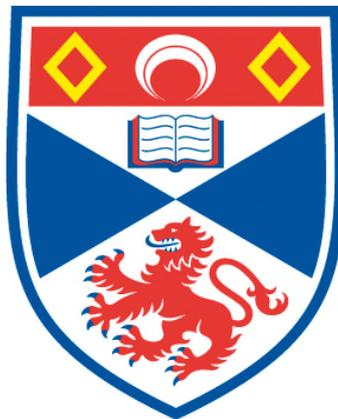


**THE LOST VENETIAN CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA ASSUNTA DEI CROCIFERI:
FORM, DECORATION, AND PATRONAGE**

Allison Morgan Sherman

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



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Form, Decoration, and Patronage.**

Allison Morgan Sherman
Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
School of Art History
University of St Andrews

1 April 2010

Declaration

1. Candidate's declarations:

I, Allison Morgan Sherman hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 79,990 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September 2006 and as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in September 2006; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2006 and 2010.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDEGMENTS.....	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTES OF GUIDANCE.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
ABSTRACT.....	xviii
<u>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</u>	1
1.1. Crociferi: Neglect, Clarification, and Reconstruction.....	1
1.2. Archival Badlands.....	3
1.3. Sources: Early History.....	8
1.4. Sources: The Venetian Crociferi.....	9
1.5. Sources: The form and decoration of the church.....	10
<u>CHAPTER II: HISTORY OF THE ORDER</u>	12
2.1. Crociferi: History.....	12
2.2. Foundation, Development and Dispersion.....	13
2.3. Crosecchieri di Venezia.....	16
2.4. Suppression.....	24
<u>CHAPTER III: THE CHURCH</u>	29
3.1. The Crociferi Church.....	29
3.2. Architectural Form: Exterior.....	32
3.3. Interior: 1581 and 1656.....	36
<u>CHAPTER IV: MONASTIC PATRONAGE. FIRST PHASE (1500-1565)</u>	42
4.1. Monastic Patronage, 1500-1565.....	42
4.2. The Crociferi and Music.....	42
4.3. The Crociferi, Preaching and Plays.....	45
4.4. Proactive Priors.....	47
4.5. Coordinated Decoration in Venetian Churches.....	50
4.6. Hieronimo Confalonieri and Giuliano Cirno.....	54
4.7. Tintoretto's <u>Assumption</u> and the Chancel Decoration.....	59
4.8. The Commission and Dating.....	64
4.9. Dating: Competition and Style.....	67
4.10. Patronage of the Altarpiece.....	75
4.11. Toward a Marian Programme: <i>Laterali</i>	85
4.12. Meaning and Experience.....	90
4.13. Unconventional Iconographies?.....	96
4.14. Tintoretto's <u>Wedding at Cana</u>	111
4.15. Summary.....	126

<u>CHAPTER V: MONASTIC PATRONAGE. SECOND PHASE (1580-1620)</u>	128
5.1. Rebirth and Reconstruction	128
5.2. The Impetus for the Second Phase	130
5.3. Priamo Balbi	134
5.4. The Second Generation	136
5.5. Palma il Giovane	140
5.6. Chronology and Commemoration	143
5.7. The Sacristy	148
5.8. The Organ	151
5.9. The Choir	154
5.10. Side Altars	158
5.11. The Eucharist, Martyrdoms and Mary: A Post-Tridentine Decorative Programme	161
5.12. The Eucharist	164
5.13. Summary	169
<u>CHAPTER VI: CORPORATE PATRONAGE</u>	171
6.1. Corporate Patronage	171
6.2. <i>Setaioli</i>	173
6.3. <i>Scuola di San Cristoforo, Passamaneri, Specchieri</i>	181
6.4. <i>Sartori</i>	183
6.5. <i>Varoteri</i>	188
6.6. <i>Botteri</i>	194
6.7. <i>Scuola della Beata Vergine della Concezione</i>	196
6.8. <i>Stampatori, Librai</i>	198
<u>CHAPTER VII: PRIVATE PATRONAGE</u>	201
7.1. Private Patronage	201
7.2. Alvise Dardani and Ludovico Usper	201
7.3. The Zen	207
7.4. The Da Lezze	214
7.5. Lorenzo Massolo and Elisabetta Querini	219
7.6. Patriarch Giovanni Tiepolo	231
<u>CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION</u>	237
Appendix I: Index of documents preserved in the Archivio Storico del Patriarcato di Venezia, Capitolo di San Marco, Pergamene, B. 7	244
Appendix II: Transcription of the 1581 Apostolic Visit for Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi	249
Appendix III: Transcription of the 1656 Inventory of Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi	255
Appendix IV: Extracts from the <i>Libro di spese</i> of Priamo Balbi pertaining to the construction of the Crociferi library	260

Appendix V: Biographies of Distinguished Crociferi.....	261
Appendix VI: Extracts from the diaries of M. Sanudo, Preaching and Theatrical Performances at the Crociferi monastery	267
Appendix VII: Extracts from the inventory of the <i>palazzo</i> of Ludovico Usper	269
Appendix VIII: Inscriptions from monuments in the Crociferi church.....	270
Appendix IX: Transcription of the agreement between the Crociferi and the guild of the <i>stampadori e librai</i> , 1555	272
Appendix X: Extracts from the Crociferi 1564 <i>condizione</i>	273
BIBLIOGRAPHY	277

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Abbreviations and Notes of Guidance

- Unless otherwise stated, all dates connected to archival material are given in the *more veneto*.

Libraries and Archives

ASP	Archivio Storico del Patriarcato di Venezia
AST	Archivio di Stato di Treviso
ASV	Archivio di Stato di Venezia
ASVat	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
BCT	Biblioteca Comunale di Treviso
BMC	Biblioteca del Museo Correr
BNM	Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana

Archival References

Archivio Segreto Vaticano

ANV	Archivio della Nunziatura di Venezia
CVR	Congregazione Vescovi e Regolari
CSR	Congregazione Stato dei Regolari, Relationes
FV II, CV	Fondo Veneto II, Chiese Varie
MA	Miscellanea Armadio
SS	Segretaria di Stato, Venezia
VA	Visita Apostolica

Archivio Storico del Patriarcato

CSM	Capitolo di San Marco, pergamene
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Archivio di Stato di Treviso

CRS, SMR	Corporazioni religiose soppresse, San Martino e Rosa
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Archivio di Stato di Venezia

AP	Notarile, Atti Piccini
Barbaro	M. Barbaro, <i>Arbori de' Patritii Veneti</i>
CRS	Corporazioni religiose soppresse
DelibR	Senato, Deliberazioni Roma Ordinaria
DispR	Senato, Dispacci Roma

GdP	Giudici del Petizion
NT	Notarile, Testamenti
PdC	Provveditori di Comun
PsM	Provveditori sopra Monasteri
PSMcitra	Procuratori di San Marco de citra
PSMsupra	Procuratori di San Marco de supra
SDC	Sopraintendenti alle Decime del Clero
SDR	Dieci Savi sopra le Decime in Rialto
SPS, BVC	Scuole piccole e suffragi, Beata Vergine della Concezione
ZC	Procuratori di San Marco de citra, Commissarie [Zen Commissaria], B. 234/5.

Journal Titles

AV:	<i>Arte Veneta</i>
ATV:	<i>Ateneo Veneto</i>
BM:	<i>Burlington Magazine</i>
DBI:	<i>Dizionario biografico degli Italiani</i>
JWCI:	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
SV:	<i>Studi Veneziani</i>
VC:	<i>Venezia Cinquecento</i>
ZfK:	<i>Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte</i>

List of Figures [not available in electronic copy]

- Fig. 1. Domenico Rossi, Santa Maria Assunta dei Gesuiti, 1711-1735.
- Fig. 2. Jacopo de'Barbari, *Bird's-Eye-View of Venice, with detail of Crociferi church*, c.1500, woodcut, Museo Correr.
- Fig. 3. Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, *Detail of Crociferi church from Bird's-Eye-View Plan of Venice*, c. 1535, woodcut,
- Fig. 4. Matteo Pagan, *Detail of Crociferi church from Bird's-Eye-View of Venice*, 1559, woodcut.
- Fig. 5. Giovanni Merlo, *Detail of Crociferi church from Bird's-Eye-View of Venice*, engraving, 1660 .
- Fig. 6. Plan of the Crociferi Church with proposal for the addition of two right lateral chapels in 1667, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Hd-4d, 141.
- Fig. 7. Plan of the Crociferi church and monastery (first floor) after 1657, before 1667 renovations, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Hd-4a, 250.
- Fig. 8. Palma il Giovane, *Pope Cleto Institutes the Crociferi Order*, Crociferi Oratory, c.1590.
- Fig. 9. Palma il Giovane, *Detail of Pope Cleto Instituting the Crociferi Order*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, c. 1620.
- Fig. 10. Palma il Giovane, *Helen and Ciriacus Discover the True Cross*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, c. 1620.
- Fig. 11. Palma il Giovane, *Detail of Ciriacus Reconfirming the Crociferi*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, c. 1620.
- Fig. 12. Palma il Giovane, *Detail of Pope Alexander III Confirms the Rule of the Crociferi*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, c. 1620
- Fig. 13. Jacopo de'Barbari, *Detail of the Crociferi Church from Bird's-Eye-View of Venice*, c. 1500.
- Fig. 14. Palma il Giovane, *Detail of Pope Pius II Assigns the Crociferi their Reformed Habit*, Sacristy, Gesuti, c. 1620.

- Fig. 15. Odoardo Fialetti, *Crocigeri* from De gli Habiti delle Religioni con le Armi, e breve Description loro (Venice: Marco Sadeler, 1626).
- Fig. 16. Palma il Giovane, *Detail from Paul IV Issues a Breve to Venetian Ambassador*, Crociferi Oratory, c.1590.
- Fig. 17. Canaletto, *Campo dei Gesuiti*, 1730-1735.
- Fig. 18. Jacopo de'Barbari, *Detail of the Crociferi Church from Bird's Eye View of Venice*, woodcut. c. 1500.
- Fig. 19. Palma il Giovane, *Detail of Votive Painting of Doge Pasquale Cicogna*, Sala dei Pregadi, Palazzo Ducale, c. 1595.
- Fig. 20. Domenico Lovisa, *View of the Campo dei Gesuiti*, engraving, 1717, Museo Correr.
- Fig. 21. Palma il Giovane, *Doge Pasquale Cicogna Visits the Crociferi Monastery on the Feast of the Assumption*, Crociferi Oratory, 1585-1588.
- Fig. 22. Overlay of Crociferi and Gesuiti groundplans by Stefano Bortolussi and Antonio Mazzeri, from I Gesuiti a Venezia, 1994, 824.
- Fig. 23. Reconstruction of the Church Interior 1581
- Fig. 24. Reconstruction of the Church Interior 1656
- Fig. 25. School of Carpaccio, *Vision of Prior Ottobon in Sant'Antonio di Castello*, Accademia, Venice, c. 1515.
- Fig. 26. Cima da Conegliano, *Detail from Annunciation*, Hermitage, St. Petersburg, 1495.
- Fig. 27. Cima da Conegliano, *St. Lanfranc Enthroned with St. John the Baptist and St. Liberius (Varoteri altarpiece)*, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, c.1515-1516.
- Fig. 28. Marco Basaiti, *Lamentation*, Hermitage, St. Petersburg, 1527.
- Fig. 29. Giovanni Bellini, *Lamentation*, Accademia, Venice, c. 1510.
- Fig. 30. Tintoretto, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1553-1555.
- Fig. 31. Tintoretto, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, Accademia, Venice, c.1555-1556.

- Fig. 32. Palma il Giovane, *Preparatory drawing for Doge Pasquale Cicogna Receives Word of his Election at the High Altar of the Crociferi Church*, pen and ink, brown wash on blue paper (274x155cm), Private Collection, Shropshire, c. 1585-1588.
- Fig. 33. Palma il Giovane, *Pasquale Cicogna Receives Word of his Election as Doge at the High Altar of the Crociferi Church*, Crociferi Oratory, c. 1585-1588.
- Fig. 34. Alessandro Vittoria, *Zane Altar (flanking saints in stucco)*, Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice, c. 1566.
- Fig. 35. Reconstruction of the Tintoretto Decoration in the Presbytery
- Fig. 36. Tintoretto, *Details of cherubim and liturgical still-life in the Assumption of the Virgin*, Gesuiti, Venice.
- Fig. 37. Tintoretto, *Wedding at Cana*, Santa Maria della Salute, Venice, 1561.
- Fig. 38. Tintoretto, *Presentation of the Virgin*, Madonna dell'Orto, Venice, c. 1554-1556.
- Fig. 39. Tintoretto, *Martyrdom of St. Ursula and the Ten Thousand Virgins*, San Lazzaro dei Mendicanti (formerly the Incurabili), 1554-1555.
- Fig. 40. Tintoretto, *The Apparition of the Cross to St. Peter*, Madonna dell'Orto, Venice, 1555.
- Fig. 41. Tintoretto, *Bamberg Assumption of the Virgin*, Bamberg Cathedral, c. 1553-1556.
- Fig. 42. Paolo Veronese, *Giustiniani Altarpiece*, San Francesco della Vigna, Venice, 1551.
- Fig. 43. Andrea Schiavone, *Visitation*, Private Collection, Venice, c. 1550.
- Fig. 44. Tintoretto, *Portrait of Vincenzo Zen*, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, 1560-1565.
- Fig. 45. Tintoretto, *Portrait of Nicolo Zen?*, Prado, Madrid, c. 1555-60.
- Fig. 46. Titian, *Portrait of Nicolo Zen*, Kingston Lacy, Dorset, c. 1547-1550.
- Fig. 47. Views of Palazzo Zen, the Rio Santa Caterina façade and the *campo* façade from Canaletto, *Campo dei Gesuiti*, c. 1730-1735.
- Fig. 48. Titian, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice, 1518.

- Fig. 49. Details of the open book from the a) Bamberg *Assumption* b) the Giunti vernacular bible [source] c) *Crociferi Assumption*.
- Fig. 50. Details from Tintoretto, *Crociferi Assumption*, sarcophagus and Virgin with crown of stars.
- Fig. 51. Giovanni Bellini, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, Accademia, Venice, 1460-1464.
- Fig. 52. Tintoretto, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, Santa Maria dei Carmini, Venice.
- Fig. 53. Location of the Refectory and Tintoretto's *Wedding at Cana* on the pre-1667 Paris plan of the monastery
- Fig. 54. Odoardo Fialetti, After Tintoretto's *Wedding at Cana*, engraving, c. 1610.
- Fig. 55. Giovanni Volpato, After Tintoretto's *Wedding at Cana*, engraving, 1722.
- Fig. 56. Greco-Veneto painter, After Tintoretto's *Wedding at Cana*, Museo Correr, Venice, c.1650, Inv. Cl. I. n. 255.
- Fig. 57. Tintoretto's *Wedding at Cana* in the sacristy of Santa Maria della Salute, Venice.
- Fig. 58. Paolo Veronese, *Wedding at Cana*, (formerly the refectory of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice), Louvre, Paris, 1562-1563.
- Fig. 59. Titian, *Last Supper*, Escorial, Madrid, 1557-1564.
- Fig. 60. Tintoretto, *Wedding at Cana*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, early 1540's.
- Fig. 61. Sixteenth-century copy after Titian's Escorial *Last Supper*, Brera, Milan.
- Fig. 62. Details of Fig.s from Tintoretto, *Wedding at Cana*, Santa Maria della Salute, Venice, 1561.
- Fig. 63. Details of potential portrait of Hieronimo Confalonieri from Marco Basaiti, *Lamentation*, Hermitage, St. Petersburg, 1527 and Tintoretto, *Wedding at Cana*, Santa Maria della Salute, Venice, 1561.
- Fig. 64. Decoration by Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, Vittoria in place by 1581.
- Fig. 65. Giacomo del Duca, Santa Maria in Trivio, Rome, 1575-1578.

- Fig. 66. Palma il Giovane, *Votive Painting of Doge Pasquale Cicogna*, Sala dei Pregadi, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, c.1595.
- Fig. 67. *Osella of Doge Pasquale Cicogna*, recto and verso, 1586.
- Fig. 68. Girolamo Campagna, *Monument to Doge Pasquale Cicogna*, Gesuiti, Venice, 1595-1604.
- Fig. 69. Girolamo Campagna, Detail of Effigy of Doge Pasquale Cicogna.
- Fig. 70. Girolamo Campagna, *Monument to Doge Marino Grimani*, San Giuseppe di Castello, Venice, c. 1601-1604.
- Fig. 71. Locations of Palma il Giovane paintings in the Crociferi Church
- Fig. 72. Palma il Giovane, *Self Portrait as a Crocifero*, Bardisian Collection, Venice, c. 1606.
- Fig. 73. Palma il Giovane Studies after the Titian *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence*
 a) Paris, Louvre b) London, Witt Collection c) New York, Sonnenberg Collection
- Fig. 74. Arrangement of paintings by Palma il Giovane in the Crociferi Oratory, 1583-1590.
- Fig. 75. Palma il Giovane, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Crociferi Oratory, Venice, 1589.
- Fig. 76. Palma il Giovane, *Renier Zen, the Dogaressa, Crociferi, Ospizio Widows, Procuratori di San Marco and the Resurrected Christ with Portrait Identifications*, Crociferi Oratory, Venice, 1584-1585.
- Fig. 77. Palma il Giovane, *Priamo Balbi Administers the Host to Pasquale Cicogna and the Ospizio Widows (before his election)*, Crociferi Oratory, Venice, 1585-1588.
- Fig. 78. Palma il Giovane, *Pasquale Cicogna Receives the News of his Election as Doge at the High Altar of the Crociferi Church*, Crociferi Oratory, Venice, 1585-1588.
- Fig. 79. Palma il Giovane, *Doge Pasquale Cicogna Visits the Crociferi Monastery on the Feat of the Assumption (with Portrait Identifications)*, Crociferi Oratory, Venice, 1585-1588.
- Fig. 80. Palma il Giovane, *Pope Cleto Institutes the Crociferi*, Crociferi Oratory, Venice, 1590.

- Fig. 81. Palma il Giovane, *Pope Paul IV Issues a Breve to Ambassador (with Portrait Identifications)*, Crociferi Oratory, 1590.
- Fig. 82. Palma il Giovane, *Decollation of St. John the Baptist (with Portrait Identifications)*, Varoteri altarpiece, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1593-1595.
- Fig. 83. Details of Three Palma il Giovane Portraits of Giuliano Cirno
 a) Detail from Oratory *Paul IV Issues a Breve* b) Detail from *Decollation*
 c) *Independent Portrait Study*, Brera, Milan.
- Fig. 84. Palma il Giovane, *Flagellation*, Crociferi Oratory, Venice, 1590-1591.
- Fig. 85. Palma il Giovane, *Transport of the Body of Christ*, Crociferi Oratory, Venice, 1590-1591.
- Fig. 86. Palma il Giovane, *Elijah Fed by an Angel in the Desert*, Sacristy Ceiling, Gesuiti, Venice, 1590.
- Fig. 87. Palma il Giovane, *David and Ahimelech*, Sacristy Ceiling, Gesuiti, Venice, 1590.
- Fig. 88. Palma il Giovane, *Gathering of the Manna*, Sacristy Ceiling, Gesuiti, Venice, 1590.
- Fig. 89. Palma il Giovane, *Raising of the Bronze Serpent*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, 1592.
- Fig. 90. Palma il Giovane, *Helen Discovers the True Cross*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1620.
- Fig. 91. Palma il Giovane, *The Emperor Heraclius Returns the Cross to Jerusalem*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c.1620.
- Fig. 92. Palma il Giovane, Details from *Pope Cleto Institutes the Crociferi* and *St. Ciriacus Rconfirms the Crociferi*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1620.
- Fig. 93. Palma il Giovane, Details from *Pope Alexander III Assigns the Crociferi Their Rule* and *Pope Pius II Assigns the Crociferi their Reformed Habit*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c.1620.
- Fig. 94. Palma il Giovane, *Madonna and Child in Glory with St. Cleto, St. Catherine, St. Lucy, St. Anthony Abbot (Sacristy Altarpiece)*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c.1620.

- Figs. 95-98. Palma il Giovane, *Saints Ciriacus, Lanfranc, Helen and Cleto*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1620.
- Fig. 99. Raphael, *Vision of Ezekiel*, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, 1518.
- Fig. 100. Palma il Giovane, *Angels Playing Trumpets* (from the organ loft?), Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1592-1593?
- Fig. 101. Palma il Giovane, *Crucifixion*, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna, c. 1595.
- Fig. 102. Palma il Giovane, *Descent into Limbo*, (formerly San Niccolo della Lattuga), Accademia, Venice, c. 1584.
- Fig. 103. Palma il Giovane, *Decollation of John the Baptist (Varoteri altarpiece)*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1593-1595.
- Fig. 104. Palma il Giovane, *Guardian Angel (Tiepolo altarpiece)*, Gesuiti, Venice, after 1617.
- Fig. 105. Palma il Giovane, Detail of *Raising of the Bronze Serpent*, Portrait of Priamo Balbi, Sacristy, Gesuiti, 1592.
- Fig. 106. Palma il Giovane, Detail of *Emperor Heraclius*, Palma Self-Portrait, Sacristy, Gesuiti, c.1620.
- Fig. 107. Locations of Altars/Chapels under guild patronage
- Fig. 108. Locations of guild *alberghi*, Domenico Lovisa, Detail from *Campo dei Gesuiti*, engraving, 1717.
- Fig. 109. Cima da Conegliano, *Annunciation*, Hermitage, St. Petersburg, 1495.
- Fig. 110. Cima da Conegliano, *St. Mark Healing the Cobbler Anianus*, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, 1497-1499.
- Fig. 111. Giovanni Mansueti, *The Arrest of St. Mark*, Vaduz, 1497-1499.
- Fig. 112. Paolo Veronese, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, (formerly Setaioli chapel), Chapel of the Rosary, Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, c. 1560-1565.
- Fig. 113. Cima da Conegliano, *St. Mark and St. Sebastian*, National Gallery, London, c. 1500.
- Fig. 114. Cima da Conegliano, *Coronation with Saints and Prophets*, (formerly Setaioli albergo), Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, c. 1505-1510.

- Fig. 115. Cima da Conegliano, *St. Mark Healing* and Lattanzio da Rimini, *Preparatory Drawing for the lost St. Mark Preaching*, Duke of Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth, n. 741, c. 1497-1499.
- Fig. 116. Jacob Matham, After Veronese's *Adoration of the Shepherds*, engraving, 1621.
- Fig. 117. Giacomo Barri, After Veronese's *Adoration of the Shepherds*, engraving, 1667.
- Fig. 118. Cima da Conegliano, *Zermen altarpiece with lunette of Christ, Peter and Paul*, c. 1507-1510.
- Fig. 119. Tintoretto, *Martyrdom of St. Barbara?*, Private Collection, Turin, c. early 1540's.
- Fig. 120. Bonifacio de' Pitati, *Madonna and Child with St. Barbara and St. Omobono giving alms (Sartori albergo altarpiece)*, Accademia, Venice, 1533.
- Fig. 121. Alberghi of the *Scuole dei Botteri and Varoteri*
 a) Detail: Lovisa (1717)
 b) Detail: Gabriel Bella, *Gioco del pallone ai Gesuiti*
 c) Detail Canaletto (1730-1735)
- Fig. 122. Cima da Conegliano, *St. Lanfranc Enthroned with St. John the Baptist and St. Liberius (Varoteri altarpiece)*, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, c.1515-1516.
- Fig. 123. Palma il Giovane, *Decollation of John the Baptist (Varoteri altarpiece)*, Sacristy, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1593-1595.
- Fig. 124. Giorgio Vasari, *Decollation of John the Baptist*, San Giovanni Decollato, Rome, 1553.
- Fig. 125. Carletto Caliarì, *Raising of Lazarus*, (formerly *Varoteri albergo*), Accademia, Venice, late 1590's?.
- Fig. 126. Alberghi of the *Scuole dei Botteri and Varoteri*
 a) Detail: Lovisa (1717)
 b) Detail: Bella
 c) Detail Canaletto (1730-1735)
- Fig. 127. Giovanni Permeniates, *Madonna and Child with St. John the Baptist and St. Augustine*, (formerly *Botteri albergo*), Museo Correr, c.1523-1528.

- Fig. 128. Locations of Altars/Chapels of Private Patrons
- Fig. 129. Andrea dall'Aquila, *Madonna and Child*, (formerly Usper Chapel), Gesuiti, Venice, after 1581, before 1603.
- Fig. 130. Alessandro Vittoria, *Emperors in stucco*, Palazzo Thiene, Vicenza, late 1570's.
- Fig. 131. Jacopo Sansovino, *Madonna and Child*, Bronze, Cleveland Museum of Art.
- Fig. 132. Alessandro Vittoria, Bust above fireplace, Palazzo Contarini delle Fig., Venice.
- Fig. 133. Alessandro Vittoria, *Four Evangelists*, terracotta, Art Institute, Chicago, c. 1580.
- Fig. 134. Alessandro Vittoria, *Bust of Pietro Zen*, Seminario Patriarcale, Venice, c.1583-1585.
- Fig. 135. Lombardi, Chapel of Cardinal Giovanni Battista Zen, San Marco, Venice, 1504-1521.
- Fig. 136. Alessandro Vittoria?, Monument to Priamo, Giovanni and Andrea Da Lezze, Gesuiti, Venice, after 1576.
- Fig. 137. Alessandro Vittoria, Bust of Priamo Da Lezze, Gesuiti, Venice, c. 1566-1568.
- Fig. 138. Lucini, Engraving of the Da Lezze Monument, c. 1657.
- Fig. 139. Vincenzo Coronelli, Engraving of the Da Lezze Monument, 1709.
- Fig. 140. Alessandro Vittoria, Façade of the Scuola di San Fantin, Venice, 1583-1584.
- Fig. 141. Titian, *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence*, Gesuiti, Venice, 1548-1559.
- Fig. 142. Detail of St. Lawrence from Titian, *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence* and Detail of the statue of Vesta from Titian, *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence*, Gesuiti, Venice.
- Fig. 143. Carl Loth, *Copy after Titian's Martyrdom of St. Peter Martyr* (lost), Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, 1527-1529.
- Fig. 144. Titian, *Tityus*, Prado, Madrid, 1548-1549.
- Fig. 145. Titian, *Ecce Homo*, Prado, Madrid, 1548.

- Fig. 146. Titian, *St. Margaret*, Prado, Madrid, c. 1555.
- Fig. 147. Palma il Giovane, *Guardian Angel Transport Souls to Heaven*, formerly altarpiece of Patriarch Giovanni Tiepolo, Gesuiti, Venice, after 1617.
- Fig. 149. Palma il Giovane, Preparatory Drawings for the Guardian Angel altarpiece, Colnaghi, London.
- Fig. 150. Palma il Giovane, Preparatory Drawings for the Guardian Angel altarpiece, British Museum, London.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation reconstructs the original form and sixteenth-century decoration of the lost Venetian church of Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi, destroyed after the suppression of the Crociferi in 1656 to make way for the present church of the Gesuiti. The destruction of the church, the scattering of its contents, and the almost total lack of documentation of the religious order for which the space was built, has obscured our understanding of the many works of art it once contained, produced by some of the most important Venetian artists of the sixteenth century. This project seeks to correct scholarly neglect of this important church, and to restore context and meaning to these objects by reconstructing their original placement in the interest of a collective interpretation. Various types, patterns and phases of patronage at the church—monastic, private and corporate—are discussed to reveal interconnections between these groups, and to highlight the role of the Crociferi as architects of a sophisticated decorative programme that was designed to respond to the latest artistic trends, and to visually demonstrate their adherence to orthodoxy at a moment of religious upheaval and reform.

Chapter I: Introduction

The church of Santa Maria Assunta dei Gesuiti is situated at the extreme north of Venice in the *sestiere* of Cannaregio, where the waters of the lagoon meet the island at the Fondamente Nuove [Figs.1-2]. Its soaring sculptural façade and its exuberantly decorated interior make it one of the finest examples of Venetian high-Baroque in the city. It is ornamented by one of the finest Titian altarpieces remaining *in situ*, an important Tintoretto, and a considerable collection of works by Palma il Giovane, easily the highest in quality and number possessed by any Venetian church. These images are relics from the monastic church of Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi, acquired by the Jesuits after the suppression of the Crociferi in 1656, and demolished in 1718 to make way for their new church. This dissertation will reconstruct the form, decoration and patronage of this lost church, once a shrine to artists of the Cinquecento such as Cima da Conegliano, Giovanni Mansueti, Lattanzio da Rimini, Lorenzo Bregno, Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, Alessandro Vittoria, Girolamo da Campagna and Palma il Giovane.

1.1 Crociferi: Neglect, Clarification, Reconstruction

The church of the Crociferi occupied this same location for over a half millennium. Its foundation around 1155 predated that of most of the more renowned surviving churches in Venice, such as Santi Giovanni e Paolo and Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari. In comparison to more famous mendicant orders, the Crociferi remain a relatively obscure group, and the Venetian branch is no exception. Despite boasting an important monastic community and one of the more lavishly-decorated churches of the Cinquecento, the Venetian Crociferi have not enjoyed much scholarly attention. The

most extensive treatment remains Lunardon's history of the Crociferi hospital.¹ Her research expanded upon two brief studies of the oratory, providing the first comprehensive narrative of their development in Venice.² Commentary on the church has been restricted to abbreviated histories and vague guidebook descriptions.³ Sources so imperative to the study of lost buildings as Tassini's Edifici distrutte, Zorzi's Venezia Scomparsa, and Bassi's Tracce di chiese veneziane distrutte make only cursory mention of the church, as they focus primarily on buildings destroyed during the Napoleonic suppressions and the Austrian occupation that followed.⁴ Antonio Visentini and Jan Grevembroch, who so often provide important visual records for reconstructive projects like this one, arrived too late to capture the church of the Crociferi, destroyed short decades before their activity.

The adage "out of sight, out of mind" has relevance here: it is the natural tendency of scholarship to focus on things that still exist. Suppressed in 1656, the Crociferi were eclipsed by other mendicant orders that flourished and endured while the Crociferi fell into disrepute. The destruction of the church and its replacement with the Gesuiti has resulted in confusion and conflation. Much scholarship has taken for granted

¹ S. Lunardon, *Hospitale S. Mariae cruciferorum. L'ospizio dei Crociferi a Venezia*, (Venice, 1985).

² G. Bellomo, *Notizie storico-pittoresche dell'oratorio de' SS. Filippo Neri e Luigi Gonzaga annesso all'Ospizio di S. Maria de' Crociferi in campo de' Gesuiti* (Venice, 1845); G. Bianchini, *La Chiesa di Santa Maria Assunta de' Gesuiti in Venezia* (Venice, 1891).

³ A. Gallo and S. Branca Savini, *Chiesa dei Gesuiti* (Venice, 2002).

⁴ G. Tassini, *Edifici di Venezia distrutti o volti ad uso diverso da quello a cui furono in origine destinati* (Venice, [1885], 1969), 177; A. Zorzi, *Venezia Scomparsa* (Milan, 1984); E. Bassi, *Tracce di chiese veneziane distrutte: ricostruzioni dai disegni di Antonio Visentini* (Venice, 1997).

that the Jesuits have always occupied the church and monastery, which was only the case beginning in 1657.

Little effort has been made to clarify the more complex history of the space, which in turn obscures the way we view and interpret the considerable artistic patrimony the Crociferi left behind. The reader is warned that in an attempt to clarify context, this dissertation strays at times from strictly visual material to provide information vital for the interpretation of objects that will ultimately interest the art historian. This dissertation is archaeological in nature; it will reconstruct the form their monastery took, how it was decorated, when and by whom, how it changed and responded—physically and ideologically—to its environment as a result of political, social, religious, doctrinal change.⁵ It will examine patterns of patronage: ducal, private, corporate and monastic. This reveals an intricate web of connections and collaborations between individuals and communities, as well as a conscious effort on the part of the Crociferi to solicit and coordinate patronage and decoration of their church in two phases throughout the cinquecento.

1.2 Archival Badlands

A further deterrent to the study of the Venetian Crociferi is almost certainly the extreme lack of archival documentation. While both the Archivio Segreto Vaticano and the Archivio di Stato di Venezia are home to many robust *buste* pertaining to other suppressed religious communities in Venice, no unified archive survives for the Crociferi.

⁵ Recent studies with similar goals include: H. D. Walberg, “‘Una compiuta galleria di pitture Veneziane’: The Church of S. Maria Maggiore in Venice,” *SV* 68 (2005), 259-303; B. Paul, “Not One but Three: The Churches of the Benedictine Convent SS. Cosma and Damiano on the Giudecca” *VC* 34 (2007), 41-75.

Cicogna recorded “antichissimi carte” relating to the Crociferi at the Correr⁶, now lost, and only a single *busta* remained for the Crociferi when Da Mosto penned his guide to the Archivio di Stato, which has since been lost.⁷ Unlike the archives of religious houses suppressed contemporaneously, the Crociferi archive is not at the Archivio Segreto Vaticano.⁸ Eight Crociferi *processi* pertaining to various administrative issues are conserved in the archive of the Venetian Nunziatura, in addition to a copy of the 1581 apostolic visit to the church.⁹ The Vatican holds a single *busta* containing three documents on the order in Italy and another on its houses in Germany.¹⁰ None of the extensive instructions, communications or inventories exchanged between Venice and Rome during the distribution of the *beni* of the Crociferi ever mention archives or papers.¹¹ Any remaining documents had disappeared sometime before Flaminio Corner. This great eighteenth-century archivist and author of the seminal works on Venetian churches, lamented an unfortunate lack of documentation for this important monastery.¹²

⁶ BMC, Cod. Cicogna. MMMCCCCLX, “Crociferi di Venezia. Documenti rari (XII-XV) spettanti ad Monastero dei.”

⁷ A. Da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia* (Roma, 1940), II, 139. Indicated a single “pezzo” (1260-1418). These remain in the index, however Dott. Schiavon of the Archivio di Stato assures me that they are lost.

⁸ Documents from Santo Spirito in Isola, suppressed by the same papal bull, are located in ASVat, Fondo Veneto II, Chiese Varie, B. 907.

⁹ *L'archivio della nunziatura di Venezia*, ed. G. Roselli (Rome, 1998), 137, 182-3, 195, 201, 247, 263, 409. ASVat, Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Venezia II, Processus, 2422. A better copy of the visit is in ASVat, Congregazione Vescovi e Regolari, Visite Apostoliche, 96, f. 70r-74r.

¹⁰ ASVat, Ordini Religiosi, Crociferi. A small collection of papers (c.1577-1672).

¹¹ ASVat, Segreteria di Stato, nn. 83, 84, 87, 88, 89 and 281, and ASV, Senato, Dispacci da Roma, filz. 134, 136, 139, Deliberazioni Roma, filz. 91, 94, 95, and especially the inventory of the *beni* of S.Maria dei Crociferi (ASV, Notarile, Atti A.M. Piccini, B. 11125).

¹² F. Corner, *Ecclesiae Venetae antiquis monumentis nunc etiam primum editis illustratae ac in decades distributae* (Venice, 1749), II, 176. He follows Boldù that the bulk of the

The documents remaining from the suppressions of small convents in the mid-seicento was a subject of particular interest to Corner, and therefore his notation of the scarcity of documents in his time narrows the field for the archive's disappearance to before 1749.¹³

A pair of Cinquecento histories of the order written by two prominent Crociferi, Venetians Marc'Antonio Boldù and Benedetto Leoni, have often served as the central sources for Crociferi studies. Both authors testify to the existence of an archive that had been kept at the motherhouse in Bologna, and eventually in Venice. Benedetto Leoni noted Trecento documents in the "archivio delli monasteri crocifero a Bologna,"¹⁴ and later the existence of a fifteenth-century apostolic letter "riservate nell'istesso archivio a Vinetia."¹⁵ Evidently the Venetian monastery did at one time house important writings and relics that were purveyed from other Crociferi monasteries during the period of disorder in the Quattrocento because Venice was considered a secure location, immune to looting. Venice was, however, not impervious to the threat of fire, and indeed the monastery was claimed by a blaze in 1513. Marc'Antonio Boldù confirms in his 1571 history that the bulk of these treasures were lost in this blaze¹⁶, and the need for a proper location to house an archive is mentioned in the Crociferi constitution, published in

archive was lost in the 1513 fire. B. Lanfranchi Strina, "Documenti trascritti e perduti" *Ateneo Veneto* 18 (1980), 72.

¹³ Lanfranchi Strina, 1980, 72.

¹⁴ BMC, Cod. Cic. 3045, Marc'Antonio Boldù, *La Historia della Religione Crocifera*, 1571; B. Leoni, *L'Origine et fondatione dell'ordine de'Crociferi* (Venice, 1598), 6. G. P. Pacini, "L'ordine ospitaliero dei Crociferi attraverso il Cod. MS. 474 della Biblioteca Comunale di Treviso. Contributo alla storia dell'ordine fino alla soppressione del 1656" *Rivista della Storia della Chiesa in Italia* 50 (1996), n. 40, 414.

¹⁵ Leoni, 1598, 12, 22. He notes his own testimony is based on fragments from Padova and Bologna.

¹⁶ Boldù, 1571, 30r, 34v. Notes the destruction of "le scritture dell'antichità" in Bologna in the Spanish invasion of the city, the movement of assets to Venice for safekeeping and the loss of "i più interessanti e secreti documenti del loro istituto" in 1513.

1587.¹⁷ A short description of the history of the order that accompanied a review of the state of the Crociferi and each of its remaining houses just before the 1656 suppression, confirms the realization of such an archive and a tantalizing reference to the presence of “ancient inventories” in it.¹⁸ Yet, on the brink of suppression, when each of the remaining priors attempted to defend their legitimacy by invoking their longevity, they were forced to admit their inability to provide any documentary evidence of it.¹⁹

Lunardon suggests that fragments remained in the Jesuit monastery, inherited along with the property.²⁰ The primary evidence for this is the survival of a ground plan of the Jesuit complex in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, and Corner’s assertion that he read about the 1214 fire in a manuscript history of the order in the Jesuit library.²¹

Although it is possible that Crociferi documents did remain in Jesuit possession and were dispersed following their suppression in 1773, I would suggest an alternative hypothesis for the fate of its archive. Preserved in the *fondi* of the Procuratori di San Marco de Supra in a series called “Chiesa: Commissarie e amministrazione” is a group of “pergamene diverse” belonging to the Crociferi and to the monastery of Santo Spirito in

¹⁷ BNM, 150 D. 162, *Constitutiones ordinis fratrum cruciferorum* (Venice, 1587), 29.

¹⁸ ASVat, Misc. Armadio VII, n. 34, f. 31r.

¹⁹ ASVat, Congregazione Stato dei Regolari, 24, cc. 30r, 86r, 95r. The prior of Vicenza notes: “...da immemorabili anni in quà, non essendovi scritte sufficienti di provarlo. At Verona: “Per l’antichità et conseguenze di varij accidenti di Guerre, incendij, et altre ingiurie de tempi, per quali furono disperse le scritte non si può descrivere.” At Camerino: “La fondatione d’esso Monasterio non può essere notata perche é così antico, che non vi é memoria, e tanto più, quanto che doi legrimevoli incendij occorsi l’uno in Bologna, l’altro in Venetia havevano arsi li due Archivij della singolari della Congregatione.”

²⁰ Lunardon, 79, n. 39. For the Paris plan: Jean Vallery-Radot, *Le Recueil de plans d’édifices de la Compagnie de Jésus conservé a la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*, (Rome, 1960), 93-94, #357, 358-362.

²¹ Corner, 1749, II, 174. He was probably referring to that of Boldù.

Isola, which was suppressed by the same papal bull in April 1656.²² These documents have gone unnoticed, probably because they are in a somewhat unlikely spot; Procuratori de Supra were chiefly concerned with matters pertaining to the ducal church, while their counterparts, the Procuratori di San Marco de Citra, would have been responsible for administering to pious institutions north of the Grand Canal where the Crociferi were located. The documents probably ended up in the possession of the procurators as a result of their involvement in the post-suppression sale of these *conventini*. Three “Procuratori Assistenti” were nominated by the Senate to assist the papal nuncio and protect Venetian interests, and perhaps whatever was left of the Crociferi archive passed to them.

A reconstruction of the state of the Crociferi during the Cinquecento has proven challenging due to the lack of a centralized monastic archive and the sorts of potential leads it would generally provide, requiring a more exhaustive search in less obvious places. The Byzantine nature of the Venetian government is largely responsible for the complex organisation of the Archivio di Stato, and for the scattering of sources of information presented here. Horatio Brown, a great early excavator of the ASV, wrote in 1887: “Among the archives of Europe, none is superior in historical value and richness of minutiae, to the archives of the Venetian Republic.”²³ It is only because of the meticulous and extensive record keeping of the Republic that any trace of the Venetian Crociferi has survived.

²² ASV, Procuratori di San Marco de Supra, Chiesa, Inventario dattiloscritto 285ter. The earliest document for the Crociferi in this collection dates to 1206. *Buste* containing Crociferi documents: B. 103, fasc. 7-13; B. 104, fasc. 4, fol. a-q; B. 114; B. 115; B. G, fasc. 3-6; B. I, fasc. 2; B. M, fasc. 3-5.

²³ H. Brown, *Venetian Studies* (London, 1887), 178 quoted in J. Pemble, *Venice Rediscovered*, (Oxford, 1996), 74.

1.3 Early History

The early history of the Crociferi in Venice and the Veneto has been comprehensively reconstructed by Pacini, based on early papal letters, bulls, privileges, many of which were transcribed in a manuscript preserved at the Biblioteca Comunale di Treviso.²⁴ Probably compiled just after the suppression of the order by an anonymous member of the last Crociferi, the 630-page manuscript gives a history of the order and each of the Crociferi houses, with transcriptions of surviving documents pertinent to each.²⁵ Additionally, there is a list of Crociferi brothers and their achievements throughout history, saints of the order, and a rather defensive account of the suppression entitled “Effetti pessimi e lachrimevoli prodota dalla suppressione della Religione.”

Another small collection of *pergamene* is preserved in the Archivio Storico di Patriarcato di Venezia.²⁶ Kehr knew the documents at the end of the nineteenth century, and I suspect that they constitute whatever was left of the ancient papers of the order at the time of the suppression [App.I].²⁷ The survival of these documents lends further support to the notion that the remains of the Crociferi archive passed to the Procuratori, as they belong to another collection of *pergamene* with no clear provenance from the archive of the Capitolo di San Marco.

²⁴ G. P. Pacini, "Fra poveri e viandanti ai margini della città: il 'nuovo' ordine ospitaliero dei Crociferi fra secolo XII e XIII" in *Religiones Novae* 2 (1995), 57-85; Pacini, 1996, 399-43; Pacini, "I Crociferi e le comunità ospedaliere lungo le vie dei pellegrinaggi nel Veneto medioevale secoli XII-XIV" in *I percorsi della fede e l'esperienza della carità nel Veneto medioevale, Monselice*, 2001.

²⁵ BCT, Mss. 474; Pacini, 1996, 402, n. 10, 11.

²⁶ ASPat, CSM, B. 7.

²⁷ P. Kehr, "Papsturkunden in Italien. Reiseberichte zur Italia Pontificia 1 (1896-1899)" in *Acta Romanorum Pontificum* 1 (1977), S.518; K. Baaken, "Papsturkunden für die Crociferi" in *Ex ipsis documentis. Beiträge zur Mediävistik Festschrift H. Zimmermann zum 65* (Sigmaringen, 1991), 331-343.

1.4 The Venetian Crociferi: Cinquecento

Because the material preserved in the archive of the Provveditori sopra monasteri—the officials charged with overseeing ecclesiastical matters concerning discipline, building and finances—is generally quite late, the records of this office are only useful for documenting the period of the suppression of the order.²⁸ Sources that sometimes provide information on the building, renovation and decoration of churches, such as the deliberations of the Senate, the records of the salt magistrates, and the *Notatorio* of the Collegio, remain for the most part silent on this monastery.

One of the most telling archival documents for the Crociferi in the sixteenth century is their *condizione*, or declaration of property, income and expenses, recorded for the census of ecclesiastical institutions carried out in 1564 by the Soprintendenti alle decime del clero [App.X]. This document amounts to a snapshot of life at the monastery, recording their properties, expenses and sources of income.²⁹

The *condizione* also names those living in the monastery, which proved critical to forming a timeline of the high-ranking *frati* and isolating the quorum of Crociferi who would have been responsible for the projects of redecoration. The account books of the dependent Crociferi monastery of San Martino di Conegliano were also helpful in this regard.³⁰ An exhaustive search of the vast notarial archive yielded the names of at least three of the notaries the Crociferi used during the sixteenth century: Diotsalvi Benzon and his son, Giovanni Battista, and Giovanni Figolin. Because notaries registered all

²⁸ ASV, PsM, B. 1, fasc. 1. The earliest document dates to 1642.

²⁹ ASV, SDC, B. 33, filza 173. F. Masè, *Patrimoines immobiliers ecclésiastiques dans la Venise médiévale (XI-XV siècle)* (Rome, 2006), 16.

³⁰ Da Mosto, 1940, 27 and M. F. Tiepolo, *Guida generale degli archivio di Stato Italiani* (Rome, 1994), IV, 261, 749.

official agreements, their protocols have the potential to contain documents that might have once survived in duplicate in the lost archive. A number of Crociferi brothers emerged from the pages of these protocols as chief protagonists in this narrative. Further research into this initial list of Crociferi revealed that many of them were accomplished musicians, preachers and authors. The dedications and content of their printed works further embellished the list of names and testified to the status of the monastery as a centre of learning and culture. Particularly useful was Crocifero Luigi Contarini's 1587 Giardino Historico, a compendium of facts that included a history of his order and the accomplishments of historical figures, including his fellow Crociferi. Like the histories of Marc'Antonio Boldù and Benedetto Leoni, as well as the published version of the order's revised constitution of 1581³¹, these writings bring into focus the values and concerns of the community at the peak of its revival, information critical to understanding the obscured context of the church and its decoration.

1.5 The form and decoration of the church

A reconstruction of the church exterior was facilitated by Jacopo de'Barbari's invaluable woodcut bird's-eye-view of Venice (1500). Three further maps dating to c.1535, 1559 and 1660 [**Figs.3-5**] were consulted to determine if any changes to the church were made over the course of the following century. More detailed views of the façade were provided by various painted and engraved views of the *campo*.³² Ground plans (c. 1667) of the original church and cloister survive in the archive of the

³¹ *Constitutiones*, 1587.

³² Domenico Lovisa, Veduta del Campo de Giesuiti, engraving, 1717, BMC, Stampe A. 10, tav. 45; Canaletto, Campo dei Gesuiti, 1730-35, Milan, Private Collection; Antonio Visentini, Area PP. Societatis Jesu cum eorum Templo dal dipinto di A. Canaletto, engraving, 1742, BMC, Stampe E. 36, Tav. 38; Gabriel Bella, Il gioco del pallone ai Gesuiti, c.1779, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice.

Provveditori sopra monasteri and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris [Figs.6-7].³³ A more vivid sense of the interior and its decoration was supplied by guidebooks and early art criticism. Clearly one must proceed with caution when relying on such sources; the taste of the day and its understanding of what defined the style of artists sometimes differs from our own. As a consequence, these authors inevitably make false attributions and fail to notice or describe objects that we now consider interesting. I have also tried to bear in mind the fallibility of subsequent authors who often blindly rely on previous testimony. A comparative analysis of these sources helped to form a timeline for the arrival and disappearance of works of art. The locations of altars and their patronage came into clearer focus through the records of the apostolic visit to the church in 1581 [App.II], a year that emerged as an appropriate benchmark for the first of two reconstructions. By 1581 most of the important Cinquecento decoration was *in situ* and could be placed through the testimony of Sansovino and the apostolic visitors. My discovery of a previously unknown inventory taken of the church and monastery just before the Jesuits took possession of the church in 1656 facilitated the creation of a second reconstruction of the church and its contents at the moment the Crociferi abandoned it [App.III].

³³ ASV, PsM, B. 13, c. 1667; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Hd-4d, 72. Plan of the church and adjacent buildings (before 1667). BN, Hd-4a, 250. Plan for the proposal of the addition of two lateral chapels, 1667.

Chapter II

2.1 Crociferi: History

It is appropriate to provide a brief history of the Crociferi, not only because so little is known about it, but also because the Crociferi themselves became hyper-aware of their past during the sixteenth century, something that has implications for the art they commissioned. There was increasing pressure from Rome to reform monastic life in the wake of the decrees of the Council of Trent, and the Crociferi had more than the average order for which to atone. Rampant disobedience and internal abuses of power in the mid-Quattrocento resulted in the imposition of strict disciplinary measures that were still in place well into the Cinquecento. These punitive efforts seemed to right the order, if only temporarily, and there is evidence that the Crociferi made efforts to publicise this in a variety of ways. There is a sense that the written histories of Marc'Antonio Boldù and Benedetto Leoni, as well as the published version of the reformed Crociferi constitution, were conceived as public affirmations of what the Crociferi viewed as their rebirth. A major component of their campaign to assert their reformed status involved stressing the longevity of the order, the illustrious nature of its beginnings and of its supporters through history. Significantly, these authors, as well as those responsible for formulating the new constitution, were all Venetian. It is critical to remember that the narrative of the foundation and development of the order passed down to us was filtered through individuals with an agenda to rehabilitate their image. Their testimony is therefore all the more valuable because it provides insight into what was clearly the accepted and propagated version of their origins. I argue that Palma il Giovane's narrative cycles for

the sacristy and oratory of the church were conceived by the *frati*—Boldù and Leoni among them—as a visual parallel to the published histories. The specifics of Palma’s cycle will be discussed in following chapters, but the images will be useful here to illustrate this history of the order.

2.2 Foundation, Development and Dispersion

Benedetto Leoni succinctly articulates the legendary origins of his order thus: “The blessed Cleto, as vicar of Christ (St. Cleto, third pope of Rome created the year 80) zealously encouraged followers of Christ to make a practice of visiting the relics of martyrs, and in particular those of Peter and Paul. On the way, passing from city to city, he prompted them to build hospitals in many different places, but particularly in Rome, where they set up a house near the Rione, called *Vicopraticio* and then built a church dedicated to S. Matteo in Merulana where they based their charity work and hospitalling. And it was as a result of his example that they always took in hand the cross in memory of the Passion. Their survival during the Roman persecutions was made difficult, but their efforts were revived by the restoration of Ciriaco, bishop of Jerusalem, during the time in which S. Elena found the wood of the three crosses (which the brothers later adopted as their symbol).”¹

Linking their foundation to Cleto and the early years of the papacy was of central concern to the Crociferi: it is expressed twice by Palma, once in the oratory and again in the sacristy [Figs.8-9]. In both cases, Cleto receives a group of kneeling pilgrims. In the sacristy painting he hands them a small wooden cross, from that point forward taken as

¹ Leoni, 1598, 11.

their symbol. Their attachment to the cross is further explained through a second picture in the sacristy cycle depicting St. Helen's discovery of the True Cross in 351 A.D, aided by her "guida hebreo", Judas Ciriacus, who directed her to the crosses, was converted and awarded the Bishopric of Jerusalem, the guise in which we find him depicted by Palma [Figs.10-11].² In his capacity as bishop, Ciriaco aided the fledgling Crociferi in the Holy Land, and thus was honoured as one of their principal saints.³

With good reason, modern scholars have considered the timing of this foundation story dubious. It arose initially out of what was surely a misinterpretation of twelfth-century documents officially recognizing the order, which characterized the group of laymen as followers of the "disciplinam Cleli."⁴ Pacini correctly characterizes Cleto as a person "stranamente trascurato dalla storigrafia"⁵, having taken on legendary proportions in oral and written accounts of the order, perhaps not surprisingly, written by Boldù and Leoni. These Venetian authors were steeped in the tradition of foundation myths, and, at a time when the order's value was called into question, they would have been keenly aware of the legitimization that accompanied the alignment of a community with important Christian events and individuals. The Crociferi were making no small claim by crediting their foundation to the third pope of Rome, only two permutations from the living Christ, around the year 80. This illustrious history is further embellished by the association with Ciriaco, who tidily connects them to the finding of the True Cross, and

² L. Contarini, *Il vago e dilettevole giardino*, (Vicenza, 1589), 417; J. Drijvers, *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden, 1992), 165-180.

³ Leoni, 1598, 14-16.

⁴ Pacini, 1996, 399 and Pacini, 2002, 155.

⁵ Pacini, 1996, n.3, 399.

therefore the first moments of the blossoming of the Christian faith.⁶ In reality, the founder was likely a random crusader, the namesake of Cleto, rather than the actual saint, but it is clear that throughout their history the Crociferi celebrated Pope Cleto as their founder.⁷ The foundation is more securely dated to last half of the twelfth century, with the official recognition of the Crociferi by Alexander III in 1160.⁸ Palma communicates their new organisation through the uniform brown dress of the brothers—as opposed to the variety of dress in the previous scenes [Fig.12]. The bull of Alexander III underscored the important function of the Crociferi as administrators of care to the sick and poor and established that they would adhere to a rule of life akin to that of Augustine.⁹

By 1187 the Crociferi had already realized a rapid expansion into many territories, not just on the Italian peninsula, but also into England, Germany, the Netherlands, and particularly in the Levant. They were established outside the walls of Ancona as early as 1162, Vicenza in 1167, Padua in 1163 and Verona in 1170.¹⁰ A bull issued by Gregory IX in 1228 listed over 56 Crociferi hospitals, the bulk of which were dedicated to the Virgin who was clearly the main focus of Crociferi devotion. By the end of the century there were over 120 Crociferi houses in Italy, and another 200 hospitals in European countries, including the island of Crete, Syria, Bohemia, the Low Countries, France and Portugal.¹¹ Santa Maria di Morello at Bologna became the motherhouse under Clement IV (1265-1268), with the Venetian house taking on a role of secondary importance, not

⁶ P. Morigia, *Historia dell'Origine di tutte le religioni*, 1576, 69-70.

⁷ Lunardon, 20; Pacini, 1995, 57.

⁸ F. Corner, *Notizie storiche delle chiese e monasteri di Venezia* (Padua, 1758), 302; G. Moroni Romano, *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica* (Venice, 1842), v. 17-18, 303.

⁹ Pacini, 1995, 67.

¹⁰ Pacini, 1995, 61, 67; Pacini, 2000, 158-160; ASVat, CSR, 25, c. 86r.

¹¹ Leoni, 1598, 19r; Pacini, 1995, 73; Lunardon, 21.

only because of its size, but because it was well-positioned to oversee the order's outposts in dependent territories and the East.¹² For the better part of the order's existence, the Venetian Crociferi managed at least twelve dependent monastic communities: Vicenza, Verona, Conegliano, Padova, Trent, Candia, Tergesteo, Pola, Portogruaro, Desio, Burghetto and Valle Urbana.¹³ The particular brand of assistance the Crociferi offered was ideally matched to both the needs and values of the Venetian Republic, a welfare state with a social conscience, a distaste for vagrancy, a transient population and an ideal natural environment for the spread of disease.

2.3 Crosecchieri di Venezia

The Crociferi, known in Venice by the dialectical form, Crosecchieri (or Crocichieri) arrived in Venice around 1155, preceding the official recognition of their order by Alexander III. As per their habit of establishing themselves on the urban periphery, in this city without walls they built their community in a relatively uninhabited and “*paludoso*” location on the edge of the lagoon [Fig.13].¹⁴

The 1360 chronicle of Andrea Dandolo was the first to record their arrival, assigning the foundation of the church to 1154. He asserted that a Venetian named Cleto

¹² Leoni, 1598, 16r. Leoni talks about the extension of the religion into the east, naming the monasteries of Santo Spirito d'Accone, San Giuliano di Cipro in Nicosia, Santa Maria di Negroponte, San Nicolo di Agiocrodio, also of Negroponte, Santa Maria de Acheropita, Sant'Angelo d'Andro, San Michele de Saga. The monastery in the Venetian territory of Candia was also under the control of the Venetian house. Extensive documentation for the monastery in Candia survives in the ASV, PSMsupra, Comm., BB. 103, 104.

¹³ *Constitutiones*, 1587, 44-45.

¹⁴ D. Howard, *The architectural history of Venice*, Rev. ed. (New Haven, 2002), 76. In this respect the Crociferi conformed to the general pattern for mendicant settlements in Venice.

Grausoni provided the land, conflating the founder of the order with the founder of the Venetian church.¹⁵ Subsequent authors name Pietro Grausoni (Gussoni), whose existence in these years can be confirmed with relative confidence from a Trecento history of the Gussoni family.¹⁶ An approximate foundation date of 1150 has been generally accepted ever since.¹⁷ The Gussoni were an important patrician family who resided in this area as early as the Duecento, and made sizable charitable bequests that changed the face of this neighbourhood, founding Santa Sofia and evidently contributing to Santa Caterina.¹⁸ The Gussoni history notes that the nuns of Santa Caterina soon found themselves displaced by the overwhelming local support the Crociferi attracted from the *Nobili, cittadini* and *Popolo* for their life “onestissima et anzi santa” and their “austerezze e fervorose virtù.”¹⁹ A subsequent donation was made to the Crociferi around 1170 by a descendent of Pietro, Bonsaver Gussoni, “vigne e possessioni situate nel distretti di Chioggia e Pelestrina”, properties which the 1564 *condizione* confirm were still in their possession centuries later.²⁰ The Gussoni therefore assumed a role that many noble families exercised over parish and monastic churches, handing down the tradition of patronage from one generation to the next.²¹ Indeed, there is evidence that close ties between the Crociferi and this family endured. The surname Gussoni appears in several of the registers of the names of *frati* present in the monastery, a Teodoro Gussoni served as prior during

¹⁵ A. Danduli, *Chronica per estensum descripta*, ed. E. Pastorello, in RIS.2, XII/1, (Bologna, 1938-1958), 246.

¹⁶ Pacini, 1995, 59; ASV, Barbaro, IV, 17, 199-201; ASV, CRS, S. Caterina, B. 21.

¹⁷ Lunardon, 74, n. 3.

¹⁸ W. Dorigo, *Venezia romanica. La formazione della città medioevale fino all'età gotica* (Venice, 2003), II, 793.

¹⁹ G. Cappelletti, *Storia della Chiesa di Venezia* (Venice, 1849-50), 390.

²⁰ Leoni, 1598, 32. For the mainland possessions: ASV, SDC, B. 33, f. 73.

²¹ ASV, Barbaro, IV, 17, 199-201 and IV, 18, 205-206.

sixteenth century, and a letter of 27 October 1556 written by the Venetian prior reports the death of a member of the Gussoni family and the involvement of the Crociferi in his funeral “alla parte del debito nostro alli molti oblighi che ha il monastero nostro con quella Eccellentissima et Illustrissima casa.”²² Finally, obligations for masses in honour of this family were recorded in the 1656 inventory as outstanding for the Gussona family.²³

In 1186 Urban III granted the Crociferi permission to build a church dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin.²⁴ This first church and its adjacent hospital were probably, like most of this period, constructed of wood.²⁵ These structures were extremely susceptible to fire, and indeed, this first church was consumed in 1214.²⁶ Particularly during the first decades of the duecento, the Crociferi played a key role in Venetian society, further endearing their order to the Republic by following doge Enrico Dandolo to the Fourth Crusade. Bronze horses were not the only things brought back to Venice; the hospital cared for the less glamorous byproducts of Dandolo’s war: wounded crusaders and sick pilgrims.²⁷

The Crociferi acquired further prestige through their connection to a Duecento doge, Renier Zen (1253-1268). A document of 1254 bears the signature of “Rainerius Geno, Dei Gratia Dux, avocator S. Mariae.”²⁸ Zen, who had been elected doge the

²² ASV, PSMsupra, Comm., B. 104.

²³ ASV, AP, c. 129.

²⁴ ASV, PSMcitra, B. 233. “Ecclesiam suam quam de novo edificant” in 1186; E. Cicogna, *Corpus delle iscrizioni di Venezia e delle isole della laguna veneta* (Venice, 1824-53), II, 871.

²⁵ ASV, PSMcitra, B. 233, n. 27, c. 6v.

²⁶ Corner, 1749, 174; Corner, 1758, 302.

²⁷ Pacini, 2000, 162.

²⁸ ASV, CSR, S. Caterina, B. 21; Corner, 1749, 174-5.

previous year, was a member of one of the oldest families in Venice.²⁹ He owned a *palazzo* in the *campo dei Crociferi*, which is probably how he came to be associated with the monastery. The position of lay protector was one established by the early Crociferi to serve the very purpose it did in this case: to associate the order with a person of influence who would intercede on their behalf.³⁰ Zen's election as doge afforded him even greater capacity to do so, and indeed, he used his sway to furnish the church with the recently translated relics of St. Barbara in 1256.³¹ In death the wealthy doge provided a sizeable bequest that made the hospital a bona fide institution, and ultimately facilitated its existence beyond the survival of the order itself.³²

As a result of the financial security the *commissaria* Zen afforded, the Crociferi were able to reinvent themselves in two phases over the course of the Quattrocento. As demand for hospitallers decreased, they shifted their charitable focus toward caring for 30-40 sick, and mid-century became a *ospizio* for 12 elderly widows.³³ Crociferi in other cities were less responsive to the social changes that altered their purpose, and a period of decadence took hold throughout the order. Such crises were experienced by many mendicant orders as a result of the complications new material wealth, rapid growth and social change brought to their way of life. Both Boldù and Leoni report on this moment

²⁹ P. Giraldi, *The Zen family (1500-1550)*, (unpub. PhD diss., University of London, 1975), 64.

³⁰ Pacini, 2000, 163.

³¹ Corner, 1758, 302-3.

³² Giraldi, 1975, 68. The Zen made a fortune through the settlement of the eastern Mediterranean, leaving Renier a very wealthy man at the time of his death. G. Luzzatto, "Il Patrimonio privato di un doge del secolo XIII" *Ateneo Veneto* 17 (1924), 29-58. His estate totalled 49,000 *lire* and he left the Crociferi vineyards in Istria and sixteen local houses.

³³ M. Frank, *Donne Attempate: Women of a Certain Age in Sixteenth-Century Venetian Art* (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2006), 243.

of decline, of the “*miserie interne*”, which would ultimately lead to the ruin of the order.³⁴ Because one of the more obvious signs of disobedience was the relaxation of costume, Pius II assigned a new habit to the Crociferi in 1464. The wooden cross that each brother carried became silver, and the original grey habit was replaced with one of turquoise.³⁵ Palma illustrates this change in the far left of the sacristy painting depicting Alexander III [Figs.14-15].

A further measure for reform was taken by assigning cardinal *commendatori* to oversee restoring order to each of the rogue monasteries.³⁶ The first *commendatore* of the Venetian monastery was Pietro Barbo, the future Paul II. When he was elected pope shortly after taking up this position, the learned Cardinal Bessarion was his successor.³⁷ An *istromento* of 1469 between Bessarion (also papal legate to Venice) and the Crociferi confirms his involvement with the monastery.³⁸ The next recorded *commendatore* was Cardinal Giovanni Michiel, who assumed the role as early as 1481. It can safely be assumed that nepotism secured the commendam for Michiel, as his uncle was Pietro Barbo. It is tempting to make a further connection between these individuals and yet another in their circle: Cardinal Giovanni Battista Zen. Zen, who belonged to the same

³⁴ Leoni, 1598, 19-21. Leoni recalls the existence of “*poca obedientia*”, of brothers going outside the monastery, and even violence.

³⁵ O. Fialetti, *Habiti delle religioni con le armi e breve descrittioni loro* (Venice, 1626), II, 60.

³⁶ Pacini, 1996, n. 37, 413; O. Logan, *The Venetian upper clergy in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries* (Salzburg, 1995), 523. “In the monastic sense an abbey was said to be held in commendam when the right of election to the office of abbot was not enjoyed by the chapter, power of nomination being exercised by the Papacy or by a lay patron.”

³⁷ Boldù, 1571, 29r. The principal locations on which the *commenda* was focused were Rome, Naples, Salerno, Bologna, Milan, Ravenna and Venice. Leoni, 1598, 22r; Corner, 1749, II, 176; Corner, 1758, 304.

³⁸ M. Palmieri, *Historia della translatione del glorioso corpo della Beata Vergine e Martire Santa Barbara di Nicomedia* (Padua, 1643), 22.

line of the illustrious family descendant from Renier, was also the nephew of the Barbo pope and cousin to Michiel.³⁹ Given the longstanding connection between the Zen and the monastery, this may be another instance in which family influence was used to aid the Crociferi.

During the final years of the fifteenth century, the Crociferi gained another important advocate in Alvise Dardani, who would go on to be elected Grand Chancellor. This position, created during the dogate of Renier Zen, was a governmental role of chief importance. It was the only position of such authority open to members of the Republic's vast citizen class of which he would essentially act as head.⁴⁰ Beginning in 1472, Dardani occupied the role of lay protector, although his association with the Crociferi seems to have dated back to his youth. In the record of the 1446 election of a prioress of the hospital, Dardani is listed as "D. Ludovicum de Dardanis procuratorem et sindicum."⁴¹ Throughout his tenure as advocate Dardani was largely preoccupied with resolving a misappropriation of funds meant for the hospital by the Procuratori di San Marco de Citra, to which documents of 1472 attest. It was also in his capacity as protector that Dardani oversaw, and perhaps even initiated, a project to rebuild the old church around 1490, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

³⁹ S. Fletcher, "The Making of a Fifteenth-Century Cardinal" *SV* 31 (1996), 32. Barbo was related to Michiel and Zen through his sisters, Nicolosa and Elisabetta.

⁴⁰ *Guida alle magistrature: elementi per la conoscenza della Repubblica veneta*, eds. Milan, Politi, Vianello (Sommacamagna, 2003), 71-73. The Grand Chancellor was second only to the doge and the Procuratori di San Marco in ceremonial terms and was elected for life. He was the first of the secretaries of each assembly, where he could voice opinions, but not vote.

⁴¹ P. De Peppo, "Memorie di veneti cittadini: Alvise Dardani, Cancellier Grande" *SV* 8 (1984), 420; Lunardon, 155-56.

The *commenda* was still in effect in 1556, the year in which the Republic began to actively intervene on behalf of the Crociferi in an attempt to restore their autonomy. Following a report of indiscipline observed on a visit to the monastery by the Master General, a *breve* was sent which put the house under the control of the Generale and robbed the Venetian Crociferi of the unique privileges they had always enjoyed, including the right for their prior to deal independently with economic and disciplinary issues. Doge Francesco Venier, via ambassador Bernardo Navagero, convinced Paul IV to lift the restrictions.⁴² This incident is reflective of the constant struggle to maintain the sensitive balance of power between Rome and Venice, which closely guarded its autonomy, particularly regarding ecclesiastical matters. Compromises frequently had to be reached, and it was probably just this sort of politics that sustained and protected the Venetian Crociferi until the last. This resolution, involving the direct intercession of a doge and the concession of a pope, was celebrated as a victory in the eyes of the Crociferi. Indeed, they saw fit to advertise it amongst important events of the order's history depicted by Palma in the oratory cycle [Fig.16]. Through the intervention of the Republic, Pius V finally abolished the *commenda* in 1568, deeming the Crociferi to have returned to sufficient discipline.⁴³ In 1571, Boldù credited their reform to the “saggio et diligenze governo de suoi presenti Retori.”⁴⁴ A new beginning was signalled at the Capitolo Generale of 1581 in Venice, at which a committee was appointed to revise the constitution to account for the decrees of the Council of Trent and an ongoing need to remain vigilant against indiscipline. Master General Francesco Fossano appointed four

⁴² *I Libri Commemorativi della Repubblica di Venezia. Regesti.* (Venice, 1903), VI, n. 42, 285 (July 15, 1556).

⁴³ Corner, 1758, 305.

⁴⁴ Boldù, 1571, 29.

high-ranking brothers, all of whom were Venetian, or were based in Venice: Giuliano Cirno, Camillo Cremaschi, Stefano Leoni, and Ottaviano Semitecolo.⁴⁵ This was perhaps because somehow the Venetian monastery and its Veneto dependents flourished, while those elsewhere would continue to struggle with disobedience and depleted membership. Throughout the century it was consistently the largest, filled to capacity with well over 50 Crociferi, while even the motherhouse at Bologna only maintained 24. Verona was the next largest with 10 *religiosi*, followed by Vicenza with 9, Conegliano with 8, and Padova with 7.⁴⁶

The population of the Venetian house was equal to or exceeded that of other major Venetian monasteries. In 1564 there were 59 inhabitants, comparable to San Francesco della Vigna, occupied by 60 Franciscans, or San Giobbe, with 49.⁴⁷ Numerous archival sources reveal that the Crociferi consistently maintained *frati* bearing the most important and ancient family names of the Libro d'oro.⁴⁸ In many cases it can be determined that membership to the order was a sort of family affair; Crociferi who were brothers, cousins, nephews and surely many illegitimate sons can be traced across multiple generations. In the list of expenses for the church in the 1564 *condizione*, an intriguing addition is made which suggests the monastery was the chosen destination of

⁴⁵ *Constitutiones*, 1587, 5v; B. Leoni, *Memoriale per la regolare osservanza della congregazione de' Crociferi* (Verona, 1591), 1r-5v.

⁴⁶ Leoni, 1591, 5r.

⁴⁷ ASV, SDC, B. 33, f. 173.

⁴⁸ For example: Badoer, Barbarigo, Barbaro, Boldù, Bondumier, Cicogna, Contarini, Donà, Dolfìn, Gradenigo, Gussoni, Leoni, Malipiero, Michiel, Mocenigo, Pasqualigo, Pisani, Querini, Trissino, Tron, Vinciguerra, Zen.

gentlemen during the Holy Week, at which time they would live amongst the brothers.⁴⁹ Given the lively and learned atmosphere the Crociferi cultivated, it is understandable why the monastery appealed to a patrician audience, steeped as they generally were in secular pursuits. An ambience the Venetian Crociferi clearly provided—with greater than average latitude and access to the sorts of pursuits to which a patrician male might be accustomed—would have been an attractive option to those for whom a religious calling was not the driving force behind their entry into monastic life. Indeed, at the time of suppression one of the nuncio’s main complaints was that the monastery remained “ripiena di persone mal nate.”⁵⁰

In 1591 Master General Benedetto Leoni published a commentary on the revised constitution in which he acknowledges the success of the “utilissime” reforms, but suggests ways in which the order might move toward an even more rigorous existence. Clearly from the perspective of the highest-ranking member of the order, there was still instability, an ongoing need to stabilize and reorganise, warning signs of what the next century would bring.

2.4 Suppression

From about 1605, various popes began to make efforts to reduce the number of Crociferi monasteries, suppressing those that had too few brothers to warrant their independence.⁵¹ By the time Innocent X ordered the review of the state of Italian *religiosi* in March of 1649, the Crociferi were already nearly extinct. Thirty monasteries

⁴⁹ ASV, SDC, B. 33, f. 173, c. 11. “Per spese si fano la settimana s[an]ta In chiesa, et per molti gentil’huomini, che si ritirano qui a viver con li p[ad]ri’ nelli giorni santi nelqual giorni per la lungeza di offij, é necessario far magior spesa in viver del’ordinario.”

⁵⁰ ASV, DispR, B. 139, c. 65v-66r.

⁵¹ Pacini, 1996, 408.

had closed during the last decade of the sixteenth century; their houses were reduced to just 25, over a quarter of those remaining were in Venetian territory. The pope's inquiry led to major suppressions in 1653, which further reduced Crociferi monasteries from 25 to 5: Bologna, Venice, and their dependents in Verona, Vicenza and Bergamo.⁵² Although the motherhouse was still Bologna, it had been all but abandoned, and even the Master General lived permanently in Venice.⁵³

It was no coincidence that four of the remaining five houses were under Venetian control. In its typical fashion, the Republic continued to defend the *conventini* under its jurisdiction, refusing to enforce the suppressions decreed by the papacy.⁵⁴ Beyond financial concerns, this decision was based on the fact that the Venetian government viewed these monasteries as a refuge for poor nobility.⁵⁵ Indeed, the Venetian house was still home to 53 Crociferi, while three remained at Bologna, and their income was five times the size of any of the remaining monasteries.⁵⁶

A stalemate of roughly two years ensued, during which the Republic was embroiled in a war against the Turks in its territory of Candia (1647-1669). It was almost certainly due to the financial strain of this conflict that the Senate instructed their ambassador in Rome to initiate a dialogue with the papacy in January of 1656 regarding

⁵² Corner, 1758, 305; Cappelletti, 1855, 396; Pacini, 1996, n. 15, 404.

⁵³ Santa Maria di Morello di Bologna was demolished following the Napoleonic suppressions.

⁵⁴ ASV, DispR, f. 134, c. 316v. ASVat, SS, B. 87, 169r-v and B. 281, 47v. On November 2, 1652 Venice sent explicit instructions to their territories not to execute the instruction of the papal constitution without permission of the state. E. Boaga, *La soppressione innocenziana dei piccoli conventi in Italia* (Rome, 1971), 115-18.

⁵⁵ P. Pallavicini, *Della vita di Alessandro VII* (Prato, 1839), I, 424.

⁵⁶ ASVat, CSR, 24, f. 81. Their income was 5557 *scudi romani*, while Bologna ranked second with 1334. The Venetian Crociferi administered 2 daily, 31 weekly and 44 monthly masses, 8 anniversaries and 7 daily commemorations.

the implications of conceding to the suppressions. The new pontiff, Alexander VII, was also keen to banish these quasi-extinct orders, and an agreement was reached between the two parties, each having a caveat. Venice wanted to keep the profits yielded from the sale of the monastic houses to fund their war, and the papacy wanted the Republic to readmit the Jesuits, who had been banished in 1606.⁵⁷

From January to April of 1656 the details of the suppression were negotiated with the help of the Venetian ambassador to Rome and the papal nuncio Carlo Caraffa. In February 1656 the orders under consideration for suppression were announced: “una delle prime può esser la Religion de Cruciferi come ripiena di persone mal nate, e ch’è fatta depositaria de gl’effetti del vizio.”⁵⁸ Nunzio Caraffa concurred, writing to Rome:

“....si mantigono da Cinquanta Religiosi nessuno di quali si vivi coll’osservanza o disciplina regolare, ma al contrario si trova in tutti tanta relaxationi, che non é quasi alcuno di questi Padri, che non habbia qualche figlio nato di mal pratica. A questo loro modo di vivere, che causa generalm[ent]e grandissimo scandalo s’aggionge anco un’ ignoranza cosi estrima.”⁵⁹

Caraffa listed amongst their transgressions an offensive relaxation of costume, and expressed shock at having found no mass being said the day before on account of the fact that every brother had slept outside of the monastery. In March Caraffa and three Procuratori Deputati elected by the Senate initiated the inventories of the *beni* of the Crociferi church (and of Santo Spirito in Isola, which was also suppressed).⁶⁰ The estimated worth of the entire group of properties was about one million ducats.⁶¹ In light

⁵⁷ G. Signorotto, “Venezia e il ritorno dei Gesuiti” *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 28 (1992), 227-317.

⁵⁸ ASV, DispR, B. 139, c. 65v-66r.

⁵⁹ ASVat, SS, B. 87, c. 169 (4 March 1656).

⁶⁰ BNM, Mss. Cod. It. XI, 42 (=6961), *Dispacci di Mons. Caraffa nunzio apostolico in Venetia toscani il ritorno de P.P Gesuiti, 1656-7*, 159.

⁶¹ ASV, DispR, B. 139, c. 74v.

of the arrangement the Republic had made to receive the profit from the sale of the properties, the enormous value of these buildings, full of important works of art, cannot have been a small factor in this decision to allow the suppression of these particular monasteries. Santo Spirito alone had two altarpieces and a series of three ceiling paintings by Titian, and the Crociferi church was not far behind with its cache of important works from the previous century. In a letter of 1 April 1656, Nuncio Caraffa reported that the Crociferi, clearly aware of impending doom, had resolved to divide the “sacri suppellittili” amongst themselves.⁶²

On 28 April 1656, two bulls of suppression were issued for the Crociferi and the Canons of Santo Spirito. The Crociferi complex did not remain empty for long. As early as May of 1656, the brothers of Cardinal Vidman had expressed interest in buying the majority of the *beni* of both Santo Spirito and the Crociferi, but their offer was rejected as too low.⁶³ The pope’s stipulation that the Jesuits be readmitted went to vote in the Venetian Senate in January of 1657. The request was passed after an animated debate, and when the question arose of where to put them, the ample double cloister of the Crociferi monastery seemed an ideal option. In early March of 1657 Caraffa took an offer of forty thousand ducats to the Senate, but it was rejected. He reports that some agitators took to the *piazza*, claiming that even one hundred thousand ducats would not be adequate.⁶⁴ Caraffa suggested a compromise of fifty thousand silver ducats, and

⁶² ASVat, SS, B. 87, c. 224r.

⁶³ ASVat, SS, B. 281, c. 220r (20 May 1656).

⁶⁴ ASVat, SS, B. 89, c. 176r-v.

ultimately the offer was accepted.⁶⁵ Even Caraffa knew the Jesuits were getting a fairly handsome deal. He wrote to Rome:

“..le fabbriche formano un Isola bellissima et molta grande....perche conoscono effettivamente il sito assai vasto, in ottima e più salubri parti dilla Città con fabbriche molto grandi, e dalle parti di magazeni proportionamente ad essere ridotti con non gran’ spesa informa di Collegio con Cortile e Scuole commodissimi. Essendo certo, che il prezzo é stato piutosto dolce, che rigoroso, e che grande la congiuntura non havessi fatto trovasi questo luoco vacuo in cent’ anni se con la spesa di 150 ducati non havev[--] mai potuto arrivare á fabbricarsi quella commodità che trovano adesso nil primo giorno del loro ingresso per li detti 50 ducati, che vien[-] assorbito, anzi di gran lunga superato dal solo valori della Chiesa, Sagristia e mobili Sacri.”⁶⁶”

Indeed, the church was more or less ready to be used, but by the turn of the eighteenth century the structure was over two hundred years old and showing its age. By some accounts it was rotting and dangerous, and it did not suit the tastes or needs of its new occupants.⁶⁷ They wanted more space for their scholastic endeavours and a church that would reflect their exuberant spirituality. A generous offer by the influential Friulian Manin family in 1710 presented them with the opportunity to make it their own. Two decades later there was little trace of the old complex, and much of the surrounding *campo* had been altered to accommodate the new plan [Fig.17]. Further alterations were made after the fall of the Republic, when the cloister was used as barracks for Napoleon’s troops. So it was that the last traces of the Crociferi church slipped away.

⁶⁵ ASV, DelibR, reg. 60, c. 67r-v (28 February 1656).

⁶⁶ ASVat, SS, B. 89, c. 177r-v.

⁶⁷ M. Zanardi, “I ‘domicilia’ o centri operativi della Compagnia di Gesù nello Stato vento” in *I Gesuiti e Venezia* (Padua, 1994), 125. *Proti* for the building project, Domenico Rossi, Domenico Mazzoni and Iseppo Pagan reported on the physical state of the church in May of 1710, noting holes in the walls and ceiling over the nave.

Chapter III

3.1 The Crociferi Church

Marin Sanudo recorded the initiation of the rebuilding of the post-1214 church in 1490: “In questi zorni la chiesa d’i Crosechieri comenzò a restaurarsi di novo—era vecchia—mediante Alvise d’i Dardani l’oro Procur, dove è il corpo di S. Barbara, al qual fu fato una capella, etiam fo fabbrichà di novo il dormitorio.”¹ The author of the Annali veneti dall’anno 1457 al 1500 offers that sometime between April and August of 1490: “Marco Moresini q. Polo, ha restaurò la giesia di Crosechieri, co’l suo dormitorio; e quella de Sant’Andrea de Lido.”² Sabellico noted it had been restored sometime before 1494, and elaborated in 1502: “il loro monastero vago et lieto pur dianzi procurando Aloisio Dardano è stato edificato, come che di questo luogo la faccia sia antica.”³

This testimony establishes that the structure Jacopo de’Barbari captured in 1500 was in fact the church that had been newly restored, and that their lay protector Dardani was involved in some capacity [Fig.18].⁴ Confusion enters into the matter on a number of fronts here. The first thing requiring clarification is the mention of Marco Moresini in the Annali. While Marco Moresini was indeed the wealthy benefactor of the monastery of Sant’Andrea della Certosa, rebuilt about the same time, my research has uncovered no link to the Crociferi.⁵ There is no mention of any bequest or association with them in his

¹ M. Sanudo, *Le vite dei dogi*, (Padua, 1989), II, 630.

² D. Malipiero, “Annali veneti” *Archivio Storico Italiano* 7 (1844), 685.

³ M. A. Sabellico, *De situ urbis venetae* (Venice, 1494), II, 13; *Del sito di venezia città*, 1502, ed. G. Meneghetti (Venice, 1957), 22.

⁴ BMC, Jacopo de’ Barbari, Venetie, (Venice, Anton Kolb, 1500), woodcut.

⁵ Sanudo, *Le vite*, II, 630-31.

testament, or in any of the documents concerning his *commissaria*.⁶ Since Sanudo also mentions the two renovation projects in close proximity (roughly June or July of 1489), it seems safe to assume that the attribution of the Crociferi renovation to the benevolence of Morosini resulted from an error in the 1564 transcription from the now lost original copy of the Annali, which reorganised the information from chronological to thematic order.⁷

Further confusion of the timeline has resulted from Sansovino's frequently repeated assertion that the church was rebuilt after a fire in 1513. Despite the earlier testimony of Sanudo and Sabellico, authors have universally omitted any reference to the 1490 structure, leading to an assumption that the building in the Jacopo de' Barbari map was destroyed and replaced after 1513.⁸ Yet later perspectival views of the church—those of Vavassore, c. 1535 [Fig.3], Pagan, 1559 [Fig.4], and especially Merlo, 1660 [Fig.5]—as well as pictorial renderings by Palma il Giovane [Fig.19] and Lovisa [Fig.20], all illustrate a church that is identical to the one depicted in 1500. It is prudent to acknowledge here that many subsequent views were heavily reliant on the 1500 precedent, and did not account for changes in the urban fabric. Comparative analyses have revealed that a number of engravers did endeavour to update their plans, including Merlo, whose 1660 view shows the church more or less as it was 160 years before.⁹

Tragically, there was a fire at the monastery in 1513, the same night as a separate blaze laid waste to the Rialto. The Annali Malipiero relates: “Ai 10 Gennajo, ad un'ora

⁶ ASV, PSMsupra, Comm., B. 25, 26, 27, 41; ASV, CSR, S. Andrea della Certosa, B. 8, f. K, n. 257.

⁷ C. Neerfeld, *Historia per forma di diaria: la cronachistica veneziana contemporanea a cavallo tra il quattro e il cinquecento* (Venice, 2006), 69, 83.

⁸ F. Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima* (Venice, 1581), 60b. States that the rebuilding was the work of Dardano, “Grand Protettore and Benefattore.”

⁹ J. Schulz, “The printed plans and panoramic views of Venice (1486-1797)” in *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte* 7 (1970), 73.

di notte, in tempo di furiosissimo vento, prima ai Crocicchieri, poi in Rialto si accese fuoco.”¹⁰ And from the diaries of Marcantonio Michiel: “A di 10 Gennajo essendo entrato il fuoco per un cammino nel monastero dei Crocicchieri, bruciò tutto il monastero, eccetto la chiesa, fino ai fondamenti...”¹¹ Galliccioli clarifies: “arse il Convento, ma non la chiesa de’Croecchieri.”¹² These accounts indicate that only the monastery, and not the church, was destroyed in the fire.¹³ A 1562 *relazione* laments that the fire “consumò il monasterio con tutte le sue scritture e argenti e paramenti della giesia”, things that the 1656 inventory confirms were kept in the monastery.¹⁴ This clarifies how some early decoration and the body of Barbara managed to survive, and why a few days after the fire Sanudo was able to report that the saint’s head was carried in procession around the smouldering Rialto in an attempt to extinguish the flames with its recently tested preventative powers.¹⁵

The confusion surrounding the rebuild seems to have emerged from a misreading of original documents, or a failure to consult them at all. Many authors took Sansovino at his word without realising that by 1513 Alvise Dardani had been reposing in his tomb inside the church for several years, thus unable to oversee the post-fire renovation.¹⁶

¹⁰ Malipiero, 1844, 1100.

¹¹ BMC, Cod. Cic.2848, M. Michiel, *Diarii*.

¹² G. B. Galliccioli, *Delle memorie venete antiche, profane ed ecclesiastiche* (Venice, 1795), II, 237-8.

¹³ Galliccioli, 1795, II, 237.

¹⁴ ASV, PSMcitra, Comm., B. 234-5, fasc. 9; Lunardon, 42.

¹⁵ E. Concina, “Fuochi di Medioevo” in *Venezia in Fumo*, ed. D. Calabi (Bergamo, 2006), 33.

¹⁶ M. Sanudo, *I diarii*, ed. R. Fulin et al. (Venice, 1879-1903), XII, 67 (18 March 1511). Relates the circumstances of Dardano’s funeral and his burial “*in la chiesa de li crosechieri, in la soa archa et capella fata far per lui.*” M. Neff, *Chancellery secretaries in Venetian politics and society: 1480–1533* (Los Angeles, 1985), 173-250. De Peppo (1984, 418-19) assumes that the date of the fire is incorrect.

Neff's suggestion that Dardani's role was simply related to a "substantial" amount of money he left to the Crociferi that was used for the rebuilding is negated by his testament, which made no such provision.¹⁷ The more likely scenario is that Alvise Dardani was to the Crociferi what Marco Morosini was to the Certosa, as Giorgio Emo was to Santi Giovanni e Paolo, and as Bernardo Navager was to the parish of San Giovanni in Bragora: a powerful lay protector who contributed funds in life and/or presided over a project of reconstruction.¹⁸

It is hard to know how the 1490 renovations were made possible, if not from a private contribution from Dardani or another wealthy patron.¹⁹ Still in *commenda*, the Crociferi would not have been in a position to fund such a project independently, as Dardani's own testimony regarding their dire financial situation reveals.²⁰ Indeed, finances prohibited a speedy restoration of the cloister, which was enlarged in the classical style, but not complete until 1543, when an engraved stone was placed to mark the occasion.²¹

3.2 Architectural Form: Exterior

¹⁷ ASV, NT (Busenello), B. 66, n. 47 (28 October 1504, Codicil of 24 December 1506).

¹⁸ P. Paoletti, *L'architettura e la scultura del Rinascimento in Venezia* (Venice, 1893), II, 222. M. Tafuri, *Venice in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1985), 20. As procurators of the friars Emo oversaw the 1510 transformation of the basilica and was involved in a decision to finance parts of the rebuild of San Salvatore. On Navager: P. Humfrey, "Cima da Conegliano, Sebastiano Mariani, and Alvise Vivarini at the East End of S. Giovanni in Bragora in Venice" *Art Bulletin* 62 (1980), 350.

¹⁹ Although the government would sometimes direct funds towards such projects via the *Provveditori al Sal*, my research revealed no such provision was made for the Crociferi, nor is there mention of a rebuilding in the deliberations of the Senate.

²⁰ ASV, PSMcitra, Comm., B. 230/1, Quaderno VI. Dardani testifies in 1493 that the *commenda* cost the monastery in excess of 600 ducats a year, making it difficult for them to maintain the hospital.

²¹ Lunardon, 40. "Coenobium hoc igne et vetustate consumptum in augustiorem hanc formam Crucigeri a fundamentis erexerunt A. MDXLIII."

Judging from the size of the structure depicted in the various engraved and painted images of the church in relation to others that survive, the Crociferi must have been of substantial dimension.²² It was bigger than the Madonna dell'Orto and smaller than Santi Giovanni e Paolo, but only by perhaps a third. Sanudo named it as among the most “grande e bellissime” of churches of Venice, joining others that have survived to be regarded as the most splendid in the city.²³ The ample two-storey cloister extended off the right side of the façade and extended the entire length of the sizeable *campo*²⁴, and a Romanesque campanile flanked the church.²⁵ A walled area between the bell tower and the edge of the Rio del Tassetto di Murano was a garden.²⁶

Because several ground plans of the original church exist, some conclusions can be reached about its actual dimensions. An overlay of the Crociferi ground plan with that of the present church of the Gesuiti composed by architects Stefano Bortolussi and Antonio Mazzeri has produced a rough estimate of the original size: it was approximately 17m wide and 50m long [Fig.22].²⁷ Judging from these estimates, we can surmise that the height was probably about double the width of the church, or about 35m.

²² W. Dorigo, *Venezia origini: fondamenti, ipotesti, metodi* (Milan, 1983), 495. The Crociferi church is rated a 3 out of 4 on Dorigo's comparative scale, with a 4 being “*grandissimo*.”

²³ M. Sanudo, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis Venetae (1493-1530)*, ed. A. Caraccioloarico (Milan, 1980), 49. In addition to San Marco, S. Piero di Castello, Santi Giovanni e Paolo, the Frari, Santa Maria dei Servi, San Stefano, San Zaccaria, the Madonna dell'Orto, the Miracoli.

²⁴ ASVat, CSR, Relationes, 24: There were 54 rooms in the monastery, plus “Novitiato, Vestiario, Libreria, Refettorio, Cucina, Respensa, Tinello, Canecca, Magazeni da legne et altre comodità con doi Claustri tre corti et un pocco di Horto; ha doi parti è situato sopra l'Aqua, et dall'altra sopra una piazza assai grande.”

²⁵ Dorigo, 2003, I, 793.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 793.

²⁷ M. Dalla Costa, “La Chiesa di S. Maria Assunta dei Gesuiti e la concezione Palladiana” in *I Gesuiti e Venezia*, 1994, 714-5.

The church was a barn-like structure—“a capanna”—consisting of a single large nave (lacking side aisles or clerestory) and was constructed from brick.²⁸ A square chancel extended off the body of the church and reached toward the edge of the canal. Dorigo incorrectly stated that there were no chapels; two extended off the left side of the church, an angle that is not accommodated by the perspective of the engraved views. There were no chapels on the right side of the church, presumably due to the placement of the adjacent cloister. The church was lit by six lancet windows which punctuated the flanks, as well as a large oculus window placed centrally just below the roofline on the façade, flanked by two further lancet windows. Another oculus window was similarly positioned at the liturgical east end of the church, with a second at the altar wall of the chancel, again flanked by two lancet windows.

We can see from the ground plan that the façade ran on an angle, flush with the adjacent buildings that we can still observe *in situ* today [Fig.6]. The present Jesuit church now extends about two meters in front of these buildings, suggesting the Jesuits corrected the angle in order to enlarge the church and create a more imposing façade. Although for obvious reasons there was a practice of reusing foundations in Venice, the Jesuit project was probably too ambitious for the original foundations to accommodate.

The façade was relatively simple, even austere, compared to churches built or rebuilt around the same time (the Miracoli, San Zaccaria, San Giobbe), and would not have been unlike other lost churches such as Sant’Elena, San Servolo, Santa Giustina or the altered church of Santi Cosma e Damiano della Giudecca.²⁹ Its relative simplicity

²⁸ Bricks consistent with those used in surviving gothic buildings were found during a restoration of the Gesuiti.

²⁹ Dorigo, 1983, 630.

may be reflective of financial constraints; similar restrictions necessitated modest designs for the Sansovinian churches of San Giuliano and San Martino.³⁰ If the brick was exposed, we get no such sense of its texture from Palma's depiction, or from Lovisa's engraving [Figs.19-20]. It is possible that it was covered in a salmon coloured *stucco* (much like the façade of the cloister [Fig.21]), against which the Istrian stone engaged pilasters and detailing would have had stood out crisply, an effect that can still be observed at the church of San Giovanni Crisostomo.

The next obvious question is who might have been responsible for the design of this structure, information we lack for many Venetian churches of this period. In some cases the *proto-maestro*, a skilled project manager who was sometimes also an architect, might be known, but just as often these figures remain anonymous. The Crociferi may have had significant input into the design of their church, even supervised its construction. Among multiple examples of the active participation of clergy in the initiation and coordination of an architectural project, the most obvious remains the rebuilding of the Franciscan church of San Francesco della Vigna.³¹ The form and functionality of Sansovino's design was shaped by the input of three monks—Zuanne Barbaro, Hieronimo Contarini, and especially Francesco Zorzi—all from patrician families, thus privy to intellectual circles in which architecture was discussed.³² Given the patrician demographic at the Crociferi monastery, it would not be surprising to find that there were architectural enthusiasts among the membership that could have served a similar administrative role in the reconstruction. Their lay protector, Alvise Dardani,

³⁰ Tafuri, 1993, 73.

³¹ On ecclesiastical patrons: D. Howard, *Jacopo Sansovino: Architecture and Patronage in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven, 1975), 62-88.

³² Howard, 1975, 66-7, 173, n. 30.

might also have assumed the role. Multiple sources do testify to his involvement— Sansovino said “mediante”—and indeed, his role in a contemporaneous building project speaks to his qualifications to act as an intermediary. In 1490 he was directing a project to build a new meetinghouse in his capacity as guardian grande of the Scuola Grande di San Marco.³³ Dardani’s role in this project may help us rule out a few of the well-known architects as potential authors of the Crociferi design. In November of 1489 progress on the meetinghouse was halted due to an unspecified conflict between the *guardian grande*, Dardani, and the architects Pietro Lombardo and Giovanni Buora.³⁴ By 1490 Mauro Codussi was in charge of the project, and no further mention of the first architects appears in any subsequent documentation.³⁵ It seems safe to conclude that something had gone wrong enough to warrant dismissing them, and given the fact that Alvise Dardani seems also to have been in charge of the Crociferi rebuild, initiated a few months later, it is hard to imagine that he would have brought them in on another project.³⁶

3.3 Interior: 1581 and 1656

Two major things happened in 1581 that proved incredibly useful to this reconstruction: Francesco Sansovino published the first edition of his guidebook to

³³ De Peppo, 1984, 421. Dardani served as *guardian grande* twice (1484 and 1490).

³⁴ ASV, Scuola Grande di San Marco, Notatorio, B. 16; Paoletti, 1893, II, doc. 73, 103.

³⁵ P. Sohm, *The Scuola Grande di San Marco, 1437-1550: the architecture of a Venetian lay confraternity* (New York, 1982), 11-12, 113-116.

³⁶ A. Schulz, “Giovanni Buora lapicida” *Arte Lombarda* 65 (1983), 49-50, 59. Buora (1450-1513) was more of a collaborator than an independent architect. His specialty was geared more towards carved decoration than architectonic design, although he was responsible for the dormitory of San Giorgio Maggiore (1494). Because there is no like project by Buora with which to form a comparison, it is difficult to make any sort of meaningful comment on whether he had anything to do with the Crociferi church, however his connection to Giovanni Michiel, the cardinal *commendatorio* for the Crociferi during the years of the rebuilding, merits remark as evidence of a potential link. Buora was commissioned by Michiel to execute an external portal at Palazzo Vescovile in Verona in 1502.

Venice, and an apostolic visit to all Venetian monasteries occurred.³⁷ Between Sansovino's testimony and the observations made in the records of the visit, we can begin to visualize the interior as it would have been after the first phase of redecoration. The inventory taken in 1656 provides a sort of snapshot of the arrangement of the church and its decoration after the second phase of redecoration and before the Jesuits arrived. The reader is encouraged to consult the 1581 and 1656 reconstructed ground plans in the interest of visualising the basic layout of the church and the location of works of art, as we move on to a discussion of decorative patronage [Figs.23-24].

Tombs

Some wall tombs probably occupied the space along the first third of the nave before the installation of two additional altars to the left and right of the entrance sometime after 1581. Their construction may have displaced the sculptural tomb of the youth Ippolito Verardi, the first known Venetian work by Giambattista Bregno commissioned around 1503-4 by the Verardi brothers who had been Cesenate patrons of Bregno.³⁸

The Choir

As Modesti's study of the choirs described in the apostolic visit revealed, the Crociferi choir was one of only three described as "podium pensile" or "quod inservit pro choro."³⁹ It was raised, like surviving *barchi* in Santa Maria dei Miracoli, San Sebastiano

³⁷ S. Tramontin, "La visita apostolica del 1581 a Venezia" *SV* 9 (1967), 453-533.

³⁸ A. Schulz, *Giambattista and Lorenzo Bregno* (Cambridge, 1991), cat 18, 170-1. The Verardi also commissioned Bregno to execute statues for the Altar of the Corpus Domini in the chapel of Carlo Verardi in the Duomo at Cesena. The tomb was recorded in place (albeit without reference to its specific location or form) as late as 1592. [App.VIII]

³⁹ P. Modesti, "I cori nella chiese veneziane e la visita apostolica del 1581. Il 'barco' di Santa Maria della Carità" *AV* 59 (2002), 39-65.

and Sant'Alvise, only not suspended over the entrance door. This type of choir occupied the width of the church, dividing the space in two unequal parts: the *ecclesia laicorum* and the *ecclesia fratrum*, terms that speak to the function of the screen as a barrier between the zones occupied by the laity and the *frati*.⁴⁰ The Crociferi version was made of wood with an open arcade front (resembling a portico) and a central passage, perhaps sizable enough to provide visibility toward the high altar.⁴¹ This became increasingly important with Counter-Reformation changes to liturgy, requiring some choirs to be dismantled to accommodate the need of the populace to see what was occurring at the altar. The visitors to the Crociferi in 1581 made no suggestion for altering the choir, and although the structure was refurbished in the early 1590's, it survived intact until the Jesuits demolished it to rebuild.⁴² Like the Crociferi choir, the analogous choirs belonging to the Dominicans of Santi Giovanni e Paolo and the Camaldolese monks of San Giovanni Battista alla Giudecca are lost, however the lone surviving monastic *barco* at San Michele in Isola, and a painting of the interior of the lost church of Sant'Antonio di Castello (depicted in Carpaccio and shop, Vision of Prior Ottobon [Fig.25]), furnish us with some notion of how it may have looked.⁴³ As at San Michele, there was probably a door to the right of the *barco* that would have allowed the *frati* to move in and out of the choir from the second level of the adjacent two-storey cloister. The apostolic visit notes

⁴⁰ M. Merotto Ghedini, "Il tramezzo nella chiesa dei santi Giovanni e Paolo a Venezia" in *De Lapidibus Sententiae*, eds. T. Franco and G. Valenzano (Padova, 2002), 257-62.

⁴¹ Ghedini, 2002, 258. The choirs at Santi Giovanni e Paolo and Sant'Antonio were similarly arcaded.

⁴² G. Albrizzi, *Il forestiere illuminato intorno le cose più rare, e curiose antiche, e moderne, dalla città di Venezia e dell'isole cironvicine* (Venice, 1740), 164. Describes a painting relocated when "i Gesuiti disfecero il Coro che attraversava il Tempio antico."

⁴³ Ghedini, 2002, 257-8. The Santi Giovanni e Paolo choir (post-1386) was destroyed in 1683. On the San Michele *barco*: D. Howard and L. Moretti, *Sound and Space in Renaissance Venice. Architecture, Music, Acoustics* (New Haven, 2009), 50-55.

that a wooden crucifix was suspended from the front of the choir, a practice that was common in mendicant churches.⁴⁴ Examples of these objects from the late fifteenth century, usually made of wood, survive at San Giorgio Maggiore, the Frari, and San Giovanni in Bragora.⁴⁵

In front of the choir was a vessel containing holy water, and a podium, probably used for preaching.⁴⁶ Sanudo's diaries record that a multitude of itinerant preachers spoke at the Crociferi church, and many of the brothers themselves were accomplished *predicatori*. The ample, open space of the nave would have been ideal for large audiences to gather, and the structure of the choir would have kept the laity at a distance from the part of the sanctuary where the Crociferi circulated and where the holy offices were performed.

The Organ

The organ was suspended from the wall between the choir and the door to the sacristy, where Martinelli located it in 1684. This is confirmed through the records of the confraternity of the Conception, which locates its altar beneath the choir on the left, located "vicino al organo."⁴⁷ While the organs in many Venetian churches were located above the door of the main entrance, others were positioned in the middle of the church (such as Santa Maria dei Carmini) for proximity to the choir and the *cappella maggiore*,

⁴⁴ ASV, AP, c. 125r. "Sopra la faccia del Choro...un Christo di Legno." ASVat, VA, 96, c. 72r. "habet crucifixum."

⁴⁵ A. Schulz, "La scultura lignea in area lagunare dalla meta del trecento alla meta del Cinquecento" in *Con il legno e con l'oro: la Venezia artigiana degli intagliatori, battiloro e doratori*, ed. G. Caniato (Sommacampagna, 2009), 53-55.

⁴⁶ ASVat, VA, 96, c. 72r. "suggestum, labella pro aqua benedicta forestutas."

⁴⁷ ASV, SPS, BVC, B. 214; D. Martinelli, *Il ritratto di Venezia* (Venice, 1684), 222.

where the singing and holy offices were performed.⁴⁸ Nothing is known of the origins of the instrument itself, although it is worth noting the proximity of the organ maker Lorenzo da Pavia, who had his shop in Cannaregio as early as 1494.⁴⁹ It seems safe to conclude that the church was furnished with a new organ following the 1491 rebuild, particularly in light of the importance of music in this monastic community, and given the presence during these years of Fra Giovanni Armonio Marso, *recitatore*, singer and organist of San Marco.⁵⁰

The Sacristy

The sacristy extended off the left side of the church, more or less as the present space is positioned, but was smaller and arranged differently, with the altar niche at the liturgical east.⁵¹ The apostolic visitors characterized it as “ampla” and they noted that it contained cabinets, seats and a place to wash hands.⁵² Its only known decoration up to 1581 was a “crocifiso” attributed to Giovanni Mansueti by Sansovino (lost).⁵³

The Library

In 1584 the library positioned above the sacristy was renovated, a project recorded in the hospital’s *libri di spese* [**App.IV**]. There were to be twenty-four shelves in total, which corresponds to the number of “scabelle” of books recorded in the inventory of the

⁴⁸ M. Bisson, “La collocazione degli organi nelle chiese veneziane del Rinascimento” in *Architettura e musica nelle Venezia del Rinascimento*, eds. Howard and Moretti (Venice, 2006), 308.

⁴⁹ S. Dalla Libera, *L’arte degli organi*, (Venice, 1962), 189; W. Prizer, “Isabella d’Este and Lorenzo da Pavia” *Early Music History* 2 (1982), 88.

⁵⁰ The Abbruzian Marso was active in Venice before 1502.

⁵¹ I am grateful to Dr. Lydia Hamlett for sharing the relevant pages of her dissertation. L. Hamlett, *The Sacristy in Renaissance Venice* (unpub. PhD thesis, Cambridge, 2007), 159-161.

⁵² ASVat, VA, 96, c. 72r.

⁵³ Sansovino, 1581, 60b.

library completed between 1598-1603 at the request of the Congregazione dell'Indice.⁵⁴ The accord between the Crociferi and their carpenter specified that their *banchi* should resemble those in the library of San Giorgio Maggiore. They would obviously not have been referring to the present Longhena library, but the preceding one that had been a gift to the Benedictines from Cosimo de' Medici (c.1464-78).⁵⁵ It was not unusual to make comparative specifications like this in contracts for the building of choir stalls, and evidently the practice extended to the furnishing of libraries.⁵⁶ The Crociferi wished for their *banchi* to be the same in size and ornament as those at San Giorgio, with the exception of the quality of the wood, which would not be walnut, but fir and cherry.⁵⁷ We know from the inventory the library was organised in a typical Renaissance system, with each shelf designated to house a certain genre or class of book. The size of the library, which the contract asserts was bigger than that of San Giorgio Maggiore, and the priority its renovation took in the scheme of renovation serve as further testament to the privileged place learning and intellectual pursuits held within this monastery.

⁵⁴ Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 11296, c. 145r-155v; *Codices Vaticani Latini: codices 11266 – 11326. Inventari delle biblioteche religiose italiane alla fine del Cinquecento*, eds. M. Lebreton and A. Fiorani (Rome, 1985), 198-203.

⁵⁵ K. Staikos, *Libraries from antiquity to the Renaissance and major humanist and monastery libraries* (Athens, 1997), 74-5. Vasari noted the San Giorgio library: “fu finita non solo di muraglia, di banchi, di legnami ed altri ornamenti, ma repleta di molti libri.”

⁵⁶ G. Radke, “Nuns and Their Art: The Case of San Zaccaria in Renaissance Venice” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (2001), 449. The nuns of San Zaccaria stipulated in the 1455 contract for their choir stalls that various parts should resemble those at Sant’Elena, and that certain details should be better than those in Santa Fosca.

⁵⁷ ASV, ZC, *Spese di Fabbriche 1507-1592*, filz.8.

Chapter IV

4.1 Monastic Patronage: First Phase (1500-1565)

Franzoi and Di Stefano assert that despite the scale and splendour of the convent, the Crociferi did not distinguish themselves in any particular way in the social, cultural, or religious spheres.¹ On the contrary, my research revealed that the Venetian monastery was in fact an active centre of learning and humanistic pursuits. The 1564 *condizione* records that the Crociferi employed masters of grammar, Latin, Greek, theology and music to instruct the *religiosi*.² A late-Cinquecento inventory of their extensive library (in excess of 1400 titles) reveals the rich, varied, and progressive interests of the Crociferi, many of who were published theologians, poets, historians, musicians and preachers of some renown.³ Marc'Antonio Boldù stressed all of this in the introduction to his history of the Crociferi:

“...li padri nostri l’hanno narrato, ne si convenendo ad altri che a Dio il vero honore, et culto divino, dovremo almeno con vive voci predicarli, et con eterne memorie de scritti, alla perpetuità della fama racomandarli perche havendo noi ricevuto de loro, per le sottili inventioni di tante scienze, et arti, si liberali, come mecanice, ogni industria, sapere, et commodo, dovremo meritamente reputarli come universali benefattori degni d’immortal lode come essaminadori l’historie verissimi testimoni delle humane attioni, et specchio di veritade...”⁴

This will of course have significant implications for our understanding of their role as patrons of art.

4.2 The Crociferi and Music

¹ U. Franzoni and D. Di Stefano, *Le Chiese di Venezia* (Venice, 1976), 150.

² ASV, SDC, B. 33, n. 173. [App.X]

³ *Codices Vaticani*, 1985; A. Barzani, “Ordini religiosi e biblioteche a Venezia tra Cinque e Seicento,” *Annali dell’Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento* 21 (1995), 187-91.

The inventory (c.1598-1603) encompassed both the communal library and the personal collections of individual Crociferi.

⁴ Boldù, 1571, 1r.

Most of the Crociferi monasteries dependent on the Venetian house—including Venice, Padova, Conegliano⁵, Bergamo and Treviso—sustained active music chapels, complete with *maestri di cappelle*, and salaried positions for the organist and instructors of singing and instruments.⁶ The account books of San Martino di Conegliano reveal that musicians were regularly dispatched from Venice, Padova and Treviso to aid the smaller monastery in performing on its significant feast days.

Quaranta's comparative study of the 1564 *condizioni* revealed that the Crociferi paid their organist substantially more than any other monastery, save the church of San Pietro di Castello, then the cathedral of Venice [App.X].⁷ The importance of organ music at the church may have been connected to Crocifero Giovanni Antonio Marso, organist of San Marco (1516-1552), who lived at the monastery from about 1506.⁸ As organist of San Marco for almost four decades, he served under *maestri* De Fossis, Willaert and De Rore. This is significant, as the Crociferi seem to have been amongst the early practitioners of *coro spezzato*; a form of double-choir or polyphonic music that had its roots in sixteenth-century Venice and the unique acoustic space that was the ducal

⁵ D. Bryant and E. Quaranta, "Come si consuma (e perché si produce) la musica sacra da chiesa?" in *Architecture, Musical Composition and Performance*, ed. D. Howard (2006), 269. An anonymous 1588 description of the churches of Conegliano noted that San Martino was among a few churches where music could be heard: "i quali [i Crociferi] porgon prieghi al Signore con organi, canti et musica."

⁶ AST, CRS, SMR, B. 11, c. 18v, 53r and ASV, SDC, B. 33, n. 173. At Venice there was an annual expense for the "maestro insegna cantar alli novitii, diaconi et sudiaconi, et professi", as well as a "maestro insegna à sonar à 3 padri." ASV, AP, c. 124v, and ASV, ZC, *Libro di Spese*, c. 21r. The 1656 inventory of the church recorded 14 "libri di cantar" in the choir, and Priamo Balbi's account book entries for 1593 record a payment to the shop of "Mag.ro Zonta per uno salmista delli Grandi per il choro."

⁷ E. Quaranta, *Oltre San Marco* (Florence, 1998), 33. The salary was 33 ducats, as opposed to the 36 paid to the organist at San Pietro. The average salary was 10-15 ducats.

⁸ App.V for his biography.

chapel.⁹ Adrian Willaert, once credited with the invention of the genre, is now viewed as having played a major role in its development.¹⁰ One of the key pieces of evidence for the emergence of this sort of music before his time involves the Crociferi. In 1536, the musical theorist Pietro Aaron (1480-1545) was admitted as a Crocifero at San Leonardo, Bergamo, following his extensive stay in Venice. Aaron recounted the service in a letter to Giovanni del Lago in Venice the following day: “For the sake of the love that these musicians and singers have for me, Maestro Gasparo, the chapel master, came here voluntarily with twenty-two singers to honour me, and they sang Vespers most excellently with two choirs and *psalmi spezzati*.”¹¹ My own research uncovered further evidence of Crociferi involvement in double-choir music. Various music books were listed in an inventory of the Conegliano monastery, among them an *antiphonario*; a liturgical book used in respondent chanting.¹² In a letter of 1556, prior Giuliano Cirno reported that they had honoured a deceased member of the Gussoni family by saying

⁹ G. D’Alessi, “Precursors of Adriano Willaert in the Practice of “Coro Spezzato” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 5 (1952), 187.

¹⁰ D. Bryant, “The ‘Cori Spezzati’ of St. Mark’s: Myth and Reality” *Early Music History* 1 (1981), 165-86; L. Moretti, “Architectural spaces for music: Jacopo Sansovino and Adrian Willaert at St. Mark’s” *Early Music History* 23 (2004), 153-84; Howard and Moretti, 2009, 26-8.

¹¹ A six-voice madrigal followed. *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*, eds. B. J. Blackburn, E. Lowinsky, C. Miller (Oxford, 1991), 709-11, 789. Aaron likely made the initial connection with the Crociferi in Venice. Until 1540 he was a correspondent of Venetian Crocifero Fra Gregorio Corbelli, and both Corbelli and Aaron were correspondents of Giovanni del Lago, a music theorist and a member of clergy at Santa Sofia who also had Crociferi connections. Del Lago’s unpublished letters include his correspondence with Aaron, but also the accomplished organist, Giovanni da Legge (Da Leze or Da Lezze), a member of a family of Crociferi supporters who would ultimately be buried in the church. Sanudo described him as “a consummate musician” and related the circumstances of Giovanni’s 1526 trip to England, which he took in hopes the king would be impressed with his musical talents and would provide him with a salary “as he had done for the Crocifero of Cà Memo for whom he provided largely.”

¹² AST, CSR, SMR, B. 12. The inventory listed two *salmiste* and two *libri di motetti*.

“tutte le messe due cantata la messa grande in canto figurato più honorevole.”¹³ Finally, the Venetian house counted amongst its illustrious brothers Catarin Bianchi, composer of polyphonic music, who was at Venice as *sacerdote* in 1564, served as the *maestro di cappella* of S. Alessandro di Bergamo in the 1570’s, and returned to Venice where he was recorded as organist in 1581 and 1592.¹⁴

4.3 The Crociferi, Preaching and Plays

A systematic examination of the diaries of Marin Sanudo yielded very little information about the Crociferi, however what Sanudo did mention contributes a great deal to what we know about the atmosphere at the monastery during the early Cinquecento. It was evidently a major venue for itinerant preachers, and on the opposite end of the spectrum, for *commedie dell’arte*. Sanudo records nine visiting *predicatori* at the church between 1507 and 1532 [App.VI]. A glimpse at the appendix of accomplished Crociferi reveals that many of the brothers were themselves preachers of some renown [App.V].

About 1522, Sanudo’s descriptions of preaching at the Crociferi church give way to descriptions of professional productions of *commedie dell’arte* [App.VI]. In 1522 they hosted two recitations of a comedy by Cherea, and the first Venetian performance of Machiavelli’s Mandragola.¹⁵ The following year Ruzzante’s Gli Orlotani and Bibbiena’s Calandra were performed.¹⁶ These were not exactly Passion plays, and were popular amongst the aristocracy for good reason; many of them were erotic and used offensive language, hardly the kind of production you might expect to find friars attending, let

¹³ ASV, PSMsupra, Commissarie, B. 104

¹⁴ App.V for his biography.

¹⁵ G. Padoan, *Momenti del Rinascimento Veneto* (Padua, 1978), 34-8.

¹⁶ [App.VI.]

alone hosting.¹⁷ Theatrical performances did take place at other Venetian monasteries¹⁸, in fact one production in the cloister of Santo Stefano in 1502 was the comedy Stephanium, written by Crocifero Antonio Marso, who must have been instrumental in bringing these acts to the stage of his own monastery. It is also worth considering the influence some of the patrician supporters of the Crociferi, such as the Zen and Da Lezze, may have had on this aspect of life at the monastery.¹⁹

Crociferi involvement in the theatre scene was an obvious extension of their literary interests. We know from a late sixteenth-century inventory that the monastic library contained volumes related to all categories of learning, and that individual Crociferi maintained personal collections. With the blossoming printing industry on their doorstep, the monastery produced published writers of poetry, history, theology and music. Many of the Crociferi held university degrees and were members of academies of learning in Venice and elsewhere.²⁰

¹⁷ P. Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia nella vita privata* (Bergamo, 1928), vol. 2, 394-414; G. Padoan, *L'avventura della commedia rinascimentale*, 1996, 93; R. Ferguson, *The theatre of Angelo Beolco (Ruzante)* (Ravenna, 2000), 166-7. Where these performances took place remains unclear; some have assumed that it was in the cloister or the refectory. Since the monastery was destroyed in 1513 and not rebuilt until 1543, this seems unlikely. It is more plausible that they were staged in one of the many properties the Crociferi owned near the monastery, probably indoors, since Sanudo attended plays in the cold winter months.

¹⁸ Sanudo records performances at San Canciano, San Stefano, San Salvatore and Santa Maria e Donato on Murano.

¹⁹ E. Concina, "Fra Oriente e Occidente: gli Zen, un palazzo e il mito di Trebisonda" in "*Renovatio Urbis*"; *Venezia nell'età di Andrea Gritti (1523-1538)* ed. M. Tafuri (Rome, 1984), 269-70.

²⁰ ASVat, VA, 96, cc. 72v-73r. Hieronimus Rubeus Baccalaureus and Felix Spadius Venetus Lector, Baccalaureus. Marcantonio Querini was a member of the Accademia degli Intenti in Pavia, Francesco Gatta of the Accademia dei Nobili in Venice, and Bernardo Forli of the Accademia of the Alletati.

In the dedication of his history of the Crociferi, Benedetto Leoni asserts that he and his fellow Crociferi made a conscious choice to depart from the tradition of writing in Latin, preferring the vernacular for accessibility.²¹ This preference was also reflected in the titles in their monastic library.²² Their rather progressive literary interests were likely to have been a key factor in the appeal the monastery had to a patrician audience, from which they drew a great deal of membership and, indeed, patronage. Many of their major private patrons and illustrious supporters, the noble Zen, Querini-Massolo and Da Lezze families, and the papal nuncio Giovanni della Casa, were all members of the humanist circles in which the debate over the use of language was being carried out. It cannot be coincidence that it was in a space owned by the Crociferi in Calle del Padiglione that Francesco Marcolini, that famous printer of *volgare* texts, established his first shop in Venice in 1535.²³

4.4 Proactive Priors

During the last decade of the fifteenth century efforts were already being made to ornament the new church. Most of the decoration that we know about from the early part of the century belonged to the trade guilds that occupied side altars or chapels in the church. Nothing was recorded regarding the early decoration of the high altar, as is the case with many important Gothic churches.²⁴ The original high altarpiece was probably

²¹ Leoni, 1598, 1r-v. On the involvement of friars in the editing of vernacular texts in Venice: B. Richardson, *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 2004), 28-47.

²² Barzani, 1995, 187. Notes: “tra i religiosi si contavano scrittori di qualche fame, alieni dal latino e saldamente attaccati al volgare.”

²³ In 1536 he published Adrian Willaert’s Cantus liber quinque Missarum Adrian Willaert “In Vinegia per Francesco Marcolini da Forlì ne le case de i Frati Crosechieri.”

²⁴ P. Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven, 1993), 39. There is no record of what decorated the high altars of the Frari, Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Santa Maria dei Servi, San Stefano, or the Carmini.

some sort of polyptych—whether early or late Gothic—perhaps with a central representation of the Coronation of the Virgin, a preferred subject for churches with Marian dedications during the Quattrocento.

Under the strain of the *commenda* and the efforts to return to discipline, the Venetian house struggled to fill the position of prior in the early decades of the sixteenth century. So desperate was the situation, the Crociferi even attempted to install the thirteen year-old Nicolò Priuli as prior in 1503-4, scandalizing the Signoria, who asked Rome to intervene.²⁵ One Crocifero remained omnipresent throughout these years: Archangelo Cremaschi, who is recorded as prior at Venice at least five times (1497, 1521, 1527, 1529 and 1534), and who served as Master General of the order in 1501 and 1513 [App.V]. During his tenure as Master General, he was responsible for the rebuilding of the motherhouse at Bologna, which had been destroyed by fire during the invasion of Carlo Borbone in 1527.²⁶ His central role in this project is evinced by his burial beneath the high altar in 1545.²⁷ Given his involvement in the Bologna rebuild, it is worth considering that it may have been Archangelo who sparked the spirit of renewal at the Venetian house.

I suspect that part of the project for rejuvenation at the church involved an attempt to solicit new guilds and confraternities. These organisations provided income, they tended altars, and they also had the potential to contribute decoration to the spaces in which they carried out their devotional activities. The guilds centred at the church of the

²⁵ Sanudo, *I diarii*, V, 637, 714.

²⁶ ASVat, CSR, 24, c. 19r. “Nel passaggio di Borbone fu incendiato tutto il mon[aste]ro e la maggior parte della Chiesa, che percio il Pre. M[aest]ro Archangelo de Cremaschi all’hora Generale Perpetuo rifece la Chiesa et edificio l’alta volta il mon[aste]ro assai ristretto.”

²⁷ BCT, Mss.474, c. 631v.

Crociferi were among the wealthiest and most prolific in their art patronage, and it is worth considering that the Crociferi made a concerted effort to attract these rather more prosperous than average *scuole* to their church, and may even have guided their choice of imagery and artist. The fact that both Giovanni Mansueti and Cima da Conegliano provided multiple works for the church and its *scuole* is evidence that some party involved favoured their work. There was a Mansueti crucifix in the sacristy, Cima painted two guild altarpieces for the church, and both he and Mansueti contributed to the silk-weavers' narrative cycle (c. 1497). Cima, relatively fresh to Venice when he produced his Annunciation in 1495 for the chapel of the silk-weavers, could have come to the attention of the Crociferi through their dependent monastery in Conegliano.²⁸

Although the loss of the church of San Martino prevents confirmation, it is quite possible that Cima depicted the church through the window behind the angel Gabriel in the Annunciation [Fig.26]. It is known that the church of San Martino underwent major reconstructions about the same time as the Venetian monastery, including the addition of frescoes of “alcune arme del ordine” above the entrance.²⁹ In Cima's painting, traces of three crosses are arranged in the attic storey of the elevated Gothic façade. Such tender depictions of his birthplace in the distance are not uncommon in the works of the perpetually homesick artist. The inclusion of St. Lanfranc and St. Liberius in the altarpiece Cima painted for the furriers around 1515 had more to do with the Crociferi than the furriers, who had no connection to either saint. Their altar was dedicated to Lanfranc, whose head was preserved beneath it, but the presence of the Crocifero saint,

²⁸ Cima may have been residing in the city as early as the mid 1480's, however his earliest datable Venetian work is the Madonna dell'Orto *sacra conversazione* (1493).

²⁹ AST, CSR, SMR, Liber H, Inventario 1518, cc. 6r, 9v-12r.

Liberius (complete with the turquoise habit and silver cross in hand), points strongly toward monastic input into the content of the painting [Fig.27].

In 1501, Archangelo Cremaschi further cemented an existing relationship with the furriers' guild by ceding them land on which to build a meetinghouse to the left of the church.³⁰ In 1519 Fra Hieronimo Confalonieri, the vicar of the monastery, assigned an altar to the devotional confraternity dedicated to the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception.³¹ This is the first document to mention Confalonieri, who would go on to lead both the Paduan and Venetian monasteries throughout the following four decades, initiating and coordinating major renovations. His involvement in the attraction of a confraternity dedicated to the Conception of the Virgin is also important early evidence for what I will argue in the following pages. I will suggest that Confalonieri, along with several other leading *frati*, made an active effort throughout the 1550's to create a Marian programme in the chancel. In doing so they conformed to two major religious and artistic trends of the period, including the proactive involvement of the clergy in the coordination of building and/or decoration, and the creation of a thematic decorative programme.

4.5 Coordinated Decoration in Venetian Churches

In his study of Venetian Renaissance altarpieces, Peter Humfrey notes that the clergy would obviously have been involved to some degree in each commission to ensure decorum was observed. He cautions the reader to remember that "patronage" denotes a long-term, consistent and educated involvement in commissioning art.³² Usually the clergy were only responsible for the sponsorship of a single work of art, if anything at all,

³⁰ ASV, Arti, B. 719, n. 30 III, c. 3r.

³¹ BMC, Mariiegola 58, 1r-v; ASV, PdC, Reg. O, cc. 309r-311v (27 January 1519).

³² Humfrey, 1993, 87.

and for this reason they have not been accorded a prominent place amongst the various categories of patrons or donors. But Humfrey's study, among others, has demonstrated that some ecclesiastical patrons played a far more active role, "prompting the laity to commission altarpieces, and in advising them on questions of form, content, medium, and even the choice of artist."³³ There are multiple examples of Cinquecento building and decorative projects initiated by monks, nuns and parish priests. The parish churches of San Giovanni in Bragora and San Giovanni Crisostomo were rebuilt and splendidly redecorated under the guidance of the priests Cristoforo Rizzo (1479-95) and Ludovico Talenti (1480-1516).³⁴ The nuns at San Zaccaria and Santa Maria Maggiore were extremely active patrons, despite the restrictions of their cloistered lives.³⁵ The latter created an unusual painted Marian programme in the apse and nave to which Veronese, Titian, Tintoretto (and shop) all contributed. At the Franciscan basilica of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Fra Germano, a high-ranking Franciscan, commissioned Titian's Assunta (1518), its impressive *all'antica* frame, and attracted two private patrons to assume responsibility for two altars in the nave.³⁶ Jacopo Pesaro provided an altarpiece

³³ *Ibid.*, 96. For altarpieces commissioned for the various monasteries and friaries from 1450-1530: Table 8, 90. P. Humfrey, "Co-Ordinated Altarpieces in Renaissance Venice: The Progress of an Ideal" in *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance*, eds. Humfrey and Kemp (Cambridge, 1990), 195.

³⁴ On San Giovanni in Bragora: Humfrey, 1980, 350-63. On San Giovanni Crisostomo, see: C. Bertini, "I committenti della pala di S. Giovanni Crisostomo di Sebastiano del Piombo" *Storia dell'Arte* 53 (1985), 23-31; M. Lattanzi, "La Pala di San Giovanni Crisostomo di Giovanni Bellini: il soggetto, la committenza, il significato" *Artibus et Historiae* 2 (1981), 32.

³⁵ On San Zaccaria: Radke, 2001, 430-59. On Santa Maria Maggiore: Walberg, 2005, 259-303.

³⁶ On clerical patronage: Humfrey, 1993, 89-103. On the Frari: P. Humfrey, "The Pre-history of Titian's *Assunta*" in *Titian 500*, ed. J. Manca (National Gallery of Art, *Studies in the History of Art* 45), 1993, 223-43; D. Rosand, "Titian in the Frari" *The Art Bulletin* 53, no. 2 (1971), 196-213; R. Goffen, *Piety and Patronage in Renaissance Venice*:

by Titian (1526) for the altar on the left of the nave dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, and Goffen suggests that Fra Germano then solicited Nicolò Valier to provide an altarpiece for the altar on the opposite side of the nave.³⁷ Its dedication shifted from St. Bernardino of Siena to the Purification of the Virgin, although ultimately the decoration by Francesco Salviati did not conform to what he probably envisioned.³⁸ The combination of these three altars formed a sort of triangle of related Marian mysteries, with up-to-date Renaissance altarpieces, something that Humfrey argues Fra Germano set about to create.³⁹ A similar coordinated effort was undertaken a few decades later at San Sebastiano under prior Bernardo Torlioni, a theologian with ties to the great religious reformers, Gian Pietro Carafa and Cardinal Reginald Pole.⁴⁰ Torlioni came into contact with them in his native Verona, which is probably where he came to know Paolo Veronese, the artist who would realize his vision.⁴¹ Between 1544-72, Torlioni would commission Veronese to decorate the sacristy, the ceiling and walls of the nave, and the

Bellini, Titian, and the Franciscans (New Haven, 1986). Two further examples: the Canons of Santa Maria della Carità organised the formally unified Bellini triptychs beneath choir, and the Canons at San Salvatore coordinated decoration that favoured Titian, who completed a Transfiguration for the high altar, and was to provide altarpieces for the chapels belonging to families on either side of the nave, but only the Annunciation was realized.

³⁷ Goffen, 1986, 142.

³⁸ Humfrey, 1993, 96. The prior's suggestion to suppress the dedication to a popular Franciscan saint is evidence of his interest in a larger narrative programme.

³⁹ Humfrey, *Pre-history*, 1993, 236.

⁴⁰ P. Humfrey, "Veronese's High Altarpiece for San Sebastiano" in *Venice Reconsidered*, eds. J. Martin and D. Romano (Baltimore, 2000), 365-88; T. Pignatti, *Le pitture di Paolo Veronese nella chiesa di S. Sebastiano in Venezia* (Milan, 1966), 76-8.

⁴¹ Humfrey, 2000, 370.

organ. Paolo would also complete the high altarpiece, a work that was at once a *sacra conversazione* and a scene of martyrdom of St. Sebastian, with flanking lateral pictures.⁴²

During the period of religious reform, clerical involvement would have been particularly important to ensure decorum and advise on imagery that would adhere to long-established but newly reinforced notions about the purpose of sacred art. When the Council of Trent finally issued a decree on this subject in 1563, what little was said was a repetition of statements made by Gregory the Great and Thomas Aquinas, who both viewed education and inspiration as the central benefits of visual art. In the Counter-Reformation period, religious art stood alongside public preaching as a means by which the church could instruct a largely illiterate public, and defend itself against the Protestant challenge to its core tenets: the cult of the Virgin, the saints, and the centrality of the Eucharist. In both visual and oral religious propaganda there was an emphasis on stimulating emotion and providing the viewer with multiple and often interrelated themes upon which to meditate and model their own behaviour.⁴³

The decoration in the Frari and San Sebastiano conformed to these ideas by celebrating the Virgin and the martyrdoms of saints, and both Fra Germano and Torlioni would have provided the guiding force behind the spatial and symbolic unity of the decorative programmes.⁴⁴ I argue that a similar effort was made by the ecclesiastical hierarchy at the church of the Crociferi to actively solicit, coordinate and influence two phases of decoration throughout the last half of the sixteenth century.

⁴² Humfrey, 2000, 366. Although the altarpiece was actually commissioned by Lise Querini, the widow of, Giovanni Soranzo, who was also buried beneath the high altar, Torlioni must have been heavily involved in the conception of the painting.

⁴³ Humfrey, 1990, 191; Humfrey, 2000, 371.

⁴⁴ M. Kahr, "The Meaning of Veronese's Paintings in the Church of San Sebastiano in Venice" *JWCI* 33 (1970), 236-7; Humfrey, 1990, 191.

4.6 Hieronimo Confalonieri and Giuliano Cirno

A major focus of my research was combing through notarial *protocoli* and *minute* in hopes of uncovering contracts for work (not just by artists, but labour connected decorative projects) undertaken at the church, particularly in the chancel. The dating for this major redecoration, which included works by artists such as Tintoretto, Andrea Schiavone and Alessandro Vittoria, has generally been assigned to the 1550's on a stylistic basis, but has not been securely documented. Regrettably, no new contracts surfaced, however the Crociferi business that was registered provided information that has allowed a deeper understanding of the context and intentions behind the decoration. These documents provided the identities of the high-ranking Crociferi during the years in which the project was undertaken, and two names consistently stood out. Hieronimo Confalonieri, whose role in attracting the confraternity of the Conception in 1518 has already been noted, was recorded as prior at Venice in 1548, 1549, 1550 and 1553.⁴⁵ It was during his time as prior in 1553 that an official agreement was reached with Nicolò Zen to rebuild the Crociferi hospital.⁴⁶ Another Crocifero, Giuliano Cirno, was recorded in the same position in 1541, 1544-7, 1554-6 and 1558. It was general practice within the order for priors to serve for a maximum of three years in order to prevent abuse of power, and throughout the late 1540's and 1550's these two men took turns leading the monastery.⁴⁷ When one was serving as prior, the other consistently occupied a role of

⁴⁵ App.V

⁴⁶ Lunardon, 157-8.

⁴⁷ See Appendix V.

secondary importance.⁴⁸ Along with the identities of these *frati*, further evidence emerged that suggested Confalonieri in particular might well have had ample training in art patronage prior to his arrival in Venice.

The author of the Treviso manuscript described Confalonieri as “notissimo in ogni sorte di lettere, et oratore.”⁴⁹ He was from Milan, although the few sources that do mention him mistake him as Bressano.⁵⁰ Confalonieri spent a period of years as prior of the monastery in Padua before taking on the same role in Venice, and during that time he had initiated the rebuilding of the church. Portenari wrote of the lost church of Santa Maria Maddalena: “La fabrica antica di questo hospitale si è veduta infin’all’anno 1565, nel qual tempo Girolamo Confaloniero Bressano Crucifero Priore di detto monastero, aggiungendovi nuove fabriche lo ridusse in forma di convento, il quale anco ristorò, abbellì, e diede nuova forma alla chiesa.”⁵¹ The project was still in progress by the time Confalonieri departed for Venice, and was perhaps still in part unfinished even after his death in 1558, but continued under the supervision of his nephew, Simon Rubens.⁵² Situated on the periphery of the city’s old walls (now the Via di Savonarola), the church was destroyed in the early nineteenth century, however guidebooks recorded clues to

⁴⁸ The sole exception was 1551, when Jacopo Antonio Boldù was recorded as prior. ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. 12, fasc.10b, c. 1r.

⁴⁹ BCT, Mss. 474, c. 619v.

⁵⁰ BCT, Mss.474, c. 419r. The Treviso manuscript records an inscription from the Paduan church that refers to him as Milanese: “Fr. Hieronymi Confalonierii Mediol. Obiit. II. Kal. Sept. 1558. Vite sue Anno 73.” Confalonieri is referred to as “Prefecto et Instauratoris.” ASPat, CSM, B. 7. His nephew, Simon Rubens Bressano, was dispatched from Venice to assume the role of prior at Padua at the behest of Paul IV.

⁵¹ A. Portenari, *Della felicità di Padova*, (Padua, 1623), Libro 9, Cap.XXXII, 464-5.

⁵² Portenari, 1623, Libro 9, Cap. XXXII, 464-5; B. Scardeone, *De Anitquatate Urbis Patavii & claris civibus Patavinis*, 1560, Libro 3, fol.91. Rubens was prior there in 1555, 1558-9 (ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 392/3).

Confalonieri's patronage.⁵³ Before leaving for Venice in 1548 a monument to his legacy was erected.⁵⁴ Several sources record a marble portrait bust in a shell niche, flanked by two bas-relief *putti* mounted on the lateral wall of the church, a work by Gian Girolamo Grandi (1508-1560), a member of the Vicentine family of sculptors and bronze-casters. Rossetti saw it in 1780, before it was presumably destroyed: "...è da vedersi in oltre sopra la porta interna della Chiesa un mezzo busto di marmo da Carrara, che rappresenta Fra Girolamo Confaloniero Milanese, che morì l'anno 1558. Come rilevarsi dall'iscrizione posto sotto il suo ritratto, cui si fece fare ancor vivente nel 1549. Opera eccellente dell'egregio Statuario Padovano Giangirolamo Grandi, il cui nome si legge nel piedestallo."⁵⁵ It was much admired by those who did see it *in situ*, including Pietrucci, who esteemed Grandi's bust as "una prova del suo amore alle sane regole additate dai grandi maestri la si aveva", and noted "i due putti in bassorilievo che lo fiancheggiavano erano condotti con tutto il gusto dell'arte." Such a monument to a member of the clergy who had been active in the initiation, administration, and even financing of such a renovation is not without precedent. At the lost Sansovinian church of San Geminiano,

⁵³ G. Toffanin, *Cento chiese Padovane* (Padua, 1985), 76-7. My attempts to consult its archive, which Da Mosto described as containing "moltissime carte", were in vain. What remains was repatriated from the Venetian archive to the Archivio di Stato di Padova and has been absorbed into a collection of three hundred uncatalogued *buste*.

⁵⁴ ASV, PSMsupra, B. 104, fasc. 4e (16 February 1548).

⁵⁵ The inscription: "Jo: Hier. Grandus pat. sculpebat. 1549." For descriptions of the monument: Scardeone, 1560, Libro 3, fol. 91; Portenari, 1623, Libro 9, Cap. XXXII, 464-5; *Urbis Patavinae Inscriptiones sacrae, et profane a magistro Jacobo Salomonio ord. praed.*, 1701, 185; G. Rossetti, *Descrizione delle pitture, sculture ed architetture di padova*, (Padua, 1780), 256-8; P. Brandolese, *Pitture, sculture, architetture ed altri cose notabili di Padova*, (Padua, 1795), 197-8; F. Cessi, *Vincenzo e Gian Gerolamo Grandi scultori* (Trent, 1967), vol. 2, 384-5.

such contributions by two parish priests—Matteo Eletti and Benedetto Manzini—were acknowledged with marble busts in the church.⁵⁶

Other than the Grandi monument, the only decoration mentioned in guidebooks was a painting by the Friulian painter, Marco Basaiti. Ridolfi noted: “In Padovane’ Padri Crociferi, è della di lui mano il morto Redentore.” Brandolese was more specific in his description of a “Depositione del Salvatore nel Sepolcro” of which “ora nulla rimane.” He continues: “Spacciasi però come un vestigio di questa un quadretto in forma di mezza-luna, in cui stanno espressi il Padre, ed il Divin figliuolo che coronano la Vergine Santissima, con varj Angeli a’lati in atto di suonare, ed altri Santi ancora. Sta questa pittura nella Cappella, appesa al muro dal lato sinistro.”⁵⁷ This description of a separate narrative scene in a half moon evokes something consistent with a compositional device frequently used in paintings, including altarpieces by the Bellini, Vivarini, and Cima.⁵⁸ No trace of this Coronation remains, while the main scene, the Deposition, could be one of two surviving works of this subject by Basaiti at the Hermitage or the Brera.⁵⁹ A Crociferi provenance for the Hermitage painting is likely for two reasons. The first is the arrangement of the composition, in which the church’s titular, Mary Magdalen, is given a position of prominence at the centre of the painting at the base of the Cross [Fig.28]. The Virgin and Christ were similarly positioned at the base of the cross to emphasise the devotional interests of the patron(s) in what must have been an important precedent for

⁵⁶ Howard, 1975, 81-2, 175, n. 88.

⁵⁷ Brandolese, 1795, 197.

⁵⁸ Although not separated by an actual frame, but by faux architectural elements, a Coronation topped Alvise Vivarini’s Frari St. Ambrose Enthroned (1508), finished by Basaiti after Vivarini’s death.

⁵⁹ M. Scierbasciova, “La ‘Pieta’ di Marco Basaiti nell’Ermitage” *AV* 15 (1961), 228-9; T. Fomichova, *Venetian Painting* (Florence, 1992), 37, cat. 9. (Inventory no. 5517, Oil on panel, 122 x 154 cm)

this work: Giovanni Bellini's Lamentation of c. 1510 for the Venetian church of the Servi (Accademia, Venice) [Fig.29].⁶⁰ It is possible that the cross in the Basaiti was once represented in its entirety, as in the Bellini.⁶¹ The Hermitage painting is better classified as a Lamentation, something more contemplative than the Deposition Brandolese suggested, though the sepulchre he described is present. In the context of the Paduan church, this choice of subject would have provided an opportunity to reference the cross, the symbol of the order, as well as the church titular. Should a Coronation have in fact topped the work, it would have communicated the Virgin's ultimate reward for the suffering represented below. Further support of this provenance is an inscription, one of two recorded in the Urbis Patavinae Inscriptiones sacrae, previously overlooked. It read: "In ara. 1527. Fr. Hier. de Confaloneris Prior. Marcus Damiani faciebat." The Hermitage picture is signed and dated 1527 on a *trompe l'oeil cartellino* pinned beneath a scallop shell.⁶² In addition to confirming the original location of this painting, the inscription indicates a possible patron of the work, and records the involvement of Confalonieri. Unfortunately the author did not specify the location of the altar, although neither its subject matter, nor its dimensions (122 x 154 cm) preclude it from having been a high altarpiece, particularly if it was once topped with a Coronation. What remains critical to the discussion at hand is that Confalonieri was involved in both the renovation of the church *and* two major decorative commissions. Both are demonstrative of his initiative; the Basaiti of his familiarity with the increasing trend for narrative

⁶⁰ Humfrey, 1993, 250 and 355, cat. 74.

⁶¹ A precedent for a depiction of the subject without the cross: Cima's version in the Galleria Estense, Modena, c.1495-7.

⁶² "M. Baxaiti F. MDXXVII"

altarpieces.⁶³ It is therefore not difficult to imagine that he arrived in Venice, fresh from a period of *renovatio* in Padua, and eager to apply this same initiative to the most affluent Crociferi monastery of all.

4.7 Tintoretto's "Assunta" and the Chancel Decoration

When the Crociferi decided to update their altarpiece, the task fell to Jacopo Tintoretto. He produced an Assumption of the Virgin that now occupies the altar on the left hand side of the present Gesuiti church [Fig.30]. The painting has received relatively little scholarly attention, even though it was praised by Boschini, who declared it “un esemplar del Tentoreto solo Ghe porto, sì perfeto e sì amirando” and “una delle singolari opere del mondo”⁶⁴, and by Carlo Ridolfi, who counted it among Tintoretto's greatest works.⁶⁵ As an autograph work of extremely high quality, it merits independent consideration, however more can be learned about its date, meaning, and the circumstances of its commission only if the painting is considered in relation to the decoration that surrounded it.

Francesco Sansovino recorded the following in the Crociferi chancel in 1581:

“Iacomo Tintoretto vi dipinse la palla dell'altar maggiore, da i cui lati Alessandro Vittoria

⁶³ On the increase in narrative subjects in Venetian altarpieces: Humfrey, 1993, 248-259.

⁶⁴ M. Boschini, *La carta del navegar pitoresco*. 1664. Ed. A. Pallucchini (Venice, 1966), 362; H. Tietze, *Tintoretto: the paintings and drawings* (London, 1948), 367-368.

⁶⁵ C. Ridolfi, *The Life of Tintoretto*, 1648, eds. R. and C. Enggass (University Park, 1984), 79. A. M. Zanetti (*Della pittura veneziana e delle opere pubbliche de' veneziani maestri*, Venice, 1771, 145) also considered it one of Tintoretto's finest: “la famosa tavola dell'Assunta, una delle più compiute opere del Tintoretto. Vegga questa tavola chi crede mancar molto alle pitture di questo Maestro, quando sono più condotte e finite; e mi dirà poi se potrà, che non si trova in essa lo spirito, e la solita grandezza di stile di quel vivacissimo pennello. Ha questa pittura di singolare molta vaghezza, belle tinte di panni, e n bell' andare di pieghe, assai raro nel Tintoretto.”

fece di stucco, Santa Helena, & Santa Barbara. Dipinsero nella medesima cappella due quadroni, Andrea Schiavone, & il Tintoretto.”⁶⁶ Ridolfi elaborated that Tintoretto had produced a lateral painting of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, “in concorrenza” with Andrea Schiavone, who produced a now lost Visitation. The Presentation, which Ridolfi felt to be among the “più pregiate dell’autore”, survived the demolition of the Crociferi church, but was shifted to the sacristy in the Gesuiti until it was taken to the Accademia in 1906 [Fig.31].⁶⁷ Its pendant by Schiavone disappeared sometime between the suppression of the Crociferi and the demolition of the church.⁶⁸ The *stucchi* saints

⁶⁶ Sansovino, 1581, 60a-b. ASVat, VA, 96, c. 71v. The apostolic visitors noted: “Altare maius Assumption B.M.^a ornatissimum in omnibus consecratum et testum tela cerata, bona nulla annezza est ei societas.”

⁶⁷ On the Presentation: Sansovino, 1581, 60a; V. Borghini, *Il riposo* (Florence, 1584), 553; C. Ridolfi, *La meraviglie dell'arte*, 1648, ed. D. von Hadeln (Rome, 1965), II, 38; Boschini, 1664, 422 and *Le ricche minere della pittura veneziana* (Venice, 1674), 11; Zanetti, 1771, 145. See also: R. Pallucchini and P. Rossi, *Tintoretto. Le opere sacre e profane* (Milan, 1982), 167-9, cat. 168; R. Krischel, “Ein unbekanntes und einige wenig beachtete Gemälde des Jacopo Tintoretto” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 53 (1992), 45-82; M. Matile, “*Quadri laterali*, ovvero conseguenze di una collocazione ingrata: sui dipinti di storie sacre nell’opere di Jacopo Tintoretto,” *VC* 6 (1996), 185-88; F. Ilchman, “The Presentation of Christ in the Temple” in *Tintoretto*, ed. M. Falomir (exh. cat, Prado, Madrid, 2007), 294-6, cat. 30.

⁶⁸ A painting that was probably the one in question was listed as “su il altar grande” in a 1645 inventory of the Scuola dei Varoteri (ASV, Arti, B. 719, n. 11). The lateral paintings were not listed in the 1656 inventory of the church, probably because they belonged to guilds. G. Barri, *Viaggio pittoresco* (Venice, 1671), 59. Barri, who visited the church and engraved the Veronese Nativity noted: poi dell’Altare maggiore con l’Assunzione della Madonna, tanto bella, che io sono in dubbio se debba dire, che sia assolutamente la più superba opera, che habbia mai fatto il Tintoretto, & à mano dritta del detto Altare vi è un quadro con la Visitatione di Maria à Santa Elisabetta. Opera d’Andrea Schiavon; e dall’altra parte vi è la Circoncisione del Signore inventione bizzarra al solito del Tintoretto.” Boschini (1674, 384) did not mention the Schiavone, but recorded the Tintoretto in the sacristy, where the state inspector saw it in 1773 (ASV, Inquisitori di Stato, B. 909). No mention was made of the Schiavone. One Schiavone Visitation survives (Venice, Private Collection, oil on panel) [Fig.43]. F. Richardson, *Andrea Schiavone*, (Oxford, 1980), 183-4. Like the Tintoretto, it features some classical architecture, and the composition is organised in such a way that it could potentially have

Helen and Barbara were among the few works by Vittoria noted by Vasari in 1568: “nella chiesa de’ Crocchieri fece di stucco due figure alte sei piedi l’una, poste all’altare maggiore, molto belle.”⁶⁹ While his brief description provides some notion of their considerable size—in excess of six feet tall—his approval is also telling. Knowing of Vasari’s strong preference for the grandeur and monumentality of Michelangelo’s sculpture, and of its influence on Vittoria, his comments suggest that the sculptor achieved an impressive, and perhaps even Michelangesque result at the church.⁷⁰ These saints were listed in the 1656 inventory as “dui statui di rillievo una per part d’essa Pala [the Assunta], but they were destroyed when the church was demolished.”⁷¹

A preparatory drawing made by Palma il Giovane for a painting in the oratory of c. 1585-88, as well as the resulting painting, provide some impression of the area around the high altar [Figs.32-33].⁷² The altar was elevated, positioned at the top of a flight of steps. The *stucco* saints can be made out in the drawing; figures in recessed niches that were positioned about six feet above the floor. Analogous *stucco* saints in scallop shell niches on the Zane altar at the Frari provide some idea of how they might have looked [Fig.34]. Both the Palma drawing and painting suggest that the altarpiece was framed by monumental architecture; engaged pilasters of Istrian stone, possibly with some

hung on the left wall. It is of unknown provenance, however its dimensions (172 x 164cm) preclude it from being a pendant to the Tintoretto.

⁶⁹ G. Vasari. *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architetti*. 1568. Gaetano Milanesi, ed. (Florence, 1878-1885), VII, 519.

⁷⁰ For example, his *stucchi* figures in the Stanza degli Imperatori in Palazzo Thiene at Vicenza (1553), were characterized by massive proportions, *contraposto* poses and musculature. V. Avery, “Alessandro Vittoria: the Michelangelo of Venice?” in *Reactions to the Master*, eds. F. Ames-Lewis and P. Joannides (Aldershot, 2003), 157-79.

⁷¹ ASV, AP, c. 123r.

⁷² S. Mason-Rinaldi, “Jacopo Palma il Giovane all’ospedaletto dei Crociferi: una nuova cronologia” *AV*, 31 (1977), 240-250.

additional marble columns flanking the altarpiece. The custom of the time was for *all'antica* frames, sometimes topped with a triangular pediment.⁷³ The bottom of the altarpiece—visible in the Palma painting behind a rather large tabernacle—would have been positioned above the eye level of the average viewer standing at the base of the stairs. The lateral paintings were probably hung at a similar height, something that is more or less confirmed by the perspective Tintoretto employed in the Presentation, which also suggests that it hung to the right of the altar.⁷⁴ The general proportion of the space Palma depicted is consistent with the known dimensions of the chancel, which spanned around 6.5m. The altarpiece, a work measuring 440x260 cm, would have occupied just over a third of the wall, leaving about two meters on either side to accommodate the *stucchi*. The overall effect of the chancel, with its altarpiece, monumental framing, gilded tabernacle and lateral pictures, would have been quite grand [Fig.35].

The altarpiece was in the traditional format of the time: vertical with a rounded top. The Virgin, clad in fluttering pink and ultramarine blue robes, is assumed into heaven at the summit of the canvas, supported by two large angels and assisted by smaller cherubim. Her victory is trumpeted by a host of seraphim that seem to bob and dissolve around her, lending the scene a hint of supernatural chaos [Fig.36]. The dispersion of the angels across the canvas marks the path of the Virgin's ascent. Mary's gaze is directed upwards in anticipation of a long-awaited reunion, her cares no longer of this world. She pays no attention to the eleven apostles left behind; the ever tardy and dubious Thomas has yet to arrive. Their gestures, ranging from exaggerated and

⁷³ Humfrey, 1990, 192; Humfrey, 1993, 146-151.

⁷⁴ C. Gould, "The Cinquecento at Venice: III: Tintoretto and Space" *Apollo* 96 (1972), 36.

theatrical, to calm repose, provide the viewer with a variety of responses to the miracle occurring above, and guide the gaze upward. The arrangement of figures around the empty antique sarcophagus, diagonally placed and elevated on three steps, provides some welcome depth to the stacked picture plane, giving the impression that the painting is an extension of real space. The *arca*, with its detailed bas-relief bearing the Crociferi symbol, is surrounded by a delicate, positively miniaturist floral/liturgical still life [Fig.36].

Such attention to detail, and the degree of high finish that characterize both of the paintings Tintoretto produced for the chancel, is also marked in the third and final work he would produce for the Crociferi, a Wedding at Cana for their refectory (now in the sacristy of Santa Maria della Salute), signed and dated 1561 [Fig.37]. All three paintings have been accepted as autograph works with minimal, if any shop intervention, and could be considered hallmarks of the artist's concern for meaningfully integrating his works—both symbolically and compositionally—into their physical contexts. It is, however, a fact that Tintoretto did not lavish the same sort of care on every commission. During the early years of his career, writers such as Aretino and Vasari criticized his habit of merely creating an illusion of finish in order to increase output. It was viewed as a problematic form of *prestezza*, a pronounced roughness, or carelessness in style, the antithesis to the praised *sprezzatura* of Titian.⁷⁵ This characterization of Tintoretto's work has dominated his critical fortune ever since, and it is precisely the variability throughout his oeuvre that

⁷⁵ *Sprezzatura*, nonchalance, or concealment of effort to give the impression of ease of execution. P. Sohm, *Pittoresco* (Cambridge, 1991), 160-162; M. Roskill, *Dolce's Aretino and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento* (Toronto, 2000), 21-22, 301.

so often makes it a challenge to date his paintings on a purely stylistic basis.⁷⁶ The 2007 monographic exhibition at the Prado did much to rehabilitate Tintoretto's reputation by showcasing the many gems in an admittedly patchy career, and also provided some important markers for the various decades of his activity. I will argue that the quality and quantity of the paintings he produced for the monastery serve as clues to both the period to which they might be assigned, and to the discerning taste and involvement of the patrons, undoubtedly the Crociferi themselves.

4.8 The Commission and Dating

What little we know about the circumstances of the altarpiece commission comes from Carlo Ridolfi's 1642 biography of Tintoretto:

“Ne' Padri Crociferi, nella maggior Cappella, fece la tavola con lo ascendere di Nostra Signora al Cielo; & tutto che que' Padri havessero terminato, che Paolo Veronese facesse quella Pittura, seppe il Tintoretto tanto dire, promettendogli, che l'averebbe fatto sù lo stile medesimo di Paolo, sì che ogn'uno l'haverebbe fatta sù lo stile medesimo di Paolo, sì che ogn'uno l'haverebbe creduta di sua mano, che ne ottenne lo impiego. Ne vanamente promise, poiche in effetto fece un misto in quella tavola di fiero e di vago, che bene dimostrò, che per ogni modo sapeva dipingere, trasformandosi in ogni qual maniera fosse aggradevole.”⁷⁷

One must proceed with caution when the fulcrum of an argument consists of a biographical anecdote, particularly one recorded long after the fact. In this case, it should be acknowledged that Ridolfi's account might not be totally authoritative. His formula for the artist biography follows a well-established pattern that was initiated by Pliny the Elder and was repeated most famously by Vasari. His debt to these authors is betrayed not only by the details he occasionally borrows, but also in the formulae for anecdotes that serve his larger narrative agenda. He is known to exaggerate, and is occasionally just

⁷⁶ For Tintoretto's critical reception: A. Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed* (Ravenna, 1983).

⁷⁷ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 38.

plain wrong, often because of his dependence on earlier accounts.⁷⁸ As most contemporary studies agree, our knowledge of Tintoretto's shop practices, particularly regarding his close study of prints, drawings and sculptural reproductions, can be credited to Ridolfi's testimony.⁷⁹ This information has been imperative to our understanding of the way Tintoretto's paintings appear as they do, and how he manages to respond to artistic innovations occurring outside of a city he never really left.⁸⁰ Ridolfi was among the very first to undertake a life of Tintoretto, and among others who wrote about the artist in the proximity of his lifetime, he was the only one that was permanently on the Venetian scene.⁸¹ He is precise in his descriptions, making able identifications of the authorship, subject and quality of the pictures he discusses. He was well placed to come by his knowledge as a practicing (albeit not particularly accomplished) painter in the milieu in which Tintoretto had circulated short decades before. He was a pupil of Aliense, a late mannerist follower of both Tintoretto and Veronese, who also contributed a painting to the church of the Crociferi. Ridolfi himself produced multiple works for the Crociferi monastery in Conegliano, which was dependent on the Venetian house.⁸² Ridolfi knew Jacopo's son, Domenico Tintoretto, who is known to have painted the

⁷⁸ For instance, Ridolfi mistakenly assigns his birth date to 1512. In his description of the San Rocco competition he adds Tintoretto's early mentor Andrea Schiavone to the list of competitors, overlooking the fact that by 1564 he had been dead nearly a year, a mistake repeated from Vasari.

⁷⁹ C. Gould, "Ridolfi the Historian" *Apollo* 125 (1987), 199.

⁸⁰ R. Pallucchini, *La giovinezza del Tintoretto* (Milan, 1950), 97-98.

⁸¹ Vasari's testimony about Tintoretto predates Ridolfi's, however he provides only a cursory treatment in the 1568 life of Battista Franco. Vasari, 1568, 587-88.

⁸¹ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 261.

⁸² D. M. Federici, *Memorie Trevigiane* (Venezia, 1803); M. Lucco, *I dipinti della chiesa di San Martino a Conegliano*, (Conegliano, 1981), 11. Federici recorded "molti bei dipinti in S. Martino" by Carlo Ridolfi, "l'autore delle Meraviglie dell'Arte."

author's portrait.⁸³ Thus, there are just as many reasons to trust Ridolfi's credibility, and indeed, the Crociferi anecdote seems just the sort a son might recount to a biographer in fond remembrance of his determined father, or even the kind a Crocifero might relate about their altarpiece.

It is largely from Ridolfi's portrait that history has formed its image of this artist: the cunning cloth dyer's son, the native Venetian who was as intimate with the working class as he was the patriciate, a man who went to great lengths to make his mark. The Crociferi anecdote stands alongside other fabulous tales of Tintoretto's notorious methods of self-promotion related by Ridolfi, including the most notorious example of his competitive streak: the competition to paint the ceiling of the *albergo* of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco.⁸⁴ When he was not offering to work in the style of his competitors, or installing works before they had been officially commissioned, Tintoretto was also known to actively solicit work and undercut his competitors by offering to work at lightening speed and a bargain price.⁸⁵ But even to a modern audience, Tintoretto's offer to paint in another artist's style is decidedly subversive, and it is safe to assume that Veronese felt much the same way. Perhaps Paolo even had the Crociferi slight in mind when he stated, according to Ridolfi, that he "appreciated Tintoretto's genius", but did

⁸³ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 261.

⁸⁴ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 27-28.

⁸⁵ For example, he produced organ shutters for Santa Maria del Giglio in two weeks. On Tintoretto's marketing: P. Hills, "Tintoretto's Marketing" in *Venedig und Oberdeutschland in der Renaissance*, eds. Roeck, Bergdolt and Martin (Sigmaringen, 1993), 107-120; T. Nichols, "Tintoretto, prestezza and the poligrafi: a study in the literary and visual culture of Cinquecento Venice" *Renaissance Studies* 10 (1996): 72-90.

not approve of his habit of working “ad ogni maniera”, believing it would destroy the reputation of the profession of painting.⁸⁶

4.9 Dating: Competition and Style

Anecdotes that demonstrate an attempt to deceive and outwit often emerge in the chapter of biography that deals with the adversity of the early career.⁸⁷ Although it must be admitted that Tintoretto never totally abandoned such scheming, the story Ridolfi relates about the Crociferi commission clearly belongs to the period of establishment, in which he was most aggressive in his self-promotion. Competition amongst Venetian artists was at its peak during the mid-sixteenth century, as recent exhibitions in Boston and Paris have emphasised.⁸⁸ Unlike Titian and Veronese, Tintoretto was not always the preferred candidate for major public commissions, nor did he enjoy court patronage in the same way his two major competitors did. By mid-career, with a large family to feed, he did not have the luxury of refusing commissions or turning pictures to the wall for years at a time as Titian did.⁸⁹ While Titian increased his prices, Tintoretto frequently presented pictures as gifts. In the 1560's Tintoretto initiated a major decorative project in the apse the Madonna dell'Orto by volunteering his labour, if the prior would provide the materials for the Making of the Golden Calf and Last Judgment. He volunteered to produce façade frescoes at important *palazzi* to advertise his talent, and while Veronese minimized his humble origins in pursuit of an aristocratic audience, Tintoretto deliberately emphasised his working class roots, producing work cheaply for modest

⁸⁶ Ridolfi, 1648, I, 349.

⁸⁷ P. Sohm, *Style in the art theory of early modern Italy* (Cambridge, 2001), 37-39.

⁸⁸ P. Hills, 1993, 107-120, and *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Venice*, ed. F. Ilchman (exh. cat, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2009).

⁸⁹ For Boschini's testimony on Titian's working practice: P. Humfrey, *Titian* (London, 2007), 201-202.

confraternities. He was working on the astute notion that one well-placed picture might lead to many more, and as the three Crociferi paintings testify, it often worked.⁹⁰ I would suggest that Tintoretto's offer to the Crociferi is best understood in light of circumstances particular to the mid-1550's, precisely as he was faced with the arrival of a formidable new adversary.

Ridolfi writes: "Having Veronese as a competitor caused Tintoretto to put greater effort into these paintings, for rivalry sometimes serves as a spur, making the artist more attentive so as not to fall behind his competitor."⁹¹ The rather uncharacteristic polish of the three Crociferi paintings has already been noted, and one need only look to other works following Veronese's arrival in Venice in 1553, such as the Madonna dell'Orto Presentation of the Virgin, to find like examples of such buttery textures, diligent colour harmonies, and the use of quality pigments **[Fig.38]**.⁹² All three Crociferi works could be considered typical of a period during which Tintoretto's style shows a marked response to Veronese. Many who have written about the Assunta and Presentation in the Temple have noted the strong influence of Paolo. Ridolfi states as a means of praise of the Crociferi *pala*, that Tintoretto proved he could work in any style, but never offers an evaluation of how closely the altarpiece really comes to approximating Veronese's style. He remarks on its "vigor", a quality one would expect to find in any representation of this subject following Titian's seminal Frari Assumption. He also invokes the ambiguous term "vago", roughly analogous to the frequent refrain of early art criticism, the "non so

⁹⁰ Enggass, 21.

⁹¹ F. Ilchman, "Venetian Painting in an Age of Rivals" in *Renaissance Rivals*, 2009, 21-38.

⁹² R. Echols, "Tintoretto the Painter" in *Tintoretto*, 2007, 44.

che.”⁹³ In this instance, “charm” seems the appropriate label to apply to the stylistic qualities that Tintoretto appears to have distilled from his rival; above all the palette of jewel tones and luminous decorative manner. He has attempted to minimize hallmarks of his own emerging techniques—dramatic *chiaroscuro* and pronounced brushwork—and has substituted his plunging perspective for a shallow space that defies a sense of depth. A few years later Boschini’s praise of the Assumption was perhaps overstated, when he noted the visibility of the styles of Schiavone, Bassano, Titian and Veronese all at once.⁹⁴ Pallucchini and Rossi observed: “Il dipinto quindi nacque con un assunto ben preciso, in cui il ‘veronesismo’... appare ovviamente più programmatico nella stessa chiarezza atmosferica e nelle tinte brillanti.”⁹⁵ They linked the picture to other paintings more securely dated to this period that show a marked reference to the style of Veronese including the San Severo Crucifixion (1554-1555), St. Ursula and the Virgins (San Lazzaro dei Mendicanti, 1554-1555) [Fig.39], and the Apparition of St. Peter (Madonna dell’Orto, 1556) [Fig.40].⁹⁶ Based mostly on elements of style, a date between 1555-60 has generally been applied to the Crociferi Assumption, and 1554-6 to the Presentation.⁹⁷

⁹³ Sohm, 2001, 190-193. The term “*vago*” is used to describe a spectrum of feelings that a viewer might experience in response to an image, but not be able to articulate; its power to move and inspire, to dazzle and deceive with its ability to convey the unknowable.

⁹⁴ M. Boschini, *La carta del navegar pitoresco* (Venice, 1660), 329. “Là tute le maniere ghe xe unie: Gh’è Paulo veronese, gh’è Tician, Ghe xe ‘l Schiavon, gh’è Giacomo Bassan.”

⁹⁵ Pallucchini and Rossi, 1982, I, 169, cat. 170.

⁹⁶ R. Echols, “The Decisive Years: 1547-1555” in *Tintoretto*, 2007, 213-217.

⁹⁷ Recently Ilchman and Echols have suggested a date of early-mid 1560’s for the Assunta (*Rivals in Renaissance Venice*, 2009, 147). Most have agreed to a date of 1554-1555, with the exception of Rearick who pushed the date to post-1582, contending Tintoretto quoted the Veronese Umilità Assunta, dated to 1562, and his high altarpiece for Santa Maria Maggiore, dated to 1581-1582 (W. R. Rearick, “Tintoretto’s Bamberg *Assunta*,” in *Art the Ape of Nature*, eds. M. Barasch, et al., (New York, 1981), 367-373, 371). Pallucchini and Rossi rejected this date as “insostenibile.” Falomir and Nichols

Indeed, the latter was shown in the 2007 Prado exhibition amongst other works characteristic of this period of production.⁹⁸

It might be fair to say that the altarpiece could be viewed as somewhat atypical of Tintoretto, and perhaps more like a Veronese, something that I think is confirmed and in other ways complicated by a possible rejected first version of the Crociferi Assumption, now in Bamberg Cathedral [Fig.41].⁹⁹ The works are indeed very close compositionally, and most compellingly, are virtually identical in dimensions.¹⁰⁰ Veronese is referenced in the sparkling silvery atmosphere, but also in the distinctly female angels with bejewelled hair and ornate dress, which, along with the scantily clad Christ, Erasmus Weddigen postulates might have resulted in a rejection of the picture as indecorous. The iconography of this painting will be discussed shortly, but stylistically it also conforms to this period of Veronesian influence.

If we accept a date of around 1555-60 for the chancel paintings, we must question what possible local testimonial there would have been for Veronese's ability to produce

have both noted that purely autograph works such as the Crociferi Assumption are rare in Tintoretto's work after 1577 (T. Nichols, *Tintoretto: Tradition and Identity* (London, 1999), 105; M. Falomir, "Jacopo Comin" in *Tintoretto*, 2007, 21). For dating of the Assumption: H. Tietze, *Tintoretto: the paintings and drawings* (London, 1948), 367-368; P. De Vecchi, *L'opera completa del Tintoretto* (Milan, 1970), II, 98, cat. 110; Pallucchini and Rossi, 1982, I, 169, cat. 170; Krischel, 1992, 62-5.

⁹⁸ F. Ilchman, "The Presentation of Christ in the Temple" in *Tintoretto*, 2007, 294-6, cat. 30. See also: S. Moschini Marconi, *Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia, opere d'arte del secolo XVI* (Rome, 1962), 233, cat. 406.

⁹⁹ Wilde published it in "Die Mostra del Tintoretto zu Venedig" *ZfK* 8 (1938): 145. The painting was dated to the mid-1550s by Erich von der Bercken [*Die Gemälde des Jacopo Tintoretto* (Munich, 1942), 104]. Rearick associated the picture published by Wilde with the one he saw in the Obere Pfaarkirche, where it was moved after World War II. (Rearick, 1981, 367-373) Rearick dated it to c.1562. See: E. Weddigen, "Zur Ikonographie der Bamberger *Assunta* von Jacopo Tintoretto," in *Die Bamberger "Himmelfahrt Marie" von Jacopo Tintoretto* (Munich, 1988), 61-112.

¹⁰⁰ Crociferi version: 440 x 260cm, Bamberg version: 437 x 265 cm.

an altarpiece for the Crociferi. What could have led the *frati* to desire a work by his hand? And what, for that matter, would Tintoretto have known of his rival's work, from which inspiration for a comparable effort might be drawn? Up until his arrival in Venice in 1553, Veronese had only produced one altarpiece in the city, the Giustiniani *pala* (c.1551) from San Francesco della Vigna, a *sacra conversazione* that owed much to Titian's Pesaro altarpiece [Fig.42]. By 1555 some of his work for San Sebastiano would presumably have been visible, and perhaps the main hall of the Marciana library. These prominent commissions could hardly have escaped any interested party. Titian and Jacopo Sansovino had excluded Tintoretto from the competition for the Marciana ceiling, awarding Veronese the golden chain and publicly championing him as the heir for major public projects. At San Sebastiano, Veronese's initial commission to decorate the sacristy ceiling turned into a much larger project to decorate the entire church. In 1555, Tintoretto would have been smarting from the Marciana slight, and eager to put a visible stamp on another major monastic church. A date for the commission around 1555 might also explain the initial desire for a Veronese on the part of the Crociferi. A 1555 *decime* establishes that Veronese was renting a house from Vincenzo Zen (q. Pietro), just around the corner from the church.¹⁰¹ This made him neighbour, not only to the Crociferi, but also to the Zen, whose connections to the Crociferi church dated back to the Trecento. A member of the family may have recommended their tenant to the brothers. It is well known that Veronese enjoyed patrician support even before his arrival in Venice, and

¹⁰¹ ASV, DSR, B. 120, n. 1848, c. 1r; T. Pignatti, *Veronese*, 1976, I, doc. 7, 251. Vincenzo Zen received an income from "Paulo veronesi pictor" for the use of the house in the *Corte della Candela*, just behind the Crociferi oratory.

given the patrician demographic at the Crociferi monastery, their desire to hire an artist so in demand amongst the elite is understandable.

It must have been a particularly discouraging moment for Tintoretto, being overlooked in favour of a young upstart from the mainland. It is not difficult to imagine him offering his services to the Crociferi at a reduced rate and with a promise of a quick delivery. One can almost imagine Tintoretto suggesting the addition of a few lateral paintings, a growing trend in other Venetian presbyteries.¹⁰² And following this, a large-scale supper picture for the refectory, another genre increasingly in demand. These additional commissions are informative regarding the dating, considering the Crociferi would certainly have prioritized the commissioning of an altarpiece before adding two supporting images, or a refectory painting. We can therefore secure a *terminus ante quem* of 1561 to the chancel redecoration, given the Wedding at Cana is signed and dated to this year.¹⁰³ While scholars have wavered slightly on the dating of the Assumption, they have consistently accepted the Presentation of Christ in the Temple as a work of 1554-6. If we accept that the Bamberg picture is a rejected first version, I would suggest that the two altarpieces were probably executed sometime between 1553-1555, followed quite closely by the lateral paintings. I view the *stucchi* by Alessandro Vittoria as an integral part of the grand effect the Crociferi were attempting to achieve, rather than an afterthought, and indeed they also fit nicely into this window, as Vittoria returned to Venice in 1553 after a period of two years in Trent and Vicenza. It would hardly have made logistical sense for work on the *stucchi* to follow the installation of the altarpiece,

¹⁰² Matile, 1996, 151-206.

¹⁰³ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 38. Ridolfi relates that he was given the commission for the refectory painting because of “le cose operate nella cappella.”

so they were probably executed at the same time as the frame. The virtually identical dimensions of the Bamberg and Crociferi versions of the Assumption remain the most convincing evidence, not only for the argument for the rejected first effort, but also for a pre-existing framing structure. It was also from about 1552 onward that Vittoria's work was "profoundly indebted to Michelangelo", something that Victoria Avery has argued was fuelled by his collaborations during this decade with other artists, including Tintoretto, who shared his interest in the Florentine master.¹⁰⁴ The monumental figures in the foreground of Tintoretto's Presentation also suggest a reaction to Michelangelo, perhaps even filtered through the Vittoria *stucchi*, which were clearly already present, as Tintoretto included similar figures in niches in the backdrop of the rounded classical apse, an illusionistic extension of the actual space. One wonders if the composition of Schiavone's Visitation was similarly arranged, taking into consideration the lateral approach to the altar, perhaps with an architectural setting. We might also pause here to recall Ridolfi's testimony that Tintoretto produced his lateral painting "in concorrenza" with the elder Schiavone. While the terminology suggests a sort of competition, I think Ridolfi's remarks are more aptly interpreted as an observation of a playful dialogue. By the mid-1550's Schiavone was in the winter of his career, and it would already have been abundantly clear that the junior Tintoretto was poised to be a formidable player on the Venetian art scene. The Crociferi commission presented an opportunity to showcase their

¹⁰⁴ Avery, 2003, 163. It was precisely during this period that the influence of sculpture on Tintoretto's style was at its height. The three-dimensional quality of sculpture appealed to Tintoretto, who came under the influence of Alessandro Vittoria, but also Jacopo Sansovino during the 1540's and 50's. B. Boucher, "Artes cognatae: the relationship between painting and sculpture in the time of Tintoretto" in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte*, eds. P. Rossi and L. Puppi (Padua, 1996), 241-6.

virtuosity, for each to respond to the other's ideas, for the viewer to observe the late manner of the master juxtaposed to the maturing style of the pupil (even if that relationship was unofficial). We can be sure the result of this collaboration—not only between Tintoretto and Schiavone, but also with Vittoria—was striking, something that the loss of the original arrangement prevents us from fully appreciating. These artists were friends, competitors, and at this moment they were all keen to respond to each other, and to artistic innovations occurring outside of the city. Perhaps the high degree of finish and detail that has so often been praised in Tintoretto's Crociferi paintings was not solely a result of his desire to top Veronese, but was also inspired by the calibre of the other artists at work in the space.

The fact that Tintoretto was asked to produce multiple paintings for the Crociferi suggests that they cannot have been unhappy with the result. One doubts that they ever passed off their Assumption as a Veronese, but their initial determination to have a work by this rising star implies their awareness of the cachet that accompanied the ownership of a work by his hand, and therefore the latest artistic developments. While the Ridolfian anecdote suggests Tintoretto's initial willingness to surrender the triumph of authorship, the result is not entirely convincing; his vigorous, irrepressible style comes through. His promise to the Crociferi belongs to his corporate approach to marketing, while the result is actually more of a verisimilitude. Once Tintoretto obtained the opportunity, his effort at imitation was aimed at exposing the work of his competitor as overrated by showcasing his own ability to produce something of the like with a flair all his own. The three extremely high quality works he produces for the Crociferi are testament to his desire to prove himself; as Ridolfi stated, Tintoretto “knew how to bring

his paintings to an exquisite finish when he judged it opportune and when the occasion and the quality of the place required it.”¹⁰⁵ Perhaps he knew that the Crociferi were discerning patrons. If he did not know from the outset, the potential rejection of his first effort would have been enlightening. Or perhaps Tintoretto knew that something else was also at stake: the approval of their influential patrician protectors.

4.10 Patronage of the Altarpiece

Although Ridolfi’s anecdote clearly suggests that the Crociferi were in charge of the commission for their altarpiece, arguments for alternative patrons have been made. As will be demonstrated, the lateral paintings were provided by guilds that used the main altar for their devotional exercises. Although corporate patronage of a high altar was not without precedent in parish churches, it would be unusual in the context of a monastic church. It is more likely that these guilds paid for use of the space, even provided decoration for it, but did not possess rights. Merkel made a rather feeble argument for the involvement of Paola Priuli, the widow of Francesco Querini. They were indeed patrons of art, however their devotional interests were focused on the parish of Santa Maria Formosa, the *campo* in which they had a *palazzo*.¹⁰⁶ His main evidence is their remote connection to the branch of the Querini family of which Elisabetta Massolo, another Crociferi patron, was a member, and the fact that a distant descendant assumed responsibility for the altar to which the Jesuits relocated the Tintoretto Assumption.¹⁰⁷ Their involvement is completely refuted by the records of the 1581 apostolic visit, which

¹⁰⁵ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 39-40.

¹⁰⁶ *Catalogo della pinacoteca della Fondazione scientifica Querini Stampalia*, eds. M. Dazzi and E. Merkel (Venice, 1979), 15-21. Francesco died in 1554.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 29.

clearly states which altars were under the patronage of individuals or confraternities, and the rights to the high altar belonged to neither.¹⁰⁸

It is difficult to say how desperate the financial situation was at the monastery as a result of the *commenda*, but it would be fair to assume that such a massive decorative project must have been aided, at least partly, by funds external to the monastery.

Occasionally the state might contribute funds to such projects, usually via the *Provveditori al Sal*, however my investigation failed to reveal any such endowment to the *Crociferi*. A few alternatives should be considered. There are recorded cases of monetary contributions being made to decorative projects on the part of individual members of the clergy. For example, the prior of San Pietro Martire, Bartolomeo d'Alzano, used proceeds from his literary activities to finance an altarpiece by Fra Bartolomeo.¹⁰⁹ Fra Germano probably used communal funds raised from his monastery to fund the Titian Assumption.¹¹⁰ The possibility that the funds were raised amongst the *Crociferi* cannot be discounted, considering the wealthy pedigree of many of the *frati*, their involvement in public preaching (which attracted almsgiving), literary and theatrical pursuits. Recalling the involvement of Alvisè Dardani in the rebuilding of the church, the potential contributions of private patrons or lay procurators must also be considered.

The longstanding relationship between the *Crociferi* and the Zen family has already been noted. The Cinquecento generation of the family demonstrated particular attachment to the church; the patriarch of the Zen ai Crosecchieri line, Pietro (1457-1539), founded a burial chapel in the church in 1538 in which he and his son Catharin

¹⁰⁸ ASVat, VA, 96, c. 71v. “..bonna nulla annezza est ei societas.”

¹⁰⁹ Humfrey, 1993, 97.

¹¹⁰ Goffen, 1986, 84; Humfrey, 1993, 84.

were buried. A marriage between Pietro's daughter, Barbara, and Priamo Da Lezze (1467-1557), one of the most distinguished statesmen of the day, secured a close alliance between these powerful families and provided the Crociferi with yet another set of supporters.¹¹¹ In 1550 Giovanni Da Lezze (1510-1580)—like his father Priamo, a Procurator of St Mark—made provision in his testament for burial in the Crociferi church. The resulting monument to Giovanni, Priamo and Giovanni's son Andrea by Alessandro Vittoria was completed over the following decades. It has generally been assumed that Giovanni's choice of the church of the Crociferi was inspired by the family connection to the Zen.¹¹² While the Zen might have initially attracted the Da Lezze family to the church, Priamo and Giovanni probably had a much more personal connection to the monastery as lay procurators.

My research revealed that several generations of the Zen family served as lay protectors, a position that seems to have frequently passed from father to son. Notarial documents confirm that Pietro's eldest son, Catharin (1481-1556), senator and ambassador to Persia, was their protector for more than twenty-five years.¹¹³ Catharin's son, Nicolò Zen (1515-1565), also served as procurator, and his son, Nicolò, became a Crocifero.¹¹⁴ In 1554 a dispute arose between the Crociferi and Nicolò Zen, and he

¹¹¹ Priamo, a Procurator of St. Mark, was balloted for doge in 1553, 1554 and 1556.

¹¹² M. Dario, "Autoglorificazione patrizia e architettura: il caso della famiglia Da Lezze alla Misericordia" *SV* 30 (1995), 192.

¹¹³ ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 372. March 5, 1554. The Crociferi outline a dispute with Nicolò Zen and suspend him as procurator. They note: "Il Cl^{mo} M. Catharin padri di voi Mag^{ro} M. Nicolo Zen da poi che per xxv et più anni continui governo Noi frati del mon^{rio} di Crosichieri et fo vero nostro Procurator et Protitto."

¹¹⁴ See App.V.

resigned.¹¹⁵ In his resignation he outlines his contributions to their hospital: “che vi ho rifabricato di nove senza vostro danno, senza vostra spesa, senza vostra fatica” and notes that land was given in front of the *Zen palazzo* and on the side of the monastery to build a *lavandera*, for which, he adds, he has yet to receive any money.¹¹⁶ About the time of his resignation, his political career flourished, and he went on to hold a series of extremely influential governmental posts over the following decade in which he assumed a leading role in major urban renovations.¹¹⁷ The proceedings to elect new procurators following Zen’s departure resulted in the appointment in 1555 of the patricians Giovan Andrea da Mosto, Giovan Alvise Grimani and Giacomo Gussoni by prior Giuliano Cirno and the *capitolo*. They would join Stefano Tiepolo, Senator and Procurator of San Marco, who had served alongside Nicolò Zen for a time, and by 1554 had been procurator for at least twelve years.¹¹⁸ In an election of June 1556 Priamo da Lezze was added to the list of candidates for procurator, and although he is never explicitly referred to as “procurator”, Giovanni da Lezze frequently witnessed notarial documents on behalf of the monastery,

¹¹⁵ ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 372. The documents in this *busta* are mixed “*estraordinaria*.” A series of documents throughout March of 1554 outline the dispute.

¹¹⁶ ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 372. March 5, 1554. “...slargandovi il campo non solo davanti la casa nostro, ma dalla banda del vostro Monasterio dandovi del nostro Terreno et fabricandovi il luogo della lavandera vostra, per il quale ancora non ho havuto dinaro alcuno.”

¹¹⁷ He took up his first major posts in the months following the resignation. For his extensive resumé, including Savio di Terraferma and Provveditore all’Arsenale: O. Pinessi, “Tintoretto e gli Zen. ‘El caballero de la cadena de oro’: Nicolò Zen” *Arte Documento* 23 (2007), 156.

¹¹⁸ ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 359, cc. 89v-90v. May 1543 election of priors at various Crociferi monasteries mentions “C^{lmo} D. Stephanus Thiepulo pr^{or} et p.tector dicti mon^o.” ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 372. April 19, 1549, Confalonieri refers to Stefano Tiepolo and Nicolò Zen as “procuratori laici.” ASV, Barbaro, VII. 32, 75-6, 84. Stefano (q. Polo) lived in Santi Apostoli, was elected Procurator *de Ultra* in June 1553, served as Captain General, received votes in the ducal elections of 1553, 1554.

particularly around 1577¹¹⁹, the year in which the Crociferi elected Cavaliere and Procurator of San Marco *de ultra*, Paolo Tiepolo (1523-85), the eldest son of Stefano, as their procurator, just a year before he was also elected “protettore e procuratore” of Santi Giovanni e Paolo.¹²⁰

Stefano Tiepolo, as it happens, had a connection to Lorenzo Massolo and Elisabetta Querini, patrons of Titian’s Martyrdom of St. Lawrence, albeit not a particularly happy one. In 1537 Pietro Massolo, the couple’s young son wed Stefano’s daughter, Chiara. After only seventeen months of marriage, Pietro bludgeoned his young bride and fled to the Benedictine monastery of San Benedetto di Polirone near Mantua.¹²¹ A decade later his family sought a pardon, and enlisted the help of some of their connected friends, including Giovanni della Casa, the papal nuncio to Venice (1544-49) who was a friend of Stefano Tiepolo and enjoyed a close relationship with Elisabetta. She was a muse for his poetry, and they were both, incidentally, patrons of Titian.¹²² In

¹¹⁹ ASV, Atti Figolin, B. 5696.

¹²⁰ BMC, Mss. PD. c. 2190/I(9), “Crociferi nominate Procurator Paolo Tiepolo”; M. Gaier, *Facciate sacre a scopo profano* (Venice, 2002), 47-8. Paolo was an important figure in papal diplomacy and spent several years (1571-2) as ambassador to the court of Pius V.

¹²¹ P. Molmenti, “Un poeta uxoricida del secolo XVI” *Nuova Antologia*, 1927, 133-4.

¹²² Titian knew Della Casa before his arrival in Venice in September 1547. He did one, possibly two portraits of Della Casa, and produced works for the court of Paul III, to which the nuncio was tied. Titian was one of the first to visit the nuncio in 1547, undoubtedly calling on him in relation to his campaign to obtain a benefice from Paul III. In 1547 Della Casa acted as an intermediary between Titian and the Farnese court to secure the artist the role of keeper of the keys following the death of Sebastiano del Piombo. Muttini, “Giovanni Della Casa” in *DBI*, XXXVI (1988), 713; R. Zapperi, “Alessandro Farnese, Giovanni della Casa and Titian’s Danae in Naples” *JWCI* 54 (1991), 159-171; C. Terribile, “Il Doge Francesco Donà e la Pala di San Giovanni Elemosinario di Tiziano” *Venezia Cinquecento* 14 (1997), 124-6; A. Santosuosso, “Giovanni Della Casa and his lost portrait by Titian” *Bibliothèque d’humanisme et renaissance* 57 (1995), 111-118; C. Terribile, “Quale volto per monsignor Della Casa?”

1546 Della Casa approached Tiepolo on behalf of the Massolo couple in hopes he would intervene for a pardon. It may have been his friendship with Stefano and/or Elisabetta, or perhaps his avid literary interests that encouraged his own protection of the Crociferi.¹²³ He appealed to cardinal Alessandro Farnese on behalf of the monastery, as he had on behalf of Titian, but in the case of the Crociferi for the favour of a tax reduction in 1544.¹²⁴ A letter of 19 April 1555 to his nephew, Annibale Rucellai, a member of the household of Cardinal Caraffa in Rome, records his ongoing advocacy for the monastery at Tiepolo's behest:

“Papa Clemente Sua Maestà ordinò, credo per un preve, le facultà del generale de' Crocicchieri, la quale ordinatione si è osservata fino a qui senza strepito. Hora questo general presente par che havessi ottenuto un altro breve da Papa Iulio, per il quale si ampliavano le sue facultà, il che dispiace non solo a questi Padri ma a tutta la città, massimamente perché pare che non si proceda in tutto sinceramente ma con qualche rancore come è usanza de' frati il più delle volte, et oltra ciò che si volgia metter mano nella administration delle entrate, il che questi Signori sentono pessimamente mal volentieri. Il clarissimo Messer Stefano Tiepolo mi ha pregato che io scriva in raccomandatione de' frati a S. Angelo et a S. Vitale, et così ho fatto più diligentemente ch'io ho saputo.....Tu sai quanto il clarissimo Messer Stefano merita apresso d'ogniuno, et quanto noi siamo obligati alla sua bontà et cortesia, et perciò in questa occasione sforzati di mostrarli gratitudine. Può esser che la sopradetta informatione non sia vero in tutto, perciò riferisciti a quell che ti dirà il procurator dei dei frati et habbia a cuore.”¹²⁵

In addition to connecting Della Casa to the Crociferi, this letter is an ideal demonstration of the function of a lay procurator. As the case of Dardani demonstrated, these individuals played an intercessory role on behalf of the monastery, particularly at

in *Giovanni della Casa: un seminario per il centenario*, ed. A. Quadam (Rome, 2006), 79-130.

¹²³ Della Casa was the author of poetry, political treatises, an influential book on manners, and in his early years, burlesque writings.

¹²⁴ ASPat, CSM, B. 7, n. 62. (December 9, 1544). “Joannes de la Casa, Eletto di Benevento, ed altri collettori indicati a proposito di alcune lettere del cardinale diacono Alessandro Farnese per la riduzione delle tasse ai Crociferi di S. Maria a Venezia.”

¹²⁵ M. Mari, “Le Lettere di Giovanni della Casa ad Annibale Rucellai” in *Per Giovanni della Casa*, eds. G. Barbbarisi and C. Berra (Bologna, 1997), 409.

moments of strife.¹²⁶ It is telling that by the mid-1550's, just as they were initiating this project of decorative renovation, the Crociferi were no longer content with having just one or two lay procurators, but had enlisted as many as five, and influential ones at that. Three of the six men Francesco Sansovino singled out in 1561 as examples of the Venetian patrician ideal can be traced to the Crociferi: Pietro Zen, Priamo Da Lezze and Stefano Tiepolo.¹²⁷ The monastery was quite simply allied with some of the most respected members of the ruling class, which is why it is not entirely surprising that it was during these same years that the Republic began actively appealing to Rome on behalf of the monastery for the restoration of their privileges and release from the *commenda*.

Many of their protectors also happened to be major patrons of art. Tintoretto had several connections to the Zen. He painted the portrait of Pietro's son, Vincenzo Zen, (Palazzo Pitti, Florence, c. 1560-5) [Fig.44],¹²⁸ and Ornetta Pinessi has recently argued that a Tintoretto portrait in the Prado is in fact a depiction of Nicolò Zen [Fig.45].¹²⁹ Her hypothesis relies heavily on the sitter's likeness to Titian's portrait of a clearly younger Nicolò at the Kingston Lacy Collection, Dorset [Fig.46].¹³⁰ The dating of these portraits

¹²⁶ Gaier, 2002, 17. In 1582 the nuns of Santa Maria Celeste held a contest for procurator in hopes of accelerating the reconstruction of their church.

¹²⁷ F. Sansovino, *Delle cose notabili* (Venice, 1561), c. 74v.

¹²⁸ P. Rossi, *Tintoretto. I ritratti*, (Venice, 1973), 106.

¹²⁹ Pinessi, 2007, 104-121. Pinessi advances a convincing argument for a later date than had traditionally been applied to it by Rearick, who assigned it to 1545-7, and Von der Bercken, Pallucchini and Rossi, who preferred a date of 1555-60. Falomir, 2007, 282-4, cat. 29.

¹³⁰ The portrait, once thought to depict Francesco Savorgnan del Torre, has been accepted as one of Nicolò, probably the one seen by Vasari in the home of Danese Cattaneo. The date recently attached to the Titian of about 1565-6 must be pushed back in order to accept the Tintoretto as a likeness of Zen, who appears much older than in the Kingston Lacy portrait. P. Humfrey, "Nicolò Zen" in *Titian* (exh. cat. National Gallery, London,

remains a matter of conjecture, but the arguments for the identity of the sitter are convincing, particularly in light of the circles in which Zen travelled. In addition to his active life in government, Nicolò was engaged in various learned pursuits that brought him into the humanist circle of Pietro Aretino, among others.¹³¹ His interest in architecture undoubtedly formed the basis of his friendship with Daniele Barbaro, patron of Palladio, who also sat for a portrait by Titian. In 1557 Nicolò published his history of the origins of Venice with the printer Francesco Marcolini, who had been a favourite of his grandfather, and who also shared a close paternal relationship with Tintoretto. The Zen owned a Tintoretto Madonna adored by members of the Zen family (unidentified), a Christ and the Adulteress (Rome, Galleria Nazionale) and an Entry into Jerusalem (Florence, Uffizi).¹³² The last two date to about 1551, and thus secure a connection between Tintoretto and the Zen previous to his work at the Crociferi church. Ridolfi noted that Tintoretto joined Andrea Schiavone in frescoing the façade of the Zen *palazzo*, undoubtedly in the early part of his career [Fig.47].¹³³ Pietro Zen had left instructions in his 1538 testament that the *palazzo*, still in construction, should be painted with scenes

2003), cat. 39; S. Sponza, “Un dipinto di Tiziano riconosciuto: il ‘ritratto di Nicolò Zono’ a Kingston Lacy” in *Pittura veneziana dal Quattrocento al Settecento*, ed. G.M. Pilo (Venice, 1999), 57-62.

¹³¹ C. Cairns, *Pietro Aretino and the Republic of Venice* (Florence, 1985), 15-16. Zen published: *Storia della guerra veneto-turca of 1537, Dell'Origine de' Barbari, che distrussero per tutto 'l mondo l' Imperio di Roma, onde hebbe principio la città di Venetia of 1557.*

¹³² Ridolfi, 1648, II, 54; E. Weddigen, “L’Adultera del Tintoretto della Galleria Nazionale di Roma” *AV* 24 (1970), 81-92. S. Martinelli. “L’Entrata di Cristo in Gerusalemme” in *Jacopo Tintoretto 1519-1594. Il grande collezionismo mediceo*, ed. M. Chiarini (Florence, 1994), 50-51.

¹³³Ridolfi, 1648, II, 1648, 15; Boschini, 1660, 312;

celebrating the achievements of his ancestors.¹³⁴ Presumably Schiavone and Tintoretto were hired to carry out his wishes, with Schiavone in charge. Tintoretto's contributions, a "donna distesa" on the Rio Santa Caterina façade, and a Conversion of St. Paul on the *campo* façade, had all but faded by the time Zanetti turned his attention to the fresco fragments, making dating of the work problematic.¹³⁵ Much depends on the chronology of the building of the *palazzo* itself, which started around 1537, but was evidently not complete until around 1562.¹³⁶ Paoletti dated the project to around 1553, however Pallucchini was justifiably critical of this date, preferring to assign it to the previous decade when Tintoretto could more reasonably be imagined assisting the elder Schiavone.¹³⁷ It is conceivable that the parts of the *palazzo* he frescoed were complete in the late 1540's, and that Tintoretto's more modest contribution of a "donna distesa" belonged to a first phase of the project led by Schiavone.¹³⁸ By around 1556, when the *campo* façade was complete, a more established Tintoretto might have returned to complete the more complicated scene of the Conversion that was so praised by Ridolfi and Boschini. Ridolfi also notes two further early commissions in the *campo* immediately following his description of the Zen frescoes: a narrative frieze of the life of

¹³⁴ F. Lucchetta, "L'Affare Zen in Levante nel primo Cinquecento" *SV* 10 (1968), Appendix XXVIII; ASV, NT (Marsilio), B. 1213, n. 889. Zen specified: "sopra le mie case depenti tutti i fatti notabili del quondam Messer Carlo Zen, che fece per la Republica."

¹³⁵ A. M. Zanetti, *Della Pittura veneziana e delle opere pubbliche dei Veneziani Maestri* (Venice, 1792), 2nd ed, vol. I, lib. 3, 331; L. Foscari, *Affreschi esterne a Venezia* (Milan, 1936), 67; Pallucchini and Rossi, 1982, 26.

¹³⁶ Concina, 1984, 153. Testimony of "Maestro Salvatore, murarius" in 1566 states that it had been four years since the *palazzo* "è fabbricata."

¹³⁷ Paoletti, 1893, II, 186; Pallucchini, 1950, 83.

¹³⁸ Pinessi, 2007, 115.

St. Barbara for the meeting house of the tailors guild¹³⁹, and a fresco of St. Christopher on the façade of the meetinghouse of the silk-weavers, both to the right of the church.¹⁴⁰

Tintoretto's very public work on these nearby buildings may also have brought him to the attention of the Crociferi.

Priamo and Giovanni Da Lezze were also patrons of Tintoretto, who painted Priamo's portrait, and worked at the house of Giovanni on an unspecified project from 1565-7.¹⁴¹ As *Procuratori*, Priamo and Giovanni were involved in various renovations at the Palazzo Ducale, Marciana Library and Procuratia, and Giovanni Da Lezze was among those responsible for commissioning *stucchi* at each of these places from Alessandro Vittoria (c.1553-60), and Giovanni commissioned a bust of his father from Vittoria sometime around 1566.¹⁴² In 1553 Giovanni Da Lezze, Stefano Tiepolo and Filippo Tron (another individual listed in the 1556 election of lay procurators) were all depicted as witnesses in Tintoretto's 1553 Emperor Frederick receiving the Imperial Crown from Pope Adrian (destroyed) in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 15-16; Boschini, 1664, 252; Zanetti, 1771, 146; Pallucchini and Rossi, 1982, 266. Boschini, 1674, 386. "Intorno la detta stanza vi e un fregio con la vita di S. Barbara della puerizia del Tintoretto."

¹⁴⁰ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 15-16; Foscari, 1936, 67. Ridolfi notes "la figura di san Cristoforo sopra il campo, ora del tutto consumata."

¹⁴¹ Rossi, 1973, 150-2. There are three portraits of Priamo by Tintoretto and shop (Pallavicini Collection, Rome; Ringling Museum, Sarasota; Accademia, Venice).

¹⁴² Priamo signed a contract for Vittoria's work at San Francesco della Vigna in 1557. Giovanni signed the contracts for Vittoria's Marciana Feminioni in 1553, for the *stucchi* for the staircase, for the reading room of the library and the office of the Procuratia in 1556, 1559 and 1560. V. Avery, 'Documenti sulla vita e opere di Alessandro Vittoria', *Studi Trentini di Scienze Storiche*, 78 (Supplemento, 1999), 21, doc. 17ii; 43, doc. 40iii; 55-6, doc. 52iii; T. Martin, *Alessandro Vittoria and the portrait bust in Renaissance Venice* (New York, 1998), 34.

¹⁴³ Pallucchini and Rossi, 1976, 265. Dolce objected to the anachronistic inclusion of these individuals in the painting, while Vasari praised the work, particularly the portraits. Roskill, 1968, 124; Vasari, 1568, VI, 588-9.

The fact that all three artists involved in the chancel decoration had connections to these individuals supports the possibility that the input of lay supporters was a factor in securing the Crociferi commission for Tintoretto, Schiavone and Vittoria. Since a number of these wealthy individuals planned to be buried in the church, they might also have had some financial investment in a decorative project that would refurbish and update the principal liturgical space. There is little doubt that the Crociferi were consciously enlisting patrician procurators, not only as potential benefactors, but to intercede on their behalf. In the document in which they suspend Nicolò Zen, they state it themselves: “nostri Padroni et gentilhomini de la qualità che tutta la cit[t]à mande et atti a defender per justitia le cose nostre.”¹⁴⁴ Their advocacy was surely one means by which the Venetian Crociferi emerged from the *commenda* and rebuild their reputation.

4.11 Toward a Marian Programme: Lateral

As Michael Matile and Paul Hills have shown, *quadri laterali*—longitudinal narrative paintings designed for lateral walls—developed in sixteenth-century Venice concurrently with the proliferation of Scuole del Sacramento, confraternities devoted to the care, promotion and distribution of the sacrament in parish churches.¹⁴⁵ New emphasis on the Eucharist and its proper reservation in response to the Protestant challenge resulted in alterations to the space surrounding the high altar, where the sacrament was increasingly kept. In some cases renovations were required in the presbyteries for reasons of decorum, and to accommodate the devotional activities of these confraternities. These *scuole* sometimes commissioned art to attract and engage

¹⁴⁴ ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 372. 5 March 1554.

¹⁴⁵ P. Hills, “Piety and Patronage in Cinquecento Venice: Tintoretto and the Scuole del Sacramento.” *Art History* 6, no. 1 (1983), 31; Matile, 1996, 151-2.

their membership, including lateral paintings, which often hung above the *banco* at which they congregated.¹⁴⁶ Because it was a monastic church, there was no such confraternity at the church of the Crociferi, but the sacrament was indeed reserved on the high altar, something that may have contributed to their desire to renovate their chancel.¹⁴⁷ The church was, however, the centre of the religious life of four trade guilds: the tailors, silk-weavers, barrel-makers and furriers. Both the *botteri* and *varoteri* had been associated with the Crociferi church since at least the late fifteenth century, however the *botteri* seem not to have possessed a side altar, instead using the high altar to carry out their devotional activities.¹⁴⁸ These corporate organisations also had a vested interest in the appearance of the church, particularly those that used the chancel for their devotional activities. A number of scholars have argued that the Tintoretto Presentation [Fig.31] and Schiavone Visitation were provided by the guilds of the *botteri* and *varoteri* respectively.¹⁴⁹ The barrelmakers were dedicated to the Purification of the Virgin, a Marian mystery synonymous with the Presentation of Christ in the Temple¹⁵⁰, and while the furriers cared for an altar dedicated to St. Lanfranc, their own dedication was to the Visitation.¹⁵¹ The rather scant archival material that survives for these guilds does provide some evidence of their possession of the works. We know both guilds had a tradition of solemnly processing to the altar each year on their respective feast days,

¹⁴⁶ M. Cope, *The Venetian Chapel of the Sacrament in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1979).

¹⁴⁷ ASVat, VA, 96, c. 70r.

¹⁴⁸ G. Vio, *Le Scuole Piccole nella Venezia dei Dogi* (Vicenza, 2004), 578-9 and 583-4.

¹⁴⁹ Matile, 1996; Krischel, 1992.

¹⁵⁰ G. Monticolo. *I capitolari delle arti veneziane sottoposte alla Giustizia e pei alla Giustizia Vecchia*, II, Rome, 1905, XCVI-II; D. Shorr, "The Iconographic Development of the Presentation in the Temple" *The Art Bulletin* 28 (1946), 17-32.

¹⁵¹ S. Gramigna and A. Perissa, *Scuole di arti mestieri e devozione* (Venice, 1981), 108.

where the *frati* were obligated to sing mass.¹⁵² A 1645 inventory of the possessions of the *varoteri* notes: “Ritrovandosi al presente nella chiesa delli crosechieri: Su il altar grande un quadro dilla nostra veneranda.”¹⁵³ In this same year the *varoteri* voted to spend 30 ducats to “restaurare il quadro della scuola che è sull’altare maggiore...di gran valsente.” This is the last we hear of what must have been the Schiavone. Neither the Visitation nor the Presentation were included in the inventory of the church in 1656, probably because they could not be counted amongst the assets being inventoried for sale, or perhaps because by 1656 the Visitation had been lost to a botched restoration.¹⁵⁴ A 1715 accord between the *botteri* and the Jesuits provides clarification. This document records an agreement made on the occasion of the rebuilding of the *cappella maggiore*, where the *scuola* carried out its “divoti essercitij.” It makes clear that there would not be room for the “Palla Grande di M.^a Vergine Assunta Titolare d’essa Chiesa” on the new high altar, which was being renovated at the expense of the Manin family and would be dedicated to the sacrament. The Assumption would be transported to a “decoroso” altar to the right of the church. To this altar would be transferred “ogni e qualunque Ius, prerogativa, Raggione e Possesso di fari li soliti devoti essercitij, che detta Arte teneva, et esserciteva all’antedette Altare e Capella maggiore.” While this document does indicate that the guild had some rights to the *cappella maggiore*, it does not explicitly claim full patronage rights to the space, or to the altarpiece.¹⁵⁵ It does, however, specify their ownership of

¹⁵² Vio, 2004, 533.

¹⁵³ ASV, Arti, B. 719, n. 11.

¹⁵⁴ Barri, 1671, 59; Boschini, 1674, 384; Martinelli, 1684, 223; BMC, Mariegola 116, c. 139r-v.

¹⁵⁵ A stone engraved with a barrel is still visible in the pavement around the high altar of the Jesuit church, a record of their use of the space. Further evidence is the barrel positioned on the steps in the Tintoretto Presentation, admittedly a feature that could have

the Tintoretto *laterale*: “Che il Quadro della Purificatione di M^a V^e di ragione di d[ett]a Arte che Stava per avanti ad un Lato della Capella Maggiore sia conservato nella d[ett]a Capella da farsi, col segnale dell’Arte stessa come in d[ett]o Quadro s’atrova.”¹⁵⁶

Matile noted that the Tintoretto would only have occupied about a third of the available space on the lateral wall—leaving space for as many as two further paintings per wall—and suggests the Crociferi may have intended to create a larger Marian programme that was never realized.¹⁵⁷ Similar Marian cycles were created at Santa Maria Maggiore and the Scuola di Santa Maria Assunta at San Stae.¹⁵⁸ The attraction of the Scuola della Concezione to the Crociferi church in 1519 has already been noted; their dedication would have made them prime candidates to contribute to such a programme. Their inventories do list two large paintings in the church, a Meeting at the Golden Gate and a Nativity, both lost.¹⁵⁹ Either subject would have been appropriate to a Marian scheme, however neither is ever recorded in the chancel. Martinelli’s assertion that the

been added at a later date. Ilchman (*Tintoretto*, 2007, cat. 31) and Krischel (1992, 79) both note that x-rays revealed a crest beneath the barrel, suggesting the work may have meant for another patron. This is unlikely, as the composition was clearly tailored to fit its place in the church. My attempt to obtain a copy of the x-ray for the purposes of comparison with *stemme* was unsuccessful. Honofri, *Cronologia veneta* (Venice, 1663), 165-166. Claims that the *varoteri* and *botteri* had rights to the high altar. It is important to note that by 1663 the Jesuits had rearranged, rededicated and added altars.

¹⁵⁶ BMC, Mariegola 116, c. 139v. It was obviously meant to return to the main chapel, something that probably never happened; instead it ended up in the sacristy.

¹⁵⁷ Matile, 1996, 188, 205, n. 121, 123. The lateral wall measured approximately 9.4m, and the Tintoretto, while large, is only 3m wide. He suggests, and is correct to reject the possibility that the Veronese Nativity was a part of this ensemble. It was consistently recorded as a lateral painting for the chapel of the silk-weavers.

¹⁵⁸ Walberg, 2005, 286-287; Matile, 1996, 205, n. 122.

¹⁵⁹ Martinelli, 1684, 222; ASV, SPS, BVC, B.196.

former was by the Dalmatian painter Matteo Ponzone also places the work at a great distance from the project in question, as Ponzone arrived in Venice around 1586.¹⁶⁰

My research uncovered a 1555 contract between the Crociferi and the guild of the *stampadori*, or printers, that established the church as the centre of their devotional activities, the significance of which will be discussed shortly.¹⁶¹ Like the *botteri*, they would not have had an altar, but the document provides yet another example of the Crociferi drawing important guilds to their church, and in light of the date of the accord, we might consider the possibility that the Crociferi hoped the *stampadori* might also contribute some sort of decoration to the communal area of the church.

Alternatively, the size of the Tintoretto Presentation may simply reflect the financial limitations of the guild, rather than evidence of some larger unfinished programme. Their patronage of these works already set them apart from many of their counterparts, who were rarely able to afford more than the rights to an altar.¹⁶² With or without the addition of further episodes, as a result of these guild contributions, the Crociferi formed a Marian programme in the chancel that was both visually engaging and iconographically challenging.

Matile and Hills have demonstrated Tintoretto's critical role in the development of the genre of *laterali*; he and his shop produced eleven sets in all.¹⁶³ His work for modest confraternities was part of his marketing practice, and by 1548 Tintoretto had

¹⁶⁰ ASV, SPS, BVC, B. 196. Inventories from 1707 onward located the Meeting of Joachim and Anna above the *banco* belonging to the *scuola* beneath the pulpit, probably in front of the choir. The Nativity was recorded "presso l'altare" in 1620. K. Prijatelj, *Matej Ponzoni-Poncun* (Split, 1970), 61.

¹⁶¹ ASV, Atti Fiume, B. 5698, cc. 36v-38r.

¹⁶² P. Humfrey and R. Mackenney, "The Venetian Trade Guilds as Patrons of Art in the Renaissance" *Burlington Magazine* 128 (1986), 317-30; Humfrey, 1993, 58-60.

¹⁶³ Matile, 1996, 152; Hills, 1983, 30.

worked for the fishmongers, glassblowers, tailors and silk-weavers.¹⁶⁴ Although his social status was elevated through marriage, his origins were working class, and he therefore had a unique ability to relate to these patrons. His strengths as a painter were particularly suited to *lateralis*; their placement demanded a thoughtful approach to composition, and Tintoretto was particularly innovative in his manipulation of space. The disruption of original context often prevents us from fully appreciating the degree to which this was the case.

4.12 Meaning and Experience

In addition to coordinating the logistics of their chancel decoration, the Crociferi seem also to have been architects of a progressive symbolic programme in the chancel, one that presented several interrelated themes on which to meditate. As a consequence of its placement at the locus for ritual worship, the altarpiece was an important means by which the central tenets of the faith could be asserted, defended and disseminated to the audience, whether lay or clerical. Catholic doctrines challenged by the Protestants found new emphasis in the altarpiece, particularly the centrality of the Eucharist and the cult of the Virgin and saints. This registered visually with a shift away from iconic imagery and subject matter, toward a proliferation of narrative subjects, which had greater dramatic force and potential to instruct. In the case of Marian churches, the preferred narrative became the Assumption, eclipsing the previously favoured subject of the Coronation, even in churches not dedicated to the mystery.¹⁶⁵ With the Assunta as their titular, the Crociferi were ideally positioned to adhere to this particular trend, and the resulting

¹⁶⁴ Nichols, 1999, 145.

¹⁶⁵ P. Humfrey, "Altarpieces and altar dedications in Counter-Reformation Venice and the Veneto" *Renaissance Studies* 10 (1996), 379.

altarpiece was indeed responsive—perhaps even too much so—to the climate of Church reform. There are at least two good reasons why this was inevitable. The Crociferi, particularly those at Venice, were intent on achieving and maintaining reform within the order so as to be freed from the *commendata*. They would have been keen to advertise their reformed status, and one excellent way of doing so would have been by visually demonstrating their adherence to the concepts and doctrines most heavily promoted by the Church during this period. Given what is known about the learned atmosphere at the monastery, it is hard to imagine that they would not have been fully aware of how these ideas might best be expressed, something that is reflected in the iconography of the altarpiece and its typological relationship to the *laterali*. Although this phase of the decoration of their church predated the official decrees of the Council of Trent on sacred art in 1563, the Crociferi ornamented their church in a way that was demonstrative of what would eventually be sanctioned as the proper use of visual art.

The arrangement of a Marian programme would not have been challenging for the largely Venetian population at the monastery. They would have been conversant with the iconography of the Virgin Mary, who was the object of ardent religious and civic devotion in the lagoon city.¹⁶⁶ Venice believed herself to possess a uniquely close association with Mary; integral to Venetian ideology was the notion of her divine protection and sanction over the Republic, beginning with its founding on March 25th of the year 421, the feast of the Annunciation.¹⁶⁷ This connection to the Virgin was a part of

¹⁶⁶ R. Chavasse, “Latin Lay Piety and Vernacular Lay Piety in Word and Image: Venice, 1471-early 1500’s” *Renaissance Studies* 10 (1996), 322. By Bernardo Giustiniani’s 1457 tally, there were twenty-one churches, three hundred altars, two Scuole Grandi and innumerable devotional confraternities with Marian dedications.

¹⁶⁷ D. Rosand. *Myths of Venice: The Figuration of a State* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 12.

the myth Venice promoted about itself as not only divinely protected¹⁶⁸, but also in possession of the virtues represented by its holy intercessors, in this case, as incorruptible and eternal like the Virgin.¹⁶⁹ Venice also possessed an important Byzantine icon, the *Nikopeia*, believed to be the portrait of the Virgin painted by the Evangelist Luke, which was solemnly processed each year on August 15th, the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, creating strong association between the city and this miracle.¹⁷⁰

The Assumption forms the culmination of all Marian mysteries as the glorious final reward for the Virgin's virtue, purity and sacrifices, and above all represented her exemption from death. As the tabernacle of Christ, the Virgin was free from sin and therefore was assumed bodily into heaven, where she reigned as Queen of Heaven. The notion of bodily assumption was intimately tied to Christ's Resurrection, and therefore this subject also carried Christological meaning. The Reformation's challenge to the nature and centrality of the Eucharist resulted in a proliferation of imagery that emphasised the importance of participation in the sacrament as the only means to salvation. Also stressed was the active role of the Virgin in the redemption of mankind, through her role as Christ's mother, and participation in the Passion. The amalgamation of Marian and Eucharistic meaning carried by the subject of the Assumption made it ideal for placement on the high altar, where the sacrament was reserved and distributed, and where the faithful would pray for the Virgin's intercession.

¹⁶⁸ E. Muir. *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton, 1981), 135-56; D. Rosand. "'Veneta figurata': The Iconography of a Myth" in *Interpretazioni Veneziane*, 1984, 177-96.

¹⁶⁹ Rosand, 2001, 36, 100-114. Rosand refers specifically to the city's conception of itself as "Venetia Vergine." Sansovino spoke of its uncorrupted purity and "long survival intact against outside forces."

¹⁷⁰ Humfrey, 1996, 379; Chavasse, 1996, 322-323.

Both subjects chosen for the *laterali* were related to the central image, communicating the justification for the Assumption. The Visitation, as related in Luke 1, marked the first recognition of the presence of the miraculously conceived Christ. Upon her arrival at the home of Elizabeth, John the Baptist, still *in utero*, leapt in his mother's womb. In that moment he was sanctified, freed from the burden of sin by the presence of the Virgin and the unborn Christ. It was sometimes argued that the Virgin was similarly sanctified while still in the womb of Anne.¹⁷¹ During this visit Mary makes her longest speech, the Magnificat, in which she articulates her special status: "My soul doth magnify the Lord" and "From hence-forth all generations shall call me blessed." The Presentation, an event with significance in the lives of both Mary and Christ, prefigured the sacrifice of mother and son for mankind, and denoted the Virgin's purity and humility. In accordance with Mosaic Law, mothers were to present their child in the Temple after a forty-day period of cleansing following its birth. An offering of a lamb and a turtledove was required to purify the mother, who had been rendered unclean through process of conception and childbirth. Because Christ had been conceived without sin, Mary was technically exempt from obeying this law, but submitted to it anyway. In Christological terms, while the Visitation represented the first recognition of Christ, the Purification signified the first introduction of the Messiah into the house of God and the initiation of the purification of mankind, brought about by both Christ and the Virgin.¹⁷²

A number of examples of such coordinated decorative programmes have already been noted, marking microcosms of Marian devotion. The reader will recall a similar

¹⁷¹ E. O'Connor, *Dogma of the Immaculate Conception* (Notre Dame, 1958), 192.

¹⁷² Shorr, 1946, 19.

arrangement at the Frari, where Titian's high altarpiece formed the apex of a triangle of Marian altar decoration.¹⁷³ The monumental framing of Titian's painting in the apse, with its references to the classical triumphal arch, emphasised the grandeur and drama of Mary's victory over death. The reasons for her exemption were communicated through the decoration of the altars in the nave, referencing the related mysteries of the Purification and Immaculate Conception. A spectator progressing down the nave would have passed these altars, before moving beneath the sculptural crucified Christ atop the choir screen, and onward toward the high altar. The message of the potential of salvation through the sacrifice of Christ, the intercession of the Virgin and participation in the sacrament at the altar was communicated through the interrelationship between these spaces and their decoration, as were the devotional affinities of the friars. Humfrey has recognized the "considerable theological expertise" evident in the coordination of this programme, and a similar erudition was clearly at work in the Crociferi chancel.

In selecting Tintoretto, the Crociferi recruited an artist adept at developing new iconographies, at exploring the boundaries of tradition to discover new ways of engaging the viewer, sometimes through the use of unexpected motifs. He drew his inspiration from both visual sources and popular devotional literature, which also aimed to elicit empathy and encouraged a visualisation of being present at the actual event. Highly descriptive medieval texts such as the Meditations on the Life of Christ and Jacopo da Voragine's The Golden Legend provided a wealth of motifs for artists, particularly for events such as the Assumption of the Virgin that were not described in the Bible.¹⁷⁴ The Crociferi undoubtedly guided Tintoretto in his development of the imagery in the

¹⁷³ Humfrey, *Pre-history*, 1993, 236-7; Rosand, 1971, 196-213.

¹⁷⁴ Humfrey, 1993, 59.

Assumption; they would have been familiar with an abundance of texts, and as the primary audience, would have wished for an altarpiece rich in meaningful references. Scholars have noted that both the Crociferi Assumption, and the Bamberg version contain quite unique, perhaps even slightly questionable iconographical elements.¹⁷⁵ Considering Weddigen's compelling argument that the Bamberg Assumption was in fact a rejected first version of the Crociferi altarpiece, we must entertain the possibility that unconventional imagery in both paintings might have had as much to do with the patron as the artist.

Much about the Crociferi altarpiece conforms to what anyone mid-century would have expected of a painting depicting the Assumption. Humfrey has traced the development of the depiction of the Assumption in the Veneto, noting the gradual movement away from motionless, iconic arrangements toward more theatrical narrative scenes occurring against a recognizably earthly backdrop.¹⁷⁶ Any work to follow Titian's treatment of the subject at the Frari could hardly have escaped referencing this seminal work [**Fig.48**]. There are indeed echoes of its influence in the Crociferi picture: the variety of apostles arranged at the base of the composition, their gestures directing attention to the robust, dynamic Virgin, enveloped in the ineffable light. The notion of light beyond comprehension was central to Cinquecento rhetoric on the Assumption, as

¹⁷⁵ Rearick, 1981, 368-9; Weddigen, 1988, 88-9; Humfrey, 1996, 372.

¹⁷⁶ Humfrey, *Pre-history*, 1993, 233-5. The first known Venetian depiction of the Assumption, Jacopo Moranzone's version of 1441 for the church of Sant'Elena (now in the Accademia) exemplifies the early static, iconic format that was the fashion initially. Gradually more naturalism, movement and drama was introduced by Alvisio Vivarini (Brera, Milan, 1478), Lotto's Assumption of the Virgin with St. Anthony Abbot and St. Louis of Toulouse (Asolo, 1506), Giovanni Bellini's Assumption with Saints (formerly in Santa Maria degli Angeli, now San Pietro Martire, 1505-1510), Palma Vecchio's Assumption (formerly for the Scuola di Santa Maria Maggiore, now in the Accademia, 1514).

the orations composed by the Venetian poet and historian, Sorano, to be read on the feast of the Assumption in 1499 at the Crociferi church demonstrate. That year it was to be recited by one of Sorano's students at the monastery, the future doge Lorenzo Priuli. It read:

“After her death, was this not something divine, even, indeed more than divine? At the very moment when the most glorious soul of the Virgin was most gloriously raised to the heavens, a radiance gathered in the sky, so bright that nobody's eyes could endure it.

On the third day, then the body was taken up into heaven in the company of all the Angels, amid the joy of all the Saints, the applause (so to say) of all the stars, and into the presence of the Son himself. What is your faith, my noble Christians? The earth shook with joy; the very waters were stirred to merriment, the air grew clearer, the sky seemed a fairer sight. The whole firmament of heaven shone brighter than before.”¹⁷⁷

What is less conventional about the Crociferi Assumption is in the details; namely the delicate floral still life, the meticulously rendered liturgical objects in the foreground, and above all the crown of stars about the head of the Virgin. These motifs serve to accentuate certain aspects of the message of the Assumption, but also point to a subtext that is now difficult to fully interpret due to the loss of the original context.

4.13 Unconventional Iconographies?

We know that Tintoretto made use of The Golden Legend as a source for his Miracle of the Slave, and it must certainly have informed the iconography for his depictions of the Assumption. Weddigen has argued for another source from popular literature of the time for the Crociferi and Bamberg altarpieces: Pietro Aretino's Vita di Maria Vergine, published in 1539.¹⁷⁸ Although history has remembered Aretino for his piercing tongue, letters, dialogues, satire and even pornographic works, he published a

¹⁷⁷ Chavasse, 1996, 328.

¹⁷⁸ Weddigen, 1988, 69, 74-76.

series of religious texts in the 1530's and early 1540's that were received with immediate enthusiasm.¹⁷⁹ The author claimed that the dynamic preaching of *Spirituali* preacher Bernardino Occhino, in 1534 had resulted in “la conversione Aretina”, moving him to compose vivid accounts of religious drama.¹⁸⁰ The extent to which art and literature interacted in this period remains the subject of debate.¹⁸¹ I will not argue that Tintoretto was engaging in some kind of *paragone* with Aretino's description of the Assumption, however the influence of certain elements of the text should be considered for several reasons.

Artists and writers did share descriptive goals, and for Tintoretto, always striving to innovate, the pictorial quality of Aretino's writings would have naturally tempted translation in a visual form. The reciprocal influence of Aretino's work and that of his friend Titian has been the subject of several studies.¹⁸² It is not impossible that Tintoretto knew Aretino's sacred texts; Tintoretto produced two paintings for the ceiling of Aretino's *palazzo* (1541), and a portrait of the writer in the 1540's, establishing a relationship between them. The printer Francesco Marcolini provides a link; he

¹⁷⁹ R. B. Waddington, “Pietro Aretino, religious writer” in *Renaissance Studies*. 20 (2006): 277-292. Aretino published *La Passione di Giesu* and *I sette Salmi della Penitencia di Davide* in 1534, *Humanità di Christo* in the following year, *Il Genesi* in 1538, and the *Vita di Maria vergine*, *Vita di Caterina vergine* and *Vita di San Tommaso* in 1539, 1540 and 1543.

¹⁸⁰ Waddington, 2006, 279.

¹⁸¹ C. Hope, “Aspects of Criticism in Art and Literature in Sixteenth-Century Italy” *Word and Image* 4 (1988), 1-10.

¹⁸² J. Anderson, “Pietro Aretino and Sacred Imagery” in *Interpretazioni veneziane*, 1984, 275-90; U. Roman D'Elia. *The Poetics of Titian's Religious Paintings* (Cambridge, 2005).

considered Tintoretto like a son and he published Aretino's religious works.¹⁸³ The Crociferi had connections of their own to Aretino, through a number of their patrons/protectors who had been responsible for attracting Aretino to Venice (Zen and Da Lezze). Aretino's published correspondence includes a letter and a number of references to the Master General of the Order Pietro Trevisan (1530).¹⁸⁴ Crociferi interest in the *volgare* literature has already been noted; a number of the Crociferi were even involved in the production and publishing of their own sacred poetry and psalms. The Crociferi could not have been unaware of Aretino's works, thus any resonance of his text in Tintoretto's imagery might be just as easily attributed to their influence.

Aretino's description of the Assumption has much in common with the tone of Sorano's oration, emphasising the turbulent nature of the event, and the inexplicable light; as Aretino writes, "non so che luminoso."¹⁸⁵ Aretino's departures from tradition, as in Tintoretto's paintings, are in the details, and therein lay the controversy. Tintoretto may have been too eager in his inventiveness, pushing the boundaries of decorum with a first version of the Crociferi altarpiece.¹⁸⁶ To the dimensional similarities of the Bamberg and Crociferi paintings [Figs.30, 41], we can add several compositional and iconographical parallels. Both include the diagonally placed sarcophagus, floral still life and an open book, all motifs unique to these two pictures amongst the five versions of the

¹⁸³ R. Echols, "The Decisive Years", 220 and F. Ilchman, "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative" in *Tintoretto*, 2007, 86; A. Jacobson Schutte. *Printed Italian Vernacular Religious Books 1465-1550* (Geneva, 1983), 53.

¹⁸⁴ *Pietro Aretino. Le Lettere*, ed. F. Erspamer, 1995, I, 625-6, no. 304.

¹⁸⁵ Roman D'Elia, 2005, 116.

¹⁸⁶ Weddigen, 1988, 88.

subject Tintoretto completed in his lifetime [Figs.36, 49].¹⁸⁷ The palettes are similar, he recycles the figure of John the Evangelist (placed on the far left in both pictures), and the apostle gesturing in open-armed abandon at the back row of the group. The Bamberg painting, however, contains some critical differences: the position of the Virgin, the unusually large female angels that assist her ascent, the presence of all twelve apostles and the figure of Christ, hands marked by the stigmata, descending dramatically from the left.

Some elements can be attributed to some of the more traditional texts already discussed. The floral still life refers to the legend of the miraculous blooms that appeared in the tomb after the Virgin's bodily ascent, as well as the common iconography of the enclosed garden as a symbol of her purity. Both the Golden Legend and Aretino's account include this miracle, the former identifying roses and lilies, the latter describing a veritable bounty of symbolic flora.¹⁸⁸ Tintoretto's sensitive treatment of the floral passage is so specific that it is possible to identify the actual plants he has selected to depict in both paintings [Fig.36]. Some refer to the Virgin's purity, while others seem to be herbs typically used as medicine at the time, perhaps in reference to the vocation of the Crociferi.¹⁸⁹ The prominence of John in both paintings is also reflected in these texts. Both Voragine and Aretino stress John's special role; charged by Christ to care for his mother, the youngest evangelist is first to receive word of the Virgin's impending death and plays a central role at her funeral.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ His completed other versions for the church of San Stin (1549-1550, Accademia, Venice), San Polo (1575), and the Scuola di San Rocco (1582-1587).

¹⁸⁸ L. Réau, *Iconographie de l'art Chrétien* (Paris, 1955-59), III, pt. 2.

¹⁸⁹ Weddigen, 1988, 74, 103-104, n. 47

¹⁹⁰ Weddigen, 1988, 67.

Although Titian had included God the Father in his depiction of the Assumption, the presence of Christ in Tintoretto's Bamberg version is without precedent.¹⁹¹ Aretino may be the source for this unusual imagery, which seems to refer to a reunion of Christ and the Virgin in terms of their mystical marriage. The notion of the Virgin as the bride of Christ has its origins in the Old Testament Song of Songs.¹⁹² At the moment of the Incarnation at the Annunciation, when the Word became flesh, a union that was both physical and spiritual occurred between the Virgin and Christ. As the redemptive equivalent to Eve, the Virgin was the bride of the second Adam, remaining faithful, even throughout the suffering of His Passion. Her reward is the reunion with Christ and her coronation as Queen of Heaven and Co-Redemptrix. Tintoretto may be evoking this idea through the winged female figures hoisting the Virgin toward a dramatically foreshortened Christ. Since angels were thought to be androgynous, Weddigen notes they might actually be bridesmaids to the Virgin, or, as in Aretino's text, personifications of the senses or Virtues accompanying her funeral bier.¹⁹³ In Aretino's text, Christ does not descend toward the Virgin, but he is present—revealed on a throne as the gates of heaven open to accept her with radiant light—in a moment that forms the apex of Aretino's narrative.¹⁹⁴ Tintoretto has taken this concept a step further, with Christ (in the guise of the Redeemer) plunging downward on a collision course with the Virgin, a trajectory that implies the imminent, electric moment of reunion.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ Rearick, 1981, 368, 370.

¹⁹² O'Connor, 1958, 364.

¹⁹³ Weddigen, 1988, 73-74.

¹⁹⁴ Roman D'Elia, 2005, 116; Weddigen, 1988, 76.

¹⁹⁵ Weddigen, 1988, 77.

Although the open book is less clear in the Crociferi painting, the one in the Bamberg version is so precisely rendered that the exact Bible (a volgare translation published by the Giunti in 1538) and passage on which it was modelled has been identified, the first page of the Book of the Maccabees (from the Apocrypha). It is hard to imagine that Tintoretto would have gone to such pains to depict the pages in detail if the motif did not carry some sort of message. The choice of the Macabees forms a fitting parallel to the themes at work in the painted narrative: evidence for hope of resurrection, for the justification of sacrifice, and proof of intercession at the end of days.¹⁹⁶ This unusual iconography and unconventional composition may have offended the Crociferi, leading them to reject the Bamberg painting. Such a scandal would not have been without precedent; even Titian's Assumption was initially met with reluctance. It was, after all, precisely at this moment that the campaign to eradicate heresy descended on Venice. The brothers would have been justified in their concern about arousing unwanted attention by displaying images of a questionable nature over their high altar, particularly in light of their efforts to rehabilitate their reputation. Reformers praised Aretino's religious writings as adherent to orthodoxy, but there were also aspects of the works that were called into question, and ultimately a petition for the ban of Aretino's religious texts was advanced in 1557.¹⁹⁷ It was precisely the physicality and inventiveness of Aretino's interpretations of sacred subjects that came under fire. In privileging grandeur and drama, he was perceived to have neglected theological precision, a criticism that could easily have been levelled against Tintoretto's Bamberg

¹⁹⁶ Weddigen, 1988, 80.

¹⁹⁷ P. Fehl, *Decorum and wit* (Vienna, 1992), 167. Inquisitors placed Aretino's religious texts on the list of prohibited books in 1557.

Assumption. It is perhaps no coincidence that a rejection of this first version may well have occurred during the period in which the former Inquisitor, Giovanni della Casa, had returned to Venice. Although the author of obscene poetry in his early years, in his capacity as nuncio he ordered book burnings and formulated the first Venetian list of prohibited texts. One of his chief duties had been to oversee the behaviour of clergymen, something that would undoubtedly have taken him to the beleaguered Crociferi monastery.¹⁹⁸ As previously noted, Della Casa had connections to the Crociferi through their supporters, Stefano Tiepolo and Elisabetta Massolo, and we have documentary evidence of his intervention on behalf of the Venetian-dependent monastery of San Martino di Conegliano in 1545, and of the Venetian house in 1547 and 1555, precisely when this project was underway.¹⁹⁹ As a patron of art himself, he would no doubt have been interested in how the Crociferi had decorated their altar. As an author with broad literary interests²⁰⁰, who had been charged with eradicating heresy, Della Casa was

¹⁹⁸ Della Casa returned to Venice in 1549, remaining until 1553, when he moved to the Abbazia di San Eustachio near Treviso, where he composed his *Il Galateo*, a treatise on manners. A. Santosuosso, "Religious Orthodoxy, Dissent and Suppression in Venice in the 1540s" *Church History* 42 (1973), 477-8. On the nunciature of Giovanni della Casa: L. Campana, "Monsignor Giovanni della Casa e i suoi tempi" *Studi storici* 16 (1907), 527-80; 17 (1908), 145-282; 18 (1909), 325-58.

¹⁹⁹ O. Battistella, *Di Giovanni della Casa e di altri letterati all'Abbazia dei Conti di Collalto in Nervesa intorno alla metà del sec. XVI* (Treviso, 1904). Della Casa visited Conegliano on several occasions while at Nervesa, and while there was hosted by the Crociferi of San Martino, as he had intervened on their behalf as nuncio in 1545. City officials accused them of mismanaging their *ospizio*, and under Della Casa's protection, the denouncement did not proceed. N. Faldon, *La chiesa di San Martino di Conegliano*, 1979, 12, and M. Baldissin and L. Caniato, *La Chiesa di Santi Martino e Rosa in Conegliano*, 1998, 11.

²⁰⁰ For the inventory of his library: E. Scarpa, "La biblioteca di Giovanni della Casa" *La Bibliofilia. Rivista di storia del libro e di bibliografia* 82 (1980), 247-80.

ideally placed to advise the *frati* on anything that might have been interpreted as unorthodox.²⁰¹

Although we have no record of how the Bamberg Assumption made its way to Germany, it is interesting that it was sent north, perhaps because it had already been deemed inappropriate for display in the south. This is not to say that Tintoretto or the Crociferi harboured heretical sympathies; we must recall that it was Tintoretto who corrected the questionable iconography of Michelangelo's Last Judgment in his own version for the Madonna dell'Orto.²⁰² The contents of the Crociferi library show that they did possess evangelical texts that were, or would come to be prohibited, however they owned just as many which were anti-Lutheran and promoted orthodoxy.²⁰³ They were obviously engaged in the latest doctrinal debates, and as a result may have had more progressive ideas that did not translate as clearly in a pictorial form. It is more appropriate to view the Bamberg version as a less successful attempt at pushing the boundaries of iconographic invention, probably under the theological guidance of the Crociferi. Whether or not Aretino was the source for some of this imagery, there is no doubt that there were elements of the work that could not be considered mainstream. There was simply no room for subtlety during this period, and the result may just have been too daring for comfort. Judging from the alterations made between the two

²⁰¹ Santosuosso, 1995, 115-16. Vasari provides details about Della Casa's interest in visual arts in the life of Daniele da Volterra, from whom Della Casa commissioned several paintings. Vasari claimed that Della Casa was writing "un trattato delle cose di pitture" that never materialized.

²⁰² Ilchman, "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative" in *Tintoretto*, 2007, 84-86.

²⁰³ Barzani, 1995, 190-1. For example, they possessed a copy of the decrees of the Council of Trent, two manuals for inquisitors, works by the theologian Roberto Bellarmine who articulated the central religious controversies of the time, a work of criticism of the Beneficio di Christo by Politi, and a compendium of "errori et inganni luterani."

versions, it appears that in addition to a few of the iconographic abnormalities, it was primarily the compositional arrangement that was at issue. The Virgin is not necessarily the main focus of the Bamberg picture, Christ's presence would have further complicated the identification of the subject, and the apostles, while appropriately dynamic, seem crammed together and are not always successfully realized. While it was critical for images to challenge the viewer, clarity was critical to facilitating interpretation; if a painting was formally complicated or difficult to read, it was not able to instruct.

Although forceful, Tintoretto's Bamberg painting lacked the "humanity and nobility" that Gould felt made Titian's effort so worthy of imitation.²⁰⁴ Tintoretto's second attempt seems to have benefited from the failures of the first. He preserves some of the motifs from his first version, however he arrives at something more legible by omitting Christ, the female angels, and Thomas (who actually missed the Assumption). He returns to a more traditional formula with the Virgin placed on the central axis at the pinnacle of the altarpiece, her arms outstretched in a gesture of blessing (rather than the traditional upturned *orans* pose), implying her continued role as intercessor. His engagement with the challenge of painting the immaterial light of heaven and supernatural chaos is more successfully realized in the *Crociferi* version, and would have facilitated the sort of ecstatic visionary experience encouraged by Catholic reform.

One new detail added to the *Crociferi* clarifies some of the associations that Tintoretto was less successful in conveying in the Bamberg variant. Above the Virgin's head is a crown of twelve stars. This particular motif, rarely employed in Venice until

²⁰⁴ C. Gould, "The Cinquecento at Venice. I. Two Crises" *Apollo* 95 (1972), 380.

after 1600, identified the Virgin with the Woman of the Apocalypse [Fig.50].²⁰⁵ The imagery derives from Revelations as one of signs of the End of Days: “And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun and the moon was under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.” The motif eventually became one of the most common symbols of the Immaculate Conception, a doctrine still widely debated in the Cinquecento that contends Mary was free from Original Sin, even before conception.²⁰⁶ A distinction has to be made from the outset that while the purity of the Virgin and the miraculous nature of her own conception to barren parents was never in question, the chronology of the moment at which she was sanctified as free of sin was less clear.²⁰⁷ At issue was whether she was exempt from sin only after the announcement of the birth of Christ, whether she was sanctified in the womb, or whether she was conceived free from sin. In defence of the doctrine, other Marian mysteries were invoked as central proof of the Virgin’s immaculacy, such as the Meeting of Anna and Joachim at the Golden Gate, the Purification, Visitation, and most popularly, the Assumption.²⁰⁸ Because it was a concept rather than a narrative, these other subjects were often used in visual art to reference the doctrine. Sixtus IV approved the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1475, but it was not accepted as an official doctrine until 1854. It was adopted by many

²⁰⁵ Humfrey, 1996, 380. The first known appearance of the aureole of twelve stars in a Venetian image dates to 1350 (a polyptych attributed to Jacobello di Bonomo, National Gallery, London). M. Levi D’Ancona, *The Iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance*, 1957, 24; M. Vloberg. “The Iconography of the Immaculate Conception” in O’Connor, 1958, 469-470.

²⁰⁶ Levi d’Ancona, 1957, 5.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 1957, 6.

²⁰⁸ H. S. Ettlinger. “The Iconography of the Columns in Titian’s Pesaro Altarpiece” *The Art Bulletin* 61 (1979), 61, 63. The text used for centuries as the Office of the Assumption of the Virgin, Ecclesiasticus 24, was also used as the main textual proof of the Immaculate Conception.

mendicant orders and celebrated at a local level from as early as the fourteenth century. The devotion of Venetian Franciscans to the doctrine helped to increase its profile in the city, and by 1489 there were churches and *scuole* dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, including the one occupying an altar at the Crociferi church in 1519.²⁰⁹ While the arrangement of subjects in the chancel of the Crociferi church, and the high altarpiece itself, could be construed as making reference to this doctrine, I would not assert that scheme was designed to defend or affirm Immaculatist sympathies on the part of the Crociferi. Such arguments made for other paintings of this period are rarely convincing²¹⁰, because the iconography was not yet codified, and because the suggestion that a controversial doctrine would have been overtly celebrated on a high altar at the peak of the enforcement of orthodoxy must be viewed with scepticism.²¹¹ I would venture that the immaculacy of the Virgin was one of several interrelated themes at work in a decorative cycle that was ultimately meant to celebrate the singularity of the Virgin.

²⁰⁹ Goffen, 1986, 141. Santa Maria dei Miracoli (1489), the Scuola di Santa Maria della Misericordia (1493), and the Scuola Grande di Santa Maria della Carità (1496). There was also a chapel dedicated to the Concezione at Santa Maria Formosa. S. Steer, “Tota pulchra, et formosa es Maria et macula originalis non est in te: The Congregation of Clergy at Santa Maria Formosa, Venice, and Their Altar of the Immaculate Conception” *Artibus et Historiae* 27 (2006), 111-123.

²¹⁰ Goffen (1986, 94) argued that Giovanni Bellini’s Assumption of the Virgin with Saints (formerly in Santa Maria degli Angeli on Murano, c. 1510) was in fact a representation of the Immaculate Conception. Humfrey (1993, 250, 334-5, n. 34) has shown that this is contradicted by the dedication of the altar to the Assumption and non-specific iconography. Dal Pozzolo’s argument for Immaculatist references in Lorenzo Lotto’s Assumption of the Virgin with St. Anthony and St. Louis of Toulouse (Asolo, 1506) is problematic for the same reasons. E. M. Dal Pozzolo, “Lorenzo Lotto 1506: la pala di Asolo” *Artibus et historiae* 11 (1990), 89-110.

²¹¹ S. Stratton, The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art (Cambridge, 1994), 58. The Council of Trent avoided committing in any definitive way to the doctrine, instead decreeing that the Virgin’s life was free of “sinful acts and fleshy corruption”, and as such was untouched by original sin, that her conception was immaculate, and that her bodily assumption was in fact proof of this fact.

Beyond the presence of an altar at the Crociferi church dedicated to the Conception, there are several other reasons to consider this possibility.²¹² The Crociferi were evidently supporters of the doctrine, as their church in Rome was one of the earliest churches in the city devoted to the Immacolata. Bruzio recorded that the high altar was decorated with a painting representing the Virgin crowned by angels, with the moon beneath her feet, a crown of twelve stars, with Crociferi insignia in the margins.²¹³ This decoration, which must have dated to the late sixteenth or possibly early seventeenth century, also employed the iconography of the Woman of the Apocalypse, which by that time was the most popular prefiguration of the Virgin's role in the defeat of sin.²¹⁴

The crown of stars in Tintoretto's altarpiece anticipates this by a good number of decades, and it functions in the context of the larger decorative scheme to remind the spectator of two themes. The first, the Virgin's purity and humility, was the means by which she was qualified to serve as the vessel of Christ, to be bodily assumed, and to reign as Queen of Heaven and intercessor. The second theme was salvation through sacrifice, in which the Virgin was implicit. This reminder of the End of Days was one of a number of novel visual clues selected by the artist in an effort to connect several quite complex theological ideals that were aimed at asserting the centrality of participation in the Eucharist and intercession in salvation. The meticulously rendered instruments of the

²¹² ASV, SPS, BVC, B. 196, c. 5v. The altar is described in 1720 as: "L'altar nostro del'Imacolatta Concetion."

²¹³ G. A. Bruzio, *Theatrum Romanae Urbis sive romanorum sacrae aedis*, Biblioteca Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 11869, 11896, 19, 700-703; F. Titi, *Descrizione delle pitture, sculture e architetture esposte al pubblico in Roma* (Rome, 1763), 354-5.

²¹⁴ Stratton, 1994, 46-60. In Spain references to the Apocalyptic Woman were consistently made in representations of the Assumption, particularly in the seventeenth century. Stratton suggests that the notion of merging the iconography of the Woman of the Apocalypse with that of the Assumption originated in the Netherlands.

mass on the sarcophagus, link the meaning of the narrative to the liturgical function of the altar below.²¹⁵ Weddigen suggests that the theme of sacrifice is also referenced in the relief on the sarcophagus faintly present in the Bamberg version, and completely legible in the Crociferi painting [Fig.50]. It depicts Noah making an offering in front of the ark after the flood, perhaps a visual expression of the parallel made in The Golden Legend between the ark and the Virgin, both instruments of salvation and vessels of the Lord.²¹⁶ These associations would have enhanced the message of the Assumption, and connected the narrative to the ritual taking place below, an enactment of the sacrifice through the consecration of the Host. The Crociferi emblem on the relief of the vessel into which Noah deposits his sacrifice signifies their role in this process. Although the references are more traditional in the Crociferi Assumption, both versions employed complex iconography in an effort to depict the Virgin as virtuous, pure, glorious, privileged, triumphant: a personification of the Church at the moment of its greatest challenge.

Tintoretto's spectator is not just a passive recipient of symbolic narrative, but is implicated in the event as the creator of meaning through viewing, drawn into the narrative to meditate on a variety of subtexts within the images. The viewer is then encouraged by formal and iconographical cues to relate them to the *lateralis*. Tintoretto possessed a unique ability to engage complex participation, inspiring internalization of emotion, persuading the viewer of the reality of the event, particularly through manipulation of space.

In "Only Connect", Shearman explored the notion of the "engaged spectator"; the viewer who is "critically sophisticated and accustomed to communicating through media

²¹⁵ Humfrey, 1996, 379.

²¹⁶ Weddigen, 1988, 83.

of art.” This spectator not only “completes, as object, the subject matter of the transitive or affective work of art, but also becomes an accomplice in its aesthetic functioning. He brings to it experiences, attitudes, a knowledge of the critical and poetic frames of reference that have been calculated in the artist’s assumptions.”²¹⁷ The coordinated decorative program, with its complex multiple meanings, was designed for such an engaged spectator. Tintoretto’s religious works in particular were highly sought after; his success in this regard was surely due to the fact that he was himself an engaged spectator; deeply pious, but also a native Venetian, rooted in the city’s religious and civic traditions and visual precedents. Boschini was the first to fully appreciate Tintoretto’s sensitivity to space, relating that Tintoretto would create small models of the spaces for which his works were destined, so as to gauge effects of lighting, figure placement and perspective.²¹⁸ It is precisely Tintoretto’s unique approach to perspective and compositional arrangement that sets the emotional tone in his works, in contrast to the emotive success of Titian’s figures.²¹⁹ If we visualize the Assumption and Presentation in their original formation, we can appreciate the ways in which the master scenographer was clearly at work. Tintoretto oriented the figures and shifted the perspective in the Presentation to account for the approach of the viewer, much as Titian did in his Pesaro Madonna at the Frari.²²⁰ As in the actual church, the priest is positioned at the summit of a set of stairs at the extreme left of the image. Another mother begins to climb the flight

²¹⁷ J. Shearman, *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton, 1988), 57.

²¹⁸ Ilchman, “Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative” in *Tintoretto*, 2007, 71.

²¹⁹ Gould, 1972, 37.

²²⁰ This represents a departure from the earlier compositional model of an intimate close-up with the figures in half or three-quarter length, such as Giovanni Bellini’s version at the Kunsthistorisches Museum [Fig.51]. F. Cocchiara, “La Presentazione de Gesù al Tempio e Purificazione di Maria’ di Jacopo Tintoretto ai Carmini” *VC* 16 (2006), 232-41.

to present her child, providing the viewer with an interlocutor figure. The eye is invited into the picture by the procession within the image toward the figurative altar, echoed by the viewer's physical procession towards the actual altar. It should be recalled that the patrons approached this space in solemn procession by candlelight down the nave each year on their feast day, no doubt the impetus for volunteering the decoration. This fact cannot have been lost on the artist, who would have been aware of the centrality of such ritual to civic and religious life within the city, as well as the established tradition of depicting processions in Venetian art.²²¹ Tintoretto's unusually detailed effort at grand classical architecture in the Presentation functions to effectively extend the curve of the apse within the image.²²² The mirroring of the *stucchi* from the actual decoration of the chancel would have created a sense that this biblical event was happening within the space of the church, an impression further enhanced by the faces staring out from the other side of the steps. Ridolfi, who saw these works *in situ*, commented on the success of these devices.²²³ Since the picture was hung at or above eye level, the viewer in front of this work in its original context would have completed this figurative circle of spectators, becoming participants in Christ's Presentation.²²⁴ The figure mounting the

²²¹ For example, the narrative cycles of Carpaccio and the Bellini, Titian's Presentation of the Virgin for the Scuola Grande della Carità, and Tintoretto's own version of the same subject at the Madonna dell'Orto.

²²² Krischel, 1992, 62-4. Tintoretto evokes the temple while referencing Bramantesque and Serlian architecture. Krischel recognizes the elements of the Tempietto and the Cappella Pellegrini at Verona.

²²³ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 38. "...situando la mensa ove si appoggia il Sacerdote, e la Vergine che tiene fra le braccia il Bambino, in tale maniera accomodata, che per di sotto si veggono alcune figure lontane, e un giro di architettura che ne forma un sito curioso e pellegrino, che di gran fatto superò l'emulo suo."

²²⁴ Tintoretto used a similar technique in his San Cassiano Crucifixion laterale (1565-1568), in which the three crosses were shifted from the traditional central position to the far right of the composition.

stairs holding a candle provides a further point of contact between the painted narrative and the devotional activities of the *scuola*, and the motif is carried over into the high altarpiece, where a lit candle rests on the edge of the sarcophagus.²²⁵

The viewer is encouraged to meditate on what this scene ultimately prefigures: the sacrifice Mary and Christ are already destined to make on behalf of mankind. The Gospel of Luke relates that Mary received the second prophecy of the Passion at the Presentation: “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted and thy own soul a sword shall pierce—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”²²⁶ The “engaged spectator” would have understood these references, and the requisite doves and lamb are further cues to the sacrificial nature of the image. They would also have understood this subject, and the pendant Visitation as corollary to the altarpiece. These events adorned the Virgin with virtues that make her worthy of bodily assumption, just as the ritual in which the spectator was participating—the procession to the mass—was their own means to salvation.

What the Crociferi succeeded in creating in their chancel was a sophisticated expression of their own devotional interests, clearly informed by the spirit of reform and the needs of the communities the space serviced.

4.14 Tintoretto's “Wedding at Cana”

²²⁵ There are traces of some of these compositional ideas in earlier version of the subject at the church of the Carmini (once attributed to Schiavone) **[Fig.52]**, which falls somewhere between the traditional representations of this subject (such as Carpaccio's San Giobbe version), and the Crociferi painting. Cocchiara, 2006, 189-272.

²²⁶ Shorr, 1957, 17.

Tintoretto's painting for the Crociferi refectory is among the very few works the artist signed, and one of only five that he dated in the 1560's [Fig.37].²²⁷ Perhaps more than almost any other work, it can be considered the hallmark of Tintoretto's interest in the manipulation of space to the particularities of context. It was praised by Ridolfi, Boschini and Zanetti as among the artist's finest works²²⁸, was engraved twice and copied at least six times [Figs.54-56].²²⁹ It was the only painting amongst the many of substantial value possessed by the Crociferi that was retained by the state when the order was suppressed in 1656. At that time it narrowly escaped surreptitious sale and export to the Florentine collection of Leopoldo de' Medici, when the painters' guild and Senate made an impassioned plea to preserve it for the "public good."²³⁰ It joined other displaced treasures by Titian and others in the sacristy of the newly erected basilica of Santa Maria della Salute [Fig.57]. There it captured the attention of some of the most discerning eyes of the Romantic era, including Sir Joshua Reynolds, who owned a copy, and wrote an eloquent description of the original in his diary.²³¹ John Ruskin and Henry

²²⁷ *Venezia Restaurata (1966-1986)* (Milan, 1986), 115.

²²⁸ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 38-9. He relates that the work "mediante la positura di quella mensa e l'intavolato del soffitto compartito in molto spatij, tirati in prospettiva, si allunga il Refettorio in modo, che pare si raddoppino le mense e i conviti." Boschini, 1660, 468-70; Boschini, 1664, 351; Boschini, 1674, 28; Zanetti, 1771, 146.

²²⁹ *Jacopo Tintoretto e i suoi incisori* (exh. cat, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 1994), 76, 94. It was engraved by Odoardo Fialetti in 1612 [Fig.53], and by Giovanni Volpato in 1722 [Fig.54]. Pallucchini and Rossi, 1982, 181. There is a sixteenth century copy in the Museo Correr by a Greco-Venetian painter (Inv. Cl. I. n. 255) [Fig.55], another in Montecitorio, and one in the Ospizio Priuli.

²³⁰ ASV, Senato Terra, filz.663 (24 May 1659).

²³¹ W. Cotton, *Sir Joshua Reynolds and his works* (London, 1859), 40-1. One of 400 paintings sold from the Reynolds collection in 1795 was a copy of the "Feast at Canaan by Tintoret", described as "a study for the picture in the refectory of the Padri Crociferi at Venice." Getty Provenance Index, Sale Cat. Br-A5462. Whether or not it was actually a Tintoretto *bozzetto* is impossible to know without the object itself.

James admired it for its invention, the qualities of light and shade, and the variety of figures.²³² It so impressed Ruskin that he devoted much effort to an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to acquire it for the National Gallery in 1852.²³³ What captivated each of them most was the clever and engaging use of perspective, at which Ridolfi had also marvelled when he saw it *in situ* in the Crociferi refectory. His claim that it doubled the actual space of the refectory makes a great deal of sense with regard to both the compositional and iconographic formula at work in the painting. Like Tintoretto's paintings for the chancel, the removal of this *cenacolo* from its original context has robbed it of its ability to engage the spectator as originally intended, both formally and symbolically.

The location of the refectory can be determined from the plan of the monastery previous to the Jesuit renovation [**Fig.53**].²³⁴ It was a long rectangular space on the far right of the first floor of the cloister, sandwiched between an open courtyard closer to the canal. The Crociferi entered the space at the east end through a small "lavamano", while the Tintoretto hung at the opposite end. At 4.4m in height and 5.9m in width, the painting would have occupied three quarters of the wall.²³⁵ The canvas was originally

²³² Lepschy, 1983, 170-1; Cotton, 1859, 41. Ruskin said: "Taken as a whole, it is perhaps the most perfect example which human art has produced of the utmost possible sharpness of shadow, united with richness of local colour."

²³³ The progress of the proposal is outlined in Ruskin's letters to Charles Eastlake, who acted as intermediary between Ruskin in Venice and the trustees. Ruskin reported that the paintings were "for the most part rotting on the walls", and that given credentials he would "send home two such pictures as English eyes never yet saw." It was offered for 5,000 pounds, but the plan was rejected in June of 1852. J. Ruskin, *Diaries (1848-1873)*, eds. J. Evans and J. H. Whitehouse (Oxford, 1958), vol. II, 73; E. T. Cook, *The Life of Ruskin* (London, 1911), 40-3.

²³⁴ Vallery-Radot, 1960, 94, n. 361, Hd-4d, 195.

²³⁵ Matile, 1996, 173. The refectory was roughly 17x19m.

rectangular, not rounded on the top, as some have claimed.²³⁶ Both of the lateral walls appear to have been punctuated with windows, placed at intervals consistent with those depicted on the left side of Tintoretto's painting in an attempt to extend the space of the dining hall. The ceiling was probably coffered, an effect that Tintoretto has mirrored, and the stone washbasin to the right of the painting—standard in monastic refectories—would have further enhanced the illusion. The fictive space recedes to three classical arches that open to a blue sky beyond, possibly a response to Sansovino's *loggetta* in Piazza San Marco, something Veronese also mimicked in his San Giorgio version [Fig.58].²³⁷ The festive hanging ribbons billowing in the breeze amplify the impression of open air. The dialogue between painted and architectural space naturally calls to mind Palladio's San Giorgio Maggiore refectory, once decorated by Veronese's massive version of this same

²³⁶ ASV, PSMsupra, Chiesa, B. 153, proc.309, fasc.1, c.11r; ASV, CRS, Santa Maria della Salute, B. 55, fasc. A, c.11r-v. At present, the top corners of the painting are clearly additions. Several archival documents from June of 1659 record that the corners of the painting were cut off during the time the painting spent near the altar of the Madonna in San Marco, where the Procuratori initially had plans to place it. They had frame made for it, a curtain made to protect it, and two gilded St. Marks were placed in either corner of the painting: "Quadro grande, et lungo delle Nozze sopradette Insoazato con soaze dorate grandi, et riquadrato nel di sopra con doi San Marchi pure dorati fatti dalle detti S.S. Procuratori, era già nel refettorio delli Padri Cruciferi di mano del Tentoreto vecchio....Fù fatto al detto Quadro una coltrina in due parti di tela nostrana rossa con suoi cordoni di feleselo e ferro di sopra per preservarlo dalla polvere." The application of a visible stamp of governmental possession seems to have been a standard practice during the Seicento as a means of protecting notable works from theft. The Procuratori did the same with the Jacopo Bassano Ark of Noah from the refectory of Santa Maria Maggiore. In 1705 the Inquisitori di Stato caught the *abbadessa* selling paintings in the middle of the night to Ludovico Altovrandi of Bologna, who planned to replace the originals with copies. The Senate records that "a tutti fosse impresso il suggello pubblico affinché il Leone di San Marco colla sua maestà proteggesse capitali così pretiosi in ornamento et decoro delle chiese e di questa Dominante." Zanetti later remarked on the tradition of applying a "S. Marco di rilievo decreto per ordine publico." See: R. Fulin, "L'arca di Noè di Giacomo da Ponte detto il Bassano" *Atti dell'Ateneo Veneto*, ser. II, 5 (1868), 87, 97.

²³⁷ G. Pavanello, "Più vino per la festa" in *Il Miracolo di Cana*, ed. G. Pavanello (Venice, 2007), 25.

subject. Indeed, the two paintings have much in common, but it is significant to remember that while Veronese has been considered the innovator with regard to the relatively unusual subject, his version followed Tintoretto's a year later (1562-3). Given the details of the competition for the altarpiece commission related by Ridolfi, it is tempting to consider the possibility that Veronese saw the San Giorgio commission as an opportunity to engage in a *paragone* with his competitor and suggested the subject to Abbot Girolamo Scrocchetto.²³⁸

The Subject

The more traditional scene for *cenacoli* was the Last Supper. It made sense for a refectory, where *frati* engaged in communal dining in the image of Christ and his disciples, but also functionally, as the usual compositional arrangement called for a horizontally oriented table ideal for filling a wide space. The production of supper pictures had decreased in the earlier part of the century, but picked up again in the 1550's, perhaps as a result of Titian's Last Supper for the refectory of the Dominicans at Santi Giovanni e Paolo (1550-7, lost 1571), followed by a commission from the King of Spain for the Escorial version (1557-64) [Fig.59]. The subject chosen by the Crociferi was relatively rare. It depicts the narrative related by John (2:1-12) of a wedding feast at Cana to which Jesus, the Virgin and five disciples were invited. When the Virgin realized the wine had run out, she drew this to the attention of Christ in an appeal for some resolution. Christ instructed the servants to fill the empty vessels with water, which miraculously turned into fine wine. This event is important for a number of reasons that may have inspired its selection. It represents the first public miracle of Christ, one that he

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

enacts at the request of his mother, and in the presence of the disciples, who are henceforth convinced of his divinity. The event is not only Christological, but also Marian, as the Virgin's plea to Christ indicates her intercessory role. It has obvious Eucharistic implications, prefiguring Christ's last meal and the consecration of the sacrament in the mass, and it was commonly interpreted as central support for the doctrine of Transubstantiation. It also symbolizes the shift from the Old to the New Order, of Christ's symbolic marriage to the Church, and may also refer to his mystical union with the Virgin, who is not mentioned in the bible again until the Passion. Christ's choice to attend the banquet, and to provide libation has also been accepted as evidence for his support of marriage—which, it is worth noting, Luther had made secular, challenging its status as a sacrament—as well as moderate festivity.²³⁹ Several of the themes referenced in the chancel decoration therefore carry over to the refectory through the selection of this subject. The choice is also reflective of the general atmosphere at the monastery, which could be described as convivial, to say the least. The rather theatrical result Tintoretto achieves in his painting cannot help but bring to mind the *commedie dell'arte* the Crociferi were involved in staging, and the productions Tintoretto would have known through his friend, the playwright Andrea Calmo. We must also bear in mind the rather unusual note in the monastery's 1564 *condizione* that gentlemen were in the habit of coming to stay within the walls of the monastery during Holy Week, at the considerable expense of the Crociferi who were responsible for feeding them.²⁴⁰ They obviously wanted something more festive for their refectory, perhaps reflective of the patrician demographic at the monastery, not only amongst the *frati*, but also their guests.

²³⁹ Réau, 1957, v. 2, pt. 2, 362-5.

²⁴⁰ ASV, SDC, B. 33, f. 173, c. 11.

The legitimacy of egregious display and the nature of banqueting were under the moral microscope during this period. Venice was a city that revelled in any opportunity for sumptuous display, and around the time of the Italian wars a current of thought emerged that viewed decadence amongst the upper class as the root of the difficulties plaguing the Republic. Crociferi protector, Nicolò Zen, articulated these ideas in his 1539 history of Venice. Drawing on the account of Cassiodorus, Zen stressed the uniformity and minimalism of the original Venetian settlement as definitive of the republican ideal. Despite the fact that he was the owner of a newly-built *palazzo*, Zen spoke out against magnificence, “pomp and needless expenses”, calling instead for moderation. Venice formally addressed the issue by creating sumptuary laws, particularly with regard to patrician wedding feasts, which were considered especially prone to luxury and folly.²⁴¹ Allerston’s essay on finery at Venetian weddings demonstrates that Venetian authorities became especially concerned with ensuring the decorum of these banquets around 1557 and 1562, issuing decrees on everything from the type and amount of food that could be served, the dress of the bride, bridegroom, the servants and their guests, and the decorative touches that adorned the festivities.²⁴² These regulations, which in many cases went unheeded, had the greatest repercussions for patrician families, to which many of the Crociferi and their patrons belonged. While moderation is never reflected in Veronese’s sumptuous feast scenes, it is perhaps more evident in the comparative

²⁴¹ N. Zen, *Dell'Origine de' Barbari*, 1557; Tafuri, 1993, 2-6; P. Fortini Brown, *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven, 2004), 5, 35.

²⁴² P. Allerston, “Wedding Finery in sixteenth-century Venice” in *Marriage in Italy*, eds. K. Lowe and T. Dean (Cambridge, 2002), 25-40. For the 1562 sumptuary laws: *Venice: a documentary history, 1450-1630*, eds. D. Chambers, et. al. (Toronto, 2001), 178-9, docs. 22, 23. On banquets: *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, eds. M. Ajmar-Wollheim and F. Dennis (London, 2006), 246-67, and P. Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia nella vita privata*, 1928, II, 332-5.

restraint of Tintoretto's *Crociferi* painting. There are hints of revelry in the festoons, the musicians, the splendid dress of the celebrants and even the servants, with their pearls and elaborately braided hair. But there is little of the exotic menagerie and material decadence of Veronese's supper paintings (which would ultimately catch the attention of the Inquisition), but only traces in the turbaned figures in the distance, the dog beneath the table and the credenza in the lower right corner that would be so spectacularly rendered by Paolo at San Giorgio. Still, there is nothing sombre about the *Crociferi* version, and considering the reputation the *Crociferi* had for relaxation and their obviously keen appreciation for the finer things, art included, it is perhaps not altogether surprising that the *frati* opted for something a little bit different for their *cenacolo*.

Sources, Experience, Meaning

Tintoretto treated the Wedding at Cana at least once before, in the 1540's (Isabella Stewart Gardner, Boston) [Fig.60]. Although on a much smaller scale, this painting demonstrates what a difference a few decades can make. The early version shows some effort to extend the fictive space with the addition of a small room in which another feast occurs, receding into the upper right corner. But overall the young Tintoretto arrives at a much more traditional result in the Boston picture, which pales in comparison to the confidence and inventiveness of the *Crociferi* version. If Tintoretto was looking to anything for inspiration around 1561, it was probably yet another work of art now inaccessible to us: the Titian Last Supper from Santi Giovanni e Paolo.

D'Argaville has written of the echoes of this lost painting that might be reflected in the slightly later (and hugely altered) Escorial version [Fig.59], and a copy of the Spanish variant at the Brera which captures some vestige of the original composition [Fig.61].

Titian was also known to vary the architectural arrangement of his paintings depending on scale and context, although the Escorial painting is an exception. It was not designed for a refectory, and was later cut down to serve as a *cenacolo*, thus the incongruity between the real and painted space. The similarities between these works and Tintoretto's *Crociferi* painting are mostly spatial, including the tripartite division, the smooth ionic orders, the coffered wooden ceiling compartments, and the opening of the end wall to blue sky beyond. It is impossible to know how responsive Tintoretto was to elements of Titian's lost painting, but it would seem an obvious point of reference.

As in the Assumption and Presentation, Tintoretto is relatively attentive to detail, particularly with the figures. The robust, yet graceful servant women in the foreground are a feature on which critics consistently remark; Fragonard singled them out for independent study.²⁴³ There is a relatively high degree of finish overall, with some evidence in places of Tintoretto's *prestezza*, particularly in the execution of the vases, which consist of bare ground hastily articulated in black. As in the chancel, Tintoretto's central concern is the play of light and space. He has accounted for the way that the light would enter the room from the left, something that prompted Reynolds to remark that he could imagine Tintoretto using "his pasteboard houses and wax figures for the distribution of masses."²⁴⁴ Tintoretto has departed from the traditional horizontal *mensa*, opting for a table that recedes into the distance, the perspective terminating on Christ and the Virgin. In doing so he anticipated the effect of his praised San Giorgio Maggiore Last Supper, deepening the experience of the painting by using perspective to emphasise the

²⁴³ P. Rosenberg, "Tintoretto et Fragonard" in *Jacopo Tintoretto: Quarto centenario dopo la morte*, 1996, 27-8, 294, fig. 8.

²⁴⁴ Cotton, 1895, 40. Recalling Ridolfi's description of his practice of using dioramas.

key protagonists, increasing the legibility of the work. This is in stark contrast to Veronese's version in which the central characters become lost in the sea of tooth-picking guests, soldiers, dwarves and monkeys. When the Tintoretto hung in the refectory, the position of the table would have mirrored the orientation of the actual table at which the Crociferi would have sat, giving them the most rewarding impression that they were actually dining with Christ, who presided as *capotavola*. While the biblical narrative of the Marriage at Cana is relatively brief, it was one of the events on which Aretino expounded at length in his Humanità di Cristo, with particular emphasis on the humility of Christ and the Virgin. He adds a detail to the beginning of the story, relating that when they first arrived, Christ and his mother humbly opted to sit at the furthest distance from those of import. The master of the house was quick to ask them to join him at a place of honour at the head of the table.²⁴⁵ If Tintoretto or the Crociferi were familiar with Aretino's texts, as previously suggested, this might explain his choice to exaggerate their placement at the head of the table through the sharp recession in space.

The highly individualized faces of the guests might well be portraits, possibly of some of the Crociferi responsible for commissioning the work, another way of engaging the audience [**Fig.62**]. Veronese represented some of the Benedictines in his Wedding at Cana, indeed, scholars have recognized the likenesses (some more convincing than others) of notable figures in Veronese's heavily tabled feast.²⁴⁶ Some supporting evidence for Tintoretto's inclusion of monastic portraits is provided in Paolo del Sera's letters to Leopoldo de' Medici. It has already been noted that the agent attempted to

²⁴⁵ P. Aretino, Humanità di Cristo (Venice, 1551), Libro II. See also: E. Boillet, *L'Aretin et la Bible* (Geneva, 2007), 428-431.

²⁴⁶ Pavanello, 2007, 25. Aretino, Charles V, Francis I, Vittoria Colonna, and even Veronese, Titian, Tintoretto and Bassano.

acquire this painting the year before the Crociferi were suppressed, via Del’Sera’s barber, an amateur *sensale*, who was also the monastery barber. Del Sera had word that the Crociferi wished to sell their prized refectory painting on the condition that it would be taken speedily and quietly out of the city. Del Sera was so fond of the painting that he spent the next two years negotiating its acquisition for Leopoldo, eventually through official channels, before the Senate ruled against the sale. Several years later, he wrote to Leopoldo regarding another picture with Crociferi provenance, this time a portrait:

“Ho inteso dall’avoritissima del 30 del passato, che aveva ricevuto quella testa del Tintoretto, e che gl’era piaciuta, e non vi è immaginabil dubbio, che è di mano del Tintoretto vecchio, prima perchè la maniera lo denota chiaramente come l’Altezza Vostra ben dice, ma poi anco perchè fu fatta per un frate dell’ordine de’ Crociferi, quando il Tintoretto dipingeva il Cenacolo di essi padri, che è quello che ora la Repubblica l’ha collocato nella sagrestia della chiesa Nuova della Salute, et io lo comperai a dire il vero da un padre del detto ordine suppresso poco fa, che come sia restato a lui non lo so. Basta che lo conosceva molto bene per quel ch’egl’era, e dice esser il ritratto d’un padre Contarini che è quello che ha stampato il Giardino d’Historie, et altre opere, che se questo sia vero o’no’, non lo sò bene.”²⁴⁷

As Del Sera admits, it is impossible to know if the portrait was a likeness of Contarini—particularly because the painting has never been identified—although it is a legitimate possibility. Luigi Contarini was indeed the author of the Giardino storico, and he was present at the Venetian monastery during the years in which the work was commissioned. He lived on until the last decade of the century, and continued to play a leading role at the monastery [App.V]. Ridolfi claimed that Palma included a portrait of Contarini some thirty years later in one of the paintings from the narrative cycle amongst

²⁴⁷ ASF, Carteggio d’artisti, VI, c. 275v (October 1662). The painting to which Del Sera refers has not been traced. P. Barocchi, *Archivio del Collezionismo mediceo* (Milan, 1987), 325. The source for Del Sera’s information about the identity of the sitter was undoubtedly one of the former Crociferi he would have come to know during the earlier transaction.

other *frati* witnessing the Venetian ambassador receiving a *breve* in their favour from Paul IV [Fig.16]. Palma made similar individual studies for insertion into the larger paintings, and it is possible that Tintoretto employed a similar practice, although I see no obvious physiognomic similarities between any of the faces depicted by Tintoretto and the portrait Ridolfi identifies in the Palma. If Del Sera's informant was correct about the Contarini portrait, Tintoretto may have inserted others.

As previously noted, Hieronimo Confalonieri and Giuliano Cirno served as priors during the years in which the Tintoretto paintings were commissioned. An aged Cirno would be represented several times in Palma's decoration, and Confalonieri's particular penchant for *renovatio* and visual self-promotion in the form of the Grandi monument has already been demonstrated. I would suggest, with due caution, that the bald figure at the head of the table between Christ and the Virgin might well be a posthumous portrait of Confalonieri, who died in 1558 at 73 [Fig.63]. Tintoretto would have known him from their earlier dealings for the chancel decoration, and the position between Christ and the Virgin would have been a sufficiently honorific way of paying tribute to the recently deceased prior, who probably initiated the redecoration. There is a blue cast to his robe, which was the colour of the Crociferi habit, and his appearance is consistent with a man about Confalonieri's age. Further evidence for this identification may lie in the Basaiti Lamentation from Padua, once placed on an altar that was inscribed with the names of Confalonieri and the patron of the work. Accounting for the nearly thirty-five years separating the paintings, there are marked similarities between the facial features of the man in Tintoretto's painting, and the figure of Joseph of Arimathea. The general shape of the features, hooded eyes, rounded forehead and the relatively high position of the ears

are close in both. Less convincing is the nose, which is wider in the older man, and the mouth, which has taken on a distinct bow shape that does not seem imminent in the younger man's appearance.

With or without monastic portraits, Tintoretto's painting provided the Crociferi with an engaging and meaningful backdrop to their communal feasting. The message of this work was further enhanced at the beginning of the seventeenth century with the addition of a pendant painting by Odoardo Fialetti, a Bolognese painter, engraver and purported pupil of Tintoretto, best known for his graphic work. In 1674 Boschini recorded a "profanazione de' Sacrivasi fatta da Baldassari" in the refectory²⁴⁸, followed by Malvasia: "Nella facciata del Refettorio sopra la porta, l'istoria, quando il Rè Assuero profana i Sacri vasi al Convito." The work obviously hung on the opposite end of the refectory, facing Tintoretto's *cenacolo*. The subject of Belshazzar's Feast is another unconventional choice for a refectory, and perhaps not the most obvious selection as pendant to the Wedding at Cana, further evidence of complex theological reasoning behind the decoration. The pairing of New Testament subjects with an Old Testament prefiguration was increasingly popular in the seventeenth century, but the more obvious complement to the Wedding at Cana was the related New Testament miracle of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes. This narrative from the book of Daniel involved the Babylonian king, Belshazzar, host of a raucous feast at which he and the other participants drank from the sacred vessels that had been taken (and treated honorifically) from the Temple of Jerusalem by his father, Nebuchadrezzar. They proceeded to worship false idols, "the gods of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone" (Daniel

²⁴⁸ Boschini, 1674, 335.

3:3). What followed was the mysterious writing on the wall by an unseen hand, text that was later translated by Daniel as a prophecy of Belshazzar's downfall. While the subject represented the antithesis to the message of the Wedding of Cana, the fulcrum of both narratives is what happened to the vessels. In Cana they were consecrated by Christ's miraculous conversion of water into fine wine, while at Belshazzar's feast they were desecrated by the act of drinking wine, and through false idolization. While the guests of the banquet at Cana recognized the sacred nature of what had transpired inside the vessels, Belshazzar failed to recognize the Living God, instead glorifying lifeless gods. In this respect the story could be seen as a commentary on the importance of proper preservation of the sacrament, or perhaps even the folly of mistrust in the doctrine of Transubstantiation.²⁴⁹ Both were of central concern during the Counter Reformation, and the Crociferi library contained various texts by theologians that dealt with the doctrine of the consecration of the Eucharist, some of them controversial.²⁵⁰ Fialetti's painting was therefore conceived as an obscure cautionary counterpart. It was a warning against hubris, the opposite of the virtue of humility embodied by the Cana narrative, and a demonstration of the consequences of disorderly conduct, excess, and unworthy communion. The painting hung above the exit, just as scenes of the Last Judgment were often situated on the counter façade of churches, to serve as an admonitory parting reminder. Formally, the subject afforded yet another opportunity to depict the splendour

²⁴⁹ The Eucharistic symbolism of Belshazzar's Feast was emphasised in seventeenth-century religious dramas, particularly in Spain. Pedro Calderón made this connection in his version of Belshazzar's Feast in his *Autos Sacramentales*, a collection of allegories on the mystery of the Eucharist.

²⁵⁰ They owned several works by Christophe de Cheffontaine, who was instrumental in the extension of the Italian confraternity of the Holy Sacrament to France, and whose writings on the consecration of the sacrament were condemned to the index of prohibited books.

of an aristocratic feast, and undoubtedly the pivotal role of the vases in the Old Testament story provided an ideal compositional foil to the vessels in the Tintoretto pendant.

The most obvious precedent for Fialetti's now lost version would have come from the Tintoretto shop where he was a pupil. Since Tintoretto was dead by 1594, we can assign Fialetti's arrival in Venice to sometime in the preceding years. His most likely source would have been Tintoretto's lost fresco of the subject on the façade of the Casa dei Fabbri all'Arsenale, still visible in 1664.²⁵¹ One would expect that he rose to the compositional challenge laid out by Tintoretto, perhaps even providing the spectator with a similar illusion of the extension of space on the other end of the refectory. The painting was recorded in the 1656 inventory as "l'altro di Odoardo", and the Jesuits retained it until sometime after 1664, or perhaps 1678.²⁵²

Fialetti's introduction to the Crociferi may have been through the Tintoretto shop, or even through Palma, the favoured artist of the Crociferi, with whom Fialetti collaborated in 1608 on his Il vero modo et ordine per disegnar tutte le parti et membra del corpo humano. Fialetti may also have made the contact through the motherhouse in his native Bologna. Malvasia claimed that Fialetti lodged at the Venetian monastery while recovering from an illness after his return from Rome, and it was perhaps as a result of their generosity that he produced the engraving of Tintoretto's Wedding at Cana, probably around 1612 [Fig.54].²⁵³ Its favourable reception may have led to the painting commission. The inscription on the bottom of the engraving names Crocifero Opilio Versa Cremasco, whom Fialetti refers to as "Mio Sig^r et Patron Osserian^{mo}." Two

²⁵¹ Ridolfi, 1648, II 17; Boschini, 1664, 169.

²⁵² ASV, AP, c. 125v; C. Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice* (Bologna, 1678), 311.

²⁵³ Malvasia, 1678, 311.

heraldic shields are placed at the corners of Fialetti's engraving, one the symbol of the Crociferi, the other probably belonging to Versa.²⁵⁴ The only trace of Versa I found comes from a letter written to him in Bologna by Marc'Antonio Querini sometime before 1613, the year after the engraving was produced.²⁵⁵ Perhaps Versa was at the Venetian monastery while Fialetti convalesced, but perhaps more likely, Versa was Fialetti's Bolognese connection to the Venetian house, and the engraving was sent to him in thanks for the recommendation. In the inscription he specifies that the Tintoretto painting is in the refectory of the monastery in Venice, suggesting Versa may not have known it firsthand.

4.15 Summary

This chapter has sought to demonstrate the active involvement of the Crociferi in the organisation and conceptualisation of the decorative project. Their concerted effort to attract affluent and influential corporate and private patrons who might adorn their church—literally or figuratively—can be seen as a part of a restoration, not only of the church, but also of the order's reputation after a period of decline. The sacred themes at work in the chancel and refectory are demonstrative of an effort on the part of the Crociferi to visually assert their adherence to central aspects of Counter-Reformation orthodoxy and their reformed status.

By 1565 the Crociferi church contained works by most of the celebrated artists of the sixteenth century, whether as a result of the direct patronage of the Crociferi, or their input into commissions of lay and corporate supporters **[Fig.64]**. This speaks to their

²⁵⁴ E. Morando di Custoza, *Libro d'arme di Venezia* (Verona, 1979). No *stemma* for any Venetian family corresponds.

²⁵⁵ M.A. Querini, *Lettere* (Venice, 1613), 77v.

understanding of the latest artistic developments; their altarpiece and the works that surrounded it conformed to major trends in church decoration of the period in its formal arrangement, its mixture of media, the inclusion of lateral paintings, and of course in the selection of interrelated subjects. The quality of the paintings produced by the notoriously inconsistent Tintoretto is also indicative of a judicious patron. Given the learned patrician character of the monastery and its supporters, it is not surprising to find that the Crociferi appreciated visual art and its function. The nature and scope of the decoration testifies to their stance on the use of visual art for instruction and inspiration, an attitude that anticipated the official decrees of the Council of Trent.

The project to redecorate the church did not end mid-century, but entered a second phase in which the Crociferi continued to develop their commissions to shifting taste and trends; there was a focus on bringing formal unity to the altars down the nave, and to adding narrative cycles to the sacristy, choir, organ and hospital. The emphasis on the Eucharist became more pronounced, and the decoration made explicit reference to the Crociferi and its history. While Crociferi fingerprints could be discerned in this first phase, they would be virtually everywhere by the turn of the century.

Chapter V

Monastic Patronage: Second Phase (1580-1620)

5.1 Rebirth and Reconstruction

The period of rebirth within the order endured into the second half of the sixteenth century, fuelled by ongoing reform under a leading group of *frati*. This spirit of renewal is reflected in the undertaking of two major reconstructions from 1573-1580 in Rome and Verona, achieved under the guidance of the long-time Venetian prior, Giuliano Cirno, who by the early 1570's was serving as Master General.¹ After its cession to the Crociferi in 1560, the church of Santa Maria di Trivio near the Trevi Fountain was rebuilt from 1573-1575 [Fig.65]. Again, an illustrious supporter was behind this *renovatio*, and a Venetian supporter at that. Cardinal Alvise Cornaro (1516-1584), nephew of Caterina Cornaro, and descendant of the great Cornaro *della Regina* of San Polo line, was the protector of the Roman Crociferi and oversaw the rebuilding.² A *libro di spese* discovered amongst fragments in the Procuratori archive records some of the expenses for the building of the church, including a payment in 1575 “all’Architetto di Roma per cortesia per il disegno mandato a Venezia”, and also for the construction of the choir (above the entrance door) in 1578.³ The Crociferi had evidently been saving for the project for some time, as the *libri di spese* of San Martino di Conegliano record that a tax was levied against each of the monasteries of the order for 100 *scudi d'oro* a year from

¹ ASV, Atti Figolin, B. 5626.

² S. Benedetti, *Giacomo del Duca e l'architettura del Cinquecento* (Rome, 1972), 155-71.

³ ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. G, fasc. 4, c. 83r, 172r-v. “Libro delle entrate et spese appartenenti alla mensa del reverendissimo padre general (dei Crociferi) che si faranno nel suo triennio... (1574-1580).

1568-1570, and 50 in 1571 and 1572 directed toward “la fabrica del luoco nostro di Roma.”⁴

It is possible that Cornaro became acquainted with the Crociferi at the lively Venetian monastery, but it was the Roman house that benefited from his influence. A member of a family that had been patron to Sanmicheli and Sansovino in Venice, Cornaro must surely have been involved in the selection of the architect. The Sicilian follower of Michelangelo, Giacomo del Duca, was chosen. He was also responsible for the grand façade of Cornaro’s adjacent *palazzo* (1579-1582).⁵ Cornaro was buried at the centre of the church, where an engraved slab still marks his tomb, and an apostolic visit of 1593 records that, contrary to previous claims, he had an altar on the left side of the church dedicated to the Baptist at which a mass was celebrated in his honour until the Crociferi were suppressed.⁶ The altar does not seem to have been decorated in any notable fashion. Bruzio recorded an altarpiece by a follower of Palma il Giovane, but was more taken by two flanking columns of “rarissima” *verde antico* marble.⁷ I think that it is reasonable to conclude that Cornaro was financially responsible, at least in part, for the building of this church, given that he is referred to as “benefactor”, but also given the rather unremarkable nature of his altar. One would expect something far more sophisticated from a member of a family of astute patrons of art and architecture; his

⁴ AST, CRS, SMR, B. 11, 1568, c. 30v and 1571-2, c. 19r.

⁵ Benedetti, 226 and W. Barcham, *Grand in design: the life and career of Federico Cornaro* (Venice, 2001), 47-8.

⁶ ASVat, VA, 3, cc. 48-49. “..nuper a Patribus constructum” and “olim C[-]merarii tamquam Benefactoris, cuius sepulcrum manet in medio eius Ecclesiae.” ASVat, CSR, 24, c.13v. Mass obligations in 1650: “Per grata corrispondenza de beneficij ricevuti dall’E[ccellentissimo]mo e R[everendo] Sig[no]re Card[inale] Alvisse Cornaro.”

⁷ Benedetti, 239, note. 5. R. Venuti, *Accurata, e succinta descrizione topografica e istorica di Roma moderna*, 1766, v. 1, 127; Titi, 1763, 354-55.

brother would commission a substantial funerary monument (attributed to Giacomo della Porta) for the counter façade of San Silvestro al Quirinale, and the next generation would be responsible for a lavish burial chapel by Bernini at Santa Maria della Vittoria. It is therefore likely that Alvise considered the Crociferi church as a whole a monument to his memory.

As this project was concluding in June of 1577, it was decided, again under the leadership of Cirno, that the church of San Luca di Verona be rebuilt.⁸ It was completed over the next decade with monastery funds, and “per mezo della Pietà de secolari infervorati all’elemosine da Predicationi de nostri Padri della Religione et principalmente dal Prete Maestro Ottaviano Semitecolo Venetiano.”⁹ Francesco Torbido, Jacopo Ligozzi, Claudio Ridolfi and Alessandro Turchi decorated its altars.¹⁰

Two factors were central to these projects: 1) the initiative of Cirno and the order to provide their churches with facelifts reflective of their rehabilitated status, and 2) the attraction of an illustrious patron to provide practical and even financial support. Both factors would also be central to a second phase of decoration at the Venetian monastery.

5.2 The Impetus for the Second Phase

Several fortuitous events unique to the Venetian house seem to have precipitated this second phase of decoration. The first was the release of the Crociferi from the *commenda* in 1568. This represented a fresh start for the brothers, releasing them from a

⁸ ASVat, CSR, 24, c. 72r.

⁹ ASVat, CSR, 24, c. 72v.

¹⁰ *Nuova Guida di Verona e della sua provincia*, 1854, 107-6. Torbido produced a Trinity, Ligozzi an Invention of the Cross, Turchi an Assunta, Ridolfi an Angelo Custode. ASV, PSMsupra, Chiesa, B. 186, cc. 10v-12r.

burden to both their finances and their reputation. Further financial freedom was achieved in the early 1580's when a settlement was reached with the Procuratori de Citra, the government officials charged with overseeing the Zen legacy on which the hospital was dependent. Mismanagement of the funds was uncovered as a result of investigations by Fra Priamo Balbi, who served for two decades as the "hospitalano and procurator." Reparations came in 1583, perhaps through the intervention of Pasquale Cicogna, Procurator of St. Mark.¹¹ As it transpired, the Crociferi would have one final powerful advocate in Cicogna, who emerged as the dark horse in the 1585 ducal election. It was often the case that candidates for the top job were drawn from the powerful ranks of the *procuratori*. In 1585 there was a favourite among the procurators: Vincenzo Morosini. What could not have been predicted was the feeling in the Maggior Consiglio that a doge from less ancient extraction than the venerable Morosini might prove a better choice to replace Nicolò da Ponte, whose dogate had been troubled with armed riots. Cicogna's family entered the Maggior Consiglio in 1381 (just a century after the *serrata*), and it was only in his lifetime—partially as a result of his success—that members of his family were serving in higher offices. Thus Cicogna entered one of the more hotly debated ducal races, which dragged on through an astonishing 53 rounds of balloting until Morosini passed his votes to Cicogna, who became the 88th doge.¹² Contemporary testimony reports a lack of enthusiasm in the *piazza* upon the announcement, probably because the

¹¹ M. Di Monte, "Vincenzo Morosini, Palma il Giovane e il ritratto di gruppo veneziano" *VC* 7, n. 13 (1997), 172. Michele di Monte has argued against Lunardon's assertion that Cicogna's signature at the top of one of the first resolutions indicates his special role in bringing it about, preferring a more conservative suggestion that Cicogna was one among several procurators who were involved in bringing the deliberations to a close.

¹² L. Ranke, *Venezia nel Cinquecento*, trans. I. Zapperi Walter (Rome, 1974), 173-77.

public was expecting the wealthy Morosini.¹³ The election of Cicogna, a man of far lesser means, was testament to the fact that in the Venetian system, extraction from a noble family, not wealth, was the only definite criteria for political power. No more prepared for the news was Cicogna; he received the word while attending mass at the high altar of the Crociferi church, an event immortalized in the Palma il Giovane narrative cycle in the chapel of the hospital [Fig.33]. Divine providence had seen fit to seal what must have been an existing relationship between Cicogna and the *frati*. It was, of course, a place and time in which such occurrences were interpreted as heavenly signs, and Cicogna, a deeply pious man, had already been the recipient of several celestial messages.¹⁴ He took to his heart the site where his fortunes had so dramatically changed, and the Crociferi gained another protector of the highest calibre. Cicogna's dedication found expression in a number of ways. It cannot be coincidence that during his extremely proactive dogate—which saw the rebuilding of the Rialto bridge, the construction of Palladio's church of the Redentore and the fortress of Palmanuova—substantial funds were directed to urban development in the area around the church with the building of the Fondamenta Nuove in 1589, a measure taken partly to secure the monastic settlements in danger of eroding into the lagoon.¹⁵ The Crociferi church figured prominently in the visual propaganda produced during Cicogna's dogate—votive imagery at the ducal palace [Fig.66]¹⁶, coins [Fig.67]¹⁷, and ultimately his tomb. The doge wished

¹³ Di Monte, 1997, 160.

¹⁴ On Corfu a consecrated host was whisked out of the hands of a priest and into Cicogna's.

¹⁵ Tafuri, 1993, 184-5.

¹⁶ The connection between the Crociferi and the doge is communicated through its centrality in his votive painting by Palma il Giovane in the Sala dei Pregadi of the

to repose in eternal proximity to the place where he had been touched by the divine. His testament provided for a mass in his honour at the altar where “per gratia d’Iddio havessimo la nova dell’ellection nostra al Ducato.”¹⁸ The will stipulated for a tomb, one “con ogni modestia, perche siamo lontani da ogni mondano ambitione”, on which he wished his standard be placed.¹⁹ This claim of modesty is reflected in his choice against burial in that pantheon of doges, Santi Giovanni e Paolo, and also in the monument itself, a work by Girolamo Campagna [**Figs.68-69**]. We know that the tomb was still in progress in 1604, although the effigy of the doge was complete.²⁰ Work on the monument probably commenced soon after Cicogna’s death in April of 1595, but completion was delayed, perhaps because of a subsequent commission for the tomb of Doge Marino Grimani at San Giuseppe di Castello, or even due to financial complications.²¹ The monument survived the Jesuit rebuild, but was dismantled and relocated above the sacristy door. Its original position was on the opposite side of the church above the door that once led to the cloister. Surrounded by architectural elements—black marble Corinthian columns topped with a triangular pediment with dentilled moulding and the Cicogna arms at its apex—an Istrian stone effigy of Cicogna,

Palazzo Ducale, which celebrates the principal tenets, attachments and achievements of his life against the backdrop of the church [**Fig.63**].

¹⁷ On the *recto* of the Cicogna *osella* was an angel bestowing the ducal *corno* on Cicogna, and on the *verso* the Crociferi symbol.

¹⁸ ASV, NT (Secco), B. 1192, n. 527, c. 8v.

¹⁹ ASV, AP, cc.125v-126v. This standard was recorded in the 1656 inventory, in addition to a chasuble with his arms.

²⁰ F. Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare*, ed. G. Stringa (Venice, 1604), 148. “..si fabrica al presente.” G. Gronau, *Documenti artistici Urbinati* (Florence, 1935), 244. A 1604 letter from Campagna to the Duke of Urbino mentions the effigy is complete.

²¹ W. Timofiewitsch, *Girolamo Campagna* (Münich, 1972), 267-8, n. 20. 1600-3. See also: J. Simane, *Grabmonumente der Dogen: Venezianische Sepulkralkunst im Cinquecento* (Sigmaringen, 1993).

his robes of gilded gold brocade, reposes casually atop a marble sarcophagus. Campagna has achieved a kind of ease and presence in his likeness of the doge that many of his attempts at portraiture lacked.²² The doge's serene expression and relaxed pose communicate the critical message that five surrounding inscriptions define: this was a doge who could rest with ease after a life marked by peace, pious acts, the love of his people and divine intervention.²³ Although grand in its references to triumphal architecture, Cicogna's monument is in fact modest in comparison to the majority of ducal tombs, taking for example that of Marino Grimani (1601-4), a larger and more ornate monument [Fig.70].

One doubts very much whether the Crociferi were particularly concerned with its grandeur; the prestige that accompanied the presence of a ducal tomb would have been of central import. In death as in life, Pasquale Cicogna made it his business to put the Crociferi on the map, something that the Crociferi visually advertised in the narrative cycle in their hospital, the first initiative of the second phase of redecoration.

5.3 Priamo Balbi

The efforts of Lunardon and Mason-Rinaldi have furthered our knowledge of the circumstances and chronology of the hospital refurbishment. I can add little to what they have already established beyond the odd detail or correction, and because my already

²² P. Rossi, *Girolamo Campagna* (Verona, 1968), 33-4.

²³ Gaier, 2002, 245. [App.VIII] These engravings refer to his central achievements: release from pestilence and famine, the miracle of the Host on Corfu, meritorious service as *rettore* at Crete, where he was honoured with a marble likeness on the citadel wall. This statue was also depicted in Cicogna's Pregadi votive painting.

broad focus is restricted to the church, I will discuss the hospital decoration only as it relates to my arguments regarding the church decoration.

The first generation of Crociferi patrons nurtured a second in the later part of the century. It was this quorum of *frati* who initiated the redecoration of the oratory, choir, organ, sacristy, library and various altars. Many of these Crociferi facilitated and inspired the rejuvenation, but at the heart of this project was a single Crocifero: Priamo Balbi.

Balbi served for two decades as the *hospitalano* of the *ospizio*, not as a prior of the monastery, a distinction frequently confused.²⁴ His Venetian patrician surname suggests he entered the order at Venice, possibly because of an existing connection between his family and the order.²⁵ He was a *sacerdoto* in 1562, 1564 and 1566, later serving as the prior at Conegliano (1574-78).²⁶ By 1581 he was among the highest-ranking Crociferi listed in the apostolic visit, by which time he had been in charge of the hospital for at least a year.²⁷ To our great benefit, Priamo was a meticulous record keeper, leaving behind two account books in which he logged the expenses of the various projects at the hospital and church. These *libri di spese* survive in the archive of the Procuratori de citra, as it was largely the *commissaria* Zen that funded the renovations. They narrate the chronology of the projects, document the coordination of labour between various trades, and confirm the proactive patronage of the Crociferi. The extent to which this was the case emerges strongly out of a 1594 *relazione* by Balbi entitled “Memorial

²⁴ Priamo is never referred to as prior, but rather as *hospitalano* or *procuratore*.

²⁵ ASV, AP, c. 128v. An *anniversaria* listed in the 1656 inventory for a former prioress of the hospital, Donna Venturina Balbi.

²⁶ See Appendix V for his biography.

²⁷ ASVat, FV II, CV, 908/40.

delle refatte nel hospital e sagrestie.” It amounts to a brief autobiography in which Balbi boasts of his achievements, stressing his responsibility for coordinating multiple aspects of the projects to redecorate the hospital and church, starting around 1582-3. In order to fund the project he initiated two financial disputes on the hospital’s behalf with the help of his brother, “avocato della Religione.”²⁸ He claims to have “brought to light through much personal effort and with great expense”²⁹ the complaint of mismanagement against the procurators, which after nine years of deliberation resulted in compensation that funded the decoration at the hospital *and* church, aided by funds from *mansonarie*, including that of distinguished Crocifero, Lauro Badoer.³⁰ Among the results he lists are an increase in capacity at the hospital to 13 residents, the provision of a doctor, medicine and funerals for the women, the new *banchi di noghera* for the chapel of the hospital, its *istorie*, a decorative ceiling, and the Palma il Giovane altarpiece depicting the Adoration of the Magi (lost). Remarkably, in the space of less than fifteen years, he was also able to coordinate the building of a new monastic library, and redecorate the sacristy, choir and organ. Even though each project cost in excess of 1,000 ducats, he stresses “il Monastero non ha dato niente” and that “con la mia industria ho fatto far il tutto.”

5.4 The Second Generation

Priamo was well placed to inherit the tradition of coordinated patronage from his industrious predecessors. He entered the order during the frenzy of decorative activity during the late 1550’s and 1560’s, undertaken by priors Confalonieri and Cirno. Cirno,

²⁸ Lunardon, 52-7. The first was the dispute with the procurators, the second a *processo* against the plebanum of Santa Felice.

²⁹ ASV, ZC, fasc. 8.

³⁰ ASV, ZC, *Libro di Spese*, 31. July 1594, Vettor Soranzo allots 141 L from the *commissaria* of Badoer for the choir *banchi*.

Luigi Contarini and Jacopo Antonio Boldù provided a bridge between the two eras; they were a part of the hierarchy during the previous decades and continued to serve as priors and Masters General well into the 1580's and 1590's, undoubtedly supporting Priamo's initiatives.³¹ Others who provided critical support were Crociferi who had ascended the ranks with Balbi, most of them fellow Venetians: Stefano Leoni, Vettor Soranzo, Faustino Bondumier, Liberale Marino, Thiberio Foresti, Augustino Gratiano, Francesco Fossano, Zaccaria Barbaro and Lauro Badoer.³² By the late sixteenth-century they were master generals, priors, *diffinitori* or vicars, and we find their signatures approving his expenditures throughout the *libri di spese*.³³

These individuals continued to form a learned community of writers, linguists, poets, philosophers, theologians, musicians and preachers, evinced by their many published works—histories, rhymes, soliloquies, orations, songs, letters, poetry and theological writings—and through the testimony of their fellow Crocifero, Luigi Contarini, whose *Vago e dilettevole giardino* (1586) lists the achievements of accomplished Crociferi. Like his contemporaries, Marc'Antonio Boldù and Benedetto Leoni, Contarini provides a history of the Crociferi. These narratives, paired with the published version in the 1587 constitution, represent a concerted effort by leading

³¹ Appendix V for biographies.

³² Gratiano, Bondumier and Marino were at the monastery as early as 1556 and throughout the 1560's and 1570's, along with Fossano and Foresti who appear as early as 1563 with Balbi. (ASV, PSMsupra, Chiesa, B. 103; ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 392; Leoncini, B. 7829; Figolin, B. 5604). Balbi, Boldù, Camillo Bressan, Ferro, Gratiano, Marino, Barbaro, Stridonio and Bondumier were all *sacerdoti* together in 1564, while Leoni and Badoer were novices.

³³ ASV, ZC, *Libro*, cc. 31, 47, 48, 57; ASVat, VA, 96; ASVat, FV II, CV, 908/40, 5v. Barbaro was prior in 1581 and Gratiano was General of the order. Marino was prior in 1583, Foresti 1584, Gratiano 1585, Badoer 1587-88, Fossano was Master General in 1590, Leoni 1593, Soranzo 1594.

Crociferi to promote their order, each consistently stressing several themes: their ancient origins, long list of illustrious supporters, societal contributions, and reformed status. Lowe isolates a similar impetus for several Cinquecento nuns' chronicles, particularly one produced at the Venetian convent of the Vergini.³⁴ These authors clearly saw the renewal within the order as a direct result of their return to discipline and their study of the liberal arts, guided by key individuals. In his *Rime spirituali* (1571), Contarini's nephew, Lauro Badoer, Bishop of Alba, singles out many of these same individuals in his dedication to Pietro Zen, Prior of Bologna:

“A Religion nostra Crucifera, che per l'antichità dell'origine avanza quasi tutte l'altre, si come per la pietà che ha usato di continuo, & usa dal principio della sua infanzia, fina à questi nostri tempi, in albergar tanto cortesemente, & piamente i poveri non cede à niuna: Tra tanti & tanti figliuoli dignissimi, che ha havuto ne i tempi antichi, e in questa età moderna che con affetto divoto, & con religion singolare l'an sempre mantenuta in quel colmo di perfettion in che nacque; Gli Arcangeli, gli Oliveri, i Gerolami, i Giuliani, i Giacomi Antonij, i Giulij, i Camilli, i Simoni.....Et accio che col tempo questa religion nostra, non havesse in cosa alcuna ad invidiar l'altre, no si è contentata di agrandirla di fabriche materiali nel cospetto del mondo ma tutta accesa de santi, e virtuosi pensieri, è andata con la sua bontà et cortesia fabricando novi edifici de spiriti virtuosi, e nobili in servitio di Dio et di S. Chiesa, si che homai n'attende il mondo da si felice principij Teatro mirabile à rifguardanti, E di questa sua impresa degna di perpetua memoria, ne farà sempre certa, et indubitata fede il molto valor del Reverendo Padre maestro Benedetto Leoni; huomo (se dall'Eccellenza de scolari si puo argumentar quella de precettori) di molto merito, e di non poco loda: Il Reverendo Padre Ottaviano Semitecolo et molte altre sue creature, che et nel leggere, et nel Predicar cominciano, con non poco splendor di questa religione à farsi conoscere per diverse Citta d'Italia huomini valorosi, e singolari; per non parlare hora della musicha, nella quale pur si conosce da' professori di quest'arte à qual colmo di perfettione sia goto il Reverendo Padre Catarino Bianchi hora maestro di Capella di S. Alessandro di Bergamo.”³⁵

³⁴ K. Lowe, “Elections of Abbesses and Notions of Identity in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Italy” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (2001), 402-3. The author of the 1523 chronicle stressed the institution's (probably mythical) foundation by the daughter of Federico Barbarossa and approval by Alexander III and the doge, in response to a moment of internal upheaval and increasing orthodoxy.

³⁵ L. Badoer, *Rime Spirituali del R.do Padre F. Lauro Badoaro Curcifero* (Bologna, 1571), 1-2.

Here Badoer refers to notable Crociferi, many already mentioned, such as Archangelo Cremaschi, Olivero Ferro, Girolamo Confalonieri, his nephew Simon Rubens, Jacopo Antonio Boldù, the preacher Ottaviano Semitecolo and Giuliano Cirno, both of whom had been charged with revising the constitution.³⁶ Leoni echoes these sentiments in his 1598 history:

“Da indi in poi incomincio l’Ordine a guisa d’arida terra perfusa di rugiada celeste a pullulare di nuovo and germogliare frondi, fiori and frutti di maravigliosa bonta: si riformarono i costumi, crebbe il culto di Dio, s’abbelli la disciplina, and l’osservanza claustrale, fiorirono li studi delle buon’arti and quelli specialmente della Sacra Teologia, li quali di molti anni a dietro erano quasi estinti and si continuarono per anni ventisette in circa sino a questi tempi con notabile frutto di essa Congregatione and con non mediocre servizio di Santa Chiesa con tanta felicità di acquisto and accrescimento così nel temporale, come nello spirituale, che fa stupire grandemente l’antichità.”³⁷

I would suggest that this very group of *frati* conceived of the decorative projects—in particular the narrative cycles—as visual parallels to their published histories, as celebrations of their post-*commenda* renewal, the Crociferi who guided it, and their core devotional interests, which tended increasingly toward the sacramental. What really unites the decoration throughout the church and oratory is Eucharistic iconography, although this has never been discussed. The portraits from life contained within Palma’s paintings commemorate many of the aforementioned Crociferi brothers, lending further strength to this hypothesis. And who better to charge with such paintings than an artist who had been a familiar of this monastery since childhood?

5.5 Palma il Giovane

³⁶ Appendix V for biographies. Cremaschi was responsible Bologna rebuild. Ferro was Venetian prior in 1563, Master General in 1571. Confalonieri, Cirno and Boldù were priors at Venice during the first project of redecoration. Confalonieri initiated Paduan rebuild, and Rubens saw it to completion. Semitecolo was prior at Venice and Master General, and his preaching funded the Verona rebuild.

³⁷ Leoni, 1598, 23.

The story of Jacopo Negretti can hardly be told without the mention of the Crociferi. According to Ridolfi, theirs was a connection rooted in Palma's boyhood, which nurtured his early career and produced some of the most impressive examples of his high style. Over the course of his long career, Palma converted the Crociferi complex into a monument to his talent; it was to Palma as San Rocco was to Tintoretto [Fig.71]. The notoriously prolific artist produced over fifty individual paintings for the Crociferi, many of which, had they have survived, would have constituted the earliest traces of his artistic production.

Ridolfi recounts a charming anecdote about Palma's big break. At fifteen³⁸, Palma was honing his artistic skills—inherited via his uncle, Palma Vecchio³⁹—by drawing famous paintings of the city, including the newly installed Titian Martyrdom of St. Lawrence. Evidently Duke Guidobaldo della Rovere of Urbino frequented the church and was delighted by the young boy at work. While the duke was attending mass, Palma sketched his portrait and was brought before the duke by his courtiers. Having impressed the duke, who wished to have the portrait and the copy of the Titian, Palma was invited to join the household at Urbino. Thus, Palma left Venice in 1564, remained at Urbino until 1567, but then accompanied the duke to Rome, where he stayed until 1570.⁴⁰ In Rome the Crociferi at Santa Maria in Trivio commissioned a Christ for above the door to their

³⁸ A 1606 self-portrait of the artist at 58 places his birth date to 1548 (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York). S. Mason Rinaldi, "Novità, ritrovamenti e restituzioni a Jacopo Palma il Giovane" *AV* 36 (1982), 152.

³⁹ P. Cottrell, "The artistic parentage of Palma Giovane" *BM* 144 (2002), 289-91.

⁴⁰ S. Mason-Rinaldi, *Palma il Giovane: L'opera completa* (Milan, 1984), 9-11.

cloister that was “tenuto in gran conto”⁴¹, and, according to Ridolfi and Baglione, he executed a painting of angels adoring the Sacrament in the arch above the high altar.⁴²

Knowing that Santa Maria in Trivio was under construction from 1573-75, Palma probably produced this work on his second Roman sojourn following a brief return to Venice. Ridolfi reports his visit to the Venetian Crociferi upon returning from his first trip: “[Palma] volle compartir loro le primizie del suo ingegno.”⁴³ Palma’s eagerness to demonstrate his new skills to the brothers imparts a sense of the paternal role they played in his life and lends credence to Ridolfi’s claim that “ai quali [Padri Crociferi] il Palma vise sempre divoto, poichè sino da fanciullo fu da quelli avuto in protezione.”⁴⁴ During this less than fruitful return to Venice, the Crociferi were his only patrons. He produced several frescoes in their dormitory: A Virgin and Child adored by Angels “in capo al loro dormitorio”⁴⁵, a Helen Finding the True Cross and a Padre Eterno⁴⁶ in the stairs (all lost), but finding the Venetian scene too competitive, he returned to Rome. Given the timing, it is possible that it was a commission secured for him at the recently completed Roman church that warranted his second trip. In addition to his paintings for the Venetian and Roman Crociferi, it is known that he also produced a Crucifixion (lost) for the choir of

⁴¹ Venuti, 1767, I, 304-5.

⁴² Ridolfi, 1648, II, 173; G. Baglione, *Le vite de’ pittori, scultori et architetti* (Bologna, 1642), 183-4. “..lavorò un quadro a olio, en, entrovi una gloria d’Angioli, con puttini, in atto d’adorare il Santissimo Sagramento con buona maniera.” *Roma antica, e moderna*, 1750, 243; Titi, 1763, 354-5: “Nel quadro dell’ Altar maggiore era una gloria d’ Angioli, che adorano il Santissimo, con diligenza dipinta da Giacomo Palma, allora giovinetto, con tutto il restante da i lati.” Venuti, 304-5: “un bel quadro ch’era di Giacomo Palma.”

⁴³ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 173.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 179.

⁴⁵ Boschini, 1664, 424.

⁴⁶ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 174; Boschini, 1664, 424; Zanetti, *Descrizione di tutte le pubbliche pitture della città di Venezia* (Venice, 1733), 385.

the church at Conegliano and a Flagellation for the choir of the church at Padua⁴⁷, and several of his pupils also found work with the Crociferi in Venice, Conegliano⁴⁸ and Rome.⁴⁹

When Palma returned to Venice for good, the Crociferi remained his most consistent patrons, immediately commissioning a painting depicting St. Christopher for the altar dedicated to the saint beneath the choir, followed by substantial decorative projects in each of the following four decades.⁵⁰

The impression of a deeply personal relationship between the brothers and the artist that emerges from Ridolfi's portrait is substantiated by several other telling clues that have never been sufficiently emphasised. A contemplative self-portrait of the aging artist as a Crocifero⁵¹ (Bardisian Collection, Venice, c. 1606) [Fig.72] hints at the kind of devotion to the order that Ridolfi describes; gratitude for their support, and perhaps also for the charity the Crociferi of Naples bestowed upon Palma's son, a wandering misfit who died under their care.⁵² Finally, Rosand noted rather touching evidence that in the

⁴⁷ Rossetti, 1780, 256-8.

⁴⁸ Lucco, 1981, 11; Federici, 1803, II, 60.

⁴⁹ Bruzio, v. 19, 700-703; Ridolfi, 1648, II, 366. Fra Cosimo Piazza Cappuccino produced a Martyrdom of St. Cleto for the altar *in cornu evangelii* and frescoes of the Passion around the altar. Another pupil painted a Baptism of Christ.

⁵⁰ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 174; ASV, AP, c. 123v; F. Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare*, ed. G. Martinioni (Venice, 1663), 168; Boschini, 1664, 422; Barri, 1671, 59; Martinelli, 1684, 223.

⁵¹ Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, cat. 565; Y. Suzuki, *Studien zu Künstlerporträts der Maler und Bildhauer in der venetischen und venezianischen Kunst der Renaissance*, (Münster, 1996), 283, cats. 126, 146-8.

⁵² Ridolfi, 1648, II, 203. "Sorti egli nondimeno poca felicità nei figliuoli...l'uno si morì vagando per il mondo ricoverato in Napoli nel Convento dei Padri Crociferi, amorevoli del padre suo."

winter of his life, Palma would return to sketch the Titian where he got his big break [Fig.73].⁵³

Once again, much depends on the validity of Ridolfi's testimony, whose reliability and connections to the Crociferi were previously outlined. His information regarding the later decoration is even more authoritative due to his proximity to the lifetime and circle of Palma. In Ridolfi's description of the choir of the Crociferi church, he relates a conversation between himself and the artist, suggesting that he enjoyed the benefit of a personal tour of the space. The validity of Ridolfi's biography is critical to what follows, as it forms a foundation for what we know about the *frati* involved in these decorative projects as patrons and subjects.

5.6 Chronology and Commemoration

Having updated their chancel, the Crociferi focused on keeping up with the trends of the later century: ceilings and cycles. Sansovino noted the explosion of *soffitti*: "there are (in Venice) countless buildings in which the ceilings of their rooms are finished with gold and other colours and decorated with paintings."⁵⁴ Schulz calculated that about 73 costly ceilings were produced in the flurry of building throughout the century, noting that Palma was among the last exponents of the genre.⁵⁵

The initial focus was on the oratory, probably because it had been refurbished in 1553 [Fig.74]. Work began almost immediately in 1583 on the gilded decorative ceiling that by 1589 contained Palma's large central Assunta surrounded by music-making

⁵³ D. Rosand, "Palma il Giovane as Draughtsman: The Early Career and Related Observations," *Master Drawings*, 8 (1970), 12, figs. 50a, 50b and 51.

⁵⁴ Sansovino, 1581, 142v.

⁵⁵ J. Schulz, *Venetian Painted Ceilings of the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1968), 39.

angels and grotesque sibyls by Baldassare delle Grottesche [Fig.75].⁵⁶ Palma's first commission was for the lost altarpiece of the Adoration of the Magi in May 1583.⁵⁷ Ridolfi observed the inclusion of a portrait of "Padre Liberale Marini, padre di quel tempo" as a magus, a suggestion corroborated by a document.⁵⁸

In late March 1584 Balbi initiated the renovation of the monastery library with the permission of the Master General Agostino Gratiano, and Venetian prior, Faustino Bondumier. In December 1584 Balbi commissioned the "telero Zen" for the oratory, depicting Doge Renier Zen and the Dogaressa with Piazza San Marco in the distance [Fig.76].⁵⁹ A group of Procuratori gather to the doge's left, among them Morosini, who is directly addressed by the Doge, who in turn gestures in recommendation of Crociferi and elderly women gathered to the right. The elderly Crocifero closest to the *dogaressa* is Giuliano Cirno⁶⁰, and recommending the women, Priamo Balbi. A Christ in Glory hovers above, gesturing in benediction. Di Monte argued that in 1584 Morosini was considered the frontrunner in the next ducal election, and that the Crociferi were hedging their bets by assigning him a place of prominence in the first of what must have already been conceived as a cycle. The message is clear: divine sanction of the relationship between Zen, the Crociferi, and the women under their care. The Crociferi clearly hoped that Morosini would assume a similarly protective role. Cicogna, the procurator who

⁵⁶ Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 139, cats. 523, 523A-H.

⁵⁷ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 179; Boschini, 1664, 426; Zanetti, 1771, 308. In 1875 a Paris Bordon Presentation in Temple was on altar; the Palma was in the oratory of Filippo e Luigi where it was recorded as badly damaged.

⁵⁸ ASVat, FV II, CV, 908/40. Listed as prior in this 1583 *processo*.

⁵⁹ Mason-Rinaldi, 1977, 246-7. Payments in December 1584, April 1585, October 1585.

⁶⁰ R. Zava Boccazzi, "Inseri ritrattistici in alcune tele di Palma il Giovane" *Pantheon* 23 (1965), 297-8.

would be doge, is beside Morosini, engaging the viewer with his gaze, roles that would be reversed.

Cicogna's unexpected promotion probably changed the course of the programme, or inspired a larger one. Three paintings in his honour were commissioned in March 1585, and were installed sometime before 1588.⁶¹ The first depicts Balbi administering the Host to Cicogna at the altar of the oratory days before his election [Fig.77], the second narrates the news of his election arriving at the high altar of the church [Fig.78], and the third captures the arrival of his ducal procession at the entrance to the monastery on the feast day of the Assumption [Fig.79]. In each Cicogna is surrounded by Crociferi and the *ospizio* widows, connecting them to the doge previous to, during and after his election. In the third canvas Morosini now plays a secondary role from behind the doge, engaging the viewer with his gaze, while Cicogna's focus is on the Crociferi who welcome him, Balbi among them. Ridolfi's assertion that Palma included a portrait of Lauro Badoer in the guise of the papal nuncio to Cicogna's left is entirely plausible, given that he was amongst the hierarchy in 1585-6, and prior in 1587 and 1588. Augustino Gratiano was prior of the monastery during the time these works were produced, so in keeping with the trend, his portrait is probably that of the bearded figure in liturgical robes standing in the door. Cicogna cannot have been unhappy with this tribute, a rarity in a city that frowned upon glorification of the individual, particularly in the propagandistic visual form. However in the context of a small chapel used exclusively by cloistered widows, the purpose of the cycle was not so much to publicly glorify Cicogna as to celebrate the illustrious patronage the Crociferi attracted. In this

⁶¹ Payments in March 1585, August 1587.

sense it was pendant to the *Zen telero* [Fig.76]; the protection of these two doges lent the Crociferi prestige and inserted them into the narrative of Venetian history. The next paintings expounded on this theme of advocacy, and included their connection to two popes.

These papal images were installed by June of 1590.⁶² The first depicted Cleto's foundation of the order, and the second Paul IV issuing a *breve* to Ambassador Giustiniani with the Crociferi church in the distance [Fig.80-81]. This *breve* of 1556 secured autonomy for the Crociferi, exempting the monastery from various external supervisory and disciplinary measures.⁶³ These pictures also contained monastic portraits. In the Cleto painting Balbi kneels in the lower right corner. Ridolfi identifies Benedetto Leoni, author of the Crociferi history, and Luigi Contarini as the two figures kneeling in the lower left of the Paul IV painting: "Ed in quest'azione intervengono il padre Benedetto Leoni, fu generale di quella Congregazione e vescovo d'Arcadia, ed il padre Contarino autore del Giardino istorico, tratti dal naturale."⁶⁴ Two further Crociferi can be identified based on their appearance in the Decollation of the Baptist on the *varoteri* altar in the church [Fig.82]. Ridolfi identified the elderly Giuliano Cirno in the guise of San Lanfranco at the left of the altarpiece, and he appears almost identically in the Paul IV painting. A small portrait in Milan identical to the likeness of Cirno in the Decollation suggests that small head studies were made for the purpose of inserting Crociferi into multiple paintings [Fig.83].⁶⁵ Cirno's appearance in three paintings speaks to his ongoing role as Venetian prior and Master General of the order, but may also point

⁶² ASV, ZC, *Libro*. Payments in August 1589, June 1590.

⁶³ Lunardon, 111.

⁶⁴ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 180-1.

⁶⁵ Zava Boccazzi, 1965, 297-8.

to his longstanding involvement in the decorative projects as one of the last remaining Crociferi responsible for the first decorative project. Ridolfi claimed that Crocifero Simon Rossi appeared in the Decollation as St. Liberius on the right.⁶⁶ Over the shoulder of the executioner is another familiar face from the Paul IV painting; the same figure appears against the façade of the church.

The concentration of monastic portraits in these paintings already merits comment, even without knowing the full extent to which it was the case. It seems likely that others still were represented, now unidentifiable amongst the anonymous faces. Even without identifying the full cast of characters, the message of their inclusion is clear: they are commemorated, along with their illustrious protectors, for their contributions to the renewal and reform of the monastery and order. The latter is particularly true of Balbi's case; he appears three times in the decoration he coordinated. Leadership took on new importance in the wake of the *commendata*, which was enforced because of corrupt administration and lack of guidance within the order. The revised Crociferi constitution, which had been initiated and formulated by the same individuals in power during this project of redecoration (Francesco Fossano, Cirno, Contarini, Leoni and Semitecolo), stipulated that each prior meet monthly with the 4-6 of the "oldest and wisest" *frati* to discuss discipline. The presence of Contarini and Leoni in the image of

⁶⁶ Ibid., 297-8. Zava Boccazzi asserted he also appears in the *Zen telero* (second to the right of the dogressa) and in the later Paul IV painting (the figure gesturing toward the pope in the lower left corner). While I accept that the Crocifero in the *Zen* painting is probably the same man, the one depicted in the Paul IV canvas is clearly not. His nose is long and slanted, while that of the Crocifero portrayed in the *Zen* and Decollation paintings is smaller and slightly upturned. Zava Boccazzi's may be correct that Ridolfi mistook the identity of the Crocifero in the guise of Liberius. No Fra Simon Rossi is ever mentioned in documents, however there was a Simon Rubens, another high-ranking Crocifero, and a Girolamo Rossi, Master General in 1598.

Paul IV⁶⁷, an event that affirmed the reformed status of the Venetian monastery, speaks to the centrality of these individuals in the spiritual and physical *renovatio*. Both committed to print their passion for the ancient history, modern reform and the ongoing legitimacy of the order. Leoni articulates the purpose of these documents in his 1591 Memoriale per la regolare osservanza della congregazione de' Crociferi: “con l’opera delle stampe uscire tante copie in luce, che non vi sia alcuno di voi, nè vecchio, nè giovane, nè superiore, nè suddito, che non ne habbia un’ esempio, à forma di cui, quasi in lucido specchio possa ciascuno di noi riformare secondo l’occorrenza l’huomo interiore, & ridurlo à quella vera spirituale bellezza.”⁶⁸

The narrative cycle conceived by these same Crociferi served an identical function: to instruct and inspire present and future generations of Crociferi and widows. The Crociferi and the women depicted become timeless interlocutors, lending realism and legitimacy to the events depicted, providing exemplars from a familiar context for future spectators. The tender, even sentimental precision Palma devoted to the portraits reflects the unique nature of this private/civic/monastic project, and the special relationship he shared with his greatest patrons.

5.7 The Sacristy

The themes of history, reform and commemoration continued in the sacristy decoration, initiated in 1589. About a year before the two final paintings for the oratory were delivered in 1590-1—Palma’s Flagellation and Transport of the Body of Christ—

⁶⁷ ASPat, CSM, B. 7, n. 63. Paul IV intervened several times on their behalf, and ceded Santa Maria in Trivio to the Crociferi.

⁶⁸ *Memoriale*, 1591, 1v.

work on the sacristy ceiling had begun [Figs.84-85].⁶⁹ Its gilded wooden compartments made by Martino *marangon* were finished in 1590 and Palma's ceiling cycle was installed.⁷⁰ Evangelists and Doctors of the Church in *chiaroscuro* were arranged around two large rectangular panels depicting Elijah Fed by an Angel, David and Ahimelech and a centrally placed *tondo* of the Gathering of the Manna [Figs.86-88].⁷¹ A Raising of the Bronze Serpent was added in 1592 to hang "al capo della sagrestia", above a *banco* used to prepare for the mass [Fig.89].⁷² The remaining wall space was lined with a historical narrative cycle that hung above walnut benches: St. Helen Finding the True Cross [Fig.90], The Emperor Heraclius Returning the Cross to Jerusalem [Fig.91], The Foundation of the Crociferi by Cleto and Improvement by Ciriaco [Fig.92], and Pius II Reforming the Constitution and Alexander III Confirming the Rule of the Crociferi [Fig.93].⁷³ No mention of the history cycle or the altarpiece is made in Balbi's account books, meaning they could have been completed any time after about 1596-97. Rinaldi dates the narrative cycle to 1620-25 based on stylistic evidence, and the inclusion of a self-portrait of an older Palma in the Heraclius painting.⁷⁴ The sacristy altarpiece, a Virgin and Child in Glory with St. Lucy, St. Catherine, St. Anthony Abbot and St. Cleto

⁶⁹ The Transport was installed in December 1590, the last payment for the Flagellation was made in August 1592. The sacristy ceiling was commissioned in May 1589, was affixed in February 1589, the last payment was made in August 1598.

⁷⁰ The present compartments are 18th century; the sacristy was enlarged in the rebuild, which would have required a redistribution of the ceiling arrangement.

⁷¹ Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 126, cats. 412-422.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 126, cat. 423.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 126, cats. 424-431.

⁷⁴ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 182. "...nell'ultima èta sua espresse, sopra ai banchi, in quattro quadri" of "molto minor perfezione delle opere dette." Palma has depicted himself above the two children carrying a sword and helmet.

also dates to this period [Fig.94].⁷⁵ They are less accomplished and inventive than Palma's earlier work for the Crociferi, perhaps reflective of the artist's decline, however a few other factors corroborate the date. Few of the monastic portraits in the sacristy narrative cycle match those shown in the oratory cycle, suggesting the turnover that would have occurred in the hierarchy over a number of decades. Further, in 1599 Benedetto Leoni published his Crociferi history, a tool undoubtedly used in formulating the cycle, and probably the impetus for the creation of a pictorial historical narrative. The events selected stress the centrality of devotion to the cross and to its foundation saints, Cleto, Ciriaco and Helen. Observance of their feasts was amongst seven points emphasised by Leoni in his 1591 Memoriale, and depictions of these saints bracketed the narrative scenes in the corners of the sacristy, anchoring the history literally and figuratively as pillars of the order [Figs.95-98]. As in the oratory, the advocacy of illustrious individuals is emphasised, with new emphasis on popes. The Crociferi may well have chosen to make a statement about their position on papal authority, something that was called into question by the Protestant challenge.

Attention shifted next to the nave. By September 1590 at the latest, the Crociferi knew Cicogna planned to be buried at the church. According to his Ceremoniale and the oratory painting depicting his visit, the church had been added to the itinerary of ducal processions. The clerical vestments with Cicogna arms in their possession in 1656 also suggest that special fuss was made when the doge visited. These circumstances may have provided an impetus for the renovation of the choir, organ, and several side altars. The 1581 apostolic visit was also a catalyst for structural and decorative changes in many

⁷⁵ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 182; Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 127, cat. 433. Ridolfi noted it was "molto lodata per la delicatezza."

churches, although Venetians viewed the visit as an imposition and were in no rush to carry out the suggestions made by the pope's representatives.⁷⁶ At a distance of a decade, some of the changes may have seemed necessary to remain in line with liturgical and doctrinal orthodoxy. The *commenda* years not yet a distant memory, the Crociferi must still have been aware of keeping up appearances.

5.8 The Organ

By the early 1590's the choir and organ would have been a century old and in need of updating. A vote taken by the *capitolo* in April 1594 names Balbi the "perfettuar l'opera del coro", which had already begun in March with work on the *banchi* and "cassa del organo."⁷⁷ Martino *marangon*, who worked on all previous projects, was enlisted to "desfar et far di novo il choro, tutto di noghera, et il pavimento di larese (larch)" and Palma was once again hired to provide the decoration.⁷⁸

Between April and June of 1594 Martino affixed "il quadro del mezzo d'organo di sotto in su", three other paintings on the front of the organ, and two angels beneath the organ loft. The purchase of twenty pieces of "legne longhe" to be sent to Palma for the organ paintings suggests that these lost works were on panel. Payments to transport the works from Palma's studio to the church indicate that they were *in situ* by June 1594.⁷⁹

The painting described in Balbi's account book as *di sotto in sù* was probably the one Stringa and Martinioni described as "una delle Visioni d'Ezechiele." The *di sotto in*

⁷⁶ Tramontin, 1967, 453-533, and S. Mason-Rinaldi, "Immagini della devozione eucaristica in Venezia alla fine del Cinquecento" in *Venezia e la Roma dei papi* (Milan, 1987), 171.

⁷⁷ ASV, ZC, *Libro*, c. 131-134.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, c. 45.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, cc. 27-29.

su treatment suggests an ascension, perhaps something akin to Raphael's Vision of Ezekiel (Palazzo Pitti, 1518) [Fig.99], or perhaps a representation of the vision in which Ezekiel was carried to a valley of bones that became alive once more. Among the prophet's multiple visions, a few seem more probable on formal and iconographic grounds. The latter, in its allusions to the Resurrection, would have complemented the Christological scenes on the front of the organ, and the Passion subjects planned for the choir. We must also consider the location of the decoration above the altar of the Conception. Ezekiel's vision of the closed gate (Ezekiel 44:2-3), or that of a human likeness on the sapphire throne (Ezekiel 1:26)—both prophecies of the Immaculate Virgin and the Incarnation of Christ—would have been appropriate in this context.

The other three organ paintings mentioned in the expense book refer to the Madonna Adored by Angels, flanked by the Banishment of Merchants from the Temple and Entry into Jerusalem (all lost) described by Stringa and Martinioni as above the sacristy door. Since this is where the organ loft was suspended, we can assume that these three paintings were positioned on the front of the *cassa*.⁸⁰ In January 1595 Palma was paid an instalment, as was Giacomo Rizzardini for his contributions “per adornar l'organo.” This included “pitture in chiaroscuro” and gilding of the organ, “come sedie.”⁸¹ The identity of Rizzardini remains unknown, however in later entries Balbi refers to him as “pictor.” He was probably a minor independent, or perhaps even a member of the Palma shop to whom the less arduous task of monochromatic work was delegated. These *chiaroscuro* may be connected to the “diverse historiette della scrittura”

⁸⁰ Stringa, 1604, 148; Ridolfi, 1648, II, 182; Martinioni, 1663, 168; Boschini, 1664, 419-24; P. Pacifico, *Cronica veneta* (Venice, 1697), 34; Zanetti, 1733, 385.

⁸¹ ASV, ZC, *Libro*, c. 47.

recorded on the inside of the organ loft. I suspect that the two angels with trumpets that now flank the Palma altarpiece in the sacristy were at one time on the organ, as they do not, in dimensions or subject matter, correspond to the *sacra conversazione* [Fig.100].⁸² They may even be the two unidentified *quadri* by Palma installed beneath the organ as the finishing touches were applied in October 1595.⁸³

The organ case, with its carved and gilded ornamentation, elaborated on the front and underside with painted narratives, would not have been unlike those still *in situ* at the church of the Carmini, decorated by Andrea Schiavone and Marco Vicentino a few decades before, or that of Santa Maria del Giglio, built in 1548, but decorated over the course of the next century with shutters by Tintoretto and small narrative panels by Zanchi.⁸⁴ We must take Martinelli's word for the fact that the shutters were of a "maniera antichissima."⁸⁵ The *portelle* may have dated to the period in which the instrument itself was built (late 15th century), and thus may have even been the work of Cima or Mansueti, who had done so much else for the church. The 1656 inventory lists "due quadri lunghi, uno dell'Annuntziata, l'atro dell'Angolo Gabriel sopra tella" in the chapel of the silk-weavers.⁸⁶ It is not impossible that these two paintings were actually the organ shutters, removed from the instrument and placed at some point in the nearby

⁸² Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, cat. 434/435, 127. (1.40cm x 46cm)

⁸³ ASV, ZC, *Libro*, c. 63. Marin mounted two wooden *spintelli* (small angels, presumably carved) and four gilded *cantinelle* (narrow partitions, often carved and/or gilded) that presumably divided the two unidentified works from the central Vision of Ezekiel.

⁸⁴ C. Moretti, *L'organo italiano* (Cuneo, 1997), 74. The organ gallery of San Benedetto was also decorated with shutters, three pictures for the front of the gallery, and two sibyls in *chiaroscuro* beneath it, all by Tintoretto (lost). B. Paul, "Jacopo Tintoretto and the Church of San Benedetto in Venice" *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 49 (2005), 384-90.

⁸⁵ Martinelli, 1684, 222.

⁸⁶ ASV, AP, c. 124v.

chapel. The Annunciation was the most popular subject for organ shutters in Venice, and the Angel Gabriel was often depicted on one shutter, facing the Virgin on the other, as in the Giovanni Bellini Miracoli shutters (Accademia, Venice).⁸⁷

5.9 The Choir

As the organ renovation drew to a close in the spring of 1595, work on the choir had been underway for about a year. It is clear from the expenses that the choir was not rebuilt, but rather refurbished with new decoration and seating for the *frati*, perhaps necessitated by changing practices in the liturgical music performed by the brothers. The building of new walnut *banchi* for the choir was initiated in April 1594, and throughout June and July, Priamo bought *tavole di noghera* from the “botteghe à s. zuane paulo.”⁸⁸ Balbi made contemporaneous payments for *terlise* (a coarse fabric often used as a support for painting, but also for monastic habits⁸⁹) to be sent to Palma for three paintings, presumably those recorded on the face of the choir: Road to Calvary, Crucifixion/Resurrection and Descent into Limbo.⁹⁰ Work on the foundation and pavement of the choir in July and August 1594 was registered with payments made for substantial amounts of larch and fir, less expensive woods more appropriate to such a function.⁹¹ A new “pilella d’acqua santa” of marble or stone, was commissioned from “Nicolo tagliapiedo”, and was later gilded and placed at the choir door.⁹² In October and November 1594 Priamo paid for the production and installation of several “colone del

⁸⁷ Paul, 2005, 385.

⁸⁸ ASV, ZC, *Libro*, cc. 28-29.

⁸⁹ Paul, 2005, 401.

⁹⁰ ASV, ZC, *Libro*, c. 29.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, cc. 31, 33-34.

⁹² *Ibid.*, cc. 33, 35. It was not uncommon for there to be doors in the choir precinct, sometimes placed centrally, or to one side.

marmoro” for beneath the choir and the altars it sheltered, and an *inginochiar* to face the altar.⁹³ The bulk of the work on the structure must have been complete by this time, as remaining payments were for minor hardware, turquoise curtains for the frame, and for gilding of the “banchi dei giovani e garzoni”, “banchetto delli putti”, and the “puzar”, or back support of the *sacerdoti*.⁹⁴ These entries demonstrate that the seating in the choir was specifically designed and arranged for various groups within the monastic hierarchy. Given what we know about the performance of polyphonic music at the church, this practice of division may have been related to the way music was performed.⁹⁵

The expenses for November 1594-April 1595 give us some idea of the decorative arrangement. The first of the three paintings for the face of the choir was mounted in April 1595. A payment for *azzurro* for “l’ultimo quadro messo da dretto il choro” was made in November, the month in which the painting was delivered, along with “li doi profesi et le 4 cantinelle indorati”, suggesting it was flanked by two prophets with gilded panels separating the paintings.⁹⁶ Eventually there is mention of both prophets *and* sibyls on the choir, which explains payments made to Rizzardini in November of 1594 for “chiaro è scuro per le parti del choro verso al porta della chiesa come verso l’altra.”⁹⁷ While Palma was paid for two prophets, no payment to him was ever recorded for the sibyls on the choir referred to in October of 1595, when Marin *marangon* was engaged to

⁹³ *Ibid.*, c. 37.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, cc. 37-39.

⁹⁵ Moretti, 2004, 155-7. It should be noted that there is no evidence that *psalmi spezzati* were accompanied by organ music, and therefore proximity to the organ would not have been so important, however other sorts of music performed may have benefited from visibility between the lofts.

⁹⁶ ASV, ZC, *Libro*, cc. 58, 60, 61, 73-5 and 44, 51.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, cc. 39, 43.

produce four angels to be placed above the “profetti e sibille.”⁹⁸ The sibyls may therefore have been the work of Rizzardini, and may be the *chiaroscuro* sibyls Boschini recorded in the refectory in 1664.

In Ridolfi’s account of the works *in situ*, the reader is instructed to raise their gaze to the face of the choir to find the three “sacre istorie”, suggesting that they were hung above the viewer’s head. His descriptions are the most detailed we have of these works, lost sometime after Boschini recorded them in the refectory in 1664.⁹⁹ The first was the Road to Calvary, in which Ridolfi says Christ was accompanied by “molti ministri”, possibly another opportunity for monastic portraiture. Ridolfi noted the Virgin, who fell into the arms of the three Marys, and Veronica who gives over the veil. In the middle position was the “Redentore crocefisso” with “molte figure applicate in diversi ufficii, e corpi di morti risorgenti dai sepolcri.” This description points toward a merging of the iconography of a Crucifixion and Resurrection, and calls to mind the sort of multiplicity of detail found in Tintoretto’s important precedent at the Scuole Grande di San Rocco. Mason-Rinaldi has astutely pointed out a possible connection between the lost Crociferi Crucifixion and a painting of unknown provenance in the Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna [Fig.101]. It fits Ridolfi’s description in its inclusion of bodies emerging from the ground into the scene of the Crucifixion¹⁰⁰, however Palma frequently repeated pictorial devices in his paintings. While the size of the Bologna picture (214cm x 393cm) does not negate the possibility that this is the painting in question, neither does it strengthen the argument for it. If we assume that the other two choir paintings were of analogous size,

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, c. 63.

⁹⁹ ASV, AP, c. 125r. They were on the choir in 1656: “tri Quadri grandi di mano di Palma.” Boschini, 1664, 426.

¹⁰⁰ Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 76, cat. 33.

or even slightly smaller, the width of the church (approximately 17m), could not have accommodated all three paintings and the prophets, sibyls and *cantinelle*.

The third painting depicted Christ the Redeemer drawing the holy fathers from Limbo, and, according to Ridolfi, the figure of Christ appeared to do so with such violence that he joked of it to Palma, who responded that it was no laughing matter because God could do such things if he wished.¹⁰¹ The painting must have been a rough approximation of Palma's celebrated work of the same subject for the oratory of San Niccolò della Lattuga of a few years before, which also included donor portraits [Fig.102].¹⁰² The choice of the Descent into Limbo as pendant to a Crucifixion or Resurrection was an increasingly popular combination during the last half of the century, as it drew attention to the threat of purgatory, the existence of which had come under scrutiny by Protestants.¹⁰³

This decorative programme at San Niccolò della Lattuga, executed for the most part by the Veronese shop, may provide us with some idea of which prophets and sibyls might have flanked the three Crociferi choir paintings. Analogous to the Crociferi choir in its iconography, the San Niccolò decoration also featured *chiaroscuro* sibyls and prophets to complement Passion subjects. Veronese painted the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, while Palma produced two sibyls (lost). The four sibyls most closely identified with the Passion were the Hellespontic, Delphic, Egyptian and Tiburtine sibyls.¹⁰⁴ Any

¹⁰¹ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 182.

¹⁰² Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 103, cat. 224. Christ in Limbo, Belluno (deposited at the Accademia), 1589.

¹⁰³ Hills, 1983, 36.

¹⁰⁴ Cope, 1979, 171; Réau, vol. II, pt. II, 427. This association derives from the prophecies of the Crucifixion, Crowning with Thorns, Flagellation and Derision of Christ respectively.

of these prophets or sibyls would have sufficed as complements to the choir paintings. Isaiah would have been particularly suited to flank the Road to Calvary and Crucifixion: “Thus the lamb is led to the slaughter” (Isaiah 53:7), while two other prophets, Moses and Elijah, might have been better suited to the Crucifixion and Limbo paintings, as they were both assumed by God and were seen in conversation with Jesus during the Transfiguration, discussing the imminent Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension.

5.10 Side Altars

What remained to be refurbished were several side altars, a few of which will be revisited in following chapters. I will touch briefly on them here for the purposes of the argument for monastic influence over art patronage. Palma was enlisted at some point to replace Cima’s furrier’s guild altarpiece with an updated *pala* depicting the Decollation of the Baptist [Fig.103]. The apostolic visitors had made few recommendations for change in 1581, but among them was the suggestion to move the altar of Lanfranc from its location near the sacristy.¹⁰⁵ The renovation of the choir probably presented the ideal moment to relocate it to the opposite side of the church between the choir and the altar of St. Lawrence. The dedication of the altar also shifted to St. John the Baptist, something that is only partially explained by the devotional interests of the guild, and must also be considered in the context of what Mason-Rinaldi recognized as an “*infusione ornata dall’immagine del Battista, per timore di eventuali aspirazioni anabattiste.*”¹⁰⁶ The *varoteri* were dedicated to the Visitation, thus the rededication to John the Baptist must have been chosen by the *Crociferi*, and it is hard to imagine that they were not also responsible for the suggestion of the dramatic scene of the saint’s martyrdom. By the end

¹⁰⁵ ASVat, VA, 96.

¹⁰⁶ Mason-Rinaldi, 1987, 171.

of the century all three of the altars on the right side of the nave would be decorated with graphic martyrdoms. I would suggest an earlier date for the Palma altarpiece (c. 1593-1595) on the grounds that decoration shifted with the altar during the work on the choir in 1594-5.¹⁰⁷ The work is stylistically compatible with this stage in Palma's career, and an earlier date would also explain why several of the monastic portraits included in the altarpiece—those of Cirno and the bearded man over the shoulder of the executioner—match those in the decoration of the oratory from around 1596-7.¹⁰⁸ The inclusion of these portraits may be indicative of the involvement of these *frati* in the solicitation and/or concept for the altarpiece. The reader will recall that the *varoteri* were responsible for the provision of one the chancel *lateralis*. The *botteri*, who furnished the pendant, may also to have been drawn into the second phase of redecoration. A lost image by Palma of the Feast of Passover flanked by two prophets in *chiaroscuro* was recorded on the side of the choir facing the upper nave before 1684 when Martinelli noted its removal to the nearby *botteri albergo*.¹⁰⁹ Balbi's payments to Rizzardini for *chiaroscuri* for the choir refer to decoration for "le parti del choro verso al porta della chiesa *come verso l'altra*." This suggests that both sides of the choir were similarly decorated, thus Balbi was probably referring to the image by Palma, to which Rizzardini contributed flanking prophets. Perhaps more important than the logistics of authorship and dating this

¹⁰⁷ Zava Boccazzi, 1965, 297; Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 127, cat. 432.

¹⁰⁸ Cirno is last recorded in 1587, although he may well have lived on into the 1590's. Since he was recorded at Venice in 1530, he would have been as elderly as the portrait suggests.

¹⁰⁹ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 182; ASV, AP, 125r; Martinioni, 1663, 169, Martinelli, 1684, 224. The 1656 inventory: "Dall'altra parti del Choro verso l'Altar maggiore...Una Pittura dell'Angel Pasqual di mano dil Palma." Martinelli: "Qui ancora si conserva un quadro del Palma, che fù levato dalla Chiesa, quando li Padre Giesuiti disfecere il Choro che attraversana detta Chiesa, e vi si vedonno gl'Hebrei con l'Angel Pascale, e due Profetti."

clarifies¹¹⁰, is the indication that the *botteri* were responsible for the commission. The paintings cannot have ended up in their possession without claim to ownership. They had no altar of their own, however in 1550 they arranged an accord with prior Cirno and Confalonieri to purchase two *arche* for membership burial “d’avanti il Coro”¹¹¹, which may explain the location of the image. Through its reference to Christ as the paschal lamb, the subject of the Passover is linked to the guild’s dedication to the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, an event that also foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ. As such, the image satisfied the guild’s devotional interests and conformed to the Eucharistic theme of the choir decoration.

At some point during the final decade of the century, the *Crociferi* added two new altars to the immediate left and right of the entrance to the church. The altar to the left was dedicated to St. Catherine and the altar to the right was dedicated to the Guardian Angel, which Ridolfi claimed was erected by Patriarch Giovanni Tiepolo [Fig.104]. They were probably additions of the early seventeenth century, considering Tiepolo became patriarch in 1617, although Antonio Vassilacchi, called “Aliense” (1556-1629), who decorated the altar of St. Catherine was active in the city as early as 1584.¹¹² His pupil Ridolfi provided a brief description of the Martyrdom of St. Catherine (lost)¹¹³: “Nei Padri *Crociferi* dipinse santa Caterina al martirio della ruota; ma egli non potè divisar quell’azione a voglia sua, per alcuni ritratti, che vi fece a petizione del padrone, e

¹¹⁰ Stringa’s omission of the painting is the main evidence for a post-1603 date. Balbi’s payment suggests the opposite side of the choir was already decorated in 1594.

¹¹¹ BMC, *Mariegola* 116, c. 82r-83v and ASV, *Atti Benzon*, B.364/365, 427r.

¹¹² H. K. Makrykostas, *Antonio Vassilacchi Aliense* (Athens, 2008), 55. He registered with the guild of painters in 1584.

¹¹³ Last recorded by Martinelli (1684, 223). It was on the altar in the 1656 inventory (ASV, AP, c. 123v): “Una Pala di Santa di mano incognita bella.”

perche gli convenne ancora variar la figura della santa a soddisfazione di Padri.” The use of the generic “padrone” leaves us wanting with regard to the identity of the patron of this work. The 1656 inventory does not specify patronage rights to the altar, as it does in every other case, suggesting that the Crociferi alone were responsible for the altar. Catherine, a hugely revered martyr saint; in Venice she was unofficially considered a patron saint of the Republic, probably because of her ties, and theirs, to the East. She was associated with charity, care for the sick and contemplation, and by the 1581 count of altar dedications by the apostolic visitors, she ranked sixth with 22 altars.¹¹⁴ In light of the earlier discussion of the potential influence of Aretino’s religious writings, it is worthy of note that the author also penned an extremely popular life of St. Catherine in 1538 that included an astonishingly graphic 147-page description of the saint’s martyrdom that could easily have provided fodder for the painting. The witness or spectator to the saint’s demise plays an important role in Aretino’s narrative, providing a variety of reactions, something Aliense may have translated in visual terms using the portraits the Crociferi insisted upon. Ridolfi’s assertion that Aliense was forced to depart from his vision to accommodate the *frati* conforms to what has been established regarding their obvious preference for the inclusion of monastic portraits and once again suggests their discerning taste as experienced patrons.

5.11 The Eucharist, Martyrdoms and Mary: A Post-Tridentine Decorative Programme

¹¹⁴ Humfrey, 1993, 64-5. She was also depicted in the *sacra conversazione* in the Crociferi sacristy.

As Schulz stressed in his study of Venetian ceiling painting, it is important not to “categorize the parts of larger decorative systems as if they were independent works of art.”¹¹⁵ The most interesting finding to emerge out of what began as a largely reconstructive project has been the clear indication of a carefully coordinated decorative system. This system connects the decoration that took place over the course of the cinquecento, not only in the church, but also the oratory, which has generally been interpreted in isolation from the church on which it was dependent. A physical reconstruction of the church has facilitated a collective interpretation of these works.

If the global picture is considered, the decoration of the church by about 1610 addressed three themes: saintly martyrdom, the centrality of the Eucharist, and the singularity of the Virgin Mary. A viewer entering the church would have passed the three scenes of martyrdom on the altars lining the right side of the nave: the Aliense St. Catherine, followed by the dark and fiery demise of Titian’s St. Lawrence, then Palma’s bloody, yet contemplative Decollation of John the Baptist. Humfrey, Cocke and Meilman have done much to clarify the development and function of images of martyrdom in relation to the decrees of the Council of Trent and Counter-Reformation belief regarding saintly intercession and sacrifice.¹¹⁶ The Council of Trent made its only remarks on the use of visual art in its final decrees in December of 1563, reiterating Gregory the Great’s notion that “images are the books of the ignorant”, adding that through paintings and other representations “people are instructed and confirmed in the

¹¹⁵ Schulz, 1968, 38-9.

¹¹⁶ Humfrey, 1996, 371-89; R. Cocke, “Exemplary lives: Veronese’s representations of martyrdom and the Council of Trent” *Renaissance Studies* 10 (1996), 388-404; P. Meilman, *Titian and the Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (Cambridge, 2000).

articles of the faith.”¹¹⁷ Titian’s Death of St. Peter Martyr of 1527 represented a major shift in the development of the narrative altarpiece tied to an increasing demand for more dramatic and psychologically engaging depictions of saints that would elicit strong emotion in the viewer, provide them with exemplars, and communicate the parallel between Christ’s Passion (as enacted in the mass on the altar below) and the self-sacrifice of the martyr. The viewer would have understood the connection between the bodily death of the saint and that of Christ, and between their sacrifice and the reward of resurrection, something they too could achieve through participation in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Having progressed past these three altarpieces in the Crociferi nave, the viewer’s gaze would have been pulled up toward the *tramezzo* decoration. Its message of Christ’s suffering (Road to Calvary), sacrifice (Crucifixion) and ultimately the promise of new life (Descent into Limbo) would have reinforced these same ideas. Even if the partition of the choir prevented a complete view of the sanctuary and its own exuberant decoration—a concern that saw the removal of choirs down the peninsula—what was occurring in the chancel and its centrality to the faith was referenced for the laity through the side altarpieces and choir decoration. This decoration would have provided moving visual complement to the preaching that we know took place in the church, another means by which the populace was educated in the central tenets of the faith.¹¹⁸ Therefore, we can envision how movement through the nave of the church, from entry to chancel, was intended to instruct the viewer in the central Counter-Reformation ideologies.

¹¹⁷ H. J. Schroeder, *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, (London, 1941), 216.

¹¹⁸ Cocke, 1996, 393-5.

5.12 The Eucharist

This could also be said of spaces that were not open to the laity, such as the oratory, sacristy and refectory, where the decoration placed especially strong emphasis on sacramental themes. Cope and Hills have highlighted the importance of Eucharistic devotion in Venice and the emergence of the Scuole della Santissimo Sacramento at almost every parish church in the city.¹¹⁹ Concern for the proper preservation of the sacrament increased in 1543 when the reformer Matteo Giberti, bishop of Verona, set a precedent for its exclusive reservation on the high altar. By 1581 it was a top priority for the apostolic visitors, who made note of how the Host was kept in each church.¹²⁰ The first page of Leoni's guide to the revised Crociferi constitution stresses that proper care for the sacrament was among the seven principal responsibilities of their monasteries.¹²¹ At parish churches lay confraternities tended to the sacrament and its altar, a role that often included commissioning works of art. Rinaldi correctly identifies Palma as the heir to the tradition previously dominated by Tintoretto, becoming an innovator of Eucharistic iconography in his own right, yet she does not discuss the sacramental themes that connect his projects at the Crociferi church.

Sacramental programmes of Passion subjects and typologies from the Old and New Testament became a popular means of emphasizing central dogmas, particularly those on which Protestantism had cast doubt, such as Transubstantiation, the actual

¹¹⁹ Cope, 1979; Hills, 1983, 30-43.

¹²⁰ The tabernacle of Crociferi church was deemed "decens", was silver, and if Palma's depiction of it in the painting of Cicogna receiving word of his election is accurate, it was large, with architectural details and a painted *sportello*, not unlike those Palma painted for tabernacles at San Zaccaria, San Zulian, the Redentore and Umiltà. Mason-Rinaldi, 1987, 189-90.

¹²¹ *Memoriale*, 1591, 1v.

enactment of the Passion in the mass, and communion under one species (the bread).¹²² Subjects once preferred for their narrative quality, such as the Last Supper and the Crucifixion, increasingly gave way to subjects that better conveyed the miraculous and mysterious nature of the Passion and the Eucharist.

The Crociferi adhered to these themes in the selection of subjects in the oratory, sacristy and on the choir, particularly after about 1590, when a concerted effort to incorporate Eucharistic imagery was initiated. The final additions to the decoration of the oratory, the Flagellation and the Transport of the Body of Christ [Figs.84-85], emphasised the suffering of Christ. The latter in particular evoked the suffering of the Virgin and Christ's followers in the wake of his bodily death, and in this respect was akin to the popular subjects of the *Pietà* or *Ecce Homo*, both meant to arouse empathetic emotion from the spectator. In the post-Tridentine Catholic tradition, the Virgin's participation in the Passion, above all after the death of her son, made her suffering implicit in the Eucharist.¹²³ According to Ridolfi, her role was also emphasised on the choir in the Road to Calvary and Crucifixion, and according to the 1656 inventory of the church, the Zen chapel of the Cross was decorated with a wooden *Pietà*.¹²⁴

The sacristy ceiling presented an opportunity to create another sacramental cycle, one that focused on Old Testament typologies of the consecration, adoration, distribution and salvation through the bread of the Eucharist. The Protestant belief that the faithful had to receive communion under *both* species or kinds—both the bread and wine—was

¹²² Cope, 1979, 79, 228. The 22nd session at Trent established that the mass was an actual re-enactment of the Passion. For example, the raising of the Cross occurred when the Host was elevated.

¹²³ Cope, 1979, 53.

¹²⁴ ASV, AP, c. 123r.

related to their denial of the Real Presence of Christ in the mass, and their opposition to Catholic practice of offering only the bread to the laity during communion. The legitimacy of this practice was reaffirmed at the Council of Trent, resulting in a proliferation of New and Old Testament imagery that related to the centrality of bread, its miraculous provision and consumption. This explains the subjects chosen for the sacristy ceiling, and the inclusion of the Feast of Passover on the choir.¹²⁵ It is worth reminding the reader that the Crociferi had already furnished their refectory with a painting of the relatively unusual subject of the Wedding at Cana, to which they eventually added the image of Belshazzar Profaning the Sacred Vessels by Fialetti. Perhaps by 1590 the Crociferi felt that the species of wine had been sufficiently celebrated in existing decoration, and moved on to celebrate the bread.

Palma was no stranger to sacramental programmes; he was responsible for, or contributed to Eucharistic cycles at San Niccolò della Lattuga, San Moisè, San Bartolomeo, and most notably, San Giacomo dell’Orio.¹²⁶ This church contained three spaces devoted to the Eucharist to which Palma contributed sacramental decoration, including a cycle in the sacristy (1580-1) that closely resembled and may have inspired the Crociferi ceiling.¹²⁷ The central subject on the ceiling, the Gathering of the Manna

¹²⁵ Cope, 1979, 225, 228. The adoration and consumption of the paschal lamb—a type for the sacrifice of Christ, and therefore the Eucharist—made it an ideal typology to include in Passion cycles, as well as those that focused on the divine presence the consecrated bread. In the San Giacomo dell’Orio version Palma shifted the traditional focus on the lamb to the bread by omitting the meat altogether, something he may also have done in the lost Crociferi Passover.

¹²⁶ Cope, 1979, 125, 181, 244.

¹²⁷ Schulz, 1968, 65; Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 121-2, cats. 381-7. The decoration at San Giacomo was initiated by the parish priest, Giovanni Maria da Ponte. There was an altar dedicated to the Eucharist and a chapel of the sacrament. The sacristy of San Giacomo

[Fig.88], was a typology for the Real Presence of Christ in the mass and was favoured by the Council of Trent because Christ made explicit reference to it: “I am the bread of life your fathers did eat manna in the desert: and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven: if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of the bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world” (John 6:48-52). It communicated the miraculous nature of the bread and the importance of its reception as a means to salvation.¹²⁸ The flanking scenes of Elijah Fed by the Angel and David and Ahimelech [Figs.86-87] complement the central image by referencing the miraculous provision of bread, and the reception of the spiritual nourishment of the sacrament.¹²⁹ Palma has enriched this message through his arrangement of both compositions. Elijah leans back as if having a vision, while the angel descends from above. The more unusual subject of David Receiving the Consecrated Bread from Ahimelech appeared more frequently in cycles during the late sixteenth century because of its emphasis on the role of the priest in the distribution of the sacrament.¹³⁰ Palma has emphasised this in this image by placing Abimilech at the top of a flight of stairs. David kneels in adoration as he mounts the stairs to accept the only nourishment the priest had to offer: the holy bread. In this position David echoes the posture of a typical participant who would approach the altar to receive communion, and therefore salvation from a Crocifero. While vessels are included

had the Raising of the Bronze Serpent, Elijah and the Angel, the Gathering of the Manna and the four Evangelists in common with the Crociferi sacristy.

¹²⁸ Cope, 1979, 193.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 213. These scenes appeared together in other sacramental programmes, for example in Palma’s decoration in the sacristy of San Giacomo and Giuseppe Porta Salviati’s ceiling decoration for the refectory of Santo Spirito in Isola.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 223.

in both the David and Elijah paintings—presumably in reference to the wine—they are peripheral in comparison to the centrally placed bread. The Doctors of the Church and Evangelists in the surrounding compartments functioned as witnesses to the typological narratives that they were responsible for interpreting.

The Raising of the Bronze Serpent [Fig.89] brought a fitting conclusion to the cycle. This was among the most common Old Testament subjects during this period because Christ made an analogy between the event and his Crucifixion to assert his presence in the Host through its elevation during mass: “And Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up” (John 3:14). In the context of a Eucharistic cycle, this painting demonstrated the curative reward of participation in the mass, and the risks of rejection of the sacrament.¹³¹ The significance of this typology was explained in some of the most influential theological treatises of the time, such as Roberto Bellarmino’s Controversia Generalis of 1588 and the Speculum Humanae Salvationis, both of which were in the Crociferi library.¹³² Palma emphasises the analogy between the bronze serpent and the cross by twining the snake around a cross-like staff. The inclusion of monastic portraits—one of which is Priamo Balbi—references the priestly role in the delivery of the sacrament [Fig.105].

This image assumes a connective role in linking the imagery on the ceiling to the cycle on the walls. The cross connects the two projects, which contrary to the assertion of Rinaldi, were in fact related conceptually, just not chronologically. The centrality of the True Cross to Crociferi devotion, embedded in their foundation story, is one of the predominant themes of the historical cycle. The Crociferi may have felt their connection

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 256, 290.

¹³² Barzazi, 1995, 187-191. On Bellarmino: Cope, 1979, 177.

to the primary instrument of Christ's Passion warranted extraordinary devotion to the Eucharist. The insertion of monastic portraits into both the ceiling and historical cycles communicates a great deal about the audience. While the sacramental subjects on the choir were typical of those selected to inform and inspire the laity, those chosen for the sacristy were far more complicated, cerebral and rich in their iconographic correlations. This was appropriate considering the highly intellectual monastic spectators the paintings addressed, many theologians themselves. In the context of the space in which the vestments and implements of the mass were kept, in which the Crociferi met and prepared to go into the sanctuary, the ceiling served as reminder of their role in delivering the sacrament, and ultimately salvation, to *all* people. If we cast our minds back to the oratory decoration, we find Priamo Balbi in the act of doing just that; administering the Host to Pasquale Cicogna¹³³, the single most important individual in the Republic, but also to his poor widow charges [Fig.77]. The wall narratives also provided touchstones for the ancient and noble status of their order and its struggle to reform, a process that Leoni's Memoriale insisted each Crocifero had to play a part.

5.13 Summary

This chapter has demonstrated that in the final decades of the century, a second group of proactive Crociferi picked up where the last generation had left off, consciously coordinating visual expressions of their worth, their reformed status, and adhesion to Counter-Reformation doctrine. The church became a true Renaissance shrine; to the astonishing collection of works from the earlier part of the century, they added the

¹³³ The Eucharist was central to the personal piety of Cicogna. The miracle of the Host he experienced on Corfu led to his fervent devotion to the Eucharist, witnessed by the depiction of the Host in both of his votive paintings in the Palazzo Ducale. S. Sinding-Larsen, *Christ in the Council Hall* (Rome, 1974), 249-50.

singular collection of works by the artist to whom the mantle was passed. Perhaps nowhere do we see Palma il Giovane respond to the challenge more thoughtfully and skilfully than at the church of his faithful Crociferi supporters. The portraits of these *frati* and the artist himself within the surviving decoration in the Gesuiti serve as poignant reminders of what time has obscured [Fig.106].

Chapter VI

6.1 Corporate Patronage

In Venice members of like trades formed guilds that regulated aspects of their professional and devotional activities, while other confraternities attracted membership based on a common devotional interest. These *scuole piccole* were an important part of Venetian life. In a city ruled exclusively by the patrician class, these organisations empowered and pacified members of the lower class, providing them with agency at a local level. Their ceremonial processions enhanced public pageantry, something on which Venetians thrived, and their devotional activities promoted the image of Venice as exceptionally devout. The Crociferi church was host to some of the oldest, largest and wealthiest *scuole piccole*.¹ Throughout the sixteenth century, it was the locus of devotion for as many as seven *scuole* (excluding the short-lived presence of the mirror-makers and printers), and as such considerably outnumbered other churches traditionally considered major centres for guild devotion.² Should it have survived, the Crociferi church would have contained many of the most lavishly decorated guild altars and chapels in the city.

By the early sixteenth century, four *arti* and two devotional confraternities had altars or chapels at the church of the Crociferi [Fig.107]. That the Crociferi attracted the

¹ R. Mackenney, “The Guilds of Venice: State and Society in the Longue Durée” *SV* 34 (1997), 16; R. Mackenney, *Tradesmen and Traders. The World of the Guilds in Venice and Europe* (London, 1987), 16. Mackenney’s conclusions are based on Monticolo’s extensive study of the statutes registered with the Giustizia, as well as the surviving archives and *mariegole*. The guilds he lists as the oldest were all active at the church of the Crociferi. The tailors were active as early as 1219, the silk-weavers in 1265, the furriers in 1271, the barrel-makers in 1271.

² Mackenney, 1987, 7. For example, Santa Maria dell’Ascensione, Santa Maria Formosa and San Giacomo di Rialto.

support of a number of guilds that dealt in luxury goods must have been more than mere coincidence. While geographic proximity might provide a partial explanation, it cannot be considered the dominant factor. Although the parish of Santi Apostoli was the major centre for the textile industry to which the silk-weavers and tailors belonged, the furriers were almost exclusively based on the Rialto side of the island.³ Nor can it be accidental that between the dedication of the church and those of the *scuole* attached to it, the Crociferi formed a collection of each of the major feasts in the Republic's liturgical calendar. The church was dedicated to the Assumption, the silk-weavers were dedicated to St. Mark, the Annunciation, and the Nativity, the *botteri* to the Purification, the *varoteri* to the Visitation, and the Scuola della Concezione to the Immaculate Conception. The tailors were dedicated to St. Barbara, whose body was preserved in a chapel under their patronage, and who enjoyed special significance in Venice because her feast day had important civic connotations. On December 4th an annual lottery, the *Barbarella*, was held in which patrician youths over eighteen had the potential to win the privilege of taking their seat in the Maggior Consiglio at twenty, rather than twenty-five.⁴

Humfrey and Mackenney drew attention to the patronage of this segment of the population, which has suffered from considerable scholarly neglect, largely as a result of the unfortunate depletion of guild archives, which are quite late, fragmentary and disappointingly vague in their description of the objects they possessed. Another reason for an underestimation of their role as patrons is that the artistic contributions they made

³ D. Romano, *Patricians and Popolani* (Baltimore, 1987), 80-1, 108.

⁴ S. Chojnacki, "Political Adulthood in Fifteenth-Century Venice" *American Historical Review* 91 (1986), 791-810.

tended to be modest due to financial restrictions.⁵ Their wealthier counterparts, the *Scuole Grandi*, were able to commission opulent decorative projects, narrative cycles and ceilings. For the *scuole piccole*, the priority was to secure an altar at a church, then to furnish it with liturgical objects and an altarpiece. The *pala* was generally traditional, with little innovation until the later part of the century, because their finances often dictated they hire second or third rate artists.⁶ The establishment of a meetinghouse would be the next step, and in the cinquecento some *scuole piccole* were able to do so, although rarely were they able to decorate them in any substantial way. All of the confraternities active at the Crociferi church form exceptions to these general rules. They all had *alberghi* with altarpieces, some with ceiling and narrative paintings [Fig.108]. Two had chapels, all but one had a church altar, and with one exception, they commissioned at least one altarpiece, supporting decoration for their altars, and even the communal areas of the church. Among the surviving guild altarpieces listed by Humfrey and Mackenney, those once in the Crociferi church stand out in terms of quality, innovation and calibre of the artist. Given the pattern of astute, deliberate patronage at the church, it is difficult to view this extraordinary concentration as mere coincidence.

6.2 The Setaioli

Venice was among the most vibrant centres of silk production in all of Europe, along with Genoa, Bologna and Lucca, particularly after 1314, when political unrest drove Lucchese manufacturers and merchants to the lagoon.⁷ As a cosmopolitan city on trade routes to and from the East, Venice was the ideal place for such a luxury industry to

⁵ Humfrey and Mackenney, 1986, 318.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 322.

⁷ L. Molà, *The Silk Industry of Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore, 2000), xiv, 17.

thrive. There were three divisions within the trade: dyers, weavers and merchants. The weavers made the Crociferi church the centre of their devotional activities.⁸ Within the weavers there were the *veluderi* (velvet-makers), the *samiteri* (producers of plain cloth), the *tessitori di panni di seta*, and eventually the *passamaneri*, (producers of woven trimmings).⁹ To increase membership and finances, the *veluderi* and *samiteri* merged in 1347, and both celebrated mass at the Crociferi church. In 1488 they merged with the *tessitori di panni di seta*.¹⁰ By 1430 there were at least 400 weavers, 500 in 1493, and an astonishing 1200 in 1554.

If the new Crociferi church was initiated around 1490, the silk-weavers wasted no time in initiating the decoration of their chapel, *in cornu evangelii*. Boschini's 1664 account of its appearance remains the most detailed. He described the altarpiece as the Annunciation produced by Cima da Conegliano in 1495 (Hermitage, St. Petersburg) [Fig.109].¹¹ On the left wall of the chapel hung a narrative cycle, four scenes from the life of St. Mark by Cima, Lattanzio da Rimini and Giovanni Mansueti dating to c.1497-9, only two of which survive [Figs.110-111].¹² On the opposite wall was an Adoration of the Shepherds by Paolo Veronese [Fig.112]. The testimony of Stringa, Ridolfi and

⁸ Mackenney, 1987, 108.

⁹ B. Vanin and P. Eleuteri, *Le mariegole della biblioteca del Museo Correr* (Venice, 2007), 14, 35-7, 53. For the *mariegole* of the *veluderi*, *tessitori* and *passamaneri*: BMC, *Mariegola* 17, 48,49, 50. Comparatively speaking, there is a relatively handsome guild archive, however my research failed to uncover any record of art patronage.

¹⁰ Vio, 2004, 574; Molà, 2000, 162.

¹¹ (143 x 113cm) Stringa, 1604, 147. Stringa contended that the altarpiece was in the Zen chapel (*in cornu epistolae*), leading Menegazzi to conclude the same. It was otherwise always recorded in the opposite flanking chapel, suggesting Stringa was mistaken.

¹² Stringa, 1604, 147; Boschini, 1664, 421-2. Both Stringa and Boschini claim the lost work of Lattanzio da Rimini dated to 1499, possibly based on an inscription. The same date is inscribed on the Mansueti Arrest of St. Mark, along with the names of ten members charged with the task of overseeing the commission.

Martinioni confirms this configuration, with the addition of one further detail: Saints Mark and Sebastian in shell niches, also by Cima, on either side of the altarpiece (National Gallery, London, c. 1500) [Fig.113].¹³

Logic dictates that the altarpiece would have been prioritized as the first commission. The *samiteri* carried a dedication to the Annunciation to the merger of the branches of the trade, a devotion to which Humfrey has suggested the members of the guild, mostly Lucchese immigrants, adopted in order to align themselves with the devotional proclivities of the Republic.¹⁴ The same might be said of the *veluderi*, who selected the beloved patron of the Venetian Republic, St. Mark, and the depiction of this saint in the chapel was obviously related to this *colonnello*.¹⁵ The inclusion of St. Sebastian, to whom the guild had no official dedication, might better be understood in terms of his general popularity as a plague saint. The execution of the narrative cycle and flanking saints must have followed gradually as the guild could afford to commission them. They cannot have been unhappy with Cima's altarpiece; he provided the flanking saints (c.1500), and a Coronation with Saints and Prophets (Santi Giovanni e Paolo, c.1505-10) [Fig.114] by Cima (and shop) was recorded in their meetinghouse in the late

¹³ Ridolfi, 1648, I, 59; Martinioni, 1663, 169; J. Crowe and G.B. Cavalcaselle, *A history of painting in North Italy* (London, 1871), I, 241; R. Burckhardt, *Cima da Conegliano* (Leipzig, 1904), 31; P. Humfrey, *Cima da Conegliano* (Cambridge, 1983), 113-14, cat. 71. These paintings were not recorded in the 1656 inventory, and cannot be traced until they sold from the Venetian Schiavone collection to Charles Eastlake in 1854. Crowe and Cavalcaselle associated the pair with the descriptions of the silk-weavers' chapel, prompting a reconstruction of the ensemble by Burckhardt. Formal and dimensional differences between the altarpiece and the saints led subsequent authors to reject the notion that they belonged together. Humfrey correctly highlights the possibility that the incongruities may simply be due to the fact that the various parts were completed at different times, and were not conceived as a unified triptych.

¹⁴ Humfrey, 1983, 106-108, cat. 59.

¹⁵ Vio, 2004, 579.

eighteenth century.¹⁶ He was also the first to contribute to the cycle, a St. Mark Healing the Cobbler Anianus (Staatliche Museen, Berlin) [Fig.110].¹⁷ Following this painting would have been the St. Mark Preaching by Lattanzio da Rimini (lost), then Giovanni Mansueti's Arrest of St. Mark (Vaduz) [Fig.111]. The final scene, the subject of which was never specified, must have been a scene of his martyrdom, or even the theft and translation of his relics to Venice, to establish the guilds' proximity to the saint and its intercessory powers.¹⁸

Cima achieved a graceful and contemplative effect in his altarpiece, that at once betrays the influence of Giovanni Bellini, and of Netherlandish depictions of the Annunciation [Fig.109].¹⁹ The Virgin kneels in prayer within a domestic setting. The direction of her gaze and the gesture of her hand suggest that she has only just realized that she is not alone in the room. The angel Gabriel approaches, garments still fluttering from his entry. The setting, the shadow cast by Gabriel, and the fly resting on the *trompe l'oeil cartellino* encourage the viewer to meditate on the reality of incarnation, as if it was occurring in an extension of real space. The position of the Virgin makes her accessible to the viewer, however her purity is emphasised by her placement behind the *prie dieu*,

¹⁶ Humfrey, 1983, 159-60, cat. 156. It passed to the basilica with several other paintings belonging to the guild in the late eighteenth century. Humfrey suggests it has been cut down from its original form as a lunette, probably once positioned in the vault of a meetinghouse. If so, it would have been designed for the first *albergo* of the silk-weavers at the Crociferi monastery, not their headquarters at the Misericordia, occupied after 1612.

¹⁷ Boschini, 1664, 421-22; Humfrey, 1983, 82-4, cat. 14. It might have been produced slightly earlier than the others, given that Cima's was already working for the guild in 1495.

¹⁸ P. Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven, 1988), 286-7.

¹⁹ Cima clearly knew the Bellini Annunciation Miracoli organ shutters (Accademia, Venice, 1489).

and by her elevation high above the world seen through the window beyond. The Hebrew inscription on the canopy of the bed has been identified as a passage in the Old Testament (Isaiah 7:14) that prophesied the Virgin birth and was incorporated into the liturgy for the Feast of the Annunciation, which the guild would have celebrated annually.²⁰

Judging from the surviving narrative paintings by Cima and Mansueti, as well as a preparatory drawing for the lost work by Lattanzio²¹, an effort was made to unite the various parts of the cycle through the use of receding perspective, exotic architecture and the employment of an Eastern aesthetic, particularly in the dress of the participants [Fig.115].²² These motifs located the events in Alexandria where Mark spent his final days, while referencing elements of the everyday visual world of the Venetian guild members. Architecture in the lagoon city was heavily influenced by the eastern world, and as a cosmopolitan centre of trade, the streets were populated with people from all corners of the known world.²³ Inspiration for the variety of colours, textures, shapes and types was literally at their doorstep, and it is clear that buildings like San Marco and the newly constructed church of the Miracoli served as models for their marbled cityscapes. The rich jewel tones and intricate patterns employed in the paintings would have appealed to the patrons, with their particularly keen eye for luxury, and Cima has even

²⁰ Humfrey, 1983, 106. “Behold a Virgin shall conceive.”

²¹ D. Von Hadeln, *Venezianische Zeichnungen des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 1925), 63. Collection of the Duke of Devonshire, Chatsworth, n. 741.

²² Humfrey, 1983, 83-4. Notes fluidity between Cima’s composition and Lattanzio’s plan for the following scene, which would have formed a *piazza* with similar buildings behind.

²³ *Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797*, ed. S. Carboni (New Haven, 2007), 304-5, cats. 27 and 28.

made an effort to render one of the intricate damasks produced by the weavers in the robe of the turbaned figure behind Anianus.

The commission of this narrative cycle should be viewed as a rather remarkable response on the part of a guild to a genre that was still burgeoning, largely as a result of the more sophisticated patronage of the Scuole Grandi. Their choice to decorate their chapel in this way was to assert the affluence of their guild, recently enhanced through the merging of three *colonnelli*, perhaps even in emulation of the exclusive Scuole Grandi. In 1492 Gentile Bellini offered to produce a cycle of scenes of the life of St. Mark for the newly rebuilt *albergo* of the *scuola*. The reader will recall that at that moment Alvise Dardani would have been protector of the Crociferi and Guardian Grande at the Scuola di San Marco. Although delays postponed the actual execution of the cycle Bellini initiated (1504-c.1534), the idea would have been in the front of Dardani's mind in those first years after the completion of the Crociferi church. The cycles had subjects and Giovanni Mansueti in common. His Arrest of St. Mark at the Crociferi may have recommended him to Dardani and the Scuola Grande di San Marco *confratelli*. He produced four scenes before his death in 1526/7, which echoed the Crociferi precedent in their allusions to the Islamic world.²⁴ By modern standards artists like Mansueti, Cima and Lattanzio are considered second tier in comparison to the Bellini and Vivarini, but in reality these artists were highly sought after, often but not exclusively by more modest patrons. This should not lead us to discount the quality of their output, and indeed, the *setaioli* cycle demonstrates their ability to respond to artistic innovation.

²⁴ P. Humfrey, "The Bellinesque Life of St. Mark Cycle for the Scuola Grande di San Marco" *ZfK* 48 (1985), 225-42; Fortini Brown, 1988, 291-5.

Botteon connected the names inscribed on the *cartellino* to the left of the Virgin in the Cima Annunciation with the Lucchese guild members charged with overseeing the commission.²⁵ A similar inscription on Mansueti's Arrest of St. Mark confirms their involvement. The Lucchese community was based at an oratory at the Servite church, which they decorated with one of the earliest recorded narrative cycles.²⁶ Painted sometime after 1370 by Nicoletto Semitecolo, the lost cycle focused on the relic of the Volto Santo. As early participants in the genre of painted cycles, the immigrant Lucchese *confratelli* may have suggested the addition of the narrative scenes.²⁷

Around 1560 the silk-weavers further embellished their chapel with a Paolo Veronese Adoration of the Shepherds (Chapel of the Rosary, Santi Giovanni e Paolo) [Fig.112].²⁸ In the end, the Crociferi church would finally get its Veronese. As already noted, Veronese immediately garnered high profile private and civic commissions. That the guild would seek out a work by his hand once again speaks to their desire to participate in the latest trends, and a remarkable financial capacity to do so. This was a

²⁵ V. Botteon and A. Aliprandi, *Intorno alla vita e alle opere di Giovanni Battista Cima* (Conegliano, 1983); Humfrey, 1983, 106-8, cat. 59. "1495 / Laure ... de S. luc...da / uicco e. S. jac.º de S... / e S. jeronimo de ... / e S. piero de ... zudici //joan. baptista da / Conegliano fecit."

²⁶ Fortini Brown, 1988, 265.

²⁷ Sansovino, 1581, 58v-59r; Boschini, 1664, 467.

²⁸ Sansovino, 1581, 61r; Stringa, 1604, 147; Ridolfi, 1648, I, 306; Martinelli, 1684, 258; Zanetti, 1733, 384; Zanetti, 1771, 183-4; D. Von Hadeln, *Paolo Veronese* (Florence, 1911), 200; R. Marini in *L'opera completa del Veronese* (Milan, 1968), n. 117; W. R. Rearick, *Tiziano e il disegno veneziano del suo tempo* (Florence, 1976), 162; Pignatti, 1976, I, 131, cat 417; S. Sponza, "L'Adorazione dei pastori già nella chiesa dei Crociferi, ora dei Gesuiti" in *Per una monografia sulla basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo* (Venice, 1996), 130-132. Von Hadeln, Pignatti and Sponza assigned a date of around 1560, and Rearick suggested it predated 1555. Marini believed it dated to before 1565. The guild's patronage is marked by their monogram on the base of the broken column at the bottom left corner. The cool palette has much in common with other works of around 1560, for example the Virgin and Child Appearing to St. Anthony Abbot and St. Paul (Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, 1562).

painting of exceptional quality that continued to attract attention well into the next century when it was engraved by Jacob Matham in 1621 and Giacomo Barri in 1667 [Figs.116-117].²⁹ Because the subject would not have conformed to the dedication of the chapel to the Annunciation, it was obviously conceived as a lateral painting. According to Boschini, the work hung on the right wall in 1664. Its relocation a decade later to the opposite wall scandalized the author, who claimed it had disturbed the effect of the lighting, which was plainly designed to enter from the left.³⁰ The choice of the subject of the Nativity must have been related to yet another *colonnello*, the *passamaneri*. This division enjoyed a major period of growth during the cinquecento due to demand for their fashionable products. They were so prosperous that they broke away and formed their own guild in 1593, dedicated to the Nativity, but they were still united with the other weavers at the time the Veronese was commissioned.³¹ The lion of St. Mark positioned in the lower left corner refers to the co-dedication of the *veluderi colonnello*.

The naturalism and dynamism of Veronese's painting must have provided a stark contrast to the static works of Cima and his contemporaries. Additionally, the space must have started to feel much like a picture gallery. At 350 cm x 290 cm, the Veronese would have filled the right wall, while the left wall would have been lined with the narrative paintings, and the altar wall almost totally occupied by the altarpiece and its flanking saints. So it was when the apostolic visitors arrived in 1581, noting it was "ornatum in omnibus." By 1656 still other paintings had accumulated. The post-suppression

²⁹ Matham engraving: *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 4, 309. Barri engraving: *Immagine dal Veronese* (exh. cat. Villa Farnesina, Rome, 1978), 46-7.

³⁰ At that time only two of the early St. Mark cycle remained in the chapel, taking the place of the Veronese.

³¹ Molà, 2000, 306-7; Vio, 2004, 588.

inventory recorded “Diversi Quadri da tutti dui le Parti della Capella.” It notes “uno di Paolo Veronese, l’altro sopra tavola di mano incognita.” Presumably the latter refers to the Cima Annunciation. Another “Pittura sopra legno con l’effiggii di SS. Pietro e Paolo” and “Due altri quadri lunghi, uno dell’Annuntiata, l’altro dell’Angelo Gabriel” were also recorded in the chapel, but have never been identified. I would suggest that the painting on wood of saints Peter and Paul might have originally topped the Cima altarpiece, perhaps in the form of a lunette, although it is undeniably strange that such an ensemble was never described. If so, it would have resembled Cima’s high altarpiece from the parish church of Zermen (c. 1507-10), a *sacre conversazioni* of similar dimensions, topped by a lunette of Christ, saints Peter and Paul [Fig.118].³²

By 1674 Boschini registered several changes in the decoration, including the disappearance of two of the four St. Mark narratives. In 1684 Martinelli observed that “tutte le pitture antiche” had been removed from the chapel.³³ Presumably many things were scattered at that time, first to the guild meetinghouse at the Misericordia, which had been relocated in 1612 from its smaller quarters along the façade of the Crociferi monastery. What happened to these paintings next belongs to the narrative of their afterlife, to which I will return briefly in my concluding remarks.

6.3 Scuola di San Cristoforo, Passamaneri, Specchieri

The Scuola di San Cristoforo was active at the Crociferi church as early as 1346. It occupied an altar on the right side of the church, just beneath the choir near the exit to

³² Humfrey, 1983, 102, cat. 49. Vio, 2004, 579. From 1357 the *veluderi* enforced a *luminaria* for the celebration of the feast of St. Peter.

³³ Boschini, 1674, 24; Martinelli, 1684, 223. Only the Cima and Mansueti paintings remained.

the cloister³⁴, and in 1367 it established an *albergo* along the façade of the monastery [Figs.107-108].³⁵ The *scuola* possessed a relic of an impressively large tooth and a piece of the skull of the giant saint, and it was intimately connected to the silk-weavers' guild.³⁶ In 1464 the *veluderi* decreed that no one could obtain title of “maestro” in their *arte*, if they were not also members of the Scuola di San Cristoforo. In 1495 the *tessitori di panni di seta* followed suit. This gesture increased the confraternity's profile, and by 1567 there were over 350 members.

Nothing of the altar's decoration is known to survive, although the apostolic visitors described it as “ornatum honorifice.” By 1581 it was adorned by the lost *pala* of the saint by Palma il Giovane painted upon his return from Rome. It was recorded on the altar in 1656, flanked by two unidentified paintings, and remained until after 1684 when Martinelli recorded it for the final time.³⁷

The *passamaneri* were originally considered a division of the silk-weavers' guild, but gained their independence in 1593.³⁸ They took responsibility for the altar of San Lorenzo sometime before 1642, the year in which the Crociferi signed an accord assigning them an *albergo* to the right of the monastery entrance [Fig.108]]. It also that

³⁴ ASVat, VA, 96, c. 72r. “Altare S. Christophori situm sub podio, quod incervit pro choro...”

³⁵ ASV, PdC, Reg. N, c. 683v; Vio, 2004, 581. In 1352 they also maintained a chapel, presumably a shrine, “in cavo del ponte de Madonna sancta Maria de Crocicheri.”

³⁶ Boldù, 1571, 33r.

³⁷ ASV, AP, c. 123r. “Una Pala di detto Santo” and “Dui Quadri uno per Parti di detta Pala.” Martinelli, 1684, 223. “Passata la porta, che va nel Claustro e v'è la Tavola, con S. Christoforo mano del Palma.” Vio, 2004, 582. An inventory of the *scuola* at the time of its suppression in 1764 recorded a *pala* of St. Christopher, perhaps the Palma that had been removed from the church after the Jesuit rebuild. ASV, SPS, S. Cristoforo, B. 340, c. 2r. The 1773 inventory of their altar in the Jesuit church does not mention decoration.

³⁸ Molà, 2000, 306-7; Tassini, 1824, 182.

stated the *scuola* already serviced the altar.³⁹ Although masses continued to be given in perpetuity for the Massolo family, the family was extinct and the altar required upkeep. The apostolic visitors recorded that even in 1581 the altar of San Lorenzo was “annexed” to a guild, but does not specify which. I would speculate that in 1581 it may well have been under the care of the *specchieri* or mirror-makers, a highly prized trade which only established a guild in 1564. Notations in their *mariegola* record votes taken “alla scola di S. Cristoforo alli Crosichieri from around 1600 to 1641, and indeed, the accord of 1642 confirms the *albergo* the *passamaneri* assumed had been occupied by the *specchieri*, “da questi lasciato.”⁴⁰

6.4 Sartori

The tailors’ guild was extremely wealthy, judging from the tangible signs of their affluence: a two-storey *albergo* to the right of the church **[Fig.108]**⁴¹, a sumptuous chapel, and a hospital that tended to “poveri impotenti.”⁴² Matteo Palmieri, a Seicento chronicler of the relics of their patron, St. Barbara, recorded an engraved marble slab above the door in their *albergo*. It probably marked the foundation of the meetinghouse in February 1391—a year before the initiation of their *mariegola*—approved by Fra Zuanne Gamboti da Mantova, “Priore de tutti i frati dell’Ordine.”⁴³ Giovanni Zambotti

³⁹ Vio, 2004, 588.

⁴⁰ BMC, IV, *Mariegola* 69, cc. 115r, 156v-165r, 194v-200r.

⁴¹ A. Manno, *I mestieri di Venezia* (Cittadella, 1995), 76; Zorzi, 1972, II, 575. The meetinghouse door was closed in 1821.

⁴² Gramigna and Perissa, 1981, 108-9; Vio, 2004, 581. The *sartori* hospice was established in 1492. G. Tassini, *Edifici di Venezia distrutti* (Venice, 1885), 176. The *piano superiore* of the *albergo* dated to the late-fifteenth century.

⁴³ Palmieri, 1642, 22; Vio, 2004, 581.

was a famous Trecento Crocifero, patriarch of Grado (1406-1408).⁴⁴ At the peak of Crociferi indiscipline, the *sartori* were charged with care of the body of St. Barbara. The Crociferi received the relics in 1258 at the behest of Doge Renier Zen, who decided the body should be placed in the church after its translation from the east by the merchant Raffaele Bassegio. The story, first related by the fourteenth-century hagiographer Pietro Calò, relates that the body was carried in procession with great solemnity to the church, working four miracles along the way.⁴⁵ The legendary status of the translation story must be stressed, for there was a second body of Barbara at the convent of San Giovanni Evangelista di Torcello. Although the Torcello relics would ultimately gain official recognition, it was the Crociferi body that received popular devotion in Venice.⁴⁶ The debate over its authenticity peaked in 1624, when the Crociferi reliquary was opened for examination, and two written chronicles emerged in defence of the two variations of the legend.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ C. Cenci, "Giovanni Zambotti da Mantova, Crocifero, patriarca di Grado" *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia* 19 (1965), 436-465.

⁴⁵ G. P. Pacini, "Le reliquie di santa Barbara, di San Giovanni evangelista di Torcello e di santa Barbara della chiesa dei Crociferi di Venezia" in *Floretissima proles ecclesiae* (Trent, 1996), 451; Corner, 1749, II, 180-1.

⁴⁶ Palmieri, 1642, 15-20. Palmieri's defence of the Crociferi relics lists the various authors who confirmed their authenticity, including Sanudo, the apostolic visitors, Jacopo de Voragine, and Sansovino. Barbara was made official protector of the whole order at the 1462 Capitolo Generale in Mantua: "Dall'esempio della città di Venetia che per Protettrice Santa Barbara rese, anco la Crocifera fece lo stesso" and ordered "la commemorazione e suffragii così di Santa Barbara...come di San Cleto lor fondatore & della santissima Croce." AST, *Mss.474*, c. 567v-568r. In 1581 Venice made a diplomatic gift of a rib from the Crociferi body to the Duke of Mantua. Three Venetian Crociferi, Jacopo Antonio Boldù, Lauro Badoer and Giuliano Valiero purveyed it to Mantua, where Cardinal Borromeo and the city's clergy processed the relic to a chapel built by the duke in the church of St. Barbara and Badoer preached "con ammirazione universale."

⁴⁷ C. Pesaro, *Croniche de Trasporti con la vita e miracoli di S. Barbara* (Venice, 1636).

The tailors gained custody of the relics around 1467.⁴⁸ The records of the Consiglio dei Dieci note the building of a chapel in that year—which was presumably retained in the new church built a few decades later—and mentions the *sartori* who were already involved in some capacity.⁴⁹ I suspect that the chapel and the transfer of custody of the relics were established during Cardinal Bessarion’s tenure as *commendatore*. Palmieri records “Un’istromento tra il Cardinal Niceno detto Bessarione & li Padri Crociferi circa l’illuminar il corpo di Santa Barbara fatto l’anno 1469 di 17 aprile.”⁵⁰ The guild’s adoption of St. Barbara as patron resulted solely from this arrangement, not as a result of any particular relevance the saint had to their trade. Barbara was rarely associated with tailors outside of Venice; whereas elsewhere she was also patron to the *bombardieri*.⁵¹

The *sartori* chapel of St. Barbara was the second of the two that extended off the left side of the nave [Fig.107]. In 1581 Sansovino described the chapel as “assai ricca et honorata.”⁵² The apostolic visitors were more specific: “Altare Sancte Barbarae in Capella in qua est Corpus ipsius sanctae locatum decentissime in Arca marmorea fulcita columna marmorea; & duobus Angelis ex marmore.” Palmieri paints a spectacular vision of a chapel totally “incrostata” with Parian marble, the coveted white marble favoured by

Sister Cornelia Pesaro published the rival account in 1630 (reprinted 1636, 1658). It relates an earlier translation to the ducal chapel in 1069, then to the convent as a gift from Doge Pietro Orseolo, whose daughter was *abbadessa*.

⁴⁸ Tassini, 1882, 580.

⁴⁹ ASV, Consiglio dei Dieci, Deliberazioni, Reg. 17, f. 36v. November 26, 1467. “cum solemnitatibus solitis ad ecclesiam Cruciferorum, die IIII mensis decembris, et honorare corpus S. Barbare, transducendum de loco solito in quadam honorata capella, fabricata illi beato corpori in ecclesia predicta.”

⁵⁰ Palmieri, 1642, 22.

⁵¹ *Santità a Venezia*, eds. A. Niero, G. Musolini, S. Tramontin (Venice, 1972), 220.

⁵² Sansovino, 1581, 60v.

the Hellenic world, known for its unique transparency.⁵³ The relics of St. Barbara were kept in a marble *cassa* with gilded copper doors, elevated by marble columns and topped with marble effigy, nestled into a space that must have seemed like a reliquary within a reliquary.⁵⁴ By 1656 there were also “diversi pitturi intorno ad una parti di essa capella di mano di pittori in certo.” Guild inventories of 1641, 1680 and 1707 described “quadri 4 con la vita di Santa Barbara” inside the chapel, along with a “Madonna alla grecha” and a “quadro grande della Madonna e Santa Barbara.” Martinelli stated “v’è tra gl’altri un quadro con Santa Barbara condotta avanti Tiranno: mano di Bernardino Prudenti.”⁵⁵ By 1718 the paintings of the life of Barbara from the chapel were in the meetinghouse, but were evidently not considered objects of worth (“non vagliono niente”).⁵⁶ The chapel narratives joined the painted narrative frieze depicting scenes from her life recorded in the *sala terrena* of their *albergo*, a work of the “prima puerizia del Tintoretto.”⁵⁷

⁵³ Palmieri, 1642, 10. “...una Capella superbissima tutta incrostata di marmi Parij.”

⁵⁴ ASV, Arti, B. 505, c.1v; ASV, AP, c.124v. The 1729 inventory specifies that the stone reliquary had “portelle di rame dorate.” Both the body and effigy were recorded in a 1641 guild inventory, and in the 1656 inventory, the former noting that “un figura grande di Santa Barbara sta sopra la cassa continuamente.”

⁵⁵ Martinelli, 1684, 222. The seicento painter Prudenti is best known for the votive painting he produced for the inauguration of the basilica of Santa Maria della Salute.

⁵⁶ ASV, Arti, B. 505.

⁵⁷ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 7; Boschini, 1664, 425; Zanetti, 1771, 130; ASV, Arti, B. 505, Inventory 1729. Zanetti praised its small figures “piene di spirito”, providing some impression of scale. All three authors assign the frieze to Tintoretto’s early career, when he had ties to the shop of Bonifacio. P. Cottrell, “Bonifacio Veronese and the young Tintoretto” *Inferno: St Andrews Journal of Art History* 4 (1997), 25-8. Cottrell argues that an autograph work by Tintoretto in a private collection in Turin (Pallucchini and Rossi, 1962, I, 139, cat. 56) might have formed a part of the cycle [Fig.119]. Once identified as the obscure subject of the Martyrdom of St. Eurosia, Cottrell convincingly suggests it is more likely the martyrdom of St. Barbara at the hands of her father on the edge of a mountain, as in the Golden Legend. The arrangement of the composition and the absence of her traditional attributes may indicate that this was part of a series. Bonifacio produced the *albergo* altarpiece in 1533 [Fig.120], but the frieze must date to a later phase, particularly if Cottrell’s thesis about the Turin picture—a more mature effort

Although neither cycle survives, what remains significant is that the guild was able to commission two cycles, when most were unable to consider commissioning one. Their *albergo* also contained a painted ceiling by the school of Titian, featuring a *Padre Eterno*, and busts of the four evangelists and doctors of the church, yet another undertaking that would have been well beyond the reach of most guilds.⁵⁸ Also decorating the meetinghouse was the fine altarpiece of the Madonna and Child with Saints Barbara and Omobono Giving Alms by Bonifacio (Accademia, Venice) [Fig.120]⁵⁹, and an alleged Giorgione Madonna and Child with Saints Barbara, Omobono and donor in bust-length (unidentified).⁶⁰

than Tintoretto would have been capable of in the early 1530's—holds. There is no reason to assume the frieze was commissioned with the Bonifacio painting, and such a guild commission fits with Tintoretto's activity in the early 1540's when he worked for several *arti*. A date in the early 1540's is consistent with the time frame in which the early authors place the work (along with his activity as a fresco painter), and the dimensions of the painting (50x40cm) make sense for something described as a “fregio” or “friso.” The comments of the inspector of public paintings suggest that the scenes were separate, lending further support to Cottrell's hypothesis. ASV, Arti, B. 505. The 1729 inventory is the first in the guild archive to mention the frieze: “Un friso di pittura rappresentate la vita di santa Barbara a torno della scolla da basso si dice del Tintoretto.” ASV, Inquisitori di Stato, B. 909. The frieze was still in place in 1773 when the inspector of public pictures described it: “Alcuni quadri con Istoriette della vita di S. Barbara dipinti da Giac^o Tintoretto nella sua prima gioventà.” In 1796-7 Inspector Maggiotto considered them “assai pregiudicati” and felt they merited restoration. Zorzi, 1972, II, 575. It was among a few of the things salvaged from the *albergo* following the suppression of the guild in 1816, but nothing is known of its fate.

⁵⁸ ASV, Arti, B. 505, Inventory 1729. “Il soffitto da Basso in scolla con pitura Rapresentante nel mezo il Padre eterno et nel contorno li quatro evangelisti et li quatro dottori di santa chiesa si dice della scolla di Tiziano.” Schulz, 1968, 91. The remains of the ceiling were brought to the Domonial deposits following the guild's suppression and were attributed to Damiano Mazza. The remaining works (the Padre Eterno, Jerome, and the Evangelists, save Luke) are in the Accademia.

⁵⁹ Ridolfi, 1648, I, 272; Boschini, 1674, 15; Zanetti, 1771, 124. ASV, Inquisitori di Stato, B. 909, 122.

⁶⁰ The painting was evidently large and hung on the second floor of the *albergo*. ASV, Inquisitori di Stato, B. 909, 1773. “Il Quadro con la B.V. S. Barbara, S. Omobono e un ritratto in profilo: mezze figure dipinte da Giorgione di Castel Franco.” Boschini (1664)

The tailors remained on at the Jesuit church; after the chapel of Barbara was demolished their altar was shifted to the second on the left side of the church.⁶¹

6.5 Varoteri

The furriers' guild was another old and wealthy confraternity whose members dealt in pelts of vair, ermine, wolf, rabbit, squirrel, sable, lamb and fox.⁶² Their numbers were great during the Renaissance period, with as many as thirty to thirty-four master furriers working at a given time, and many more workers in the trade's various subdivisions.⁶³ The guild's first *capitolare* was recorded in 1271⁶⁴, but when precisely it became associated with the Crociferi church is uncertain. A 1446 *mariegola* entry notes they were celebrating their feast day at the high altar of the church.⁶⁵ It also records that on January 6th, 1501 the guild formed an accord with the Crociferi for a patch of land across from the church for the construction of their "scuola."⁶⁶ The building of their meetinghouse would have alleviated their need to hold their biannual meetings at the

first identified the work as a Giorgione and Zanetti repeated the attribution in 1773 and 1792. Possibly following Boschini, the guild recorded the work in their 1707, 1718 and 1729 inventories as "un quadro grande...di mano di Giorgione." Suida wrote that he had seen this painting in a private collection, but fails to specify where, only noting a copy in the Mather collection at Princeton. He viewed it as a work of the young Titian, which could easily have been the case. W. Suida, "Miscellanea Tizianesca-IV" *AV* 13-14 (1959-60), 62-67.

⁶¹ ASV, PSMsupra, Chiesa, B. 188, fasc. 2. proc. 358.

⁶² B. Cecchetti, *La vita dei Veneziani nel 1300: le veste* (Venice, 1886), 80.

⁶³ Romano, 1987, 80-3.

⁶⁴ Monticolo, 1905, 99; Mackenney, 1987, 16.

⁶⁵ Vio, 2004, 758; BMC, *Mariegola* 18. Vanin and Eleuteri, 2007, 15, n. 18. Extracts in ASV, Arti, B. 719, n. 30III, c. 2r. "Che ogn'anno nel giorno della Visitazione si faccia cantar una messa nella chiesa di Crosichieri, et tutti li fratelli siano tenuti di venirvi, et farsi dar la luminaria dal Gastaldo."

⁶⁶ ASV, Art, B. 719, c. 3.r. "Concession d'un luogo per fabricar la Schola di Varotari, fatta 1501. a di. 6 Zenaro per lo R[everen]do Padre Fra Archangelo di Cremaschi General et maestro di tutto l'ordine di Crosichieri et Prior de Madonna Santa Maria di Vinetia coll'intervento de tutto il capitolo."

church of San Giovanni di Rialto.⁶⁷ The *albergo*, destroyed when the façade of the Jesuit church was extended forward, is visible in Bella's Giocco di pallone and in Lovisa's engraving at the opening onto the Fondamenta Nuove **[Fig.121]**.⁶⁸ The major project to build an *albergo*, and the decorative commissions they would undertake over the course of the Cinquecento were undoubtedly made possible by the amalgamation of three subdivisions of the trade, or *colonnelli* in the late fifteenth century.⁶⁹

The guild participated in a procession to mass at the high altar on their feast day, but also possessed the rights to the altar dedicated to St. Lanfranc beneath the organ on the left side of the church. The furriers were officially dedicated to the Visitation and possessed no connection to Lanfranc, an eleventh-century Pavian bishop and scholar, beyond the fact that they tended the altar beneath which the relic of his head was preserved.⁷⁰ Even still, he was the focus of their exquisite Cima da Conegliano altarpiece **[Fig.122]**. It represented St. Lanfranc enthroned, overlooking a delicately rendered landscape, flanked by St. John the Baptist and St. Liberius (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge). Robertson assigned it a date of post 1514, based on the suspicion that it replaced a previous altarpiece lost in the fire that we now know only destroyed the monastery. Since the furrier's altar was on the opposite side of the church, we can be certain that any decoration would have gone unscathed, even if the church had been

⁶⁷ Romano, 1987, 80-1.

⁶⁸ ASV, Arti, B. 724. In 1724 an agreement was reached between the members of the guild and the Jesuits for the relocation and rebuilding of their *albergo* in *campo Santa Margherita*, at the Jesuits' expense. Their replacement *albergo* is still marked by a 1511 relief of the Madonna with furrier *committenti*, brought from the original location.

⁶⁹ Cecchetti, 1886, 78.

⁷⁰ ASVat, VA, 96, c. 71v. "Altare S. Allafranchi Archiepiscopi cantavariensis consecratum situm sub organo; in reliquis decenter ornatum", and under the list of relics: "Caput s Lanfranchi."

touched by the blaze in the adjacent cloister. As Humfrey and Menegazzi have both agreed, a date in this range (c. 1515-16) still holds on stylistic grounds.⁷¹ It also makes logistical sense, considering the plans for an *albergo* were still in the early phases in 1501. It seems unlikely that the guild would have been in a position to commission an altarpiece much sooner than 1515. The altar dedication dictated the centrality of Lanfranc, but the Crociferi must have suggested the inclusion of the Crocifero saint, Liberius, to whom the furriers had no connection. Marcantonio Boldù mentioned Liberius in his discussion of saints venerated by the order, and another life of the saint in Latin was inserted into the Treviso manuscript. Whether or not it was actually the case, Liberius was thought to have been heir to a 5th-century king of Armenia. Legend relates that he gave up the trappings of his royal life to live in poverty as a pilgrim, travelling to sacred locations in Jerusalem and Rome before assuming the Crociferi habit at Ancona.⁷² Evidently the city claimed the saint as its co-patron, along with St. Ciriaco, who was considered co-founder of the Crociferi. Liberius is shown to the right of the throne in the Crociferi habit, delicately clutching the silver cross that Pius IV had assigned as part of their reformed dress in 1462.⁷³ The presence of John the Baptist references the guild's dedication to the Visitation, a Marian mystery, but also a part of the narrative of the

⁷¹ Fitzwilliam Museum, no. M. 16, 145.1 x 129.9 cm. Humfrey, 1983, 90-1, cat. 30; L. Menegazzi, *Cima da Conegliano* (Treviso, 1981), 52 and 131. Based on stylistic proximity to the Brera St. Peter Enthroned, 1516 (Humfrey, 1983, 119, cat. 80). At some point the altarpiece was altered in size, possibly to facilitate its relocation to the choir or the convent; the area above each of the flanking saints was reduced, along with part of the throne below St. Lanfranc (later restored). Humfrey suggests it might also have contained a musician angel and perhaps an inscription recorded in 1745 by F. A. Zaccaria (*Johannis Baptistae Coneglianensis opus*) on the base of the throne or a *cartellino*.

⁷² Boldù, 1571, 32v; AST, Mss. 474; G. Speciali, *Notizie istoriche de' santi protettori della città d'Ancona*, 1759, 154-8.

⁷³ The darkening of the blue of the habit led Boschini to mistake the saint for Benedict, just as the obscure bishop Lanfranc has been confused with Ambrose.

Baptist's life. One of the *colonnelli* may have carried a dedication to the Baptist when the various branches merged; John, whose attribute was the hair shirt, would have been a particularly fitting choice for furriers.

Less than a century later, the *varoteri* replaced their rather traditional Cima altarpiece with the Decollation of the Baptist by Palma il Giovane [Fig.123]. In the meantime they had contributed a Visitation by Schiavone to the chancel, and had commissioned an Annunciation (Accademia, Venice) from the shop of Paolo Veronese, as well as a Raising of Lazarus (Accademia, Venice) by his son, Carletto, both for the *albergo* [Fig.125].⁷⁴ As previously noted, the altar was moved to the right side of the church, just in front of the choir.⁷⁵ A change in dedication to St. John the Baptist accompanied the transition, although the relic of Lanfranc continued to be preserved on their new altar.⁷⁶ Cima's altarpiece was displaced to the choir, where it was recorded in 1648 and 1663, but by 1674 it had been moved to the monastery.⁷⁷ Once again, the

⁷⁴ Raising of Lazarus: Ridolfi, 1648, I, 343; L. Crosato Larcher, "Per Carletto Caliari" *AV* 21 (1967), 120. Ridolfi: "fu delle opere vicino il fine della vita e delle sue più studiose." Vio, 2004, 579; Zorzi, 1972, II, 578. When the furriers were suppressed in 1808, inspector Pietro Edwards recorded an altarpiece and thirteen paintings in their *albergo*, two of which were considered "di pregio."

⁷⁵ ASV, AP, c. 123r. In 1656 the Palma was *in situ*: "Una Pala di detto S. Giovanni a mano del Palma." Traditionally there has been some confusion over where the guild's altar actually was, in part due to the shift of location, but also because the Jesuits moved the Palma to hang above Aliense's Martyrdom of St. Catherine on the first altar on the right (Boschini, 1674, 12; Martinelli, 1684, 223) and converted the altar dedication to Francis Xavier. It is now in the sacristy.

⁷⁶ ASV, AP, c. 123v.

⁷⁷ Ridolfi, 1648, I, 59; Martinioni, 1663, 168; Boschini, 1674, 15; F. A. Zaccaria, *Excursus literarii per Italiam ab anno 1742-1752* (Venice, 1754). Boschini noted its relocation from the choir to a room in the convent. Zaccaria recorded it there in 1746, but it was gone by 1803 when Federici (1803, I, 223) marked the disappearance of the picture once "sopra le scale." It was probably removed after the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773. It surfaced in the Brinsley Marlay collection, and passed to the Fitzwilliam

varoteri opted against an altarpiece depicting their main dedication, but included St. Lanfranc and St. Liberius, who stand as anachronistic witnesses to the gory martyrdom. If their first altarpiece had been traditional, Palma's was at the other end of the spectrum, an exemplar of the increasingly ambitious scope of guild commissions during the later part of the century. The violence of John's decollation is emphasised by the dynamic *contrapposto* pose of the brawny executioner, and above all by the foreshortened torso of the headless Baptist. The stump of his neck extends toward to viewer along the central axis of the composition, still gushing blood, as if onto the altar below.⁷⁸ The sacrificial message is highlighted by the gesture of Liberius, who directs our gaze to the corpse, and to the lamb beneath the foot of the executioner, calling to mind the Baptist's prophecy of Christ's sacrifice: "Ecce Agnus Dei." The shock of crimson drapery over the shoulder of the central witness accentuates the gore, and carries the eye up to the opening in the upper right corner where Herod's banquet takes place, adding yet another dimension of action and meaning. The handsome saints bracketing the composition balance the drama of the martyrdom, and are set apart through their placement below the ledge of rusticated stone. Palma removes them both physically and psychologically from the historical narrative as contemplative models meant to engage the viewer. The reader will recall Ridolfi's assertion that Giuliano Cirno and Simon Rossi were cast as Lanfranc and Liberius, and there are other highly individualized faces in the crowd of observers that seem very likely

Museum in 1912 [*Catalogue of Paintings in the Fitzwilliam Museum*, eds. G. Robertson and J.W. Goodison (Cambridge, 1977), 36-8].

⁷⁸ The torso and executioner, as well as the banquet scene in the distance are very similar in Palma's version of the subject once at Santa Caterina in Crema (1620). Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 79, cat. 51.

to have been taken from life.⁷⁹ The bearded man behind the executioner who meets the viewer's gaze is very close to the one depicted as a Crocifero in the oratory painting of Paul IV. Some have observed (not particularly convincingly) the likeness of Palma in the figure in red to the right of Salome, but he is far more likely a *gastaldo*, honoured for his role in the commission and service to the guild.⁸⁰ These visceral and instructive elements combined to form what could be considered an ideal post-Tridentine altarpiece, and indeed, the Decollation should be considered amongst Palma's finest works. The thoughtfully arranged composition, the studied anatomy and facial features of the figures, the striking colour harmonies and expertly rendered brocade vestments of Lanfranc are testament to the care invested. For stylistic and logistical reasons, the altarpiece belongs to the early part 1590's, a time at which Palma's manner was marked by greater finish and the nearby choir was renovated.⁸¹

It has not previously been noticed that the basic composition is heavily reliant on a work of the same subject by Giorgio Vasari that Palma may have seen during his time

⁷⁹ As Zava-Boccazzi has argued, Pallucchini's suggestion that Palma had actually cast his artistic forbearers Titian and Tintoretto in the guise of these saints is highly unlikely, not only because there would have been very little cause for him to have done so, but also because of obvious physiognomic differences compared to known portraits of the artists. See: R. Pallucchini, *Pittura veneziana del Seicento* (Padua, 1959/60), I, 22; Zava-Boccazzi, 1965, 297-8.

⁸⁰ Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 164, D. 198. The preparatory drawing (Albertina, Vienna) confirms the witnesses within the narrative portion were an afterthought, suggesting they were in fact portraits. On the self-portrait: Suzuki, 1996, 231.

⁸¹ W. Arslan, "Jacopo Palma il Giovane" in *Thieme-Becker, Allg. Lexikon der bildenden Kuenstler* 26 (1932), 176. Arslan saw the painting as contemporaneous with the sacristy works of 1592-3, and Zava Boccazzi concurred (1965, 298). Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 127. Dated the work to after 1610, based on Stringa's failure to recognize the hand of Palma, an artist who should have been familiar to him. Stringa noted its proximity to the door "che getta in convento", just where the altar of San Giovanni was located. It seems unlikely that between 1581 and 1603 the *varoteri* would have replaced the Cima with another painting, only to turn around and replace it with the Palma.

in Rome in the 1560's [Fig.124]. In 1553 Vasari's version had been placed on the high altar of the church of San Giovanni Decollato, the church that was the base for at the Florentine confraternity of the Misericordia, dedicated to preparing prisoners for execution.⁸² Palma made an obvious pastiche of the executioner, and of the heavy prison architecture with the barred Serlian window, although it is shifted to the lower register in his own version. The motif of the banquet in the distance, the foreshortened torso and the graceful figures in profile are also echoed in Palma's altarpiece. It is not difficult to imagine why the artist Ridolfi claimed was so drawn to the horror of Titian's Martyrdom of St. Lawrence would have been impressed by Vasari's painting and tempted to borrow from it—even decades later—when asked to produce a work that would hang next to one of the greatest Venetian scenes of martyrdom of all time.

6.6 The Botteri

The Calle dei Botteri, between the Rialto and San Cassiano, marks what was at one time a locus for the production of the barrel-makers. Their first *capitolare* was approved in 1271, and at that time their devotional activities were based at the lost church of Sant'Agostino.⁸³ Sometime before 1486, this shifted to the high altar of the church of the Crociferi, where their members celebrated the Feast of the Purification. The move may have been determined by their establishment of an *albergo* directly across from the church, already visible in the Jacopo de'Barbari bird's-eye-view around 1500, and more clearly articulated in the Bella and Lovisa depictions of the *campo* [Fig.126].⁸⁴

⁸² L. Corti, *Giorgio Vasari* (Florence, 1989), 80, cat. 60.

⁸³ Monticolo, 1905, 397; Gramigna and Perissa, 1981, 108; Vanin and Eleuteri, 2007, 30-1, 81-2. BMC, Mariegola 40, 41, 116. Three *mariegole* survive at the Correr, however they make little mention of decoration.

⁸⁴ Zorzi, 1972, II, 546. Demolished in 1847.

Although they did not have an altar of their own in the church, the *botteri* still contributed to its ornamentation, as the previous chapters have already demonstrated. They participated in the redecoration of the chancel by commissioning the lateral painting of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple by Tintoretto around 1555, and they were almost certainly the patrons of Palma's lost Passover (flanked by prophets). Both the 1656 inventory and Martinioni (1663) describe the painting of "gli Hebrei, che mangiano l'Agnello Pascale, con due Profeti da i lati" on the other side (dall'altra) of the choir facing the high altar, probably near the altar of St. Christopher.⁸⁵ We know that they had four *arche* in this area of the church, and that the members were obligated to attend mass there.⁸⁶

When the Jesuits removed the choir, the Passover was moved to the *albergo* where it joined several other works of art. On the gilded altar was an early Cinquecento *sacra conversazione* of the Madonna and Child enthroned with St. John the Baptist and St. Augustine (Museo Correr, Venice) by Giovanni Permeniates that betrays the influence of Bellini and Cima on this immigrant painter from Candia [Fig.127].⁸⁷ Boschini admired their *gonfalone* by Alvise dal Friso, "adorno di Architettura in oro, nel mezzo della quale sta sedente la Madonna col Bambino in braccio e dalle parti evvi S. Zaccaria, e Sant'Agostino Vescovo."⁸⁸ At the time of their suppression, a total of seven *quadri*

⁸⁵ ASV, AP, c. 125r. "Dall'altra parti del Choro verso l'Altar maggiore...Una Pittura dell'Angil Pasqual di mano dil Palma." Martinioni, 1663, 169; Albrizzi, 1740, 164-5.

⁸⁶ BMC, Mariegola 41, cc. 88-9 (March 8, 1550); BMC, Mariegola 116, cc. 102v-103v.

⁸⁷ The presence of Augustine is connected to their previous devotional interests at the church of Sant'Agostino. He was also the patron saint of brewers, who did share a connection to these makers of casks. For Permeniates, active in Venice 1523-8: A. Lymberopoulou, "Audiences and markets for Cretan Icons" in *Viewing Renaissance art*, eds. K. Woods, et. al. (New Haven, 2007), 201-2.

⁸⁸ Boschini, 1674, 16.

were recorded, including a “Circoncisione”, (probably a Presentation in the Temple), and a “pala del Perugino” that was almost certainly a wishful attribution.⁸⁹

6.7 Scuola della Beata Vergine della Concezione

The devotional confraternity dedicated to the Conception of the Virgin formed an agreement with the Crociferi in January of 1519 to assume the rights of the altar “sotto el barcho.”⁹⁰ They possessed *arche* in the cloister, where weekly mass was said at the nearby altar used by *scuole* who had burial rights there.⁹¹ Their first inventory in 1527 listed little more than various functional objects and a “Nostra dona con due Anzoletti per banda indoradi” that presumably passed for decoration.⁹² Although the 1581 apostolic visitors rarely provided details of decoration, they generally indicated if an altar was ornamented, and if it was remarkable, it was generally described as “ornatissimum”, “decentissime”, “decenter”, or “honorifice.” Much of the decoration at the Crociferi church was thus praised, with the exception of this altar, which was simply “ornatum.”⁹³ It seems not to have been decorated in any notable way until later. The next surviving inventory (1707), recorded a painting of the Virgin in a carved and gilded frame on the altar, flanked by two “quadri bislonghi” of saints Lucy and Agatha. Another painting of God the Father was above the capitals of the altar, flanked by an Annunciation, a Nativity and two large gilded angels.⁹⁴ In May of 1620 the confraternity elected four members to

⁸⁹ Vio, 2004, 574-5.

⁹⁰ ASV, PdC, Reg. O, c. 309r-v; ASV, SPS, BVC, B. 196, 1r.

⁹¹ Honofri, 1682, 164-6. It was decorated with a Christ “di bellissima scoltura fatto di pietra.”

⁹² BMC, Mariegola 58, c. 7.

⁹³ ASVat, VA, 96, c. 71v. “Altare conceptionis B. Maria consecratum et ornatum in omnibus situm sub choro.”

⁹⁴ ASV, SPS, BVC, B. 196, 1r.

find “un Pittore sufficiente” to create two paintings they felt were lacking. One would be placed above the *banco* in the church, the other “apresso il nostro altar.”⁹⁵ In 1684 Martinelli observed “un quadro, dove è figurata la Nascita della Beata Vergine mano di Matteo Ponzone” near to their altar.⁹⁶ Inventories of the *beni* of the confraternity in 1707, 1717 and 1729 do list a “Natività della B[eata] V[ergine] vicino al Nostro Altar” that might have been the work of the Dalmatian painter, or perhaps another pupil of Palma.⁹⁷ Ridolfi, Martinioni, and Martinelli recorded another work by Ponzone in the church, a Meeting of Joachim and Anna at the Golden Gate.⁹⁸ Martinelli’s description placed the work near the Usper chapel and seems to suggest that it contained a self-portrait of the artist: “...quadro grande con la Visita di San Gioacchino e Sant’Anna, con il Padre eterno nella gloria del Paradiso, con molti Angeli, che tengono i Simboli della B. V. opera bellissima di Matteo Ponzone; v’è anco il suo Ritratto vestito di rosso, con la Beretta alla mano, & un bastone.” Although its placement at a distance from their altar is slightly puzzling, it seems this painting did belong to the *scuola*. The subject of the Meeting at the Golden Gate was frequently used to reference the Conception of the Virgin, and an inventory of their newly built chapel in the Jesuit church of 1729 records: “L’altar nostro dell’Imacolata Concetion in chiesa nella prima Capella all’Evangelio. Due quadri grandi attorno li muri in scuola. Uno con San Gioachino e Sant Anna, è l’altro con la Gloria del Padre Eterno. Il quale era un sol Quadro, che stava sopra il Pulpitto in Chiesa vecchia, che

⁹⁵ ASV, PdC, Reg. O, c. 325v.

⁹⁶ Martinelli, 1684, 222.

⁹⁷ Boschini, 1674, 13; Zorzi, 1972, II, 550; Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 176, cat. A.117. When the *scuola* was suppressed a Nativity of the Virgin considered by Boschini to belong to the Palma *bottega* was salvaged (now in the Conservatorio Benedetto Marcello, Venice).

⁹⁸ Ridolfi, 1648, II, 273; Martinioni, 1663, 169; Boschini, 1664, 526; Martinelli, 1684, 222. Boschini: “Là se vede la man San Gioachin; Dar a Sant’Ana, in ato de sposarla; Ogni figura veramente parla.”

ora per comodo si è fatto in due Quadri.”⁹⁹ This suggests that the painting was cut in half to fit the new space, and that the Ponzone belonged to the *scuola*.¹⁰⁰ The financial fortunes of the confraternity seem to have improved considerably during the seventeenth century. By 1609 they were able to afford an *albergo*, built into the façade of the monastery, where an inscription on the architrave and a bas-relief Madonna still marks the spot. According to Boschini, their meetinghouse also contained a painted ceiling of “architecture with various and curious ornaments”, a work of Simon Gugliemi, and frescoed figures in three compartments by the Milanese painter Federico Crivelli (1623-1700), all lost.¹⁰¹

6.8 Stampatori, Librai

One of the more interesting documents I uncovered reveals a previously unknown connection between the Crociferi and the guild of the printers and booksellers.¹⁰² A *conventio* between the Crociferi and three representatives of “*la Fraterna dellj Stampadori*” dated 22 September 1555, established formal guidelines for their relationship [App.IX].¹⁰³ Prior Giuliano Cirno agreed to welcome them into the church to tend to their spiritual and practical business. The guild was allowed to celebrate a low

⁹⁹ ASV, SPS, BVC, B. 196, c. 11r. Inventories of 1707 and 1717 record a “quadro grande” above the pulpit where their *banco* was located, but it is identified as a “Visitazione della Beata Vergine.” ASV, PdC, Reg. O, cc. 328v-329r, 332r-333v. Initially the confraternity occupied the chapel *in cornu evangeli* in the Jesuit church.

¹⁰⁰ Prijatelj, 1970, 61.

¹⁰¹ Boschini, 1674, 13; Tassini, 1885, 124; Zorzi, 1972, II, 550; Gramigna and Perissa, 1981, 109.

¹⁰² This document is not mentioned in Brown’s exhaustive review of documentary evidence regarding the Venetian print industry, or in any subsequent study. H. Brown, *The Venetian Printing Press* (London, 1841).

¹⁰³ ASV, Atti Fiume, B. 5698, cc.36v-38r. This is the only surviving document registered on behalf of the Crociferi by Fiume, who was a favoured notary of printers such as the Giunti, Michele Tramazzini and the Dalmatian printmaker Martin Rota.

mass every first Sunday of the month, so as to avoid impeding the devotional activities of the already established *scuole*, and consented to accommodate their *capitolo* in “*un luoco capace et honorevole*.” On the first Sunday of the month, the Crociferi would provide a “*bancho*” in their own *capitolo* for the giving of alms and offered to house a storage chest for their accessories in the sacristy.

This document serves as further evidence of the concentration of important guilds at the church, and the efforts of the *frati* to attract them. But its value extends even beyond this: it helps to fill a lacuna in the documentation of the history of this guild that has long puzzled scholars. The first printing press arrived in Venice in 1469, and the city soon became a major hub for the European print industry, reaching its peak 1540-1570¹⁰⁴, yet the trade did not form a corporation until 1549, when a license was granted by the Consiglio dei Dieci to found the *Arte dei stampadori e librai*.¹⁰⁵ More problematic is the nearly twelve-year gap that separates this first mention of a corporation and actual documentation of their existence as a functioning body. The next official record of them has led scholars to conclude that the guild was not effective until May 14, 1567, when the Provveditori di Comun approved the guild’s *mariegola*.¹⁰⁶ In its reference to the “*fraterna*” and “*capitolo*” of the *stampadori*, this *conventio* of 1555 establishes that by 1567 the group had already been functioning as an organised body for at least twelve years. The wording of the document clearly implies that they were not taking over patronage rights to an altar or chapel within the church, but would instead use a

¹⁰⁴ J. Bernstein, *Music Printing in Renaissance Venice* (Oxford, 1998), 14.

¹⁰⁵ Vio, 2004, 184.

¹⁰⁶ Brown, 1841, 241-249; Vanin and Eleuteri, 2007, 85; Vio, 2004, 184; G. B. Salvioni, *L’arte della stampa nel Veneto. La corporazione dei librai e stampadori in Venezia* (Padova, 1879).

communal space within the church. The *stampadori* must have moved on from the church sometime before 1564, as they are not named in the *condizione* amongst *scuole* present in the church.¹⁰⁷ It is unlikely that the guild ever commissioned works of art to be displayed in the Crociferi church, although if they had, any works would have moved with the group to their eventual seat in the Cappella del Rosario at Santi Giovanni e Paolo, a space that became the most lavish of all *scuole piccole* chapels.

¹⁰⁷ ASV, SDC, B. 33, n. 173.

Chapter VII

7.1 Private Patronage

Patronage in Renaissance Venice revolved around “communities of the sacred” that were linked by blood or by fraternal bonds.¹ Monasteries were particularly attractive loci for these communities because they were perceived as places where the work of God was done. Individuals, families and confraternities viewed proximity to the divine as crucial in life, and particularly in death. Previous chapters have established that the Crociferi benefited from the advocacy of many elite patrons, many of them acting in the role of lay procurator. This discussion will provide a clearer sense of a clustering or interconnectivity between many of these families. In a city where spirituality was very much linked to social and economic concerns, and where dynasties were formed and promoted through kinship and marriage, this was perhaps bound to be the case.

Patronage of a church was established through three categories of benevolence: the provision of land, financial participation in the building of a church, or the patronage of an altar or chapel. We have already seen how longstanding ties between the Crociferi and the Zen and Gussoni families resulted from early donations of property and finances, and how the church was built with the practical and financial assistance of Alvise Dardani. The following pages will elaborate on the third category of patronage at the church [Fig.128].

7.2 Alvise Dardani and Ludovico Usper

¹ Romano, 1987, 41, 103.

Like many of the private patrons who were drawn to the monastery, Dardani was an intellectual. He was friend to humanists such as Johannes Britannicus, Giorgio Merula and Buccardus, and his own writings, a quite astonishing defence of women in the *volgare*, was published posthumously in 1554.² Having been associated with the Crociferi for the better part of his life, as *sindacus* in 1446, and having overseen, and perhaps even contributed financially to the rebuilding project as lay procurator, Dardani chose to be buried at the church in his 1504 testament.³ Dardani would not have been aware of the illustrious position he was to assume at the end of his life. He entered into political life rather late, but with great success.⁴ He was instrumental in securing the allegiance of the citizens of Padua to the Republic during the Italian wars as *provveditore* of Mirano in 1509, a role generally not assigned to a member of the citizen class.⁵ He was so beloved that in December 1510, even though he was not initially considered a leading candidate, he was elected Grand Chancellor—the highest possible office a *cittadino* could achieve—with 1363 of about 1400 votes.⁶ This powerful role allowed a member of a generally excluded portion of the population a chance to voice an opinion in government, albeit only vocally. In ceremonial terms, the Grand Chancellor was second only to the doge and the Procuratori di San Marco, processing directly behind them in a

² Neff, 1985, 415. A. Dardani, *La bella e dotta difesa delle donne* (Venice, 1554). This work celebrates historical *donne illustre*, is an etiquette manual, and even strategies for conceiving sons. Dardani also had interests in the company of Nicholas Jenson, the earliest licensed publisher, and John of Speyer. M. Lowry, *Nicholas Jenson and the Rise of Venetian Publishing in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford, 1991), 165.

³ ASV, NT (Busenello), B. 66, n. 47, B. 66 III c 17. (28 October 1504).

⁴ Neff, 1985, 413. From 1483 he was a notary at the Auditori Nuovi, and had his first government appointment in 1487.

⁵ *DBI*, 1986, XXXIX, 262-5.

⁶ G. Zocchetto, *Alvise Dardanio* (Mestre, 1999), 109.

place of prestige.⁷ This is highlighted in Sanudo's description of Dardani's funeral in March of 1511, days after he succumbed to an injury suffered the year before in a conflict near Padua. Dressed in official regalia, his body was taken by solemn state procession to Santi Giovanni e Paolo, where it reposed beneath a tall baldacchino. From there it was placed in "la chiesa de li crosechieri, in la sua archa et capella fu ha far per lui."⁸

Dardani's testament and Sanudo's entry confirm that Dardani was buried in the church in a chapel that was undoubtedly incorporated into the design of the church he had helped bring to completion. Thanks to an eighteenth-century family history, his letters and several funeral orations, quite a lot is known about Dardani's life, but almost nothing was known about his final resting place, not even where it was located in the church.⁹

Palferio recorded the funerary inscription, but failed to note its location, nor was it mentioned in guidebooks or the apostolic visit.¹⁰ The 1564 *condizione* and 1656 inventory confirm that a weekly mass continued to be given on his behalf, as per his *mansonaria*.¹¹ The only chapel for which patronage rights remained unclear was the first on the left of the nave. The 1656 inventory listed it as the "Altar dell'Annontziata dell'Uspir", and Martinioni recorded that the chapel belonged to one Ludovico Usper, one of the first Avvocati del Foro [**Fig.128.**]. Since only members of the *cittadini ordinarii* class could serve in this position, Tassini's valuable manuscript compendium of

⁷ *Guida alle Magistrature*, 2003, 71.

⁸ Sanudo, *I diarii*, XII, 67 (18 March 1511). He died at 79.

⁹ T. Weigel, "Begräbniszeremoniell und Grabmäler venezianischer Grosskanzler des 16. Jahrhunderts" in *Praemium Virtutis* (Münster, 2002), 147-73.

¹⁰ BMC, Tassini, *Cittadini*, II, c. 143-144; BMN, Ms. It. VII 366 (=7660), *Famiglia Dardani*. BNM, Ms.lat. Cl. X 144 (-3657). G. Palferio, *Memorabilia Venetiarum Monumenta antiquis recentioribusque lapidibus insculpta*, c.91r-v. Inscription: [**App.VIII**].

¹¹ ASV, SDC, B. 33, f. 173, c.2; ASV, AP, c. 128v, 131r.

cittadino families seemed likely to yield further clues. Indeed, he made one notation about a Ludovico Usper: “1587: compera l’arca dei Dardani ai Crociferi. Egli testò nel 1600 24 febbraio in atti Antonio Calegarini.”¹² Although I found no trace of any such purchase of the chapel in the *atti* or *minute* of Calegarini, my research did uncover a detailed inventory of Usper’s San Stae *palazzo* [App.VII]. Amongst the personal papers listed in the inventory was “un’ istromento 1576 20 febbraio, concessione della capella di Crosechieri” and “scritture circa la mansonaria di crosechieri.”¹³ The testaments of Usper and his wife, Elena, confirm their desire to be buried in their “archa alli Crocechieri”, and note their bequests of in excess of 1,000 ducats for the celebration of masses each week, and on the feasts of St. Lawrence and St. Helen “nilla nostra cappella.”¹⁴ Thus, it seems that around 1576 Ludovico Usper purchased the rights to the chapel that had belonged to Alvise Dardani. Sometime after 1581 and before his death in 1601, Usper furnished the chapel with sumptuous decoration.¹⁵ Stringa recorded: “Questa cappella e veramente di molta spesa, poiche è tutta di viva pietra con tutto l’altare fabricata. Vi è per pala in un gran nicchio la figura della Beata Vergine scolpita in marmo di Andrea Aquila Trentino [Fig.129]. Vi sono altre sei figure in tanti nicchi, due vicine desta, quattro ambi i lati, due per lato, che sono i quattro Evangelisti. I lavori poscia, i parimenti, i corniciamenti, le colonne, il soffitto che è fatto di stucco & messo ad oro, con

¹² BMC, Tassini, *Cittadini*, V, c. 115-116. I searched the *atti* of Calegarini for all available years for references to Usper, Dardani and the Crociferi to no avail.

¹³ ASV, Giudici del Petizion, B. 342/7 n. 26, c. 18v.

¹⁴ ASV, NT (Secco), B. 1191 (Elena, 16 April 1594); B. 1194 VI 60 (Ludovico, 30 October 1600); B. 1192, n. 402 (Ludovico, 30 December 1600); NT (Ziliol), B. 1244, n. 466 (Ludovico, 24 February 1600), B. 1242, n. 230 (Elena, 25 October 1602). Ludovico: “...voglio quando piacerà à Dio chiamarmi voglio che sia sepolito nella mia archa alli Crocechieri.”

¹⁵ The chapel may not have been recorded in the 1581 visit because the chapel had just been ceded, and was perhaps even in the process of redecoration.

certe pitture, adornano non poco questa cappella.”¹⁶ Usper’s body reposed in a “bellissima sepoltura” in the middle of the chapel.

I know of no other such Venetian chapel adorned quite in this way, with orders of architecture, sculpture, painting and gilded stucco, which is why it is so regrettable that only the Madonna by Andrea dall’Aquila survives.¹⁷ As a primarily sculptural chapel, it would have provided a rich complement to the marble-encrusted neighbouring chapel of St. Barbara. There is reason to believe that the project was executed by the shop of Alessandro Vittoria, not only because Stringa attributes the Madonna to his first pupil and nephew, or because the description of gilded stucco and architectural elements evokes an image of something very much in line with what his shop could produce, but because of his previous associations with both the Crociferi and Usper.¹⁸ Amongst Vittoria’s papers, which passed with his *commissaria* to San Zaccaria, a document of 1560 records money he is owed for a “chiave di volta a forma di testa” for *palazzo* Usper, establishing very early contact with the *bottega*.¹⁹ The inventory of Usper’s home provides further insight into his patronage of art.²⁰

Like many of the Crociferi patrons, Usper was learned; the inventory of his mezzanine library consumed twelve pages, attesting to his broad interest in Latin and Italian works of history, religion, philosophy, science and music. A handsome inlaid

¹⁶ Stringa, 1604, 148; Martinioni, 1663, 169; ASV, AP, c. 124r. The 1656 inventory recorded “Diversi statui”, but only one painting “di mano di Pittore incerto.”

¹⁷ The closest surviving analogous project by the shop is the chapel of the Sacrament at San Giuliano (1578-83), which was also decorated with a *stucco* ceiling and side niches with small bronze terracotta figures by Agostino Rubini.

¹⁸ On Andrea dall’Aquila: V. Avery, “La bottega di Alessandro Vittoria” in *La Bellissima maniera*, 1999, 132-3.

¹⁹ Avery, 1999, 212.

²⁰ ASV, GdP, B. 342/7 n. 26, cc.17r, 18v. Amongst Usper’s papers: “diversi scritte circa ricevi del pagamento dela casa circa scolturi.”

cabinet of walnut and ebony contained the Crociferi “scritture”, as well as a collection of bronze figures.²¹ He owned globes and framed maps of the world that hung in the entrance to his *palazzo*. His possession of a harpsichord points to his interest in music, which is further evinced by his patronage of the Istrian composer and organist, Francesco Sponza (1560-1641), a pupil of Andrea Gabrieli.²² Over fifty religious and allegorical paintings were recorded in various parts of the *palazzo*, all in gilded frames. In one room there were twelve heads of Emperors in *stucco*, presumably a frieze, which brings to mind Vittoria’s busts of Roman historical characters executed in the Sala dei Principi of Palazzo Thiene [Fig.130]. Additionally, there were four oval *quadri*, four others by Palma, and a bronze Madonna by Jacopo Sansovino [Fig.131].²³ The *portego*, the most important public room in the house, was filled with paintings of 20 *huomini illustri*, sibyls, Mercury, Ariadne, Adonis, Fortune, and “una donna col specchio in mano.” There were also two pairs of pendant portraits of Usper and his consort, common in mainland homes, but rather rare in Venetian *porteghi*.²⁴ In the *camera d’oro*, in the “nappa del camin”, was “una testa di marmo del clarissimo signor Usper con il suo piede sotto indoradi”, bringing to mind a similar arrangement over the fireplace of Palazzo Contarini delle Figure, attributed to the Vittoria shop [Fig.132]. Clearly a humanist occupied the

²¹ *Ibid.*, c.18v. [App.VII]

²² Sponza dedicated his *Ricarcari* to Usper, who was likely responsible for Sponza’s employment as organist and choirmaster at the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista, of which he was a member. Sponza was also organist at San Salvatore (1614) and San Marco (1622). E. Selfridge-Field, “Usper, Francesco” in *New Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1980).

²³ B. Boucher, *The sculpture of Jacopo Sansovino* (New Haven, 1991), II, 326. The only possible surviving bronze this could be identified with is the signed Madonna in the Cleveland Museum of Art. The fact that the inventory specifies the work is by Sansovino suggests it was also signed.

²⁴ ASV, GdP, B.342/7 n. 26, cc. 22v-23r. Fortini Brown in *At Home in the Renaissance*, 2006, 56. For example, Veronese’s portraits of the Porto-Thiene couple.

palazzo at San Stae; Usper was a major patron of art and a connoisseur of sculpture in particular, which may explain why he opted for a sculptural chapel. He was probably also a repeat customer of Vittoria and pupils such as Andrea dell'Aquila, who took on increased responsibility in the shop after about 1581, shortly after Usper acquired the chapel. Given Usper's obvious interest in bronzes, I wonder if the evangelists in niches Stringa mentioned might be associated with the preparatory terracotta evangelists attributed to Vittoria in the Art Institute of Chicago [Fig.133]. At just under 60cm (and dated to c.1580), they would have been of ideal dimensions for the purpose described.²⁵ Although precious little has been handed down regarding the specifics of the decoration of the chapel in its two incarnations, what knowledge has been gained about its *cittadini* patrons conforms to what we already know about the sort of supporters the Crociferi were attracting: wealthy, learned individuals with particular interest in literature and/or music who were willing and able to provide exquisite decoration.

7.3 The Zen

As previously outlined, it was the early support of doge Renier Zen that really put the Crociferi on the map. Beyond his advocacy, Zen furnished his preferred church with a number of enduring gifts, including the body of St. Barbara, which was given to the Crociferi at the behest of the doge who clearly understood the potency of relics. It was during his dogate that two major aspects of the Marcian legend were revived: the *praedestinatio*, or legend of the destiny of Mark's body to rest in Venice, and the

²⁵ M. Leithe-Jasper in *La Bellissima maniera*, 1999, 364-6, cat. 82. He postulates they might have once been contained in niches, possibly on a large tabernacle.

apparitio, the miraculous rediscovery of the misplaced relics.²⁶ The Zen bequest established the Crociferi hospital, facilitated its survival, and provided for decoration in the oratory and the church, and Renier's support also cemented his family's devotion to the monastery for centuries to come.

The particularly ardent devotion of the Cinquecento descendants of Renier has already been partially elucidated. As lay procurators and benefactors they continued to support the Crociferi, something that surely must have contributed to the thriving cultural atmosphere of the monastery.²⁷ It was Pietro Zen (q. Catharin, 1457-1539), who really took up the Crociferi cause, something that his son, Catharin, and grandson Nicolò would perpetuate. In 1520 Pietro bestowed a “veste” given to him by “Su[lei]m[an]o Gran Signor” upon the Crociferi²⁸, and sometime after 1538 he founded a family burial chapel in the church. His wishes were articulated in a testament written the year before he died at 86, en route to the east to take up the position of Oratore al Sultano. He stipulated: “Voglio che'l me sia fabricà una capella ala Chiesa di Crosechieri et speso fina ala suma de ducati 500; al qual lasso el mio calese et patena d'arzeno dorado; item li lasso el mio bel mesal et una dele mie pianede, la più rica, et che'l sia vendudo una altra, la più bella, et sia comprà zambeloti negri a far una per l'officio da morti; et li laso li mei 4 pezi de

²⁶ D. Pincus, *Tombs of the Doges of Venice* (Cambridge, 2000), 62-3.

²⁷ Concina, 1985, 269-72. The Zen were active in the *compagnie delle Calze*. Catharin was a member of the Cortesi, Carlo of the Ortolani, Francesco a founder of the Fasuti. Their interest in music is evinced by their possession of an organ (the sole surviving instrument) by Lorenzo da Pavia, and their literary activities by their close association with the printer Marcolini (who considered himself a “creatura di gran Pietro”), figures such as Aretino, and their own published works.

²⁸ BMC, Cod. Cic. 3237.T.II.

razo del triumpho de Cesaro per el suo adornamento li zorni festivi.”²⁹ Both Sansovino and the apostolic visitors recorded a Zen chapel *in cornu epistolae* in 1581, dedicated to the Holy Cross, a choice that probably had more to do with the devotional interests of the Crociferi [Fig.128].³⁰ Little is known about this chapel beyond the fact that it existed. An inscription still preserved in the chapel occupying the same location in the Gesuiti confirms that Pietro and his son Catharin were buried there.³¹ My own research revealed that a previously unidentified daughter of Pietro, Lucrezia, expressed her wish to be buried in her father’s “monumento”, but as early as 1535, suggesting Pietro had such plans even before his own testament stipulated for its construction.³² Documents of 1658 recording the transfer of responsibilities for the chapel and masses to the Jesuit suggest that his wishes were carried out in 1544.³³

²⁹ ASV, NT (Marsilio), B. 1213, n. 888, transcribed in Lucchetta, 1968, Appendix XXVIII.

³⁰ Sansovino, 1581, 60b; ASVat, VA, 96, c. 72r. “Altare sancte Crucis cum capella qua edificanda sine reparanda est i Nobilibus le Zenis.”

³¹ [App.VIII]

³² Lucrezia was named for Pietro’s sister, who had been a trusted member of the household of their cousin, Caterina Cornaro. In her first testament, witnessed by one Frater Marchus Venetus Ordinis Cruciferorum [ASV, NT (Grasolario), B. 1184, n. 311 (15 July 1523)], she established a *commissaria* for masses to be said at the altar of St. Barbara. In her second will [ASV, NT (Benzon), B. 96, n. 381, c. 1r (12 August 1535)], she expressed her wish to be buried “nel monumento sepulc. del m^{ro} mio padre nella giesia di S^{ta} Maria d Crosechieri.” Her *commissaria* is recorded in the 1656 inventory.

³³ ASV, PSMsupra, Chiesa, B. 95, c. 296r-v (1 August 1658). “Pietro Zen per il suo testamento che si dice esser fatto l’anno 1538 ordini fabricarsi una cappella nella chiesa di Santa Mara de Crociferi di questa chitta offitiarvi una Mansonaria , con altre funtioni in quello dichiarite applicandovi il tratto delle sue chesure d’Arzere grande, le quali poi da suoi figlioli et heredi frono consegnate a gli stessi Padri con obligo d’eseguire l’ordinatione del Testatore come vien detto apparire per scrittur privata de 14 novembre 1544 registrata in atti di Nodaro a 21 febraro seguente. La cappella già eretta sotto titolo della Santissima Croce, dagl’herei del q. Pietro Zen nella predetta Chiesa già de Crociferi e hora dei Gesuiti, la qual cappella al presente si strova anco sotto il titolo di S. Ignatio, postavi coll’assenso dei detti Zeni.” Although no notary was specified by name, I made an unsuccessful attempt to find the agreement in the *atti* of the favoured Crociferi notary,

It has never been clear if the chapel was decorated. While Pietro had left instructions for his *palazzo* to be adorned with frescoes celebrating his ancestors, he provided no specifications for the decoration of his chapel. Guidebooks and family histories remain mysteriously silent on the issue, and the 1656 inventory lists only: “Una statua di legno della Madonna con nostro Sig^{re} in braccio vestita, et con un faciol di cassetta di passemanno d’oro guarnito”, which presumably decorated the altar.³⁴ A bust of Pietro by Alessandro Vittoria was recorded there by Cicogna, which has been tentatively identified with a posthumous terracotta now in the Seminario Patriarcale [Fig.134].³⁵ Dario’s suggestion that it was contained within a niche adorned with frescoes depicting scenes from the life of Renier is an error that persists from a misreading of documents pertaining to the lost funerary monument to the Zen doge at Santi Giovanni e Paolo.³⁶ In fact, the grandiose nature of Renier’s monument is one of several reasons why it is puzzling that this chapel never seems to have received any notable ornamentation. This was a family that knew something about grandeur. To Zen’s dogate we owe the present splendour of San Marco; he had the domes raised and trophies, including Dandolo’s Quadriga, placed on the façade. Renier’s vast wealth allowed him to raise one of the

Benzon, as well as Antonio Marsilio, used by Zen for his testament. What survives of the Zen family archive is preserved in the Correr, but only seven documents dating 1500-1550 remain, none of them pertinent to the chapel.

³⁴ ASV, AP, c. 123v. [App.IV] The statue evidently led those making the inventory to erroneously conclude that the chapel was dedicated to the Pietà. BNM, Mss. Ital, Cl. VII. 193 (=7490), P. Zen, *Elogi degl’homini illustri della famiglia Zena*; G. Zabarella, *Trasea Peto, ovvero origine della Serenissima fameglia Zeno di Venezia* (Padua, 1646).

³⁵ Cicogna, 1824-53, III, 1830, 520; J. Martin, 1998, 126-7, and J. Martin, “Pietro Zen” in *La Bellissima maniera*, ed. A. Bacchi, 1999, 306. An inscription “PETRUZ ZE” identifies it as a Pietro Zen, but it is generally dated to 1583-5. It would had to have been commissioned by his heirs, possibly in response to busts being made by their Da Lezze relatives for their monument in the church.

³⁶ Dario, 1995, 193.

most ostentatious ducal monuments in Santi Giovanni e Paolo, a tomb raised on consoles beneath an architectural canopy, all gilded, polychromed and topped with a Crucifixion. It was surrounded by grillwork of wood and iron and set against a backdrop of gold, lapis and frescoed scenes of the doge's life.³⁷ Pietro's cousin, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Zen, used his influence and finances from his astonishing 119,000 ducat estate—of which Pietro was executor and a beneficiary—to secure the southwest corner of San Marco for his burial chapel, which was opulently decorated with a cast bronze canopy and bronze Madonna and Child with St. Mark and St. John the Baptist by the Lombardi (1504-21) [Fig.135].³⁸ As previously noted, Pietro and his heirs were patrons of art and architectural enthusiasts.³⁹ The family had a *studio d'anticaglie* praised by Sansovino, owned paintings by the Bellini, Pordenone, Bonifacio, Tintoretto and others, and they were occupied with the reconstruction of the family *palazzo* from c.1530-66 [Fig.47]. This project was executed to the design of Pietro's son, Francesco, which was allegedly filtered through Sebastiano Serlio.⁴⁰ Francesco did not live to see the building complete,

³⁷ Pincus, 2000, 59-75; Lunardon, 30. Only fragments remain. Zen's 1268 will outlined his desire to see it complete as soon as possible. The expenses for work on the tomb are recorded in the *buste* of his *commissaria* (PSMsupra, BB. 230-5). Some have speculated (based on misinterpreted documents) that Zen was first buried at the Crociferi church, which may have been the case temporarily. His 1268 will implies that work was underway on his monument, but if it was not yet complete, he might have reposed for a time in the church that received the other half of his substantial bequest. The Crociferi and the Dominicans were to divide Zen's capital investments, and both received separate bequests for individual projects. For example, he allotted 1000 ducats to construct the portal at Santi Giovanni e Paolo.

³⁸ Pietro inherited 3,000 ducats.

³⁹ Sansovino, 1581, 138 v; Ridolfi, 1648, I, 58; *Figure di collezionisti a Venezia tra Cinque e Seicento*, eds. Borean and Rinaldi (Udine, 2002), 291-2. Francesco was also a friend of Daniele Barbaro, was lauded by Sansovino as "gentiluomo intendente dell'architettura."

⁴⁰ Palazzo Zen: Fontana, 1865, 279-82; Concina, 1984, 265-89. After Pietro's death the home was split between his four sons.

predeceasing his father by about a year. So passionate was this architectural aficionado that he stipulated that his funeral procession include the workers, masons, carpenters and stonecutters engaged in the construction, accompanied by Serlio and the foreman Innocenzo Lombardo. He was buried at the now-destroyed church of San Cristoforo della Pace in a chapel founded as per his testament.⁴¹

The Zen had much to celebrate. Pietro had enjoyed a long career in service to the Republic, as would many of his heirs.⁴² Like many patrician families of the Cinquecento, they were also clearly conscious of their ancestry, which could be traced back to ancient Rome and the imperial families of Trebizond and Persia.⁴³ A desire to celebrate lineage is evinced by Pietro's request that the façade of the *palazzo* be frescoed with the exploits of his great-uncle, Carlo, and by the mosaic of Renier, also at the *palazzo*.⁴⁴ Nicolò, who was a major player in urban renewal, celebrated his family in written form, chronicling the voyages to the North Pole of his late trecento ancestor, Antonio, as well as the Venetian Turkish war in which Pietro had been an instrumental negotiator. Nicolò also composed an unpublished manuscript (c. 1540) in praise of Pietro's diplomacy.⁴⁵ For a family so engaged with the spirit of *renovatio*, with a clear understanding of the role of

⁴¹ BMC, Archivio Zen 330, 1543.

⁴² On Pietro's career: Gaier, 131-160; Lucchetta, 1968, 107-119. Pietro entered the Grand Council at 25 in 1477, served as Provveditore of customs at Venice and Damascus, and was consul at the latter. He was appointed to the Avogadori di Comun, was a member and Capo of the Consiglio dei Dieci, Podestà of Padua, and served in various capacities in the east, including orator of Constantinople. Catharin was ambassador to Persia.

⁴³ Giraldi, 66; Concina, 1984, 272-3.

⁴⁴ Giraldi, 10. Both Renier and Carlo led Venetian forces to major victories against the Genovese.

⁴⁵ Foscari Collection, Vienna, Cod. CCVIII no.6643.

architecture in the “formazione di imperio e fama veneziane”⁴⁶, and with the means and desire to celebrate their lineage, it is more than odd that the chapel was so modestly equipped. I can only surmise that a few factors prevented the chapel from receiving decoration. Perhaps Zen finances were tied up in the long process of renovating the family *palazzo*, as it dragged on throughout the last decade of Pietro’s life, was still in progress after Catharin’s death, and was finally brought to completion (however not without creating internal familial strife) by Nicolò, who also provided finances for the rebuilding of the Crociferi hospital.⁴⁷ Although he was a Crociferi procurator, Nicolò resigned this post on bad terms in 1554, and ultimately opted for burial on the façade of Santi Giovanni e Paolo along with another Crociferi lay protector, Stefano Tiepolo.⁴⁸ The choice can be seen as another example of consciousness of illustrious ancestry, and of the clustering of elite families. Both the Zen and Tiepolo had ancient claims to the basilica, and shared a desire to repose in the more stately location with more obvious civic connotations. Nicolò was also a major proponent of the rejection of magnificence, and as his aforementioned treatise stressed, he believed that great powers began “without pomp, without concern for vainglory or needless expenses.”⁴⁹ Perhaps for Pietro’s grandson, elaborate burial chapels fell into the category of needless expense and excessive pomp.

⁴⁶ Concina, 1984, 281.

⁴⁷ On the controversy surrounding the division of property between Nicolò and his uncle Vincenzo: Pinessi, 2007, 109-10. ASV, PSMcitra, Com., B. 233, c. 30. (5 June 1553) Nicolò provided 8600 ducats “per destruzer et redificar d[etto] Hosepdal.”

⁴⁸ Gaier, 43-50. Stefano’s son, Paolo, also had plans to be buried there and allotted 1000 ducats for an unrealised façade tomb, but it was never realised. Pincus, 2000, 14-35. Stefano’s ancestor, doge Jacopo Tiepolo (1229-49), founded the church and was buried on the façade.

⁴⁹ Tafuri, 1995, 2.

7.4 The Da Lezze

What the Zen chapel apparently lacked in grandeur was made up for in the impressive architectural funerary monument to Priamo, Giovanni and Andrea da Lezze, complete with marble sepulchres topped with busts by Alessandro Vittoria (Priamo) and Giuliano dal Moro (Giovanni) and *bottega* (Andrea) [Figs.136-137]. The Da Lezze monument is one of the few fragments of the Crociferi church to survive more or less intact in the Gesuiti. If the engravings of the monument by A. F. Lucini (1657, Museo Correr) and V. Coronelli (1709, Museo Correr) predating the destruction of the church can be trusted, this monument provides a useful scale by which we can envision the dimensions of the original counter façade [Figs.138-139]. Coronelli's rendering accounts for an oculus window, visible in Palma's depiction of the façade, around which the pediment of the monument broke. Both engravings indicate some elements were lost: two reclining victories on either side of the oculus, shell niches behind the busts of Giovanni and Andrea, and three *putti* heads beneath each sarcophagus. A comparison between ground plans of the Crociferi and Gesuiti churches confirms that the Da Lezze monument must have been dismantled and then reassembled in a different orientation on the new and enlarged counter façade. The original façade was positioned on an angle; the Jesuits extended the new one further into the *campo* and took the opportunity to straighten it. These elements were probably lost in the process.

Cavaliere Giovanni da Lezze, Procurator of San Marco *de supra* (1537), commissioned the monument in honour of himself, his father, Priamo, Procurator *de ultra*

(1556), and his son, Andrea, a Procurator of St. Mark *de citra* (1573).⁵⁰ Giovanni's testaments narrate a progression from a general desire to be buried in the church in 1550, to an idea for a monument in a 1561 codicil, to a work in progress in 1576.⁵¹ The authorship of the monument has been the subject of scholarly conjecture, a debate to which I can add little beyond my own opinion. An attribution to Jacopo Sansovino has persisted since Lucini's engraving of 1657, and has most recently been argued, albeit not particularly persuasively, by Dario.⁵² It was sensibly excluded from Howard's monograph on the Florentine architect and sculptor, and Boucher has made a compelling case for an alternative attribution to Alessandro Vittoria.⁵³ The primary evidence for Sansovino's involvement is the connection he shared with Giovanni, who was one of his principal supporters.⁵⁴ While Dario is able to provide some stylistic comparisons with other works by Sansovino⁵⁵, just as many parallels can be drawn between the monument and works by Vittoria (such as the façade of the Scuola di San Fantin, 1583-4 [Fig.140]), whose own style was informed by that of the elder master. Further, Vittoria also shared

⁵⁰ BMC, Barbaro, IV, cc.148v-149v. [App.VIII]

⁵¹ AST, NT (Bianco), B. 79, n. 496 (3 November 1550). "...habbia far far un posito in giegli di chrosechieri." Codicil (2 March 1561); (Secco), B. 1191, n. 370 (26 July 1576). In 1550 he expresses a desire to be buried with his father at the Crociferi church. By 1561 Priamo was dead and he amended his wishes ("voglio che sia fatto un deposito nella giesia di frati de Crosechieri") and allotted 400 ducats to the project. In 1576 it was in progress, as he wishes to be placed "nello emolumento alli Crosechieri." It is "non finito per sorte", and he specifies that it be brought to completion "con ogni diligentia."

⁵² M. Dario, "Il monumento funebre ai procuratori Priamo, Giovanni e Andrea da Lezze, nella chiesa dei Gesuiti a Venezia. Nuove considerazioni per un'attribuzione a Jacopo Sansovino" *AV* 66 (1994), 62-9; Dario, 1995, 167-209.

⁵³ Boucher, 1991, 370, followed by L. Finocchi Ghersi, *Alessandro Vittoria* (Udine, 1998), 155 and Martin, 1998, 116-118.

⁵⁴ Vasari, VII, 508. As procurator Giovanni was involved in initiating and coordinating many of the major building projects and restorations in Piazza San Marco.

⁵⁵ Dario, 1994, 64. Mainly elements from the façades of San Giuliano and the Scuola della Misericordia, the Venier monument, the Loggetta.

connections with Giovanni as a result of decoration he contributed to some of the same public buildings with which Sansovino had been involved. By 1576 Vittoria had already provided *stucchi* in the Crociferi chancel, and he had produced the handsome bust of the patriarch Priamo to be placed at the focal point of the monument. Vasari knew the bust, whether through direct observation at the Crociferi church or San Marziale *palazzo* in 1566, or through his connected informant Cosimo Bartoli; it was among eight mentioned in the 1568 edition.⁵⁶ Lewis' statement that as an "unequivocally architectural enterprise" the monument must be Sansovinian seems unreasonably dismissive of Vittoria's capabilities.⁵⁷ Documentary and logistical evidence points strongly away from Sansovino. He was dead by 1570, and Giovanni's last testament confirms that the work was in progress, but not complete in 1576. Although this does not exclude his responsibility for the design, it is difficult to reconcile Francesco Sansovino's failure to assign the work to his father, particularly since in 1581 the monument would have been recently completed.⁵⁸ Dario's suggestion that Francesco glossed over the monument out of animosity toward Giovanni is not a satisfactory explanation for a missed opportunity to celebrate what would have been one of his father's final designs.⁵⁹ In light of Vittoria's pre-existing connection to the Crociferi, to Giovanni and perhaps most compellingly, his secure involvement in producing one of the key elements of the ensemble, it seems reasonable to remain dubious about any direct connections between this monument and

⁵⁶ Vasari, VII, 520. It may have been placed on Priamo's initial *arca* before the monument was complete.

⁵⁷ D. Lewis, "Review of Sansovino and Venetian Architecture, by D. Howard" *BM* 121 (1979), 39.

⁵⁸ Sansovino, 1581, c. 61v. "Dentro alla porta maggiore, è collocato in bel sepolcro Priamo da Legge Procurator di S. Marco, col figliuolo parimente Procuratore."

⁵⁹ Dario, 1994, 63.

Sansovino. Its triumphal form is not altogether surprising, given Priamo and Giovanni both held imperial titles, and given Giovanni's status as an avid architectural enthusiast who played an integral role in encouraging and introducing a classical, Roman idiom to a Venetian context (via Sansovino) as an expression of the Republic's prestige.

Beyond attribution, what remains significant to the discussion at hand is the magnificence of the result and what it represented. The combination of three sepulchres represented a formal innovation, as Stringa's expanded description of the monument highlighted: "tre bellissimi, & ricchissimi depositi, congiunti in uno."⁶⁰ It constituted a break from tradition as a grandiose tribute to a private family, ostentatiously conceived by its members to celebrate its political dynasty. The scale and grandeur of the monument was not particularly unusual, but in the late sixteenth century it would have been incongruous with the class of the patrons. Venetian republican sensibilities discouraged the glorification of the individual. As Renier Zen's monument demonstrates, elaborate tributes were erected to honour individuals who had contributed to the Republic, but generally something on this scale was reserved for the likes of doges, or perhaps *condottieri*. The Da Lezze had all enjoyed brilliant political careers, each occupying important ambassadorial roles and the position of power second only to the doge⁶¹, but in the centuries that separated Renier's tomb from that of the Da Lezze, little had changed with regard to the decorum of memorials to the worldly ambition of individuals of this rank. Thus the Da Lezze monument forms a seminal example of a

⁶⁰ Stringa, 1604, 148.

⁶¹ Dario, 1995, 169-77. Priamo was Captain of Treviso, Belluno, Padua (1506-7; 1519-50; 1529-30), was balloted for doge three times. Giovanni bought his way into the position of procurator (and therefore a lifetime position in the Senate) at the tender age of 21. Was ambassador to Paris (1561) and between the pope and Emperor Charles V at Bologna in 1532, the latter knighted him and made a Count of the Holy Cross.

shift toward the acceptability of the self-glorification of the patrician elite, and an innovatory precedent for counter façade monuments to come.⁶²

Dario argues that like the Zen, the cultural interests of the Da Lezze intersected with the atmosphere at the Crociferi church, providing a motivating factor in the selection of the site for the monument.⁶³ The Da Lezze were active participants in the *compagnie delle Calze*, were members of learned circles, and Giovanni was among those who attracted Aretino to Venice in 1527.⁶⁴ While it cannot have discouraged their association with the monastery, neither is it a sufficient explanation. The selection of the church and the construction of an extremely grand and visible monument was undoubtedly a deliberate effort to cluster their devotional interests with those of the powerful Zen. When Priamo's first wife Elisabetta Dolfin passed away in 1534, within the year he had arranged another socially strategic marriage to Barbara Zen, daughter of Pietro.⁶⁵ Priamo was named in Pietro's 1538 testament ("et magnifico messer P. d Leze, mio genero"), and further ties between the two families would have been made by the next generation when as Provveditore all'Arsenale (1553), Giovanni came into close contact with Nicolò, a proponent of the renovation of the Arsenale.⁶⁶ Stately tombs and chapels were material expressions of devotion to a sacred community, but they were also markers of lineage and legacy. Although there is some evidence of a connection between the Crociferi and the

⁶² Dario, 1995, 194. Cites another example: Vettor Grimani's unrealised 1542 plan for a counter façade monument at San Francesco della Vigna.

⁶³ Dario, 1995, 189-90.

⁶⁴ Cairns, 1985, 15-21. Letters and dedications confirm the close ties between Aretino and Giovanni, who promoted the writer in high society, as did the Zen and their cousin, Andrea Corner. Giovanni was a member of the Floridi *compagnia*, and a member of the Accademia della Fama.

⁶⁵ BMC, Archivio Zen, 2 (3 Oct 1534).

⁶⁶ Dario, 1995, 170.

Da Lezze previous to Priamo's marriage, this link of kinship can only have strengthened ties to the monastery⁶⁷ and as I have previously suggested, may even have resulted in the service of Priamo and Giovanni as lay procurators. The proximity of the tombs of these two families amounts to a conscious expression of solidarity that had existed in life, continued in death, and it cannot have escaped them that on the final day, the members would rise and approach judgment together as one illustrious assembly.

7.5 Lorenzo Massolo and Elisabetta Querini

Of all the decoration that once adorned the Crociferi church, none has received more attention than Titian's Martyrdom of St. Lawrence, which survives in the Jesuit church, albeit relocated from its original position on the second altar on the right, to the first altar on the left [Figs.128, 141-142].⁶⁸ It has been the object of numerous formal and iconographic analyses, has been discussed as an example of Titian's response to Roman art and architecture, and to Counter-Reformation spirituality.⁶⁹ Although formal and symbolic considerations will be touched upon, the focus here will be on the patronage of the altarpiece. The narrative of its creation is one that stretches across a decade or more, punctuated by puzzling lacunae in documentation. The fantastic story of

⁶⁷ *Correspondence*, 1991, 988-90. In the 1520's Giovanni da Lezze, the illegitimate son of Priamo's son Donado, was attached to the church, probably due to his musical talents, was perhaps even studying under some of the musicians there as a talented organist.

⁶⁸ R. Gallo, "Per il 'San Lorenzo Martire' di Tiziano" *Rivista di Venezia* 14, no. 4 (1935), 170. Lorenzo Pezzana built the chapel of St. Lawrence in the new Jesuit church.

⁶⁹ On the influence of Rome, the Temple of Antonious and Faustina, Raphael, Michelangelo, and the Grimani Fallen Gaul: J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *The Life and Times of Titian* (London, 1881), 262; Gallo, 1935, 167; E. Panofsky, *Problems in Titian, Mostly Iconographic* (New York, 1969), 53-7; H. Wetthey, *The Paintings of Titian* (London, 1969-75), I, 139-40, cat. 114; S. Sponza in *Titian Prince of Painters*, ed. F. Valcanover (Venice, 1990), 309-11. On Titian's visual sources and the development of the iconography: A. Joachimides, "Tizians Laurentiusmartyrium und die Venezianità Künstler und Auftraggeber zwischen Humanismus und Gegenreformation" *ZfK* 72 (2009), 351-68.

its patrons is rife with material worthy of historical fiction: murder, infidelity, illegitimate children, a prominent statesman, a papal nuncio, and the darling of the Venetian *literati*.

Lorenzo Massolo, a lawyer, hailed from an old Venetian patrician family, dating back to the early twelfth century. In 1512 he married Elisabetta Querini, a member of another illustrious family. Their first child, a daughter, died in infancy, but a son, Pietro, followed around 1519. In 1537 Pietro married Chiara Tiepolo, the daughter of Stefano, lay protector of the Crociferi. The marriage came to a shocking end short months after their union, when Pietro evidently stabbed his young wife to death. No explanation was ever provided for this violent act, even in the trial, but Pietro was convicted and sentenced to death.⁷⁰ He immediately fled to the Benedictine monastery of San Benedetto di Polirone near Mantua, where he took monastic vows the following year. Even a decade later his parents were still attempting to secure a pardon. By the mid-1540's they had garnered the advocacy of some powerful friends: Pietro Bembo and Giovanni Della Casa, who was also a friend of Stefano Tiepolo. Bembo wrote to the Abbot Gregorio Cortese in Mantua in 1538 appealing to him to allow Pietro to continue in his studies in the "belle lettere" insofar as decorum would allow. In April 1546 Della Casa agreed to approach Tiepolo in hopes of resolving the situation for the Massolo family, but was understandably met with resistance. He wrote to Gualteruzzi that he had little hope for a resolution in favour of Massolo, as Tiepolo remained "così acerbo come se il caso fosse occorso hieri."⁷¹ Although Tiepolo was willing to admit that Pietro posed

⁷⁰ Molmenti, 1927, 133-4.

⁷¹ Gallo, 1935, 164. Della Casa narrates the developments in letters to Gualteruzzi dated 10 April, 24 April and 1 May, 1546.

little risk, the discussion had opened old wounds. Without Tiepolo's support, Della Casa felt there was little hope of changing minds, as everyone respected "questo nobile e ben honorato gentilhomo." Eventually the Holy See became involved, authorizing the nuncio to personally appeal to the government for a retrial. No dispensation was ever made for Pietro, who never returned to the island, but thrived in monastic life, becoming a successful writer of various treatises including, ironically, *Rime morali*.⁷²

Just a year after Della Casa's unsuccessful attempt to secure Tiepolo's support in a pardon, Elisabetta wrote a new testament, the first to name the Crociferi church as the site of their "archa."⁷³ Her previous will of 1537, written a few months before Pietro's sentence, had expressed only a desire to be buried with her daughter and husband, but did not specify location.⁷⁴ Lorenzo's testament of November 1548 provides some clarification: "Item voglio et ordino che 'l mio corpo sia messo in la mia sepultura, quello di mia moier et le osse della q. mia fiola quale si trovano in uno deposito nella chiesa de ms. Zorzi Mazor nè altri voglio siano messi in detta sepultura, quale è nella Chiesa di Crosechieri davanti il mio altar."⁷⁵ In all likelihood Elisabetta's 1537 testament referred to some sort of burial arrangement they had at San Giorgio Maggiore, where their daughter was already interred, that they later shifted to the Crociferi church. The timing of this move can be secured to sometime before May of 1547, about the time that the appeals to Stefano Tiepolo were being made. No explanation has ever been provided

⁷² *Rime morali di m. Pietro Massolo* (Venice, 1583). Published with a preface by his friend, Francesco Sansovino.

⁷³ ASV, NT (Marsilio), B. 1207, n. 270 (25 May 1547). "Voglio che 'l sia sepelito nella Chiesa di crosichieri de Venesia nell'archa nostra con quella spesa che alli ditti miei commissari parerà."

⁷⁴ ASV, NT (Canal), B. 190, n. 244 (1 May 1537).

⁷⁵ ASV, NT (Marsilio), B. 1210, n. 683, c. 2r (18 November 1548).

for why the couple chose the Crociferi church for their altar. There is no record of either family having previous or subsequent ties to the church, although they did live in relative proximity at San Cancian. I would suggest that their foundation of the altar was a gesture related to their contemporaneous efforts to appease Stefano Tiepolo, who in these years was a Crociferi lay protector. Lorenzo's 1548 testament contains further evidence:

“Lasso al mag^o m. Stephano Thiepolo et sui Heriedi ducati vinticinq del Intrado in segno del amor et ho portat a quella pover del Chiara sua fiola et mia Carrissima nuora.”⁷⁶

Clearly Pietro's parents intended on making amends, and what better way than to establish and decorate an altar at the preferred church of the bereaved Tiepolo? It was also precisely in these same years that Giovanni della Casa began advocating for the Crociferi, and established his friendship with both Elisabetta and Tiepolo. The reader will recall that he intervened on behalf of the monastery in 1544, 1545 and 1555, with the latter resolution initiated at the request of Tiepolo. It was also during this period that Della Casa's infatuation with Elisabetta—expressed in laudatory letters and sonnets—was at its peak, thus it might even have been Della Casa who encouraged them to make such a gesture. It has often been postulated that Titian began work on the painting soon after his return from Rome in late March 1546, a trip on which Elisabetta's brother Girolamo had encouraged the artist to embark.⁷⁷ The influence of his Roman sojourn on aspects of the composition has often been cited as evidence for this date. The potential

⁷⁶ Lorenzo also left 100 ducats “alli frati del S. Franc.^o dalla vignoi per loro fabrica...una volta sola”, and small bequests to the Pietà, S. Iseppo, Santa Croce, Corpus Domini and the hospitals of Santi Giovanni e Paolo and the Incurabili.

⁷⁷ He is habitually mistaken as her grandfather or cousin. D'Elia, 2006, 180; BMC, Barbaro, VI, cc.181v-182r; ASV, Barbaro, VI, 335.

impetus for the commission around 1546 dovetails nicely with the approximate date many scholars have reached on stylistic grounds for the initiation of the painting.⁷⁸

In any case, Lorenzo's 1548 testament makes clear that arrangements for the altar were already in progress. His testament notes: "La Palla del qual altar voglio che sia habbia a finir et cussier coverchio de ditta sepolutura et salizato li va atorno secondo la mia intention come mia moier sa il tutto." This single line has formed a *terminus ante quem* for the commission of Titian's altarpiece, and in fact it is the last mention we have of the painting until 1557. A previously unknown document, Lorenzo's *mansonaria* dating to 8 August 1551, helps to fill part of that decade-long gap in documentation. The agreement notes that Lorenzo will "costrui et fabricarni fecevit ni ecc[lesi]a dine virginis Marie ordinus cruciferorum huius Civitatis Venetum a manu dextra Ingressus....altare sub vocabulo dine laurentij." It primarily stipulates the obligations of the Crociferi for saying a daily mass "per l'anima mio et del mia moier in perpetuo", a task that was initially assigned to one "frater Hieremia da Verona Sacerdotem", presumably their confessor. Lorenzo requested that his heirs, or in their absence the Procuratori di San Marco, oversee the election of a Crocifero to carry out these responsibilities in the future.⁷⁹ Although the document remains silent on any arrangements for decoration of the altar, the tense used to describe the act of building indicates that the altar itself had not yet been built.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ R. Pallucchini, *Tiziano* (Florence, 1969), 148-9; Sponza, 1990, 308. Chiara Moretto Wiel has argued similarly based on a study in the Uffizi of the leg of the figure on the right, probably the one mentioned in a letter to Leopoldo de' Medici from Paolo del Sera of 1671. (Inv. 12907f, charcoal on blue paper). C. Moretto Wiel, *Tiziano. Corpus dei disegni autografi* (Milan, 1988).

⁷⁹ ASV, PSMsupra, Com. B. 12, fasc. 10b, cc. 1r-2r (8 August 1551).

⁸⁰ Thanks to Dr. Georg Christ and Dr. Angela Roberts for confirming the transcription.

Indeed, we know that the painting was still not finished on 12 March 1557, when Elisabetta wrote her last testament on 25 January 1557, less than two months after the death of her husband: “Voglio et ordino che se l’archa et Pala di Crosechierj non serà finita, la facci finir con quella più prestezza serà possibile et cosi si data ogni debita execution di tempo in tempo à quanto è stà ordinato per il g. m. Lorenzo mio Marido...”⁸¹ Elisabetta may not have survived to see the finished altarpiece installed. She died in January of 1559, the same year that Ridolfi claimed the 15 year-old Palma had studied it.⁸² Even though Titian could literally see the back of the Crociferi church from his Biri Grande studio, it seems to have taken him over a decade to deliver the work, a habit that, according to Boschini, was not unusual. In 1564 Garcia Hernández, the intermediary between Titian and King Philip II, came sniffing around the church when his patron expressed a desire for a Titian Martyrdom of St. Lawrence to honour the saint who had gained new significance as a result of a key victory at St. Quentin on his feast day in 1557. Hernández wrote to the king’s secretary Gonzolo Pérez about the Crociferi version, “done by Titian many years ago.” What he says next is critical, yet it has been consistently mistranslated and misinterpreted.⁸³ Most authors have contended the Crociferi were willing to part with the altarpiece for 200 *scudi*, or the king could pay 50 for a copy by Titian’s leading pupil. What the letter actually says is that the *frati* told Hernández *they* paid 200 *scudi* for it.⁸⁴ For one thing, this suggests that the Crociferi

⁸¹ BMC, Cod. Cic. 3423/XIV (V 294, VII 8), fasc. 17 (8 March 1557), c. 1r.

⁸² Ridolfi, 1648, II, 172.

⁸³ B. Cole. “Titian and the Idea of Originality in the Renaissance” in *The Craft of Art*, ed. A. Ladis and C. Wood (London, 1995), 105.

⁸⁴ Crowe and Cavalcaselle’s English translation makes this error, and it has persisted since (1877, II, 343). The original is transcribed in M. Mancini, *Tiziano e le corti d’Asburgo nei doumenti archivi spagnoli* (Venice, 1998), 322, n. 202 (9 October 1564).

probably assumed the responsibility for bringing the arrangement to a conclusion since Elisabetta's executor, Girolamo, predeceased her in October 1559.⁸⁵ Stringa claimed in 1604 that an elderly Crocifero told him that the *frati* had received many offers over the years for the picture, even from foreign princes, of 3,000 or 4,000 *scudi*, but that they would never part with it.⁸⁶ Indeed, it is difficult to accept that they would have had the authority to sell a work right off the altar that had been provided by a private patron just five years before. That the Titian was not taken into the custody of the state in 1656 like the Tintoretto Wedding at Cana is further evidence that it was tied to its location by virtue of patronage rights. Even if they had been free to strike a deal, it seems beyond ridiculous to entertain the notion that a group of monks in the midst of a five-decade decorative extravaganza designed to obtain works by the leading artists would have been willing to part with their Titian for the low sum of 200 *scudi*.

Since the *pala* was unfinished when Lorenzo died, responsibility for following its progress fell to his wife. Lorenzo's 1548 testament clearly states that his wife knew his intentions in matters pertaining to the altar. Although it was not the norm, neither was it unheard of for a woman to oversee a commission on behalf of her deceased husband.⁸⁷ Yet one does get the distinct impression that it was Elisabetta who was the driving force behind this commission from the start, even if the subject honoured her husband's

“En un monasterio desta ciudad está un quadro de San Lorenzo que hizo él muchos años ha, el qual es de la grandeza y manera que vuestra merced apunta en su carta, y los frailes me han dicho que le dieron por él doscientos escudos...”

⁸⁵ Humfrey, 1993, 97. It was not unusual for the clergy to assume responsibility for a commission initiated by a deceased patron.

⁸⁶ Stringa, 1604, 147.

⁸⁷ Humfrey, 2000, 379. For example, Elisabetta Soranzo oversaw the commission of Veronese's high altarpiece for San Sebastiano, and Elisabetta, widow of Giovanni Vendramin, executed the commission for Tintoretto's San Polo Assumption.

eponymous saint. While very little is known about Lorenzo Massolo, quite a lot is known about Elisabetta, and it was certainly she who had the connections to the painter, through her brother and her great admirers, Pietro Bembo and Giovanni della Casa. In 1543 Elisabetta commissioned a portrait of herself from Titian to give to Gualteruzzi, a member of this same circle.⁸⁸ There was, evidently, any number of people who wished to gaze upon her likeness. From the late 1530's she had been the object of Pietro Bembo's affections. He devoted six sonnets to praising her beauty, intellect, piety and grace.⁸⁹ In one he claims that she would have outshone Laura in the eyes of Petrarch, in another she was cast as a goddess in the Judgment of Paris. The papal nuncio was similarly besotted when he came to know "La Massola" during his time in Venice, probably via her brother Girolamo.⁹⁰ In 1545, the same year Della Casa served as delegate judge on Titian's trial over a dispute with the Canons of Santo Spirito in Isola⁹¹, a second Titian portrait of Elisabetta was commissioned, this time for the nuncio, who had already established a relationship with the sitter familiar enough to receive from her a gift of a luxurious bed.⁹² Some have proposed that their relationship was inappropriate, and even produced a love

⁸⁸ On the portraits of Elisabetta and Giovanni della Casa: Gallo, 1935, 163-5; Santosuosso, 1995, 111-18.

⁸⁹ C. Kidwell, *Pietro Bembo* (Montreal, 2004), 318-26, 374. Bembo wrote to her in 1537: "...your mind is no less lovely than the body which heaven gave you, so graceful and pleasing and marvellously sweet. I know you had a most charming mind, but I would not have guessed that you had such a pure, beautiful and noble literary style which delights me and gives me a good, sweet reason to love and honour you."

⁹⁰ Santosuosso, 1995, 119. Bembo recommended Della Casa to the Querini family before he took up his post. Girolamo was extremely connected—he was active in the circle in which the Zen and Da Lezze also ran—and he introduced the nuncio to artists and intellectuals, including Titian, Sansovino and Aretino.

⁹¹ A. Sambo, "Tiziano davanti ai giudici ecclesiastici" in *Tiziano e Venezia* (Vicenza, 1980), 383-93.

⁹² Gallo, 1935, 162-3; Vasari, 1878, III, 169. A letter of 23 May 1545 from Della Casa to Gualteruzzi confirms the commission, and Vasari saw it in Della Casa's house.

child, an argument swiftly dismantled by Gallo, who sensibly notes that even if a woman married in 1512 could have borne a child in 1544-5, some record of such a scandalous turn of events would have reached us.⁹³ It cannot be denied that Della Casa was beyond smitten; it was the second portrait that was the object of his sonnets, which provide an enduring record of his admiration: “Ben veggo io, Titiano, in forme nove L’idolo mio.” So too did Aretino praise Titian for his rendition of “the golden, the beautiful, the sacred countenance of la Massola.” The accompanying sonnet stressed Titian’s success in revealing her illustrious mind, regal quality, noble thoughts, and irresistible spirit. Sadly neither of the portraits of Elisabetta survives, nor does his portrait of Della Casa.⁹⁴

Given that Elisabetta was already a patron of Titian, and was clearly a woman of unusual intellect who was accepted in the most learned circle of the day, the possibility that she played a more active role in the commission should not be dismissed. It may even have been the ease between friends that allowed the project to drag on as it did.⁹⁵

⁹³ BMC, Cod. Cic. 3423/XIV (V 294, VII 8), fasc. 17 (8 March 1557), c. 1r. As Elisabetta’s testament confirms, a son, Quirinetto, was born to Della Casa who still aspired for promotion to cardinal. For obvious reasons of decorum he was taken as the charge of the woman for whom he was clearly named, and her brother Girolamo. She arranged a handsome trust for the boy in her testament. Sponza (1990, 310) suggests that the specification in Lorenzo’s testament that no one other than he and his wife be placed in their burial plot is evidence of his concern with excluding his wife’s illegitimate son, however testaments frequently included this particular clause.

⁹⁴ Santosuosso, 1995, 117 and Terribile, 2006, 79-130. Della Casa owned multiple works by Titian, including one given to Girolamo Querini upon his departure for Rome in 1550. A portrait matching the description of the Elisabetta portrait was listed in 1640 in the *Catalogo di quadri vendibili a Genova*: “La Donna di Gio: della Casa nominata dal Vasari come in ritratto nuda, a meraviglia bella, di mano di Titiano, largo quattro palmi et alto palmi quattro e mezzo.” Various engravings and purported copies of both portraits do exist.

⁹⁵ As has so often been suggested, the work was probably immediately delayed by Titian’s eight-month sojourn at the court of Charles V in January 1548, followed by a second trip, six months in duration in 1550, and many commissions for the Augsburg court throughout the decade.

The result was, of course, well worth the wait. The fiery nocturnal scene of Lawrence's martyrdom assumed unprecedented drama on a life-size scale.⁹⁶ Gone is the static, passive figure leaning on a grill. In the altarpiece's original setting, the viewer would have discovered the foreshortened Lawrence, feet first as they moved up the nave. The spectator is drawn into the darkness, broken only by the flames that lick the saint's exposed skin, torches, and a bolt of lightning, seen only by Lawrence and the pious witness to this sacred drama. This effect would only have been heightened by the addition of two actual torches, which Lorenzo stipulated should be placed on the altar on special occasions.⁹⁷ The looming classical temple emerging from the night and the violent postures of Lawrence's tormentors, pushing, pulling, stoking and watching in cruel inaction, inspire pity, fear, and horror.⁹⁸ Yet there is something triumphant and heroic about the muscular body of the saint, who strains to reach for his divine reward, in a gesture that closely recalls Peter Martyr's in Titian's first monumental scene of martyrdom of thirty years before [Fig.143]. As Panofsky so persuasively argued, this impression of the saint's victory over death, of the Christian faith over the pagan world, would have been emphasised for the educated viewer by the statue of Vesta to the left-

⁹⁶ (493x277 cm)

⁹⁷ ASV, NT (Marsilio), B. 1210, n. 683, c. 2r. "Io voglio che mio moier manda ogni anno dilli sopra scritti padri di Crosechieri doi torci" to be placed on his altar "al vespero et alla messa di morti. A codicil was primarily occupied by how and by whom the torches would be supplied after his wife's death.

⁹⁸ D'Elia, 2006, 67; P. Hills, "Titian's fire: pyrotechnics and representations in sixteenth-century Venice" *Oxford Art Journal* 80 (2007), 195, 202. D'Elia argued that Venetian Renaissance viewers had a vivid point of reference from witnessing public executions. Likewise, Hills has noted the original audience would have lived with a pervasive anxiety about fire and its destructive power, thus may have had a heightened response to its depiction.

hand side.⁹⁹ It must be said that the painting's message of violence and redemption takes on new poignancy against the backdrop of that shocking act that forever changed the lives of the patrons.

Even though the official guidelines for Counter-Reformation art had not yet been codified, this altarpiece fulfilled the requirements. It is no wonder that the altar decoration was so praised by the apostolic visitors at a time when the boundaries were clearer: "...ornatum decentissime in omnibus."¹⁰⁰ By the end of the century theorists were encouraging artists to exaggerate violence in scenes of martyrdom, to explore the tension between tragedy and victory, for the purposes of moral edification and heightened emotional reaction. But even in the 1540's and 50's, the Massolo couple's selection of a scene of martyrdom was highly progressive. Titian had already explored some of these ideas in 1527, and by the time he painted the Massolo altarpiece he had spent a decade producing works, some of them depicting violence and suffering, for various individuals at the Spanish court, where Counter-Reformation spirituality was alive and well.¹⁰¹

Titian's good friend Aretino began writing his highly dramatic and violent accounts of the lives of saints over a decade before Trent was even in session, and their immediate popular appeal confirms that there was a demand for written works that would elicit a

⁹⁹ Panofsky, 53-7. Panofsky contends that Titian's source may have been the *Passio sancti Laurentii* of Prudentius, written just two centuries after the actual martyrdom, translated and published in the vernacular by the Aldine press around 1501. For Prudentius, Lawrence's martyrdom represented the defeat of Vesta, the chaste goddess, and thus forms a moment of transition from the pagan to Christian world.

¹⁰⁰ ASVat, VA, 96, c. 72r. "...sed est sine capella habet dotem 22 ducatorum cum obligatione ibi celibrandi ad libitum per mansonaria S.mi Dn' Laurentij Massoli, familia extincta est, annexa est ei societas."

¹⁰¹ C. Hope, *Titian* (London, 1980), 109. Hope has called the 1547 Prado *Ecce Homo* [Fig.145], "one of the earliest and most perfect examples of Counter-Reformation religious art." Titian produced the gory *Tityus* and quasi-nocturnal *St. Margaret* for Mary of Hungary 1548-9 [Figs.144, 146].

similar response from the reader as Titian's painted narratives. Why should we expect that there would not have been an analogous demand for such expression in the more powerful and accessible medium of painting, even if there had not yet been a formal articulation of the ideal form of Counter-Reformation art? It was precisely during the 1540's that Venice became more aware of the Protestant threat and a need to remain vigilant against it. Della Casa's arrival in the city in 1544 signalled a superficial openness to addressing the concerns of the papacy, as in reality he was met with the usual Venetian resistance to external interference. As Humfrey has noted, the echoes of Counter-Reformation spirituality discernable in altarpieces like this one "may be interpreted less as the result of instructions from bishops and the clergy than a spontaneous response by artists and their lay patrons to a generally diffused mood of religious revival."¹⁰² Although Della Casa was more ambitious than pious, and could not really be considered a particularly passionate reformer, it was his job to enforce orthodoxy. As an intellectual and art enthusiast, no one would have been in a better position to advise Titian and/or the Massolo couple on how they might achieve a progressive, yet decorous result. The connections all parties involved in this commission shared with Della Casa serve as compelling evidence of this, and the generally learned character of the patrons, their circle, and the Crociferi, supports the long-held belief that there was in fact a literary source for the painting, probably Prudentius.¹⁰³ Many have

¹⁰² P. Humfrey, *The age of Titian* (Edinburgh, 2004), 26-7.

¹⁰³ E. Scarpa, "La biblioteca di Giovanni della Casa" *La Bibliofilia* 82 (1980), 247-280. There is no record of a copy of Prudentius in the inventory of Della Casa's library, although he must surely have known it, given he was responsible for compiling the first index of prohibited books. Due to the closure of the Vatican library I was unable to consult the full inventory of the Crociferi library for evidence of the text in their collection. Given their interest in *volgare* literature and their connections to the

argued for various cryptic references to Elisabetta's involvement, but it remains impossible to prove.¹⁰⁴ Even as a clearly extraordinary woman, it seems anomalous to suggest that she would have expected to be overtly referenced in the altarpiece. Should she have wished for such a thing, she might have opted for a more traditional *sacra conversazione* designed to include her eponymous saint. If there is evidence of Elisabetta in this image, it might better be described as latent; the work as a whole may be seen as a reflection of her own erudition and the company she and Titian kept at a moment of religious upheaval. The Crociferi, with their known taste for the theatrical cannot have been displeased. On the contrary, the work seems to have inspired them to bracket the altar with two further violent martyrdoms in the decades that followed.

7.6 Patriarch Giovanni Tiepolo

The last major addition to the decoration of the church was an altar dedicated to the Guardian Angel that Martinioni claimed was erected by Giovanni Tiepolo “già Patriarca di Venetia.” Like many Crociferi patrons, Tiepolo (1571-1631) was of noble extraction, a member of the Tiepolo family through his father and the Bragadin family through his mother, whose uncle was doge Marino Grimani (1595-1605). It was Grimani who appointed the exceedingly pious Tiepolo to the position of *primicerio* of San Marco in 1603, a position he held until he became patriarch in 1619. Throughout his career, he was a fierce promoter of Venetian spirituality and its autonomy from Rome, the cult of the Virgin, local saints and relics as well as a prolific author of pastoral treatises

community that produced it, there is good reason to believe that they would have known the Aldine translation, if not possessed a copy.

¹⁰⁴ Sponza, 1990, 311. He argues the statue and lightning reference Elisabetta.

published exclusively in the *volgare* in the interests of accessibility.¹⁰⁵ As a proponent of religious reform, Tiepolo viewed painting as a similarly powerful, even related tool for the instruction and inspiration of the population, as articulated in his 1613 Trattato dell'invocatione et veneratione de'Santi.¹⁰⁶ From about 1615-1621 he expended the majority of his personal fortune creating and decorating altars in every single *sestiere* of the city in an effort to visually promote rather obscure Marian dedications and the cults of Venetian *beati*.¹⁰⁷ He personally founded four altars dedicated to the Virgin at the churches of San Francesco di Paola (Madonna di Loreto), Spirito Santo (Madonna di Arezzo), Santa Lucia (Madonna del Parto), and the Frari (chapel of the Madonna del Pianto), an altar dedicated to the Crucifixion at San Gerolamo, another dedicated to the Agony of Christ at the church of the Convertite on the Giudecca, and the altar of the Venetian *beato* Giacomo Salamon at Santi Giovanni e Paolo. Two further altars of unknown dedication were founded at San Stefano and San Samuele.¹⁰⁸ Tiepolo's altar at the Crociferi church must be seen in the context of this wider pattern of patronage; it was a gesture made on behalf of these individual communities, and the Venetian religious community as a whole. It was personal only insofar as it was an expression of Tiepolo's

¹⁰⁵ On his writings: Logan, 1995, 332-371.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 340. "One can understand the matter and order of a thing by reading it no less than by seeing it. But a writer sometimes cannot in certain points embellish what he says to the same degree that a painter can with brushes and colours, nor can the painter express certain things which pertain to ideas rather than to what can be perceived by sense; to describe a thing fully, therefore, painting and writing are often joined together."

¹⁰⁷ I am indebted to Deborah Walberg, who generously shared her unpublished research on Tiepolo's patronage of Marian altars.

¹⁰⁸ BMC, Cod. Cic. 3060, I, n. 23, cc. 243-64.

own devotional proclivities, as he was not buried at the church, nor did he endow masses there.¹⁰⁹

Martinelli's description locates the altar to the immediate left of the entrance. Both Martinioni and Martinelli attest to its decoration with a *pala* by Palma il Giovane (still in the Gesuiti), who was in fact also the favoured painter of Tiepolo [Fig.147].¹¹⁰ Palma contributed to the cycle of 28 portraits of Venetian saints and *beati* Tiepolo commissioned in 1622 for the Madonna dell'Orto as a visual parallel to his published Venetian hagiographical treatise.¹¹¹ He also provided an altarpiece around 1618 for the altar at Santa Lucia (now in San Geremia) employing the rare iconography of the Expectation of the Birth of Christ¹¹², and it cannot be coincidence that Palma was heavily involved in the decoration of San Bartolomeo and San Gerolamo, both churches consecrated by Tiepolo. Like many of Tiepolo's altars, this one bore a rather obscure dedication to the cult of the Guardian Angel, which was heavily promoted by the Jesuits in the face of the rejection of the book of Tobit from Protestant scripture. It was deemed as apocryphal, and prayers to angels were discouraged as a form of false intercession. Published reflections on the cult by its major proponents, Luigi Gonzaga (1606) and the Roberto Bellarmino (whose works were recorded in the Crociferi library) aided its dissemination. Their writings stressed the role guardian angels played in each life, from womb to tomb and beyond, guiding, protecting and interceding on behalf of an

¹⁰⁹ There was no mention of Tiepolo in the 1656 list of endowed masses, *mansonarie*.

¹¹⁰ Martinioni, 1663, 169; Martinelli, 1684, 222; ASV, AP, c. 124r. The 1656 inventory recorded: "Una Pala di d^{to} Angelo di man del Palma." Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 127, cat. 436.

¹¹¹ Boschini, 1664, 445.

¹¹² Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 375, 377-80.

individual, just as the archangel Raphael did for Tobias.¹¹³ Their story became the model for the concept of the guardian angel, but did not proliferate in Venice until the later part of the century, as evinced by the foundation in 1692 of a confraternity dedicated to the cult in Santi Apostoli.¹¹⁴ The story of Raphael and Tobias had further relevance for the vocation of the Crociferi, as the story carried connotations of charity and healing, indeed the name “Raphael” means “God’s healing”, and their church in Verona also had an altar dedicated to the Angelo Custode.

Palma’s altarpiece provides multiple vignettes [**Fig.147**], narrating various stages of the journey of Raphael and Tobias on the lower register. In each Raphael directs and counsels Tobias, something Palma communicates through protective postures and guiding gestures. In the principal scene Raphael and Tobias seem to engage in a debate between two paths, with Tobias, clutching his pilgrim’s staff, gesturing inquisitively toward a tree trunk. Raphael’s elegantly-posed leg blocks his progress, directing him instead to the souls purveyed to heaven by angels in the second register. It conveys the central message of the importance of blind faith in divine grace (personified by the angel) to steer souls out of the path of danger (where they might be felled by evil), and onto the correct path toward salvation. Several preparatory drawings illustrate how Palma initially conceived of a *sacra conversazione* format, with a single depiction of Raphael and Tobias, flanked by two kneeling female saints and two Crociferi on the lower register, with the Madonna in the firmament above [**Fig.148**].¹¹⁵ A second arrangement included the multiple narratives, with the figure of Raphael gesturing to the souls being carried

¹¹³ P. Marshall, *Angels in the early modern world* (Cambridge, 2006), 13, 191-213.

¹¹⁴ Vio, 2006, 173.

¹¹⁵ Mason-Rinaldi, 1984, 127, D. 55. London, Colnaghi Archive (Pen, ink and brown wash), and London, British Museum.

toward the Trinity at the summit [Fig.149]. Ultimately he left the heavenly sphere to the imagination of the viewer, but achieves a far more engaging result by omitting the more static elements. The work has traditionally been dated to after 1619, based on the year of Tiepolo's election, and because it fits stylistically with Palma's late period, to which Ridolfi assigned it.

It is hard to say why Tiepolo chose to bestow the church with an altar. His devotion to its titular may have been a factor, but in a city with innumerable Marian churches, this alone is not a satisfactory explanation. As a reformer, perhaps he was rewarding or encouraging the efforts of the Crociferi toward rehabilitation. Tiepolo was extremely sympathetic to the difficulties of convent life in particular. As a member of the ruling class, he knew all too well that the city's institutions were full of sons and daughters who had been forced into religious life by necessity rather than a genuine calling.¹¹⁶ It may have been the patrician demographic at the monastery that attracted his support and, as we have seen, it was just this sort of illustrious backing that allowed the Venetian house to flourish while all others faltered. As one of the greatest proponents of religious traditions unique to Venice and the autonomy of its church, Tiepolo's gesture might also be seen against the backdrop of the gradual decline of the order throughout the final decades of its existence, and Rome's increasing desire to suppress these "conventini inutili." The Venetian house was the last to go, not because it was a bastion of piety and orthodoxy, but because it was the longstanding recipient of a sort of protection unique to Venice: one that was rooted in the Republic's resistance toward the interference of Rome, even when justified, and in the devotional preferences of its elite ruling class,

¹¹⁶ Tiepolo's sympathy for nuns is outlined by Sperling (*Convents and the Body Politic*, 1999).

which we have seen favoured the Crociferi from the start. As a late and final piece of evidence for what has already emerged strongly from these pages, Tiepolo's patronage is a fitting place to conclude.

Chapter VIII: Conclusion

Beyond achieving a clearer sense of the form and decoration of this lost church, one of the chief objectives of this project was to understand how this decadent religious order, constantly cited for its disobedience, managed to maintain a thriving community in Venice, the material expression of which was its sumptuously decorated church. Two explanations emerged, both related to forms of patronage, the theme that developed as the fulcrum of this dissertation. A map of relationships and social networks, all interacting in this space became apparent, one that spanned the full spectrum of Venetian social stratifications. As these pages have demonstrated, despite their lapses in discipline, the Venetian Crociferi were consistently sustained by the support of the elite patrician class, prominent members of the *cittadino* class, numerous affluent guilds and confraternities, two doges, a Grand Chancellor, numerous Procuratori di San Marco, and a Patriarch of Venice. Their connection to the ruling class seems the obvious explanation for the unprecedented success and longevity of the Venetian monastery. As Romano has shown, despite moral and economic corruption, even violence, these monasteries continued to have huge appeal to a patrician audience.¹ Attachment to a sacred community sometimes developed out of a historical connection between a family and a monastery, or a strategic bond of kinship, and while this was the case at the Crociferi church, there is also a sense that its rather sophisticated and at times relaxed atmosphere was a compelling factor for its elite support and membership. Crociferi interest in theatre, secular literature, music and visual art undoubtedly developed out of their connection to the patrician class, or at

¹ Romano, 1987, 103.

the very least was nurtured by it. The monastery formed a nexus between the sacred and the secular, demonstrating that while there was often tension between these two realms, they were in fact intimately linked. Since the Crociferi elsewhere do not appear to have been particularly engaged in learned pursuits or as patrons of memorable visual art, it is tempting to assign responsibility for the ambiance at Santa Maria Assunta to this uniquely Venetian milieu. Indeed, patrician support goes a long way in explaining how the Venetian monastery was still filled to capacity in 1656, when membership at every other house was depleted to two or three inhabitants, and why three out of the final four Crociferi houses were under Venetian control. Patrician allegiance to monasteries was a major obstacle for religious reform in Venice, as the very individuals in positions of governmental authority to enforce discipline were also those with personal investments in individual monastic communities, and the power to protect their favoured institutions.² Ample evidence has been elucidated of the ways in which the Crociferi benefited from this dynamic; indeed it is clear that they actively sought out powerful protectors precisely for this reason, particularly during the cinquecento. It was this same ruling class that maintained Venice's fiercely guarded independence from Rome, particularly regarding ecclesiastical matters. Giovanni Tiepolo was, for example, a staunch promoter of the Republic's unique spirituality, the cults of its own saints, and its right to make decisions for its own religious community. Venice's resistance to suppressing some of these "conventini inutili" in its territory—the Crociferi included—in the early 1650's was absolutely a protective reaction against the interference of the papacy, a brand of advocacy the Crociferi in other territories did not enjoy. Only when it was in their best

² Quaranta, 1998, 62.

financial interest did the Venetian authorities concede to the suppressions, and there is evidence that even then the Crociferi were still trying to manipulate the system. Nuncio Caraffa reported to Rome that having caught the “odore di suppressione” the remaining Crociferi and their “Eccellentissimi Signori Protettori” made an impassioned *supplica* to the Senate, appealing for rescue one final time on the grounds of their ancient origins, their longstanding relationship with Venice, and the monastery’s status as a refuge for the nobility. They invoked their connections to Cleto, St. Helen, the discovery of the True Cross, and the Gussoni family, reminding the Senate that they provided “l’educazione, e alimento di tanto numero d’Alumni di questa Patria, molti di quali sono singolarizzati in lettere, Prelature e Ationi degne di rimarco.”³

The reason the Crociferi were able to thrive and survive in Venice also explains why the decoration of their church ended up looking as it did. The stars aligned throughout the sixteenth century, drawing together a distinguished body of learned Crociferi, connected private patrons and affluent confraternities, whose combined resources and vision converted the space into an ambitious visual response to the latest artistic and religious trends. Throughout these chapters, the Crociferi have emerged as astute patrons of art who exercised their influence over the imagery even when they were not directly responsible for the commissions. It was no coincidence that their church became a sort of shrine to Venetian Renaissance painting. The decoration they organized exhibits not only an intent to procure works by the leading artists of the time, but also a deliberate and erudite attempt to advertise their reformed status and their adherence to the

³ BMC, Cod. Cic.1231/XXXVI, cc. 221-222. “Supplica de Padri Crociferi soppressi dal somo Pontefice Ill.^{mi} et Ecc^{mi} Sig^{ri} Protettori del Monastero de Padri Crociferi di Venezia.”

central tenets of Counter-Reformation spirituality. The efforts of these Crociferi to coordinate the form, content and logistics of multiple phases of church decoration that formed a collective response to religious reform, should be viewed alongside the analogous schemes undertaken by Fra Germano at the Frari, Bernardo Torlioni at San Sebastiano, and numerous priors and parish priests at other Venetian churches during this same period.

When a church is destroyed, far more than a physical structure is lost. From the very beginning, I approached this project with an ambition to reconstruct the form of the Crociferi church, but also to restore meaning to works of art that have always been esteemed, but have rarely been properly evaluated in relation to their original setting. In excavating new information about the Crociferi community and their supporters, in bringing objects and their patrons back together and considering them in relation to one another, this pattern of deliberate and learned patronage emerged from a previously obscured context, facilitating new connections and interpretations.

Some quite interesting material that emerged from my research did not fit organically into this dissertation, but belongs to a chapter yet to be written: the afterlife of a lost monastery. The post-suppression dialogue between Rome, the papal nuncio, the Senate, and the Florentine agent Paolo del Sera surrounding the fate of the visual art belonging to the Crociferi and the Canons of Santo Spirito in Isola, reveals early awareness on the part of Venetian authorities, the public, and the painters' guild of the importance of preserving the Republic's cultural patrimony, in this case, the Tintoretto *Wedding at Cana*, and multiple works by Titian and Salviati from Santo Spirito. The solution they reached in 1659 was to create a collection of these displaced treasures in the

sacristy of the recently completed basilica of Santa Maria della Salute.⁴ They were reacting against the increasing scarcity of quality Old Master paintings as a result of the ravenous foreign art market; Paolo del Sera's attempt to sneak the Crociferi *cenacolo* out of Venice and into the collection of Leopoldo de' Medici was one of many covert sales the government increasingly felt the need to remain vigilant against.⁵ By the mid-Seicento, the state was already well aware that these paintings represented a golden age in the history of the Republic. Works of the Cinquecento were privileged, and a keen awareness of the quality of paintings also emerged, perhaps not coincidentally as a language for Venetian art criticism found its voice and a wider audience with the publishing of Boschini's topographical guide to the city for the art enthusiast, and Ridolfi's lives of the Venetian painters. The popularity of these printed works, both immediate best sellers, is also evidence of the increasing celebration of regional style, and a demand from a public that clearly wanted to learn to view and appreciate it. The relocation of the Crociferi and Santo Spirito paintings to the Salute sacristy was a concerted effort to create a collection for edification of the public, something the painters' guild also emphasized when pleading their case to keep the paintings. Always sensitive of their geographic removal from other major centres of artistic innovation, the painters felt that especially fine works by their forbearers should be accessible for the instruction of future generations.

⁴ ASV, Senato Terra, filz. 663 (24 May 1659).

⁵ During these same years the nuns of Santa Maria Maggiore were caught unloading valuable paintings "at dead of night" to representatives of the Aldovrandi of Bologna. The government was alerted to similar activity at Santa Maria dell'Umiltà, where the Benedictine nuns were negotiating the sale of a Bassano and a Tintoretto. The monks of Santa Maria dei Servi were caught negotiating the sale of their Veronese Feast in the House of Simon, a picture Del Sera hoped to acquire, claiming it was more studied than either of the artists other large feasts at San Giorgio and Santi Giovanni e Paolo.

As a locus of civic and popular devotion and ceremony, the Salute was an obvious choice for the display of an impressive group of pictures. The authorities clearly understood that they were creating a relationship that would be symbiotic: the important works would have a home appropriate to their calibre and the prestige of the shrine would be enhanced by their presence. By 1664 Boschini recorded that the sacristy was serving its intended purpose as an *accademia*, visited for the purpose of study. He wrote:

“Oh Sagrestia famosa de Salute,
Dove tante Piture de valor
Miracolosamente, dal Signor
In qual Sacratio al fin xe stà redute!

Tician, el Tentoreto, el Salviati
Sa dar la vita e ‘l spirito ai colori;
Là ghe xe ‘l fior de celebri Pitori,
Là ghe ‘è ecelenza de figure e d’ati

Adesso core tutti i forestieri
In sta nova Cademia, a far profito
Per l’invencion, dessegno e colorito,
Per imarar de l’Arte e colpi veri.”⁶

The Salute solution was to prove seminal; it was a precedent to which Venetian authorities would return a century and a half later, when faced with the thousands of works of art displaced by the Napoleonic suppressions and the epic plunder and desecration of the city’s monasteries that followed. As in 1659, the threat after 1797 was foreign, but the situation was far more dire; this city built on the spoils of war understood that the loss of their visual art represented a loss of their identity and independence. The Salute collection, and that irrepressible Venetian spirit of “dov’era, com’era” that spurred its creation went on to inspire new repositories for the material relics of Venice’s past, including the Accademia Galleries, the annexed Scuola Grande di

⁶ Boschini, 1664, 504.

San Giovanni Evangelista, and the Chapel of the Rosary in Santi Giovanni e Paolo, where several paintings formerly in the Crociferi church—Cima’s Annunciation and Veronese’s Adoration of the Shepherds—would find a home.

Tintoretto’s *cenacolo*, long alienated from its original home in the Crociferi refectory, hangs in the Salute, like so many works in collections all over the world, enjoying a rebirth of sorts, but also serving as a poignant reminder of *Venezia scomparsa*. At the heart of this project was a conviction shared with Ruskin, whose lament for the lost “stones of Venice” sparked subsequent efforts for reconstruction and preservation. He said: “there is no school, no lecturer, like the ruin of the ages.”⁷ Despite many obstacles, much has been recovered regarding the history of the elusive Crociferi and their church, material with implications that reach beyond the art historical sphere. But a glimpse at the Jacopo de’Barbari bird’s-eye-view reveals that the Crociferi monastery is, sadly, only one among far too many important lost buildings yet to be reconstructed, reminding us that there is still much more work to be done.

⁷ J. Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice* (London, 1851), III, 366.

Appendix I

Index of documents preserved in the Archivio Storico del Patriarcato di Venezia, Capitolo di San Marco, Pergamene, B. 7.

- n. 1. 1168, July. Richelda, relicta et commissaria Henrici navigat. de confratelli S. Eustachii, fa alcune donazioni.
- n. 2. Verona, 1185, 15 January. Lucio III mette l'ospedale di Padova sotto la protezione papale e lo libera dalla decima.
- n. 3. Verona, 1186-1187, 29 April. Urbano III mette sotto la protezione papale il Magister ed i confratelli dei Crociferi e conferma a loro le chiese di S. Golfo e S. Leonardo.
- n. 4. Verona, 1187, 26 March. Urbano III mette sotto la protezione papale il Magister e i confratelli dei Crociferi a Bologna, conferma la loro proprietà e decide altre questioni elencate in seguito una per una.
- n. 5. Laterano, 1195, 1 August. Celestino III mette sotto la protezione papale il Magister e i confratelli dei Crociferi a Bologna conferma le proprietà elencate ognuna col proprio nome, e decide altre questioni elencate in seguito una per una.
- n. 6. Innocenzo III mette sotto la protezione papale l'ospedale a Rotello
- n. 7. Orvieto, 1220, 9 July. Onorio III autorizza il Magister dei Crociferi di Bologna, a dispensare dal giuramento il priore ed alcuni fratelli dell'ospedale dei Crociferi a Venezia.
- n. 8. Rieti, 9 December. Onorio III esorta tutti i cristiani della Romagna e della Marca di Ancona a dare il proprio sostegno all'ospedale presso Potenza (Pons Potentiae) e concede indulgenza di 20 giorni.
- n. 9. Laterano, 1228, 26 February. Gregorio IX mette sotto protezione papale l'ospedale dei Crociferi a Negroponte.
- n. 10. Perugia, 1228, 29 June. Gregorio IX autorizza il Magister a procedere contro i confratelli che non si attengono alle regole dell'ordine.
- n. 11. Perugia, 1228, 6 July. Gregorio IX autorizza i confratelli dell'ospedale dei Crociferi a raccogliere elemosine una volta all'anno e concede altre privilegi.
- n. 12. Perugia, 1228, 9 July. Gregorio IX incarica arcivescovi ed altri prelati ad assicurare ai Crociferi i loro privilegi.

- n. 13. Perugia 1228, 11 July. Gregorio IX sentenza che nella formula generica “quidam alii” non è compreso l’ordine dei Crociferi.
- n. 14. Perugia, 1229, 11 July. Gregorio IX concede al procuratore dei Crociferi di Morello un grande privilegio.
- n. 15. Perugia, 1229, 11 July. Gregorio IX concede al procuratore dei Crociferi di Morello ed a tutti gli altri procuratori un privilegio e stabilisce un interesse di riconoscimento per l’ammontare di 12 denari.
- n. 16. Perugia, 1229, 13 November. Gregorio IX vieta di visitare l’ordine.
- n. 17. Perugia 1235, 14 May. Gregorio IX mette sotto la protezione papale l’ospedale di Venezia e conferma le proprietà a Dese. Sacrosancta Romana ecclesia.
- n. 18. Terni, 1236, 15 June. Gregorio IX mette sotto la protezione papale le chiese elencate a favore dell’ospedale di Bologna.
- n. 19. Terni 1236, 21 June. Gregorio IX conferma all’ospedale di Negroponte la donazione del Patriarca di Costantinopoli.
- n. 20. Rialto, 1237, 8 July. Thomasina filia q. Marie defuncte relicte Cuirani Moy de conf. S. Gervasii trasferisce a suo fratello Angelo Moy parti dei suoi beni ereditati.
- n. 21. Laterano 1244, 2 January. Innocenzo IV concede ai Crociferi di Bologna che non possano essere obbligati a concedere provvigioni.
- n. 22. Lione, 1245, 7 July. Innocenzo IV mette sotto la protezione papale l’ospedale a Trento e conferma la donazione in Acquaviva.
- n. 23. Lione, 1250, 29 July. Innocenzo IV esorta tutti i cristiani a sostenere l’ospedale di Acca.
- n. 24. Rialto. 1252, 25 June. Primora relicta Henrici Lisi de confratelli S. Gervasii dona a Maurus ed Angelus Moya ai loro eredi alcuni beni.
- n. 25. Laterano 1256, 12 February. Alessandro IV incarica arcivescevo ed altri prelati ad assicurare i privilegi dei Crociferi.
- n. 26. Laterano, 1261, 13 March. Alessandro IV autorizza i confratelli dell’ospedale dei Crociferi a raccogliere elemosine una volta all’anno, e concede altri privilegi.
- n. 27. Orvieto, 1262, 21, December. Urban IV conferma all’ospedale di Bolgona tutti i privilegi concessi da papi e re.

- n. 28. 1265-68. Clemente IV mette sotto la protezione papale il Magister e i confratelli dei Crociferi a Bologna, conferma la loro proprietà e decide altre questioni elencate in seguito una per una.
- n. 29. Perugia, 1265, 6 May. Clemente IV conferma al priore e ai confratelli dell'ospedale di Bologna tutti i privilegi concessi da papi e re.
- n. 30. Clemente IV esorta tutti i cristiani a sostenere con elemosine l'ospedale di Acca.
- n. 31. Perugia, 1265, 30 September. Clemente IV autorizza i confratelli dell'ospedale dei Crociferi a raccogliere elemosine.
- n. 32. Perugia, 1265, 9 October. Clemente IV libera il magister e i confratelli dei Crociferi dall'obbligo di dover provvedere a pensioni o benefici in favore di qualcuno.
- n. 33. Viterbo, 1267, April. Clemente IV autorizza i confratelli dell'ospedale dei Crociferi a raccogliere elemosine .
- n. 34. Bologna, 1268, 27 May. Il capitolo generale e Frate Giacomo, Magister dell'ordine dei Crociferi, donano il loro ospedale di S. Maria a Creta all'ospedale di Santa Maria a Venezia.
- n. 35. Rialto 1272, 3 October. Il doge Lorenzo Tiepolo certifica assieme al Consiglio Maggiore e il Consiglio dei Dieci.
- n. 36. Rome, S. Sabina, 1286. 5 December. Onorio IV conferma al priore ed ai confratelli dell'ospedale di Acca tutti i privilegi concessi da papi e re.
37. Anagni 1295, 28 July. Bonifacio VIII dà una nuova regola per l'elezione del priore di S. Maria a Venezia.
- n. 39. Rome, S. Pietro, 1307, 13 May. Bonifacio VIII toglie S. Maria a Venezia dalla giurisdizione del Patriarca di Grado e la mette sotto la protezione papale.
- n. 40. Avignon, 1343 13 February. Clemente VI autorizza i confratelli dell'ospedale de Crociferi, S. Maria ad Amalfi, a raccogliere elemosine una volta all'anno e concede altri privilegi all'ospedale S. Maria ad Amalfi.
41. Clemente VI conferma il documento di Urbano III
42. Avignone 1346, 9 April. Clement VI conferma al priore e ai confratelli dell'ospedale di Bologna tutti i privilegi concessi da papi e re.
43. Villeneuve, 1353, 17 July. Innocenzo IV concede che il magister dell'ordine dei Crociferi non sia colpito da riserve pontificie generiche se non esplicitamente menzionato.

- n. 44: Bologna, 1414, 29 August. Giovanni XXIII concede all'arcivescovo di Kalocsa un salva condotto per Angelus Coinvio.
- n. 45 Costanza 1416, 7 November. Giovanni XXIII destituisce il Magister Generale dell'ordine dei Crociferi, Tomaso Scappi.
- n. 46. Il Concilio di Costanza conferma al Magister Generale Andrea Lodovico de Eugubio la rimozione del Magister Generale Tomaso Scappi.
- n. 48. Rome 1423, 30 June. Martino V conferma al Priore e ai confratelli dell'ospedale di Bologna tutti i privilegi concessi da papi e re.
- n. 49. 1425, 22 May. Frater Marinus, Priore dell'ospedale S. Maria a Venezia, scrive ad Andreas de Bontis de Eugubio, Magister Generale dell'Ordine.
- n. 50. Rome 1449, 20 April. Nicola V incarica il Patriarca di Grado ed i vescovi di Jesolo e Torcello con l'insediamento del cardinale diacono Petrus di S. Maria nova nella sede di S. Maria a Venezia.
- n. 51. Laterano, 1450, 28 March. Nicola V conferma il documento di Bonifacio VIII per il convento di S. Maria a Venezia, e lo mette sotto la protezione papale.
- n. 55. Rome, S. Pietro 1485, 11 March.
Innocenzo VIII decide che il priore dei Crociferi di S. Maria de Murello (Bologna) sia il capo dell'ordine come Magister Generale, prende decisioni a proposito dei suoi doveri e dell'eventuale vacanza del posto
- n. 56. Roma, 1490, 6 June. S. Pietro, in palatio caesarum apostolico. Direttive dell'ufficio pontificio per Augustinus Badoer a proposito dell'esecuzione delle sentenze nel processo del priorato dei Crociferi di S. Maria Venezia per i beni del loro priorato a Creta.
- n. 57, 58. Priorato al S. Maria de Desio and S. Lucie de la Posta. Fra Archangelus de Cremaschis, Priore, S. Maria di Venezia, 1521, 1527.
- n. 59. Venice 1530, 14 June. Autenticazione notarile del protocollo della seduta del capitolo generale dei Crociferi di Venezia con i coninativi dei singoli membri presenti.
- n. 60. 1534-49. Giuramento del Simon di Brescia Priore di S Maria Maddalena a Padova, sui suoi doveri e la sua obbedienza nei confronti dell'ordine e del papa.
- n. 61. 1534-49. Giuramento del Simon del Bernardinus, Priore di S. Maria Maddalena di Padova.

- n. 62. Venezia, 1544, 9 December. Joannes de la Casa, Eletto di Benevento, ed altri collettori indicati a proposito di alcune lettere del cardinale diacono Alessandro Farnese per la riduzione delle tasse ai Crociferi di S. Maria a Venezia.
- n. 63. Rome, S. Pietro 1555, 26 May. Paolo IV, scrive ai vescovi di Cesena e Bagnoregio come anche al vicario del vescovo di Padova a proposito delle dimissioni del Priore dei Crociferi di S. Maria Maddalena a Padova e della desintazione del priorato vacante da parte di Paolo III per Simon di Brescia.
- n. 64. Venezia, S. Maria. 1560, 19 December. Franciscus Ferrius, vescovi di Vercelli e Legato scrive ai Crociferi di S. Maria a Venezia che autorizza lo spostamento della prima messa di Natale.
- n. 65. Rome, 1602, 22 March. Marcellus Lantes, prothonotarius apostolicus, protocolla la sentenza emanata dopo il processo intentato da Andreas, Priore dei Crociferi di Conegliano, per molestie subite.

Appendix II

Transcription of the 1581 Apostolic Visit for Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi, [Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Congregazione Vescovi e Regolari, Visite Apostoliche, 96, f. 70r-74r and Archivio della Nunziatura Apostolica in Venezia II, Processus, 2422].

Visita Apostolica, 96. (1581)

f. 70r-74r.

[f. 70r] Die mercurij 26 mis julij. 1581

Ill^{mi} et Rx^{mi} Dn' Dni Laurentius Campegius S^{mi} Domini Nostri Papa utriusque signaturae Referendarius et praelatus domesticus ac in toto Serenissimo dom. Venetorum Dominio Nunti-Apostolicus [70v] et Augustinus Valerio, Dei et Apostolicae sedis gratia episcopus Veronensis, et Comes, visitatores Apostolic Venetiarum per prelibatum [illegible] D. N Papam specialiter deputati in visitatione huiusmodi prosequi intendentes e contulerunt ad monasterium sancti Maria Cruciferorum Venetiarum Ordinis cruciferorum, et ipsius ecclesiam pulsantibus campanis sonante organo decantantibus fratribus ac accinsis candellis, et intortortitijs cereis super omnibus altaribus et alijs eiusdem ecclesiae locis ingressi sunt, et coram altare maiori, ubi repositum est sanctissims sacrasanctum praesabita flexis genibus oratione secreta et debita sanctissimi sacramenti adoratione, ac Thurificatione R.x Fr Hieronymus di Grassis cotta, sfolia, et pluniali in dictus ad eorum mandatum e Tabernaculo magno ligneo dearato superdicto altari constructa intus pano sericeo rubeo circumvertito tabernaculum argenteum in quo dicenter sanctissimum sacramentum reconditum erat extraxit et super ipso altari [illegible] Quod inspexerunt et visitarunt ac cum et eiusdem monaserij fratres totu[illegible] populum ibidem astantem benedixerunt. Item altare sancti Christophori in quo nonnullas reliquiae, et oleum infirmorum in loco sub Icona eiusdem bene clasuo repereratur. Altare canotae Barbarae in quo [illegible] gloriosissimum corpus S. Barbarae virginis, et martiris in archa marmorea super dicto altaris reposita [illegible] ipsius ecclesiae altaris, totam ecclesiam, sacristiam, argenta paramento honorificentissima et alea ornamenta pro usu ecclesiae necessaria omnia [illegible] inferius describenda pariter inspexerunt et visitarunt.

Et deinde in eadem sacristia convocatis [illegible] omnibus eiusdem monasterij fratribus, eos omni primo [illegible] Apostolica benedixerunt et postea ipsis procentibus nonnullis sermonis qpluribus sanctis bonis, et proficuis monitionibus, et [illegible] plenas habuernt ipsos prospocipe hortantes.

[71r]

Ad pacem, et concordiam intereos in Charitate [illegible]

Ad regularem eorum observantiam, et debitam obedientiam

Ad Lierarum studijs operam dandum

Ut crucis agnum quem gerunt continuo memoriae [illegible] debeant

Ad deducendum al Ill.mia Dominationum [illegible] notitiam quicquid pro eorum et dicti sui monasterij beneficio deducere possunt Dominationes suae Ill.me plenè de omnibus informatae quibus opus sacris oportune providere valtant.

Ac ad alia pia, et sancta opera i prout alijs in monasterijs sacere solit sunt. Et omnibus alijs fratribus prater R.do Patres primum visitatorem Religionis pradictae, et Priorem dicti monasterij licentiatis, ipsos visitatorem, et Priorem de nonnullis a d hane/lane visitationem necessarijs prout sibi expedire visum fiut enterroganunt.

Issiq sic Interrogatis ad [illegible] Interrogationes responderunt et dixerunt

Assidue Divina offitia et precipue, in nocte officium matutinali per dicti monasterij fratres recitari.

Fratres ipsos in communionem, et Charitate vivere, et in regular eorum observantia non deficere.

Literis, et Adijs operam dare

Introitus annuos dicti monasterij ad ducator quattuormille ascendere.

Notitios in bonis moribus, et [illegible] summostudio instrui, et erudirj.

Quattuor solos confessiones audiendi officium in hoc monasterio ex omnibus fratribus exercere ipsosq ab ordinario [illegible] existere, prout etiam, et nonnulla alij qui [illegible] hoc onus subire non curant et [illegible] approbatus ultra quadragesima [71v] eorum atatis annum constitutos esse.

Et his habitis eos etiam licentiarunt, et de rebus ad [illegible] visitationem spectantibus diversa colloquia, et tractatus interse habuerunt, et portea inde recesserunt.

Oleum infirmar servatum in scatula argentea, cum scatula lignea corio testa, et in capella locata in altari sub clavi tuta

Tenor discriptionis Reliquiarum, Altarium, honorum et Status ecclesiae ac sacristiae praedict., et lista nominum fratrum didti monasterij. De quibus supra fit mesitco sequitur, et est talis 23.

Monasterij S.ta Maria Cruciferorum.

Die Mercurij 26 julij 1581.

Reliquia

Corpus S' Barbare Virg.s et m.s
Caxa s' Christophor. m.
Dens Maxillaris eiusdem
Tibie S. Laurentij m.
Ossa S'Maxim epi et m
Caput s Gregorij Nazian[illegible]
Caput s Lanfrachi
Sinciput S. Sabin m.
Sanguis eiudem
ossa S. Jo: Chrisostomi epi Doct.
Os s Barnabe. Apostoli
Dens S. Blasij epi' et m'
Ossa sancti Innocentum m
De ligno Crucis
Spina corone Salvatoris

Altare maius Assumptionis B. M.a ornatissimum in omnibus consecratum, et [illegible] tela cerata; bona nulla annezza est ei societas.

Altare Annuntiation B. Mariae consecratum et ornatum in omnibus annexa est ei societas

Altare conceptionis B. Maria consecratum et ornatum in omnibus situm sub choro,
Annexa est ei societas

Altare S. Barbare cum capella, in qua est corpus ipsius s.te Locatum decentissime in arca marmorea fulcita columna marmorea [72r] marmorea, et duobus angelis ex marmore, ei annexa est societas

Altare S. Laurentij consecratum, ornatum decentissime in omnibus: sed est sine capella habet dotem 22 ducatorum cum obligatione ibi celebrendi ad libitum per [illegible] S.mi Dn' Laurentij Massoli familia extincta est, annexa est ei societas

Altare S. Allafranchi Archiepiscopi cantavariensis consecratum situm sub organo; in reliquis decenter ornatum

Altare S. Christophori situm sub podio, quod incervit pro choro in cosunt Plurime reliquis, que dicenter servantur ornatum honorifice, annexa est ei societas

Altare sancte Crucis cum capella qua edificanda sine reparanda est i Nobilibus le Zenis.

Bona ecclesie

Crux ex argento et ex ligno
Calices duod[er]iam ex argento cum patenis

Tabernaculum pro processionibus ex argento
Thuribula duo ex argento cum assorris [illegible]
Tabella pacis ex argento partim, et partim ex [illegible] inaurato [illegible] et peluij ex
argento
Corporalia 20 Purificatoria 60 Vela et manutergiola solemnna, et ferialia
[illegible] cum amictibus, et cingulis 40
Veste sacre omnium colorum [illegible] ritum S. te Romanae Ecclesiae praeciosae,
solemne, festivae et feriales habentur omnia Integra
Missalia octo integra ex restitutis cum suis signaculis sacculi sine [illegible] pro
corporalibus sex
Libri cantus quot neccassarij sunt per choro et Psalmistae

Omnis denique sacra suppelix, que usu est [illegible] ministris [72v] quam sacerdotibus,
et altaribus in ipsa habetur ecclesia.

Status Ecclesie

Ecclesia est satis ampla cum unica navi, pasietes decentes testum fastigiatum ex lignis, et
asseribus, Pavimentum ex Lapide solido quadrato, Podium pennli interrersans e'cclesiam,
quod inservit pro choro, habet crucifixum, organum, suggestum, labella pro aqua
benedicta forestutas.

Sacrastia est ampla, [illegible], et ornata omnibus rebus neccassarij, armarijs, sedilibus,
altari et loco lavandi manus, et forestutas.

Campanilis turris satis dicens cum campanis

Fratum et totus familia monasterij Crucifero Venet

R. mus Pr' Generalis totius ordinis cruciferor.
D. Fr' Augustinis Gratianus Venetus
Rx. dus D. F. Zacharias Barbaro Venetus Prior
Rx. dus D. F. Jacobus Antonius Boldu Venetus Diffinitor ordinis
Rx. dus D. F. Simon Rubens Brix Diffinitor
Rx. dus D. F. Dionisius Padavinus Venetus Diffinitor
Rx. dus D. F. Julianus Cynus
Rx. dus D. F. Liberalis Marino Venetus Preceptor Gramaticae (Vic. Monast.)
D. F. Hippolitus De Angelis Venetus
D. F. Thiberius Forestus Venetus
D. F. Camillus Brixienus
D. F. Josephus Mutonius Venetus
D. F. Faustinus Bondumerio Venetus Procurator Monasterij
D. F. Theophilus Michaelius Venetus sacrista

[73r]

D. F. Leander Grumius Venetus

D. F. Priamus Balbi Venetus

D. F. Joannes Petrus Brixienus

D.F Thydeus Besdonus Venetus
D.F Vitus Stella Venetis
D.F Rocchus Biscardius Magister Chori Veron.
D.F Catherinus Blanchus organista Venetus
D.F Hieronymus Rubens
D.F Daniel Rabinerio Venetus
D.F Carolus Armanus Venetus
D.F Christophorus Gabriel Venetus
D.F Laurus Badoarius Venetus Praedicator
D.F Hieronymus de Grassis Bononiensis
D.F Felix Spadius Venetus Baccalareus
D.F Liberius de Conegliano
D.F Victor Basadona Venetus

Diaconi:

F. Julianus Valerius Venetus
F. Oliverius Albinus Venetus

Suddiaconi e Accoliti

S. Silvester Veronensis
F. Angelus Amulius Venetus
F. Petrus Paulus
F. Ludovicus Venetus
F. Sigismondus Vicentinus
F. Archangelus Brixienis
F. Jacobus Venetus

Novitij

F. Octavianus Bonaniensis
F. Joannes Maria Venetus
F. Julius de Jadesa
F. Joannes Baptisto Venetus

[73v]

F. Paulus Antonius Vincentinus
F. Marinus Venetus
F. Plaudus Ven.
F. Celsus Ven
F. Fortunatus Ven
F. Modestus Ven.
F. MAtheus Ven

Seculares in probatione

Innocentius Veronenxis
Dominicus Vicentinus.

Converti

F. Orpheus Patavinus
F. Joannes Maria Brix
F. Andrea Brix
F. Joannes Battista Brix

Famuli Seculares
Thomas [illegible]
Joseph Portinarius
Joannes
Andrea
Bartholomeus
Sebastianus
Joannes
Joannes

Die venetis XI mensis Augusti 1581 Ill.Illustrissimi et reverendissimi domini visitatores apostolica Venetiarum antedicti in sacristia monasterij sancti Salvatoris insimul congregati in suprascripta ecclesia sancta Maria Cruciferorum ultra superius per eos in eadem commissa, ac praeter decreta, et hortationes generales et ordinationes et Regulas universales infascripta ordinanda esse decreverunt et [74r] ordinarunt, quae per Reverendum Auditorem eiusdem Illustrissimi Nuntij Prior dicti monasterij tradi, ac sub poenis, et in terminis in dictis regulis generalibus edendis, specificandis exequi et adimpleri mandarunt.

Quae quidem ordinata haec sunt et sequuntur videlicet.

In aurentur aliqui Calices et patena', qui vero habent emblema reficiantur et qui in usu habentur lavent[illegible] in menso.

Altario sub choro, et organo trasferantur in alium locum pana interdicti ipsorp.

Altaribus que sunt sin capella fiat tegumentum quod dicitur capociela ad legendam altare, et celebrantem sacerdotem in termino anni.

Die Venetis 29 mis~ Decembris 1581.

Appendix III

Transcription of 1656 Inventory of Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi, [Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Notarile, Atti A.M. Piccini, B. 11125].

[123r]

Li Fraternali, et Scolari sono questi
La Santissima Concetion
S. Cristoforo
Li Mercanti
Passamanieri
Sartori
Samitieri
Bottieri
Varotieri

Segui la Nota delli Suppellenli sacri, et Argentarii Alli Altari Maggiore

Un Tabernacolo con sui Colonille di Marmo, e chiaveta d'argento
Una Pinili d'Argento dorata continenti il Santissimo Sacramento
Candilliere d'Ottoni Grandi n° 6
La Pala di mano dil Tintoretto
Dui statui di rillievo una per parti d'essa Pala
Dui Candillieri Grandi dorati di legno
Quattro Candilliere di legno argentati
Una Lampada d'Ottoni

[123v]

Un Candillier Grandi per il Cerco dorato
Tovaglia, e Parapetto nel d^{to} Altari

Nell'Altare di Pietà

Una statua di legno della Madonna con nostro Sig^{te} in braccio vestita, et con un faciol di cassetta di passemanno d'oro guarnito
Una Lampada di Rami
Un Christo Piccolo d'ottoni
Una Tavoleta dell'Orationi secreti per la messa
Un'Omorilla Ducali di Panno d'oro antico
Un quadro portatile d'un Dogi Cicogna e sua effiggii

Nell'Altar di S. Cristofforo

Una Pala di d^{to} Santo
Dui Quadri uno per Parti di d^{ta} Pala
Una Tovaglia sopra l'Altari
Una Tavoleta con l'Orationi secreti della Messa
Una Croci d'Ottoni dorata
Un Parapetto
Una Lampada d'Ottoni
Candillieri affissi alla Pietra n° 6

Nell' Altari di S. Giovanni

Una Pala di d^{to} S. Giovanni a mano del Palma
Reliquii diversi in una Caasa dorata con suoi Christali della conditione che si vede nella
Nota, custodite ne vasi di Cristalo, et argento.
Dui Angili di legno dorati
Una Tovaglia
Un Parapetto
[124r]
Un Tavoleta con l'orationi secreti
Una Lampada d'Ottoni

Nell'Altari di S. Lorenzo

La sua Pala esquisitissima di mano di Titiano
Una Croce
Una Lampada d'Ottoni
Dui Candillieri di Legno

Nill'Altari di Sta. Caterina

Una Pala di d^{ta} Santa di mano incognita bella
Una Croce
Una Tavoleta con l'Orationi secreti
Dui Angili di legno
Una Lampada d'Ottoni

Nell'Altar dell'Angelo custode

Una Pala di d^{to} Angelo di man del Palma
Un Christo di Legno
Dui Candillieri di Legno
Una Tavoleta con l'Orationi secreti
Un Parapetto
Una Lampada di Rami
Un Annuntiata di legno

Nell' Altar dell' Annuntiata dill' uspir

Diversi statui
Un Christo
Dui Candillieri di Legno
Una Tovaglia
[124v]
Una Parapetto
Un Quadro Grandi di mano di Pittori incerto da una parti della d^{ta} capella

Nell' Altar di Sta. Barbara

L' effigii di d^{ta} Santa
Il suo Corpo Santo
Un Christo di Legno
Una Tavoletta con l' Orationi secreti
Candillieri d' Ottoni affissi alla Pietra n^o 6
Una Tovaglia, e Parapetto
Tre Lampadi di Rame
Diversi pitturi intorno ad una parti di essa capella di mano di Pittore incerto
La sudetta Capella si asserisce esser della fraglia di Sartori tenendo loro ancora una
Chiave del sud^{to} Corpo Santo, et una stà appresso il Padri Priori, essendo tutti
gl' Ornamenti, eccettuata la tovoaglia di d^{ta} fraglia.

Nell' Altar dell' Annuntziata

Una Pittura sopra legno con l' effigii di SS. Pietro, e Paolo in tella
Diversi Quadri da tutti dui le Parti della Capella, uno di Paolo Veronese l' altro sopra
tavola di mano incognita
Due altri quadri lunghi, uno dell' Annuntziata, l' atro dell' Angolo Gabriel sopra tella
Una Tovaglia
Un Parapetto
Una Croce
Una Lampada d' Ottoni
Una Tavoletta con l' Orationi secreti

Sopra la faccia del Choro

[125r]
Tri Quadri grandi di mano del Palma
Un Christo di Legno

Dall' altra parti del Choro verso l' Altar magg^{re}

Una Pittura dell' Angel Pasqual di mano del Palma

Sotto il Choro

Un' Altari della Concettioni con suoi ornamenti, quali comi si asserisce sono della scola della Concettioni.

In Sacristia

Un'Altare con sua Pala della B. V. di mano del Palma
Dui Candillieri d'Ottoni
Dui altri Candellieri dorati
Ornamento di Cuori d'oro
Una Tovaglia
Una Lampada d'Ottoni
Una Tavoletta con l'Orationi Secreti
Cinqui Quadri Grandi con suoi frisi, che atorniano la Sacristia tutti di mano del Palma con il soffitato pure con Pitture di mano del d^{to} Palma
Un Christo di legno dove si fa la preparazioni per la messa

Sopra il Choro

Due Quadri con soazi dorati di mano di Pittore incerto
Libri da cantar usati n°14 venendo data relationi dal Padri Priore che vi ne mancano tre

Nel Refettorio

Dui Quadri Grandi uno del Tentoretto Vecchio
Nota che questo quadro del Tentoretto resta per conto Publico onde fu' detto al Padri Provintiale, che lo facessi custodire sino ad [125v] altro ordine
L'altro di Odoardo
Un Christo

[125r-127v] Paramenti in terzo (listed by colour).

[127v- 128r] Argenti

[128r]

Et qui è il fine dell'Inventario di suppelletili, et Argentarii sacri
Hora segui il registro della Tabella
Tabella obligatione

Missi quotidiani

1. Pro D. Catherina Sartoreto
2. Pro Flaminia Florinana.

[128v]

3. Pro D. Ludovico Uspir
4. Pro D. Helena Uspir
5. Pro D. Marco de Benedictis

6. Pro D. Laurentio Massola ad Ara S. Laurencij
7. Pro D. Petro Zeno Ad Altare S. Crucis
8. Pro D. Andrea Selvazzo
9. Pro D. Gratiosa Prezta
10. Pro Ser^{mo} Pr[enci]pe Pascali Ciconia ad Altari Beati Virginis Sing. Dominicis
11. Pro Franciscs Vidna
12. Pro D. Lucieta Zeno ad Altari S. Crucis
13. Pro Ludovico de Bustis
14. Pro D. Venturina Balbi
15. Pro Marieta Ruscona
16. Pro Angilica Zanibona
17. Pro Claudia Riccio
18. Pro Aloysio di Dardanis

Infra Mensile

19. Pro Barthholomeo Dedo ad Altari Privilegiati
20. Pro D. Helenda Vspir in Diebus Dominicis
21. Pro R^{do} P. Felice Spa pro defunctis
22. Pro Marieta Garbeladora
23. Pro Venturina Balbi in Diebus Dominicis
24. Pro Marco de Benedictis

Anniversaria

25. Pro D. Paulina Gustiniana et filiijs

[129r]

26. Pro Daria Costa
27. Pro D. Armilina
28. Pro Helena Uspir
29. Pro D. Ludovico Uspir
30. Pro D. Catherina Brugnola
31. Pro D. Petro Zeno Die 25 Junij, et lampada pro sua Cappella
 Pro fratibus Congregationis nostri omnis Sacerdoti celebrens
 Pro Benefactoribus Congregationis omnis celebrent

Commemoratione quotidiani

- Pro D. Marchesina Brugnola
 Pro D. Armillina
 Pro D. Daria Costa
 Pro D. Aloysio di Dardanis
 Pro D. Francisco Vidna
 Pro Famiglia Gussona
 Pro Ser^{mo} Prencipe, tota Ser^{ma} Republica, Emin. Card^{le} Protectori, et R^{mo} P. Generali

Appendix IV

Extracts from the Libro di spese of Priamo Balbi pertaining to the construction of the Crociferi library, [Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Procuratori di San Marco de citra, Commissarie, B. 234/5, Commissaria Zen]

“R[everen]do P[adre] Tiberio Foresto al p[rese]nte Prior del Monasterio et Hospital di Crosechieri e rimasto d’accordo con M[aest]ro Martino di Stefano marangon per far i banchi nella libreria, posta sopra la sagrestia, quali saranno al numero de 24 cioè è, 12, per banda in compartimento eguale. Quali banchi devono esser fatti, come sono quelli della libreria di San Zorzi maggiore di quella istessa altezza, et larghezza, con li suoi ornamenti et sederi et sottopiedi, in modo che di fattura siano come quelli, eccetto che nella qualità del legname, perche quelli sono di Nogara et questi saranno di albedo, et sarese, di maniera che come si è detto, do vi là da esser altra differenza che del legname, ma la fattura sij come quella di san Giorgio. Et per esser la libreria assai più larga di quella li banchi debbino esser 7 piedi l’uno con li suoi fornimenti.”

Appendix V

Biographies of Distinguished Crociferi

Badoer, Lauro: Described by his uncle, Luigi Contarini, as: “Poeta singolarissimo, & celebre Predicatore, publicò alcuni Sonetti contra i setti vnij capitali, & altre onorate rime sopra le miserie d’Italia, & in altre materie, & hà scritto le vite d’alcuni Santi, ad imitatione del Zio, & le Parafrasi in versi sopra i Salmi di David, & una singolar Canzone dedicata à Papa Sisto Quinto.” He was listed as a novice in 1564 (ASV, SDC, B. 33, f. 173, c. 12), served as prior at Venice in 1588, a year (PSMsupra, Com., B. G) and went on to serve as the *teologo* of the Duke of Mantua and the bishop of Alba. The Treviso manuscript describes the translation of a relic from the body of St. Barbara taken by three Venetian Crociferi, including “Prete Lauro Badoaro Teologo e predicatore famoso” to Mantua in September 1587. It was received in the chapel designed for it in the church of St. Barbara in Mantua by Cardinal Borromeo and the clergy of Mantua with “solemn pomp”, and Lauro Badoaro gave an oration “con ammiratione universale.” He died in 1593. His published works include: *Rime spirituali*, 1571 and *Sette salmi penitenziali*, 1594.

Baffo, Celsus: A Venetian, among the final 70 Crociferi listed when the order was suppressed. Published a funeral oration to doge Leonardo Donato, 1612. Named in the dedication to Marcantonio Querini’s *Rime*, 1606 (Cicogna, *Iscrizione*, IV, 428-9).

Balbi, Priamo: He may have entered the order as a result of some existing connection between his family and the order. For example, an *anniversaria* listed in the 1656 inventory for a former prioress of the hospital, Donna Venturina Balbi (ASV, AP, c. 128v). He was recorded as a *sacerdoto* at the Venetian house in 1562, 1564 and 1566, later served for a period of four years (1574-78) as the prior of the monastery at Conegliano (ASV, Atti Leoncini, B. 7829, c. 223, c. 351; ASV, SDC, B. 33, filz. 173). Was *hospitalano* in Venice from 1580 (ASVat, FV II, CV, 908/40).

Bianchi, Catharin: A composer of polyphonic music, who was at Venice as *sacerdote* in 1564, served as the *maestro di cappella* of S. Alessandro di Bergamo in the 1570’s, and returned to Venice where he was recorded as organist in 1581 and 1592 (ASVat, VA, 96, c. 72v).

Boldù, Giacomo Antonio: He was among the highest-ranking Crociferi from about 1543 onward. He was prior at Venice in 1543 (AST, San Martino, B.1), 1558 (PSMsupra, Com., B. 12) and 1580 (ASVat, Chiesa Varia, 908/40). He was prior of Como in 1545-6 (ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 356), procurator of the Venetian monastery in 1547 (ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. 12), prior in Naples in 1559 (ASV, Atti G.B. Benzon, B. 392), served as *diffinitor* in Venice at 1562 (ASV, Atti Leoncini, B. 7829), was Master General of the order in 1564 and prior at Rome in 1581. As vicar general of the Venetian house, he joined Lauro Badoer in accompanying a relic of St. Barbara from Venice to Mantua in 1587, where it was placed in a chapel built in her honour by the duke.

Boldù, Marcantonio: His 1571 history of the Crociferi in manuscript form was probably the major source for Leoni's version a quarter century later. He is first recorded in Venice in 1555 (ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 375). He was prior at Salerno in 1556 (ASV, Atti Benzon, B. 391), and in 1562 he was back at Venice, but drew a salary for his services at Conegliano where he officiated at the church and taught grammar from time to time (AST, San Martino, B. 1). I suspect that he was related to another prominent Crocifero in these years, Jacopo Antonio Boldù. Both may have been related to the Boldù family with a *palazzo* in the vicinity of the church.

Catena, Nicolò: Quirini addresses him in the dedications to his *Rime*, and at the time of Querini's *Lettere*, Catena was Master General. Died in 1621. A family connection seems to have existed between the Catena and the Crociferi. A nearby *calle* is named for the family, one Laura Catena was *priora* of the hospital (1630), and a Tommaso Catena was buried at the church. (BMC, Tassini, *Cittadini veneziani*, II, 49)

Cirno, Giuliano: First recorded as prior of the monastery at Campo S. Pietro (ASPat, Cap. San Marco, B. 7). Prior at Venice as early as 1541 (BCT, Mss. 474, c. 573v), a post he held on and off into the 1580's: 1544-5 (AST, San Martino, B. 1 and ASV, Notarile, Atti Benzon, B. 356), 1546 (Benzon, B. 362), 1547 (San Martino, B. 1), 1551 (ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. 12), 1554-6 (ASV, Notarile, Atti Pellestrina, B. 10650, c. 573r-v, ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. 103 and B. 104), 1558 (ASV, Atti G.B. Benzon B. 392), 1581 (ASVat, Vis. Ap. 96). He was procurator of the monastery in 1562 (ASV, Notarile, Atti Leoncini, B. 7829) and Master General of the order in 1575 and 1578 (PSMsupra, Com., b. G). He was last recorded in Venice in 1587.

Confalonieri, Hieronimo: Noted by the anonymous author of the Treviso manuscript as "Girolamo Confalonieri, Notissimo in ogni sorte di lettere, et oratore" (BCT, Mss. 474, c. 619). Some sources claim he was Milanese, but he was more likely from Brescia. Confalonieri is first recorded in 1519 at Venice, where (as vicar of the monastery) he reached an accord on behalf of the Crociferi with the Scuola della Concezione for an altar at the church (ASV, Provveditori di Comun, Reg. O, c. 309v). He was prior of Santa Maria Madalena of Padova in 1530, 1535 and 1538 (ASPat, Cap. San Marco, B. 7; ASV, Soprintendenti alle Decime in Rialto, B. 1233, c. 156; ASV, PSMcitra, Com., B. 234/5). He was prior of Salerno and procurator of the order in 1543 (BCT, Mss. 474.). He was procurator of the Venetian monastery in 1535 (ASV, Decime, B. 1233, c. 156) and prior in 1548, 1549, 1550 and 1553 (ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. 104; AST, Martino e Rosa, B. 1; ASV, PSMcitra, Com., B. 234/5; ASV, Notarile, Atti Benzon, B. 364/5, c. 427r;). In 1553 he settled an agreement with Nicolò Zen for property between the hospital and Zen palace (ASV, Atti G.B. Benzon, B. 392). When he was not serving as prior, he remained among the highest-ranking *frati*, usually second to Giuliano Cirno throughout the 1550's. We know from an inscription recorded above the door to the sacristy of the Paduan church (left by his nephew, Simon Rubens "Bressan", who succeeded his uncle as prior there at the behest of Paul IV) that he died in 1558 at the age of 73 (BCT, Mss. 474, 419r). He was especially beloved at the monastery at Padua because he has been the one to restore it, and left his mark, presumably as he departed for Venice, with a monument above the lateral door to the church, signed and dated 1549 by Gian Girolamo Grandi

(lost). An *anniversaria* and an endowment for two masses a week amounting to 300 ducats for one D. Francesco Confalonieri Chierico di Milano was recorded amongst the ongoing obligations of the monks of the Paduan monastery in 1652. It is possible that this person was somehow related to Hieronimo Confalonieri (ASVat, CSR, 24, c. 98r.).

Contarini, Luigi/Alvise: There is some indication that he may have been the nephew of Gasparo Contarini who edited his uncle's *Opere*. His dates do not rule out the possibility, however beyond his own prolific literary output, I have not found any additional information to support the claim. Contarini himself states that he became a Crocifero at age 10, was a student of history, rhetoric and poetry. Sansovino singled out amongst the notable authors of his time. He was first recorded at Venice in 1548 (ASV, Notarile, Atti Benzon, B. 356/7) and again in 1554, 1555, 1556, 1558, 1566 (Benzon, B. 375, Atti Figolin, B. 5588, G.B. Benzon, 392/3 and Figolin, B. 5604). He spent a number of years at Naples, presumably as prior (ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. G), before returning to Venice (probably in 1581, as he is not listed in the apostolic visit) where he was prior at Venice at least once in 1582 (AST, San Martino, B. 1). He was among the four Crociferi charged with revising the constitution in 1587. His nephew, Lauro Badoaro, an author and preacher, was also a prominent Crocifero. His known published works are as follows:

Rime di dversi eccellenti autori raccolte e mandate in luce con un discorso di Girolamo Ruscelli, 1553.

L'antiquità, sito, chiese, corpi santi, reliquie e statue di Roma, 1569, reprinted 1575.

La nobiltà di Napoli in dialogo, 1569.

Vago e dilettevole giardino, 1597, reprinted 1589, 1590, 1602, 1607, 1616, 1619, 1660, 1683. (Dedicated to nephew Lauro Badoaro)

Genealogia degli antichi Hebrei

Della ottima bellezza della Donna

Dell'origine della Patria del Frioli.

Cremaschi, Archangelo: Cremaschi was prior at Venice in 1497, 1529 and 1534 (ASV, Notarile, Atti Benzon, B. 356/7), and Master General of the order in 1501 (ASV, Arti, Varoteri, B. 719), 1513 (ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. 12), 1521 and 1527 (ASPat, Capitolo di San Marco, B. 7). Sanudo tells us that while Master General Cremaschi was responsible for the resolution of the controversy regarding the replacement of the Venetian prior with a thirteen year-old boy. In this same capacity, at Bologna, he initiated a project to rebuild the church after a fire (ASVat, CSR, 24, c. 19r). When he died in 1545 he was buried beneath the high altar at Bologna with an inscription: "Archangelo Cremaschi huomo di bellissime lettere, Generale" (BCT, Mss. 474, c. 613r).

Fiamma, Paolo: Was prior at Venice, specialised in hagiography, and was a correspondent of Querini. Was among the last 70 Crociferi at Venice in 1652 and was buried at the church.

Santa Barbara miracolosa in Sassonia: Tragedia di lieto fine, 1638.

Vita di san Leone Bembo Vescovo di Modone venerato nella chiesa della Beatissima Maria della Humiltà, 1646.

Florì, Bernardo: Bishop of Canea, member of Accademia of the Alletati. Edited a group of works of Fra Paolo Sarpi.

Gatta, Francesco: A Venetian Crocifero, philosopher, theologian, composer and preacher, who read publicly in the Accademia dei Nobili in Venice. (BCT, Mss. 474, c. 617)

Gussoni, Teodosio: Contarini stated that he was a “Filosofo Tedogene.” He was Master General of the Order and a correspondent of Marcantonio Querini. He was still alive in 1652 and living at Venice (ASVat, CSR, 24). His personal library contained 140 titles when the monastic library was inventoried at the end of the sixteenth century.

Leoni, Ambrogio: Remembered by Contarini as “nepote di Benedetto Leon, humanista raro, singular Filosofo, honorato Theologo, & di honesta, & Santissima vita.” His *La Taide convertita, rappresentazione spirituali* was published in 1600, by the same Venetian publisher, Gratoso Perchacino, with whom Benedetto had published his history of the order a few years previously. He was recorded at Venice as early as 1589 (Figolin, B. 5641).

Leoni, Benedetto: Recorded by Contarini as “Teologo, Filosofo, & Poeta.” He was a committed reformer, something reflected in his published works. Went on to serve as bishop of Arcadia in Crete. He is first recorded as prior at Padua in 1575 (ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. G.), was prior at Venice in 1589 (ASV, Atti Figolin, B. 5641), Master General of the order in 1591 (*Memoriale*) and 1594 (ASV, Atti Figolin, B. 5640). He published his condensed version of the revised constitution in 1591 and his history of the order in 1598, as well as:

Una nuova canzone di Benedetto Leoni (Venice, 1577).

Canzone fatta intorno allo stato calamitoso della inclinta citta di Ven nel colmo del maggiore suoi passati travagli per le peste (Bologna, 1577).

Leoni, Stefano: Probably a relative (possibly a brother) of Benedetto Leoni, Stefano was a novice in Venice in 1564 (ASV, SDC, B. 33, f. 173, c. 12), was registered in the catalogue of the Collegio Teologico in Bologna in 1594 (S. Mazzetti, *Università e l'Istituto delle scienze di Bologna*, 325). He was described by Contarini as “Filosofo, & honorato Theologo.” He went on to serve as Master General of the order in 1593 (PSMcitra, Com., B. 234/5, *Libro di Spese*) and approved the expenses for the rebuilding of the Venetian library when he visited the monastery in 1595, still Master General.

Marso, Armonio (Harmonio de' Rossi): Contarini defined him thus: “Veronese, Crucifero, musico, Organista, & Comico eccellente.” He was in fact a native of the Abruzzi. Appointed organist of San Marco in September 1516, a post he held until 1552. Author of the Latin comedy, *Stephanium*, published in 1502 and performed in the cloister of Santo Stefano. Mentioned by Sabellico and Sansovino (*Venetia città, 1581*) as one of the early *recitatori* of comedies in Venice, and was noted by Anton Francesco Doni (*Libreria*, 1551) as one of the founders of a musical academia in conjunction with the actor Antonio Molino. See: N. Pirrotta, “‘Commedia dell’Arte’ and Opera” *The Musical*

Quarterly, 41(1955): 305-24 and F. Caffi, *Storia della musica sacra nella già capella ducale di San Marco in Venezia*, 72.

Querini, Marcantonio: His name at birth was Sebastiano Querini; he published under this name initially, probably before he entered the order of the Crociferi. He was certainly Venetian, as he refers to Venice as his “patria” and published exclusively in the city. Cicogna speculates that his absence from the various branches of the Querini family trees suggests that he was an illegitimate son, possibly of Vincenzo Querini. He was a member of the Accademia degli Intenti in Pavia, and on their behalf wrote to the Master General (Teodoro Gussoni) for his blessing to put their findings regarding *Amore divino* to print. As a preacher he gave sermons at Naples (1606), San Marco in Venice (1612), San Petronio, Bologna (1616), Santa Maria Maggiore, Bergamo (1617), San Zaccaria, Venice (1620), Vicenza cathedral (1625). He eventually became the archbishop of Naxos and Paros (1621-2). His works in print include many editions of his *Rime* and *Lettere*.

Rime, 1606 and *Rime sacre e morali*, 1612, *Rime, sonnetti e madrigale*, 1613.

Lettere (in three parts), 1612, 1615.

La Bella Pescatrice, 1613.

La Bella Serva, 1616.

La meraviglia, 1617.

Gli aspetti del cielo, 1619.

Iole Aurora. Dialogo et panegirico, 1620.

Iole Indovina. Panegirico, 1620.

De' Soliloquii del Padre Maestro Marcantonio Querini Crocifero con gli Argomenti a ciascuno di essi, & con le descrizioni segnate in margine. Opera per tutti giovevole et curiosa; ma in particolare a Religiosi, Predicatori, oratori, virtuosi, & divoti. 1621.

Il Manuale de' Grandi, 1656.

de' Rossi, Girolamo: Contarini describes him as “Filosofo, Teologo, Poeta, & Predicatore.” Master General in 1598; Leoni dedicated his history of order to him. Correspondent of Marcantonio Querini (*Lettere*).

Rossi, Giulio: Venetian, composed works of “musica symbolum” and translated the works of Areopagita into the *volgare*.

Semitecolo, Ottaviano: Contarini described him as “Predicator unico, & Teologo.” He was apparently so successful as a preacher that the alms raised by his sermons contributed to the renovation of San Luca of Verona. He was dead by 1593, when an inventory was made of his belongings (ASV, Atti Figolin, B. 5646, c. 482r).

Stridonio, Nicolò: According to Contarini he was “Vescovo Millepotenie, nella latina, & greca linguadottissimo.” Was the first to read Greek in the Collegio di Roma de Greci instituted under Gregory XIII. First recorded as prior of Santa Maria di Candia in 1558-9 (ASV, PSMsupra, Com., B. 103, fasc. 9), was at Venice in 1563 (ASV, Atti Leoncini, B. 7829), was procurator of the monastery in 1570 (ASV, Atti Figolin, B. 5696).

Zen, Nicolò: Another member of the Zen ai Crociferi who went on to join the Crociferi. “Fratris Nicolai Zeno ordinis cruciferorum” listed among the *capitolo* of the Venetian Crociferi (ASV, Atti Figolin, B. 5627 (1578), B. 5696 (1593), and as prior of SS. Zeno e Barbara at Padua in 1594 (B. 5640). Corresponded with Marcantonio Querini.

Zen, Pietro: Was prior at Bologna when Lauro Badoaro dedicated his Rime to him in 1571. Marcantonio Querini wrote to him in Naples, where he was prior. Was probably a member of the Zen ai Gesuiti.

Other Crociferi singled out by Contarini:

Andrea Valier, Filosofo, Theologo, & Predicator .

Alvise Bolani, Filosofo, Theologo, & d’alto intellecto.

Enea Spacino, Greco, Latino, Hebreo, Musico, & universale.

Felice Spudi, Crocifero Filosofo, Teologo, & Predicatore.

Francesco Gatto, Filosofo, & Theologo raro universale, & Predicatore.

Cleto Cremasco, Letterato, Filosofo; & Theologo.

Florian Ghirardelli, Filosofo, & Theolgo.

Ludovico Bollano, Dottore theologo, bishop of Candia.

Appendix VI

Extracts from the diaries of M. Sanudo, Preaching and Theatrical Performance at the Crociferi Monastery.

Diary Entries on Preaching:

- April 1507: Franciscan Fa' Bonaventura of Verona preached, and in March 1508, Martin da Zenoa preached at the church, then went on to the "caxa dil doxe a lezer certe letere." [Vol. VII, 40, 339.]
- March 1516: Pontremolo of the Frati Menori preached at the Crociferi church and San Marco. [Vol. 22]
- March 1518: "Hironimo spagnol" preached at San Marco and at the Crociferi. [Vol. 25, 353.]
- January 1521: Fra Ruffin Lovato Franciscan preached at "San Zacharia, et a l'incontro sier Piero Zen e altri voleno el predichi a Crosechieri." [Vol. 29.]
- February 1522: Sermon by a "fratonzello di l'hordine di San Francesco." [Vol. 32, 439]
- December 1522: Fra' Cornelio da Perosa preached to "grandissimo concorso di zente." [Vol. 33, 529-30.]
- March 1526: Fra Beneto di Foiano preached at San Marco, then at the Crociferi church. [Vol. 41, 113.]
- April 1532: Fra Zacaria. [Vol. 54]

Others preachers at the Crociferi church:

Luigi Dragan "Grifalconi", "dottissimo nelle lingue, hebrea, greca, latina", who also preached at San Giorgio Maggiore and the church of Santa Maria dei Servi. He also preached in Rome for Leo X, and France for King Francis I. (Martinelli, 1684, 166; L. Contarini, 1586, 448)

In 1502 Marc' Antonio Sabellico, the noted orator and historian, delivered an oration on the occasion of the feast of the Assumption.

(R. Chavasse, "Latin Lay Piety and Vernacular Lay Piety in Word and Image" *Renaissance Studies* 10 (1996), 322.)

Diary Entries on Performances “ai Crosecchieri”:

- February 9, 1522: “In questa sera, a li Crosecchieri, con licentia di Capi di X, licet sia parte nel Consejo di X non si possi dar licentia, per Cherea luchese, novamente venuto di Roma, fu fato una comedia over cosa di amore, di Philarete innamorato in Charitea, et uno Caliandro lo consiglia, et per via di uno orbo fu ajutato et ebbe l’amata. Et li intermedii fo suo Zuan Polo con suo fiol, che ave dil bon.” [Vo. 32, 445.]
- February 13, 1522: “In questa sera, a li Crosecchieri fo recitata una altra comedia in prosa, per Cherea luchese e compagni, di uno certo vecchio dottor fiorentino che havea una moglie, non potea far fioli etc. Vi fu assaissima zente con intermedii di Zuan Pollo e altri bufoni, e la scena era si piena di zente, che non fu fato il quinto atto perche non si poté farlo, tanto era il gran numero di le persone.” [Vol. 32, 458.]
- February 16, 1522: “Fu di novo a li Crosecchieri recitata la comedia dil firentino non compita l’altro zorno.” [Vol. 32, 466.]
- February 23, 1522: “In questa sera, ai Crosecheri fo recitata una comedia in prosa di Caladra, fata però zà alias pur in questa terra.” [Vol. 32, 487.]
- January 5, 1523: “In questa sera a Crosecchieri fu recitata una comedia nova in versi per Cherea luchese et altri compagni. Compi hore 6 di note.” [Vol. 33, 564.]
- January 16, 1523: “Eri sera a Crosecheri fu fata una bellissima comedia, zoè recitata per Cherea luchese, cosa nova et molto piacevole.” [Vol. 33, 581.]
- January 26, 1523: “In questa sera fu fatta ai Crosecchieri una commedia.” [Vol. 33, 592.]

Appendix VII

*Extracts from the inventory of the palazzo of Ludovico Usper, [ASV, Giudici del Petizion,
B. 342//7 n. 26.*

[4v]

Un quadro grande de nostra donna con fornimento dorado
Un quadro grande con una donna che suona de lauto con fornimento dorado
Un quadro grande del retratto del q. Ecc^{mo} S^r Ludovico Usper con fornimento dorado
Un altro quadro simile della Donna, che taglio li Capelli à santo con fornimento dorado

[5r]

Un altro quadro con fornimento dorado di Giudi che taglio la testa di Olofernes
Doi quadri con fornimenti doradi di ritratto della q. S^{ra} Helena moglia del q. S. Ludovico
Una Lettura grande di noghera intagliata dorada con quattro figure

[5v]

Nella camera sopra canal grande
3 Palme Vecchio sopra il camin

[7v]

Un quadro grande della Casa
4 Quadri ovadi con suoi fornamenti doradi
12 teste de Imperadorj de Carton, over stucco
Una nostra donna de Bronzo opera del Sansovin
4 Palme

[18v-19r]

Un sattiro de bornzo con venere legato a un albero
Una figura a Cavallo de Bronzo
Una Navisella con cinq figurete de bronzo
Quadri di fiandra
Uno Napamondo in Quadro grande

Appendix VIII

Inscriptions from monuments in the Crociferi church.

Funerary Monument to Ippolito Verardi by Lorenzo Bregno:

*HIPPOLITO VERARDO CESENATI RARISSIMAE INDOLIS PVERO IN QVO
EXORNANDO DVM NATVRA CVM ARTE ET VIRTVS CVM DOCTRINA CERTATIM
CONTENDVNT FATI VIS INVIDA PVLCHERRIMVM ORNAMENTVM MALA
DISPARAVIT MANV. VIXIT ANNOS XVII. M. III. D. IIII. HORAS II. OBIIT NONAS
APRILIS MDIII. CAMILLVS EQVES PONTIFICIVS ET SIGISMVNDVS
MOESTISSIMVS PATER NON SINE LACRIMIS P.*

(E. Cicogna, *Corpus delle iscrizioni di Venezia*, 1824-1853 (Venice, 2001), 879, from Palfero).

Chapel of Alvise Dardani:

*ALOYSIO DARDANIO DE REP. SENATVQ. VENETO OPTIME SEMPER MERITO
NOVISSIME VERO SVB GALLICI BELLI TVMVLTV MIRANENSIS AGRI MENSTRINI
ORDEACIQ. LEGATO AB EODEM SENATV DESIGNATO VNA CVM ANDREA
GRITTO VRBE PATAVIO RECEPTA SERVATAQ. A DVRISSIMA HOSTIVM
OBSIDIONE VENETIAS SVMMA CVM LAVDE REDEVNTI SVPREMO A SECRETIS
SENATVS TOTIVS VRBIS IMMENSA GRATVLATIONE DECLARATO IACOBVS FILIVS
PIENTISS. PATRI OPTIMO POSTERISQ. HOC MONVMENTVM P. VIXIT ANNOS
LXXVIII. OBIIT MDXI.*

(E. Cicogna, *Corpus*, 879, from Palfero)

Massolo-Querini Altar of St. Lawrence:

*LAVRENTIO MASSVLO VIRO PATRITII ORDINIS OPTIMO IN CVIVS OBITV TOTA
ET NOBILIS MASSVLORVM FAMILIA FINEM HABVIT ISABETTA QUIRINA VXOR
PIENTISS. M. P. OBIIT ANNO SALVTIS MDLVI. MENSE IAN.*

(E. Cicogna, *Corpus*, 876, from Sansovino)

Zen Chapel:

*PETRO ZENO CATHERINI/ EQ. F. KATHERINVS ET/ FRATRES PIENISS. F./ SIBI ET
HEREDIBVS/ MDXXXIX/ VII. KAL. IVLY.*

(Still present on the pavement in the chapel of St. Francis Xavier)

*KTARINVS. ZENO. PE. FI./ POST. LEG. APUD. TVR. IMP. / FV.CTA. DVM. IIII.
CONSS./ AGERET. OBIIT/ VIXIT. AN.O LXXVII./ NI. FI. M. P. MDLVI.
(Still present on the right wall of the chapel of St. Francis Xavier)*

Da Lezze Monument:

*PRIAMO LEGIO ANDREAE FILIO D. M. PROCVRATORI CVIVS/ CUM
INCREDIBILEM VITAE INTEGRITATEM TVM EXIMIAM IN/ ADMINISTRANDA REP.
SAPIENTIAM POSTERITAS OMNIS ITA IN/ PERPETVVM PRAEDICABIT VT EA
ADMIRARI FACILIVS POSSIT Q. IMITARI/ IOHANNES FILIVS EQVES COMES AC
PROCVRATOR FECIT C./ VIXIT ANNOS LXXXVIII. OBIIT VI. IDVS SEPT. MDLVII.
IOANNI LEGIO/ PRIAMI. F. EQ. COMITI/ D. MARCI. PROCVRATORI/ APVD.
CAROLVM. IX. GALLIARVM/ CAROVM. V. ROMANORVM. REGES/ LEGATIONIBVS.
PERFVNCTO/ IN. DALMATIA. CONTRA. TVRCAS/ SVMMO. CVM. IMPERIO/ IN.
PATRIA. TVTANDA/ SVADENDA/ FORTI.PRVDENTI. PIO/ IOANNES. ANDREAE.
PROC. F./ TANTO. AVO/ V. A. IXXIV. OBIIT. NON./ MARTIAS/ MDXXC.*

*ANDREAS LEGIVS/ D. MARCI PROCVRATOR/ EXIMIAS PARENTIS/ IOAN. EQ.
PROCVRATORIS/ VIRTVTES ADMIRATVS/ DIGNITATE PARTA/ AMPLITVDINE
SERVATA/ FELICITATE QVAESITA/ AETERNAM TANDEM/ LXXVIII. AETATIS
ANNO/ EST. ADEPTVS/ VI. KAL. NOVEMBREIS/ M.DC.IV./ IONNAS FILIVS/ PATRI
M.*

Monument to Pasquale Ciconga:

*PASCHALIS CICONIAE/ VENETIARVM PRINCIPIS MEMORIAE SEMPITERNAE/ QVI
POST REMP. DOMI FORIS E DIGNITATE SAEPIVS ADMI/ NISTRATAM POST
CRETENSEM INSVLAM CVI PER DECENNI/ VM SVMMO CVM IMPERIO PRAEFVIT
IN NAVALI AD ECHINA/ DAS PRAELIO INCOLVMEM RESERVATAM QVA CAVSA
CYDO/ NES ILLI STATVAM IN FORO E. C. PATRIAE SVAE TANDEM/ PRINCEPS
MIRA OMNIVM CONSENSIONE CREATVS EAM/ PARITER PER DECENNIVM
TANTA ASSIDVITATE ET DILI/ GENTIA GVBERNAVIT VT DE EIVS COMMODIS
ATQ. VTILI/ TATIBVS NON PRIVS FINEM FECERIT QVAM ANIMAM/ EFFLAVERIT
ET AD SVPEROS CVM DIV AETERNITATI SVAE/ INTERFVVISSET NON SINE
OPINIONE SANCTITATIS EVOLAVIT/ OBIIT DIE. II. APRILIS. MDXCV. AETATIS
SVAE ANNO LXXXV./ MENS. X. DIES XXV./ PASCHALIS CICONIA EX FRATRE
NEPOS MAESTISS. P. C.*

(Relocated above the sacristy door, originally above door to the cloister)

Appendix IX

Transcription of the agreement between the Crociferi and the guild of the stampadori e librai, [ASV, Notarile, Atti Fiume, B. 5698, cc. 36v-38r.]

Conventio mon^{ri}o Sanctae mariae cruciferorum di venet.
MCCCCCLV, Die XXII mensis septembris.

Rx.D^s f.^r Julianus Prior
Simon di Brixia Prior Padoa, vic[ario] dicti monasterij
Thomas di Campo S. Petri, prior Tergesti
Raymundus Venetus Prior Cremmsis
Julius de Rubeis Venetus
Raynaldus di Pissaro
Jo:Baptista di agnilla
Thiberius Venetus
Augustinus Venetus Prior Salmona
Hippolitus Venetus
Hieronymus Boldu venet. Prior altre mille
Zaccarius Venetus
Pius Venetus
Marcus antonius Boldu venetus

Noi Prior Et Capitolo del Mon^{ri}o delli Crosacchieri di Venetia havendo veduto il buon' Animo di Voi intervenienti per la Fraterna delli Stampadori; che è di volerij ridurre Al Mon^{ri}o nostro per trattare le cose concernente alla Fraterna vostra. Vi dicemo, et contentamo osservarvi quanto qui sotto serà scritto

Che Ad honore et laude del N. S. Dio, contentamo ci conpromettemo, ogni prima Domenica di ciascuno Mese, farvi celebrare una messa bassa; Però senza impedimente delle Altre schole piu antiche nella Chiesa nostra.

Che ogni volta vorrete ridurvi à fare il vostro Capitolo per trattare le cose vostre, si offerimo commodarvi di un luoco capace et honorevole per tale effetto.

Che ogni prima Domenica del Mese, che farete dire la Messa vi supplica et vorrete mettere Bancho per scuoter le vostre limosine dalli Fr[at]elli v[o]stri si offerimo commodarij per quella mattina del nostro Capitolo, et metter se vi pererci il Banco in Chiesa per quella mattina.

Contentamo, che siate in libertà, di fare una cassa, per allogare le v. cose et cere, et quella possiate metter' nella nostra sacristia.

Che in recompensa della missa et per le commodità à voi promesse, semo contenti delli tre ducati all'anno da voi offertone per limosina; Et che tutte le predette cose se ne habbia à fare publico istrumento per chiarezza della verità.

Appendix X

Extracts from the Crociferi 1564 condizione, [ASV, Soprintendenti alle decime del clero, B. 33, f. 173.]

[1]

Mansonarie lassati da diversi a detto Monast^o lequal si pagano come qui sotto

M^{ria} lassata per mad^{na} Lugretia Zeno con obligo de dir una messa al giorno — 12 duc

M^{ria} lassata per S. And^a Salvazo con obligo de dir una messa al giorno — 15 duc

M^{ria} lassata per M. Damian Moro paga la scuola de S^{ta} Maria di Mercadanti con obligo di dir una messa al giorno ne l'hospadal nostro — 2 duc 12

M^{ria} lassata per Mad^{na} Armelina fu Priora nel nostro Hospadal, si scuolde da duc 6 in c^a de affitto de alcune Terre poste sotto seravale, liquial duc 6 vano destabuidi fra tutti li sacerdoti con obligatio de dir una messa al giorno — duc —

M^{ria} lassata per Mad^{na} Daria Costa fu Priora del nostro hospadal duc 12 all'anno delli qualli danari duc 8 va destribuidi alli padri sacerdoti, et duc 2 alli novicij del Monast^o e duc 2 nelle Core per far lesequio, ogn'anno, con obligation de dir una messa al giorno — duc —

M^{ria} lassata per M Alvisè dardani fu Canc^r grande duc 10 delliquial danari duc 9 vano destribuidi a tre sacerdoti del Mon^o elletti per il R^{do} Pre Prior per 3 anni con obligation di dir una messa per uno al giorno, et duc 1 per Core per far l'eseguiò che se fa ogn'anno, acoto dellaqual Manss^a suo Fiol ha consegnato una Casetta In Villa de Mogiano, dellaqualgia molti anni non s'ha scosso cosa ne una duc — duc —

M^{ria} lassata per M. Franc^o dalla vedoa Pagano li suoi eredi con obligo de dir una messa al giorno — 10 duc

Lutile che si Cava dalle scuole poste nella chiesa de Crosechieri

Scola di sartori all'anno — 5 duc

Scola di Samitari — 5 duc

Scola di Varoteri — 3 duc

Scola di bottari — 4 duc

Scola di Pelizari

—— 2 duc

[2]

Coppia di livelli s'atrova haver il Monastero fuori della terra

Paga de livello li eredi del q. Cl^{mo} M Piero Zen per una possessio detta Sonomarin nel terr^o de Mestre ——— 80 duc
Paga Il Cl^{mo} M Nic^o Zen de livello de una possessio posta à terzo sotto di Mestre ——— 80 duc

[5]

Paga di fitto li eredi del q. Cl^{mo} M steph^{no} Thiepolo proc^r: de una possessio posta nella villa de Marcon sotto Mestre, paga per una possessio posta nella contra de San Nic^o dal Boscho

[10]

Sallaradi pagadi ordinamente per Il detto Monast^o all'anno

A M. Agnolo Filogienio maestro de gramatica, et de grecho, per Insegnar alli novitij Diaconi et sudiachoni et altri 40 duc——
A M. Nic^o Comano medico 22 duc——
Al m^{ro} Insegna à sonar a 3 padri 16 duc——
Al R^{do} Pre M^{ro} Agnolo, per legghier Teologia et Filosofia alli pri et gioveni 40 duc——
Al Fattor da padoana 6 duc 16—
Al Fattor de Trivisana 6 duc 16—
A 3 barbieri 12 duc——
A l'organista 33 duc——
A m^{ro} Vic^o di colombi per tenir al'ordine l'organo della chiesa 6 duc——
[Other expenses for lavandara, cuogo, sotto cuogo, dui famegi, canavaro]

A total of 304 ducats were paid out in salaries.

Spese de viver et altro: 1222 ducats

Per spese de amaladi et forestieri 180 duc

[11]

Per Cl. Mag^o Piero Zen fu del M^o M Jo' batt'a per l'ha Interesse de duc' 2000 hauti da s. M. per Fabrichar el Monast^o

Per spese si fano la settimana s^{ta} In chiesa, et per molti gientil'ho'i che si retirano qui a viver con li pri nelli giorni s^{ti} per la lungeza di offij, é necessario far maggior spesa in viver de l'ordinario 20 duc

[12]

Le Boche ordinarie s'atrova haver detto Mon^o

Sacerdoti

Il R^{do} Pre' Fra Jacomo Ant^o Boldu g'nal
Il R^{do} Pre' Fra olivier Ferro Prior
Il Pre' Pietro Paulo Fossano Vicario
Il Pre' Agostino gratiano Proc^r
Il Pre' Hieremia da Verona
Il Pre' Rinaldo da Pesaro
Il Pre' bernardino da Vic.^a
Il Pre' Hypp^{to} Angieli
Il Pre' Camillo da Bressa
Il Pre' Michiel Venetiano
Il Pre' Thiberio Foresto
Il Pre' Liberal Marino V.^{no} [Venetiano]
Il Pre' Zacc^a Barbaro
Il Pre' Nicolo stridonio V.^{no}
Il Pre' Faustino bondumier
Il Pre' Hier^{mo} boldu
Il Pre' Fran^{co} gatta V.^{no}
Il Pre' Valerio da bollogna
Il Pre' Teophilo Michiel
Il Pre' Priamo Balbi
Il Pre' Vicenzo V.^{no}
Il Pre' Archangelo da Piove de sacho
Il Pre' Leandro Pasqualigo
Il Pre' Thiberio Beloni V.^{no}
Il Pre' oratio Forte da Napoli
Il Pre' Gasp^{ro} guincuera V.^{no} [Vincuera]
Il Pre' Thimosto Machiaveli Vesent

M^{ro} de Gram^{ca}

M. Agnolo Filogrenio

Diaconi

Fra Cornelio Boldu

Fra Ant^o Zorzi

Sudiaconi

Fra Rocco da Verona

Fra Hier^{mo} grasso da bollogna

Fra Ant^{nio} Trivisano

Fra dario da Belveder
Fra Gabriel Pizzamano

Novitij

Fra Pelegrin Veronese
Fra Cleto Trentino
Fra lauro badoer
Fra stephano leone
Fra Roberto V.^{no}
Fra seraffino Mozetti V.^{no}
Fra Felise V.^{no}
Fra Bernardino Padano
Fra ortensio V.^{no}
Fra Domenego Moro V.^{no}
Fra Massimo Michiel
Fra Cesaro V.^{no}
Fra Damiano V.^{no}
Fra lessandro Nani
Fra –usrbro porto Visentin

Conversi

Fra orteo, benetto, liberal, Martino

Michiel Cuogo

Piero sottocuogo

And^a s.^f per Far il pane

Total “bocche” = 59

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