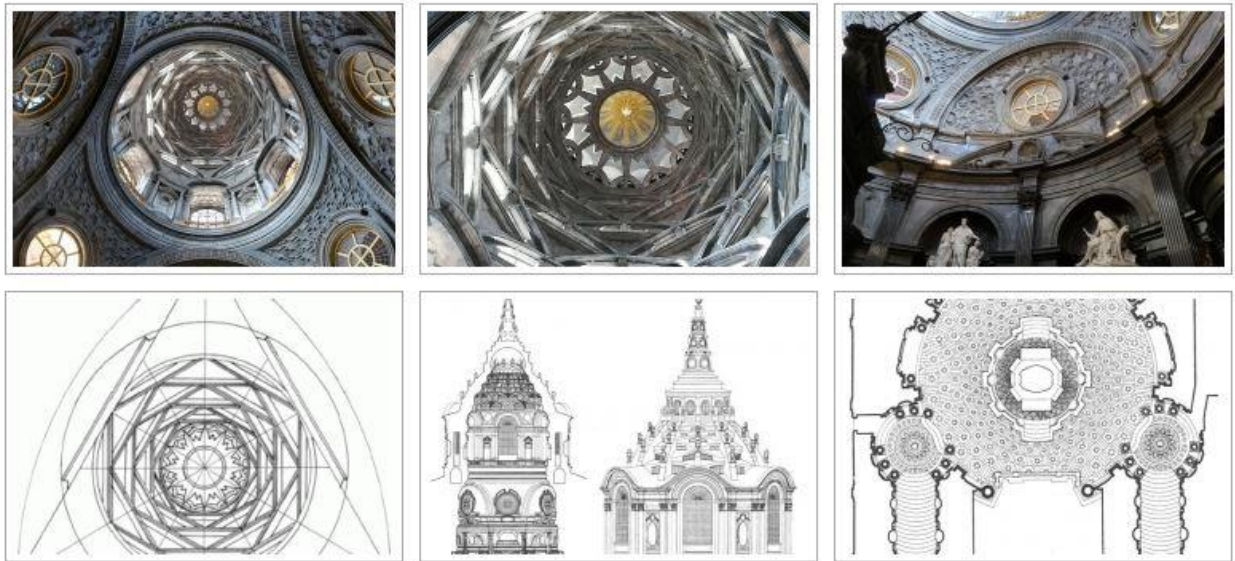




## THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION OF SAVOY ORDERS

### SIXTEENTH ANNUAL SAVOY HISTORY LECTURE

November 13, 2018



*Guarino Guarini, Dome Interior of the Chapel of the Holy Shroud  
Turin, 1667-1694*

**Glorifying Church and State:  
Chapel of the Holy Shroud of Turin,  
Guarini and the Royal House of Savoy  
by John Beldon Scott**

**The Chapel of the Most Holy Shroud of Turin** is one of the key monuments of Baroque architecture and the acknowledged masterpiece of Guarino Guarini. The Shroud was originally captured by European crusaders in Constantinople circa 1353. It was housed in a church in Chambéry, France until that church burned in 1532. And the cloth moved on to Turin. The 2018 Savoy History Series titled *Glorifying Church and State: The Chapel of the Holy Shroud of Turin, Guarini and the Royal House of Savoy* was presented by Professor John Beldon Scott, who is the former Director of the School of Art & Art History at the University of Iowa. The fascinating topic explored the dynastic role of the holy relic, venerated as the burial cloth of Jesus, as expressed in the great architectural marvel of the chapel's dome design. Located between the Cathedral and the Savoy Royal Palace in Turin, priest-architect Guarino Guarini's Holy Shroud chapel, designed at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, embodies both sacred and secular imagery, demonstrating the dual function of the relic in the religion and politics of the early modern Savoyard realm.

Furthermore, this study examined the ritual exhibition of the Holy Shroud and its impact on the design of Guarini's chapel in Turin. The analysis reconstructed the architect's original idea, which visually united Turin Cathedral and the Shroud Chapel with the purpose of creating a sacred theater for the ceremonial display of the relic. Special attention was given to the Roman sources of Guarini's scenographic solutions and to the political dimension of the ritual function of the chapel. Observations about the spiritual significance that "seeing" the Shroud had for seventeenth-century viewers was presented.







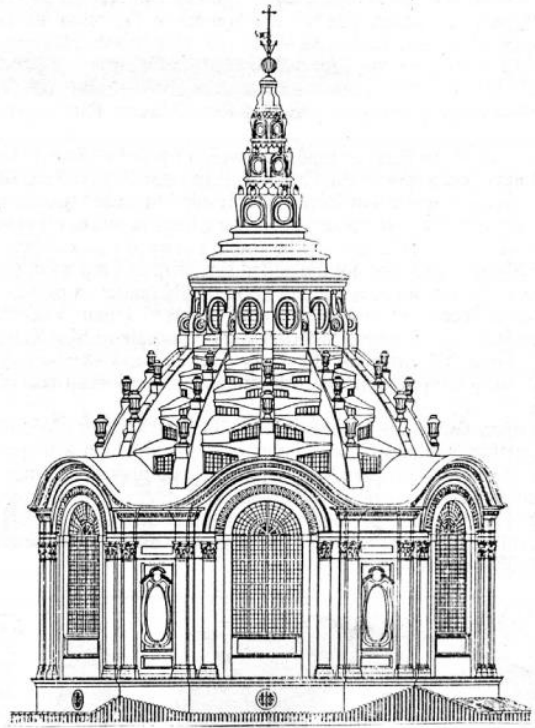
In his talk, Scott also examined the secular power of the Shroud of Turin in the historical context of Renaissance and Baroque Italy. He also looked at how the architecture designed for the shroud's safekeeping and display reveals the intent of the owners, the Dukes of Savoy, to promote their dynasty through the enhancement of the cult of the shroud and its ritual exhibition. The priest-architect Guarino Guarini designed a chapel to display the shroud at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Scott examined how this recently destroyed building reflected both political and devotional aspects of the relic. He argued that the political uses to which the relic has been put, the architectural expression of that endeavor and the ultimate fate of the House of Savoy are connected to the current status

of the relic in popular American culture.

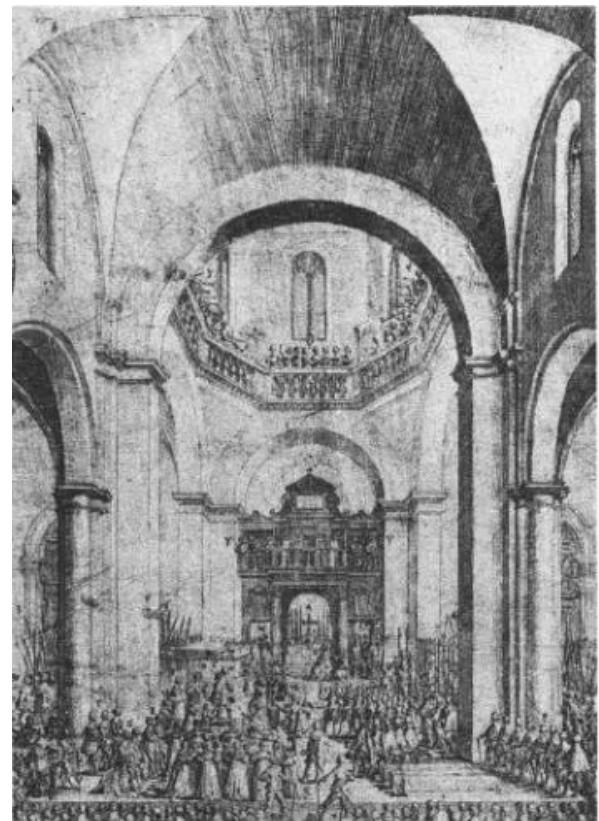
Reference to the *Supreme Order of the Santissima Annunziata* and its members' participation in ritual displays of the Shroud also figured in the chapel's ceremonial portal. The design, particularly the chapel's dome structure, holds a prominent place in the history of Baroque architecture as one of the most radical conceptions of its epoch. Severely damaged by fire in 1997, the chapel has been restored following a twenty- year effort and opens to the public in Fall 2018. Professor Scott examined the dynastic role of the relic as expressed in the chapel and discussed images of the newly-restored work.

The famed linen cloth preserved in Turin Cathedral has provoked pious devotion, scientific scrutiny, and morbid curiosity. Imprinted with an image many faithful have traditionally believed to be that of the crucified Christ "painted in his own blood," the Shroud remains an object of intense debate and notoriety yet today.

In this amply illustrated lecture, John Beldon Scott traced the history of the unique relic, focusing especially on the black-marble and gilt-bronze structure Guarino Guarini designed to house and exhibit it. A key Baroque monument, the chapel comprises many unusual architectural features, which Scott identified and explained, particularly how the chapel's unprecedented geometry and bizarre imagery convey to the viewer the supernatural powers of the object enshrined there. Drawing on early plans and documents, he demonstrated how the architect's design mirrors the Shroud's strange history as well as political aspirations of its owners, the Dukes of Savoy. Exhibiting it ritually, the Savoy prized their relic with its godly vestige as a means to link their dynasty with divine purposes. Guarini, too, promoted this end by fashioning an illusionary world and sacred space that positioned the duke visually so that he appeared close to the Shroud during its ceremonial display. Finally, Scott described how the additional need for an outdoor stage for the public showing of the relic to the thousands who came to Turin to see it also helped shape the urban plan of the city and its transformation into the Savoyard capital.

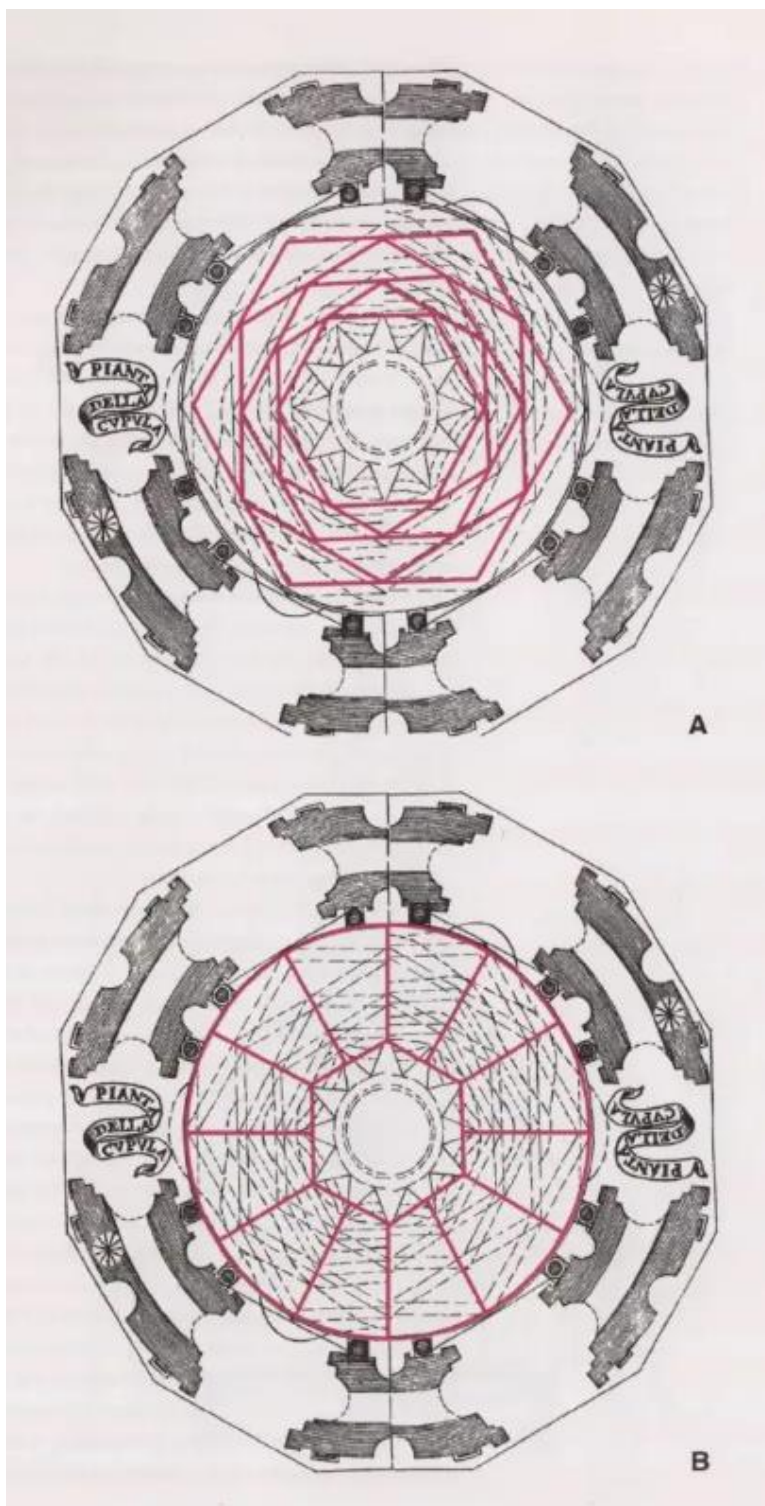


GUARINI'S DESIGN FOR THE CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SHROUD, TURIN



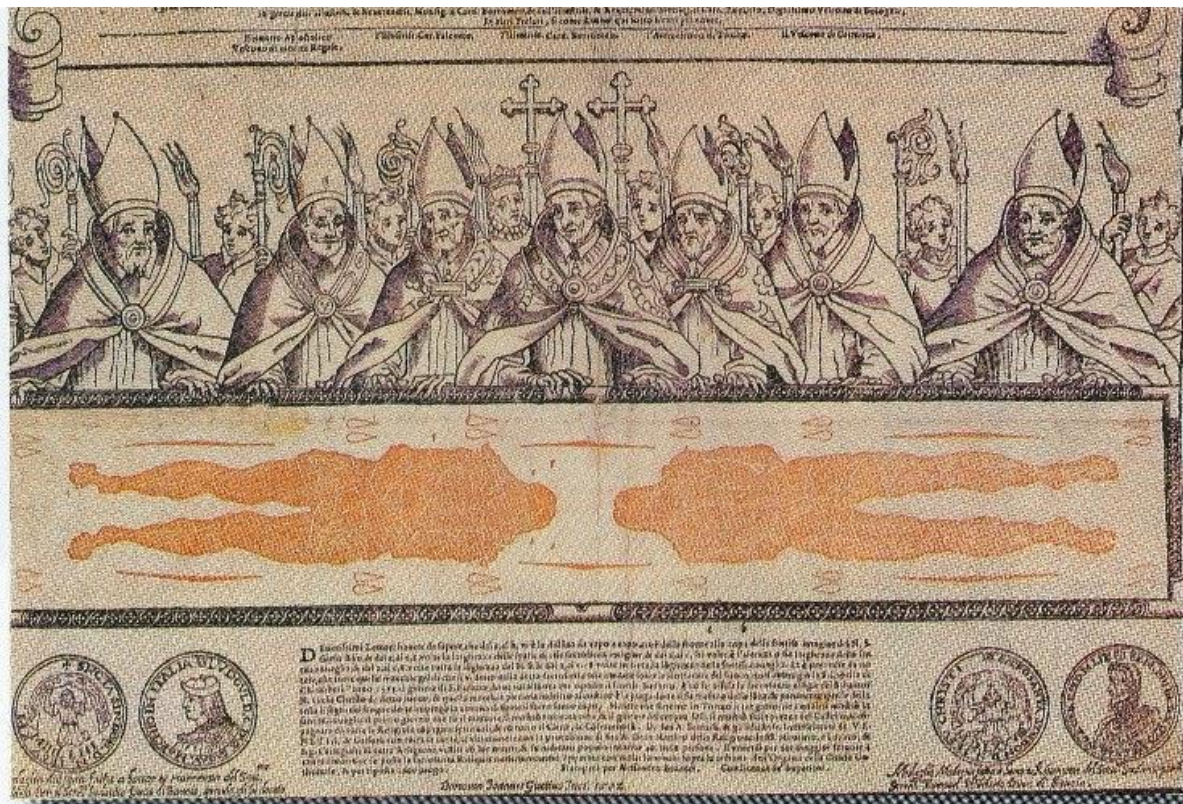
Seeing the Shroud: Guarini's Reliquary Chapel in Turin  
and the Ostension of a Dynastic Relic



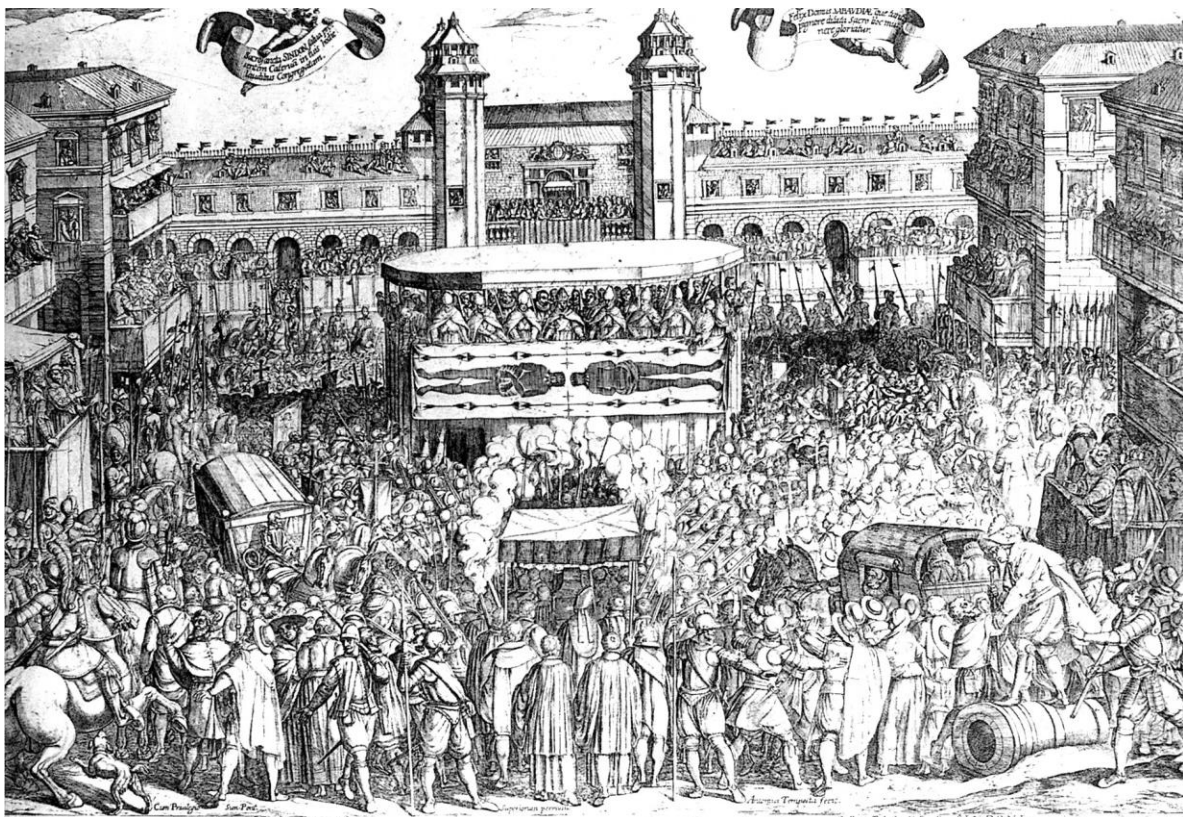


Plan of dome with superimposed arcs of hexagonal tiers (A) and skeletal structure of external buttresses (B), Chapel of the Holy Shroud





Print depicting the public exposition of the Shroud in Turin on 13-15 June 1582, to mark the second pilgrimage by Cardinal Charles Borromeo (centre cleric holding the Shroud) to venerate the Shroud in Turin.



Antonio Tempesta (1555-1630), View of the Piazza del Castello, Turin, during the ostension of the Holy Shroud, 1613





Painting by Pieter Bolckmann (1640-1705) of the public exposition of the Shroud in Turin's Piazza Castello on 8 May 1684, to mark the wedding of Duke Victor Amadeus II and Anne Marie de Orléans.











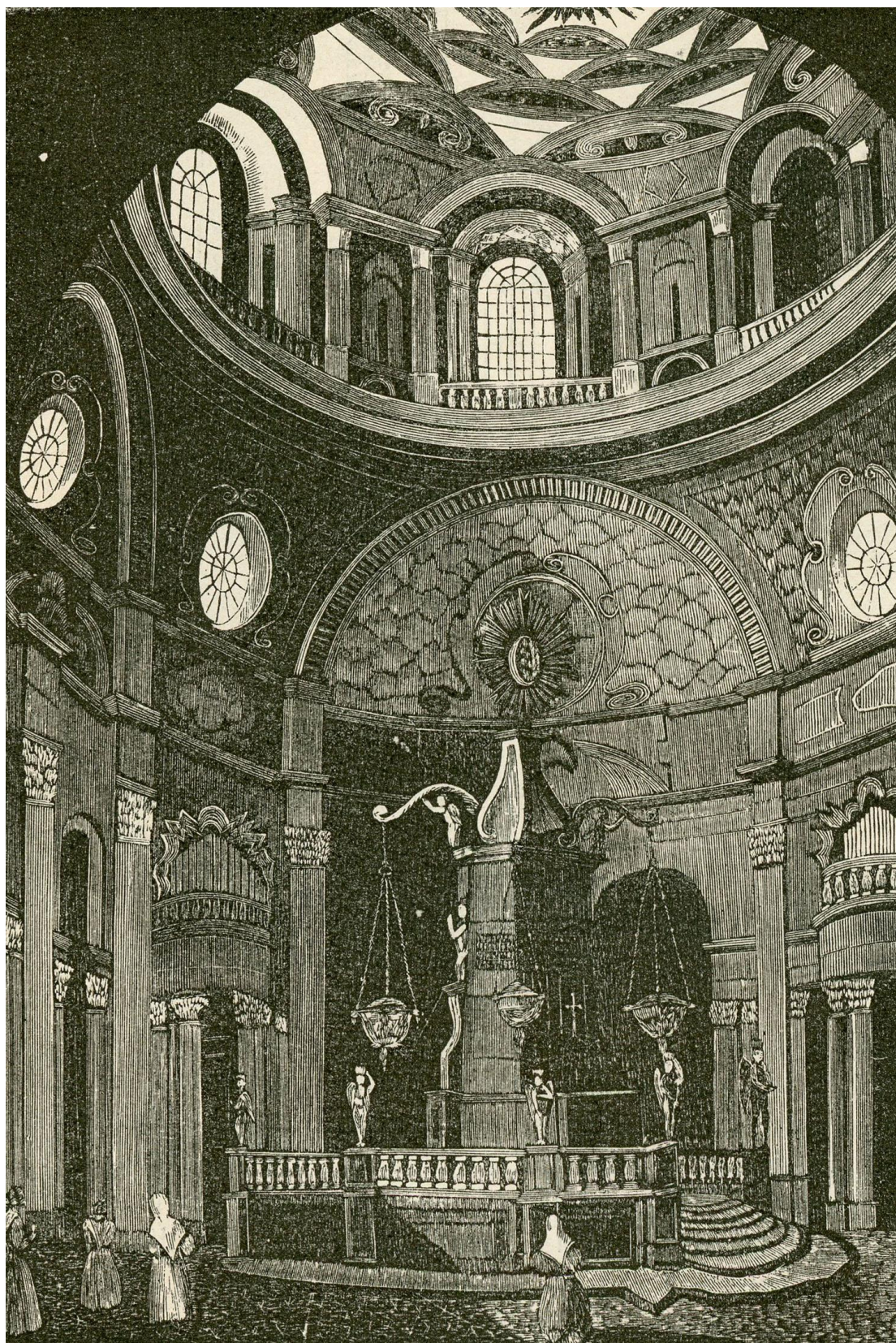
Bartilomeo Giuseppe Tasnière after Giulio Cesare Grampini, Ostension from the Balustrade of the Chapel of the Holy Shroud in Turin Cathedral, engraving 1703.



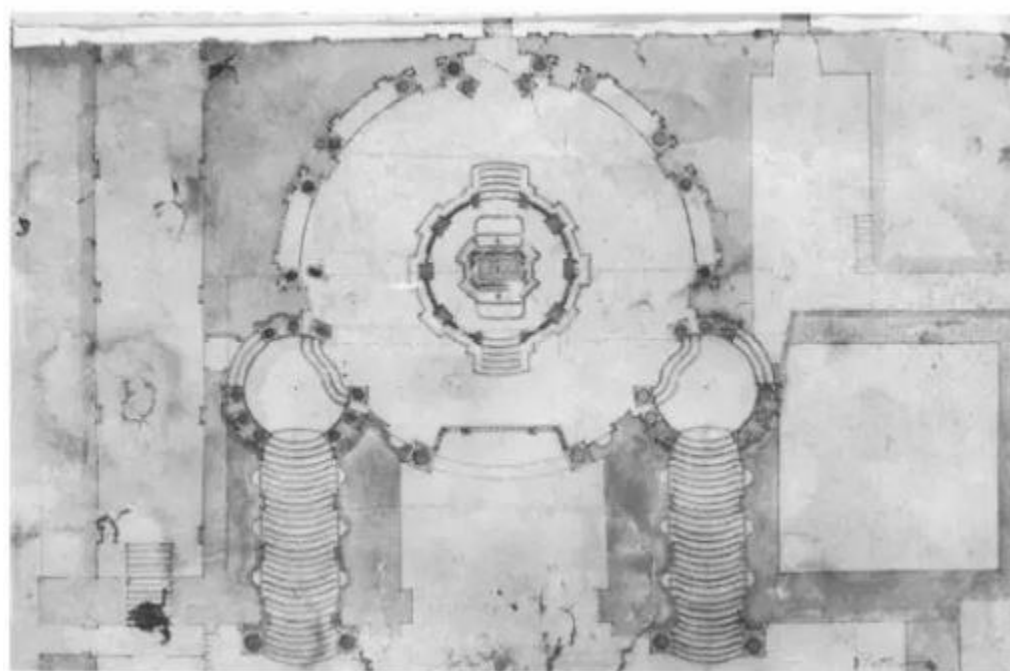
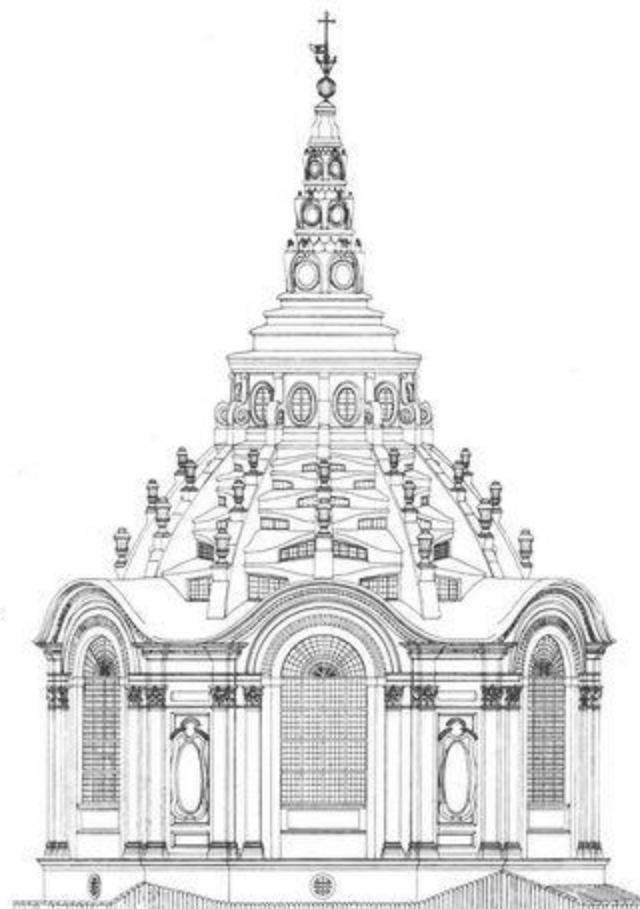
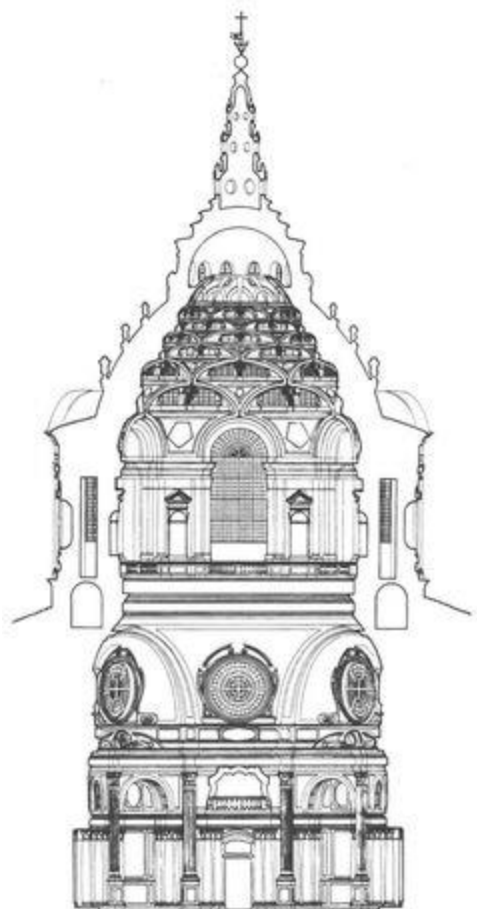


Interior of the Reliquary Chapel of the Holy Shroud by Giacomo Canova







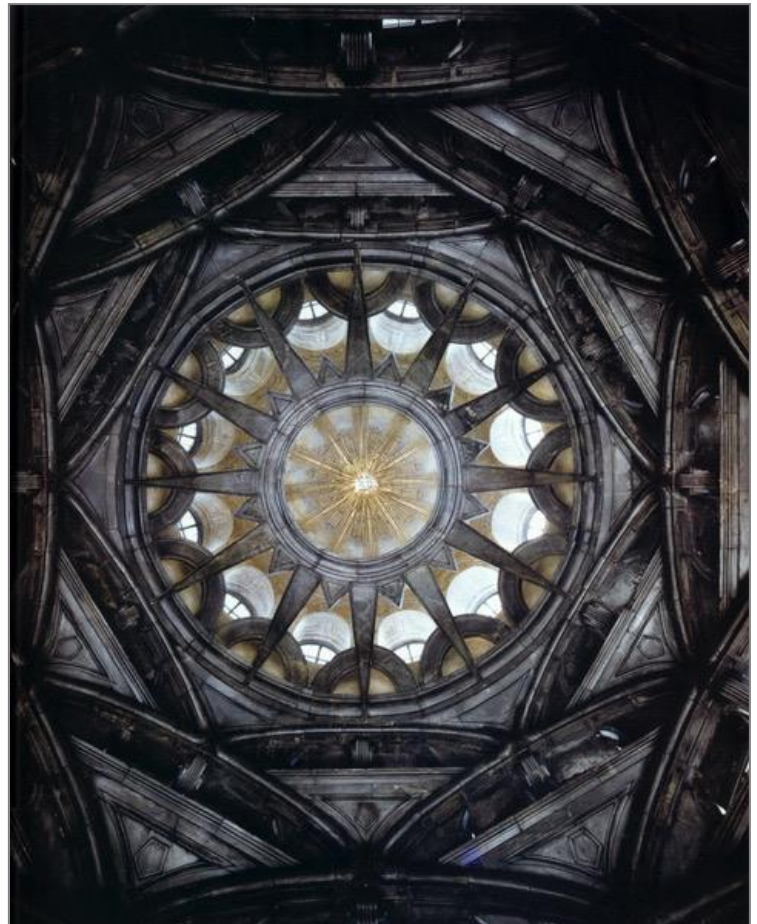


Plan of the Chapel of the Holy Shroud, drawing, after 1709

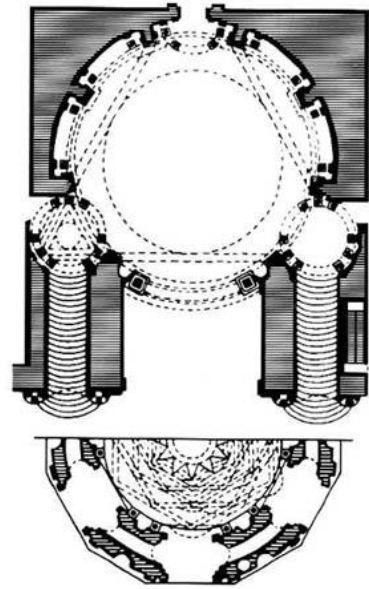




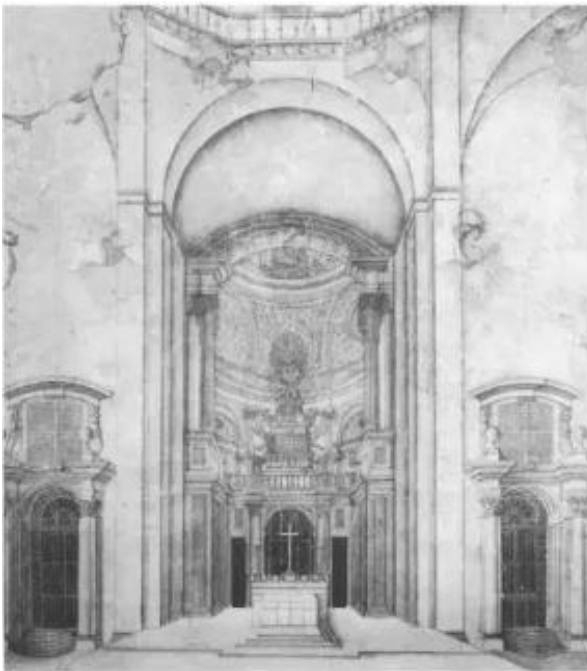
*Images of the chapel's  
unprecedented geometry and  
bizarre imagery conveying to the  
viewer the supernatural powers  
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Plan and elevation of the Chapel



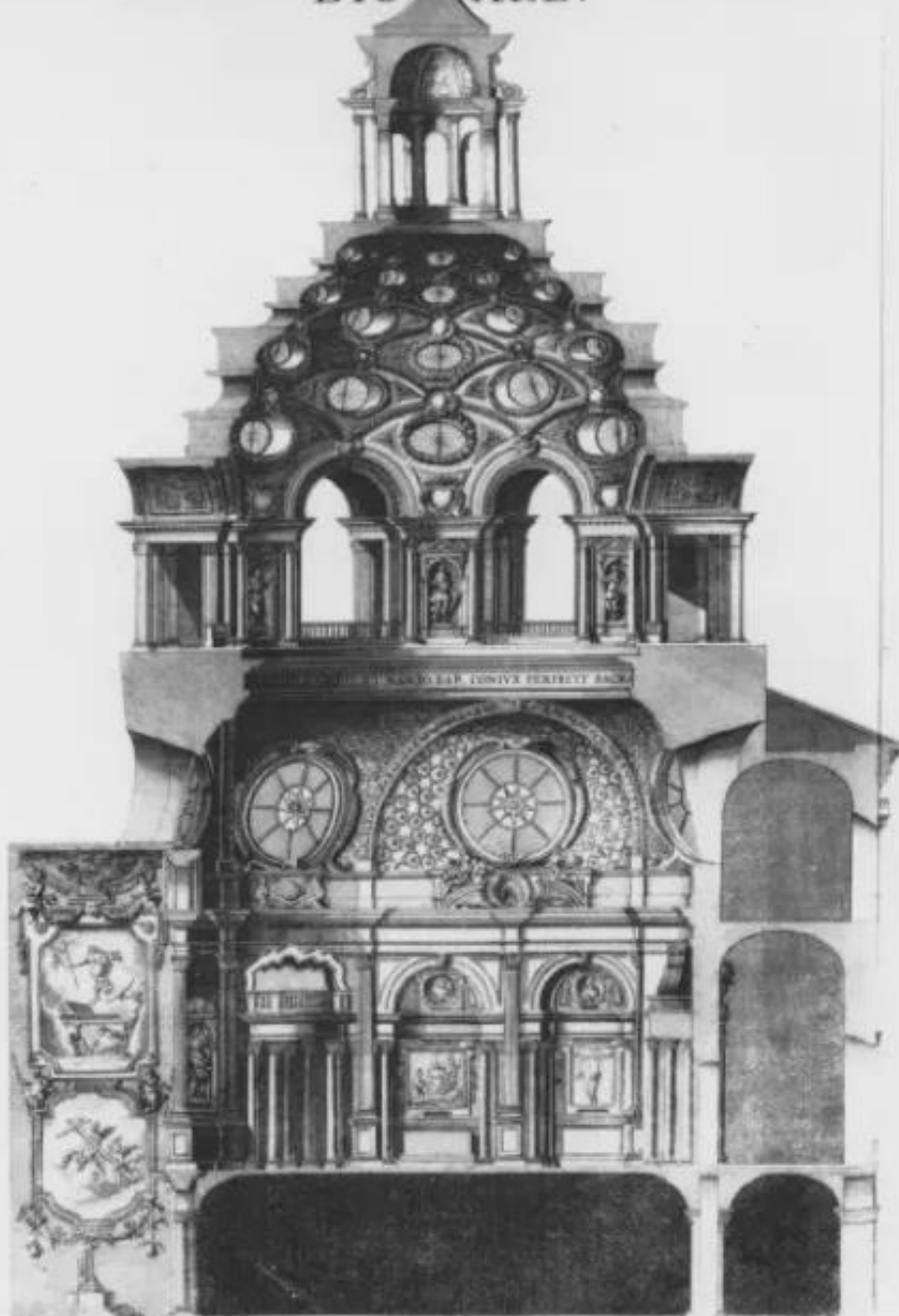
8 Artist unknown, *Perspective View of Turin Cathedral Transept Crossing and Choir with Chapel of the Holy Shroud*, drawing, after 1709 (photo: Archivio Capitolare, Turin)



9 Detail of Fig. 8 (photo: Archivio Capitolare, Turin)



SCENOGRAPHIA  
ÆDIS REGIÆ  
SACRATISSIMÆ SINDONI  
DIC-ATÆ.



After Giovani Tommaso Borgonio, Section of the Wooden Model for Chapel of the Holy Shroud, engraving 1682





**John Beldon Scott**

The 'Savoy History Lecture Series' was enormously pleased and honored to welcome to its podium John Beldon Scott, who is the Elizabeth M. Stanley Professor of the Arts, Emeritus and former Director of the School of Art & Art History at the University of Iowa. His field of research is the art and architecture of early modern Italy and of twentieth-century totalitarian regimes. He is the author of *Images of Nepotism: The Painted Ceilings of Palazzo Barberini* (Princeton, 1991) and *Architecture for the Shroud: Relic and Ritual in Turin* (Chicago, 2003). The latter book was awarded the 2004 College Art Association Charles Rufus Morey Prize. He is currently Associate Editor of the forthcoming *Cambridge Guide to the Architecture of Christianity*. He has been a fellow at the American Academy in Rome, the National Humanities Center, the Institute for Advanced Study, the Stanford Humanities Center, and the Fulbright Specialist Program in Uruguay.