

Urszula Mazurczak¹

Paradise—Heaven in the Roman mosaics of the 5th–9th centuries. In search of Dante’s source of inspiration

Painting, sculpture, art and architecture which were known and admired by Dante Alighieri are of great interest for various researchers: art historians, literary scholars and dantologists. The poet – scholar was particularly sensitive to the visual historical art as well as to his contemporary art: of Giotto, Cavallini, Cimabue². The poet’s erudition is highlighted in his versatile works of art, in his public activity. The researchers have deeply searched into his religious and personal life. Various studies have been devoted to the dynamic historical, political and social processes which he experienced. His Christian religious ethos, based on the Bible and on the comments to the Bible, shaped the cognitive and moral sphere of his life and work³. The experience resulting from his deep faith defined his basic questions: concerning eternal life, eternal happiness and heaven analogous to God. The questions concerned the aim of the human life and they resulted from his life in the Christian community of faith, although the answers which came from various sources were different.

1 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9314-5094>

2 M. Baxandall, *Giotto e gli umanisti. Gli umanisti osservatori della pittura in Italia e la scoperta della composizione pittorica, 1350–1450*, Milano 1980, p. 115 passim.

3 P. Rigo, *Memoria classica e memoria biblica in Dante*, Firenze 1989 (Saggi di “Lettere italiane”, 48); Dante Alighieri, *Boska komedia*, transl. E. Porębowicz, the afterword and the footnotes by M. Maślanka-Soro, Kraków 2004; M. Maślanka-Soro, *Tragizm w „Komedii” Dantego*, Kraków 2005, with extensive bibliography.

The times when the poet lived (1265–1321) were the High Middle Ages and were rightly called Mediaeval humanism. The traditions of the classical knowledge which lasted continuously in Italy since the first centuries of Christianity, which were preserved in architecture, in fine arts and in literature and which constituted a rich source of knowledge for the poet, were revived. Florence is the most beautiful and famous daughter of Rome as Dante said in *Convivio*. (*Convivio* 1, III4). Rolandino expressed a similar opinion of Padua in 1262⁴. The time in which he lived equipped the poet with the passion for searching, for posing questions concerning the issues of life on earth, of the human life and of nature. Padua was a particular source of philosophical, humanistic and natural knowledge. As he himself confessed, he studied in Padua for 30 months at the Franciscan Study Santo⁵. The questions of the eternal life and of the four last things of man took priority over everything which surrounded the poet in the fleshly reality. The eschatology was present already in the first centuries of Christianity as death, particularly the one of a martyr, derailed the sense of truth, good and beauty of the earthly life. It annihilated the concept of justice and good – the basic categories of the Ancient philosophy.

The same questions were posed by Dante. He deeply searched through the wide variety of such fields as theology, philosophy and in particular, the Gospel, to find answers to these questions. The Good News guided him to the beginnings of Christianity which, in the time of Dante's life, explained the truths of life and introduced man into the contemplation of the eternal life with God. Despite the 1200 years that passed, the questions remain the same, however, visions and images have been changed in the transmission through language or fine arts. However, the need for the vision of the perfect eternal life – which is considered to be happy and beautiful, remained unchanged. Sensitivity to beauty was the poet's deep need just like his need for knowledge and cognition. He was surrounded by a circle of intellectual geniuses such as his beloved Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), Bonaventure (1221–1274), Richard of Saint Victor (+1173). In their works he found the source of the Ancient and patristic knowledge, he searched through the mysteries of the spiritual life

4 A. Tartufieri, M. Scalini, *L'arte a Firenze nell'età di Dante: 1250–1300*, Firenze 2004; D. Norman, *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art, society and religion 1280–1400*, t. 2: *Case studies*, London 1995, p. 9.

5 A. Renaudet, *Dante humaniste*, Paris 1952; R. Imbach, *Portrait des Dichters als Philosoph. Eine Betrachtung des philosophischen Denkens von Dante Alighieri*, Basel 2020, p. 11–28; G. Holmes, *Florence, Rome, and the origins of the Renaissance*, Oxford 1986, p. 121; E. S. Varanelli, *La riscoperta medievale della poetica di Aristotele e la sua suggestione sulle arti figurative tardoduecentesche*, [in:] *Roma anno 1300. Atti della IV settimana di studi di storia dell'arte medievale dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza" (19–24 maggio 1980)*, a cura di A. M. Romanini, Roma 1980, pp. 833–859.

of the monastery, especially the one of Benedict of Nursia (480–550), as well as the ones of Cistercians, Franciscans and Dominicans.

Artfully created visions of Hell, Purgatory and Paradise are built on the rich source of knowledge combined with the artistic vision and artistic images presented by means of the language allegories⁶. The visionariness is a feature proper for any type of art, it creates visions and provokes visual images. Every type of art uses different means: the craftsmanship of the word, the sound, the colour, the shape, the light. The mutual osmosis of the vision created by the word and by the image is particularly meaningful in Dante's work.

The mosaics created in the church apses in Rome and in Italy e.g. in Ravenna since the end of 4th century and in the next centuries 5th–9th, are the visions of colours and light and they were meant to visualize the final destination of the Christian life. The questions concerning the eternal life, God, Paradise and Heaven led to the Bible. Monumental paintings in the apses, that is in the main parts of the church, must not have been accidental or superficial decorations. On the contrary, they were skilfully made with an artful technique and of precious materials and pigments in order to present the programs of the Church presented by the scholar founders. The artistic effects of the mosaic apse conches presented visions of the earth, of the earthly paradise and of heaven. However, the problem did not concern simple relations. They went deeper into the *arche* of the beginning of the earth, of the man and of life in paradise with God as well as of the original sin. In the Christian interpretation of the eternal life, of paradise and of heaven, Christ and His Parousia are in the centre of attention. These truths are the basis of the Christian vision of Paradise and Heaven as presented in the Old Testament and of the Gospel. Paradise-Heaven are not eternally separated but they are continuously waiting to be reached.

We are interested in the aspects of the apses' construction which describe the truths of the Christian vision of Paradise and Heaven and which resemble poetic images- metaphors of Dante's Paradise. Dante's knowledge of the Bible has already been analysed⁷. This dissertation is not a proper analysis and the Author does not seek any straightforward analogies between the text and the images. At the same time, the hermeneutics of the interpretation of both the text and of the image enables to reveal the way the power of the images mutually permeates the power of the word which has such an influence on the

6 M. Maslanka-Soro comments in: Dante Alighieri, *Boska komedia...*, passim; P. Piehler, *The visionary landscape. A study in medieval allegory*, London 1971, pp. 111–144; R. Imbach, *Portrait des Dichters als Philosoph. Eine Betrachtung des philosophischen Denkens von Dante Alighieri*. Jacob Burckhardt – Gespräche auf Castelen Bad 37, Basel 2020. Especially chapter III, pp. 25–32.

7 P. Rigo, *Memoria classica e memoria biblica in Dante*, Firenze 1989 (Saggi di "Lettere italiane", 48).

painted visions. The idea of Paradise – Heaven of the spiritual reality is totally transcendent to the world of the senses. It draws a broad horizon of numerous meanings, contents and interpretations. However, the ideas head towards one point of the spiritual creature, to use the metaphor of G. Poulet⁸. This point is Paradise – Heaven meant as a unity but, at the same time, as two separate Biblical phenomena. The Paradise is created by God, just like the man and nature. Heaven is unchanging, eternal, out of time and out of space, analogous to God.

This paper reflects the analysis of the Roman mosaics of the early Christian period which are the earliest attempt of visualisation of Paradise-Heaven. Dante saw these churches in a slightly different condition than they are now after renovations, however, they have not changed in their basic message contained in their composition⁹.

The early Christian mosaics explained the faithful the most important eternal life truths which had not been present before, in the pagan fine art. They were also presenting the visions of the fake paradise and heaven. The poet's workshop was deeply rooted in the Bible as well as in the works of pagan writers and in the Ancient philosophy. Researchers present the Virgil's Aeneid and the ideas introduced in the work with its Champs Elisees¹⁰. Dante's paradise is presented as a set of terraces and is full of historical characters, saints, scholars, artists and philosophers. Before the image of Paradise Dante presents the Purgatory with the description of the processes and events accompanying the Church's authority and the secular authority. For Dante, history is an important binder of the two worlds: the spiritual and the fleshly. History is the root of the mystical man, it leads the man to the eternal transcendence. Dante also combined the paradise and the City-Country of God and its citizens, the issue analysed by Chiara Frugoni with her most reliable means of research¹¹.

The program of the mosaic apses of the churches in the early Christianity analysed in the theological and philosophical context and rooted in the Christian

8 G. Poulet, *Metamorfozy czasu. Szkice krytyczne*, selection by J. Błoński, Warszawa 1978.

9 The historical and conservation knowledge, the information about the introduced changes were collected in the corpus of research with the additional latest bibliography: *La pittura medievale a Roma, 312-1431*. Corpus, a cura di M. Andaloro, S. Romano, Milano 2006, vol. 1: *L'orizzonte tardoantico e le nuove immagini, 312-468*, vol. 2: *Roma e Bisanzio, 468-795*, vol. 3: *Prima e dopo il mille, 795-1050*, vol. 4: *Riforma e tradizione, 1050-1198*, vol. 5: *Il Duecento e la cultura gotica, 1198-1280*, vol. 6: *Apogeo e fine del Medioevo, 1288-1431*.

10 M. Maślanka-Soro, *La dimensione poetica e la simbolica del giardino nella "Divina Commedia" di Dante*, [in:] *Imaginer le jardin*, Kraków 2003, pp. 69-70; J. Strzelczyk, *Rajskie początki i upadek człowieka w świadomości ludzi średniowiecza*, [in:] J. Strzelczyk, *W świecie średniowiecznych myśli i emocji. Wybór prac*, Poznań 2012, pp. 119-136; P. Piehler, *The visionary landscape...*, op. cit., pp. 111-138.

11 C. Frugoni, *A distant city. Images of urban experience in the medieval world*, Princeton 2008. Comments by M. Maślanka-Soro about Purgatory and Paradise: Dante Alighieri, *Boska komedia...*, op. cit.

anthropology, was based on the Bible which presents the description of creating the world until the loss of paradise. The Gospel complemented the meaning of the paradise with the coming of Christ. The man is not a static being but he was involved into the perspective of the development towards the promised eschatological fullness.

For the founders of the mosaics in 4th–8th centuries the interpretations of the Fathers of the Church were the basis conveying the meaning of the paintings. Their attachment to the Greek thought and to the Platonic cosmology were obvious. They remained faithful to the Biblical message of understanding the development of the reality created by God. The interpretation of the Bible was filled with deep ontological, anthropological and theological thinking¹².

The life in God and with God was the essence of the eternal life in the Christian interpretation visualised in the mosaics. The man as the historical creature is shown in a dynamic way as a pilgrim on his way to salvation for the eternal life. The history marked out places and times of breakthroughs in people's lives therefore the images of the parts of the cities of Bethlem, Jerusalem and Rome are present in the mosaics in the apses as the stages of heading towards the final destination, Paradise and Heaven. The Bible, especially the Psalms, the Book of Wisdom and prophecies explained the visions of heaven and of the eternal life in heaven which is inseparable with God, in a very pictorial way.

For Christians who created the mosaics, heaven was not only a figure in space which is filled with celestial bodies. Such pictures were also created as a medium of God's Paradise. The bodily substance of matter is the earth's nature while the nature of heaven consists of: eternity, the heavenly nature, the kingdom of heaven. Heaven is combined with the attributes of God the Creator: the Absolute, the Beauty, Holiness, Glory, Kingship, Love, Dominion, Kingdom. Dante's visions of Paradise on earth described in Canto XXVIII lead to the river Lethe (the river of forgetfulness), Dante is talking to Mathilda who is standing at the opposite bank of the river (Purgatory, Canto XXVIII, 37).

Canto XXXIII of Dante's Paradise is filled with the metonyms which describe the eternal happiness filled with light and infinite. Paradise is compared to the transparent matter, with a transparent light streak. These oxymorons or anthologies recognizable in the world of senses as separate phenomena, were combined in the Canto denying their physical nature and presenting their transcendental and heavenly nature. Infinity is presented by the figures of the cir-

12 S. Casartelli Novelli, *Le "due città" della creazione iconografica absidale in Roma (secoli IV–XII)*, [in:] *Il De civitate Dei. L'opera, le interpretazioni, l'influsso*, a cura di E. Cavalcanti, Roma 1996, pp. 641–662; R. Tichy, *Mistyczna historia człowieka według Bernarda z Clairvaux*, Poznań 2019, p. 96.

cles, rings, quadrature of the circle known from the Pythagorean philosophy as the figures of perfection and eternity. The poet raved about them. The circles of light which form an outline of the *Circulation* (Paradise, Canto XXXIII, 133). The beauty which he saw in the images is infinite. “*Here vigor failed the lofty fantasy... Even as a wheel that equally is moved...*” Paradise Canto XXXIII 144¹³.

Biblical Paradise — Heaven

Roman mosaics reflect Biblical Paradise which consists of two ephemera: the earthly Paradise and the Paradise which will come back together with Christ's Parousia; Heaven is the place of God beyond time and beyond space. The first one begins with the act of world creation described in the Book of Genesis. God created heaven and earth, He created man to His image and He said that it was good which means the same as beautiful¹⁴. The Second Paradise which was announced in Christ's Parousia and which was combined with the Kingdom of Christ, was also expressed in the parts of architecture¹⁵.

The compositions of the apses of the Roman basilicas from 4th–8th centuries inspired the whole religious art of the Middle Ages and of the modern times. They explained the difficult dogmas of faith, they shaped sensitivity regarding the sensual values of the painting techniques which were popular in the tradition of the pagan Rome. The changes which concerned composition and form highlighted new tendencies. They were to express the new, spiritual message of Paradise and Heaven which were inhabited by spiritual creatures and the narration of which concerned eternal life. Therefore, instead of the sensory illusion of the three-dimensional depth, the compositions were formed in axially — one line over another which resembled terraces and which lead from the base of the conch and up. They displaced the antique three-dimensional illusions. As it is

13 All of the quotations from the *Divine Comedy* of Dante come from the edition: Dante Alighieri, *Boska komedia*, transl. E. Porębowicz, with the afterword and footnotes by M. Maślanka-Soro, Kraków 2004.

14 J. Delumeau, *Une histoire du paradis*, vol. 1: *Le jardin des délices*, Paris 1992; H. Schade, *Das Paradies und die Imago Dei*, [in:] *Wandlungen des Paradiesischen und Utopischen. Studien zum Bild eines Ideals*, hrsg. H. Bauer [et al.], Berlin 1966, pp. 80–189 (*Probleme der Kunstwissenschaft*, 2); U. M. Mazurczak, *Das Sechstageswerk in der Ikonographie des Mittelalters. Forschungsstand und Forschungsperspektiven*, „Acta Mediaevalia” 8 (1995), pp. 117–135; U. M. Mazurczak, *Cielesność człowieka w średniowiecznym malarstwie Italii*, vol. 1, Lublin 2012, pp. 35–124.

15 J. Delumeau, *Une histoire du paradis...*, op. cit., pp. 31–33; U. M. Mazurczak, *Cielesność człowieka...*, op. cit.; M. Maślanka-Soro, *La dimensione poetica...*, op. cit., Kraków 2003, pp. 69–70.

the eternity, beyond the time and space, beyond the paradigms of the fleshly life, which is the final destination.

Pagan art did not contain the visualization of life which would be deprived of the sensual qualities or physical matter. In order to visualize the superpower, the artists used transgression e.g. humans into animals. Artists did not try to visualize immortality or eternity with any other means but with numbers and geometrical figures. These issues were shown in the mosaics which consisted of colourful sensual tesserae laboriously creating the layout of 'eternity', 'infinity' or being 'en route'. The compositions were collages of colourful layers, ocher, green and emerald and they filled the upper layer of the conch with tesserae in blue and gold. In this way Paradise–Heaven images were subjected to the colourful treatment which imply the movement 'towards' the mountain which is to be reached but which will not be reached only by a single act.

Heaven in the Roman mosaics is 'heavenly blue', the light is enriched with the gate architecture as the synonym of God's Kingdom. Heaven is identified with Glory, Majesty. Paradise is a part of a meadow with flowers recorded in the mature Christian mysticism, free from any corporeal aspects. Flowers are a substitute of colours: white and purple. Similarly, God is free from any matter created by Himself. Heaven is the communion of saints and it is preserved in the immaterial light. It is an unprecedented problem in visualization in the Christian art which is deeply rooted in the physical shapes, sensual colours and in the sensual perception in the inheritance of the antique mentality, although they were to visualize what is not sensual.

The mosaics were recognized in a thorough research collected in a source of knowledge of the last two centuries confirmed by the authority of Guglielmo Matthiae¹⁶, and mainly quoted by the group of Maria Andaloro and Serena Romano. In the heritage of the fine arts, especially in painting in the churches in Rome of the early and late Middle Ages, mosaics constitute the synonym of the archetype of the Christian art, both in the form and in the transferred contents, confirming the authority of the Latin Church tradition. The mosaics are the testimony of the artistic aspirations of the masters of mosaic workshops in Rome in the 5th century. Their tradition was continued in the reduced state of preservation on the frescos of 11th–13th centuries. They were the testimony of the Church's authority as the interpretation of faith since the early beginnings of Christianity in Rome in 5th century until the time of the developed scholasticism in 12th and 13th centuries with its intellectual aspirations, Thomistic rationalism and the mystic beauty. Their mystery is expressed in the fact that

16 G. Matthiae, *Mosaici medioevali delle chiese di Roma*, Roma 1967.

they fulfil the adequate role of a medium of the mysticism of light and colour so well-known to Dante. All of these experiences are expressed in the Roman mosaics. They testify the delight over the truth known to Thomas Aquinas and found in the mysticism of the light of Bernard of Clairvaux in the equal extent of the Aristotle's learning.

Dante's time is cumulated in the Holy Year, it is the time of Pope Boniface VIII (Benedictus Gaetani 1234–1303) who tended to renew and refresh the insides of churches strengthening the ethos of the Church. This idea was taken from his predecessor Pope Nicolas III (Gaetano Orsini 1220–1280, the Pope 1277–1280)¹⁷. It was the aspiration of the Popes to give splendour of modernity to basilicas preserving the rank of tradition as the synonym of the sources of papacy and Christianity in Rome as the *sedes petri*. The outstanding artists close to Dante: the architects, painters, sculptors and gardeners were the only ones who could implement this idea. The renewed art was to support the idea of the renewal of the Church's authority. However, it was one wing of Christianity. The other wing was the doctrinal Tradition of the Church, the history of papacy, the history of the Holy Martyrs. It was the time of the fast and reverential development of the cult of saints whose graves were situated in the Roman basilicas or in the catacombs.

According to the description in the Book of Genesis, the Paradise was depicted as the specific land, the first land of life of the man in happiness with God. Its topography was marked by rivers, four rivers from four directions with the direction set by winds. However, the act of the man's disobedience to God and the original sin were the reasons of the man's leaving the earthly paradise – to the earth which was cultivated by Adam. Thus the simple unequivocal message of the Book of Genesis about the original *locus amoenus* was subjected to various interpretations – even the paradise lost but also the paradise meant as returning to the place of being with God.

However, both in Dante's intuition and earlier in the simple diagrams of the colourful stripes of the apses' conches, Paradise is the waiting for Parousia. Time is the basic medium, rather than space. The future is not only the category of events but it is also a providential eschatology. The whole richness of indirect states, stages of spiritual access, steps leading upstairs to heaven where the unknown future was located. The Pythagoreans came to the rescue as they reduced infinity to the circle, a sphere of circle meanders. Infinity could be depicted in geometrical figures which constituted the surrogate of perfection and

17 *La storia dei Giubilei*, vol. 1–2, a cura di M. Fagiolo, Milano 1998; M. D'Onofrio, *Le committenze e il mecenatismo di Papa Niccolò III*, [in:] *Roma anno 1300...*, op. cit., s. 553–562.

eternity. They were also the poet's delight. Luminous circles constitute the contour of the image of the *Circulation* Paradise Canto XXXIII 133 Beauty which he saw in paintings has not found its end „Here vigor failed the lofty fantasy [...] Even as a wheel that equally is moved” (Paradise, Canto XXXIII, 144).

Theories were created about heaven which is a paradise for the saved, about eternal God's heaven which, however, is not identical with paradise. Theological interpretations of heaven and earth have become the background for the problems of visualization of earthly and heavenly paradise – the home of God, rather than their answer. In 4th century people created images of Christ Pantocrator the Son of God Who is sitting on a sphere as if on the heavenly throne hanged in the sky in order to underline that God's place is not the paradise for the saved.

The earliest model of this kind in the monumental paintings of apses is presented in the mosaics in the mausoleum of Constance dating back to 354 (when Constance's body was brought from Bithynia to Rome)¹⁸. Mosaics in the mausoleum of Constance from the first half of 4th century constitute a synthesis of the tradition of the pagan paradise and of the paradise of Christian salvation¹⁹. The tholobate in the not preserved dome of the mausoleum contained a maritime landscape, scenes from the Old Testament and from the New Testament, candelabrum and floral ornamentation. In the northern apse there is the preserved scene *Traditio clavium* (Mathew 16, 19) taken from the sarcophagus program²⁰. The mosaic in the little southern apse presents Christ Who appears on the clouds as the Peace Giver as it is written on the inscription on the rotulus *Dominus pacem dat*²¹. In the seemingly harmonious and unified composition of the sky, the strips were clearly separated like the steps indicating separate places for the apostles, for palm trees, for the simple architecture which refer to the pagan shepherd scenes. The hill with four heavenly rivers at Christ's feet is a separate place. The meadow assimilates the implications of the earthly paradise as it is presented as a narrow strip of land with the figures of people and things. Christ is presented with the background of the sky and clouds highlighted with rose and purple glares of light, He is the source of light. The implications of the earthly paradise are presented in the palm trees and in

18 These mosaics keep the traces of the changes as a result of renovation and maintenance. See: W. Oakeshott, *Die Mosaiken von Rom vom dritten bis zum vierzehnten Jahrhundert*, Leipzig 1967, pp. 69–72; G. Matthiae, *Pittura romana del Medioevo. Secoli IV–X*, Roma 1987, vol. 1, pp. 35–37; *La pittura medievale...*, op. cit.).

19 *La pittura medievale...*, op. cit., pp. 54–56.

20 *La pittura medievale...*, op. cit., p. 81.

21 S. Romano, M. Andaloro, *Romisches Mittelalter. Kunst und Kultur in Rom von der Spätantike bis Giotto*, Milano 2002, p. 30.

the miniature forms of architecture taken from the shepherds' sheds which are the announcement of the future compositions of cities: Bethlem and Jerusalem presented in art.

The apses in the Constance mausoleum present visions of paradise and heaven which are different from the one at the vault of the nave in the central part of the mausoleum. Here the richness of the sensual nature is presented in all its glory: deciduous trees, pine trees, fruit trees, pear trees, apple trees, lemon trees, there are birds: pigeons, pheasants, partridges, hoopoes, falcons, and some objects: cups, craters, oenochoe, cornucopias. They introduce the world of earthly wealth and abundance, of heavenly and earthly wealth²². There are narrative scenes shown at the vault e.g. the harvest of grapes, wine pressing refers to the Dionysian ideas taken over to Christianity. The paradise of sensual abundance is juxtaposed to the spiritual reality in the apses.

Heaven—Sphere. Christ sitting on the sphere

Christ sitting on the sphere is the archetype of heaven as the home of God is the prototype of the visualization of heaven as God's home. The Pythagorean ideal figure symbolised infinity, beauty and features of gods: perfection, glory, immortality. The sphere, the circle were to symbolise the throne of God Almighty in heaven. These earliest visualizations of Heaven in the mosaic in the Constance mausoleum will develop in the next century in the times of Pope Leo the Great (440–460)²³. The bold artistic innovation of the composition is stunning²⁴. A different vision of the earth—the earthly paradise was shown in the axiality of colourful strips. The sphere is the vision of heaven, the geometrical form which is only reserved exclusively for God. The illusion of three-dimensionality was replaced by the axiality of colourful strips laid one over another like terraces. They imitate the land, the ground, green meadows with flowers, ribbons of streams. Over these the conch is filled with blue or gold tesserae. They clearly indicate the separate intangible vision of God's eternity. The artists deliberately and purposefully resigned from using illusion like in the antique landscapes. It was necessary to show the faithful a brand new vision of paradise,

22 *La pittura medievale...*, op. cit., p. 62.

23 *La pittura medievale...*, op. cit., p. 33.

24 M. S. Bunim, *Space in medieval painting and the forerunners of perspective*, New York 1940; E. Panofsky, *Die Perspektive als „symbolische Form“*, [in:] M. S. Bunim, *Aufsätze zu Grundfragen der Kunstwissenschaft*, hrsg. von H Oberer, E. Verheyen, Berlin 1974, pp. 99–167.

however, not analogous to God. Paradise created by God was the light of the spirit – God’s breathing. God is Infinity and in His Eternity He is like Heaven.

The Biblical language in both the Greek and in the Latin version, reflects the nuances of understanding eternity through metonyms, through the symbols of varied meanings of eternity and God. The figural representation of the earth and of paradise which was presented by literary tradition and its reflections in the Ancient Roman paintings, were not adequate either to understanding the Biblical paradise, or, the less, to understanding Christian heaven – the eternity²⁵. There were only weak bindings to *locus amoenus*: little meadow with flowers, sheep in the pasture, low shrubs, shepherds’ sheds. In Christian religion paradise was the essence of the man’s meeting God, as in paradise the man was created „to the image of God”, the following paradise was to come with Christ’s Parousia which was seen as the Saviour’s return to the earth. There was only the problem in reflecting the earth which was to be „the new land”.

Visualization of these difficult truths of faith required from the artists, and particularly from the founders of the ecclesial compositions, finding a new language of communication, the new style of visualization. The compositions which were subjected to gradation, from the lowest layers of the earth to the top of the conch filled with blue or gold mosaic, were an adequate medium of the new teaching of the Church. They visualized gradual passing from the earth to the eternal life with God. The artists used the forms of new configuration, two-dimensional Surface in order to visualize the essence of spiritual life which is a process and not a single immediate event.

The apses of churches in their whole liturgical meaning in the shape of a conch constituted an important construct of the material architectural background which was the basis on which it was possible to create visions of the earthly paradise, the paradise of Parousia and God’s eternity out of colourful tesserae. Therefore in the gradual terraces the saint guides Peter and Paul lead their protégés to Christ. The place where the Saviour appears must not have been identical to the earthly paradise.

The perception of mosaics created in the Roman apses was inseparable from the read and heard liturgical texts, Biblical texts, the prayer and singing. The contemplation of the painting was not autonomous and independent from the liturgy, neither from any engagement of the faithful into the prayer, particularly

25 U.M. Mazurczak, *Krajobraz idealny, krajobraz realny. Antropologia krajobrazu zdarzeń i przyrody malarstwa włoskiego końca XIII i I połowy wieku XIV*, [in:] *Miraże natury i architektury. Prace naukowe dedykowane profesorowi Tadeuszowi Bernatowiczowi*, red. A. Barczyk, P. Gryglewski, Łódź 2021, pp. 373–409.

the reading or more often singing the psalms which praise God's heavenly beauty. The sacred space from the courtyard, the narthex, the main nave and the side naves, especially in the presbytery, were animated by the sparkling mosaic images which harmonized with the whole inside creating dynamic atmosphere which supported the spiritual reaching of the top, heading up, ascending. The dynamics of the voice, the colour of the image, the smell of incense, the sparkling of candles and lights reflected the image of spirituality which is not immobilised immaterial statics. Spiritual reality is constant pulsation and thus it is life. It reminds of Canto VI of Paradise:

With our desert is portion of our joy, Because we see them neither less nor greater. Herein doth living Justice sweeten so Affection in us, that forevermore It cannot warp to any iniquity. Voices diverse make up sweet melodies; So in this life of ours the seats diverse Render sweet harmony among these spheres (Paradise, Canto VI, 120–124).

The inside of basilica had an entirely different effect, rhythm, light and colour than the real space, outside the sacral sphere. The land where Jesus comes, Paradise where Jesus comes to in Parousia with His second changed coming is not a copy of Adam and Eve's paradise, as this one could not be God's eternity. The compositions reflected the new eschatological reality which, however, was referring to green pastures, flowers, shrubs and rivers.

The Mediaeval perception of Roman mosaics was experienced as deeply as it was revived by the memory of history, experienced equally deeply in the 5th century and in the year 1000, and in every next century. Rome was the Holy City – the miniature of the Holy Jerusalem. The programs of apses created in 13th and 14th centuries – in the time of Dante, in Italy and in the whole Latin Europe (to a great extent also in the Greek Europe), came from their mosaic archetypes from 5th–9th centuries. Their perception, interpretation and understanding could not have changed as the Word of the Bible, of liturgy and the sacramental Word have not changed. The historical knowledge about the Church, about the State and about faith was deepened. The constant question about the aim of life, about eternity and about the happiness of the life with God, about the dogma of the communion of saints were particularly popular in Dante's time. These questions remained unchanging just like the unchanging meaning of the Greek letter „I” Iota written on the fluttering, as if the breath of the Holy Spirit, coats of the Apostles on the Roman mosaics from 5th and 8th centuries.

Eternal life means “wandering” to heaven which was similar to a ray of light in the colours of the dawn. Christ sitting on a sphere in His majesty was shown in the mosaic of the church San Vitale in Ravenna, in the baptistery of San Giovanni in fonte in Napoli where He is standing on a sphere in the scene *Traditio legis*. In numerous compositions, the sphere was the figure of Heaven and it was both the footrest and the throne in numerous compositions of Mediaeval frescos in the miniature and in the panel painting.

Paradise — Heaven — The Holy City

Heaven presented in the mosaics of the early Christianity involves the Holy City, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the King with its courtyards and gates. The King on the throne is the referent of the Kingdom as it was shown in the earliest, no longer existing mosaics in the apse of the Basilica of Saint Peter in the City of Vatican²⁶. The apse from the time of Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) preserved in the picture, was admired by Dante; similarly, the apse from the burned Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls, known from the set of water-colour paintings of Uncial 054 (Bible, Vatican, Barberini, lat. 4406).

The mosaic preserved in the apse of the church of Santa Pudentiana presents a fully developed concept of Heaven — the City of God. Over the city panorama in the sky there is a cross made of precious stones surrounded by four apocalyptic creatures. The mosaics were created during the pontificate of Pope Innocent I (403–417). The city is a vision of the City of God described in *De Civitate Dei* of Saint Augustine²⁷. The City of Jerusalem in some of its parts reminds Roman memorial buildings. They are authenticated by the gold Cross *crux gemmate*, studded with gems, in the sky and by the apocalyptic creatures. The mosaic is the visualisation of the Christian faith in the eternal life which can be acquired through *Ecclesia ex Gentibus* and *Ecclesia ex Circumcisione* presented as personalised female allegories rising above the heads of the apostles²⁸. The vision

26 The apse from the times of Pope Innocent III, known from the drawing of the Grimaldi Album, Vatican Library (S. Romano, M. Andaloro, *Romisches Mittelalter...*, op. cit., p. 92). Apostolic Succession of the Sepulchre of St. Peter in the Vatican was known in the times of early Christianity and deepened in the times of Dante. E. Kirschbaum, *Die Graeber der Apostelfürsten: St Peter und St. Paul in Rom*, Leipzig 1973, pp. 95–97.

27 E. Kirschbaum, *Die Graeber der Apostelfürsten...*, op. cit., p. 76. Extensive historical and iconographic analysis see: *La pittura medievale...*, op. cit., pp. 41, 54–59.

28 C. Ihm, *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei vom vierten Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des achten Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden 1960. The personifications are also interpreted as the holy martyrs,

of the imperial hall with the Saviour on the throne Who is surrounded by the apostles confirms the relationship with the cross studded with gems with the sky in the background. The mosaic technique, the nature of little tesserae – colourful and gold, tilted slightly askew, reflected the effect of the dynamics of the constant sparkles of light which imitate God's light is often the metaphor of Dante as the heavenly beauty. This vision of Paradise – Parousia and of Heaven which is brand new in its composition and contents.

The answer to the question about Paradise – Heaven reflects the semantic relations which do not draw from pagan inspirations of the pastoral *locus amoenus*. The vision of Heaven in the mosaic in the apse of Santa Pudentiana is not an impressive and breath-taking cosmic phenomenon. The mosaic is derived from the roots of thinking and from the awareness of the history which is rooted in the texts of Saint Augustin *De Civitate Dei* or like the 14 homilies of Orygenes on the Ezekiel's prophecies. The Roman sarcophagi deepened the meaning of Christ as the teacher and philosopher in heavenly paradise²⁹.

For Dante and his contemporaries faithful Rome was a particularly important city, the figure of Heavenly Jerusalem. It assimilated pagan times with the Christian times in a specific order of human history. Jerusalem was not an abstraction or geometric cosmology, nor an intellectual configuration. Heaven was shown as the supreme authority the synonyms of which are: power, majesty, glory and kingdom. The authority required the space of the city meant as the State, and the State was meant to be the Empire³⁰. In the topography of Rome the authorities visualised two hills: Capitol – the hill of emperors and the mythological Genesis and the Vatican – the hill of the martyrdom of Saint Peter, the first bishop of Rome. Since the 4th century there has been an alliance between the Roman empire in Capitol and Saint Peter's Church in this sphere³¹.

daughters of Senator Pudens, Pudentian and Praksed, see: S. Romano, M. Andaloro, *Romisches Mittelalter...*, op. cit., pp. 76, 120–122.

29 M. Buchsel, *Das Christusporträt am Scheideweg des Ikonoklastenstreits im 8. und 9. Jahrhundert*, „Stadel Jahrbuch” 11 (1990), pp. 7–52; *La pittura medievale...*, op. cit., p. 120.

30 F. Marazzi, *Rome in Transition Economic and political Change in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries* [in:] *Early medieval Rome and the Christian West. Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough*, ed. J. M. H. Smith, Leiden–Boston 2000. This issue in detail is developed by: A. Frascchetti, *Vom Kapitol zur Peterskirche. Aspekte der römischen Stadtlandschaft in der Spätantike*, [in:] S. Romano, M. Andaloro, *Romisches Mittelalter...*, op. cit., pp. 11–24; D. Iogna-Prat, *Ecclesia/Christianitas. Identité universelle et identité religieuse*, [in:] *Religiosità e civiltà. Identità delle forme religiose (secoli X–XIV). Atti del convegno internazionale, Brescia, 9–11 settembre 2009*, a cura di G. Andenna, indeks E. Filippini, Milano 2011, pp. 193–210.

31 W. Müller, *Die Heilige Stadt. Roma quadrata, himmlisches Jerusalem und die Mythe vom Weltnabel*, Stuttgart 1961, pp. 85–127; H. Köhren-Jansen, *Giottos Navicella. Bildtradition, Deutung, Rezeptionsgeschichte*, Worms am Rhein 1998, p. 58 (Römische Studien der Bibliotheca Hertziana, 8).

There have been changes in visualising Heaven as the place of God's rule. The original brightness was enriched with the figures of the city especially the gates and walls according to the prophecy of Isaiah "You shall call your walls 'Salvation' and your gates 'Praise'" (Is 60, 18). The open gates were the sign of the safety of the citizens and of the inflow of material wealth. In the second song of thanksgiving the prophet praises God's glory: "A strong city have we; he sets up walls and ramparts to protect us. Open up the gates to let in a nation that is just, one that keeps faith" (Is 26, 1). However, the full description of Heaven as the City of God was provided by Saint John in his Apocalypse (Ap 21). The text is the basis of the mosaic compositions in which the vision of Heaven is the New Creation – the Heavenly Jerusalem. Seeking for the analogy Jerusalem – Rome was based on the beginnings of the Church on the graves of martyrs who resembled those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. The history of Rome of the first Christians was read in the Middle Ages, referring to the history and refreshing the legends. According to the legend preserved in Rome *Domine Quo Vadis*, Christ returned to Rome in order to be crucified here again, which was indicated by the Pope Innocent III (1198–1216). According to the faith of Romans, Rome was appointed by God as *caput mundi, caput ecclesiae*³².

Creating the mosaic in the church of Saint Peter in Vatican dates back to the time after the death of Constantin the Great that is after 337. The mosaic was to be created during the period of 342–344³³. Dante saw this mosaic, it was the first apotheosis of the city as heaven and heaven as Civitas. It was ahead of 100 years of the preserved mosaic from Santa Pudentiana with the apotheosis of the City as heaven. The preserved mosaics from the first half of the 4th century and till the 8th century in their nature of the colours, gold, in their full abundance of the twinkling tesserae, dynamically changing the shape of things, constitute a new language of visualization. Instead of being defined by the outline and volume, the figures radiate with the light and shine which refracts and scatters their sensual shapes. Dante's metaphor *the streaks of light*, radiant, pulsating, reflects the essence of the visualisation of spiritual and mystic life. They have become the synonym of harmonic continuous – eternal movement of interpenetrating circles which overwhelmed the characters and heaven.

The terraces, ground falls, meadows, the waters of the rivers formed as strips imply the flashback of the earthly paradise with human figures, with nature

32 W. Müller, *Die Heilige Stadt...*, op. cit., pp. 110–112; M. Guarducci, *Gli avori erculei della cattedra di San Pietro. Elementi nuovi*, Roma 1977, pp. 117–253 (Atti della Accademia nazionale dei Lincei. Memorie. Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, 8, 21, 3).

33 S. Romano, M. Andalaro, *Romisches Mittelalter...*, op. cit., p. 77.

and with pieces of architecture. The pyramids of clouds which carry Christ lead to heaven. The apse of the church of Saint Cosmas and Damian in Forum Romanum, built between 526 and 530 founded by Pope Felix IV, is presented in a mature way, in a synthesis of the well-known models of paradise-heaven. The founder was presented in the apse carrying the model of the church and with a palm tree with a phoenix sitting on a branch in the background. The tree and the bird, the symbol of life, visualised the earthly paradise. The basilica commemorates the cult of holy martyrs in Rome at the beginning of 6th century. The church and particularly the composition of the apse became the models for the later churches founded by the Pope Paschalis I, Saint Praxedes and Saint Cecilia³⁴.

The artistic structure is very thoughtful. Saint martyrs were wearing white tunics and coats slightly swinging, suggesting the blowing wind – the Holy Spirit. The martyrs are wandering to Christ, from His right and left side, led by their guides Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The faces of the figures reflect light – the glow of the blue sky, enveloping their cheeks and hands. The heavenly light left shadows on the human complexion, the shade in the off-gray. This thoughtful artistic technique reflects the idea of the change of the bodies of saints, the figures of which were situated in the parts above the ground. Dante called them “purgatory mountain” Paradise, Canto I. The saints maintain the nature of the human corporeality but at the same time they are overwhelmed by the shine of the heavenly light leaving in the shadow of the off-blue. The rule over the light indicates that they have not received the new spiritual body. The shadow of the heavenly blue echoed on the faces and on the feet of the figures reflected the movement – reaching towards, as opposed to the immobility. This artistic technique with reflecting heaven on earth and on the bodies of the saints mirrors the distinction of the spheres which head towards heaven. The spheres which set the direction of the figures – towards Christ, do not determine the ownership nor the isolation.

Roman and Italian painters used to paint blue heaven since 12th century while in the Byzantine area the heaven was painted gold which led to using the same style in the north of Italy, as is reflected in the churches Pawi San Pietro in Ciel d’Oro as well as in the gold mosaics in Milan. Gold does not give shade and it is the absolute quintessence of the cosmic light. The gold robes of Christ, His tunic and coat with the purple *clavi* were the source of light for the mauve shades of the clouds in the dark-blue sky.

34 S. Romano, M. Andalaro, *Romisches Mittelalter...*, op. cit. p. 77.

The wanderer and his guide on their way to Paradise

The figures presented in the apse of Cosmas and Damian preserve the individual features in the physiognomies of Saint Paul and Saint Peter and they are at the same time enveloped with blue, they become the figures subjected to transformation. The energetic targeting of the figure towards Christ in Heaven visualises the words of Saint Paul: "I have finished my course". Saint Peter and Saint Paul are the guides for other saint martyrs. This composition visualizes the idea of a guide who in the Christian religiosity is rooted in the function of a patron, teacher, intermediary, protector. Such functions were created in the early Christian art in the visualizations in sarcophagi. Patron-Guide became a figure both for the figures of saints and for the living founders, sometimes even for the anonymous observers of events. The differences in meaning which obviously existed between the mentioned figures were designated by the thematic contexts of the presented events. The man – the pilgrim was known in the pictures of the whole period of the Middle Ages especially in the times of intense frequent pilgrimages to the graves and holy places, especially to Rome of Saint Peter and to Santiago de Compostella to Saint Jacob. Both the pilgrim and his guide were bestowed with God's grace which enabled them to wander and seek. The grace of being guided was also necessary and so was the acceptance of the gift of guidance. Dante is the pilgrim as the New Aeneas³⁵. He makes his pilgrimages in the afterlife guided by his guides Virgil and Bernard of Clairvaux; Beatrice leads him to heaven which is his destination.

In the patristic and Benedictine milieu the physical wandering was preceded by a spiritual pilgrimage declared in the Benedictine keynote – *quaerere Deum*. The motifs Guide – Master – Teacher – Protector with their shades of meanings were developed by the whole Mediaeval art. The genesis can be found in the Roman mosaics, among others in the church apse mentioned above. The guides – Saint Peter and Saint Paul embrace their holy martyrs, protect them on their way to their destination – to Christ in heaven. This retinue of saints involves Pope Felix IV and Saint Theodore – the martyr officer in the Emperor Maximilian's army in Asia Minor, they are placed on the right. Below, in one axis with Christ, there is the Lamb on the hill with four flowing heavenly rivers. These far away echoes of pastoral scenes gained a new meaning. A row of sheep which are heading towards Christ has an eschatological meaning, these are the faithful of the Church heading towards their source.

35 M. Maślanka-Soro, *Antyczna tradycja epicka u Dantego*, Kraków 2015, pp. 188–190.

The earthly paradise consists of a set of terraces: the land and rivers, it is separated from the dark blue strip of heaven which is a depth and infinity. The Blue Paradise–Heaven are separate spheres where you can set off to. Heaven is the light which can beam and raise Christ. Figures and things of the paradise preserve their sensual qualities, adequate to their earthly matter. The corporeality of the figures has physical and sensual qualities. They shed the shadow as they preserve their material property. At the same time their white robes dematerialize their bodily volumes. They sparkle and shimmer with the blue shades reflecting the blue heaven. Heaven is separated from the earthly paradise, it radiates with its inner light. This transgression is also present among the world of nature. Plants, flowers, shrubs preserve their botanical qualities but in a stunted and diminished way. On the miniature mounds there are miniature buildings seen “from a bird’s eye view”.

The composition from the church of Cosmas and Damian was the archetype of visualization of the man on his way to heaven. It presented the pilgrimage of saints guided by the *auctoritas* of the Church, which was later imitated in various versions of the enriched form. The artist introduced new saint pilgrims and new saint guides. The aim remained the same: to reach the destination – the New Paradise and Heaven with God the Father. Dante’s Paradise is also somehow “*overcrowded*”.

A hundred years later new mosaics were created in the apse of Saint Agnes church in Rome, they dated back to 625. They show Saint Agnes in the very centre of the conch of the apse, standing between the Popes: Pope Honorius (625–628) and Pope Symmachus (498–514). The saint martyr from the time of Diocletian was one of the most cherished saints. Her name was compared to the personification of chastity *agnes* – Greek *hagnes* – chaste, Latin. *agnus* – lamb. She was shown as a young beautiful Roman girl with regular facial features of a delicate girl and with slender hands. Her beauty was described by Prudentius in his hymn to the saint³⁶.

She is wearing elegant ceremonial clothes *loros* made of an expensive fabric in gold and purple and decorated with precious stones. The clothing refers to the outfit of the Byzantine court *basilissy*. It is not typical clothing but an attire. The attire was put on her body thus dematerializing it, changing the physical

36 The oldest descriptions of martyrdom are the texts of Saint Ambrose, *De virginibus* from years 375–377. The author indicates the beauty of the face of the saint martyr. In the developed poetic verses he praised the beauty of Saint Agnes. Aureliusz Prudencjusz Klemens, *Wieńce męczeńskie*, transl. M. Brożek, Kraków 2006).

matter into a transformed spiritual body³⁷. In the early Christian and Medieval writing and poetics saints were compared to *the living Stones chosen by God* like the body of Christ. Origen, similarly to Clemens, on the basis of Saint Peter's letter (1 Pt 2, 4–5) compared Christ's body and saints to the precious stones of Holy Jerusalem³⁸.

The figures were situated on the edge of the narrow strip – the green meadow, as if on the other bank from the point of view of the viewer. The standing figures include: Pope Honorius with a model of the temple, Saint Agnes and Pope Symmachus with a book³⁹. Honorius as a person living in the time of creating the mosaic was presented without the nimbus. The head of Saint Agnes and her face are lighted up with blushes, her cheeks reflect the heavenly glow of paradise. Heaven as God's Tent visualises God's Hand with a heavenly wreath for Saint Agnes. Heaven is God's tent according to the words of Prophet Isaiah: "He stretches out the heavens like a veil, spreads them out like a tent to dwell in". (Is 40, 22)

Despite the fact that the figure of Saint Agnes was located in the centre, she is meant to be on her way to Heaven as it is shown in the direction of her feet. The Saint is the guide for the Popes.

Saint Agnes was also shown in other Roman churches e.g. in the apse of Saint Mark's church where she is located next to Saint Agapit, her face emphatically emphasises the changed, heavenly corporeality. The fleshly schematism indicates spiritual transformation. The face of Saint Agnes from Sancta Sanctorum from 12th century, which is shown at the vault next to the face of Christ with Saint Nicolas, Stephen and Lawrence, has a similar meaning. The community of saints with God as well as the implication of the place are the visualisation of the meaning of heaven. The examples include the mosaics in such churches as: Santa Maria in Domnica (818), Saint Praxedes (1st quarter of 9th century), Saint Cecilia (the last quarter of 9th century), created in the times of Pope Paschalis I. The Church as the physical space becomes the miniature of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Holy City with the existing community of saints with the living – it

37 M. G. Houston, *Ancient Greek, Roman and Byzantine costume and decoration*, London 1977, p. 145. The author compares the garments of St. Agnes for priestly robes.

38 U. M. Mazurczak, *Cielesność człowieka...*, op. cit., pp. 141–191.

39 Walter Oakeshott recognizes Symmachus (W. Oakeshott, *Die Mosaiken von Rom...*, op. cit., p. 159), and Serena Romano and Maria Andaloro refer to the figure as an unknown pope (S. Romano, M. Andaloro, *Romisches Mittelalter...*, op. cit., p. 23). Portraits of popes are an important and developed problem in the study of medieval art in their historical aspects. At this point, we do not undertake a synthetic analysis of papal images and portraits in the mentioned mosaics. The classic dissertation is a study: G. B. Ladner, *I ritratti dei papi nell'antichità e nel medioevo*, vol. 1: *Dalle origini fino alla fine della lotta per le investiture*, Città del Vaticano 1941.

is shown in the mosaic in the apse of the church Santa Maria in Dominica. The community of saints consists of countless amount of angels who are surrounding the throne of Mary with the Child. In the first row we can recognise the figures, while the crowd of angels is marked with scraps of blue nimbuses as spiritual creatures. On the footstool of Mary's throne there is Pope Paschalis I in a white alba, with a golden chasuble with a square nimbus around his head, who is kneeling. This is the way of marking his contemporary life in the time of creating the mosaic. The liturgical clothing is the reason for his presence in the apse of the place of the Eucharist⁴⁰. The touch of Mary's foot reminds of the tradition of the imperial visualisations of the emperor on horse and the emperor's foot which could have been touched by a subject. In the content of the composition in front of Mary's throne this gesture is the expression of humility⁴¹.

Paradise is a green meadow covered with white and red flowers which symbolise virtues: love and chastity. At the chancel arch there is again the composition of the meadow with white lilies over which Christ is shown with a golden medallion. Over the meadow there are apostles in a formed procession heading towards Christ led by angels. They too have the roles of the guides. White and red flowers as the symbols of virtues reflect human tendencies and human struggling on their way to holiness, while white lilies meant the divinity, the state of holiness. The composition of the apse and the chancel arch visualise the hierarchy of the figures and places. The paradise has terraces highlighted by flowers while heaven is highlighted with blue and gold colours as the God's light. In Canto XXIII of Dante's Paradise

There is the Rose in which the Word Divine Became incarnate; there the lilies are By whose perfume the good way was discovered (Paradise, Canto XXIII, 71–75).

The founder of the basilicas and the initiator of the heavenly visions in the apses Pope Paschalis I recorded the program of the decorations in the church of Saint Cecilia (the martyr from year 230) the one that he particularly cherished and worshipped. The composition of the apse is a continuation of the tradition of basilicas founded by this Pope which does not mean that they were copies⁴². Pope Martin V (1281–1285) gave special validity to this basilica. He employed

40 W. Oakeshott, *Die Mosaiken von Rom...*, op. cit., p. 215.

41 S. Romano, M. Andaloro, *Romisches Mittelalter...*, op. cit., p. 140.

42 The apse, destroyed by the flood, was restored according to its original composition: B. Meli, *La Basilica di S. Cecilia in Trastevere ed i suoi ulteriori ritrovamenti*, [in:] *Roma anno 1300...*, op. cit., pp. 17–22.

masters Arnolph do Cambia and Pietro Cavallini to modernize the interior and, at the same time, to preserve its original character⁴³. The hierarchical arrangement of steps resembling terraces of Paradise and Heaven is adequate to the hierarchical arrangement of retinue of saints heading towards Christ. The Saviour was presented on the clouds, dressed in a gold tunic. On the right Saint Paul is the guide for Saint Agatha and for Pope Paschalis, while on the left Saint Peter is leading the holy spouses Valerian and Cecilia. In the place of Christ's revelation, the heavenly meadow gives place to the clouds. Symmetrically below there is a heavenly hill with four rivers which are the destination for a number of sheep which symbolise the faithful.

There is a gradual minimization of the sensual bodies of the figures presented in the apses, they become more and more mystical and disembodied. The function of the sensual body is replaced by flowing robes. In comparison to the figures from 5th–7th centuries, the previous post-antique sensuality is replaced by the colours: white, gold, purple and blue, which imply the spiritual meaning of the beauty of figures brought to the steps of paradise⁴⁴.

In 9th century Popes: Paschalis I (817–824), Gregory IV (827–844) and Sergius II (844–847) founded churches in order to maintain the cult of the holy relics which was present in Rome since the Constantine times. New basilicas built in the early Christian style, maintained the mosaic decorations of the apses and of the whole insides. Despite certain stylistic and composition changes, the main ideas of visualization of the faith in the eternal life and Paradise-Heaven were preserved. These visualizations legitimized the historic continuity of the Church which managed to establish Her authority of Saint Peter's successor *cathedra Petri* also through visualization of the essential dogma. What is more, the language of the message of the relationship between the Bible and the liturgy was also preserved. We can notice new tendencies in visualizing paradise-heaven which was influenced by the visualizations created between 4th and 9th centuries.

The history of visualization of the theme of Paradise- Heaven has not been clearly defined in the Bible. On the other hand, the interests and inspirations of artists and of founders strongly influenced the difficulty with this visualization. The history of visualization created between 4th and 6th centuries or rather of experimenting in seeking the way "to" paradise and "to" heaven where God

43 M. Pignatti Morano, P. Refice, *Documenti per la storia dei restauri della basilica di S. Cecilia in Trastevere dal Rinascimento agli interventi di Federico Hermann*, [in:] *Roma anno 1300...*, op. cit., pp. 331–340.

44 U.M. Mazurczak, *Cielesność człowieka...*, op. cit., pp. 148–154.

lives. At the same time it was not fantasy. It was drawn from the Christian tradition of the visualization of God which focused on the visualization of Christ in Parousia and Virgin Mary Theotokos. The mosaic art developed its decorativeness predilections of using the wall e.g. the space between the windows as decorative space, the space was filled up with plants, flowers, trees and birds. They did not clearly semantically refer to the official message of the apses, they increased the aesthetic impressions of the whole of the inside as the substitute of paradise and heaven.

The apse and the chancel arch were of primary importance. The original apse construction of steps with the terraces of green and blue strips, with the emerald waters, with the rivers, was enriched with details referring to the cities of Bethlem and Jerusalem, and was confirmed by inscriptions. Since 9th century the visions of the cities were presented from the bird's-eye-view. The roof tile arranged precisely and reflecting the light, gold, cinnabar and purple pigments, dematerialize the reality of the houses indicating the symbolic meaning of the cities of Alpha and Omega of the history in the eschatological perspective.

In the main apse of the church of Saint Praxedes and Pudentiana, the composition of the apse of Cosmas and Damian is repeated, however, the visions of Paradise and Heaven and of the eternal life were strongly developed which is also presented at the chancel arch (despite the Baroque reconstruction). Christ in the gold robe is raised to the clouds. He is raising His right hand as a gesture of the sovereign's greeting, according to pattern of the Ancient emperors. In His left hand He is holding a convoluted scroll of writing confirming His Parousia.

On the right Saint Paul is leading Saint Praxedes to Christ, while on the left Saint Peter is leading her sister Pudentiana. Pope Paschalis I in the liturgical robe and a square nimbus is raising a model of the renovated church. Behind him there is a Fenix on a bench of a palm tree. Both the bird and the tree introduce the symbols of rebirth to the eternal life.

The place for Christ was clearly separated with a band of clouds which is much wider than in the previous original works. The clouds in the blue sky reserve a place for Christ. Above the Saviour's head appears God's Hand with a gold wreath. It designates a sphere unavailable for saints. Attention is drawn by the river at Christ's feet with an inscription *Jordan*. Topographic concretization is necessary in order to understand the baptism as a historical event in Christ's life, however, this scene presents the sacrament of baptism in the Christian faith. The Saviour was shown in the clouds as He passed the river bank and He is already on the other side. This determines the results of the sacrament of Baptism and not only the event described in the Gospels. Along the river bank

the saints are walking with their guides in the rhythm of a procession. River Jordan is situated above the hill of Paradise and the four rivers of paradise flow out of it. The artist expanded the structure: of the earthly Paradise, of the Paradise promised by the Christ's Parousia and of Heaven as the place of God. The terraces of the earth, water, clouds, blue sky are separated in space but they are all connected by the figures of saints. At the chancel arch at the gates of Bethlem and Jerusalem there are figures of the Apocalyptic Old Men which are heading towards the altar of the Lamb which is surrounded by four Apocalyptic creatures. The Hetoimasia throne is God's throne:

A throne was there in heaven, and on the throne sat one whose appearance sparkled like jasper and carnelian. Around the throne was a halo as brilliant as an emerald. (Rev. 4, 1–3)

Heaven is crowded with the saved dressed in white robes and presenting their wreaths of martyrdom. The community of heaven *communitas* consisting of a multitude of angels and saints "from every nation, from all tribes", presented in the highest part of the apse, constitutes the visions of Empyrean. The saved are spiritual creatures therefore they have no individual features of appearance.

Paradise — Heaven. The saved residents

In the church mentioned above the memory of the cult of a multitude of saints: the sisters of the church of Saint Praxedes and Pudentiana, Saint Zeno, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Agnes, Saint Valentin, was maintained. The saints, in contrast to the Apocalyptic figures, have their own specific earthly facial features. In the chapel of Saint Zeno, which was built as a grave of the mother of Pope Paschalis I, her portrait with the square nimbus is preserved, it is situated between the images of Virgin Mary the Mother of God, Praxedes and Pudentiana. The name of the chapel is Hortus Paradisus — the paradise garden. It refers to the first garden created by God. It was visualized as little meadow beds with white and red flowers. They are the space for the saints: Peter, Paul, Agnes, Praxedes and Pudentiana. They are raised above the heavenly meadow, and they are located on the golden plain which imitates the eternal light. The saints are dressed in their gold tunics and tiaras studded with gems. The heavenly meadows resemble terraces which are raised towards the luminous Empyrean.

Christ is presented in the central part of the vault, He is wearing a mandorla carried by four angels. At the chancel arch Peter and Paul indicate God's throne, according to the words of the psalm: "Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight" (Ps 43, 4). The mandorla with Christ's bust on top of the golden vault with its shine of gold is in contrast with the dark blue of the "night". It is not the artistic quintessence of colours but an image of the cosmic projection.

The medallion with the figure of Christ was known ever since from the earliest Eastern tradition of visualizing the Saviour both in miniature painting and in monumental painting⁴⁵. The images of emperors in clypeuses were widely spread on coins and medals in the whole Roman empire. A clypeus with the bust of Christ at the vault in the chapel of Saint Zeno in Basilica of Saint Praxedes from year 820 is the quintessence of visualization of such images of the Saviour in the Roman tradition. A number of medallions with the images of the apostles and of popes were put on the main nave of Basilica of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, known to Dante but no longer existing now. In Canto XXIII of Paradise the poet develops metaphors which reflect the dynamically changing images the shapes of which are beaming with lights. The rush of stars, the movement, the storms, blur the contours of objects, the swarms of colours of flowers. In the sun storm Beatrice:

As in the sunshine, that unsullied streams (Canto XXIII, 80).

Illumined from above with burning rays, Beholding not the source of the effulgence. O power benignant that dost so imprint them! Thou didst exalt thyself to give more scope There to mine eyes, that were not strong enough (Paradise, Canto XXIII, 83–87).

The shine of gold and sapphires on Christ's medallion indicate the highest craftsmanship of the image of Saviour in a golden tunic and coat with the rolled up scroll awaiting the Apocalypse. Angels are spiritual creatures, their essence is expressed in transparency of the colours: white, gold, blue. Their gestures of raising clypeuses are only the touch of the circle. They only delicately touch the bright mandorla with the tops of their fingertips instead of raising it with their hands.

45 H. Belting, *Obraz i kult. Historia obrazu przed epoką sztuki*, transl. T. Zatorski, Gdańsk 2010, pp. 178–179.

Heaven—the Luminous Cross

One of the earliest images of Christ in clypeus in the spot of crossed beams of the cross in the monumental painting is the composition of the apse of the church of Saint Apollinaire in Classe in Ravenna consecrated in 549⁴⁶. Christ's face is reflected in the inscription IXOYC (the Greek for *the fish*) and it is an abbreviation of the name Jesus Christ the Son of God the Saviour, in the bottom part *Salus Mundi* the Saviour of the World, on the sides the letters *Alpha* and *Omega*. The apse of the port church in Ravenna summarises the experiences and searches in the artistic visualization of Paradise and Heaven, of saints, of the saved, of prophets. In the apse with the dominating monumental circle with the inscribed bright cross there are also such scenes as: the symbolic vision of Christ's transfiguration on Mount Tabor and Saint Apollinaire as an orans praying for his church. On top of the apse there is an image of heaven with *Manus Dei*.

The mosaic is the result of tedious thoughts, of the novelty and of maintaining the tradition which was transmitted by Rome in 4th and 5th centuries. What did Ravenna mean to our poet? He started to live here in 1318 and he died here⁴⁷. Apollinaire the saint bishop of Ravenna as an orans was the guide for the faithful shown as the symbolic sheep. He indicates heaven as the destination of the Christian life, this heaven was developed and presented in the scenes of paintings in the apses of Roman basilicas. The earthly and the heavenly paradise are painted at the base of the conch, the cross is located in the centre of the conch with the background of the sky full of stars. It is not an unambiguously still centre. It is Christ's Face on the crossed beams of the bright cross which is still. Around Him there is the whole composition of the apse which is a dynamic vision of the earthly paradise, of heavenly paradise and of heaven. In its semi-circular and circular colourful circles it reflects the illusion of the universe set in the eternal harmonious motion. These swirling circles like the inner diagrams indicate the order for the figures and scenes, the order pulsating with light and bright colours.

The central circle of the dark sapphire tones imitate the night starry sky bringing out the cosmic power of celestial bodies. The circle of the sky embraces the cross which shimmers with gems. The heavenly circle is parting the clouds presenting the majesty of the cross. The flickering lights and colours of

46 E. Jastrzębowska, *Sztuka wczesnochrześcijańska*, Kraków 2008, pp. 205–207.

47 M. Maślanka-Soro, *Posłowie*, [in:] Dante Alighieri, *Boska komedia...*, op. cit., p. 469.

tesserae: gold, blue, white, in various shades were dominated by Christ's face on the cross.

The iconography of the whole apse, which has been analysed in multiple monographs, indicates a relationship of the events described in the Gospel with the eschatology of the cross and Apocalypse⁴⁸. Saint Apollinaire in his liturgical garment shown as an orans confirms the timeliness of the Liturgy which, as real, is being constantly performed at the altar, at the same time the mosaic visualizes the liturgy of eternity. The Biblical history (creating Heaven and earth) is intertwined with the history of the Gospel, with hagiography and finally with the history of the Church⁴⁹.

The cross in the centre of the starry sky in the centre of the apse was widespread in the East in 6th century almost at the same time as the apse San Apollinaire in Classe. There are also the apses in the churches from the Ancient Syro-Mesopotamia⁵⁰. The beginnings refer to the form *Labarum Christi*. The images of Christ inscribed into a circle as the monogram of Christ were spread on the Roman Christian sarcophagi with such a motif, the oldest of these dates back to year 340⁵¹.

The crosses in the apses of churches have eschatological meaning in which the visions of the earthly paradise, the paradise after Parousia and Heaven, the See of God complete one another. One of the most important examples is the chapel within the southern part of the walls of the monastery in Sinai which dates back to the 6th century. There was a cross studded with artificial pearls against the background of the heavenly sky. What is more, in the niche of the western chapel in Sinai there was a cross with the background of gold mosaics with peacocks on each side⁵². Bright crosses with the whole context of blue or gold background are called eschatological crosses. Therefore the mosaic from Santa Pudentiana, which should definitely be mentioned, was the oldest among the remaining examples of open Heaven illuminated by the luminous cross. This group will also contain other apses in Italy e.g. in the basilica of Saint Apostles in Nola from year 400, San Eusebio in Vercelli from the first half of 6th century⁵³.

48 A. Michael, *Das Apsismosaik von S. Apollinare in Classe: seine Deutung im Kontext der Liturgie*, Münster 2004 (*Europäische Hochschulschriften*, 23: *Theologie*, 799).

49 A. Michael, *Das Apsismosaik von S. Apollinare in Classe...*, op. cit., pp. 78–83.

50 A. Michael, *Das Apsismosaik von S. Apollinare in Classe...*, op. cit., p. 75.

51 A. Michael, *Das Apsismosaik von S. Apollinare in Classe...*, op. cit., p. 75.

52 A. Michael, *Das Apsismosaik von S. Apollinare in Classe...*, op. cit., p. 75.

53 A. Michael, *Das Apsismosaik von S. Apollinare in Classe...*, op. cit., p. 75.

The apse in San Stefano Rotondo in Rome from year 650 is the direct analogy to the apse of San Apollinaire in Classe⁵⁴. The difference is essential as far as the spot of the clypeus with the image of Christ's Face is situated. It is attached to the top of the cross *Crux gemmata* and it fulfils the whole height of the apse over which there is the Face of the Saviour. The medallion with Christ's Face is slightly below the firmament with God's Hand. On both sides of the cross there are saint martyrs from the time of Diocletian – Saint Primus and Saint Felicianus. They are standing on the enigmatic edges of the line of the ground⁵⁵. M. Bunim explains this change – it is the result of the formal efforts to eliminate the sensual illusion of three-dimensional sphere which were most popular in the miniature Benedictine painting of the end of 10th and the beginning of 11th century. The apse in San Stefano Rotondo is the continuation of presenting spiritual reality of the image.

New compositional solutions which are particularly important in visualising the idea of Paradise–Heaven as the destination of the Christian life. The compositions of apses in Rome were rooted in the word of the Bible. The language of the Bible created mosaic images of the period in question but the tradition of the literary language, of fine arts depicting the material culture of the pagan Rome, were still present. They were carefully assimilated by the ecclesial scholars both of the Greek and Latin religious cultures and languages. Life after death, salvation, paradise, eternal happiness, locating in Paradise and in Heaven required new transcription of the image which is to convey the truth of the word of the Bible with new means of communication. It was no longer about the individually selected things – symbols. It was necessary to present reality, the spiritual, transcendental, intangible vision of paradise and heaven the home of God with visual means and not with the voice or with the word. The vision of Paradise–Heaven constituted visualization of life and not death.

Therefore, the presented images in the church apses in which liturgy is the abbreviation of the eternal life, were no longer fossilized images but the scene of the new life and new earth restored and renewed by Christ. The dynamics of this spiritual life was best visualised by the mosaic tesserae which by the very essence of its technique imitated luminosity and colourful twinkle over which there is the cosmic order and harmony. They must have fascinated Dante. At the very beginning of raising from the purgatory mountain of Paradise (Paradise, Canto I, 1–10). Beatrice explains Dante the mystery of the cosmic harmony:

54 P. Verdier, *La colonne de Colonia Aelia Capitolina et l'imagem clipeata du Christ Helios*, „Cahiers Archéologiques” 23 (1974), pp. 17–39.

55 P. Verdier, *La colonne de Colonia...*, op. cit., p. 35.

in circularity there is a unity of colours, of light, of sound. The order in the universe is restored by harmony and therefore it made the world beautiful and eternal⁵⁶.

The mosaics presented faces enclosed in circles; the perfect forms of the circles are harmonious with nine round celestial spheres which are circulating round the immobile earth. The Ptolemaic system was widely known by Dante and by many other people in the early and late Middle Ages. However, the most important dogmatic obligation of the mosaic images is the meeting in Heaven and the Vision of the Son of man. The Biblical message of the Book of Daniel is full of fiery rays of sparks. "Thrones were set up and the Ancient One took his throne. His clothing was snow bright, and the hair on his head as white as wool; His throne was flames of fire, with wheels of burning fire" (Dan 7, 9). The Book of Wisdom contains the comparison of souls to the sparkles shining in the sky: "In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble" (Wis 3, 7).

The combination of two mystical circles with the human face is best depicted by the icon. At the end of his journey in Paradise Dante is brought to the end which is a Circle:

That circulation, which being thus conceived
Appeared in thee as a reflected light,
When somewhat contemplated by mine eyes,
Within itself, of its own very colour
Seemed to me painted with our effigy,
Wherefore my sight was all absorbed therein" (Paradise, Canto XXXIII 127–131).

Dante was fascinated with Florence, Padua, Venice, he knew Rome and other Italian cities perfectly well, but he was buried in Ravenna – the kingdom of mosaics. He had tender eyes, sensitivity of feelings, deep wisdom and constant craving for knowledge, he contemplated in awe the riches of the world's beauty and art's beauty, its diversity in paintings. He posed questions in uncertainty for their meaning, he asked open questions, sometimes very insistent, and he left the questions to his readers until the 21st century. Until the perfect man of the 21st century posed the question himself: after the tormenting seven centuries

56 Comments by M. Maślanka-Soro in: Dante Alighieri, *Boska komedia...*, op. cit., pp. 319–320, footnote 2.

without an answer: „Dante why do you toil so much?”⁵⁷. The poet responded to that in the final verses of the Paradise:

And not yet from my bosom was exhausted
The ardour of sacrifice, before I knew
This offering was accepted and auspicious;
For with so great a lustre and so red
Splendours appeared to me in twofold rays,
I said: “O Helios who dost so adorn them!”
Even as distinct with less and greater lights
Glimmers between the two poles of the world
The Galaxy that maketh wise men doubt,
Thus constellated in the depths of Mars,
Those rays described the venerable sign
That quadrants joining in a circle make.
Here doth my memory overcome my genius;
For on that cross as levin gleamed forth Christ (Paradise, Canto XIV 91).

Translated by Monika Gierak

57 The main sentence from the title in the Atlantic Codex was the question posed by Leonardo da Vinci himself: „O Leonardo, why do you toil so much?” (Codice Atlantico, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milano).

References

- Aureliusz Prudencjusz Klemens, *Wieńce męczeńskie*, transl. M. Brożek, Kraków 2006.
- Baxandall M., *Giotto e gli umanisti. Gli umanisti osservatori della pittura in Italia e la scoperta della composizione pittorica, 1350–1450*, Milano 1980.
- Belting H., *Obraz i kult. Historia obrazu przed epoką sztuki*, transl. T. Zatorski, Gdańsk 2010.
- Buchsel M., *Das Christusporträt am Scheideweg des Ikonoklastenstreits im 8. und 9. Jahrhundert*, „Stadel Jahrbuch” 11 (1990), pp. 7–52.
- Bunim M., *Space in medieval painting and the forerunners of perspective*, New York 1940.
- Casartelli Novelli S., *Le “due città” della creazione iconografica absidale in Roma (secoli IV–XII)*, [in:] *Il De civitate Dei. L’opera, le interpretazioni, l’influsso*, a cura di E. Cavalcanti, Roma 1996, pp. 641–662.
- D’Onofrio M., *Le committenze e il mecenatismo di Papa Niccolò III*, [in:] *Roma anno 1300. Atti della IV settimana di studi di storia dell’arte medievale dell’Università di Roma “La Sapienza” (19–24 maggio 1980)*, a cura di A.M. Romanini, Roma 1980, pp. 553–562.
- Dante Alighieri, *Boska komedia*, transl. E. Porębowicz, afterwords and footnotes M. Maślanka-Soro, Kraków 2004.
- Delumeau J., *Une histoire du paradis*, vol. 1: *Le jardin des délices*, Paris 1992.
- Fraschetti A., *Vom Kapitol zur Peterskirche. Aspekte der römischen Stadtlandschaft in der Spätantike*, [in:] S. Romano, M. Andaloro, *Romisches Mittelalter. Kunst und Kultur in Rom von der Spätantike bis Giotto*, Milano 2002, pp. 11–24.
- Frugoni Ch., *A distant city. Images of urban experience in the medieval world*, Princeton 2008.
- Guarducci M., *Gli avori erculei della cattedra di San Pietro. Elementi nuovi*, Roma 1977 (Atti della Accademia nazionale dei Lincei. Memorie. Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, 8, 21, 3).
- Holmes G., *Florence, Rome, and the origins of the Renaissance*, Oxford 1986.
- Houston M. G., *Ancient Greek, Roman and Byzantine costume and decoration*, London 1977.
- Ihm Ch., *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei vom vierten Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des achten Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden 1960.
- Imbach R., *Portrait des Dichters als Philosoph. Eine Betrachtung des philosophischen Denkens von Dante Alighieri*, Basel 2020 (Jacob Burckhardt-Gesprache auf Castelen, 37).
- Iogna-Prat D., *Ecclesia/Christianitas. Identité universelle et identité religieuse*, [in:] *Religiosità e civiltà. Identità delle forme religiose (secoli X–XIV). Atti del convegno internazionale, Brescia, 9–11 settembre 2009*, a cura di G. Andenna, Milano 2011, pp. 193–210.
- Jastrzębowska E., *Sztuka wczesnochrześcijańska*, Kraków 2008.
- Köhren-Jansen H., *Giotto’s Navicella. Bildtradition, Deutung, Rezeptionsgeschichte*, Worms am Rhein 1998 (*Römische Studien der Bibliotheca Hertziana*, 8).

- Ladner G. B., *I ritratti dei papi nell'antichità e nel medioevo*, vol. 1: *Dalle origini fino alla fine della lotta per le investiture*, Città del Vaticano 1941.
- La pittura medievale a Roma, 312–1431. Corpus*, a cura di M. Andaloro, S. Romano, Milano 2006, vol. 1: *L'orizzonte tardoantico e le nuove immagini*, 312–468, vol. 2: *Roma e Bisanzio*, 468–795, vol. 3: *Prima e dopo il mille, 795–1050*, vol. 4: *Riforma e tradizione, 1050–1198*, vol. 5: *Il Duecento e la cultura gotica, 1198–1280*, vol. 6: *Apogeo e fine del Medioevo, 1288–1431*.
- Maślanka-Soro M., *La dimensione poetica e la simbolica del giardino nella "Divina Commedia" di Dante*, [in:] *Imaginer le jardin*, collected by B. Sosień, Kraków 2003, pp. 69–70.
- Maślanka-Soro M., *Posłowie*, [in:] *Dante Alighieri, Boska komedia*, transl. E. Porębowicz, afterwords and footnotes M. Maślanka-Soro, Kraków 2004.
- Maślanka-Soro M., *Tragizm w „Komedii” Dantego*, Kraków 2005.
- Maślanka-Soro M., *Antyczna tradycja epicka u Dantego*, Kraków 2015.
- Matthiae G., *Mosaici medioevali delle chiese di Roma*, Roma 1967.
- Mazurczak U. M., *Das Sechstageswerk in der Ikonographie des Mittelalters. Forschungsstand und Forschungsperspektiven*, „Acta Mediaevalia” 8 (1995), pp. 117–135.
- Mazurczak U. M., *Cielesność człowieka w średniowiecznym malarstwie Italii*, t. 1, Lublin 2012.
- Mazurczak U. M., *Krajobraz idealny, krajobraz realny. Antropologia krajobrazu zdarzeń i przyrody malarstwa włoskiego końca XIII i I połowy wieku XIV*, [in:] *Miraże natury i architektury. Prace naukowe dedykowane profesorowi Tadeuszowi Bernatowiczowi*, ed. A. Barczyk, P. Gryglewski, Łódź 2021, pp. 373–409.
- Meli B., *La Basilica di S. Cecilia in Trastevere ed i suoi ulteriori ritrovamenti*, [in:] *Roma anno 1300. Atti della IV settimana di studi di storia dell'arte medievale dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza" (19–24 maggio 1980)*, a cura di A. M. Romanini, Roma 1980, pp. 17–22.
- Michael A., *Das Apsismosaik von S. Apollinare in Classe seine Deutung im Kontext der Liturgie*, Münster 2004 (*Europäische Hochschulschriften*, 23: *Theologie*, 799).
- Müller W., *Die Heilige Stadt. Roma quadrata, himmlisches Jerusalem und die Mythe vom Welt-nabel*, Stuttgart 1961, pp. 85–127.
- Norman D., *Siena, Florence and Padua. Art, society and religion 1280–1400*, vol. 2: *Case studies*, London 1995.
- Oakeshott W., *Die Mosaiken von Rom vom dritten bis zum vierzehnten Jahrhundert*, Leipzig 1967.
- Panofsky E., *Die Perspektive als „symbolische Form“*, [in:] E. Panofsky, *Aufsätze zu Grundfragen der Kunstwissenschaft*, hrsg. von H. Oberer, E. Verheyen, Berlin 1974, pp. 99–167.
- Piehler P., *The visionary landscape. A study in medieval allegory*, London 1971.
- Pignatti Morano M., Refice P., *Documenti per la storia dei restauri della basilica di S. Cecilia in Trastevere dal Rinascimento agli interventi di Federico Hermann*, [in:] *Roma anno 1300. Atti della IV settimana di studi di storia dell'arte medievale dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza" (19–24 maggio 1980)*, a cura di A. M. Romanini, Roma 1980, pp. 331–340.

- Poulet G., *Metamorfozy czasu. Szkice krytyczne*, selection by J. Błoński, Warszawa 1978.
- Rigo P., *Memoria classica e memoria biblica in Dante*, Firenze 1989 (*Saggi di "Lettere italiane"*, 48).
- Romano S., Andaloro M., *Romisches Mittelalter. Kunst und Kultur in Rom von der Spätantike bis Giotto*, Milano 2002.
- Renaudet Augustin, *Dante Humaniste*, Paris 1952.
- Schade H., *Das Paradies und die Imago Dei*, [in:] *Wandlungen des Paradiesischen und Utopischen. Studien zum Bild eines Ideals*, Hrsg. H. Bauer [et al.], Berlin 1966, pp. 80–189 (*Probleme der Kunstwissenschaft*, 2).
- Simi Varanelli E., *La riscoperta medievale della poetica di Aristotele e la sua suggestione sulle arti figurative tardoduecentesche*, [in:] *Roma anno 1300. Atti della IV settimana di studi di storia dell'arte medievale dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza" (19–24 maggio 1980)*, a cura di A. M. Romanini, Roma 1980, pp. 833–859.
- Strzelczyk J., *Rajskie początki i upadek człowieka w świadomości ludzi średniowiecza*, [in:] *W świecie średniowiecznych myśli i emocji. Wybór prac*, ed. J. Strzelczyk, Poznań 2012, pp. 119–136.
- Tichy R., *Mistyczna historia człowieka według Bernarda z Clairvaux*, Poznań 2019.
- Tartuferi A., Scalini M., *L'Arte a Firenze nell'Eta di Dante* Firenze 2004.
- Verdier Ph., *La colonne de Colonia Aelia Capitolina et l'imago clipeata du Christ Helios*, „Cahiers archéologiques” 23 (1974), pp. 17–39.