

Chapels of the Cinquecento and Seicento in the Churches of Rome

FORM, FUNCTION, MEANING

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A Splendid Shrine for an Ugly Image

VISUAL INTERACTIONS IN THE
SALVIATI CHAPEL AT
SAN GREGORIO AL CELIO

Chiara Franceschini

“T here you saw a noble chapel, part of the house of Gregory, where the image of the heavenly Virgin is shown, which is said to have spoken to that most holy Pontiff. The old age and long span of time (*vetustas*) have removed any beauty (*venustas*) from this image; this [chapel] now, thanks to the generous munificence of Salviati, for the mottled columns, the gilded vault, and the elegant work of painting, shines so brightly that the ornament of the place responds admirably to the dignity of the religion.”¹

Lacking beauty

In his funerary oration for Cardinal Antonio Maria Salviati, held in the church of San Giacomo in Augusta on January 22, 1603, ten months following the cardinal's death, Pompeo Ugonio thus described the cardinal's chapel (*sacrarium*) within the church of San Gregorio al Celio (FIG. 1).² The passage is remarkable, as it offers a comprehensive interpretation of the conception and decoration of the “noble chapel” as a modern project, which, both in its entirety and in its details, was oriented around the reinstallation of a Marian image valued for its antiquity and associations but considered lacking in “any beauty” due to the passage of time.

As in other cases in this volume, important studies exist as well on certain aspects of the Salviati Chapel; however, they primarily have focused on its architecture.³ Although Ugonio clearly had done so, modern scholars have rarely considered the various decorative elements of the chapel in relation to one another within their spatial context. Furthermore, the chapel in San Gregorio al Celio has never been considered in relation to the other contemporary works promoted by the cardinal, which help to clarify its genesis and meaning. This essay therefore examines the history and decoration of the Salviati Chapel—as the repository of the image of the Virgin—in its entirety and in relation to two other chapels created by the same patron in the church of San Giacomo. In considering this dialogue among the chapels, I analyze the rationale behind the project at San Gregorio and its purpose to valorize antique images and the role played by Pope Gregory the Great in promoting the cult of the Virgin. I also discuss the artistic experimentation that took place in Rome at the turn of the seventeenth century. As I will argue, the Salviati Chapel reveals a new awareness, simultaneously conservative and expository, that should be considered in light of previous and contemporary projects aimed to enhance miraculous images, as promoted by Salviati himself and other Roman patrons. And through a consideration of its peculiarities and novel elements, the chapel—designed and decorated *ex novo* by the cardinal's artists—can be understood as the site at which an unprecedented dialogue between antiquity and modernity played out. This dialogue was aimed not only at the recovery of devotional and proto-archaeological elements of the Christian past but also at an original and modern creation that resulted from an experimental form of visual analysis and a new discourse of stylistic judgment.

Two issues need to be kept in mind with respect to an understanding of Salviati's chapel at San Gregorio. First of all, it has changed considerably since its unveiling. Giovanni Battista Ricci's frescoes are damaged, at least as far as the two lateral walls are concerned. The right wall was completely repainted in



FIG. 1. Salviati Chapel, Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.

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1839 by the Danish painter Christen Købke, and the modern restoration appears to be only partial (FIG. 3).⁴ The wall to the left of the altar is largely obscured, due to the 1757 relocation there of what was once the high altar of San Gregorio, commissioned in 1469 by the abbot Gregorio Amatisco Romano and dismantled in 1733 (FIG. 2).⁵ The biggest change, however, concerns the replacement of the altarpiece by Annibale Carracci with a copy executed in 1800 when French troops removed the original from the church and sent it to Paris (FIG. 4). This action led to an irrevocable loss because the painting, intercepted in Genoa by Vincenzo Camuccini and purchased in London in 1801 by Lord Radstock, ended up in the Bridgewater House collection that was destroyed in 1941.⁶ The second issue concerns the type of chapel it is: unlike many of the cases dealt with in other essays in this volume, Salviati's commission is not a sepulchral chapel.

Salviati's Chapels, Salviati's Madonnas

As early as April 1593, Antonio Maria Salviati (1537–1602) had chosen the apse of the church of San Giacomo in Augusta—the church that he himself had built—as his future burial site rather than the family chapel at Santa Maria sopra Minerva.⁷ A bronze commemorative plaque to the right of the high altar of San Giacomo bears an inscription of the works promoted by the cardinal (provisioned for in his will of 1593 and installed by his nephew in 1604).⁸ His coat of arms and the commemorative plaque are integrated into the two apse frescoes by Vespasiano Strada (ca. 1582–1622), depicting, respectively, *The Fall of Manna* and the more rarely depicted scene of *Melchizedek Delivering the Blessed Bread to Abraham* (Genesis 14:18 and Hebrews 7:3; FIGS. 5–6). Together the scenes have a Eucharistic meaning (the first perhaps also a supersessionist connotation by presenting Melchizedek as a non-Jewish priest). Regardless, the two scenes also allude to the cardinal's much-praised charitable works; in particular, the delivery of the bread (placed in direct visual relationship with the funerary inscription below) seems to refer to the recurrent donations of white bread to the poor ordered by the cardinal in the last years of his life.⁹ Here, as well as in the chapel of San Gregorio, it is worth noting the preeminence of signs of personal representation, particularly the crests and inscriptions of a cardinal, whose fame, however, was linked not so much with pomp and monumental self-representation but rather with his great financial and material commitment to charity. Even so, his name and his coat of arms—which in the apse fresco of San Giacomo even takes the place of a basket to collect the manna held by a woman in the foreground (FIG. 5)—are omnipresent, as prominent “media” of the cardinal's person and body.¹⁰

While the exact chronology of the chapel of San Gregorio al Celio is not entirely known, it is possible to hypothesize that its conception dates back to the end of the same year of 1593. Antonio Maria Salviati returned to Rome in June 1578, after having been the apostolic nuncio to France for seven years (1572–1578), and was raised to the cardinalate on December 12, 1583, by Gregory XIII. Over the last twenty years of his life, Salviati distinguished himself through his generosity. He rebuilt the hospital of San Giacomo (1587), of which he had been appointed guardian-prelate; built the church of San Giacomo in Augusta (first stone laid on May 20, 1592); founded the hospital of San Rocco delle Partorienti; and established the Collegio Salviati for the orphans of Santa Maria in Aquiro



FIG. 2. Salviati Chapel (left wall), Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.

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FIG. 3. Salviati Chapel (right wall), Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.

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and restored its eponymous church. The cardinal also undertook the reorganization of the monastery of San Gregorio, which was united in 1573 with the congregation of the Camaldolese by Gregory XIII, where he had become commendatory abbot. Jacob Hess already noted the contribution of Antonio Maria Salviati to the reconstruction of this church, which had fallen into disuse during the sixteenth century, as “the most important,” although greater credit was subsequently attributed to his successors, Cesare Baronio and Cardinal Scipione Borghese.¹¹ On September 13, 1593, Clement VIII, who had also been involved in promoting the publication of the works of Saint Gregory the Great, issued a brief that lashed out against those who wanted to prevent Salviati from taking possession of this title.¹² The projects at San Gregorio therefore must have begun after this date. To facilitate access to the church, the cardinal opened the square in front of it by paving an adjacent vineyard; this work was completed before June 7, 1600, when Ottavio Panciroli, in his *Tesori nascosti*, praised the recently opened “beautiful and large square.”¹³ Salviati then widened the staircase, in the middle of which, according to the *Annales Camaldulenses*, he included an image, painted on a false door, of the Septizonium recently demolished by Sixtus V.¹⁴ Nothing else is known about this pictorial reproduction, although its inclusion points to the archaeological interests of the cardinal. In a comparable spirit of recovery, but focused on a late medieval pictorial relic of the Virgin originally located in the area of the cemetery of the church (FIG. 7),¹⁵ Salviati turned to the construction of the chapel, which constituted the first step in the enhancement of the “memorie gregoriane” (the memory of Gregory the Great) at San Gregorio, which would subsequently continue under Baronio. A second brief of Clement VIII attests that on December 14, 1593, the pope granted indulgences to those who participated in the litanies to be held on Saturdays before the Marian image.¹⁶ It is likely that the Marian image had not yet been moved by this date, which can therefore be considered a *terminus ante quem non* for the conception of the chapel.

Built on the same ancient burial grounds of the church,¹⁷ the Salviati Chapel at San Gregorio is a square building independent of the body of the sanctuary. A plan by Robert de Cotte shows the original structure prior to the 1744 renovations to the church (FIG. 9), in which we can see that the externally constructed chapel is in line with the three church apses but exceeds them in size. Its interior is preceded by a rectangular atrium (modified and extended after 1744) connected by a door to the left side aisle of the church but also has an independent external entrance. Today, the viewer still enters the chapel from the vestibule (FIG. 1), his gaze guided into the space by an imposing inscription painted in fictive bronze letters running along the four sides of the upper cornice: “The year 1600 Cardinal Antonio Maria Salviati adorned with a chapel (*sacellum*) the image of the Virgin Mary that, 1000 years before, had spoken to the Blessed Gregory in his parents’ house.”¹⁸ The inscription is carefully distributed on the four sides of the chapel to highlight the name of Cardinal Salviati and explain the desired function and meaning of the space. The cardinal’s name appears prominently directly above the effigy of the pope (FIG. 4), instead of the expected name of Gregory (which is relegated to the entrance wall, behind the entering viewer), while the reference to the image corresponds with the Marian aedicule (FIG. 3). Beyond providing the year 1600 as the completion date, this inscription also leaves no doubt

FIG. 4. Salviati Chapel (altar wall with copy of Annibale Carracci’s lost altarpiece), Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.

that the chapel's devotional focus was the Marian image reinstalled there. The church of San Gregorio (often indicated with the toponym "ad clivum Scauri") was, in fact, built on the site where the monastery dedicated to the apostle Andrew had been located, which, at least starting from the end of the sixth century, was believed to have been founded by Saint Gregory the Great in his own paternal home.¹⁹ In the absence of sources prior to the sixteenth century that describe the image (and in particular, prior to 1573, when the Camaldolese moved to San Gregorio), the very fact that the image was found in this area was sufficient to prove its association with the saint.²⁰ Among the various Roman Madonnas known to have spoken to Saint Gregory, only this one could aspire to the role of domestic devotional image.²¹

While it was common practice for a cardinal to choose a place distinct from that of his family for his burial site, to design an entire chapel without an explicit sepulchral purpose but only to honor an image of dubious origin was a more unusual occurrence. Several Marian images already had been recovered and reinstalled as altarpieces, including the *Madonna della Colonna* in St. Peter's, the *Madonna del Latte* in the church of San Giovanni Decollato, and the image of Mary on the altar of the Grifoni Chapel in San Marcello, where Giovanni Battista Ricci himself had worked. However, at the time of the Salviati project, no large-scale chapel was built exclusively for this purpose.²² The most important models for Salviati were undoubtedly the Gregorian Chapel in St. Peter's, on whose altar Gregory XIII had reinstalled the beautiful *Madonna del Soccorso* with a solemn ceremony on February 12, 1578, and the Altemps Chapel commissioned by Marco Sittico Altemps (1589) in Santa Maria in Trastevere, which housed the precious ancient encaustic image of the *Madonna della Clemenza*.²³ However, both chapels were conceived as monumental burial sites, for Gregory XIII (and Saint Gregory Nazianzenus) and the Altemps family, respectively. The Cappella della *Madonna della Strada* in the church of the Gesù is another precedent, but it is not a private chapel and functions mostly as a repository of relics, which do not play an important role in the Salviati Chapel. Instead, here everything revolves around the image of the Virgin—which was restaged almost as a contact relic of Saint Gregory and served as the chapel's generating element—reflecting the patron's particular interest in this type of Marian image recovery.

The ideas at work in the Salviati Chapel at San Gregorio al Celio are in fact closely related to some other contemporary projects. On the one hand are those promoted by Salviati himself, as already mentioned, at San Giacomo in Augusta and, on the other, the Cerasi Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo, where the same artists (with the notable exception of Caravaggio) were employed, namely, Carlo Maderno, Annibale Carracci, and Ricci.²⁴ It has been suggested that the Cerasi Chapel was completed shortly after the Salviati Chapel; in fact, some elements of the decorative apparatus are similar (not only the use of fictive polychrome marble revetment but also the simple, two-toned floor design).²⁵

As at San Giacomo, Salviati first entrusted the project of the chapel at San Gregorio to Francesco Capriani, called il Volterra, who died on February 15, 1594, before finishing the commission.²⁶ No documents survive detailing to what extent the design of the San Gregorio chapel was completed by the date of Volterra's death, at which time the project (along with the church of San Giacomo)



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passed into the hands of Carlo Maderno. According to Howard Hibbard, the chapel as we see it today is entirely the fruit of Maderno's intervention.²⁷ However, the considerations put forward by Margherita Eichberg, together with the widespread claims in various Roman sources (from Baglione onward) that associate the beginning of the work with Francesco Capriani, seem sufficient (in the absence of supporting documents) to maintain the double attribution. It seems reasonable to attribute the design of the chapel and its fundamental elements to Francesco Capriani and the subsequent completion of some decorative elements (including, perhaps, the choice of capitals) to Maderno.²⁸ At San Giacomo, the cardinal used the same artists. He entrusted the project to Volterra as well as the pictorial decoration of one of the chapels (that of Saint John) and the lost altarpiece depicting the *Last Supper* to Giovanni Battista Ricci of Novara.²⁹

The projects for San Giacomo and those at San Gregorio must therefore be read in parallel. The most important element uniting the projects is the fact that the cardinal promoted the transport and reinstallation of yet another devotional image, known as the *Madonna dei Miracoli*, inside the church of San Giacomo. This fifteenth-century frescoed image was known for having performed a miracle in 1525 in its original location, on the inner side of one of the towers of the Aurelian walls near the Tiber.³⁰ Following the reputed miracle,

FIG. 5. Vespasiano Strada, *The Fall of Manna* with Salviati coats of arms, ca. 1600. San Giacomo in Augusta (apse, left side), Rome.

FIG. 6. Vespasiano Strada, *Melchizedek Delivering the Blessed Bread to Abraham* with Salviati epitaph (1604), ca. 1600. San Giacomo in Augusta (apse, right side), Rome.



FIG. 7. *Virgin and Child* (first half of the fourteenth century), reframed and retouched, ca. 1600. Salviati Chapel (right wall), Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.

FIG. 8. *Virgin and Child*, early fourteenth century. Vestibule of the Salviati Chapel (visible through an oval hole on the right of the entrance to the chapel), Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.



the image was first exhibited in a small chapel erected around the exposed image by the Archconfraternity of San Giacomo near the Tiber, a chapel that appears in Bufalini's map of Rome in 1551 and again in Tempesta's in 1593 (see the map on pp. 16–17). In 1598, on the initiative of Cardinal Salviati, the image was finally transported into the church of San Giacomo.³¹ The arrangement commissioned by the cardinal for the Madonna in San Giacomo has been partially lost, since the image is now inserted in a large sculptural altarpiece with *San Francesco di Paola* executed by Pierre Legros between 1714 and 1716 (when the church was under the control of the Minims).³² However, notwithstanding the later additions, the image is still located in the second chapel on the right (FIG. 11). The original altar, still in the chapel and bearing the Salviati insignia, is remembered and described in a notarial deed dated February 13, 1601, a *donatio* that reports all the bequests and investments provided by the cardinal for the hospital:

he also built from the foundations and completed at great expense the new temple or church of San Giacomo, added to the same Archihospital, completed with a sacred double tower, or bell tower, sacristies, choirs from one side to the other, chapels and altars arranged around an ellipse or a circle, and all of its other parts, and recently [he] adorned the apse, or tribune, and the main altar with paintings, columns, colored marbles, and a tabernacle inlaid with varied stones, and at the

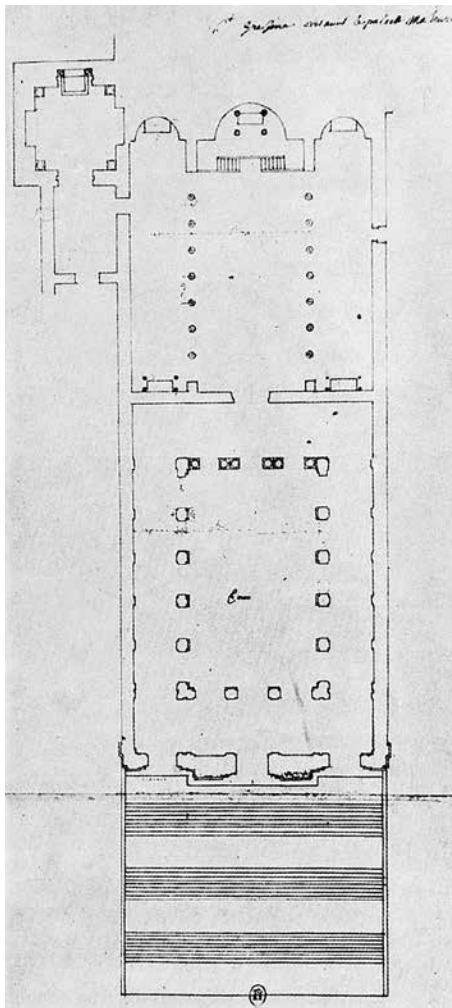
same time [the space was] richly honored by a new statue in marble (*statua nova marmorea*) of Saint James above the altar of one of the aforementioned chapels dedicated to this saint, and by an ancient and devout image (*vetere devotaque imagine*) of the Most Holy Virgin Mother, called Santa Maria dei Miracoli, transferred from a less honorable place (*e loco minus decenti*) near the Tiber to another of the aforementioned chapels on an honorific altar.³³

The two chapels of San Giacomo and the Madonna dei Miracoli—the one with the “new statue” executed by Ippolito Buzzi (or Buzio) (FIG. 10) and the other with an “ancient and devout image” recovered from a less decent place (FIG. 11)—are the two main chapels of this innovative elliptical building. They face each other along the latitudinal axis of the church, and their layout and decorative elements as imagined by Volterra for Salviati have been preserved (particularly in the Chapel of San Giacomo). Originally, the image of the Virgin was surrounded by “some angels and putti” painted by Paris Nogari, presumably as a frame not unlike those of Ricci at San Gregorio.³⁴ Concomitantly, as in a shell game, the cardinal had a substitutive copy of the Marian image painted in the small chapel of the Madonna dei Miracoli beside the Tiber. This copy is today in the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli in Piazza del Popolo, a building that was constructed by Alexander VII in 1661 because the old freestanding Chapel of the Miracoli was subjected to excessive humidity and flooding. We do not know to whom Salviati entrusted the task of painting the replacement copy of the Marian image, executed on canvas rather than fresco, but further research will likely clarify this point.³⁵

The three projects at San Giacomo, San Gregorio, and the Chapel of the Madonna dei Miracoli, focusing on the recovery, reinstallation, and substitution of Marian images, respectively demonstrate the systematic approach of the cardinal's simultaneous archaeological, devotional, and curatorial vision. Surviving information does not allow us to establish which project came first, although it is clear that the 1600 jubilee precipitated completion. The earliest known documents regarding the chapel at San Gregorio are prior to 1598, which is the transfer date of the *Madonna dei Miracoli*. However, considering that the chapel of the Madonna dei Miracoli beside the Tiber was already under the aegis of the hospital, the first Salviatian idea for the *Madonna dei Miracoli* could date back a few years earlier (since the work at San Giacomo in Augusta began on May 20, 1592).

Vetustas and Venustas at San Gregorio

The first documents relating to the chapel in San Gregorio date to February and March of 1595. These are payments to the *scarpellino* Stefano Longo for two columns of *cipollino* marble coming from the church of the Santi Apostoli and another column, of the same material, from the Ospedale del Salvatore;³⁶ on July 8 of the same year, four columns of the same type were purchased and transported to San Gregorio.³⁷ A subsequent payment found by Hibbard concerns “a statement of the work performed by the *scarpellino* Bartolomeo, or Meo Bassi, dated 25 September 1600”; this report records the invoice for the making of pedestals, bases and capitals of columns, work on the columns themselves, on the architrave, and also on the stone frame “around the Madonna.”³⁸ All these



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FIG. 9. Robert de Cotte, Plan of the church of San Gregorio al Celio, ca. 1713.

FIG. 10. Ippolito Buzzi, Saint James, ca. 1600–1602. Chapel of San Giacomo, San Giacomo in Augusta, Rome.

additions were valued at 4,322.77 scudi. The entry seems to confirm that the installation of the image of the Madonna in the chapel must have taken place by September 1600.

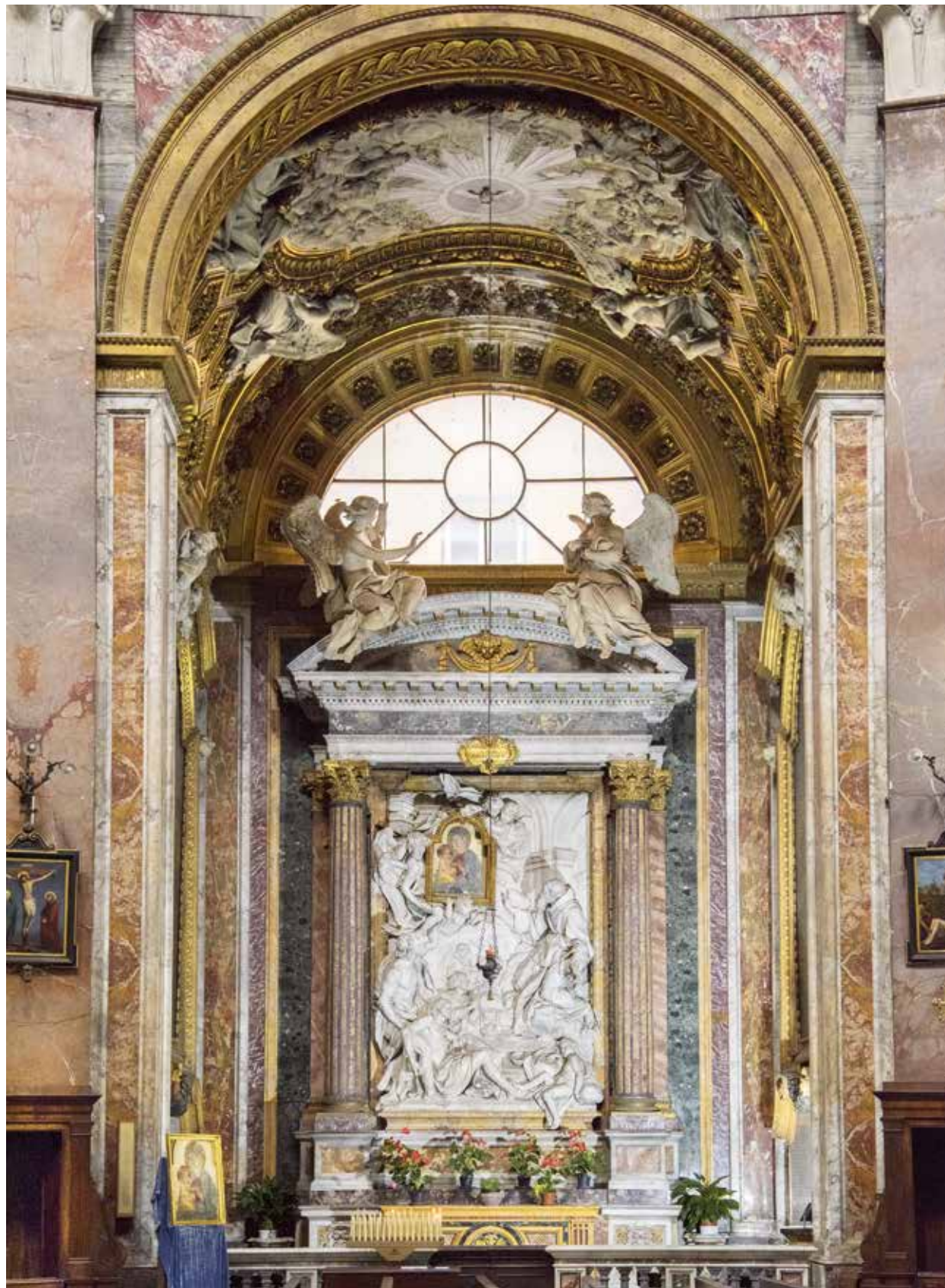
The *maculosae columnae* (mottled columns) mentioned by Ugonio as the first element of the decoration, that is, the four freestanding shafts of *cipollino* marble placed in the corners of the quadrangular space to support the ribbed vault (FIGS. 1, 9, 12), are the dominant elements of the chapel's architecture. In addition to the reference to the San Zeno Chapel in Santa Prassede, built under Paschal I (817–824), where, however, the columns actually do not serve a supporting function, the design also corresponds to the sepulcher of the Cerceni on the Via Appia, a monument that was often reprised and copied by Renaissance architects.³⁹ It is also very relevant to note a comparison offered by Eichberg with the chapel of the Madonna in the church of San Benedetto in Piscinula, which exhibits elements from the same Cerceni mausoleum. Due to the similar shape of the aedicule housing the image of the Madonna, this chapel seems to constitute an influence on Salviati's commission. Inspired by these ancient models, the four corner columns in the San Gregorio chapel not only serve a decorative role but also have a manifestly structural function: together with the trabeation, including the inscription, they highlight the "architectural frame" built to house the image (FIGS. 4, 12).⁴⁰ The four large windows that open into the upper subarches contribute to the height and illuminate the space.

The words *camera inaurata* (gilded vault) in Ugonio's description of the chapel surely refer to the ornament and pictorial decoration of the dome, elliptical like the plan of San Giacomo, and of the walls, articulated by three niches of differing depths, shallower along the lateral walls and deeper on the altar wall

(FIG. 9). The projecting moldings, arches, and other structural and decorative elements of the vault (including the now darkened stuccos), as well as the mostly white stone frame of the Marian image, are highlighted with gilding. In the dome fresco (FIG. 12), a blessing Christ flanked by Saints Mary and John the Baptist appears in a heavenly *gloria* with cherubs before a circle of apostles, saints, and martyrs. Among them, the eponymous Saints Andrew and Gregory (who is dressed in blue and red like the Virgin Mary and looks up at her), as well as Peter, John the Evangelist, Noah, Moses, and Abraham and David, in between whom we see Isaac, appear prominently, along with other more distant patriarchs (including the naked Eve and Adam) and some female saints. Bright yellow tones dominate the composition, perhaps another distant call to the traditional medium of mosaic (as in the Chapel of San Zeno). Even the fictive marble inlay simulated in stucco continues the yellow tone (although these stuccos, as well as the gilding, have been retouched). Projecting their trumpets downward from the base of the luminous composition, four figures of angels (which recall those of the Last Judgment) connect the figures of the dome to the rest of the space painted by Ricci. In their entirety, the frescoes are exuberant and rich in iconographic and decorative detail.⁴¹ Eight figures of Prophets



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appear above the arches of the low register (and below the inscription), from left to right, starting from the altar wall: Ezekiel, Hosea (FIG. 4); perhaps Habakkuk and Zechariah (FIG. 3); Daniel and Jonah; Tobias and Isaiah (FIG. 2). Above are the Evangelists in the lunettes flanking the large windows in the upper register of the main wall (Matthew and John, FIG. 4) and on the entrance wall (Luke and Mark), and finally, four figures of Fathers of the Church are on the lateral walls. Here (FIG. 2) Gregory seems to be repeated twice in the lunettes of the upper left register of the left wall, while Saints Jerome and presumably Augustine appear in the register on the right (FIG. 3). The four pendentives at the corners of the dome simulate triangular openings onto a blue sky through which angels and cherubs fly with the instruments of the Passion. Other graceful pairs of winged putti float on a golden yellow background in the squares at the center of the upper subarches, and others bear the *arma Christi*. Each pair of cherubs is flanked by four personifications of Virtues (sixteen in total), while in the window openings we see cherubic heads or the cardinal's coat of arms surrounded by birds and other finely painted elements alluding to early Christian decorations. Finally, the Salviati double-merled crest is repeated obsessively, painted on the fictive entablature encircling the base of the dome (FIG. 12).

While the early Christian references and the allusion to mosaic yellow can be associated with the archaeological interests of the cardinal and of Ricci himself, the allegorical details (especially the sixteen personifications of Virtues) signal a further interest of Cardinal Salviati, who was the dedicatee of the first-ever edition (not illustrated) of Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*.⁴² The imagery in the dome and the second register of the chapel, starting from above the arches, insists on a combination of prophetic, Christological, Marian, and salvific themes (accentuated by the centrality of John the Baptist, next to Mary, and the visibility of the nude Adam and Eve just above the figure of the blessing Christ, FIG. 12).⁴³ These upper frescoes therefore have a complementary and ascendant function with respect to the uniquely Marian and Gregorian themes unfolding below across the three main walls.

Beyond stylistic associations, the attribution of these frescoes to Giovanni Battista Ricci is based on the testimony of Baglione, who briefly mentions the glory of the dome and describes in detail only the fresco on the left wall, a fresco, whose subject refers to a further and better-known effigy of Mary connected with Gregory: "When Saint Gregory had the holy image carried in procession through Rome" (FIG. 2).⁴⁴ This composition was prepared presumably by Ricci in a drawing now preserved in the British Museum (FIG. 13).⁴⁵ It derives from an invention of Federico Zuccari for the now-lost altarpiece of the Ghiselli Chapel in the church of Santa Maria del Baraccano in Bologna (1580).⁴⁶ From an iconographic perspective, Ricci's fresco—only partially visible today—constitutes his greatest contribution to the Marian-Gregorian meaning of the chapel. The scene focuses on the public procession of Gregory the Great with the thaumaturgic image of the Virgin before the immense Castel Sant'Angelo. As far as we can reconstruct from what remains of the fresco and from the preparatory drawing, which admittedly differs in some details, the Marian image (FIG. 14) seems closer to the icon of Santa Maria Maggiore than to the image in the chapel and is represented at the center of the composition, with the pontiff kneeling in the foreground at prayer.⁴⁷ Thus, the uni-

FIG. 11. Altar of the *Madonna dei Miracoli* (fifteenth century), ca. 1600–1602 and 1714–1716. Chapel of the *Madonna dei Miracoli*, San Giacomo in Augusta, Rome.

versal *Salus Populi Romani* (as it would later be called) faces and mirrors the domestic image from the house of Gregory on the opposite wall. An angelic apparition dominates from a distance, and, closer to the spectator, two angels in flight bear a scroll celebrating Mary (“Regina celi letari [sic] alleluia”). The message of the fresco unequivocally points to Gregory’s renewed emphasis on the value of Marian images, and its composition mirrors the scene enacted in the space of the chapel through the dynamic visual relationship between the chapel’s two principal images (Carracci’s altarpiece and the ancient Madonna), to which I now turn.

What distinguishes the Salviati Chapel from all of the previous and subsequent reinstallations of Marian images (such as the two Maderno tabernacles in San Giovanni dei Fiorentini, 1612–1613, and Santa Maria della Pace, 1614, and the Pauline Chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore),⁴⁸ is that the aedicule on the high altar was intended to frame not the old Madonna but rather a modern painting. It is tempting to identify the modern composition by Annibale Carracci with the *pictura perelegans* (“very fine painting”) mentioned by Ugonio.⁴⁹

The surviving structure of the shrine that housed Carracci’s painting resembles that of the Madonna in the chapel of San Benedetto in Piscinula and also the frame for the *Madonna della Clemenza* in the Altemps Chapel. A simply formed frame with two columns, perhaps ancient and sometimes identified with a rare marble called *marmo rodio*, with Corinthian capitals supports an entablature composed of a slab of *verde antico* and a simple, triangular pediment (FIG. 4).⁵⁰ As the chapel is dedicated to the recreation of a moment in the life of Saint Gregory, it is not surprising to find his image, albeit in the dress of a sixteenth-century pope, in the altarpiece.⁵¹ However, given the emphasis placed on the Marian image by the imposing inscription in fictive bronze letters and the evident reference to ideas implemented in previous Marian chapels, it becomes necessary to question why the Madonna was placed on the side wall in a position apparently secondary to the modern painting. The particular shape of the image not only helps us to comprehend this decision but also allows us to fully understand the genesis of the composition by Annibale Carracci, today lost but fortunately documented by a rich series of drawings already studied by Donald Posner followed by successive scholars.

The Marian image, immured obliquely in the right wall of the chapel, is all that remains of a fresco apparently dating from the fourteenth century (FIG. 7).⁵² Its irregular shape is characteristic of the original rounded surface to which the painting was once attached, perhaps a column or otherwise curved surface. Despite the prestige accorded to the Marian effigy, the creators of this chapel must have considered that its shape did not make an entirely suitable main altarpiece. The effect of its irregular format potentially affected its location more than the fresco’s poor quality; thus, it was decided to place the image on the right side wall and in this manner, given its curvature, literally oriented toward the main altar (FIG. 15). Contemporaneously, Antonio Maria Salviati, who must have had some contact with the Carracci since at least 1598 (having been the dedicatee of an engraved replica of the *Pietà di Caprarola*),⁵³ commissioned the altarpiece from Annibale, which was probably executed between 1600 and the second half of 1602. This altar was consecrated together with others in the church on October 30, 1603, by Bishop Sidone Leonardo Abel (following Salviati’s death more than a year earlier).⁵⁴ Even so,



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FIG. 12. Giovanni Battista Ricci, Frescoes of the upper walls and the vault, ca. 1600–1602. Salviati Chapel, Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.



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FIG. 13. Giovanni Battista Ricci, *Saint Gregory's Procession with the Icon of the Virgin Mary and the Vision at Castel Sant'Angelo*, ca. 1600–1602. British Museum, London.

FIG. 14. Giovanni Battista Ricci, *St. Gregory's Procession with the Icon of the Virgin Mary and the Vision at Castel Sant'Angelo* (detail of the icon), ca. 1600–1602. Salviati Chapel, Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.

FIG. 15. Lateral view of the right wall as seen from the main altar. Salviati Chapel, Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.

a testimony by Mancini reassures us that the painting was ordered by the cardinal himself and had been finished, or nearly so, while the cardinal was still alive.⁵⁵ Although the copy remaining in situ lacks in quality, it still gives us a sense of the relationship between the two images (FIG. 16). Saint Gregory turns slightly toward the Virgin, who in response looks toward the kneeling saint. In this moment, the humble saint not only prays to the Virgin (as the scene is often simply described) but also actively receives divine grace, and even potentially listens to the voice of the Madonna through her image.⁵⁶

Annibale thus found himself having to solve the following complex and unprecedented problem: how to create an altar painting with a frontal orientation yet simultaneously engage in dialogue with a devotional focus on a lateral wall. Some studies have already reflected on this dialogue between adjacent images in space and on the theme of side walls in chapel spaces.⁵⁷ This preoccupation likely aroused interest in contemporary artists, especially if we consider the work of Caravaggio in his lateral paintings for chapels at San Luigi dei Francesi and Santa Maria del Popolo. In any case, here the orientation is reversed: it is the altarpiece that must show a certain level of deference toward the right wall (i.e., to the left of the figures represented).

The original composition by Annibale is preserved only in a photograph, which Heinrich Bodmer obtained before 1937 from the Earl of Mayo in London



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and later donated to the Kunsthistorisches Institut (FIG. 17). Comparing the copy with the original composition by Annibale (FIGS. 4, 16, 17), one notices how the former alters important details of the original painting, including the position of Gregory and the exact shape and inclination of the cushion on which he kneels. In the analysis that follows, I will therefore refer to the pre-1937 photograph of the original. Since 1971, the complex composition of Annibale's painting has been reconstructed thanks to a series of at least six surviving drawings.⁵⁸ It has already been noted several times that Annibale sought to achieve a "fusion between painting and surrounding space"⁵⁹ and a certain degree of illusionistic effect, perhaps in competition with Caravaggio.⁶⁰ The first known *bozzetto* by Annibale for the San Gregorio altarpiece is identified as the drawing now in Chatsworth (FIG. 18), which is often described as much freer and more "illusionistic" than the final painting.⁶¹ According to Posner, who was interested in developing the idea of the "reform" of Italian painting, Annibale progressively eliminated every "ease and warmth" from the composition, which resulted in an "unpleasantly rigid and cold" painting. This influential reading of the surviving drawings depends on Posner's more general assumption that the "late style" of Annibale consisted of "hyper-idealism," according to which illusionistic elements had to be abandoned in favor of monumentalizing "expressive gestures" and "pious attitudes."⁶² Recent studies have now modified this point of view, emphasizing instead the interests of the late

FIG. 16. Salviati Chapel (dialogue between right wall and main altarpiece), Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, Rome.

Annibale in Correggio's naturalism and Venetian painting.⁶³ In relation to the chapel's lost altarpiece, it is worth pursuing this analysis, since Posner's interpretation is in contrast to all of the period descriptions of the painting.

From Baglione (1642) to Bellori (1672), up to the engraver Jakob Frey (1733, FIG. 19), who offers us one of the best reproductions of the work (which was engraved several times previously),⁶⁴ all observers noticed not only the extremely vivid colors of the composition⁶⁵ but also the actual "dialogue" between Gregory and the Virgin Mary—that is, the interaction between the two images across the space of the chapel from the central altarpiece to the right wall.⁶⁶ Bellori describes how "color enlivens the efficacy of the Holy Pontiff,"⁶⁷ while Frey praises how Annibale "had expressed in colors" (*coloribus expresserat*) the figure of Gregory the Great, "who, kneeling toward the image of the Virgin Mary that was depicted on the opposite wall, deserved that she talked to him during his life."⁶⁸

These impressions are definitively confirmed by a lesser-known source: documentation relating to the crowning of the Marian image by the Chapter of Saint Peter. In 1658, the image at San Gregorio al Celio received a golden crown (stolen for the first time before 1786) in recognition of its status as a miraculous image. As is well known, this systematic crowning campaign of the Madonnas by the Chapter began in 1631, becoming a perpetual honor in 1636 thanks to a rich legacy bequeathed to the Chapter by Count Alessandro Sforza.⁶⁹ The bestowal of the crown represented an official recognition of the prestige of Marian images (at first those predominantly located in Rome and then elsewhere) that could aspire to obtain this status. For each Madonna, a small dossier is kept in the archive of the Chapter, and it is worth reading the complete justification for the crown granted to the Madonna at San Gregorio:

The most prestigious and excellent glory of this most respectable place is the image of Mary painted on the wall (*dipinta in muro*), which once was in Saint Gregory's parents' house, and is now venerated in the most beautiful Salviati Chapel. This chapel was fabricated in 1600 by the illustrious piety of cardinal Antonio Maria of that name, who praiseworthy deployed his munificence for the decoration (*condecorazione*) of this most precious image. This is the image in front of which the devout St Gregory, from his earlier years, frequently directed to God his fervent prayers. And this is the image that delighted to talk repeatedly (*compiacquesi di parlar più volte*) to this beloved son of God, as we are assured by a continual tradition and by the inscription on the frame on the chapel. What more? The painting on panel (*il quadro in tavola*) painted by the famous Annibale Carracci represents the Holy Pontiff humbly kneeling and praying, and with his face turned toward this image.⁷⁰

"With his face turned toward this image" offers us the most direct and effective description of how the interaction between the two images was understood in 1658. Moreover, as already noted by Ugonio, we are shown once again the reciprocal hierarchy between the two images. The beautiful painting by the "famous" Annibale Carracci confers decisive value on the ancient and prestigious Marian image, not only in artistic terms (as a restitution of that beauty deprived by time) but also from a normative point of view. That is to say, the miracle of the Virgin speaking to Gregory occurred *because* the painting by the famous Carracci (together with the inscription painted on the



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FIG. 17. Annibale Carracci, *Saint Gregory Altarpiece* (from the Salviati Chapel), formerly Ellesmere collection, Bridgewater House, Westminster, London. Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Photo Library, inv. 115117, pre-1937.

frame), here and now (in 1658), proves it.⁷¹ If the underestimation of Annibale's completed altarpiece stems from preconceived prejudice toward the artist's supposed late style, then it is worthwhile to go back one last time to the surviving preparatory studies. By reconsidering this series, not so much in relation to the internal development of the painter's style but rather in relation to the space of the chapel in terms of a search for a progressive laterality, Annibale's solution reveals a deceptively effective design.

The "strong three-dimensional implications" of the first sketch (FIG. 18) are due to the inclusion in the represented space of the entrance arch within the chapel and to the gesture of the angel on the right, which projects beyond the arch and points toward the image of the Virgin.⁷² It should also be noted that the background of this sketch is not completely resolved. An open landscape appears on the right, while on the left we see an altar with a tiara and a crucifix. The relationship between inside and outside is not entirely clear at this point in the artist's process. Regarding the gestures of the angel on the left, the one hand beckons the attention of the pope, while the other points toward the background of the painting in the direction of one or two souls in flight, probably freed from Purgatory. This element—which refers to another and better-known legend linked to Gregory the Great and is still present in a second

stage of Annibale's process (documented by a study copy at the Louvre)⁷³—was subsequently eliminated from the composition, most likely because it was not relevant to the particular historic episode staged in this chapel (specifically, the image of the Virgin that spoke to Gregory in his parents' house).⁷⁴ Further, from a compositional point of view, the double movement suggested by the opposing gestures of the angel unnecessarily complicates the composition.⁷⁵

The development toward the final composition is documented by a sheet containing a series of at least four pen studies now in Windsor (FIG. 20). These sketches not only explore the spectrum of appropriate gestures for a figure in the act of receiving a divine message (a series of solutions comparable to those possible for an Annunciate Virgin) but also introduce other small but fundamental changes, in particular with respect to the position of the angel on the right, which evolves into the second key figure in the composition (as evidenced by a further drawing dedicated solely to this figure in a sheet at the Metropolitan Museum).⁷⁶ The first study seems to be the central one, with the saint clasping his hands to his chest and the angel on the right. Unlike both the first sketch and the intermediate stage documented by the copy in the Louvre, the angel here is no longer placed behind the pontiff (Chatsworth) or at the same level (Louvre) but descends one step in the direction of the image



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FIG. 18. Annibale Carracci, *First composition for the Saint Gregory altarpiece* (pen and brown ink and wash, heightened with white), ca. 1600–1602. Collection of the Duke of Devonshire, Chatsworth House, inv. 435.

FIG. 19. Jakob Frey after Annibale Carracci, *Saint Gregory Altarpiece* (etching), 1733. British Museum, London.

of the Virgin and toward the viewer. The position of this angel in the space is moreover isolated in a second sketch in the right background (although it is unclear if this drawing was executed before or after the central scene). And here the angel on the left barely appears, being only hinted at in a secondary position behind Gregory. The unsuitable flying angels that accompanied the souls from Purgatory into the sky have now been replaced by a *gloria* of flying angels culminating in the figure of the dove that slightly inclines to the right. These two first studies are followed by the two remaining designs represented on the left side of the sheet. In the lower left corner, the artist works through another variant of the pontiff's listening gesture. The last in-depth analysis appears in the squared vignette, placed against the left margin of the sheet; in my opinion, this miniature study of the relationship between the two figures represents an attempt to render an angled view of the altarpiece, that is, from the point of view of the image of the Madonna on the right wall (compare the detail of this vignette with the photograph taken from an acute angle of the painting's copy; FIGS. 20, 21).

While in the first *bozzetto* the three figures and the corresponding line of the cushion are all parallel and horizontal to the picture plane, the ultimate



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FIG. 20. Annibale Carracci, *Studies for Saint Gregory Altarpiece* (pen and brown ink on cream paper). Royal Collection Trust, Windsor Castle, Collection of H.M. the Queen, inv. 2335.

FIG. 21. Lateral view of the main altar with the copy of the altarpiece (after Annibale Carracci) as seen from the right wall. Salviati Chapel, Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio.

solution executed by Annibale sets the three figures on a diagonal line, from the knee of the angel on the left to the foot of the main angel on the right which now firmly rests on the ground near the viewer (FIG. 18, 17). A further modification, with respect to the Windsor folio, is the repositioning of the primary angel, which serves to connect the figure of the pontiff and the image of the Madonna through the space of the chapel even more effectively: the angelic leg now firmly resting on the ground echoes the function of the corner column (almost a reference to the typical column included in Annunciation scenes). At the same time, the final version (documented by the pre-1937 photograph) orients the cushion diagonally, at an opposing angle to the figures represented. The cushion therefore heightens the spontaneous twist of Gregory toward the image of the Virgin, a movement accentuated by the prominence of the saint's right knee leaning more clearly on the cushion and confirmed by the position of the dove above his head, which, like the saint, has "eyes turned" in the direction of the speaking image. In addition, while Gregory was represented in both the Chatsworth and Windsor drawings with the red velvet and satin cap typically worn by the Pope (*camauro*), in the final painting the absence of the cap presents to the viewer the still black hair of a young Gregory, as the future pope should have been at the time of the episode in the house of his parents.

These adjustments, minimal yet decisive, are not to be attributed only to a stylistic evolution of Annibale between his first sketch and the final composition but instead represent a study of the function of the painting in the chapel interior and its dialogue with the old and private image of the Virgin on the right wall: the interaction between the two images was intended to recreate the real private space in which the young Gregory allegedly prayed and listened to the voice of the Marian image. The brilliant colors praised by all observers had to compete with the fictive polychrome marbles and frame of the Madonna and probably sought to accentuate the "effectiveness" of the recreation, as emphasized by Bellori.⁷⁷

Conclusion

In 1586, Giovanni Battista Armenini, speaking of "sacred images," posed a sharp contrast between those that contained "certain figures made in the Greek manner, very awkward, disagreeable, and completely darkened with soot," and "beautiful images" painted by Renaissance artists, such as "Titian, Correggio, and Giulio Romano." These modern paintings, according to Armenini, were to be considered much more effective—capable of bringing tears to viewers' "eyes out of emotion"—because the eye can perceive the "divinity [in such images] almost like the very ones who are in heaven."⁷⁸

Around 1600, the experiment designed and implemented in the Salviati chapels by Volterra, Maderno, Giovanni Battista Ricci, Annibale Carracci, and a series of stonemasons and marble workers (Stefano Longo, Bartolomeo Bassi) aimed to overcome this sharp contrast between the clumsy "Greek" figures and the "beautiful images" of the Renaissance. The "divinity" emerges here from the combination and integration of artifacts of different epochs. In the new and luminous space of the Salviati Chapel in San Gregorio, gilded and brightly decorated, the old and private Marian image received new life from the added brilliant frescoes of the walls and the vault (showing respectively

two other images of Mary related to Gregory: the public *Salus Populi Romani* and the interceding Virgin Mary in the vault, to whom the Saint Gregory in the vault, dressed in the same colour, raises his gaze) and from the most elegant contemporary painting ("pictura perelegans"), which in the 1763 edition of Filippo Titi's guide was called "one of Rome's most famous paintings."⁷⁹ This reputation no doubt stemmed from the fact that the altarpiece was conceived not as an independent work but in relation to the chapel's space and more precisely in a way that enhanced, aesthetically, iconographically, and symbolically, an image otherwise lacking "any beauty" (Ugonio). At San Giacomo, Salviati sought a similar reconciliation between the "new" statue of the saint commissioned from Ippolito Buzzi and the "ancient" image of the *Madonna dei Miracoli* in the two central chapels across the new architectural interior (FIGS. 10, 11).

This juxtaposition of antiquity (*vetustas*) and modern beauty (*venustas*), thematized both in the cardinal's *donatio* and in Ugonio's passage, emerges as the most innovative element of the chapels commissioned by Cardinal Salviati, wherein contemporary works (in painting and sculpture) were cleverly conceived and positioned in relation to prestigious ancient images, whose importance was enhanced by their reinstallation in new spaces.

In both San Gregorio al Celio and San Giacomo in Augusta, the emphasis is not so much on the Virgin's role as abstract intercessor⁸⁰ but rather on the value and effectiveness of Mary's material images. The desire to conserve (in the modern sense) and arrange new spaces suitable for each image's presentation was the impetus for the creation and decoration of the Salviati chapels.⁸¹ Experimentation in the case of the chapel in San Gregorio was made all the more daring by the defects of the image itself and by the decision to exploit these very defects in order to recreate in the space of the chapel the historical role and miraculous activity of the image itself (an image and an event not mentioned in documents before the sixteenth century).⁸² The architecture and the decoration of the chapel, culminating in the altarpiece by Carracci, fundamentally contribute to the historic recreation, the effectiveness of which is attested by all of the sources prior to 1800. While this unusual solution may have inspired other artists engaged in similar commissions,⁸³ the reciprocal visual hierarchy between the old Madonna and the elegant modern painting in the Salviati Chapel was sanctioned officially by the image's coronation in 1658. When the Madonna received her golden crown from the Vatican Chapter, the altarpiece painted by the "celebrated Annibale Carracci" was called out specifically in the documentation in order to confer prestige and recognition on the Marian image.

In San Giacomo in Augusta, and even more so in the "cautiously experimental" chapel of San Gregorio al Celio,⁸⁴ the authorship and beauty of the chapels' architecture and ornamentation served to restore splendor to the two prestigious yet ruined Madonnas, in what emerges as a specific theory of conservation and enhancement of ancient images. In these carefully articulated interiors, the Madonnas were thus restored from a devotional as well as an aesthetic point of view, in spaces designed to exploit their full potential and reveal them in their divine materiality.

Appendix

Doc. 1. Copy of the will of Cardinal Salviati, written on April 9, 1593, and opened in 1602 on the death of the cardinal, Archivio di Stato di Roma (ASR), Ospedale di San Giacomo, b. 228, n 2 (register bound in parchment), fols. 24–66:

/24/ Testamentum bonae mem(oriae) Eminentissimi Cardinalis Antonii Mariae Salviati rogatum die 9 aprilis 1593 et apertum die 16 Aprilis 1602... /28v/ Corpus vero suum sepelliri voluit sine aliqua pompa in Ecclesia S. Jacobi Incurabilium quae modo edificatur et in Cappella Maiori sub lapide eneo et cum epitaffio congruenti. Item reliquit pro Anima sua celebrari Missas S. Gregorii, et in singulo anno Anniversarium in eadem ecclesia in qua erit sepultus. Item reliquit...

Doc. 2. *Donatio* of Cardinal Salviati to the Ospedale di San Giacomo, ASR, Archivio dell'Ospedale di San Giacomo degli Incurabili, 44, *Protocolllum instrumentorum Venerabilis Archiconfraternitatis Sancti Jacobi Incurabilium in Augusta de Urbe. Petrus Martinus Truccha est Notarius*, fols. 49–63v (the passage translated in the text appears at the end in italics):

/49/ [on the margin] Presens donatio fuit insinuate per acta d. Octavii Capogalli notarii r. coll. sub die 15 martii 1602
Donatio facta per illustrissimum et reverendissimum d. Antonium Mariam Cardinalem Salvium ad favorem V. Archiospedalis, Confraternitatis et Ecclesiae Sancti Jacobi Incurabilium et Collegii Salviati.
In Dei nomine amen. Anno a nativitate eiusdem D. N. Jesu Christi millesimo sexcentesimo primo inditione decima quarta die vero decimatertia februarii pontificatus s.mi in Christo patris et D. N. D. Clementis Divina providentia papae octavi anno decimo. Cum fuerit et sit quod illustrissimus et reverendissimus D. Antonius Maria Tituli S. Mariae Transtiberim presbiter cardinalis Salvius, et ac presens venerabilium Archiospedalis S. Jacobi Incurabilium, et Archiconfraternitatis Domusque Orfanorum et Orphanarum sub titulo Visitationis B. Mariae in Aquiro, et SS. Quatuor Coronatorum de Urbe Protector pro Pia sui animi propensione, quam semper habuit ad procurandum et propagandum optimum statum dictorum Archiospedalis et Archiconfraternitatis Domusque Orphanorum et Orphanarum omni tempore maxima cura invigilaverit et intenderit ac protegendum et amplificandum dicta loca, ipsorumque incrementum sua continue promoverit beneficentia et propterea ex una parte ad gloriam Dei Optimi Maximi, honorem S. Jacobi Apostoli, et Christifidelium salutare commodum propriis ipsius illustrissimi d. Cardinalis sumptibus Hospitale maius a Sancti Rocchi via inceptum, et ad alteram viam Flaminiam, quam Cursum appellant, recta linea protensum suis partibus inferioribus et superioribus ad infirmerum infirmarumque usum distincte fabre factum ac et domum et habitationem pro officialibus, sacerdotibus et ministris Ecclesiae, Confraternitatis, et Archiospedalis S. Jacobi prefati inter Hospitale Vetus ac domus maius Hospitale Novum consistentem a funda/49r/mentis edificaverit nec non templum seu Ecclesiam Novam S. Jacobi eiidem Archiospedali adiunctam, duplici turri sacra, seu campanili, sachristiis, chorisque ab uno, et altero cornu, cappellis, et altaribus per orbem seu circum circa dispositis, ceterisque suis partibus absolutam, et nuper maxime ad apsidam seu tribunam, et altare maius picturis, columnis,

marmoribus versicoloribus, tabernaculoque mixtis lapidibus contexto adornatam, simul et statua nova marmorea S. Jacobi ad altare, in una prefatarum Capellarum suo peculiari dicatum nomini, ac vetere devotaque Sanctissime Deiparae semper Virginis Imagine, Sancta Maria Miraculorum nuncupata, e loco prope Tiberim minus decenti ad alteram dictarum capellarum in altare honorificum translata, munifice insignitam pariter a fundamentis extruxerit, ac perfecit.

This *Donatio* starts with a separate register, from 1601, compiled by Vincentio Castronio “computista.” On fol. 2:

item mandat illustrissimus Bonae memoriae quod singulis annis de mense septembris post dominicam quartam ipsius mensis die prima non impedita sequi fiat officium de Spiritu Sancto pro salute eiusdem... Item quod in eodem die dicti mensis septembris quotannis donec vixerit detur a confraternitate per manus camerarii infra deputandi seu eodem deficiente alterius vel aliourm manus unum inseprum rubrum tritici boni in tot panes albos ex eo conficiendos pro elemosina in salutem ipsius cardinalis distribuendum pauperibus eodie ad ecclesiam accedentibus qui hortantur fundere preces pro eiusdem cardinalis salute. Post vero mortem loco dicti officii Spirius Sancti mandat quod fiat anniversarium solemni funere annis singulis in perpetuum et rogat eosdem custodes qui velint interesse. Et vult quod distributio panum que fieri... post obitum etiam fiat in die anniversarii et sic in perpetuum.

Doc. 3. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (BAV), Archivio del Capitolo di San Pietro, Madonne Coronate (1648–1667), 2, fol. 166r–v, Madonna nella chiesa di S. Gregorio sul Monte Celio, 1657–1658:

La gloria più pregevole ed eccellente di questo rispettabilissimo luogo è l’imagin di Maria dipinta in muro, che un tempo era nella paterna abitazione di S. Gregorio, e ora si venera nella bellissima Cappella Salviati, fabbricata l’anno 1600 dall’insigne pietà del cardinale Antonmaria di tal nome, il quale si lodevolmente impiegò la sua munificenza alla condecorazione di questa preziosissima immagine. Imperocchè dessa è quella, innanzi alla quale il divotissimo S. Gregorio, sin dai teneri anni, frequentemente mandava a Dio le sue fervide preghiere, dessa è che a questo suo amatissimo figliuolo compiacquesi di parlar più volte, come ne vediamo assicurati dalla costante tradizione, e dalle parole a gran caratteri impresse nel fregio del cornicione della detta cappella: “Antonius [Maria] cardinalis Salvius B. V. imaginem ante annos mille in paternis aedibus B. Gregorium allocutam sacello exornavit anno MDC.” Che più? *Il quadro in tavola dipinto dal celebre Annibale Caracci rappresenta il Santo Pontefice umilmente genuflesso ed orante, e colla faccia rivolta a questa imagine.* Anzi l’altare stesso fu con ecclesiastico rito a Dio consacrato in memoria appunto della Beatissima Vergine, e di S. Gregorio Papa: ecco quel che vi si legge: “Sacris ritibus Deo consecratum in memoriam Dei genitricis V. Mariae et S. Gregorii papae die 30 octobris 1603.” /166v/ Clemente VIII con suo Breve de’ 14 Dicembre 1593 concede amplissime Indulgenze a quei che visitano questa sacra imagine, e intervengono alle litanie solite a cantarsi in onor di Maria, ossequio religioso, che ogni sabbato dopo la compieta rendonle in chiesa i divotissimi Monaci Camaldolesi, ai quali mancava la consolazione di vedere questa sì veneranda effigie coronata.

Notes

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- 1** — “Vidistis ibidem sacrarium nobile, partem Gregorianae domus, ubi caelestis Virginis imago monstratur, quae Pontificiem illum sanctissimum affata traditur, cui omnem venustatem vetustas longae aetatis abstulerat; id nunc munifica Salviati impensa, maculosis columnis, camera inaurata, picture pereleganti ita collucet, ut dignitati religionis egregie ornatus loci respondeat.” Ugonio 1603, 23.
- 2** — On Salviati’s funerals see Schraven 2014, 236–237. The date of the cardinal’s death, April 16, 1602, is noted in a copy of his will; see Appendix, doc. 2 (fol. 25). The complete title and dedication of the church on Celio is Santi Andrea e Gregorio al Monte Celio, but San Gregorio Magno, or San Gregorio al Celio, are the most commonly used denominations.
- 3** — Hibbard 1971, 121; Eichberg 1994; see also Pedrocchi 1993, 60–67, mostly based on Hibbard and on Gibelli 1888.
- 4** — After a first sample cleaning in 1983, the nineteenth-century frescoes were completely removed. A photo of the previous situation with Christen Købke’s frescoes is available in the Photographic Collection of the Bibliotheca Hertziana.
- 5** — Gibelli 1888, 10, n. 3. Traditionally associated with Andrea Bregno, this altar is attributed today to the so-called Maestro di Pio II (Caglioti 1997, 235). Its move into the chapel is probably due to the association of the stories of Saint

Gregory in the reliefs with the frescoes in the chapel (see below).

- 6** — Posner 1971, II, 57, no. 130.
- 7** — This choice is expressed already in 1593 in his will (see Appendix, doc. 2). The Salviati family possessed the *iuspatronatus* of a chapel entitled to Saint James in Santa Maria sopra Minerva (subsequently passed to other patrons). Thus, the idea that the chapel at San Gregorio might originally have had a funerary function (Eichberg 1994, 49) does not seem plausible.
- 8** — Appendix, doc. 2. The inscription runs as follows: “I.C.R. ANTONIUS MARIA SALVIATUS / S.R.E. CARD(INALIS) / AEDIBUS ADIACENTIBUS IN AEGROTOR(UM) / CURAM EXTRUCTIS / IN HOC QUOD A FUNDAMENTIS EREXIT / TEMPLO / SEPVLCRVM SIBI DELEGIT / VIXIT AN. LXV MENS. II. DIES XXVII / OBIIT XV. KAL. APR. MDCII / LAURENTIUS SALVIATUS IACOBI FILIUS / MARCHIO IULIANI EX TESTAMENTO / HERES / PATRIS PATRUELI P.C. AN. MDCIV.” See also Pecchiai and Montini 1958, figs. 10–11.
- 9** — See Appendix, docs. 1 and 2.
- 10** — “Medien des Körpers,” according to Belting 2001, 130–133.
- 11** — Hess 1943, 56.
- 12** — Hurtubise 1985, 311.
- 13** — Panciroli 1600, 395; Ugonio 1603, 22–23: “Vidistis in Caelio, ad Magni Gregorii aedem huius quondam fidei commendatam, patefactam aream, gradus ad ascensum templi dilatatos, ubi antea ob locorum angustias, confluenta ad festos dies turba populorum, molestissime premebatur.”
- 14** — Mittarelli and Costadoni 1764, 194: “scalas similiter ampliavit, et cum antiquum Septizonium, quod prope ecclesiam sancti Gregorii extabat, jussu Sixti V. fuisset eversum, in medio scalarum aedecis ex una parte fingens ianuam, ad memoriam Septizonii conservandam depingi ipsum voluit expresse, et prout integrum iacebat, apposita inscriptione: *Antonius Maria cardinalis Salviatus aream confluenti populo aperuit.*” Mittarelli and Costadoni (1764, 195) refer to Michele Losanna’s manuscript *Descriptio monasterii Sancti Gregorii*, from around 1640, which is also used by Gibelli 1888, 18–19, n. 6. This text is currently untraceable.
- 15** — BAV, Vat. lat., 11911, Francesco del Sodo, “Conpendio delle chiese di Roma con le loro fondatione, consecratione e titoli de’ Cardinali delle parochie,” 1575, fols. 133–135: “Questa è una chiesa nel Monte Celio in luogo antico detto Clivo Scauro qual chiesa era la casa paterna di

detto San Gregorio. La casata sua non si sa sicura, ma la commune oppenione è che lui fussi di casa Frangipane el quale l’anno secondo del suo pontificato che fu l’anno secondo del suo pontificato 592 la dedicò e consagrò a Sant’Andrea apostolo e vi fece li quattro sottoscritti altari consagrati di sua mano e privilegiati per li defunti: l’altar grande fu il primo e vi pose alquante reliquie come le mani di Sant’Andrea a molte altre reliquie in un vaso e la dotò d’assai indulgentie; il secondo fu quel a mano manca di detto ad honore di San Tomaso ...; l’altro è a mano diritta qual ad honore di San Pantaleo et ivi vi pose il suo santo corpore et altre reliquie; l’altro in nel entrare in chiesa a mano diritta ad honore della gloriosa Vergine e qui vi pose del latte e i capelli della Madonna et altre reliquie qual altare hanno di molte indulgenze come per le bolle in sagrestia si vedeno *et drento al cimiterio v’è una Imagine della Regina del Cielo quale dicono che parlò con San Gregorio.* Quel luogo che cala abasso nel detto cimiterio dove è il Pozzo di San Gregorio li dicono che vi faceva penitenzia. Là fuori [vi era] la tavola dove il glorioso Santo dava da mangiare a dodici poveri ogni giorno... Questa Chiesa è assai devota con gran concorso di devotione alli Christiani, e per l’Ottava de’ morti ve si dicono assaissime messe per li defunti e non tanto in la detta Ottava, quanto in tutto l’anno nella qual Ottava v’è indulgentia plenaria.” See Eichberg 1994, 51, n. 6; Gibelli 1888, 19 (“dipinta nel muro di un antico luogo non sempre visibile”) and 20, n. 2. Gibelli mentions a copy, which would have been left in the place where the original image was on the basis of Michele Losanna’s manuscript quoted above (n. 14): “Haec sacra imago B.V. Mariae est remota, sed in loco, in quo erat, asservata.” Unfortunately, I have not yet been able to retrace either this painted copy or Losanna’s manuscript. According to Romano (2017, 433, n. 7), the image in the chapel is “staccata e di ignota provenienza ... la sua *facies* attuale è compatibile con una datazione alla prima metà del Trecento” (entry by Daniela Sgherri). Just before entering the chapel, it is possible to see, through a hole in the right wall of the vestibule to the chapel, another image of the Virgin (FIG. 8). However, this image appears to be different in iconography and certainly cannot be considered a copy, as it seems to be from the early fourteenth century (not commented on

in Romano 2017). The matter deserves further investigation.

- 16** — Bombelli 1792, 2, 83.
- 17** — See Eichberg 1994, 50.
- 18** — “ANTONIUS MARIA CARD[INALIS] SALVIATUS / B[EATAE] VIRGINIS IMAGINEM ANTE ANN[OS] MILLE / IN PATERNIS AEDIBUS B[EATUM] GREGORIU[M] ALLOCUTAM / SACELLO EXORNAVIT ANNO 1600.” The indication of the interlapsed one thousand years, marking a sort of Gregorian jubilaum, aspires to be quite precise if we consider that the date of the foundation of the monastery (as specified by the *Conpendio* quoted above in n. 15) was thought to be in the year 592.
- 19** — See n. 15 above. The earliest documentation on this foundation dates to the end of the sixth century; references to the institution of a monastic community in the Celimontan properties of Gregory the Great’s family are present in the *Dialogi* and in the *Registrum Epistolarum*; subsequent sources (*Liber Pontificalis* and *Vita Gregorii* by Giovanni Diacono, 873–876) “registrano la notizia della fondazione del monastero all’interno di un complesso immobiliare di proprietà del pontefice sul colle Celio nei pressi del Clivo di Scauro.” Bartola 2003, vi–viii.
- 20** — The absence of documents is noted in the application submitted to the Chapter of St. Peter’s in 1657–1658 for the coronation of this image: “Non essendo i Monaci Camaldolesi entrati al possesso della Chiesa o Monastero di S. Gregorio di Roma prima dell’anno 1573 non possono avere notizie più antiche dell’anno suddetto circa la mentovata chiesa, e le immagini sacre in essa contenute, giacchè loro non fu lasciato archivio fornito di scritture, che potessero somministrare simili notizie.” BAV, Archivio del Capitolo di San Pietro, Madonne Coronate, 1648–1667, 2, fol. 168 and fols. 175v–176; see below and Appendix, doc. 3.
- 21** — The legend of a Marian image having spoken to Saint Gregory was attached to at least four other works in Rome, including in St. Peter’s (Muffel 1452 [1999], 50); Santa Maria del Buon Aiuto (Mariano da Firenze 1518 [1931], 161); Santa Maria Imperatrice (among others Palladio 1554, 54); and Santi Cosma e Damiano (Panciroli 1600, 282–283). See Weißenberger 2007, esp. 62, with her very useful appendix of texts.
- 22** — Later examples include the *Madonna delle Grazie* in San Salvatore in Lauro and the Rivaldi Chapel in Santa

Maria della Pace. Subsequently, the same Ricci also painted the *frontale*, or framing altarpiece, around the Madonna of SS. Trinità dei Pellegrini. For a typology of Roman reframing projects from the 1570s to the Pauline Chapel (1613), see Ostrow 1996, 151–168. A useful chronology of *translationes* of Roman Madonnas from the year 431 to 1593 (*Madonna della Clemenza*) is offered by Weißenberger 2007, *Anhang*, 50.

- 23** — For the Gregorian Chapel and the *Madonna del Soccorso*, see the essay by Fabio Barry in this volume; Zander 2016; Zander 2020, forthcoming.
- 24** — According to Bernardini and Mignosi Tantillo (2001, 49–75), Ricci was asked to work in the Cerasi project by Madero, after the completion of a great part of the Salviati Chapel.
- 25** — Bernardini and Mignosi Tantillo 2001, 49–75.
- 26** — For San Giacomo, it is possible to attribute to Capriani (to whom is attributed a project preserved in the Albertina; Pecchiai and Montini 1958, 26) not only the original oval plan of the church but also the building of the edifice to the height of the cornice (Pecchiai and Montini 1958, 25).
- 27** — Hibbard 1971, 121; Hibbard 2001, 77, n. 10.
- 28** — Eichberg 1994.
- 29** — Wiedmann 2004. The altarpiece was replaced in the first half of the nineteenth century by a *Death of Saint John of God* by Giovanni Silvagni (1844), which in turn was substituted by the currently visible SS. *Trinità* by Francesco Grandi. Pecchiai and Montini 1958, 32.
- 30** — Fulvio 1527, book 5, cap. 15: “Imago deiparae Virginis quae nuperrime in quadam fumosa proseuca in proximis moenibus iuxta Tiberim coli frequentiarique coepta est proximo anno iubilei MDXXV.” See Weißenberger 2007, *Katalog*, 83–84; Montini 1953, 17, 31 (quoting “ampie notizie manoscritte del padre V. Sauré presso l’Archivio dei Padri di Bétharram” on the two Madonne dei Miracoli).
- 31** — Panciroli 1600, 534–535: “li Guardiani dell’hospitale de gl’Incurabili dall’elemosine raccolta fabricarono qui l’anno 1525 che fu del Giubileo, a di 20. di Giugno, questa chiesa a canto le mura della vicina porta detta del Popolo, e da quel luogo qua riportarono l’image, et è stata gran tempo sotto la protettione, e cura delli Padri Francescani Conventuali riformati.... Poi l’anno 1598 per essere il luogo molto rimoto, et havendo il Cardinale Salviati

adornato l’hospitale de S. Giacomo de gl’Incurabili con si bella, e vaga fabrica, ... volse con quest’Image ancora arricchirla.” See Weißenberger 2007, *Anhang* 30; Bombelli 1792, 1, 85. Romano 2017, 434, n. 25: “è probabile che la cronologia si attesti al primo Quattrocento, accanto al gruppo affine a Taddeo di Bartolo.”

- 32** — Pecchiai and Montini 1958, 54.
- 33** — See Appendix, doc. 2. This *donatio* is incorrectly considered to be a will by Hibbard 1971, 121.
- 34** — Baglione 1642, 89: “colori in s. Giacomo de gl’Incurabili alcuni angioi, e puttini intorno alla Madonna.”
- 35** — Bombelli (1792, 1, 85) specifies this difference of media. In BAV, Archivio del Capitolo di San Pietro, Madonne Coronate, 2, fol. 208 (1659), the substitutive copy on canvas is described as “di eccellentissimo lavoro.”
- 36** — Hibbard 1971, 121; Eichberg 1994, 44, 52, n. 20 (ASV, Fondo Borghese Salviati, b. 4374).
- 37** — Hibbard 1971, 121.
- 38** — Hibbard 2001, 139. Meo Bassi worked at least since 1593 for the cardinal, and he is recorded in BAV, Archivio Salviati, 315, “Libro di spese datte dal Card. Giovann [ma Antonio Maria] Salviati per il Palazzo alla Lungara, 1583 [sic; actually 1593] a 1599,” fols. 15r, 72v, 73r, 91v, 98v, 99r. The “fascicolo sciolto” mentioned by Hibbard (relevant fols. 10v, 13), presumably containing the reference to the frame of the Madonna, corresponds today to BAV, Archivio Salviati, 316: “Nota delli lavori di scalpello fatti nel Palazzo dell’ill.mo cardinale Salviati [1600].” Due to the significant state of deterioration of the small file, consultation is not allowed.
- 39** — Eichberg 1994, 44–45.
- 40** — Eichberg 1994, 47: “telaio architettonico.”
- 41** — Previous studies on these frescoes, however, have been rather dismissive of this program. See, for example, Abromson 1976, 177–180.
- 42** — Ripa 1593, 2r–v.
- 43** — On images of the Patriarchs as a salvific theme in private chapels, see Franceschini 2017, 287–298.
- 44** — Baglione 1642, 149: “per il medesimo cardinale dipinse a S. Gregorio al Celio la cappella al Santo dedicata; e nella cupoletta havvi una gloria con li Santi del Cielo; e da basso incontro all’immagine di Maria, v’è quando S. Gregorio fece portare la santa immagine in processione per

Roma, fatte a fresco.” The attribution and description are repeated by several subsequent Roman guides, such as Martinelli (1581 [1969], 72); Nicola Pio (Enggass and Enggass 1977, 88); and others (e.g., Giacomo Gregorio Terribilini).

45 — Gere and Pouncey 1983, n. 246, and online entry at: britishmuseum.org (n. 1979,1006.87). For a later chapel fresco design by Ricci (at San Francesco a Ripa), see Tosini 2003.

46 — The work by Zuccari displeased the patron and was subsequently replaced; the painting now in the chapel is a procession of Saint Gregory the Great by Cesare Aretusi (1552–1614). See Acidini and Capretti 2009, 174–183, with previous bibliography.

47 — Eichberg (1994, 54, n. 49) states that the represented icon is not of the type of the *Salus Populi Romani* but of the type of the image in the chapel; after close inspection, this seems not to be the case.

48 — Ostrow 1996, 151–158.

49 — However, *pictura* can also refer to the entire work of painting, including the frescoes by Ricci.

50 — Corsi 1825, 56–57.

51 — The anachronistic representation of Gregory, who is shown already as a pope (while the episode occurred supposedly when he was still living in his parents’ house) and more specifically as a sixteenth-century pope (here in white tunic and *mozzetta* and without a beard as in Raphael’s *Disputa*), was repeated in both sculpture (Nicolas Cordier) and painting (Antonio Viviani) in the Oratory of Santa Barbara with Saint Gregory’s *triclinium*, following Baronio’s instructions. Hendler 2007, 177–178.

52 — See n. 15 above.

53 — A silver plate for this engraving, dated 1598, is preserved in Naples, Museo di Capodimonte. The plate replicates in reverse an etching made by Agostino on the model of Annibale’s etching from 1597, known as the *Pietà di Caprarola*. The plate bears the inscriptions in reverse, “A.C.I.F.,” and on the right “Ant. Mar. Card. Salv. 1598.” See DeGrazia 1984, 190, n. 209; Bernardini and Mignosi Tantillo 2001, 75, n. 43. As suggested by Posner (1971, II, 82–83), it is therefore likely that the executor of the plate was Agostino Carracci and not Annibale.

54 — “M. DC. III. DIE XXX. MENSIS OCTOBRIS EGO LEONARDUS ABEL EPISCOPUS SIDONIENSIS ET IN URBE SUFFRAGANEVS DEPVTVS CONSECRAVI

ALTARE HOC IN HONOREM BEATAE VIRGINIS MARIAE ET SANCTI GREGORII PAPAE; ET RELIQVIAS SACRI SPIRIDIONIS CONFESSORIS SANCTAE MARIAE EGYPTIACAE. . . .” See Gibelli 1888, 21–22.

55 — Mancini ca. 1620 [1956–1957], I, 218: “tra tanto Anniballe attende a finire la gallaria et in questo tempo, con suo disegno e ritocco, fu il quadro di S. Gregorio per il cardinale Salviati, e il Deposto di Croce in S. Francesco di Ripa con alcune altre cose particolari.” See Ginzburg Carignani 2000, 97–110. According to Mittarelli and Costadoni (1764, 194), Salviati obtained the *altare privilegiato* through a *breve* by Clemente VIII of April 5, 1601; see also Pedrocchi 1993, 64. In this case, the Saint Gregory altarpiece would follow, and not precede, the *Assumption of the Virgin* in the Cerasi Chapel, which is usually dated “by March” (Strinati 2001) or June 1601 (by the time of the Farnese Gallery *scoprimento*, on June 2, 1601). The Cerasi Chapel was then consacrated only on November 11, 1606, when Cerasi was already dead (May 5, 1601).

56 — A similar arrangement was repeated in the Pauline Chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore, where Paul V directs his prayers from his tomb to the Marian icon on the altar; however, the difference is that here the icon is on the main altar, and the figure of the pope acts from the lateral wall.

57 — Steinberg 1959; for Venice, Matile 1997.

58 — Posner 1971, I, 126–128.

59 — Pedrocchi 1993, 64.

60 — Ginzburg Carignani (2000, 97–110) interestingly suggests a comparison between the cushion in this painting and Matthew’s tottering stool in the second version of Caravaggio’s Saint Matthew altarpiece.

61 — Posner (1971, 128), followed by several others (e.g., Bernardini and Mignosi Tantillo 2001, 75; “i suoi studi preparatori, di un illusionismo molto più accentuato”).

62 — Where, according to Posner (1971, I, 128), “little remains of the illusionistic ideas with which Annibale started some years before.” In the same way, Posner compares and contrasts the Capodimonte *Pietà* and the *Pietà* at the Louvre. For the influence of Posner on subsequent judgment, see Ginzburg 2011, 160.

63 — Ginzburg Carignani 2000.

64 — Borea (1986) lists and reproduces three other engravings, for a total of four (while only three are known of

the *Assunta* in the Cerasi Chapel; Jean Collin engraved both the San Gregorio altarpiece and the *Assunta*).

65 — Also noted by Ottley and Tomkins 1818, no. 30, who saw the painting in London and described the “crudeness or over brilliancy of its colours,” considering it “too gay in its colouring” (Posner 1971, 2, 57, no. 130). However, Gibelli (1888, 21, n. 1) reports the notice (from the untraceable *Memorie del monastero*) that in 1731 the work was restored at the orders of Duca Salviati: “dal coloraro Pietro Michelini, il quale facendo uso di uno suo segreto lavò il quadro e l’accomodò così bene, che sembrava dipinto da poco tempo.”

66 — Baglione 1642, 107: “Per il Cardinale Antonio Maria Salviati fece in S. Gregorio nella cappella a questo Santo dedicata sopra l’altare un s. Gregorio Papa, ginocchione in atto di orare ad una imagine della Beatissima Vergine, con angioi, e puttini a olio dipinto, e diligentissimamente condotto.”

67 — Bellori 1672 [1976], 93–94: “Nella Chiesa di San Gregorio su ’l monte Celio, entro la cappella edificata dal cardinale Antonio Maria Salviati, ammirasi il quadro del Santo ginocchione con le braccia aperte, pregando per l’anime del Purgatorio. Vive il colore nell’efficacia del Santo Pontefice in abito col camice e con la mozzetta su le spalle. Sta in mezzo a due angeli, che accompagnano le sue preghiere; l’uno con le mani al petto, l’altro accenna il Santo alla Vergine dipinta in una divota immagine per fianco nella medesima cappella, che si tiene parlasse a San Gregorio; e sopra il Santo si vede lo Spirito Santo in forma di colomba, che infonde la luce con altri angeli in adorazione.”

68 — “Magnum Gregorium / quem procumbentem ante Deiparae imaginem, adverso in pariete / depictam / cuius ipse dum viveret alloquium meruit, / Annibal Caraccius, urgente Salviatae Gentis pietate, coloribus expresserat, / Ex archetypo a se delineatum aerae incidit, ut omnium voto facere satis / Jacobus Frey” is the inscription that appears at the bottom of the engraved reproduction by Frey (FIG. 19).

69 — For more general information on the history of the *madonne coronate* and the role of Fra Girolamo Paulucci de’ Calboli da Forlì (d. 1620), see Bombelli 1792; Ilarino da Milano 1950; Ottavio da Alatri 1933; Bonci 2004, 60, 20–29. See also Ostrow 1996, 130, 318, n. 60; Garnett and Rosser 2013, 26, 283–285.

70 — See Appendix, doc. 3, and Bombelli 1782, 2, 79, and following pages. The crowns were already stolen before 1786 when the following note was written: “Noi sottoscritti per la pura verità attestiamo, qualmente abbiamo sempre inteso a dire, e pubblicamente, che la corona d’oro posta alla Madonna della Capella Salviati in S. Gregorio, fu rubbata, ed attestiamo avere ciò inteso a dire da vecchi dimoranti nel Monastero di S. Gregorio, i quali riferivano il sudetto furto, come certo, e indubitato, e negli anni più addietro a tempo loro pubblico, e notorio. Io fra Fedele Brancoli Calmaldolese; io Andrea Puggelli vecchio ortolano di detto monasterio” (note subsequently included in the same file quoted in Appendix, doc. 3, that is, BAV, Archivio del Capitolo di San Pietro, Madonne Coronate [1648–1667], 2, at fols. 178–179).

71 — The idea that the inscription and, above all, the painting by Annibale *document* the miracle is expressed elsewhere in the same file, for example, in this passage: “Da alcuni documenti però non tanto recenti, che tuttavia sussistono, si può sufficientemente raccogliere essere stata la predetta imagine avuta sempre in grande venerazione, non solo per i miracoli, ma ancora per essersi riconosciuta per quella, che parlò già a san Gregorio il grande fondatore del monastero. Nel fregio del cornicione dell’accennata cappella Salviati. . . . La tavola medesima dell’altare di S. Gregorio nella stessa cappella Salviati esprime cosa coerente alle descritte parole [i.e., the inscription], giacchè rappresenta S. Gregorio in ginocchio con la faccia rivolta alla menzionata imagine posta in altro altare in fianco in atto di adorarla.” BAV, Archivio del Capitolo di San Pietro, Madonne Coronate, 1648–1667, 2, fol. 170v, which is the continuation of the text quoted above, n. 20.

72 — Posner (1971, I, 126–127, 173, n. 22) suggests that at this stage, the idea “was to paint the picture in fresco, which would have been the only logical way to execute this design.” It is difficult to assess this hypothesis in relation to the overall project of the chapel.

73 — Posner 1971, I, 127, and 2, fig. 130c.

74 — The chapel might have been finished after 1600 and even after the death of Salviati by his successor, Cardinal Cesare Baronio, who was certainly in charge of the 1603 consecration of this and other altars in

the church (see Posner 1971, 172, n. 24; Eichberg 1994, 50); however, for what concerns this change of iconography, there is no need to posit an intervention by Baronio, as it is not possible to establish any certain connection between Baronio and the San Gregorio altarpiece, even if Baronio was certainly in charge of all the subsequent Gregorian interventions at San Gregorio al Celio. Posner (1971, I, 172, and 2, 57, n. 130) dated the executed altarpiece to ca. 1601 or 1601–1602; see n. 55 above. For a discussion of this drawing in relation to the painting (wrongly entitled *Saint Gregory Praying for the Souls in Purgatory*), see also Loisel Legrand 1999.

75 — Posner (1971, I, 127) notes the “rather odd presentation of a slightly bewildered saint being pulled in opposing, but equally legitimate directions.”

76 — The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 62.120.1, recto.

77 — Posner (1971, 2, n. 130, 57) mentions the possibility (on the basis of Mancini, quoted in n. 55 above) of a degree of intervention of the workshop in the execution of the painting. However, this hypothesis does not seem to be necessary, and it is rarely taken up in the subsequent literature. Among the original liturgical furnishings was probably also a small altar below the image of Mary “in commesso di marmi preziosi.” See Pedrocchi 1993, 64: “risulta dai documenti che fin dall’inizio del ‘600, sotto l’icona della Madonna, c’era un piccolo altare, solo da pochi anni rimosso, costituito da una mensa in commesso di marmi preziosi, citato sia nell’Inventario dei Beni della Chiesa del 1727 che in quello del 1825.”

78 — Armenini 1586, 188–189: “certe figure fatte alla Greca, goffissime, dispiacevoli e tutte affumicate. . . .”

79 — Titi 1763, 75: “nel quadro dell’altare è dipinto a olio s. Gregorio orante alla B. Vergine, con angioi, e puttini, con gran maniera condotto da Annibale Carracci, ed è una delle insigni tavole di Roma.”

80 — As suggested by Eichberg 1994, 50: “tradurre formalmente . . . il cammino ascensionale del popolo di Dio attraverso le preghiere alla Vergine.”

81 — These commissions follow Cardinal Salviati’s diplomatic mission in France (1572–1578), during which time he would have been intimately aware of the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacre, gaining firsthand knowledge of iconoclastic fervor. Earlier, as bishop of

Saint-Papoul (since 1561), Salviati went to Trent on November 28, 1561 (Hurtubise 1985, I, 10). Here, from January 18 to the beginning of December 1562, he took part in the Council, speaking in favor of a strict interpretation of the residence duty. He left before the discussion of the decrees on Purgatory and the veneration of saints and images.

82 — See above and n. 20.

83 — It has been widely recognized that at the moment of planning his major altarpiece for the *Madonna della Vallicella*, Peter Paul Rubens knew the San Gregorio al Celio chapel. In fact, Rubens’s first and refused proposal—the Grenoble version—offers, among other things, a sophisticated combination of laterality (the figure of Saint Gregory) and frontality (the image of the Virgin), while in the final version, the figures of the saints are more “normally” situated at the sides of the Marian image. See Buttler 2011 and *La regola e la fama* 1995, 158.

84 — The quotation about the architecture of this chapel is from Tafuri 1976.