



Projet Erasmus+ Namur - Marsala

" Patrimonia "



A la découverte du patrimoine historique, architectural et culturel

« Quattro Cantí » in Palermo and « Bologni » Square



Chiara Casciano

Translated by Marie Larcin



ISISS « Abele Damiani » - Marsala

ABSTRACT



The "Quattro Canti", or "Octagon Of The Sun", or "Place Villena", is the name of an octagonal square located at the intersection of two main roads in Palermo: Via Maqueda and Via Vittorio Emanuele, which is Palermo's oldest street.

The "Quattro Canti" represent the center of Baroque Palermo.



Architecture

Ancient sources recall that the name "Octagon Of The Sun" was attributed to it because, during the day hours, one of the architectural facades is illuminated by the sun.

The "Quattro Canti" are the four decorative devices delimiting the space of the intersection.

The four elevations present an articulation on several levels, with a decoration based on the use of architectonic orders and figurative insertions which, from below upwards, succeed one another according to a principle of ascension from the world of nature to that of the sky.

The four floors of the facade are thus decorated: on the lower floor, fountains representing the four rivers of the ancient city: Papireto, Kemonia, Oreto and Pannaria, above which are statues allegorically representing the four seasons: Eolo (winter), Venere (spring), Cerere (summer) and Bacco (autumn).

On the central floor are the statues of the rulers: Carlo V, Filippo II, Filippo III, Filippo XV, and finally, on the upper floor, the four Holy Protectors of Palermo: S. Agata, S. Ninfa, S. Oliva and S. Cristina.



Story

Viceroy Don Juan Fernandez Pacheco De Villena and Ascalon, hired in 1606 by the city government, had this square built and entrusted to the Florentine architect Giulio Lasso the urban layout of the square, to which he worked for many years. In 1609, the structural part of two frontals, later called St. Ninfa and St. Agata, was already finished. In 1612, the frontal of Santa Cristina was complete.

The project is inspired by the crossroads of the four fountains of Rome.



« Bologni » Square



Another very important square near Via Vittorio Emanuele is Piazza Bologni. This perfectly rectangular square was built in 1566 and was originally named after Viceroy Carlo D'Aragona Tagliavia, who was later replaced by Largo Dei Bologna and derives from the presence of the Palazzo Alliata Di Villafranca, property of Luigi Bologna Baron de Campofranco.

In the center of the square, you can find the bronze statue of Carlo V D'Asburgo, to which the square serves as a stage. The statue is the work of Scipione Li Volsi and initially was to be placed in the center of "Quattro Canti", but it was then decided to change its destination. It was placed here in 1631.