
4 Mimesis, Mental Images, Places and Institutional Models

Summary 4.1 Buildings and Architectural Models. – 4.2 Jerusalem Centrality. – 4.3 Symbolic Representations. – 4.4 Outlines and Plans. – 4.5 Representation Types and Architectonic Drawings.

The phenomenon of imitation and duplication of the Holy Sepulchre highlights the mechanisms and processes that lead to create mental images that actively participate in the religious and cultural dialectics characterizing a society.

This can be detected, under different forms, in the whole Christian *oicumene*, from Latin Europe to the Orthodox world and the Eastern churches, to Africa and India. It intersects the pilgrimage nets, and all the relationships with Jerusalem, which is considered both an earthly city affected by wars, struggles and human miseries and a heavenly city projected towards an eschatological dimension.

The *exemplum*, the place and the architecture guarding the empty grave of Christ generated several copies: reproductions, models, illustrations, objects.

The way those ‘copies’ have been imagined, realized and shared out is typical of the way the believers image systems and the cultural systems are built. In fact, it involves the formation processes of identity, belonging and sense of belonging.

The Body is the centre of the genesis process of the *imitationes*: the dead body of Jesus, the body of the believer who goes and visit the Holy Sepulchre (or a copy of it), the body used as a measure, the body of the celebrant and that of the believers which, during the liturgy, join the original and the doublings in a whole by enlivening their lives in a sacral, symbolic and metaphysical perspective.

Reproductions, on their turn, found the planning and re-planning of the urban space.

The architectural *imitationes* of the Holy Sepulchre are linked to the memory of the Passion and Resurrection, but this identification did not exclude wider operations of sacralisation of urban spaces as well as creation of topomimesis systems which not only interested a single building, but several devotional centres scattered on the built areas. Previous *martyria* and places intended for venerating the relics have been enclosed inside them, in a thread of meanings and symbolic allusions truck down by performing processional rites connected to the Holy Week. Special customs typical of local communities, as well as special devotions and values associated to the Christianisation origin could insert exactly into the liturgies and paraliturgies taking place in the *imitationes* of the Holy Sepulchre; that origin was brought back to the more general perspective of the universal Church, which has Jerusalem as its ideal and space centre. In fact, the churches “ad veram similitudinem aedificatae” were an integral part of the ecclesiastical, social and space context where they stand in and which they were an expression of. Depending on the cases, they took up martyr functions or they held different relationships with *martyria* and previous churches, in the context of a whole genesis procedure of rites and space connections.

Buildings are planned taking into account the liturgies and purposes they are intended for, by discovering patterns and prototypes which become stable and circulate, by imitation, just in connection with their correspondence with the community needs.

4.1 Buildings and Architectural Models

The imitations act inside space sacralisation procedures that also take place by multiplication, duplication and reproduction of dedications, entitling ceremonies as well as consecrated buildings, connected amongst each other just thanks to processional ceremonies and, more in general, thanks to the execution of common liturgies. At their centre, the relationship between local Churches and the universal Church takes place, thanks to connections of filiation, spiritual and hierarchical belonging, dependence, distribution of models, workforce and styles. In this context, even the formal duplication of patterns or planning, structural and architectonic elements participates in confirming and highlighting the belonging to specific pathways of faith, devotion, institutional subordination and communions.

In fact, the mechanism of architectonic *imitatio* has been shaping out like an identity assertion as well as a mean for enhancing the meaning expressed during the liturgies. For example, the bond with the Roman Church is also made visible thanks to the reproduction

of *more romano constructi* models, which referred to the planning and architectural patterns of the great Early Christian basilicas.¹

In the Greek world a quite similar route was created as far as the Thessaloniki Agyos Demetrios niche is concerned: it had a central diagram and was destined to be used as a building model.²

4.2 Jerusalem Centrality

This is true, with an even greater emphasis, for the confirmation of a relationship with the centre, with Jerusalem, mother of all Churches. The tie of spiritual dependence showed up thanks to the shape of the spaces, but mainly thanks to the execution of the same rites or liturgies (and paraliturgies) really based on common patterns and contents.³

During the processions, in the gesture memory the reproductions of ceremonies from the Church of Jerusalem have developed with different types and echoes.

Just to make an example, in Milan the *officiatura* (way of celebrating) developed in the Middle Age in connection with the architectural configuration of the double archbishop church, Santa Maria Maggiore and Santa Tecla, with a double baptistery. On Sundays, at the end of the morning and evening hymns, a procession took place from the winter church (or the summery one) to the baptistery, after the model of the Jerusalem liturgy, which ended at the Holy Sepulchre niche, source of deliverance just like the Christian admission sacrament water.⁴ In the Milan documents, the antiphonal processional hymns are referred to with the titles *De ecclesia in baptisterium* and *De baptisterio in aliud*.⁵

These forms of ritual, liturgical and paraliturgical communion appear to be weak and generic, a little bit more than echoes of ancient habits still used or imitated, in relation to the bond created between a Christian community and the Church of Jerusalem during the celebration of the Holy Week and, more in general, during the celebration of the Eucharist. The duplication of the *ipsissima loca* was just put in relation with the Resurrection and Passion rites. Not only are they the

1 Peroni, "Ordo et mensura nell'architettura altomedievale".

2 Brenk, *Architettura e immagini del sacro nella tarda antichità*, 143-8.

3 About Jerusalem as a liturgical and spatial model, see: Salvadó, "Commemorating the Rotunda in the Round"; Parenti, "Da Gerusalemme a Costantinopoli", 99-120. See also Bärsch, "Jerusalem im Spiegel der abendländischen Liturgie des Mittelalters".

4 Alzati, "Il salmo e l'incenso", in particular 53-5; Alzati, *Ambrosianum Mysterium*, 113-29.

5 This is the case, at example, of the Sundays between Easter and Pentecost in the *Manuale ambrosianum* (no. 8), *Manuale Ambrosianum ex codice saec. XI olim in usum canonicae Vallis Travaliae*, Milano 1905, I: 213, 215, 227-8, 238-40, 244-5, 272, 274. For a more complete analysis, see: Carmassi, "Processioni a Milano nel Medioevo".

core of the Christian liturgy, and therefore their contents are shared among all the Churches, but also they originate from and historically rest on the celebrations of the Apostles community; those celebrations have been continuously kept alive within the Church of the holy city during the first centuries and they gradually differentiate as far as the different confessions and Churches went on separating.⁶

The Holy Sepulchre is a place of gathering, confrontation and compenetration of different liturgies in a centuries-old coexistence of rites of distinguished communities, which share the same spaces all day and all year long. There, the Jerosolimitan Church of the origins elaborated its habits and *ordines*, which Churches of different ethnic and confessional groups have adopted. In time, they have assimilated and changed them in their churches giving them back under different forms to their celebrants present in the Holy Sepulchre. Therefore, the big basilica has been carrying out its role of cornerstone for the liturgical elaboration, especially for the rite of the Holy Week, by transferring ritual and liturgical habits, but also receiving some by the different local and 'national' Churches. Inside it, the believers coming from different communities have come closer and curiously known each other, though remaining distinct and linked to their relevant priests. While formal celebrations have been more and more diverging, devotions and paraliturgies have come to create a combination of gestures, behaviours and perceptions that are mostly shared. This 'popular' component, too, has taken part in the large flow of topics, suggestion and devotions, which pilgrims have activated all over the Christian *oicumene*. On the contrary, its uncoded and strongly emotional characteristic has facilitated exchanges and loans. In different ways it is also in connection with the genesis of the architectural imitations as well as with the liturgical habits developed within them, by shaping up to be like a difficult weaving place for a yarn of common habits that has remained under track in relation to the differences among the Churches, but that during the centuries has broaden to the whole *oicumene*.

How are the architectural *imitationes* of the Holy Sepulchre and its parts brought to life? In relation to the pilgrimage experience, so common in the Middle Age *societas christiana*, evoking, getting relics and do some building appear as steps of a sole devotional process. Believers left for the *iter* (*journey*) upon mandate of the community they belonged to, with the priest's, bishop's or abbot's blessing. After arriving at the Holy Places and dissolving their vote, they would go back to their community almost always bringing a material sign of their experience, thus extending to others the contact they had had with the places and objects sanctified by the physical presence

⁶ About the general theme, see: Gy, *La liturgie dans l'histoire*.

of Christ. The act of duplicating the signs and spaces of the Holy Land appears to be a further step and satisfies the desire of extending the experience, sharing and conveying it, even though indirectly.

Which reasons grounded the choice of building new Sepulchres? Celebrating and emphasizing the journey, communicating its meaning and substituting the places with more easily reachable space elements are the three main reasons that appear – and differently overlap – in the single situations. Russian hegumen Daniil Palomnik tells that he had the privilege of easily enter the niche and perceive its shape and dimensions; but he does not specify if his detailed report about the things he saw, was also aimed at buildings plans, or if, on the contrary, inserting data in his diary was only a sort of evidence of the truthfulness of his information.⁷

In other cases, the will of duplicating the Jerosolimitan model is explicitly attested. This can be found at Paderborn, heart of Westphalia, a seat of an imperial palace and linked to the Saxon dynasty, where a geometrical duplication of the Jerosolimitan model was started in the contest of a wide building action. The building results of that action can be insufficiently verified, as the apsis perimeter of the church built ‘ad veram similitudinem’ is the only thing remained. Archbishop Meinwerk (1009-1036) at the end of his long pastoral action and being at the high point of a difficult building activity commissioned it. He started to build the Carolingian cathedral, at which he had the Saint Barthelemy Chapel built by *graeci operari* (*Greek workers*).⁸

However, the account of the *Vita Meinwerci*⁹ attests that the reproduction of the Holy Sepulchre is not due to a generic exchange of topics and models caused by the presence of workforce coming from the south of Italy or the Mediterranean area, but to a real mission organized by the priest in order to reveal the dimensions of Christ’s grave. A very important person was put in charge of this project: Abbot Wino from Helmarshausen, a monastic centre especially active in implementing the imperial reform of the Church, the seat of a *scriptorium* and an artistic *officina* (*workshop*). Based on the data he collected, the church of the Holy Virgin and the Saints Peter and Andrew

7 “Die Pilgerfahrt des russischen”; Garzaniti, *Itinerario in Terrasanta*, 164.

8 Tenchoff, *Vita Meinwerci Episcopi Patherbrunnensis*, ch. 155; Wemhoff, “Die Bar-tolomäuskapelle”, 7-13.

9 The dedication has been celebrated on 25 May 1036 in the presence of the bishops Bardo of Mainz and Erimann of Köln. The building is evidently connected with the Gregorian Reformation and this context is confirmed by the decision of Meinwerk to settle a community of regular canons: “Reverso autem Winone abbate de Ierosolimis et mensuras eiusdem ecclesie et sepulchri sancti reliquias deferente cepit episcopus ad similitudinem eius ecclesiam in honore sancte Dei genitricis et perpetue virginis Mariae ac beatorum apostolorum Petri et Andree extra Patherbrunnensem civitatem in orientali parte construere; in qua canonicos Deo servientes congregavit, quibus victum et vestitum de bonis propriis ministravit”; Tenchoff, *Vita Meinwerci Episcopi Patherbrunnensis*, ch. 217.

was built. The building was not preserved and in its place there is the Busdorfkirche nowadays, that was built in the thirteenth century.¹⁰

It probably consisted of a round central core with four rectangular aisles. The groundwork of this building was constructed, but its execution stopped after Meinwerk's death and it was only completed in 1070, by erecting the octagonal central core. People living in that period considered that result as a complete and topomimetic *imitatio* as the dimensions of the model had been reproduced according to the intent. However, the final building pattern is not actually that of Jerusalem, but a copy of the Mauritius-Rotunde of Constance, a better known example and nearer to the designers and workforce who were working at Paderborn.¹¹

It is important to say that Meinwerk's church has given life to an indirect copy of the Jerusalem original church of Saint John the Baptist at Kruchenberg, built in 1126 on the mound dominating the area where the Helmarshausen monastery was. Originally, it was composed of a cylindrical central core with four square aisles, one of which had an apsis imitating the small apsis opened along the perimeter of the Anastasis.¹²

Nowadays what remains of the building still dominates the area where it should have marked the sacralisation of the territory with reference to the *umbilicus mundi*. The Archbishop of Paderborn Henry II of Werl founded the church in 1126. Its dedication derived from a previous chapel. However, that building was expressly requested in order to substitute a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which the priest could not go on as he was too elderly. The Holy Sepulchre consisted in an underground square room, excavated under the floor: there was an arcosolium above a slab reproducing the one put inside the Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Building on imitation is not an isolated technique, but it belongs to wider and more common trends typical of the Middle Age society. There exists a link between the will of building *ad veram similitudinem* and the common will of depicting Jerusalem as a whole and especially the Sepulchre. Since the first centuries of the Christian era, the painted or graphic reproduction of the city and its sanctuaries was already a way to multiply its vision and contact for all the *oicumene*.

Two main types of images can be found: the didactic, evocative and the symbolic ones (the amount of which is definitely higher) and other more precise ones, aesthetically less elaborated, connected to the pilgrimage reports and probably also destined to be used in building contexts.

¹⁰ Kosch, *Paderborns Mittelalterliche Kirchen*, 37-43.

¹¹ Erdmann, Zettler, *Zur Archäologie des Konstanzer Münsterhügels*, 59-61.

¹² Mietke, *Die Bautätigkeit Bischof Menwerks von Paderborn*, 180-7.

4.3 Symbolic Representations

The first ones are mostly realized on objects that have a strong symbolic value. The eulogies from Bobbio and Monza are among the oldest ones: they are small containers destined to contain the blessed oil that was sold to the pilgrims in the secondary rooms of the Holy Sepulchre. They showed the image of a niche, shaped as a *ciborium* containing Jesus' grave, dating back to the sixth-seventh century and referring to the Constantine building organization. Pope Gregory the Great gave the queen of the Longobards Theodelinda the series of sixteen ampoules that now are at the Museum of the Monza Cathedral. They show the image of the niche as it was before the Persians destroyed the set of buildings and bear the graphic description of the grave: a simple *arcosolium* grave just as it was when it had been taken away from the surrounding rock; Constantine wanted to create the block, probably with a square or polygonal basis, on which the Anastasis was built. Six images show the structure, some of them in a more stylized form, two of them in a more realistic way. A 'container' with a polygonal basis can be identified, with a dome supported by some columns and with a cross on its top, inside of which the real Grave can be seen: it is characterized by the presence of an arch and the closing stone. There are also the gates and the grills described in the coeval documents.¹³

Generally, the depicted types are inconsistent, different, composite; they probably register and integrate the architectural and figurative patterns and elements which were common and developed based on local models, more than following a direct connection with the Holy Land original.

The Holy Sepulchre is reproduced on a pyx made of ivory dating back to the sixth century; at present it is kept at the Cleveland Museum between the scene of the resurrection of Lazarus and that of the entrance of Jesus in Jerusalem; it evidently refers to the celebration of the 'Saturday of Lazarus' that opened the liturgies of the Holy Week in the Church of Jerusalem of the first centuries. The image is stylized: a small temple composed of a cupola on four columns lays on another small dome and three columns and with a cross on top. The first one can be identified with the Anastasis round building, the second one with the niche and the cross, probably the Golgotha one. This way, an amazing graphic synthesis was created of the three main devotional elements of the complex.

The Anastasis above the niche (but without the cross) also appears with the same pattern in a fifth century mosaic discovered at Lun-

¹³ A matching between the images of the Monza's eulogies and some written sources, see: Corbo, *Il Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme*, 73-4; see also the photos and in particular 81-6.

ca, in Tunisia, as well as in another one from the same period which is in the chapel of the Mother of God at Ras Siaga, on Mount Nebo.¹⁴

The niche, with the shape dating back to the Modestus organisation, is reproduced as a miniature in Anastasius' reliquary, a Byzantine jewellery piece realized at Antioch at the end of the tenth century and now kept at Aachen, in the Cathedral treasure.¹⁵

The small silver temple has a square plan and a cubic development. It has a small dome on its top ending with a cross and based on a tambour with a series of columns and small arches. The niche volume prolongs in a small semi-circular apsis. The same pattern has been reproduced, always in Aachen, on the gold altarpiece of the palatine chapel.¹⁶ The niche with square plan but on three floors and a small round dome is depicted in the Sacramentary of Henry II: it was given to him by the emperor at Bamberg between 1007 and 1014 and today it is in Munich.¹⁷ The background is composed of three parts: the two upper ones represent the superiority of the Christian world compared to the pagan one, which is depicted in the third lower one. The Crucifixion dominates the whole work. On the left, in the middle part, there is the Sepulchre shaped like a three-floors tower.

The tenth century ivory small label displaying the Resurrection, coming from the Carrand collection and kept at the National Museum of Bargello in Florence, shows a church with a big transept, sided by small towers and dominated by a central tower, inside which it is possible to see a wrapped sheet laying on the lower level. It has a small dome on its top ending with a cross.

The same type of tower is depicted in another small label at the Bargello, which dates back to the previous century, as well as in a fragment of diptych, always dating back to the ninth century, kept at the Treasure of the Milan Cathedral; the niche is identified with a round base structure, composed of a lower cylinder with a door, covered with a truncated cone on which a second smaller cylinder is inserted and has a conic cover on its top. This is a common pattern in the Byzantine psalteries, too.¹⁸ The picture of the Anastasis round building that encloses a small temple is also present in the

¹⁴ Bonnery, Mentré, Hidrio, *Jérusalem, symboles et représentations dans l'Occident médiéval*, 172-6.

¹⁵ Legner, *Ornamenta Ecclesiae*, 88-90. Brandt, Eggerbrecht, *Bernward von Hildesheim*, 2: 153.

¹⁶ Brandt, Eggerbrecht, *Bernward von Hildesheim*, 2: 187.

¹⁷ München, Bayerische Stadtbibliothek, Clm 4452; Brandt, Eggerbrecht, *Bernward von Hildesheim*, 2: 99-103, 183.

¹⁸ Bonnery, Mentré, Hidrio, *Jérusalem, symboles et représentations*, 183-6.

fragments of the Münster book coming from Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire.¹⁹

In the Otto artistic jewellery the niche has a round shape, thus copying a geometrical symbolic pattern that is over the real structure, firstly in the memory, and then in the representation, until it substitutes it. It is depicted like that, with a small dome on top, at the bottom right of the scene of the Resurrection in the Goldener Buchdeckel of the treasure in the Aachen cathedral.²⁰ The ivory work of the Metz Evangelary, realized between the ninth and the tenth century, shows the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. The Holy Sepulchre complex is outlined in a round building with a conic cover on its top, and a lower aisle. In the background there are two towers having the same type of cover. Inside the round building you can see an empty Grave pointed at by the angel's finger.²¹ It has a round plan and a tower-shaped structure with four floors, with a small dome on top; the empty Sepulchre is depicted on an ivory tablet of the twelfth century, which is nowadays in the Museum of Bargello in Florence.²² In it, an Angel, sitting nearby, is pointing at a wrapped sheet. In the same way, the pattern with a lower square plan level is also popular and an upper cylindrical part with a cone or a dome on it. Just to mention a case, the Sepulchre is depicted on the front side of a portable altar dating back to the second half of the eleventh century, coming from Cologne and today kept at Darmstadt.²³

The important thing was the symbolic and emblematic value of the represented elements; the form of the graphic representation was developed according to the places, commissions and workshops. Just to make an example of how those mechanisms have been developed, an incense burner showing the niche and dating back to the second or third decade of the twelfth century – today kept at the Diocesan Bressanone Museum – and two cross bronze feet of the same period, coming from Niedersachsen or Hildesheim and today in Berlin²⁴ and Cleveland,²⁵ belong to the same figurative context. They refer to the architectonic prototype of the memorial church, by recalling the Byzantine and Sicilian architecture and can be considered as free reproductions of the Holy Sepulchre in the phase of its maximum architectonic complexity, that of a Crusades building site.

¹⁹ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms Lat. 8318-b, f. 27r; Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. Lat. 596.

²⁰ Brandt, Eggerbrecht, *Bernward von Hildesheim*, 2: 169.

²¹ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms Latin 9453.

²² Inv. Nr. 36C.

²³ Hessisches Landesmuseum, Inv. Nr. Kg 54:221.

²⁴ Berlino, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kunstgewerbemuseum, Inv. no. 97,4; Legner, *Ornamenta Ecclesiae*, 336-7.

²⁵ Cleveland, Museum of Art, inv. no. 26.555. Reuther, "Ein architektonisches Räucherstandgefäß".

Just the plurality of the shapes of the representations and the freedom they have been recovered and multiplied with, could have fostered the knowledge, the sense of proximity and belonging of the *exemplum* to the different Christian communities. The diffusion of images of the Holy Sepulchre, with a strong symbolic value and differently linked to a will of representing the Jerusalem exemplum in a realistic and rationalistic way, created a sort of perceptive substratum that made it possible to immediately recognize the *imitationes*. In addition, the graphic representations destined to serve as basis for the planning and realisation of the copies have probably been inserted and intersected.

Evocative images, on the one hand, and measure and types of planimetric and volumetric rationalisation on the other hand, in fact, had to integrate into systems of planning and two-dimensional reproduction of the architectonic volumes, which we cannot easily reconstruct, at least, until the end of the thirteenth century.

4.4 Outlines and Plans

The model *imago* has been transmitted thanks to several duplication means: little models, graphic representations, outlines. Their analysis in relation with the construction of the architectonic imitations presents some preliminary problems. First of all: what possibility did the pilgrims effectively have to measure and detect the structure of a sanctuary that was so crowded and where there were back to back ceremonies? Hegumen Daniele emphatically underlines that he had the possibility to stay inside the niche and go back there until he finished his measurements. However, this appears most like an exception, a privilege obtained thanks to the intervention of the king. Most pilgrims were likely to stay in the Anastasis area only the time necessary for the celebration, as there were big groups of believers. Therefore the space and geometrical data collected had to be limited, if not invalidated, so that they needed at least a considerable subsequent version.

Furthermore, what technical knowledge and what capacity of understanding spaces did single believers have? How were the data 'noted down'? Which configuration and measurements of the model did the pilgrims bring when they came back? Which dimensional parameters were adopted? Did they resort to a scale? The collocation itself of the achieved representations indicate that they were conceived in close relationship with the pilgrimage and its devotional aspects. They are not strictly technical descriptions, but information and data as well as topological data collections united in two dimensions, always in an illustrative perspective.²⁶

²⁶ Niehoff, "Umbilicus mundi".

The drawings enclosed to a manuscript of Arculf's pilgrimage report, referred to in the *De locis sanctis* of Adamnanus from Hy, are an example of representations inserted into pilgrimage reports. Inside them, there are two codes of different time and origin, which are strongly connoted, in a symbolic sense: both of them are kept in Wien. They demonstrate how the graphic representations were aimed at the duplication of liturgies and spaces, based on the unit of measurement of the believer's body.²⁷

The graphic reproductions were accompanied by the production of three-dimensional models more or less realistic, realized with the most different materials, included wax, of which only a small part is known to us. A testimony of that is the simulacrum of the Narbona niche, a real scale reproduction,²⁸ as well as some stone models of central plan churches created and used inside the Armenian architectonic elaboration. They date back between the seventh and the eleventh century and today are kept at the Armenian History Museum at Erevan.²⁹

The well-known three-dimensional models made of ebony, ivory and mother-of-pearl, kept at the Museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum of Jerusalem, realized between the sixteenth and the seventeenth century with devotional and decorative aims, are nothing but refined epigones of a long tradition of middle elements between the original and its monumental copies scattered all over the world.

4.5 Representation Types and Architectonic Drawings

The plurality and complexity of the representation means and patterns of the Jerosolimitan model, in relation with the phenomenon of its architectural imitations, pone presents some technical and historical problems.

The central matter is the relationship between the different mental, graphic and planimetric patterns. In fact, a Holy Sepulchre model has been structured in such a way that, from the typological point of view, took the place of the other ones and ended up prevailing, in the collective perception, just thanks to the impact of the meanings which it refers to. If on the one hand, a tight continuity between the *exemplum* and its *imitationes* has taken place, on the other hand, it

²⁷ A more detailed analysis of the drawings is in Salvarani, "Idea e realtà del Santo Sepolcro".

²⁸ Bonnery, "L'édicule du Saint-Sépulchre de Narbonne"; Mérel-Brandenburg, "À propos du 'sépulchre' de Narbonne (Ve siècle)", 77-82.

²⁹ Inv. nos. 2858, 2859, 1157, 56; Cuneo, "Les modèles en pierre de l'architecture arménienne".

has developed within wider nets of models and volume patterns exchange and space perception. An unknown German pilgrim who visited the Jerosolimitan complex before 1142, before the works on the cross layout of the complex ended, put in relationship the Anastasis round building and the palatine chapel of Aachen:

There you can find the Sepulchre of That who was crucified for us; on it a church has been built with the same shape of that built in Aachen by Charles the Great and dedicated to Saint Mary; but there is an exception: the church of Jerusalem has only one tower and that tower, which is on the Holy Sepulchre, has an open top.³⁰

Theodoric³¹ also detects the same, immediate similarity.

In this case the relationship is explained by the circle and the central plan, widely used during the Constantine period and afterwards resumed differently. Nevertheless, this mechanism may have been used on other images and for other elements, too.

The interest fulcrum does not appear to be the geometrical pattern itself, but the perception that the believer might have of the building and the celebrations that took place in there. The centrality of the body, recipient and protagonist of the liturgies, influenced the mechanisms of graphic rendering of the detected model and successive re-elaboration. The third important aspect to our topic is just the use of the body as a unit of perception and measurement.

Just to quote two proofs, Petrus Diaconus wrote in his report: "In the centre of this church [Anastasis] there is the Lord's Sepulchre, round shaped and carved into the rock; its ceiling can be reached by a standing person".

And "In the northern part of the niche there is the Lord's Sepulchre engraved in the stone; it is seven feet long and is a little bit taller than three palms".³²

Theodoric's description is more detailed: first, he noticed that the grave cell had two doors. "At both the doors there are very strict guardians who do not allow in fewer than six and more than twelve people at the same time. The narrow room cannot host more - we can read in the text. After the pilgrims have prayed, they must go out through the other door. Those who want to go in through the entrance of that cave, can only do this by crawling in; besides they find the desired treasure, that is the Sepulchre in which our Lord Jesus Christ rested for three days. It is marvellously adorned with white marble, gold and precious stones. On the front, it has three round

³⁰ Anonymus Alemannus, "Questi sono i luoghi", 156-7.

³¹ Theodericus, "De locis sanctis", 322-3.

³² Petrus Diaconus, "De locis sanctis", 174-7.

holes, through which pilgrims kiss the stone where the Lord laid down. The sarcophagus is two and a half feet wide, a man cubit and one foot long". The last empiric notice: "The floor between the Sepulchre and the wall has a lot of space, where five men praying on their knees can remain, with their faces towards the Sepulchre".³³

The relationship between direct perception, on the one hand, and the graphic measurements and rationalizations based on the human body, on the other hand, recalls the centrality of the liturgy, conceived and lived just like the expression and participation of the divine. The building was used, perceived and planned according to it. Specifically, this is true for the Jerosolimitan imitations that find their full reason in the Easter celebrations and those related to the finding of the Cross and other relics. Therefore, the stronger and more important circuit of exchanges and topics where they developed is just that of the types of liturgy. It is the unifying texture of the whole phenomenon, on which other elements of patterns, models, techniques and representations have been differently inserted.

33 Theodericus, "*De locis sanctis*", 320-1.

