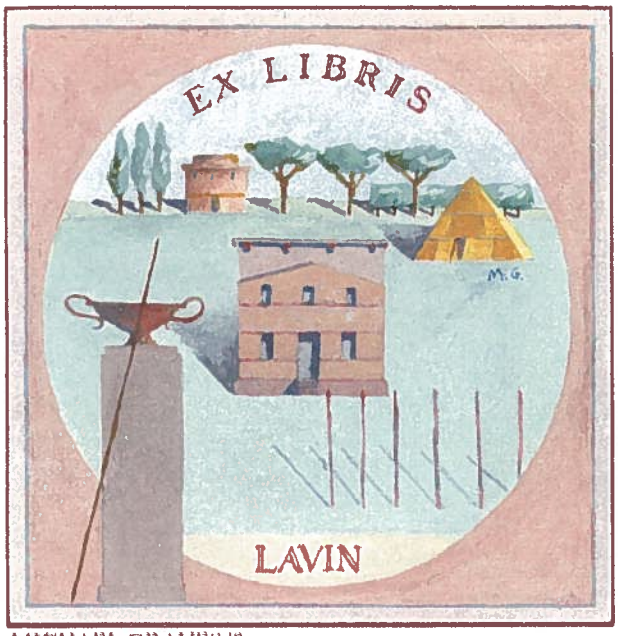
ST. PETER'S IN THE VATICAN

Edited by

WILLIAM TRONZO



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BERNINI AT ST. PETER'S

Singularis in Singulis, in Omnibus Unicus

IRVING LAVIN

PREAMBLE

PERHAPS THE MOST PROFOUND INSIGHT INTO Bernini's conception of his work at St. Peter's is provided by a passage about the juvenile artist in Filippo Baldinucci's biography, published two years after Bernini's death at age eighty-two in 1680:

> It happened one day that he found himself in the company of Annibale Carracci [Carracci died in 1609; Bernini was born in 1598] and other masters in the basilica of St. Peter's. They had finished their devotions and were leaving the church when that great master, turning toward the tribune, said, "Believe me, the day will come, when no one knows, that a prodigious genius will make two great monuments in the middle and at the end of this temple on a scale in keeping with the vastness of the building." That was enough to set Bernini afire with desire to execute them himself and, not being able to restrain his inner impulse, he said in heartfelt words, "Oh, if only I could be the one." Thus, unconsciously, he interpreted Annibale's prophecy and later brought it to pass, as we will relate in due course when we tell of the wonderful works he executed for those places.[1]

The source of the anecdote can only have been Bernini himself, and although it implies a kind of providential intervention in the completion of St. Peter's on the artist's behalf, its art-historical significance lies in what it suggests about Bernini's underlying motivation in the work. It seems that, stimulated by the insight of one of the artists he admired most, Bernini from the beginning had in mind a vision, however vague and inchoate, of the church as a whole. In fact, drawings made half a century later show him realizing exactly this dream. As if in fulfillment of Carracci's prognosis, Bernini studies the visual relationship between two of the most magnificent art works of modern history, the view through the Baldacchino to the Cathedra Petri in the apse (Fig. 108).

This is not to say that Bernini had a preconceived scheme for the projects he would carry out at St. Peter's. But Carracci's remark, which applied to the specific problem of relating the high altar to the apse, represents a way of thinking that Bernini would develop into a comprehensive worldview, unified by certain threads of form and meaning common to everything he designed. Bernini was of course an employee of the papacy, and nothing happened without the initiative and/or approval of the authorities, including a supervising committee of the College of Cardinals, and often the pope himself. But Bernini was an employee of a unique and exalted sort. That he was able to realize his vision was due to the not less providential longevity of his responsibility for St. Peter's. His hegemony began informally soon after Urban VIII became pope and became official in 1629 when, on the death of Carlo Maderno, Urban appointed him architect of St. Peter's. Over the remaining half-century of his life Bernini was responsible for everything done at St. Peter's, serving no less than six popes (see Appendixes 1 and 2). Perhaps even more remarkably, and owing as much to his brilliant if volatile personality as to his talent, he maintained almost without interruption close personal relations with all of them. There is probably no example in history of such continuous (and continuously innovative) creativity, on such a scale, on a single project, over such a long period, by a single artist (Figs. 109, 110).

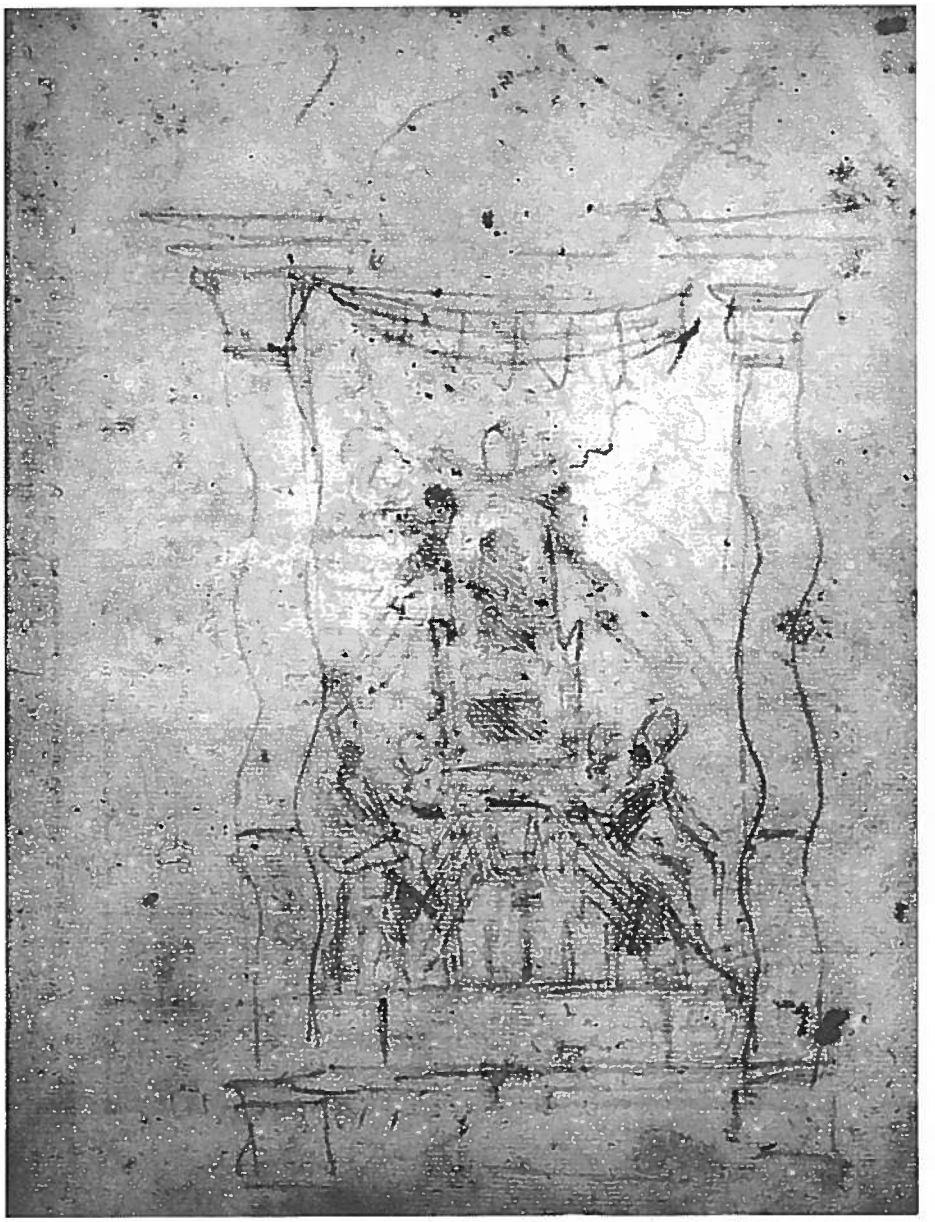
Four important caveats are in order before we consider this unexampled spectacle of creativity. First, the discussion that follows is woefully incomplete, if only because it deals exclusively with the monumental works that are still to be seen in St. Peter's. Bernini designed many works, small and large, that are left out of account, from church furnishings and liturgical vestments, to vast temporary decorations for canonizations; even huge bell towers, one of which was actually built but soon dismantled because it was deemed unstable. Second, although discussion will proceed in roughly chronological order, it is to a degree misleading, since many projects overlapped

and others were planned and carried out in fits and starts over many years, even decades. Third, a veritable army of artists and artisans carried out these works, some of them gigantic, and although under Bernini's supervision they achieved a remarkable harmony of style, his personal participation in the execution varied greatly. Individual artistic personalities are often discernible. I have not attempted to disentangle these problems of authorship, but I am convinced that at least in some instances – notably the statues in the crossing piers and the angels of the Ponte Sant'Angelo – Bernini condoned, or deliberately encouraged, these individual differences, both for concerted expressive effects and in order to manifest the human comprehensiveness of the concepts and beliefs the works embody. Finally, although certain elements required for the outfitting of a church, even such a special one as St. Peter's, were predictable, Bernini obviously could not have premeditated some eventualities and projects; these had to be integrated into the overall scheme after the fact, as it were. Partly in response to such contingencies, and partly of his own volition, Bernini's vision evolved in detail; but it remained constant in essence. Through all the manifold vagaries of time, persons, places, and things, one and only one mind was at work at St. Peter's during the long period in which the building was brought to completion. Despite the vicissitudes of unforeseen developments and a situation fraught with conflicting interests, Bernini was able to impress his conceptual and visual stamp on the greatest building in Christendom and create the salient image of an entire epoch:[2] "singularis in singulis, in omnibus unicus" (Fig. 111).[3]

St. Peter's as *Summa Ecclesiarum*

Two major decisions, taken at an interval of a century, established the fabric of the mother church of Western Christendom as we know it today. The first, made early in the sixteenth century, was to bring down the venerable but tottering and by then inadequate Early Christian basilica. The old building had been erected in the early fourth century by Constantine, the Roman emperor who first recognized Christianity. The aim was to replace Old St. Peter's by a centrally planned structure built over the tombs of the apostles Peter and Paul.[4] The new design expressed above all the commemorative nature of the church, its concentric and symmetrical geometry evoking an ancient sepulchral tradition that had come to express the ideal, eternal perfection of the Christian martyr and of Christ's church, here manifested in the person of Saint Peter and in his office as the Vicar of Christ on earth. The second decision, made in the early seventeenth century, was to add a longitudinal nave, which thus restored to the building a semblance of its original basilical form. The determination to add the nave was not so much owing to the failure of the Bramante/Michelangelo plan to fulfill its intended purpose (the reason given by the later generation) as the reflection of a profound change in values that radically altered the relative importance attached to the building's primary functions. In the wake of the Reformation the attitude of the Church had taken an extroverted and aggressive turn, which entailed a shift of emphasis in the liturgy from commemoration toward the practical aspects of performance and involvement of the faithful. In this new spiritual culture the earlier building made inadequate provision for the sacristy and for the canon's choir, and was wholly unsuited to the ceremonial processions that played an ever-increasing role in ecclesiastical devotions and celebrations. The same underlying spirit also reaffirmed the venerable traditions of the church, not only by returning to the basilical form of the original building, but also by recognizing the value and importance of its physical remains. A meticulous record of the Early Christian building was made before it was demolished, not merely as a historical record, but to ensure that many of its features might be translated into the new church. The problem of furnishing this hybrid structure, combining two complementary but contradictory ideological and functional traditions, confronted the newly elected Urban VIII – who had strongly opposed the demolition of the old building – and his chosen impresario. Reconciling the merger of centralized and longitudinal building types in New St. Peter's, and the corresponding merger of commemorative and liturgical values, became a fundamental, driving principle of the church's conceptualization and design.

The same merging and the problems attendant upon it were inherent in the Cathedral of Florence, the illustrious predecessor of St. Peter's as the largest church in Christendom and, as I believe, the prime model for both phases of its construction. At Florence the identical designs of the transept arms and choir created a centrally planned core around the high altar at the center, which in turn was the focus of the nave (Fig. 112). The Duomo was the single most important example to be emulated, and surpassed, not only with respect to its unexampled size and blending of central and longitudinal building types, but also in its devotion to Christ. Despite, or rather in a sense owing to its dedication, S. Maria *del Fiore*, its two main interior furnishings were Christological: the high altar, where Bandinelli's marble choir commemorated the sacrifice (1547–72, Fig. 113); and Brunelleschi's famous cupola, where Zuccari and Vasari had painted a vast fresco of the Last Judgment (1571–9, Fig. 114).[5] At St. Peter's this principle had already been adopted in part with Cesare d'Arpino's mosaic decoration of the cupola (Fig. 115): a Deesis composition including



108. Bernini, view of the Cathedra Petri seen through the Baldacchino, drawing, ca. 1657. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

the apostles and angels holding the instruments of the Passion, which also alludes to the Last Judgment (1603–12).

The Apse and Crossing
(Figs. 116, 117)

THE HIGH ALTAR

Although adding the nave solved some problems, it created others that came to the fore when the new structure was completed and ready to receive the requisite furnishings. The most essential components and the first to be attended to were the high altar and the choir. In the traditional basilica the high altar was placed at the entrance to the apse, and the choir for the attendant clergy was installed around its perimeter. In a central plan structure, with the high altar placed at a distance from the apse, such a solution was possible only by including a choir with the high altar at the center of the crossing, thus substantially blocking the view down the nave. This was the solution adopted at Florence when Brunelleschi surrounded the high altar with a low polygonal choir, after an earlier version had been rejected as too obstructive. The difficulty can be recognized in the fact that Brunelleschi's choir, which was built of wood and intended to be only temporary, in fact remained in place for more than a century, with no final decision being taken. Then, under very different circumstances, the Grand Duke Cosimo de' Medici

109. View of St. Peter's including Ponte and Castel Sant' Angelo

replaced Brunelleschi's choir with a much more elaborate and monumental marble enclosure. His intervention was counter-current. Contemporaries remarked on the irony of Cosimo's act of high-handed, aristocratic class-consciousness, in sharp contrast to the new open policies of the mendicant orders, which were then systematically updating their churches by demolishing the old choir screens that excluded the faithful from religious functions and blocked the view down the nave to the high altar.[6]

The difficulty was precisely the same at St. Peter's, and the dilemma must have been intensely relevant for Bernini as well as for Urban VIII, who came from Tuscany and was thoroughly familiar with the situation in Florence. Early in Urban's reign the elements of a coherent plan emerged that sought to reconcile the centrality of the crossing as the commemorative location of the tomb of the apostles, with the longitudinal focus inspired by the new nave. Although analogous proposals were made, the kind of encumbrance imposed by the choir at Florence was ruled out, in favor of a solution involving two altars, the isolated high altar dedicated to Peter and Paul over their "confessio," or subterranean burial place, and a second altar placed toward the apse for papal functions involving the cardinals and associated with a choir. The dilemma inherent in the size, form, and function of St. Peter's was such that no solution for a permanent choir was ever achieved: to this day, when required for special occasions, temporary structures of wood are installed in the apse with seating for the College of Cardinals. But the idea for two major altars, one in the crossing and the other in the apse, remained a permanent feature of the church.

BALDACHINS AND CIBORIA

The solution in favor of two altars at St. Peter's was adopted early in the reign of Paul V, when the drastic decision was taken to move the high altar to the apse.[7] Thereafter, and continuing under Gregory XIV, the two altars were given contrasting forms of covering, reflecting their different functions. The high altar in the apse was covered by a traditional architectural ciborium surmounted by a cupola, distinguished in this case by wings consisting of the precious twisted marble columns

110. Interior of St. Peter's

reputedly brought from Solomon's Temple of Jerusalem by Constantine the Great and installed at the high altar in the apse of the original basilica (Fig. 118, cf. Fig. 127). With the removal of the high altar to the apse the altar over the tomb became largely celebratory; it was marked by a series of what appeared to be, and actually were, temporary installations conceived as portable baldachins supported on four staves carried by standing or kneeling angels (Fig. 119). The idea of imitating a processional baldachin on a monumental scale served two purposes. The slender, open design permitted maximum visibility of the proceedings at the altar and beyond, toward the apse. But the disposition must also be understood in reference to the grand ceremonial papal procession of the Corpus Domini, which in some respects culminated the progressive magnification of the Sacrament during the Counter-Reformation as the theological heart of church doctrine (cf. Fig. 160). It had long since been decreed that the Sacrament be displayed at the high altar of every church, and Paul's baldachin was surely meant to evoke the honorific and celebratory message of the Corpus Domini procession, in which the pope paraded the sacramental Host from the basilica through the streets of Old Rome and back again, under a tasseled baldachin carried by acolytes. By the end of the sixteenth century, altars devoted to the Sacrament had multiplied and grown to huge proportions. At S. Maria Maggiore the centerpiece of the mortuary chapel built by Sixtus V is a bronze sacrament altar with four over-life-size angels carrying the tabernacle (Fig. 120). Around 1600, Paul V's predecessor, Clement VIII, erected a huge bronze sacrament altar in the transept of the pope's episcopal seat and the cathedral of Rome, S. Giovanni in Laterano (Fig. 121); these columns, too, were supposed to have come from the Temple of Jerusalem, brought back filled with earth from Mount Calvary by Empress Helen, mother of Constantine the Great. Emulating these illustrious precedents, Paul V planned to cast the processional baldachin at St. Peter's in bronze, creating a majestic, permanent "temporary" display, a kind of angelic celebration of the three distinctive features of the St. Peter's altar – the commemoration of the apostles, the celebration of the Sacrament, and the sanctity of the papacy. At opposite ends of the typological and topographical scale, the isolated baldachin served as a light, open structure to mark the tomb altar without blocking

111. Antoine Cheron, honorific medal of Bernini, with allegories of Sculpture, Architecture, Painting, and Mathematics, 1674

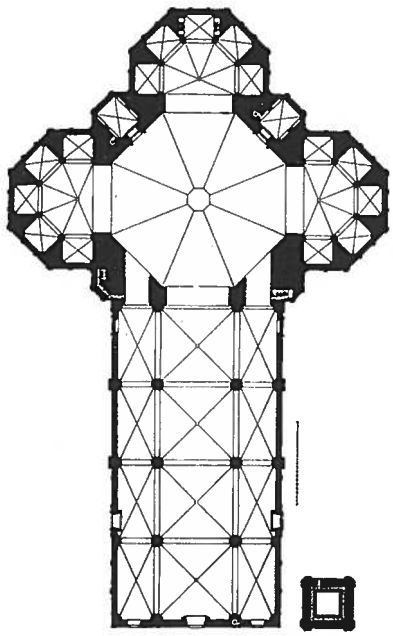
the vista toward the apse, where the ciborium appeared as an architectural monument in conjunction with an architectural setting.

THE BALDACCHINO (1624–35)

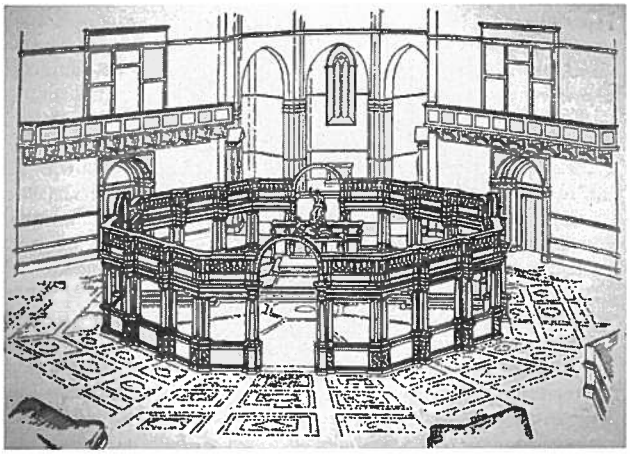
Urban VIII and Bernini approached the dilemma of St. Peter's in a fundamentally new spirit of consolidation and unification, seeking to encompass and subordinate under a dominant theme the disparate legacies of tradition and the contributions of their predecessors. This powerful new inspiration motivated two epoch-making decisions: the preeminence and centrality of the crossing was reaffirmed by returning the high altar to the tomb; and the altar was to be marked by a structure that would meld the heretofore distinct types of celebratory baldachin and commemorative architectural ciborium. (For Bernini's conception the term "baldachin," which normally refers to a nonarchitectural covering, is literally a half-truth. Wanting a better name, I have retained the Italian for Bernini's monumental version.) Visually, the effect was to reconcile, in permanent form on a colossal scale, the conflicting values of minimal structure and open visibility with architectural permanence and monumentality (Figs. 122, 123, 124).

Bernini's initial design consisted of four spiral columns supporting semicircular ribs that intersected diagonally; from the apex, crowning the whole structure, rose a figure of the Resurrected Christ holding the bannered cross (Fig. 125). Standing on the columns are angels who seem to carry a tasseled canopy by means of ribbons strung through loops on its top and secured to the ribs. The columns replace the staves of the earlier baldachins, their spiral form alluding to the Solomonic marble columns. The angels suspend the canopy of the baldachin from above, divine replacements for the ropes on which "floating" but stationary baldachins were hung from the vault above the pope in ceremonies when he was seated enthroned (Fig. 126); and the crossed ribs recall those which had conjoined the marble columns in the Constantinian shrine (Fig. 127).

This astonishing amalgam of ephemerality and monumentality fused the processional character of the Sistine with the architectural character of the Lateran sacrament altars. The powerful, spiraling movement of the columns has its animate continuation in the angels, who perform the celebratory work of covering the altar, and culminates in the figure of Christ, who rises to take his place in heaven, as depicted in the dome above. One "material" key to the solution was the use of bronze, not normally associated with either the baldachin or the ciborium types, which permitted the vast scale and the daring structural engineering the project demanded. Bernini's Baldacchino was certainly the greatest enterprise of bronze casting since antiquity, and in this sense,



112. Plan of Florence Cathedral. From Paatz and Paatz 1952–5, 3:345



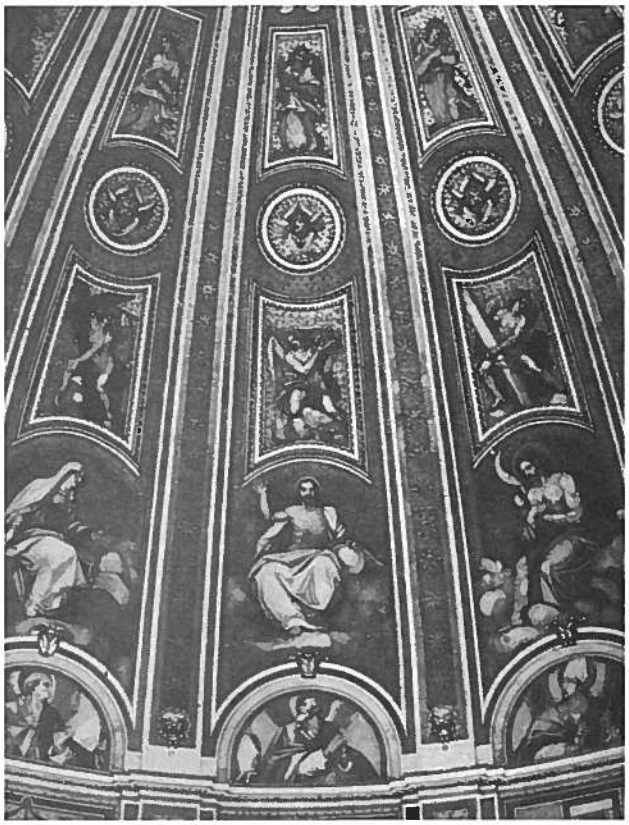
113. Baccio Bandinelli, choir of Florence Cathedral, reconstruction. From Heikamp 1964, 40

114. Federico Zuccari and Giorgio Vasari, cupola of Florence Cathedral, detail

as well as in its sacramental content, the project took up Paul V's homage and challenge to the Lateran sacrament altar – the greatest legacy of antiquity in this respect, and a particular model to surpass because of its provenance from the fabled Jewish Temple of Jerusalem. Beside emulating these predecessors, Bernini's use of bronze was a practical necessity, to achieve the Baldacchino's unexampled fusion of forms. But the amalgam also had particular significance as a material because of its continuity, fluidity, and transformability in the crucible of fire.[8] Associated with this quasi-alchemical process was an almost mystical sense of the spirit that animates all creativity: the matrix of a bronze cast was actually called the "anima."

After further deliberation, Bernini's initial idea had to be modified because it was feared that the weight and lateral thrusts of the superstructure might cause the columns to give way. In the final solution three major changes were made that resulted in an even more egregiously "impossible" design. The load was lightened by substituting for the complex, drapery-swathed figure of Christ, the simple, regular configuration of the globe-surmounted cross. The semicircular ribs were transformed into spring-like, curving volutes that served to raise the center of gravity and make the thrusts upon the columns more vertical. Finally, the canopy was lowered to coincide with the tops of the columns so that a continuous band could serve to tie the columns together (Figs. 128, 129).

Each of these changes entailed a shift of meaning. The resurrected Christ was replaced by the traditional symbol of Christianity's promise of universal salvation. Palm fronds, symbols of victory, grow from the crossed ribs, which take the form of a crown – the crown of martyrdom in memory of Christ's sacrifice and those of Peter and Paul whose relics sanctify the high altar. Each of the ribs consists of three volutes, which

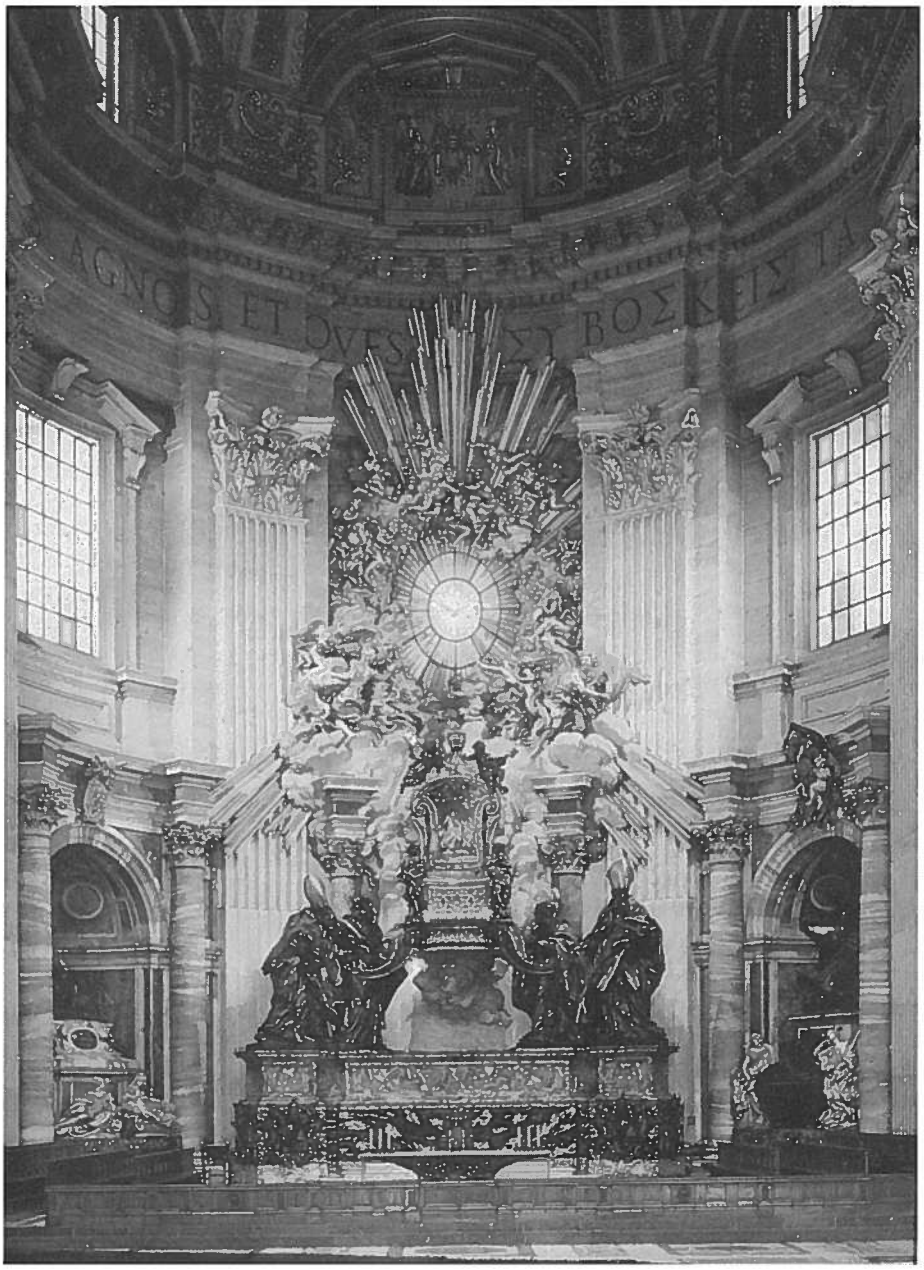


115. Mosaic of cupola, St. Peter's, Rome

116. View of Baldacchino and choir, St. Peter's, Rome

differ in design and function. The larger, central volute rests directly on the inner corner of the column's impost entablature, whereas the two lesser, flanking scrolls curl up at the corners of the baldachin and seem to bear no weight – on the contrary, their spring-like coils suggest buoyancy. Wreaths of laurel held delicately by the angels with the tips of their fingers disappear beneath these spiral volutes and serve the ambivalent function of sustaining both the volutes and the canopy; conversely, the central, larger volutes disappear between their neighbors as they rise to the top. The superstructure of the Baldacchino is thus quite literally a mystery-bound affair, in which a triune summa of honorific markers – processional-carried and stabile-suspended baldachins, and architectural ciborium – is achieved by the angels who have alighted to conjoin – mysteriously, imperceptibly – heaven and earth. Considered thus, it is easy to see why, according to a critic of the project, Bernini insisted that "in any case, he wanted it to be sustained by angels."[9]

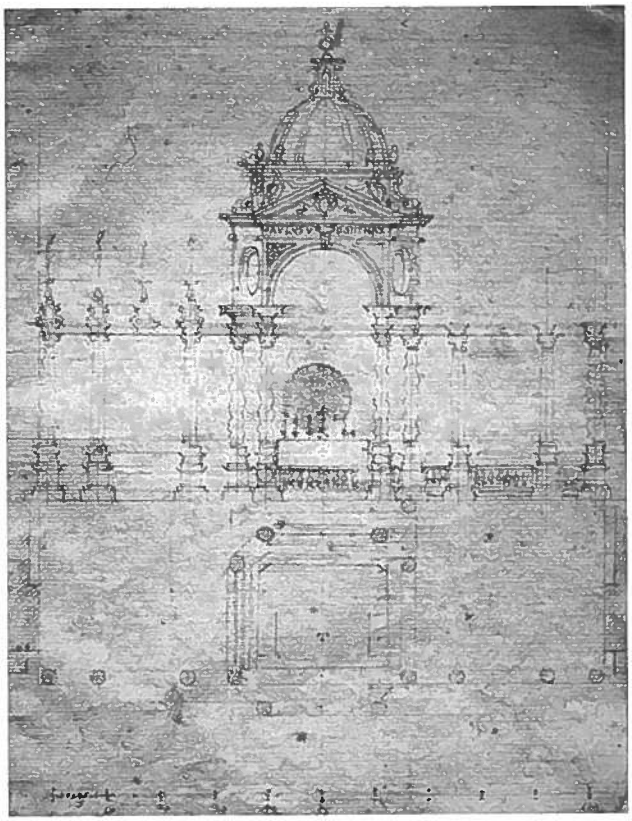
The same commentator also perceived and railed against the device that is the key to Bernini's solution in "architectural" terms, insisting that "baldachins are not sustained on columns but on staves," and that "the baldachin does not run together with the cornice of the columns." Bernini's entire design was created in order to make precisely those impermissible things happen: the cornice continues uninterrupted around the structure, while the frieze between the columns consists not of metopes and triglyphs proper to architecture but of lappets and tassels proper to a cloth canopy. This deliberate elision of the conventional grammar of design – a sort of visual "ain't" – makes a virtue of necessity, since only thus could baldachin and ciborium truly merge while retaining the essential integrity of both. No wonder Bernini referred to himself as a "bad Catholic" (preferable to Borromini, a good heretic) and believed that the great challenge of the architect was to make disadvantages appear to have been invented on purpose, and to "surpass the rules without breaking them." In the final analysis



117. View of choir, St. Peter's, Rome

Bernini's Baldacchino is exactly what the same detractor called it in derogation, a "chimera," a perfect, inextricable, and indissoluble fusion of three heretofore distinct categories of visually significant thought: the immediacy of the processional baldachin, the animated suspense of the hanging canopy, and the monumental stability of the ciborium. The task of accomplishing this unreasonable fusion is assigned, quite properly, to the angels, whose garland swags disappear from view to work their magic in privacy, as it were, at the crucial juncture of all three elements.

The change in the design and symbolism of the crown entailed a shift in emphasis from the sacrament itself to the universal dominion of Christianity as an institution, and in turn to the role of the papacy in the administration of that legacy. At the same time, insignia of the papacy in general and of Urban VIII in particular were introduced all over the Baldacchino, which is literally strewn with Barberini emblems: the sun, laurel, and the famous bees. What is important about this phenomenon is not its testimony to the personal egotism and ambition of Urban VIII – the usual cliché – but to the pope's view of the nature of his office and its role in the mission of the Church. A literally wondrous instance of the coincidence of the human and divine upon which the faith rested was the bee – a traditional symbol of Divine Wisdom – three

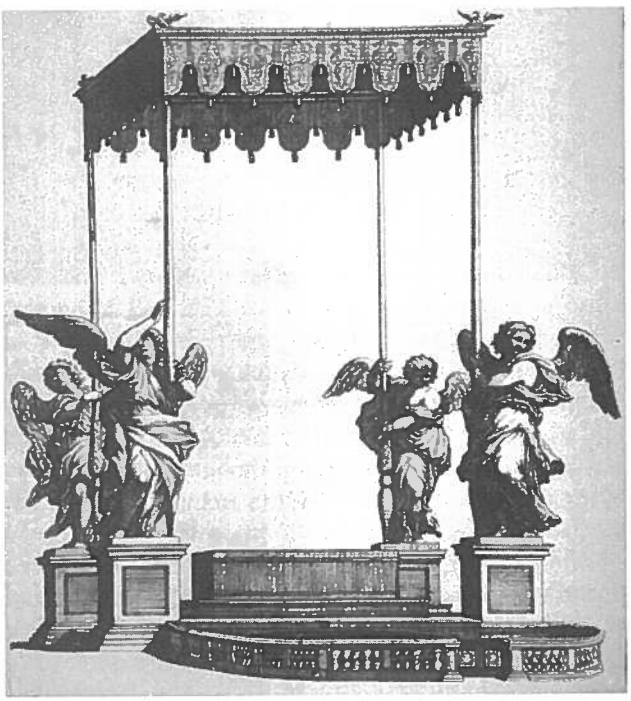


118. Borromini, ciborium for the choir of St. Peter's, drawing. Albertina, Vienna

of which formed the Barberini coat of arms. The vicariate of Christ was not only bestowed on Saint Peter by the Lord himself; its succession was also determined by an act of divine will, which inspired every papal election by the college of cardinals. In one way or another, all of Urban's emblems alluded to the intervention of divine will on earth. But this intervention had become direct and visible at his election when, upon his winning by a single vote (in a second ballot upon which he had himself insisted to confirm the previous count), the Sistine Chapel was invaded by a swarm of bees![10]

These considerations of material and design in turn help to illuminate the relationship between the bronze "anima" of the Baldacchino, its triune composition of celebratory and commemorative markers, and the Trinitarian theme that has often been noted in the spiritual ascent from the sacrament at the altar: the resplendent dove of the Holy Spirit on the underside of the canopy, the resurrected Christ seated in judgment in the cupola, God the Father in the lantern above (cf. Figs. 115, 124). The consonance of material, form, and meaning coincides with the great visual drama of the Baldacchino itself: massive in scale and ponderous in proportions, it fairly writhes in a powerful paroxysm of movement and energy to its own climax, and beyond toward the vault on high.

Finally, it is important to realize that the revolutionary design of the Baldacchino was accompanied by a no less significant procedural revolution in the execution of the work. The idea of erecting a monumental architectural, or quasi-architectural, baldachin-ciborium over the high altar in the vast reaches of the new basilica posed quite unprecedented problems of scale and proportions, which were confronted in quite unprecedented ways. Under Bernini's direction Borromini produced detailed perspectival drawings – unlike any seen before – specifically intended to visualize the relationship between the proposed structure and the building itself (Fig. 130). And an equally unheralded procedure was followed in three dimensions: detailed models of various sizes up to the final, full scale were created and installed in situ so the effect could be judged.[11] No work of this kind and at this scale had ever been premeditated to this degree and in this way. Implicit in this method is a new, "wholistic" conceptual mode – the Baldacchino was not an independent piece of church furniture, as it were, but an integral part of the building itself. This attitude was adumbrated by the scale of Maderno's temporary baldachins, but now fully articulated in fully monumental form. Yet, the elaborate planning procedure notwithstanding, the biographers report that Bernini himself, speaking precisely of the matter of scale and proportional relationships, said that the Baldacchino had succeeded "per caso," by chance. The explanation of the paradox is implicit in the biographers' observations that because the scale of



119. Temporary baldachin in St. Peter's under Paul V, 1617. Buonanni 1696, pl. 48

120. Cappella Sistina, S. Maria Maggiore, Rome

the undertaking was unprecedented there were no established standards, and ultimately no rule to guide the eye other than the mind and genius of the artist, whose judgment "happened" to be right.[12]

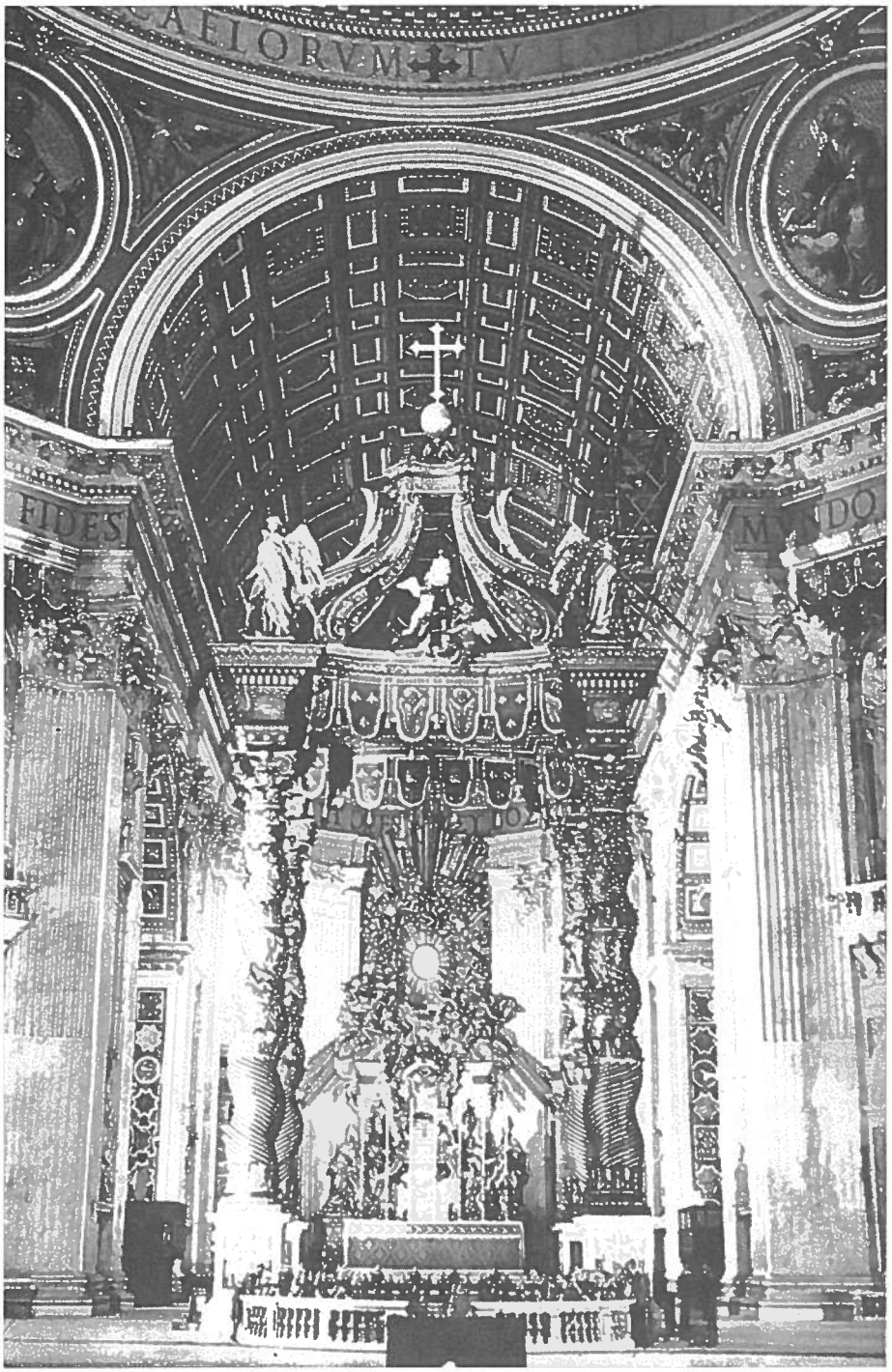
EXCURSUS A: BORROMINI AND THE BALDACCHINO

The legendary rivalry between Bernini and Borromini has been revived in recent decades by a veritable cabal of scholars bent upon "deflating" Bernini's "arrogant" artistic hegemony in seventeenth-century Rome and demonstrating that Bernini was "really" "only" a sculptor (although he designed many buildings and called himself "architetto"), whereas Borromini was the "real" architect (although he was also a competent sculptor). The ur-texts on the subject as it concerns the baldachin are a biography of Borromini written by his nephew Bernardo Castelli-Borromini and an appreciation by his erstwhile admiring friend and patron Virgilio Spada, which convey what can only have been Borromini's own bitter laments about how Bernini, architecturally inexperienced and insecure, unscrupulously exploited his subordinate's professional expertise.[13] (In fact, both were then very young, and neither had produced any significant buildings.) Neither Bernardo Castelli-Borromini nor Virgilio Spada actually laid claim to a role for their hero in the design of the Baldacchino. But, taking up the cause, the modern protagonists seek, by tortuous and sometimes obfuscating means, to circumvent the plain facts of the case and arrogate to Borromini credit which even Borromini himself did not claim. (Among other things, it is astonishing how reluctant these writers are to quote the relevant statements by Borromini in their entirety and in their context.) Bernini, ambitious and exasperatingly self-confident, was, after all, specifically charged by Urban VIII with the creation of the Baldacchino and, as the documents show, Borromini was employed at St. Peter's in a secondary capacity. The reprise of tendentiousness began with the otherwise exemplary work on the early drawings of Borromini by Heinrich Thelen, and has reached a sort of reductio ad absurdum in a recent work devoted to the rivalry, which reaches the fantastic conclusion, baldly stated, that Borromini

121. Altar of the Sacrament, S. Giovanni in Laterano, Rome

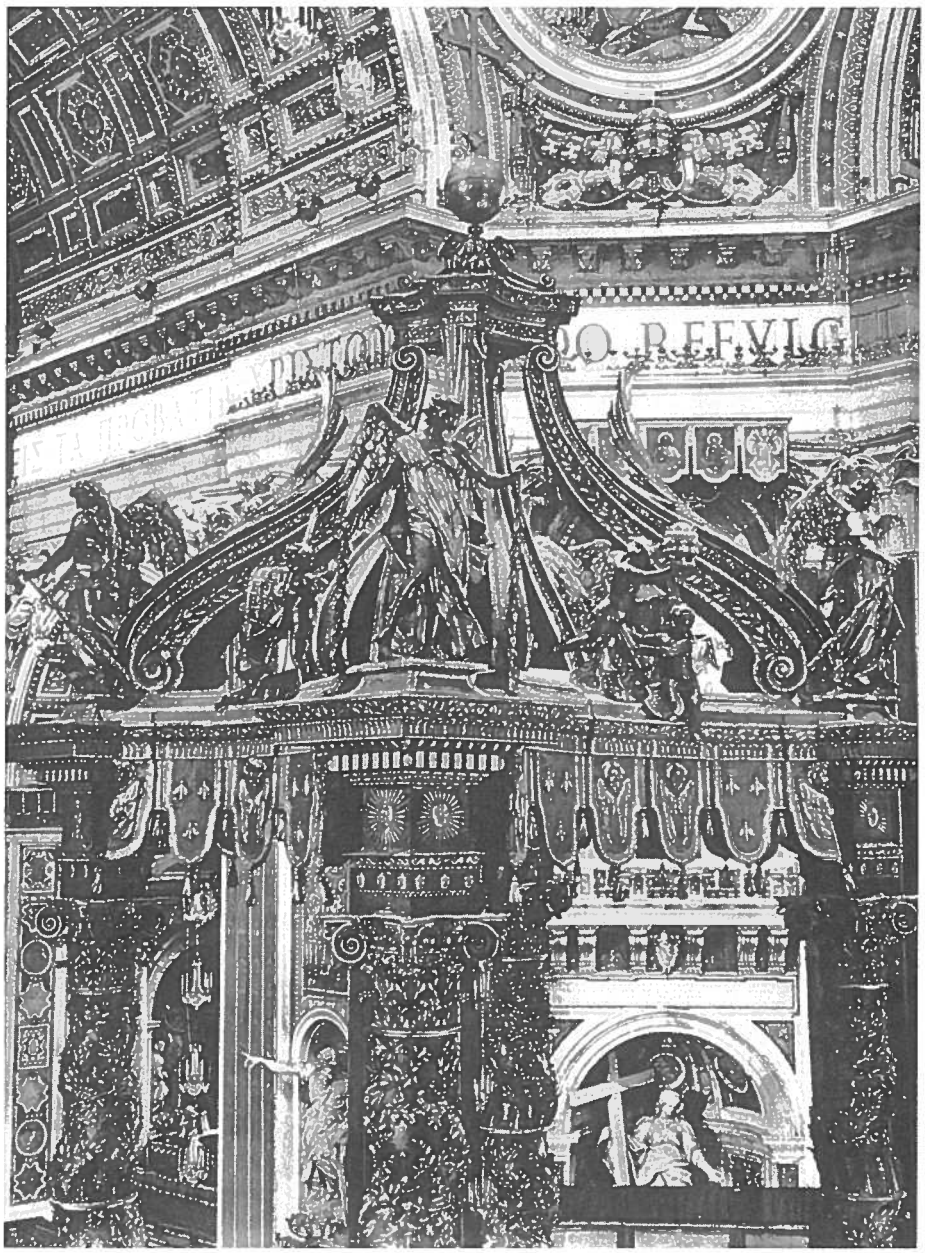
was reponsible for the architecture of the Baldacchino, Bernini for the sculpture: "Im Entwurfsprozess für das definitive Baldachinprojekt erscheint Borromini massgeblich für die architektonische Durchbildung des monuments verantwortlich, wohingegen Bernini sich auf die plastische Dekoration konzentriert zu haben scheint."[14]

The plain fact is that there is not a shred of evidence – not a shred, visual or documentary – that Borromini played any role whatever in the design of the Baldacchino. The payment records show that he was employed at St. Peter's in two capacities, as a carver of minor works in marble and wood, and to make large, detailed drawings as templates for other artisans to follow, including some beautiful metal gratings that are certainly his own creations; Borromini's obsessively precise draftsmanship and brilliant grasp of perspective and spatial relationships were ideally suited for the purpose of making detailed "demonstration" renderings. Bernardo Castelli repeatedly observed that Borromini's mentor, Carlo Maderno, appreciated his protégé's ability to make drawings "con grandissima diligenza e polizia" and employed him in his old age for this purpose. This in fact is exactly what the visual evidence confirms. All the known drawings by Borromini related to the Baldacchino are of this sort – not preliminary sketches or studies, but fully developed working or presentation drawings that served to visualize, not to work out, ideas. They are finely wrought "models" of decorative elements, obviously intended for approval and/or to serve as models for executing artisans, or elaborately rendered, spatially situated



122. View of Baldacchino and Cathedra Petri, St. Peter's, Rome

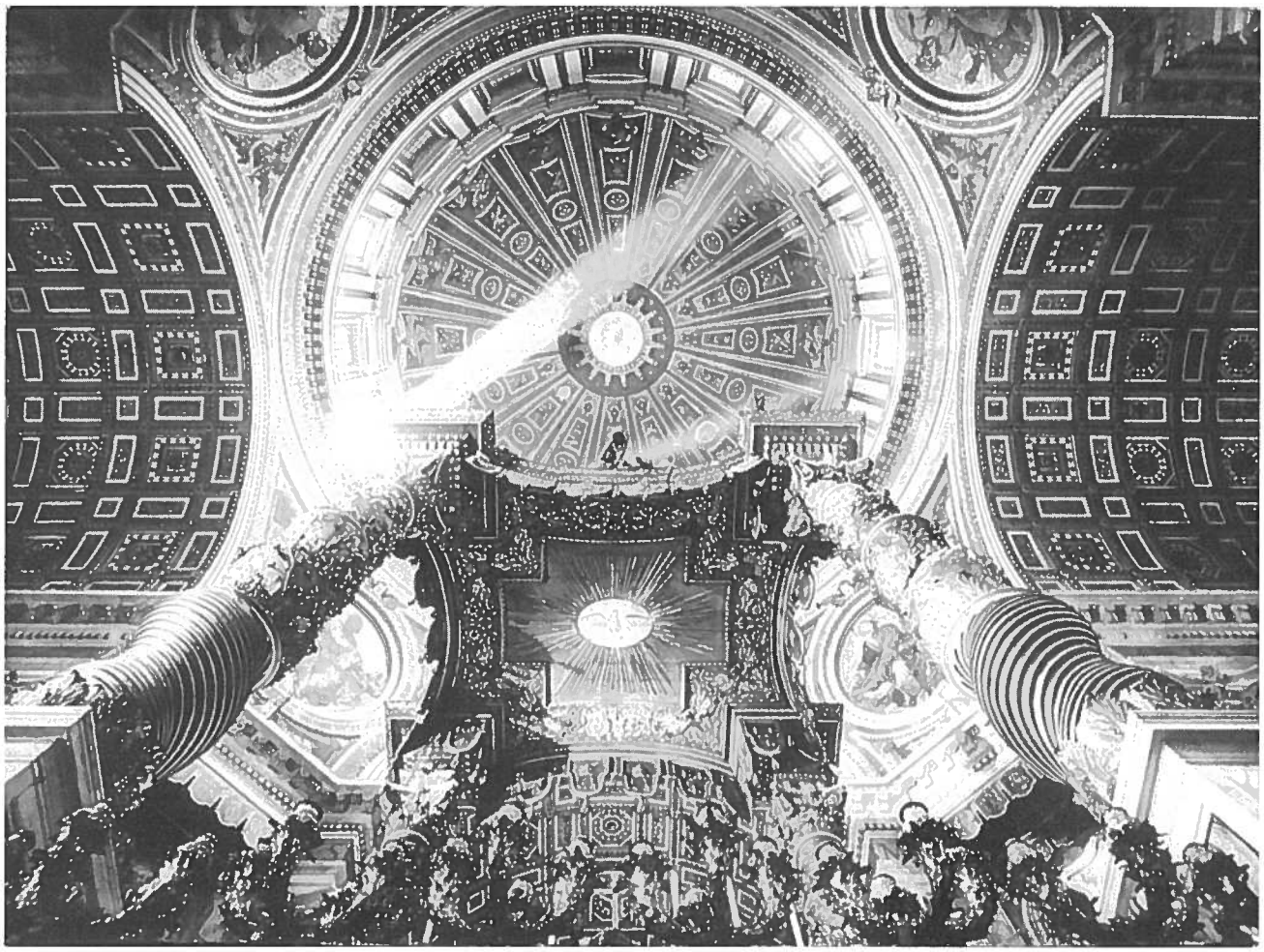
illustrations of projects for the Baldacchino itself, obviously intended to aid in judging the projected work in situ (Fig. 130).[15] Such drawings, along with trial models progressively larger in size up to full-scale and actually built and mounted in place, formed part of the revolutionary creative process that we have seen Bernini developed for carrying out the staggering enterprises at St. Peter's. The detailed drawings and models were of course especially helpful in aiding nonprofessionals, the pope and cardinals who governed the Fabbrica, to visualize the final work; but they also reflect Bernini's own obsession with proportional relationships in the immense environment of the church. On the other hand, all known drawings by Bernini are precisely of the experimental sort – rapid sketches of ideas in which, in the heat of creativity, he tries out various solutions to all the crucial problems to which, as we know from the sources, the baldachin project gave rise (Figs. 128, 129). Bernini never made



123. Crown of the Baldacchino, St. Peter's, Rome

detailed drawings for architecture; he left that work to assistants.

But by far the most eloquent, and authoritative, testimony to the fact that Bernini, not Borromini, was responsible for the design of the Baldacchino, is Borromini himself. In 1660–3 his good friend Fioravante Martinelli wrote an excellent guide to the artistic monuments of Rome, which he submitted to Borromini for comment. The margins of the manuscript are in fact filled with corrections, additions, and suggestions in Borromini's own hand. Throughout the manuscript, at every opportunity, Borromini took care to insert his own name whenever Martinelli had omitted or obscured his contribution to the work in question.[16] On several occasions he also took care to downplay, sometimes quite subtly, Bernini's role. Crucial to my point is that Borromini added by far his most circumstantial and elaborate comment to Martinelli's remarks about the Baldacchino, which the author had attributed to Bernini. Borromini is at pains to qualify Bernini's role: he gives his master Maderno due credit for the idea of combining a baldachin with twisted columns but stresses that the columns did not support the baldachin (baldachins were frequently suspended from above); he notes that some attributed the inspiration to the pope (a conceit that Bernini himself promulgated); he makes the absolutely decisive point that the crucial design invention in the baldachin-ciborium merger – the oxymoronic



124. View of the Baldacchino and dome, St. Peter's, Rome

entablature with an architectural cornice and frieze of canopy lappets – was specifically *ridiculed* as a chimera; and he reports also the criticisms that baldachins are not to be supported on columns but on staves, that the baldachin should not accompany the cornice of the columns, and that Bernini insisted in any case on retaining the supporting angels.[17] These are, after all, the essential, boldly unorthodox and innovative features of the design of the Baldacchino. It is simply unimaginable that Borromini would have reported these inventions as criticisms and failed to report his role, had he been responsible: here, of all places, where the subject is one of the most conspicuous and famous monuments of Rome; here, of all places, in a venue where he had the opportunity to make a public statement (since the guide was intended for publication) through the voice of another, respected authority. At best, Borromini's silence on these points bespeaks his honesty and strict sense of fairness, as well as the mutual respect these two giants had for one another, despite the rancor and resentment that spoiled their originally friendly relationship. In any case, here, of all places, Borromini's failure to speak on his own behalf, as he did throughout the rest of the manuscript, speaks volumes. No wonder that none of the promoters of Borromini's authorship addresses this simple, obvious fact.

EXCURSUS B. A NEGLECTED PROTOTYPE OF BERNINI'S BALDACCHINO

In 1952, J. B. Ward Perkins collected the remains and evidence concerning a considerable group of post-classical marble, spiral-form columns dispersed in and around Rome and in Naples that are clearly related to and imitative of the Solomonic columns in St. Peter's. Two pairs of these columns concern us here – one at Cave, an ancient fief of the Colonna family in the periphery of Rome, the other at Naples – because of the particular ways in which they relate to each other and to St. Peter's. The relationship is explicit in the case of the pair that now flank the high altar of the church of San Carlo at Cave, which Ward Perkins determined to be medieval

(post-eighth-century) copies of the columns in St. Peter's (Fig. 131).[18] The columns rest on plinths bearing inscriptions that refer the pair to the same Jerusalem provenance as their models: respectively,

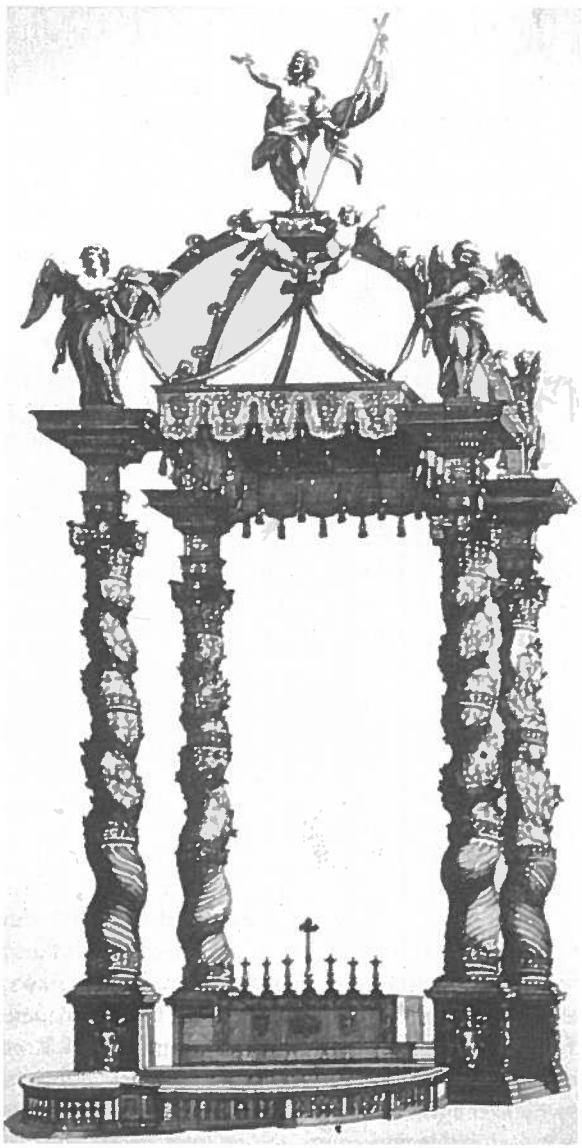
MARMOREAE
COLUMNAE

and

SALOMONICI
TEMPLI

The importance of the Cave columns in our context lies in their history. They were transferred to San Carlo when they were willed to the new Jesuit church by Marchese Filippo Colonna in 1639.[19] They stood previously in the early medieval church of S. Lorenzo at Cave, to which they had been given by Marcantonio Colonna, who received them from Pius V after the great general's victory at the battle of Lepanto.[20] The treatment of the columns as Solomonic relics triumphantly converted to Christianity, as it were, was clearly a reference to Constantine and St. Peter's. The reference fulfilled the promise invoked at the outset of the campaign by the Holy League against the Turks, which Pius V had promoted. On 11 June 1570, in the Sistine Chapel, Pius had commissioned Colonna commander of the papal forces, personally handing him the standard of the Holy League bearing the inscription "In hoc signo vinces," the angelic message that appeared to Constantine himself on the eve of his battle with Maxentius.[21] Marcantonio's gift to S. Lorenzo may have a further bearing on our understanding of the high altar at St. Peter's. In its original form the altar was surely reflected in one of the earliest known depictions of the structure with spiral columns, an Early Christian medal with the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence on the reverse.[22] S. Lorenzo fuori le mura in Rome, be it recalled, was also a foundation of Constantine. Marcantonio's gift may have been inspired by these associations, which add considerable weight to those that underlay Bernini's reclamation of the primitive type.

The connection of the Naples pair is indirect, but nonetheless compelling (Fig. 132). These flanked the high



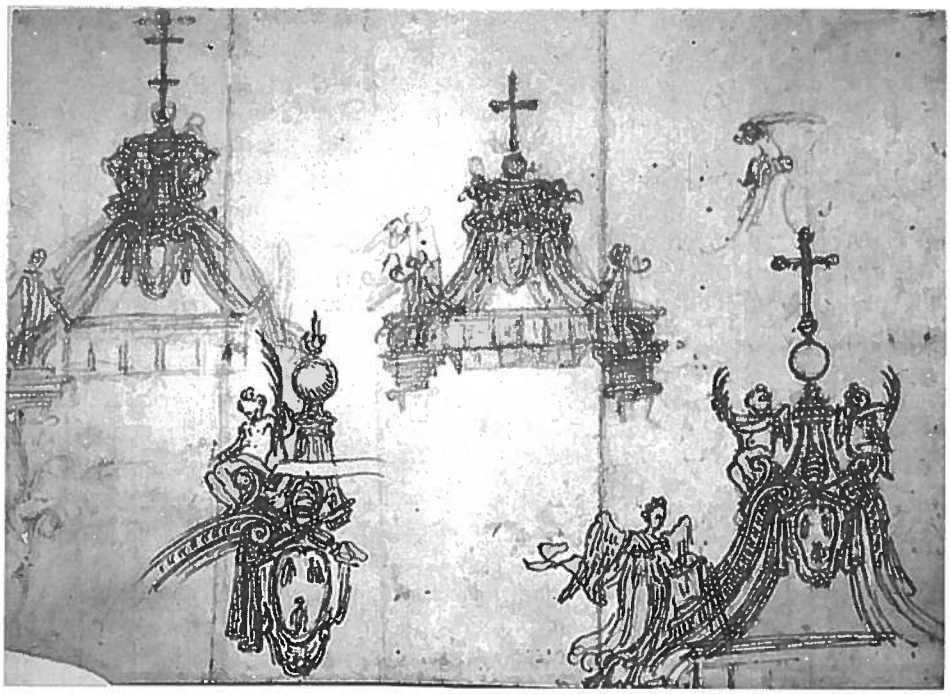
125. Bernini, first project for the Baldacchino, 1626. Buonanni 1696, pl. 50

126. Giulio Romano, *Donation of Constantine*, detail showing suspended baldachin and reconstruction of the Constantinian presbytery. Sala di Costantino, Vatican Palace, Rome

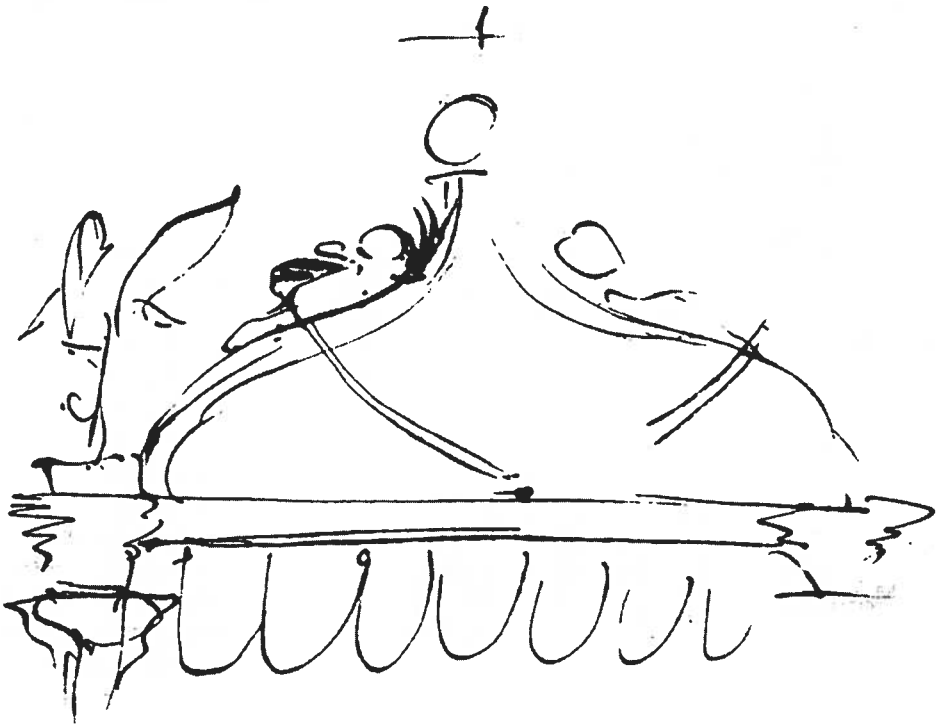
altar of the church of S. Chiara in Naples, until they were destroyed by fire in 1943. Small fragments remain, as does a cast of one of the columns that had been made earlier. The relevance of these columns to Bernini's Baldacchino begins with their origin. They are first recorded in an order of the ruler of Naples, Robert of Anjou, who together with his wife, Sancia di Maiorca, a devoted patron of the Franciscan order of the Poor Clares, was then patronizing the construction of the new basilica, dedicated, it must be emphasized, to the Corpus Christi, also called the Sacred Host, and the adjoining convent of the Clarisse (whence the commonly used denomination of the church as S. Chiara). On 24 October 1317, Robert donated two marble columns not attached to any edifice, but formerly lying on the grounds of S. Maria del Monte, to the Monastery of the Holy Body of Christ that he and his consort, Sancia queen of Jerusalem and Sicily, were building in Naples, and ordered that they be transported by ship from Barletta.[23] Robert's and Sancia's interest in the columns, spurred by their own passionate devotion to the cause of Jerusalem, which included negotiating (and paying for) a permanent access to the Holy Sepulcher for the Franciscans, undoubtedly stemmed from several factors. The spiral design and sculptural decoration patently related them to the Constantinian columns at St. Peter's; and these columns, too, were supposed to have come from the temple at Jerusalem, as reported by a Franciscan historian at the end of the sixteenth century.[24] This association may have accompanied the columns from their resting place at S. Maria del Monte, a Benedictine abbey near which the emperor Frederick II built his awesome fortress, Castel del Monte, in the 1240s. Frederick had conducted a crusade to the Holy Land, and in Jerusalem in 1229 assumed the royal crown of the city in the church of the Holy Sepulcher. It is perfectly possible, indeed probable, that, in emulation of Constantine the Great, Frederick on his return to Italy brought the columns back with him as souvenirs of the Jewish Temple.[25] Frederick had concluded a ten-year truce with the Sultan of Egypt, which provided access to the holy sites for Christian pilgrims. The truce ended in 1239, and the following year he announced his intention to build Castel del Monte, the design of which incorporates many features reminiscent of the fabled Temple of Jerusalem. In this very document Frederick fixes the prospective location of the castle with reference to S. Maria del Monte.[26] The capitals of the columns, which are of separate blocks of marble, are carved with eagles, one of Frederick's primary symbols of imperial authority.[27] Frederick must have known that the columns in St. Peter's were associated with Constantine, with the Temple, as well as with the Sacrament. And he must have understood that Constantine's appropriation of the columns for reuse in the apostolic altar at St. Peter's was a symbolically charged, Christian reenactment of the emperor Titus's victory over the Jews and removal of the Temple furnishings to the Temple of Peace in Rome, which his father Vespasian had erected to celebrate the suppression of the Jewish revolt.[28] Frederick must have conceived his own act of transferal in this grand tradition of imperial cooptation, and following him so also Robert of Anjou and Sancia.

127. Modern reconstruction of the Constantinian Shrine at St. Peter's

It is not clear where the columns were first installed at S. Chiara or how they were used.[29] But shortly after the middle of the sixteenth century, following the decree that the Sacrament was to be displayed on the high altar of every church, two copies by the Roman wood carver Bartolomeo Chiarini (documented in Naples 1560–79) were added to create a ciborium over the tabernacle of the Sacrament.[30] Presumably, at that time the columns were placed on marble plinths with reliefs that illustrated their relationship with the Jerusalem Temple and the supercession of the Hebrew sacrifices by the Sacrament, bearing inscriptions borrowed from the liturgy for the Feast of Corpus Domini: Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine (inscribed PANEM ET VINVM OBTVLIT), and the sacrifice of Isaac (IN ISAAC IMMOLATVR), Old Testament prefigurations of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion.[31] The Solomonic origin of the columns was repeated by the



128. Bernini, sketches for the crown of the Baldacchino. Arch. HDz. Rom XXX, VIII, 769, Albertina, Vienna

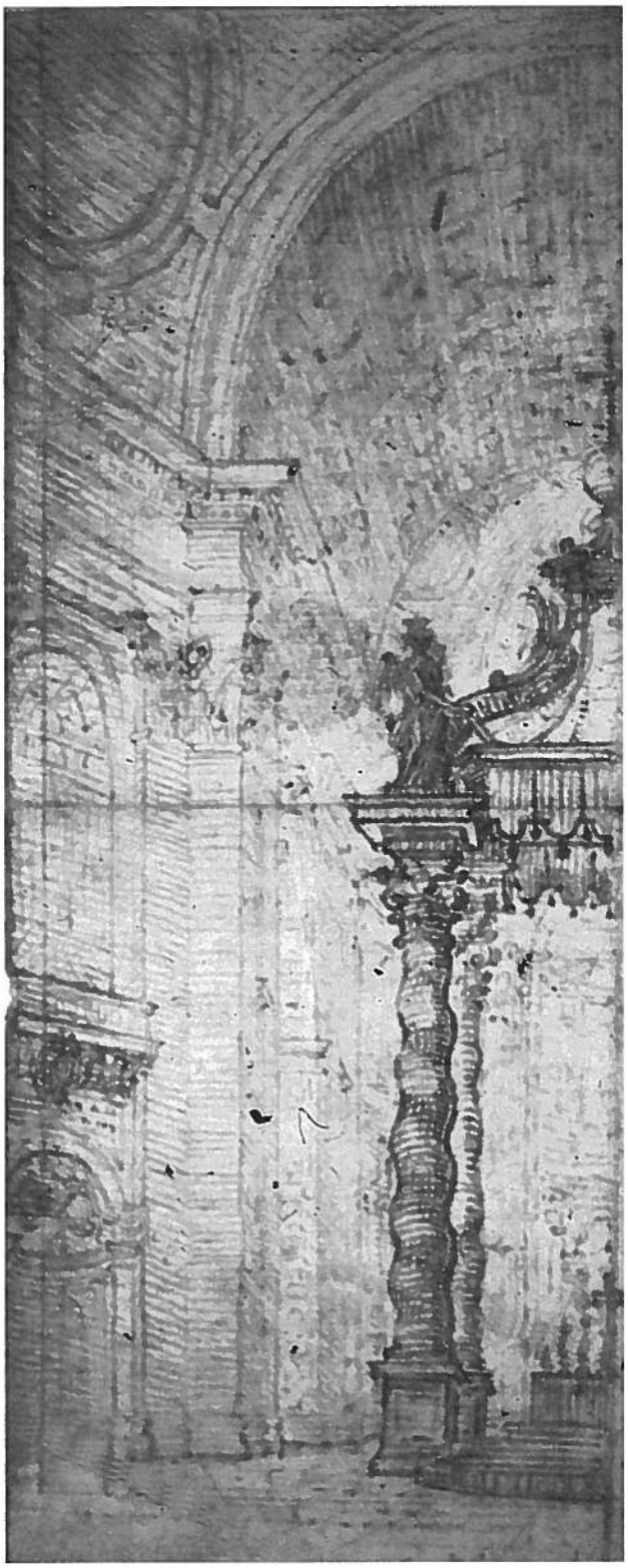


129. Bernini, sketch for the crown of the Baldacchino. Archivio Barberini, Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

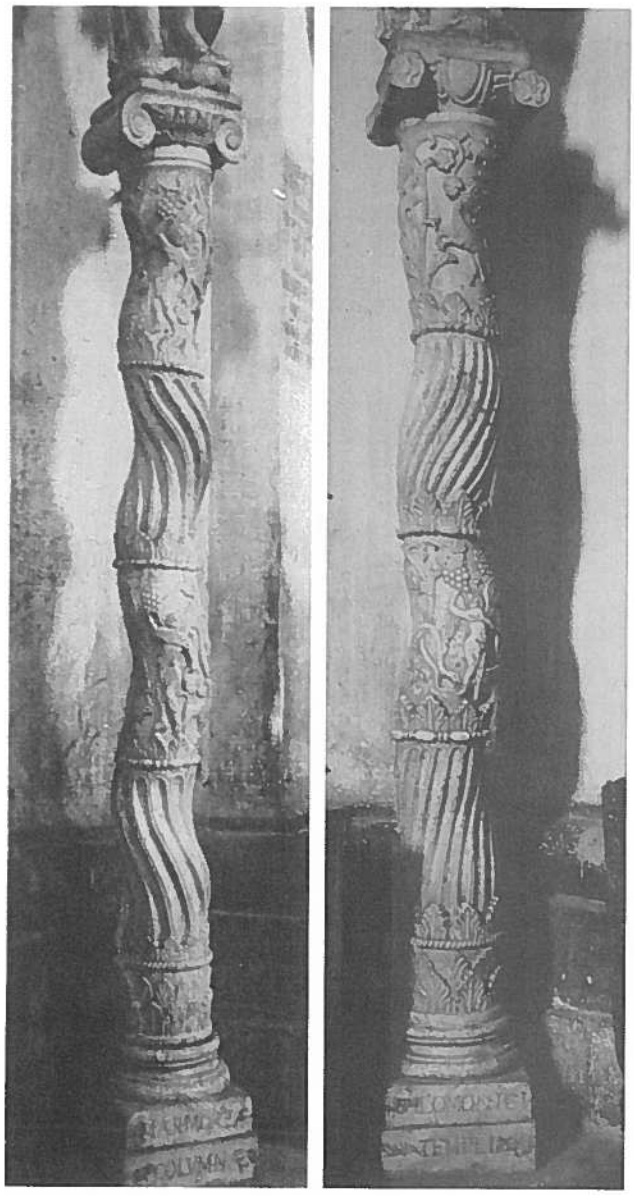
Franciscan historian Luke Wadding in his description of the four-columned high altar.[32]

The new arrangement is recorded in a medal commemorating an event of world-historical importance that took place in S. Chiara on 14 August 1571. In a solemn ceremony Don Juan of Austria received from the hands of Cardinal Antoine Perrenot Granvelle, Viceroy of Naples and papal legate to the city, the standard of the Holy League, blessed by Pius V. Don Juan was commander-in-chief of the Christian fleet in the victory at Lepanto on 7 October 1571. The cardinal is depicted seated on a faldstool consigning the standard to the kneeling Don Juan (Fig. 133).[33] Given the known dates of activity of Bartolomeo Chiarini, it seems likely that the installation shown on the medal was actually occasioned by the investiture ceremony. The action takes place before the altar on which the Sacrament tabernacle (Luke Wadding's "tholos") rests; four spiral columns at the corners support a horizontal entablature, without any superstructure. Apart from the superstructure, the disposition approximated the original Early Christian covering of the high altar at St. Peter's that had been dismantled around A.D. 600. By the same token, the arrangement and symbolism of the high altar at Naples strikingly anticipated the basic concept of Bernini's Baldacchino, with its reprisal of the Early Christian disposition of the high altar of old St. Peter's.[34]

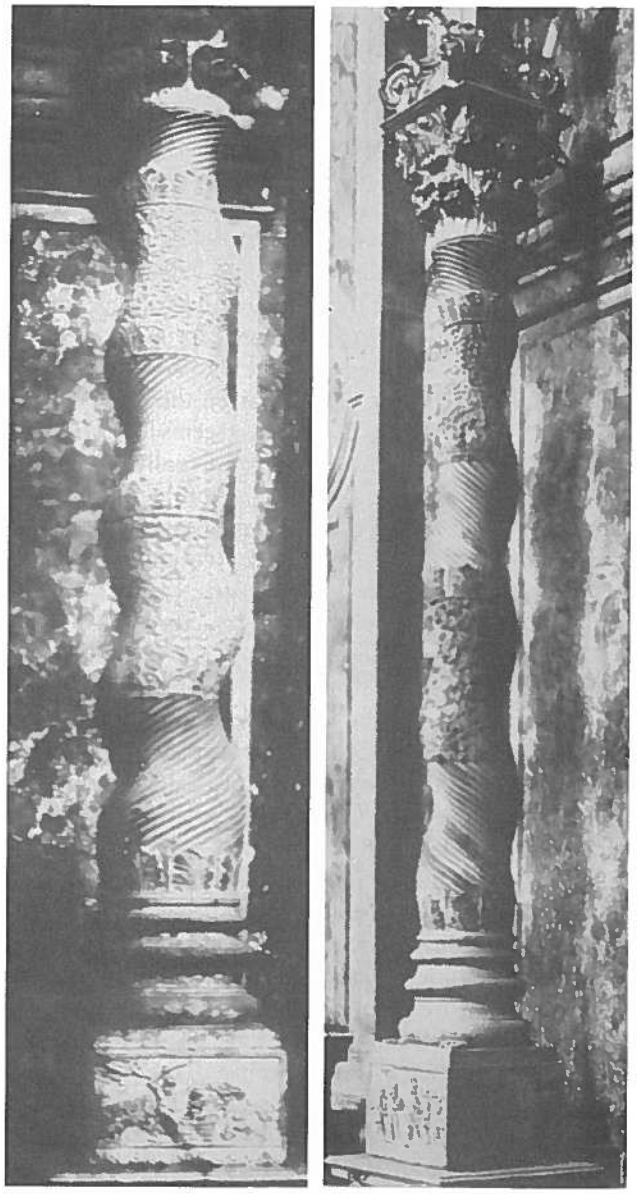
The relationship in form and content is too close to be coincidental, and opens new perspectives on the ideological content of the work at St. Peter's.[35] The Naples monument commemorated one of the most providential events in the entire history of the Church, and its imagery as recorded in the medal must have seemed providentially relevant when it came to reinstall the prototypical spiral-columned altar tabernacle at St. Peter's. The circumstances of the epochal dedication at Naples of the European powers of the Holy League to the preservation and propagation of the Church under Pius V, served as a model and inspiration to their successors under Urban VIII in the Church's struggles with unbelieving enemies both in the East and in the North. The pertinence in Rome of the Naples monument and the event it celebrated was conveyed explicitly in the medal by the Constantinian accent of the text inscribed on the architrave of the structure in the background: IN HOC VINCES. Both the Cave pair and the Naples pair were associated with Lepanto, and it seems that the Solomonic columns were seen, not only as relics of Constantine and the Temple of Jerusalem, but as insignia of Christianity's great recent triumph over the infidel. The propitious events that took place in St. Peter's and in the Neapolitan church of the Corpus Christi, or Sacred Host, were thus seen in a world-historical context directly relevant in myriad ways in Rome, the Vatican, and St. Peter's.[36] In particular, the Naples monument dedicated to the Holy Sacrament



130. Francesco Borromini, perspective view of the Baldacchino in relation to its setting, drawing



131a, b. Post-classical columns copied from those at St. Peter's. S. Carlo, Cave



132a, b. Ancient columns with medieval capitals and bases, now destroyed. S. Chiara, Naples

suggests that the Constantinian and Sacramental ideology we have found in Bernini's Baldacchino may have had heretofore unsuspected contemporary religious and political resonance.

PAIRED TOMBS

While under Urban VIII and Bernini the sacrifice of Christ occupied the center of the ideology of the crossing, the subject of papal succession was the focus of the building's longitudinal axis. These two complementary and mutually interdependent themes, which reflected the combination of building types engendered by the addition of the nave, were developed in tandem: the first was embodied in the decision to treat the four crossing piers uniformly; the second in the decision to move the tomb of Paul III, which had occupied one of the piers, and pair it with that of Urban VIII in the niches flanking the altar in the apse.[37]

The tomb of Paul III, by Guglielmo della Porta, was originally a freestanding monument in a side aisle with four reclining allegories, two at the front and two at the back. Later, the tomb was moved to a niche in one of the crossing piers, and the figures of Justice and Prudence were placed at the base, while the other two, Abundance and Peace, were set on the pediment above. Retaining only the figures of Justice and Prudence, Bernini reinstalled the tomb on the south side of the apse, and

conceived the monument to Urban as its matching partner in the corresponding niche on the opposite side (Fig. 134). The paired tombs evoke the basic typology established by Michelangelo in the Medici monuments in the New Sacristy at S. Lorenzo, Florence, with the deceased enthroned and pairs of allegorical figures below (Fig. 135). Following della Porta, Bernini made the effigy of bronze, the allegories of marble, and he complemented Paul's Justice and Prudence with Justice and Charity for Urban. Placed in the lateral niches of the apse, the twin monuments were thus coordinated in content as well as design. With the tomb of Saint Peter himself at the center of the crossing, they formed a coherent group of memorials that embodied the millennial papal succession initiated under Saint Peter, established under Constantine, and continuing ad infinitum.[38]

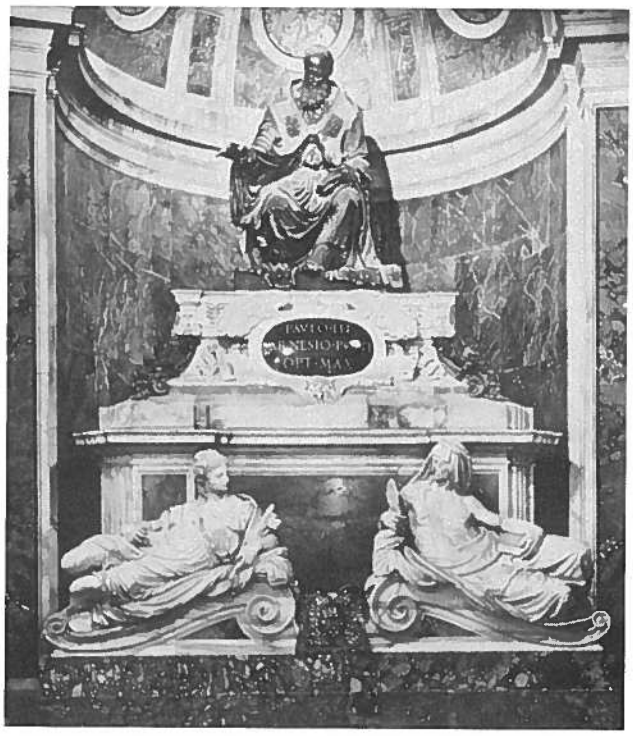
The particular choice of virtues for the two tombs, in part seemingly redundant, must be understood in the light of two medieval traditions of rulership and jurisprudence. As cardinal or moral virtues, Justice and Prudence were the chief attributes of earthly dominion – they characterized the good and wise ruler. Paul III was in fact the great militant pope of the Counter-Reformation, as his palm-down gesture of pacification suggests (Fig. 134). On the other hand, Justice and Charity, as attributes of Divine Wisdom, were proper to the spiritual magistrate, the Just Judge of biblical tradition.[39] Although the tomb of Urban VIII was the first time Justice and Charity had been paired in isolation on a papal monument, they appeared often in relation to papal portraits; from the Middle Ages on, these virtues played fundamental roles in defining the extent and limitations of papal rule – the so-called *plenitudo potestatis*.[40] The point here, in the context of St. Peter's as the seat of Christ's vicars, is twofold. The particular combinations of virtues, while perhaps appropriate to a specific individual, were primarily emblematic of the vicarious role inherited by all the successors of Peter as magistrates of the church. And, taken together, the paired tombs created a complementary contrapposto in meaning emblematic of the temporal and spiritual hegemony of the papacy.[41] With these changes of location and focus, Bernini transformed the Farnese tomb from an unwelcome obstacle to the unified program then emerging for the crossing piers into a providential blessing in the apse.

133. Giovanni V. Melone, Reverse of medal of Cardinal Granvelle showing installation of Don Juan of Austria, 1571. Museo di Capodimonte, Naples

THE TOMB OF URBAN VIII (1627–47)
(Figs. 136, 137, 138, 139)

An important model for Bernini's treatment of the tombs was provided by the series of magniloquent papal portraits in the Sala di Costantino of the Vatican, the ceremonial hall frescoed a century before by Giulio Romano; the purpose of the series was to display the continuity of the Church in the papacy from its inception under Peter. Urban's pose, including his glance downward to the left and the posture of his uplifted right arm, specifically refer to Giulio's image of Saint Peter himself (Fig. 140). The seated allegories that accompany Peter in the fresco suggest the motivation for Bernini's reference: they represent Eccelesia at the left and Eternitas at the right. Peter, enthroned in heaven, seems to create the church by fiat with the expletive gesture of his raised right hand, while with his glance he regards its future on earth. Bernini has thus assimilated Urban to Saint Peter, except that the emphasis has shifted from simple chronology to an exposition of the underlying foundation for the eternal rule of the church in its earthly and heavenly domains – the exercise of Divine Wisdom.

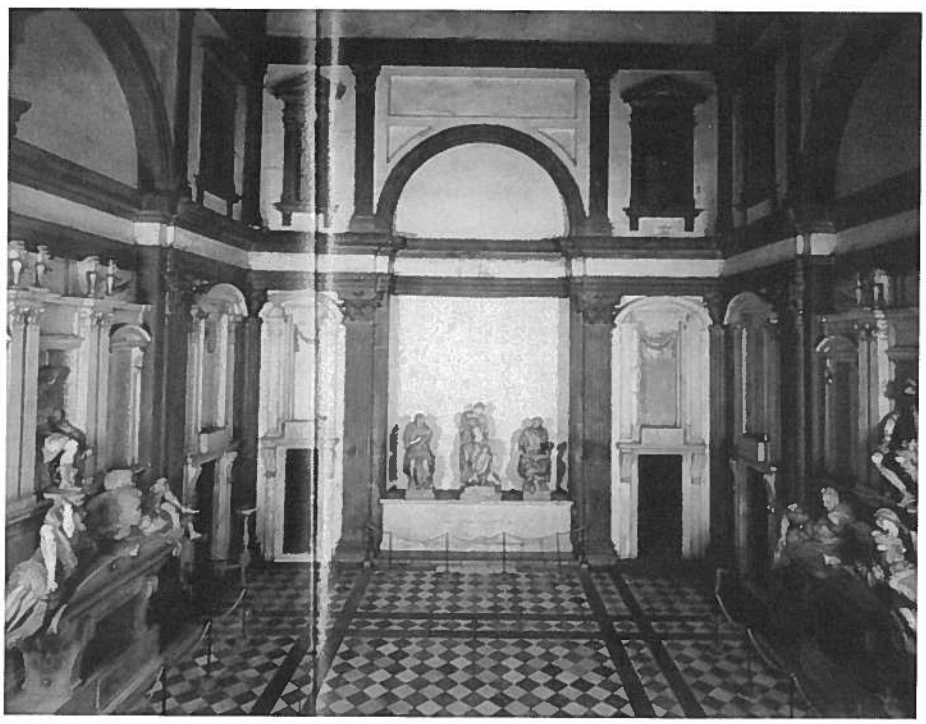
Integral to their role as embodiments of the action of divine will is the fact that, without precedent in the traditions of papal portraits and tombs, Bernini's allegories do not sit or recline, but stand "on their own two feet" beside the sarcophagus, with whose spring-like lid segments they establish dynamic interrelationships. Lowered to the supporting plinth, they cease to appear simply as "attributes" and become intermediaries between the realm of the tomb and that of the spectator. Through their actions and emotional expressiveness the tomb becomes the focus of an interplay that relates the underlying abstract thought to human experience. Seen in this light, it is evident that Bernini's allegories are not mourners, as is often claimed. On the contrary, they illustrate the roles played by these divine virtues, acting through this pope and the papacy, in the process of salvation. Charity incorporates a binary complementary moral and



134. Guglielmo della Porta, Tomb of Paul III. St. Peter's, Rome

psychological contrast – "contrapposto," Bernini would have called it – between the extremes of the soul's route to salvation.[42] One child, having absorbed the milk of God's forgiving goodness, sleeps blissfully until the end of time. The other soul bawls at the top of his lungs: he is the repentant sinner reaching desperately for redemption, so utterly consumed by self-recrimination as to be unaware of Charity's benign and compassionate response to his excruciating Jeremiad. Charity is a vigorously dynamic and earthly figure who contacts the papal tomb primarily by resting her sleeping charge against the sarcophagus – an image that insistently recalls the themes of the Pietà and the entombment of Christ, whose sacrificial death, which promised resurrection and salvation, was the prototype of all acts of charity.[43]

In sharp contrast, Justice stands, or more accurately leans, against the tomb in a pose redolent of languor and passivity (Fig. 137). Whereas Charity has fewer accouterments than usual (two babies rather than three), Justice has more: the book and fasces in addition to the canonical sword and balance. While the balance illustrates the impartiality of Justice, the other attributes relate to the three quintessential forms of justice derived ultimately from Aristotle, developed by the Scholastics, and formulated definitively at the Council of Trent. Cumulative justice, individual to individual, is symbolized by the sword; distributive justice, society to the individual, by the fasces; legal justice, the individual to society, by the book. Three points are of particular concern here. The cross-legged pose of the figure and the inclusion of the fasces have a common theme as compared with the balance and sword, which evoke the impartial and retributive nature of justice.[44] Crossed legs were a frequent attribute of figures representative of unhurried meditation and contemplation, and in this case the motif expresses one of the fundamental attributes of God's



135. Michelangelo, Tombs of Giuliano and Lorenzo de' Medici, Medici Chapel, San Lorenzo, Florence

136. Bernini, Tomb of Urban VIII. St. Peter's, Rome

justice, that it is slow and deliberate. "Divine Goodness does not run quickly or noisily to castigate error, but belatedly and slowly, so that the sinner is unaware before he feels the pain."[45] With respect to divine justice, "the fasces with the ax, carried by the ancient Roman lictors before the consuls and the Tribune of the People, signifies that in the execution of justice overzealous castigation is unwarranted, and that justice should never be precipitous but have time to mature judgment while unbinding the rods that cover the ax."[46] The third point concerns the most commonly misunderstood feature of the allegory, that is, what might be called her mood: her head resting on her hand, her head and eyes turned upward, her lips parted as if in response to some message received from on high. There is nothing tearful or morbid about her expression, which is rather one of dreamy absorption tinged with a kind of melancholic lethargy. The very fact that her right elbow rests on the book of law – Urban was first and foremost a jurist, and his rise within the church hierarchy rested on that basis – indicates that her action has to do with justice, not mourning. To be sure, all writers emphasize that divine chastisement is inflicted only reluctantly, and with dismay, and hints of fearsomeness and withdrawal are expressed by the putti, one of whom hides anxiously with the scales, while the other turns away with the fasces. The allegory herself, however, has a quite different attitude. The head-on-hand motif is one of the most consistent postures of the thinker, the contemplator, the mediator, and the turn of her head and glance makes it clear, not only that she is slow to act, but that what she is contemplating is the heavenly source of divine justice. Together the two groups offer a veritable counterpoint of psychological and moral states, active and passive, that illustrate the divine origin and

137. Bernini, Tomb of Urban VIII, Allegory of Justice, detail. St. Peter's, Rome

earthward dispensation of God's grace in the form of Charity and Justice.

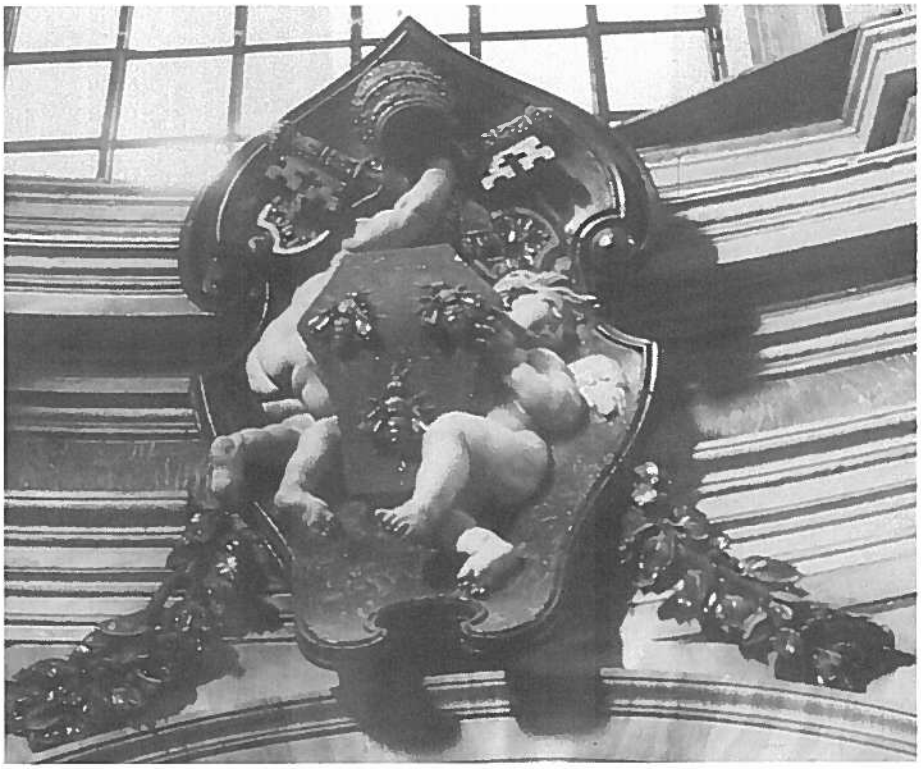
The basic key to the significance of the allegories is that Bernini did not choose to accompany the pope with the cardinal moral virtues normally associated with the earthly ruler, whose loss they would properly mourn. Instead, he combined one of the cardinal virtues, Justice, with the chief theological virtue, Charity. This combination was common enough, but in the context of papal portraiture it specifically denoted the role of the papacy in the execution of God's wish that man be justified – that is, made just – and so redeemed from original sin. God achieves this result through the sacrifice of his only son and the exercise of the chief attributes of his Divine Wisdom, the divine virtues of Charity and Justice. The two virtues are equal and interdependent, operating

138. Bernini, Tomb of Urban VIII, Allegory of Death. St. Peter's, Rome

together in the interest of mankind. Far from lamenting the pope's demise, the allegories enact the roles of God's virtues in achieving the beneficent result implicit in the pope's salvific gesture.

A final correlation and contrast are evident in the treatment of what is, literally and figuratively, the central theme of Urban's tomb as well as that of Paul III, death. In both cases the caducity of earthly existence is conveyed by wing-borne inscriptions with the names of the deceased, except that Bernini assimilated this motif to the figure of *Historia* writing on a shield of victory, represented on the front of Paul III's cope, and to the traditional winged Angel of Death – which now becomes also the fateful, victorious recorder of life.[47]

The hyperbolic flattery usually taken as Bernini's exclusive concern in the tomb is belied not only by the universal significance of the allegories but also by the inordinate importance attributed to death itself: witness the prominent disposition of the Michelangelesque sarcophagus in front of the pedestal, and especially the central role played by the figure of the Reaper in the drama of the tomb (Fig. 138).[48] Death seems to rise up out of the sarcophagus itself, a conceit derived, I think, from the tomb of a great Flemish cardinal of the sixteenth century; well known through contemporary engravings of monuments of famous persons, the tomb of Cardinal Érard de la Marck was an important progenitor of Bernini's ideology of death (Fig. 141).[49] In the Flemish monument, however, Death performs his role as memento mori in a traditional way, brandishing an hourglass and beckoning to the effigy, whereas Bernini's figure writes, or rather finishes writing, the name and title of Urban VIII in the black book of death. The bookish Death seems to recall that along with his literary interests the pope was an avid historian and bibliophile. A more specific reference is suggested by a rarely noted, and to my mind never properly understood peculiarity of the motif, that is, the name of Urban's predecessor partially visible on a preceding page. Often assumed to refer to Gregory XV, the letters are clearly legible as CL above and AL below, that is, Clement VIII Aldobrandini. And, as if to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding, exactly three pages, corresponding to the number of intervening popes, are shown between that with Urban's name and that with Clement's.[50] It is not hard to understand why the reference to Gregory was avoided: that pope's nephew, Cardinal Ludovisi, had been a bitter enemy of Urban's since the time of the conclave in which he had been elected. On the other hand, Urban had been a great favorite of Clement VIII, who had furthered his early career



139. Bernini, Tomb of Urban VIII, escutcheon. St. Peter's, Rome

in many ways, and whose very name corresponds to the ideology of the tomb.[51] However, the motif of the funereal scribe and record book had another, more universal implication. Recording in reverse the sequence of Peter's successors, Death displays not only the ephemerality of earthly things, including Urban VIII, but also the permanence of heavenly things, notably the Church as embodied in the persons of its temporary heads. Therein lies the ultimate, and supremely paradoxical, significance of Bernini's tomb of Urban VIII. The very figure that represents the triumph of transience, winged Death, is at the same time scribe of the Book of Life, guarantor of immortality through the divine virtues vested in the institution of the Church and the papacy.

This same quality informs the notorious bees that have alighted here and there on Urban's tomb. Having passed through a window of the basilica, they now participate in the commemoration of Saint Peter's departed successor, just as they had done twenty years before on the occasion of Urban's election. Transforming the papal coat of arms into a trio of monumental insects bumbling over the papal tomb was, surely, an act of unparalleled imagination and wit, which also served to transform the mood of melancholy and despair usually associated with funeral iconography into a moment of surprise, and even of joy. Urban was an accomplished poet, and the bees certainly allude to his mellifluous verse. But in fact the three large bees that have escaped from the coat of arms are really the leaders – king-size bees, one might say – of a swarm that populates the monument; the others are much smaller, worker bees – indeed, they are "life-size." This ingenious display conflates two distinct emblematic themes evoked by the pope's device. Bees swarmed over the tomb of the ancient Greek poet Archilochus, who was vilified for his pungent tongue but celebrated as the progenitor of the Pindaric tradition that Urban emulated in his own poetry (Fig. 142). And in an emblem of ideal social hierarchy and adhesion, the apian chorus is attracted to its beneficent ruler, Princely Clemency (Fig. 143). The bees thus celebrate the triumph of Christian virtue realized, poetically, in Urban's verses on religious themes, and institutionally, in the divine charity and justice of the rule of Christ vested in every pope.

Considered in this light, the seemingly casual, "bumbling" placement of the big Barberini bees becomes charged with meaning. All three are facing upward and seem to rise in an ascending march past the skeletal figure of death, as if in response to the resurrecting command of the pope, enthroned on his seat of wisdom, itself ornamented with bees. The lowermost bee, perched on the rim of the sarcophagus basin, has no stinger – "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"! (1 Cor. 15:55). The other two, as if already resurrected – bees literally embodied resurrection: ancient writers consistently reported that they were generated spontaneously from the putrefying corpses of animals, notably lions – are whole again and proceed in their journey up

140. Giulio Romano, *St. Peter*. Sala di Costantino, Vatican Palace, Rome

to the very border between death, commemoration, and life.

The startling confluence of past, present, and future in the tomb of Urban VIII is the very theme of the coat of arms of the Barberini pope attached to the face of the arch at the apex of the niche (Fig. 139). Here an extraordinary operation is performed by two divine messengers, who detach the Barberini escutcheon from the papal tiara and keys and carry it aloft. The image is a living demonstration of the fleeting earthly presence and spiritual sublimation of one mortal who briefly occupied the center of an eternally abiding creation of God's will.[52]

THE CROSSING PIERS (1627–41)

The treatment of the tombs in the apse can only be understood in relation to the larger project of which they were part: to integrate the choir and crossing, and ultimately the nave, in one comprehensive program. At the center, the tomb of Saint Peter was crowned with a new Baldacchino that expressed Christ's sacramental sacrifice and triumph in its very design. In turn, the papal altar was surrounded in the crossing piers with relics and images of saints evoking Christ's passion. Altogether, the program encompassed the entire process of salvation as envisioned by the Church.

When it was decided to replace the Resurrected Christ atop the Baldacchino by a cross and globe, traditional symbols of the universal dominion of Christianity, Bernini dealt with the new situation, typically, by exploiting it.[53] He found a new solution that expressed his underlying point of view even more vividly than before, in the context of the crossing as a whole, by interpreting the cross not simply as an emblem of the Church but as an allusion to the Crucifixion itself, the "real event." The result was a comprehensive, unified program, developed between June 1627, when it was decided to treat all four crossing piers in the same way, and April 1629, when the subjects and the basic form of the decorations were determined. This drastic, epoch-making decision inaugurated a new way of conceiving the relationship between a work of art and its environment, which might best be described as psychological. The principle of the scheme was to devote each of the niches to a saint whose relic was preserved in the basilica, thus also stressing the continuity between the old and the new. Simple, except that in the old basilica the relics, accumulated over centuries, and their reliquary altars were scattered throughout, whereas now the idea was to make a meaningful selection for a thematic union. The idea had various roots. There had been a proposal, presumably during the month-long reign of Leo XI, Paul V's predecessor, to place in the niches of the four crossing piers the tombs of four sainted popes who bore the same name.[54] The common denominator with the high altar dedicated to Saint Peter was the continuity and sacrality of the papacy, often expressed in the choice of papal names. Another precedent for the unified planning at St. Peter's was again the Cathedral of Florence, where the crossing was surrounded by chapels dedicated to the Twelve Apostles. The underlying theme was Christological, with historical reference to the church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople, which Constantine had built as the eastern counterpart (rival) of St. Peter's. Finally, an important tradition of unified and coherent programming in central-plan churches was the scheme involving the major feasts of the Orthodox Church that developed during the Middle Ages in the Greek East. This Byzantine formula had a particular relevance because it functioned in the vertical as well as the horizontal plane, rising to a crescendo of sacrality with the image of the Pantocrator in the apex of the cupola.

What distinguished the arrangement at St. Peter's was, first, the use of the relics that had existed, dispersed, in the former building, and taking their exposition as the guiding theme of the design. The display, rather than simply the conservation of the relics, became the overriding concern. Second, the relics themselves were perceived not simply as precious remnants of an individual saint, but as integral parts of a coherent process, that of salvation through Christ's Passion. Two of the relics lent

141. Tomb of Érard de la Marck, engraving. Formerly in Liège Cathedral. From Boissard 1597–1602, part IV, vol. II, title page

themselves directly to this theme: the kerchief of Veronica, imprinted with the face of Christ on the road to Calvary, and the lance of the Roman centurion Longinus who, blinded by disease, pierced the side of the crucified Christ, "saw the light," and was cured by a touch of the blood. A third relic, the head of Saint Andrew, was indirectly related by virtue of the particular form of his martyrdom on a diagonal cross, which he requested of his oppressors in order to imitate but not presume to repeat Christ's own death. In other words, the three major relics of St. Peter's were perceived, for the first time together, as having a common denominator in Christ's sacrifice and its promise of salvation, precisely the theme that dominated in the conception of the Baldacchino at the same time. A fourth suitable relic was required to complete the scheme, the importance of which may be measured by the fact that in April 1629 the pope made bold to appropriate a portion of one of the most important relics, the True Cross, from one of the most important churches in Rome, S. Croce in Gerusalemme, also a Constantinian foundation and one of the city's venerable patriarchal basilicas.

The unprecedented ideology of the crossing of St. Peter's lay in its being conceived as a unified sacred place devoted to the Christian process of salvation achieved through the sacrifice of Christ and the establishment of his church through Saint Peter and his successors. The key to the visual realization of this program was the idea of personifying the relics by representations of their respective saints. There was nothing inherently new about this idea: Veronica had often been shown displaying her kerchief, Longinus his lance, Andrew his cross, Helen the Cross. What was new was the combination of this mode of representation with the idea of a coherent theme, to be expressed by portraying the figures in such a way as to convey the significance of the relics, that is, the events that lent them their meaning and role in the process of salvation. Conceived in this way, the crossing of St. Peter's became a sacred space in which the very foundation of church ideology – the perpetual reenactment of Christ's sacrifice – took place. The whole project may have been generated by the idea of surrounding the tomb of Saint Peter with a sort of Greek chorus of colossal statues of the relic saints who would themselves, through their poses and expressions, reenact the portentous events in which they had participated. Veronica rushes in desperation to display the miraculous imprint of Christ's face on the way to the Cross (Fig. 144); Andrew and Longinus exult in their imitations of the Crucifixion (Figs. 145, 146); and the empress Helen seems to convey to her subjects the precious relics she had retrieved of Christ's sacrifice (Fig. 147). The figures

142. *Malediction*, Tomb of Archilochus, engraving. Alciati 1621, Emblema LI

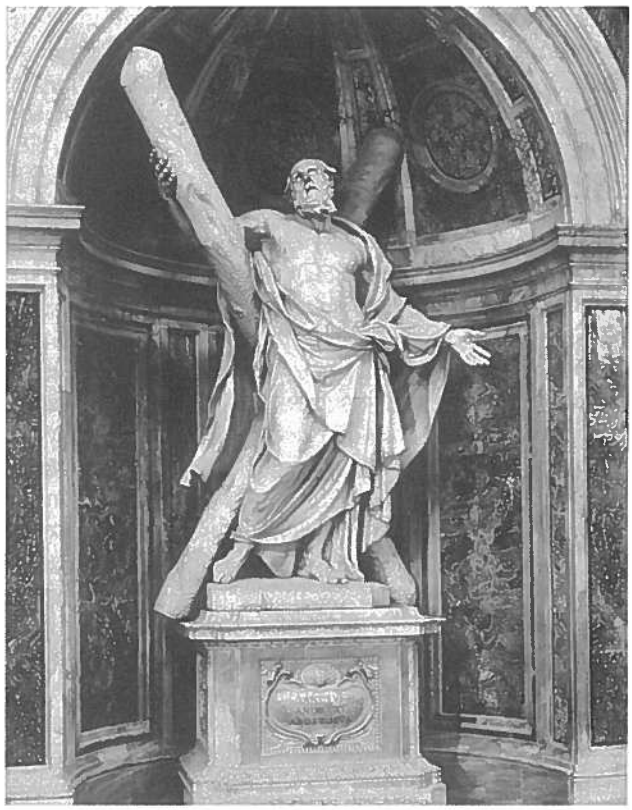
thus perform dual roles. They are isolated and independent images, embodiments of the attributes they hold; at the same time, they are actors in a narrative, participants in a sacred mystery play, at once historical and imagined, taking place in the crossing of St. Peter's. The viewer who enters the crossing is inevitably caught up in the action that surrounds him – as never before on this scale and with this intensity – as if he himself, through the Eucharist, were the protagonist.

The drama is by no means "pure theater," however: it is modulated and controlled by an underlying principle that might best be called psycholiturgical, for in accordance with liturgical principle the figures are paired by their sexes and by their psychological states. In the traditional hierarchy of the Church, men precede women, and in the traditional psychology of the sexes, men are more intellectual and spiritually inclined, while women are more compassionate and earthbound. So the figures' locations were determined, and so their emotions were portrayed at St. Peter's. Together they enact a four-part, contrapuntal dialogue with the spectator, who thus participates in the sacrifice of Christ and the process of salvation as in no other church in Christendom. The women lament the earthly sacrifice – Veronica frantically, Helen majestically; the men exult in its eternal triumph – Andrew worshipfully, Longinus electrically. The sculptures display the respective stylistic propensities of the artists who made them, but Bernini provided the basic designs and remained very much in charge. This fact in itself testifies to an extraordinary achievement, precisely because of the variety of psychological states the figures portray. Never before had such a range of human emotions been magnified to such heroic grandeur. The psychological states of the figures match their superhuman scale, yet in form, expression, and action they are carefully modulated and orchestrated so as to transform the mute relics of the past into a veritable chorus of eloquent witnesses to Christ's sacrifice in the present. Most important is that together the statues create an environment, a space charged with powerful emotions into which the spectator is ineluctably drawn. The traditional veil between real and fictive space has been removed, and the spectator's experience of this world is uplifted to the level of a participant in the process of salvation to the next.

Architecturally, the plan entailed repeating the structures used for the relics in Old St. Peter's, free-standing reliquary tabernacles on three levels (Fig. 148): lowermost an altar, surmounted by an altarpiece with a representation related to the saint and/or the relic itself, and an uppermost compartment from which the relic was displayed on special occasions. In the new arrangement the lowermost level became fully developed chapels in the grotto beneath the piers, with depictions on the walls of the lives of the saints and altarpieces showing or referring to their martyrdoms. The wall frescoes introduce the equivalent of verb tenses in language; representing events from the past, portrayed in the technique and subterranean location of the first Christian paintings in the catacombs, they serve as preludes to the three-dimensional present represented by the sculptured figures in the church above.[55] The past included the genesis of the crossing project itself, recorded in a scene in the Veronica chapel in which Bernini is shown presenting to the pope his initial design for the upper reliquary niche – a remarkable testimony to the importance and self-consciousness of the entire undertaking (Fig. 149). The scene includes prominently a portrait of Bernini's brilliant younger brother, Luigi (1612–81), who served as his assistant (Fig. 150).[56] The function of the uppermost level of the old tabernacles was transferred to the balconied niches in Michelangelo's piers above the statuary. Bernini also transformed the upper niches into miraculous locales, introducing tabernacles that echo those of the original reliquary structures. These architectural frames themselves became reliquaries by virtue of incorporating the spiral marble columns that Constantine had taken from the Temple of Jerusalem to adorn the original choir and altar of Old St. Peter's. In their new location the antique supports give physical testimony to the idea of the fulfillment of the Old Dispensation of the Jews in the New Dispensation of Christ, the transferral from the earthly to the heavenly Jerusalem. The celestial nature of the "event" is conveyed by the treatment of the niche interiors, where angels and putti carry aloft the relics – partly rendered in three dimensions, as if there were no surface behind – against a polychrome "space." In the conches of the niches stucco clouds and putti bearing banderoles inscribed with texts referring to

143. *Principis Clementia.* Alciati 1567, Emblema IX

144. Francesco Mochi, St. Veronica. St. Peter's, Rome



145. Francesco Duquesnoy, St. Andrew. St. Peter's, Rome

146. Bernini, St. Longinus. St. Peter's, Rome

147. Andrea Bolgi, St. Helen. St. Peter's, Rome

the relics, merge into the unfathomable gilded space of heaven, as in the golden backgrounds of medieval religious art.[57] In this way, the upper level also participates in and contributes to the perception through the crossing of a real, living space on high. The shift from painting in the subterranean chapels to sculpture in the church itself comprised not only a temporal shift from past to present, but also an existential shift from illusion to reality. Following a long tradition concerning the respective natures of the arts of representation, Bernini adhered to the view that painting, as false illusion, was indeed "inferior" to sculpture, which shares the three-dimensionality of God's own creation. Bernini here maintained the principle even in the celestial apparitions in the reliquary niches, since the space is defined "naturally" by veins in the carefully chosen colored marble; hence the surface is nowhere penetrated by "artificial" illusion.

The Nave: Continuity

Two contemporaneous projects envisioned by Bernini under Urban VIII began the gigantic task of articulating the longitudinal axis defined by the apse and nave. In doing so, Bernini treated the crossing and the nave as the intersection of two complementary functions, not only of church architecture but of the house of God itself, as a locus of memory and as a place of action. The papal tombs in the apse represent the "sequel" to the crossing's commemoration of Christ's sacrifice and the building of his church on the cornerstone of St. Peter. The nave takes up the theme announced in the apse: history in action.

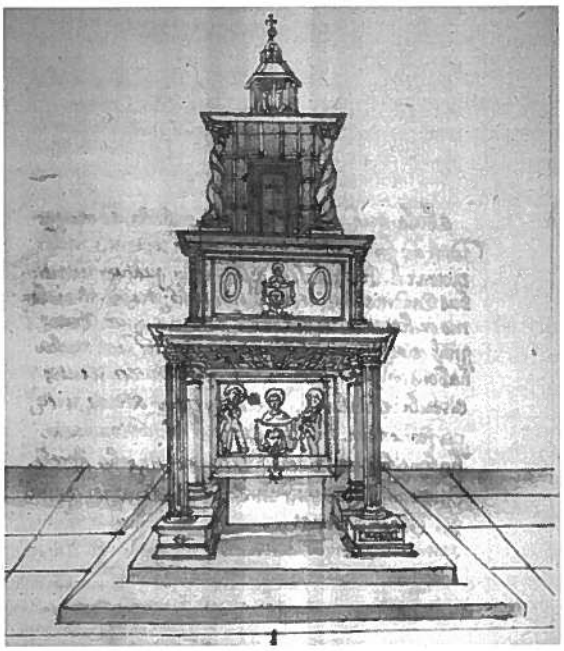
"FEED MY SHEEP" (1633–46)

The story begins, literally as well as figuratively, in the atrium above the main portal to the basilica, with a grandiose relief depicting the venerable theme of *Pasce oves meas*, "Feed My Sheep" (Fig. 151). The Gospel of John records that in a postmortem appearance to his disciples as the Good Shepherd, Christ assigned to Peter the task of nurturing his mystical flock. The episode was universally interpreted as the institution of the Church with Peter and his successors at its head.[58] The work thus illustrates the historical and divine sanction for Christianity and the authority of the popes. Bernini perceived the underlying paradox of this epochal theme, an august condescension of absolute power, in a context of a pastoral meekness and gentility. Both these qualities are conveyed by the "historicizing" style that recalls the venerable antiquity of the event and endows it with the visual authority of classical art. The subject is cast in a lyrical, idealizing mode that suggests the Augustan pastoral poetry of Christ's own time, notably the Georgics of Virgil. This classical tradition, to which Urban's own "Pindaric" poetry on sacred themes belonged, was deeply imbued with the idea of the perennially returning Golden Age. Church history thus begins and is perpetuated here, in the verdant landscape of an idyllic time and place – past, present and future – at the entrance to St. Peter's.

Bernini's presentation imparts a twofold message concerning the import of the scene. On the one hand, Christ displays his august authority in the ideal perfection of his human form and the noble grace of his dual action; he faces Peter to establish his primacy among the apostles as Christ's chosen spiritual heir, while gesturing behind to convey his authority over – and responsibility for – his flock. On the other hand, the composition also emphasizes the humility and obedience of Peter, who kneels in an attitude of devoted self-abnegation. In the gospel account, Peter affirms three times his love for Christ – who thrice affirms his charge, "Feed my sheep" – in penitential atonement for Peter's threefold denial of the Lord at the time of the Passion. Peter's supreme office is thus linked to his humble devotion, and to Christ's forgiveness of the first penitent.

MATILDA OF TUSCANY (1633–44)

The supreme, divinely ordained hegemony of the church and the papacy in the terrestrial realm is the theme of another "historical" work commissioned by Urban VIII at the same time, in the nave of the basilica. Following the initial foundations by Constantine the Great and his mother, there was another heroic instance in which secular rulers acknowledged the superior authority of the



148. Tabernacle reliquary of the Volto Santo, Old St. Peter's drawing. From Grimaldi 1972, fol. 92 recto

papacy and greatly augmented the church's earthly patrimony. Urban's eleventh-century compatriot, Countess Matilda of Tuscany, had been a staunch supporter of the papacy in its manifold and prolonged power struggle with the Holy Roman Emperor and donated to the Church her vast territories in south Italy. As he had appropriated for the crossing pier the relics of the passion from S. Croce in Gerusalemme, Urban removed Matilda's body from its original resting place in Lombardy for reburial in a tomb in a niche in the north side aisle (Fig. 152). History is here portrayed metaphorically, for there is nothing medieval about the figure of the countess. Bernini represented her instead as a grandly regal Roman matron in a purely white environment clearly intended to suggest an ancient commemorative monument. In form as well as content, the figure establishes a link between the empress Helen, with her attributes changed from the instruments of the Passion to Matilda's military command baton and the tiara and keys of the papacy, and the commanding Christ of the "Feed My Sheep."[59] Matilda is thus presented as the ideal companion of the original secular founders of the church.

The simple trapezoidal coffin (Fig. 153) suggests ancient frieze sarcophagi, especially, and appropriately, the Etruscan sarcophagi of Tuscany. The relief celebrates Matilda's role in a signal victory of the papacy in the contest with the emperors over investiture, the right to nominate abbots and bishops. Henry IV is shown in abject prostration receiving the forgiveness of Gregory VII at Matilda's castle at Canossa, thus acknowledging the superior authority of the papacy in the matter of investiture. The emperor's claim was in direct contradiction to the meaning of *Pasce oves meas* as understood by the papacy. The composition of the relief scene strikes an inescapable analogy with the penitential obeisance of Peter and the pontifical forgiveness by Christ as depicted over the entrance. The conflict between secular and ecclesiastical authority persisted in Urban VIII's time, and the work was surely intended to set an example to the current rulers of Christian Europe. This contemporary significance is made evident by the features of Gregory VII, which are those of Urban himself. Bernini declared visually that this is a commemorative monument as well as a tomb, by placing on the lid of the sarcophagus an inscribed cartouche held up like a billboard by two kneeling putti. The inscription describes Matilda not simply as a donor but as a woman of male spirit, protector (*propugnatix*) of the Holy See; she wears an armored breastplate and carries a military commander's baton in allusion to the fact that she actually led her troops in defense of the papacy.

Most extraordinary, Bernini inserted the sculpture in a double niche, the outer shell of which consists of panels that diminish in perspective toward a vanishing point at the center of the figure. Physically, the double niche allowed Bernini to include the whole monument in the narrow, shallow space available. The outer shell functions visually in two ways. The perspectivized coffering acts as a visual loudspeaker, magnifying the figure as it thrusts forward from the inner niche into the space of the spectator. At the same time, the expanded outer shell gives a wider "arc of visibility" within the restricted confines of the aisle. This ideal, antiquarian commemoration of a distant past is cast into an immediate, celebratory present by a pair of airborne putti who complete the monument by assembling the countess's coat of arms at the apex of the arch.

THE NAVE DECORATION (1647–8)

Early in the reign of Urban's successor, the Pamphili pope Innocent X, the concept of devoting the longitudinal axis of the basilica to the history of the Church came to fruition. The importance attached to the theme is indeed evidenced by the fact that it was retained and developed despite the new pope's bitter hatred for his predecessor and his equally hostile attitude, at least initially, toward Bernini. To illustrate this history, an extraordinary coincidence of form and content was worked out for decorating the nave piers that gave the church a new sense of direction. For the elaborate but mute abstract designs of flat, multicolored marble incrustation with which the surfaces had been reveted before the nave was built, Bernini substituted a simple, articulate, sculptured voice (Fig. 154; earlier revetment visible at far right).

The point of departure was one of the most important of all documents concerning the history of St. Peter's and its decoration, a letter composed at the end of the thirteenth century by one of the church's greatest patrons, Nicholas III (1277–80). What has been called the Magna Carta for the canons of St. Peter's is a letter Nicholas wrote urging them, among other reforms, to look to the condition of their church to assure that its physical state was worthy of its exalted spiritual status: "The Church Militant can be visualized as the holy city of the New Jerusalem, descending from heaven and prepared by God as a bride adorned for her spouse." Conceived as the Heavenly Jerusalem, the church was to be appropriately arrayed. Under Nicholas, the adornment took the form of a series of medallions of the popes aligned along the clerestory wall. Representing the popes in this manner was, in fact, a cooptation of a much earlier system of church decoration in which medallion portraits of saints populated the celestial hierarchy represented by the building itself, except that earlier the medallions were generally confined to subsidiary locations in borderline friezes. Under Nicholas the papal portraits occupied a conspicuous part of the basilica's main field of decoration. And in the papal series the idea of a temporal sequence provided the sense of continuity and perdurance

149. Bernini Presenting His Design for the Reliquary Niches to Urban VIII. Grotto Chapel of St. Veronica, St. Peter's, Rome

150. Bernini, Portrait of Luigi Bernini, drawing. Windsor Castle

that was essential to the meaning of the frescoes. Recreating the program in the new nave was, it might be said, a double confirmation of the idea of continuity, in the sequence of popes and between the old basilica and the new.

The new version comprised several fundamental changes, in content as well as form. Most significant, perhaps, is that not all the popes were included, only those who were sainted.[60] There was thus a reversion to and convergence with the early tradition of medallion saints, as if to populate the Heavenly Jerusalem with its principal denizens from the church hierarchy. Second, the portraits are not arranged in a line, but in zigzag fashion back and forth across the nave. The disposition was clearly adopted from that of the series of standing papal portraits in the Sistine Chapel, where this serpentine organization serves to interlace and bind together the Old and New Testament narrative cycles running parallel along the chapel walls.[61] The Sistine Chapel is where the popes are elected, where the divinely ordained succession is perpetually renewed. Moreover, the medallions were not shown in isolation but as if born aloft, along with the papal tiara and keys, by pairs of winged putti. The "imago clipeata," as this motif was called, was the ancient method of illustrating the triumph of the soul and apotheosis, in this case clearly the saintliness of those portrayed.[62] And finally, Bernini's medallions are sculpted, not painted, so that they partake of a different level of reality. With gilded backgrounds and set against the polychrome marble pilaster surfaces, the white marble reliefs appear as real objects suspended in space, where they serve as animated memory messages miraculously transported from the past to the present. The nave fairly pulsates with the persistent rhythm and energy of their reminders.

In the spandrels of the arches huge female personifications of the virtues recline on the arches of the nave arcade (Fig. 155). They, too, make clear reference to antiquity, assimilating the analogous figures of Victory that were commonly placed in the spandrels of Roman triumphal arches. Through their reference to pagan triumphal imagery, the allegories emphasize that the victory of the Church was theological and moral, not military. Pervaded with the emblem of Innocent X, a dove with an olive branch in its beak, the traditional symbol of peace, the entire decorative system calls on the language

151. Bernini, "'Feed my Sheep.'" Portico, St. Peter's, Rome

of classical antiquity to express historically the divinely ordained, pacific triumph of Christianity.

The organization also suggests a progression reciprocal to our ordinary perception of the relationship between the nave and the crossing, from the entrance to the high altar. This transition from the mundane to the spiritual world is indeed the practical experience of the visitor; but for the believer, the direction of spiritual movement is exactly the opposite. As the dove of the Holy Spirit under the canopy of Bernini's Baldacchino sheds its light down upon the sacrament at the high altar, so its grace radiates outward from that epicenter to illuminate the world. Thus, once again, and most important, the Early Christian basilica is recalled: from earliest Christian times the movement, in theological and in decorative terms, was always from the altar outward to the entrance of the church.[63]

Ingress and Egress

THE PIAZZA AND COLONNADES (1656–67) *(Figs. 156, 157, 158, 159)*

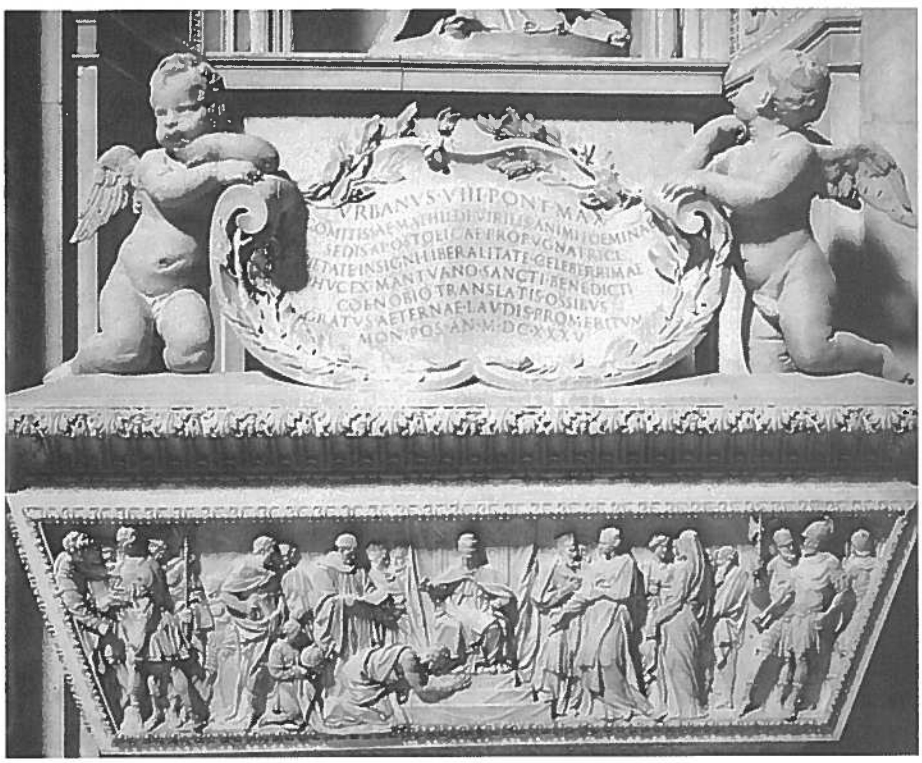
The same outward orientation drove the designs of the piazza and colonnades in front of the church and the Cathedra Petri in the extremity of the apse. These mighty projects commissioned by Bernini's friend and multifarious Maecenas, Alexander VII, brought to completion and closure the longitudinal extension of the basilica. One of the fundamental concepts of Christianity, derived from the mystery religions of antiquity, was that of initiation, the process whereby neophytes, or catechumens, would "prepare" to enter the church proper. From the very beginning of church architecture this idea of a preliminary "foreclosure" was translated into an atrium or forecourt preceding the entrance to the building. At St. Peter's, the forecourt as a reception and gathering place for devotees was combined with another function that had developed relatively recently in the history of the church. From the beginning of the thirteenth century, there had been a phenomenal increase in devotion to the central mystery of the Eucharist. The devotion was greatly augmented in response to the attacks of Protestants on what they perceived as the theological

152. Bernini, Tomb of Countess Matilda of Tuscany. St. Peter's, Rome

and institutional trappings with which the Church had encumbered the simple facts of belief and grace. Such factors had led at St. Peter's to the development of the greatest annual "urban" devotion of the church calendar, the procession of Corpus Domini: the pope, displaying a monstrance containing the Host of the Sacrament and covered by a baldachin carried by acolytes, paraded with a vast entourage from the Vatican palace through the nearby streets of the Borgo, as the area was called, and back to the church. On these occasions two great long canopies supported by staves were extended far out, one from the entrance to the Vatican palace flanking the facade on the north, the other from the central portal of the church (Fig. 160). The canopies served two intimately related purposes, one practical, the other symbolic. The procession was a grueling exercise, especially for the popes, who were often relatively advanced in age, and the canopies served to shield both the participants and Holy Sacrament from the sun or inclement weather. The canopies also had an equally exigent ceremonial sense, doing honor to the importance of the event and its participants, and especially to the sanctity of the Sacrament itself.

The space before the church thus served a dual function, as an open area to contain the crowds assembled on special occasions, circumscribed by passageways specifically designed for the Eucharistic procession. Considered in this way, the piazza posed the same problem as had the church building itself, namely that of reconciling centrally and longitudinally organized forms and functions. Earlier projects to create a unified and worthy overture to the church had tended to treat the space as a city square, creating an enclosure consisting of covered arcades with offices and apartments on top, recalling portico-lined city streets such as the one projected much earlier for the Borgo by Nicholas V and those common in many northern Italian cities. Bernini's totally different solution may best be understood in relation to the great public act, clearly intended to sound the thematic keynote of his reign, taken by Alexander VII almost immediately after his election on 7 April 1655. On 27 May the new pope introduced a radical innovation in the conduct of the Corpus Domini procession. Instead of walking or riding seated in the traditional *sedia gestatoria*, in origin a Roman symbol of imperial authority, Alexander was carried on a litter, kneeling and holding the Host before him. The austerity and self-control exhibited in this long, uncomfortable, and intensely concentrated devotion by the agonized (he had a painful infirmity) and perspiring pope, who remained absolutely immobile throughout, is movingly described by eyewitnesses.[64] This simple but stunning demonstration of humble adoration inaugurated a new era, defining the entire future development of St. Peter's and, with it, the public face of the Catholic Church itself.

Eloquent testimony to this awesome new attitude is the fact that, in planning a suitable frame for the forecourt of St. Peter's, Alexander would have nothing to do with the common idea of functionality. He rejected a project that included a usable second story, with the



153. Stefano Speranza, *Capitulation of Henry IV before Gregory VIII*. St. Peter's, Rome (after Bacchi 1998)

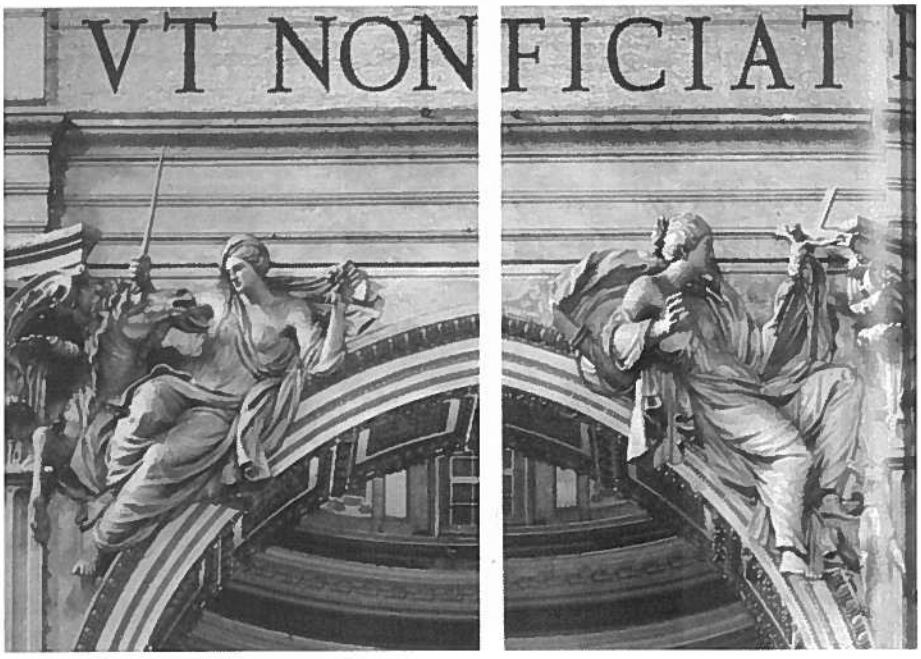
absolute requirement that the porticoes serve no other purpose than as passageways, effectively silencing those who argued that the structures should also have "practical" value. For Alexander, only self-sufficient porticoes could express without adulteration the spiritual values, celebratory and sacramental, he intended them to represent. We shall see that their public utility, which was indeed very great, lay in the work the huge undertaking would provide for the indigent unemployed of Rome, especially after the plague of 1656.

Division of the area into two parts was inherent in the project (Fig. 161a, b). The sizes and shapes of these contiguous spaces were also determined by interdependent features of the situation – features that must have seemed providentially "given" and susceptible, in Bernini's imagination, to incorporation into one coherent, unifying thought. The flanking sides of the area immediately in front of the church were fixed by a portion of the Vatican palace to the north, situated diagonally with respect to the facade. This corner of the palace was also a determining factor in the vertical sense, as the pope often made appearances from the balcony of his apartment overlooking the square, for which maximum visibility was required. Matching the palace front symmetrically to the south created the so-called *piazza retta* (i.e., aligned with the axis of the church), a trapezoid diverging toward the facade, clearly – and inevitably – evocative of Michelangelo's piazza of the Campidoglio. The space thus became the ecclesiastical counterpart to the secular capitol of Rome and the ancient empire.

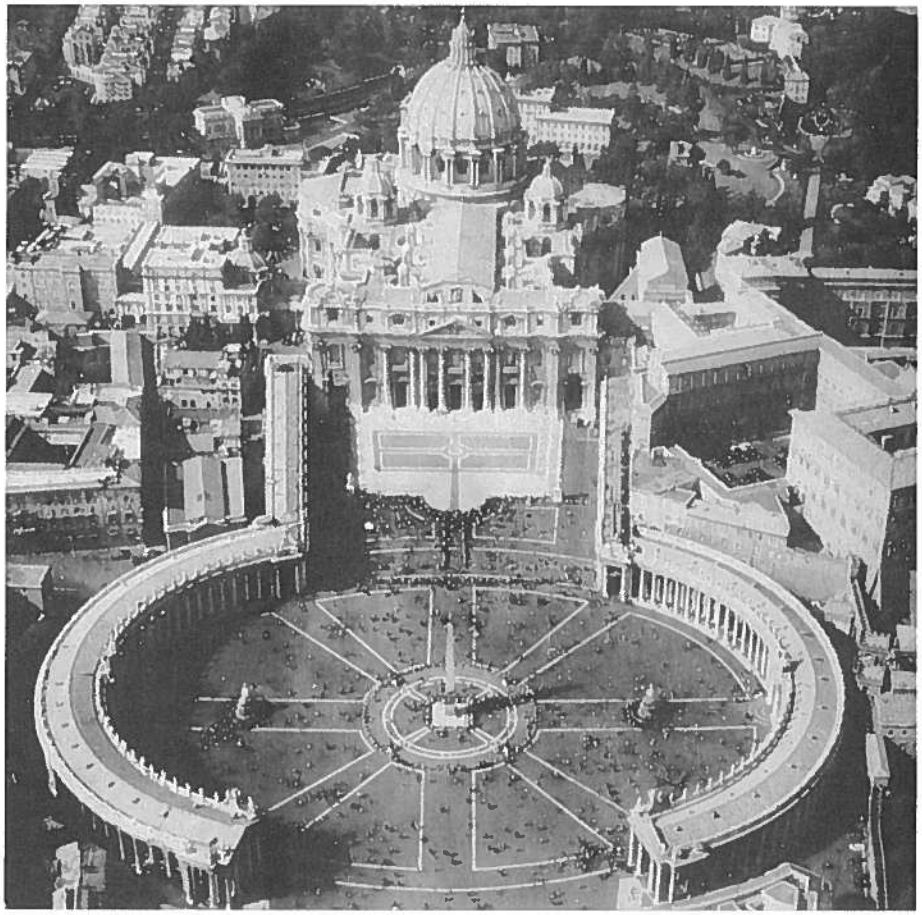
The lateral, northern extension of the expanded space east of the *piazza retta* was delimited by the Leonine wall of the city, inviolable because it contained the famous corridor connecting the Vatican with the papal stronghold of the Castel Sant'Angelo. The configuration of this space and its relation to the *piazza retta* depended from the intersection of two axes, one running longitudinally with respect to the basilica, from the center of the facade of the church to the obelisk that Sixtus V had erected toward the middle of the piazza. The obelisk, in turn, was the point of intersection with an oblique axis, hence the name *piazza obliqua*, parallel with the church facade. A point on this transverse axis became the center of a circle whose perimeter happened to coincide both with the corner of the Vatican palace and the Leonine wall. When the corresponding circle was drawn on the opposite side of the piazza, the points of intersection between these two circles in turn became the centers for larger circles whose perimeters complete the oval on its long axis. A third axis was a line projected from the north end of the church facade, along the palace facade, through the Borgo Nuovo – the main thoroughfare from the center of Rome – to the front of Castel Sant'Angelo. The intersections of the north lateral circle with this axis determined endpoints of the arc of the colonnade, so as to provide the approach from the Borgo Nuovo with the maximum view of the church facade.

These manifold "coincidences" must have confirmed Bernini's adherence to the quasi-mystical tradition of Pythagorean geometry in which the circle was the most perfect of divinely given forms. These factors, symbolic as well as practical, must also have recommended the oval shape, defined by intersecting circles, rather than the true ellipse, for the *piazza obliqua*. Although he attributed the conception to the pope himself, Bernini had had much prior experience with this shape, most notably in a chapel he had designed for Urban VIII's Palazzo di Propaganda Fide, the church's office dedicated to the worldwide dissemination of the faith (Fig. 162); this was, in fact, the first use of the transverse oval in Rome. The chapel was dedicated to the Three Magi and was therefore replete with astrocosmological symbolism; hence, the plan may also have anticipated the *piazza obliqua*'s reference to the ideal of a universal, all-embracing church, the first witnesses to which were indeed the Magi. At St. Peter's the obelisk is flanked by two fountains that give special prominence to the oval's transverse axis, which in turn calls attention to a particular feature of Bernini's design: the columns are aligned in concentric circles behind one another so that the centers of the lateral circles become, literally, vanishing points from which the welter of columns disappears. When seen at an angle, the columns seem multitudinous, disoriented, and dynamic; when seen from the center points, they look simple, regular, and stable. The moving visitor inexorably seeks out these "perfect" vistas, which are in fact marked in the pavement on the axis, perceiving the transitory and yearning for the permanent. Bernini had only recently employed a very different but fundamentally analogous "double perspective" system in the lateral walls of the Cornaro chapel in S. Maria della Vittoria. There the members of the deceased's family are shown in diagonally foreshortened architectural settings (Fig. 163a, b), so constructed that when the visitor approaching along the axis of the nave reaches the central vanishing point under the center of the dome, the perspectives "make sense" as a sort of triptych whose lateral wings form one coherent space (Fig. 164). In the Cornaro chapel the context was also a gathering of souls, deceased members of the donor's family, united in a kind of disputation of the sacramental event depicted in the central altarpiece, the Ecstasy of St. Teresa, and enacted at the altar. Viewed thus, the perspective "resolution" of the space of the piazza at St. Peter's stands in a long tradition, especially of sacrament tabernacles and altars, in which the satisfying sense of "truth" mysteriously evinced by perspective had become a metaphor for the mystical coincidence of opposites embodied in the Eucharist itself.[65]

154. Bernini, nave decorations, St. Peter's, Rome



155. Bernini, nave spandrels, Niccolò Menghini, allegories of Virginity and Obedience. St. Peter's, Rome



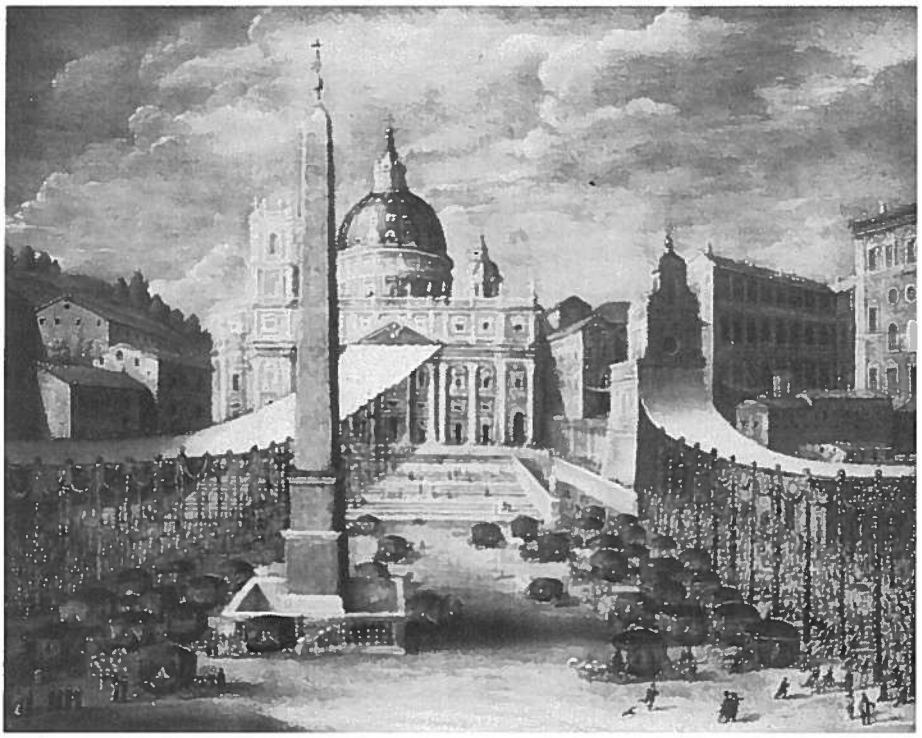
156. Bernini, Piazza S. Pietro. Rome

157. Bernini, Colonnade, north arm. St. Peter's, Rome

158. Bernini, Colonnade, north arm. St. Peter's, Rome

One of the most impressive, and unexpected, features of the piazza is the simple sobriety of the colonnades' Doric order, which has surprised observers who expect a more "Baroque," that is, more elaborate treatment, especially from Bernini. The Doric is of course the Greek order par excellence, and one of the most perspicacious students of Bernini, Rudolph Wittkower, made the trenchant observation that "No other Italian structure of the post-Renaissance period shows an equally deep affinity with Greece."[66] Part of the motivation for the relatively low and understated design of the colonnades was to magnify by contrast (*contrapposto*) the height and magnificence of the facade, bereft of the intended bell towers. With respect to the Corinthian order of the facade, the juxtaposition conformed to the traditional increase in elaboration with the superimposition of orders, most famously exemplified in the Colosseum (Fig. 165). The juxtaposition made social and ideological sense in that the gravity of the Doric resonated with the piazza's solemn function at Corpus Domini, whose ritual discipline Alexander had greatly augmented at the outset of his reign, and for the common masses of the faithful gathered there to receive the pope's public ministrations. No less important, however, was the resonance Bernini's Doric order created with what was in fact the most

159. Bernini, Colonnade, north arm. St. Peter's, Rome

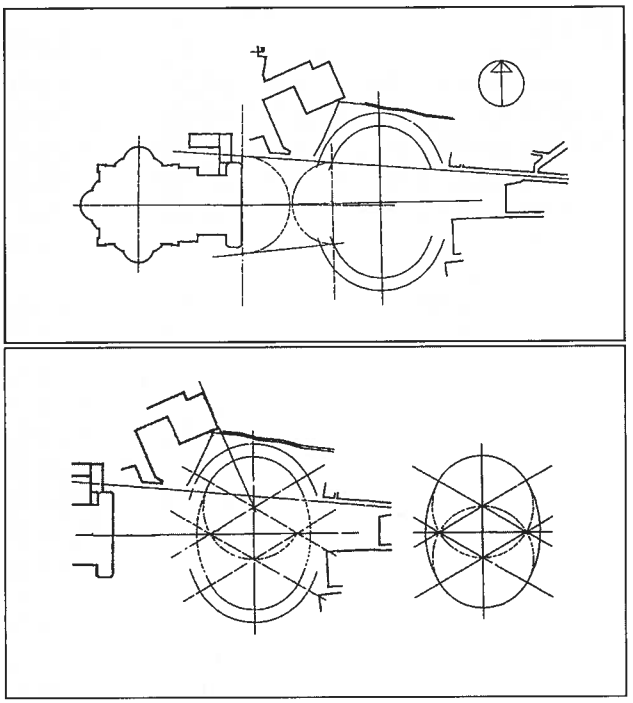


160. Anonymous, Corpus Domini procession, ca. 1640. Museo di Palazzo Venezia, Rome

important Petrine building in Rome besides the papal basilica, the famous circular and domed *tempietto*, ringed by antique columns, designed in the early sixteenth century by Bramante to mark the actual spot of Peter's martyrdom (see Fig. 264). Bernini had paid specific homage to this martyrial tradition in certain sketches for the Baldacchino, where the upside-down cross of St. Peter appears atop the crown, along with the cross of Golgotha. The relationship between the two buildings had already been articulated by Bramante in the cupola of his project for New St. Peter's, and the analogy was retained in the basic configuration of the dome as built. As we shall see, Bernini conceived of the semicircular arms of the colonnade as the arms of St. Peter embracing the faithful, his head surmounted by the tiara crown as dome.

Bernini's colonnades are extraordinary – more Greek than the Greeks, one might say – in that they eschew an important decorative element, the frieze of triglyphs, of the traditional Doric order. In this form the porticoes clearly coopt the similarly bare first-story order of the Colosseum, the ancient structure whose oval shape the piazza most clearly echoes. The adoption was singularly appropriate as a solemn, even melancholic, reference to the ancient building's service as the "theater" of death for the early Christians who were martyred there – to be resurrected in the cordon of saints whose statues ring the piazza as a triumphal legion of honor guarding the entrance to St. Peter's. The association was given a personal reference in a medal designed by Bernini likening the pope's salvific efforts during the plague to the victory of Androcles over the obeisant lion in the amphitheater (Fig. 232).

Wittkower's recollection of Greece, however, may have had more substance than he imagined. The allusion suggests an added dimension to the imperious or bucolic "classicisms" Bernini adopted in other contexts at St. Peter's. The Doric here becomes a kind of common or everyman's visual *modus orandi* whose pristine simplicity and moral rectitude evoke the early Attic style that many ancient rhetoricians sought to retrieve.[67] An analogous association was imbued in the design of the colonnades themselves, with three aisles that provided the sacramental papal procession with a central, covered passageway also protected at the sides. This structure was sanctioned by an elaborate study of the literary evidence concerning ancient colonnades carried out by one of the leading scholars of the day, Lucas Holstein.[68] The study concluded that triple porticoes, called chalcidicae from Chalcis in Euboea, were common in the ancient cities of the Greek world, a happy coincidence in view of the fact that Alexander VII, through his namesake, had many associations with the Hellenic tradition. The sources are unclear as to what form the "triple portico" took, but neither they nor the preserved examples suggest that the central passage of the ancient avenues, which were flanked by covered porticoes, was itself covered;[69] Bernini's smooth annular vault here is again adapted from the Colosseum (Fig. 166). No less important than this invocation of an *imagined* classical



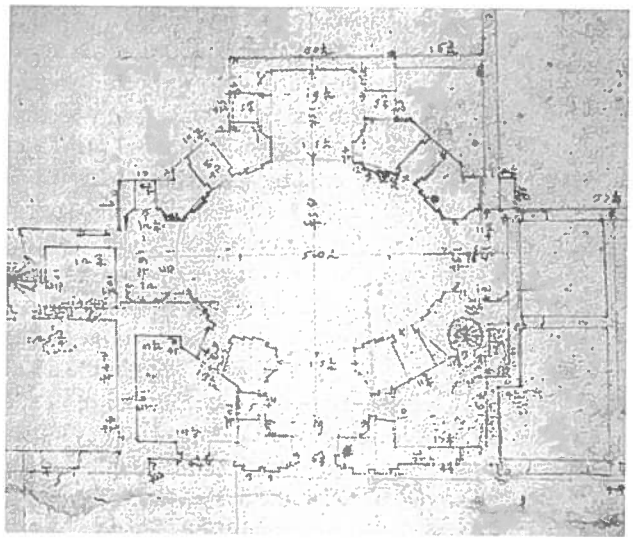
161. Determination of the *Piazze Retta* and *Obliqua*. After Birindelli 1981, 80, 82

precedent is the occurrence of the same term in the Old Testament, in no less significant a place than the prophet Ezekiel's account of the courtyard of the Temple of God, where he says there was a "porticus iuncta porticui triplici" (Ezek. 42:3).[70] In one of the most compendious and popular postmedieval allegorizations of scripture, Hieronymus Lauretus's *Silva allegoriarum*, first published at Barcelona in 1570 and reissued many times thereafter, the triple portico might designate the mystery of the Trinity: "Porticus atriorum templi, & praecipuè porticus triplex, mysterium sanctae Trinitatis designare possunt."[71] So far as I can discover, Bernini's quadruple colonnades comprising three covered passages were without precedent in antiquity. The motif constitutes a brilliant architectural neologism that melds classical and biblical references, and so embodies the fundamental concept of Christianity's historical role, proclaimed from the outset by the Fathers of the Church, as the *Ecclesia ex circumcisione* and *ex gentibus*, incorporating and superseding its predecessors.

Two species of appropriation and supersession are represented by the architecture of the facades and cross section of the porticoes (Fig. 167). The stepped, pedimented entrances with horizontal entablatures appropriately recall in simplified form the temple front design of the Lateran sacrament altar (Fig. 121). Within the colonnades, the raised semi-circular vault with flat wings refers to one of the most conspicuous of Renaissance architectural motifs, the so-called Serliana (derived from antiquity and popularized by the sixteenth-century architect Sebastiano Serlio). At St. Peter's the adaptation consisted essentially in the convergence of two important traditional contexts with which the motif was closely associated. One of these was the ancient triumphal *fastigium* in which the Serliana, covered by a pediment, served as a kind of proscenium or frame for the appearance or passage of the emperor. The most famous *fastigium* of antiquity had already been baptized, as it were, by the emperor Constantine himself, who erected a huge structure of this kind in the Lateran.[72] Conceived as a frame in depth, as it were, the Serliana had an "extended" life in the form of a vaulted, three-aisled passageway. Bernini used the motif in the lateral reliefs of the Cornaro chapel and, as a continuation of the piazza porticoes through the entrance to the Vatican itself, in the Scala Regia (Figs. 163, 178). In this form the design might be described as at once celebratory and transitional – a triumphal corridor for the procession that also defines the piazza, in which the perspectival resolution from the vanishing points of the two arms of the colonnade comprises the universal embrace of the Corpus Domini.

Another feature that distinguishes the porticoes at St. Peter's are the statues of saints that surmount the balustrades. The image they create provides a celestial counterpart to the army of secular heroes who celebrate the Roman imperium on the balustrades of the palaces of the Campidoglio, site of the ancient Temple of Jove and seat of the modern city government.[73] Although there was no classical precedent for this arrangement in a portico, colonnades surmounted by statues were shown in a reconstruction of the ancient Capitoline published in 1648, surely an important model for Bernini (Fig. 168). Such figures seen atop a colonnade conveyed an additional sense that may have been a factor in the pope's extravagant insistence that the colonnades stand alone with no structure above them. In this way, the statues appear not simply to crown the balustrades but to stand directly on the columns, and so they are described in the contemporary sources. The sculptures were seen not only as a horizontal ring but as an alignment of triumphal columns, the most common form of imperial Roman honorific commemoration. The arrangement created a veritable legion of Christian heroes, joined together by faith, to replace the military heroes celebrated by statues placed on isolated columns in antiquity. A contemporary writer actually described the Corpus Domini procession at St. Peter's as the successor to the triumphal processions of the ancient imperators to the temple of the Capitoline Jove. Bernini gave form to this idea.

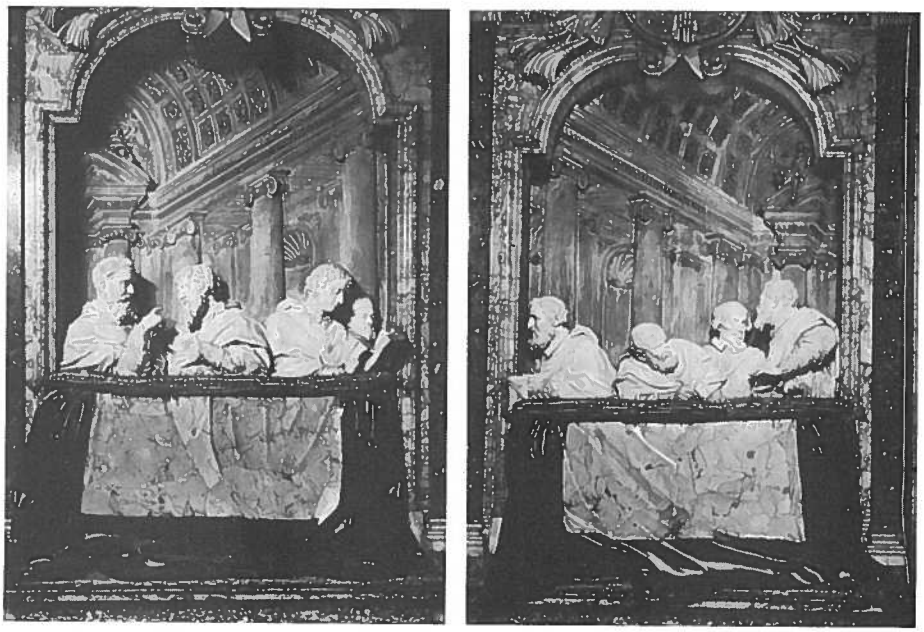
In a powerful explanation of the project Bernini gave his own definition of the basic theme that animated his conception of the colonnades, which he described as the arms of the mother church embracing all the world, including nonbelievers: "The church of St. Peter, being



162. Francesco Borromini, plan of Palazzo di Propaganda Fide showing Bernini's chapel of the Re Magi, drawing, detail. Albertina, Vienna

virtually the mother of all the others, had to have a portico that would in fact appear to maternally receive with open arms Catholics to be confirmed in faith, heretics to be reunited with the Church, and unbelievers to be enlightened by the true faith."[74] He even drew a sketch in which this "open-arms" metaphor is transferred to St. Peter's represented as pope wearing the tiara (Fig. 169). The idea in fact had ancient roots, referring in the first instance to a classical anthropology of architecture – vigorously revived in the humanistic tradition of the Renaissance – in which the harmonious relationships among the parts of the central-plan building were correlated with the ideal proportions of the human body, the so-called Vitruvian Man, whose extended arms and legs touched the perimeter of a circle centered at the navel. In the Christian tradition the metaphor's most familiar application was in the definition of the cruciform basilica as the image of Christ on the cross. Like the architectural forms themselves, the concepts were complementary – one man-focused, the other God-focused – but reconcilable only with difficulty; and both were based on essentially static, symbolic images. Bernini's conception of the relationship between the church of St. Peter's and the colonnaded piazza fused these themes, the ecclesiology of the basilica and the universality of the central plan, with a third: the institutional image of the church as Mater Ecclesia. Through this combination he created a new, dynamic metaphor for Christianity's universal embrace. Bernini's sketch of this idea – in itself a startling fusion of concept, elevation, ground plan, and bird's-eye view – concerned the preferred placement of a projected but never executed pavilion, appropriately called the Terzo Braccio, the third arm, at the entrance to the piazza. The purpose of the structure was at once conceptual and visual: it provided the optimum viewpoint from which to grasp the shape and space of the entire square, and hence its universal meaning. The difference from the preceding traditions is that Bernini's metaphor involves not only the static ground plan but the elevation as well, and conceives of the church and the piazza together as a unified whole, not a passive receptacle but a living organism acting on behalf of mankind.

A further unexpected but sharply illuminating insight into the kind of thinking that underlay the project is provided by the four explicative inscriptions, composed by the pope himself. They were placed at the outer and inner extremities of the arms of the colonnades, the latter pair



163. Bernini, Chapel of St. Teresa, lateral walls, members of the Cornaro family. S. Maria della Vittoria, Rome

164. Bernini, Chapel of St. Teresa, view of altar with "converging" perspectives. S. Maria della Vittoria, Rome

at the junctures between the colonnades and the corners of the *piazza retta*. Except for the one at the southeast entrance, which records the completion of the work in 1661, the texts combine passages from scripture in such a way as to define the nature and meaning of the structure, and address the viewer, exhorting him, in effect, to follow the pope's example. The texts are all from the Old Testament, as if to demonstrate the fulfillment of their auguries in the New. The inscription at the northeast entrance states the practical function of the colonnades, but in terms that express their higher import through the prophet Isaiah's description of the tabernacle/umbrella in the Kingdom of God: IN UMBRACULUM DIEI AB AESTU IN SECURITATEM A TURBINE ET A PLUVIA (Isa. 4:6: "et tabernaculum erit in umbraculum diei ab aestu et in securitatem et absconsionem a turbine et a pluvia." [And there shall be a tabernacle for a shade in the daytime from the heat, and for a security and for a covert from the whirlwind, and from rain; Douay-Rheims]). At the southeast entrance is the dedication: ALEXANDER VII PONTIFEX MAXIMUS A FUNDAMENTIS EXTRUX[IT] ANNO SALVAT[ION]IS MDCLXI. The inscriptions at the corners conflate Old Testament phrases in praise of God into prescriptions that evoke the Corpus Domini procession and the Eucharistic worship it celebrated. That on the northwest invokes the procession and worship in the church: VENITE ASCENDAMUS IN MONTEM DOMINI ADOREMUS IN TEMPLO SANCTO EIUS (Come, let us ascend the mount of God, let us worship in his holy temple). The text combines Isaiah 2:3, "et ibunt populi multi et dicent venite et ascendamus ad montem Domini" (And many people shall go, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD), with Psalm 137:2, "adorabo ad templum sanctum tuum et confitebor nomini tuo super misericordia tua et veritate tua quoniam magnificasti super omne nomen sanctum tuum" (I will worship toward thy holy temple, and I will give glory to thy name. For thy mercy, and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy holy name above all). The mountain alludes to the Temple on the Mount in Jerusalem, to the Mons Vaticanus where St. Peter's and the Vatican are located, and to the mountains that form part of the arms of the Chigi family. At the southwest: VENITE PROCIDAMUS ANTE DEUM/IN TEMPLO SANCTO EIUS ET NOMEN DOMINI INVOCEMUS (Come, let us bow down before God in his holy temple, and let us invoke his name), combining Psalm 94:6, "venite adoremus et procidamus et ploremus ante Dominum qui fecit nos" (Come let us adore and fall down: and weep before

165. Colosseum, Rome

the Lord that makes us) with Psalm 114:4, "et nomen Domini invocavi o Domine libera animam meam" (and I called upon the name of the Lord. O Lord, deliver my soul).

The genesis and meaning of the entire project were subsequently distilled into a medal issued in 1664 in commemoration of that extraordinary innovation, to celebrate the decennalia, or decadal anniversary of the pope's election (Fig. 170).[75] The image chosen for the occasion, Alexander kneeling in the Corpus Domini procession, is a measure of the importance attached to the event and the pope's extraordinary innovation. The motto, "Prodicamus et adoremus in spiritu et veritate" (Let us kneel and adore in spirit and in truth), is again an ingenious amalgam of two scriptural passages, one from the Old Testament, the other from the New, which encapsulate the essence of the Corpus Domini devotion. The first part comprises David's exhortation to praise God in Psalm 94:6, the same text used in the southwest colonnade inscription. The second part repeats John's prescription for the inward disposition required of those who worship God, "God is a Spirit; and they who adore him, must adore him in spirit and in truth" ("Spiritus est Deus, et eos, qui adorant eum, in spiritu et veritate oportet adorare"; John 4:24). Together the passages describe the inward and outward expression of devotion proper to the Eucharist. The kneeling, immobile attitude of prayer had long been the canonical mode of devotion

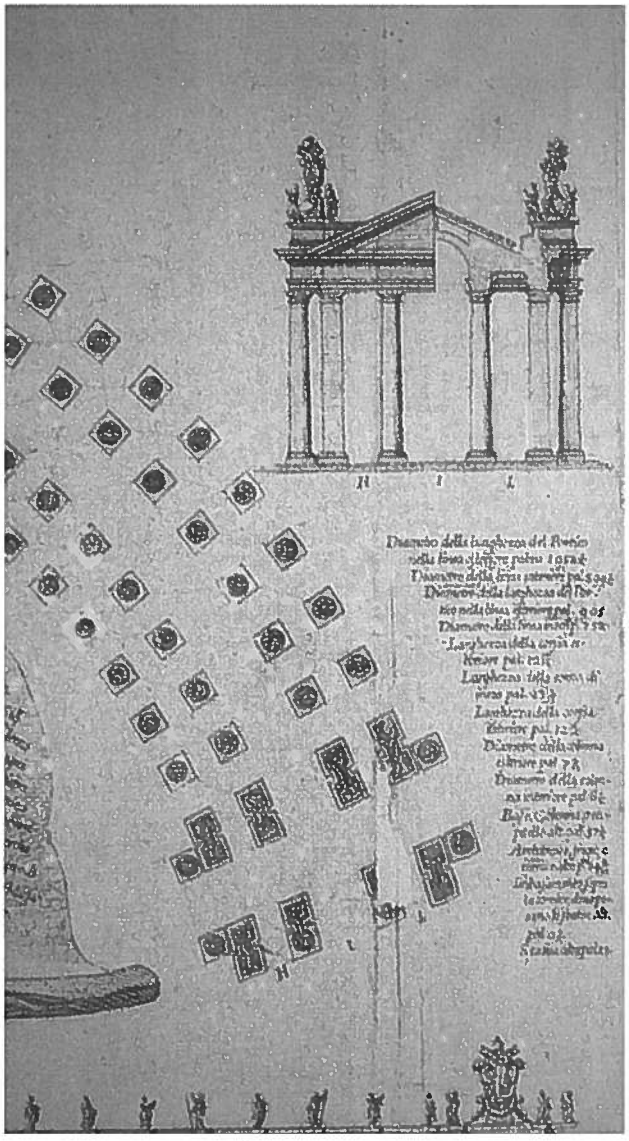
to the Eucharist – perpetual adoration was, as we shall see, the highest calling of the angels in heaven – but introducing it into the Corpus Domini celebration served to transform both traditions: the Eucharistic devotion was given a dynamic movement and an all-embracing scope, and the traditional procession of exultant triumph was enshrined, as it were, in a powerful sign of humble public worship, specifically associated with the Eucharist. The medal and its inscription have another sense as well. The Catholic understanding of the Eucharist, or rather the nature of the Eucharistic sacrifice in the mass, was one of the major targets of the Protestant reformers and had been emphatically reaffirmed at the Council of Trent. The council specifically imposed the Corpus Domini procession as a public demonstration of belief in the truth of the Eucharist, which would overcome and, it was hoped, convert the enemies of the church.[76] Alexander's innovative inaugural procession and Bernini's welcoming piazza and colonnades gave new form to the new spirit that inspired the quintessential tenet of the church and its claim to universality.

Commemoration

CATHEDRA PETRI (1657–66) *(Figs. 171, 172, 173)*

Contemporary and planned in concert with the piazza was the decision finally to resolve the problem of the choir of St. Peter's – foreseen "providentially" by Annibale Carracci at the beginning of Bernini's career. The solution was found in an idea that would celebrate, liturgically and visually, the legitimacy and authority of the Church as a divinely ordained institution. This claim was

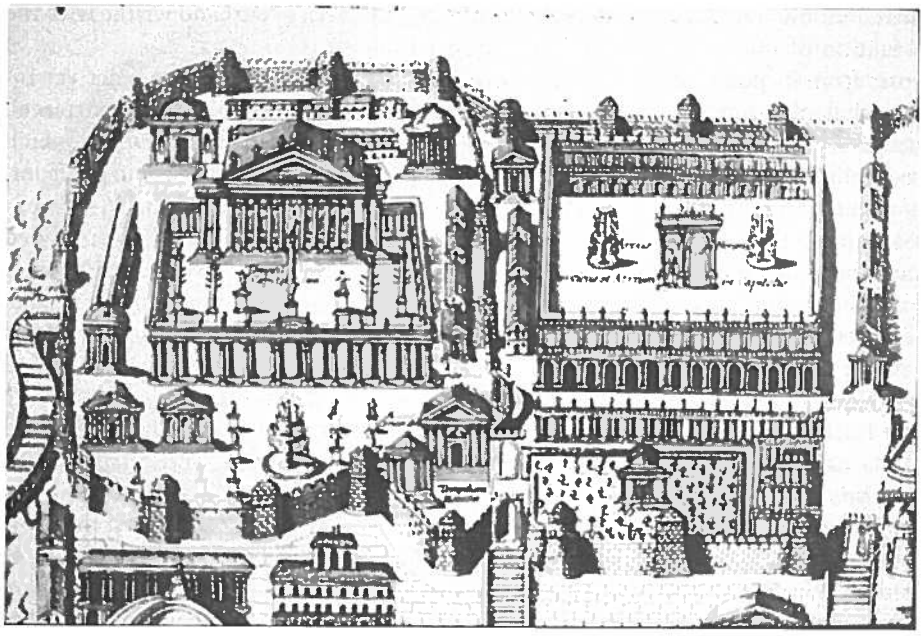
166. Jean Grandjean, Annular vault of the Colosseum, 1781, watercolor (after Luciani 1993, 24)



167. Giovanni Battista Bonacina, plan of Piazza S. Pietro with facade and cross section of portico arms, engraving, detail. Archivio Chigi 25.27.4, Vatican Library, Rome

vested in the form and concept of the cathedra, the chair or throne of office, from ancient times the symbol of legitimate supreme authority, conveyed to Peter by Christ along with the responsibility to "feed my sheep." Understanding the piazza colonnades and the Cathedra Petri as simultaneous and interrelated projects provides a fundamental insight into the overall planning for St. Peter's under Alexander VII, most specifically the correspondence and reciprocity between the projected entrance pavilion, the Terzo Braccio, and the cathedra at opposite ends of the axis. Although never executed, the Terzo Braccio was a critical element in the design because it provided a sort of triumphal arch – an *arcus quadrifrons* in classical terms, since one passed through it in four directions – between the enfolding arms, both revealing and screening the space of the piazza. As Bernini's project evolved, he shifted the structure to the east, beyond the perimeter of the arc of the colonnades; here it provided a kind of vestibule, or viewing space from which the "teatro" (the contemporary term for the piazza, better translated in this case as "totality" than as "theater") could be grasped and contemplated. During his visit to Paris in 1665, while work on the piazza was in progress, Bernini recommended just such a viewing area in a critique of purely round buildings, where the visitor tends to move inward without perceiving the whole: "... it would be a good thing to create a small space projecting from a completely round church, for on entering one usually takes six or seven steps and so is prevented from appreciating the circular form."[77] This imperative sense of perceiving the whole had a truly numinous quality for Bernini, which he expressed in describing his own feeling about viewing the interior of his transverse oval church of S. Andrea al Quirinale, designed at precisely this period. His son recalled his response upon finding him withdrawn in a corner of the church and asking him what he was doing there, so alone and quiet: "Son, this is my only work in architecture that gives me some particular pleasure at the bottom of my heart, and I often come here to find consolation with my work."[78] In the context of St. Peter's it is important to realize that the force of movement is inward from both extremities: the visitor entering from the city feels the piazza's embrace and is then drawn forward into the building to meet, in the frame of the high altar, the light of the Holy Spirit pouring toward him from the apsidal window above the throne of Christ's vicar.[79]

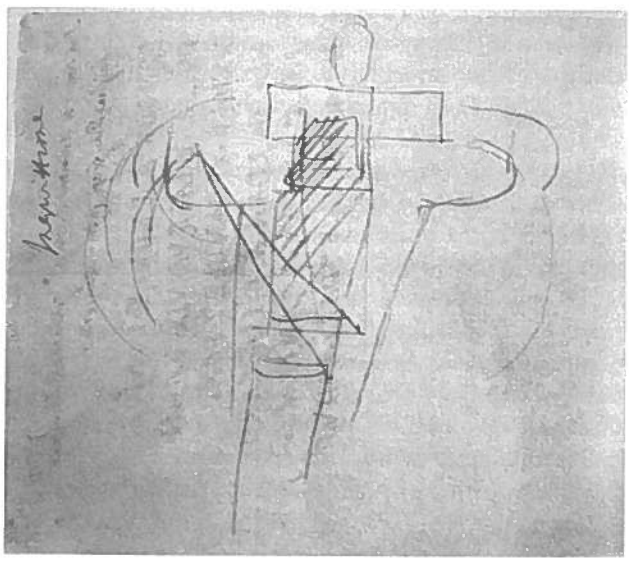
The relationship was articulated in the inscriptions on the medals (Figs. 174, 175) issued by the pope to commemorate the twin projects, piazza and cathedra, both of which texts include the same metaphor relating Saint Peter the man to St. Peter's the building, and to the church which Christ built on that rock. The 1657 foundation medal of the colonnade quoted Psalm 86:1, FUNDAMENTA EIUS IN MONTIBUS SANCTIS ("the foundations thereof are in the holy mountains"), anticipating the allusions that would appear in the portico inscriptions.[80] A 1662 medal of the cathedra is inscribed PRIMA SEDES, FIDEI REGULA, ECCLESIAE FUNDAMENTUM ("first seat, the rule of faith, foundation of the Church"). The words epitomize the major headings under which the papacy laid claim to the leadership of the Christian world: as the successor to the person first designated by Christ himself in his charge to Peter; as the arbiter of Christian belief, to whom Christ conveyed the power to bind and to loosen; and as the foundation on which the institutional Church was based. Whereas the Corpus Domini was a relatively modern feast of the Church, that of the Cathedra Petri (22 February), known from the mid-fourth



168. Reconstruction of ancient Capitol. Donato 1648, 108

century, was one of the oldest. Originally celebrating the concession by the emperor to the pope of the power to rule, the feast had from the beginning the imprint of imperial – that is, universal – authority. The long neglected commemoration was revived in 1588 by Paul IV with a bull that specifically stated the motivation: to confute the heretical Protestants who, following the schismatic eastern church, challenged the authority of the papacy, even denying that Peter had ever visited Rome.[81] The quasi-Trinitarian formulation of the medal was derived from the definition of the feast of St. Peter's chair in the Golden Legend, the great, omnipresent compilation of church tradition concerning the liturgical calendar composed in the thirteenth century by Jacobus of Voragine. For the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter, Jacobus gives a threefold significance: the chair of regal dignity, the chair of priestly dignity, and the chair of the teacher. These same domains are defined in the medallic inscription: Peter as the Prince of the Apostles (*prima sedes*), to whom Christ conveyed the keys to heaven and power to loose and bind (*fidei ragula*) and on whom He would build his church (*fundamentum ecclesiae*). And the three functions are illustrated in the reliefs that decorate the front and sides of Bernini's Cathedra Petri: "Feed my Sheep," Christ's charge to Peter Prince of the Apostles, as his earthly vicar; "Christ Giving the Keys to Heaven to Peter" as arbiter of the faith by which the gates will be opened or closed; and "Christ Washing the Feet of His Disciples," in the first instance Peter's, as Jesus' own example of the love and humility that would be expected of Peter in attending his flock.

The artifact symbol was preserved at St. Peter's in the form of the very chair Peter was supposed to have used. Although on an unprecedented scale, the throne Bernini designed to contain the relic belongs in a long tradition of reliquaries that take the shape of the objects they contain. In the ninth century, the original plain oak chair had been decorated with antique ivory tablets, and by adding rings through which staves could be passed, it was altered into a *sedia gestatoria* on which the pope could be carried in procession.[82] Honorific levitation, so to speak, was thus an integral part of the significance as well as the very fabric of the chair. Bernini substituted the Fathers of the Church for the traditional "sediari" who



169. Bernini, St. Peter's with the colonnades as embracing arms, drawing. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

carried it in procession, and his colossal monument thus became an embodiment and perpetuation of the motivating power of the Holy Spirit. Apart from its punning reference to Peter's chair, Bernini's spectacular conception deliberately calls to mind one particular instance in which a reliquary-like, shaped container served as a monumental, sculptured altarpiece. This unmistakable precedent is the tabernacle of the Sacrament that forms the centerpiece of the mortuary chapel built by Sixtus V in S. Maria Maggiore at the end of the sixteenth century, to house his tomb and that of his predecessor, Pius V (see Fig. 120). Here four over-life-size angels are shown carrying a domed, centrally planned structure symbolic of the Holy Sepulcher as the locus of the Eucharist. The angels bear their burden effortlessly, on a single, delicately raised hand – as if in response to Christ's own exhortation to the faithful to "Take up my yoke upon you.... For my yoke is sweet and my burden light" (Matt. 11:29–30, "Tollite iugum meum super vos... iugum enim meum suave est et onus meum leve est"). Bernini's cathedra makes essentially the same point, transmitting Christ's mystical injunction to the faithful through his successor.

Bernini also imbued the ritual of the feast with new meaning by giving form to the words of Psalm 106:32, in which the church as an institution and the chair as an emblem of the transfer of power were linked in a prophetic act of exaltation: "Let them exalt him in the church of the people and praise him in the chair of the ancients"("Exaltent eum in ecclesia plebis: et in cathedra seniorum laudent eum"). Those who exalt the chair are the Fathers of the eastern and western churches, who thus express the all-embracing ecumenism that underlies Bernini's works for Alexander at St. Peter's. The importance of this verse may explain the pride of place given to Saint Augustine at the right side of the altar. Augustine's comment on the passage in his sermon on the feast of the Cathedra Petri is recited in the lessons of that day: "In this way the Lord names Peter as the foundation of the Church, and so the Church rightly celebrates this foundation on which the whole lofty structure rises up. And it is fitting that the Psalm verse read today says, 'Let them exalt him in the church of the people and praise him in the chair of the elders.' Blessed be God, who commanded St. Peter the Apostle to be exalted in the Church; for it is right that in the Church this foundation should be honored by which she rises up to heaven."[83] There could hardly be a more apt commentary on Bernini's monument, which embodies the dual import of Augustine's understanding of the relationship between the chair and the church. The Fathers are shown as if they were supporting the chair ("Let them exalt him..."), but in fact it is carried aloft by some higher power ("God who commanded St. Peter... to be exalted..."), which animates them and their massive yet turbulent drapery through the intervening ribbons that seem to curl and writhe with the power they transmit.

The Cathedra Petri consists of four distinct yet interconnected elements: the altar proper; the "altarpiece" in the form of the chair; a concave platform on which stand four Doctors of the Church, two Latin in the front, Ambrose and Augustine, two Greek at the back, Athanasius and John Chrysostom; on the rear wall in gilded stucco a glory of the heavenly hierarchy that explodes into the space of the apse, clouds cascading down behind the chair; and, in the center, the window with the dove of the Holy Spirit, which was not originally stained glass but painted in oil on glass, surrounded by "molte teste di serafini." The curved platform, unprecedented for an altarpiece with free-standing sculptures, permitted Bernini to create an astonishingly subtle illusion that the two rear figures are some distance behind (as if the chair were square in plan), and that all four figures are complete and "in-the-round." In Bernini's vision the Holy Spirit passes through the rear wall and expands as it descends to fill the apse of the church, ultimately to include the high altar framed by the Baldacchino and the distant viewer in its exultant embrace (see Fig. 110). The essential point of the ideology of the Cathedra Petri is the singularity and unity of the Church under the papacy; reflecting this ecumenical theme, the gospel reading of the papal mass for the Feast of the Chair is recited in both Latin and Greek.[84] This is also the central point of Bernini's monument. The conceptual unity is conveyed by the Latin and Greek Doctors of the Church whose doctrines, under the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit, are literally tied to Peter's throne. The unity is conveyed visually in the indissoluble fusion between two distinct apparitions, those of the miraculously suspended brazen chair to which its inspired acolytes are conjoined and the luminous infiltration of the Holy Spirit. The fusion is mediated by the implosion of the gilded stucco "Gloria" whose radiant beams shed the fiery light of the heavenly hierarchy from seraphs, to cherubs, to angels.[85] The spiritual progression from the divine will to its earthly manifestation has its visual and physical analogue in an imperceptible progression from two-dimensional, translucent polychromy, representing the pure spirit, through progressively "lower" and increasingly three-dimensional orders of reality, to reach, ultimately, our own. The conversion of the preexistent window into the luminescent Holy Spirit was a perfect instance of Bernini's definition of architectural merit: to make obstacles seem deliberately invented.[86]

Viewed in this light, the Cathedra Petri repeats in its own way the expansive, outward reach and all-encompassing unity that was the primary conceit of the Piazza S. Pietro, where in Bernini's mind the dome became the head, the facade the chest and shoulders, and the colonnades the embracing arms of the mother church

170. Decennial medal showing Alexander VII kneeling as in the Corpus Domini procession of 1655, 1664. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

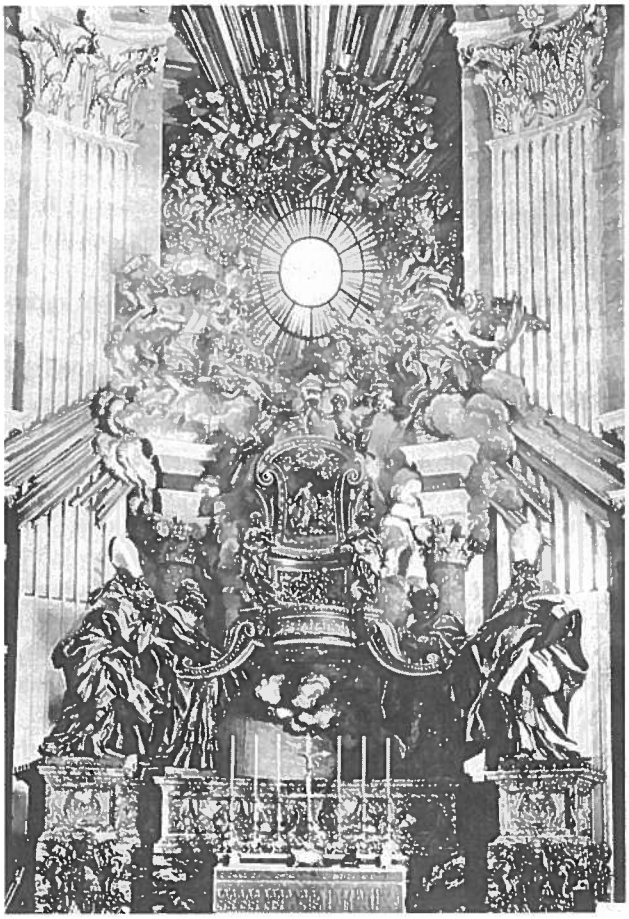
(see Fig. 169). The viewer is enclosed in an arena of space in which the distinction between fiction and reality is almost imperceptibly bridged, and from which the ultimate focus is inward in a kind of existential self-reflection on the meaning of the experience.

THE CONSTANTINE AND SCALA REGIA (1662–70) *(Figs. 176, 177, 178, 179)*

Innocent X had planned in 1654 to include in a side aisle of the new building a monument to the emperor Constantine the Great, as a counterpart to that installed by Urban VIII for the church's great medieval benefactress, Matilda of Tuscany (see Fig. 152). A completely new idea emerged when the project was taken up by Alexander VII as part of his ambitious plans for completing the new church inside and out. In this context Constantine would be commemorated for decreeing the recognition of the new faith as the state religion of the empire, and for building the original basilica dedicated to Christ's vicar. By these acts (and the fabled Donation of Constantine), the first Christian emperor established the Church's claim to terrestrial universality. It might be said, juridically speaking, that Constantine initiated the kingdom of God on earth. The intention from the outset was for an equestrian figure, in antiquity the imperial honorific portrait form par excellence, indeed the exclusive prerogative of the emperor. The intention must have been to create at St. Peter's a counterpart to the ancient equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius that Michelangelo had erected at the secular center of the city atop the Capitoline hill. Throughout the Middle Ages the famous sculpture had stood at the Lateran, mistakenly identified as Constantine. Ancient honorific equestrian portraits, apart from tombs, were almost by definition independent, free-standing monuments. Only during the Middle Ages did there develop what might be called a specifically architectural equestrian tradition in Italy, mostly in relief, and notably for placement on the facades of palaces (where they portrayed the noble owner) and churches (where they were often thought to represent Constantine).[87] By virtue of its design and location, the monument to Constantine comprises all these traditions. Alexander's and Bernini's new building scheme created a crucial juncture between the corridor from the north colonnade, the portico of the basilica extended by a vestibule, and a grandiose stairway built by Bernini, the Scala Regia, connecting with the Vatican palace. The location of the image here was not merely "strategic," to proffer an example to those passing between the church, the palace, and the city; the position at this topographical turning point also marked Constantine's historical role at the intersection between the public, the private, and the spiritual domains of Christianity.

The monument was equally unprecedented in the subject it represented. In the classical tradition, equestrian portraits depicted prototypical acts of imperial majesty, the emperor addressing his troops or spearing an enemy.[88] To portray a specific historical event was unheard of. Bernini's monument, by contrast, embodies the very turning point of Constantine's life, an instant when the emperor was himself subjected to a superior power. The origin of Constantine's devotion to Christianity was a famous vision of the Cross that inspired his great victory over his rival Maxentius and led him to adopt the new religion. In the Golden Legend, for the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross, Jacobus da Voragine frankly, but with some embarrassment, gives two radically different accounts of the event. In one version, the vision occurs at night, on the eve of a crucial battle with barbarians on the bank of the Danube.

> At that time an innumerable horde of barbarians was massing on the bank of the Danube, making ready to cross the river, in order to subjugate the entire West. At these tidings, the Emperor Constantine marched forth with his army, and camped on the other bank of the Danube. But when the number of the barbarians continued to increase, and they began to make their way across the river, Constantine was filled with fear at the thought of the battle which he had to undertake. But in the night an angel awoke him, and told him to lift up his head. And Constantine saw in the heavens the image of a cross described in shining light; and above the image was written in letters of gold the legend: "In this sign shalt thou conquer!" Taking heart at the heavenly



171. Bernini, Cathedra Petri, St. Peter's, Rome

> vision, he had a wooden cross made, and commended that it be carried in the van of his army; and then, falling upon the enemy, he cut them to pieces or put them to flight.

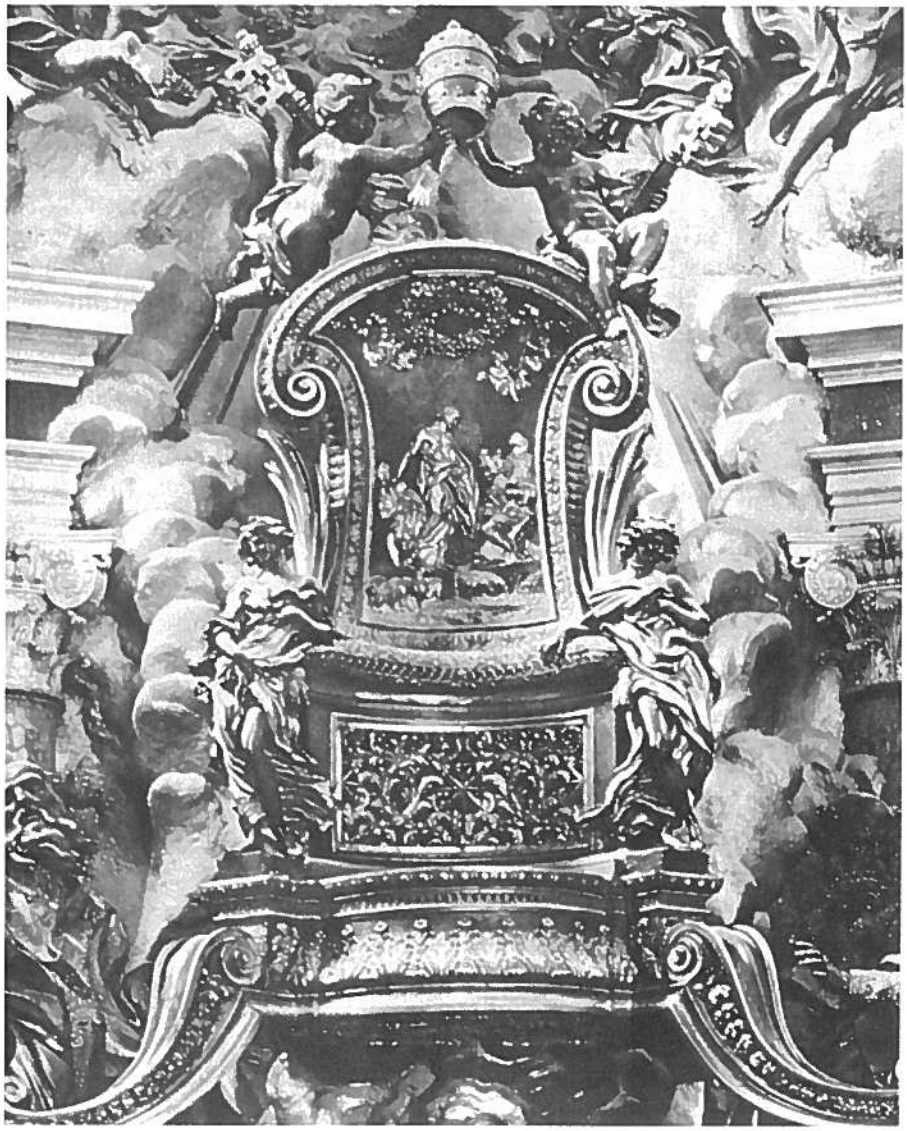
In the second version, for which Jacobus cites Constantine's biographer, Eusebius of Caesarea, the vision takes place on the day before the confrontation with Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge over the Tiber near Rome.

> The *Ecclesiastical History* [actually Eusebius's *Life of Constantine*] gives a different account of the victory of Constantine. It tells us that the battle took place near the Pontus Albinus, where Constantine encountered Maxentius, who was attempting to invade the Roman Empire. And when the care-laden emperor raised his eyes to Heaven to plead for succour, he saw in the eastern sky the gleaming sign of the cross, surrounded by angels who said to him: "Constantine, in this sign shalt thou conquer!" And as Constantine was wondering what this meant, Christ appeared to him during the night, with the same sign, and ordered him to have an image made of it, which would aid him in battle. The emperor, now assured of victory, made the sign of the cross upon his forehead, and took a gold cross in his hand.... And Maxentius, when he was about to cross the river, forgot that he had caused the bridges to be undermined in order to draw Constantine to destruction; and he started to pass over a bridge which had been sapped, and was drowned in the river.[89]

Eusebius himself reports that the vision took place at noon and was repeated to Constantine in a dream that night, before the encounter with Maxentius:

> [Constantine] said that about noon, when the day was already beginning to decline, he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens above the sun, and bearing the inscription, CONQUER BY THIS. At this sight he himself was struck with amazement, and his whole army also, which followed him on this expedition, and witnessed the miracle. He said, moreover, that he doubted within himself what the import of this apparition could be. And while he continued to ponder and reason on its meaning, night suddenly came on; then in his sleep the Christ of God appeared to him with the same sign which he had seen in the heavens, and commanded him to make a likeness of that sign which he had seen in the heavens, and to use it as a safeguard in all engagements with his enemies.[90]

The common denominator among these accounts, the sign of the Cross and the words that appeared with it, became the talismans of Constantine's victory and conversion. The sources, however, elicited two different ways of illustrating the vision. It might be depicted as a solitary event, experienced at night, with the emperor in bed. More frequently, the vision was depicted taking place in daylight, with the emperor peering at the luminous apparition in the sky and sometimes standing and haranguing his troops to carry the sign of the Cross, the first official, public declaration of the new faith (Fig. 180). Alternatively, Constantine might appear on horseback amid his army preparing to do battle in the first Christian military victory (Fig. 181). When mounted, his steed was portrayed in the walking gait proper to the imperial *adventus*, or triumphal entry. Another mode of representing the event developed in Byzantium, especially in psalter illustration, which was of great importance for Bernini: there he found the miracle isolated and distilled into a sort of icon. The vision (a disk inscribed with the Cross) and the military encounter were conflated and reduced to a single, composite action, with the victory conceived as a personal triumph of the emperor in combat – although the essential point of the story according to Eusebius was that, confronted by the Cross displayed by Constantine, Maxentius was defeated by his own guile, and no battle took place. The emperor was shown



172. Bernini, Cathedra Petri, detail. St. Peter's, Rome

charging forward on a rearing horse to dispatch the enemy with his spear, beneath the emblematic vision appearing in the sky (Fig. 182, where, significantly, the vision is represented as a shield). The motive for this deliberately ahistorical presentation was clearly its use in the Psalter, where it invoked the divine auspices for the military exploits of the Byzantine emperors, who considered themselves Constantine's successors. The subject illustrates a passage in Psalm 59:6–7, in which God's intervention is sought against the enemies of Israel: "Thou hast given a sign for those who fear thee, that they may flee from before the bow. Save me with thy right hand, and hear me" ("Dedisti metuentibus te significationem ut fugiant a facie arcus ut liberentur dilecti tui. Salvum fac dextera tua et exaudi me").[91] Because the church established under Constantine, who founded the Greek Orthodox capital, was universal, reference at St. Peter's and the Vatican to such an authentically Greek visualization of the critical event implicitly suggested the essential unity of Eastern and Western Christianity. It is symptomatic of Bernini's thought, I believe, that even closer to his concept are certain related illustrations in the Greek psalters, not of the emperor but of military saints, notably Eustathius and Procopius, in which a vision is itself the subject: they are shown, alone and similarly mounted on charging horses, leaping up and gesturing toward heavenly apparitions. These visions were not related to battles, and the saints are represented without weapons and without adversaries (Fig. 183). The Byzantine formulations were readily available in a famous early Greek psalter in the Barberini collection at the Vatican.[92] Moreover, Bernini could find impeccable historical precedent for transposing this isolated type into sculpture in one of the most venerable and uncannily affective works of early Christian art, which formed part of the prehistory of the Byzantine Psalter miniatures of

173. Bernini, Cathedra Petri, Saints Ambrose and Athanasius. St. Peter's, Rome

Constantine. This is a leaf of an ivory diptych, the centerpiece of which is an armored imperial figure, mounted at the attack on a rearing horse, in the act of impaling with his lance an imaginary enemy below (Fig. 184).[93] Here, too, the group seems to thrust itself off the surface into the viewer's space. The artist manages to elide the distinction between front and side views, so that while the horseman is imbedded in the complex visual and thematic context provided by the "setting," he also takes a turn toward the spectator and his victory leaps out of the frame into the present. In Bernini's time the ivory was also part of the Barberini collection in Rome and was thought to represent Constantine himself, partly no doubt because the medallion image of Christ holding the Cross in the panel above suggested the emperor's vision. The subject matter would have been no less relevant to Bernini's enterprise than the virtuoso technique and subtle illusion. In fact, he seems to have had the Barberini plaque in mind, especially the movement of the horse, when he designed the unexecuted first version of the Constantine monument for Innocent X (Fig. 185).

Although the event was often depicted with the mounted Constantine in the field of battle or dispatching enemies, there is nothing in the literary accounts to suggest a violent response to the vision. Indeed, never before Bernini had the emperor been shown alone, in no other act than absorbing the apparition and mounted on a rearing horse which, unlike any of its ancestors, seems to be no less astounded by the miracle than he. In this respect, Bernini's invention may be understood in part as a conflation of Constantine's vision with the one equally portentous instance of precisely the same phenomenon – that is, the conversion of Saint Paul, to which the Church devotes a feast in the liturgical calendar.[94] A non-Christian, in this case Jewish, equestrian military leader is suddenly confronted by a miraculous intervention from on high on behalf of the new faith. Through the power of his preaching and writing Paul established the spiritual hegemony of the Church, as Constantine was to establish its earthly dominion through his military power. Paul's vision also included a light in the sky and a verbal message, not written but spoken by the invisible Christ. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus was a violent event: he was toppled from his

174. Foundation medal Piazza S. Pietro, 1657. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

175. Commemorative medal of the Cathedra Petri, 1662. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

horse and relinquished his military life to become the apostle Paul, "a true warrior for Christ," in Augustine's words.[95] In the visual tradition of the conversion of Saint Paul, the man and animal might be shown alone, without accompanying figures. And, unlike the horse of the equestrian Constantine in the West, Paul's mount was often shown rearing up, as startled by the miracle as the rider. In one notable example, a medal of Pope Julius II, Paul is still on his rearing horse, reeling from the vision in the sky (Fig. 186).[96] In assimilating Constantine's vision of Christianity to that of Paul's conversion, Bernini created a concerted response of both rider and animal – man and nature, as it were – to the heavenly apparition.

In one of the most famous and important portrayals of Paul's conversion, that by Raphael in the tapestry series for the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, Paul's reaction is particularly appropriate (Fig. 187). The open-armed gesture, suggestive of both surprise and receptivity, which Bernini had attributed to Saint Longinus, was understood as a reference to the Crucifixion, and was the authentic mode of prayer among the early Christians. Eusebius specifically ascribed this gesture to the full-length portraits of himself that Constantine erected at the entrances to his palaces:

> How deeply his soul was impressed by the power of divine faith may be understood from the circumstance that he directed his likeness to be stamped on the golden coins of the empire with the eyes uplifted as in the posture of prayer to God: and this money became current throughout the Roman world. His portrait also at full length was placed over the entrance gates of the palaces in some cities, the eyes upraised to heaven, and the hands outspread as if in prayer.[97]

Heinrich Valesius, who published what became the standard modern Latin translation of Eusebius in 1659, explained the history and symbolism of the gesture as follows:

> Whoever was the Translatour[*sic*] of this Book, he has rendered this place with little of attention, thus, *Et precantes forma manus sursum tollens, and lifting up his hands in the form of one praying*; whereas he ought to have rendered it, *manibus expansis, ut precantes solent, with expanded hands as persons praying are wont to do*. For the *Christians* were wont, when at prayers, to stretch forth their hands, that by this means they might represent the likeness of a Cross. Indeed, the *Christians* lifted up their hands, whilst they were praying. But this was not peculiar to the *Christians*, in this regard the Heathens did the same; as *Virgil* attests in these words,
>
> – *Et geminas tellens ad sidera palmas.*
>
> But, that was peculiar to the *Christians*, to expand their hands in the form of a Cross. *Tertullian*'s words, in *his Book de Oratione* Chap. ii, are these: *Nos vero non attollimus tantum, Sed etiam expandimus, & dominica passione modulamur; We do not only lift up [our hands,] but do spread them also, and we put our selves into a form agreeable to Our Lord's passion.* He says the same in *his Apologetick*, chap. 30.[98]

The relationship between these two crucial divine interventions in the defense and dissemination of Christianity, one by the power of faith, the other by the power of empire, was not Bernini's invention. The comparison of Constantine to Paul was made explicitly by Rufinus of Aquileia, whose Latin translation of Eusebius's Greek was the source of all Western knowledge of this fundamental history of early Christianity. Rufinus's version, much criticized because of the many liberties it takes with the text, might better be understood as an interpretive commentary, and he made clear the sense in which he understood Constantine's vision by adding that Constantine's "heavenly invitation to faith" did not seem to him inferior to that of Paul, to whom heaven also spoke – except that "the invitation was no longer not to persecute, but to prosecute."[99] Conflation of the two events produced an image of immediate, unadulterated, and devastating awareness not inherent in either of its precedents. The reference to Saint Paul and the idea of conversion was explicit in the liturgy for May third, the feast of the Invention of the Cross: the first three lessons were taken from Paul's perorations on the Crucifixion in the epistles, and the fourth began the story of the True Cross with Constantine's vision and victory.[100] Constantine's rapturous expression and gesture epitomize a tradition, which included Bernini's *St. Longinus* in the crossing pier, specifically motivated by imitation of the Crucifixion and impassioned devotion to the Cross.

Allusion to the visionary conversion of Saint Paul was eloquent testimony to the history of divine intervention on behalf of the Church. However, the full import of Bernini's interpretation of Constantine's role cannot be comprehended without reference to a superficially quite different but profoundly related episode involving another pagan emperor – at least, as the story was interpreted by the one artist who above all others, as Bernini frequently acknowledged during his visit to Paris, struck him with admiration, even awe – Poussin.[101] Bernini's fundamental innovation of depicting Constantine's vision with rider and steed reacting together in response to the apparition on high is an explicit, undisguised "quotation" of the image of Titus, son of the emperor Vespasian and later also emperor, in Poussin's monumental *Destruction of Jerusalem*, which he painted for Cardinal Francesco Barberini in 1638 (Fig. 188).[102] As must have been intended from the outset, on 1 January 1639, the cardinal presented the picture as a diplomatic gift to the ambassador to the Holy See from the Hapsburg ruler

Ferdinand III, Constantine's successor as "Holy Roman Emperor." What Bernini admired in Poussin's art, apart from its sheer beauty and intelligence, was its narrative sagacity and power – *grande favelleggiatore* (great fabulator) was the phrase he repeated in response to Poussin. He certainly grasped the affective power of Poussin's majestic equestrian group, in the context of the heroic action performed on a stagelike piazza before a noble cityscape that is in itself a deliberate evocation of the tragic theater set, evolved since the early sixteenth century from Vitruvius's famous account of ancient scenography.[103] However, it is essential to understand, as Bernini certainly did, that Poussin's theme, and Titus's role in particular, were in themselves extraordinary, and charged with potent, immediate significance.

Poussin generally and in many details follows the primary description by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, who was a member of Titus's entourage, of the terrible mayhem wrought by the Roman army that fateful day in A.D. 70.[104] Indeed, Poussin seems to have depicted a specific moment: the city is in ruins and burning, but the Temple is still intact, except for the fire that has erupted in the inner sanctum sanctorum, as the looters make off with the precious ritual vessels and furnishings. All this Josephus describes, while also emphasizing that Titus himself was opposed to the destruction of such a sacred and magnificent structure, and even tried, in vain, to restrain his impetuous followers. Poussin had illustrated this very theme in an earlier picture of the same subject, also painted for Francesco Barberini and presented to the representative of Louis XIII of France: Titus, on a walking horse, gestures toward his men to desist, while looking heavenward in an anguished appeal for clemency (Fig. 189).[105] In the second version, Titus and his rearing horse are shown as if awestruck by a sudden message from on high. Titus now acts as intercessor, with one hand lifted toward the vision he sees in the sky, the other lowered toward the carnage on the ground below. In this salient display of sudden awareness and compassion in the midst of fury, Poussin seems to reconcile Josephus's account with a diametrically opposed interpretation developed by the first writers to treat world history in Christian terms. In this view, the destruction of the Temple became a divinely providential act of vengeance upon the Jews – which Titus favored – for their martyrdom of Christ.[106] Clearly, it is this supernal, proleptic intimation of the Christological import of the event and his own role in it that is being revealed to Titus in Poussin's dramatization. In effect, Titus was inspired by Divine Wisdom, whose intervention on behalf of the Church was the very leitmotif of Urban's reign.

176. Bernini, *Constantine the Great*. St. Peter's, Rome

Poussin made this Christological meaning explicit through Titus's pose, calling on the Early Christian tradition in which the open-armed gesture patently evokes the Crucifixion.[107] Sulpicius Severus reports that Titus favored the destruction in order to eradicate both the Jews and their Christian heirs, but calls the destruction of the Temple and subsequent dispersion of the Jews an act of God.

> Titus is said, after calling a council, to have first deliberated whether he should destroy the temple, a structure of such extraordinary work. For it seemed good to some that a sacred edifice, distinguished above all human achievement, ought not to be destroyed, inasmuch as, if preserved, it would furnish an evidence of Roman moderation, but if destroyed, would serve for a perpetual proof of Roman cruelty. But on the opposite side, others and Titus himself thought that the temple ought especially to be overthrown, in order that the religion of the Jews and of the Christians might more thoroughly be subverted; for that these religions, although contrary to each other, had nevertheless proceeded from the same authors; that the Christians had sprung up from among the Jews; and that, if the root were extirpated, the offshoot would speedily perish. Thus, according to the divine will, the minds all being inflamed, the temple was destroyed. . . .[108]

177. Bernini, *Constantine the Great*. St. Peter's, Rome

Two other texts must also have inspired Poussin's visualization of the tradition. Orosius, perhaps the most important early Christianizer of ancient historical texts, relates the destruction of the Temple to Titus's triumph in Rome (Poussin also alludes to the exhibition of the Temple spoils in the triumphal entry depicted on the Arch of Titus), to the decree of God, and to the avenging of Christ's blood and Passion:

> After the capture and overthrow of Jerusalem . . . and after the total destruction of the Jewish nation, Titus, who had been appointed by the decree of God to avenge the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, celebrated with his father Vespasian his victory by a triumph and closed the temple of Janus. . . . It was indeed right that the same honor should be paid to the avenging of the Lord's Passion as had been bestowed upon His Nativity.[109]

Perhaps the most explicit and lapidary formulation was that of Dante who, in the voice of his fellow poet Statius, speaks of the sudden, earthquake response to Divine Justice when it releases from Purgatory those pure spirits who lived "not yet with faith." Statius calls to witness "the good Titus," "In the time when the good Titus, with the help of the Highest King, avenged the wounds

whence issued the blood sold by Judas, I was famous enough . . . but not yet with faith."[110]

The relevance of Poussin's painting to Francesco Barberini's mission to the Hapsburg emperor was above all in reference to the struggle with the Protestants, often likened to the Jews in their refusal to recognize the Church. Poussin was surely as familiar as Bernini with the equestrian Constantine tradition, and one might well suppose that Poussin's Christological interpretation of the destruction of the Jewish Temple already involved a proleptic reference to the revelation accorded to Titus's imperial successor, who adopted Christianity and protected the Church. The pose of Poussin's second Titus suggests that the "good" pagan is inspired by the same vision of Divine Wisdom acting through Christian charity and justice that informed the tomb of Urban VIII. For Bernini, the tradition was equally relevant at St. Peter's, in a program specifically addressed to the same "political" problems. Titus and Constantine were links in a chain forged by Divine Wisdom that bound these early heroes to the current rulers of Europe and ordained the reigns of popes.

From a formal point of view, it might be said that Bernini abstracted Poussin's heroic group from its narrative context and infused it into the tradition of the independent equestrian monument. In this sense, Bernini alluded to a flourishing contemporary honorific mode: the equestrian monument with the rider mounted on a rearing horse, mostly cast in bronze, which in the course of the seventeenth century had become a veritable icon of sovereign display, both political and artistic (Fig. 190). The ruler was portrayed as a triumphant hero demonstrating his military prowess by defeating an enemy, shown prostrate beneath the animal's hooves; or

178. Bernini, *Constantine the Great* and the Scala Regia. St. Peter's, Rome

179. Bernini, Constantine's vision and the view beyond. St. Peter's, Rome

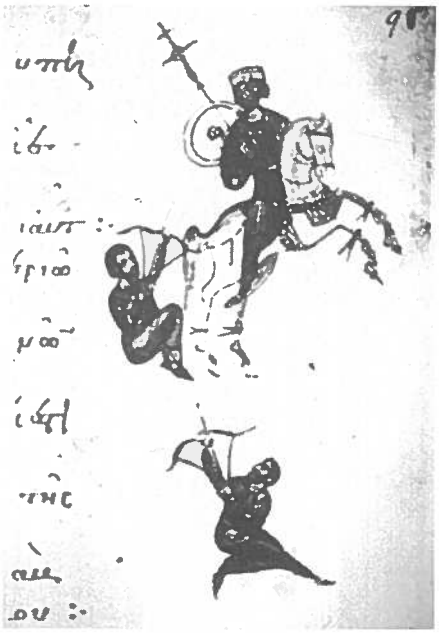
demonstrating his innate power of leadership through his consummate skill in the noble art of horsemanship, effortlessly commanding the huge beast, against its nature, to execute a veritable aerial levitation – the so-called *levade* of the high equestrian school then enormously in vogue.[111] Bernini's *Constantine* is also an emblem of victory, but of an entirely different, spiritual order – neither a military victory nor a triumph of the will, but a moral conquest of the self, a revolution of the soul in response to the revelatory power of divine grace. This emphasis on the spiritual nature of Constantine's historical role is completed by the events illustrated in the stucco medallions in the vault above – not the defeat of Maxentius as in so many other narratives, but the emperor's baptism and his construction of St. Peter's.

In the traditional equestrian monument the sculptor's victory, his *virtù*, consisted in immortalizing the hero's victory over superior physical strength in the permanent but inherently amorphous form of bronze. In the case of Bernini's Constantine, where there are no reins or stirrups, and the hero's tour de force was his response to an act of divine will, the artist's achievement lay in "dominating" the inherently rigid material of stone. In fact, an important aspect of the significance of the work lies in its technical qualities, first among these being its colossal scale. In his biography of his father, Domenico

180. Giulio Romano, *Vision of Constantine*. Sala di Costantino, Vatican Palace, Rome

181. *Vision of Constantine*. Galleria delle Carte Geografiche, Vatican Palace, Rome

Bernini emphasized that the sheer size of the block, and by implication the skill required to carve such a large work from a single stone, were specifically intended to vie with antiquity itself: "a colossus . . . truly great for the subject it represents, for the place it was to be located, and for the material in which it was to be carved: in a thirty-wagon mass of stone (to use the proper terms) the likes of which had rarely been seen in Rome even in ancient times."[112] This agonistic attitude toward the past was not simply a matter of personal satisfaction or aggrandizement but carried specific meaning related to the basic theme of the monument: Bernini's technical victory over the stone was an analogue of Constantine's moral victory over paganism. Domenico Bernini intimated this very point when he attributed the true greatness of the colossus to three factors: its subject, its location, and its material.[113] The significance of the technique in these terms was expressed directly and profoundly by Bernini's great friend and admirer Giovanni Paolo Oliva, who was general of the Jesuit order and apostolic preacher. In a sermon he delivered before the pope in the Vatican palace as the Constantine was reaching completion, Oliva used

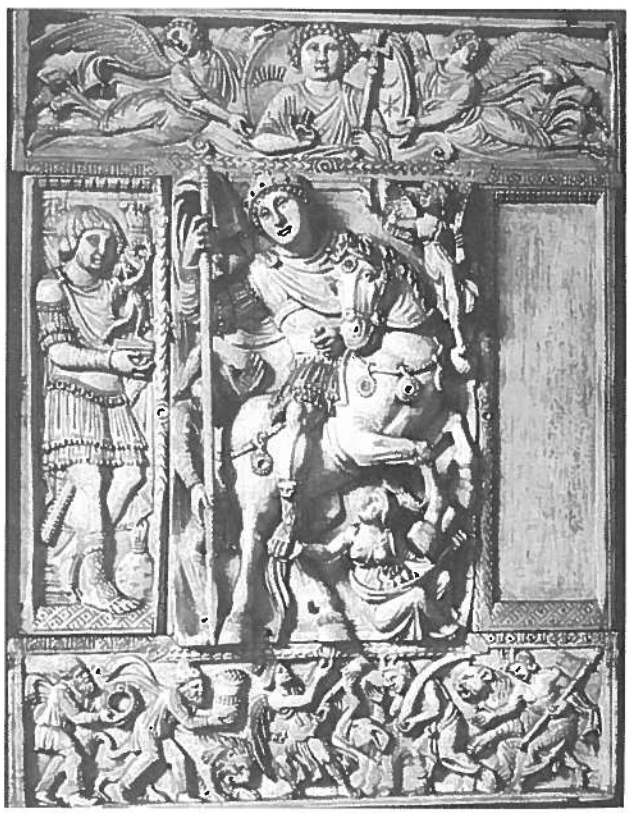


182. *Vision of Constantine*, MS Barberini Gr. 372, fol. 75^{r}. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

183. *Vision of St. Procopius*, MS Barberini Gr. 372, fol. 85^{v}. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

the feat of carving it as a metaphor for moral action in the achievement of a noble end.[114] The technique is also remarkable in that the work occupies a sort of intermediate realm of existence between the traditional domains of relief and freestanding sculpture. The equestrian is indeed carved from a single block of marble, which is, however, attached to the back wall of the niche. This device made it possible to create the rearing horse without artificial support, such as a defeated enemy underfoot, that would otherwise be required. Bernini was thus able to isolate the vision as a pure, unadulterated moment of revelation. At the same time, being carved virtually in the round, the sculpture appears completely independent, to all appearances a freestanding group. The figures seem to inhabit the spectator's space, and the horse's rear hooves actually do rest on the pedestal. A key to this effect is Bernini's virtuoso capacity, nurtured since his childhood training in his father's studio, for carving deeply undercut, perforated, and cantilevered forms.

The polyvalence of the subject and location of the Constantine monument has a counterpart in the design of the work. Bernini must have been well aware of the traditions in which equestrian sculptures were placed before palaces and churches, often in niches, parallel or perpendicular to the wall (Figs. 191, 192).[115] In its new location the Constantine might well have been intended to "reclaim" this hegemonic tradition for the papacy. The design certainly incorporates the seemingly incompatible alternatives of orientation, responding to the principal approaches in the Scala Regia. The horse, rider, and pedestal project sufficiently from the flat niche so that from the corridor in front the sculpture suggests the freestanding equestrian ruler portraits that confront the visitor, sometimes quite aggressively. The "regal" entrance behind Constantine is marked by the huge coat of arms of the pope carried by trumpeting angels placed on the arched opening to the Scala Regia, whose triumphal



184. "Triumph of Constantine," Barberini plaque, ivory. Musée du Louvre, Paris

185. Bernini, study for the first version of the *Vision of Constantine*, drawing. Academia de San Fernando, Madrid

186. Conversion of St. Paul, medal of Julius II (after Hill 1930, pl. 139, no. 867)

fastigium design repeats the Serlian cross section of the colonnades. From the portico of the church the work appears as an equestrian monument placed laterally and framed by an arch, with the figures twisted outward by the force of the apparition above. Bernini fused the lateral and the frontal types in the way the figures are carved; at the rear, the animal's body, in high relief, is parallel to the spectator, while toward the front both horse and rider become fully three-dimensional, so the space into which they leap is to the side and forward. Some precedence for this sculptural ingenuity may be found in a rare if not unique instance of an equestrian, as a deeply carved relief, shown frontally in a niche, at a corner of Arnolfo di Cambio's fourteenth-century altar tabernacle in S. Cecilia in Rome, which Bernini certainly knew (Fig. 193).[116] An analogous turn from the relief plane into space created the powerful thrust of the horseman of the Barberini plaque and its prototypes on Roman hunting and battle sarcophagi (Figs. 184, 194). Psychologically, this "bent" movement also helps to create the spatial elision and explosive power of Constantine and his horse, whose forward movement Bernini augmented by skewing the perspective of the coffered arch and the sweeping flow of the billowing drapery behind.[117]

When the huge marble block was acquired the sculpture would have more than filled the niche in the basilica

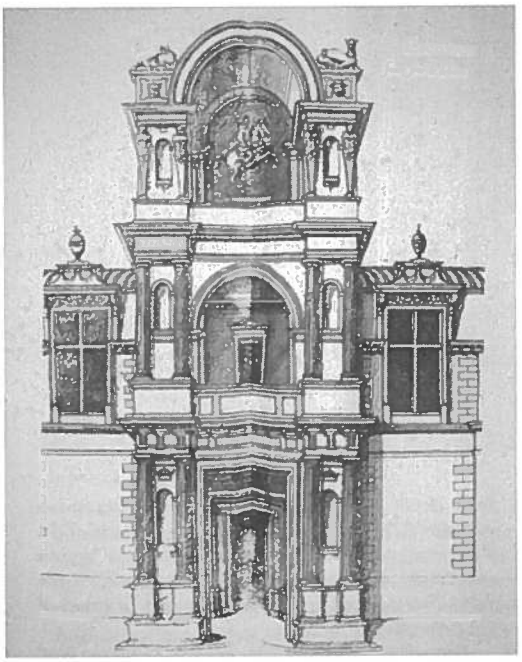
187. Raphael, *Conversion of St. Paul*, tapestry. Musei Vaticani, Rome

188. Poussin, *Destruction of Jerusalem*, 1638–9. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

189. Poussin, *Destruction of Jerusalem*, 1625–6. The Jewish Museum, Jerusalem

for which it was originally intended (Fig. 185).[118] The additional space available in the new location made it necessary – "possible" would be a more appropriate word, given Bernini's way of surmounting the challenges that confronted him – to provide the work with a context that would impart new meaning and expressive power. The horse and rider are now set up on a pedestal, so that the sculpture becomes a proper equestrian monument (Fig. 177). The monument is set within a framing arch and given a background suggesting that the space continues behind to include accouterments in temporary materials as ephemeral as the fleeting moment represented by the sculpture itself: a circular baldachin over which is flung a huge, billowing cloth that sweeps forward behind the figures and loops down over the pedestal. At first glance, the setting suggests the military encampment where the emperor experienced the vision, including the commander's tent (Fig. 180), or the outdoor

190. Pietro Tacca, equestrian monument of Philip V, 1636–40. Plaza de Oriente, Madrid

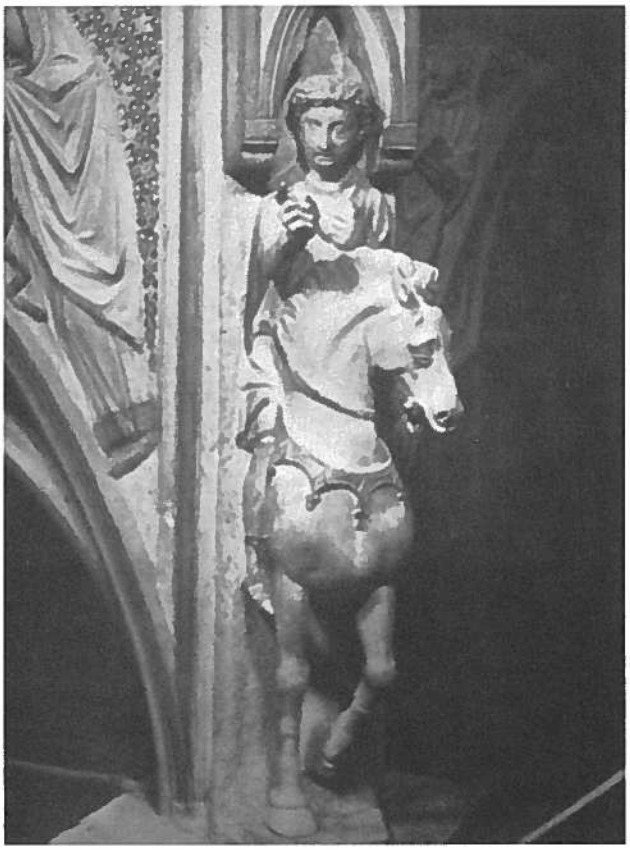


191. Entrance portal at Ecouen with equestrian statue of Anne de Montmorency, engraving by Jacques Androuet Ducerceau, 1579 (after Prinz and Kecks 1994, fig. 333)

draped audience chamber from which he made his *ad locutio* to inspire his troops before the battle (Fig. 195). In fact, these references are purely symbolic. The canopy, which recalls the baldachin suspended over the pope in Giulio Romano's *Donation of Constantine* (Fig. 126), has no visible means of support, but hovers above like the heavenly *umbralacum* of Isaiah cited in the inscription of the colonnade. The drapery is here an analogue of the *parapetasma*, or cloth of honor, against which in ancient funerary monuments portraits of the deceased were placed to signify apotheosis. In Bernini's memorial of Suor Maria Raggi in S. Maria sopra Minerva, the drapery became a kind of "magic carpet," suspended from her vision of the Cross above, on which the image is transported heavenward by two flying putti (Fig. 196).[119] The drapery behind Bernini's Constantine seems to respond to the blaring trumpets of the angels above who carry the papal coat of arms, echoing the description in the Acts of the Apostles (2:2) of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, when "suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind," initiating the universal dominion of Christianity through the gift of tongues – the *ad locutio* – to the apostles.

It could well be argued that light is the true protagonist of the vision of Constantine as portrayed by Bernini. Taking advantage of the slope of the Vatican hill, he introduced a large window between the vault of the corridor from the colonnade and that of the landing. Light passes through the opening to illuminate the space, duplicating the radiance of the divine apparition described in the sources. A great effulgence descends mysteriously from the upper right, forming with the body of the horse one diagonal axis of a huge chiastic composition, of which the crossing diagonal is formed by the flowing drapery of the tent and the body of Constantine himself. The viewer is propelled forward in the direction of the light source by the displaced vanishing point of the perspectivized arch, and by the massive, billowing sweep of drapery. The view from the Scala Regia back toward the

192. Andrea Rivalta, equestrian monument of Vittorio Amadeo I of Savoy. Palazzo Reale, Turin



193. Arnolfo di Cambio, equestrian saint, ciborium of high altar, detail. S. Cecilia, Rome

entrance corridor portrays the vision itself: the window provides the bright light, while the cross and the words appear immediately below, conjoined in what might be called a literally miraculous way. Instead of appearing simply as a text in the sky, the motto is inscribed on a sculptured, floating banderole before which the cross is suspended. The text thus serves not only as an immaterial vision, but also as a sort of label, a physically substantive, heaven-sent message for the viewer as well as for Constantine, defining the meaning of the event and the monument as a work of art. Bernini had developed many of these devices long before. In his depiction of a vision of Saint Francesca Romana, a halo of light above the figures serves its historical function as a heavenly apparition (Fig. 197); and in his portrayal of the ecstasy of Saint Teresa light from a window above radiates down upon a sculptured relief that appears suspended in midair and is virtually carved in the round (Fig. 164). In both works real light had become an integral, active agent of the subject represented, which, in the case of Saint Teresa, is also "explained" by a message inscribed on a banderole fluttering at the apex of the entrance to the chapel (Fig. 198).[120] To re-present the "image" described by Eusebius, Bernini seems to have melded the cross-borne drapery inscription of the Maria Raggi monument with the heavenly inscribed banderole of the Teresa chapel. In the space of the Constantine memorial the spectator is not simply a witness but feels himself included in the event. The ultimate nature of this pervasive, mysterious illumination comes into focus when one faces in the opposite direction: from the top of the stairs leading up to the Sala Regia at the end of the long perspective of diminishing and receding ceremonial architecture that continues the colonnade, the light radiates exactly as it does in a splendid altar tabernacle in Bologna, which Bernini certainly knew, whose one-point perspective of the same design epitomized the Sacrament (Fig. 199).[121]

Here, as in no previous work, at the threshold of St. Peter's and the Vatican, real space and the space of the

194. Roman hunting sarcophagus, detail. Palazzo Mattei, Rome

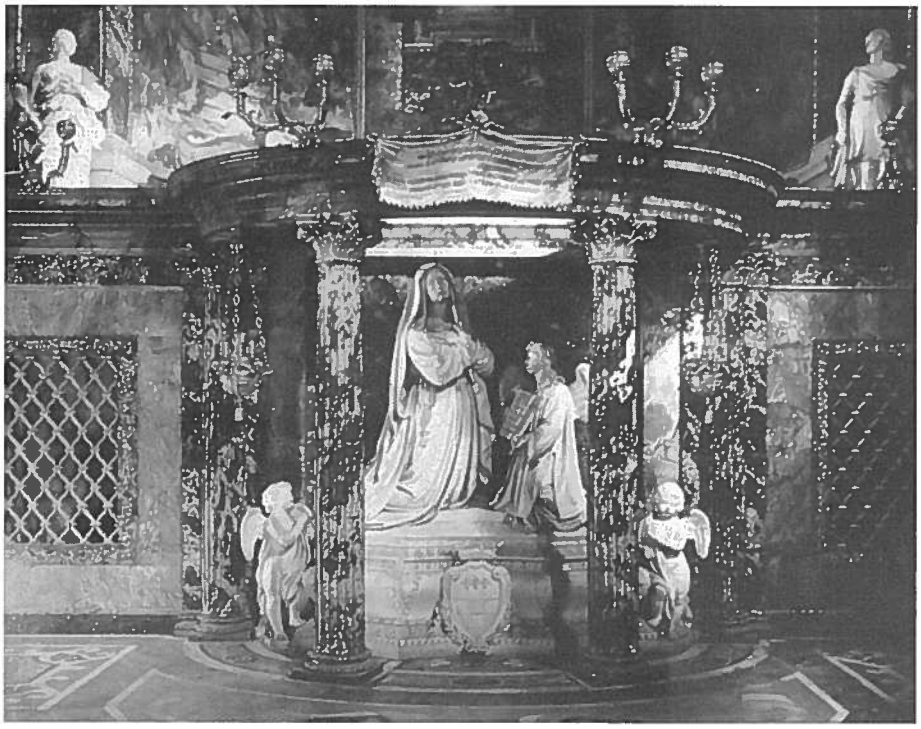
195. Giacinto Gimignani, *The Vision of Constantine.* Baptistery, S. Giovanni in Laterano, Rome

event re-created are one and the same. The crucial event of church history is isolated and distilled into a single, supreme moment of revelation. Constantine is at once the protagonist of a distant historical event and the subject of a commemoration in the present. And the viewer is inextricably conjoined with the architecture and the sculpture as participant in the visionary act taking place, then-now, there-here. The medium through which and in which this existential fusion transpires is the flood of light that accompanies the miraculous sign and message from on high. Having been embraced and urged forward by the arms of the colonnades, we enter a place charged with physical energy and optical radiance by a divine illumination revealed ultimately in the Sacrament, the ultimate goal of both patron and artist "at the end of the tunnel." Heaven and earth meet at the point where the spiritual pilgrim enters the sacred precinct.

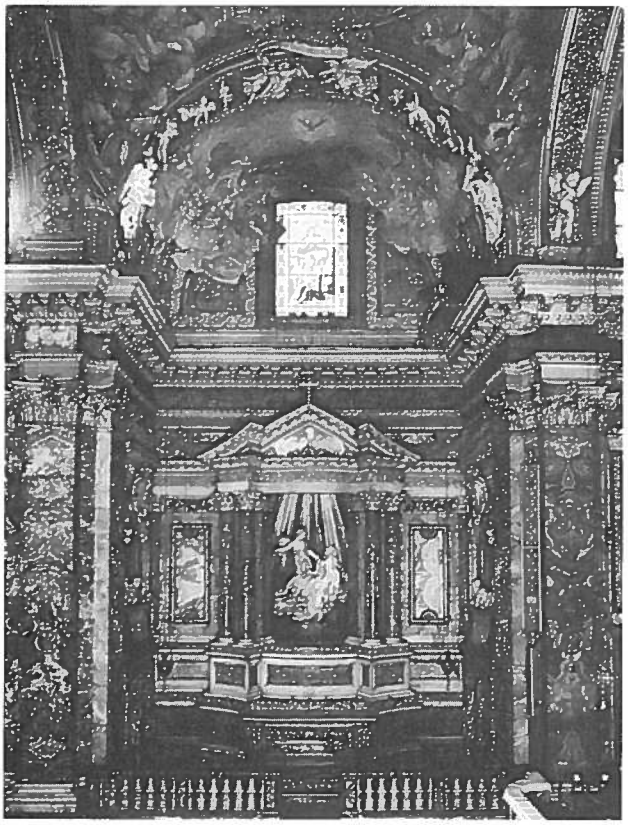
THE TOMB OF ALEXANDER VII (1671–78)
(Figs. 200, 201, 202)

On 8 April, the day following his election to the papal throne, it was reported that Alexander VII had given an urgent order to Bernini to have made a lead casket in which he would be buried; the coffin was to be brought to his room as a memento mori, a reminder of death. On 10 April the pope was said to have ordered a skull of marble, so that he might continuously meditate on the brevity of life.[122] Alexander's profound and humble devotion to the Sacrament was displayed in his unprecedented conduct of the Corpus Domini procession on 27 May. And his order to Bernini to prepare a design for his tomb was reported on 28 August. All these actions not only reflected important aspects of the pope's character, they also sounded the keynote of his reign. Bernini's response to the personal impulse of what might be called Alexander's eschatological modus vivendi emerged ultimately in the tomb that was executed long after the pope's death. The situation chosen might seem to have been eminently inhospitable:

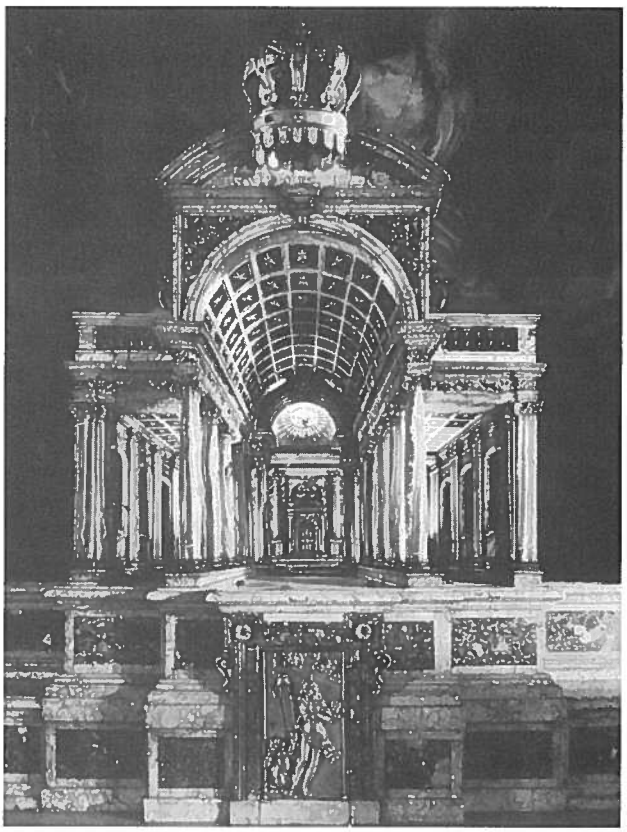
196. Bernini, Monument to Suor Maria Raggi. S. Maria sopra Minerva, Rome



197. Bernini, *S. Francesca Romana*. S. Francesca Romana, Rome



198. Bernini, Chapel of St. Teresa. S. Maria della Vittoria, Rome



199. Sacrament tabernacle. S. Paolo Maggiore, Bologna

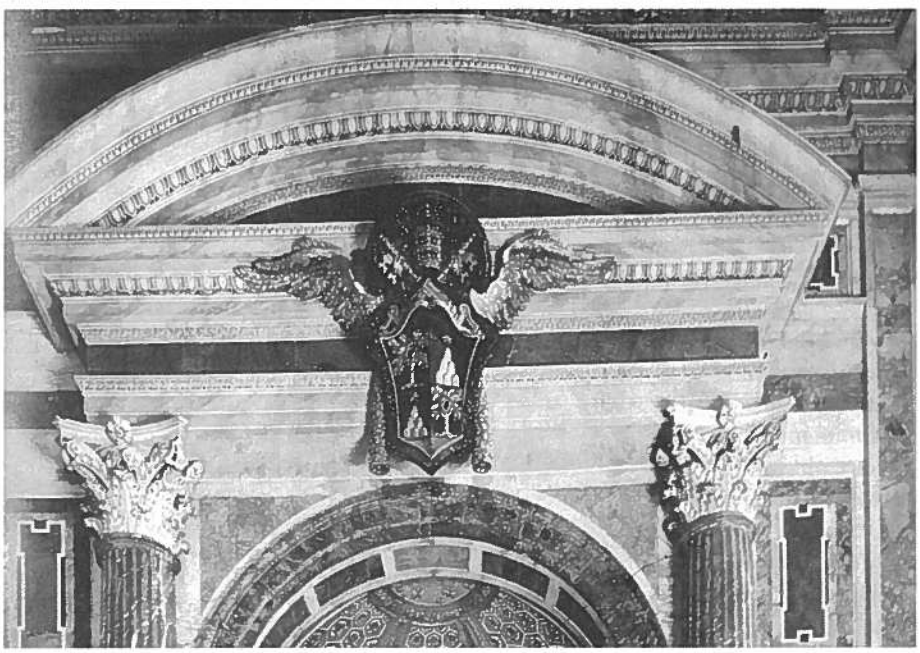
200. Bernini, Tomb of Alexander VII. St. Peter's, Rome

a niche in the outer wall of the south aisle of the choir, containing the opening of a narrow service passageway for the basilica. The composition of the tomb takes up the theme of papal continuity in the nave by epitomizing the major commemorative types developed for Alexander's predecessors. The pyramidal form with the raised effigy flanked by pairs of allegories echoes the apsidal monuments of Paul III and Urban VIII, as does the inclusion of a skeletal allegory of death. As in the Urban VIII tomb, the allegories "participate," actively or passively, so as to animate rather than merely symbolize the concepts they represent. Harking back in part to the original form of the Paul III monument, the design suggests a freestanding tomb accompanied by four allegories of virtues, in this case Charity, Justice, Prudence, Truth. Finally, the deceased is shown kneeling in an attitude of prayer, following the late sixteenth-century tombs of Pius V and Sixtus V in S. Maria Maggiore, where the popes kneel in perpetual adoration toward the Eucharistic tabernacle at the altar in the center of their funerary chapel (see Fig. 120).

By virtue of synthesizing these elements of continuity, the work is kind of summa of papal tomb types: a "freestanding" monument with four "activated" allegories, surmounted by a kneeling effigy.[123] However, Alexander's tomb also comprises variations and innovations such that it becomes, as never before, a vehicle of concerted expressive power: the choice and treatment of the allegories, the great shroud enveloping the door at the rear of the niche, the figure of death emerging from beneath it wielding his hourglass, the pope's act of humble, intense devotion. The tomb is imbued with a sense of

201. Bernini, Tomb of Alexander VII, Allegory of Truth. St. Peter's, Rome

urgency that transforms the sepulchral monument from a record of passive commemoration to an expression of active protagonism. We have seen in considering the tombs of Paul III and Urban VIII that Charity, Justice, and Prudence were normal, and Charity and Justice together especially important, themes of papal ideology. Truth, however, was without precedent in this context. A clue to the significance of the choice of allegories may be traced to the very beginning of Alexander's papacy. In keeping with tradition, the pope had celebrated his election in 1655 by issuing a medal intended to define the guiding principle of his reign. The reverse (Fig. 203) shows Justice and Peace embracing one another, while the inscription – IVSTITIA ET PAX / OSCVLATAE SUNT – quotes a phrase from a famous passage in Psalms 85: 10–11, attesting faith in God's goodness: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven" ("Misericordia et veritas obviaverunt sibi, iustitia et pax osculatae sunt. Veritas de terra orta est, et iustitia de caelo prospexit"). Alexander's interest in the passage is subsequently recorded in an entry in his diary dated 26 January 1660, noting a visit from Bernini, in which it is cited (substituting, significantly if inadvertently, "modesty" for "mercy"), evidently with the tomb program in mind. Charity and Justice are proper virtues, the former theological, the latter moral, whereas Peace and Truth are rather the fruits of virtue, and Truth alone was never part of the traditional repertory of funerary allegory. The theme of Charity and Justice was retained on Alexander's tomb, while another cardinal virtue, Prudence, was substituted for



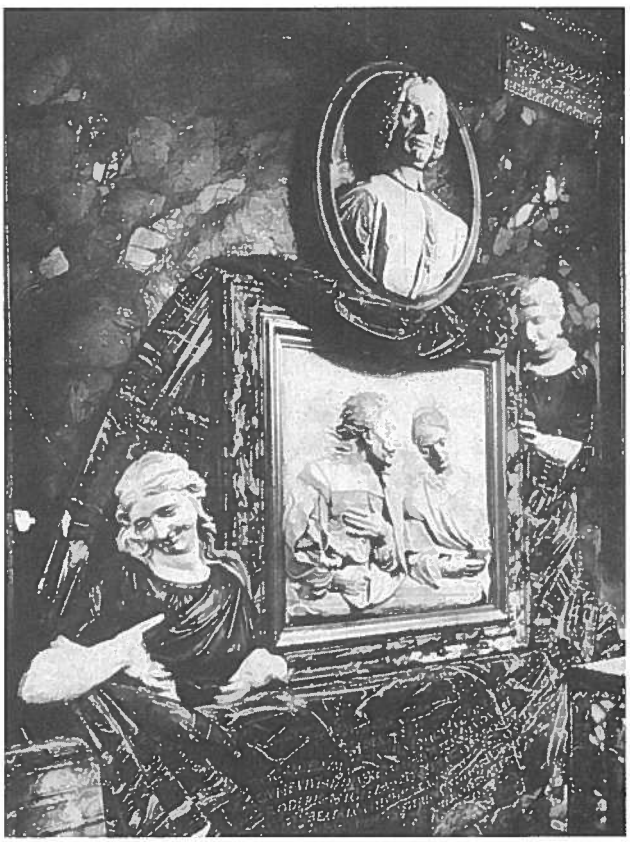
202. Bernini, Tomb of Alexander VII, escutcheon. St. Peter's, Rome

203. Justice and Peace, inaugural medal of Alexander VII, 1655 (after Buonanni 1699, 2:641, no. VI)

Peace. But Truth was also retained, and given pride of place with Charity in the forefront of the monument. This anomalous juxtaposition is a key to understanding the work. (Note: the draperies covering the body of Truth and the bosom of Charity are later additions.)

The unexampled pairing of the greatest of the theological virtues, Charity, with what Bernini in his testament called the most beautiful virtue, Truth, is based on a particular interpretation of the imagery of the virtues in the Eighty-fifth Psalm.[124] The passage entails two distinct aspects of truth: one (Ps. 85:10) focused on the quality itself as one of the special attributes of man before the Fall, which came to be known in allegorical tradition as the Four Daughters of God; the other aspect (Ps. 85:11) concerns truth alone as a cognitive, quasi-eschatological ideal, whose ultimate triumph the psalm declares as the promise of redemption that will emerge over the course of time.[125] Bernini had illustrated Truth before, in both aspects. She is one of the Four Daughters of God in a catafalque he designed for the death of Pope Paul V, and in a funerary chapel in S. Isidoro, where the four allegories – conjoined in pairs by drapery swathes that also anticipate the tomb – were assigned to two deceased couples of the family (Fig. 204). (Note: In the S. Isidoro tomb the figures of Mercy pressing milk from her breast, at the left, and Truth emerging from the shroud, at the right, were originally nude.) The promissory aspect of Truth was the subject of an independent monumental marble group, intended by the artist as a personal vindication of the calumnies of his enemies, showing Father Time revealing Truth and raising her from the earth to heaven by lifting her drapery (Fig. 205). On the Alexander tomb, Bernini combines both aspects of Truth, as a quality inherent from the beginning in God's plan for the salvation of mankind, and as a witness to salvation.

As in the tomb of Urban VIII, the attributes are not those of the pope individually, whose fleeting occupancy of the office is now evinced by the huge pair of wings that carry the coat of arms at the apex of the niche (Fig. 202), but of the papacy and the Church as institutions. Inspired by the pope's profound devotion, Charity rushes to offer up the fulsome charge reclining at her breast, while Truth, in a demure, expectant attitude, grasps the radiant sun, her exclusive charge, possessively to her bosom (Fig. 201). The emblematic nature of the allegory of Charity as a prelapsarian virtue is evident from the fact that, contrary to all tradition, here she has only one offspring. The single recipient of Charity's nurture may refer to the idea of a single, universal hospice for the poor in Rome to be housed in the papal palace of the Lateran, first bruited under Alexander VII and ultimately carried out by his successors, with Bernini's involvement. The sleeping infant's pose almost exactly duplicates that of his counterpart on the tomb of Urban VIII, again recalling the dead Christ held by his mother in depictions of the Pietà.[126] But here the isolated, unselfconscious, sleeping soul is also a kind of synecdoche for humanity, and can only refer to Adam in his original state of innocence. The original, unique, and quintessential act of charity



204. Bernini, tomb of Beatrix and Roderigo Lopez de Silva. (N.B.: The figures of Mercy pressing milk from her breast (*left*) and Truth emerging from the shroud (*right*) were originally nude.) S. Isidoro, Rome

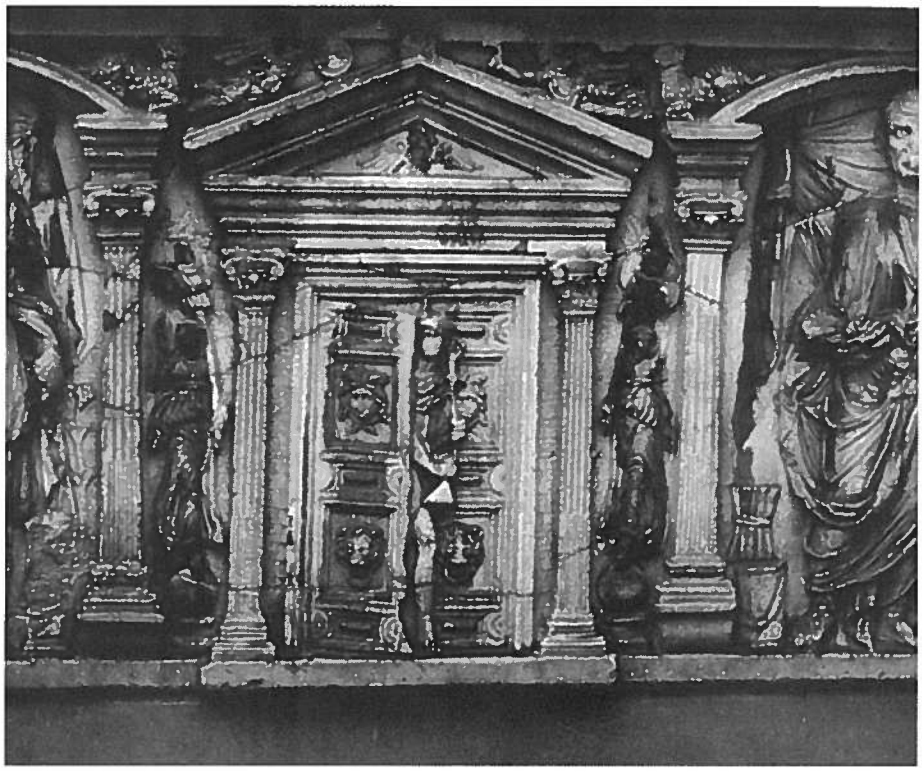
was that of God in offering the sacrifice of his only son, the New Adam, in redemption for the sins of the Old Adam. The complementary, suprapersonal significance of Truth is apparent from the "geography" of the sphere of earth on which Truth's left foot rests: Italy with Rome at the center faces the spectator, while England, the unredeemed province of the Protestant heresy, remains downtrodden and benighted.[127] The unprecedented combination and prominence of Charity and Truth, and the high drama they enact, serve a coherent purpose: together they express the global reach of the Church's promise of redemption to those who follow the pope's example; perdition to those who do not.

The Eighty-fifth Psalm had a particularly important role in the liturgy, in the devotions that celebrate both the Birth of Christ and the special commemorations of All Souls (2 November) on behalf of the individual, all the faithful, and the pope. In the latter case, the recitation ends, significantly, with the refrain, *requiem eternam*, eternal rest.[128] The relevance of the psalm in those contexts is related to the most famous and influential of all interpretations of lines 10–11, that of the great Cistercian mystic Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, whose reading was determinant for the Four Daughters of God as a moral allegory. As interpreted by Bernard, the passage in Psalm 85 had long been understood as announcing the promise of salvation to those who died a "good death" in keeping with the teachings of the Church. And whether directly or indirectly, this reading determined the conceptual framework of the tomb. Bernard takes the passage as the theme of his sermon on the Feast of the Annunciation: "That glory may dwell in our land, Mercy and truth. . . ." The passage becomes a sort of allegorical mystery play celebrating the incarnation. The virtues, originally Adam's handmaidens, after the Fall become disputants over his fate, to be reconciled only by Christ's birth and sacrifice. The virtues represent the glory that inhabits the earth with the truth of Christ's salvation of those who love him. What makes Bernard's explication important here is that he relates this theme specifically to the redemptive power of truth to overcome death itself, and the terms in which he does so make a perfect commentary on the vision of Alexander's tomb.

> The one [Truth] says: "I am undone if Adam does not die"; the other [Mercy]: "I am undone unless he obtains mercy. Therefore, let him die a blissful death and each will have her desire." . . . "But how shall this be done?" (Luke 1: 34) they asked. "Death is most cruel and bitter, death is terrible: its very name is enough to inspire one with horror. How then can there be such a thing as a blissful death?" To which the Judge replied: "It is indeed true that 'the death of the wicked is very evil' (Psalm 33: 22), but 'the death of the saints' can become 'precious in the sight of the Lord' (Psalm 115: 6). Will death not appear precious if it become the portal of life, the gate of glory?"[129]

205. Bernini, *Truth*, 1646–52. Galleria Borghese, Rome

Bernard's reference to the portal of death that becomes the portal of life must have made the niche that contained a door at St. Peter's seem providential to Bernini: it coincided with what he considered to be the chief virtue of the architect, not to make beautiful and commodious buildings, but to make such use of a defect that if it did not exist one would have to create it.[130] The door to the underworld was a motif virtually endemic in Western funerary art: Roman sarcophagi often included scenes of Hermes Psychopompos, with a winged helmet and carrying his caduceus, exiting through the half-open door to the underworld, or leading by the hand a figure of the deceased from behind and beneath a curtain within (Figs. 206, 207).[131] Hermes in this case is the messenger who announces mortality, as does Bernini's skeletal personification of death, whose great shoulder wings and hourglass replace Hermes's winged helmet and caduceus. Bernini melded this classical motif of Hermes passing through the door to the underworld, with the representation on the tomb of Érard de la Marck of the skeleton emerging



206. Roman sarcophagus, detail. Museo Archeologico, Florence

from the coffin with an hourglass (Fig. 141), portrayed on the tomb of Urban VIII as the recording winged Angel of Death. Through this merging of motifs, Alexander's tomb becomes a literal enactment of Death's passage beneath the veil dividing this world from the next.

Drapery had a dual history in a mortuary context. In funeral ceremonies, which in the case of important personages might take place before the high altar of the church, the coffin of the deceased was often covered with a shroud expressive of respect and mourning.[132] Drapery also served as a cloth of honor on which an image of the deceased was carried aloft in a "miraculous" act of apotheosis (see Fig. 196).[133] The drapery curtain also played an important role in the seventeenth-century theater, where Bernini was an impassioned and innovative participant: it formed the transitory boundary between the domains of reality and the imagination.[134] The stage curtain did not at that period open and close in two parts, but rather was a single cloth that fell at the beginning and rose at the end of the performance. Bernini was acutely aware of the dramatic function, and indeed the metaphysical significance, of the curtain, as the plot of his comedy of Two Theaters amply demonstrates. When the curtain fell, the audience was confronted with a fictive realm of an altogether unexpected nature, at once nontheatrical and hypertheatrical: a duplicate audience in a duplicate theater, watching the beginning of a duplicate performance. For Bernini, evidently, the curtain did not reveal a one-way but a two-way opening, like the looking glass of Alice in Wonderland; he used a great swath of drapery in exactly

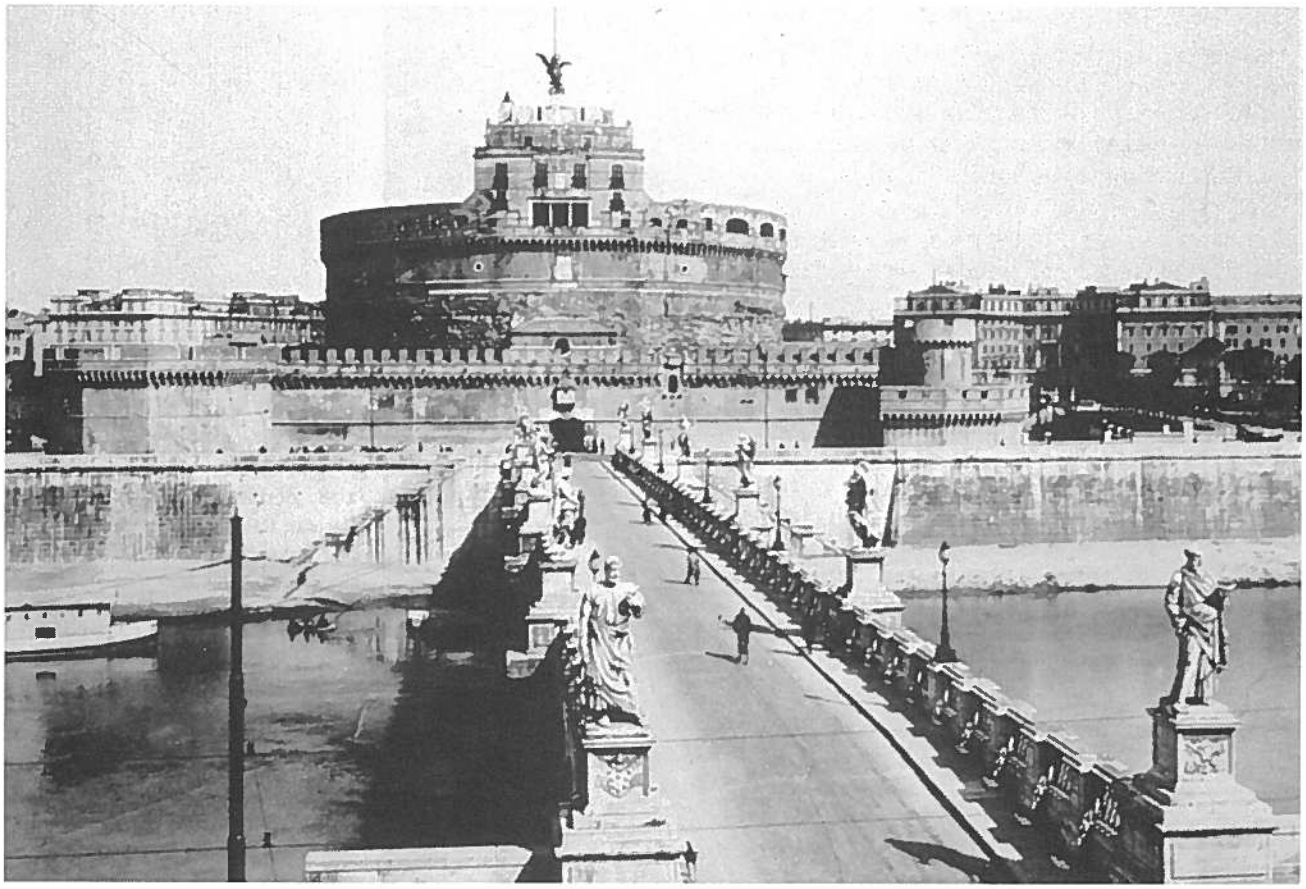
207. Hermes leading deceased from Hades, Roman sarcophagus, detail. Museo Civico, Velletri

208. Bernini, Sala Ducale, 1656–7. Vatican Palace, Rome

this way to frame the passage between two important ceremonial rooms in the Vatican palace, at the behest of Alexander at the very time he was planning the tomb (Fig. 208).

Bernini's conception of Alexander VII's tomb as a dramatic demonstration of the power of faith to overcome death recalls the de la Marck tomb in another sense. Here, on an architectural platform with niches containing figures of the theological and cardinal virtues, Érard kneels in prayer before his own sarcophagus, as if in response to the skeletal figure of Death who emerges from the opposite end, brandishing an hourglass in one hand and beckoning with the other. By contrast, Alexander takes no notice of Death, but turns his head toward the high altar, where Bernini had built the Eucharist into the very fabric of the design. It might be said that the Corpus Domini procession, at which Alexander provided an example of humble devotion by kneeling motionless and constantly in prayer before the Host, comes full circle at his tomb, where also the allegories seem to illustrate the exhortation to love in spirit and in truth inscribed on the pope's anniversary medal: "Prodicamus et adoremus in spiritu et veritate" (Fig. 170).

In sum, the strife between Mercy and Truth over the sin of Adam was resolved only by the truth of Christ's supreme act of charity. Bernard's explication provided the four main constituents of the tomb's message: the allegories from the Eighty-fifth Psalm, the theme of death, the door of death, and the sacramental sacrifice of Christ, with Alexander VII portrayed in the act of Eucharistic devotion. Alexander's prayerful attitude here was the culmination and perpetual repetition of his innovation in the Corpus Domini procession.[135] The tomb thus complemented the main theme of the program for the basilica, including the colonnades and the Cathedra, which became a monumental equivalent to the *splendore* of the Eucharistic monstrance the pope adored during the ritual. Visually, the monument is a "decompression" of that of Paul III, eliding the transition from a relief to a free-standing form – exactly what Bernini achieved in the Cathedra Petri. This special kind of illusionism, "optical refinement" might be a better term, also underlies the image of St. Peter's square, in which the arms reach forth from the church to envelop the spectator. Considered in this way, the illusion of the tomb also involves the spectator, now in a "living" memento mori that includes the



209. Ponte Sant'Angelo and Castel Sant'Angelo, Rome

menacing skeleton and the "door of death." The monument seems to emerge from the recess of the niche as Death seems to escape from the underworld. The pope, the door, and the skeleton confront the spectator, toward whom Death gestures just as menacingly as toward the pope. Comprising the door within the shroud effectively penetrates the invisible separation between fiction and reality.[136] Just as the colonnade in front of the church reaches outward to embrace the worshiper, so the tomb, with the example of Alexander VII, guarantees in all its amplitude the mercy and truth of faith.

Passage to the Holy City

THE PONTE SANT'ANGELO AND CASTEL SANT'ANGELO (1667–71)

PREHISTORY

Saint Michael and the City

Bernini's career at St. Peter's was a lifelong effort to convert the church and the Vatican into a vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem to which every believer aspires. The final work of this celestial urbanism focused on the bridge that led across the Tiber from the center of Rome to the Holy City. The project consisted of clearing and reorganizing the areas at either end of the bridge, which was lengthened and refurbished with ten statues, five on either side, representing angels carrying the instruments of the Passion; the statues rest on pedestals placed at regular intervals in open, grilled balustrades that originally extended some distance on both sides along the river banks (see Fig. 235). Although evidently planned earlier, the work was begun soon after the election of Clement IX (June 1667) and completed in 1671 under Clement X.[137]

The Pons Aelius had been built in the second century A.D. by the emperor Hadrian, Publius Aelius Hadrianus, to give access from the city to the immense tomb that commemorated his power and that of the world domain he had ruled. In the course of the Middle Ages the area across the Tiber became the Holy City centered on the tomb of the apostles, the basilica of St. Peter's, and the Vatican, to which Hadrian's bridge and tomb became the monumental entranceway (Fig. 209). As the hegemony of the papacy was established, and challenged from many quarters, Hadrian's monuments had also taken on the aspect and function of a fortified bastion behind a moat crossed by a guarded bridge.

The transformation is implicit in the origin and meaning of the name applied to the bridge and the

tomb in the Middle Ages, Ponte and Castel Sant'Angelo (Figs. 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215). This Christian reconceptualization of the site drew upon two distinct but convergent traditions involving the dual role of the Archangel Michael as patron saint of the city of Rome and Defender of the Church. The most obvious, literally, is the tradition that virtually identified Michael with Rome, celebrated by the towering figure of the saint that had replaced the bronze image of the emperor Hadrian atop his mausoleum after it was converted into the stronghold of the papacy. This substitution of angelic for imperial military rule was accomplished by a famous salvific apparition of the archangel to Pope Gregory the Great in 590. The story is told twice in the *Golden Legend*. On the feast of Saint Gregory, 12 March:

> The plague continued to rage, and the pope ordained that on Easter Day a procession should march around the city, bearing the picture of the Blessed Virgin which is in the possession of the church of Saint Mary Major. This picture, according to the common opinion, was painted by Saint Luke, who was as skilled in the art of painting as he was in medicine. And all at once the sacred image cleansed the air of infection, as if the pestilence could not withstand its presence; wherever it passed, the air became pure and refreshing. And it is told that the voices of angels were heard around the picture, singing:
>
> *Regina coeli laetare, alleluja,*
> *quia quem meruisti portare, alleluja,*
> *resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluja!*
>
> which means: "Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia! For He Whom thou wert worthy to bear, alleluia! hath risen as He said, alleluia!" To this Saint Gregory promptly responded: "Ora pro nobis Deum rogamus, alleluja." – "Pray for us, we beg, alleluia!" Then, above the fortress of [Pope] Crescentius, he saw a mighty angel wiping a bloody sword and putting it back into its sheath. From this he understood that the plague was at an end, as indeed it was. And thenceforth this fortress was called the Fortress of the Holy Angel.

210. Girolamo Lucenti, Angel with the Nails, detail. Ponte Sant'Angelo, Rome

211. Antonio Raggi, Angel with the Column. Ponte Sant'Angelo, Rome

And on the feast of Saint Michael, 29 September:

> When Gregory had instituted the Greater Litany, and was praying devoutly that the people of Rome might be delivered of the plague, he saw an angel of the Lord standing upon the castle which was once called the

212. Bernini, Angel with the Crown of Thorns. Ponte Sant'Angelo, Rome

Tomb of Hadrian; the angel was drying a bloody sword, and putting it up into its sheath. From this sign Gregory understood that his prayers were heard, and erected a church at that same place in honor of the angel, whence the Castle has since been called the Fortress of the Holy Angel. This apparition is commemorated on 8 May.[138]

The conception of the plague as divine retribution, and specifically the theme of the plague angel wielding then scabbarding his sword, was appropriated from the Old Testament account of the retribution and forgiveness of David for his prideful act of numbering his people against the wishes of the Lord (1 Paralip. 21, Douay):

16 And David lifting up his eyes, saw the angel of the Lord standing between heaven and earth, with a drawn sword in his hand, turned against Jerusalem.

27 And the Lord commanded the angel: and he put up his sword again into the sheath.

This Old Testament prototype of crime, punishment, and reconciliation was central to the Roman Church's

213. Bernini, Angel with the Superscription. Ponte Sant'Angelo, Rome

understanding of its role in the entire process of salvation. To commemorate the miracle and the penitential procession by which the city celebrated it, Nicholas III (1277–80) erected a great marble sculpture of Michael atop the castle.[139] Seen high against the sky, the figure seemed to reenact the heavenly apparition of the angel with his sword in its scabbard, signaling the cessation of God's just ire at man's sins, as the apocalyptic rage of the plague was interpreted. The statue was succeeded by several replacements, including a figure with copper wings and sword commissioned by Nicholas V in 1453,[140] and a "gilded statue of the angel holding a sword outside the scabbard," destroyed by an exploding powder keg in 1497.[141] Over the centuries the awesome image of the armored and winged protector looming watchfully from atop the fortress came to embody the very identity of the city.

Gregory's vision was often included in depictions of the life of the saint and the deeds of the archangel (Figs. 216, 228).[142] Saint Michael's miraculous "conquest" of the plague at the intervention of the pope, and their mutual dominion over the Castello and the bridge, came to symbolize the Church's dominion over the Vatican and Rome itself. Giulio Romano illustrated

214. Bernini, Angel with the Crown of Thorns. Sant'Andrea delle Fratte, Rome

215. Bernini, Angel with the Superscription. Sant'Andrea delle Fratte, Rome

this very point in the early 1520s in his portrayal of another, earlier visionary intervention on behalf of the Church, when Constantine saw an image of the Cross in the sky on the eve of his victory over Maxentius at the battle of the Milvian Bridge, which assured the establishment of the Church and the Christian empire (Fig. 217).[143] In the fresco, in the Sala di Costantino in the Vatican Palace, the triumphant inscription that appeared along with the Cross is placed directly over the bridge and the Mausoleum, shown surmounted by a statue holding a spear. The bridge is clearly copied from a bronze medal of Hadrian (Fig. 218), where it rests on seven arches, the four central piers of which were surmounted by tall columns carrying sculptures, doubtless conceived as Victories or trophies of arms and armor captured in war. The scene recaptures the original function of both monuments in antiquity as the triumphal approach to and commemoration of the divinized emperor; the "archaeologically" correct portrayal serves to celebrate both the Church's victory over the pagan empire and the individual Christian's victory over death.

Siege, Triumph, and Retribution

A further angelic intervention occurred shortly after the Constantine cycle was completed under Clement VII, when the ethos of the Sant'Angelo monuments was radically altered by one of the most disastrous and perilous events in the entire history of the Church. In 1527 Rome was sacked by the latter-day scourge of the troops of the emperor Charles V, and the pope was besieged in the Castel Sant'Angelo.[144] Clement managed to escape during the night of 6–7 December 1527 and flee to Orvieto. The bridge leading to and the piazza in front of the fortress were major focal points of the siege, and this ignominious defeat gave a new level of meaning to the relationship between the Vatican, the city of Rome, and the world at large. Clement regarded this tragic event, and his own "miraculous" salvation, as a providential liberation of the Church from the predations of secular power. The pope considered his escape a reiteration of what might be described as the original instance of angelic intervention on behalf of Christianity, that is, the liberation of Saint Peter from the Mamertine prison, which permitted Christ's first vicar to fulfill his mission of establishing

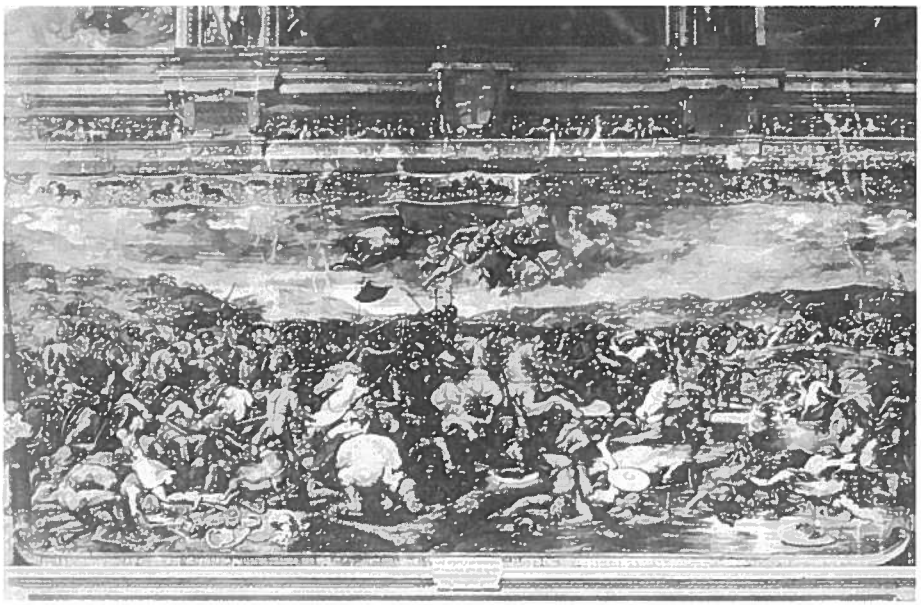
the Church in Rome. The most familiar illustration of the liberation of Saint Peter was that by Raphael in the Stanza d'Eliodoro in the Vatican, where, behind the prison bars, the angel is shown breaking Peter's chains and leading him out of the darkness (Fig. 219). Clement's reference to this apostolic event in relation to his own liberation was made explicit in a medal attributed to Benvenuto Cellini in which the two episodes are melded into one image (Fig. 220); the medal was issued in two versions with different inscriptions, one referring to the pope himself, *Misit D(ominus) Ang(elum) suum et liberavit me*, the other to the city of Rome, *Misit Dominus angelum suum. Roma.*[145] The deliverance from pestilence was in fact twofold. The plague had also taken hold during the siege, and there was danger from this quarter as well as from the mercenary Lutheran *landsknechts* who made up the bulk of the imperial forces.[146] The great trauma thus also echoed the original Gregorian episode that occasioned the baptizing of Hadrian's tomb as the Castel "Sant'Angelo."

After returning to Rome in October 1528, Clement VII embarked on an aggressive campaign of commissioning images aimed at restoring the moral and by implication the temporal authority of the church. The entrance to the Holy City was to be given new importance with a project designed around 1530 by Baccio Bandinelli – a huge bronze group representing Michael defeating the seven deadly sins, to be installed on the parapet of the military tower that had been placed in front of the Castello for added protection.[147] According to Vasari, Clement commissioned the sculpture in fulfillment of a vow, evidently to commemorate the intervention of the Almighty on behalf of the Church, and as a warning to its future enemies. A sketch by Bandinelli shows that, in this new context, the Archangel who earlier replaced his weapon in its scabbard in a particular act of benevolence was transformed into the prototypical champion of Christian virtue (Fig. 221). The project, never carried out, was evidently related to a plan, also never carried out, for Michelangelo to paint the same subject on the entrance wall to the Sistine Chapel, as the prelapsarian counterpart to the Last Judgment that he would depict on the altar wall. Facing each other at opposite ends of the Old and New Testament histories on the flanking walls, the two apocalyptic visions would have engulfed the visitor in the universal embrace of church doctrine. There is good reason to suppose that an awesomely incandescent altarpiece in Siena painted circa 1526–30 by Domenico Beccafumi and showing Michael defeating the rebellious angels (Fig. 222), which has much in common with Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, is related to these unexecuted schemes.

216. Vision of St. Gregory the Great. Trinità dei Monti, Rome

Bandinelli's project would have given monumental form to the retributive association that had long been implicit in the relationship between the Archangel and the Castello. In his effort to reassert the power of the Church, Clement VII introduced this association explicitly in another way, extending its reach beyond the river to the city itself. He removed the decrepit structures from the area leading to the bridge and in 1534 had its entrance flanked by monumental statues of Peter with his keys and Paul with his sword, the principal apostles in the foundation of the Church, who are both commemorated in St. Peter's (Fig. 223). The saints had a particular significance in this context, however, to which voice was given in the inscriptions placed on the statue's pedestals: for Peter, as exemplum of humility and penitence, "here forgiveness to the humble" (*hinc humilibus venia*); for Paul, soldier in the battle for the faith, whom Augustine called a "true warrior for Christ," "here punishment to the prideful" (*hinc retributio superbis*).[148] Conceived in this way, the two apostles were surely meant to be seen in relation to the Archangel above. Taken together, the figures inevitably recall their traditional place in depictions of the Last Judgment. For the first time since antiquity, the bridge and the mausoleum were now linked as interdependent parts of a coherent whole, a monumental memento mori.

The quasi-antiquarian Christian theme implicit in the background of Giulio Romano's Constantine fresco



217. Giulio Romano, *Battle of the Milvian Bridge*. Sala di Costantino, Vatican Palace, Rome

was given an explicitly modern, political formulation by Clement VII's successor. As an act of reconciliation with Charles V, Paul III revived one of the glorious traditions of the ancient Romans. In 1536, following the emperor's victory over the Turks at Tunis, Charles was given a triumphal entry into Rome to be received by the pope. To celebrate his passage to St. Peter's and the Vatican, the bridge's parapets were provided temporarily with a new set of eight sculptures, presumably in recollection and emulation of the Victories or trophies shown on the Hadrianic medal (Fig. 224; see Fig. 218).[149] On the west side, behind the statue of St. Peter, who administers the New Law, were the four evangelists; on the east, behind St. Paul, apostle to the Hebrews, were the four Old Testament patriarchs Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. In recalling and emulating the ancient parapet sculptures, both the choice and the disposition of the new figures endowed the bridge with a distinct and consistent liturgical dynamic. The arrangement was complementary bilaterally, with St. Peter and the evangelists on the dexter side, St. Paul and their Old Testament counterparts on the sinister; and the disposition was progressive longitudinally, with the evangelists presumably aligned in their canonical, the patriarchs in their chronological order.[150] The ancient theme of triumph thus acquired an entirely new content and purpose. The past became testimony to the present, history became a process of promise and fulfillment. The sculptures were only temporary, but the ideas they represented left an indelible mark on what now became the bridge to eternity.

The underlying eschatological theme was not motivated solely by the aftermath of the Sack of Rome. In the course of the sixteenth century, the papacy increased its hegemony over the city of Rome and demonstrated its jurisdiction by shifting the locus of criminal punishments, notably executions for capital offenses, from the center of Rome to the point of entry to the Holy City at the threshold of the Ponte Sant'Angelo. The ritual of execution was orchestrated by the Confraternity of John the Baptist Beheaded, whose mission it was to comfort and reconcile the prisoners to their fate, and which maintained a chapel adjoining the entrance to the bridge where they were prepared to meet their Maker.[151] Sentences were carried out after a procession through the streets deliberately suggestive of Christ's way to the Cross. Paintings depicting the Passion were held in front of the prisoners' faces. In an ironic evocation of the sculpted Victories or trophies that adorned the parapets in antiquity, the severed heads of the "giustiziati" were displayed on stakes placed along the flanks of the bridge – a kind of historical reminder to those crossing it of the

218. Pons Aelius, medal of Hadrian, reverse

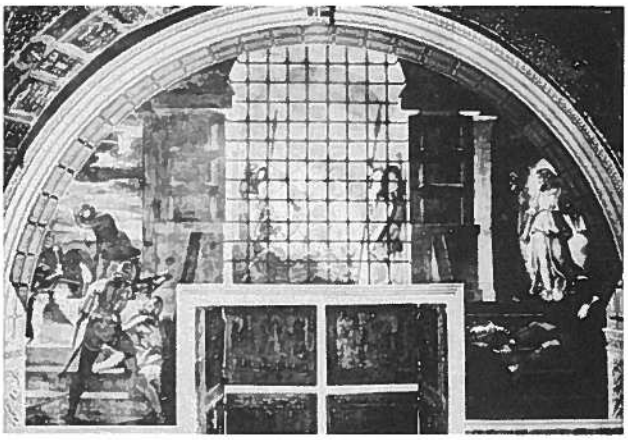
ultimate judgment to which they, too, would be subject (Figs. 225, 226). The executions took place within sight of the Archangel atop the Castello, in an enclosure beside the sword-bearing figure of St. Paul (who was himself martyred by beheading), the sinister side traditionally reserved for the damned at the Last Judgment. The punishments themselves – hanging, decapitation, quartering et al. – were those traditionally meted out to the sinners in Hell and often depicted in scenes of the Last Judgment.

The Last Judgment

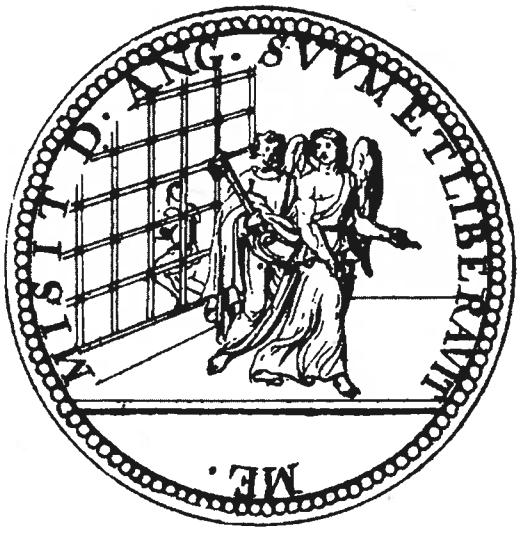
The contrasting themes of the beneficent Archangel scabbarding and vengeful Archangel brandishing his sword were replaced by a very different image under Paul III, who initiated the Council of Trent to defend, reform, and reaffirm the essential tenets of the Church. In 1544 the pope commissioned a new figure of marble with bronze accoutrements from Raffaello da Montelupo (Fig. 227).[152] Poised in a classical contrapposto pose midway between standing and striding, the Archangel seems inscrutably to contemplate the scene below, his naked sword held aloft, poised ambiguously between sheathing and unsheathing the weapon in the scabbard held at his side. This intermediate, "neutral" pose alludes to Michael's traditional role as weigher of souls at the Last Judgment, embodying both the promise and the threat, the salvific and punitive alternatives of the Archangel's invincible power. Montelupo's figure remained atop the Castello until it was replaced in 1752 by the historically minded Benedict XIV, who reverted to Gregory the Great's original vision with the heroic bronze monument by Peter Verschaffelt that now occupies the summit.

The comprehensive association of the Archangel, the Castello, and the bridge with the Last Judgment – particularly in relation to the plague and the inscrutability of divine justice – may indeed have originated with Gregory the Great. A seminal work in the creation of these eschatological themes was Gregory's Fourth Dialogue, in which he recounts visions of the underworld described by those who have returned from the dead, in particular a Roman soldier who

> died three years ago of the horrible plague which devastated Rome. During that time arrows could be seen hurled down from the sky, carrying death to many individuals. A soldier at Rome was struck down in this way. He did not remain dead very long, however, for, shortly after dying, he came back to life and told what had happened to him. The scene he described – one that became familiar to many others at this time – was as follows. He saw a river whose dark waters were covered by a mist of vapors that gave off an unbearable stench. Over the river was a bridge. It led to pleasant meadows beyond, covered by green grass and dotted with richly scented flowers. These meadows seemed to be the gathering places for people dressed in white robes. The fragrant odors pervading the region were a delight for all who lived there. Everyone had his own dwelling, which gleamed with brilliant light. One house of magnificent proportions was still under construction and the bricks used were made of gold. But no one could tell for whom the house was meant. There were houses also along the banks of the river, some of which were infected by the vapors and stench rising from the river, while others remained untouched.
>
> On this bridge saint and sinner underwent a final test. The unjust would slip off and fall into the dark, foul waters. The just, unhampered by sin, could walk over it, freely and without difficulty, to the beautiful



219. Raphael, *St. Michael Liberating St. Peter from the Mamertine Prison*, ca. 1514. Stanza d'Eliodoro, Vatican Palace, Rome



220. Attributed to Benvenuto Cellini, *St. Michael Liberating St. Peter from the Mamertine Prison*, 1527, medal of Clement VII (after Buonanni 1699, 184, 192, no. IX)

221. Baccio Bandinelli, *St. Michael Defeating the Seven Deadly Sins*, drawing Musée du Louvre, Paris

meadows on the other side. Below this bridge the soldier saw Peter, an overseer of the church who died four years ago, lying prone in the foul mire loaded down with heavy iron chains. When he asked why such terrible punishment was inflicted on him, the answer he received harmonizes well with what we of this household remember of Peter's life and actions. "He suffers these torments," he was told, "because whenever he was ordered to administer punishment, he would deal out the blows in a spirit of cruelty rather than of obedience." Everyone acquainted with Peter knows this is true.

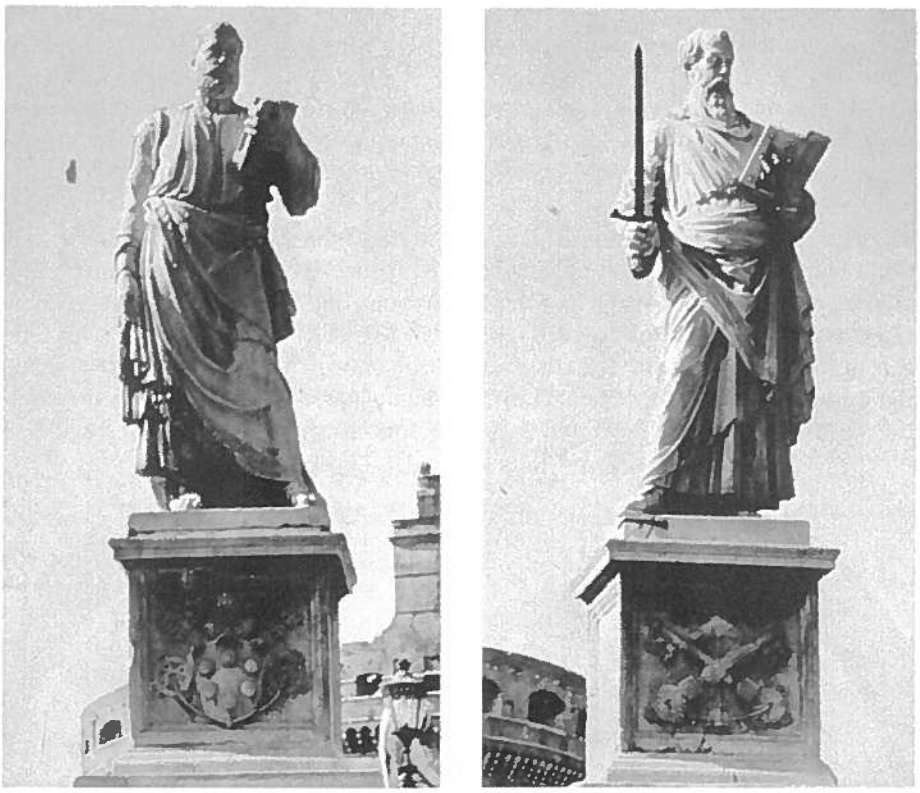
According to the soldier's description, he also saw a priest of some foreign country stepping onto the bridge and walking over it with all the confidence that a life of sincerity had won for him. On the same bridge he saw and recognized the Stephen whom we mentioned above. In trying to cross the river, Stephen had slipped and fallen, leaving the lower half of his body dangling over the edge of the bridge. Some fiendish men from the river below seized him by the sides and tried to pull him down. At the same time, princely men dressed in white appeared on the bridge to draw him back to safety. While this struggle went on, with the good spirits drawing him up and the evil ones pulling him down, our spectator was called back to earth to be reunited with his body. *No one, therefore, knows what the final outcome of this struggle was* [italics mine].[153]

With the reference to the plague taking place in Rome, the bridge with the "heavenly mansion" at one end, the river, and the arrogant church official named Peter, the site can only be identified with the Ponte Sant'Angelo, the Tiber, and the tomb of Hadrian as the bastion of Saint Peter and the papacy. The Roman monuments thus become the locus of justice meted out at the Last Judgment and, through Gregory's seminal text, keys to the definition of the eschatology of the Church. The plague was seen as an act of divine retribution, an instrument of God's wrath, a presage of the Dies Irae and of Michael's role in the Last Judgment. The close association between the appearances of Saint Michael at the plague and at the Last Judgment is illustrated in a late fourteenth-century fresco by Spinello Aretino in the church of San Francesco at Arezzo (Figs. 228, 229).[154] The vision at Castel Sant'Angelo is shown in the upper two registers, while below Michael acts as the avenger of evildoers at the end of time.

The Bridge of Trial

The Bridge of Trial appears as an important feature of the fiery punishments described in many medieval apocalyptic texts, notably the Vision of St. Paul and the Revelation of Esdras.[155] But Gregory's specifically Roman vision in the Fourth Dialogue inspired what must have been one of the chief progenitors of Bernini's conception of the Ponte Sant'Angelo's place in the religio-topography of

222. Domenico Beccafumi, *St. Michael Defeating the Rebellious Angels*. Pinacoteca, Siena



223. Lorenzo Lotti and Paolo Romano, Sts. Peter and Paul. Ponte Sant'Angelo, Rome

the Church: its role as the eschatological bridge par excellence in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which had also been Michelangelo's point of reference in imagining his *Last Judgment*. In the eighteenth canto of the *Inferno*, describing the place called Malebolge, Dante speaks of a fortress stronghold surrounded by deep pits spanned by a bridge. There he saw naked sinners passing in both directions, like crowds at the Jubilee year, and the tortures of the damned below:

> In this place we found ourselves dropped from the back of Geryon, and the poet held to the left, and I came on behind. On the right hand I saw new woe, new torments, and new scourgers, with which the first ditch was replete. At its bottom were the sinners, naked; on our side of the middle they came facing us, and, on the other side, along with us, but with greater strides: thus the Romans, because of the great throng, in the year of the Jubilee, have taken measures for the people to pass over the bridge, so that on one side all face toward the Castle and go to St. Peter's, and on the other they go toward the Mount. Along the dark rock, on this side and on that, I saw horned demons with large scourges, who smote them fiercely from behind.[156]

Dante thus associates the traditional Bridge of Trial with the bridge used by pilgrims to reach the Holy City to obtain the plenary indulgence, the first of its kind, during the first Holy Year of Jubilee, declared by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300.[157] With respect to these indulgences Dante gave the Tiber River a specific role in the divine scheme, for on its shore the chosen souls began their journey through Purgatory on their way to salvation.[158] Two themes that occur here, and frequently in such eschatological imagery, are particularly relevant to the ideological substructure of Bernini's project: the perilous bridge and the atrocious punishments of those who fail to make the crossing. A common feature in descriptions and illustrations of the Bridge of Trial was its perilousness – it was a hair's breadth wide and had no balustrades to hinder the wayward sinner's fall into the fiery flood below.

Purgatory and All Souls

Owing mainly to the nature and importance of this tract, Gregory became the intercessory saint par excellence for liberating souls from Purgatory.[159] His references to Rome, the plague, Saint Michael, the river, the bridge, the "mansiones" reached by the successful soul, were a congeries of allusions that ineluctably suggest the Tiber crossing, the mausoleum, and the angelic instrument of God's will. Apart from his contribution to the definition of Hell, Gregory's main purpose in the Dialogue is to demonstrate the efficacy of suffrage to alleviate the pains of those condemned to pay for their sins.[160] This compensatory capacity of the living to act on behalf of the dead became a fundamental ingredient of the theology

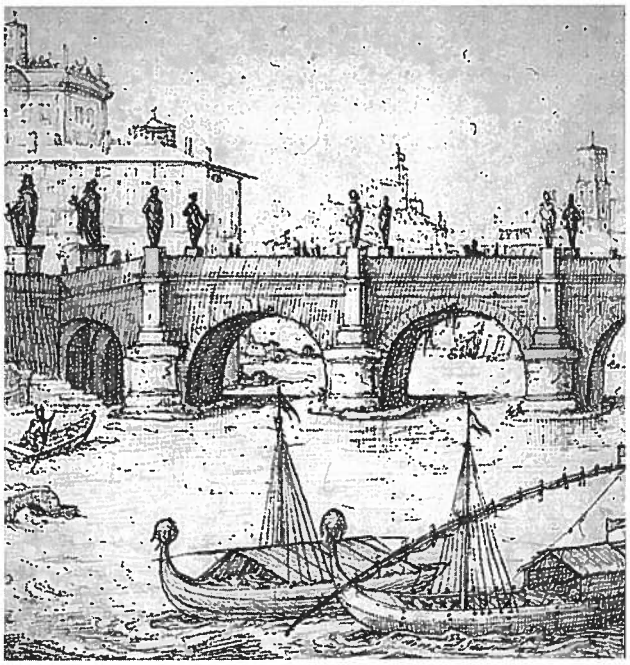
and practice of the doctrine of purgatory. Liturgically, this relationship between offering and assuagement was embodied personally and particularly in the Mass for the Dead, but it was given universal status in the Feast of the Commemoration of All Souls, 2 November. In his discussion of the feast in the Golden Legend, Jacobus of Voragine gives elaborate explanations of all these points, based on Gregory's Dialogue and including the example of the Roman soldier at the Bridge of Trial.[161] The prayers offered in this context reach beyond the individual and gain in efficacy as acts of charity toward others who have died and therefore cannot help themselves. It is precisely in this sense that the offertory prayer used in both liturgies pleads that Christ liberate the faithful from the infernal torments, including the deep lake, and that Michael re-present them in the holy light:

> O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell and from the deep lake; deliver them from the lion's mouth, that hell engulf them not, nor they fall into the darkness, but let Michael, the holy standard-bearer, bring them into the holy light which Thou once didst promise to Abraham and his seed.[162]

The Plague

A major impetus for refurbishing the entrance to the Holy City must have come from a recurrence of the plague, which, having devastated Naples, wracked Rome from May 1656 through the summer of 1657.[163] Alexander VII took drastic measures to confine the disease, and his efforts were credited with limiting the number of victims to some fifteen thousand, far fewer than usual in such outbreaks. To commemorate the event and pay tribute to the pope's succor, no fewer than three medals were struck, two in 1657, the third in 1659. In one, which seems to adumbrate the eschatological imagery of the bridge, an angel stands beside a cross holding the gentle yoke (Matt.11:29–30) and a book (doubtless the Gospels), treading underfoot a skeletal figure of Death; the legend reads POPVLVM RELIGIONE TVETVR (the people are protected by religion) (Fig. 230).[164] The intervention and ministrations of the pope were also celebrated in the second medal, designed by Bernini, who had lost one of his brothers in the plague while another, having fallen ill, "miraculously" recovered.[165] Issued in 1657 upon the cessation of the disease, the medal shows Saint Peter himself in the sky holding the keys and gesturing toward St. Peter's as the source and goal of healing faith (Fig. 231).[166] Dead, dying, and recovering figures are depicted below, partially immersed in the flowing river, while to the side a winged figure strides away carrying a skull and a flamboyant sword. The scene seems to be taking place in the area between St. Peter's and Castel Sant'Angelo, and the legend of the medal, VT VMBRA ILLIVS LIBERARENTVR, which derives from a passage in Acts that refers to Saint Peter as healer, also served to express in Petrine terms the continuity between the colonnade and the Castello: "5:15 (Douay Version) Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that, when Peter came, his shadow at the least might overshadow any of them and they might be delivered from their infirmities."[167] The legend clearly anticipates the 1661 inscription of Isaiah 4:6 at the northeast entrance to the colonnade, the approach to St. Peter's and the Vatican from the bridge and Castello, where the portico is described as an *umbraculum*, a refuge from storm and rain. In effect, Peter and the pope are identified with the portico, as the angel is with the Castello and bridge. In fact, the plague was often conceived of as a rain of arrows cast down by an irate God upon sinners, who huddle beneath the ample, tentlike mantle of the Madonna della Misericordia, wherein the Virgin is seen as the sheltering church.[168]

In recognition of his actions, the Senate in 1658 decreed that a statue of the pope be erected on the Capitol; he refused the honor, and an inscription recording the city's gratitude was installed instead.[169] In 1659 a splendid third medal, again designed by Bernini, was issued by an official of the city (Fig. 232). The medal casts Alexander in the role of Androcles, the runaway Roman slave who healed a wounded lion. Recaptured and condemned to die in the amphitheater, Androcles was confronted by the same beast, which, instead of attacking



224. View of Ponte Sant'Angelo, drawing, ca. 1580. Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin-Dahlem (after Weil 1974, fig. 17, p. 28)

fawned upon him, whereupon both were set free and Androcles became known as the Healer. Bernini shows Androcles, before whom the lion bows down in devotion, not as a slave but as a military hero wielding his sword as if he were the archangel Michael. The long inscription on the medal details many of the pope's benefactions to the city, but first and foremost its liberation from the plague.[170]

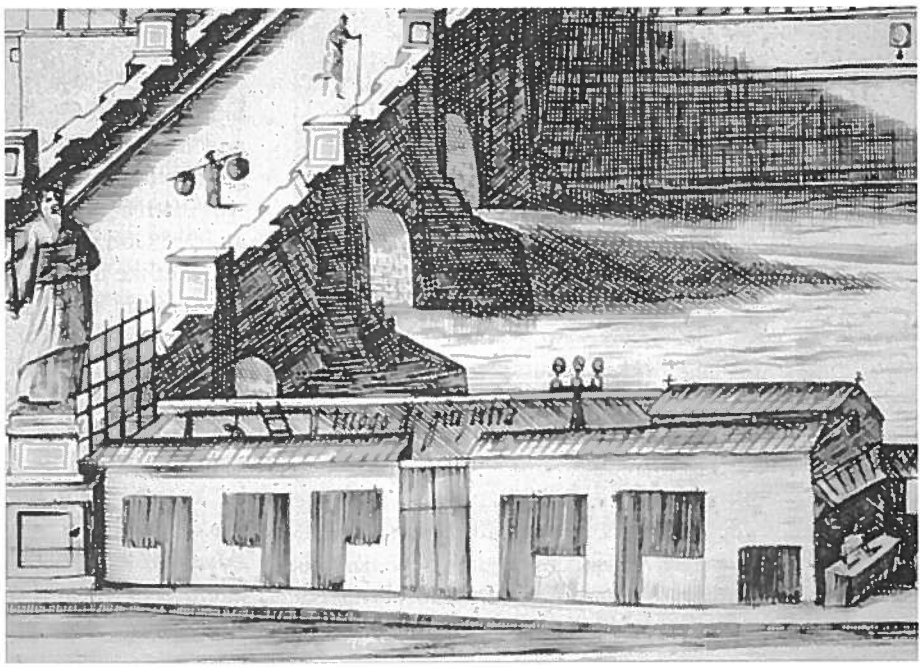
The pope's beneficent role in this horrendous event inevitably evoked the circumstances of the original vision of Gregory the Great, which had, in effect, converted the mausoleum of Hadrian into a Christian fortress under the aegis of Saint Michael, successor to the avenging angel of the Old Testament. Now, however, the stimulus of the past echoing in the present led to a comprehensive new program in which the bridge and the Castello would synthesize the traditions associated with the entrance to the Holy City.[171]

Preconception

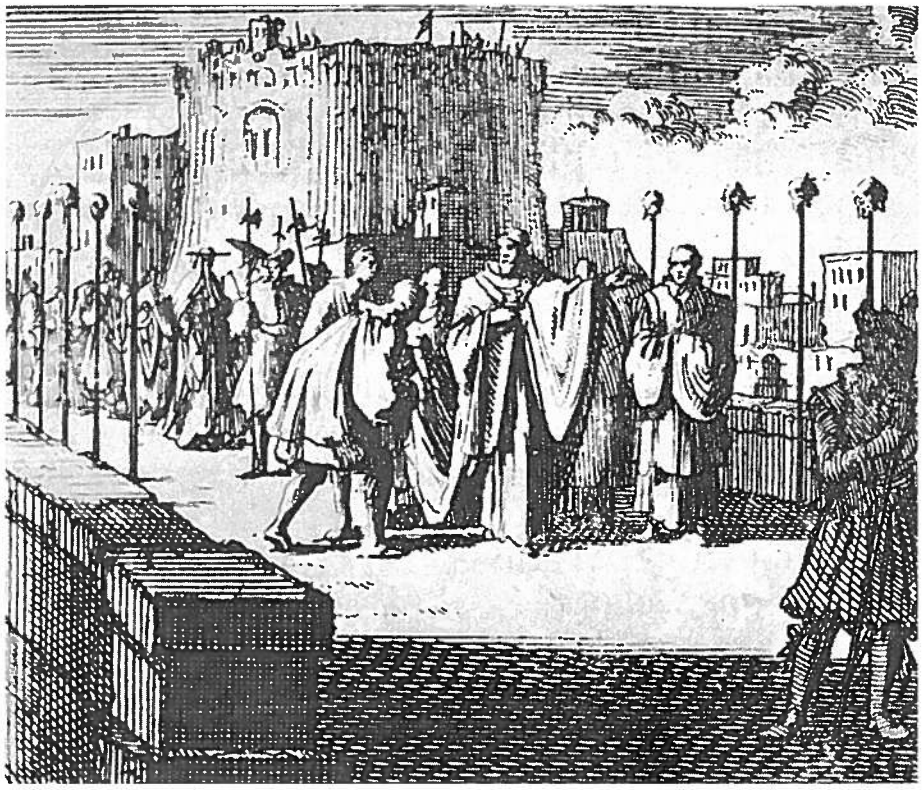
Alexander VII died on 2 May 1667, Clement IX was elected on 20 June, and the first payments for work on the refurbishing of the bridge leading to the Vatican were made on 22 September. It is evident that at least the basic elements of the project, if not the actual plans, must have been conceived sometime during Alexander's papacy.[172] Indeed, thought must have been given from the outset to incorporating the entrance to the Holy City into the grand schemes the pope adopted and carried out in the basilica and the palace. The idea to create a major thoroughfare from the river to the basilica, carried out for the Jubilee of 1450, had been repeatedly broached since the thirteenth century, and we have seen that the line of approach from Castel Sant'Angelo had been an important consideration in the design of the Piazza San Pietro and the Scala Regia with the equestrian statue of Constantine. A specific indication that Alexander was thinking about the relation between the Castel Sant'Angelo and the Vatican is an inscription of 1656 – that is, while the piazza in front of the basilica was first being planned – recording that the pope had installed the uppermost crown of the fortress so that for the dignity of the papacy the final decor would not be wanting.[173]

A hint as to the nature of Bernini's vision for the project emerges from a remarkable document of April 1659 concerning Montelupo's sculpture of the archangel Michael. A workman is paid for various repairs to the angel and for having disjoined the clamps that held it, "because Bernini wanted to raise it higher."[174] The point of the operation was surely to increase the visibility of the figure, obviously not from the city at large – the figure was already plain to see from a distance – but from below, so that it would continue to loom above as the visitor approached from the other side of the river. This concern indicates that Bernini had already invented a new conceptual and formal role for the angel bridge, and for the entire complex; perhaps he was already thinking of the Archangel as the commander of a celestial honor guard.[175]

One senses the germination of another aspect of Bernini's concept in two of the artist's apparent whimsies during his stay in Paris in the summer of 1665, recounted by Chantelou. On 31 July, Bernini made a point of visiting the Pont-Rouge, also known as the Pont Saint-Landry, which linked the Île Saint-Louis to the Île de la



225. Ambrogio Brambilla, View of Ponte and Castel Sant'Angelo, detail showing the "Luogo di Giustizia" with gallows and several heads, engraving, 1585–90



226. Procession of Sixtus V showing severed heads of criminals displayed on stakes along the parapets of Ponte Sant'Angelo (after D'Onofrio 1981, fig. 47, p. 76)

Cité behind Notre-Dame: "Our evening drive was rather short; he wanted to go to the Pont-Rouge and stopped the coach on it for a good quarter of an hour looking first from one side of the bridge and then the other. After a while he turned to me and said, 'It is a beautiful view; I am a great lover of water, it calms my spirits.' Then we returned home." And the next day: "After we had gone towards the Cours-la-Reine he asked to go to the Pont-Rouge where we had been the night before; he remained there a good quarter of an hour; we came back by the Pont-Neuf and through the streets."[176] The bridge where Bernini lingered was carefully chosen and his interest far more than casual (Figs. 233, 234). Constructed in 1627, demolished in 1710, and now replaced by the Pont Saint-Louis, the Pont-Rouge was a narrow, fragile, wooden structure (painted red), often damaged and in need of repair; passage, only on foot, must have seemed perilous indeed, and the open railings provided a full view of the water below.[177] In a famous accident during a procession in 1634, the bridge gave way and many persons were killed or wounded; a similar and even more notorious disaster, accompanied by an outbreak of the plague, had befallen the pilgrims crossing the Ponte Sant'Angelo during the Jubilee of 1450.[178]

227. Raffaello da Montelupo, *St. Michael.* Castel Sant'Angelo, Rome

BERNINI'S WAY OF SALVATION

Bernini's project involved two fundamental innovations with respect to the prior history of the Ponte Sant'Angelo and of bridge design generally. The new features are

defined explicitly in the accounts given by Baldinucci and Domenico Bernini, doubtless echoing Bernini's own formulation of his concept: while taking great care to provide for the visibility of the river below, he incorporated the traditional Christian name of the bridge in a cohort of angels displaying the instruments of Christ's Passion.

> During the pontificate of Clement IX, Bernini finished the right wing of the portico of St. Peter's by the Holy Office and the ramp or, as we would say, the pavilion in front of the basilica of St. Peter's. He embellished the bridge of Sant'Angelo with statues of angels carrying instruments of Christ's Passion and designed the balustrades. Bernini made with his own hand two of the angels that were to be placed with the others on the bridge. But it did not seem right to Pope Clement that such beautiful works should remain there exposed to damage from the weather. Therefore, he had copies of them made. The originals were placed elsewhere at the disposition of the cardinal-nephew. Nevertheless, Bernini carved another angel secretly, the one with the superscription, so that a work by a pope to whom he knew he owed so much would not be without some creation by his hand. When the pope learned of it, although he was very pleased, he said, 'In short, Cavalier,

228. Spinello Aretino, *Vision of St. Gregory*. Guasconi Chapel, S. Francesco, Arezzo

229. Spinello Aretino, *Last Judgment*. Guasconi Chapel, S. Francesco, Arezzo

230. Religion Protects the People, medal of Alexander VII (after Buonanni 1699, 649, n. X)

231. St. Peter Expelling the Plague, medal of Alexander VII. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

you wish to compel me to have yet another copy made.' And let my reader now consider that Bernini, though well on in years, carved three entire marble statues, larger than life-size, in the space of two years: a thing that to those most competent in art seemed to be an impossibility.

Baldinucci makes the following observation discussing Bernini's fountains:

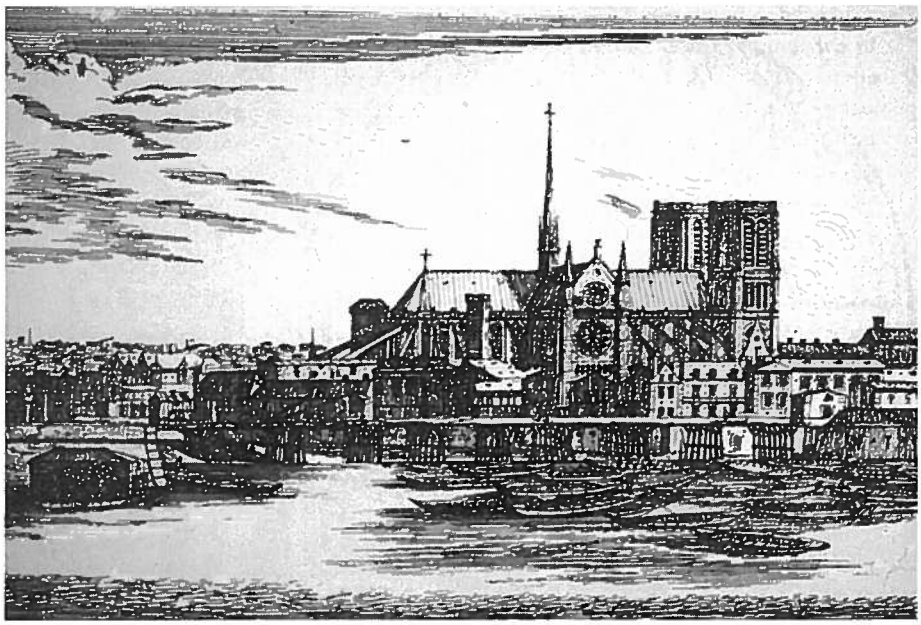
> Another of his precepts should be brought forth since we are speaking of fountains. It is that as fountains are made for the enjoyment of water, then the water should always be made to fall so that it can be seen. It was with such a precept in mind, I believe, that in his restoration of the bridge of Sant'Angelo by order of Clement IX, he had the side walls lowered so that the water could better be enjoyed. The eye may see with double pleasure from the banks of the river the flow of water as well as the bridge above, ornamented with angels that allude to its ancient name.[179]

Domenico Bernini introduces the idea while speaking of the bridge:

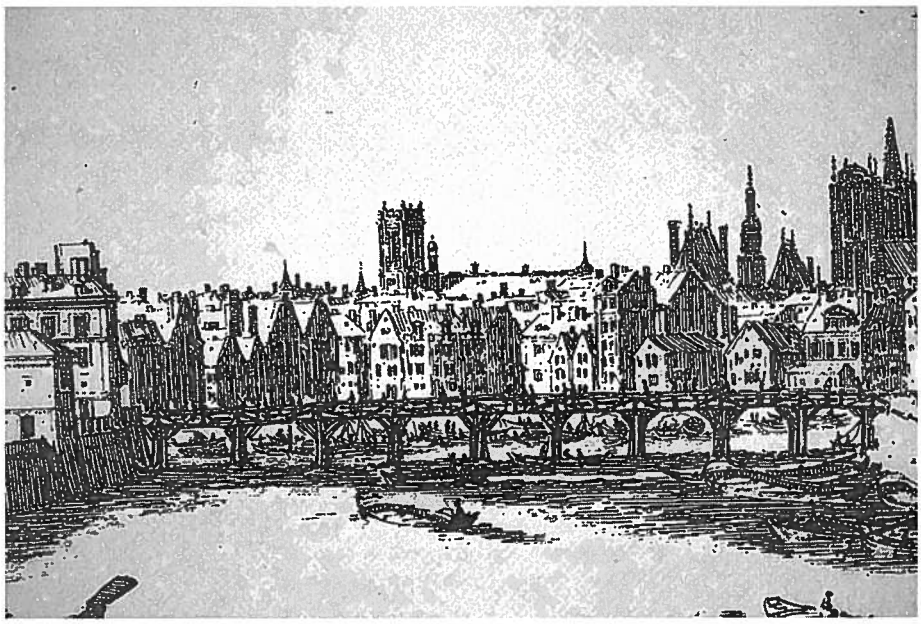
> But Clement, desirous as his predecessors to increase the magnificence of the Temple of St. Peter's, the adornment of Rome, and the glory of his pontificate, ordered Bernini to adorn in the best way with some noble invention the bridge that takes its name from the nearby Castello, Ponte Sant'Angelo, deemed worthy of notable

232. Alexander VII as Androcles, medal of Alexander VII. Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome

embellishment both for the grandeur of the Mausoleum of Hadrian which presents itself to those who enter it, and because it is the most frequented way to the great Basilica of St. Peter. The idea that occurred to Bernini was most appropriate to the site and as majestic in appearance as can be said. He often observed that 'With respect to fountains or works involving water, the good architect will make sure that it will easily be seen, either in falling or in passing. Since the sight of water gives



233. Israël Silvestre, *View of Pont-Rouge from the North* (Paris), detail, engraving, before 1655



234. Israël Silvestre, *View of Pont-Rouge from the South* (Paris), detail, engraving, ca. 1657

> great pleasure, to impede or block it removes from such works their most delightful value.' Toward this end, when ornamenting the bridge, the Cavaliere wished that the parapets, which are normally solid wall constructions, would include regular openings, protected by wrought-iron screens, so that the passerby might easily admire the flow of the water above which he happily moves.[180]

Open balustrades had never before been seen on the monumental stone bridges of Rome.[181] Bernini opened the parapets along the flanking banks of the Tiber as well, so that the river was visible even as one approached the crossing itself (Fig. 235; the flanking parapets were closed when the bridge was renovated after 1890). The biographers were justified in relating the innovation to Bernini's appreciation of the effect of moving water. In contrast to the thin, geometrically controlled jets of Mannerist tradition, he engineered for his fountain and theater designs spectacular aquatic displays, veritable cascades, abundant and potentially overwhelming. The innovation was exactly analogous to Bernini's transferal of other formal devices from the realm of the informal, rustic, and ephemeral to the context of urban "high art" – awesomely craggy rustication in palace architecture, aggressively crude draftsmanship in caricatures, menacingly

failed scenic illusions in the theater.[182] These transformations of tradition were not merely formal but conveyed distinct and often disturbing meaning in their respective contexts. In one of his comedies, the river Tiber threatened to flood off the stage and inundate the audience![183] At the Ponte Sant'Angelo, as at the Pont-Rouge in Paris, the effect of the natural flow is quite different, inspiring, in Bernini's terms, a mood of meditative contemplation and tranquillity. His meaning in this case becomes evident only with an understanding of the Ponte Sant'Angelo project as a whole.

Beginning in May 1667, obstructive buildings at the entrance to the bridge (including the infamous executions precinct) were demolished to create the Piazza San Celso, and the open-grilled parapets were introduced flanking the bridge and along the river on either side.[184] The effect was to enlarge the vista from the Piazza San Celso and include the flood running under the bridge in the overall prospect. The bridge, the river, and the Castel Sant'Angelo behind it could now be comprehended as one vast, emblematic marker of the perilous transition from the secular to the sacred city, from this world to the next. The panorama is a "real"-world prolepsis of the otherworldly vision that awaits the faithful who, approaching the end of the pilgrimage inside the church, perceive the Cathedra Petri looming gloriously behind the angel-borne baldachin. On the other side of the bridge, the last remaining obstructions to the Borgo Nuovo were removed and the road was widened. The junction, formerly a focus of military defense, now provided an unobstructed view and passage to the hallowed precincts of the Vatican and St. Peter's.[185] This ultimate demilitarization and sacralization of the entrance to the Holy City might be thought of as the political counterpart of the spiritual embrace embodied in the open arms of the St. Peter's colonnades. With its thought-provoking view of the abyss, the Ponte Sant'Angelo evokes the perilously narrow, unguarded Bridge of Trial, now become a broad avenue protectively screened on either side by the perforated balustrades and guarded by troops of angels. In the horizontal axis the bridge becomes the intermediary between the secular and the holy city; in the vertical axis, it becomes the intermediary between the deep, dark river winding its way to the globe-encircling sea, and the infinite, angel-filled empyrean above. Bernini's transformation may be said to have given Ponte Sant'Angelo a cosmic expanse, fulfilling the destiny of Rome, center and capital of the world – *umbilicus mundi* in classical terms, in papal terms, *urbis et orbi.*

The Via Salvationis and the Arma Christi

Bernini's solution for transforming the ancient Pons Aelius into the modern Ponte Sant'Angelo consisted partly in assimilating to the classical tradition of triumph and apotheosis the vast accumulation of medieval eschatological associations. His essential contribution in doing so consisted in distinguishing, isolating, and integrating into this cumulative heritage the ultimate, salvific component that had been only implicit before: Christ's sacrifice. This innovation was perhaps inevitable, given the special emphasis upon and devotion to the Eucharist that had characterized church doctrine since the Council of Trent; we have seen that the Eucharist was the central theme of Alexander's pontificate from the outset, motivating in fundamental ways the unprecedented tasks he entrusted to Bernini at St. Peter's. Similarly, flanking the bridge with parallel sequences of monumental statues refurbished the idea of a triumphal honor guard inherent in the ancient, imperial heritage of the bridge, which had been revived in prophetic terms in the Old Testament–New Testament succession for the entry of Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor. But representing the Eucharistic sacrifice as a sort of dramatization enacted by a procession of sculpted angels bearing the instruments of the Passion was a radically new conception that conflated two previously distinct but profoundly related traditions. The fusion of antecedents transformed the role of the bridge from that of an introductory "walk-on" to that of the prime protagonist in Bernini's Roman production of the divine mystery play of salvation. This reference to the mystery play tradition is by no means factitious.

The Passion of Christ was of course the original and ultimate Christian triumphal procession, toward victory over death through humility and self-sacrifice. Since the later Middle Ages, this eschatological dynamic of the Passion had been ritualized in an independent, penitential journey in the stages of which single episodes of Christ's immolation became the subjects of particular devotions; the faithful followed in Christ's footsteps, receiving at each step of the way indulgences of time released from Purgatory. The Stations or Way of the Cross was a penitential devotion developed originally by the Franciscans in the Holy Land, in which the worshiper retraced Christ's path to Golgotha, imitating his sufferings on behalf of humankind. Especially in the sixteenth century, the exercise became increasingly popular in the form of depictions of the events of the Passion distributed in chronological order along the nave of a church, or as sculpted tableaus placed along the ascending path of a "Holy Mountain." By re-creating the Passion in this way, the Stations of the Cross were permanent versions of the contemporaneous, ephemeral mystery plays produced in cathedral squares, where the sacred events were performed, not on a single stage as in the classical tradition, but on the platforms of individual, temporary "mansiones," with the populace following from one to the next.[186] Bernini's bridge combined both representational modes, in that the angels are arranged in

succession yet are also perceived and meant to be understood as a unified whole.

A link between the Via Salvationis, as an expiatory meditation on the Passion, and the Last Judgment was grounded in the famous passage in the Gospel of Matthew (25:35–9) that was crucial to the Church's response to the Protestants' principle of justification by faith alone. Here Christ himself defined the Last Judgment and stipulated the good works – the acts of mercy – requisite to redemption.[187] Before reciting the six merciful obligations, Jesus says:

> 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
> 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

And, after reciting the failed opportunities for charity, he concludes:

> 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.
>
> 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

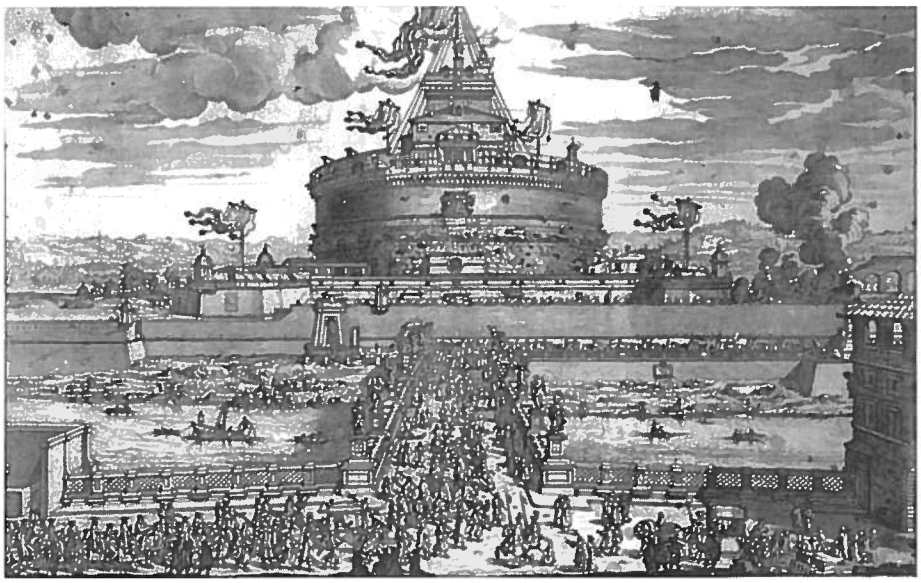
The seventh work, Burial of the Dead, which integrated the series into the eschatological scheme, was added by the Church specifically in response to the ravages of the plague. In an elaborately illustrated treatise by Giulio Roscio on the acts of mercy published in Rome in 1586, the basic theme is illustrated in the frontispiece, where the seven are distributed in a frame surrounding the Last Judgment (Fig. 236).[188] And the physical good works named by Christ were supplemented by seven complementary spiritual acts of mercy. Meditation on the Passion conceived in the narrative sense of the Via Crucis was seen as an act of charity toward others, and therefore efficacious in the individual's search for salvation. Roscio included meditation on the Passion, as well as corresponding episodes from the Old Testament, as the fifth of these spiritual acts, that of bearing injury with patience, *ferre patienter iniurias* (Fig. 237).

Another theme in which episodes of Christ's sacrifice were singled out for inclusion in a comprehensive evocation of the Passion concerned not the sequence but the instruments used in his humiliation and martyrdom. The objects of torture and ridicule were isolated from their narrative contexts and reassembled as the "Arma Christi," an ironically ambivalent term referring to the instruments used to torment Christ both as weapons that served in the divine plan to conquer the Devil, and as the coat of arms of mankind's royal Champion in that struggle.[189] In this context, the instruments are gathered together as *disjecta membra*, often in geometric rather than chronological order, and are displayed either in isolation or as accoutrements of an image of the suffering Christ, the Imago Pietatis (Fig. 238). The instruments of the Passion were displayed in one context that might be described as quasi-narrative – that is, the Last Judgment. The Arma Christi are here identified with the *signum Filii hominis in caelo* to which Matthew refers in his vision of the Second Coming (24:30): "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn: and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty."[190] The relics of the sacrifice appear in the heavens, not in chronological order, but as trophies of Christ's victory over death. As a heavenly vision the instruments are often carried by cloud-borne angels who serve as eschatological vexillaries displaying them as insignia of the Son's God-given authority to administer divine justice to humanity on the day of reckoning (cf. Fig. 115). In the context of the Last Judgment, moreover, there is an inherent link between the arms-bearing troops of angels and the Archangel Michael as the Lord's adjutant.

These essentially late-medieval forms of devotional piety were revived and brought together in the perfervid spiritual atmosphere of Rome around 1600. Inspired by and in collaboration with leaders of the newly founded Counter-Reformatory religious orders, some of the great papal and cardinalate families undertook to restore the neglected and decrepit early churches to a semblance of their pristine doctrinal purity. In two closely related instances, S. Prassede and S. Prisca, angels carrying the instruments of the Passion were aligned on the parallel walls of the nave, alternating with figures of saints in one case, flanking large scenes of the Passion in the other (Figs. 239, 240, 241, 242).[191] The cycle at S. Prassede is particularly noteworthy because the Passion scenes are accompanied by episodes from the history of Joseph the Patriarch, a prototype of Christ.[192] The sequence of angelic standard-bearers create a kind of heavenly honor guard for the Via Salvationis through which the worshiper passes recollecting Christ's progress, prefigured in the Old Testament, toward the salvation of mankind in the Eucharistic sacrifice at the altar. Standing on pedestals or surmounting the nave supports, the angels also emulate the ancient honorary mode of displaying statues on high pedestals or columns.

The Angels on the Bridge

Combining the Arma Christi with the Via Dolorosa traditions, these ecclesiastical mural decorations impart a sequential animation to the structures they occupy, anticipating Bernini's sacrificial activation of the Ponte



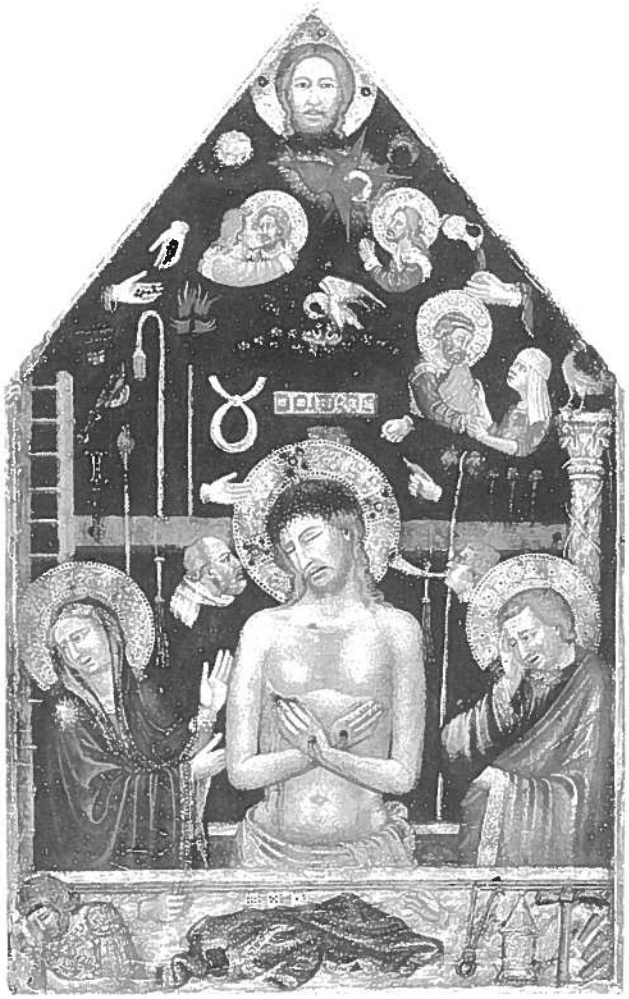
235. Giovanni Battista Falda, View of Ponte and Castel Sant'Angelo, engraving, 1671

236. *The Last Judgment with the Seven Acts of Mercy* (after Roscio 1586, frontispiece)

237. *Ferre patienter iniurias* (Suffer injuries patiently), Fifth Act of Spiritual Mercy, surrounded by six episodes of the Via Crucis and four Old Testament scenes (after Roscio 1586)

Sant'Angelo. His figures stand alone, however, and he found precedence elsewhere for a series of angels isolated from any represented narrative context but bearing the instruments of the Passion in chronological order. The idea was prefigured in a suite of ten half-length angels, numbered consecutively, engraved in 1631 by Crispijn de Passe, Senior and Junior (Figs. 243, 244, 245).[193]

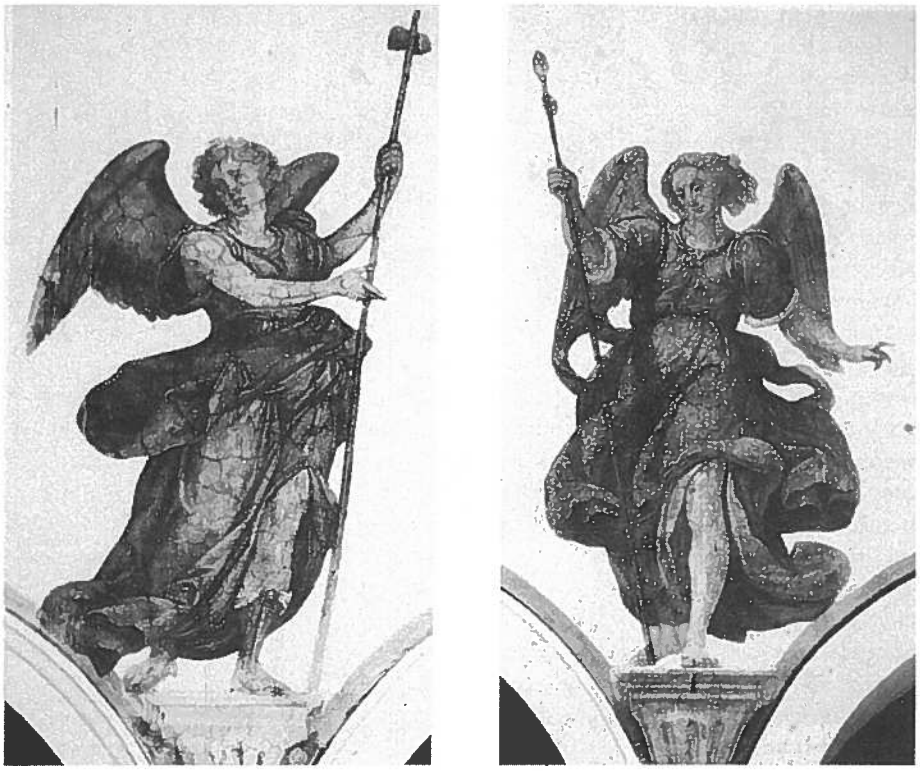
Poetic invocations of Christ's sufferings are inscribed below the figures, whose dolorous expressions show their compassionate endurance of the same tribulations. The series also anticipates the theme of triumph that Bernini retained from the tradition of the bridge: the title page shows Christ "enthroned" as the Ecce Homo and wearing the Crown of Thorns, and in the final image an angel



238. Roberto Oderisi, *Imago Pietatis with Arma Christi*. Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts

displays the banner carried by Christ at the resurrection, inscribed *Victoria Christi*. A similar suite was issued by Aegidius and Johan Sadeler, both *separatim* and as vignettes surrounding a central image of the Pietà (Fig. 246).[194] Bernini's angels are not arranged in a straight line, as would normally be the case with the Stations of the Cross in a church; instead, the sequence zigzags back and forth across the bridge as it proceeds from the secular to the Holy City (Fig. 247).[195] To be sure, this is the only bilateral arrangement that moves consistently forward, but it was also a reflection of the similar disposition of the papal portraits along the walls of the Sistine Chapel, and a prelude to Bernini's own distribution of the successors to Peter in the nave of the basilica. By this concatenation of associations the visitor is bound in the chain of spiritual teleology. At the same time, arranged at regular intervals in facing pairs along the bridge, the angels' rhythmic alignment creates a perspective focus on the Castello surmounted by the Archangel Michael, in his dual role as protector and avenger. In this sense, the bridge thus anticipates the perspective effects Bernini built into the colonnades in relation to the facade of the church and exploited in the nave of the basilica in relation to the high altar and the Cathedra Petri. Following the lead of the Peter and Paul monuments at the entrance to the bridge, as well as the Flemish engravings, the pedestals bear titulary inscriptions. The brief phrases, which are all quotations, offer a key to understanding the meaning of the images themselves and the significance of the bridge in the overall program for St. Peter's and the Vatican. The texts are taken not from the gospel accounts of the Passion, as might be expected, but from liturgical and Old Testament sources that emphasize the eschatological

239. Nave fresco. S. Prisca, Rome



240. Nave fresco. S. Prisca, Rome

241. Nave fresco. S. Prassede, Rome

destiny of Christ's sacrifice as the preordained fulfillment of Divine Providence.[196] In this view the inscribed words announce that the angels alighted on the bridge to complete the promise of the voices from the past.

Unlike their frescoed predecessors in the Roman basilicas, the angels of Bernini's bridge do not stand directly on their architectural supports but upon clouds.[197] The figures seem to have descended from the celestial realm of the Archangel Michael at the Last Judgment to escort those who undertake to follow in Christ's footsteps. Moreover, the frescoed angels are emblematic in spirit as well as in function: they convey their symbolic and celebratory status by their relative uniformity of type and action; and they "display" the relics by holding them aloft like trophies won in battle. The bridge angels, in contrast, have individual personalities, in their appearance, their actions, and their relationships to the attributes they hold (Figs. 210–215). This chorus of angelic differentiation is due to the large measure of freedom accorded, I believe knowingly, as in the crossing

242. Nave fresco. S. Prassede, Rome

243. Crispijn de Passe, *Ecce Homo*, engraving (after *Speculum* 1631, title page)

244. Crispijn de Passe, Jr., *Angel with Instruments of the Passion*, engraving (after *Speculum* 1631, no. 4)

245. Crispijn de Passe, *Angel vexillifer*, engraving (after *Speculum* 1631, no. 10)

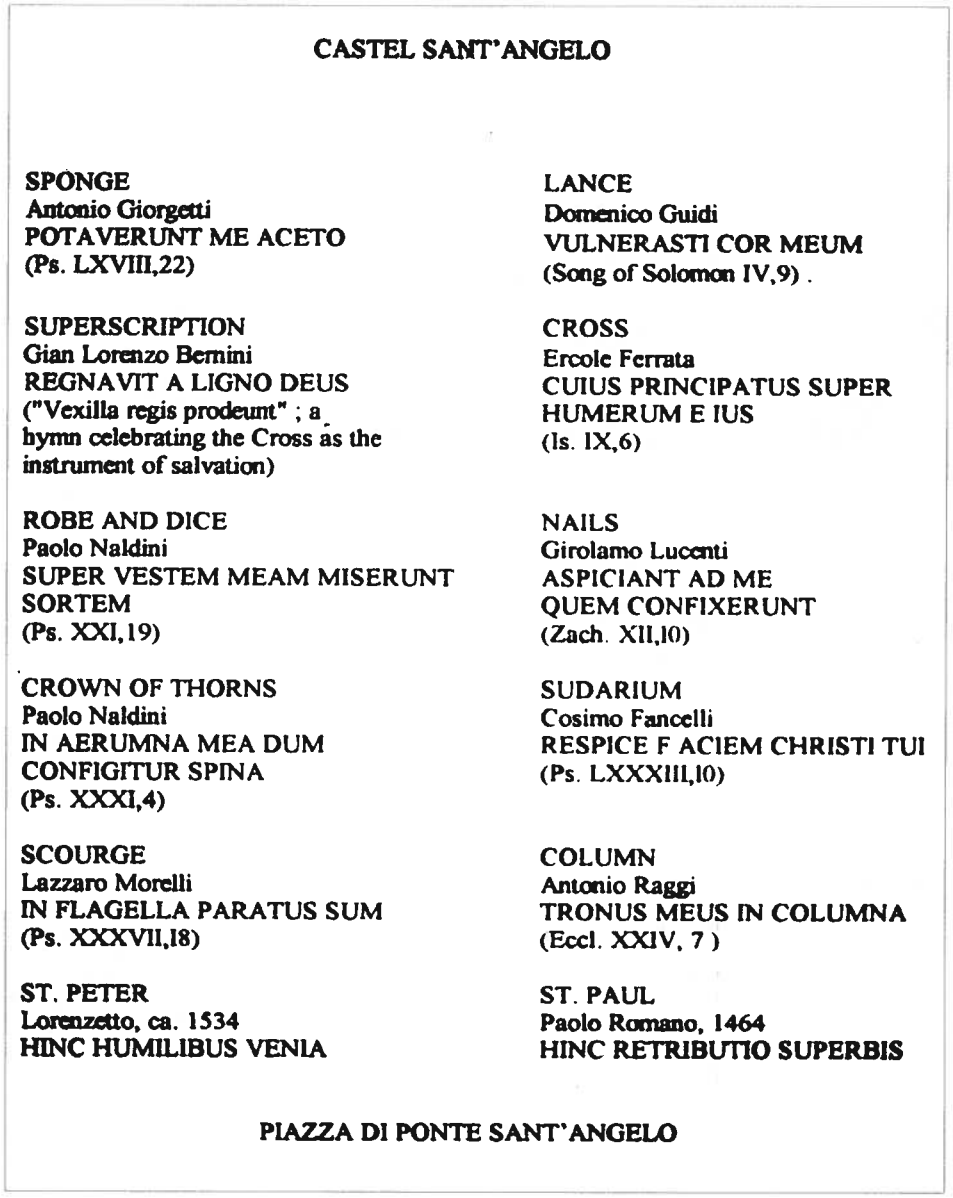
of St. Peter's, to the sculptors who carried out the designs Bernini provided.[198] The gamut of expressions thus achieved was part of Bernini's intention, not simply to lend variety to the sequence, but also to suggest the singularity of each episode of the Passion and the meaning it held for the artists themselves. The artists become devotees, and through them the sculptures exemplify the individual souls of all for whom Christ suffered.

The Regal Couple

Within a few months after the projects began, Bernini made an important structural change at the north end of the bridge: he added buttresses to the piers footed at the river bank to strengthen them against the current and accumulation of silt and debris during high water.[199] The extension entailed adding two more angels, bringing the total number of statues on the bridge to twelve – perhaps not coincidentally equivalent to the number of apostles and the number of gates to the Heavenly Jerusalem. Bernini reserved two of the angels to execute himself: the angel with the Crown of Thorns and that bearing the Title of the Cross (Figs. 214, 215). Why two, and why these two?

Among the Arma Christi the Title and the Crown were the royal insignia par excellence. They represented above all the *Maiestas Domini*, recalling the quintessential crime for which Christ was condemned by the Jews. These emblems encapsulate the paradox of the supreme lèse majesté: salvation attained through the immolation of the Savior, whose humiliating path to death became humanity's glorious route to salvation. This theme is expressed verbally in the inscriptions on the pedestals. The angel with the Crown of Thorns is accompanied by a passage from one of the penitential psalms (Ps.31:4): "[I am turned in my anguish] whilst the thorn is fastened."[200] The use of the lament in the liturgy, as an antiphon in the feast celebrating the crowning of thorns, transforms Christ's ignominious, painful, mock-crown into a regal vestment.[201] The text for the angel with the Superscription, "regnavit a ligno deus," is of particular interest, as it is also taken from a psalm (95:10),[202] "Say ye among the Gentiles, the Lord hath reigned," but in a version different from the Vulgate. The citation comes from a hymn written by the sixth-century poet Venantius Fortunatus,

246. Johan Sadeler, *Pietà with Angels Bearing Instruments of the Passion*, engraving



247. Distribution of Angels on Ponte Sant'Angelo, with accompanying inscriptions (after Weil 1974, fig. 52)

where it is quoted in a passage identifying the Cross as the fulfillment of David's prophecy:[203]

> Impleta sunt quae concinit
> David fideli carmine,
> Dicendo nationibus:
> Regnavit a ligno Deus.
>
> (The words of David's true prophetic song were fulfilled, in which he announced to the nations: "God has reigned from a tree.")

This famous poem celebrating the Cross, used in the liturgy for the Good Friday mass, begins: "The standards of the king appear...." The phrase *vexilla regis prodeunt* specifies the regal nature of the insignia. Bernini's figures thus identify the angels as standard-bearers in a royal company. They bear the insignia that testify to the descent of Christ from King David and the majestic victory of his sacrifice. In this way, too, the angels reiterate the theme of the sculptures erected on the bridge to greet the emperor Charles V at his triumphal entry of 1536, except that here the progressive, zigzag dynamic of the arrangement serves to correlate the spiritual integration of the Old and New Testaments, inherent in the ideology of the Church, with the physical integration of the two sides of the bridge, as both move toward the goal of salvation.

Given the chronological sequence of the Passion and the zigzag placement of the instruments, Bernini's two figures cannot now be seen, and cannot have been intended to be seen, together on the bridge. Yet, everything about their design and the inordinately large series of preparatory studies made for the two figures indicates that they were conceived and meant to be comprehended as a complementary pair. Contemporary reports reveal that the pope thought of keeping them for himself, to be sent to his native Pistoia, where Bernini was then designing his family villa and a new high altar for the church of the Jesuits.[204] The first notice of the idea is recorded only after the sculptures had been begun, but the choice of themes, which precluded their being seen together on the bridge, and their contrapuntal, bilaterally symmetrical design, suggest that Bernini must have had something of the kind in mind from the outset, and their exquisitely nuanced surface finish was obviously meant for indoors.[205] The prospect of such a disposition would have been a powerful incentive for Bernini to have substitutes installed on the bridge, one by his own hand.[206] I suspect that Bernini intended his original pair for what they are, complementary pendants and supreme testimonials to the perfection, in the sense of consummate fulfillment, of his own witness to Christ's sacrificial triumph. These considerations may help to explain the otherwise mysterious fact that although Clement IX gave the sculptures to his nephew, Cardinal Giacomo, in December 1669, they remained in the possession of Bernini and his heirs until 1729, when the artist's grandson donated them to the church facing his house on the Via della Mercede, S. Andrea delle Fratte, where they were installed, appropriately, flanking the high altar.[207]

While the bridge angels display a greater variety of expression and action than their predecessors, they maintain a celebratory, essentially conventional mood. Bernini's figures (both on and off the bridge), on the contrary, have a special character quite apart from the intricate, profoundly musical counterpoint of their poses and the movements of their draperies. The intensity and depth of their responses reach far beyond the expressive range of their siblings, and even of their Flemish prototypes, to convey the objects they embrace not just as symbols but as actual relics of Christ's sacrifice. Bernini seems to have taken his cue for the poses and gestures of his two angels from the corresponding pair at S. Prassede (Fig. 242), but he imbued the figures with a wholly new, sinuous dynamic. Their lithe bodies and flamboyant movements seem to writhe in a crescendo to the open-lipped effusions of anguish on their faces. At the same time, Bernini makes a notable distinction between the two angels, who display distinct, gently gendered, characters.[208] The Angel with the Superscription, with its delicate features, curly locks, and downcast, watery eyes, stands passively and unfurls the scroll hesitantly, almost with reluctance: a distinctly interior, feminine sensibility. The Angel with the Crown, physique more robust, broad-faced with flowing locks, furrowed brow, and a distant, visionary stare, holds the precious emblem gingerly but thrusts it forward with heroic, masculine aggressiveness.

These qualities were inherent in Bernini's conception of the pair. He initially studied both angels as male nudes, and the proportions of both figures became taller and slimmer as they evolved. But from the outset the angel with the Crown was more robust and assertive while the angel with the Superscription was more delicate, hesitant, and withdrawn. The inordinate number of such preparatory studies for the angels testify that these effects of profound, unselfconscious, spontaneous feeling were the products of an equally feverish labor of experimentation and calculation.[209] The astonishing fact is that Bernini's creative process was no less innovative than the works themselves: on the one hand, no previous sculptor's preparatory studies are so numerous or show a comparable degree of rapidity and spontaneity in execution; on the other hand, the first known sculptural study marked for scaled enlargement is a model for the angel with the Crown (Fig. 248).[210] These twin innovations may seem paradoxical, but they are in fact mutually interdependent and offer an essential insight into the nature of Bernini's art. Bernini's choice of themes for his two angels and the complementary contrast he worked out for them were motivated by the significance of their respective instruments. Although both represent the pathetic irony of the mocked majesty of Christ, the degradation-exaltation of the Crown of Thorns was physical, that of the Superscription purely spiritual.

In sum, the features, expressions, coiffures, actions, and very physiques of Bernini's angels offer a profound psychophysical disquisition on participation in the Passion. Considered in this light the "individualization" of the figures serves a dual purpose. The differences seem to reflect the gendered nature of humankind and the basic distinctions between male and female spirituality long recognized by the Church. At the same time, the devotional passion that animates both figures recalls the passage in the Gospel of Matthew (22:30) in which Christ himself relates human gender to the divine status of angels: "For in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married; but shall be as the angels of God in heaven (22:30, Douay)" (*in resurrectione enim neque nubent neque nubentur sed sunt sicut angeli Dei in caelo*). Christ's words absorb gender into the communal state of angelic purity and, equally important, into the androgynous nature of divinity itself.[211]

Bernini's figures offer a preview of this state of angelic purity to which humankind aspires. Viewed

from below against the blue Roman sky, the angels are epiphanic creatures, apparitions heaven-sent to convey to the present their bittersweet relics of the past. Delicately poised on white puffs, with graceful, lilting movements, they appear like momentarily congealed visions of the events they represent. Their wind-filled drapery floats, flutters, billows, and curls, and they hover weightlessly over the piers of the bridge. These are the angels of wind and clouds described by the Pseudo-Dionysius in the *Celestial Hierarchies*, the most famous of all Christian accounts of the angels, who are the motion and the light of the divine spirit.[212] With reference to John 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit," the wind signifies the movement of life whose source is hidden, invisible, unknowable. Clouds evoke the mighty angel of the Apocalypse, 10:1, "come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was on his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." But especially, the clouds signify light and the hidden, transcendent luminosity with which those divinely intelligent beings are filled.[213]

For Bernini these references were much more than metaphors. His figures complement each other not only in form but also in their very essence – they *are* wind, they *are* clouds, they *are* light. He said as much when he remarked that the greatest achievement of his chisel was to have rendered marble "malleable as wax," and to have had the heart to render stones obedient to his hand, "as if they were made of pasta."[214] In this quasi-material sense the angels may be said to evoke the transubstantial, sacramental nature of the majestic triumph they represent – the Corpus Domini, for the celebration of which Alexander had earlier built the colonnades, and for which Clement X, who completed the bridge decoration, would soon commission the Sacrament altar, where Bernini's pair of angels would fulfill their ultimate mission of perpetual adoration.

Blood and Water

The twin features of the Ponte Sant'Angelo noted by Baldinucci and Domenico Bernini, the view of the water and the parade of instrument-bearing angels, are related in a way that imparts to the bridge and its urban mission a specific sacramentary role. A devotional tradition closely linked to the Instruments of the Passion focused on the Crucifixion itself: the Five Wounds of Christ, of which the side wound opened by Longinus's lance was of central importance.[215] Water and Christ's sacrifice are conjoined in this crucial event, in which it has been said "the entire history of salvation is concentrated."[216] Bernini had long before celebrated the lance relic preserved at St. Peter's with his statue portraying Longinus's illumination in the crossing at the high altar of the basilica. On the bridge, the Way of the Cross ends with the lance, the instrument that signaled not only the ultimate desecration of the Son of Man, but also, and by the very same token, as it were, the salvation of mankind achieved by his sacrifice. This paradoxical, dual import of the lance wound was conveyed by the account of it given, uniquely, in the fourth Gospel (19:34–5), where John reports:

> 28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.
>
> 30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.
>
> 34 But one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side, and immediately there came out blood and water.
> 35 And he that saw it, hath given testimony, and his testimony is true. And he knoweth that he saith true; that you also may believe.
> 36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled.[217]

In John's account, Christ had already given up the ghost; Christ was dead, and the lance wound was thus quite distinct from those inflicted by the Crucifixion. For such effusions to issue from a corpse was miraculous, and John reported his presence at the Crucifixion as his own eyewitness testimony of Jesus' true nature and proof of the realization of the divine plan.

The wound was also doubly miraculous, however, in that the effusion was of water as well as of blood, and from the earliest Christian times the lance wound became the prototype for the mixture of water and wine in the Eucharist. The dual constituents were also taken to signify the beginning and the end of the sacraments, the water being identified with baptism and the Church, the blood with the Eucharist and Christ. "Sts. Cyril and Chrysostom say that the water signifies baptism, which is the first beginning of the Church and the other sacraments, and the blood represents the Eucharist, which is the end and completion of the sacraments, to which they all refer as to their beginning and their end." Particularly important was the idea that, with the lance wound, the Old Law was succeeded by the New and God's entire plan for salvation was accomplished. According to John, just before giving up the ghost Christ knew that "all things were now accomplished that the Scripture might be fulfilled," and John himself reported them to show that they were accomplished in order that Scripture be fulfilled. And for the Fathers of the Church the effusion of

blood and water signified that "from the death and side of Christ as a second Adam sleeping on the cross, the Church was formed as Eve the spouse of Christ."[218] A very suggestive association in relation to Bernini's eschatological conception of the Ponte Sant'Angelo is Rupert of Deutz's punning comparison of the mixture of blood and water in the Eucharist to the opening and closing of the Red Sea in the salvation of the Elect from their diabolic pursuer.[219]

The theme of sacramental and ecclesiological fulfillment in the lance wound at the end of the bridge is made explicit by the Old Testament text chosen for the inscription on the pedestal. Borrowed from the Song of Songs (4:9), the text invokes the theme in a special way: VULNERASTI COR MEUM (*soror mea sponsa vulnerasti cor meum in uno oculorum tuorum*) (Thou hast ravished [wounded] my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes). The Song of Songs was the pivotal text in the definition of Christ and his Church as the fulfillment of the messianic promise of the Old Testament synagogue; the Hebrew understanding of the passionate love lyric as an expression of God's love for his chosen people was converted, as it were, into a celebration of the marriage, consummated in the Passion, of Christ to the Virgin and through her to the universal community of the faithful.[220] The verse also announces the lance wound in its capacity to convert those who, like Longinus, are able to "see the light."[221] The Ponte Sant'Angelo thus offers safe passage over the Bridge of Trial. The Passion of Christ transforms the river Tiber into the river Jordan, conjoining the salutary water of baptism to the redeeming blood of the Sacrifice. We shall see presently that, in a contemporary image of the Crucifixion, Bernini actually commingled the blood and water into a veritable Eucharistic ocean. So, while Bernini's entrance to the Holy City promises the Last Judgment, it also offers the protection of the Church. The lance wound becomes the Wound of Love, and the Bridge of Trial becomes the road to redemption through the ministrations of Saint Peter and his successors.

We have seen that the idea of refurbishing and, as it were, reconverting the ancient bridge as a Christian triumphal entryway must have been converging in the minds of Alexander VII and Bernini well before the project came to fruition. Alexander's heroic actions during the plague and his prior planning of the bridge may explain the reluctance of his successor, Clement IX, under whom the project was actually carried out, to attach his name to it when it was finished. Clement IX's contribution was commemorated in an inscription added later by his successor, Clement X, who soon also brought to completion the daunting task and Bernini's lifework of furnishing and thereby giving voice to the new church.

248. Bernini, Study for the Angel with the Crown of Thorns. Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

CONSUMMATION

THE SACRAMENT ALTAR (1673–5)

Bernini's final work for St. Peter's was devoted explicitly to the theme that had been implicit in much of what he had done before, the Holy Eucharist. The Sacrament altar is in certain respects the most astonishing of all these creations, by virtue above all of its utter simplicity: it is a bronze tabernacle in the form of a peripteral tempietto, flanked by two kneeling angels (Figs. 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254). Bernini evidently felt compelled to distill to its quintessential elements the central mystery of his faith.

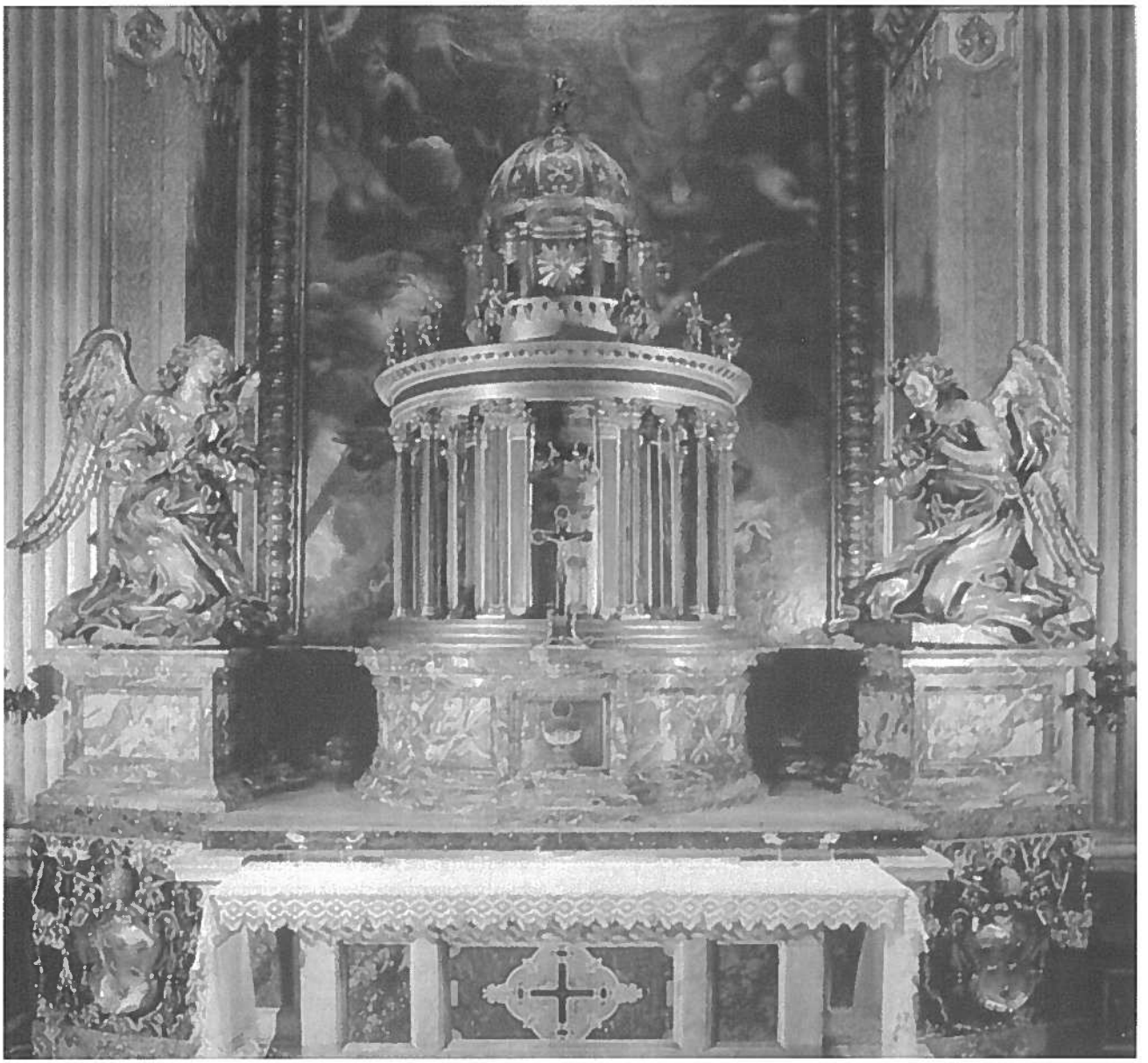
249. Bernini, Altar of the Holy Sacrament. St. Peter's, Rome

The project evolved in three phases. Begun under Urban VIII, it was taken up again under Alexander VII, and finally completed under Clement X. Important insights into the development and significance of this unexpected creation and the process that led to it is provided by a heretofore unpublished study by Bernini for the first altar of the Sacrament in New St. Peter's commissioned by Urban VIII (Fig. 255).[222] The drawing corresponds to the records of payment for the work Bernini designed in 1629. Figures of Peter and Paul stood on pedestals at the ends of the altar, while at the center small angels knelt around the base of the peripteral tabernacle covered by a cupola. Executed in temporary materials, the altar was initially erected in a chapel decorated by Gregory XIII with an altarpiece that incorporated a venerated image of the Madonna. In 1638 this provisional work was transferred to a large side chapel in the nave designated as the New Sacristy, where the niche behind the altar had been decorated with a great painting of the Trinity by Pietro da Cortona, commissioned in 1628 and completed in 1632. Cortona's painting shows the Trinity at the top of the composition, with a large celestial globe below (Fig. 251). In the drawing, the composition sketched in the niche behind the altar shows no hint of the framed image of the Madonna in the center of the Gregoriana altarpiece in the Gregorian chapel, but is quite compatible with what became Cortona's design. The two works were executed in tandem, and the drawing indicates that Bernini's altar, though installed temporarily in the Gregoriana, was designed to be placed in front of Cortona's Trinity, with which it was intended to harmonize from the outset.[223] The main variations in the drawing concern the height of the altar: at first there is a low plinth on which the tabernacle alone rested; then a higher plinth is introduced, with the tabernacle flanked and perhaps lifted slightly off the surface by two or more kneeling angels (the documents speak first of two, then of four).[224] In this form the apostles would flank

Cortona's altarpiece, the angels remaining well below, and the level of the tabernacle would be calibrated so that only the semicircular cupola would appear just beneath the heavenly globe in the painting.

The temporary altar remained in situ for decades, and when the project was resumed under Alexander VII the attitude toward the Sacrament had changed and the altar underwent a significant development that is recorded in a series of drawn and terra-cotta sketches. the tabernacle grew in size and importance, and the figures of Peter and Paul were shifted to become the central pair in a ring of apostles standing on the entablature of the colonnade. The high plinth was retained and the sacramental presence was exalted by raising the tabernacle still higher, at first by placing it in the hands of four, much-enlarged kneeling angels, who also held the candles that were important to the Eucharistic devotions (Fig. 256). In this form the altar struck a parallel between the Eucharist and the seat of its administration, the Cathedra Petri, sustained by the Fathers of the Church in the great reliquary altar in the apse, which Bernini was then executing for the same pope. In this elevated position the Sacrament tabernacle, rather than appearing as a subordinate altar furnishing, as in the drawing, would now appear to be equated with the celestial globe immediately behind, in Cortona's composition.

Bernini's final design was an amalgam of this second version with the original project. The tabernacle remains



250. Bernini, Altar of the Holy Sacrament. St. Peter's, Rome

251. Bernini, Altar of the Holy Sacrament, with Pietro da Cortona's *Trinity*. St. Peter's, Rome

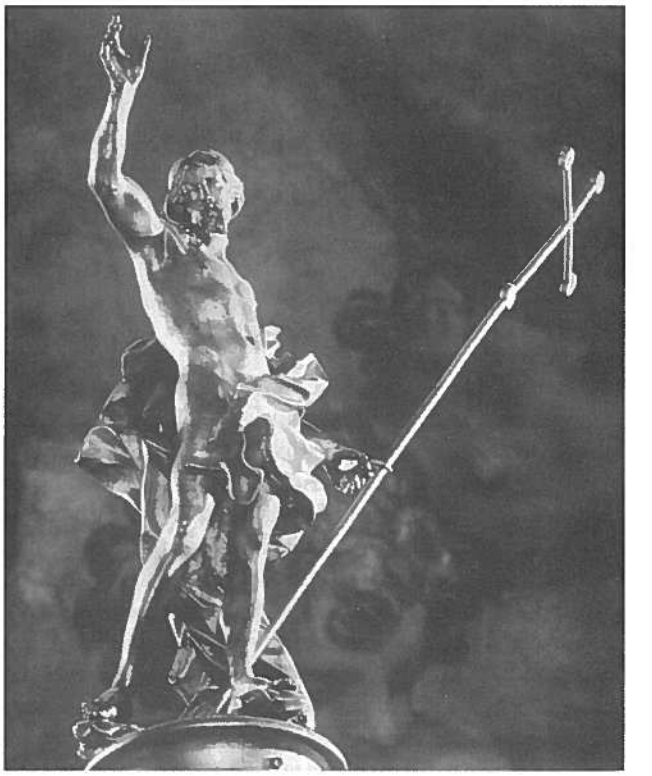
elevated, while its central core is elongated by the introduction of a tall drum beneath the cupola. The kneeling angels, relieved of all ancillary duty, replace Peter and Paul at the extremities of the altar. The supporting role of the angels who bore the tabernacle in the second version is now played by the angels in Cortona's *Trinity*, who seem to embrace Bernini's tabernacle as well as the globe behind (Figs. 249, 257). Taken together, the Sacrament altar and the Trinity now function effectively as a coordinated whole. Divine grace descends from the Trinity through the universe, to be embodied in the Eucharist on the altar. In the final version the angels become, exclusively, devotees. The decision to "defunctionalize" their role recalls Alexander VII's insistence that the colonnades of the piazza have no other purpose than to serve in celebration of the Corpus Domini. So also Bernini's angels perform no other service than to kneel in perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament.

The angels, in fact, embody the celestial nature of sacramental devotion.[225] The liturgy of the Church, especially regarding the Eucharist and especially in its original meaning of thanksgiving, is conceived as a mirror of and participation in the liturgy celebrated in heaven by the angels and the saints. The angels in heaven, to whose status human nature aspires, are engaged in adoration of the Eucharist – not occasionally but perpetually intoning their joyous acclamations. Bernini's angels make this vision visible and audible through their gracious smiles

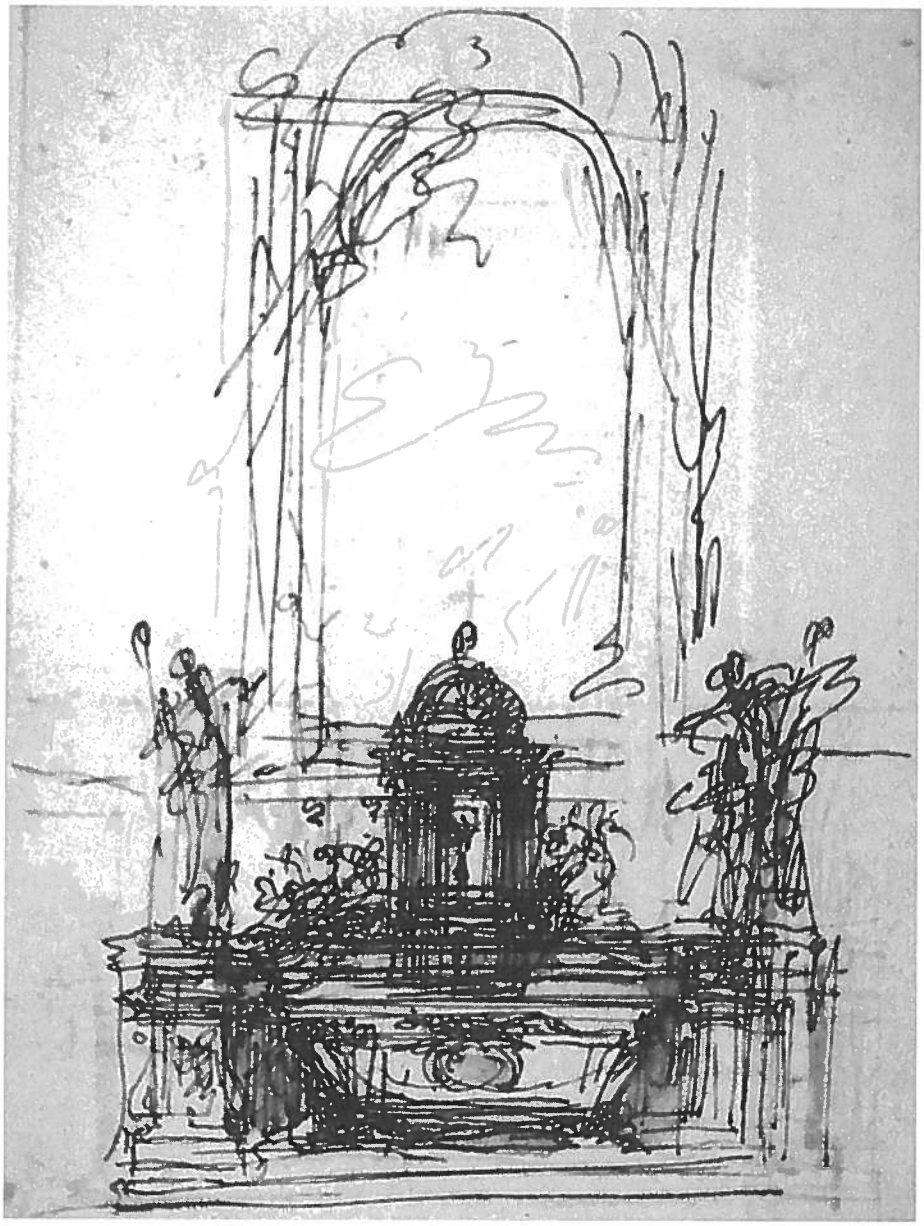
252. Bernini, Altar of the Holy Sacrament, angel. St. Peter's, Rome

253. Bernini, Altar of the Holy Sacrament, angel. St. Peter's, Rome

and delicately parted lips. With their great wings and aureate glow the angels recall the golden cherubim who guarded the Old Testament Holy of Holies. According to some, the angelic hosts included the sublimated souls of just men made perfect, and Bernini's angels seem to reflect their human origin and inspire emulation of their devotion. The creature at the left has long, flowing hair and is fully clothed in the tunic of a subdeacon, with hands pressed together; the head, blank-eyed in ecstasy, inclines inward toward the tabernacle of the host (Fig. 250). The other, with short, radiant locks, one muscular arm and shoulder bare, and hands crossed at the breast, looks outward and down toward the altar with sharply focused pupils (Fig. 251).[226] This distinct, complementary contrast of spiritual natures – contemplative and active – seems to retrieve, in angelic terms, Bernini's demonstration at the beginning of his career of the psycho-physiognomic expression of extreme moral states in his "portrait busts" of the Blessed (female, wearing the tunic of subdeacon) and Damned (male, nude) Souls (Fig. 258a, b).[227] Through their inner- and outer-worldly-directed emotions and actions, the angels intone an acclamatory hymn: their contrapuntal voices reciprocate with impassioned serenity the two chief modes of Eucharistic devotion embodied in the allegories perched over the very entrance to the Sacrament. Corresponding to Faith, the joined hands of the contemplative angel



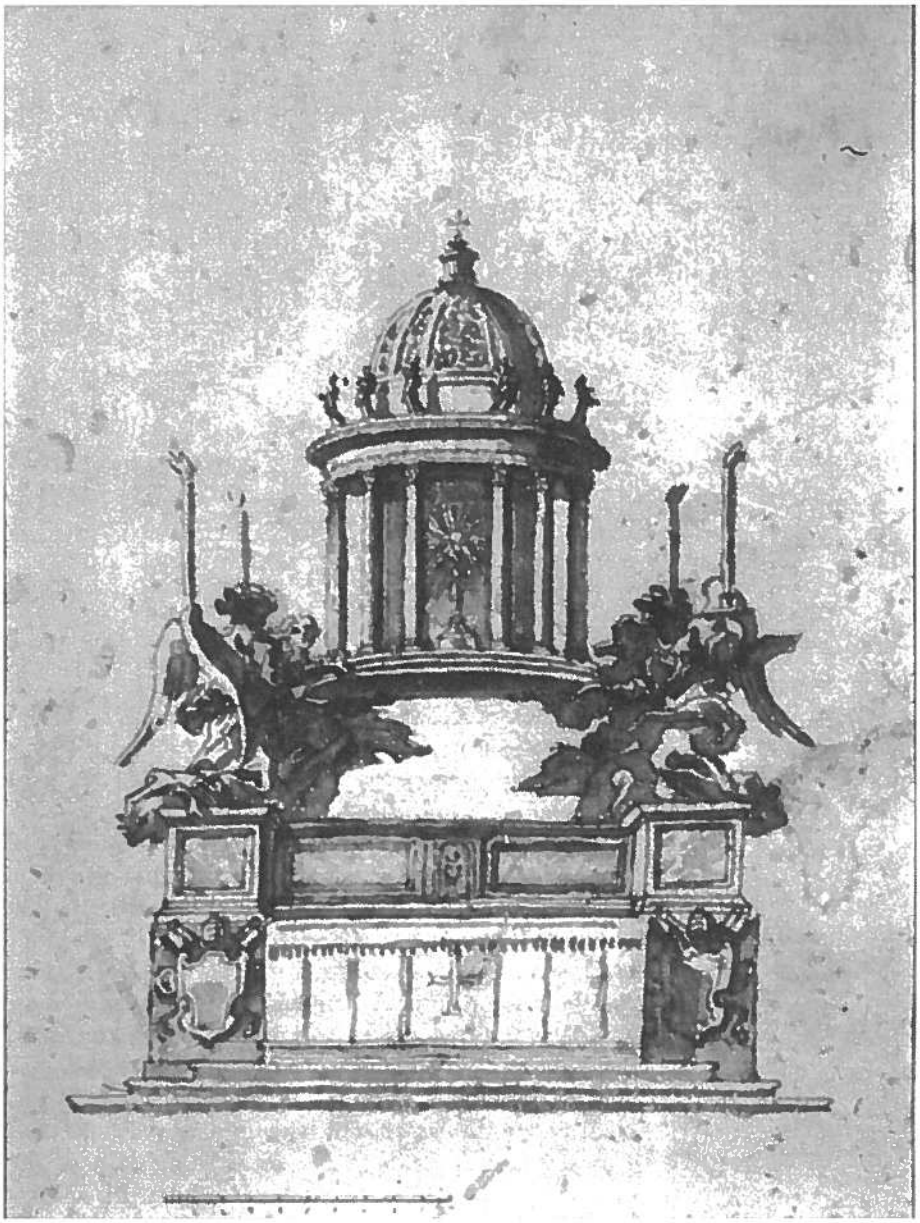
254. Bernini, Altar of the Holy Sacrament, Risen Christ. St. Peter's, Rome



255. Bernini, study for the Sacrament altar, drawing. Location unknown

were the expression par excellence of the act of adoration, prescribed in the rubrics of the Mass and serving even in a juridical sense in the solemn pledge of fealty. The crossed arms of the active angel, corresponding to the figure of Religion holding the Cross, were an expression of supplication, this attitude being adopted by the celebrant during the prayer *Supplices te rogamus* of the Canon of the Mass.[228] The benign response of the cross-armed angel to the sacrificial offering of the priest surely reflects the specific sense of that prayer, which is to implore the angels to carry the sacrifice from the altar on earth to the altar in heaven.[229]

By definition, angels are present and participate at the altar of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Indeed, the key to understanding Bernini's altar lies in the fact that the Mass is above all the communal act of the church, where heaven and earth meet. Hence the altar and the Mass are the place and time when angels are present together with the faithful in the performance of this ritual offering and devotion. The Mass is, after all, a celebration, and what it celebrates is nothing less than the paradoxical redemption of mankind through Christ's death. In their form, Bernini's shimmering creatures display mankind's highest aspirations to perfection, and in their expression they evoke the joy that unites humanity and the angels at the Resurrection. Their effulgent and flamboyant drapery seems to consume their very essence in a pyrotechnical display of pure, coruscating energy. Both the fiery nature of these ethereal creatures and the ardor of their love are fused into the golden bronze of which they are made,



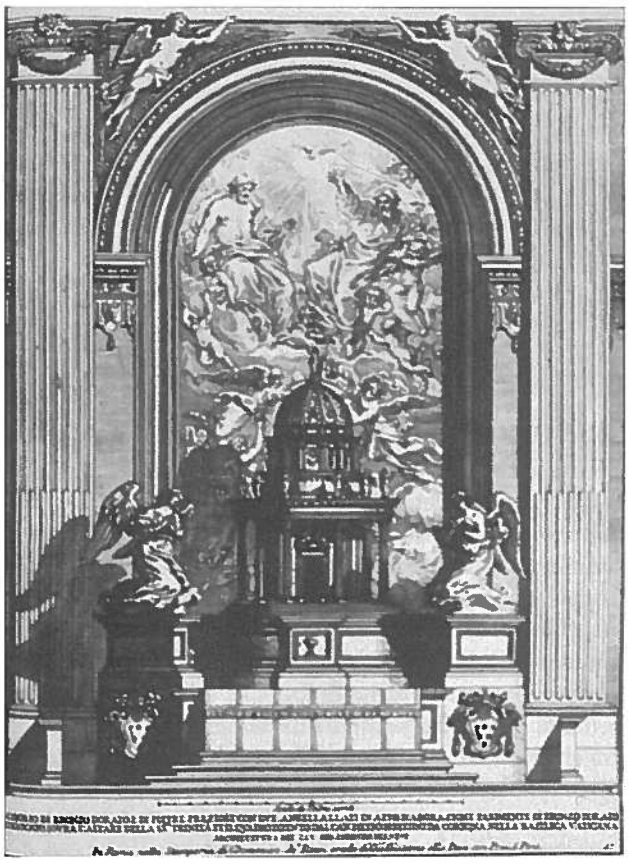
256. Bernini, study for the Sacrament altar, drawing. Hermitage, St. Petersburg

itself purified and formed in fire. Whereas the wind-blown angels of the Passion on the Ponte Sant'Angelo are epiphanic, the angels of the Sacrament are devotional, eternally fixed in the ecstatic bliss of their *visio dei*. In this sense they seem literally to reflect the Pseudo-Dionysius's description in the *Celestial Hierarchies* of the shining and enflamed garments that cover the nudity of the intelligent beings of heaven, as symbolizing the divine form.[230] The ardor of their devotion to the Sacrament is epitomized and announced by the emblematic flames and palm fronds of victorious martyrdom emblazoned on the gates to the sanctuary (Fig. 249).

As with the bridge angels, many autograph preliminary studies, drawn as well as sculpted, testify to the painstaking labor that lay behind these quite different, chiaroscuro effects (Figs. 259, 260).[231] In these sketches, Bernini sought deliberately not only to defunctionalize the figures, but also to "dematerialize" them. The continuous, predominantly linear definition of form in the bridge angels is here replaced by a flickering pattern that arises from the juxtaposition of discrete patches of light and dark. (It is no accident that the single preserved autograph drawing for the drapery of a bridge angel is in pen and ink, whereas all the drawings for the sacrament angels are brush and wash.) On the bridge the white marble reflects the spiritual movement and solar luminosity of those who bear witness to the salvific sacrifice. On the Sacrament altar the gilt bronze embodies the fiery substance and passionate bliss of Eucharistic devotion. In both cases the materials become as transcendent

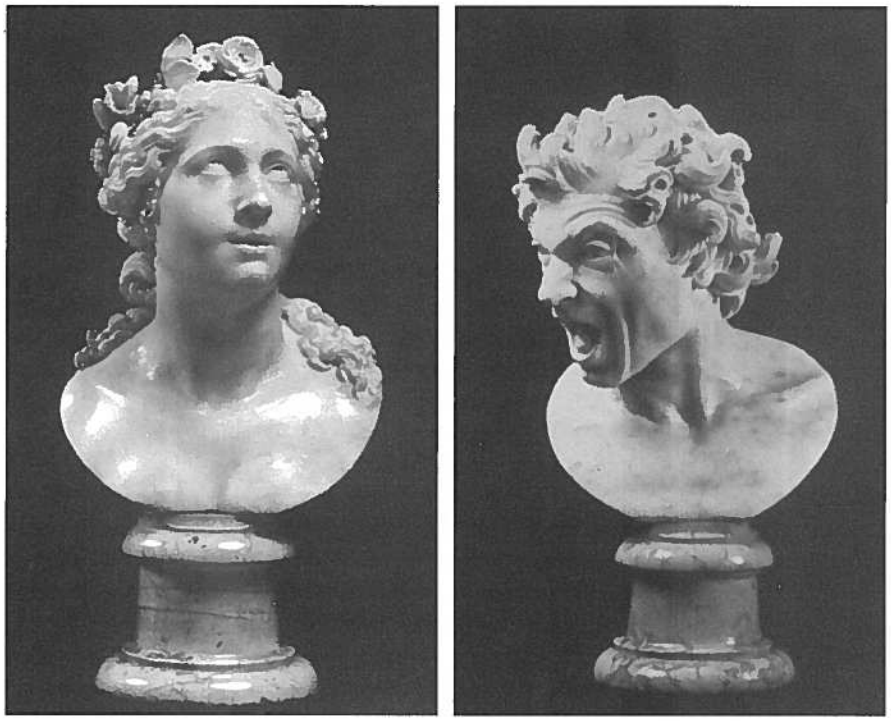
as the images they represent. Evidently, Bernini's ultimate choice of medium in visualizing the Sacrament was light: following a millennial tradition according to which light was the visual manifestation of divinity, he imitated God's own act of illumination at the end of the first day, after creating the heaven, the earth and the sea (Gen.1: 1–3). Taken together, the altar, the figures, the tabernacle, and the Trinity fresco behind evoke, through a setting for the earthly liturgy of the church, the heavenly liturgy that celebrates all creation.

Since the early Renaissance there had been an ever-expanding tradition to reserve the Eucharistic Host on the altar. The Host was placed in an architectural container that might, in a sense, be described as a reliquary whose form reflects its ideal prototype, the Holy Sepulcher. The decoration often also includes allusions to Old Testament antecedents such as the Ark of the Covenant, the Temple of Jerusalem, and the Heavenly Jerusalem. Angels, in various acts of devotion or exaltation, were a standard part of the representational repertory. And Christ was commonly depicted in reference to the Passion or the Resurrection, which might take the form of a figure of the risen Christ placed atop a centrally planned tabernacle. Bernini's altar refers to all these hallowed traditions but also breaks with them in nearly every respect. I have not encountered an earlier instance in which, on a monumental scale, a free-standing tabernacle is flanked by two angels kneeling in attitudes of prayer. In the nearest precedent, which Bernini certainly knew, a sacrament altar of the early sixteenth century in S. Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, there are kneeling angels, but they serve as candelabra-bearers (Fig. 261).[232] In plan, Bernini's altar is a subtle adaptation of his design for the facade of the church of S. Andrea al Quirinale, where the convex entrance "tabernacle" protrudes at the center of two flanking, concave wings (Figs. 262, 263). The curving wings of the altar end in diagonals, as do the colonnades of the piazza, except that here the extremities serve as pedestals for the pair of angels kneeling in adoration, who are placed diagonally with respect to the altar itself. They thus appear in three-quarter view, intermediating by their postures and the directions of their glances between the worshiper-celebrant before the altar and the Sacrament itself. In this way, the angels initiate the spatial and conceptual continuum in which the Sacrament proceeds from the divine grace of the Trinity to the spectator.



257. Bernini, Altar of the Holy Sacrament; Pietro da Cortona, *Trinity*, engraving. (after De'Rossi 1702–21, part III, pl. 22)

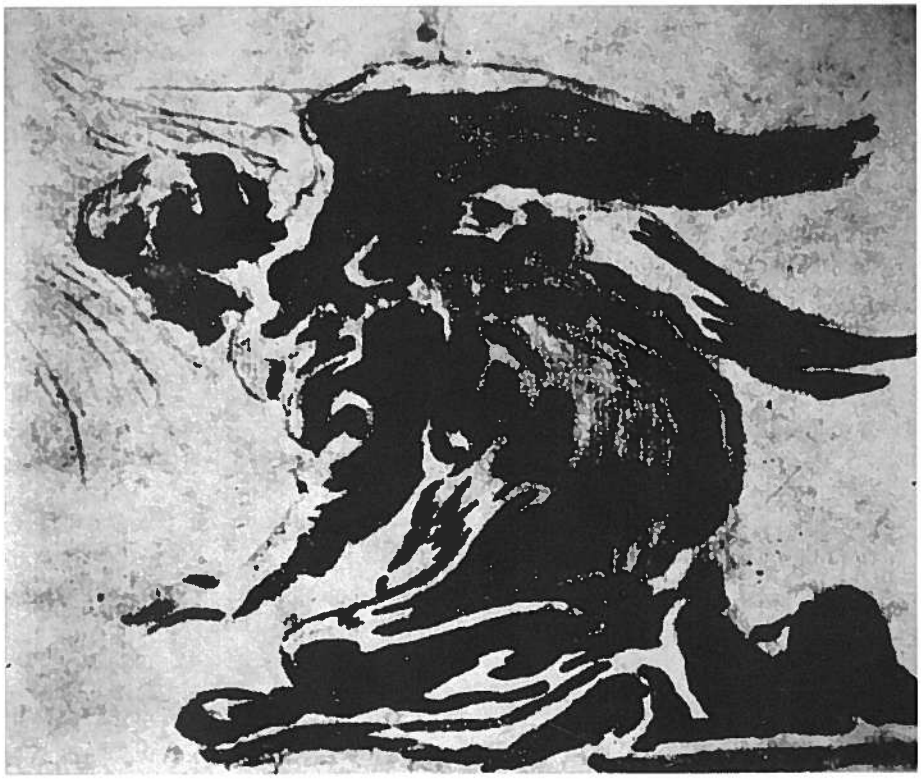
Bernini's tabernacle follows that of S. Croce in referring to one of the most famous and widely imitated buildings of the Renaissance, the so-called Tempietto designed by Bramante to mark the spot of Saint Peter's martyrdom not far from the Vatican, in the courtyard of the Franciscan convent adjoining the church of S. Pietro in Montorio (Fig. 264). Apart from its role as a paragon of Renaissance architecture, Bramante's Tempietto entailed several associations appropriate for a sacrament tabernacle. In its design it had assimilated the classical peripteral temple to a centrally planned domical structure commonly associated with the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem – hence its relevance at S. Croce – as well as being used in temporary catafalques erected in the churches as funeral commemorations.[233] At St. Peter's the reference to the Tempietto served to relate Peter's death to that of Christ himself, and had already been cited by Bramante in his design for the cupola of the church. The celebratory nature of the repository of the Sacrament is expressed through the differences between it and its monumental prototypes. The tabernacle is more elaborate, its fluted Corinthian order and sumptuous materials – gilt bronze inlaid with azure lapis lazuli – recall the lavishness of the biblical description of the Holy of Holies and Saint John's vision of the celestial Jerusalem in the Book of Revelations. On the pediment of the temple door, the flanking allegorical figures of Faith and Religion convey the fundamental paradox of Catholic belief and doctrine, referring both to the tomb of Christ and to his triumphant resurrection. Crowned with figures of the apostles, the tabernacle's colonnade recalls



258. Bernini, *Blessed and Damned Souls*. Spanish Embassy to the Holy See, Rome

the semicircular colonnades of the piazza S. Pietro, so that the phalanxes of saints celebrating and guarding the processional way culminates here, in the apostolic guard of honor flanking Peter and Paul at the Holy of Holies. Bestrewn with the stars from the arms of Clement X, the cupola becomes a veritable Dome of Heaven. The sacramental theme of death and resurrection would have been the predominant image of the entire basilica in the crown of Bernini's first design for the Baldacchino over the high altar (Fig. 125). Now, half a century later, Bernini repeated in miniature essentially the same figure, for essentially the same reason, atop his sacrament tabernacle.

Although relatively small and difficult to discern in detail from below, the risen Christ is one of Bernini's most remarkable creations, unprecedented in its combination of four heretofore unrelated features (Fig. 254): the shroud of death is cast aside to reveal the nude body in its entirety along the right side; the Lord is shown without the wounds of the Crucifixion; the figure is carried aloft on a cloud; and while the right arm is raised heavenward, the face is inclined down to the right. The nude, perfect body is the glorified state of the New Adam to which he returned at the Resurrection – a clear recollection of Michelangelo's famous nude, *Risen Christ*, in S. Maria sopra Minerva in Rome.[234] With the apostles ranged about the tabernacle-tomb below, the cloud-borne Christ evokes the theme of the Ascension. The uplifting gesture of Christ's right hand – which echoes that of Christ in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel fresco (Fig. 265) – and the direction of his inclination suggest the Lord's salvific action on behalf of those whom he saves at the resurrection of all souls on the last day. With the force of a heaven-bent explosion the figure embodies, as does the Eucharist itself, the entire process of salvation from Christ's death to the Last Judgment. In this context, the relation between Bernini's tabernacle and Pietro da Cortona's composition becomes critically significant, because the Last Judgment, the ultimate act of the divine drama, is commonly represented as taking place under the aegis of the Trinity.[235] The relationship here recapitulates that which Bernini originally envisaged at the high altar, with Christ rising from the crown of the Baldacchino to take his seat at the Last Judgment in the dome, beneath the beneficent God the Father in the lantern (Figs. 125, 115). The lantern fresco, painted by Cesare d'Arpino following Michelangelo's image in the Sistine Chapel ceiling of God creating the sun and moon, shows the Eternal Father creating the "lights in the firmament of the heaven" (Gen.1:14,15; Fig. 266).[236] The providential coincidence of this religio-historical drama cannot have escaped the participants, least of all Bernini and Clement X himself: the pope under whom d'Arpino had begun the work of bringing the great dome over the tomb of the apostles to completion also bore the name Clement (VIII, Aldobrandini, 1592–1605), and was also identified by stars in his coat of arms. Inspired by divine clemency, the popes had vaulted the earthly image of the Heavenly Jerusalem with its celestial canopy.



259. Bernini, study for a kneeling angel, drawing. Windsor Castle

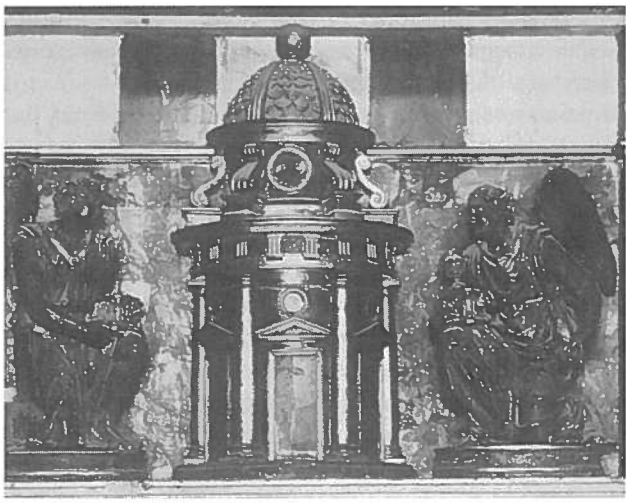
The Church, the City, and the Artist

It would be a grave error to confine our perception of Bernini's work at St. Peter's in a narrow Petrine, or even ecclesiological, framework without considering its relation to the urban and social domain of the city as a whole, and to the inner, spiritual domain of the artist himself.

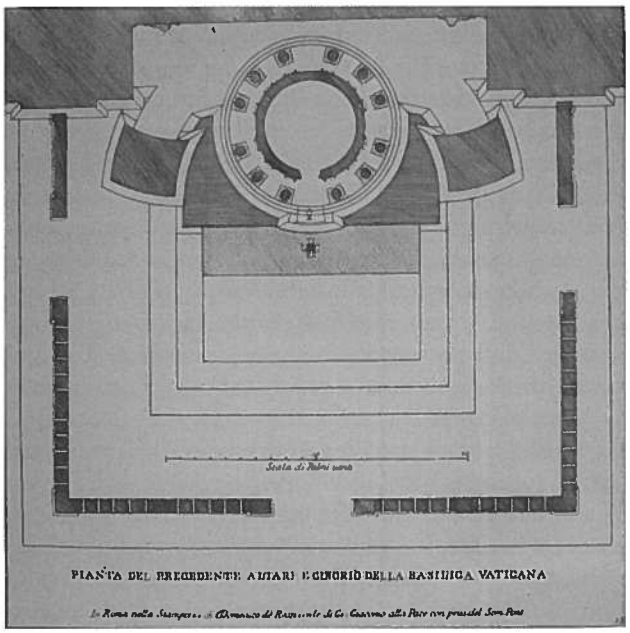
ROMA ALESSANDRINA: URBAN UNITY, PUBLIC WELFARE, AND UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN CHARITY

The building was always the centerpiece of a worldview that was itself centered on the city of Rome, from which the pope spoke, as Christ's vicar, *urbi et orbi*. The conscious and explicit development of this programmatic relationship, initiated in the Renaissance, culminated in the seventeenth century, especially under Alexander VII, when Rome acquired three epithets – two contemporary, Roma moderna and Roma alessandrina, the third applied a posteriore in our own time, Roma barocca. The coincidence and significance of these new views of the city – chronological, papal, stylistic – were essentially the theme of one of the great books of recent urban history, Richard Krautheimer's *The Rome of Alexander VII, 1655–1667* (1985), consideration of which provides important insights into the nature of this epochal development of what can now with particular justification

260. Bernini, study for a kneeling angel, terra-cotta. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Besançon



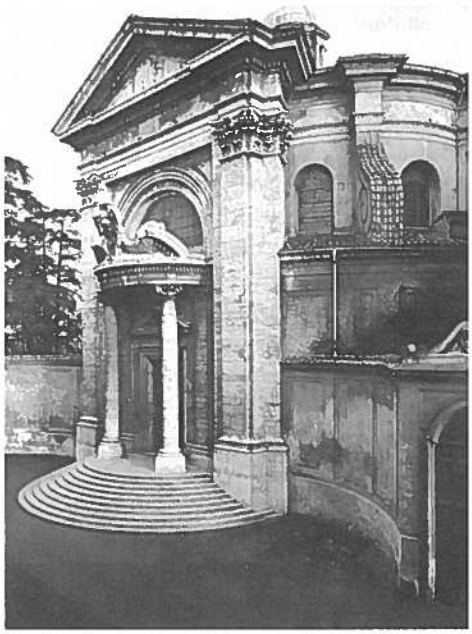
261. Attributed to Jacopo Sansovino, Altar of the Sacrament. S. Croce in Gerusalemme, Rome



262. Bernini, Altar of the Sacrament, plan

properly be called "modern" history.[237] Contemporaries used the term "Modern" chiefly in the Petrarchan sense of postmedieval and in contrast to the ancient city, whereas for Krautheimer, Alexander's extravagant campaigns of building and embellishment epitomized the transformation of the chaotic and squalid medieval town that survived from antiquity into the splendid new capital of the Christian world.

Alexander was by no means the first pope with a passion for building, nor was he the first to regard Rome as a projection of himself and his office. But whereas Sixtus V, for example, still conceived of the city in largely symbolic terms – the avenues connecting the patriarchal basilicas were seen as a star-shaped pattern reflecting his family emblem as well as the star of Bethlehem – Alexander's view was functional, in that he believed the city and its monuments served an urgent, contemporary ideological and strategic purpose. Indeed, perhaps Krautheimer's main contribution was to perceive a comprehensive significance underlying the building mania that has always been regarded as Alexander's chief strength – or weakness, depending on whether one gives greater importance to its effect on the city or its effect on the papal treasury. Krautheimer realized, first of all, that Alexander was not just a Maecenas in the popular sense of a vulgar Renaissance tyrant bent on a vulgar display of wealth and power, but a man of rare intelligence and refined taste who, moreover, followed the work personally, participating in the most minute details of planning with a passion that can only have been born of an innate gift and cultivated interest. In a sense, I suspect that this last may have been one of the mainsprings of Krautheimer's own interest, arising from his study and ultimate publication of the passages dealing with art and artists from Alexander's personal diary.[238] This document is in itself utterly extraordinary: I am not aware of a comparable personal record of any previous pope. (Fabio Chigi, from a great Sienese family, must have taken as his model the famous *Commentaries* of his compatriot predecessor, Pius II, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini.) No less astonishing, however, is the amount of time and effort Alexander devoted to these matters. Bernini and Alexander were together constantly – consulting, discussing, planning, designing – often for long periods on a weekly basis, sometimes even more often. In this respect,



263. Bernini, S. Andrea al Quirinale. Rome

264. Bramante, Tempietto. S. Pietro in Montorio, Rome

too, Alexander was unprecedented, and Krautheimer perceived that, not only was the pope mad about architecture, but his madness encompassed the whole of the city. His improvements not only focused on the obvious, major places and monuments in the heart of Rome but also extended to the outskirts, the *disabitato*, to use the term Krautheimer preferred, although it was often populated by the poor, the dispossessed, and vagabond gypsies. I myself came to appreciate from the book that the Cathedra Petri was only the last stop on a physical and conceptual pilgrimage that began at the Porta del Popolo. The sharpness and comprehensiveness of Alexander's vision is attested in many subtle ways beyond, or underlying, the works themselves – for example, the new accuracy and comprehensiveness of the maps of Alexander's Rome, and the lists of his works compiled and portrayed in illustrated series of engravings. But perhaps there is no better indication of both the intimacy and the comprehensiveness of Alexander's vision than the fact that he kept in his private chambers a model of the city. (It is interesting to speculate where his miniature Rome fits in the history of city models;[239] it was, I suppose, as complete and accurate as the maps of Alexander's Rome, and it is the first model I can recall that was made for the purpose of urban planning. Evidently, the pope not only thought about the city in a modern, comprehensive way; he also had a modern, comprehensive way of representing it – a new kind of "three-dimensional" urban consciousness, one might say.)

Just as Alexander's vision was global, so is Krautheimer's, as he extends the normal purview of architectural history itself, and this in two senses. He is at pains not only to consider individual buildings but also to relate them to their contexts, their immediate surroundings as well as their interlocking connections with other works throughout the city, and even beyond. Moreover, architecture itself is no longer conceived of in terms of permanent structures, but includes city squares and public spaces of all sorts – marketplaces, theater sets and ephemeral spectacles, gardens, streets, and tree-lined allées – everything we tend to call, for want of a still more comprehensive term, the built environment. A vast panorama is deftly captured in what is, after all, a relatively brief text.

Considered thus, Krautheimer's book draws a thin line between the genres of building history and urban history. The ten chapters carry the reader through a sequence of ideas, beginning with the career and character of Alexander VII: his family, his education, his learning, his wit, his financial nonchalance, his love of architecture. The second chapter deals with what Krautheimer calls the urban substructure: the pope's efforts to widen and straighten the city's messy tangle of medieval "ways," partly to make them grand and beautiful, and partly to accommodate the growing traffic problems created by that monstrous newfangled conveyance, the horse-drawn coach; and his campaign to clean up the equally messy and unsightly markets that encumbered public spaces of high visibility, such as the Forum and the Pantheon, by confining the vendors to less conspicuous locations and/or providing new, more efficient accommodations. Chapter 3 deals with the pope's architects and some of their major projects. The central figure, of course, is Bernini, followed by Pietro da Cortona; Borromini, Krautheimer observes, was such a difficult character that Alexander wanted as little as possible to do with him! Chapter 4 explores the contemporary notion of "teatro," not in the narrow sense of a spectacle, but in the large sense of any global, encompassing idea, especially as the term applies to churches and the spaces before and around them. Cortona's S. Maria della Pace, Bernini's S. Andrea al Quirinale and St. Peter's, including both the square and the Cathedra, are cases in point. Chapter 5 concerns overall planning and opposition, primarily the careful control Alexander exercised, at vast expenditures of his own time and energy, over his projects and those of other patrons (who sometimes resisted) throughout the city. Chapter 6, entitled "Prospects," deals with unrealized projects that give us some idea of what Alexander might have achieved had he lived longer and had more money, but which also testify to the colossal scale of what he did manage to carry out. Chapter 7, called "Roma Antica and Moderna," deals with the treatment of classical remains, showing that,

although ancient works could be treated cavalierly on occasion, the principal objective was to integrate them into the modern city so that they, too, could contribute *Ad Maiorem Gloriam Dei*. Chapter 8 is devoted to the Piazza del Popolo as a deliberately theatrical – that is, emulating contemporary stage designs – reformation of the principal entrance to Rome from the north. The piazza was the prelude to a whole series of works intended to embellish and aggrandize the processional way through the city to St. Peter's and the Vatican. Chapter 9, "The Reverse of the Medal," is devoted to the seamier side of Rome, the part that the kind of audience Alexander had in view was not supposed to see. Alexander's Rome may have been beautiful, but for many people it was not a very nice place in which to live.

Together, these chapters amount to a recitation of the main types of monumental urban and architectural projects undertaken under Alexander's direct or indirect control. Although richly informative, awash with stimulating observations, and written in Krautheimer's inimitably lively, informal style, they are essentially repetitions of the same theme: Alexander's passion for building and the grandeur of his ideas, as aided and abetted by his favorite artist-entrepreneur, Bernini. From a formal point of view, the accent is on the perspective vista, the dramatic focus, and majestic scale. Except for chapter 9, there is nothing about what we would today call the urban infrastructure – utilitarian projects (other than public markets) such as sewage and sanitation, ordinary housing, and the like. When Alexander said, "Let nothing built in honor of the Virgin be anything but great," it matched Bernini's statement when he reached Paris to redesign the Louvre for Louis XIV, "Let no one speak to me of anything small."[240] And Krautheimer gives a corresponding vision of grand ideas on a grand scale that defined Rome as a special place with a special role to play on the world stage. True to his subjects – Alexander VII, Bernini, and Rome – Krautheimer did not write microhistory!

If all this sounds very Baroque, the architecture of Krautheimer's book is itself rather Baroque. In fact, this sequence of contrapposto-like repetitions and variations on a dominant theme creates an increasing feeling of suspense, as one wonders what, in the end, is the point. The point appears dramatically in the last chapter, "City Planning and Politics: The Illustrious Foreigner," wherein Krautheimer presents what he considered to be the guiding principle – the "political" motivation – that lay behind Alexander's urban enterprises, which were concentrated primarily along the principal ceremonial route through the city and were intended primarily to impress the illustrious foreign visitor. Here it is important to bear in mind that, in a bibliographical note, Krautheimer explicitly disclaims competence as a historian, declaring his dependence in such matters upon von Pastor's *History of the Popes* and other standard works on the period. And his political motivation turns out to be the standard one, familiar to all students of Italian Baroque: the victories of the Protestants and the rise in the industrial and mercantile power of the North; the establishment and hegemony over European affairs of the great national states, especially France, Spain, and the Hapsburgs – all these factors had led to a drastic diminution in the real power of the Church, in the face of which Pope Alexander adopted what might be described as a policy of "overcompensation," seeking to aggrandize and embellish the physical power of the city to make up for the loss of political power. He sought to convince the world that the papacy remained a factor to be reckoned with, by transforming Rome into a great modern city, or at least the appearance of one.[241] This perception of a "diplomatic" rationale underlying and motivating Alexander's architectural mania may be Krautheimer's most original contribution in the book.

Paradoxically, then, the modern city was created, not from any fundamental shift in attitude or values, but as an act of deception. At bottom, from a strictly art-historical point of view, the ultimate argument of Krautheimer's book is rather conventional. The effect is to "instrumentalize" the Baroque, which becomes an art of propaganda and representation rather than the expression of a new worldview, which the idea of modernity would suggest. This conception of the Baroque as an artificial, bombastic, overcompensatory reaction to the challenge of Protestantism, as an art of rhetoric, display, and theatricality, coincides with the equally conventional, absolutist conception of political consciousness in the seventeenth century.[242] Alexander's was preeminently an urban renewal program conceived as "of the elite, by the elite, and for the elite."

There was another side to this medal, however, no less important, in my view, than the obverse. Alexander's new urbanism had what I would call a subversive, underground aspect, of which Krautheimer caught glimpses but the implications of which he did not fully grasp. The point begins with the fact that the urban population of Rome was, after all, a very powerful force – moral, economic, and political. In this sense, Rome was like many other cities in Europe, where there was a growing consciousness of and concern for social problems that had no doubt long existed. Krautheimer is aware of this background to the extent that he devotes his next-to-last chapter, "The Reverse of the Medal," to a remarkable document written in 1656–9 by an absolutely minor and otherwise insignificant administrative employee, one Lorenzo Pizzati from Pontremoli, in which he details the execrable conditions of everyday life in the city and the pitiable state of its underprivileged population,

along with drastic and utopian suggestions for alleviating them. For Krautheimer the report simply reveals an underlying reality for which Alexander's urban program was a kind of cosmetic cover-up for the benefit of visiting dignitaries. However, the improvements were surely meant for the edification of the people of Rome as well, and not only as embellishment. For example, more than once it is reported that an important function of the vast expenditures for the Piazza S. Pietro was as a public work program to provide employment for the indigent, especially the unskilled.[243] I think a good case could be made that this attitude originated with Bernini himself, who certainly promoted it. A primary source is a remarkable document prepared circa 1657–8 by Bernini in response to objections to his project, in which he eulogizes Alexander's efforts to deal with precisely the problems of homelessness and unemployment described by Lorenzo Pizzati. In response to criticisms of the "uselessness" of the piazza colonnades, Bernini replied – in a wholly modern spirit of social welfare – that, on the contrary, the work they provided for the poor and unemployed was the most efficacious charitable use of public funds for the public good. Explaining the piazza project, Bernini wrote:

> He [the pope] quickly applied opportune remedies to the evils, and, compassionate toward poverty – which not only wandered unemployed about the city but languished under the oppression of a famine that increasingly elicited his pity the more it afflicted the people – he turned to distributing large quantities of gold, although the scarcer harvest limited the torrent of this devout munificence. Moved by wholehearted Charity, this most generous pope saw clearly that simply to open the Treasury for the common good was to promote idleness and nourish vice. Whence the very antidote one applied to restore health could be the potent toxin to poison it. He therefore repressed that flame of Charity, not to extinguish it, but so that it might be more greatly dispersed to the benefit of his subjects, whence he thought to begin a great construction, through which to encourage labor among the homeless, and by the expenditure of a large sum of money to alleviate the immediate need.[244]

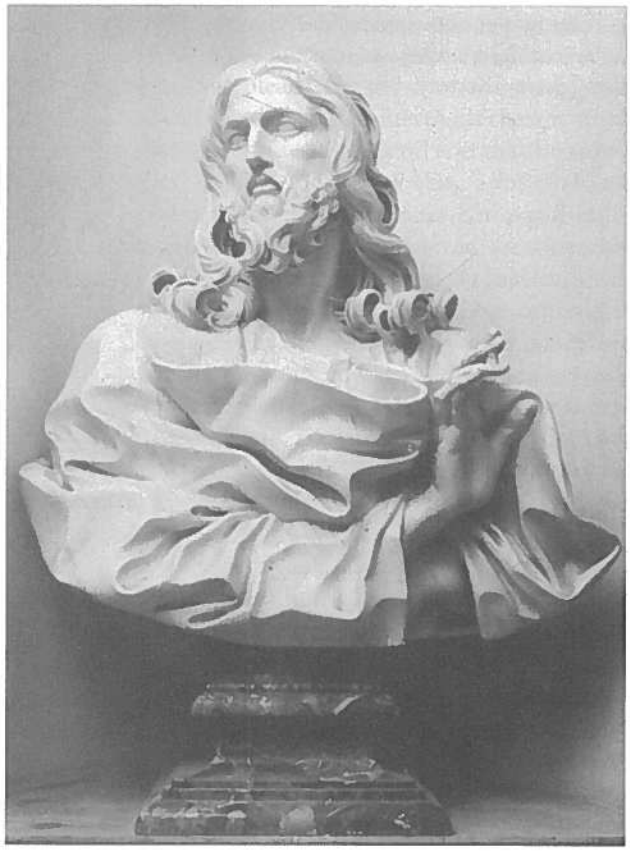
When it is said, rightly, that Alexander's program nearly ruined the papal finances, it was not merely a spendthrift vanity, it was also the result of what today would be called a program of public works for social welfare and rehabilitation, the cost of which was ultimately beyond the reach of the economic system on which it was based. The proof of this point lies in the fact that Alexander specifically opposed outright gifts to the poor, not only because it engendered dependency on the dole, but also because it was an indignity; instead, he favored helping the poor by providing work for which they could be paid and so retain their Christian pride.[245]

The great weight and import of the populace is also evident from a fundamental source that is overlooked in Krautheimer's Roma alessandrina: an official document, deliberately compiled at the pope's behest. I refer to the apostolic visitations commanded by Alexander VII to all the churches and dioceses of Rome. Apostolic visits had a long history, to be sure; and earlier in the century Urban VIII had ordered one that fills three very substantial volumes. But none of these precedents even remotely approaches the scope, depth, and systematic coverage of Alexander's effort to gather and organize information about what ultimately mattered, the spiritual conditions of the people of Rome. Alexander's apostolic visitation – which continued throughout his reign – has been described as the most comprehensive in the modern history of Rome.[246]

My reasons for emphasizing this reverse of the medal are two. I am not concerned simply to reveal the existence of this social substructure of the city and its problems in Alexander's Rome; they had existed for a long time. What is important to understanding Alexander's modernity, and the scope and meaning of his vision for the city, is the fact that he was aware of their existence; he perceived the conditions in the city not only as a physical but also as a social and moral whole; he sought to grasp them by studying them carefully and in detail, and to do something about them in a conscious and comprehensive way. I do not want to overstate my case. Alexander was a product of his age, not ours. He had his own defects, he failed to realize many of his projects, and many of the projects he did complete failed to achieve their purpose. But just as his urbanistic projects on the obverse of the medal bore fruit in the subsequent history of architecture and urban planning, so did his ideas on the reverse. Alexander was the first pope in modern times to make a serious effort to end the tradition of nepotism, and his effort was a direct inspiration for Innocent XI, who actually did finally break the tradition.[247] A similar spirit underlay another great project of unification and consolidation with which Bernini became involved, effecting a new principle of what would come to be thought of as state-sponsored social welfare. The myriad private and selective charities of the city were subsumed into a single, comprehensive institution devoted to all the poor, under the aegis of the papacy. The entire indigent population was given shelter at the Lateran palace of the popes, no less, which, it was reported in 1676, Bernini was supposed to refurbish for this purpose. First broached by Lorenzo Pizzati in his diatribe of 1656–9, the idea was taken up under the succeeding popes by an Oratorian priest, Mariano Sozzini (1612–80), and was championed by Bernini's nephew, Francesco Marchese (1623–97), who was also an Oratorian. The project was

265. Michelangelo, *Last Judgment*, detail. Sistine Chapel, Vatican Palace, Rome

266. Cesare d'Arpino, *God Creating the Stars*. Lantern of the cupola, St. Peter's Rome



267. Bernini, bust of the Savior. S. Sebastiano fuori le mura, Rome

actually carried out under the great reforming pope Innocent XII (1691–1700). Marchese was mainly responsible for the program, and he must have been instrumental in the institution' s decision to take Bernini's last work, the bust of the Savior (see Fig. 267), as the model for the sculpted insignias that were placed throughout the city on those buildings whose rents were devoted to the great cause (1694–5). For a variety of reasons, financial as well as social, the project was short-lived, but it engendered a sequence of institutions and programs of social welfare whose history can be traced thereafter down to our own time.[248] The obverse and reverse belong to the same medal, after all. Alexander's collective awareness of his distinguished aristocratic visitors from abroad was part and parcel of an equally collective awareness of his ordinary, often underprivileged, subjects at home. In this sense, too, he helped to transform Roma antica into Roma moderna, and Roma barocca.

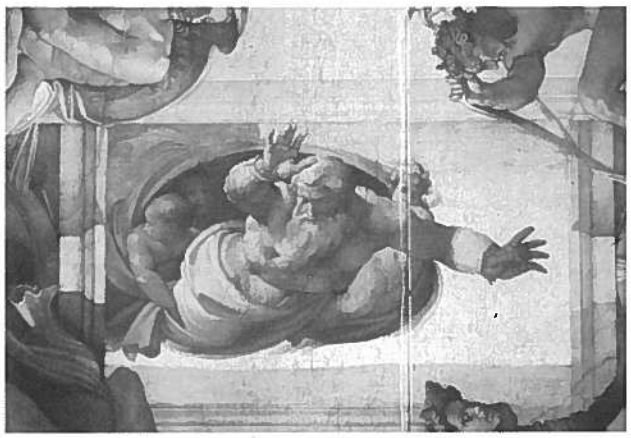
THE BLOOD OF CHRIST (1669–70)

The spiritual pilgrimage at St. Peter's that Bernini envisaged from his earliest youth – "Oh, if only I could be the one" – reached its ultimate goal in the passage over the Ponte Sant'Angelo and the Sacrament altar. The feelings and ideas expressed in these works held deep personal significance for the now aged artist. Contemplating his own death during this same period, he created two works of what might be called devotional eschatology, with a view to achieving a "good death."[249] In his eightieth year he carved the recently rediscovered sculpted, half-length bust of Christ (Fig. 267), whose pose evokes the Last Judgment and makes a particular point of alluding to the chest wound.[250] Nearly a decade earlier he had distilled in a spectacular, angel-filled apparition known as the *Sangue di Cristo* (Blood of Christ), an inner

268. Bernini, *Sangue di Cristo*, engraving by François Spierre, 473 × 290mm (after Marchese 1670). Vatican Library, Rome

vision that must have guided and inspired him through all the divagations of his life's work, including St. Peter's (Fig. 268). This famous composition, in which the Virgin intervenes between the Eucharist and the Trinity, was a veritable emblem of Bernini's sense of his personal raison d'être and his mission as a creative artist: he kept a large painted version of it before his bed until the end.[251] Often described as mystical – too often, in my view – the scene is a clear and impassioned articulation of Bernini's mode of preparing for death in accordance with the precepts of a medieval tradition codified in a famous text, the *Ars moriendi*. The Art of Dying had been revived toward the end of the sixteenth century, notably by the Jesuits, who had institutionalized the tradition in the Confraternity of the Good Death (Bona Mors), of which Bernini was a long-standing and faithful member.

He undertook the design late in 1669, partly no doubt in commemoration of the great Florentine Carmelite mystic Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, whom Clement IX



269. Michelangelo, *God Creating the Firmament.* Sistine Chapel, Vatican Palace, Rome

had recently canonized, and partly as a sort of votive expiation for the failure that year of a major project to refurbish the apse of S. Maria Maggiore, mother of all churches dedicated to the Virgin, including tombs for both Clement IX and his predecessor, Alexander VII.[252] With a view to both these causes, Bernini had the composition reproduced in a large, resplendent print by François Spierre, to be promulgated as an independent devotional image.[253] The print was carefully scaled so as also to fold neatly into the small octavo format of a devotional tract composed by the artist's beloved nephew and counselor in the "art of dying," the Oratorian father Francesco Marchese, which provides the work's full ideological context. Published in 1670 as work on Ponte Sant'Angelo was nearing completion, the theme of this volume, itself a modern version of the *Ars moriendi*, was epitomized in its title: *The Only Hope of the Sinner Consists in the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*[254] The theme of the engraving is epitomized by two inscriptions in which the blood of Christ's sacrifice is conceived as an offering on behalf of the sinner: one is from Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, "The blood of Christ, who offered himself without spot to God, will purge our conscience";[255] the other quotes the new saint named after the Virgin and her first namesake, Mary Magdalene, both of whom had worshiped at the foot of the Cross, "I offer you, eternal Father, the blood of the incarnate word; and if anything is wanting in me I offer it to you, Mary, that you may present it to the eternal Trinity."[256] As if emergent from the whiteness of the paper, God the Father, with an expansive gesture that also echoes Michelangelo, dispels the threatening clouds and creates by fiat the exultant event that takes place between Himself and the world below. The gesture echoes that of God the Father in Michelangelo's *Separation of the Sky and Water* (the second day of Creation), where also only the sky and sea are visible (Fig. 269).[257] But Bernini introduces a significant change that suggests a reciprocal movement: God the Father turns his left hand up, as if raising the Crucifixion heavenward, and his right hand down as if commanding the descent of the salvific blood. The reference to Creation may also allude to the commonly held view that the New Dispensation was foreordained. Christ sheds his blood in luminous streams that pour from the wounds in his hands and feet to form an infinite ocean inundating the earth. The Virgin receives the effusions from the chest wound and offers them to the Father on behalf of the sinner. This spectacular tour de force of aerial perspective and foreshortening revives and conflates a number of late medieval devotional traditions in a new synthesis.

Conceived as a cloud-borne vision with the Virgin kneeling as advocate before the Crucifixion, the composition follows the traditional mode of intercessory illustrations of the *Ars moriendi,* of which one of the primary injunctions was that the believer preparing for a "good death" should contemplate "holy images, especially the Crucified Christ and the Virgin." The prescription for divine intercession might be illustrated as a heavenly apparition above the deathbed: under the aegis of the Trinity, the virgin mother as Queen of Heaven offers her breast and pleads for the *moriens* on bended knee, while Christ on the cross points to his chest wound, for it is as sacrificial and sacramental son that he transmits her appeal to God the Father (Fig. 270).[258] None of these features is present in Bernini's composition, in which, moreover, the vision is conceived as appearing not *within* the picture to the moribund on his deathbed, but *through* the picture to the viewer. One cannot repress the suspicion that the whole image was conceived to be seen exactly as Bernini saw it at the foot of his own deathbed. Whereas the artists of the *Ars Moriendi* represented the death scene, Bernini isolated the vision and made the viewer of the engraving – imaginary *moriens*, disconcertingly suspended between the apparition above and the flood below – its witness. It is clear that while retaining essential elements of the *Ars moriendi* imagery, Bernini departed radically from the medieval tradition, which had focused on what might be called the external mechanism of intercession. He focuses instead on the inner, sacramental medium of salvation, that is, the Eucharist itself, corresponding to the mottoes inscribed below and to the title of Father Marchese's book in which they are explained.

The *Sangue di Cristo* incorporates three fundamental innovations – the ocean of blood, the chest wound of Christ, and the action of the Virgin – that together express the essential conception embedded in these texts: the Eucharist as a reciprocal offering to and by the sinner, and the only means by which universal redemption may be achieved. Metaphors expressing the generosity and ubiquity of the blood of Christ had frequently been cast in liquid terms, like the Fountain of Life, the flood of Noah, the sea, a river of blood. The idea was illustrated

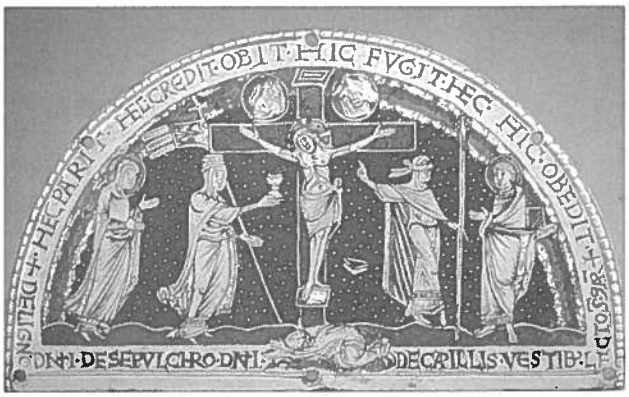
270. *The Death of Moriens and the Intercession with the Trinity of Christ and the Virgin*, stained-glass votive window, Wettingen, Switzerland

272. Detail of Fig. 268, Virgin receiving Water and Blood in Her Hands

in Botticelli's Eucharistic depiction of the Crucifixion titled by Vasari "Triumph of the Faith," where the liquid descends from the Cross to form a cleansing river of baptism (Fig. 271).[259] This motif expressly illustrates the account of Christ's death given in the Gospel of John, discussed earlier.[260] Among the many interpretations of the miracle, the one associating the effusions from the chest wound with the Virgin Mary and the Church is most important here because it underlies the third innovation of Bernini's composition, the role of Christ's mother. The streams from the chest wound descend not to the ocean but to Mary's hands, where they disappear (Fig. 272). Mary kneels, arms and hands extended, palms turned up to receive the effusions, which, commingled within her body to become the Eucharist, she also offers up to the Trinity – exactly the process of receiving and offering

271. Sandro Botticelli, *Triumph of the Faith*, woodcut

273. Madonna avvocata ("Madonna di S. Sisto"). S. Maria del Rosario, Rome



274. Crucifixion, showing the Virgin as advocate and Ecclesia with the Chalice receiving the Water and Blood of the Sacrament, reliquary plaque, Musée de Cluny, Paris

275. Christ Crucified by the Virtues, Ecclesia with the Chalice receiving Water and Blood, Psalter, MS 54, fol. 15v. Musée Municipal, Besançon

that takes place at every Mass.[261] But the ocean of universal salvation in Bernini's engraving is unique, and specifically complementary to the hardly less extraordinary portrayal of the chest wound: instead of the usual single cascade of blood, two clearly distinguishable streams gush forth. This quite unprecedented act entailed the amalgamation of three related but heretofore distinct interpretations of the Virgin's role in the work of salvation. As Mother of Christ, Mary was the intercessor par excellence with her son, who could refuse her no request for mercy. In Rome this theme was associated above all with a particular class of images in which the Virgin lifts both hands upward in a gesture that suggests both an appeal and an offering to heaven. The type was familiar from the classic Byzantine Crucifixion composition, in which the Virgin standing beneath the Cross gestures in this way, and had been isolated in Rome as a famous icon known as the Madonna Avvocata (Fig. 273).[262] Any Roman viewer would recognize the allusion in Bernini's figure. In response to Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi's invocation, the Virgin has become, not simply a mother and advocate, but the unique conduit for humanity's unique hope for salvation. This role she performs in her capacity as *Mater Ecclesia*, the Mother Church, a common epithet that alludes equally to the institutional church and to the Virgin as mother and spouse.[263] It was precisely in this capacity that the Virgin-Church participated in what might be called ecclesiological depictions of the Crucifixion collecting the blood from the side wound in an emblematic chalice.[264] In some cases, the institutional nature of the Sacrament is emphasized, as when Ecclesia, on the dexter side of the cross, is contrasted with Synagoga on the sinister side.[265] In some cases, the Virgin and Ecclesia might appear together, thus identifying Mary as compassionate intercessor with the Church as the administrator of the sacraments (Fig. 274). In one notable instance, Ecclesia gathers the water and blood in her chalice, while a personification of Charity inflicts the lance wound (Fig. 275).[266] While the blood and water were frequently shown as two adjacent streams, I have found no precedent for Bernini's absolutely distinct, gushing spouts, one to each hand of the Virgin – whose two breasts, it should be recalled, were traditionally understood as the Old and New Testaments, conjoined in her body.[267] The identification of the Eucharistic chest wound with the Church on the most popular level, as Ecclesia in the original, Greek sense of "community," was specifically relevant to the ecumenical ideal conveyed by the ocean metaphor in

276. *Mary as Priest offering the Chalice of the Sacrament to the Trinity*, engraving. Brussels, Jumpers Collection (after Missaglia et al. 1954, fig. 102, p. 111)

277. Caravaggio, *Madonna del Rosario*. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

Marchese's text and Bernini's composition. The formulation concerning the Eucharist given in the Catechism of the Council of Trent stressed that the water mentioned by John was identified with the word "used in the Apocalypse, to signify the people, and therefore, Water mixed with wine signifies the union of the faithful with Christ their head."[268]

The third manifestation of the Virgin associates her with the actual function of the Church in the administration of the sacraments, *Maria sacerdos*, the Virgin as Priest.[269] The concept of Mary-Ecclesia as equivalent to the consecrated male priest received its first explicit formulation by the eighth century from the Pseudo-Epiphanius: "equivalent to the priest and indeed the altar, she gives Christ our celestial bread in remission of our sins."[270] The principle is illustrated in a dramatic vision in a Flemish engraving of the early seventeenth century. Mary appears in this sacerdotal capacity, cloud-borne, kneeling before an altar and offering the chalice and wafer to God the Father and the Holy Spirit above (Fig. 276).[271] In this context it is significant that the closest antecedent I have found for the Virgin's gesture is that

of the priest, Saint Dominic, in Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary,* where it carries essentially the same meaning: Dominic receives the Rosary from the Virgin and offers her the devotion of the faithful (Fig. 277). Bernini's Virgin fuses all these characters in a single persona, and the symbolic chalice is replaced by Mary-Ecclesia's own hands, bathed in the humble and charitable sacrifice she shares as compassionate co-redemptress. The portrayal of the Madonna was a direct visualization of the most famous of all accounts of the Virgin's role as Eucharistic conduit in the process of salvation, Bernard of Clairvaux's sermon on the Nativity of the Virgin, called *De aquaeductu.* The title itself makes the point, which is defined explicitly in the final paragraph, to which Marchese himself alludes:

> But, my brother, whatsoever thou hast a mind to offer to the Lord be sure to entrust it to Mary, so that thy gift shall return to the Giver of all grace through the same channel by which thou didst obtain it. God of course had the power, if He so pleased, to communicate His grace without the interposition of this Aqueduct. But he wanted to provide us with a needful intermediary. For perhaps "thy hands are full of blood" (Is. 1:15) or dirtied with bribes: perhaps thou hast not like the Prophet "shaken them free from all gifts" (Is. 33:15). Consequently, unless thou wouldst have thy gift rejected, be careful to commit to Mary the little thou desirest to offer, that the Lord may receive it through her hands, so dear to Him and most "worthy of all acceptation" (1 Tim. 1:15). For Mary's hands are the very whitest of lilies; and assuredly the Divine Lover of lilies will never complain of anything presented by His Mother's hands that is not found among the lilies. Amen.[272]

The underlying principle was expressed in Saint Bonaventure's treatise on the Incarnate Word, in terms that seem perfectly illustrated in the *Sangue di Cristo*:

> one cannot reach the benefaction of this sacrament without the protection of the Virgin. And for this reason, as this holy body has been given to us through her, so it must also be offered by her hands and received by her hands as the Sacrament, which she procured for us and which was born from her breast.[273]

In the *Sangue di Cristo*, Maria Maddalena's first appeal is to the Father, then to the Virgin, and ultimately to the Trinity. Perhaps the most profound insight into the ultimate meaning of Bernini's image and Marchese's text is hidden, that is, to be found in the omission of the Holy Spirit from the Trinity evoked by the saint. The omission is certainly not inadvertent, since the Holy Spirit is a central step in the heavenly ladder of the saint's offering as reported by her biographer, Vincenzo Puccini, referenced in the citation itself, by the saint herself in her *Colloqui* and by Marchese himself in the text of his book.[274] This is indeed the Hidden God secreted *in potentia* in every altar – many of which are actually inscribed with Isaiah's famous phrase, *Vere tu es Deus absconditus, Deus Israel salvator* ("Truly, thou art a God who hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior"; Is. 45.15) – and whose presence is effected through the sacrament of the Eucharist offered through the Church.

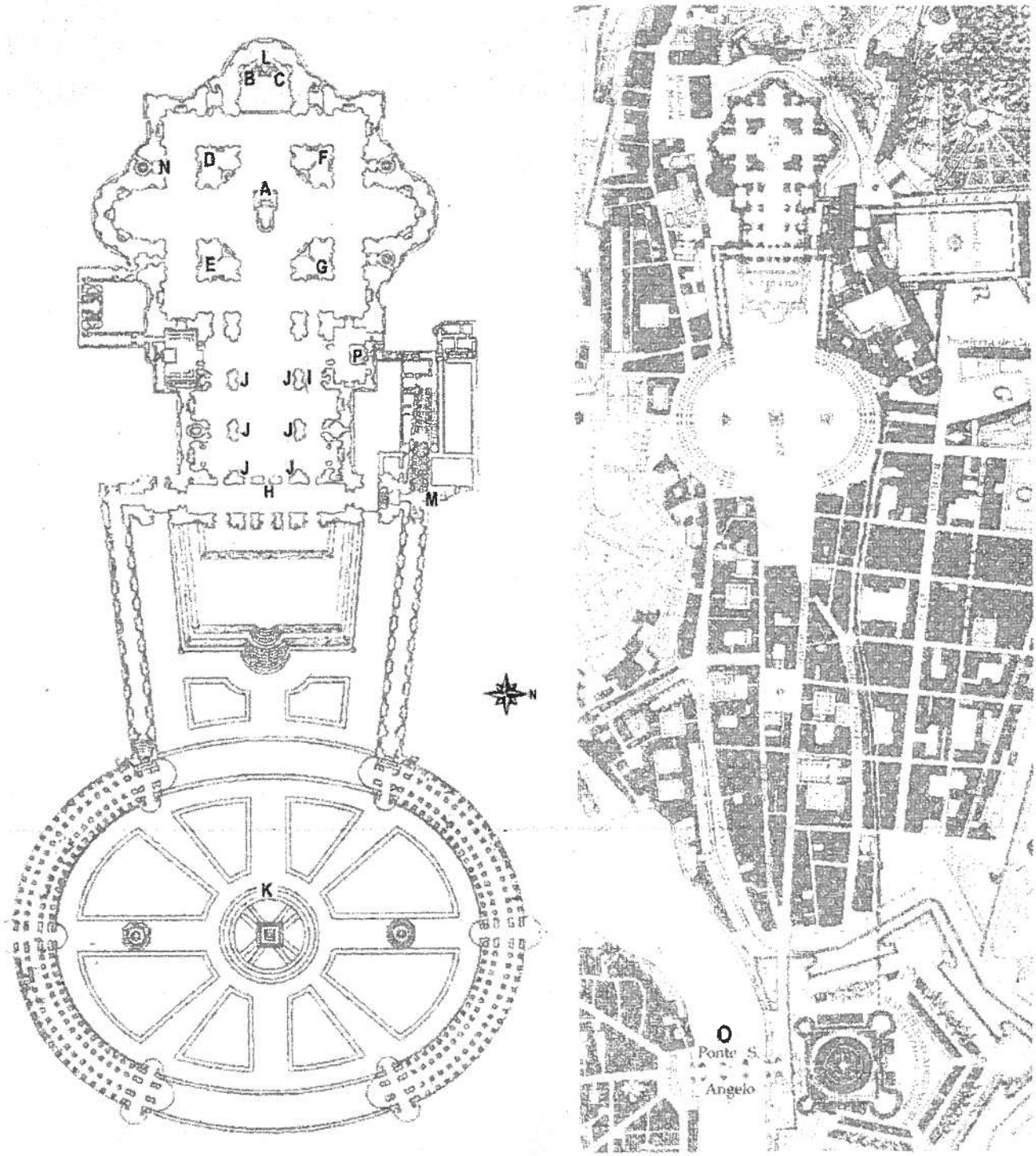
The *Sangue di Cristo* thus incorporates into one comprehensive image of intercession an explicit and intensely personal expression of the human drama of the event described in the gospel, as well as its vast Eucharistic-ecclesiological legacy. The evangelist bore witness to the essential, complementary distinction inherent in the miracle of Redemption that took place on the Cross: the sacrificial blood of Christ's death, which brought the promise of salvation to all mankind; and the sin-cleansing fluids that poured from his chest after death as the sacraments bringing salvation to those who seek it through the mediation of his church. At St. Peter's, the same love wound completes the Passion sequence on the Ponte Sant'Angelo, fulfilling the Old Testament in the New. The way is thus opened to the ministrations the faithful will receive upon entering the embrace of the church dedicated to Christ's vicar, to receive at its altar the Sacrament administered by his successors.

The spiritual ideas and comprehensive mode of thought evident in the *Sangue di Cristo* composition extend their reach far beyond St. Peter's, especially through the reference in its powerful Mariological content to Bernini's project for the apse of S. Maria Maggiore. Having in mind the ancient temple associated with the Vestal Virgins, he envisaged a semicircular colonnade that would have resonated across the city with those of the Piazza San Pietro and the tempietto of the Sacrament altar. In this way, all Rome would have been enveloped in the universal embrace of the Church and the promise of salvation it offered. The thought was an urbanistic counterpart to the Corpus Domini procession emanating from St. Peter's, and to the greatest of the medieval processions, that of the Assumption of the Virgin, which Alexander VII sought to revive. Starting from S. Giovanni in Laterano, the cortege followed the miraculous icon of Christ as it was carried through the center of the ancient city to its "union" with the icon of the Virgin at S. Maria Maggiore, paying homage on the way to the Madonna Avvocata.

The idea of unity, artistic as well as spiritual, might be said to have preoccupied Bernini all his life – at St. Peter's since his childhood encounter with Annibale Carracci and the prospect of a future Baldacchino to provide the new building with a central focal point. In artistic

terms his pursuit was epitomized in what he considered his greatest achievement: having surpassed the conventional boundaries between painting, sculpture, and architecture, and succeeded in merging all three in a new kind of unity – a kind of Trinity-in-art, as it were.[275] The conjunction of the visual arts as variants of one overarching principle had been part of the vocabulary of Italian art theory since Vasari described Disegno (meaning both drawing and conceptualization) as their "father." Federico Zuccari had spoken of God as "the true Design, and true author, and perfect and divine Painter, Sculptor and Architect," and had portrayed Disegno as a God the Father–like figure with a "halo" of three interlocking circles that replicated the personal emblem of the "divine" Michelangelo.[276] Bernini emulated Michelangelo in many ways, including his facility in all three visual modes and in regarding his genius as a humble and inadequate instrument of God's will.[277] In this sense, the conjunction of the arts of design was assimilated to the traditional theological metaphor that identified God as the original creative, multimedia artist of the world, *Deus Artifex*. Although Bernini was no theoretician, he was profoundly indebted to this ideological heritage, which attributed a profound spiritual significance to the visual arts. He changed – transmuted would be a better word – the essence of the relationship, however. His predecessors had conceived of the link between the arts as a common procedure that operated on the two levels implicit in the ambivalence of the word "design." For Bernini, the relationship among the arts was not procedural but substantive: painting, sculpture, and architecture were not simply linked but literally fused, melded into one another to create an unprecedented kind of unity, both material and visual, requiring a special name: a "bel composto."[278] God the Father's fiat in the *Sangue di Cristo* creates the spiritual equivalent of this infinitely adaptable and efficacious medium. Bernini's personal invocation of divine charity is confluent with his conception of the nature of his art and with his vision of universal redemption.

Appendix 1 – Bernini's Extant Monumental Works at St. Peter's (Plans after Nolli 1748)



A. Baldacchino B. Tomb of Paul III C. Tomb of Urban VIII D. St. Veronica E. St. Andrew F. St. Helen G. St. Longinus H. "Feed My Sheep" I. Matilda of Tuscany J. Nave Decoration K. Piazza and Colonnades L. Cathedra Petri M. Constantine and Scala Regia N. Tomb of Alexander VII O. Ponte Sant'Angelo and Castel Sant'Angelo P. Sacrament Altar

Appendix 2 – List of Popes during Bernini's Lifetime

Clement VIII	1592–1605	Ippolito Aldobrandini
Leo XI	1605	Alessandro Ottaviano de' Medici
Paul V	1605–21	Camillo Borghese
Gregory XV	1621–3	Alessandro Ludovisi
Urban VIII	1623–44	Maffeo Barberini
Innocent X	1644–55	Giovanni Battista Pamphilj
Alexander VII	1655–67	Fabio Chigi
Clement IX	1667–9	Giulio Rospigliosi
Clement X	1670–6	Emilio Altieri
Innocent XI	1676–89	Benedetto Odescalchi

Notes

This essay is a revised and expanded version of one published in Pinelli 2000, where full bibliography and a detailed catalogue by various authors will be found. The text of this version has benefited from the attentive editing of Mary Elizabeth Lewis and the exemplary research assistance of Uta Nitschke-Stumpf.

1 Baldinucci 1966, 10f. "*Avvenne un giorno, ch'e' si trovò col celebratissimo Anibal Caracci ed altri virtuosi nella basilica di S. Pietro e già avean tutti soddisfatto alla lor divozione, quando nell' uscir di chiesa quel gran maestro, voltatosi verso la tribuna, così parlò:* 'Credete a me, che egli ha pure da venire, quando che sia, un qualche prodigioso ingegno, che in quel mezzo e in quel fondo ha da far due gran moli proporzionate alla vastità di questo tempio.' Tanto bastò e non più, per far sì che il Bernino tutto ardesse per desiderio di condursi egli a tanto; e non potendo raffrenare gl'interni impulsi, disse col più vivo del cuore: ≪ O fussi pure quello io! ≫ E così senza punto avvedersene interpretò il vaticinio di Annibale, che poi nella sua propria persona si avverò così appunto come noi a suo tempo diremo, parlando delle mirabili opere, che egli per quei luoghi condusse" (Baldinucci 1948, 75f.).

2 The sometimes fractious and surprisingly arbitrary operations of the administrative authorities in the naming and decoration of the altars of the new basilica may now be savored in the careful study by Rice 1997. The fiasco of Bernini's bell towers has been exposed in detail by McPhee 2002.

3 Motto of a portrait medal of Bernini commissioned in 1674 in his honor by Louis XIV (Baldinucci 1948, 126f.; Bernini 1713, 147; see Tommaso Montanari in Bernardini and Fagiolo dell'Arco 1999, 302f.). I have taken the liberty of transposing to the multiplicity and unity of Bernini's work at St. Peter's the sense of the motto on the reverse of the medal, where it is accompanied by emblems of the three arts, painting, sculpture, and architecture (and mathematics). Bernini excelled in all three, but was considered the first to have merged them into a "bel composto" (for which see p. 230).

After this preamble was written I (re)discovered the following passage in Rudolph Wittkower's fundamental monograph on Bernini's sculpture (1997, 120f.): "during the execution of this extraordinary amount of work, covering the span of almost two generations and for its physical extent alone, probably unmatched in the history of art.... Though undertaken without a premeditated comprehensive programme, Bernini's work in and around St. Peter's embodies more fully the spirit of the Catholic Restoration and, implicitly, that of the Baroque age, than any other complex of works of art in Europe." An overview of Bernini's work at St. Peter's by Damian Dumbrowski (2003) appeared too late to be taken into account here.

4 A tradition universally accepted since the Middle Ages held that the bodies of both St. Peter and St. Paul had been divided; half of each had been deposited at Saint Peter's, the other two halves at Saint Paul's Outside the Walls (Lavin 1968, 1).

5 On this understanding of the Cathedral of Florence and its relevance for St. Peter's, see Lavin 1999b.

6 This phenomenon has been amply studied by Hall 1979.

7 Paul's solutions at St. Peter's – a "temporary" baldachin over the tomb altar and a ciborium toward the apse – took up proposals made under Clement VIII for the Lateran, where the matter of visibility, mainly of the new Sacrament tabernacle and altar in the transept, was also paramount. See Lavin 1984, 407ff., and Freiberg 1995, 52f., 181f., 310.

8 On this metaphorical sense of the material and process of bronze casting, see the illuminating paper by Cole 1999.

9 The passage is quoted and discussed in Lavin 1968, 11ff.

10 On Urban's election, see Lavin, "Bernini's Bumbling Barberini Bees" (1999), 63. The subject has been admirably explored in these connections by Scott 1991, 180–6, who scrupulously acknowledges (185n28) my calling his attention to the miracle of the bees and its relevance to the vault fresco by Pietro da Cortona.

11 The use of full-scale models, especially by Bernini, has been the subject of a series of excellent studies by Bauer, most recently, "Bernini and the Baldacchino" and "Arguing Authority in Late Renaissance Architecture" (both 1996).

12 Baldinucci 1966, 17: "Bernini used to say that it was by chance that his work came out so well, implying that under such a great dome and in such a vast space and among such massive piers, artistic skill alone could never arrive at suitable dimensions and proportions, although, on the contrary, the artist's genius and mind could envisage the appropriate dimensions without the help of any rules." (Baldinucci 1948, 83: "Soleva dire il cavaliere che quest'opera era riuscita bene a caso, volendo inferire che l'arte stessa non poteva mai sotto una sì gran cupola ed in ispazio sì vasto, e fra moli di eccedente grandezza dare una misura e proporzione che bene adeguasse, ove l'ingegno e la mente dell'artefice, tale quale essa misura doveva essere, senz'altra regola concepire non sapesse.")

Bernini 1713, 39, repeats the same phrase about chance, and adds, p. 40: "Considerò, che in un tratto così smisurato di spazio, vana sarebbe stata la diligenza delle misure, che malamente potevano concordare col tutto di quel Tempio; onde facendo di mestiere uscir dalle Regole dell'Arte, difficilmente vi acconsentiva per timore di perdersi senza guida. Tuttavia accordò così bene quelle repugnanze, che nel dar loro la proporzione, seppe uscir dalle Regole senza violarle, anzi egli stesso da sè trovò quella misura, che invano si cerca nelle Regole."

13 Burbaum 1999, 279, 283.

14 Thelen, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte* (1967) and *Borromini* (1967); Burbaum 1999, 71. It is indicative that in his monograph on the high altar of St. Peter's and the Baldacchino, Thelen nowhere cites the crucial statement by Borromini himself (see n. 17 below) in its entirety and in its context; and that the author of another recent monograph on the Baldacchino has taken the incredible step of dividing between the two artists a sheet of sketches showing an organic evolution of the design for the crown (our Fig. 128 is the recto), which has universally been regarded as Bernini's handiwork, by both Bernini and Borromini scholars (Kirwin 1997, 161). An important contribution to the whole subject of the conceptualization and realization of

the Baldacchino is that by Bauer, "Bernini and the Baldacchino" (1996).

15 One drawing by Borromini that might be described as a study but in no sense a sketch, confirms the principle, since it was made, as the inscriptions indicate, not for purposes of design but in preparation for the perspective renderings that are justly famous: at the left of the sheet is a perspective grid giving the distance from the projection point ("distanza dal centro della vista"), at the right a longitudinal section of the choir and crossing, with dimensions (Thelen, *Borromini*, 82–4).

16 D'Onofrio 1969, 13, 14, 15, 57, 67, 69, 80, 220, 282.

17 Fioravante Martinelli, *Roma ornata dall'architettura, pittura, e scoltura*, Rome, Bibl. Casanatense, MS 4984, 201 (D' Onofrio 1969, 158, incomplete; for identifications, corrections, and discussion of this passage, see Lavin 1968, 11f., 47):

> It was the thought of Paul V to cover with a baldachin the high altar of St. Peter's, with a richness appropriate to the opening made to the confession and sepulcher of the saint. Whereupon Carlo Maderno presented a design with spiral columns; but the baldachin did not touch the columns or their cornice. After the death of Paul the project remained on paper until the pontificate of Urban VIII, who instructed Carlo to allow Bernini to execute the work. Celio, perhaps not fully informed, published that it was the invention of Divine judgment (that is, the Pope), carried out by Bernini. Vincenzo Berti, in a manuscript in the possession of Monsignor Landucci, Sacristan of Our Father Alexander VII, and one who for his eminent virtues is very worthy of a higher position, has written that the design was by Bernini's brother-in-law Ciampelli; I do not know if this is true; but he did not agree with Bernini about the decoration, etc., and said that baldachins are not supported on columns but on staves, and that the baldachin should not run together with the cornice of the columns, and in any case he wanted to show that it was held up by angels. And he added that it was a chimera.

The passage occurs as a marginal correction to the original text, canceled but decipherable, which attributes the design to Bernini: "The metal ciborium with twisted spiral columns is the design of the Cav. Bernini, and the casting by Gregorio de Rossi of Rome. But the Cav. Celio writes that it is the invention of Holy Judgment carried out by Bernini. Vincenzo Berti, in a manuscript in the possession of Monsignor Landucci, Sacristan of Our Father, wrote that it was the design of Bernini's brother-in-law Ciampelli." (Ciampelli was certainly not Bernini's bother-in-law.)

> Fù pensiero di Paolo V coprire con baldacchino l'altar maggiore di S. Pietro con ricchezza proportionata all'apertura fatta alla confessione e sepolcro di d.o Onde Carlo Maderno gli presentò un disegno con colonne à vite; ma il baldacchino non toccava le colonne, ne il lor cornicione: sopragionse la morte di Pauolo, e restò l'op.a sul disegno sin al ponteficato di Urbano VIII. il quale disse al d.o Carlo si contentasse, che il Bernino facesse d.a opera. Il Cavalier Celio, forse non ben informato del tutto, stampò essere inventione di Santiss.o giuditio (cioè del Papa) messo in opera dal d.o Bernino. Vincenzo Berti manoscritto appresso Mons.r Landucci Sacrista di N'ro Sig.re Alessandro VII e p le sue eminenti virtudi dignissimo di grado superiore, ha scritto, esser disegno del Ciampelli cognato del d.o Bernini, il che non sò se sia vero; ma si bene non concorreva con d.o Bernini circa l'abbigliam.ti et altro; e diceva, che li Baldacchini non si sostengono con le colonne, ma con l'haste, et che il baldacchio non ricor(r)a assieme con la cornice dele colone, et in ogni modo voleva mostrare che lo reggono li Angeli: e soggiongeva che era una chimera.
>
> Il Ciborio con colonne di metallo istorte a vite dell'altar maggiore è disegno del Cav. Bernino, et il getto è di Gregorio de Rossi Rom.o. Ma il Cav.re Celio scrive essere inventione di santissimo giuditio messo in opera dal d.o Cav.re. Vincenzo Berti manoscritto appresso monsig.re Landucci sacrista di N. S.re ha lasciato scritto esser disegno del Ciampelli cognato di d.o Bernino.

Here is a recent egregious example of tendentious obfuscation of Borromini's text, in this case by simply omitting the words that expressly interdict the author's interpretation: "Fioravante Martinelli (1660) sostiene, su indicazione del Borromini, che Carlo Maderno avrebbe suggerito la soluzione di un baldacchino sorretto da quattro colonne tortili già negli ultimi anni del pontificato di Paolo V: 'fu pensiero di Paolo V coprire con baldacchino l'altar maggiore (...) Onde Carlo Maderno gli presentò un disegno con colonne a vite (...)'" (Tuzi 2003, 186).

Bernini may have been returning the chimera barb years later when, discussing Borromini and architecture, he remarked that "a sculptor or painter took the human body as his standard of proportion; Borromini must take a chimaera for his" (Chantelou 1985, 326, 22 October).

18 Ward Perkins 1952, 32 ("The bases and Ionic capitals are carved separately, but may be contemporary"; no reference to the inscribed plinths).

19 The columns were in fact willed to the church of S. Carlo by Filippo Colonna in 1639 (Tomassetti 1975–7, III, 616na).

20 Mauceri 1898, 382n2. The earliest reference to the provenance of the columns is by Teoli 1648,170f.: "Il Signor Conestabile Don Filippo Colonna hà donato à questa Chiesa [S. Carlo] due Colonne del famoso Tempio di Salomone, quali furono donate al Sig. Marc'Antonio Colonna, quando fù Generale dell'Armata Nauale per Santa Chiesa, al tempo di Pio Quinto Sommo Pontefice," followed by Piazza 1703, 228; and Tomassetti 1898, 216 (also 1975–7, III, 616), who adds that they came from San Lorenzo: "Da quest'antica ed importante chiesa provengono due nobili monumenti della scultura italica del sesto secolo, cioè due candelabri marmorei scolpiti in rilievo; e che ora si ammirano nella moderna chiesa di s. Carlo . . . ."

21 As described by Pastor 1923–53, XVIII, 380f. The visionary motto is quoted in the crossing pier above the figure of Saint Helen, who brought back a relic of the Cross from Jerusalem, and it was a crucial feature of Bernini's later portrayal of the equestrian Constantine.

22 This acute observation was made by Sartorio 1927–8, 600; on the medal, see Lavin 1968, 13f.

23 The document was first published by Minieri Riccio 1882, 260: "Cum velimus Columpnas duas mormoreas nulli edificio adherentes sed olim in solo terre Sancte Marie de Monte iacentes . . . per nos Monasterio Sancti Corporis Christi quod Neapoli cosituitur opus quidem nostrarum manuum et Sancie Regine Jerusalem et Sicilie consortis nostre carissime donates"; the order for shipment follows. The Naples columns have been discussed recently, although not in relation to Bernini's Baldacchino, by Leone de Castris (1986, 144–6; 1993) and Tuzi (2003, 94f.).

24 Gonzaga 1587, 144, describing the high altar: " . . . elegantissime exornatur: Praecipue vero duabus marmoreis columnis que ex amplissimo Salomonis templo allatae feruntur" (cited by Maresca 1888, 116). The Solomonic origin of the columns was repeated by the Franciscan historian Luke Wadding, describing the four-column high altar of S. Chiara.

25 Ward Perkins 1952, 26, concluded that the shafts of the Naples columns were ancient oriental imports and form a group with those at St. Peter's; he does not discuss the capitals or bases, except to note that they are medieval (26n26).

26 "Cum pro castro, quod aput s. Mariam de Monte fieri volumus . . ." (for the foregoing, see Huber 1997, esp. 49 and n. 31).

27 Minieri Riccio 1882, 260n4, and Mauceri 1898, 382, note the Swabian symbolism of the eagle capitals.

28 See Josephus, *The Jewish War* VII, 158–62. *Josephus* 1968, III, 550–3.

29 Dell'Aja 1961, 105.

30 Ibid., 104; Gallino 1963, 340.

31 Reproduced in Carcano di Varese 1913, pls. 22, 23. The references to Corpus Domini were noted by Spila 1901, 133 n. 1.

32 "Tholos quatuor innititur columnis quorum duae anteriores ex Salomonis Templo Hyerosolimitano extructae sunti" (Wadding 1628–35, III, 124; cited by dell'Aja 1961, 104).

33 On the medal, signed by Giovanni V. Melone, see most recently *Museo* 1996, 296f. No. 8.143. The event is described by Pastor 1923–53, XVIII, 415.

34 The design of the medal itself distinctly anticipates that of the 1629 medal commemorating the canonization of Andrea Corsini in St. Peter's, where Bernini's Baldacchino appears (Lavin 1968, fig. 32).

35 Maresca 1888, 116, suggested in passing that the Naples monument might have inspired Bernini; the idea was summarily dismissed by Fraschetti 1898, 391n1, and Mauceri 1898, 379fn3, on the grounds that such columns were also available in Rome.

36 The continuity of this world-historical, religio-imperial tradition was expressed ceremonially, as it were, in Marcantonio's victory parade, which passed through the Arches of Constantine and Titus, and in the many attendant celebrations and monuments (see Pastor 1923–53, XVIII, 429–35). The subsequent history of the Naples ciborium is uncertain, except that when the church was given a Baroque transformation in the mid-eighteenth century, the two marble columns were installed flanking the choir, where they remained until the fire of 1943 (Dell'Aja 1961, 105f.).

37 For much of what follows concerning the tomb of Urban, see Lavin, "Bernini's Bumbling Barberini Bees" (1999), 50–71.

38 On this theme of papal succession in the arrangement of the tombs, see Borgolte 1989, 313–15, followed by Schütze 1994, 265f., who notes that the reference would have been made explicit by a depiction of Christ Giving the Keys to St. Peter (repeating the subject of the medieval decoration in the apse of the old basilica) first planned for the altar in the center of the apse, between the two tombs.

39 Panofsky 1964, 94, noted the substitution in relation to the Paul III tomb of the theological virtue Charity for the moral virtue Prudence; but he failed to realize that this change implied a corresponding shift in meaning for Justice. Wilkinson 1971 recognized that the allegories on the tomb of Urban were attributes of Divine Wisdom, followed by Lavin, "Bernini's Bumbling Barberini Bees" (1999).

40 This tradition was admirably outlined by Quednau 1979, 251–4; and, with respect to Bernini's monuments to Countess Matilda and Constantine, by Kaufmann 1970, 278f.

41 It has been suggested that Urban chose to pair his tomb with that of Paul III because the Farnese pope served as a model for his own nepotistic ambitions (Scott 1991, 6). My view is that the primary motive was the demonstration of papal continuity and the complementarity of papal terrestrial and spiritual dominion.

42 On Bernini's notion of contrapposto, see Lavin 1980, 9f., and compare his busts of the Damned and Blessed Souls (Fig. 258), Lavin 1993, 101–38.

43 Kauffmann 1970, 122, notes the analogy with the Pietà.

44 Ripa s.v. Giustitia: "Le bilancie significano, che la Giustizia divina dà regalia à tutte le attioni, & la spada le pene de' delinquenti" (1603, 188). "Il mostrare la severità, il rigore della giustizia per una spada ignuda . . . è stato trovato da moderni, i quali per dar qualche cenno all'equità vi aggiunsero ancor la bilancia" (Valeriano 1625, 565). It is tempting to think of the damascene ornament on Justice's sword as alluding to the frequent metaphor for the Turkish menace, the "cruentes gladius impiorum," as an instrument of God to test the Christian's faith and will (O'Malley 1968, 177; Patrides 1963).

45 Cartari 1626, 30 " . . . la divina bontà non corre in fretta, nè con romore a castigare chi erra, ma và tarda, & lenta, & così tacitamente, che non prima se ne avede il peccatore, che senta la pena." An ancient representation of Justice as a figure leaning on a spear signified "la lentezza, per la quale le cause si mandano in lungo più del dovere: perche . . . significa tardanza" (Valeriano 1625, 566).

46 Ripa 1603, 188, "Giustizia Divina": "Il fasco di verghe con la scure, era portato anticamente in Rome da littori inanzi a' Consoli, & al Tribuno della Plebe, per mostrar che nô si deve rimanere di castigare, ove richiede la Giustizia, ne di deve esser precipitoso: ma dar tempo à maturare il giuditio nel sciorre delle verghe." On the fasces as an attribute of Justice, see the discussion by Kissel 1984, 107f.

47 Ripa specifically identitifies the ancient image of victory as an "angel, with wings": "Gl'antichi dipinsero la vittoria in forma di Angelo, con l'ali . . ." (Ripa, 1603, 517). Paul III's winged personification of *Historia* is reproduced in Gramberg 1984, 321, fig. 77.

48 Wittkower 1997, 123, also notes Bernini's emphasis on the sepulchral idea, in contrast to the commemorative and ceremonial monuments of his predecessors.

49 On the de la Marck tomb, see Lavin, "Bernini's Bumbling Barberini Bees" (1999), 34, and the references given there. Érard de la Marck (d. 1538) was an eminent cardinal prince-archbishop of that portion of the Netherlands that had remained in the Catholic faith. Until it was destroyed in the French Revolution, the gilt brass monument stood in the Cathedral of Liège. The tomb was illustrated as a frontispiece in one of the most popular and important handbooks of the antiquities of Rome by Jean-Jacques Boissard; the engraver, Theodore de Bry, was a native of Liège and must have intended to promulgate this local product in emulation of the monuments of ancient Rome.

50 Schiavo 1971 first noted that the reference was to Clement rather than Gregory; Schiavo recalled the disagreements with Gregory and Urban's debt to Clement, and also noted that Clement had dedicated the new high altar at St. Peter's, while Urban had consecrated the new basilica itself. For the correct identification, see also Fehl 1982, 354 (adding a letter in each line, however), and 1987, 194.

51 Pastor 1923–53, XXIII, passim; Fehl 1987, 194, who also calls attention to Urban's several poems honoring Clement.

52 On the tomb's escutcheon, see Lavin, "Bernini's Bumbling Barberini Bees" (1999), 69.

53 "Bernini had splendid precepts concerning architecture: first of all he said the highest merit lay not in making beautiful and commodious buildings, but in being able to make do with little, to make beautiful things out of the inadequate and ill-adapted, to make use of a defect in such a way that if it had not existed one would have had to invent it" (Baldinucci 1966, 80). "Nell'architettura dava bellissimi precetti: primieramente diceva non essere il sommo pregio dell'artefice il far bellissimi e comodi edifici, ma il sapere inventar maniere per servirsi del poco, del cattivo e male adattato al bisogno per far cose belle e far sì, che sia utile quel che fu difetto e che, se non fusse, bisognerebbe farlo" (Baldinucci 1948, 146; cf. Lavin 1980, 11, 85).

54 Lavin 1968, 20n89.

55 On this theme of medium-illusion-temporality, see Lavin 1980, Index, s.v. "Illusionism."

56 The fresco, painted in 1630–3 under Bernini's supervision (Lavin 1968, 29), makes it possible to recognize and date the Windsor drawing reproduced here in Fig. 150. With remarkable perspicuity, Harris 1977, xv, no. 24, had rejected the previous identification as a juvenile self-portrait, suggesting a date "c. 1630." A closely related drawing in the British Museum attributed to Bernini also represents the brother; see Harris 1998, 640f., and Turner 1999, Catalogue, II, 640f., no. 14. On Luigi Bernini, who was named Supervisor of the Works at St. Peter's in 1634, see Hibbard in *Dizionario* 1960–, IX, 9:375f.

57 On the inscriptions, see Preimesberger 1984.

58 For a recent discussion of the relief as a document of papal primacy, see Bauer 2000.

59 The classicizing style of these and related works by Bernini has been the subject of much discussion. My view (Lavin 1956, 258; 1968, 33–5, 37; 1980, 23), that the classical references are not, as has been repeatedly suggested, a condescension to current fashion but a deliberate evocation of an antique ideal appropriate to the theme and context, has been taken up and developed in connection with the Matilda monument by Scott 1985.

60 The idea seems to recall the early project, mentioned above, to install in the four niches of the crossing piers the tombs of the sainted popes named Leo.

61 On the medieval and Renaissance systems of narrative church decoration, see Aronberg Lavin 1990, esp. 197.

62 On Bernini's use of the *imago clipeata*, see Lavin 1980, 69f.

63 See Aronberg Lavin 1990, chap. 1.

64 Alexander's suffering was graphically described in the biography by the pope's friend Sforza Pallavicino:

> Fu di singolare tenerezza al popolo il modo, col quale il Pontefice comparve nella celebrità del Corpo di Cristo; imperocchè non potendo egli far quella lunga funzione a piedi per la mala affezione, che ricordammo rimasagli dal taglio (per l'estrazione d'un calcolo dalla vescica, subito mentre era Nunzio a Colonia nel 1642), non volle portar l'Ostia sedendo, e coperto come avevano costumato gli antecessori, ma fè portarsi inginocchioni, ed a capo nudo, e gli si vedea grondar dalla fronte il sudore, al quale egli era dispostissimo per la rarità della sua carnagione, senza che per l'impedimento delle mani potesse tergerlo

(Pallavicino 1839–40, I, 269, cited by Incisa della Rocchetta 1932, 498). The diarist Giacinto Gigli recorded the powerful effect the pope's attitude and comportment had upon the eyewitnesses:

> "1655 A di 27. di Maggio fu la festa del Corpus Domini, et si fece la Processione solennissima, nella quale è solito, che il Papa è portato sopra le Spalle delli Scudieri in Sedia con maestà coronato tenendo nelle mani il SS.mo Sagramento. Ma il Papa Alessandro si fece portare, non in sedia, ma inginocchiato con la testa scoperta tenendo in mano il SS.mo Sagramento, essendo scalzo, et con tanta devotione senza movere gli occhi, ne la persona, che pareva più tosto una figura immobile, che un huomo, la qual cosa mosse tutti a gran devotione, et compuntione, che gli pareva vedere una visione in aria" (Gigli 1958, 468).

65 On the Cornaro chapel and this subject, see Lavin 1980, 95–8, 103.

66 Wittkower 1997, 129. On Bernini's use of the Doric here, see Roca de Amicis 2000, 294. Onians has discussed the ethos of the Doric order in relation to Bramante and the Dorian mode in music (1988, 235–9).

67 On this ancient theme in rhetoric and art, see expecially Gombrich 1966.

68 Del Pesco 1988.

69 Holstein thought the texts referred to three-sided piazzas, while Bernini evidently construed the term as referring to porticoes with three passages (see Roca de Amicis 1999 and 2000). In fact, taking into account the "third arm" Bernini intended, his project incorporates both interpretations.

Bernini later again "assimilated" Bramante's tempietto to the Colosseum, in a project for a commemorative Temple to the Martyrs to be constructed in the amphitheater, which he insisted on preserving intact, for the jubilee of 1675, just as he was adopting the tempietto model for the tabernacle of the Sacrament altar in St. Peter's; Di Macco 1971, 82–4, Hager 1973, 323–5. No doubt this project was in turn related to that for a hospice for the poor to be housed in the Lateran palace, which Bernini was commissioned to refurbish the following year (Fraschetti 1900, 398n1.; see Lavin 2000b).

70 The ambiguity of the phrase is evident from the English translations: Douay, "... there was a gallery joined to a triple gallery"; King James, "... gallery against gallery in three stories."

71 Lauretus 1971, 815, cited by Grunder 1985, 75.

72 For a reconstruction of the Lateran fastigium, see Nilgen 1977.

73 Haus 1983–4, 305–10.

74 "... essendo la Chiesa di S. Pietro quasi matrice di tutte le altre doveva haver'un portico che per l'appunto dimostrasse di ricevere à braccia aperte maternamente i Cattolici per confermarli nella credenza, gl'Heretici per riunirli alla Chiesa, e gl'Infedeli per illuminarli alla vera fede." Biblioteca Vaticana MS Chigi H II 22, fols. 105–9v, transcribed and dated 1659–60 by Brauer and Wittkower 1931, 70n1; dated 1657–8 by Krautheimer 1985, 174. See Kitao 1974, 14, and Index s.v. "arms of the church, image of."

75 See Buonanni 1699, II, 665ff. Bernini designed for the occasion a device, a sort of prayer stool called a *talamo*, that evidently braced the pope, so he could in fact kneel throughout the ceremony. The procession was recorded by Carlo Ceci in an engraving dated 1655 (reproduced by Incisa 1932, 498, and Grunder 1985, 71, fig. 1), whose central portion was in turn reproduced a decade later on the medal (concerning which see *Bernini in Vaticano* 1981, 301, where a document of 1656 recording Bernini's *talamo* is cited). It is sometimes said that Bernini's device allowed the pope to appear to be kneeling while actually being seated. Sforza Pallavicino's account, quoted in n. 64 above, belies this claim, which was also denied by Cancellieri (1790, 296f.), who noted that the *talamo* he knew, and described, could not have been used in a seated position. By contrast, the *talamo* used in the early nineteenth century by Pius VII (illustrated by Incisa 1932, 500) did include a seat.

76 The Protestant challenge is discussed in connection with Alexander's Corpus Domini medal by Buonanni 1699, II, 668. Council of Trent, Session XIII, chap. 5: "The Worship and Veneration to be Shown to the Most Holy Sacrament: There is, therefore, no room for doubt that all the faithful of Christ may, in accordance with a custom always received in the Catholic Church, give to this most holy sacrament in veneration the worship of latria, which is due to the true God. Neither is it to be less adored for the reason that it was instituted by Christ the Lord in order to be received. For we believe that in it the same God is present of whom the eternal Father, when introducing Him into the world, says: And let all the angels of God adore him; whom the Magi, falling down, adored; who, finally, as the Scriptures testify, was adored by the Apostles in Galilee. The holy council declares, moreover, that the custom that this sublime and venerable sacrament be celebrated with special veneration and solemnity every year on a fixed festival day, and that it be borne reverently and with honor in processions through the streets and public places, was very piously and religiously introduced into the Church of God. For it is most reasonable that some days be set aside as holy on which all Christians may with special and unusual demonstration testify

that their minds are grateful to and mindful of their common Lord and Redeemer for so ineffable and truly divine a favor whereby the victory and triumph of His death are shown forth. And thus indeed did it behoove the victorious truth to celebrate a triumph over falsehood and heresy, that in the sight of so much splendor and in the midst of so great joy of the universal Church, her enemies may either vanish weakened and broken, or, overcome with shame and confounded, may at length repent" (*Canons* 1978, 76). ["De cultu et veneratione huic sanctissimo sacramento exhibenda. Nullus itaque dubitandi locus relinquitur, quin omnes Christi fideles pro more in catholica ecclesia semper recepto latriae cultum, qui vero Deo debetur, huic sanctissimo sacramento in veneratione exhibeant. Neque enim ideo minus est adorandum, quod fuerit a Christo Domino, ut sumatur, institutum. Nam illum eundem Deum praesentem in eo adesse credimus, quem Pater aeternus introducens in orbem terrarum dicit: Et adorent eum omnes angeli Dei; quem magi procidentes adoraverunt; quem denique in Galilaea ab Apostolis adoratum fuisse, scriptura testatur. Declarat praeterea sancta synodus, pie et religiose admodum in Dei ecclesiam inductum fuisse hunc morem, ut singulis annis peculiari quodam et festo die praecelsum hoc et venerabile sacramentum singulari veneratione ac solemnitate celebraretur, utque in processionibus reverenter et honorifice illud per vias et loca publica circumferretur. Aequissimuni est enim sacros aliquos statutos esse dies, quum Christiani omnes singulari ac rara quadam significatione gratos et memores testentur animos erga communem Dominum et Redemptorem pro tam ineffabili et plane divino beneficio, quo mortis eius victoria et triumphus repraesentatur. Ac sic quidem oportuit victricem veritatem de mendacio et haeresi triumphum agere, ut eius adversarii in conspectu tanti splendoris, et in tanta universae ecclesiae laetitia positi vel debilitati et fracti tabescant, vel pudore afecti et confusi aliquando resipiscant" (Canones 1887, 61f.)].

77 Chantelou 1985, 34, 14 June. "Il leur a dit encore qu'il serait bon qu'on y eût quelque partie qui avançât sur le devant, parce que les églises qui sont rondes tout à fait, quand on y entre, on fait ordinairement sept à huit pas, ce qui empêche qu'on puisse pas bien voir la forme." (Chantelou 1885, 33f.).

78 "Quivi avvenne un giorno, che quel suo figlio, che presentemente scrive questo Libro, essendo per sua devozione entrato in quella Chiesa, e ritrovato havendo in un angolo di essa ritirato il Cavaliere suo Padre, che in atto di compiacenza vagheggiava con gli occhj tutte le parti di quel piccolo Tempio, ossequiosamente gli domandasse, Che facesse così solo, e cheto? e che gli rispondesse il Cavaliere, Figlio, di questa sola Opera di Archìtettura io sento qualche particolar compiacenza nel fondo del mio cuore, e spesso per sollievo delle mie fatiche io quì mi porto a consolarmi col mio lavoro" (Bernini 1713, 109f.).

79 Domenico Bernini understood the complementarity of the two works: "Le due Opere e del Portico, e della Cathedra furono per così dire il principio, el fine della magnificenza di quella gran Basilica, rimanendo non men attonito l'occhio nell'ingresso per il Portico, che nel termine per la Cathedra" (Bernini 1713, 111).

80 Krautheimer 1985, 73.

81 Moroni 1840–61, X, 270.

82 Pastor 1923–53, XXXI, 299.

83 "Petrum itaque fundamentum Ecclesiae Dominus nominavit: et ideo digne fundamentumn hoc Ecclesia colit, supra quod ecclesiastici aedificii altitudo consurgit. Une convenienter psalmus, qui lectus est, dicit: Exaltent eum in ecclesia plebis: et in cathedra seniorum laudent eum. Benedictus Deus, qui beatum Petrum Apostolum in Ecclesia exaltari praecepit: quia dignum est, ut fundamentum hoc in Ecclesia honoretur, per quod ad caelum conscenditur" (*Hours* 1964, 1:1796).

84 Pastor 1923–53, XXXI, 303

85 The relationship of Bernini's "gloria" to the *Celestial Hierarchy* of the Pseudo-Dionysius was noted by Wittkower 1997, 58, and discussed by Minor 1989.

86 See pp. 118f.

87 Many antecedents are surveyed by Kauffmann 1970, 278–89, and Marder 1997, 180–8.

88 For the ancient equestrian monument types, see Brilliant 1963.

89 Voragine 1969, 271, 272.

90 Eusebius 1976, 490.

91 Der Nersessian 1966–70, II, 98. An exception is Ms. Paris Gr. 510, fol. 440, the earliest surviving representation of Constantine's vision (Walter 1997, 194); Brubaker (1999, 168f.) has shown that the miniature applies the imperial reference to a text in which Solomon speaks of "awakening and recovering my sight," and so leaving the pleasures of this world to pursue God's wisdom.

92 Delehaye 1975.

93 The importance of the ivory in the seventeenth century has been stressed by Fumaroli 1995, who also related it to Bernini's sculpture.

94 The relevance of the Conversion of St. Paul, though not Rufinus's text, was noted by Kauffmann 1970, 282, and Marder 1997, 188.

95 Augustine is cited by Voragine 1969, 127.

96 Cited by Kauffmann 1970, 282n34; Hill 1930, 225, no. 867.

97 *Life of Constantine*, Bk. IV, chap. xv, Eusebius 1976, 544. "Quanta porro divinae fidei vis ac virtus in ejus animo insederit, vel ex hoc uno conjici potest, quod in aureis nummis exprimi se jussit vultu in cœlum sublato, et manibus expansis instar precantis. Et hujus quidem formae nummi per universum orbem Romanum cucurrerunt. In ipsa vero regia juxta quasdam januas, in imaginibus ad ipsum vestibuli fastigium positis depictus est stans, difixis quidem in cœlum oculis, manibus autem expanisis precantis in modum" (Migne 1857–1905, XX, col. 1163).

98 *The Life of Constantine* 1682, 611. Valesio's translation (quoted in the preceding note) and annotations were reprinted by Migne 1857–1905, XX: "*Quisquis fuit interpretes hujus* libri, parum attente hunc locum vertit, hoc modo, et precantis forma manus sursum tollens, cum vertere debuisset, manibus expansis, ut precantes solent. Christiani enim inter precandum manus expandere solebant, ut crucis similtudinem hoc modo adumbrarent. Allevabant quidem manus Christiani, dum preces funderent. Sed hoc non erat proprium Chritianorum, quippe cum gentiles idem facerent, ut testatur Virgilius, Aeneid., lib. I, vers. 97, dum ait: Et geminas [duplices] tollens ad sidera palmas. Illud vero peculiare fuit Christianis, manus in crucis formam expandere. Tertullianus in lib. De oratione, cap. 11: 'Nos vero non attollimus tantum, sed etiam expandimus, et Dominica passione modulamur.'" Idem in Apologetico, cap. 30 (Migne 1857–1905, XX, cols. 1163f.).

99 "... quod est: in hoc vince. Tum vero laetus redditus et de victoria iam securus, signum crucis, quod in caelo viderat, in sua front designat et ita caelitus invitatus ad fidem, non mihi illo videtur inferior, cui similiter de caelo dictum est: 'Saule, Saule, quid me persequeris? Ego sum Jesus Nazarenus,'" nisi quia hic non adhuc persequens, sed iam consequens invitatur" (Aufhauser 1912, 4f.).

100 *The Roman Breviary* 1879, I, 1056–61. After centuries of debate, the feast was suppressed in 1960 (*New Catholic Encyclopedia* 1967, IV, 482).

101 See the many passages cited in the indexes of Chantelou 1885 and 1985. The relationship discussed here is but one among many that give the lie to those who would regard Bernini's deference to Poussin in Paris as an insincere gesture of flattery to his French patrons. Nothing could be further from the truth, if for no other reason than that he unabashedly complained

about almost everything else in France. More important, the allegation betrays a baleful misunderstanding of Bernini's character and art. For another, important instance – among many that could be cited – of Bernini's profound understanding of the meaning and "authenticity" of Poussin's ideas, see his adoption and adaptation of the "non-penetrating" principle of Poussin's feigned stucco decoration of the vault of the Louvre; Lavin 1980, 5n4, 45n80. In the same vein, I want to express my solidarity with Tomaso Montanari's recent, resounding affirmation of the integrity and authenticity of Bernini's art in the face of current attempts to reduce it, notably his late style, to a sort of meretricious "self-representation" (Montanari, in Angelini 1998, 409).

102 On Poussin's picture, see Rosenberg 1994, 77, where the resemblance of Bernini's *Constantine* is noted.

103 See Bätschmann 1982.

104 *The Jewish War* VI, 241–66 (*Josephus* 1968, III, 444–55).

105 On the recently discovered early version, now in Jerusalem, see Mahon 1998. Rosenberg 1994, 77, suggests that the gifts were intended to balance the two great powers.

106 The Christian interpretation is alluded to by Stanic 1994, 94, and Rosenberg 1994, 77.

107 Poussin may well have been stimulated by the open-armed gesture of the standing figure of Titus in an engraving of the *Destruction* by Phillip Galle, designed by Maarteen van Heemskerck, as part of a series illustrating the disasters of the Jews (Veldman and Luijten 1993, 203, no. 258).

108 Sulpitius 1976, 111. "Fertur Titus adhibito consilio prius deliberasse, an templum tanti operis everteret. Etenim nonnullis videbatur, aedem sacratam ultra omnia mortalis illustrem non oportere deleri, quae servata modestiae Romanae testimonium, diruta perennem crudelitatis notam praeberet. At contra alii et Titus ipse evertendum in primis templum censebant, quo plenius Iudaeorum et Christianorum religio tolleretur: quippe has religiones, licet contrarias sibi, isdem tamen ab aouctoribus protectas: Christianos ex Iudaeis extitisse: radice sublata stirpem facile perituram" (Latin text cited after Thackeray, in Josephus 1968, I, xxv).

109 "Capta eversaque urbe Hierosolymorum . . . extinctisque Iudaei Titus, qui ad vindicandum Domini Iiesu Christi sanguinem iudicio Dei fuerat ordinatus, victor triumphans cum Vespasiano patre Ianum clausit . . . iure enim idem honos ultioni passionis Domini inpensus est, qui etiam navitati fuerat adtributus" *Hist.* VII, iii, 8 and ix, 9; quoted after Singleton in Dante 1970–5, *Purg.* 512f.

110 " . . . il talento che / divina giustizia, contra voglia, / come fu al peccar / pone al tormento . . . però sentisti il tremoto e li pii / spiriti . . . render lode . . . Nel tempo che'l buon Tito, con l'aiuto / del sommo rege, vendicò le fóra / ond'uscì 'l sangue per Giuda venduto, . . . era io di là, . . . ma non con fede ancora" (*Purg.* XXI, 62–4, 82–7; Dante 1970–5, *Purg.* 228, 229, 230, 231.) In Paradiso VI. 92–3, Dante speaks of Titus's vengeance as the effect of "living justice" (*viva giustizia*).

111 This development of the *art* of horsemanship as a distinction of nobility may be followed in Liedtke 1989.

112 " . . . Colosso condotto a fine dell'Imperador Costantino a Cavallo, Opera veramente grande per il Soggetto che rappresenta, per il luogo ov'era destinato a collocarsi, e per la materia, in cui doveva scolpirsi. In un Masso dunque di Sasso (per usare i termini proprii) di trenta Carrettate simile al quale rari ne hà veduti entro le sue mura anche negli antichi tempi la Città di Roma" (Bernini 1713, 106–7).

113 Interestingly, Bernini's comment on the manageability of marble was made in response to a criticism of the complex and perforated mane and tail of the horse of his equestrian monument of Louis XIV, commissioned after and in specific emulation of the Constantine. In this work he actually accomplished the feat of carving a fully free-standing, rearing equestrian group in a still larger block (see Lavin 1993, 172–4). Bernini described the relation between the two works in a letter to Colbert: "Questa statua sarà del tutto diversa a quella di Costantino, perche Costantino stà in atto d'amirare la Croce che gl'apparve, e questo del Rè starà in atto di maestà, e di commando . . ." (30 December, 1669, Wittkower 1961, 521, doc. 24).

114 "Passo più oltra e manifestamente intimo, anche oue mancano intaccature di Passioni esercitate, oue abbondano fregi di virtù ottenute, bisognare tolleranza di chi ci lauori e sofferenze d'emende. Per non vscire dal Palazzo, oue discorriamo, l'ammirabile Colosso di Costantino, che si ripulisce per immortalare e la Basilica di S. Pietro e la reggia de'Pontefici; sarebbe non Simulacro d'vn Cesare tanto Benefico della Chiesa, mà vn informe sasso de'Monti Ligustici, quando la prodigiosa Mano di chi lo forma, con più ferite non lo scarnasse, e con durezza di scarpelli non ne perfettionasse le sembianze. Ne'quali prodigij d'amirata maestria, si osserui, non troncarsi dal Marmo, per farlo Statua d'infinito valore, ò selci rusticane, ò tegoli disprezati, ò neri carboni. Si tolgono al Masso parti totalmente omogenee e vniformi à quelle, che si lasciano, perche rappresentino vn'Augusto trionfante" (Oliva 1674, 278).

115 The example from Ecouen was cited by Marder 1997, 195.

116 On Arnolfo's horseman, see Carli 1993, 124, and the study by Pace 1991, esp. 349–51, who noted the relationship to Roman sarcophagus reliefs.

117 On the dual points of view and treatment of the relief, see Marder 1997, 165, 188–90.

118 There was a certain tradition for this idea: markedly similar is Parmigianino's fresco of St. Secundus in S. Giovanni Evangelista in Parma, where the hoof of the saint's rearing horse projects beyond the painted niche on a projection of molded, painted stucco (see Lavin 1980, 54f., Fig. 94; Rossi 1980, pl. VII).

119 Lavin 1980, 67–70.

120 NISI COELVM CREASSEM OB TE SOLAM CREAREM ("If I had not created heaven I would create it for you alone"). On this floating "label" see Lavin 1980, 139f.

121 The tabernacle was made in Rome when Bernini was working on the Theresa chapel. On this work and the metaphorical relationship between mathematical perspective and the Sacrament, see Lavin 1980, Index, s.v. Perspective.

122 Zollikofer 1994, 11; Schlegel 1996.

123 I have borrowed the term "activated" from the pioneering study of tomb sculpture by Panofsky 1964, 73, 76ff., who used it to describe "living" effigies.

124 On Bernini's view of the relationship between beauty and truth, see Lavin 1980, 70–6.

125 Traver 1907.

126 The theme of the sleeping infant in depictions of the Virgin and Christ Child as foreboding the Pietà has been familiar since the pioneering work of Firestone 1942. Adam was frequently shown reclining at the foot of the Cross (see Bagatti 1977).

127 Fehl 1966.

128 *Hours* 1964, I, 1164f., III, 1776f.; cf. Lasance and Walsh 1945, 1269.

129 St. Bernard's Sermons 1950, III, 134, 149. "Ut inhabitet gloria in terra nostra, misericordia et veritas obviaverunt sibi, justitia et pax osculatae sunt. . . . Haec dicit, Perii, si Adam non moriatur; et haec dicit: Perii, nisi misericordiam consequatur. Fiat mors bona, et habet utraque quod petit. . . . Sed id quomodo fiet, inquiunt? Mors crudelissima, et amarissima est, mors terribilis, et ipso horrenda auditu. Bona fieri quanam ratione poterit? At ille: Mors, inquit, peccatorum pessima, sed pretiosa fieri potest mors sanctorum. Annon pretiosa erit, si fuerit janua vitae, porta gloriae?" (Migne 1844–77, CLXXXIII, cols. 383, 389).

130 A signal instance of the principle of design Bernini enunciated as the true test of the architect:

Baldinucci 1948, 146f. "Nell'architettura dava bellissimi precetti: primieramente diceva non essere il sommo pregio dell'artefice il far bellissimi e comodi edifici, ma il sapere inventar maniere per servirsi del poco, del cattivo e male adattato al bisogno per far cose belle e far si, che sia utile quel che fu difetto e che, se non fusse, bisognerebbe farlo. Che poi il valor suo giugnesse a questo segno, conobbesi in molte sue opere, particolarmente nell'arme d'Urbano in Araceli che, per mancanza del luogo, ove situarla, che veniva occupato da una gran finestra, egli colori di azzurro il finestrone invetriato e in esso figurò le tre api, quasi volando per aria, e sopra collocò il regno. Similmente nel sepolcro di Alessandro; nella situazione della Cattedra, ove fece che il finestrone, che pure era d'impedimento le tornasse in aiuto, perché intorno a esso rappresentò la gloria del paradiso e nel bel mezzo del vetro, quasi in luogo di luce inaccessibile fece vedere lo Spirito Santo in sembianza di colomba, che dà compimento a tutta l'opera."

Baldinucci 1948, 131: "Mostrò in questo sepolcro il cavalier Bernino la solita vivacità del suo ingegno, situandolo in una gran nicchia in luogo appunto, ove è una porta, per la quale continovamente si passa, servendosi di essa così bene al suo bisogno, che quello, che ad altri sarebbe potuto parere grande impedimento, a lui servì d'aiuto, anzi fu necessario requisito per effettuare un suo bel pensiero."

Bernini 1713, 57f.: "Hor se il Bernino in quel, che non era professione sua, si dimostrava tanto valente, quanto dobbiamo credere, che fosse in ciò, in cui consisteva il suo proprio talento raffinato dallo studio, e dall'arte? E come che soleva dire, che 'Il buon'Artefice era quello, che sapeva inventar maniere, per servirsi del poco, e del cattivo, per far cose belle, egli veramente fù maraviglioso a comprovarlo con gli effetti.'"

Bernini 1713, 166: "Ne intraprese dunque arditamente i principii, e colla solita vivacità del suo ingegno situòllo in una gran Nicchia sopra la Porta, che conduce dalla Sacrestia alla Chiesa, con far servire il difetto a necessità della sua intenzione."

131 Andreae 1963.

132 Many examples will be found in Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997.

133 On this motif, see p. 172.

134 See the entry "*Sipario*" by Elena Povoledo in *Enciclopedia dello spettacolo* 1975, IX, cols. 1–8.

135 Grunder 1985, 71, citing Haus 1970, 161n375.

136 The effect recalls that of Bernini's famous comedy of the Inundation of the Tiber, in which the river on stage threatened to overflow its bank and inundate the audience.

137 There have been three monographic treatments of the bridge: Weil 1974, D'Onofrio 1981, Cardilli Alloisi and Tolomeo Speranza 1988; valuable essays have also appeared recently by Angela Negro and Marina Minozzi, in Strinati and Bernardini 1999.

138 Voragine 1969, 180f., 580.

139 "...et ipse Angelus cum gladio in vagina sculptus in lapide mirae magnitudinis . . ." (*L'angelo e la città* 1987, I, 96–7).

140 "agniolo nuovo messo in chastello," with "l'ale e le penne e spada . . . tutti de rame" (D'Onofrio 1978, 168).

141 "una statua dorata dell'angelo tenente la spada fuori del fodera"; (Chastel 1983, 279n44; D'Onofrio 1978, 168–70).

142 A valuable survey will be found in *L'angelo e la città* 1987, I; see also Cavazzini 1989. On plague iconography generally: Crawfurd 1914; Ronen 1988, 1989; Ahl 1996, 141–6, 259f., and n. 171 below.

143 The Sala di Costantino fresco is admirably treated in Quednau 1979, 88–95, on the dating; on the vision, 330–45.

144 The history and art-historical repercussions of the Sack of Rome have been explored with magisterial scope and acumen by Chastel 1983.

145 On the two liberations and the medal, see Chastel 1983, 190–1.

146 On the plague during the siege, see D'Onofrio 1976, 233–58; Pastor 1923–53, IX, 427–31.

147 On the nature and significance of Bandinelli's project, see Lavin 2003a.

148 On the statues and their significance in this context, see D'Onofrio 1978, 74–8.

149 The drawing is of later date but evidently records the Charles V entry. Although made of temporary materials, the figures may have remained in place after the event.

150 I use the terms "dexter" and "sinister" in the hierarchic sense of the liturgy (as in the Last Judgment) and heraldry. On the tradition of paralleled Old and New Testament narrative cycles in nave decorations, see n. 61 above.

151 An excellent account of these punishments and the attendant rituals, noted by D'Onofrio 1981, 78n10, will be found in Ingersoll 1985, 408–40. For the Last Judgment hangings, see Blunt 1939–40, 59, 61.

152 For the payments to Montelupo, whose angel was later restored by Bernini, see D'Onofrio 1978, 280, 305, 314, 322.

153 Gregory 1959, 230–40; Gregory 1978–80, CCLXV, 128–32:

Qui ductus ad inferni loca uidit multa, quae prius audita non credidit. Sed cum praesidenti illic iudici praesentatus fuisset, ab eo receptus non est, ita ut diceret : "Non hunc deduci, sed Stephanum ferrarium iussi." Qui statim reductus in corpore est, et Stephanus ferrarius, qui iuxta eum habitabat, eadem hora defunctus est. Sicque probatum est uera fuisse uerba quae audierat, dum haec effectus mortis Stephani demonstrauit. Ante triennium quoque in hac pestilentia quae hanc urbem clade uehementissima depopulauit, in qua etiam corporali uisu sagittae caelitus uenire et singulos quosque ferire uidebantur, sicut nosti, Stephanus isdem / defunctus est. Quidam uero miles in hac eadem nostra urbe percussus ad extrema peruenit. Qui eductus e corpore exanimis iacuit, sed citius rediit et quae cum eo fuerant gesta narrauit. Aiebat enim, sicut tunc res eadem etiam multis innotuit, quia pons erat, sub quo niger atque caligosus foetoris intolerabilis nebulam exhalans fluuius decurrebat. Transacto autem ponte amoena erant prata atque uirentia, odoriferis herbarum floribus exornata, in quibus albatorum hominum conuenticula esse uidebantur. Tantusque in loco eodem odor suauitatis inerat, ut ipsa suauitatis fragrantia illic deambulantes habitantesque satiaret. Ibi mansiones diuersorum singulae magnitudine lucis plenae. Ibi quaedam mirae potentiae aedificabatur domus, quae aurels uidebatur laterculis construi, sed cuius esset non potuit agnosci. Erant uero super ripam praedicti fluminis nonnulla habitacula, sed alia exsurgentis foetoris nebula tangebantur, alia autem exsurgens foetor a flumine minime tangebat. Haec uero erat in praedicto ponte probatio, ut quisquis per eum iniustorum uellet transire, in tenebroso foetentique fluuio laberetur, iusti uero, quibus culpa non obsisteret, securo per eum gressu ac libero ad loca amoena peruenirent. Ibi se etiam Petrum, ecclesiasticae familiae maiorem, qui ante quadriennium defunctus est, deorsum positum in locis teterrimis, magno ferri pondere religatum ac depressum uidisse confessus est. Qui dum requireret cur ita esset, ea se dixit audisse quae nos, qui eum in hac ecclesiastica domo nouimus, scientes e ius acta recolimus. Dictum namque est: "Haec idcirco patitur, quia si

quid ei pro facienda ultione iubebatur, ad inferendas plagas plus ex crudelitatis desiderio quam oboedientia seruiebat." Quod sic fuisse nullus qui illum nouit ignorat. Ibi se etiam quemdam peregrinum presbiterum uidisse fatebatur, qui ad praedictum pontem ueniens, tanta per eum auctoritate transiit, quanta et hic sinceritate uixit. In eodem quoque ponte hunc quem praedixi Stephanum se recognouisse testatus est. Qui dum transire uoluisset, eius pes lapsus est, et ex medio corpore iam extra pontem deiectus, a quibusdam teterrimis uiris ex flumine surgentibus per coxas deorsum, atque a quibusdam albatis et speciosissimis uiris coepit per brachia sursum trahi. Cumque hoc luctamen esset, ut hunc boni spiritus sursum, mali deorsum traherent, ipse qui haec uidebat ad corpus reuersus est, et quid de eo plenius gestum sit minime cognouit.

154 Berenson 1963, 203, fig. 403.

155 Kauffmann 1970, 306, was the first to allude to these eschatological bridges in relation to the Ponte Sant'Angelo. They have been noted by Le Goff 1981, whose account of the "St. Patrick's Purgatory" (193–201) is particularly suggestive in our context. The Knight Owein succeeds in crossing the perilous bridge by invoking Christ's name as he goes:

> facing a very broad river of fire, traversed by what seems to be an impassable bridge, since it is so high as to induce vertigo, so narrow that it is impossible to set foot on it, and so slippery that it would be impossible in any case to maintain one's footing. In the river below, demons are waiting with iron hooks. Once again Owein invokes the name of Jesus and advances onto the bridge. The further he advances, the wider and more stable the bridge becomes, and half-way across he can no longer see the river to the right or the left. He escapes one last infuriated attempt by the demons and, climbing down from the bridge, finds himself facing a very splendid high wall whose gates, made of pure gold set off by precious gems, give off a delightful odor. He enters and finds himself in a city of marvels.

In my view, this is exactly the import of the Ponte Sant'Angelo.

156 Dante 1970–5, *Inf.* XVIII, 184f., vv. 19–36:

> In questo luogo, de la schiena scossi
> di Gerion, trovammoci; e 'l poeta
> tenne a sinistra, e io dietro mi mossi.
> A la man destra vidi nova pieta,
> novo tormento e novi frustatori,
> di che la prima bolgia era repleta.
> Nel fondo erano ignudi i peccatori;
> dal mezzo in qua ci venien verso 'l volto,
> di là con noi, ma con passi maggiori,
> come i Roman per l'essercito molto,
> l'anno del giubileo, su per lo ponte
> hanno a passar la gente modo colto,
> che da l'un lato tutti hanno la fronte
> verso 'l castello e vanno a Santo Pietro;
> da l'altra sponda vanno verso 'l monte.
> Di qua, di là, su per lo sasso tetro
> vidi demon cornuti con gran ferze,
> che li battien crudelmente di retro.

157 Frugoni 1996, esp. 108.

158 *Enciclopedia dantesca* 1984, V, 601f.; cf. Dante 1970–5, *Purg.* II, 18, vv. 100–5; XXV, 274, v. 86.

159 Mâle 1972, 62–4.

160 This point was emphasized by Le Goff 1981, 90–5.

161 Voragine 1969, 653.

162 Lasance and Walsh 1945, 1272: "Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni, et de profunda lacu: libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant in obscurum; sed signifer sanctus Michael repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam: Quam olim Abrahae promisisti, et semini ejus."

163 See Pastor 1923–53, XXXI, 31–3, and D'Onofrio 1976, 221–60, with the vivid account in the diary of Carlo Cartari; Weil 1974, 93f., also regarded the plague of 1656–7 as a factor in the refurbishing of the bridge.

164 Bonannus 1699, II, 649, no. X.

165 D'Onofrio 1976, 252.

166 Bonannus 1699, II, 649–50, no. XI; *Bernini in Vaticano* 1981, 289.

167 "Ita ut in plateas eicerent infirmos et ponerent in lectulis et grabatis, ut, veniente Petro, saltem umbra illius obumbraret quemquam illorum, et liberarentur ab infirmitatibus suis et liberabantur ab infirmitate statim salvi fiebant."

168 Ronen 1988, 92ff.

169 Buonanni 1699, II, 650.

170 Ibid., 697f., no. XXXX. See especially Perlove 1982; Petrucci 1997, 190–5; Bernardini and Fagiolo dell'Arco 1999, 414f.

171 Perhaps relevant to the reaction in Rome was the commission by the governors of Naples to Mattia Preti for a series of intercessory frescoes for the city gates, concerning which see Clifton 1994, 479–501. The angel with sword and scabbard occupies the center of Preti's plague paintings, executed 1656–9, and Clifton shows that the location of the images at the entrances to the city had an apotropaic function; the same may be said of Castel Sant'Angelo. Depictions of the Naples plague itself, with an angel of Christ wielding the sword, are discussed by Roworth 1993, Marshall 1998, and Erben 1999.

172 The evidence for earlier ideas and planning for the bridge under Alexander VII is summarized by Weil 1974, 91–3.

173 D'Onofrio 1978, 82; for the inscription, Forcella 1869–84, XIII, 150, no. 282.

174 "...per haver schiodato li ferramenti dell'Angelo sudetto perche il Signor Bernini architetto ha voluto vadi più alto" (D'Onofrio 1978, 322; 1981, 81). Bernini also supervised substantial restorations necessitated by accidental damage in 1660 (D'Onofrio 1978, 322).

175 D'Onofrio 1981, 83, also perceived that the completion of the colonnade, the raising of the angel, and the plan for the bridge were related.

176 Chantelou 1985, 31 July, 1 August, 94n177, aptly referring the passage to the Ponte Sant'Angelo and its open-grille railings (96). Chantelou 1885, 78: "Le soir, la promenade fut assez courte; il a voulu aller sur le Pont-Rouge, et y a fait arrêter le carrosse un bon quart d'heure, regardant d'un côté et d'autre du pont, puis m'a dit: 'C'est là un bel aspect, je suis fort ami des eaux; elles font [du bien] à mon tempérament.' Après nous nous en sommes revenus"; "quand nous avons été vers le Cours, il m'a demandé d'aller sur le Pont-Rouge, comme le soir précédent; il y a demeuré un bon quart d'heure, puis nous nous en sommes revenus par le Pont-Neuf, par les rues." Lalanne identifies the bridge with the Pont-Rouge that linked Cité with the Île Notre Dame.

177 Babelon 1977, pls. 13, 14; Duplomb 1911–13, I, 291–7; Hillairet 1967, 39–42.

178 On the jubilee tragedy, see D'Onofrio 1980, 234f.

179 Baldinucci 1966, 63f., 81; Baldinucci 1948, 129f.:

> In questo pontificato finì il nostro artefice il braccia del portico verso il S. Ufizio, la cordonata alla scala, che noi diremmo padiglione, o scala a bastoni davanti alla basilica di S. Pietro; abbellì il ponte S. Angelo con statue d'angioli portanti gli strumenti della passione del Signore e fecevi le balaustrate. Aveva egli condotto di sua mano due de'medesimi angioli per dar loro luogo fra gli altri sopra

di esso ponte; ma non parve bene a Clemente che opere sì belle rimanessero in quel luogo all'ingiurie del tempo; che però fecevene fare due copie e gli originali destinò ad esser posti altrove a disposizione del cardinal'nipote. Cionostante il Bernino ne scolpì un altro segretamente, che è quello, che sostiene il titolo della croce, non volendo per verun modo che un'opera d'un pontefice, a cui egli si conosceva tanto obbligato, rimanesse senza una qualche fattura della sua mano. Ciò risaputo il papa, ebbene contento, e disse: "Insomma cavaliere, voi mi volete necessitare a far fare un'altra copia." E qui consideri il mio lettore che il nostro artefice constituito in età decrepita in ispazio di due anni e non più condusse le tre statue di marmo intere assai maggiori del naturale, cosa che ai più intendenti dell'arte sembra avere dell'impossibile.

Baldinucci 1948, 147f.:

Ma giacché parliamo di fontane, è da sapersi un altro suo precetto; e fu, che essendo fatte le fontane per lo godimento dell'acque, doveansi quelle sempre far cadere in modo, che potessero esser vedute. Con tal concetto (cred'io) dovendo egli far restaurare per ordine di Clemente IX il ponte S. Angiolo sul Tevere, ne fece sfondare le sponde, acciò l'acque meglio si potessero godere, ond'è che con doppio piacere vede l'occhio dai lati del fiume il corso dell'aque e sopra quei del ponte l'ornato degli angioli, per alludere all'antico nome del ponte.

180 Bernini 1713, 158–60:

Mà Clemente desideroso ugualmente quanto i suoi Predecessori di accrescere magnificenza al Tempio di S. Pietro, ornamento a Roma, e Gloria al suo Pontificato, ordinò al Cavaliere, che con qualche nobile invenzione ornasse in miglior forma quel Ponte, che, prossimo al Castello, da lui prende il nome, di *Ponte S. Angelo*, giudicato degno di riguardevole abbellimento sì per la grandezza della Mole Hadriana, che, a chi v'imbocca, si offerisce avanti, come per essere la più frequentata via, che conduce alla gran Basilica di S. Pietro. E ne sovvenne al Bernino il pensiere proporzionatissimo al luogo, e maestoso quanto dir si possa all'apparenza. Fù suo detto assai familiare, che *Il buon'Architetto in materia di Fontane, ò di lavori sopr'acque, doveva sempre procurar con facilità la veduta di esse, ò nel cader che fanno, ò nel passare: Poiche essendo le acque di gran godimento alla vista, con impedirla, ò con difficoltarla, toglie à quelle opere il loro pregio più dilettevole.* Con questa intenzione, nell'adornamento dell'accennato Ponte, volle il Cavaliere ne'Poggi, che sogliono comporsi tutti di materia, e di muro si aprisse di tanto in tanto un proporzionato vano, assicurato da altrettante ferrate, per cui, commodo fosse al Passagiere rimirare il corso di quell'acque, sopra le quali esso felicemente camina.

181 D'Onofrio 1981, 94.

182 On this theme, see Lavin, "On the Unity of the Arts and the Early Baroque Opera House" (1990) and Lavin 1993, 147–55.

183 On Bernini and the theater, see Lavin 1980, 146–57.

184 Weil 1974, 32.

185 Ibid., 35; also D'Onofrio 1981, 48.

186 On these contrasting and normally incompatible traditions, see Lavin, "On the Unity of the Arts and the Early Baroque Opera House" (1990).

187 On the Works of Mercy and the Last Judgment, see Knipping 1974, II, 328–32; Harbison 1976, 106–16; Pacelli 1984, 31–48.

188 Roscio 1586, 82; part 1 of Roscio's treatise is devoted to the acts "quae ad corpus pertinent," i.e., those mentioned explicitly by Christ; part 2 (45ff.) considers those "quae ad animum pertinent," as defined by Thomas Aquinas. On Roscio, see Zuccari 1984, 118f., fig. 7; Pacelli 1984, 46f., figs. 30–2.

189 On the Arma Christi: Berliner 1955; Knipping 1974, II, 461–5; Suckale 1977.

190 Berliner 1955, 35f., cited by Preimesberger 1988, 207.

191 The seminal study of these works is that of Zuccari 1984, 92f., 109–37; followed by Macioce 1990, 126–8, 132f., 149f.; Caperna 1999, 97–101. In SS. Nereo e Achilleo, similar frescoed angels standing atop the nave columns carry the palm and crown of martyrdom. The relevance of these church decorations for the bridge sculptures was noted by Minozzi 1999, 81f., who also perceived the nature and novelty of Bernini's synthesis of the Via Crucis and the Arma Christi traditions in a progressive (and processional) series of independent angels bearing the instruments.

192 See Zuccari's excellent analysis of the significance of the Joseph story and its relevance to the conversion of Henry IV (1974, 115–19).

193 *Speculum passionis Christi salvatoris mundi*, Hollstein 1949–, XVI, 21–3, nos. 57–67ad.

194 De Passe: Bartsch 1978–, LXXII, part 1 (supplement), 107–19. Sadeler: Bartsch 1978, LXX, part 1 (supplement), 263f.; Knipping 1974, II, 462f. Other precedents are cited by Minozzi 1999, 81f.

195 For the order and disposition of the angels and the inscriptions on the pedestals, see Kruft and Larsson 1966, 157, Weil 1974, fig. 100, 52; our Fig. 247 is after Weil 1974, fig. 52, corrected.

196 The nature of the relationship between the instruments and the texts has been illustrated by Preimesberger 1988, 208–11; he does not consider the inscriptions discussed here.

197 In a number of drawings for the angels by studio hands the figures stand on oblong plinths, suggesting that the clouds may have been introduced at a later time in the development of the project. However, none of the autograph sketches, drawn or modeled, shows such a plinth instead of the clouds. The studies have been most recently surveyed by Tolomeo Speranza, in Cardilli Alloisi and Tolomeo Speranza 1988, 43–80.

198 Weil 1974, 139–51, outlines their careers and artistic personalities.

199 D'Onofrio 1981, 84, regards the buttresses as useless. Bernini's reconstruction remained in place until the modern embankment and street were installed after 1892. For Bernini's work and its replacement, compare Weil 1974, figs. 20–1, figs. 1–4, and see Stefano Funari and Giuseppe Biunno, in Cadrilli Alloisi and Tolomeo Speranza 1988, 224–38.

200 "[conversus sum] in aerumna mea dum configitur spina."

201 Gramatica 1951, 485.

202 "dicite in gentibus, quia Dominus regnavit."

203 "Vexilla Regis prodeunt . . ." Reydellet 1994, 57, 185.

204 See Angelo Negro, in Strinati and Bernardini 1999, 67–9.

205 Certain areas are left rough, and Negro 1999, 73, has suggested that the finish postdates Bernini; but the rough areas are invisible from the front and below, and indicate only that Bernini expected the huge figures mounted on pedestals to be viewed in that way – a frequent procedure in his work.

206 The replacements differ from their counterparts in varying degrees, but chiefly in the lower drapery of the angel with the superscription, executed by Bernini himself, which blows in the same, rather than the opposite, direction with respect to its companion; the change seems appropriate for figures meant to be seen in succession rather than as a pair.

207 I doubt that the angels were moved from Bernini's studio to the Palazzo Rospigliosi (D'Onofrio 1981, 87). They do not appear in the inventories of Bernini's possessions taken after his death, no doubt because they were not legally his property. The report that his grandson gave them to the church also suggests that they remained physically in Bernini's house.

208 Wittkower 1997 (1995), 57f., noted the gender difference and emphasized Bernini's debt to the Pseudo-Dionysius.

209 Following Weil 1974, the material is conveniently collected in Tolomeo Speranza 1988, but with a hopeless conflation of original and workshop studies. Valuable observations on Bernini's modeling technique have been offered by Sigel 1999.

210 On this subject and the history of the sculptural model generally, see Lavin 1967 (1964).

211 On these points, see Meeks 1974, Koole 1986, Mathews 1993, and Keck 1998.

212 Pseudo-Dionysius, XV, 6; 1987, 187f.:

> They are also named "winds" 161 as a sign of the virtually instant speed with which they operate everywhere, their coming and going from above to below and again from below to above as they raise up their subordinates to the highest peak and as they prevail upon their own superiors to proceed down into fellowship with and concern for those beneath them. One could add that the word "wind" means a spirit of the air and shows how divine and intelligent beings live in conformity with God. The word is an image and a symbol of the activity of the Deity. It naturally moves and gives life, hurrying forward, direct and unrestrained, and this in virtue of what to us is unknowable and invisible, namely the hiddenness of the sources and the objectives of its movements. "You do not know," says scripture, "whence it comes and whither it goes." 162 This was all dealt with in more detail by me in *The Symbolic Theology* when I was explicating the four elements. 163 The word of God represents them also as clouds. 164 This is to show that the holy and intelligent beings are filled in a transcendent way with hidden light. Directly and without arrogance they have been first to receive this light, and as intermediaries, they have generously passed it on so far as possible to those next to them. They have a generative power, a life-giving power, a power to give increase and completion, for they rain understanding down and they summon the breast which receives them to give birth to a living tide.

213 On the mystical theology of clouds and light, see Puech 1938.

214 "... il pregio maggiore del suo Scalpello, con cui vinto haveva la difficultà di render' il Marmo pieghevole come la cera, ... il cuore di rendere i sassi così ubbidienti alla mano, come se stati fossero di pasta" (Bernini 1713, 149); on this point, see Lavin 1980, 11f.

215 On the Wounds of Our Lord and the Spear Thrust, see *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 1967–89, XIV, 1036–7.

216 Malatesta 1977, 176.

217 28 postea sciens Iesus quia iam omnia consummata sunt ut consummaretur scriptura dicit sitio

30 cum ergo accepisset Iesus acetum dixit consummatum est et inclinato capite tradidit spiritum

34 sed unus militum lancea latus eius aperuit et continuo exivit sanguis et aqua

35 et qui vidit testimonium perhibuit et verum est eius testimonium et ille scit quia vera dicit ut et vos credatis

36 facta sunt enim haec ut scriptura impleatur os non comminuetis ex eo.

218 "... ut significaretur ex morte et latere Chrisiti, quasi secondi Adae dormientis in cruce, Ecclesiam quasi Evam Christi sponsam formatam esse ... ut ait Cyrillus e Chrysostomus, acqua significet baptismum, qui est principium Ecclesiae et Sacramentorum caeterorum; sanguis vero repraesentet Eucharistiam, quae omnium Sacramentorum finis est et complementim, ad quae duo quasi ad principium et finem, caetera Sacramenta omnia deducuntur" (Lapide 1866–8, XVI, 621; Lapide 1876–1908, VI, 249, 248). The early interpretations are conveniently summarized by Malatesta 1977 and Meehan 1985. See also the important work by Heer 1966, who relates the Johannine tradition to the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, followed by O'Donnell 1992. The first part of John 19:34 is quoted in the banderole in the upper part of the crossing pier niche with Bernini's sculpture of St. Longinus, in connection with which the text was discussed in a paper by Preimesberger 1989.

219 "Cur nec solus sanguinis nec sola aqua de latere eius exierit, vel cur aqua sanguini sociata sit.

...

Societate, inquam, vivifici pretiosi sanguinis hoc accepit, ut comparetur vera similitudine Rubro mari, per quod salvatus populus transivit Pharaone submerso cum currinbus et equitibus suis. Nam fugientes Aegyptum huius saeculi mundatos in veram repromissionis terram transmittit diabolumque persequentem penitus absorbet cum praeteritis actibus et pompis suis" (Rupert of Deutz 1999, III, 812–4).

220 Much material on the interpretation and art-historical ramifications of the Song of Songs is found in Aronberg Lavin and Lavin 2001.

221 The relationship between Song of Songs 4:9 and the lance wound has been explored by Hamburger 1990, 72–7, in connection with a diptych illustration in the Rothschild Canticles (Fig. 15): Sponsa, who gestures toward her eyes, thrusts her spear toward the figure of Christ with the instruments of the Passion, who points to the wound in his side. There is no allusion to John 19:34.

222 I received a photograph of the drawing in 1973 from a New York dealer, John A. Torson, who supplied no details. I have since been unable to trace the work.

223 The fact that the Trinity altar was widened when the temporary sacrament altar was moved, as the documents attest, is no proof that the transfer was not anticipated (Rice 1997, 208); the change indicates only that the original size of the Trinity altar may have been determined by other factors, or that it was installed before the dimensions of Bernini's work were determined. The documents concerning the early Sacrament altar were published by Pollak 1928–31, II, 36, Reg. 42, 301–5, Reg. 967–83.

224 The documents speak first of two, then of four angels.

225 For what follows concerning the angels I am much indebted to the inspired study by Eric Peterson 1964.

226 In her entry on Bernini's tabernacle in Pinelli 2000, Schede, 699, Evonne Levy also notes the gender distinction between the angels.

227 On these sculptures, see Lavin 1980, 101–29, and Schütze, in Coliva and Schütze 1998, 148–69.

228 Gougaud 1925, 19, 25f.

229 Keck 1998, 176.

230 XV, 4; Pseudo-Dionysius 1987, 186.

231 On the paradox of Bernini's "calculated spontaneity," see Lavin 1978a. On the *bozzetto* illustrated in Fig. 260, see Lavin 2001.

232 Cited by Hibbard 1965, 202.

233 See Fagiolo 1997, 129.

234 On the adult nude Christ, see Lavin 1977–8, Steinberg 1996, 19–22, 135–9, 146f., Hamburger 1990, 72f. It is important to note that the Minerva Christ has no chest wound and that the small holes representing the other wounds are certainly later "additions": they do not appear in the early copies (Tolnay 1943–60, III, figs. 236–42).

235 On the Last Judgment and the Trinity, see Harbison 1976, 159–68.

236 See Tolnay 1943–60, II, fig. 51.

237 This section was extracted from the writer's contribution to a symposium commemorating Richard Krautheimer; Lavin 1997.

238 Krautheimer and Jones 1975; supplemented by Morello 1981.

239 Aronberg Lavin 1994.

240 Chantelou 1885, 15; 1985, 12 (4 June 1665).

241 The notion of Alexander's Rome as Roma moderna, articulated in the publications of the period, stems from Pastor 1923–53, XXXI, 312.

242 See on this point my introduction to Panofsky's essay "What Is Baroque?" in Lavin 1995.

243 See Krautheimer 1985, 70, 80, 174; Pastor 1923–55, XXXI, 291.

244 "Applicò subito a i mali gl'opportuni remedii, e compassionando la povertà, che non solo priva d'impiego errava vagabonda per la Città, ma languiva oppressa da una carestia che quanto piu affligeva il Popolo, tanto maggiormente doveva far spiccare la sua pietà, si volse a distribuire grand.ma quantità d'oro, benche la scarsezza dell'erario fosse un'argine opposto al torrente di questa devota munificenza. Portato il nostro liberalissimo Prencipe dalla piena Carità ben providde, che l'aprire semplicemente a beneficio comune i Tesori era un fomentare otio, et un nudrire i vitii. Onde quell'istesso antidoto che s'applicava per la salute poteva essere un tossico piu potente per avvelenarla. Così dunque represse quella fiamma di Carità, non per estinguerla, ma acciò maggiormente à prò di suoi sudditi si dilatasse, quindi pensò dar principio ad una gran fabbrica, mediante la quale s'eccitasse l'impigeo nei vagabondi, e si sovvenisse con il giro di grossa somma di denaro alle correnti necessità." Brauer and Wittkower 1931, 70n1. Brauer and Wittkower date the statement 1659–60, whereas Krautheimer 1985, 174, gives 1657–8; Pizzati's diatribe was composed 1656–9, as noted by Krautheimer 1985, 191.

245 This attitude is emphasized by Alexander's friend and biographer, the Jesuit Sforza Pallavicino 1839–40, II, 177f.

246 Fiorani 1980, 53–148, cf. 133.

247 Alexander's efforts, and ultimate failure, to break the tradition of nepotism are described by Pastor 1923–53, XXXI, 24ff.

248 On Bernini, charity, and the homeless, see Lavin 1997, 1998, and 2000b; for efforts to deal with the problem in the sixteenth century, especially a similar project under Sixtus V, see Delumeau 1957–9, I, 403–16. The immediate successor to the Lateran hospice, after the turn of the century, was the vast Apostolic Hospice of San Michele a Ripa (Sisinni, ed. 1990, Bevilacqua Melasecchi 2001).

249 On Bernini's death, the bust of the Savior, and the *Sangue di Cristo*, see Lavin 1972 and 1998.

250 The original of this long-lost work, known from an autograph drawing and several early copies and reflections, came to light at S. Sebastiano fuori le mura in Rome; see Cucco 2001, 119, where the connection with Bernini was overlooked; Fagiolo dell'Arco 2002, 71, where it is described as "attributed" to Bernini; and Lavin 2003b.

251 Among the many known copies, the one Bernini commissioned for himself has also recently been identified; see n. 260 below.

252 See Lavin 1998, 81–94; Lavin 2000; Anselmi 2001.

253 The print measures 473 × 290mm, the book 170 × 110mm; the thematic analogy between the composition and the Sacrament altar was noted and aptly discussed by Beck 1999.

254 Marchese 1670.

255 9:14 (Douay): How much more shall the blood of Christ, who by the Holy Ghost offered himself unspotted unto God, cleanse our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?

256 "Vi offerisco il Sangue dell'umanato Verbo, o Padre Eterno: e se manca cosa alcuna, l'offerisco a voi, o Maria, accioche alla Trinità."

257 Cf. Tolnay 1943–60, II, 137.

258 On the stained-glass window at Wettingen, dated 1590, see Anderes and Hoegger 1989, 258f.

259 The composition is also interesting in our context because the Crucifixion–baptism juxtaposition alludes to the mixture of blood and water in the Eucharist, to be discussed below.

260 Without considering the significance of the motif, Francesco Petrucci has made the important observation that the painted version of the Sangue di Cristo in a private collection in Genoa actually shows the spouts as blood and water, unlike other painted replicas in which they are both red (Petrucci 2001, 81–4; Petrucci, in Tapié 2003, 272, with attribution to Borgognone; cf. the color illustrations in Bernardini and Fagiolo dell'Arco 1999, figs. 223, 226). Petrucci argues cogently that this detail favors the Genoa picture, which measures 99 × 70 cm, as the "large" original Bernini kept beside his bed, while the others are copies after the engraving. In the Eucharist itself, of course, the wine and water are *mixed*, and interesting in this context is a passage in Domenico's description of the composition, quoting the artist: "... (Bernini) said, 'in this Sea are drowned his sins, which cannot be found by Divine justice except amongst the Blood of Jesus Christ, in the tints of which they will either have changed color or by its merits obtained mercy.' [Et In questo Mare, egli diceva, ritrovarsi affogati i suoi peccati, che non altrimente dalla Divina Giustitia rinvenir si potevano, che frà il Sangue di Giesù Christo, di cui tinti ò haverebbono mutato colore, ò per merito di esso ottenuta mercede](Bernini 1713, 170).

261 All contemporary sources, including Bernini himself, identify the figure as the Virgin Mary or Queen of Heaven (as duly noted by Bindi in Bernardini and Fagiolo dell'Arco 1999, 445); indeed, only she can perform the task given to her by Maria Maddalena's invocation and in Bernini's composition. Mary is shown conspicuously barefoot as a sign of her humility, but the figure no doubt also alludes to the Virgin's two namesakes: Mary Magdalene, who is often shown as the penitent kneeling at the foot of the Cross (as noted by Brauer and Wittkower 1931, 168); and Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi herself, a member of the Discalzed Carmelites, the order dedicated to the Virgin. The saint was famed for her frequent ecstatic visions like the one from which the caption of the *Sangue di Cristo* was quoted. The relevance of Maria Maddalena is amply discussed by Beltramme 1994, who follows Blunt 1978 in actually identifying the figure as the Florentine mystic.

262 *Marienlexikon* (1988–94), I, 41; II, 549–59. The icon and the procession in which it had figured for centuries were part of the background for Bernini's projects for the tribune of S. Maria Maggiore and a hospice for the poor at the Lateran palace. As has been noted by Cardile 1984, 202, 208nn30, 50, the gesture is related to the *manis expansis* of the Offertory of the Mass.

263 *Marienlexikon* (1988–94), II, 312–14.

264 The relationship between these images and the blood and water was noted by Mâle 1984, 193f. (Tedaldi 1996, 90, and Bindi in Bernardini and Fagiolo dell'Arco 1999, 445, refer to the Ecclesia type but not its relevance to the Joannine theme.) Blood and water issue from the side wound in the Crucifixion in Duccio's triptych at Hampton Court (Shearman 1983, 96); the ecclesiological reference is here expressed through the extraordinary combination of the Crucifixion with Mariological scenes in the wings. The blood and water motif also refers to the institutional sacrament in Bellini's *Blood of the Redeemer*, National Gallery, London; the double stream from the chest wound, to which Christ gestures, is captured in a chalice by a kneeling angel (Goffen 1989, ill. 57).

265 See the examples illustrated in Seiferth 1970.

266 On the theme of the Virtues crucifying Christ, see Kraft 1976.

267 I have tried to show that this tradition underlay the particular relation between the Virgin and the Christ child in Michelangelo's Medici Madonna (Aronberg Lavin and Lavin 2001, 49–84).

268 "With the wine used in the sacred mysteries, the Church of God, however, has always mingled water, because, as we know on the authority of councils and the testimony of St. Cyprian, our Lord himself did so; and also because this admixture renews the recollection of the blood and water which issued from his sacred side. The word water we also find used in the Apocalypse, to signify the people, and, therefore, Water mixed with wine signifies the union of the faithful with Christ their head." (Apoc. xvii.15: "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.") *Catechism* n.d., 151. ["Aquam vero Dei Ecclesia vino semper admiscuit; primum, quod id a Christo Domino factum esse et conciliorum auctoritate et sancti Cypriani testimonio comprobatur; deinde, quod sanguinis et aquae, quae ex eius latere exierunt, hac permistione memoria renovatur. Tum vero aquae, ut in Apocalypsi legimus, populum designant; quare aqua vino admixta fidelis populi cum Christo capite coniunctionem significat, atque hoc ex apostolica traditione perpetuo sancta Ecclesia servavit" (*Catechismus* 1989, 244).]

269 On this delicate and vexed subject, see *Marienlexikon* 1988–94, V, 314–18. In 1916 the Holy Office forbade the use of images of Mary portraying her as a priest, and in 1927 proscribed altogether the devotion to Mary Virgin Priest.

270 "sacerdos pariter et altar quidem ferens, dedit nobis coelestem panem Christum in remissionem peccatorem" (cited after Marracci 1710, 607).

271 Missaglia et al., 1954, fig. 102, p. 111. I have been unable to trace this Madonna–Priestess image. The inscription below (faintly legible in the bad reproduction from an unspecified source used for Missaglia's book, preserved in an album in SS. Andrea e Claudio dei Borgognoni in Rome) specifies that Mary offers to God her son's flesh and blood, consecrated by the priests: MARIA TANQUAM MEDIATRIX OFFERT DEO PATRI QUOD CONSECRATUM EST A SACERDOTIB' SCILICET [C]ARNEM VIRGINEAM ET SANGUINEM PRETIOSUM FILI EIUS DOMINI NOSTRI IESU CHRISTI.

272 Bernard of Clairvaux 1950, III, 305 (cf. Marchese 1670, 82):

> Caeterum quidquid illud est, quod offerre paras, Mariae commendare memento, ut eodem alveo ad largitorem gratiae gratia redeat quo influxit. Neque enim impotens erat Deus, et sine hoc aquaeductu infundere gratiam, prout vellet; sed tibi vehiculum voluit providere. Forte enim manus tuae, aut sanguine plenae, aut infectae muneribus, quod non eas ab omni munere excussisti. Ideoque [alias, itaque] modicum istud quod offerre desideras, gratissimis illis et omni acceptione dignissimis Mariae manibus offerendum tradere cura, si non vis sustinere repulsam. Nimirum candidissima quaedam lilia sunt: nec causabitur ille liliorum amator inter lilia non inventum, quidquid illud sit quod inter Mariae manus invenerit. Amen. (Migne 1844–47, CLXXXIII, col. 448)

273 Bonaventure 1934–64, V, 316: "...quia non nisi patrocinio beatae Mariae Virginis ad virtutem huius Sacramenti perveniturr. Et propeter hoc, sicut per eam hoc sacratissimum corpus nobis datum est, ita per manus eius debet offerri et per manus eius accipi sub Sacramento quod nobis praestitum est et natum ex eius utero" (*De verbo incarnato*, Sermo VI, par. 20, Bonaventure 1934–64, V, 316, cited by Crocetti 2001, 125).

274 T'offerisco adunque à te, ò Verbo; lo presento à te Spirito Santo, e se cosa alcuna ci manca, l'offerisco à te, o Maria, cho lo presenti all'eterna Trinità, per supplimêto di tutti i difetti, che fossero nell'anima mia, e ancora per sodisfazioijne di tutte la colpe, che fossero nel corop mio. (Puccini 1609, 241f.)

> Io t'offero il Sangue del'tuo humanato Verbo, dico l'offero a te Padre, l'offero a te Verbo, e l'offero a te Spirito Santo. Et se nulla ci mancassi, l'offero a te Maria, che l'offerisca all'eterna Trinità per supplimento di tutti e' diffetti che fussino nell'anima mia, e ancora per soddisfatione di tutti e' difetto che fussino nelcorpo mio. (De' Pazzi 1960, 20)

> Vi offerisco, ò Padre eterno, il Sangue dell'vmanità del vostro Verbo; l'offerisco à voi stesso, ò Diuin Verbo; l'offerisco anco à voi, ò Spirito Santo; e se manca à me cosa alcuna, l'offerisco à voi, ò Maria; accioche, lo presentiate alla Santissima Trinità. (Marchese 1670, 83)

Bernini's *Sangue di Cristo* composition was by no means unprecedented in this respect. The Holy Spirit as such is not represented in Filippino Lippi's *Intercession of Christ and the Virgin* in Munich (Lavin 1972, 165, fig. 4), but is present by implication between the angel and Virgin of the Annunciation flanking the central presiding figure of God the Father; the Eucharist is alluded to in the body of Christ displayed in the predella below. Bernini also omitted the Holy Spirit in his drawing of Christ and the Virgin appealing to God the Father, in Leipzig (Lavin 1972, 165, fig. 3).

275 On Bernini's conception of the unity of the visual arts, see Lavin 1980, esp. 6–15, 143–5.

276 "Iddio adunque è il vero Disegno, e vero author, e perfetto, e divin Pittore, Scultore et Architetto"; for this and other citations, see Herrmann-Fiore 1979, 78–81, esp. 79 n. 192, fig. 31, p. 76. See also Merz 1999, 229.

277 For Michelangelo's self-deprecation with respect to his portrayal of God in the Sistine Chapel ceiling, see Lavin 1990b, 26f., and 1993, 36f.

278 On Bernini's "bel composto," see Lavin 1980, 6–15.

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