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Gillian Mackie

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See table of contents

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Article abstract

Les lieux de vénération reliés au culte des martyrs forment des séquences spécifiques à considérer dans le temps et dans l'espace. On se rendra compte qu'elles incluent, en partie ou en totalité, les éléments suivants : un lieu de martyre, un tombeau, une *cella memoriae*, des chapelles avec chambres funéraires *ad sanctos*, un sanctuaire collectif du martyre ou *martyrium*. Une telle combinaison se retrouve chez un groupe de martyrs de Dalmatie et d'Istrie, dont les reliques furent rapportées à Rome par le pape, Jean IV (640-642) et vénérées dans les chapelles latérales ouvrant sur le Baptistère du Latran. C'est à Salone, la capitale de la Dalmatie romaine, que l'on peut voir la plus grande partie des sites et des édifices, mais dont le point culminant de l'ensemble demeure la chapelle de San Venanzio à Rome. Ce martyrium du Latran, sa décoration de mosaïques, et les découvertes archéologiques sans parallèle du site paléo-chrétien de Salone, constituent, lorsque réunis, une source majeure de renseignements non seulement sur un groupe de martyrs et un ensemble d'édifices commémoratifs, mais aussi sur l'évolution historique du culte des martyrs.

The San Venanzio Chapel in Rome and the Martyr Shrine Sequence

Gillian Mackie, University of Victoria

Résumé

Les lieux de vénération reliés au culte des martyrs forment des séquences spécifiques à considérer dans le temps et dans l'espace. On se rendra compte qu'elles incluent, en partie ou en totalité, les éléments suivants: un lieu de martyre, un tombeau, une *cella memoriae*, des chapelles avec chambres funéraires *ad sanctos*, un sanctuaire collectif du martyre ou *martyrium*. Une telle combinaison se retrouve chez un groupe de martyrs de Dalmatie et d'Istrie, dont les reliques furent rapportées à Rome par le pape, Jean IV (640-642) et vénérées dans les chapelles latérales ouvrant sur le Baptistère du Latran. C'est à Salone, la capitale de la Dalmatie romaine, que l'on peut voir la plus grande partie des sites et des édifices, mais dont le point culminant de l'ensemble demeure la chapelle de San Venanzio à Rome. Ce martyrium du Latran, sa décoration de mosaïques, et les découvertes archéologiques sans parallèle du site paléo-chrétien de Salone, constituent, lorsque réunis, une source majeure de renseignements non seulement sur un groupe de martyrs et un ensemble d'édifices commémoratifs, mais aussi sur l'évolution historique du culte des martyrs.

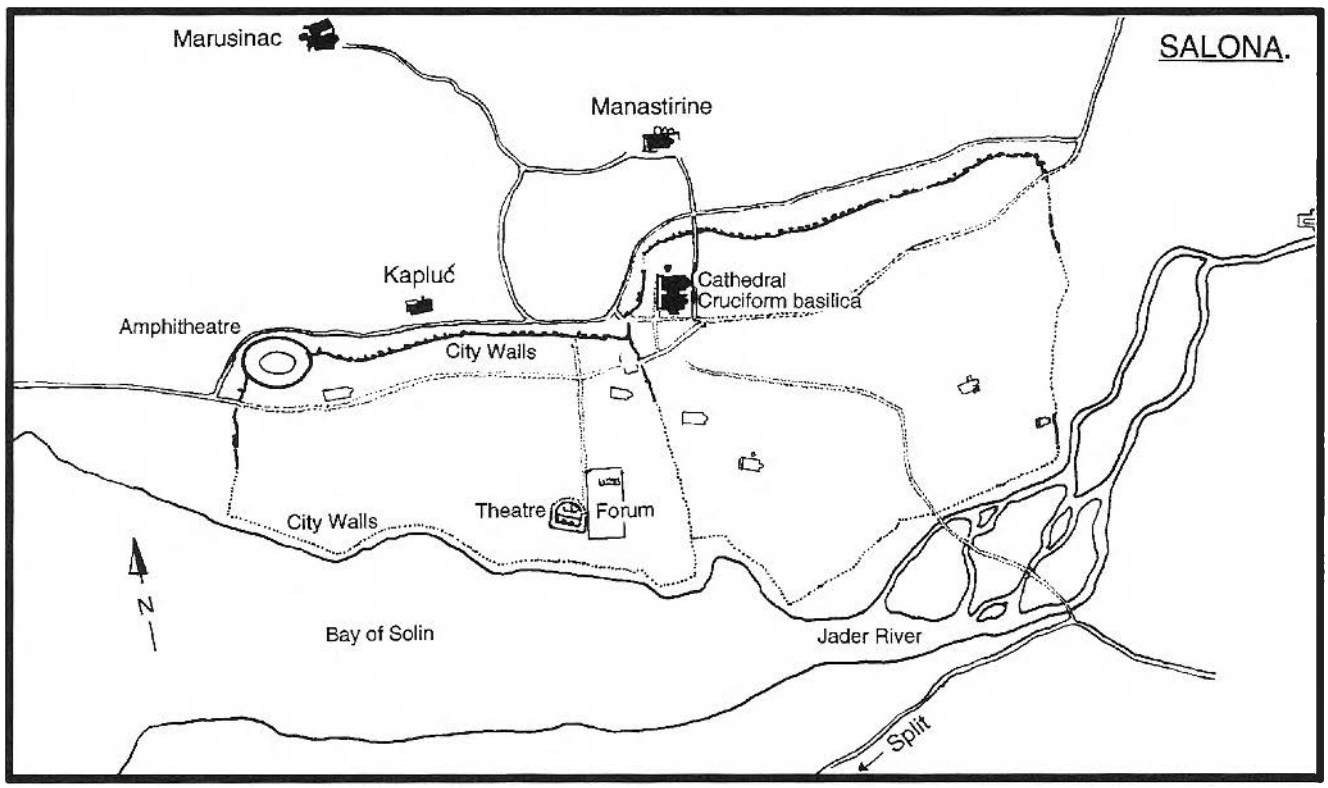
The twin cults of the martyrs and of their relics were marked from the beginning by their distinctive architecture, which, like the concept of venerating heroes by building shrines in their memory, was taken over from pagan tradition. These Christian shrines are known as *martyria*. André Grabar, in his magisterial work, *Martyrium*, defined the earliest martyria as monuments built with two purposes, the marking of the location of the martyrs' tombs and the organization of space around their graves for the use of the cult and for sheltering the faithful.[1] The broadness of this definition, though, can be confusing. For example, the word "martyrium" may describe both the earliest monument erected over a martyr's grave in connection with his or her cult, and any shrine where the martyr's relics are venerated, even if the only connection between the location and the saint is that the relics have been moved there for veneration. The purpose of this paper is to clarify the relationships of the various buildings raised in connection with the martyr cult in the earliest days of Christianity. Richard Krautheimer has drawn attention to the need for establishing some "family trees" within the broad framework outlined by Grabar.[2] This article will trace one such tree, a branching structure which will lead from the earliest commemorative graves through *cellae memoriae* and funerary chapels to the collective shrines. The connecting links will be the varied cults of a specific group of martyrs, and will take into account the architectural diversity which enabled the needs of each of these cults to be well served.

The word martyrium will not be used for the early shrines. These will be referred to as "martyr shrines" or memoriae, *cellae memoriae*, words which will be reserved for the primary buildings erected over sites specifically connected to the martyr's life or death, or over his or her grave. In the course of evolution, the primary sites acquired secondary uses. For example, it was common for important Christians, both lay and clerical, to be buried beside a saint (burial *ad sanctos*) to await the day of judgment in the belief that the saint would help them reach Paradise. Since the western tradition forbade relocation of the bones of the martyrs except in very special circumstances, martyr shrines and burials *ad sanctos* were typically to be found in the suburban graveyards rather than elsewhere. It was not until the laws about burial within the city were relaxed in the late sixth century, and translations of relics from their original places of burial became possible, that a further step in the evolution of the martyr shrine became possible: the creation of buildings specifically for the veneration of relics, at locations other than the primary sites of the martyrs' lives and deaths. I propose that the word *martyrium* should be reserved for these secondary shrines, built specifically for the veneration of relics of one or many saints in a place that was previously unconnected to the cult.[3] These buildings represented the culmination of the sequence of devotional building in connection with the martyr cult and commonly became sites of pilgrimage.

An important early example of a martyrium, in the sense of a shrine made specifically for the veneration of relics brought from afar to one central place, is the San Venanzio chapel at the Lateran Baptistery, Rome. This was built by the Dalmatian pope John IV (640-642). The circumstances of its building are recorded in the *Liber Pontificalis*, where we read that John feared for the fate of his countrymen, whose land had been overrun by the Avars, and for the remains of the saints who lay in its cemeteries. He therefore sent an envoy, Abbot Martinus, to Dalmatia and Istria, giving him money to ransom the captives taken by the invaders. Martinus was also charged with bringing the relics of the region's numerous saints back to Rome.[4]

The first part of the mission has left no records, and we do not know whether any captives were liberated, and

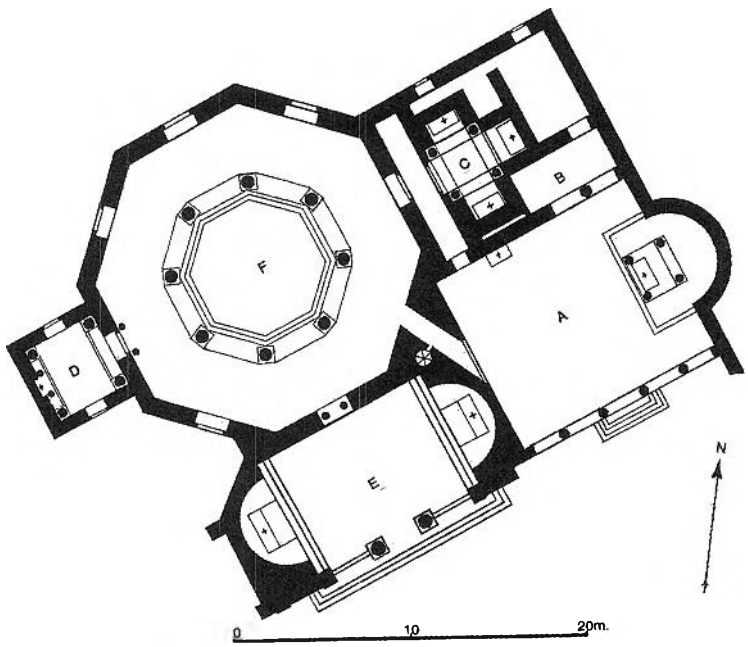
Figure 1. Salona. Plan, after Morin, following Dyggve.



if so, how many. Martinus' second charge resulted in the creation of a martyrium in the heart of the pope's domain in Rome. Its altar became the resting place of the relics of the Dalmatian saints, and its apse wall and apse were decorated with mosaics which included a papal inscription commemorating the event.[5] These decorations reveal a great deal about the saints who are commemorated in the San Venanzio chapel, adding a further dimension to the building's considerable interest as one of the earliest surviving decorated martyria, one, moreover, which has been in continuous use since its founding. The survival of the mosaics and the documentation also provides us with a unique opportunity to trace the connections between the seventh-century Roman martyrium and the martyrs' death-sites, graves and *cellae memoriae* in Early Christian Dalmatia. By good fortune the site of Salona, capital city of Roman Dalmatia, was never again built on after the Avar conquest. At that time the population fled and took refuge in the strongly fortified palace of Diocletian four miles away at Aspalathos (later Spalato, now Split) or in the coastal islands. The abandonment of Salona, where all but one of the Dalmatian saints met death, has allowed unparalleled opportunities for confirming their existence. They are recorded in a variety of contexts. We know their places of martyrdom (in most cases the Salona amphitheatre), their grave-sites in the cemeteries outside the walls of the city, and their original *memoriae* (plan, fig. 1), which have all been revealed by archaeological studies.[6] In addition, the images of some of the saints, named by inscription and painted not long after their deaths, were found on the walls of the east gladiator chapel at the Salona amphitheatre, and can be compared with their mosaic likenesses in Rome. Tradition has also preserved some of the details of their martyrdoms, as well as of their role as protectors and patrons of the communities along the eastern shore of the Adriatic. We also know the identity of some of those who chose to be buried beside them. We can, in fact, trace the evolution and elaboration of these saints' cults from their beginnings in Salona to their culmination across the sea in Rome, as a result of a unique combination of circumstances: Salona's abandonment and the survival of the San Venanzio chapel as part of the Lateran Baptistery complex at Rome.

The San Venanzio chapel has existed in its present form since the mid-seventh century (plan, fig. 2) and still contains the relics and displays the mosaic decorations that were given to it by the founder. The mosaics show the donor pope and his successor as well as the named images of ten saints from the Adriatic's further shore whose relics are venerated in the chapel (fig. 3). The Dalmatian saints are included in the composition as witnesses to the central event, portrayed in the bowl of the apse: a theophany vision which may well be modelled on the original design of the apse at

Figure 2. Lateran Baptistery Complex, Rome. Plan, after G.B. De Rossi, following Rohault de Fleury. A. San Venanzio chapel. B. Site of Pope Hilarus' St Stephen chapel. C. S.Giovanni Evangelista. D. S.Giovanni Battista. E. Portico. F. Baptistery



St John's Lateran.[7] The martyrium also reveals the attitudes of two seventh-century popes to the martyr cult and the relics of the saints.

This paper will explore the history of the San Venanzio chapel in the light of its antecedants in Dalmatia. The iconographic programme of its mosaics will be analysed, and their meaning elucidated. The identity of the Dalmatian and Istrian martyrs will be established, as well as their place in the history of their homelands.

Papal attitudes to the translation of relics will also be discussed. The ideas of Pope Gregory I, revealed in his correspondence at the turn of the seventh century, will be compared with those current at the Lateran when the Dalmatian relics were moved there a scant forty years later. The physical nature of the relics acquired by Pope John's envoy will also be considered; this is possible since a recognition of the relics was carried out in 1962. It will become clear that, far from being a martyrium created *de novo* as the *Liber Pontificalis* text suggests, Pope John's foundation in Rome was the culmination of a sequence of shrines dedicated to the martyrs across the Adriatic in Salona and Poreč. The archaeological finds in Salona have revealed, for one or another of the martyrs, all the stages in the typical evolution of the martyr shrine. The simple martyr grave, perhaps marked by an inscription, came to be isolated in an apse or enclosure, and honoured with a *mensa* or altar.[8] The next stage of veneration of the grave came when a simple memorial chapel or *cella memoriae* was erected over it, and this was quickly followed by adoption of the *memoria* as a funerary chapel for burial of rich or powerful patrons beside the saint. As the cult grew, it was necessary to provide more space for pilgrims, and this development also occurred in Salona. The establishment of the martyrs' cults increased the need for physical manifestations of the holy in the form of relics. These could consist not only of the martyrs' physical remains, but of substances or objects which had been in contact with the remains such as *brandea*, cloths which were lowered into the grave to soak up the holiness of proximity. Such contact relics were not subject to the rules which limited the transfer of human remains and could be dispersed to sanctify other burial places. The final stage of the process occurred when the relics, whether corporeal or contact, were brought together and placed in a building designed with a single aim: the veneration of the remains of the martyrs.[9] This final building is the martyrium, defined as a central shrine holding the relics of a whole city or region, what Grabar, in a somewhat different context, called a "collective martyrium."[10] The veneration paid to the Dalmatian and Istrian martyrs was expressed sequentially in all these types of buildings and is atypical only in having taken place in two geographically separate locations: the earlier part of its history took place in the eastern homelands, while the climax of devotional building happened in Rome, thanks to the intervention of John IV. The early buildings have perished, but the series can be reconstructed from Salona's archaeological records, while the culmination of the series, the martyrium, rises far from its roots in foreign soil beyond the Adriatic Sea. This is the San Venanzio chapel: almost miraculously preserved, it can be studied in its original form, complete with documentation and a major part of its decorative programme.

The building history of the San Venanzio chapel will be briefly summarized. The brickwork reveals two campaigns of building prior to that of John IV. The lower half of the apse wall can be dated to the third century, while the upper levels of the wall and its three windows are of fifth-century brick and tufa construction.[11] Brickwork studies also reveal that the apse itself was a seventh-century insertion and therefore probably dates from the time of John IV.

Figure 3. San Venanzio chapel, Rome. Apse wall with mosaics (Photo: Archivio fotografico dei Musei Vaticani).

The fifth-century phase must be that of Hilarus I (461-468), whose St Stephen chapel appears to have been situated in a small room between the chapel of San Giovanni Evangelista and an open colonnade (fig. 2,B).[12] The latter was a continuation of the main portico of the Lateran Baptistery, and it was this extension which was walled off as the site of the San Venanzio chapel. Elements of the earlier building can still be traced not only in the apse wall but on the side walls of the chapel, where remnants of the columned portico are embedded in the walls of John IV's chapel. These walls were made by blocking up an arcade of five openings on the Lateran side and a pair of arches near the altar on the other side, towards S. Giovanni Evangelista. Presumably the paired opening was the entrance to the inner sanctum of Hilarus' chapel. The central column of this opening survives, rising from a base at the lower floor level, and with its full height embedded in the wall. Panvinio, writing in the late sixteenth century, mentioned the "ancient and not inelegant" pictures that clothed all walls apart from the apse, and especially that on the left.[13] Some unreadable traces of paint and plaster are all that survive of these. However, at a depth of about five feet below the present floor-level, a black and white mosaic floor has been found, together with the lowest register of the early painted decoration of the chapel. This consists of an imitation in paint of red and green marble panels, a well-known decorative scheme for the dado in the early Middle Ages. For example, the Roman church of Santa Maria Antiqua has a comparable dado in the sanctuary which dates to the papacy of John VII (705-707).

The character of the San Venanzio chapel as a martyrium is made clear not only by the inscription and the *Liber Pontificalis* text, but by the mosaic decoration itself. Both the apse and its surrounding wall are covered with mosaics (fig. 3). The decoration of the apse is in three registers: Christ between angels in the clouds above; standing saints and donor popes on either side of an orant Virgin, a total of seventeen figures in the middle band; and the donor inscription below. The row of standing saints extends onto the arch wall on either side. The decoration is completed by two compositions on the upper part of the east wall: the cities of Bethlehem and Jerusalem in the outer corners and, framing the window above the apse, the single-winged symbols of the evangelists, complete with books and haloes. Spaces around the figural mosaics are filled with acanthus scrolls, and there is a wide band of formalized ornament containing crosses and lilies around the opening of the arch.

The bowl of the apse is the site of the most important, and therefore largest figures, those of Christ and his archangels, which float imposingly above the heads of the smaller figures below. Backed by visionary gold, and supported by the red, blue and white clouds from which they emerge, they provide the key to the whole iconographic programme: all the other figures on the lower apse are there to acclaim and witness to the vision above.[14]

The saints and martyrs who were transferred to the chapel by Pope John take their places below the visionary zone. Their images are accompanied by two unnamed popes, presumably those of the donation, John IV and his successor Theodore (642-649), who finished the work. Only two of the ten saints are shown within the curved, central area of the apse: Domnius and Venantius, who stand beside the popes. Closer again to the centre stand the two saints John, honoured at the nearby baptistery, basilica and chapels, and Peter and Paul, patrons of Rome. In the centre the Virgin stands, her hands raised in a gesture of prayer.

Who were these martyrs, lined up here like a guard of honour for our inspection, their forms and features brought along with their relics from their homeland across the Adriatic? Within the apse, Salonitan bishops Venantius and Domnius both carry books, and each stands beside a pope, probably John IV on the left holding a model of the church, and Theodore on the right holding a book. John reigned for less than two years; obviously the work on the San Venanzio chapel was carried to fruition by his successor, Theodore. Venantius, who Frane Bulić presumed to have been the first bishop of Salona, a somewhat shadowy figure, may have been a missionary to the Dalmatians, who died among them in the time of the emperors Valerian (253-260) or Aurelian (270-278). Bulić believed Venantius met his death at Delminium, in present-day Herzogovina, in the spring of AD 270. More recent opinion is that Venantius was a bishop, but not necessarily bishop of Salona.[15] His position as patron of the chapel probably honours Pope John's father, another Venantius.[16] St Venantius' grave was formerly identified at Salona's Manastirine cemetery (plan, fig. 1) from an incomplete inscription, but this identification is now rejected.[17] His successor in the bishopric, Domnus or Domnius (Domnio), came from Nisibis in Mesopotamia and died in the Salona amphitheatre on 10 April 304, in the persecutions of Diocletian.[18] An inscription suggests that he also was originally interred at Manastirine, among the graves of other early bishops of Salona, where Bishop Primus (ca. 325) chose *ad sanctos* burial beside him.[19] Domnius was to become the patron saint of Aspalathos (Split), with his grave in the cathedral. This church, by an ironic twist of fate, was the former Mausoleum of Diocletian, which was dedicated to St Domnius before the year 950, according to Constantine Porphyrogenitos.[20] The apparent duplication of Domnius' remains in Split and Rome has been explained since the early Middle Ages by there being a second – and earlier – Bishop Domnius in Salona, a disciple of St Peter who suffered martyrdom under the emperor Trajan. This legend of an apostolic origin for St Domnius seems to have developed during the struggle for ecclesiastical primacy in Dalmatia in the seventh to tenth centuries, with Split basing its claim on the supposed apostolic foundation of Salona, to which it fell heir.[21]

The other five martyrs of the Salona amphitheatre, the priest Asterius and four soldiers of Diocletian's personal body-guard, Antiochianus, Gaianus, Paulinianus and Telius, are also pictured in the San Venanzio chapel. Their deaths also took place during the persecutions of April 304. The guards' presence in Salona suggests that Diocletian was in the city at the time, since their duty was to accompany his person. His known itineraries in the last two years of his reign confirm this possibility. He celebrated his *vicennalia* in Rome in late November 303, left Ravenna on 1 January 304, and arrived back in Nicomedia, his capital, on 28 August of the same year.[22] It is likely that he stopped at Salona on his way east, to visit the palace at nearby Aspalathos which was being built for his retirement in 305.[23] Tradition recounts that the four palace guards were sent to arrest Bishop Domnius; refusing, they suffered martyrdom with him on 10 April 304.[24] In the mosaic the four saints are shown in the court dress of the Emperor's personal bodyguard, white with distinctive black tablions, and are also distinguished by their identical and unusual haircuts, bushy at the sides and flat on top. Each holds his crown of martyrdom. Their sarcophagi were at first placed in the middle of the sanctuary at Kapljuć (plan, fig. 1) surrounded by benches for the funerary meal. The floor was raised fifty years later when the funerary basilica of Kapljuć in the *Coemeterium Quinque Martyrum* near the Salona amphitheatre was built around the martyr graves: these remained intact, their tops level with the new floor. The fifth martyr of the Kapljuć cemetery was the priest Asterius, whose date of martyrdom is not known: Bulić has suggested 304 for him also, since it was a year in which many priests died in Salona.[25] Asterius was buried in the apse of the Kapljuć basilica, which became his *cella memoriae*, complete with the *mensa* for his funerary meal, which had plates carved into its surface and perforations for the pouring of libations of wine and oil, as well as for insertion of strips of cloth into the tomb for use as contact relics.[26]

Another clerical martyr shown in the mosaic is Septimius, a deacon, clad in a dalmatic and holding a book, who died in Salona on 18 April 304. His remains were installed under the main altar at Manastirine, where archaeology has revealed his *confessio*: Bishop Gaianus (ca. 391) was buried *ad sanctos* beside him.[27]

Flanking the curved apse wall on either side are two last saints: the Istrian bishop Maurus on the right, St Anastasius on the left.

According to tradition, Anastasius was a wealthy fuller, a native of Aquileia, who heard that persecutions were under way at Salona, and hurried there to give himself to martyrdom.[28] When he arrived, he deliberately advertised his Christian belief by signing his door with a cross and as a result was tied to a millstone and drowned in the bay at Salona on 26 March 304.[29] The earliest sources for both his trade and his nationality date from more than seven hundred years after his death: the evidence of the mosaics and of his burial suggest he was an aristocrat, for Anastasius appears in golden garments, unlike the other saints, who

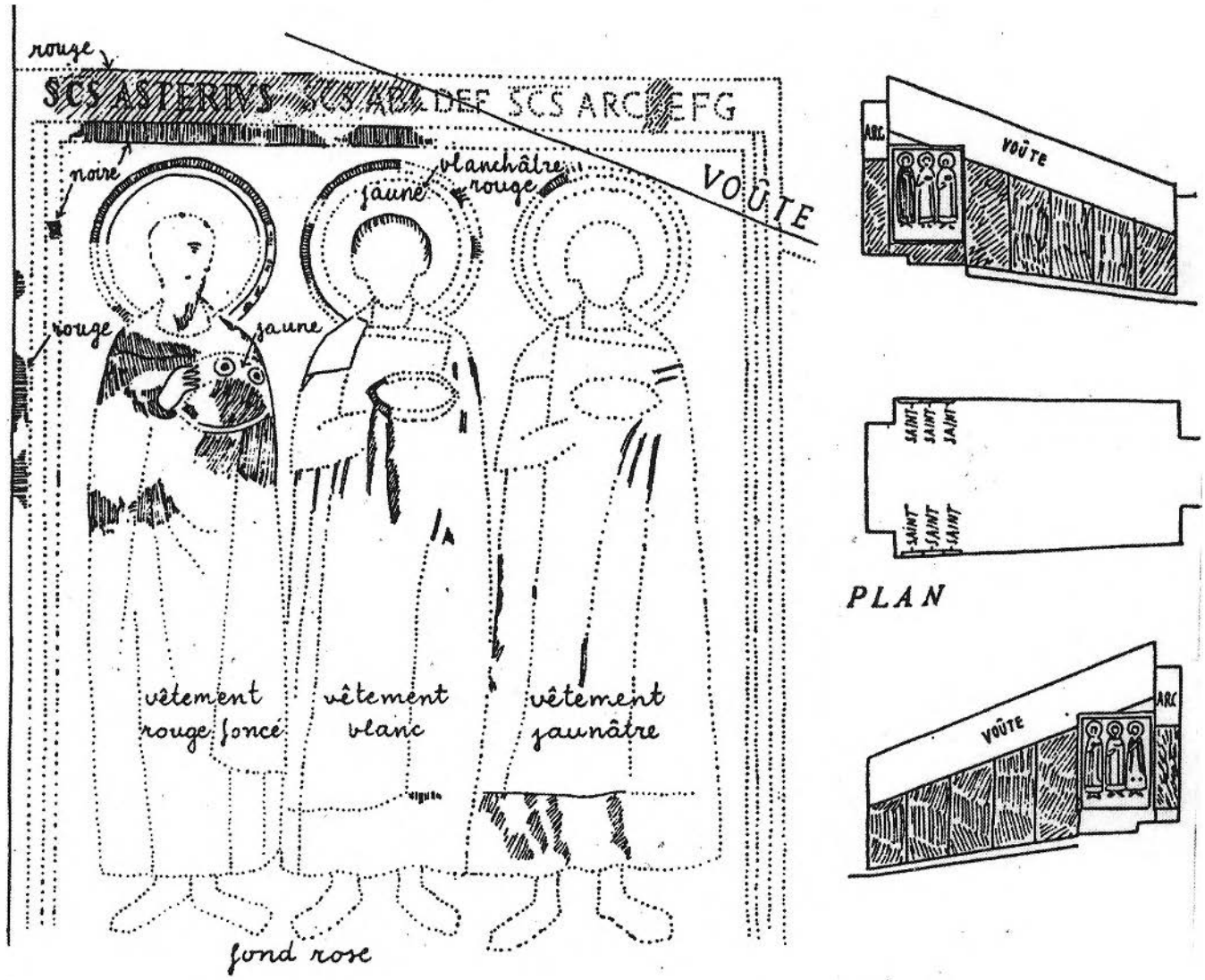
are dressed in white.[30] His burial also points to his aristocratic origins: his remains were at first hidden on the island of Pharia (Lesina, Hvar) off Split; a noble lady, Asclepia, and her husband then transferred his remains to their private mausoleum at Marusinac (plan, fig. 1), a short way from Salona's northern boundary. In the fifth century a cemetery church was dedicated to him at Marusinac, and he was re-interred there beneath the main altar. Soon after 400 the attacks of the Goths and Huns became more frequent, and both Manastirine and Kapljuć were destroyed, their graveyards despoiled, their sarcophagi broken open. In each case the martyrs' graves were consolidated into a smaller sacred area, an "emergency church" within the great basilica, and the saints were moved to safety.[31] The emergency church at Manastirine consisted of the transept of the great basilica, walled off and buttressed: the nave at Kapljuć received the same treatment.

One more saint, Maurus of Parentium (Parenzo, Poreč), represents Istria in the San Venanzio chapel, fitting the text of the *Liber Pontificalis* which specifically mentions relics of Istrian saints. Patron of his city, Maurus by long tradition had a corporeal presence there in the Basilica Euphrasiana, where a fourth- to fifth-century inscription connects him to the site.[32] His remains were stolen from Poreč by the Genoese in 1354 and re-interred in San Matteo, Genoa, in 1356, whence they were returned to Poreč in 1934.[33] For this reason, as well as his status as patron saint of his city and diocese, it seems unlikely that Pope John's emissary managed to take the saint's body to Rome, just as historical evidence makes it seem unlikely that the people of Aspalathos parted with the body of St Domnius.

Thus, Salona has offered unique opportunities to archaeologists to confirm the existence of the martyrs that are portrayed in the San Venanzio apse mosaic, and the events recorded in their legendary *Lives* have in many cases been corroborated by archaeological findings. This confirms that the Salona martyrs were interred, according to Roman law, in various of the graveyards that surrounded their city, and that *memoriae* were raised over their actual grave-sites. The simple chapels became the centre of their cults, and larger buildings were added to provide accommodation for devotees and pilgrims. The martyrs' remains could be moved, either to larger quarters to accommodate their growing cults, as in the case of Anastasius, or to smaller, more defensible buildings to protect the remains in times of danger, as with the Manastirine and Kapljuć "emergency churches." However, archaeology has revealed a further type of veneration at Salona: the commemoration of the martyrs at the actual place of their deaths, the amphitheatre. There, a chapel dedicated to them came to light in 1911: the south-east chapel of the Salona amphitheatre.[34] Its position was analogous to that of the gladiator shrines common to amphitheatres, which in the pre-Christian era would typically have been dedicated to the goddess Nemesis.[35] Other nearby sites in Dalmatia and Pannonia retain traces of this cult, among them Pola (Pula), Carnuntum (Bratislava) and Aquincum (Budapest), and at Salona, too, an altar inscribed to Nemesis was discovered in the amphitheatre itself.[36] In the 1940s, the chapel still had barely legible, early medieval frescoes of saints on its walls, overwhelming evidence that it had been put to Christian use, although its precise purpose cannot be determined owing to its poor condition. The decoration of the west wall, the best preserved, consisted of a row of standing saints, three-quarters life-size, on a layer of pink-painted plaster that was itself superimposed on an earlier layer imitating marble (fig. 4). Best preserved was the image of Asterius; less distinct were the images of two more saints, one a palace guard, named by inscription Telius.[37] When the amphitheatre chapel was first excavated, Bulić recorded traces of a smaller figure, perhaps a boy, beside the saints.[38] Ivanka Nikolajević has suggested that this may have been a donor figure on a smaller scale, comparable to those at Dürres, where the amphitheatre chapel also contained votive images, in mosaic, complete with donors.[39] Since the Salona saints bore a remarkable likeness to those on the apse wall in the San Venanzio chapel, Ejnar Dyggve proposed that the emissary of John IV brought back not only the relics from Dalmatia, but the likenesses of the martyrs as well. By May 1987 these paintings, which were in an unroofed location, had entirely disappeared, leaving only a few painted plaster fragments to mark their former location.

Detailed iconographic resemblances between these gravely damaged figures and the San Venanzio saints convinced all the scholars who saw the paintings that they were indeed the source for the Lateran "portraits." Among these scholars were Bulić, Bröndsted and Dyggve.[40] However, they did not agree on the date to be given to the paintings, on the evidence of the plaster layers. Estimates spanned two centuries, from Bröndsted's choice of the first half of the fourth century to Dyggve's estimate of the early sixth century, a date supported by the style of the clothing. The conversion to Christian use of the gladiator chapel at the Dyrrachium (Dürres) amphitheatre has been dated to the same period by Nikolajević.[41] For Salona, Dyggve suggested a specific occasion, the visit of Justinian's general Constantianus in 536 in connection with improvements to the city's defences, which have plasterwork comparable to that of the amphitheatre chapel. If we accept the sixth-century date, the saints' likenesses cannot have been taken from life;

Figure 4. Salona Amphitheatre, east gladiator chapel: saints, after Nikolajević, following Dyggve.



nevertheless, their quality of ancient authority may have suggested their use as models by the emissaries of John IV a century later, and the many stylistic details shared with the San Venanzio chapel mosaics support this idea. These include the size of the haloes in proportion to the faces, the gold or yellow martyr crowns, the distinctive styles of hair and beard and, most importantly, the clothing. For example, in both Rome and Salona Asterius appears as an older man with a pointed beard and a tonsure, while Telius has thick, dark hair and a white garment with a shoulder patch. Little remained of the third saint but tiny fragments of halo and of a light yellow garment. Indistinct painted remnants on the facing wall, including a terracotta coloured garment and a cruciform ornament, suggested a further set of three saints there: the slope of the roof would have limited the composition to three saints on each side. The matching south-west chapel may have had a similar decoration, bringing to twelve the number of saints portrayed. The facial features show no stylistic differences between the representation of a living pope and that of a canonized and martyred bishop.[42] Each individual appears to gaze out at the viewer; each is de-materialized in the manner of the San Venanzio mosaics, as well as of others from the same period at Sant'Agnese fuori le Mura, Rome (ca. 625) and at St Demetrius, Thessaloniki, likewise from the early seventh century.

It seems very likely on the basis of these findings that John IV received information, probably in the form of sketches, about the physical appearance of the saints, based on their pictures in the shrines at their place of martyrdom. Despite their dematerialized style, in Rome each saint is individualized through close attention to rank, colour and

ornament, and these images have come to be used as paradigms of seventh-century costume. For example, although the four palace guards are of necessity identically clothed in sumptuous uniforms, they are sharply individual in face, hair colour and complexion.[43] The San Venanzio mosaics suggest that the models in Salona had already developed a separate iconography for each saint.

The San Venanzio chapel is the most fully dated and documented martyr chapel to survive complete with relics and a major part of its decoration. It is therefore one of the best sites at which to explore the attitude of the papacy and the church to relics in the mid-seventh century, a time of change and uncertainty. Obviously, in the particular circumstances of danger that surrounded the translation of the Dalmatian saints, it was acceptable to move the relics and to honour them with a magnificent new chapel in the pope's own establishment at the Lateran. However, very soon afterwards a translation occurred within the peaceful milieu of Rome itself. John IV's successor Theodore I (642-649), who had shared the patronage of the San Venanzio chapel and like John was of Eastern origin, built a funerary chapel for his father, Bishop Theodore of Jerusalem.[44] This was one of the earliest chapels to be built inside a church, Santo Stefano Rotondo.[45] The chapel was sanctified with the remains of two saints translated from the Roman catacombs, Primus and Felicianus, thus providing an *ad sanctos* burial for the bishop.[46] This is the first time that such a translation is recorded in Rome, and the circumstances have important elements in common with the San Venanzio chapel: most importantly, perhaps, the participation of Pope Theodore I; the translation itself (here from mile 14 of the Via Nomentana); and the honouring of a pope's father. Evidently, the crucial break with tradition took place at the San Venanzio chapel, rather than the chapel of Saints Primus and Felicianus at Santo Stefano Rotondo. However, the translations of saints' relics at these two chapels set a pattern which would be followed by many more and, indeed, was to become standard practice.

The circumstances of the pagan conquest of Dalmatia have been shrouded in mystery, as have the actual nature of the relics in the San Venanzio chapel. These are called *reliquias* in the early sources. When they were rehoused in 1698, however, they were described as *corpora* on the lead cover of their casket. The casket occupies a small sarcophagus inside the altar of the San Venanzio chapel. What exactly was meant by *reliquias* and *corpora* as applied to these martyrs, and what form did the relics that John IV honoured in his chapel take? How available to relic hunters were the bones of the saints in Dalmatia, and how acceptable was it at that time to move them from one place to another? Were there guidelines governed by the needs of the saint, of the congregation, or of the church hierarchy that determined what might be done in the way of translations? Did the acceptability of translation depend on the motivation of the mover, with service to one's own purposes in building a place of prayer or burial for oneself, perhaps contrasting with service to the martyr, the protection of his or her remains from danger? Was the moving of remains complicated by the desire of those who owned them not to lose their powerful *praesentia* and power for good,[47] a question particularly apposite in the case of the patrons of important cities, such as Domnius and Maurus?

Much confusion has been generated by the belief that the word *reliquias* of the *Liber Pontificalis* statement must refer to *reliquias ad corpora* or corporeal relics, bodies or bones of saints, for if Abbot Martinus took the actual bodies of the saints to Rome around 641, then obviously their homelands were deprived of them, providing, that is, that at least in the West saints' bodies were not being dismembered and distributed in pieces as relics.[48] Our authority for this supposition is the papal correspondence of a half-century earlier, which reacted to requests from the rulers in Byzantium for corporeal relics of the apostles Peter and Paul. As early as 519, the papal legate in Constantinople had responded to a request by Justinian for relics of the apostles and St Lawrence by asking pope Hormisdas to send contact relics, objects that had been in contact with the tombs of the saints. The legate informed Justinian that it was contrary to Roman custom to provide bodily relics of the saints.[49] A second instance, much closer to the date of the San Venanzio chapel, is Gregory the Great's reply to the request of Constantina, wife of the Byzantine emperor, for the head of St Paul to sanctify a chapel she had built.[50] He told her that it was totally contrary to Roman custom to disturb the bones of the saints, and that he neither could, nor did he dare to do so, because of the danger of such intervention, which he illustrated graphically with examples. Indeed, he continued, one ought not to dare even to look at the bodies of the saints. Instead, new relics could be created by placing cloths by the body in the tomb. Relics so created were as powerful as the saints' bodies themselves and were used for the same purpose, for the sanctification of altars.[51]

There has always been some doubt about whether this letter should be taken at face value, or whether Gregory was exaggerating the position of Rome so as to justify refusing an imperial request that the papacy relinquish the major relics that were central to its power. Does this letter, then, reflect actual practice in the West, as Gregory seems to claim? McCulloh has examined Gregory's correspond-

ence and his *Dialogues*, to discover his attitudes to translations or dismemberments of saints' bodies, attitudes which might contradict the position he takes in his letter to Constantina.[52] He found many references to tombs and burials, but only a single reference to a translation, that of St Donatus, whose remains were carried away by the bishop and congregation of Euria in 603-04 when invaders forced them to flee their homes.[53] Gregory granted them permission to bury the saint's body in their camp and return for it when things returned to normal. This, the only place where Gregory mentions a translation, is comparable to the situation in Salona in the early seventh century, where saints were exhumed and reburied in safer places in times of emergency by their own congregations: the action was at least partly altruistic, the aim being to save the remains from loss or desecration during times of exceptional danger. On the other hand, earlier Salona practice suggests that the saints' remains could be disturbed for no better reason than the provision of new and grander settings for them, perhaps in association with a bishop's burial *ad sanctos*. The bodies were also disturbed when their shrines were consolidated and made more secure. However, the primary service was to the saint in all these cases, and there is no record of the evil consequences that Gregory reports from Rome as sequels to the disturbance of the bodies of the saints. We know that practice differed from one place to another even in the West: for example, St Ambrose moved saints' bodies into Milan from Laus Pompeia (Lodi), as well as disinterring the bodies of saints Gervasius and Protasius which he discovered in the chapel of Nabor and Felix in the *Coemeterium ad martyres* in Milan. He intended to use the relics to sanctify the altar of the church he was building, which would later become Sant'Ambrogio. Ambrose tells of his apprehension at doing so, though, in a letter to his sister Marcellina.[54] On the question of "relics" (such as those of the Salona martyrs whose *reliquias*, we are told, were put in the San Venanzio chapel), the texts of Gregory confirm that *reliquias* had two distinct meanings: parts of a saint's body, corporeal relics, and contact relics such as *brandea*, cloths which had been saturated with the holiness of proximity to a saint's remains. Since Gregory deplored the dangerous practice of touching a saint's body, while admitting that the Greeks allowed it, he was left with contact relics, which could be created and were as holy and powerful as the bodies themselves, to use on all occasions that required sanctification or the special protection and blessing of the saints. This then was the position around the turn of the seventh century: translations were rare and undertaken only in unusual circumstances; *reliquias* meant contact relics much more often than corporeal fragments.

The question of what exact form the relics of the Dalmatian saints took acquires new importance in this context, as evidence of papal attitudes that would either agree with Gregory's official position, or disprove it. The interval of just under forty years is not long, and it would seem unlikely that papal policy would have changed in the interval. The ingredients for a physical transfer of bodies were there: a time of great danger when the saints' remains might have been lost or desecrated. Discussion of the contents of the relic container in the San Venanzio chapel has until recently been hampered by lack of tangible evidence. Consensus of opinion from the late Middle Ages through the Renaissance was that the actual bodies – *corpora* – were present in the chapel. According to the inscription on the lead cover of the casket[55] to which the remains, in their cherry wood box, were transferred in 1698, as well as to the words of Panvinio (1570), the ten bodies were physically present.[56] There was a recognition ceremony in 1713, but apparently no records were kept. Bulić, despite repeated efforts through his long life, was denied permission to investigate the contents of the casket. It was not until 1962 that the ecclesiastical authorities agreed to another recognition of the relics. The sealed reliquary was opened and the contents examined at the request of the bishops of Split and Poreč.[57] Surprisingly, the box contained less than a half-kilogram of small bones, both human and animal, plus dust and two small, illegible Byzantine coins. There were no documents. The relics included neither skulls nor long bones. It seems very unlikely that all the major bones were formerly there and then given away as relics. We are forced to the conclusion that Abbot Martinus brought back either tiny corporeal relics; contact relics such as *brandea*; soil or dust from the tombs; or even animal bones gathered up in ignorance from the ruined shrines, which were pillaged during the barbarian invasions, probably after being emptied of relics by the fleeing Christians. In such unsettled conditions, nothing outside the walls was safe, and archaeologists found very few of the numerous large stone sarcophagi in the Salona cemeteries to be intact.[58] In these circumstances, it is obvious that the martyrs' remains were taken to safety by the retreating population, either to Aspalathos (Split), to Iader (Zadar), or to the islands off the Dalmatian coast, which remained under Roman control, and were administered from Iader for Ravenna as the Theme of Dalmatia.[59]

It has recently been proposed that the fall of Salona, far from happening soon after the last recorded burial at Salona in 612, took place only a year or two before the accession of John IV. John's delegation, it will be remembered, was charged with a double mission. It was not only to res-

cue the relics of the saints but to ransom Christian prisoners from the invaders. Ivan Marović has pointed out that prisoners taken soon after 612 are unlikely to have survived almost three decades until 640, so as to have needed ransom then.[60] The existence of the prisoners in 640 in fact implies that they were captured not long before this date, that is, not much earlier than 630. The entire period during which Salona could have fallen to the Avars was covered by the reign of Heraclius 610-641. For this reason Marović has analysed the distribution of coins of Heraclius found in Salona. He concluded that commerce continued to take place at Salona long after 614, the date previously suggested for its destruction, and that the city was therefore still inhabited after that date. The latest coin in a hoard found in a water drain of a late antique complex of buildings at Solin (Salona) in 1979 is dated to 630-631.[61] Although this evidence cannot be used to give a *terminus post quem* for the fall of Salona, as Marović suggests, the presence of this scatter of Heraclian coins, some from late in the reign, does imply that there was occupation of the site at least until well into the 620s. In support of this, a recent topographical analysis of the account of the fall of Salona in Constantine Porphyrogenitos' *De Administrando Imperio* has suggested a date of 626 for the fall of the city.[62] Its end may have come even later than this, if prisoners were still awaiting ransom in 642.

Abbot Martinus then would have found a dispersed Christian community on the islands and in Aspalathos, and the martyrs reinterred in new and safer surroundings. This would explain the enduring belief of the Croatians that they have, and have always had, the bones of their martyrs in the cathedral at Split. The Parentines' beliefs about Maurus' relics would likewise be vindicated.

So the San Venanzio chapel was probably sanctified with contact relics. These were tokens of the saints whose spiritual power they represented and symbols of the beleaguered churches across the Adriatic which, till then, had always been within the sphere of influence of Rome. The presence of these relics of the Istrian and Dalmatian martyrs and of their "authentic" portraits in Rome guaranteed they would protect, assist and intercede for the pious souls who had installed them there. Moreover, invisible threads of contact across the Adriatic were forged, which bound Istria and Dalmatia mystically to Rome, just as the images themselves looked West into the heart of the city, where all roads led, and where the Pope was the vicar of Christ on earth. The political implications of this are clear: the mosaic is a statement that as the Illyrian saints looked to and protected Rome, so would the papacy care for Christians in the beleaguered homelands across the sea, which indeed have remained within the orbit of Rome until the present day.

The San Venanzio chapel owes its clarity of purpose to the fact that it was founded as a martyrium in the sense of a chapel built for the housing of relics of the martyrs which have been gathered into a central shrine for veneration. Because it fulfilled this purpose from the beginning, its original documentation remains fully relevent. This type of martyrium, though, seems to have been a late development in the evolution of the martyr shrine or *cella memoriae*. The earliest of all these shrines were built over the actual grave-sites of the saints or, less commonly, at the places of their martyrdoms or of episodes in their passions or other sites which are closely connected with their life histories. Salona is rich in examples of all these types of shrine. The earliest were clearly *cellae memoriae*, comparable to the surviving early fifth-century San Vittore in Ciel d'Oro in Milan, which is the most complete and well documented surviving example of a shrine raised over a martyr's grave.[63] Such chapels did not go unnoticed by those who sought a holy and powerful burial place for their own use, and the Early Christian shrines were favourite sites for the graves of pious Christians, who clustered around the saints in death as they had in life. The grave of St Peter on the Vatican Hill is a famous early example of this development, while the burial of Satyrus, brother of St Ambrose, beside St Victor in San Vittore in Ciel d'Oro is a well documented example of burial *ad sanctos*, burial beside the saints. Such burials are also known from Salona, where we find St Anastasius buried in the private funerary chapel of the noble lady Asclepia and her husband, who by this action not only honoured and benefited the saint, but also reserved his spiritual power and presence for themselves, to help them at the threshold of heaven. Clerics also chose this option, and we know that the sarcophagi of at least four early Salonitan bishops were placed beside the graves of martyrs.[64] The building of a basilica at Kapljuć illustrates another stage in the evolution of the martyr shrine: recognition that the cult has so grown that provision must be made at the graveside for the crowds of devotees. There is, however, a third stage illustrated in Salona in the journey towards the type of martyrium represented by the San Venanzio chapel. This is the choice of a martyr's *memoria*, which may or may not also be the funerary chapel of one or more important lay people or clerics, as the central location to which other holy relics are brought, perhaps from the whole region surrounding the shrine. This stage at Salona took the form of consolidation of the martyrs' bodies in small, secure shrines at the suburban cemeteries. This has been interpreted until now as an early fifth-century

response to insecure times, when the great cemetery churches were destroyed by the Goths and the Huns. However, it also fits in with developments elsewhere in the sixth century, when regulations concerning the moving of the saints' bodies seem to have been altered in connection with the need for relics to use in the consecration of altars. The insecurity of the graveyards must have gone along with the changing image of the relic, which, as it lost its dread reputation as a dangerous and untouchable talisman, became an object of enormous commercial value. An almost limitless market developed as more and more churches were built, especially in the newly Christian lands north of the Alps, and as altars also proliferated, each one in need of a fragment of a saint for consecration. The way was open for development of trade in relics, fed from both legal and illegal sources, among the latter theft from the suburban cemeteries.[65]

So we see that the San Venanzio chapel, far from being a simple shrine built to house and revere the relics of the Dalmatian and Istrian saints which had been brought from afar, was in fact the last in an orderly and logical series of shrines commemorating this group of saints. Starting with local, small-scale veneration in their homelands, their cults grew and prospered and evolved through all the stages of such shrines: the *cella memoriae*, the funerary chapel with burial beside the saints, the shrine with added accommodation for pilgrims and devotees, the memorial chapel at the scene of martyrdom, and the full-blown regional martyrium. This last probably rose at Salona, not long before the final destruction of the city in the early seventh century. It may be identified as the cruciform basilica which was raised beside the cathedral in the mid-sixth century (fig. 1), which was probably dedicated to the cult of relics. It was at this point that chance provided both an expatriate pope, John IV, with the means and the will to save and commemorate these martyrs, and a homeland so changed for ever by the invasions that its capital city would never rise again from its ruins. This has allowed the rediscovery of tangible memorials of its saints, which link their deaths, graves and memorials to the San Venanzio chapel in Rome for ever.

Notes

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1 The classic work on the martyrium is André Grabar's *Martyrium. Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique*, 3 vols (Paris, 1946), reprinted 2 vols (London, 1972).

2 In addition to Grabar's *Martyrium*, see R. Krautheimer, "Review of André Grabar, *Martyrium. Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique*, 2 vols., Paris, 1943-1946," *Art Bulletin*, XXXV, (1953), 57-61, repr. *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York, 1969), 151-59, esp. 159.

3 J.F. Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus* (Leiden, 1976), records fifth- and sixth-century examples of churches called martyria purely because they were dedicated to a martyr or martyrs.

4 *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. L. Duchesne, 2 vols (Paris, 1886-90), I, 330, "Iohannes, natione Dalmata, ex patre Venantio scolastico, sedit ann.1, mens. VIIII dies XVIIII. Hic temporibus suis misit per omnem Dalmatiam seu Histriam multas pecunias per sanctissimum et fidelissimum Martinum abbatem propter redemptiorem captivorum qui depraedati erant a gentibus. Eodem tempore fecit ecclesiam beatis martyribus Venantio, Anastasio, Mauro et aliorum multorum martyrum, quorum reliquias de Dalmatias et Histrias adduci praeceperat, et recondit eas in ecclesia suprascripta, iuxta fontem Lateranensem, iuxta oratorium beati Ioannis evangelistae, quam ornavit et diversa dona obtulit."

5 MARTYRIBUS XPI DNI PIA VOTA IOHANNES/ REDDIDIT ANTISTES SANCTIFICANTE DO/ AC SACRI FONTEIS SIMILI FULGENTE METALLO/ PROVIDUS INSTANTER HOC COPULAVIT OPUS/ QUO QUISQUIS GRADIENS ET XPM PRONUS ADORANS/ EFFUSAQUE PRECES MITTAT AD AETHRA SUAS. See Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis*, I, 330, note 3.

6 For summaries of earlier archaeological work, see especially Emerico Ceci (Mirko Čečić), *I monumenti cristiani di Salona* (Milan, 1963); and Ejnar Dyggve, *A History of Salonitan Christianity* (Oslo, 1951).

7 J. Wilpert, "La decorazione constantiniana della basilica lateranense," *Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana*, VI (1929), 42-127. See also R. Giordani, "Riflessioni sulla decorazione absidale della basilica di san Giovanni in Laterano," *Riv.Arch.Crist.*, LXX (1994), 271-313, esp. 272-73, note 4 for full bibliography.

8 See Grabar, *Martyrium*, 54-55 for Kapljuć; 56 for Manastirine, 57 for Marusinac, all three sites at Salona.

9 For a discussion of these stages, see G. Mackie, "The Early Medieval Chapel: Decoration, Form and Function," PhD. diss., University of Victoria, 1991, ch. 3 and 4.

10 Grabar, "Martyria collectifs," *Martyrium*, 54-63, where martyrs interred in shared graves at their deaths are discussed.

11 Anon., "Restauri di mosaici fuori del Vaticano," *Atti della pontificia Accademia de archeologia. Rendiconti*, XXIII-XXIV (1947-1949), 402-05.

12 *Liber Pontificalis*, I, 245, also 247, note 11, manuscript variant # 2, "Fecit autem oratorium Sancti Stephani in baptisterio Lateranense."

13 O. Panvinio, *De septem urbis ecclesiis* (Rome, 1570), 167, "De Ecclesia Sancti Venantij," reprinted in P. Lauer, *Le Palais du Latran* (Paris, 1911), 468: "habet ... parietes a tribus lateribus vetustissimus et non inelegantibus picturis praesertim a parte sinistra."

14 See Grabar, *Martyrium*, esp. ch. V, 207, "Les théophanies," and 211-12 on the S. Venanzio chapel. Also Mackie, "The Early Medieval Chapel," 217-20.

15 Ceci, *Monumenti cristiani*, 69. F. Bulić, "Kronotaska solinskih biskupa," *Bulletino di archeologia e storia dalmata*, XXXV (1912), 1-10, and "Anno e giorno della morte, condizione e numero dei martiri Salonitani," *Bulletino di archeologia e storia dalmata*, XXXIX (1916), 126. Also, "Mučenici Solinski, Broji stalis, godina i dan smrti mučenika solinskih," *Dodatak k vjesniku za arheologiju i povjest dalmatinsku* (Zagreb, 1919), 1-31, esp. 9-10. J.J. Wilkes, *Dalmatia* (London, 1969), 427, disagrees on the ground of insufficient evidence. See also M. Ivanisević, "Salonitanski Biskupi," *Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku*, LXXXVI (1993), 223-53, esp. 226, note 5, for literature, and 250-53, for the argument that Venantius was a bishop, but not necessarily the first bishop of Salona.

16 For John's parentage see *Liber Pontificalis*, I, 330, text in note 4, above.

17 N. Duval and E. Marin, "Encore les cinq martyrs de Salone. Un témoignage épigraphique désormais bien établi," *Memoria Sanctorum Venerantes* (Vatican City, 1992), 283-307, esp. 292.

18 Wilkes, *Dalmatia*, 429, for Domnio's origins, and Bulić, *Mučenici*, 8, for the date.

19 Dyggve, *History*, 73. Bulić, *Mučenici*, 7, records an inscription with the name Domnius.

20 Constantine Porphyrogenitos, *De Administrando Impero*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik, tr. R.J.H. Jenkins (Washington, 1967), I, 136-37, and II, *Commentary*, F. Dvornik et al., ed. R.J.H. Jenkins (London, 1962), 108-09.

21 Dyggve, *History*, 71f., 125f., with sources.

22 Diocletian's itineraries from Timothy D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982), 55-56.

23 Since construction of this enormous building, covering 9.5 acres, had started in 393, it must have neared completion by 304.

24 Ceci, *Monumenti cristiani*, 82.

25 Ceci, *Monumenti cristiani*, 81; Bulić, *Mučenici*, 12.

26 Grabar, *Martyrium*, I, 26.

27 For inscription, see *Ephemeris Salonitana* (Zadar, 1894), repr. in *Acta primi congressus internationalis archaeologiae christianae* (Vatican City, 1993), pl. 4, fig. 11.

28 Dyggve, *History*, 104.

29 *Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur*, 3rd edn (Paris and Rome, 1863, in progress), 7 Sept., 21-22. Dyggve, *History*, 73.

30 Antonio Nieri, "Santi aquileiesi e veneti in Dalmazia," *Antichità Altoadriatiche*, XXVI (1985), 261-88, esp. 269, finds that all sources that refer to Anastasius as an Aquilaean date from after 1000. Nieri, 273, also finds that Anastasius is not even described as a fuller in the early sources. For a summary of the archaeological evidence for his presence in Salona, see Dyggve, *History*, 83.

31 Dyggve, *History*, 83.

32 HOC CUBILE SANCTUM CONFESSORIS MAUR(I) NIBEUM CONTENET CORPUS, /H/AEC PRIMITIVA EIUS ORATIBUS REPARATA EST ECCLESIA. H/IC/ CONDIGNE TRANSLATUS EST UBI EPISCOPUS ET CONFESSOR EST FACTUS; IDEO IN HONORE DUPLICATUS EST LOCUS /.../ M S(U)BACTUS /.../ S. See Ceci, *Monumenti cristiani*, 81-82 and note 104, for sources.

33 "I corpi santi erano stati sottrati a Parenzo da pagano Doria l'11 agosto 1354 durante la guerra con Venezia, e custoditi nella chiesa di San Matteo fino al 1934 quando vennero restituti alla cittadina istriana e l'urna vuota collocata nel chiostro." The marble chest ordered in 1356 by Raffaello Doria for the bodies of the martyrs is illustrated in Carlo Ceschi and Leonard von Matt, *Chiese di Genova* (Genoa, n.d.), 60, pl. 31.

34 F. Bulić, "Escavi dell'anfiteatro romano di Salona negli anni 1909-12 e 1913-14," *Bulletino di archeologia e storia dalmata*, XXVII (1914), 22 and pl. 14.

35 Similar pagan shrines are known from the Colosseum, Rome, and from Dürres (Dyrrachium), Albania, where one was also converted into a Christian chapel. See Nicole Thierry, "Une mosaïque à Dyrrachium," *Cahiers Archéologiques*, XVIII (1968), 227-29; Maria Andaloro, "I mosaici parietali di Durazzo o dell'origine constantinopolitana del tema iconografico di Maria Regina," *Studien zur spätantiken und byzantinischen Kunst*, III, ed. O. Feld and V. Peschlow (Rome, 1986), 103-12; and, especially, Ivanka Nikolajević, "Images votives de Salone et de Dyrrachium," *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloskog Instituta*, XIX (1980), 59-70, who suggests a sixth-century date and also discusses the Salona amphitheatre chapels, with line drawings of the paintings.

36 Bulić, "Escavi dell'anfiteatro," 31. The altar is now in the Split archaeological museum; Ceci, *I Monumenti pagani di Salona* (Milan, 1963), 108. For bibliography on other gladiator shrines, see Ceci, *Monumenti cristiani*, 244, note 6.

37 See Dyggve, *History*, 49, fig. IV. The inscription read SCS (AST)ERIU(S) SCS T(E)LIU(S).

38 Bulić, "Escavi dell'amfiteatro," 22 and pl. XII. "vi sono avvanzi ... di una figura umana ... piuttoso' di un fanciullo."

39 Nikolajević, "Images Votives," 70.

40 See Ceci, *Monumenti cristiani*, 243, for references.

41 See above, note 35.

42 E. Kitzinger, "Some Reflections on Portraiture in Byzantine Art," *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West*, ed. W.E. Kleinbauer (Bloomington, 1976), 256-70, esp. 189 and note 19.

43 See C. Cecchelli, *La vita di Roma nel Medio Evo*, 1:2, *Le arti minori e il costume* (Rome, 1960), 1076.

44 Two inscriptions from the chapel at Sto. Stefano, now lost, were

recorded by G.B. De Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, 5 vols (Rome, 1857-1861, repr. 1888), II, 152, no. 30. EXQUIRENS PIETAS TECTUM DECORARE SACRATUM/ PASTORIS SUMMI THEODORI CORDEM EREXIT/ QUI STUDIO MAGNO SANCTORUM CORPORA CULTU' HOC DEDICAVIT, NON PATRIS NEGLECTA RELIQUIT. "Piety inspired the heart of Pope Theodore, who wished to decorate this sanctuary. He applied all his zeal to honouring the bodies of the saints by this fine decoration, nor did he forget the remains of his father," tr. W. Oakeshott, *The Mosaics of Rome* (Greenwich, Conn., 1967), 153.

45 See C. Davis-Weyer, "S. Stefano Rotondo in Rome and the Oratory of Theodore I," in *Italian Church Decoration of the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance. Functions, Forms and Regional Traditions*, ed. W. Tronzo (Bologna, 1989), 61-80.

46 The relics were found *in situ* in its *confessio* in 1736, identified by a silver tablet. R. Krautheimer *et al.*, *Corpus Basilicarum Christianorum Romae*, 5 vols (Vatican City, 1937-77), IV, 237.

47 See P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints, Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981).

48 Anxiety about the apparent presence of the martyrs' bodies in both Rome and Dalmatia gave rise to the duplication in legend of at least two of the saints: Domnus, as was discussed, and Anastasius, whose saintly *alter ego* was a legendary saint, Anastasius the *Cornicularius*: a soldier of that rank who was martyred under Aurelian; *Acta Sanctorum*, 7 Sept., 21-22, and H. Delahaye, "Saints d'Istrie et de Dalmatie," *Analecta Bollandiana*, XVIII (1899), 488-500.

49 John M. McCulloh, "The Cult of Relics in the Letters and Dialogues of Pope Gregory the Great: A Lexicographical Study," *Traditio*, XXXII (1976), 145-84, esp. 147; and Epistula 218, *Epistulae imperatorum pontificum*, *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiastorum latinorum*, XXXV, 679-680.

50 Gregory I, *Epistola* XXX, to Constantina Augusta, Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, LXXVII, cols. 700-05; tr. James Barmby, *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, XII (1895), 154-56.

51 For the question of what is meant by Gregory's letter, see McCulloh, "Cult of Relics," 147-150. The sanctification of altars with martyr relics is first mentioned in the biography of pope Felix (268-273), *Liber Pontificalis*, I, 158: "Hic constituit supra memorias martyrum missas celebrare," tr. R. Davis, *The Book of Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis)* (Liverpool, 1989), 11: "He decreed that mass be celebrated over the memorials of the martyrs," though this statement clearly does not proscribe its celebration in other locations, or at altars which were not sanctified in this way.

52 McCulloh, "Cult of Relics," 151-53.

53 Gregory I, *Epistola* 14.7, 8.13; II, 425-28, 432-33. McCulloh, "Cult of Relics," 151.

54 Ambrose, *Epistola* 22, "To his sister Marcellina," *PL*, 16, cols. 1062-69, esp. 1063.

55 The lead coffer and the inscription were provided for the remains after the building of a new altar in 1674.

56 The inscription reads in part: CORPORA SS MM VENANTII DOMNUSNIS (the other names follow); Ceci, *Monumenti cristiani*, 91. See also Panvinio, "De Ecclesia sancti Venantij," 468, "et sub eius altare corpora SS. Martyrum Venantij, Dominionis, Anastasij, Mauri, Asterij, Septimij, Sulpicianij, Telij, Anthiochiani, Pauliniani et Caiani ex Dalmatia et Istria Romam advecta recondidit ...." Sulpicianus seems to be added in error.

57 Makso Peloža, "Rekognicija relikvia Dalmatinskih i Istarskih mučenika, u oratoriju svetog Venancija kod baptisterija Lateranske bazilike u Rimu 1962-1964 godine," *Vjesnik za arheologiju i historiju dalmatinsku* (=*Bull.Dalm.*), LXIV (1962), 163-80, with French summary.

58 Dyggve, *History*, 83: "Among the extremely numerous sarcophagi, which in the course of years have been excavated there are scarcely ten, which have not been opened by violence."

59 Wilkes, *Dalmatia*, 437. These communities retained their Roman character into the Middle Ages.

60 Ivan Marović, "Reflexions about Year of the Destruction of Salona", *Vjesnik Dalm.*, LXXVII (1984), 293-315.

61 F. Oreb, "Archaeological Excavations in the Eastern Part of Ancient Salona in 1979," *Vjesnik Dalm.*, LXXVII (1984), 25-35, esp. 28-29. See also Marović, "Reflexions," 293, coin 45, with facing portraits of Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine.

62 Nikola Jaksić, "Constantine Porphyrogenitos as the Source for the Destruction of Salona," *Vjesnik Dalm.*, LXXVII (1984), 315-26.

63 See G. Mackie, "Symbolism and Purpose in an Early Christian Martyr Chapel: The Case of San Vittore in Ciel d'Oro, Milan," *Gesta*, XXXIV (1995), 91-101.

64 Primus, after 304; Gaianus, ca. 391; Symferius, 405; and Esychius, before 426. See Ivanisević, "Salonitanski Biskupi," for inscriptions and dating.

65 Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra. The Theft of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1978).