

# Rome

## Monuments and Memories



## Credits

Concept and Editor: **Alessandro Furlan**

Graphics: **Alessia Moretti**

Texts: **Michele Ascutti, Lia Barelli, Sabina Carbonara, Letizia Cenci, Gemma Fusciello, Alessandra Milella, Maria Grazia Nini, Raffaele Pugliese**

Editorial coordination: **Maria Grazia Nini**

Plates from the following volumes:

*Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*, XVI sec.

A. Palladio, *I quattro libri dell'Architettura*, 1570

E. Dupérac, *I Vestigi dell'Antichità di Roma*, 1575

*Le cose meravigliose dell'alma città di Roma*, 1588

G. Lauro, *Antiquae Urbis Splendor*, 1612

G.B. Falda, *Nuovi disegni delle architetture e piante dei palazzi di Roma*, 1660

G.B. Falda, *Nuovo Teatro delle Fabriche, et Edificii, in prospettiva di Roma moderna*, 1665

G.B. Falda, *Il terzo libro del novo teatro delle chiese di Roma*, 1667-69

A. Specchi, *Il quarto libro del nuovo teatro delli Palazzi in prospettiva di Roma moderna*, 1699

G.B. Piranesi, *Vedute*, 1720-78

G. Vasi, *Delle magnificenze di Roma Antica e Moderna*, 1747-61

L. Rossini, *I sette colli di Roma antica e moderna*, 1790-1857

P. Letarouilly, *Edifices de Rome moderne*, 1795-1855

L. Canina, *Gli edifizj di Roma antica*, 1848

A. Boulfroy, *Rome, ses monuments, ses souvenirs*, 1895

## Index

- |    |   |        |
|----|---|--------|
| 1  | <i>The Saint John Lateran Area</i>              | p. 1   |
|    | <i>Basilica of Saint John Lateran</i>           | p. 7   |
|    | <i>Scala Santa and Sancta Sanctorum</i>         | p. 15  |
|    | <i>The Lateran Baptistry</i>                    | p. 19  |
| 2  | <i>Saint Peter's and the Borgo</i>              | p. 25  |
|    | <i>Basilica of Saint Peter</i>                  | p. 33  |
|    | <i>Bernini's Colonnade</i>                      | p. 47  |
|    | <i>The Vatican Palaces and Museum</i>           | p. 53  |
|    | <i>The Sistine Chapel</i>                       | p. 62  |
| 3  | <i>The Saint Paul's Area</i>                    | p. 68  |
|    | <i>Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls</i> | p. 75  |
| 4  | <i>The Santa Maria Maggiore Area</i>            | p. 83  |
|    | <i>Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore</i>         | p. 89  |
| 5  | <i>The Santa Croce Area</i>                     | p. 96  |
|    | <i>Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme</i>   | p. 104 |
| 6  | <i>The San Lorenzo Area</i>                     | p. 112 |
|    | <i>Basilica of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura</i>    | p. 118 |
| 7  | <i>The San Sebastiano Area</i>                  | p. 125 |
|    | <i>Basilica and Catacombs of San Sebastiano</i> | p. 133 |
| 8  | <i>The Appian Way</i>                           | p. 140 |
|    | <i>Baths of Caracalla</i>                       | p. 147 |
| 9  | <i>The Sant' Agnese Area</i>                    | p. 154 |
| 10 | <i>Villa Borghese</i>                           | p. 162 |
| 11 | <i>Piazza del Popolo</i>                        | p. 170 |
|    | <i>Santa Maria del Popolo</i>                   | p. 176 |

- 12 *Via di Ripetta* p. 183
- 13 *Via del Corso* p. 192  
*Palazzo Montecitorio* p. 201  
*Trevi Fountain* p. 208
- 14 *The Spanish Steps Area* p. 215  
*SS. Trinità dei Monti* p. 218
- 15 *Via delle Quattro Fontane* p. 224  
*Palazzo Barberini* p. 228  
*S. Carlino alle Quattro Fontane* p. 233
- 16 *The Castel Sant'Angelo Area* p. 237  
*Castel S. Angelo* p. 243
- 17 *Piazza Navona* p. 251
- 18 *Corso Rinascimento* p. 264  
*S. Luigi dei Francesi* p. 269  
*S. Ivo alla Sapienza* p. 273
- 19 *Corso Vittorio* p. 276  
*Theater of Pompey* p. 290  
*SS. Nome di Gesù* p. 295
- 20 *The Pantheon Area* p. 300  
*Pantheon* p. 304  
*S. Maria sopra Minerva* p. 311
- 21 *Piazza Venezia* p. 315
- 22 *Via Giulia* p. 322  
*Palazzo Farnese* p. 329
- 23 *The Portico of Octavia Area* p. 333
- 24 *The Quirinale* p. 344



	<i>Palazzo del Quirinale</i>	p. 348
25	<i>Largo S. Susanna</i>	p. 353
26	<i>Piazza dei Cinquecento</i>	p. 359
	<i>S. Maria degli Angeli</i>	p. 366
27	<i>The Capitol</i>	p. 371
	<i>Palazzo dei Conservatori</i>	p. 378
28	<i>The Roman Forum</i>	p. 386
29	<i>The Palatine Hill</i>	p. 402
30	<i>The Imperial Forums</i>	p. 411
	<i>Forum of Augustus</i>	p. 420
31	<i>The Colosseum and the Oppian Hill</i>	p. 426
	<i>The Colosseum</i>	p. 432
	<i>The Domus Aurea</i>	p. 441
	<i>S. Pietro in Vincoli</i>	p. 445
	<i>S. Clemente</i>	p. 451
32	<i>The Celian Hill</i>	p. 459
	<i>Ss. Giovanni e Paolo</i>	p. 466
33	<i>The Mouth of Truth Area</i>	p. 473
	<i>S. Maria in Cosmedin</i>	p. 481
34	<i>The Aventine Hill</i>	p. 487
	<i>S. Sabina</i>	p. 493
35	<i>Via della Lungara</i>	p. 499
36	<i>Trastevere</i>	p. 505
	<i>S. Maria in Trastevere</i>	p. 511
37	<i>The Tiber Island</i>	p. 518



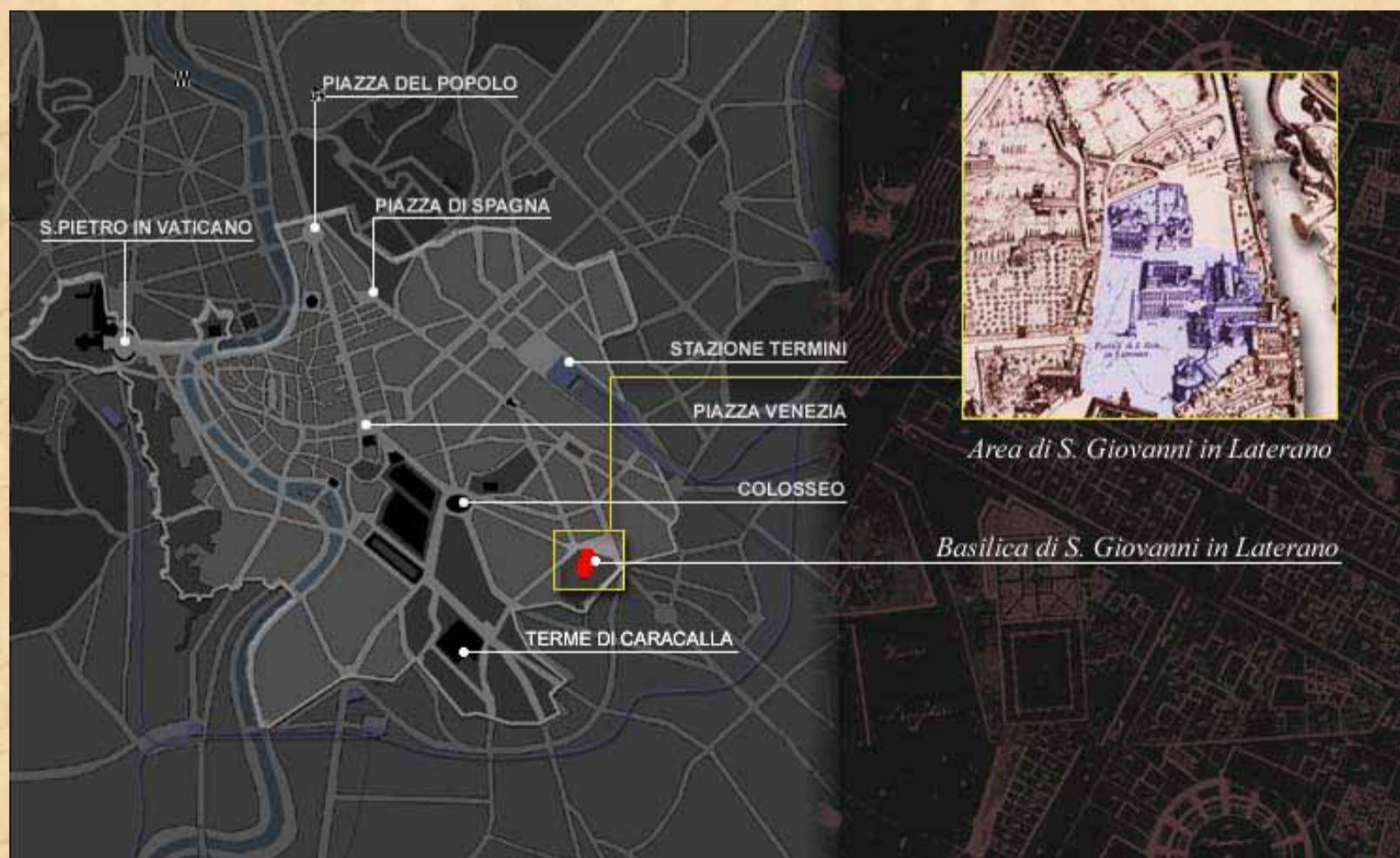
38 *The Janiculum Hill*  
*Tempietto del Bramante*

*p. 527*  
*p. 535*



# *The Saint John Lateran Area*

By Lia Barelli



The Lateran area, on the south-eastern slopes of the **Celian Hill**, was in Roman times mainly populated with courtly villas. Its name is derived from the rich abode of the Plauzi Laterani, which became imperial property in 65 AD, after being expropriated by Nero who wanted to punish one of the members of the family for having taken part in the plot of the Pisoni against him. At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD Septimius Severus built the *Castra nova equitum singularium*, which were barracks for the imperial horseguards. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century the area was incorporated within the Aurelian Walls.

From the beginning of the Middle Ages, when the urban area shrank due to the declining population, the whole area would have been abandoned, being far from the liveliest part of the center of the city, if Emperor Constantine had not built the Basilica di S. Giovanni, the cathedral church of Rome. Throughout almost all the Middle Ages the Popes, who are also Bishops of Rome, therefore had their official seat in the Patriarchio, a vast palace which developed within the basilica, growing around the original nucleus given by Constantine.

The Patriarchio was made up of a group of similar buildings, intended by the first popes who decorated it to rival in importance the palaces of the Byzantine emperor in Constantinople. Apart from the apartments of the pope, the complex included chapels and reception rooms, and two huge apsed tricliniums which Leo III (795-816) had built for banquets. Boniface VIII had the Loggia delle Benedizioni added to the façade of the largest triclinium, and from there he declared the first Jubilee in 1300. Some pictures of it still survive: it had a double row of arcades which opened out towards the *Campus Laterani*, a vast irregular square on the northern side of the basilica, in which the faithful gathered in great numbers. The loggia was decorated with frescoes, a famous fragment of which, from the right nave of the basilica, has survived. Scholars have called it “Boniface announces the Jubilee”, and have attributed it to Giotto.

Inside the Lateran complex of buildings there were several monasteries, including that of the Saints John the Evangelist and John the Baptist, and Pancrazio, on the left of the basilica. It was almost entirely rebuilt in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and today, the only part of the building to survive from the Middle Ages is the cloister, which is reached through the basilica. The cloister was begun in 1227, and built by the Vassalletto family, who were famous as sculptors and marble workers. It is an admirable blend of classic antiquity with gothic elements.

The Patriarchio was enlarged and fortified several times between the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but in the 14<sup>th</sup> century a succession of natural disasters, and its



abandon due to the transfer of the papal city to Avignon, led to its decay by the time the Popes returned to Rome. This consideration contributed to their choice to reside at **St. Peter's**.

Later on the Patriarcho, fallen even further into decay, was finally demolished by Sixtus V (1585-1590). The Pope, who once more wanted the Pontifical residence to be transferred from the Vatican to the Lateran, realized that the ancient building was beyond repair, and decided to build a new palace. Moreover he wanted to organize the area more organically, the results of which can still be seen today.

Today, beyond the Aurelian Wall, with its monumental Porta di San Giovanni, built by Gregory XIII in 1574 to replace the ancient adjacent Porta Asinaria, there are two large squares: Piazza di Porta San Giovanni and Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano. The former is dominated by the 18<sup>th</sup> century façade of the **Basilica of Saint John Lateran**, on which there is an epigraph asserting its primacy as the “mother and head of all churches”.

On the right of the basilica we find the Palazzo Lateranense, built by the architect Domenico Fontana, commissioned by Sixtus V. Begun in 1585, it was inaugurated in 1589. On the piano nobile we find the papal apartments, directly linked by the monumental pontifical staircase to the portico of the basilica. For the façades Fontana drew inspiration from Palazzo Farnese, the work of Antonio da Sangallo and Michelangelo. In 1735, Alessandro Galilei, while restoring the façade of the basilica, brought the adjacent façade up to the same height as the other two sides, which Fontana had built slightly higher.

In spite of the great pains taken to build the new palace, it was not able to inherit the same functions as the ancient Patriarcho, and the popes, including Sixtus V, continued to reside in the Vatican or in the Quirinale.

Among the most important monuments of the square, we should remember the monumental niche on the right of the basilica, built by Ferdinando Fuga in 1743, whose decorations include the remains of the mosaics which adorned one of the trycliniums of Leo III; and also the Palazzo della Scala Santa, or Palazzo del Sancta Sanctorum, also commissioned by Sixtus V to contain the 13<sup>th</sup> century Chapel of the **Sancta Sanctorum**.

Piazza San Giovanni is dominated by the façade of the northern transept of the basilica, in front of which there is a portico below the present Loggia delle Benedizioni, again by Domenico Fontana commissioned by Sixtus V. On the left the portico is extended, decided by Clement XIII in 1884-86, and hides the apse of the basilica



and the vestries, reconstructed in XIX century. Further to the right is the **Lateran Baptistry**, founded by Constantine, and restored and embellished several times, surrounded by minor chapels.

At the center of the square there is an Egyptian obelisk from the era of the pharaoh Tutmosis III and his son Tutmosis IV (15<sup>th</sup> century BC), which, with its 32 meters, is the highest in Rome, and including its base is 47 meters high. It was brought to Rome in 357 by Constance II, the son of Constantine, and put in the Circus Maximus to seal the triumph of Christianity. Its transfer to the square by Domenico Fontana was a feat of engineering for that period. The 17<sup>th</sup> century fountain of Acqua Felice was built underneath it.

On the right side of the square we find the Hospital of San Giovanni. Its first buildings date back to 1216, and were built by Cardinal Giovanni Colonna. Little of it has survived from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, while its current appearance is the result of rebuilding and enlarging carried out in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

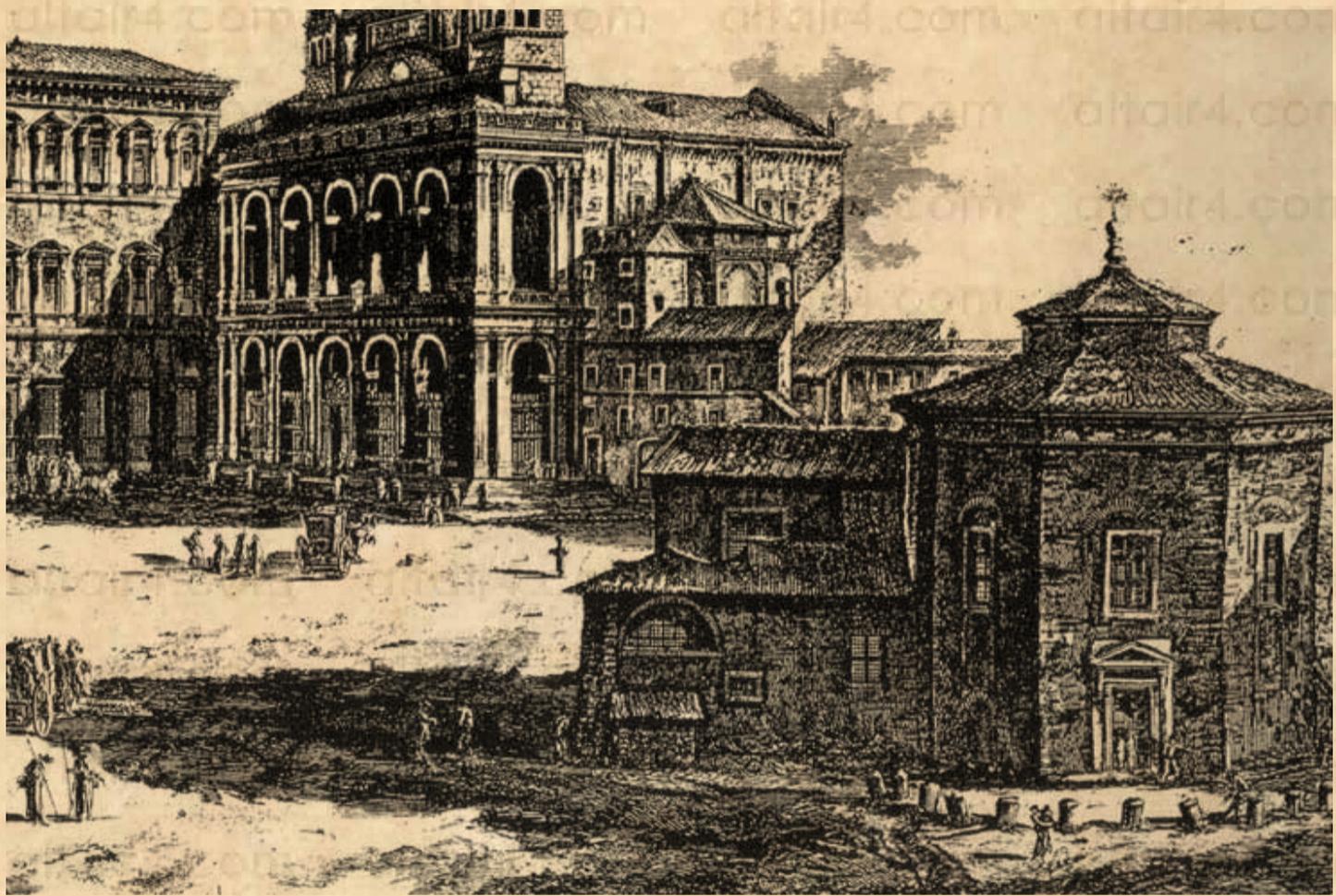
Under the modern wing of the hospital, along the adjacent Via dell' Amba Aradam, there are the remains of a building, parts of which date back to between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, perhaps belonging to the Villa of Domizia Lucilla, the mother of Marcus Aurelius. Here a plinth has been discovered, which some say is that of the famous equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, which was near the basilica until 1548, when it was moved to the **Capitol**.





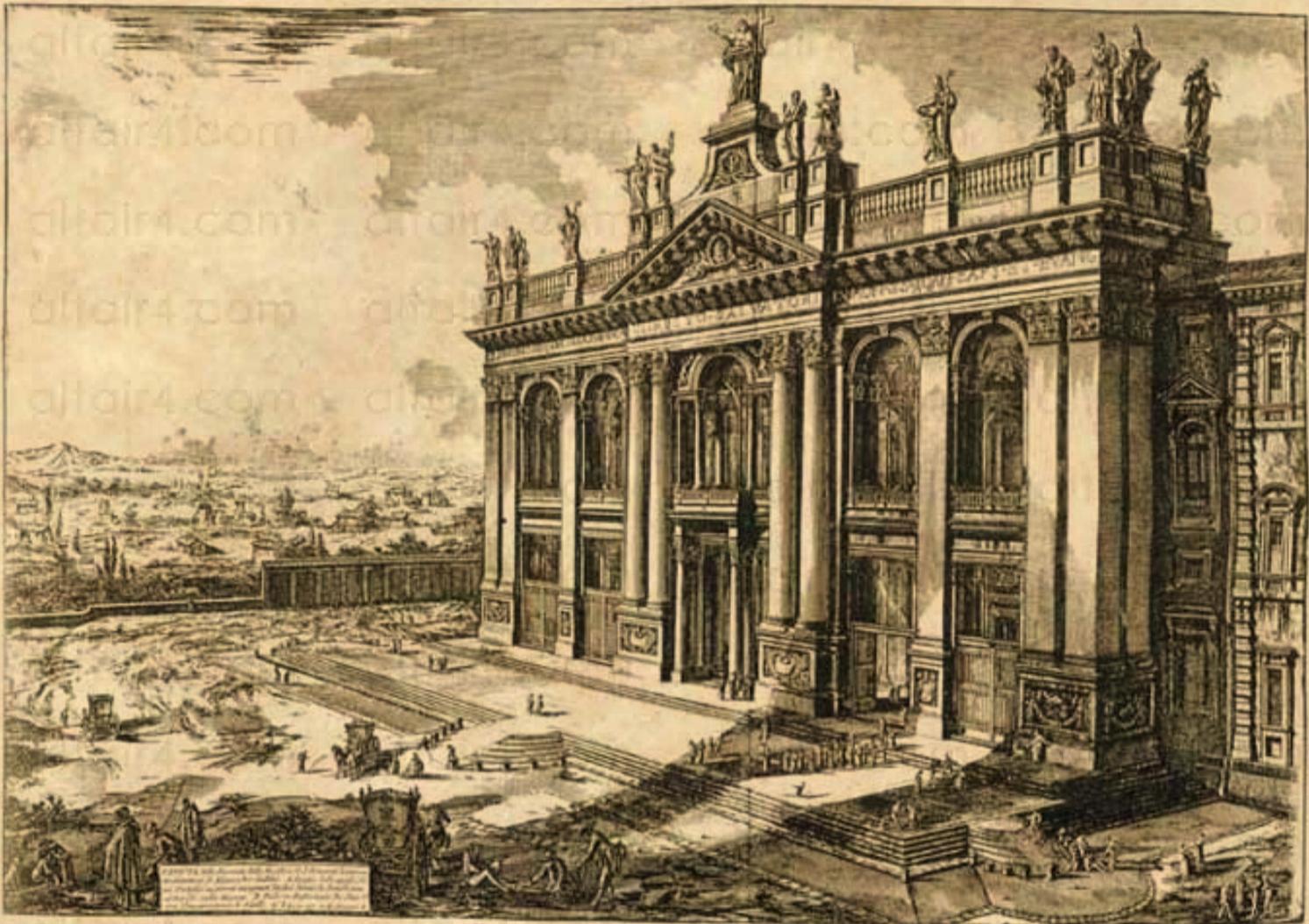
*Battistero Lateranense  
1. Obelisco Etrusco, 2. Spedale di S. Giovanni in Laterano, 3. Battistero, e Chiesa di S. Giovanni in Fonte*





# *Basilica of Saint John Lateran*

By Lia Barelli



The Basilica was originally dedicated to the Holy Savior, then to John the Baptist and John the Evangelist.

The Basilica was founded by Constantine on the site of the *Castra nova equitum singularium*, the barracks of the imperial horse guards. The barracks, built at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century by Septimius Severus, were subsequently demolished to clear ground for the Basilica.

This may have been an act of revenge on Constantine's part since the horse guards had been allies of his rival Maxentius. Construction most likely began in 312, immediately after the battle of the Milvian bridge in which Constantine won a decisive victory over his adversary.

Pope Sylvester consecrated the Basilica probably on November 9 of 318, so it is the oldest Christian Basilica in Rome.

The original ground plan of the building can in large part be determined. At 95 meters



in length and 55 meters in width it was considerably smaller than Saint Peter's. It had five naves divided by columns, and the two shorter outer naves ended in lower spaces that extended slightly beyond the perimeter. The central nave ended in a large western apse containing the seats of the Pope and the clergy.

The exterior of the building was fairly austere. This was probably done intentionally to avoid offending a city that was still in part hostile to Christianity. The interior, on the other hand, was illuminated by large windows and decorated with all kinds of precious materials.

Excavations carried out beneath the Basilica in various epochs have revealed the foundation from Constantine's time, as well as bringing to light important remains of Roman constructions, including a first century AD house and parts the *Castra nova equitum singularium* with floor mosaics and paintings.

The Popes have always dedicated special attention to the Basilica.

As it seems quite certain by recent studies, Pope Leone Magno (440-461) ordered the construction of an deambulatory around the apse, called Portico leoniano.

In the Late Middle Ages Pope Nicholas IV (1288 – 1292), the first Franciscan Pope, proved to be an energetic builder. His numerous works are described in the *Tabula Magna*, an inscription in mosaic from 1291 that is housed in the Basilica. He had the apse rebuilt on the ancient foundation, or simply covered by new structures.

The interior of the apse had a semicircular form and was decorated with a beautiful mosaic, while the six-sided polygonal exterior was decorated with pilasters and half columns supporting blind arches. The design was similar to the five-sided apse that the same pope had built in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore.

The dome of the apse contained a mosaic created in 1291 by Jacopo Torriti. Torriti, painter and mosaicist, had worked in the upper Basilica in Assisi, and was commissioned by Nicholas IV to create the mosaic in the apse of Santa Maria Maggiore.

Unfortunately, little remains of the original mosaic since it was almost completely redone in 1883 – 84 when Pope Leo XIII had the apse rebuilt more to the west. A tracing on paper found in the Vatican museums reveals that at least the iconography of the original has remained unchanged.

The center of the mosaic depicts the four rivers of Heaven and the celestial city of Jerusalem. Higher up a cross stands out on a golden background, and a bust of Christ among the clouds hovers above the cross. Mary and John the Baptist stand at either side of the cross as Nicholas IV kneels at Mary's feet. They are in turn flanked by the four Apostles while Saint Francis and Saint Anthony of Padua appear in the



mosaic on a smaller scale. The appearance of these two Saints in the mosaic may be explained by the membership in the Franciscan Order of the Pope who commissioned the work. According to a holy legend the face of Christ miraculously appeared to Pope Sylvester during the consecration of the Basilica. That is why Torriti placed the bust of Christ, which was found in an earlier work dating back to possibly the fifth century, in his mosaic. It was meant to commemorate this miraculous appearance.

The lower part of the apse was also decorated with mosaics left unfinished in 1295. Nicholas IV made reconstruct the Portico leoniano, which was also destroyed in the nineteenth-century works. Almost certainly work of Nicholas is also the addition of the continuous transept, instead of the two low transverse compartments of the Constantinian basilica, altered by subsequent interventions. The north prospect of the transept was characterized by two tall towers that emphasized, in some way, its role of privileged facade of the basilica, facing the most vital part of the city.

For this particular role that prospect suffered numerous interventions of transformation and beautification, as under Gregory XI (1370-78), Pius IV (1562-67), who added the attic and Sixtus V, who added a portico and the overhead Loggia of the Benedictions. The Loggia, frescoed by Cesare Nebbia and Giovanni Guerra, was terribly damaged in a 1993 bombing and recently restored.

Among the alterations carried out in the Middle ages, it is well worth remembering a porch in front of the facade of the basilica, built by Sergio II (844-847), which was partially destroyed in the twelfth century, when the marmorarius Nicolò d'Angelo personally executed another one, extended only to the front of the central and the right naves. In it there were depicted in mosaic episodes connected with the precious relics preserved inside the basilica, including the legendary transport of the relics from Jerusalem by Emperor Titus, and the Donation of Constantine.

Various natural disasters and restoration works took place throughout the 1300s and continued after the Popes returned from Avignon. Martin V (1417 –1431) had a splendid Cosmati floor laid and commissioned Gentile da Fabriano to fresco the central nave. Important improvements were made throughout the 1500s. Among these was the gilded coffered ceiling by the French ebanist Flaminio Boulanger, following Daniele da Volterra's design. Another was the Great Chapel completed by Giacomo della Porta in 1570 – 71, inspired by the style of Bramante.

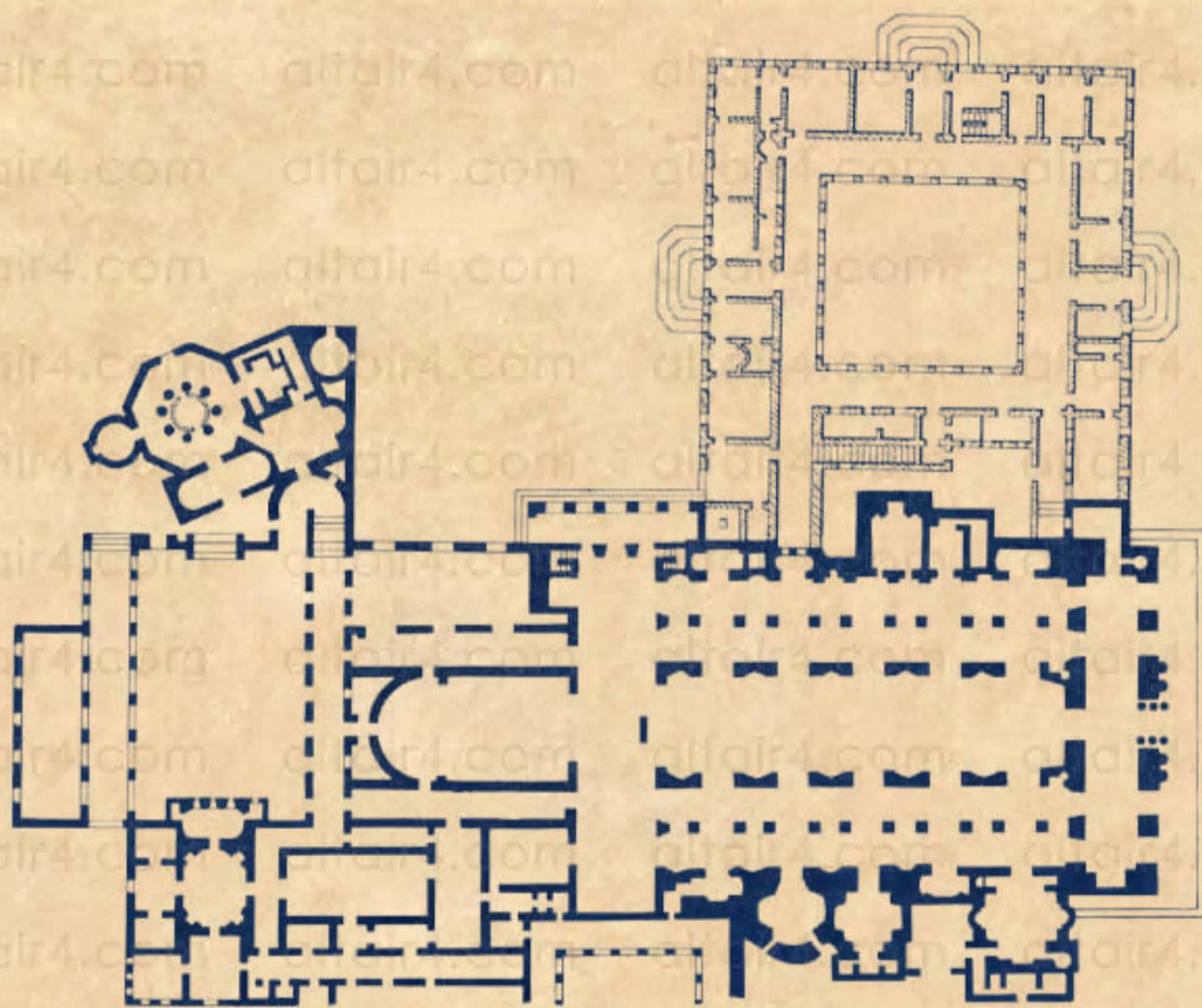
For the Jubilee in 1600 Pope Clement VIII wanted to renovate the transept which had been decorated according to Cardinal Baronio's design. The Pope commissioned Giacomo della Porta to carry out the architectural work, while the pictorial decorations with motifs portraying episodes of divine intervention on behalf of the Basilica were

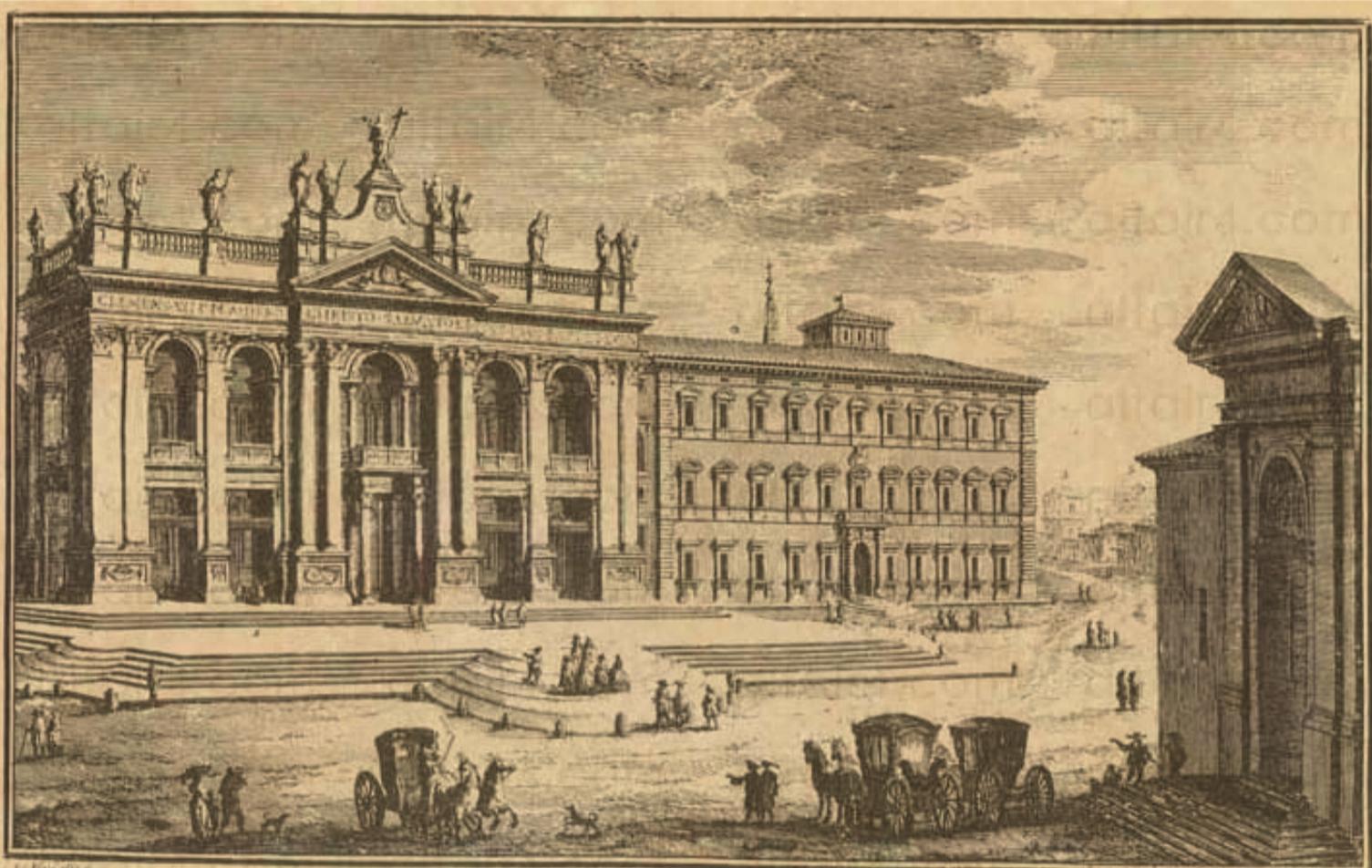


carried out by a number of artists under the direction of Cavalier d'Arpino. The Gothic tabernacle built in 1367 by the sculptor Giovanni di Stefano, and paid for by Charles V of France, and remained in the middle of the transept.

When Pope Innocent X visited the Basilica during the 1650 Jubilee he tackled the urgent problem of major restoration for the crumbling Constantinian Basilica. He hired Francesco Borromini to carry out the work. The Pope demanded that the original walls and the 15th century ceiling be preserved, and while Borromini complained bitterly of these restrictions, he nevertheless found brilliant technical and artistic solutions to this challenge. The interior of the Basilica as it appears today with its predominance of curved lines is for the most part due to Borromini's work. Borromini opened five large arches in the central nave. The arches rest on large pilasters in which the architect incorporated the original columns. He placed tabernacles against the pilasters and crowned them with a convex tympanum in which he employed antique green columns that had been in the smaller Constantinian naves. Pilasters then substituted the columns in the naves. The statues in the tabernacles are from the 1700s. Borromini placed the ancient tombs and funereal monuments along the far walls. He redesigned the walls almost entirely and included the original portions he deemed most meaningful in the composition. The walls were replastered and stuccoed. The architect abandoned the project in 1660 and left Felice della Greca to continue the work. The problem, which Borromini left unsolved, of creating a new façade was entrusted to the Florentine architect Alessandro Galilei by Pope Clement XII after Galilei won a public competition for the job in 1731. He replaced the medieval porch with a new façade completed in 1735. He built a single order of demicolumns and Corinthian pilasters on which 15 enormous statues stand. The façade also includes a portico and a balcony from which the Pope offers benedictions. There are five doors leading from the portico into the Basilica, and the door to the far right is the Porta Santa which is opened in the occasion of jubilee years. Galilei also built the chapel for the Pope's family at the beginning of the central nave. Leo XIII decided to enlarge the presbytery and entrusted the work to the architects Virginio and Francesco Vespignani. They began work in 1884 and quickly finished within two years. Then the apse was rebuilt in a more west position and, as already mentioned, the mosaic was redone. At the same time the Loggia of the Benedictions and the supporting portico were lengthened as far as the baptistery, thus hiding the sacristies.







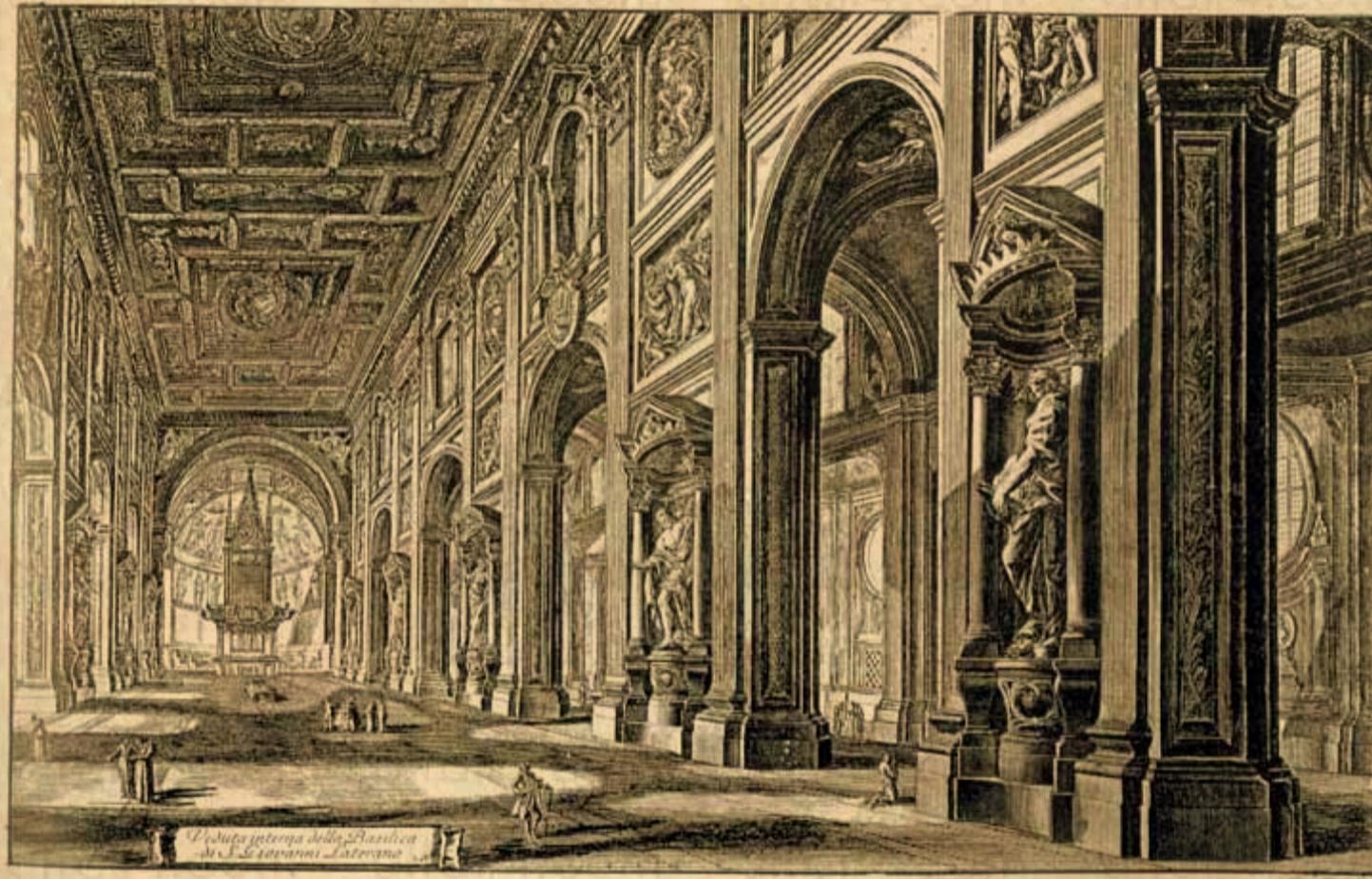
*Basilica di S. Giovanni in Laterano*  
*L'aspetto principale della Basilica, il Palazzo Pontificio, il Campanile, l' Ospedale per le donne, che contig. de' col chio. Riccio, &c. - Ag. ed. 1760.*





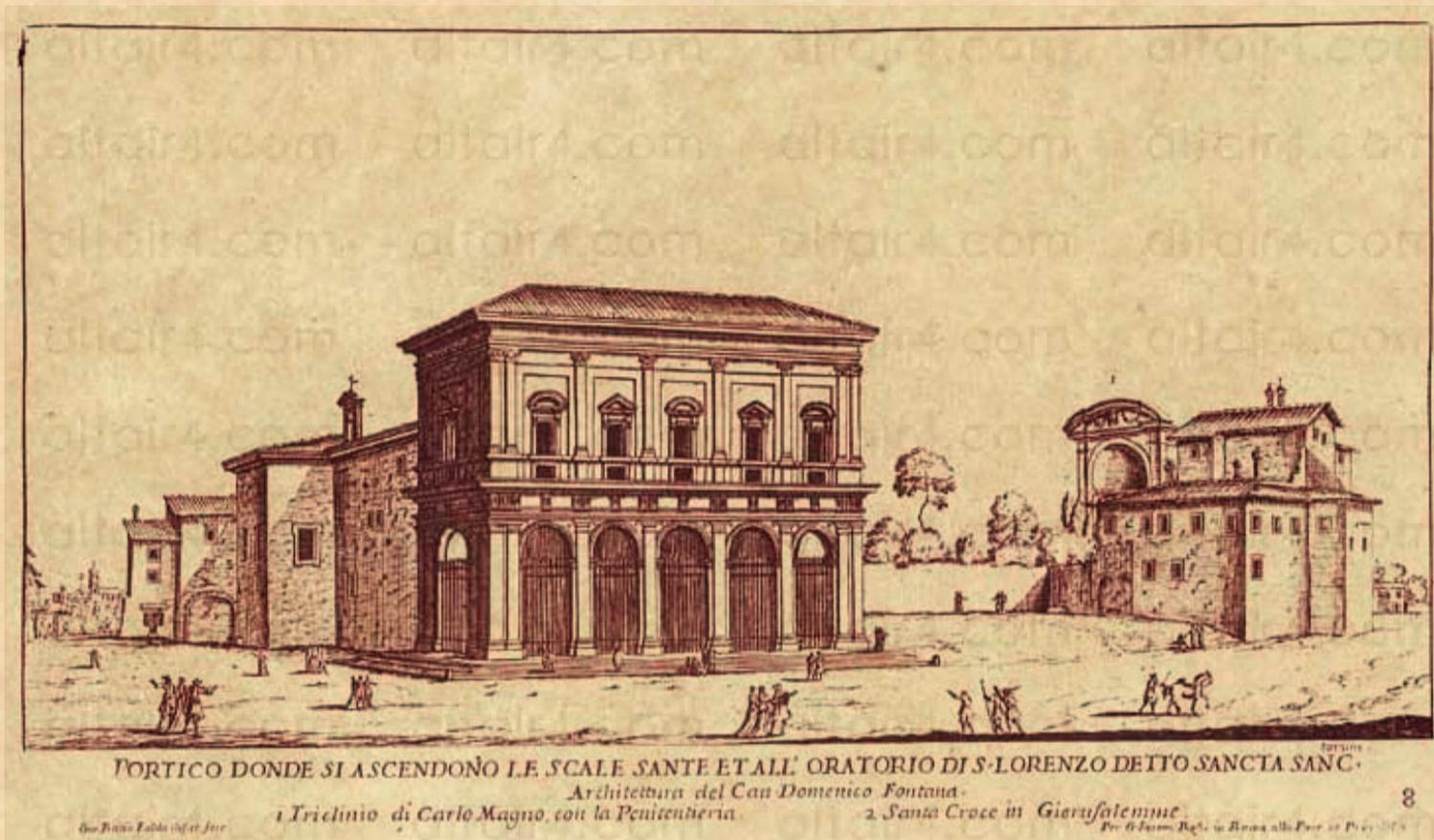
*Piazza di S. Giovanni in Laterano  
e Obelisco, Fontana di Campidoglio, e portico laterale della Chiesa di S. Gio. Laterano, e Palazzo Pontificio, nei Contorni di piazza Zibello e Le Scale Sante, Site dell'Obelisco*





# *Scala Santa and Sancta Sanctorum*

By Lia Barelli



The chapel dedicated to Saint Lawrence is more commonly known as the *Sancta Sanctorum* because it contains some of the most holy relics in the Christian world. The Latin inscription above the altar affirms that “there is no place more holy in the whole world.” It is also the most important part still existing today of the ancient *Patriarchium*, the Palace of the Popes, and was used as the private chapel of the pope.

It is first mentioned in the 6th century when it already housed important relics. Various popes carried out restoration work and had improvements made on the chapel throughout the Middle Ages. Pope Sixtus V had it spared when the ancient papal palace was demolished and he ordered the architect Domenico Fontana to include it in the new building, the *Sancta Sanctorum* palace (1589).

Since it was on a higher level than the stone work foundation, Pope Sixtus had the Scala Santa moved from the *Patriarchium* and placed before the entrance to the chapel.

Legend has it that these stairs were from the Pretorate of Pontius Pilate, and that Jesus climbed them during his trial. The 28 stairs are protected by a wooden encasement,



and people often climb them on their knees. The stairs rise to a hall that leads into the chapel.

The present-day chapel was rebuilt by Nicholas III. He consecrated it in 1279. It was built on the ancient walls which were unearthed during excavations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Frescoes from the 12<sup>th</sup> century depicting the Crucifixion of Christ are visible on the walls which once were part of an oratory.

The Pope took a special interest in the chapel and spent a large amount of money in order to provide precious decorations and to employ architects who were in the avant-garde of their epoch.

The Chapel is a blend of traditional and modern taste in 13<sup>th</sup> century Rome. To understand the artistic importance of this work, it is helpful to compare it to the Gothic style in other parts of Europe in the same epoch, for example, the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, built by the king Saint Louis IX (1248).

The exterior of the chapel today is almost entirely covered by the 16<sup>th</sup> century palace. However, a view of how it appeared in the 13<sup>th</sup> century can be seen in a fresco inside the chapel. It was a hexagonal block in brickwork, the sides lightened by blind arches that framed marble lancet windows. It was crowned by a row of brick in a saw-tooth pattern and marble ledges, typical of those found in Roman bell towers.

The interior consists of a 7 meter long square nave, covered by a ribbed cross vault supported by four angular columns. A rectangular presbytery is covered by a barrel vault. The two parts are separated by two porphyry columns that support a decorated architrave.

The lower part of the chapel is completely covered in precious marble that was taken from classical buildings. It was customary to strip ancient structures of material in order to embellish newer buildings. The columns too were taken from older edifices. A false gallery of three-lobed arches placed on spiral columns runs half way up the sides of the nave. It reflects a clearly Gothic taste and recalls a similar motif found in the transept of the Upper Basilica in Assisi. Standing figures from a later date are painted in the arches and include the Virgin and the Apostles. Two niches are located in the arcade above the wall that divides the presbytery. These were originally meant to hold relics.

An epigraph inside the chapel commemorates the work of Cosma, a member of the medieval family of famous Roman marble workers. He and his workshop are probably to be credited with marble finishings of the interior, the beautiful capitals, and the mosaic floor that, with its geometric patterns framing porphyry discs, paves



the way to the altar.

Beautiful frescoes are located in the higher part of the nave. They lend a highly refined quality to the interior worthy of the private papal rituals. The vault bears the images of the four Evangelists, and the four walls offer a fresco cycle of great significance for medieval Roman painting.

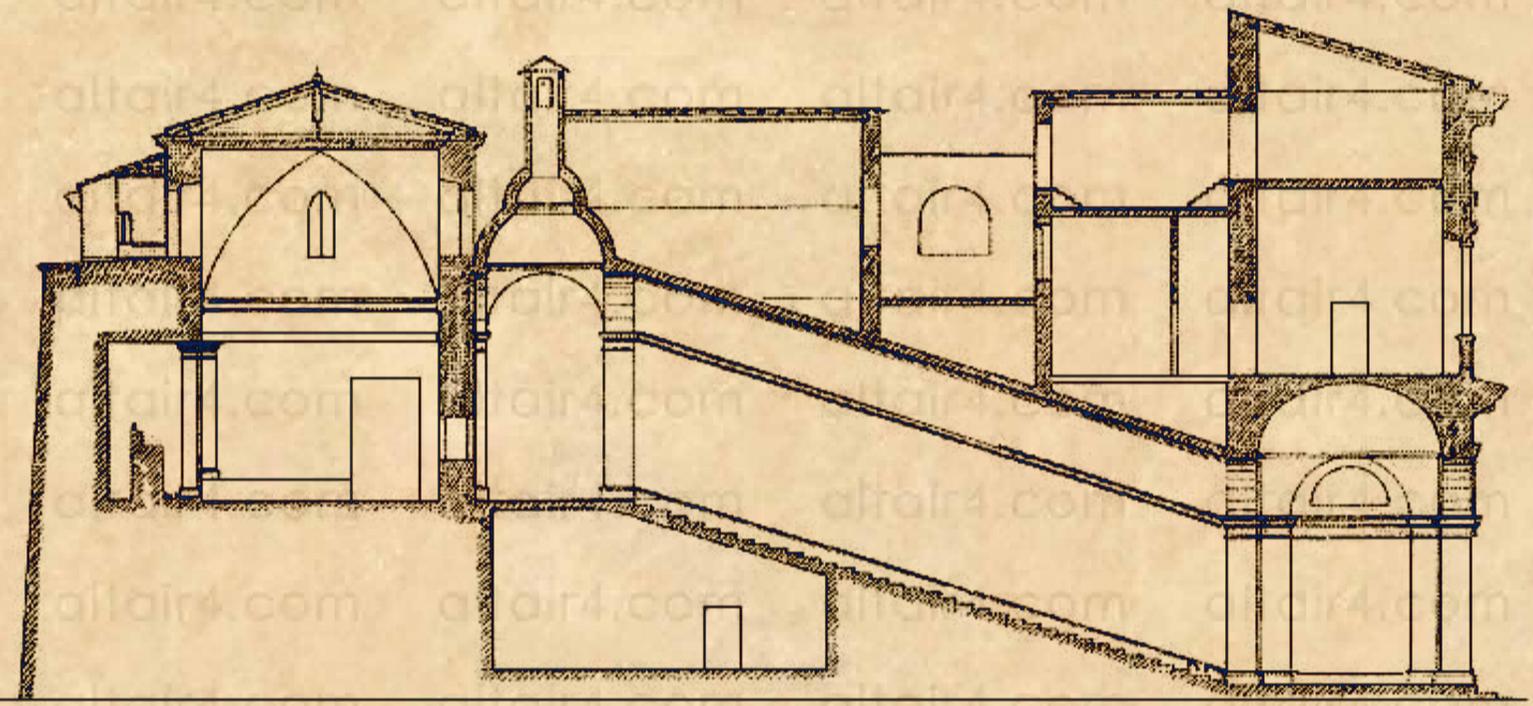
The frescoes were heavily repainted at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and only recent careful restoration has revealed their original 13<sup>th</sup> century appearance. They are the work of numerous and, unfortunately, anonymous artists who, however, shared a common culture.

The frescoes depict the martyrdom of Saints Peter, Paul, and of the virgin Agnes, whose heads were among the holy relics housed in the chapel. Other subjects include Nicholas III, flanked by the two apostles, as he offers a small scale model of the chapel to Christ enthroned between two angels; the miracle of Saint Nicholas paying the dowry of the three poor maidens (the Pope was particularly devoted to his namesake); the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence and Saint Steven.

These subjects are composed in such a manner as to appear individual paintings set apart by decorations in which themes from pagan and Christian antiquity (for example, the painting of the catacombs) are juxtaposed. The work clearly reflects the new Gothic style.

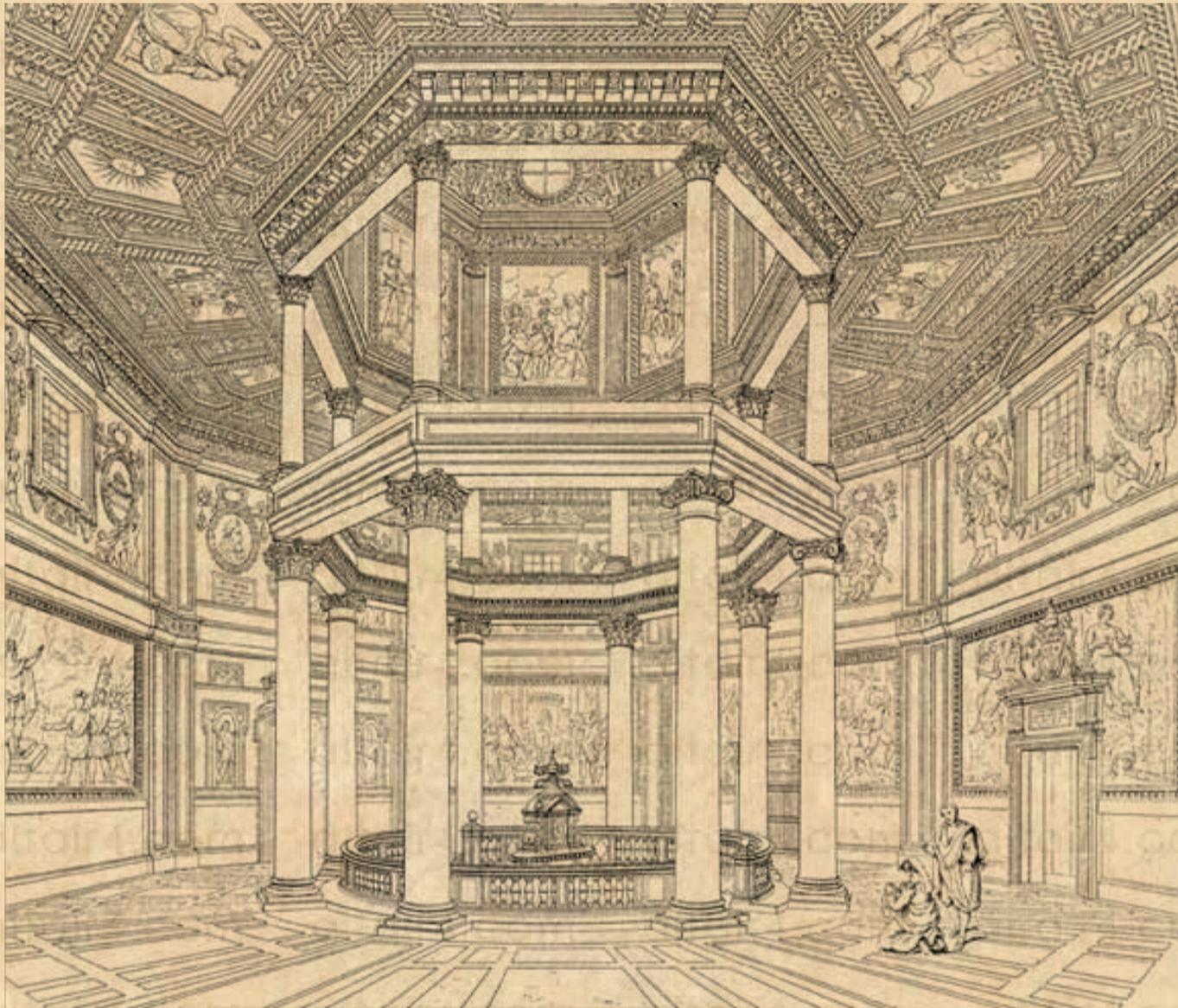
The vault in the presbytery is decorated in mosaic. This art form was traditionally used in the middle ages for the most important areas in religious architecture. A tondo borne by angels and depicting Christ may be the work of artists from Iacopo Torriti's circle. Busts of saints in the lunettes may have been done by the workshop of Cosma. The altar containing holy relics is located in the middle of the presbytery. A painting on the reverse side of the altar is considered the most sacred relic in the chapel – the *acheiropoieton*. It depicts the enthroned Christ pantocrator, and the panel painting is believed to be an authentic portrait which, as the name in Greek indicates, was “not painted by human hands”. It is, in fact, a Byzantine icon from the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century, and its appearance in Rome has been documented since the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Pope Innocent III had it covered in embossed silver, leaving visible only the face of Christ. It is kept behind wooden doors and rarely on view. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century marble workers placed porphyry finishings to the sides of the icon. This kind of marble was traditionally used to emphasize the imperial majesty of the objects for which it was employed.





# *The Lateran Baptistry*

By Raffaele Pugliese



Constantine endowed Rome's cathedral, Saint John Lateran, with a baptistry, and tradition has it that Constantine himself was baptized here by Pope Sylvester.

The baptistry was built on the site of baths which were decorated with rich mosaics and marble pavements in the age of Severus.

These baths, which were uncovered during archaeological digs in the 1960s, must have served the nearby barracks of the *Castra nova equitum singularum*. They made use in turn of the even more ancient structures of what may have been a private home and baths of the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC in the age of Hadrian.

Sixtus III (432-40) ordered the construction of the two orders of columns inside. The first order of porphyry columns, perhaps from the construction of Constantine, has an elegant metric inscription on the architrave, exalting the salvific function of baptism; the columns of the second order have been put in place by Urban VIII



(1632-44), replacing the old ones. All around there was an deambulatory covered with a barrel vault, decorated with rich mosaics and marble pilasters along the walls. To Sixtus III dated also the narthex with an apse at either end (called “a forcipe”) and the portal, decorated with two impressive porphyry columns. In the right apse survives the mosaic with a lush and classic floral frieze on a blue background; in the mosaic of the left one, destroyed in 1757, there was a band with landscape scenes and the Good Shepherd.

A third phase, attributed to Pope Ilario (461-68), included the raising of the outer walls and the addition of the chapels of St. John the Evangelist, still preserved, of St. John the Baptist, rebuilt in 1727, and of the Holy Cross, demolished in the sixteenth century.

One of the noteworthy renovations of the Middle Ages was the transformation of the narthex into the chapel of Saints Rufina and Seconda. This was commissioned by Pope Anastasius IV in around 1154. There is a late 15<sup>th</sup> century wooden crucifix on the chapel door which is attributed to Andrea Bregno.

The right apse contains two valuable canvasses: a Madonna and Child by Sassoferrato (1609 – 85), and a copy of a painting by Guido Reni depicting Saint Filippo Neri. Tommaso Righi, an artist with close ties to Piranesi, built the funereal monuments of Nicolò Lercari and of Cardinal Alessandro Borgia during the pontificate of Clement XIII (1758 – 69).

Leo X ((1513 – 22) had the baptistry roof repaired, and in 1540 Paul III had the old cupola dismantled and replaced by the present-day lantern. He also had the ambulatory vault demolished. The mosaics in the ambulatory had already been destroyed by mercenary soldiers in 1527.

Other improvements were made in preparation for the 1575 Jubilee when the present-day entrance from Saint John in Lateran Square was built. Urban VIII Barberini (1623 – 44) initiated important changes in the decorative scheme of the baptistry. The architect Domenico Castelli, who had been active since 1629, was commissioned to refurbish the bases and the capitals of the two orders of columns in the peristyle.

The services of Gian Lorenzo Bernini were requested in 1633, and it was under his direction that Bartolomeo de’ Rossi refashioned the wooden cupola, and Simone Lagi executed the goldwork.

The painter Andrea Sacchi was hired in 1636 to create scenes recounting the life of Saint John the Baptist for the eight walls of the baptistry. He completed the work in 1649, in time for the 1650 Jubilee. Sacchi availed himself of the aid of Gemignani, Andrea Camassi, and the young Carlo Maratta to create the fresco cycle that was to



accompany his canvasses.

Unfortunately, Sacchi's original paintings had to be transferred to the Vatican Museum and replaced by copies, due to the humidity in the baptistry. His work in vibrant colors reveals a highly accomplished pictorial sense.

Around 1650 Francesco Borromini created the frieze inside the baptistry with the emblems of Alexander VII Chigi. Pope Innocent XI Odescalchi (1676 – 89) commissioned Ciro Ferri to apply the luxurious gilded bronze decorations to the baptismal font.

During the massive renovations of the Cathedral choir (1884 – 86) commissioned by Leo XIII the baptistry was joined to Domenico Fontana's Loggia of the Benedictions. Four chapels were located on the circumference of the octagonal building. The oldest of these, the Santa Croce (Holy Cross) Chapel, was built by Pope Hilary (461 – 68) and demolished in 1588. The Saint John Baptist Chapel and the Saint John Evangelist Chapel were located to the right and left of the narthex. These two chapels underwent renovations commissioned by Pope Clement between 1597 and 1601. He also had work done on the already mentioned Saints Rufina and Seconda Chapel.

The Saint John Evangelist Oratory is the only one that still has the beautiful fifth-century mosaic decorations on the vaulted ceiling. The mosaic depicts the Lamb of God on a gold background, surrounded by birds and fruit. A rare painting by Cavalier d'Arpino was once found in this chapel, but it has since been moved to the Great Chapel in the Saint John Basilica. The bronze statue of the Saint by Antonio Vasoldo the Younger is still located in the chapel.

The oratory dedicated to Saint John the Baptist was renovated by the architect Giovanni Battista Ceccarelli in 1780. Thus a fresco cycle for the 1650 Jubilee was lost. The unimpressive frescoes currently found in the chapel replaced a cycle that Giuseppe Filani had painted in 1781.

A beautiful bronze portraying the Baptist is located on the altar. This work was executed by Giuseppe Valadier in 1772 to replace a wooden statue which was believed to be by Donatello, but in fact was carved by Donato da Formello in the second half of the 1500s. It is now kept in the sanctuary of the Basilica. It was also once believed that the bronze doors were from the baths of Caracalla, but they are either fifth-century or medieval works.

The fourth oratory to the right of the narthex is dedicated to Saint Venantius. It was commissioned by Pope John IV in 640 to hold the holy relics of the martyrs of Salona, a city near Split. John's successor, Theodore (642 – 49), then had the

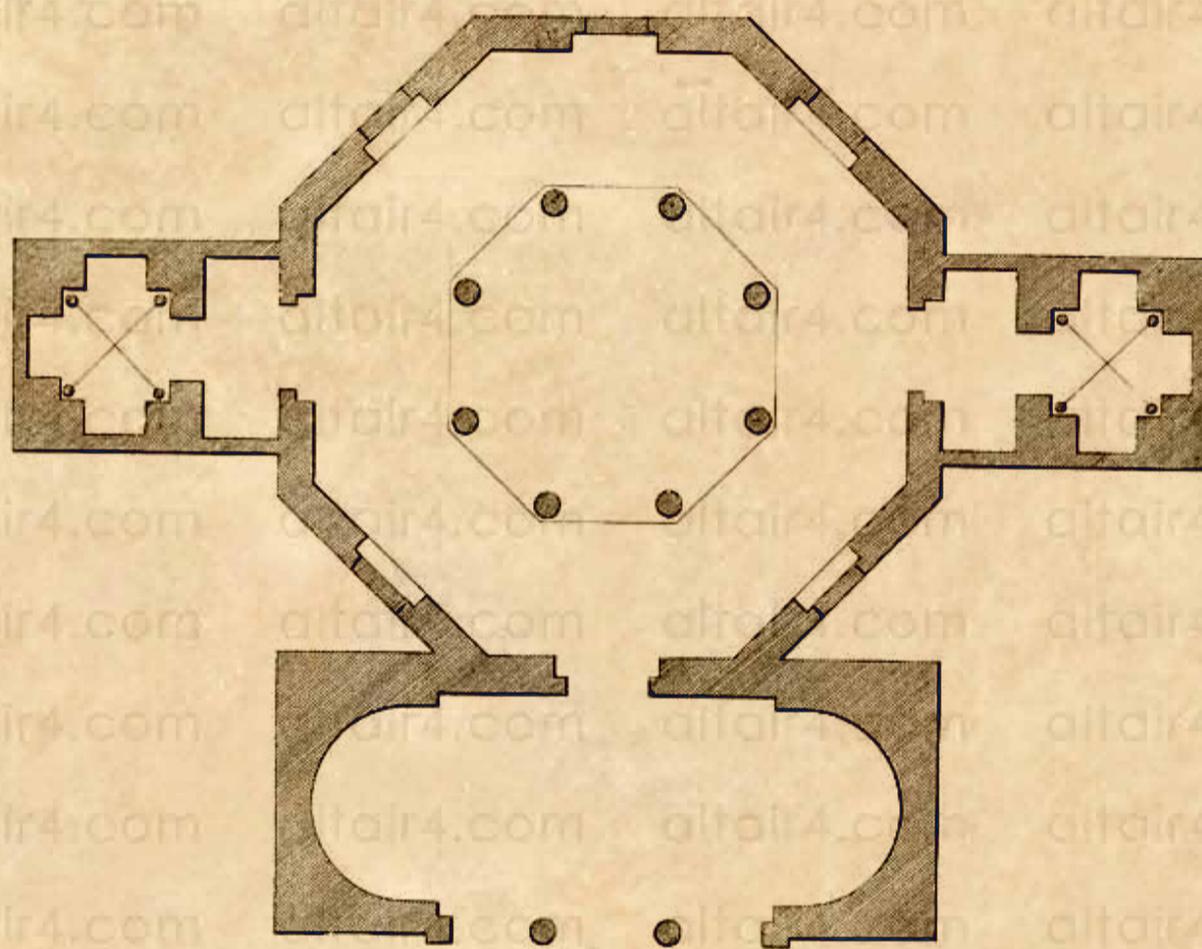


chapel decorated with mosaics. The mosaics depicted an ethereal bust of Christ with Angels, the Holy Virgin surrounded by two rows of Saints, and the two popes who commissioned the chapel, all on a gold background.

In 1574 Pope Gregory XIII had a splendid wooden ceiling installed. The Assumption is depicted in the center of the ceiling.

A 15<sup>th</sup> century Madonna and Child are found on the altar built by Carlo Rainaldi (1611 – 91). Cardinal Ceva's tomb, designed by Borromini, is of particular interest.

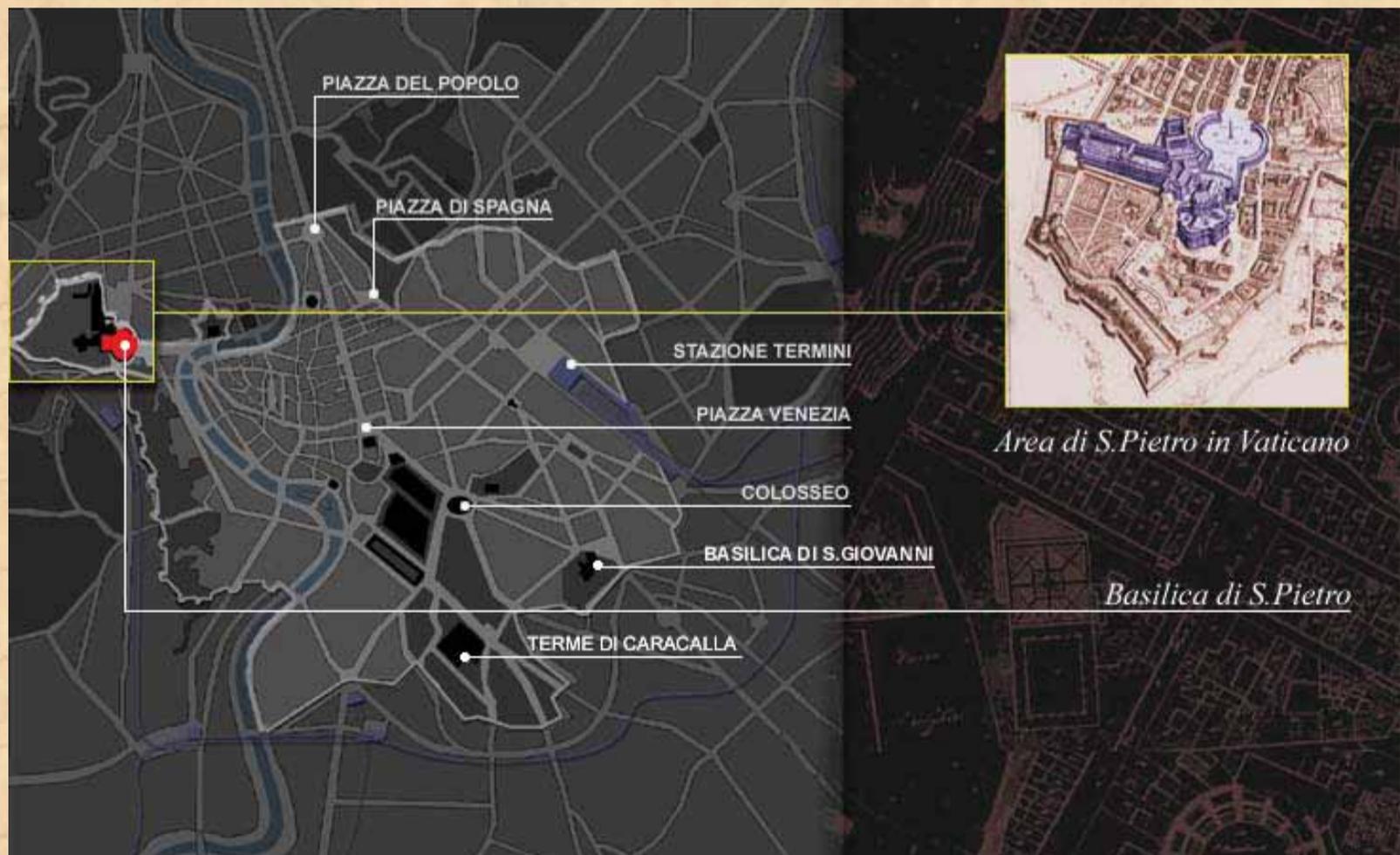
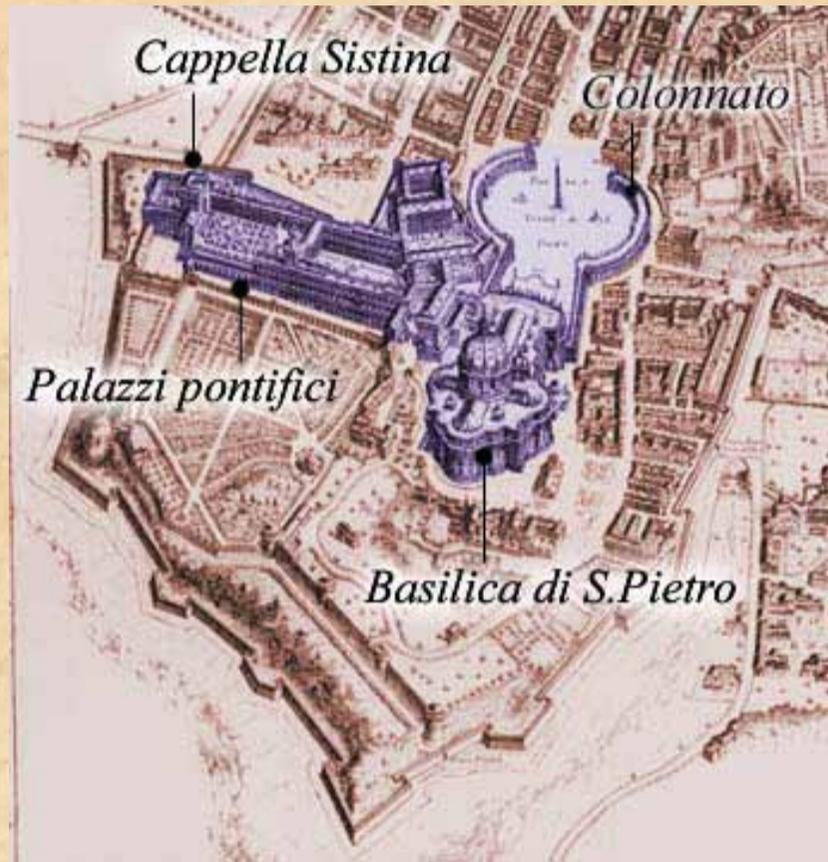






# *Saint Peter's and the Borgo*

By Lia Barelli



In antiquity the *Ager Vaticanus* included a vast area situated on the right bank of the Tiber, extending from the **Janiculum** to the ancient city of Fidene.

Beginning in the 2nd century AD the name *Vaticanus* referred to a much smaller area of the hill which today is surrounded by the Vatican walls and the area at the foot of the hill next to the river.

The city center was connected to this area by the bridge built by Nero (its ruins are visible down river from the present-day Vittorio Emanuele II bridge), the starting point of the main roads crossing the area in all directions; the Trionfale in the direction of Monte Mario, and the Cornelia toward the west, which in its initial tract followed the path of the present-day Via della Conciliazione; the road south from the bridge was the Via Aurelia Nuova.

Although the entire area was insalubrious and the lower part swampy and subject to flooding from the Tiber, it was nonetheless occupied by villas and gardens, including the Gardens of Agrippina, mother of the emperor Caligula. Her son had a great circus built on his mother's land and in the center he erected a tall obelisk, brought from Egypt on a specially built ship. Nero is said to have used the circus to train for quadriga (four-horse chariot) races and after the famous fire of 64 AD he used it to house the Romans who lost their homes in the fire. The circus was also used, on his orders, for the persecution of the Christians in which Peter was martyred.

The ruins of the circus have been identified by archeological digs; it extended to the left of the present-day basilica and the original position of the obelisk, transferred in 1586 to the center of St. Peter's square, is marked by a plaque in the floor of the piazza of the Protomartiri Romani. By the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD the circus had already fallen into disuse, as demonstrated by the ruins of a tomb inside its perimeter. Very early on, in fact, the entire area was invaded by necropoli. The most dramatic evidence of the use of the area as a burial ground is the construction of Hadrian's tomb, later transformed into **Castel Sant'Angelo**.

It was the presence of one of these early necropoli, in fact, that was to determine the future development of the area for centuries to come, the one in which the body of the Apostle Peter was deposited into a humble grave. At the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century the emperor Constantine founded the **basilica of St. Peter** on the site of his grave; the church that was to become the greatest temple of Christianity. The necropolis, brought to light under the central nave of the basilica, is formed primarily by brick tombs arranged in two lines parallel to the circus. Some are richly decorated with stucco figures and paintings of Christian subjects. The tombs date from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when burials were suspended for the construction of the



basilica and the front portico. From 2013 another necropolis along Via Trionfale can also be visited.

Soon after the completion of the basilica numerous annexes sprung up around it to host clergy and to serve the needs of pilgrims. The first structures, built by Pope Symmachus (498-514) were a shelter for the poor and two bishop's residences on the sides of the front portico. Beginning in the High Middle Ages a modest urban settlement began to grow up around the religious buildings along the axis of *Porticus S. Petri*, a porticoed street described in 6<sup>th</sup> century accounts, which went from Hadrian's tomb all the way to the basilica.

Peter's tomb attracted multitudes of foreign pilgrims, who came primarily from the north by way of the roads coming down from France. It wasn't long before national communities grew up, called *burgs* or *scholae*, endowed with their own church, hospital, cemetery, and lodgings. The first was probably the *Schola Saxonum*, with the church of Santa Maria *in Saxia*. On the south side of the basilica was the *Schola Francorum* and nearby buildings for official delegations, including the palace where Charlemagne stayed when he was in Rome. The late medieval term *Burg* is the source of the modern Italian name *borgo*, with which the area is known today.

The south side of the basilica was also the site of a papal residence, the work of Leo III (795-816), later enlarged by Gregory IV (827-844). It was reserved, however, for temporary sojourns, as much as the pontiffs resided officially in the Lateran Palace, until their return from Avignon.

Some five monasteries were founded in the vicinity of the basilica. The oldest was instituted by Leo I and named in honor of Saints John and Paul, the martyrs venerated in the church of the same name on the Celian hill. Another important monastery was called Saint Stephen *cata Galla Patricia*, perhaps associated with Galla, Gregory the Great's woman friend who chose the monastic life. Part of the monastery still survives in the church of S. Stefano degli Abissini behind the apse of Saint Peter's, rebuilt in the Carolingian period.

In addition to the monasteries there were also five diaconates, charitable associations, founded to offer food, clothing, and shelter to pilgrims and the poor. These had all disappeared by the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

The history of the area was profoundly affected when it was sacked by the Saracens in 846. Pope Leo IV immediately ordered the construction of a ring of walls with 44 bastions for the protection of the basilica and the borgo; this marked the birth of the so-called *civitas leonina*, almost an alternative city to Rome, with all the features of



a great center of religious hospitality and assistance, surrounded by walls.

Between the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century through the 13<sup>th</sup>, the popes carried out the construction of a new papal residence on the north side of the basilica. In particular Nicholas III Orsini (1277 – 80) contributed to its enlargement and transformation, even adding a garden with exotic animals. This palace constitutes the oldest nucleus of the **Vatican palaces**.

With the return of the popes from Avignon conditions were created for the radical transformation of the area: the popes decided, in fact, to transfer their official lodgings and administrative offices to the Vatican. The existing palaces were restored and Castel Sant'Angelo was ceded to the basilica to be used by the popes as a refuge in case of danger. For that purpose the castle was connected to the Vatican by the so-called Passetto, a covered passage which presents itself today as the product of continuous restorations and renovations.

Despite the area's new important role, at the time of Eugene IV (1431-1447) it was almost abandoned and the popes had to promote a series of initiatives to encourage its re-population. Among the most important building projects to affect the area in the 1400s were those carried out by Pope Nicholas V (1447-1455), beginning with the creation of a new choir for the basilica of St. Peter's and continuing with the restoration and enlargement of the walls and the Vatican palaces.

Sixtus IV (1471-1484) enlarged the territory of the Borgo with the addition on the north of the Borgo Angelico, and he rebuilt the Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia (1473-78), founded by Innocent III in 1198 (the church of Santo Spirito was subsequently rebuilt after a design by Antonio Sangallo the Younger). Sixtus IV is also responsible for the construction of the **Sistine Chapel** on the inside of the Vatican palace. Alexander VI (1492-1503) fortified Castel Sant'Angelo and opened up the Via Alessandrina which joined it to the Vatican palaces.

With the advent of Julius II (1503-1513) on the papal throne a series of uninterrupted projects brought about a total transformation of the entire area. The pope commissioned Donato Bramante to reconstruct the basilica and enlarge the palace, with the creation of the gigantic Belvedere court. The work continued for the entire 16<sup>th</sup> century, with progressive enrichments and enlargements and the participation of the most prestigious artists of the period, including Michelangelo and Raphael.

The reconstruction of the basilica was not completed until the 1600s and in the same century, for the purpose of hosting papal ceremonies, a new theatrical space was added: St. Peter's square with its splendid **colonnade**, designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini.



Besides the work on the complex of the papal palaces many other Renaissance and Baroque era interventions contributed to the embellishment of the surrounding neighborhood. Among the many newly built or restored religious buildings we must remember the church of S. Maria in Transpontina, begun in 1566 by Sallustio Peruzzi and completed by Francesco Laparelli in 1637, and the elliptical church of S. Anna dei Palafrenieri, the parish church of the Vatican, begun by Jacopo Barozzi in 1572 and completed by his son Giacinto.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century a number of palaces were built in the Borgo, designed by illustrious architects. We should recall Palazzo Branconio dell' Aquila by Raphael, demolished for the creation of St. Peter's square, Palazzo Caprini, later called dei Convertendi, attributed to Bramante.

In 1538 Paul III commissioned Antonio da Sangallo to redesign the defensive walls of Rome but work actually carried out was limited to the protection of the Borgo. In 1545 Antonio expressed his belief in the necessity of fortifying the hills to the west of St. Peter's to impede enemy fire from the heights. The project was carried on after his death by Jacopo Castriotto and most of the new circuit of walls and the addition of Borgo Pio were executed under Pius IV.

In 1929 with the signing of the Concordat between the Italian State and the Church, the State of Vatican City was born. Immediately thereafter it was decided to build a direct connection between the basilica of St. Peter and the city of Rome as a symbol of the recently ratified reconciliation between the two states.

The design for the new road to be obtained by the demolition of the so-called Spina del Borgo, or the line of houses between the Borgo Vecchio and the Via Borgo Nuovo, interrupted around the halfway point by Piazza Scossacavalli, became the object of a heated debate between those in favor of the complete demolition of the Spina and those who, valuing the area's historic and artistic features, wished to preserve it intact. The former prevailed and in 1936 work began on the implementation of the design elaborated by Attilio Spaccarelli and Marcello Piacentini, which tried to save the buildings of significant historical or artistic value. Still surviving today, surrounded by two wings of cold modern constructions inspired by the classicism of the fascist regime, are Palazzo Giraud-Torlonia, from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, and Palazzo Penitenzieri, built in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by Cardinal Domenico della Rovere, nephew of Sixtus IV.

Other historical buildings were razed and rebuilt in new locations, not without some adjustments, like Palazzo Caprini, which had been located in Piazza Scossacavalli and is now on the right side of Via della Conciliazione, and Palazzo Rusticucci from



1585, also rebuilt along the new street. Opposite the colonnade of St. Peter's square is the new Piazza Pius XII, where the two monumental palaces marking the entrance to Vatican City were built after the Second World War after a design by Enrico Pietro Galeazzi. Work on the buildings was completed for the Holy Year of 1950. Vatican City is not without some quite recent works, like the grandiose Hall for Papal Audiences, designed by Pier Luigi Nervi and inaugurated in 1971.





VEDUTA DI TUTTA LA BASILICA VATICANA ARCHITETTURA DI MICHEL ANGELO BONAROTI LA FACCIATA DI CARLO MADERNI LI  
 Portici del Cavalier Bernini la Cupola inalzata da Giacomo della Porta e la Guglia del Cav. Fontana.  
 1 Palazzo Pontificio. 2 Chiesa di S. Marta. 3 Sagrestia vecchia dove stava la guglia in mezzo. 4 Palazzo del S. Officio. 5 Corridore di Castello.





VEDUTA DELLA GRAN PIAZZA E BASILICA DI S. PIETRO IN VATICANO



# *Basilica of Saint Peter*

By Lia Barelli



## **From the Fourth to the Fifteenth Century**

After his martyrdom the Apostle Peter was entombed in a large necropolis on the Vatican hill. The Emperor Constantine had a majestic basilica built on the site of the tomb in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The basilica was demolished through the course of the Renaissance, to be replaced by the present-day structure.

The part of the necropolis located under the basilica was unearthed during 20<sup>th</sup> century excavations. An open area measuring about 4 X 8 meters, referred to as “field P”, is found in the necropolis. The field’s western side is bordered by the so-called “red” wall, referring to the color of the plaster finishing. The remains of a shrine, on the same axis of the altar in the basilica above, are found in the center of the red wall. A travertine slab supported by two columns separates two niches, which form the shrine. A portion of the wall, designated “g”, is found to the right of the shrine.

A small loculus, or crypt, was later carved into this wall. The red wall and the shrine



date back to around 150 – 160 AD, and are known as the Gaius Trophy or shrine, a monument mentioned by the historian Eusebius. They were built on the tomb of Peter to celebrate the triumph achieved through martyrdom.

There is an inscription in Greek on the “g wall” which reads PETR(OS) ENI, meaning “Peter is here”. Human bones found in the loculus were, according to a highly credible theory, the mortal remains of Peter, which had been exhumed from a grave beneath the Trophy and placed in the loculus during the time of Constantine when the Trophy was incorporated into the newer monument.

The exact date when work began on Constantine’s basilica is uncertain, but it is believed to be between 319 and 324. The main parts of the building were completed in 337, the year of the Emperor’s death, and the entire structure completed during the time of Pope Liberius (352 – 366). The construction of the basilica required an enormous effort, and numerous technical and legal problems had to be overcome. This was particularly true for the placement of the presbytery directly above the tomb, since the necropolis had to be buried and it was protected by very strict Roman laws. Furthermore, the street plan had to be redesigned, enormous amounts of earth had to be moved, and a supporting structure of 240 X 90 meters had to be built for the base of the basilica and portico.

Almost all that remains today of Constantine’s original building are parts of the foundation. However, on the basis of these vestiges of the foundation and thanks to historical records, it is possible to reconstruct an image of the original basilica.

The Basilica was about 90 meters long and 63 wide. It had five naves separated by rows of 22 columns; a transept closed at either end by a rectilinear exedra which was more than 90 meters long and extended beyond the perimeter; and an apse on the west end. The central nave was higher than the others and illuminated by eleven windows. The transept was lower than the central nave and separated from it by a triumphal arch. The apse contained five windows.

The focal point of the composition was the monument Constantine had erected above Peter’s tomb. It was a marble shrine which included the Trophy of Gaius, jutting from the floor and surrounded by a rail, and stood on the central axis of the apse. A baldachin supported by four spiral columns with carvings of vines stood over the shrine. Two identical columns to the sides supported an architrave from which curtains hung. Part of the shrine is preserved in the so-called “pallium niche” beneath the present-day *confessio*, or reliquary.

The entire Basilica was beautifully decorated, but little is known of the exact details of the decor. Gilded beams lined the ceiling, and the apse was decorated with gold leaf.



A monumental four-bayed portico rose in front of the façade. However, Constantine may have only completed the western portion. A *cantharus* or fountain was located in the center of the portico. It was covered by a bronze baldachin supported by eight columns. The famous bronze “Pigna” or pine cone, which may have been taken from the Mausoleum of Hadrian and now gives name to its new location in the courtyard of the Vatican Palaces, was later added.

Three monumental mausoleums were raised near the Basilica. A circular mausoleum was built to the left of the Basilica in about 400 AD. This was first the final resting place of the Emperor Honorius’ two wives, and then of the Emperor himself. This became the church of Saint Petronilla, Saint Peter’s alleged sister, in around 757. The Saint’s mortal remains were moved here from the catacombs of Domitilla under order of Pipin the Short.

The church was demolished during the Renaissance in order to build the new south transept of the Basilica.

Another circular mausoleum to the left of the Basilica was originally the sepulchre of Theodosius, Honorius’ father. Pope Symmachus later dedicated it to the Apostle Andrew. Pope Symmachus had the image of the Madonna of the Fever brought to the mausoleum which thereafter owed its name to the holy image. The monument then became the sacristy of the Basilica and remained so until it was demolished at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. It was then replaced by the present-day sacristy designed by Carlo Marchionni. The Mausoleum of the powerful Anici family, probably built in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, stood behind the apse of the Basilica. It consisted of three naves and an apse until it was demolished in the Renaissance.

Throughout the Middle Ages the Basilica and the portico were embellished by precious furnishings and decorations. Many of these embellishments are recorded in the *Liber Pontificalis*, a text which contains the biographies of the early popes.

A mosaic on the façade depicted the Homage to the Lamb from the Twenty-four Lords of the Apocalypse. This work was probably commissioned by Leo I (440 – 460), as was the fresco cycle in the central nave presenting scenes from the Old and New Testaments. This series of frescoes offered a prototype for many other works of art in medieval churches. The apse contained a scene of the *Traditio legis* (Peter receiving the Law from Christ); this too was probably created in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

At the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century Gregory the Great wanted mass to be celebrated above Peter’s tomb, and he had the area of the presbytery raised to create a semicircular crypt below. The upper portion of the Constantinian shrine thus stood almost a meter above the new pavement and formed the lower part of an altar covered by a baldachin.



The six spiral columns of Constantine were used to form a colonnade that was then doubled in size by Gregory III (731 – 741).

One of the most important works of art and architecture of the high Middle Ages was commissioned by Pope John VII (705 – 707). It was the Oratory of the Holy Virgin, next to the small southern-most nave. It was splendidly decorated with mosaics, few fragments of which remain, and was the repository of Veronica's veil.

Also to be remembered are the bell tower that Stephen II had raised in 752, the new altar that Callistus II consecrated above the former Gregorian construction in 1123, and the right transept that Adrian IV (1154 – 1159) had built.

An intense period of restorations and embellishments began with Innocent III's pontificate (1198 – 1216) and continued until the early years of the 1300s. Innocent commissioned a new mosaic, later demolished in 1592, for the apse. Christ Pantocrator enthroned appears on a gold star studded firmament in the center of the demi-dome. Peter and Paul stand at either side, and below, four deer drink from the four rivers of Paradise. Further down, the twelve Holy Lambs converge on the *Agnus Dei*, and Innocent III and a personification of the *Ecclesia romana* appear at either side.

Gregory IX (1227 – 1241) renovated the upper part of the façade with the placement of two rows of Gothic windows, and Leo IV's mosaics were almost completely redone.

Nicholas III had the *tondi*, or circular portraits, of the Popes painted along the central nave, and he consecrated a new altar above the tomb in 1279. He may also be responsible for the frescoes in the portico depicting the stories of Peter and Paul. At the end of the century Boniface VIII commissioned his own funeral monument from one of the most famous sculptors of the period, Arnolfo da Cambio. It was to be placed in a small chapel against the inner façade. The sculptor completed the tomb in 1296. A reclining figure of the Pope appears on the sarcophagus, now housed in the Vatican Grottoes.

Important works were undertaken also in the 1300s, in spite of the papal exile in Avignon. The Canon of the Basilica, Jacopo Stefaneschi was responsible for some of the most distinguished works of this period. For the main altar he commissioned Giotto to paint the polyptych, now housed in the Vatican Picture Gallery, and the famous mosaic of the *Navicella* (little ship) for the façade of the portico. Only two fragments of the original mosaic have survived.

Valuable architectural and decorative works were also carried out in the 1400s. This renewed activity may have been due to the return of the popes from Avignon to settle permanently in the Vatican.



Nicholas V was committed to a general renovation of the decaying Basilica and a complete restoration of the area of the apse. The architect Bernardo Rossellino began the renovations in 1452. When the Pope died in 1455 his successors abandoned these efforts. Only later did Paul II (1464 – 1471) renew efforts to beautify and restore the ancient Basilica. Pius II added the monumental Loggia of the Benedictions on the right wall leading to the portico. This project was completed under Alexander VI and Julius II, to be demolished by Paul V. Inspiration for this project was drawn from the style of the monuments of ancient Rome.

Among some of the outstanding works of 15<sup>th</sup> century sculpture there are Donatello's tabernacle (1432 – 33); Filarete's (popular name for Antonio Averulino) bronze doors which Eugene II commissioned in 1433, and which Paul V had moved to the new portico; the ciborium for the main altar commissioned by Pope Sixtus IV. Drawings of the ciborium show that it was inspired by classical models. In addition, there were two bronze monuments by Antonio del Pollaiuolo, recently restored: Sixtus IV's sepulchre (1493), today found in the *Museo del Tesoro di San Pietro*, and Innocent VIII's funeral monument (1498), relocated in the new Basilica.

### **From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century**

When Julius II became pope the stage was set for a period of unprecedented renewal. The Pope had his own tomb designed by Michelangelo. It was to stand alone in the Basilica, and the artist planned an enormous 7 meter high monument with a 10 X 7 meter base. It was to have 40 marble statues and bronze reliefs depicting scenes from the life of the Pope.

It seems that the problem of placing such a massive monument in the existing space led to the more ambitious plan to expand the entire basilica.

Even though many people thought it unwise to go beyond a renovation of the Constantinian Basilica, the Pope commissioned Donato Bramante to build an entirely new construction that would demonstrate the supremacy of the Church of Rome and lend it even greater prestige in the eyes of the world.

Bramante designed a Basilica on a central plan that was more in keeping with the ideals and taste of the Renaissance to replace Constantine's longitudinally oriented structure. His idea was for a building based on the Greek Cross, with four equal arms circumscribed in a square; an immense dome and four smaller cupolas. Inside four powerful piers with Corinthian decorations would support four arches and pendentives that would, in turn, support the central dome. Four spiral towers were



envisioned for the summit of the square on which the dome rested.

In a second version of the plan the architect added semicircular ambulatories to the exterior of the apse to complete the four arms of the cross. Bramante's design was intended to create a unified structure with a clearly discernable hierarchy of masses rising to the central dome, in which the logic of the interior could be read on the exterior. The harmonious proportions were to be in keeping with an attempt to re-evolve the grand spaces of Roman antiquity. The new place of worship was to result from placing the cupola of the Pantheon upon the Temple of Peace, as the Basilica of Maxentius at the Roman Forum was then called.

Work began in 1506 with the western apse and the piers of the cupola. The western part of the roof of Constantine's Basilica had to be demolished, and in order to continue celebrations of the holy mass on the main altar, Bramante had the *Tegurium* built. This was a large rectangular structure divided into three planes: a kind of enormous canopy that protected the faithful from inclement weather.

Following Bramante's death in 1514, many of the most famous architects of the time succeeded one another in the direction of the works, and the conflict between advocates of the longitudinal plan and partisans of the central plan flared up again. The longitudinal "planners" had religious tradition and the practical considerations of celebrating religious services to support their stance.

Fra' Giocondo, Giuliano da Sangallo, Raphael, Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, and Baldassare Peruzzi in turn carried on with the construction, each offering variations and alternative solutions to Bramante's design. All the while there was no lack of bitter criticism of the huge amount of money being spent, nor of accusations of immoral waste.

Antonio da Sangallo created the Vatican Grottoes. He thought that the height of the nave in Bramante's design was excessive, and in order to reduce it he raised the floor by three meters. This opened a subterranean space which was at first used to work the lime needed in the huge building site. This procedure continued until Paul V ordered that the rooms be used to house the monuments removed from the former Basilica.

Michelangelo succeeded Sangallo in 1546 and designed a new plan based on Bramante's earlier central plan. The artist made alterations in order to achieve greater clarity of volume and space. He then began work on the structure in the form of a Greek cross circumscribed by a square. However, he chose a compact four lobed volume, rather than Bramante's vertical masses, in order to sustain a majestic cupola above a drum encircled by double columns. He had also planned for four smaller



domes, only two of which were built. He had Bramante's gigantic Corinthian pylons located on the perimeter. Michelangelo's plan was meant to symbolize the celestial sphere in the cupola, supported by the Church and the faithful represented by the solid architectural base. There was to be a columned pronaos resembling that of the Pantheon in front of the façade.

When Michelangelo died in 1564 the work continued under the direction of Iacopo Barozzi da Vignola, followed by Pirro Ligorio, then Giacomo della Porta. Della Porta undertook the construction of the enormous dome. The dome, 42 meters in diameter and 136 meters high, was completed in 1590, while the lantern was finished three years later. The cupola has a double dome and an elongated profile reminiscent of Brunelleschi's dome of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence.

It is uncertain whether Michelangelo's design had included the elongated dome or had envisioned a semi-spherical form. When Paul V began his pontificate (1605-1621) the edifice planned by Michelangelo was nearly completed, except for the eastern wing. However, the Pope decided to return to a more traditional longitudinal plan, and he had three naves added to the eastern side. To accomplish this addition, the still functional remaining anterior part of Constantine's Basilica, which was separated by a transverse wall built by Antonio da Sangallo in 1538, had to be demolished. However, the Pope saw to the removal and preservation of the tombs and altars, some of which were placed in the Grottoes.

Carlo Maderno built the three naves, a portico supporting a loggia, and the façade between 1608 and 1614. With these additions the architectural work on the Basilica was by and large completed. However, the new Basilica was not consecrated until November 18, 1626, exactly 1,300 years after the first consecration by Pope Sylvester. The façade consists of a gigantic order of columns with a central tympanum surmounted by an attic. Statues of the Redeemer, the Baptist, and the Apostles stand above the attic. Maderno's plan called for two bell towers which Bernini tried to construct according to a new plan in 1637. However, structural problems made it necessary to dismantle the right bell tower shortly after completion. This event dealt a severe, though temporary, blow to the artist's reputation.

The clocks today found on both sides of the façade were made by Giuseppe Valadier for Pius VI. The Loggia of the Benedictions stands on the central balcony. The portico contains five doors which lead into the Basilica. The door to the far right, known as the *Porta Santa*, is opened by the Pope at the beginning of every Holy Year, and it remains open until the end of the year. The original epigraph with the Papal bull instituting the first Jubilee of February 22, 1300 appears to the upper right of the



door. The central bronze doors were created by Filarete (Antonio Averulino) for the old Basilica in 1433 – 45. The other doors are the work of modern artists including Giacomo Manzù.

The middle nave contains a single order of Corinthian double demicolumns placed against pilasters that support a series of arches. The arches open onto the lateral naves and the chapels.

A 44 meter high barrel vault with a beamed ceiling rises above the trabeation. Michelangelo's immense cupola soars above the point where transept and nave meet. The main altar and the tomb designed by Maderno for St. Peter stand beneath the dome. The apostle's tomb is perpetually illuminated by 99 lamps.

The extensive use of mosaic decorations is a characteristic of St. Peter's Basilica. Gregory III (1572 – 85) introduced this decorative technique for the north-east chapel, which he had called the Gregorian chapel. For the Jubilee in 1600, Clement VIII commissioned Giovanni de' Vecchi and Cesare Nebbia to execute the mosaics of the pendentives in the central cupola, and Cavalier d'Arpino for those in the apse. Mosaic decoration has been preferred ever since then and in the 1700s many frescoes from the altars were moved to Santa Maria degli Angeli and substituted by mosaics. A number of the frescoes were the work famous artists including Domenichino, Pietro da Cortona, Giovanni Lanfranco, and Nicholas Poussin.

Gianlorenzo Bernini played a fundamental role in the decoration and furnishing of the Basilica throughout his artistic career. In 1624 Urban VIII entrusted the young artist with the creation of the canopy for the main altar. Four enormous bronze spiral columns reminiscent of those in the Constantinian Basilica support an elaborate and typically Baroque baldachin completed in 1635. Among the many artists who assisted in the work was the as yet little known Francesco Borromini who had only recently arrived in Rome.

The Pope also commissioned Bernini to erect the four pylons that support the cupola. The Pope wanted four of the most precious relics of Christianity to be placed in the pylons: the Sacred Lance, Veronica's Veil, relics of the True Cross, and the head of Saint Andrew. The artist had the relics placed in the pylons' upper niches which were decorated with the spiral columns of the ancient canopy, while four monumental statues of the saints were placed in the lower niches. Bernini himself created the statue of Saint Longinus holding the Lance.

Bernini undertook the task of unifying the two parts of the Basilica in 1649. He employed abundant decorations with figurative elements to unite the more austere portion designed by Michelangelo to the part containing Maderno's naves. He also



had the polychrome marble floor laid.

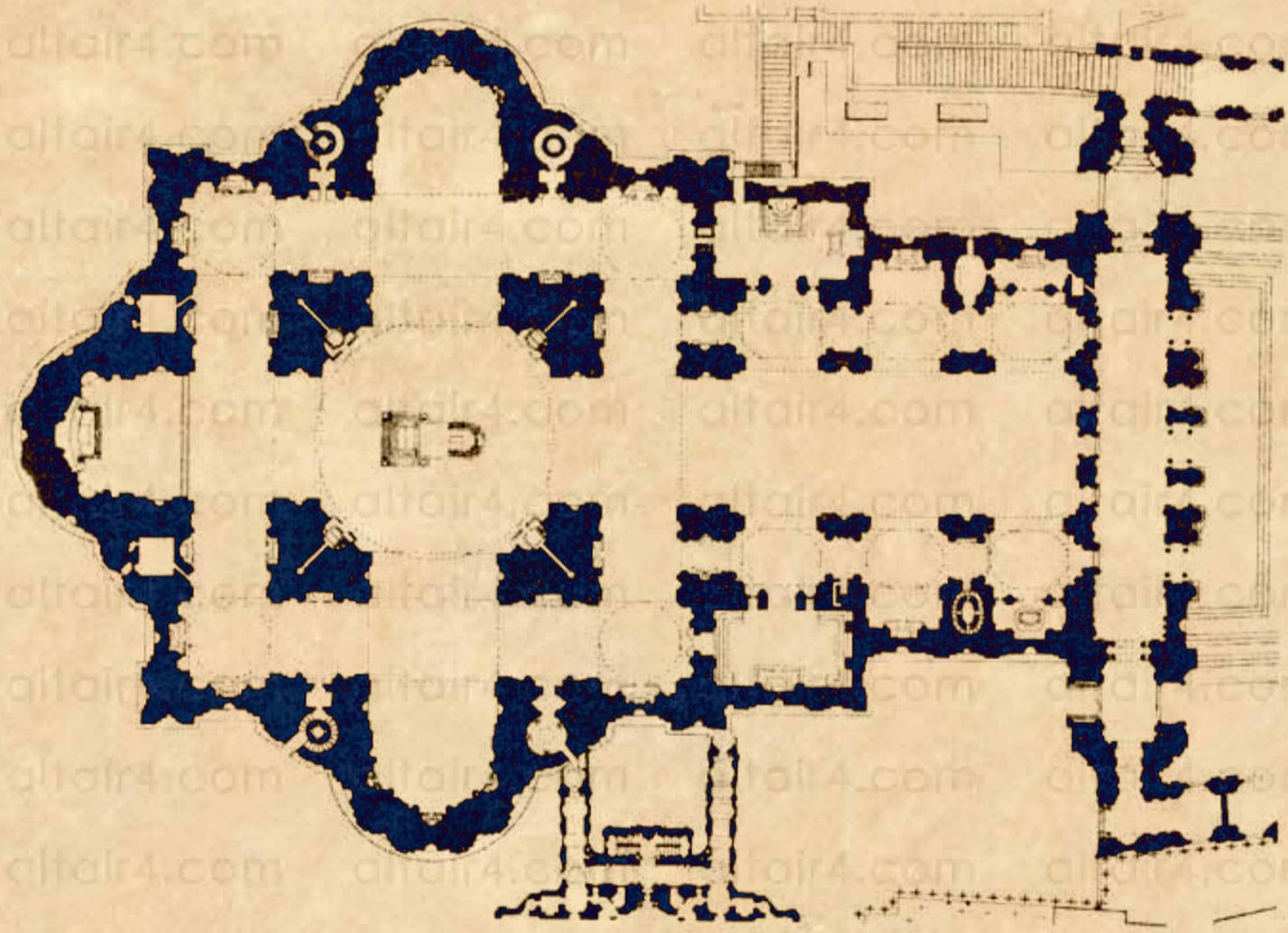
The artist's final work was the Throne of St. Peter. It is placed in the rear of the apse, an ideal point of arrival when entering from the square and passing through the entire length of the Basilica. Alexander VII commissioned the work in 1656 in order to relocate the antique throne, an elaborate object of devotion, in the new Basilica. The ancient throne was believed to be that of the Apostle, but it is now known to be a composite work from the Carolingian era. Four bronze statues of Doctors of the Church stand on a base of precious polychrome marble. The throne seems to hover above the statues, and above the throne a ring of Angels surround a stained glass window depicting the dove of the Holy Ghost.

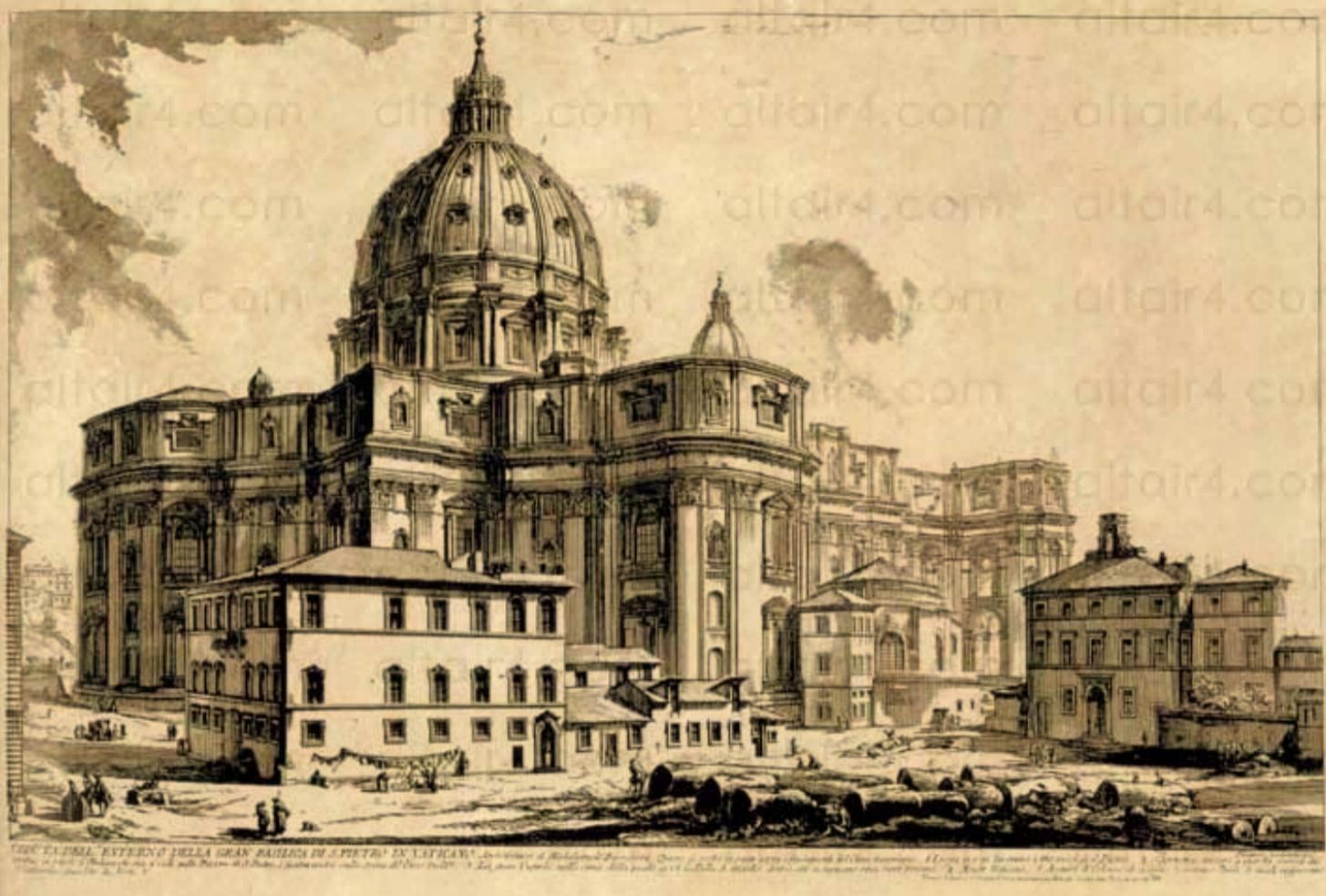
The Basilica contains myriad important art works. The famous Pietà, the statue of the Holy Virgin holding the dead Christ, that the young Michelangelo sculpted for the French Cardinal Jean de Bilhères (1499 – 1500) stands in the first chapel to the right. The Pietà Chapel is decorated with frescoes depicting Stories of the Cross, painted by Giovanni Lanfranco between 1629 –31.

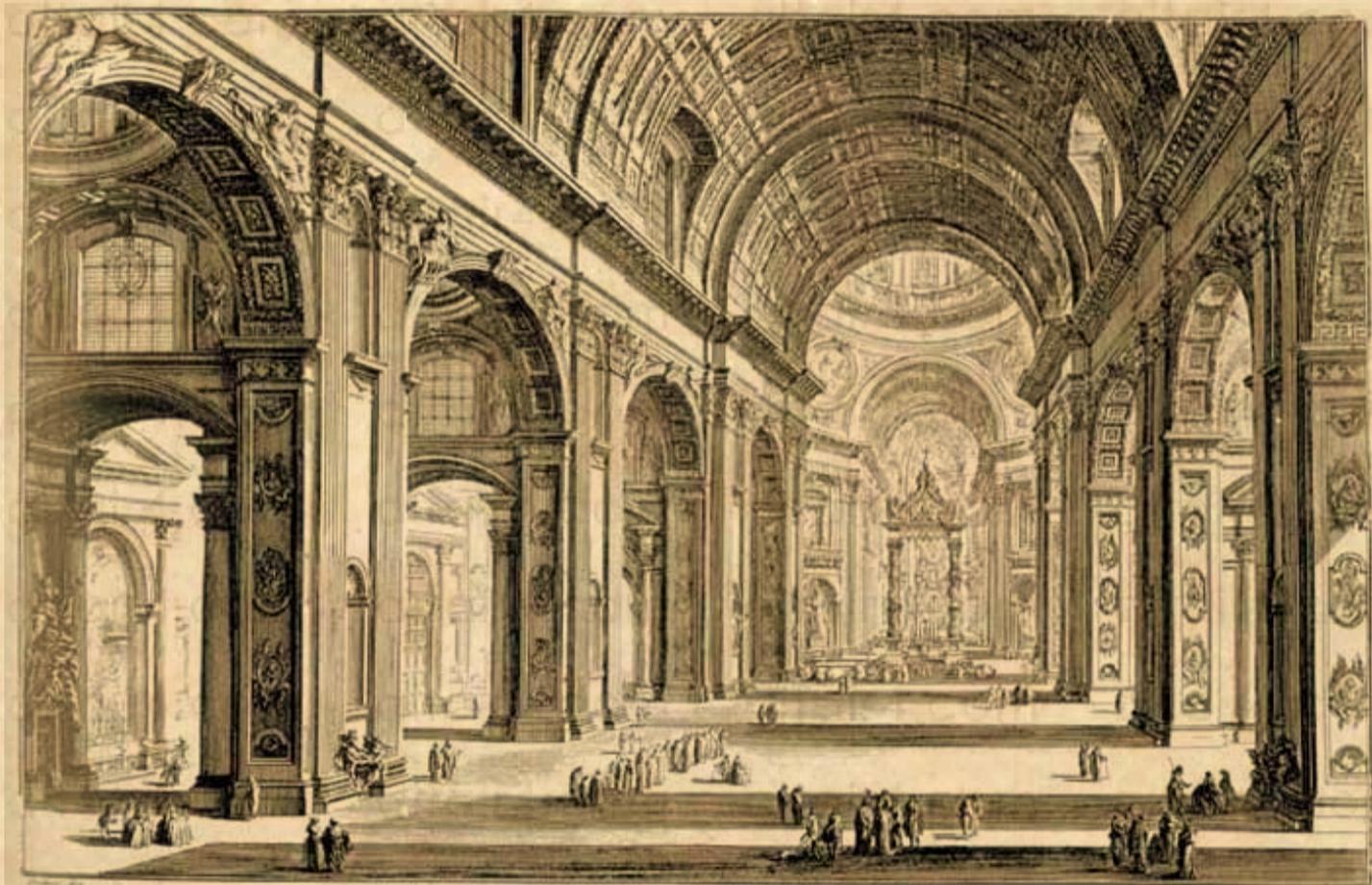
One of the most remarkable papal tombs is that of Innocent VIII Cybo in the left nave. This gilded bronze by Antonio del Pollaiuolo (1498) is the only monument transferred from the antique Basilica. The sepulchres of Pope Urban VIII by Bernini (1642 – 47) and of Paul III by Guglielmo della Porta (1551 – 1575) are located respectively to the right and left sides of the throne.

Another work by Bernini and his assistants (1672 – 78) is the tomb of Alexander VII Chigi, and one of the 18<sup>th</sup> century's most famous works is Clement XIII's sepulchre by Antonio Canova (1788 – 1792). The popes were entombed in sepulchres created by renowned artists in the following centuries as well. The tomb of Benedict XV (+1922) is the work of Pietro Canonica; a statue by Francesco Messina commemorates Pius XII (+1958); and Emilio Greco's statue is dedicated to the memory of Pope John XXIII (+1963). The tomb of St. John Paul II, from his beatification, is in St. Sebastian's chapel inside the basilica.









*Veduta interna della Basilica di S. Pietro in Vaticano*







# *Bernini's Colonnade*

By Lia Barelli



After the façade of Saint Peter's Basilica was completed according to Carlo Maderno's plan in 1612, the elongated and irregularly shaped square in front of the edifice remained as it had been for centuries.

The left side of the square seemed to cramp the wide façade, while the right side was dominated by the tower that Paul V had Martino Ferrabosco and Giovanni Vasanzio build in 1517–18. There was also a monumental fountain on the right which Innocent III had commissioned in 1490, and Carlo Maderno had renovated in 1613.

A towering obelisk rising in the middle of the square has remained in place to this day. It had been placed there at the wish of Sixtus V in 1586 by his entrusted architect Domenico Fontana. Considering the height and weight of the monument, the work crew that carried out this task achieved an extraordinary feat for their time.

The red granite obelisk at 25.5 meters in height is the second tallest in Rome after that found at Saint John Lateran. It had previously been located at the Circus of Caligula near the left side of the basilica. The Emperor had it brought from Egypt



in 37 AD where it seems the prefect Cornelius Gallus had had it carved for one of his forums. It was known as the *agulia* (needle) in the Middle Ages and gave rise to numerous legends.

It was believed that the ashes of Caesar were sealed in the gilded bronze ball on top of the obelisk. The ball is now kept in the Capitoline Museum, having been removed by order of Sixtus V and replaced by the pope's emblem in bronze in which a relic of the True Cross is enclosed.

Ever since the time of Pius IV (1559 – 1565) it had been clear that the square needed to be redesigned in a more unified manner. Many suggestions were made for square, rectangular, and octagonal designs; all inspired by the memory of the four porticoes of Constantine's earlier basilica.

In 1656 Alexander VII commissioned Gianlorenzo Bernini to design a plan for a square encircled by porticoes. The Pope envisioned a project that would stand comparison with the magnificence and splendor of classical antiquity, even though he was heavily criticized for the costs and demolition that such an undertaking would involve.

The new square was to fulfill the function which Constantine's four porticoes had once performed; to provide shelter from inclement weather for the faithful during holy services. One of the most solemn rites that the area was intended to host was the *Corpus Domini* procession, which was then taking place under the temporary shelter of a kind of tent.

Furthermore, the new square was to enhance the proportions of Maderno's façade, which seemed too low and wide, as well as offer a more distant stage from which to view Michelangelo's spectacular dome, which when viewed from nearer the basilica was partially hidden by the naves that Maderno had added.

Bernini worked on several plans before finding the final ingenious solution. He juxtaposed two different shapes: a trapezoid and an oval. The longitudinal axis of the trapezoid begins directly in front of the façade and the northern and southern sides are two corridors, while the oval is perpendicular to the narrower end of the trapezoid. The problem of the ill-proportioned façade is thus solved by a clever trick of perspective. The trapezoid narrows towards the observer while the height of the lateral corridors, which are punctuated by double pilaster strips, diminishes as they approach the façade. The optical effect makes the façade appear higher and more graceful.

The perpendicular square is 244 meters wide and bounded by two semicircular porticoes. A third portico was planned at the eastern end of the square to close it off



from the surrounding neighborhood. Four rows of Doric columns form the porticoes and support the trabeation. The rows of columns delineate three passageways; the central passageway is wider than the two external passageways. There are 284 columns and 88 pilasters in the colonnade. There are 150 statues and the escutcheons of Alexander VII on the trabeation. The travertine used in the colonnade comes from the quarries in Tivoli.

The plan of the perpendicular, or oblique, square is formed from the sections of two circles joined by an intermediate space. This solution was preferable to an elliptical shape because it overcame the problem of the placement and dimension of the columns in the porticoes.

In fact, the columns are located along the radiuses of the two outermost circles and oriented along the circumferences of increasing dimension. Thus, as is quiet well known, a person standing in the center of the circles, which is marked by a circular stone in the pavement, sees the colonnade as if it were formed of a single row of columns, since the foremost column covers those behind it. This oval shape fulfilled an exact symbolic need, for the colonnade was meant to represent two arms that, as Bernini wrote: “doveva haver un Portico che per l'appunto mostrasse di ricever à braccia aperte maternamente i Cattolici per confermarli nella Credenza, gli Heretici per riunirli alla Chiesa e gl'Infedeli per illuminarli alla vera Fede” (“maternally embrace faithful Catholics to confirm their belief; embrace heretics to bring them back to the Church; and embrace infidels to enlighten them to the true Faith”).

The statues above the portico were also an integral part of this symbolic scheme in that they portrayed the Saints who took part in the embrace of the faithful. Work on the statues began in 1660 with experiments meant to determine the ideal proportions for the exact place in which they would stand. It was finally decided that the statues should be 3.10 meters in height.

The choice of the Saints to be represented followed a precise religious scheme. The pope most likely had a word in this iconographical decision, but artistic matters were left entirely to Bernini. Numerous artists participated in the creation of the statues, and among the most accomplished was Lazzaro Morelli who sculpted more than 50 of them. The last figures to be placed on the colonnade were done in the 1700s. Clement XI then decided to have others, which had not figured in the original plan, placed above the corridors of the trapezoidal square. They reflect the prevailing rococo taste of the time.

Bernini's plan had envisioned a fountain at either side of the obelisk. The fountain to the right erected by Carlo Maderno according to the wishes of Paul V in 1613



was already in place. The twin fountain to the left was built by Bernini and Mattia de Rossi in 1677. Both fountains flow with waters that are carried along Trajan's aqueduct from Lake Bracciano.

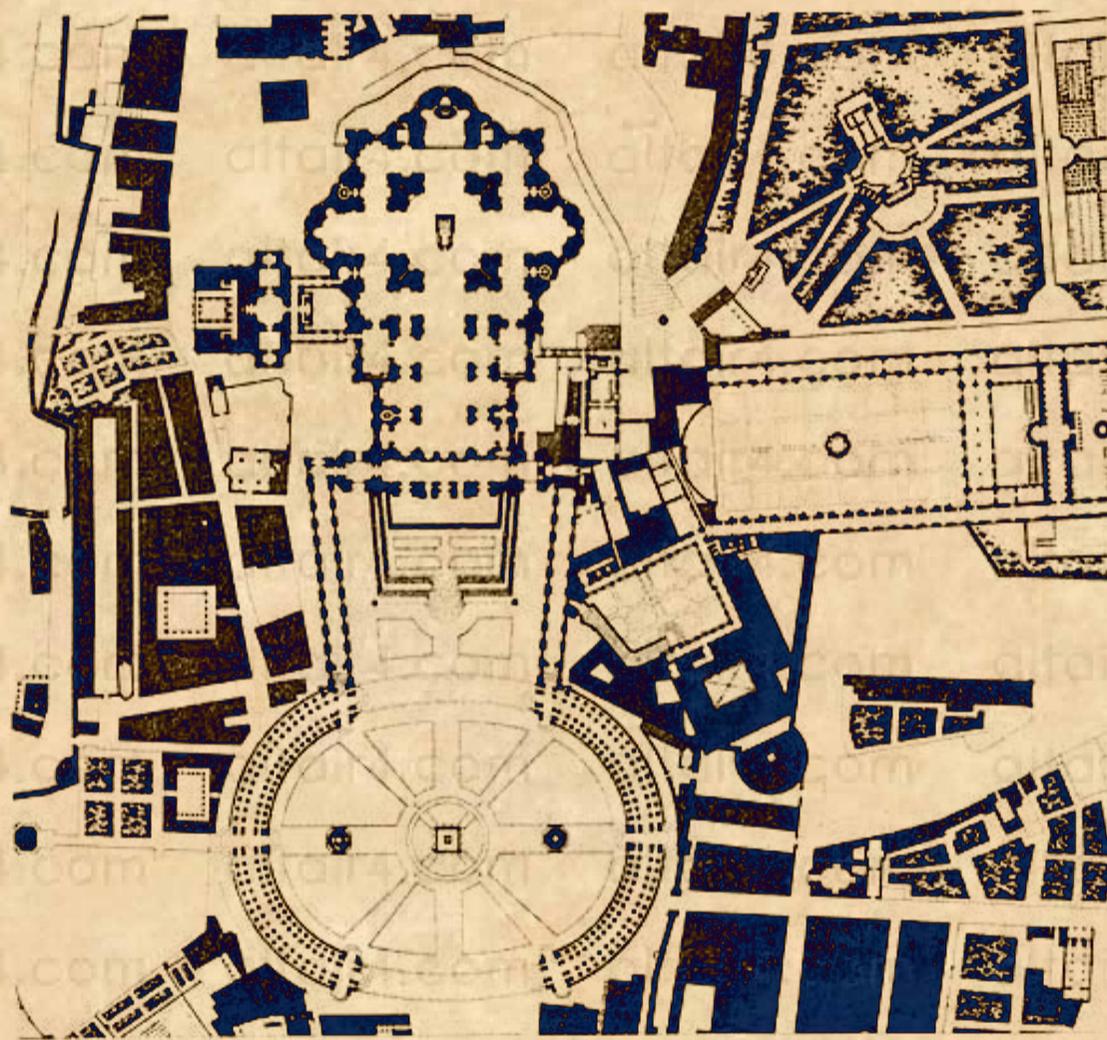
When the northern portico was completed, and then the southern, work was to begin on the third portico. A print by Falda from 1665 gives evidence that the work may actually have begun, although to this day no third portico exists. Bernini must have had second thoughts, and there are plans in which he envisions a fore-square resulting from the displacement of the third portico further from the oval square. This project would have been difficult to carry out, and the additional expense led to it being abandoned. Nevertheless, the idea of a third portico re-emerged from time to time, and in 1694 Carlo Maderno designed new plans to complete the square.

Even though the plan to completely surround the square with porticoes was never carried out, the contrast between the spacious, well-lit square and the dark narrow streets in the neighborhoods beyond the lateral porticoes is striking.

When the Concordat was signed in 1929 an idea dating back to the 1400s to join the city of Rome more directly to the Vatican was revived. This was achieved by demolishing a wide swath of streets and houses, known as the Spina del Borgo, and building a monumental boulevard in its place.

In spite of strong opposition between 1936 and 1950 the Via della Conciliazione was opened, thus solving, albeit in a highly debatable fashion, the problem of integrating the square into the urban landscape.







1 Basilica di S. Pietro.  
 2 Portici fatti da N. Sig.  
 3 Palazzo Apostolico.

PIAZZA E PORTICI DELLA BASILICA VATICANA FATTI DA N. S. PAPA  
 ALESSANDRO SEPTIMO.

Per Gio. Francesco Rossi in Roma alla Pace et P. del S. P.

G. B. della Porta del S. P.

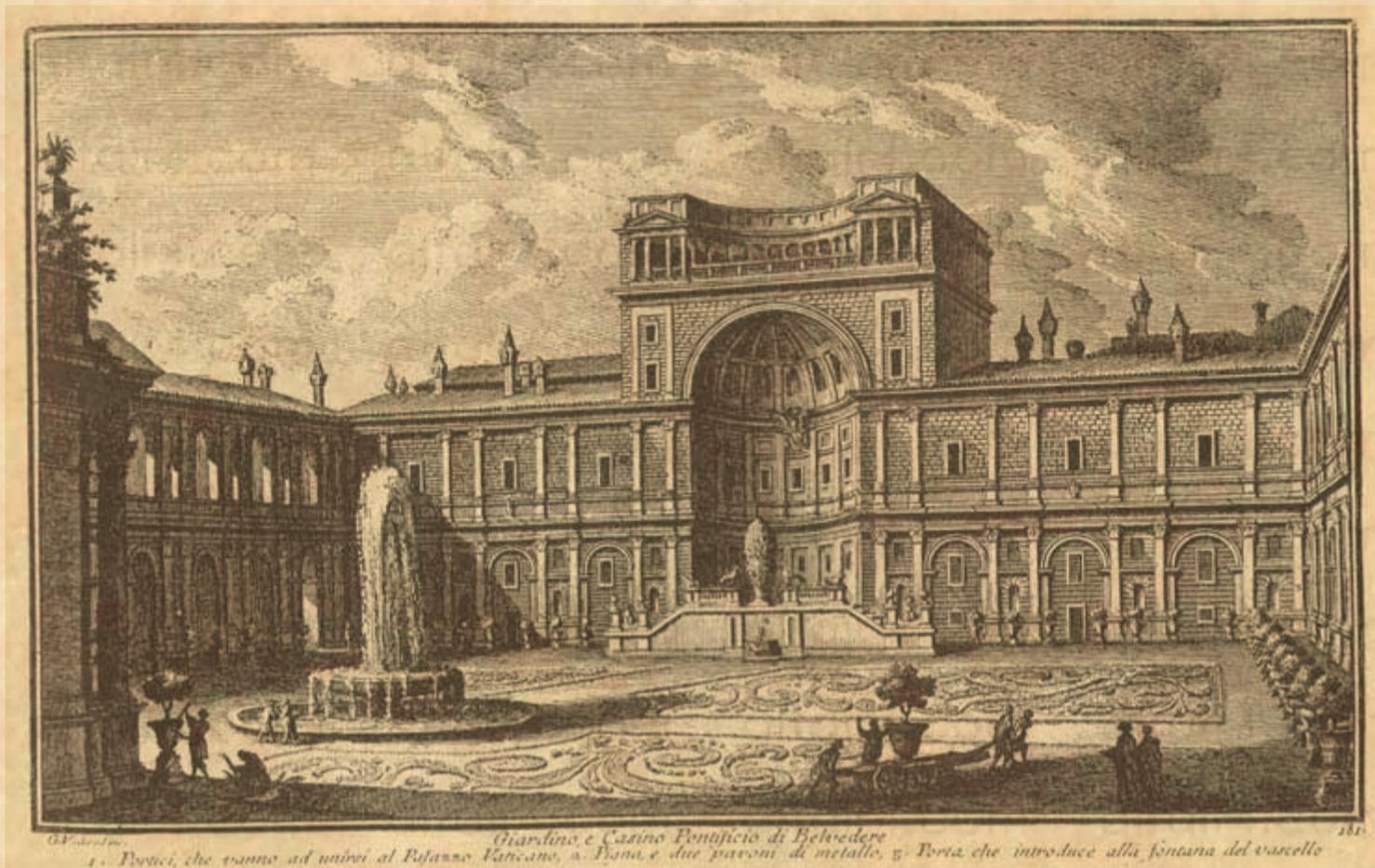
4 Obelisco del' Circo di Caio, e  
 Nerone.  
 5 Palazzo del' Sant' Officio.

3



# *The Vatican Palaces and Museum*

By Lia Barelli



The Vatican palaces are situated to the north of Saint Peter's Basilica and consist of numerous buildings from various epochs.

*The buildings stand for the most part around courtyards, the oldest known as the courtyard of the Pappagallo (parrot), while the most spacious and majestic is the courtyard of the Belvedere, which was subsequently divided into three separate courtyards.*

The Popes always called upon renowned artists to design the buildings and decor of these palaces, so today they comprise one of the world's unique architectural sites. The palaces have also been the repository of art works of inestimable value ever since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and from the 18<sup>th</sup> century on they have been gradually more open to the public, and today house the Vatican Museum.

The palaces have antique origins. Even though the popes' official residence was at the Lateran, ever since the time of Pope Symmachus (498 – 514) they were able to stay in quarters reserved for their use at Saint Peter's Basilica.

They used these quarters when taking part in special liturgical celebrations or under



particular political and military circumstances. Leo III (795 – 816) and Gregory IV (827 – 844) had a rather imposing residential annex built, perhaps on the south side of the Basilica. Eugene III (1145 – 1153) had a *palatium novum* built on the northern side.

This was probably the nucleus of today's Palaces. Judging from contemporary historical records, Innocent III (1198 – 1216) continued construction in a fairly active way. He had a residence built that was fortified and equipped with every possible comfort; quarters worthy of a pope who was a true ruler.

The palace was enlarged by Innocent IV, and especially by Nicholas III (1278 – 1280) who had a splendid garden added.

Little of the medieval structures are visible today, except on the south and east sides of the courtyard of the Pappagallo; and even here scholars disagree on the exact historical interpretation.

Upon returning from Avignon, the popes chose to reside permanently in the Vatican. After several of his predecessors had carried out renovations on the palace, Nicholas V (1447 – 1455) undertook a larger scale restoration project in conjunction with efforts to renovate the entire defense system of the Vatican.

He had a north wing added to the palace to enclose the courtyard of the Pappagallo. The Pope summoned some of the most accomplished artists of the period to decorate the rooms. Among them were Fra' Angelico and Piero della Francesca.

Unfortunately, all that remains of their work are the frescoes commissioned by the Pope and painted by Beato Angelico between 1448 and 1449 for the Nicoline Chapel. The chapel, an almost square room in a tower built by Innocent III or IV, is one of the gems of renaissance art. The Evangelists, eight Doctors of the Church, and the early martyrs Stephen and Lawrence are depicted in the frescoes.

The pope in the frescoes resembles Nicholas V, and the technique of portraying the pontiff with the features of the reigning pope became customary from that time forward.

Two major works of the early Renaissance that are among the palaces were commissioned by Sixtus V: the Sistine chapel and the Library.

The chapel was built between 1473 and 1477 on nearly the same location of a previous chapel which may have been from the time of Innocent III. The design is attributed to Baccio Pontelli, but the work was carried out by Giovannino de' Dolci.

The Chapel is above all famous for its frescoes. Those from the 1400s depicting the Lives of Christ and Moses are the work of Pietro Perugino, Sandro Botticelli, Cosimo Rosselli, Domenico Ghirlandaio, and Luca Signorelli, while the frescoes



from the 1500s on the ceiling and the Last Judgement on the altar wall are the work of Michelangelo.

The Library, located on the ground floor of the wing that Nicholas had built, consisted of various rooms for the collection and consultation of books. The decoration of the rooms was done by Domenico and Davide del Ghirlandaio, and Melozzo da Forlì who painted the famous fresco of Sixtus IV entrusting the Library to the humanist Bartolomeo Platina. The fresco was removed and is now housed in the Vatican Picture Gallery.

The popes were also interested in creating places where they could relax. Innocent VIII (1484 – 1492) had the architect Jacopo da Pietrasanta build the Palazzetto del Belvedere on top of the hill to the north of the Palace. The Palazzetto was designed by Antonio del Pollaiuolo and decorated by Pinturicchio. There was once a chapel in the palazzetto with frescoes by Andrea Mantegna, but it was destroyed in the 1700s. Alexander IV Borgia (1492 – 1503) had fortifications built for the palace, among which the Borgia tower, and commissioned works of beautification. The Pope had a private apartment built on the ground floor of the Nicoline wing. Pinturicchio and his assistants decorated the apartment in brilliant colors and an abundance of gold. A complex iconographical program celebrating the Pope, and even using images from Egyptian mythology, appears in a series of rooms.

Julius II was responsible for the most famous works in the history of the Palace. The Pope commissioned Donato Bramante not only to rebuild Saint Peter's but also to create an enormous courtyard, known as the Belvedere, that would cover an area of 300 X 100 meters to connect Innocent VIII's Palazzetto to the main body of the Palace.

The courtyard consisted of three terraces rising towards the north and more or less corresponding to the modern-day courtyards of the Belvedere, the Library, and the Pigna. They were joined by stairways and bordered by façades decorated in classical orders. The courtyard was to be used for festivals, theatrical representations, and tournaments.

The new apartment that the Pope commissioned for the second floor of the Nicoline wing offered an excellent view of the carefully designed perspective of the internal courtyard. It was originally planned to contain rooms for the pope's private life and public affairs, such as receiving ambassadors and ministers.

Raphael was called upon to paint frescoes for these rooms, and his work gained such fame that they are now known as the *Stanze di Raffaello*. The work continued under Leo X, and when Raphael died in 1520 his pupils completed the paintings.



The main rooms are named as follows: the room of the Fire in the Borgo; the room of the *Segnatura*, the room of Heliodorus and the room of Constantine.

The School of Athens is one of the most remarkable paintings to be found here. It depicts a group of ancient philosophers deep in discussion, with Plato and Aristotle in the center, and a background of complex renaissance architecture.

Raphael and his followers also decorated the second loggia in the courtyard of San Damaso. They employed a decorative motif based on classical antiquity and inspired by the recent discovery of Nero's *Domus Aurea*.

Architectural and decorative work on the palace and on Bramante's courtyard, including various alterations to recent modifications, continued almost ceaselessly throughout the 1500s. The list of all the works completed and the artists who executed them is astounding.

Among the works planned and carried out by Antonio da Sangallo the Younger the Sala Regia is one of the most memorable. This room contains majestic barrel vaults decorated by one of Raphael's students, Perin del Vaga. During Paul III's pontificate Sangallo also built the Pauline Chapel (1537) which was later altered, and where Michelangelo painted frescoes depicting the Crucifixion of Saint Peter and the Conversion of Saint Paul (1542 – 50).

Remarkable works by Pirro Ligorio include the large niche at the far end of the Belvedere Courtyard (1562) and Pius IV's lodge in the Palace gardens (1561 – 1563). This is a masterpiece of Italian Mannerist art. It consists of a main residence with a ground floor loggia. A large decorative basin stands in the oval courtyard in front of the lodge. Federico Zuccari, Santi di Tito, and Federico Barocci created the splendid decorations for the lodge.

Ottavio Mascherino planned the *Galleria delle carte geografiche* (Gallery of Maps) for the western side of the Belvedere Courtyard (1578 – 1580). It is 120 meters long, covered by a vaulted ceiling, and illuminated by numerous windows. This gallery was conceived as a place where the popes could take leisurely walks. It is named for a series of maps, illustrating various regions of the Italian peninsula, which comprise the dominant decorative motif of the gallery. They were created by the famous mathematician and geographer Ignazio Danti.

Giorgio Vasari too worked at different times on the Palace. Several frescoes in the Sala Regia are by his hand, and the astonishing Battle of Lepanto (1573) is considered one of his most accomplished works.

Towards the end of the 1500s Sixtus V (1585 – 1590) commissioned his favorite architect, Domenico Fontana, to undertake two important projects. One was the



building of a transverse wing that would divide Bramante's courtyard and provide space for the Library, which had become too large for the rooms built by Sixtus IV. The other was the construction of a new Palace facing on to Saint Peter's square and containing the Pope's private quarters. It had been common practice throughout the 1500s for newly elected popes to have living quarters designed that were different from those of their predecessors.

From the time of Sixtus V until the 1700s the popes did not carry out substantial alterations; due in part to the fact that they preferred to lodge in the healthier quarters of the Quirinal Palace.

Alexander VI had the new entrance to the Palaces built. This is the Constantine wing created by Bernini to the north of Saint Peter's square. The artist had the statue of Constantine, which he sculpted, placed there. The Scala Regia, a majestic stairway that the artist skillfully designed using false perspective to adapt it to the limited space, is accessible through the Constantine wing.

Clement XIV and his successor Pius VI created the first real public museum in the palace at the end of the 1700s. They also reorganized and added liberally to the collection of art housed in the museum.

Their museum was located in the Palazzetto del Belvedere and in several rooms in neo-classical style which they had built specifically for the museum. It was called the Pio-Clementino museum, the same name by which it is known today.

Among the many masterpieces of Greco-Roman sculpture in the collection are the sarcophagi in porphyry of Constantine's daughter, Constance, and that of his mother Helena, the famous Belvedere torso, probably representing Hercules. This work was greatly admired by many renaissance artists and by Michelangelo in particular.

The museum also contains the Laocoön, the remarkable Hellenistic Greek statue discovered in the Domus Aurea (1st century BC to 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.). It is the work of Agesander of Rhodes and his sons Athenodorus and Polydorus. Another masterpiece found here is the Apollo Belvedere, a copy of an original Greek statue from the fourth century BC.

From that time on the additions and improvements to the Museums have been continuous.

Pius VII (1800 – 1823) called upon Antonio Canova to assist in the organization of the Chiaramonti Museum with the acquisition of numerous sculptures and Christian and pagan epigraphs.

The Pope also gave orders to build a new wing to the museums. Thus the architects Raffaele Stern and Pasquale Belli designed the New Wing in an austere neo-classical



style inspired by Canova. The New Wing cut once again across the Belvedere courtyard to close the north end.

This portion came to be known as the Library courtyard. The Augustus of Prima Porta, a copy of the original in bronze found in Villa Livia, and a copy of Polyclethus' Dioforum are in the New Wing.

Under Gregory XVI (1831 – 1846) the museums flourished. He inaugurated The Gregorian Etruscan Museum containing the treasures of the Regolini-Galassi Tomb, the Todi Mars, and a large collection of pottery. He also established the Egyptian Museum.

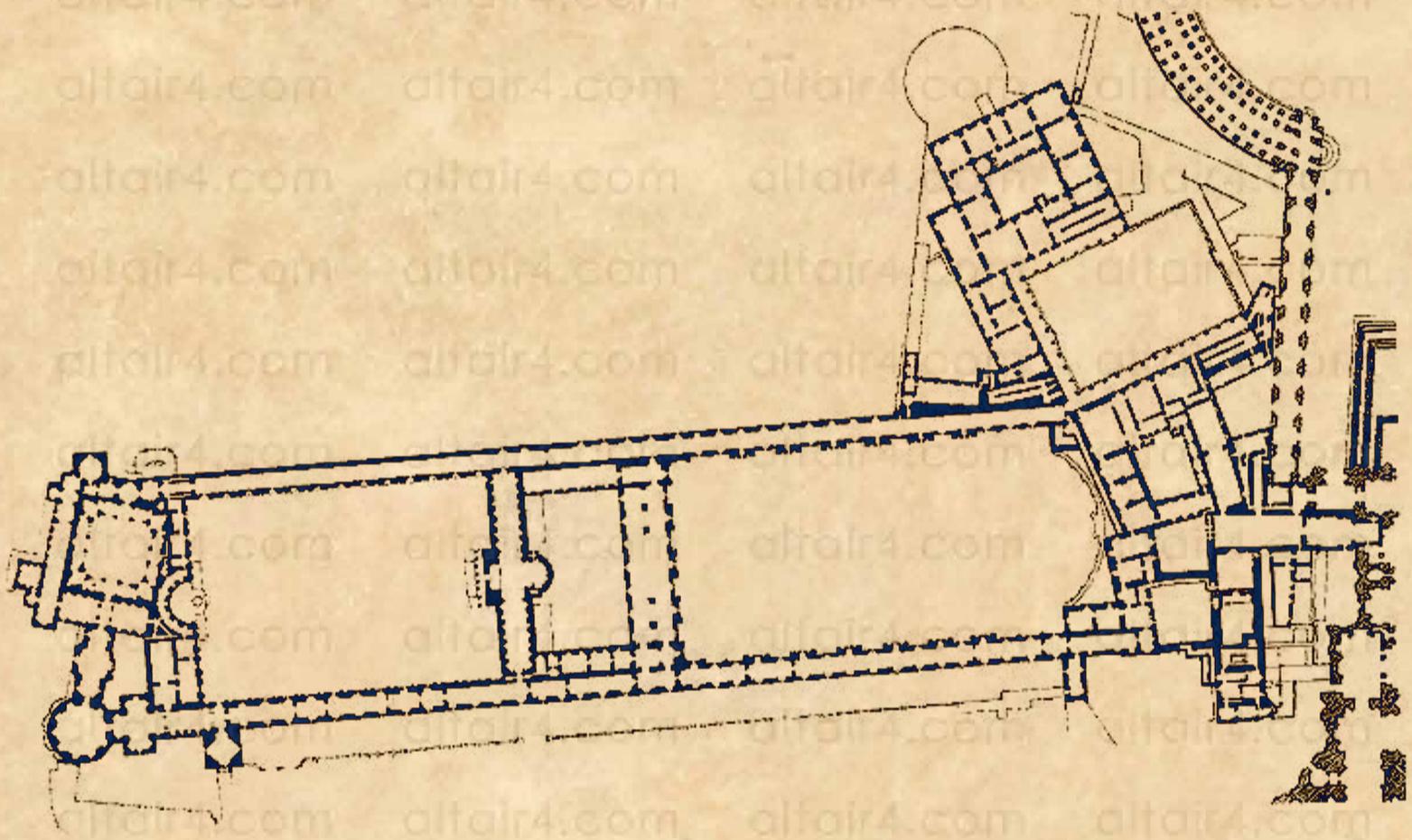
Vatican City acquired statehood in 1929.

In 1932 Pius XI had Giuseppe Momo design a double ramp of stairs for the entrance to the museums to prevent visitors from traipsing through Vatican City. The stairs are lined with bronze reliefs by Antonio Mariani.

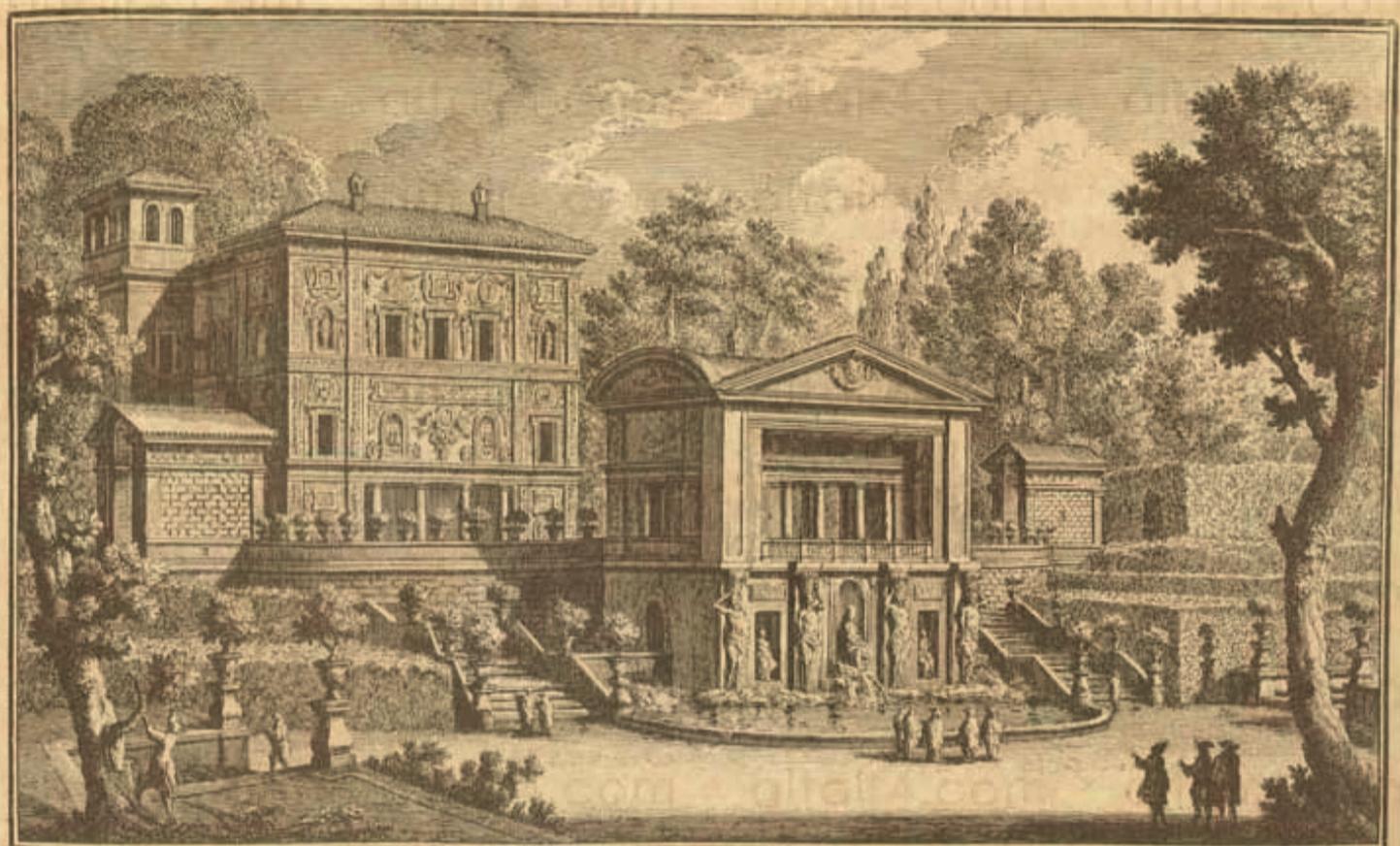
The new picture gallery (Pinacoteca) was inaugurated the same year. It was designed by Luca Beltrami in a neo-Renaissance style and built in the Papal Gardens. Among the masterpieces in the gallery are the Stefaneschi polyptych created by Giotto and his assistants for Saint Peter's tomb, Raphael's Transfiguration, and Leonardo's Saint Jerome.

Pope John XXIII was responsible for some of the more recent additions and alterations. He wanted to transfer the Lateran collections to the Vatican and had the Passarelli Studios design a modern building to house the three Lateran Museums, the Gregorian Profane Museum, the Missionary-Ethnological Museum, and the Pio-Christian Museum. They were inaugurated in 1973 by Paul VI. It was also according to the wishes of Paul VI that a collection of modern religious art was established in the Vatican. The collection housed in the Borgia apartments was inaugurated in 1973.







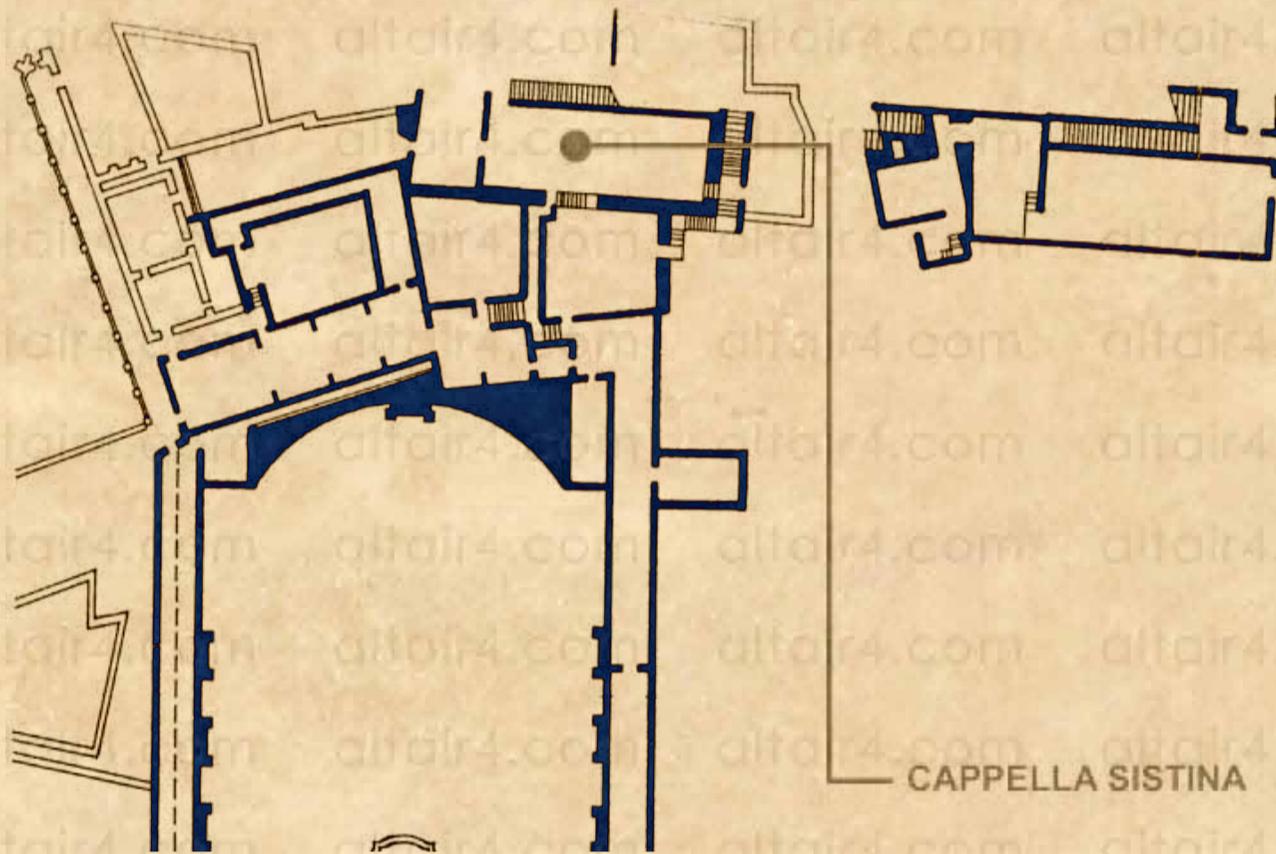


*Giardini e Casino Pontificio nel Vaticano  
L'Orto con colonne di granito orientale, e Niche con statue, e Cortile circolare con due portici, che servono d'ingresso al casino, e Scale che portano al medesimo.* 182



# *The Sistine Chapel*

By Sabina Carbonara



Pope Sixtus IV della Rovere (1471-1484) had the Sistine Chapel built in the oldest part of the papal palaces as chambers for the Conclaves. It is a 41 by 13.5 meter rectangular room; the dimensions duplicate those which the Bible specifies for the Temple of King Solomon.

The work was entrusted to the architect Baccio Pontelli who built the chapel between 1477 and 1481, modifying and elevating the previous structures.

The ceiling is a partial barrel vault, and the room is illuminated by six large windows. The 15<sup>th</sup> century pavement is done in *opus alexandrinum*, similar to the medieval Cosmatesque floors.

A 15<sup>th</sup> century marble screen divides the room into two parts. The larger part of the room holds the altar and is for use by the officiating clergy, while the smaller part is for the worshippers. Today visitors enter through a door to the left of the altar and exit beyond the screen on the same side.

The painters Pietro Vannucci, known as Perugino, Sandro Botticelli, Domenico Ghirlandaio, and Cosimo Rosselli signed a contract in 1481 agreeing to paint ten stories on the side walls. The actual number of paintings was in fact sixteen, even



though only twelve still exist.

Luca Signorelli substituted the other artists and the works were completed by August 15, 1483 when Sixtus IV consecrated the chapel in the name of the Assumed Virgin. Trompe-l'oeil curtains were painted on the lowest level of the walls; the next level was dedicated to frescoes depicting the Stories of Moses (*sub lege*) and Stories of Christ (*sub gratia*).

The two motifs began on the wall behind the altar, faced one another from opposite walls, and joined on the wall near the entrance. The next level up, in the space between the windows, was dedicated to a portrait gallery in which the first thirty popes were depicted. The ceiling was a simple starry sky, painted by Pier Matteo d'Amelia.

Perugino painted a fresco of the Assumption of the Virgin in the center of the wall behind the altar. This work no longer exists, and can be seen only in preparatory drawings. The frescoes depicting the Lives of Christ and Moses have been restored in the Nineties of the XX century.

The 15<sup>th</sup> century thematic program emphasized the historic, legal, and political role of the Roman Church. Moses was a precursor of Christ, while Christ entrusted the care of the Church to Saint Peter, the first pope (Perugino, The Donation of the Keys), and Peter in turn passed this responsibility down to his successors who are portrayed on the Chapel walls.

The frescoes further represent papal authority over the Church's enemies within (Botticelli, The Punishment of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram), and the Church's power over secular authority. Yet, there is also an indication that papal authority is founded on temporal power as the Arch of Constantine, the Emperor who first donated a basilica to the future Papal State, appears in the background of the Donation of the Keys.

Except for the Last Judgement, the 16<sup>th</sup> century paintings did not alter the message that Pope Sixtus IV had envisioned for the Chapel. Indeed, they re-enforced that very message in a more complex and enriched figurative language that completed the work.

Julius II della Rovere (1503-1513) commissioned Michelangelo Buonarroti to decorate the ceiling. The artist painted frescoes in the vault from 1508 to 1512, providing the missing age to those already depicted – the *ante legem* age, with episodes from Genesis:

the creation of the cosmos, the origin of man, from original sin to the advent of Evil, and finally the intervention of God to protect the chosen people from whom, as



foretold by the prophets and the sibyls, and prepared by the Ancestors, Messiah will come, who is the protagonist, along with Moses, his prefiguration, of the fifteenth-century pictorial cycle.

While the artist exploited the architectonic support to give an illusion of reality to his subjects, the painting seems to enhance the latent structural qualities of the chapel and give greater depth to the five arches that cross the vault and rest on the pendentives.

Furthermore, the trompe-l'oeil architectural elements function as a cohesive framework for the various figurative elements by dividing them into three ascending ranks. The highest consists of nine frames dividing the central part of the vault.

The artist depicted the stories from Genesis in these nine frames: from the parting of the light and the dark, to the Drunkenness of Noah, while the architectonic cornices frame pairs of *ignudi* (naked youths) who hold medallions. The second rank consists of enthroned five Sibyls and seven Prophets.

The figures of the Seers are at the beginning of the narration. The prophets appear as authors of the Old Testament, while the presence of the Sibyls is explained because their prophecies are reinterpreted in a Christian key.

In the third rank of lunettes and ressaults the Ancestors of the Christ are depicted.

The pendentives in the four corners of the chapel are dedicated to scenes which represent four episodes from the Bible (the Punishment of Aman; the Brazen Serpent; David and Goliath; and Judith and Holofernes), related to the theme of salvation of the people of Israel. related to the theme of the salvation of the Israel people.

The painter began at the end of the narrative and moved toward the beginning. He may have wished to represent the return of humankind towards the divine origin, the liberation of the soul from its enslavement to the bonds of the flesh.

The first scenes are painted in such a way that they accurately express mankind's tragic destiny, while the following scenes, as they move towards the altar, are more freely rendered and pictorially unconventional. The figures become larger and more luminous; the depiction of God becomes more imposing until in the final scene an overwhelming gesture expressive of divine power separates the light from the darkness.

According to several scholars Michelangelo superimposed a complex program of neo-Platonic philosophy on the primarily Biblical and historical iconography in his paintings. Thus the human form is symbolically expressive of the physical, rational, and intellectual faculties as represented respectively in the figures beneath



the Prophets, Sibyls, and the putti; in those that accompany them; and in those, the ignudi, above them.

This more profound meaning probably remained obscure to the common spectator in Michelangelo's time, as it may also have been lost on the more informed public in papal circles.

In regard to the perspective rendering of space, Michelangelo did not adhere to the accepted Renaissance practice of foreshortening the figures to create an illusion of a unified view. Likewise, the painter ignored Leonardo's method of grouping figures in a harmonious pattern, preferring a model based on classical sculpture in which a single figure was juxtaposed to an architectonic element.

Between 1515 and 1516 Pope Leo X de' Medici (1513-1521) commissioned Raphael Sanzio to execute the preliminary drawings for ten large tapestries known as the Acts of the Apostles, even though, in reality, they illustrate the lives of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The tapestries, with monochrome borders illustrating the life of the pope, were woven in silver and gold by Pieter van Aelst in Bruxelles. They were first placed on the lower part of the walls, and covered the trompe-l'oeil curtains, but they no longer hang in the chapel.

In 1534 Pope Clement VII de' Medici (1523-1534) commissioned Michelangelo to complete the decoration in fresco of the far wall of the Chapel. Upon his death shortly thereafter, Pope Paul III Farnese (1534-1549) immediately confirmed the commission. In this fresco Michelangelo depicted the horror of *Dies Irae*, that is, Judgement Day.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the artist did not follow a pre-established iconographical program, but rather relied totally on inspiration provided by the Bible and Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*.

In traditional representations of the Last Judgement God is enthroned above the celestial and earthly powers which are placed in descending ranks according to a spiritual hierarchy and in keeping with a tradition of ancient cosmology. Michelangelo made radical changes in this traditional scheme.

The entire scene revolves around Christ's imperious gesture, and Christ dominates the composition from within a glowing halo. The whirlwind of bodies, no longer arranged on the traditional horizontal axis, is oriented on perpendiculars that accentuate the ascending and descending movement of the souls elevated toward God or cast down to perdition. Christ stands out on high in the center as supreme judge.

The Virgin timidly draws near her Son. Saints, Patriarchs, and Martyrs in Paradise are near at hand as the chosen, to the right of Christ, ascend to heaven with the help



of ministering angels as devils try in vain to drag them down.

The damned to Christ's left are cast down to where Caron, the ferryman of Hell, awaits them. Minos can be glimpsed in the right hand corner. According to Vasari the infernal judge resembles Biagio di Cesena, Pope Paul III's master of ceremonies who had been opposed to the depiction of nudes.

The resurrection of the dead is depicted in the lower right hand corner, and in the center, above Caron, angels sound the Judgement day trumpets. Saint Bartholomew is at Christ's feet. The martyr holds his own flayed skin, a self-portrait of Michelangelo. Saint Lawrence bears the grate on which he was burned.

To Christ's right, near the Virgin, a figure appears which has been interpreted as either John the Baptist or Adam, and Saint Peter to the left is easily recognizable as he holds the keys. Numerous angels with the symbols of the Passion appear in the lunettes.

The fresco was painted between 1536 and 1541, and reflects a period of turmoil for the Church. At this time there was a conflict between the agents of reform and the position of proponents of the Counter-reformation.

This painting certainly did not fit into the earlier political and theological program, nor was it generally in keeping with the predominant narrative tone of the Sistine Chapel decorations. Here on the most important wall of the Chapel, an apocalyptic vision of the dramatic struggle between good and evil supplanted the earlier historical and implicitly celebratory scenes.

The fresco also expressed the general mood of the city after the tragic events of the sack of Rome in 1527. There was a new awareness that the rebirth of the city as hoped for by Pope Julius II and Pope Leo X was an impossible dream. An era of grandeur had come to a close, and Michelangelo's Judgement sets the seal on this ending.

Michelangelo wanted to use the entire wall, therefore Perugino's Assumption and the first episodes of both the Stories of Moses and the Stories of Christ were destroyed. The painter was also to have painted a Resurrection on the entrance wall, however, commitments to new projects prevented him from ever beginning the work with which he would have completed the decoration of the Sistine Chapel. Now there are two mediocre frescoes from the end of the 1600s on the wall facing the altar.

After 1541, alterations were limited to restoration on damaged portions of the frescoes, and under Pius IV (1560-1565) the painter Daniele da Volterra was commissioned to provide pants and loincloths for some of the Michelangelo's nudes in the Last Judgement. The rigid dictates of the Council of Trent did not allow certain so-



called obscenities to be present in the most important chapel in the Christian world, considered, as Antonio Paolucci says, “Ark of the Covenant and synthesis and image of the Church’s mission and destiny”.

The Painting Restoration Laboratory of the Vatican Museums carried out restoration on the ceiling in the mid-1980s, thus revealing the original brilliant colors that were unlike the somber tones that had been seen in many catalogues and art books up until then. The fresh vivid colors that the painter had applied with a light touch had been hidden under a thick layer of dust, varnish, and greasy candle soot.

Restoration on the Last Judgement took place shortly afterwards. The clumsy trousers painted in tempera after Daniele da Volterra’s alterations were removed. Other such efforts at bowdlerizing the painting were left, because they had been done in fresco which replaced the now destroyed original frescoed plaster. Furthermore, a powder made of lapis-lazuli was used in order to restore the brilliant blue of Michelangelo’s sky, just as he had used such a powder in the original painting.

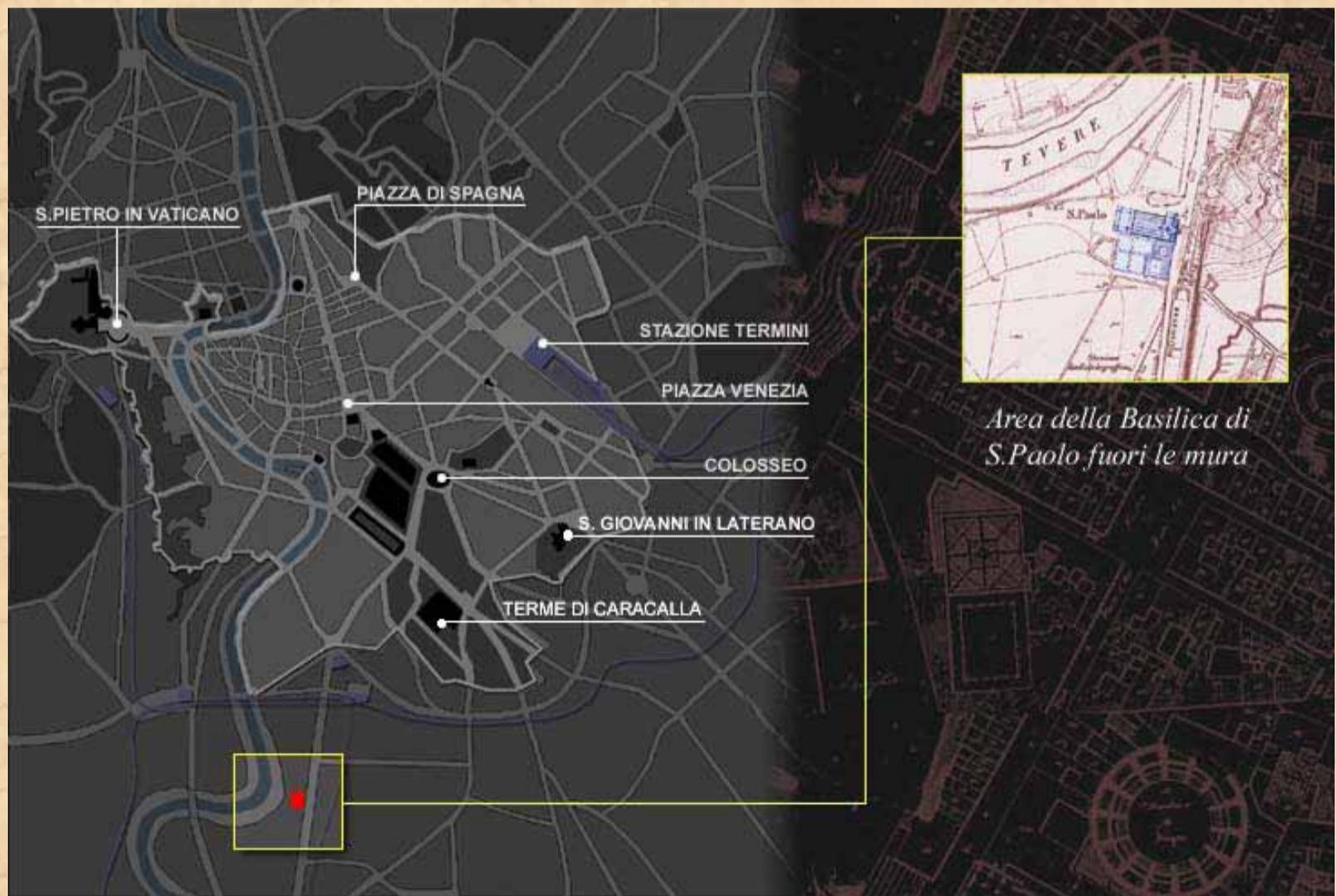
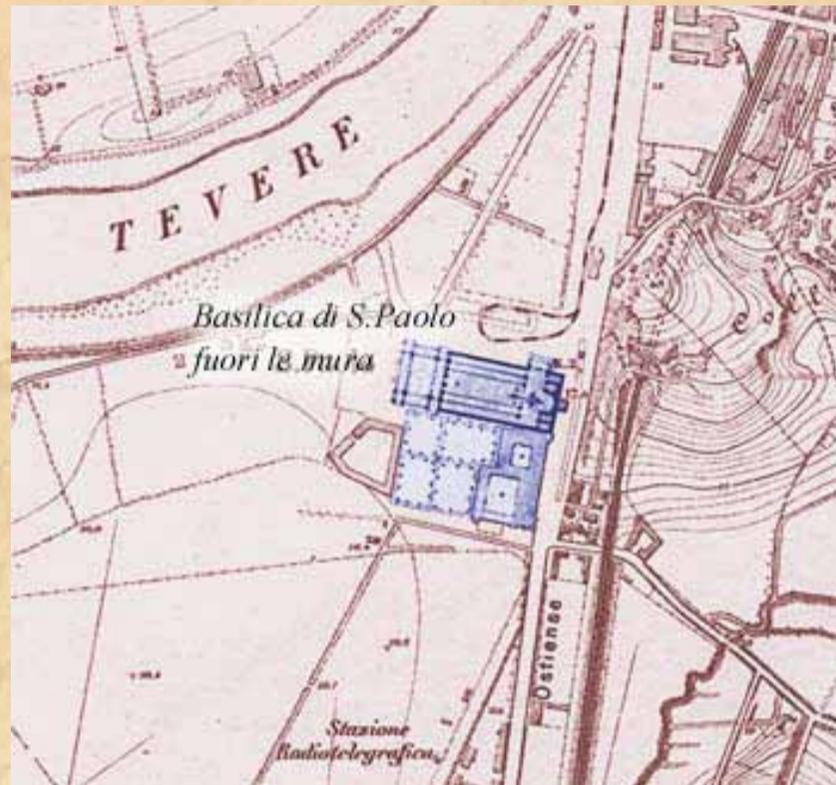
The restoration to the ceiling has been the greatest cause of debate, even though the major experts in Italy were in agreement with this undertaking. Even the underlying technical premise on which the restoration was based has been called into question. That is, the belief that Michelangelo worked only in *buon fresco*, applying color only to the fresh plaster without retouching once the plaster had dried.

Those who criticize the restoration disagree, claiming that Michelangelo regularly reapplied color to the dry plaster, and that the methods of restoration have altered and impoverished an essential element of the original work.



# The Saint Paul's Area

By Lia Barelli



The basilica of San Paolo fuori le mura (**Saint Paul's Outside the Walls**) is located on the Via Ostiense, a road rich with memories tied to the life of Saint Paul, and one of the oldest in Rome. It winds along the course of the river Tiber and takes its name from the port of Ostia, to which it led. It was probably the first "salt way," which connected the city to the sea, where salt-works had been operating from the beginning of antiquity and where in 388 BC the *Castrum ostiense* was built, a fort defending the salt-works.

The road leaves Rome through the Porta San Paolo (St. Paul's Gate), the old Porta Ostiense, an opening in the Aurelian Wall, one of the best conserved of the entire circuit. The oldest part, from the times of Marcus Aurelius, had two barrel vaults and was framed by two semi-circular towers. Under Maxentius the bases of the towers were faced with new masonry and a new pair of towers in travertine were added on the side facing the city. Later on, emperor Honorius (395-423) eliminated one of the Aurelian barrel vaults and raised the towers, topping them with merlons. Over the centuries the gate underwent a number of restorations; first in the Byzantine period, then under Nicholas V (1451), Alexander VII (1663) and Benedict XIV (1749).

During the Second World War the tract of wall to the right of the gate was destroyed and other adjacent sections were torn down later to facilitate the flow of traffic, so that today the gate looks isolated, reduced almost to a lane divider. The interior of the gate houses the Museum of the Via Ostiense, which conserves interesting models of the Roman ports of Ostia, Claudius, and Trajan.

Just outside the gate, to the right, is the famous Pyramid of Cestius, recently restored, the funeral monument of Gaius Cestius Epulone, who, as stated in an inscription on the side of the pyramid, was praetor, tribune, and a member of the college of the *Septemviri epulones*, or the organizers of sacred banquets. Another inscription records that the pyramid was built in 330 days. The width of the base measures 29.5 meters and the pyramid reaches a height of 36.4 meters. The base is made of travertine and faced with marble from Luni. At the corners of the pyramid are two of the four columns which used to decorate it. The small burial chamber, a rectangular plan with barrel vaults, was decorated with paintings in the third Pompeian style of which only small traces remain. The structure is modeled on the Egyptian pyramids, which came into fashion after the Roman conquest of Egypt in 30 BC, and dates back to between 18 and 12 BC. In the Middle Ages it was known as *Meta Remi*, while the *Meta Romuli*, another pyramid shaped monument, was near the Vatican. It was excavated in 1663 by order of Alexander VII.

Behind the pyramid, on the Via Caio Cestio, is the entrance to the Protestant cemetery



where a number of artists and poets are buried including Percy Bysshe Shelly, John Keats, and Antonio Gramsci.

Outside the gate the Via Ostiense is flanked by modern residential apartments and public buildings including the station for the Rome-Ostia-Lido of Ostia line.

The Ostiense Necropolis, of which some ruins are visible in the vicinity of the basilica, extended to about two kilometers beyond the gate. The burial ground was quite extensive and was crossed by the Via Ostiense and by smaller roads which led to the tombs. The tombs date from the Republican era to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD and are primarily pagan. The oldest tombs are columbaria, or spaces whose walls are carved with niches to hold the ashes of the dead; from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century on graves became more frequent. For the most part the tombs here are quite poor, used for the burial of slaves or freedmen. There are a few important graves of important personalities, marked by epigraphs, including some of the emperors' freed slaves.

One of these tombs, located on land belonging to the pious matron Lucina, is said to be the burial place of Paul, following his martyrdom in 67 AD. On this site at the time of Constantine or one of his immediate successors, rose the first basilica dedicated to the sainted apostle, replaced in 385 by an immense new basilica, of which the current one is an unhappy imitation, built after the fire of 1823.

The area around the basilica was occupied by numerous annexes built to house clergy and pilgrims who continuously flocked to visit the tomb of the apostle. Pope Symmachus (498-514) had some small houses and a bath built there for the poor.

Following the repeated threats of the Saracen pirates, which took the form of a full-fledged attack in 846, Pope John VIII (872-880) had a fortified settlement built around the basilica, which came to be known after him as Giovannipoli (Johnopolis). The defensive wall had thirteen towers and enclosed a space large enough to house 200 families, a grain mill and a church dedicated to Saint Mary. After the 16<sup>th</sup> century every trace of the settlement was lost.

Monasteries sprouted up around the basilica soon after it was built. The oldest of these, according to a document dating back to the time of Gregory the Great in 604, was dedicated to Saint Stephen and belonged to an order of nuns. Several funereal epigraphs of some nuns and an abbess have been preserved. The convent was later joined by the monastery of Saint Cesario. Both were restored at the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century by Gregory II and entrusted to the care of the Benedictines who were given the charge, still carried out by them today, of officiating at the liturgies in the basilica. From the 10<sup>th</sup> century on the two monasteries were joined together under the name of Saint Paul.



The monastic structures were renovated and enlarged several times. Their current arrangement is the result of restorations in the 15 and 1600s, but parts of the medieval walls are visible along the outside perimeter. The splendid cloister, dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, is nearly intact; its most beautiful parts are the work of the celebrated Vassalletto family of Roman marble carvers.

Beyond the basilica of Saint Paul, on the left, is the beginning of the Via Laurentina, from which branches off, in turn, the Via delle Tre Fontane, which leads to the Abbey of the same name, also tied to the memory of Saint Paul. The name, in fact, recalls the three fountains which, according to the legend, sprung up on the site where the saint's head landed when he was decapitated.

Three churches were built on the site. The most important is the church of Saints Vincent and Anastasius, founded by Honorius I (625) and rebuilt together with a monastery in 1221 by the Cistercians, who had been ceded the church by Innocent II in 1140.

The church of Santa Maria *Scala Coeli*, designed by Giacomo della Porta (1583), was built on the site where 10,203 Roman legionnaires were martyred. It has an octagonal plan with a dome, apse, and chapels.

The church of San Paolo alle Tre Fontane was built in the 5<sup>th</sup> century on the site of the martyrdom of the Apostle and was rebuilt by Giacomo della Porta in 1599. In 1868 the Abbey was ceded to the Order of Reformed Cistercians (Trappists).





*La Piramide, e Sepolcro di Cajo Cestio . Porta S. Paolo o Trigemina . a Parte della Chiesa del SS. Salvatore . 21.*





*Chiesa di S. Paolo alle tre Fontane  
L'Abate e monaco del convento di Montecorvo e Chiesa de SS. Eustachio ed Anastasio. S. Chiesa vice come le tre Fontane e Chiesa di S. Maria Scala Ceclia e parte del Monastero*





# *Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls*

By Lia Barelli



In circa 67 AD Paul was martyred and buried in the Ostiense necropolis. His tomb immediately became an object of veneration, and a sanctuary was built there in the second century, as had occurred for Saint Peter.

Based on excavations carried out by the architect Virginio Vespignani in 1838, it is uncertain what alterations the original sanctuary had undergone. Vespignani offered as proof of the tomb's existence beneath the main altar the discovery of a stone plaque bearing the engraved inscription PAULO APOSTOLO MARTYRI, "to the Martyr Apostle Paul". This inscription probably dates from the fifth century.

Constantine, around 250 years from Paul's death, had the first basilica built above the tomb. It was not large and was oriented in the opposite direction of the present basilica.

In 386 the three Emperors Theodosius, Valentinian II, and Arcadius ordered the construction of a new immense basilica. It was 128 meters long, 65 meters wide, and was completed under Honorius (395 – 423).



The church had not undergone major alterations until the devastating fire in 1823, after which it was almost entirely rebuilt. It had five naves divided by colonnades with 20 columns in each row, a wide transept, and an enormous apse oriented towards the east.

The naves were illuminated by large windows with an oculus above each window in the transept. Little is known about the decoration of the Basilica in this period. There were mosaics, and gilded ceilings and beams. Four porticoes stood before the façade.

Leo I (440 – 461) made the first important alterations, perhaps after damage caused by a bolt of lightning. He had the central nave decorated with figures of apostles and prophets between the windows. He had scenes from the Old Testament depicted further down, on the right, and on the left scenes from the lives of the apostles, and of Apostle Paul in particular. These latter were drawn from the Book of Acts. Portraits of the popes in tondi, from Saint Peter to Innocent I (401 – 417) appeared below.

New portraits were added in the following centuries. Leo also had the chancel arch reinforced with two lateral columns, and a mosaic inscription attesting to his restoration efforts added. The mosaic was the first example known of a representation of a theme from the Apocalypse. It depicted a clipeus in the center with a bust of the Savior and symbols of the Evangelists to either side, the Twenty-four Lords of the Apocalypse, and Saints Peter and Paul. It has been replaced by a nineteenth-century replica.

Many repairs and improvements followed. A semicircular crypt was built beneath the presbytery. This may have been done under Gregory the Great, as he had accomplished a similar feat at Saint Peter's. A bronze door donated by the Consul of Amalfi, Pantaleone, was installed in 1070. It had been designed by Theodorus and cast by Staurachio in Constantinople. The door survived the fire in 1823, and in 1963 it was placed in the Porta Santa.

A bell tower as high as the façade was built next to the north nave in the eleventh century. Innocent II (1130 – 1143) had a wall supported by columns built along the transept, as the transept roof was in danger of collapsing.

A paschal candelabrum was made by Niccolò d'Angelo and Pietro Vassalietto at the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century, and today is located in the transept. The candelabrum is 3,6 meters high and is sculpted with scenes of the Passion and Resurrection, symbolic figures, and floral decorations which recall classical and paleo-Christian art.

The mosaic in the apse, commissioned by Honorius III, is the most famous work of art



from the middle ages. Honorius requested Venetian masters from the Doge in order to create the mosaic in 1218. The Abbot Giovanni Caetani assisted in the completion of the work after Honorius' death. The mosaics were miraculously spared in the fire. However, in 1836 they were redone in many parts, and even though the original iconography was preserved it is difficult to evaluate the style which is similar to that of the contemporary mosaic panels in Saint Mark's in Venice.

The mosaics depict Christ enthroned and Honorius III prone before Him. Peter and Andrew are to the left, Paul and Luke to the right on a lawn abounding in flora and fauna with palm trees to the sides. The *Hetimasia*, the empty throne, the Cross, and other instruments of the Passion appear in the center further down in the mosaic. The other Apostles and two Evangelists stand to the sides. The sacristan Adinolfo and the Abbot Giovanni Caetani kneel before the empty throne.

The ciborium of the main altar by Arnolfo di Cambio and an assistant identified only as Pietro is another work of great artistic value which was remarkably innovative for its time. Predominantly in a French Gothic style the ciborium was also inspired by classical, paleo-Christian and Cosmatesque art.

The redecoration of the central nave is attributed to Pietro Cavallini, working perhaps between 1282 and 1297. The themes from the time of Pope Leo were preserved, though only a few portraits of popes are now kept in the annexed monastery.

Pope John XXII commissioned the same artist to execute the mosaic on the façade in 1325. The mosaic depicts a bust of the Savior on a clipeus, the symbols of the Evangelists appear at both sides, and below the windows the images of the Virgin, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Peter, and Saint Paul. Heavily restored fragments of the mosaic were inserted in the apse arch and behind the chancel arch when the Basilica was rebuilt in 1823.

The series of medieval restorations ended with the rebuilding of the bell tower in 1349. It was low, with only three open floors and lancet arches on the top two of these. The tower was demolished after 1823.

Among the memorable later works, there are the restoration of the apse area and the presbytery commissioned by Sixtus V; the new altar attributed to Onorio Longhi and financed by Clement VIII (1592 – 1605); the Holy Sacrament Chapel, today known as the Saint Lawrence Chapel, designed by Carlo Maderno (1619 – 20) and later restored after the fire.

Benedict XIII commissioned Antonio Canevari to redo the façade and rebuild the portico that had collapsed in 1724. Benedict XIII was also responsible for the new Holy Sacrament Chapel where a 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century wooden crucifix was placed.



According to legend surrounding this crucifix a miracle occurred when the statue of the crucified Christ turned toward Saint Bridgette.

The Basilica was seriously damaged by fire the night between July 15 and 16 of 1823. An intense debate arose between those who believed the Basilica should be rebuilt to more modern taste and those who wished to restore the church to its former state. The architect Luigi Valadier was among the first and proposed a plan in the form of a Greek Cross with a large atrium.

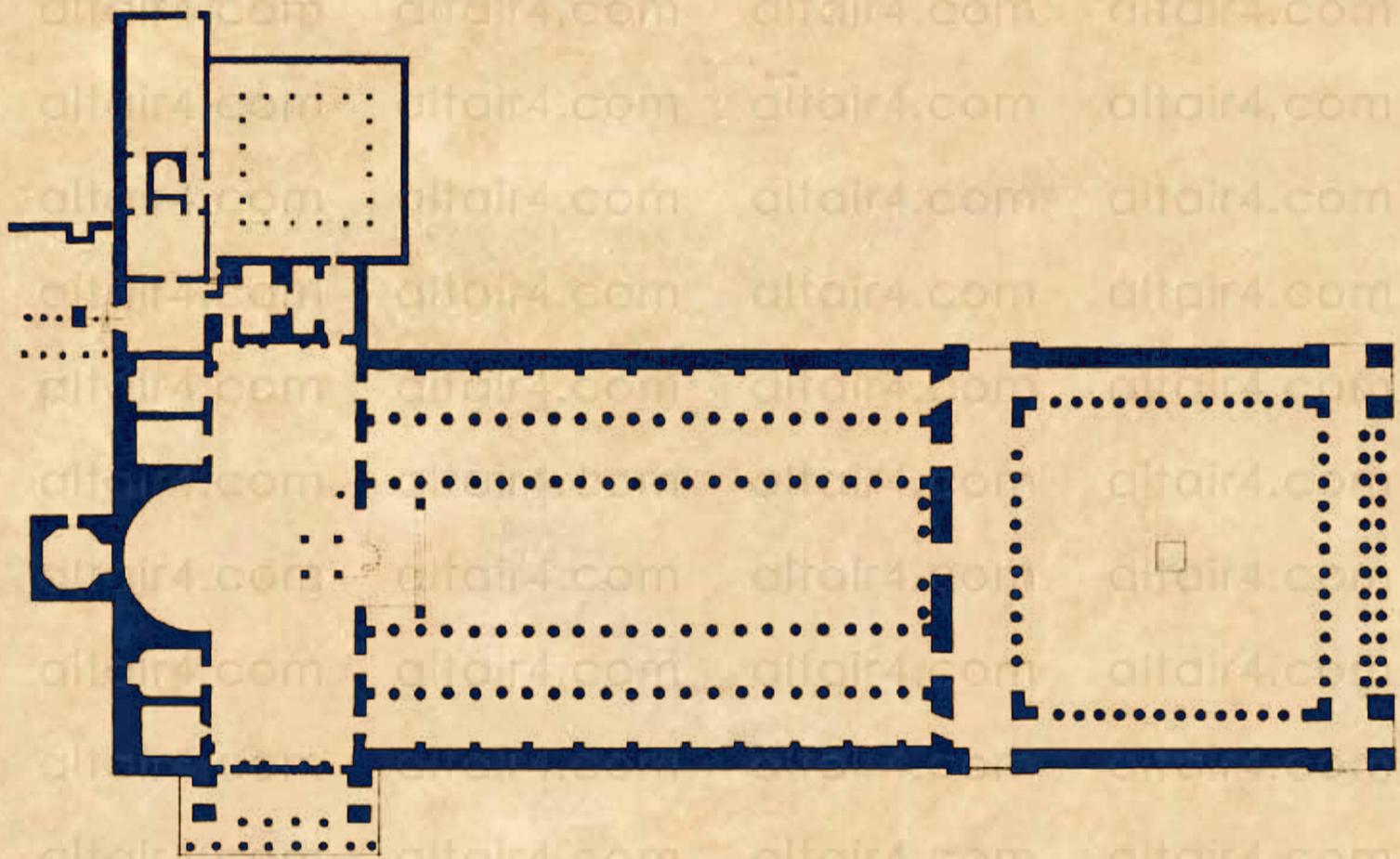
The second group prevailed and it was decided to demolish the remaining fragments, with the exception of the apse and parts of the transept. Work began under Leo XII's patronage, and under the direction of Pasquale Belli in 1826. Belli was substituted by Luigi Poletti in 1833.

The new structure, which seemed a lifeless copy of the former church, was consecrated by Pius IX in 1854. A portico containing some columns from the old Basilica was added to the outside the north transept. Pope Gregory XVI called this the Gregorian portico, as he had commissioned it as a monumental entrance to the Via Ostiense. All the decoration was done by the most famous artists of the period, who had relied heavily on a Classical style with some touches of Romanticism.

Luigi Poletti finished construction of the bell tower in 1860. It is entirely covered in travertine. It rises to a height of five stories characterized by simple geometric shapes: squares, octagons, and circles. On the central axis behind the apse the 65 meter high tower was to create a focal point from the Via Ostiense. This was the least successful part of the restoration project.

Virginio Vespignani built the narthex between 1873 and 1884. Work was then interrupted until 1890, when Guglielmo Calderini began the enormous four-sided portico measuring 70 meters on each side, containing five hundred columns, and finished in 1928. A statue of Saint Paul by Giuseppe Obici was placed in the center. Arnaldo Foschini built the baptistry next to the south transept in 1930.







*Basilica e Monasterio di S. Paolo fuori le mura.  
a Ponte della Basilica di S. Paolo, a Via Ostiense, e Ostia verso Roma.*





*Spazio interno della Basilica di S. Paolo fuori delle Mura. Veduta dal vestibolo verso l'altare. Disegnata da G. Piranesi. Incisa da G. B. Piranesi. Roma, 1763.*



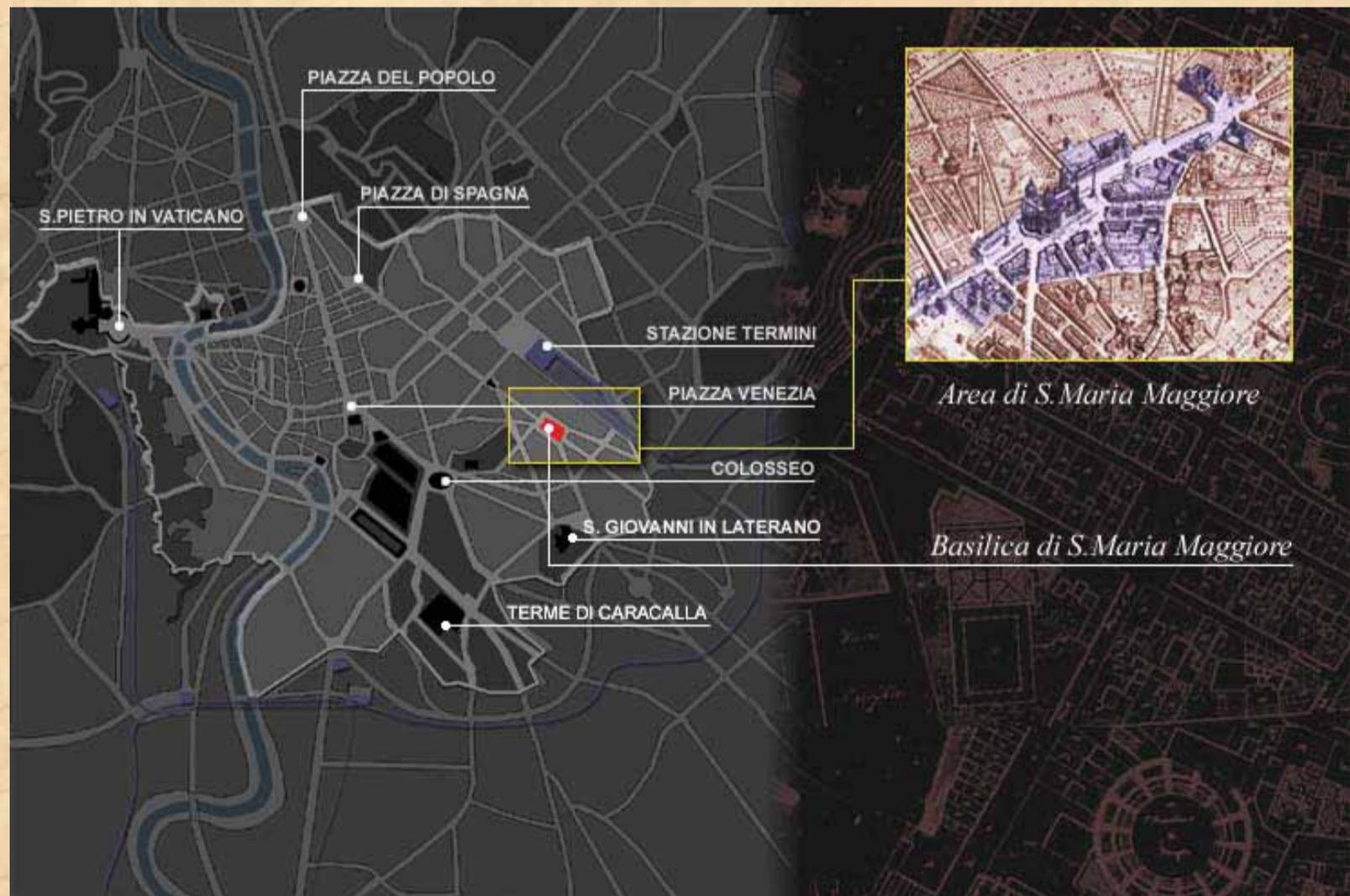


*Ecclesia S. Pauli in Via Ostiensi quae a Constantino fuit edificata. Peria S<sup>m</sup> habet huius precipua Reliquia sunt partes corporum SS. Petri et Pauli, corpora SS. Anastasi, Timothei, Celsi, Iuliani, Basilidis, SS. Innocentii, et plurima SS. Martyrum in Cementerio B. Lucinae, de ligno S. Crucis Christi, et fructu Crucis S. Andree de Reliquiis SS. Apostolorum Jacobi, Maioris, et Iacobini, et Mathiae, Andreae, Bartholomei, Lucae, Euaui, Felicii, Stephani, Marcelli, Xyli, Gregorii, Summorum Pontificum SS. Nicolai, Alexii, Stephani, Ananiam, de quibus Dni Dionysii, Sebastiani, Iuliani, Basilii, Gheronah, Dariae, Barbarae, Nymphae, Eustachii, Quirini, Primi, Feliciani, Pancratii, Ceciliae, Sophiae, et aliorum SS. Innocentii, S. Annae, Mariæ, Virginiæ, Nepesæ, et Archilæ, Hilaria, Laurentii, Blasi, Gordiani, Benedicti, Vincentii, Hermolai, Celestini, Luciae, et aliorum, calena quae S. Paulus vinculus fuit, et baculi fracti, cum quo Ordo ferrarum peragravit. Maxima et perpetua in hac Basilica sunt Indulgentia, et praesertim diebus stationum eius, quae sunt in die SS. Innocentii, Conuerisionis S. Pauli, et commemorationis eiusdem Dominica in Sexagesima feria quarta post quartam Dominica Quadragesima, feria 3<sup>a</sup> Pascha, et feria quinta post Pentecosten.*



# *The Santa Maria Maggiore Area*

By Lia Barelli



The **basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore** and the surrounding buildings occupy the top of the Cispan hill, one of the summits of the Esquiline.

The entrance façade looks onto Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore while the apse dominates the wide Piazza dell'Esquilino.

In Roman times the Cispan area, shaped roughly like a triangle, was delimited on the northwest by *Vicus Patricius* (today Via Urbana – Via Massimo d'Azeglio), on the south by *Clivus Suburanus* (Via di San Vito – Via di San Martino ai Monti – Via in Selci), roads that converged in the direction of the ancient quarter of the Suburra, and on the east by the Servian Wall. Parts of the ancient wall are still visible today in Via Carlo Alberto and in Via San Vito, where the so-called Arch of Gallien stands, actually the Esquiline Gate, rebuilt by Augustus.

The hill was mostly occupied by wealthy family residences. Among the Roman buildings of a certain importance was the Basilica of Junio Basso, consul in 331, whose ruins were rediscovered in the 1930s under the Pontifical Seminary of Oriental Studies between Via Napoleone III and Via Carlo Alberto. Built for secular use, it was transformed into the church of Sant'Andrea in Catabarbara under Pope Simplicius (468-483). It was adorned with marble inlays, two of which are conserved in the Palazzo dei Conservatori in the Capitol and in the Roman National Museum in Palazzo Massimo.

The foundation of the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in the 5<sup>th</sup> century of the Christian era was the event that determined the future development of the entire area. Around the basilica, in fact, only isolated ruins of classical buildings, a few houses, churches and monasteries survived the dwindling of the population during the High Middle Ages and the consequent shrinking of the inhabited area of the city. But the presence of the basilica, which had become an important center of the cult of Mary, attracted larger and larger crowds of pilgrims and enkindled the intense interest of the popes for the entire area.

Some of the numerous monasteries in the vicinity were built for the monks who were entrusted with the care of the basilica, like the now destroyed monastery named for Barbara, attached to Sant'Andrea in Catabarbara. Most of these monasteries disappeared starting in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when the basilica was entrusted to the canons, under the direction of an archpriest.

Among the places of worship still existing today we should remember the basilica of S. Prassede with the attached monastery, situated only ninety meters from the southern side of Santa Maria Maggiore, and the basilica of S. Pudenziana, facing Via Urbana. Tradition has it that the latter is located on the site of the house where the



Roman senator Pudente is said to have hosted Saint Peter. The present-day church is the result of the rehabilitation of an ancient bath, executed at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and it was dedicated to Pudenziana, the presumed sister of Santa Prassede. Composed of three naves and an apse, it was restored by Adrian I (772-795). The bell tower dates back to Pope Honorius III (1216-1227). In 1589 the architect Francesco da Volterra remodeled the interior and added the cupola over the presbytery. In the apse is a mosaic from the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Opposite the façade of Santa Maria Maggiore, in 1259, Cardinal Pietro Capocci founded the Hospital of the Antoniani of Vienne, later rebuilt in the 1500s. The polychrome marble main door to the Hospital, inserted into a modern façade, now constitutes the access to the church of Sant'Antonio Abate, of ancient origins, but redone in 1481 and decorated in the 1700s. In front of the church of Sant'Antonio was a red granite column in the form of a cannon surmounted by a cross, in honor of Henry IV of France, erected by the Prior of the Antoniani in 1595. In 1875 the column was moved because of the traffic on the right flank of Santa Maria Maggiore. When he was Bishop of Palestrina and archpriest of Santa Maria Maggiore, Pope Clement III (1187-1191) had a palace built for the Prenestine bishops, which he later donated to the basilica. It was on the left side of the basilica, on the site of the present-day Palazzo Cassetta, between Via Olmata and Via Paolina. Nicholas V (1447-1455) built a pontifical residence in its place which was completed by Julius II: it was formed by two, three-story wings of simple design, which looked onto an arched courtyard supported by octagonal pilasters; it was also connected to the basilica by an overhead passage above the present-day Via Liberiana.

Starting in the 1500s papal renovations concentrated on the urban infrastructure around the basilica. For the Jubilee of 1575 Gregory XIII straightened the street, Via Gregoriana, that led from Santa Maria Maggiore to the basilica of Saint John Lateran; the street is now called Via Merulana.

Sixtus V, whose secular name was Felice Peretti (1576-1590), opened up a new street along the side of the basilica, Via Felice, which connected Trinità dei Monti with Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. In the immediate vicinity of the basilica the Pope built Villa Peretti, an immense garden of delights, begun before his pontificate in 1576-80 and then expanded between 1585-88 according to designs by Domenico Fontana. One of the main entrances to the villa was situated opposite the apse of the basilica and a piazza was built in front of it, the present-day Piazza dell'Esquilino. In 1587 Sixtus V commissioned Domenico Fontana and his nephew Carlo Maderno to decorate the center of the piazza with one of the two obelisks which flanked the



entrance to the Tomb of Augustus (the other is in Piazza **Quirinale**).

Sixtus V also built the axis constituted by Via Santa Maria Maggiore and Via Panisperna, razing part of the pontifical palace built by Nicholas V.

Paul V continued the work begun by Sixtus: in 1605 he began the work on the perimeter of the basilica complex and the regularization of the piazza in front of it, destroying some of the existing buildings.

In 1613 Carlo Maderno erected the Column of the Immaculata in the center of the piazza. Some 14.3 meters high, the column was taken from the basilica of Maxentius in the Roman Forum, the only one to survive of the original eight. A bronze statue of the Virgin by Guglielmo Berthélot was placed on top of the column and in 1615 a fountain designed by Carlo Maderno and fed by the Acqua Felice aqueduct was placed at its feet.

Paul V also opened up Via dell'Olmata and the Via Paulina, cutting the site of the pontifical palace in half and building private residences in place of the palace. Then he had a new five-story palace built by Flaminio Ponzio adjacent to the right side of the façade of the basilica, which contained the sacristies and the choir.

Clement XIII took up where Paul V left off and in 1721 he had Ferdinando Fuga build a palace for the Canons on the left side of the basilica, in imitation of the palace built by Paul V, later remodeled on the occasion of the restoration of the façade in 1743.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries the private residences around Santa Maggiore included some rather modest homes, including the home of Gian Lorenzo Bernini who lived there until 1639. The artist was buried in the basilica at his request, at the foot of the altar. Another noteworthy building is the Palazzetto Rospigliosi in Via Liberiana, remodeled in the late 1700s.

The situation changed starting in 1871 with the rezoning of the area. To encourage new construction the level of Piazza Esquilino and the adjacent streets was raised, so that the church of Santa Pudenziana ended up in a sort of ditch. On the contrary in front of the façade of the basilica the level was lowered, making it necessary to add new steps and a new base under the Column of the Immaculata, while a floor was added under the existing buildings in Via Liberiana. The basilica was surrounded for the most part by anonymous large buildings, among which stand out the ones in Via Liberiana designed by Gaetano Koch and Angelo Diaz.







# *Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore*

By Lia Barelli



The Basilica was built by Pope Sixtus III (432 – 440). It was probably intended to celebrate the proclamation that Mary was the Mother of God made at the Council of Ephesus in 431.

*The church is also called the Basilica Liberiana because it was once thought to be the same edifice that Pope Liberius (352 – 366) had built, but they were probably two different buildings.*

It has always been dedicated to Mary, and from the seventh century onward it has been known as Santa Maria Maggiore and Santa Maria ad Presepe. The latter title derives from the oratory alongside the Basilica which is dedicated to the worship of Mary as Mother of God, and is known as the *Presepe*. The oratory contains the Holy Crib and the *Puerperium*, the cloth in which the new-born infant Jesus was wrapped. These holy relics may have been brought to Rome in the seventh century.

Sixtus III had the Basilica constructed on land where buildings had already stood. A Roman building, which may have been the home of a wealthy family, was found



beneath the floor. Some layers of the building date back to the first century BC. There are frescoes depicting farming scenes typical to each month in one of the rooms of the house (c. third century AD.).

Sixtus' basilica had three naves, a semicircular apse, an atrium, a square portico such as that at Saint Peter's, but no transept. The naves were separated by 22 marble columns on each side, with Ionic capitals beneath an architrave with a frieze in mosaic. The church was clearly inspired by classical architecture.

The interior was richly decorated. The mosaics depicting episodes from the Old Testament above the colonnades still exist. Originally there were numerous large windows framed by stucco decorations above the mosaics. Sixtus III's mosaics extend to the chancel arch. The empty throne depicted at the keystone awaits Christ's second coming, while Peter and Paul stand to either side of the throne, and episodes from Christ's childhood are depicted beneath. The iconography emphasizes God's help to the Hebrews in conquering the promised land and draws a parallel with Christ as the prelude to humanity's earthly journey, with the help of the pope, toward the advent of Christ's second coming. The mosaics are stylistically in keeping with ancient Roman art, in particular with paintings in the catacombs.

The Basilica was very important as the center of the cult of Mary. The popes, the high clergy who took care of the Basilica, and many private individuals made contributions in order to restore and embellish the church. Among the memorable contributions there are those of Paschal I (817 – 24) for the presbytery, Benedict III (855 – 858) for the baptistery, Eugene III (1145 - 1153) for removing the atrium and the building of a portico; and during Eugene's pontificate Scotus and Giovanni Papparone financed the Cosmatesque pavement.

Pope Nicholas IV (1288 - 1292) was responsible for the most important works in the middle ages. As he had in Saint John Lateran, the pope had an extended transept with frescoes added. He had the apse built and decorated with mosaics on both the interior and exterior. Iacopo Torriti created the mosaics for the apse. Within a clipeus held by angels, Christ enthroned crowns Mary, according to iconography of French derivation. Saints Peter, Paul, and Francis are to the left, and Nicholas IV kneels below them. To the right John the Baptist, James, and Anthony are depicted, while the Cardinal Giacomo Colonna kneels below them.

The Cardinal, who was archpriest of the Basilica, brought the works to completion after the death of the Pope. Episodes from the life of the Virgin are depicted on a lower level. The decorations in the arch of the apse depicting the Lamb of God, the Twenty-four Lords of the Apocalypse, and symbols of the Evangelists are a



recreation from 1933.

Nicholas also had the oratory of the Presepe rebuilt with sculptural decorations by Arnolfo di Cambio. However, little remains of the sculptor's work other than the statues of the ox, the ass, the three Magi, and Saint Joseph.

Giacomo Colonna and his brother Pietro commissioned Filippo Rosuti to decorate the upper part of the façade in mosaics. The mosaics, which can be seen from inside the eighteenth-century loggia, depict on the upper level Christ Pantocrator and Angels, the Virgin, Saints, and the two patrons; while on a lower level the Legend of the Snow. This legend dating back to the twelfth century recounts a miraculous snowfall on the Esquiline hill between the nights of August 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> with which the Madonna indicated to a wealthy Roman named Giovanni and his wife, and to Pope Liberius the location for a church to be built.

The Basilica had a bell tower from time immemorial which was entirely rebuilt in 1372. It is six floors high and at 75 meters it is the tallest bell tower in Rome. The top floor was altered with the addition of a peak by Cardinal William d'Estoutville, archdeacon from 1443 to 1483. The Cardinal executed numerous other works, among which, the vaults of the lateral naves, the Saint Michael Chapel with frescoes attributed to Piero della Francesca, and the ciborium of the main altar by Mino del Reame, which was removed in the 1700s.

Alexander VI (1492 – 1503) commissioned the famous gilded beam ceiling, begun by Giuliano da Sangallo and completed by his brother Antonio the Elder. According to an unconfirmed legend the ceiling was gilded with the first gold to arrive from the Americas.

Important alterations were made in the 1500s. The Cesi Chapel, attributed to Guidetto Guidetti (c.1560), was built, and the Sforza Chapel, designed by Michelangelo with innovative semi-elliptical lateral apses, was begun by Tiberio Calcagni in 1556 and completed by Giacomo della Porta.

Pope Gregory XIII had Martino Longhi the Elder rebuild the portico, and the bell tower restored for the Holy Year in 1575.

Sixtus V (1585 – 90) took a personal interest in the Basilica, and summoned the architect Domenico Fontana to build the Sistine Chapel at the end of the right nave. Also known as the Sacrament Chapel, the ancient oratory of the Presepe was transferred with remarkable engineering skill into the chapel's crypt. The chapel is in the form of a Greek cross with a cupola. The lovely decorations, which were intended to have didactic value, were done by Mannerist painters under the direction of Cesare Nebbia and Giovanni Guerra. The tomb of the Pope was placed in the



right wing of the chapel, and that of Saint Pius V in the left. Both tombs were created by Fontana.

During general restoration work to the central nave in 1593, the archpriest Domenico Pinelli had frescoes painted depicting the Life of the Madonna, thus covering half of Sixtus III's windows.

Paul V (1605 – 1621) planned a new design for the whole external perimeter of the Basilica. This plan was carried out over the course of the following centuries. Thus the Pauline Chapel was built by Flaminio Ponzio in imitation of the Sistine Chapel (1605 – 1613). The sepulchres of Paul V and Clement VIII were placed in the two lateral wings, while the venerated icon *Salus Populi Romani*, believed to be painted by Saint Luke, though in reality dating from the fifth to the thirteenth century, was placed in the main altar, designed by Girolamo Rainaldi. Cavalier d'Arpino, Guido Reni, and Ludovico Cardi called Cigoli, among others, worked on the decorations of the chapel. The entire decorative project was based on themes which emphasized victory over heresies and is an example of the classical trend in religious circles of that epoch.

Clement X (1670 – 76) commissioned Carlo Rainaldi to renovate the exterior of the apse area. Rainaldi is to be credited with the impressive exterior view of the church, even though the Sistine Chapel side was not completed until 1933.

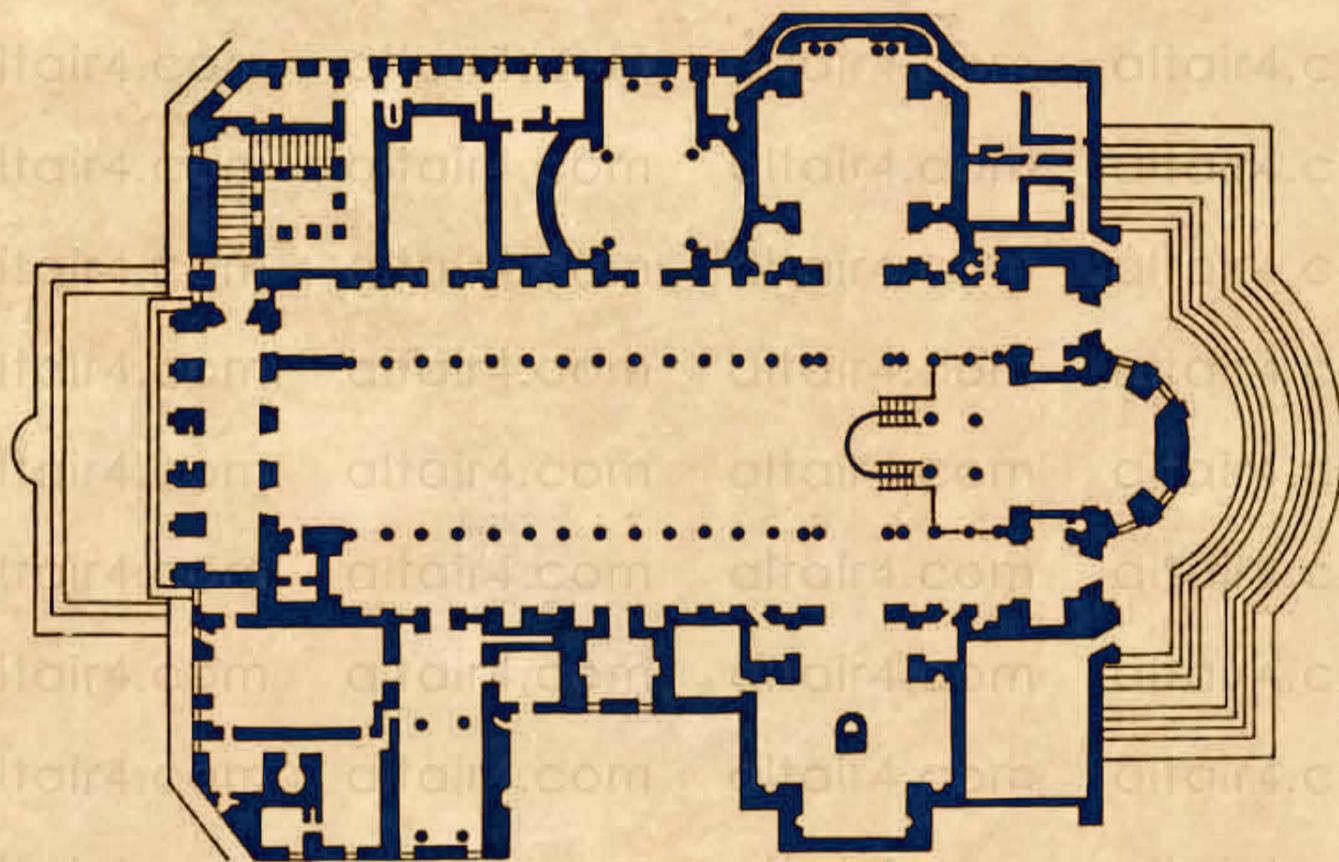
For the 1750 Holy Year Benedict XIV commissioned the architect Ferdinando Fuga to carry out general restoration. Fuga began a new façade in 1741 and completed it in 1743. It has a portico with five openings surmounted by an architrave and a triple-arched loggia with the central arch higher than the lateral arches. It is replete with sculpture and makes skilful use of chiaroscuro effects. The entire elevation, including the lateral buildings, are crowned with statues. The Port Santa is on the left of the portico, and is opened in Jubilee years.

Fuga tried to reorganize the interior in an effort to integrate the space as Borromini had done with Saint John's, but the results were not as successful. Fuga also created the new altar.

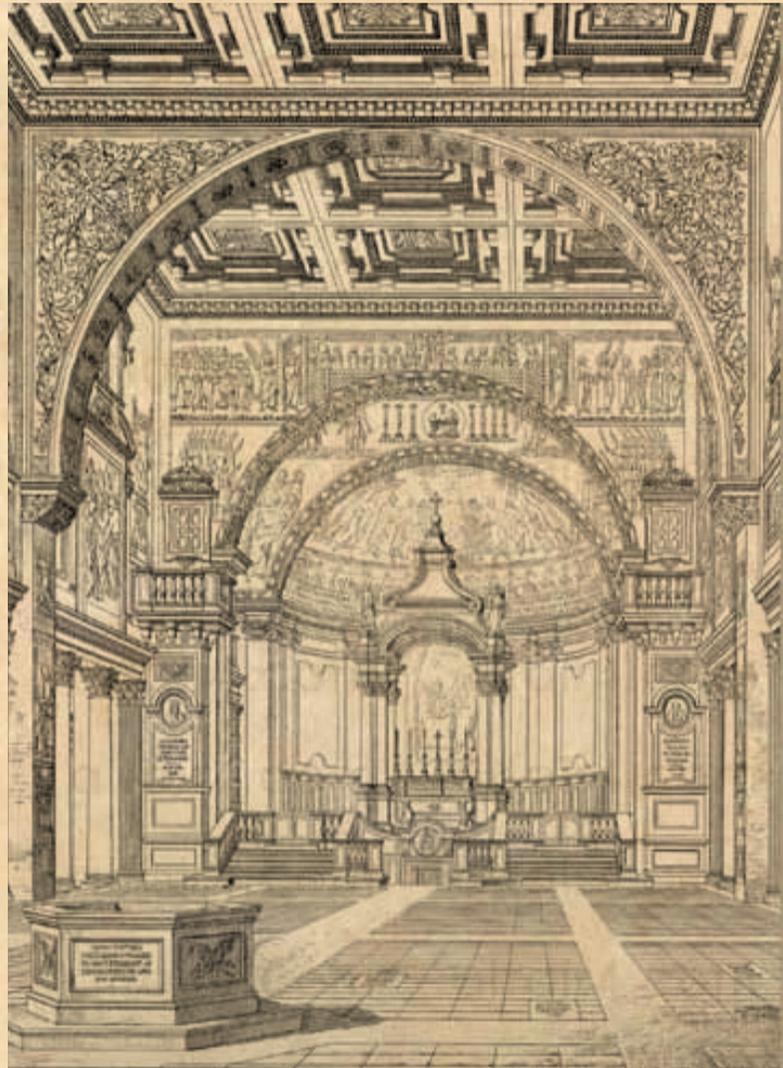
The popes' interest continued throughout the 1800s. Leo XIII had Giuseppe Valadier place the Baptistery in Paul V's winter choir in 1826. Pius IX had Virginio Vespignani enlarge the sanctuary in 1864.

Among the important works in the twentieth century were Pius XI's restoration of the transept for the special Jubilee in 1933, and the recent restorations of the bell tower and the mosaics.



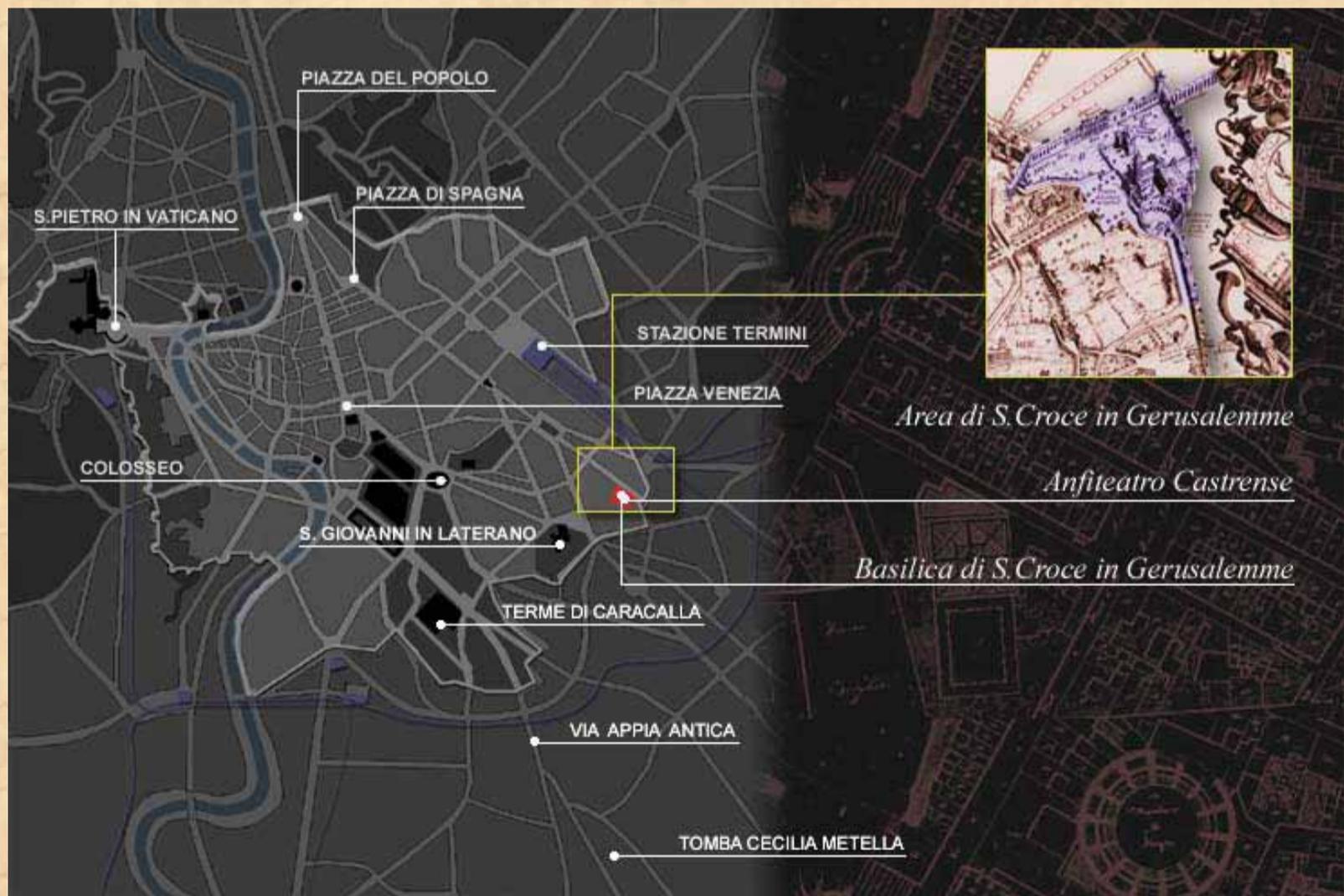
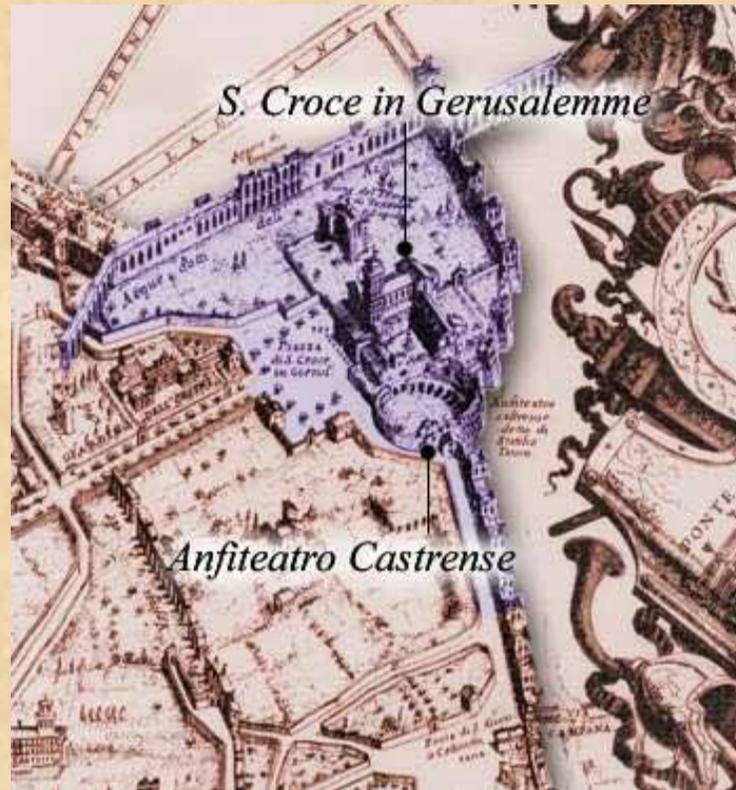






# *The Santa Croce Area*

By Maria Grazia Nini



In Roman times the area between the Porta Maggiore and Piazza Santa Croce in Gerusalemme was known as *ad spem Veterem* (“to Speranza Vecchia”) since it held a small temple dedicated to that deity, built in the early republican era.

The spot had the characteristic of being slightly above the rest of the city, and for this reason many aqueducts flowed there, coming from the south-east area of the Roman countryside. The first of these was the *Anio Vetus*, built in 275 BC, and most of it ran underground. In 144 BC another aqueduct was built, the *Aqua Marcia*, of which some arcades in tufa blocks have survived in Piazzale Labicano. Its capacity was increased by adding a second duct, the *Aqua Tepula*, in 125 BC, and by the *Aqua Iulia* in 33 BC, built by Agrippa. These three aqueducts entered the city slightly to the north, after having crossed Via Tiburtina over a monumental arch from the Augustan era, which was later transformed into Porta Tiburtina of the Mura Aureliane (271-275 AD).

The present Porta Maggiore is also one of the gates of the Aurelian Wall, which integrated the two monumental arches over which the Acquedotto Claudio crossed Via Prenestina and Via Labicana. The arcades support two ducts, the *Aqua Claudia* and the *Aqua Novus*, both of which were begun by Emperor Caligula and finished by Claudius (32-52 AD). The Acquedotto Claudio was extended by Nero to supply the Domus Aurea on the **Oppian Hill**, and then by Domitian as far as the Domus Flavia-Augustana on the **Palatine**.

The Porta Maggiore is built in blocks of travertine, with the technique of rustic ashlar-work, typical of the Claudian era. On each of the three pylons there is an aperture framed by Corinthian half-columns and topped by a tympanum. On the high attic, inside which the water ducts run, there are three inscriptions, the first commemorating its building by Claudius, while the other two concern its restorations by Vespasian and Tito (71 and 81 AD).

In 1838 the bastion which reinforced the external side of the gate, dating back to Emperor Onorio (403 AD), was demolished.

At this time the inscription bearing the name of Onorio was put on the left side of the gate, and the Sepolcro di Eurisace, which had been hidden in the fortifications, was uncovered.

It is an original funereal monument belonging to a rich baker, who lived in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. All of the components of the sepulcher refer to his profession : firstly the cylindrical architectonic elements, which imitate the flour jars, then the frieze in the upper part of the monument, which depicts the various phases of bread-making, and the inscription, which refers to the urn, in the shape of a kneading trough, containing



the ashes of the wife of Eurisace (now in the National Roman Museum). The relief, with its portraits of the couple, which was originally in the center of the eastern façade, is now in the New Capitoline Museum.

In the area we can see the remains of the graves, and below today's ground level, there is a hypogeum known as the underground Basilica of Porta Maggiore. Scholars still disagree about how to interpret this monument, which was discovered in 1917. It has been dated as belonging to the era of Tiberius and Claudius, judging by the building technique and the decorative style in stucco, today almost completely lost, due to humidity and continuous vibrations. Divided into three naves by six pillars, it has a vestibule in front and an apse at the back, and the floor is in black and white mosaics. The vaults of the atrium and of the naves are decorated with decorated stucco panels, depicting mythological scenes which have inspired some to think that the basilica was the sanctuary for a neo-pythagorean cult, popular at that time in the aristocracy. Another hypothesis is that it was a funereal basilica.

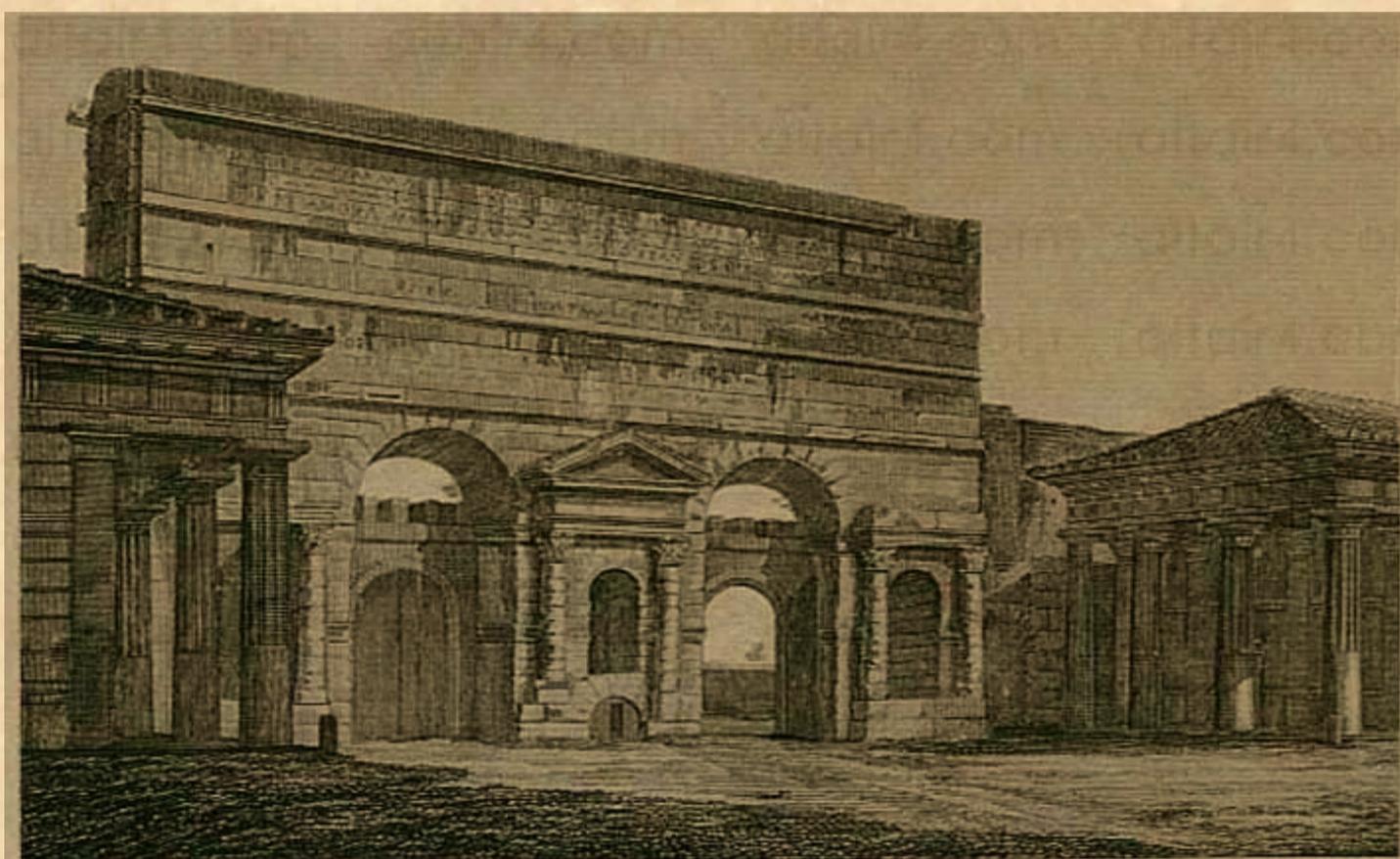
From Porta Maggiore the Aurelian Wall turns southeast to include the area of Sessorium, the imperial palace built by Septimius Severus (193-211 A.D.), part of which was the Castrense amphitheater, incorporated within the walls. The palace was the residence of the Emperess Elena, the mother of Constantine, the former probably ensuring the consecration of the **Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme**.





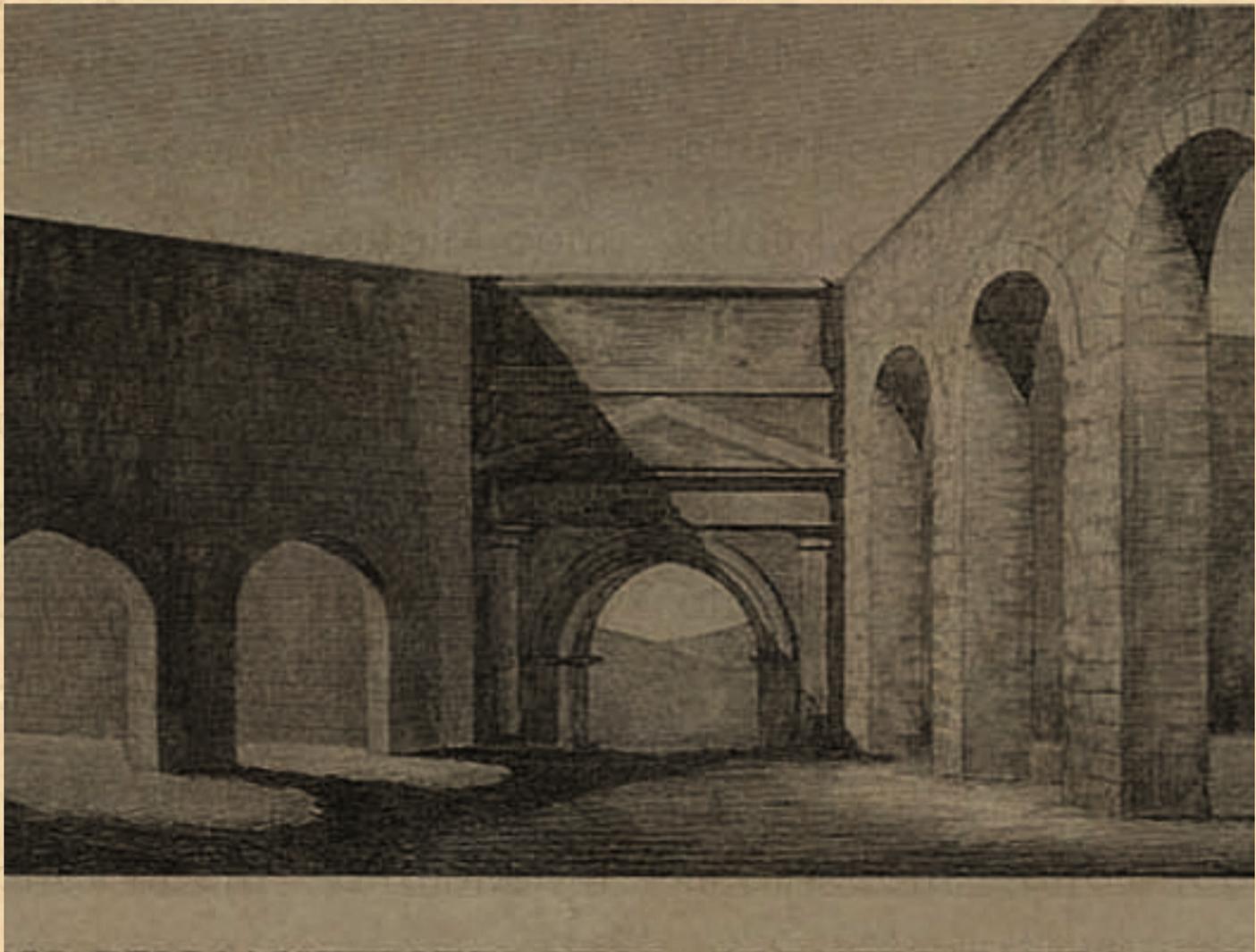
VEDUTA DELLA PARTE INTERNA DELLA PORTA TIBURTINA DI S. LORENZO  
CON L'ACQVEDOTTO DELLE ACQUE GIULIA TEPVLA E MARCIA

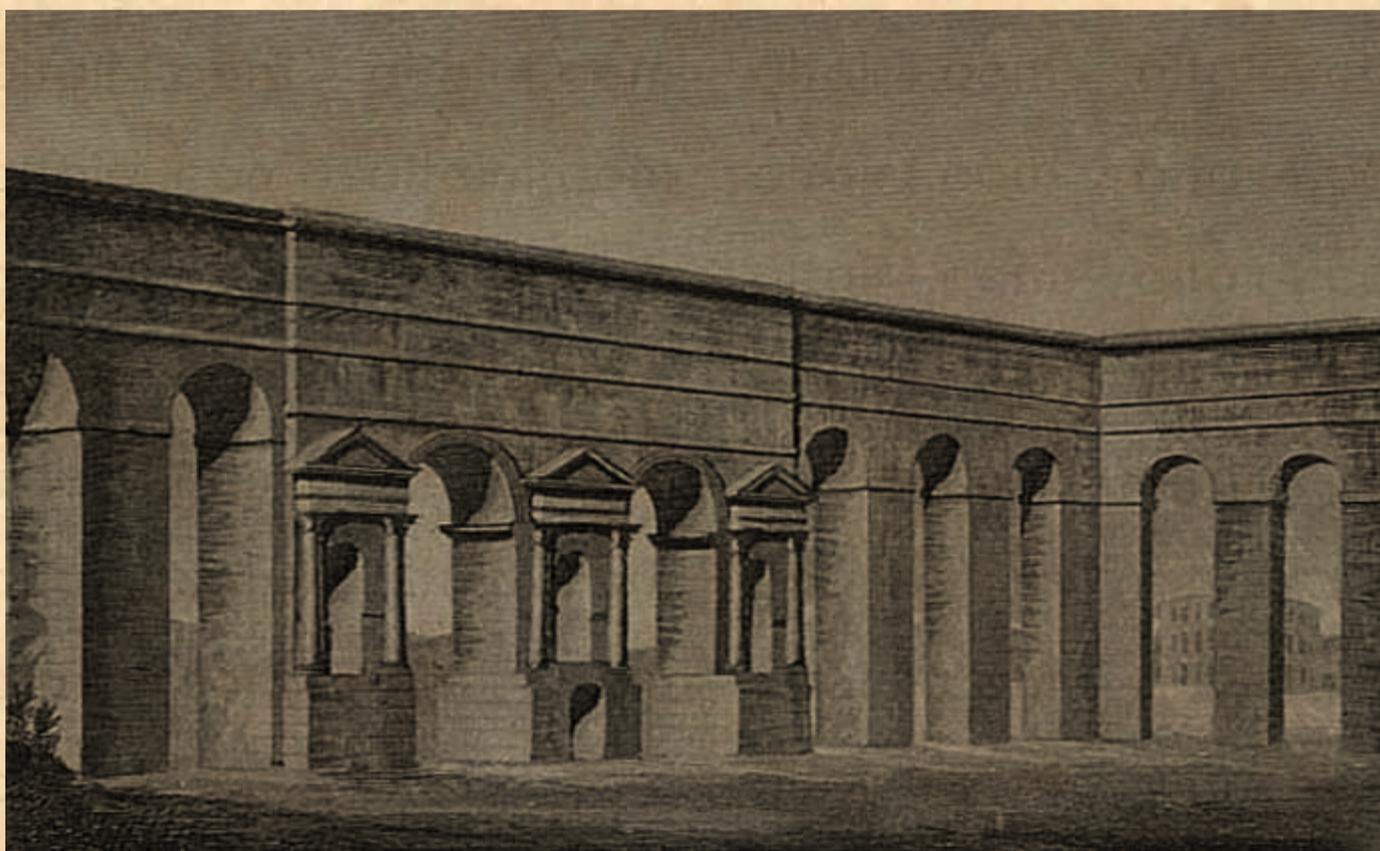




VEDUTA DELLA PARTE INTERNA DELLA PORTA MAGGIORE  
CON L'ACQUEDOTTO DELLE ACQUE CLAVDIA ED ANIENE NUOVA.

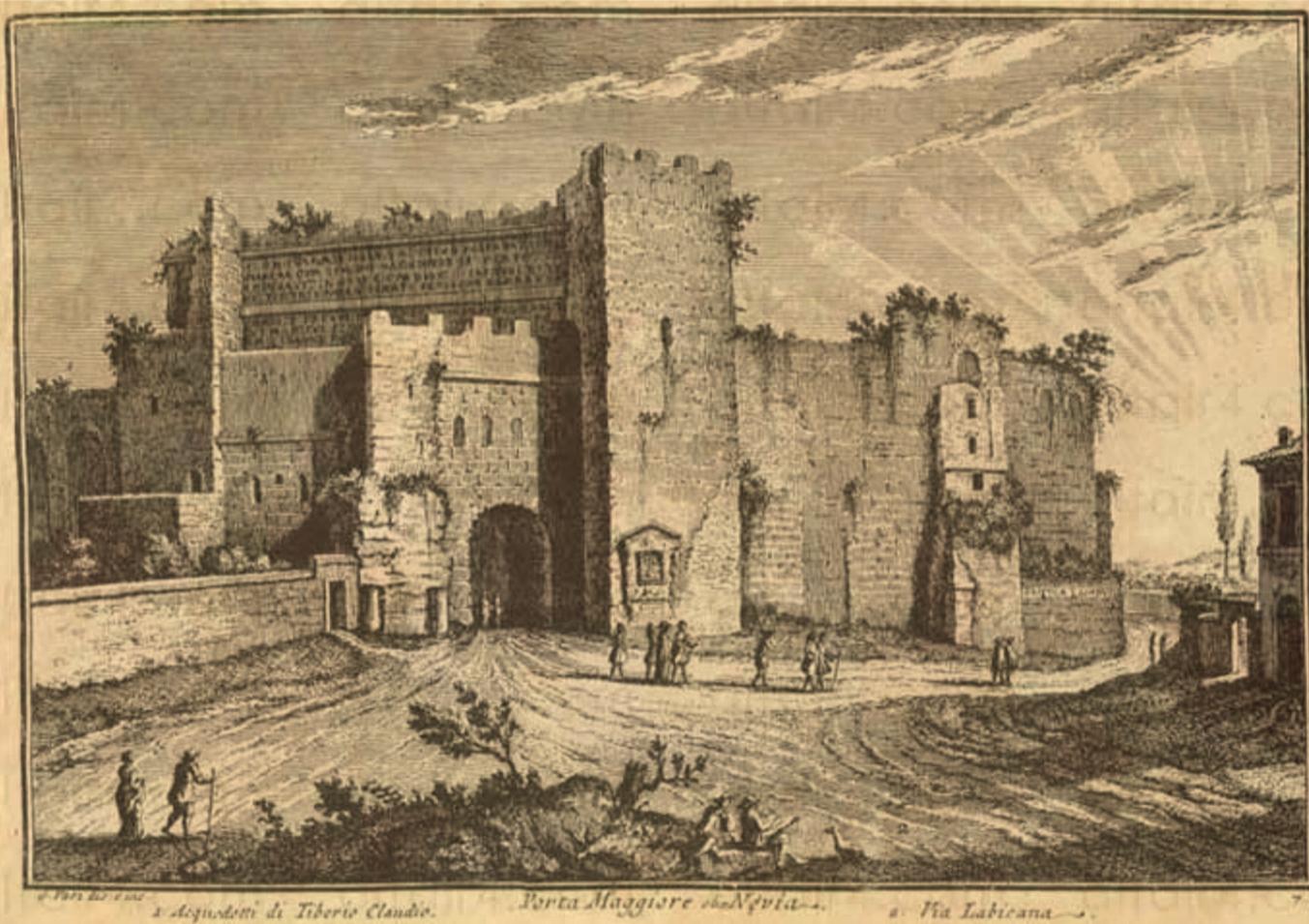






ARCHI DELL'ACQVEDOTTO DELL'ANIENE NUOVO, ED ACQVA CLAVDIA  
ERETTI SVL TRAPASSO DELLA VIA PRENESTINA





*Porta Maggiore* *Acquedotti di Tiberio Claudio* *Porta Maggiore della Nerva* *Ria Labicana*



# *Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme*

By Sabina Carbonara



The church, at the foot of the Esquiline Hill, is imbued with a deeply spiritual character that draws upon the very essence of Christianity; it houses relics that, according to age old tradition, are part of the True Cross of Christ, which were carried to Rome by Constantine's mother, Helena.

The figure of the first Christian Emperor is in fact closely bound to the history of the Basilica and endows it with a universal aura based on the myth of Rome *Hierusalem secunda* (Second Jerusalem). That is why the Basilica is one of the Seven Churches of Jubilee pilgrimages, and why the popes have always held it in special regard.

Yet the impressive image of the Basilica as seen today is mostly due to the radical renovations which Pope Benedict XIV had ordered between 1741 and 1744. These resulted in one of the most representative expressions of architectural achievement in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century church attests to an important phase, though only a phase, of a process which began fourteen centuries earlier with the transformation of a great empire which is closely linked with the history of the basilica.



Thus, rather than speaking of the founding of the church, one must consider the vicissitudes which the original Basilica of the true Cross underwent as various interpretations were applied through alterations, additions, and renovations.

According to an ancient tradition the Basilica was founded by Helena to hold the relics of the True Cross which she had brought back from her voyage to Palestine. To this end a portion of the Sessorian Palace (from the Latin, *sessio* = seat) was transformed.

The Sessorian Basilica was dedicated by Pope Sylvester I (314 - 335) to the Holy Cross, then restored in the 8<sup>th</sup> century by Popes Gregory II and Adrian I.

Benedict VII founded the monastery in 983, and Leo IX entrusted it to the Benedictine Brothers in 1049. The *Canonici Regolari di San Frediano di Lucca* entered the monastery in 1062.

In the twelfth century Pope Lucius II was concerned about the dilapidated condition of the Basilica, and he undertook a major restoration program in which the present-day brick bell tower was built, as well as a portico very similar to that found at the church of Saints John and Paul.

Thus, the Basilica became one of the finest examples of the revival of paleo-Christian architecture that, after its clearest expression during the pontificate of Paschal II (1099 – 1118), continued throughout the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Lucius II had the monastery renovated in order to assure that the church would be well maintained after it had been completely restored.

In 1370 Pope Urban V had further restorations carried out and entrusted the monastery to the Cistercian order.

The Spanish Cardinal Carvajal had important work done on the monastery and the church in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. These included above all the wall decorations and the roof of the nave.

The Cardinal commissioned two decorative cycles that are of great importance for the understanding of 15<sup>th</sup> century Roman figurative arts. The first is a mosaic in the Saint Helena Chapel (founded by Costantine) which stands at the end of the right nave. The mosaic on the chapel ceiling was done by the painter Melozzo da Forlì (around 1484). It has since been restored by Baldassare Peruzzi, then by Francesco Zucchi, and is of great beauty to this day. It depicts Christ Pantocrator in a tondo, surrounded by the Evangelists and four stories of the true Cross framed in elliptical forms. Beneath one of the arches, Saint Sylvester, Saint Helena, and Cardinal Carvajal in adoration of the Cross are depicted, as well as the symbols of the Passion. Beneath another arch Saint Peter, Saint Paul and the *Agnus Dei* appear.



The painter Niccolò Circignani executed a fresco cycle dedicated to the True Cross on the chapel walls and entrance portal at the end of the 1500s. Cardinal Albert of Austria (1601-1602) who commissioned the frescoes later employed the Flemish painter Peter Paul Rubens to paint three altar pieces for the chapel. One of the pieces, The Raising of the Cross, was substituted by a copy thirteen years after it was created. This and the other two paintings, depicting Saint Helena with the Sacred Wood, and Christ Crowned with Thorns, are now in France in the Chapel of the Petit Paris in Grasse.

There is a statue of a Roman woman transformed into Saint Helena on the chapel altar. The earth from Calvary is buried beneath the chapel floor. It had been brought to Rome, together with the other holy relics of Christ's Passion, by Constantine's mother, thus the Basilica's appellation, "in Jerusalem".

The second cycle that Carvajal commissioned decorates the curved wall of the apse. It is dedicated to Legends of the True Cross based on an eleventh-century manuscript kept in the Fondo Sessoriano.

Saint Helena's invention of the Sacred Wood and its later recovery by the Emperor Heraclitus occupy the main register, while Christ Pantocrator appears in a mandorla surrounded by cherubs on the dome of the chapel.

These frescoes were once attributed to Antoniazio Romano, but are now believed to be the work of an Umbrian workshop influenced by Melozzo. The work was completed in the last decade of the 1400s.

Cardinal Carvajal was responsible for two other works that were executed in 1523. The first is his own tomb. The second is the Gregorian Chapel at the end of the left nave and joined by a stairway to the Saint Helena Chapel.

The Basilica and the monastery were entrusted to the Cistercians in 1561, and they have been the officiating order until 2011.

Benedict XIV ordered the final and decisive metamorphosis of the Constantinian church for the 1750 Jubilee. The Pope undertook a general renovation of the church in 1741, employing the architects Domenico Gregorini and Pietro Passalacqua.

The twelfth-century tripartite interior of the Basilica was maintained, but the architects kept only eight of the original granite columns while the other six were incorporated into concrete pilasters.

The ceiling was finished by 1743. Two large canvasses by the famous painter Corrado Giaquinto from Molfetta were installed in the wooden structure. One depicts the Virgin presenting Saint Helena and the Emperor Constantine to the Holy Trinity, and the other depicts the Twelve Apostles in adoration of the Cross.



The work of Gregorini and Passalacqua also affected the exterior of the basilica. On that occasion the medieval porch was demolished and a new travertine front was built, that hid the Romanesque one.

The architecture is conceived on strictly geometric patterns. The façade is framed between two enormous lateral pilasters, while the convex portion stands between two simple pilaster-strips and is divided into three parts by two more full pilasters. The gigantic order supports a trabeation which bends to follow the curvature of the ground plan. A curved tympanum rests above the central part. Six statues stand above the balustrade. The outer-most statues represent, on the left, Saint Helena with the Cross, and on the right, Constantine, originally with the *Chrismon*. The four central statues depict the four Evangelists. There are three doors below. The two lateral doors are rectangular, while the central door consists of a stilted arch supported by two free-standing columns. A large oval window stands above the central door. This new façade is a bold reinterpretation of Lucius II's earlier portico.

The new façade does not cover the former structure but is separated from it by the oval atrium; one of the most noteworthy elements of the eighteenth-century modifications, and one of the most original creations of 18<sup>th</sup> century Roman architecture. The oval atrium is covered by a cupola, contains pilaster-strips and granite columns, and is encircled by a corridor.

Returning to the interior, the Relic Chapel is at the end of the left nave.

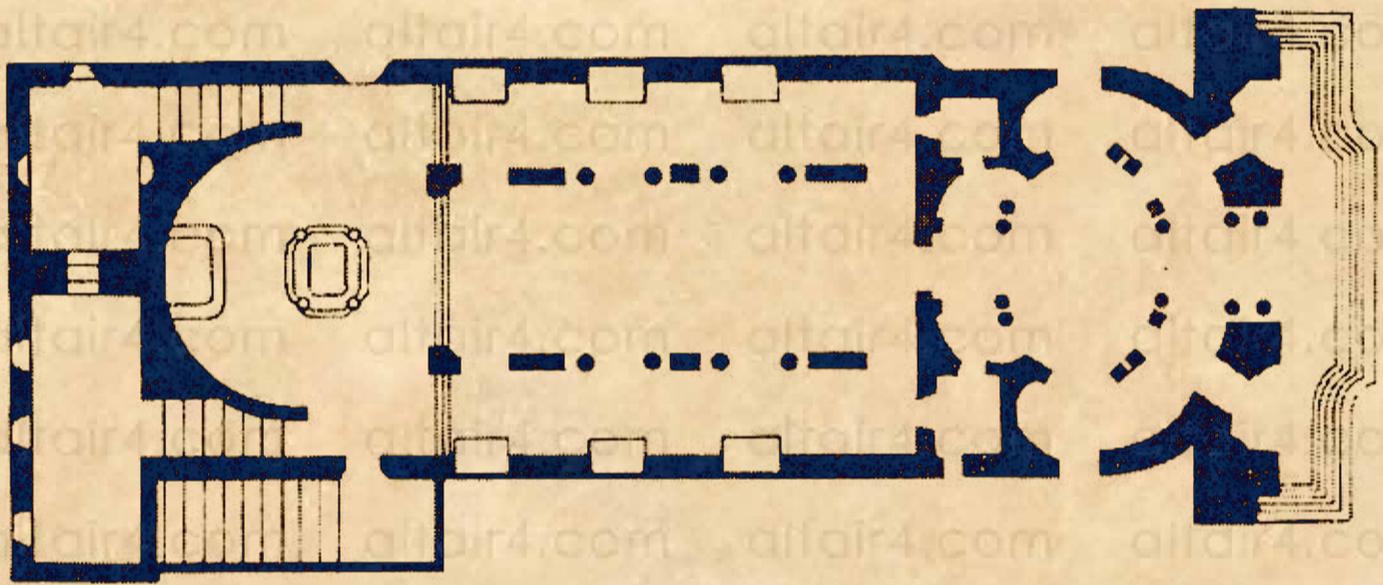
The Architect Florestano di Fausto built it above the Gregorian Chapel in 1930. This is where some of the most important relics of Christianity are kept: pieces of the True Cross, and other relics of Christ's Passion. The right arm of the cross of the Good Thief, who was crucified beside Christ, is kept at the beginning of the stairs.

Other interesting areas are the sacristy, the monastery, which was restored in the 1700s, the main room of the library, which was finished in 1724 by the architect Sebastiano Cipriani, and frescoed soon after by Giovanni Paolo Pannini. The remains of two older cloisters, that can be seen in the monastery, were restored in the 1700s. The fields that once surrounded the Basilica have nearly vanished. In fact, the Italian government expropriated the land at the end of the 1800s and had three complexes built there.

Today they house the Museum of Musical Instruments, The Museum of the History of the Infantry, and the Historical Museum of the Sardinian Grenadiers.

In 2004 in the Castrense amphitheatre the vegetable garden of the Cistercian monastery was recreated.

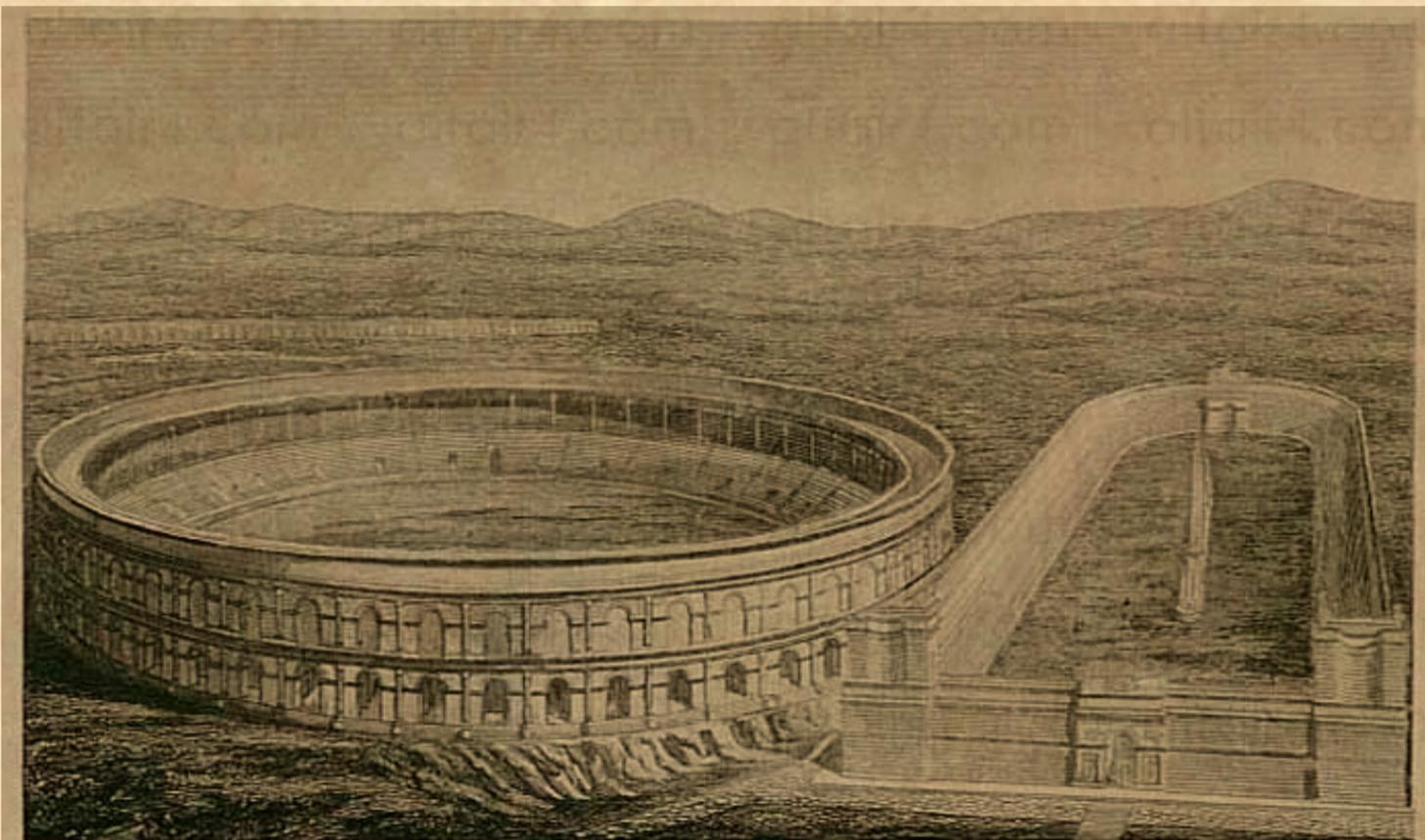






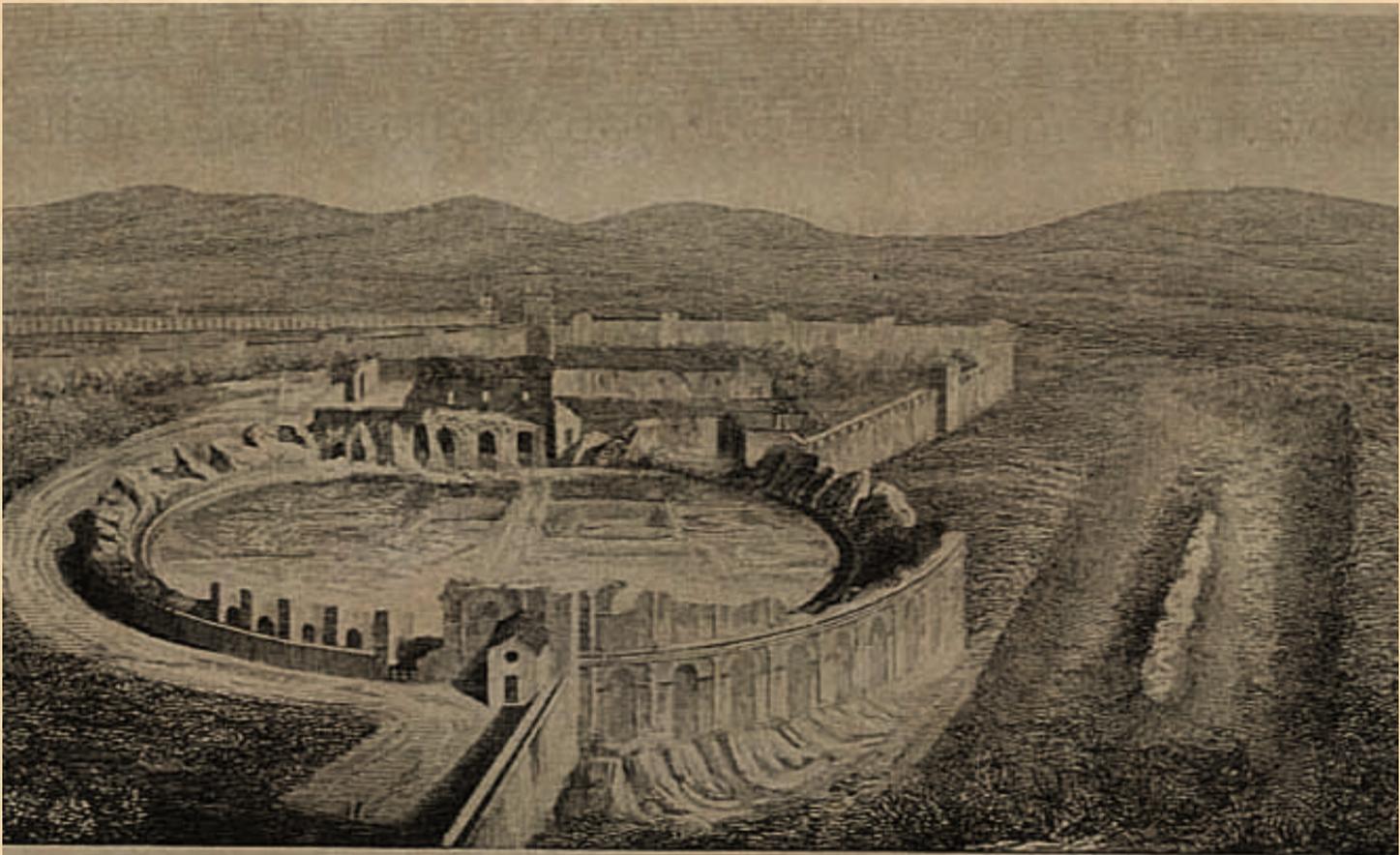
*Basilica di S. Croce in Gerusalemme  
C. Acquedotto del Aquila (Claudia), e Ruine del Tempio di Venere, e Cupido, e Parte del Monasterio de Monaci, Cisteriensi, e Via che porta a S. Lorenzo*





ESPOSIZIONE DELL' INTERA ARCHITETTURA DELL'ANFITEATRO CASTRENSE  
E DEL CIRCO VARIANS



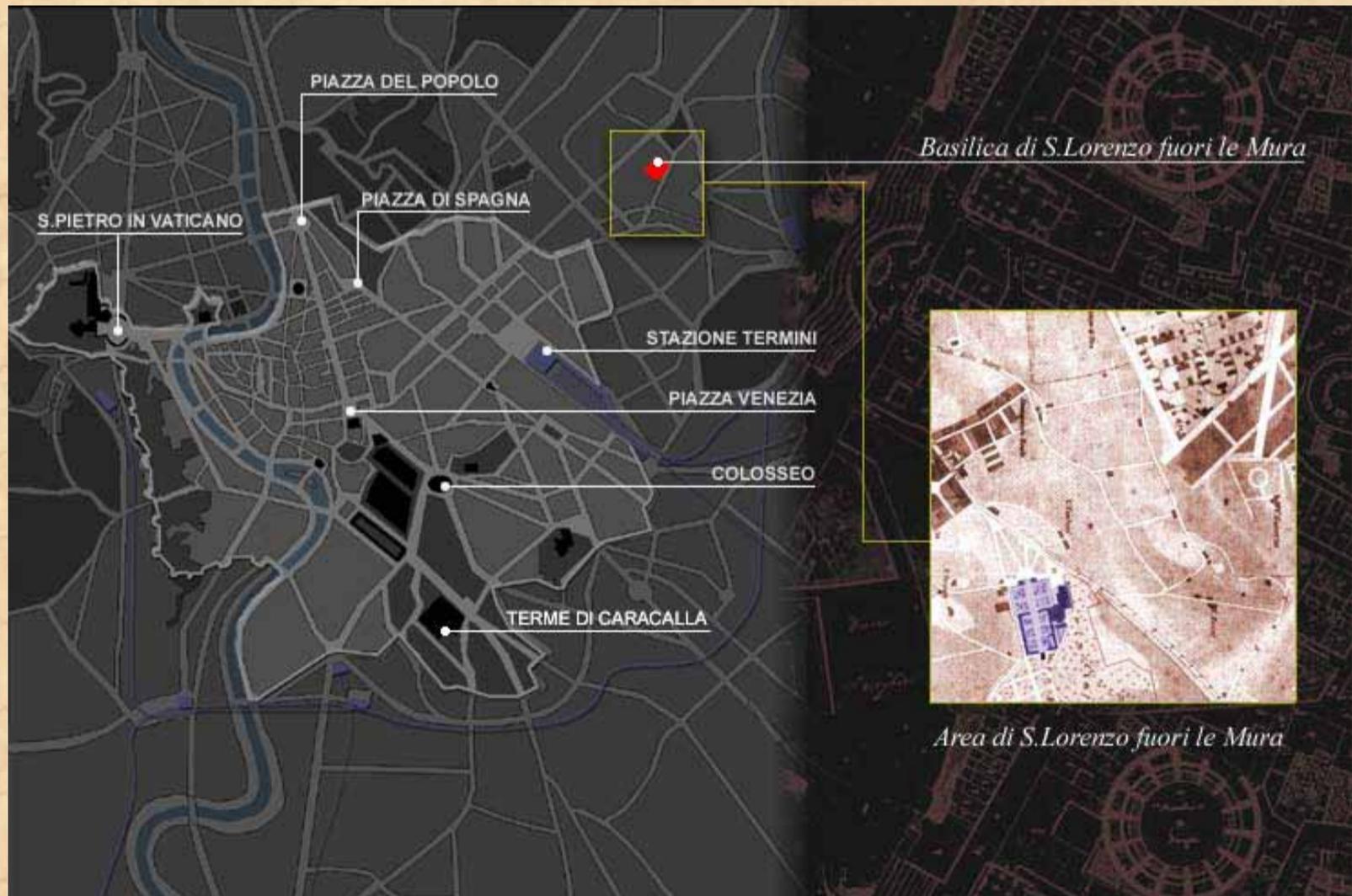
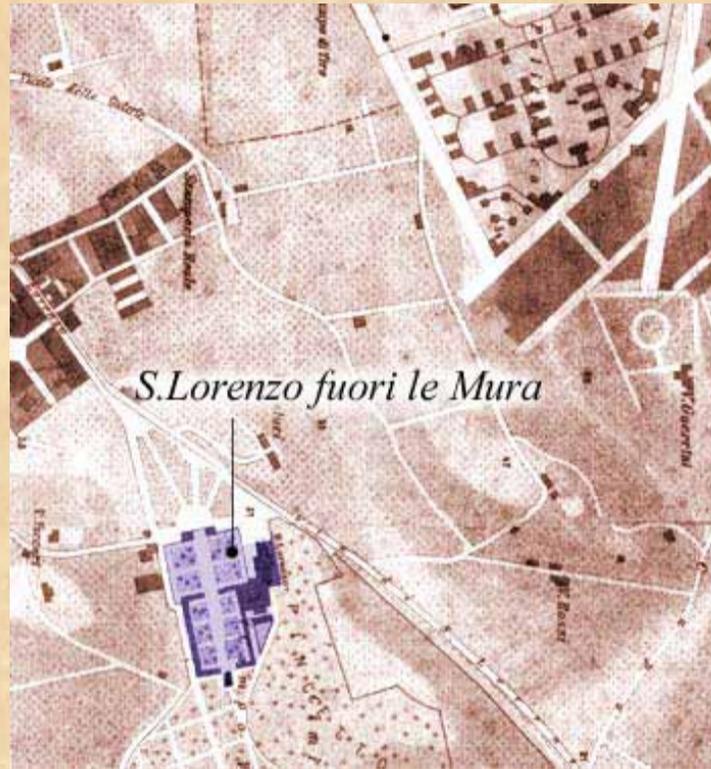


VEDUTA DELLE RELIQUIE DELL' ANFITEATRO CASTRENSE  
E DELLE TRACCE DEL CIRCO VARIANO



# *The San Lorenzo Area*

By Raffaele Pugliese



Once outside the city gate that bears its name, the Via Tiburtina, like the other consular roads, was flanked every since Roman times by fields, villas and burial grounds now vanished in the intense urbanization of modern Rome. The early Christians continued the Roman tradition of burying the dead in this area, digging several catacombs including those of Ciriaca (or Lawrence) and Saint Hippolytus, the latter extremely interesting due to the presence of a small subterranean basilica.

The most important of the catacombs is the one dedicated to Ciriaca, probably the owner of the land in which the catacomb grew up, later transformed into a martyr by a legend from the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The other name for this catacomb is tied to the figure of Saint Lawrence, a much venerated Roman martyr, deacon to Pope Sixtus II, killed during the persecutions of Valerian in 258. Saint Ambrose reported that Lawrence was tied to a red hot grate and buried on the land of a widow named Ciriaca.

The land was located *in agro Verano*, the vast plantation owned by Lucio Vero (161-169), friend and collaborator of Marcus Aurelius. It was on this land in the course of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century that excavation was begun on the catacomb, which continued to function until the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Although abandoned it continued to be visited and used during the Middle Ages and was sacked by relic seekers from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; it was partially destroyed when the modern cemetery was built. A center of worship perhaps tied to a cult of the martyrs was excavated in the area later occupied by the **basilica of San Lorenzo** (Lawrence). In a small cubicle in the center of the space a small tomb was found, perhaps for relics, over which, at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, a “well” was built, probably the work of Constantine, through which the faithful could see the tomb.

The same emperor intervened with respect to the tomb of Saint Lawrence, located in a simple crypt, which was enlarged and closed in by an apse lined with slabs of porphyry; the grave was protected by a silver grate and plutei, also in silver, while a descending and ascending staircase facilitated the flow of pilgrims; precious lamps and candelabra, donations by Constantine, illuminated the grave.

The crypt was connected by a stairway to a grandiose cruciform basilica built by Constantine (recently some scholars have moved the date of construction forward to the pontificate of Sixtus III, 432-440). The basilica was excavated in part in the 1950s and occupied roughly the present day area of the Verano cemetery, to the left of the entrance. The almost 100 meter long building was composed of three wide naves with a curved ending (ambulatory) in communication with the Via Tiburtina by way of five open arcades. The floor was occupied entirely by tombs, while the naves must have had an architrave in place of arches on columns.



The catacomb conserves few paintings including the interesting ones in the wall tomb of Zosimo: on the front is a painting of a garden with sheep out to pasture, closed in by transennae with busts on either side. The rest is subdivided in squares with Old Testament scenes: Jonah and the Whale, Moses, and then there is Jesus between two saints, and the Judgment of the deceased.

Spurred on by the frequent pilgrimages the cemetery was gradually transformed into regular urban agglomerate known starting in the 12<sup>th</sup> century as Laurenziopoli (Lawrenceville) and protected by a ring of walls. On the initiative of the popes of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries work was undertaken to build baths, hostels, two libraries, monasteries (Santo Stefano and San Cassiano), votive churches (San Gennaro and Sant'Agapito), a *praetorium* (a fortified habitation). A portico built in the 8<sup>th</sup> century welcomed and protected the pilgrims from the Tiburtina gate to the basilica. The little settlement inhabited by families tied to agricultural work, small merchants and artisans (souvenir makers and sellers), and by the monks dedicated to the custody of the sanctuary began to fade away, however, starting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, leaving few traces of its buildings in the artists' views of the time.

It was only at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> that the whole area around the basilica underwent an intense period of urbanization with the construction of the Monumental Cemetery of Verano, and then of a vast residential neighborhood and finally, of the university campus.

In ancient times the Via Tiburtina left the city passing through the Tiburtina gate in the Aurelian Walls, restored by Emperor Honorius at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and was also known in the Middle Ages as *Porta sancti Laurenti* (Saint Lawrence). The gate was restored in 1917 as part of a larger urban renewal project which affected the entire area. To the left of the gate, just a few hundred meters down Via Marsala, you can see the monumental wall of the Felice aqueduct, built by Sixtus V (1583-87) in tufa and travertine. On the right you can see the remains of the garden and villa Gentili (18<sup>th</sup> century).

Today the Via Tiburtina goes through the densely populated working class neighborhood of San Lorenzo. The neighborhood was built at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a residential area for the lower classes of the city, primarily sanitation workers, tram drivers, railroad employees, and members of workers' cooperatives. The houses are generally five stories high and built around internal courtyards. The façades are simple and nondescript, balconies are few, while the courtyards contain common bathrooms and passageways. The neighborhood was partially destroyed by the massive Allied bombardment of July 1943, and some buildings have never



been rebuilt. The modern church of the Immaculate Conception, designed in the Romanesque style by Strocchi, rises up among the anonymous blocks of the neighborhood streets.

Some 750 meters from Piazza Tiburtina you arrive at Piazzale del Verano, whose layout is the work of the architect Virginio Vespignani, following his restoration of the nearby basilica of San Lorenzo. The statue of the saint placed atop a high column is the work of Stefano Galletti (1833-1905).

On the left of the piazza is the beginning of the campus of the University of Rome, constructed under the direction of the architect Marcello Piacentini and completed in 1935.

On the right side of the church San Lorenzo is the entrance to the Monumental Cemetery of Verano. As early as 1808, during the French occupation and government of the city, the necessity of building a common cemetery was recognized in order to comply with the prohibition against burying the dead in the city. The architects Giuseppe Camporesi and Raffaele Stern were thus commissioned to choose a suitable site and draw up a plan. The first work began in 1811 but they were interrupted in 1814 when the French fled the city.

In 1835 it was decided to begin work again and Gregory XVI (1831-46) named a special committee, including the architect Gaspare Santi. In 1838 the proposal was made to surround the cemetery with porticoes and build new chapels. The work on this project was completed in May of 1840. In 1847 and 1848 two other designs were drawn up, one by Paolo Belloni and the other by Luigi Canina, but neither was carried out.

In 1855 Pope Pius IX commissioned Virginio Vespignani to do the work and he began immediately. Work was brought to completion on landscaping the terrain, building the protective wall and new chapels, the four-sided portico, the stations of the cross, the stair for the so-called Pincetto, the various infrastructures and the isolation of the nearby basilica of S. Lorenzo with its piazza. At the beginning of 1862 the cemetery was completed. In 1870 the entrance and right wing of the four-sided portico were completed, and the following year the direction of the work was handed over to architect Agostino Mercandetti.

The entrance portico is framed on the sides by two enormous blocks representing two altars, connected by an arched portico adorned with four colossal statues, the work of Stefano Galletti, Fabio Altini, and Blasetti. The statues represent Hope, Meditation, Prayer, and Silence. The quadri-portico is composed of 64 columns with



Doric capitals and in the center stands a statue of Jesus ascending into heaven, the work of Leopoldo Ansiglioni (1889).

The interior of the cemetery conserves the tombs of many famous people, such as the tomb of Goffredo Mameli (died 1849), carved by Luciano Campisi, the tomb of Ricciotti, the son of Garibaldi, that of Admiral Saint-Bon, and that of Vespignani; on the Pincetto, which is the most panoramic part of the cemetery, is the tomb of the archeologist Giovanni Battista De Rossi and the military shrine.

In 1883 the architect Gioacchino Ersoch presented a design for the Jewish cemetery which was carried out and completed in 1890.

Additional projects for the expansion and modernization of the cemetery were carried out in the closing decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.





# *Basilica of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura*

By Raffaele Pugliese



One of Rome's five patriarchal basilicas, San Lorenzo (Lawrence) is named after one of the martyrs best loved by the people of Rome.

The deacon of Pope Sixtus II, Saint Lawrence was burned alive on a grate during the persecutions of the Emperor Valerian in 258. The present building was damaged during the Allied bombing of Rome on July 19, 1943 but the sections that were destroyed (portico, central nave with frescoes, façade) have been carefully rebuilt.

The very large church, of monumental proportions, is actually a combination of two earlier religious buildings, the first built by Pope Pelagius II (579-90) and the second by Honorius III (1216-27).

When water damage and land slippage threatened the stability of Lawrence's tomb, Pelagius II intervened with a large scale project which called for leveling a part of the hillside where the tomb was located and encapsulating it into a great basilica.

The apse of that basilica faced Via Tiburtina with its entrance on the opposite side of the present entrance, and it had an atrium which led to three naves with the center nave particularly wide and luminous. The truly innovative feature was the presence of an upper gallery in the atrium and along the two side naves, whose entrance was at the same level as the top of the hill. Thus the faithful could look at the martyr's



tomb or participate in liturgical celebrations from above, up in the galleries, or down on the ground floor in the naves.

This system was later used in the church of Sant' Agnese in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, to facilitate the flow of pilgrims and faithful and give additional importance to the patron saint's tomb in the center of the basilica.

A series of splendid columns with plain capitals supporting intricately carved architraves with richly decorative vegetation motifs and exuberant cornices, separate the central nave of Pelagius II from the lateral naves and the atrium. On the upper level is the airy gallery with column-supported arches.

The most important work of art, however, is the splendid mosaic in the triumphal arch: Christ sits in the center on a sky-blue globe with a cross. On his right are Paul, Stephen, and Hippolytus and on his left Peter, Lawrence, and slightly smaller, Pelagius, holding a model of his church with his hands covered as a sign of respect. Below are symbolic representations of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The composition recalls the earlier mosaics from Rome and Ravenna. With the exception of Pelagius, who is rendered with more natural features, the figures stand angelically and impassive against the gold background.

The crypt with the tombs of St. Lawrence, St. Stephen, and St. Justin is situated under the elevated presbytery. The tomb probably dates from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The slab where Lawrence's burned body was laid is also displayed in the crypt, whose ceiling is supported by eight black and green columns.

It is believed that Gregory III (715-31) gave the church to the monks of Monte Cassino, who later ceded it to the monks of Cluny in 950.

The basilica did not undergo any major changes, except for many donated art works and liturgical furnishings, among which is the splendid ciborium with angular columns made of porphyry and a double order of small columns topped by a truncated roof of pyramids and cylinders. The piece, which dates from 1148, was used as a model for the one in S. Giorgio al Velabro, and was restored in 1862. An inscription bears the names of the artists and the patron who commissioned the work.

The most important modification of the basilica was done under Honorius III (1216-27). The breadth and architectural style of the design were based on great Roman basilicas built under Constantine.

Honorius III, who before he became pope had ordered work done on the tomb of St. Lawrence, used the Pelagian church as the presbytery (the sector dedicated to the altar and to the clergy and usually closed by the apse) of the new edifice, demolished



the apse, whose position is indicated by the circular steps added in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and added three naves ending in a portico looking on to Via Tiburtina. The new building thus reached a total length 75 meters.

The elegant portico, rebuilt after the bombardment from original pieces and recently restored, is the work of the Vassalletto, a Roman family of marble carvers, active in the XII and XIII centuries. Formed by six columns, four curved and two smooth, on high pedestals with splendidly carved ionic capitals, it has rich marble trabeation with one horizontal strip decorated with fine mosaics. Among the mosaics a noteworthy scene shows Honorius III presenting Peter of Courtenoy to Lawrence, after having crowned him Emperor of Constantinople in 1217.

The walls of the portico conserve a rich cycle of frescoes by Maestro Paolo and his son Filippo, dating back to the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The scenes are fresh, with bright colors and lively facial expressions, in the popular taste. They show episodes of miracles performed by Saint Lawrence and Saint Stephen.

Several other significant art works are located in the portico: on the left the tomb of Alcide De Gasperi by Giacomo Manzù, next to a sarcophagus with grape-harvesting putti from the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and on the right a sarcophagus whose cover is an imitation roof of a house.

The interior of Honorius's edifice stands out for its splendid colonnades topped with precious medieval ionic capitals on robust columns possibly brought from the ancient cruciform basilica of Constantine.

Innocent III must be credited, however, for bringing the work begun by Honorius III to conclusion in 1254, with the addition to the elevated presbytery of two simple side benches surrounding the main altar, closed on the sides by two lions, possibly the work of the Vassalletto family.

Several of the most significant works still conserved in the basilica are attributable to the Cosmati family of Roman marble carvers active in the XII and XIII centuries, from the magnificent and colorful geometric floor (braids, circles, squares), whose dominant element are the large round figures of red porphyry, to the raised pulpits in the central nave and the superb episcopal throne.

The raised pulpit on the right side of the central nave dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Formed by a trapezoidal front section divided into panels of red and green marble, and outlined by bands filled with mosaic squares, it has a suggestive lectern stand with an eagle gripping its prey. Next to it is a paschal candelabrum, with a spiral shaft, decorated with scintillating mosaics and the work of the same artists who did the pulpit. The left pulpit is slightly older and made of simpler forms in marble with



a large slab of porphyry on one side.

The episcopal throne, situated in the rear of the presbytery, was sculpted in 1254, and its surfaces are inlaid with porphyry and colorful mosaics; two plutei with spiral columns on the ends frame it on the sides, making it stand out. These are divided into two levels of panels, respectively green and red. The splendor of the colors and marble slabs is contained by an orderly composition.

The style of the Cosmati is also evident in the important tomb of Cardinal Guglielmo Fieschi, nephew of Pope Innocent IV, who died in 1256. The monument, placed on the right on the outside wall, is composed of a tabernacle supported by columns which, in turn, have a second order of little columns and architraves enriched with polychrome mosaics. For the tomb the sculptor chose a precious sarcophagus from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century with wedding scenes.

Beginning in 1479, the care and liturgical direction of the church were entrusted to the Lateran Canons who took over from the Clunian monks, and in the 16th century Cardinal Alessandro Farnese undertook work to embellish the reliquary and chapel of Santa Ciriaca, where he donated the altar with his crest. Placed at the end of the left nave, the chapel led to the catacombs under the church. The frontispiece, perhaps designed by Pietro di Cortona, is quite beautiful and there are two pre-existing funeral monuments: on the left that of Gerolamo Aleandri (died 1629), on the right that of Bernardo Guglielmi (died 1623), whose bust was carved around 1630 by the Flemish sculptor, Francesco Duquesnoy. A stairway leads to a room below which has an elegant marble relief with a figure of the Pietà from the end of the 1400s.

Opposite, but in the right nave, is the chapel of San Tarciso, once the former sacristy, later remodeled as a chapel in the 19th century. On the altar is a painting of Santa Ciriaca by the Bolognese painter Emilio Savonanzio (1580-1660?). Also on the left side is a painting by the Caravaggesque Giovanni Serodine da Ascona with the Decapitation of John the Baptist.

On October 1, 1855 the complex came under the care of the Capuchin fathers. A radical restoration was ordered by Pius IX between 1855 and 1864, directed by the architect Virginio Vespignani with the collaboration of the archeologist, Giovanni Battista De Rossi.

On the interior the floor of the presbytery (ex basilica of Pelagius II) was excavated, transforming it into a kind of great reliquary; the 15<sup>th</sup> century offered ceiling was replaced with naked beams; six 17<sup>th</sup> century side altars were removed from the lateral naves; arched windows were opened up in the basilica of Honorius replacing the



earlier windows; the gallery was rebuilt over the atrium or narthex, and new floors were put down in the galleries. Finally, the hill closing in the building on the east and west was leveled. The work is commemorated in an inscription over the triumphal arch in the basilica of Honorius III.

Frescoes were painted on the walls of the central nave by Cesare Fracassini and his students (19<sup>th</sup> century) with figures of the popes, saints and prophets. This is a work in the cold style of the academy with banal references to the paleo-Christian models. The frescoes on the façade were painted by Silverio Capparoni (1864) with scenes showing the founders and the restorers of the church.

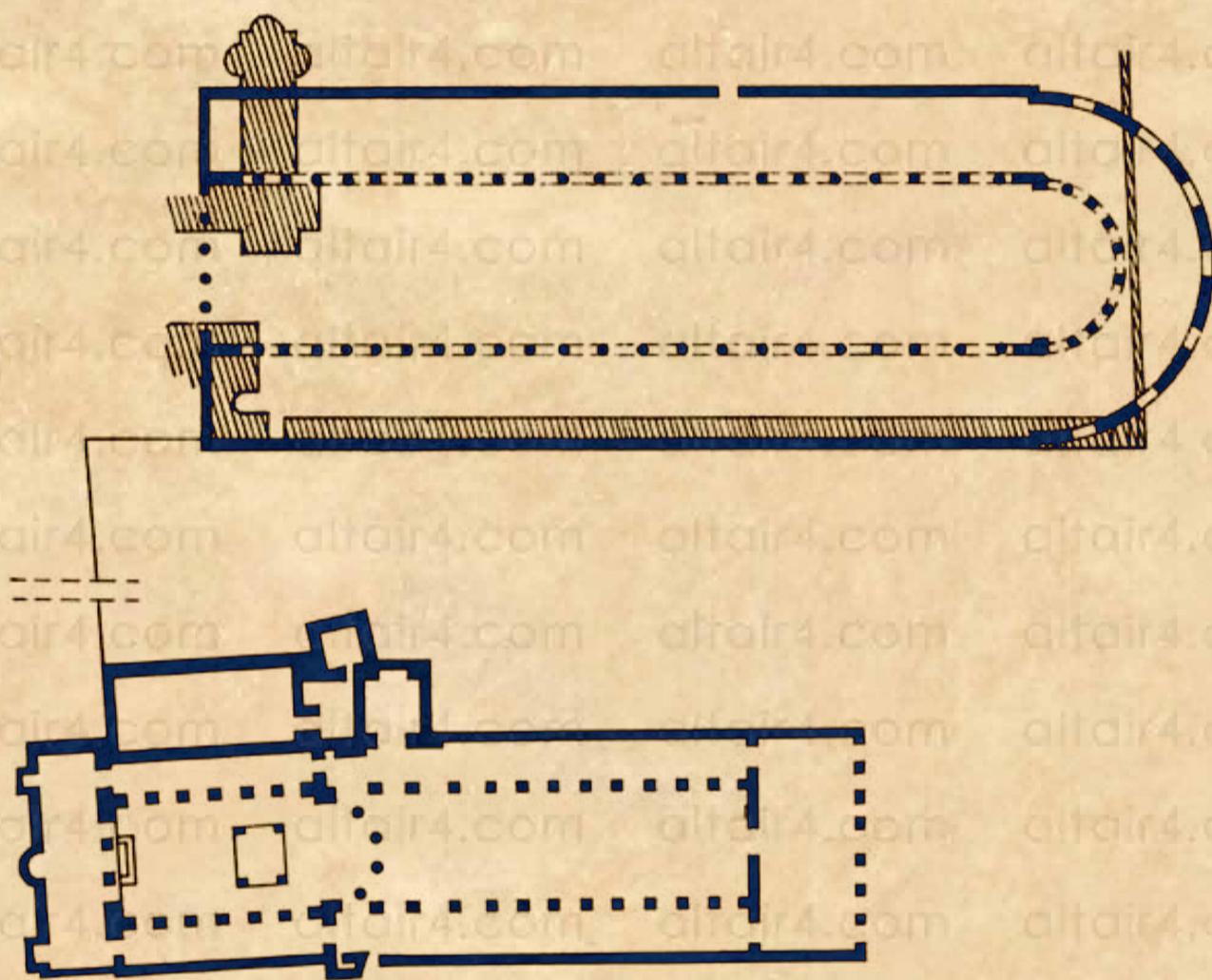
The spaces between the columns in the upper gallery were filled in by a balustrade and the chapel of Santa Ciriaca was decorated with reliefs. Lastly, it must be recalled that the ancient Pelagian portico was transformed into a funeral chapel by Pius IX (died in 1878 and buried there in 1881). Built by the architect Raffaello Cattaneo, it is magnificently decorated with mosaics in the paleo-Christian style based on designs by Ludovico Seitz.

Part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century modifications were destroyed by the bombardment of July 16, 1943, whose damage was repaired by a careful restoration carried out between 1946 and 1949.

Beside the church is the convent with a portico of elegant six columned arches from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, while atop the ruins of a tower, part of the ancient fortress of Laurenziopoli, rises a massive eight-story bell tower (middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century), five of which have mullioned windows, some of which have been filled in for structural reasons. Restorations of the bell tower were conducted prior to 1373 and then again in 1486.

Connected to the convent is the cloister, which is accessible from the modern-day sacristy. Dating from the time of Pope Clement III (1187-91), it is among the oldest in Rome, sober and simple in its structure, but not without charm. Small single and double stilted columns go around all four sides. On the upper floor, there are open loggias with columned and arched galleries.







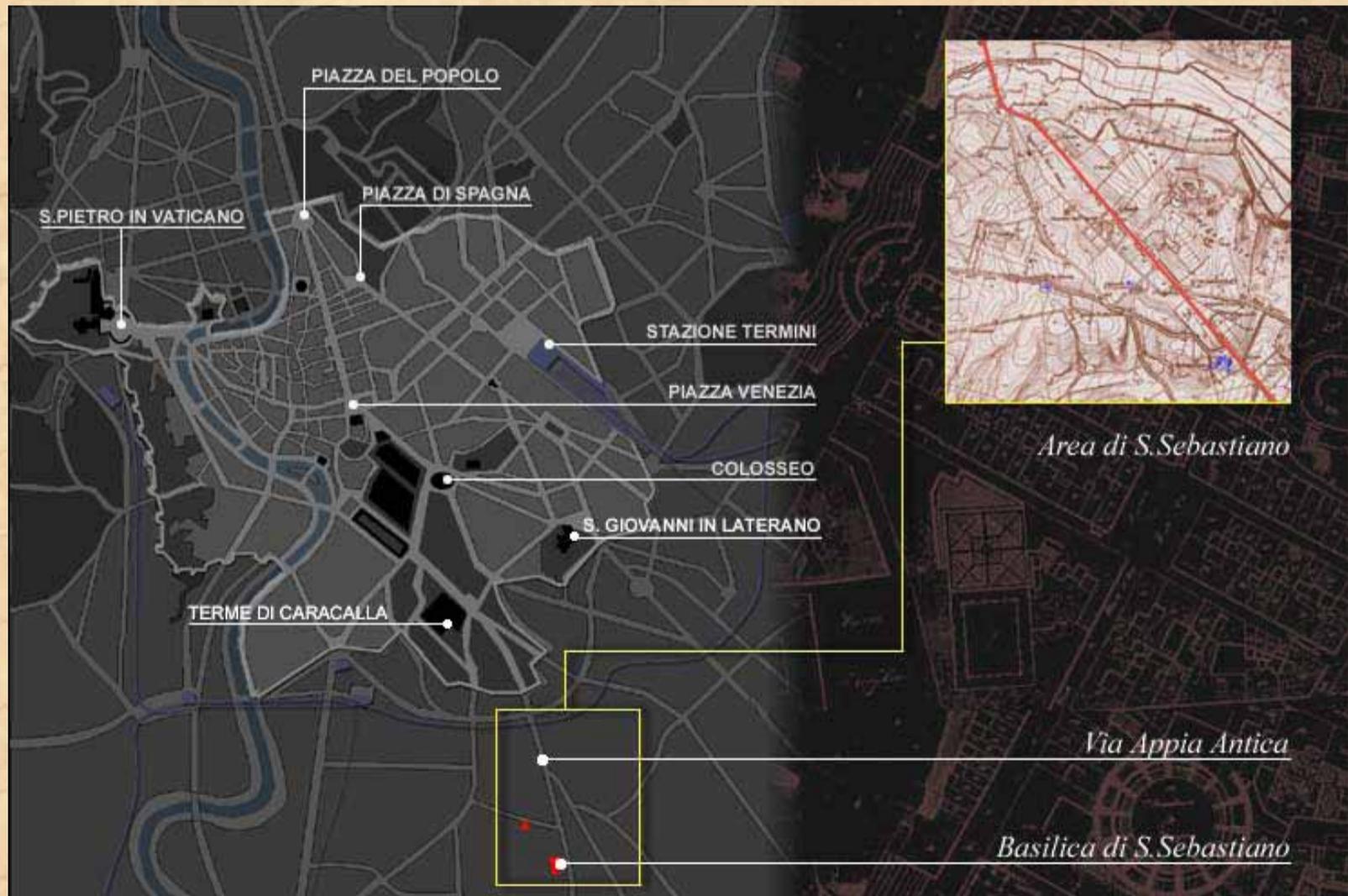
QVINTA ECCLESIA S. LAURENTII EXTRA MVROS VNA EX VII ET EST PATRIARCHALIS.

*Hac Ecclesia est extra urbem in via Urbana, constructa ab eodem Constantino Magno imperatore, qui vultu eius demum in ecclesia supra, quam papa  
 Honorius III a fundamentis manavit. Indignitate generis permissa a vobis Pontificibus sic concordante, sub Alari rectori in sepulchro fecerit cancelli circumstantis  
 sunt corpora SS. Marcellini celebratissimi Laurentii et Stephani, presbyterorum, et in Crypta Cyrilli sanctae femine vni statera Sanctae Corpora: vni plerumque 1600  
 SS. Reliquiae Habent hic RR. PP. Cantus S. Sabinae.*



# *The San Sebastiano Area*

By Raffaele Pugliese



The fundamental Roman transportation axis of the **Appian Way** was also valued by the early Christians because of the presence of several of their most venerated and visited cemeteries, and because of the many associations tying the Appian Way to memories of the lives of saints Peter and Paul.

The road maintained its transportation function into the High Middle Ages especially for the crowd of foreign pilgrims converging on Rome to visit the early Christian sanctuaries. After a while, however, the road fell into disuse because of increasing marshification, the presence of ruins and the spread of vegetation. Furthermore powerful families took possession of some of the monuments and transformed them into fortresses from which they asked travelers to pay high tolls. This was the case, for example, of the tomb of Cecilia Metella, surrounded by the castle of the Caetani family, the family of Pope Boniface VIII. The 1852 reopening of the Via Appia as far as *Bovillae* by Pius IX is marked by a cross-topped column in the little piazza in front of the basilica of San Sebastiano.

The itinerary of Christian monuments is highly suggestive and rich with history starting with the first section of the road before it leaves the city. The road began at the Capena Gate, not far from the curve side of the Circus Maximus. Right in front of the Baths of Caracalla is the basilica of Saints Nereo and Achilleo, two Roman soldiers martyred by Diocletian. The church replaced an older community center from the 4<sup>th</sup> century (the equivalent of a modern parish) known by the name *titulus Fasciolae* and linked to an episode in the life of Saint Peter. After escaping from the Mamertino prison Peter is supposed to have lost the bandage (*fasciola*) which was wrapped around the sores on his ankle inflicted by the chains; the bandage was then found and picked up by a woman and conserved in her house which was later transformed into a place of worship.

Recent archeological studies under the church have brought to light Roman ruins (1st-2<sup>nd</sup> century AD) including a house and a street, and medieval frescoes, but no trace of the paleo-Christian building. The surviving structure is a reconstruction by Leo III (795-816). The basilica has three naves and an apse flanked by two towers. An original mosaic of the Transfiguration is located in the triumphal arch, next to an Annunciation and Virgin and Child. The church was restored by Sixtus IV (1471-84) and again by Cardinal Baronio in 1597 in preparation of the Jubilee of 1600. The liturgical decoration and some frescoes painted by Girolamo Massei (1540-1619) are from this same period.

In front of the church of Saints Nereo and Achilleo, immersed in a wooded area, are two recently restored religious buildings: *Santa Maria in Tempulo*, built from



an earlier Roman structure, and close by, the basilica of San Sisto Vecchio, a parish church from the 5<sup>th</sup> century with interesting frescoes of the XVI century in the apse. Several hundred meters beyond the San Sebastiano gate you come to the little church of *Domine quo vadis?*, described in 9<sup>th</sup> century documents and restored under Clement VIII (1592-1605). The name of this church, which in Latin means, “Lord, where are you going?” is also tied to a legendary episode in the life of St. Peter. Here the fleeing apostle is said to have encountered Christ, to whom he is supposed to have posed the famous question and the Lord is said to have answered, “*Venio iterum crucifigi*” (“I’ve come to be crucified again”). It was at that point that the Apostle decided to return to Rome to face his martyrdom. The proof of the encounter was a slab of stone with two footprints, which became an object of veneration in the Middle Ages and which moved Petrarch to tears during a visit to Rome in 1337. In reality, the relic, replaced by a mold and conserved in the church of San Sebastiano, was a votive object widely used in the Greek and Roman world by travelers to make offerings to the gods for a safe journey.

Not far from *Domine quo vadis?* there is a small circular shrine erected by the English prelate Reginald Pole (1500-1538), proud antagonist of Henry VIII, in memory of the miraculous episode.

A little beyond *Domine quo vadis?* there is a fork in the road: to the right is Via Ardeatina, to the left Via Appia along which, after another 1.8 kilometers, you come to the catacombs of Callistus, one of the largest and most famous in Rome.

Beyond the catacomb, you come to the intersection of Via Appia Pignatelli, site of the catacombs of Pretestato, excavated at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century on land owned by famous Athenian politician, Herod Atticus, who lived under Marcus Aurelius and died in 177. This vast catacomb houses the remarkable gallery, known as *Spelunca Magna* (100 meters long) with elegant cubicles with brick façades and some paintings, including a very rare scene of Christ Crowned with Thorns (first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century).

After another few hundred meters, in a splendid position in the middle of the countryside, you come to the small church of Sant’Urbano. This church is a very interesting example of how, in the Middle Ages, ancient buildings became transformed into religious structures. The church is located on a piece of land known as “Triopio” (perhaps a Greek hero) which was owned by Herod Atticus and his wife Annia Regilla, where there was a vast villa with important works of art and places of worship, including a temple from the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, perhaps dedicated to Ceres, Faustina (wife of Antoninus Pius), and to Regilla. The temple had



a cell with a barrel vault, a front portico with four marble columns and brick walls. In the 10<sup>th</sup> century it was transformed into a church and dedicated to Saint Urban. Its interior has paintings commissioned by a certain Bonizzo in 1011 with scenes from the life of Christ, Saint Urban, and Saint Cecilia. In 1634 the inter-column spaces of the portico were walled up because they were threatening to collapse.

Returning to the Appian Way you come to the **basilica of San Sebastiano** with its underground catacombs, famous for votive offerings to Saints Peter and Paul as well as for the tomb of Saint Sebastian.

Just before you come to the church you can turn down Via delle Sette Chiese and then on to Via Ardeatina where you find the catacomb of Domitilla or of saints Nereo and Achilleo.

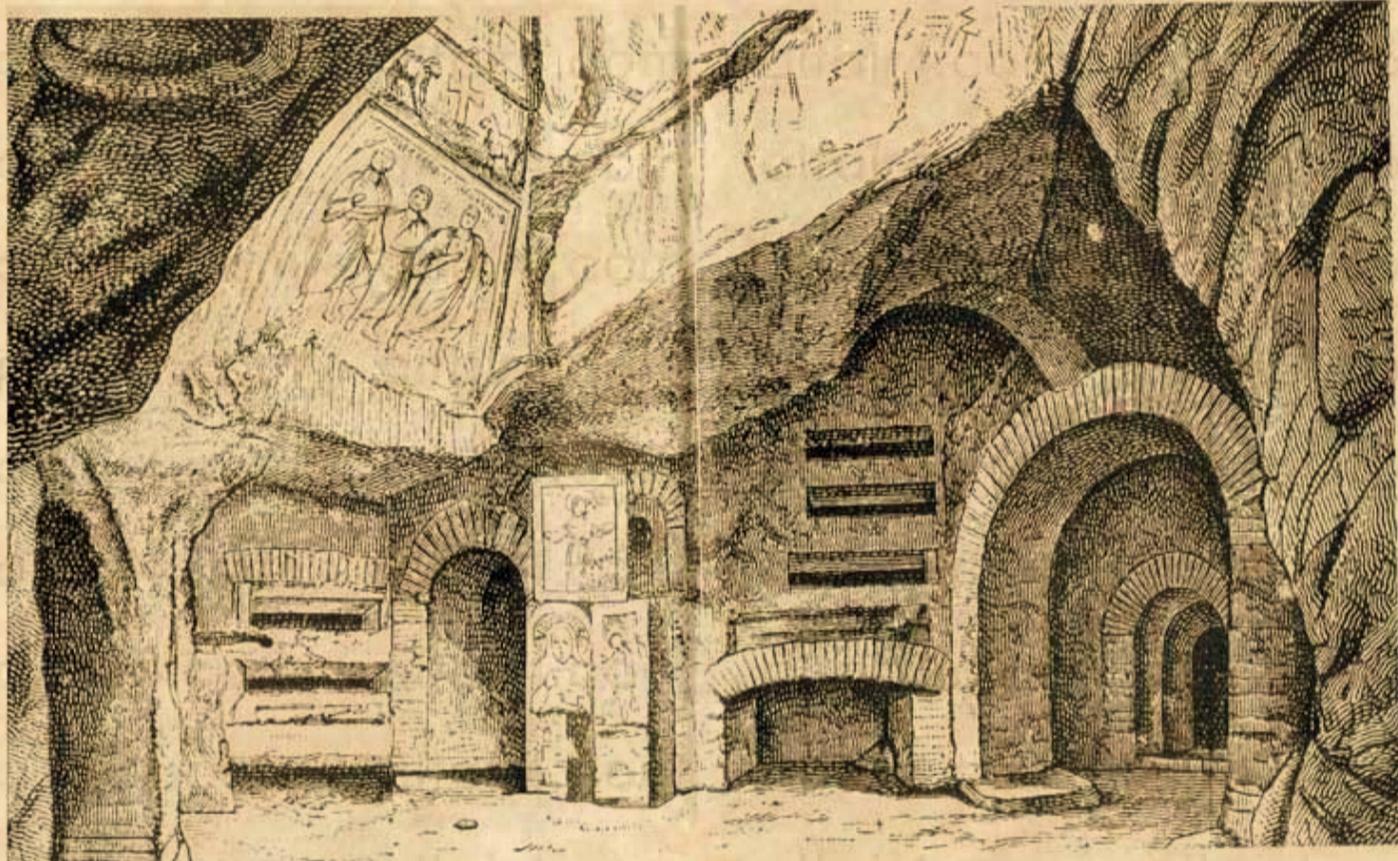


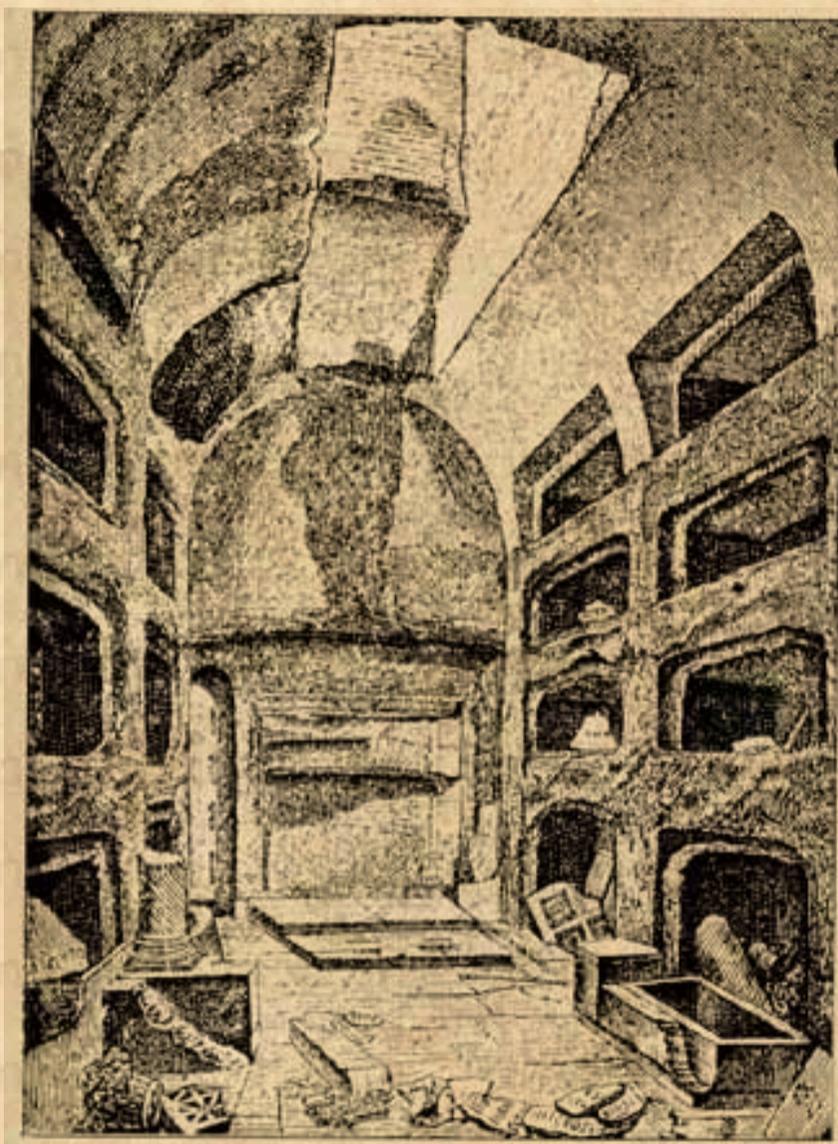


*Chiesa di SS. Nereo ed Achilleo  
1. Torre di Anonimo, Casacella, 2. Chiesa di S. Balbino, 3. Chiesa di detti SS., 4. Villa di Paolo Genari, 5. Chiesa di S. Sisto Papa, 6. Via Nuova.*









*La cripta dei Papi in terra nel complesso delle catacombe di S. Callisto (in basso a sinistra). Nell'epistaffio che sommonta l'altare è scritto: «Qui è la folla dei santi martiri che consacrarono gli altari di Cristo... e qui sono fanciulli e giovani e vecchie e donne...»*



# *Basilica and Catacombs of San Sebastiano*

By Raffaele Pugliese



This is one of Christian Rome's most suggestive and historically significant complex of buildings and it is easily reached after about a two kilometer walk from San Sebastian gate.

The area has traditionally been closely tied to the presence and cult of Peter and Paul dating back, according to ancient sources, to at least 258. Historians have been unable to agree, however, on the precise origins of this cult.

Some hold, on the basis of an inscription by Pope Damasus, that the two saints lived near the site; others, that their bodies were moved here from their original tombs (Peter's was on the Via Cornelia in the Vatican and Paul's on the Via Ostiense) to save them from possible profanation by the pagans during the persecutions under Emperor Valerian, which began in 257.

According to this version, the saints' relics were then taken back to their original tombs in the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

In any event, although the cult of the Apostles was predominant in those early times,



the new association of the church with the memory of Saint Sebastian, one of the most venerated martyrs in Rome, slowly began to take hold at least as early as the 9th century. Because of his Christian faith, Sebastian, a young tribune, was condemned by Emperor Maximian to be shot through with arrows. But he managed to save himself and was nursed back to health by a matron by the name of Irene. He then presented himself before the Emperor and was clubbed to death in the circus of the Imperial Palace on the Palatine, and his body was thrown into the Cloaca Maxima. He appeared in a dream to the Roman matron, Lucina, who buried him along the Appian Way near the tombs of the Apostles.

A catacomb dedicated to Saint Sebastian developed in the area and, together with the catacombs of San Pancrazio and Saint Lawrence, it has always continued to be accessible to and visited by the faithful. Among the famous pilgrims who have visited the catacombs are Saint Brigid, Saint Charles Borromeo, and Saint Philip Neri.

In ancient times the site where the cathedral rises was a deep valley, in Latin *ad catacumbas* (from which the term used to refer to all underground cemeteries) and was connected by a small side road to the Appian Way.

During the first century AD it was occupied by some pagan burial niches and an old pozzolana quarry used by the pagans as a burial ground.

In the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD the quarry was filled in with earth, raising the level of the ground by six meters, and forming a kind of piazza, which archeologists refer to as a “piazzuola.” Nearby, a luxurious villa, or “Villa Grande,” was built, with a courtyard and a well, paintings, mosaic floors, and marble marquetry (*opus sectile*). Looking on to the piazzuola were the façades of three elegant hypogea with underground burial chambers. The three mausoleums, from right to left respectively, bore the names of M. Clodio Ermete, of the *Innocentiores* or *Ixtùs* (in Greek the word means “fish” but it is composed of the initials corresponding to *Iesùs Cristos Teou Yuòs Sotèr*, or “Jesus Christ, Son of God Savior”) and the Ax. They were excavated out the tufa rock on two levels connected by stairs, with niches for vases of ashes or tombs. The façades are of intricate brickwork, with doors in travertine marble, and brick gables. The interiors are decorated with precious stucco-work and paintings.

Above the mausoleums a *solarium*, or terrace, was built, with a long bench and a small open space; structures related to the *refrigeria* or funeral ceremonies that families of the dead conducted in memory of their loved ones. Around 220-230 the front of one of the mausoleums, the one of Clodio Ermete, was painted with Christian themes, while at the beginning of the 3rd century AD a second small house



or “Villa piccola” was built, probably as a house for the guardian of the cemetery. Around the middle of the 3rd century, about the time of the Valerian persecutions of 257-258, the “piazzuola” was covered over and several structures associated with the cult of Peter and Paul, referred to by scholars as a *triclinium*, were built on it around a small courtyard.

The *triclinium* (a kind of open-air shelter) is formed by a brick-paved courtyard surrounded on the sides by a roof and long benches, whose walls are covered with *graffiti* or scratched inscriptions invoking the intercession of Peter and Paul. There is also a small mausoleum and a shrine, perhaps containing relics of the Apostles and referred to by scholars as *Mensa Martyrum*. There was also a stairway which led to an underground spring and another leading to a point above the triclinium. So this was a structure equipped to receive small groups of the faithful who came to visit the *Memoria Apostolorum*.

This monumental arrangement was later modified by the construction in the 4<sup>th</sup> century of a large, overarching basilica begun either under Maxentius or perhaps on behalf of Constantine or his son Constantius. The basilica had what was called a “cruciform” shape, formed, that is, by a central nave surrounded by a semicircular ambulatory, which recalled the form of a circus.

Several other basilicas of the same type have been discovered in suburban Rome: the basilica of Ss. Pietro and Marcellino on the Via Labicana, the basilica of Sant’ Agnese on the Nomentana, San Lorenzo on the Tiburtina, one called Anonima on the Prenestina, and the most recently discovered in the San Callisto district. All dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> century, their primary function was primarily to serve as large, covered cemeteries. Another characteristic is that they are all in the proximity of a tomb of a highly venerated martyr and to the nearby catacombs or imperial mausoleums, as in the case of Sant’ Agnese, Ss. Marcellino and Pietro, and the Anonima.

The basilica was more than 70 meters long and was surrounded by the mausoleums of wealthy or aristocratic Christian families. One of these is the so-called *Platonica*, believed in the past to be the mausoleum housing the relics of Peter and Paul. In reality it was a horse-shoe shaped mausoleum belonging to a family or to an association of Pannoni, the ancient inhabitants of the former Yugoslavia.

Towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century the body of Saint Quirino, the bishop of Siscia, was transported there, new burial niches were opened along the walls, and an inscription was carved in the wall in honor of the saint.

In the Middle Ages, the memory of the bishop having been lost, one of the burial niches came to be identified as the tomb of Peter and Paul, and it was thought that



Pope Damasus had etched a poem of his on a slab of marble, called the *plato*, from which the name *Platon* was derived.

Beside the *Platon* is a chapel built by Honorius III with paintings from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and on the right side of the chapel an apsed mausoleum was excavated whose walls bear an inscription with the words *domus Petri* (“House of Peter”), perhaps drawn by a pilgrim during a visit to the holy place.

The interior of the basilica was occupied by a multitude of tombs dug into the floor or into the walls on several levels of the semicircular apse.

Together with the *Memoria Apostolorum* a vast catacomb began to take shape starting in the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, with tombs arranged on a number of levels, in one of which was placed the body of Saint Sebastian. Later, perhaps at the behest of Damasus, his tomb was separated from the others, creating a vast crypt with stairs connecting it to the basilica above, and it became the object of numerous donations and embellishments. Among these is a marble bust of the martyr attributed to Bernini. Sebastian’s body was moved to the Vatican by Eugene II in 826, but Honorius III ordered it returned to the original site in 1218.

The presence of the saint and the desire of the faithful to be buried close to him in order to benefit from his intercession with the Lord, gave rise to an enormous development of the catacomb during the course of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. There are also a number of paintings among which a rare representation of the manger scene is particularly worthy of note: Jesus between an ox and a donkey and, above, a beardless Christ.

In 846 the ancient basilica was pillaged by the Saracens and in the 10<sup>th</sup> century it underwent its first significant transformation when the arcade of the central nave was walled up, thus reducing its dimensions. Alexander III (1159-1181) entrusted the basilica to the care of the Benedictines and work was carried out on order of Honorius III (1216-1227), including perhaps the construction of the bell tower, later modified, and a cloister, the ruins of which were discovered during later archeological studies.

In 1259 the Benedictines were replaced by the Lateran Canons, who were in turn replaced by the Cistercians at the wish of Eugene IV (1431-47).

Because of the poor condition of the ancient basilica Cardinal Scipione Borghese decided to carry out a radical restoration. The architect Flaminio Ponzio was commissioned to carry out the work in 1613 and he completed the design for the portico and the façade before his death. The work was continued by the Flemish artist Giovanni Vasanzio, who had already designed the beautiful coffered wood



ceiling with the statue of Sebastian in the center.

The façade presents a portico composed of three arches, the center one formed by paired columns, while the lateral ones have a single column paired with a pilaster. The frieze bears an inscription commemorating the works ordered by the Cardinal. Above the frieze are three large windows framed by pilaster strips, with the middle one bearing the Barberini crest.

The interior was laid out as a single nave orchestrated on the sides by arches and pilaster strips according to the architectural taste of the time, and the tomb of Saint Sebastian was covered. The reliquary in the first chapel on the right, contains what are presumed to be the footprints of Christ, brought here from the church of *Domine quo vadis?*, as well as the head of Saint Callisto. The chapel altar was decorated in 1625 at the behest of Duke Maximilian of Bavaria and it holds one of the arrows that pierced the body of Saint Sebastian.

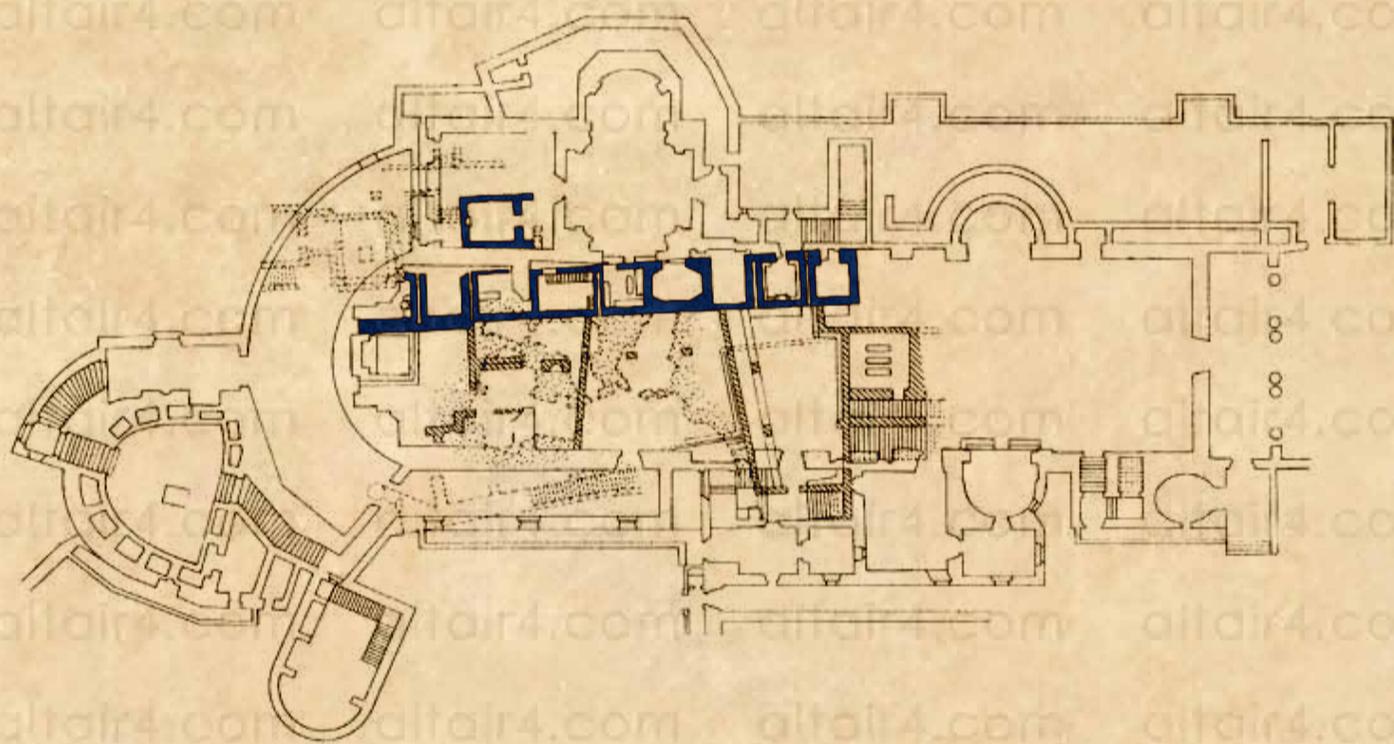
Later, in 1676, thanks to the munificence of Cardinal Francesco Barberini the altar of Saint Sebastian, designed by Ciro Ferri, was built on the left side of the basilica, over the tomb of the martyr in the underlying catacomb. The statue of the saint in a lying position is an extremely natural rendering, carved by Antonio Giorgini after a model by Bernini.

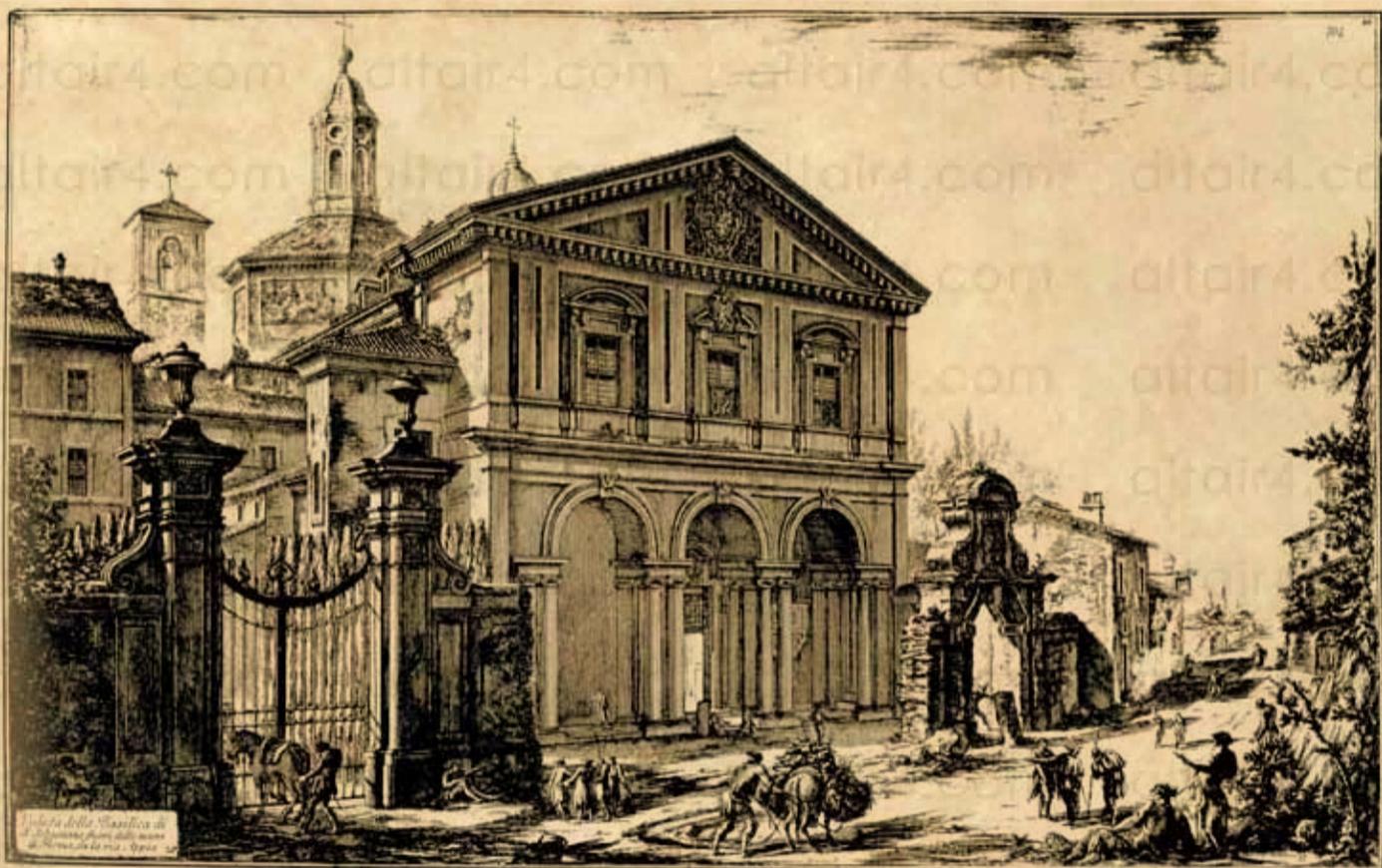
In 1714 Pope Clement XI had his family chapel, dedicated to Saint Fabian, placed immediately after the Chapel of the Relics. The chapel was designed by Carlo Fontana while the statue of Saint Fabian is by Francesco Papaleo. The painting on the right is by Giuseppe Passeri and the one on the left is by Pier Leone Ghezzi.

The main altar, built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, has four beautiful columns in antique green, while the fresco is by Innocenzo Tacconi from the school of Annibale Carracci. The paintings on the door and the upper right wall were done by Carracci himself.

Gregory XVI (1831-46) entrusted the basilica to the care of the PP. Minori, who have remained its custodians to the present day.







# The Appian Way

By Maria Grazia Nini



The Appian Way is the oldest and most important of the Roman consular roads and for this reason it was called *regina viarum* (queen of the roads). It was built by censor Appius Claudius Ciecus in 312 BC along a pre-existing path which connected Rome to the primitive villages on the Alban hills, including Alba Longa, the ancient city associated with the legend of the founding of Rome.

Initially the road went as far as the city of *Capua* (the present-day city of Santa Maria Vetere), then it was extended as far as Benevento (268 BC) and finally to Brindisi (191 BC), becoming the main line of communication with Greece, Africa, and the Middle East.

The road was paved in volcanic stone, was 14 feet wide, and began at the Capena Gate of the Servian Wall, near the Circus Maximus. With the construction of the ring of the Aurelian Wall, in 271 AD, another gate was its point of issue from the city, the Appian Gate, later known as the **San Sebastian** Gate, from the basilica that was built along the road.

In this first tract between the two gates, the route of the Via Appia is traced by the boulevard of the **Baths of Caracalla**, and by Via di Porta San Sebastiano, which conserves a funeral edifice from the Republican era: the Tomb of the Scipios. This tomb was rediscovered in the 16<sup>th</sup> century but restored only in 1926 and it dates to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. On the basis of the more than 30 inscriptions on the 30 sarcophagi found in its interior it has been attributed to the Scipio family, whose members held high positions of political and military responsibility.

The tomb, partially dug out of rock and partially constructed, had a façade, today almost totally disappeared, decorated with architectonic elements. Its base, in which three entrance doors open up, supported semi-columns and pilasters, alternating with niches with statues. The base was decorated with paintings of historical subjects, which recalled the enterprises of the famous figures buried on the inside. Among them is L. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus, consul in 298 BC, probably the builder of the temple, whose original sarcophagus is conserved, together with all of the inscriptions found in the tomb, in the Vatican Museums.

Beyond the San Sebastian Gate, the best conserved of the gates in the Aurelian Wall and today the site of the Museum of the Walls, it is possible to follow the route of the Appian Way for about 18 kilometers, which in some short tracts conserves its original pavement, etched with grooves from the cart wheels that rolled over it for centuries, and admire the ruins of a numerous structures originally built as residences, tombs or temples. Thanks to archeological studies performed in the 19<sup>th</sup>



century, and especially to Luigi Canina, the road and the monuments along its route were carefully studied and restored.

The first monumental complex that you come to was built by Maxentius and is constituted by the Tomb of Romulus, a circus, and the imperial palace. The tomb of Romulus, the son of the emperor Maxentius who died in 307 AD, was a round building with a diameter of about 33 meters, with a forepart supporting six columns. The tomb, inspired by the model of the Pantheon, was enclosed by a large rectangular portico. In the 1800s a farm house was built on its base.

Behind the mausoleum is the Circus of Maxentius: 512 meters long and 50 meters wide, with its grandstand still conserved, and two towers that marked the starting gate for the chariots (*carceres*), and the line of the middle divider. We know from original documents that it was richly decorated with fountains, columns, statues and seven eggs and seven dolphins carved in stone which functioned as lap counters for the chariot races. In the center of the track was the obelisk of the emperor Domitian, which in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was still in place though broken in several places. In 1649 Pope Innocent X had it moved to **Piazza Navona** and placed on top of the Fountain of the Rivers by Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

The circus is connected to the imperial palace, which shows evidence of three phases of construction prior to that of Maxentius in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, of which the oldest phase goes back to the Republican era. Among the structures it's possible to recognize two small temples (nymphaeums), a terrace lined with towers, baths and a room identifiable as the *Aula Regia* or throne room, in which the emperor granted audiences to his subjects.

From here you arrive at the Tomb of Cecilia Metella, the most celebrated monument on the Appian Way, both for its unusual form, due in part to its transformation into a castle, and for its suggestive location.

In the vicinity of the tomb, at the three mile point of the Appian Way, a village grew up which, starting in the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, came to be part of the Triòpio, a vast plantation owned by Herod Atticus, a rich and powerful figure of Greek origins, who held important political and honorary positions in the empire and who had inherited lands in this area from his wife Annia Regilla. After his wife's death, to honor her memory, Herod Atticus built a unified complex here, known as Triòpio from the name of a sanctuary of the goddess Demeter on the island of Cnidus, which was comprised of a residential villa, a temple dedicated to Ceres and Faustina (the wife of the emperor Antoninus Pius), a sanctuary dedicated to Annia Regilla, and other buildings and religious areas in addition to the above mentioned



village and numerous cultivated fields. It is thought that the villa may have occupied the site later occupied by the villa of Maxentius, while the Temple of Ceres and Faustina has been hypothetically identified with the temple that was transformed into the church of Saint Urban.

Beyond the fifth mile of the Appian Way you come to the villa of the Quintili. Known as Roma vecchia or old Rome up until the end of the 1700s, the villa occupies an area of almost 600 x 400 meters, and is articulated in various complexes. We know that it was the residence of the emperor Commodus who expropriated it from the Quintili family in 182 AD.

Although it was first rediscovered in the 1500s the villa is still the object of archeological excavations and studies aimed at reconstructing its entire floor plan and the intended use of all of its structures.





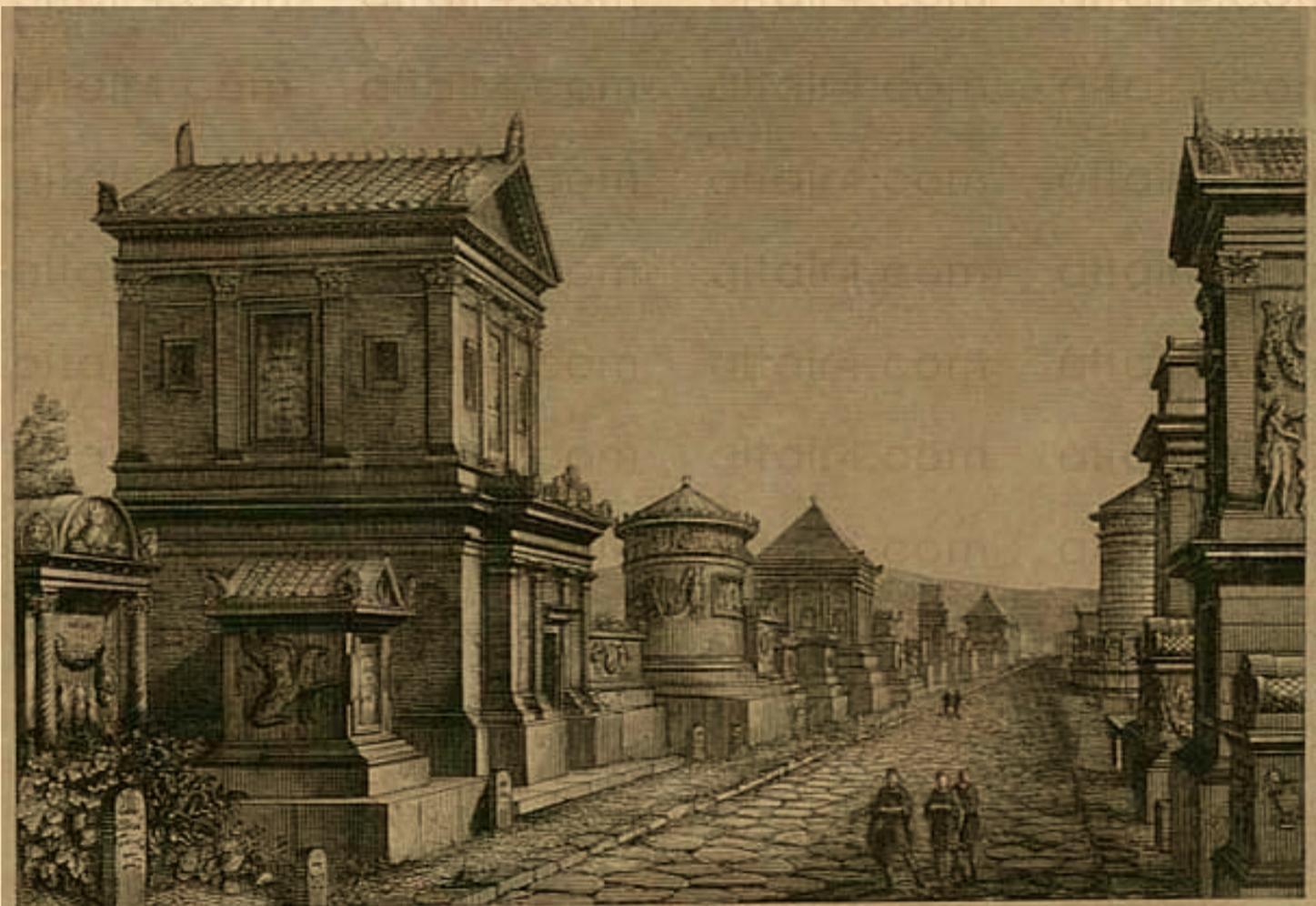
VEDUTA DELLA PARTE INTERNA DELLE RELIQUIE DELLE TERME  
DI ANTONINO CARACALLA





VEDUTA DELLE RELIQUIE DEI SEPOLCRI ANTICHI  
ESISTENTI DA VICINO AL QUINTO MIGLIO DELLA VIA APPIA





ESPOSIZIONE DELLO STATO ANTICO DEI SEPOLCRI  
ESISTENTI DA VICINO AL QUINTO MIGLIO DELLA VIA APPIA



# *Baths of Caracalla*

By Maria Grazia Nini



Also known as the *Thermae Antoninianae*, the imposing ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, built by the Emperor Caracalla between 212 and 216 AD, can still be seen today along the boulevard named after them in the low-lying area between the Celian and Aventine hills.

The second largest in Rome, after the baths of Diocletian, but certainly much better preserved, the baths were designed according to the standard model of imperial baths: a long central body (200 X 114 meters) contained a symmetrical arrangement of rooms specifically dedicated to the baths, and was surrounded by an outside wall (337 x 328 meters).

Along the outside wall were two large *exedrae*, or semicircular recesses, furnished with seats or benches used for conversation, and a grandstand similar to a section of seats in a stadium, which hid the enormous cisterns. An extension of the *Aqua Marcia* aqueduct, called the *Aqua Antoniniana*, was built especially to supply water for the baths.



It is known that the baths were still in use at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, when they were restored for the last time by the Gothic King Theodoric, before being abandoned after the Goths cut all of the Roman aqueducts in 537.

The entrance to the baths was on the northwest, where the dressing rooms (*apodyteria*) were located, along with the *palestra* or exercise rooms. Next came the heated rooms including the *laconicum*, the sauna room, leading up to the circular room of the *caldarium*, the room for hot baths, and from there on to the *tepidarium*, in the grand basilica, and finally to the cold water swimming pool, or *natatio*.

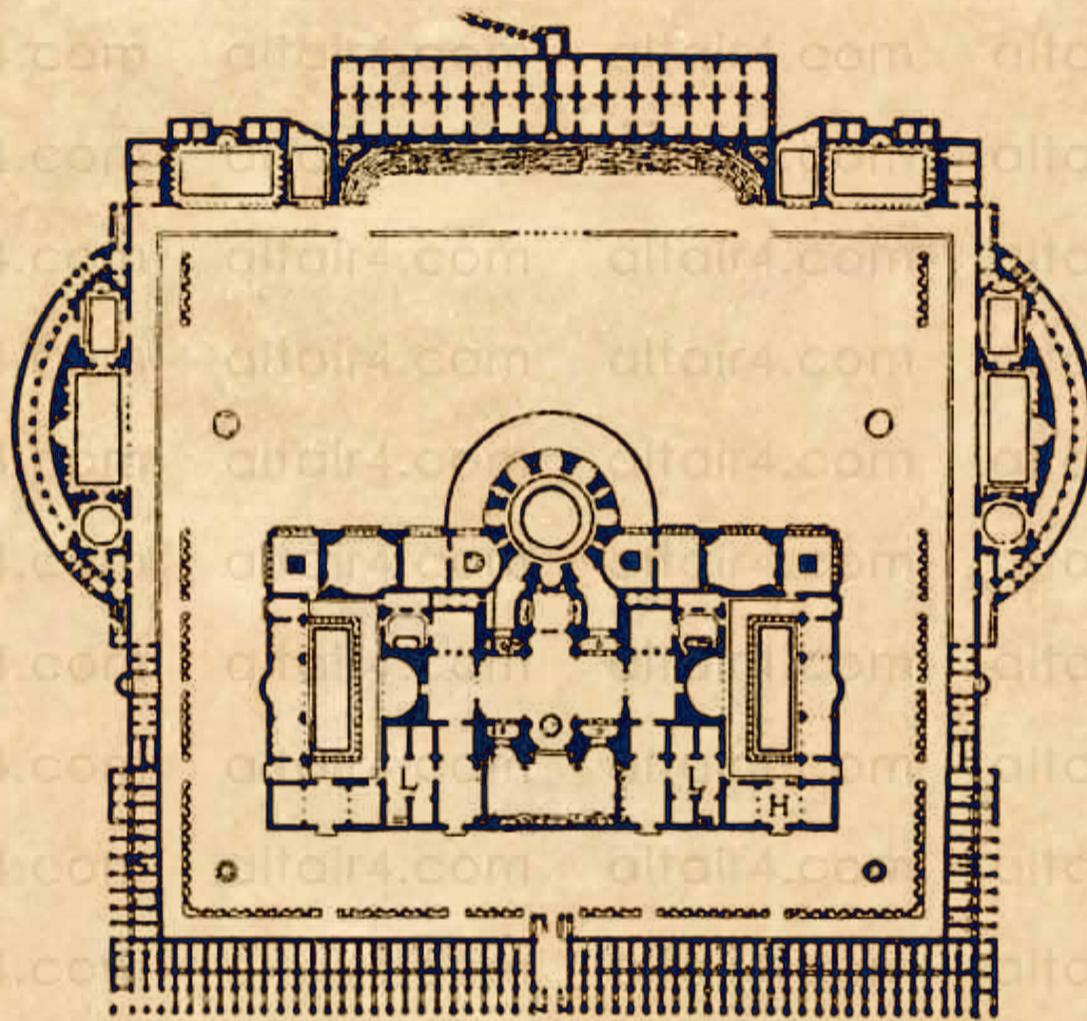
The biography of Caracalla states that the “cella soleare” or sun room of the baths had the largest ceiling ever built, and believed to have been constructed by the use of metallic beams that supported the whole structure. On the basis of this text, 19<sup>th</sup> century scholars reconstructed the *natatio* of the baths, identified as the “cella soleare,” with a flat roof, while today it is believed that it was probably an open air pool.

Libraries, meeting rooms, and lecture halls designed for social encounters and entertainment, were located all around the outside perimeter of the complex.

The decoration of the rooms and spaces must have been magnificent, as shown, not only by drawings made by Renaissance artists who were able to work there before the monument was completely pillaged, but by the enormous number of art works which have been discovered there in recent centuries, including the statues of the Bull, of Flora, and of Ercole Farnese, now preserved in the National Museum in Naples, the mosaic from the exercise room with its figures of athletes, today in the Vatican Museum, and two granite tubs and a column, now located in the Piazza Farnese in Rome and in Piazza della Trinità in Florence.

In the early 1900s, archeological digs conducted in the underground areas of the baths revealed the presence of a *mitreo*, a religious building dedicated to the worship of the oriental divinity, Mitra, the object of an initiation cult which was very widespread in imperial Rome and characterized by an unusual ceremony which called for the sacrifice of a bull.







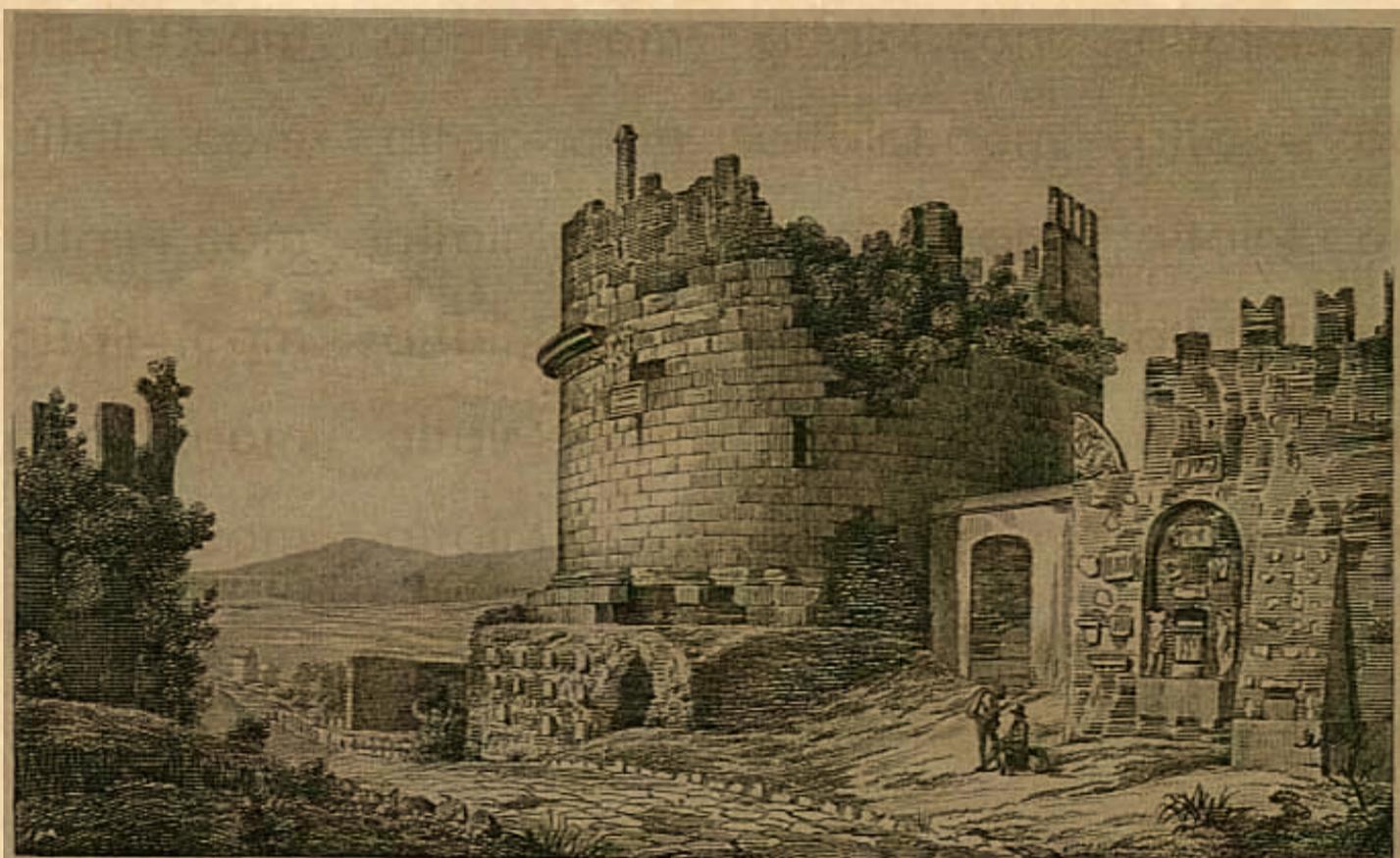
VEDUTA DELLA PARTE INTERNA DELLE RELIQUIE DELLE TERME  
DI ANTONINO CARACALLA





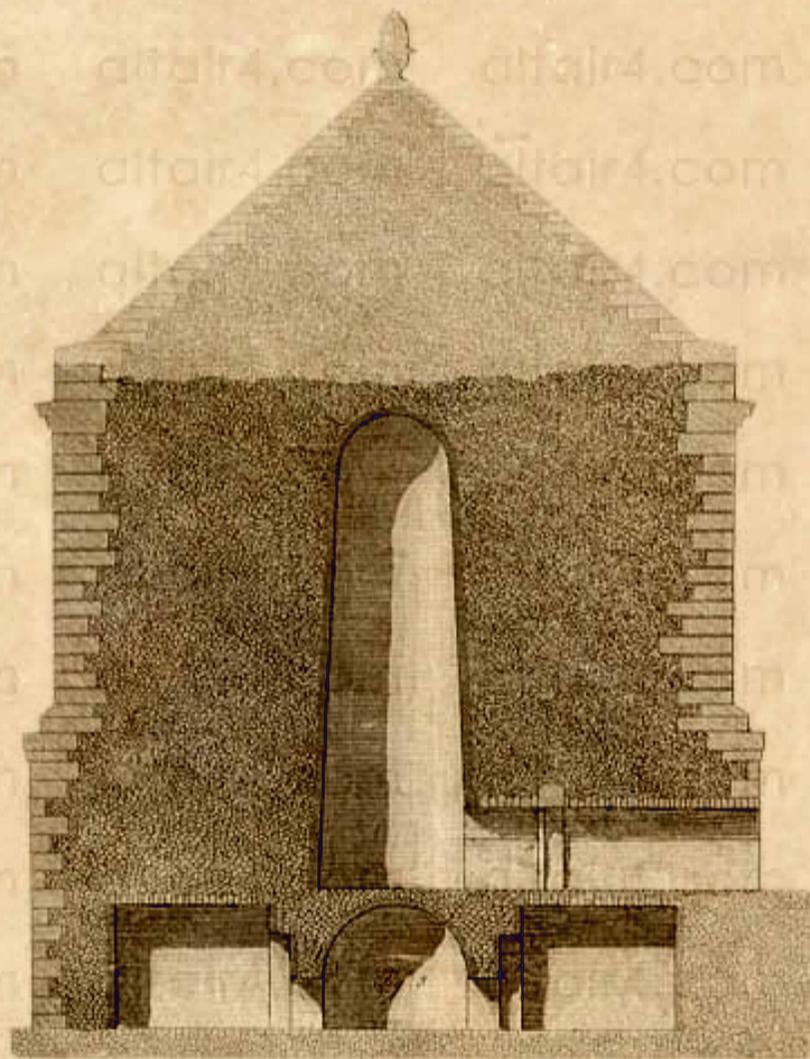
ESPOSIZIONE DELL' INTERA ARCHITETTURA DEL SEPOLCRO  
DI CECILIA METELLA POSTO LUNGO LA VIA APPIA





VEDUTA DELLE RELIQUIE DEL SEPOLCRO DI CECILIA METELLA  
E DEL CASTELLO DEI CAETANI





# The Sant'Agnese Area

By Raffaele Pugliese



What is today Via Nomentana in part traces the ancient road which exited the city from Porta Collina in the Servian Wall (near the Finance Ministry in Via XX Settembre) and then from the gate of the same name in the Aurelian Wall. The road led to *Nomentum* (near Mentana), the ancient town 14 miles from Urbe.

In Roman times, along the road there were burial grounds, villas, farms and, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, some Christian catacombs, such as those of Nicomede, or the Cimitero Maggiore, slightly beyond the Basilica of Sant'Agnese. From the Middle Ages the area was predominantly rural, until its dense urbanization starting at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The road starts at the monumental Porta Nomentana, built to replace the Roman gate which was smaller and was slightly more to the south. The inside of the gate, which is the end of the new Via Pia (today XX Settembre) is thought to be the work of Michelangelo, who was commissioned by Pius IV, even though it was actually executed by Giacomo del Duca from 1561-64.

The interior façade, with a monumental central fornix and an attic, has an original and manieristic style, such as in the portal with ashlar with a mascarón in the lunette, and the gable above it, with two half-tympanums connected by a festoon; in the side windows and in the circular motif overlapped by a layer in the shape of a horseshoe, a reference to patens and stoles, rather than to basins and towels, which remind us of the not entirely noble origins of the family of Pope IV, who were barbers and surgeons. However, another attic, completed in 1851, with the Papal arms held up by two angels, completes the construction.

The external façade was executed by the architect Virginio Vespignani in 1861. In the shape of a triumphal arch, with on its sides two statues of Saint Agnese and Saint Alessandra, it was separated from the Michelangelo façade by a small courtyard. In the rooms inside the gate we find the Museum of the Bersaglieri regiment.

Outside and on the left there is the monument erected to commemorate the famous breach of 20<sup>th</sup> September 1870, when the Italian army took the city. The marble façade has commemorative epigraphs by Adolfo Apolloni (1920), while the column in front of it was built in 1895. Opposite the Porta Nomentana there is the Monumento al Bersagliere, built in 1932, by the architect Italo Mancini. Skirting the road we can turn off to the Piazza Galeno, where we find the Villino Ximenes, in liberty style, by the sculptor Ettore of the same name, who was assisted in its building by the architect Ernesto Basile. Back on the Via Nomentana, on the right we find the vast Villa Torlonia, built on an estate belonging to the Colonna family, and sold to Giovanni Torlonia in 1797. The latter, after having bought the land, at the beginning



of the 19<sup>th</sup> century commissioned Giuseppe Valadier to build a sumptuous villa which could be compared with those of the Pamphili or the Borghese. Most of the work was undertaken by Alessandro Torlonia, who commissioned the architect Giovanni Battista Caretti and then Quintiliano Raimondi and Giuseppe Iappelli.

The villa was inaugurated in 1842 and other modifications were made between 1906-1920. Inside its English garden, seemingly abandoned to nature, but with hollows, caves, false walls and plants of various kinds, there are many different and eclectic architectonic styles. The most important features of the villa are the Palazzo, built by Valadier on the model of the Farnesina, and modified by Caretti, with a palladian façade with columns and the fronton with reliefs, and on its sides Doric porticoes with curved heads; the vast Theater, with its curvilinear cavea and in front its portico in cast iron and glass, and its elliptical fountain; the Villino dei Principi by Caretti in renaissance style; the medieval Villino and the Villino Rosso.

The Capanna Svizzera or Casina delle Civette has been recently restored, with its depictions in many colored and splendid stained glass windows which were added by Giovanni Torlonia, the grandson of Alessandro, in 1908, who settling there introduced a more strictly medieval style. In 1923 the villa became the residence of Mussolini, who built some underground rooms (bunkers) recently found. Occupied by the allied troops in 1944-47, and then abandoned, it is currently undergoing extensive restoration work. In the area around the villa Jewish catacombs have been found, in which there are many pictures depicting candelabras or sacred books.

Two kilometers from the Porta Nomentana we find the two most important buildings of this itinerary, formerly in the middle of the countryside but now suffocated by urban development: the Basilica of Sant' Agnese and the Mausoleum of Santa Costanza.

Continuing from there, we find other interesting buildings, such as the Villa Blanc, built at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Alberto Blanc, in an eclectic style with multicolored floral decorations, or the so-called "Devil's Seat" in Piazza E. Callisto, which is a brick graveyard in the form of a small temple with two chambers one above the other, with niches, which can be dated back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

Lastly, at the crossroads between the old Nomentana and Via di Pietralata, the River Aniene is crossed by the Nomentano bridge, which has been restored many times over the centuries. Only the central fornix has survived of the original Roman structure, and can be dated back to the late republican era, while the structure above it, in the shape of a castle with merlons, could partly date back to the works undertaken by Nicholas V, whose plaque with the name and arms has survived.





*Chiesa di S. Agnese fuori delle mura  
1. Tempio antico, ora Chiesa di S. Costanza, 2. Monasterio antico di S. Agnese, 3. Abbatia del Duomo, 4. Via Nomentana, 5. Ruvine antiche.*

105











# *Villa Borghese*

By Sabina Carbonara



From Viale dell'Obelisco, above **Piazza del Popolo**, we come to the modern overpass which, crossing over the Viale del Muro Torto, connects the Pincio to the gardens of Villa Borghese, which until the opening of Villa Pamphilj was the largest public garden in the city, opened to the public in 1901.

The villa, created at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century at the initiative of Cardinal Scipione Caffarelli Borghese, nephew of Pope Paul V, was radically transformed at the last of thirty years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the architects Antonio and Mario Asprucci and the painter Christophe Unterperger.

The construction of the Gardens of the Lake goes back to this second phase of the work, in which an artificial pond was created with a small island in the center, the site of a small ionic temple of Aesculapius hosting a statue of the god discovered in the ruins of the Tomb of Augustus. This pond took the place of the one in the Valley of the Beech Trees, which was dried up. The design of the Piazza of Siena goes back to the same period and its name probably derives from the name of the city from which Mark Anthony I Borghese, father of Paul V, came to Rome in the middle of 1500s. The oval space, in the form of a stadium, is commonly used for riding competitions and folklore festivals.

The villa reached its present size between 1820 and 1833, with the inclusion of the area between the Pincian Gate and the Aurelian Wall.

Continuing down the Viale dei Pupazzi (Puppet Lane) we come to the Sea Horse Fountain, designed by Unterperger. Beyond the fountain we turn up the Viale dell'Uccelliera (Aviary) where there are two interesting seventeenth-century buildings: the Aviary (first twenty years of the seventeenth century) and the pavilion of the Sundial (eighties of the seventeenth century). On the right the same Viale leads to the palace of the Borghese Museum, where there is the Casino Borghese, built for Cardinal Scipione Borghese by the architects Flaminio Ponzio and his collaborator, Flemish Jan Van Santen (Giovanni Vasanzio), houses the Borghese Museum and Gallery.

The building was realized between 1607 and 1613 and modified in the eighteenth century.

Turning instead to the left, from Viale dell'Uccelliera, in the direction of the Zoological Gardens, we come, beyond the Piazzale Cervantes, to the Viale delle Belle Arti, which hosted the World's Fair of the Fine Arts in 1911: for this the architect Cesare Bazzani created the building that now houses the National Gallery of Modern Art. Descending towards the Tiber along the Viale delle Belle Arti and past the Roman Academies of several nations, we come to Villa Giulia.



At the end of the long Viale delle Belle Arti, just beyond the modern church of Sant'Eugenio, we turn left into Via Flaminia and, following it as far as Piazzale Flaminio we come to the neoclassical propylaea of the architect Luigi Canina, the monumental lower entrance to the Villa Borghese.

Finally, entering Piazza del Popolo through the Aurelian Wall, we walk up, on the left, the Viale Gabriele D'Annunzio, which leads back up to the Pincio.

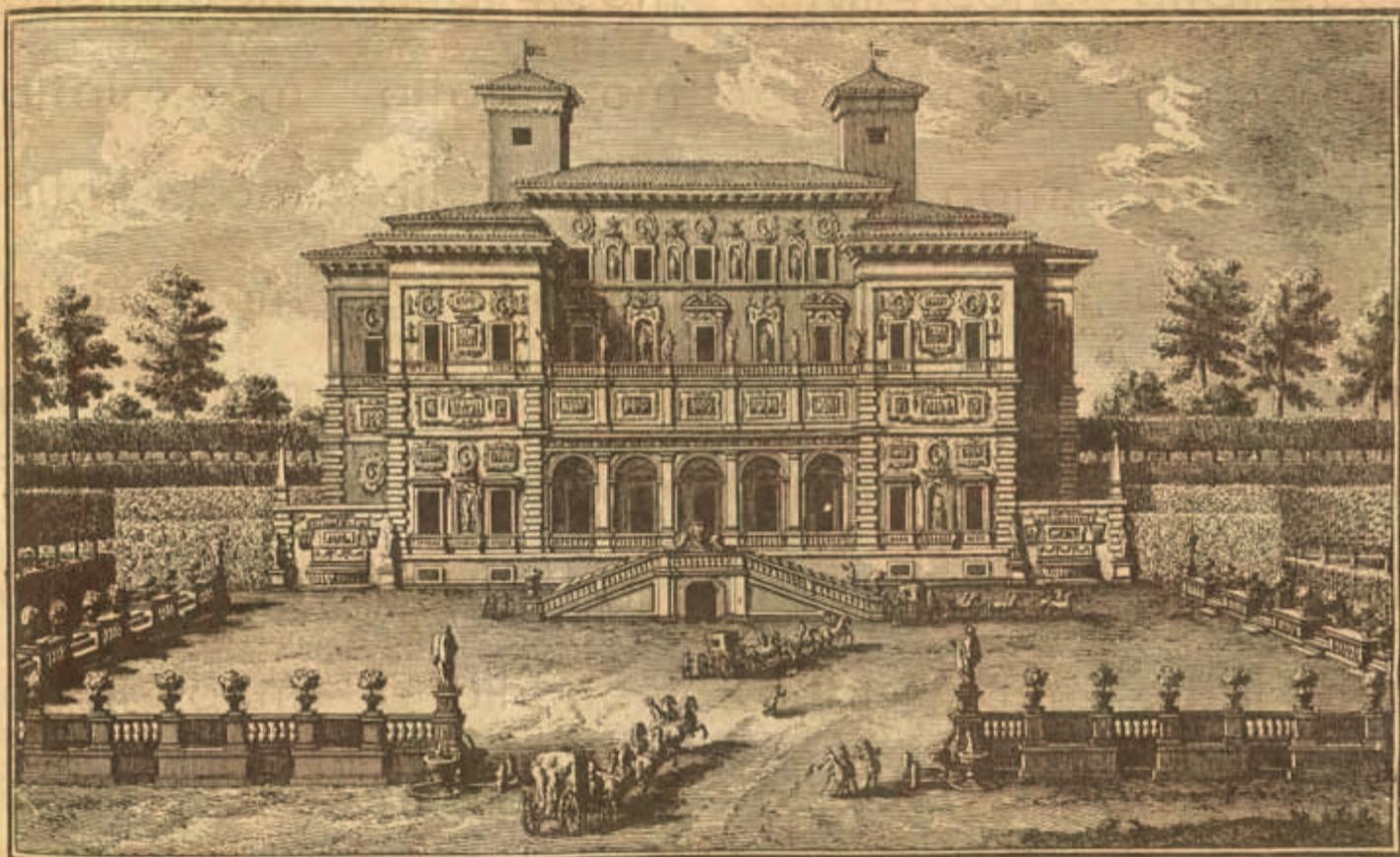
The landscaping of the area as a public park (*Le Jardin du Grand César*) on the site of some old Roman villas, was one of the few projects of urban renewal undertaken by the French government in Rome. It was designed by the Roman architect Giuseppe Valadier (1809-14) as a complement to Piazza del Popolo, of which it was meant to represent the scenic backdrop.

The park was later redesigned by the French architect Louis Martin Berthault and completed in 1820 by the papal administration. In accordance with the fashion of 18<sup>th</sup> century gardens, the park hosted a series of small pavilions serving a variety of different purposes, while the placement of busts of famous people, proposed during the Roman Republic, recalls the tradition of the ancient Roman villas.

From Viale Gabriele D'Annunzio we come to Viale Trinità dei Monti where, on the left, we find the Villa Medici, the current site of the French Academy.

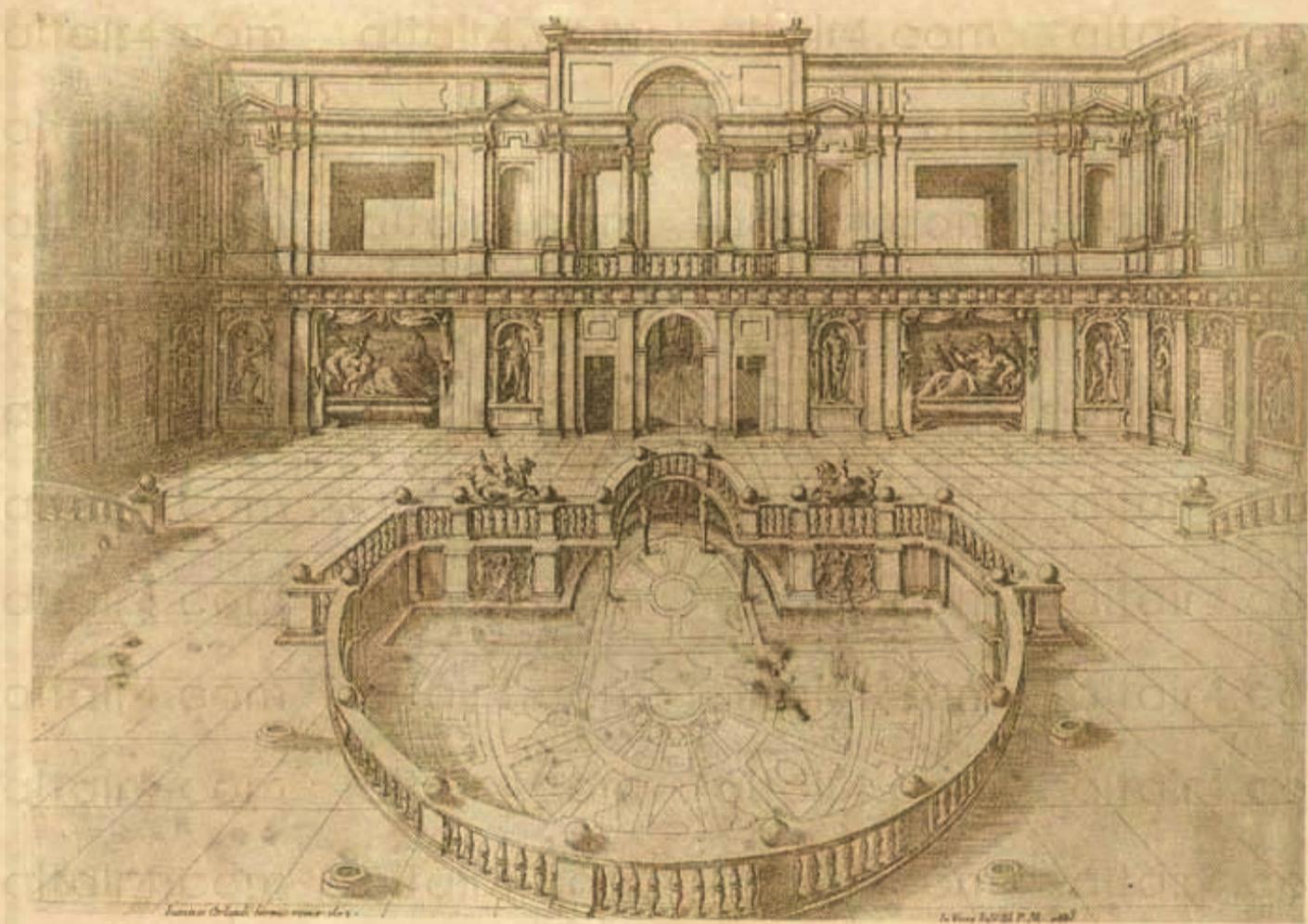


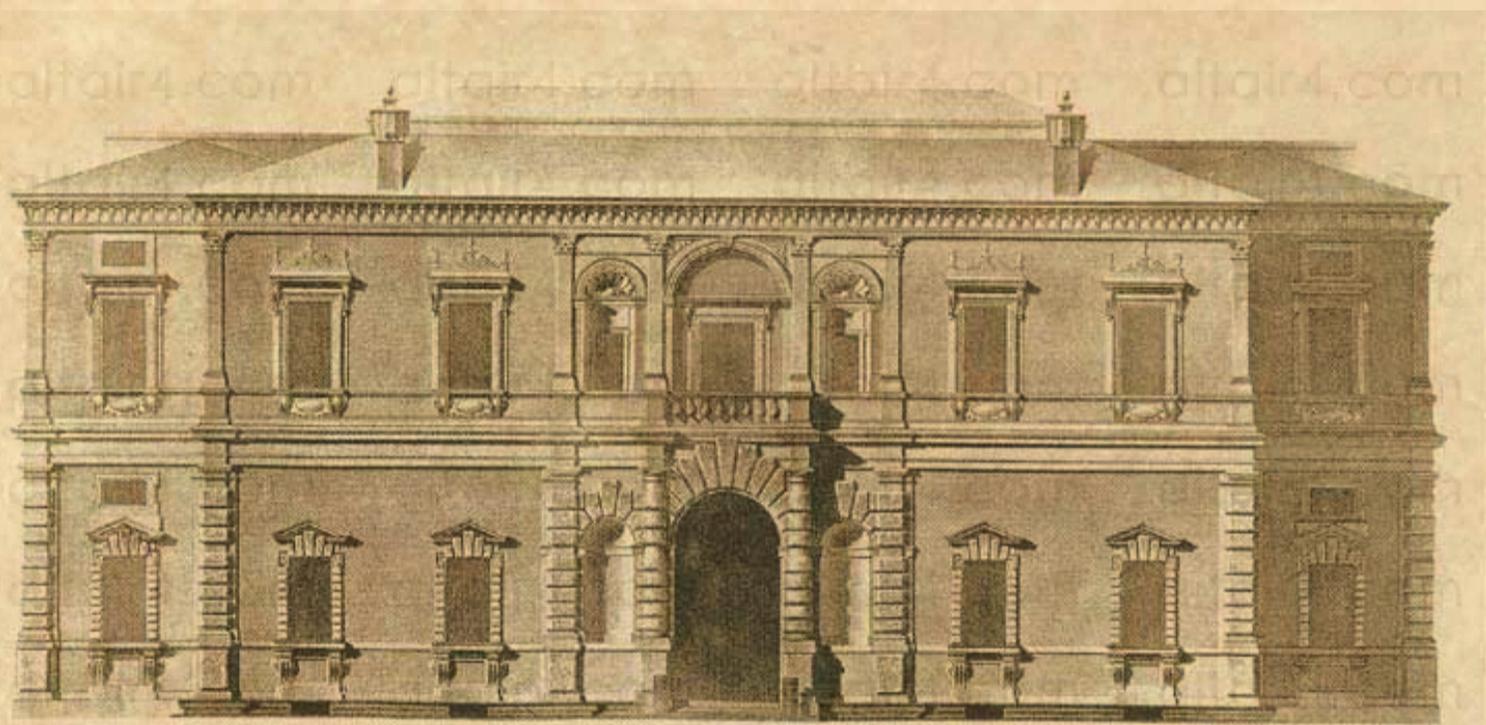




G. P. de' ed. *Villa e Casino Borghese detta Pinciana* 187.  
Prospetto del casino nel primo recinto, a Spalliere, che dividono il primo recinto dal secondo, e corrisponde un corridoio prospettivo, e piazza con fontane, e Statue









*Villa e Casino Medici sul monte Fiesole. 1. Obelisco di granito egizio a Torrici con statue. 2. Giardini portali. 3. Due conche di granito egizio e una testa di porfido. 4. Galleria di Statue.*



# *Piazza del Popolo*

By Sabina Carbonara



You reach Piazza del Popolo from Piazzale Flaminio by walking through the monumental gate of the Porta del Popolo.

The origins of the piazza coincide with the construction of the Aurelian Wall and of the related Porta *Flaminia* (Flaminian Gate); it was then that this far-flung projection of the Campo Marzio, located between the Tiber and the slope of the Pincian Hill and crossed by the beginning of the *Via Flaminia*, came to be part of the city.

Its boundaries were established, on the east, by the hill, on the north by the walls, and on the south by the confluence into the Via Flaminia (the future **Via del Corso**) of two other roads with classical origins: the intersection which would come to be known as the “trident,” marked by two enormous pyramidal mausoleums (*metae*).

Adjacent to the first tract of the consular road was a tomb, belonging to the Domitians, where Nero’s ashes were deposited. During the Middle Ages a legend grew up about a walnut tree born of the ashes of the emperor and infested with devils in the form of ravens.

The memory of the emperor was to be exorcised by Pope Paschal II with the construction, in 1099, of the church of **Santa Maria del Popolo**, located on the northern side of the piazza, just to the left of the Porta del Popolo.

In the 1400s Pope Sixtus IV, on the occasion of the renovation of the church, began work on the redesign of the external aspect of the gate with the construction of two square towers on either side of the fornix.

A few years later, Leo X would begin work on the renovation of the “trident,” after a design by Raffaello Sanzio (Raphael) and Antonio Sangallo the Younger, with the regularization (1517-19) of the ancient way, which was to be called for time, in tribute to him, the *Via Leonina*, the present-day **Via di Ripetta**.

For the Jubilee of 1525 Clement VII picked up the project where his Pope cousin, beginning the regularization of the third street, the present-day Via del Babuino, substantially carried out, however, after the dramatic event of the sack of Rome, by Paul III (the reason it was called at first via Clementina and then Via Paolina Trifaria) and completed in 1543.

In 1572 the piazza was endowed by Gregory XIII with the first public fountain in modern Rome, the work of Giacomo Della Porta. Sixteen years later Pope Sixtus X had Domenico Fontana raise the colossal obelisk of Ramses II at the confluence of the three streets; the obelisk was brought to Rome during the reign of Emperor Augustus for the circus Maximus.

At the time of Alexander VII, on the occasion of Queen Christina of Sweden’s visit to Rome (1655), work was performed to complete the interior front of the gate and



the external front was crowned with the unusual crenellation of armored busts.

On the opposite side of the piazza, on the left and right of Via del Corso respectively, are the two 17<sup>th</sup> century churches, Santa Maria di Montesanto and Santa Maria dei Miracoli, sacred propylaea – perhaps also a reminder of the already-mentioned pagan *metae* – which announced, with more emphasis than before, the entrance into “Holy City” and tripled the piazza’s homage to the Blessed Mother.

The final touches on Piazza del Popolo and the introduction into Rome of a new element, that of the public garden, are owed to the years of Napoleonic domination of the city (1809-14).

The first project, proposed by the Italian architect Giuseppe Valadier, reconfirmed the funnel design strictly connected to the prospective layout of the “trident”. The definitive solution, however, was the work of the French architects, Alexandre-Jean-Baptiste Guy de Gisors and Louis Martin Berthault, ordered by the government to collaborate with Valadier: the expansion of the two semicircles, already partially configured by the Roman architect.

After the Restoration of papal authority (1815-16) Valadier drew up the final plan, which was completed in 1824, just in time for the Holy Year, the first of the century. The final execution of the project has left us with an arrangement that combines the creation of a public garden with the definitive layout of the piazza, recalling the model of Parisian Place de la Concorde, but above all the piazza in front of the basilica of St. Peter’s in the Vatican.





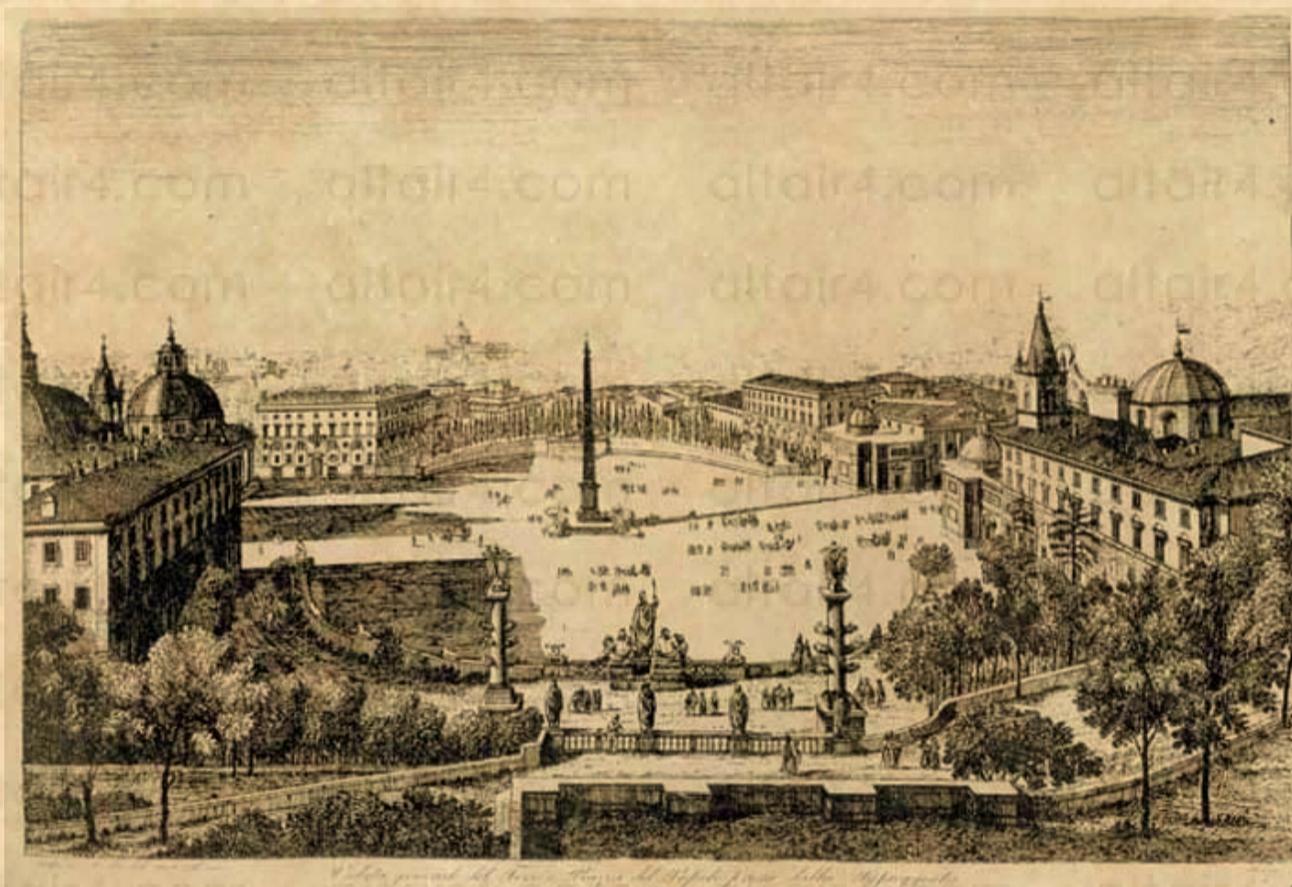


*Prospectus Portae Flaminiae et magnae partis Romae. Valde Porta del popolo.*

*Engraving from the series 'Antiquities of Rome'*

*J. B. Rossi del.*





*Veduta generale del Campidoglio, Piazza del Popolo, Piazza della Signoria, Firenze.*



# Church of Santa Maria del Popolo

By Sabina Carbonara



The church owes its name to an earlier chapel built in 1099, at the expense of the People of Rome, by Pope Paschal II, to celebrate the liberation of the Holy Sepulcher by the Crusades.

Another tradition holds that the church was built on the site of the tomb of Nero, whose ghost continued to haunt the area until the construction of the church.

In 1235, when the chapel was in the process of being transformed into a church for the Franciscans, Pope Gregory IX had the panel of the Madonna and Child, attributed to Saint Luke the Evangelist, moved here from Saint John Lateran, and it is still in place on the main altar. In 1250 the Franciscans were replaced by the Augustinians, who were asked by Sixtus IV to undertake the reconstruction of the church (1475 and 1477) on a more monumental scale. The work was later completed by Pope Julius II, Sixtus IV's nephew.

Additional work was performed on the church between 1655 and 1658, during the papacy of Alexander VII, who had the central nave restored by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, in association with the rehabilitation of the inside of the gate of Piazza del Popolo on the occasion of Queen Christina of Sweden's entrance into Rome.



In the same years (1656-58) Raffaello Vanni was entrusted to the decoration of the dome (Immaculate Virgin in Glory of Paradise) and the four pendentives (biblical prophets Esther, Judith, Ruth and Deborah).

Finally, we must recall intervention directed by Giuseppe Valadier in the 1800s, when, during the rehabilitation of Piazza del Popolo and the Pincio, the 15<sup>th</sup> century convent and its two cloisters were partially demolished and replaced by the neoclassical convent which we see today.

The façade in travertine marble, one of the best examples of early Renaissance in Rome, has a lower order of elegant pilasters on high bases which divide it into three spans. In the center door is surmounted by a tympanum and adorned by a Madonna and child attributed to the Lombard sculptor Andrea Bregno. The smaller doors in the lateral spans are set below tympanums and high scalloped windows. The two scroll-shaped forms (volutes) on the sides of the tympanum crowning the façade over the main door were added by Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

Recent studies tend to attribute the design for the building to Andrea Bregno. In fact Bregno, native of Como, received his training at the side of artists like Guiniforte Solari, who designed the church of San Pietro a Gessate (Milano), with which Santa Maria del Popolo shares a lot of common features. It is also quite plausible that the Augustinians, a Lombardy-based order, may have requested that the church be redesigned by an architect from the northern school.

From the piazza it is possible to observe the octagonal cupola and the cone-topped tile bell tower with its four angular pinnacles, recalling the late Gothic architecture of the Po valley.

The interior of the church is a triple nave in four spans divided by semi-columned pilasters, four altars on each side, a transept with apses at either end, and a deep, apsed choir, now covered by the 17<sup>th</sup> century main altar.

In the course of the above-mentioned Baroque restoration, in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, pairs of large plaster figures of saints were placed above the arches.

The first altar on the right, the Della Rovere chapel, has frescoes by Bernardo di Betto, known as Pinturicchio, and collaborators (1488-90 or 1477-79). Pinturicchio may have painted also the Adoration of the Child above the altar (or Nativity with San Girolamo). On the left of the chapel is the tomb of Cristoforo and Domenico Della Rovere, attributed to Andrea Bregno and Mino da Fiesole.

Immediately after the Della Rovere chapel is the very interesting Cybo chapel. The chapel, presumably decorated by a collaborator of Pinturicchio but radically transformed between 1680 and 1687 by Cardinal Alderano Cybo, is the sumptuous



creation of the architect Carlo Fontana, in the form of a Greek Cross enriched with marble inserts and sixteen jasper columns from Sicily.

The decoration of the chapel is completed by the oil painting by Carlo Maratta of the Immaculate Conception with Saints John the Evangelist, Gregory, John Chrysostom, and Augustine. The artist, although he died at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, was very influential in the development of 18<sup>th</sup> century painting. Taking as his models Raphael and Carracci, he adopted an “idealist” style of painting which, distancing itself from the search for natural beauty, tried to represent a sense of ideal beauty.

In the right transept is a beautiful organ decorated with gilded stucco figures, the work of Antonio Raggi after a design by Bernini.

A long corridor, rich with 15<sup>th</sup> century sculptures, leads to the sacristy, where the marble frontispiece of the main altar dated 1473 and signed by Andrea Bregno, has been placed on the rear wall. In the archway a 15<sup>th</sup> century painting of the Madonna and Child.

On the present-day main altar, dating from 1627, is the Madonna del Popolo, a Byzantine panel from the beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> century, traditionally attributed to Saint Luke. Behind the altar is the entry to the choir designed by Donato di Pascuccio, known as Bramante (1500-03, first phase of works; 1505-09 second phase) with a large arch with recessed panels (lacunaria) and an apse with a shell-shaped canopy, which recalls the vault of the entrance hall of Palazzo Venezia in Rome.

On the side walls are the funeral monuments of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza (1505), on the left, and Cardinal Girolamo Basso Della Rovere (1507), on the right, commissioned by Pope Julius II Della Rovere and signed by the Tuscan sculptor Andrea Sansovino. The two beautiful stained glass windows from 1509, the only ones in Rome from this period, were painted by Guillaume de Marcillat with stories from the lives of the Madonna and of Jesus’ childhood. In the vault of the presbytery, in a painted arch decorated with grotesques, the splendid frescoes of Pinturicchio with the “Incoronation of the Madonna” and the Evangelists, Sibyls and Fathers of the Church (1509-10).

In the left arm of the transept is the Cerasi chapel, noted for its two canvases painted in 1600-1601 by the Lombard painter, Michelangelo Marisi, known as Caravaggio, representing the Crucifixion of St. Peter and the Conversion of Saint Paul.

The real protagonist of the two paintings is the incisive light which outlines the volumes of the figures and highlights the most significant details of the events. With these first monumental scale works the artist marked his passage from his early Roman style, luminous and clear, to the new darker, more dramatic manner.



On the altar is the Assumption of the Virgin (1602) by Annibale Carracci, example of synthesis between naturalism and classical tradition.

But the fulcrum of the entire church is constituted by the Chigi Chapel, the second on the left from the entrance, built, after a design by Raffaello Sanzio, by Agostino Chigi, the famous Senese banker and merchant.

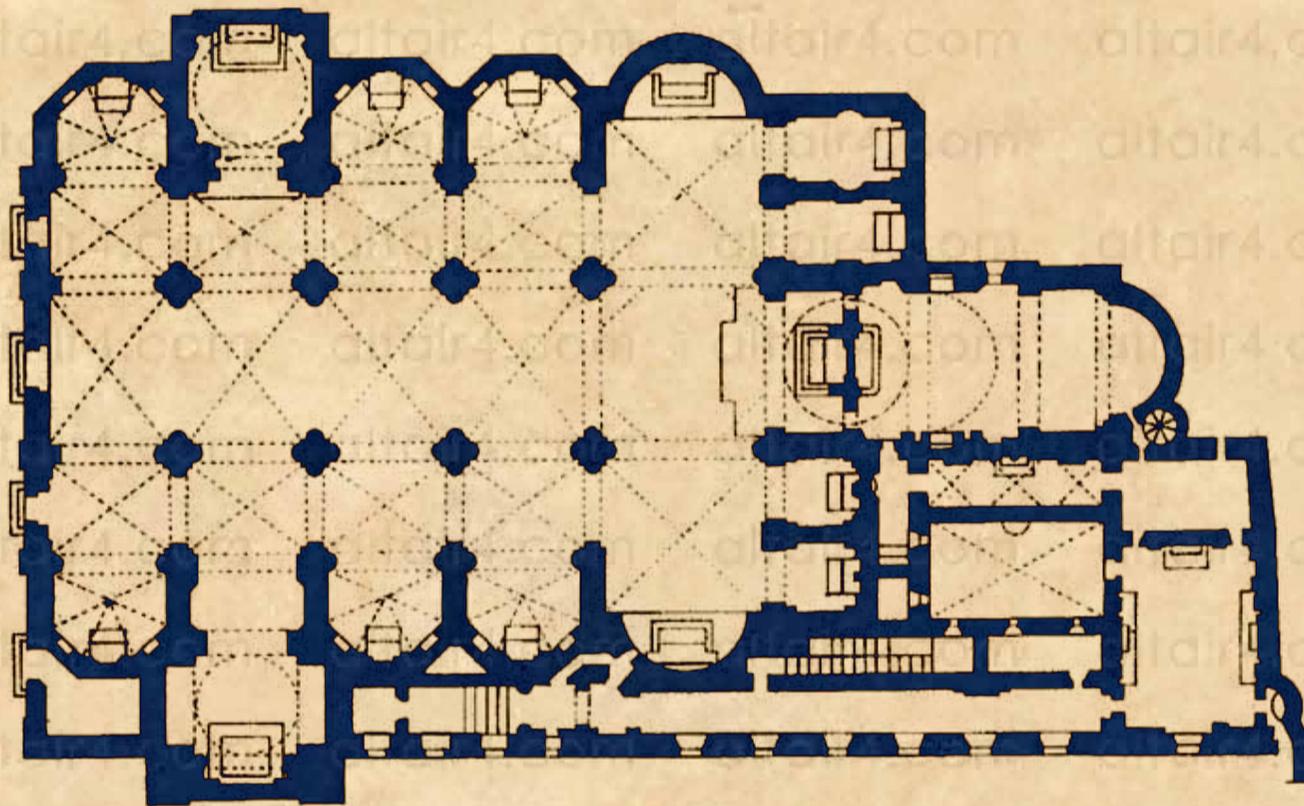
Raphael's central plan interior is an admirable synthesis of architecture, sculpture, and painting; a wonderful manifesto of the Roman early 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Commissioned as a mausoleum for the Chigi family, it was begun in 1513-14, but the work continued through a number of phases through its completion and restoration by Bernini, sponsored by Alexander VII (1652-56), also a member of the Chigi family.

In the cupola a mosaic of God the Father, creator of the firmament and symbols of the sun and the seven planets by Luigi De Pace, from drawings by Raphael. In the tympanum eight scenes of the Creation and the Original Sin by Francesco Salvati; in the tondi of the pendentives Allegories of the Four Seasons by the same artist; on the altar the Birth of the Virgin, oil on stone, begun by the Venetian Sebastiano Piombo (last contract 1530) and completed by Salvati in 1554.

In the niches of the pilasters there are two sculptures by Bernini, Habakuk and the Angel, Daniel and the Lion (1655-61), and two others by Lorenzo Lotti, known as Lorenzetto, Jonah and the Whale and the Prophet Elias, from 1520. On the walls are the marble pyramid tombs of Agostino Chigi, on the right, and his brother Sigismondo Chigi, designed by Raphael but sculpted by Lorenzetto and Raffaello da Montelupo (1521-1522) and finished by Bernini in the Fifties of XVII century.







VEDUTA DI DENTRO DI S. MARIA DEL POPOLO RESTAVRATA ET ADORNATA DA N-S-PAPA ALESSANDRO VII.  
*Per Gio: Laur. Rossi in Roma alla Pace et Per del SP Gio: Batt. Naldi sculpsit*





*Piazza della Piaz. del Popolo*



# Via di Ripetta

By Letizia Cenci



In 1517 Pope Leo X commissioned the “master road-builders”, Bartolomeo della Valle and Raimondo Capodiferro, to draw up plans for a road to connect the Porta del Popolo with **St Peter’s**: his wish was to ease the journey for the many pilgrims who, arriving in Rome from the Via Cassia and Via Flaminia, were heading for the Tomb of Peter.

The road, built on the ancient track, took its name, Leonina, from Pope Leo X, and was then called today’s name of Ripetta in the 18<sup>th</sup> century due to the proximity of the Port di Ripetta, that is to say the lower Ripa.

The Port, which already existed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, was used for the mooring of small boats, and was rebuilt in 1703-1704 under Clement XI by the architect Alessandro Specchi, with a structure with ramps which formed an exedra which opened onto the Via di Ripetta: the building of the banks of the Tiber until the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century brought about the destruction of the Port.

In 1938 the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (the Altar of Peace) was rebuilt on the banks of the Tiber inside a glass pavilion. The altar, the greatest expression of Augustan art, was commissioned by the Roman Senate in 13 AD to celebrate the peace that had been regained after the victorious campaigns of Augustus in Gaul and in Spain; the enclosure is square, on a base, with an altar in the center, the walls of which are decorated with friezes and bas reliefs which are so fine that scholars assume the artists must have been Greek.

The first panels were discovered in the 16<sup>th</sup> century under the palace of the titular cardinals of the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina, today the Palazzo Fiano in Piazza in Lucina, and further discoveries continued to be made until the 1930’s.

Opposite the *Ara Pacis* we find, isolated by demolition carried out by the Fascists, the Mausoleum of Augustus, a circular structure built in 28 BC by the emperor as a tomb for himself and his descendants.

On Via di Ripetta, just beyond the *Ara Pacis* on one side of the Mausoleum, we find the church of San Rocco, which was originally a hospital chapel (Saint Rocco cured plague victims), used to house young unmarried mothers who could remain anonymous there.

The church, built in 1499, was transformed in the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century by Giovanni Antonio de Rossi, while the façade, restored in 1992, is the neoclassic work of Giuseppe Valadier in 1834.

In the vestry we can admire an interesting painting from about 1660, depicting *Madonna and the Saints Rocco and Antonio with plague victims* by Giovan Battista



Gaulli, known as “il Baciccia”, the artist who decorated the ceiling of the church of Il Gesù.

Beyond the church of San Girolamo degli Illirici, built under Sixtus IV in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and after the 19<sup>th</sup> century Via Tomacelli, Via Ripetta skirts on the left a small part of the side of the impressive Palazzo Borghese.

The façade with a balcony overlooking Via Ripetta is commonly known as the “the keyboard” of Palazzo Borghese, for its shape, which looks like the keyboard of a musical instrument.

Guy de Gisors and Louis Martin Berthault were the French architects commissioned by the government to work with Valadier, to produce the final result (1813) of the shape of the building in two semicircles, as already partly planned by the Roman architect.

After the Restoration (1815-16) they produced the definitive design, completed in 1824, just in time for the Jubilee, the first of this century.

The ultimate result includes a public garden, following the model of the Place de la Concorde, but reminds one above all of the square in front of the Vatican basilica of St. Peter's.





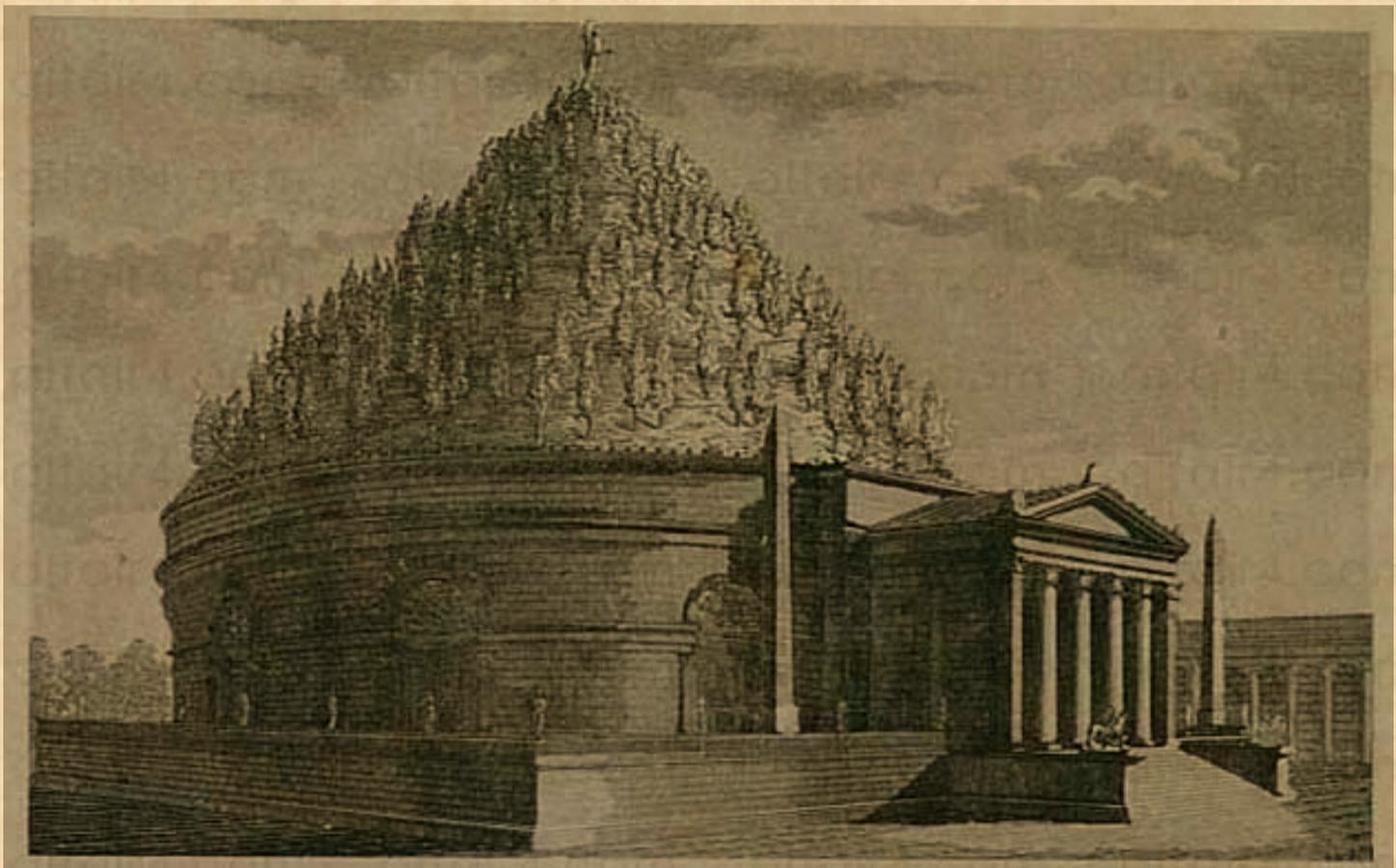
Porto di Ripetta  
Chiesa di S. Antonino, dei S. Antonini, a. Chiesa della Chiesa di S. Pietro e Palazzo Borghese, e Albergo della famiglia, 5. Sella del moderno, 6. Mola di orme 15.

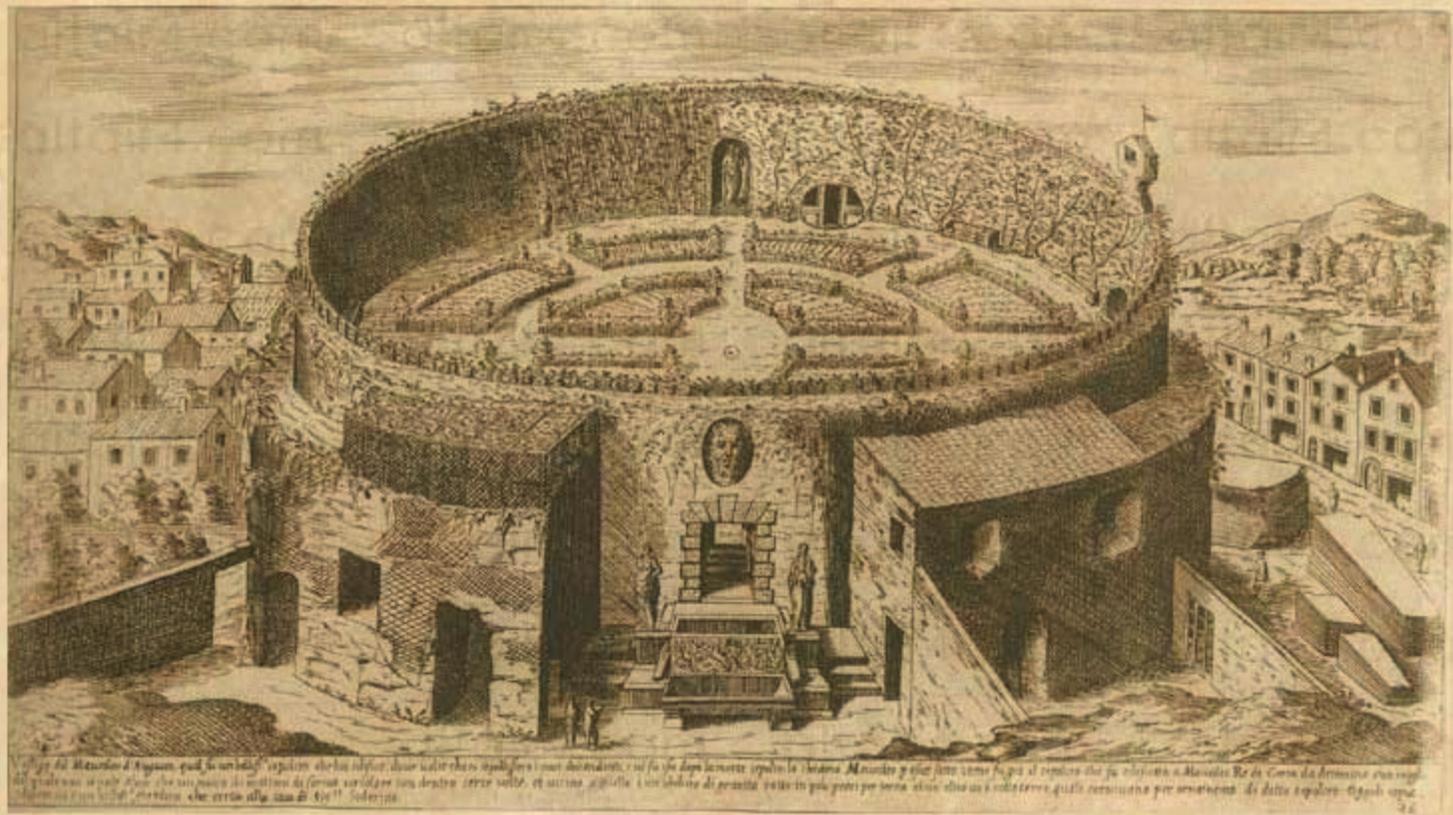




*Chiesa di S. Ivo dei Dattoli  
1822  
1. Strada di Ripetta, 2. Palazzo Corselli, 3. Abbazia di S. Maria in Campitelli, 4. Chiesa di S. Ivo, 5. Chiesa di S. Ivo, 6. Chiesa di S. Ivo, 7. Chiesa di S. Ivo*











*Palazzo Borsario  
Veduta principale del detto Palazzo sulla Strada de Condotti a Ponte del meo, oppo verso il Ponte di Ripetta, z. Abitazione p. la Kamphise e Sembroni e Rincio.*



# Via del Corso

By Letizia Cenci



The fronts of the churches of Santa Maria di Montesanto and Santa Maria dei Miracoli flank the beginning of Via del Corso, a straight line, one and a half kilometers long, which is the most representative street of historic Rome, with **Piazza del Popolo** at one end and **Piazza Venezia** at the other.

It was named “Corso” in 1446, for the horse races (*corsi*) that were held there through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For a long time the street was the center of festivals, carnevalesque spectacles and parades, and in the 1700s it became the focal point of the city’s artistic and political life. In 1900 the street was named in honor of King Umberto I, but in 1947 it was given back its old name.

The street took on such importance in the life of the city that it gave its name, without any reference to horse races, to the main streets of the city’s neighborhoods, a custom that spread rapidly beyond Rome to other Italian cities.

The course follows the route of the Via Flaminia, the Roman consular road connected to the Flaminia Gate, which constituted the northern entrance to the city, and of the ancient *Via Lata* in the tract that goes from Piazza Colonna to **Piazza Venezia**.

Beginning in the Renaissance the street began to take on the important role that it has maintained down through the centuries: the Corso formed, in fact, upon the opening of the Via Leonina between 1517 and 1519, today **Via di Ripetta**, and then the Via Clementina in 1525, the present-day Via del Babuino, the so-called “trident,” the splendid example of urban design which has Piazza del Popolo as its starting point. Given the street’s importance a number of palaces and monuments were built along its route, like the church of Saints Ambrose and Charles, belonging to the Lombard community and rebuilt by Onorio and Martino Longhi in 1610, when Charles Borromeo was canonized.

Continuing down the Corso toward **Piazza Venezia** a lovely, recently restored piazza opens up on the right side, taking its name from the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina. The church is one of the oldest places of Christian worship in Rome. It was first built as the *ecclesia domestica* in the house of the matron Lucina.

In the 5<sup>th</sup> century Pope Sixtus III replaced the original building with a triple-naved basilica, incorporated in the present-day church, dedicated to Saint Lawrence, the famous martyr who during the persecutions of the emperor Valerian in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century was burned alive on a grate conserved in the church inside an 18<sup>th</sup> century urn under the altar of the first chapel on the right.

On the occasion of a campaign of archeological digs conducted between 1982 and 1987 the presence of pre-existing was ascertained.

The Sistine church was built on the foundations of a Roman *insula* (a structure used



both as a residence and for commercial activity) from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, which had in turn been built on the remains of an earlier building from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. These subterranean areas, open to the public, allow visitors to see the progression of the various phases of construction.

Paschal II had the church completely rebuilt between 1099 and 1118 endowing it with an elegant portico, whose interior contains marble fragments and medieval inscriptions.

The bell tower, on the right of the façade, with two floors of single mullioned windows and three floors of double windows, is also from the time of Paschal II.

In 1606 the church was ceded by Pope Paul V to the Order of the Chierici Regolari Minori, who undertook a radical restoration in the middle of the century, transforming the two side naves of the basilica into family chapels.

The central nave is dominated by the imposing altar, with columns in black marble, designed by Carlo Rinaldi in 1669 to host the celebrated *Crucifix* by Guido Reni.

The church's interior bears the imprint of the 19<sup>th</sup> century restoration done at the behest of Pope Pius IX: between 1856 and 1858 the architect Andrea Busiri Vici eliminated many of the earlier Baroque decorations and in 1860 the painter Roberto Bompiani painted the canvas at the center of the ceiling and the figures of saints between the windows.

Just a few meters down the street you come to Piazza Colonna, the only monumental piazza that opens on to the Corso, which takes its name from the Colonna Antonina which rises up in its center.

The column was erected after the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180 AD to celebrate his victories over the barbarians: composed of 28 blocks of marble, it was restored under Sixtus V in 1588 by Domenico Fontana who conceived its new base and replaced the statue of the emperor on the top with a bronze statue of Saint Paul.

In the classical age the Temple of Marcus Aurelius was located on one side of the piazza, while the others were adorned with porticoes and occupied by homes and stores.

During the Middle Ages the piazza became an obligatory stopping point, placed as it was at the middle of two routes heavily trafficked by pilgrims, the first of which led from the Salaria Gate to the Sant'Angelo bridge, and the second from **Piazza del Popolo** to the **Capitol**.

It was at the end of the 1500s that the piazza began to take on the aspect which it maintained until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sixtus V, in addition to the restoration of the column, had the pre-existing houses demolished, replacing them with noble



palaces: the first nuclei of the Palazzo Del Bufalo (later Ferrajoli) to the left of the church of Saints Bartolomeo and Alessandro dei Bergamaschi, and Palazzo Aldobrandini (later Palazzo Chigi), today the site of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

The piazza was also decorated with an elegant fountain with an oval tub adorned with masks and tritons, designed by Giacomo Della Porta. The fountain, modified in 1830, was first located next to the column, and was recently restored by the City of Rome.

The piazza's current design was determined in the 1800s, with the reconstruction by Pietro Camporese the Younger, of Palazzo Wedekind, once the site of the Pontifical Post Office and today the head office of the newspaper *Il Tempo*. On the opposite side of the street the late 16<sup>th</sup> century Palazzo Boncompagni-Piombino was demolished in 1889 and in 1915-1922 the monumental office building, known as "galleria Colonna," was built in its place.

Not far from Piazza Colonna, at the end of a slight ascent, you come to Piazza Montecitorio, with the red granite obelisk used by Augustus as the gnomon of his famous sun dial.

On the long side of the piazza is the imposing **Palazzo Montecitorio**, the former home of the Innocentian Curia and now the site of the Italian Chamber of Deputies. Returning to Piazza Colonna and turning down Via dei Bergamaschi you come to Piazza di Pietra, whose name derives from the grandiose Temple of Hadrian built in to a 17<sup>th</sup> century building that functioned as the Customs House: there are 11 columns of white marble remaining from the right side of the temple dedicated in 145 AD by the son of Antoninus Pius to his deified father.

By way of Via del Burrò you come to theatrical Baroque Piazza di Sant' Ignazio, with its famous so-called "canterani" (chests of drawers), the small Rococo palaces built by Raguzzini in the 1700s, which contribute so much to the charm of the piazza.

Facing the piazza is the church of Sant' Ignazio built by the Jesuits in honor of the canonization of their founder in 1622 and closely tied to the nearby Collegio Romano, the first and most important of the Order's scholastic institutions.

The final part of the Corso leading to **Piazza Venezia** is the least changed by the 19<sup>th</sup> century interventions and is the location of the church of San Marcello, rebuilt by Jacopo Sansovino and then by Antonio Sangallo the Younger after the fire which destroyed it in 1519. The façade is the work of Carlo Fontana (1682-86).

Just ahead on the side opposite San Marcello is the church of Santa Maria in Via Lata, an ancient diaconate from the 9<sup>th</sup> century, entirely rebuilt at its current level in



1491 and then transformed for the Holy Year of 1650 by Cosimo Fanzago, while the façade is the work of Pietro da Cortona.

The church occupies the northern side of the block of Palazzo Doria Pamphilj, the most important of the palaces facing the Corso, not only for its size, but also for the value of its architectonic construction completed over a period of four centuries.

Its oldest parts date back to 1435, while the façade facing the Corso is an original work by Gabriele Valvassori completed in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The family art collection in the gallery includes more than 400 paintings from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, among them *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* and *Mary Magdalen* by Caravaggio and the celebrated *Portrait of Pope Innocent X Pamphilj* by Velazquez from 1650.

When you come to the end of the Corso you head toward Piazza Ss. Apostoli, an area of great importance in ancient Rome because it was the end point of the **Imperial Forums**.

Today the piazza is the site of Palazzo Colonna, built by Martin V, whose secular name was Oddone Colonna, at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and rebuilt in 1730 by Nicola Michetti. On the inside the palazzo hosts a splendid gallery.

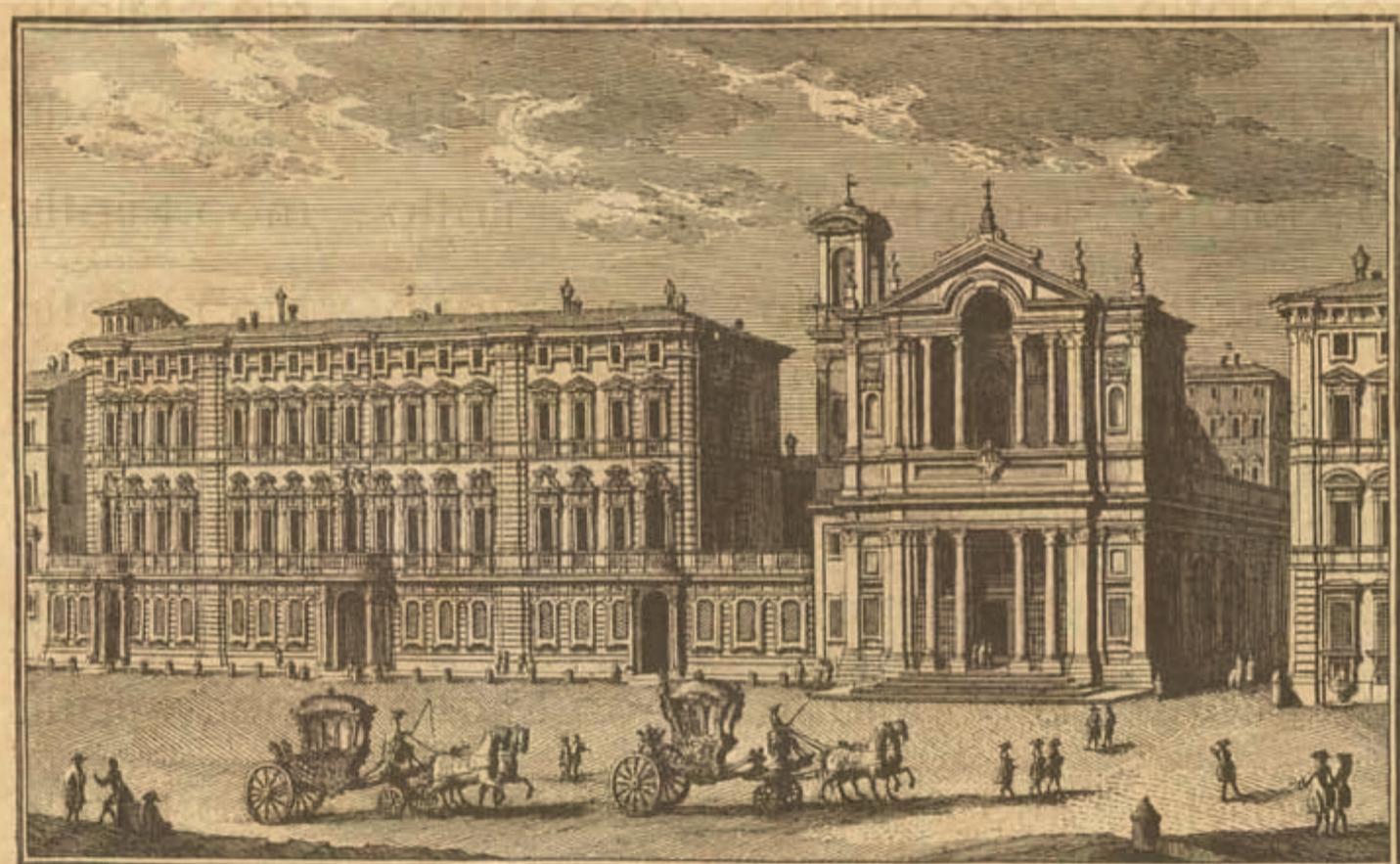
Next to Palazzo Colonna is the basilica dei Ss. Apostoli, with origins in ancient times and characterized by its 15<sup>th</sup> century portico which precedes the neoclassical façade in an oblique position with respect to the rest of the church.

Returning to Piazza Colonna and crossing the Corso, after a few meters you come to the Piazza of Trevi, dominated by the scenic **Trevi Fountain**, begun by Nicola Salvi in 1762.

In the nearby Piazza San Silvestro is the church of San Silvestro *in Capite*, annexed to the convent built on the ruins of the Temple of the Sun; its present aspect is the work of Francesco da Volterra and Carlo Maderno who rebuilt it in the late 1500s.

The name *in Capite* comes from the church's conservation of the relic of the head of Saint John the Baptist, but its original name was San Silvestro *inter duos hortos* after the large number of vineyards in the area.





*Chiesa di S. Maria in Via Lata*  
*Palazzo di Desiole e Parte del Palazzo Pamfili, che corrisponde su la piazza del Collegio Romano, e Parte del moderno Palazzo, che sta su la Via del Corso*





*Chiesa di S. Carlo, ed. Ambrosio al Corso  
Collegio dei Preti, e Spedale dei Milanesi, e Chiesa e Spedale di S. Giacomo degli Incurabili, Chiesa di S. Nome di Gesù di Moria e Conv. dei PP. Agostiniani - Scala*





V. G. de' m.

Pl. Colonna

1. Colonna Antonina o. Palazzo Ghisi, 2. Chiesa Innocenziana, 3. Palazzo di Monsi, 4. Vicarienti, 5. Ch. della Nazione de Bergamaschi

23





# *Palazzo Montecitorio*

By Letizia Cenci



The superb façade of Palazzo Montecitorio dominates the piazza of the same name, built between 1730 and 1740 by Ferdinando Fuga and enriched by an Egyptian obelisk, the gnomon of Augustus' ancient sun dial, at the behest of Pope Pius VI in 1792.

The palace and the piazza are named after the medieval *Mons Acceptorius*, an artificial hill made out of earth that was excavated for the foundation of the enormous column of Antonino Pio.

There is still some debate about the origin of the name, but the most plausible hypothesis is that *Mons Acceptorius* derives from *Mons Septorium* and that the area takes its name from the nearby *Saepta*, the place where in ancient times the centurions met to vote.

Palazzo Montecitorio was built on the site of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Palazzo Gaddi as a residence for the Ludovisi family, and commissioned by Pope Innocent X, who in



1653, charged Gian Lorenzo Bernini with the construction of the palace.

It seems that Bernini succeeded in winning the commission after showing a silver model of his design to the wife of Prince Ludovisi, his patron at the time. Bernini's conception of the prestigious residence is characterized by long lateral wings and by an original curved arrangement which lends the building elegance and lightness. The Neapolitan Bernini was the author of the overall design but the architectural details are the work of Carlo Fontana who completed it in 1697 for Pope Innocent XII Pignatelli, adapting the building to house the courts of the Vatican State, the "Curia Innocenziana," a function it served up until the 1870s.

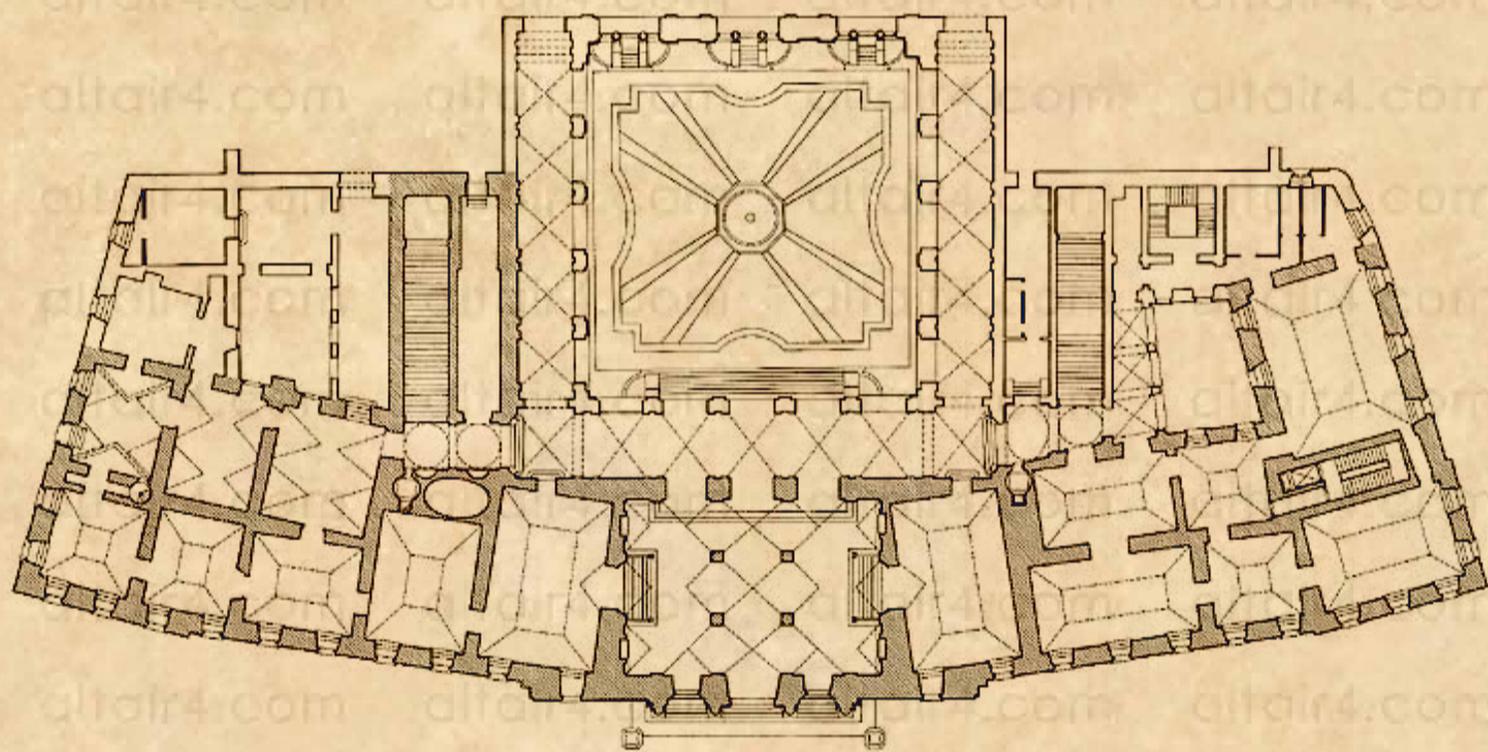
Carlo Fontana made some modifications in Bernini's original design, adding a triple entrance and, above the jutting central part, a belfry.

During the period of the Napoleonic occupation the Palace was the seat of the Prefecture, while since 1871, following the declaration making Rome the capital of Italy, it has hosted the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of the Italian Parliament. To adapt the palace to its new, important function, the architect Ernesto Basile was called from Palermo and, between 1903 and 1927, he added a new corpus to the building, building the current parliamentary chamber in the large courtyard left by Fontana.

The semi-circular chamber made entirely of oak with floral inlays and decorations in the art nouveau style, and it is embellished by a frieze painted on canvas by Giulio Aristide Sartorio, representing the *Civiltà Italiana* and the *Virtues of the Italian People with salient episodes from its history*.

The work required for the expansion of the building led Basile to construct a new front which faces on to the Piazza del Parlamento and which, weighed down by excessive decoration, does not harmonize very well with the texture of the surrounding urban environment.







PROSPETTO E VEDUTA DEL PALAZZO DELLA CURIA ROMANA PER RESIDENZA DE TRIBUNALI NUOVAMENTE FABBRICATO SUI MONTE CITATORIO  
VOLGARMENTE DETTO CITORIO DALLA SANTITA DI N.S. PAPA INNOCENTIO XII. Architetto del Cavaliere Gio: Lorenzo Bernini  
*La Porta e l'Orologio Architetto del Cavaliere Bernini. 1 Palazzo della Curia Romana 2 Palazzo della Ecc. Casa Chigi 3 Colonna Antoniana 4 Piazza Colonna 5 Architetto di Piazza della Minerva  
Alessandro Giarra Bernini e Fontana* 51









# *Trevi Fountain*

By Gemma Fusciello



The Trevi Fountain, situated in the piazza of the same name, is the largest fountain in Rome. Its name may be related to its location near a “Trivio,” or triple intersection, or else to the fact that in the 15<sup>th</sup> century the fountain’s water gushed forth from three different spouts.

This was the monumental terminus of the aqueduct of the Acqua Vergine, which took its name from the legend about a young virgin who had pointed out the source to some thirsty Roman soldiers.

The aqueduct was built by Agrippa in 19 BC to supply water for his new baths and the Campo Marzio. It was restored several times during the Middle Ages and in the late 1600s its conduits crossed through the piazza atop several arches.

The fountain, the first monumental fountain in Rome, was built in the 1400s, at the time of Nicholas V, after a design by Alberti and Bernardo Rossellino. That first fountain was positioned at a right angle with respect to the current fountain, and was much simpler in design.

After undergoing a restoration in the 1500s it was demolished in 1640 by order of Urban VIII. It was then that work on the new fountain was begun by Bernini, situated



in its current location and much more monumental than the previous one, but never brought to completion for lack of funds.

The project was suspended for the entire 17<sup>th</sup> century and then taken up again with designs done by all the major architects of the time. It was not until the papacy of Clement XII Corsini, however, that the final design was approved.

The selection fell to one of the five designs submitted by Nicola Salvi, completed only in 1762, with several variations such as the three basins at the foot of the Ocean, executed by Giuseppe Pannini, who finished the fountain after Salvi's death.

The design of the fountain is based on the scheme of earlier fountains built in Rome at the time of Sixtus V, based in turn on the only surviving fountain from ancient times, the Acqua Giulia in Piazza Vittorio, known in the Middle Ages as the Trofei di Mario.

In a fusion of architecture and sculpture, the great tub is topped by an architectural front with three large niches adorned with statues.

The fountain is enthroned between the two wings of Palazzo Poli, occupying its central area, left undecorated during its 18<sup>th</sup> century enlargement, due to the presence of the barrel-vaults of the aqueduct. Or rather, to bring it into harmony with its new context, the front of the palace was redecorated with architectural elements similar to those used in the fountain.

The entire ground floor was adorned with a thin facing of square stones (ashlar-work) to become the base for an order of gigantic Corinthian pilasters, which frames the two upper floors and is topped by an attic or penthouse level.

The corpus of the fountain itself moves forward from the front of the palace with a giant order of four Corinthian columns adjacent to the pilasters, which divides the fountain into three parts.

The main part is the large central niche, adorned with four ionic columns, which holds the statue of Ocean placed on a coach in the form of a seashell, pulled by two seahorses driven by Tritons. This sculptural group, executed by Bracci in 1762, is the heart of the composition; the water flows down from it through the three superimposed basins.

On the sides, in the space between the columns, are two niches surrounded by bas-reliefs. Inside the niches are two statues by Filippo Valle: the one on the left represents Agrippa approving the design of the aqueduct, the one on the right the young girl showing the source to the soldiers.

The composition is completed by the high attic, adorned with four statues representing the seasons, on which is enthroned the crest of the Corsini. As a counterpoint to





*Veduta in prospettiva della gran Fontana dell'Acqua Vergine detta di Trevi, Architettura di Nicola Salvi*





ALTRA VEDUTA DELLA CHIESA DI S-IGNATIO DE PP. DELLA COMP. DI GIE.SV NEL RIONE DELLA  
 Pigna, condotta da uarij disegni dal P Horatio Graffi Matematico. 3 Guglia di S.Mauto. 22  
 1 Casa de PP. Gesuiti del Collegio Rom. 2 Conuento de PP. Domenicani. 4 Oratorio di S.Fran.Sauerio.





CHIESA DEDICATA A SANT'IGNAZIO DE' PP. DELLA COMPAGNIA DI GIESÙ NEL RIONE DELLA PIGNA.  
 condotta da varj disegni dal P. Horatio Graffi Matematico.

1 Casa de PP. Gesuiti del Collegio Romano. 2 Convento de PP. Domenicani.

3 Guglia di S. Mauro.

21

Gio. Battista Falda del. fecit.

Per Gio. Innocenzo Reffi in Roma alla Pace se' Priu. del S. P. M.





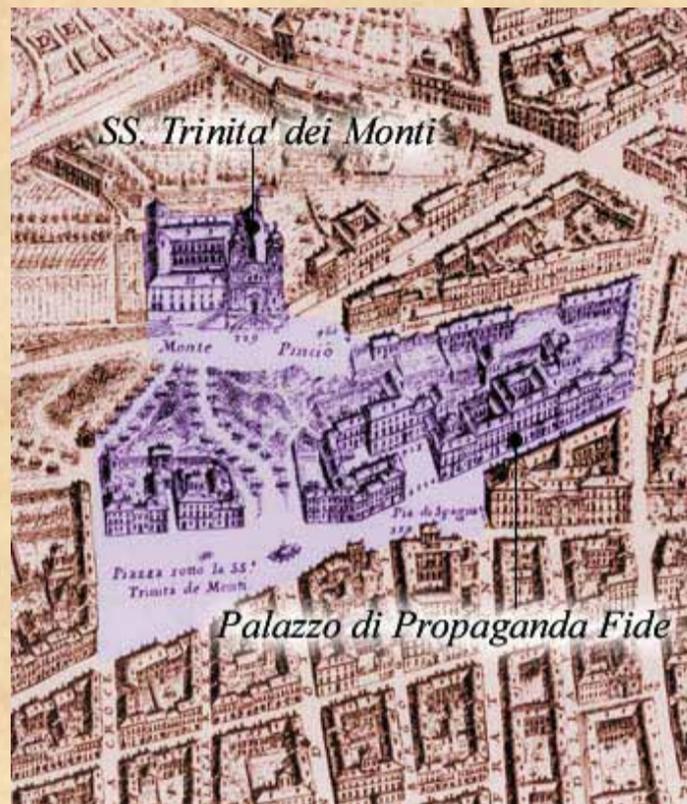
*G. P. del. sculp.*  
*Palazzo Colonna*  
*1. Anticaglia nel giardino di detto Palazzo, e Appart. nuovi del medesimo Palazzo per uso della famiglia, e Chiesa dei XII. SS. Apostoli, e Palazzo Musi.*





# The Spanish Steps Area

By Sabina Carbonara



Just beyond the church of San Carlo al **Corso**, near Largo Goldoni, you turn onto Via Condotti, named for the conduits of the Acqua Vergine aqueduct that passed under it, until you reach Piazza di Spagna, one of the most famous in Rome.

The piazza has always been, ever since the 1500s, one of the important centers of the city's cultural life, particularly popular with foreign artists, and it is now one of the city's most elegant neighborhoods.

The piazza's main attraction is the scenic staircase built, in the elegant style of the late baroque era, between 1723 and 1726, by the architect Francesco De Sanctis. The steps function as a via of communication between the piazza and the overlooking church of the **Trinità dei Monti**, and it is articulated in a complex succession of flights of twelve steps each, which become narrower and wider and divide themselves into groups, in a polygonal, straight line development, concave and convex; almost a foretaste of the rococò.

The presence of wide seating areas corresponded to the desire to create a "passageway of stairs" and it has such a welcoming air that, still today, makes it a pleasant open air meeting place.

At the top of the staircase is the church of Trinità dei Monti, built for the Minim Friars of St. Francis of Paola (1502-85) and preceded by a stairway of converging ramps, the work of architect Domenico Fontana.

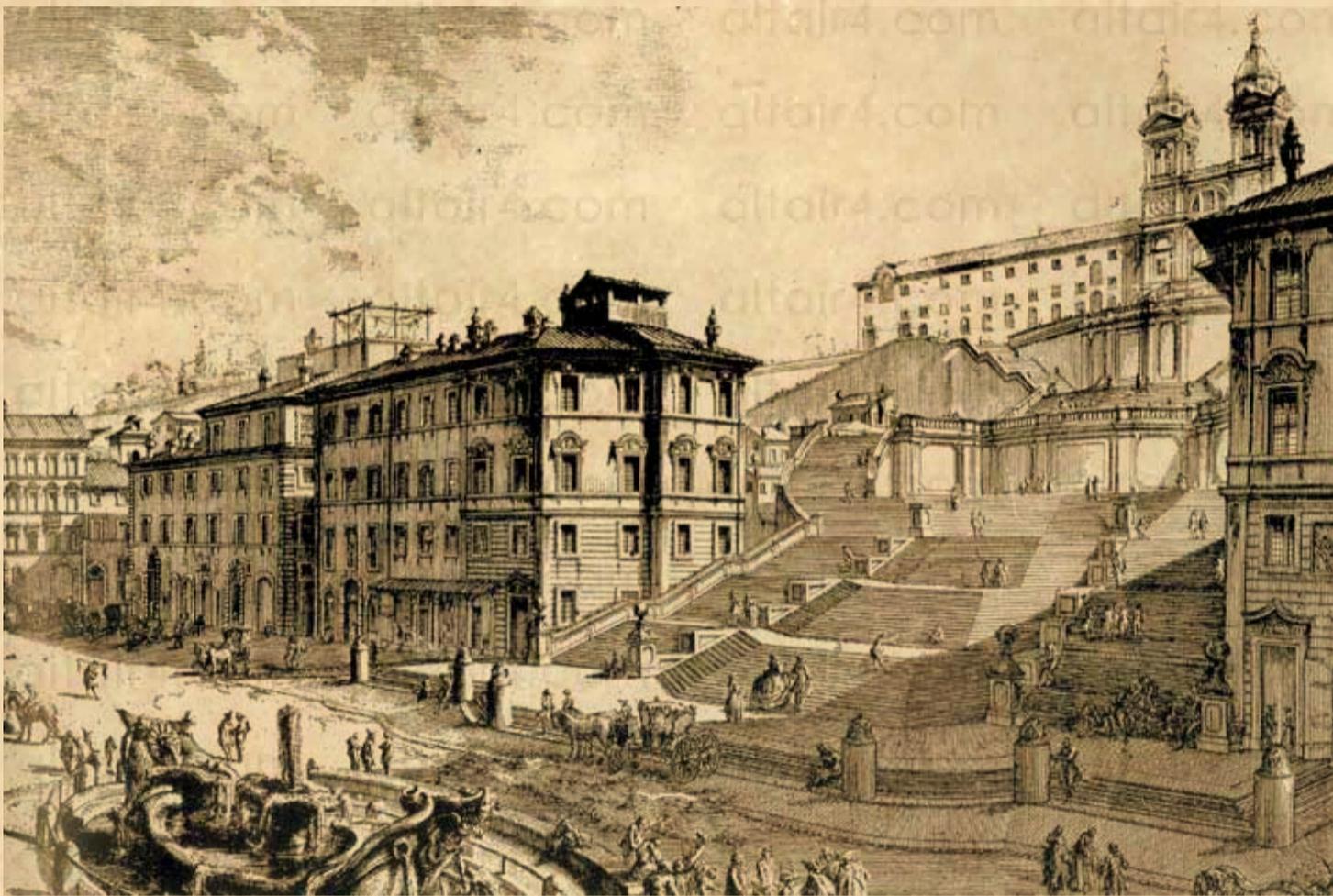
In front of the church, on a high pedestal, is the Sallustian obelisk (brought here from the Gardens of Sallust, near the Salaria Gate) erected in 1789 by Pope Pius VI. Going back down the Spanish steps in the opposite direction, you come to the splendid fountain, in the form of a boat, in the center of the piazza. The fountain has been known, at least since 1693, as the "Barcaccia", perhaps in association with the "barcacce" or "beat-up old boats" that, from the nearby port of **Ripetta**, transported wine barrels up and down the river.

The fountain, which breaks the Renaissance tradition of tub fountains, represents a boat sunk into a low basin, pouring water from its bow and stern. Although the payments for the work were made out in the name of Pietro Bernini, father of the more famous Gian Lorenzo, today the critics are almost all agreed in attributing the work is the result of collaboration between the two artist (1626-29).

Continuing along the side of the street opposite the steps, to the right of Via Condotti you pass alongside the Palace of Spain, the location since the 17<sup>th</sup> century of the Spanish Embassy to the Holy See.

You continue down the Via di Propaganda to the Propaganda Fide Palace, headquarters of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, instituted by Pope Gregory XV in





# *Church of SS. Trinità dei Monti*

By Sabina Carbonara



The church was born of the relationship between San Francesco di Paola and King Charles VIII of France, and his successor King Louis XII, who sponsored the acquisition of the land on the Pincio and the construction of a conventual complex for the Order of the Minims, founded by San Francesco di Paola.

Begun in 1502, the church was completed in 1519, while the convent was completed in 1550. Later the church was lengthened and a higher façade added on, which was completed after a design by Giacomo Della Porta in 1584, while the double ramp staircase was executed in 1587, replacing a previous one, after a design by Domenico Fontana. However, the consecration took place only in 1595.

Between 1617 and 1622 the architect Filippo Breccioli was commissioned by the Minims of Calabria to restore and enlarge the convent building, completed in 1624. In the same years the Minims of Calabria left the convent, whose direction was entrusted to the Minims of France.

Finally, in 1677 the structure above the presbytery was realized.

In 1774 Giovanni Paolo Pannini restructured the vault of the church, hiding the original gothic-like structures in the central nave. In 1797, during the Jacobin Republic of Rome, the Order of the Minims of France was forced to leave the convent and then,



after the restoration of 1816, in 1828, it was assigned to the Sisters of Sacred Heart, the order founded by Saint Madeline Sofia Barrat, who established a prestigious school for young women there, which is still operating today.

The façade, with its twin belfries on either side, has a northern gothic look, quite unusual for Rome, which testifies to the French influence in its design, while the great window in the center adds a touch of classical balance.

The interior, composed of a single nave, has twelve side chapels, which house many important works of art.

The church is divided in two parts by a gate; the part beyond the gate, which can be visited only by permission of Le Pieux Etablissements de la France a Rome, still conserves the late gothic architecture of the church's initial phase.

The third chapel on the right was built at the expense of the convent and ceded to Lucrezia Della Rovere, who commissioned Daniele Ricciarelli, known as da Volterra, to decorate it with Stories of the Virgin. It is known that the painter executed the drawings but that the frescoes were done by a large group of artists including Pellegrino Tibaldi and Marco Pino (1548-50 and 1553-60). The fresco cycle, one of the most important examples of 16<sup>th</sup> Tusco-Roman mannerism, is conceived in such a way that the real space of the chapel is connected to the painted space by the use of illusion.

The chapel at the end of the left arm of the transept has a beautiful cycle of frescoes done by the Florentine painter Pietro Bonaccorsi, known as Perin del Vaga, with Stories of the Virgin (1523-1527) commissioned by the Cardinal Lorenzo Pucci, who was the protector of the convent from 1513.

In 1527 the painter left Rome for the Sack and the decoration was left incomplete. In 1562 the patronate of the chapel went to the Archbishop of Corfu, Giacomo Cauco, who assigned to Taddeo Zuccari the completion of the work.

Taddeo painted the Death of the Virgin on the left wall, and did the drawing for the Assumption, on the back wall. His brother Federico painted the rest of the cycle.

Much more interesting is the second chapel on the left which conserves the precious Deposition by Daniele da Volterra.

The chapel, ceded to the patronage of the Spaniard Antioco Bonfili was decorated between 1570 and 1570 by the painters, Paolo de Cèspedes and Cesare Arbasia.

Its significance derives, however, from the presence of da Volterra's celebrated Deposition, initially painted in the third chapel (Orsini) and detached in 1809, which still today testifies to the artist's elevated style.



Reframed and cleaned in an attempt to revivify its colors, the fresco was restored again in 1822 by Vincenzo Camuccini, then moved to Villa Medici and finally, reclaimed by the heirs of the Orsini, brought back to the church.

The Deposition, painted by the artist in 1541, still shows Perin del Vaga's influence in its nervous attempt at formal perfection and the movement of the drapery, but whereas in Perin del Vaga this resulted in a sophisticated formal elegance, here it produces a more intense and dramatic vision.

The work is one of the most representative examples of Mannerism in its second phase, not only for its stylistic originality, owing to its animated monumentality and the skillful decomposition of its levels, but also for its reinterpretation of the cultural components which converge in it, from the lessons of the Tuscan painters of the earlier generation, like Rosso Fiorentino, all the way back to the problematic philosophy of the late Michelangelo.

The attached convent, unfortunately not open to visits, conserves a beautiful cloister of the XVI century, restored between 1987 and 2002, and splendid frescoes.

The vaults in the four-sided portico of the cloister present frescoes by Avanzino Nucci, with portraits of the kings of France (1616-1629); in the lunettes are scenes from the life and miracles of San Francesco di Paola painted by Cavalier d'Arpino, Cristoforo Roncalli, and other mannerist painters.

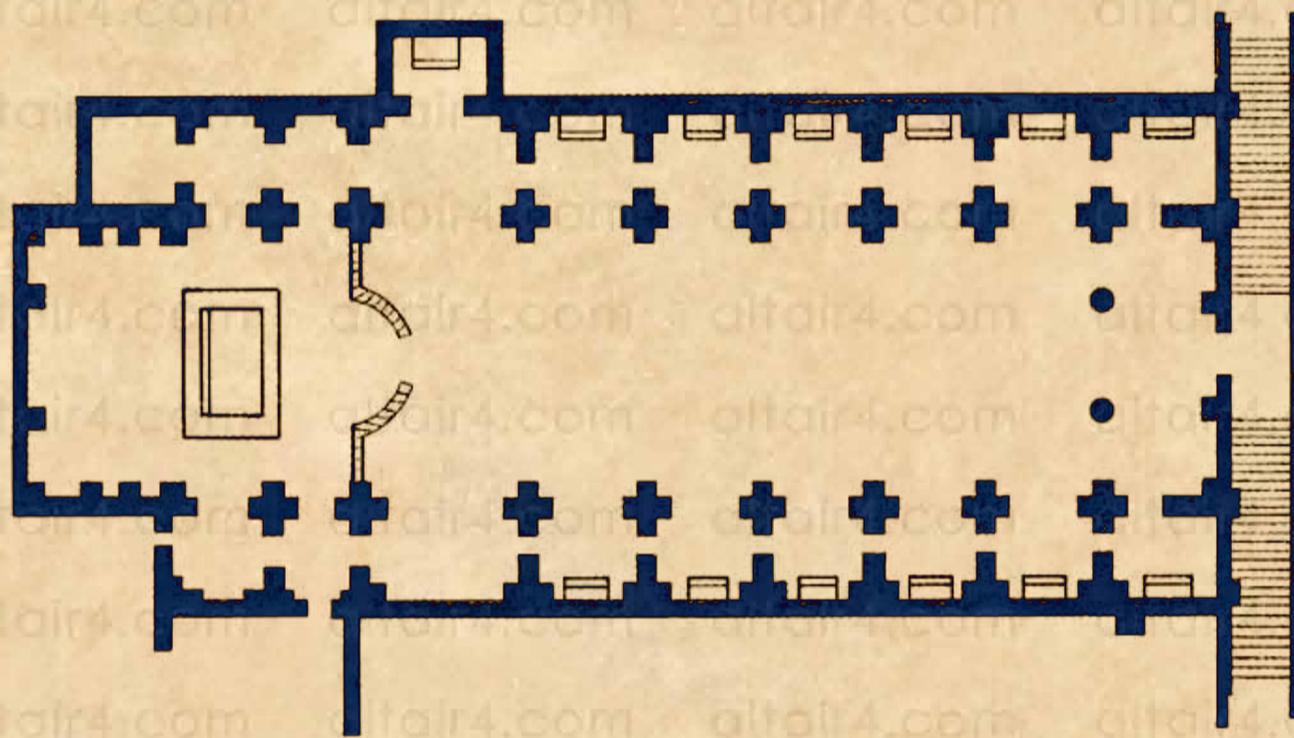
In the rooms of the west cloister, until the end of the eighteenth century, there was the Pharmacy of the Minims.

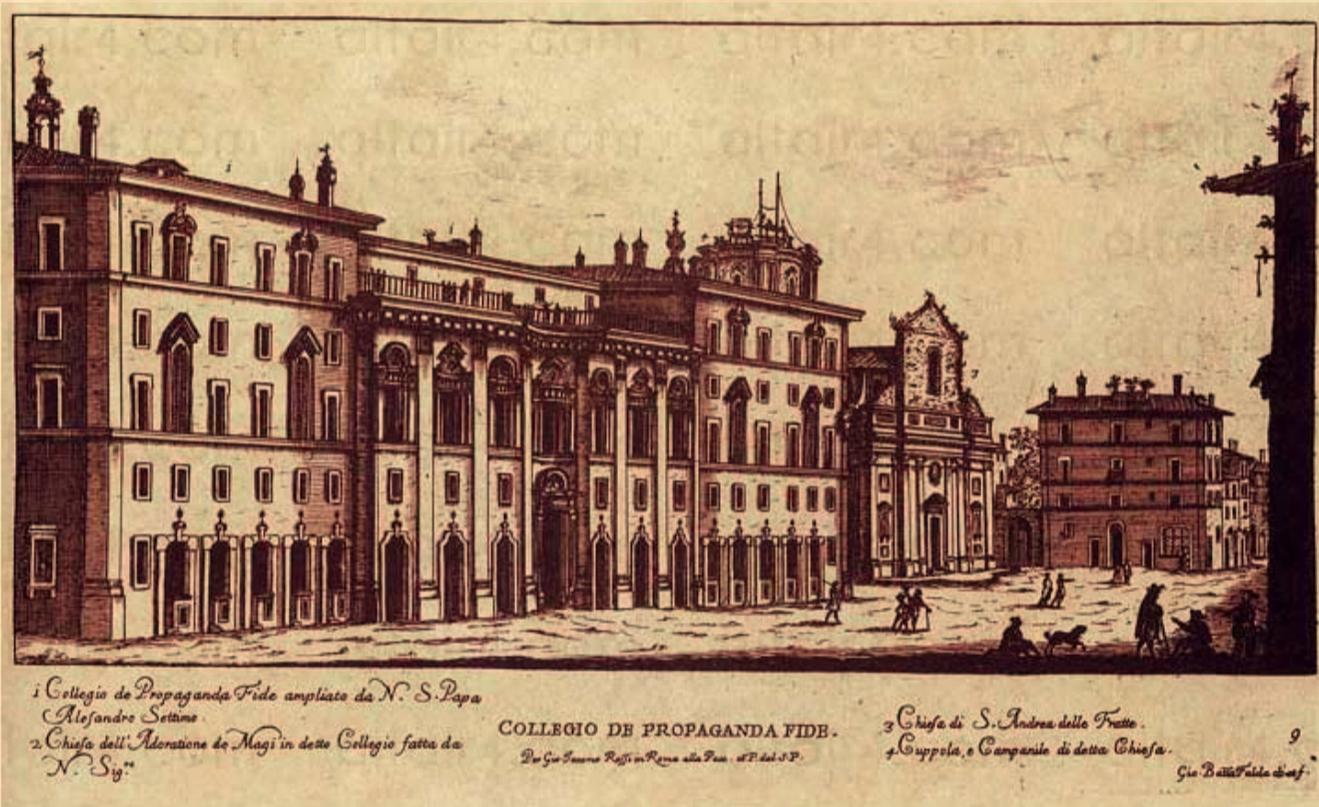
Passing through a large door that opens on to the northwest side of the cloister one enters a corridor that leads to the garden.

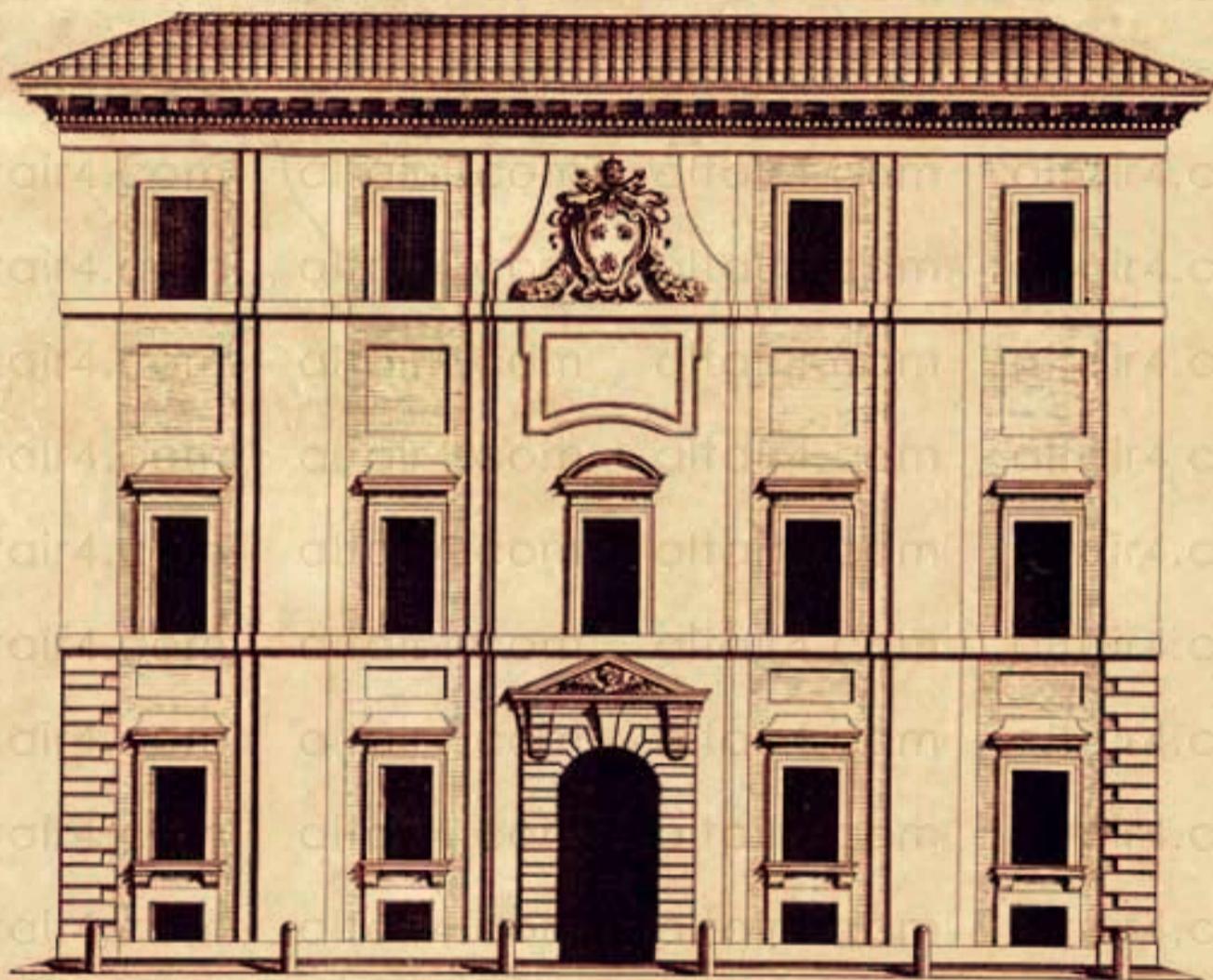
At the end of the corridor, on the left, is the Refectory, a very large room painted by the Jesuit painter Andrea Pozzo (1694).

On the back wall Pozzo painted The Wedding Feast at Cana set in a palace of a hundred columns and, in the vault, the Trinity and numerous episodes taken from the history of the Order of the Minims. The frescoes were restored in 2002.









PALAZZO DEL COLLEGIO DE PROPAGANDA FIDE NEL RIONE DI COLONNA ET FACCIATA VERSO LA PIAZZA DELL' ECC.<sup>MA</sup> S.<sup>TA</sup> ANNA<sup>RE</sup> IN SPAGNA EDIFICATO SOTTO VIBANO VIII ARCHITETTURA DEL S.<sup>TO</sup> CAV.<sup>TO</sup> GIO. LORENZO BERNINI.  
 Disegnato da G. B. Piranesi in Roma alla fine del sec. del 18. *Scala di metri 10.*

21



# *Via delle Quattro Fontane*

By Sabina Carbonara



From Via del Tritone, opened at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to connect **Via del Corso** and Piazza Barberini, you come to the piazza that takes its name from the powerful Barberini family, which built a villa-palazzo in the area (1625-33) extending from Via delle Quattro Fontane to the church of San Nicola da Tolentino. At the center of the piazza is the Fountain of Triton, the work of Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1643), now isolated in a completely transformed urban environment, especially the part behind the statue, with the opening of the lower part of Via Vittorio Veneto and Via Bissolati, and the construction of the Hotel Bristol.

Four dolphins with their mouths touching the surface of the water in a four-lobed basin, hold the crest of the Barberini family in with their tails and hold open the valves of a giant shell on which sits Triton who, blowing into a bugle-horn, sends a gushing stream of water into the sky.

On the north corner, on the left of the piazza, is the beginning of Via Vittorio Veneto, opened in 1893 as the main street of the new neighborhood built on the site of the 17<sup>th</sup> century villa of Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi. The street, lined with luxury hotels and elegant cafes, was the center of the Roman “dolce vita” of the 1950s and 60s.

At the beginning of the street, on the right, the Fountain of the Bees, also the work of Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

From the opposite side of the piazza you walk up Via Quattro Fontane; on the left, halfway up the street, you can see **Palazzo Barberini**, one of the biggest palaces of the Baroque era.

After leaving Palazzo Barberini you come to the descent of Via Rasella whose name is connected to the 1944 bombing of a patrol of German soldiers then occupying Rome and the subsequent reprisal, resulting in the execution of more than 300 people in the Fosse Ardeatine.

Continuing instead along Via Quattro Fontane you come to the intersection of Via XX Settembre and **Via del Quirinale**.

Here the intersection of two important axes, part of the new urban design conceived by Sixtus V Peretti, and more precisely the Felice road (now Via Sistina) and the Pia road (now Via XX Settembre), already extant and realized by Pope Pius IV on which the diagonal Sistine road was implanted, marks the location of the four fountains, a characteristic four-part intersection of late 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century Rome opening on to the four-part background of Porta Pia and the three obelisks of the Esquiline, Quirinale, and Trinità dei Monti.

Each of the four fountains – representing the Tiber, the Arno, Diana and Juno – was placed in a niche dug out of a block of stone placed diagonally with respect to the



axis of the street which, in the case of Palazzo Mattei, now Del Drago, constitutes the corner of the building; in the other three cases the niche was made in the outside wall of the various private properties involved.

Not far ahead, on the right, right next to the intersection of the four fountains, is the church of Holy Trinity and Saint Charles Borromeo, commonly known as **San Carlino alle Quattro Fontane**, because of its reduced dimensions which could fit inside one of the pilasters that support the dome of St. Peter's.



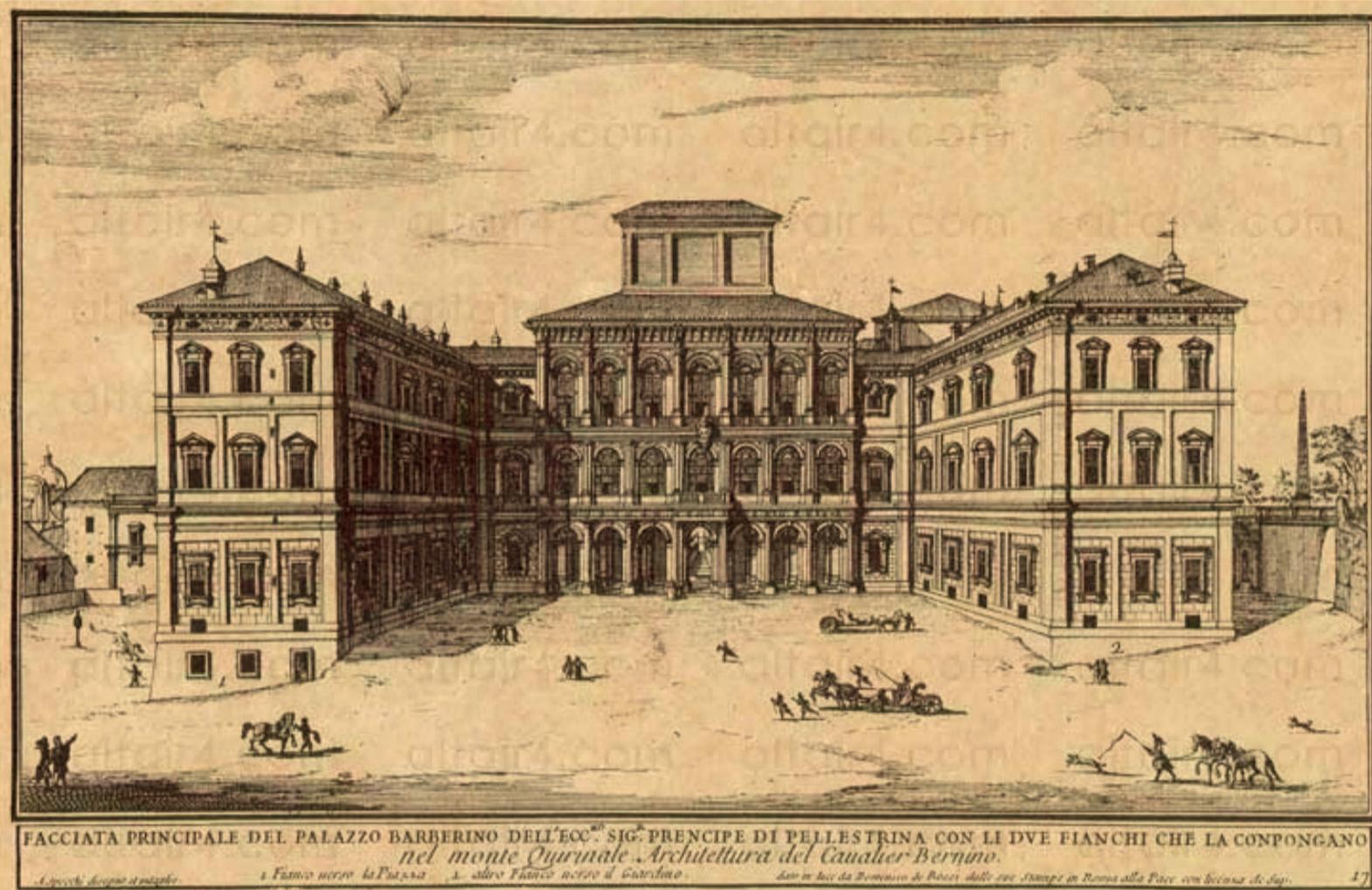


*La Piazza Barberina o Obelisco che giace nell'ingresso di detto Palazzo Barberini e Fontana del Gallo che si veda alla Chiesa di PP. Capuccini.*



# *Palazzo Barberini*

By Sabina Carbonara



The first design for the Barberini palace was done by the architect Carlo Maderno, whose initial conception called for a rectangular building to envelope the already existing Villa Sforza, following the typical scheme of a Renaissance palace.

He then elaborated another design, revolutionizing his earlier idea into an open-winged palace, bringing together the official, public role of the papal family residence with the customary aspect of the suburban villa, endowed with vast gardens and open views.

*Upon Maderno's death Bernini took over the direction of the project but he maintained the essence of his predecessor's design.*

Francesco Borromini began working as draftsman for the project team in 1629, and he is credited with the oval staircase modeled after the one designed by Vignola in the Palazzo Farnese in Caprarola. Counterpointing the oval stair, at the opposite end of the portico, is the rectangular stair designed by Bernini.



Bernini built a palace in two sections joined by a third, for which he designed the extraordinary façade with glassed-in loggias, supported by the wide portico which takes the place of the classical courtyard. This third sector, the fulcrum of the design, is centered around the large volume of the salon which occupies two stories and is covered by a vault frescoed by Pietro da Cortona with the Triumph of Divine Providence (1632-39), symbolizing the spiritual and temporal glory of the Barberini family.

This grandiose palace corresponded to the wishes of Pope Urban VIII, who wanted his Florentine family to have a residence equal to those of the great families of the Roman nobility.

The façade of the urban palace is the one facing Piazza Barberini and the entrance to the complex was constituted by the grand doorway designed by Pietro da Cortona. The country villa façade on the other hand, facing Via Quattro Fontane, underlines the palace's symbiotic relationship with nature, representing, with its double entrance, the division between the two main sections of the palace.

The north section was occupied by the secular wing of the family; the south section by the ecclesiastical wing and here, on the top floor, Cardinal Francesco Barberini installed his celebrated library. Only later on did this side of the building become the main entrance to the palace, when the gate was added in 1865, after a design by Francesco Azzurri with the large supporting telamones sculpted by Adamo Tadolini. The interior of the palace now hosts the National Gallery (Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica).

The National Gallery of Rome was officially constituted in 1893, after the collection, which had been donated to the government by Prince Corsini ten years before, was joined in 1892 by the more recently formed Torlonia collection.

The Gallery's original location in Palazzo Corsini turned out to be inadequate, especially in light of the ever more numerous new donations and acquisitions, and Palazzo Barberini was purchased in 1949 as the new home of the National Gallery. In 1984, following the rearrangement of the Gallery's collection, all of the original works in the Corsini collection were taken back to be housed again in Palazzo Corsini. The works which came to the Gallery through subsequent donations or acquisitions are now held in Palazzo Barberini which, without the works from the initial corpus of the Corsini collection, presents itself as the only state-owned collection in Rome without a specific historical identity, and suitable, therefore, for a chronological arrangement and didactic exposition open to new acquisitions.

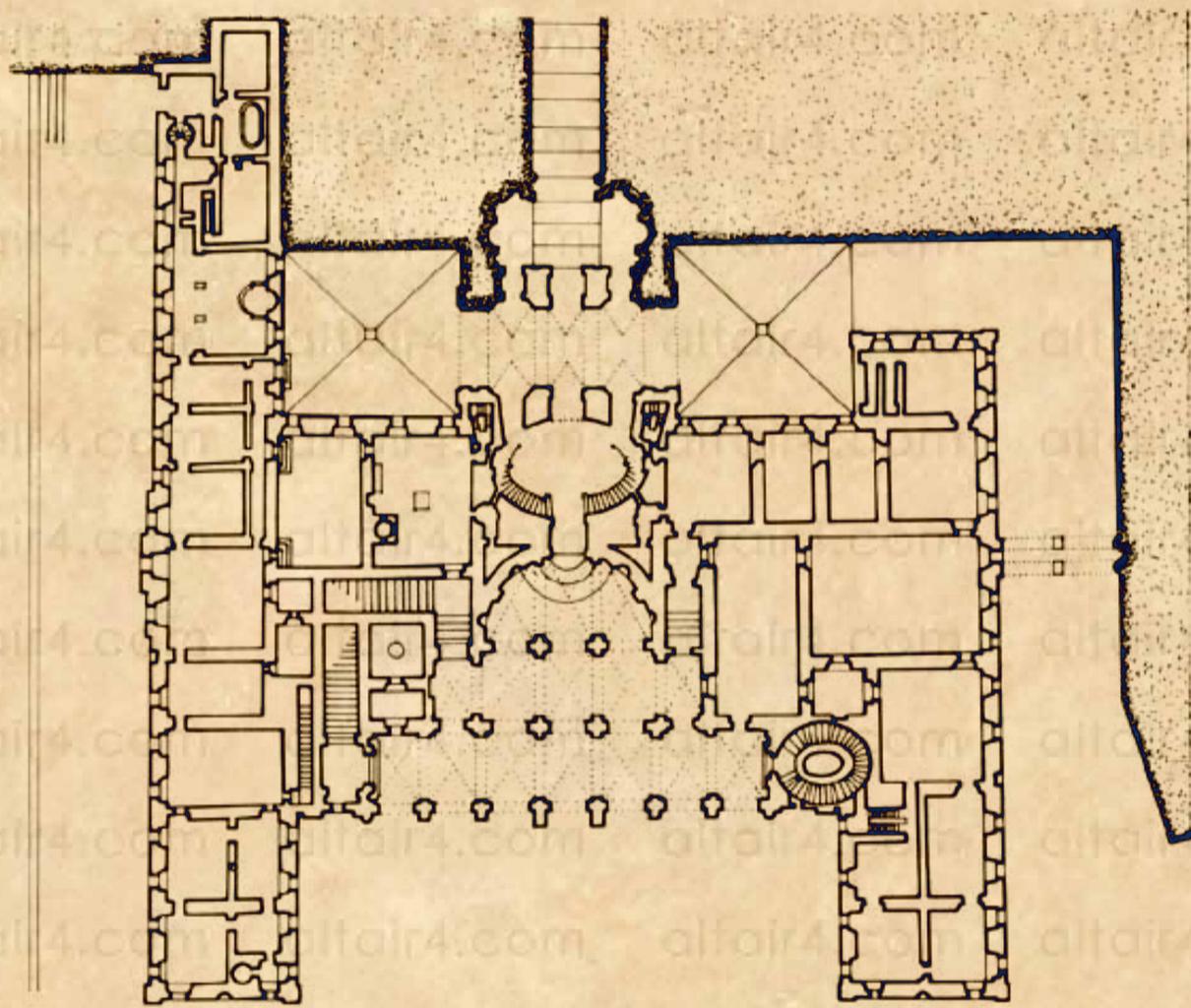
The collection is extraordinarily rich in master works, especially from the 16<sup>th</sup> and



17<sup>th</sup> centuries. We cannot fail to mention the portrait of the “Fornarina” by Raffaello Sanzio (Raphael) and Venus and Adonis by Tiziano Vecellio (Titian).

Although the fundamental nucleus of the Gallery is formed by works from the 1600s, the 18<sup>th</sup> century painting, exhibited on the second floor, is also quite well represented. This collection of paintings can now be seen as part of the visit to the apartment decorated in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Cornelia Costanza Barberini.







# Church of San Carlino alle Quattro Fontane

By Sabina Carbonara



At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Spanish Discalced Trinitarian friars established themselves on the site and in 1634 they decided to build a church and attached monastery there after a design by Francesco Borromini.

Although the lot was small and irregular, the architect managed to design a functional architectural complex endowed with a refectory, the necessary private spaces for the clerics, and a church.

Started in 1638 and consecrated in 1646, this religious complex was Borromini's first architectural commission, while its façade can be said to be his last work, as it remained incomplete at his death in 1667. The façade, divided into three sections by columns with original capitals, has a curved development in two orders, concave on the sides and convex in the center.

The interior, whose plan derives from the intersection of a rhombus and an ellipse, is divided by Corinthian columns, which follow the undulating movement of the walls, with one chapel per side. A small apse opens up at the end.

The elliptical dome presents a curious coffering of octagons, crosses, and hexagons,



which gradually diminish in size as they converge on the opening of the dome, giving the idea of a space that is larger than the reality.

All of the decorative motifs are extremely refined, these too meticulously designed by Borromini and unified by the controlled use of white stucco figures which give the church a strikingly white, creamy luminosity.

On the main altar is a painting representing the Saints Charles Borromeo, Felix of Valois, and John of Malta in adoration of the Trinity, the work of the French painter, Pierre Mignard (1646).

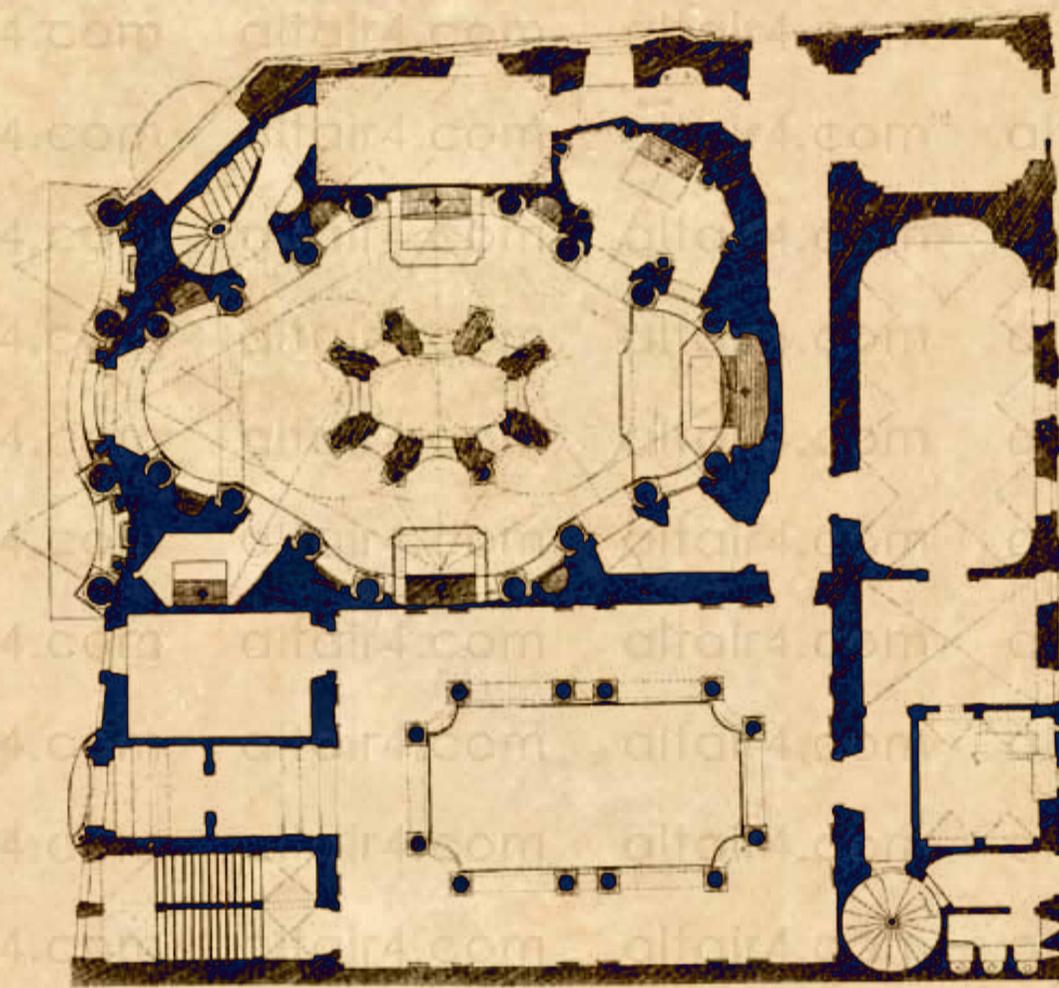
Also worthy of note is the painting, conserved in what is now the sacristy (former refectory), representing Saint Charles Borromeo in adoration of the Trinity, by the caravaggesque painter Orazio Borgianni.

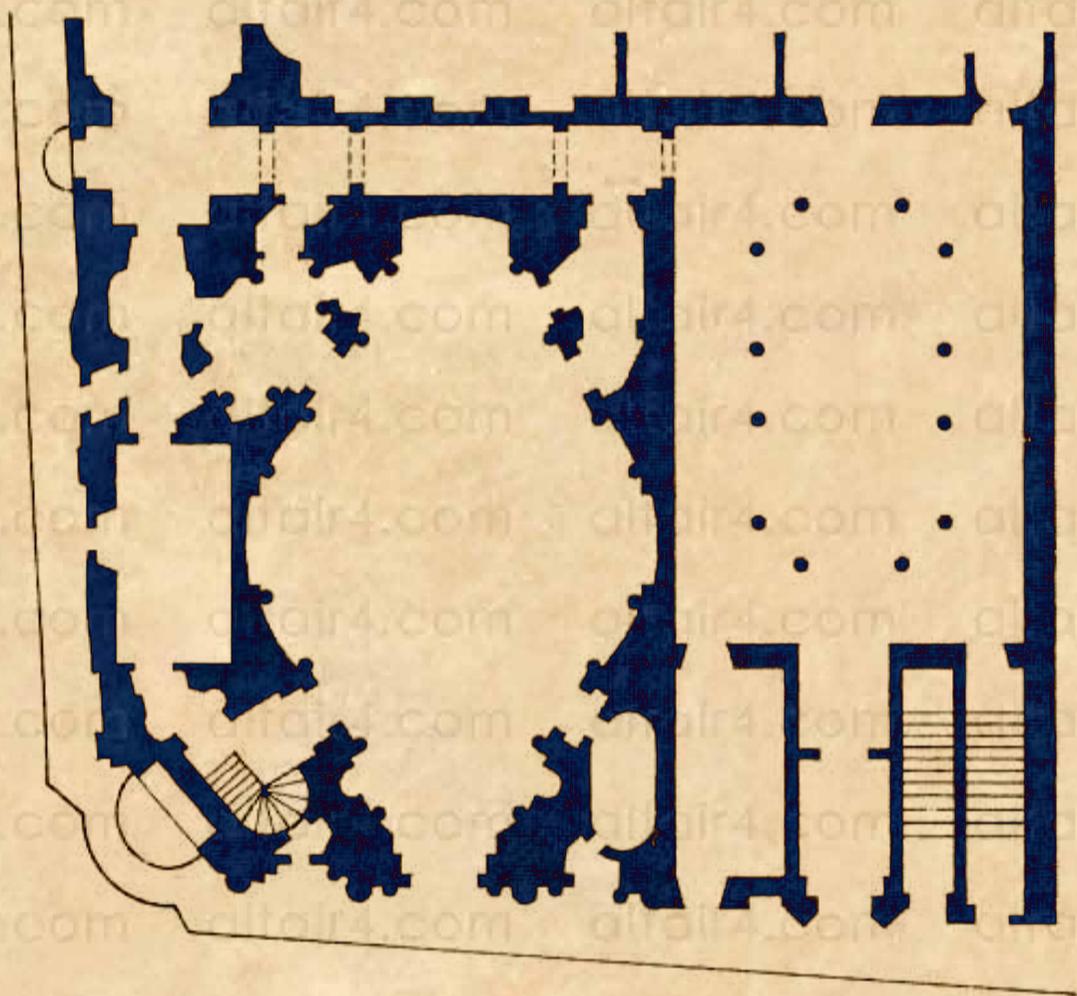
The lower level church, usually not open for visits, presents a simplified version of the upper church.

The cloister, parallel to the axis of the church, presents an original octagonal plan (with convex angles) on two levels: on the lower level, paired Ionic columns supporting the arches of the portico; on the upper level, paired columns with architraves. The loggia is girded by a balcony with little columns which are alternately inverted.

The architecture of the monastery is also quite remarkable; some of its features look like a prelude to 18<sup>th</sup> century innovations. The best view of the monastery is from Via Depretis, from where you can also see the bell tower, designed by Bernardo Borromini, the architect's nephew.

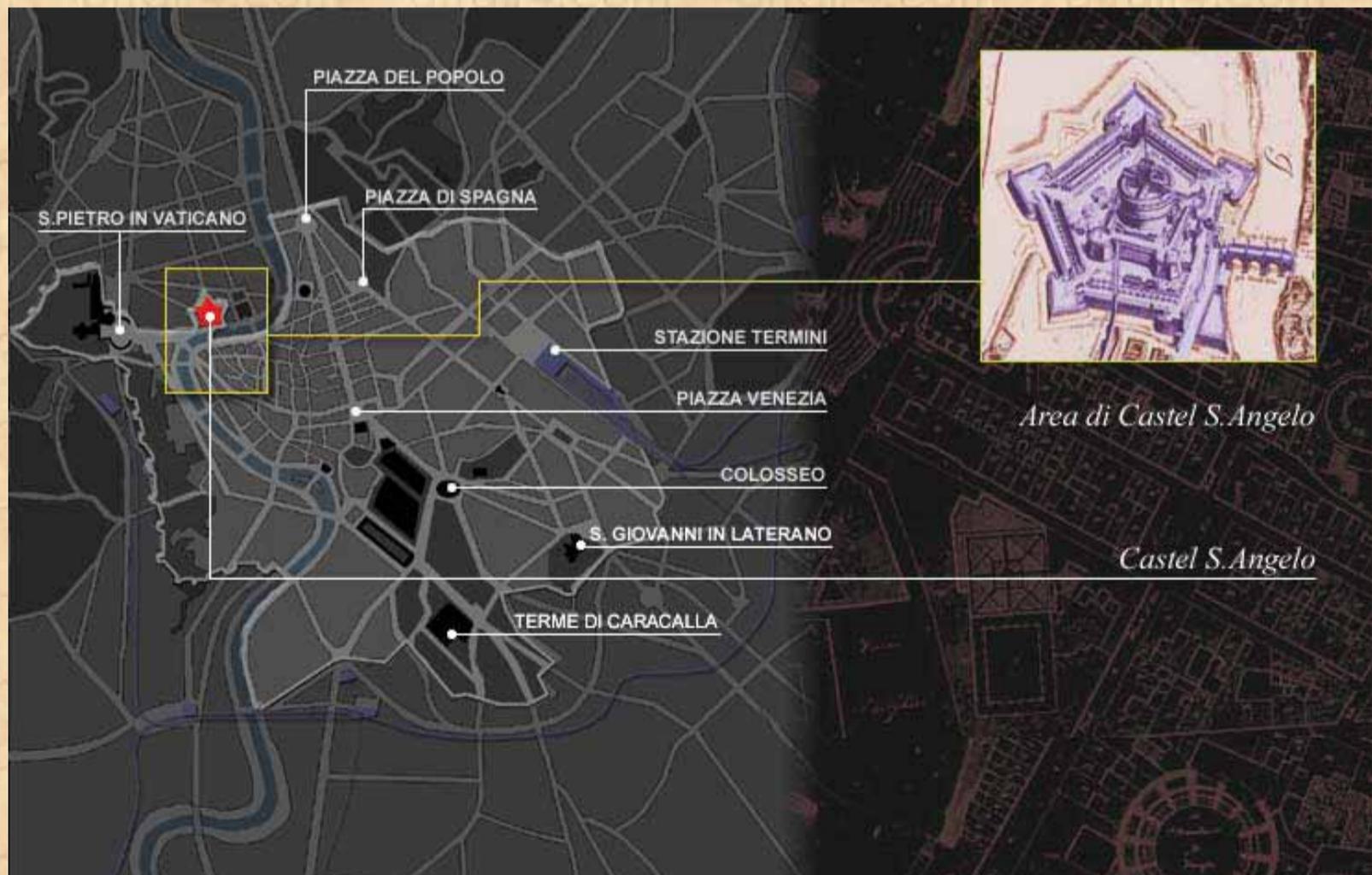
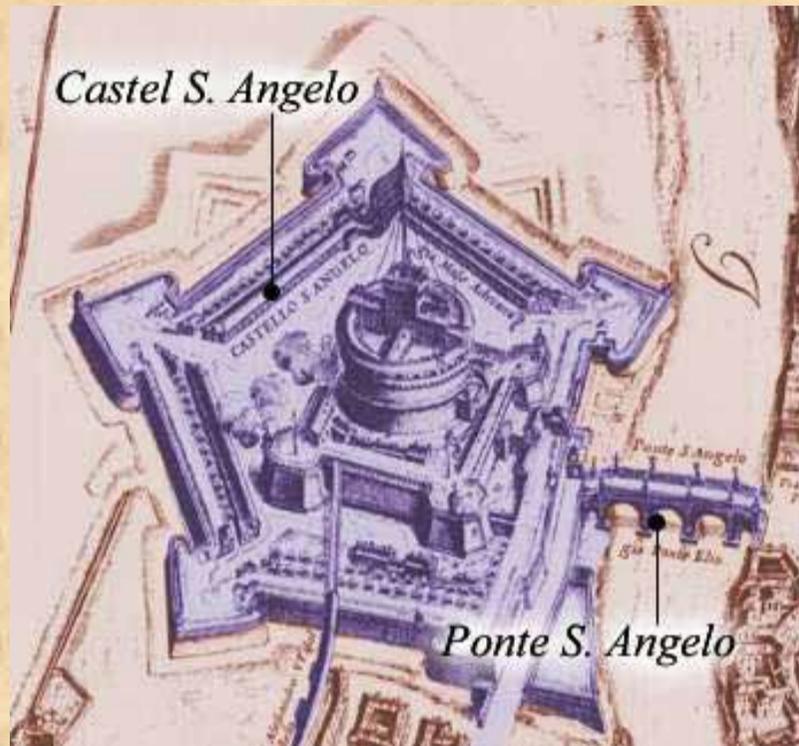






# *The Castel Sant'Angelo Area*

By Raffaele Pugliese



Today the area around **Castel Sant'Angelo** is divided between the 14th administrative district (Rione), known as Borgo, and the 22nd, called Prati, but in Roman times it all belonged to the 14<sup>th</sup> Augustan region, Trastevere.

Because of its proximity to the river, the area was subject to frequent floods and most of the land was, therefore, dedicated to farming or to gardens for aristocratic villas. Some of the most famous were the gardens of Domizia, wife of the Emperor Domitian (81-96), located near Hadrian's tomb.

Since the area was outside the city, it was also used for tombs and necropoli. An enormous pyramid-shaped tomb, known in the Middle Ages as *Meta Romuli* (Meta in Latinis used to indicate a figure in the form of a cone or pyramid) was located just at the point where the present day Via della Conciliazione begins. It was destroyed, however, by Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503) to make way for the opening of Via Alessandrina (now Borgo Nuovo).

In front of Hadrian's tomb stands the ancient Ponte Elio (Elio was one of Hadrian's names) built to connect the emperor's tomb to the center of the city. It was begun in 121 AD and inaugurated in 134. It continued to be called Ponte Elio until the 5<sup>th</sup> century, when it was given the name San Pietro, and finally Sant'Angelo.

Originally the bridge had eight arches, three in the center, three on the left, and two smaller ones on the right, all faced in travertine, and it was 135 meters long and 10.95 meters wide. Because of flooding the outside arches on either side were almost immediately covered over with earth.

The bridge, which later became the most direct route connecting St. Peter's to the city, has been the setting for a number of unusual events. During the Jubilee of 1300, as Dante mentions in the *Inferno*, it became so crowded with pilgrims that it was necessary to divide the pedestrian walkway into two lanes of traffic in opposite directions. On the last day of the Jubilee of 1450, Cardinal Pietro Barbo's donkey flew into a rage and provoked such a tumult that some 300 people died in the confusion. Nicolas V, in consultation with Leon Battista Alberti, effected a radical rehabilitation of the bridge, which was followed by additional renovations executed by later popes, such as Clement VII, who had the two statues of Saints Peter, by Lorenzo Lotti, and Paul, sculpted by Paolo Taccone, placed on the end of the bridge on the left bank of the river in 1534. During work on Castel Sant'Angelo conducted by Giulio Buratti in 1628, the arches on the right bank were excavated in order to facilitate the flow of water under the bridge.

At the behest of Clement IX (1667-69) Gian Lorenzo Bernini was commissioned to decorate the bridge with the stations of the cross. The artist, by then quite old,



charged his assistants with the execution of eight statues, while he himself sculpted the angel with the crown of thorns and the angel with the scroll (the originals were replaced by copies in 1792 and are now located in Sant'Andrea delle Fratte). The work began in 1668 and the parapets were also rebuilt and closed in by unusual metallic transoms. The statues were put in place in 1669 and 1671, respectively.

The bridge maintained its Berninian look for two centuries, but after the great flood of 1870 it was decided to construct the large restraining walls – the muraglioni- and the riverfront boulevard, or Lungotevere. Therefore, excavation was begun around the bridge in 1892 and its smaller arches were unearthed. Despite the opposition of many experts and scholars, it was decided to modify the original structure, eliminating the smaller arches, and adding two new arches like the ones in the center, one on either side. The bridge was reopened and officially dedicated in 1895. A more recent restoration was carried out in 1968-69.

Castel Sant'Angelo is surrounded by public gardens created by making use of the land formerly occupied by the pentagonal bastions and its moats constructed by Francesco Luparelli (1561-68). The park, inaugurated in 1934, was designed by the architect Attilio Spaccarelli and it preserves, employed as fountains and ornaments, some sarcophagi, a big tub, and other scattered sculptures. The architect demolished the barracks constructed by Urban VIII at the beginning of the XVII century. A bronze statue of Hadrian was added to the gardens in 1940.

In the sector of the gardens overlooking Largo Giovanni XXIII is a monument in honor of Saint Catherine of Siena, patron saint of Italy, inaugurated on the occasion of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her canonization, in 1962. The work is by the sculptor Francesco Messina and the architect Mario Loreti.

Behind the castle is the Passetto di Borgo, of the defensive wall of Borgo San Pietro which, partly retracing the line of the ancient walls built by Leo IV (847-55), was built by Nicholas III (1277-1280) to connect the Vatican palaces to the fortress in case of need.

Beyond the Passetto, toward Piazza Adriana, you come to the enormous building of the Casa Madre dei Mutilati (Mother House of War Invalids) whose sides flank both Castel Sant'Angelo and the Lungotevere.

The building, commissioned by Carlo Del Croix, president of the Association of War Invalids, was designed by Marcello Piacentini and built by Ulisse Igliori, and is now occupied by both the headquarters of the association and by the Court of Appeals of Rome.

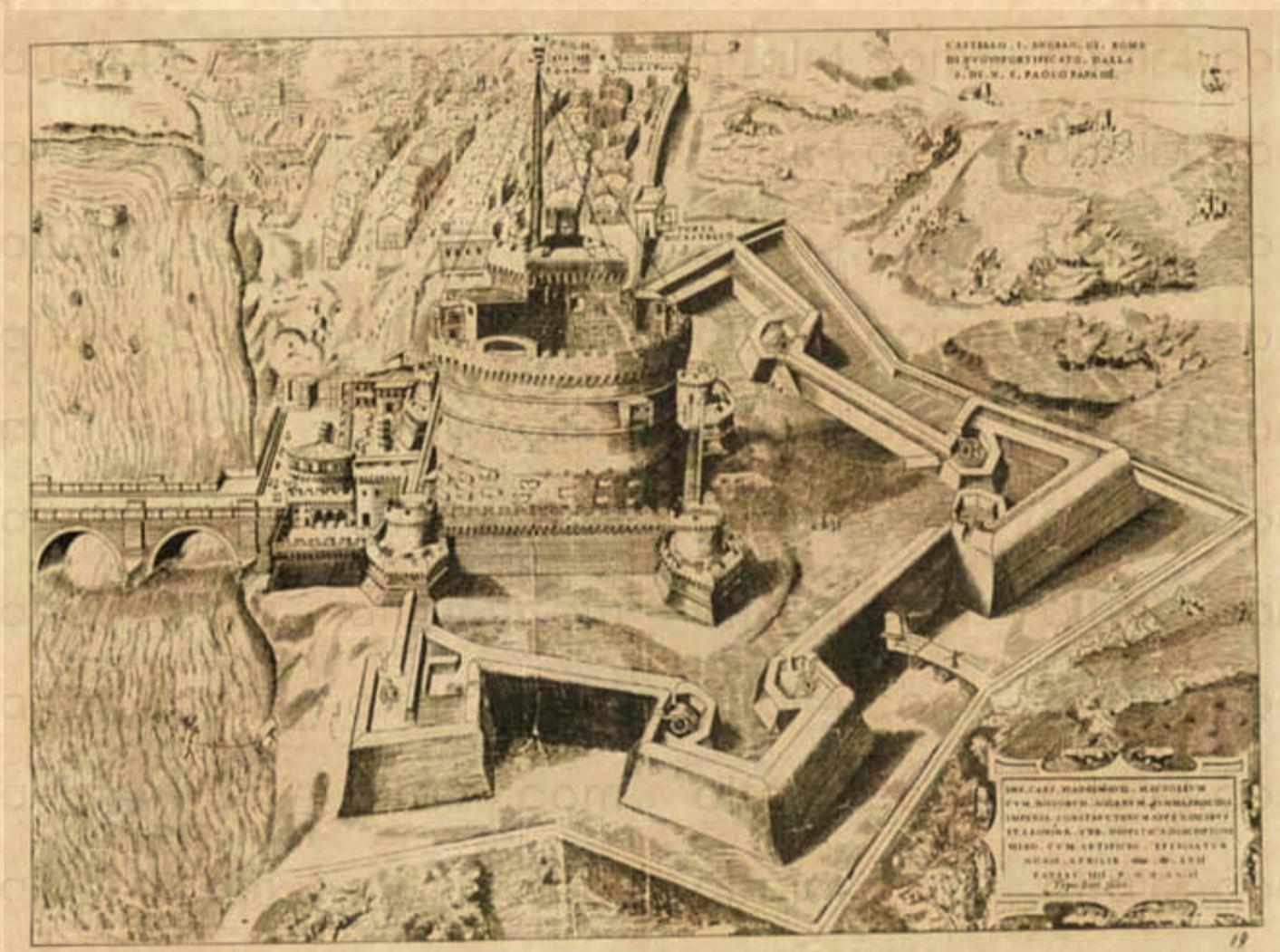
The initial nucleus of the building, whose entrance is in Piazza Adriana, was inaugurated



in 1928; the second, overlooking the Tiber, in 1936. It is a brick construction with cornices in travertine, large windows flanked by Doric half-columns on the first level, and by a cornice on the second, with heads of infantrymen carved by Giovanni Prini. The building is crowned by a tower.

On the interior there is a portico with frescoes of battles fought by Italian soldiers, the work of Antonio Giuseppe Santagata and Cipriano Efisio Oppio. In the rooms there are frescoes by Mario Sironi from 1938.





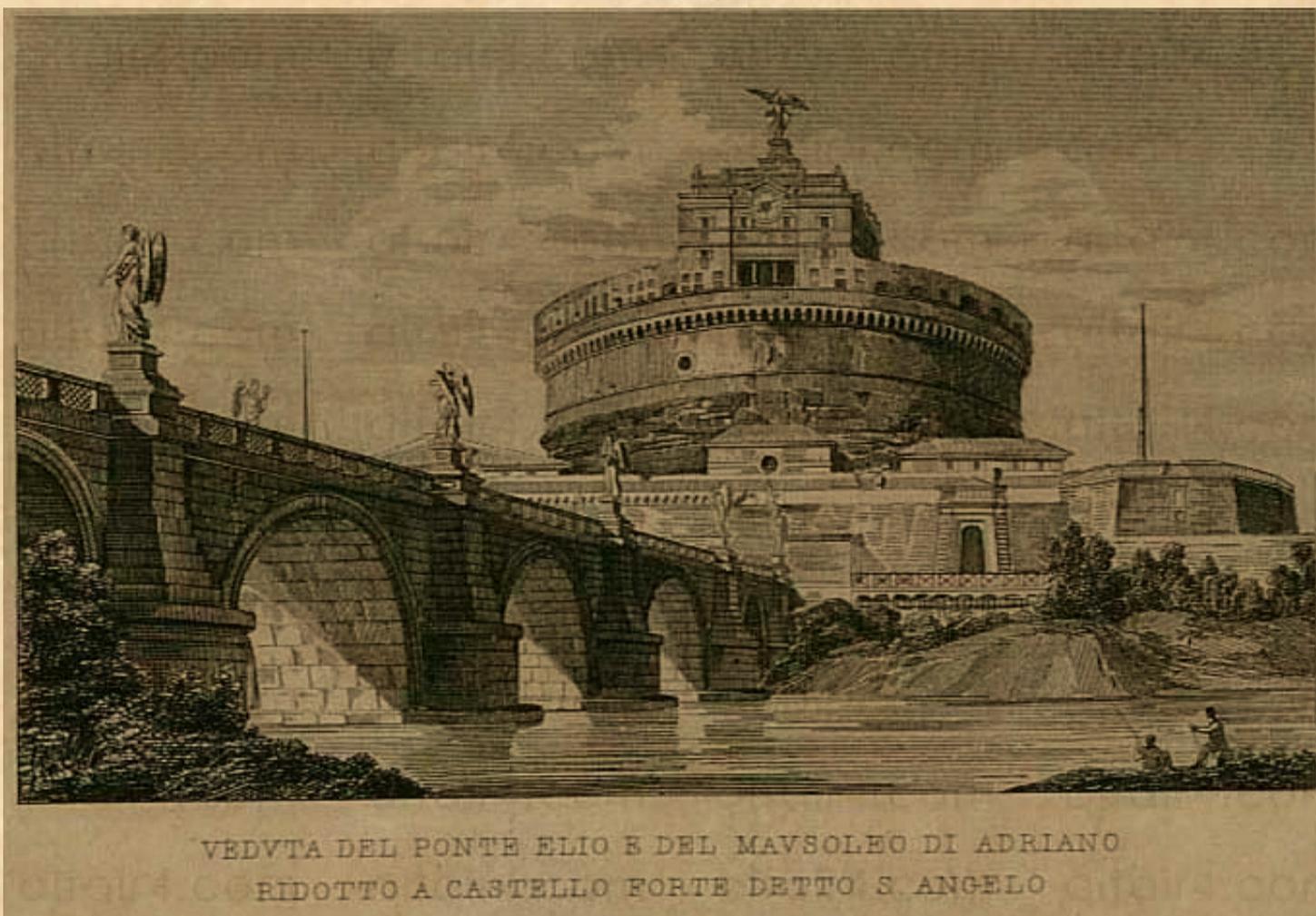


*Ponte Adriano così detto S. Angelo. Veduta della Città di Roma, dalla Piazza del Campidoglio, e della Chiesa di S. Maria della Trinità, e della Chiesa di S. Andrea della Trinità, e della Chiesa di S. Andrea della Trinità, e della Chiesa di S. Andrea della Trinità.*



# *Castel Sant'Angelo*

By Raffaele Pugliese



In 123 AD, the Emperor Hadrian decided to commission the architect Demetrianus to build a new imperial mausoleum to replace of the Tomb of Augustus in Campo di Marte.

The site he chose was occupied by vast gardens, probably belonging to the wife of Domitian, Domitia Longina, and subject to frequent flooding by the Tiber. The mausoleum was completed in 139 AD by Hadrian's successor, Antoninus Pius.

The building was composed of a rectangular base, 15 meters high and 89 meters per side, added by Antoninus Pius, with rooms covered by vaults supporting terraces laid out as gardens; its walls were covered in marble with a frieze and festoons. The entrance to the tomb itself was on the side overlooking the river.

The tomb was formed by a mighty cylindrical central corpus, 21 meters high and 64 meters in diameter, all covered in blocks of tufa and travertine marble and crowned with a ring of statues. Above this there rose another circular base concluded by a bronze quadriga, or four-horse chariot, with a statue of Hadrian.



On the interior of the cylindrical corpus, served by a spiral staircase, were three superimposed chambers, today known as the Hall of Justice, on the first level (reserved for the ashes of the emperor and his wife, Sabina), the Chamber of the Treasury, on the second level, and the Rotunda under the terrace of the Angel. Finally, an external metal fence surrounded the entire complex, enriched at its corners by statues of peacocks in gilded bronze (two of these are conserved in the Vatican).

The mausoleum later became the site of the tombs of other emperors, the last of whom was Caracalla (211-17).

Because of its position it soon became a bulwark for the defense of the Vatican and the Basilica of St. Peter. The name Sant' Angelo (Holy Angel) derives from an episode in the life of Pope Gregory the Great. When the city of Rome was invaded by a virulent pestilence in 590, Gregory organized a great procession which arrived in the vicinity of the mausoleum. At that point the Pope looked up to see, hovering over the top of the tomb, the Archangel Michael, putting his bloody sword back in its sheath; a sign that the plague had come to an end.

The Castle was included by Pope Leo IV (847-55) in the defensive wall protecting the Basilica of St. Peter and the surrounding neighborhood, but at least up until the 14<sup>th</sup> century its ownership rested in the hands of a number of Roman families, including the Crescenzi, from which the name "tower of the Crescenzi." Pope Nicholas III (1277-80) connected it to the Vatican palace by way of a fortified passageway, known as the "Passetto."

The City of Rome donated it to Pope Gregory XI (1371-79); from then on the successive popes transformed the castle into an impregnable fortress, the theater of numerous historical events. A number of famous historical figures were imprisoned there, including Arnaldo da Brescia (1155), Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), Giuseppe Balsamo, the Count of Cagliostro (1743-95), and the renowned artist Benvenuto Cellini, who organized a dramatic and successful escape in 1538. Cola di Rienzo took refuge there and Vittoria Accoramboni (1557-85) and her lover Paolo Orsini were imprisoned there, accused of murdering Francesco Peretti, her husband and the nephew of the future Pope Sixtus V. This particularly bleak story inspired many writers, including Stendhal.

A radical transformation of the castle was undertaken by the Tuscan Niccolò Lamberti, commissioned by Boniface XI (1389-1404). He removed the landfill surrounding the central cylinder, thus creating a vast spiral walkway, still perfectly functional today; the exterior circular base was transformed into a square and the spiral ramp was closed, while another one was opened up across the diameter, allowing for a



rapid crossing from one side of the fortress to the other.

The castle was given a more turreted and fortified look by the architect Bernardo Rossellino who, on commission from Pope Nicholas V (1447-55), had three circular towers built on the ends of the rectangular outside wall, corresponding to the base of the ancient mausoleum, and two rectangular turrets between the main door and the Elio bridge.

Following the invention of firearms and siege techniques, Alexander VI Borgia (1492-1503) called upon Antonio Sangallo the Elder to reinforce the castle; the top of the cylindrical base was reinforced with battlements, the three towers of Nicholas were enveloped by octagonal bastions, and a fourth tower was built on the side of St. Peter's, as well as a circular tower in front of the bridge. A wall on the Tiber side and a moat concluded the bastions on the left and right ends of the side overlooking the Tiber, named in honor of Saint Matthew and Saint John, respectively, and on the opposite side, named after Saint Mark and Saint Luke.

Naturally, the pontiff did not forget the residential apartments, which were frescoed by Pinturicchio, while new food storage areas were installed to hold provisions in case of a state of siege. In the courtyard, known as Alexander VI's courtyard, or "the well," dug out of the first level of the dungeon, there is an elegant well with the crest of the Borgia family.

These works were brought to an end by Alexander VI's successor, Julius II (1503-13) and the elegant loggia overlooking the Tiber is probably the work of Bramante. In 1514 Leo X commissioned Michelangelo to build a small marble front for his chapel facing the Cortile dell'Angelo. The façade with a small triangular pediment over a cruciform window and niches, reveals a highly personal and original treatment of the architectonic elements.

In 1527, during the sack of the German mercenaries, the Lansquenets, the castle absolved its function of last line of defense, providing refuge for Pope Clement VII (1524-34). The papal apartment is still accessible from the Courtyard of the Angel, and is composed of several rooms, including the rooms of Justice and Apollo, later redecorated at the behest of Paul III by Pierin del Vaga and Domenico Zaga with mythological scenes of the Muses and Apollo. The "stufa" or heated bath, like the heated rooms of the ancient Roman baths, also belonged to the apartment. It is a small rectangular heated room, with a bath tub and niches on the rear wall. Recent studies have established that the design was done by Bramante, on commission by Julius II (1504), but, begun somewhat later, it was not completed until around 1525 by Giovanni da Udine.



The sacking of Rome by the German mercenaries was soon forgotten when Paul III (1534-49) gave orders for the papal apartment to be enlarged and redone, and for the restoration of the “diametrical ramp” with a stringcourse stairway of low brick steps lined with marble. He ordered a new apartment to be built in the upper level of the dungeon, composed of both private and public rooms, with an airy façade with an arched loggia looking toward the Prati area.

The work was directed by Raffaello da Montelupo, while the decoration of the rooms was done by Luzio Romano and later by Pierin del Vaga and his workshop. The most notable of the rooms, for the high quality of the painting and composition, are the Paolina, Perseus, and Apollo rooms, and the Pompeian corridor, whose walls are painted prevalently with profane and mythological themes, reflecting the classicist cultural climate of the city but also the evident papal reference to the highest tradition of ancient Rome, of which the papacy claimed to be the unique and direct descendant. Raffaello da Montelupo was also responsible for the restoration of the Honor Court or Cortile dell’ Angelo, located on the first level of the dungeon and looked down on from the central tower. The artist endowed the north side of the court with an elegant marble façade modeled after the one by Michelangelo on the opposite side, with a central niche topped by a triangular pediment and three round side windows, flanked by two arched openings which led respectively to the ascending and descending stairways (1547). Three years earlier, in 1544, he had executed the marble statue of Saint Michael the Archangel which was placed on top of the dungeon and is now in the court of the same name.

More modern defensive strategies inspired Pius IV (1560-65) to commission Francesco Laparelli to construct a third defensive wall, in the form of a pentagon, with five corner bastions (now transformed into a garden), and a covered circular passageway around the central dungeon on the second level at the height of the apartments of Julius II and Paul III. This “giretto” was characterized by its low openings toward the outside and its small interior spaces.

Urban VIII (1623-44) commissioned some important works by the military engineer Giulio Buratti, which sacrificed several earlier structures, such as the towers of Nicholas V and Alexander VI along with its papal apartment. The frontal wall of the fortress facing the Tiber was also reinforced and a vast “piazza d’armi” or parade grounds was created, as well as barracks for lodging and warehouses. Moreover the side facing the river was endowed with a monumental entrance, now located on the left side of the castle.

In 1675 Clement X, perhaps after a design by Bernini, built an armory located



between the bastions of St. Luke and St. John, whose courtyard was later used for executions.

In the 1700s the residence of the Vice-Warden, whose construction was undertaken thanks to the initiative of Vice-Warden Zanobio Savelli in 1730, was added above the loggia of Julius II.

In 1752 Benedict XIV ordered the statue Michael the Archangel by Raffaello da Montelupo to be replaced by another one sculpted by Peter Anton Verschaffelt and cast in bronze by Francesco Giardini.

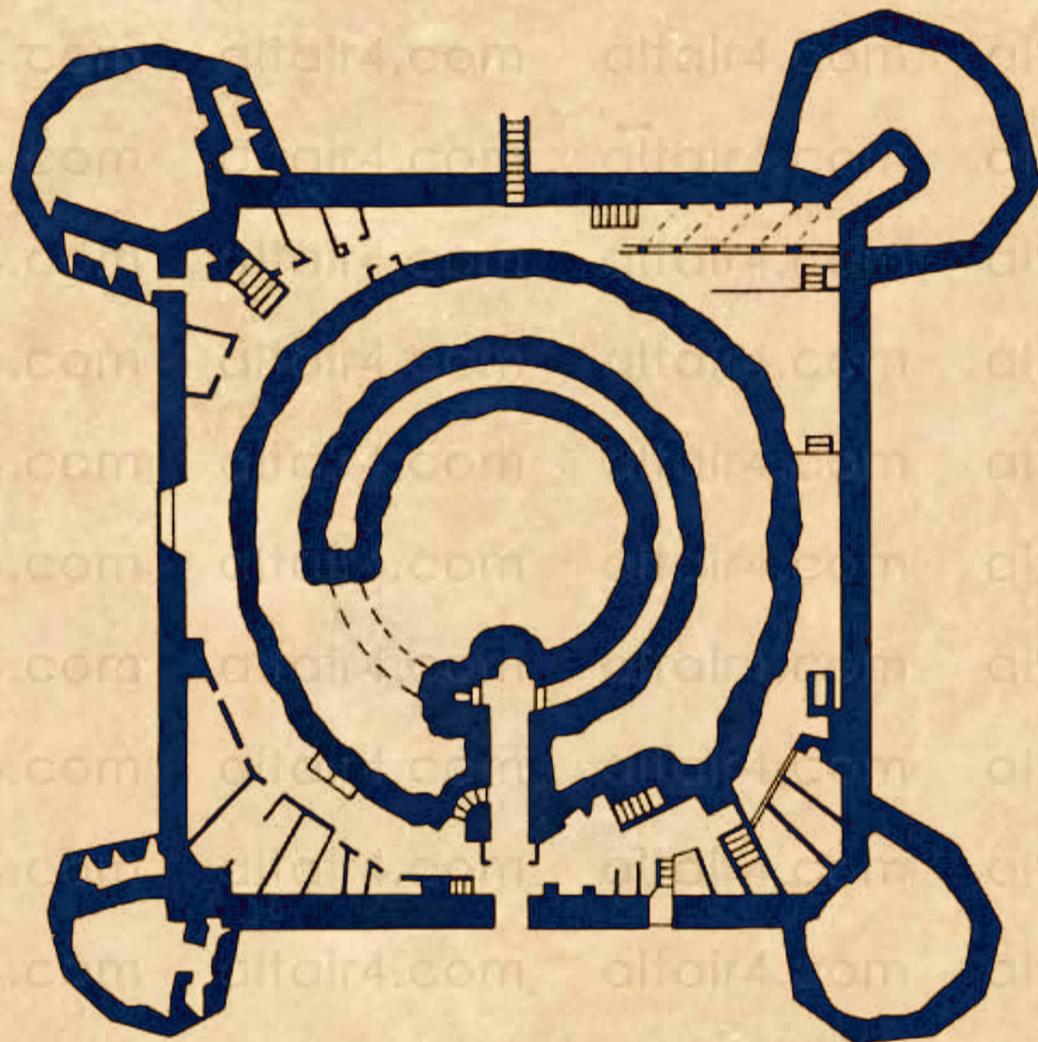
As time went by the castle came to be considered less and less functional as a military structure, and uncomfortable as a papal residence. Nevertheless, in 1799, the French chose the castle as a military presidio. In 1825 the spiral ramp was removed and in 1860 the fortifications facing St. Peter's were demolished to open up the space for Piazza Pia.

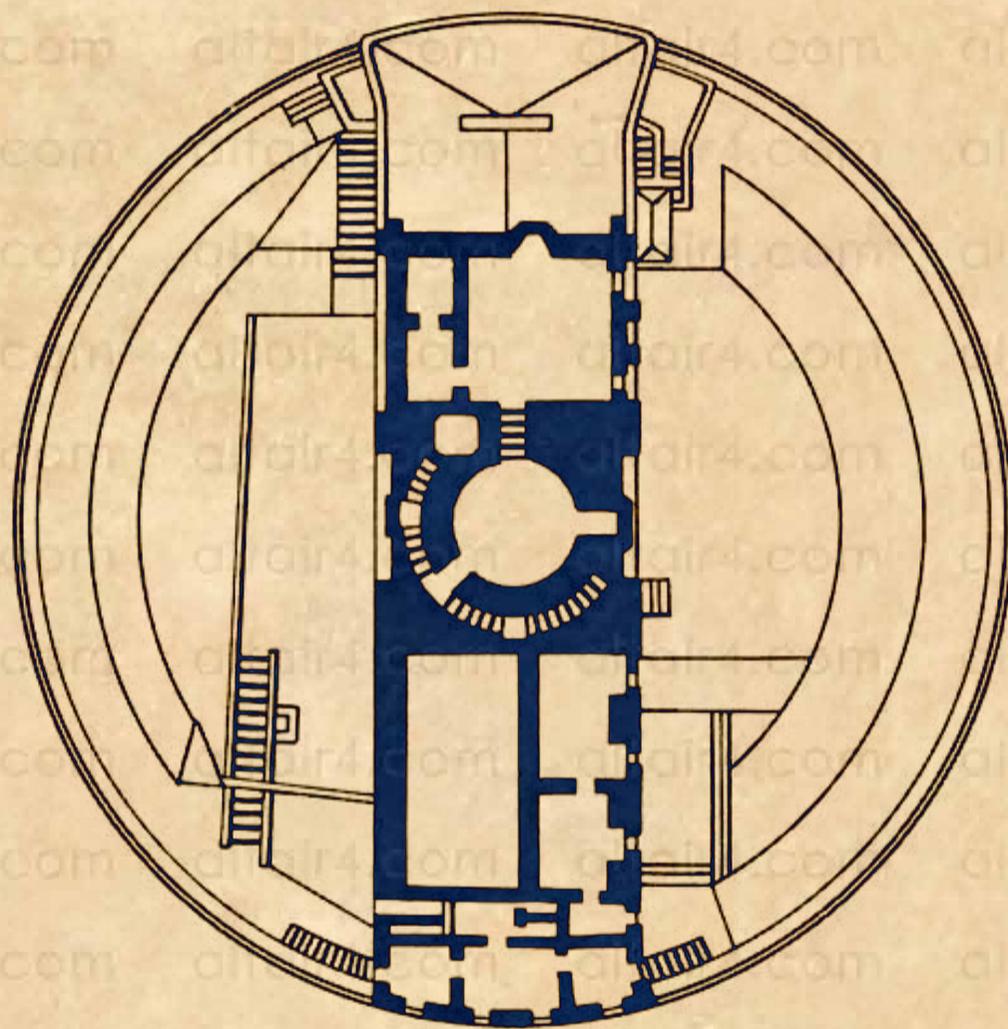
But it was starting in 1889 that the work of radical restoration was begun under the direction of Mariano Borgatti. The work continued until 1911 with the objective of the restoration was to bring to light the presumed architectonic features of the castle as it had been under the pontificates of Alexander VI and Paul III. The project involved substantial and rather arbitrary changes to the octagonal bastions on the interior wall, as well as other parts of the complex, but because of the presence of the Lungotevere riverfront boulevard, parts of the two corner bastions of the wall built by Laparelli were also sacrificed.

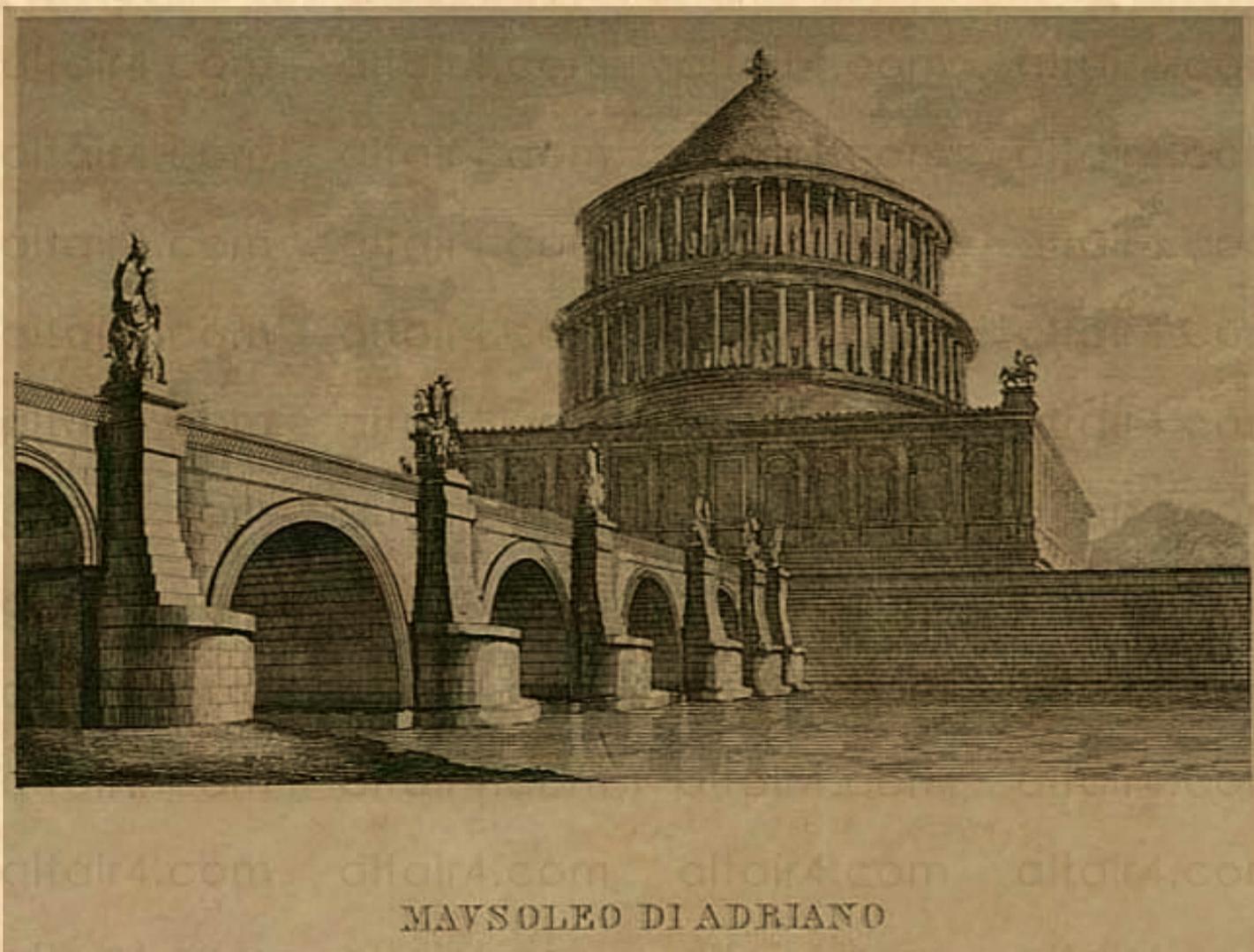
In 1906 the Museum of the Army Corps of Engineers was installed in the castle, while on the occasion of the 1911 World's Fair the first nucleus of the Museum of Rome was opened. The decorative painting of the three rooms adjacent to the Rotonda are worthy of note, the work of Duilio Cambellotti. The rooms were designed to hold the flags and colors of disbanded regiments, which had participated in the campaigns of World War I (1915-18). The decoration, executed between 1925-26, is composed of stucco and painted military trophies alternating with decorative motifs. The colors are very soft and sober, but handled with great effect.

Finally, in April 1934 the area in front of the castle was transformed into a public park. It must be remembered that a number of rooms in the castle still conserve collections of weapons, ceramics, ancient decorations and important paintings, making a visit to the castle well worth while.









MAUSOLEO DI ADRIANO



# *Piazza Navona*

By Letizia Cenci



Piazza Navona is such a refined and theatrical urban complex, with its fountains, the obelisk, and the magnificent palaces and two churches that surround it, that it certainly qualifies as one of the most beautiful piazzas in the world.

We enter Piazza Navona from Via di Pasquino, which takes its name from the statue of Pasquino located at the corner of Palazzo Braschi. The statue is all that remains of a marble group from Roman times perhaps representing *Menelaus Holding the Body of Patroclus*, which was discovered in Via del Parione and placed here by Cardinal Oliviero Carafa in 1501.

It is a “talking statue,” so-called because of the centuries’ old tradition of affixing placards to it with phrases of invective and political satire, defined as “pasquinate.” The origin of this popular name is not known for certain; tradition has it that a shrewd tailor named Pasquino lived and kept his shop on the piazza and that he was the first to hang a satirical phrase on the statue, which then came to be known with his name. The form and dimensions of the piazza are derived from the Stadium of Domitian, built in 85 AD to celebrate the victory against the Chatti; a travertine arch with two Ionic semi-columns can still be seen today at the base of a palazzo in Tor Sanguigna. The origin of the piazza also explains its name: Navona is a corruption of “in Agone,” in reference to the athletic and jousting competitions that were held there and known, with a Greek word, as “agones.”

Later on, the form of the piazza, resembling a large ship and the custom, in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, of flooding it for water festivals and the pre-Lenten carnival, probably contributed to the further corruption of the name into “Navona” or large ship.

In the Middle Ages house and towers were built over the stadium and its corridors were used as warehouses and stables, and the travertine facing was removed in efforts to salvage the mortar for building; the stadium thus became an enormous ruin covered with grass.

Around the year 1000 the Benedictines of Farfa became the owners but it was not until the 15<sup>th</sup> century that the first buildings and churches began to appear on the piazza, which, in 1477, became the new site of the market formerly held at the Capitol.

In the 1600s the Pamphilj family undertook the most significant transformation of the piazza with the construction of the magnificent church of Sant’ Agnese in Agone, designed for Pope Innocent X by Borromini, as well as the Innocentian College, the grand Fountain of the Rivers, and finally, the family palace, built by Girolamo Rinaldi between 1644-1650 with rooms on the piano nobile decorated by, among



others, Pietro da Cortona, Agostino Tassi, and Giacinto Gimignani (today occupied by the Embassy of Brazil).

There are three fountains that contribute to the charm of the piazza: the first is the Fountain of the Moor, which takes its name from the statue of the Ethiopian fighting the dolphin carved by Giovanni Antonio Mari in 1654 after a design by Gian Lorenzo Bernini and commissioned by the Pamphilj family for the front of their palace; at the opposite end of the piazza is the Fountain of Neptune, left unadorned until 1878, when, to bring it into symmetry with the Fountain of the Moor, it was decorated with the statues of Neptune, sea nymphs, and sea horses; at the center the Fountain of the Rivers, built in 1651 by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, who thus won the favor of the previously hostile Innocent X.

The theatrical fountain is dedicated to the four great rivers of the earth, which are symbolically represented by the four travertine statues, five meters high, and sitting on a reef supporting an obelisk. The statues, based on designs by Bernini, symbolize the four continents then known to Europeans as they render homage to the Pamphilj, whose crest (a dove with a twig in its beak) appears in several places.

The rivers are the *Danube*, symbol of Europe, flanked by a pouncing lion; the *Ganges*, symbol of Asia, with its covered head perhaps an allusion to the mystery of its then still undiscovered source; the *Nile*, symbol of Africa; and lastly, turned toward S. Agnese, the statue of the *Rio della Plata* with the armadillo, representing, along with the coins scattered at its side, the primitiveness and wealth of the Americas.

According to tradition, the gestures of the statues, particularly the raised arm of the *Rio della Plata* defending itself against the collapse of Sant' Agnese, and the covered brow of the *Nile*, are expressive of the rivalry between Bernini and Borromini, the architect of Sant' Agnese in Agone. But these theories have no basis in fact since the fountain was built before the church.

On the east side of the piazza is the church of San Giacomo degli Spagnoli, now Nostro Signore del Sacro Cuore (Our Lord of the Sacred Heart), built on the occasion of the Jubilee of 1450 by Bernardo Rossellino, restored by Antonio Sangallo the Younger, and redone in 1879 by Luca Carimini, after a long period of abandonment. The only original part of the façade facing the piazza is the lower level with the three doors. Because of the numerous restorations the entrance has been moved back and forth several times between the piazza and Corso Rinascimento.

Entering the Via di Sant' Agnese in Agone and following Via della Pace we come to the piazza, which like the street, takes its name from Santa Maria della Pace, whose completely baroque interior and the suggestive façade are the work of Pietro da



Cortona.

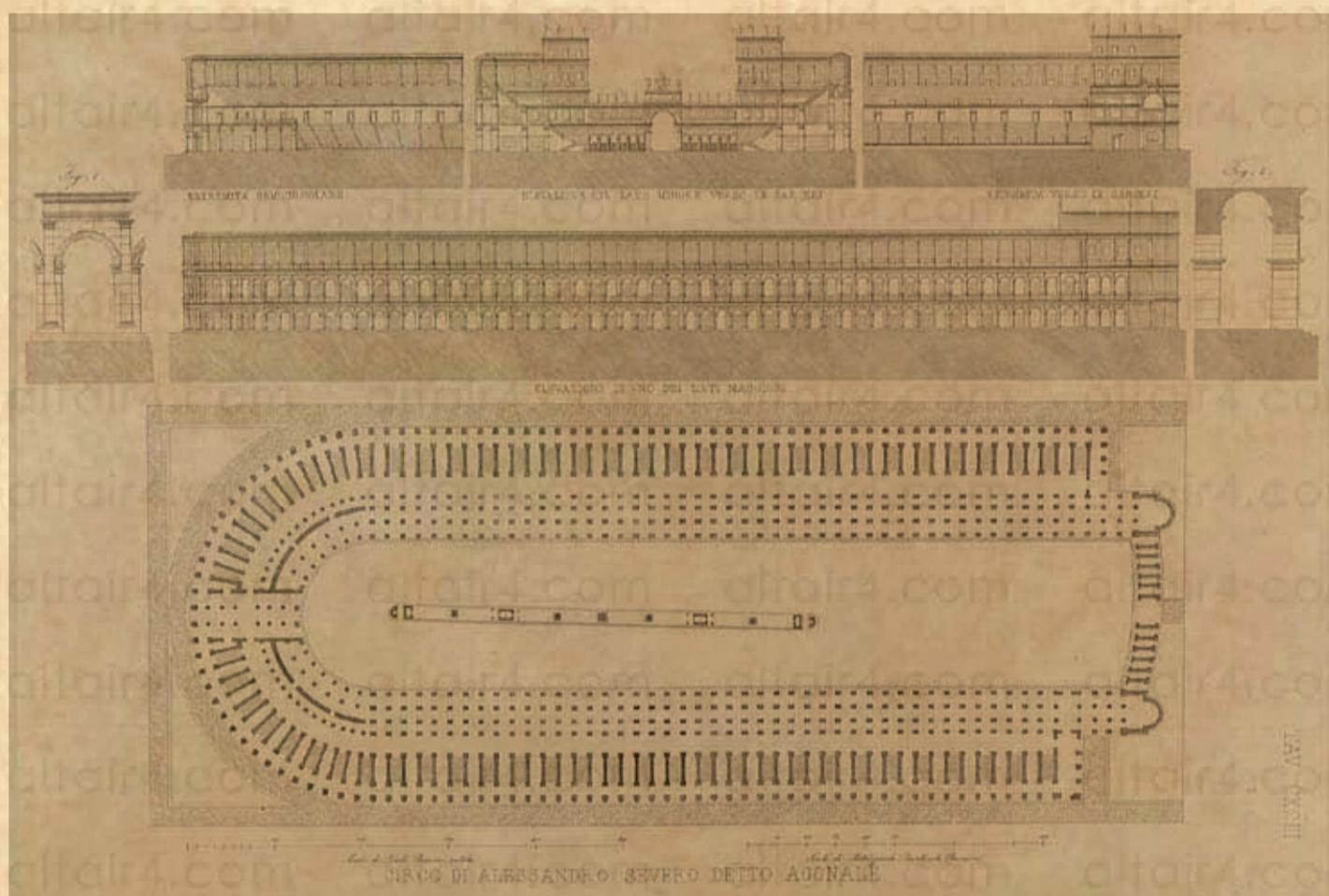
Next to the church is the Dominican convent, whose interior includes an elegant cloister, Bramante's first work in Rome, built between 1500 and 1504. Completely unchanged, the cloister is surrounded by an arched portico supported by Ionic pilasters and surmounted by a loggia.

Leaving Piazza Navona by Via Agonale we come to Piazza delle Cinque Lune and after going under the arch which connects the German College to the palazzo of Sant'Apollinare, we come to the piazza which takes its name from the church of Sant'Agostino, built in the early 1400s and transformed, especially on the inside, by the architect Vanvitelli in the mid 1700s.







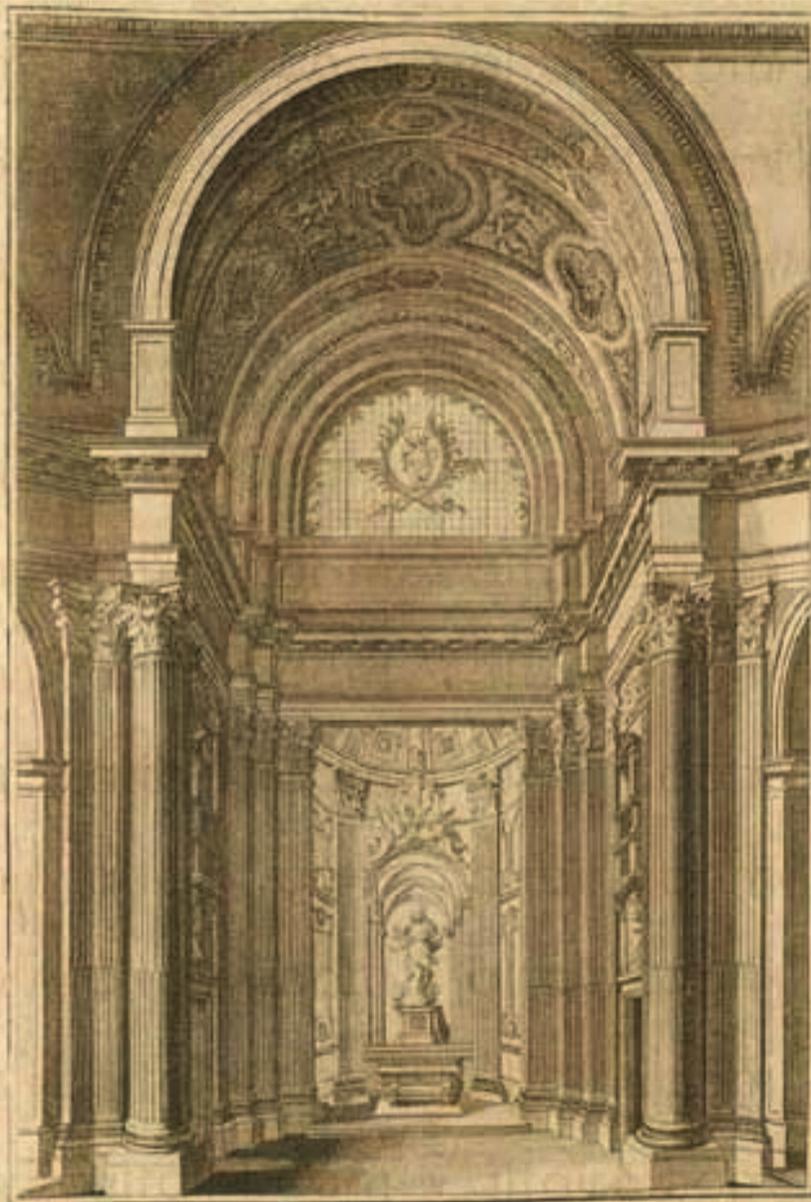






CHIESA DEDICATA A S-AGNESE VM IN PIAZZA NAVONA LA FACCIATA IN SINO LA CORNICE CON L'ALZATA DELLA CUPOLA e Architettura del Cau Fran Borromini. il frontespizio col timpano ornamento della Cupola e campanili sono Architettura di Gio Maria Baratta  
Per Giacomo R. off. in Roma alla post. of. pub. del S. Post. 6





TRADUZIONE DI UNO DEI DISegni DELLA Cattedrale di S. Marco in Venezia, sotto l'Arcata della Basilica del 1776  
L'Architetto del Disegno Giovanni Battista Piranesi  
Goussier del Disegno





*Monastero dei Canonici Lateranensi, e Chiesa di S. Maria della Pace  
Piazza del Monastero, a Albano, che formano teatro alla Piazza della Chiesa, e sopra al Colos. dei Preti, il dechi, che soffiano la Chi di S. Maria dell'Anima*





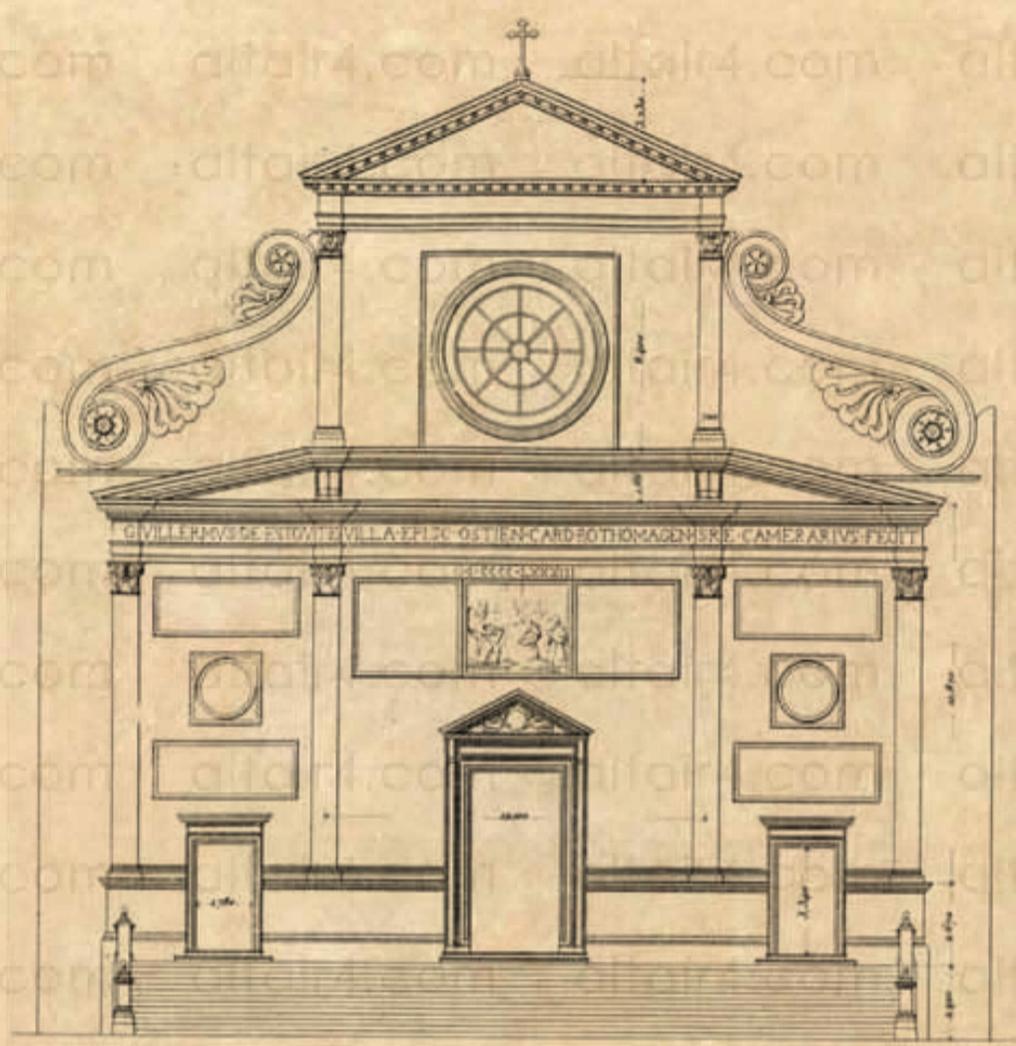
VEDUTA DI DENTRO DI S-MARIA DELLA PACE RESTAVRATA ET  
ADORNATA DA N-S-PAPA ALESSANDRO VII.

*Per Gio: Jacopo Ruffi in Roma alla Pace et Po. nel 1702*

*Gio: Batt: Falda del. sc.*

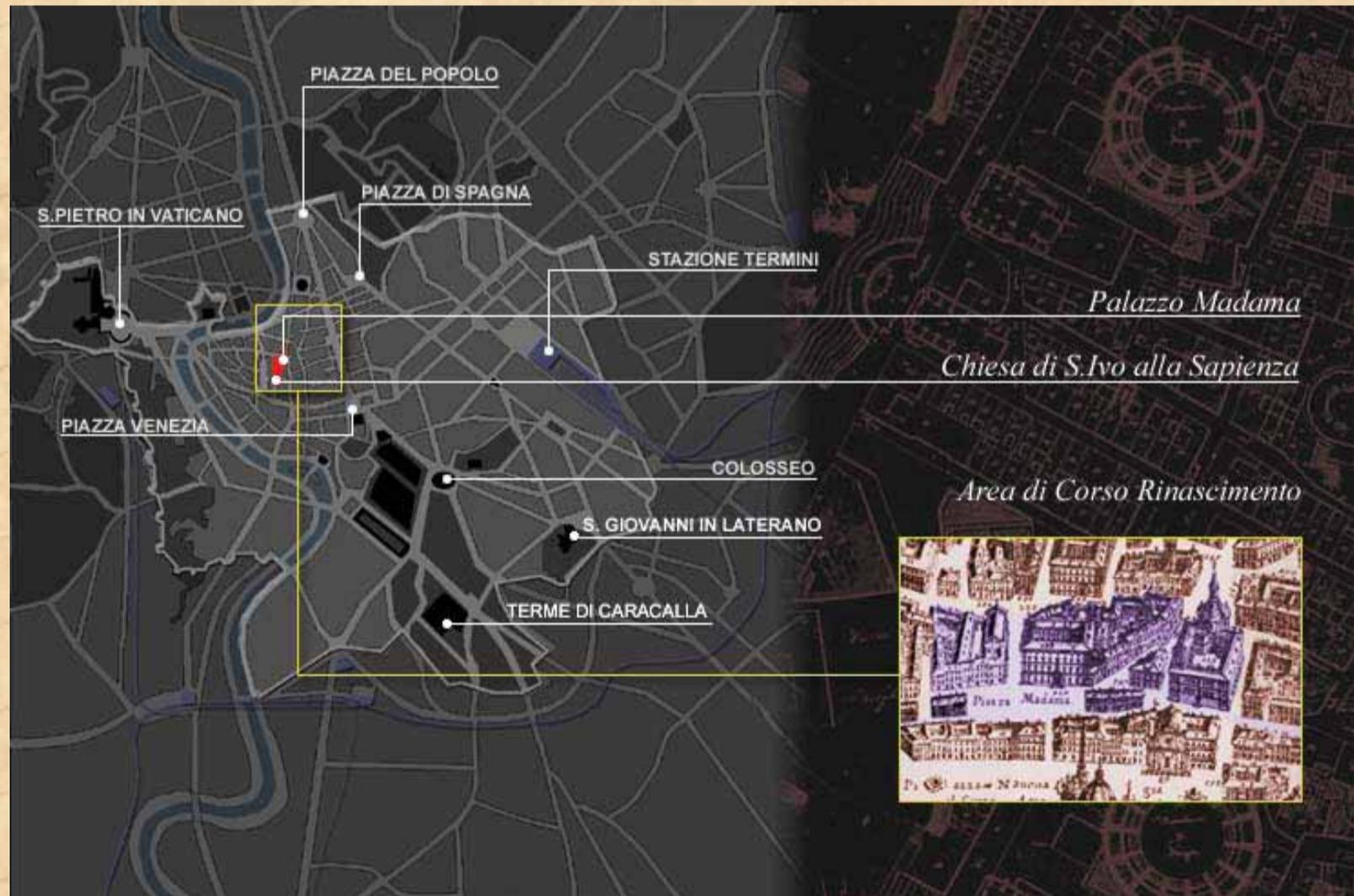
27





# Corso Rinascimento

By Sabina Carbonara



From Piazza Sant'Eustachio, with its church of the same name, founded according to tradition by the Roman Emperor Constantine on the spot of the martyrdom of Saint Eustace, turning right into the Via della Dogana Vecchia, we find Palazzo Giustiniani. Built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by Francesco Borromini, today it is the house of representatives for the Presidency of the Italian Senate, for Senators offices and former presidents.

Close by is a narrow square where, on the left, there is the church of **San Luigi dei Francesi**, well-known and visited above all because of its paintings by Michelangelo Merisi, better known as Caravaggio, depicting the history of St. Matthew at the beginning of the XVII century.

Beyond the Via del Salvatore (which marks the former position of the demolished church of San Salvatore *in Thermis*, built on the site the Nero-Alexandrian baths) we reach the Corso del Rinascimento, opened between 1936 and 1938 by the architect Arnaldo Foschini, as a direct link between Corso Vittorio Emanuele and the new Dei Prati district.

The widening of the ancient Via della Sapienza, in order to create more space for traffic, reduced the remaining ancient urban area, and created an almost continuous line of modern façades, built in an extremely simplified and synthetic classicist style. Despite the twentieth-century interventions, this area is still today a harmonious ensemble of 16<sup>th</sup> century architecture with frequent elements of Roman baroque style.

Continuing down the left side of Corso Rinascimento, towards the Church of S. Andrea della Valle, we see the impressive Palazzo Madama, from 1871, which houses the Senate of the Italian Republic.

Continuing down Corso Rinascimento, after Via degli Stradieri, we reach Palazzo della Sapienza. The building take its name from the ancient Roman University (*Studium Urbis*), founded by Pope Boniface VIII in 1303, which was placed here as indicated in a Papal bull in 1431 at the time of the Papacy of Eugene IV.

Today the building houses some rooms of the Senate of the Republic and the State Archives, and conserves documents concerning the city of Rome dating from the 9<sup>th</sup> century to 1870. The Palazzo, which looks out onto a splendid courtyard, three sides of which have a portico with a loggia, was begun under the Papacy of Pius IV Medici by the architects Guidetto Guidetti. In 1564, at Guidetti's death, the construction yard was entrusted to Pirro Ligorio, who was unable to bring out the execution, because a lack of funds.



Gregory XIII Boncompagni then entrusted the work to Giacomo della Porta, who was then followed by Francesco Borromini who built the attached church of **Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza**, one of the best known churches in the city for the stinger-like spiral of its cupola.





*Palazzo Madama  
1. Palazzo Carpegna, 2. Capola della Chiesa di S. Luca nel Collegio della Sapienza, 3. Palazzo Giustiniani, 4. Chiesa del SS. Salvatore.*





# *Church of San Luigi dei Francesi*

By Sabina Carbonara



In 1518 the Confraternity named in honor of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Denis, and Saint Louis, King of France, having received as a gift from Pope Leo X a piece of land bordering on the lot occupied by their old and now decrepit home church, decided to build a new and bigger church, dedicated to Saint Louis, which would respond in a dignified fashion to the needs of the Confraternity. For economic reasons, work on the new church proceeded very slowly; suspended in 1524, it started up again in 1580, with the intervention of the architect Domenico Fontana. Finally, thanks to a substantial donation from Catherine de' Medici, mother of King Henry III, the church was completed and consecrated in 1589.

The travertine marble façade, built by Domenico Fontana after a design by Giacomo Della Porta, is composed of two orders with niches for statues. The interior is divided into three arched naves supported by pilasters, and is pervaded by a warm glow emanating from the prized marble facing of the pilasters and the stucco figures sculpted by the Lyonese artist Antonine Dérizet between 1749 and 1764.

Dérizet's work combines the solemnity of neo-classicism and the taste for detail of the regency style. Supported by one of the pilasters is a wooden pulpit with painted



panels from the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, a rarity for Rome.

The altar in second chapel on the right has a copy by Guido Reni of Raphael's famous painting, now in Bologna, representing Saint Cecilia and other saints. Between 1612 and 1615, Domenico Zampieri, known as "il Domenichino," frescoed the walls of the chapel with stories from the life of Saint Cecilia.

The fresco cycle is one of Domenichino's master works; the design of the figures, their chromatic values, and the purity of the composition, making it one of the most splendid works of the Roman classic style of the early 1600s. The stories are taken from the *Acta* of Saint Cecilia by Antonio Bosio (1600), written after the discovery of the martyr's body in 1599. The fifth chapel has a collection of memoirs by numerous French artists and scholars who have lived and worked in Rome.

But the main attraction of the whole church is constituted by the Contarelli Chapel, the fifth on the left, with its frescoes by Giuseppe Cesari, known as "il Cavalier d'Arpino," and canvases by Caravaggio.

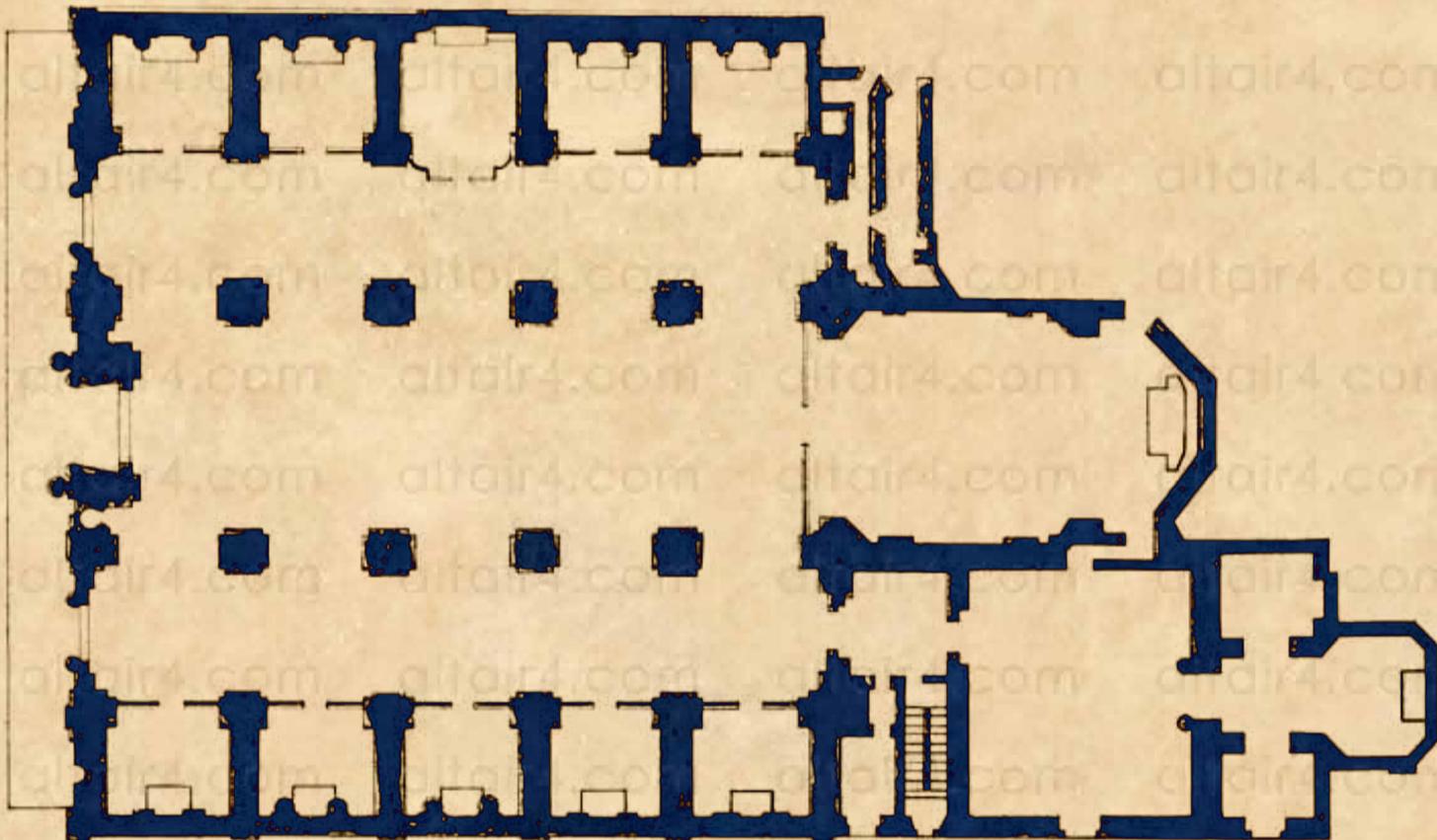
After completing the frescoes in the vault (begun in 1591), Cavalier d'Arpino was commissioned to undertake the decoration of the chapel but, in 1599, still having failed to complete the task, he was replaced by Caravaggio, who executed the three canvases of The Calling of Saint Matthew (left), Saint Matthew and the Angel (center), and The Martyrdom of Saint Matthew, (right) in 1600.

Because the painting of Saint Matthew and the Angel was judged inappropriate for the chapel he painted another version, the one still in the chapel today, in 1602. The earlier painting became part of the collection of Marquis Giustiniani and then, in 1815 it was ceded to the royal family of Prussia in Berlin, where it was destroyed in 1945, during the Second World War.

These paintings constituted Caravaggio's public debut as a religious painter and, after abandoning his repertory of youthful half figures, he went on to develop a style characterized by direct emotion and dramatic narrative.

With The Calling of Saint Matthew, Caravaggio revolutionized religious iconography: an ideal vision of the story is juxtaposed to a realistic and contemporary one. In the Martyrdom of Saint Matthew the figures are revealed by suggestive luminous spirals which create zones of darkness and provoke a centrifugal motion. The alternation of light and shadow lends volume to the figures and a sense of infinite space, endowing the most dramatic parts of the scene with symbolic resonance.

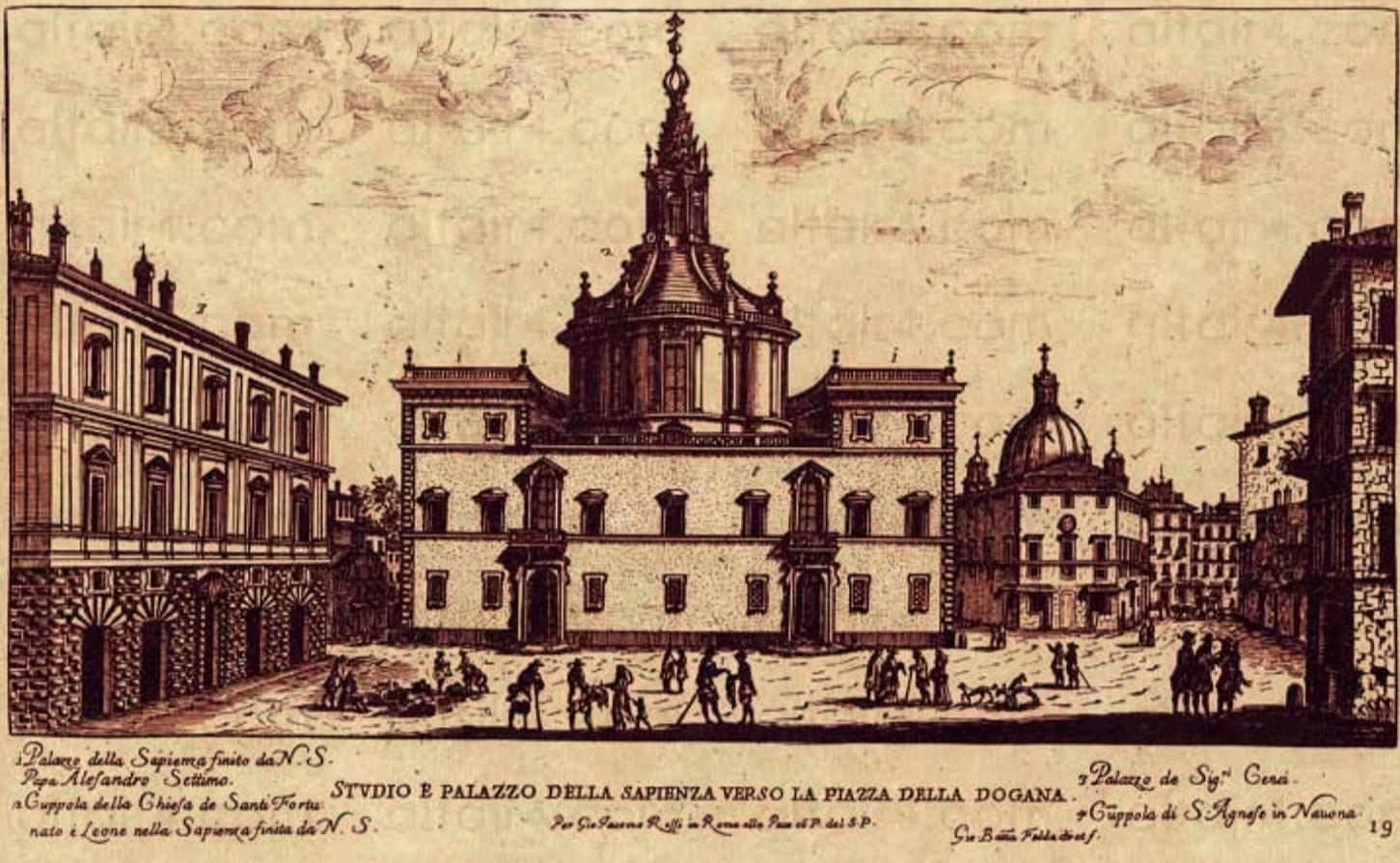






# *Church of Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza*

By Sabina Carbonara



At the end of the courtyard of the Sapienza stands the splendid church of Sant'Ivo, the baroque masterpiece of the architect Francesco Borromini (1642-60).

Because of the originality of its design and the choice of its decorative motifs, the church has been the object of numerous symbolic interpretations, but its underlying themes are the exaltation of Divine Wisdom (Sapienza) and the celebration of the popes who sponsored the construction of the church.

To the pre-existing concave facade Borromini added an attic, upon which rises a cylindrical element composed of six convex bays, which encloses the cupola. The points at which this element joins the attic are covered with drums surmounted with the emblems of Alexander VII, the rounded hills and a star. The six-lobed figure that encloses the cupola is cadenced by Corinthian pilaster strips; along the cornice a series of tiny cherubim heads take the place of the classic ovolos. In the niche of the large window overlooking the courtyard is a relief with a lamb sitting on the book of the seven seals.

Above this is a stepped crown supporting buttresses that meet at the balustrade



which circles the lantern; the composition is completed by the spiral terminus of the lantern on which is placed a flaming crown supporting, in turn, a metal armature with a sphere, a cross and a dove. The choice of the spiral form culminating in the flaming crown, suggests the road to be taken to reach Charity, the principal attribute of wisdom and the virtue of the pontiff, the personification of Christ on earth.

The interior of the church, rendered remarkably luminous by the predominant use of white, has the form of a delicately modeled irregular hexagon, recalling the shape of the heraldic bee of the Barberini family fused with the outline of a Greek cross. The concave lines of the large niches alternate with the convex lines of the smaller ones, separated by tall pilaster strips which highlight the structure of the hexagonal polyhedron.

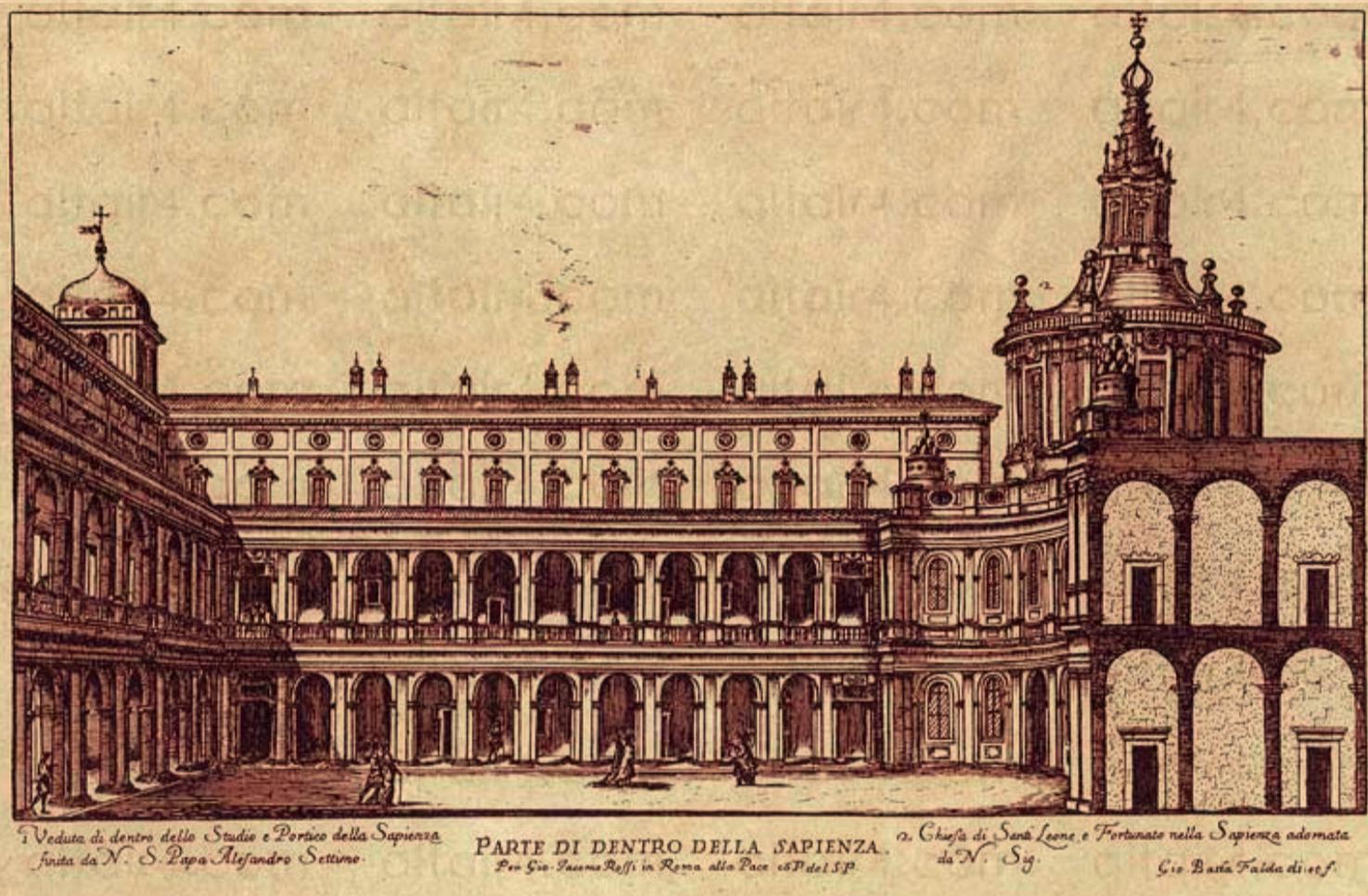
On the main altar, redone by the architect Giovan Battista Contini, there is a painting representing Saint Ivo and other saints, begun by Pietro da Cortona, another great master of the baroque, and completed by his student, Giovanni Ventura Borghesi. The main theme of the altar-piece is Charity, the virtue exemplified by Saint Ivo who, after studying theology and law, put himself at the service of the poor and the indigent, so as to merit the nickname, “advocate of the poor” (he was the patron of the Consistorial Advocates, who represented the poor on a pro bono basis).

The dedication of the church to Saint Ivo was largely due to the preeminent role of the law faculty within the university, of which the church was a sort of internal chapel.

The church, restored in 1858-60 by the architect Virginio Vespignani, who covered the interior with a decoration of imitation colored marble, was the site of regular religious functions until 1870. The temple was restored and reopened for worship in 1926; a later restoration in 1967-68 removed the imitation marble and brought back the white interior and another restoration in 1992-93 rehabilitated the exterior.

In 1870 the entire complex of the Sapienza, including the church, was taken over by the government of Italy and now houses the State Archives and some offices of the nearby Senate of the Republic.





# Corso Vittorio

By Letizia Cenci



Corso Vittorio was created by the 1873 Rome city plan as an extension of Via Nazionale to connect the city center with the new neighborhoods then under construction to the east and west.

Work began in 1883 and was completed at the end of the century, with the exception of the terminal piazza which wasn't completed until the early 1930s.

The construction of the new street, twenty meters wide, necessitated the demolition of numerous structures and took on the aspect of a "slum clearance" project in the heart of the city. In order to cut a straight swath for the street it was necessary to raze parts of many buildings and provide them with new façades.

As a result of this massive demolition the relationship between pre-existing monuments and their urban context was radically modified and, walking along the Corso today, you find yourself almost forced to admire, surrounded by 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, the magnificent surviving structures.

Starting down the Corso from the direction of the Vittorio Emanuele II Bridge, after about 500 meters you come to the Piazza della Chiesa Nuova with the church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, also known as Chiesa Nuova, and the 17<sup>th</sup> century complex of the Filippini with the splendid Oratory of the Filippini (Saint Philip Neri's name for his Order of Oratorians).

Continuing down the Corso you gradually discover the long side wall, facing the street, of the Palazzo della Cancelleria, whose entrance, however, is in the piazza of the same name.

Beyond the Cancelleria, on the left, the little Piazza di San Pantaleo, which takes its name from the church in the piazza.

This ancient church, also known as the "chiesa de Parione" from the name of the surrounding neighborhood, has been restored many times and in 1614 it was ceded to Giuseppe Calasanzio, whose body is conserved inside in a lavish porphyry urn. The simple, modern façade was added in 1806 by Giuseppe Valadier.

Walking past San Pantaleo you come to Palazzo Massimo, called "alle Colonne," the masterpiece of the architect Baldassarre Peruzzi (1532-36), who built it on the site of the 15<sup>th</sup> century homes of the Massimo princes, destroyed in the sack of Rome in 1527.

The convex stone façade follows the line of the underlying *Odeon*, built by Emperor Domitian, and presents a piano nobile with seven small balconies and the same number of architraved windows; above are two orders of framed rectangular windows. The stone front of the ground floor opens up into a portico formed by six pairs of Doric columns, with iron-grated windows on the sides.



Crossing the Corso, at the beginning of **Corso del Rinascimento**, you come to the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle, where the Order of the Teatini (1591), among the most intransigent champions of the Counter-Reformation, established their presence in Rome, after many controversies.

Opposite the church, in the piazza of the same name, is a fountain, attributed to Carlo Maderno, adorned with the eagle and the dragon of Pope Paul V Borghese.

Passing the church on the right side you enter Via de' Chiavari which leads, on the right, to the Piazza del Biscione, site of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Palazzo Pio, built atop the ruins of the **Theater of Pompey** (55 BC); the curve of the cavea of the theater can still be seen in the Via di Grotta Pinta.

Returning to the Via de' Chiavari turn left onto Via dei Giubbonari which, passing in front of the church of San Carlo ai Catinari, built in honor of Saint Charles Borromeo, brings you to Via Arenula, which connects Corso Vittorio to **Trastevere**.

From here you arrive, proceeding up the left side of the street, at Largo Argentina. The area takes its name from the Latin name (*Argentoratum*) for Strasburg, the native city of the head of papal protocol, Giovanni Burckhardt, the owner of a house, built in 1503 around a pre-existing tower, in Via del Sudario.

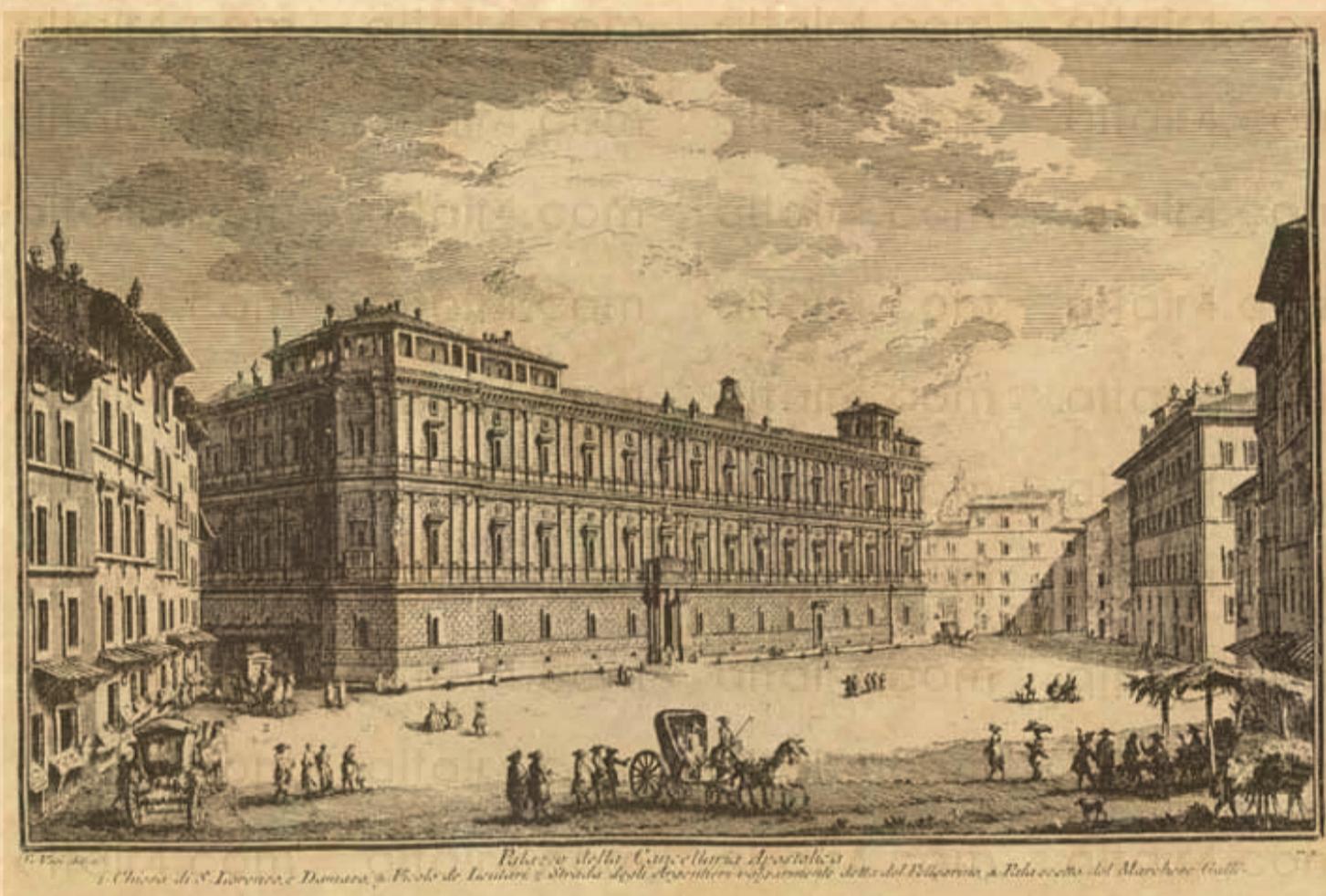
At the center of the piazza is the Area Sacra of Largo Argentina, one of the few complexes in the city of buildings surviving from the Republican era of ancient Rome.

The four temples, excavated between 1926 and 1930, are situated a few meters below present-day street level; a precious indication of the street level of ancient Rome.

From Largo Argentina Corso Vittorio continues until Piazza del Gesù, dominated by the elegant façade of the **church of Il Gesù**, home church of the Society of Jesus in Rome, begun by the architect Jacopo Barozzi, known as "il Vignola", in 1568, and completed by Giacomo Della Porta.

On the left, at the beginning of Via del Plebiscito, is the grandiose Palazzo Altieri, begun in the middle of the 1600s and completed during the 1700s.





*Palazzo della Cancelleria Apostolica  
Chiesa di S. Lorenzo e Damiana a Ponte de Lucubrari e Strada degli Agentieri e Palazzo a Palazzo del Marchese Gualti.*





*Palazzo Mancini detto delle Colonne  
e Palazzo Santiboni e Chiesa di S. Pantaleone e Palazzo della medesima famiglia Mancini detto di Braccio a Strada Papale verso il Palazzo Valle.*







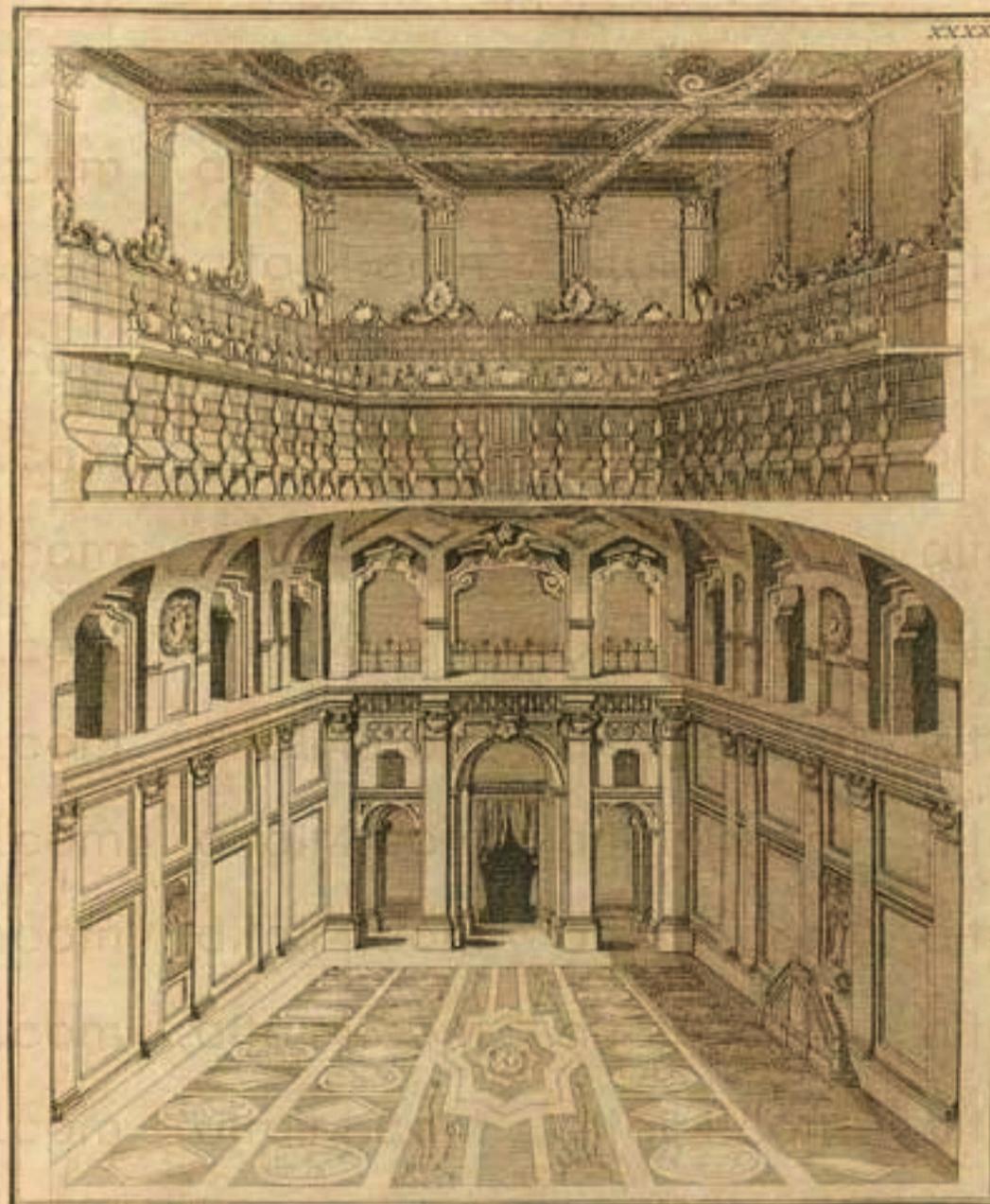
*Chiesa di S. Maria in Vallicella e Casa dei Preti della Congregazione dell'Oratorio  
Apostolico. Prospetto dell'Oratorio, a. Piazza S. Maria, e Palazzo Cesariano, già Dataria Apostolica*

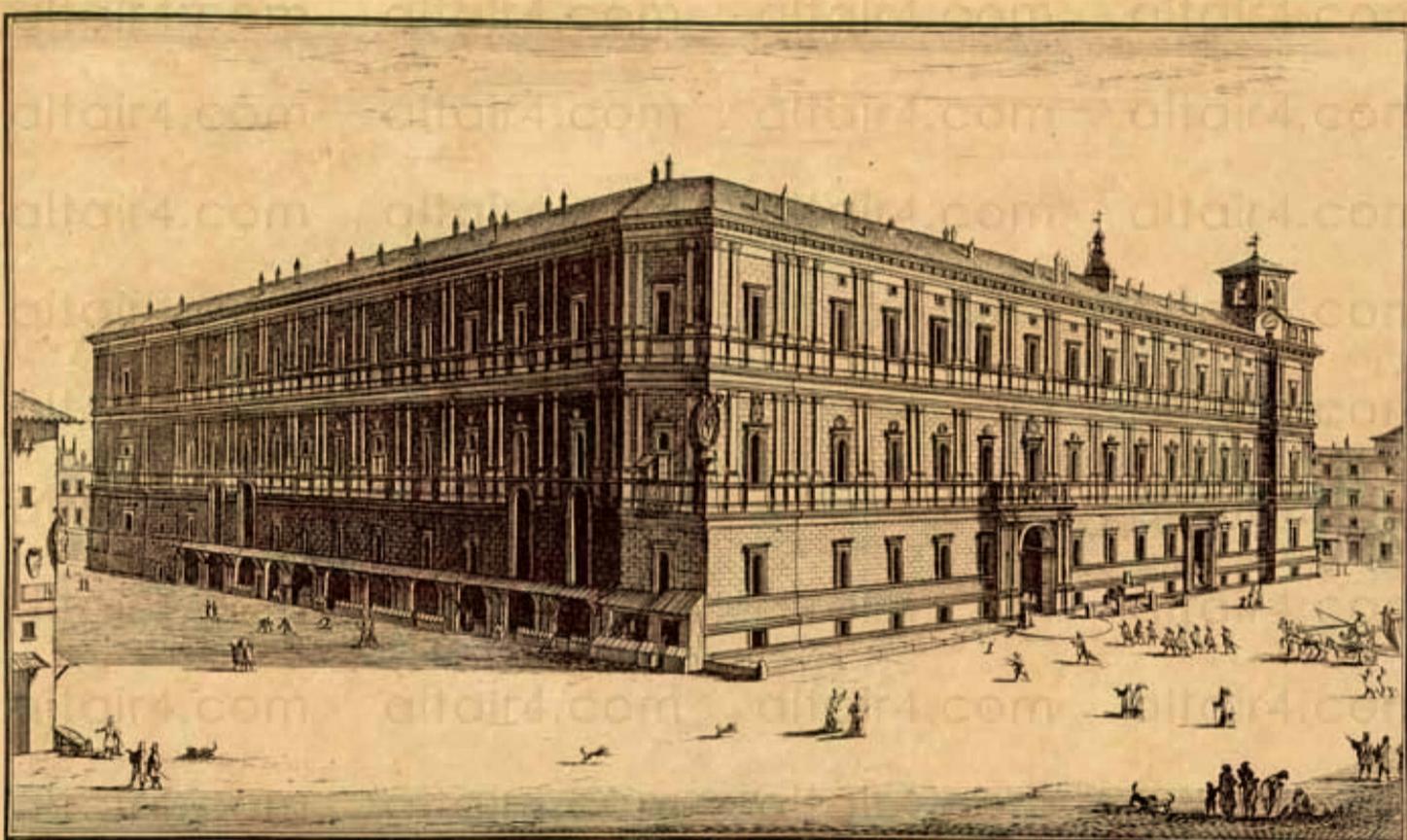




1 Chiesa di Santa Maria in Vallicella.    PIAZZA CHIESA E ORATORIO DI SANTA MARIA IN VALLICELLA    2 Piazza ampliata da Nostro Sig. Papa  
 2 Oratorio de' Sacerdoti della Cong. di S. Filip. Neri.    DETTA LA CHIESA NOVA.    Alessandro Sestimo.  
 Per Gio. Giacomo Rossi in Roma alla Pace 1707. del S. P.    Gio. B. alla Faida dir. f.







PALAZZO DELLA CANCELLERIA FATTO FABRICARE DAL CARDINAL RAFAELLE RIARIO

*Architettura di Bramante da Urbino.*

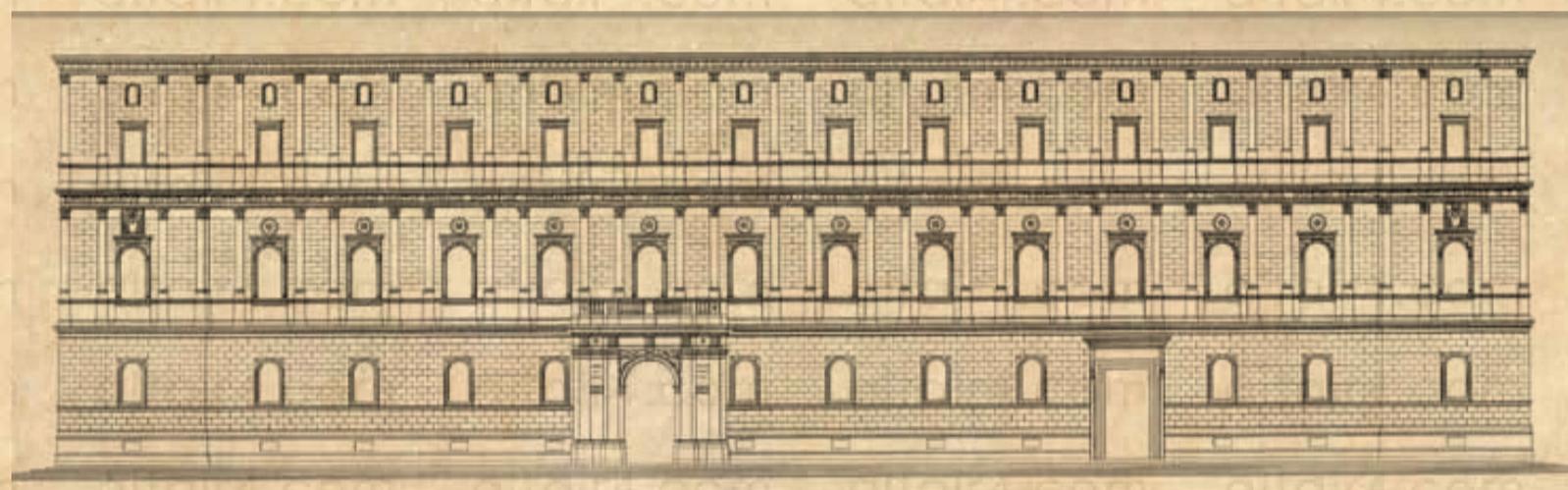
*1. Facciata Principale nella Piazza. 2. Piano del medesimo Palazzo che risponde nella Strada del Pellegrino.*

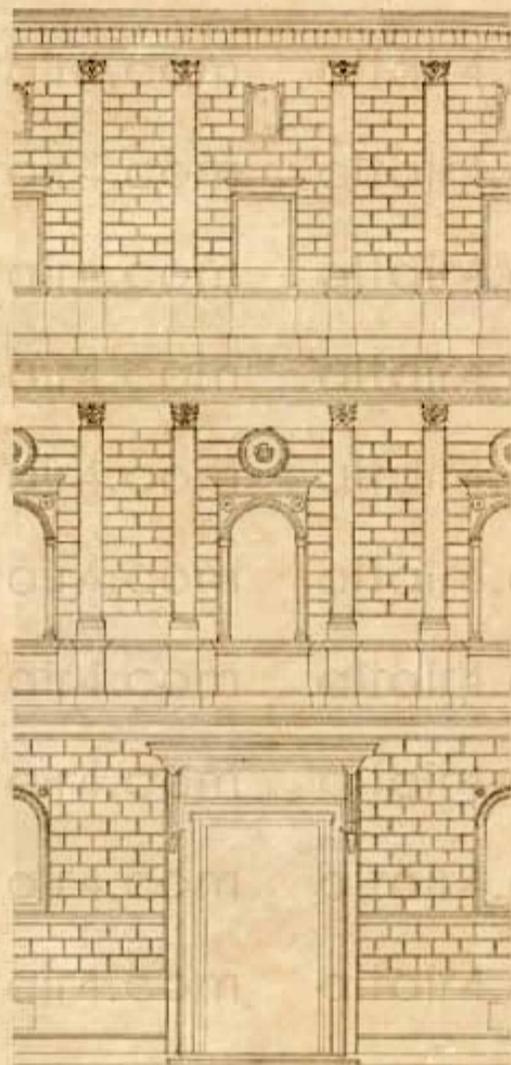
*A. Spacchi designa et incisit.*

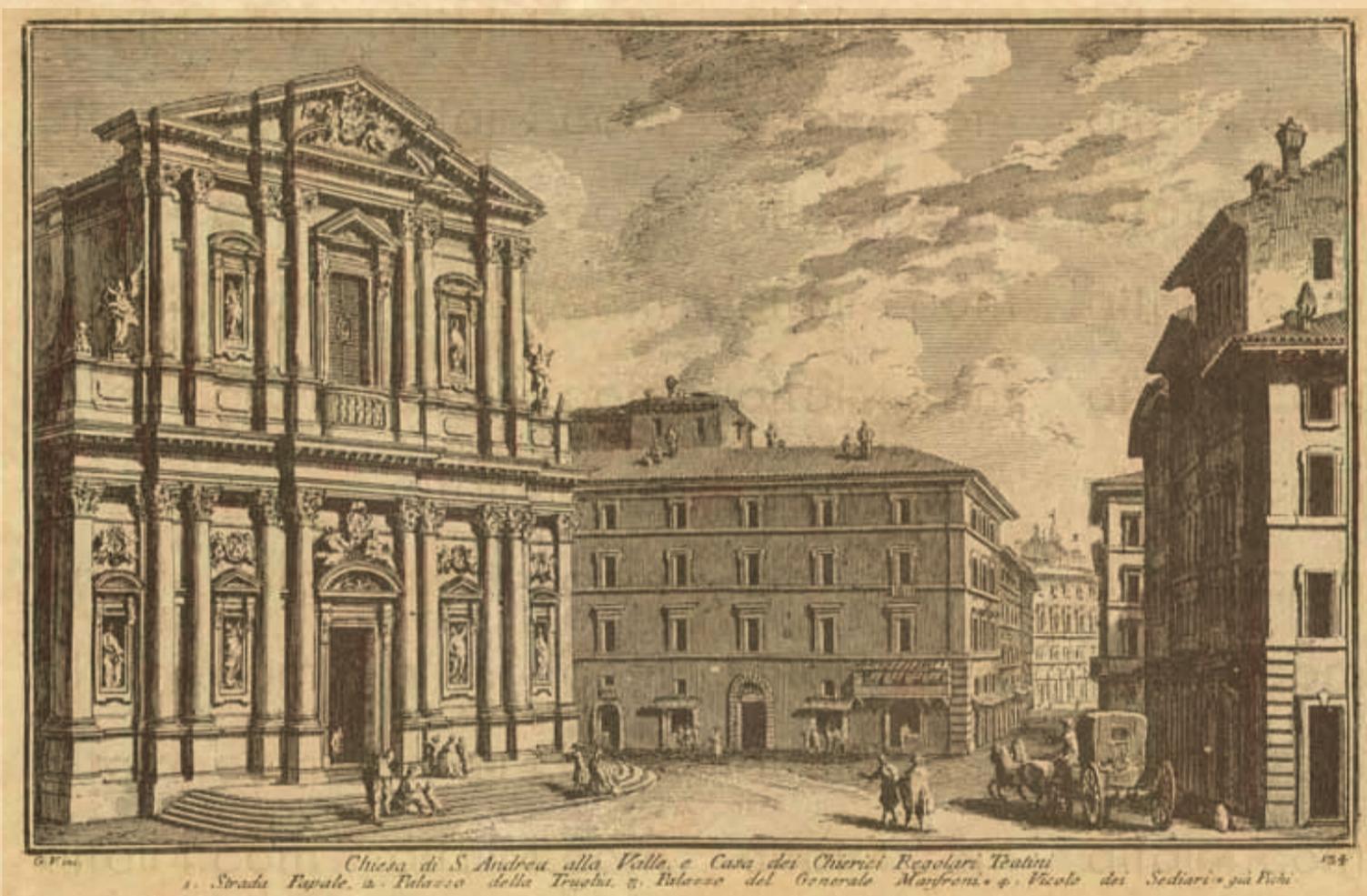
*dati in luce da Tommaso de' Ricci della sua Stampa in Roma alla Piazza del Corso con licenza de' Sup.*

6









*Chiesa di S. Andrea alla Valle, e Casa dei Chierici Regolari Teatini  
1. Strada Papale. 2. Palazzo della Truista. 3. Palazzo del Generale Manfredi. 4. Vicolo dei Sediari. 5. Piazza Fochi*





1 Facciata della Chiesa di S. Andrea finita da  
N. S. Papa Alessandro Settimo.

PIAZZA E CHIESA DI S-ANDREA DELLA VALLE.  
Per Gio. Jacomo Rossi in Roma alla Pace. 1748 Ed. del S. P.

2 Habitatione delli PP. Theatini finita da N. Sig.  
3 Cuppola di S. Carlo.

Gio. Batt. Falda di et. 25



# *Theater of Pompey*

By Maria Grazia Nini



The Theater of Pompey was the first actual theater building in Rome. Prior to its construction there were laws prohibiting the building of permanent theaters and permitting the performance of theatrical productions only in areas immediately outside of religious temples or in temporary structures made of wood.

In 55 BC Pompey found a way around the law by building a grandiose temple dedicated to Venus the Victorious at the center of the cavea, or the tiered semi-circular seating area of his theater. A grand portico stood behind the stage.

A detailed plan of the Theater and Portico of Pompey can be seen in several fragments of the *Forma Urbis Severiana*, a marble model of Rome dating back to the era of Septimius Severus (203-211 AD).

The theater was the largest ever built in Rome, equaled only some other theaters in the provinces of the Roman Empire. It had a semi-circular plan with a diameter of 150 meters, and its cavea could hold more than 17,000 spectators, seated in different



areas according to precise rules.

In the first row were the seats reserved for members of the Senate; then came the cavaliers, or aristocracy; the rest of the seats were for ordinary citizens. Finally, in the *porticus in somma cavea*, or the covered box at the top of the cavea, there were places for women.

At the center of the cavea was the temple of Venus, whose apsed cell protruded, atop its base, from the outside curve of the theater.

In the portico which opened up behind the stage were rows of fountains, adorned with statues, along the edges of two garden areas with trees.

On the east side, opposite the theater, were rooms opening on to the garden, the largest of which, in the center, has been identified as the Curia of Pompey. Meetings of the Senate were held in this room, and Julius Cesar was killed there on March 15, 44 BC, at the foot of the statue of Pompey.

There are very few remains of this great complex that are still visible today, but the streets and buildings in the area of the theater, situated in the Campo Marzio, still conserve the “imprint” of the monument, tracing its perimeter and dimensions almost perfectly.

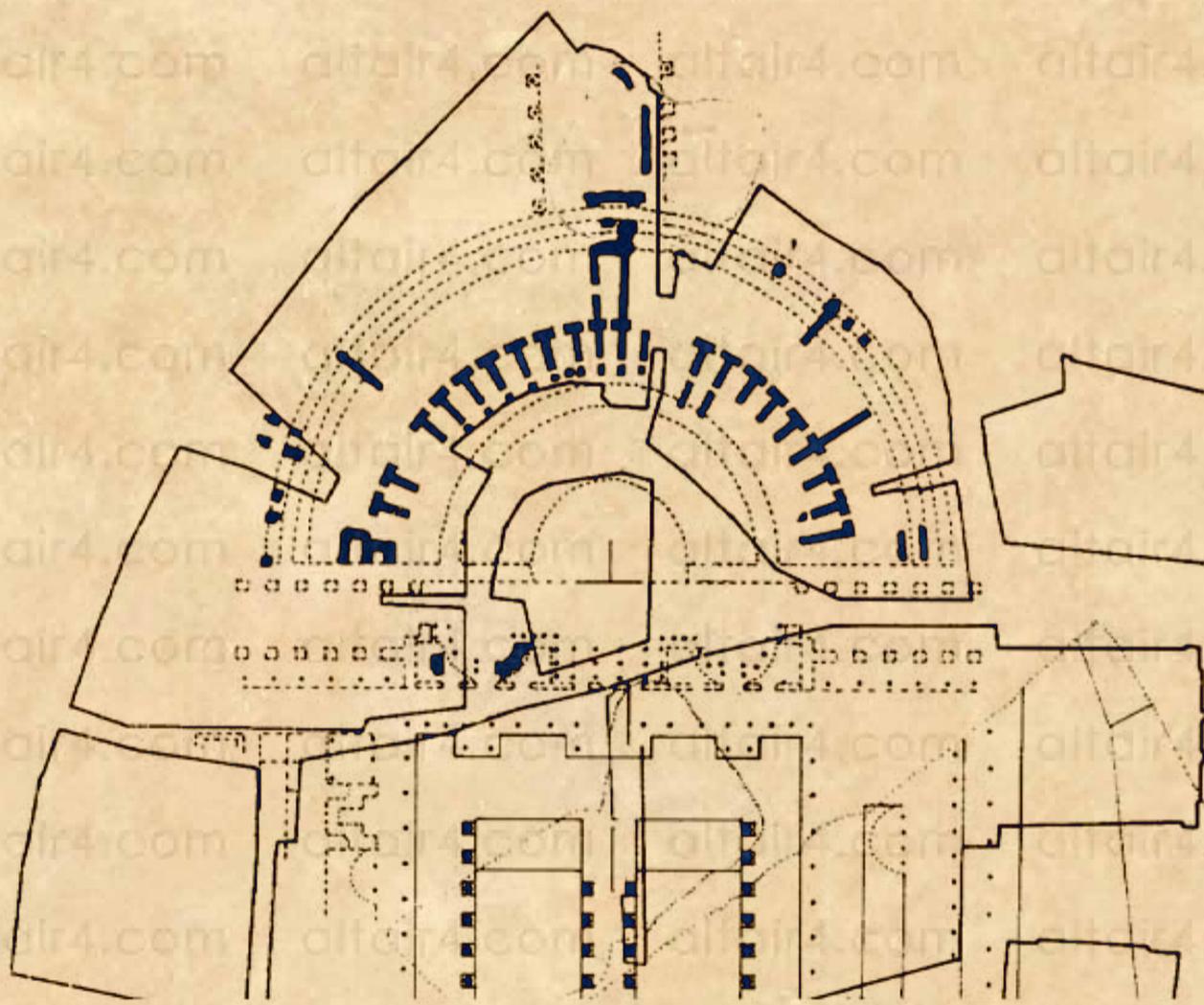
The interior curve of the cavea is delineated by Via di Grotta Pinta, while the outside curve is best seen in Via del Biscione and Piazza Pollarola. Palazzo Righetti, which faces the Campo de' Fiori, sits exactly on the spot of the Temple of Venus.

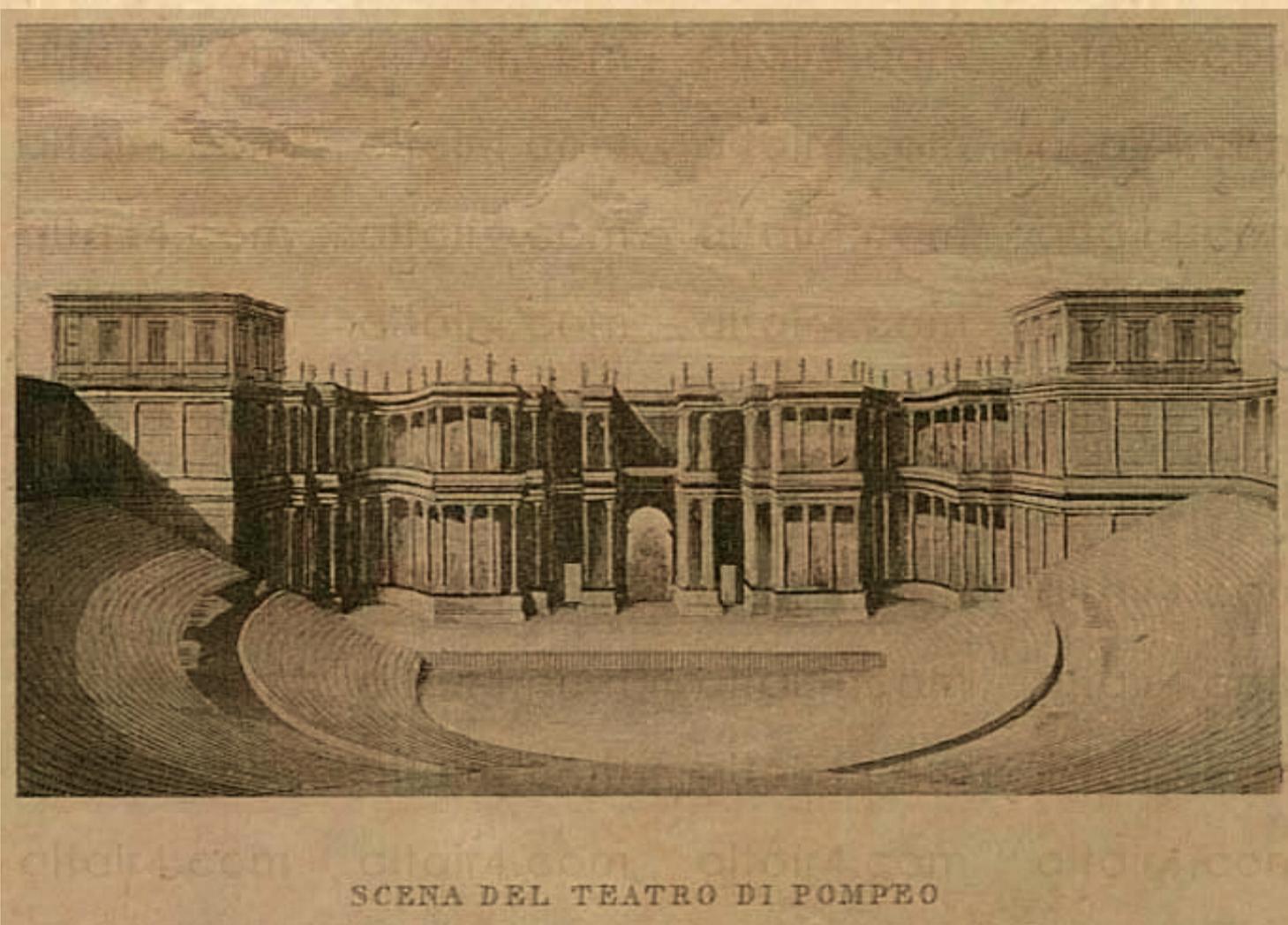
In the basements and lower floors of the buildings in these streets it is still possible to see sections of the theater's radial walls in reticulated masonry.

The area of the Pompeyan Porticos corresponds roughly to the area comprised by Via dei Chiavari, Via di S. Anna, Via del Sudario, and Largo Argentina. Inside the sacred area of Largo Argentina there are some remains of the eastern wall of the theater.

An additional element of historical continuity is provided by the presence, in that same area, of a modern theater, the Teatro Argentina.

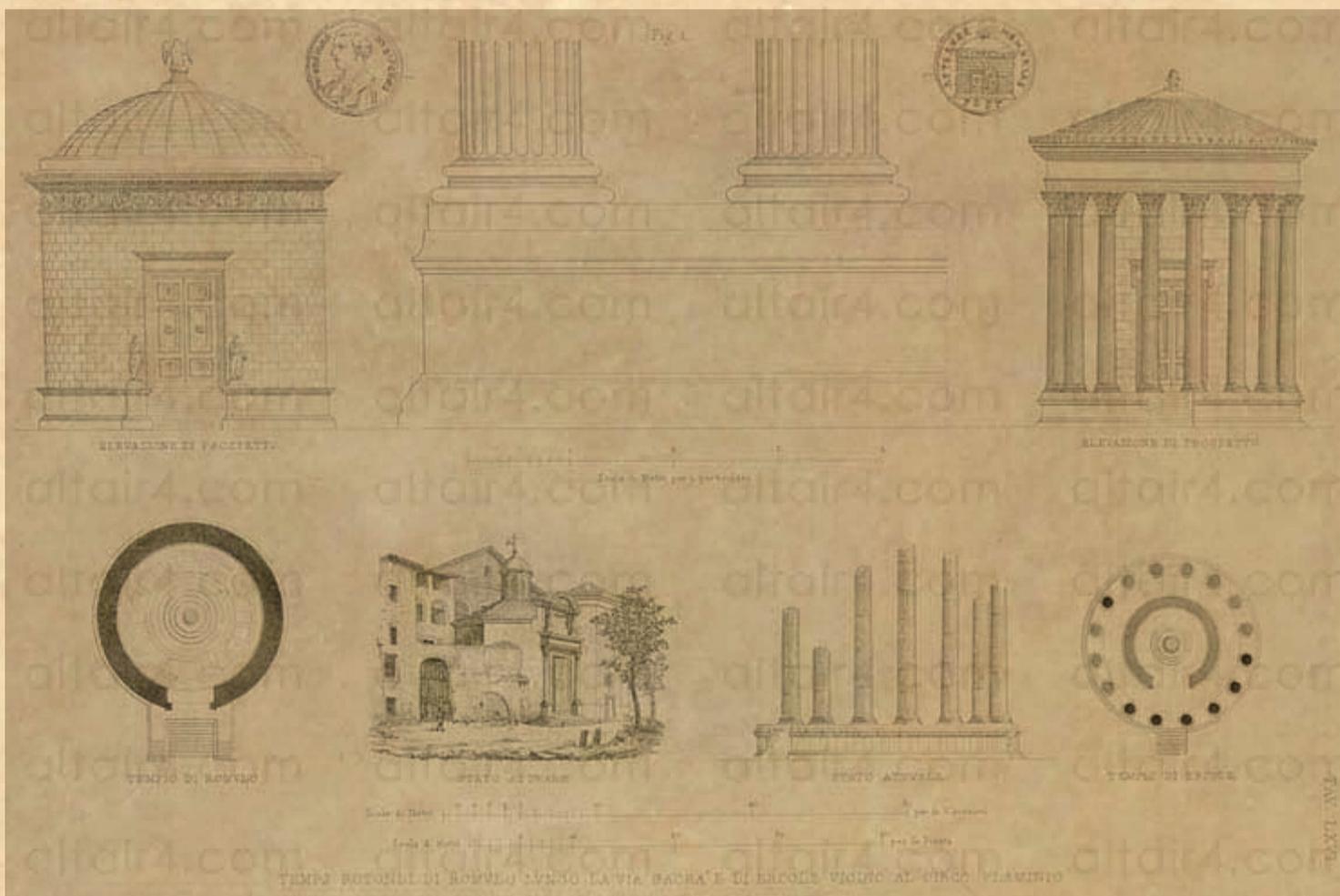






SCENA DEL TEATRO DI POMPEO





# Church of Il Gesù

By Sabina Carbonara



The church of Il Gesù has its origins in the Roman sojourn of the founder of the Society of Jesus, the Spanish saint, Ignatius Loyola. It is the quintessential Jesuit church, having become over the centuries the symbol of the Order.

In 1542, during the organizational phase of the Society's missionary activities, Ignatius and a few members of the Order installed themselves in the pre-existing church of Santa Maria de *Astalis* (also known as S. Maria della Strada), located in front of Palazzo Altieri. Soon thereafter work was begun on the headquarters of the Order, which took the name of Casa Professa.

By 1550 the church of Santa Maria della Strada was no longer sufficient for the needs of the Society; it was therefore demolished and plans were made for a bigger church. At the time of the Loyola's death in 1556, however, work on the new church had still not begun.

Finally, in 1568, thanks to a generous financial contribution from Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, work began on the construction of a majestic building based on the design of the architect Jacopo Barozzi, known as "il Vignola," later replaced as director of



the project by Giacomo Della Porta.

The church was consecrated in 1584, but the decoration of the interior was not completed until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, while further embellishments were added up until the middle of the 1800s.

The double order façade, one of Giacomo Della Porta's most successful designs, presents a great portal in the center of the first order, topped by the monogram of the name of Jesus, the work of Bartolomeo Ammannati.

On the sides, between pairs of pilasters, are two smaller portals topped by niches with statues of Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier, founders of the Society of Jesus.

The low dome, placed directly on the octagonal masonry drum, is the work of Della Porta after the original design by Vignola, and served for two centuries as the model for many others.

The interior has a latin cross plan with a single large nave, flanked by six chapels and covered by a barrel vault. It is certainly one of the most important examples of Counter Reformation architecture and embodies the moment of transition between the Renaissance and the Baroque.

The vault over the nave is decorated with the grandiose fresco of the Adoration of the Name of Jesus, painted in 1679 by the Genoese artist Giovan Battista Gaulli, who also did the frescoes in the pendentives and canopy of the dome. All of the decorative painting is inserted in an ensemble of stucco and gilded figures, executed between 1672 and 1685, which constitute one of the most remarkable baroque "machines" executed in Rome during the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The chapels contain innumerable sculptures and paintings by artists working in Rome from the end of the 1500s to the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the third chapel on the right there are frescoes and an altar-piece by Federico Zuccari; in the third chapel on the left, on the altar, a canvas by Francesco Bassano il Giovane representing the Holy Trinity, and on the walls, frescoes by Ventura Salimbeni, Giovan Battista Fiammeri and Durante Alberti, with the collaboration of other artists (1588-1589).

The most important works of art, however, are conserved in the chapels opening onto the ends of the transept, and in the apse.

The chapel of Francis Xavier, to the right of the cross-vault, contains an altar designed by Pietro da Cortona and an altar-piece by Carlo Maratta with the death of the saint. It is a work from the mature phase of the great master of 17<sup>th</sup> century Roman painting; the rigor of the master draftsman is indeed quite evident in the painting, but the



attitudes of the figures and the luminous whirling of the angels up above, denote his indulgence in the taste of the baroque.

On the altar of the small chapel on the right of the apse is the painting on copper of the Sacred Heart executed in 1760 by Pompeo Batoni. The apse was richly decorated between 1841 and 1843 by Antonio Sarti at the behest of Alessandro Torlonia; in the arch and canopy of the apse there are more frescoes by Baciccia; on the floor, the tomb of Cardinals Alessandro and Odoardo Farnese.

The incredibly rich chapel of Saint Ignatius opens onto the left transept. The body of the saint rests under the altar is a gilt bronze urn, the work of Alessandro Algardi. The chapel, first decorated by Pietro da Cortona, was later completed by the Jesuit priest Andrea Pozzo (1696), who managed to harmonize his work with the gushing baroque atmosphere in which Giovan Battista Gaulli had fashioned the chapel's interior.

In the altar niche, among four columns faced with lapis lazuli and mounted on plinths with gilded bronze reliefs representing scenes from the life of Saint Ignatius, stands a seventeenth-century painting that rises and falls like a curtain, hiding the colossal statue of the saint, originally cast in silver by the sculptor Pierre Lagros; later melted down in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Tolentino (1797) and redone in silver-plated stucco by Adamo Tadolini; above, the group of the Trinity with a globe of lapis lazuli; on the sides of the altar, which has a superb bronze balustrade, two marble groups by Jean-Baptiste Théodon (*The Triumph of Faith over Idolatry*) and Pierre Lagros (*Religion Defeating Heresy*).

In the vault, framed by stucco figures, is the fresco of *The Glory of Saint Ignatius*, by Baciccia.

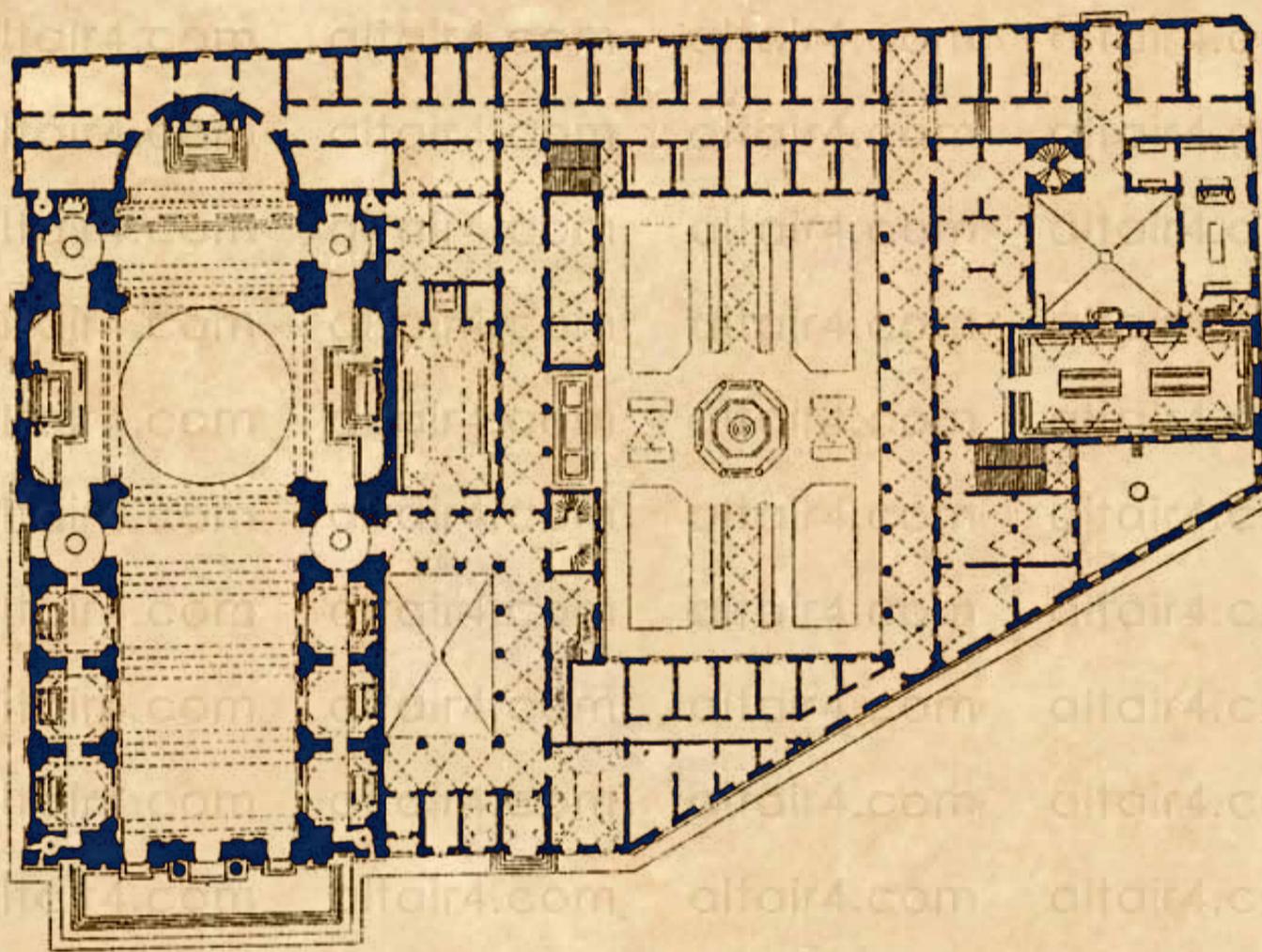
Recently the church has been restored by the Superintendence for the Artistic and Historical Heritage of Rome and Lazio.

Outside the church, on the left, is the Casa Professa, the old headquarters of the Society, built between 1599 and 1623 after a design by Girolamo Rainaldi.

The Casa Professa was arranged around a large and suggestive cloister, today practically disappeared, and included rooms for the members of the order as well as a refectory, a library, an oratory, and a chapel containing the original rooms where Saint Ignatius had lived.

The main entrance of the three story building faced with finely carved brick opens onto the Piazza del Gesù. The building was partially reduced in size, on the Via San Marco side, as part of an urban redevelopment project for the area, executed in 1932.

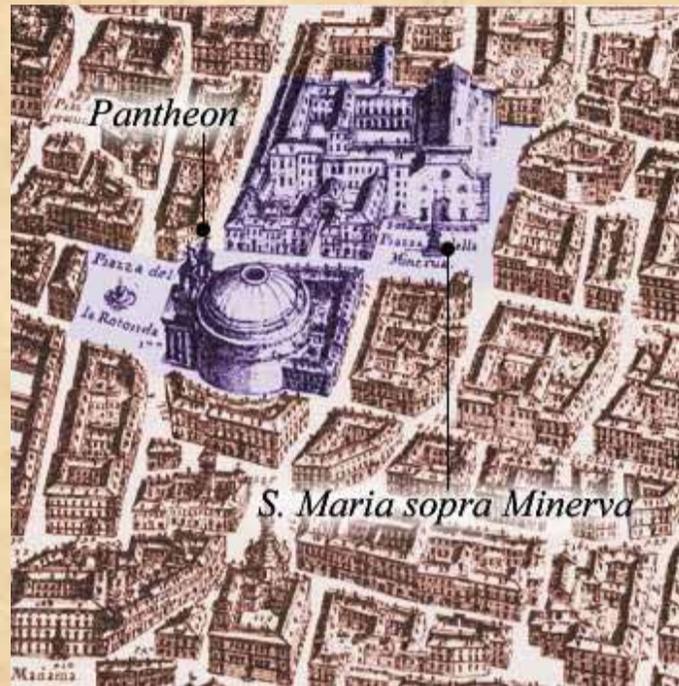






# *The Pantheon Area*

By Letizia Cenci



The “Rotonda” is the popular nickname for the **Pantheon**, the Roman temple dedicated to all the gods, whose massive structure occupies the south side of the piazza.

Today the area is characterized by the façades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century palaces which in part retrace the lines of the porticoed space situated in front of the temple in ancient times.

At the center of the piazza is the fountain, in grey African marble, carved by Leonardo Sormani in 1575 after a design by Giacomo della Porta. The fountain is decorated with masks and jumping dolphins (the current ones are from a restoration in 1847). In 1711 Pope Clement XI commissioned the sculpting of the rich reef-shaped base supporting the Egyptian obelisk dedicated to Ramses II and moved here from the nearby Piazza San Macuto.

The fountain has the curious particularity of having five steps on the side of the temple and only two on the other side, in order to compensate for the slope of the piazza.

In the Middle Ages the Pantheon was the first pagan temple to be converted into a church by Pope Boniface IV, who dedicated to the Madonna and all the Martyrs; the consecrated church, in fact, although universally known as the Pantheon, bears the name of *Santa Maria ad Martyres*.

Walking down Via della Minerva you come to the Piazza Minerva and the Dominican church of **Santa Maria sopra Minerva**, named after the temple erected here by Pompey in honor of Minerva Calcidica, on whose ruins the church was built.

The focal point of the piazza is the fantastic monument called the “Pulcin della Minerva,” an obelisk supported by a gracious marble elephant.

The word “Pulcin” derives from the popular corruption of “porcino” or pig, probably attributed to the elephant because it looks more like a pig than a pachyderm.

The elephant is an ancient symbol of piety and intelligence and was chosen to represent the virtues required to achieve true Christian wisdom because, in the words of the long epigraph placed on the base of the statue by Pope Urban VIII, “solid wisdom must be sustained by a robust mind.”

The sculptural group is an example of the great imagination of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, who originally designed it to decorate Piazza Barberini.

The elephant was carved, after a design by Bernini, by Ercole Ferrata in 1667, while the obelisk, found in 1665 in the garden of the friars of the Minerva, comes from the ancient Iseo Campense (the Temple of Isis) and is the smallest of the Egyptian obelisks in Rome.







1. Antico Tempio di Giove Vittore, hoggi dedicata alla  
*Madonna, col Portico da S. S. restaurato di colonne,  
 Cornicione, et ornamenti, e di sotto terra ridotto in piano  
 con la Piazza.*

*Gio. Batt. Falda del. et fecit.*

**PIAZZA DELLA ROTONDA AMPLIATA SPIANATA CON  
 LE STRADE INTORNO DA N. S. PP. ALESSANDRO VII.**

*Per Gio. Giacomo Rossi in Roma alla pace et priv. del. S. P.*

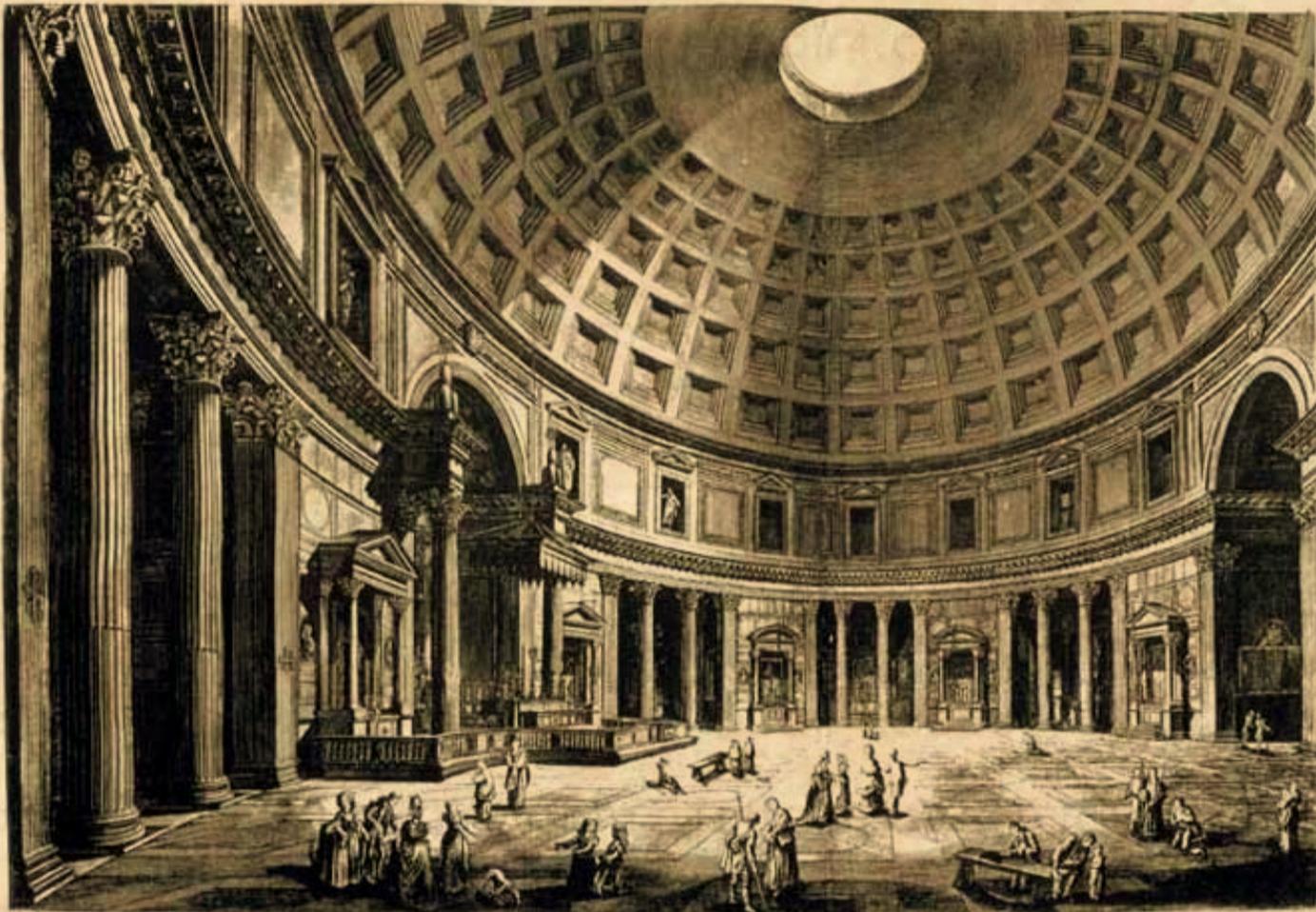
2. Fontana restaurata da N. Sig.  
 3. Palazzo de Sig. Crescentij.

3



# *Pantheon*

By Maria Grazia Nini



*Planta interna del Pantheon restaurato dalla Niccolini*

The Pantheon, as we see it today, was built by emperor Hadrian between AD 118 and 125, a temple dedicated to the twelve gods of Olympus.

The original temple was built by Marco Vipsanio Agrippa, son in law, advisor and trustworthy friend of Augustus, between BC 27 and 25.

The initial structure had a rectangular design. The façade was on one of the long sides and perhaps facing south, opposite to the present building. Historical sources indicate that Agrippa had bronze capitals from Syracuse placed in the Pantheon, and caryatids; the statue of Cesar was in the *cella*, while those of Augustus, according to his wishes, and Agrippa were in the pronaos.

We know that Hadrian never had his name inscribed on any of his buildings, with the sole exception the Temple of Trajan. Though Hadrian totally rebuilt the Pantheon, such was the emperor's modesty that he had the original inscription of Agrippa repeated on the new building; it can still be read on the architrave.

Below this inscription there is another, smaller one, that recalls restoration works



done by Settimio Severo and Caracalla, in AD 202.

Considered one of the most well-conserved Roman monuments, thanks to its early consecration as a church, the Pantheon has a pronaos and three naves of sixteen columns, eight of which are frontal, and a circular *cella*, roofed with a spectacular spherical dome. The pronaos and the *cella* are connected by two symmetrical constructions, with the stairs to the attic of the building and two apses on either side of the entrance and the original great bronze doors.

In ancient times, the pronaos was closed within a portico, blocking the view of the vast dome and making the building look like a normal rectangular temple; it must have had an incredible “surprise” effect upon entering.

The diameter of the dome is 43.30 meters, equal to the greatest height of the building in correspondence to the central *oculus* of the cupola.

There are seven alternating rectangular and semicircular exedrae framed by Corinthian pilaster strips, each with two Corinthian columns in front, except the central one opposite the entrance, which is open and bordered by a cornice that separates the first order from the second.

It is not certain that this is the ancient characteristic of the central exedra, due to its transformation into the church’s choir. Niches open on the interior of the exedrae, and between one exedra and another there are eight *aediculae*, with alternating curved and triangle gables: the niches and *aediculae* originally hosted the statues of the gods to whom the temple was dedicated, paintings and statues were placed there after its having been consecrated as a church.

In the higher fillet, which is not a true second order but a sort of attic, small windows separated by Corinthian pilaster strips open. All the decorations, including the pavement with large squares and inscribed circles, are in polychrome slabs of porphyry, and grey and red Egyptian granite.

The dome of the Pantheon represents, for its dimensions and feat of engineering, the *unicum* in the history of architecture. The concrete mixed with travertine, tufa, brick and pumice-stone was poured on a framework which bore in reverse the outline of the coffering, the heaviest materials at the lower levels, the lighter tufa and pumice mixture being used at the top of the dome. The great central *oculus* has a diameter of 9 meters and was originally ringed with bronze.

To the back of the *rotonda* are the remains of the Basilica of Neptune, that look onto Via della Palombella. It is a rectangular building, originally covered by a cross-vaulted dome, one of its long sides is still conserved, with open niches and a central apse with two Corinthian columns on either side. The brick walls conserve a length



of marble decoration with dolphins and hay-forks, symbol of Neptune. The basilica is dated, as is the Pantheon, to Hadrian times.

In AC 608 the Pantheon was given by the Byzantine Phocas to Pope Boniface IV, who consecrated it as a church dedicated to St Mary and All Saints or Martyrs, with the name St Mary *ad Martyres*. Consecration to the martyrs seems due to the transportation of 28 carts of martyrs bones to the church, from cemeteries outside the city walls, buried under the pavement.

During medieval times the monument was also used as a fortress with many constructions built onto it, among these, under Pope Anastasius IV (1153-54), a palazzo, seat of the papacy, was built to the left of the façade. Around 1270 a small bell tower was built at the center of the pediment.

During the Renaissance period the Pantheon was studied and drawn by many artists, among these Andrea Palladio.

Raphael was buried in the Pantheon by his own wish in 1520. He was known to have commissioned Lorenzo Lotti, called Lorenzetto, to make the 'Madonna of Stone'.

In 1542, in the first exhedra to the left, the *San Giuseppe di Terra Santa* brotherhood was established, many of the most important artists working in Rome at that time belonged. Some of these, like Perin del Vaga, Taddeo Zuccari and Flaminio Vacca, were also buried in the church, while honorary busts were placed in the sanctuary for many others.

In 1820 the busts were transferred to the Campidoglio in the Protomoteca hall. The busts of Raphael and Baldassarre Peruzzi, present still today in the Pantheon, were realized in later years, 1833 and 1921 respectively.

With Urban VIII Barberini (1623-44), many important restorations were carried out: the monument was partially liberated from all the annexed buildings and two twin bell towers, substituting the central one, were built on either side of the gable (called the "donkey's ears") by Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1628).

At that time, the bronze covering the beams of the portico was removed to make the 80 cannons of Castel S. Angelo and the *baldacchino* of the basilica of St Peter's in the Vatican, provoking the famous pasquinade "*Quod non fecerunt barbari, fecerunt Barberini*" ("what the barbarians didn't do, the Barberini did.").

In 1668 the pronaos was closed by a gate to keep the market stalls outside of Piazza *Rotonda*.

New restorations were done under Clement XI Albani (1700-21), who entrusted the design to Alessandro Specchi: the central apse was renewed, remaking the altar, the apsidal semi-dome redecorated with mosaic, placing there the painting of the



Mother and Child, which dates back to the seventh-century; it had been formerly situated in another chapel.

Restoration works of the attic were completed in 1756-1757, under Pope Benedict XIV.

In 1833 Raphael's tomb was discovered and renovated, while in 1842 the original marble pavement was restored.

After 1870, the Pantheon was chosen as the mausoleum of Italy's kings: Vittorio Emanuele II (1878) and Umberto I (1900) lie buried in the smaller apses, to the right and left.

During the year 1881-83 the Pantheon was freed from all the nearby structures, the gate removed and the Bernini bell towers destroyed. Excavation works were done by Rodolfo Lanciani.

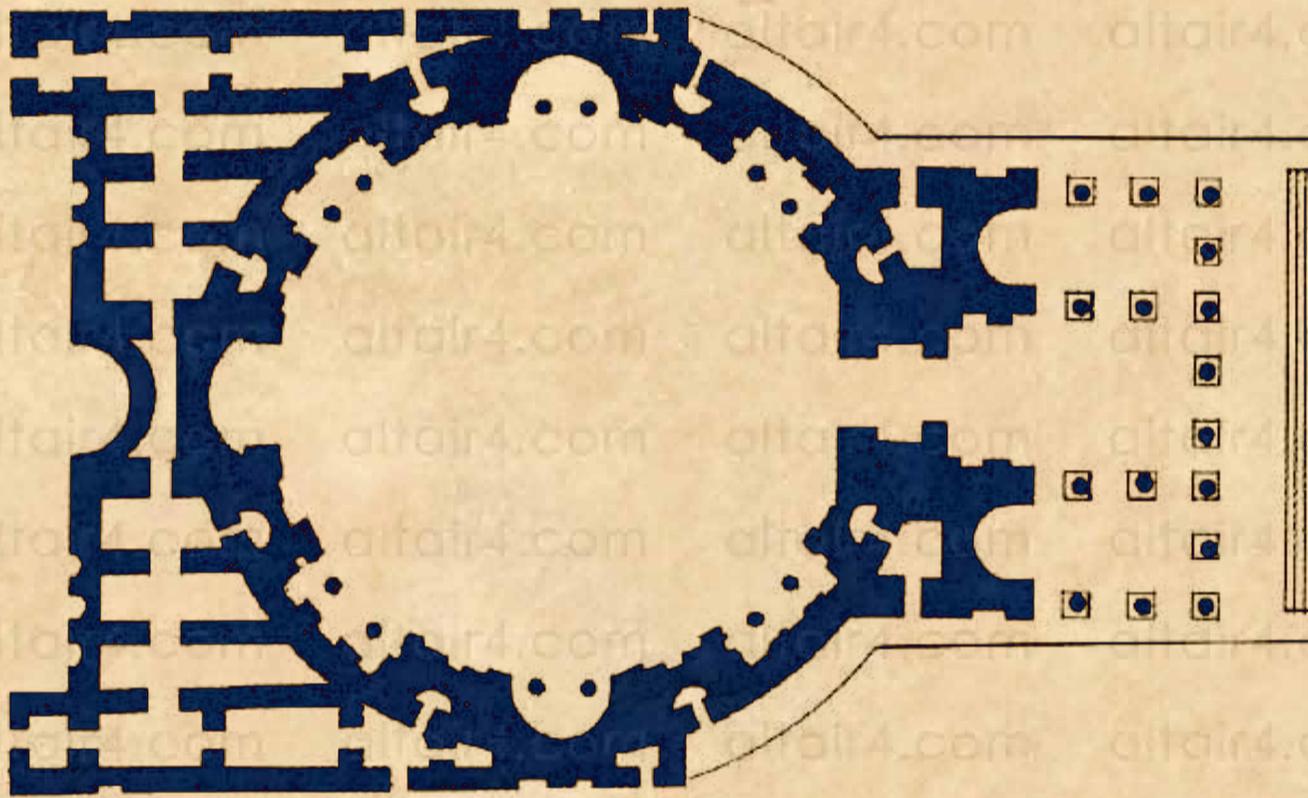
During the last decade of the century it was discovered that the whole of the Pantheon was built in the reign of Hadrian, based on analysis of the stamps on the bricks.

During the thirties, the monument underwent some modifications, with the aim of returning it to its original aspect: part of the original attic was rebuilt (above the first exedra to the right of the apse), that had been destroyed during the restorations of 1756-57.

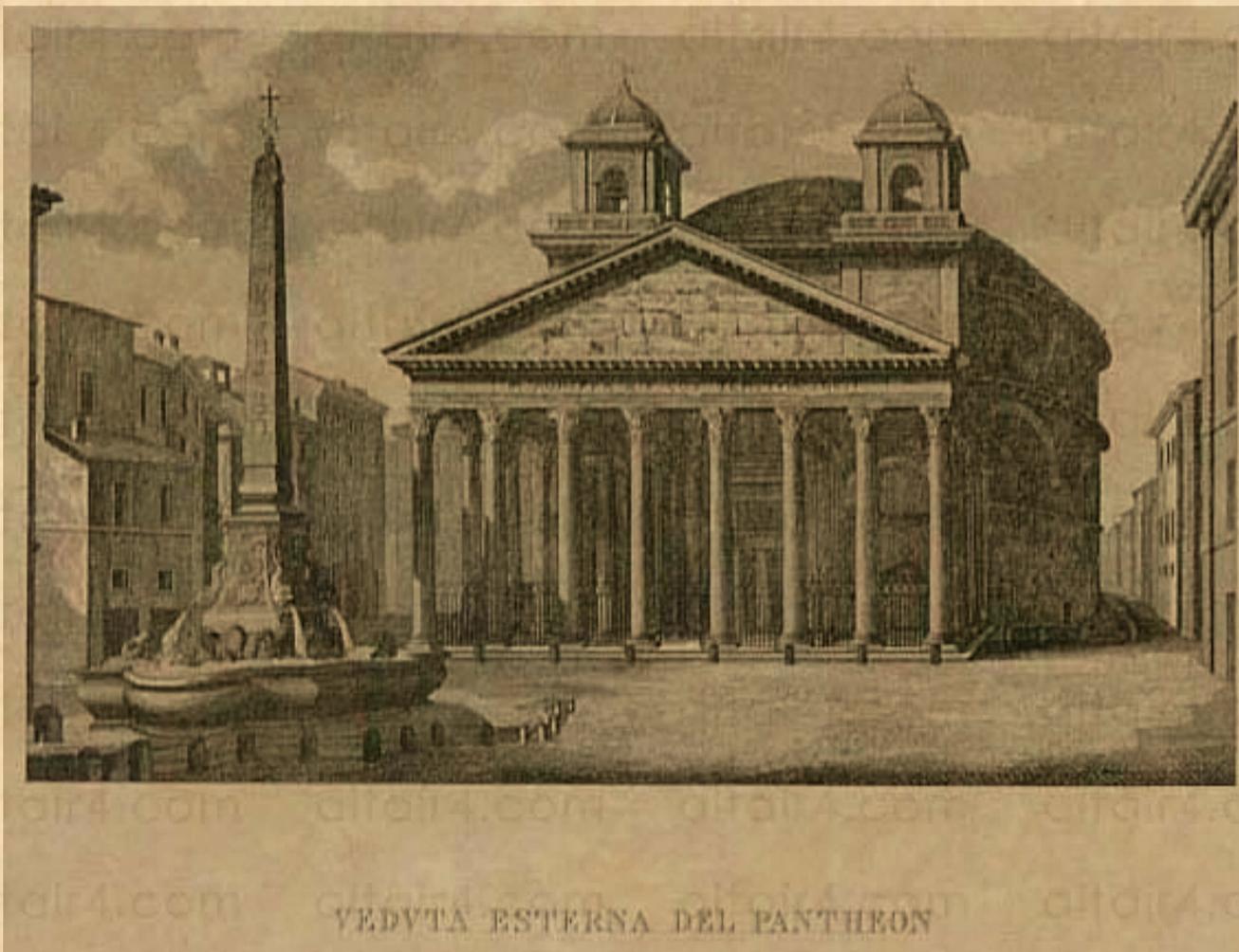
In 1984 the paintings hanging in the church were restored and placed in the chapels, respecting, when possible, their original position.

At present, restoration work is being done on the interior, bringing back to life the splendid polychrome marble surfaces.









# *Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva*

By Letizia Cenci



In the eighth-century, near the Pantheon and on the ruins of the *Minervium*, the ancient temple dedicated to Minerva, a small church consecrated to the Virgin Mary was built and named Santa Maria sopra Minerva.

In 1280 the ancient church gave its place to another, much larger one, commissioned by will of the Dominican friars, and has remained, notwithstanding the numerous and radical restorations endured over the centuries, one of the rare examples of Gothic architecture in Rome. The church looks out on the charming and evocative Piazza Minerva, noted for its monument “Pulcin della Minerva”.

In 1453 Francesco Orsini had a façade built, of which today only the portals remain, attributed to Meo di Caprino’s workshop, and enclosed in the new façade in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The façade, restored in 1992, was divided into three sections by pilaster strips and crowned by a simple cornice; three portals were opened, the lateral ones covered with frescoed lunettes and the central one topped by a pediment. There are simple circular windows to exalt the elegant scansion of space above each portal. Apart



from the emblems of the Orsini and of Pope Pius V Ghislieri there are also many plates on the façade, placed in the right hand corner, that mark the height reached by the floods of the Tiber from 1598 to 1870.

The interior, greatly altered by the painstaking restorations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, has a central nave and two aisles, covered today by a cross vault which replaced the original truss.

Before the construction of the Church of St. John in Via Giulia, Santa Maria in Minerva was the church of the Florentine community in Rome. As testimony to this one finds many tombs of Florentine nobility. Leo X and Clement VII, popes of the Medici family, are buried behind the greater altar in two splendid funeral monuments in the form of a triumphal arch, work of Antonio da Sangallo, done in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

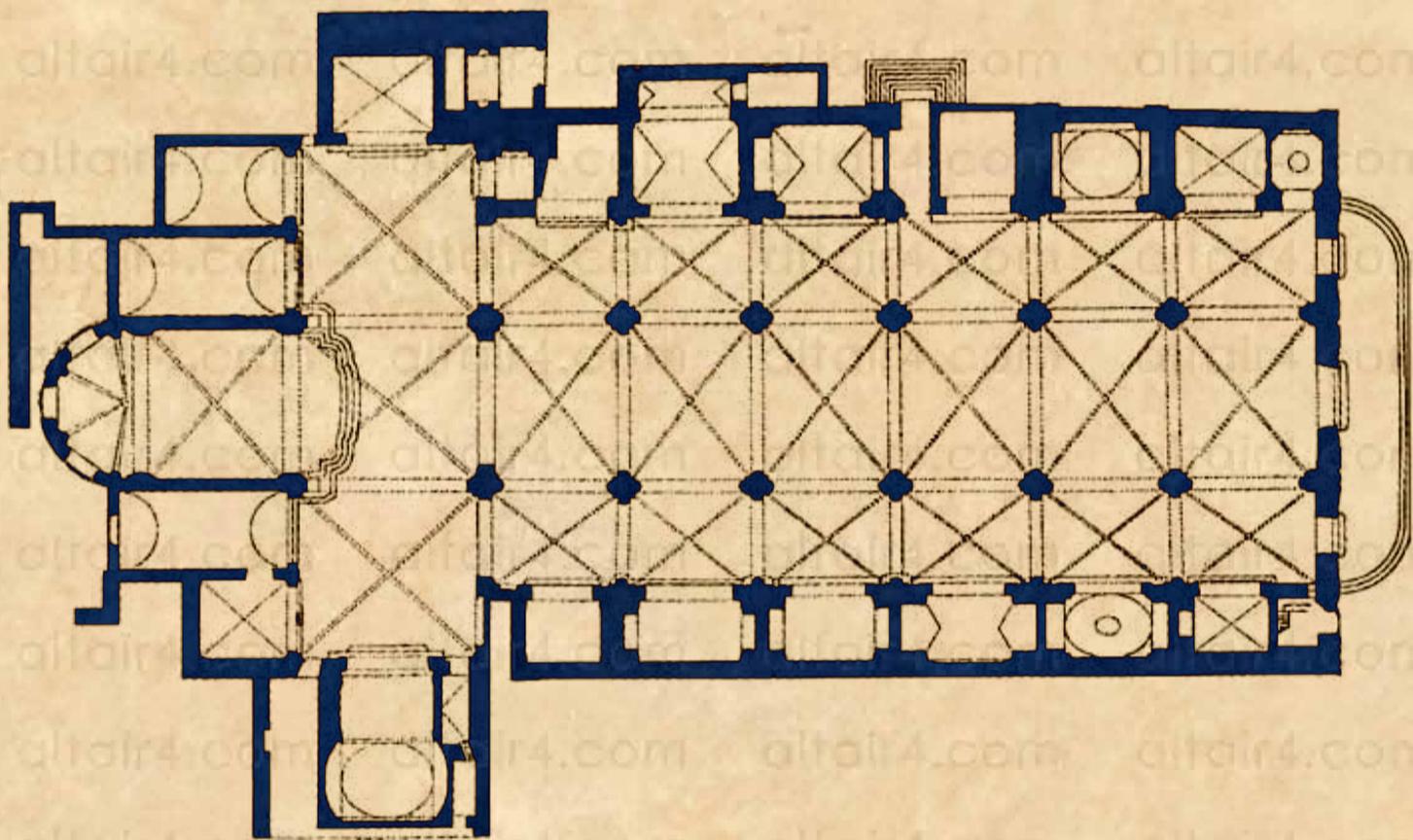
The monument to Leo X shows the statue of the Pope seated giving blessings while holding keys with his left hand; often used as a model for funeral portraits down through the centuries.

Among the other tombs are the famous humanist Pietro Bembo, the Venetian sculptor Andrea Bregno, the painter Beato Angelico, a Dominican friar who died in Rome in 1455 and finally, below the main altar, St. Catherine of Siena, patron saint of Italy who died in 1380.

Among the many chapels that enrich the church, the Carafa Chapel is worthy of our attention. In the right transept, decorated with frescos by Filippino Lippi in 1488-1493 is the *Annunciation* and the *Presentation of Cardinal Carafa to the Virgin Mary by St. Thomas*.

Against the left column of the presbytery is the statue of *Christ Arisen* begun by Michelangelo, but completed by Raffaele da Montelupo in 1521. The Christ was originally completely nude, but for reasons of “decency “ was covered with a bronze cloth, the same material was used for a foot cover as the devoted used to kiss and touch the marble foot and with time would have damaged it.







ALTRA VEDVTA DELLA PIAZZA DI S-MARIA DELLA MINERVA .

1 Chiesa di S. Maria della Minerva.

2 Obelisco inalzato da N. S. PP. ALESSANDRO VII.

3 Tempio della Rotonda.

Gio. Balla Faldà del. et fec.

Per Gio. Giacomo Rossi in Roma alla pac. ed. prin. del S. Font.

6



# *Piazza Venezia*

By Sabina Carbonara



Going down the Via del Plebiscito, past a series of buildings from different historical periods, we come to the 15<sup>th</sup> century Palazzo di Venezia.

Continuing along the right side of the palazzo we come out into the Piazza San Marco, where we find, incorporated into the palazzo, the basilica of San Marco, founded by Pope St. Mark in 336 in honor of the evangelist. On the left of the façade is a female Roman bust called “Madama Lucrezia,” one of the “talking statues” of Rome.

At the end of Piazza Venezia rises the Vittorio Emanuele II monument, called “il Vittoriano”, the work of architect Giuseppe Sacconi, begun in 1885 to celebrate the unification of Italy and inaugurated, still incomplete, in 1911.

The fundamental architectural motif is constituted by the wide flight of stairs, which leads up to the site of the Altare della Patria and then divides into two ramps which, twisting around behind the altar, converge on the statue of the king, reunite behind the statue and open up again onto a vast area dominated by the semi-circular portico that crowns the building.

In 1921 the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was added at the foot of the statue of Rome. It holds the body of an unidentified soldier killed in World War I and is constantly protected by an honor guard.

The inside of the monument houses the Institute for the History of the Italian Risorgimento, which manages the Museo Centrale del Risorgimento and the attached Archive.

The construction of the monument to Vittorio Emanuele led to the destruction of many of the city’s architectural and urban land marks, among which the main part of the convent of Santa Maria *in Ara Coeli* and the little palace of Venezia or of San Marco, later rebuilt.

On the other hand, the construction of the monument represented an extraordinary opportunity to celebrate the recently won reunification of the country; the architectural and decorative designs were selected on the basis of a national competition and brought together artists and materials, especially marbles, from every region of Italy. From Piazza Venezia, between the Vittoriano and the Assicurazioni Generali di Venezia, opens the largo of Trajan’s Forum with, on the left, the two almost symmetrical domed churches of Santa Maria di Loreto and Santo Nome di Maria, which constitute, together with Trajan’s Column, one of the most characteristic scenes in Rome.





*Piazza di Marco*  
*il Palazzo di residenza dell'Ambasciatore della Francia, e il Palazzo degli Avogari Padovani & Veneziani di Arte*





*Chiesa di S. Marco  
Vista del Palazzo della Serenità Pap. di Venezia con il campanile, a dext. che dal medef palazzo si porta al Campidoglio, e Ch. del SS. Nome di Maria, e Statue scolpite, da dove Maddama Lucrezia fu.*

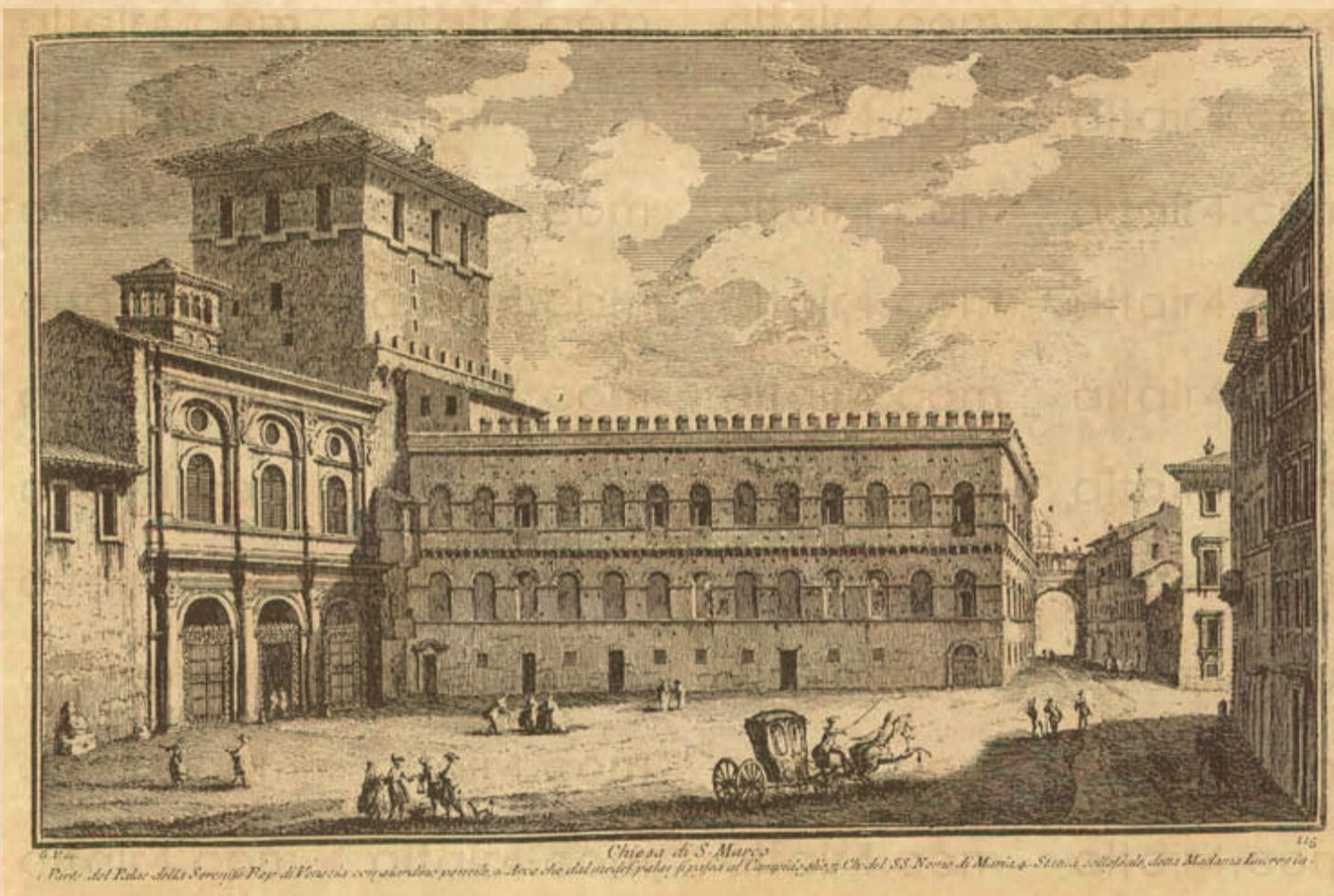






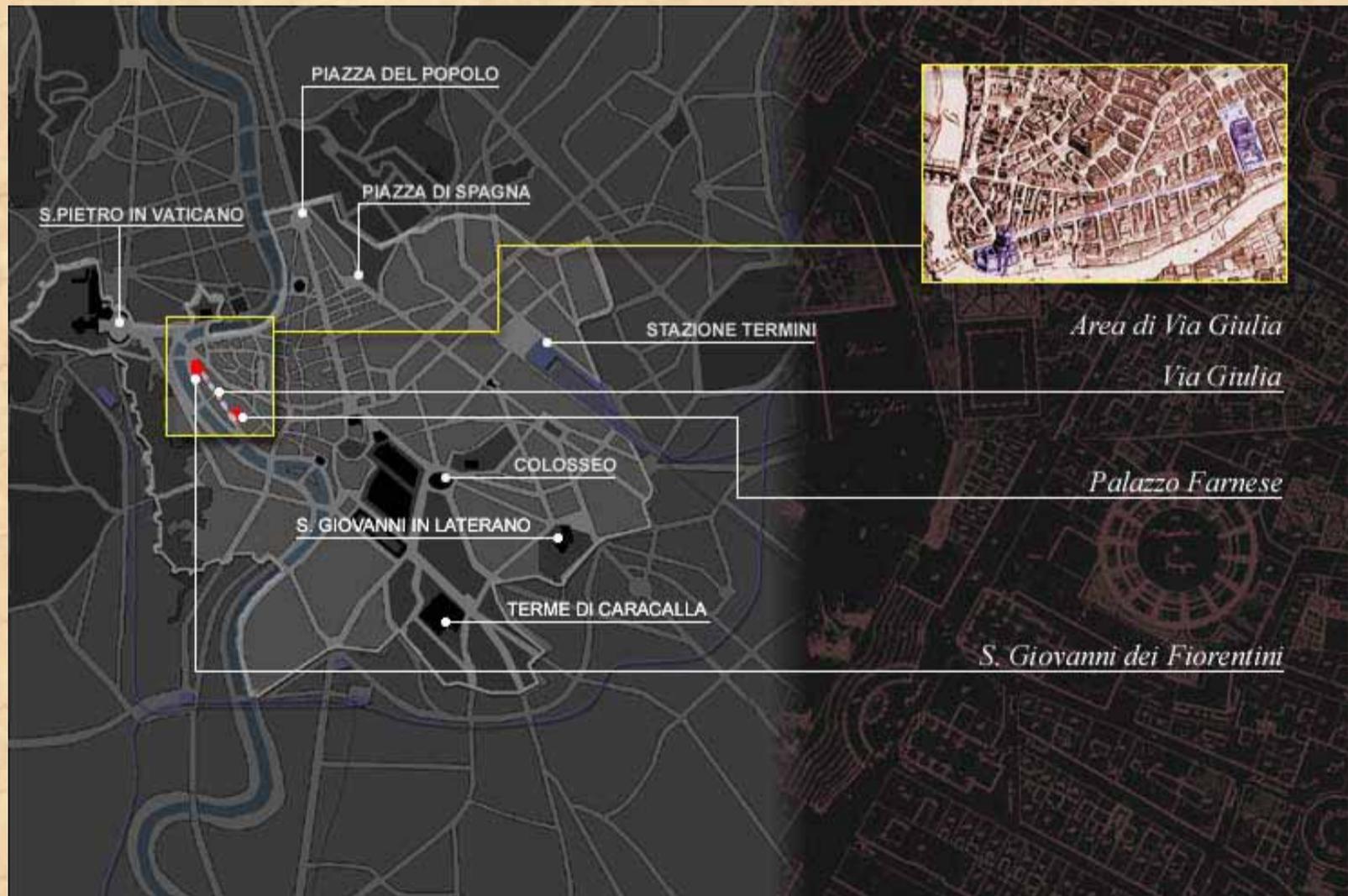
*Piazza S. Maria  
Palermo. Palazzo di residenza dell'Ambasciatore della Francia. Palazzo Almerico. Palazzo Pansò, e Palazzo d'Asse*





# Via Giulia

By Letizia Cenci



The architect Donato Bramante drew the plans for this road at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century for Pope Julius II Della Rovere, who gave it his name.

Via Giulia was the first and the longest street in Rome (more than a kilometer) and was built in a straight line: it was a genuine revolution for the inhabitants of that time, who were used to a dense network of medieval alleys, and it was opened at the same time as the parallel **Via della Lungara**, on the opposite bank of the Tiber, with which it was intended to be a joint road structure.

The project also included plans for new Court House, but the death of the Pope and soon after that of Bramante prevented its realization.

Today it is still possible to see, at the corner of Via del Gonfalone, a small side road which leads to the river, part of the basement of the Court House, made of blocks of travertine which, because of their shape, are known as the “sofas” of Via Giulia.

The road, flanked by aristocratic residences, dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, by churches and antique shops, is very pleasant to walk down. Its renaissance character has been seriously damaged in recent history: the first time at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the creation of the banks of the Tiber, which, due to the raised level of the ground, reduced some of the façades of the residences close to the river to being almost basements; the second time was when the fascist regime, with demolitions, tried to create a transversal axis between the Chiesa Nuova and the **Janiculum**.

One of the characteristics of Via Giulia is that, in its final stretch, it has been inhabited by numerous Florentine families who had their own mills on barges anchored on the Tiber. Their official church was San Giovanni dei Fiorentini which, begun in 1519, needed a century to be completed. Due to its high cupola, built in 1614 by Carlo Maderno, it has always stood out in the city panorama.

Continuing down Via Giulia, after the imposing Palazzo Sacchetti at number 66, which was originally the home Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, the architect of Palazzo Farnese, we come to Via Sant’Eligio, which leads to the church of Sant’Eligio degli Orefici.

The name reminds us that the building was commissioned in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by the wealthy corporation of Goldsmiths, and is dedicated to their patron, goldsmith and bishop of Noyon.

For a long time the project was attributed to Raphael, but the most convincing hypothesis is that it was the work of Bramante, carried out before and during the building of St. Peter’s, with the collaboration of his student Raphael, while the façade, which collapsed in 1601, was rebuilt by Flaminio Ponzio at the beginning of



the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

A little further down Via Giulia, next to the church of Santa Maria dell'Orazione e Morte, we find Palazzo Falconieri, which today houses the Accademia d'Ungheria, modernized by Francesco Borromini, the author of the beautiful façade, with at its corners hermae with female busts and heads of falcons.

Via Giulia is cut in two by the famous Arco del Passetto Farnese, which increases its romantic charm.

The arch was part of Michelangelo's project, never realized, to link Palazzo Farnese and its gardens with the Villa Farnesina, on the opposite bank of the Tiber.

While admiring the so-called "arco de' Farnesi" we can also admire the rear façade and the courtyard of **Palazzo Farnese**, a splendid example of renaissance architecture which today houses the French Embassy.

After the arch there is a fountain known as the "Mascherone", in which a granite mask and pool, both of them ancient, make up a suggestive baroque fountain.

Going down Via dei Farnesi we reach Piazza Farnese, one of the few renaissance squares in line with the building it was planned for: built at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it is decorated with two twin fountains with gray granite pools, which come from the Thermal Baths of Caracalla, and have water spouting from farnesian lillies.

Walking down the Vicolo dei Venti, on the left of Palazzo Farnese, we come to the small Piazza della Quercia, and from there to the Piazza Capo di Ferro, from the name of the family who, in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Built the magnificent residence, which then became the property of Cardinal Bernadino Spada and is known today as Palazzo Spada.

The building, bought by the Italian State in 1927, and now housing the Council of State, was built in around 1548-1550 by Giulio Merisi da Caravaggio, and decorated by Giulio Mazzoni with refined stuccoes celebrating the greatness of Rome.

Across the elegant internal courtyard we can admire the Gallery built in the style of Borromini; the perspective, created with a sloping floor, the lowered vault and the converging walls, gives the impression of more space than its actual 9 meters in length.

The interior of the palazzo houses the Galleria Spada, with a small but valuable collection of art that belonged to Cardinal Bernardino, which still retains the characteristics of a patrician collection of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Returning to Piazza Farnese and walking along Via dei Baullari, we can see Campo de' Fiori, historically one of the most interesting and characteristic squares in Rome, and since 1869 the home of the animated local market.



The square, which was originally a vast field of flowers, occupies the site, attached to the Teatro di Pompeo, where the ancient temple of Venere Vincitrice used to stand. At its center there is a 19<sup>th</sup> century statue of Giordano Bruno, who was burnt here as a heretic in 1600, evidence of the executions which were once held in this square. When in 1478 the Campidoglio market was moved to Piazza Navona, Campo de' Fiori became an important center of activity; many hotels and taverns were built, also because the square was crossed by papal processions and countless pilgrims who were on their way to St. Peter's, Saint John Lateran and Santa Maria Maggiore.





**PALAZZO FARNESE DEL SERENIS DVCA DI PARMA.**  
*Architettura di Michelangelo Buonarroti, et Antonio Sangallo, e Gio: Barozio da Vignola.  
1. Facciata verso la Piazza. 2. Piano del medesimo Palazzo verso l'uscio. 3. Le due Fontane nella Piazza.  
Disegnato da Piranesi in Roma, e Stampato in Roma alla Piazza del Corso, e presso il Palazzo di S. Andrea.*





*Palazzo Sacchetti sulla Strada Giulia*  
1754 - In basso: Chiesa della Consolazione, Chiesa di S. Maria del Suffragio, Carcere Nuovo, Chiesa dello Spirito Santo dei Napoletani, Palazzo Policovera e Arco del Palazzo Farnesio e Collegio Apostolico.







structure, it was built with materials taken from the Baths of Caracalla and the ruins of Ostia Antica.

Recent restorations brought to light the brick decorations of the façade, where geometrical designs emerge: art historians are questioning their true significance, proposing the hypothesis that they are not simple decorations but rather alchemic symbols.

Inside, at the end of San Gallo's triple-naved entrance hall, the celebrated courtyard opens up. The two higher orders were realized by Michelangelo, and to quote Vasari "*by the toil and genius of man, today it has become the most beautiful courtyard of Europe*".

Passing through the great staircase one comes to the Gallery, planned by Vignola, with frescos of the *Trionfo dell'Amore sull'universo* (The Triumph of Love over the Universe) by Annibale Carracci in 1597-1604, with the help of his brother Agostino and the collaboration of his students Domenichino and Lanfranco. The splendid frescoes represent a transition from late 16<sup>th</sup> century mannerist decoration to the Baroque exuberance of color and form.

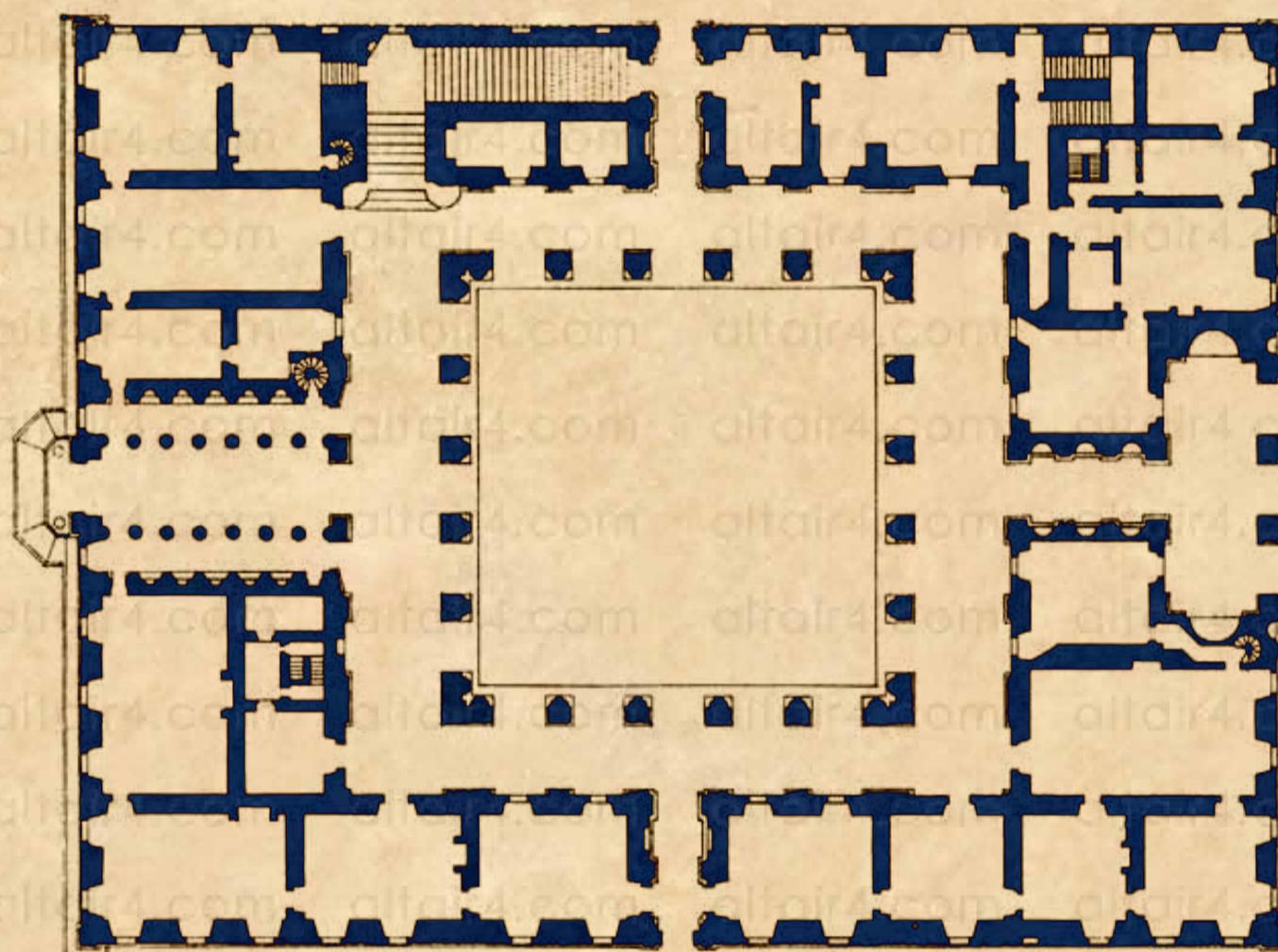
The Palazzo hosted many illustrious guests: in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Cristina of Sweden, the queen converted to Catholicism and forced to abdicate her throne, was a guest of Ranuccio Farnese. During the festivities organized in her honor Gian Lorenzo Bernini covered the façade with a painted face.

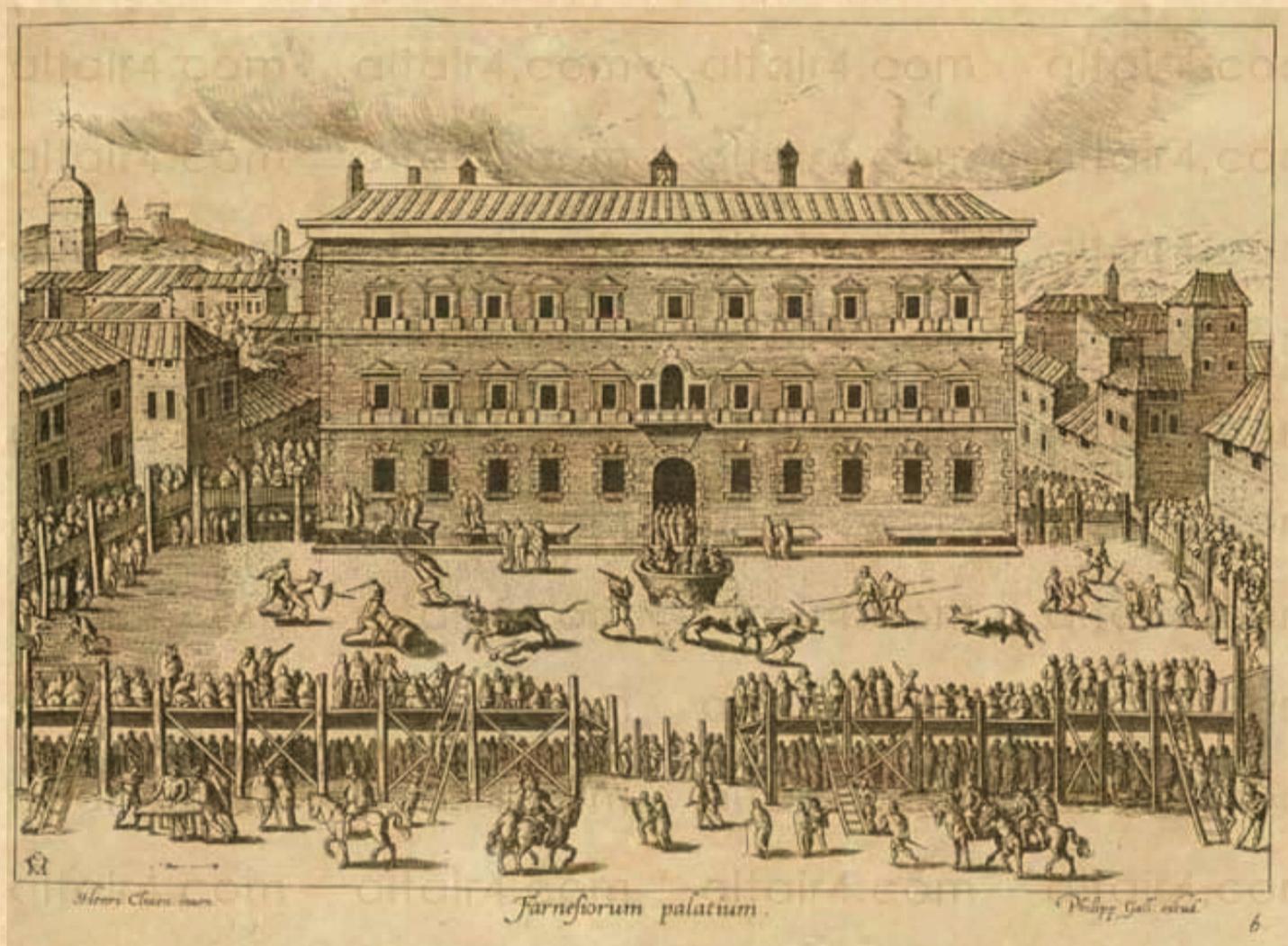
With the extinction of the lineage in 1731, the riches of the Farnese, including the Palazzo, passed to the Bourbons of Napoli, who moved many of the works of art belonging to the Farnese family to their city.

The Palazzo passed to the Italian State in 1871 and has since then hosted the French Embassy.

In 1936 a 99 year contract was signed according to which the Palazzo Farnese will continue to be the seat of the embassy until 2035.

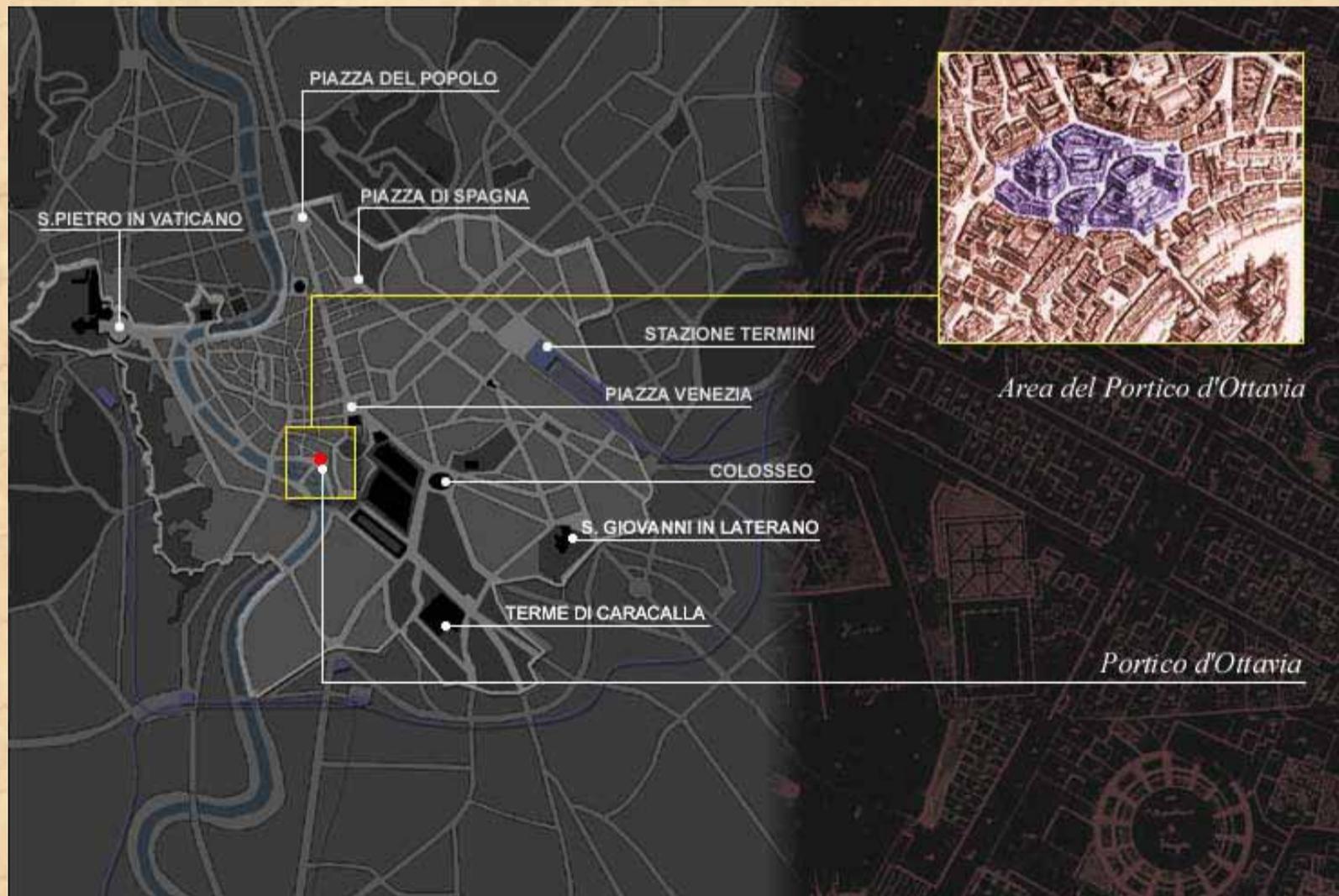






# *The Portico of Octavia Area*

By Raffaele Pugliese



The present-day Via del Portico d'Ottavia and the surrounding area constitute one of the most enchanting neighborhoods of Rome. Bordered on the north by Piazza Campitelli, on the west by Via Merulana, on the east by the church of San Nicola in Carcere, and on the south by the Tiber, the area has conserved almost intact the atmosphere of the old city.

In Roman times the area belonged to the 9<sup>th</sup> Augustan region, the Circus Flaminius, while today it is in the 11<sup>th</sup> district, Sant'Angelo.

In ancient times the area was occupied by temples and porticoes, some of them of great artistic importance, like the Temple of Bellona (296 BC), the Temple of Apollo Sosian (443 BC), of which three high columns have survived from a restoration in the Augustan era, and which had a sculptural group in its pediment of very high quality, the work of a Greek artist from the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.

Among those porticoes which are famous for the works of art they have conserved and for the elegance of their design is the Portico of Octavia, whose monumental entrance is conserved in the street of the same name. The building was constructed by Augustus between 33 and 23 BC and dedicated to his sister Octavia, and was in reality the reconstruction of an earlier portico erected by Quintus Cecilius Metellus Macedonicus between 146 and 131 BC.

The earlier portico surrounded the Temple of Juno Regina (179 BC) alongside a temple dedicated to Jupiter Stator, the work of the Greek architect Hermodorus of Salamis (second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC) and famous for having been built entirely of marble.

The Augustan reconstruction provided for a double colonnade surrounding an open area at the center of which were the two temples and behind them an apsed structure housing a library. Numerous works of art were conserved in the arms of the portico. The entrance was constituted by a monumental propylaeum of columns with architraves and tympanum, of which there remain two columns with their architraves and tympanum engraved with an inscription dating from a restoration carried out under Septimius Severus in 203 AD.

Further restorations to reinforce the propylaeum were carried out during the Middle Ages.

Between 755 and 770 a diaconate was built on the inside of the complex by Theodotus, uncle of Pope Adrian I (772-95). It was originally dedicated to Saint Paul and later named Sant'Angelo in Pescheria or *in foro piscium* (in the fish forum) because of its location in front of the fish market. The high Middle Age church had three naves



ending in a triple apse, an underground crypt decorated with frescoes simulating veils.

The bell tower is very old and bears the date 1291. In 1571-72 the last arch of the right nave was transformed into the Chapel of Saint Andrew. In the same year the Fish Mongers Guild was founded and its oratory is found on the right of the church. Beginning in 1611 the church underwent a restoration at the behest of Cardinal Andrea Peretti and sometime before 1660 the old bell tower collapsed.

A radical renovation was carried out in 1869-70, when the apse was moved forward, the left side wall was rebuilt, and the bell tower was demolished. In 1928 the ceiling was repaired. The church now presents three naves with only three spans, divided by arches on cruciform pilasters.

Along the Via del Portico d'Ottavia are several medieval and renaissance residential palaces, including the house of Lorenzo Manlio, dated 1468 with a long marble inscription running along the façade which bears the date *2221 ab urbe condita*, that is from the foundation of Rome. The beautiful letters of the inscription express all of the reverence for ancient Rome contained in the humanistic spirit of the owner who Latinized his surname Manilio into Manlio.

The street was one of the main thoroughfares of the old Jewish quarter of the Ghetto. Probably as early as the 12<sup>th</sup> century a sizable Jewish community had already settled in the area, referred to in several medieval documents as *contrada Judeorum*.

It was Pope Paul IV, however, who in a bull of 12 July 1555 commissioned the architect Silvio Peruzzi to construct a wall around the settlement, provided with doors and windows, whose maintenance was to be paid for by the Jews.

Subsequent enlargements of the ghetto were carried out by Sixtus V, up to the edge of the Tiber, and by Leo XII in 1825. In the end the limits of the ghetto were formed by the river Tiber on the south, by the present-day Via del Portico d'Ottavia on the north, the Via del Progresso on the west, and by Sant'Angelo in Pescheria on the east. Its walls were taken down in 1848 while the rehabilitation of the neighborhood began in 1888.

Among the buildings of interest conserved in the area are the Palazzo Cenci Bolognetti, designed by Ferdinando Fuga (1699-1781), the imaginative Fontana delle Tartarughe in Piazza Mattei, perhaps the work of Giacomo Della Porta, while the artist of the bronze statues was Taddeo Landini (1585), the Palazzo Mattei, and the Synagogue. The last, built in a singular Babylonian style between 1897 and 1904, is the work of the architects Osvaldo Armani and Costa, while the paintings are by Bruschi and Brugnoli. This synagogue replaced the old one which was destroyed by fire in 1893.



Behind the church of Sant' Angelo in Pescheria is the lovely Piazza Campitelli, which hosts a number of interesting buildings such as the Capizucchi and Spinola palaces. The façade of the church of Santa Maria in Campitelli stands out, however, for the quality of its architectonic design. Its origins may go back as far as the 9<sup>th</sup> century and it is certainly mentioned in documents beginning in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1618 the church was ceded to the Congregation of the Minor Order of the Mother of God. The Order immediately asked for it to be razed so a new, larger church could be built in its place and the new church was consecrated in 1648. Nevertheless, the necessity of safeguarding a miraculous image of the Madonna conserved in the nearby church of Santa Maria in Portico pushed Alexander VII to commission Carlo Rinaldi to reconstruct the church again in 1660.

His initial design called for a convex façade and an elliptical plan for the church, but in 1661 he decided on a simpler and more spacious design, which was completed in 1690. The façade, completed in 1667, has a complex structure in two orders enriched by columns and shrines; the marked protrusion of the structures and the heavy use of columns is typical of the Baroque style.

The interior has a single nave with a deep, curved choir. The alternation on the sides of the nave of chapels which retract and expand and then retract again, is of great effect, creating a series of transverse axes to the longitudinal axis which ends in the choir. The nave is composed of 24 paired and free Corinthian columns with the cupola rising in the center.

Among the prestigious works conserved in the church is a painting of Saint Michael in the first chapel on the right by Sebastiano Conca (1680-1764). Then comes the second chapel, designed by Girolamo Rinaldi, with a splendidly luminous altarpiece of the Destination of the Virgin by Luca Giordano (1632-1705).

The main altar stands out in the choir with a ring of angles resembling the one by Bernini in St. Peter's, perhaps the work of Giovanni Antonio De Rossi, one of Rinaldi's collaborators.

The interior conserves the icon of the Madonna with Child from the church of Santa Maria in Portico. It is an enamel *à champlevé* (a technique which consists in the filling in indentations with enamel) dating perhaps to the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Baciccia's canvas of the Birth of Saint John the Baptist is also quite interesting.

There are also paintings by artists from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and several tombs of famous historical figures, while the fresco in the canopy of the apse dates to 1925 and is the work of Giovan Battista Conti, representing Alexander VII offering the virgin a model of the church.



Once past the church you reach the Theater of Marcellus, a classic example of how Medieval and Renaissance Rome grew up on the ruins of the empire. The theater, which was restored and freed from some surrounding buildings starting in 1926, was begun by Caesar but finished by Augustus, who dedicated it in 13 or 11 BC to the memory of his nephew and heir Marcellus.

The façade had two orders of arches in travertine (the one in tufa on the right is from a restoration) on pilasters framed by the order of Doric and Ionic semi-columns. The third level, which would have taken the building to a height of 33 meters, has been lost. Behind the arcades unfold the seven radial sections that supported the grandstand for the spectators (the cavea) with a diameter of 130 meters. In front of the grandstand was the stage flanked by two apsed rooms, but nothing remains of this part of the building.

In the Middle Ages the theater was transformed into a fortress, first by the Fabi family, whence the name Monte Fabio. Then in 1368 the Pierleoni family took over and they kept it until 1368. They were followed for five hundred years by the Savelli family, for whom Baldassarre Peruzzi built an overlooking palace between 1523-27. It also included a church dedicated to Santa Cecilia. When the Savelli were left without heirs the theater passed on to the Sforza-Cesarini family and then was sold to Domenico Orsini.

Immediately next to the theater is the church of San Nicola in Carcere, which was built on the inside of an area sacra formed by three temples flanked and separated by a thin corridor. These were erected around the piazza of the Forum Olitorium, or the ancient vegetable market of Rome, which, however, lost its commercial character during the Republic and took on a monumental role.

The three temples are, respectively from left to right, the one dedicated to Janus, the Temple of Juno, and the Temple of Hope. The first and smallest, with a Doric peripteral, dates back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, and the church still conserves, on its outside wall and in its interior, parts of the colonnade with the travertine trabeation. The central temple was bigger and more ornate, peripteral and hexastyle, in the Attic-Ionic order, and dates back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. The façade of the church still conserves three columns from the peristyle. The last was in the Ionic order, while the floor plan was in the style known as Italic, with a closed wall instead of a colonnade in the back. It had six columns in the façade and nine on the sides. It has been dated to the age of Augustus.

The exterior of the church conserves part of the colonnade and the interior come ruins. The underground part of the church, besides some remains of the temples, has



a curious cell with three apses whose function and date of origin are uncertain (a place of Christian worship?).

The first historical news of the church seems to date back to the 9th century as can be deduced from an inscription engraved in one of the columns of the basilica which reports on a donation to the church by a certain Anastasio. The inscription is dated to the 9th century and bears the name of the three saints, Simeon, Anne, and Lucia, to whom the donation was made and who it is supposed were venerated there.

The first certain mention is to be found on a plaque still conserved today which names Pope Urban II (1088-1099) who may have been responsible for changing the dedication of the church to San Nicola in place of San Salvatore. His successor, Pope Paschal II is named underneath as a cardinal's deacon.

In 1128 the church was solemnly consecrated by Honorius II following a restoration which restructured the basilica in three naves and an apse flanked by two smaller rectangular apses.

Some paintings in the reliquary date back to the beginning of the 13th century, representing the Prophets, now conserved in the Vatican Gallery.

Medieval documents also refer to the church with the name "in carcere" (in prison). This is probably because of the presence in the vicinity of a Byzantine prison in the 7th and 8th centuries, or a reference to the Mamertine prison at the foot of the Capitol. Perhaps Cardinal Gaetano Orsini, later Pope Nicholas III (1277-80), opened up a door which today looks on to Piazza Monte Savello. The door is in the Gothic style with two small rose windows on the sides.

Very little has survived from later restorations, apart from some paintings by Giovanni Baglione (1573-1644) executed in the chapel to the right of the apse dedicated to the Virgin of the Rosary. The paintings represent prophets and scenes from the Old Testament.

Finally in 1599 Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini commissioned Giacomo della Porta (1540-1603) to rebuild the façade according to Renaissance canons. The façade has only one order of two columns supporting a high attic with a pediment, completed by stucco reliefs.

In the 18th century the roof was reinforced and the pavement repaired. A new restoration, of a structural nature, was undertaken in 1808 by Giuseppe Valadier, while at the behest of Pius IX new works of consolidation and embellishment were executed from 1846-67 with decorations in imitation marble and drapes alternating with false windows on the walls of the central nave and the apse. Furthermore part of the windows and nearby masonry were redone as well as the coffered ceiling. In



the nave the painter Guido Guidi painted 10 large frescoes on the life of San Nicola, while the apse was frescoed by Vincenzo Pasqualoni (1819-1880).

Pius IX also enlarged and transformed an earlier chapel from the 1400s located on the left nave, dedicating it to the Virgin of Guadalupe. On the right side of the façade is a high tower used which originally may have been part of the fortress of the Pierleoni family.

The isolation of the basilica from the surrounding neighborhood took place in 1934.





*Piazza Montanara. Fontana a Teatro di Marcello, ridotto a Botteghe della Famiglia Savelli, in oggi possedute dalla Ecc. Casa Orsini.* 30





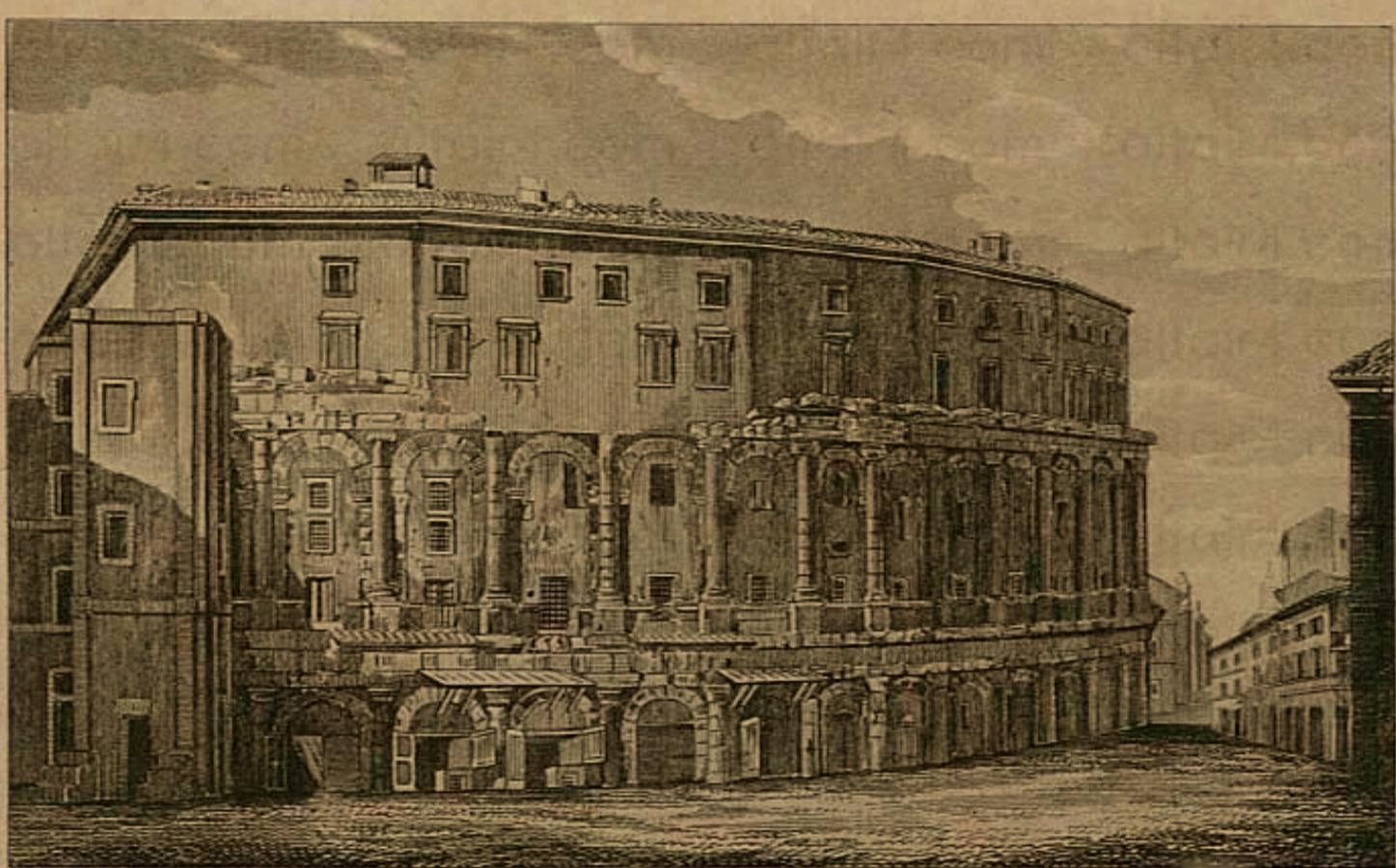


*Scenografia del Teatro di Marcello nel 1780  
di Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Roma, 1780*

TEATRO DI MARCELLO.

*Scenografia del Teatro di Marcello nel 1780  
di Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Roma, 1780*





VEDUTA DELLE RELIQUIE DEL TEATRO DI MARCELLO  
SU CUI FU COSTRUTTO IL PALAZZO ORSINI



# The Quirinale

By Sabina Carbonara



From Largo Santa Susanna we turn down Via XX Settembre and at the intersection with Via Quattro Fontane we continue down Via del Quirinale, which, on the right, runs alongside the so-called “Manica lunga” or “Long sleeve”, part of the residential complex of the Quirinale, originally built as a barracks for the Pope’s Swiss Guard. The complex was built in several stages under Alexander VII, Innocent XIII, and, finally, Clement XII, who brought it to completion in 1773 with a small palace in two orders and ashlar-work corners, the work of the architect Ferdinando Fuga.

Just ahead, on the left, is the church of Sant’Andrea al Quirinale, built by Gian Lorenzo Bernini for Cardinal Camillo Pamphilj, nephew of Innocent X.

As we come out of Sant’Andrea we continue down Via del Quirinale to the Piazza del Quirinale, one of the loveliest in Rome, surrounded on three sides by buildings and open, on the right, with a balcony looking out on the panorama of the city and, in the background, the dome of St. Peter’s.

Quirinale is the ancient name of the hill, which, from the beginning of the Middle Ages, came to be known under the popular and more usual name of Montecavallo, *mons caballi*. This name is due to the presence of the statues of the *Dioscuri* near their horses, now in the center of Piazza del Quirinale.

The name Quirinale owes its origins more appropriately to the temple built in honor of Quirinus which, built and consecrated in 293 BC, was inspired by the founding of Rome. At the center of the piazza, with an obelisk and a large ancient tub of grey granite are the two statues, on high pedestals, of the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, standing next to their horses. The statues are Roman copies, made in the age of empire, of original Greek statues from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, come from the nearby Baths of Costantine, where now is palazzo Pallavicini-Rospigliosi.

In front of the statues rises the **Palazzo del Quirinale**, begun by Gregory XIII on the site of the villa of Cardinal Oliviero Carafa, as the summer residence of the popes.

On the right side of the piazza, in front of the palazzo, is the low 18<sup>th</sup> century structure of the papal stables, restored in the occasion of the Jubilee of 2000 and transformed in an exhibition place.

On the left is the recently restored front of the Palazzo della Consulta, built by the architect Ferdinando Fuga between 1732-34, at the behest of Pope Clement XII Corsini as the Tribunal of the Sacra Consulta which decided on cases of civil and criminal justice.

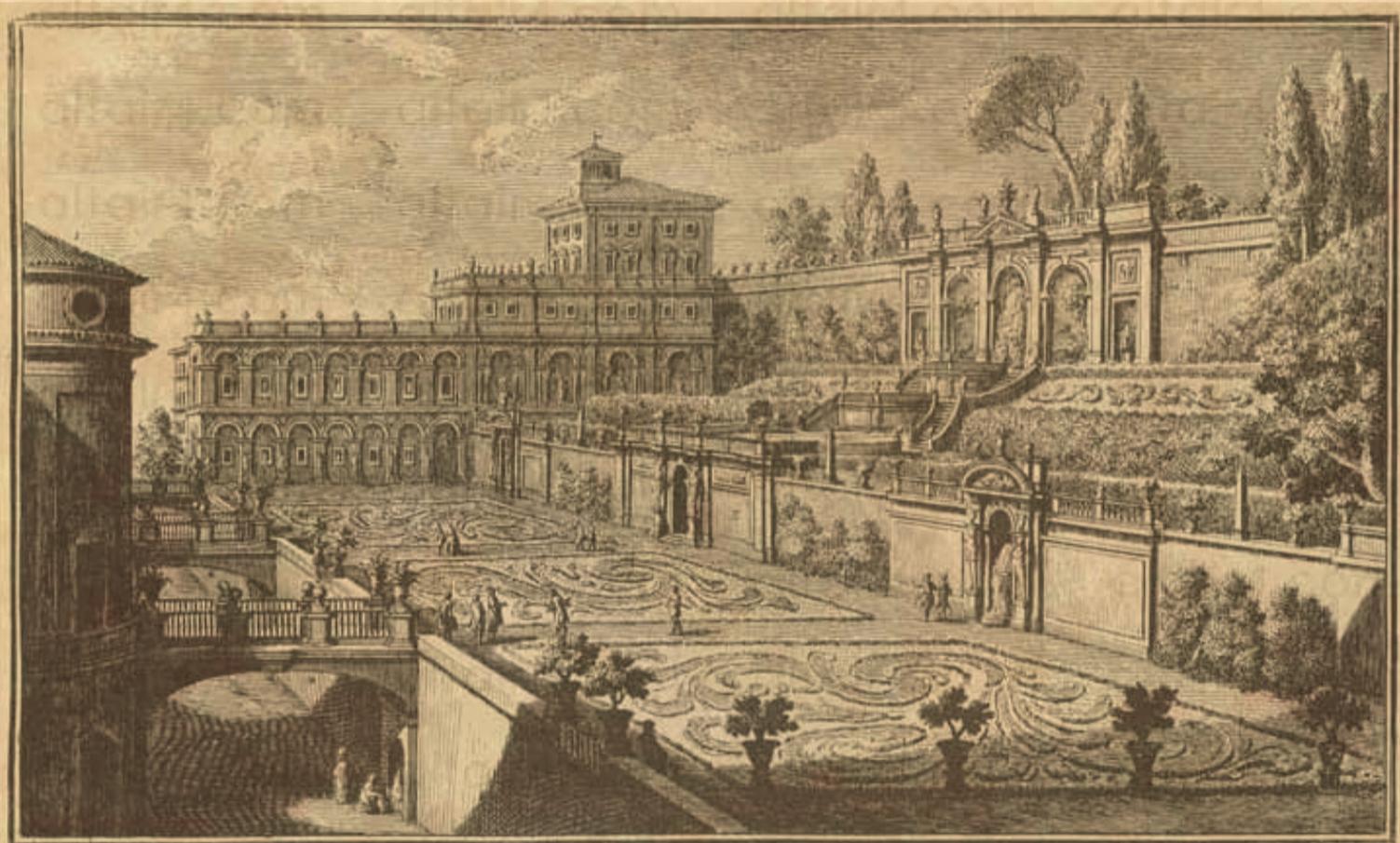
After 1870 it hosted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and then the Ministry of the Colonies; sine 1955 the Constitutional Court of the Italian Republic.





*Piazza Pontificia nel Quirinale*  
1. Alloggiamento della Famiglia Pontificia, 2. Torre della Guardia dei Svizzeri, 3. Palazzo della Sacra Consulta, 4. Sentinelle Corps di Guardia, 5. Strada Pia



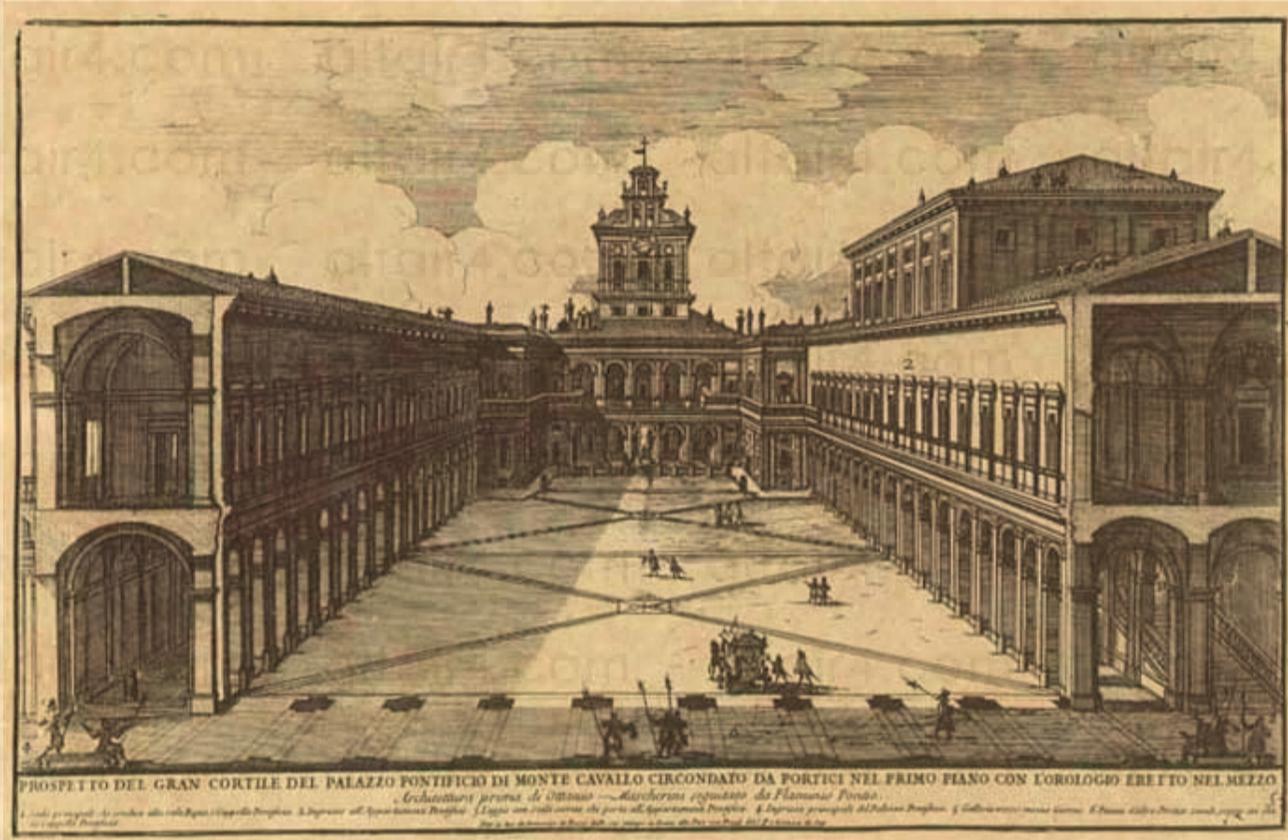


G. V. de' Medici  
*Giardino Colonna nel clivo del Quirinale*  
*«Esterno della Galleria ovale, s. Ponti sulla strada della pilotta, che sono con il Giardino col Palazzo, Fontane, e case nuove, p. Carino nuovo eretto sulle mura antiche»* 1797



# Palazzo del Quirinale

By Sabina Carbonara



The Palazzo, built on the site of Cardinal Oliviero Carafa's villa, later rented by Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, was the seat of the papacy almost continuously from the time of Pope Gregory XIII (1572-85), whose original plan of the building was begun by Martino Longhi il Vecchio (1573-1577) and carried out by the architect Ottaviano Mascherino (1578-85), until the unification of Italy in 1870.

Important interventions were carried out by Pope Paul V (1605-21), who commissioned the frescoes by Guido Reni in the Cappella dell'Annunziata, the construction and decoration of the Salone dei Corazzieri and the Cappella Paolina, and, in general, the entire southern wing of the Palazzo.

Pope Alexander VII (1655-67) commissioned the important frescoed frieze, executed under the direction of Pietro da Cortona, on the walls of a long gallery in the wing of the palazzo facing Piazza Quirinale, today divided into three halls.

Between 1809 and 1814 the Quirinale was occupied by the French, a short period but important for the neoclassical re-furnishing of many rooms, particularly those of the north wing, Napoleon's residence.

The return of the popes to the Quirinale, above all Pius VII (1800-23) and Pius X (1846-78), marks another phase in the redecoration of the palazzo, characterized by



iconographic austerity and formal rigor. There was no pontiff, however, that didn't in some way contribute to the enrichment and embellishment of the building and to the interior elegance and furnishings.

After 1870 the Savoy monarchs tried to give a more sumptuous royal aspect to the Quirinale, commissioning rococo decorations and frescoes of simple allegorical subjects in the western wing of the palazzo.

Finally, it is important to note that rarely are furniture, paintings, or tapestries tied to the history of the construction of the rooms. This is due to the fact that many were brought to the Quirinale after 1870 from the various residencies of the Savoy family. Since 1947 the palazzo has been the official seat of the Italian Republic's Presidency. The façade on the piazza has two orders of windows, and on the right above the portal one can see the Benediction loggia by Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

The clock tower rises to the left, the work of Martino Longhi; on the right, above the tiered cornice is a raised story and mezzanine. Inside the perimeter marked by the palazzo – invisible from the outside – are the lush green gardens of the Quirinale.

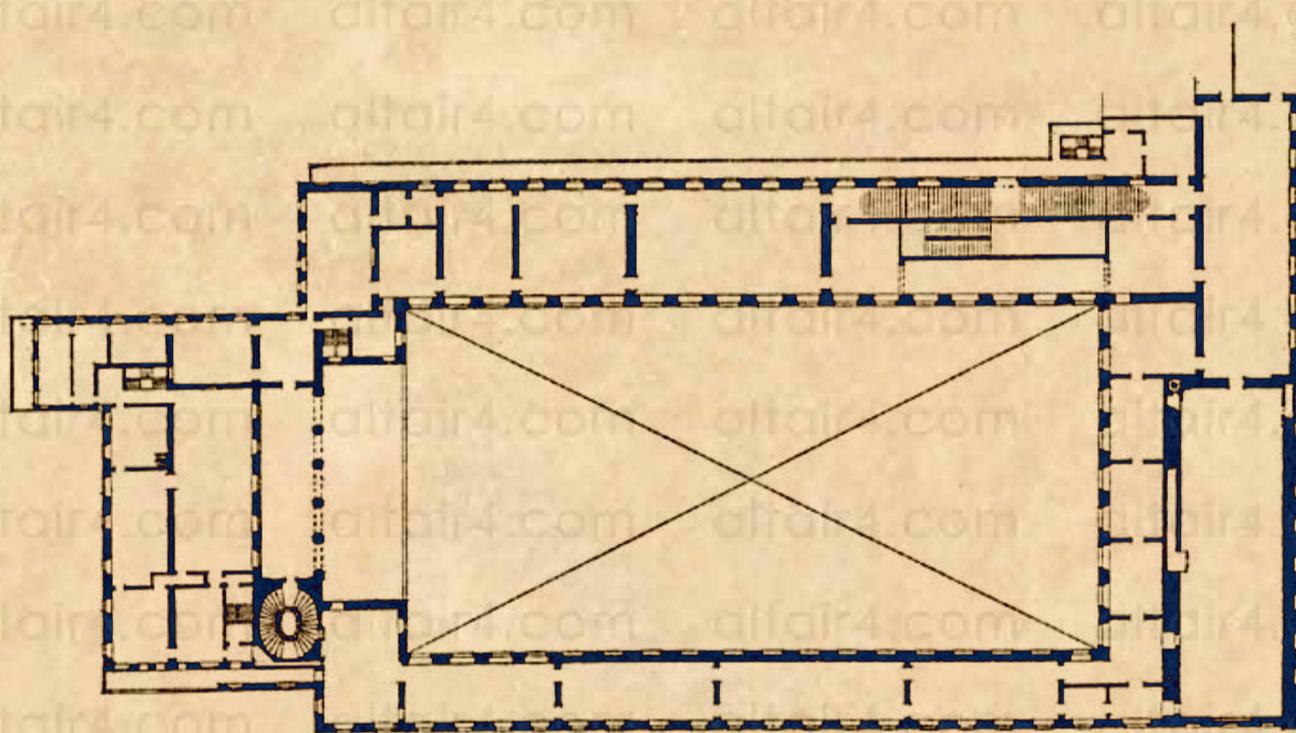
The almost four hectares of park, brings together the Italian taste for geometrically designed flower beds and shady lanes, boarded by hedges of laurel and box-wood, and a wide variety of large trees.

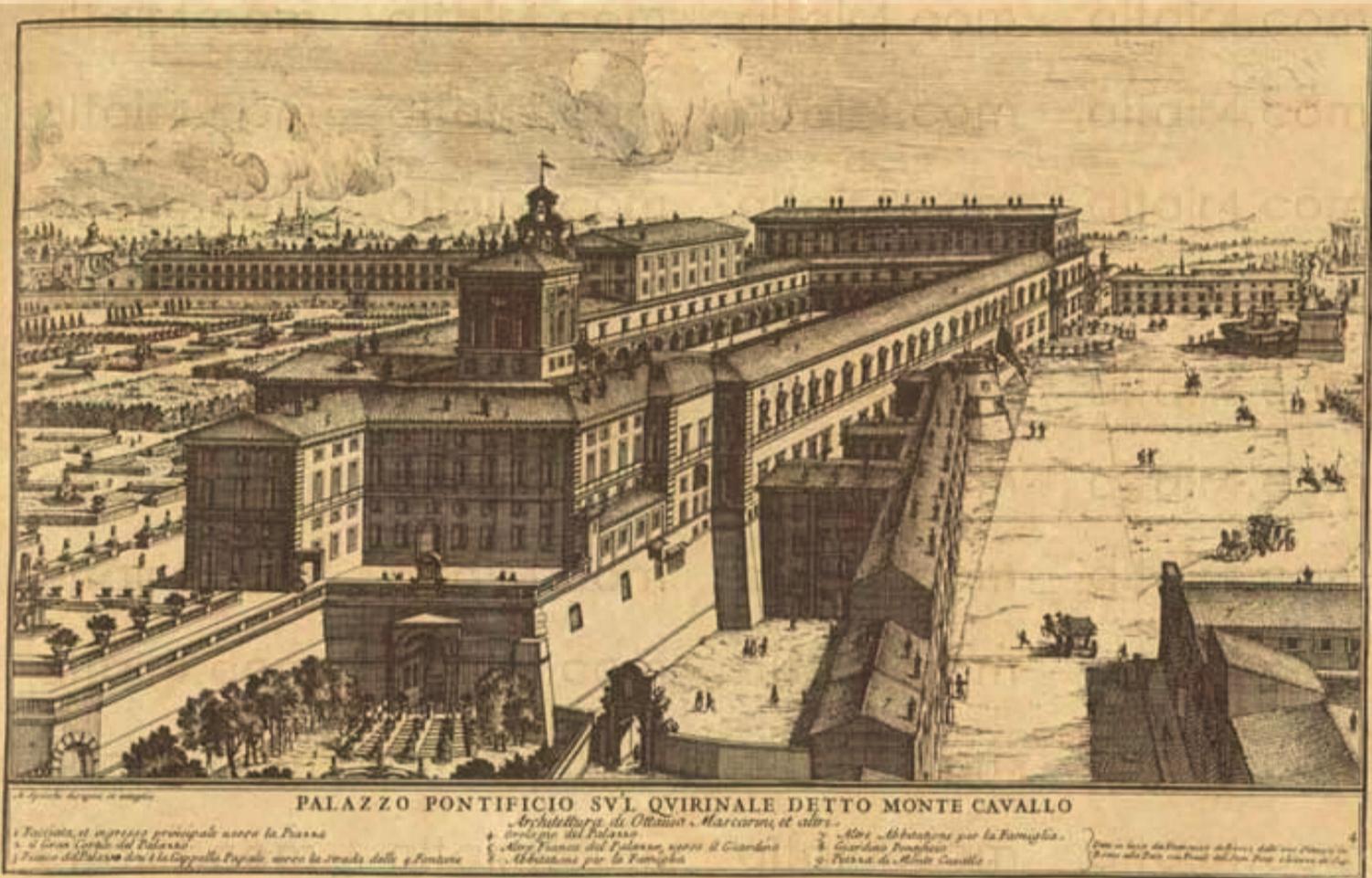
Although in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the gardens maintained the picturesque and varied character of the 16th century, the 19th century brought English style gardens and the ordered gardens gave way to an irregular arrangement of large trees.

Almost all of the ancient fountains disappeared, replaced by new ones.

The elegant *Coffee-House*, however, is still present today, with its loggia and two lateral rooms, commissioned by Benedict XIV (1740-58) and realized by Ferdinando Fuga, as a meeting place, taking its name from the drink principally consumed by its guests. In most cases *coffee-houses* were small shops composed of one or more ground floor rooms opening directly onto the street; there were also examples, however, as is the case of the Quirinale, with larger halls decorated with mirrors, stucco figures, and paintings.









CHIESA DEDICATA A SAN ANDREA APOSTOLO DEL NOVITIATO DE PADRI GIESVITI SVI MONTE QVIRINALE

alle quattro Fontane, Architettura del Cav. Bernini

Con due Altari & Organo in Roma alla Pace con Pront. 3 P.

1. Chiesa del S. Sacramento delle Monache Capuccine

2. Chiesa di S. Maria Maddalena delle Monache di S. Domenico

3. Piazza di Santa Cecilia



# *Largo Santa Susanna*

By Sabina Carbonara



Walking uphill to the end of Via Bissolati, we come to the center of Largo Santa Susanna, Piazza San Bernardo, which, beginning in 1870, has been totally transformed, leaving only three churches which face each other and the Fontana del Mosè (also called dell'Acqua Felice), built by the architect Domenico e Giovanni Fontana (1587-88) as the terminal display of the Felice aqueduct, restored by Pope Sixtus V (Felice Peretti).

Under the commemorative inscription there are three niches, divided by columns: in the lateral panels there is a high relief depicting Joshua who is leading the Hebrews across the River Jordan, and another one depicting Aron who is leading the Hebrews to quench their thirst; in the center there is a colossal Moses, the work of the sculptors Prospero Antichi, called the Bresciano, and Leonardo Sormani.

Today the square is bisected by the Via XX Settembre, the ancient Strada Pia (after Pope Pius IV), who reopened the route of the Roman *Alta Semita* and was, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, one of the most elegant roads in the city. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was chosen to house the ministers, since it was linked to both the Quirinale (Royal Palace) and the railway station, thus becoming the administrative axis of the new capital.

On the left, at the beginning of the second part of Via XX Settembre, we find the Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria, famous above all for its beautiful statue depicting the Ecstasy (or Transverberation) of Saint Teresa of Avila, and sculpted by Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

Leaving the church, at the end of the square, on the left, we find the Church of San Bernardo, built at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in one of the four round angulars of the Diocletian Baths.

Opposite we see the church of Santa Susanna, built in ancient times on the spot of her martyrdom.

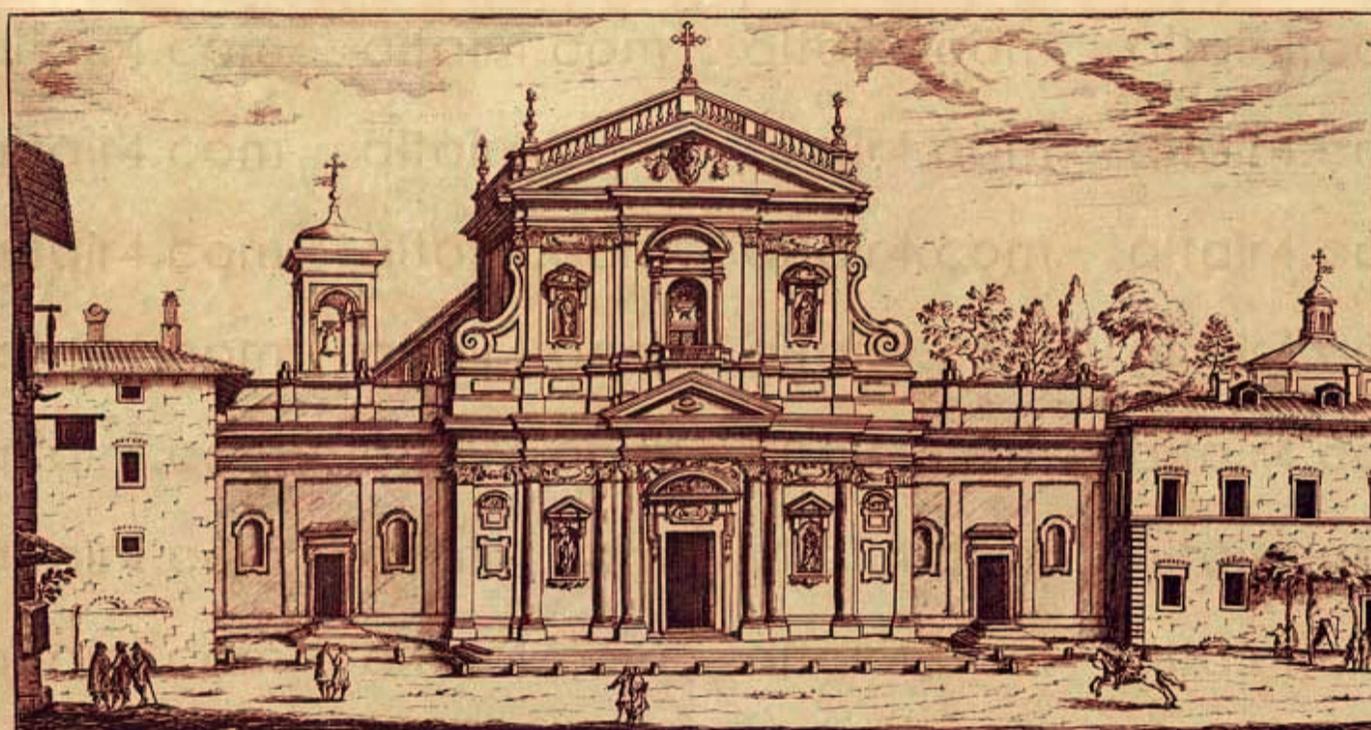




*Monastero e Chiesa di S. Susanna delle Monache Cisterciensi  
Chiesa e Monastero detto, a Chiesa di S. Maria della Vittoria e Cono dei PP. Carmelitani Scalzi, 5. Strada P. 9. Fontana dell'acqua felice a piazz. di Donna*







CHIESA DI SANTA SUSANNA DELLE MONACHE DI BERNARDO SVI VIMINALE ALLE TERMINE LA FACCIATA  
Architettura di Carlo Maderno.

Gio. Batt. Falda del. et fecit.

Per Gio. Leone Reggi in Roma alla Pace di Prati del S. Paolo. 11





# *Piazza dei Cinquecento*

By Maria Grazia Nini



This square was named after the five hundred Italian soldiers who fell in the battle of Dogali, in Ethiopia, in 1887. Previously it had been called Piazza di Termini, a name which derived from a corrupt version of Thermal Baths, referring to the Baths of Diocletian, the ruins of which are to be found near the square.

Today the area occupied by the square, which is dominated by the façade of the main railway station of Termini, is part of the Viminale, one of the hills on which the city developed during its most ancient period.

The hill was part of the circuit of the Servian Walls, attributed to king Servio Tullio (first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC). Various parts of these walls have survived, in particular near the Termini Station, and also on the **Aventine Hill** and in other parts of the historical center.

Scholars have established that most of these walls date back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and therefore to their reconstruction after the invasion of the city by Gauls in 390 BC.

The walls are built in square blocks of tufa: in the most ancient parts they are made of gossan, a kind of soft tufa, easily found in Rome, while for the republican wall Grotta Oscura tufa was used, which came from stoneworks near the Etruscan city of Veio, which had recently been conquered by the Romans (396 BC).

The walls were about 10 meters high, and about 4 meters thick, and ran on for almost 11 kilometers. They included 16 gates: of these, two have survived in their original state following restoration during the Augustan period: the *Porta Caelimontana*, which is near the Church of Santa Maria in Domnica on the **Celian Hill** and is known as the Arco di Dolabella e Silano; and the *Porta Esquilina*, near the basilica of **Santa Maria Maggiore**, called the Arco di Gallieno.

Near the left side of the façade of the Termini Station there are the remains of another gate, the *Porta Viminalis*, and a stretch of wall almost 100 meters long. It is known that on this side, which was not very high and thus difficult to defend, the walls were reinforced with earthworks (*ager*) and by a ditch.

The earthworks, which stretched out for over 1200 meters between the Viminale and the Esquiline, survived until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and were called *Altissimus Romae locus* (“the highest place in Rome”), while in the subsequent century they were called the Monte della Giustizia, due to the presence of a Roman statue of the goddess Minerva on its peak.

At that time this area was almost completely uninhabited, and the land was used to cultivate vegetables and grapes; however the Baths of Diocletian had survived and were still in a good state of repair.



In 1561 the Brotherhood of Carthusian monks established a monastery there, following an authorization by Pius IV, and at the same time, part of it was consecrated, and transformed by Michelangelo into the **Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli**.

Between 1576 and 1588 Cardinal Felice Peretti, who later became Pope Sixtus V, bought all the land in the area and had a sumptuous villa built there by the architect Domenico Fontana, which he called Montalto, after his native town.

This villa, which was the biggest of the urban villas, then became the property of the Negroni family, and then of the Massimo princes. Gradually it was demolished, from 1860 onwards, to make way for the building of the first Central Railway Station, and for the new urbanization following the proclamation of Rome as the capital in 1870. These transformations, and more recent ones after the war, such as the building of the new Termini Station and the B line of the subway, led to the discovery, on various occasions, of extremely interesting relics and artifacts from the period of the Roman Empire, which were exhibited, for the first time in a single exhibition, in 1997, in some of the rooms of the Baths of Diocletian.

In 1777, inside the Villa Montaldo Negroni, the discovery was made of a house with frescoes of mythological scenes, which have only survived through reproductions made at the time of their discovery.

In 1872 the remains of another house were found, with precious decorative objects in bronze, some of which were, at that time, arbitrarily pieced together to form a litter, which is today kept in the Capitoline Museum.

In 1947, under the road of the square, an entire living area from the 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD was discovered, composed of a courtly residence (*domus*) with a private thermal bath attached to it (*balnea*), and some more humble lodgings (*insulae*). Many of the rooms were decorated with splendid paintings and floor mosaics, which were saved before the destruction of the site.

On the right of the façade of the Termini Station we find the Palazzo Massimo. It was built in 1883 by the Jesuit priest Massimiliano Massimo, in order to house a college, and today it houses the Section of Ancient Art and Numismatics and Jeweler's Art of the National Roman Museum.





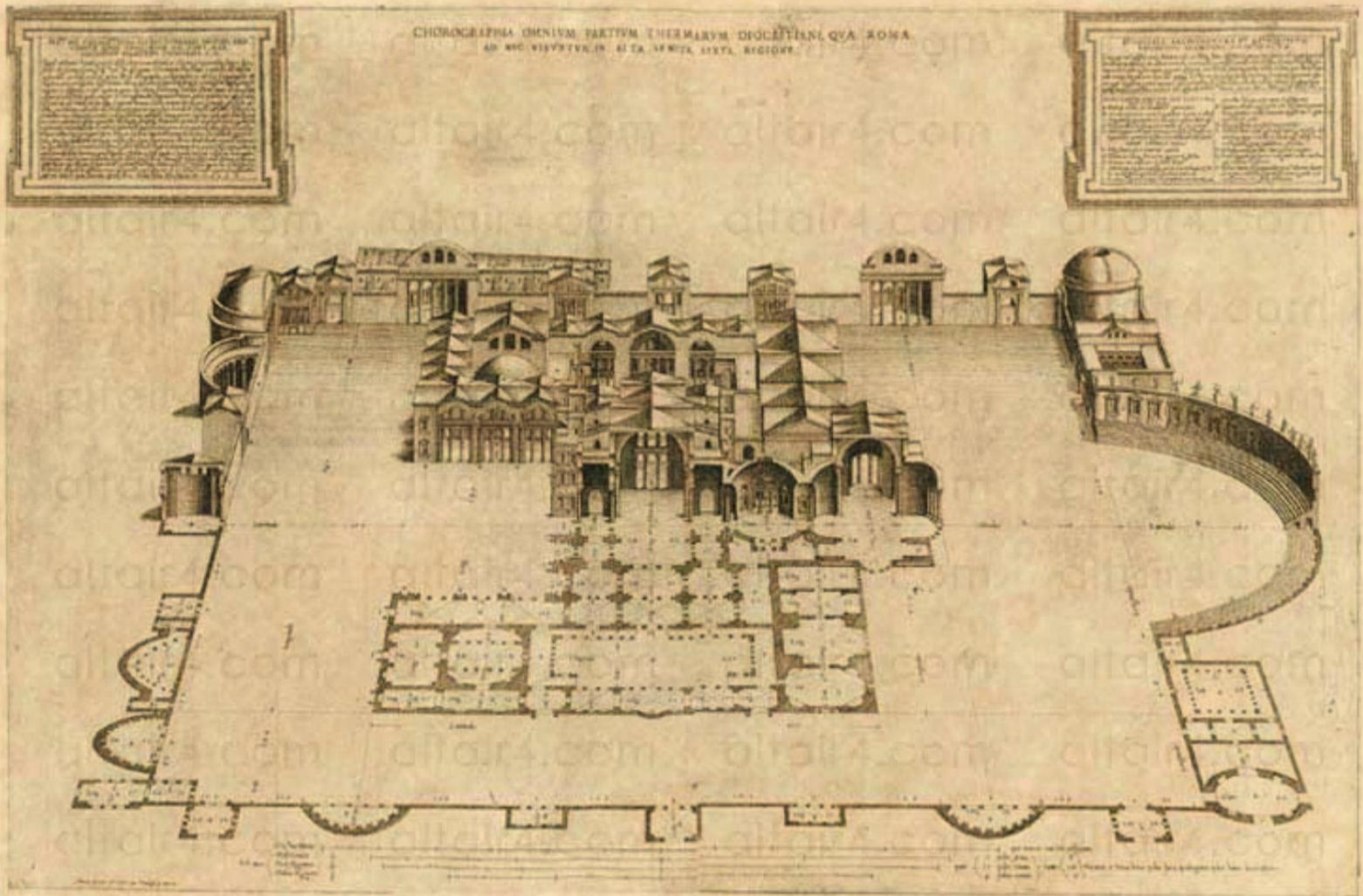
*Il tempio pubblico, e Ossuario di S. Pietro  
e Capo, fabbricato da Sisto II. nel Circo di S. Pietro  
dalla sua orda, anni de' Sig. 1680.*

*Veduta degli avanzi superiori delle Terme di Diocleziana  
Chiesa di S. Maria degli Angeli*

*La massima parte di questi rudimenti è  
incisa da un grande oggetto, da  
Pietro Cortusi, e Laurito all'Opera*









# *Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli*

By Gemma Fusciello



The church was built in 1561 at the time of Pius IV, and is the product of the unrelenting work of the Sicilian priest Antonio del Duca who, having discovered in a small church in Palermo an ancient painting representing the seven princes of the angels (Gabriel, Raphael, Michael, Uriel, Saultiele, Geudiele and Barachiele) made it his mission to reestablish the cult of the angels in Rome.

In 1545 he had the mosaic with the seven angels crowning the Madonna and Child in St Mark in Venice, reproduced into a painting. The painting is now placed above the high altar of the church that carries its name. Following a vision in 1541, Del Duca had established that the church should rise from the ruins of the Baths of Diocletian, but he only accomplished his inspiration twenty years later when the Pope, after having entrusted the ruins of baths to the Carthusians, conferred the project to Michelangelo.

The design for the church made use of the preexisting structure of the Baths of Diocletian, the largest in Rome and built in AD 300. The principal one is the rectangular basilica room, now the church transept, divided into three bays with



cross vaults on pilasters and very high columns of gray granite. Secondary rooms surrounded it, with barrel and cross vaults; only some of these were used again. One then passed in to a circular room, perhaps the *tepidarium*, which is now a vestibule, and from here to the rectangular *calidarium* with an exedra for each wing; only the exedra used as today's façade remains.

The construction of the church and the convent brought more destruction to what remained of the baths.

The church does not have a true façade but uses the curtain wall of what was the exedra of the *calidarium*, with three simple arches. However, the majestic profile of the bath buildings with the wide barrel-vaults in the background makes it unique. Commonly considered a Greek cross, the church has a design which is difficult to define, made up of different spaces merging together through the unitary decorations designed by Vanvitelli in 1749.

The entrance leads into the circular room transformed into a vestibule with 18<sup>th</sup> century tombs. Transversal planks open onto the Chapel of the Crucifixion to the right, with a painting by Daniele da Volterra, to the left is the Baptistry, both are from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. From here there is a small passage covered by a barrel-vault, the chapels along its sides are dedicated to St. Peter and St. Brunone, founder of the Carthusians, and in a recess is the enormous statue of St. Brunone, done by Houdon in 1766.

The lacunars in the dome of the vestibule, the columns in stucco that adorn the passage, as well as the decorations of the barrel-vault are by Vanvitelli. The passage opens into an enormous transversal nave which functions as the transept, it is some 100 meters long and 27 wide, from here it is possible to admire the cross vaults and columns of the baths. It ends with two Chapels: the one on the left, dedicated to St. Brunone, dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the one on the opposite side is dedicated to the blessed Niccolò Albergati, and is from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The walls are adorned with eight large altar pieces brought here in 1746 from St. Peter's, where they were replaced by mosaic copies.

The floor is marked by the so-called Clementine line, a complex double meridian with the signs of the zodiac, made in 1702 at the behest of Clement XI. Another short passage connects the nave to the apse, covered by a barrel-vault adorned with four stucco columns; here are chapels dedicated to St. Giacinto and to the Savior. Its present aspect is the work of Vanvitelli, as is the apse with the characteristic semi-octagonal apsidal termination, with four more paintings from St. Peter's.

The church of today conserves Michelangelo's general design, with two significant



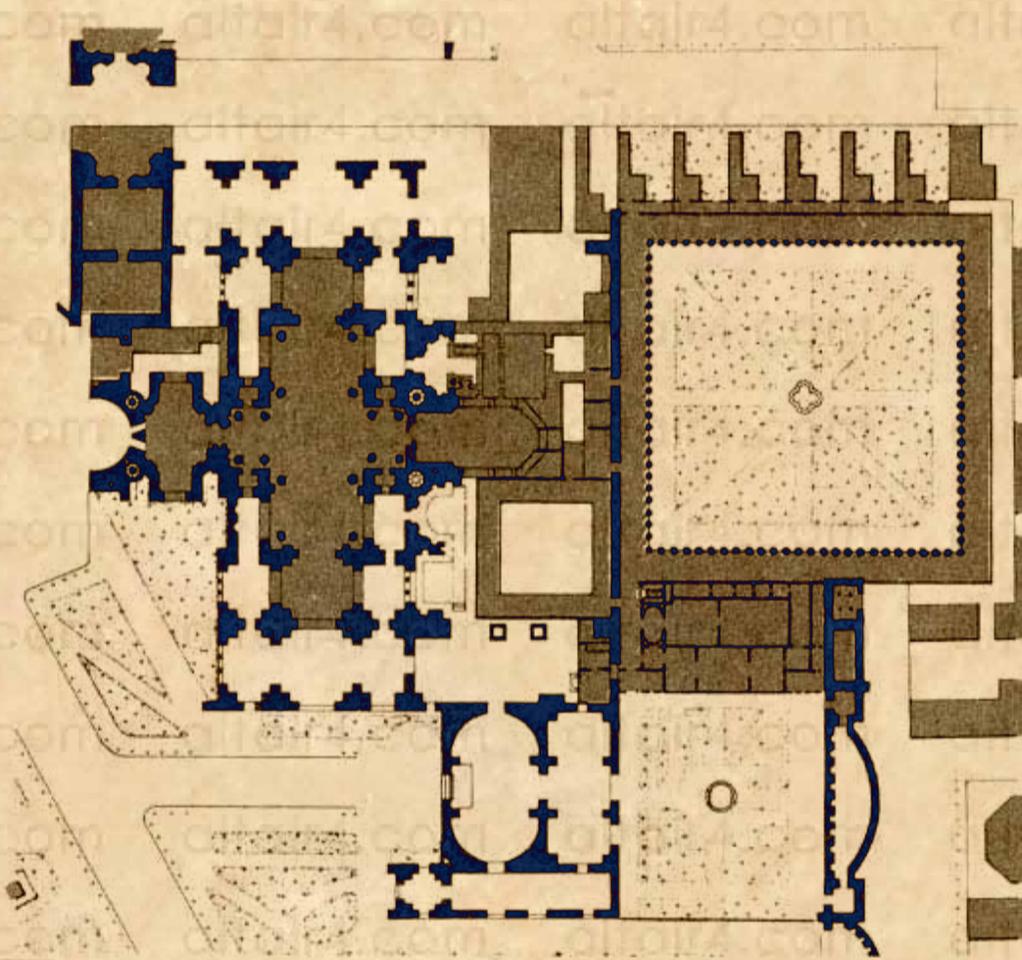
differences in the transept. There were originally two doors in place of the chapels; the one towards Termini was replaced by the tomb of blessed Niccolò, so monumental as to be defined by Vasari as “outside the opinion of all architects”.

Chapels open along the other two walls, in the side rooms of the baths.

In the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the door in the left wing of the transept was closed, in its place we find the Chapel of St. Brunone, done by Maratta. In 1746, in order to provide for a wall to hang the paintings from St. Peter's, the Carthusians decided to close the entrance arches to the side chapels in the transept, making it symmetrical and eliminating the door towards Termini. Clemente Orlandi carried out these transformations, which were finished by Vanvitelli for the Jubilee of 1750, the occasion of his complete redecoration of the church.

After the unification of Italy in 1870, the Carthusians left the convent, which was confiscated by the State and used for a Roman Museum. It remained untouched until 1911-12 when Muñoz restored the church to its original state, eliminating part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century decoration. On this occasion the façade took on its present aspect, with the destruction of the pre-existing Baroque portal and reconstruction of the three-arched *calidarium* exedrae.





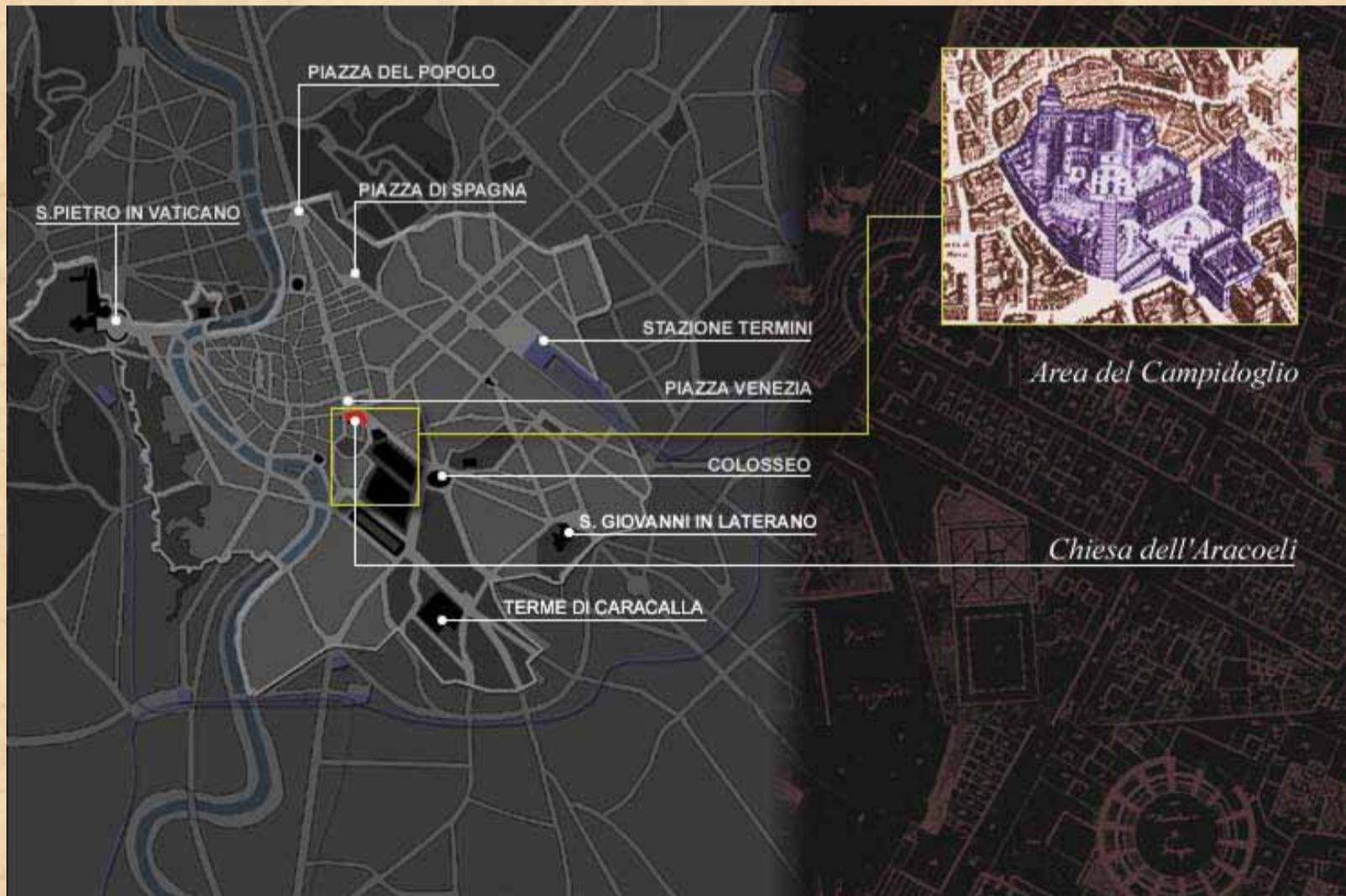


Pl. Termoli. *Piazza di Termoli. Veduta delle Terme Diocleziane, Chiesa di S. Maria dell'Angelo, e Com. di Monaci Certosini, e Sito della Circa di Trajano nell'antico. e Granari della R. Camera.* 35



# *The Capitol*

By Gemma Fusciello



The Capitol, or Capitoline Hill, is the most important of the famous Seven Hills, and because of its dominant position above the **Roman Forum** it has been called the acropolis of Rome.

All of its ancient buildings face toward the Forum, and while today there is an access road down to the Forum, in ancient times there was only a cliff, Tarpea, from which traitors were thrown to their deaths during the first Republican era, and of which there still remain some traces on the south flank of the hill.

The hill, about 50 meters high, has two elevations divided by a saddle. The southern hilltop, the true *Capitolium*, was the site of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus Capitolinus, the most important in Rome.

According to tradition it was erected in 509 BC by the Tarquinians, and was rebuilt many times. It was placed on a base and had three cells, preceded by a pronaos, dedicated to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. The foundation slab and a few ruins are visible today under Palazzo Caffarelli.

On the north peak, the summit, the site of the present day church of the Aracoeli, there was a Temple of Juno Moneta, founded on 309 BC and the temple of the *Virtus* of which nothing remains.

The saddle between the two hilltops, the site of today's piazza, was occupied by the *asylum*, where exiles were given shelter. In a subsequent epoch a road was built there with houses and stores alongside it, and in 78 BC, on the side facing the Forum, the *Tabularium*, or the public archive of ancient Rome, was built. It was a Doric portico with 11 arcades above a long underground gallery that connected the Capitoline palaces.

The Capitol was not spared from the city's decline during the Middle Ages. Goats grazed among the ruins of the Temple of Jupiter, giving rise to the new name of Mount Caprino (Goat Hill) attributed to the Capitoline Hill.

The convent of Aracoeli rose up on the ruins of the Temple of Juno and the *Tabularium* gave way to a fortress complex, built at the behest of the baronial family of the Corsi. Contrary to the ancient structures, these new buildings all turned their principal side toward the city.

In the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the palace of the Corsi, the present-day Palazzo Senatorio, became the seat of the renewed Roman senate. It was enlarged and restored and the terrain in front of it was leveled off, giving rise to the *platea Capitolina*, the present-day piazza, which was the site of a market.

Toward the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century the first nucleus of the **Palazzo dei**



**Conservatori** was built on the right side of the piazza. Its name at the time was Palazzo dei Banderesi and it was rebuilt in the 1400s, while the only structure on the left side remained the outside wall of the Aracoeli convent.

The Late Middle Age aspect of the Palazzo Senatorio is known today, its structure well preserved behind the 16<sup>th</sup> century façade. It was a crenellated palace with a bell tower in the center containing the famous Patarine bell which called the people to assembly.

The main façade, the one facing the piazza, rose up as it does today on a raised foundation that was reached by a *cordonata* or ramp, and the terrace at the top of the ramp functioned as a podium from which to harangue the assembled crowd. It was also the site where executions were carried out.

The façade was comprised of three stories opened by arcades, the first in correspondence with a vast portico, the second with main hall where justice was administered, and the third to the hearing room.

It was only later that the arcades were walled up for reasons of safety, and the palazzo took on a more severe aspect. And at the end of the 1300s two towers were built on the right side of the building.

The two towers on the left side date to the 1400s as does the reconstruction of Palazzo dei Conservatori at the behest of Nicholas V. But even after the restorations were completed the entire area remained in precarious conditions and in need of a complete overhaul.

In 1536, on the occasion of the visit of Emperor Charles V, Pope Paul III commissioned Michelangelo to redesign the piazza, designating the center as the new location for the statue of Marcus Aurelius, until then located in the Piazza of St. John Lateran. Michelangelo redesigned the piazza in its marvelous present arrangement, reinserting the two preexisting palaces into their new context by redecorating them with new façades.

The piazza is a grand balcony overlooking the city. The main access to it is by way of a *cordonata* (ramp) whose railing is presided over at the bottom by two basalt lions from the Temple of Isis in the Campo di Marte and at the top by the *Dioscuri* (Castor and Pollux) discovered in the Ghetto.

The balustrade around the piazza is also adorned with statues: the *trofei di Mario* which had been in the nymphaeum of the Acqua Giulia in Piazza Vittorio, the statues of Constantine and of his son Constantius taken from the baths of Constantine, and finally two milestone columns.

The piazza has the form of a trapezoid which widens out toward its base to allow



Michelangelo's newly designed museum palace to be in a symmetrical position with respect to Palazzo dei Conservatori. Michelangelo surely wished to preserve the preexisting elements but he also knew how to bend them to his intention of creating a new space with a single axis of longitudinal symmetry. Along this axis, at the center of the piazza, is the famous equestrian statue of the emperor *Marcus Aurelius*, though today's statue is only a copy of the original in gilded bronze conserved in the new palazzo.

According to Michelangelo's original design it was to be placed in an elliptical space a bit lower than the rest of the piazza, the inside of which was to have been decorated a complex twelve-point star design centered around the statue's elegant pedestal. The star figure was brought out again in 1940 by Antonio Muñoz.

At the end of the piazza is the façade of the Palazzo Senatorio, with its two jutting lateral wings enclosing the two preexisting towers. It rises from a tall travertine base which supports the majestic double-ramped staircase leading to the entrance, and which is the only part of the palazzo to be realized in complete accordance with Michelangelo's design. Under the ramps sit two colossal statues, representing the *Tiber* and the *Nile*, while the central niche has a *Minerva* transformed into *Dea Roma*, too small for the space, in place of the statue of *Jupiter* conceived by Michelangelo.

The upper part of the palazzo is different from Michelangelo's design, which called for, in respect of the preexisting internal distribution, the realization of a travertine façade of two equally important levels in which opened up balconies framed by a gigantic order of pilaster strips with the central axis highlighted by the presence of a protruding loggia.

Between 1573 and 1577, when Giacomo della Porta united the two upper floors of the palazzo to create the great hall of *Julius Caesar*, where the Rome City Council now holds its meetings, he built a different façade, with just one main level, opened by windows instead of balconies, and a mezzanine above it. The central axis was also changed with the replacement of the loggia by a portal surmounted by a plaque, although the axis is still emphasized by a belfry realized by Martino Longhi in 1583, replacing the earlier one from the Middle Ages.

On the sides of the piazza are the Palazzo dei Conservatori and Palazzo Nuovo. Although built in different periods, their façades were redone following Michelangelo's design and are practically identical. They present a trabeated portico on the ground floor and an upper floor adorned with balconies, a scheme which is repeated for two spans of the lateral façades.



The two levels are united by a gigantic order of Corinthian pilaster supporting the overhanging cornice, and the terminal balustrade adorned with statues. The portico presents, flanked by the Corinthian pilaster, two Ionic columns, which are repeated channeled into the interior wall to support a series of pavilion vaults.

Completely extraneous to Michelangelo's plan, which did not allow for interruptions of the rhythm of the upper balconies, is the central loggia adorned by two Ionic columns supporting a tympanum with a very original form. This clearly mannerist twist was adopted by Giacomo della Porta in 1586 when he completed the façade of the Palazzo dei Conservatori, begun by Guidetti in 1563, and it was used again on Palazzo Nuovo, built between 1603 and 1655 by Gerolamo Rainaldi and his son Carlo.

The two palaces are alike only externally in that the façade of Palazzo dei Conservatori hides behind it a palazzo built in the 1400s, while Palazzo Nuovo was built entirely in the 1600s up against the remaining wall of the Aracoeli convent, where a niche conserves the fountain of Marforio.

The two palaces house the Capitoline Museum, with important classical sculptures. It is the oldest public museum in the world, because in 1734, for the first time, by order of Clement XII, the public was allowed to visit the Albani collection, installed in Palazzo Nuovo by the architect Bargioni. All three palaces are currently undergoing restoration.

On the sides of the two twin palaces, stairways climb up to the twin peaks of the hill culminating in two porticoes of three arches, built around 1550. The one near the summit, named after Paul III, was the access to the now destroyed Aracoeli convent; the other one is attributed to Vignola. Next to it is the Palazzetto Altemps, whose façade, built by Onorio Longhi in 1600 on the Via Flaminia, was transported here in 1925.







PALAZZO DELL'ILL.<sup>mo</sup> ET ECC.<sup>mo</sup> SG. SENATORE DI ROMA NEL MEZZO LA PIAZZA DI CAMPIDOGGIO COMINCIATO DA M. ANGELO BRONAROTA ET È SVA ARCHITETTURA LA SCALA CON LA FONTE ET ORNAMENTI DI STATVE IL PRIMO ORDINE DELLE FENESTRE CON LA PORTA DI MEZZO È DI GIACOMO DELLA PORTA IL SECO<sup>do</sup> ORDINE DI GIROLAMO RAINALDI.

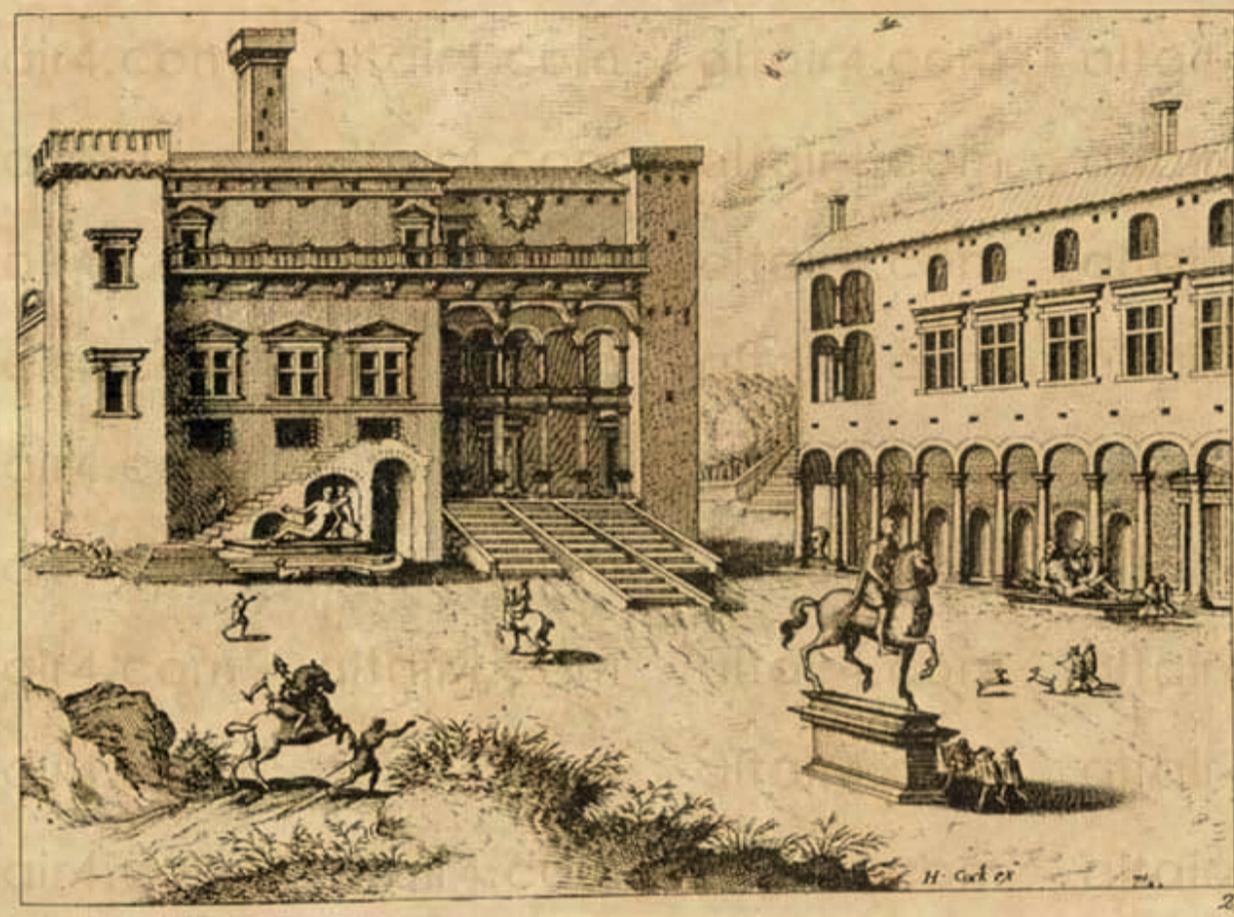
Dis. Bart. Felici del. et inc. G.

Dis. Francesco Bagnoli sculp. in Roma alla p. del. et. del. G. P.

Scal. di palmi 12. 1/2. 1/4. 1/8. 1/16. 1/32. 1/64. 1/128. 1/256. 1/512. 1/1024. 1/2048. 1/4096. 1/8192. 1/16384. 1/32768. 1/65536. 1/131072. 1/262144. 1/524288. 1/1048576. 1/2097152. 1/4194304. 1/8388608. 1/16777216. 1/33554432. 1/67108864. 1/134217728. 1/268435456. 1/536870912. 1/1073741824. 1/2147483648. 1/4294967296. 1/8589934592. 1/17179869184. 1/34359738368. 1/68719476736. 1/137438953472. 1/274877906944. 1/549755813888. 1/1099511627776. 1/2199023255552. 1/4398046511104. 1/8796093022208. 1/17592186044416. 1/35184372088832. 1/70368744177664. 1/140737488355328. 1/281474976710656. 1/562949953421312. 1/1125899906842624. 1/2251799813685248. 1/4503599627370496. 1/9007199254740992. 1/18014398509481984. 1/36028797018963968. 1/72057594037927936. 1/144115188075855872. 1/288230376151711744. 1/576460752303423488. 1/1152921504606846976. 1/2305843009213693952. 1/4611686018427387904. 1/9223372036854775808. 1/18446744073709551616. 1/36893488147419103232. 1/73786976294838206464. 1/147573952589676412928. 1/295147905179352825856. 1/590295810358705651712. 1/1180591620717411303424. 1/2361183241434822606848. 1/4722366482869645213696. 1/9444732965739290427392. 1/18889465931478580854784. 1/37778931862957161709568. 1/75557863725914323419136. 1/151115727451828646838272. 1/302231454903657293676544. 1/604462909807314587353088. 1/1208925819614629174706176. 1/2417851639229258349412352. 1/4835703278458516698824704. 1/9671406556917033397649408. 1/19342813113834066795298816. 1/38685626227668133590597632. 1/77371252455336267181195264. 1/154742504910672534362390528. 1/309485009821345068724781056. 1/618970019642690137449562112. 1/1237940039285380274899124224. 1/2475880078570760549798248448. 1/4951760157141521099596496896. 1/9903520314283042199192993792. 1/1980704062856608439838598784. 1/3961408125713216879677197568. 1/7922816251426433759354395136. 1/15845632502852867518708790272. 1/31691265005705735037417580544. 1/63382530011411470074835161088. 1/126765060022822940149670322176. 1/253530120045645880299340644352. 1/507060240091291760598681288704. 1/1014120480182583521197362577408. 1/2028240960365167042394725154816. 1/4056481920730334084789450309632. 1/8112963841460668169578900619264. 1/16225927682921336339157801238528. 1/32451855365842672678315602477056. 1/64903710731685345356631204954112. 1/129807421463370690713262409908224. 1/259614842926741381426524819816448. 1/519229685853482762853049639632896. 1/1038459371706965525706099279265792. 1/2076918743413931051412198558531584. 1/4153837486827862102824397117063168. 1/8307674973655724205648794234126336. 1/16615349947311448411297588468252672. 1/33230699894622896822595176936505344. 1/66461399789245793645190353873010688. 1/132922799578491587290380707746021376. 1/265845599156983174580761415492042752. 1/531691198313966349161522830984085504. 1/1063382396627932698323045661968171008. 1/2126764793255865396646091323936342016. 1/4253529586511730793292182647872684032. 1/8507059173023461586584365295745368064. 1/17014118346046923173168730591490736128. 1/34028236692093846346337461182981472256. 1/68056473384187692692674922365962944512. 1/136112946768375385385349844731925889024. 1/272225893536750770770699689463851778448. 1/544451787073501541541399378927703556896. 1/1088903574147003083082798757855407113792. 1/2177807148294006166165597515710814275584. 1/4355614296588012332331195031421628551168. 1/8711228593176024664662390062843257102336. 1/17422457186352049329324781325665142044672. 1/34844914372704098658649562651330284089344. 1/69689828745408197317299125302660568178688. 1/139379657490816394634598250605321137377376. 1/278759314981632789269196501210642274754752. 1/557518629963265578538393002421284549509504. 1/1115037259926531157076786004842569099019008. 1/2230074519853062314153572009685138198038016. 1/4460149039706124628307144019370276396076032. 1/8920298079412249256614288038740552792152064. 1/17840596158824498513228576077481105584304128. 1/35681192317648997026457152154962211168608256. 1/7136238463529799405291430430992442233721536. 1/14272476927059598810582860861984884467443072. 1/28544953854119197621165721723969768934886144. 1/57089907708238395242331443447939537869772288. 1/114179815416476790484662886894679075739544576. 1/228359630832953580969325773789358151479089152. 1/456719261665907161938651547578716302958178304. 1/913438523331814323877303095157432605916356608. 1/1826877046663628647754606190314865211832713216. 1/3653754093327257295509212380629730423665426432. 1/7307508186654514591018424761259460847330852864. 1/14615016373309029182036849522518921694661705728. 1/29230032746618058364073699045037843389323411456. 1/58460065493236116728147398090075686778646822912. 1/116920130986472233456294796180151373557293645824. 1/233840261972944466912589592360302747114587291648. 1/467680523945888933825179184720605494229174583296. 1/935361047891777867650358369441210988458349166592. 1/1870722095783555735300716738882421976916698332176. 1/3741444191567111470601433477764843953833396664352. 1/7482888383134222941202866955529687907666793328704. 1/14965776766268445882405733911059375815333586577408. 1/29931553532536891764811467822118751630667173154816. 1/59863107065073783529622935644237503261334346309632. 1/119726214130147567059245871288475006522668692619264. 1/239452428260295134118491742576950013045337385238528. 1/478904856520590268236983485153900026090674770477056. 1/957809713041180536473966970307800052181349540954112. 1/1915619426082361072947933940615600104362699081908224. 1/3831238852164722145895867881231200208725398163816448. 1/7662477704329444291791735762462400417450796327632896. 1/15324955408658888583583471524924800834901592655265792. 1/30649910817317777167166943049849601669803185310531584. 1/61299821634635554334333886099699203339606370621063168. 1/12259964326927110866866777219939840667921274124212336. 1/24519928653854221733733554439879681335842548248424672. 1/49039857307708443467467108879759362671685096496849344. 1/98079714615416886934934217759518725343370192993698688. 1/196159429228833773869868435519037450686740385987397376. 1/392318858457667547739736871038074901373480771974794752. 1/784637716915335095479473742076149802746961543949589504. 1/1569275433830670190958947484152299605493923087899179008. 1/3138550867661340381917894968304599210987846175798358016. 1/6277101735322680763835789936609198421975692351596716032. 1/12554203460645361527671579873218396843951384703193432064. 1/25108406921290723055343159746436793687902769406386864128. 1/50216813842581446110686319492873587375805538812773728256. 1/100433627685162892221372638985747174751611077625547456. 1/200867255370325784442745277971494349503222155251094912. 1/401734510740651568885490555942988699006444310502189824. 1/803469021481303137770981111885977398012888621004379648. 1/1606938042962606275541962223771954796025777242008759376. 1/3213876085925212551083924447543909592051554484017518752. 1/6427752171850425102167848895087819184103108968035037504. 1/12855504343700850204335697790175638368206217376070075008. 1/25711008687401700408671395580351276736412434752140150016. 1/5142201737480340081734279116070255347282486950428030032. 1/10284403474960680163468558232140510714564973900856060064. 1/20568806949921360326937116464281021429129947801712120128. 1/41137613899842720653874232928562042858259895603424240256. 1/82275227799685441307748465857124085716519791206848480512. 1/164550455599370882615496931714248171433039582413696960224. 1/329100911198741765230993863428496342866079164827393920448. 1/658201822397483530461987726856992685732158329654787840896. 1/1316403644794967060923975453713985371464316659309575681792. 1/2632807289589934121847950907427970742928633318619151363584. 1/5265614579179868243695901814855941485857266637238302727168. 1/10531229158359736487391803629711882971714533274476605454336. 1/21062458316719472974783607259423765943429066548953210908672. 1/42124916633438945949567214518847531886858133097906421817344. 1/84249833266877891899134429037695063773716266195812843634688. 1/168499666533755783798268858075390127547432533911625687271376. 1/336999333067511567596537716150780255094865067823251374542752. 1/673998666135023135193075432301560510189730135646502749085504. 1/134799733227004627038615086460312102037946027129300549817008. 1/269599466454009254077230172920624204075892054258601099634016. 1/539198932908018508154460345841248408151784108517202199268032. 1/1078397865816037016308920691684968016303568217034404395360064. 1/2156795731632074032617841383369936032607136434068808790720128. 1/4313591463264148065235682766739872065214272868137617581440256. 1/8627182926528296130471365533479744130428545736275235162880512. 1/17254365853056592260942731066959488260857091472550470325761024. 1/34508731706113184521885462133918976521714182945100940611522048. 1/69017463412226369043770924267837953043428365890201881223044096. 1/138034926824452738087541848535675906086856731780403762446088192. 1/276069853648905476175083697071351812173713463660807524892176384. 1/552139707297810952350167394142703624347426927321615049784352768. 1/110427941459562190470033478828540724869485385464323009956700544. 1/220855882919124380940066957657081449738970770928646019913401088. 1/441711765838248761880133915314162899477941541857292039826802176. 1/883423531676497523760267830628325798955883083714584079653604352. 1/1766847063352995047520535661256651597911766167429168159307208704. 1/3533694126705990095041071322513303195823532334858336318614417408. 1/7067388253411980190082142645026606391647064669716672637228834816. 1/14134776506823960380164285290053212783294129339433345274457669632. 1/28269553013647920760328570580106425566588258678866690548915339264. 1/56539106027295841520657141160212851133176517357733381097830678528. 1/113078212054591683041314282320425702266353034715466762195661477056. 1/226156424109183366082628564640851404532706069430933524391322954112. 1/452312848218366732165257129281702809065412138861867048782645888224. 1/904625696436733464330514258563405618130824277723734097565291776448. 1/1809251392873466928661028517126811236261648555447468195130583552896. 1/3618502785746933857322057034253622472523297110894936390261167057792. 1/7237005571493867714644114068507244945046594221789872780522334115584. 1/14474011142987735429288228137014489890093188443579745561044668231168. 1/28948022285975470858576456274028979780186376887159491122089336462336. 1/57896044571950941717152912548057959560372753774318982244178672924672. 1/115792089143901883434305825096115919120745507548637964488357358449344. 1/231584178287803766868611650192231838241491015097275928976714716898688. 1/463168356575607533737223300384463676482982030194551857953429433797376. 1/926336713151215067474446600768927352965964060389103715906858867594752. 1/1852673426302430134948893201537854705931920120778207431813717735189504. 1/3705346852604860269897786403075709411863840241556414863627435470379008. 1/7410693705209720539795572806151418823727680483112829727254870940758016. 1/14821387410419441079591145612302837647455360966225659454509741881516032. 1/29642774820838882159182291224605675294910721932451318909019483763032064. 1/59285549641677764318364582449211350589821443864902637818038967526064128. 1/118571099283355528636729164898422701179642877329805275636077935052128256. 1/237142198566711057273458329796845402359285754659610551272155870104256512. 1/474284397133422114546916659593690804718571509319221102544311740208513024. 1/948568794266844229093833319187381609437143018638442205088623480417026048. 1/1897137588533688458187666638374763218874286372676884410172446960834052096. 1/3794275177067376916375333276749526437748572745353768820344893921668104192. 1/7588550354134753832750666553499052875497145490707537640689787843336208384. 1/15177100708269507665501333106998105750994290981415075281379575686672416768. 1/30354201416539015331002666213996211501988581962830150562759151373344833536. 1/60708402833078030662005332427992423003977163925660301125518302746689667072. 1/121416805666156061324010664855944846007954327851320602251036605493379334144. 1/2428336113323121226480213297118896920159086557026

# *Palazzo dei Conservatori*

By Gemma Fusciello



The palazzo is on the right side of Piazza del Campidoglio. In medieval times it belonged to the Banderesi, captains of the urban militia.

It was rebuilt in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by Nicholas V, and became the residence of the Conservatori, the elected representatives of the Romans, who governed the city together with the Senate, housed in the nearby palazzo Senatorio.

The 15<sup>th</sup> century façade, designed by Michelangelo and completed, with some variations, by Della Porta, looks out upon the piazza with two orders of architraved columns.

The first, which ties the two floors of the palazzo together, is the enormous order with Corinthian pilaster strips on high bases that support the entablature, the jutting cornice, clearly in Michelangelo's style, and the banisters with statues as a finishing touch.

The second, that supports the ground floor portico, is an Ionic order with columns whose capitals have very unusual designs, like the laurel festoon that hangs from the volute and the masks that adorn the abaci.



The columns, placed in twos around the Corinthian pilaster strips, are repeated on the opposite wall of the portico to support the finely decorated pavilion vaults. Michelangelo style portals leading to the ancient offices of the corporations open up in each span of the portico.

Returning to the façade, the architrave of the minor order marks the floor line of the balconies on the upper floor, flanked by columns with mask capitals on either side supporting a curved pediment decorated with shells, a pattern that we also find in the original shell mask of the vestibule.

Michelangelo's design was changed in part by Della Porta, who added a central axis, transforming the central balcony, originally the same as the others, into a loggia with a complex tympanum held up by Ionic columns like the ones on the lower level.

From the portico, through the portal by Della Porta, one enters a courtyard rich with statues, such as the remains of the massive statue of Constantine, which was found in the apse of the basilica of Maxentius.

The entrance façade of the courtyard is a simplified version of the external one, with the columns replaced by Ionic pilaster strips below and Corinthian pilaster strips above, and the balconies now become simple windows.

The opposite façade, belonging to the Clementine palazzo, was built in 1720 by Alessandro Specchi, it is similar to the other one except for the great arch in the central space, made to hold the statue of the *Dea Roma (Goddess Rome)*, acquired by Clement XI, as noted in the inscription on the plaque above.

The lateral façades have a totally different aspect, conserving still today a 15<sup>th</sup> century style, with brick arches on massive granite columns that date to the construction of the palazzo in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by Nicholas V.

Its main body, of which Michelangelo redesigned only the façade, had a portico which hosted the offices of the corporations, two large halls on the upper floor looking out onto the piazza, with cross windows and loggias on both sides.

The palazzo had a C-shaped plan with the lateral wings, shorter than today's, surrounding the courtyard, half the size of the present one. There was a portico with cross vaults in the right wing, and in the left a stair leading to the second floor. The courtyard was closed in 1702 by Clement XI to build the palazzo Clementino and unite palazzo dei Conservatori to the 16<sup>th</sup> century palazzo Caffarelli.

The palazzo dei Conservatori has preserved, for the most part, its 15th century structure, and it is the transposition into images of the history of Rome, illustrated in the frescoes found in its halls, which take their names from the episodes they narrate, and in the decorations found in the corridors and vestibules.



The main hall, of the *Orazi* and *Curiazi*, has frescoes with stories of the Roman monarchy, painted by Cavalier d'Arpino in the form of a tapestry. The theme had been treated in an earlier cycle of frescoes in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, destroyed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the façade was redone and the hall enlarged to include the nearby loggia.

The statues of Urban VIII by Bernini and Innocent X by Algardi are here.

To the left, frescoed with stories of Republican Rome, is the hall called *dei Capitani* (of the Captains), because of the five busts of the church captains, among these is the classic torso of Carlo Barberini by Bernini.

The part of the principal structure of the building towards the courtyard is occupied by a passage way leading to the old chapel, a small rectangular room next to the hall of the *Capitani* where there is a 15<sup>th</sup> century fresco by Antonio da Viterbo among the rich 17<sup>th</sup> century decorations.

The chapel was de-consecrated in 1870 to enlarge the passage way, the Baroque altar is now in the new chapel made in a small room in the palazzo Clementino. The ancient loggia on the right side of the palazzo was closed and transformed into the Trionfi hall.

Access to the right wing of the palazzo is through this hall, which conserves the mostly 15<sup>th</sup> century decorations. The rooms that look out on the external part of the palazzo are the Lupa, from the famous *Lupa capitolina*, an Etruscan bronze from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC to which Pollaiuolo added the twin boys, Romulus and Remus, and the room of the Geese.

The rooms looking onto the courtyard are the Punic Wars, the Tapestries, with tapestries from St. Michele, and the small room of the Eagle.

The Capitoline Museum, the oldest in the world and famous for its classical sculpture, is housed in this palazzo and in the opposite Palazzo Nuovo. The collection, begun in 1471 by Sixtus IV who donated the *Lupa*, was continued by successive popes with the sole objective of adorning the site which was the symbol of the city of Rome.

In 1720 Clement XI commissioned Specchi to close the courtyard to turn it into an exposition area for a series of sculptures.

Clement XII, after having donated the Albani collection, decided to open the museum to the public. Since then, the ancient sculpture collection continues to grow and has pieces of enormous value: classical statues such as the *Galata morente* and the *Venere Capitolina*, bronzes such as the head of Bruto and the *Spinario*, and more recent works like the bust of Michelangelo by Daniele da Volterra and the *Medusa* by Bernini.

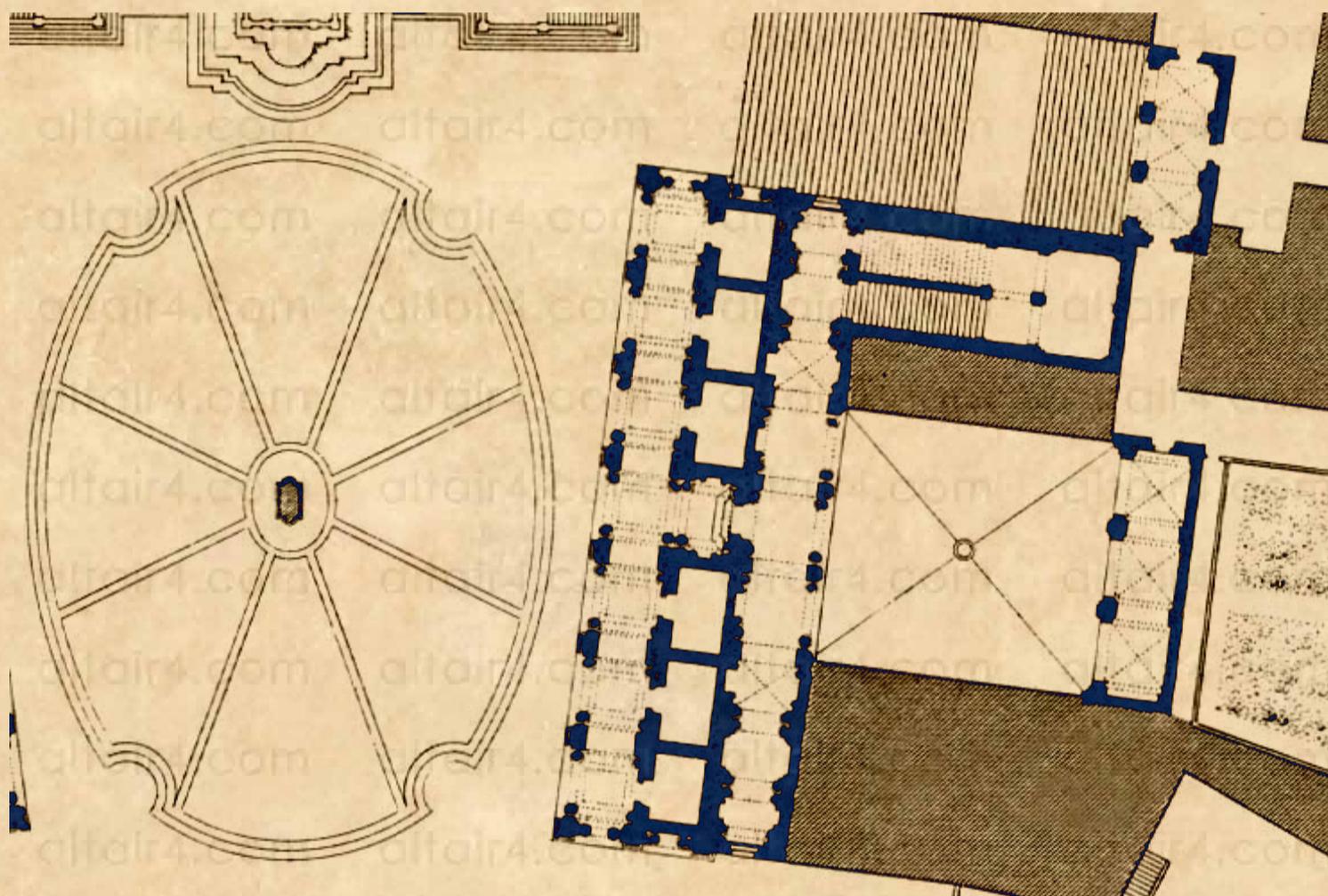


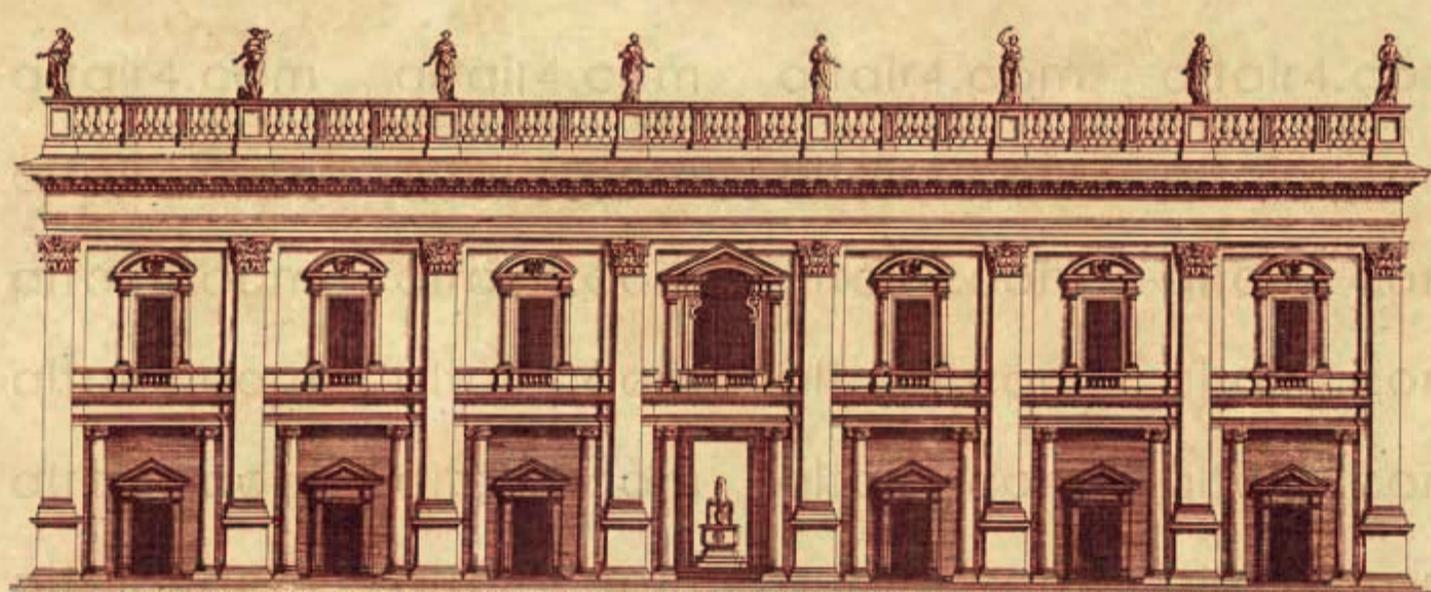
The new wings of the Museum are in the Clementino and Caffarelli palazzos, hosting collections donated at later times and findings from various archeological excavations.

The collection has been transferred to industrial archeology spaces in Via Ostiense (Centrale Montemartini), as the palazzos are being restored.

The picture gallery instituted by Benedict XIV in 1784 is also in palazzo Clementino, with works from the 16th to the 18th centuries such as the *Baptism of Jesus* by Titian, *St. John* by Caravaggio, and paintings by Veronese, Carracci, Pietro da Cortona, Rubens and Velasquez.







FALAZZO DE SIG. CONSERVATORI DI ROMA SOTTO ARACELI SV LA PIAZZA DI CAMPIDOGGIO ARCHITETTURA DI MICHELANGELO BVONAROTTI LA FENESTRA ET RINGHIERA DI MEZZO È DI GIACOMO DEL DVCA.

Disegnato dall'Autore

Disegnato dall'Autore in Roma alla fine del secolo del 17.

Scala di piedi 10  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10





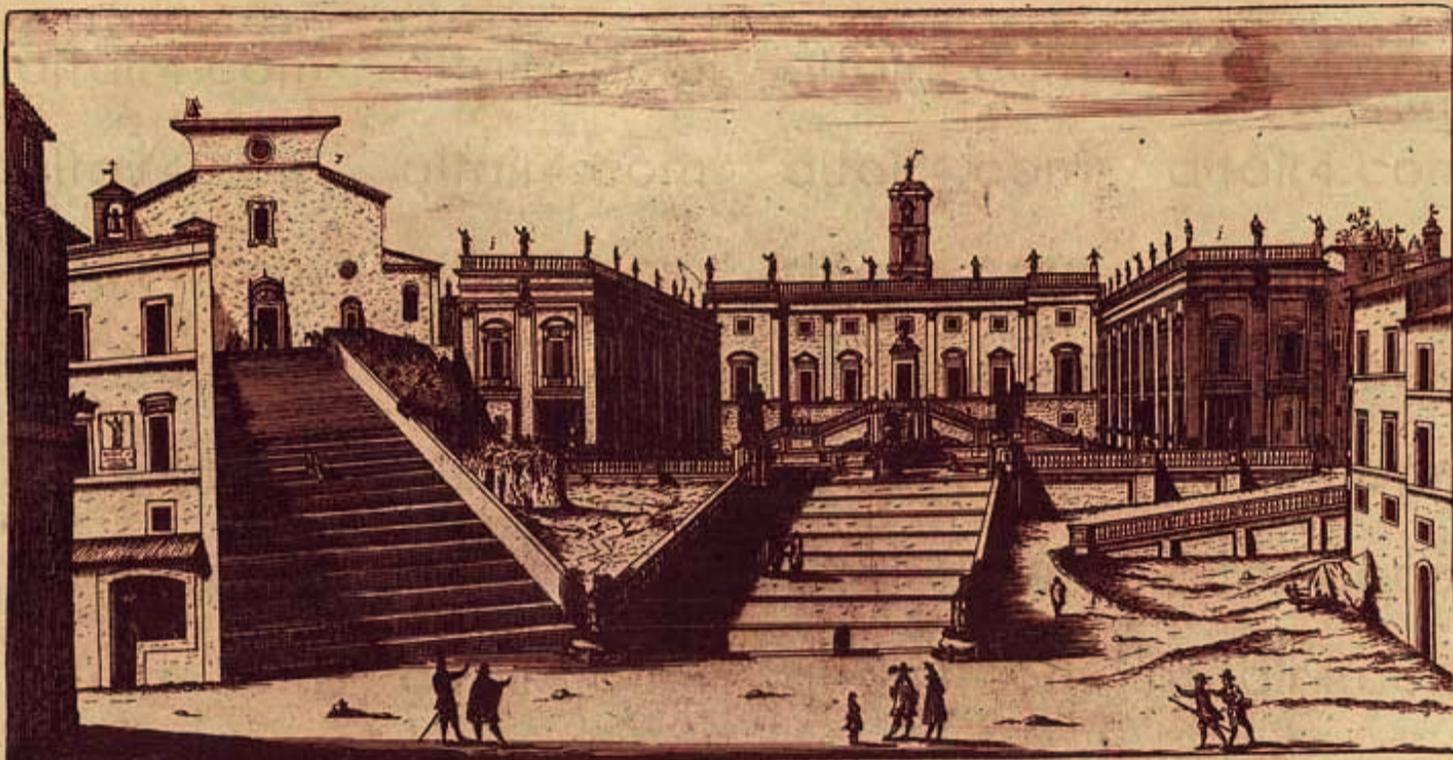
*1 Chiesa di S. Biagio, e B. Rota fatta da N. S.  
 Papa Alessandro Settimo.  
 2 Chiesa e Scala d' Araceli*

**ALTRA VEDUTA DEL CAMPIDOGLIO.**  
*Per Gio: Jacomo Ruffi in Roma alla Pace del SP.*

*3 Scala del Campidoglio.  
 4 Palazzo Capitolino.*

*G. B. Falda del. et. f. 11*





*i Palazj de SS.<sup>ti</sup> Conservatori una parte finita da N. S. Papa  
 Alessandro Settimo con l'ornamento della Piazza.*

**CAMPIDOGGIO.**

*Dis. Gio. Tommaso Ruffi in Roma alla Pace 1787. del S. P.*

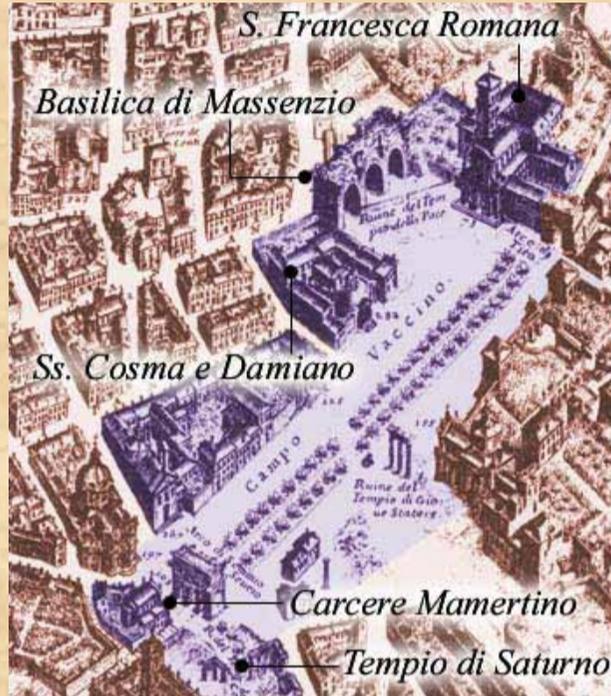
*La Palazzo del Senato di Roma  
 3 Chiesa e Scala d' Araceli.*

*G. B. Piranesi del. 10*



# The Roman Forum

By Maria Grazia Nini



The Roman Forum was not the city's oldest meeting place and commercial market. In prehistoric times, when primitive Rome occupied the **Palatine Hill**, the forum was close to the Tiber. The *Forum Boarium*, so-called because the principal activity there was the trading of livestock, was located near the piazza of the **Mouth of Truth**, while the area of the Roman Forum, largely a bog or marsh, was occupied by a burial ground.

The extension of the inhabited area to the surrounding hills and the consequent increase in population, created a need for larger public spaces.

The Etruscan kings, Tarquinius Priscus and Tarquinius Superbus (6<sup>th</sup> century BC) reclaimed the valley of the Forum by constructing a network of sewers, the *Cloaca Maxima*, which drained the valley waters into the Tiber, and they also paved the piazza, which was crossed by the Via Sacra.

This became the site of the city's most important public buildings: the Regia or Royal Palace, the Curia, or Senate, and the Comitium, or public assembly hall, as well as the Prison.

It was also the site of temples tied to the oldest religious cults: the Temple of Vesta, the protective goddess of the domestic hearth, the Temple of Saturn; the Temple of the twin gods Castor and Pollux, the sons of Jupiter and Leda; the Temple of the Concordia, celebrating the reconciliation of patricians and plebeians, the two social classes composing Roman society.

The area was also the site of many "religious" places where, according to tradition, miraculous events had taken place: like the *Niger Lapis* (Black Stone), where Romulus died and where, under a slab of black stone, an important inscription in archaic Latin has been rediscovered; the *Lacus Curtius*, where the Sabine warrior Mettius Curtius was killed; the Fountain of Juturna, an ancient spring where Castor and Pollux were said to have appeared to show their favor for the Roman army.

The piazza also hosted small symbolic monuments such as the *Umbilicus Urbis*, the center of the city, marked by masonry wall, and the *Miliarium Aureum*, a column marking the point of departure for all roads leading out of Rome.

With the transition from the monarchy to the Republic, the forum became the center of political and commercial life: the basilicas were built there, great porticoed halls on the Greek model, used for the holding of trials, for commercial negotiations, and other meetings, and the orators platform, which came to be called the *Rostrum*, after the rostrums, or curved ends of the prows of the ships that were captured from the Latins in the battle of Anzio (338 BC) and used to decorate the railing of the



platform.

At the north end of the piazza, at the foot of the **Capitol**, Quintus Lutatius Catulus built the state archive, the *Tabularium*, which became, in the Middle Ages, the base of the Senatorial palace, still used today as the offices of the city administration of Rome.

At the end of the Republican era the Roman Forum was no longer adequate to contain the enormous flow of citizens and foreigners who came into Rome on a daily basis to conduct their business. In 54 BC Julius Caesar decreed the construction of a new forum, the Forum of Julius Caesar, which was later followed by the **Imperial Forums**.

During the imperial age, therefore, with the progressive cessation of all of the activities related to the democratic government of the state, and the relocation of judicial and commercial activities to other areas, the Roman Forum assumed the role and the profile of the historical and monumental center of the city, in which every emperor wished to build a monument celebrating his accomplishments.

The Flavian emperors, Vespasian and Titus, built a temple there, and so did Antoninus Pius, dedicating it to his wife Faustina; a triumphal arch was built for Septimius Severus in honor of his victories in the Orient, while Maxentius endowed the area of the Forum with a new and sumptuous basilica, the basilica of Maxentius, situated at the exit of the Forum toward the Colosseum. By the end of the Roman empire the piazza was full of arches, statues and commemorative columns, the last of which was erected by the Byzantine emperor Foca, in 608 AD.

With the advent of Christianity the monuments in the forum were either sacked and destroyed or transformed into churches and thus conserved.

At the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, in fact, an imperial edict prohibited all forms of pagan religion, and the temples became the property of the state, which allowed their transformation into churches.

The oldest Christian place of worship in the Forum is the basilica of Saints Cosmos and Damian, consecrated in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The church of Santa Maria Antiqua is from around the same time. Converted into a church from a room in a larger complex, identified as an entrance of the imperial palace of Domitian on the Palatine, the little church is decorated with important frescoes, dating back to the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. The oldest is a fragment, located on the right of the apse, with Maria Regina among the Angels dated 530-540, above which are three other painting cycles, the last of which goes back to Pope John VII (705-707).

The frescoes in the chapel on the left of the apse, called the chapel of Quiricus,



Juditta and Theodotius, were painted during the reign of Pope Zacharias (741-752); in the apse is a figure of Paul I (757-767) being presented to Christ by the Virgin, while in the right nave is a fresco, detached from the atrium, with Mary enthroned among angels and saints with Pope Adrian I (772-795). The church was abandoned under Leo IV (847-885), because of earthquake damage, and rebuilt on the ruins of the Temple of Venus and Rome, near the Colosseum (Santa Maria Nova or Santa Francesca Romana).

Under Pope Honorius I (635-638) the Curia of the Senate was consecrated to Saint Adrian, while the church of S. Martina was built nearby. This church, ceded to the Academy of S. Luca by Sixtus V in 1588, was rebuilt, between 1634 and 1650, by Pietro da Cortona.

The temple of Antoninus and Faustina became the church of S. Lorenzo, called “in Miranda,” perhaps from the name of the devoted woman who requested its consecration. The church’s architectural decoration was removed by Urban V (1362-1370) and used in the Lateran Palace. The church was restored in 1602 by Paul V.

Between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries the area of the Roman Forum underwent a progressive interment owing in part to the accumulation of rubble from the monuments, and in part to the marshification caused by the obstruction of the Roman sewer network, which had provided, since prehistoric times, for the drainage of the area into the Tiber.

During this time the area assumed the name of Camp Vaccino, the Cow Field, the site of pastures and fruit and vegetable gardens. This is perfectly recorded in artists’ views of the area, from the Renaissance up to the 1800s, when excavation of the area began.

Unfortunately, however, in the intervening centuries the monuments, which lay under a thick layer of earth, had been systematically pillaged to build the churches and piazzas of the city. Tunnels and galleries were dug and architectural elements, such as columns, cornices, and blocks of stone, were carried away; numerous ovens were set up on the site to remove mortar from the stones recovered from the ancient buildings.

Despite all this, today the Roman Forum is still one of the most important archeological sites in the entire world and, with its exceptional stratification, from prehistoric times to the modern era, it constitutes an immense mine of information still to be discovered and studied.





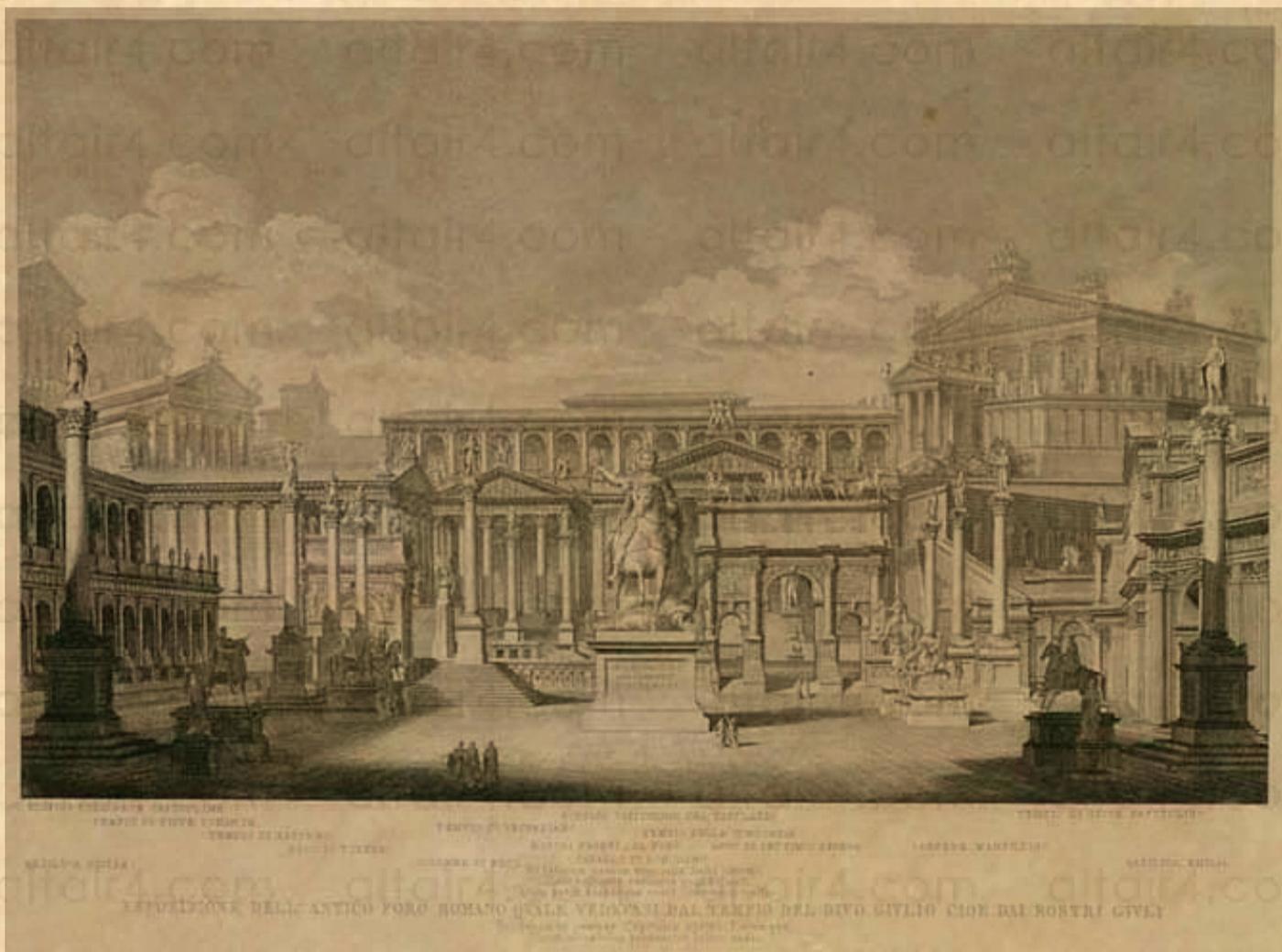
CHIESA DI S. FRANCESCO ROMANA

ARCO DI TITO

VEDUTA OCCIDENTALE DEL TEMPIO DI VENERE E ROMA











VEDUTA DELLE REMOVIE DEI TRE TEMPI  
DI SATVRNO DI VESPASIANO E DELLA CONCORDIA





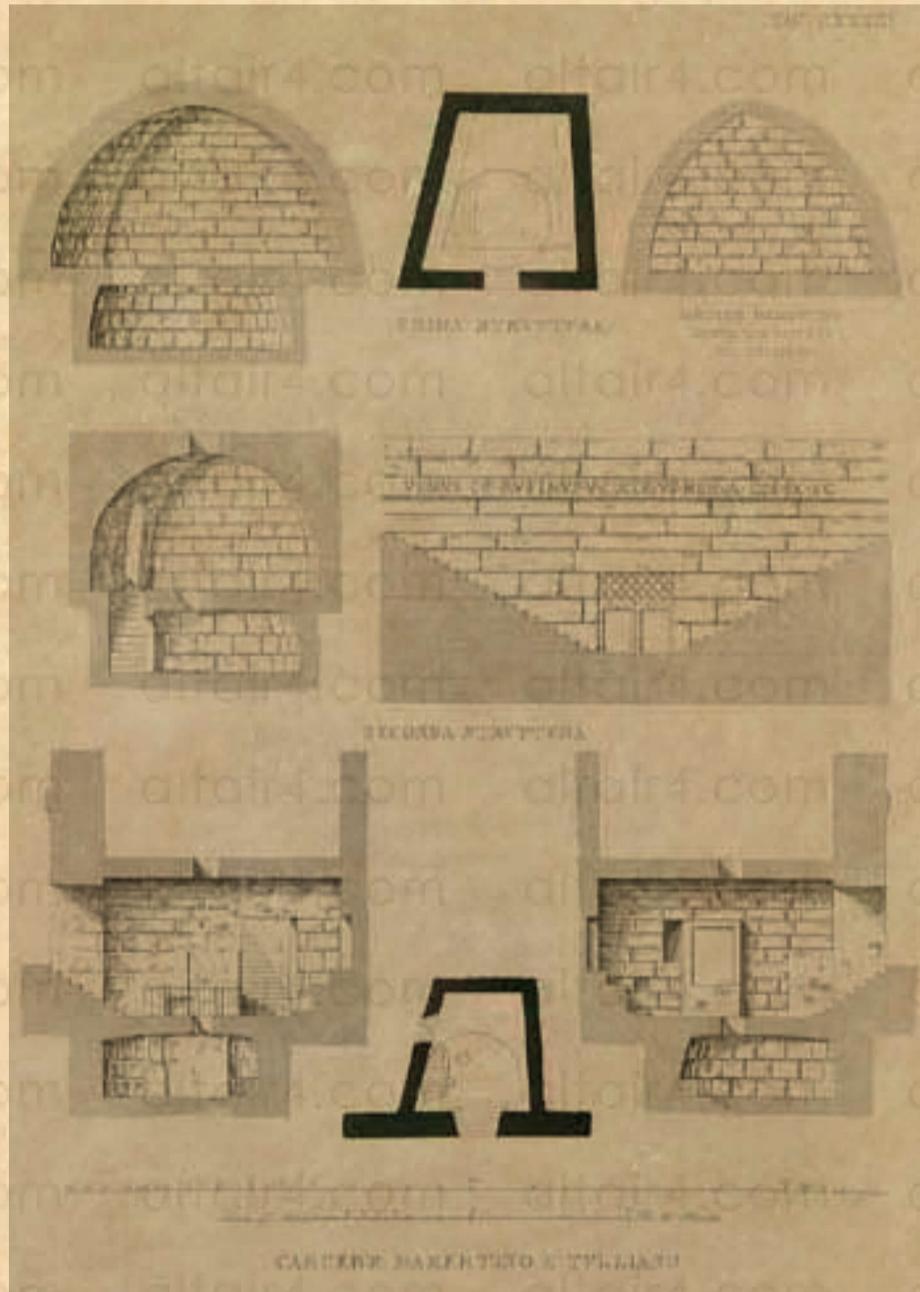


*Ferris. inc.*

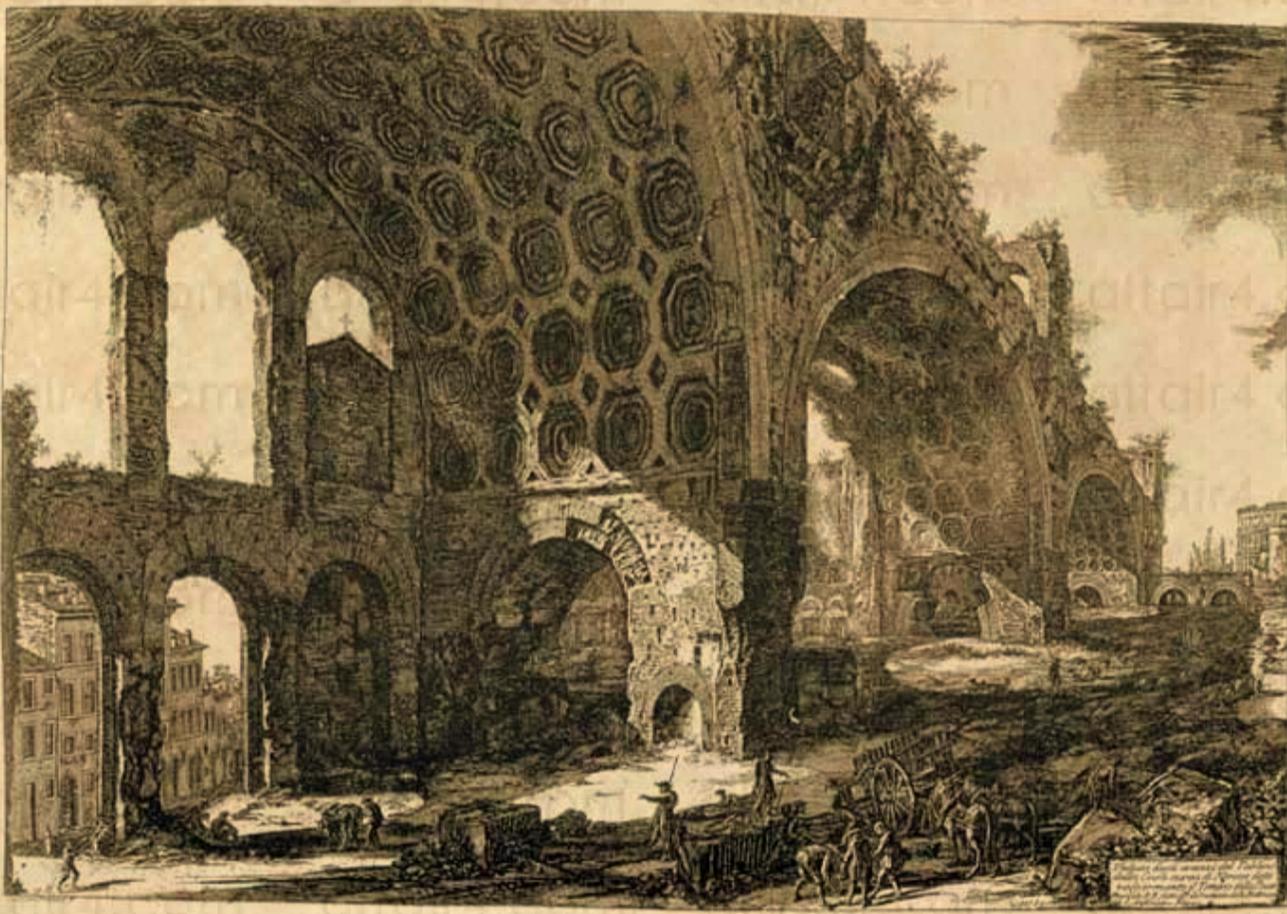
VEDUTA DEL CARCERE INFERIORE

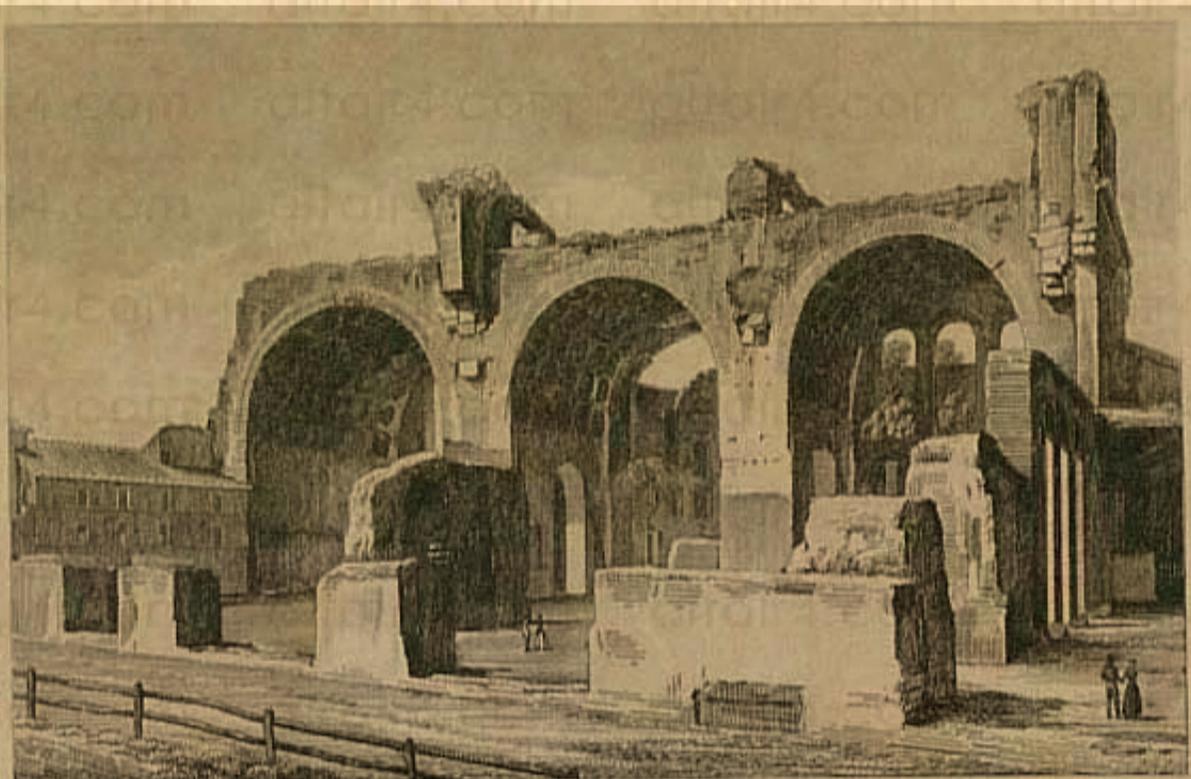
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Colonna, a cui fu incatenato S. Pietro<br/>         2 Sorgente dell'acqua miracolosa,<br/>         con cui battezzò i Custodi della Prigione</p> | <p>ed altri XLVII. Compagni<br/>         3 Mensa di Marmo bianco<br/>         4 Apertura di una forma Sotterranea</p> |
|---|---|







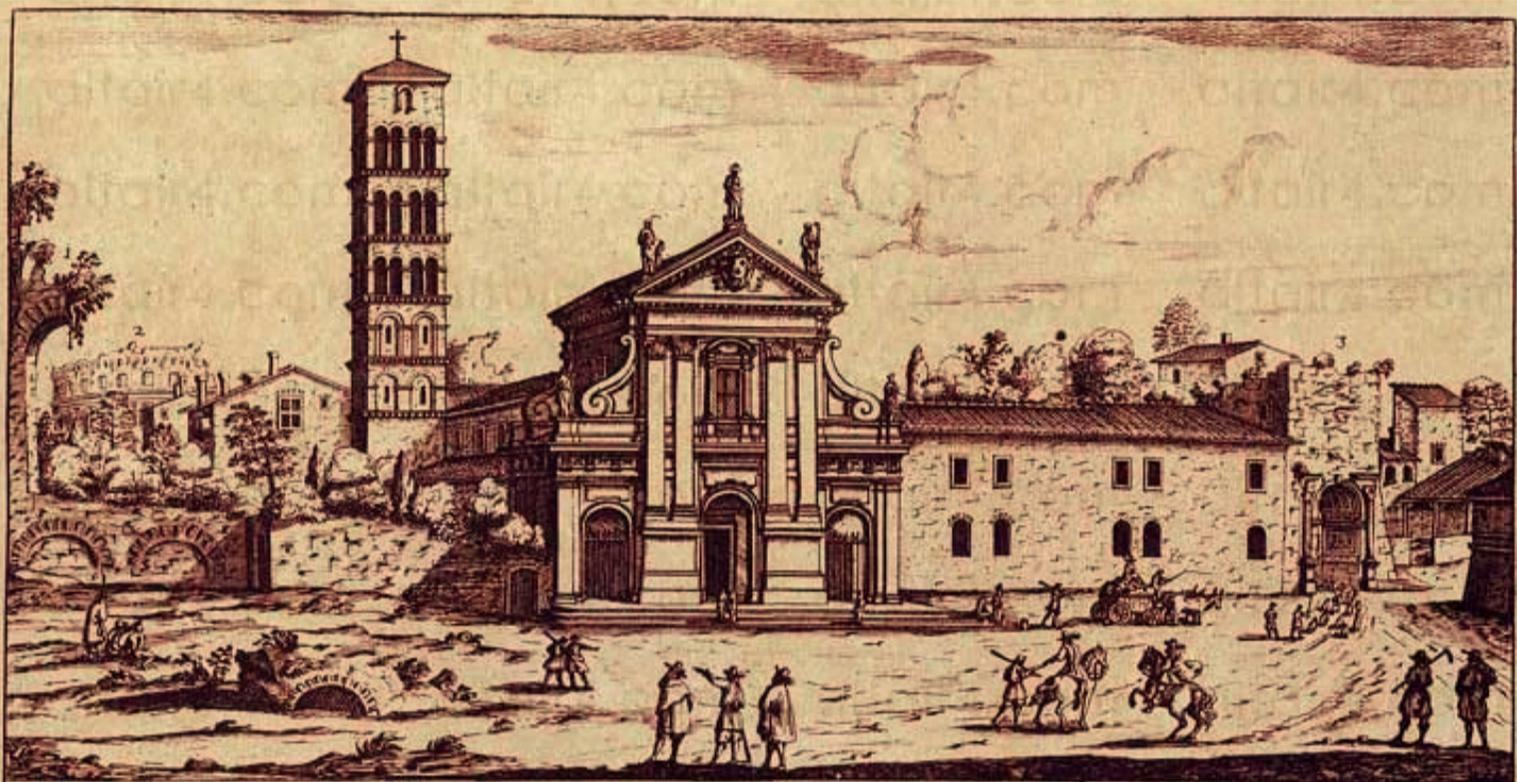




VEDUTA DELLO STATO ATTUALE DELLA BASILICA DI COSTANTINO

DEGNOMINATA VOLGARMENTE TEMPIO DELLA PACE





CHIESA SOTTO IL TITOLO DI S-MARIA NUOVA ET S-FRANCESCA ROMANA IN CAMPO VACCINO OFFICIATA  
dalla Monaci di Monte Oliveto, Architettura di Carlo Lambardo.

1 Ruine del Tempio della Pace.  
Gio: Batt: Falda del: ex: fecit

2 Anfiteatro ouero Colosseo.

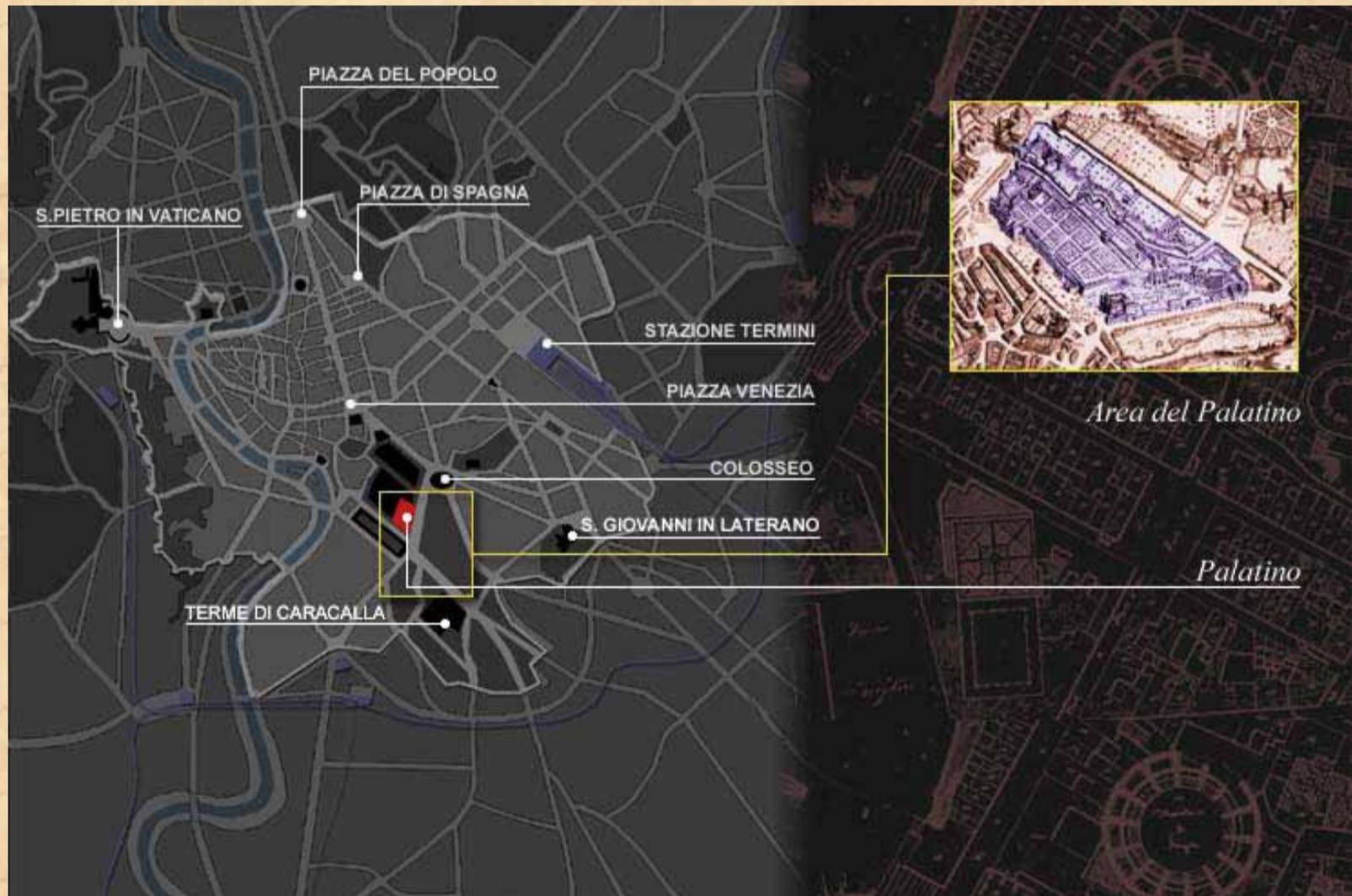
3 Arco di Tito  
Per Gio: Jacomo Rossi in Roma alla Pace co: Priu: del S: Pont

9



# *The Palatine Hill*

By Maria Grazia Nini



According to the ancient historians the Palatine is the hill upon which Rome was founded by Romulus, the first King of Rome, in 753 BC. Modern archeological research has found that the old legend is supported by a substantial basis of fact.

In 1948, in a circumscribed area of the hill, free of more recent buildings, the remains of three Iron Age huts (8<sup>th</sup> century BC) were brought to light.

The remains consist of grooves and holes carved out of a natural bank of tufa, in which were inserted the pilings that constituted the skeleton of the huts.

These traces, together with the analysis of a special kind of cinerary urn, discovered in the contemporary Latin and Etruscan necropoli, the “hut-shaped urn,” made it possible to reconstruct these primitive dwellings.

A series of poles held up the side walls, and a central pole the roof, the walls and roof were made of straw and clay. Four smaller poles, placed near the entrance, formed a small portico. The roof had an opening for the release of smoke from the fireplace, which was on the inside.

It is thought that the largest of these huts can be identified as the *Casa Romuli*, a house that the Romans believed to have been the house of Romulus, and made sure it was restored periodically. This would explain the fact that no buildings had been built over it.

Recent excavations have brought to light, on the slope of the hill toward the valley of the **Roman Forum**, a tract of wall dating back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC which has been tied to the epoch of the founding of Rome.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> century, therefore, there was already an inhabited village on the Palatine, that we can call Rome, and which had its *Arx*, or fortress, on the **Capitol**. This city was equal in size to the other Latin cities of Gabii, Lavinio and Ardea, but smaller than the great Etruscan cities like Veio, Cerveteri, and Tarquinia.

In the Republican era the Palatine was occupied primarily by the homes of the nobility, like for example the house of Livia, decorated with frescoes in the second Pompeian style (30 BC).

But there were also some temples: the Temple of Victory, the Temple of Jupiter Invincible, and the Temple of the *Magna Mater*, a divinity of eastern origins, whose cult was introduced to Rome in 204 BC when a statue of the goddess was brought to Rome from Pessinunte, in Asia Minor. In place of the head of the goddess the statue had a black stone, possibly a meteorite. The statue was placed in the temple, whose base still remains on the southwest slope of the Palatine.

The Palatine retained its residential character into the age of Empire. Augustus himself decided to build his home next to that of Romulus, because he wished to



present himself to the populace as the “new founder” of Rome. After him, all of the other emperors chose to live on the Palatine, building grand and sumptuous homes, so much so that the term *Palatium* was used to refer to the emperor’s palace.

The house of Augustus has been identified with a series of rooms, decorated with paintings, situated between the Iron Age huts and the Temple of Apollo. This temple, built by order of Augustus, was inaugurated after the battle of Actium against Mark Antony and Cleopatra, in 28 BC, and for that reason it came to be called the Temple of Actium Apollo. It is known that the temple had a number of religious statues, representing Apollo, Diana, and Latona, the work of famous Greek artists.

Excavations carried out in the 1960s brought to light several splendid terra cotta slabs carved with reliefs of mythological scenes related to the decoration of the temple, which still conserve a part of their original coloring. The slabs are on display at the Palatine Antiquarium. The temple had a portico on the front and two libraries inside.

The *Domus Tiberiana*, the residence of the emperor Tiberius, was spread out on the western sector of the Palatine, occupied today by the Farnese Gardens, and so its floor plan is not well known. Excavations in the 1800s ascertained the presence, in the center of the garden, of a large rectangular porticoed courtyard, with rooms facing onto it. It is certain, however, that the *Domus Tiberiana* was restructured by Domitian when he built his own residences: Domus Flavia and Domus Augustana.

These grandiose palaces came to occupy the entire central section of the Palatine, superimposing themselves on the Republican era residences. Two of these earlier houses have been identified under the *Domus Flavia*: the so-called House of the Griffins, which conserved paintings in the style of the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and stuccoes with griffins in relief; the Hall of Isis, with frescoes dating back to 25 BC representing the Egyptian goddesses Isis and Serapis (late 2<sup>nd</sup> century style).

The imperial palace was further enlarged by Septimius Severus, who added a new complex in the southeast section of the hill, the *Domus Severiana*, which was erected atop a brick foundation, still visible today. The palace was flanked, on the side facing the beginning of the **Appian Way**, by a monumental fountain, the *Septizodium*.

This monument, structured as a multi-storied façade cadenced by a series of columns, was still partially conserved into the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when it was demolished by Sixtus V, who reused its materials to build the Sistine Chapel in the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. Modern excavations have brought to light its remains, limited to the ground floor.

The southern side of the hill, looking toward the Circus Maximus, is entirely occupied by supporting structures for the palaces above, such as the *Paedagogium*, or the



training school for slaves in service to the emperor, and the *Domus Praeconum*, the headquarters of the heralds.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> century the church of Sant'Anastasia was built in the southwest corner. It was the official church of the imperial dignitaries when the Palatine was the seat of the Byzantine governor. Its current exterior is the work of Urban VIII (1636), while the interior was redecorated in the 1700s.

In the northeast sector of the Palatine is a large landfill, which was site of a temple whose foundation has been excavated. It was the temple built in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD in honor of Elagabalus, an eastern sun god, by the Emperor of the same name.

It was probably positioned in the gardens of Domitian's imperial palace called the *Aedonaea* (The Gardens of Adonis). The site is connected to Christian tradition of the martyr Saint Sebastian and is now the site of the church of San Sebastiano al Palatino.

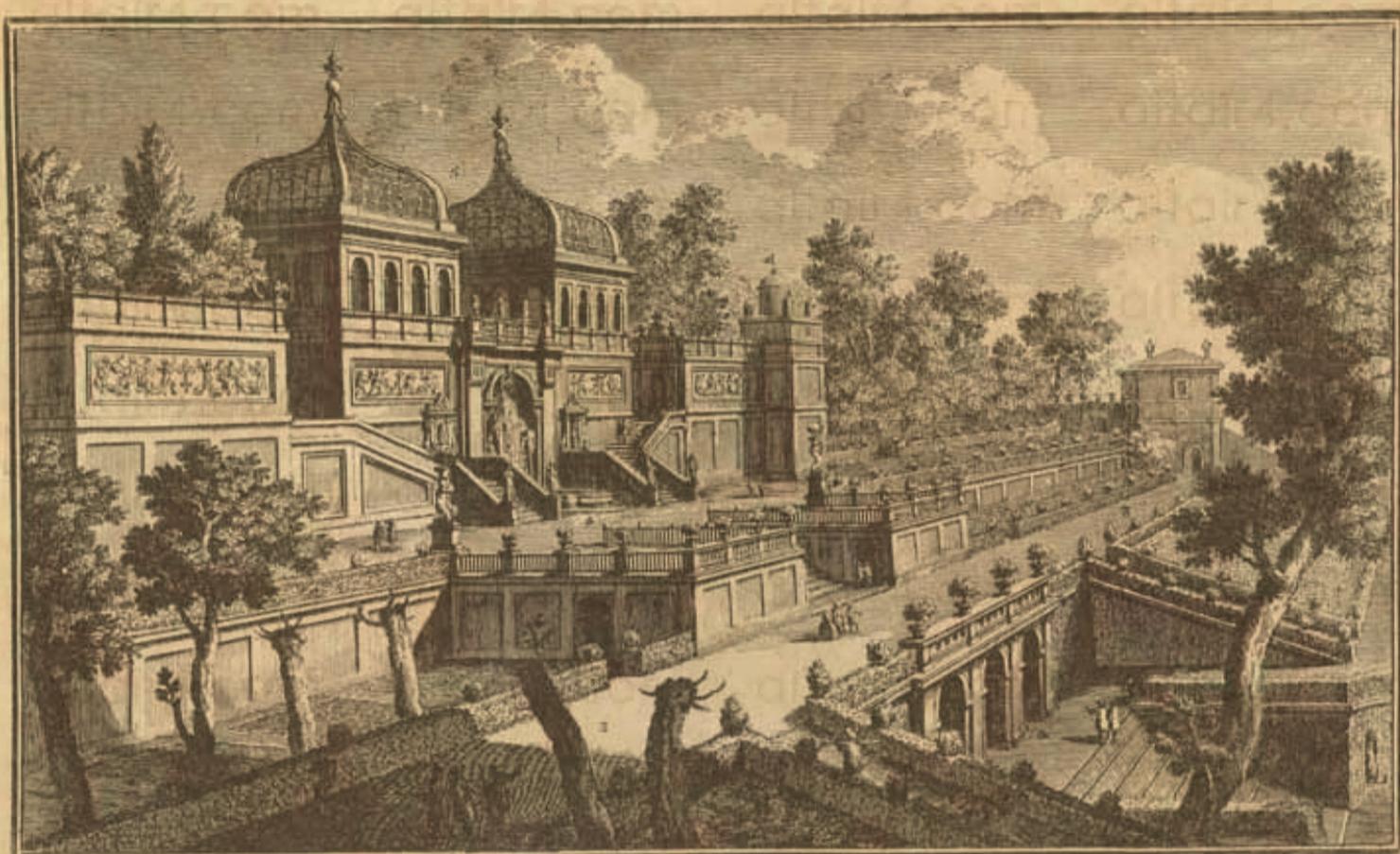
Very close by is the church of Saint Bonaventura, built in 1675, on the ruins of a cistern from the Neronian aqueduct, by the Franciscan friar Bonaventura da Barcellona, later beatified, who obtained the land for the construction of the church and convent from the Barberini family, at that time the owners of a vineyard in the area (Vigna Barberini).

Along the Via S. Bonaventura, which leads to the church, you can see, encased in the ancient masonry, the 18<sup>th</sup> century stations of the cross in painted terra cotta.

Between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries the Palatine was transformed into sumptuous gardens which took the name of the Horti Farnesiani (Farnese Gardens) from the Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, who had them built on behalf of Pope Paul III. The Gardens, still partially conserved, had a monumental entrance which looked toward the Roman Forum; it was demolished in the late 1800s.

Staircases adorned with fountains led up the hill to the two Aviaries and then the top of the hill, with quiet lanes decorated with flower beds. The Belvedere casino was also part of the Gardens, built atop a temple of the *Domus Falvia*, with a loggia frescoed by the school of Taddeo and Federico Zuccari.



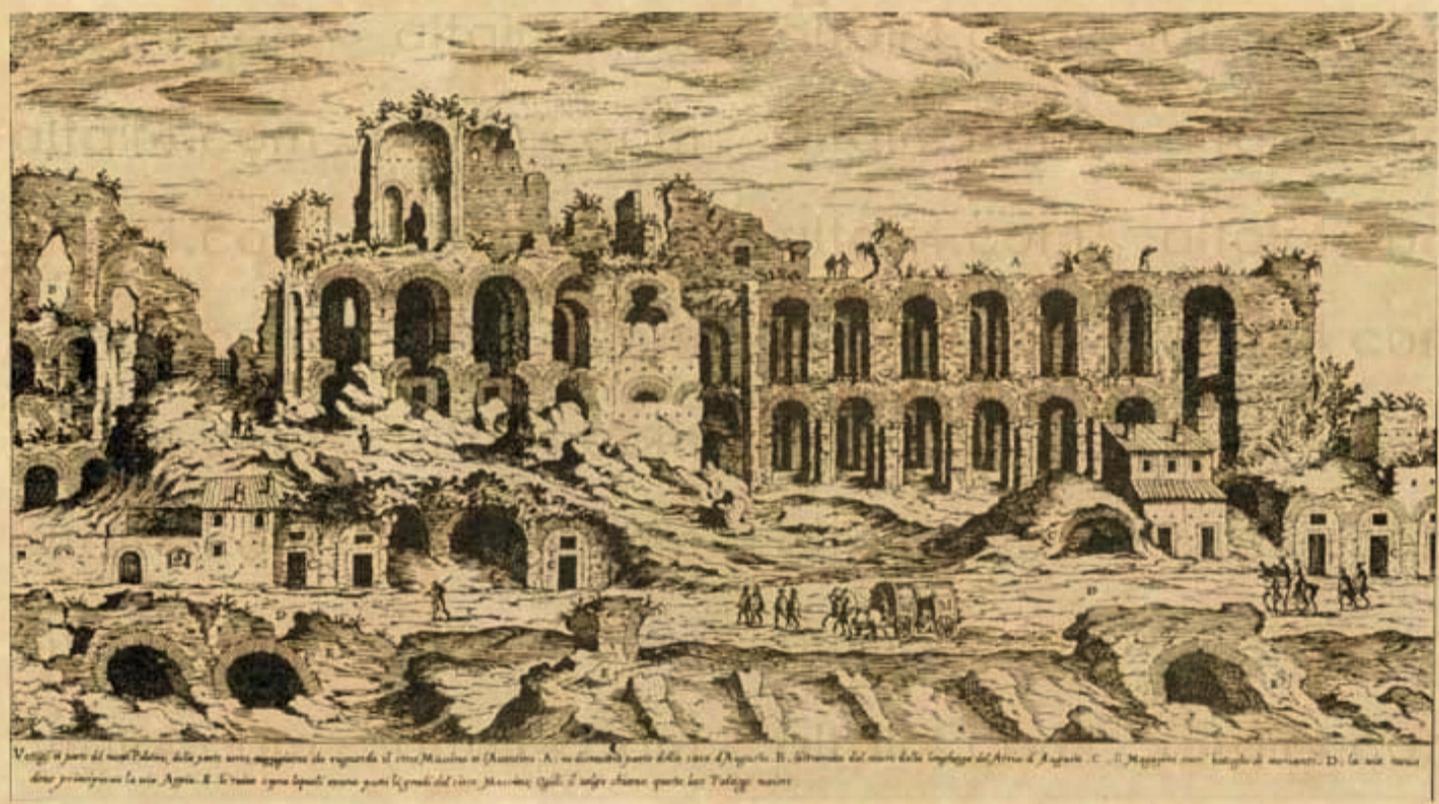


*Orti Farnesiani sul monte Palatino  
Teatro di buoi nel primo ingresso del portone con statua, a Fornici e fontana della pioggia, e Secondo piano della Villa, e Terzo piano, e Piano ultimo con uccelliere*









Veduta di parte del mont Palatin, dalla parte verso occidente che riguarda il circo Massimo o Massimo. A. in distanza parte della città d'Agrippa. B. all'imboccatura del mare della tempio di Antonia d'Agrippa. C. il Massimo con i resti di marciatori. D. la via nuova dove principiano la via Agrippa. E. le rovine sopra le quali erano parte i gradini del circo Massimo. F. il selgo che era parte del Palatio nuovo.



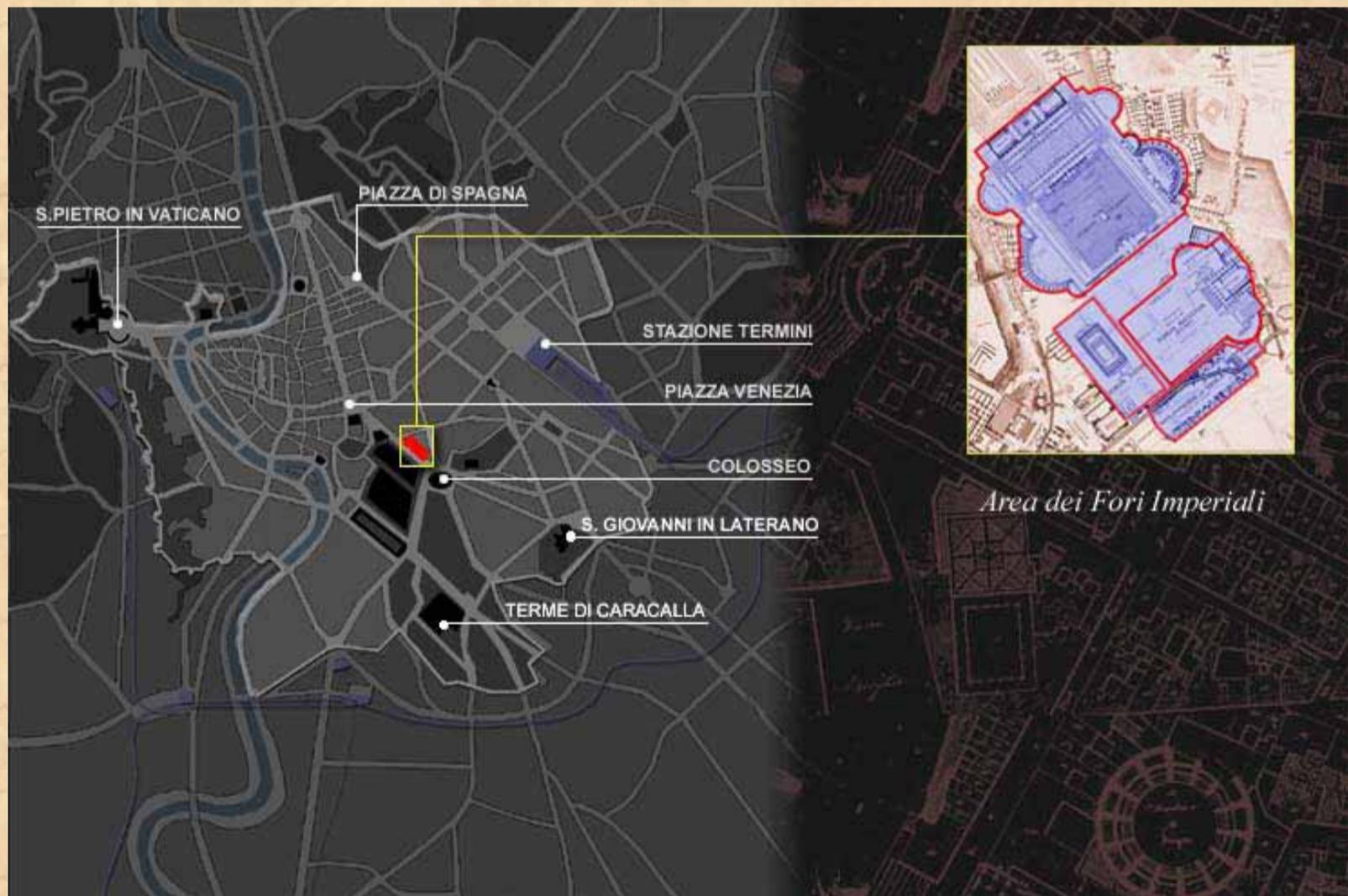
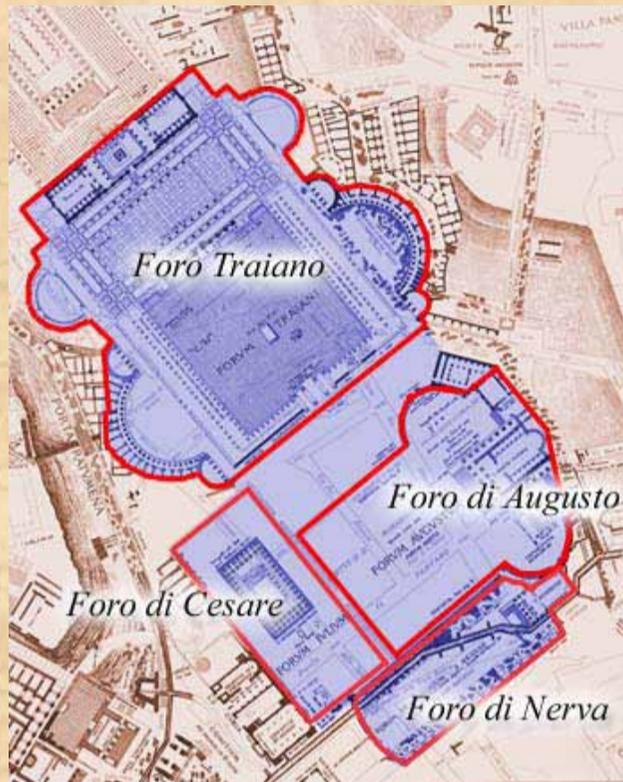


*Veduta del tempio di Diana imperatore che fu un tempio che egli si edificò sopra. In questo luogo non per altro ragione si non che quelli che abitano di Africa, lo hanno per un luogo molto celebre per aver fatto il tempio di Diana di opera Corintia con bellissimi colonne di marmo e di pietra bianca, con le loro menta di marmo e di pietra bianca con altri ornamenti de' suoi edifi. che erano et che si vede nella parte di dentro del tempio di Diana di opera Corintia di Vergilio*



# *The Imperial Forums*

By Maria Grazia Nini



The complex architectural and urban design of the Imperial Forums is difficult to grasp today because the area has been invaded and fragmented by the growth and development of the modern city.

Over the course of a little more than 150 years five monumental piazzas were built in the area for a total extension of 600 X 200 meters (more than one million sq. ft.), but the Forums were dismembered and in large part covered over, between 1931 and 1933, by the construction of Via dell'Impero (now Via dei Fori Imperiali) from Piazza Venezia to the Colosseum, for the purpose of creating a suitable space for the celebratory political demonstrations of the Fascist regime.

From 1924 to 1932 most of the Medieval and Renaissance neighborhood that had grown up around the ruins of the Forums was demolished and the Velian hill, a smaller projection of the **Palatine** toward the valley occupied by the **Colosseum**, was leveled as well.

Over the past twenty years there has been a long debate about the advisability of expanding the excavation of the Forums and dismantling Via dei Fori Imperiali and the surrounding gardens. The original project for the complete elimination of the street has been set aside for the moment in favor of a partial expansion of the excavations to the areas now covered by the gardens.

The "Imperial Forums Project," part of the program of public works to be carried out in association with Jubilee 2000, calls for excavation work sites in three distinct areas: the Forum of Julius Caesar, Trajan's Forum, and the Forum of Peace.

These studies, still in progress, are already providing new information which is bound to keep growing and, in some cases, to change the interpretation and attribution of the monuments located in the area.

Julius Caesar was the first to build a new forum, in the vicinity of the **Roman Forum**, between 54 and 46 BC, in order to satisfy the need for more and bigger public spaces created by the expansion of the Roman state, and, therefore, also of the city.

Caesar appointed Cicero to purchase the land needed to build the forum, then occupied by private residences and thus quite costly to buy. Caesar's Forum was a porticoed piazza, long and narrow, and dominated by the Temple of Venus Genetrix.

Only about half of the temple is visible today, along with a section of the left portico, some *tabernae* or shops, and the podium of the temple, of which three lateral Corinthian columns have been re-erected.

The remains of the forum, however, belong in large part to restorations and additions executed after the time of Caesar, especially during the reign of Trajan, who restored



Caesar's forum when he built his own, and of Diocletian (284-305 AD).

During the era of Trajan another building was added, between the temple and the left portico, which has been identified as the Basilica Argentaria. Some graffiti of poetic verses have been discovered on one wall of this building, giving rise to the hypothesis that the building housed a school.

The next forum in chronological order is the **Forum of Augustus**, originally adjacent to the right portico of Caesar's Forum, and today situated on the other side of the modern street.

In this same area the emperors of the Flavian dynasty built the *Templum Pacis* (Temple of Peace, also known as the *Forum Pacis*, Forum of Peace) conceived by Vespasian (71-75 AD) to celebrate the victory in Judea, and the Transitory Forum, which took the name of the emperor that completed the work on it, Forum of Nerva. The Temple of Peace, situated in the southeast sector of the Imperial Forums, was formerly known to us almost exclusively through the fragment of the *Forma Urbis*, the marble plan of Rome from the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, which was actually found in a wing of the temple itself, affixed to a wall that can be seen today on the exterior of the basilica of Saints Cosmos and Damian. The exploration of a sector of this complex is part of the "Imperial Forums Project."

The last forum to be built was Trajan's Forum, whose grandeur and magnificence are still visible today in Trajan's Column. The inscription located on the base of the column affirms that it stands to indicate the height of the hill that stood between the **Capitol** and the **Quirinale**, which was leveled for the construction of the Forum.

To hold back the slope of the Quirinale hill Trajan's ingenious architect, Apollodoro of Damascus, conceived a multi-story building which connected the level of the Forum with the top of the hill, at a point corresponding to the present-day Via IV Novembre. This complex, excavated in 1929, has been given the modern name of *Trajan's Market*.

It is a complex of spaces dedicated to practical use, primarily *tabernae*, built of brick and arranged in part around a terraced semi-circle, similar to the right exaedra of the forum, and in part on the sides of a great hall, with a ceiling composed of six cross-vaults, facing the Quirinale. The *tabernae* on the top floor are served by a street paved with volcanic stone, called Via Biberatica, probably because of the presence of stores selling beverages (from the Latin *biber*, "beverage").

In the Middle Ages (13<sup>th</sup> century) the Torre delle Milizie (the castle of the noble family of the Caetani) was built over the complex, along with the Torre del Grillo, named by the Marquises of Grillo, who in the 1600s built their family palace around



it. The Torre delle Milizie, located in Via IV Novembre, is one of the most important medieval buildings in Rome. It belonged to the noble families of the Caetani and the Conti, and in 1619 it was annexed to the convent of Saint Catherine (demolished in 1929 during the excavations of Trajan's Market). It was restored by Antonio Muñoz in 1914.

During the Middle Ages the area of the Forums underwent a progressive marshification, caused by the obstruction of the Cloaca Maxima, the main Roman sewage canal, which passed under the Forum of Nerva. The marsh became so extensive that the area took on the name of "Pantani" or "the bogs".

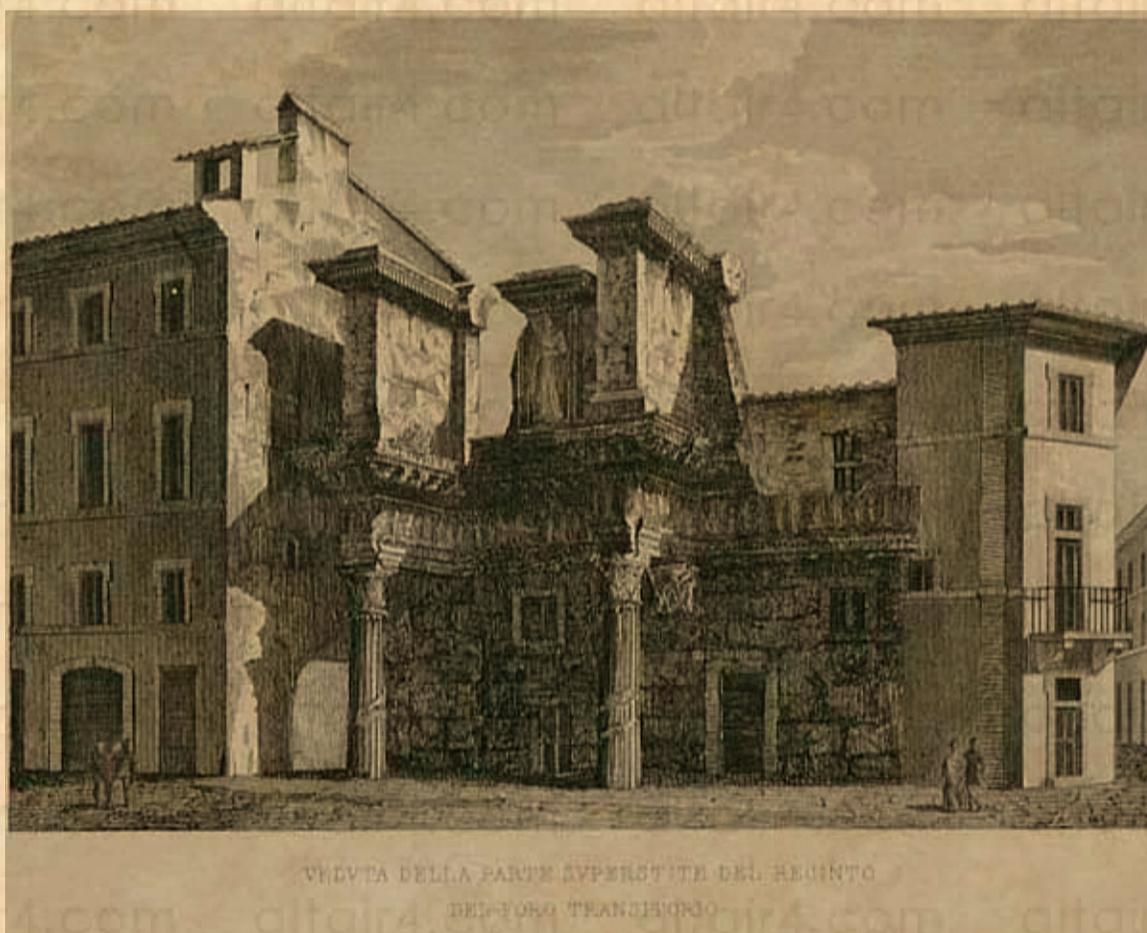
In the Renaissance a reclamation project was undertaken, followed by a new period of urbanization, which was largely erased by the demolition of the 1920s and 30s. The one exception is the Piazza di Santa Maria di Loreto, with the church of the same name and the church of SS. Nome di Maria (Most Holy Name of Mary), facing Trajan's Column and the ruins of Trajan's Forum.

The church of Santa Maria di Loreto, built by the bakers' guild, went through two phases of construction between 1507 and 1573: the first, perhaps after a design by Bramante, was directed by Antonio Sangallo the Younger and was limited to the foundation dado, while the drum, dome and bell tower were executed by Jacopo del Duca, a student of Michelangelo.

The church thus represents a rare fusion of Bramante's Renaissance classicism and the innovative spatial sense of Michelangelo's architecture, expressed here by the "disproportionate" dome and lantern, toward which all of the architectonic and decorative elements seem to be rising.

In 1736 construction was begun on the nearby church of the Most Holy Name of Mary, completed in 1751 and inspired by Santa Maria di Loreto, with a more rigidly classicist design.







Veduta delle principali reliquie del Foro Trajano e Basilica Ulpia





*Chiesa e Monastero di S. Maria Annunziata delle Sorelle Domenicane Neapolitane  
Le Torri e mura antiche credute del foro di Nerone e Campanile del detto Monastero. Arco fatto del pontone a Palazzo del Mare del Orillo, già della famiglia Conti.*







# *Forum of Augustus*

By Maria Grazia Nini



“I found a city of brick and left one of marble,” Augustus told his friends shortly before his death. The Forum of Augustus is certainly a splendid confirmation of this pronouncement.

The Forum was built by appropriating an area of private homes with money from the plunders of war, and was opened in 2 BC. The Temple of Marte Ultore, on a high podium, dominates the piazza with a porticoed colonnade on either side with two symmetrical exedrae.

Only the northeast sector is visible today, while the southwest one, where the main entrance would have been, is buried under the embankment that supports the Imperial Forums; it has never been excavated. Its reconstruction was based solely on supposition.

The original dimensions of the Forum were 118 meters wide and some 125 meters long.

The complex was separated from the popular Suburra neighborhood behind it, by a high wall in square *peperino* stone with travertine supports; a large part of which is still conserved today.

There were two minor entrances opened in the wall on either side of the temple.



The left entrance had three arches and the right a single arch in travertine blocks. In medieval times this last took on the name of “Arco dei Pantani” (quagmire arch), as the zone had become marshy and unhealthy.

Parts of the original pavement, in polychrome marble slabs, is still conserved today in the porticos. In the left exedra there are semi-columns framing the niches and a tract of architraves.

The most important remains, however, are part of the temple: the podium, the entrance stairs - with an altar in the center -, some of the bases of the columns of the pronaos and the tract of wall to the right of the cell, with three splendid Corinthian columns in white marble from Luni (Carrara).

The temple was chosen by Ottaviano, who had not yet become Augustus in 42 BC, on the occasion of the battle of Filippi in Macedonia against Bruto and Cassio, who killed Cesar; for this reason the temple was dedicated to Mars “vindicator”.

The Forum, with its rich and complex sculptor decorations, represents a true “propaganda manifesto” of Augustan politics, respectful of the most ancient Roman traditions and celebratory of its religion and institutions. The statues in fact express the historical and cultural roots of Augustus’ reign, as the great poet Virgilio celebrated in the Aeneid.

The temple pediment hosted a sculptural group, which is known because of its relief reproduction in the Claudian era, the *Ara Pietatis Augustae*. The group was composed of Mars in the center, and Venus and the goddess of Fortune on one side, Romulus and the personification of Palatine on the left and the goddess Rome and the personification of the Tiber on the right.

The statue of Mars, Venus and Julius Cesar, the first Roman hero to be sanctified after Romulus, are found inside the cell, in the apse. This sculptural group was also reconstructed based on a relief recovered in Carthage and conserved in a museum in Algiers. On the long sides of the cell were seven columns with Doric capitals embellished by beautiful winged horses, one of which is conserved in the *Antiquarium* of the Forum.





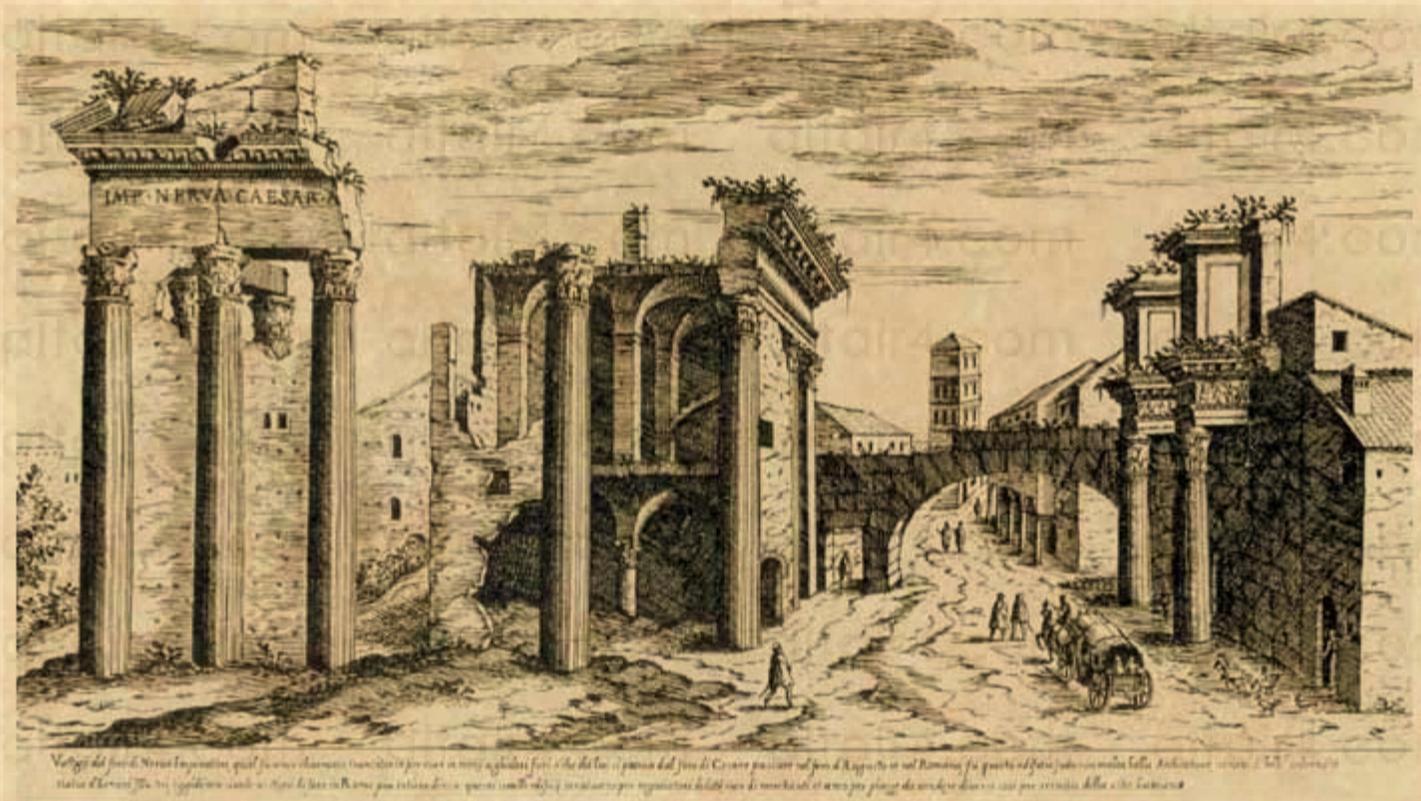
RELIEVIE DELLA PARTE ESTERNA DEL FORO DI AVGVSTO  
E DEL TEMPIO DI MARTE VLTORRE





ESPUNTIONE PROSPETTICA DELLA INTERA ARCHITETTURA DEL FORO TRAIANUM  
CON IL PALAZZO DI TRAIANO





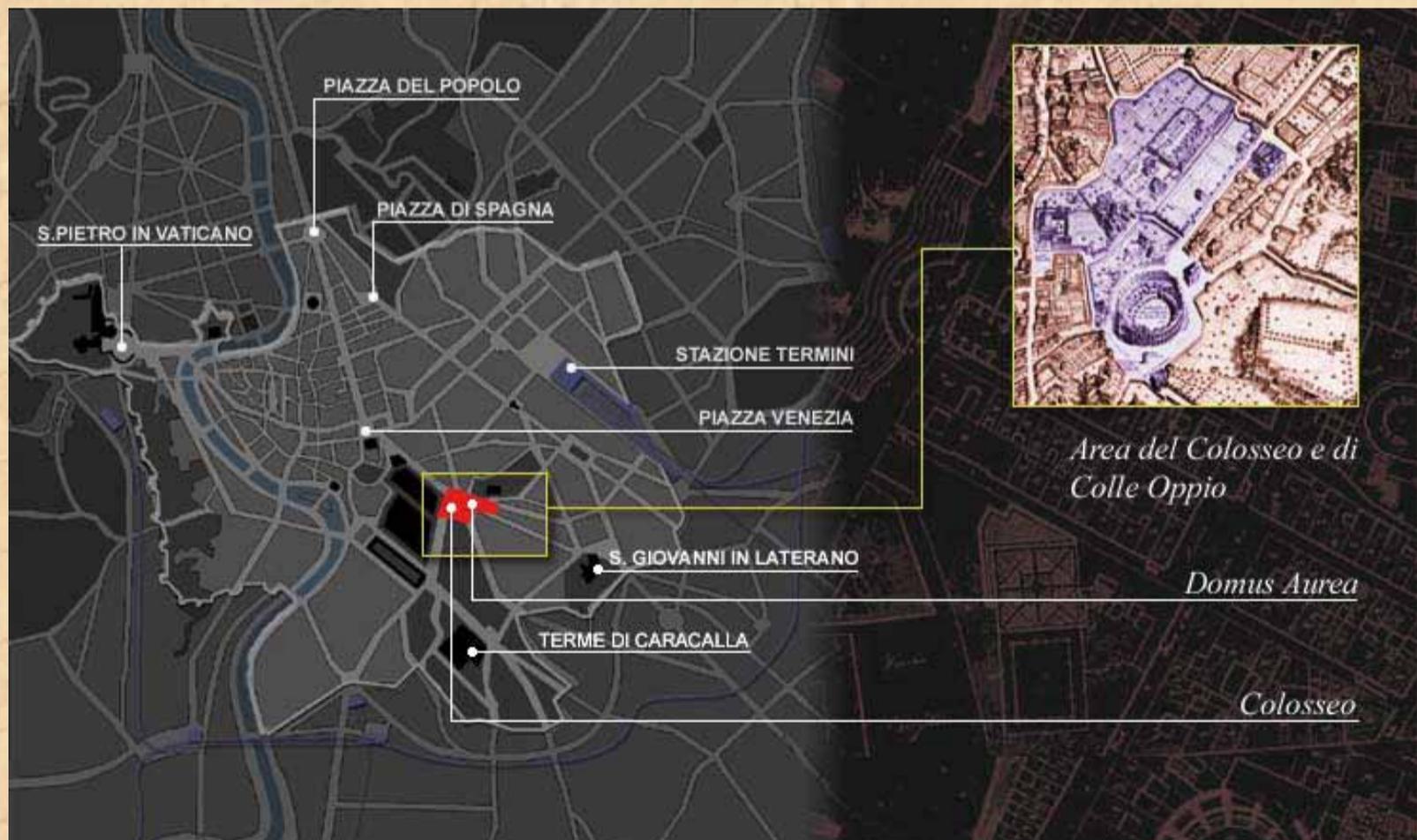


VEDUTA DEL TEMPIO DI PALLADE NEL FORO TRANSCORIPIO  
QUALE SI TRUVAVA ESISTENTE NEL SECOLO DECIMOSEPTIMO



# *The Colosseum and the Oppian Hill*

By Maria Grazia Nini



The valley between the **Palatine**, the Esquiline and the **Celian Hill** constitutes, together with the Oppian Hill, the third Augustan region, which was known as *Isis et Serapis*, after an important shrine dedicated to these Egyptian deities in the same area, whose exact location is today unknown.

The topography of the region was drastically modified by the building of Nero's imperial residence, the **Domus Aurea**, which extended from the Palatine to the Esquiline, thus linking two former imperial building complexes.

After the death of Nero (64 AD) the area was occupied by a series of public buildings which were built under later emperors, above all by the Flavians (69-96 AD), with the intention of giving back to the city the vast spaces occupied by the palace. The most important of these buildings is the Flavian amphitheater or the **Colosseum**, which replaced the artificial lake of the Domus Aurea.

Near the amphitheater a fountain was built, called the *Meta Sudans*, since it had a conical shape, like the *metae* of the circus, and it "perspired" water. The center of this fountain was made of brick, and survived until the 1930's, when it was demolished in order to leave space for the building of the Via dell'Impero (Via dei Fori Imperiali); its original appearance has survived in depictions on coins from the period of Emperor Tito (80 AD), who ordered its construction. In 1986-87 archeological research in the foundations of the fountain revealed more ancient structures, in particular an area with porticoes belonging to the Domus Area.

The fountain was built at the intersection of two important roads: one which came from the Circo Massimo, which was the venue for processions by victorious leaders (*Via Triumphalis*, currently Via di S. Gregorio) and the other which ran down from the Palatine and went under Tito's Arch, with which the fountain is in perfect line.

Tito's arch, with a single barrel vault, was built to celebrate the conquest of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Tito, and its reliefs depict the military campaign. The arch, transformed into a fortress in the Middle Ages by the Frangipane family, was restored by Giuseppe Valadier in 1821. Overlooking the Via dei Trionfi was Constantine's Arch: the last of the monuments which celebrated the Roman Empire.

Between Tito's Arch and the *Meta Sudans* there lies one of the long wings of the podium of the Temple of Venus and Roma, which was built by Emperor Hadrian in 135 AD in the area which was the atrium of the Domus Aurea. It was built on a huge podium (145x100m.), and lined with columned porticoes, and had two opposite cellae, dedicated to the two deities, enclosed by a peristasis of 10x22 Corinthian columns.

The temple, one of the biggest ever built in Rome, was, like most of the constructions



built by Hadrian, inspired by Greek models, which he had a great predilection for. In the 1930's, what remains today was restored: some columns of the portico in gray granite, and the remains of two apsed cellae. In order to open the Via dei Fori Imperiali, in the same years, the Velia, the hill to the northern side, was leveled, thus revealing the foundations of the podium.

In the cella facing the **Roman Forum**, which is in the ex-convent of the church of Santa Francesca Romana (now housing the Forum Antiquarium), there are still some columns of porphyria on the walls, stucco work in the lacunars of the apse and on the ceiling, and part of the floor in colored marble. Research has shown that the cellae go back to a rebuilding of the temple, completed at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century by Emperor Massenzio.

At the center of the atrium of the Domus Aurea there is the colossal bronze statue of Nero, which Hadrian moved next to the Colosseum, transforming it into the Sun god. Historical accounts speak of twenty-four elephants needed to transport the colossus: it was 35 meters high, higher than the Colossus of Rhodes (about 32 meters).

A modern plinth has been built to replace the original one, the remains of which were destroyed together with those of the *Meta Sudans*. Due to the presence of this statue, the Flavian Amphitheater, in the Middle Ages, came to be known as the "Colosseum".

On the Oppian Hill, the large buildings which probably constituted the nucleus of the Domus Aurea were destroyed by the building of two thermal baths: the Thermal Baths of Tito, and those of Trajan. Emperor Tito, inaugurating in 80 AD the thermal baths which were named after him, was merely finishing the building, and making public the private thermal baths of Nero's palace, to which they were attached, in the same north-south direction.

Today all that survives are a few pillars with brick half-columns, in the green area between the Colosseum and Via Nicola Salvi. A detailed floorplan of the baths was drawn by Andrea Palladio in 1500, on the basis of ruins which had survived until then.

Much larger, and facing different directions, were the great baths commissioned by Trajan and built by his architect Apollodoro di Damasco, inaugurated in 109 AD. They then became the model for the subsequent Imperial Baths of Rome, also following the north-east/south-west directions, ideal for exposing the salts to the sun rays.

The baths were built above Nero's structures, using them as underground service rooms. On three sides they were surrounded by a large empty area, around which



there was an enclosure divided into rooms, some of which were apsed. On the side facing the Colosseum there was a vast exedra.

The ruins of Trajan's Baths, until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, were mistakenly taken for Tito's Baths, and are now found in the park of the Oppian Hill, designed in the 1930's by Antonio Muñoz, expropriating the gardens of the Palazzo Brancaccio.

Today there are several walls, which used to belong to the central part and the enclosure of the baths, the great cistern which used to guarantee the water, known in the Middle Ages as the "Seven Salts".

The cistern has a quadrangular plan, with one long side which is curved, and is divided into nine parallel rooms, which are long, narrow and interconnecting. During archeological digs in 1966-67 and 1975, researchers found the remains of an ancient *domus* (4<sup>th</sup> century AD).

Other excavations, carried out from 1957-60 under the basilica of **San Pietro in Vincoli**, revealed the presence of at least four phases of Roman construction, the first of which concerns a house from the mid-republican period (4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century BC), the last a *domus* from the 3<sup>rd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, which the early basilica was built on in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

In an archeological area next to the Colosseum, between Via Labicana and Via di San Giovanni in Laterano, we find the remains of the *Ludus Magnus*, the main barracks for the gladiators of Rome, built by Domitian (81-96 AD).

The building included a small arena for training, surrounded by a quadrangular porticoed structure, in which the gladiators were housed, and other rooms for service equipment for the Colosseum's events, and a tunnel linking it to the *Ludus Magnus*. The visible remains, discovered in 1937 but only restored in the 1960's, are those of the northern part of the monument.

We know that there were other gladiators' barracks in the area, and buildings linked to the amphitheater, such as the *Armamentarium* ("the weapon room"), the *Saniarium* ("the hospital"), the *Spoliarium* ("the mortuary"), and the *Castra Misenatum*, the barracks which housed the marine corps from the port of Miseno, near Napoli, who were responsible for moving the velarium which covered the seats.

Walking down Via di San Giovanni in Laterano, the road opened by Pope Sixtus V in 1588 to link the basilica of **Saint John Lateran** to the Colosseum, we reach the extremely important complex of buildings of **San Clemente**, in which the visitor can see, under the current basilica, the paleochristian basilica and the structures from the Roman era on which it was built.

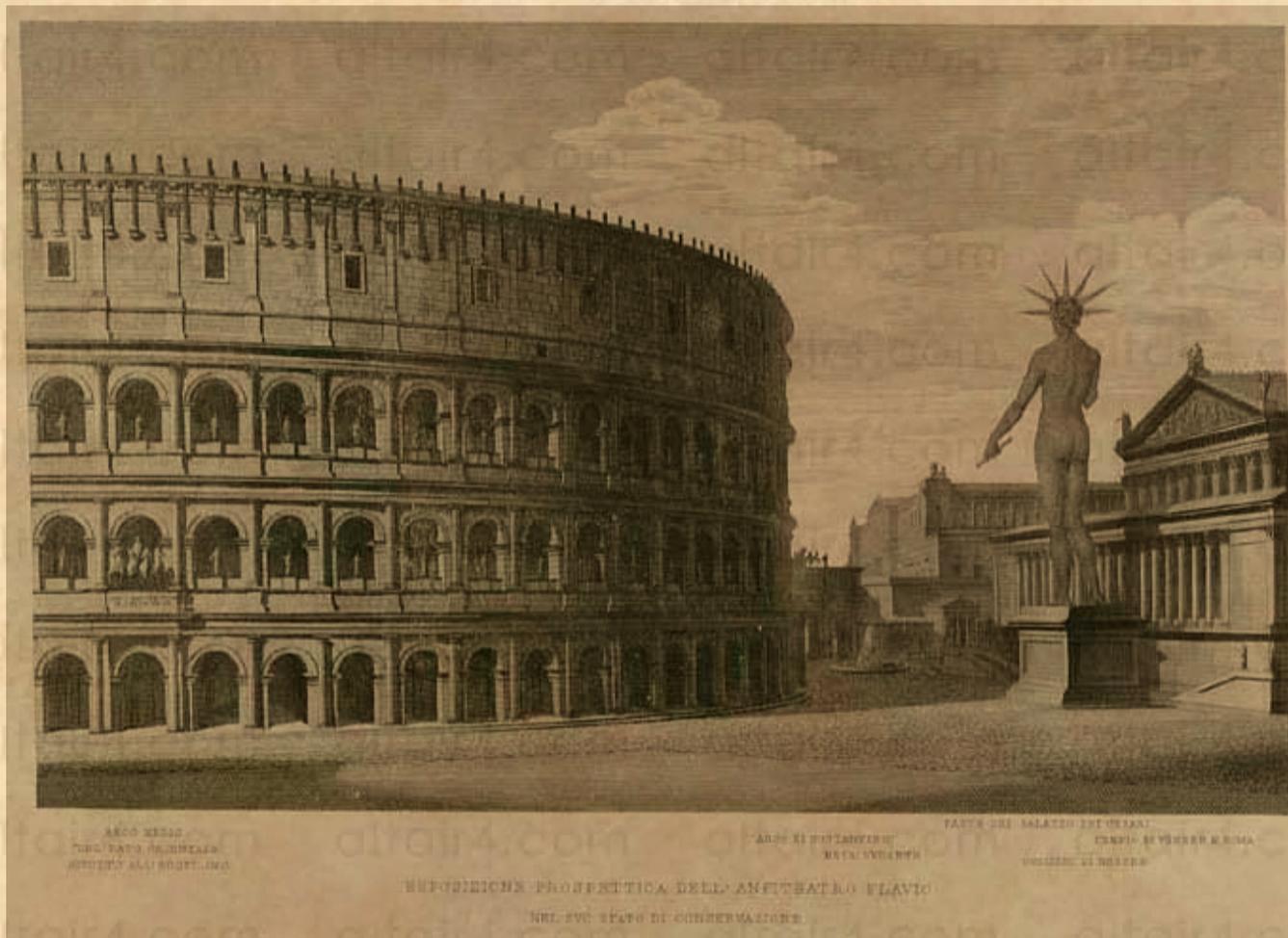






# *The Colosseum*

By Maria Grazia Nini



Built in less than ten years by the emperors of the Flavian dynasty, the Flavian Amphitheatre, called the Colosseum, perhaps due to the vicinity of the Nero Colossus, occupied the area of what had been the artificial lake of the Domus Aurea, Nero's home. One hundred days of festivity were proclaimed for its inauguration in AD 80. The amphitheater, which has become a symbol of both ancient and modern Rome, is some 50 meters high, divided into four floors by three orders of arches.

The half-columns on the arcades are Doric at ground level, Ionic on the middle level and Corinthian on the third. The attic consists of a plain wall with Corinthian pilaster strips framing small windows.

The external structure is square travertine, while the interior is brick. The arches of the first floor were numbered, to allow the orderly flow of spectators who were given free numbered entrance passes. There were also entrances and terraces reserved for the imperial family and other important personalities. Women were seated in the higher tiers. The building is said to have contained some fifty thousand spectators.

Upon entering the Colosseum today one has the idea, more so than when admiring



it from the outside, of how much of this great monument has been lost.

The tiers where the spectators sat and the floor of the arena have completely crumbled, uncovering the cells below, where the animals and equipment were kept. There were wooden slides and hoists to lift the animals and scenographic elements, creating great stage effects for the public.

A gallery allowed the gladiators to enter from the nearby barracks of the *Ludus Magnus*. During performances the seating area was covered by a huge velarium or awning erected by a complicated system of ropes and pulleys, to shade the spectators, as shows started in the morning and lasted all day. This operation was carried out by sailors from the port of Miseno at Naples.

There were two types of shows: the *venationes* (“hunts”) and the *munera*, gladiator fights. At a *venation*, the Romans had the possibility of seeing the most ferocious and exotic wild animals known at that time, fighting between themselves or with *venatores*, hunters armed with lances and whips.

The number of animals that were used is shocking: sources cite thousands of exemplars brought down at each show. Animals of different species were put into the arena to fight: lions against tigers, elephants against bulls, bears against buffalos. There was a fence crowned with ivory rollers and elephant tusks separating the arena from the tiers to stop the animals from attacking the spectators; in any event a group of archers were always ready to intervene.

The gladiators were generally slaves or prisoners. They were trained in special barracks, of which the *Ludus Magnus* was the most important. They were divided into different classes, according to their armor and to the type of combat. The Retiarius fought with a net and trident, the Mirmillo had a fish symbol on the helmet, the Thracians had a small shield and a short curved sword and the Gauls fought with no head gear, a large rectangular shield and a long sword.

At the end of each fight the winning gladiator waited for the public’s verdict, if they wanted to spare the loser, they shouted *Mitte!* raising an index finger and waving a piece of cloth, if not, pointing their thumbs toward the ground, they shouted *Jugula!* “kill”. Particularly cruel were the midday shows, where an armed gladiator fought an unarmed one. With the advent of Christianity, the gladiator games slowly disappeared and were finally abolished by the emperor Valentinian in 438 AD. *Venationes* continued to be held for another century, after which the amphitheater was abandoned. The arches of the first floor were then occupied by homes and shops and for almost two centuries (the 12th and 13th) the Colosseum was incorporated in the fortress of the noble Frangipane family, together with other monuments in the



same area, such as the Arch of Constantine and the Arch of Titus.

It later became property of the Church (1244).

During the Medieval and Renaissance periods it was used as a 'quarry' and almost half of the external façade, in great travertine blocks, crumbled. The remaining blocks are pitted with holes, made when the metal cramps holding the stones together were pillaged. The removal of materials was probably made easier by the collapse of vast parts of the building, also due to earthquakes.

The materials were used to build many of the major churches and palazzos in Rome, such as St. John's, the Scala Santa, St. Peter's, St. Mark's, palazzo Venezia, palazzo della Cancelleria and palazzo Farnese.

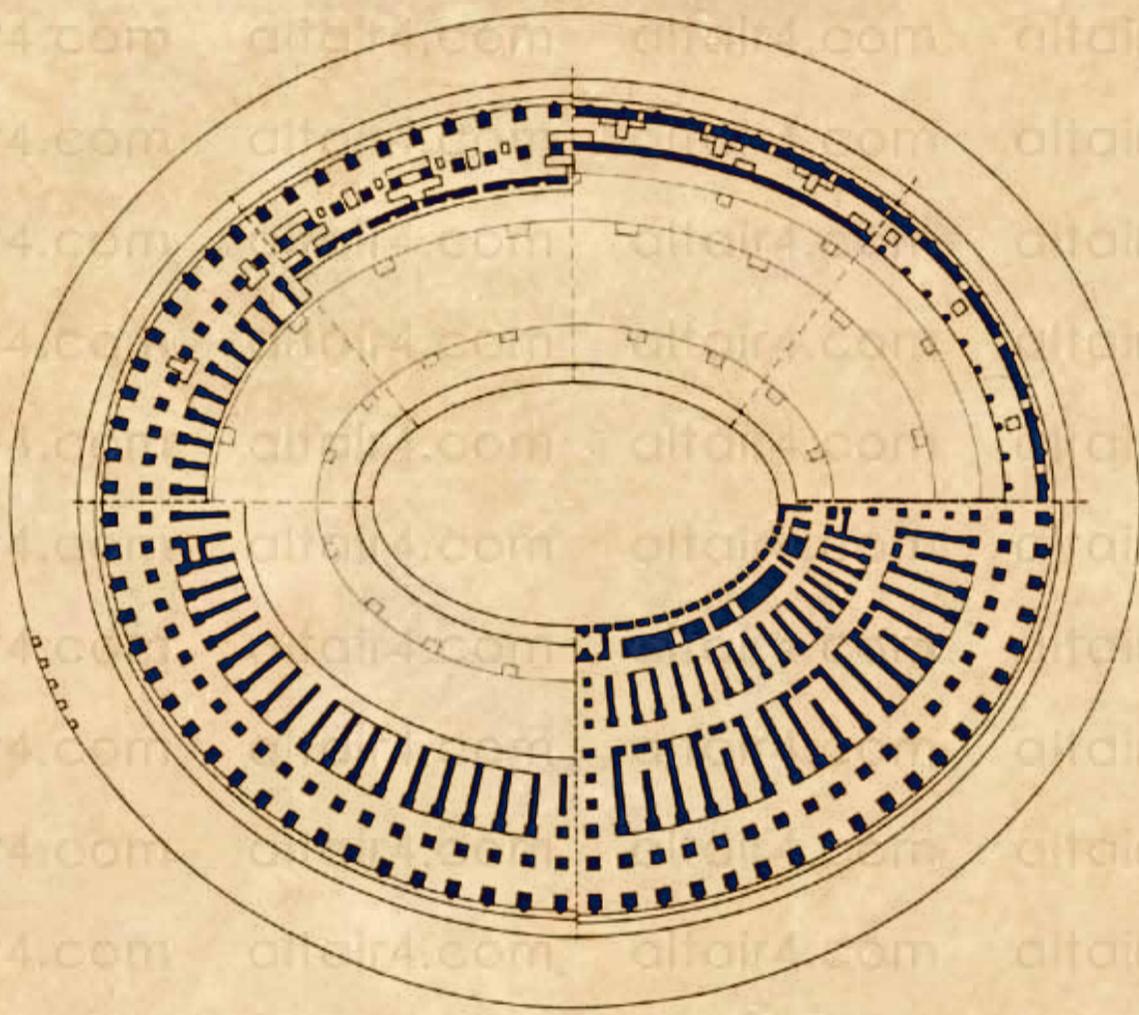
Only in 1744, under pope Benedict XIV, with the consecration of the arena to the memory of Christ's Passion and His Martyrs, did the pillage of the monument finally end. Stations of the Cross were placed along the arena, inaugurating the tradition of the ritual procession of Good Friday. Between the 13th and 16th centuries sacred representations of the Passion and death of Christ were held in the Colosseum. In Christian tradition, in fact, the Colosseum represents the place where martyrs were persecuted. There is, however, no proof that Christians were martyred in the amphitheater, although it is certain that from the second half of the 1st century AD they were persecuted by law and sentenced to death, and could therefore be fed to the beasts. It is thanks to this tradition that the Colosseum was saved from destruction. In the 16th century it was inserted in the itinerary of the pilgrimage of the faithful, to whom it was recommended to conserve the soil of the arena as a relic, soaked as it was with the blood of the martyrs.

A chapel dedicated to Santa Maria della Pietà, was consecrated in the 17th century. It was later demolished along with the Stations of the Cross, between the end of the 18th century and 1870, when the whole of the Colosseum was completely excavated, uncovering the underground rooms.

The first restorations were done in the 19th century; two magnificent brick buttresses were built at either end of the external ring, respectively under Pius VII in 1807 by Raffaele Stern and under Leo XII in 1827 by Giuseppe Valadier. The buttresses of the precarious arches, together with the brick work filling, are an example of the more functional and methodologically correct restorations that have ever been done on ancient monuments.

A costly restoration project to clean and consolidate the stone facing, gravely corroded by pollution, has been in progress since 1992.









*Veduta esterna dell' Anfiteatro Flavio dalla Parte orientale*

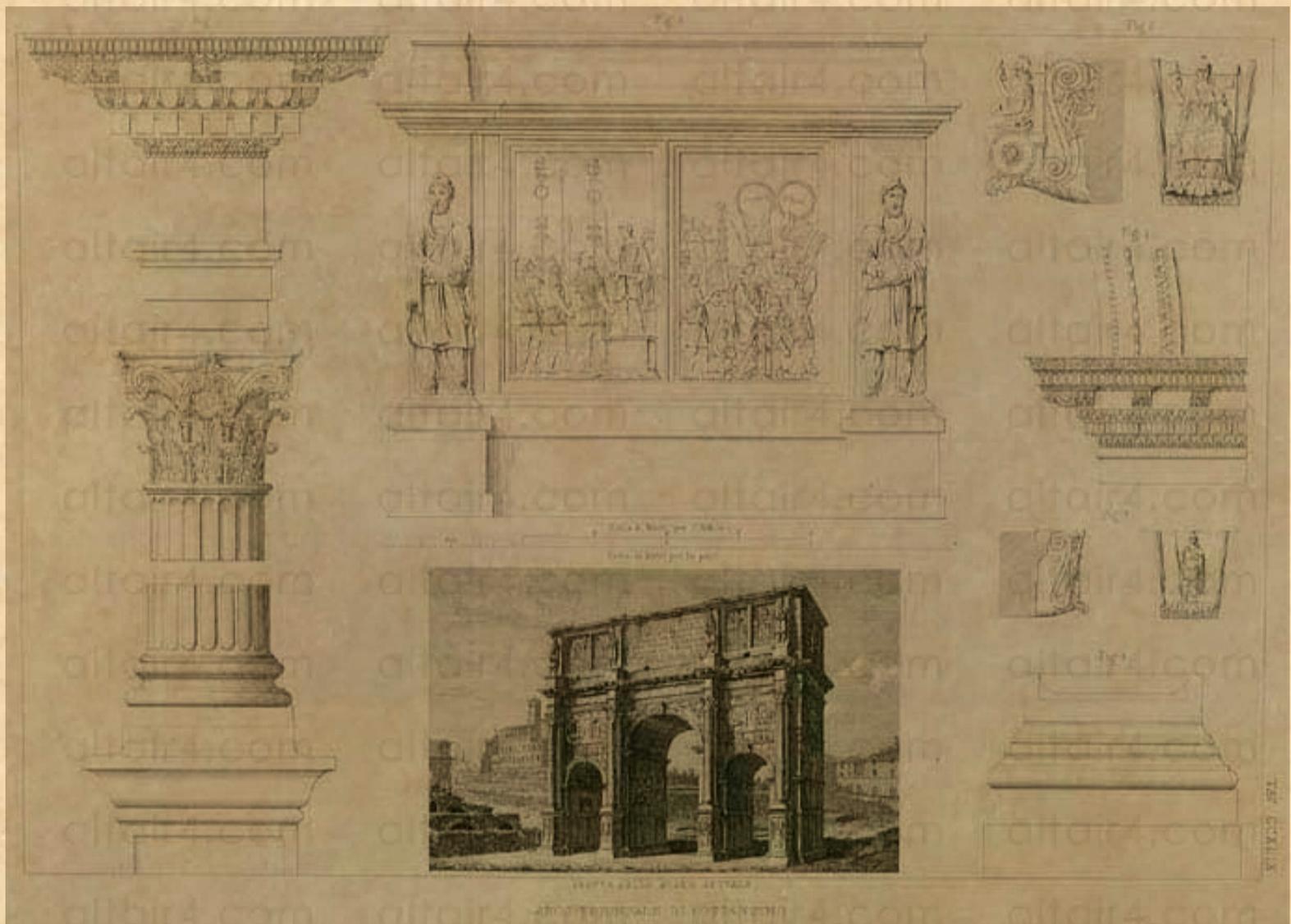




*Veduta dell'Interno dell'Amfiteatro Flavio.*

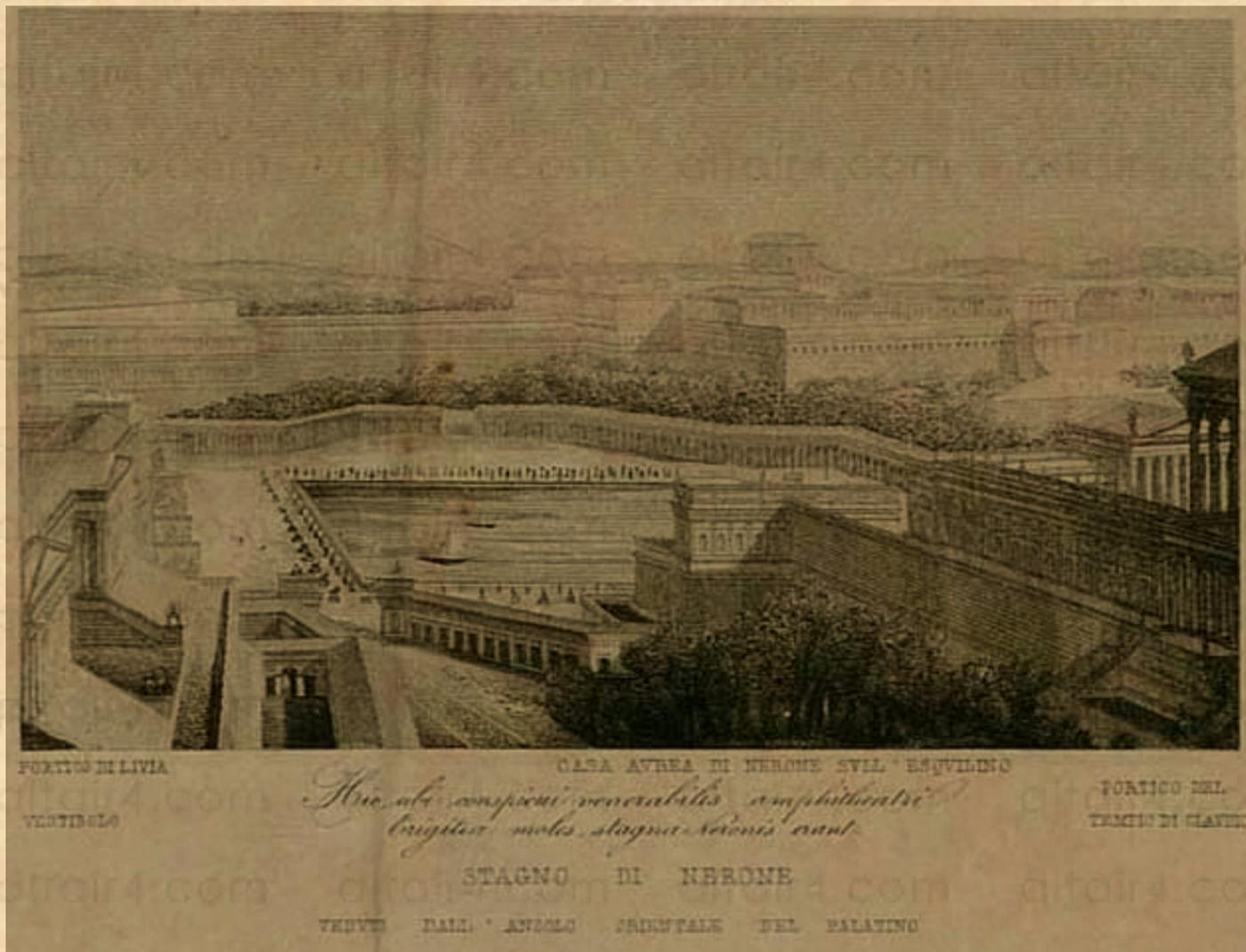






# *Domus Aurea*

By Maria Grazia Nini



The imperial residence of Nero has recently come into the limelight of cultural news on national and international television and in the press; the occasion is its reopening to the public after being closed for restoration for almost twenty years.

The Domus Aurea or “Golden House” has returned, after five centuries, to awaken the interests not only of the scholars, but also of all those impassioned by ancient history and art. In fact, when it was discovered on the Oppian Hill in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, below the ruins of the Baths of Trajan (then wrongly thought to be ‘Titus’), the painted decorations created a sensation and many artists of that time, including Raphael, rushed to study and draw inspiration from them.

The so-called “grottoes” (because they were underground) were reproduced and re-elaborated in numerous villas, churches and palazzos, according to the style of the epoch. The paintings were often reproduced in the centuries that followed, and the rooms of the residence progressively dug out until the latest excavations carried out



in the 1970s.

The complex on the Oppian Hill is only a part of the extensive home built by Nero in 64 AD. After the famous fire, of which he was perhaps unjustly accused, the emperor destroyed his previous residence, the “transitory home” *Domus Transitoria*, that connected the palace on the Palatine with the imperial properties on the Esquiline. The *Domus Aurea* was said to have been built in places as far from each other as the Palatine, Esquiline and Celian Hills. The palace is described as grandiose and luxurious. There was a colossal statue of Nero in the entrance hall, and an artificial lake within its walls, surrounded by porticos.

The halls were richly decorated and adorned with valuable statues. Even the names of the architects who designed the palace have passed down through the centuries, Severo and Celere, and that of the painter who decorated it, the illustrious *Fabullus*, who usually painted while dressed in a toga. The appearance must have been of a suburban villa, a sort of “antique Versailles”, as it has been called, right in the center city.

The pavilion on the Oppian Hill, partially conserved thanks to the superimposition of the Baths of Trajan, must have been the center of the palace. It was built along the hill and covered almost four hundred meters from east to west, divided into groups of rooms within large open areas. In fact, it is thought that the complex conserved today, made up of two sectors, continued laterally to the east, doubling its present size.

The western sector is organized around a rectangular peristyle, which is closed to the north by a cryptoporticus. Many rooms, identifiable as bedrooms (*cubicula*) or sitting rooms are found on the southern side, including the “volta delle civette” (vault of owls) hall, dedicated to the Goddess Minerva for whom the owl is the sacred animal, the alcoves (“yellow vaulted” and “black vaulted”), and the hall that we can call “red” for its decorations on red background.

The lower parts of the walls in this hall were covered with slabs of polychrome marble, now completely lost, with frescoes painted above, today almost completely lost. They were reproduced by artists in the 18th century, and though they were re-elaborated according to the styles of the time, the reproductions represent a precious source of knowledge of these splendid paintings.

The walls were covered with sumptuous decorations, with shrines and curtains. Curtains were reproduced in the vault as well, separated by cornices with animal and vegetable figures. A male figure, perhaps Dionysus, is depicted in the central square of the vault, surrounded by female figures and by a child. There is an apse on the far



wall of the hall where a statue was placed.

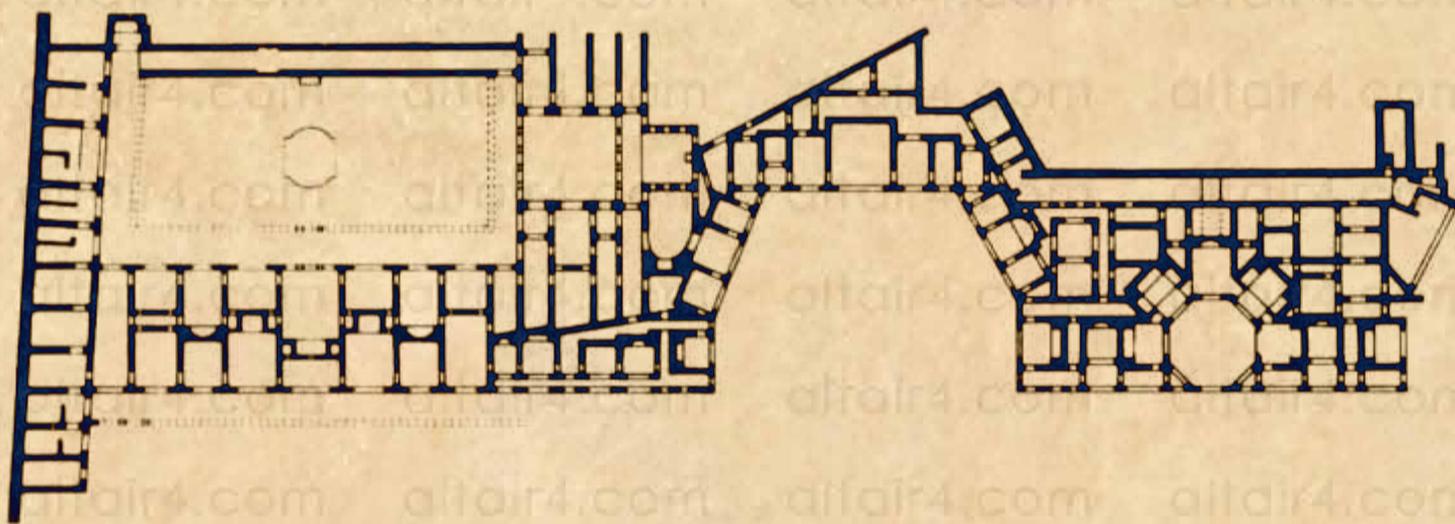
A great hall, perhaps a dining-room, opens on the eastern courtyard and a nymphaeum called “Polyphemus’s nymphaeum” because of the scene of the vault’s central medallion, in glass paste mosaic, of Ulysses offering the cup of wine to the Cyclops. The eastern sector offers a more complex design, as the rooms are distributed around a polygonal courtyard and an octagonal room. A “golden vaulted” hall opens at the center of the courtyard, thus called because of the splendid decorations in gold stucco of the cornices that frame the paintings.

On the sides of the octagonal room are two other halls adorned with paintings and stuccos called, “Achilles and Cyrus’ room” and “Hector and Andromache’s room”. The octagonal room represents the fulcrum of the whole complex. It is completely without walls, with wide openings toward the surrounding rooms, one of which is the nymphaeum, which sources say “rotated continuously, day and night, like the earth”. Many hypotheses have been put forward about the mechanism that enabled the rotation. Most probably it was an hydraulic system applied to a turning platform or *controvolta*, with paintings of the constellations.

The paintings of the Domus Aurea are the highest expression of the so-called “fourth Pompeian style”, or fantastic style, characterized by an accentuated spatial illusion effected by way of a delicate architectural *trompe-l’oeil*, framing small landscapes with figures, astonishingly impressionist in the freedom of their execution.

A different decorative style is used in the corridors and in the hallways of the pavilion, white backgrounds with extremely simple divisions containing small squares with landscapes and stylized vegetable and animal figures.





# *Basilica of San Pietro in Vincoli*

By Alessandra Milella



The Basilica of San Pietro in Vincoli is at the top of the Oppian Hill, where three of the city's ancient administrative Regions established by the emperor Augustus, come together: the 3rd, 4th and 5th.

This area, part of today's Rione Monti (Monti District), has been of great importance since prehistoric times, so much so that it was believed there was a sacred wood with a sanctuary dedicated to Jupiter on the top of the Hill, called the *Fagutal* after a "faggio" or beech tree, where sacrifices were celebrated in occasion of the ancient *Septimontium* feast.

This part of the city had been chosen over the centuries by many important people to build their residences, until 64 BC when Nero expropriated various private properties, enclosing the whole area in the extravagant *Domus Aurea*. After his death, the Flavian emperors promoted the restitution of the area to the citizenship, conceding some sectors to private ownership and others to public works, like the Baths of Titus, later enlarged by Trajan, or the Flavian Amphitheater.

All of these phases succeeded one another in the same spot in which the basilica



was built in the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century; the same spot in fact where evidence identifies uninterrupted human presence since prehistoric times.

The most interesting archaeological data are from the excavations done below the central nave of the church between 1957 and 1960, when the remains of a 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC square house in Grotta Oscura tufa were revealed, together with its 1<sup>st</sup> century BC floor mosaics.

Next to it was another residence, built in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, with brick walls and floor mosaics. The two buildings must have lived side by side for a long time, until they were replaced, in imperial times, by a single large villa with a central rectangular porticoed courtyard and a bath in the center.

The new home was modified in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD but the most interesting transformations were done during the second part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the central room of the villa, which had already been lengthened into the courtyard, was completed by an apse. The function of this apsed hall has never been made clear: there is not sufficient data to establish whether it was a reception hall where the rich owner would hold audiences or an early Christian place of worship.

There is no information regarding the origins of the basilica, though there are inscriptions that date its existence to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, tying it to Pope Sixtus III (432-440) and to Eudoxia, the daughter of the Eastern Emperor Theodosius and wife of the Western Emperor Valentinian III, in whose honor the church has often been referred to, since the 6<sup>th</sup> century, as the Eudoxian basilica.

From the text of these epigraphs it is possible to deduce that the pope, with the help of imperial funds, had important work done in the already existing church, dedicating it to the apostles Peter and Paul, from which the long-used name, *Titulus Apostolorum*, was derived. The basilica appears in official documents, such as ecclesiastical synod records, since the end of the fifth-century, the same time as the first evidence of the relics of St Peter's chains, which are still conserved there today.

The early Christian building, with a triple nave, a narthex, and an apse, continues to make up the central part of the present day church, despite modifications made over the centuries. The outline of the original entrance, which led into the central nave, still remains visible on the back wall of the façade. The fact that the side aisles never had doors is confirmed by the presence, in correspondence to the end of the left aisle, of the altar with the mosaic of San Sebastian, moved to its present position in the middle of the nave in 1576.

A passage by Paolo Diacono gave rise to the theory that the altar was built in 680 to



stop the pestilence that affected the city, but a more careful reading of the passage reveals that the author was referring to a church with the same name in Pavia. The characteristics of the mosaic do, however, confirm the antiquity of the work, attributed to a local mosaicist who used a Byzantine style from the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. In any case, nothing indicates that the date of the work coincides with its being placed on the altar of San Pietro in Vincoli. The saint, whose unusual portrayal as an old man, dressed in the robes of a Byzantine dignitary with the crown of martyrdom in his hands, emerges from the deep blue background of the panel.

San Pietro in Vincoli was rebuilt in the 8<sup>th</sup> century by Adrian I (772-795), while restorations of the transept and the characteristic small windows were done during the Romanesque era. The church later went through a period of great difficulty, and was actually abandoned during the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

It was Nicola Cusano, titular Cardinal from 1448 to 1464, who began an uninterrupted cycle of restoration work, returning the church to its original luster within the century. At the beginning of the left aisle is his tomb, with colored reliefs attributed to Andrea Bregno. The Cardinal is portrayed on his knees before San Peter and an angel is holding the chains. The work was probably done as a frontal for the altar of chains, built by Cusano on the left end of the transept and transferred to the sacristy in 1704. At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the tomb of the brothers Pietro and Antonio Pollaiuolo was installed on the pilaster that begins the left colonnade, perhaps the work of Luigi Capponi. Antonio, a famous sculptor, died in 1498, and according to his will wished to be buried in San Pietro in Vincoli next to his brother, who had died two years earlier.

The simple monument is in the form of a shrine, made up of two small pilasters that support a pediment with the image of God giving His benediction, and the busts of the artists in the two oval niches. There is a fresco above the shrine which commemorates the procession in which the image of San Sebastian was taken through the streets of Rome streets to ward off the plague in 1476.

The ceremony was held under the auspices of Pope Sixtus IV, that is to say Francesco della Rovere, who as titular Cardinal between 1467 and 1474 restored the roof of the church and started construction of the adjacent palace on the left. He was succeeded as titular cardinal by his nephew Giuliano, later became pope Julius II, who commissioned the cross vaults of the transept, the portal on the side aisles, and probably the portico, as well as the convent with the annexed monastery on the right side of the church, seat of the Faculty of Engineering of “La Sapienza” University since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



The decoration of the church could be considered finished with the creation of Julius II's tomb, placed to the right of the transept, by Michelangelo between 1542-1545. The masterpiece, famous for the majestic statue of Moses, had a long and torturous history, and the same pope who commissioned it in 1505 for St Peter's in the Vatican never saw it finished.

The monument is made up of two architectural orders: the lower one realized by Michelangelo, is dominated by the statue of Moses, descended from Mount Sinai with the tablets of the Law received from God. In the niches on either side are the statues of Rachel to the left and Leah to the right, representations of Contemplative Life and the Active Life, respectively. The cornice is supported symbolically by four herms, executed by Jacopo del Duca, while the higher order is adorned to the right and left respectively by statues of the Sibyl and the Prophet. The Madonna and Child are in the center, protecting the sarcophagus of the pope. The figure of the pope is the work of Tommaso Boscoli, perhaps with touch ups done by the maestro, the other three are attributed to Raffaele da Montelupo.

Between 1570 and 1579, Cardinal Antonio de Granvelle raised the portico by building a second floor, which modified the façade once and for all. This can be considered one of the most important periods of San Pietro in Vincoli, whose interior was embellished with precious art works.

In 1577 the Florentine artist Jacopo Coppi completed the painted decorations of the apsidal semi-dome with subjects taken from the stories of St Peter and chains. It seems that the two smaller apses on either side of the central apse can be attributed to the end of the Renaissance period. The one to the right has become a chapel dedicated to St Margaret with a canvas representing the saint attributed to Giovan Francesco Barbieri, known as Il Guercino (1591-1666). It is not by chance that the chapel was dedicated to the martyr from Antioch; in fact nearby there must have existed a church of the same name, in memory of which the altar in the basilica was dedicated.

A canvas representing St Augustine, again by Guercino, is on the first altar of the small right aisle; next to it is the tomb of Cardinal Luigi Margotti, who died in 1611, adorned by a small oil portrait commonly attributed to Domenico Zampieri, known as Domenichino, also the author of the tomb of Cardinal Girolamo Agucchia, who died in 1605, in the same aisle, and probably of a painting representing St Peter's liberation from prison, now conserved in the sacristy. Finally, on the first altar of the right aisle is the painting of the Pietà, the work of the mannerist Cristoforo Roncalli, known as Il Pomarancio (1552-1626).



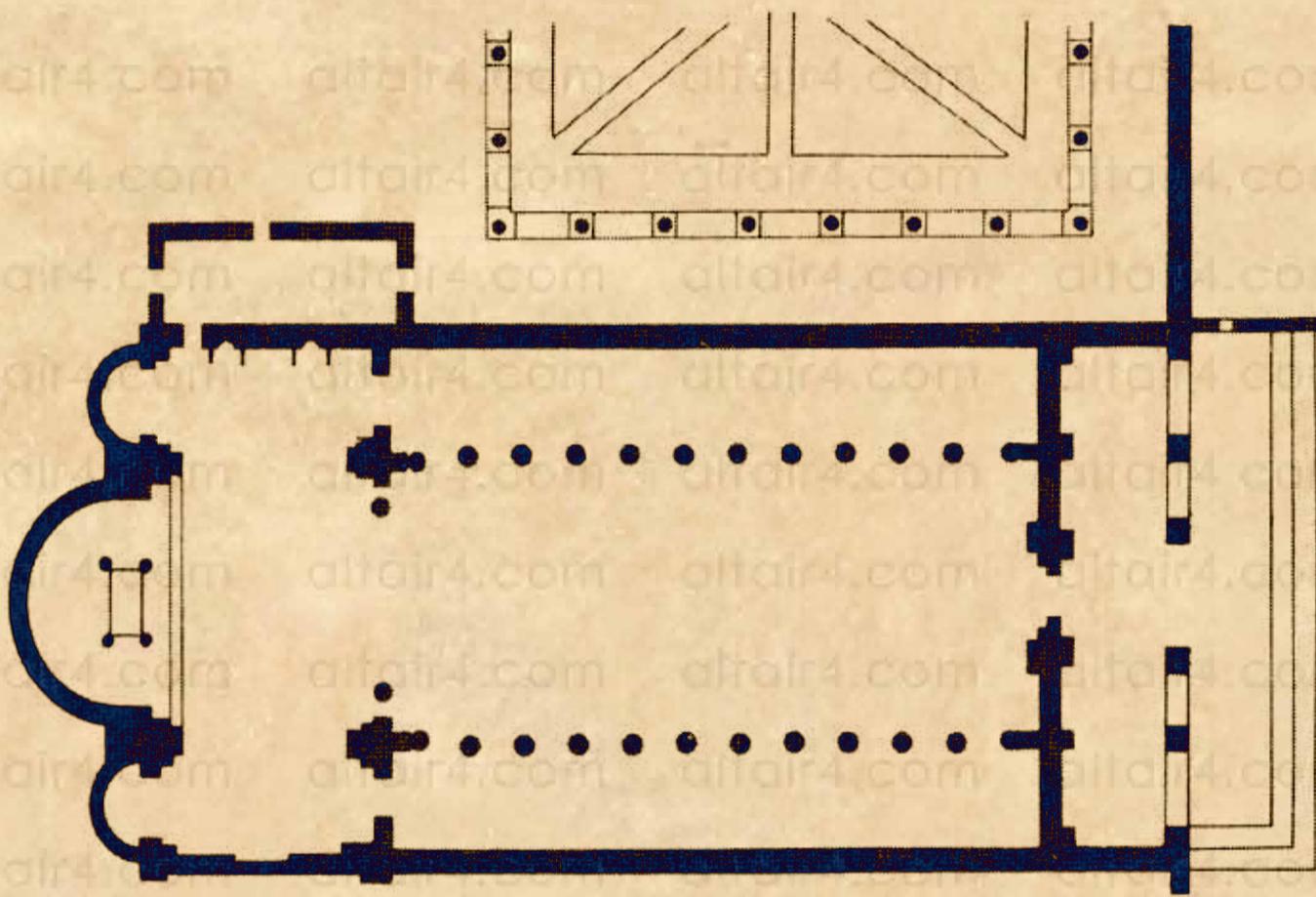
The interior of the building took on its present characteristics in 1705, when Cardinal Durazzo gave Francesco Fontana the task of covering the grand twin trusses of the ceiling of the central nave with a gilded wooden vault, a work that provoked great admiration among contemporaries. The central painting was done by Giovanni Battista Parodi, a Genovese painter, whose subject was taken from a legendary episode tied to the chains of St Peter: in 969 Pope John XIII cured a man who was possessed by placing the sacred relics around his neck.

The last important intervention was carried out by Virginio Vespignani, who rearranged the presbytery by making an underground reliquary in front of the high altar in which to place the shrine of the chains. The relic is conserved in a gilded bronze box with a small representation of the Liberation of St Peter, painted by Andrea Busiri Vici in 1856. Two small bronze portals were adapted to the new structure, taken from the single one that Giuliano della Rovere had made for the altar in 1477 that, at the time, was in the transept. In the two paintings by Ambrogio Foppa, called Caradosso, below the coat of arms of Sixtus IV and his nephew Giuliano, are two scenes in relief of the life of the apostle: the trial and the miraculous liberation from prison thanks to the angel.

When excavations in the presbytery were begun for the reliquary, the unexpected recovery of the ancient sarcophagus containing the remains of the Seven Maccabei Brothers induced Vespignani to enlarge the project adding an underground crypt to conserve the remains which had been in the basilica since time unknown. The brothers were the only martyrs of the Old Testament, which were accepted by Christianity as noble examples of martyrdom.

An epigraph, estimated by ancient historians to be from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, marks the re-consecration of the church by pope Pelagius, it may be the I (556-561) or II (579-590), who placed the remains of the Maccabei Brothers together with the chains. The beautiful sarcophagus, divided into seven compartments, is attributed to a 4<sup>th</sup> century AD Roman workshop. There are Christian themes represented in relief on the front; starting from the left: the Samaritan at the well, the Multiplication of the loaves and fishes, Peter denying Christ, and the Conferring of the Keys to Peter.





# *The Basilica of San Clemente*

*By Lia Barelli*



A place of Christian worship in the valley between the Celian and Oppian Hills, dedicated to St Clement, the third pope in the history of the Church, it dates back to the fourth-century, at the end of which, or at the beginning of the following, a first basilica was built.

The church is the seat of a titular cardinal. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century, in order to guarantee the care and custody of the church, the Benedictines founded a monastery next to it, and after various changes of hands it passed into the care of the Irish Dominicans in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and they still reside there today.

The particularity that distinguishes the complex, made up of the basilica and its annexes, is that thanks to the numerous excavations, begun in 1857 and still going on today, the first Paleo-Christian basilica, situated below the existing one, and the Roman constructions in which it was inserted have been made available to the public. These last were endowed with a certain importance.

Two buildings are clearly visible: the first, in large blocks of tufa and travertine, has a rectangular base, with cells along the sides of a courtyard; it might have been a store room (*horrea*) or an industrial plant, identified by some with the *Moneta*, the ancient imperial mint that was located in this area, dating back to the end of the 1<sup>st</sup>



century AD.

The second building, a 1<sup>st</sup> century mansion, is situated behind the apse of the basilica. It had luxurious rooms, including a hall covered by lowered barrel vaults, probably a nymphaeum, which was used in the third-century as a sanctuary of the oriental divinity Mitra. At a still lower level are the ruins of Roman buildings from the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century.

The first basilica was inserted within the rectangular building using its perimeter walls. The interior was divided into a nave and two aisles separated by eight columns on each side. A large apse was added in the part of the house with the Mitra sanctuary, a narthex was separated from the naves by a multiple window, a yet to be excavated atrium and a baptistery on the left side.

The building was restored under Adrian I (772-795) and decorated by Leo IV (846-855), whose interventions include a fresco representing the Ascension, where Christ is depicted still alive. In 869 Pope Adrian II placed the remains of St Clement here, brought to Rome from Crimea by the missionary Saints Cyril and Methodius, evangelists to the Slavic peoples. The two saints were later buried here and now rest in a chapel erected by Leo XIII in 1882-86, with frescoes of episodes from their lives painted by Salvatore Nobile.

Following the damage done by the fire set by the troops of Robert Guiscard in 1084 the basilica was in need of consolidation and several columns were enclosed by newly built walls. At the end of the century frescoes were painted on these structures, including the legend of St. Alessio, episodes from the life of Clement, and portraits of the consignors Beno de Rapiza and his wife Maria Macellaria, members of a well known and wealthy Roman family in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries and owners of property in the area.

The Mass of St Clement contains some captions which are one of the earliest examples of the use of vernacular Italian.

Under Paschal II (1099-1118), Cardinal Anastasius and his successor Peter, decided to totally rebuild the basilica as it was still unsafe, and as the level of the surrounding land had risen due to rubble, they covered the existing basilica, reusing the old walls as the new foundation. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century excavations the more ancient structure was brought to light and to make it ready for use, was covered by vaults on cruciform pilasters to support the floor of the superior church. In 1868 an altar and tabernacle were added.

The new basilica, dedicated in 1128, was smaller than the earlier one, as the central nave and right aisle were made out of the space occupied by the previous central



nave.

Apart from very few transformations, the present building is much the same as in the time of Paschal II: it has a nave and two aisles, separated by seven columns and a central pilaster for each side, with Ionic capitals redone in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, three apses, of which the left one was demolished to create a chapel. It is preceded by a four-sided portico, with Ionic columns supporting an architrave. The entrance to the hall is adorned with an arch supported by two columns with Ionic capitals.

The apse was decorated with a splendid mosaic, depicting the cross where Jesus was crucified, on a gold background, adorned with twelve white doves representing the Apostles; the cross is next to Mary and John, and above them is the hand of God holding a crown on his Son's head. A tuft of acanthus rises from which numerous spiral ornaments including flowers, lanterns, bowls of fruit, birds, saints, doctors and fathers of the Church. At the base of the cross are deer drinking from the four rivers of Paradise. Below, twelve lambs converge towards the *Agnus Dei*. On the apsidal arch Christ enthroned is flanked by symbols of the Evangelists, saints and prophets. The lower part of the canopy was painted around the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with Jesus and Maria surrounded by the twelve Apostles.

The interior of the basilica was enriched with a beautiful pavement and precious liturgical furnishings: the *schola cantorum* (choir) and presbytery enclosure which utilizes the 6<sup>th</sup> century plutei and transennae, found in the lower basilica. The raised pulpits for reading the Epistle and the Gospel, and the paschal candle were made new.

Also from the 12<sup>th</sup> century are the ciborium made of four purple columns supporting a gallery of tiny columns and a canopy, and the Episcopal throne at the center of the curve of the apse. The altar was redone in 1925.

On the pier of the apsidal arch is the Gothic tabernacle work of Iacopo Caetani (1299), nephew of Boniface VIII.

Over the centuries, chapels and tombs were added; at the beginning of the left aisle we find the chapel of St. Catherine of Alexandria, with frescoes of stories of Catherine and Ambrose, the Crucifixion, and the Annunciation. On the dome are Evangelists and doctors of the church, attributed to Masolino da Panicale, the maestro of Masaccio. The altar-piece is the Virgin by Sassoferrato (1605-1685).

The Chapel of St Dominic on the right aisle has held the remains of Cyril and Methodius since the 19<sup>th</sup> century; in 1715 it was covered with marble and decorated with stories of St Dominic by Sebastiano Conca.

Among the tombs are those of Cardinal Roverella and Venerio and Archbishop

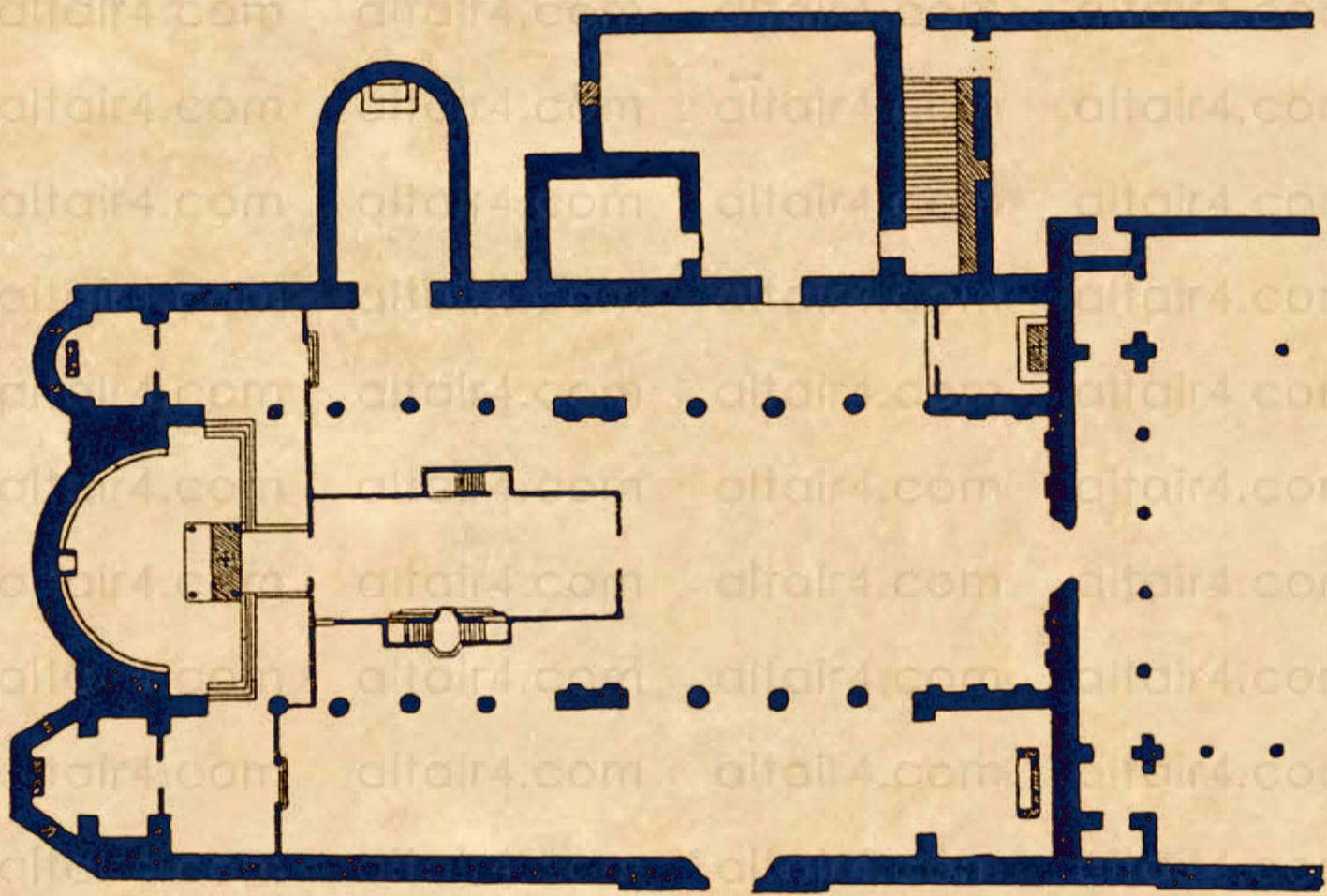


Giovanni Francesco Brusati, attributed to artists from the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

By appointment of Clement XI Albani, the architect Carlo Stefano Fontana carried out modernization works following the styles of the time, and concluded in 1715.

The interior walls were adorned with stucco and frescoes of stories of St Clement and St Ignatius, whose relics were said to have been housed in the basilica. The central nave was covered by a wooden ceiling with paintings of the Glory of St Clement by Giuseppe Chiari. Fontana also constructed a new façade with a portico, reusing the columns from the wing of the 7<sup>th</sup> century four-sided portico; to the left he placed a small belfry. Fontana also probably designed the side door on Via S. Giovanni, dating from 1719.

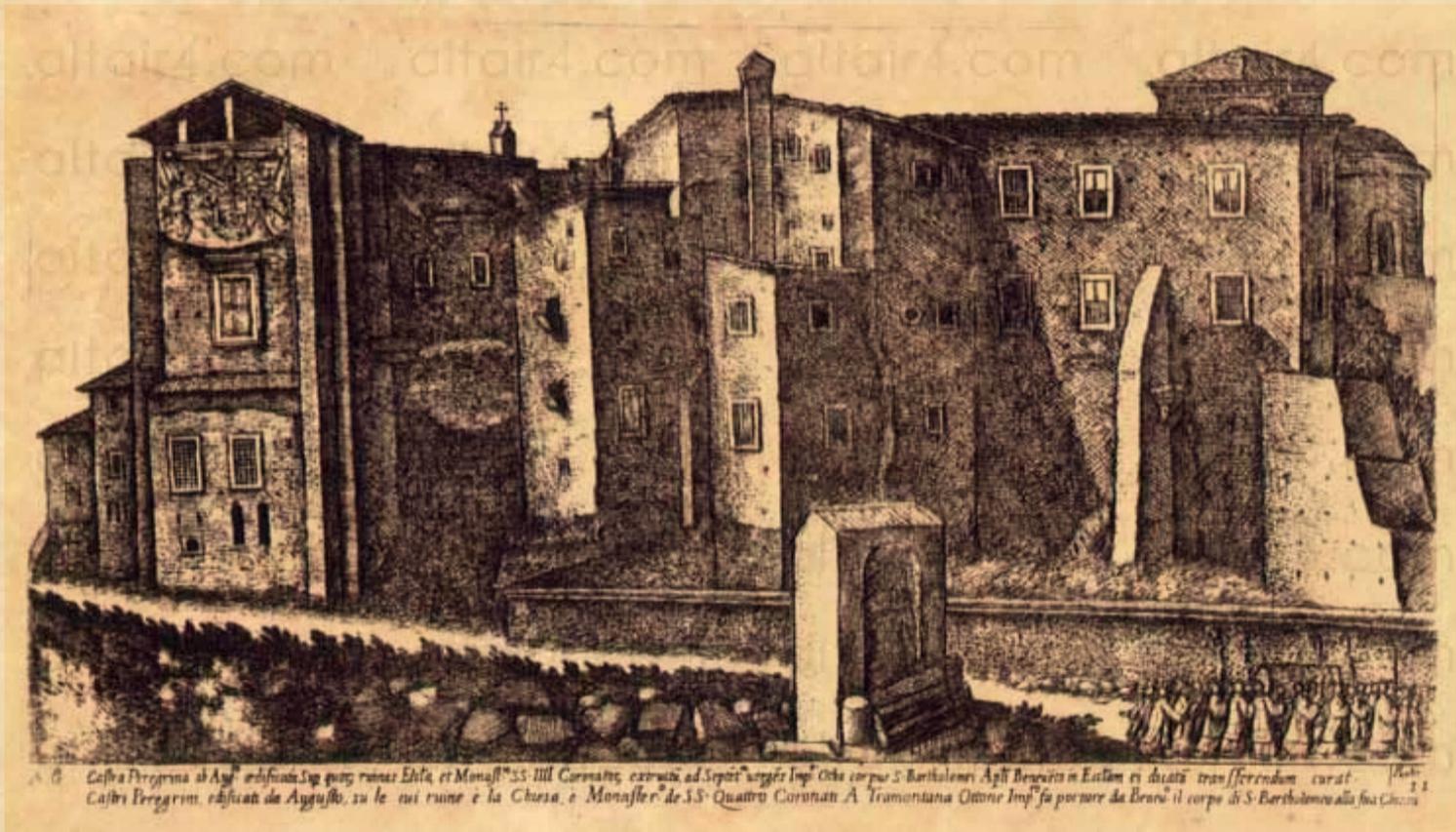




*Scenographia interior*

*Basilica S. Clementis* TAEMII





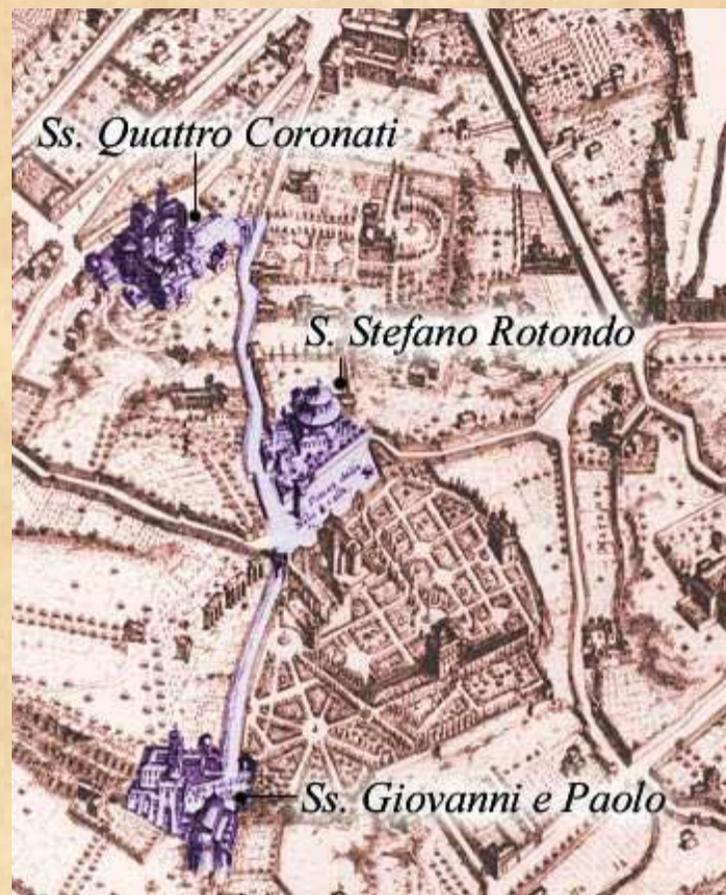
A. G. *Castro Peregrina ab Asolo edificata. Sup. quos ruinas Etrusc. et Monast. SS. IIII Constantis, extructa ad Sepulcrum imp. Otto corpus S. Bartholomei Apoli Benaviti in Eastem et diuita transferendum curat. 1711  
 Castro Peregrin. edificat. de Augusto, su. le. sui ruine e la Chiesa, e Monaster. de SS. Quattro Constanti. A. Teumontana Ottone Imp. fu portare da Benev. il corpo di S. Bartholomeo alla sua Chiesa.*





# The Celian Hill

By Raffaele Pugliese



This district corresponds to the Second Augustan region and also to the Twelfth Rione or quarter of modern Rome, known as Celio, and was built on two hills: the first is known as the *Celius*, and corresponds to the area where today we can find Villa Celimontana, the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo and the Temple of Claudius, and also the *Caeliolus* or little Celio, which contains the basilica of Santi Quattro Coronati.

Today the district's outer limits can be clearly defined: on the north by Via di San Giovanni in Laterano, on the west by Via di San Gregorio, on the south by Via della Navicella as far as the Porta Metronia, and on the east by the Lateran Palace.

There were settlements on the hill from ancient times (ceramics from the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC found in the area around the Military Hospital), all within the Servian Wall which surrounded the city from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.

Some important roads crossed the hill settlement: Via Tuscolana in the north (today Santi Quattro Coronati), Via *Caelemontana* (Via di Santo Stefano Rotondo), and the *Vicus Capitis Africae* ("Vico of the head of Africa", which links the two roads transversally).

From the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC the area was densely inhabited with humble dwellings, but it also had luxurious residences belonging to the Roman aristocracy, which became a prevailing characteristic of the imperial era.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD some extremely important public buildings were erected: among these were the barracks of the *peregrini* (provincial troops) in the area of Santo Stefano Rotondo, the barracks of the Vigili (urban police) in Santa Maria in Domnica: both of them were begun in the Augustan era. The most important monument was the temple of the deity Claudius or the *Claudianum*, begun in 54 AD, and whose impressive foundations can still be seen today.

The famous fire during Nero's reign in 64 was particularly devastating, and destroyed part of the district. After the fire the food market was rebuilt by Nero (*Macellum Magnum*), who decided to incorporate part of the *Claudianum* into his palace, the *Domus Aurea*.

The reign of Domitian (81-96) saw a period of building of military installations or buildings linked to the games held in the Coliseum, while some *insulae* (several floor buildings for tenants) in the area of the Military Hospital, along the Via Celimontana or under the Church of Saint Paul and Saint John, can be dated back to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD.

However, the predominant characteristic of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD are the



luxurious *domus* (villas belonging to the aristocracy), as testified by written sources (such as those of the Valeri or the Simmaci families) and by archeological findings. They are to be found in the best panoramic locations on the hill and reveal the wealth and measure of importance of this city within a city.

The hill suffered its first setback with the raids by the Visigoths in 410, who plundered and burnt some of the richest and most famous villas in the district. From this time on there was a rapid exodus which seems to have come to an end with the building of some small nuclei of settlements around the Christian basilicas, the only remaining buildings which would henceforth characterize the hill for centuries.

The only noteworthy construction from the early Middle Ages to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the building and restoration of churches, and of some villas such as that of the Mattei family (Villa Celimontana) in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Casali villa in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Military Hospital area), and the Villa Campana (Via dei Santi Quattro Coronati) in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the resurfacing of some of the most important roads; all around there were vineyards, vegetable plots and farms, interrupted by the walls of ancient buildings.

Starting in 1802, however, some urban development was begun in the area between the Colosseum and the Temple of Claudius, so as to bring out the qualities of the level of Roman domination and create an area for the public around it.

In 1870 Rome became the capital of Italy, and much building was undertaken in the Celio district, in particular in the zone between the Navicella fountain, the avenue of S. Giovanni and the temple of Claudius.

With the town planning scheme of 1871, the whole area was destined to become a working-class residential area crossed and surrounded by a grid of roads, whose names were ancient Roman place names. The building went on for an extended period, which lasted up to the 1930's.

Along Via Celimontana, and flanked by buildings from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we reach a vast square dominated by the impressive Military Hospital. It was built by Colonel Luigi Durand de la Penne, and was finished in 1891. However, its construction also caused the demolition in 1888 of the Villa Casali, famous for its art collection.

Beyond the Hospital is the Via della Navicella, whose name derives from the unusual fountain with a marble ship sculpture. In reality the ship is a copy of what was probably a votive offering to the goddess Isis, offered by soldiers, and was ordered to be built by Leo X in 1513; the road, regularized in 1931, continues as far as the Metronian Gate.



On the left of the fountain we find Via Santo Stefano Rotondo, the left side of which is flanked by the arcades of the aqueduct built under Claudius and Nero.

Along the road which leads to the Lateran Palace, we find the magnificent Church of Santo Stefano Rotondo.

To the right of the Navicella we find the entrance to the Villa Celimontana or formerly Mattei, built in 1582, with a magnificent portal, the work of Carlo Lombardi (1625), which originally adorned the Villa Giustiniani-Massimo on Via Merulana, and was taken there after 1885.

Through it we reach the splendid villa, whose 17<sup>th</sup> century games room has been, since 1926, the headquarters of the Italian Geographical Society. In the gardens there is an obelisk which comes from the temple of Isis in Campo Marzio, donated to Ciriaco Mattei by the Senate in 1582.

Next to the villa is the church of Santa Maria in Domnica. Built on the ruins of the barracks of the V Cohort of the Guards of Rome, it has an elegant porticoed façade, perhaps by Andrea Sansovino (1513-14), and inside we can still see the precious mosaics which can be dated to the papacy of Paschal I (817-24).

On the right of the church, after a few meters we can see a large portal, left over from the hospital which was once attached to the church of San Tommaso in *Formis* (in the Middle Ages the term *Forma* was used to indicate the arches of an aqueduct) and almost demolished in 1925.

The hospital was founded in 1198, by Giovanni de Matha, of the Trinitary Order, with the aim of ransoming prisoners of war or slaves. The lunette of the main gate has some fine mosaics, the work of Iacopo and his son Cosma (1209), depicting Jesus between two slaves, one black and one white.

Just beyond it is the arch built by the consuls Dolabella and Silano in 10 AD, which replaced the ancient Celimontana gate which opened in the Mura Serviane.

Further on, along the Via Claudia, we can see the impressive wall of the foundations of the temple of Claudius. The temple itself rose up out of an enormous *terrazza* (180x200m) with gardens. In the Piazza dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo we find the ruins of the platform of twin arcades built in blocks of rough-cut travertine.

On the other hand, its east wing, visible from Via Claudia, was transformed into a nymphaeum with niches by Nero for his *Domus Aurea*.

Going through Dolabella's arch we reach the *clivus Scauri* (Scauro's slope), along which we find, on the right, the **basilica of Saints John and Paul**, while at the end of it we find the remains of what was known as the Library of Pope Agapitus (in reality the reception hall of a *domus* from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD), and lastly the church



of San Gregorio Magno with its three oratories.

It has a baroque façade (1633), in front of which there is a high flight of steps and then a portico. Its interior was redecorated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; particularly interesting is the room which is considered part of the residence of Gregorio Magno with its marble chair.

Even more significant are the three oratories to the left of the church: the one on the right dedicated to Saint Silvia, with frescoes by Guido Reni (Concert of Angels); the one in the middle dedicated to Saint Andrea, with frescoes by Domenichino and Guido Reni; and lastly on the left, dedicated to Saint Barbara, built on the ruins of a Roman dwelling.

On the other side of the district, in ancient times known as *Caeloilus*, we find the Basilica dei Santi Quattro Coronati, whose turret looks out over what is today the Via dei Santi Quattro, following the ancient Via Tuscolana.





*L'Esse del 1710*  
1. Chiesa di S. Stefano Rotondo, 2. Fonte dell'Acqua Claudia, 3. Villa Mattea, 4. Chiesa di S. Maria in Domnica, 5. Avanzi della Ch. di S. Tommaso in Formello, 6. marciapiedi, 1710. 52





21. Chiesa di S. Gregorio, e Monistero dei Monaci Camaldolefi  
s. Trichino di S. Gregorio, s. Oratorio di S. Maria, e di S. Andrea, s. Cappella di S. Silvestro, s. Tribuna della Chiesa de SS. Gio: e Paolo, s. Clivo di Scauro



# *Basilica of Saints John and Paul*

By Letizia Cenci



The basilica is situated on the western slopes of the Celian hill, along the *clivus Scauri*, “Scauro hill”, an ancient Roman roadway, whose name comes from a member of the *Aemilii Scaurii* family.

Numerous buildings rose on the sides of the hill in the imperial Age. The basilica covered and in part utilized some of these, whose remains were excavated and rendered accessible in 1887; they are still waiting for a definitive interpretation.

There were probably three *insulae* from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, apartments with shops on the first floor. One *insula* was found to the east of a narrow lane or paved courtyard, situated almost in correspondence to the present right aisle, two others were to the west.

The southern façade of the western house, placed along the *clivus Scauri*, was utilized as a side of the basilica and it is possible to see the outlines of the original windows and doors.

The houses were subjected to numerous transformations; at first the house to the east became a very luxurious home with a small thermal bath. It was then connected



to the western house, creating a single prestigious residence whose rooms were decorated between the 3rd and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries. On this occasion the lane-courtyard was transformed into a nymphaeum decorated with frescoes, including the 5 x 3 meter painting interpreted as the *Return of Proserpine from Ade*. Some frescoes portray Christian subjects. A steep staircase was also added.

A reliquary, which must have corresponded to an altar in a room above, was built on a landing of the staircase in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, to hold holy relics. Pammachius, a Roman senator, and friend of St. Jerome, who died in 410, built the basilica on top of these buildings. It is possible that he was the last owner. The religious settlement is in fact recorded from 499 as *titulus Pammachii*: the list where the owner of the building is indicated was called a title.

In the beginning of Christianity, when the faithful left property to the church, often private homes, these were named with the word title and followed by the name of the owner.

The dedication to Saints John and Paul appears only from 535. According to the text of the sixth-century account that tells of their 'Passion'. They were two Roman officers, martyred in 362 by Julian the Apostate, who lived in the house where the church arose. The reliquary on the stairway is decorated with frescoes, which seem to have a relationship with this tale.

The Pammachian Basilica, below the Baroque superstructures, is quite well preserved. It was formed by a nave and two aisles, divided by twelve columns that support the arches and by an apse; the central nave was illuminated by large circular windows. In correspondence to the ancient reliquary, in the middle of the central nave on the right, there must have been an altar in memory of the *locus martyrii* of Saints John and Paul.

The façade, preceded by a portico with a terrace above and a tower on the left, presented five large arches above, and on the ground floor five more corresponding arches, today partially walled off. The arches were without fixtures, which, together with their ample dimensions, indicates that there was no precise separation between the interior and exterior of the building.

The basilica was damaged by Alaric's troops in 410, and then by the earthquake in 442, and was in need of consolidation work including two buttresses along the Scauro hill, constituted by two arches built across the road. The arches of the façade were also closed.

Further damage was caused by the fire started by the troops of Robert Guiscard in 1084. During the time of Paschal II (1099-1118), Cardinal Teobaldo rebuilt the



convent and began the bell tower, which rose detached from the church, supported by the structure of the nearby Temple of Claudius.

In 1154 Cardinal Giovanni dei Conti di Sutri built the present elegant portico. It is supported by eight columns, with two Roman Corinthian capitals and six mediaeval Ionics, above which run a trabeation made of a marble architrave with a splendid inscription, supporting arches in brick and a boundary frame of serrations and corbels. Giovanni also completed the bell tower, the last five floors opened with mullioned windows with two lights, adorned with ceramics and mirrors of porphyry and serpentine.

Cardinal Cencio Savelli, the titular Cardinal before being elected Pope Honorius III in 1216, built a gallery above the portico, opened by mullioned windows with one and two lights with marble jambs and supporting arches in brick.

Other works datable to the 13<sup>th</sup> century are the gallery of small arches of Romanesque Lombard or Rhenish flavour, which decorate the outside of the apse; the arches built across the Scauro hill and a new definition of the interior: the central nave was divided by two oblique arches, supported by pillars in which the corresponding columns were absorbed. The external arches are buttressed by arched spurs. The windows were partially walled off to reduce light.

A portal, liturgical furnishings and flooring were added by specialized workers, the remains of which are included in the present floor from the 1700s. The basilica was also decorated with frescoes. Those remaining are the Redeemer Enthroned among the Apostles, dated 1255, in a space at the end of the left aisle. It is likely that Cencio Savelli also enlarged the palace, which had expanded in the meantime, using the structures of the Temple of Claudius.

In 1573, after restorations in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and in 1522 carried out by Cardinal Guglielmo Enckenvoert, Cardinal Nicolò Pelleve promoted various interventions. Among these were excavations in correspondence to the altar on the *locus martyrii* and the gathering of relics. The relics were then placed in a new movable altar; the old altar was moved up against a pillar and a new one was created in a symmetrical position.

The successor, Cardinal Antonio Carafa, destroyed a gallery of small arches lining the apse, redecorated the transept, where frescoes from the 5<sup>th</sup> century had been ruined, and had another fresco of the *Gloria celeste* painted by Pomarancio (1588). Cardinal Agostino Cuisano in 1598 renewed the ceiling, which was later restored in 1904.

Between 1668 and 1689 Cardinal Filippo Howard financed substantial works



transforming the church. He had the relics transferred to the main altar, destroying the Pelleve altars, and placed a stone in the floor in correspondence to the *locus martyrii*. He transformed the portico gallery, changing the windows and plastering the surfaces.

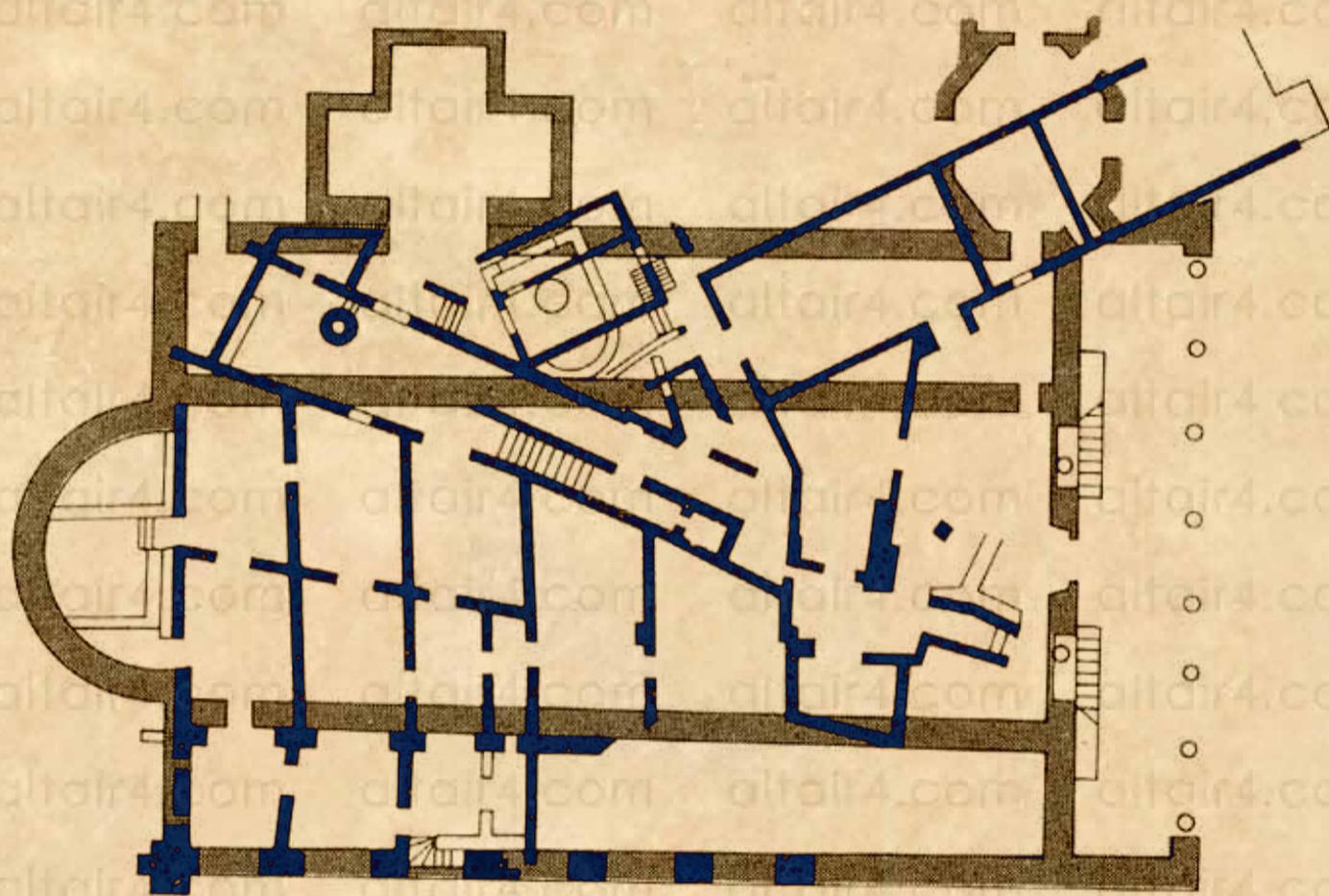
From 1715 to 1718 Cardinal Fabrizio Paolucci delegated the architects Antonio Canevari and Andrea Garagni to carry out a definitive modification of the image of the basilica. Today it appears as a single nave with side chapels. Some of the columns were enclosed in alternating large and small pillars that support the arches, flanked by residual columns adorned with pilaster strips. These last go round the apse and the inside wall of the façade. Flattened cupolas were built over the smaller naves to resemble chapels. And the ends of the smaller naves were also transformed into chapels. The altar was remade by Francesco Ferrari.

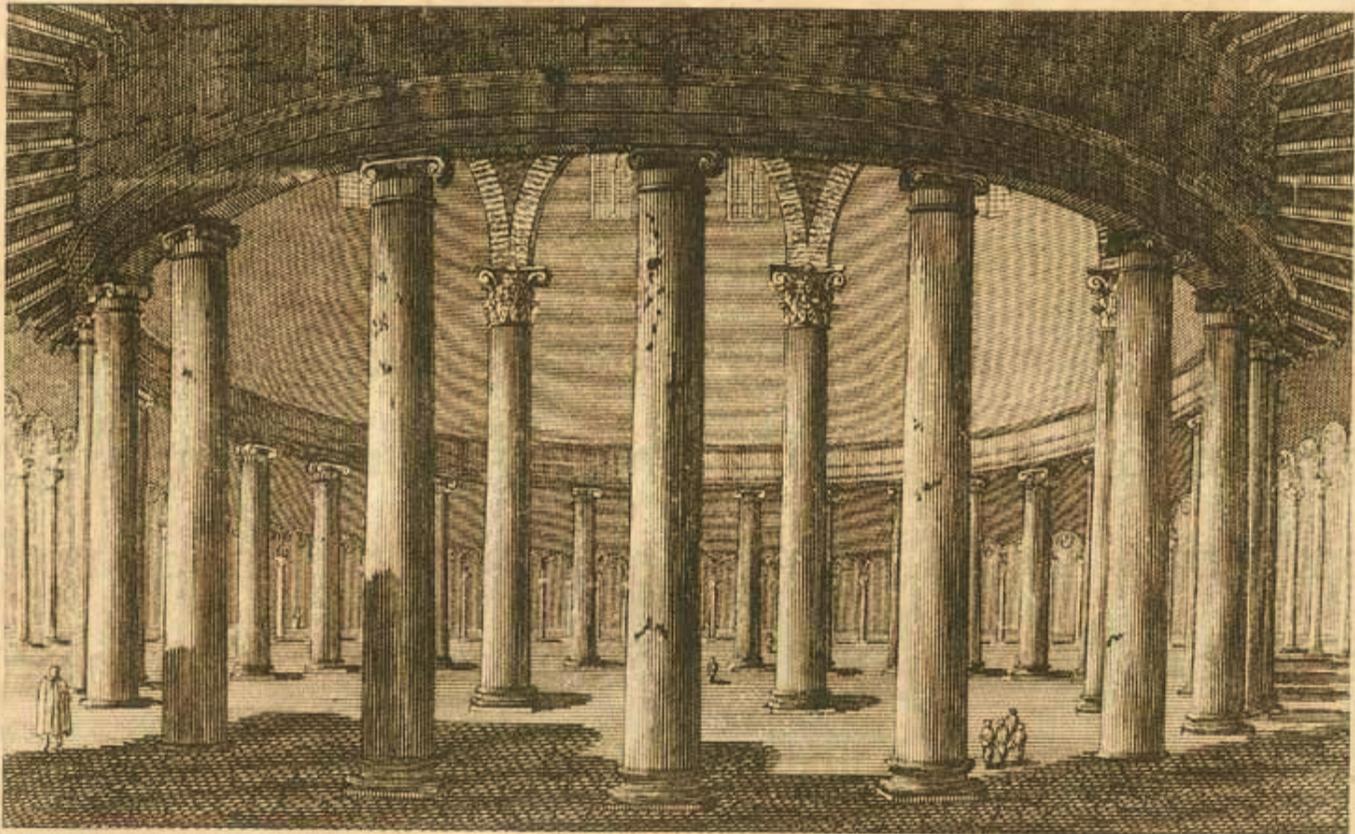
In 1726 Pietro Bracci realized the stucco decorations in the apse, also decorated with the stories of the saints, and Benedict XIII placed the relics of the martyrs in the altar. In 1911 the originally white basilica was decorated with imitation marble.

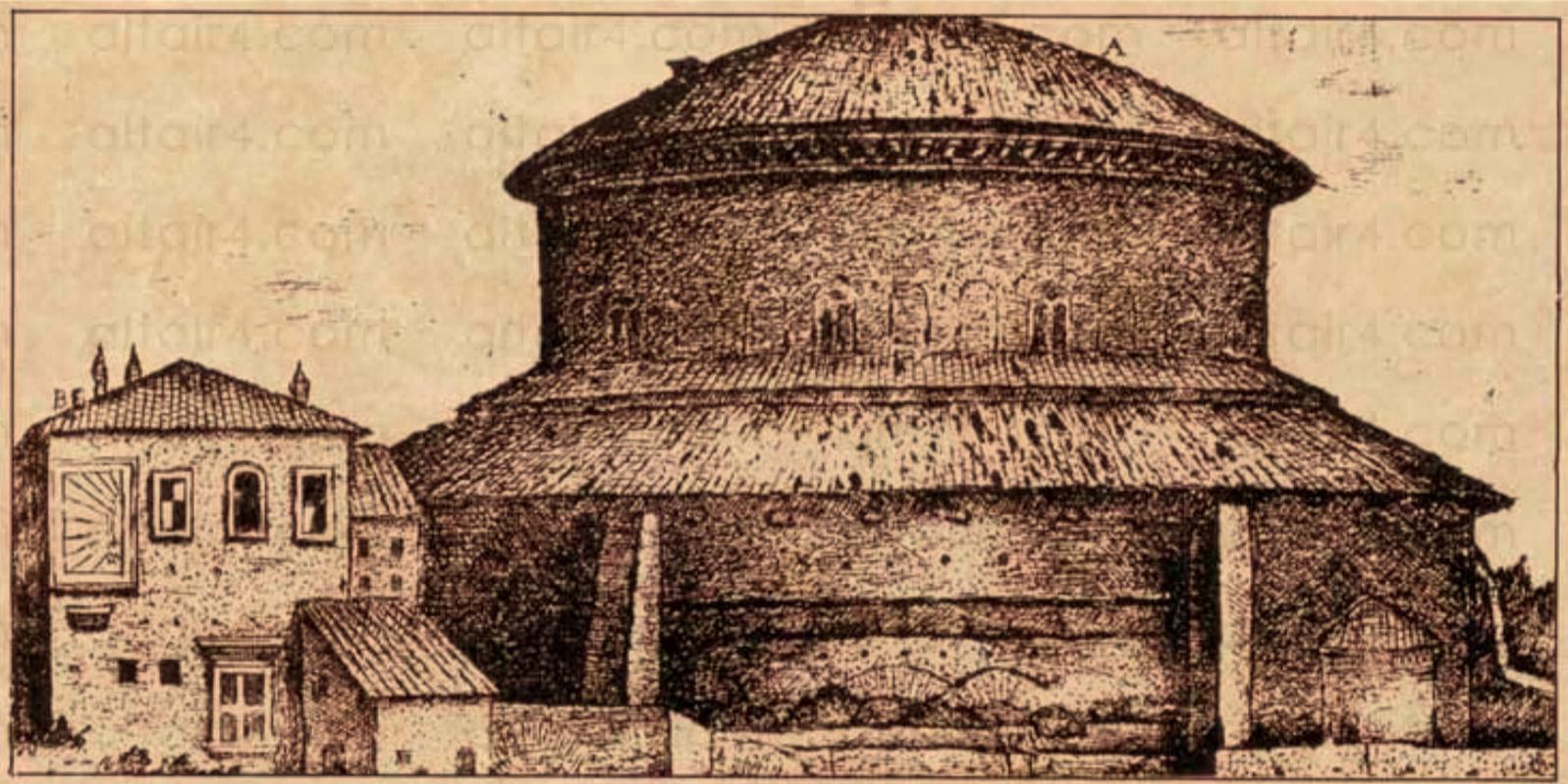
In 1857 the architect Filippo Martinucci began the chapel of S. Paul of the Cross on the right aisle. It was finished by his son Vincenzo, with a Greek cross design and a very high cupola in which the Passionist fathers, who have cared for the basilica since 1773, transferred the remains of the saint.

In 1948-52 restorations conducted by Adriano Prandi brought to light the many medieval restorations and modifications.









# *The Mouth of Truth Area*

By Gemma Fusciello



This area, bordered by the Tiber, the **Capitoline**, **Palatine**, and **Aventine** hills, is among the oldest settled areas in the city.

Up until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC it was known generically as the Forum Boarium, perhaps because it was the location of the ox market, or because of the presence of a gilded statue of a bull tied to the legend of the founding of Rome.

It was an important even in prehistoric times, since it was situated at the foot of the hills upon which the first human settlements that gave rise to the city of Rome were located and at the point of the river where Tiber Island created a ford across the Tiber. The river also fed a marshy area there, called Velabro, which extended all the way to the Roman Forum and which, since it provided a good docking area for ships, became the *Portus Tiberinus*. Located at the point of confluence of roads and waterways that were so important for commerce in salt and livestock, the area became an important market, the center of prehistoric Rome.

Many of the legends about the origins of the city are rooted in the area: the battle between Hercules and Cacus took place here; it was here that Hercules built the Ara Massima, the center of his cult; is where Aeneas landed; Romulus and Remus were discovered here; and finally, it was from here that Romulus began to trace the boundary lines of the city he founded, Rome.

At the beginning of the Republican era, on the occasion of the construction of the first bridge in Rome, the Sublician bridge, the area underwent its first reclamation, with the diversion of the waters of the Velabro into the Cloaca Massima.

But it was not until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, with the construction of the Emilian bridge, that the reclamation was completed, raising the level of the land and building a bank to hold back the continuous floods from the Tiber.

Starting around that time the area began to subdivide into three parts, each with its own characteristics: the riverbank and a series of buildings related to the nearby *Portus Tiberinus*, the commercial area around the Velabro, and the piazza of the Forum Boarium with its important ancient religious buildings, including the Ara Massima, dedicated to Hercules, and the Temple of Ceres.

This subdivision continued throughout ancient times but disappeared in the Middle Ages, when the three zones were raised to the same level. In this period the area was no longer the center of the city but it continued to have a role in city life.

During the Byzantine domination it became the Greek quarter, who founded two important diaconates there, S. Gregorio al Velabro and **Santa Maria in Cosmedin** (*Santa Maria in Schola Graeca*) on the ancient piazza of the Forum Boarium.



In the centuries that followed, after the depopulation of the city, the piazza in front of Santa Maria in Cosmedin became the last populated area on the south of the city because of its proximity to the Emilian bridge, named *pons Maior* in honor of its importance, the only access to **Trastevere** for anyone coming from the Capitoline hill.

The area's strategic position was also the reason it was chosen as the location of the first Papal palace, other than the Lateran Palace, which was built near Santa Maria in Cosmedin.

In modern times the bridge lost its monopoly as a connection to Trastevere and, washed away by the flood of 1598, it was never rebuilt.

After that the area, by now uninhabited and abandoned, went back to being marshy and unhealthy and, having become a dumping ground during the building boom of the Baroque period, the level of the soil was raised more than 2 meters during the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Some relief from abandonment was to come only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when Clement XI, as part of a much greater urban renewal project, had the piazza in front of Santa Maria in Cosmedin restored to its former level and gave it a new look by placing a new fountain in the piazza. The renewal work was completed in 1718 with Sardi's reconstruction of the façade of the church.

In the late 1800s, the piazza's arrangement was changed again by the building of the new walls along the Tiber and the Lungotevere roadway. The area took on its present day arrangement in 1930, when it was redesigned by Giovannoni, bringing together all of the ancient monuments around the piazza of the Mouth of Truth, after eliminating the more recent constructions that had been built up around them.

The piazza of the Mouth of Truth is dominated by the façade of the ancient church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin; a reconstructed façade in the Romanesque style supporting the very high 12<sup>th</sup> century belfry. Sardi's earlier Baroque façade was destroyed during the restorations of the late 1800s.

To the left of the church, in the ruins of a building from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, under a building built in the 1930s to house the Museum of Rome, there is an ancient and well-preserved Mitreo. Across from it is the lovely fountain with its curved basin adorned with tritons, built in 1715 by Bizzaccheri.

Behind the fountain are the two temples of the Forum Boarium, built on the river bank following the reclamation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, which are among the best preserved buildings from that period.

The round one is commonly known as the Temple of Vesta and the rectangular one



as the Temple of Fortuna Virile; but these attributions have no basis in historical fact. The latter is almost certainly the Temple of Portuno, related to the port which it overlooked, while it is less certain that the other is the Temple of Hercules.

Opposite the rectangular temple, along the road that once led to the *pons Maior*, whose ruins can still be seen in the river, are the ruins of a tower house, known in the Middle Ages as the House of Pilate, built in the XI century by Niccolò Crescenzo to control the bridge.

Although all that's left of it is one entire side and parts of two others, it is characterized by the eight half-columns in the remaining façade which support an overhanging open gallery with mullioned windows, which may have been the lookout post of the now destroyed control tower. Its corbels, its architrave, as well as the door frames present in what remains of the other two sides, are ancient elements re-utilized and reintegrated, according to the custom of the time, into a new context.

Next, along the way to the Teatro Marcello, the modern building of the Anagrafe or Bureau of Vital Statistics, during whose construction were discovered the remains of several ancient warehouses serving the nearby *Portus Tiberinus*.

On the side of the piazza facing the Palatine hill is the so-called arch of Janus, dating back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD; a four-fronted arch (hence the name Janus) with a cubic structure in marble and travertine, with a cross vault on the inside and niches, which lighten the exterior faces of its robust pilasters.

This is the starting point of the Via del Velabro along which we find the church of San Giorgio, founded in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Its beautiful portico, an addition from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, destroyed in a bombing in 1993, has been patiently recomposed by a recent restoration.

Built-in to a part of its Romanesque bell tower we can see the so-called Arco degli Argentari (Arch of the Silversmiths), actually an architraved structure which owes its name to the guild which had it built in 204 in honor of the emperors Septimius Severus and Caracalla, whose figures appear in the reliefs on its pilasters.



( XXXV. )

*Descrizione della Tavola Novantesimaquinta, rappresentante la Spiaggia verso la Bocca della verità.*



*Spiaggia verso la Bocca della Verità.*  
Viaggi del Ponte Palatino, e Palazzo detto di Elato, e Monte Palatino, e Ch. di S. Maria del Sole, e Sbraccio della Cloaca massima, e Ch. di S. Maria Cosimodini detta alla bocca della Verità.

**A**SSAY celebre è nella Romana Istoria la spiaggia, che vi presento in questa Tavola; ove anticamente entrando le acque del Tevere, venivano a formare quella rinomata palude, nella quale furono trasportati Romolo, e Remo, come dicemmo nel lib. III., dalle onde del fiume, allora forse inondante, che poi edificata Roma, fù chiamata Velabro, e così chiamossi ancora dopo che seccate quelle acque, vi furono edificati molti edifizj di Tempj, e Fori, come dagli avanzi potrà osservarsi, quale sia stata la magnificenza di questa spiaggia. Dice Varrone (a), trattando della Porta Romanula: *Alteram Romanulam, quae est dicta à*

(a) *Varro lib. IV.*





1. Chiesa S. Maria in Ardeatina. 2. Basilica di San Lorenzo.  
 3. Chiesa S. Maria in Trastevere. 4. Chiesa S. Maria in Campitelli.  
 5. Chiesa S. Maria in Via Lata. 6. Chiesa S. Maria in Cosmedin.  
 7. Chiesa S. Maria in Montesanto. 8. Chiesa S. Maria in Via del Corso.  
 9. Chiesa S. Maria in Via del Babuino. 10. Chiesa S. Maria in Via del Corso.

Veduta del Tempio della Fortuna virile.

1. Chiesa S. Maria in Ardeatina. 2. Basilica di San Lorenzo.  
 3. Chiesa S. Maria in Trastevere. 4. Chiesa S. Maria in Campitelli.  
 5. Chiesa S. Maria in Via Lata. 6. Chiesa S. Maria in Cosmedin.  
 7. Chiesa S. Maria in Montesanto. 8. Chiesa S. Maria in Via del Corso.  
 9. Chiesa S. Maria in Via del Babuino. 10. Chiesa S. Maria in Via del Corso.





VEDUTA DELLO STATO ATTUALE DEL TEMPIO DETTO DI VESTA





VELVTA DELLO STATO ATTUALE DEL TEMPIO  
DETTO DELLA FORTVNA VIRILE



# *Church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin*

By Gemma Fuscello



*Chiesa di S. Maria in Cosmedin  
1. Tempio antico, detto S. Stefano delle Carrozze, ed in oggi S. Maria del Sole e Via che porta a S. Paolo fuori le Mura e Finib.*

In the first documents of the 8<sup>th</sup> century which mention this church, it is counted among the cardinal's churches and called both Santa Maria in Cosmedin or Santa Maria in Schola Graeca, names which must surely have Byzantine origins. Of the first name, there is no known meaning, the second takes its origins from medieval times when mostly Greeks inhabited the area.

The church is situated in the ancient piazza of the Forum Boarium and conserves many important ruins of Roman buildings.

On the foundation of the presbytery there is a tufa and travertine foundation from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. On the external walls of the front of the church you can still see some Roman columns from a rectangular room built over the 4<sup>th</sup> century foundation, open on three sides with mostly composite arches and columns, seven on the long side and three on the short one.

On the walls of today's central nave are the remains of a small room, perhaps used as the diaconate's oratory, built on the inside of the room before the 8<sup>th</sup> century, and later walled off.

Following restoration work begun by Giovenale in 1882, the church took on its



present, Romanesque aspect. To enter one passes through a portico with seven arches on pilasters, the central one preceded by an arch supported by four columns. To the right of the simple façade in brick, built by Giovenale, is the Romanesque bell tower with two orders of mullioned windows with two lights and five orders with three lights.

Below the portico is the “mouth of truth”, a Roman mask, perhaps the fountain or trap cover of a temple, in medieval times thought to be the image of a god that took the hands of liars.

The cornice of the main door, perhaps from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, is worthy of note, as is the 12<sup>th</sup> century tomb of Cardinal Alfano who rebuilt the church.

The irregular form of the inside of the church is divided into a nave and two aisles with eighteen columns, alternating every three with a pilaster. The high columns of the Roman hall rise along the interior wall of the façade and the external wall of the left aisle.

You enter the sacristy, built in 1647, and the choir, realized by Mattei in 1687, from the right aisle. The altar canopy with the image of the *Teotochos*, Mother and Child is of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, although tradition holds that it was brought to Rome from the Orient during iconoclast persecutions.

An 8<sup>th</sup> century marble mosaic is conserved in the sacristy, originally part of the decorations in the chapel of John VII in S. Peter's, destroyed in 1639. Along the left aisle is the Sardi baptistery and two 19<sup>th</sup> century chapels.

The church has a flat ceiling, with no transept and a presbytery with three apses slightly raised and closed by a *pergula* that was rebuilt by Giovenale; as was the *schola cantorum* in the central nave. The main altar, however, covered by a 14<sup>th</sup> century tabernacle, and the very fine polychrome pavement, the two raised pulpits, the paschal candlestick and the Episcopal throne are authentic.

The frescoes between the windows of the central nave are from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, while the others, particularly those in the apses, were done by Palombi and Caroselli following restorations in 1892. Below the main altar is the crypt, in the form of a basilica, with a transept, a nave and two aisles divided by columns.

The church was built by Adrian I in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and has been restored to the simple dignity of its ancient origins. But the articulation of the walls of the central nave, with supports unlike those present today, and barrel-vaults that opened, perhaps like the entrances to upper level galleries, was different. It was decorated and completed in the next century by Nicolas I, who also built a palazzo behind it, the first example of a papal palazzo other than the Lateran.



The load-bearing structure of the central nave was transformed, following a Romanesque design, in the twelfth-century, closing the barrel-vaults and constructing the present arches on columns and pilasters.

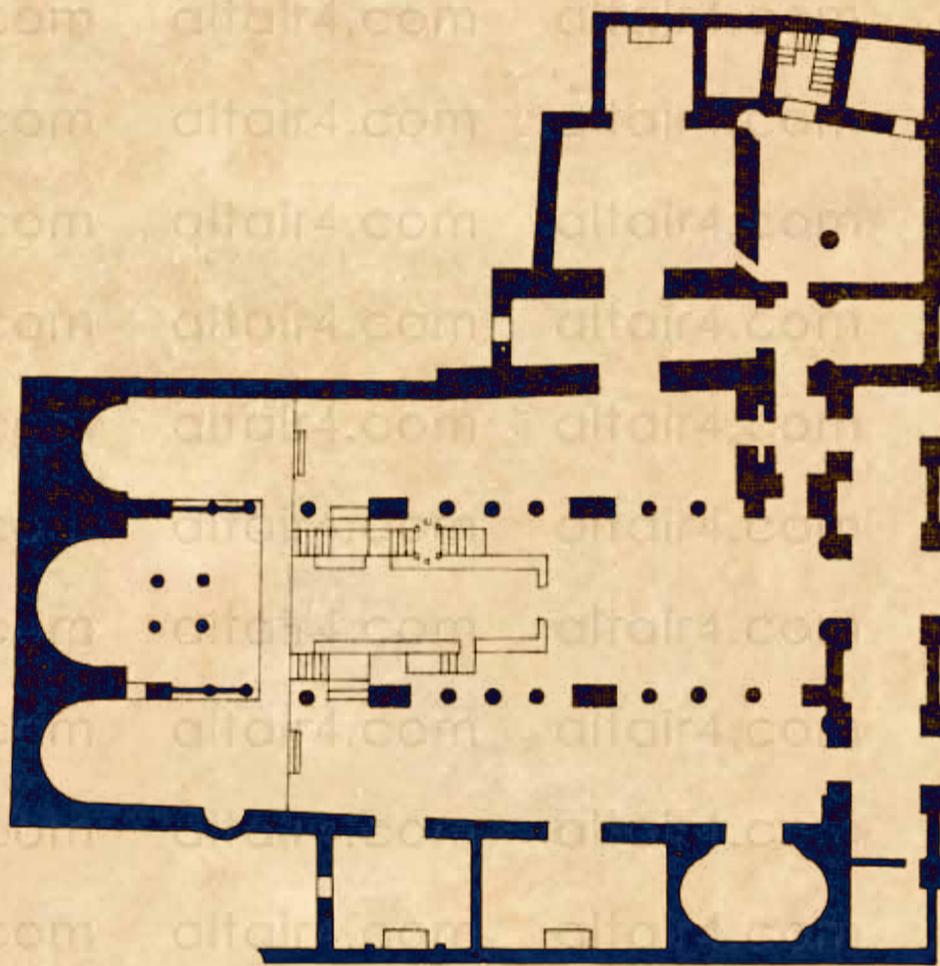
The bell tower was added, the portico built and the church adorned with polychrome marble decorations by Alfano, treasurer of Callistus II. Of the restorations done for the Jubilee in 1300, only the tabernacle by Deodato remains.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the church's transformation into a Baroque style began, with new altars and decorations, culminating at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century after Clement XI had the level of the piazza, that had risen by 2 meters, lowered to match that of the church. The titular cardinals at that time, Annibale and Alessandro Albani, nephews of the Pope, commissioned Sardi to build the new façade in 1718, the baptistery in 1727, and to transform the presbytery.

In 1892 the Baroque modifications were erased by Giovenale who restored the basilica to its original 7<sup>th</sup> century design. His restoration, interrupted for lack of funds, was completed by the Rome office of the Superintendance for Architectural and Environmental Heritage, which restored the bell tower and the arches in the portico.

The church, in the past a confraternity, is presently officiated in eastern rite by the Melkiti.

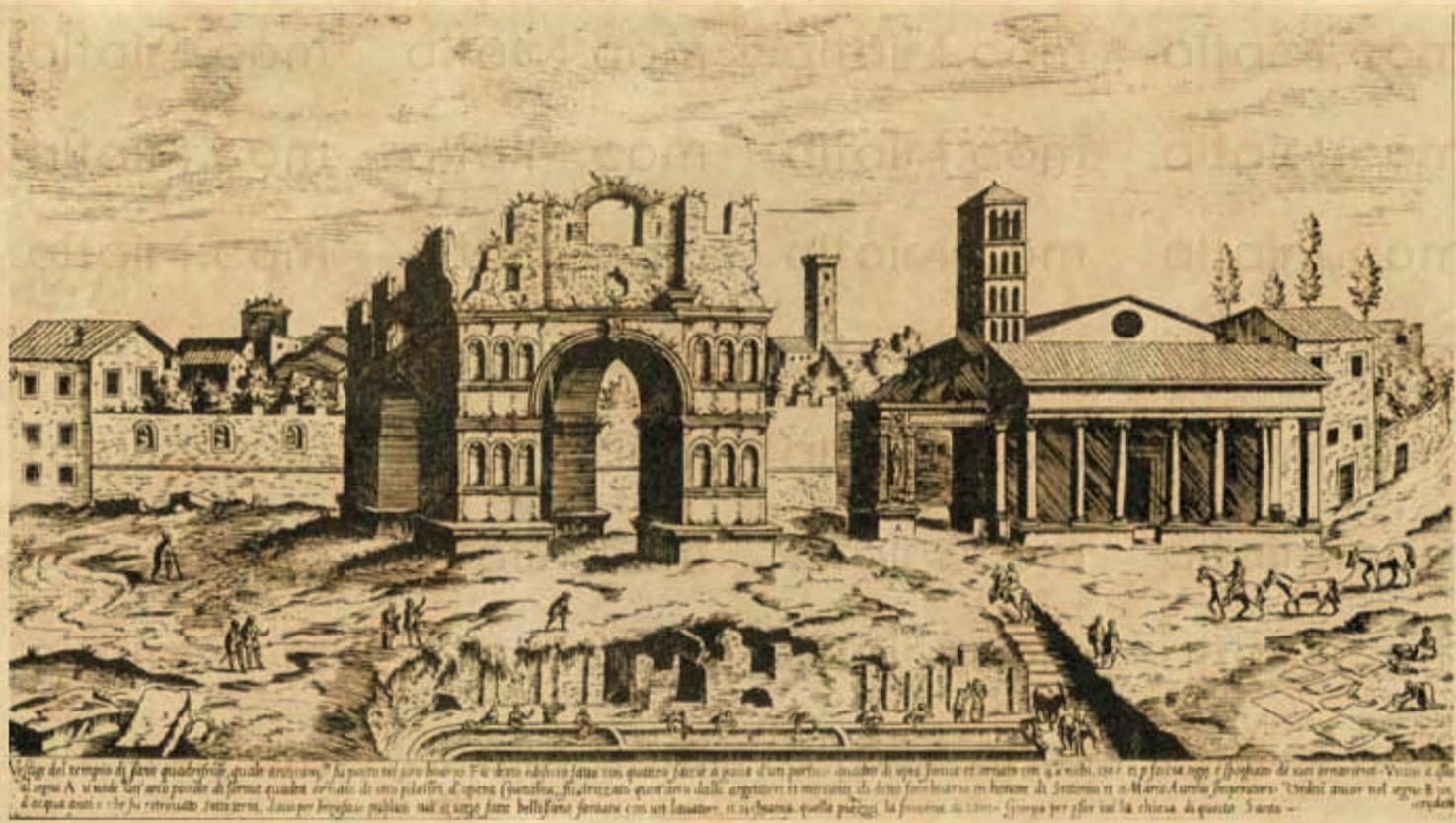






*Chiesa di S. Giorgio in Calabria  
e Chiesa Quadrifronte e Cantone sopra il passaggio della Chiesa Malabro e Bice antico degli Angellari e Chiesa di S. Giorgio e Comunità.*



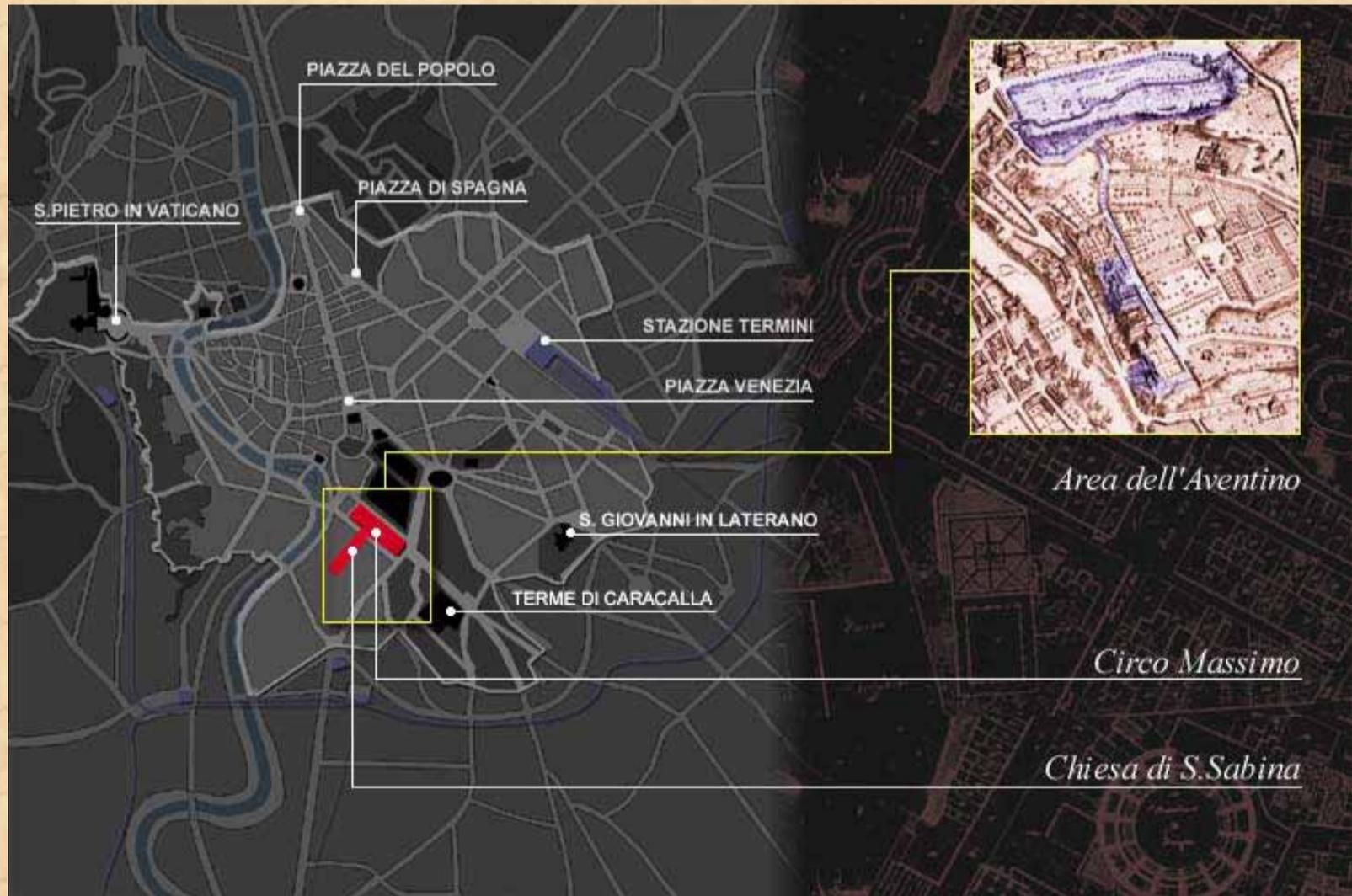


Vista del tempo di fatto quadrifido, quale arca, fu posto nel suo luogo. Fu detto edificio fatto con quattro facce a guisa d'un portico, di cui di ogni faccia fu ornato con 4 colossi, con il portico oggi è il tempio di san antonio. Visto a. d. 1700. A. si vede nel suo portico di forma quadrata ornato di otto pilastri di opera ionica, fu alzato quest'arco dalla architettura romana di detto imperatore in honore di Trajano et a. Marco Aurelio imperatore. Ordo ante nel anno 8 in. è occupato a che fu ritrovato fatto per il suo uso per farne pubblica, ma si sono fatte bellissime fontane con un lavatore, et si chiama quella piazza la piazza di san- Giorgio per far via la chiesa di questo. Sisto —



# *The Aventine Hill*

By Sabina Carbonara



You turn onto the Via dei Cerchi and walk along the Via dell'Ara Massima di Ercole, which passes, on the left, the few visible remains of the Circus Maximus, now restored; at this point you come to Via Circo Massimo, which goes up to Piazzale Ugo La Malfa, with the bronze statue of Giuseppe Mazzini.

The sculpture, commissioned in 1890 to Ettore Ferrari, was not inaugurated until 1949 because of the controversial political views of Mazzini, who was thought to be too "republican."

Below you can see the park of the Circus Maximus. From the piazza, overlooking the Circus, you take the Via di Valle Murcia, on the right, which goes up to the Aventine hill, coming out in Via di Santa Sabina.

Very early on, the Aventine, the southernmost of the seven hills of Rome, became the residential center for the middle working classes of Roman society, a mixed group of artisans, merchants, and small land owners. In the imperial period, however, the most of the people moved to the low-lying areas to the south, in the vicinity of the *Emporium* (the commercial port), and to the right bank of the river, in the Trastevere area.

Thus the Aventine lost its popular character to become one of the most aristocratic areas of the city. Devastated by the Visigoths of Alaric (410 AD) it remained sparsely populated, like the Celian hill, until very recently.

The hill is divided into two elevations: the itinerary that we are following leads to the "real Aventine" of ancient times. Continuing up Via Santa Sabina you come to, on the right, Savelli park. Shortly thereafter you come to Piazza d'Iliria, site of the ancient **basilica of Santa Sabina**.

Continuing on Via Santa Sabina you quickly come to, on the right, the outer courtyard of the church of Saints Alessio and Bonifacio. The church was built prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> century and dedicated initially only to Saint Boniface. The name of Saint Alexis was added later by Pope Honorius III. Today it appears completely transformed by the restoration carried out, between 1743 and 1750, by the architect Tommaso De Marchis.

Passing by the church you head in the direction of the Piazza dei Cavalieri di Malta, surrounded by an unusual wall designed, in 1765, by the architect Giovanni Battista Piranesi, with obelisks and steles inspired by his famous bizarre etchings. On the right is the entrance, also by Piranesi, of the Villa del Priorato di Malta, property of the Military Sovereign of the Order of Malta.

The piazza offers a rare view of St. Peter's basilica; looking through the keyhole of



the front door of the villa you can see, at the end of a tree-lined lane, the dome of St. Peter's.

Inside the garden is the beautiful church of Santa Maria del Priorato, also under the patronage of the Order of Malta, completely restored and decorated by Piranesi, who turned it into one of the first works of neoclassicism.

You go down Via di Porta Lavernale until you reach Piazza Sant'Anselmo and you come out into the vast Piazzale Albania. After crossing the piazzale you turn up Via di San Saba, to the top of the other elevation of the Aventine, called the Piccolo Aventino (called *Saxum* in ancient times).

On the left is a portico of the XIII century, altered in the following centuries, beyond which opens up the courtyard of the church of San Saba, dedicated in the 7<sup>th</sup> century to the holy monk of Cappadocia, the head of eastern monasticism, on the original site of the home of Santa Silvia, mother of Pope Gregory the Great.

The church has undergone numerous restorations over the centuries.





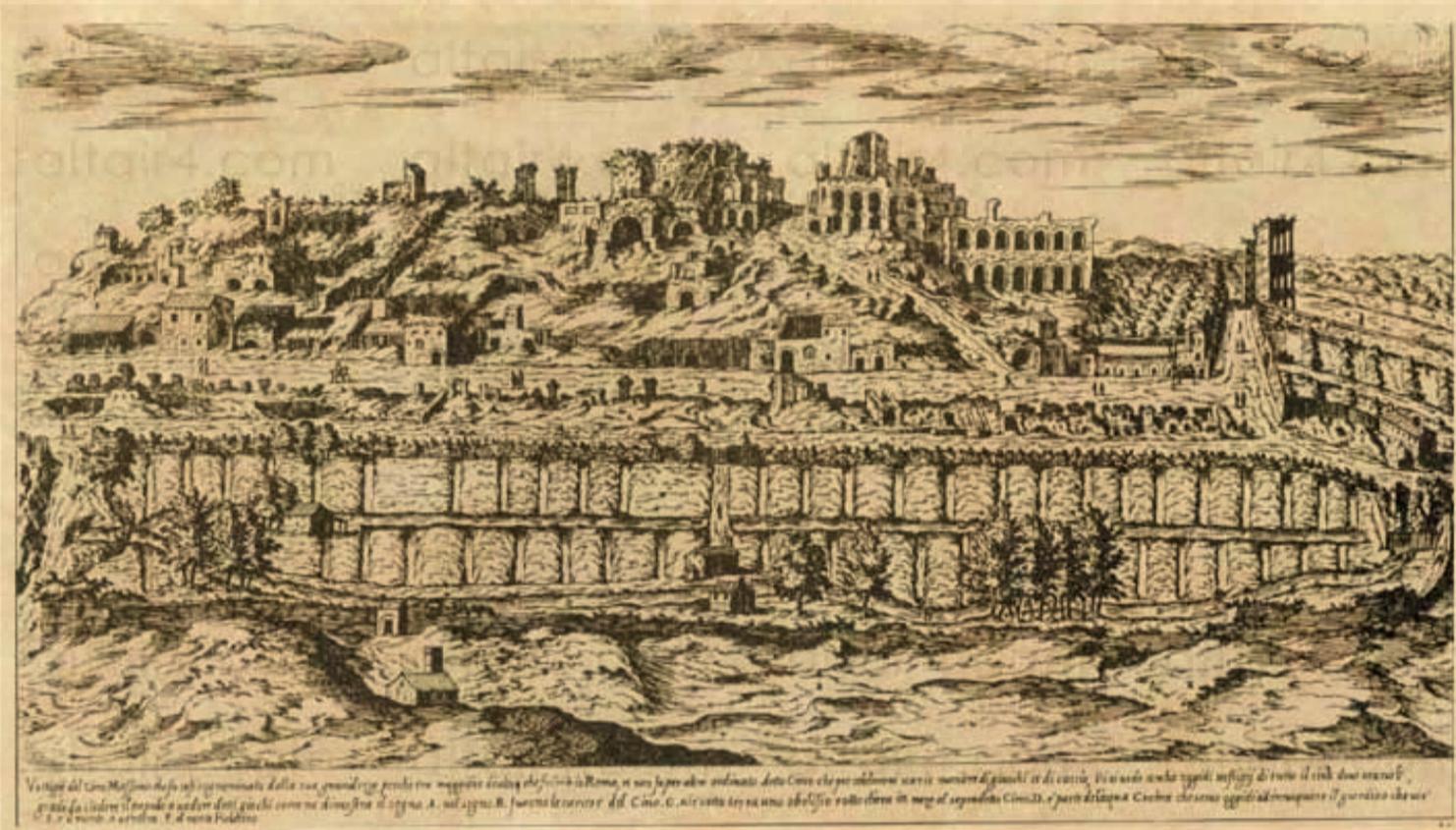
*Monte Aventino, e Vista del Ponte Pubblico*  
*La Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano, e la Chiesa di S. Maria in Trastevere, e il Ponte di Antonio...*





*Veduta di una parte del monte Ararat che guarda verso l'occidente ed il Taurus quali per loro molte volte non si rischiarano più che nei giorni di nebbia. A destra che antichissimi nella sommità si fanno bellissimi Tempj ed edifici nel 1790. A sinistra che si fanno le selve leggere queste fanno il marciante perché ad il caricano di loro pietre di marmo quali si trovano al posto d'Orta, nel 1790. B. e l'altre cappel del fume due arca in tutti gli angoli di un'ora che vengono per la marina in Perzia*





Veduta del Campidoglio della città romana dalla sua grandiosa pendice tra maggiori edifici che s'edificò in Roma, in un luogo dove ordinato della Cons. che per abitudine aveva numero di giardini di città. Di questo anche grandi edifici di tutto il città dove erano le  
grandi statue e veduti deli giardini come se dimostra il segno A. nel segno B. furono le statue del Cons. C. air volta era una abitudine edificare in mezzo al palazzo Cons. D. e parte del palazzo Cons. che sono oggi adempire il palazzo che era  
L. e il nome a sinistra. F. di casa Palazzo



# *Basilica of Santa Sabina*

By Sabina Carbonara



The most ancient evidence of devotion to Santa Sabina dates back to before the pillage of the Visigoths (410) and is connected to a large hall, used for Christian worship, that was part of a noble building. In spite of the veneration, information regarding Saint Sabina herself is very imprecise.

The Martyrs' calendar, the most important source on the history of Christian martyrs, refers only that the matron Sabina "under the emperor Hadrian" was "struck with a sword" and martyred. Her remains are preserved below the altar of the basilica dedicated to her, which was built precisely on the site of her house.

During the Celestine I pontificate (422-432), a rich priest named Peter from Illyria had a small church built on the place of the *titulus Sabinae*, instituted in the house which formerly belonged to Sabina, whose name was then confused with the homonymous Saint of Umbrian origins.

The new building was consecrated by Sixtus III (432-40). In the 10<sup>th</sup> century Alberico II, Roman prince and senator, turned the basilica and the adjoining annexes into a fortress. Later the Crescenzi and Savelli families made it their fortified baronial



residence.

In 1222 Honorious III entrusted the church to the Order of Evangelicals, the Dominicans, who built new convent rooms in the back of the basilica, giving the central nave a partition wall for liturgical needs. The cloister, with arches above alternating single and twin columns, and the bell tower, cut off in the seventeenth century, are from this period.

More evident transformations took place at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century during the pontificate of Sixtus V. In 1586, at the behest of the Pope, the basilica underwent extreme alterations conducted by the architect Domenico Fontana.

The *schola cantorum*, rebuilt at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the ancient tabernacle and the rood-screen (an ornate structure of icons placed to divide the nave from the presbytery) were eliminated. On this occasion the internal paintings and stucco decorations were covered, after having walled in almost all the windows. It is only at the beginning of XX century that the church was largely restored to its pristine state by the important restoration conducted by Antonio Muñoz.

The basilica, with an exposed stone façade, has a long side wall along the piazza with rounded arch windows that were reopened in XX century. The windows flood the interior with a golden light. The façade faces the courtyard of the more modern monastery, seat of the Superior-General Home of the Dominican Order. There are six rounded arch windows, constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and an elegant Renaissance colonnade, from the days of Pope Pius II (1458-64), under which opens the ancient cherry wood entrance door between two small portals.

The structure of the sacred building is typical of early Christian basilicas, in fact Santa Sabina represents the most distinct example of a 5<sup>th</sup> century basilica. The interior unfolds in a vast space, divided into three naves by twenty-four fluted marble columns. These last, all exactly the same, are furnished with Corinthian capitals from a 2<sup>nd</sup> century building. A large apse opens at the back of the central nave. The interior light of the basilica is regulated by a long series of windows near the ceiling. Very little remains of the ancient furnishings of the basilica; the most precious decorative elements are the ancient wooden doors and the mosaic (above the main door) on the inside wall of the façade. Dating back to the construction of the basilica and early Christianity are what must certainly be the oldest carved wooden doors in existence. In the eighteen panels, of different sizes, are illustrations of incidents from the Old and New Testaments. The representation of the Crucifixion is one of the earliest known.

In the interior, above the main door, is the long dedicatory mosaic inscription in gold



on a blue background, reminiscent of the founding of the church by Pietro d'Illiria; on either side of this are two female figures that represent the Church of the Gentiles (*Ecclesia ex gentibus*) and the Jewish religion (*Ecclesia ex circumcissione*).

The 9<sup>th</sup> century marble decorations enclosing the *schola cantorum* in the central nave, requested by Eugenio II, and the red and green colored marbles on the clerestory (*opus sectile*) from the 5<sup>th</sup> century, which decorate the spaces between the arches of the nave and aisles, restored and reintegrated by Muñoz, are worthy of note.

On the interior of the basilica, before interventions in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the whole frieze below the windows was decorated in mosaic with scenes whose subject is unknown. In the middle of the nave is the tomb of Muñoz da Zamora, a general prefect of the Dominicans who died at Santa Sabina in 1300. It is the only tomb in Rome with a mosaic figure.

Also of interest is the fresco in the apse, by Taddeo Zuccari in 1559, that follows the design of the original mosaic. Christ is represented in the center between the saints and apostles; a clear allusion to the priorities of the Dominicans, whose exact name is "Order of Preachers". On the external part of the arch, the roundels of saints and representations of the symbolic holy cities on either side are painted, to replace the mosaics of these subjects known previously to have existed there.

Off the right aisle, in the chapel dedicated to Saint Hyacinth, are 16<sup>th</sup> century frescoes by Federico Zuccari, scenes taken from the life and liturgy of the saint's canonization. The decorations in the chapel were commissioned by Cardinal Girolamo Bernerio, who probably suggested to the artist the subjects to be included in the painting. On the left wall St. Dominic wears the Dominican robes of Giacinto, parsonage of Krakow; higher up, in three compartments, are episodes from the saint's life.

Two miracles of St. Hyacinth are depicted with frescoes on both sides of the window; on the right wall is the Canonization of the saint and on the left, to the right of the closed window above the altar, we find respectively the death and funeral of the saint. Finally, in the dome, St. Hyacinth is painted triumphantly in the sky; a self-portrait of the painter holding a small temple in his hand with the writing "Anno Jubilei 1600 F.F" can be seen near the figure of David.

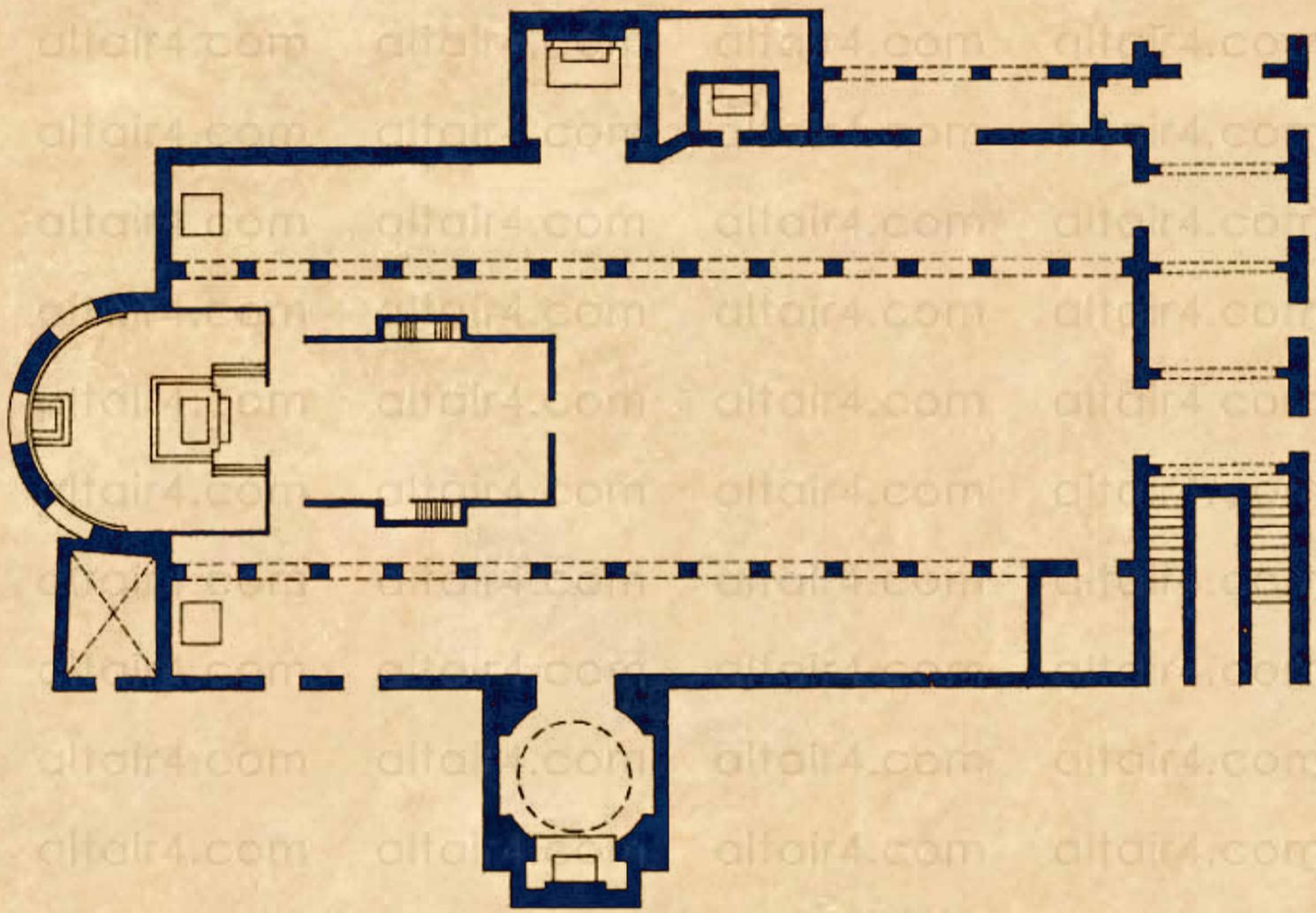
The chapel of St Catherine of Siena, another important space, opens on the opposite aisle. This chapel was designed by the architect Giovanni Battista Contini, and offers frescoes by Giovanni Odazzi, student of the late Baroque painter Giovan Battista Gaulli, with stories from Saint Catherine's life. On the altar a copy of the 17<sup>th</sup> century altar-piece with the Madonna del Rosario and Saints Dominic and Catherine, by the painter from the Marches, Giovanni Battista Salvi, known as il Sassoferrato

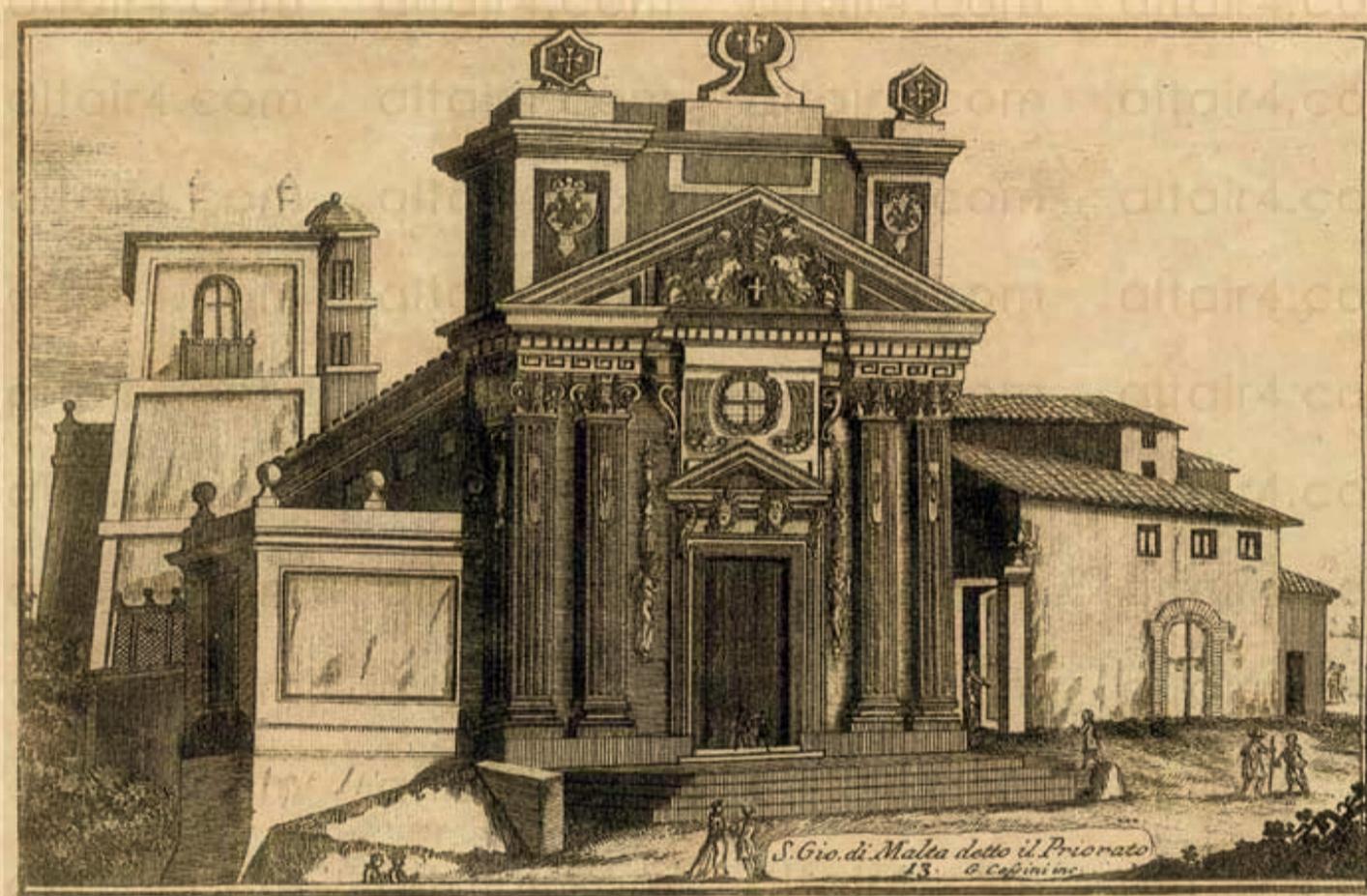


(The original painting is now in the Museum of St. Sabina, housed in the medieval dormitory).

Recently, during the intervention of restoration of the atrium of the basilica, a wall painting was discovered, depicting the Madonna and Child with Saints Peter and Paul, Sabina and Serafia along with the donors, dated 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century, probably work of a Greek artist working in Rome.

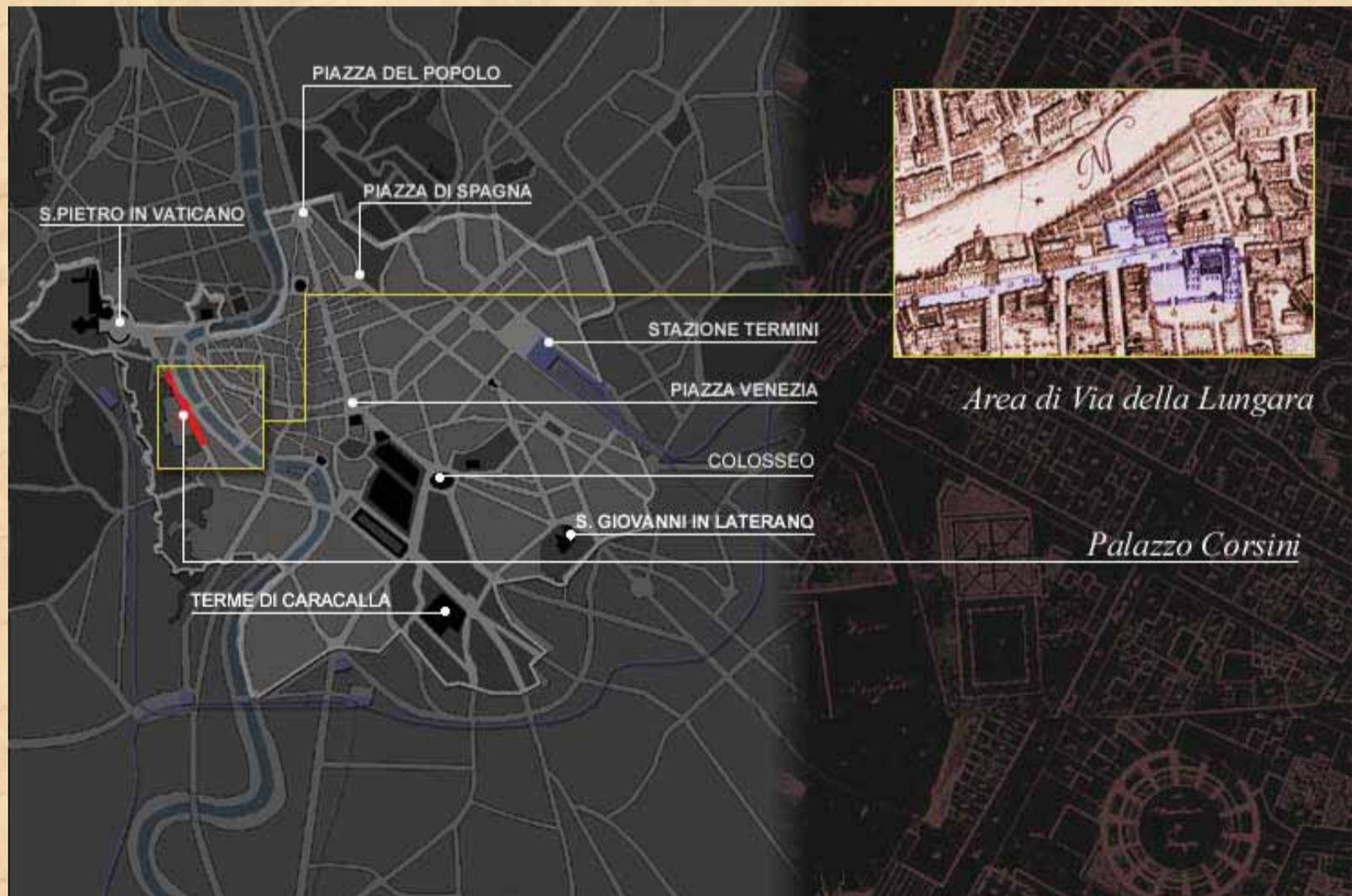






# *Via della Lungara*

By Sabina Carbonara



Having walked along the Sassia section of the riverfront drive, we cross the Piazza Della Rovere, and go down Via della Lungara along which, in the early Renaissance, some of the richest families in Rome built their villas.

However, before reaching the Farnesina, the most famous and prestigious of the buildings on this road, built by Baldassare Peruzzi with frescoes by Raffaello Sanzio, with the collaboration of other famous artists, we see, on the right side of the road, the 19<sup>th</sup> century prison *Regina Coeli* (named after the church which was formerly there), and the church of Santa Croce delle Scalette o del Buon Pastore, built in 1619. Next to it there is a monastery, rebuilt in 1854 by Virginio Vespignani, which until 1970 was a women's reformatory. On the opposite side, next to the Farnesina, we find the church of San Giuseppe alla Lungara, built in 1732 by the Roman architect Ludovico Sassi Rusconi; the convent next to it was built about thirty years later.

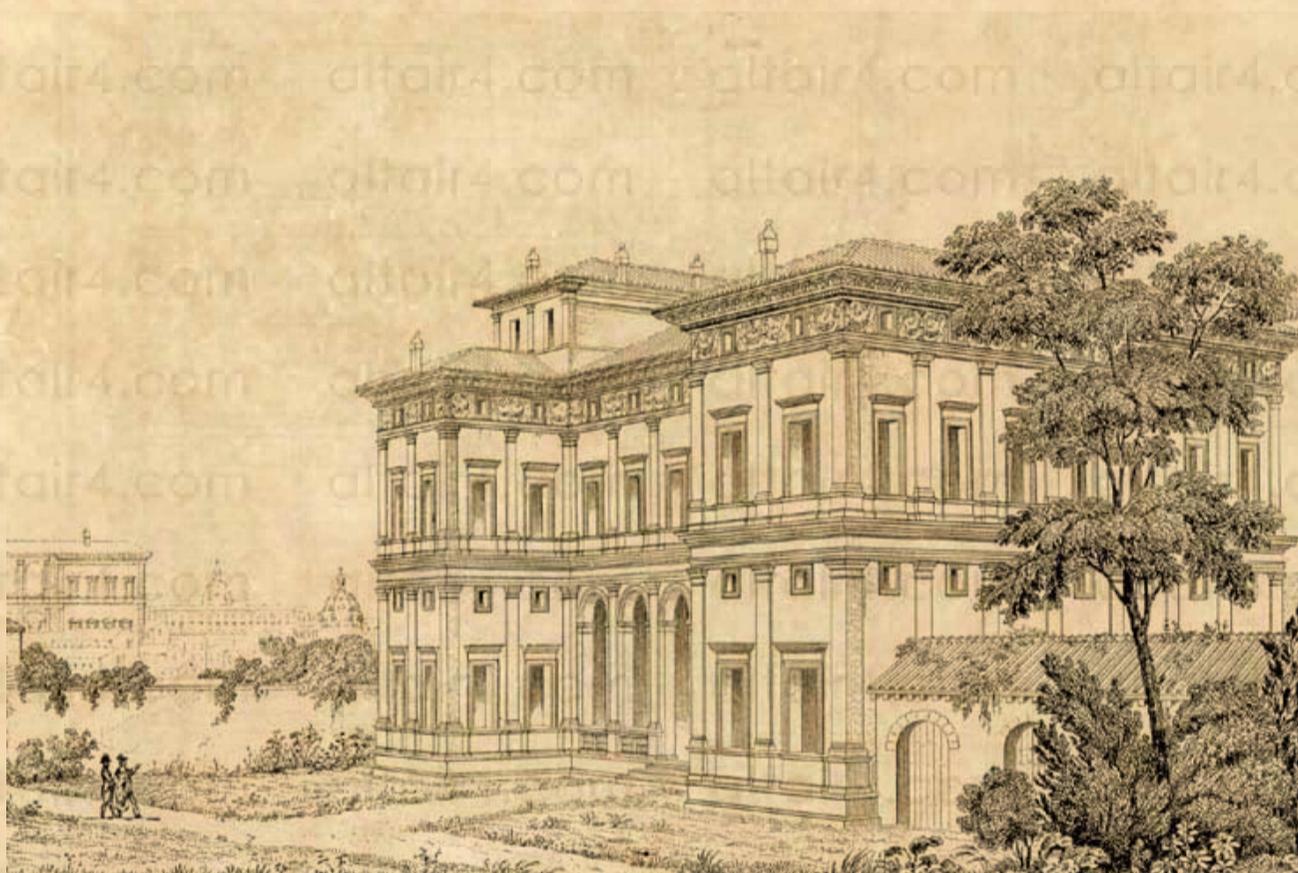
Further down on the same side we reach the entrance of the villa of the Farnesina family. When its owner died (the wealthy banker Agostino Chigi) the heirs were not able to administer the estate, and so in 1590 the villa was sold to the Farnese family, from whom it takes its name. Today it houses the Accademia dei Lincei, and part of the State Archives of Drawings and Prints.

Opposite the villa there is Palazzo Corsini alla Lungara, a typically Roman example of a large and suburban residence in one building complex. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the noble Florentine Corsini family, having already bought a 16<sup>th</sup> century residence from the Riario family, formerly occupied by Queen Cristina of Sweden, called in the architect Ferdinando Fuga to rebuild it.

It was enlarged to house the library founded by Cardinal Lorenzo Corsini (later Pope Clemente XII), and the many works of art collected by the family. The priceless works collected by Cardinal Neri Corsini, with many masterpieces, make up the Galleria Corsini, which is in a wing of the piano nobile of what is now the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. The garden, designed around the rear wings of the building, stretched as far as the **Janiculum**. What survives today is the result of changes brought about by its adaptation to the Botanical Gardens. The scientific function of the garden now prevails over its original recreational one, of which few elements survive: the "water chain" and some fountains. The Botanical Gardens, belonging to Rome University, known as "La Sapienza", is one of the most important in Italy. It covers 12 hectares around the slopes of the **Janiculum**, and includes about 3500 species of plants. Continuing down Via della Lungara we reach the 15<sup>th</sup> century Porta Settimiana, through which we pass into the ancient quarter of **Trastevere**.









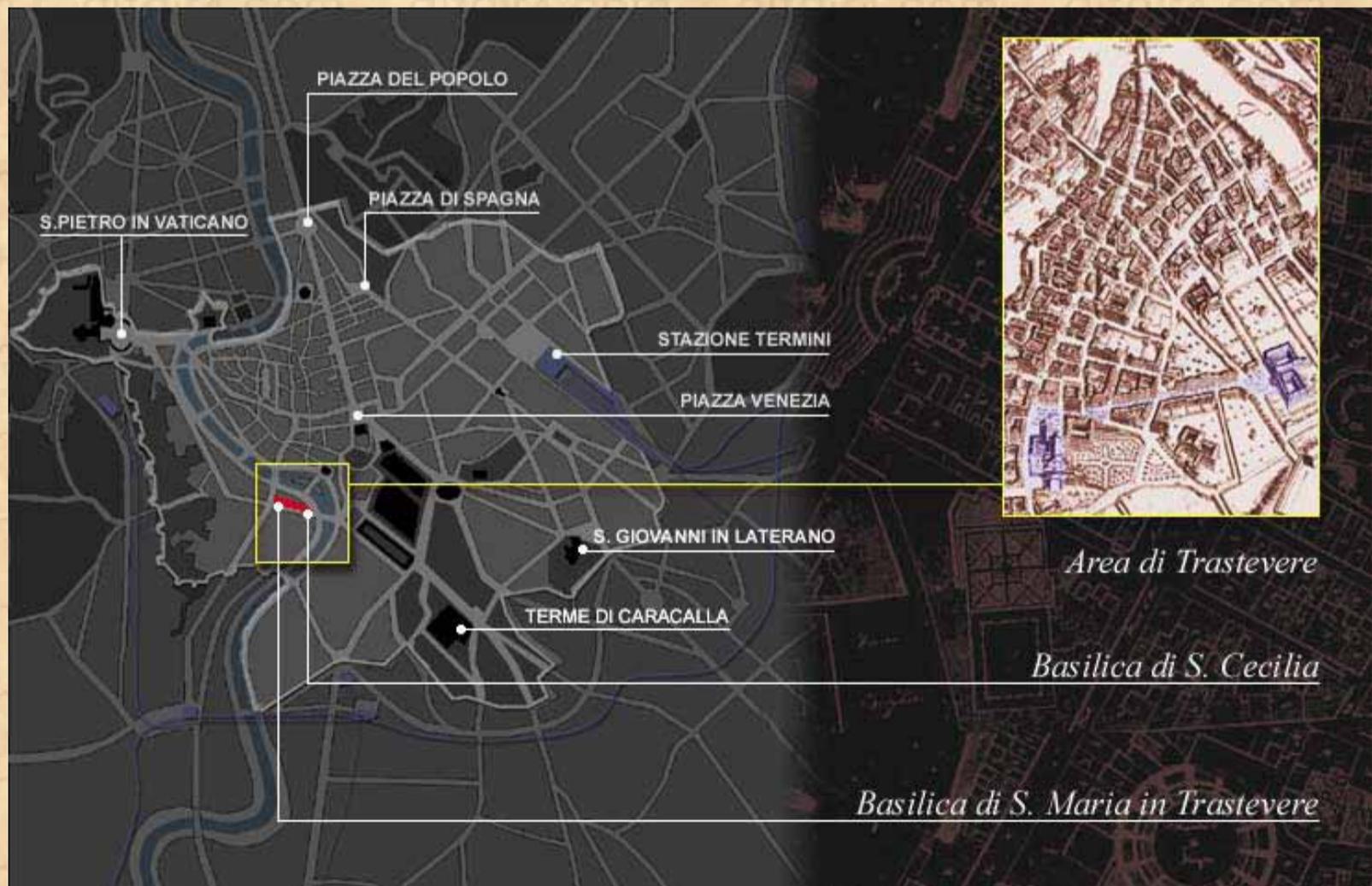
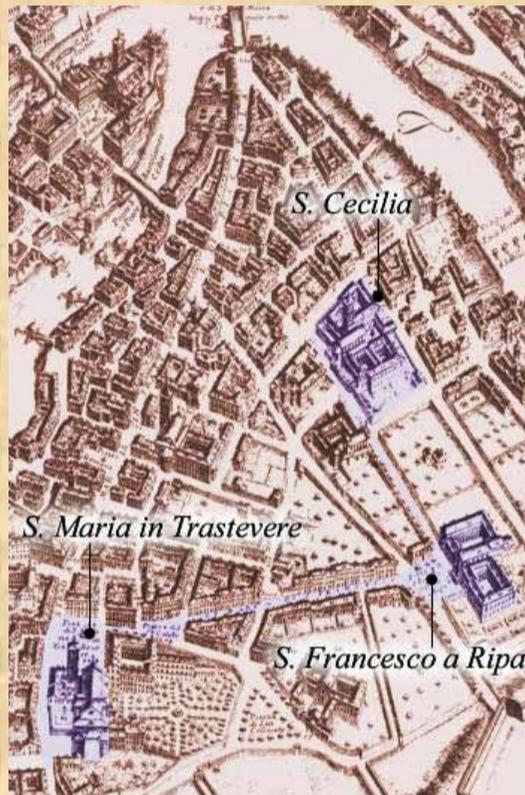


*Palazzo Corsini*  
1. Chiesa e Monastero di S. Giacomo, 2. Porta S. Spirito, 3. Chiesa e Monastero di Regina Celi, 4. Chiesa e Monastero delle Sestiere



# Trastevere

By Gemma Fusciello



Trastevere is the area between the Tiber and the slopes of the **Janiculum Hill**, and was originally occupied by the Etruscans, whose stronghold was on the Janiculum. After the Roman conquest, for a long time it remained a border zone, mainly of fields, but once the danger from the Etruscans ceased, it was rapidly urbanized, and, due to its proximity to the port, it became one of the busiest areas of the city, and the biggest and most populated. It can also be reached from the **Tiber Island**, but mainly from the Forum Boarium (**Mouth of Truth**) across the Sublician and Emilian bridges.

The two roads around which the whole quarter developed branched off from these two bridges: one which went to the Aurelia, which is now Via della Lungaretta, and one which led to Portuense, today Via dei Vascellari. There was an early spread of Christianity there, since there were three buildings which were given over to the cult, known as *tituli*, later transformed into the churches of **Santa Maria in Trastevere** and San Crisogono on Via della Lungaretta, and Santa Cecilia on Via dei Vascellari. Trastevere, although within the perimeter of the Aurelian Walls, did not escape invasion by the Barbarians, nor the consequent depopulation, but it recovered, due to the ease of water supply from the nearby Tiber, even when the aqueducts were in ruins.

The old road which led to the Aurelia, which was also important as an access road to **Saint Peter's**, became the hub of development in the first centuries, around the zone near the bridge with its center in San Benedetto in *Piscinula*. The other road, going to the Portuense, was never very densely populated, in spite of the port of Ripa Grande, which until the early Middle Ages had replaced the Roman port on the opposite bank.

Between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries the area developed, as shown by the rebuilding of the ancient titular basilicas, but even during the periods of greatest expansion it was limited to the zones neighboring Via della Lungaretta, reaching Santa Maria in Trastevere and Santa Cecilia. The rest of the area was made up of countryside and some monasteries, such as San Cosimato and San Francesco a Ripa.

It was during this period that Trastevere assumed its characteristic appearance of a maze of narrow alleys, closely knit and swarming with people, causing serious problems of urban hygiene, with at the same time basilicas and the turreted houses of many important Roman families.

Many popes tried to influence its planning. At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Sixtus IV rebuilt the Roman bridge connecting the Campo dei Fiori, which was given his name



and called the Ponte Sisto. Julius II oversaw the straightening of Via della Lungara, a continuation of Via della Lungaretta, which he wanted to become the axis crossing the whole quarter.

From the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century a period of building was begun, with new churches and palaces, which ended at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century under Paul V, who ensured a water supply for the quarter, opened up new roads and rebuilt the Piazza di Santa Maria in Trastevere. Work continued until the end of the century, and into the next, with the building of the Hospital of S. Gallicano and the Hospice of San Michele a Ripa, which did not however succeed in populating the area outside the historical center.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Pope Pius IX tried to populate it, building a quarter for the workers of the Manifattura dei Tabacchi (Tobacco Factory) opened by him. This was the first intervention in contrast with the preexisting urban development, whose unity was definitively broken by the opening up, in an orthogonal line, of Viale Trastevere, which split the old quarter in two, and set off a period of building of monotonous 19<sup>th</sup> century blocks in the uninhabited areas.

Today, if we cross the modern Palatine Bridge, which replaced the ancient Emilian Bridge that after being rebuilt several times in the Middle Ages had become a mere wall in the river, we reach the most ancient part of Trastevere, which is built around Piazza di San Benedetto in *Piscinula*, dominated by a fine Roman bell tower, belonging to the medieval church of the same name.

The medieval house nearby, which belonged to the Mattei family, is particularly interesting, with its 14<sup>th</sup> century single and double lancet windows. From there we branch off into Via della Lungaretta, the ancient main axis of the quarter.

At the corner of Via della Luce we find the church of Santa Maria della Luce, a very ancient church rebuilt in 1736 by Valvassori, which in the past was called San Salvatore de Corte because in ancient times it had been the barracks for the 7<sup>th</sup> Cohort of the City Guards, the remains of which were found in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Walking on we reach Piazza Sonnino, incorporated into the fabric of the city when Viale Trastevere was built. The Palazzo degli Anguillara, dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, looks out over the square, with its Tower which, although it has been restored many times, is the only remaining medieval one in the quarter.

Opposite is San Crisogono, the extremely ancient *titulus*, transformed in the 8<sup>th</sup> century into a church with a single nave and apse, whose remains can still be seen in the underground chambers.

Rebuilt in 1129 with three naves separated by twenty-two bare columns, with a



transept and an apse, it was restored in 1626 by Soria, who was also the author of the porticoed façade on the right of which is the Roman bell tower.

Behind it is the hospital of San Gallicano, a rare example of hospital architecture, built in 1725 by Filippo Raguzzini. Its busy buildings, along which runs its characteristic balcony access, extend down Via San Gallicano, with the church in the center.

Continuing down Via della Lungaretta, before reaching Piazza San Maria in Trastevere, some ancient churches, rebuilt in various periods, interrupt the characteristic medieval fabric of the area: Sant'Agata, with its 18<sup>th</sup> century façade by Recalcati, Santa Rufina e Seconda with its Romanesque bell tower, and Santa Margherita, rebuilt by Carlo Fontana.

Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere, after transformation under Paul V, is the real heart of the quarter. On the left is the Palazzo di San Callisto, with a fine portal with a balcony above, the work of Torriani, who also built the church of San Callisto within the palace.

At the back of the square, flanked by the high Romanesque bell tower, we see the façade of Santa Maria in Trastevere, with its portico which was rebuilt in 1702 by Carlo Fontana, to whom we also owe the octagonal fountain in the center of the square. Turning down Via della Scala we find the church of Sant'Egidio, with its nearby Carmelite ex-convent, now housing the Museum of Folklore.

At the end of the road we come to Piazza Santa Maria della Scala, with its 16<sup>th</sup> century church of the same name, with a façade by Francesco da Volterra and the interior by Ottaviano Mascherino, with a Latin Cross a single nave, flanked by chapels, with a fine baldachin by Carlo Rainaldi.

From here, passing through the Porta Settimiana in the Aurelian Wall, we come out onto the 16<sup>th</sup> century **Via della Lungara**.

The ancient built-up area developed around Via della Lungaretta. On the side facing the Tiber the area around the Ponte Sisto is the one in which more of the original buildings have survived, in which several churches stand out: the 15<sup>th</sup> century church of San Giovanni della Malva, and the 18<sup>th</sup> century Santa Dorotea.

On the other side the built-up area went as far as Via dei Genovesi, which took its name from the hospital of the brotherhood of the same name, built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century for sick sailors. It still has a beautiful cloister, the work of Baccio Pontelli, with its attached small church of San Giovanni Battista. The road ends near the river, with the small medieval church of Santa Maria in Cappella.

Further on we come to the Piazza Santa Cecilia, where the ancient basilica has a monumental entrance in the courtyard built by Fuga in 1725. Outside the historical



center, behind the Manifattura dei Tabacchi in Piazza Mastai, we find Santa Maria dell'Orto, a precious church with a Latin Cross, three naves and lateral chapels, built in 1566 by Guidetti for the corporation of the market gardeners, with its façade by Vignola which was then finished by Francesco da Volterra.

From there we reach San Michele a Ripa, an extremely interesting church built between 1670 and 1790 to house an institute for orphans and the elderly, and where for a period of time there was also a reform institute for young offenders and a prison for women.

The series of buildings around the internal courtyards, ranging across 334 meters, was begun by Carlo Fontana, who also built the large church of the same name, finished by Ferdinando Fuga.

The buildings go as far as the Piazza Porta Portese, which takes its name from the monumental gate which was opened in the Aurelian Wall by Urban VIII, and where on Sunday there is a famous flea market.

From the nearby square, which is overlooked by the 17<sup>th</sup> century façade of the church of San Francesco a Ripa, we enter the road of the same name, opened in 1611 by Paolo V to connect Porta Portese with Santa Maria in Trastevere.

Along it, and beyond Viale Trastevere, we find the convent of San Cosimato, which existed from the 9<sup>th</sup> century with the name of San Cosma e Damiano in Mica Aurea. It has two cloisters, one of them Romanesque, like the ancient protire which still survives today outside the convent, while the other cloister was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, through which we reach the small 10<sup>th</sup> century church which was rebuilt in 1475.

Opposite, instead of the ancient oratory of the Forty Martyrs, there is the beautiful church of San Pasquale Baylon, built in 1745 by Giuseppe Sardi.





CHIESA DI S. GRISOGONO DE FRATI CARMELITANI IN TRASTEVERE.

Architettura di Gio. Battista Soria.

Gio. Rossi Fecit del. et fecit.

Per Gio. Jacopo Rossi in Roma alla Casa di Gio. del. et fecit.



# *Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere*

By Gemma Fuscello



Santa Maria in Trastevere is one of the most important churches in Rome, after the patriarchal basilicas.

Legends of its foundation narrate that this is the spot where the famous fountain of oil, *fons olei*, is said to have gushed forth at the time of Christ's birth; it is still conserved near the altar. Considering it a prophetic sign, a Christian meeting place was founded in 220, at the time of Pope Callistus I, in one of the public buildings which were called *tituli*.

In 340 Pope Julius I built the basilica, thus it appears with his name as *Titulus Juli*, often linked in documents to *Titulus Calixti*. It was rebuilt in the 5<sup>th</sup> century by Pope Celestine, following the damage inflicted by Alaric's troops. In the 8<sup>th</sup> century it was enlarged by Adrian I and in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by Gregory IV, who transformed the presbytery to insert a crypt with the body of Saint Callistus.

It was dedicated to the Virgin in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, and as in Santa Maria Maggiore, a chapel of the Holy Crib was made. Ruins of this earlier basilica exist below the present one, although they are insufficient to establish either its design or its extension. It



was rebuilt more or less as we see it today by Innocent II in 1140 and completed a century later by Innocent III.

It represents one of the best examples of early Christian basilicas built in Rome during the Romanesque period. In fact, it has a triple nave and a continuous transept opening into an apse, just like in the earliest basilicas, particularly the Constantinian Saint Peter's.

The naves are divided by a trabeation supported by twenty-two mostly Ionic columns, almost all elements are reused spoils from earlier buildings, but the search for a unitary effect emerges in the way the pieces are combined or by imitations of missing pieces. Many capitals and columns probably come from a single classical building, perhaps the Temple of Isis in Campo Marzio or the Baths of Caracalla, and others, signed with the frog and lizard, are probably works of Vassalletto.

The present-day arched windows, the order of Corinthian pilaster strips and the frescoes in the upper part of the basilica can be traced back to restorations conducted by Virgilio Vespignani between 1865 and 1869, during which the cosmatesque pavement was lowered and redone.

The magnificent coffered ceiling with the Assumption was designed in 1617 by Domenichino, and during its realization the original medieval windows which opened in the intercolumns were closed.

At the beginning of the central nave, on the right, is the 18<sup>th</sup> century tabernacle by Mino del Reame. The chapels that open off the side aisles, extraneous to the design of the medieval church, were built at a later time and redone many times leading up to their current Baroque quality.

The Chapel of the Holy Crib in the right aisle, the Baptistery in the left and the Chapel of d'Avila, all of distinct Baroque style, are worthy of note. Filippo Ragozzino did the first two and Antonio Gherardi the last in 1680.

The triumphal arch, supported by pilasters with Corinthian columns to each side, divides the church from the raised transept, the ancient main high altar is in the middle with the *fenestella confessionis* of the crypt below.

The ciborium that covers it was largely rebuilt during the 1865 restorations, at which time the pavement of the transept was raised. The fine coffered ceiling is from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. On the left head of the transept is the altar of San Filippo d'Alencon whose statue and high-relief are now to the left of the altar. On the opposite wall is the tomb of Cardinal Armellini attributed to Sansovino.

To the rear of the apse is the ancient cosmatesque marble throne, the raised pulpits and the paschal candlestick are in the transept. The apse is adorned with the famous



13<sup>th</sup> century mosaics by Pietro Cavallini; the six panels show the *Birth of the Virgin*, the *Annunciation*, the *Birth of Christ*, *The Epiphany*, the *Presentation in the Temple* and the *Assumption of the Virgin*. In the center of the apse is another mosaic by Cavallini, showing the Madonna and Child encircled by a rainbow, with Saints Peter and Paul.

The mosaic in the canopy of the apse, with the Coronation of the Virgin, and those on the external front of the arch, with the Evangelists and the Prophets, are of special interest; the two rectangular chapels on the sides of the apse were added at a later time. To the left is the richly decorated Altemps chapel, realized between 1584 and 1589 by Martino Longhi and his son Onorio. The Madonna of Clemency altar-piece is from the Byzantine era.

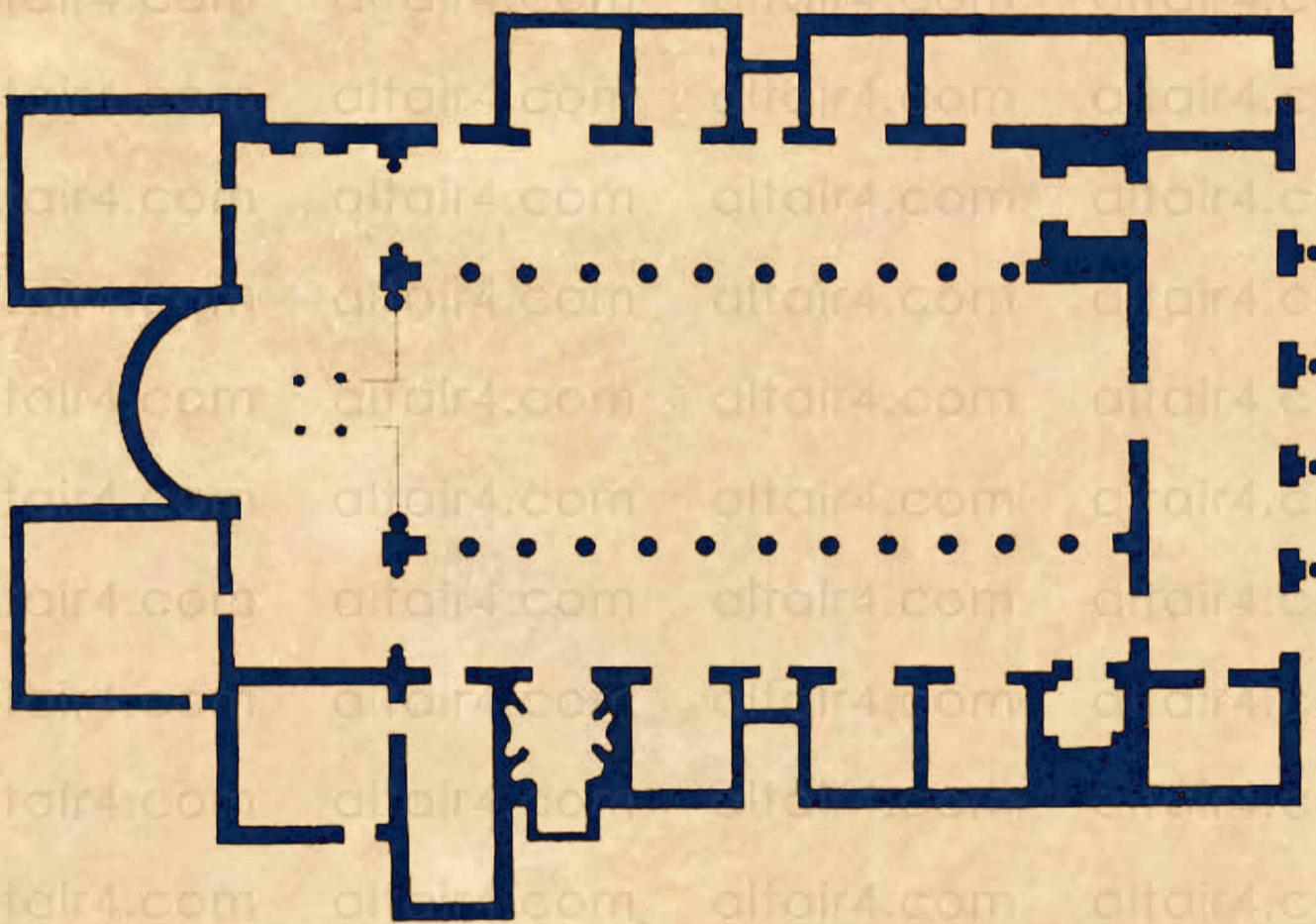
To the right is the even more richly decorated Winter Choir designed by Domenichino, where the *Flight from Egypt* by Maratta is found. On the altar is the miraculous image from the 16<sup>th</sup> century of the Madonna called: *della Strada Cupa* (of the dark road), because of the place from which it was taken.

The exterior façade conserves the characteristic concave ending of 14<sup>th</sup> century Roman façades, even though it is surmounted by a later sloping top. Between the two windows opened by Vespignani is the splendid mosaic from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, representing the Virgin and Child among ten female figures, perhaps restored by Cavallini.

Flanking the church is the beautiful Romanesque bell tower, characteristic for its aedicola with another mosaic of the Virgin and Child. In front of the façade is the portico built by Carlo Fontana in 1702, with arches on pilasters and Ionic columns. Inside are two frescoes from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, some tomb stones and the remains of the marble gates from the 8<sup>th</sup> century church.

On the exterior outside walls one notes the medieval design with its characteristic cornices, and in correspondence with the transept the old secondary door, surmounted by medieval shrine. The beautifully sculptured stone cornices of the three doors were evidently taken from classical buildings of the middle period of the Empire.







*1 Chiesa di Santa Maria in Trastevere.*  
*2 Habitatione dell' Canon' fatta da N. S.*    **PIAZZA DI S. M. IN TRASTEVERE AMPLIATA DA N. S. PAPA ALESSANDRO VII**    *3 Fontana fatta da N. Sig.*  
*Per Gio: Jacomo Rossi in Roma alla Pace cō P. del S. P.*    *Gio: Battista Falda del 1717.*    *Monastero de' Monaci Neri di S. Ben'*    **33**





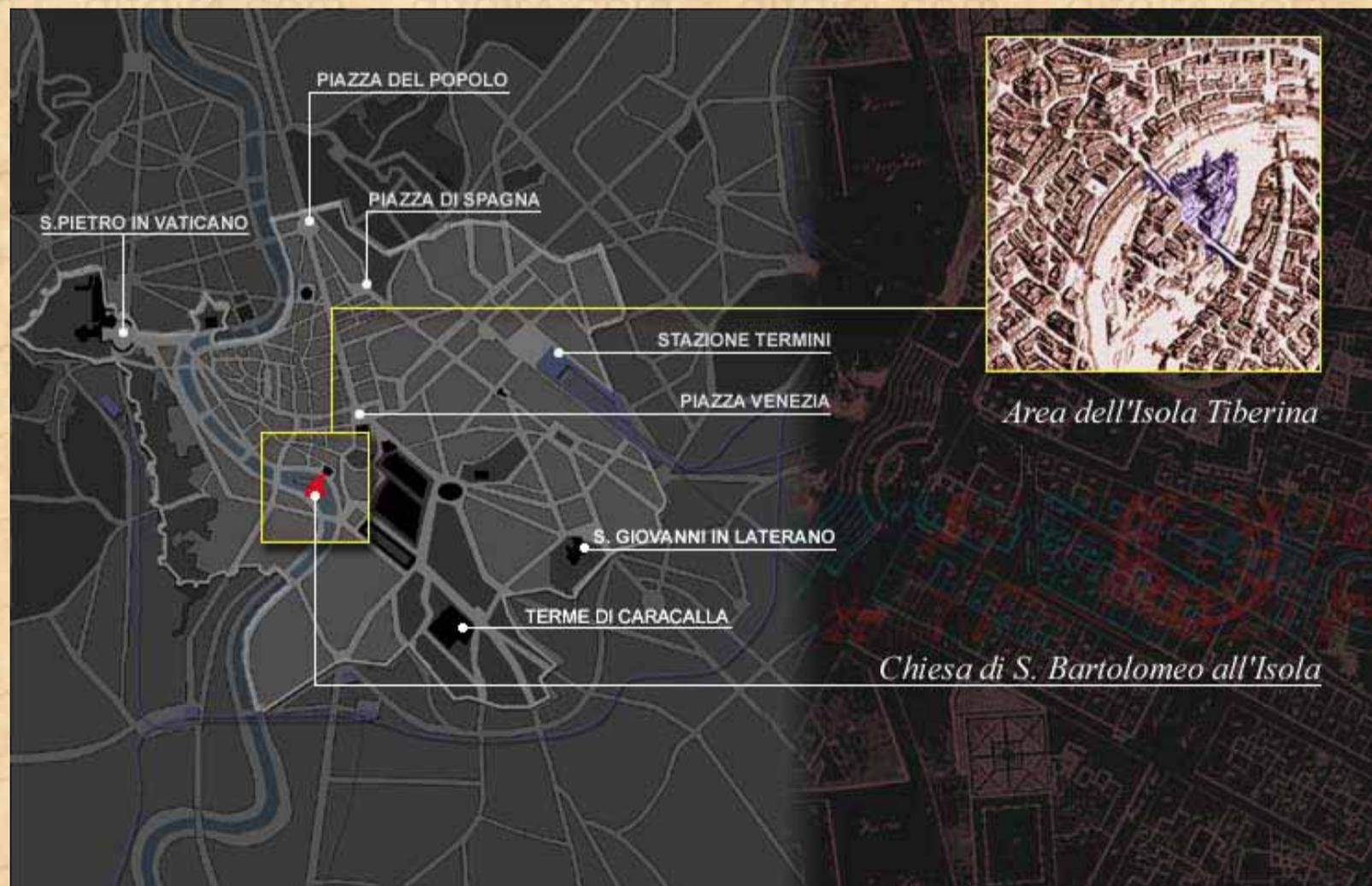


*Convento dei PP. Minori Riformati  
Chiesa e Convento di S. Francesco a Roma, e Chiesa e Convento di S. Biagino dei PP. Riformati Spagnoli, a Fontana secca.*



# *The Tiber Island*

By Maria Grazia Nini



The island takes its name from *Tiber*, the Latin name for the Tiber river. The Romans, however, simply called it *Insula*, the island. The provenance of the name *Lycaonia*, with which the island was known in the Middle Ages, is uncertain.

According to the legend, the island is said to have been formed when the Tarquins, the last Roman kings, were chased out of Rome and the grain harvests from their lands were thrown into the Tiber.

In reality the island was formed by an accumulation of flood debris on top of a base of volcanic rock. In the most primitive stage of the city's development there was most probably a temple on the island, in honor of the river god, Tiberino.

Ancient historians tell of how in 293 BC, following a great plague, a ship was sent to Epidaurus, in Greece, site of the sanctuary of Aesculapius, the god of medicine, to ask for the cessation of the epidemic.

The miracle-working powers of the god were said to emanate from a sanctuary of sacred snakes. One of these was brought back to Rome on the ship and, while the ship was sailing up the Tiber, the snake jumped onto the island, indicating the place where the Temple of Aesculapius should be built.

The Temple of Aesculapius was on the site of the present-day church of S. Bartolomeo all'Isola. On the inside of the temple was a sacred font and on the outside a porticoed area where the sick could find shelter.

Numerous inscriptions have been discovered in the area, with dedications to Aesculapius, invoking his help and thanking him for successful cures, as well as votive plaques in terra cotta.

There is also evidence of the presence of other temples and mortuary chapels on the island: for example, a temple of *Iuppiter Iurarius* (Jupiter, Guarantor of the Oath) was probably located under the church of San Giovanni Calibita, built in the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

Around the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC the island itself was transformed into a monument. The two bridges, Ponte Cestio and Ponte Fabricio, were built and the island was made into a ship (which it already resembled in its natural configuration) in memory of the ship that had brought the serpent of Aesculapius to Rome. The transformation was effected by the construction, on either end of the island, of a bow and a stern made out of stone.

One part of the boat, in blocks of travertine, is still conserved on the north side of the island. It is still possible to make out, carved in relief, the bust of the god, holding a cane with the snake wound around it, which became the symbol of the medical profession, and a bull's head, which may have supported a ring for boats to tie up to.



At the center of the island, on the site of the present-day 19<sup>th</sup> century marble spire in Piazza San Bartolomeo, was an obelisk which functioned as the mast of a ship.

The island held on to its medical vocation, throughout the Middle Ages, and up to the present day. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century Pope Formosus (891-896) had the bodies of Saints Hippolytus and Taurinus moved there from Ostia.

In honor of these two saints some Benedictine nuns later founded a hospital, which at the end of the 1500s passed into the hands of the disciples of Saint John of God. The motto of these religious was “Fate bene fratelli per l’amour di Dio” (Do good works brothers for the love of God), the origin of the popular name of the hospital, “Fate bene fratelli,” still operating today.

Near the Ponte Fabricio is a medieval tower. It is the tower of the castle of the Caetani, placed there in the 13<sup>th</sup> century on top of a pre-existing fortress, belonging to the Pierleoni family. The castle was seriously damaged, along with the other buildings on the island, by a flood in 1557. Transformed into a Franciscan monastery, it passed to the City of Rome in 1870, and for nearly a hundred years part of it was rented out to the Jewish hospital of Rome.

Just a few meters down river from the Tiber Island is the suggestive surviving arch of the Ponte Rotto (Broken Bridge), the ancient Emilian Bridge. It was the first stone bridge in Rome, built in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.

The bridge had many names over the centuries: at the time of Pope John VIII (872-882) it was called Ponte Santa Maria, since it was in front of the church of Santa Maria Egiziaca, which had grown up inside the rectangular temple of the Forum Boarium; it was also called *pons Maior* and Ponte Senatorio. It underwent numerous restorations, partially necessitated by its oblique position, which made it vulnerable to damage from the river current.

After the last restoration, ordered by Sixtus V in 1598, the bridge was never again rebuilt. In 1853, to reopen the passage across the river, an iron walkway was added to the bridge’s three remaining arches but, in 1887, following the construction of the nearby Palatine Bridge, two of the arches were demolished.









Veduta di me.

*Isole Tiberine verso Occidente*

1. *Gl'Isola degli Ebrei, 2. Ponte Fabricio, 3. Ponte Cestio, 4. M. S. da orione, 5. Muri dell'antica Isola, 6. Chiesa di S. Maria in Cosmedin.*

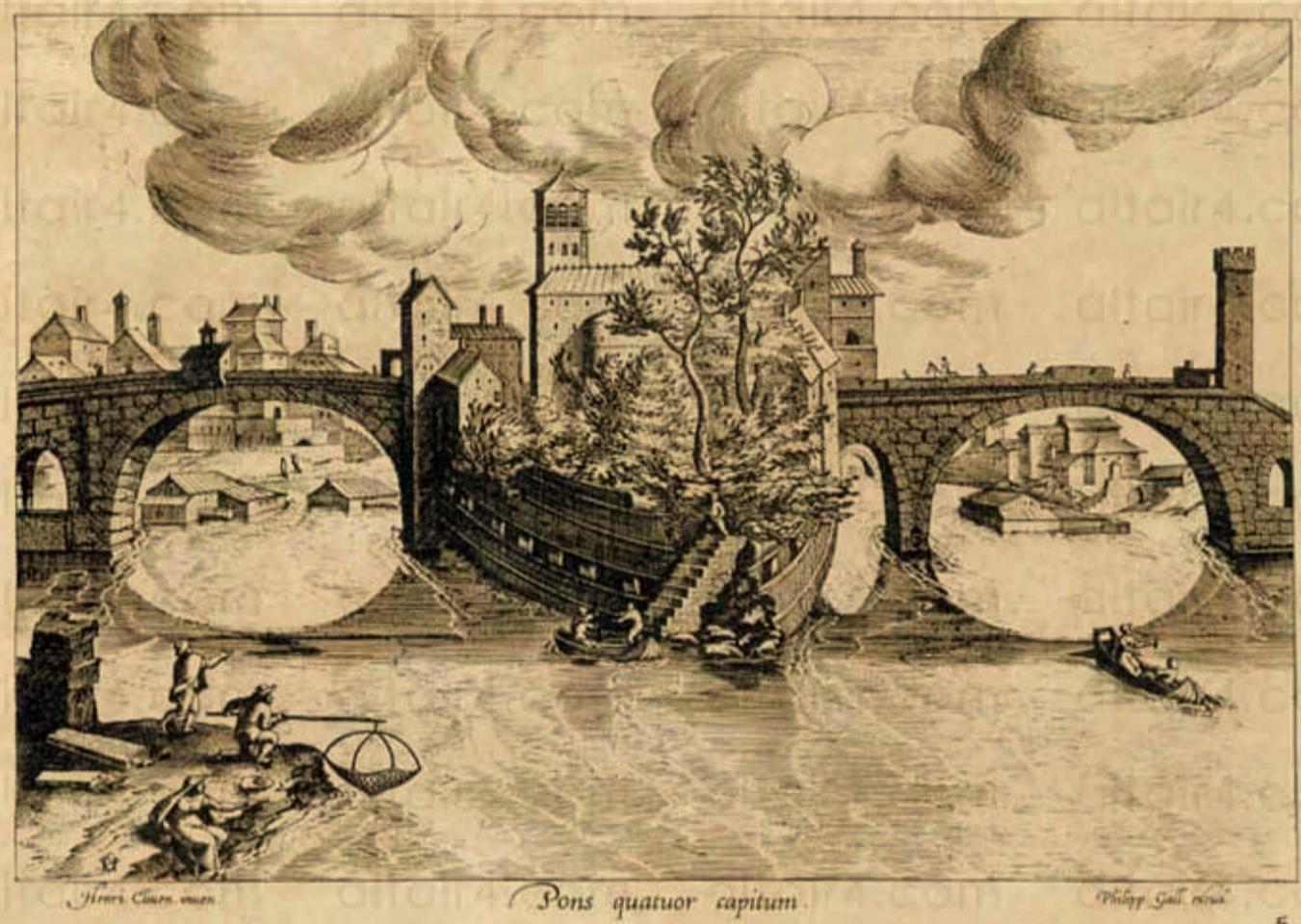
91

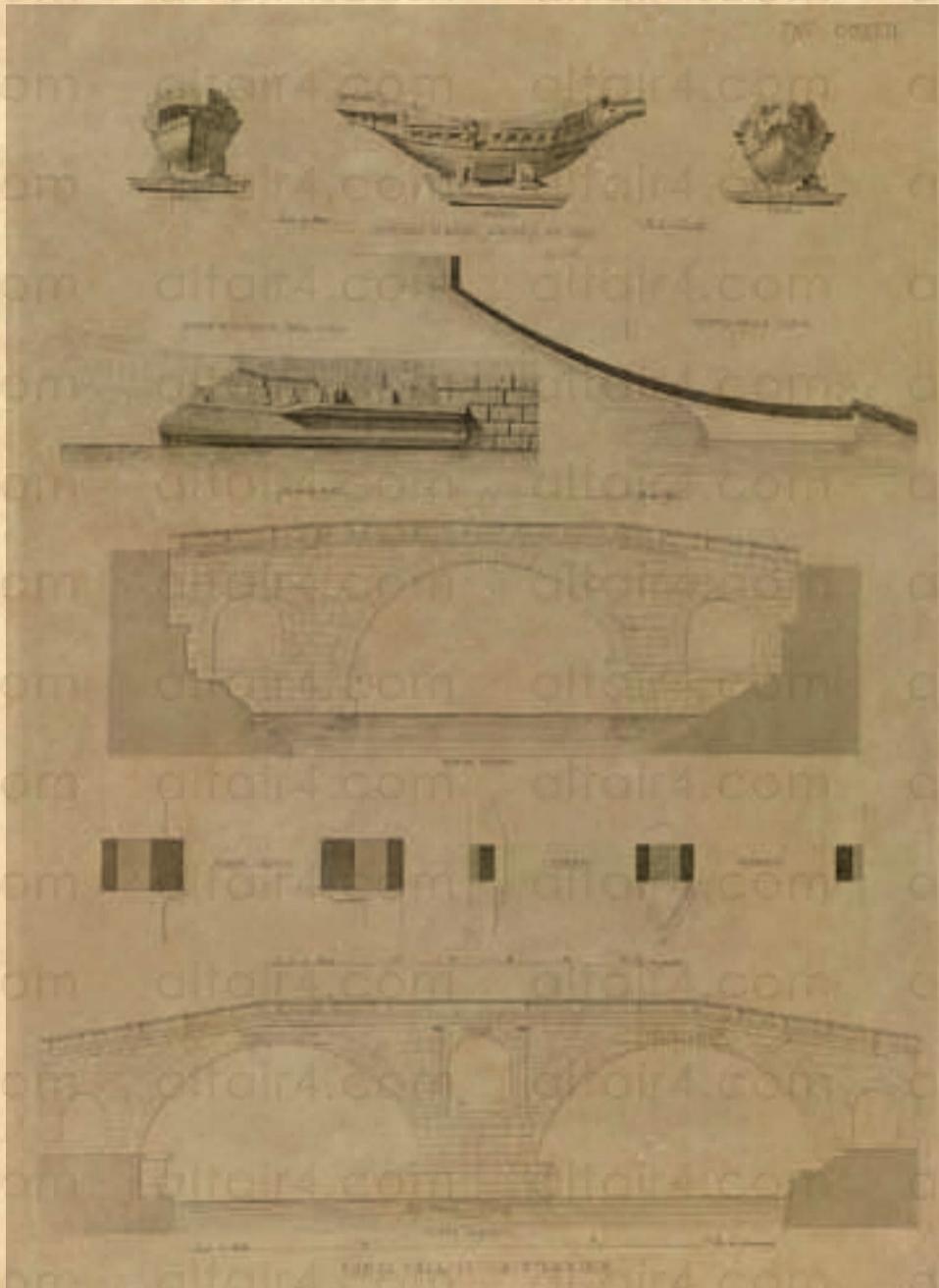




*Chiesa di S. Bartolomeo all'Isola  
A. Lapide che sta nel Convento de PP. Olivetani, a Ponte del Ponte Cestivo, 7. Ponte del Ponte Fabricio, 4. Chiesa di S. Gregorio a ponte, 4. Capri, 2. Ponte di Roma.*







# *The Janiculum Hill*

By Raffaele Pugliese



The Janiculum Hill is part of the 13<sup>th</sup> city quarter, while in the Roman era it was part of the 14<sup>th</sup> Augustan region, the *Transtiberim*.

According to the ancients the name came from *Ianus*, the king of ancient times who founded his city there. However another legend speaks of a mythical settlement in the same place called *Aineias*, founded by *Rhomos*, the son of Aeneas in honor of his father.

Apart from the myth, the hill was always considered to be an integral part of the city, due to its strategic position, so much so that it was contested several times by the Etruscans. Tradition had it that the tomb of Numa Pompilio lies at the bottom of the hill; Anco Marzio included the hill in the city, to which it was linked by the Ponte Sublicio; ultimately it was included within the Aurelian Walls.

The Janiculum, bisected by Via Aurelia, was principally composed of gardens and villas, but also included places of worship, some of which were very ancient. In the Middle Ages it was also known as the *mons Aureus* for the color of its sand. Little building was undertaken in this period, and only with Sixtus V was some building undertaken in order to improve the road network and city planning.

This period of building was continued by Paul V at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and subsequently by Urban VIII, who in 1642 had a new wall built around the Janiculum, which was connected to the walls of the **Vatican** and the **Trastevere**. The works of fortification were carried out by Giulio Buratti and Marcantonio De Rossi.

The hill, characterized above all by the presence of convents, churches and villas, lived through a dramatic period when in 1849, for more than two months, Garibaldi, together with the Romans who had founded the Republic, resisted against the French commanded by Oudinot.

At the foot of the hill, along Via Garibaldi, there is the monastery of Santa Maria dei Sette Dolori, whose church was begun by Borromini between 1642 and 1643, while the construction of the convent continued until 1655. The unfinished façade is unusual, with its concave central part.

Walking further down Via Garibaldi, we come to Bosco Parrasio, which, from 1724, housed Arcadia, the famous academy founded in 1690, with the aim of rediscovering the purest spirit of Italian poetry. The Bosco is made up of three terraces with curved flights of stairs, built by Antonio Canevari with the help of Nicola Salvi. In the second terrace there is an elliptical amphitheater, while in the third one there is a theater enclosed by a palazzo, which housed the Arcadians.

Beyond this we reach the Church of San Pietro in Montorio, part of a former



Franciscan monastery, in whose cloister there is the **Tempietto of Bramante**. Next to it is the Spanish Academy of Fine Arts.

Following this we see the Mausoleo Ossario Gianicolense, dedicated to the fallen of 1849, and subsequently to those of 1867 and 1870. It was built in 1941 by the architect Giovanni Jacobucci, in order to replace a previous one in Piazza di San Pietro in Montorio. It is a very simple and sober structure, in which were placed the remains of those who fell against the Nazis, and then of Goffredo Mameli.

At the top of the Janiculum there is the monumental Mostra dell'Acqua Paola, the façade of the Aqueduct, built by Trajan to transport water from Lake Bracciano. Paul V restored the structure, and, between 1608-1612, entrusted Giovanni Fontana and Flaminio Ponzio with the construction of the sumptuous villa in which were used the marble from the Foro Romano and four columns from the ancient façade of San Pietro.

The façade is composed of four large niches, flanked by two lateral ones which are lower and more narrow, punctuated by granite columns on high bases. An attic bears a commemorative inscription, and it is peaked by a tympanum with angels and the Papal arms, the work of Ippolito Buzio (1610). Initially there were small baths in the niches, which were then replaced with the current “pool” by Carlo Fontana.

At the end of Via Garibaldi, and at the highest point of the hill (82 meters above sea level) we find the impressive Porta San Pancrazio, built by Virgilio Vespignani in 1854. It replaced a more ancient gate built under Urban VIII in 1642, which was destroyed during the siege of 1849; inside there is a small museum with relics of Garibaldi's life.

In an elegant and modern building in Via Angelo Massimo, on the left of the Porta, we find the American Academy, founded in 1894. The building was the work of the architects C. F. McKim, W. Rutherford Mead and S. White.

Within the fortified walls built under the orders of Urban VIII, we find the Passeggiata del Gianicolo. The thoroughway, opened to the public in 1884, is characterized by its memories of Garibaldi and the Italian Risorgimento.

At the beginning of the Passeggiata, after Piazzale Aurelio, there is an unusual façade called “Michelangelo's House”. In fact it is an architectonic façade on two floors, with alternate parastas with niches and portals, coming from Via delle Tre Pile, where it was built in 1874 by the architect Domenico Jannetti, using various architectonic fragments. It was repositioned in 1941.

Behind it, but outside the walls, there is a small marble niche built in 1848 by Pius IX. It was built to commemorate the finding of the gown of Sant'Andrea, which in



the same year had been stolen from the church of San Pietro.

Following on down the Passeggiata we come to the Piazzale del Gianicolo, with its impressive equestrian statue of the Hero of Two Worlds: unveiled in 1895, it is the work of Emilio Gallori; in the same square, a cannon signals that it is noon to the city every day.

In the next square there is an equestrian statue of Anita Garibaldi, whose remains were buried in the pedestal, sculpted by Mario Rutelli and unveiled in 1932.

Just beyond it, to the right, is the renaissance Villa Lante, begun in 1518 by Giulio Romano who was commissioned by the rich Tuscan benefactor Baldassarre Turini, so as to be able to organize literary salons there. It then fell into the hands of the Lante family, and then the Borghese, who commissioned Luigi Canina to do some restoration work.

The two-leveled façade, with an attic, has stuccoed pilasters, while pillars were added to the end of it after 1551. Valuable decorations, some of which grotesque, stuccoes and frescoes all enrich the interiors.

Next we see the Piazzale del Faro, designed by Manfredo Manfredi, and donated by the Italian immigrants in Argentina and inaugurated in 1911.

Walking down towards the Vatican, we see the famous Quercia del Tasso, where the poet used to rest, and so did also San Filippo Neri. The walk ends shortly before the Church of Sant'Onofrio.

This church replaced a hermitage dedicated to Saint Onofrio in 1419 by the blessed Nicolò da Forca Palena. It was begun in about 1439 and was finished during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1595 Torquato Tasso died in the attached convent. The whole complex was entrusted by Pius XII to the Ordine del Santo Sepolcro in 1945. The church has a portico with frescoes by Domenichino (1605).

The interior has a single nave with a terminal apse and five lateral chapels, and contains many tombs of famous men and prelates, and many interesting paintings and frescoes, among which those by Antoniazio Romano in the first chapel on the right. In the apse the frescoes have been attributed to Baldassare Peruzzi. In the first chapel on the left there is Tasso's funeral monument, the work of Giuseppe Fabris (1857).

In the convent, which has a simple cloister with frescoes by Giuseppe Cesari executed for the Jubilee in 1600, there is a small museum dedicated to Tasso.











CHIESA DEDICATA A S. PIETRO APOSTOLO, DETTA IN MONTEORIO SVL' GIANICOLO DE PADRI REFORMATI DI SAN FRANCESCO.  
Architettura di Bramante.

Geo. Banti Faldes del. et fecit

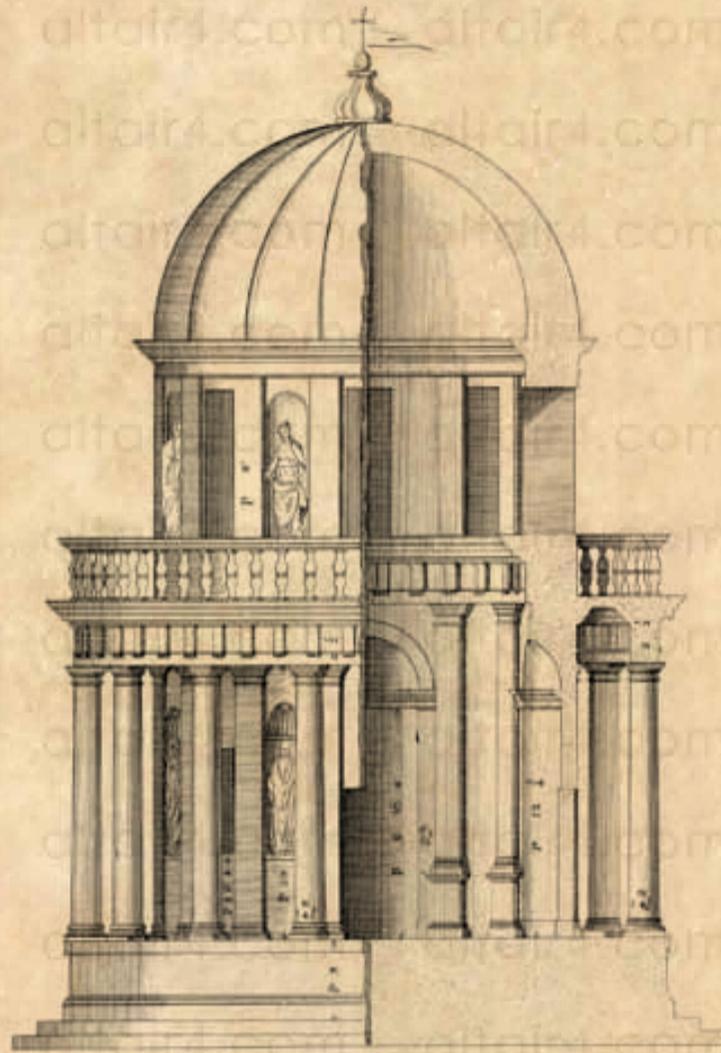
Fecit Gio. Jacomo Rusconi Roma alla post. et F.lli del. S. Post.

31



# *The Tempietto del Bramante*

By Gemma Fusciello



The Tempietto was built, by will of the Spanish sovereigns, inside the monastery of San Pietro in Montorio, the spot once believed to be the place of St. Peter's crucifixion.

The Temple is believed to have been built in 1502, but it may have been later. The design was entrusted to Donato Bramante, who made it one of the Renaissance period's masterpieces, compared by many contemporaries to the works of ancient builders.

Bramante chose a circular form, tied to the worship of saints and to the principal Christian relics since the beginning of Christianity, but also adapted to the central expression of the role of St. Peter and the Church.

It was inspired by the many circular Roman temples, but far surpassed such models creating a vivacious dialecticism between the interior stonework bulb, above which



one can see the circular drum that holds the high cupola, and the peristyle colonnade. The Temple stands on a base formed by three stairs, upon which sits the peristyle made of sixteen Doric columns. They hold an entablature of the same order where liturgical objects are represented in the metope, also repeated on the interior part of the peristyle.

Above the peristyle is a parapet, with no apparent use, which frames the circular drum, lightened by the alternating rectangular windows and niches decorated with shells, schematically divided by pilaster strips.

The splendid cupola is then freed, with its high lantern at the center of the entire composition.

On the interior of the peristyle and the stonework bulb, are sixteen pilaster strips also overlaid by a Doric entablature and placed in correspondence to the sixteen external columns. Again we find alternating niches decorated with shells, and rectangular windows of different shapes and sizes due to the narrow space between the pilaster strips.

The door, larger than the space between the two pilaster strips, overlays and cuts into them with its frame.

The interior follows a different principle. Instead of sixteen pilaster strips set at regular intervals along the wall, they become eight placed in pairs diagonally, creating a rhythmic, Baroque feeling. In the small spaces between the pairs of pilaster strips, there are four small niches, decorated with statues of saints from the following century; in the wider spaces we find four exedras with shell decorated semi-domes. The main door opens in one of these, while the church altar with the statue of St. Peter is in the opposite one. It seems that two more doors were to be placed in the lateral exedras in the original design by Bramante, to create an ideal cross-shape that can still be seen in the floor decoration. The crypt opens here, where it is believed to hold the hole where the cross of Peter was nailed.

A part from few particulars, such as the unopened lateral doors, the Temple follows Bramante's design. The principal modifications date back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the crypt, the lantern, and the decorations were changed.

A number of restoration works have been carried out starting in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the most famous by Valadier in 1825. The last, commissioned by the Spanish Academy of Fine Arts, was completed recently.



