

## 4 Other Cancelleria Spaces

### 4.1 The Sala Riaria

Gaps appear among the sources of information for Ottoboni around 1715.<sup>202</sup> Although he seemed not to have been responsible for the decorations of the Sala Riaria in the Cancelleria (see Figure 3.17) which honored Clement XI, and the project did not involve his resident artists, its cost was imposed on him when it was completed in 1718.<sup>203</sup> The Sienese artist Giuseppe Nasini's paintings honored the reign of Clement XI by reproducing many of the historical buildings that the pope had ordered restored.<sup>204</sup> The Albani pope had been canon of San Lorenzo in Damaso from 1670 to his election as pope in 1700. The upper portions of the walls were decorated by Marcantonio Franceschini with small scenes from the Old Testament and a God the Father with symbols of the Evangelists. Francesco Moderati, a pupil of Rossi, appears in this context, but his stucco personifications of Justice and Charity have not survived.<sup>205</sup>

### 4.2 Ludovico Rusconi Sassi

Angelo de' Rossi replaced Michetti in Ottoboni's favor in 1710 as evidenced from his being assigned *machine* for San Lorenzo for five consecutive years, just as he had earlier eclipsed San Martino on the papal tomb project.<sup>206</sup> Rossi's death in 1715 followed Juvarra's departure from the court by a few short months. If these events distressed Ottoboni, he gave no evidence of it in his letters to his cousin, Margherita Zeno Pio di Savoia, for he makes no mention of them.<sup>207</sup>

Shortly after these losses, Ottoboni commissioned a stucco image of the Virgin from Moderati (Figure 4.1), and a stucco Madonna for a window of the Cancelleria

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<sup>202</sup> Chracas's *Diario Ordinario* dates from 1716, but a hiatus appears in Valesio's *Diario di Roma* between 1711 and 1724, and there is a five year break in Ottoboni's correspondence with Margherita Pio Zeno from 1707.

<sup>203</sup> Schiavo, 1964, pp. 148-149; Rudolph, 593-600; Chracas, vol. 6, no. 184, August 10, 1718, pp. 8-10.

<sup>204</sup> Rudolph, 597-598. For Albani patronage, see also Johns, C. (1985). *The Art Patronage of Pope Clement XI Albani and the Paleochristian Revival in Early Eighteenth Century Rome*, Ph. D. dissertation, University of Delaware, and (1993). *Papal Art & Cultural Politics, Rome in the Age of Clement XI*, Cambridge University Press; (1989). *L'Architettura da Clemente XI a Benedetto XIV*, E. Debenedetti (Ed.), Rome: Multigrafica Editrice.

<sup>205</sup> Rudolph, 597.

<sup>206</sup> San Martino's name is not entered in the palace rolls after 1700; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 40, fasc. 1, "Rollo di Famiglia," January 1700.

<sup>207</sup> Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Archivio Falco, scatola 438, February 2 – March 9, 1715, fascs. 65-74. See also, Millon, 1982, II, pp. 520-521.

from Ludovico Rusconi Sassi (1678-1736). The window Madonna has not survived, perhaps removed when Napoleonic troops occupied the palace. The edicula with the Virgin and Child has been restored several times through the centuries.<sup>208</sup>



**Figure 4.1:** Ludovico Rusconi Sassi and Carlo Moderati, *Tabernacle of Madonna and Child*, 1714, stucco, via del Pellegrino, Rome.

Sassi supervised the execution of the tabernacle for Moderati's statue on the via del Pellegrino and was responsible for payments to the artisans.<sup>209</sup> The fee of 139.05 *scudi* to Moderati represents a major portion of the full cost of 237.39 *scudi*, and explicitly names

**208** Kelly has written a documented history of these restorations; pp. 216-218, 222. For more on the edicula, see BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 97, no. 89, November 11, 1716; Blunt, p. 250; *Guide rionali*, VI, Parte 2, 1980, p. 68.

**209** Schiavo correctly claimed that Sassi received all bills related to the edicula project, although he cited no evidence for this; 1972, 346. Kelly lists these payments but in excerpted form omitting many citations to Moderati in the process; pp. 306-307. BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 97, no. 63; "Lista di Spese pagam:ti fatti p la Madonna SSma fatti di Stucco nella Stra del Pellegrino."

him as sculptor. Consequently, any attempt to credit Sassi with the sculpture must be discounted, especially as it was common practice at the time for architects and sculptors to collaborate on projects, the sculptors working within an architect's general design, but responsible for the sculptural details.<sup>210</sup> Cathie Kelly has correctly credited Sassi for the architecture of Ottoboni's edicula.<sup>211</sup> The project seems to have been completed by November 1716.<sup>212</sup> In 1720, Ottoboni celebrated the placement of an altar at this site, presumably to commemorate the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin.<sup>213</sup>

Sassi worked for Ottoboni as early as 1702 but was never entered in the family rolls.<sup>214</sup> Nonetheless, it has been claimed that he became Ottoboni's principal architect from 1705 to his death in 1736.<sup>215</sup> This observation was ultimately based on the tenuous claim that "there is no evidence to the contrary," but it has already been noted that "Simone Felice del Lino Architetto" is listed as Ottoboni's first resident architect with a monthly stipend of 10 *scudi*, that Carlo Enrico di San Martino was the cardinal's architect in the 1690s, and that "Gio. Francesco Pellegrini Architetto" appears as a member of Ottoboni's household as early as 1698.<sup>216</sup> He is in the court with Juvarra in 1712, listed under the heading of "Gentiluomini" in January when Juvarra is entered under "Cappellani." Pellegrini remained a palace resident until his death in February of 1732.<sup>217</sup> Most seriously, however, the claim for Sassi overlooks the important presence in the court of the talented Juvarra, and ignores the fact that the earliest record of Sassi's independent association with Ottoboni dates from 1715, that is, after Rossi's death and Juvarra's departure, which left openings in Ottoboni's court for a sculptor and an architect.

Ottoboni's choice of a replacement for Rossi (if not for Juvarra) was Lorenzo Merlini.<sup>218</sup> The Florentine sculptor and metal smith had worked with Rossi in 1695 on

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<sup>210</sup> Kelly, p. 222. For more on the sharing of responsibilities between architects and sculptors see Montagu, pp. 77-98; and for their collaboration see Olszewski, 2004, pp. 229-245.

<sup>211</sup> Kelly, pp. 213-214. See also Schiavo, 1972, 346.

<sup>212</sup> BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 97, no. 89, November 11, 1716; "Io Sott.o ho riceuto dall'E.mo e Rev.mo Card.le Pietro / Ottoboni per le mani del Sig.re Lodovico Rusconi / Sassi quindici e ba 45 moneta sono p sal/do e final pagamento di tutti li lavori di stucchi / fatti in fare di novo l'ornato ad una Madonna / in un cantone nella strada del Pellegrino / et in fede questo di il 9bre 1716 / Pietro Porcioni ma.o."

<sup>213</sup> Chracas, vol. 15, no. 483, pp. 4-5, August 17, 1720.

<sup>214</sup> Sassi's name only appears in a payment for 1 *scudo* for a copper inscription; Kelly, pp. 13-14, 22, n. 75, 306-307.

<sup>215</sup> Kelly, C. Ludovico Rusconi Sassi, *MEA*, III, p. 620. For more on Sassi c. 1732, see Iacobini, S. (1989). *Le vicende costruttive di San Giuseppe alla Lungara e il progetto architettonico di Ludovico Rusconi Sassi*. In Debenedetti, E. (Ed.), *L'architettura da Clemente XI a Benedetto XIV* (pp. 49-68). Rome: Multigrafica Editrice.

<sup>216</sup> Kelly, p. 215.

<sup>217</sup> BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 90, "Rollo di Famiglia," February 1732.

<sup>218</sup> BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 71, "Rollo di Famiglia," 1716. For more on Merlini, refer to Enggass, 1976, I, pp. 120-123.

the altar of Saint Ignatius at the Jesuits' Il Gesù.<sup>219</sup> Finally, in the mid-1730s, two other architects, G.B. Oliverio and Domenico Gregorini, would enter Ottoboni's service about whom more will be said shortly.

### 4.3 The Arcadian Academy

Ottoboni considered himself the logical heir to Queen Christina of Sweden as arbiter of culture in Rome. After her death in 1689, Alexander VIII acquired her extensive library now in the Vatican, and the cardinal engaged her composer-musicians, Alessandro Scarlatti and Arcangelo Corelli, taking the latter into his court. The frontispiece to Francesco Bianchini's *Istoria Universale* of 1697 is based on a lost painting by Trevisani (Figure 4.2). Bianchini served as librarian for both pope and cardinal. The illustration apotheosizes Ottoboni as a patron, and reveals his aesthetic preferences as he accepts a book and sheet of music from supplicants while two painters display canvases honoring the arts of sculpture and painting.



**Figure 4.2:** *Frontispiece*, from Francesco Bianchini, *Istoria Universale*, 1697.

**219** For the collaboration of Merlini and Rossi, see Kerber, B. (1965). Designs for Sculpture by Andrea Pozzo, *Art Bulletin*, 47, 499-502.

Christina's royal colors of blue and silver were the same as the Ottoboni livery. Her famous academy which disbanded on her death was revived with the Arcadians. Sponsored by Ottoboni, it had many of the same members, and gave similar emphasis to music and the arts, but it was not the same academy.<sup>220</sup> The Accademia degli Arcadi was a new academy with new rules and a new membership. Its emphasis was on music and the fine arts rather than science and philosophy. Several residents of the Cardinal's court were Arcadians.<sup>221</sup> They met weekly in the Cancelleria, for a period of years on Monday evenings, then on Wednesday evenings. In 1701, they held their gatherings every Monday under Ottoboni's sponsorship, with music as an integral element of the meetings.<sup>222</sup>

From the Academy's founding in the convent garden of San Pietro in Montorio on October 5, 1690, their summer meetings were always in the open. They followed the practice established by Queen Christina's academy where there were seven meetings between May 1st and October 7th in a wood with members masked as shepherds.<sup>223</sup> Various sites served this purpose including the garden of the Cancelleria, the arbor of the Duke of Parma on the Palatine Hill from 1693-1699, in 1705 at the Villa Giustiniani beneath the Porta del Popolo, then at the gardens of Prince Ruspoli on the Aventine Hill from 1713-1719. Wherever the site, it was always referred to as "Bosco Parrasio." In the winter the meetings convened in the shepherds' "huts."

The summer meetings of the Arcadians did not always begin in May, and they seemed to have met throughout the year. In 1721, they did not have their first meeting until late in August, and in 1738 the formal closing of the open air gatherings occurred after mid-September.<sup>224</sup> That meeting honored Innocent XIII with eclogues, sonnets and madrigals. It was held at the Villa Ruspoli near San Matteo in Merulana.

Ottoboni's Arcadians were quite active in 1722. Their most important academy each year was on the eve of Epiphany, and that year a cantata was sung by Finaja, and

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<sup>220</sup> Christina's *Accademia Reale* was founded in 1674 in her residence of the Villa Riario; Stephen, R. (1966). A Note on Christina and Her Academies. In M. von Platen (Ed.), *Queen Christina of Sweden, Documents and Studies* (pp. 369-370). Stockholm: Norstedt & Soner. The Arcadians pursued literary and esthetic interests in their meetings against the ethical and scientific priorities of Christina's academies. See Maylender, M. (1907). *L'Accademia Reale di Cristina di Svezia* (Roma, 1656-1689) (pp. 8-21). Fiume: Arturo Novak, and (1926). Accademia degli Arcadi – Roma. *Storia delle Accademie D'Italia*, (I, pp. 232-281). 5 vols., Bologna: Licinio Cappelli.

<sup>221</sup> These included Ottoboni's father, Antonio, Arcangelo Corelli, Juvarra, Angelo de' Rossi, Francesco Trevisani, Andrea Adami, etc. For the poetry of Antonio Ottoboni, see Brunetti, M. (1933). M. Antonio Ottoboni, un ignoto poeta veneziano del '700. *Rivista di Venezia*, 335-349, and BC, Cod. Cicogna 1230, Ottoboni Antonio, poesia, p. 27 (I.41t.o); Cod. Cicogna 1211, Ottobon Antonio sonetti (I.37).

<sup>222</sup> Valesio, I, p. 437, July 11, 1701.

<sup>223</sup> Stephen, R. (1966). A Note on Christina and Her Academies, M. von Platen (Ed.), *Queen Christina of Sweden, Documents and Studies* (p. 370). Stockholm: Norstedt & Soner.

<sup>224</sup> Chracas, vol. 19, no. 642, p. 8, August 23, 1721; vol. 89, no. 3298, pp. 6-8, September 20, 1738.

Domenico Scarlatti performed.<sup>225</sup> Another meeting at the end of the month featured an exhibition of paintings by Panini.<sup>226</sup> The following year the Arcadians met again in the Cancelleria to sing a pastorale on the Birth of Christ.<sup>227</sup>

#### 4.4 The *Bosco Parrasio*

The Jubilee year, 1725, was special for Ottoboni for several reasons. He had just taken Holy Orders, he was about to witness the completion of his great-uncle's tomb after a campaign of thirty years, and he would be declared Bishop of Sabina at the consistory held the end of January.<sup>228</sup> Thus, the usual January 6th academy was described by Chracas as enjoying a large number of guests.<sup>229</sup> It included a cantata sung in six voices, three choirs, and an erudite discourse presented by the Venetian abbot, Gaetano Zuannelli. Present were sixteen cardinals and many ambassadors as well as the Duke of Gravina who was an important Arcadian, a jurist and master of the poet and librettist, Pietro Metastasio.

Two years before, encouraged by a donation of 4,000 scudi from the King of Portugal, the Arcadians had been able to purchase a meeting site on the Janiculum near the Villa Riario with a clear view of Rome.<sup>230</sup> Then in 1725 Antonio Canevari (Rome 1681 – Naples 1764) designed the *Bosco Parrasio* (Figure 4.3), an outdoor meeting place with an open air theater, and an elaborate staircase expanding and contracting as it ascended, much in the fashion of Francesco de' Sanctis's contemporary Spanish Steps or Alessandro Specchi's earlier Porta di Ripetta.<sup>231</sup> Canevari donated his services and worked with the aid of Nicola Salvi (Appendix, docs. 6, 7).<sup>232</sup> The new site was dedicated on September 9, 1726.

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<sup>225</sup> Chracas, vol. 21, no. 699, pp. 3, 7-9, January 10, 1722.

<sup>226</sup> Chracas, vol. 21, no. 708, pp. 2-4, January 31, 1722.

<sup>227</sup> Chracas, vol. 25, no. 845, p. 12, January 2, 1723.

<sup>228</sup> Valesio, IV, p. 462, January 29, 1725; Valesio reports his consecration on February 4; p. 466, February 4, 1725. For his Vatican tomb project, see Olszewski, 1997, 2004.

<sup>229</sup> Chracas, vol. 33, no. 1158, p. 7, January 6, 1725.

<sup>230</sup> D'Onofrio, C. (1976). Il 'gregge pecorario, ovvero: l'Accademia d'Arcadia, *Roma val bene un'Abiura*, Rome: Fratelli Palombi, 261-290. For the *Bosco Parrasio*, see Delaforce, A. (1993). Lisbon, 'This New Rome', Dom João of Portugal and Relations Between Rome and Lisbon. In Levinson, J. (Ed.), *The Age of the Baroque in Portugal* (pp. 49-80). New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, See also, Dixon, S. (2006). *Between the Real and the Ideal, The Accademia degli Arcadi and Its Garden in Eighteenth-Century Rome*, Newark: University of Delaware Press, and Minor, V. (2006). *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste* (pp. 115-169). New York: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>231</sup> *Guide rionali*, XIII, Parte 1, 1980, pp. 156-162.

<sup>232</sup> Blunt, p. 209. See also, Ferraris, P. Canevari Giacomo Antonio, in *In Urbe*, pp. 331-332.



Figure 4.3: Antonio Canevari, *Bosco Parrasio* (portal), 1725, Rome.

Canevari's *Bosco Parrasio* began as a two-story gatehouse with a concave portal and broken pediment (Figure 4.4). Each wing of the gatehouse was divided into three bays by colossal order pilasters with an entrance in the central bay. A gentle ascent into and beyond the main portal was made by broad stairs to a landing. From this the ascent continued by means of a pair of curved staircases to a second plateau with wooded areas at left and right (Figure 4.5). Within the oval space of the landing, the Arcadians could enjoy a dedicatory plaque with a figure of Apollo above, and river gods to the left and right. Directly ahead lay a grotto within a pentagonal area defined by another pair of stairs breaking at right angles at a small landing half way up. These led to an oval amphitheater with an edicula at the back presided over by a figure of Pegasus defining the site as a new Parnassus.

Although the *Bosco Parrasio* was not Ottoboni's commission, it was conveniently located between his vigna in Trastevere and the Cancelleria, and near the site of the Arcadians' inaugural meeting in 1690. Ottoboni continued as patron of the academy, although he did not always dictate programs and meeting sites. It was after the Arcadians' usual Christmas eve academy in the Cancelleria in 1728 that Ottoboni had scheduled a final performance of the musical drama *Carlo Magno* in his splendid theater.<sup>233</sup> He honored the Princess Borghese with the key to the front box, which led to a controversy when the Sforza Duchess refused to attend after she had also asked for a box and was placed in a lateral balcony. Ottoboni was unsuccessful in his efforts to placate her.

233 Valesio, IV, p. 1034, December 28, 1728.

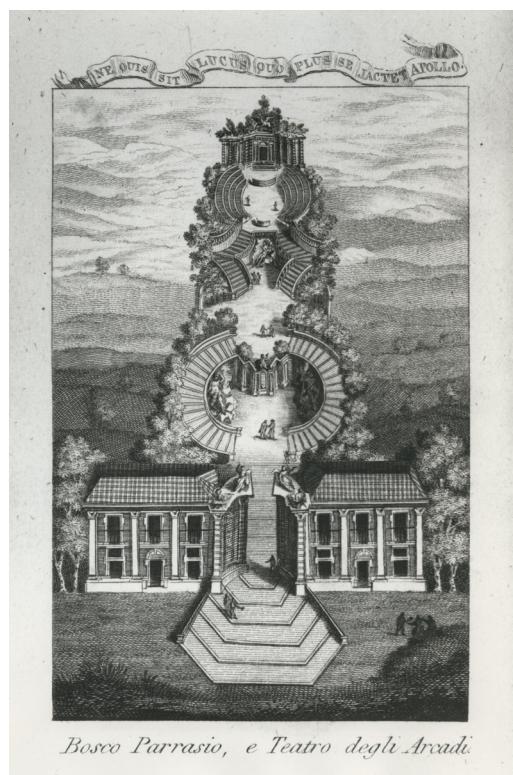


Figure 4.4: Antonio Canevari, *Bosco Parrasio* (vertical section), drawing, 1725.

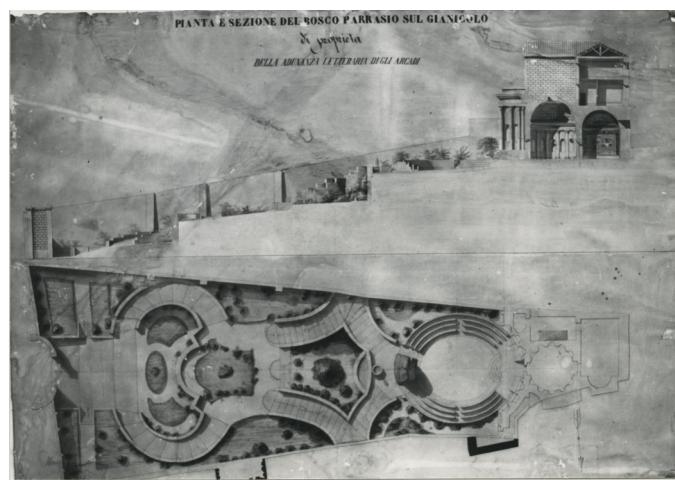


Figure 4.5: Antonio Canevari, *Bosco Parrasio* (plan), drawing, 1725.

In the following spring, Ottoboni initiated the academy discussions with music and refreshments, the latter practice apparently revived after some years according to Valesio.<sup>234</sup> The following week's meeting featured a cantata in honor of the Venetian ambassador.<sup>235</sup>

Ottoboni was still referred to as protector of the Arcadians in late 1737. He was present for the recitation of erudite essays and poetry at the academy held on the Janiculum's *Bosco Parrasio*. Present with Ottoboni were the cardinals Porzia, Caraffa, Firrao, Gentile, and Spinelli as well as the Venetian ambassador, members of the nobility and prelates.<sup>236</sup>

#### 4.5 San Lorenzo in Damaso

Ludovico Rusconi Sassi had worked for Ottoboni intermittently and only on modest projects until the 1730s. Cathie Kelly has recorded Sassi's earliest association with Ottoboni as minor work in the Cancelleria in 1702, the same year that Sassi had taken second prize in the Concorso Clementino.<sup>237</sup> He seems to have been employed as a journeyman to the *Capomaestro Muratore*, Francesco Catani. Kelly has observed correctly that Sassi was never enrolled as an official resident of Ottoboni's court, but he was entered among the "Diversi" in the household of Marco Ottoboni as "Ludovico Rusconi Sassi Architetto" in 1717. From 1718, he was paid a monthly stipend of 1 *scudo*. Sassi married a Venetian woman who had been a member of Marco Ottoboni's household. The Duchess of Fiano had even provided her with an impressive dowry of 2,000 *scudi*, and the Duke later served as godfather to their daughter, Tarquinia, who had been named after the Duke's wife.

In 1724, as archpriest of Santa Maria Maggiore, Ottoboni opened the basilica's Holy Door to begin Jubilee Year celebrations. Always seeking opportunities to turn liturgy into spectacle, he had more than twenty crystal lamps suspended between columns in the narthex, with a grand box of two stories constructed to accommodate the Roman ladies invited to the event (Figure 4.6).<sup>238</sup> When the Porta Santa was sealed the following December to mark the end of the Holy Year celebrations, Sassi was put in charge of the project.

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<sup>234</sup> Valesio, V, p. 50, April 19, 1729.

<sup>235</sup> Valesio V, p. 55, April 26, 1729.

<sup>236</sup> Chracas, vol. 85, no. 3139, pp. 5-6, September 14, 1737.

<sup>237</sup> Kelly, pp. 13-14, 22, n. 75.

<sup>238</sup> Valesio, IV, p. 449, December 24, 1724. This was one of the first events recorded by Valesio when he resumed his diary after a hiatus of thirteen years (from March 10, 1711 to December 24, 1724). See also, *Correspondance*, vol. 7, no. 2839, p. 111, December 26, 1724, letter from Poerson to d'Antin; Chracas, vol. 33, no. 1157, pp. 47, 50, January 5, 1725. For Ottoboni's patronage at Santa Maria Maggiore, see Ostrow and Johns, 528-534.



Figure 4.6: Ottoboni Opening the Holy Door, Santa Maria Maggiore, 1725, etching.

Ottoboni had also given Sassi a second, more important Holy Year commission, namely the construction of his *machina* for the celebration of Forty Hours devotions in San Lorenzo in Damaso.<sup>239</sup> Sassi's Holy Year *machina* for Ottoboni met all expectations as an impressive construction with its lateral staircases of ten steps, each leading to an altar with 100 wax candles.<sup>240</sup> Thirty more candles in the forms of colonettes surrounded the altar and columns. A third set of stairs led directly to the altar where eight columns supported an entablature and baldacchino. The latter had eight ribs extending from above the columns to terminate at the apex in the form of a crown with a globe and cross above. These were in simulated bronze. Putti carried a banderole above the main cornice with the inscription: *Ad te levavi oculos meos qui habitas in coelis* (I raise my eyes to you who resides in heaven). Weil has commented on the unique character of Sassi's *machina* as an abstract construction.<sup>241</sup>

Ottoboni finally engaged Sassi in a major way only in 1732 when he began work on the Chapel of the Holy Sacrament in San Lorenzo in Damaso (Figure 4.7).<sup>242</sup> This was the year of Pellegrini's death, and Ottoboni may have turned to Sassi as a prospective replacement. The project was finished just before Sassi's death in 1736, with paintings by Trevisani's pupil, Andrea Casali (Appendix, doc. 8). It was consecrated on August 5, 1736.<sup>243</sup>

The space in San Lorenzo had been dedicated to the Holy Sacrament as early as 1501 when Raffaello Riario was cardinal.<sup>244</sup> For many decades there had been a sacristy behind the chapel with an entry from the courtyard of the palace to a crypt below the chapel for burial of members of the Confraternity of the Holy Sacrament. The crypt was of two rooms to which one descended by doors on either side of the altar. This would become Ottoboni's resting place, once marked by a dedicatory inscription. Sassi's design for the chapel had to take these spaces into account.

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**239** Valesio, IV, p. 619, December 24, 1725. A three-page *conto* for 100:33-1/2 *scudi* was submitted to Sassi by Francesco Tedeschi; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 86, no. 23, January 15, 1726.

**240** Valesio, IV, p. 619, December 24, 1725; Sassi had been given a similar commission in 1712 at Santa Maria Maggiore in celebration of the canonization of Pius V; Weil, 247; Kelly, p. 225. For Clement XI's activities at Santa Maria Maggiore, see Ostrow and Johns, 528-534.

**241** Valesio, IV, pp. 468-470, February 8, 1725, and p. 488, March 29, 1725; a full description of Sassi's *machina* from the pamphlet printed to commemorate the occasion is reprinted in Kelly, pp. 309-311; Weil, 242-243.

**242** Valtieri, S. (1984). *La Basilica di S. Lorenzo in Damaso* (pp. 59-62). Rome: Arti Grafiche Moderni; Schiavo, 1964, p. 104; Chracas, vol. 81, no. 2969, p. 892, August 11, 1736; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 94, no. 13, December 14, 1734; vol. 95, no. 1, p. 144, August 17, 1736. For a discussion of the chapel commission, see Kelly, pp. 230-239. For earlier reports on the Chapel of the Holy Sacrament, see Moroni, vol. 12, p. 71; "Ottoboni, Pietro Cardinale," vol. 50, p. 74.

**243** Valtieri, p. 61; see Appendix, Doc. 8, p. 2; Valesio, V, p. 892, August 5, 1736; Schiavo, 1964, pp. 103, n. 3, 105. The inscription read: PETRUS CARDINALIS OTTHOBONUS / S.R.E. VICE-CANCELLARIUS / SIBI / ET POSTERIS CONSANGUINEIS / ANNO SALUTIS MDCCXXXVI.

**244** Valtieri, p. 59, n. 1. Raffaello Riario was cardinal at San Lorenzo in Damaso from 1483 to 1503.



**Figure 4.7:** Ludovico Sassi, *Chapel of the Holy Sacrament*, 1732-1736, San Lorenzo in Damaso, Rome.

The appearance of the chapel today is due in part to restorations carried out in the early nineteenth century.<sup>245</sup> It was at this time, 1818, that Vincenzo Berrettini's painting of *The Last Supper* now *in situ* replaced Casali's *God the Father and the Holy Spirit*.<sup>246</sup> One enters the chapel beneath a broad arch with gilded rosettes in

**245** These are discussed by Kelly, pp. 80, 252, n. 80.

**246** Progress on the chapel can be gauged from payments to the *scarpellino* as early as March 1733, followed by those in July 1734 to the *muratore*, Carlo Santi Primoli. Primoli added piers to support the chapel's vault and below to strengthen the crypt beneath the altar; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 95, fasc. 47. The *muratore*, Primoli, was paid 3,400 *scudi*. For more on Primoli, see BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 94,

a single row of coffers, the rosettes centered on an Ottoboni blue field. The altar of yellow and variegated green marbles and the frescoed vault are Sassi's original contributions.<sup>247</sup> A slightly concave back wall is articulated chromatically with yellow and variegated green marbles within clear borders, green a color also in the Ottoboni crest. The presence of the sacristy limited the depth of the chapel. The pair of doors to the left and right of the altar which allowed entry to the sacristy also defined the breadth of the altar backdrop. The doors narrowed the ascent of the steps approaching the altar, confining it on three sides, and as a result limiting the size of the altar itself.

In the previous year, Sassi had begun another chapel of the Holy Sacrament for Ottoboni's bishop's seat of Santa Lucia at Porto, which marked the end of his work for the cardinal.<sup>248</sup> The city no longer functioned as a port as in its ancient heyday during the reign of Trajan. Now cut off from the sea and of little use for farming, Porto had become barely a village. The chapel contained marble portrait medallions of Popes Alexander VIII and Benedict XIII (1724-1730) carved in 1735 by Bartolommeo Pinello.<sup>249</sup> Here, too, Primoli was active, with a first payment to the mason dated January 26, 1735.<sup>250</sup> The sculptor Pinello received fifty *scudi* in March of that year.<sup>251</sup>

The Porto chapel was Sassi's last project. Here he recessed an altar between concave piers of some breadth. He used framed marble panels to decorate the walls, piers and ceiling. Above the altar, he supported a triangular pediment on pilasters to define three bays on the altar wall. The concave wall of Sassi's chapel in San Lorenzo and his use of wide, concave piers in Santa Lucia suggest the influence of Carlo Fontana with whom Sassi had studied, as exemplified in the broad, concave curve of

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fasc. 4-6. A final payment by Ottoboni to the painter Casali on October 6, 1735, can be taken as marking the end of the project, although the *intagliatore*, Domenico Borbiani, was not paid until February for the gates of the altar railing; BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 94; Valtieri, p. 61, n. 9.

**247** Kelly, p. 232. Schiavo has associated the altar's original tabernacle in the shape of a *tempietto* and no longer extant with the silversmith, Francesco Giardoni; Schiavo, 1972, 233; Valtieri, p. 61, n. 9. Ottoboni employed many silversmiths, including Lorenzo Merlini, Carlo Negrone, Simone Miglie, Urbano Bartolese; see Olszewski, 2003. The tabernacle carried the inscription: PETRUS CARDINALIS OTTHOBONUS S.R.E. VICE-CANCELLARIUS A.D. MDCCXXXII. Much silver was looted from Roman churches by French troops during the Napoleonic occupation. See p. 122, n. 88.

**248** For Ottoboni's chapel of the SS. Sacramento in Porto, see Kelly, pp. 239-244. The marble inscription at the entrance to the courtyard of the adjacent residence read: ATQUE PETRUS CARD. OTTHOBONUS S.R.E. VICECAN. / IN AMPLIOREM NOBILOREMQUE FORMAM REDEGIT / ANNO DOMINI MDCCXXXVIII.

**249** BAV, Comp. Ottob. Vol. 95, fasc. 13, January 1, 1736. Pinello was still owed 330:30 *scudi* in 1742 as one of Ottoboni's creditors; ASR-EUR, Jura Diversa, Busta 1556, De Comitibus, pp. 1-2, March 13, 1742.

**250** BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 95, fasc. 46, January 26, 1735.

**251** BAV, Comp. Ottob., vol. 95, March 1735.

Fontana's façade for San Marcello al Corso. More to the point, Kelly found the chapel balustrade and the pattern of marble work identical to Fontana's earlier chapel of Saint Erasmus in the same church, as Sassi (or his patron) made a conscious effort to achieve harmony in the church interior.<sup>252</sup> While Sassi was completing these chapels, Ottoboni was engaged on a grander project as arch-priest of St. John Lateran.

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**252** Kelly, p. 243.