Introduction: openings

The grand and imposing Treasury Chapel, which truly can be called a treasure, both for what is conserved there, and for that which was spent on it. (Carlo Celano, *Notizie del bello dell'antico e del curioso della Città di Napoli*)[1]

What are we to make of the Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro in Naples Cathedral? What do we risk it making of us? We enter the Treasury Chapel via the aisle of the Cathedral (Plates 1 & 2), through the vast subdued architectural frame of the majestic bronze gate – and *suddenly* the chapel presents itself to our gaze (Plates 3 & 4). It is overwhelming: an explosion of glittering surfaces and colour, a space as large as a small church, crowned with a towering cupola, dazzlingly frescoed (Plates 5 & 21), a space where polished coloured marbles seem to tilt with glittering silver busts, while dark self-absorbed bronze figures brood in recesses (Plate 7). This exuberantly decorated baroque chapel is home to Naples' many protector saints, particularly the miraculously liquefying blood relic of San Gennaro (St Januarius) (Plate 6 & Fig. 1).[2] Here are intertwinings, a refusal of a univocal sense of direction or reading: a proliferation that implicates the viewer. Altars, altarpieces, frescoes, marbled walls, precious metals, and semi-precious stones brandish colour and polished surfaces in intense competition for attention in a flickering unstable light (Fig. 3). Everywhere one looks, there is an abundance of luxuriant, exuberant claims, from the soaring recesses of the dome, splashed with light, to the shadowy presbytery populated by busts and statues peering from darkened niches, to the vast glittering silver candlesticks and

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[1] '[L]a grande e maestosa cappella del Tesoro; che veramente dir si può tesoro, e per quello che vi conserva, e per quello che speso fù'. C. Celano, *Notizie del bello dell'antico e del curioso della Città di Napoli*, ed. Giovanni Battista Chiarini, 5 vols (Naples: Agostino de Pascale, 1856–58), vol. III, tom. 1, 235.

[2] The city of Naples also succeeded in appointing Gennaro as patron of the Kingdom of Naples during the plague of 1656. See J. M. Sallmann, *Santi barocchi: modelli di santità, pratiche devozionali e comportamenti religiosi nel Regno di Napoli dal 1540 al 1750*, trans. Carla Rabuffetti (Lecce: Argo, 1996), 83.

the illusionistic pavement that conjures depth in grey, creamy white, and Spanish brocatello (Plate 33).

Building from 1608 to fulfil a vow made during the plague of 1526–27, the chapel remains one of the most venerated sanctuaries in the city (Fig. 2). Here is revered the prodigious blood of Naples' principal protector saint, San Gennaro, Bishop of Benevento, beheaded as a Christian in 305 in Pozzuoli. The miraculous liquefaction of his blood affirms the intercession of San Gennaro with God in heaven on behalf of Naples. This it does when it encounters his head relic (Plate 6 & Fig. 4), including on auspicious occasions, such as his feast days, with tremendous celebration (Fig. 9).[3]

The chapel is a multiple deployment of surfaces, colours, and textures, making possible not one or two unambivalent and singular significations, but entire constellations of meanings (Plate 4). What is to many, especially those of northern and Protestant sensibilities, most readily characterized as 'excessive' or 'over the top' seems to pull the visitor in all directions at once. Material richness, surface sheen, and formal and iconographical complexity engulf us. A treasury indeed.

What is found here? Lessons in paint for the poor and unlettered? Hardly. Rather, rich labyrinths in which knowledge loses its way in a great displacement, a great multiplication of forms, relics, images, and surfaces, in which we must first lose ourselves before anything can be found. The system is a displacement, which takes over. Indeed, art would be nothing more than opinion if it did not allow an element of chaos to enter in and transform and mobilize thinking.[4] Destruction of mere opinion is achieved by disrupting the supposed harmony or unity of experience. Thus the chapel takes us out of the ordinary, through a visible and 'natural' spectacle encompassing history, away from history, spectacle, and nature as given. We are made present at the mystery, rather than it presenting itself to us. But to be present is to be changed.

Baroque particularity

I have chosen to examine the matter of the miracle through the prism of baroque architecture, because the very material insistence of the latter has often defeated analysis.[5] The Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro is characteristic

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[3] Gennaro's blood and head are relics. A 'relic' is etymologically 'that which remains', but its meaning was strengthened by Christianity, so as to render it the equivalent of 'holy body' or 'sacred remains'. Such holy matter, vehemently attacked by Protestant reformers, received new visibility. It drew worshippers, swelled reserves, established boundaries, and accused dissidents and outsiders.

[4] G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchill (London: Verso, 1994), 204.

[5] The term 'baroque' is useful for designating an emphatic Catholic emotive visual aesthetic.

in many ways of the sort of baroque art that is still too readily marginalized within art history, squeamishly ignored, or too hastily characterized as 'excessive' or 'over the top'.[6]

The study of a single work of architecture offers an opportunity to reflect on the baroque in general via the particular. This permits clear contradistinction to the more conventional approach that seeks to interpret the particular in terms of the general (the chapel as consequence or manifestation of 'the Counter-Reformation', for example). I approach this issue without assuming that the architecture at the heart of the study represents a universal or that it is continuous with other buildings of the same chronological 'moment' or reducible to the literal presence of the chapel. Indeed far from it.

Responding to baroque architecture's self-declaratory assertiveness and drama, scholars have too easily assumed that it is necessarily overt, extrovert, and fundamentally representational or transmissive. This is to confuse baroque's effects with the intelligible, if arcane, iconographies that it wears. Thus the baroque has been read overwhelmingly in terms of 'propaganda' and as an articulation of renewed Catholicism after Trent.[7] It has been interpreted, in other words, as little more than illustration of ideas and hopes effected and held elsewhere, bundled together in an appeal to 'emotions' or to 'rhetoric'. Yet the strength of its address should not be confused with apparent simplicity of message. Indeed, it should not be conflated with 'message' at all. Rather

As a chronological term, 'baroque' conventionally is usually treated as coinciding more or less with the Catholic Reform from the mid-sixteenth century to the mid-eighteenth century. For discussion of the 'baroque' that does not depend on chronological period, see G. Deleuze, *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1988); C. Buci-Glucksmann et al., eds, *Puissance du Baroque: les forces, les formes, les rationalités* (Paris: ditions Galilée, 1999); R. Harbison, *Reflections on Baroque* (London: Reaktion Books, 2000); V. H. Minor, *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); H. Hills, 'The Baroque as Decadence: From the Beads of a Rosary to Baroque Folds', in Marcello Fantoni and Chiara Continisio (eds), *Catholicism as Decadence*, Italian History & Culture 12 (Florence: Mauro Pagliai Editore, 2007), 185–211. A useful discussion of architectural history and the *longue durée* is provided by D. Calabi, *The Market and the City: Square, Street and Architecture in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 21–24. For the baroque as thorn in the flesh or sand in the oyster of academic art history, because without contemporaneous articulation, see H. Hills, 'Introduction: Rethinking the Baroque', in H. Hills (ed.), *Rethinking the Baroque* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), 3–10, and 'The Baroque: The Grit in the Oyster of Art History', in H. Hills (ed.), *Rethinking the Baroque* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), 11–36.

6   Art historians in particular persist in treating the Italian south as necessarily less sophisticated than the north. The consonance of political and cultural prejudices has been critically interrogated by sociologists and modernist historians, but not by art historians. See for example R. Lumley and J. Morris (eds), *New History of the Italian South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

7   The literature here is too extensive to encompass, but see in particular E. Levy, *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

than 'propagandistic', rather than a rhetorically effective and visual version of Tridentine decrees, baroque's demands on the viewer are more than *persuasive*. This is not to pit the rational against the emotive. Far from it.

Baroque emerges as far more crepuscular and muscular than is permitted by any interpretation that privileges representation and 'history' over 'art'. Here it is more allusive and elusive, more unpredictable than representational, and more affective, crueller, and more subtle. Above all, it is transformative. The very visual richness – of form, colour, materials, and flagrant display of virtuoso technique – of the Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro is productive in terms other than conveying a message from ecclesiastical authority to worshipper (Plate 2). Baroque materiality must be thought in terms of potentiality. Thus the baroque chapel may be seen as presenting singular affects and percepts, freed from organizing and purposive points of view.

The material richness of the chapel, its exciting visual complexity, and its excessive demands – so often treated as simply overwhelming or vulgar – are approached here not as an obstacle to interpretation, nor even so much as something to be understood – in the sense of explicated, explained, and tamed – but as material effects that are imbricated in the very productiveness of the chapel itself. Thus rather than treat the Treasury Chapel in standard terms of baroque as 'propaganda', or as a manifestation of 'liturgy' or 'the Counter-Reformation', or as apparently straightforward response to, or consequence of, a particular local event, such as the plague, the vow, or the translation of relics, I will show that it can offer a material framing of baroque and of the work of architecture that permit materiality's development. This is, then, what might seem to be a contradiction in terms – 'material spirituality' – a spiritual materiality that is also generative.

There are many reasons why the Treasury Chapel is a compelling work of architecture, permitting an examination of the relationships between form and excess, holiness and materiality, and place as productive of saints, reasons which this book brings to the fore, but the focus on a particular building is undertaken for more significant theoretical reasons, too.

Dwelling on a single building allows a detailed examination of the many registers in which its architecture (in an extended sense) operates. To alight upon a single building demonstrates how architecture's work is far from single. It permits the machinic to emerge. It permits recognition of its particularity and peculiarity while also demonstrating the depth and breadth of its reach. More than this, such a focus allows the chapel to emerge as event, as something that generates and disrupts. Thus the chapel is interrogated here in terms of the miracle and temporality, materials and materiality, local topographies and telluric philosophy, form and affect, niche and mobility, sanctity and transformation. It is investigated as an engine in – not as origin of – the production of protectors, and in the aristocratization of sanctity in the city.

Thus I trace its intimate involvement in the production of protector saints, its salvific interventions in disasters, its capacity to remake the city, and its subtle reworkings of aristocratic politics and spiritual authority – in short, issues that extend far beyond the walls of the chapel building, but that are also wrought within and by them. This is to address the chapel as baroque assemblage that brings into productive relation relics, place and places, sanctity, materiality, blood and miracles, and the politics of the Seggi.

The Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro in Naples and the excess of art history

To many, especially those from the Protestant north, the Treasury Chapel seems 'excessive' or 'over the top' (Plate 3). But the experience of feeling overwhelmed by it is neither new nor limited to visitors from the north. The responses of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century visitors to the chapel indicate similar difficulties. 'It is wholly precious', writes Domenico Antonio Parrino in 1700.[8] But he, like most early modern authors, quickly slips into enumeration, as if the impact of the chapel leaves him grappling to reassert control by counting and recording the number of columns and statues, and, above all, by calculating its cost. Preciousness slides into value. Quantification takes over. The impulse to enumerate perhaps springs from a wish to steady the ground and counter the sense of being swept away. Parrino opens his discussion of the Treasury Chapel which runs to five pages in his *Nuova Guida de' Forastieri* (Naples: Parrino, 1714): 'One would need all the energy in the world to describe the chapel of San Gennaro.'[9] Thus its infinite refinements lie beyond any feasible description; indeed, simply to describe it would demand energy without limit. The chapel is introduced in terms of *excess*. It exceeds and exhausts energy and description. Parrino then briefly refers to the miraculous liquefactions as a 'lively testimony' to San Gennaro's love of the Neapolitans, before turning to the cost envisaged in 1526 of 10,000 ducats: 'As it is seen today, it is entirely precious [*tutto prezioso*], both for its sacred relics and for the wealth of golds, silvers, stones, sculpture, and painting.'[10]

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8 '[È] tutto prezioso'. D. A. Parrino, *Napoli Città Nobilissima, Antica, e Fedelissima Esposta à gli Occhi, & alla mente de' Curiosi, divisa in due parti, Contenendo in questa prima le sue più belle Vedute intagliate in Rame, Chiese, Castelli, Fabbriche, magnificenze, Notizie degli antichi Dogi, Regnanti, Arcivescovi, Nobiltà, Popolo, Tribunali, Quadri, Statue, Sepolchri, Librarie, e ciò che più di notabile, bello, e buono in essa si contiene, Epilogata da suoi Autori impressi, e manoscritti, che ne hanno diffusamente trattato*, vol. I (Naples: Parrino, 1700), 396.

9 'Tutta l'energia del Mondo ci vorrebbe à descrivere la cappella.' Parrino, *Napoli Città Nobilissima*, vol. I (1700), 396.

10 'In questo quanto ora si vede, è tutto prezioso, ò per le sacre reliquie, ò per le ricchezze d'ori, argenti, pietre, scoltura, e dipintura.' Parrino, *Napoli Città Nobilissima*, vol. I (1700), 396.

Thus relics, precious materials, and artifice are brought together under the epithet *prezioso*. The whole is 'precious' and so is everything about it. Parrino, like most writers, presents sacred relics, architecture, sculpture, and painting of the chapel as bound in a whole precisely through their value, their preciousness.

That the chapel cost a treasure and held a treasure was repeatedly articulated by early modern commentators. Writing in 1623, Caracciolo says that already 150,000 scudi had been spent on the chapel, which was at that time still far from finished, but which on completion, he claims, 'would be one of the principal and splendid treasuries of Italy'.[11] Commentators are less ready to enter into a discussion about what lay between its cost and its contents. Thus Carlo Celano in 1692: 'The grand and imposing Treasury Chapel, which truly can be called a treasure, both for what is kept there, and for what was spent on it'.[12] The chapel combines the treasures that it contains with those that were spent to produce it; that is, the chapel is presented as 'container' and in terms of its expense. The celebration of cost and contents tends to eclipse the matter and work, indeed, paradoxically, even the very materiality of the chapel itself.

Carlo de Lellis, writing in 1654, does indeed refer to materials and form. He situates the chapel in a European-wide comparative perspective and emphasizes the use of 'the finest marbles', of 'bronze' for the patronal saints' statues, and of 'the noble Corinthian order'. But enumeration swiftly supplants qualitative engagement:

> in truth this new Treasury has proved to be one of the most beautiful and splendid temples of Europe; appropriately its order is Corinthian, and it consists entirely of the finest marbles. There can be seen there 40 columns of *broccatello*, 14 statues of bronze, of a value of 4,000 ducats each of 14 patron saints of the city.[13]

[11] 'uno de più principali, e superbi Tesori dell'Italia'. C. D'Engenio Caracciolo, *Napoli Sacra: Ove oltre le vere origini, e fundationi di tutte le Chiese e Monasterij, Spedali, & altri luoghi sacri della Città di Napoli, e suoi Borghi. Si tratta di tutti li corpi, e Reliquie di Santi, e Beati vi si ritrovano … Ad istantia de Francesco Buonocore* (Naples: Ottavio Beltrano, 1623), 8.

[12] '[L]a grande e maestosa cappella del Tesoro; che veramente dir si può tesoro, e per quello che vi conserva, e per quello che speso fù'. Celano, *Notizie del bello*, vol. III, tom. I, 235. He justifies the chapel as a 'treasure' in terms of what it holds and what it cost.

[13] 'Et in verò è riuscito questo nuovo Tesoro un de' più belli e superbi Tempii d'Europa; imperciò che essendo d'ordine Corinto, e tutto composto di finissimi marmi, vi si scorgono 40 colonne di broccatello, 14 Statue di bronzo, di valuta di 4,000 ducati l'una de' 14 Padroni della Città.' C. de Lellis, *Parte Seconda ò vero supplimento a Napoli Sacra di D. Cesare D'Engenio Caracciolo: ove si aggiungono le Fondationi di tutte le Chiese, Monasteri, & altri luoghi sacri della Città di Napoli e suoi Borghi* (Naples: Roberto Mollo, 1654), 17.

It is as if, overwhelmed by the richness and complexity of what lies before him, all he can do is to count: columns, statues, cost, and number of saints. The chapel becomes a computational machine or magic number system.

In his well-known *Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, ed Architetti Napoletani* (Naples, 1743) Bernardo De Dominici adopts a different approach:

> Here I will not undertake a detailed description of its structure, its magnificence, or its lavishness, nor the hundreds of thousands of scudi that have been spent on it, since all these things can be read in [works by] various of our writers, who have gone into minute detail on the subject; what is clear is the fame of so noble and sumptuous a chapel throughout almost the entire world.[14]

Striking here are the almost obligatory paralipses, the repeated, apparently bewitched references to 'magnificence', 'richness' or 'lavishness' (*ricchezza*), and to the vast sums of money spent. Money is materialized; and the descriptions quickly return to enumerate the cash sums spent. Like Carlo de Lellis, De Dominici is quick to emphasize the fame of the chapel, 'throughout almost the entire world'. He characterizes the chapel as *nobile* and *sontuosa*. These are part of its constitution, not simply aristocratic in patronage and conception, but in richness, materials, and effects.

Matter, money and materiality are interfused, and cost, price, and value become confused in these early descriptions of the Treasury Chapel. Accounts become accounts. It is the very *preciousness* of the chapel that is regarded as defying description. Thus the chapel is evoked as something excessive, exceeding budgets and description. Enumeration rapidly replaces evaluation, and terms associated with high social rank, such as magnificence and nobility, elide comparative architectural interpretation and even discussion of ritual practices during the miracle.

Rewriting the ex-voto chapel

In the face of the chapel's overwhelming visual complexity and affective demands, it is no wonder that modern historians and art historians have responded to it, much as their baroque counterparts, by trying to produce order out of its apparent chaos. Modern scholars have sought to master the chapel by treating it in terms of physical and chronological extent. The

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[14] 'Quì non si descrive a minuto la struttura di essa, la magnificenza, e la ricchezza, nè la gran migliaja di scudi, che vi si spesero, da poichè tutte queste cose si leggono in varj nostri Scrittori, che minutamente ne han fatto parola; essendo chiara la fama di sì nobile, e sontuosa Cappella quasi per tutto il Mondo.' B. De Dominici, *Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, ed Architetti Napoletani Non mai date alla luce da Autore alcuno dedicate agli Eccellentiss. Signori Eletti della Fedelissima Città di Napoli* (Naples: Francesco & Cristoforo Ricciardi, 1743), 251–252.

strongest impulse has been towards producing a chronological narrative account.[15] To organize the dates of the numerous interventions into a conventional linear narrative to correspond to the physical fabric of the chapel is to treat and reproduce the chapel as simply *extensive*.

Without exception, art historians and historians have to date interpreted the Treasury Chapel as a teleological fulfilment of a vow made during the plague of 1527.[16] Its concentrated artistic splendour has been explained, overwhelmingly, in terms of struggles and triumphs of individual artists. Existing scholarship consistently characterizes its architecture as exemplifying 'Neapolitan devotion of the Counter-Reformation', and less insistently as the centre of the cult of San Gennaro.[17] Architectural studies tend to ignore the painting and metalwork, dismissing them as 'later additions' that obscure the 'original intentions' for the chapel.[18] Altarpieces and frescoes are treated as way markers in the oeuvres of individual artists. The bronze figural sculpture has been approached in isolation, without being related to the chapel's magnificent bronze gates (Plates 1 & 3).[19] Insofar as they have been

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[15] A. Bellucci, *Memorie storiche ed artistiche del Tesoro nella cattedrale dal secolo XVI al XVIII desunte da soli documenti inediti* (Naples: Antonio Iacuelli Libraio Editore, 1915); E. Catello and C. Catello, *La Cappella del Tesoro di San Gennaro* (Naples: Edizione del Banco di Napoli, 1977); F. Strazzullo, *La Cappella di San Gennaro nel Duomo di Napoli* (Naples: Istituto Grafico Editoriale Italiano, 1994); S. Savarese, *Francesco Grimaldi e l'architettura della Controriforma a Napoli* (Rome: Officina Edizioni, 1986), 116–125; V. Cerino, *San Gennaro: un santo, un voto e una cappella* (Naples: Rolando Editore, 2005).

[16] Scholars who have reinforced the chronologizing impulse in interpreting the Treasury Chapel include Bellucci, *Memorie storiche*, 1–30; F. Strazzullo, *La Real Cappella del Tesoro di San Gennaro: documenti inediti* (Naples: Società Editrice Napoletana, 1978); Strazzullo, *La Cappella di San Gennaro*; G. Cantone, *Napoli barocca* (Bari: Laterza, 1992), 109, 144, 214; Catello and Catello, *La Cappella del Tesoro*. The document recording the formal vow is dated 13 January 1527: 'Die XIII Januarii 1527, Neapoli. In maiori Ecclesia Neapolitana coram nobis constitutis magnificis dominis Elettis Civitatis Neapolitanae qui, moti fervore devotionis, promettono et fanno voto donare delli denari publici di questa Città ducati undecimillia, videlicet mille d'oro per lo Tabernacolo della Ven. Eucharistia et Sacramento t dieci millia altri per lo Sacello da riponere lo reliquiario del Beato Januario Protettore di questa Citta; acciò interceda avanti lo cospetto de Dio per la liberatione alla peste di questa Città.' Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, Ms II-E-2, fol. 357. There were outbreaks of plague in Naples in 1522, 1526, 1527, 1528, and 1529. Most scholarship deems 1727 to be the worst of these. And most of the baroque accounts do not refer to the 1729 outbreak. See A. White, *Plague and Pleasure: The Renaissance World of Pius II* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014), 377.

[17] The identification of the Treasury Chapel and the 'Counter-Reformation' is most starkly drawn by Savarese, *Francesco Grimaldi*, 116–126. See also Cantone, *Napoli barocca*, 109, 144, 214.

[18] See, for instance, A. Blunt, *Neapolitan Baroque & Rococo Architecture* (London: Zwemmer, 1975), 43–44.

[19] Paola d'Agostino's excellent study of Cosimo Fanzago thus considers his gates, without

studied at all the silver reliquaries have been hived off into specialist studies of silverwork.[20] Attempts to embrace architecture and sculpture together have invariably assumed a purely chronological lens.[21] Thus the decoration, like the miracle, has not to date been effectively related to the architecture of the chapel. Indeed, the chapel has been treated overwhelmingly as either a passive receptacle for objects, or as mere representation of events and changes produced and existing *already somewhere else.*

The narrative of the Treasury Chapel as a built response to the terrible plague of 1526–28 was first circulated in the seventeenth century, and has been repeated many times. In brief, it runs like this. In 1526 plague seized Naples in its deathly grip. Coinciding with a bloody war with France, this was a terrible time for the city and kingdom.[22] In increasing desperation, 'the Neapolitan people, unable to find any other solution, had recourse to the help of the saints'.[23] In particular, they turned to San Gennaro, their principal patron. On 13 January 1527, the feast day of the translation of his relics to Naples from Montevergine, following the traditional procession of their patron's relics, the Eletti of the city, an overwhelmingly aristocratic group, who constituted the Tribunale di San Lorenzo and were responsible for the administration of the city of Naples, made a vow in the presence of the Vicario Generale Monsignor Donato, Bishop of Ischia. They swore to raise 11,000 ducats, including 1,000 within a year for a tabernacle for the sacrament and the remaining 10,000 to build within ten years a sumptuous and magnificent chapel in San Gennaro's honour 'so that he will intercede in the presence of God to free our city from plague'.[24] Thus a showcase for San Gennaro's

relating them in visual terms to the bronze figural work in the chapel. See P. d'Agostino, *Cosimo Fanzago scultore* (Naples: Paparo Edizioni, 2011), 288–292.

20 See, for example, E. Catello and C. Catello, *Scultura in argento nel Sei e Settecento a Napoli* (Naples: Franco Di Mauro, 2000), 32–55.

21 See, for example, Strazzullo, *La Cappella di San Gennaro*.

22 In 1526–27 during the absence of the Viceroy from Naples and after the death of Andrea Carafa, Count of Santaseverino, in June 1526, the Angevins once again invaded to try to recapture the Kingdom of Naples from Spain. French soldiers disembarked at Salerno and Gaeta, and got as far as Castellammare and Torre del Greco. The viceroy hurried back to Naples with a fleet of thirty ships and 16,000 infantry troops. The end of the serious French threat to the Kingdom of Naples was marked by the failure of the invasion in 1528 under the command of Odet de Foix, Monseigneur de Lautrec. Lautrec himself died of plague and the French soldiers, demoralized, retreated from the siege of the capital, suffering a severe defeat at Aversa (1528). See J. Marino, *Becoming Neapolitan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 103, 115.

23 Celano, *Notizie del bello*, vol. III, 235.

24 'acciò che interceda avanti lo cospetto de Dio per la liberazione dalla peste di questa Città'. C. Tutini, *Memorie della Vita Miracoli, e culto di San Gianuario Martire Vescovo di Benevento, e principal protettore della Città di Napoli, Raccolte da Don Camillo Tutini Napoletano* (Naples: Ottavio Beltrano, 1633), 114. The deed of 13 January 1527 was

relics was to be built and the basis of the constitution of the Deputation, or commssion of the chapel was established.[25] By doing this, the Eletti hoped to propitiate San Gennaro and persuade him to safeguard the already devastated city of Naples from even worse disasters. Thus the city, as the municipal administration was then known, was to have patronage rights over the chapel, and the tabernacle was to belong to the Eletti.[26]

Many years passed before the vow of 1527 was discharged.[27] The vow failed to halt the plague and, undeflected, the disease slaughtered somewhere in the region of 60,000 people in the city between 1526 and 1528. More significantly, the political will to forge ahead with the project was lacking. It was not until 5 February 1601– a full thirty-four years later – that the Eletti

notarized by Vincenzo de Rosis and was signed by Marino Tomacelli for the Seggio of Capuana, Francesco d'Alagno for Nido, Galeazzo Cicinello and Antonio Sanfelice for Montagna, Alberigo de Liguoro for Porta Nova, Antonio d'Alessandro for Porto, and Paolo Calamazza for the Seggio del Popolo. See A. Bellucci, *Memorie storiche*, 1–2. It was made in the presence of Monsignore Donato, Bishop of Ischia, Vicario Generale of Cardinal Vincenzo Carafa, Archbishop of Naples (Strazzullo, *La Real Cappella*, 3). The seat of Naples' civic administration was the Piazza di San Lorenzo, next to the basilica of San Lorenzo. From the end of the fifteenth century Naples was administered by a group of 'Eletti', in which the nobility had five votes and the 'Popolo' ('people') only one. Every six months each Seggio elected its own representative, the Eletto, who sat in the Tribunale. Thus the government of the city, whose population by the mid-seventeenth century was an astonishing 450,000, was effectively in the hands of a mere 150 noble families. Social disequilibrium, quite usual in seventeenth-century Italy, was thus dangerously pronounced through sheer force of numbers in Naples. The elect of the Popolo was chosen by the Viceroy from six names proposed for election by the fifty-eight procuratori of the twenty-nine ottine, or city districts (two procuratori for each district). After 1548 the Eletto of the people was no longer selected from the fifty-eight procurators of the people's ottine, but by the Viceroy from three names voted by the procurators. G. Muto, 'Il patriziato napoletano e il governo della città capitale', in G. Muto, E. Capasso Torre delle Pastene, and Pierluigi Sanfelice di Bagoli (eds), *Patriziato napoletano e governo della città* (Naples: Cappella del Tesoro, 2005), 17–23.

25 Deputations or committees were bodies with specific functions. Some of them were administrative, others jurisdictional, such as the *Tribunale della fortificazione, acque e mattonata*. Other deputations had no jurisdictional power, but considerable political weight, such as the *Deputazione contro il Santo Uffizio*, the *Deputazione dei capitoli e privilegi*, the *Deputazione della Moneta*, and the *Deputazione del Tesoro di San Gennaro*. Muto, 'Il patriziato napoletano', 21.

26 See Strazzullo, *La Real Cappella*, 3.

27 Meanwhile the hospital of San Gennaro dei Poveri for plague victims went ahead: its vestibule was decorated with frescoes in the 1530s illustrating the life of San Gennaro, attributed to Sabatino. In 1566 Carlo Caracciolo di Vico established an annual procession on 4 November from the Annunziata to the catacombs of San Gennaro. Part of the revenue from this event was used to build homes for the poor to protect them better from the plague. C. Nichols, 'Plague and Politics in Early Modern Naples: The Relics of San Gennaro', in L. Dixon (ed.), *In Sickness and in Health: Disease as Metaphor in Art and Popular Wisdom* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 42 n. 50.

nominated a commission, or Deputazione, of twelve members charged with the building of the chapel. At that meeting, it was agreed to establish a chapel in the Cathedral, and to entrust responsibility for worship to a college of six chaplains and four deacons, with a Treasurer, responsible for the relics, to be chosen from the chaplains. On 21 April 1603 the deputies agreed to increase the number of chaplains from six to twelve, indicating their fast-growing ambition.[28] Pope Paul V officially authorized the building of a 'magnificent chapel' in a Bull of 1605, and gave permission for six canons and four clergymen.[29] Even then it was not until another outbreak of plague that the building of the new chapel began. On 8 June 1608 the Bishop of Calvi, Monsignor Fabio Maranta, delegating for Cardinal Ottavio Acquaviva who was in Rome, blessed the first stone in the presence of the Viceroy, the Neapolitan patriciate, and a great gathering of Neapolitans, 'with noble pomp and display'.[30] By 1615 the chapel's basic structure was complete and marble work including the columns was begun.[31] And in 1646 the deputies announced that, as the chapel was complete in structure and essential ornament, the translation of all the relics from the old Treasury Chapel (Fig. 6) could now begin.[32] Costs kept pace with ambitions and rapidly spiralled. In 1633 Camillo Tutini recorded in his *Memorie della Vita Miracoli, e culto di San Gianuario Martire* that, while the vow had sworn to spend 10,000 ducats, even though the chapel was not yet finished, by 1633 a prodigious 140,000 ducats had already been spent 'for its magnificence'.[33] Decoration continued well into the 1770s. And new protector saints were welcomed in and accommodated until the twentieth century.[34] Indeed, the doors are potentially open to new saints to this day.

[28] Strazzullo, *La Real Cappella*, 3.
[29] The six canons were to be decided by the Seggi, which also were to take it in turns to choose the Treasurer from the same group of canons. Meeting on 30 January 1606, the deputies agreed to ask the Holy See to institute twelve chaplains in addition to the six canons, indicating a renewed spiritual and institutional ambition. Strazzullo, *La Real Cappella*, 3–4.
[30] Tutini, *Memorie* (1633), 114. The foundation stone was inscribed on one side: 'Divo Ianuario, D. Aspremo, D. Agnello, D. Thomae Caeterisq: Tutelaribus, Neapolitana Civitas saeviente vi pestis, Anno 1527 sacellum vivit, 1608 fecit'; and on the other: 'Divo Athanasio D. Severo, D. Euphebio, D. Agrippino, Paulo V. Pontif. Max. Philippo III Rege Octavo Aquaviva S.R.E. Cardinale Archiepiscopp. Io. Alphonso Pimitello Veneventanorum Comite Prorege.' Tutini, *Memorie* (1633), 114.
[31] On 1 June 1615 the Deputies, considering that the basic fabric ('la fabrica rustica') of the chapel was complete, released Giovanni Cola Franco from his role as supervisor and engaged Cristofero Monterosso to superintend the work of the master carvers and those involved in the marble work and columns. See ATSG, 66/2, fol. 18.
[32] Strazzullo, *La Real Cappella*, 8–9.
[33] Tutini, *Memorie* (1633), 115.
[34] The most recent silver reliquaries are those of Santa Rita (1928), St Gertrude (1927), St Lucy (1902), and St Maria Francesca of the Five Wounds (1901).

A linear chronological account of the building and decoration of the chapel is therefore readily conceived. And, indeed, it has been repeatedly undertaken. The story focuses on great artists and their interventions in an attempt to insert the Treasury Chapel into the canon.

An art history without artists

Scholarship has treated the Treasury Chapel as product of an individual architect, seen as providing the necessary link to developments in Rome. The Theatine architect Francesco Grimaldi was already known in Naples for his churches of the Sapienza, San Paolo Maggiore, Sant'Andrea delle Dame, Santa Maria degli Angeli, Trinità delle Monache, and Santi Apostoli.[35] Thus Grimaldi emerges as caught in locality and propelled by an overpowering Hegelian stylistic current. Silvia Savarese describes him as 'an artist who, while remaining tied to a traditional vocabulary, marked in Naples a change of taste as the hinge between local tradition and early baroque architecture'.[36]

The early stages of the design process are far from clear. A host of architects produced designs for the new chapel: Ciccardo Bernucci, Giovan Battista Cavagni, Bartolomeo Cartaro, Giulio Cesare Fontana, Alessandro Cimminelli, Giovan Cola di Franco; D.e d'Azzurro, Gesuè d'Angelo; Michelangelo Naccherino, Dionisio di Bartolomeo; Giovan Giacomo di Conforto.[37] These designs were sent to Rome to an 'expert committee' and Francesco Grimaldi's design was selected.

From the start, the Deputazione snubbed local Neapolitan architects and artists, seeking instead to involve those from elsewhere. Thus on 26 January 1608 the Deputazione determined that 'as the work is of great import, quality and expense, in order that it should reach successful completion with correct proportions and measurements, according to the design', they would ask the Theatine Francesco Grimaldi 'to design, direct and visit the work as necessary', knowing his 'intelligence and excellence sufficient to the job'. They turned to Grimaldi because 'almost all the architects in this city are either not

[35] Grimaldi was born in Oppido Lucano in 1543, entered the Theatine order in 1574, and between 1585 and 1598 was in Rome for the building of Sant'Andrea della Valle. He died on 1 August 1613 in the Casa of Santi Apostoli in Naples, which he himself designed. S. Savarese, 'Francesco Grimaldi e la transizione al Barocco: una rilettura della Cappella del Tesoro nel Duomo di Napoli', in G. Cantone (ed.), *Barocco napoletano* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato Libreria dello Stato, 1992), 120.

[36] Savarese, 'Francesco Grimaldi', 120.

[37] ATSG, AB/1 (10/25-166), fol. 87r: 4 October 1607: 'Si nota come si sono ricevuti dalli SSri Deputati l'infra[scri]tti disegni per la Cappella del gl.so S. Gennaro. Dip. di Ciccardo Bernucci di Gio Battista Cavagni, Bart.o Cartaro, Giulio Cesare Fontana, Alessandro Cimminelli, Gio Colafranco di Gio: d.e d'Azzurro, Gesuè d'Angelo di Michel'Angelo Naccarino di Dionisio di Bart.o di Gio Giacomo di Conforto.'

above suspicion or not disinterested' and were resentful of those appointed or whose designs were selected.[38] Giovan Cola di Franco was appointed as supervisor, in recognition of his 'hard work' in producing a design for the chapel, which in Rome had been selected 'in part'.[39]

There thus began a pattern of rivalry and division that runs through the story of the art patronage of the chapel. Thus in 1612 the deputies were searching for artists from Rome, 'due to the scarcity in this city of sufficient artists and craftsmen necessary to an undertaking of such high quality', as they wrote to Conte di Castro, Philip III's ambassador in Rome.[40] This replayed something of the dynamic at the Certosa of San Martino in Naples when the Carthusians at the start of work had turned to Rome, Genoa, Venice, and the Low Countries for artists.[41] The deputies were initially eager to commission famous artists from outside Naples, in order to secure unquestionable prestige. Gradually those ambitions were thwarted by entrenched local artistic interests.

Thus energetic historians and art historians have concentrated on chronologizing, identifying, and attributing individual artworks within the chapel.[42] At first sight, indeed, a chronological narrative seems the best way to accommodate the chapel and its lengthy creation. For the chapel was not conceived or planned in its entirety at its inception: the archives amply demonstrate that the building and decoration of the chapel were long-drawn-out and complex affairs. Controversy centred on the sore ques-

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[38] 'E perchè l'opera è di molta importanza qualità e spesa, affinchè venghi con le proporzioni e misure giuste e riesca a punto, conforme al disegno di detta Capella, essendo che l'architetti sono in questa Città, quasi tutti sono sospetti et interessati per non essere presi et eletti i disegni da loro fatti, et in alcuni altri cardendo [backbiting] le difficoltà e rispetti discorsi fra essi Deputati, sapendosi la bontà sufficienza et intelligenza del padre D. Francesco de Clerici Regolari Teatini è stato concluso che se scrivi pregando il Padre generale della loro religgione che dia licenza e comandi a detto Padre D. Francesco che poss, secondo sarà necessario, revedere quell'opra si fa e designarla e regolarla di modo che venghi con ogni perfezione.' ATSG, 10/25, n.f. (published in Catello & Catello, *La Cappella del Tesoro*, 397–398, doc. VI). The following deputies signed the document: Annibale Spina, Marcello Muscettola, Francesco Rosso, D. Cesare Pappacoda, Domenico Imparato, Matteo Golino, Marc'Antonio Torre.

[39] 'ha fatigato nel fare il disegno della Cappella, e nella scelta fatta in Roma il suo ha partecipato nell'essere eletto in parte'. ATSG, 10/25, n.f.

[40] 'per la scarsezza che è in questa Città di maestri et artefici sufficienti come bisognano in una opera di tanta qualità' (27 September 1612). ATSG, 10/25, n.f.

[41] R. Causa, *L'arte nella Certosa di San Martino a Napoli* (Naples: Cava dei Tirreni, 1973), 38.

[42] See especially Bellucci, *Memorie storiche*, 1–30; Strazzullo, *La Real Cappella*; Strazzullo, *La Cappella di San Gennaro*; [Archdiocese of Naples], *San Gennaro: tra fede, arte e mito* (Naples: Elio de Rosa Editore, 1997); Catello and Catello, *Scultura in argento*; Cerino, *San Gennaro*; Savarese, *Francesco Grimaldi*, 116–125.

tion of whether the best artists were to be attracted from elsewhere, notably Emilia Romagna and Rome, or whether they might be found in Naples itself. The competition, selection of artists, and bullying and intimidation of non-Neapolitans by native artists and their henchmen resulted in a prolonged and disputatious affair. More than most buildings the chapel was promised, stalled, begun, interrupted, and added to; ideas were altered, shelved, and reconsidered over a long period of time; attempts to secure prestigious artists ran constantly into the sands; and its primary occupants, the reliquary busts of the protector saints, shifted and proliferated as new patron saints were elected. Direction there was – above all from the Deputation, the aristocratic administrative body in charge of the chapel – but what was directed and who directed it were ever changing. The chapel underwent many alterations and developments which were unforeseeable at the time of the completion of the structural shell, let alone of the vow itself. Such a shifting story appears to demand a chronological narrative, which scholars have dutifully sought to supply.

Dates and names; a chronological string; a linear history on to which to hang this overwhelming richness, to peg it out in narrative clarity, repair (and impair) the imbroglio, and produce order out of apparent chaos. There has been an apparently irresistible urge to name, to identify, to date, and to chronologize, with regard to the architecture, the frescoes in the dome and vaults, the altarpieces and altars, the reliquary busts and statues. Indeed, a chronological compilation of interventions might, at first sight, seem to be a fitting response to the nature of the documents in the Treasury's own archive. Fragmented and lacunary though they are, records of payments and cursory notes of the *Conclusioni* of the meetings of the Deputazione, together with extensive correspondence with artists and agents provide names, dates, figures, and indications of what was bought and from whom, what was delivered, and how much was paid (Fig. 49). After the dating of artworks and naming of artists has followed a patient iconographical deci-pherment, as if the naming and identifying, the dating, listing, and ordering were to perform the 'history of art'.[43] Indeed, Georges Didi-Huberman has suggested, in a radically different context, that the history of art 'has wanted to bury the ancient problematics of the *visual* and the *figurable* by giving new ends to artistic images, ends that place the visual under the tyranny of the *visible* (and of imitation), the figurable under the tyranny of the *legible* (and of iconology)'.[44]

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[43] See note 15 above.
[44] Didi-Huberman's challenge was quite the reverse of that posed by the 'over-filled' Treasury Chapel: the apparently 'empty' whiteness in the centre of Fra Angelico's *Annunciation* (c.1440–41) in the monastery of San Marco, Florence. G. Didi-Huberman,

The pressure towards closure, and methodological sufficiency work against this chapel. It poses problems for conventional art-historical narrative, which does not seem capable of responding to it. Precisely for this reason, then, the chapel is of interest to art history: it requires alternative and less orthodox approaches. In particular, an approach willing to let go of the assumed necessary precedence of the temporal 'frame'. An approach, then, that does not wield history to confine eventful architecture, and one that would not dismiss excess, nor so much simply grant it room, as to recognize its transgressive force as necessary and generative.

The 'artist narrative' and 'patronage narrative' threaten to flatten the chapel into a linear timeline of events, at once teleological and unable to engage effectively with the effects of the chapel's astonishing richness and sumptuous decoration. The claim here is first that a continuous historical narrative does not 'explain' the chapel, but locates it in a peculiarly linear conception of history that is also circular, in which what precedes (artists' aims or patronage) is both explained by and extrapolated from what follows (the chapel conceived as fixed and static), in which the requirements of artists or patrons are discerned from the appearance of the finished building (or designs *en route*), whose consequences are regarded as already envisaged, indeed desired and willed by the patrons before the first stone was laid.

The dominant 'explanation' of the chapel in terms of the 1527 plague and subsequent vow is fundamentally flawed in assuming that we understand *prima facie* the workings of monuments and holy sites in the perpetuation of a cult. Instead I examine here how the cult itself has fashioned and refashioned its own explanation of the monument's political and spiritual role, in the process disclosing its own understanding of history.

Moreover, a linear narrative threatens too hastily to produce the 'finished' chapel as *telos.* Site is thereby reinvested with the desire for continuity in an anxious historicist impulse. The chapel cannot be understood through a painstaking 'reconstruction', which seeks to find an origin and then to trace a coherent and extensive history from that point. Not only does historicism work to abandon the historical object by equating it with its literal presence, but it tends to suspend contingency and discontinuity in favour of narrative coherence, guided by a notion of time as continuous and progressive, at least in the sense of linearity. My discomfiture with historicism runs deeper than this, however. Historicism is allied to relegating architecture (and images) to the sphere of the simulacrum, or document. This manoeuvre (sometimes conjured in response to the imperative to subordinate art work to

Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art, trans. J. Goodman (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 8, 12–52.

'context') severs architecture and art from their phenomenological specificity, from their materiality and substance, and from their generative potentiality.[45]

In short, the Treasury Chapel as operative is eliminated in such an approach. Such an account hardly permits the chapel to *do* anything; it is simply an instantiation of an idea that preceded it and foretold it. This is to underestimate the capacities of architecture. A good deal of architectural history, presumably unintentionally, has the effect of limiting architecture's own compass by proceeding in this manner.[46] Architectural history too glibly assumes that there is an autonomous and stable 'base' or 'origin' 'outside' architecture which can serve to 'explain' it, and which architecture seeks to 'represent', to house and accommodate (or exclude).[47] This is to treat architecture as *expressing* the social forms which are also those capable of generating it and of being generated by it. In such a model the building of a church sets up a place that did not exist before and yet at the same time its inhabitants – God, clergy, worshippers, 'the Counter-Reformation' – required the place before it was invented.[48]

Instead this book proceeds from the notion that architecture is not an illustration or 'mirror' of anything else and – above all – that it is productive.[49] I depart from architectural history that posits religious buildings as 'reflecting popular devotion' (or anything else for that matter).[50] This book therefore

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[45] For a good discussion of how historicism manufactures its own unimaginable, see G. Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 30–47.

[46] Recent instances abound in the scholarship focused on British architecture and Christopher Wren in particular. Thus architecture is said to 'express' religious devotion, power, learning, or civic ambition. Architecture is presented as mirror or representation of qualities that *precede* it. Too often architecture is discussed naively in terms of 'function' as if this can be reduced to the purely utilitarian, or as if it is self-evident. For a usefully rich discussion of the way in which 'architecture' is representational in its excess of building, and for the argument that that representational quality is necessarily ideological, see Denis Hollier, 'Architectural Metaphors', in K. M. Hays (ed), *Architecture Theory since 1968* (Cambridge, Mass., London, and New York: MIT Press, 1998), 190–197.

[47] See the discussion in A. Benjamin, 'Eisenman and the Housing of Tradition', in A. Benjamin, *Art, Mimesis, and the Avant-Garde: Aspects of a Philosophy of Difference* (London: Routledge, 1999), 23–29.

[48] Indeed, the 'spiritual' is readily seen as essentially opposed to the architectural, and therefore 'outside' it (rendering the displacement of architecture almost salvational, redemptive). *Spiritus,* immaterial breath, is the counterpart to the materiality of architecture; the immateriality of the spirit and of spiritual matters is readily opposed to the body and to the matter that constitutes architecture.

[49] That architecture 'reflects' or 'expresses' something that precedes it remains a common assumption in architectural history, but it is fundamentally flawed, as its dependency on the mode of the mimetic relies on binary logic to describe phenomena of entirely different natures.

[50] This is a common claim in Renaissance and baroque architectural history. Thus Santa Maria dei Miracoli in Venice is described as having the 'aim of reflecting the intensity

resists both the idea that there is necessarily coherence between architecture and non-architecture (between 'text' and 'context') and also that architecture is equivalent to mere building. Thus while this book engages with various contexts of the chapel, it refuses to treat any or all of them as either unifying or determining. I present here instead an interpretation of the particular in order to understand the general; not the other way about. Thus rather than see Trent as a collective phenomenon compelled to reproduce and repeat itself indefinitely in architecture (explaining the 'lesser' fact of the chapel by the 'greater' of Trent), I think of it the other way about, that is, fractally, the greater in terms of the lesser and the whole in some way encapsulated within the part.[51]

Architecture is far more than a literal building. Even if one lingers on the conflicts, the false starts and dead-ends, there remains the risk of presenting the chapel as their unity, their culmination, or, worse (in the manner of much architectural history), as the end triumph over interim failures and errors of judgement which were inherently doomed to fail. For, of course, the chapel is not simply the unifying consequence of these conflicts and false starts and successes. It is also their disruption and counterpoint. But even a narrative acutely sensitive to contingency would betray the chapel. What matters here is the work that the chapel itself *does.* A narrative of what was done by whom at what time does not adequately explain or engage with the processes at work in the chapel, its architectural effects on the Neapolitan spiritual landscape, let alone its affective effects and what we see and feel in it. How can then one best write about this chapel art historically – as opposed to writing its linear chronological history?

I emphasize here the *work* of the chapel, particularly in its discontinuities: that is, what the chapel produced that was not and could not have been foreseen; and what the chapel did disrupts the more readily told narratives of closure and continuity. Thus the chapters are jolts, cuts, and openings made at various angles to the chapel, rather than a continuous narrative. This is not a historical narrative of the Treasury Chapel's building and decoration.

In a famous essay, Walter Benjamin distinguished between a child's view of colour and an adult's.[52] He suggested that adults understand colour as a layer superimposed on matter to such a degree that colour is seen as 'a

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of popular devotion'. A. Schiavoni 'Santa Maria dei Miracoli: una fabbrica "cittadina"', in M. Piana and W. Wolters (eds), *Santa Maria dei Miracoli a Venezia: la storia, la fabbrica, i restauri* (Venice: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2003), 3.

51 Trent should perhaps be viewed not as producing a new frame through which to read art and architecture, but rather as an attempt to control what was uncontrollable – meaning in art and architecture.

52 W. Benjamin, *Early Writings 1910–1917*, trans. H. Eiland and others Belknap Press (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 211–213.

deceptive cloak'. For children, on the contrary, colour is 'fluid, the medium of all changes, and not a symptom'.[53] It is with adults' eyes in a similar sense that architectural historians are prone to approach exuberant baroque architecture such as the Treasury Chapel. There is a prevailing sense that the very effects that produce excitement and energetic engagement are precisely those that the scholar should strip away in order to produce an effective and rigorous analysis. Such an impulse runs deep in architectural history. Thus architectural historians have long tended to treat ground plans – – an abstraction – as the privileged form for analysis.[54] In this book, instead, I seek neither to prioritize 'structure' over 'decoration', nor to distil or essentialize the chapel, not to reduce it to a single unifying narrative, and certainly not to simplify or dispel its overwhelming qualities, its disquiet-ing tendencies, its contradictions, and its opacities. Rather, I wish to dwell within precisely those most unruly fields. The intensity of the demands the Treasury Chapel makes upon a visitor are part of its distinctive claims and are central to my analysis. I treat the visual richness of the chapel, its colour, textures, materials, not as 'deceptive' or misleading superficialities that must be dispelled before the 'true' chapel beneath can emerge, not as barriers to a clear grasp of what the chapel actually is or what it represents, but as the energ-etic matter of the chapel itself. This book aims, then, to see, in Benjamin's terms, with children's eyes, baroque architecture, materiality, and holiness.

Materiality of holiness

There is no architecture in and of itself. Its status and effects have varied according to radical changes of technology and beliefs. Neither architecture nor religion existed in the first place: how the chapel and the power of the pro-tector saints produced each other is my concern here. It is, then, architecture itself that is desirable and affective; not a concealed belief or meaning behind it. There is no autonomous 'base' or 'origin' '*outside*' architecture which can serve to '*explain*' it, and which architecture seeks to '*represent*', to house, to

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[53] Benjamin, *Early Writings*, 211–213.

[54] Thus, for example, Anthony Blunt, a scholar of extraordinary visual sensibilities and unusually sensitive to baroque architecture, distinguished between baroque architecture which comprises 'spatial movement' from subordinate architecture whose effects are seen as 'decorative'. In his discussion of Balthasar Neumann's architecture, for example, Blunt writes, 'Fundamentally, the churches are Baroque in that they depend on complex structural forms which are left clearly visible.' Despite his emphasis on ground plans and abstractions, Blunt emphasizes the 'appeal to the emotions' of baroque architecture and its 'rhetorical' nature. A. Blunt, *Some Uses and Misuses of the Terms Baroque and Rococo as Applied to Architecture*, Lectures on Aspects of Art, Henriette Hertz Trust of the British Academy, 1972 (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 8, 9, 29.

embody (or exclude).[10] Architecture is not the expression of meaning, but the production of sense, allowing new perceptions, new worlds.

The chapel is a treasure and a treasury. The challenge is to think of a treasury as more than something that holds or whose cost can be counted. That is, to think of treasure as material and devotional potential, a potential that, implicated in the miraculous, works to produce worshippers, and forms part of their salvation, but that also facilitated and was part of the exploitation of the weak by the aristocratic elite of baroque Spanish Naples.

Rather than to treat 'excess' as a problem that defies interpretation, or as an embarrassment to be redressed or curbed, I take it seriously and explore the manner in which the chapel exceeds. Thus this book interrogates relationships between matter, form, and the sacred, while avoiding an easy reference to a transcendent. Drawing on the work of Gilles Deleuze and Mark Wigley, among others, I argue below that what might prematurely be designated 'container' is activated and exceeded in unforeseeable ways by what it 'contains'. That which it is deemed to 'hold' is not only partly withheld but transformed. And the city, far from being merely locus where the chapel is situated, was opened to new dynamics. Far from holding the chapel, the city is profoundly and repeatedly re-ordered by it.

The relation architecture–miracle necessarily brings the relation between materiality and the sacred into focus. This book addresses that relation via architecture in the widest sense. Drawing on the brilliant work of Caroline Walker Bynum, Andrew Benjamin and other scholars, I seek to show materiality as potential and productive. Caroline Walker Bynum repositions 'the body' from simple 'human individual' to reposition it in conceptions of matter (*materia*).[55] She explores the paradox at the heart of late medieval Christianity whereby matter was seen as both threatening and offering salvation because of its capacity to suffer change.[56] For Bynum, medieval art encapsulates this paradox by insistently displaying and commenting on its own materiality; images do more than reference the divine, they 'lift matter towards God and reveal God through matter'. I relate this to architecture drawing on Mark Wigley's profound insights into the complex relation between architecture and the body to side-step a simple claim that architecture is productive.

In place of linear historicism, this book offers a new approach to architecture by examining the matter of the miracle in relation to baroque architecture through an interrogation of the relationship between architecture and the sacred in the economy of the relic. Thus this is a study of the materiality of baroque holiness.

[55] C. W. Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011), 32.
[56] Bynum, *Christian Materiality*, 34–35.

Making matter matter

Materiality is more than sign. I consider the materials in play at the Treasury Chapel as not simply material because of their sensuous origin, for that is to risk treating origin and development as identical. Instead the approach here is to identify material in motion, in operation, at work. This is not simply the association of ideas. It is to recognize that materiality is part of the process of the exploration and development of materials, even as counterbodies are involved. Thus Cosimo Fanzago's tremendous bronze gates (Plate 23) do not simply refer to an ideal incarnated in material form, but themselves produce an interaction between bronze, matter, form, and worshippers, all of which are conceived as historically contingent, to produce new possibilities of protection, new sensations and directions of bronze and of veneration and exclusion, necessarily unforeseeable by Fanzago and his patrons.

'Materiality' is emphatically not to be confused with 'material culture', with which the humanities are currently awash. 'Material culture' was advanced as part of the imperative to take matter seriously. Ironically, however, in practice such studies tend either to dissipate 'materiality' into a curious obdurate residue apparently beyond analysis, or to immaterialize the material in treating it too hastily as instantiation of idea.[57] 'Affect' is then the hook that is thrown to relate 'art' to 'material culture', often depending on art to 'represent' affect, as in the portrayal of emotion. Art and architecture as affective thus tend to be overlooked.[58] But the principal problem with 'material culture' is that it implies that there is an 'immaterial culture' from which it is distinct, that is located off-piste, as it were. These problems have arisen largely because of a premature haste in assuming that the 'material' is identifiable with the literal object (and even sometimes that this is given, known, fixed and stable). Discussions of 'material culture' and of 'affect' tend to avoid art in embarrassed silence, as if the 'materially affective' necessarily refers to shrouds and handkerchiefs, aprons and marginalia – indeed, to anything other than art and architecture. As if art and architecture were anything but materially affective. Paradoxically, therefore, studies of material culture have tended to ignore the huge resource of artworks, despite the fact that art not infrequently offers a critique of assumptions about materials and materiality.

Throughout the humanities there is a renewed interest in materials and materiality. Yet architecture has hardly featured in these debates. And the relationship between potentiality and materiality has been unnecessarily flattened

[57] See, for instance, H. Smith, *'Grossly Material Things': Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[58] Rather than simply assuming that art is affective, the precise ways in which this worked must be examined.

by a tendency to emphasize materials and technique. Thus Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, otherwise perspicacious scholars, resoundingly reject what they call 'a materialist approach to historical art':

> a materialist approach to historical art leaves the art trapped within its original symbolic circuits. It tends not to even notice that the artwork functioned as a token of power, in its time, precisely by complicating time, by reactivating prestigious forebears, by comparing events across time, by fabricating memories.[59]

In fact, there is no good reason to suppose that a consideration of materiality should lock artworks into time past as closed and fixed. Far from it. Arguably, thinking materiality critically is precisely one means by which architecture can be freed from the reductionism of 'reconstructions' of the past and of the sort of architectural history in which architecture features as no more than index of its efficient causes. In this regard, the most useful contributions have come from outside of the discipline of art history. In his consideration of materiality in relation to both architecture and potentiality, Andrew Benjamin argues that 'matter reconceived in terms of work becomes a locus of potentiality. Potentiality is a quality intrinsic to materials once materials no longer have to bear the weight of being architecture's irreducible essence.'[60] Thus the immaterial emerges through the severance of the material and the empirical: 'once the material and the empirical have been separated, then implicit within the work and as part of the object's material presence is an active quality that is inherently immaterial'.[61] That quality is always in excess of that which is there to be described and yet which is at work within what would have been described. This permits thinking of the object as material and within materialism rather than as idea or sensation. This book engages with materials and their potentiality, but attempts to do so historically, while allowing history to be non-linear, riven, thrawn, and productive. This is to recognize that potentiality is both historically contingent and historically productive. It is part of the possibilities that may be opened historically.

Resisting the reduction of matter to a literal material presence, permits work instead with an evocation, not of transcendence, but of immanence. Thus I assume that all culture is material, but that the nature of that 'material' is not given. Materiality is discovered and invented in the process of making, itself a process that is not identifiable with the fabrication of discrete objects.

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[59] A. Nagel and C. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 18.
[60] The reference to architecture's irreducible essence is to K. Frampton, 'Rappel à l'ordre: The Case of the Tectonic', in *Labour, Work and Architecture. Collected Essays on Architecture and Design* (London: Phaidon, 2002), 92.
[61] A. Benjamin, 'Endless Touching: Herder and Sculpture', *Aisthesis*, 3:1 (2011), 76.

Materiality is not the mere matter of an object conceived as fixed, bounded and stable. Thus this book enquires into the making that materials do. Not in the sense of technique, virtuosity, or fixed 'function' of a stable object, but in productive terms in which materiality exceeds the literal object, in which matter may work analogously, extensively, and intensively to permit artworks to bear a potentiality that is materially and historically implicated. Materials are treated as fluid and potential, indeterminate and changeable. Miracles and catastrophe, the relationship between the human body and change, decay and the divine, hierarchy and gender, surface and salvation are exposed here as intricately interwoven in material terms.

I approach the potentiality of materials as necessarily historically contingent and thus, while avoiding a simple resort to 'context', or indeed to anything already given, I seek to treat materiality as inflected – that is, as always in process, vulnerable, threatened, and unrepeatable. In short, as political and controversial. This book seeks to explore materiality's production of potentiality and its offering itself up, that must, of necessity, also entail exploitation and sacrifice.

The matter of religion

In spite of insistence on the 'treasure' the chapel holds, the early descriptions seem better fashioned for an aristocratic palace than for a chapel. This is, of course, telling; and this book sets out to explicate the ways in which the chapel was marked as aristocratic, papal, and urban, rather than ecclesiastical or episcopal. It sets itself the task of engaging emphatically with the *matter* of the chapel – – that which the cited writers tend to vault over: the astonishing marshalling of metals, the complex runnels linking inside and out (such as to abolish any easy distinction between them), the potentialities without and within the chapel that are opened up and linked by procession and movement between urban fabric and ornate interior, and, above all, between architecture, relics, and redemption, time that returns and time and chances that are lost. For it is the chapel's implication in religious beliefs and the sacred that is most notably absent from the early modern accounts. I address these matters without resort to a transcendent or to a notion of 'ritual' as a 'practice' distinct from architecture, and without treating architecture as that which makes belief visible or gives worshippers a space in which to pray. Instead, I think architecture as that which *permits* the worshipper to *take place*, and as implicated in the self-displacing play of excess.

Consequently, this book examines the relationship between relic, miracle, architecture, and city. The baroque city was reconceptualized and reformulated in visual terms. This occurred partly through refiguration of the holy,

such that holiness was reinscribed in urban terms. But the city should be thought not as simple location of holiness, but as material part of its production. Thus I interpret the making of a patron saint as an important event in early modern Italian devotional and urban history, and – more especially – of the city itself as an *event* in holiness and sanctity.

It is well established that both sanctity and the city were subject to renewed attention in baroque Italy, but while the mapping of early modern cities has received considerable attention, the conceptual redrawing and visual reforming of cities in baroque culture in relation to saint and relic has not received the attention they deserve. Christianity's sanctification of history and place – often orchestrated through the relic is always provisional, always requiring confirmation, a process of infinite deferral. Not a travelling to, not a pilgrimage by a believer, but a *dislocation*. This is not simply dislocation of the worshipper, but a demonstration of the dislocation that is holiness's place. Thus place is the place of difference, of dislocation, because it is holy and involved in redemption. In the Treasury Chapel holy space pertains to a specific mode of enunciation – the enunciation of the relic, of the protector saint, that is of the possibilities – and the predicament – of salvation through the city.

It is necessary to consider holy place, not in terms of what it represents or *means*, but in terms of what it *does*. I treat architecture and the art object above all relationally, and in terms of relations, not as additional, but as intensificational. Thus baroque place, especially the city, is seen less as passive location for spiritual event than as active presence in constituting holiness. By conceiving the holy city not only in terms of measurable extent, but in terms of densifications, intensifications, and intercalations, we can think of both holiness and the city as fluid and mobile, in terms of intensities, rather than of either as occupying fixed geometric space. Thus, in turn, holiness and city may more effectively be thought together – including in terms of affective involvement.

This is a departure from anthropological approaches to social authority and charismatic emotions. According to Geertz charisma is 'an abiding, if combustible, aspect of social life that occasionally bursts into flame' that he seeks to separate from questions of place and geographies.[62] Geertz sees rulers as 'justifying their existence and ordering their action' in terms of 'a collection of stories, ceremonies, insignia, formalities, and appurtenances' that they inherit or invent: 'stamping a territory with ritual signs of dominance', making territory 'almost physically part of them'.[63] In this model place remains passive like modelling clay, imprinted with the active force of

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[62] C. Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 122–123.

[63] Geertz, *Local Knowledge*, 124–125.

the ruler's will. And the significance of the role of territory or place remains unclear. If it can be so readily impinged upon and imprinted, why was its involvement also so necessary?

The notion of space as both extensive and intensive, developed by Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, is central here. In thinking holiness and architecture together, I want to avoid rehearsing them in representational terms (liturgy, ritual) or in linear, dualistic, and hierarchical terms (such as ecclesiastics/laity). Thinking space and architecture intensively permits thinking of them as unmeasurable, unfixed, and unrepresentational. This is to think a new rhizomatic form of urban holiness and architecture. In using the term 'rhizomatic', I am deliberately trying to invoke a non-genealogical conception of relationships of patron–architect–architecture. Ecclesiastical architecture of this date has generally been seen in terms of arboreal relations that are dualistic and hierarchical. If instead we use an entirely different schema, one favouring rhizomatic rather than arboreal functioning, which no longer operates by dualisms, a greater complexity is brought into focus. First, there are no beginnings, like those from which a linear sequence derives, and no measurable extent, but rather densifications, intensifications, reinforcements, intercalations. Further, by conceiving the holy city not in terms of measurable extent, but in terms of densifications and intensifications, we can think of both holiness and the city as fluid and mobile intensities, rather than of either as occupying fixed geometric space. Thus, in turn, holiness and city may more effectively be thought together.

Rather than wielding labels like 'baroque' or 'excess' or 'overwrought' to dismiss the chapel, or to neatly house and contain it, or to diminish the demands it makes, I wish to engage with its multiplicity, its visual complexity, and with the sensational and affective assault that this chapel produces. The saint's fundamentally revelatory quality has been dismally eclipsed through discourses of representation (historical and archaeological) in recent scholarship on sanctity. If we think of the chapel neither as mimetic representation of San Gennaro's life, nor as the combined politico-spiritual ambitions of the Deputazione and archbishop, but instead as producing zones of intensity, or pure 'affect', of saintly might, which can enhance the human power to become, then, rather than the structuring of and container for 'sanctity', or for Trent, its decrees, and Catholic liturgy, architecture might be thought affectively.

An affective approach to the chapel, in which architecture is not only extensive (measurable, stable), but also intensive, is pursued here. Affect is intensive and potentially redistributive. It takes place less to me, or even across me and in ways of which I am not conscious, than it elicits me. Affect occurs through the darkness of the chapel, the glinting of the silver, a flicker of candlelight, the hollowed-out niches in which darkened figures loom; a sense of foreboding and dread that spread; the dance of the trompe l'oeil floor, the dome above

that sings. Here we are not in the realm of the pure intensities, the becoming of qualities, of which Deleuze has eloquently written (the infra-red light that we eventually will see as red), but in that of intensities that are organized, imposed upon, refracted, that produce our sense of ourselves *as* response to this chapel. The chapel bewilders, glamours, and leaves one thrawn.

Naples was excessive also in its saints. Throughout the seventeenth century, it boasted more protector saints than any other city in Europe.[64] By 1731 as many as thirty-two protectors swarmed in the chapel and by 1928 there were an astonishing fifty-two (Plates 4 & 7). Most precious of all was the relic of the miraculous blood of San Gennaro (Fig. 1). The chapel was both productive of and 'home' to its protector saints, but what does this mean both for their 'home' and for the city of Naples? The superlative richness of the chapel was also affectively productive; the chapel was productive of new forms of holiness in the heart of Naples. The chapel was literally the home of the city's protectors, and it bound the institutions in its shadows to its own ends.

Spanish silver and colonial politics ignite the chapel's spark. This dazzling temple of heroes of the faith, this museum of sacred osteology, managed to thread precious stones and metals through withered bones and blood. The poet and Bishop of Foligno Federico Frezzi (1346–c.1416) brilliantly evoked the entwining of martyrs' bodies with precious stones:

> Their hair, it looked like thread of gold,
> and their vermilion veins as coral seemed,
> and purplish their wounds.
> Their flesh and bones? More clear than crystal,
> All inlaid with gems of precious stone,
> Filled up with sapphire and yellow topaz.[65]

This book takes seriously that entwining of bodies and metals, of saintliness and stone (Plate 2 & Fig. 3). It treats that superlative richness as productive of more than excess, the chapel itself as productive of new forms of holiness in the heart of Naples, and thus of its own present and future.

'Religious beliefs', 'holiness', and 'spirituality' readily dissolve into opacity; indeed, they are terms whose appeal lies in their unboundedness. On what terms, then, may architecture speak in their regard? What sort of relationship between the two may be thought to take place? And where would this relationship be located? For Deleuze speakers are the effects of investments in language. Might worshippers be thought as the effects of investments in architecture? Conceiving holiness as a relationship between the absolute and the local, I treat the forms in which it appears as vital to negotiations in social,

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[64] The best study of patronal sanctity in Italy remains Sallmann, *Santi barocchi*, esp. 83–93.
[65] F. Frezzi, *Il Quadriregio* (Bari: Laterza, 1914), 347.

political, ecclesiastical, and urban relationships, but not reducible to them. Thus figural sculpture of protector saints is analysed as agent of change in urban politics, as material metaphor, as machinic, rather than in terms of iconography or vehicle of representation. Architecture, sculpture, print culture, and painting in Naples between about 1600 and 1733 rearticulated saint and city in baroque culture in terms that reorganized that key relationship and thereby altered saint and city for ever.

I am not suggesting that to take holiness seriously requires detaching it absolutely from social-political stakes.[66] The material implications of Christianity are profound and also necessarily social and political. Indeed Chapters 6–8 are devoted to analyses of its socio-political implications and the politics of religious issues. Chapter 5 focuses on the patronage of the Deputation of the Treasury of San Gennaro. My reading of the Treasury Chapel in relation to the aristocratic city Seggi – indirectly via their representatives in the Deputation – argues that the apparent homogeneity of 'the chapel' conceals radical institutional heterogeneity across the city, including alliances and enmities, competition and profound divergence. I seek to demonstrate that the apparent homogeneity of 'the city' that patronal sanctity institutes, requires, conjures – and, indeed, to some extent even holds in place – is both illusionary and political in both motivation and consequence. However, it is not exclusively socio-political. The work of spiritual materiality matters here, too. Thus I resist the notion, current in much art-historical writing from the late twentieth century onwards, that holiness is best understood exclusively through the lens of the social or the political, as if the socio-political precedes or stands outside the dynamics of holiness and beliefs, and as if it *matters more* than religion. As if, in short, religion belongs *elsewhere* (beyond scholarly interpretation). Even political motivations and political consequences are never the same: the material holy transforms the nature of the political, even as it is transformed by it.

Architectural form tends too readily to be understood as the empirical instantiation of the ideal.[67] An appeal to 'spirituality', 'religion', or even 'liturgy' risks explaining it too hastily (away), even as it might seem to proffer a useful key to unlock ecclesiastical architecture. Architecture, conceived as separate from and as constituting the material embodiment of religion or

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[66] Latour has usefully remarked that 'Religion does not have to be accounted for by social forces because in its very definition – indeed, in its very name – it links together entities which are not part of the social order', B. Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 7. Nevertheless, it is socially implicated. Thinking of religion in relation to architecture does require the thinking of the social, albeit without treating it as a stable given.

[67] This applies at all levels in the evocation of the material.

spirituality, its material evocation – a 'pointing to' of something which either is imagined or actually exists already 'elsewhere' – haunts much architectural history, displacing and replacing architecture with its imagined predecessor ('religion') or destiny ('spirituality' or 'transcendence'). Architecture thus becomes a sort of interloper, an illegitimate occupier of a space, which is more appropriately occupied by something else. Architecture, approached this way, is already off limits, always elsewhere, a mere representation of an abstract idea. Thus architecture is conceived as a technique separate from thought (and affect and spirit) and either as coming after thought (and affect and spirit) to accommodate them, or as preceding them and producing them. Conceived like this, architecture – especially ecclesiastical architecture – is like a gigantic butterfly net, able to trap 'spiritual experience' and pass it on to its users. This conception of architecture as 'capturing' or 'expressing' pre-existing transcendent effects, termed 'spiritual', because visitors 'recognize' them as such (like the identification of the butterfly by reference to the pre-existing wallchart), reduces architecture to conveyor belt or tunnel through which something *else* can be transmitted. Like the butterfly, too, such 'spirituality', treated as transcendent, is divorced from and indeed obviates material history. I seek instead to avoid defining either 'architecture' or 'holiness' by confining them to a fixed and stable identity in a box of periodization in terms of a (finished) past. Instead I consider both architecture and spirituality as dynamic, productive, and pluralistic, while also tending to produce each other's limits. This is to adopt a strategy of the ontology of immanence to replace a notion of architecture as mimesis with that of becoming.

This book draws together material and spiritual approaches that have too often excluded each other. Working with the understanding that truths are not declared but betrayed, I resist those approaches to holiness that tend to reduce spirituality to the explicit declarations of church councils, or to 'liturgy' or 'practice', and to those gestures conceived as effected somewhere somehow outside the material. It is also important to avoid reducing either holiness or the material to political and social concerns.[68] The sociology of art neglects the technical processes and precise form of works of art. And phenomenologies of perception slight the historical religious and cultural aspects of looking practices. While I acknowledge that the socio-political is deeply significant in the formation of visual culture, the originality of my approach here consists in connecting more precisely material and spiritual concerns.

In seeking to relate architecture to religion, architectural history often

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[68] Recent work on ritual, praxis, piety, and theology has, by separating them from each other, either lapsed into description or served to reduce them to socio-economic mechanisms, the tools of elites, or instruments of popular resistance.

accelerates hastily, like a hit-and-run accident. Referring to 'religious belief' 'religious practice', or 'religious context' or 'ritual', it speeds up to connect vast arrays of life and history. Frequent is the leap from a single church to 'the Counter-Reformation' (the latter offered as explanation of the former; the former an example of the latter). Although this book engages with issues that are conventionally subsumed under umbrella terms such as 'Counter-Reformation' or 'Catholic Reformation', I avoid these terms as they substitute mere labels for attentive analysis. Too often buildings are described as 'in the spirit of the Counter-Reformation' or as executed to 'serve Catholic Reform', as if religious clouds spread an ineluctable shadow across Europe, or as if diversity and dissension were subsumed in an early modern 'clash of cultures'. Worse, as if architecture simply houses religion which precedes it.[69] I seek here to do something more than to explain away forms assumed in architecture, sculpture, and print by simply labelling them 'Counter-Reformational'. I also resist the notion of a pre-given social, political, or religious. This study offers an interpretation of those forms in terms of production, potential, and possibilities that are formed and reformed materially and socially in complex and specific relations.

Neither religion nor architecture exists *in the first place*. This necessitates a move away from interpretations based on secure identities, a hermeneutics of depth and linear historical time, to think instead about the relationships between architecture and spirituality in baroque Naples as a continuing travail of openings, fissures, and delays. Rather than a substantive, having an essence that can be identified, holiness or spirituality is better termed an actative. This actative is conflictual and therefore unable to support an essential. Thus these categories – 'architecture' and 'holiness' – are sharp-edged, cutting into other matters, rather than stable; erosive and creative, rather than static. Holiness and spirituality are not restricted here to church architecture (nor teleologically corralled within a 'pre-modern' period enclosure), but are intensity of affects produced in the relation of the absolute to the particular which depend on and require the *mobilization* of architecture.

The matter of the relic: temporality and event

This book interrogates sanctity in relation to place and architecture in new ways. It departs from a conception of holiness as located within the divine or the saint, to conceive instead of place as part of a relationship with holiness,

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[69] Such reductionism mars the fine scholarship of Steven Ostrow, *Art and Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Rome: The Sistine and Pauline Chapels in S. Maria Magggiore* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and pervades most histories of Catholic art and religion.

rather than simply its location. Space as intensive, fluid, and mobile, rather than only static and extensive, is thought in relation to the theological. To the relation city-saint, the role of relic, reliquary and reliquary chapel are treated as central. Since through the relic a saint could be present in heaven and on earth simultaneously, in the relic both the non-localizable quality of sanctity and the quality of space as intensive rather than extensive are at their sharpest.

I suggest that if we broaden the focus of recent scholarship which tends to *reduce* holiness either to liturgy and ecclesiastical issues, or to urban politics and mundane rivalries, then architecture, holiness, and the saints emerge as important actors in the baroque. This is not simply to reinstate an older approach, since this time they are not treated as transcendent. If we think the holy city not in terms of measurable extent, but in terms of densifications and intercalations, we can think of both holiness and the city as fluid and mobile, in terms of intensities, rather than of either as occupying fixed geometric space. Thus, in turn, holiness and city may more effectively be thought together – including in terms of affective involvement. Thus this book seeks to demonstrate that we need both to conceive of the making of a patron saint as an important event in early modern Italian devotional and urban history, and of the city itself as an *event* in holiness and sanctity.

Thus this book cuts new ground in exploring the visual economy of the relic in baroque Naples. The new chapel was justified almost exclusively in terms of reverence for relics, both in terms of housing the precious relics in more suitably respectful mode, and in terms of providing better accommodation for the increased numbers of faithful drawn to worship them. But is it possible to 'house' a relic? And more specifically what did it mean to 'house' the relics of patron saints? What is the limit of the relic? What is the matter of the relic? How did the limits and matter of relics undermine the matter of housing?

The matter of the miracle

[The blood] immediately liquefies, just as if it were wax placed in a fire.[70]

All relics are potentially miraculous. San Gennaro's blood relic supports a particularly lively miracle (Figs 2 & 4). In relation to the orbit of relic-architecture the miracle appears like a vital moon. The dusty blood of San Gennaro runs crimson on feast days and special occasions, warns of, or celebrates, august or catastrophic events, but always indicates the saint's

[70] '[L]'ordinario miracolo, che in esso si vede, è, che stando separato, e fuori l'aspetto della Testa del Santo, esso se ne stà tutto indurito, ed immobile; in porsi però dirimpetto la Testa, subito si liquefà, come se fusse cera posta nel fuoco.' ATSG, CA/67 (Fasc. 83 bis n. 1), 'Registro dei Miracoli', fol. 2r.

intercession in heaven with God. San Gennaro's blood has been investigated in relation to many things, including ecclesiastical conspiracy, the laws of physics, and its historical origins.[71] But – surprisingly – it has not yet been related to the architecture of the chapel which stages it.

Scoffing at the miracle or dismissing it in terms of southern superstition misses the point. I am interested in the miracle's architectural effects and I have no wish here to explain it away. The miracle is contrary to nature and disorders the matter of life and death. Thus it puts materiality into question. It invites the contemplation of matter, change of state, body, and death in relation to the divine. In disturbing, it poses the question as to what ways matter is necessary to salvation. What does it mean to 'house' a miracle? Can architecture begin to contain such a monstrous thing? Does the latter contain the architecture? Or is this about a housing that is not containing?

What demands do miracles call forth from architecture? The miracle requires thinking architecture as *part* of a miraculous metamorphosis (and thus more than stage in any sense of the term). This book seeks to relate architecture to relic, reliquary, religious institutional, and aristocratic investment, to the city, and to the miracle, to the problem of the relation between change and the unchanging, and to salvation.

I seek to expose the ways in which architecture is not simply responsive to pre-existing 'religion' (whether in theology, doctrine or liturgy, devotional practice or belief), but as operative. This is not a question of pitting 'clericalism' and 'superstition' against 'rationality', 'freedom' or 'autonomy' – a tendency particularly vexed in relation to the Italian south. Instead this book explores architecture as productive – that is, generative in unforeseen and unforeseeable ways – and asks whether the worshipper might usefully be conceived as an effect of architectural effects in the broadest sense. From warm worshipping body to cold silver reliquary to noisy chaotic procession joined in desperation in the teeth of catastrophe, to the burst of red blood from grey dust, the chapel is part of an assemblage, part human, part mineral, part movement, part plural temporality, that exceeds the apparent limits of the constituent parts, even as it transforms them. It is the work of the chapel to transform visitor into worshipper and worshipper into witness.

Thus this book examines the relationship between matter and miracle. How did the miracle inform the chapel and inflect its matter? In what ways was architecture implicated in the miracle? The miracles – whether the daily miracle of the Mass, or the less frequent miracle of the bloody liquefaction –

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[71] On the 'scientific' analysis of the miracle and blood, see G. B. Alfano and A. Amitrano, *Il miracolo di S. Gennaro: documentazione storica e scientifica*, 2nd edn (Naples: Vincenzo Scarpati, 1950).

bring heaven to earth, death to life, and appear to dispel difference between past, present, and future. In what ways is temporality implicated in the chapel?

In short, this book examines the relationships between baroque, holiness, materiality, and history through the architecture of that extraordinarily richly decorated chapel and its miracles in order to rethink spatiality and materiality in relation to holiness, and architecture in relation to religious devotion through the material. Attention to the specificity of the complex forms and temporalities at work in the Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro demonstrates that a re-evaluation of the role and nature of place – and especially of the baroque city – in thinking about holiness is urgently required.

Excess and event: taking place

Finally, why Naples? What is at stake in the claim that Naples matters particularly? To focus on Naples is important for three inter-related reasons. First, Naples permits a focus on European colonialism within Europe and thus illuminates the ways in which culture was implicated in the Spanish imperial project. While colonialism outside Europe has attracted considerable scholarly attention, European colonialism within Europe remains an embarrassment, almost untouched by academics. A truly critical account of Spanish colonialism in Italy is still awaited. The self-glorifying terms of Spanish rule continue to reverberate at international conferences. Even the designations 'colonial' and 'imperial' remain fiercely contested by local and Spanish historians alike. Yet Spanish imperial rule (1503–1707) rendered Neapolitan politics and culture particularly fraught and significant, and thus complex and rich. The Spanish Crown and local aristocracy tended to bail each other out to maintain their disproportionate privileges through processes in which architecture, urbanism, and religion were intimately implicated. We urgently need to understand this.

Second, Naples is a crucial site for the investigation of sanctity, particularly patronal sanctity. By the end of the sixteenth century Naples had seven patron saints (Plate 15); this already high number swelled prodigiously during the seventeenth century, with a further twenty-one recognized between 1631 and 1710 – far more than any other European city.[72] What part did patronal saints play in aristocratic and institutional rivalries and urban politics and in the streets and chapels of Naples? How did patronal sanctity affect the depictions of the city of Naples in maps, paintings, sculpture, and prints; and in what ways, if at all, was this distinctive? How can architecture be thought in terms of producing holiness rather than simply housing it? How did the

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[72] Besides these amassed protector saints, a swarming crowd of would-be saints and living saints occurred at all levels of society. See Sallmann, *Santi barocchi*, esp. 83–122, 190–257.

Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro function less as housing for saints' relics than as a 'machine' for producing patron saints? And in what ways was the city part of the production of sanctity? That is, how did the relic and the saint open the city to question?

Both sanctity and the city were subject to renewed pressure in baroque Italy. While the mapping of early modern cities has received considerable attention, the conceptual redrawing and visual reforming of cities in baroque culture in relation to saint and relic have not yet received the attention they deserve.[73] Historians and art historians have energetically explored 'Counter-Reformation sanctity' and its depictions, and the development of early modern cities and their visual representations in painting, maps, and prints, but their inter-relationship has received less attention.[74] Indeed, that relationship as figured in a remarkable number of artworks of the period has been largely ignored by art historians.

Architectural history has fruitfully examined individual buildings for the imprint of conceptions of sanctity; and some architectural historians have ventured beyond the discussion of individual buildings in comparative isolation to search for ways in which the sacred seeped out of the 'hot spots' into street shrines, house façades, and buildings which might seem to be predominantly secular.[75] However, the question of how the city *as a whole* was conceived and

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[73] For mapping of early modern cities see J. Pinto, 'Origins and Development of the Ichnographic City Plan', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 35:1 (1976), 35–50; J. Schulz, 'Jacopo de' Barberi's View of Venice: Map Making, City views, and Moralized Geography before the Year 1500', *Art Bulletin*, 60 (1978), 425–475; D. Woodward, *Art and Cartography: Six Historical Essays* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987); H. Hills, 'Mapping the Early Modern City', *Urban History*, 23:2 (1996), 145–170; C. de Seta (ed.), *Tra oriente e occidente: città e iconografia dal XV al XIX secolo* (Naples: Electa Napoli, 2004); M. Bury, 'The Meaning of Roman Maps: Etienne Dupérac and Antonio Tempesta', in M. Dorian and F. Pousin (eds), *Seeing from Above: The Aerial View in Visual Culture* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013), 26–45.

[74] Outstanding in its concern with the city–saint–relation is P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981). Studies of sanctity of particular import include A. Vauchez, *La sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge d'après les process de canonisation et les documents hagiographiques* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1981); D. Weinstein and R. M. Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000–1700* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1982); S. Boesch Gajano, 'Il culto dei santi: filologia, antropologia, e storia', *Studi storici*, 23 (1982), 119–136. The not always helpful tendency among early modernists to analyse sanctity predominantly in terms of difference between Catholic and Protestant has usefully attenuated since c.2000.

[75] Particularly important studies of individual buildings include A. Herz, 'Cardinal Cesare Baronio's Restoration of SS. Nereo ed Achilleo and S. Cesareo de' Appia', *Art Bulletin*, 70:4 (1988), 590–620; for consideration of the religious outside the ecclesiastical, see

visualized through and in relation to saints, and the concomitant question of the relationship between images of the city and notions of (patronal) sanctity, have dropped out of focus.[76] Likewise, scholarship concerned with the relation of a patron saint to the urban has proceeded via studies of individual buildings, or concentrated on the socio-political aspects of their cults. The question of how sanctity, including patron sanctity, contributed to the production of a visual image of a city – and hence shifted 'visual identity' from the Ideal City of the Renaissance to the holy city of the baroque while retaining its principal topographical features – has not been examined.[77]

Thus this book contributes to scholarship interrogating sanctity in relation to place. It does so by departing from a conception of holiness as located within

especially M. Camille, 'At the Sign of the "Spinning Sow"', in A. Bolvig and P. Lindley (eds), *History and Images: Towards a New Iconology* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 250–251. An ambitious attempt to compare different urban dynamics in relation to saintly images in the streets of Venice, Florence, and Naples is E. Muir, 'The Virgin on the Street Corner': The Place of the Sacred in Italian Cities', in S. Ozment (ed.), *Religion and Culture in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Kirksville, Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989), 25–42. For the notion that Catholic urban space had 'hot points and cold points', while Protestants tended to dissolve the link between the sacred and place, see N. Zemon Davies, 'The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyons', *Past and Present*, 90 (1981), 59–60.

[76] The city as locus of sanctity has generally been treated in predominantly socio-political terms. See, for instance, Zemon Davies, 'The Sacred and the Body Social'; P. Golinelli, *Culto dei santi e vita cittadina a Reggio Emilia* (Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1980); A. M. Orselli, *L'immaginario religioso della città medievale* (Ravenna: M. Lapucci, 1985); J. Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); G. Labrot, 'Le carnival des reliques', *L'arte*, 9 (1970), 28–48. For scholarship more engaged with holiness in relation to materiality and the built environment, see T. M. Lucas, *Landmarking: City Church & Jesuit Urban Strategy* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997); T. M. Lucas, *Ignatius Rome and Jesuit Urbanism* (Vatican City: BAV, 1990). For the place and spectacle of canonization itself, see N. N. Rasmussen, 'Liturgy and Iconography at the Canonization of Carlo Borromeo, 1 November 1610', in John Headley and John Tomaro (eds), *San Carlo Borromeo* (London: Associated University Presses, 1988), 264–276. Louise Marshall offers fresh readings of sacred images during plagues: L. Marshall, 'Manipulating the Sacred: Image and Plague in Renaissance Italy', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 47:3 (1994), 485–532; L. Marshall, 'Confraternity and Community: Mobilizing the Sacred in Times of Plague', in B. Wisch and D. Cole Ahl (eds), *Confraternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy: Ritual Spectacle Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 20–46. However, in retaining Richard Trexler's notion of 'framing of the sacred', Marshall persists in thinking of the city as backdrop, of 'a ritual landscape' as occurring *within* the city (rather than *including* the city).

[77] Useful work on patron saints includes H. C. Peyer, *Stadt und Stadtpatron im mittelalterlichen Italien* (Zurich: Europa, 1955); G. Fiume (ed.), *Il Santo patrono e la città. San Benedetto il Moro: culti, devozioni, strategie di età moderna* (Venice: Marsilio, 2000). A reading of the patron saint in instrumental terms is S. Kaplan, 'Religion, Subsistence, and Social Control: The Uses of Saint Genevieve', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 13:2 (1979–80), 142–168.

the divine or the saint, to conceive instead of place, particularly the city, as part of a *relationship* with holiness, rather than simply its location. 'Naples' is posed as a question, rather than given as a solution. To the relation city–saint, the roles of relic, reliquary, and reliquary chapel are treated as central. Since through the relic a saint could be present in heaven and on earth simultaneously, in the relic both the non-localizable quality of sanctity and the quality of space as intensive rather than extensive are at their sharpest. In turn, this requires a reconsideration of the role of the patron or protector saint.

We need to consider holy place, not in terms of what it represents or *means*, but in terms of what it *does*. I treat architecture and the art object above all relationally, and in terms of relations, not as additional, but as intensificational. Thus baroque place, especially the city, is seen less as passive location for spiritual event than as active presence in constituting holiness.

Above all, to focus on Naples is to challenge *meridionalismo*, which, as it remains – alas – alive and well, must urgently be tackled. Indeed, reactionary cultural trends in Europe are presently reifying and reinforcing it. Mainstream art history still treats southern Italy as beyond the pale, albeit quaintly exotic. Even today respectable art history departments flinch from referring to Naples on their websites, lest it deter easily frighted applicants.

Stereotypes die hard. In spite of increasingly sophisticated scholarship focused on Naples, studies of baroque architecture or of early modern Italy continue to treat Naples as 'extra', additional, superfluous (a form of excess), and as that which can only be understood by reference to 'the centre', mistakenly but conventionally, conceived as Rome – in fact, the most anomalous of cities. *Meridionalismo* persists in the characterization of the south in terms of extremes, of the exotic, and of the unsophisticated. Neapolitan history is still approached in terms that would not be used in relation to Florence or Rome.[78] Some would have it that 'religiosity', not 'religion', is found here; Neapolitan practices and rituals remain exoticized, deemed 'extreme', 'excessive', and 'exaggerated'.[79] 'The masses' and 'the people' are imagined as holding sway down south, a people far removed from the loci of reason and erudition (necessarily further north). In terms of temporality the south is imagined as behind, backward, struggling to 'catch up'. Naples and Neapolitans are represented as less sophisticated than their northern counterparts, subject to impulsive urges, rooted in body and in matter conceived as base. This is not to treat the south

[78] This is a form of primitivization which, to date, has been studied within art history in relation to colonialism outside Europe.

[79] On the north–south divide in Italian culture and history, see T. Astarita, *Between Salt Water and Holy Water: A History of Southern Italy* (New York: W. W Norton, 2006), 7–9; Lumley and Morris (eds), *New History of the Italian South*; R. D. Putnam, *La tradizione civica nelle regioni italiane* (Milan: A: Mondadori, 1993); P. Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics, 1943–1988* (London: Penguin, 1990).

relationally, but to judge it against an imaginary 'norm'. I have tried in this book to write a non-normative architectural history of particularity, one that takes the south, baroque as excess, and the excess of sanctity seriously. This is necessarily to engage with southern baroque architecture in terms of 'excess'.

The question of 'excess' is itself also one of extremes. Neapolitan architecture, religious practices, and beliefs are still routinely presented as extreme, exotic, and excessive in order, precisely, to be taken less seriously than the supposedly less extreme, exotic, and peculiar practices at play in the canonical 'centres', Venice, Florence, or Rome.

All this makes Naples matter more. While architectural history has generally proved intensely resistant to materiality (as opposed to materials and techniques), the history of the Italian south has been made to matter too much (characterized in terms of unrestrained appetite, unruly bodies, profligate adornment, rubbish mountains, and dirt). Where better, then, to focus an enquiry into the relationships between matter and religion and place?

Organization of the book

The structure of this book is designed to hold the issues introduced above in tension. Part I, 'The miracle' (Chapters 1–3), focuses on the miraculous blood and its consanguine fields to examine how the miracle distinguished itself in relation to place. Thus the miraculous blood is treated as part of the production of a specific materiality of place, in both the broadest and narrowest of terms. Part II, 'Patrons and protectors' (Chapters 4 and 5), examines the interplay between patrons and protectors; and Part III, 'The choreography of sanctity' (Chapters 6–9), considers the Treasury Chapel as the interaction of movement and sanctity in relation to matter and affect, particularly the transport of salvation.

Chapter 1 focuses on the miracle of San Gennaro, the blood that courses through the chapel and its telling. This chapter examines the blood as change. The blood changed. It changed itself from brown to red, from still solid to mobile fluid. But it did more than change itself. It wrought change in others. And in so doing it rooted itself in Naples. In the miracle, material, nature, and the divine interact. The blood's capacity to change, indeed, its capacity *as* change, cuts into two related questions. The problem of temporality and its relationship to repetition and the problem of how mutable matter could refer to the immutability of God. In its appearance and disappearance the miracle raised some of the questions posed by the sacrifice of the Mass: how could it be momentary, yet eternal? How was change to be understood in relation to the divine? Unlike an iconic sign which established reference through visual resemblance, the miraculous blood, like the consecrated host, offered identity without resemblance, thus bypassing the image problem. It also offered

(apparent) repetition without difference in contrast to the drift and variation exhibited by images.[80] That is, the blood combined change in state with continuity, repetition that did not risk formal drift, devotional love that alteration finds. Gennaro's blood as the desire to reconcile the changeable and the unchangeable is explored in relation to the miracle seen less as repetition than as a series of 'only onces'.

My book recasts the relationship city–saint via relics and telluric philosophy. Chapter 2 considers liquefaction, the shift from something solid to liquid and back again in relation to blood, bronze, and volcano. Nature, matter, and the divine are considered as operating in analogous relation thorough heat in the working of the Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro. Cosimo Fanzago's great bronze gate (Plate 1) is interpreted through telluric philosophy, as part of the relationship between saint, blood, and Vesuvius, the transformation of metals and other materials through heat.

The miracle as witness and the witness of the miracle are explored in Chapter 3, 'Miraculous witness: exclusive affects'. A 'miracle' etymologically is an event that produces wonder or marvelling. In addition, a 'martyr' was a 'witness'. Here the moods and affect of the miraculous blood, its capacity to produce *communitas*, along with its intolerant, accusatory, and exclusive tendencies to isolate heretics and foreigners are investigated.

Chapter 4, 'The machinic chapel and the production of protectors', addresses the Treasury Chapel as part of a machinic interlinking of saints, bodies, minerals, and investment. The chapel is superabundantly inhabited by relics and saints and, by extension, by external institutions which were invested in the chapel through their espoused saints. The effect is not of simple population, but of over-population, a synthesis of heterogeneity, of saintly reproduction and overflow. I argue that the Treasury Chapel generates protector saints, including San Gennaro. That production is necessarily intimately related to Naples' spiritual topography, since to produce patronal saints is also to produce the city. Thus the chapel's production of patronal sanctity reconfigures Naples' spiritual topography.

Chapter 5, 'From prayer to presence', focuses on the Renaissance Succorpo chapel (1497–1506) below the main altar of Naples Cathedral as the principal precursor to the Treasury Chapel (Plate 11 & Fig. 8). This allows the Treasury Chapel to emerge as a significant reorchestration of the cult of San Gennaro, moving it from an introverted, if politically ambitious, Carafa family affair to a divine address articulated in terms of the city of Naples as a whole. The new Treasury Chapel is presented here as a calculated repudiation of that Carafa chapel, as the Deputation sought to widen its address to the city as a

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[80] A. Nagel, *The Controversy of Renaissance Art* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 204.

whole. The Seggi aristocracy thereby laid claim to a 'proper place', a sphere of influence where their political will could be mobilized and transformed into saintly influence.[81] Claiming such a place (the Treasury Chapel) enabled them to accumulate and exchange material goods, cultural capital, and spiritual authority. Thus aristocratic deputies were implicated in a web of practices in which their power was extended and simultaneously disguised.[82]

Chapters 6 and 7 investigate the weaving of relationships between chapel interior and the city through the extraordinary mobility of the silver reliquaries. Relics were not simply moved from one point to another (translation), but in that movement they transformed and became (variation); on assuming residence in the chapel, each new reliquary statue altered it. The translation of the relics represented the acquisition of a power that the community regarded as superior to human nature.

Chapter 6, 'Niche and saints: folding the wall', takes as its focus the apparently insignificant niches that line its walls and that hold the reliquaries (Figs 3 & 11). It explores the multiplication and fragmentation of saintly bodies and of architecture in the Treasury Chapel in the fractured and contradictory relationship between architecture and saintly body, relic and wall.

While Chapter 6 considers the chapel from within and as introverted, Chapter 7, 'Saints on the move and the choreography of sanctity', conversely sees it as extroverted, and turns it inside out to trace the translation of relics and the processions of saints beyond its walls. Thus it focuses on the singular mobility of its numerous silver bust reliquaries of protector saints. Most of those reliquaries belonged not to the Treasury Chapel itself, but to churches, monasteries, and convents across the city of Naples, to which institutions they solemnly returned on their respective feast day processions. This chapter interrogates the urban address of the chapel, its distinctively centrifugal forces, and its enzymatic characteristics in relation to those busts and the processions associated with them. It suggests that the silver busts radically perforated the chapel and extended it across the city, such that the chapel became a point of intensified deterritorialization and reterritorialization, social and spiritual, in the city. Interior space is shown to be harnessed to external institutional dynamics beyond it, and the chapel is revealed as a machine producing new forms of urban spirituality. Thus the chapter examines the chapel in terms of the peripatetic, of perforation, prosthesis, and movement to tell of the chapel's

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[81] Michel de Certeau: 'le lieu propre', or 'the proper place' – a concept taken from P. Bourdieu, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. S. Randall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 55.

[82] See S. Lindenbaum, 'Ceremony and Oligarchy: The London Midsummer Watch', in Barbara A. Hanawalt and Kathryn L. Reyerson (eds), *City and Spectacle in Medieval Europe* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 173, for comparable examples in a radically different context.

shifting topography in relation to the making of Naples city, or, rather, its continual remaking in the face of sanctity.

Chapter 8, 'Holiness and history: relics and gender', explores how the enclosed aristocratic convent of Santa Patrizia used its relics of St Patricia – a female rival to San Gennaro – to vault its enclosure walls and to intervene in the Treasury Chapel, quite beyond its own confines, in order to secure and extend its own spiritual authority in Naples. This chapter demonstrates that print culture and relics worked to connect physically distinct architectural spaces (female convent and city chapel) and open up routes for urban intervention for nuns bound by enclosure.

'Heads and bones: face to face', Chapter 9, examines the reliquaries' predominant bust form (Fig. 59), especially its religious significance, and Chapter 10, 'Silver saints: between transformation and transaction', investigates the relationships between silver and salvation activated and opened by the Treasury Chapel's many splendid reliquaries. Silver, the material from which the patronal saints' reliquaries are overwhelmingly made, is treated not as passive given matter, but – like bronze in Chapter 2 – as a quality to be discovered and invented. The silver of the reliquaries is related to Spanish imperial power and the flow of capital from the so-called 'New World', and to exchange and transformation. Material and immaterial, intimacy and desire, surface and depth are explored through silver. In their shimmering surfaces the reliquaries have the capacity to shift between silver as profit and silver as salvation, between wonderful transformation and mere instrumentalism. Silver, then, as the shimmering possibility of salvation as a promise. And with it the possibility of shifting sacrifice into redemption – a possibility that can so easily tarnish into mere calculating transaction.