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Cover illustration: *Angel*, by Giambologna, 1580s, bronze. Cappella Salviati, San Marco, Florence (photo: David Finn, courtesy of the Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art, London).

Framing Cecilia's Sacred Body: Paolo Camillo Sfondrato and the Language of Revelation

Tobias Kämpf

Il Pilo d'alabastro s'è messo à piede di questo altare per dare ricetta à tutti tre li corpi delle Sante, sopra i quali i Sacerdoti che celebreranno Messa e i circostanti che l'ascolteranno avranno occasione di molta devozione, dal sapere che quivi si conservino così preziose Reliquie; è perchè muove più quel che si vede, che qualche non soggiace all'occhio, s'è lasciato il Pilo scoperto dinnanzi, e da fianchi, e queste parti con ferrate messe à oro si sono assicurate.¹

Stefano Maderno's statue of *Saint Cecilia* is rightly called a milestone in the transition from mannerist

to baroque sculpture in Rome.² Not only has it been widely imitated in a broad range of media, but it has come to be considered the incarnation of the new 'anti-mannerist realism' that would catalyse the overall development of baroque sculpture. While the innovative character of Maderno's statue is widely recognised, no detailed attempt has yet been made to explain the statue's genesis within its specific intellectual, liturgical and topographical environment.³ As will be shown, the innovation of



1. *St Cecilia*, by Stefano Maderno, c. 1600, marble, l. 130.5 cm. Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome (photo: courtesy Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale).

the masterpiece was made possible only by a reformed Catholic culture that creatively re-defined its own past in the face of Protestant criticism and by the growing awareness of its patrons that art's role in religious practice had been challenged. The massive church restoration campaigns undertaken for the Jubilee of 1600, actively encouraged and often financed by the Holy See, created the ideal forum for an expression of this intellectual concern.

The statue of Cecilia occupies pride of place in the restored basilica of that name, the titular church of Cardinal Paolo Camillo Sfondrato (figs 1, 2).⁴ It is located on a site directly below the high altar, within the central niche of a wall that both closes off the nave and stages the raised choir (fig. 3).⁵ This significant position is amplified by the intersecting vertical axis that connects the statue and its tabernacle with the *mensa*. Above and beyond the celebrant, framed by Arnolfo di Cambio's ciborium of 1293, the seasoned eye would glimpse the *Agnus Dei* at the centre of the apse frieze and the blessing Christ above. The same axis, not incidentally, links the two other great benefactors of the basilica: the monogram of Pope Paschal I (817–24) is visible in the roundel topping the proscenium arch, while the tomb of Cardinal Sfondrato lies beneath the porphyry *rota* before Cecilia. During the Mass, at the moment of the elevation of the host, the officiating priest draws the line of this vertical axis with the Body of Christ Himself.⁶ More tangibly than any other previous form, this arrangement made manifest the recently revised, central themes of early Christianity, exemplified in St Ambrose's dictum of 386 that 'the triumphant victims [i.e. the martyrs] may follow on the spot, where Christ is the host. But Christ who has suffered for all should stand above the altar, whereas those who have been redeemed by His passion should lie below it'.⁷ The same theme is manifested in St Augustine's assertion that altars to God were founded on the spoils of the saints.⁸

The altar in Santa Cecilia seemingly responded to and set the standard for the fulfilment of contemporary liturgical concerns. That this was its intention can be deduced from the intellectual biography of the statue's patron, Cardinal Paolo Camillo Sfondrato (1560–1618) (fig. 4).⁹ Sfondrato, a native of Ambrose's Milan,¹⁰ had been educated first at the Oratorio dei Filippini in Rome (1575–80)¹¹ – an experience that was formative enough for contemporaries subsequently to christen him Filippo Neri's 'spiritual son'¹² – and then

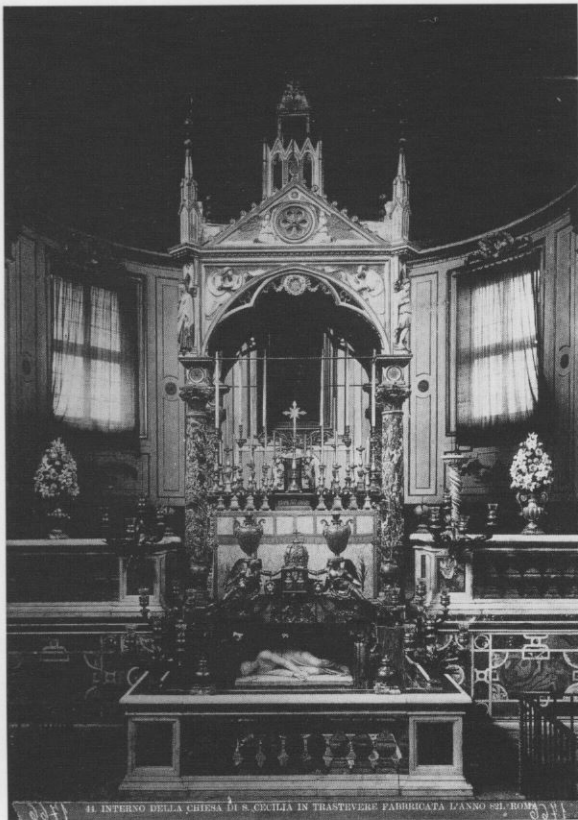
at the Collegio Borromeo in Pavia, where he counted Federico Borromeo among his schoolmates.¹³ In both institutions, Paolo Camillo inevitably became involved with the very core of a Catholic environment reacting to the challenges of Protestant movements and concerned with a reassessment of its own spiritual diversity and cultural identity in a manner to an unprecedented degree.

A turning point in Paolo Camillo's career came on 5 December 1590 with the ascension to the papacy of his uncle Niccolò Sfondrato as Gregory XIV. Not only was he immediately promoted to cardinal nephew, but he was also entrusted with Gregory's own former titular church, Santa Cecilia in Trastevere. He paid homage to his uncle by celebrating his own *possessio* of the church on the same day that Niccolò Sfondrato had scheduled his five years previously.¹⁴ The nephew's emulation of his papal predecessor would be decisive in his patronage of the church, which centered on the veneration of Cecilia's corpse and those of her companions. According to Antonio Bosio, among the papers left by Gregory at the time of his death on 15 October 1591 Paolo Camillo found a copy of the letter of Paschal I concerning the miraculous rediscovery and transfer of the holy bodies from the catacombs to the basilica and their reburial under its main altar.¹⁵ With this action, Paschal had crowned his restoration campaign of the *titulus ecclesiae*. Sfondrato was ready to imitate him by accumulating further relics and enclosing them, as well as those that he had found in the church, in gilt and silver reliquaries.¹⁶ As stated by Bosio, Paolo Camillo's desire to preserve the relics in the most appropriate space in the church, in accordance with early Christian tradition, prompted him to excavate under its main altar in the area of the *fenestella confessionis*.¹⁷ The cardinal thereby followed a long established tradition that had seen a significant recent revival in the Roman church of Santa Sabina, where Domenico Fontana, guided by Pope Sixtus V, had remodelled the main altar in 1586–7, creating a *confessio* beneath it, in which the principal relics of the original altar were placed.¹⁸

The remodelling of Santa Sabina established a prototype for the application of the ideals of Christian antiquarianism to an actual building: the shifting of the altar from the end of the presbytery towards the church's nave, its raising above the nave's level and the insertion of the newly created *confessio* under it. Pompeo Ugonio provides a contemporary functional interpretation for these



2. Interior of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome, view of altar zone (photo: courtesy Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale).



3. Interior of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome, before the restorations at the turn of the twentieth century (photo: courtesy Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale).



4. Portrait of Cardinal Paolo Camillo Sfondrato, artist unknown, engraving. Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence, Buonamici, Ritratti.

modifications: during the liturgical ceremonies, space was required for the pope and his whole court behind the main altar. This necessity ultimately derived from Sixtus V's programmatic revival of the medieval stationary masses, which required that the *capella pontificalis* was celebrated on specified days in certain churches of Rome according to a ritual calendar. On Ash Wednesday Santa Sabina traditionally accommodated the first of the fifty-four stationary masses of the Lent period¹⁹ and thereby a key position in the papal endeavour. Santa Sabina's architectural remodeling, which promoted the re-established rite, can be seen as exemplary for the other churches. Architectural renewal was intimately connected with the spiritual rebirth of the original apostolic community through a recovery of its rites. The fact that mass was, as thereby implied, celebrated *versus populum* even in a church such as Santa Sabina that faced east indicates a strong ideological motivation for the church's transformation.²⁰

One of the most important results of the

renewed interest in the stational churches of Rome was Ugonio's 1588 guide to the buildings, among which the basilica of Santa Cecilia figured prominently. Sfondrato cannot have ignored its indication of the virgin's burial place under the main altar of the church, together with that of her husband St Valerianus, his brother St Tiburtius, St Maximus and the holy popes Urban and Lucius.²¹ The cardinal was thus prompted to attempt the rediscovery of the holy bodies. As in the case of Paschal I, the search for the bodies provided the framework for a restoration campaign, which is first documented in 1597 and continued for many years.²²

A series of *avvisi* record the ensuing drama:²³ on Wednesday, 20 October 1599, in Sfondrato's presence, three marble sarcophagi with six 'incompact' bodies were discovered in the zone under the high altar. Even if these almost journalistic dispatches were evidently produced immediately after the find, their descriptions conform so closely to consolidated hagiographical tradition that they can

only bear witness to the careful scripting of the bodies' invention. In particular, they detail Cecilia's lack of corruption: her dress, the veil over her face, the wound in her neck, the blood, all still intact after more than a thousand years. They also preciently announce that Pope Clement VIII would re-inter the bodies himself, even though he was then still at Frascati.²⁴ Finally, the ruse is exposed altogether by referring to Sfondrato's discovery within the context of the papally motivated restoration of the titular churches for the coming Jubilee year of 1600. The historical place of the discovery had thus been carefully calculated and its ecumenical importance established.

Cardinal Sfondrato spared no expense in creating an ornamental setting that would match the preciousness of his finds. Reasserting the holy presences would garner public attention, prestige and hence revenues both for the church and its titular cardinal. All these advantages would enhance the status of the cardinal both during his life and thereafter. Indeed amongst his peers Sfondrato's alleged discovery provoked such a sensation that – as *avvisi* tongues wagged – Cardinal Alessandro de' Medici now set out to restore Sant'Agnese, on the Via Nomentana, with a similarly miraculous discovery in mind.²⁵ Since Alessandro was the papally appointed overseer of aesthetic and ritual propriety in Roman churches,²⁶ Sfondrato's activity must have been not only sanctioned but considered exemplary.

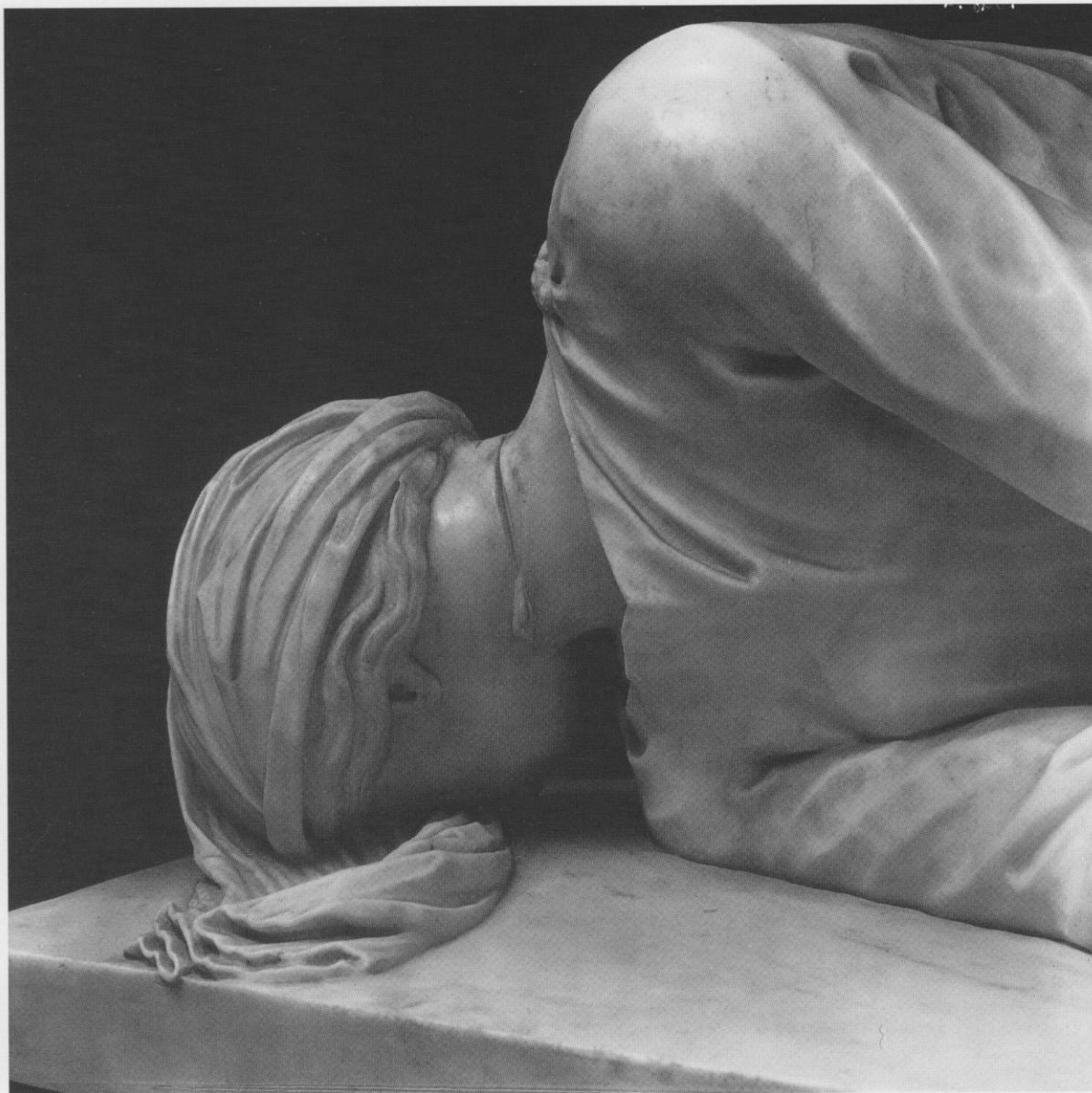
Soon the Pope too came to venerate Cecilia's body.²⁷ She was very rarely visible to the mass public, with good reason – one of the exhibitions of the body resulted in such public hysteria that the Swiss guard was unable to control the people at halberd-point. In order to save Cecilia from certain dismemberment she was precipitously resealed.²⁸ She was reburied by Clement VIII in the presence of forty-two cardinals and the whole papal court on her feast day, 22 November 1599,²⁹ after having been out of the grave for a total of thirty-three days. If this ceremony can be considered the culmination of public attention bestowed on St Cecilia, it was soon to be followed by an artistic and intellectual endeavour to perpetuate the excitement: Antonio Bosio's *Historia passionis B. Caeciliae Virginis, Valeriani, Tiburtii, et Maximi martyrum* was published in Rome in 1600³⁰ and Maderno's statue of the saint (fig. 1) was unveiled the same year. Bosio's text provides a detailed description and interpretation of Sfondrato's activities, which can be considered consonant with the

ideas of the cardinal – who probably financed the work, since the book's frontispiece bears his arms and his personal certification of Bosio's accuracy.³¹ Sfondrato's endorsement reappears in the inscription below the statue itself, in which the cardinal addresses the beholder: 'Gaze upon the likeness of the most holy virgin Cecilia, / Which I saw myself lying in an entire state in the sepulchre / I have had this same likeness, precisely in the same position her body lay, / Expressed for you in marble'.³²

To ensure the saint's permanent exhibition during the Holy Year of 1600 and thereafter, Sfondrato had her image carved as the focus of the choir substantially remodelled to the designs of Giacomo della Porta.³³ It was of paramount importance in the new scheme that the saint's sculpted body should lie visibly below the high altar. However, della Porta and his patron retained the medieval split-level choir with raised presbytery and subterranean annular crypt, a configuration derived ultimately from Gregory the Great's (590–604) reconstruction of the chancel of St Peter's.³⁴ According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, Gregory had had his chancel constructed 'so that masses could be said above the body of Saint Peter',³⁵ a concept that before Sfondrato had never been made as tangible as in Maderno's statue.

Yet, by his very tendency to manifest liturgical concerns, Sfondrato departed from Gregory's hallowed prototype in two crucial respects: first by replacing the existing *fenestella confessionis* with the new statue niche,³⁶ secondly by eliminating the stepped flights to the apse (now relegated to the aisles) thereby completely segregating it visually from the nave.³⁷ The result was a marble encrusted dividing wall. Liturgical dispositions remained intact, the symbolic axis of *confessio* and altar was enhanced and two new clear-cut horizons were established – one for the veneration of the relic and the other for the liturgical celebration of the mass.

The same creative rethinking of liturgical and architectural vocabulary is demonstrated in other elements. Contrary to Baronio's archaeologising tendencies in his almost contemporary reconstructions of Ss Nereo ed Achilleo and San Cesareo de' Appia, Sfondrato removed the *ambones* from the nave 'as they were not used any more'.³⁸ The new apse platform took over their function. This gleaming architectural frame to Cecilia's incorrupt body extended the entire width of the nave, giving the relics a prominence unseen even in St Peter's. The church itself was flooded with light as Sfondrato had unblocked old windows in

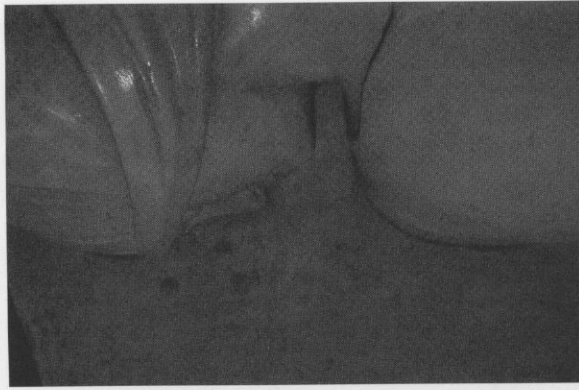


5. *St Cecilia*, by Stefano Maderno, c. 1600, marble (detail of Cecilia's neck). Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome (photo: courtesy Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale).

the nave. As Bosio said, 'all the innovations at the main altar and the ornaments for the holy grave' were designed to be taken in at a glance by anyone entering the church.³⁹ Indeed, these actions seem to comprise the innovative aspect of Sfondrato's patronage. Intellectually, he concerned himself with a conscientious return to the culture of early Christianity, yet he conveyed this pursuit in a contemporary form, through a direct verbal, visual, emotive appeal to the beholder – whether through the unity and visibility of the architectural space,

or through a monumental cult image that was intended to be the culmination of a sacred zone. The cardinal's approach to prototypes of classical and Christian antiquity can thus be interpreted as selective. Traditional elements were employed to fulfill modern expressive needs.

At the very beginning of his description of the recognition of the saintly bodies, Bosio mentions the liturgical orientation of the main altar in Santa Cecilia 'which, according to the old tradition is orientated towards the East'.⁴⁰ The apse of the



6. *St Cecilia*, by Stefano Maderno, c. 1600, marble (detail of Cecilia's face turned towards the ground). Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome (photo: courtesy Marshall Hopkins).

basilica faces west, like Constantine's St Peter's and all the churches that had benefited prominently from the patronage of Paschal I. Some liturgical traditions would require an orientation of the celebrant towards the east, the direction from which the Second Coming of Christ was expected.⁴¹ Yet, as the case of Santa Sabina shows, to Sfondrato and other exponents of counter-reformation culture, it must have been even more a reminder of the early Christian tradition to celebrate mass *versus populum*.⁴² Sfondrato capitalised on this liturgical direction to emancipate the entire area in front of the altar. Thus the celebrant could pose no visual obstacle to the congregation's view of the sacred stratigraphy of the altar structure, from the *confessio* and statue to the main altar and the sacramental area above it. In fact, one could say that Cecilia now lay at the heart of the rite on an axis that the sacral protagonist – the officiating priest – would



7. *Rota*, c. 1600, porphyry. Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome (photo: courtesy Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione, Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale).

manifestly activate during the elevation of the host.

In addition, below the altar, the head of Maderno's Cecilia turns to the ground (fig. 6), drawing the viewer's attention to a centrally placed porphyry *rota*, which Sfondrato designated as his own tomb slab (fig. 7).⁴³ This element mirrored another roundel on the high altar *paliotto* as well as Paschal's monogram on the triumphal arch. Sfondrato, reiterating the arrangement Ambrose made for his own tomb in the *basilica martyrurum*, which is today named after him, has effectively inserted himself into the most holy place in the church, thereby invoking the eventual intercession of Cecilia with Christ and identifying himself with the basilica's earlier restorer, Paschal. Since in Santa Cecilia the altar faced outward, the celebrant and his assistants would not obscure the founder's tomb during the highest moment of public attention to the zone⁴⁴ and would eventually look down on it, perpetuating the founder's memory and the prayer for the remission of his sins after his death.⁴⁵

If the statue of Cecilia marks the liturgical centre of the basilica, it also subverts time by fusing several successive moments into an Aristotelian unity of time, place and action, suggesting their coincidence in a mystical transcendence. In fact, in describing the statue there can be no consensus as to which moment in the narrative is actually represented. Maderno exploited Cecilia's veil to reference her execution: having been used to stretch out her neck, the veil still kept the hair away to manifest the triple cut of the executioner's blade (fig. 5). According to the *passio*, those wounds had been so ineffective that during the last three days of her lingering life she was able to entrust her catechumens to Pope Urban and to charge him to convert her house into a church. By emphasising the wounds in the sculpture, the work of art and its patron called attention to the sacrifice by which the basilica itself was created. The bleeding wounds, symbol of Christ's charity and of Cecilia's emulation are a metonym of its foundation. Therefore the statue alludes to the moment of the saint's death, her entry into paradise and her founding of the basilica, the final act of charity after the attempted execution. It likewise recalls the corpse discovered by Pope Paschal I in 821 in the catacombs and transferred to the *domus ecclesiae*, as well as Sfondrato's rediscovery and sumptuous reburial of the body in 1599, which gave rise to the statue's production. It also resonates with the mass, when the host is transubstantiated on the

altar above Cecilia's body and finally with Christ's Second Coming and the bodily resurrection of the faithful.

Bosio describes the statue as 'turning her face towards the confessio', thus indicating the burial place of the saintly bodies beneath.⁴⁶ Functionally as well as spatially, the statue has therefore taken over the function of the *fenestella confessionis* to indicate through its stance the relics in the space of the church, originally achieved through votive lamps and an opening in the *fenestella* ground leading towards the sarcophagi. The statue obstructs any contact between the sarcophagi of the saints and the worshipper; its reference is psychological and intellectualised. Yet it clearly and tangibly defines the physical form of the relic through its *loculus* setting.

The term *loculus*, significantly used by Bosio to describe the architectural setting for Maderno's sculpture, alludes to the saint's original burial place⁴⁷ where she had been discovered by Paschal. According to Bosio the newly hewn niche even matched the dimensions of her prostrate body.⁴⁸ Sfondrato, then, sought not only a facsimile of the cadaver but also the environment of its original interment. The allusion to the catacombs, however, was not only a matter of documentation and dramatic authentication. This particular subterranean world was also employed in counter-reformation Rome as an environment that provoked spiritual purification through its impact. In the Jubilee of 1575, the court preacher of Munich, Johann Jakob Rabus remarked of the catacomb of San Sebastiano that it 'provokes great fervour in pious Christians for our most holy religion; even in those, who are hardly close to the Church of Rome, as it was freely confessed to me and to others during this holy Jubilee'.⁴⁹ Filippo Neri, Sfondrato's spiritual mentor, can be called the founder of modern catacomb piety.⁵⁰ After his arrival in Rome, the adolescent Florentine had not only frequently visited the Seven Churches of Rome, which were especially holy because of the memories of the martyrs, but also prayed through entire nights in the catacombs of San Sebastiano on the Via Appia.⁵¹

Bosio's first published, scientific study of catacombs, which later grew into the *Roma sotterranea*, is significantly to be found in the *passio* of Cecilia, where he interprets the sites as the refuges of the early Christian church from persecutions.⁵² The evocation of the catacombs and the times of persecution would psychologically unite the Catholic

world under their apostolic leader against a common enemy. But these sacred places were also employed with a demonstrative intention. Often richly decorated with figurative elements, they did indeed prove the existence of religious images in the early Christian church. This was all the more important since iconoclasm was one of the common denominators of many anti-Catholic currents. Maderno's statue, framed by a richly profiled pictorial niche can in this context be described as an apologia for the religious image: not only is the statue ontologically justified by replicating an authenticated relic, but it has even conquered the place of the *fenestella confessionis*, a place previously without any monumental figurative work of art.

Cecilia's incorrupt corpse has a special relationship with the resurrection, as it demonstrated that the body which had been immaculate in life would not decay while awaiting its eventual reunification with its soul, as represented in the apse mosaic.⁵³ It thus became also an ideal vehicle to express Sfondrato's personal aspiration for eternal salvation in the context of his own tomb. Traditionally, two groups of Christians were most often credited with an incorrupt body: confessors and the ascetics.⁵⁴ Cecilia was both, her moral integrity matching her physical purity. Her statue thus had to fulfill one of the traditional concerns of tomb sculpture: to present the deceased with the incorrupt body of the afterlife.⁵⁵ Like the martyrs' souls beneath the apocalyptic altar, after death Cecilia receives the white garment and reposes until all her co-martyrs have died for Christ (Revelations, 6, 9–11).⁵⁶ Sfondrato's restoration campaign and burial arrangement was thus crowned with a religious image that united visually and in radically new form the hope for resurrection, with its foundation – the sacrifice of Christ – reenacted on Cecilia's altar in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Yet this innovation would not have been possible outside an historical environment that, in its focus on legitimisation and communication to the masses, had re-examined and redefined its cultural heritage by a creative adaptation of Catholic tradition to the standards of the 1600 Jubilee.

NOTES

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Abbreviations:

ASR: Archivio di Stato, Rome

ASV: Archivio Segreto Vaticano

BAV: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

Glossary:

mass versus populum: a celebration of the mass during which the officiating priest faces the congregation

ambo: pulpit

mensa: altar table

titulus ecclesiae: a *domus ecclesiae* (see below) in the city of Rome

confessio: subterranean chamber or recess in a church located below or near the altar and sheltering a relic

fenestella confessionis: window opening into the *confessio* from the church

possessio: the official and festive take-over of a site connected with a specific office by its appointed holder

ciborium: free-standing canopy rising above an altar

rota: round slab

domus ecclesiae: house serving the religious, administrative and charitable needs of a congregation in the early Christian period; an early Christian community centre

¹ Domenico Fedini interpreting Gianlorenzo Bernini's Roman altar of the virgin saint and martyr Bibiana in 1627, in S. Vasco Rocca, *Santa Bibiana*, Rome, 1983, p. 20, note 19.

² See the influential comments of R. Wittkower in *Art and Architecture in Italy 1600–1750*, rev. J. Connors and J. Montagu, New Haven & London, 1999, p. 90; *idem.*, 'Ein Werk des Stefano Maderno in Dresden', *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, 62, 1928/9, pp. 26–8, esp. p. 28. For significant earlier appraisals see A. Muñoz, 'Stefano Maderno. Contributo allo studio della scultura barocca prima del Bernini', *Atti e memorie della R. Accademia di S. Luca. Annuario*, 1913–14, pp. 1–23, at p. 23; A. Donati, *Stefano Maderno scultore 1576–1636*, Bellinzona, 1945, p. 10; C. E. Fruhan, *Trends in Roman Sculpture circa 1600*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1987, p. 214.

³ For recent studies of the statue, see M. Smith O'Neil, 'Stefano Maderno's *Saint Cecilia*: a seventeenth century Roman sculpture remeasured', *Antologia di Belle Arti*, XXV/XXVI, 1985, pp. 9–21; G. Wolf, 'Caecilia, Agnes, Gregor und Maria. Heiligenstatuen, Madonnenbilder und ihre künstlerische Inszenierung im römischen Sakralraum um 1600', *Zeitsprünge. Forschungen zur Frühen Neuzeit*, 1, 1997, 3/4, pp. 750–95, esp. pp. 752–69 for the statue. A. Nava Cellini's 'Stefano Maderno, Francesco Vanni e Guido Reni in Santa Cecilia in Trastevere', *Paragone*, XX, 227, 1969, pp. 18–41, remains fundamental and indicates those holdings of the ASR that refer to Santa Cecilia.

⁴ For a recent biography of Paolo Camillo see H. H. Schwedt, *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, XIV, Herzberg, 1998, cols 1475–8 with earlier literature. See also L. Căstano, *Gregorio XIV*, Turin, 1957, pp. 355–8. The most intense analysis of Sfondrato's character and biography is contained in the memoirs of Cardinal Guido Bentivoglio, *Memorie e lettere*, ed. C. Panigada, Bari, 1934, pp. 53–5. The second name of Sfondrato is often erroneously cited as Emilio although contemporary documentation specifies it as Camillo: see, for example, letters to him from the Holy German Emperor Rudolph II from Prague Castle, 15 April 1593 and 28 March 1598 (BAV, Chigi I III 66, fol. 142r and fol. 144r; also fols 149v and 151v). A poem dedicated to him addresses him only as Camillo: 'De Camillo Sfondrato S. R. E. Cardinali. Eiusdem Foliari Epigramma' (S. Foliani, *De Gregorio XIV. qui nonis decemb. M. D. XC. Pontifex Maximus declaratus fuit cum bonorum omnium summa laetitia*, Milan, 1590). Sfondrato's date of birth, 20

March 1560, can be deduced from the inscription on his tomb slab in Santa Cecilia: VIXIT ANNOS 57 MENSES 10 DIES 25 OBIT ANNO 1618 MENSE FEB. DIE 14. This seems to be the source for the date given by H. H. Schwedt, 'Die heilige Caecilia und Kardinal Paolo Sfondrati', *Sancta Caecilia. Ein Bild aus dem Frankfurter Dom*, ed. G. Hefele, Limburg an der Lahn, 1995, pp. 29–42, at p. 34, though Schwedt later distanced himself from this observation.

⁵ At the turn of the twentieth century, the presbyterial zone of the church was extensively remodelled by Giovanni Battista Giovenale for Cardinal Mariano Rampolla da Tindaro (see F. Caraffa and A. Massone, *Santa Cecilia martire romana*, Rome, 1996, pp. 165–83). Fortunately, there are photographic records of parts of the original arrangement (see fig. 3).

⁶ The relationship between the statue, Christ in the centre of the apse mosaic and the Eucharist is implied by Wolf, *op. cit.* at note 3, p. 763, who calls Cecilia 'a lamb *sub altare Dei*' and notes that her arms and legs seem to be bound together like the legs of a sacrificial animal.

⁷ *Corpus ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, LXXXII, Sancti Ambrosii Opera, ed. M. Zelzer, Vienna, 1982, pp. 134–5. For influential comments on this passage see J. Braun, *Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 1, Munich, 1924, p. 658; H. Brandenburg, 'Altar und Grab. Zu einem Problem des Märtyrerkultes im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert' in M. Laberigts and P. Van Deun (eds), *Martyrium in Multidisciplinary Perspective*, Leuven, 1995, pp. 71–98, at p. 84; T. Verdon, 'Le origini dell'altare barocco e la Controriforma a Firenze' in C. de Benedictis (ed.), *Altari e committenza. Episodi a Firenze nell'età della Controriforma*, Florence, 1996, pp. 19–27, at p. 20. Ambrose continues the same passage with: 'I had reserved this place for myself, for it is decent that the priest rests in the place where he used to celebrate the sacrifice, but I leave the right hand place to the sacred victims: One owes this place to the martyrs'.

⁸ 'Nos enim in isto loco non aram fecimus Stephano, sed de reliquiis Stephani Deo'. See Braun, *op. cit.* at note 7, p. 457. Cardinal Cesare Baronio mentions the episode of the relics of St Stephen in the seventh volume of the *Annales* published before 1600, as mentioned in a different context by A. Herz, 'Cardinal Cesare Baronio's restoration of SS. Nereo ed Achilleo and S. Cesareo de' Appia', *Art Bulletin*, 1988, LXX, 4, p. 600.

⁹ See note 4 above.

¹⁰ For Sfondrato's Milanese birth, see ASV, Segreteria di Stato, *Avvisi*, 1, fol. 42v.

¹¹ G. Incisa della Rocchetta and N. Vian, *Il primo processo per San Filippo Neri*, Vatican City, II, 1958, p. 245 and note 1504 and A. Cistellini, *San Filippo Neri*, Brescia, 1989, p. 230. See also the letter from Paolo Camillo from Rome, 2 July 1575 to his father and other indications in L. Căstano, *op. cit.* at note 4, p. 356. Bozio states that Sfondrato had passed five years among the Oratorians under his spiritual guidance (*De signis ecclesiae Dei*, I, Rome, 1591, dedication), probably 1575–80.

¹² Incisa della Rocchetta and Vian, *op. cit.* at note 11, II, 1958, pp. 84, 95; III, 1960, pp. 297, 396 and note 2234.

¹³ *Ibid.*, III, 1960, p. 245 and note 1504; Cistellini, *op. cit.* at note 11, p. 230.

¹⁴ ASR, Benedettine cassinesi di Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Busta 4202, 'Inventario dell'archivio del monastero di Santa Cecilia', fols 9, 10.

¹⁵ A. Bosio, *Historia Passionis B. Caeciliae* ... , Rome, 1600, p. 154. Bosio mentions in the same context that Santa Cecilia was Niccolò Sfondrato's titular church before his election to the papacy.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 153–4. Also ASR, Benedettine, Busta 4202, fol. 10, '1598. = Dono fatto dal Card. [jnal]e Sfondrati di una navicella d'argento dorato piena di Reliquie, e di una Testa di argento, in cui racchiuse il Capo di S. [an] Tiburzio — To. 50. pag. 41. v'.

¹⁷ Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, pp. 44, 133, 154.

¹⁸ P. Ugonio, *Historia delle Stazioni di Roma*, Rome, 1588, pp. 10r–11r.

¹⁹ See J. J. Berthier, *L'Église de Sainte-Sabine à Rome*, Rome, 1910, p. 53.

²⁰ This was emphasised by S. de Blaauw, *Met het oog op het licht*, Nijmegen, 2000, pp. 49–51.

²¹ Ugonio, *op. cit.* at note 18, pp. 133–4.

²² ASR, Benedettine, Busta 4202, fol. 10, '1597. Nota delli risarcimenti, e pitture fatte nella Chiesa per ordine del Card.[inal]e Sfondrati Titolare. — To. 50. pag.41'.

²³ The codices of the BAV containing the following *avvisi* and Alaleona's diary were already indicated by L. von Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste im Zeitalter der katholischen Reformation und Restauration, Klemens VIII (1592–1605)*, XI, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1927, pp. 684–9. However, Pastor did not transcribe any of the *avvisi*, of which he normally only gives the date, while some were not mentioned by him. See BAV, Urb. lat. 1067, fol. 672v, 'Di Roma li XXX. Ottobre 1599', 'Questi Ill.[ustriss]mi Card.[inal]i attendono ad accomodar le loro Chiese titolari, frà le quali il Card.[inal] Sfondrato fa resarcire quella di S.[an]ta Cecilia in trastevere, presso il cui corpo trovato sotto l'altar Magg[io]re in una cassa d'Ebano lunga 6 palmi, intiero et nel collo la ferita, ch'hebbe nel suo martirio col sangue ancor vivo; ne furono trovate dell'altre di Marmo con 4 altri corpi S.[an]ti cioè S.[an]to Urbano Papa, il Marito, e Cug[ino] di S.[an]ta Cecilia battezzati da d.[ett]o S.[an]to Urbano, et un altro corpo di Papa; tutti intieri, e posti dom[est]ica passata con grand'issima pompa, e devotione in una Ciboria della med[esima] chiesa, dove concorse gran popolo à vederli'. This *avviso* is indicated by Pastor, p. 684, note 8. Its precise archival location was then provided by Wolf, *op. cit.* at note 3, p. 755 and the description of Cecilia's body alone published. See also BAV, Urb. lat. 1067, fol. 659r: 'Supplimento di Roma delli 23 di Ottobre 99. Nella Chiesa di Santa Cecilia in Transtevere è stato trovato il corpo di quella Santa intiero con le medesime Veste nuntiali che havea quando andò al martirio che sono 800 anni, et con un velo sopra il viso, ogni cosa come nuovo'. This *avviso* was partly published by M. Bimbenet-Privat and A. Kugel, *La collection d'offèverie du Cardinal Sfondrati*, Vatican City, 1998, p. 4, note 8. See also BAV, Urb. lat., 1067, fol. 638r, 'Sabbato. Di Roma li XXIII. ott.[obre] 1599', fol. 641, 'In S.[an]ta Cecilia chiesa di Trastevere lavorandosi et fabricandosi, un hieri l'altro ritrovarono il Corpo di d.[ett]a S.[an]ta sotto l'altar maggiore in una cassa di Cipresso, con una vesta di fondo d'oro anco Intiera, et con una ferita in una guancia, che pare anco fresca, et con un velo avvolto Intorno al collo, et alla d.[ett]a ferita, et alcuni altri corpi di S.[an]ti tra quali quello di Tiburtio et Valeriano suo marito, et cognato, et certi altri Intirissimi, et sono pur da 1300. anni, che furono martirizzati, et circa oltre 500. anni stati nascosti nelle catecumbe di S.[an] Sebastiano in Via Appia et di la trasportati 800. anni fa da Pascasio Papa, secondo la visione che hebbe di d.[ett]a S.[an]ta [fol. 641v] che la facesse trasportare ove era la sua casa Paterna, che era ove è d.[ett]a chiesa, li faranno stare fuori fin al giorno della sua festa 22 di Nov.[em]bre et allhora il Papa anderà à riporlo nel luogo ove vorranno rimetterli'. This *avviso* is indicated under the date only by Pastor, p. 684, note 8.

²⁴ BAV, Barb. lat. 2816, 'Pauli Alaleonis Diarium à die 15. Augusti 1599 usque ad diem 29. Octobris 1612.', fol. 4v, 'Feria 3.a die octobris 1599 [fuit crossed out] Papa ivit Tusculanum permansurus per aliquos dies/ Feria 4.a die 27 bbris 1599 Papa redivit Romam, et descendit ad Palatium apostolicum apud S. Petrum'; see Pastor, *op. cit.* at note 23, p. 287, note 1.

²⁵ BAV, Urb. lat. 1067, fol. 647, 'Mercordi. Di Roma li 27 ottobre 1599', fol. 649v, 'Oltre qualche si scrisse con le passate circa il ritrovamento de Corpi S.[an]ti nella Chiesa di S.[an]ta Cecilia, si manda per Intelligenza [fol. 650] di tutto il fatto più prolissam[en]te l'Inclusa Scrittura fatta ad istanza di certe Monache, che desideravano saperne il tutto; solo si aggiunge à quanto in d.[ett]a Scrittura, che Il Card.[inal]e Sfondrato co' questa occ[asi]one è risoluto far un luogo molto concedente ne senza grande spesa per riporre d.[ett]i S.[an]ti Corpi et Reliquie. Il Card.[inal] di Firenze ad emulat.[io]ne credo, di questo Card.[inal]e lunedì si mise à risarcire ciò è lunedì comincio a farlo, la Chiesa di S.[an]ta Agnese posta fuori di Roma nella Via Salaria, con opinione secondo alcuni, che anco S.[an]ta S.[an]ta S.[an]ta Ill.[ustriss]ma voglia trovare il Corpo di d.[ett]a Santa, ma che non dia tal/ [fol. 650v] voce per ogni buono eff[et]to, acciò non si levasse la divotione alla sud.[ett]a Chiesa In evento non si trovasse, et questo med.[esimo] stile sia tenuto Il Card.[inal]e Sfondrato'.

²⁶ See A. Zuccari, *Arte e committenza nella Roma di Caravaggio*, Turin, 1984, pp. 34–6. Zuccari gives also an introduction to the cultural and artistic importance of Alessandro (pp. 109–37).

²⁷ BAV, Urb. lat. 1067, fol. 666, 'Sabbato. Di Roma li 6. 9bre 1599', [fol. 666v] S. B.[eatitudine] giovedì sene andò à visitar S.[an]ta Cecilia [fol. 667] Il cui Corpo sarà lasciato sopra terra fin alla sua festa, et poi con una processione generale si riporrà in un luogo concedente'. Likewise on 10 November, according to BAV, Urb. lat. 1067, fol. 675, 'Mercordi. Di Roma li X. 9bre 1599', fol. 676, 'Questa vatter.[in]a N.[ostroj] S.[igno]re è andato, ò per dir meglio è tornato à veder Il sacro Corpo di S.[an]ta Cecilia nella capella della quale ha detto messa, et ciò à richiesta del Card.[inal]e Sfondrato il quale ha pensato far qualche bella cosa per conto di questa mem[oria] et vogliono di più habbia da impetrare [fol. 676v] che il giorno dedicato à questa santa si habbia da far solenniss[im]o et da guardare'.

²⁸ BAV, Urb. lat. 1067, fol. 688, 'Mercordi. Di Roma li [the day is left out, yet being a Wednesday, should be 17 November] Nov.[em]bre 1599', fol. 689, 'Dom.[en]ica matt.[in]a Il Card.[inal]e Sfondrato fece metter fuori in un altare alla publica vista del popolo Il sacro Corpo di S.[an]ta Cecilia, ma vi fu tanto concorso di gente, che quantunque ci si teneva la guardia e svizzeri in ogni modo, non si poteva tener il popolo à freno onde Il Card.[inal]e fece rimettere Il corpo più [fol. 689v] presto di qualche si era risoluto, dovendosi poi lunedì pross[imo] che sarà la festa di d.[ett]a Santa rimettere nel luogo deputato et fatto rifare apposta sotto l'Altare maggiore'.

²⁹ See *avviso* of Wednesday, 24 November 1599 in BAV, Urb. lat. 1067, fol. 704r, 'Mercordi. Di Roma li 24 Nov.[em]bre 1599', fol. 704v, 'N.[ostroj] S.[igno]re lunedì matt.[in]a giorno della festività di S.[an]ta Cecilia sene passò co' tutta la Corte et SS.ri Car.[dinal]i a d.[ett]a Chiesa ove tene capella, essendo stato il giorno dopo pranzo rimesse le reliquie sante al lor luogo, et con tutto che fusse un cattiviss[im]o tempo, et continuo co' piogge in ogni modo ci fu tanto popolo, che si trattava dell'Impossibile ad Intrarci'. See also BAV, Barb. lat. 2816, 'Pauli Alaleonis Diarium à die 15. Augusti 1599 usque ad diem 29. Octobris 1612.', fol. 6, 'Feria 3.a die 22 9bris 1599 In festo S. Ceciliae Virginis, et Martyris Papa cantavit Missam Solemne in Ecclesia S. Ceciliae, et reposuit, ac recondit sub altare Maiori Corpus B. Ceciliae cum eadem Capsa lignea ex cipresso in qua fuit repositum à S.to Pascali Papa in Capsa argentea expensis Papae laborata infrascriptis Cerimonijs, quod Corpus curiositate Ill.[ustriss]mi D. Cardinalis Sfondrati titularis dictae Ecclesiae superioribus diebus fecit è loco sub altari maiori in/ [fol. 6v] monetis argenteis intus in Missa omnia alia de more pro ut in alijs Missis Papalibus, locus pro commoditate Cappellae fuit accomodatus cum contignatione, et sca[be]na pro Illustrissimis DD. Cardinalibus fuerunt sca[be]na Concistorij depicta, sed parata pannis auleis. Corpus Beatae Ceciliae fuit decoratum et ornate collocatum post altare maius ante primas Vesperas ab Ill.mo et R.mo D. Cardinali Sfondrato Capsa argentea erat ponderis 251 librarum'.

³⁰ As the anniversary of Cecilia's feast in 1600 is mentioned in it (Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, p. 183) and it bears the date 1600, the book must have been completed between 22 November and 31 December 1600.

³¹ Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, rear of frontispiece, 'Nos Paulus tituli S. Caeciliae S.[acrae] R.[omanae] E.[cclesiae] Presbyter Cardinalis Sfondratus, has Sanctissimae Virginis Caeciliae, eiusque Sociorum vitas ex quamplurimis, iisque vetustissimis codicibus integras ab Antonio Bosio exceptas fuisse, necnon quae de inventione Corporum eorundem Sanctorum ab ipso referuntur, omnia fideliter, sincere, atque ad veritatem conscripta esse testamur. Paulus Card.[inalis] Sfondratus'.

³² 'PAVLVS TT. S. CAECILIAE/ EN TIBI SANCTISSIMAE VIRGINIS CAECILIAE IMAGINEM/ QVAM IPSE INTEGRAM IN SEPVLCHRO IACENTEM VIDI/ EANDEM TIBI PRORSVS EODEM CORPORIS SITV/ HOC MARMORE EXPRESSI' (see Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, p. 173). An historical discrepancy has prompted modern observers to doubt the accuracy of this inscription and the exhumation report: the *Liber Pontificalis*, a roughly contemporary account of early medieval papal reigns, states that in 821 Pascal had removed Cecilia's head and put it in a silver reliquary, which was presented by Leo IV to the Roman church of Santi Quattro Coronati (L. Duchesne, *Le Liber Pontificalis*, Paris, 1892, II, p. 58). For Smith O'Neil, *op. cit.* at note 3, p. 17, this discrepancy meant that the body was not properly seen in 1599; she insisted that Cecilia's 'head' was in fact 'rumpled linen' (p. 17). According to Smith, Mader-

no compensated for this by introducing a turban into the statue. She overlooks the fact that one of Baronio's main sources was the *Liber Pontificalis* and that he knew the passages and discussed them. Yet, the *avvisi* describe Cecilia's gashed face and, especially, the veil wrapped around it. Baronio, who confirmed the relics' authenticity himself, mentions the problem of the mysterious extra head. He refers to the *Liber Pontificalis* and states that, even if he did not know how the head was rejoined to the body, it was found that way (C. Baronio, *Annales ecclesiastici*, IX, Rome, 1600, pp. 691–2). He preferred in this instance the evidence of his eyes over the textual tradition.

³³ For della Porta's role, see Nava Cellini, *op. cit.* at note 3, p. 38, note 13. As the architect Giovanni Antonio de Pomis is paid as a *misuratore* in the church, 13 August 1601, one can be fairly certain that della Porta was paid only for his plans. See ASR, Benedettine cassinesi di Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, 'Registro de' mandati del 1601 al 1602', 'N. 47 Molto m.[agnifici] S.[S]||igno[ri] Herr.[er]a. Vi piacerà di pag.[a]re à m[aest]ro Gio.[vanni] Ant.[onio] Pomici scudi dieci di m.[one]ta quali sigli donano per le misure fatte da lui fin' à quest' hora ne' lavori della chiesa di S.[an]ta Cecilia. Che pigliandone ric.[evu]ta. Di Casa à 13 di Agosto 1601—10—'.

³⁴ For the most detailed description of the altar of Santa Cecilia before Sfondrato's interventions, see Ugonio, *op. cit.* at note 18, pp. 131r–v. For the adaptations of Gregory the Great's chancel arrangement to other Roman churches, see most recently S. de Blaauw, 'Die Krypta in stadtrömischen Kirchen: Abbild eines Pilgerziels', *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum. Ergänzungsband*, XX, 1, 1995, pp. 559–67.

³⁵ B. M. Apollonj Ghetti: 'Le confessioni semianulari nelle basiliche romane' in R. Luciani (ed.), *Roma sotterranea*, Rome, 1984, pp. 203–13, quotation from the *Liber Pontificalis*, p. 203: 'Hic [Gregorius] fecit ut super corpus beati Petri missas [sic] celebrarentur'.

³⁶ Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, p. 172.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 171–2.

³⁸ See Herz, *op. cit.* at note 8, p. 597 and p. 605 for the two churches entrusted to Baronio; Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, p. 174 for Santa Cecilia.

³⁹ Bosio, *ibid.*: 'Huius quoque mediae navis spatium remotis veterum Ambonum, seu pulpitorum è marmore impedimentis, cum nulli iam usui sint, in ampliorem speciem dilatavit, ita ut sub uno aspectu ingredientibus nova omnia ad Aram maiorem, & circa sacrum tumulum ornamenta compareant'.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 154: 'sub Ara maiore, qua ad Orientem antiquo more convertitur'.

⁴¹ See the *ordo primus* (M. Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani du haut Moyen Âge*, Louvain, 1931–61, II, pp. 67–108), the earliest papal mass recorded in a document whose composition probably dates to the papacy of Sergius I (687–701). My thanks to Caroline Goodson for this reference. Beate Fricke kindly drew my attention to F. J. Dölger, *Antike und Christentum. Kultur- und religionsgeschichtliche Studien*, III second edn, Münster, 1975, pp. 76–7. See also *idem.*, *Sol salutis: Gebet und Gesang im christlichen Altertum, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die*

Ostung in Gebet und Liturgie, Münster, repr. 1925; O. Nussbaum, *Der Standort des Liturgen am christlichen Altar vor dem Jahre 1000*, I, Bonn, 1965, pp. 395–6. The celebrant was also advised never to turn his back to the altar (Dölger, V, p. 50).

⁴² S. de Blaauw, *Cultus et decor*, Vatican City, 1994, II, pp. 82–3, has, in any case, demonstrated that there was no definite interrelation between mass *versus populum* and an orientation of the celebrant towards the East.

⁴³ During the cardinal's lifetime, Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, p. 182, published both the *rota* and its inscription in 1600, leaving the obvious gaps to indicate the cardinal's age at his death.

⁴⁴ For these ideas in a related context, see S. McKillop, 'Dante and *Lumen Christi*: a proposal for the meaning of the tomb of Cosimo de' Medici' in F. Ames-Lewis (ed.), *Cosimo 'il Vecchio' de' Medici*, Oxford, 1992, p. 278.

⁴⁵ See the appreciation provided by *ibid.*, pp. 279–80. This concern had already become clear in the 1297 will of the Dominican cardinal Hugues Aycelin in Santa Sabina; he wanted to be buried 'at the foot of the high altar ... level with the pavement, so that the brothers seeing it will remember us in their prayers' (transl. S. de Blaauw, 'Private tomb and public altar: the origins of the mausoleum choir in Rome' in W. Renink and J. Stumpel [eds], *Memory and Oblivion*, Dordrecht, 1999, p. 477).

⁴⁶ This was already noted by Wolf, *op. cit.* at note 3, p. 763.

⁴⁷ Nava Cellini, *op. cit.* at note 3, p. 21 and Wolf, *op. cit.* at note 3, pp. 759, 763.

⁴⁸ Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, p. 157, 'ad cubantis corporis mensuram'.

⁴⁹ W. Wischmeyer, 'Die Entstehung der christlichen Archäologie im Rom der Gegenreformation', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 89 Band, 1978, vierte Folge, XXVII, pp. 136–7.

⁵⁰ Pastor, *op. cit.* at note 23, IX, pp. 119–20.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 119, note 6, quotes A. Capocelato, *La vita di S. Filippo Neri*, Rome, 1889, I, p. 153.

⁵² Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, pp. 65–6: 'abscondebant (Christiani) se intra viscera terrae, & in solitudinis (ut S. Pauli verbis utar) quibus dignus non erat mundus. (Ad Hebraeos, 11, 38). In cryptis igitur habitabant, baptizabant, sacraque mysteria celebrabant Sancti Martyres, quibus ipsa Solis luce frui, brutis quoque animantibus concessa, denegebatur'. Bosio erroneously interprets the catacombs as a sacred space exclusive to Christians, which permitted their reading as one of the symbols of persecuted early Christianity.

⁵³ See the fundamental treatment of this theme by A. Angenendt, 'Corpus incorruptum. Eine Leitidee der mittelalterlichen Reliquienverehrung', *Saeculum*, XLII, 1991, pp. 320–48, especially pp. 322, 337.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 343–4.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

⁵⁶ This passage is explicitly referred to in Bosio, *op. cit.* at note 15, p. 149, note 12, in his official comment on the *Passio*. For an important treatment of this subject, in which the statue is mentioned, see Verdun, *op. cit.* at note 7, p. 20.