

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA'S TOMB AND ITS PLACE IN SANTA MARIA SOPRA MINERVA, ROME: NARRATION, TRANSLATION AND VENERATION

by Joan Barclay Lloyd

By examining the historical narratives of Saint Catherine of Siena's death and burial this paper sheds new light on the liturgical layout of the Dominican church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome c. 1380. Since then Saint Catherine's remains have been translated five times, and at each translation, the form and decoration of her sepulchre has changed, showing how different aspects of her life were commemorated at each renewal of her tomb. These transformations are examined in the light of what survives today and of other literary documentation. Particular attention is given to the way Catherine was represented before and after her canonization in 1461. This explains why a relief attributed to Donatello that has been associated with her tomb may date c. 1430, while a figure of the saint by an artist close to Isaia of Pisa was made c. 1466. The paper also examines the consequences of placing the tomb under the altar of the Capranica chapel in 1579, and of moving the monument under the high altar of the church in 1855, when Santa Maria sopra Minerva was restored according to neo-Gothic principles. Each phase of her tomb shows how Catherine has been venerated from 1380 until the present.

Il saggio fa nuova luce sulla disposizione ai fini liturgici della chiesa domenicana di Santa Maria sopra Minerva a Roma attorno al 1380 attraverso l'esame delle narrazioni storiche della morte e della sepoltura di Santa Caterina da Siena. Da quel momento i resti di Santa Caterina sono stati traslati cinque volte e a ogni traslazione la forma e la decorazione del sepolcro è cambiata: diversi aspetti della sua vita vennero infatti commemorati in occasione di ciascun rinnovamento della tomba. Queste trasformazioni sono esaminate nel saggio alla luce di ciò che sopravvive oggi e della documentazione letteraria. Particolare attenzione viene data al modo in cui Caterina è stata rappresentata prima e dopo la sua canonizzazione nel 1461. Questo modus operandi spiega perché un rilievo attribuito a Donatello, che è stato associato alla tomba della Santa, possa essere datato attorno al 1430, mentre una sua figura, opera di un artista vicino a Isaia da Pisa, fu realizzata attorno al 1466. Lo studio esamina anche le conseguenze della scelta di collocare la tomba sotto l'altare della Cappella Capranica nel 1579 e di avere poi spostato il monumento sotto l'altare maggiore della chiesa nel 1855, quando Santa Maria sopra Minerva fu restaurata secondo i dettami dello stile neo-gotico. Le diverse fasi della tomba mostrano come Caterina sia stata venerata dal 1380 sino ai giorni nostri.

Catherine of Siena (1347–80) was one of the great saints of the later Middle Ages.¹ Immediately after her death many people recognized her as blessed

¹ I thank Dr Joyce Martin for inviting me to give a preliminary version of this paper at the Ateneo in Manila. For Catherine's biography, see Raymond of Capua, *Legenda Maior*, edited by G. Henschenius and D. Papebrochius (eds), in I. Bollandus, G. Henschenius and D. Papebrochius, *Acta Sanctorum* [hereafter AA SS], 69 vols (Antwerp, 1643–1940), aprilis III (Antwerp, 1675), 851–978, especially pp. 936–54; in English: Raymond of Capua, *The Life of St. Catherine of*

(‘beata’); and after her canonization in 1461, she was officially venerated as a saint (‘sancta’).² Today her cult has spread all over the world. One place where she is especially venerated is the basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome, where she was buried.³

After a brief outline of Catherine’s life, and a short analysis of the history and layout of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, this article examines the historical narratives of Catherine’s death and burial in order to shed new light on the liturgical layout of the Dominican church c. 1380. It then considers each of five successive translations of Catherine’s remains, and the changing appearance of her sepulchre, as known from what survives today and from literary documentation. It highlights aspects of Catherine’s life that were especially commemorated at each renewal of her tomb, in the decoration and inscriptions on or near her sepulchre, showing aspects of her veneration through the centuries.

Catherine Benincasa was born in Siena in 1347, and she died in Rome in 1380. She was not a nun in an enclosed convent, but a religious woman, consecrated to God in virginity as a Dominican tertiary, called a ‘Mantellata’ in Siena.⁴ In the early part of her life she lived at home with her family, going out to serve the sick and the poor. In later years she travelled through Italy, as well as to Avignon in France, to fulfil a very public and political mission in the Church and in the world.⁵ Although she had no formal education, with the help of several scribes and an ability to write that she attributed to divine intervention,

Siena, translated by G. Lamb (Charlotte, 2011). See also, Thomas Antonii de Senis (‘Caffarini’), *Legenda Minor*, edited by E. Franceschini (Milan, 1942) and Thomas Antonii de Senis, *Libellus de Supplemento*, edited by G. Cavallini and I. Foroloso (Rome, 1974). There are numerous modern biographies of Catherine, beginning with A.T. Drane, *The History of Saint Catherine of Siena and her Companions* (London, 1880).

² For the distinction between ‘blessed’ and ‘saint’ in the Late Middle Ages, see A. Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, translated by J. Birrell (Cambridge, 2005), 85–103; for the early cult of Saint Catherine, J.F. Hamburger and G. Signori (eds), *Catherine of Siena: the Creation of a Cult* (Turnhout, 2013); and for later veneration, G. Parsons, *The Cult of Saint Catherine of Siena: a Study in Civil Religion* (Aldershot, 2008).

³ The standard work on Saint Catherine’s sepulchre is L. Bianchi, ‘Il sepolcro di S. Caterina da Siena nella basilica di S. Maria sopra Minerva’, in L. Bianchi and D. Giunta, *Iconografia di S. Caterina da Siena*, 1. *L’immagine* (Rome 1988), 15–62. See also, D. Norman, ‘The Chapel of Saint Catherine in San Domenico: a study of cultural relations between Renaissance Siena and Rome’, in M. Ascheri, G. Mazzoni and F. Nevola (eds), *L’ultimo secolo della Repubblica di Siena: arti, cultura e società (Atti del convegno internazionale, Siena 28–30 settembre 2003 — 16–18 settembre 2004)* (Siena, 2008), 405–19.

⁴ For medieval Dominican tertiaries, see G.G. Mersseman, *Dossier de l’ordre de la penitence au XIIIe siècle* (Freiburg, 1961); G.G. Mersseman with G.G. Pacini, *Ordo Fratemitatis: confraternite e pietà dei laici nel medioevo*, 3 vols (Rome, 1977); M. Lehmijoki-Gardner, ‘Writing religious rules as an interactive process: Dominican penitent women and the making of their *Regula*’, *Speculum* 79 (2004), 640–87; M. Lehmijoki-Gardner (ed.), *Dominican Penitent Women* (Mahwah (NJ), 2005); and M. Lehmijoki-Gardner, ‘Le penitenti domenicane tra Duecento e Trecento’, in G. Zarri and G. Festa (eds), *Il velo, la penna e la parola — le Domenicane: storia, istituzione e scritture (Biblioteca di memorie domenicane 1)* (Florence, 2009), 113–23.

⁵ F. Thomas Luongo, *The Saintry Politics of Catherine of Siena* (Ithaca/London, 2006).

she authored many letters, a book known as *The Dialogue*, and numerous prayers.⁶ From her childhood onwards she had strong mystical experiences, culminating in the stigmata, which she received at Pisa in 1375. In 1378 Pope Urban VI summoned her to Rome, where she went to live and pray for the Church during the 'Great Schism', when there were two rival contenders for the see of Peter.

When Catherine died in Rome on 29 April 1380, her body was taken to the Dominican church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, where it remained for three days before her burial. A few months later, Raymond of Capua translated her remains to a new sepulchre in the chapel south of the sanctuary of the church. Antonino Pierozzi (1389–1459), better known as Saint Antoninus of Florence, who was prior of the Minerva in 1430, moved her to a more dignified monument in that chapel. After her canonization in 1461 her tomb was raised above the chapel's altar. It was moved to a position below the altar in 1579. Finally, in 1855 her sarcophagus and effigy were located under the high altar of the church, where they are today.⁷

In 1855 her effigy was modified (Fig. 1): her face and hands were tinted in flesh tones; her clothing was transformed into the white tunic, black mantle and white veil of a Dominican tertiary; the two pillows under her head were painted dark red; and a metal crown and a necklace were added as votive gifts. In 2000 Father Giovanni Monti, prior of the Minerva, decided to have Saint Catherine's tomb restored to its fifteenth-century appearance: an elegant white marble effigy of Catherine above a marble sarcophagus with gilded highlights (Fig. 2).⁸

THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA SOPRA MINERVA

In order to grasp the significance of the various locations of Catherine's tomb, one needs to understand some aspects of the history and layout of the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva (Figs 3 and 4). Between 1255 and 1275 the nuns of Santa Maria in Campo Marzo ceded a small eighth-century church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva to the Dominican friars. From 1280 onwards, the Dominicans built a much larger basilica on the site, as their second church in Rome, the

⁶ *The Letters of St. Catherine of Siena*, translated by S. Noffke, second edition, 4 vols (*Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 202, 203, 329, 355) (Tempe (AZ), 2000, 2001, 2007, 2009); *Catherine of Siena: The Dialogue*, translated by S. Noffke (New York, 1980), and *The Prayers of Catherine of Siena*, second edition, translated by S. Noffke (San José, 2001). See also J. Tylus, 'Mystical literacy: writing and religious women in medieval Italy', in C. Muessig, G. Ferzoco and B. Kienzle (eds), *A Companion to Catherine of Siena* (Leiden, 2011), 155–83, esp. pp. 156–60.

⁷ G. Palmiero and G. Villetti, *Storia edilizia di S. Maria sopra Minerva in Roma, 1272–1870* (Rome, 1989), 228–31.

⁸ G. Monti, 'Restauro dei monumenti cateriniani nella basilica di S. Maria sopra Minerva', and S. Nerger, 'Il restauro della tomba di Santa Caterina nella basilica di S. Maria sopra Minerva a Roma', in M.G. Bianco (ed.), *La Roma di Santa Caterina da Siena* (Rome, 2001), 395–8, and 399–410, respectively.



Fig. 1. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Saint Catherine's tomb before the restoration of 2000. (Photo: Alinari Archives — Alinari Archive, Florence.)



Fig. 2. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Saint Catherine's tomb after the restoration of 2000. (Photo: author.)

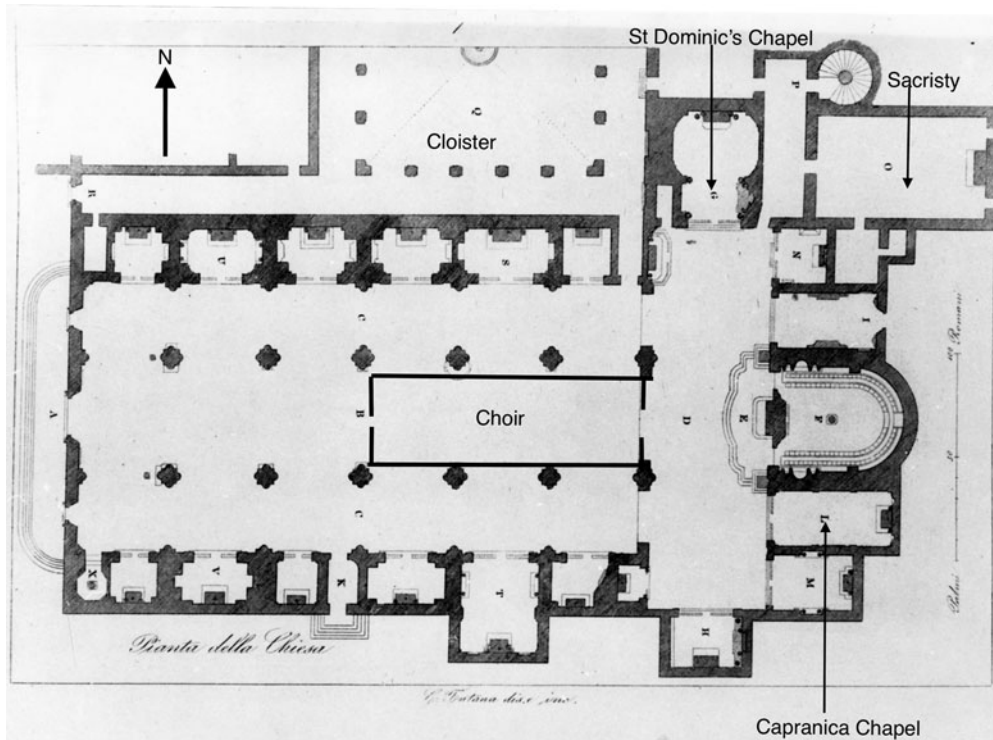


Fig. 3. G. Fontana, *S. Maria sopra Minerva*, plan, 1838, detail. Photo U. Fi. C I, 131 g; Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Rome, with labels and site of choir added by author. (Reproduced courtesy of the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Rome.)

first being Santa Sabina, where they continued to serve.⁹ The reason they wanted a second church was that Santa Sabina on the Aventine was far from where most people lived, whereas the Minerva was located in a more densely inhabited neighbourhood near the Pantheon.¹⁰ Over the centuries they set up a large convent there, which by 1320 housed 50 friars.¹¹

⁹ For the architecture of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, see G. Matthiae, 'Gli aspetti diversi di S. Maria sopra Minerva', *Palladio* n.s. 4 (1954), 19–26; U. Kleefisch, *Die Römische Dominikanerkirche S. Maria sopra Minerva von 1280 bis 1453. Ein Baumonographische Untersuchung* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelm-Universität zu Bonn, 1986); Palmiero and Villetti, *Storia edilizia* (above, n. 7); U. Kleefisch-Jobst, *Die Römische Dominikanerkirche Santa Maria sopra Minerva: ein Beitrag zur Architektur der Bettelorden in Mittelitalien* (Münster, 1991); and G. Villetti and G. Palmiero, *Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Roma: notizie dal cantiere* (Rome, 1994). For Santa Sabina, see J. Barclay Lloyd, 'Medieval Dominican architecture at Santa Sabina in Rome, c. 1219–c. 1320', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 72 (2004), 231–92.

¹⁰ A. Brandi, *Cronica*, Archivum Generale Ordinis Praedicatorum, AGOP XIV, liber C, p.te I, fols 3–4.

¹¹ Recorded in the Catalogue of Turin, c. 1320, Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino, MS lat. A 381, fols 1–16, published in R. Valentini and G. Zucchetti, *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, III (Rome, 1946), 205–318, esp. p. 299.



Fig. 4. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, interior. Photo U. Pl. D 33940: Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Rome. (*Reproduced courtesy of the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Rome.*)

The Dominicans built the church in the Gothic style, and indeed it was the only truly Gothic church in medieval Rome. It had a nave six bays long, two aisles, a transept and a polygonal apse, which was flanked by two stepped chapels on either side (Fig. 3). From the fourteenth century onwards other chapels were added to the building, one at either end of the transept, and six opening off each of the aisles. Apart from three doors in the west façade, there was one side entrance in the north aisle and another in the south aisle, as well as a door in the north transept close to the sacristy.

In the nineteenth century it was believed that the medieval church was designed and built by Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, the Dominican lay-brothers and master builders who constructed Santa Maria Novella in Florence.¹² In 1848 Fra

¹² P.T. Masetti, *Memorie storiche della chiesa di S. Maria sopra Minerva e dei suoi moderni restauri ... aggiuntevi alcune notizie sul corpo di S. Caterina da Siena e sulle varie sue traslazioni* (Rome, 1855), 9; V. Marchese, *Memorie dei più insigne pittori, scultori, architetti domenicani*, 2 vols, fourth edition (Bologna, 1878–9), I, 72–5. This theory is no longer accepted; see Matthiae, ‘Gli aspetti diversi’ (above, n. 9), 24–5; and Kleefisch, *S. Maria sopra Minerva ... ein Baumonographische Untersuchung* (above, n. 9), 93.

Girolamo Bianchedi, also a Dominican lay-brother, began to restore Santa Maria sopra Minerva according to neo-Gothic principles.¹³ Bianchedi first analysed the building and then drew up plans to correct what he thought were its deficiencies.¹⁴ He changed the semicircular arch at the entrance to the sanctuary into a pointed arch; he demolished the upper part of the apse (which had been restored in 1614) and inserted new pointed windows and ribbed vaulting; he replaced the rectangular sixteenth-century windows in the clerestory with rose windows; and he made the arches throughout the building more pointed (Fig. 4).¹⁵ He managed to restore the structure of the church before he died in 1849, but the interior decoration was left incomplete. Then work stopped amid the political tensions c. 1849–50, when Pope Pius IX (1846–78) had to flee to Gaeta. After these setbacks, the interior was embellished with stained glass and frescoes, while real or fake marble covered the piers. This work was finished in 1855, when Pius IX rededicated the church.¹⁶ The reordering included moving Saint Catherine's tomb to a prominent position under a new, neo-gothic high altar (Figs 1 and 2).

NARRATION: CATHERINE'S DEATH AND BURIAL

There are several historical sources for Catherine's life, including letters from eyewitnesses and early biographies. Raymond of Capua (1330–99), who completed his *Legenda Maior* in 1395, tells of Catherine's final years in Rome, her death, and what happened immediately afterwards.¹⁷ In the early fifteenth century Tommaso Antonio of Siena, known as 'Caffarini' (1350–c. 1434), composed an abbreviated version of Raymond's life, entitled the *Legenda Minor* in Latin, or the *Leggenda minore* in Italian;¹⁸ between 1401 and 1418 he wrote another work on Catherine, his *Libellus de Supplemento*.¹⁹ In addition, he and some other Dominicans referred to Catherine's death at the *Processo Castellano*, a diocesan enquiry held in 1411–16 into the Dominican

¹³ He previously had participated in the restoration of San Domenico, Bologna, and Imola cathedral; Palmiero and Villetti, *Storia edilizia* (above, n. 7), 192. Contemporary Roman architects, like Virginio Vespignani (1808–82) who restored many churches, tended to follow the original style of each building, while sumptuously embellishing the interior; see C. Barucci, *Virginio Vespignani, architetto tra Stato Pontificio e Regno d'Italia* (Rome, 2006), esp. pp. 17–31, 133–95.

¹⁴ Masetti, *Memorie* (above, n. 12), 24–5.

¹⁵ Masetti, *Memorie* (above, n. 12), 25–6; see also Matthiae, 'Gli aspetti diversi' (above, n. 9), 19–26; Palmiero and Villetti, *Storia edilizia* (above, n. 7), 195–7.

¹⁶ Masetti, *Memorie* (above, n. 12), 67–72.

¹⁷ Raymond, *Life* (III, 1) (above, n. 1), 273–353.

¹⁸ 'Caffarini', *Legenda Minor* (above, n. 1), iii–vii; and F. Grottanelli (ed.), *Leggenda minore* (Bologna, 1868).

¹⁹ 'Caffarini', *Libellus de Supplemento* (above, n. 1).

cult of Catherine in Venice before she was canonized.²⁰ From these historical sources, one can reconstruct the main events surrounding her death and burial.

Raymond, who had been Catherine's spiritual director from 1374 to 1378, explained that Pope Urban VI summoned her to Rome in November 1378, shortly after the election of a rival pope, Clement VII, plunged the Church into the Great Schism, which lasted from 1378 to 1417.²¹ During the last two years of her life, Catherine stayed in Rome, walking almost every day to Saint Peter's to pray for the Church, and, according to Raymond, waging an intense spiritual battle against evil, which he considered a form of martyrdom.²² As was normal with Catherine, she came to Rome with numerous disciples, men and women who formed her spiritual 'family' and who referred to her as 'Mamma'. Raymond states that she and her followers lived in 'Via del Papa, between the Minerva and Campo dei Fiori'.²³ She died at home surrounded by her disciples.

One of her disciples, Barduccio Canigiani, described her death in a letter immediately afterwards.²⁴ As Catherine neared the end of her life, her followers in Rome came to her deathbed. She prayed for each of them in turn, gave them advice, and she interceded for the Church and for the pope. She was very conscious of her sins, and twice received absolution. After a great struggle with the devil, she called for mercy through the precious blood of Jesus. Finally, having pronounced the words, 'Father, into Thy Hands I commend my spirit', she bowed her head, and expired.²⁵

Raymond was not present at her death, because in December 1378 he had become provincial of the Dominican province of Lombardy, and in April 1380 he was in Genoa.²⁶ Nevertheless, he recorded that his information came from eyewitnesses among Catherine's followers, thereby attesting its credibility.²⁷ While he himself had an intimation that Catherine had died,²⁸ he also mentioned the vision of a Roman woman called Semia, who saw Catherine as a young girl surrounded by saints and angels in heaven; there were three crowns on her head, one on top of the other — the lowest of silver, the middle one of gold mixed with silver that had a reddish glow, and the highest of pure gold inset with jewels.²⁹ Semia ran to Catherine's house, but found it locked up, for

²⁰ M.H. Laurent (ed.), *Il Processo Castellano (Fontes Vitae S. Catharinae Senensis Historici 9)* (Milan, 1942).

²¹ Raymond, *Life* (III, 1) (above, n. 1), 276–7.

²² Raymond, *Life* (III, 2) (above, n. 1), 287–91; reference to this as martyrdom at p. 290.

²³ Raymond, *Life* (III, 2) (above, n. 1), 291. The house is believed to have been at today's Piazza Santa Chiara 14; see G. Cavallini and D. Giunta, *Luoghi cateriniani di Roma* (Rome, 2000).

²⁴ Barduccio's letter is published in Latin in *AA SS*, aprilis III (above, n. 1), 959–61, and is used as a source by Drane, *History* (above, n. 1), 568.

²⁵ Barduccio's letter, in Drane, *History* (above, n. 1), 568.

²⁶ Raymond, *Life* (III, 4) (above, n. 1), 307.

²⁷ Raymond, *Life* (III, 1) (above, n. 1), 281–6.

²⁸ Raymond, *Life* (III, 4) (above, n. 1), 308.

²⁹ Raymond, *Life* (III, 4) (above, n. 1), 309–14, esp. pp. 310–11.

Catherine's disciples wanted to grieve in private, and they were perplexed about what to do. Finally, they decided to take Catherine's body to Santa Maria sopra Minerva, and request she be buried there.³⁰

Stefano Maconi, who on Catherine's advice became a Carthusian monk after her death,³¹ recalled in 1411–16 how Catherine had died in his presence, and he had carried her body in his own hands to the Minerva.³² Before Catherine's funeral, her body lay in the church for three days. When news of her death spread through Rome, many people were deeply moved, and a large crowd gathered, seeking her intercession. Her followers and the friars were afraid they would remove parts of her clothing and parts of her body to take home as relics.³³ For this reason, said Raymond, 'they laid the corpse behind the iron railings in Saint Dominic's chapel in the church'.³⁴

This chapel was at the northern end of the transept, not far from the campanile and the door leading to the sacristy (Fig. 3).³⁵ Giacomo Alberini, a Roman citizen, had constructed it, probably shortly after 1350, and he had also paid for the nearby stairs from the sacristy to the dormitory, and for the doors of the sacristy and the bell-tower.³⁶ The Alberini family remained patrons of the chapel until 1634, when it was ceded to Alessandro Rondanini.³⁷ Through the centuries the chapel has been in this location, where Pope Benedict XIII totally rebuilt it in 1724.³⁸

The location of the chapel, the stairs and the sacristy is related to how the medieval Dominican friars used the church liturgically. Each morning they came down the stairs from the dormitory, and walked past the sacristy and Saint Dominic's chapel on their way to the enclosed choir in the church to celebrate the divine office (Fig. 3). Ambrosio Brandi's *Cronica* described the medieval choir in the nave of the church with altars around its exterior, where Mass was celebrated.³⁹ When the transfer of the choir to the apse was planned in 1539, reference was made to freeing the piers of the church, so that people could walk

³⁰ Raymond, *Life* (III, 4) (above, n. 1), 314.

³¹ Raymond, *Life* (III, 4) (above, n. 1), 304.

³² Laurent (ed.) *Processo Castellano* (above, n. 20), 261.

³³ Raymond, *Life* (III, 4) (above, n. 1), 315.

³⁴ Raymond, *Life* (III, 4) (above, n. 1), 315.

³⁵ Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fols 30–1; Palmiero and Villetti, *Storia edilizia* (above, n. 7), 171–4.

³⁶ Palmiero and Villetti, *Storia edilizia* (above, n. 7), 171–4, suggested a date in the second half of the fourteenth century. For the patronage, see *Il Campione, o sia generale descrizione di tutte le scritture spettanti al Venerabile Convento dell'Annunziata o sopra Minerva di Roma* (compiled by R. Quadri), 3 vols, Archivio di Santa Maria sopra Minerva MS III, 1758, I, 165; and Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fols 30–1, 43.

³⁷ *Campione* (above, n. 36), I, 162; Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fols 43–4.

³⁸ Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fols 43–4; and Anonymous, *Beneficij segnalati fatti a questa nostra chiesa di S.a M.a sopra Minerva dal sommo pontefice regnante Benedetto XIII*, AGOP XIV, liber C, p.te I, fols 85–7. See also Palmiero and Villetti, *Storia edilizia* (above, n. 7), 172–3.

³⁹ Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fol. 29: 'era anticamente il Coro in mezzo della Chiesa cinto da fuori da alcuni altari ne quali si celebrava'. See also Palmiero and Villetti, *Storia edilizia* (above, n. 7), 143–4.

between them.⁴⁰ This suggests that the choir originally took up most of the eastern half of the nave with its enclosing partitions close to the piers.

From 1249 onwards, Dominican churches usually had their interior space clearly divided into two parts: in the east, the interior or friars' church, for the religious community, including the choir; in the west, the 'exterior church' for the lay congregation.⁴¹ At Santa Sabina from 1238 onwards there was also an intermediary wall or 'tramezzo' built across the nave and aisles to mark this separation (Fig. 5).⁴² At Santa Maria sopra Minerva, there is no mention of such a dividing wall. Raymond described protective railings closing the chapel of Saint Dominic in 1380, but he did not refer to a wall preventing people from entering the eastern half of the church. On the contrary, he said that many men, women and children came to venerate Catherine at Saint Dominic's chapel, and many were healed.⁴³

Giovanni of Siena, an Augustinian Hermit, climbed into the pulpit, wanting to speak of Catherine's virtues, but he could not make himself heard over the hubbub, so he climbed down again, muttering that Catherine had no need of such sermons.⁴⁴ In a church belonging to the Order of Preachers, the pulpit was an important feature. Yet it is not clear exactly where it was located in Santa

⁴⁰ '... lasciare la Chiesa con li pilastri libera, al populo che verrà passeggiare per epssa ...', from a 'Relazione tecnica' added to a letter from Cardinal Nicola Ridolfi, dated 15 July 1539, published in P. Pecchiai, 'I lavori fatti nella chiesa della Minerva per collocarvi le sepulture di Leone X e Clemente VII', *Archivi d'Italia e Rassegna Internazionale degli Archivi*, ser. II, 17 (1950), 199–208, esp. pp. 206–7.

⁴¹ For Dominican legislation about this, see G.G. Mersseman, 'L'architecture dominicaine au XIIIe siècle', *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 16 (1964), 136–90, and R. Sundt, 'Mediocris domos et humiles habeant fratres nostri. Dominican legislation on architecture and architectural decoration in the thirteenth century', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 46 (1987), 394–407. See also J. Cannon, *Religious Poverty, Visual Riches: Art in the Dominican Churches of Central Italy in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (New Haven/London, 2013), esp. 7–9, 29–45, 109–16; M.B. Hall, 'The 'Ponte' at S. Maria Novella: the problem of the rood screen in Italy', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37 (1974), 157–73; M.B. Hall, 'The tramezzo in S. Croce, Florence, reconstructed', *Art Bulletin* 56 (1974), 325–41; M.B. Hall, 'The Italian rood screen: some implications for liturgy and function', in S. Bertelli and G. Ramakus (eds), *Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore*, 2 vols (Florence, 1978), II, 213–18; M.B. Hall, 'The 'tramezzo' in the Italian Renaissance', in S.E.J. Gerstel (ed.), *The Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West* (Washington (DC), 2006), 214–32; M. Bacci, *Lo spazio dell'anima: vita di una chiesa medievale* (Rome, 2005), 79–85; D. Cooper, 'Access all areas? Spatial divides in the mendicant churches of late medieval Tuscany', in F. Andrews (ed.), *Ritual and Space in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of the 2009 Harlaxton Symposium* (*Harlaxton Medieval Studies XXI*) (Donington, 2011), 90–107.

⁴² Barclay Lloyd, 'Medieval Dominican architecture at Santa Sabina' (above, n. 9), 251–9.

⁴³ Raymond, *Life* (III, 5) (above, n. 1), 316–25; 'Caffarini', *Libellus de Supplemento* (above, n. 1), 319; and M. Hohlstein, "'Sacra Lipsana': the relics of Catherine of Siena in the context of propagation, piety, and community", in Hamburger and Signori (eds), *Catherine of Siena: the Creation of a Cult* (above, n. 2), 47–67.

⁴⁴ Raymond, *Life* (III, 5) (above, n. 1), 317; 'Caffarini', *Libellus de Supplemento* (above, n. 1), 319.

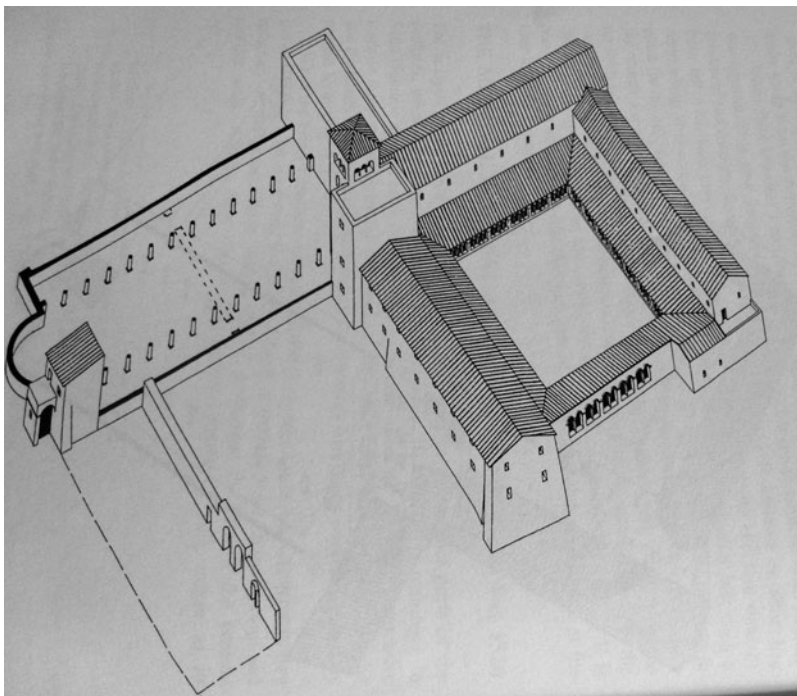


Fig. 5. Santa Sabina reconstruction. (Drawing J.M. Blake and author.)

Maria sopra Minerva. Going on other mendicant churches, it may have been on top of the west wall of the choir, or against one of the aisle walls near the lay section of the church.⁴⁵

Raymond reported several miracles that happened in his absence, and also one that occurred when he came back to Rome, after he had been elected Master General of the Order of Preachers on 12 May 1380, an outcome he claimed Catherine had predicted.⁴⁶ The exact date Raymond returned to Rome is not known, but Father Timoteo Centi rightly argued that it must have been before 1382, because Raymond said that Alessia Saraceni was present at the miracle he witnessed in Rome, and she died in 1382.⁴⁷ Bianchi suggested convincingly that Raymond could have returned to Rome as early as September 1380.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Cannon, *Religious Poverty, Visual Riches* (above, n. 41), 47, 249; Cooper, 'Access all areas?' (above, n. 41), 96–7; C. Bruzelius, *Preaching, Building, and Burying: Friars in the Medieval City* (New Haven/London, 2014), 97.

⁴⁶ Raymond, *Life* (III, 5) (above, n. 1), 319–22.

⁴⁷ T.M. Centi, 'Il culto di S. Caterina da Siena prima della canonizzazione', *S. Caterina da Siena* 16 (3) (1965), 17–22, esp. p. 21; Raymond, *Life* (III, 5) (above, n. 1), 322–3; and D. Giunta, 'La prima processione con la reliquia della testa di S. Caterina: tradizione, storia, iconografia', *Quaderni del Centro Nazionale di Studi Cateriniani* 1 (1986), 119–38.

⁴⁸ Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 20.

Stefano Maconi recalled in 1411–16 that Catherine's body was placed in a coffin of cypress wood and then in a tomb of marble.⁴⁹ It is likely that the wooden coffin was needed immediately for her burial, while the marble monument was provided later. In a letter dated 30 May 1381 Maconi stated that very shortly after Catherine's death about 30 golden florins were paid for the 'sacred vessel' — meaning Catherine's body — and hence for her burial.⁵⁰ Besides, in a letter written in December 1380 Bartolomeo Dominici stated that 20 florins were paid at the time of her death.⁵¹ Bianchi suggested that these two sums paid for Catherine's first tomb, perhaps the 30 florins for the casket of cypress wood, and the 20 florins for sculptural decoration of the monument.⁵²

Caffarini was in Bologna when Catherine died, so, when he wrote his works in the early fifteenth century, he mostly followed Raymond's account of her death and burial, while adding a few details of his own. In his *Libellus de Supplemento*, he stated that Catherine was interred in an alien grave made of stone.⁵³ He also noted that she was buried in a wooden coffin, and then in a beautiful marble tomb raised above the ground and located near the high altar of the church, where Pope Urban VI and the secular rulers of Rome came to honour her.⁵⁴ Again, the wooden coffin may have been for her initial burial, the marble tomb a later construction. Caffarini's recollection of its being near the high altar may reflect where he saw it some time after her death. It may refer not to its first, but to its second, location.

The exact place of Catherine's first burial is unknown. Until 1965 it was assumed that she was interred in the common cemetery of the convent, and that Raymond on his return to Rome created a new tomb, moving her from the cemetery into the church.⁵⁵ This would correspond with the two phases mentioned by the early sources: first in a wooden coffin, and then in a marble tomb. New studies have shown that medieval Dominicans had common cemeteries for lay people beside, in front of, and sometimes extending into their churches and cloisters.⁵⁶ If

⁴⁹ Laurent (ed.), *Processo Castellano* (above, n. 20), 261. See also J.J. Berthier, *L'église de la Minerve à Rome* (Rome, 1910), 411.

⁵⁰ Stefano de' Maconi, Letter XXI, in Grottanelli (ed.), *Leggenda minore* (above, n. 18), 298–301, esp. p. 300.

⁵¹ Laurent (ed.), *Processo Castellano* (above, n. 20), 301.

⁵² Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 21.

⁵³ 'Caffarini', *Libellus de Supplemento* (above, n. 1), 365.

⁵⁴ 'Caffarini', *Legenda Minor*, III, 5 (above, n. 1), 174.

⁵⁵ A.A. Tantucci, *De Translatione Corporis et Delatione Senis Sacri Capitis Seraphicae Virginis Catharinae Senensis ...* (Rome, 1742), 8; Masetti, *Memorie* (above, n. 12), 56; Berthier, *L'église* (above, n. 49), 411; and I. Taurisano, *S. Maria sopra Minerva e le reliquie di S. Caterina da Siena* (Rome, 1955–6), 50.

⁵⁶ F. Schwarz, *Il bel cimiterio: Santa Maria Novella in Florence, 1279–1348. Grabmäler: Architektur und Gesellschaft* (Berlin/Munich, 2009); Cannon, *Religious Poverty, Visual Riches* (above, n. 41), 233–44 (for Santa Caterina of Pisa), 319–23 (for Santa Maria Novella); C. Bruzelius, 'The dead come to town: preaching, burying and building in the Mendicant Orders', in A. Gajewski and Z. Opacic (eds), *The Year 1300 and the Creation of a New European Architecture* (Turnhout, 2007), 203–24; and Bruzelius, *Preaching, Building, and Burying* (above, n. 45), 150–66.

Catherine's original tomb were located in the cemetery at Santa Maria sopra Minerva, it would have been where the present cloister and northern side chapels were built in the sixteenth century; there was in that place an earlier medieval cloister, which Brandi described as being low and dark with ledges surmounted by twin colonnettes, next to the church, and surrounding the cemetery.⁵⁷

Caffarini also mentioned that rainwater was coming down upon Catherine's tomb.⁵⁸ This suggests that Catherine's first grave was out in the open. Centi, however, claimed that from her death until the nineteenth century Catherine's tomb was located in the chapel south of the apse; he suggested that the problem of rainwater was due to humidity inside the building, or a leak in the roof.⁵⁹ Hence, when Raymond came to Rome and saw the condition of Catherine's tomb, he needed only to fix the gutters on the chapel's roof.⁶⁰ This theory is not very convincing, for if the original grave were in the chapel, it would have been in an enclosed and possibly vaulted space; and the defective guttering may have been merely a figment of Centi's imagination.

It is clear, moreover, that Raymond really did move Catherine's body to a different tomb. Dominici in 1411–16 stated that Raymond had told him personally that he had moved Catherine 'from one tomb to another'.⁶¹ Raymond also wrote that Catherine had prophesied that he would translate her body on the eve of Saint Francis's feast-day (4 October).⁶² If he returned to Rome in September 1380, this translation could have taken place as early as 3 October 1380, which is before early writers located the tomb in the church. There must have been a first grave where Catherine was buried, before Raymond translated her to another tomb. It is plausible that the first grave was located outside in the open-air cemetery beside the church, or in one of the ambulatories of the medieval cloister, a rather open space not well protected from the weather.

TRANSLATIONS

(1) RAYMOND'S TOMB, C. 1380

When Raymond returned to Rome, he translated Catherine from her first grave to a new tomb, and he took the opportunity to provide relics of the saint. He cut off

⁵⁷ 'Il primo chiostro ch'è contiguo alla chiesa basso oscuro è noto che cingeva il Cimiterio con alcuni moriccioli attorno e con alcune colonnette di sopra accoppiato a due a due ...', Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fol. 40; see also L. de Gregori, 'Il chiostro della Minerva e le 'Meditationes' del Card. Turrecremata', in *Le onoranze a S. Caterina da Siena nella R. Biblioteca Casanatense* (Rome, 1940), 29–54, esp. p. 42.

⁵⁸ 'Caffarini', *Libellus de Supplemento* (above, n. 1), 381.

⁵⁹ Centi, 'Il culto' (above, n. 47), 20.

⁶⁰ Centi, 'Il culto' (above, n. 47), 20, 22.

⁶¹ Laurent (ed.), *Processo Castellano* (above, n. 20), 301.

⁶² Raymond, *Life* (III, 5) (above, n. 1), 322.

her head, which Dominican Friars Tommaso della Fonte and Ambrogio di Luigi Sansedoni took to Siena, where it was placed in a reliquary of gilded copper.⁶³ At first it was kept secretly in the convent, until the head was taken in a solemn procession through Siena in 1385.⁶⁴ Raymond also placed her right arm in a silver reliquary, to be kept in the sacristy at Santa Maria sopra Minerva, ‘to serve the devotion of the faithful’.⁶⁵

A stone angel holding a scroll with an inscription was found in the bell-tower of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in 1867, and is believed to have been part of Raymond’s monument for Catherine (Fig. 6).⁶⁶ The angel is a half-length figure, 65.5 cm high and 82 cm wide, with symmetrical wings and a robe carved in a linear style with pointed folds, typical of Roman sculpture of the Late Middle Ages. The angel’s scroll bears an inscription in Gothic lettering of the late fourteenth century: ‘Here rests the humble, worthy, prudent, and kindly Catherine. She had zeal for the dying world. She flourished under her mother, Lapa, and then under Dominic, her father. This pure virgin was born in Siena’.⁶⁷ Raymond probably composed the epitaph.⁶⁸ From its shape, it seems the angel was placed originally in a shallow niche in the wall above the marble coffin, standing on the floor of the church, in which Catherine was buried.⁶⁹ Such ‘niche tombs’, usually with a canopy as well, were common in Rome from the twelfth century onwards.⁷⁰

Recent accounts of Raymond’s tomb do not mention a painting of Catherine near the sepulchre.⁷¹ Ambrogio Tantucci, however, located Catherine’s tomb in the floor of the south transept, precisely because there was in the eighteenth century a faded painting thought to represent Catherine on the southeasternmost pier of the nave.⁷² By the mid-nineteenth century no trace of that painting survived,⁷³ and Tantucci’s

⁶³ A.G. Palagi, ‘La sacra testa di S. Caterina da Siena e le sue urne’, *Rassegna Cateriniana* (1931), 1–11, esp. p. 7.

⁶⁴ Giunta, ‘La prima processione con la reliquia della testa’ (above, n. 47), 119–38, esp. p. 135. Tantucci erroneously claimed that Catherine was first translated in 1385, Tantucci, *De Translatione* (above, n. 55), 20; followed by Berthier, *L’église* (above, n. 49), 411; but Masetti, *Memorie* (above, n. 12), 58, gave the date 1384 or 1385.

⁶⁵ ‘Caffarini’, *Libellus de Supplemento* (above, n. 1), 381.

⁶⁶ Bianchi, ‘Il sepolcro’ (above, n. 3), 21–3.

⁶⁷ ‘HIC HUMILIS DIGNA PRUDENS CATHARINA BENIGNA,
PAUSAT, QUAE MUNDI ZELUM GESSIT MORIBUNDI.
SUB LAPA MATRE, DOMINICO POSTEA PATRE,
FLORUIT HAEC MUNDA VIRGO SENIS ORIUNDA.’

L. Bianchi, ‘Appendice epigrafica’, in Bianchi and Giunta, *Iconografia* (above, n. 3), 55.

⁶⁸ Berthier, *L’église* (above, n. 49), 412; Bianchi, ‘Il sepolcro’ (above, n. 3), 22–3.

⁶⁹ It is now located in a niche near the chapel incorporating parts of the room where Saint Catherine died, which Cardinal Antonio Barberini built near the sacristy of the Minerva in 1637. See Taurisano, *S. Maria sopra Minerva* (above, n. 55), 53–4.

⁷⁰ J. Gardner, *The Tomb and the Tiara: Curial Tomb Sculpture in Rome and Avignon in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1992), 24–31.

⁷¹ For example, Bianchi, ‘Il sepolcro’ (above, n. 3), 18–23.

⁷² Tantucci, *De Translatione* (above, n. 55), 7–8.

⁷³ Masetti, *Memorie* (above, n. 12), 61–4.

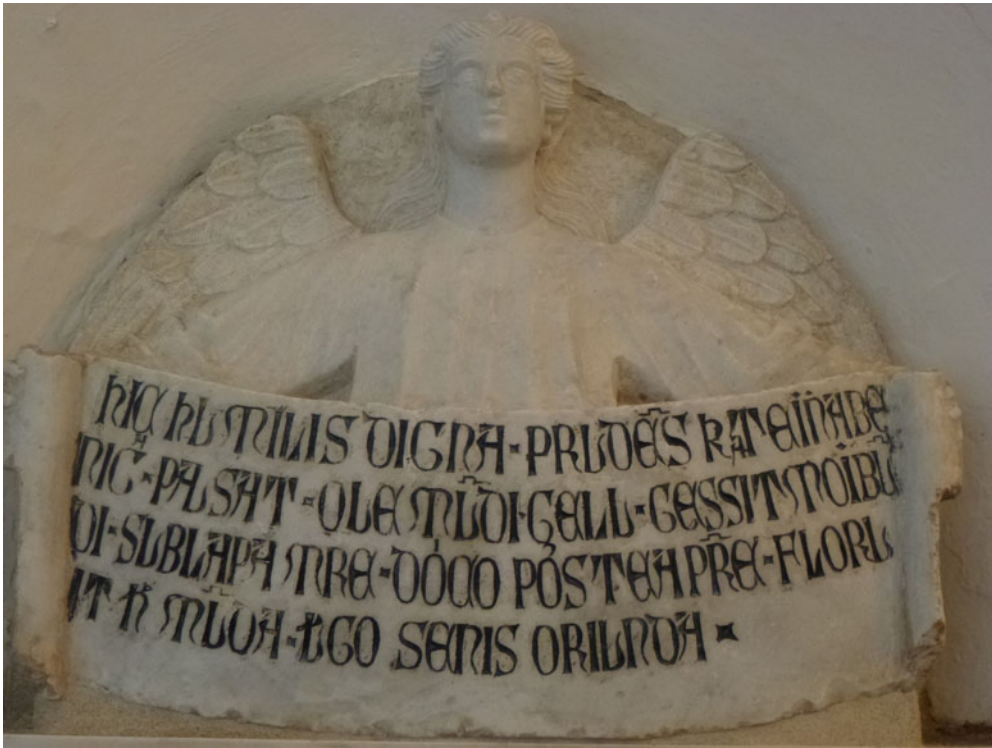


Fig. 6. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, angel from Blessed Catherine's tomb, c. 1380.
(Photo: author.)

theory of the tomb's location and his assertion that it was a floor slab are now discounted.

None the less, it is recorded that Raymond, with the help of some of Catherine's followers, notably Lisa Colombini, promoted her cult by having paintings of her made.⁷⁴ In fact, historical sources record a painting close to her tomb showing Catherine giving some clothes to a beggar, and then having a vision of Christ wearing them.⁷⁵ Maconi mentioned Catherine's generosity in 1411–16, adding that it was represented in Rome near her tomb, a fact also mentioned by Caffarini.⁷⁶ Besides, a marginal note in a fifteenth-century manuscript refers to a 'very ornately painted' image of this scene in Rome.⁷⁷ Although no such painting survives at the Minerva, another version of the event was painted in the

⁷⁴ 'Caffarini', *Libellus de Supplemento* (above, n. 1), 381.

⁷⁵ The story is in Raymond, *Life* (III, 5) (above, n. 1), 104–6.

⁷⁶ For Maconi's comment, '... prout actus iste figuratus est Romae iuxta sepulcrum eius', Laurent (ed.), *Processo Castellano* (above, n. 20), 270–1; cf. Caffarini's, 'Iste actus est figuratus Rome iuxta sepulcrum eius', 'Caffarini', *Legenda Minor* (above, n. 1), 45.

⁷⁷ Grottanelli (ed.), *Leggenda minore* (above, n. 18), 203, n. 33, 'In questo punto il Codice ha la seguente postilla marginale: 'Questo atto è dipinto a Roma assai adornatamente''. See also Drane, *History* (above, n. 1), 70 and n. 1.

late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, and can still be seen in the apse of the Dominican nunnery church of San Sisto in Rome.⁷⁸ It is clear that, at that time, people in Rome venerated Catherine because she helped the poor.

A painted inscription on the San Sisto fresco calls Catherine 'B(ea)TA KATHERINA DE SENIS', indicating that she was 'blessed', but she was not yet a canonized saint. Instead of a round halo, she has golden rays around her head. Indeed, the Dominicans in 1411–16 asserted that at that time she was never depicted with the round halo, as was customary in images of saints, but she was always given a radiating diadem around her head, as was usual for people who were 'blessed'.⁷⁹

Catherine has no halo in a fresco portrait of her with a devotee in the church of San Domenico in Siena first mentioned in 1399, and painted by Andrea Vanni (c. 1330–1413/14), who had known her personally.⁸⁰ In Venice in 1411–16 other images of Catherine in varied media were mentioned at the *Processo Castellano* and the witnesses were careful to note the radiating halo, and that scenes from her life were all taken from Raymond's *Legenda Maior*, which by then had become an official text on Catherine.⁸¹

One can imagine Raymond's tomb as having a marble coffin, standing on the floor and against a wall, with the angel in a shallow niche above it, holding the inscription, and nearby a painting of Blessed Catherine's generosity to the beggar.

CATHERINE'S TOMB IN THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

Catherine's remains were translated three times in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Saint Antoninus of Florence moved her tomb to a more conspicuous place in the chapel south of the sanctuary, and added the effigy of Catherine

⁷⁸ J. Barclay Lloyd, 'Paintings for Dominican nuns: a new look at the images of saints, scenes from the New Testament and Apocrypha, and episodes from the life of Saint Catherine of Siena in the medieval apse of San Sisto Vecchio in Rome', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 80 (2012), 189–232, esp. pp. 203, 223–30, figs 12 and 13.

⁷⁹ Fra Bartolomeo of Ferrara stated, 'Item dico quod numquam vidi dictam virginem depictam cum diademate rotundo circa caput, sicut de sanctis canonizatis generaliter et semper fieri consuevit sed semper vidi eandem depictam cum diademate radioso circa caput, prout consuetum est fieri erga tales personas que beate communi nomine appellantur ...', a statement that Caffarini confirmed, Laurent (ed.), *Processo Castellano* (above, n. 20), 8, 28. For other Dominican tertiaries, who were 'beate' and depicted with radiating diadems, see G. Freuler, 'Andrea di Bartolo, Fra Tommaso d'Antonio Caffarini, and Sienese Dominicans in Venice', *Art Bulletin* 69 (1987), 570–86; G. Kaftal, *Saint Catherine of Siena in Tuscan Painting* (Oxford, 1949), 9; and E.A. Moerer, 'The visual hagiography of a stigmatic saint: drawings of Catherine of Siena in the 'Libellus de Supplemento'', *Gesta* 44 (2) (2005), 89–102, esp. p. 98 and figs 6, 7, 8. Vauchez has said that the Dominicans began to show 'beati' in this manner in 1352 at San Nicolò in Treviso; Vauchez, *Sainthood* (above, n. 2), 87.

⁸⁰ Bianchi and Giunta, *Iconografia* (above, n. 3), 155–8, no. 1; P. Bacci, *La cappella delle Suore della Penitenza detta la 'Cappella delle Volte' in San Domenico di Siena. Ricerche sulle sue fasi costruttive* (Siena, 1942–4).

⁸¹ Laurent (ed.), *Processo Castellano* (above, n. 20), 365.

c. 1430. In 1466 her tomb was raised above the altar in the chapel, five years after her canonization, when the sarcophagus seen today replaced Raymond's marble coffin. In 1579 the chapel was rededicated to Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, and Catherine's tomb was placed under the altar in the chapel. The effigy of 1430 and the sarcophagus of 1466 survive, as restored in 2000.

In 2005 Giancarlo Gentilini published four pieces of fifteenth-century sculpture, which also seem to have been made for Catherine's tomb.⁸² In addition, he published a letter, dated 28 April 1592, from the art/antique dealer Marco Antonio Dovizio to Baccio Valori, which listed eight items for sale: a relief with Saint Catherine of Siena being crowned and given a palm by Christ and the Madonna; three plaques with figures almost in the round of Saints Catherine, Dominic and Michael; and two large, and two smaller angels. (Gentilini identified the four pieces he published as the first four of these items, but the whereabouts of the four angels is unknown.) This sculpture was apparently discarded in the remaking of Catherine's tomb in 1579. Its rediscovery adds to what is known of the form and iconography of the tomb, c. 1430, in 1466, and in 1579.

(2) SAINT ANTONINUS'S MONUMENT FOR CATHERINE, C. 1430

Saint Antoninus of Florence was so deeply impressed by Catherine that he wrote a short biography of her, based on Raymond's volume.⁸³ He also reported that after her burial in the convent of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, when he was prior of that convent, the body of the virgin was translated c. 1430, '... in the church to a more prominent place in the chapel next to the sanctuary in a marble tomb ...'.⁸⁴ Here Antoninus seems to assert that Catherine had been buried in the convent before his time, but he probably meant by 'convent' both the priory and the church as a single entity, or he may have alluded to the fact that originally she was buried in the cloister cemetery.⁸⁵

⁸² G. Gentilini, 'La Madonna di Santa Caterina. Il contributo di Donatello al sepolcro cateriniano della Minerva', in C. Strinati (ed.), *Siena e Roma: Raffaello, Caravaggio e i protagonisti di un legame antico* (Siena, 2005), 472–93.

⁸³ S. Antonino Pierozzi, *Storia breve di S. Caterina da Siena*, translated by Tito Sante Centi (Siena, 2002). For the original Latin text, *Tertia pars Historiarum Domini Antonini Archipraesulis Florentini* (Lyon, 1543), (no pagination) Capitulum XIV.

⁸⁴ '... in eadem ecclesia ad locum eminentiorem in capella iuxta maiorem capellam existente collocatum in sepulchro marmoreo ...', *Tertia pars Historiarum* (above, n. 83), Titulus XXIII, Capitulum XIII, XIX. See also Antonino Pierozzi, *Storia breve* (above, n. 83), 121–2; R. Morçay, *Saint Antonin, fondateur du couvent de Saint-Marc, Archevêque de Florence, 1389–1459* (Tours/Paris, 1914), 53–4; and J.B. Walker, *The 'Chronicles' of Saint Antoninus: a Study in Historiography* (Washington (DC), 1933), 7, 18, 23–4.

⁸⁵ Compare the Testament of Cardinal Matteo Orsini OP (died 1340), who stated that he wished to be buried in the 'convent' at the Minerva in the chapel of Saint Catherine (of Alexandria), which he had built (in the church), 'in conventu sancte Mariae super Minervam ... in capella beatae Catherine quam ibidem feci fieri', S. Forte, 'Il cardinale Matteo Orsini OP e il suo testamento', *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 37 (1967), 181–262, esp. p. 230.

The new tomb included the white marble effigy of Catherine, which recently was restored (Fig. 2).⁸⁶ According to the restorer, the figure was carved from a single block of Carrara marble. Before restoration the face, hands, mantle, feet and pillow were coloured, so as to make the effigy look like a contemporary nineteenth-century devotional statue (Fig. 1).⁸⁷ Chemical analysis of samples of the colouration showed that it all dated from 1855 and later.

Catherine is represented reclining on two pillows, on one of which is an inscription in early fifteenth-century letters, 'BEATA KATERINA', indicating that she had not yet been canonized. Bianchi noted that the effigy was tilted so that it could be seen at an angle, suggesting that originally it was placed high up and against a wall.⁸⁸ Nerger added that the figure's inclination was much as it is today.⁸⁹ As it was customary to have an effigy's feet pointing towards the altar, it seems likely that the tomb was located against the south wall of the chapel.⁹⁰ Sibylle Nerger considered the figure an early fifteenth-century work of high quality.⁹¹ It is not known who made it. Since the Florentine Dominican Antoninus commissioned it, and the marble came from Carrara, it is likely that the effigy was produced by a Tuscan or Florentine artist.⁹²

Berthier compared Catherine's tomb with that of Saint Monica in the church of Sant'Agostino in Rome, and attributed it to Isaia of Pisa, who made the effigy of Saint Monica in the mid-fifteenth century.⁹³ Pope Eugene IV in April 1430 translated the relics of Saint Augustine's mother from the church of Sant'Aurea in Ostia to the church of San Trifone in Rome, and they were installed later in the fifteenth century in the new church of Sant'Agostino.⁹⁴ Saint Monica's

⁸⁶ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 399–410. For tombs with effigies, see Gardner, *The Tomb and the Tiara* (above, n. 70), 36–7.

⁸⁷ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 405–6.

⁸⁸ Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 25.

⁸⁹ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 406.

⁹⁰ For the custom of having an effigy's feet pointing towards the altar, see C.M. Richardson, *Reclaiming Rome: Cardinals in the Fifteenth Century* (London/Boston, 2009), 379–80; and J. Gardner, 'Arnolfo di Cambio: from Rome to Florence', in D. Freedman, J. Gardner and M. Haines (eds), *Arnolfo's Moment: Acts of an International Conference* (Florence, 2009), 141–57, esp. p. 147.

⁹¹ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 406.

⁹² Santa Maria sopra Minerva is renowned today for works by Florentine artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, such as Filippino Lippi's frescoes (1488–93) in the Carafa chapel and Michelangelo's statue of the risen Christ (1519–21).

⁹³ Berthier, *L'église* (above, n. 49), 412. Brandi had made the same comparison, but not the attribution, Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fol. 33.

⁹⁴ See M. Breccia Fratadocchi, *S. Agostino in Roma: arte, storia, documenti* (Rome, 1979), 62–5; M. Gill, 'Remember me at the altar of the Lord': Saint Monica's gift to Rome', in J.C. Schnaubelt and F. van Fleteren (eds), *Augustine in Iconography, History and Legend (Collectanea Augustiniana IV)* (Villanova (PA), 1999), 549–76; I. Holgate, 'The cult of Saint Monica in quattrocento Italy: her place in Augustinian iconography, devotion, and legend', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 71 (2003), 181–206; M. Chiabò, M. Gargano and R. Ronzani (eds), *Santa Monica nell'Urbe, dalla tarda antichità al rinascimento. Storia, agiografia, arte (Atti del convegno Ostia Antica–Roma, 29–30 settembre 2010)* (Rome, 2011).

effigy appears more rigid than Catherine's, and the figure is not tilted. The attribution of Catherine's image to Isaia of Pisa is not accepted nowadays.⁹⁵ Instead, her effigy has been assigned to an anonymous Roman sculptor, influenced by Florentine art.⁹⁶

Gentilini connected a fragmentary relief of the Madonna to Saint Antoninus's version of Catherine's tomb (Fig. 7).⁹⁷ The relief, which is now in a private collection, was clearly part of a lunette, since a curve begins in the upper section. The Virgin Mary is shown in profile, seated and looking down towards the viewer's right; she holds up a gothic crown in her left hand, and she has another in her right hand on her lap. Surrounding the Virgin are several small cherubs. The style of carving is typical of Donatello, to whom the relief has been attributed convincingly. It could have been made in Rome in 1430, since a letter dated 23 September 1430 from Poggio Bracciolini to Niccolò Niccoli documents the presence of Donatello in the city then.⁹⁸

Gentilini has connected this fragmentary relief with Dovizio's letter of 28 April 1592, which describes a relief by Donatello in the centre of which Saint Catherine of Siena was portrayed piously kneeling with her hands joined, while on her right (the viewer's left) the Madonna held a crown up in one hand and another over her chest, while on the saint's left (the viewer's right) Christ proffered a palm in his right hand and held a third crown in his left; in addition, these three figures were surrounded by eighteen small cherubs.⁹⁹ Further, Dovizio said the relief was in the shape of a lunette, 8 *palmi* (1.79 m) wide and 6 *palmi* (1.34 m) high.¹⁰⁰ The presence of Catherine points to her tomb, while the three crowns and the palm represent an interesting iconography.

The two crowns seen in the relief fragment are of a type depicted in scenes where a saint is awarded an 'aureola'.¹⁰¹ In the Middle Ages it was believed that at the

⁹⁵ For works now accepted as by Isaia di Pisa, see F. Caglioti, 'Su Isaia da Pisa. Due 'Angeli reggicandelabro' in Santa Sabina all'Aventino e l'altare eucaristico del Cardinale d'Estouteville per S. Maria Maggiore', *Prospettiva* 89–92 (1998), 125–60.

⁹⁶ Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 25–30.

⁹⁷ Gentilini, 'La Madonna di Santa Caterina' (above, n. 82).

⁹⁸ U. Pfisterer, *Donatello und die Entdeckung der Stile 1430–1445* (Munich, 2002), 489, n. 3.

⁹⁹ 'Tornai a rivedere ... quelle figure di bassorilievo di Donatello; e con esse trovai che la figura di mezzo è s. Caterina da Siena, che sta devote inginocchione con le mani giunte. Dalla banda destra di lei la Madonna, che con una mano tiene alzata una corona per metterle in testa, e con l'altra mano un'altra corona tiene sopra il petto. Dalla sinistra N. S. Gesù Cristo, il quale le porge la palma della mano destra aperta, e con la sinistra tien pure una corona sopra 'l petto; e intorno a queste tre figure sono circa 18 Cherubini.' Letter from Dovizio to Valori, Rome, 28 April 1592, in G. Bottari, *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura ed architettura (1754–1773)*, edited by G. Ticozzi, 8 vols (Milan, 1822–5), II, 41–4, n. III, quoted by Gentilini, 'La Madonna di Santa Caterina' (above, n. 82), 487.

¹⁰⁰ Calculated by taking 22.34 cm for 1 *palm*. My dimensions are a little smaller than those given by Gentilini.

¹⁰¹ E. Hall and H. Uhr, 'Aureola super Auream: crowns and related symbols of special distinction for saints in late Gothic and Renaissance iconography', *Art Bulletin* 67 (1985), 567–603; E. Hall and H. Uhr, 'Aureola and Fructus: distinctions of beatitude in scholastic thought and the meaning of some crowns in early Flemish painting', *Art Bulletin* 60 (1978), 249–70.



Fig. 7. Attributed to Donatello, *Madonna Holding Two Crowns*, relief fragment from the tomb commissioned by Saint Antoninus of Florence (?), 1430. Private Collection. (Photo: courtesy of owner.)

hour of death certain holy people — virgins, martyrs and doctors of theology — were awarded such crowns as a mark of special distinction.¹⁰² In the case of Catherine, this may be linked also to Semia's vision, recorded by Raymond, where she saw Catherine at the hour of her death wearing three superimposed

¹⁰² Thomas Aquinas, *Commentum in quattuor libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi*, 2 vols (Parma, 1858), II, 1,233–44, said that every human being has to contend with the flesh, the world and the devil, and some saints do this in an exemplary manner, hence deserving the 'aureolae' given to virgins, martyrs and doctors.

crowns.¹⁰³ These crowns were distinct from the halo, which was depicted only after canonization, and which was not shown in visual representations of Catherine before 1461.¹⁰⁴ Several other later images represent Catherine of Siena with all three 'aureolae'.¹⁰⁵ Although she was not technically a martyr (a person put to death as a witness to her faith), Raymond, the official authority on her life, asserted that her suffering in Rome was a kind of martyrdom.¹⁰⁶ In the relief Christ himself handed Catherine a palm, symbol of martyrdom, thereby confirming Raymond's assertion. The imagery concentrates on her heroic virtues as a virgin dedicated to Christ, a 'martyr' who suffered grievously for the Church of her day, and a woman who taught and wrote Christian doctrine. Moreover, the iconography is based on the 'official text' of Raymond's *Legenda Maior*.¹⁰⁷ Antoninus wrote that many people who had not yet been canonized by the Church might have been superior in virtue to others inscribed in the catalogue of saints.¹⁰⁸ He may be arguing that Catherine was such a person who, although she had not been canonized, was certainly remarkable for her virtue. This could be shown visually *c.* 1430 by the three 'aureolae', if not yet by a halo.

An inscription, which was near Catherine's tomb in the sixteenth century, began 'Virginity, doctrine, faith and a most holy life give to your head, O Catherine, the *aureola* ...'.¹⁰⁹ It was probably related to the relief and may have been written by Saint Antoninus.

Possibly the tomb with the effigy and the carved lunette above it was of a type common in medieval Rome, like that of Bishop William Durandus (died 1296), which is also in Santa Maria sopra Minerva (Fig. 8).¹¹⁰ This, too, has a

¹⁰³ Raymond, *Life* (III, 4) (above, n. 1), 309–14, esp. pp. 310–11, and above, p. 118.

¹⁰⁴ Laurent (ed.), *Processo Castellano* (above, n. 20), 8, 28. See above, p. 126.

¹⁰⁵ L. Donati, 'Santa Caterina da Siena nelle stampe del'400. Appunti iconografici', *Studi Cateriniani* 1 (1924), 1–27; Hall and Uhr, 'Aureola super Auream' (above, n. 101), 578–83; Bianchi and Giunta, *Iconografia* (above, n. 3), 172, 175, 176, 225, 232, cat. nos. 20, 23, 25, 101, 111.

¹⁰⁶ Raymond, *Life* (III, 2) (above, n. 1), 290, and see above, p. 118 n. 22.

¹⁰⁷ See discussion of this above, p. 126.

¹⁰⁸ Antonino Pierozzi, *Storia breve* (above, n. 83), 31.

¹⁰⁹ 'Virginitas doctrina fides sanctissima vita

aureolam capiti dant caterina tuo

Alma precor Christum dominum dignare rogate

Abstersis culpis me quoque sanctificet

Ve misèr adiuro per Christi sanguinis undas

Protegere ut servum me Caterina velis.'

The text was recorded by Alonso Chacón *op. cit.* (c. 1530–99), 'Inscriptiones et epitaphia', Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana [hereafter BAV], Chigi I. V. 167, fol. 168r, who said it was on a plaque in the chapel. The last inscriptions in his manuscript are dated 1576, on fols 106r and 116r, so he probably saw this one before the chapel was transformed in 1579. See also, Bianchi, 'Appendice epigraphica', in Bianchi and Giunta, *Iconografia* (above, n. 3), 56.

¹¹⁰ It is not in its original position.



Fig. 8. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Tomb of Durandus, *c.* 1295. Photo: serie E54325, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione. (Reproduced courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali — Istituto per il Catalogo e la Documentazione.)

raised marble coffin, an effigy, a lunette (in mosaic) and an elaborate framing canopy. Two angels stand at the head and feet of the effigy drawing back curtains (Fig. 9). Dovizio's letter records four angels, two of which were 4.5 *palmi* (1.01 m) high.¹¹¹ Perhaps they also formed part of Antoninus's monument for Catherine.

¹¹¹ Quoted by Gentilini, 'La Madonna di Santa Caterina' (above, n. 82), 487.



Fig. 9. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Tomb of Durandus, c. 1295, detail: angel. Photo: serie N 71932, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione. (Reproduced courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali — Istituto per il Catalogo e la Documentazione.)

(3) SAINT CATHERINE'S TOMB AFTER HER CANONIZATION

In 1449 patronage of the chapel south of the apse was transferred to Cardinal Domenico Capranica (1400–58), and his heirs.¹¹² His brother, Cardinal Angelo Capranica (1410–78) promoted Catherine's canonization, which was proclaimed on 29 June 1461 by the Sienese Pope Pius II Piccolomini (1458–64), who had begun his ecclesiastical career as Cardinal Domenico Capranica's secretary.¹¹³ Pius II promulgated Catherine's sainthood in a papal bull; he pronounced an oration at the canonization ceremony; and he wrote three

¹¹² Norman, 'The chapel of Saint Catherine' (above, n. 3), 413–19; Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 32–7.

¹¹³ *The Commentaries of Pius II*, translated by F.A. Gragg, with historical introduction and notes by L.C. Gabel (*Smith College Studies in History* XXII, nos. 1–2), 2 vols (Northampton (MA), 1937, 1951) I, 375, Book V; Richardson, *Reclaiming Rome* (above, n. 90), 59.

hymns in her honour for the new Office of her feast-day.¹¹⁴ As he inscribed Catherine in the catalogue of virgin saints, he praised her vocation to virginity; the austerity of her life expressed in fasting and penance; her service of the poor, the sick and the imprisoned; her prudent speech and writings, filled with wisdom and doctrine that was infused rather than learned; her efforts to make peace between Florence and the papacy; her dedication to the Church in Rome; and the many miracles ascribed to her intercession.¹¹⁵ Possibly one of his hymns was sung at the monastery of Santa Maria de Oliveto on 2 May 1462, when he recorded that in the refectory, ‘he introduced musicians who sang to them, while they ate, a new song about Saint Catherine of Siena so sweetly that they brought tears of joy to the eyes of all the monks’.¹¹⁶

In 1466 Cardinal Angelo Capranica made further changes to Catherine’s tomb.¹¹⁷ Saint Catherine’s monument was now placed above the altar in the chapel.¹¹⁸ It became a place of pilgrimage, and Pius II granted visitors an indulgence.¹¹⁹ A Siennese society, known as the ‘Compagnia della Nazione Senese’ or the ‘Compagnia di Santa Caterina presso la tomba’ began to meet there from c. 1470 onwards.¹²⁰

Beneath the effigy of 1430 there is now a sarcophagus with the inscription ‘Saint Catherine, Virgin of Siena, of the Order of Penitents of Saint Dominic’ (Figs 1 and 2).¹²¹ The inscription calls her a saint, showing that the sarcophagus was made after her canonization. The ‘Order of Penitents’ refers to the Dominican Third Order, to which Catherine belonged, as opposed to the Second Order of cloistered nuns, and the First Order of Friars Preachers.

The restorer, after examining the sarcophagus closely, described it as ancient, but all the carving as sculpted between 1461 and 1466.¹²² It seems to have been refashioned specifically for this translation of Catherine’s remains.¹²³ (Brandi

¹¹⁴ G. Bernetti, ‘S. Caterina negli scritti di Pio II’, *Caterina da Siena* 18 (1) (1967), 16–20. For the bull, A. Brémond (ed.), *Bullarium Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 8 vols (Rome, 1729–40), III, 409–14; for the oration, J.D. Mansi, *Pii II olim Aeneas Sylvii Piccolomini Senensis Orationes ...*, 2 vols (Lucca, 1755–7), II, 137–44. The hymns were inserted in the Dominican Breviary.

¹¹⁵ *Bullarium OP* (above, n. 114), 140–3; Mansi, *Pii II* (above, n. 114), 411–12.

¹¹⁶ *Commentaries of Pius II* (above, n. 113), II, 673, Book X.

¹¹⁷ Palmiero and Villetti, *Storia edilizia* (above, n. 7), 163, n. 111; Bianchi, ‘Il sepolcro’ (above, n. 3), 35–6.

¹¹⁸ Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fol. 33. When saints are canonized, they are said to be raised to the altar. In Rome, since the time of Pope Boniface VIII (1294–1303) some tombs had been positioned above an altar; see Gardner, *The Tomb and the Tiara* (above, n. 70), 57–9; J. Gardner, *The Roman Crucible: the Artistic Patronage of the Papacy 1198–1304* (Munich, 2013), 128–30.

¹¹⁹ *Bullarium OP* (above, n. 114), 412.

¹²⁰ Norman, ‘The Chapel of Saint Catherine’ (above, n. 3), 413–14.

¹²¹ ‘SANCTA CATERINA / VIRGO DE SENIS / ORDINIS SANCTI / DOMINICI DE / PENITENTIA’.

¹²² Nerger, ‘Il restauro’ (above, n. 8), 403.

¹²³ On the contrary, Bianchi, ‘Il sepolcro’ (above, n. 3), 34, claimed that it was chosen hurriedly from among works available in a Roman marble workshop. Nerger found it was made all in one piece; Nerger, ‘Il restauro’ (above, n. 8), 403.

noted that Catherine's earlier sarcophagus was relocated in the large dormitory of the convent;¹²⁴ but it has not survived until today.)

The decoration of the sarcophagus was inspired by ancient Roman art. It has been attributed to Paolo di Mariano da Sezze, known as 'Paolo Romano'.¹²⁵ In the front two small angels, dressed in short tunics, hold up a 'tabula ansata', a plaque with pointed handles, on which the inscription was carved. Around them are swirls of acanthus. These are all motifs *all'antica*. The two angels combine features from ancient sarcophagi of the second and third centuries AD, which had either two female winged victory figures, or two naked male *amorini* holding a central motif with an inscription (Figs 10 and 11). Examples of such Roman sarcophagi survive in Rome, Pisa and Florence. This ancient motif was also used in Byzantine art.¹²⁶

In the late thirteenth century Arnolfo di Cambio carved two angels flanking a 'rose window' on the tympana of his ciborium over the high altar at San Paolo fuori le Mura.¹²⁷ This in turn may have influenced a similar carving of two angels flanking an inscription in the tympanum over the door of the church of San Giacomo degli Spagnoli (now Sacro Cuore) facing Piazza Navona in Rome, where Mino da Fiesole collaborated with Paolo Romano, as attested by their 'signatures' on the relief, 'OPUS MINI' and 'OPUS PAOLP'.¹²⁸

In the fifteenth century Florentine sculptors used this imagery to decorate tombs. On the monument to Leonardo Bruni in Santa Croce in Florence Bernardo Rossellino in 1449–51 carved a pair of angels holding an inscription commemorating the humanist scholar.¹²⁹ Luca della Robbia in 1450 decorated the tomb of Bishop Benozzo Federighi in the church of Santissima Trinità in Florence with a similar design.¹³⁰ Mino da Fiesole carved *amorini* displaying an inscription in a *tabula ansata* on the tomb of Bernardo Guigni in the Badia in Florence in 1466–8; and in 1469–81 he decorated the tomb of Count Hugo of Tuscany, the tenth-century founder of the abbey, with angels flanking the inscription.¹³¹ This monument differs from contemporary tombs in that it commemorates an important historical figure, and hence it has connotations of

¹²⁴ Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 10), fol. 36.

¹²⁵ Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 34; see also C. La Bella, 'Sculptori nella Roma di Pio II (1458–64). Considerazioni su Isaia da Pisa, Mino da Fiesole e Paolo Romano', *Studi Romani* 43 (1–2) (1995), 26–43.

¹²⁶ For example on the fourth-century sarcophagus of a child in the Archaeological Museum at Istanbul, illustrated in J. Kollwitz, *Oströmische Plastik der Theodosianischen Zeit* (Berlin, 1941), pl. 45.1 and 2.

¹²⁷ V. Pace, *Arte a Roma nel medioevo: committenza, ideologia e cultura figurative in monumenti e libri* (Naples, 2000), 132, 347–97; Gardner, *The Roman Crucible* (above, n. 118), 140–3, fig. 18.

¹²⁸ S.E. Zuraw, 'The public commemorative monument: Mino da Fiesole's tombs in the Florentine Badia', *Art Bulletin* 80 (1998), 452–77, esp. p. 455.

¹²⁹ Zuraw, 'The public commemorative monument' (above, n. 128), fig. 3; also illustrated in A. Petrucci, *Writing the Dead: Death and Writing Strategies in the Western Tradition* (Stanford, 1998), 72–3, fig. 32.

¹³⁰ Petrucci, *Writing the Dead* (above, n. 129), fig. 33.

¹³¹ Zuraw, 'The public commemorative monument' (above, n. 128), 452–77, esp. pp. 462–70, fig. 2.



Fig. 10. Sarcophagus of Ulpia Domnina, end of second–early third centuries AD, Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano (Terme di Diocleziano), inv. 125891. (Photo: author.)



Fig. 11. Sarcophagus of Flavia Sextiliane, AD 120–50, Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano (Terme di Diocleziano), inv. 128578. (Photo: author.)

a reliquary.¹³² Earlier, in 1425–8, Lorenzo Ghiberti had fashioned a bronze reliquary for the relics of Saints Protus, Hyacinth and Nemesius, in the shape of a sarcophagus with angels flanking an inscription on the chest, and acanthus scrolls on the lid.¹³³ He thus clearly transferred the motif *all'antica* from sarcophagus to reliquary, making it suitable for the coffin of a saint. There is also a third-century sarcophagus with flying *amorini* and other figures at Sant'Agnese fuori le Mura, to which the portrait of Saint Agnes was later added.¹³⁴

¹³² Zuraw, 'The public commemorative monument' (above, n. 128), 452–77, esp. pp. 462–70.

¹³³ R. Krautheimer, *Lorenzo Ghiberti* (Princeton, 1982), 138–9; see also p. 343, no. 23, where ancient and medieval examples of this motif are listed.

¹³⁴ P.P. Bober and R. Rubinstein, with contributions by S. Woodford, *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture: a Handbook of Sources*, second edition (London, 2010), 140–1, no. 96.

On Saint Catherine's sarcophagus the acanthus scrolls and other parts of the surface are highlighted in gold. Nerger said the gold was applied in different layers.¹³⁵ From an analysis of its chemical composition, she discerned that one layer was added in the nineteenth century, another in the eighteenth, and a much earlier layer most probably in the fifteenth century. Only the earliest layer has been retained. She also found that the inscription originally was written in gold letters on a white background.¹³⁶ Gold highlights were used in sculptural reliefs in Rome in the second half of the fifteenth century, as can be seen in Mino da Fiesole's marble tabernacle in Santa Maria in Trastevere, and on some tombs by Andrea Bregno.

The sides of the casket are not straight, but have a slight 'S' curve (Fig. 12). This is a feature seen in some fifteenth-century tombs. The monument to Marsuppini in Santa Croce in Florence has a curved coffin, and in San Lorenzo in Damaso in Rome a small sepulchral monument made by an unknown artist for Giuliano Galli, who died in 1478, has an S-shaped base.¹³⁷ On each of the short sides of Catherine's sarcophagus an acanthus plant and two small birds were painted in the nineteenth century.¹³⁸

At either end on the front of the sarcophagus there are carved some feathers (Fig. 12), which earlier authors thought belonged to ancient mythical winged figures, such as gryphons, sphinxes or harpies.¹³⁹ Moreover, there is evidence that the sides of the sarcophagus have been cut, to make it shorter.

At the ends of Roman sarcophagi of this type there were often additional figures, such as winged *amorini* holding torches, which are aflame and held upwards,¹⁴⁰ or held downwards, with the flame snuffed out, symbolic of death (Figs 10 and 11).¹⁴¹ These figures had wings.

Lidia Bianchi found a nineteenth-century print by Luigi Banzo, which she thought illustrated the original appearance of Catherine's sarcophagus, showing two hybrid winged figures at either end under the saint's head and feet (Fig. 13).¹⁴² These mythical creatures had human heads, birds' wings, animal feet, and tails that became swirls of acanthus ornament. Now in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, the tomb of Florentine Francesco Tornabuoni, made by Mino

¹³⁵ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 404–5.

¹³⁶ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 405.

¹³⁷ For the Marsuppini tomb, see Zuraw, 'The public commemorative monument' (above, n. 128), fig. 4; for the monument in San Lorenzo in Damaso, see A. Poós, *San Lorenzo in Damaso* (Rome, 2013), 35; C.L. Frommel, 'Jacobus Gallo als Förderer der Künste ...', in H. Froning, T. Hölsscher and H. Mielsch (eds), *Kotinos* (Mainz, 1992), 450–60, esp. pp. 458–60.

¹³⁸ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 404.

¹³⁹ Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 34.

¹⁴⁰ Sarcophagus of Flavia Sextiliane, AD 120–50, Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano (delle Terme di Diocleziano), inv. 128578.

¹⁴¹ Sarcophagus of Ulpia Domnina, end of second–early third centuries AD, Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano (delle Terme di Diocleziano), inv. 125891.

¹⁴² Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 40, fig. 23. Augusta Theodosia Drane used a similar image of the sarcophagus and effigy in her book (Drane, *History* (above, n. 1), 569).



Fig. 12. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Saint Catherine's tomb after the restoration of 2000, detail. (Photo: author.)

da Fiesole in the late fifteenth century, has precisely these features (Fig. 14). Under the effigy's head and feet there are two winged figures with human heads and animal feet.¹⁴³ Nerger demonstrated, however, from the way the marble of Catherine's coffin was cut that it had been shortened long before the nineteenth-century print was made, most probably in the sixteenth century.¹⁴⁴ Banzo's print is therefore an imaginative reconstruction, most likely inspired by the Tornabuoni tomb. Moreover, if one compares Banzo's image of Catherine's tomb with what remains today, one can see that there is no room for mythical figures under the head and feet of the effigy. If there were winged figures standing at either end of the sarcophagus, it is more likely that they were angels holding candelabra. Angels with candelabra decorated some fifteenth-century

¹⁴³ In the church of San Lorenzo in Damaso, the sepulchral monument of Giuliano Galli has two sphinxes with wings similar to those pictured by Banzo; see Poós, *San Lorenzo in Damaso* (above, n. 137), 35.

¹⁴⁴ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 404.



Fig. 13. Luigi Banzo, *Print Commemorating the Recognition of Saint Catherine's Relics, Showing her Tomb*, Rome, 1855. (Photo: Biblioteca Panizzi di Reggio Emilia, Gabinetto delle Stampe 'Angelo Davoli'.)

Roman tombs, as can be seen on either side of the effigy of Giovanni Alberini in the northeastern chapel of the transept at Santa Maria sopra Minerva (Fig. 15). Besides, two angels holding lights are mentioned in Dovizio's letter.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ '... Angeli che stanno in atto di tener lumi, alti due palmi e mezzo', letter from Dovizio quoted in Gentilini, 'La Madonna di Santa Caterina' (above, n. 82), 487; see also Caglioti, 'Su Isaia da Pisa' (above, n. 95).

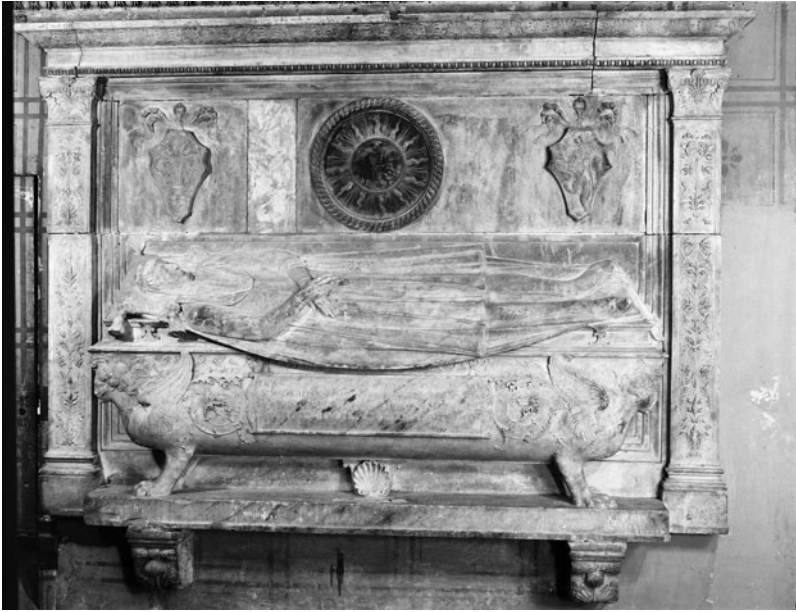


Fig. 14. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Mino da Fiesole, tomb of Francesco Tornabuoni, late fifteenth century. Photo: serie E 54265, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione. (Reproduced courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali — Istituto per il Catalogo e la Documentazione.)

Similar imagery can be seen too at San Domenico in Siena, where in 1466–9 the reliquary for Catherine’s head was inserted into a marble tabernacle carved by Giovanni di Stefano (1443–1504) (Fig. 16).¹⁴⁶ In the centre there is an opening with a grille, through which the relic can be viewed, and on either side stand two angels, while in a lunette above, there is an image of the saint with a lily surrounded by cherubs. Framing the tabernacle are fluted pilasters and acanthus scrolls, typical motifs *all’antica*. On the base an inscription requests Catherine to take care of the patron, Nicolo Benzi.¹⁴⁷

In Dovizio’s letter of 1592, apart from the two angels holding lights, 2.5 *palmi* (0.56 m) high,¹⁴⁸ he mentions three plaques with figures almost in the round, representing Saints Catherine, Dominic and Michael, of the same height.¹⁴⁹ Although Dovizio claimed that all these figures were by Donatello, Gentilini argued that the attribution was intended to impress a prospective

¹⁴⁶ Bianchi and Giunta, *Iconografia* (above, n. 3), no. 208, p. 294; Norman, ‘The Chapel of Saint Catherine’ (above, n. 3), 405–9.

¹⁴⁷ ‘BE(n)ZI S(an)C(t)A.TUI. NICOLAI. SUSCIPE. CURAM.O K(a)TERINA.’

¹⁴⁸ See above, p. 127; Gentilini, ‘La Madonna di Santa Caterina’ (above, n. 82), 487.

¹⁴⁹ ‘Vi sono poi a parte tre quadretti, con figure quasi di tutto rilievo, nell’un de’ quali è pur s. Caterina da Siena, nell’altro s. Domenico, e nel terzo s. Michele Archangelo, alti circa due palmi e mezzo ... tutti di mano di Donatello ...’, letter from Dovizio, quoted by Gentilini, ‘La Madonna di Santa Caterina’ (above, n. 82), 487.



Fig. 15. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, tomb of Giovanni Alberini, detail of angel with lamp, c. 1494. Photo: serie E 54312, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione. (*Reproduced courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali — Istituto per il Catalogo e la Documentazione.*)

buyer.¹⁵⁰ Gentilini published photographs of three figures of Saints Catherine, Dominic and Michael, all standing in classicizing niches, and whom he convincingly connected with the description in the letter; he attributed them stylistically not to Donatello, but to an artist close to Isaia of Pisa.¹⁵¹ Saint Michael

¹⁵⁰ Gentilini, 'La Madonna di Santa Caterina' (above, n. 82), 476–7.

¹⁵¹ Gentilini, 'La Madonna di Santa Caterina' (above, n. 82), figs 3, 4, 5.



Fig. 16. Siena, San Domenico, Giovanni di Stefano, Chapel of Saint Catherine with tabernacle for relic, 1466–9. Photo: serie D 974, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione. (Reproduced courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali — Istituto per il Catalogo e la Documentazione.)

must have been on the left, because he looks towards the right, probably towards Saint Catherine in the centre; and Saint Dominic would have been on the right.

The relief with Saint Catherine in a niche (Fig. 17) is now in the entrance of the part of the Palazzo Odescalchi in Rome that fronts via del Corso. The dove of the Holy Spirit is in an entablature above her head, perhaps alluding to the infused wisdom she had received.¹⁵² In this representation she is identified clearly as a

¹⁵² An inscription below the relief mentions the ‘Domus Sodalitatis S. Catherina (sic)’, but this is not part of the original relief. It may represent the location of the relief after it left the chapel and before it arrived in the Palazzo Odescalchi.



Fig. 17. Attributed to an artist close to Isaia of Pisa, *Saint Catherine in a niche*, 1466 (?), high relief, Rome, Palazzo Odescalchi. (Photo: Beth Hay.)

saint by having a round halo: hence the relief was made after her canonization. It seems plausible that the three reliefs and the two angels holding candelabra were added to her tomb after she was canonized, when the monument was moved to its new place above the altar in the Capranica chapel. The angels have not survived, but the fact that they were the same height as the three saints argues for their inclusion in the tomb as it was remade in 1466.

One therefore can imagine this version of Catherine's monument above the chapel altar with the new sarcophagus, flanked by angels holding lights; the effigy of 1430 above the stone coffin; Saints Michael, Catherine and Dominic standing in niches; and the lunette by Donatello of the coronation of Saint Catherine with the three 'aureolae' at the top. Perhaps the two larger angels still flanked the effigy.

(4) SAINT CATHERINE'S TOMB IN 1579

When in 1571 papal forces defeated the Ottoman Turks at Lepanto, Dominican Pope Pius V (1566–72) attributed this victory to people praying the Rosary. At

Santa Maria sopra Minerva there was a strong Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. In 1573 they obtained permission from Father Angelo Capranica to hold their meetings in the Capranica chapel, to restructure it, and to rededicate it to Our Lady of the Rosary.¹⁵³ The agreement stipulated that frescoes of the life and mysteries of Saint Catherine, which had been planned by Camillo Capranica, should be painted on the walls of the chapel; that the fifteen mysteries of the Holy Rosary should be depicted also; that the members of the Confraternity could not be buried in the chapel; that the sepulchre of the Capranica family should be preserved; and that the tomb of Saint Catherine of Siena should remain in the chapel in perpetuity under the altar.¹⁵⁴ The chapel was then redecorated. On 4 October 1579 a painted banner of the *Madonna and Child* (Fig. 18), then attributed to Beato Angelico, but now to one of his followers, was brought in procession to the chapel and placed above the altar, while Catherine's coffin and effigy were placed below the altar.¹⁵⁵ The chapel ceiling was covered with scenes illustrating the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, while Giovanni de Vecchi (1536–1614) decorated the walls with episodes from the life of Saint Catherine in six large compartments.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, a cycle representing scenes from Saint Catherine's life by Sodoma had been painted in 1526–36, in Saint Catherine's chapel in San Domenico in Siena (partly visible in Fig. 16).¹⁵⁷

The Sienese community in Rome was outraged by these changes. They protested that the statue of Saint Catherine had been moved; that her noble

¹⁵³ BAV, Chigi G III 81, fols 1r–8vo: *Cappellae Sanctae Catharinae Senensi in Ecclesia Sanctae Mariae super Minervam de Urbe an Angelo Cardinale Capranica erecta, et dicata Anno Domini MCCCCLVI nunc vero Sanctae Mariae Virginis de Rosario nuncupata Alexandro PP. VII*; Bianchi, 'Il sepolcro' (above, n. 3), 37–9; C. Strinati, 'Espressione figurative e committenza confraternale nella cappella Capranica alla Minerva (1573)', *Ricerche per la Storia di Roma* 5 (1984), 395–428.

¹⁵⁴ BAV, Chigi G III 81, fol. 8r. For the restructuring of the chapel, see F. Bilancia, 'Annibale Lippi, architetto della Cappella del SS. Rosario di S. Maria sopra Minerva', *Palladio* 20.39 (2007), 101–10.

¹⁵⁵ Brandi, *Cronica* (above, n. 8), fols 34–5. The banner was painted in 1449 in tempera on silk. Today it is attributed to a follower of Beato Angelico, possibly Benozzo Gozzoli. After 1700 it was stuck on a wooden panel, and now it is located in the northeastern chapel of the transept. The disposition with the painting of the Madonna and Child above and Saint Catherine below the altar corresponds to a hierarchy of images, based on different types of worship and veneration: while worship (*latría*) is due to God alone, saints are deserving of veneration (*dulia*), and among them the greatest veneration (*hyperdulia*) is reserved for the Mother of God.

¹⁵⁶ J. Heideman, 'Saint Catherine of Siena's life and thought: a fresco-cycle by Giovanni De' Vecchi in the Rosary Chapel of S. Maria sopra Minerva in Rome', *Arte Cristiana* 735 (1989), vol. 77, 451–64; and J. Heideman, 'Giovanni De' Vecchi's fresco-cycle and its commissioners in the Rosary Chapel in S. Maria sopra Minerva', in P. van Kessel (ed.), *The Power of Imagery: Essays on Rome, Italy and Imagination* (Sant'Oreste/Rome, 1993), 149–62; P. Tosini, 'New documents for the chronology and patronage of the cappella del Rosario in S. Maria sopra Minerva, Rome', *Burlington Magazine* 152.1289 (2010), 517–22.

¹⁵⁷ Norman, 'The chapel of Saint Catherine in San Domenico' (above, n. 3), especially pp. 405–10.



Fig. 18. Attributed to a follower of Beato Angelico, *Our Lady of the Rosary*, banner, c. 1450, Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Photo: serie E 60494, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione. (Reproduced courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali — Istituto per il Catalogo e la Documentazione.)

sepulchre had been demolished; and that the Dominicans no longer came to sing the praises of Catherine in the chapel.¹⁵⁸ They claimed the tomb of their saint had been violated and they introduced litigation, which continued until 1639, when

¹⁵⁸ BAV, Chigi G III 81, fols 10r–16v; S. Pagano, 'Una controversia cinquecentesca sulla cappella di S. Caterina in S. Maria sopra Minerva (1573)', in *Hagiologia: studi per Réginald Grégoire (Bibliotheca Montisfani 31)*, 2 vols (Fabriano, 2012), II, 1,245–58. It is not clear whether the 'statue' of Saint Catherine was her effigy or the standing figure in the niche.

two statues of Saints Dominic and Catherine were placed in the chapel on either side of the altar.¹⁵⁹

Only the effigy and the sarcophagus from the previous monument were retained. It is likely that at this time Catherine's sarcophagus was shortened at each end,¹⁶⁰ probably so as to fit it under the altar. Probably all the other pieces of sculpture from the tomb — the lunette, the three standing figures of saints, and the four angels — were all removed, as there was no room for them under the altar. Shortly after the tomb was dismantled in 1579, these pieces of sculpture were put on the market, hence Dovizio's letter of 1592.

(5) SAINT CATHERINE'S TOMB IN 1855

When the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva was restored in 1848–55, Saint Catherine's effigy and sarcophagus were taken out of the chapel and placed under the new high altar of the church, the focal point of the whole building (Fig. 1). At that time the effigy was modified and coloured. The relics of the saint were enclosed in a new silver box placed inside the sarcophagus. When in 2000 this sculpture was restored, the position of the tomb under the high altar was retained (Fig. 2).

Saint Catherine has been greatly venerated from the nineteenth century until today.¹⁶¹ Perhaps because she had prayed strenuously for the papacy, Pius IX honoured her, at the time of the Italian Risorgimento. On the feast of Saint Dominic, 4 August 1855, the pope consecrated the altars of the restored church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. On the following day the Senators of Rome came to pay their respects to Catherine and to present a chalice in her honour in the morning; and then in the evening there was a papal procession with her relics through the streets of the surrounding neighbourhood.¹⁶² After three more days of rituals connected with Saint Catherine, on 9 August the silver box containing her relics and a commemorative parchment were placed in the sarcophagus, on top of which was located the effigy.¹⁶³ Pius IX in 1866 made Catherine a co-patroness of Rome.¹⁶⁴ Still today on her feast-day the Roman Comune sends flowers to the church, and deputies attend a special Mass there. Pius XII proclaimed her joint patron of Italy with Saint Francis of Assisi in 1939.¹⁶⁵ In 1961, on the fifth centenary of her canonization, the friars at Santa Maria sopra Minerva inaugurated a new monument to Saint Catherine near Castel Sant'Angelo.¹⁶⁶ Paul VI in October 1970 declared her and Saint Teresa

¹⁵⁹ BAV, Chigi G III 81, fol. 1v; see also Taurisano, *S. Maria sopra Minerva* (above, n. 55), 51.

¹⁶⁰ Nerger, 'Il restauro' (above, n. 8), 404, and see above, p. 138.

¹⁶¹ Kaftal, *Saint Catherine of Siena* (above, n. 79), 8.

¹⁶² Masetti, *Memorie* (above, n. 12), 68–9.

¹⁶³ Berthier, *L'église* (above, n. 49), 413, gave the full inscription on the parchment.

¹⁶⁴ Parsons, *The Cult* (above, n. 2), 42.

¹⁶⁵ Parsons, *The Cult* (above, n. 2), 43–74.

¹⁶⁶ G. Parsons, 'A neglected sculpture: the monument to Catherine of Siena at Castel Sant'Angelo', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 76 (2008), 257–76.

of Avila the first two female Doctors of the Church,¹⁶⁷ and in 1999 John Paul II included her among the six patron saints of Europe.¹⁶⁸ Today on her feast-day (29 April) visitors can enter the space under the high altar and behind the tomb, where there is enough room for two people at a time. This seems to be an imaginative reconstruction of how a saint's tomb was venerated in the Middle Ages. Something similar can be seen in stained glass windows at Canterbury Cathedral that show the veneration of Saint Thomas Becket, and in manuscript illuminations people are depicted climbing under the tombs of Saint Edward the Confessor and Saint Alban.¹⁶⁹

CONCLUSION

Historical narratives tell of Saint Catherine of Siena's death and burial, her miracles and her canonization. From these accounts one catches a glimpse of the liturgical layout of the medieval church, with its choir enclosure, but no *tramezzo* (Fig. 3). It has been argued that it is plausible that Catherine was first buried in the common cemetery in the medieval cloister at Santa Maria sopra Minerva, and then Raymond of Capua, possibly as early as 3 October 1380, translated her to the chapel south of the sanctuary, later known as the Capranica chapel (Fig. 3). At that time her tomb consisted of a marble coffin placed on the floor, and an angel holding an inscription (Fig. 6) perhaps located in a shallow niche above the coffin; nearby there was a painting of Catherine's generosity to a beggar. Saint Antoninus of Florence c. 1430 moved the sepulchre to a more prominent position in the chapel, provided an effigy (Fig. 2), and most probably a relief by Donatello showing Christ and the Virgin Mary crowning Catherine with three 'aureolae' (Fig. 7). An inscription stated she was worthy of this distinction. Perhaps this version of the tomb included two angels at either end of the effigy. After her canonization in 1461 the saint's tomb was raised above the altar in the chapel, with a new sarcophagus bearing an appropriate inscription. It is likely that above the stone chest and the effigy there stood the high-relief figures of Saints Michael, Catherine (with a halo) (Fig. 17) and Dominic. Probably Donatello's relief was placed above them.

¹⁶⁷ Paul VI, Apostolic Letter, 'Mirabilis in Ecclesia Deus', 4 October 1970.

¹⁶⁸ John Paul II, Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio*, 1 December 1999; the other five are Saints Benedict, Cyril, Methodius, Bridget of Sweden and Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein).

¹⁶⁹ S. Lamia, 'The cross and the crown, the tomb and the shrine: decoration and accommodation for England's premier saints', in S. Lamia and E. Valdez del Álamo (eds), *Decorations for the Holy Dead: Visual Embellishments on Tombs and Shrines of Saints* (Turnhout, 2002), 39–56. See also *La estoire de seint Aedward le rei* (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.3.59, fols 29v, 30r, 33r, 36r) and P. Binski and P. Zutshi, with the collaboration of S. Panayotova, *Western Illuminated Manuscripts: a Catalogue of the Collection in Cambridge University Library* (Cambridge, 2011); and www.lib.com.ac.uk/MS-EE-00003-00059/1 (last consulted 19.10.2013). For the veneration of Saint Alban, see Dublin, Trinity College MS E.I.40, especially fol. 61r where a figure is kneeling under the saint's tomb.

Perhaps there were still two angels beside the effigy, while two smaller angels holding lights flanked the casket. When the chapel was rededicated to Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in 1579, all this was dismantled, the sarcophagus was shortened, and both it and the effigy were placed beneath the altar, while the other parts of the tomb were put up for sale. Finally, the nineteenth-century restorers adapted and coloured the effigy, and placed it and the sarcophagus under the high altar of the church. In 2000 the surviving fifteenth-century parts of the tomb were restored and replaced under the high altar.

From 1380 until today Catherine of Siena has been honoured at Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Her tomb remains the focus of veneration of a saint whose appeal has endured over the centuries right up to the present day. The sepulchre, the works of art associated with it, and the inscriptions reveal many facets of her life and character: as a 'humble, worthy, prudent, and kindly' person who helped the poor; who was distinguished for her virginity, suffering and sound doctrine; an intercessor for the papacy; a patron of Italy; a female Doctor of the Church; and a patron saint of Europe.

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