UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI VERONA

Department of Culture and Civilization

Graduate School of Humanities

Joint Doctoral Program in "Arts and Archaeology"

University of Verona – Universiteit Gent

Curriculum Arts

Cycle XXXIII

Lazzaro Bastiani: a *catalogue raisonné* in the light of infrared reflectography analysis

S.S.D. L-ART/02

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Lazzaro Bastiani: a 'catalogue raisonné' in the light of infrared reflectography analysis

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Nicole de Manincor

Ph.D. Thesis

Presentarsi a un maestro! – Presto detto; ma quale?
Fino a tanto che se n'era trattato in forma vaga,
il problema appariva a tutti semplicissimo,
privo di qualsiasi difficoltà.
Ora che bisognava risolversi, Vittore e gli amici suoi
non sapevano davvero a che santo votarsi.

Quello? No; ne sarebbe invidioso!
– Quest'altro? Ma è difficile poterlo avvicinare.
– E passavano e ripassavano in rassegna i pittori più noti
senza riuscire mai a trovar la persona
che si confaceva al loro caso.
Gli amici camminavano una sera in silenzio,
rimuginando ognuno per proprio conto,
quando un biondino, tutto nervi, scattò su a dire:

– Certo, e perché non tentare dal Bastiani?

D. De Tuoni, *Carpaccio*, Milano, 1931, p. 77.

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1. CRITICAL RECEPTION: FROM VASARI TO THE PRESENT DAYS

> "Lazzaro Bastiani is one of the dark horses of Venetian Quattrocento painting. His biography utterly confused by Vasari, was straightened out by discoveries of Paoletti, Ludwig and Molmenti in Venetian archives. Their results, on the other hand, by extending his activity far beyond its previous time limits, opened an arena for eager attributionists who succeeded in producing a muddle compared with which the confusion caused by Vasari appears relatively innocent".[1]

A survey of Bastiani's critical reception throughout the centuries is the necessary point of departure for the understanding of this "dark horse" of 15th century Venetian art. Regarded as a relatively skilled painter among the great masters of Paduan and Venetian areas, celebrated as Carpaccio's master, or downgraded as an ordinary Neri di Bicci, the evaluation of Bastiani's work experienced several ups and downs according to the scholars' different opinions. In order to present a clear overview of Bastiani's critical reception, the best way to proceed is the easiest and most straightforward one i.e., in chronological order. Thus, we necessarily have to start from the beginning, the second edition of Vasari's *Vite* (1568) and his "relatively innocent" mistake.

> "Insegnò costui [Carpaccio] l'arte a due suoi fratelli che l'immitarono assai, l'uno fu Lazaro e l'altro Sebastiano, di mano de' quali è nella chiesa delle Monache di Corpus Domini, all'altare della Vergine, una tavola dove ella è a sedere in mezzo a S. Caterina e S. Marta con altre Sante e due Angeli che suonano, e una prospettiva di casamenti per campo di tutta l'opera, molto bella, della quale n'avemo i proprii disegni di mano di costoro nel nostro libro".[2]

In the second edition of his *Vite*, published in 1568, Vasari grouped numerous Veneto and Lombard painters together in the chapter mainly dedicated to Carpaccio, who was believed to be "veramente il primo che fra costoro facesse

[1] TIETZE, TIETZE-CONRAT, 1944, p. 59.

[2] VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1971, III, pp. 622-623.

opere di conto".[3] The abovementioned "relatively innocent" error made by Vasari was due to his misinterpretation of Bastiani's signature "LAZARVS BASTIANVS PINCXIT", in the *Saint Veneranda Altarpiece*. The *pala*, painted for the Church of the Corpus Domini, is the only Bastiani work to be mentioned by Vasari (who also confused Saint Veneranda with the Virgin Mary). Vasari believed that "Lazarus" and "Bastianus", Lazzaro and Sebastiano, were two different people, Carpaccio's brothers, who had learned the artistic practice from their sibling.

Vasari's error was corrected first by Sansovino, who was more knowledgeable about Venetian art and artists than the Tuscan author. A first nucleus of works by "Lazaro Sebastiani" on display in Venetian churches, Scuole and Doge's Palace can be found in his celebratory "encyclopaedia" of Venice, the *Venetia città nobilissima* (1581). He specifically described the *Pietà* in Sant'Antonin, the *Saint Augustine Altarpiece* in San Salvador, the three panels representing *Saint James*, *Saint Mark* and *Saint Jerome* in San Giuliano, the *Saint Veneranda Altarpiece* in Corpus Domini, the *Misericordia* in Santa Maria dei Carmini, the *telero* of the *Offering of the Relics of the Cross* in the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista and the *Portraits of Doges* in Doge's Palace.[4]

In the 17th century the first mention of Bastiani was in Carlo Ridolfi's *Maraviglie dell'Arte* (1648), a Venetian version of Vasari's *Vite* in which several items of incorrect information given by Vasari on Venetian painters were revised while many were integrated.[5] Bastiani's biography was presented along with Giovanni Mansueti's, and both artists were classified as "pittori venetiani". Ridolfi no longer introduced Bastiani as Carpaccio's brother, but he confirmed Bastiani was taught painting by Carpaccio, whose style he imitated. The description of Bastiani's "grand'historia" showing the *Offering of the Relic of the Cross* for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista was followed by

[3] VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1971, p. 622.

[4] SANSOVINO, 1581, pp. 10r (*Pietà*), 48r (*Saint Augustine Altarpiece*), 49r (*Saint James, Saint Mark and Saint Jerome*), 62r (*Saint Veneranda Altarpiece*), 93v (*Misericordia*), 101r (*telero*), 124v (*Portraits of Doges*).

[5] RIDOLFI, 1648, ed. cons. 1914, pp. 49-51.

the description of one of Mansueti's *teleri* for the same confraternity. The two artists were therefore identified as painters of narrative cycles, a definition that supported the idea of Bastiani's apprenticeship under Carpaccio, who was in the main appreciated for his narrative production. Ridolfi provided also a list of Bastiani's artworks in Venice, and for some of them he added useful information concerning the subject, the painted scene, the format, and the fate of the work. For example, Ridolfi advised the reader about the existence of a *predella* in the *Saint Augustine Altarpiece*. He correctly identified *Saint Veneranda* as the female saint of the *pala* in the Corpus Domini (mistakenly believed to be the Virgin Mary by Vasari and Sansovino). He also added that the *Doge's Portraits* in the Doge's Palace had been destroyed by fire ("molti ritratti de' Dogi che si abbruciarono"). [6]

After Vasari's and Ridolfi's statements, Bastiani – often mentioned together with Mansueti – was to be referred to as Carpaccio's disciple for more than two centuries.[7] His artistic activity, therefore, was chronologically contextualised between the end of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th century. The evaluations made by the authors of the 18th and 19th centuries must be considered in this framework.

In 1733 Anton Maria Zanetti criticised Bastiani and Mansueti by stating that the two artists, albeit being disciples of Carpaccio, "poco più, che la diligenza da lui appresero".[8] But some forty years later, in *Della pittura veneziana* of 1771, Zanetti found himself to be more generous to Bastiani, whom he included among the good imitators of Carpaccio and described the artist as "diligente assai, dotto sufficientemente, e fido seguace delle antiche maniere, forse anche più del Maestro". In addition, in Zanetti's opinion Bastiani was younger than Carpaccio and lived "ne' tempi migliori". [9]

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[6] RIDOLFI, 1648, ed. cons. 1914, p. 50.

[7] See also PIACENZA, 1768, pp. 575-576.

[8] ZANETTI, 1733, p. 18.

[9] ZANETTI, 1771, pp. 41-42.

In *Della pittura veneziana*, Zanetti recorded only three paintings by Bastiani. The first one was, once again, the *telero* in San Giovanni Evangelista. The second one was the *Saint Veneranda Altarpiece*, presented as Bastiani's masterpiece ("la pittura tuttavia più lodata"), close in style to Carpaccio, but "più languido tuttavia nel colore, e molto minore di forza nell'ombre e nei lumi". The third work was the *Deposition* in San Severo. It should be noted that Marco Boschini in his *Minere* (1664) and *Ricche Minere* (1674) mentioned it as being by the School of Bastiani, while Zanetti stated that "il maestro mai non fece cosa migliore".[10] Today this *Deposition* is ascribed to Francesco di Girolamo da Santacroce and in conserved in the deposit of the Gallerie dell'Accademia.[11]

In the notes of his *Viaggio nel Veneto* (1793), Luigi Lanzi again implicitly identified Bastiani as painter of narrative cycles, by describing his *telero* of the *Relic of the Cross* in San Giovanni Evangelista. He critically discussed the painting, with comments given on colours and proportions of the figures, on the composition and the architectural setting (this architectural aspect had already been underlined by Zanetti in his 1771 work).[12] Lanzi, however, failed to also ascribe to Bastiani the canvas of the *Young Man (Antonio Riccio) that Survived a Shipwreck*.[13] This attribution was probably based on Boschini's books, while Ridolfi and Zanetti had instead attributed the painting to Mansueti.

Lanzi's critical view of Bastiani was further developed in his *Storia Pittorica* of 1795-1796. Here Bastiani was included among those artists that represented "quel grido ultimo che in ogni scuola ha fatto strada al secol d'oro", thus those artists who worked shortly before Titian and Giorgione.[14] Their paintings showed "qualche orma dell'antica secchezza", "quel disegno puro, semplice,

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[10] IBIDEM.

[11] MOSCHINI MARCONI, 1962, pp. 186-187. Refer also to Cat. RP14.

[12] LANZI, 1793, ed. cons. 1990, p. 106.

[13] The subject was later identified as *Miraculous Healing of the Daughter of Benvegnudo da San Polo* (see Cat. RP15).

[14] LANZI, 1795-96, II/1, p. 24.

diligente, timido per dir così, di dar nel soverchio", "ritratti presi dal vivo", "colori […] veri, e semplici; quantunque non accordati sempre, specialmente col campo, né rotti a sufficienza dal chiaroscuro", "semplicissime […] composizioni […], bastando a quei tempi di collocare in un trono una N.D., a cui d'intorno fan corona quei SS., che la devozione d'ognuno vi richiedeva".[15] Giovanni and Gentile Bellini, and Carpaccio were presented as the three masters of this period, while "Lazzaro Sebastiani" (once again said to be Carpaccio's pupil and follower), and other painters[16] were described as "pittori che quantunque toccassero l'aureo secolo non si dipartirono gran fatto dal gusto antico e uniforme; onde spesso l'uno è scambiato con l'altro".[17] Lanzi did not mention any of their works in Venice, noting that they were recorded in other books. He added, however, comments on their style, arguing it was close to that of Gentile Bellini and Carpaccio, specifically in architectural design ("in questi ancora si veggono bei tratti e similissimi a Gentile e al Carpaccio, specialmente di architettura"), and with regard to their colouring, the character of which, while dry for the Venetian School, could be considered soft for other Schools ("il loro colorito, che si dice duro e languido in questa scuola, in certe altre si terrebbe per quei tempi morbido, e vivo a bastanza").[18]

The numerous guides and descriptions of Venice and its artistic heritage published by various Venetian and "foreign" authors between the 17th and the 19th century have proven to be useful documents, besides the critical comments regarding our artist, in reconstructing the events that concerned Bastiani's works in Venetian churches. Some of these paintings are still in the same church today, albeit relocated, while others went lost.[19] Of import is

[15] IVI, pp. 24-25.

[16] "Giovanni Mansueti", "Marco" and "Pietro Veglia", and "Francesco Rizzo da S. Croce, terra nel Bergamasco".

[17] LANZI, 1795-96, II/1, p. 31.

[18] IBIDEM.

[19] A list (not exhaustive) of publications to be added to those already mentioned include: SANSOVINO-MARTINIONI, 1663; BOSCHINI, 1664; BOSCHINI, 1674; MARTINELLI, 1684; PACIFICO, 1697; MARTINELLI, 1705; BRACCIOLI, 1712; ALBRIZZI, 1740; MOSCHINI, 1815.

Giannantonio Moschini's *Guida per la città di Venezia*, published in 1815, where Moschini himself corrected the erroneous attribution of the Murano *lunette*, until that time attributed to the Vivarinis, by accurately reading the inscription at the base of the throne: "HOC OPVS LAZARI SEBASTIANI MCCCCLXXXIIII".[20] For the first time one of Bastiani's paintings was given a definite date.

In the 19th century, the prevalent opinion on Bastiani's art was mainly based on Ridolfi's, Zanetti's and Lanzi's texts.[21] The only author that expressed a different viewpoint was Zanotto. This latter, presenting the *telero* depicting the *Miraculous Healing of the Daughter of Benvegnudo da San Polo* for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista as Bastiani's masterpiece – after which no further painting of the artist was known at that time – believed that Bastiani did not survive Carpaccio and died shortly after 1506. Among the members of the confraternity portrayed in the canvas, Zanotto identified Francesco Duodo, who was a member of the Scuola in 1506. Given this fact, Bastiani did not have the chance to see Giorgione's and Titian's artistic revolution, thus this would explain why Bastiani did not improve his style. Zanotto's overall opinion on Bastiani is rather positive, regarding him as one of the best interpreters of Carpaccio's style and as a valued painter in his time.[22]

Archival research carried out in the early 19th century provided further information on Bastiani. A document found by Abbot Cadorin and published by Giovanni Gaye in 1840, mentioned that in 1508 Giovanni Bellini had appointed "Ser Lazaro Bastian, Ser Vettor Scarpazza et ser Vettor de Mathio"[23] as members of a commission to evaluate the frescoes that Giorgione had executed in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi.[24] A couple of years later Michelangelo Gualandi published again the same document, adding in a final note that, according to another document which he omits to identify, Bastiani and

[20] MOSCHINI, 1815, II/2, pp. 435-436.

[21] TICOZZI, 1833, p. 327; DE BONI, 1840, p. 942; BURCKHARDT, 1855, pp. 823, 829.

[22] ZANOTTO, 1834, II, s.p. Zanotto repeated this opinion in his *Pinacoteca Veneta* (1860, II [*Gesù riposto nel monumento*]).

[23] Today this latter is identified as Vittore Belliniano.

[24] GAYE, 1840, pp. 137-138.

Benedetto Diana had painted the banners for Piazza San Marco.[25] In 1853 Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna assembled and published the *Giunte Finali* to his previous work *Delle Iscrizioni Veneziane*. Here he recorded a list of members of the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo, in which he also included "Lazaro de Bastian depentor".[26] In his 1859 book *Notizie delle opere d'arte e di antichità della raccolta Correr di Venezia*, Vincenzo Lazari, at the time director of Correr Museum, specified that Bastiani had entered the confraternity of San Girolamo around 1470.[27]

The historical and philological studies carried out by Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, which resulted in their *A History of Painting in North Italy*, published in 1871, gave an innovative perspective on Bastiani's career.[28] Indeed, the authors suggested that Bastiani received his initial training in the Paduan School, from which "he acquired all the disagreeable feature of its art without the redeeming qualities so conspicuous in Mantegna",[29] and that the artist decided to move to Venice when Mantegna went to Mantua. Crowe and Cavalcaselle outlined three stages of artistic development during Bastiani's Venetian experience, which they presented in chronological order. First was a phase of Mantegnesque imitation, displayed in the *Pietà* paintings, seen in works such as those in Sant'Antonin and in Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin.[30] Second was a phase, as they refer to, of "Venetian impressions", which evolved under the influence of the Vivarinis and was included in a time frame ranging between the Murano *lunette* of 1484 and the Bergamo *Coronation* of 1490. Belonging to this period were the *Saint Veneranda Enthroned*, the *Nativity* once in Sant'Elena and the *Saint Anthony in*

[25] GUALANDI, 1842, pp. 90-92.

[26] CICOGNA, 1853, VI, p. 954. The list was part of the statute book (*Mariegola*) of the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo, which Cicogna owned.

[27] LAZARI, 1859, p. 8.

[28] CROWE-CAVALCASELLE, 1871, I, p. 215, pp. 215-219.

[29] IVI, 1871, I, p. 215.

[30] Lost in 1945.

the Nut Tree.[31] Only by the time Bastiani worked in the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, at the end of the 15th century, did his style approximate that of Carpaccio and Mansueti. After this last period of time, Bastiani's activity seemed to have been "seriously confined" (meaning: very few works executed and left behind). Crowe and Cavalcaselle must be credited for having increased Bastiani's catalogue, by attributing him some artworks previously ascribed to other painters (for instance, the *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, formerly assigned to Parentino), and for adding paintings that were outside Venice.[32] The most important addition is the Bergamo *Coronation*, signed and dated "OPUS LAZZARI / SEBASTIANI VENETI 1490", which fixed another chronological *terminus* in Bastiani's career.

The publication of newly found archival material, discovered at the end of the 19th century shed further light on Bastiani's activity.[33] The most complete collection of records concerning Bastiani and his family was published in 1900 by Pietro Paoletti and Gustav Ludwig.[34] The documents attested that the Bastiani family was settled in Venice from at least the 1430s and most of its members were minor painters.[35] A will of 1449 was published as the first document mentioning Lazzaro *pictor*, while a note of 1512 by the Scuola Grande di San Marco reported that he died that year.[36] The archival sources, moreover, disclosed some important commissions Bastiani received during his career, for instance the altarpiece to decorate the altar of Marco Venier,

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[31] Saint Anthony is mistakenly identified as Saint Onofrio.

[32] For the attribution of the *Nativity* to Parentino, refer to ZANOTTO, 1834, II, s.p. (*La Nascita del Salvatore*). In some cases, their attributions were wrong. For example, the *Pietà* in the Church of Santa Maria del Torresino, Cittadella (Padua) was executed by Andrea da Murano (See RP02).

[33] MOLMENTI, 1892, pp. 129-130; PAOLETTI, 1893, p. 135.

[34] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 174-191.

[35] They are often generically called painters, but they are also referred to as painters of cloths, curtains, banners, and *cassoni*.

[36] For scholar Gianmarco Russo, the 1449 record is no longer considered to be the first mention of Bastiani, because it says that Lazzaro was Sebastiano's son, while all the other documents refer to Lazzaro as Jacopo's son. This issue is further discussed in Chapter 4.1.

procuratore de citra, in San Samuel (1460-1468), the *telero* for the Scuola Grande di San Marco (1470), and the small *Christ* for Antonio Choradi da Pera, who preferred Bastiani to Giovanni Bellini for the execution of the picture (1473). The publication of the archival documents was followed by an essay, written by Paoletti and Ludwig, that traced Bastiani's production, adding some important attributions to Bastiani's catalogue of works, while assigning some other paintings to his *bottega* (i.e., workshop). For the first time Bastiani's and his son Vincenzo's activity as mosaicists in San Marco was brought to light.[37]

Following the publication of such archival material, the beginning of Lazzaro's artistic career in Venice was thus estimated to be in the mid-15th century,[38] which discarded Crowe and Cavalcaselle's assumption of his Paduan training[39] and the long-lasting belief of his discipleship under Carpaccio.

In light of the archival evidence, the master-pupil relationship between Carpaccio and Bastiani was reversed by Gustav Ludwig and Pompeo Molmenti; the elder Bastiani was instead regarded as the first master of the younger Carpaccio. This hypothesis was first suggested in Ludwig and Molmenti's book on Carpaccio's cycle of canvases for the Scuola di Sant'Orsola.[40] The pivotal role that Ludwig and Molmenti assigned to Bastiani was examined in depth in their monograph on Carpaccio, published in 1906.[41] In the first chapter, entirely focused on Bastiani, they discussed his family, his creative formation, his career and artistic production. Bastiani was believed to be the leader of an artistic School that arose in Venice alongside those of the Bellinis and the Vivarinis and included both modest painters, but also more talented and qualified artists, among which Carpaccio, Benedetto Diana and Giovanni Mansueti. The two art

[37] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900b, pp. 274-286.

[38] The request for an altarpiece in the Church of San Samuel in 1460 is the first commission recorded.

[39] In the second edition of Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *A History of Paintings in North Italy*, Tancred Borenius discarded the Paduan-Squarcionesque origin in light of the documentary evidences. BORENIUS, 1912, I, pp. 217-218 (note 2).

[40] LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1903, pp. 10-11.

[41] IVI, 1906, pp. 7-35.

historians thought that Bastiani's early influences derived from Jacobello del Fiore and Michele Giambono (who perpetuated the old Byzantine tradition), but also, and especially, from Jacopo Bellini, from which Bastiani's Paduan inspiration would have derived. Overall, the authors' opinion on Bastiani's art was necessarily positive in order to support their assumptions. The chapter, furthermore, was enriched with a documentary appendix that included the latest archival discoveries with some additions.

The identification of Lazzaro as Carpaccio's master was immediately considered something of an exaggeration. Some scholars firmly rejected it (Mary Logan, Laudadeo Testi, Bernard Berenson), criticising the fact that Ludwig and Molmenti's theory was based on the fact that, according to the documents, Bastiani was older than Carpaccio, while, according to stylistic evidence, Carpaccio was closer to Gentile Bellini.[42] Some other scholars though substantially accepted the assumption, even if they pointed out the limits of Bastiani as a master for Carpaccio (Lionello and Adolfo Venturi).[43] In general, however, the comments on Bastiani were not benevolent. He was called "uncouth",[44] "a feebly endowed artist with little if any independence",[45] "artista d'ingegno indubbiamente mediocre, [che] rimase in gran parte sordo alla

[42] LOGAN, 1903, pp. 317- 321; TESTI, 1904, pp. 109-114; LOGAN, 1907, pp. 339-340; BERENSON, 1916, pp. 149-155.

[43] "Il più bel frutto fu il Carpaccio, che se deve al Bastiani tutti i suoi difetti, gli deve, non v'ha dubbio, anche molti pregi", L. VENTURI, 1907, p. 272.

"Iniziò nell'arte il Carpaccio, ma questi abbandonò presto le cose apprese, le buttò giù dalle spalle, come sdrucito e rattoppato pastrano", A. VENTURI, 1915, p. 398.

[44] LOGAN, 1903, p. 319.

[45] BERENSON, 1916, p. 149. Regarding the great reputation Bastiani enjoyed among his contemporaries, Berenson said that "there was much work to be done" in Venice, but since the list of painters of mark was short, the commissioners had recourse even to mediocre men. To further emphasize his opinion, he compared Bastiani to the Tuscan Neri di Bicci: "Students of Florentine Art will not fail to recall that a man like Neri di Bicci, Lazzaro's nearest Tuscan parallel as an artist, enjoyed a similar popularity in Venice" (pp. 152-153).

evoluzione meravigliosa dell'arte veneziana",[46] "un piccolo che, correndo per la via battuta da' grandi, apparve anche più piccolo".[47]

Giuseppe Fiocco's monograph on *Carpaccio* (1931) further fuelled the debate in the early 1930s. In his book the scholar criticises Ludwig and Molmenti's methodology and reverses the relationship between Carpaccio and Bastiani, claiming that the younger artist influenced the old "pittorucolo" at a late stage of his career.[48] Gino Fogolari, in order to reassign to Bastiani the role as the master of Carpaccio, published an article in response to Fiocco, in which he argued that some of the works generally attributed to Lazzaro should be assigned to his son Sebastiano, who was a priest and an insignificant painter ("pittore da poco").[49] Fiocco's reply was not long in coming, rejecting again Ludwig and Molmenti's (and Fogolari) thesis and supporting his assumption that "il carpaccismo appare in un dato momento, suppongo tardo, nelle sue opere, e non è precorrimento ma derivazione".[50]

The quarrel between Fiocco and Fogolari, however, did not resolve itself, as in his article Fogolari released useful information on Bastiani's paintings, which was until then unknown. Of particular interest is the comment on the *Saint Augustine Altarpiece* once in San Salvador. In fact, the painting was believed to be lost until 1929, when in a short article on *Rivista Mensile della Città di Venezia* Leo Planiscig revealed that the central panel with *Saint Augustine Giving the Rule* had re-appeared on the antiquarian market in Vienna a few years before, but he also added that he was not aware of the actual location of the work.[51] This latter piece of information was provided by Fogolari, who

[46] L. VENTURI, 1907, p. 272.

[47] A. VENTURI, 1915, p. 398.

[48] FIOCCO, 1931, p. 10.

[49] FOGOLARI, 1932, pp. 279-285.

[50] FIOCCO, 1933, pp. 31-32.

[51] PLANISCIG, 1929, pp. 257-260.

stated that the painting was in the private collection of Fernando Perez, the Argentinian ambassador in Rome.[52]

Besides the issue on Bastiani-Carpaccio relationship, the extension of Bastiani's activity beyond its previous time limits prompted a debate over more significant aspects i.e., relating to Bastiani's education and his artistic evolution throughout his career.

Lacking definite sources, scholars grounded their opinions on the basis of artistic style and on their personal *connoisseurship*. In general, they suggested that Bastiani received his early training from older or more influential painters, as Jacopo Bellini, Antonio Vivarini, Squarcione and Mantegna.[53] Paoletti even believed that Lazzaro was instructed in painting cloth (such as banners and curtains) by his elder brother Marco, because, as reported in the archival documents, Marco was a *coltrer* (a painter of cloths).[54]

A crucial contribution that, for the first time, tried to systematically answer the issue of Bastiani's apprenticeship was published by Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà in 1931. In her article *Lazzaro Bastiani's 'Madonnas'*, she suggested and tried to demonstrate that the Paduan elements Bastiani shows in his works came to him second-hand via the work of the Vivarinis, who were themselves Squarcionesque painters. More specifically, Vavalà found in Bastiani "formal reminescences of Antonio and his German partner Giovanni, and a general

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[52] FOGOLARI, 1932, p. 284. For an in-depth discussion on the painting and Fernando Perez, please see Cat. AP26.

[53] "Le origini dell'arte del fondatore Lazzaro Bastiani non si possono ben determinare, e si debbono per ora cercare in una mistione delle due correnti predominanti verso il 1450, quella di Jacopo Bellini e la squarcionesca". L. VENTURI, 1907, p. 271. "Non mosso quasi dalla nuova sensibilità artistica si presenta Lazzaro Bastiani, che continua per molto tempo a smaltire le vecchie forme di Antonio Vivarini, di Jacopo Bellini e del Mantegna". A. VENTURI, 1915, VII/IV, p. 379.

[54] "Riguardo poi alla primitiva educazione artistica di Lazzaro Sebastiano, cioè dopo gli insegnamenti avuti nella bottega del fratello Marco col quale più che altro avrà dovuto attendere alle varie decorazioni per stoffe, bandiere, coltrinaggi, ecc.; certo non lieve influenza dovette avere su di lui l'arte fecondamente narrativa di Jacopo Bellini, ch'egli ricorderà per spunti anche nelle sue ultime composizioni […]". PAOLETTI, 1929, p. 126.

sentimental and spiritual parallelism with Alvise"; but it was with Bartolomeo that she observed "that close and detailed resemblance which would seem to point to the relationship of master and pupil".[55] To overcome the problem that Bartolomeo and Lazzaro were almost equal in age[56] and that it was improbable that Bastiani could have been trained by Bartolomeo, Vavalà proposed that due to the mediocre quality of his talent, Bastiani remained in the Vivarinis' workshop longer than was usual. For Vavalà, this would explain also why Bastiani developed slowly and late, producing his most notable, authenticated, and dated paintings only in the 1480s-1490s. According to Vavalà, Bastiani's earliest phase (which is not a juvenile phase, a period she admitted not to know anything about) was characterized by "direct imitation of, and apparent discipleship to, Bartolommeo". This stage would be followed by a rapid development that "reflects in turn impressions of his [Bastiani's] juniors" i.e., Alvise Vivarini, Giovanni and Gentile Bellini, and Carpaccio.[57] To support her assumption, Vavalà outlined Bastiani's artistic path based upon stylistic deductions. She attributed various paintings to Lazzaro that showed a direct ascendancy from Bartolomeo, most of them previously ascribed to Bartolomeo himself or to the Vivarinis in general. For instance, the *Madonna of Humility* in Gallerie dell'Accademia, *Madonna and Child Crowned by Two Angels, With Musical Angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father* in Poldi Pezzoli, the *Adoration of the Magi* in The Frick Collection (at that time in Pierpont Morgan Library, New York), and *The Penitent Saint Jerome* in Springfield Museum (which had formerly been on the Parisian antiquarian market). Other attributions were proposed to demonstrate Bastiani's evolution towards Alvise and the Bellinis (e.g., the *Madonna del Baldacchino*, which was in Captain George Pitt-Rivers Collection), and finally to a tardily fully formed and personal manner (e.g., the *Virgin and Child enthroned, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Dorothy*, at Wildenstein in Paris). Most of Vavalà's ascriptions proved to be

[55] SANDBERG-VAVALÀ, 1931, p. 125.

[56] She assumed Bastiani's date of birth to be around 1425, and Bartolomeo's in 1431.

[57] SANDBERG-VAVALÀ, 1931, p. 126.

correct and they have been largely accepted by the critics and today constitute important attributions in Bastiani's catalogue.

Substantially in agreement with Vavalà's conclusions on Bastiani's early stage were Berenson and Longhi, who respectively referred to Bastiani as "pupil of Bartolomeo Vivarini",[58] and as Bartolomeo's "fratello d'arte".[59]

In the attempt to give to Bastiani the so-called "Tarocchi del Mantegna", in a significant foot note in his *Officina Ferrarese* (1934), Roberto Longhi outlined Bastiani's early catalogue with new important additions (some of them, again, previously assigned to Bartolomeo, such as the Matera *Polyptych*). In addition, Longhi pointed out some intriguing suggestions about Bastiani's possible engraving activity, with employment of the burin (that according to Longhi would confirm the modest quality of his paintings)[60], and also his possible miniaturist practice (evident, for instance, in the *Pietà* in Poldi Pezzoli).[61]

Also of significance during the 1930s was Raimond Van Marle's chapter on Bastiani in his *The Development of Italian Schools of Paintings* (1936, XVIII), in which he reiterated the idea of Bastiani's Paduan education (perhaps as pupil of Squarcione), and the possible leading role he played in Carpaccio's artistic education.[62]

The most important and complete monographic contribution on Bastiani, however, was published by Licia Collobi Ragghianti in 1939.[63] Acknowledging the problematic key points that, right from the start, critics had not yet convincingly answered (i.e., Bastiani's formation and his hypothetical

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[58] BERENSON, 1932, p. 63; BERENSON, 1936, I, p. 54. In the short description of Bastiani's career, Berenson added: "Close follower of Gentile Bellini, influenced by Giovanni as well, and, not improbably in later years, by Carpaccio and Cima".

[59] LONGHI, 1934, ed. cons. 1968², pp. 97-98 (note 59).

[60] "Una particolarità tecnica che giureresti dovuta a qualche pratica corrente del bulino; lunghi tratti incisi con fermezza come sur una lastra di rame; e si è proprio la non perfetta aderenza di questo metodo all'espressione pittorica, che par denunziarne l'indebolita trasposizione da un'attività diversa". LONGHI, 1934, ed. cons. 1968², p. 97 (note 59).

[61] LONGHI, 1934, ed. cons. 1968², p. 98 (note 59).

[62] VAN MARLE, 1936, XVIII, pp. 172-196.

[63] COLLOBI, 1939, pp. 33-53.

influence on Carpaccio), and given the lack of documentary information on surviving paintings that were executed before 1480, the goal of Collobi's monographic essay was to chronologically reconstruct Bastiani's career and production according to meaningful and plausible connections. The scholar divided Bastiani's artistic activity in two macro-periods that developed before and after 1475. The early phase would be characterised by an active and independent artistic study, Bastiani's search of his proper style and his comparing himself with other painters. According to Collobi, in this period of his career Bastiani achieved his most relevant results, influenced first by the Vivarinis (Collobi suggested that Antonio was perhaps Bastiani's master around 1445) and the Paduans – both Mantegna (whom Collobi presumed Bastiani met during his journey in Venice in 1459, or during a hypothetical journey made by Bastiani to Padua), and other Squarcionesque painters, such as Schiavone and Zoppo – but also by other artists of the early 15th century, as Jacopo Bellini, Gentile da Fabriano, Pisanello and Masolino.[64] Collobi also accepted Longhi's theory that Bastiani was an engraver and miniaturist, traces of which activities she thought could be found in artworks of this early stage (respectively, for instance, in the Matera *Polyptych*, and in *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia). The second phase, after 1475, would be defined by a "crisis" that for Collobi had spiritual and religious foundations: even though Bastiani's paintings were appreciated by the public and his workshop was developing, his pictures started to show more and more rigorous and geometric compositions, with stiff figures and a general construction that Collobi

[64] "A costo di sembrare ovvi, facciamo osservare come sia in questo giovanile momento, di libera ed attiva ricerca in sé e fuori di sé, che il Bastiani raggiunge i suoi più alti risultati artistici: con un percorso ancora parallelo alle personalità più rappresentative del suo tempo; percorso che egli arresterà poi nella 'crisi', per seguire un cammino proprio, allontanandosi dal sentiero maggiore, per preferirgli una 'via dell'orto' che, in giri replicati intorno al punto fisso delle sue radicate convinzioni, lo ricondurrà, alla fine, vicino al punto di partenza". COLLOBI, 1939, p. 37.

described as "abstract" and "contemplative".[65] In this period, he was influenced by Antonello da Messina (whom Bastiani knew and admired, but did not totally comprehend, according to Collobi), Alvise Vivarini (regarding the common Muranese descendancy), Gentile and, to a lesser extent, Giovanni Bellini. Even today, Collobi's essay is an essential starting point for the study of Bastiani. The article was enriched by two appendixes. The first one focused, for the first time in any depth, upon Bastiani's graphic production, listing a number of drawings on paper ascribed to the artist and others that were not universally accepted as being by the artist. The second concerned the paintings rejected as being by Bastiani and those still of doubtful attribution and contained a short digression on Bastiani's followers.

A few years later, Bastiani's graphic production was further explored by Hans Tietze and Erika Tietze-Conrat in their seminal study on *The Drawings of the Venetian Painters in the 15th and 16th centuries* (1944). The Tietzes drafted a catalogue of drawings they attributed to Bastiani (sometimes with reservation) and also included the drawings tentatively given to our artist in the past, whose ascription they rejected. They explained their methodology in their short text on the artist: "All attributions to Bastiani, old and new, in default of any authentic document of his style, must rest on generic stylistic considerations. Drawings are claimed for him on the basis of their relative nearness to, or remoteness from, Carpaccio and the Bellini whose paths his own evolution seems to have approached or crossed at various occasions".[66]

One year after the fundamental exhibition *Cinque Secoli di Pittura Veneta* of 1945, curated by Rodolfo Pallucchini, Longhi published his *Viatico*, an essay that not only intended to present the artworks that were on display at the exhibition (a sort of compendium of the official catalogue),[67] but further discussed in a wider perspective the decisive moments and fundamental

[65] "Intorno a lui cresce la considerazione del pubblico: la sua bottega fiorisce [...] e da ora in poi egli si varrà nei suoi dipinti dell'esperienza fatta, sempre più quieto, sempre più quieto, fino alla sonnolenza degli ultimi dipinti, chiusi, malinconici, ingrati". COLLOBI, 1939, p. 41.

[66] TIETZE-TIETZE-CONRAT, 1944, pp. 59-60.

[67] PALLUCCHINI, 1945.

artists that contributed to the evolution of the Venetian art.[68] The exhibition had a rich display of paintings (200 pieces) and Longhi emphasized that at least ninety works were sublime ("d'ordine eccelso"). He also added that regarding the eighty painters whose pictures were on display, at least thirty were "artisti genuini" and at least twenty were "poeti veri".[69] Longhi, therefore, made a distinction among artists, considering only some of them as authentic poets of the painting practice that played a decisive role in the development of the Venetian art.[70]

In this framework Longhi celebrated Giovanni Bellini as "uno dei grandi poeti d'Italia"[71] and, in comparison with this master, Bastiani was a minor figure whose contribution to the sensitivity of Venetian art was insignificant and not worth even mentioning: "La poesia suole crescere in primis sulla poesia; e così nel clima poetico altissimo creato a Venezia dal Bellini crescono liberi i buoni poeti di Venezia e della provincia, negli ultimi decenni del Quattrocento e sui primi del secolo nuovo. Non alludo, s'intende bene, né al Bastiani, né al Mansueti, né a Lattanzio da Rimini, né a Vittore Belliniano, né a Vincenzo dalle Destre; tutti nomi che potevano esserci risparmiati".[72]

As observed by Russo, Longhi's caustic comment must be weighed within the context it was formulated i.e., the exhibition of the 1945, where the only Bastiani's painting on display was the Murano *lunette*, a picture that already shows that geometrically simplified composition of the mature works.[73]

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[68] "Ma, perché si trattava quasi sempre di opere di primo piano, l'occasione non poteva non provocare un discorso più ampio sui vari momenti topici e sulle molte persone prime della pittura veneziana". LONGHI, 1946, p. 3.

[69] LONGHI, 1946, p. 6.

[70] Russo already explained that this distinction was based on Benedetto Croce's ideas. RUSSO, 2017, s.p.

[71] LONGHI, 1946, p. 12.

[72] IVI, p. 13.

[73] "Come dire: la lunetta di Murano, con quelle sue forme ampie e dilatate entro uno schema spaziale assai semplificato (con quel linguaggio, cioè, tipico della maturità del pittore), può difficilmente servire da testimonianza non solo della posizione storica di Lazzaro, ma, più in generale, dell'intero corso della pittura veneziana". RUSSO, 2017, s.p.

An important addition to Bastiani's *corpus* of paintings was made in 1950. In a short but relevant article published in *Paragone*, Francesco Arcangeli attributed to Bastiani a panel depicting *Saint John the Baptist* he discovered in a private collection in Bologna. The ascription (immediately accepted by other scholars) and the date of execution are supported by the work's convincing stylistic relations with Bastiani's artworks (the Matera *Polyptych* and the *Christ Blessing* in Bayonne) and comparisons with Mantegna's, the Vivarinis' and the Bellinis' examples.[74] Arcangeli's description is impassioned and – as noticed by Russo – acknowledged Bastiani as at least a "poeta minore" (minor poet) of Venetian art, a role that a few years before Longhi had refused to recognise.[75]
This reconsideration of Bastiani was downgraded again by Luigi Coletti shortly afterwards in his *Pittura Veneta del Quattrocento* (1953). In the section dedicated to the Muranese painters, the author ascribed several paintings, whose attribution to Bastiani had already been suggested, to an anonymous artist in the artistic *milieu* of Bartolomeo Vivarini,[76] or to Andrea da Murano.[77] To this latter the scholar assigned two panels he judged to be of extremely high quality, the *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* and *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia, which he agreed to being in stylistic continuity with The Frick *Adoration*, but rejecting again the ascription to Bastiani indicated by Longhi and Collobi.[78] The reason for this re-attribution was explained by the author: "non vi è alcuna possibilità di passaggio fra queste opere databili sul sessantesimo, così scattanti, frizzanti, pungenti di spiriti, di moti, di tinte, col respiro stanco, con la psicologia ottusa, col

[74] ARCANGELI, 1950, pp. 54-56.

[75] ARCANGELI, 1950, p. 55; RUSSO, 2017, s.p.

[76] "Una personalità garbata e diligente, già verso la fine del secolo, nel seguito di Bartolomeo, fra Antonio da Negroponte, appunto, e Quirizio". COLETTI, 1953, p. XLIX. Among the works given to this anonymous painter there are the Berlin *Madonna*, the Poldi Pezzoli *Madonna*, the *Madonna of Humility* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia and the *Madonna* in the Eremitani.

[77] COLETTI, 1953, p. L.

[78] In 1949, Coletti already tried to give these pictures to the young Giovanni Bellini. COLETTI, 1949, p. 10.

colorismo sordo del Bastiani".[79] Coletti's opinion on Bastiani, therefore, seems to have been based still on the later and more "formulaic" works of the artist, albeit he was aware, at least, of the contributions by Longhi and Collobi concerning the early phase of Bastiani's career.

In the second half of 1950s Sandra Moschini Marconi and Giovanni Mariacher produced accurate and bibliographically updated catalogue entries with regard to the paintings at the Gallerie dell'Accademia[80] and at the Correr Museum in Venice, respectively.[81] In the same period Berenson published the new updated version of his *Indexes*.[82] The list included sixty artworks, five of which were considered questionable (presented with a question mark). Some of Berenson attributions have been later discarded and others have been reclassified as mere workshop products.

The number of paintings of Bastiani's catalogue was further increased by the ascriptions – sometimes bizarre – suggested by Fritz Heinemann in his *Bellini e i Belliniani* (1962, I-II). Heinemann regarded Bastiani as a weak and derivative artist, partly influenced by Bartolomeo Vivarini and uppermost by Gentile Bellini, but often inspired by Giovanni Bellini too. Given Bastiani's tendency to imitate the style of other artists – Heinemann added – several of his works were often confused with those of other painters.[83] Heinemann appears to have been confused as well, since of the twenty-eight pieces he listed, four are today given to Giovanni.[84] The scholar also included about ten portraits (some of them known only through photographs) carefully

[79] COLETTI, 1953, p. LI.

[80] MOSCHINI-MARCONI, 1955, pp. 51-60.

[81] MARIACHER, 1957, pp. 29-42.

[82] BERENSON, 1957, pp. 25-27. For the Italian version: BERENSON, 1958, pp. 26-27.

[83] HEINEMANN, 1962, I, pp. 216-217.

[84] The artworks are *Saint Jerome in the Wilderness* at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham, UK (LUCCO, 2019, pp. 292-293 [Cat. 4]), *Madonna and Child* formerly in Fodor collection in Paris (LUCCO, 2019, pp. 300-301 [Cat. 9]), *Madonna and Child* at Pinacoteca Malaspina in Pavia (LUCCO, 2019, pp. 306-307 [Cat. 13]), and *Christ on the Cross with Mary and Saint John* in Musée du Louvre in Paris (LUCCO, 2019, pp. 349-350 [Cat. 31.b]).

explaining their peculiar characteristics and the differences from Gentile's and Giovanni's portraits. No definite autograph portraits by Bastiani are known, therefore Heinemann's description must have been based on the portraits of the members of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista in the *telero* of the *Offering of the Relics of the Cross*, or, more probably (according to his description), on the general assumption that Bastiani was considered a sort of convenient 'container' for those pictures – close to the Bellinis – but too weak to be assigned to them.[85]

1965 saw Edoardo Arslan's entry on Bastiani in the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*.[86] The major Bastiani's artworks are included in chronological order to present his development, but sometimes the author seems to still be attached to the outdated ideas of Crowe and Cavalcaselle and Ludwig and Molmenti, especially with regard to the period before 1480.[87]

In an article which appeared in *Arte Veneta* in 1969, Alberto Rizzi attempted to ascribe to Bastiani a polyptych on display in the Chiesa Madre of Genzano di Lucania (Potenza).[88] For Rizzi, the picture was the work of a phase of classicism derived from Giovanni Bellini before 1475 i.e., shortly before the decline of Bastiani's creativity. In support of his thesis, he advanced several comparisons with other Bastiani's paintings. The most convincing comparisons, however, were with Giovanni Bellini's works of the 1460s and 1470s, persuading scholars that the altarpiece was to be attributed to Giovanni rather than to Lazzaro.[89]

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[85] "I ritratti di Lazzaro Bastiani sono spiritualmente più tranquilli e di espressione quasi ottusa al contrario di quelli di Gentile e di Giovanni Bellini. Dal punto di vista compositivo essi si rifanno al modello dei due artisti; si distinguono da quelli del Mansueti per una maggiore plasticità ed un colore più caldo". HEINEMANN, 1962, I, p. 216.

[86] ARSLAN, 1965, pp. 167-169.

[87] Arslan proposes Ludwig and Molmenti's theory once more, although partly revised, of Bastiani as Carpaccio's master.

[88] RIZZI, 1969, pp. 21-30.

[89] For a more detailed discussion of this subject, please refer to LUCCO, 2019, 335-337 (Cat. 25).

The 1970s did not see any noteworthy contribution on Bastiani, except a short comment by Mauro Lucco concerning his attribution to Bastiani of the *Saint Peter and Donor* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia (an attribution Lucco subsequently changed in favour of Bartolomeo Montagna, to whom the picture is today ascribed).[90]

Several articles and entries suggesting works (comprising both paintings and drawings) to be attributed to Bastiani were published in the 1980s and 1990s. Most of the new ascriptions were to be dated before 1480, giving the scholars a chance to examine Bastiani's formation and chronology and express their personal view on the matter.

Discussing some of Bastiani's *Madonnas* in *Arte Veneta* (1983), Vittorio Sgarbi considered Bastiani to be the link between the Vivarinis and the Bellinis and anchored his juvenile education to Antonio Vivarini and the Late Gothic manner by assigning him the *Madonna* n. 2193 in Correr Museum.[91] In the entry on the Brighton *Madonna of Humility* for an exhibition catalogue, Carlo Volpe remarked upon the role of Bastiani as a connection between the two families of major artists in Venice at that time, but emphasised that his early pictures "best reflect Giovanni Bellini's work of the 1450s", reversing the direction of the influences that reached Bastiani at first. Specifically, Volpe found "Bastiani's version of Bellini's manner before 1460" in the small panels with *Stories from the Life of Christ* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, to which he added two further in private collections.[92] Volpe's suggestion concerning Bellini's influence at a very initial phase of Bastiani's production was further explored by Luigi Iseppi in an article published in *Paragone* in 1986, in which he correctly identified the panels in the private collections and thus reconstructed the *paliotto* with *Stories from the Life of Christ*.[93] A date of

[90] Lucco wrote this comment in his review of the exhibition *Da Giotto a Mantegna*, that took place in Padua in 1974: LUCCO, 1977, pp. 120-121. For the ascription to Montagna, please see VILLA, 2014, p. 331 (Cat. 48).

[91] SGARBI, 1983, pp. 157-158.

[92] VOLPE, 1983, p. 56.

[93] ISEPPI, 1986, pp. 36-40.

execution between 1450 and 1455 was advanced for comparison with a similar artwork that Volpe ascribed to the young Giovanni Bellini in the same period.[94] This relation with Giovanni Bellini's paintings provided, for Iseppi, new coordinates to help understand the young Bastiani and to define his role as link and mediator of Bellini's innovations to the Vivarinis.[95] In line with the theory of the more traditional discipleship under the Vivarinis are Luisa Tognoli Bardin (1987) and Miklós Boskovits (1992).[96]

Of note during this period is Patricia Fortini Brown's book (1986) on the narrative cycles in Venetian Scuole that briefly discusses Bastiani's *teleri* too, the biographic entry written by Peter Humfrey in the volume on the *Quattrocento* of *La pittura nel Veneto* (1990) edited by Lucco, and the third upgraded tome, published posthumously, of Heinemann's *Giovanni Bellini e i Belliniani* (1991).[97]

As far as the graphic production is concerned, two contributions were published in the 1980s and 1990s. In the first, the attribution to Bastiani of a drawing representing the *Virgin Annunciate* in The Getty Museum of Los Angeles (California, U.S.A.) offered William R. Rearick the opportunity to re-examine the artistic activity of the painter. His proposal that Bastiani's initial training was with Niccolò Pizolo in Padua and his further hypothesis of a collaboration with Giovanni Bellini's in several works of the master appears

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[94] VOLPE, 1978, pp. 56-60.

[95] "Il riferimento al Bellini più volte sottolineato conferisce quindi nuovo respiro e nuove coordinate alla comprensione della personalità del Bastiani giovane, troppe volte in passato intesa in senso strettamente padovano-mantegnesco, e ne sottolinea semmai – in anni cruciali per lo sviluppo e il maturarsi della pittura veneziana – il suo ruolo, tutt'altro che marginale, di tramite e mediatore delle grandi novità belliniane presso i due più fortunati fratelli muranesi Antonio e Bartolomeo Vivarini, e più tardi presso lo stesso Alvise". ISEPPI, 1986, p. 39.

[96] TOGNOLI BARDIN, 1987, pp. 72-76; BOSKOVITS, 1992, pp. 24-27. Tognoli Bardin ascribed to Bastiani two paintings in Museo Diocesano of Milan, the *Saint Jerome and a Nun* and the *Saint Catherine*. Boskovits attempted to give to Bastiani two panels depicting *Saint Peter* and *Saint Paul* in The Martello Collection (New York, U.S.A.).

[97] FORTINI BROWN, 1986, pp. 139-142; HUMFREY, 1990, pp. 733-734; HEINEMANN, 1991, III, pp. X-XII, 76-77.

completely inconsistent.[98] The drawing of the *Virgin*, however, was accepted as Bastiani's, even though recently Russo discarded the attribution and suggested Alvise Vivarini as draftsman of the Getty picture.[99] In the second contribution, Cristina Quattrini, on the other hand, investigated the possibility of expanding Bastiani's artistic practice to the graphic decoration of incunables. Taking Longhi's hypothesis of Bastiani as engraver as her starting point, the scholar attempted the ascription to Bastiani of some pen drawings to decorate the incunable G.III. 13 of the Biblioteca Queriniana in Brescia with the *Triumphs* and the *Canzoniere* by Petrarca.[100]

Regarding the mosaics, in 1994 and in 1996 Ettore Merkel released the results of his long-term research on the 16th century mosaics in the Basilica of San Marco in two comprehensive essays in *Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'Arte*. The archival records and the visual evidence proved that Bastiani was active in San Marco between 1488 and 1512 and, most importantly, that he was assisted by his sons Alvise and Vincenzo, confirming that Bastiani's workshop was composed of his family members (in accordance with the Venetian tradition).[101]

In the second half of the 1990s, three relevant articles were published. The first one, titled *L'esordio di Lazzaro Bastiani*, is included in Longhi's posthumous book *Il Palazzo Non Finito*, printed in 1995. The unfinished volume was conceived as a collection of essays on which the art historian was working on between 1925 and 1926. The ascription to Bastiani of the two panels depicting *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* at the

[98] REARICK, 1985, pp. 48-50.

[99] TURNER-HENDRIX-PLAZZOTTA, 1997, pp. 10-11. Russo discussed this matter during the conference *Venetian Disegno: New Frontiers*, hosted by the Warburg Institute and organised by Thomas Dalla Costa and Genevieve Verdigel (20th – 21st May 2021).

[100] QUATTRINI, 1992, pp. 56-62. Quattrini's proposal was not taken into considerations by other art historians who studied Bastiani.

[101] MERKEL, 1994, pp. 89-94; MERKEL, 1996, pp. 177-178. Vincenzo tragically died falling from a scaffolding the 18th of March 1512, as reported by Marin Sanudo (SANUDO, 1886, XIV, col. 228 [123v]).

Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice (which at that time had recently returned from Vienna), "rivelate come le prime operazioni fin qui cognite di Lazzaro Bastiani"[102] and "poste ad uno dei nodi di svolgimento dell'arte Veneziana",[103] was the starting point to re-analyse Bastiani's production in the context of the 15th century Venetian art and of his relationships with the Bellinis and the Vivarinis.[104] As already observed by Russo, Longhi's intention was not to provide a list of paintings in chronological order, but to identify those elements and characteristics typical of Bastiani's production. What emerges from Longhi's analysis is Bastiani's peculiar artistic language that combines Renaissance elements, from the application of the perspective construction to dogmatic and symbolic intentions. This explains why his compositions, albeit correct in the perspective design, immediately appear schematic and rigid, revealing their primary religious meaning.[105]

A new attempt to outline Bastiani's *oeuvre* before 1480, in other words his juvenile period and early mature phase, was made by Stefano Casu in an article published in *Paragone* in 1996. Lacking archival documents and signed and dated artworks before 1484, the methodology applied was, once again, based only on stylistic characteristics, to which the author added the knowledge of the critical sources of the 20th century. Casu's essay, enriched with exhaustive footnotes reporting precise bibliographical references on the artist and the paintings discussed, is the first comprehensive study focused on Bastiani's early career and contains numerous suggestions and stimuli to reflect on even

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[102] LONGHI, 1995, p. 440.

[103] IVI, p. 441.

[104] "Anche a silentio noi potremmo dire che nessun altro pittore notevole di Venezia poté trovarsi negli stessi momenti nella stessa situazione spirituale salvo Lazzaro Bastiani". IBIDEM.

[105] "Lazzaro Bastiani è forse l'unico che sappia servirsi degli elementi rinascimentali per metterli d'accordo con questo classicismo dommatico del trecento". LONGHI, 1995, p. 443.
"La verità è che l'austero spirito di Lazzaro Bastiani poté talora servirsi dei mezzi formali del rinascimento per uno scopo extrafigurativo, e rigorosamente religioso, ma ciò non gl'impedì mai di mantenersi a un grado decente di figuratività dove non v'è traccia di incapacità e dove la ripetizione dello schema se non risentita è sempre conscia, intenzionale". LONGHI, 1995, p. 444.

today (for instance, the influence of Marco Zoppo on Bastiani, so far only briefly mentioned by other authors).[106]

An aspect of Bastiani's activity until then only of marginal interest for the scholars was investigated by Lucia Sartor in an article which appeared in *Arte Veneta* in 1997. This significant contribution was focused on Bastiani's commissioners in Veneto. After an introductory excursus on Bastiani's patrons known through the archival sources, Sartor presents case studies to prove that Bastiani was a successful painter, appreciated by his contemporaries. Bastiani's artworks, indeed, were requested by religious orders to embellish the altars of their churches and by private citizens for personal devotion or for their family chapels, but also by Venetian Scuole Piccole and Scuole Grandi, by the State to decorate the Doge's Palace and by the *fabbriceria* of San Marco for mosaics in the Basilica.[107]

It is worth noting that for the first time in the 1990s two catalogue entries also included a careful description of the conservation treatment and the scientific analyses performed on Bastiani's paintings in Venice.[108]

After Sartor's article, no significant contribution on Bastiani has been recorded for twenty years.[109]

Recently, the young scholar Gianmarco Russo focused his research on Bastiani. His main aim is declared in his very first article (2017): to compile Bastiani's "relative" monography ("monografia relativa") by integrating the traditional *connoisseurship* with considerations on the historical and artistic context the painter was raised in and the relations that linked his artistic path to other painters.[110] In 2018, the ascription to Bastiani's corpus of a *Madonna and Child* in Northampton (UK) was the occasion for Russo to discuss again Bastiani's

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[106] CASU, 1996, pp. 60-89.

[107] SARTOR, 1997, pp. 38-53.

[108] DORIGATO, 1993, pp. 50-5, 134-135; SPADAVECCHIA, 1996, s.p.

[109] Except some entries in museum catalogues and in exhibition catalogues, and generic mentions in books on Venetian art (DAL POZZOLO, 2010, pp. 114, 120-121, 126). See also the entry by TAMBINI, 1998, pp. 444-447.

[110] RUSSO, 2017, s.p.

career before 1480. Differently from Casu, whose conclusions were chronologically consistent with Longhi's and Collobi's, Russo stresses on the impact on Bastiani of Giovanni Bellini's and Marco Zoppo's Venetian altarpieces executed between the 1460s and the 1470s to convincingly postpone to the early 1470s the execution of artworks that until then were placed a decade earlier.[111] In 2019 the relationship between Bastiani and Giovanni Bellini was further investigated by Russo by presenting examples of compositions evidently derived from Giovanni, even by re-using his models and cartoons.[112] Finally, at the conference *Venetian Disegno: New Frontiers*, hosted by the Warburg Institute on the 20th and 21st of May 2021, Russo further explored Bastiani's activity as a draftsman for the mosaics in San Marco.[113]
Preliminary results concerning Bastiani's underdrawing were presented by the author of this thesis at a doctoral conference that took place at the University of Verona in 2019.[114] In 2021, the same author, reconstructed the unlucky events that involved Bastiani's *Saint Augustine Altarpiece* in San Salvador at a doctoral conference in Padua.[115]

[111] RUSSO, 2018, pp. 3-18.

[112] RUSSO, 2019, pp. 165-179. The contribution was presented at the conference *Giovanni Bellini: … "il migliore nella pittura"*. Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 27th – 28th October 2016.

[113] RUSSO, *A suggestion for Lazzaro Bastiani as a Draftman*. The conference proceedings are in print: V*enetian Disegno: New Frontiers circa 1420 to 1620*, edited by M. ARESIN – T. DALLA COSTA, Paul Holberton Publishing, London, expected publication date Spring 2023.

[114] *Humanities: approaches, contamination and perspectives*. Verona, Università di Verona, 17th – 18th October 2019. The speech presented at the conference has been printed in the proceedings: DE MANINCOR, 2020, pp. 109-123.

[115] *Storie interrotte. Riconoscere e valorizzare il patrimonio dimenticato*. Padua, Università degli Studi di Padova, 25th – 26th November, 2021. DE MANINCOR, 2022, pp. 155-159. The short article concerning the speech delivered at the conference has been recently published in the proceedings: DE MANINCOR, 2022, pp. 155-159.

2. CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

Summary of documented information regarding Lazzaro Bastiani and his closer relatives (*Fig. 1*).[116]

1449, 5th April

Lazzaro (*Lazarus pictor condam Sabastiani de confinio Sancti Leonis*) witnesses the will of *Doratia*, widow of *Laurentij merciarij de confinio sancti Leonis* (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 183; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 33).

1456, 18th November

Lazzaro (*Lazaro depentor de confin de san Rafael*) and his brother Marco (*Marcho depentor del confin de san Lio*) are made executors of their nephew *Zuane de Jacomo Trivixano*'s will (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 33).

1457, 22nd June

Lazzaro is appointed as executor of his brother Marco's will ("Volo meos fidei commissaries ser Lazarum quondam Jacobi Bastiano fratrem meum"), together with Ludovico, Marco's brother-in-law, and Marco's children (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, pp. 174-175; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 31).

1460, 4th December

The Church of San Samuel records a payment for an altarpiece Lazzaro Bastiani is painting to decorate the altar of Marco Venier, *procuratore de citra*. Bastiani is referred to as *magistro* (Paoletti, II, 1893, p. 135; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 183; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 33; Sartor, 1997, p. 39).

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[116] Based on published documents reported in: CORNER, 1749, V, p. 344; TRIESTE DE' PELLEGRINI, 1780, p. 44; GAYE, 1840, pp. 137-138; GUALANDI, 1842, pp. 90-92; CICOGNA, 1853, VI, p. 954; LAZARI, 1859, p. 8; SANUDO, 1886, XIV, col. 228; CECCHETTI, 1887, p. 401; SACCARDO, 1897, pp. 287-288; MOLMENTI, 1892, pp. 129-130; PAOLETTI, 1893, II, p. 135; PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 174-191; LUDWIG, 1905, p. 59; LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, pp. 31-35; GALLO, 1926, pp. 81-82; MERKEL, 1972-1973, p. 666, fig. 28; MERKEL, 1977, pp. 399-414; MERKEL, 1996, p. 184; SARTOR, 1997, p. 43; DAVIS, 2007, pp. 246-247; BARAUSSE, 2008, pp. 337-338; BARAUSSE, 2019, pp. 34-35, 37.

1461

Other payments are noted by the Church of San Samuel to Lazzaro Bastiani (Paoletti, II, 1893, p. 135; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 183; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 33).

1462, 21st November

Lazzaro witnesses the will of Chiara Badoder, daughter of *miser Michiel de confin de santa Margarita* (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 33).

1468, 18th February

The altarpiece for the Church of San Samuel is completed and Lazzaro receives a 300 ducats payment (Paoletti, II, 1893, p. 135; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 183; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 33).

1470, 7th January

Gabriel Zilberti, *guardian grande* of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, and the confraternity members deliberate the commissioning of Lazzaro Bastiani, according to his own request, a *telero* in two fields, to be placed "sopra et proximo al volto de la scalla" and portraying the *Instoria de David*. Before proceeding, it is decided that Lazzaro must provide a drawing of the overall composition for approval by the confraternity members. He must also bear all the expenses for painting materials. He is to be paid at the same rate by size of work as Jacopo Bellini (Molmenti, 1888, pp. 228-229; Paoletti, 1894, p. 11; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 184; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 33-34; Fortini-Brown, 1988, p. 269; Barausse, 2009, p. 337; Barausse, 2019, pp. 34-35).

Terms and conditions of Giovanni Bellini's contract with the Scuola Grande di San Marco, drawn up on the 24th of April 1470, are based on Bastiani's agreement with the Scuola (see Barausse, 2019, p. 35 and previous bibliography).

1470, 18th April

Lazzaro is made executor of *Matheus Limone calefatus de Cataro*'s will (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1470, 24th December

Lazzaro witnesses the will of *Petrus Bernardus quondam magistri domini Petri* (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1470 c.

Ser Lazaro de Bastian depentor is mentioned in the *mariegola* of the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo (Cicogna, 1853, VI, p. 954; Lazari, 1859, p. 8; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 184; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1471, 21st September

Jacopo, Lazzaro's son, along with others is also included in the list *Juvenum portantium bussulos albos in maiori Consilio* (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 191; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1473, 28th April

Antonio di Choradi from Pera (Constantinople) writes a letter to his brother-in-law *Nicholò Gruatto lapicida* commissioning Lazzaro Bastiani to paint a small painting showing the figure of Christ, the size of which should have been *mezo foio de charta di pizolj* (approximately, 30 x 21 cm). If Bastiani was already deceased or unable to fulfil the request, Nicolò Gruatto would have been ordered the panel to Giovanni Bellini (Paoletti, 1894, pp. 12-13; Thode, 1895, p. 193; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 184; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34; Goffen, 1990, p. 263; Barausse, 2009, p. 338; Barausse, 2019, p. 37).

1474, 15th January

Zuane, Lazzaro's son and painter himself, along with others, witnesses the will of Lucia, sister of *magistri Joannis Vincentij de confinio sancti Silvestri* (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 190; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1474, 25th July

The small *Christ* for Antonio Corradi is painted. The Scuola Grande della Misericordia notes the payment to Lazzaro (Paoletti, 1894, p. 13; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 185; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1476, 7th August

Lazzaro Bastiani is recorded in a document (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 185; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1478, 7th October

Lazzaro is made executor of Isabetta, widow of *ser Antonij de Fior de contrata sancti Rafaelis*'s will (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1480

The *Nativity with Saint Eustache, Saint James, Saint Philip, and Saint Benedict* is requested to be realised within six months after Eustachio Balbi's death, which occurs in April 1480. This was requested in his will drafted in 1478. It is painted for the Church of Sant'Elena (Gallo, 1929, pp. 81-82; Sartor, 1997, p. 43). The attribution to Lazzaro Bastiani is unanimously accepted by scholars.

1482, 22nd November

Magistro Lazaro Bastian pintor de contracta Sancte Margarite witnesses the will of Chiara Badoer daughter of Michele, resident in Santa Margherita (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 185; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1484

Lazzaro signs and dates the lunette portraying *Virgin and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Donatus, and the Donor Giovanni degli Angeli* for the Church of Santi Maria e Donato of Murano: "HOC OPVS · LAZARI · SEBASTIANI · MCCCCLXXXIIII".

1488, 14th July

The *Procuratori de Supra* pay Alvise Bastiani, Lazzaro's son, for the works executed in the Basilica of San Marco (Merkel, 1972-1973, p. 666, fig. 28; Merkel, 1996, p. 184).

1488

Lazzaro, identified as father of *Pre Sebastiano Piovano di S. Tomà di Venezia valente pittore di que' tempi*, realises the *Saint Jerome Enthroned* altarpiece for the Saint Jerome chapel in the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta in Asolo (Trieste de' Pellegrini, 1780, p. 44).

1488-1493

Alvise Bastiani, Lazzaro's son, receives regular payments by the *Procuratori de Supra* for various works in the Basilica of San Marco (Saccardo, 1897, p. 287; Merkel, 1977, pp. 399-414).

1493, February

The *Procuratori de Supra* pay Alvise Bastiani, Lazzaro's son, Silvestro di Pietro, Antonio di Iacopo and Pietro di Zorzi for their mosaics in the Basilica of San Marco. This is the last payment of Alvise Bastiani recorded (Merkel, 1977, p. 414; Merkel, 1996, p. 184).

1490

Lazzaro signs and dates the *Coronation of Vergin between Saint Bernardus and Saint Ursula*, a work which can be found today in Accademia Carrara of Bergamo, using the form "OPUS LAZZARI / SEBASTIANI VENETI 1490".

1490, 27th August

Lazzaro is appointed as executor of a will (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1494

Sebastiano, priest in the Angelo Raffaele Church, is made a member of the Scuola Grande di San Marco (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 192; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1494, 1st June

The Scuola Grande di San Marco records that Lazzaro settled a debt he had owed to the Scuola (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 186; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

The Scuola Grande di San Marco refunds priest Sebastiano for the expenses incurred in executing a painting of two angels and other ornaments for the celebration of the Feast of Corpus Domini (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 192; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1495, 6th April

Payment by the Scuola Grande di San Marco to the priest Sebastiano who had executed *i festoni per San Marcho* (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1498, 25th August

In two documents Lazzaro and *ser Guariscus quondam ser Viviani sculptor lignorum de confinio S. Pauli* are appointed as judges to evaluate a wooden altarpiece realised by the woodcarvers Paolo Campsa and his brother-in-law Giovanni for the Church of San Martino in Reggio Emilia. Their assessment is positive, and the woodcarvers received 52 ducats for their

work (Paoletti, 1893, II, p. 127 (n. 171); Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 186; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1498, 2nd October

Lazzaro witnesses a will, signing the document *Jo Lazaro Bastian depentor subscripsi* (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 184; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1500

Priest Sebastiano, Lazzaro's son, receives payments for works ("indorar i schudi", "chonzar la tavola davanti l'altar") in the Bernabò Chapel in the Church of San Giovanni Crisostomo (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 192; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35; Davis, 2007, pp. 246-247).

1502, 30th May

Magister Lazarus de Sebastianis pictor de confinio Sancti Nicolaj witnesses the will of *dona Jacomina*, son of the late *Rimondi Pergamensis* and widow of ser *Nicolini Mediolanensis* (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 185; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

1505, 11th July

The Signoria Veneta requests that Lazzaro and Benedetto Diana execute three banners for Piazza San Marco. The banners must measure "de longeza braza diexe octo et largo tele tredexe". The payment amounts to 630 ducats each for the three banners (Gualandi, 1842, p. 91; Ludwig, 1905, p. 59; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 34-35).

1506-1508

Payments for works in the Basilica of San Marco by the *Procuratori de Supra* to Vincenzo Bastiani, Lazzaro's son, are recorded (Saccardo, 1897, pp. 287-288; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 190; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1508, 11th December

Lazzaro, Vittore Carpaccio and Vittore Belliniano (*Vethor de Mathio*) are nominated as judges by Giovanni Bellini to evaluate Giorgione's frescoes in Fondaco dei Tedeschi. Giorgione receives 150 ducats (Gaye, 1480, pp. 137-138; Gualandi, 1842, pp. 90-92; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 189; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1512, 7th March

Lazzaro calls the parish priest and the priests of the Church of San Raffaele "per i suoi confini" before dying (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1512

The Scuola Grande di San Marco records that Lazzaro Bastiani is dead (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 189; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35).

1512, 18th March

Lazzaro's son, the mosaicist Vincenzo who executed the mosaic of *Saint Tecla* in the Basilica of San Marco, dies falling from a scaffold (Sanudo, 1886, XIV, col. 228 [123v]).

1516

Priest Sebastiano, Lazzaro's son, becomes parish priest (*plebanus*) of the Angelo Raffaele Church (Corner, 1749, V, p. 344).

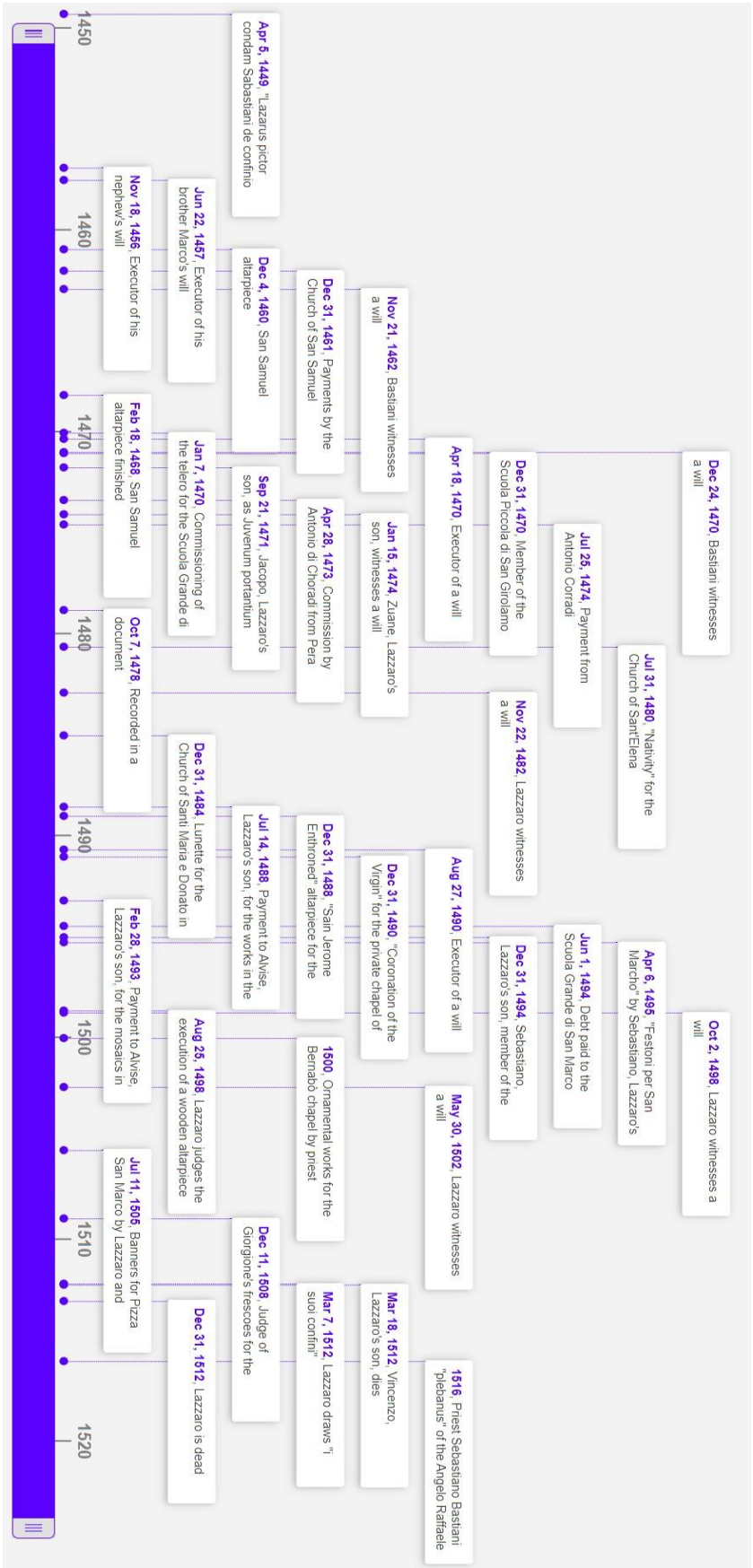


Fig. 1. Chronological overview of Lazzaro Bastiani's life.

3. LAZZARO BASTIANI AND THE INFRARED REFLECTOGRAPHY (IRR) TECHNIQUE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter plays a pivotal role in this doctoral thesis, as the study of Lazzaro Bastiani's underdrawing represents the most innovative aspect of this research.

A functional and methodological introduction, therefore, will precede the main topic, in order to provide the reader with the necessary background to fully comprehend and interpret the obtained results. First, the definition of underdrawing will be explained, followed by the explanation of the Infrared Reflectography (IRR) diagnostic technique that allows us to detect the underdrawing layer in paintings. The evolution of this technique and its gradual application to investigate works of art contributes to the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of art historical research. Finally, the formal and functional difference between drawing on paper and underdrawing in Italy and uppermost in Venice, where Bastiani lived and worked, will be illustrated. Once provided the reader with this preliminary knowledge on the underdrawing and the IRR technique, the results obtained from the IRR analyses performed on Bastiani's *corpus* of paintings will be presented in Chapter 4.4.2.

3.1. INTRODUCTION: THE UNDERDRAWING AND THE INFRARED REFLECTOGRAPHY (IRR) TECHNIQUE

Underdrawing in paintings

Paintings are "culturally" complex, multi-layered structures. "Culturally" complex because artworks are the result of a creative and technical process related to the artist's cultural background, training and personal experiences, as well as to his peculiar characteristics and individual preferences; multi-layered structures because painted artefacts are physically built by overlapping layers of different materials.

Italian Renaissance paintings are first and foremost composed of a support, generally wood or canvas, which must be "prepared" for painting. For this reason, a preparatory ground, usually made of *gesso e colla* (gypsum and glue), is applied on the support, to obtain a flat and regular surface.[117] Sometimes a further priming layer (*imprimitura*), composed by a pigment dispersed in a medium, or a clear medium alone, is added to the ground. The priming is mainly useful to prevent the absorption of the pigment layers by the ground and, in some cases, it provides a coloured base for the subsequent paint. Occasionally, between the wooden support and the ground a canvas is placed, the so-called *teletta di incamottatura*, covering the whole area of the panel, or simply fixed along the joints, to reduce the consequences, and potential damages, derived from the dimensional variations of the wood on the paint layers. The ground provides an excellent background to execute the underdrawing i.e., the first sketching-out of the composition, often made of carbon black, in a dry, or in a fluid medium. This preliminary drawing is then covered by the paint layers, consisting of pigments dispersed in a binder (the most common binders are oil and tempera). The ground, the mixture of pigments and the superimposition of multiple layers of paint, in the interaction with the visible light, produce optical effects to obtain a specific colour tone, which could be bright or dull, glossy, or matte. Finally, a varnish film is spread on top as protective coating, also providing depth and clarity to the colours.[118] Focusing on the underdrawing itself, we can refer to it both as one of the physical layers of the painting stratigraphy, and as one of the early stages of the design process of the artefact. Much of the interest in studying underdrawings

[117] The procedure to prepare wooden panels for paintings was already explained in Cennini's *Il libro dell'arte*, chapters CII-CXXI. For further information, please refer to: CENNINI (a cura di FREZZATO), 2019[11], pp. 136-149. For canvases the preparatory ground is called *mestica* and it is composed of a single thin layer of siccative oil with inert material added (the early technique of the inert material required gypsum or calcium carbonate, mixed with earth pigments; later on, only fine-grained earth pigments).

[118] For further references on paintings stratigraphy, please refer to: *Scientific examination…*, 2009, pp. 11-20.

lies in this latter aspect. Indeed, the preliminary outline of the composition provides important information about the creative development of the artist's idea in the genesis process of a painting.

The underdrawing was conceived as a working drawing, intended to be seen only by the artist, and/or the workshop assistants, as it was then concealed by the overlapping paint layers, becoming invisible to the naked eye (except in specific cases that will be illustrated hereafter).

Today we can reveal this hidden drawing by means of a specific scientific analysis, called Infrared Reflectography (*Fig. 2*).

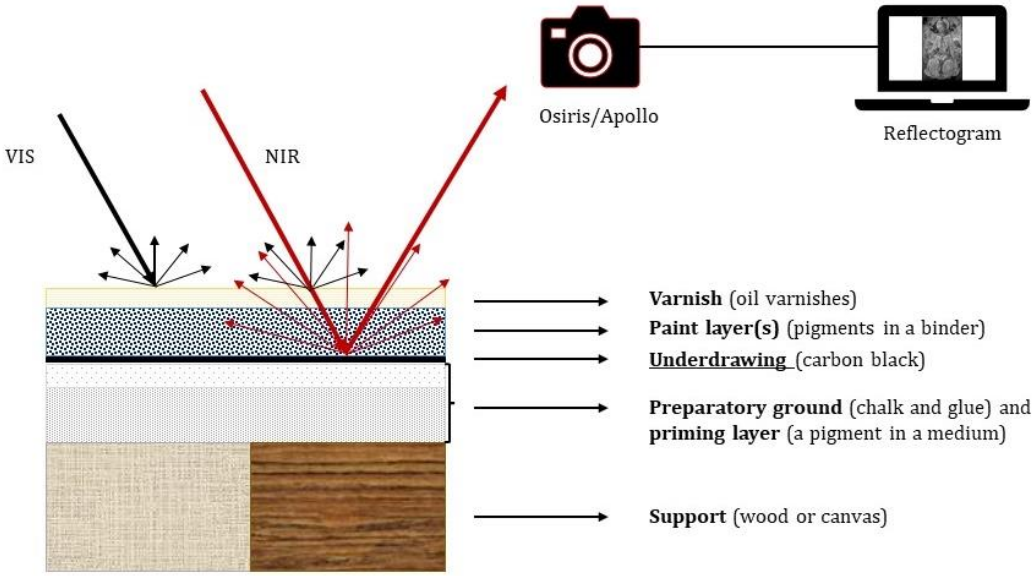


Fig. 2. Underdrawing in the painting stratigraphy and VIS/NIR interaction with the painting material.

The Infrared Reflectography (IRR) technique

Infrared Reflectography (IRR) is a non-invasive imaging technique based on the ability of the Near-Infrared (NIR) radiation to penetrate the paint layers, down to the preparatory ground, thanks to the partial transparency of most of the pigments in this spectral region, allowing us to detect features beneath the visible paint surface.[119]

The reflectographic imaging method is performed by irradiating the artwork in the Visible (VIS) and NIR range and by acquiring the backscattered

[119] The NIR is a portion of the infrared radiation whose wavelengths range from about 750 nm to about 2500 nm.

(reflected) IR radiation with a suitable device.[120] The result is an image, called *reflectogram*, of the underlying features. The latter includes not only the underdrawing, but also *pentimenti*,[121] retouches, paint losses, paint integration and subsequent restorations. Once the NIR radiation reaches the painting material, some interactions – such as absorption, reflection, and scattering events[122] – happen inside the matter. The reflected radiation thus carries information about the painting layers and can be properly collected by an imaging device (*Fig. 2*). Conventional reflectography is performed in wide-band modality, i.e., by acquiring the infrared image in a single large band, which covers the entire spectral range of the device.

The visibility of the underdrawing depends on two main physical factors: the contrast between the response signals of the underdrawing and the ground, and the transparency of the pigment layers. Hence, these factors depend on the properties of the painting analysed, but also on the performance of the specific system employed for the analysis.

The first condition is satisfied if the preparatory ground is highly reflective, and the underdrawing is made of an absorbent material in the infrared range. The technique of Medieval and Renaissance paintings is particularly suitable to study the underdrawing by means of the IRR technique, as it provides a good contrast between the preparatory drawing, sketched in a dark absorbent

[120] Halogen lamps are suitable for infrared reflectography investigation as they emit not only in the visible, but also in the NIR range. The lighting system is generally composed of two halogen lamps disposed symmetrically to the sides of the device and angled between 30 and 60 degrees to evenly illuminate the painting area.

[121] *Pentimenti* are changes that occurred during the painting composition process, dealing with either the drawing or the pigment layer.

[122] The scattering, or diffuse reflection, is a physical process involving radiation-material interaction, in which the trajectory of the incident radiation is randomly deviated at many angles by the inhomogeneities of the material. In the interaction with the paint layer, the radiation is diffused/scattered by the microscopic pigment particles dispersed in the binding medium. In the visible (VIS) range (wavelengths between 380 and 700 nm) the incident radiation is blocked at a superficial level since the scattering phenomenon is high and does not allow the radiation to go through the paint layers.

medium, and the light reflective ground. It must be underlined that in case of a dark preparation, employed by some artists starting from the 16th century, or of a drawing executed in a medium transparent to the infrared radiation, as the iron gall ink (*inchiostro ferrogallico*), the underdrawing will not be detected. Therefore, the absence of the underdrawing in the obtained reflectogram does not necessarily imply the absence of the underdrawing but might indicate that it is not visible by means of the IRR technique. Furthermore, the employed device must be considered.

The transparency of the pigment layers is strictly connected to the composition (materials and technique) of the investigated painting and to the wavelength of the infrared radiation. The composition of the paint material is not easily predictable in advance, as the pigments can be finely or coarsely grinded, resulting to be more or less opaque when applied. Moreover, the paint can be spread as a single or as multiple overlapping layers of various thickness. Thus, the hiding ability (namely, the partial transparency) of a paint film is related to the scattering properties of the pigment grains and to the thickness of the layer. As explained by Van Asperen de Boer, pioneer of the modern infrared reflectography technique, since the layer thickness cannot be modified, to decrease the hiding capability of the paint layer, a radiation with longer wavelength should be used. In fact, increasing the wavelength in the NIR, the scattering of the pigments' particles, and thus their covering ability, decreases, revealing what is concealed beneath the paint layers.[123]

As already mentioned, the detection of information relies also on the performance of the imaging system itself. The quality of the resulting image mainly depends on two parameters characterising the reflectographic device: the spectral sensitivity and the modulation transfer function (MTF).[124]

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[123] VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1968, pp. 1711-1714. Van Asperen De Boer studies are based on the Kubelka-Munk theory concerning the interaction between the incident radiation and the coat of paint. For the extensive explanation and the quantitative description of the phenomenon of decreased paint opacity in the NIR, by application of the Kubelka-Munk theory for the analysis of paint film transmission, please refer to: VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1969, pp. 96-118.

[124] DAFFARA, GAMBINO, PEZZATI, 2008, pp. 307-314.

The spectral sensitivity corresponds to the capability of the reflectographic system to penetrate the paint layers (according to their thickness and transparency in the NIR band), and to collect the information at various wavelengths. The overall spectral sensitivity depends on the system configuration, while the detectability of the underdrawing also depends upon the opacity of the drawing material in the device spectral range.

The MTF is a quantitative measure of the imaging performance in terms of contrast and resolution describing the ability of the system to transfer contrast at different spatial frequencies. In practice, it shows how, in an image, the spatial resolution decreases with the size of the spatial detail. The MTF therefore gives the extent of visibility of the underdrawing lines with respect to the background.

Down the years, different devices have been developed to achieve better and clearer results. The following section will shortly illustrate the evolution of the IR imaging analyses for paintings investigation, from the very first application to the most recent implementation.

From infrared photography to infrared reflectography: evolution of a diagnostic technique[125]

The introduction of photographic films sensitive to the infrared radiation (although at short wavelengths, closer to the visible spectrum) dates back to the first decades of the 20th century. The early experiments of images acquisition by means of infrared photography (IR photography) have been performed for aerial photography and remote sensing analysis, also with military purpose.[126] Only in 1930s, R. Arcadius Lyon and Marie Farnsworth of the Fogg Art Museum in Harvard employed this method to study painting materials. The results of this innovative examination highlighted a remarkable penetration of the infrared radiation through the opaque/darkened varnish and pigment layers. Moreover, the two scientists investigated the pigments and

[125] See also: DE RUGGERI, 2002, pp. 54-56, 57-59; POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, pp. 42-51.

[126] *Annual report…*, 1919, pp. 114-119.

binding media absorption in the IR range.[127] In the following years, IR photography started to be used as a tool to pinpoint restored areas and support conservation treatments.[128] In parallel, the research has been addressed to the implementation of specific devices for IR photography,[129] and to the trial of monochromatic lighting systems.[130]

Shortly after these early applications, the first preliminary studies on the artist's technique and the underdrawing by means of IR photography have been published,[131] with focus on the Flemish school.[132] Indeed, the peculiar technique employed by Flemish painters allows to easily detect the underdrawing underneath the thin pigment layers.

IR photography has been used for paintings analysis until late 1960s, when the pioneer Dutch physicist J. R. J. Van Asperen de Boer developed a novel technique called Infrared Reflectography (IRR),[133] based on the Kubelka-Munk theory concerning the interaction between the incident radiation and the coat of paint.[134] The obtained images, called *reflectograms*, were collected by means of a Barnes infrared camera, traditionally designed to record emitted radiation, and modified to acquire the reflected infrared radiation up to 2000 nm. IRR improved the results achieved so far by means of the conventional IR

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[127] LYON, 1934, pp. 203-212; FARNSWORTH, 1938, pp. 88-98. The results showed that different binders have a negligible influence on IR absorption.

[128] R. MANCIA, 1936, pp. 33-41, 140; PIVA, 1980[3], pp. 305, 310-312.

[129] In 1938, F. Ian G. Rawlins of the London National Gallery assembled a camera to be exclusively used for infrared photography: RAWLINS, 1939, pp. 186-188.

[130] DÉRIBÉRÉ-PORCHEZ, 1949, pp. 821-822.

[131] KECK, 1941, pp. 145-152.

[132] DESNEUX, 1958, pp. 13-21.

[133] VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1966, pp. 45-46; VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1968, pp. 1711-1714. Further experiments to improve IR photography for paintings examination have been carried out in this period e.g., the application of an infrared image converter: HEIBER, 1968, pp. 145-149.

[134] For the extensive explanation and the quantitative description of the phenomenon of decreased paint opacity in the NIR, by application of the Kubelka-Munk theory for the analysis of paint film transmission, please refer to: VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1969, pp. 96-118.

photography, since at longer wavelengths the hiding ability of most of pigments decreases and the visibility of the underdrawing increases.

Starting from 1969, Van Asperen de Boer employed the IR vidicon television system, more efficient than the Barnes infrared camera as the reflectograms were immediately visible on the monitor-screen (and were simultaneously stored using a video-recorder), but with wavelength response limited to 1900 nm and lower system responsivity when filters were used, requiring higher illumination.[135] Today the vidicon tube is still employed in some museum laboratories, as well as reflectograms acquired by means of this method can still be found in some museum images databases.

Since its introduction, IRR has been increasingly employed to perform painting analysis, examining the pigments response in the IR range, and investigating the underdrawing, the painting technique, and the workshop practice. The first fundamental and in-depth studies have been carried out on Renaissance Dutch and Flemish artists' technique,[136] and soon the interest has been extended to Italian Renaissance art.[137] Today IRR is routinely utilized *in situ* or in conservation laboratories as a major non-invasive imaging tool for the

[135] VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1969, pp. 96-118. Van Asperen de Boer listed the advantages and the disadvantages of the Vidicon television system compared to the Barnes infrared camera, pp. 109-112.

[136] VAN ASPEREN DE BOER-WHEELOCK JR., 1973, pp. 61-94; FARIES, 1975, pp. 89-228; VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1979, pp. 141-214.

[137] The outcome of scientific analyses conducted on Venetian paintings prior to 1500 in the Netherlands was presented in an exhibition that took place first in Holland and then in Italy: *The early Venetian…*, 1978; Vedere *fino in fondo…*, 1978. Curiously, in the Dutch catalogue Marjan de Bondt-Somer related the *Madonna and Child* in Anton Philips Collection (Eindhoven), already attributed to Giovanni Bellini, to Lazzaro Bastiani (pp. 27-28). Any relation with Bastiani was firmly rejected by Zeri (1978, p. 316) in his review of the exhibition, to support the ascription to Bellini's circle (although not assigning it to Bellini himself). Today the painting is included in Giovanni Bellini's autograph catalogue: LUCCO, 2019, pp. 290-291 (Cat. 3).

underdrawing study and for the diagnostic process before any planned intervention.[138]

Down the years, different NIR imaging devices have been implemented and used for IRR analyses, such as the early PbO-PbS (lead oxide-lead sulfide) vidicon cameras already adopted by Van Asperen de Boer (wide infrared band, but low spatial resolution), Si-based CCD (silicon-based couple-charged device) cameras (high spatial resolution, but short spectral range),[139] up to the most recent scanning systems with InGaAs (indium gallium arsenide) or PtSi (platinum silicide) detectors with higher performance both in spectral range and resolution.[140] Furthermore, several studies have been conducted in order to determine what is the spectral band that gives the optimal visualisation (Signal to Noise ratio) of the underdrawing. In 1968, Van Asperen De Boer demonstrated that a better detection of the underdrawing is expected at around 2000 nm.[141] Further research on the wavelength dependence of the visibility of underdrawing lines proved that for most underdrawing materials the best visualisation is achieved at 1800 nm, although remarking that every artwork is unique in composition, thus optimal spectral bands would probably need to be determined empirically.[142] And since peak visibilities can occur anywhere between 1000 nm and 2500 nm, depending on the peculiar combination of underdrawing material and paint, the use of a series of narrow band filters has been suggested to calculate the optimum wavelength to

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[138] A complete diagnostic campaign by means of major non-invasive imaging optical techniques also includes a visual inspection in the VIS range (macrophotography and raking light photography), UV fluorescence and radiography.

[139] WALMSLEY, FLETCHER, DELANEY, 1992, pp. 120-131.

[140] BERTANI ET AL., 1990, pp. 113-116; BERTANI, 2001, pp. 10-18; FONTANA ET AL., 2003, pp, 108-115; SAUNDERS ET AL., 2005, pp. 205-216.

[141] VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1968, p. 1712. However, Van Asperen De Boer himself underlined that beyond this wavelength molecular vibrations affect the results, and even at longer wavelengths the emitted radiation of the artworks would interfere with the reflected radiation. VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1969, p. 103.

[142] DELANEY ET AL., 1993, pp. 15-19.

penetrate different pigments and better visualise the underdrawing.[143] This was the first step that addressed contemporary reflectography technique.

In recent years, the multispectral imaging approach has been implemented and successfully applied in the cultural heritage field.[144] Differently from IRR, multispectral imaging in the VIS-NIR is performed by irradiating the painting with a broadband source and by collecting the returned radiation within narrow spectral VIS-NIR band. This spectral imaging technique allows the simultaneous collection of both spectral data and spatial information (high-resolution images), advancing the capabilities of IRR to new applications for the study of artists' materials by being able to exploit the varied reflectance changes of the pigments over these spectral regions. The result is a stack of multiband VIS-NIR images, which can be processed to extract information.[145] This multispectral cube (*Fig. 3*) can be interpreted as a set of wavelength-resolved images in the NIR range (multi-NIR reflectography), or as a series of spatially resolved reflectance spectra, one for each sampled pixel on the surface (NIR spectrometry).[146]

The multi-NIR reflectography allows the visualisation of images in each IR band separately, showing the response of the painting materials at different IR wavelengths. Therefore, by means of this approach, hidden features not visible in wide-band mode can now be detected. Moreover, images composing the multispectral cube can be studied both singularly, as single reflectograms, and jointly, by applying some operation to the multispectral images, for example subtraction and/or ratio on pairs of reflectograms through dedicated software and scripts (e.g., ImageJ and Matlab). The joint analysis is performed to enhance changes in the variegate reflectance of the pigments from one wavelength to another and to extract additional information.[147]

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[143] WALMSLEY, FLETCHER, DELANEY, 1992, p. 129; WALMSLEY ET AL., 1994, p. 228.

[144] LIANG, SAUNDERS, CUPITT, 2005, pp. 551-562; CARCAGNI ET AL., 2007, pp. 360-367; BONIFAZI ET AL., 2008.

[145] DAFFARA ET AL., 2010, pp. 847-856; DAFFARA, FONTANA, 2011, pp. 691-695.

[146] FONTANA ET AL., 2014, pp. 15-26.

[147] DAFFARA ET AL., 2010, pp. 847-856; DAFFARA, FONTANA, 2011, pp. 691-695.

The VIS-NIR spectrometry option is useful for the non-invasive pixel-by-pixel qualitative recognition of similar-appearing pigments by exploiting their differences in reflectivity in the VIS-NIR range. Specific scripts or software enable the reflectance spectra extraction from the multispectral cube. The obtained spectra must be compared then to reference Visible/Near-Infrared Reflectance Spectrometry (VIS/NIR-RS) or Fiber Optics Reflectance Spectra (FORS) to successfully assign each acquired spectrum to the correspondent pigment.[148] Open access databases are available in the literature.[149] Recently, VIS-NIR spectrometry has been successfully integrated with X-Ray Fluorescence analysis (XRF) for pigments mapping and characterization by applying specific algorithms or PCA analysis.[150]

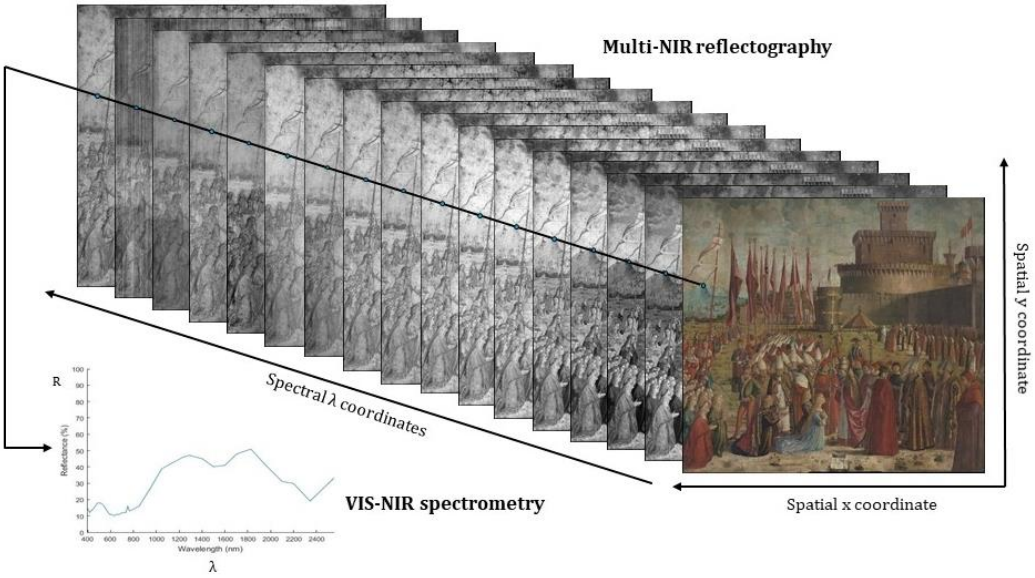


Fig. 3. Multispectral cube.

[148] CASINI ET AL., 1999, pp. 39-48; DELANEY ET AL., 2005, pp. 120-136; DELANEY ET AL., 2010, pp. 584-594.

[149] In Italy, the IFAC-CNR Spectroscopic Measurement Database is the most complete open access database. The FORS section presents a collection of reflectance spectra on pictorial materials in the 270-1700 nm range: https://spectradb.ifac.cnr.it/fors/ (last visited the 9th of April 2022).

[150] DE MANINCOR ET AL., 2017, pp. 137-148; DE MANINCOR ET AL., 2019.

Further IR imaging techniques

Conventional IRR is performed in reflection mode by direct irradiation of the painting, i.e., by placing the lighting sources in front of the artefact and collecting the backscattered radiation. Both the lamps and the device are positioned on the front side of the artwork. Since 1970s IR imaging has been applied also in transmitted modality, although employed to lesser extent than traditional IRR.[151] A different irradiation geometry/configuration is necessary for the transmitted modality, as the source illuminates the painting from the back side and the camera acquires the diffused and transmitted radiation on the front side. The potential of this method relies on the diminished absorption and/or attenuation of the infrared radiation, due to the perpendicular direction of the radiation, and on the maximized transparency of the layers, due to the elimination of surface reflection. Moreover, canvas support and most ground materials do not generally absorb much infrared and when trans-irradiated their internal scattering is further minimized.[152]

Examination of painted artefacts proved the advantages of transmitted IR imaging. The obtained images showed better recording of underdrawings, *pentimenti*, damages and restorations. Additionally, sometimes hidden compositions, covered by later paintings and invisible to IRR and X-radiography, have been discovered.[153]

Infrared false colour (IRFC) imaging technique is a useful supplementary non-invasive technique that plays an important role in the diagnosis on artworks, providing information about materials, execution technique and retouches due to previous restoration processes.[154] As the name itself suggests, this technique produces an image whose colours do not correspond to the visible ones ("true colours"). The underpinning principle is the fusion of the visible

[151] CORNELIUS, 1977, p. 42.

[152] KUSHEL, 1985, pp. 1-10.

[153] KUSHEL, 1985, pp. 1-10; DAFFARA ET AL., 2013, pp. 212-217.

[154] MATTEINI, MOLES, TIANO, 1980, pp. 40-48; ALDROVANDI ET AL., 1993, pp. 94-98. This methodology can be applied on the whole imaged area of the painting, but also on stratigraphic samples analysed under the optical microscope: ALDROVANDI ET AL., 1994, pp. 126-127, 164.

and the infrared data in a new image coded in pseudo colour, with the visible and infrared channels mixed.

The infrared false colour representation is useful to qualitatively discriminate pigments with different chemical composition but looking "chromatically similar" in the visible light since they can appear differently coloured in false colour images if they have a diverse spectral behaviour in the infrared region.[155] Pigments identification is possible in some cases by comparing the obtained false colour image and reference false colour images of accurately prepared targets.[156] It must be underlined that pigment concentration and/or mixture of pigments are particularly important factors in IRFC, as well as the acquisition parameters and condition, because they could affect the result.[157] In fact, it is necessary to remark that IRFC is a preliminary and qualitative analysis for pigment identification, which must be paired with further investigation for confirmation (e.g., non-invasive analyses: VIS/NIR-RS, FORS, XRF).

To obtain an infrared false colour image, channels sensitive to infrared, red and green spectral regions are combined as the red, green, and blue components of a standard RGB image (*Fig. 4*). Hence, the information about the blue component in the RGB visible image is discarded, while the remaining red and green components are combined with the IR component obtaining a new RGB image in which: the IR component is placed in the R (red) visible channel, the R (red) component of the visible image is placed in the G (green) visible

[155] *Scientific examination…*, 2009, pp. 200-203; POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, p. 129. E.g., Ultramarine (or lapis lazuli) and azurite appear in a very similar blue colour under visible light, but in the infrared false colour image they can be well differentiated. This means that they have similar absorbance spectra in visible light, but they may highly differ in the IR absorbance. Indeed, ultramarine does not absorb the infrared radiation (it is reflective in the NIR spectral range), while azurite is absorbing in this region. Thus, the former turns in a red tone in the IR false colour image and the second results to be dark blue/purple.

[156] An example of target is the one built by ALDROVANDI ET AL., 1996, pp. 101-103, 191-210.

[157] MOON, SCHILLING, THIRKETTLE, 1992, pp. 45-52; *Scientific examination…*, 2009, p. 203.

channel, the G (green) component of the visible image is placed in the B (blue) visible channel.

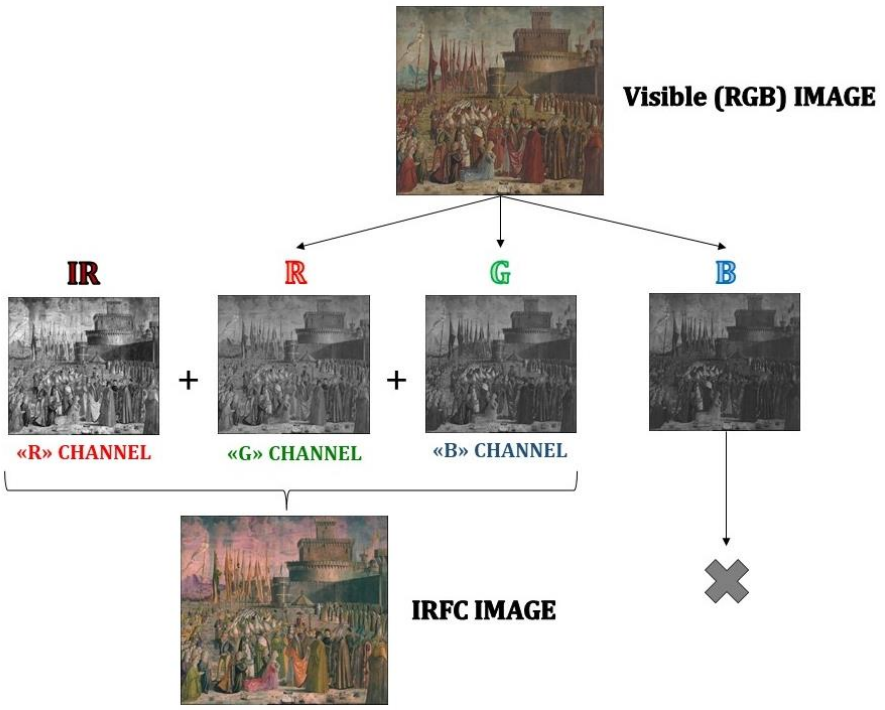


Fig. 4. Schematic procedure to follow in order to obtain an infrared false colour (IRFC) image.

For the first experiences in IR false colour imaging, IR sensitive photographic films were employed. A yellow filter was used to block the blue component.[158] Modern technologies, as cameras equipped with CCD sensor with sensitivity up to 1000 nm, allow to achieve images of better quality and resolution. Furthermore, digital programs for image handling (e.g., Photoshop, ImageJ) simplified and accelerated the process of false colour rendering.[159]

[158] MATTEINI, MOLES, TIANO, 1980, pp. 40-48; ALDROVANDI ET AL., 1988, pp. 154-159; MOON, SCHILLING, THIRKETTLE, 1992, pp. 45-52; ALDROVANDI ET AL., 1993, pp. 94-98.

[159] ALDROVANDI ET AL., 2005, pp. 265-272; MARZIALI, MARZIALI, MARCUCCIO, 2006, pp. 2-7. In 2013, in the framework of the CHARISMA project (Cultural Heritage Advanced Research Infrastructure: Synergy for a Multidisciplinary Approach to Conservation/Restoration), new optimised methodologies (including a dedicated software) for the acquisition and post-processing of reflected and photo-induced luminescence images to investigate the paintings material have been developed and published in a manual available open-source. The manual included a chapter dedicated to the "Correction of IR/UV-reflected images and generation of false-colour images": DYER, VERRI, CUPITT, 2013, pp. 135-150.

Today, IRFC is a recommended routine methodology to be performed before any conservation treatment, as it provides the conservators with important information on the execution technique and on the conservation status of paintings.

It is interesting to underline that this technique can be applied also with multispectral reflectography, even if further research is necessary in this direction.

3.2. IR IMAGING ANALYSIS AND THE HISTORY OF ART: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH FOR PAINTINGS INVESTIGATION

The "International conference for the study of scientific methods in the examination and conservation of artworks" (*Conferenza internazionale per lo studio dei metodi scientifici applicati all'esame e alla conservazione delle opere d'arte*), held in Rome in October 1930, was the first occasion to present to a wide public the latest development of scientific technologies and methodologies – mostly borrowed from the medical, criminological and anthropological fields –, and the results of decades of pioneering experiments for a comprehensive study of artistic artefacts, analysing their execution technique and their conservation status. The international group of experts/scholars (speakers and audience) that attended the conference and discussed the topics of the agenda was heterogeneous: chemists and physicists, restorers and conservators, art historians and university professors, museums directors and superintendents.[160]

The French delegation was the most involved in the debate, with the physicist Jean Fernand Cellerier, the medical doctor and "outsider" Fernando Perez,[161] and uppermost the medievalist Fernand Mercier. This latter was also conservator and director of the scientific laboratory of the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon, and his research personally benefited from the application of scientific examinations on artworks. As clearly explained by Marco Cardinali, "in his [Mercier's] view art criticism had to combine technical research with

[160] For an overview of the conference and the participants, please refer to: CARDINALI, DE RUGGIERI, FALCUCCI, 2002, pp. 233-249; The conference programme is outlined in: CARDINALI-DE RUGGIERI, 2013, pp. 138-144.

[161] Included as speaker when the conference was already started, Perez presented his invention, the *pinacoscope*, a sort of microscope to perform raking light analysis of the paint layers, and explained his methodology, the *pinacology*. In 1932, together with his friend and collaborator, Doctor Carlos Mainini, Perez founded the *Institute Mainini*, the scientific laboratory of the Musée du Louve (PÉQUIGNOT, 2016, pp. 133-150). Perez research inspired the foundation of the *Gabinetto Pinacologico* in the Museo Nazionale of Naples in 1932 (CERASUOLO, 2013, pp. 195-223).

historical-philological, stylistic, and iconographic studies. In fact, while the latter deal with the composition and subject of a work of art, technical research analyses to what extent the shaping of a work's subject and composition are linked to the artist's peculiar creative process and technique. This creative process consists of an 'external technique', which concerns the surface and is documented by macro- and micro-photography, and an 'internal technique', which relates to process and can be analysed through scientific methods such as radiography and stratigraphy".[162] Mercier's technical perspective prompted art historians opposite reactions: on one side there was Henri Focillon's supportive opinion and approval,[163] on the other side there was Roberto Longhi's strong and negative criticism. Longhi disapproval was due to his adherence to Benedetto Croce's *Estetica*, which considered the artist's intuition as the core of the artistic research, while the technical features and procedures to create an artwork as incidental, thus not being worthy to be studied[164]. Longhi's view, in accordance with Croce's idea, was predominant among Italian scholars, whose participation in the conference and interest on artwork's technical aspects was scarce.[165] A prestigious exception in the Italian context was Lionello Venturi, who did not attend the conference, but from 1939, when emigrated to the U.S. after his refusal to swear allegiance to the Fascist regime, had the chance to be acquainted with the latest scientific methodologies for the investigation of paintings execution technique developed in the American context.[166] Venturi's interest in and opinion about

[162] CARDINALI, 2017, p. 229. Mercier's view is presented in the introductory chapter of his book *Les primitifs français*, (1931, pp. 1-12) and is further discussed in CARDINALI-DE RUGGIERI, 2013, pp. 111-114.

[163] Focillon's esteem on Mercier's work is confirmed in his preface of Mercier's book (pp. VII-XIII). The text is published also in CARDINALI-DE RUGGIERI, 2013, pp. 134-137.

[164] CARDINALI, 2017, p. 233. On Focillon and Longhi opposite opinions see also: CARDINALI-DE RUGGIERI, 2013, pp. 114-118.

[165] Italian positive reactions to the conference and to the interdisciplinary approach are presented in CARDINALI-DE RUGGIERI, 2013, pp. 120-132.

[166] Curiously, it appears that during his American "exile" Venturi was not aware of the research in the same field carried out in Europe.

technical research was discussed in a lecture he delivered in 1941 at John Hopkin's University in Baltimore,[167] when he introduced the topic of "laboratory-criticism", referring to Alan Burroughs' book *Art criticism from a laboratory*.[168] Venturi appreciated the support of diagnostic techniques ("ultra-violet and infra-red rays and microphotography, through microchemistry and above all, x-rays") to study artworks' conservation status, execution technique and attribution. Moreover, by saying that "the contribution made by science to ascertaining truths relative to works of art has been very great and will become increasingly so in the future", he actually recognised that scientific examination was not a mere auxiliary tool to investigate specific aspects of artworks, but a method in itself. However, despite this positive feedback, he underlined that the laboratory criticism was a special branch of history of art and that the information on the executive process retrieved from scientific analysis was one of the elements (including content and vision) constituting "taste", while the synthesis of these elements made by the artist himself was "art".[169]

This brief introduction on the very first application of technical examinations on artworks and the early reactions of art historians is not intended to be a comprehensive treatise on the debate that arouse among scholars concerning the impact of scientific investigation on art criticism and *connoisseurship*.[170] Instead, it is aimed at showing how scientific examinations affected the evaluation of an art piece and how an interdisciplinary approach enriched the artistic debate of new interpretative perspectives, remarking the urgent need of a collaboration among experts and researchers of scientific, art historical

[167] The lecture titled *Iconology, laboratory criticism and the history of vision* was published in the book *Art criticism now*: VENTURI (a cura di PERILLO MARCONE), 2010, pp. 63-80.

[168] Alan Burroughs, art historian, was research fellow at the Fogg Art Museum. He was the first to perform an extensive X-rays campaign to analyse paintings working methods in American and European museums.

[169] VENTURI (a cura di PERILLO MARCONE), 2010, pp. 68-74, 77-80; DE RUGGIERI, 2014, pp. 393-398.

[170] The debate is well discussed in CARDINALI, 2002, pp. 29-37.

and conservation fields towards the common goal of fully understanding the analysed piece of artwork. Today this interdisciplinary cooperation of disciplines composes an enlarged field of study called "Technical art history".[171] A successfully enduring publication of research in this field is represented by the "National Gallery Technical Bulletin", an output produced by the work in synergy of curators, scientists, and conservators of the London National Gallery.[172]

As explained in the previous sub-chapter, the practical application of IR imaging techniques for paintings investigation has been a process that gradually engaged scientific researchers (physicists and chemists), conservators/restorers and art historians. If the early application of IR photography required the scientists' technical expertise, soon it was clear that the results concerning the painting materials could have been useful for conservators, as well as the revelation of the underneath features, including the underdrawing, could have been a relevant opportunity for art historians to make observations on the artists' working method. The development and introduction of the more efficient IRR technique by Van Asperen de Boer in 1960s gave a further impulse to broaden the possibilities of the art historical research in this sense. Down the years, scientists, art historians and conservators/restorers have often shared their expertise in an integrated multidisciplinary approach. This dialogue among experts resulted in relevant publications on the underdrawing practice in Renaissance art that successfully combined technical and art historical information.[173] Some remarkable

[171] AINSWORTH, 2005, pp. 4-10.

[172] The published volumes from number 1 (1977) to number 36 (2017) can be consulted and downloaded for free at the following link: https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/research/research-resources/technical-bulletin (last visited 21st of April 2022).

[173] The list of publications reported hereafter is not exhaustive. Among the publications, it is necessary to also mention the proceedings of the bi-annual conference *Le dessin-sous jacent dans la peinture*, held since 1979, that specifically focuses on the interdisciplinary research concerning the infrared reflectography and its application to investigate the underdrawing.

examples of interdisciplinary collaborations worth to be mentioned include J. R. J. Van Asperen de Boer (physicist) and Molly Faries (art historian) for their contribution on Dutch art,[174] Roberto Bellucci (restorer) and Cecilia Frosinini (art historian) for Tuscan art,[175] and Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa (art historian) and Gianluca Poldi (physicist) for Venetian art.[176]

Therefore, the art historians have been called to train themselves also in the scientific discipline in order to interpret the "new" information provided by the reflectograms in an art-historical perspective and to broaden their knowledge of the artwork itself in an interdisciplinary-mode approach. In fact, through the cross-linking of the scientific data provided by IRR with their personal *connoisseurship* – which could be further integrated with written (archival documents, technical treatises, and workshop manuals) and visual sources (as preparatory drawings on paper) –, art historians can improve their understanding of the artist's creative process and *modus operandi* for a specific piece investigated, or for more works in an evolutive perspective of the artist career. Moreover, a comparative analysis by studying the artistic production of contemporary (or even earlier of later) painters, can further enlarge the art historians' knowledge and enrich their evaluation. This is the ground methodology employed in this doctoral thesis in order to effectively interpret the IRR data.

The topics addressed in the conference included, for instance, workshop practice, creative procedure of the artworks, drawing techniques, issues of attribution and chronology.

[174] VAN ASPEREN DE BOER-FARIES, 1977, pp. 169-182; VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, FARIES, FILEDT KOK, 1986, pp. 106-116; FARIES-VAN ASPEREN DE BOER, 1987, pp. 75-87.

[175] BELLUCCI-FROSININI, 2001, pp. 146-166; BELLUCCI-FROSININI, 2008, pp. 79-94; BELLUCCI-FROSININI, 2010, pp. 167-177. The contribution of the duo Bellucci-Frosinini is not limited to Tuscan art only.

[176] Poldi and Villa extensively researched Giovanni Bellini's underdrawing: POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, pp. 321-412; *Bellini a Venezia…*, 2008; POLDI-VILLA, 2009. The team also investigated the underdrawing of other artists of the Italian Renaissance panorama. For example, see: POLDI-VILLA, 2006b, pp. 190-209; POLDI-VILLA, 2013, pp. 131-141.

3.3. DRAWING AND UNDERDRAWING PRACTICE IN ITALY AND VENICE IN THE 15th CENTURY

Drawing and underdrawing are two consecutive stages in the execution of a painting. Indeed, if the underdrawing is one of the physical layers of the painting stratigraphy, being thus associated to the practical execution of the artwork, the drawing is the very first step of its creation.

In his *Vite* (1550, 1568), Vasari criticised Giorgione's artistic practice by pointing out that he worked out his compositions directly on the preparatory ground, by means of layered patches of coloured brushstrokes, rather than defining in advance the composition by means of the drawing medium.[177] Vasari's comment later became a commonplace to distinguish between *disegno* (drawing) and *colore* (colour), which are characteristics that were ascribed, respectively, to Tuscan and to Venetian painters. The meaning of Vasari's statement, however, is related to his definition of drawing, which is broader in Italian (*disegno*) but is more specifically expressed in English (in this context) by means of the word "design" i.e., the conception of the composition in the artist's mind.[178] For the author, therefore, Giorgione's paintings did not show any preliminary planning owing to the lack of an artistic education in the practical act of drawing – an opinion later generically extended to all 16th century Venetian artists. This judgment, however, is incorrect, since, as it will be later explained, Venetian painters did plan their compositions carefully.

Vasari's conception of the pivotal role played by the preparatory drawing in the creative process, as the foundation of all the visual arts (painting, sculpture,

[177] "[…] Giorgione da Castel Franco […] cominciò a dare alle sue opere più morbidezza e maggiore rilievo con bella maniera, usando nondimeno di cacciar sì avanti le cose vive e naturali, e di contrafarle quanto sapeva il meglio con i colori, e macchiarle con le tinte crude e dolci, secondo che il vivo mostrava, senza far disegno, tenendo per fermo che il dipignere solo con i colori stessi, senz'altro studio di disegnare in carta, fusse il vero e miglior modo di fare et il vero disegno; ma non s'accorgeva che egli è necessario a chi vuol bene disporre i componimenti et accomodare l'invenzioni, ch'e' fa bisogno prima in più modi diferenti porle in carta, per vedere come il tutto torna insieme.". VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1987, VI, p. 155.

[178] VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1966, I, pp. 111-113 (Cap. XV).

and architecture), has its origin in a long tradition of Tuscan art which was codified in manuals and treatises, from the end of the 14th century onwards. In fact, in his *Libro dell'Arte*, written at the turn of the 15th century, Cennino Cennini claimed the didactic function of the drawing practice, which was preparatory for the subsequent painting process. The young apprentice first had to become skilled in drawing by copying the best works of great masters – preferably from one single master –, as well as drawing from nature.[179] Once mastery of drawing was acquired, the artist had the ability to execute the underdrawing freehand following an idea formulated in his mind, not a preparatory drawing realised beforehand, being free to change or adjust the outline over the next few days until satisfied with the work.[180] A few decades later, Lorenzo Ghiberti and Leon Battista Alberti considered the drawing process essential to plan out the composition, first conceived in the artist's mind, in order to explore and analyse the placement of figures, and to master perspective, by the study of sculptural models or, ideally, nature.[181] The preparatory drawings on paper were then duplicated on the painting support, sometimes freehand, but mostly by mechanical transfer methods, such as squaring, or *spolvero* (pouncing).[182] This latter method consisted in executing

[179] The apprentice first had to exercise the drawing practice by means of metal-point on small boxwood panel prepared with a thin coating of ground bone, which was easily erasable so that the surface could be reused. Having mastered metal-point, the student could further develop drawing skills with the use of different mediums, such as the quill pen and then charcoal, and various supports, such as paper. CENNINI (a cura di FREZZATO), 2019[11], pp. 65 (Cap. V), 80 (Cap. XXVII), 81 (Cap. XXVIII), 82-83 (Cap. XXX).

[180] IVI, pp. 149-150 (Cap. CXXIII). Being the *Libro dell'Arte* a manual for artists, Cennini also gave practical suggestions concerning the support and the medium to practice drawing skills.

[181] ALBERTI, 1436, ed. cons. 1950, pp. 106-112. Ghiberti affirmed that drawing was the foundation-stone of sculpture and painting, GHIBERTI (edited by VON SCHLOSSER), 1912, p. 5. See also GALASSI, 1998, pp. 26-27.

[182] GALASSI, 1998, pp. 27-29. An example of squared drawing is Paolo Uccello's, *Study for the Equestrian Monument to Sir John Hawkwood (Giovanni Acuto)*, today conserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence (inv. n. 31 F). A practical example is the grid of squares and rectangles realised onto the plaster in correspondence of

a 1:1 drawing of the composition – called cartoon, *cartone* in Italian – by pricking along the drawn outlines. Once the cartoon was placed over the support, the artist had to dust the pierced areas with a powder (such as charcoal) that passed through the holes and thus transferred a dotted outline of the scene to be painted onto the support surface.[183] If the *spolvero* technique was largely employed in the 15th century, later in the 16th century tracing over the outline with a stylus was preferred, as described by Vasari, who suggested the use of this method both for frescoes and for panels. In the case of frescoes, the trace was usually left directly on the plaster, while for panels, the cartoon was blackened with powdered charcoal on the *verso* in advance, in order to leave charcoal marks where the stylus was used, onto the prepared gesso ground.[184]

The *corpus* of more than two thousand drawings by Renaissance and Mannerist Venetian artists collected by Hans Tietze and Erika Tietze Conrat, and published in 1944 in their outstanding and pioneering volume titled *The Drawings of the Venetian Painters in the 15th and 16th Centuries*, contradicted Vasari's comment by proving that even Venetian painters used to plan their works in advance by drawing on paper.[185] Although not recorded in any written source (such as manuals and treatises) as was the case in Tuscany, the relevance of drawing as preparatory for painting in the Venetian tradition is confirmed by the huge number of drawings that have survived.[186]

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the figure of the Virgin in Masaccio's *Trinity* in Santa Maria Novella, Florence (BAMBACH, 1999, pp. 189-194).

[183] In his manual, Cennini already described the technique of *spolvero*, by calling it *spolverezzi*, used on panels to repeat the pattern for a cloth of gold. At the beginning, therefore, pouncing was employed for details and minor decorations to be repeated across the composition. CENNINI (a cura di FREZZATO), 2019[11], p. 163 (Cap. CXLI).

[184] VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1966, I, pp. 118-121 (Cap. XVI).

[185] TIETZE, TIETZE-CONRAT, 1944. For an update on this topic, please refer to: REARICK, 2001 and WHISTLER, 2016.

[186] Tietzes' study was only the first step of wider research into Venetian drawing that has progressed over the past seventy-five years, considerably increasing the number of drawing sheets that have been uncovered. An example of this is the significant *corpus* of ancient

The drawings gathered by the Tietzes are representative of the creative stages of creation of the artwork and include sketches (rough drafts of the composition), studies (of full figures or details, such as heads, or hands, or even draperies, but also architecture or landscapes, to develop the idea in greater detail and/or to model light and shade), *simili* or "pattern" drawings, and also compositional drawings or *vidimi* (overall design fully worked up). Evidence of this latter practice can also be found in contemporary contracts, in which a *vidimus* of the picture was explicitly requested by patrons in order to check and approve the overall composition before the artist started the execution of the painting. In these cases, the compositional drawing was part of a legal contract between the commissioner and the painter.[187]

From a technical point of view, most of the drawings that have survived are on paper as support. The sheets could have been white or coloured by adding pigments during the manufacturing process.[188] From the late 15th century on, for instance, blue paper (*carta azzurra*) became the preferred drawing support for Venetian artists, as proven by several examples that still exist. This meant that an artist could explore the tonal effects of light and shade on colour even at the drawing stage.[189]

Paper was suitable for drawing using many different media, both dry and fluid: metal point stylus, chalk (black, red, white), pen and ink, brush and pigments. The media were sometimes mixed for functional and stylistic reasons, and to help to visualize in advance the final result. For instance, a composition outlined by means of pen and ink could have been shaded or heightened through a very diluted ink or lead white applied by brush. The use of a medium

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drawings conserved in the Correr Museum collection, which amounts to about 8000-8500 pieces, and which has not been entirely catalogued yet. See *Disegni antichi…*, 1980-1996, I-VI; *Il disegno: le collezioni…*, 1993, pp. 134-136.

[187] AMES-LEWIS, 1981, p. 128-131; HUMFREY, 1993, pp. 137-141.

[188] BRÜCKE, 1993, pp. 20-31.

[189] *Il disegno: forme…*, 1991, p. 199. Painters that employed the *carta azzurra* for drawing practice were, for instance Giovanni Bellini, Vittore Carpaccio, Lorenzo Lotto, Titian, Sebastiano del Piombo, Tintoretto.

(e.g. metal point) rather than an alternative tool and/or material (e.g. pen and ink) for drawing gave a different result depending upon the effects the artist wanted to explore.

The survival of Jacopo Bellini's precious books of drawings, bequeathed to his elder son Gentile, further attest that this kind of material was of great importance for the artistic practice of the workshop.[190] It is important to underline that being bequeathed to Gentile, as explicitly requested by Anna Rinversi, Jacopo's widow, in her will, the books were intended to be kept in the family context, and in the same workshop as well.[191] Jacopo's books mainly included compositional designs (showing also narrative scenes), studies for perspective arrangement, and landscape observations. Unlike the model-books of the Gothic culture, which were a stock of natural motifs and patterns to be easily and rapidly copied or transferred by the workshop assistants into finished works,[192] Jacopo's books gathered drawings from which the assistants could extrapolate elements and/or ideas for compositions of their paintings. It was important that the drawings should not be destroyed or dispersed, but rather be preserved and passed on to the assistants (and in general to later generations) in order to produce copies, or modifications/adaptations derived from the master's original inventions.[193] As pointed out by Ames-Lewis, however, "this attitude was probably especially characteristic of the Venetian workshop which was generally family-based and dependent on the inheritance of styles and techniques over generations".[194] Drawings could circulate also amongst different workshops, being used as objects to be copied by assistants. A typical example is Antonio Pollaiolo's cartoon *cum quibusdam nudis* (showing nude figures) recorded as being possessed by Francesco Squarcione

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[190] The entire *corpus* of Jacopo Bellini's drawings in published in DEGENHART-SCHMITT, 1990, V-VIII.

[191] BARAUSSE, 2019, pp. 36-37 (doc. 35).

[192] Examples are Giovannino de' Grassi's model-book and Pisanello's sketch-book. AMES-LEWIS, 1981, pp. 63-79.

[193] AMES-LEWIS, 1990, pp. 670-673.

[194] AMES-LEWIS, 1981, p. 125.

in his Paduan studio in 1474, which was most likely used for educational purposes.[195]

Characteristic drawings which were fundamental for the creative process of Venetian painters were the so-called *simili* or "pattern" drawing. These latter were highly worked up drawings of figures or compositions used to transfer motifs into the finished painting. They were specifically useful in the workshop training since the apprentices used to practice by copying them. In this way a certain uniformity of the atelier products was assured. Gentile Bellini and Carpaccio – and their assistants – made extensive use of *simili* of which several examples survived. It is important to point out that most of the figures derived from a "pattern" drawing were of secondary importance, being placed in the background of large compositions, or were genre figures in the service of verisimilitude, such as Gentile Bellini's drawings of Oriental archetypes produced during his visit to Constantinople in 1479. It seems likely that workshop copies were also used by Pinturicchio, who included Oriental figures in the frescoes realised in the Borgia Apartments (Vatican, Apostolic Palace,1492-1494) and in the Piccolomini Library (Siena, Cathedral, 1502-1505).[196] Vittore Carpaccio's drawing *Three Studies of a Bishop*, today conserved in The British Museum of London (Museum number 1946,0713.3) was slightly modified and rearranged by the artist to portray Pope Ciriaco, a bishop and a clergyman in the episode of the *Saint Ursula Cycle* showing the *Meeting of the Pilgrims with the Pope* (Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia, 1493-1495). In this case, a *simile* drawing was used to depict some of the main figures in the foreground.[197]

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[195] LAZZARINI, 1908, pp. 41-42, 169; MARINI, 2006, pp. 268-273 (Cat. 59-60).

[196] Compare, for instance, Gentile Bellini's copy of *A Standing Turkish Man* in the Louvre Museum of Paris (inv. n. 4655, Recto) with the standing Oriental figures in Pinturicchio's *Disputation of Saint Catherine of Alexandria* (Vatican, Apostolic Palace, Borgia Apartments) and *Pope Pius II Arrives in Ancona* (Siena, Cathedral, Piccolomini Library). For reference, see: TIETZE, TIETZE-CONRAT, 1944, pp. 68-69 (n. A266, 267), 71 (n. A271); AMES-LEWIS, 1981, p. 87; AMES-LEWIS, 1990, p. 678.

[197] AMES-LEWIS, 1990, pp. 680-681.

In the 15th century, drawings were mainly perceived as workshop equipment, and were kept, and handed on for practical reasons. During the century, however, paper became widely available and less expensive, and was used as the main support for drawing exercise.[198] Artists began to realise drawings not only to develop specific compositions on the request of a commissioner, but also for sheer pleasure. The increased importance and value accorded to artists' drawings by connoisseurs and collectors further fostered their preservation, and in the early 16th century the first collections of drawings were established in Venice and Veneto.[199]

Once the composition on paper had been studied, elaborated, and approved, the artist could transfer, freehand or mechanically, this preliminary outline onto the prepared support of the painting, where it provided a guide for the subsequent application of the pigment layers. Most of the times, therefore, this underdrawing was known only to the artist and his assistants (and perhaps the commissioner), as it was then concealed by the paint, being invisible to the unassisted eye of the observer. Since its introduction at the end of 1960s, infrared reflectography analysis has been routinely employed to analyse the physical structure of paintings and has proved to be an extremely useful tool in revealing the hidden underdrawing, providing it is executed in black carbon containing material. The image obtained and the captured technical data must be interpreted also from an art historical perspective, in order to further explore the creative process that led to the artwork's genesis.[200]

As explained in Chapter 3.1, underdrawing was executed on the preparatory ground and its visibility depends on various factors related both to the painting materials and to the characteristics of the device employed to perform the

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[198] On the evolution of the drawing support, refer to *Il disegno: forme…*, 1991, pp. 191-212.

[199] DAL POZZOLO, 2003, pp. 59-61. Several mentions of drawings in various Veneto and Lombard collections are mentioned in Marcantonio Michiel's notebook *Notizia d'opere di disegno* (*Anonimo Morelliano*, 1896, pp. 30, 32, 44, 82, 94, 108, 114). For the general context of drawings collection in Italy, see, *Il disegno: i grandi collezionisti*, 1992, pp. 9-38.

[200] The infrared reflectography investigation can be integrated with other analyses, both invasive and non-invasive, in order to gain further information on the painting.

analysis. If the underdrawing revealed by infrared reflectography is clearly visible, the lines can appear either smooth and continuous, or broken and granular, suggesting that the artist used a fluid or a dry drawing medium to sketch out the composition.[201]

The way the preliminary outline was executed on the support might determine whether the artist worked freehand, or if a cartoon prepared in advance to mechanically transfer the design by means of *spolvero* or tracing was used.

As already mentioned, in 15th century Tuscany, and in general in Central Italy, the cartoon and the *spolvero* technique were largely employed to efficiently trace the design, or parts of it, from paper to the painting support.[202] This technique was used also in Venice and Veneto, although primarily in the workshop practice of serial production of devotional images e.g., *Madonna and Child* pictures,[203] but also to instruct the young apprentices.[204] In the work of the masters, however, it was mostly confined to small details,[205] though

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[201] On the materials of underdrawing, see *Underdrawings in Renaissance…*, 2002, pp. 26-37. Texture analysis algorithms applied along the drawing traces of the obtained infrared images allow the non-invasive identification of the drawing medium (LETTNER, SABLATNIG, 2006, pp. 308-311). Micro destructive analyses performed on the painting surface or on cross sections (invasive analysis) are useful to determine the constituent material/nature of the underdrawing medium (*Scientific examination…* 2009, pp. 52-57). Where it is impossible to perform any scientific investigation or use any algorithm, the identification must be based on an educated guess using the trained eye of the observer/*connoisseur*, making comparisons with similar underdrawings and using specimens prepared in advance.

[202] Evidence of *spolvero* has been observed both on fresco and on panel paintings. Piero della Francesca, for instance, used it on both supports, see BAMBACH, 1996, pp. 143-166; GALASSI, 1998, pp. 107-109 (n. 11, 12); DI LORENZO, 2001, pp. 109-124.

[203] Giovanni Bellini's prolific workshop and collaborators produced several *Madonna and Child* paintings based on ideas and cartoons, sometimes reworked, and adapted, derived from Giovanni's works. Examples are presented in: GALASSI, 1998a; GOLDEN, 2004; PAGLIANO, 2011. On the difference between Tuscan and Veneto *Madonneri* artists' practice, see BAMBACH, 1999, pp. 100-102.

[204] BAMBACH, 1999, pp. 242-243.

[205] For example, the small detail of the horseman in the background of Carpaccio's *Glory of Saint Ursula* shows traces of pouncing in the image obtained by the so-called *riflettoscopia*

occasionally its use extended to the main figures, or to wider areas of the composition, and was combined with freehand drawing. Indeed, Rona Goffen suggested that for the highly accurate underdrawing detected in Giovanni Bellini's paintings in Correr Museum (Venice), the artist could have employed a cartoon to transfer the compositions, even though no traces of *spolvero* or of another transfer technique have been observed in these works.[206] As a matter of fact, a pounced underdrawing has been found on the outline of two *Madonna and Child* paintings, one in the Rijksmuseum of Amsterdam, and the other in the Gemäldegalerie of Berlin, which depict the same Virgin Mary and infant Jesus composition. Maria Clelia Galassi correctly underlined that the presence of *spolvero* dots does not necessarily imply that the master had not played a part in the execution of a work.[207] Galassi (and subsequently Schmidt Arcangeli) downgraded the Amsterdam version to being a workshop product due to the mechanical aspect of the figures' outlines and confirmed the Berlin version as autograph. They supported this conclusion by pointing out, in addition, the presence of fine hatching for volumetric definition of the bodies in the Berlin painting, not present in the Rijksmuseum version. Recently, however, Lucco argued that both panels are autographs, taking into consideration not only the underdrawing, but also the overall execution of the pictures.[208]

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infrarossa computerizzata (SPEZZANI, 1992, p. 77). Similarly, in Carpaccio's *Hunting on the Lagoon* small dots delineating the outline of the boat in the foreground on the left and the group of hunters on it are clearly visible in the reflectogram (SZAFRAN, 1995, p. 154, fig. 16).

[206] GOFFEN, 1993, pp. 21-22.

[207] GALASSI, 1998a, p. 6.

[208] GALASSI, 1998a ,7; SCHMIDT ARCANGELI, 2015, p. 123 (note 3); LUCCO, 2019, pp. 297-298 (Cat. 7, 8). Lucco suggested that the Amsterdam *Madonna*, in his opinion closer to Jacopo's models, was earlier than the Berlin version, influenced by Donatello's and Mantegna's "sculptural" style. The rigid underdrawing of the Rijksmuseum picture, therefore, was not due to the workshop execution/intervention, but to Giovanni's young and still uncertain/insecure technique.

Similarly, Keith Christiansen observed that several of Andrea Mantegna's works investigated by infrared reflectography analysis often show evidence of transfer from a cartoon, either by pouncing or by tracing with a stylus.[209]

Even perspective construction and architectural elements – after being studied on paper to set the figure within a defined space – were outlined at the underdrawing stage.[210] Rulers and compasses were often employed by the artist as help to trace straight or circular lines, which could be drawn or even incised on the preparatory ground, as was observed in several paintings investigated by means of infrared reflectography.[211] Sometimes also the

[209] CHRISTIANSEN, 1992a, pp. 68-78. The infrared reflectography campaigns performed in 2000 (Vidicon system, M. C. Galassi) and in 2006 (InGaAs scanner, D. Bertani) on *San Zeno altarpiece* (Verona, Basilica of San Zeno) detected *spolvero* traces in the central area (*Madonna and Child and Musical Angels*). The results of the analyses have been discussed by MARIA CLELIA GALASSI (2008, pp. 85-103) and CATERINA LIMENTANI VIRDIS (2006, pp. 67-71), with opposite interpretations concerning the chronological order followed by Mantegna in the execution of the three parts of the altarpiece (see also POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, pp. 509-528). The accuracy of the underdrawing and the absence of *pentimenti* in the *Saint Luke polyptych* (Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera), GALASSI (1998, pp. 118-120 [n. 22]) suggested that Mantegna transferred the outline of the figures from a cartoon by means of the *spolvero* or tracing procedure. The photographic results of the scientific investigations carried out for the 1989 restoration of the complex, are published in PINI-BANDERA BISTOLETTI, 1989, pp. 70-87.

[210] Several of Jacopo Bellini's drawings show his interest in studying and mastering the perspective by arranging sophisticated architectural and spatial settings, often foreshortened, although his construction of space was more empirical rather than theoretical (EISLER, 1989, pp. 443-452). See, for example, Jacopo's sheets of the British Museum book showing *Urban View with Basin in the Foreground* (70v, Museum number 1855,0811.69), or *Polygonal Temple* (75v, Museum number 1855,0811.74). His son Gentile, as well, was a painter skilled in perspective, as proved by the compositional study for the *telero* of the *Miracle of the Relic of the Holy Cross in Campo San Lio* (Florence, Uffizi Gallery, Department of Prints and Drawings, inv. n. 1293 E), then executed by Giovanni Mansueti for the Scuola Grande of San Giovanni Evangelista (AMES-LEWIS, 1990, p. 680).

[211] For instance, evidence of incised architectural elements on Giovanni Bellini's artworks are presented in BAGAROTTO ET AL., 2000, pp. 187-188; GALLONE-PICCOLO, 2006, p. 81.

incised vanishing point, from which the perspective "rays" are plotted, can be detected.[212]

Once the basic composition was outlined, it was common for Paduan-Squarcionesque and Venetian artists to further work out the fall of light on the figures by accurate hatching, as they did in finished drawings on paper.[213] The underdrawing was then hidden by the paint, applied as fine hatched brushstrokes as used in tempera technique. Even though it was partially concealed, this shaded undermodelling was often visible through the paint, intentionally playing a role in the final effect. Finally, sometimes painters further strengthened lighter and darker areas with superficial fine strokes of brown-black pigment, or white pigment, or even with gold, obtaining the effect of hard metallic, surfaces. This final step was not part of the underdrawing phase, but of the painting process, and it is called "disegno pittorico".[214] This procedure was common for painters who had a Squarcionesque formation or

[212] A small hole corresponding to the vanishing point have been found in two Vittore Carpaccio's *teleri* of the *Saint Ursula Cycle*, *The Meeting of the Pilgrims with Pope Ciriaco* and *The Arrival of the Pilgrims in Cologne*. See, respectively, DE MANINCOR, 2014-2015, pp. 133-134; ARAMINI, RUBINO, TORRE, 2014, pp. 100-101 (figg. 17-18).

[213] Giovanni Bellini's *Lamentation Over the Dead Christ* in Uffizi Gallery (Florence) is a notable example of hatched monochrome painting showing the artist's concern for the effects of light on figures. For this reason, it is worth mentioning Paolo Pino's criticism of this approach, which he considered useless, given that the underdrawing then concealed by paint: "Et per la pittura è propria poesia, cioè invention, la qual fà apparere quello, che non è, però util sarebbe osservare alcuni ordini eletti da gli altri poeti che scrivono, I quale nelle loro comedi, et altre compositioni vi introducono la brevità, il che debbe osservare il pittore nelle sua invention, & non voler restrignere tutte le fatture del mondo in un quadro, n'ancho disegnare le tavole con tanta istrema diligenza, componendo il tutto di chiaro, & scuro, come usava Giovan Bellino, per ch'è fatica gettata havendosi à coprire il tutto con li colori […] (PINO, 1548, ed. cons. 1946, p. 106 [16v]). Several scholars tried to explain the main purpose of this work according to the extremely high accuracy of its drawing (the different hypothesis suggested are briefly summarised in LUCCO, 20019, pp. 459-460 [Cat. 98]).

[214] GALASSI, 1998, pp. 55-56.

influence, such as Carlo Crivelli and Bartolomeo Vivarini, who extensively employed this pictorial approach in their works across their entire careers.[215] Infrared reflectography analyses performed extensively on an artist's entire catalogue of paintings provide important information not only to study his personal approach to underdrawing, but also to observe possible changing patterns across his career. In Venetian-Paduan context, thorough infrared campaigns have been carried out on Andrea Mantegna's and Giovanni Bellini's corpus of artworks.[216] The study of Bellini's underdrawing proved to be extremely useful for addressing the difficulty in establishing a chronology for his works, and for investigating the production of *replicas* or variations of his designs by the workshop assistants.[217] In general, Giambellino's underdrawing gradually simplified. It evolved from a very accurate and detailed outlining of Paduan-mantegnesque influence, with firm dark contours, and parallel hatched strokes for rendering of shaded areas (e.g., *The Blood of the Redeemer*, London, The National Gallery, 1467-1468),[218] to simpler and more schematic sketches with no internal modelling in the later works from the beginning of the 16th century (e.g., *San Zaccaria altarpiece*, Venice, Church of San Zaccaria, 1505),[219] passing through an intermediate phase with his own personal version of *sfumato*, showing softened contours and finer and more nuanced hatching (e.g. *Frari triptych*, Venice, Church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari,

[215] IBIDEM. On Crivelli's technique, see: CASAVECCHIA, 1997, pp. 12-20; GALASSI, 1998, pp. 122-123 (n. 26); NAPIONE-RODELLA, 2012, p. 19. On Bartolomeo Vivarini, refer to: DIOTALLEVI, 1996, pp. 34-42; GALASSI, 1998, p. 123 (n. 27); POLDI, 2010, p. 193.

[216] On Mantegna, see note 209. For further bibliography, refer to: POLDI-VILLA, 2006, pp. 47-61; VILLA, 2007; *Technè: La technique picturale…*, 2009.

[217] The evolution of Giovanni Bellini's underdrawing procedure is explored and clearly explained in: GALASSI, 1998, pp. 65-69, 123-127 (n. 28-30); OLIVARI, 2001, pp. 31-50; POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, pp. 321-412; *Bellini a Venezia…*, 2008; POLDI-VILLA, 2009; DUNKERTON-SPRING, 2018, pp. 9-11 and catalogue entries in the same volume. This must be intended only as a list of non-exhaustive reference bibliography.

[218] DUNKERTON-SPRING, 2018, pp. 34-38.

[219] *Bellini a Venezia…*, 2008, pp. 168-173.

1488).[220] The reason for this development is probably related also to a wider use and more conscious exploitation of the advantages and potential offered by working in oil as binding medium, thanks to the arrival of examples of works by northern painters and, especially, to the presence of Antonello da Messina in Venice from 1475.[221]

The tendency to realize sketched underdrawing, with the schematic indication of contours and drapery folds, often rearranged in the painting phase, was carried on by 16th century artists such as Giorgione, Sebastiano del Piombo and Titian (to name but a few).[222] This drawing procedure developed more and more by the increased ability of painters to use oil as binding medium that allowed the creation of new tonal effects by superimposing layers of glazes.

To conclude, what is illustrated in this chapter is intended to be an introduction to the drawing and underdrawing practices in Italy, and especially in Venice, in the 15th century, and to provide the readers with the basic information to enable them to interpret and understand the results obtained from the infrared reflectography analyses performed on Bastiani's paintings (Chapter 4.4.2).

[220] IVI, pp. 141-144.

[221] DUNKERTON, 1999, pp. 93-100.

[222] GALASSI, 1998, pp. 85-88; BELLUCCI-FROSININI, 2011, pp. 53-62.

3.4. BASTIANI'S IR IMAGING DATABASE AND THE DIAGNOSTIC CAMPAIGN

An exhaustive study of Bastiani's underdrawing practice necessarily requires a great number of images to be analysed and compared. Since its introductions at the end of 1960s, IRR has been routinely performed in relation to restoration treatments or upcoming exhibitions, becoming one of the primary sources for new data in the art historical and conservation fields.[223] However, these circumstances presented themselves irregularly and in the early years the collected material on a specific artist's production was little comparative or too heterogeneous for a comprehensive art historical interpretation. Down the years, IR imaging diagnostic campaigns have been performed regularly on the *oeuvre* of a particular master, resulting in an almost complete database of their corpus of artworks that improved our knowledge of their artistic practice.[224] Conversely, in the case of minor painters, scientific examinations have been sporadic and often limited to investigate the condition of the piece and to support the following restorative intervention, not to specifically promote their art historical understanding. Lazzaro Bastiani must be included in this latter group of artists. In fact, the IR imaging analyses of Bastiani's works performed over the last 30 years have been carried out within the context of a conservation procedure.

To fulfil the main goal of this Ph.D. thesis research i.e., the analysis of Bastiani's underdrawing to evaluate his artistic development and to support the definition of his catalogue, it has been necessary to build up a database of IR imaging data, including both "archive" images (old IR photographs and IR

[223] An example: *The Princeton Raphael Symposium: science in the service of art history*, 1983.

[224] It is impossible to report here the numerous publications concerning the study of major artists' underdrawing. In the Italian research framework, it is sufficient to mention here the significant contributions published by Cecilia Frosinini and Marco Bellucci on Renaissance Tuscan masters, and by Gianluca Poldi and Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa on Renaissance Veneto painters. Maria Clelia Galassi investigated both Italian and Low Countries artists.

images acquired by museums for this research)[225] and new IRR images specifically collected for this study.

[225] "Archive" IR images credits

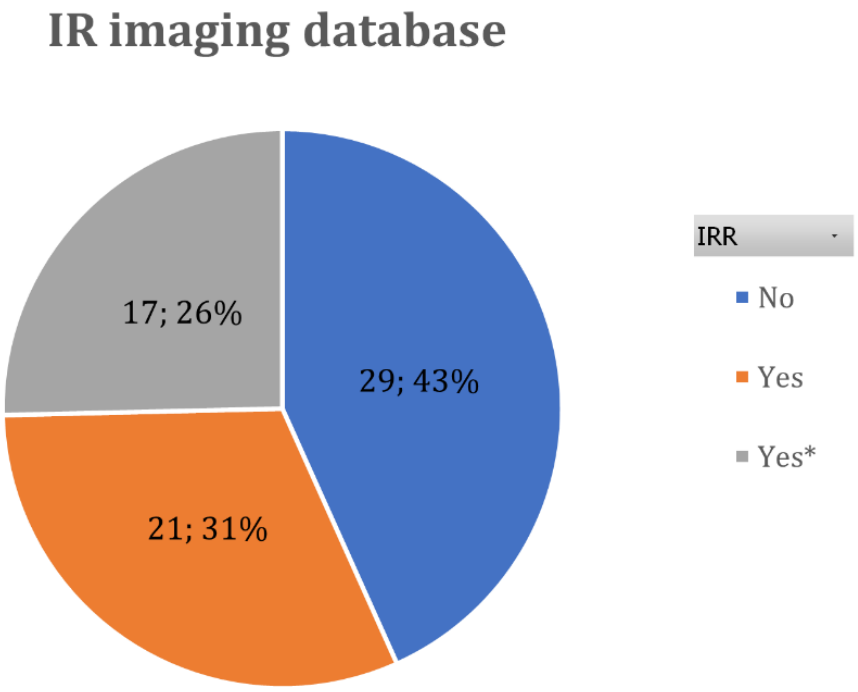
- L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with the Archangel Gabriel, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias*, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland. © National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, Photographic Department, 2020.
- L. Bastiani, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, *Saint Jerome and a Kneeling Nun*, Milan, Diocesan Museum. © Gianluca Poldi, Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa, 2004 – acquisition parameters: digital photographic camera, Si-CCD sensor, 1920 x 2560 pixels, IR spectral range 850-1000 nm, maximum resolution 20 pixels/mm.
- L. Bastiani, *Saint Jerome Bringing the Lion into the Convent, Saint Jerome in the Desert, Death/Funeral of Saint Jerome*, Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera. © Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan, Restoration Laboratory, 2018.
- L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child crowned by two angels, with musical angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father*, Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum. L. Bastiani, *Pietà*, Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum. Gianluca Poldi and Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa, 2003 – acquisition parameters: Sony DSC F717, Si-CCD sensor, 1920 x 2560 pixels, IR spectral range 850-1000 nm, maximum resolution 20 pixels/mm.
- L. Bastiani, *Christ Blessing*, Modena, Galleria Estense. © Dr. Alessandro Burani, 2020 – acquisition parameters: digital photographic camera, Si-CMOS sensor, 4928 x 3264 pixels, spectral range up to 1000 nm.
- L. Bastiani, *Madonna Adoring the Child and Scenes from the Life of Tobias in the Background*, Poznań, Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu. © Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, 1989-1990.
- L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum. © Hermitage Museum Saint Petersburg, 2019.
- L. Bastiani, *Annunciation*, Venice, Correr Museum. © Correr Museum, Venice, 1992-1993.
- L. Bastiani, *Communion of Saint Jerome*, *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. L. Bastiani, *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. © Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, 1996
- L. Bastiani, *Scenes of the Life of the Blessed Leone Bembo*, Vodnjan, Collection of Sacral Art of the Parish Church of Saint Blasius. © Hrvatski Restauratorski Zavod, Zagreb, 2014.

The database can be presented as shown in *Tab. 1*. Considering a total amount of 79 autograph and attributed paintings in Bastiani's corpus of artworks, 38 IR images have been gathered, of which 21 are the new IRR pictures collected ("Yes" label, 31%), and 17 are the "archive" ones ("Yes*" label, 26%). For the 29 paintings labelled as "No" (43%) it has not been possible to perform any investigation and any pre-existing image was available. Among the various reasons that caused the impossibility to conduct a technical examination must be listed the practical difficulties to move the instrumentation to distant locations (for instance, to foreign countries), the poor condition of the art piece itself (as in the case of the signed *Annunciation* in Correr Museum that cannot even be verticalised),[226] and, from 2020, the Covid-19 outbreak and related restrictions.

The database excludes the lost and destroyed works, as well as those paintings whose actual location is unknown (e.g., *Saint John the Baptist* in a private collection in Bologna attributed to Bastiani by Arcangeli in 1950, or *Saint Augustine altarpiece* which is somewhere in Montevideo, Urugay), that would have been impossible to analyse.

It must be pointed out that the IRR investigation has been extended, when possible, to paintings ascribed to Bastiani's workshop or manner, which can be used for comparison, but are not included in the database.

[226] Similarly, it has not been possible to examine the *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* and the Saint *Anthony in the Nut Tree*, both conserved in the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice, because of their poor condition.



Tab. 1. The IR imaging database is composed of 38 images (21+17)

The diagnostic campaign on Lazzaro Bastiani's corpus of paintings was performed *in situ*, in the rooms of the museum (either when closed or open to visitors), or in the museum depository. The museums actively involved in the project are located in Veneto and in Lombardy. The museums in Veneto are: Gallerie dell'Accademia and Correr Museum in Venice, Musei Civici agli Eremitani in Padua, Castelvecchio Museum in Verona and Pinacoteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi in Rovigo.[227] In Lombardy the museums engaged in this research are the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo and the Galleria dell'Accademia Tadini in Lovere (near Bergamo). The investigations took 32 days in total.[228]

[227] The analysis of the painting in the Accademia dei Concordi was carried out during the conservation treatment at MAUVE Srl restoration laboratory in Venice.

[228] Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia: 11 days; Venice, Correr Museum: 12 days; Padua, Musei Civici agli Eremitani: 3 days; Verona, Castelvecchio Museum: 2 days; Rovigo, Pinacoteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi: 1 day; Bergamo, Accademia Carrara: 2 days; Lovere (Bergamo), Galleria dell'Accademia Tadini, Lovere: 1 day.

The analyses at the Gallerie dell'Accademia were carried out by means of the standard Osiris camera by Opus Instruments, put at our disposal by Save Venice Inc., the leading American non-profit organization whose mission consists in preserving the cultural heritage of Venice.[229] The camera exclusively works in wide band modality (900-1700 nm spectral range).

For the IRR examinations in the other museums, the recently developed Apollo camera by Opus Instruments was employed, made available by OpDATeCH Lab of the University of Verona (Department of Computer Science). The camera was used both in wide band and in multispectral modality exploiting the set of filters supplied.

Further information on the instrumentation and the diagnostic campaign can be retrieved in "APPENDIX I: EQUIPMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC CAMPAIGN".

At this point, a critical aspect of the IR imaging database must be underlined. As previously said, the IR imaging database is composed of both "archive" IR images and recently recorded IRR images. These images can be compared, and their information can be integrated for a more complete understanding of the investigated artwork. It is necessary to emphasize, however, that in most cases the employed device and the acquisition parameters of the "archive" IR images are unknown and impossible to retrieve. Therefore, their data must be examined and interpreted with caution.

Finally, the impact of the pandemic has strongly limited the campaign from 2020 onwards. Numerous investigations were delayed and took longer than expected, while others were cancelled because of the lack of time. To overcome this inconvenience, "archive" IR images, if already present, have been requested to the museums and/or superintendencies, however still taking into account the abovementioned critical considerations related to the used device and the missing information regarding the acquisition parameters. Anyway, the research can be considered still ongoing and further analyses will be

[229] https://www.savevenice.org/about (last visited: 18th March 2022).

performed in the future to increase the database and to improve our knowledge of Bastiani's underdrawing practice.[230]

[230] As notified by the museums, new infrared reflectography analysis of the paintings *Christ Blessing* (Bayonne, Musée Bonnat-Helleu, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Bayonne), *Madonna and Child in a Painted Frame with Cherubim and Putti Holding the Instruments of the Passion* (Berlin, Gëmaldegalerie), *Adoration of the Magi* (New York, Frick Collection) should have occurred in 2022 and in 2023. The acquired images, however, were not ready for public distribution before the submission of this thesis, thus have been unavailable for this research.

4. LAZZARO BASTIANI

4.1. CONTEXT AND RELATIONSHIPS

The extensive archival research carried out in the 19th century that culminated at the beginning of the 20th century with the publication of the most complete and fundamental collection of documents concerning Lazzaro Bastiani, shed a novel light on this – at that time – still little-known painter and his artistic activity, as well as upon his family and personal relationships. A review of the published material, however, is necessary both to discard the documents erroneously believed to refer to Lazzaro and his relatives, and, in addition, to outline the cultural context where Lazzaro lived and worked.[231]

In 1900, Paoletti and Ludwig published the will of *Doratia*, widow of *Laurentij merciarij*, dated 1449, as the first document recording Lazzaro Bastiani. In fact, here a certain *Lazarus pictor condam Sabastiani de confinio sancti Leonis* is named among those who witnessed the drawing up of the will. In the light of this source, scholars estimated Lazzaro's birth date to be around 1425.[232] If this is the case, Antonio Vivarini and Jacopo Bellini were older than Lazzaro, while Bartolomeo and Alvise Vivarini (respectively brother and son of Antonio) and Gentile and Giovanni Bellini were younger than, so they placed Lazzaro somewhere between the two generations of artists.

After a reinterpretation of the published archival sources referring to the Bastiani family, however, in 1909 Antonio Leiss – and more recently Gianmarco Russo – pointed out that the 1449 document could not refer to Lazzaro Bastiani, since the Lazzaro spoken of here was the son of a certain Sebastiano – who was already dead by 1449 – while "our" Lazzaro was the son of Jacopo.[233]

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[231] In this chapter the most significant documents are referred to. For the complete published archival records on Bastiani's family, please refer to: PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 173-192; LUDWIG-MOLMENTI 1906, pp. 31-35. I wish to thank Professor Giuseppe Gullino, who helped me to revise the archival material and gave me important suggestions for their interpretation.

[232] LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 17; A. VENTURI, 1915, VII/IV, p. 381; SANDBERG-VAVALÀ, 1931, p. 125.

[233] LEISS, 1909, p. 89; RUSSO, 2019, p. 167 (note 6).

The name of Lazzaro's father was revealed in Marco Bastiani's will – written on the 22nd of June 1457 – in which he appointed *Lazarum quondam Jacobi*, his brother (*fratrem meum*), as one of his executors.[234] A further document confirmed that Lazzaro and Marco were brothers. In fact, in 1456, *Marcho depentor de confin de san Lio* and *Lazaro depentor del confin de san Rafael* were mentioned together when they were both made executors of their nephew *Zuane* (Giovanni) *de Jacomo Trivixano*'s will.[235]

The issue regarding the use of surname in documents of this period is confusing since in Italy, at that time, the modern idea of a surname was not yet established, rather it was a hybrid form, sometimes intended as surname (as it is today), sometimes as patronymic surname. Indeed, if families of the Venetian patriciate already had recognised surnames, in most cases people used the patronymic form, writing their name and specifying the name of their father (if he was already dead, they used the word *quondam/condam* before his name) and their residence and/or profession. Some surnames were derived from the name of an ancestor. For instance, the painter Michele Giambono was son of Taddeo and grandchild of a certain *magister Zambon*, from whom the surname Giambono had its origin (in documents Michele signed as *de Zane bon*, or *de Johanne bono*, or even *Çambono* – i.e., John Good).[236] In the case of Bastiani/Sebastiani, the surname seems to be derived from an ancestor called Bastiano, thus Sebastiano, and could have been employed as a patronymic surname at the beginning – meaning son of Sebastiano – and then it became a

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[234] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 174-175 (n. 7). "1457, 22 Juni – Test… Ego Marcus condam Jacobi Bastiano de confinio sancti Leonis… volo meos fidei commissarios ser Lazarum quondam Jacobi Bastiani fratrem meum et ser Ludovicum quondam Philippi cognatum meum et meos filios ad presens magnos…".

[235] Jacomo referred to Lazzaro and Marco by calling them his "barba". In ancient Venetian dialect "barba" means uncle. BOERIO, 1856, p. 61 (ad vocem "Barba").

LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 33 (n. 48). "1456, 18 Novembris - … Jo Zuane de Jacomo Trivixano de confin de san Pantalon… Item constituisso mie fidel comessari mio barba Marcho depentor del confin de san Lio e mio barba Lazaro depentor de confin de san Rafael".

[236] On the issue concerning the artists' surnames in Venice, see PUPPULIN, 1975-1976, pp. 69-71.

surname. According to Paoletti and Ludwig, it appears that Bastiani was already used as surname in the 14th century, since they found a document mentioning a certain Nicolò Bastian resident in the *contrada* of the Arcangelo Raffaele in 1367.[237] The 1449 document, therefore, could refer to Lazzaro who was the son of a member of the Bastiani/Sebastiani family, rather than the son of a certain Sebastiano. There is a further similar example concerning Marco. In a 1457 will that Marco and his son Alvise (mentioned as *Ludovicus*) witnessed, Marco was recorded as *Ser Marcus quondam ser Bastiani pictor*.[238]
Once this critical matter is understood, *Doratia*'s will of 1449 can be accepted as the very early mention of Lazzaro Bastiani. If this is the case, in 1449 Lazzaro was still resident in San Lio area with his brother, before moving to his new house in the *contrada* of the Angelo Raffaele Church prior 1456, when his nephew *Zuane* wrote his testament.
We do not have much information about Lazzaro's father, except that his name was Jacopo and that he died after 1447 and before 1449. Jacopo was recorded as still alive in three documents regarding Marco dated 1435, 1440 and 1447, while in 1454 Marco signed a will as *condam ser Jacobi*.[239] The years 1447 and 1454, therefore, are *terminus post quem* and *terminus ante quem* for Jacopo's death. However, in the 1449 testament, Lazzaro's father was indicated as already being dead (*quondam*), thus further narrowing the timeframe.[240]
No records so far found have indicated the name of Lazzaro's mother or any further information about her or her family.

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[237] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 186. Paoletti and Ludwig did not publish or report the archival reference of this document, though.

[238] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 179 (n. 30). "1457, 7 Maij – Tes. Ser Marcus quondam ser Bastiani pictor, ser Ludovicus filius supradicti ser Marci".

[239] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 174 (n. 2-4). In the 1435 and 1447 documents Marco signed as *filius ser Jacobi Bastian*, proving that Jacopo was still alive.

[240] See note 229.

According to the available sources, Jacopo apparently had two sons – Marco and Lazzaro – and two daughters – Andriana and Marina.[241] One of the daughters married the *Jacomo Trivixano*, father of *Zuane*, mentioned in the will of 1456. It is possible that Jacopo had another son, Sebastiano.

Extensive documentation regarding Marco and his sons was found by Paoletti, Ludwig and Molmenti. *Ser Marchus filius ser Jacobi Bastian pictor de confinio Sancti Leonis*, first appeared as witness of a will in 1435.[242] In 1457 he was probably very ill because he wrote his will, naming his brother Lazzaro, his brother-in-law *Lodovico* and his sons as executors to carry out his last wishes.[243] He survived this apparent illness, however, and died more than thirty years later, in 1489. He was buried in the Basilica of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, as recorded in the register containing the name of the members of the Scuola Grande di San Marco who died between 1450 and 1545.[244] In documents, Marco was mostly referred to as *pictor*, but from 1474 onwards also as *pictor cortinarum* or *cortinis*, meaning that he specialised in painting cloth objects such as, for instance, standards, banners, altar frontals, curtains etc.[245] This activity is confirmed by the evidence of various commissions that the Scuola Grande di San Marco – of which he was a member – requested of

[241] Andriana and Marina are mentioned in Marco's will, where he specifically donated ten ducats to each to his sisters. PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 174-175 (n. 7): "[…] Item volo… quod Andriana et Marina sorores mee habeant ducatos decem…".

[242] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 174 (n. 2).

[243] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 174-175 (n. 7). Marco's testament is also of cultural and sociological value, as here he specifically ordered that his Tartar slave, named Marta, had to serve his sons for a further six years and after that she was finally free. His sons, had to treat her kindly, however, otherwise the other executors would have placed her with another household where she would remain until she was entitled to be freed.

[244] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 176 (n. 17-18). In *Iscrizioni sepolcrali venete* Rocco Curti stated that Marco and his relatives (*suorum heredum*) were buried in the cemetery of Sant'Orsola in Santi Giovanni e Paolo (LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 13 [note 2]).

[245] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 176 (n. 14-15).

him, for example, the execution of *uno stendardo over penon* in 1472 and of a *penelo del guardian de mattin* in 1480.[246]

Marco had four children, three sons and a daughter. Simone (recorded 1457-1460)[247] and Alvise (documented 1457-1489)[248] were both painters living in San Lio, like their father, while Paolo (mentioned in documents between 1464 and 1484)[249] was a priest.

In the 1449 will of Doratia, Lazzaro was referred to as *pictor*. Considering that an apprentice usually embarked upon full-time training in a master's workshop from the age of twelve, and that the apprenticeship usually lasted five to seven years, when (at around nineteen or twenty) a young painter could enrol the *arte dei depintor*i, open his own workshop and call himself *pictor* or

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[246] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 175 (n. 12), 176 (n. 16). The *penelo* portrayed the insignia of the Scuola. See BOERIO, Dizionario, 1856, p. 489 (ad vocem "Penèlo")

[247] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 178-179 (n. 21-29); LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 31 (n. 17-27). Simone Bastiani cannot be identified with that certain *Simon quondam Marci curtinaris de contracta sancti Augustini* that appeared in documents from 1467 onwards, as in 1467 his father Marco was still alive.

[248] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 179-180 (n. 30-40); LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 32 (n. 28-36). *Alvixio Sebastiano pictore in plathea Sancti Marci filius quondam ser Marci* that witnessed a will in 1485 is not Marco Bastiani's son, as his father was not yet dead at that time. Alvise had a son, Francesco, a painter resident in San Luca, who was accused of sexual assault by *Paula uxor Magistri Alexandri a Lyris* in 1511 (LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 32 (n. 37).

[249] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 180-182 (n. 41-47); LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 33 (n. 40-46). Paolo was first priest *mansionarius* in the Church of Santi Apostoli and then priest *titulatus* in the Church of San Giuliano. During the 1478 plague outbreak in Venice, Paolo became a member of the *Scuola dei Battuti* devoted to Saint Roch which was based in the Church of San Giuliano. The confraternity members used to mortify their flesh with disciplines and thus were called *desceplenari* (on the flagellant confraternities, see CHEN, 2018). Among them there was also *Thomaxo Bragadin pentor*, son of the painter Donato Bragadin. Paolo, however, was defined "homo leziero et de mala sorte e volunta" as proved by an unpleasant episode that occurred in 1484, when, during an argument between the confraternity members, he drew his sword and indiscriminately assaulted the people that were attending the meeting, among whom there was also his brother Alvise, who was one of the attending members. Following that regrettable event, the Consiglio dei X decided that the two family members could no longer be members of the confraternity at the same time as each other.

magister,[250] we can reasonably assume that Lazzaro was born between 1425 and 1430, successfully finished his training in the master workshop at around twenty, at the end of 1440s, and in 1449 he was at the beginning of his artistic career. This seems to be confirmed by the earliest *Madonna* now attributed to him i.e., the *Madonna and Child* n. 2193 in the Correr Museum, that Casu stylistically linked to Antonio Vivarini's Worcester *Madonna* (originally part of the polyptych for San Francesco in Padua), executed around 1451.[251]

Archival records are a useful tool to track down Lazzaro's relations and the commissions he received through his career.[252] Between 1460 and 1468 payments by the *Procuratori de Citra* to Lazzaro are recorded for the execution of an altarpiece and other works for Marco Venier's altar in the Church of San Samuel. In 1470, following his own request, Lazzaro was designated by the Scuola Grande di San Marco to paint a *telero* in two fields with scenes from the life of David, for the Chapter Hall of the confraternity building. The contract also specified that Lazzaro had to be paid at the same rate per size of work as Jacopo Bellini (who had been charged with the execution of two *teleri* in 1466) and that he had to submit a drawing of the overall composition for approval by the confraternity members. In 1470, Lazzaro was also listed among the members of the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo. By virtue of this membership, he was probably asked to realise the *teleri* with the *Communion* and the *Funeral of Saint Jerome* to decorate the walls of the confraternity building at the end of the decade. In a letter sent to his brother-in-law *Nicholò Gruatto lapicida* in 1473, *Antonio di Choradi* from Pera (Costantinople) specifically commissioned

[250] Until the early 16th century, a painter only had to pay a tax (the *benintrada*) to the *arte* in order to open his own workshop as master. Later, a further step was introduced to become a *magister*, as the painter had to pass an exam at the presence of the *gastaldo* and of the *banca* of the Scuola. For further information about painter apprenticeships, please refer to: FAVARO, 1975, pp. 55-66; PUPPULIN, 1975-1976, pp. 38-43.

[251] CASU, 1996, p. 62-63.

[252] For the archival sources referring to Lazzaro and the commissions he received, refer to Chapter 4.3, and to PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 183-189 (n. 50-68); LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, pp. 33-35 (n. 47-74).

from Lazzaro Bastiani a small painting portraying the figure of Christ, the size of which had to be *mezzo foio de charta di pizolj* (approximatively 30 x 21 cm). *Antonio Choradi* added that if Bastiani was already dead or otherwise unable to fulfil the request, Nicolò Gruatto would have ordered the panel to be executed by Giovanni Bellini. In 1474 the painting was finished and the Scuola Grande della Misericordia noted the payment to Lazzaro. We do not have any documentation concerning relevant commissions for the next few years, but the signed and dated *lunette* for Giovanni degli Angeli in Murano (1484) and the *Coronation of the Virgin* for Bernardo Barbarigo in Crema (1490), as well as the *telero* for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista offer evidence in the absence of written records. In 1505 the Illustrissima Signoria requested Lazzaro and Benedetto Diana to paint three banners for the Piazza San Marco. Finally, in 1508, together with Vittore Carpaccio and Vittore Belliniano, Lazzaro was nominated as judge by Giovanni Bellini to evaluate Giorgione's frescoes realised on the façade facing the Canal Grande of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. Lazzaro died in 1512, probably shortly after the 7th of March, when he called the priest *per i suoi confini*.[253]

On the basis of the 1449 document, we might infer that Lazzaro spent the years of his apprenticeship in San Lio, where his brother Marco was resident. Later, between 1449 and 1456 he moved in *contrada San Rafael*, in Dorsoduro, a far-flung area of the city, distant from San Marco, the political heart of the Repubblica, and from Rialto, which was the commercial centre, with banks and markets. This is a peculiar location for a painter to make his home which was – in accordance with a long-lasting tradition in Venice – probably also his atelier.[254] This area, however, seems to have suited Lazzaro's needs as he spent

[253] LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 35 (n. 73-74).

[254] In the 13th and 14th century painters used to live in the same *contrada*, which was that of San Luca, the patron saint of their *arte*. In the 15th century, however, this custom was no longer observed, and artists were free to live and work wherever they wanted in Venice. On the Venetian painters' homes and workshops, see: PUPPULIN, 1975-1976, pp. 54-58, 82-83. For comparison, it is worth mentioning that Jacopo and Gentile Bellini stayed at San Geminiano in Piazza San Marco, Giovanni lived in San Lio and then in Santa Marina, both of which were close

the rest of his life here.[255] In addition, Paoletti and Ludwig observed that the *contrada* of the Angelo Raffaele Church had probably been the permanent residence of the Bastiani family since at least the 14th century, as evidenced by an archival record concerning the abovementioned Nicolò Bastiani, who was resident here in 1367.[256]

Although, as mentioned above, it was unusual for a painter to set up his workshop in a different location than his own home, the letter Antonio *Choradi* sent to Nicolò Gruatto commissioning the painting of *Christ* in 1473 suggests that this could have been the case for Lazzaro Bastiani. In fact, *Choradi*, who was very accurate in describing the characteristics of the work requested, was precise as well when he ordered his brother-in-law to go to Lazzaro Bastiani who was in Campo San Polo ("Apresso andatte da Lazaro Bastian che stano sopra el Champo di San Polo").[257] Therefore, we could cautiously suggest that Lazzaro had his workshop in San Polo, which was in a more central position than San Raffaele, closer to Rialto and to the more dynamic and commercial places in Venice.

Like his brother Marco, Lazzaro had several sons: Jacopo, Giovanni (*Zuane*), Sebastiano, Alvise and Vincenzo. Jacopo, who was probably the eldest, named after his grandfather, was recorded in 1471, as the *Juvenum portantium bussulos albos in maiori Consilio*.[258] In other words he served as the boy who

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to Rialto, and the Vivarinis, who were based in Santa Maria Formosa, a parish with a concentration of wood carvers and frame makers.

[255] On only two occasions was Lazzaro recorded as not being based in the *contrada* of Angelo Raffaele Church. Firstly, at Santa Margherita (1482) and then at *Sancti Nicolaj* (San Nicolò dei Mendicoli, 1502), two churches still in Dorsoduro. The parish district of Santa Margherita and San Nicolò, however, were adjacent to that of Angelo Raffaele and it is possible that the notary made a mistake while writing the testament Lazzaro witnessed. To support this hypothesis, it is worth reporting that in the contract of Chiara Badoer resident in the *contrada* of Santa Margherita, Lazzaro was indicated as being resident in the same *contrada*. For the documents, see PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 185-186 (n. 56-57).

[256] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 186.

[257] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 185 (n. 54).

[258] LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 35 (n. 81).

carried the ballot box (*bussolos albos*) to collect the votes in the government's complicated voting procedure in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio.[259] Both Zuane and Sebastiano called themselves painters. Mention of Zuane has only been found so far in a will of 1474, together with *cortineri Marco e Simone Bastiani*, who may be identified as his uncle and cousin.[260] Sebastiano was also a priest and appeared in several documents from 1489 until 1500.[261] In two testaments of 1489 Sebastiano called himself priest (*presbiter*) of the Angelo Raffaele Church,[262] while in 1497 he signed as priest *titulatus* of the same church,[263] and finally in 1516 he was appointed as parish priest (*pievano*) of that church.[264] He was in charge until his death, on the 2nd of December 1538.[265] This latter information is retrieved from Flaminio Corner's *Ecclesie Venetae*, where it is also recorded that Sebastiano was *Canonico Ducale*, meaning that he was one of the twelve chaplains of the Basilica of San Marco, the Doge's private chapel.[266] In 1494 Sebastiano was listed among the members of the Scuola Grande di San Marco.[267] The confraternity commissioned decorations ("due angeli e altri ornamenti") from him for the celebration of the Corpus Domini that year and also further ornaments to be carried during religious

[259] BOERIO, 1856, p. 93 (ad vocem "Bòssolo"). On the voting procedure in Renaissance Venice and its reform which occurred in 1492, please refer to: MUELLER, 2013, pp. 219-228; JUDDE DE LARIVIÈRE, 2018, pp. 242-256. It should also be emphasised that Giovanni Bellini's son Alvise, who had a brilliant career in Venice Chancellery, was the boy who carried the *bussulos albos* in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio (FLETCHER, 2004, p. 14).

[260] LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, pp. 17, 35 (n. 80).

[261]. LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, pp. 34 (n. 62-63), 35 (n. 82-90)

[262] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 191 (n. 75); Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 35 (n. 83).

[263] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 191 (n. 77). The *preti titolati* were priests who assisted the parish priest in performing his duties and sacred rites in the church. For further information on the *preti titolati*, see *Enciclopedia Ecclesiastica*, 1862, VII, pp. 200-203.

[264] This information, not considered by Paoletti, Ludwig and Molmenti, was pointed out by FOGOLARI, 1932, p. 280.

[265] CORNER, 1749, V, p. 344. "1516 Sebastianus de Sebastiani Canon. Duc. Ob. 2 Dec. 1538".

[266] CAPPELLETTI, 1851, II, p. 399.

[267] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 191 (n. 79).

processions of the Scuola (*apparecchi da processione* and *festoni*) in 1495.[268] In 1493 he was also recorded in documents of the Scuola Grande della Carità, probably concerning works requested of him.[269] Finally, he was involved in the decoration of the Bernabò Chapel in the Church of San Giovanni Crisostomo, which was rebuilt in the early 16th century.[270] On the basis of some payment records dated 1500,[271] we know that Sebastiano painted and gilded *i schudi*[272] (the coats of arms) here, and restored *la tavola davanti l'altar*. On reading the sources, it is evident that Sebastiano was a humble painter, who received commissions only for minor decorative works. Nevertheless, in 1932 Fogolari – in the attempt to restore the artistic dignity of Lazzaro Bastiani after the caustic comments made about him by Giuseppe Fiocco in his monography on Carpaccio – suggested Sebastiano be credited for those paintings generally ascribed to Lazzaro or his workshop that showed inferior quality of execution. To the list of works indubitably realised by a less talented artist than Lazzaro (for instance the organ shutters with *Adam and Eve* and *David and the Shulamite* today in Correr Museum), Fogolari also added the *Saint Jerome enthroned* in Asolo, an altarpiece that really cannot be the work of a modest

[268] IVI, pp. 191-192 (n. 78, 80-81).

[269] LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 34 (n. 62-63).

[270] On the majestic reconstruction works of the Bernarbò Chapel, see: DAVIS, 2007, pp. 217-278. As DAVIS (p. 240 [note 35]) underlined, Renier Fioravante, the parish priest of the Angelo Raffaele Church, was one of the executors of Jacopo Bernabò's will. I believe it is plausible to hypothesize that he might have played a role in the involvement of Sebastiano in the chapel decoration. In addition, Sebastiano was appointed *plebanus* of the Angelo Raffaele Church in 1516, after Renier Fioravante's death (CORNER, 1749, V, pp. 343-344).

[271] All the documents regarding Sebastiano's works for the chapel are published in DAVIS, 2007, pp. 246-47 (doc. 85-86, 93-94, 99-100).

[272] The word *schudi* means the coats of arms. Sebastiano painted and gilded the coats of arms of the Bernabò family that were hung high above the arch of the chapel. IVI, p. 224.

painter who mostly dedicated himself to ornamental works of minor importance.[273]

Finally, Lazzaro's sons Alvise and Vincenzo were mosaicists active in the Basilica of San Marco at the end of the 15th century and in the early 16th century. Documents and records of payments suggest that they worked (though not continuously) in the Basilica from 1488 to 1512. Ettore Merkel, who focused upon extensive research of the mosaics in San Marco, must be credited for the discovery of the payment records concerning Alvise from 1488 until 1493.[274] After 1493, the collaboration between Alvise and the *fabbriceria* of San Marco appears to have been interrupted, since no further payment records have been found. A possible explanation could be that in 1493, or shortly after, Alvise died. To support this hypothesis, the 1494 will of *Katarina Camisere* should be mentioned. In this document, *Katarina* wrote that she was the wife of Cristoforo Bastiani, who was the son of *quondam* (the late) Alvise Bastiani. We do not know if this Alvise was the son of Marco or the son of Lazzaro, since it is not specified, but given the fact that the payments to Alvise son of Lazzaro for the mosaics in San Marco were interrupted in 1493, I assume that this Alvise was Lazzaro's son.[275]

[273] BERNARDI (1987, p. 129) and COMACCHIO (1976, pp. 49-58) accepted Fogolari's ascription, even though most scholars agree in assigning the *Saint Jerome Altarpiece* to Lazzaro. For the attribution issue, see Cat. AP01.

[274] Payments to *Alvixe dal musaico* have been published in MERKEL, 1972-73, pp. 399-414 (doc. 34-80). The first document attesting *Alvise Bastian di ser Lazaro dal musaico* as one of the mosaicists in San Marco is a payment by the *Procuratori de supra* dated 14th of July 1488 (see MERKEL, 1977, p. 666, fig. 28). Previously, in 1897, Pietro Saccardo made mention of a payment to Alvise in 1492 (SACCARDO, 1897, p. 287).

[275] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 180 (n. 40); LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 33 (n. 39). "1494, 27 Januarij – Test. … Ego Katarina camisere uxor magistri Cristofori quondam Alvisij Bastiani pictoris de contrata sancti Apollinaris… volo sepeliri ad sanctum Joannem et paulum in archis viri mei…". Paoletti, Ludwig and Molmenti believed that Caterina's husband Cristoforo was the son of Alvise son of Marco (thus Cristoforo was Marco's grandchild).

Vincenzo Bastiani received payments for works made in San Marco in 1506 and in 1508,[276] although he was involved in the decoration of the Basilica until 1512. He was mainly engaged in the restoration of those mosaics that had been damaged by the 1483 fire that broke out in the Doge's Palace.[277] His intervention is evident not only for the stylistic difference between his mosaics and the Medieval ones, but also because he used to add his signature VINCENTIVS B. F. to attest his works (he used to sign only the mosaics executed *ex novo*). The successful activity of Vincenzo as mosaicist in San Marco ended when he tragically died by falling from the scaffolding where he was working on the 18th of March 1512. The accident must have been deeply shocking for those who witnessed it, and the diarist Marin Sanudo reported it in his *Diarii*.[278]

The mosaic practice of the Bastiani brothers in San Marco was probably managed by their father Lazzaro, who not only provided his sons with the cartoons to be rendered into mosaics, but who also signed the mosaic (which was a "rifacimento *ex novo*") representing *Saint Sergius* in the intrados of Saint Clemente Chapel LAZARVS B. F.

Sebastiano, the third son of Jacopo Bastiani, appears to have only been mentioned once in 1500. He was a painter too and lived in the *contrada* of the Angelo Raffaele Church, as Lazzaro.[279] Owing to the lack of an explicit reference

[276] SACCARDO, 1897, pp. 287-288.

[277] MERKEL, 1987, pp. 24-25. The Bastiani family was engaged both in the renovation works of Medieval mosaics that were only partially damaged, by combining new and old tesserae, and in the complete replacement of areas where tesserae were lost or damaged beyond repair. Merkel called these works, respectively, "restauro conservativo" and "rifacimento *ex novo*" (MERKEL, 1977, pp. 657-670).

[278] SANUDO, XIV, 1886, col. 228 (123v). "Accidit che essendo uno maistro Vincenzo, lavorava di musaico in chiexia di San Marco, qual fece quella Santa Tecla, era bon maistro, su certo soler che si lavora in chiexia, zercha hora di nona una tavola li viene a mancho, caschò, vixe do ore et morite. Fo grand pechado: è cossa più non acaduta in dita chiexia, et perho ne ho voluto far nota".

[279] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 189 (n. 65); LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 34 (n. 70). "1500, 14 Gennaio – […] Ser Sebastiano pictore quondam ser Jacobi de confinio Sancti Rafaelis […]".

to the Bastiani family in the document recording Sebastiano, however, I accepted only cautiously his kinship with the Bastianis.[280]

Below is a scheme of Bastiani's family tree as it has been defined according to the most recent interpretation of available archival sources. The family tree is informed by the research made for this thesis (*Fig. 5*).

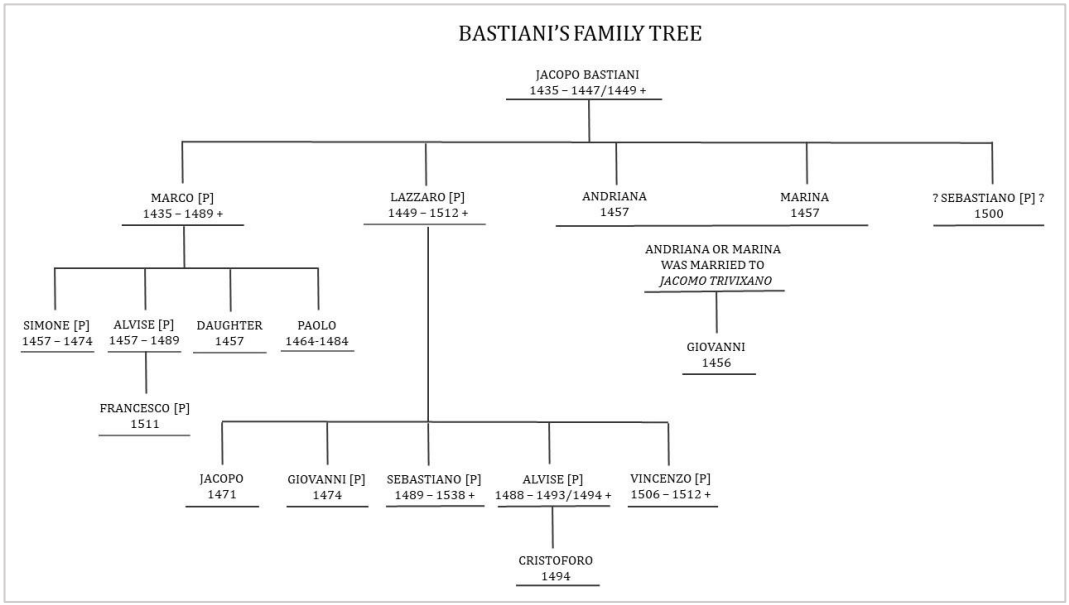


Fig. 5. Bastiani's family tree.

The picture that emerges is that members of the Bastiani family were extensively dedicated to the art of painting (as indicated above by the letter "P" next to their names).

All Lazzaro's sons, except Jacopo, became painters, as did all Marco's sons, except for Paolo who was a priest. They more than likely had their artistic education in their fathers' workshops and then assisted them in their

[280] In my opinion the document concerning a certain Faustina, daughter of *ser Sebastian de Jacomo depentore*, mentioned as one of the ten *novizie donzelle fie di fradeli nostri veneziani* in the Scuola Grande della Carità in 1509, is too generic to be accepted as a record referring to a possible daughter of Sebastiano's (for the document see LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 35 [n. 75]).

respective works,[281] in accordance with the Venetian tradition of family workshops.[282]

The numerous testaments the Bastiani family members were called to witness are proof of their relationships with artists and other people of their *contrada*. Marco and Alvise, for instance, were mentioned in wills with, respectively, Nicolò and Leonardo Scalamanzo, sons of Dimitri Scalamanzo, woodcarvers both resident in San Lio.[283] Perhaps, we might suggest that Marco and Alvise had also artistic relationships with the Scalamanzo brothers.[284] Two documents of 1498 report that Lazzaro and *ser Guariscus quondam ser Viviani sculptor lignorum de confinio S. Pauli* (Guarisco di Viviano Zingioni) were appointed as judges to estimate the value of a wooden altarpiece realised by the woodcarvers Paolo Campsa and his brother-in-law Giovanni for the Church of San Martino in Reggio Emilia. Here Lazzaro and Guariscus are mentioned as mutual friends ("communes amicos") of Paolo Campsa and Giovanni, underlining the relationships between the painter and the woodcarvers.[285] Interesting, also, is a document of 1512 reporting that a certain Alvise Bastiani requested to the Scuola Grande della Carità that he might swap his house in San Luca, which was property of the confraternity ("una casa della schuolla"), for the *casa de biri* of a certain *ser Steffano dalla Violla*. This exchange would have been of great advantage for the artistic activity of Alvise, as this way he

[281] It must be underlined that both Simone and Alvise were resident in San Lio, like their father Marco, as well as the priest Sebastiano lived at the Arcangelo Raffaele, like Lazzaro.

[282] On this matter, see PUPPULIN, 1972-1973, pp. 60-61. Noteworthy families of painters active in Venice in the 15th century are the Bellinis and the Vivarinis.

[283] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 176 (n. 14-15), 179 (n. 31-32, 35).

[284] For Nicolò Scalamanzo, see MORETTI-TODESCO, 2008, pp. 83-108. For Leonardo Scalamanzo, refer to MARKHAM SCHULZ, 2008, pp. 656-663.

[285] PAOLETTI, 1893, II, p. 127 (n. 171); PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 186 (n. 60-61). On the woodcarver Paolo Campsa and his relationship with Lazzaro Bastiani, see also MARKHAM SCHULZ-VECCHI, 2001, pp. 11-12 and FOSSALUZZA, 2004, pp. 137-138.

would have had a wide space ("luogo ampio et largo") in which to dry his paintings ("per el sugar delle sue depenture").[286]

The enrolment of Marco, Lazzaro and the priest Sebastiano to the Scuola Grande di San Marco surely improved their possibility to be acquainted with important people in Venetian society, so increasing their social and professional opportunities, as well as to enlarging their interactions with important painters active in Venice at that time. Lazzaro, indeed, worked for the Scuola both as an official, and as painter. In fact, as reported by Paoletti, in 1479 he became *Degano di tutto l'anno* (a deacon in charge that year).[287] Worthy of recall too are the commissions Marco and Sebastiano received by the Scuola for ornamental decorations. In addition, by virtue of his engagement in the realisation of the *telero* for the cycle of canvases in the Chapter Hall of the Scuola, Lazzaro surely had the chance to get in contact with the painters working on the cycle during the same period, such as Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, Bartolomeo Vivarini and Andrea da Murano. Similarly, the execution of the *teleri* for the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo, to which Lazzaro also belonged, at the end of 1470s and for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista in 1490s were two further occasions to work in the same *milieu* as important painters of the contemporary Venetian artistic panorama.

In 1508, when Giovanni Bellini nominated Lazzaro as one of the judges to evaluate Giorgione's frescoes in Fondaco dei Tedeschi, Lazzaro was an old man, and we might wonder at his frame of mind when confronted with, and being

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[286] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 180 (n. 39). This Alvise might be Marco's son, although in 1512 he would have been around 75 years old and, to me, it would have been unlikely that at that age he would have asked to exchange his house for working purpose. I believe rather that this Alvise was a younger painter, most probably the son of one of Marco's or Lazzaro's sons.

[287] Paoletti, 1929, p. 122. A definition of *Degano* is in FORTINI BROWN, 1986, "Glossary": "A deacon, of which there were twelve on the Banca of a Scuola Grande, two from each of the six sestieri of the city who provided a link between the Scuola administration and the brothers who lived in their respective districts – visiting the sick, reporting deaths, arranging burials, attending masses for the dead and investigating the reputations of girls proposed for dowry grants".

called to judge upon, the artistic innovation of Giorgione. This nomination, therefore, may be interpreted as an act of respect on the part of Giovanni for Lazzaro, owing to the long-term relationship (and perhaps friendship) between the two artists.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that the Bastiani family was part of the élite group of the so-called *cittadini originari*, as proved by the participation of *Aluisius Bastianis civis vester originarius* to the selection for a position as scribe at the Church of San Niccolò on the Lido,[288] which was only open to citizens with this social status.[289] Unfortunately, lacking any further reference to the name of the father, we cannot confirm whether this Alvise was Marcos' or Lazzaro's son. However, the fact that the Bastianis belonged to the *cittadini originari* social group would thus explain relevant commissions Lazzaro received since the 1460s, as well as his involvement in the decoration of the Doge's Palace[290] and in the restoration of the mosaics in San Marco. Indeed, as Fletcher said, "it was especially helpful for an artist to be a *cittadino originario*

[288] Russo first pointed out that *Alvise Bastiani civis vester originarius* was listed among those who competed for the role of scribe at San Niccolò (RUSSO, 2019, p. 169), even though he did not emphasise his belonging to the group of the *cittadini originari*. For the document: ASVe, *Collegio Notatorio*, reg. 11 (1467-1474), c. 76v.

[289] The *cittadini originari* were an élite group of Venetian society that included those citizens resident in Venice from at least three generations. They were not part of the Venetian patriciate; however, they were very influential people in Venetian society and could be elected to various official positions of the Venetian government e.g., chancellery or State secretariat (on the *cittadinanza originaria* matter, see CASINI, 1992, pp. 133-150). Only the *cittadini originari* could nominate candidates to be considered for the role as scribe at San Niccolò. In the list of those who participated at the selection in 1470 there was Alvise Bastiani, but also Jacopo Bellini and the abovementioned Nicolò Gruatto competed for the post. The winner was a certain Nicolò Bernardini, who was elected in 1472 (see BARAUSSE, 2019, pp. 35-36 [doc. 33]). The fact, however, that Alvise participated and explicitly wrote that he was a *cittadino originario – civis vester originarius* – is of great importance, because it proves that the Bastiani family was a family of *cittadini originari* that could have been eligible for important roles in Venetian government.

[290] Sansovino (1581, p. 124) and Ridolfi (1648, ed. cons. 1914, I, p. 50) recorded that Bastiani executed Doges' Portraits for the Sala del Collegio dei XXV in Doge's Palace. See Cat. AP52.

when seeking service with the state, which appreciated the loyalty proved by long-term residence".[291] Bastiani family members, did not, however, confine making use of their status to matters directly connected with art. In fact, as previously reported, Jacopo, Lazzaro's elder son, served as *juvenum portantium bussolus* in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, while the priest Sebastiano was one of the canons of the Basilica of San Marco, Doge's Chapel.

[291] FLETCHER, 2004, p. 14.

4.2. FORMATION AND INFLUENCES

When in 1449 Lazzaro was mentioned in Doratia's will, he was a young painter, probably in his early twenties, resident in the *contrada* of San Lio, possibly with his elder brother Marco. The Church of San Lio was in a lively area close to Rialto, characterised by a high concentration of artists and workshops, and, uppermost, fairly close to the studios of the major painters in Venice at that time i.e., the Vivarinis in Santa Maria Formosa, and the Bellinis in San Geminiano, in Piazza San Marco.[292]

On Lazzaro Bastiani's early artistic education, however, we do not have any recorded information and the name of his master is unknown. In fact, there is no firm documentation proving when, or where, or with whom he began his apprenticeship. The beginning of Bastiani's artistic practice is therefore marked by uncertainty. In general, the scarcity of archival evidence concerning his activity and of signed and/or dated artworks surrounds much of Bastiani's career, which is not straightforward to reconstruct.

Until mid-1800, in accordance with Vasari's and Ridolfi's statements[293] and on the basis of those few Bastiani's authentic paintings then known (e.g., *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* and the *telero* with the *Offer of the Relic of the Cross*) or attributed to him, Bastiani was referred to be a pupil of Carpaccio – thus mainly a painter of narrative cycles – and his artistic activity was chronologically contextualised between the end of the 15th century and the first quarter of the 16th century.[294]

In the light of the first archival documents discovered in the 19th century, that anticipated the beginning of Bastiani's career, Crowe and Cavalcaselle (1871) suggested that Bastiani was born in Padua and received his initial training in the local School, being mostly influenced by Andrea Mantegna. For these

[292] It is worth to emphasise that while Gentile stayed all his life in San Geminiano, Giovanni first lived in San Lio (probably with his mother), where he opened his first workshop, and then moved to Santa Marina (see BARAUSSE, 2019, pp. 29 [doc. 19], 40 [doc. 43], and LUCCO, 2019, p. 272).

[293] VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1971, I, pp. 622-623; RIDOLFI, 1648, ed. cons. 1914, pp. 49-51.

[294] See Chapter 1.

scholars, this would have explained why later, when Lazzaro moved to Venice, he found the most congenial figurative models in the art of the Vivarinis.[295]

The publication of the most complete collection of archival records by Paoletti, Ludwig and Molmenti in the early years of 1900, however, further anticipated the beginning of Bastiani's activity to mid-century and confirmed his Venetian origin.[296] As a consequence, the issue of outlining Bastiani's formation and his artistic evolution throughout his career, as well as the definition of his early catalogue of paintings became apparent to scholars. In the 20th century, most of art historians who studied Bastiani focused their research on this unsolved aspect.

Only three Bastiani's artworks are surely dated: the Murano *lunette* (1484. Cat. AP27) and the *Coronation of the Virgin* (1490. Cat. AP23), which are both signed and dated, and the *Nativity* once in the Church of Sant'Elena, whose date of realisation, 1480, was deduced from the patron's testament (Cat. AP57).[297] Being executed in 1480s and 1490s, when Lazzaro's manner was already mature and delineated, these paintings do not provide clear indication on his formation.

Although Bastiani was already a painter in 1449, the sources did not mention any commission received in 1450s. Nonetheless, in that decade he already became a notorious artist if in 1460 the Procuratori de Citra requested him to paint the altarpiece for Marco Venier's altar in the Church of San Samuel (finished in 1468), in 1470 the Scuola Grande di San Marco appointed him to realise the *telero* for the Chapter Hall, and in 1473 *Antonio Choradi* from Pera chose him, rather than Giovanni Bellini, to execute a small painting of *Christ* for private devotion. Unfortunately, also these works got lost or destroyed, therefore there is not a reference picture to define Bastiani's style before 1480 with any certainty. Lacking these autograph works, the scholars had to fill a 30-years gap. They outlined Bastiani's early corpus of paintings – and, in general,

[295] CROWE-CAVALCASELLE, 1871, I, p. 215.

[296] PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 173-192; LUDWIG-MOLMENTI 1906, pp. 31-35.

[297] On the dating of the *Nativity*, see GALLO, 1929a, pp. 24-26, 81-82; SARTOR, 1997, p. 43.

Bastiani's catalogue prior to 1480 – necessarily on the basis of stylistic evidence, grounding their reasoning on comparisons with Bastiani's few authentic pictures and on their personal *connoisseurship*. In general, they made only a vague reference to the painter's derivation from the contemporary Paduan-Venetian artistic *milieu*, stating that Bastiani received his early training from older or more influential painters: Jacopo Bellini, Antonio Vivarini, Squarcione or Mantegna.[298] Some art historians, however, suggested the name of a specific master they believed Bastiani trained with or was more influenced by: Jacopo Bellini for Ludwig and Molmenti;[299] Bartolomeo Vivarini for Vavalà and Longhi;[300] Antonio Vivarini for Collobi, Sgarbi and Casu.[301]

Today Lazzaro Bastiani's earliest surviving painting is generally identified as the *Madonna of Humility* n. 2193 in Correr Museum, dating from the early 1450s (Cat. AP51). The painting is still on display as work of an anonymous Venetian painter of mid-15th century, as proposed by Mariacher in the 1957 museum catalogue, for the Late Gothic elements shown in the picture, such as the gold background, the elaborately punched haloes of the figures and the uncertain illusionistic spatial effects.[302] In a short article published in "Arte Veneta" in 1983, Sgarbi attributed the artwork to Bastiani,[303] according to a verbal opinion expressed by Volpe about ten years before.[304] The name of Lazzaro Bastiani as creator of this small *Madonna and Child* was accepted by the following scholars that discussed Bastiani's early catalogue, such as

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[298] TESTI, 1904, p. 110; L. VENTURI, 1907, p. 271; A. VENTURI, 1915, VII/IV, p. 379; VAN MARLE, 1936, XVIII, pp. 174-175. PAOLETTI (1929, p. 126), on the other hand, stated that Lazzaro received the rudiments of painting by his elder brother Marco, who was specialised as painter of cloth (*pictor cortinarum*), even though he did not add any evidence to support his assumption.

[299] LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, pp. 8-12

[300] SANDBERG-VAVALÀ, 1931, pp. 125-126; LONGHI, 1934, ed. cons. 1968², pp. 97-98 (note 59).

[301] COLLOBI, 1939, pp. 35-41; SGARBI, 1983, p. 158; CASU, 1996, pp. 62-63.

[302] MARIACHER, 1957, pp. 176-177.

[303] SGARBI, 1983, p. 158.

[304] This information was pointed out by BOSKOVITS, 1992, p. 27.

Boskovits (1992), Casu (1996), and, more recently, Russo (2017, 2018, 2019).[305]

The painting seems to be influenced by works executed by the Vivarinis between the late 1440s and the early 1450s, suggesting that Bastiani was acquainted with the products of this workshop. The most convincing comparisons in composition and features of the figures, indeed, are with paintings ascribed to Antonio Vivarini, or to his brother-in-law and artistic partner Giovanni D'Alemagna,[306] executed in the years approaching the mid-century. For instance, the typology of the Virgin sitting on the ground in a semi-circular woodland setting appears also in the *Madonna of Humility* ascribed to Giovanni D'Alemagna and today in The Pittas collection,[307] but also with the *Virgin Adoring the Child* assigned to Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni D'Alemagna in Davia Bargellini Museum in Bologna.[308] This latter picture shares with the Correr *Madonna* also the head of the Virgin bent towards the infant Jesus and the precious brooch that fastens her mantle. Further similarities, such as the naked infant Jesus, were pointed out by Casu with Antonio Vivarini's *Madonna and Child* in Worcester Museum, originally part of the polyptych for the Church of San Francesco in Padua, executed in collaboration with Bartolomeo in 1451.[309] Besides the abovementioned resemblances, we cannot confirm, however, that Lazzaro learned the rudiments of the painting profession from

[305] BOSKOVITS, 1992, pp. 24-27; CASU, 1996, pp. 60-89; RUSSO, 2017, s.p.; RUSSO, 2018, pp. 3-18; RUSSO, 2019, p. 171. Only MERKEL (1994, p. 10; 1996, p. 290) gave it to Pisanello around 1440-1445.

[306] It is worth to underline that the paintings realised in the Vivarinis' workshop in this period are characterised by a general uniform style that made difficult to distinguish between Antonio's and Giovanni's hand. This tendency continued even after Giovanni's death in 1450, when Antonio engaged his younger brother Bartolomeo to collaborate with him in the production of majestic altarpieces in and outside Venice.

[307] CASU, 2011a, pp. 70-75.

[308] LUCCO, 1987, p. 83.

[309] CASU, 1996, p. 63. The polyptych once in San Francesco was reconstructed by ZERI, 1975, pp. 3-10.

Antonio himself, as some scholars suggested.[310] Anyway, we can state that in the early years of his career as painter Bastiani seems to have found the most congenial figurative approach for his artistic attitude in the works of the Vivarinis.

And if at the very beginning the compositions and the formal motifs of the Vivarinis were the predominant sources for Bastiani's art, in the early 1460s his works were also indebted to the Paduan School of Squarcione and to Mantegna. The inclusion of multicoloured fruit garlands and other antique elements (for instance the putti) in Bastiani's paintings reveal a taste for classical antiquity derived from a knowledge of Squarcione's and his followers art. On the other hand, the linearity of the figures, with insistence on dark outlines and strong forms, as well as their foreshortened positions, and the drapery folds of the Virgin's veil and cloak are indicative of Mantegna's creative stimulus on Bastiani.

Considering this framework, the typology of the Madonna adoring the infant Jesus who lies on her lap depicted in the small panel on display in the Musei Civici agli Eremitani in Padua (Cat. AP30) is related to the Vivarinis' *milieu*,[311] but the lion protomes of the Virgin's faldstool, the festoon, and the foreshortened position of the infant Jesus are derived from Squarcionesque and Mantegnesque examples. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the past the panel had been ascribed to painters variously influenced by the Muranese brothers and by the Paduan style, such as Quirizio da Murano and Antonio da Negroponte, or to Bartolomeo Vivarini as well. And to Bartolomeo or to Andrea Mantegna it had been attributed for a long time also the *Madonna and Child in a Painted Frame with Cherubim and Putti Holding the Instruments of the Passion* in the Gemäldegalerie of Berlin (Cat. AP04). The scholars identified the prototype for this composition in Mantegna's *Madonna and Child with Seraphim and Cherubim* on display in The Metropolitan Museum of New York,

[310] COLLOBI, 1939, pp. 35-41; SGARBI, 1983, p. 158; CASU, 1996, p. 63.

[311] This typology of *Madonna* spread also on the Adriatic coast of Dalmatia, see GAMULIN, 1963, pp. 18-19.

from which the plastic figures of the Virgin and of the infant Jesus, their foreshortened heads, the strong light cast from the left that defines the sharp creases of the Virgin's veil (which appear as carved in marble, rather than being soft) are derived. It is worth to emphasise that a painting showing the *Madonna and Child* behind a parapet and against a natural landscape, today in the Philbrook Art Center of Tulsa (Oklahoma, U.S.A.), almost exactly replicates the composition of the central panel of the Berlin picture. In both panels the mechanic underdrawing of the Madonna and of the infant Jesus shown by an old infrared photography seems to be traced directly from a cartoon, most likely realised in the style of Mantegna and based on the abovementioned panel in the Metropolitan Museum.[312] Differently from the artist of the Tulsa version (today generically identified as a "Follower of Andrea Mantegna"), however, Bastiani enriched his Madonna by reinforcing the outline with a brush and black ink, and by modelling volume with hatched shadows at the underdrawing layer, as revealed by the infrared image. The idea of an external painted frame filled with Donatellesque putti, instead, is peculiar, and might have been elaborated by Bastiani himself from examples by Squarcionesque painters, such as Carlo Crivelli, Giorgio Schiavone and Marco Zoppo, who more than once depicted the Virgin and Child under an arched niche and surrounded by putti. The freer underdrawing detected in the putti of the frame seems to confirm that Bastiani developed this part of the composition freehand and not on the basis of a pre-existing design.

The presence of a cartoon probably realised in Mantegna's artistic *milieu* and its circulation amongst different workshops, reaching also Bastiani's one, suggests a connection between our artist and the Paduan artistic context, even though this fact does not further clarify whether this link was direct or indirect. It is not known, indeed, if Lazzaro assimilated certain Paduan aspects by personal knowledge of the city artistic *milieu*, or second-hand through the Vivarinis. These latter, in fact, more than once worked in Padua around mid-century: in 1447 Antonio and his partner Giovanni d'Alemagna executed the

[312] See Chapter 4.4.2.1. for a more exhaustive explanation.

Nativity for the main altar of the Church of San Francesco Grande, today displayed in Národní Galerie in Prague;[313] from 1448 and until Giovanni's death, occurred in 1450, they took part to the decoration of the Ovetari Chapel – where also Mantegna was involved –, and it is very plausible that the young Bartolomeo accompanied them and had the chance to admire the works in progress in the chapel and to witness the revolution of the Paduan art by Donatello, Nicolò Pizzolo and Mantegna;[314] in 1451 Antonio and Bartolomeo realised a polyptych, today broken up, for the Church of San Francesco.[315] By virtue of these contacts with Padua, the art of Bartolomeo was largely influenced by Mantegna. It is important to highlight that also his working method, consisting of the application of the so-called "disegno pittorico" above a carefully hatched underdrawing, was coherent with that of the Squarcionesque painters.[316] It is not clear, therefore, if Bastiani adhered to the Paduan manner to compare himself to Bartolomeo, who he might have felt stylistically very close, as suggested by Russo – and already in 1934 Longhi referred to Bartolomeo as Bastiani's "fratello d'arte" –,[317] or if this was an individual fascination after a journey in Padua he took in person.

According to the sources, Bastiani's life was grounded exclusively in Venice, in the *contrada* of the parish church of the Angelo Raffaele, in Dorsoduro, where he had been recorded since 1456 and until his death in 1512. Not to mention that one of his sons, Sebastiano, was in charge as priest in the Angelo Raffaele Church. Even though not supported by any archival document, we cannot exclude, however, that Lazzaro did not go at least once to Padua, where it was possible to travel to by boat from Venice in few hours.[318]

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[313] CALLEGARI, 1996, pp. 7-8.

[314] HOLGATE, 2003, pp. 9-29; CAVALLI, 2016, p. 110.

[315] ZERI, 1975, pp. 3-10.

[316] DIOTALLEVI, 1996, pp. 34-42; GALASSI, 1998, p. 56.

[317] LONGHI, 1934, ed. cons. 1968[2], p. 97 (note 59).

[318] On the 20th of May 1494, Don Pietro Casola recorded his few hours trip to Venice. CAMPBELL, 2018, pp. 16, 266 (note 4).

To the antiquarian Paduan culture of Donatello and Squarcione might be reminiscent also the muscular anatomy of the infant Jesus depicted in the *Virgin and Child* painting once property of Max Bondi in Vienna and last auctioned by Finarte in 1988 (Cat. AP38), to be dated shortly later than the previous *Madonnas*, around 1465. A more accurate comparison for the pose of the Child could be found in the antique putti of the statuary complex of *Saturn's Throne* of Ravenna, at that time set into a wall facing Piazza San Marco, thus easily visible to a passer-by,[319] from which also Giovanni Bellini derived the figure of Jesus of his *Madonna and Child* in Anton Phillips Collection (Eindhoven). It cannot be excluded, however, a knowledge of this Giovanni's *Madonna* – and in general of Giovanni's results in the early 1460s – for the composition of the picture showing the Virgin behind the parapet holding the standing infant Jesus.

In general, from a technical point of view, Bastiani's paintings of the early phase show a strong influence of the Paduan-Squarcionesque artistic practice. In Venice the main application of this technique can be found in the works of the Vivarinis, especially Bartolomeo, but also in the pictures of the young Giovanni Bellini.[320] As observed in the infrared images acquired for this research, Bastiani used to execute a preliminary outline of the design, which was generally traced freehand most likely according to a preparatory drawing on paper (for the absence of relevant adjustments), even though, as we have seen in the Berlin *Madonna*, he also occasionally transferred the composition with the aid of a cartoon. He then used to work out the fall of light and the volumetric definition by accurate short hatching lines (parallel or crossed) and, finally, he used to further establish the layout by a dark superficial contour. It must be pointed out that in Bastiani's earliest *Madonnas*, the n. 2193 in Correr Museum and that in Musei Civici agli Eremitani, the shading to describe the volume of the figures is mainly made in the painting phase, with a brush tip on the paint surface, according to a procedure already used by Squarcione in his *Madonna*

[319] FAVARETTO, 2000, 68-73; COLLAVO, 2001, pp. 55-62.

[320] See Chapter 3.3. and note 217.

and Child today in Gemäldegalerie of Berlin,[321] but also, in Venetian context, by Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d'Alemagna, for instance in the *Adoration of the Magi* in the same museum.[322] The dark hatching lines are clearly visible at the naked eye, but appear faint in the infrared, probably because the pigment is very diluted. In Bastiani's works, however, hatching mainly with light-shade indication is found at the underdrawing stage for the Virgin's garments.[323] In these paintings Bastiani also largely employed gold in the background and in the Virgin's cloak, as well as in the elaborated punched halos of the figures. This kind of decoration is reminiscent of the Late Gothic taste and was mostly appreciated in the previous decades, although old-fashioned commissioners could request it even around mid-century or shortly later, as in the cases here presented.[324]

Around the mid-1460s Bastiani's principal figurative and compositional sources are still to be found in the Vivarinis. At that time, however, Bastiani's artistic horizon was not only confined within the muranese *milieu*, but it was gradually broadening towards a more naturalistic approach indubitably derived from Giovanni Bellini.

An early example is the *Madonna of Humility*, formerly in the monastery of Santa Croce, and today exhibited in the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice (Cat. AP56), whose immediate reference is the central part of Bartolomeo Vivarini's *Lehman polyptych* in the Metropolitan Museum in New York.[325] As Russo

[321] POLDI-VILLA, 2007, pp. 48-49. This technique was also exploited by Andrea Mantegna.

[322] POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, p. 337.

[323] The underdrawing of these *Madonnas* is further discussed in Chapter 4.4.2.1.

[324] Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini's polyptychs and *Madonnas* are significant examples. Later Bastiani's paintings showing an extensive use of gold are the *Matera Polyptych* (Cat. AP17) and the two big panels depicting *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* and *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (Cat. AP54). We can reasonably state that the golden background in these artworks was a specific request of the patrons.

[325] CASU, 1996, p. 79 (note 39).

observed, however, Bartolomeo's lesson is mitigated here by the early influence of Bellini in the naturalistic treatment of the landscape.[326]

A slightly later and more evident example of Bastiani's growing concern for an atmospheric setting is the dismembered *paliotto* representing *Stories from the Life of Christ*. The panels composing the complex are *Resurrection and Noli me Tangere*, and *Christ and the Disciples on the Road to Emmaus and the Supper at Emmaus*, in the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice (Cat. AP59), *Deposition and Descent into Limbo*, in private collection in Milan (last known, Cat. AP23), and *Christ and the Three Marys and the Ascension*, in private collection in Bologna (last known, Cat. AP07).[327] The structure of the artwork, as it has been reconstructed by scholars,[328] is to be put in relation with the typology of the altar frontal produced in Venice in that period, such as Antonio Vivarini's *Polyptych with Stories of the Passion*, once in Corpus Domini (now in the Galleria Franchetti, Ca' d'Oro, Venice) and, above all, the altar frontal with *Stories from the Life of Christ and Saints*, recently ascribed to the young Alvise Vivarini shortly before 1470.[329] Comparisons with Vivarini's *paliotto* are

[326] RUSSO, 2018, p. 7; RUSSO, 2019, p. 171.

[327] As suggested by CASU (1996, p. 77 [note 30]), the four paintings probably flanked a central panel, twice the size of the others, representing the *Crucifixion* and whose location is unknown.

[328] Bastiani's *antependium* has been reconstructed by: MOSCHINI-MARCONI, 1955, pp. 51-52; VOLPE, 1983, p. 56: ISEPPI, 1986, pp. 36-40; CASU, 1996, pp. 64-66.

[329] The *paliotto* was presented as work of Antonio Vivarini at the beginning of 1460s by Longhi in his *Viatico*. In the catalogue the scholar pointed out that the "monastic scheme" of the composition was immediately adopted by Bastiani in his paintings to satisfy requests of his provincial patrons (LONGHI, 1946, p. 56 [n. 45]). It was later attributed to the young Bellini at the beginning of 1450s, inspired by Mantegna and by Jacopo as far as the iconography is concerned (see VOLPE, 1978, pp. 56-60, and more recently CAVANNA, 2000, pp. 97-113; CAVANNA, 2003, pp. 36-45). In 1997, the central panel with the *Nativity* episode was dubitatively given to Giovanni by Andrea De Marchi, who pointed out comparisons with early works by Alvise Vivarini (DE MARCHI, 1997, p. 51). This suggestion was cautiously accepted by FOSSALUZZA (2012, p. 81). In the latest entry of the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* on Alvise Vivarini, Russo ascribed the altar frontal to Alvise in a phase of his young career in which he was influenced by Mantegna and Bellini, and in which he also showed Zoppo's suggestions (RUSSO, 2020b, pp. 48-49).

necessary, especially in certain elements Bastiani included in his painting, such as the dazzled soldier, portrayed in the act of looking up, covering his eyes with his hand while witnessing the event of Christ's Resurrection,[330] or the representation of the *Descent into Limbo* scene.[331] Miklos Boskovits, however, accurately described the *paliotto* by underlining Bastiani's "increasing concern to register, with fidelity and subtle intelligence, the calm passage of time in a luminous and well-ordered world".[332] The light yellow-pinkish sunrise sky in the *Resurrection and Noli me Tangere* scenes shows us what Boskovits meant. Bastiani could have increased his sensitivity towards nature and atmospheric light effects only studying and internalising Giovanni Bellini's lesson.[333] It is worth of notice here Bastiani's effort in researching spatial depth in the *Supper at Emmaus*, where diagonal lines, both traced and incised, have been detected in the reflectogram to set the architectural arrangement in perspective.[334] A further early attempt of creation of illusionistic space by means of perspective identified so far is the open *loggia* in the painting portraying *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* in Museo Diocesano in Milan (Cat. AP18). Perspective lines are incised in the low parapet of the *loggia* and are visible also at the naked eye. The sunrays entering from the left side and projecting the shadow on the ground and on the rear wall suggest the artist's interest in spatial and perspectival treatment. This panel, together with two others depicting *Saint Jerome and a Nun* (Museo Diocesano, Milan. Cat. AP18) and *Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian* (Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, North Carolina, U.S.A. Cat AP10),

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330 This figure was also included in Mantegna's *Resurrection* panel of the *predella* of *San Zeno Altarpiece* in Verona.

331 The iconography of this episode is certainly connected to the *predella* panel of same subject depicted by Jacopo, with the help of Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, for the *Gattamelata Altarpiece* in Padua, that in turn derives from Jacopo Bellini's drawings in which he explored this pictorial subject.

332 BOSKOVITS, 1992, p. 27.

333 CASU, 1996, p. 65.

334 For further results of IRR analysis performed on the panels in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, refer to DE MANINCOR, 2020, pp. 109-123.

was probably part of another altar frontal, most likely painted few years before the *paliotto* with *Stories from the Life of Christ* i.e., in the early years of 1460s. It is interesting to discuss the probable reuse of the same preliminary compositional drawing for the landscape of the various episodes in both *antependia*. This is evident in *Saint Jerome and a Nun* in Milan and in *Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian* in Charlotte, in which the similar natural background is symmetrically replicated. The infrared image of the *Resurrection and Noli Me Tangere* in Venice revealed the sketch of a palm tree not realised during the execution. The presence of this *pentimento* is significant when comparing this landscape with the one in the *Christ and the Three Maries and Ascension* scene in Bologna, where a palm tree is placed in the same position, as well as the hills and the small fort on top, suggesting the presence of a common preparatory layout on paper that Bastiani rearranged while painting.

Besides Giovanni Bellini, in late 1460s and early 1470s another key of inspiration for Bastiani in terms of light and colour effects and space construction was Marco Zoppo. The Emilian painter, who received his training in Squarcione's workshop, came to Venice for the first time in mid-1450s (1455-1458), even though there is evidence that his works were requested by Venetian commissioners shortly before when he still lived in Padua. The beginning of Zoppo's second Venetian sojourn cannot be fixed with any certainty, since the last source attesting to him living in Bologna is dated 1462 and the first document that records him in Venice is from 1468, when he signed the altarpiece for the Church of Santa Giustina.[335] Zoppo's influence on Bastiani was occasionally observed by Casu,[336] while in recent years it was examined more thoroughly by Russo. This latter specifically discussed a new phase of Bastiani's production, which was divergent from the Vivarinesque one, based upon a reflection on Giovanni Bellini and Marco Zoppo's altarpieces of San Zanipolo and Santa Giustina, realised between 1468 and 1471. The impact of Bellini and Zoppo's artistic lesson on Bastiani suggested him a new perspective

[335] On Zoppo's second stay in Venice, see: CALOGERO, 2020, pp. 203-228.

[336] CASU, 1996, pp. 67, 70.

to interpret and chronologically contextualise to the early 1470s a group of paintings that scholars used to estimate as having been realised in the previous decade, according to a more traditional approach that considered a stronger influence by Mantegna and the Vivarinis.

To this period, therefore, belong the animated *Pietà* on parchment (1470 c., Cat. AP22)[337] and the *Madonna and Child Crowned by Two Angels, with Musical Angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father* (1471 c., Cat. AP21),[338] both displayed in Poldi Pezzoli Museum, the *Matera Polyptych* (1472-1473. Cat. AP17),[339] and the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Frick Collection in New York

[337] RUSSO, 2018, pp. 8, 15 (note 29), 17 (note 43). In 1939, Collobi already pointed out that for the virtuosity expressed in the lively landscape this small picture, that echoes Northern artworks in the subject, was not an early product, as suggested by Longhi in 1934. She dated the picture to around 1470, in a time of intellectual reflection by the artist, when he revised and updated his technique (COLLOBI 1939, pp. 38-39). Later scholars who anticipated the execution to the beginning of 1460s are BOSKOVITS (1992, p. 27), CASU (1996, p. 66), VINCO (2012, pp. 72-73). The intense expressiveness shown in this *Pietà* and in the *Penitent Saint Jerome* in Springfield was interpreted by Calogero as Bastiani's response to Zoppo's lesson (CALOGERO, 2020, pp. 218-219).

[338] I believe that the Paduan-Mantegnesque aspect of this painting that have been observed by several scholars (COLLOBI, 1939, pp. 36, 38; CASU, 1996, p. 69; VINCO, 2012, pp. 74-77) should be considered a legacy from Bastiani's development during a period of personal artistic advancement. For the virtuosity of lights effects here achieved to characterise different materials and to obtain various effects, that lead Russo suggesting a dating in 1471, see RUSSO, 2018, pp. 13-14 (note 20); RUSSO, 2019, p. 175 (note 32). In addition, specific similarities, especially in the handling of the musician angels, can be found between this painting and certain Zoppo's drawings in his *Madonnas* sketchbook. This could perhaps suggest a personal relationship between Bastiani and Zoppo.

[339] Initially ascribed to Bartolomeo Vivarini by ARSLAN (1928, p. 85-86), the attribution to Bastiani was suggested by LONGHI (1934, ed. cons. 1968², p. 97 [note 59]) and accepted by subsequent scholars. In general, from COLLOBI (1939, p. 35) onwards, art historians that discussed the polyptych underlined Vivarinesque and Mantegnesque influences, suggesting a dating in the early 1460s. Considering this work as Bastiani's masterpiece of his early maturity stage, Casu emphasised the monumentality of the figures, included in a defined space, and their soft draperies. He took as comparative examples the *Triptychs* for the Church of Santa Maria della Carità by the Bellinis in order to place the execution of Bastiani's painting in mid-

(1470-1475. Cat. AP28).[340] For this latter work, Jacopo Bellini's *Adoration* scenes may also have provided inspiration for some specific elements of the composition, such as the idea of the porch-like stable projecting from the building in foreshortened view (compare folio 79 *recto* of The British Museum Book, inv. n. 1855,0811.78), or the foreshortened city. It must be emphasised that from January 1470 Bastiani had been involved in the decoration of the Chapter Hall in the Scuola Grande di San Marco, where Jacopo Bellini was already active as painter. Shortly after Bastiani's engagement, in April also Giovanni Bellini signed a contract with the confraternity for the execution of a *telero*.[341] In the early 1470s, therefore, Bastiani surely met and established a

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1460s, but he also observed an echo of Zoppo's Venetian production (CASU, 1996, p. 67). Russo stressed the impact of Zoppo and Bellini's altarpieces for Santa Giustina and San Zanipolo to explain the volumetric definition of the figures and the light treatment, postponing the realisation of the artwork to a decade later than previously believed, between 1471 (with reference to the *Pesaro Altarpiece*) and 1473 (with reference to Bartolomeo Vivarini's *Saint Augustine Altarpiece* in San Zanipolo). See RUSSO, 2018, pp. 7-11, 14-16 (notes 26-27, 31) and RUSSO, 2019, pp. 175-176 (note 33). A final remark, the abovementioned Vivarinesque (Bartolomeo) fashion evoked in the figures and pointed out by scholars, might be explained by the necessity to satisfy the taste of the Franciscans of the Church of San Francesco d'Assisi (Matera), who most likely commissioned the work. In fact, the massive request of Vivarinis polyptychs by the Franciscans of the nearby Puglia region might have largely influenced their artistic preferences (GELAO, 2013, pp. 219-222).

[340] As the Matera polyptych, also the Frick *Adoration* was assigned to Bartolomeo Vivarini first (BORENIUS, 1911, pp. 192-193, 196-198). Vavalà is credited for being the first that attributed it to Bastiani, even though the scholar pointed out it was depicted under direct inspiration of Bartolomeo in an early phase of Bastiani's career (SANDBERG-VAVALÀ, 1931, pp. 126, 131, 134). Most of the subsequent scholars agreed on a general Vivarinesque-Mantegnesque inspiration upon Bastiani (BOSKOVITS, 1992, p. 24; CASU, 1996, p. 69). Boskovits and Casu, however, postponed the period of execution to the early 1470s. On Giovanni Bellini, Marco Zoppo, and Antonello da Messina's lesson on perspective and light effects on different materials that have influenced Bastiani in this painting, refer to LUCCO, 1990, pp. 445-446; RUSSO, 2018, pp. 13-14 (note 20), 17 (note 43); RUSSO, 2019, pp. 173-175, note 26.

[341] Giovanni Bellini's contract specified that he had to be paid at the same rate per size of work as Bastiani. On the decoration of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, see FORTINI-BROWN, 1988, pp. 45-48, 269-270.

relationship with Jacopo and his sons (Gentile continued Jacopo's paintings in the Scuola when his father died). This close relationship with the most important family of painters in Venice could have been an ideal opportunity for Bastiani to get acquainted with their works and painting practice and, above all, with Giovanni's latest progresses and artistic achievements, specifically regarding the treatment of light for shaping volumes and rendering different materials.

In this period, an increased command in perspective treatment can be observed in Bastiani's works, whose best achievement is the extreme foreshortening realised in the New York *Adoration*. Conti pointed out that, in his paintings, Bastiani obtained the illusion of depth by intersecting vanishing lines with planes perpendicular to the observer, rather than by a modification of tone.[342] Russo further suggested that Bastiani developed this perspective representation (that he also applied to his later works) as a personal elaboration upon Zoppo's Rosebery album drawings.[343]

Bastiani's altarpieces requested by churches, however, show a strong central perspective construction. Here the main figure (generally the saint the patrons where devoted to) is hieratically portrayed in central position, flanked by other significant saints. The architectural setting contributes to the definition of the rigid perspective treatment.[344] This strong centrality might be a reminiscence

[342] CONTI, 1977, p. 59.

[343] RUSSO, 2019, pp. 174-175, note 30. Russo also suggested a comparison with the perspective treatment in Bastiani's *Penitent Saint Jerome* in Springfield (Cat. AP36).

[344] A list of Bastiani's altarpieces and further artworks characterised by strong central perspective definition includes *Saint Jerome Altarpiece* in the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Asolo (Cat. AP01); *Coronation of the Virgin*, Accademia Carrara, Bergamo (Cat. AP03); *Saint Augustine Giving the Rule to the Canons*, formerly in the Church of San Salvador, Venice, and today in a private collection in Montevideo, Uruguay (Cat. AP26); *Madonna and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Donatus and the donor Giovanni degli Angeli*, in the Church of Santi Maria e Donato, Murano (Cat. AP27); *Annunciation* in Correr Museum, Venice (Cat. AP48); *Nativity* (Cat. AP57), *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree* (Cat. AP60) and *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* (Cat. AP61) in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice; *Church Militant and*

derived from a byzantine pictorial formula.[345] In addition, this specific spatial elaboration could have been applied to achieve a sacral atmosphere aimed at encountering the commissioner's taste. Bastiani's ability to confer his pictures such a solemn characteristic might be the reason why the nuns of the Church of Corpus Domini more than once requested Bastiani to depict paintings of saints that reflect their visual culture associated with the production of illuminated manuscripts (*Saint Martin of Tour Enthroned* and *Saint Jerome in His Study* today in Correr Museum. Cat. AP53);[346] or holy episodes described in the Gospels in which the women portrayed in the pictures should have been role models for the nuns, who were expected to behave following their example (*Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. Cat. AP54).[347] Bastiani's monumental *Saint Veneranda Altarpiece* was also painted some years later for the same church. It was most likely commissioned by the nuns to restore their reputation after the quarrel arisen with the Servites sister of the nearby Church of Santa Lucia concerning the donations made by the worshippers to the precious relic Saint Lucy.[348]

Church Triumphant, or *Our Lady of Mercy*, in the Church and Monastery of Saint Francis, Zadar (Cat. AP65).

[345] Bastiani's rigid and hieratic *Christ Blessing*, derived from atavistic schemes, in Bayonne (Cat. AP02) may give us a visual indication of the small *Christ* Bastiani painted for Antonio Choradi in 1973 (See Chapter 4.3.). See also Russo's comment on this issue in RUSSO, 2019, pp. 169-171. For Bastiani's archaism, refer to LONGHI, 1926, pp. 435-449.

[346] Zaru pointed out – in my opinion correctly – the link between the dedication of the nuns to create liturgical manuscripts in the scriptorium located in their convent and the miniature-like appearance of the two saints. Inscriptions at the base of the pictures, in fact, are reminiscent of manuscript texts, such as the Biblia Pauperum. I believe that the marked discrepancy between the Renaissance style of the saints and the Late Gothic aspect of the architectural setting further underlines that Bastiani, a fully formed Renaissance painter, committed himself to accommodate the requests of the nuns. ZARU, 2014, 81-84 and ZARU, 2015, pp. 213-224, fig. pp. 322-327.

[347] ZARU, 2014, pp. 84-85 and ZARU, 2015, pp. 213-224, fig. pp. 322-327.

[348] On the controversy see ZARU, 2013, pp. 28-38 and ZARU, 2014, pp. 103-110.

From late 1470s onwards, probably by virtue of a personal relationship that gradually became closer, Bellini's influence on Bastiani is increasingly evident when observing Bastiani's artworks. Compositional schemes and ideas derived from Bellini were openly manifest, or re-elaborated, suggesting that Bastiani could carefully observe Bellini's pictures. In fact, it seems that he embraced and applied Bellini's new paradigms soon after their introduction. For the figure of Christ in the dispersed *Pietà* once in Kaiser Friedrich Museum of Berlin (Cat. AP06), for example, Bastiani copied in reverse position that in Giovanni Bellini's *Dead Christ supported by two angels* in The National Gallery of London. The *Madonna Adoring the Child* in Pinacoteca Tadini in Bergamo (Cat. AP16) was derived from a Bellini's prototype that was further re-employed also in his workshop.[349]

This closer relationship with Bellini became apparent in Bastiani' underdrawing, which gradually changed and developed according to Giovanni practice.[350] In fact, if the typology and intention of the preparatory drawing was kept almost unaltered until then (for instance, in *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia the hatching is still mostly exploited just as a light-shade indication for the subsequent painting stage), from late 1470s onwards we can appreciate Bastiani's effort in modulating the intensity of the shading lines to establish the *chiaroscuro* and volumetric definition of the figures. Clear examples of this kind of sub-modelling are visible in the National Gallery (Cat. AP15) and in the Tadini *Madonnas*, but also in the later Castelvecchio *Madonna* (Cat. AP62) and in its *replica* in Correr Museum (Cat. AP49). It would have been very interesting and meaningful to compare the underdrawing of the abovementioned Bastiani's lost Berlin *Pietà* with Bellini's London *Dead Christ*, in order to check analogies and differences in its realisation and exploitation. And even though Bastiani's hatching is worked

[349] RUSSO, 2019, pp. 176-177. Further evidence is Bastiani's *Christ Blessing* in Galleria Estense, Modena (Cat. AP24. RUSSO, 2019, p. 177).

[350] An observation on Bastiani's underdrawing developed according to Giovanni Bellini's practice has been done in Chapter 4.4.2. and in 4.4.2.1.

out with stronger emphasis than that in Giovanni Bellini's paintings, it is not less accurate or painstakingly executed, as shown in the Virgin's mantle of the Venice *Nativity* and in the later Bergamo *Coronation*.

It is worth pointing out that for his 1480s *Madonnas* Bastiani was also influenced by Alvise Vivarini's compositions, as in the case of the Redentore *Madonna* (Cat. AP46).[351]

Down the years, Bastiani was not able to keep up with Bellini's prolific inventiveness and his later works, especially those for private devotion, became old-fashioned and redolent of previous design and artistic ideas that the artist kept repeating and rearranging.[352] In addition, to fasten the production – increasing the number of this kind of pictures –, Bastiani and especially his workshop made an extensive use of cartoons, as evidenced by the four identical *Madonna Adoring the Child* respectively in Poznań (Cat. AP33), in Minneapolis, in Edgar Speyer collection (last known) and in Paul Dray collection (last known).[353]

Despite this discrepancy, however, Bellini's still had profound respect and admiration for Bastiani if in 1508 he appointed him as one of the judges to evaluate Giorgione's frescoes in Fondaco dei Tedeschi.[354] We might imagine, therefore, the old Bastiani, standing on the scaffolding in front of the façade of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, while attentively observing and judging upon Giorgione's frescoes. And we might wonder what he thought when confronting with the artistic and poetic innovation of this young painter from Castelfranco.

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[351] It is no coincidence, I believe, if in the past the triptych depicting the *Madonna and Child* flanked by the *Archangel Gabriel* and the *Virgin Annunciate* in Correr Museum, Venice (Cat. RP11), had been ascribed to a late stage of Bastiani's career. In the present research, also considering the unveiled underdrawing, the artwork has been assigned to the young Alvise Vivarini, when he still was mainly influenced by his father and uncle.

[352] Compare, for example, the *Coronation* in Accademia Carrara, Bergamo (Cat. AP03). For devotional images see the *Nursing Madonna* in Correr Museum Venice (Cat. AP50).

[353] Refer to Chapter 4.4.2.1.

[354] See Chapter 4.1.

4.3. TYPOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES AND COMMISSIONS

The subject of Lazzaro Bastiani's patronage is still relatively unexplored. While a fair number of documentary sources confirm that he was an artist appreciated by ecclesiastical, lay, and private patrons, and attest to his well-established reputation, in most cases the identity of the patrons, as well as the reasons behind their requests, are still unknown.

This aspect of Bastiani's career was investigated by Lucia Sartor in a ground-breaking article which appeared in *Arte Veneta* in 1997. In this significant work she focused on Bastiani's patrons in Veneto, presenting eight case studies to prove that Bastiani was a successful painter and showing the various patrons he had in the region.[355] Research carried out by scholars on other Bastiani's artworks threw further light upon his patrons, or, at least, clarified the framework in which his works had been requested. In addition, it is worth emphasising that Bastiani, as was the case with several other Venetian artists, produced paintings not only for Venice and Veneto, but also for cities in regions far from the lagoon that historically had cultural, political, administrative, and economic relations with the Serenissima i.e., Puglia and Basilicata, or for regions that were included in the Venetian empire i.e., Dalmatia.[356]

In this sub-chapter, an overview on the commissions Bastiani received throughout his career – within and outside Venice – will be presented to further demonstrate the appreciation and the prestige he enjoyed among his

[355] SARTOR, 1997, pp. 38-53.

[356] This was a dissemination that involved numerous 15th century Venetian artists who sent their artworks to far-flung territories (the most notable example are the Vivarinis who executed several altarpieces for Puglia region), but also physically moved there to live and work (for instance, Carlo Crivelli who went to Zara and then relocated to the Marche region, where he lived for the rest of his life). In general, the presence of several paintings by Venetian painters in cities along the Adriatic coasts of Italy, Istria and Dalmatia confirms the cultural hegemony of the Serenissima in the Adriatic region. For further reference, please see: WELCHER, 2006, pp. 135-162; TOMIC, 2011a, pp. 34-49; GELAO, 2013, pp. 117-330; CERIANA, 2019, pp. 105-127.

contemporaries.[357] As will be outlined, indeed, he worked across many social spheres from ecclesiastical and private patrons, to citizens and patricians in their Scuole, from the Procurators of the Basilica of San Marco to the Doge's Palace. In addition, the different typologies of artworks executed by Bastiani were determined by their function, the location where they were intended to be displayed and, in some cases, also in accordance with specific requests of the donor.

Archival documentation on Bastiani's commissions is patchy, and careful attention must be paid to those sources that did survive as they attest the variety of patrons that Bastiani produced work for.

In 1460, in the early years of his activity as master, Bastiani already had relationships with the highly ranked patrons when, in December of that year, the *Procuratori de Citra*[358] commissioned him to paint the altarpiece of Marco Venier's altar.[359] In his final will, written in 1417, Marco Venier specifically requested that a tomb (*arca*) and an altar be realised in the church. In the *palla del Altar ordenado de sora* the Virgin Mary, Saint Mark, Saint Donatus and Saint George, were to be painted, to which his executors could add other saints if they wished.[360] Payments to Bastiani are recorded until 1468.

Although the format was not explicitly stated in the will, considering the evolution of the altarpiece in Renaissance Venice and Bastiani's closeness to the Muranese artistic *milieu* in the early years of his artistic activity, we might imagine that the *pala* for Venier's altar was a polyptych with the Madonna and

[357] Further details concerning each commission are examined in depth in the corresponding catalogue entry.

[358] The *Procuratori de Citra* were entrusted with the administration of trusts and legacies on behalf of wealthy Venetian patricians who lived in the San Marco side of the Canal Grande.

[359] According to CAPELLARI VIVARO (BMVe, It. VII, 18 [8307], f. 162v), Marco Venier, son of Nicolò, was *cavaliere* and *senatore*, nominated capitano of Padua two times (1408, 1417), and ambassador in Friuli (1411). In 1423 he was one of the electors of Doge Francesco Foscari.

[360] In 1417 Venier was nominated capitano of Padua for the second time (CAPELLARI VIVARO, f. 162v). This could be the reason why he decided to compile his final will. For Marco Venier's last will, see PAOLETTI, 1893, II, p. 135 (n. 205).

infant Jesus in the central panel, flanked by saints, as was the case with most of the artworks that were produced by Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini at that time. We do know, however, that the artwork was framed in a carved stone frame the Procurators ordered from a certain *Magistro Nicolao incisori* in April 1460 and it was covered by a curtain painted by *magistro Iohanj pictorj*. In addition, the altar was enriched with a gold chalice, a missal, two crucifixes, a thurible, an incense boat, and several candlesticks.[361]

Venetian guides, from Sansovino onwards (1581), never mentioned Bastiani's altarpiece in San Samuel. This suggests that it might have been ruined and removed or substituted with a new *pala* towards the end of the 16th century.

The *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saint Mark, Saint Theodor and Angels* in Brera collection (today in storage at the Conservatorio "Giuseppe Verdi" in Milan) should also be included in the same sphere of 'upper-class' commissions. An inscription recorded by Carotti on the back (*telaio*) of the painting which reads "Toma Mocenigo m[…]o Scr[…]o",[362] led Humfrey to link the commission of the canvas to the election of Tommaso Mocenigo as *Procuratore de Ultra* which occurred in 1504.[363] The original location of the artwork, therefore, may well have been in the *Procuratie* and this theory seems to be confirmed by Boschini's and Zanetti's descriptions concerning a painting of same subject they ascribed to Vincenzo Catena that was in the first room of the *Procuratia de Supra*.[364] In addition, Doge's votive paintings, traditionally requested by the Doge in thanks for achieving his office, could have been of inspiration for the composition with the Madonna and infant Jesus enthroned, flanked by the patron saints of Venice. Indeed, the specific presence of Saint

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[361] PAOLETTI, 1893, p. 135; HUMFREY, 1993, p. 51.

[362] CAROTTI, 1896, p. 23.

[363] HUMFREY, 1990, pp. 41-42. Humfrey's interpretation was accepted by SARTOR (1997, p. 38) and RUSSO (2019, p. 165 [note 3]). Regarding Tommaso Mocenigo and his election as procurator, please refer to: SANSOVINO-MARTINIONI, 1663, p. 303; LITTA, 1819, Tav. V (Mocenigo di Venezia).

[364] BOSCHINI, 1664, p. 96; BOSCHINI, 1674, p. 74 (Sestier di San Marco); ZANETTI, 1733, p. 157; ZANETTI, 1771, p. 78.

Theodore and Saint Mark would legitimise the celebratory and official function of the painting and would be of further support to Humfrey's assumption regarding the request by Tommaso Mocenigo.

An even more prestigious commission was that recorded by Sansovino where Bastiani executed several portraits of doges in ancient costume that were displayed – most likely as a continuous frieze around the walls, like that of the Sala del Maggior Consiglio – in the *Sala del Collegio delli XXV* in Doge's Palace.[365] In 1648 Ridolfi advised that the paintings had been burned ("si abbruciarono"),[366] probably during the massive fire that broke out in 1577 and destroyed the artistic heritage of most of the notable rooms of the Palace. A surviving – although extremely damaged – portion of the frieze, showing Doges Antonio Venier (1382-1400) and Michele Steno (1400-1413), is conserved in the Correr Museum.

Based on his reading of the chronicle written by Marin Sanudo,[367] Rodolfo Gallo conjected that Bastiani's *Portraits of Doges* were originally in a room called *Camera di doxi*, where the portraits of the Doges with their *breve* where exhibited, and that room luckily survived the fire that on the night of the 14th of September 1483 flared up in the Eastern area of Doge's Palace and destroyed several rooms.[368] Accepting this statement necessarily implies that 1483 is a *terminus ante quem* to date the frieze and, serves to fix, chronologically, Bastiani's involvement in the decoration of Doge's Palace. Sartor suggested that Bastiani was engaged in this official commission after 1479, when Gentile Bellini left for Constantinople.[369] And if, on this particular occasion, Bastiani became one of the official painters of the Repubblica, we can assume that he enjoyed, virtually, the same appreciation as Gentile Bellini.

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[365] SANSOVINO, 1581, p. 124v.

[366] RIDOLFI, 1648, p. 50.

[367] SANUDO, *Vite dei Dogi*, see the text in LORENZI, 1868, pp. 92-93.

[368] GALLO, 1943, pp. 1-2 (note 2).

[369] SARTOR, 1997, pp. 38, 50 (note 5).

From 1488 to the early 1500s, a series of payments to Alvise and Vincenzo Bastiani, Lazzaro's sons, by the *Procuratori de Supra*[370] for works in the Basilica of San Marco attests to the official involvement of Bastiani's workshop in the mosaic decoration of the main Venetian church.[371]

The reasons for the choice of Bastiani and his workshop for this important task are still unknown, however, Merkel (1987, p. 28; 1994, p. 89) observed that at least two factors might have been decisive: the closeness of Bastiani to the Muranese artistic *milieu* including his personal acquaintance with the glass-makers who produced the mosaic glass tesserae, and his role of mediator between the Medieval and the Renaissance artistic "languages".[372] In addition, by virtue of the abovementioned commissions Bastiani received from government officers and his role as one of the official painters of the Repubblica, at this date he was probably an artist who was well known to the Doge and the Procuratori de Supra, who superintended the work in the Basilica. Furthermore, it could be hypothesised that the specialisation of Lazzaro's sons as mosaicists – to which it is most likely that Lazzaro himself provided the cartoons – could have been a clever decision which increased the workshop's possibilities of being involved in important commissions.

On the 11th of July 1505 the *Illustrissima Signoria* engaged Bastiani and Benedetto Diana to paint three large standards for Piazza San Marco.[373] The two painters had to execute the highly finished standards ("a perfection ultima et compimento") by following the precise conditions listed in the contract. The Signoria would have supplied Bastiani and Diana with the *cendado cuxido* for each banner (which had to measure "longeza braza diexeocto et largo tele tredexe"), "tuto l'oro che intrara nel dorar", and "tuto l'azuro che in quelli metter accadera". Thus, the Signoria would have provided the silk cloth to be

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370 The *Procuratori de Supra* were responsible for the financial administration, upkeep, decoration, and treasury of the Basilica of San Marco.

371 SACCARDO, 1896, pp. 277-278; LUDWIG-MOLMENTI, 1906, p. 35; MERKEL, 1972-1973, pp. 399-414 [doc. 34-80]; MERKEL, 1977, p. 66, fig. 28.

372 MERKEL, 1994, p. 89.

373 LUDWIG, 105, p. 59.

painted and the most expensive painting materials i.e., the gold and the ultramarine blue. The artists were also asked to gild the sphere or the cross that were on top of the flagpole ("[…] essendo obligati i dicti dorar i pomi o sia croce che se hanno a metter sopra le antene de dicti stendardi"). Diana was appointed to realise the preparatory drawings the artists had to abide by while working: "Et li prenominati maistri siano obligati lavorar dicti stendardi secondo el modello et desegno de Benedeto predicto miorandolo sempre". According to the contract, the total amount the painters would have earned was 630 ducats (210 ducats for each banner), plus a further possible bonus (*uno beverazo*),[374] suggesting that this was a profitable and valuable commission.[375] Scholars generically have described the standards as being amongst Bastiani's commissions, probably believing this was just a stand-alone project. The standards realised by Bastiani and Diana must, however, be considered in a broader project of renovation of the wooden flagpoles of Piazza San Marco that was carried out in the early 16th century.[376] As explained by Girolamo Priuli in his *Diarii*, on the 15th of August 1505, the first flagpole – which was that in the middle – with the new bronze base was revealed.[377] It was realised by the Venetian sculptor and bronze founder Alessandro Leopardi, who was probably engaged by Doge Leonardo Loredan or by the *Procuratori di San Marco* Paolo Barbo, Marcantonio Morosini and Nicolò Trevisan, whose portraits were shown on the base.[378] Priuli also recorded that the standards were mainly red and gold ("de zendado cremixino doratti") and that the first standard was already attached to the flagpole.[379]

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[374] BOERIO, 1856, p. 78 (ad vocem *Beveràzo*)

[375] It is worth to mention that for the altarpiece of Marco Venier's altar in San Samuel Bastiani received 300 ducats (PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 183).

[376] The ancient wooden flagpoles are shown in Gentile Bellini's *telero* Procession in Piazza San Marco, painted for the cycle of the *Miracles of the True Cross* for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista and today on display in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (Venice).

[377] *I Diarii*…, 1933-1937, p. 386.

[378] SAPIENZA, 2005, p. XX.

[379] *I Diarii*…, 1933-1937, p. 386.

Venetian Scuole were lay confraternities of non-patrician citizens resident in the city that met for a common aim and followed charitable and religious principles.[380] They were variously devoted to Christ, or the Virgin, or a patron saint (*Scuole di devozione*), or they could be guilds of workers of the same skill or profession (*Scuole di Arti e mestieri*),[381] they could also be groups from immigrant communities living in Venice (e.g., the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni and the Scuola degli Albanesi). The devotional Scuole also included the former *Scuole dei Battuti*, whose members practiced public self-flagellation as an act of penitence. These latter had a broader group of brothers and received the most substantial donations, thus gaining considerable economic success and prestige. In the second half of the 15th century, therefore, they took on a dominant role and became the so-called Scuole Grandi. The other small confraternities – whether devotional, or arts and crafts, or based upon nationality – were called Scuole Piccole.[382]

Although excluded from the oligarchic government of the Republic, the Scuole played an important social, political, economic, and artistic role in Venetian society. The role of the Scuole in the patronage of artworks to embellish their altars and decorate their meetinghouses was considerable.[383] They ordered altarpieces portraying their patron saint, for example, [384] but their most significant commissions included large narrative cycles of *teleri* that could have had both religious and civic connotations.[385]

On the 7th of January 1470 Lazzaro Bastiani entered the world of monumental narrative paintings that adorned the walls of Venetian Scuole. In fact, on that

[380] The story and the characteristics of Venetian Scuole, here briefly outlined, are explained in PULLAN, 1981, pp. 9-26.

[381] MANNO, 2010[3], I-II.

[382] VIO, 2004, pp. 17-40.

[383] On the artistic heritage of the Scuole, refer to *Le Scuole di Venezia*, 1981.

[384] HUMFREY, 1993, pp. 48-49, 110-121. Pichi, 2007, pp. 29-65.

[385] The fundamental bibliographical reference for the narrative cycles in Venice is FORTINI BROWN, 1986. See also HUMFREY, 1989, I, pp. 309-338.

day, Gabriel Zilberti, the *guardian grande*[386] of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, debated with the confraternity members whether to commission Lazzaro Bastiani, (who had personally requested that he carry out this work), to produce a *telero* to decorate the Chapter Hall (*Sala Capitolare*) of the Scuola building.[387] Since Bastiani himself had asked to be appointed for the execution of the canvas, we may assume that he was an ambitious and resolute painter, who wished to be engaged in such a relevant cycle not only to test himself and show his talent, but also to enlarge his social and professional horizons by getting himself known to other masters and also to potential patrons. It is worth mentioning that both Lazzaro and his elder son Marco, and later also Lazzaro's son Sebastiano were all members of the Scuola. During their careers Marco and Sebastiano were to realise some minor ornamental works for the confraternity.[388]

Bastiani was commissioned to produce the *Story of David* (*Instoria de David*), to be painted in two fields and that would have been placed "sopra et proximo al volto de la scalla".[389] As in the case of the standards for Piazza San Marco, there were some explicit requests in the contract with the Scuola di San Marco. The confraternity ordered that before proceeding Bastiani must submit a drawing of the overall composition (most likely a *vidimus*, thus a highly elaborate finished drawing) for approval by the Banca, members of which would have been free to modify it according to their taste ("[…] se possi per nui azonzer e detrazer al parer nostro"). The demanding officers of the Scuola,

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386 The *guardian grande* was "the chief executive officer of a Scuola Grande, who chaired meetings of the Banca, introduced proposals to the Chapter General, and was responsible for the day-to-day governing of the confraternity" (FORTINI BROWN, 1986, "Glossary").

387 PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 184 (n. 52). Bastiani was appointed to execute the *telero* by a 12-1 vote of the Banca (FORTINI BROWN, 1986, p. 269).

388 PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, pp. 175 (n. 12), 176 (n. 16), 191-192 (n. 78-81).

389 According to the reconstruction proposed by PATRICIA FORTINI BROWN (1986, p. 270), "Bastiani's *Story of David* would have been on the East wall, adjacent to the *Story of Jerusalem*. It was to be placed above and next to the stairway portal, probably extending toward the North wall".

therefore, wanted to be involved first-hand in all the phases of realisation of the painting, starting from the earliest design of the scene to be painted.

Bastiani was to be paid at the same rate per artwork size as Jacopo Bellini. Indeed, the Scuola engaged several major artists for this monumental campaign, starting from Jacopo Bellini, (followed by his son Gentile upon Jacopo's death), Francesco Squarcione, Bartolomeo Vivarini, Andrea da Murano, Giovanni Bellini, and Bartolomeo Montagna. The cycle took several years to be completed, as is illustrated by the fact that by 1482 one of the two *teleri* ordered from Giovanni Bellini in 1470 was not yet finished, and perhaps not even begun, since the Scuola handed over the commission to Bartolomeo Montagna.[390] This fact suggests that, in general, the execution of such majestic cycles could have been drawn out for an extended period. Unfortunately, on the night of the 31st of March 1485 the flame of a lit candle left on the altar of the Chapter Hall caused a curtain to catch fire. The fire spread to the entire building and burned all night, and the entire cycle of canvases was destroyed.[391]

Bastiani's commitment with Venetian Scuole Grandi reached its highest point with his involvement in the magnificent decoration of the *Sala della Croce*, or *Sala dell'Albergo*, of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista. The cycle of nine *teleri*, that replaced a previous one (the various parts of which are now dispersed),[392] was dedicated to the miracles of the Relic of the True Cross.[393] For the realisation of such an important project, the confraternity engaged several masters active in Venice in the second half of the 15th century: Gentile Bellini, Vittore Carpaccio, Giovanni Mansueti, Benedetto Diana, Pietro Perugino, and, in addition, Lazzaro Bastiani.[394] Given the lack of documents regarding the commission, we can only suppose that the Scuola issued specific guidelines to be followed by the painters. As observed by Fortini Brown, Bastiani's canvas "had somewhat different requirements from the other

[390] FORTINI BROWN, 1986, pp. 47-48, 269.

[391] PAOLETTI, 1929, p. 17.

[392] FORTINI BROWN, 1986, p. 266.

[393] IVI, 1986, pp. 60-66.

[394] MARTINELLI PEDROCCO, 1981, pp. 52-60; FORTINI BROWN, 1986, pp. 282-286.

paintings. Here the aim was to establish the provenance and document the legitimate ownership of the relic, rather than to authenticate its miracle-working powers".[395] The basic circumstances of the donation ceremony were available to Bastiani in a small booklet (described by Fortini Brown as an *incunabulum*), printed between 1490 and 1506, which recounted the history of the holy relic, from its donation to the confraternity in 1369, to the miracles that occurred thereafter (until 1480).[396] We might imagine, however, that he had extensive discussions with the Scuola regarding further details of the composition, such as, for instance, the members of the Scuola to be portrayed.[397]

Around 1470 *Ser Lazaro de Bastian depentor* was mentioned in the *mariegola* of the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo.[398] This small devotional Scuola located in Cannaregio, next to the Church of San Girolamo, drew members from various occupations, and included foreign residents. Among the major artists that joined the confraternity there were the sculptor-architect Pietro Lombardo, the printers Nicholas Jenson, John of Cologne, and Lazzaro Bastiani.[399]

In the attempt to emulate the majestic decorations of the Scuole Grandi, the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo decided to decorate the walls of the meeting-room with a series of scenes showing the Life of Saint Jerome painted on canvas.[400] The cycle was mentioned by several Venetian sources, including Ridolfi, Martinioni, Boschini and Zanetti, who recorded Giovanni Bellini, Alvise

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[395] FORTINI BROWN, 1986, p. 139.

[396] IVI, 1986, p. 60.

[397] It is worth emphasising that the old man behind the low parapet on the lower left, where a lute is placed, has been recognised as the German lutenist Nicolò Sconvelt, who joined the Scuola in 1482 (GLIXON, 1983, p. 17; BLACKBURN, 2015, pp. 37-38). In the future, perhaps, further investigations may reveal the identity of other members of the confraternity.

[398] CICOGNA, 1853, VI, pp. 954-955.

[399] LOWRY, 1981, pp. 193-218.

[400] For further information on the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo and its narrative cycle, please refer to: HUMFREY, 1983, pp. 41-46; FORTINI BROWN, 1986, pp. 49-50, 270-271.

Vivarini and Carpaccio as the painters who realised the *teleri*.[401] Today all scholars agree that the pictures previously ascribed to Carpaccio – which are the only extant ones of the cycle, on display at the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice – must, on the basis of stylistic evidence, be attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani.[402]

No documents concerning the commission of the cycle have survived, nonetheless we can formulate some general suppositions about the development of the project and Bastiani's involvement. Giovanni Bellini's *teleri*, dated 1464, as inscribed on the works themselves, were the first to be finished and displayed in the room. Humfrey observed that in the 1460s "Lazzaro Bastani, although already active, was not yet capable of the broad atmospheric handling evident in his extant contributions".[403] In addition, Humfrey also pointed out that because of the expense of each artwork, the progress on the project was likely to have been slow, for it would have taken years to raise funds to pay each painter.[404] It might be plausible to suggest, therefore, that Lazzaro was engaged after the realisation of his *telero* for the Scuola Grande di San Marco, which presumably took some years to complete. After that "formative experience" in which he was trained to work on large canvases, he might have become a skilled and sought-after artist suitable to be hired for this project. His membership of the confraternity might have been a further reason for the Scuola to assign to Bastiani the commission of two *teleri*. At the same time of the works in the Scuola di San Girolamo, or perhaps shortly after, Bastiani was engaged by another small confraternity, the Scuola di Sant'Antonio in the Basilica of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, whose altar was

[401] RIDOLFI, 1648, ed. cons. 1914, I, pp. 36-37 (Alvise Vivarini), 45 (Carpaccio), 64 (Giovanni Bellini); SANSOVINO-MARTINIONI, 1663, p. 176; BOSCHINI, 1664, pp. 462-464; BOSCHINI, 1674, pp. 44-45 (Sestier di Castello); ZANETTI, 1733, pp. 404-405; ZANETTI, 1771, pp. 13-14 (Alvise Vivarini), 37-38 (Carpaccio), 48 (Giovanni Bellini).

[402] See Cat. AP55 for the attribution history of the canvases.

[403] HUMFREY, 1983, p. 43.

[404] IVI, p. 44. Humfrey's statement is further confirmed by the expensive and precious pigments analysed in the Funeral of Saint Jerome (SPADAVECCHIA, 1996).

the first on the right upon entering the church. The confraternity also had its own meeting-space nearby, between the monastery and the Scuola dei Fiorentini.[405] Bastiani's altarpiece showing *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree*, today in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, was most likely displayed here.[406] This particular composition shows a specific late episode of the saint's life which the confraternity must have been especially devoted to. This allegiance was evidenced by the 1450 contract for the commission of a carved wooden altarpiece in the church, where the artist Catarino da Moranzone was requested to execute a work showing Saint Anthony sitting on a chair in the nut tree.[407] It seems plausible, therefore, to suggest that the Scuola explicitly ordered Bastiani to paint this subject as well. In addition, the presence of the Blessed Luca Belludi and Saint Bonaventure flanking Saint Anthony is not accidental and might have been a further request by the confraternity. Indeed, as Humfrey noticed, the fact that Bonaventure is shown without the halo "should therefore be interpreted not as a celebration of a success, but as a weapon in the intensifying propaganda on behalf of Bonaventure",[408] who was finally canonised in 1482.[409]

"[…] Apresso andatte da lazaro bastian che stano sopra el champo di San Polo che chusi li schrivo a lui e fateme far uno quadreto grando come mezo foio de charta di pizolj con la figura di miss. Iesù cristo che siano belo chome li schrivo a luj o se per chaxo che idio el guarda el fusse morto over lo nol volesse far andate da Ziane belino e mostratelj el mio e ditege il volio a quel modo chome stano quelo con quela soaza doro polita e bela e di questo non falite […]".[410]

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[405] On the 29th of December 1444 the Scuola obtained its meeting-space (BETTIOLO, 1912, pp. 75-83). The whole document is published in *Archivio Sartori*, II/2, 1986, pp. 1844-1845.

[406] SARTOR, 1997, pp. 44-45.

[407] "El santo suso la nogera sentado suso una bella chariega" (*Archivio Sartori*, II/2, 1986, p. 1855)

[408] HUMFREY, 1988, p. 409.

[409] *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1963, vol. 3, col. 256.

[410] PAOLETTI, 1894, p. 12.

This is an extract from a letter *Antonio Choradi*, a goldsmith resident in Pera (Constantinople), sent to his brother-in-law Niccolò Gruato in Venice,[411] asking for his work tools, a Bible, and other objects. In addition, *Choradi* (via Niccolò Gruato) commissioned a small devotional panel of Christ from Lazzaro Bastiani.[412] And if, in the unfortunate event that Lazzaro was already dead or unable to fulfil the request, Gruato was instructed that the commission be forwarded to Giovanni Bellini. *Choradi* had a clear idea of how he wanted the painting to look ("belo chome li scrivo a lui"). In fact, his request is specific about the size of the picture (*mezzo foio de charta di pizolj*, which corresponds to about 30 x 21 cm)[413] and the example to follow for its realisation ("quelo con quela soaza d'oro polita e bela").

As observed by Fletcher, *Choradi* and Giovanni Bellini were both members of the Scuola di San Cristoforo, where they could have become acquainted.[414] The link between *Choradi* and Lazzaro Bastiani, even if indirect, was Niccolò Gruato This latter and a certain *Aluisius Bastianus* (who could have been Marco's son or Lazzaro's son) were both in the list of candidates applying for the job as scribe at San Niccolò on the Lido in 1470.[415] It is also possible, however, that Bastiani had an unrecorded relationship with Niccolò Gruatto, since this latter also was practically involved in the visual arts.

Since Bastiani was *Choradi*'s preferred option to paint the panel, this letter is a pivotal document to further prove the appreciation Lazzaro enjoyed amongst

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[411]Niccolò Gruato was member of a prosperous clan of stonemasons and goldsmiths (CONNELL, 1988, p. 84).

[412] COLLOBI (1939, p. 39) believed the *Blessing Christ* today in Musée Bonnat-Hellou of Bayonne (France) was the *Christ* requested by *Choradi*. This proposal was accepted by LUCCO (1990, II, p. 439), but recently was proven to be wrong by RUSSO (2019, pp. 169-170).

[413] RUSSO, 2019, pp. 169-170.

[414] FLETCHER, 2004, p. 29. For *Choradi* and Giovanni membership in the Scuola di San Cristoforo, please see CICOGNA, 1853, VI/2, p. 871.

[415] RUSSO, 2019, p. 169. Among the candidates there was also Jacopo Bellini, whose name is erased, probably because he died before the winner (Nicolò Bernardini) was designated in 1472 (BARAUSSE, 2019, pp. 35-36 [doc. 33]). For the document: ASVe, *Collegio Notatorio*, reg. 11 (1467-1474), c. 76v.

his contemporaries. Acknowledging, today, the overall artistic superiority of Giovanni Bellini over Bastiani, and despite the harsh criticism of Bastiani and his production by some 20th century scholars,[416] we must interpret this archival evidence from the perspective of a 15th century private commissioner patron, who esteemed Lazzaro Bastiani equally to Giovanni Bellini to depict a small devotional painting of Christ. As already emphasized by Russo, *Choradi* would have been well aware of the various options available in Venice at that time,[417] but he consciously had Lazzaro Bastiani as his first choice because this painter's work met his taste perfectly.

No further documents recording specific private requests have survived, nonetheless scholars have clarified the context for the commission of some paintings indubitably by Bastiani.

The *Nativity with Saint Eustache, Saint James, Saint Philip and Saint Benedict*, today in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, but previously in the Church of Sant'Elena, is the first Bastiani artwork we can date based upon archival evidence. It was commissioned after the death of the patrician Eustachio Balbi according to his final will, written in 1478, (and published by Gallo in 1929).[418] Balbi instructed his executors – his three brothers Filippo, Giacomo, and Benedetto – to erect an altar in the church and to provide it with a beautiful altarpiece ("una bella palla"), showing the nativity of Jesus ("el presepio, tanto bello et honorevol quanto se po"). The four saints witnessing the nativity scene are the patron saints of Eustachio and his brothers. A will footnote omitted by Gallo, but

[416] For example: LOGAN, 1903, pp. 317-319; L. VENTURI, 1907, p. 272; A. VENTURI, 1915, VII/IV, pp. 379-398; BERENSON, 1916, pp. 149-155; VAN MARLE, 1936, pp. 172-173, 195-196; LONGHI, 1946, p. 13. On the commissions Bastiani received. Lionello Venturi (1907, p. 272) wrote: "Di qualche documento che accenni a committenti, i quali pongono alla stessa stregua Lazzaro e Jacopo Bellini o chiedono indifferentemente un Cristo a Lazaro o a Giambellino, non credo convenga tener conto. Il desiderio dei committenti a Venezia sino alla fine del secolo XV appare limitato in genere alla rappresentazione iconografica e alle materialità tecniche, anziché giungere al valore artistico intrinseco".

[417] RUSSO, 2019, p. 169.

[418] GALLO, 1929, p. 82.

reported by Sartor, explicitly pointed out that the altarpiece and Balbi's burial had to be completed within six months after his death, (which occurred in April 1480).[419]

Today the votive *lunette* depicting the *Virgin and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Donatus and the Donor Giovanni degli Angeli*, signed and dated HOC OPVS LAZARI SEBASTIANI MCCCCLXXXIIII", is still in its original location, the Church of Santi Maria e Donato in Murano (Venice). The commissioner, identified by Vincenzo Zanetti, was Giovanni degli Angeli, a canon who held several important positions in the Venice curia and was settled in the Santi Maria e Donato.[420] He was extremely devoted to his church, as evidenced by his testament, in which he explicitly requested to be buried there,[421] and by a memorial ledger stone placed in front of the main entrance door.[422] Sartor proposed, convincingly, that Bastiani's work could have been requested by Giovanni degli Angeli as a further decorative element of his burial site, placed in the counterfaçade above the main entrance, and in correspondence to this commemorative stone.[423] The *commendatio animae* scene, the saints portrayed and all the symbolic elements depicted in the picture well represent the funerary meaning of the *lunette*, Giovanni degli Angeli's homage to his church, and his hope for salvation and redemption under protection of the Virgin and Christ.

The two coats of arms of the Barbarigo family flanked by two B's (curiously never taken into consideration by any scholar before) painted at the extremities of the parapet in the *Coronation of Virgin*, signed "OPUS LAZZARI / SEBASTIANI VENETI 1490", as well the presence of Saint Bernard and Saint Ursula led Sartor to identify the commissioner of the panel as Bernardo Barbarigo. The double B's and the male saint, indeed, refer to Bernardo, while

[419] SARTOR, 1997, p. 43.

[420] V. ZANETTI, 1873, p. 249.

[421] SARTOR, 1997, pp. 45, 52 (note 55).

[422] V. ZANETTI, 1873, p. 225-226.

[423] SARTOR, 1997, p. 45.

the female saint refers to his wife Orsa Foscarini.[424] After his election as *podestà* of the city of Crema, Bernardo Barbarigo promoted the construction of a chapel in the Palazzo Comunale (built in 1488) which he intended to decorate with an altarpiece commissioned in Venice. The painting was instead donated to the "Magnifica Comunità di Crema" and placed on the main altar of the Church of Santa Maria della Croce in Crema upon request of Francesco Vimercato, who, in 1490, saw it in Venice and asked Barbarigo if he would agree to exchange it for another work.[425] To further support her hypothesis, Sartor observed that the panel size was appropriate for the chapel of a palace, she also pointed out that the specification *veneti* in Bastiani's signature is indicative of a commission outside Venice.[426]

Notwithstanding that the *Coronation* was ordered for Crema, its donor was Venetian. From research mainly conducted by Comacchio, Sartor, Indelli (and correctly interpreted by Gelao), and Prijatelj Pavičič, it emerged that Bastiani received commissions for altarpieces in Asolo, Monopoli and Zadar (Croatia) from non-Venetian patrons.

The *Saint Jerome Altarpiece*, today still in the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta in Asolo,[427] was requested by Bartolomeo Colbertaldo for the eponymous chapel, which was the first on the right when entering the church.[428] The painting was realised between 1484 and 1491, perhaps in 1488 as indicated by Trieste de' Pellegrini.[429] The circumstances in which Bartolomeo Colbertaldo became aquainted with Lazzaro Bastiani are unknown, as is the

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[424] IVI, 1997, p. 48.

[425] RONNA, 1824, pp. 122-124.

[426] SARTOR, 1997, p. 48.

[427] Today the predella panel of the *pala* is on display in Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan, see Cat. AP19.

[428] The name of the commissioner of the chapel is written in an early 17th century manuscript entitled *Vite delli cinque dottori de leggi della famiglia De Colbertaldi di Asolo*, by ANTONIO ISEPPO COLBERTALDO. Bartolomeo and his elder brother Nicolò planned the construction of the chapel together, but after Nicolò's death Bartolomeo completed the project alone, between 1484 and 1491. For a complete reconstruction of the commission, please see Cat. AP01.

[429] TRIESTE DE' PELLEGRINI, 1780, p. 44.

reason why he decided to commission him to paint the *pala* for the Saint Jerome chapel. Owing to the political and cultural prominence Asolo enjoyed during the second half of the 15th century (and especially from 1489, when the court of Caterina Cornaro, queen of Cyprus, settled in Asolo), several men of letters and artists settled in the city, as did numerous families from the outlying areas who decided to move there to increase their social status, among them the Colbertaldo family. Clearly, the involvement in the renovation of the cathedral by building the chapel of Saint Jerome and the decision to order the *pala* from a well-known Venetian artist could be interpreted as the desire of the Colbertaldo family to further emphasise the important role they played in the Asolo society.[430]

Another chapel dedicated to Saint Jerome was founded in the Cathedral of the Madonna della Madia of Monopoli, in Puglia. Here an altarpiece showing *Saint Jerome in His Study and the Donor* was displayed. Thanks to comprehensive archival research carried out by Giuseppe Indelli, and further discussed by Clara Gelao, it has been possible to identify the commissioner of the work as Saladino Ferro, famous doctor and *aromatario* native of *Ascoli della Marca*, who is portrayed as the kneeling donor in the panel.[431] As numerous young students from the Southern regions used to move to Padua for educational purposes, so Saladino studied at the prestigious university there, where he graduated in 1431. In Padua he might have become fascinated by Paduan and Venetian culture and art, however he was there long before Lazzaro became an artist, thus the reasons for this request to Lazzaro are still unknown.[432] It must be underlined that the strategic position of Puglia was of great importance to Venetian traders, therefore political and economical dealings, as well as

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[430] SARTOR, 1997, p. 46.

[431] INDELLI, 2000, p. 268; GELAO, 2004, p. 8; *Giovanni Bellini…*, 2008, pp. 11-12, 28 (notes 28-30). On Saladino Ferro, please see to MOULINIER-BROGI, 2017, pp. 645-647. References to the occupation of Saladino as a doctor might be found in the tamed lion showing the paw from which Saint Jerome removed the thorn.

[432] GELAO (2016, p. 71) affirmed that Saladino and Bastiani might have met personally while Saladino was in Padua. This assumption must be discarded.

cultural relations, between Venice and cities of the region dated back over a long period. In this context the import of artworks from the Serenissima to such cities was a widespread phenomenon that involved uppermost the Vivarinis, but also Giovanni Bellini.[433] The patrons were varied, from the lay aristocracy to clerics, the bourgeois and merchants.[434]

The large altarpiece in the Sacristy of the Monastery of Saint Francis, in Zadar, has always been puzzling, starting with its subject, which for its particular iconography can be identified both as *Our Lady of Mercy* and as *The Church Militant and the Church Triumphant* (*Ecclesia Militans and Ecclesia Triumphant*). The *pala* was originally in the Chapel of the Crucifix, built by the Detrico family between 1480 and 1488, on the altar consecrated to *Sancte Marie de Gratia*.[435] The altar was already existent in 1476 and in the final wills of various citizens of Zadar bequests for the execution of an altarpiece to decorate the altar are mentioned.[436] Unfortunately, in 1476 a fire occurred in the archive of the Monastery of Saint Francis and probably destroyed important documents that might have been useful to reveal the name of the patron of the altar and the reason why the numerous citizens made donations for an altarpiece.[437]

In the last thirty years, art historian Ivana Prijatelj Pavičič has extensively researched the painting and realised that the key to correctly interpreting its iconography, to understanding the reason for its commission and in pinpointing the period of execution lies not only in the study of archival records, but also in the identification of the numerous people portrayed. According to the latest results of their study, published by Jurković and Prijatelj Pavičić in 2020, the people depicted were the members of the anti-Ottoman league that Pope Sixtus IV and Ferrant of Naples formed to defeat the Ottomans

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[433] On the Vivarinis altarpieces in Puglia, please refer to: GELAO, 2016, pp. 59-77. On Giovanni Bellini's *San Pietro Martire*: *Giovanni Bellini…*, 2008, pp. 7-31.

[434] GELAO, 2013, pp. 257-266.

[435] PRAGA, 1928, pp. 75-76.

[436] IVI, 1928, pp. 75 (note 5), 76.

[437] PRIJATELJ PAVIČIĆ, 1995, p. 51.

who invaded the city of Otranto between 1480 and 1481. To achieve the accuracy of the facial features, the commissioner must have provided Bastiani with portraits of the people to be depicted. Since Marco Barco had frequent contacts with Venice and is painted *en face*, the authors wondered if he might have been a crucial figure in the commissioning of the artwork or its financing, but lacking the archival documents, they have not been able to confirm this hypothesis.[438]

Finally, Bastiani also executed altarpieces and other works for ecclesiastical patrons.

The *Saint Augustine Altarpiece* had been recorded from Sansovino (1581) until Zanetti (1733) as being in the Church of San Salvador. Its original location in the church was on the altar dedicated to Saint Augustine, which was the last one on the right of the nave, before the crossing. The altar was purchased from the canons regular of San Salvador by the rich merchant Antonio Cornovì della Vecchia, who erected his family altar in the second half of the 16th century and decorated it with an altarpiece depicting the *Annunciation* by Titian.[439] Bastiani's artwork was relocated in the church and, perhaps, in the monastery, then it was broken up and dispersed after the Napoleonic suppressions and it was only in 1929 that the central part, showing *Saint Augustine Giving the Rule to the Canons*, reappeared on the antiquarian market in Vienna.[440] Today it is believed to be in a private collection in Montevideo, Uruguay.[441] According to descriptions made by historic authors, such as Ridolfi and Boschini, the painting was a unified altarpiece, with a predella and a topping panel with the *Pietà*, following the fundamental examples created by Marco Zoppo and Giovanni Bellini in their Pesaro altarpieces, dated respectively 1471 and 1475 circa. In the predella the ordination of Augustine by the Pope was depicted, while in the crowning elements the dead Christ supported by angels (*Pietà*)

[438] JURKOVIĆ-PRIJATELJ PAVIČIĆ, 2020, pp. 225-285.

[439] MASCHIO, 1975, pp. 178-182; BOHDE, 2001, pp. 458-463.

[440] PLANISCIG, 1929, pp. 257-260.

[441] ARSLAN, 1965, p. 168.

was portrayed.[442] The original location and the iconography of the artwork prompted Lucia Sartor to identify the commissioners as being associated with the canons regular of the congregation of San Salvatore from Bologna, who had been in charge of the church and the monastery of San Salvador since 1442. For the art historian this representation can be interpreted not only generically as a tribute to Saint Augustine, the founder of the Augustinian order, but also specifically as a celebration of the recent foundation of the congregation of San Salvadore itself, which occurred in the early 15th century.[443] In addition, the request could have been included as part of the spiritual and formal renovation of the church, carried out after the settlement of the canons regular of San Salvatore.[444]

Similarly, Sartor conjected that the *Deposition of Christ* in the Church of Sant'Antonin was ordered by the *fabbriceria* of the church for the altar of the Santissimo Sacramento, which was placed in the chapel of Saint Anthony, the one to the proper left of the main altar.[445] This original location of the panel is confirmed by Sansovino and Boschini's descriptions[446], as well as by the eucharistic meaning of the iconography of the picture.

For the Church of Corpus Domini Bastiani painted his most famous and admired altarpiece, the *Saint Veneranda Enthroned*, signed "LAZARVS BASTANVS / PINCXIT". Despite the lack of any surviving documents concerning the *pala*, scholars have attempted a reconstruction of the events that led to the decoration of the altar dedicated to Saint Veneranda. Humfrey and MacKenney

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[442] RIDOLFI, 1648, ed. cons. 1914, I, p. 50; BOSCHINI, 1664, p. 134; BOSCHINI, 1674, p. 105 (Sestier di San Marco).

[443] SARTOR, 1997, p. 43.

[444] Some documents dated between 1442 and 1475 prove the intention to proceed with the renovation of the church (TAFURI, 1983, pp. 8, 27 [note 27], 32 [Appendice 1]; CONCINA in CAPUTO, 1988, pp. 89-90), while the monastery had been enlarged and in 1480s artists had been called for works there. (CONCINA in CAPUTO, 1988, pp. 90-91).

[445] SARTOR, 1997, p. 41.

[446] SANSOVINO, 1981, p. 10r; BOSCHINI, 1664, pp. 193-194; BOSCHINI, 1674, pp. 36-37 (Sestier di Castello).

conjected that the members of the Scuola dei Barcaiuoli (*Traghetto del Corpus Domini*), who were particularly devoted to Saint Veneranda, and whose relic was conserved in the church, requested the altarpiece around 1480.[447] This hypothesis, however, was discarded by Sartor since, according to the *mariegola*, the confraternity was founded only in 1643.[448] Accepting Moschini Marconi's idea,[449] Sartor suggested instead that the Contarini family was responsible for the commission of the artwork. In front of the altar, in fact, there was a tombstone dated 1479 and inscribed by Bernardo and Domenico, Francesco Contarini's sons.[450] In her opinion, the key event for the request of the altarpiece was the death of Francesco Contarini, which occurred in 1491. In support of her claim, Sartor added her own iconographic interpretation of the picture, in which the four saints represented in the *aedicola* in the background are Francesco's and his sons' (Bernardo, Domenico, Girolamo) patron saints. Additionally, the medallion with Saint John the Evangelist on Saint Veneranda's throne may refer to the other son, Giovanni.[451] More recently, for Denise Zaru, the dispute which had arisen between the nuns of the Corpus Domini and the Servites sisters (*suore servite*) from the nearby church of the *Annunciata*, followed by the purloining of the precious relic – the body of Saint Lucy – from the eponymous church in 1472 by the nuns of the Corpus Domini, was the key point in leading her to discover the name of the commissioner and the date of execution of the altarpiece of Saint Veneranda. The controversy ended in 1478, though the whole affair had negative repercussions on the nuns and the community.[452] From this perspective the realisation of an altarpiece to promote the cult of the relic of Saint Veneranda is seen by Zaru as an opportunity for the nuns of the Corpus Domini to obtain

[447] HUMFREY-MACKENNEY, 1986, p. 325.

[448] SARTOR, 1997, p. 48. For the *mariegola*, see VIO, 2004, p. 453.

[449] MOSCHINI MARCONI, 1955, pp. 53-54.

[450] The inscription of the tombstone is reported in CICOGNA, 1827, II, p. 20.

[451] SARTOR, 1997, pp. 49-50.

[452] ZARU, 2013, pp. 34-35; ZARU, 2014, pp. 108-109.

redemption.[453] In 1479 the Contarini family provided the funds to purchase the altar where the Saint Veneranda would later be displayed and they also obtained permission to establish the family's burial site there. This fact, which occurred shortly after the end of the dispute, combined with the nuns' desire to restore the good name of the convent, represents for Zaru a valid reasons for commission to take place and a *terminus post quem* to date the artwork. The income received for the Contarini's sepulchre might also have been used to pay the artist's fee.[454]

The nuns of the Corpus Domini might also have been the commissioners of other Bastiani's paintings originally in this church i.e., *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, and *Saint Martin of Tours Enthroned* and *Saint Jerome in His Study*.[455] The importance given to the women in the first two pictures, led Zaru to observe that they could have been role models for the nuns, who were expected to behave following their example.[456] Zaru also pointed out that the miniature-like appearance of the four paintings, and especially of the Saint Martin and of the Saint Jerome, may also be linked to the nun's association with the production of illuminated manuscripts and printed works.[457]

In 1490s the Benedictine nuns of the Church of San Lorenzo might have been Bastiani's patrons as well. It is likely that he painted the removable *paliotto* with *Scenes from the Life of the Blessed Leone Bembo* that are believed to have once enriched the façade of the *beato*'s casket (today in the Collection of Sacral Art of the Parish Church of Saint Blasius, Vodnjan), and the three panels showing *Episodes from the life of Paul I of Constantinople* (today in Musée Jacquemart André, Paris) for them. The first was probably ordered to replace Paolo Veneziano's painting of same subject, when the nuns refurbished the

[453] ZARU, 2014, p. 109.

[454] ZARU, 2013, p. 34.

[455] ZARU, 2014, pp. 81-85; ZARU, 2015, pp. 221-224.

[456] ZARU, 2014, p. 85.

[457] IVI, 2014, pp. 80-81.

altar of San Leone in the Chapel of San Sebastiano.[458] The second was most likely requested in 1493, when the relic of Saint Paul's body was rediscovered in the Church of San Lorenzo.[459]

Bastiani also provided the cartoon for a tapestry depicting the *Pentecost*, which was initially in the Church of Santo Spirito in Isola, and is today displayed in the Church of Santa Maria della Salute. The subject of the tapestry prompted Forti Grazzini to hypothesise that the artwork had probably been requested, for the altar of the Virgin, by the Augustinian canons who were in charge of the church.[460] Referring to an engraved inscription on a marble slab in the church, Corner reported that two altars, that of the Virgin and that of the True Cross, were consecrated on Easter day in 1505. The same canons regular of Santo Spirito in Isola might have played an intermediary role in the commission to Bastiani of the two organs shutters with *Saint Michael Archangel* and the *Archangel Gabriel*, today in Musei Civici agli Eremitani, in Padua. According to a proposal by Nicolò De Salmazo, the two canvases were most likely painted for the Church of San Michele (once dedicated to the Archangels) in Padua, which had been affiliated to the Church of Santo Spirito in Isola from 1479 until 1656.[461]

Outside Venice, Bastiani executed a polyptych for the Church of San Francesco d'Assisi in Matera. Unfortunately, no document concerning the commission has survived (they were most likely destroyed), thus it is impossible to determine with any certainty if the altarpiece was ordered by the friars of the order or by a private patron. Some iconographical elements, however, seem to suggest that the monks of San Francesco played a pivotal role in the commission of the artworks: first is the exclusive presence of Franciscan saints, second is the

[458] CRAIEVICH, 1997, p. 362 (note 9); KREKIC, 2005, pp. 154-156.

[459] SARTOR, 2002, p. 80. On the rediscovery, please refer also to: FIAMMA, 1645, pp. 19-20; CORNER, 1758, pp. 136, 138-140.

[460] FORTI GRAZZINI, 2002, pp. 117, 120, 122. On the consecration of the altar by Bernardo Venier, bishop of Chioggia, on Easter Sunday 1505, please see: CORNER, 1758, pp. 496-497.

[461] BELTRAME, 1979, pp. 14-15, 18; NICOLÒ DE SALMAZO, 1991, p. 80.

identification of the young female saint holding the ring as Saint Mustiola.[462] If the polyptych was commissioned by the monks of the Church of San Francesco, the project must be considered in the context of the expansion of Franciscanism in Basilicata in the 15th century (especially in the 1470s),[463] but also in in the light of with the numerous requests of Venetian altarpieces (especially to the Vivarini family) by churches of the Franciscan order in nearby Puglia.[464]

To conclude, it is worth emphasising that the typology of artworks requested of Bastiani have been various, in order to satisfy the various patrons' wishes. As we have seen, the pictures range from small devotional images (as in the case of the *Christ* for *Choradi*) to large altarpieces, from organ shutters to impressive narrative *teleri* for the Scuole's meetinghouses. Also worthy of mention are several *Madonna and Child* panels, whose commissioners are unknown, which might have adorned the walls of Venetian houses, such as those depicted in Carpaccio's cycle of canvases showing the Legend of Saint Ursula (*Arrival of the Ambassadors* and *Ursula's dream*). Even the supports Bastiani worked with had been varied. Albeit he preferred working on wood panels, documents indicate that he also painted on canvas and cloth. In addition, his cartoons were employed for mosaic and tapestry production. Finally, the structures and the compositions of his pictures evolved according to the development of Venetian art. Thus, for example, if the design of the *Saint Augustine Altarpiece* followed Zoppo's and Giovanni Bellini's Pesaro altarpieces, the arrangement of the scene in the *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* was inspired by Giovanni's *Saint Catherine Altarpiece* and by Antonello da Messina's *San Cassiano Altarpiece*.[465]

[462] RUSSO, 2018, pp. 8-9.

[463] BOCHICCHIO, 1977, pp. 1-49; BOCHICCHIO, 1999, pp. 205-208.

[464] GELAO, 2013, pp. 219-224.

[465] See the explanation of Saint Veneranda's iconography in Cat. AP61.

4.4. A SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO INVESTIGATE BASTIANI

4.4.1. BASTIANI'S ARTISTIC TECHNIQUE

Comprehensive research on Bastiani's artistic technique has not yet been carried out. It is possible, however, to outline his *modus pingendi* using analyses performed on his paintings before or after restorative interventions that have taken place to date.[466] This insight is not intended to be comprehensive, as the analysed paintings are few,[467] but, rather, intends to give a general overview on Bastiani's painting procedure that must be considered when interpreting the IRR data.

[466] Non-invasive analyses: Vis-RS and XRF performed directly on selected points of the painting surface. Invasive analyses: Sample stratigraphy observed by the optical microscope and investigated through chemical tests, and through scanning electron microscopy with energy dispersive x-ray spectroscopy (SEM-EDX). The results are deduced from restoration reports and from published contributions.

[467] The artworks are:

- *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Restoration report, VOLPIN, 1996: sample stratigraphy analysed by means of the optical microscope (Vis and UV light), integrated with microchemical and histochemical tests for the identification of the binding medium, and with SEM-EDX analysis for the characterisation of the chemical elements.
- *Saint Veneranda Enthroned*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Restoration report, VOLPIN, 1996: for the analyses performed, see *Saint Anthony in the nut tree*.
- *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Restoration report, VOLPIN, 1996: for the analyses performed, see *Saint Anthony in the nut tree*. The results have also been briefly discussed by SPADAVECCHIA, 1996.
- *Coronation of the Virgin*, Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. DE BENI, 2010, p. 203 and POLDI, 2010, p. 194: Vis-RS analysis.
- *Saint Jerome and a kneeling nun*, Milano, Museo Diocesano. POLDI-BONIZZONI, 2009, p. 157: Vis-RS and XRF analysis.
- *Christ blessing*, Langres, Musée d'art et d'histoire. Restoration report, C2RMF, 2001: SEM-EDX analysis on samples.

- **SUPPORT**

  Bastiani preferred working on wooden panels, as is evidenced by most of his works.[468] However, a small part of his production also included paintings on canvas (*teleri* and two organ shutters).[469] The choice of this support was most likely linked to a specific request of the commissioner and but also with reference to the site the artwork was to be located. For example, in the contract stipulated with the Scuola Grande di San Marco it is expressly requested the execution of a big canvas painting i.e., a *telero*.[470] It should be stressed that some of Bastiani's artworks which are found on canvas today have been transferred from panel during past restoration treatments owing to the particular work's precarious condition (*Madonna del Baldacchino*, ex Pitt-Rivers collection and *Madonna and Child*, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum). Bastiani was able to execute pictures of various size, ranging from small *predella* panels to big altarpieces and large *teleri*; he also worked on additional different supports, such as parchment (*Pietà*, Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum) and cloth (standards for Piazza San Marco, today lost).[471]

[468] For most of his wooden panel paintings, Bastiani employed poplar panels, which were used extensively by artists in Italy (BRUZZONE-GALASSI, 2011, pp. 253-259). In two cases the wood used is willow (Saint *Anthony in the nut tree*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia and *Madonna and Child*, CI. I n. 2193, Venice, Correr Museum). In the restoration report of the *Nativity* (Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia) it is pointed out that for this specific work Bastiani used tangential cut pieces. Panels with this type of cut were usually bigger and cheaper than the radial cut pieces, however, they were also more sensitive to temperature and relative humidity changes that could cause a panel to curve (RINALDI, 2011, p. 109).

[469] The two *teleri* with *Stories of Saint Jerome* are made of linen canvas.

[470] See Chapter 2, *ad vocem* 1470, 7th January.

[471] In 1505, Bastiani and Benedetto Diana were asked to execute three banners for Piazza San Marco (see Chapter 2, *ad vocem* 1505, 11th July). It is important to emphasise that his elder brother Marco specialised in painting cloth and the Scuola Grande di San Marco requested him to execute a banner and the insignia of the confraternity (see Chapter 4.1).

- **PREPARATORY GROUND AND PRIMING LAYER**

  The analyses performed on samples taken from Bastiani's paintings confirm a preparatory ground made of gypsum and animal glue (*gesso e colla animale*), which is a yellowish-brownish in colour. Sometimes a priming layer of animal glue alone is found to avoid the absorption of paint layers into the ground. In other cases, the priming layer consists of lead white, to give a uniform, bright white background behind the subsequent paint.

  In at least three cases a canvas strip has been found glued along the joints of the wood planks, covered by the preparatory ground[472]. These strips constitute the so-called *teletta d'incamottatura*, which was applied to reinforce the support and to provide the painting with an elastic layer to prevent possible fractures of the pigment layers.[473]

- **UNDERDRAWING**

  Stratigraphic analyses have revealed the presence of black carbon particles in linear formations suggesting the presence of the underdrawing, which historic IR imaging analyses/photographs and the IRR diagnostic programme performed for this research have further confirmed. Sometimes the underdrawing is clearly visible to the naked eye owing to the compromised condition of the paint layer.

  Bastiani's underdrawing practice will be extensively explored in Chapter 4.4.2. In general, the underdrawing, carefully built up, shows no or few modifications, and the ultimate painted forms and volumes are closely based on the underdrawing.

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[472] The paintings are *Annunciation* (Venice, Correr Museum), *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree* (Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia) and *Coronation of the Virgin* (Bergamo, Accademia Carrara; POLDI, 2010, p. 194). Curiously, in the *Saint Anthony* and in the *Coronation* the canvas strips are coloured in red, which suggest that Bastiani probably employed a recycled canvas.

[473] The procedure of the *incamottatura* and the material used evolved down the centuries. In fact, in the 14th century the canvas was glued on the entire surface of the panel, while in the 15th century canvas strips were applied only on the most fragile parts i.e., the joints of the wooden pieces (SKAUG, 2008, pp. 22-29; RINALDI, 2011, p. 110).

- **BINDING MEDIUM**

  An in-depth investigation on Bastiani's binding media has not yet been performed. Nonetheless, the results of the chemical testing carried out so far have shown that Bastiani made use of both *tempera grassa* (*Funeral of Saint Jerome*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia) and oil-based binding media (*Saint Veneranda enthroned*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia).

- **PIGMENT LAYERS AND GILDING**

  The study of pigments has revealed a palette of colours composed of the typical pigments employed by Venetian painters in the Renaissance period.[474] The final colour shade is obtained by a single layer, or by two overlapping layers. The paint is applied as a pigment alone, or as a mixture of two or more pigments. In the case of two superimposing layers, the one uppermost is slightly transparent.

  The pigments include azurite and ultramarine for the blues, copper resinate and copper acetate, often mixed with lead-tin-yellow, for the greens, cinnabar and red lake for the red vestments and red ochre mixed with lead white for the flesh tones. Bastiani also made use of gold, especially in the haloes and to decorate the vestments.[475] Sometimes gold leaf was applied extensively to obtain a golden background, which was probably at the specific request of the commissioner.

  The employed materials are related to the prestige of the commission. The more renowned the commission was, the more expensive the pigments were. For example, in the *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, one of the only two extant *teleri* from the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo, Bastiani made use of ultramarine in the tunic of the second monk with the white beard standing on the right of the picture. Ultramarine mixed with white lead and red lake is employed to obtain the light purple colour of the clothing of the priest officiating the funeral rite, while for the green lawn of the cloister lead

[474] LAZZARINI, 1983, pp. 135-144.

[475] The gilded haloes of the figures in the *Madonna and Child*, CI. I n. 2193 (Venice, Correr Museum), have been finely decorated with elaborate punched motifs.

white and lead-tin-yellow are mixed with malachite, another precious pigment. Ultramarine was largely employed in the *Coronation of the Virgin*, requested by Bernardo Barbarigo for his private chapel in Palazzo Comunale of Crema after his election as *podestà* of the city. De Beni reported that the precious pigment has been found in the Virgin's cloak, in the shaded areas of the Christ's vestment, in the angels' tunics and even in the sky.[476] On the other hand, the sky of the *Saint Veneranda Enthroned*, a work which was most likely commissioned by the nuns of the Corpus Domini after the dispute with the nuns of Saint Lucy over the relics of the namesake saint, is painted in lead white and azurite, while the bright blue mantle of Saint Veneranda is composed by two layers, an underpaint of azurite, and a superficial layer of ultramarine. In this case Bastiani had to economise the use of ultramarine, indeed the painting process applied here is called "a risparmio".[477] Finally, although the standards requested to Bastiani and Benedetto Diana for Piazza San Marco in 1505 have been lost, we know from the contract that the *Signoria* provided the most expensive material for the execution, thus the use of gold and the ultramarine blue in this work.[478]

From this summary, it is evident that Bastiani's artistic technique is ordinary for a 15th century painter.

It is necessary to underline that numerous conservation treatments carried out on most of Bastiani's paintings (at least in the last century) have pointed out the aggressive cleaning procedures carried out during old restoration works, which have, sadly, abraded (in some cases down to the preparatory ground) and altered the tone of the original pigments. This kind of damage has been further revealed by optical microscope analysis on samples. Moreover, today some works are still in an extremely poor state of preservation, as is the case,

[476] DE BENI, 2010, p. 203.

[477] Restoration report, VOLPIN, 1996.

[478] LUDWIG, 105, p. 59. See also Chapter 4.3.

for instance, with the two panels with *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* and *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* in the storage of the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. These panels show several cracks and have a generally dirty appearance, conditions which combine to conceal the bright original colour. Another notable example in very poor condition is the signed *Madonna and Child* in The National Gallery, London, which is currently conserved in the museum depository. The work shows numerous *lacunae* and areas where the pigment layer has been reduced down to the preparation, and, in places, the paint surface is so thin that the underdrawing can be seen, through the paint, with the naked eye. IRR is useful to enlighten further our knowledge regarding the conservation status of the paintings, but the condition of the work must be taken into account when examining IRR images, as this can affect the results, and lead to them being misinterpreted.

4.4.2. UNDERDRAWING IN THE WORK OF LAZZARO BASTIANI

In January 1470 the Scuola Grande di San Marco commissioned Lazzaro Bastiani to paint a *telero* composed of two fields depicting the *Instoria de David*. The contract drawn up between the two parties explicitly stipulated that, before proceeding, the artist had to provide a drawing of the overall composition for the approval of the confraternity members, so that they could have elements added or removed to their liking (Cat. LD02, see also Chapter 2, *ad vocem* 1470, 7th January).[479]

Discussing Lazzaro Bastiani's *Saint Veneranda Altarpiece* in the second edition of his *Vite* (1568), Giorgio Vasari made mention of those original drawings which, by that time, were in his collection (Cat. LD01).[480]

Unfortunately, none of Bastiani's drawings survived and today we cannot ascribe any drawing with any certainty to Bastiani, either by means of documents or from direct comparisons with his autograph paintings. The abovementioned textual references, are, however, evidence of Bastiani's graphic activity, in accordance with contemporary Venetian artists' drawing practice as preparation for painting. Though Vasari did not provide any further information on the drawings in his possession (he did not clarify, for instance, whether they were sketches or compositional drawings), the "contract drawing" submitted for acceptance to the Scuola di San Marco was probably a *vidimus*, a highly elaborate finished drawing with as much significant detail as possible to be presented to the patrons.

In effect, research regarding Bastiani's graphic production has always been of secondary importance, with sporadic and tentative attributions based on

[479] "[…] El debi depenzer l'instoria de david secondo el desegno die far de tal instoria el qual visto se possi per nui azonzer e detrazer al parer nostro prima chel nebi dado principio sopra dicto teller […]". PAOLETTI-LUDWIG, 1900a, p. 184.

[480] "[…] Molto bella, della quale n'avemo i proprii disegni di mano di costoro nel nostro libro". VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1971, III, p. 623. For Vasari's *Libro de' disegni*, refer to COLLOBI RAGGHIANTI, 1974, I-II.

stylistic grounds only. Collobi's (1939) and Tietzes' (1944) contributions are still the most comprehensive studies on the matter.[481]

Today, only three drawings are assigned to Bastiani: *Madonna della Misericordia* in The British Museum in London (Cat. AD01); *Two Scenes from the Life of the Virgin* in the Louvre Museum in Paris (Cat. AD02); *Seated Male Saint* in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam (Cat. AD03).

As already noticed by the Tietzes, the Louvre example "is a very finished drawing, of the kind an artist might have presented to his prospective patrons",[482] so, similar to the one requested by the Scuola di San Marco. Owing to similarities with the architectural setting of the *predella* in Jacquemart André and the *telero* for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, the Paris drawing can be dated around mid-1490s. Given the scarce number of drawings that have survived, we cannot outline with any certainty Bastiani's working process, even though he most likely followed the same routine as his contemporaries, such as Gentile Bellini and Vittore Carpaccio.[483] The pen-and-ink contract drawing in the Louvre, therefore, is most likely the final stage of a design procedure whose early phase experiments probably mainly showed Bastiani's concern with the pictorial structure, the spatial arrangement, and the topographical accuracy of the composition.

The drawing of the *Madonna della Misericordia*, on blue paper typical of Venice, was ascribed to Bastiani by K.T. Parker in 1927.[484] Collobi, followed by the Tietzes, agreed with this attribution, suggesting a date of execution of around 1490, by comparing it with the Bergamo *Coronation* and recalling the quite striking contrast between the archaic appearance of the rigidity and symmetry of the composition and the Carpaccesque character of the figures' heads. Parker conjectured that the drawing was a design for a *pax* and given the

[481] COLLOBI, 1939, pp. 50-51; TIETZE, TIETZE-CONRAT, 1944, pp. 59-61.

[482] TIETZE, TIETZE-CONRAT, 1944, p. 59.

[483] AMES-LEWIS, 1981, pp. 139-145.

[484] PARKER, 1927, p. 32 (n. 49).

finished level of the picture, Collobi argued that it might have been a model drawing to be presented to the commissioner.

The *Seated Male Saint* too is a finely wrought drawing on linen, in which much attention had been paid by the artist to the working out of the drapery and the effects of light and shade in the folds. This highly elaborated drawing might have been a *simile*, to be preserved in the workshop and re-used as a reference design for realisation of cartoons for paintings. In addition, given the accuracy in the exploration of the fall of light on the Saint's robe and mantle and of the arrangement of the drapery folds, it might also be classified as a study. The argument that the work is of this nature is further supported by the artist's use of linen as substrate. Canvas, indeed, was not widely exploited for drawings in the 15th century and Leonardo drapery studies on linen must be mentioned as the main examples of the use of this kind of substrate. In fact, in the second edition of his *Vite*, Vasari gave the young Leonardo credit for this innovative technique.[485] Although undoubtedly less impressive than Leonardo's, Bastiani's drawing on linen share with them the same purposes: firstly, in making use of a support which was more durable and flexible than paper – especially if the drawing was intended to be preserved and re-used; secondly, allowing for the research for a pictorial result working by pen and brush, ink and tempera to be made directly onto a painting support. Concerning the period of execution, Collobi believed that this work was made between 1460 and 1470 under the influence of Andrea Mantegna,[486] while recently Russo has

[485] "[…] E perché la professione sua volle che fusse la pittura, studiò assai di ritrar di naturale, e qualche volta in far modegli di figure di terra, et adosso a quelle metteva cenci molli interrati, e poi con pazienza si metteva a ritrargli sopra a certe tele sottilissime di rensa o di panni lini adoperati, e gli lavorava di nero e bianco con la punta del pennello, che era cosa miracolosa, come ancora ne fa fede alcuni che ne ho di sua mano in sul nostro libro de' disegni" (VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1976, IV, p. 17). The extant drawing of drapery studies on linen are considered youthful works, being dated in the 1470s, when Leonardo was an apprentice in Verrocchio's workshop. For further insight of this technique, see BAMBACH, 2004, pp. 44-55; for further reference, see MARIANI, 2015, pp. 519-520 (Cat. I. 11, I, 12) and previous bibliography.

[486] COLLOBI, 1939, p. 50.

convincingly suggested a date between 1480 and 1488, when this work is compared with others in Bastiani's catalogue realised in this decade, such as the *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia of Venice, or the *Christ Blessing* in the Galleria Estense of Modena.[487]

The drawings identified so far must be placed in a period of maturity or in the final years of Bastiani's career, thus not providing any further understanding of Bastiani's graphic practice in his problematic early phase. Further theories regarding this issue, were offered by scholars during the 20th century. Such ideas were not based upon documentary evidence but rather relied only upon interpretation of stylistic evidence and – to a significant degree – on the particular scholar's intuition, albeit that the latter was well rooted in experience and art historical knowledge.

In an attempt to explain the hard, incisive character of Bastiani's outline Longhi advanced the hypothesis – in a significant footnote of his *Officina Ferrarese* (1934) – that Lazzaro was competent as an engraver by means of the burin in the 1460s, during his early years as painter. To support his theory, Longhi attributed to Bastiani the E-series of the so-called *Mantegna Tarocchi*.[488] Longhi's ascription was rejected by Collobi – who did agree however, that the

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[487] RUSSO, 2023.

[488] LONGHI, 1934, ed. cons. 1968, p. 97 (note 59). In the catalogue of paintings to be ascribed to Bastiani Longhi included in the early phase of his career the *Saint Jerome and Donor* in Monopoli Diocesan Museum, the *Adoration of the Magi* in The Frick Collection, New York, the Matera polyptych, the panels with *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, and, finally, the *Portrait of Doge Francesco Foscari* in Correr Museum. While this latter work has been rejected by the author of this thesis, in accordance with CASU (1996, p. 88 [note 74]) and RUSSO (2017, note 7), the others have been postponed to the 1470s. It is evident, however, that Longhi did not refer to the art of engraving for reproductions of complex pictorial compositions (such as those realised by Mantegna, who became fascinated by the potential of printmaking and contributed hugely to the diffusion of this innovative technique in Italy, see CHRISTIANSEN, 2009, pp. 47-63), nor in the engraving procedure associated with book printing. Both these artistic activities that exploit engraving largely developed in the second half of the 15th century. On this topic refer to the pivotal publication of LANDAU-PARSHALL, 1994, pp. 1-6, 104-120, 284-309.

artist was possibly skilled in engraving –,[489] and was not concurred with subsequent scholars, who believed the artist was, in the case of the *Tarocchi*, a Ferrarese engraver.[490] Recently, Gnaccolini has accepted Longhi's attribution, suggesting Lazzaro Bastiani as being the artist engraver of the *Mantegna Tarocchi* on the basis of stylistic comparisons with his paintings.[491] Personally though, I do not see, those clear stylistic and formal similarities with Bastiani's works observed by Gnaccolini, thus I would not accept her attribution to our artist.[492]

In the same footnote, Longhi further expanded upon his analysis of Bastiani's graphic practice. Indeed, the art historian suggested that Bastiani was also skilled in painting miniatures. In Longhi's opinion, the abilities of Bastiani as a miniaturist were evident in two miniature-like paintings that he attributed to the artist, namely the small *Pietà* on parchment in the Poldi Pezzoli of Milan (Cat. A22) and the panel portraying *God the Father, the Resurrected Christ, the Virgin Mary, Angels, and Devotees* (mistakenly believed to be a *Mystical Allegory* by Longhi) in the Pinacoteca Malaspina in Pavia.[493]

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[489] COLLOBI, 1939, pp. 35, 50. Concerning the *Mantegna Tarocchi*, Collobi stated that they were "molto vicine per maniera ed epoca al nostro, ma probabilmente da considerare di un artista affine, più che opera di sua mano" (p. 35). On accepting Longhi's suggestion, Collobi said: "[…] Un'operosità bulinistica del pittore, che sarebbe insieme causa ed effetto delle sue particolarità stilistiche di fronte ai contemporanei. Suggestiva ipotesi, che abbiamo accettata (anche se non concordiamo nella proposta attribuzione al Bastiani dei *Tarocchi* detti del Mantegna)" (p. 50).

[490] For bibliographical references on the various attributions given to the *tarocchi*, please refer to *L'Uomo Divino…*, 2018, p. 151 (notes 89-90). As Gnaccolini noticed, the Ferrarese origin of the cards must be discarded (p. 151 [note 90]). The scholar also dated the tarot cards to around 1465-1467 (p. 159).

[491] *L'Uomo Divino…*, 2018, pp. 151-161.

[492] Gnaccolini also suggested to ascribe to Bastiani a list of engravings generally assigned to the same master of the E-series of the *Mantegna Tarocchi*. *L'Uomo Divino…*, 2018, pp. 160-161, notes 148-149.

[493] LONGHI, 1934, ed. cons. 1968, p. 98 (note 59). In 1981 museum catalogue, Giovanna Giacomelli Vedovello observed that while several elements were typical of Bastiani, given its overall execution, the panel in the Pavia Museum was more likely a product of the workshop

An intriguing theory supporting Longhi's statement regarding Bastiani's possible activity as a miniaturist was suggested by Quattrini (1992). The scholar ascribed to Lazzaro the monochrome pen drawings of the capital letters and *marginalia* in the incunable G.III.13, composed of two volumes with Petrarca's *Triumphs* and *Canzoniere*, which is held in the Queriniana Library (Brescia).[494] According to Quattrini, the illustrations enriching the incunable, printed in Venice by Bernardino Rizzo in 1488,[495] are not by an expert miniaturist, but by an artist that was not exclusively dedicated to the decoration of books. The attribution to Bastiani was also supported, Quattrini continued, by stylistic comparison with his paintings and drawings (for example the *Madonna della Misericordia* in The British Museum, London), with which the scholar specifically noticed affinities in the drapery construction, in the figures, with their oval heads, small eyes and mouths, and in the generic appearance of their faces. As already pointed out by Quattrini herself, the late execution of the incunable, and therefore of the drawings, explains the contrast with the dry and schematic compositions of Bastiani's paintings of the 1480s-1490s. She also added that accepting this attribution would attest that at a late phase of his career Bastiani was more creative in graphic production (depicting narrative pictures of a small size) than in painting.[496] Before accepting Quattrini's ascription to Bastiani, albeit a fascinating and quite convincing proposal, I believe that further research should be carried out on the Queriniana incunable decorations, not only on the basis of stylistic

– an opinion I personally agree with (GIACOMELLI VEDOVELLO, 1981, p. 161). For further information on the artwork, please see the latest catalogue entry of the Pinacoteca Malaspina: PORRECA, 2011, p. 186.

494 QUATTRINI, 1992, pp. 56-62.

495 BARONCELLI, 1970, pp. 303-305 (Cat. 722, 727).

496 "Il livello di questi disegni è tale da apparire in contrasto con i segni di inaridimento che contraddistinguono in parte la produzione pittorica di Lazzaro Bastiani negli stessi anni e attesta, a questa data, esiti migliori in rappresentazioni narrative e di piccolo formato piuttosto che nelle composizioni monumentali dei dipinti d'altare". QUATTRINI, 1992, p. 60.

comparisons with Bastiani's paintings, but also in comparison with his underdrawings.

Further insights into Bastiani's graphic practice can be indirectly deduced from his production of cartoons for mosaics and tapestries. Over the years, some mosaics in the Basilica of San Marco and a tapestry originally in the church of Isola di Santo Spirito (Venice) – now displayed in the Church of Santa Maria della Salute – have been recognised as being realised from cartoons made by Bastiani. Again, however, no cartoons or drawings that can be associated to Bastiani's mosaics or tapestries have survived.[497]

It is worth recalling here that until the beginning of the 15th century the mosaic was intended as a fresco painting made of glass *tesserae*, for which a *sinopia* (which was subsequently coloured) was drawn on the *intonaco* to guide the mosaicist in the execution of the work. From at least the 1430s however – after the work of Paolo Uccello in the Basilica – a new procedure, the *spolvero*, was adopted to transfer the design of the composition from a cartoon on paper directly to the wall.[498] Alvise and Vincenzo Bastiani, Lazzaro's sons, were actively involved as mosaicists in the decoration and restoration of mosaics in the Basilica at least from 1488 until 1512, participating to the technical and stylistic evolution of the mosaics in San Marco from the Byzantine tradition to the contemporary Venetian artistic practice.[499] In accordance with the

[497] Even though not specifically referring to the mosaics in San Marco, in his latest contribution on Bastiani's *Male Saint* drawing in Rotterdam (Cat. AD03), Russo made convincing stylistic comparisons with these works. RUSSO, 2023.

[498] ROBOTTI, 1997, pp. 278-283. Vasari mentioned the use of the cartoon regarding the mosaics design: "E però bisogna che il disegno de' cartoni che per esso si fanno sia aperto, largo, facile, chiaro e di bontà e bella maniera continuato" (VASARI, 1568, ed. cons. 1966, I, p. 148).

[499] A document recorded the payment to Alvise Bastiani for some works executed in the Basilica in May and June 1488 (MERKEL, 1994, p. 88 [fig. 29]). Alvise's activity as mosaicist in the Basilica seems to have lasted until 1493, when another document recorded the last payment to the artist (MERKEL, 1996, p. 184). On the 18th of March 1512 Marin Sanudo reported the accidental death of Vincenzo Bastiani by falling from a scaffold (SANUDO, 1886, col. 228 [123v]). For further information on the Bastiani family active in San Marco, please refer to Cat. M01-M07 and related bibliography.

tradition of family workshop practices, Lazzaro provided his sons with the cartoons they employed in the renovation of the mosaics. The cartoon and the execution of the mosaic portraying *Saint Sergius* (Cat. M07), signed "LAZAR/VS · B · F", on the intrados of the Chapel of Saint Clemente, can be ascribed to Lazzaro himself.[500] This attribution is further supported comparing the pose of the saint to that of the painted sculpture of the Evangelist Luke on the right side of the external *pontile* (rood screen) in the *telero* of the *Offering of the Relic of the Cross* for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista (c. 1494, Cat. AP58). These two images could be derived from a single model drawing on paper available for re-purposing in the workshop, in one case then worked up as element of the composition for the canvas painting, in the other developed as a full-scale cartoon for the mosaic.

A fully finished and coloured cartoon of the (final) composition was a necessary guide for the weaver in the production of tapestries too. Before the weaving began, the pattern had to be traced onto the bare warps.[501] The tapestry from Santo Spirito, representing the *Pentecost* (Cat. AT01), shows several elements derived from Bastiani's paintings, especially from his 1490s' works. The amalgamated character of the composition, in fact, led Adriana Augusti to believe that the execution of this specific tapestry was not based on

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[500] Merkel suggested that the mosaic was made by Alvise upon his father's cartoon. MERKEL, 1994, pp. 89-91. In this thesis this hypothesis has been discarded, see Cat. M07.

[501] CAMPBELL, 2002, pp. 5-6. An outstanding example of full-scale designs for tapestries that has survived until the present day is the set of cartoons that Raphael created upon commission of Pope Leone X for the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican Palace. Today seven (out of ten originals) cartoons are on display in the Raphael Court of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. For general bibliographical references on the cartoons, please see *Raphael: cartoons…*, 2010 and here, specifically, pp. 33-37 for the technical aspects related to the weaving from the cartoons. It is also worth sharing the link to the Victoria & Albert Museum website dedicated to the Raphael cartoons: https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/raphael-cartoons?gclid=CjwKCAjwlqOXBhBqEiwA-hhitNlDgGb0iwe1qr3YM8RhpmFRxB3_b5WDpT-DqZ763qSJy7KOjW16zhoCax0QAvD_BwE (last viewed 2nd of August 2022). In 2019 an ultra-high-resolution recording in the visible and infrared range, and in 3D of the artworks has been carried out. The images are accessible in the section "Explore the Raphael Cartoons".

a single cartoon by a given artist. In her opinion, the weaver had instead mixed elements and motifs (some unusual, others more generic and widespread) which were taken from various contemporary paintings.[502]

Now that I have provided the reader with the necessary insight regarding direct and indirect evidence of Bastiani's graphic production, the results of the investigation carried out on Bastiani's underdrawing in paintings will be presented hereafter. Given the paucity of historic drawings on paper by Bastiani, the revelation and study of his underdrawing through the infrared reflectography technique continues to allow a fresh and innovative light to be shed upon Bastiani's artistic practice.

As explained in Chapter 3.4, the IR imaging database includes 38 underdrawn images collected from Bastiani's autograph and attributed paintings. The research is ongoing and further analyses must be carried out in the future to provide a more complete understanding of Bastiani's underdrawing practice. It would also be useful to extend the scientific investigation to Bastiani's painting technique (in the current thesis this has only been outlined on the basis of few examinations carried out in the past) in order to present an even more comprehensive interpretation of Bastiani's *modus operandi*. In this chapter the most significant results are discussed.

Given that the examination of the underdrawing is a new area of Bastiani's technique to be studied, firstly the evidence that emerged from the reflectograms of confirmed autograph and dated works will be analysed and described, in order to define a reference baseline from authentic works. This baseline will be extended to the corpus of attributed paintings.

It is essential to emphasise once again that infrared images of Bastiani's paintings have been generated using a wide range of equipment. This aspect must be considered while interpreting the infrared images, since most of the "archive" pictures were taken in the past by means of low-res photographic

[502] *Restituzioni '90…*, 1990, p. 44. For an alternative viewpoint, see Muraro's interpretation of the tapestry and his comparison with elements in Carpaccio's works: MURARO, 1963, pp. 130-134.

devices with low spectral resolution, while the reflectograms specifically acquired for this research have been collected by the Osiris and the Apollo cameras (see Chapter 3.4 and "Appendix").[503] If the analyses of "archive" IR images were repeated with improved technology, the information acquired on the paintings would be more certain and reliable (for example, new images might show that the underdrawing was executed more extensively or in more considerable detail than previously believed).

Another issue which should be taken into consideration when interpreting the IR images is the state of preservation of the artworks. In fact, poor conservation and aggressive cleaning procedures carried out in the past caused the loss of painting material right down to the preparatory ground in several Bastiani's paintings. The presence of *lacunae*, stuccoed areas, inpainting and overpainting can compromise the visualisation of the underdrawing. Examples showing damaged areas on the whole surface are the *Portraits of Doge Antonio Venier and Doge Michele Steno* (*Fig. 6*, *Fig. 7*), and the *telero Communion of Saint Jerome* (*Fig. 10*, *Fig. 11*), whose conservation history has been troubled.

The *Doges Portraits* (Cat. AP52) originally were in the so-called "camera di doxi" that miraculously survived the devastating fire which broke out on September 1483 in the Easter area of Doge's Palace, destroying several rooms. In fact, as emphasised by Lorenzetti, when the canvas entered the Correr Museum collection in 1921, after a bequest of Count Alessandro Venier, it was darkened in appearance, the paint was dry and burned areas were present (compare also the photograph published in Lorenzetti's article).[504] After a complete conservation treatment of the support and the pigment layers, several *lacunae* and damaged areas emerged, such as in the doges' faces, whose underdrawing is almost entirely lost (*Fig. 6*, *Fig. 7*).

[503] For the specifications of the two devices and the setup parameters of each analysis, refer to Chapter 8 ("Appendix: equipment and diagnostic campaign").

[504] LORENZETTI, 1933, pp. 387-398.



Fig. 6. L. Bastiani, *Portraits of Doge Michele Steno and of Doge Antonio Venier*, Venice, Correr Museum. Detail of Doge Michele Steno (visible).



Fig. 7. Detail of Doge Michele Steno (IRR, Apollo).

When the two canvases with *Scenes from the Life of Saint Jerome* (Cat. AP55) were returned to Venice from Vienna, both showed extensive overpainted areas, partly dating from the 17th century and partly probably added during the work's long sojourn in Austria (from 1838 to 1919. *Fig. 8*). Once an extensive conservation treatment was carried out in 1948-1949 by Mauro Pellicioli and Giuseppe Arrigoni, consisting of the removal of all the overpainting, the whole surface of the *Communion of Saint Jerome* was revealed to be in very poor preservation condition, with numerous *lacunae* and damaged areas that had previously been covered. The tamed lion on the extreme right side, for instance, was completely overpainted (*Fig. 9*, *Fig. 10*). After the cleaning, few remaining lines of the original drawing of the lion emerged. This outline was also confirmed by Valentina Piovan, who performed the latest conservation treatment in 1996-1997 (*Fig. 10*), and by the reflectogram that has recently been executed (*Fig. 11*). This latter picture also shows very well the paint losses and the high degree of abrasion of the pigment layers.



Fig. 8. L. Bastiani, *Communion of Saint Jerome*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the lion on the right side before Pellicioli and Arrigoni restoration of 1948-1949.



Fig. 9. Detail of the lion during the cleaning by Pellicioli and Arrigoni in 1948-1949.



Fig. 10. Detail of the lion as it is today, after the 1996-1997 restoration (visible).



Fig. 11. Detail of the lion's underdrawing (IRR, Osiris).

The extension of deteriorated and retouched and inpainted areas is even more evident when the information on the condition of the artwork obtained from IR images is integrated with that from photos in the ultraviolet (UV) range.[505]

[505] When irradiated by UV radiation, some painting materials, such as varnishes and some pigments and dyes, become fluorescent, re-emitting in the visible range. A recent varnish appears brighter than an aged one. This technique, therefore, is particularly useful in detecting

A clear example of this is shown in the figures of the Virgin and the infant Jesus in the *Madonna and Child Enthroned* in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin (*Fig. 12*), where extended retouched parts are present not only in the Virgin's hands, as shown by the IR photography (*Fig. 13*), but also in the Virgin's and Jesus' faces, as highlighted by the UV photo (*Fig. 14*).



Fig. 12. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with the Archangel Gabriel, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias*, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland. Detail of the Virgin and the infant Jesus (visible).



Fig. 13. Detail of the Virgin and the infant Jesus ("Archive" IR photography).



Fig. 14. Detail of the Virgin and the infant Jesus ("Archive" UV photography).

In some cases, however, owing to the poor condition of the paint film, which is extremely abraded, the underdrawn hatching can be discerned with the unaided eye, as is the case for instance in the *Madonna and Child* in The National Gallery in London (AP15) and in the *Annunciation* in the Correr Museum in Venice (AP48). In the London *Madonna* the underdrawing is evident in the light areas, such as in the Virgin's and infant Jesus' flesh tones, or in the white cushion, and in the light brown-greyish marble parapet (*Fig. 15*, *Fig. 16*). In the Venice *Annunciation* it is clearly visible in the Angel's dress, which entirely lacks the superficial paint (most likely removed during an

old, restored areas, as well as to spot superficial retouching applied over the varnish film, since they show as dark patches. As reference see POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, pp. 157-172.

aggressive cleaning treatment in the past), showing the underdrawing executed directly on the preparatory layer (*Fig. 17*, *Fig. 18*).[506]

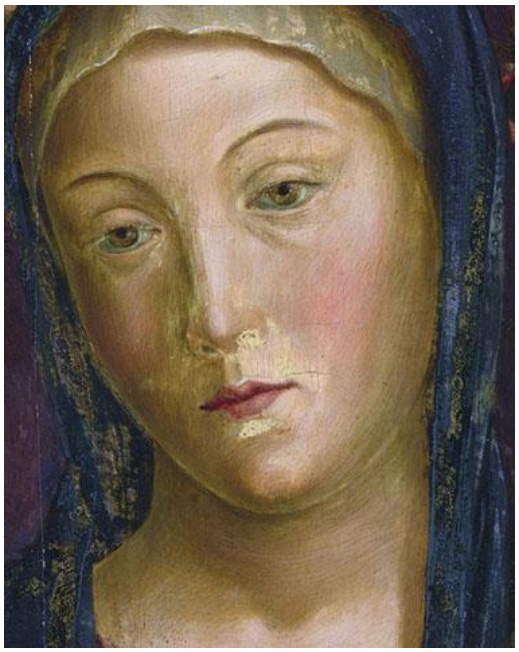


Fig. 15. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, London, The National Gallery. Hatching visible through the painting layers in the Virgin's face.

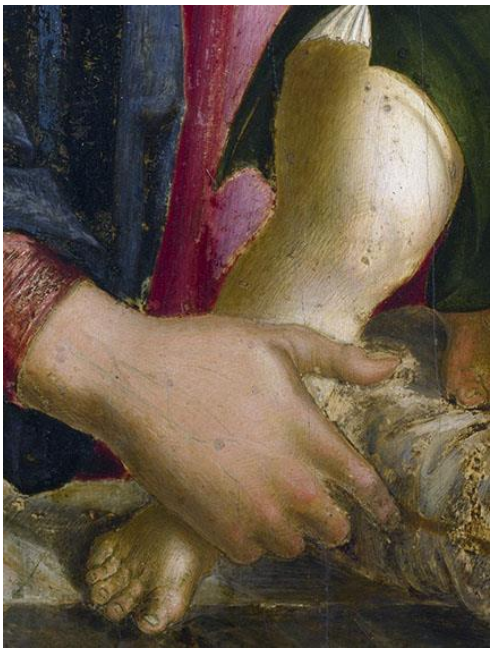


Fig. 16. Hatching of the infant Jesus' leg and the Virgin's right hand visible through the painting layers. Lines of hatching can be observed also on the parapet.



Fig. 17. L. Bastiani, *Annunciation*, Venice, Correr Museum. Detail of the Archangel Gabriel's dress showing the underdrawn hatching.



Fig. 18. Detail of the Archangel Gabriel's dress showing the underdrawn hatching.

Despite the problematic issue of determining Bastiani's catalogue and chronology of the first three decades of his long artistic career, from the 1480 *Nativity* formerly in the Church of Sant'Elena onwards, Bastiani's paintings

[506] VEDOVELLO, 1993, p. 134.

show a fully formed style and established characteristics.[507] To these years belong all Bastiani's signed pieces and, most importantly, his only two signed and dated pictures, the Murano *lunette* representing the *Madonna and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Donatus, and the Donor Giovanni degli Angeli* (1484, Cat. AP27) and the Bergamo *Coronation of the Virgin between Saint Benedict and Saint Ursula* (1490, Cat. AP03). These latter works have been used as stylistic references by scholars to define Bastiani's chronology for the mature phase of his career, as his personal and particular hallmarks are clearly distinctive in these compositions.

Bastiani's interest in central perspective construction is evident in his paintings of this period. Buildings and architectural elements (for instance pavement tiles), as well as other features of the composition (such as hedgerows and trees in the landscape) form continuous perspective lines converging to a single vanishing point on the horizon line. In addition, the main scene in the foreground is intentionally divided from the background by a horizontal component, usually a low parapet. These geometrical settings are populated by stiffly posed and hieratic figures portrayed standing, sitting, or kneeling. They are dressed in garments described by a marked geometrical way of folding and sharply delineated creases.

In general, the underdrawing revealed by infrared reflectography analysis performed on these works is careful and precise. We can assume that the underdrawing in Bastiani's paintings has been executed by means of a fluid

[507] The signed and unquestionably autograph paintings included in the IR imaging database built up for this research are *Annunciation* in Correr Museum, Venice (AP48); *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice (AP60); the Murano *lunette* (1484, AP27); *Madonna and Child* in Castelvecchio, Verona (AP62); *Coronation* (1490) in Accademia Carrara, Bergamo (AP03). The autograph works not examined either in the past nor for the current research include *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* (AP61) and the *telero* with *Offering of the Relic of the Cross* (AP58), which are both in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice; *Pietà* in the Church of Sant'Antonin, Venice (AP47); *Episodes from the life of Paul I of Constantinople* in Musée Jacquemart André, Paris (AP31); *Saint Augustine Giving the Rule* in Montevideo (AP26); *Madonna and Child* in The National Gallery, London (AP15).

drawing medium, most likely employing a carbon black pigment or ink applied by brush, as the marks appear smooth and continuous.[508] The coarser and broken appearance of the design in some areas may be connected to abrasions of the pictorial layers, probably due to bad conservation conditions over the years and/or aggressive cleaning during restoration treatments carried out in the past. The face of Saint Ursula in the Bergamo *Coronation* provides a clear example of this issue (*Fig. 19*, *Fig. 20*). Variations in width and density of the lines might suggest that brushes of different sizes and a more or less diluted pigment have been employed.



Fig. 19. L. Bastiani, *Coronation of the Virgin between Saint Benedict and Saint Ursula*, Bergamo, Accademia Carrara, 1490. Saint Ursula (visible).



Fig. 20. Saint Ursula (IRR, Apollo).

Before painting began, every aspect of the composition was established in advance in the underdrawing. In fact, the outlining in Bastiani's works is very complete, with every contour scrupulously drawn. Figures and animals (including also genre figures and angels in the background), architectural structures, and other, even minor, features are all entirely outlined.

[508] Although not investigated by means of the IRR technique, the stratigraphic analysis on samples taken from the *Saint Veneranda* altarpiece has detected carbon particles beneath the pigment layers, proving the existence of the underdrawing. For the scientific analysis performed on the *Saint Veneranda altarpiece*, please see Chapter 4.4.1 and Cat. AP61.

Physiognomic characteristics (mouth, nose, eyes, eyebrows, chin lines, wrinkles, beard, and hair) are all represented in the underdrawing stage.

In the collected IR images of Bastiani's mature paintings, therefore, we can observe, for instance, the drawing of the very abraded hovering angels in the Bergamo *Coronation* (*Fig. 21*, *Fig. 22*), the contour of the church and convent in the landscape background of the *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree* (*Fig. 23*, *Fig. 24*), and even the outline of secondary small details, for instance the freehand sketched saints framed in niches that decorate the cape of Saint Benedict in the Venice *Nativity* (*Fig. 25*, *Fig. 26*). We can also admire the careful description of the facial features of the main figures, such as, for example, the wrinkles and the curly hair in the portrait of donor Giovanni degli Angeli in the Murano *lunette* (*Fig. 27*, *Fig. 28*).



Fig. 21. L. Bastiani, *Coronation of the Virgin between Saint Benedict and Saint Ursula*, Bergamo, Accademia Carrara, 1490. Detail of the hovering angels (visible).



Fig. 22. Detail of the hovering angels (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 23. L. Bastiani, *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the church and convent in the background (visible).

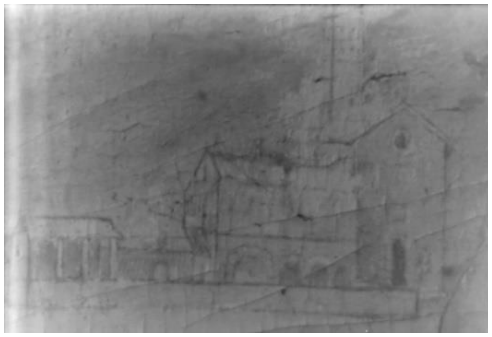


Fig. 24. Detail of the underdrawing outlining the church and convent in the background ("Archive" IR image).

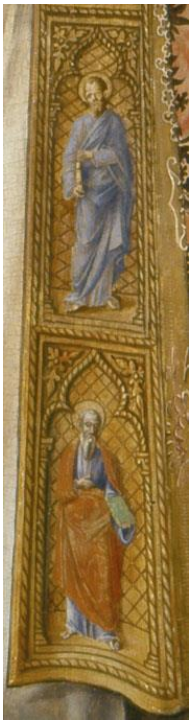


Fig. 25. L. Bastiani, *Nativity*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia, 1480. Detail of the decorations on Saint Benedict's cape (visible).



Fig. 26. Detail of the decorations on Saint Benedict's cape (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 27. *L. Bastiani, Madonna and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Donatus, and the Donor Giovanni degli Angeli*, Murano (Venice), Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, 1484. Detail of Giovanni degli Angeli's face (visible).



Fig. 28. Detail of Giovanni degli Angeli's underdrawing facial feature ("Archive" IR photography acquired during the cleaning procedure carried out in 1979).

Another aspect of Bastiani's underdrawing that that becomes clear from the IR images is the extensive elaboration of a hatched undermodelling, for the

volumetric definition of the forms and to work out the fall of light on figures and vestments (*Fig. 29*, *Fig. 30*).



Fig. 29. L. Bastiani, *Funeral of Saint Jerome, Venice,* Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the tamed lion (visible). The visibility of the underdrawing is helped by the strongly abraded paint layer.

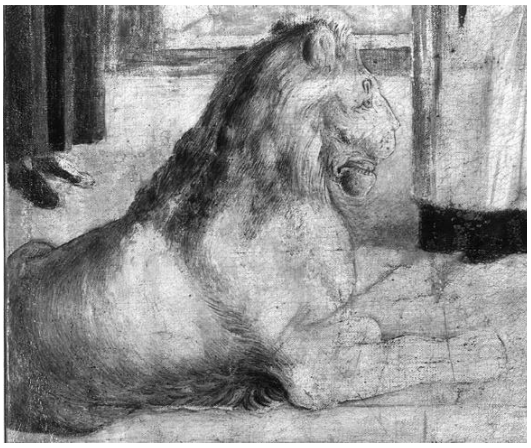


Fig. 30. Detail of the tamed lion (IRR, Osiris).

The revelation of these hatched areas might give us an indication of Bastiani's increased knowledge of Giovanni Bellini's underdrawing practice from the 1470s onwards, when Lazzaro and Giovanni were asked to realise two *teleri* for the Scuola Grande di San Marco.[509] It is necessary to emphasise, at this point, that later in the decade and in the following years, several of Bastiani's paintings were based on, or strongly influenced by Bellini's compositional ideas, suggesting not only a relationship between the two painters, but also that Bastiani was familiar with Giovanni's workshop, and, consequently, his artistic materials, and *modus operandi*.[510]

For a visual example of what has just been discussed above, we can compare the hatched undermodelling of the Virgin's mantle in Giovanni Bellini's Pesaro

[509] It should be mentioned too that, although in different periods, the two artists were involved, along with Alvise Vivarini, in the decoration of the meeting-room of the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo. They both executed two *teleri* each: Giovanni depicted *Saint Jerome Discoursing Outside the Monastery* and *Saint Jerome in His Study*, Lazzaro made *Communion of Saint Jerome* and *Funeral of Saint Jerome* (Cat. AP55). One of Bellini's canvases was inscribed with the date 1464, while Bastiani's paintings could be dated to the late 1470s or early 1480s. For general reference on the cycle see HUMFREY, 1985, pp. 41-46.

[510] This issue is addressed from a stylistic perspective in RUSSO, 2019, pp. 164-179.

Coronation[511] and in Bastiani's Venice *Nativity* (*Fig. 31*, *Fig. 32*) and Bergamo *Coronation* (*Fig. 33*, *Fig. 34*). Gianluca Poldi and Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa described Bellini's *grisaille* Madonna by underlining the artist's "ability to modulate the intensity of the drawing, with fading in the lights and cross-hatching in some shadows".[512] Even though the work does not reach the same painterly excellence of Bellini's masterpiece, we can however appreciate Bastiani's efforts to establish the *chiaroscuro* modelling of his Virgins' garments. The hatching here is worked out with stronger emphasis, though no less accurately, than in Bellini's picture. The long, parallel and closely spaced lines follow the forms, defining the body of the figures and scooping out the drapery folds. The lines are closely spaced in shaded zones, more widely spaced and with a more diluted pigment in mid-tones and absent in the highlights. In areas of dark shadow or in the deepest fabric pleats it seems that such lines have been modulated by tracing over the marks more than once, and by varying the dilution of the paint.

As described so far, Bastiani's undermodelling treatment of the Virgins' mantles is very similar, nonetheless, a substantial difference can be observed between the two reflectograms. In fact, while in the *Nativity* the garment folds are modelled almost exclusively through the hatching (giving the figure also a pictorial effect), in the *Coronation* the creases are further reinforced with a harsh linear outline that causes the garment to appear rigid (especially in the bottom part of the mantle).

[511] The reflectogram of the full-length figure of the Virgin is published in POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, p. 351 (fig. 47).

[512] POLDI-VILLA, 2011, p. 31. For a further analysis of the *Pesaro Altarpiece* underdrawing, see also POLDI-VILLA, 2009, pp. 57-61.



Fig. 31. L. Bastiani, *Nativity*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia, 1480. Detail of the Virgin (visible).



Fig. 32. Detail of the Virgin (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 33. L. Bastiani, *Coronation of the Virgin*, Bergamo, Accademia Carrara, 1490. Detail of the Virgin (visible).



Fig. 34. Detail of the Virgin (IRR, Apollo).

It should be noticed, however, that in Bastiani's paintings realised around mid-1480s, in works such as the small *Christ Blessing* in Modena (Cat. AP24. *Fig. 35*, *Fig. 36*) and the *Madonna and Child* in Verona (AP62), the internal modelling of draperies is highly worked up with hatched shadows, but the contours are also emphatically strengthened, giving the garments an almost geometrical appearance. We might infer, therefore, that the underdrawing of the *Coronation* represents a late and formulaic result of a gradual process of linear strengthening and sharpening carried out by Bastiani that led his figures to become dull and their draperies to appear stiff. In addition, further examples showing the extent of this development can also be found in Bastiani's drawings of *Seated Male Saint* in Rotterdam (Cat. AD3. *Fig. 37*) and *Madonna della Misericordia* in London (*Fig. 38*).



Fig. 35. L. Bastiani, *Christ Blessing*, Modena, Galleria Estense. Detail of the mantle drapery (visible).



Fig. 36. Detail of the mantle drapery (IR photography).



Fig. 37. L. Bastiani, *Seated Male Saint*, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. Detail of the drapery.



Fig. 38. L. Bastiani, *Madonna della Misericordia*, London, The British Museum. Detail of the marked folding of the garment.

In the two big panels representing *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, executed around the mid-1470s, probably under request of the nuns of the Church of Corpus Domini, Bastiani's underdrawing is different from that clearly Bellinesque previously analysed. The reinforced lines defining the contours and describing draperies, as well as the short, parallel hatching strokes disposed diagonally and carefully spaced apart, are more similar to certain drawings and underdrawings by artists who had associations with Padua and Squarcione's workshop, such as Carlo Crivelli and Marco Zoppo[513]. It appears, however, that here Bastiani did not exploit hatching primarily for undermodelling of the figures, but rather for a generic indication of the shaded areas useful for modelling of the *chiaroscuro* directly during the subsequent painting stage. In the Canaanite woman's vestment, for instance, the areas showing hatching marks have been covered with dark red glazing for shadow indication, obtaining a volumetric effect (*Fig. 39*, *Fig. 40*). A different reasoning might explain the more elaborated undermodelling of the apostle's garment on the far left of the episode of *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*. In the reflectogram, in fact, the dense hatching in the areas with deep folds establishes a plastic

[513] For Zoppo's drawings on paper (ARMSTRONG, 1976).

construction of the mantle, which instead appears flat in the visible painting due to the light blue-greenish paint layer that covers the underdrawing, concealing it. In this case, it can be argued that, originally, the mantle was most likely being executed with a very diluted opaque pigment (like malachite or smalt blue). The paint film, therefore, would have covered the hatching marks if they were drawn as in the Canaanite vestment.[514] This clarifies the reason why Bastiani worked out the sub-modelling in the apostle's mantle with a more elaborate *chiaroscuro* (*Fig. 41*, *Fig. 42*). Finally, given that Christ's garment was painted in dark blue, it would have been useless to realise any kind of underdrawing to indicate areas of shadow. To overcome this issue, according to a Medieval practice, Bastiani incised the contours of the drapery folds. We might imagine that he subsequently heightened the area by lightning strikes with a light pigment or by the application of the gold leaf (*Fig. 43*, *Fig. 44*)



Fig. 39. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Canaanite Woman*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the Canaanite's mantle (visible).



Fig. 40. Detail of the reinforced outline in the drapery folds and of the hatching for shaded areas indication in the Canaanite's mantle (IRR, Osiris).

[514] What we see today is probably the first layer of pigment that had to be covered with superficial glazes. Small areas of a darker green paint are probably traces of an old restoration that was removed or fell off. Unfortunately, we do not have information about restorations of this painting in the past. Only scientific analyses to examine the materials and painting stratigraphy could confirm this hypothesis.



Fig. 41. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the apostle's light green mantle (visible).



Fig. 42. Detail of the insisted hatching that defines folds and shaded areas (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 43. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of Christ's dark blue mantle (visible).



Fig. 44. Detail of the incisions that outline the drapery folds in Christ's dark blue mantle (IRR, Osiris).

In the 38 IR images composing the database investigated for this thesis only a few *pentimenti* during the underdrawing and the painting process have been identified. These sporadic, minimal adjustments to the design are mainly in secondary details, thus not substantially modifying the overall composition. Curiously, most of the variations that occurred between the underdrawing stage and the final execution are in paintings of small size, executed between

1460 and 1470, where the composition has been clearly outlined freehand, such as the two panels with *Stories of the Life of Christ*, conserved in the Gallerie dell'Accademia and originally part of a dismembered *paliotto* (Cat. AP59. *Fig. 45*, *Fig. 46*, *Fig. 47*, *Fig. 48*),[515] or the small *Pietà* on parchment on display in Poldi Pezzoli (Cat. AP22. *Fig. 49*, *Fig. 50*). Small changes, however, were done also in mature works. For instance, in the tower on the right of the Venice *Nativity* (Cat. AP57), an arched *bifora* and a square window initially underdrawn were probably believed by the artist to be excessive elements, because they were not further elaborated in the final execution (*Fig. 51*, *Fig. 52*). A *pentimento* that occurred exclusively during the painting phase is visible in the late *Virgin and Child Enthroned* in the National Gallery of Dublin (Cat. AP11). The IR photo of Tobias' head clearly shows that the eyes had initially been placed in a slightly lowered and turned position (Fig. *53*, *Fig. 54*).[516]



Fig. 45. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Disciples on the Road to Emmaus and Supper at Emmaus*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the end of Christ's vestment (visible)

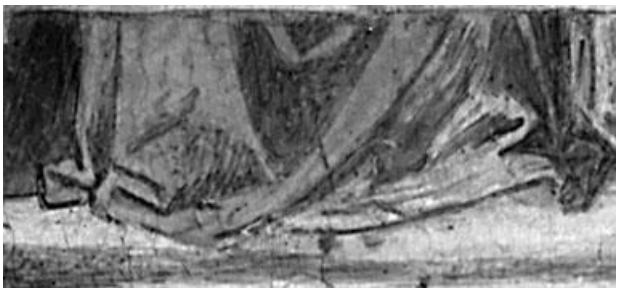


Fig. 46. Detail of the underdrawing that models the draperies at the end of Christ's vestment (IRR, Osiris)

[515] For a comprehensive description of Bastiani's underdrawing in these panels, refer to DE MANINCOR, 2020, pp. 109-123.

[516] Owing to the abraded superficial paint layer, the *pentimento* can also be appreciated in the visible photograph.



Fig. 47. L. Bastiani, *Resurrection of Christ*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the sky (visible).

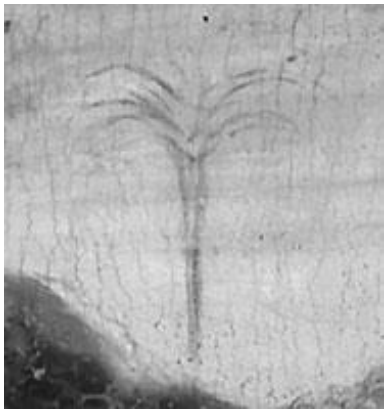


Fig. 48. Detail of the palm tree originally underdrawn in the background (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 49. L. Bastiani, *Pietà*, Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum. Detail of Christ's left arm and hand (visible).

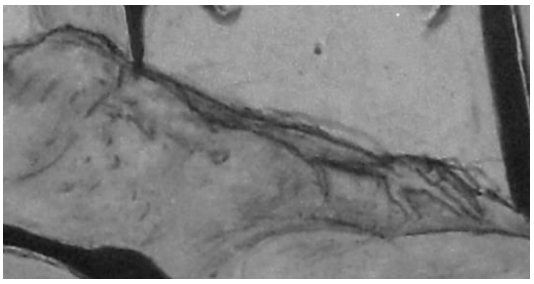


Fig. 50. Detail of the first sketch for Christ's left arm and hand ("Archive" IR photography).

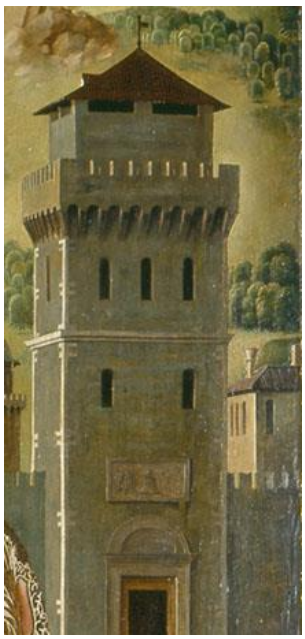


Fig. 51. L. Bastiani, *Nativity*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the tower on the right side (visible).

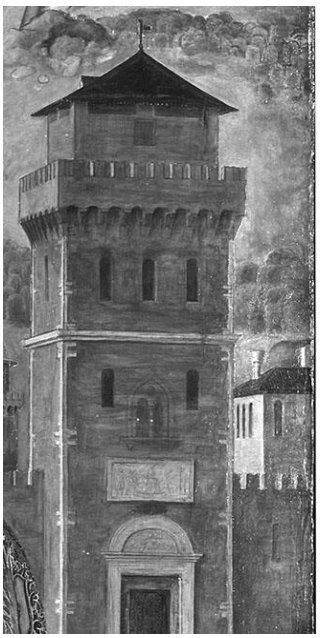


Fig. 52. Detail of the tower on the right side showing the arched *bifora* and the square windows previously drawn (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 53. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with the Archangel Gabriel, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias*, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland. Detail of Tobias' head (visible).



Fig. 54. Detail of Tobias' head revealing the *pentimento* in the positioning of his eyes (IR photography).

The rare and minor changes identified give an indication that for Bastiani the underdrawing was not intended as simply a guide to be further developed and worked out in the painting process, but rather as an outline to be carefully followed. This might suggest, therefore, that he painstakingly studied and elaborated his compositions and designs in advance, producing a huge number of drawings on paper, despite the scarce quantity of these drawings that have so far been identified. Given this fact, it is very plausible that most of his drawings deteriorated or were destroyed during the massive use and re-use by Bastiani and his assistants. The realisation of drawings on more durable supports, such as linen (as seen in the *Seated Male Saint* in Rotterdam), could have been a solution to preserve established figurative ideas, as for instance, *simili* portraying figures or *modelli* showing overall designs fully resolved.

Planning the compositions on paper as first step and then creating a cartoon to reproduce the design on the *gesso* ground could have been the procedure Bastiani followed in his paintings, even though s*polvero* pouncing, or evident marks of tracing have not been found in the underdrawing of the paintings examined in this thesis.[517] It must be stressed, however, that the artist might

[517] Exceptions are the *Madonna and Child* pictures for private devotion since the existence of several copies and replicas of Bastiani's works give evidence of the serial production of this

have rubbed off the characteristic dotted outline of the *spolvero* transfer method or he may have concealed the mechanical tracing lines by reinforcing them with a dense dark outline.

In *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, the schematic contours and the lack of changes suggest that the principal figures in the foreground were based on very detailed studies on paper, which were then transferred to the panels, either freehand, by eye or using a mechanic transfer technique, such as tracing. The emphatic dark outline makes it difficult to understand how the underdrawing was actually worked out (*Fig. 55*, *Fig. 56*). In some features, however, two different outlines have been observed, indicating that the drawing was elaborated in two steps. The first one establishes the design by means of a diluted pigment, the second one fixes and reinforces the contours with a strong black pigment (*Fig. 57*, *Fig. 58*). In the same pictures, the underdrawing of the figures in the background is notably freer and improvised. In the Samaritan scene, for example, the citizens of Sichar leaving from the city gate are roughly drafted. It must be emphasised that also in these secondary figures Bastiani described the fall of light by hatching. Finally, two figures were initially sketched but have not been further worked out in the painting process (*Fig. 59*, *Fig. 60*).

kind of painting, based on cartoons, in Bastiani's workshop. As a further confirmation, *spolvero* has been detected in the infant Jesus' hair of the Correr accurate replica of the *Madonna and Child* in Castelvecchio. Bastiani's production of *Madonna and Child* paintings is extensively discussed in the following sub-chapter.



Fig. 55. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Canaanite Woman*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the apostle's face (visible).



Fig. 56. Detail of the apostle's face showing the reinforced outline in the facial features (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 57. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Canaanite Woman*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the double outline in Christ's left hand (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 58. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Canaanite Woman*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the double outline in apostle's feet (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 59. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of Samaritan citizens leaving Sichar (visible).



Fig. 60. Detail of the freehand drawing outlining Samaritan citizens leaving Sichar (IRR, Osiris).

The creation of illusionistic space in his paintings was a key concern for Bastiani. Probably the best examples of his command of space and perspectival treatment most likely are the two *teleri* with *Episodes of the Life of Saint Jerome*, the *Nativity*, and the *Offering of the Relic of the Cross*, all in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. In all these paintings the spatial construction is mainly defined through the architectural setting. As already discussed, Bastiani's fascination with central perspective clearly emerged in the mature stage of his career and

is particularly evident in the two latter works. The perspective lines are represented by the architectural elements and other features of the composition that converge to the vanishing point. In the canvas *Offering of the Relic*, Bastiani chose to illustrate a specific and significant moment i.e., when the Guardian Grande of the Scuola, Andrea Vendramin, receives the relic from Philip de Mézières.

With regard to the perspective treatment in the *Nativity*, the construction of the wooden shed structure seems carefully elaborated with this aim in mind. It is unquestionable that the shed is derived from Jacopo Bellini's *Nativity* compositional drawings – being especially inspired by folio 99 *recto* of the British Museum drawing book – drawings that Bastiani probably had the possibility to carefully examine when his personal relationship with the Bellinis was consolidated after the participation to the cycle of canvases for the Scuola di San Marco from 1470. It is reasonable to suppose therefore that Bastiani accurately studied and elaborated the composition on paper and then transferred it onto wooden panel. The meticulous underdrawing revealed by IRR analysis and the lack of *pentimenti* seems to support this assumption. The lines that construct the shed are precisely drawn (perhaps with the help of a ruler to score straight lines), in order to define the upper beams and the lower enclosure (*Fig. 61*, *Fig. 62*). On the ground beneath the shed further lines are revealed in the IRR image. These latter are not used to outline any architectural component, but rather for perspective elaboration. In fact, projecting these rays to the horizon line, they converge to a single vanishing point, that is incised on the preparatory ground (*Fig. 62*, *Fig. 63*). Upon careful inspection, a traced vanishing point can be spotted also in the *Annunciatio*n of the Correr Museum (probably realised few years later than the *Nativity*), in which Bastiani's zeal for the elaboration of a strong geometrical perspective setting is even more evident, albeit a little formulaic. Here, indeed, the whole perspective construction is established by the front pavement tiles and faldstool, and the buildings to the rear, hedgerows and trees that form continuous perspective lines projecting to the single vanishing point. No measurement points or preliminary incisions have been detected by the IR

analysis performed at the time of the last conservation treatment, which was carried out in 1993.[518]

Given the evidence that emerged from the observation of the reflectogram, we can cautiously suggest Bastiani's working process for the *Nativity*. After having painstakingly studied the composition in advance by drawing on paper, Bastiani first established the height of the horizon line and traced the vanishing point, then set out the perspective lines and, finally, based on this perspective construction, he further worked out the shed. It is likely that in this painting Bastiani possibly made use of a ruler in order to draw the straight lines accurately (no traced lines have been detected).

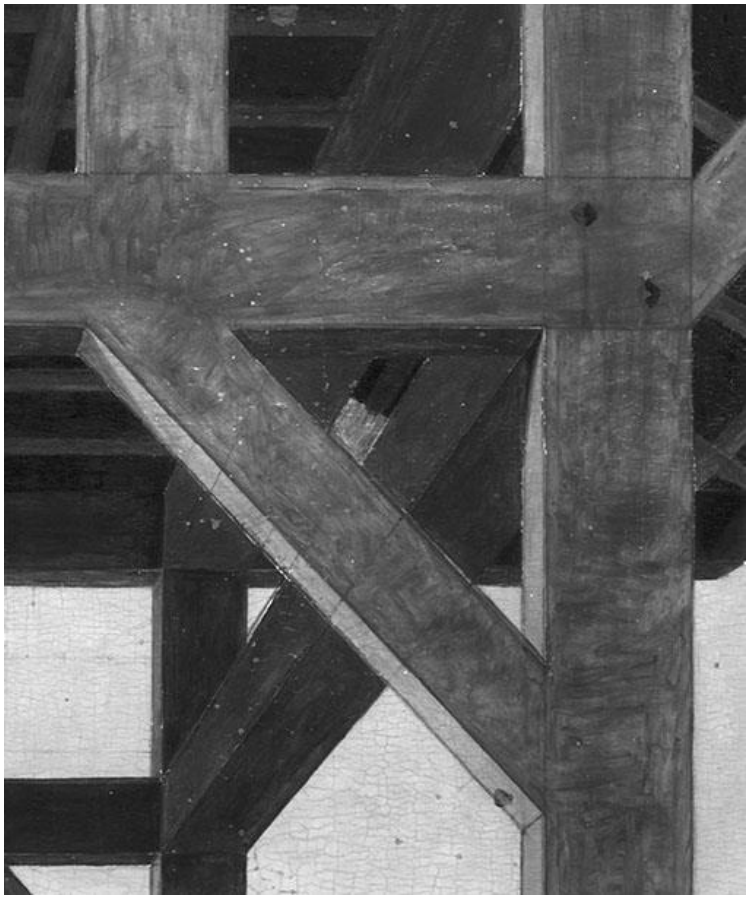


Fig. 61. L. Bastiani, *Nativity*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the construction lines of the shed's beams (IRR, Osiris).

[518] VEDOVELLO, 1993, p. 134.



Fig. 62. L. Bastiani, *Nativity*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the construction lines of the shed's enclosure and of the perspective line (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 63. L. Bastiani, *Nativity*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the incised vanishing point and of the perspective lines here converging (IRR, Osiris).

The creative idea of the geometrical and peculiar architectural setting in Bastiani's *teleri* for the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo was quite possibly suggested by Fra Carnevale's companion panels depicting the *Birth of the Virgin* (Metropolitan Museum, New York, U.S.A.) and the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A.), parts of an altarpiece commissioned in 1467 for Santa Maria della Bella in Urbino. It is unlikely that Bastiani directly knew Fra Carnevale's paintings, but whether Bastiani was aware of these designs is still to be discovered. It seems, however,

that Fra Carnevales's compositions were known and appreciated in the Venetian artistic *milieu* since further resemblances in the architectural construction have been identified with Carpaccios' *Arrival of the Ambassadors* for the Scuola di Sant'Orsola, and in the two bas-reliefs portraying scenes from the *Life of Saint Mark* that flank the entrance door of the Chapel of the Madonna della Pace in the Scuola Grande di San Marco, which were executed by the workshop of the Lombardo family.[519]

As in the case of the *Nativity*, we can reasonably assume that Bastiani studied this elaborate composition and complex perspective setting in advance by working out drawings on paper. Unlike in the previous example, however, Bastiani adjusted the composition while working on the support or in the painting process. In fact, the outline of the marble circles, and the arches were traced more than once by means of the compass (*Fig. 64*), while the circular windows above the bifora in the *Funeral* was previously placed slightly to the left of where it was finally painted (*Fig. 65*). The reflectogram reveals that Bastiani also moved the central column slightly to the right in the *Communion* scene (*Fig. 66*).

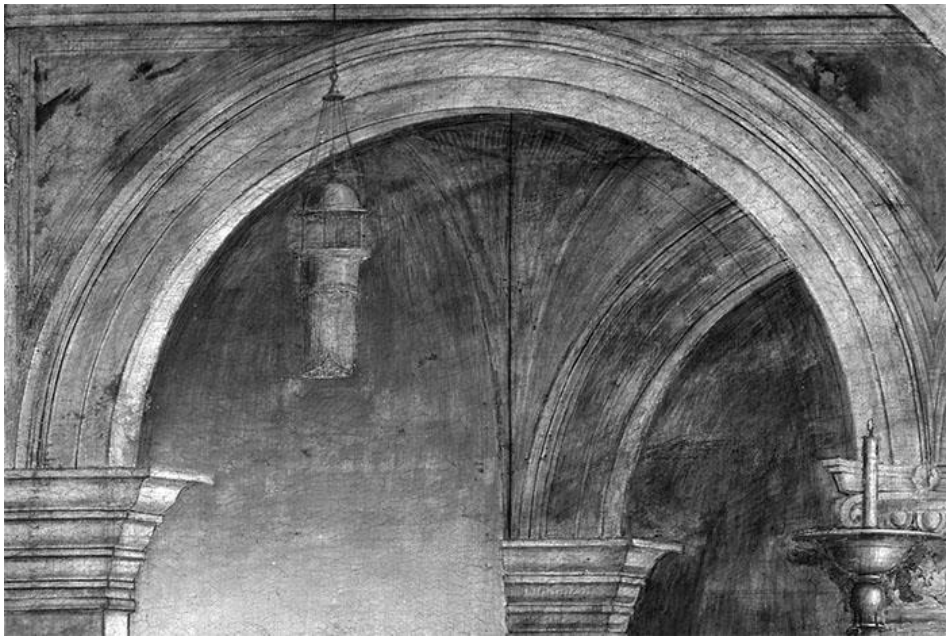


Fig. 64. L. Bastiani, *Communion of Saint Jerome*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the numerous traced curved lines of the arch (IRR, Osiris).

[519] CERIANA, 2004, pp. 124-125; GUERRA, 2006, pp. pp. 105-108, 118 (note 59); MENATO, 2016, pp. 64-66.

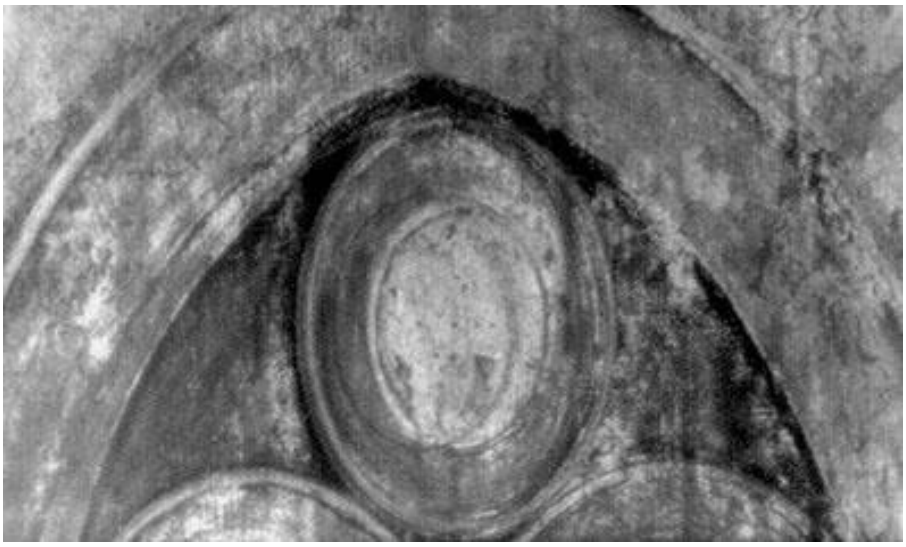


Fig. 65. L. Bastiani, *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the traced circular window, then painted slightly moved to the right ("Archive" IR image).

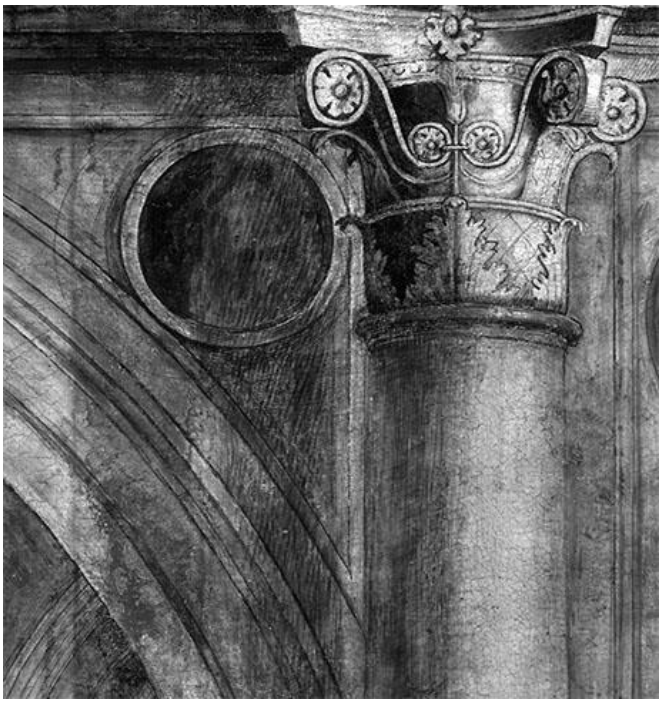


Fig. 66. L. Bastiani, *Communion of Saint Jerome*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of the *pentimento* in the column (IRR, Osiris).

In general, we can state that Bastiani's architectural settings are all carefully elaborated, most likely worked out first on paper and then set out on the surface of the painting. Ruled incisions to outline straight elements and incised circles made by aid of a compass for circular details have often been detected in buildings and architectural compositions (*Fig. 67*, *Fig. 68*).



Fig. 67. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Detail of traced lines in the well (IRR).

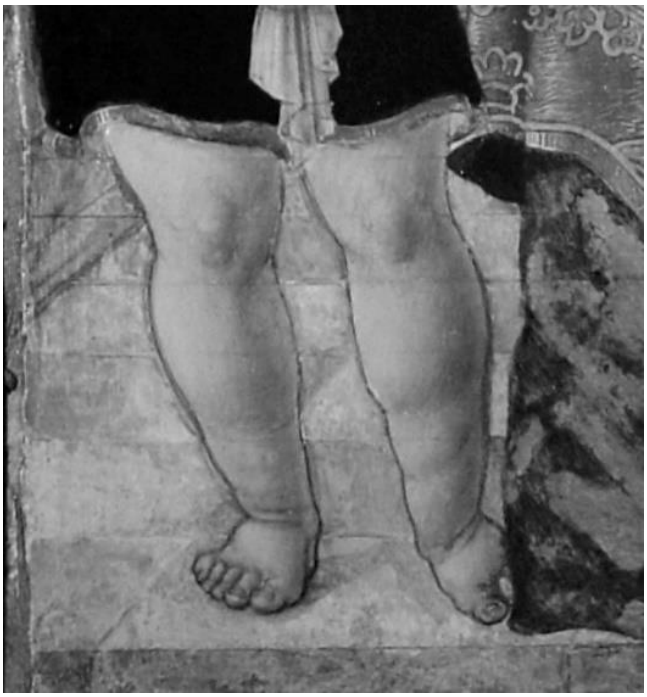


Fig. 68. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child crowned by two angels, with musical angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father*, Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum. Detail of the incised floor tiles ("Archive" IR photography).

The IRR image of the *Saint Martin of Tours Enthroned*, today in Correr Museum, but originally in the Church of Corpus Domini and most likely commissioned

by the nuns,[520] shows that the elaborate throne where the saint is sitting, is entirely drawn freehand, however. Given the striking archaic aspect of the picture, with the discrepancy between the architectural setting rendered in late Gothic fashion and the Renaissance style figure, Casu suggested that Bastiani realised the final painting over an existing architectural setting, that had been painted several years before.[521] The unveiled underdrawing seems to discard Casu's hypothesis, however, because both the throne and the saint appear to have been outlined by the same hand. The architectural setting was first roughly sketched by brush using a very diluted pigment and then traced over with a darker pigment (*Fig. 69*). The figure of the saint was realised over the existing lines of the throne. This is evident, for instance, where the top curve of his crosier overlaps the underneath floral decoration of the throne (*Fig. 70*, *Fig. 71*).[522] In agreement with Zaru, we can propose that the nuns, when requesting the painting, asked the artist to realise a specific architectural setting that was coherent with their visual culture linked to Late Gothic examples of illuminated manuscripts.[523]

Even though the throne is approximatively worked out, the working procedure followed here is the same as that observed in *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*. In addition, it must be pointed that the four panels, all executed for the Church of Corpus Domini, should be dated to the same years (1475 c.) on the basis of stylistic evidence.

[520] ZARU, 2015, pp. 221-224.

[521] CASU, 1996, p. 72.

[522] Owing to technical problems which occurred with the Apollo camera, I was not able to perform an IRR analysis also on the other panel portraying *Saint Jerome in His Study*. If I get the chance in the future, perhaps further information concerning the underdrawing procedure followed by Bastiani in these works will be revealed. In addition, a careful conservation treatment would be useful to verify the real condition of the paintings and would help to enrich our knowledge about them.

[523] ZARU, 2015, pp. 221-224.



Fig. 69. L. Bastiani, *Saint Martin of Tour Enthroned*, Venice, Correr Museum. Detail of the throne (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 70. Detail of the throne and Saint Martin's pastoral (visible).



Fig. 71. Detail of the throne and Saint Martin's pastoral sketched over (IRR, Apollo).

Even though further observations could be given, and hypotheses be advanced on Bastiani's underdrawing, in this chapter I have decided to give only an overall description of his practice. I wish to keep studying Bastiani and his paintings in the future, including helping to enlarge the IR images database and carrying out further in-depth analyses of his pigments and painting technique. I hope to present my findings and results in a more exhaustive and comprehensive future publication, perhaps anticipated by shorter papers focusing on single aspects of his artistic procedure.

In anticipation of this, I decided to present hereafter an initial "embryonic" essay concerning Bastiani's underdrawing in his *Madonna and Child* paintings and including some observations regarding the practice of serial production of this typology of devotional images in his workshop.

4.4.2.1. THE USE OF UNDERDRAWING IN THE MADONNA PAINTINGS OF BASTIANI

Being the paintings that were most requested in the second half of the 15th century, private devotional pictures were the main typology of works produced in Venetian artists' workshops. Among these, the *Madonna and Child* subject (including the two principal figures alone or flanked by saints) was the most popular.[524] In the light of this, Giovanni Bellini's significant output of devotional images portraying the *Madonna and Child* throughout his career is worthy of study.[525]

Lazzaro Bastiani was then, typical of the period and the majority of his surviving works depict the *Madonna and Child.* In this context, Evenlyn Sandberg-Vavalà's article on *Lazzaro Bastiani's 'Madonnas'*, published in 1931, was fundamental in defining the very first corpus of Bastiani's *Madonna and Child* pictures – a task which has been further enriched by other art historians since – as well as in outlining Bastiani's artistic development, based on the stylistic evidence of these works. As we will see, however, this conventional subject did not engage Bastiani's imagination as it did in the case of, for example Giovanni Bellini, who invented and created several compositional variants of half-length *Madonnas*, greatly influencing not only other painters, but also informed the taste of local patrons too.

For the current doctoral research, extensive diagnostic research has been performed on numerous Bastiani's *Madonnas*. The analysed paintings range

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[524] Half-length *Madonnas* for private worship were commissioned not only for domestic altars, but also as decoration of private altars and funerary family chapels in churches (GOFFEN, 1979, pp. 511-514). Visual examples of this subject are shown in various paintings representing how rooms of Venetian houses, or interiors of Venetian palaces were furnished at the end of the 15th century (KASL, 2004, pp. 59-89). The most famous instances, to cite but a few, are Vittore Carpaccio's *teleri Arrival of the Ambassadors* and *Ursula's Dream* for the Scuola di Sant'Orsola, and Giovanni Mansueti's *Miraculous Healing of the Daughter of Benvegnudo da San Polo*. On the evolution of the iconography of the *sacra conversazione* in Veneto, refer to SCHMIDT, 1990, II, pp. 703-726 and TEMPESTINI, 1999, pp. 939-1014.

[525] GOFFEN, 1990, pp. 23-66; TEMPESTINi, 2009, pp. 21-107.

from early examples which are first close to the Vivarinis, through the period when the artist was inspired by Mantegna, the more mature works influenced by Giovanni Bellini, up to the final and rather formulaic paintings, which were most likely serial pictures, and probably largely executed with the aid of the workshop assistants.

Other subjects widely commissioned for private worship in the period included *Pietà* pictures and images generally portraying the figure of *Christ* (e.g., *Christ Blessing* and *Christ as the Man of Sorrow*). Of interest in this respect is the small *Christ* panel that Antonio Choradi from Pera, commissioned, remotely, from Bastiani in 1473, which today, unfortunately, is lost.[526]

The results of the infrared reflectography campaign performed on Bastiani's devotional works are presented hereafter.

Until 1950s, the background of the small panel depicting the *Madonna of Humility* n. 2193 in Correr Museum (Cat. AP51) was completely obscured (*Fig. 72*).[527] No one imagined that once the dark old overpainting layer was removed, a well-preserved golden background, and a beautiful garden (a *hortus conclusus*), rich of flowers and populated by white rabbits, enclosed by a low wall decorated with bas-reliefs of Paduan taste and a row of trees would be revealed (*Fig. 73*).[528] These natural elements, so dear to late Gothic artists, as well as the execution of the Virgin, are in common with the artistic *milieu* of Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d'Alemagna, where Bastiani most likely received his first artistic formation, around 1450.

[526] In the letter addressed to his brother-in-law Niccolò Gruatto, Choradi also asked for a Bible, which was most likely requested for the same reasons as the painting by Bastiani i.e., for pious activities, such as praying.

[527] See Cat. AP51, "Conservation status and previous restoration treatment".

[528] The panel has been cut on top and at the bottom, as suggested by the truncated arched gold background and the incomplete garments of the Virgin.



Fig. 72. L. Bastiani, *Madonna of Humility*, Venice, Correr Museum (before cleaning) © Venezia, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Fototeca dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Arte, Fondo Pallucchini.



Fig. 73. L. Bastiani, *Madonna of Humility*, Venice, Correr Museum (visible after the removal of dark, old overpaint) © Archivio Fotografico - Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia.



Fig. 74. L. Bastiani, *Madonna of Humility*, Venice, Correr Museum (IRR, Apollo).

The Virgin and the infant Jesus, of a larger scale than the elements of the *hortus conclusus* behind them, emerge from the flat gold background. On careful inspection with the naked eye, an incised line around the upper body of the two figures, where they meet the gold sky could be seen. This does not seem, however, to be as a result of a transfer procedure of the drawing from a cartoon, as it is only used to separate the area to be painted from the background to be gilded, even if it was not always followed meticulously during the phase of execution. The contours of the figures were further firmly established with black reinforcing lines, which today are very faint. Similar incisions are found at the edges of the picture as indication for the frame. The Virgin's and infant Jesus' halos are worth mentioning as their accurate punched decoration is reminiscent of the late Gothic taste.

The reflectogram shows a careful underdrawing of the pair, very detailed in the description of their features (even infant Jesus' kneecaps. *Fig. 74*). The white rabbits and the low wall are drawn as well. It appears that Bastiani did not use any transfer method here but drew freehand by means of a small brush with diluted pigment, and then traced over the contours with a darker pigment. No *pentimenti* or changes are visible, thus Bastiani probably followed a preliminary drawing on paper. A fine hatching visible to the naked eye, which appears to be made with a brush tip on the paint surface, rather than at the underdrawing level, defines the volume of the infant Jesus's body and of the Virgin's face and proper left hand (*Fig. 75*, *Fig. 76*). Curiously, in the reflectogram this hatching is faint, implying that Bastiani possibly made use of a very diluted pigment that became almost transparent to the infrared radiation. Conversely, the Virgin's mantle is modelled with lines of hatching – this also gives indication for the fall of light – which is clearly visible in the reflectogram (*Fig. 77*, *Fig. 78*). The lines follow the forms and are closely spaced and even crossed in dark shaded areas, then loose and open for brighter areas. The construction of volume by means of these preliminary elaborately hatched shadows, does not appear to have had an optical function, however, and is little appreciated in the visible image, where the underdrawing of the mantle is covered by the blue pigment. A clear example of the underdrawing is the

Virgin's left arm, whose impression of volume beneath the cloak is given by the linear definition of the fabric folds and by the work out of hatching for light and shade areas.



Fig. 75. Detail of infant Jesus (visible).



Fig. 76. Detail of infant Jesus (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 77. Detail of the Virgin's proper left arm (visible).

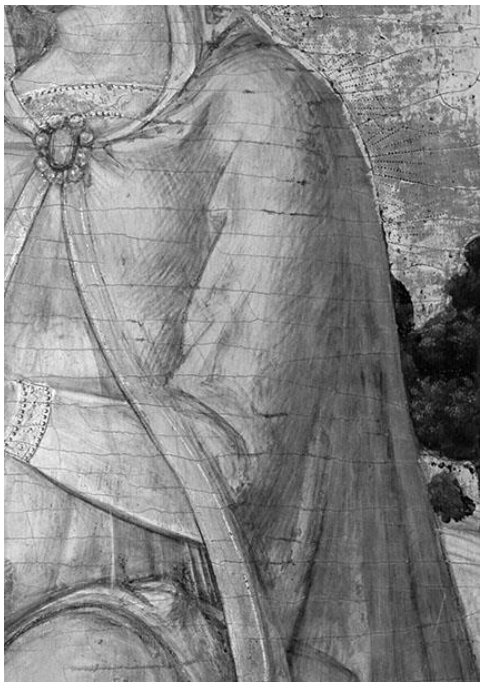


Fig. 78. Detail of the Virgin's proper left arm (IRR, Apollo).

This underlying modelling might have been useful to the artist for the subsequent painting phase, even though this cannot be appreciated by the

naked eye today. As a comparison, we could, for instance, cite Jacopo Bellini's *Madonna and Child* in Accademia Carrara, Bergamo. Here a hatched underdrawing used to indicate shaded areas is partially visible through the red lake glazes in the Virgin's pink mantle.[529] Further analyses carried out in the Correr *Madonna* might be useful to investigate Bastiani's materials and stratigraphy, and to understand if, in this case, the paint was somehow altered by the ancient dark overpainting and/or by the subsequent cleaning procedure.

The *hortus conclusus* and the golden background of Late Gothic fashion in the Correr panel are replaced by a natural hilly landscape and a blue sky in the small *Madonna adoring the Child* in Padua Civic Museum (Cat. AP30). If the composition, showing the Virgin with her hands in prayer and the infant Jesus lying on her lap is still derived from Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini's examples, the detailed landscape, the fruit garland hung in the sky, the faldstool with lion protomes, the Virgin's veil, and the foreshortening of the infant Jesus' face reveal a knowledge of the Paduan style and of Mantegna in the years around 1460.

As in the case of the *Madonna* n. 2193 in Correr Museum, in 1963 the overpainting in the upper corners was removed,[530] unveiling the original arched shape of the Paduan *Madonna* (*Fig. 79*, *Fig. 80*). A light contour of the painted area, most likely drawn by brush, is visible in the IR image which further confirms the original shape of the picture (*Fig. 81*, *Fig. 87*).

In this *Madonna* the golden element is the Virgin's brocade cloak, whose outline is no longer incised, but only reinforced by a dark contour line. As gold is highly reflective in IR range, the reflectogram clearly shows where the gold overlaps the figures, as for instance in the Virgin's veil. It appears, though, that

[529] POLDI, 2010, p. 190. Poldi argued that the visibility of the underdrawing in Jacopo's work is an effect of time, the result of an increased transparency of the paint film.

[530] The overpainting tried to replicate the fruit garland decoration. A small portion of the overpaint in the left corner has not been cleaned and is still visible today. In the reflectogram this square-shaped blue area appears dark, unlike the original blue sky, which is transparent in the infrared.

below the brooch, Bastiani deliberately painted a portion of the veil over the golden mantle, since the brocade decoration is seen through the transparent pigment (*Fig. 82, Fig. 83*).



Fig. 79. L. Bastiani, *Madonna Adoring the Child*, Padua, Musei Civici agli Eremitani (before 1963 cleaning).



Fig. 80. L. Bastiani, *Madonna Adoring the Child*, Padua, Musei Civici agli Eremitani (today).



Fig. 81. L. Bastiani, *Madonna Adoring the Child*, Padua, Musei Civici agli Eremitani (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 82. Detail of the Virgin's veil (visible).



Fig. 83. Detail of the Virgin's veil (IRR, Apollo).

As in the *Madonna* of Correr Museum, no evident indication of transfer methods has been found. Bastiani probably drew freehand, according to an established design on paper, by means of diluted paint or ink and then traced over the outlines, sometimes not perfectly following the first sketch (such as can be seen along the Virgin's proper right shoulder). The suggestion of more spontaneous drawing can be seen in the rapid lines that anatomically describe the infant Jesus' body (*Fig. 85*). These are then visible through the fleshy pink paint (*Fig. 84*). Further indications of a freehand underdrawing –subsequently adjusted in the painting process – are clearly visible in the festoon (*Fig. 86, Fig. 87*) and in the faldstool (here the particular ornament of the faldstool was first conceived as ampoule shaped. *Fig. 88*, *Fig. 89*).



Fig. 84. Detail of the underdrawing of the infant Jesus' body seen through the pigment layers (visible).



Fig. 85. Detail of the rapid sketch of the infant Jesus' body and the reinforced outline (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 86. Detail of the festoon (visible).



Fig. 87. Detail of the sketchy underdrawing of the festoon (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 88. Detail of the faldstool (visible).



Fig. 89. Detail of the change in the shape of the ornament in the faldstool and of the lion protome underdrawing (IRR, Apollo).

The Virgin's and infant Jesus' features are all realised at the underdrawing level. Bastiani even drew tiny decorations on the Virgin's mantle that would have been later covered by dark-brownish paint and retraced over by means of a lighter pigment (*Fig. 84, Fig. 85*). In the background, however, only the hills and the rivers are roughly outlined, while the fortresses, the bushy trees, and the delicate animals and flowers are worked out in the painting phase.

A fine, dense hatching by means of a very diluted pigment visible even to the naked eye (but better appreciated in macro images) was applied, as in the previous example, in the paintings process. This hatched superficial modelling, already used by Squarcione, suggests volume construction in the Virgin's face and hands, and in the infant Jesus' body (*Fig. 90*, *Fig. 91*).[531] The hatching in the folds of the Virgin's dress, was realised at the underdrawing stage and has the same modelling function and, especially, light-shade indication for areas to be covered with a dark or opaque pigment of that in the Correr *Madonna* (although it was executed less painstakingly), or that in the apostle's vestment in the *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* picture (*Fig. 41*, *Fig. 42*, *Fig. 92*, *Fig. 93*).

[531] The same procedure was observed by Poldi and Villa in Squarcione's *Madonna and Child* in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, in which the fine hatching modelling is worked out by small-pointed brush directly while painting. Mantegna learned this artistic technique in his years of formation in Squarcione's workshop and employed it until his works of the 1480s (POLDI-VILLA, 2007, pp. 48-49). Probably owing to the use of a device which was less accurate than those available to art historians today, Galassi believed Squarcione elaborated the *chiaroscuro* in the underdrawing phase (GALASSI, 1998, p. 117-118, n. 20).

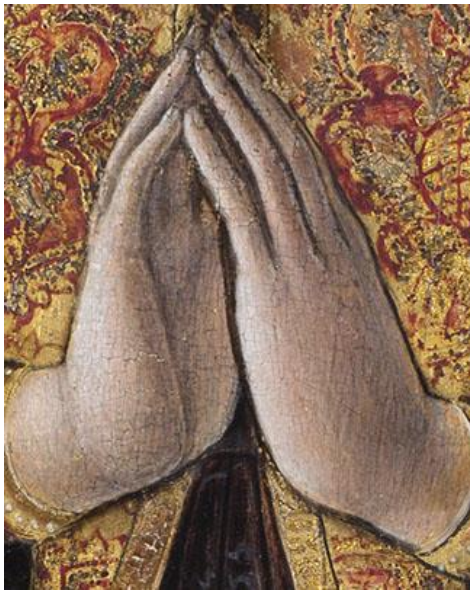


Fig. 90. Detail of the Virgin's hands (visible).

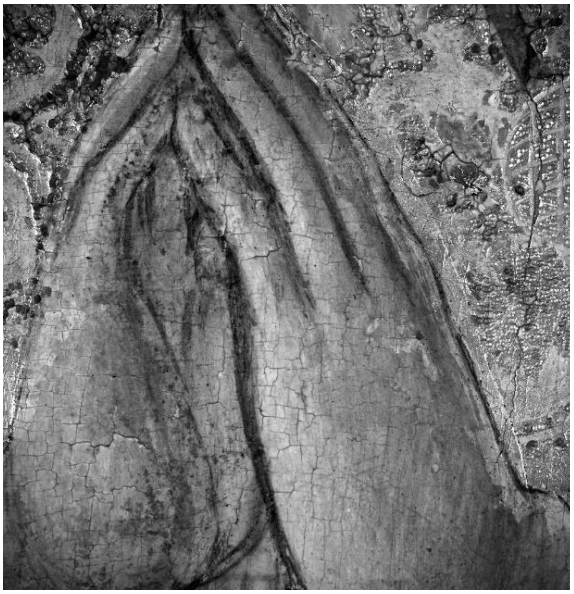


Fig. 91. Detail of the hatching modelling of the Virgin's hands (IRR, Apollo, macro lens).



Fig. 92. Detail of the Virgin's dress folds (visible).



Fig. 93. Detail of the hatching in the Virgin's dress folds (IRR, Apollo).

The Paduan and Mantegnesque inspiration is even more marked in the *Madonna and Child in a Painted Frame with Cherubim and Putti Holding the Instruments of the Passion* n. 27 in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, executed in the early 1460s (Cat. AP04). This panel, indeed, had been variously ascribed to School of Squarcione, or to Andrea Mantegna, or to Bartolomeo Vivarini. The earliest attribution to Lazzaro Bastiani, although not immediately accepted, was suggested by Collobi in 1939. Casu observed similarities not only with Mantegna's works (the putti, the foreshortened infant Jesus' head), but also with the Paduan art in general (the festoon and the pose of Jesus, derived from the Hellenistic statue of the *Child with Egyptian Goose*).

The prototype from which Bastiani's painting most likely derived was identified in Mantegna's Butler *Madonna and Child*, on display in the Metropolitan Museum (New York, U.S.A.), which shows undoubted similarities in the pose of the Virgin and the infant Jesus, and a surrounding group of seraphim and cherubim around them that Bastiani rearranged – adding the instruments of Passion – in the outer painted frame in his painting.

I was able to retrieve only two historic IR photos of the artwork, however, they show the strengthening of the contours seen so far, and thin hatching with diluted pigment in the Virgin's and Jesus' faces and in the Virgin's veil and mantle, in both cases executed with a fluid medium, probably applied by brush (*Fig. 94*, *Fig. 95*). In 2004 a new infrared examination of the panel was performed by Gianluca Poldi and Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa by means of more advanced equipment. Catarina Schmidt Arcangeli, who studied the reflectograms, confirmed the presence of hatching to indicate shading and found *pentimenti* in the Virgin's and Jesus' eyes.[532]

The underdrawing of the putti in the frame appears to have first been realised freehand and then reinforced, in accordance with the practice seen in the Padua *Madonna* (*Fig. 96*, *Fig. 97*).

[532] SCHMIDT ARCANGELI, 2015, p. 105 (note 8). Unfortunately, I have not had the opportunity to see the latest IR images. In the IR photos that I have seen, I did not detect any evident modification in the main figures' eyes.



Fig. 94. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child in a Painted Frame with Cherubim and Putti Holding the Instruments of the Passion*, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie (visible)



Fig. 95. "Archive" IR photography



Fig. 96. Detail of the putti in the frame (visible).



Fig. 97. Detail of the putti in the frame ("Archive" IR photography).

Conversely, the extremely meticulous drawing of the central pair might suggest that Bastiani made use of a cartoon here. Specifically, the outline of the folds in the Virgin's veil (where Bastiani tried to emulate those in Mantegna's *Madonna*, though he did not reach the latter's final three-dimensional sculptural effect in the painting stage), seems rather mechanical. No evidence of *spolvero*, however, is visible in the old IR photography, and nor has this been pointed out by Smith Arcangeli. Bastiani might have transferred the outline by tracing over the contours of the cartoon, perhaps blackened on the verso, with a stylus. The

marks could have been fixed by going over them with a brush and black ink, as Bastiani usually did.[533]

A panel that almost exactly replicates the composition of the Berlin *Madonna* (without the painted frame) today on display in Philbrook Art Center of Tulsa (Oklahoma, U.S.A.) and which has simply been recorded as being by a follower of Mantegna,[534] differs from the Berlin work in the natural landscape of the background, the slightly higher parapet, and the coat of arms painted at the bottom of the painting (*Fig. 98*).[535]



Fig. 98. Follower of Andrea Mantegna, *Madonna and Child*, Tulsa (U.S.A.), Philbrook Art Center, Tulsa.

Given the close similarities in composition between the two pictures, Casu, followed by Russo, conjected that both works were made following the same cartoon, which had been developed on the basis of Mantegna's Butler *Madonna*

[533] Compare, for instance, Bartolomeo Vivarini's similar underdrawing for his *Madonna and Child* in Accademia Carrara, Bergamo. POLDI-VILLA, 2006a, pp. 87 (fig. 33-35), 89.

[534] FREDERICKSEN and ZERI (1972, p. 118) gave it to "School/Shop of Mantegna".

[535] The artwork is a gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation to Philbrook Art Center, see RUSK SHAPLEY, 1968, pp. 26-27.

or a similar prototype.[536] Moench, instead, rejected this assumption owing to the different size of the panels,[537] even though it must be observed that this discrepancy in size of the support does not necessarily exclude the use of the same cartoon, as this relies only on the dimensions of the pair in the two pictures.

The underdrawing of the Tulsa *Madonna* could be useful to address the issue of an existing cartoon employed by Bastiani and the artist of the Tulsa painting. The lines revealed by means of an old IR photography, in fact, appear to have been made in a way antithetical to a freehand study and can clearly be interpreted as having been transferred from a cartoon by tracing *(Fig. 99*). It appears, thus, that a cartoon portraying this composition was likely to have existed. We might wonder who the creator of this cartoon was. In the catalogue entry of the 1992 monographic exhibition on Mantegna, Christiansen observed that "none of these derivative pictures seems to utilise a preparatory cartoon by Mantegna. Indeed, infra-red reflectography establishes that Mantegna drew the composition for the Metropolitan picture freehand on the panel, employing, in the cherubim and seraphim, a graphic style strikingly similar to that of the preparatory study for the *St. James Led to the Execution* and the *Christ at the Column*".[538] Given the strong resemblance to Mantegna's *Madonna and Child* in the Metropolitan Museum, it seems reasonable to argue that a first cartoon was realised at least in Mantegna's artistic *milieu*. The folds in the Virgin's veil, indeed, are exactly like those of the Butler *Madonna*, suggesting that the artist who executed the cartoon knew the archetype very well.[539] Soon the cartoon became known to other artists and started to circulate amongst different workshops. Bastiani most likely made use of it, although in a more artistic way than the Tulsa's painter, by tracing over the outlines and by

[536] CASU, 1996, p. 83 (note 52); CASU, 2000, p. 42; RUSSO, 2018, p. 14 (note 23).

[537] MOENCH, 2008, p. 88.

[538] CHRISTIANSEN, 1992, pp. 139-140. A further comment on the cherubim and seraphim underdrawing is in CHRISTIANSEN, 1992a, p. 71, fig. 26.

[539] Similarly, even though much damaged in the original work, also the physiognomic elements (eyes, nose, mouth) of the Virgin and the infant Jesus are really close to Mantegna's painting.

modelling volume with hatched shadows (*Fig. 100*).[540] In general, however, the Tulsa *Madonna* is inferior, both in the underdrawing and in the painting execution, and shows slight differences to the Berlin work. In this case the painter might have used a second-hand cartoon created at a later time, taken from the first version employed by Bastiani.



Fig. 99. Follower of Andrea Mantegna, underdrawing of the Virgin's veil and mantle, Tulsa, Philbrook Art Center ("Archive" IR photography)



Fig. 100. L. Bastiani, underdrawing of the Virgin's veil and mantle, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie ("Archive" IR photography)

During the 1460s and early 1470s Bastiani established a peculiar and clearly distinguishable typology of *Madonna and Child* (and one that was probably very appreciated by the commissioners) by developing the compositional scheme of the *Madonna* n. 2193 of the Correr Museum. In general, these *Madonna* pictures portray the seated Virgin holding the infant Jesus on her right knee. She supports him with her right hand, while he clutches her left hand, or sometimes her mantle. Her head is slightly turned towards her proper right, and she tenderly gazes at her child, while he sometimes glances back at her, or sometimes looks at the observer. The Virgin is always clothed in a floral

[540] It is important to stress once again that investigations by means of a more advanced equipment on the Berlin *Madonna* might give new information on the transfer method.

brocade cloak which covers her dress,[541] and Jesus mostly wears a tunic, sometimes over a long-sleeved white shirt.

First of this group of *Madonnas* is the *Madonna of Humility* n. 616 in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (Cat. AP56). The Madonna and infant Jesus are no longer placed in a symbolic garden, but rather are situated against a more 'realistic' landscape background, characterised by a steep twisted crag on the right and a small town under it, showing a man and two horsemen leaving the village, a lake being crossed by a boat, with hills and beyond them mountains in the distance. The elements of the composition are all defined in the underdrawing stage by an emphatic contour. Comparing the reflectogram with the visible image, a *pentimento* of secondary importance is visible in the distant landscape on the right, where the first outline of the hills has been worked out differently in the painting process (*Fig. 101*, *Fig. 102*).



Fig. 101. L. Bastiani, *Madonna of Humility*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (visible).



Fig. 102. L. Bastiani, *Madonna of Humility*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (IRR, Osiris).

[541] Bastiani elaborated a particular and clearly distinguishable floral decoration that he subsequently repeated in all his works.

In the infrared image, a black uninterrupted fluid outline contours the figures and their main features, so that it is difficult to suggest whether the artist mechanically transferred the pair from a cartoon by *spolvero* technique or by tracing. This issue is tricky, because in the drapery of the Virgin's dress a clearly spontaneous drawing is shown in the reflectogram (*Fig. 103*, *Fig. 104*), while in other parts, such as the facial features of the figures, it appears mechanic as if it was taken from a cartoon (*Fig. 105*, *Fig. 106*). Incisions – visible also to the naked eye – where the Virgin's cape folds on her lap have been traced, most likely as an indication of areas to be shaded, even though they have not been carefully followed in the painting phase (*Fig. 107*, *Fig. 108*).



Fig. 103. Detail of the Virgin's dress drapery (visible).



Fig. 104. Detail of the Virgin's dress drapery (IRR, Osiris).



Fig. 105. Detail of the Virgin's facial features (visible).



Fig. 106. Detail of the Virgin's facial features (IRR, Osiris).

Brushes of diluted pigment are used as indication for shading in the folds of the Virgin's dress and on her sleeve. Dense, curved hatching with the same diluted pigment but applied – it appears – by means of a brush of smaller size, describes the volume of the infant Jesus' legs, while a regular hatching executed by means of a fine pointed brush is visible in the back of the Virgin's left hand (*Fig. 108*). This hatching, however, was covered by the pigment and was not further exploited in the execution phase (*Fig. 107*). We can assume that, unlike the works previously presented, in this *Madonna* Bastiani worked out the *chiaroscuro* of the figures with hatched brushstrokes (by using a diluted pigment applied by brushes of different sizes according to the level of accuracy he wanted to achieve) but did not develop this undermodelling further during the painting process, so he ended up giving a flat appearance to the figures. We cannot exclude, however, the possibility that a final layer of glazing was lost during past aggressive cleaning, although I believe this to be unlikely.



Fig. 107. Detail of the Virgin and infant Jesus (visible).



Fig. 108. Detail of the Virgin's and infant Jesus' undermodelling (IRR, Osiris).

The *Madonna and Child crowned by two angels, with musical angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father* (Cat. AP21), painted in the very early 1470s and today on display in Poldi Pezzoli Museum was realised by the use of a heterogeneous underdrawing. While the design of the Virgin and infant Jesus is worked out by short discontinuous brushstrokes with a fine-pointed brush and a diluted pigment, then traced over with a darker contour, suggesting that it might have been transferred from a cartoon (*Fig. 109*), the outline of the musical angels is freer, being reworked and adjusted more than once before

fixing the contours with a dark emphatic working (*Fig. 110*). To support this suggestion, we can also observe the *chiaroscuro* modelling of these figures. The reflectogram of the Virgin and Child does not show any hatching, this having been defined in the painting phase by means of a blackish-brownish pigment (*Fig. 111*, *Fig. 112*). Conversely, in the surrounding angels hatched shading describes their volume at the underdrawing stage (the hatched brushstrokes underneath are visible on careful inspection with the naked eye. *Fig. 113*, *Fig. 114*). If a fully worked cartoon of the Madonna and infant Jesus had existed, there would have been of little need and an unnecessary expense to the workshop to repeat the undermodelling in the underdrawing process. In both cases, however, the first design is made by a fine pointed brush and a diluted fluid medium, and later it is reinforced with an emphatic contour. Secondary features, such as God the Father, the hovering angels, the crown, and the festoon, have been spontaneously outlined freehand by means of a diluted pigment applied by brush and have been fully worked out in the final execution stage (*Fig. 115*, *Fig. 116*). The perspective grid of the floor tiles is incised (*Fig. 113*, *Fig. 114*).



Fig. 109. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child crowned by two angels, with musical angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father*, Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum. Detail of infant Jesus ("Archive" IR photography).



Fig. 110. Detail of the musical angels ("Archive" IR photography).



Fig. 111. Detail of the Virgin's hand (visible).



Fig. 112. Detail of the Virgin's hand ("Archive" IR photography).



Fig. 113. Detail of the musical angel's legs (visible).



Fig. 114. Detail of the musical angel's legs ("Archive" IR photography).



Fig. 115. Detail of the Virgin's head, the crown and God the Father (visible).



Fig. 116. Detail showing the difference between the Virgin's head underdrawing and the freehand outline of the crown and God the Father ("Archive" IR photography).

We might cautiously suggest that Bastiani's composition was somewhat inspired by Zoppo's sketches of *Madonnas* which he realised during the latter's second journey in Venice, from 1468.[542] We can find specific similarities with how the angel musicians are drawn in Zoppo's *The Virgin and Child with Infant Musicians* which is conserved in the Department of Prints and Drawing of the British Museum, London (inv. n. 1946,0713.13 *recto*. *Fig. 117*). The influence of Marco Zoppo over Bastiani in the early 1470s has been already pointed out by Russo.[543] The Bastiani's knowledge of Zoppo's sketchbook might further indicate a closer relationship between these artists.

[542] CALOGERO, 2002, pp. 210-2019.

[543] RUSSO, 2018, p. 13-14 (note 20). In addition, Russo, in accordance with an observation previously made by CONTI (1977, p. 59), suggested that in early 1470s Bastiani possibly developed his perspective representation having studied Marco Zoppo's compositional drawings made around 1462, which are today collected in the Rosebery album in the British Museum, London (RUSSO, 2019, pp. 173-175).



Fig. 117. M. Zoppo, *The Virgin and Child with Infant Musicians*, London, British Museum (inv. n. 1946,0713.13 *recto*).

It is worth observing that some characteristic features of the figures and particular elements of the composition included in the Gallerie dell'Accademia and in the Poldi Pezzoli *Madonnas* will prove to be distinctive trademarks in Bastiani's paintings.[544] It is not surprising to find the same elements repeated in different works by the same painter, since an inventory of models (a "model book") – along with studies, sketches and cartoons – was a precious resource in the creation of devotional images. Indeed, at that time assembling designs held in stock to create different compositions was a common practice in the artists' workshops, especially if they were undertaking works for minor or provincial commissioners, where the master did not have to devote himself to creating elaborate, fresh and new compositions as he had to when working for more demanding or important patrons (e.g., prominent churches, Scuole, or

[544] Vavalà had already pointed out some of these hallmarks in her essay *Lazzaro Bastiani's Madonnas* (SANDBERG-VAVALÀ, 1931, pp. 124-127, 130-135, 138-141).

the government).[545] This routine for painting production lead to a uniformity of style within the workshop.[546]

We can find, for instance, the same distinct treatment of the Virgin's right hand (with the thumb and the fifth finger lifted) not only in the Gallerie dell'Accademia *Madonna* (*Fig. 118*), but also in the *Madonna* once in Bondi Collection (perhaps realised slightly before this one, Cat. AP38. *Fig. 119*) and also in the *Madonna* today conserved in the Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, dated around 1475 (Cat. AP35. *Fig. 120*). Similarly, the twisted cliff on the right of the Venice *Madonna* (*Fig. 121*) is depicted also in the Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà* (*Fig. 122*), in the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Frick Collection (Cat. AP28. *Fig. 123*), New York and, once again, in the Hermitage *Madonna* (*Fig. 124*).



Fig. 118. L. Bastiani, *Madonna of Humility*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia.



Fig. 119. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, formerly Vienna, Max Bondi collection.



Fig. 120. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum.

[545] See, for instance, Bastiani's *Madonna and Child* formerly in D'Annunzio collection in Settignano in which can be observed areas which are the same as in other works, such as the *Madonna of Humility* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (drapery folds on the bottom left) and of the *Madonna and Child* in Poldi Pezzoli (upper part of the Madonna and infant Jesus).

[546] For the practice of *Madonnas* replication in Giovanni Bellini's workshop see, for instance, TIETZE, 1939, pp. 34-35, 45; TIETZE-CONRAT, 1948, pp. 379-382; GIBBONS, 1965, pp. 146-155; GOLDEN 2004, 91-127.



Fig. 121. L. Bastiani, *Madonna of Humility*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia.



Fig. 122. L. Bastiani, *Pietà*, Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum.



Fig. 123. L. Bastiani, *Adoration of the Magi*, New York, The Frick Collection.



Fig. 124. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum.

This latter is strikingly similar in composition to the *Madonna* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. It is evident, in fact that it is derived from the same compositional scheme, albeit that here the elements of the landscape are inverted and the gestures of the two main figures slightly differ. The Virgin and infant Jesus have been mainly reworked based on the figures of the Matera polyptych (Cat. AP17). The design of the Virgin's garment drapery is almost the same in both paintings (*Fig. 125*, *Fig. 126*), and similarly, her left hand is placed on her chest in the Hermitage *Madonna* and in Saint Mustiola. The overall composition, however, is further enriched and embellished with fascinating

details, such as animals with a symbolic meaning and the duelling knights in the landscape, the city in the background (perhaps inspired by certain city views drawn by Jacopo Bellini), and the oriental carpet that decorates the marble pedestal where the Madonna is placed.



Fig. 125. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum. Detail of the bottom part of the Virgin's garments.



Fig. 126. L. Bastiani, *Matera polyptych*, Matera, Church of San Francesco d'Assisi. Detail of the bottom part of the Virgin's garments.

Historic restorations and, above all, the transfer of the support from panel to canvas, may have partially compromised the underdrawing, which I would cautiously suggest that have been transferred from a cartoon in the figures of the main pair. The Virgin's right hand, for example, shows the mechanical and fragmented drawing characteristic of tracing. This first outline was most likely conceived to be reinforced with a darker outline, such as the one visible in the contour of the sleeve (*Fig. 127*, *Fig. 128*). Changes that have occurred to the size of the Virgin's thumb and also in the infant Jesus' sleeve, however, could be adjustments to the transferred drawing that occurred at a later stage of the execution (*Fig. 129*, *Fig. 130*). Parallel hatching strokes spaced apart are present in the Virgin's lifted fingers (disposed vertically and showing the drop of paint that has pooled at the end of the line when the small-point brush was lifted) and in the infant Jesus' crisscrossed legs. As observed in the large panels showing the episodes of the Canaanite and of the Samaritan women, it appears that this typology of hatching was used by Bastiani as a generic indication of shaded areas for the subsequent painting process. Presumably, the more schematic approach used here can be explained by the existence of extensive preliminary drawings or a cartoon fully worked out, as suggested for the Poldi

Pezzoli *Madonna*. In addition, the Virgin's hand, and its underdrawing (including the hatching lines) is very similar to that of the *Madonna* in the Gemäldegalerie, a painting that was also based, as we have seen, on a pre-existing cartoon.



Fig. 127. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum. Detail of the Virgin's left hand (visible).



Fig. 128. Detail of the Virgin's left hand ("Archive" IR image).



Fig. 129. Detail of the infant Jesus' body (visible).



Fig. 130. Detail of the infant Jesus' body ("Archive" IR image).

For the geometric motifs of the carpet, Bastiani traced a grid of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines, probably as an aid to transfer a design previously studied on paper, and they might also have been used in the perspective construction of the pedestal (*Fig. 131*, *Fig. 132*). Secondary elements that appear in the landscape, such as animals and genre figures, are executed freehand (*Fig. 133*, *Fig. 134*).



Fig. 131. Detail of the oriental carpet (visible).

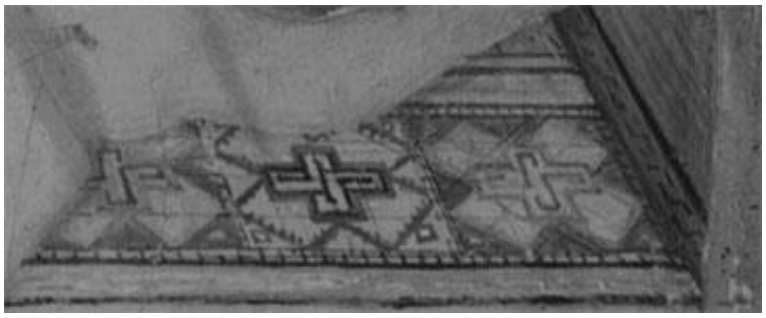


Fig. 132. Detail of the traced grid in the oriental carpet ("Archive" IR image).



Fig. 133. Detail of the genre figures in the background (visible).



Fig. 134. Detail of the genre figures in the background ("Archive" IR image).

From the second half of the 1470s and early 1480s, the influence of Giovanni Bellini's and Alvise Vivarini's compositions gradually became more pronounced in Bastiani's *Madonna* paintings, as evidenced in Bastiani's *Madonna and Child* in The National Gallery (London, Cat. AP15), *Madonna del Baldacchino* once in Pitt-Rivers Collection (Rushmore, Wiltshire, UK, Cat. AP39), *Madonna and Child* in Pinacoteca Tadini (Lovere, Cat. AP16), and *Madonna Adoring the Child* in the Church of Redentore (Venice, Cat. AP46).

As emphasised by Russo, the composition of Bastiani's Tadini *Madonna*, dated 1480 c., showing the half-length Virgin behind the parapet adoring the naked infant Jesus, who is reclined upon a luxurious green cushion, is derived from a prototype invented by Giovanni Bellini that has been replicated in several variants by Bellini himself or by his workshop during the 1470s and 1480s.[547]
The revealed underdrawing consistently differs in the undermodelling elaboration of the figures from the *Madonnas* previously analysed. In this panel, in fact, Bastiani made extensive use of an emphatic hatched shading not only as indication for the fall of light, but also to define the volume of the figures by *chiaroscuro (Fig. 135*, *Fig. 136*). The brushstrokes of underlying hatching are visible when observing the panel with the naked eye. This was most likely a desired effect, and perhaps Bastiani exploited this sub-modelling as a guide for a superficial finishing by glazing, which is possibly almost entirely lost today.[548]
A similar shading with hatched brushstrokes can also be detected with the naked eye also in the lighter areas of the London *Madonna* (which was probably executed slightly before the Tadini panel), where the paint layer is abraded or lost, as already pointed out in the previous chapter, and in the Redentore *Madonna* (especially in infant Jesus' body).
We can argue that by this time Bastiani was not only an acute observer of Bellini's inventions,[549] but he also had a direct knowledge of Bellini's hatched underdrawing practice, even though his own results with this practice was not as refined as those obtained by Bellini.
On a careful inspection in a raking light, it appears that the contours of the figures have been outlined by a light tracing, that might suggest the transposition from a cartoon. It seems, however, that Bastiani, studied and

[547] RUSSO, 2019, p. 176, notes 34, 37.

[548] The effects of past conservation treatments clearly emerge from the reflectogram.

[549] It must be recalled also that the Madonna and blessing infant Jesus pair in the *Madonna and Child Enthroned with the Archangel Gabriel, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias* in the National Gallery of Ireland in Dublin (Cat. AP11) is based on a composition originally developed by Giovanni Bellini and replicated several times by his collaborators (see GOLDEN, 2004, pp. 110-121).

tried to adjust the position of the figures too, as indicated by the freehand lines around the outline of infant Jesus' proper left leg. As usual, the contours of the overall design are emphatically reinforced with a darker pigment.



Fig. 135. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, Lovere, Pinacoteca Tadini (visible).



Fig. 136. Detail of the hatched undermodelling in the infant Jesus, Virgin's hand and garments (IRR, Apollo).

This typology of painstakingly underdrawn elaboration through hatching became the practice in Bastiani's works from the 1480s onwards. Examples have already been discussed as being visible in the vestments of the Madonnas in the Venice *Nativity* and Bergamo *Coronation*, and of the *Christ Blessing* in Modena. A finely hatched undermodelling is carefully worked out to describe the fall of light in the dress and in the harsh drapery folds of the signed Castelvecchio *Madonna* (Cat. AP62) and its very ruined replica in the Correr Museum (Cat. AP49), both executed in the second half of 1480s (*Fig. 137*, *Fig. 138*).

Small *spolvero* dots detected in the curly hair and ear lobe of the infant Jesus in the Venice version seem to confirm the existence of a cartoon employed by Bastiani to transfer the composition. Conversely, no evidence of pouncing has been detected in the Verona Madonna, but the traces might have been dusted off or covered when the contours were traced over.



Fig. 137. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, Verona, Castelvecchio Museum (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 138. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, Venice, Correr Museum (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 139. *Spolvero* dots in infant Jesus' curly hair (IRR, Apollo).



Fig. 140. Detail of *spolvero* dots in infant Jesus' curly hair (IRR, Apollo, macro).

The existence of a cartoon is worthy of further discussion.

A painting that had come to light at Agnew's art dealers in London in 1930s, and already mentioned by Sandberg-Vavalà in her essay,[550] showed the same composition as the Veronese and Venetian pictures regarding the Virgin and infant Jesus, but it differed in the landscape. Here the rear parapet and the tree have gone, giving space to a hilly landscape fading into the distance, where a fortress is still present. This painting was first discovered at antiquarian dealers Benedict & Co. in Berlin, it then disappeared, to emerge again at Agnew's in the 1930s. Having vanished once more, it reappeared in the Rinaldo Schreiber collection, where Heinemann last saw it in 1962 (*Fig. 141*).[551] The location of the painting today is unknown. Heinemann dated the painting as

[550] SANDBERG-VAVALÀ, 1931, p. 133.

[551] HEINEMANN, 1991, p. 38 (S. 114 bis), fig. 56; VINCO, 2013. In "Supplemento e ampliamenti" to *Giovanni Bellini e i belliniani*, there is mention of a further copy of the Correr *Madonna* that, from the description, seems quite similar to the picture just discussed ("paesaggio belliniano a sinistra ed una cortina all'angolo destro"). The author stated that this second copy appeared at Agnew's in 1930 and assigned it to Benedetto Diana (before it was attributed to Mansueti). Heinemann probably got confused, since the painting previously at Agnew's is the one that he later saw at Schreiber. HEINEMANN, 1991, p. 77 (V. 12 a).

being executed in 1505 and attributed it to Vincenzo dalle Destre di Treviso (Vincenzo dai Destri)[552]; Fossaluzza believed the artist to be a painter stylistically close to Vincenzo Catena in the middle period of his career and similar to Nicolò de' Barbari and to the so-called Maestro degli Inchini[553]; Vinco suggested again an improbable attribution to Bastiani;[554] while recently Russo ascribed it to Giovanni Mansueti .[555] In 2013, in a short article published on the Fondazione Zeri website, Vinco showed two pictures of another example of the *Madonna and Child* found in the Villa I Tatti's photo archive.[556] The images have a composition scheme like the one identified in Schreiber collection, even if they differ in the rocky landscape, the position of the infant Jesus, whose body is completely turned towards the Virgin, and an apple held in the Virgin's left hand. In Vinco's opinion, the two photos show the same painting, before and after a restoration treatment, with retouchings and additions ("restauro integrativo"), and he attributes the work to Lazzaro Bastiani, when compared to the other work once at Agnew's ("Le significative varianti di paesaggio e la presenza di un frutto nella mano della Madonna di collezione private fanno pensare comunque a due prove autografe, derivanti dal medesimo prototipo". *Fig. 143*).

I do not agree with Vinco's statement, as there are numerous differences between the two pictures in Villa I Tatti (for example, the Virgin's left thumb, the position of the infant Jesus's left thumb, the Virgin's expression and folds in her dress, the clouds in the sky, the fortress, and shrubs). Moreover, the painting he reproduced as the 'before restoration' picture today is in the collection of the Frascione Arte private gallery in Florence,[557] where it is

[552] HEINEMANN, 1991, p. 38 (S. 114 bis).

[553] FOSSALUZZA, 2010, p. 205.

[554] VINCO, 2013.

[555] RUSSO, 2019, p. 178.

[556] VINCO, 2013: https://fondazionezeri.unibo.it/it/pubblicazioni/call-for-papers/articoli-2013/quattro-madonne-con-bambino-di-lazzaro-bastiani.

[557]Acquired around 1960's by Vittorio Frascione. It underwent a restoration treatment between 2013 and 2015 (personal communication).

indicated as being by Lazzaro Bastiani, an attribution I personally reject owing to the generally flat and dull appearance of the whole composition (*Fig. 142*). At this point there are two possibilities: first, the two *Madonnas* are two different paintings from the same cartoon; second, the photos refer to the same painting, but the before-after restoration order has been reversed. In any case, the *replica* and the numerous variants of the same compositional scheme that have been found down the years seem to confirm the extensive use of cartoons in Bastiani's workshop, as well as the exchange, and subsequent modifications according to differing tastes, of cartoons between different Venetian artists' workshops in the 15th century.



Fig. 141. G. Mansueti (?), *Madonna and Child*, formerly Brescia, Rinaldo Schreiber collection (until 1962).



Fig. 142. Venetian painter, *Madonna and Child*, Florence, Frascione Arte. For Vinco this is the "before restoration" version.



Fig. 143. Venetian painter, *Madonna and Child*, private collection. For Vinco this is the "after restoration" version.

Further evidence of the extensive use of cartoons in Bastiani's workshop to replicate compositions which were liked and therefore requested by the patrons includes four almost identical pictures representing the *Madonna Adoring the Child*, respectively in Poznan Museum (Cat. AP33, *Fig. 144*),[558] in the Minneapolis Institute of Art (*Fig. 146*) and in two American private collections (formerly, respectively, in Edgar Speyer collection and in Paul Dray Collection. *Fig. 145*, *Fig. 147*). They show the same compositional scheme (the half-length Madonna with her arms crossed on her chest in adoration of the infant Jesus who lies on the parapet) and differ only in the elaboration of the background. The Poznan Madonna, in fact, shows in the background *Scenes from the Life of Tobias*, while in the other versions a natural landscape with buildings and genre figures characteristic of Bastiani is depicted. The copies in Minneapolis and in private collections are probably somewhat repainted, but beyond the potential overpainting, they are very alike, except for tiny differences between the figures and the architectural details.[559]

Relying on stylistic comparison, I would cautiously suggest that the Poznan *Madonna* was the first composition, created by patching together designs kept in stock (compare for instance the Virgin's hand with the bent little finger with Bastiani's Hermitage *Madonna*) or elaborating new from pre-existing designs ones (compare the representation of the infant Jesus with the Venice *Nativity*

[558] During the last restoration of the painting (1989-1990), restorers observed that the underdrawing is traced (even though they did not specify if the tracing is confined to the Madonna and Child only, or to the whole composition, see SKUBISZEWSKA, 1995, p. 41). At that time IR analysis was performed on the painting. The IR images the museum sent me shows extensive hatching in the body of infant Jesus and in the figure of the Virgin.

[559] Rachel McGarry, curator of European paintings and works of paper in the Minneapolis Institute of Art (MIA), carefully inspected the painting and confirmed that the condition of the panel is compromised, with some overpainting and retouching throughout. She also believes that she has detected *spolvero* traces in the outline of the fingers, especially Mary's proper right hand, along the upper edge of the forefinger, seen against the blue mantle, as well as in the eyes, the line dividing the lips, and around Christ Child's legs and toes (personal communication).

or the Tadini *Madonna*). The particular background with *Scenes from the Life of Tobias* might have been based upon a specific request of the commissioner and may have involved Bastiani himself in its ideation. For the other versions we might think of another cartoon created from the Poznan one and enriched with the landscape background.

The Virgin's facial features in the Speyer work are very similar to the Redentore *Madonna*'s, perhaps suggesting that Bastiani executed it personally. The treatment of the face of the Virgin in the Minneapolis and Paul Dray panels seems different, perhaps this area was worked out by the hand of a workshop assistant or was modified during previous conservation treatments.

To summarise briefly what has been examined in this chapter; Bastiani's underdrawing, although based on a technical elaboration which remained constant, evolved during his career, reaching a turning point in the extensive use of *chiaroscuro* sub-modelling at a time when his personal artistic relationship with Giovanni Bellini intensified. In addition, over the years, cartoons were very effective in hastening the rate of output of serial reproductions of devotional images which were increasingly being requested by patrons during this period.



Fig. 144. L. Bastiani*, Madonna Adoring the Child and Scenes from the Life of Tobias in the Background*, Poznań, Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu.



Fig. 145. L. Bastiani, *Madonna Adoring the Child*, formerly Edgar Speyer collection.



Fig. 146. L. Bastiani (workshop?), *Madonna Adoring the Child*, Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Art (MIA).



Fig. 147. L. Bastiani (workshop?), *Madonna Adoring the Child*, formerly Paul Dray collection.

5. CATALOGUE OF PAINTINGS

5.1. AUTOGRAPH PAINTINGS



© Diocesi di Treviso

Number: AP01

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Enthroned Saint Jerome* and *Pietà* (*Saint Jerome altarpiece*)

Location: Asolo (Italy), Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta

Date: 1484-1491 (1488)

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 160 x 180 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Cattedrale di Santa Maria Assunta, Asolo (Saint Jerome chapel, until 1922).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1826, restoration of the frame (Fiocco, 1958); 1979, *Pietà*, by Pinin Brambilla Barcilon (*Rassegna…*,1979, p. 231); 1980, *Saint Jerome enthroned*, by Pinin Brambilla Barcilon (*Rassegna…*, 1980, p. 289).

Fiocco wrote about the restoration of the frame in 1826 ("[…] nel 1826, quando si manomisero le belle cornici tanto di questa [Lotto's Asolo altarpiece], quanto del «S. Gerolamo» di Lazzaro Bastiani […]". Fiocco, 1958, p. 10). In the 20th century two consecutive restoration treatments were performed, the first one on the lunette with the *Pietà* in 1979 (*Rassegna…*,1979, p. 231), the second one on the main panel in 1980 (*Rassegna…*, 1980, p. 289). Today the altarpiece condition is fair. Several incised signatures, probably left by Saint Jerome's worshippers in the past, are visible on the base of the throne (*Fig. 148*). The *Pietà* is substantially damaged with several *lacunae* that reduce its readability.

Bibliography:

Trieste de' Pellegrini, 1780, p. 44; Paladini, 1892, p. 74; Logan, 1903, p. 319; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; L. Venturi, 1909, p. 21; Borenius, 1912, I, pp. 217-218 (note 2); A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 381-382; Paladini, 1919, p. 64; Coletti, 1927, 2, pp. 4-5; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 134; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Fogolari, 1932, p. 282; Fiocco, 1933, p. 33; Berenson, , 1936, p. 54; Van Marle, 1936, p. 184; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 45 (note 31); Galetti-E. Camesca, 1950, p. 245; Chimenton, 1956, p. 23; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; De Marchi, 1960, pp. 43-44; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 219; De Marchi, 1964, p. 18; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Comacchio, 1976, pp. 18, 24-25, 33-36, 38, 42, 49-60, 78-79, 93-110, 129, 193-194, 197-201, 208, 212-215; Don Bernardi, 1987, p. 129; Lucco, 1987, p. 162; Fossaluzza, 1990, pp. 548-549; Sartor, 1997, pp. 46-48, 52 (note 62); Fossaluzza, 2009, pp. 58-60; Tempestini, 2021, p. 256 (n. 1331).

The Saint Jerome altarpiece was commissioned for the eponymous chapel, which is the first on the right when entering the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta in Asolo. From an early 17th century manuscript entitled *Vite delli cinque dottori de leggi della famiglia De Colbertaldi di Asolo*, written by Antonio Iseppo Colbertaldo, we know that the commissioner of the Saint Jerome chapel was Bartolomeo Colbertaldo, a jurisconsult, priest and canon in Santa Maria Assunta, and a descendant of the noble Colbertaldo family of Asolo (Comacchio, 1976, pp. 38, 208 [DOC. V]). Bartolomeo, son of Adamo Colbertaldo (Comacchio, 1976, pp. 18-25), planned the construction of the chapel together with his beloved elder brother Nicolò, who was a priest himself. Nicolò requested and obtained permission to build the chapel from the bishop of Treviso and from the provost of Asolo, but, unfortunately, he died in 1484, before realizing the project. Nonetheless, in his testament he left an annual bequest to the priests of the church of Asolo, with the obligation of officiating a mass to pray for his soul every week and to commemorate the anniversary of his death every year (Comacchio, 1976, p. 34). Bartolomeo, who obtained a canonry in the Cathedral in 1483, probably to commemorate his lamented brother, decided to complete the project and to build the chapel in the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta by investing 200 ducats (Comacchio, 1976, p. 198 [DOC. III]; Comacchio, 1976, p. 208 [DOC. V]). As Sartor pointed out, this seems to be a small sum of money to build the chapel *ex novo*, thus it is more likely that the money was used to restore a pre-existing space and to erect a new altar (Sartor, 1997, p. 52 [note 62]). A document of 1491 concerning the request of Bartolomeo Colbertaldo to establish a canonry in the Saint Jerome chapel, under the *juspatronatus* of the Colbertaldo family, proves that the chapel was already built by that time (Comacchio, 1976, pp. 197-201). It should be noted that previously the Colbertaldo family members were buried in the cemetery that surrounded the Cathedral (Furlani, *Notizie di Asolo antica*, p. 155; Comacchio, 1976, p. 24, 59 (note 1)). This fact is confirmed by Adamo's testament of 1468, in which he explicitly requested "voglio esser sepelido alla chiesa di Madonna santa Maria di Asolo, dove piacerà alli miei commmissarii, et miei figliuoli" (Comacchio, 1976, p. 193 [DOC. II]). Hence, the

chapel of Saint Jerome became the new Colbertaldo family tomb, the place of interment probably was in front of the altar, beneath the floor, and it was closed by a memorial ledger stone. The first remains to be reburied here were those of Adamo, Nicolò and Francesco (another brother), which were previously in the external cemetery (Comacchio, 1976, p. 59-60). Moreover, in the 1499 version of his testament, Girolamo, Bartolomeo's younger brother, asked to be interred in the church of Santa Maria Assunta, specifically "jn capella Sancti Heronimj ubi est sepulcrum domum illoreum de Colbertaldo" (Sartor, 1997, p. 46). The unconsecrated wooden altar was set against the rear wall, and it was enriched with Bastiani's *Saint Jerome altarpiece*. Down the years the descendants of the Colbertaldo family did not show any great interest in conserving/preserving the chapel. Indeed, several pastoral visitations' reports underlined the bad condition of the place (in 1584, Comacchio, 1974, p. 65, 197; in 1625, Comacchio, 1974, pp. 78, 210). In 1789, the brothers Giovanni Bartolomeo and Giovanni Francesco Colbertaldo donated the chapel to the community of Asolo, in order to convert it into a baptistry to house the baptismal font which had been given to the church by the queen Caterina Cornaro in 1491. The two parties drew up an agreement ratified by Bernardo Marini, bishop of Treviso, with seven conditions to be fulfilled for its validity (Comacchio, 1976, pp. 214-215 [DOC. VIII]). In the fourth point of the contract the Colbertaldo brothers directly requested the Saint Jerome altarpiece remain positioned and conserved in the chapel (Comacchio, 1976, pp. 78-79, 212-213 [DOC. VII]). The renovation works were carried out between 1806 and 1807. Pietro Basso reported that the new baptistry was finished in 1807 when the font was moved from its previous location, under the organ *in cornu Evangelii*, to the chapel (Comacchio, 1974, p. 145 (note 8)). In 1922 Mons. Angelo Brugnoli obtained permission to transform the baptistry into the chapel of the Madonna Ausiliatrice and on that occasion the Saint Jerome *pala* was moved to the left-hand wall of the nave, where it is still on display (Comacchio, 1976, pp. 93-110).

The altarpiece was composed of three parts: the main panel showing Saint Jerome in majesty, the *predella* with *Stories of the Life of Saint Jerome*, and a

crowning *lunette* representing the *Pietà*. Today the *predella* is conserved in the Pinacoteca di Brera, as it was sold to the Milanese museum by Giuseppe Colbertaldo in 1900 (Malaguzzi Valeri, 1908, p. 128).

In the central panel Saint Jerome who faces forward is seated on a marble throne closed back by a green curtain, holds an open book (probably the *Vulgata*) with his left hand, while blessing the observer with his right hand. He is portrayed as an old, bearded man wearing the red cardinal choir dress, while two hovering angels, which might recall those of Bartolomeo Vivarini, in Lionello Venturi's opinion (L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279), hold the *galero* in mid-air over his head. The tamed lion lies down at his feet, looking towards the viewer. A parapet separates this scene from the distant hilly landscape in the background, an arrangement already presented in the Murano *lunette* (1484). A fortress and other buildings enrich the rural scene that evidently recalls Asolo and its surroundings (De Marchi, 1960, p. 44). Adolfo Venturi found the saint in majesty to be dull, and the composition to be shallow in the forced geometrical pose of the figures. Moreover, he criticized the "flattened" perspective of the hills, which, in his opinion, are rendered "alla maniera di Jacopo [Bellini]" (A. Venturi, 1915, p. 282). For the symmetrical and equipoised, even if rigid, disposition of the figures to right and left of the central axis, in this case represented by Saint Jerome himself, as well as for "the cold restraint of the general atmosphere", Sandberg-Vavalà included the painting in that group of Bastiani's most personal works (Vavalà, 1931, p. 134). The *lunette* shows the *Pietà* with the dead Christ held upright by the mourning Virgin and Saint John the Baptist. The three half-length figures emerge from a dark background. Both of the Venturis underlined similarities with the *Pietà* in Sant'Antonin, in Venice, even if the Asolo composition is simpler, being reduced to only three figures (L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 381-382), while Fossaluzza remarked its derivation from Giovanni Bellini models (Fossaluzza in Lucco, 1990, p. 548). Three episodes of the life of the saint are painted in the *predella*: *Saint Jerome in the desert*, *Saint Jerome bringing the lion into the convent* and the *Death of Saint Jerome*.

The decision to dedicate the altarpiece, and the chapel, to Saint Jerome is linked to the profound devotion Bartolomeo Colbertaldo had for this specific saint. His devotedness is further proved/demonstrated by his assiduous study of Saint Jerome's writings, a copy of which he always kept with him ("havendo sempre nelle mani l'opere sacre"), as reported in *Vite delli cinque dottori* (Comacchio, 1976, p. 208). Furthermore, Bartolomeo had a collection of books inherited from his father, as noted in Adamo's testament of 1468. These volumes must have included also Saint Jerome writings ("[…] Voglio sia stimadi i libri a p[resbiter] borth. sia messi a conto della sua parte per tanto quanto i montera". Comacchio, 1976, p. 194 [DOC. II]; Comacchio, 1976, p. 42 [note 15]). Nicolò was most probably dedicated to the saint as well, probably under the influence of his close friend Pietro Antonio Compagnoni, a priest who had a personal inclination for the study of Saint Jerome's written production and for the eremitic life. Moreover, in 1463 Compagnoni obtained the permission to build a church and a monastery on Monte Levrer, a hill near Asolo, that he consecrated to Saint Jerome (Comacchio, 1976, p. 33 [note 8]; Comacchio, 1969, p. 121; Rosada, 1993, p. 45).

The first to mention the altarpiece in the Saint Jerome chapel was by Pietro Trieste de' Pellegrini in his *Saggio*, published in1780. According to Trieste de' Pellegrini the *pala* was executed in 1488 by the father of Pre Sebastiano, priest of San Tommaso in Venice, a renowned painter at that time ("[…] Nel 1488 dal Padre di Pre Sebastiano Piovano di S. Tomà di Venezia valente pittore di que' tempi". Trieste de' Pellegrini, 1780, p. 44). On the basis of Trieste de' Pellegrini's information, the painter has accordingly been believed to be Lazzaro Bastiani and today critics largely agree in recognising Lazzaro as the artist behind the Saint Jerome *pala* (Paladini, 1892, p. 74?; Logan, 1903, p. 319; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; Borenius, 1912, pp. 217-218 (note 2); A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 381-382; Paladini, 1919, p. 64; Coletti, 1927, p. 5; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Fiocco, 1933, p. 33; Berenson, 1936, p. 54; Van Marle, 1936, p. 184; Collobi, 1939, p. 45 (note 31); Galetti-Camesca, 1950, p. 245; Chimenton, 1956, p. 23; Berenson, 1957, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, p. 26; De Marchi, 1964, p. 18; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Lucco, 1987, p. 162; Fossaluzza, 1990, p. 548-549; Sartor, 1997,

p. 46; Fossaluzza, 2009, p. 58). Nevertheless, in 1932 Fogolari suggested assigning the painting to Sebastiano Bastiani, Lazzaro's son, who was priest in San Raffaele church in Venice and a minor painter himself (Fogolari, 1932, pp. 279-282). In Fogolari's opinion the inferior quality of the artwork certainly suggests that the artist was the humble Sebastiano, instead of his more gifted father ("Un Sebastiano da Venezia così prossimo a Lazzaro, ma tanto inferiore a lui, chi altri poteva essere se non il suo figliuolo?". Fogolari, 1932, p. 279). Fogolari's statement was accepted by Bernardi and Comacchio, who in turn ascribed the altarpiece to Sebastiano (Don Bernardi, 1987, p. 129; Comacchio, 1976, pp. 49-58).

The *pala* has been generally connected to a mature phase of Bastiani's career (except by Adolfo Venturi, who included the panel in that group of early works under the influence of the Vivarinis and Mantegna. A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 381-382). Key artwork used as a comparison to date the Asolo altarpiece was the Murano *lunette* of 1484. The *pala* has been variously believed to slightly precede the Murano painting (Van Marle, 1936, p. 184; Arslan, 1964, p. 168), or to come shortly after it (L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; L. Venturi, 1909, p. 21), or to be contemporary (Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 45). Later authors, as well, assumed to date the altarpiece to be in the ninth decade, or between 1480 and 1485 (Arslan, 1965, p. 168), or, more specifically, around 1485 (Lucco, 1987, p. 162). Fossaluzza (1990, p. 548) suggested an even later date, placing the execution of the painting in the last decade of the 15th century, while Andrea da Murano was in Asolo and realized the altarpiece for the church of San Martino (1492, now lost), whose *predella* and *cimasa* were later added to Lotto's *Assumption*, still in the Cattedrale di Santa Maria Assunta (Chastel, 1978, p. 102; Dillon, 1980, pp. 126-129 and related previous bibliography). Trieste de' Pellegrini had written that the Saint Jerome altarpiece had to be dated 1488 (Trieste de' Pellegrini, 1780, p. 44). This date should be considered with caution, given the date was suggested some centuries after the event, even if some authors dated the altarpiece to 1488 only on the basis of this document (Paladini, 1919, p. 64; Bernardi-Farronato, 1987, p. 129; Comacchio, 1976, p. 51; Fossaluzza, 2009, p. 58). Considering that the construction (or renovation)

of the Saint Jerome chapel, occurred in a period between the death of Nicolò Colbertaldo in 1484 and the document of 1491, and assuming that the *pala* must have been commissioned and executed in the same years, the date of 1488 does not seem that implausible/unlikely, but since we are not in possession of any other document supporting this date, I believe it is fairer to suggest the interval between 1484, when Nicolò died, and 1491, when the chapel was already built. A period between the end of the ninth decade and the beginning of the following one was also indicated by Sartor (Sartor, 1997, p. 46).

The circumstances in which Bartolomeo Colbertaldo got to know Lazzaro Bastiani are unknown, as is the reason why he decided to request him to paint the altarpiece for the Saint Jerome chapel. Of important significance are the fortunes of Asolo in this period. In the second half of the 15th century Asolo arose as an important political and cultural centre, with the election of the *Consiglio Maggiore* in 1459 (Farronato in Rosada, 1993, pp. 30-31), and, above all, with the settlement, in 1489, of the court of Caterina Cornaro, queen of Cyprus and *Signora di Asolo*, that brought several men of letters and artists to the city (Comacchio, 1969, pp. 103-109, 117-141). Moreover, numerous families coming from the outlying areas or from other cities decided to move to Asolo to increase their social status and economic opportunities, establishing a new enriched noble class and becoming leaders of the Asolo society. This was the case of the Colbertaldo family, whose members played a pivotal role in Asolo city life at that time, as they were elected in the government board (Adamo and Paolo. Comacchio, 1976, pp. 24, 35-36), participated in the religious life (Nicolò and Girolamo), and were part of the court of the queen (Comacchio, 1969, pp. 105-106. Antonio Iseppo Colbertaldo was the author of the *Historia* of Caterina Cornaro. Colbertaldo [a cura di Perocco], 2012, pp. 13-21). Thus, given these particular circumstances, the involvement in the renovation of the cathedral by building the Saint Jerome chapel (the pastoral visitation of 1467 pointed out the urgency of a refurbishment of the church. Comacchio, 1974, pp. 58-59, 191-201 [DOC. I]) and the decision to commission the *pala* to a well-known Venetian artist could

be interpreted as the will of the Colbertaldo family to further affirm the important role they played in the Asolo society (Sartor, 1997, p. 46).

Further bibliography:

Sernagiotto, 1869, p. 53; Malaguzzi Valeri, 1908, p. 128; Fiocco, 1958, p. 10; Comacchio, 1969, pp. 103-109, 117-141; Comacchio, 1974, pp. 58-59, 65, 78, 145, 191-201, 210; Chastel, 1978, p. 102; *Rassegna…*,1979, p. 231; *Rassegna…*, 1980, p. 289; Dillon, 1980, pp. 126-129; Farronato, 1993, pp. 30-31; *Asolo*, 1993, p. 45; Colbertaldo (a cura di Perocco), 2012, pp. 12-21.

Further images



Fig. 148. Detail showing the incised signatures on the base of the saint's throne.



Number: AP02

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Christ blessing*

Location: Bayonne (France), Musée Bonnat-Helleu, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Bayonne (n. inv. 6)

Date: 1473 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 60.4 x 44.7 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Roche; Léon Joseph Florentin Bonnat (acquired in London in April 1898).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Last restoration in 1970s. In 2005 some abrupt temperature variations caused cracks and flaking of the paint layers. A conservation treatment, including scientific examinations, should occur by the end of 2022 (Benjamin Couilleaux, director of Musée Bonnat-Helleu via personal communication).

Bibliography:

Gruyer, 1902, p. 6 (n. 6); Gruyer, 1903, p. 200, fig. p. 197; Gruyer-Jolyet, 1903, p. 6 (n. 6); Hermanin, 1903, p. 77; Paton, 1903, p. 399; Gruyer, 1908, p. 8 (n. 6), fig. p. 9; L. Venturi, 1914, pp. 316, 319; Borenius, 1915, p. 217; Alazard, 1917, p. 261; Pierce, 1921, p. 381 (note 1); Sambon, 1924, p. 169; Personnaz-Berges, 1925, p. 15 (n. 6); *Musée Bonnat…*, 1930, p. 140 (n. 882); Berenson, 1932, p. 584; Van Marle, 1934, XV, pp. 34-35 (note 2), fig. 22; Berenson, 1936, 502; *Mostra di Melozzo…*, 1938, p. 87; Collobi, 1939, p. 39; Arcangeli, 1950, p. 50; Rizzi, 1969, p. 24; Berenson, 1957, I, p. ; Berenson, 1958, I , p. 502; De Vecchi, 1967, p. 108 (n. 54); *Musée Bonnat…*, 1970, p. 81 (n. 882); Volpe, 1983, p. 56; Lucco, 1990, p. 439; De Marchi, 1994, s.p., note 26; Casu, 1996, pp. 88-89 (note 74); De Marchi, 2015, p. 118; Russo, 2018, pp. 9, 16 (note 37), 17 (note 43); Russo, 2019, pp. 169-173.

The panel portrays the frontal Christ in the act of blessing the observer (the faithful) with his right hand, while holding a book in his left hand. He is clothed in a white tunic, enriched by a decoration inlaid with precious pearls around his neck, and the tunic is covered by a blue mantle.

The artist Léon Bonnat purchased the painting in London in 1898 and donated it, along with his entire collection, to the City of Bayonne.

It has been included in museum catalogues since 1902, when the museum was inaugurated. Initially it was presented here as a work by Piero della Francesca, but with a further note recording that Adolfo Venturi attributed it to Domenico Veneziano. The ascription to Piero della Francesca was repeated in all the catalogues and in several other publications concerning the museum until 1970 (Gruyer, 1902; Gruyer, 1903; Gruyer-Jolyet, 1903; Hermanin, 1907;

Gruyer, 1908; Borenius, 1915; Personnaz-Bergès, 1925; *Musée Bonnat…*, 1930; *Musée Bonnat…*, 1970. The only exception to this was Sambon, who dubitatively accepted Domenico Veneziano as artist). In his short book on Piero della Francesca (1967), De Vecchi also attributed the work to this artist. In an essay regarding the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, published in Bollettino d'Arte in 1914, Lionello Venturi discovered two panels depicting a *Christ Blessing*, one in the Urbino Gallery and the other in the museum of Città di Castello, both of which were similar to that in Bayonne, except for a more or less foreshortened blessing hand, and for the object held in the left hand. For the poor foreshortening of the right hand, the *Christ* in Città di Castello was given to Justus van Gent (the attribution of the painting has been long debated. Today it is assigned to Cosimo Rosselli, see Gabrielli, 2007, pp. 177-178 [Cat. 51]), while the beautiful Christ in Urbino, holding the *globus cruciger* (that iconographically identify it as *Salvador Mundi*) was attributed to Melozzo da Forlì (pp. 316-319). Venturi suggested that the pictures derived from a lost prototype by Piero della Francesca, and that the painter of the Bayonne Museum was a mediocre follower of the master (1914, pp. 319). Other painters the artwork has been variously ascribed to were Francesco di Gentile da Fabriano (Pierce, 1921, following Berenson's suggestion), Giovanni Battista Utili da Faenza (dubitatively. Berenson 1932, 1936), Gerolamo di Giovanni da Camerino (Van Marle, 1934, XV), Biagio di Antonio da Firenze (Berenson 1957, 1958), and Gentile Bellini (in the early 1460s. De Marchi, 1994; Casu, 1996; De Marchi, 2015).

In the catalogue of the 1938-39 exhibition *Mostra di Melozzo e del Quattrocento Romagnolo*, Luisa Becherucci, following written suggestions by Longhi, first attributed the painting to Lazzaro Bastiani, dating it to be from around 1460. Accepting this ascription, Collobi (1939) further noticed affinities with the figure of Christ in *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia, albeit pointing out that the Bayonne *Christ* was more rigid and abstract, and not showing any human feeling, according to the iconic and hieratic character of the subject. In addition, the scholar was convinced that the *Christ* in the Bayonne Museum had to be recognised as the Christ *Antonio*

Choradi da Pera requested of Bastiani in 1473 and which was executed in 1474 (see "Chronological Overview"). Collobi's assumption concerning the commission of the painting was accepted by Arcangeli (1950. A comparison between the *Matera Polyptych* and the *Christ Blessing* in Bayonne was sufficient to demonstrate that the *Saint John the Baptist* discovered by Arcangeli in a private collection in Bologna was to be assigned to Bastiani), Rizzi (1969), Volpe (1983) and Lucco (1990). Recently Russo, while agreeing with the attribution to Bastiani (2018), discarded Collobi's hypothesis. The scholar, indeed, observed that the dimensions of the painting requested by *Choradi da Pera* were probably half of those of the *Christ* in Bayonne (The "mezzo foio di charta di pizoli" asked by Choradi measured 30 x 21 cm. 2019, pp. 170-171). The French panel, however, is identified by Russo as an essential piece to explain the appearance of the other Christ and to define Bastiani's production around 1473. As emphasised by Russo, at that time, Bastiani was able to adapt his characteristic archaism to the Renaissance manner he had perfected in the previous two decades (2019, pp. 171-173). A further comparison which supports a dating in the early 1470s is with the *Matera Polyptych*, particularly with the *Saint Louise of Toulouse* (see the oval head, the almond-like eyes, the straight nose, the small mouth, and the left hand holding the book). I see the evolution of the Bayonne *Christ* in the figure of Christ in the *Caananite picture*, as already noticed by Collobi (even if Collobi believed the Venetian panel was somewhat earlier), and in the *Madonna* in The National Gallery in London (specifically in the facial features), both of which paintings are dated around 1475.

Further bibliography:

Gabrielli, 2007, pp. 177-178 (Cat. 51).



Number: AP03

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Coronation of the Virgin Mary between Saint Bernard and Saint Orsola*

Location: Bergamo (Italy), Accademia Carrara (from 1866, as bequest of Guglielmo Lochis – inv. n. 81LC00028)

Date: 1490

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 88 x 130 cm

Inscription: signed and dated "OPUS LAZZARI / SEBASTIANI VENETI 1490" on the cartouche at the centre of the lower border.

Technique: tempera and oil

Provenance: Crema, Church of Santa Maria della Croce; Crema, Galleria Giaracina (ante 1850); Cremona, Barbieri (1850); Crocetta di Mozzo (Bergamo), Guglielmo Lochis private collection (1850-1866).

Past exhibitions: *I grandi veneti. Da Pisanello a Tiziano, da Tintoretto a Tiepolo. Capolavori dell'Accademia Carrara di Bergamo* (Rome, Chiostro del Bramante, 14 October 2010 – 30 January 2011).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1932, Mauro Pellicioli (Valagussa, 2018, p. 342); 2010, Eugenia De Beni, Ciro Castelli, Leone

Algisi (De Beni, 2010, p. 203; Poldi, 2010, p. 194; Villa, 2010, p. 68; Valagussa, 2018, pp. 343); 2020, de Manincor, IRR; 2020.

There are no reports of historical restorations. In 1871 Crowe and Cavalcaselle recorded that "the picture, however, is much injured". According to a cartouche attached to the verso, the panel underwent a conservation procedure in 1932 by Mauro Pellicioli. The treatment most likely included a light cleaning and application of a new varnish film slightly pigmented to produce a superficial golden patina (Valagussa, 2018, p. 342). In 1939, however, Collobi observed that the work was opaque and darkened. A second major conservation process, involving both the wooden support and the paint layers, was carried out in 2010. Ciro Castelli and Leone Algisi applied a new framing on the back, to improve the stability of the two joined wood planks of the support, which were both curved. Once they had removed the stucco works applied in the past, they discovered a dark red canvas layer (*teletta d'incamottatura*) glued along the joints to give reinforcement and to prevent possible fractures on the painting layer (De Beni 2010; Poldi, 2010). Even though no samples were taken, the painting stratigraphy was found to be made of the typical *gesso e colla* preparatory ground and priming layer. The pigments identified by means of non-invasive spectroscopic analyses are those commonly employed by Venetian painters in the 15th century: ultramarine blue, azurite, copper acetate, lead-tin yellow, and cinnabar. Bastiani used a painting technique that combined both tempera and oil, often spreading the paint with the aid of his hands (as evidenced by the presence of his fingerprints on the superfial layer). Where the paint is particularly thinned, the hatched underdrawing is visible. Before the conservation procedure that was carried out by Eugenia De Beni, the varnish film was oxidised, while the pigment surface was abraded and flaked, showing several altered old retouches. First the painting was cleaned, then the small lacunae were stuccoed and, finally, inpainted. In 2020 a new conservation treatment was necessary after the work was accidentally damaged leading to a fracture on the paint that extended horizontally for the entire width of the painting where the two wood planks are joined.

Bibliography:

Lochis, 1858, pp. 213-214 (cat. LXI); Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 218, note 1; *Catalogo…*, 1881, p. 63 (n. 28); Burckhardt, 1884, II, 2, p. 639; Buckhardt, 1892, 2, p. 616; Jacobsen, 1896, pp. 251-252; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 279; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 12; M. Logan, 1903, p. 319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 22; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 280, note 1, 296; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 220, note 3; Ricci, 1912, p. 45 (n. 169); A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 380, 392; Fratelli Alinari, 1926, p. 3 (n. 16922); Ricci, 1930, p. 117; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 134, 140; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Morassi, 1934, p. 29 (n. 169); Berenson, 1936, p. 54; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 174, 184; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 48, note 43; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Ottino Della Chiesa, 1964, pp. 33, 70 (n. 169); Arslan, 1965, pp. 167-168; Russoli, 1967, p. 64 (n. 169) Zampetti, 1969, I, p. 24; Russoli, 1976, p. 64; Rossi, 1979, p. 43 (n. 526); Togneri-Anderson, 1985, p. 74; Humfrey, 1987, II, p. 575; Rossi, 1987, p. 55 (n. 526); Rossi, 1988, p. 38 (n. 526); Humfrey, 1990, II, p. 733; Lucco, 1990, II, p. 462; De Nicolò Salmazo, 1991, p. 80; Boskovits, 1992, p. 24; Quattrini, 1990, p. 58; Szylin, 1993, pp. 422-423; Nepi Scirè, 1995, p. 21; Longhi, 1995, pp. 443, 446; Casu, 1996, p. 71; Sartor, 1997, pp. 48, 52 (notes 71-77); Brambilla Ranise, 2007, p. 360; De Beni, 2010, p. 203; Poldi, 2010, pp. 190-197; Villa, 2010, pp. 68-69 (cat. 18); Avery Quash, 2011, I, pp. 243, 612; Avery Quash, 2011, II, p. 27 (fig. 31.2), 205; Piccolo, 2014-2015, p. 300; Russo, 2017, s.p.; Valagussa, 2018, pp. 342-344 (cat. III.30).

The painting portrays the Coronation of the Virgin between two saints and four angels floating in the light blue sky. In the centre, sitting on two cushions placed on the wings of the marble throne, Christ crowns the Virgin in front of the Dove of the Holy Spirit and God the Father, sitting slightly behind them and in higher position. The Virgin Mary wears a red dress covered by a blue mantle, while Christ is clothed in a blue tunic wears a pink cape over this. God the Father has on a finely woven golden brocade cloak. The central group is flanked by Saint Bernard (recognizable by the Cistercian white habit, a book symbolic of his extensive writing activity, and the crosier, as he was the first Abbot of

Clairvaux) and by Saint Ursula (depicted with the palm of her martyrdom and the banner). The setting of the scene is minimalistic, showing the front facing geometric throne in central perspective, which and this seems to continue to the rear lateral sides as a sort of parapet to enclose episode in the foreground. The only decorated part of the throne is the niche behind God the Father, which is enriched by a golden mosaic with a floral pattern. On a cartouche attached to the lower border of the throne are written the signature and date, "OPUS LAZZARI / SEBASTIANI VENETI 1490", hence the autography and the dating of the artwork have never been questioned. At the extremities of the parapet are painted two coats of arms of the Barbarigo family flanked by two B's, elements that are significant in understanding who commissioned of the panel, as it will be illustrated shortly after in the entry. The Coronation scene is represented according to the most traditional iconography, with God the Father blessing/protecting Christ and the Virgin Mary. Bastiani might have been inspired by notable earlier examples of *Coronation* in Venice, such as the *Coronation* by Antonio Vivarini and Giovani D'Alemagna in San Pantalon (Venice) and the *Coronation* by Michele Giambono for Sant'Agnese (Venice) for the old-fashioned presence of God the Father and the Dove, as well as for the garments of the figures. However, Bastiani must also have been aware of Giovanni Bellini's *Coronation* in the *Pesaro altarpiece* given the attitude of the group of the Virgin and Christ, and for the throne construction in this work. Thus, Bastiani might well have mixed influences when executing this piece, derived from his early years and from his more recent experience (it must be recalled that in the early 1470s Bastiani and Giovanni Bellini worked in the Scuola Grande di San Marco).

The late date ascribed to this painting and its condition have both negatively affected the opinions of the scholars. In 1855, Eastlake found here "weak & defective drawing – no Venetian richness" (Avery Quash, 2011, I, p. 243), while shortly after Mündler described the panel as "a curious but weak picture" (Togneri-Anderson, 1985, p. 74). Crowe and Cavalcaselle reported that Bastiani "showed a certain improvement in the technica of colours", however "the forms here are more paltry than before" (1871, I, p. 218, note 1; Borenius,

1912, I, p. 220, note 3). For Ludwig and Paoletti this spartan painting was exemplary of Bastiani's final manner, and they pointed to the pale colours and the small heads of the figures (1900, p. 279). Lionello Venturi noticed the accentuated archaic simplification, especially in the architecture, and the elongation of the proportions of the figures and of the crude vestments folds (1907, p. 280). A similar comment was made also by Adolfo Venturi ("la stilizzazione lineare e sterminata lunghezza dei corpi". 1915, p. 392). Sandberg Vavalà listed this work among "the best and most personal works of Bastiani, showing most clearly his better qualities of lucid construction and reposeful, if cold, arrangement, as well as his limitations of insensitiveness, lack of imagination and frigidity" (1931, p. 134). Collobi included the Bergamo *Coronation* among the most mediocre and monotonous outputs of Bastiani's career and suggested an extensive the participation of the workshop (1939, p. 48). In more recent years, Boskovits quite positively stated that the Coronation reveals "that the painter, while not dissociating himself entirely from his native culture, was able to enrich his own style with features derived from the art of Antonello da Messina" (1992, p. 24). Finally, Casu underlined that in this painting, as in the late works from the Murano lunette onwards, the background is a flat light surface with no naturalistic rendering, as the sky has lost its bright tones and the landscape is disappeared (1996, p. 71).

Bastiani's *Coronation of the Virgin* entered the Accademia Carrara in 1866, as a bequest of Count Guglielmo Lochis after his death (Brambilla Ranise, 2007; Valagussa, 2018, p. 344). According to what Lochis wrote recorded in his *Giornale spese e notizie*, he purchased the painting, together with two others, from a certain Barbieri of Cremona. The previous provenance is reported to be the Galleria Giaracina in Crema (Valagussa, 2018, p. 343). When the panel was in Lochis' collection at the Crocetta in Mozzo, Eastlake, Mündler and Cavalcaselle saw it and recorded their opinions and comments on it in their *Travel Diaries*. Moreover, Lochis included the artwork (one of the latest additions) in the catalogue of his collection published in 1858 (pp. 213-214 [cat. LXI]). As previously observed, the Barbarigo coats of arms depicted in the picture, never taken into consideration by any scholar before, suggested to

Sartor that the commissioner of the piece was one of the members of the family. Indeed, recognizing the male saint as Saint Bernard (not Saint Benedict as believed by Eastlake and as it was reported in all the catalogues of the Accademia Carrara), Sartor identified the commissioner to be Bernardo Barbarigo (to which the double B's refers), who was profoundly devoted to his patron saint (1997, p. 52 [note 75]). Moreover, Saint Ursula (Saint Helen for Eastlake, then corrected to Saint Ursula by Ricci in 1912 catalogue) is the patron saint of Orsa Foscarini who was Bernardo's wife from 1486. Bernardo was son of Marco Barbarigo, who was Doge between 1485 and 1486, and nephew of Agostino Barbarigo, who succeeded his brother as Doge from 1486 until 1501. While his father was Doge, Bernardo was excluded from any government office in the Republic of Venice. According to Ronna (1824, pp. 122-124), after his father's death, in 1487 Bernardo was elected *podestà* of the city of Crema, where he promoted the construction of a chapel in the Palazzo Comunale (built in 1488), and which he intended to decorate with an altarpiece commissioned in Venice. Here, in 1490, Francesco Vimercato saw the altarpiece and asked Bernardo Barbarigo if he would agree to swop the painting he had requested for another one, in order to place this altarpiece on the main altar of the Church of Santa Maria della Croce in Crema, erected between 1490 and 1501. Bernardo was willing to do this and donated the artwork to the "Magnifica Comunità di Crema" on the 31st of May 1490. To further confirm her hypothesis, Sartor suggested also that the panel size was adapted for the chapel of a palace. In addition, the specification "veneti" in Bastiani's signature is indicative of a commission outside Venice (Sartor, p. 48). Thus, as Villa underlined, the presence of the artwork in the church of Crema perfectly links with its acquisition from the Galleria Giaracina of Crema by the merchant Barbieri, who later sold it to Lochis (2010, p. 68). Furthermore, for the original location in Crema, Valagussa (2018, pp. 343-344) suggested that Bastiani modelled the iconographic composition for this painting from Bonifacio Bembo's central panel of his renowned triptych in Cremona (today in the Museo Civico Ala Ponzone, inv. 40. Marubbi, 2004, pp. 160-164 [n. 42]). I do not accept this assumption, as it would imply that Bastiani saw Bembo's

work and today we have not discovered any document certifying a journey by Bastiani outside Venice. Furthermore, I believe that Bastiani was more inclined to follow examples from artists close to him, as the Vivarinis and/or the Bellinis.

To conclude, this panel, signed and dated, is one of the two cornerstones, (together with the Murano *lunette)*, of Bastiani's production, although of his late and "stanca" manner. Therefore, it has often been taken as a control against which to date other late works of the master.

Further bibliography:

Ronna, 1824, pp. 122-124; Marubbi, 2004, pp. 160-164 (n. 42).

Further images



Fig. 149. Cartouche attached on the back of the panel reporting the wording "Restaurato il 8-8-1932 X dal Sig. Cav. Mauro Pellicioli N. 169".



© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

Number: AP04

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child in a Painted Frame with Cherubim and Putti Holding the Instruments of the Passion*

Location: Berlin (Germany), Gemäldegalerie (from 1821, cat. n. 27)

Date: 1460-1465 c.

Material and dimensions: Wood panel, 54.5 x 43.5 cm (without frame); 79 x 67 cm (with frame)

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: Berlin, Edward Solly Collection (until 1821); Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum.

Past exhibitions: *Meisterwerke europäischer Malerei* (Schaffausen, Museum zu Allerheiligen, 14th July – 28th October 1951), exposed as Mantegna (n. 56).
Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1889 c. (Bode, 1889, p. 115).
In 1871 Crowe and Cavalcaselle stated that the panel was "ill-preserved" (p. 386 [note 2]). In 1889 Bode mentioned a conservation treatment. Schmidt Arcangeli advised that no records of historic conservation procedures have been found and that the condition of the painting is good (2015, p. 105 [note 1]).

Bibliography:
Waagen, 1830, p. 22 (n. 23); Waagen, 1837, p. 22 (n. 23); Kugler, 1838, p. 46 (n. 23); Frizzoni, 1870, p. 93; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, pp. 240 (note 1), 386-387, note 2; Meyer-Bode, 1878, pp. 210-211 (n. 27); Friedlander, 1880, p. 25; Lermolieff, 1880, pp. 397-398, note 2; Meyer, 1883, pp. 258-259; Morelli, 1883, p. 359, note 1; Frizzoni, 1886, pp. 102-103; A. Venturi, 1888, p. 391; Bode, 1889, p. 115; Bode 1888-1909, p. 4; *Königlichen Museen…*, 1891, p. 159; Lermolieff, 1893, pp. 73-75; Berenson, 1894, ed. cons. 1895, p. 130; *Exhibition…*, 1894-1895, p 2 (n. 4); Gronau, 1895, p. 167 (note 3); *Königlichen Museen…*, 1898, p. 175; Cruttwell, 1901, p. 91 (note 1); Kristeller, 1901, pp. 42-120-124, 437 (n. 2), 449; Yriarte, 1901, pp. 91, 193, 209, 246; Logan, 1901, p. 260; Bode, 1903-1904, col. 132; *Königlichen Museen…*, 1904, p. 224 (n. 27); *Königlichen Museen…*, 1906, p. 223 (n. 27); L. Venturi, 1907, p. 182; Malaguzzi-Valeri, 1908, pp. 111-112 (n. 198); Posse, 1909, p. 88 (n. 27); Knapp, 1910, p. 179; *Das Kaiser…*, 1911, p. 284 (n. 27); Bornenius, 1912, II, pp. 88-89, note 3; A. Venturi, 1914, VII/III, pp. 268-270; Testi, 1915, pp. 500-501; Berenson, 1916, pp. 67-68, 72; *Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1921, p. 252 (n. 27); Fiocco, 1927, fig. p. 99; *Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1931, p. 276 (n. 27); Weigelt, 1934, pp. 42-43, 45 (fig. 6); Van Marle, 1935, XVII, p. 54; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, pp. 95-96; Fiocco, 1937, pp. 32, 201 (Tav. 34b); Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 38, note 9; Richter, 1939, pp. 63-65; Wehle, 1940, pp. 128-129; Lauts, 1941-1942, pp. 76-79*; Meisterwerke europäischer…*, 1951, p. 32 (n. 56); Hartt, 1952, pp. 334,

336; Coletti, 1953, p. XLIX; Suida, 1953, p. 24; Tietze-Conrat, 1955, pp. 179, 191; Laclotte, 1956a, pp. 94-95; Laclotte, 1956b, p. 228; Meiss, 1957, pp. 27, 88, note 45; *Andrea Mantegna*, 1961, pp. 23, 83; Cirpiani, 1962[3], p. 79; Longhi, 1962, p. 17; Pallucchini, 1962, pp. 39-41; Ragghianti, 1962, p. 40 (note 2); Wazbinski, 1963, pp. 280-282; Camesca, 1964, p. 127; Puppi, 1968, pp. 316, 323; Rusk Shapley, 1968, pp. 26-27; Rizzi, 1969, p. 29 (note 6); Rizzi, 1969, p. 29 (note 6); Goffen, 1975, p. 501, fig. 27; *Gemäldegalerie Berlin…*, 1975, p. 44; Lightbrown, 1986, p. 476 (Cat. 161); De Nicolò Salmazo, 1990, II, p. 496; Lucco, 1990, II, p. 424; Christiansen, 1992, pp. 139-140; Casu, 1996, pp. 68-69, 82 (note 52); *Gemäldegalerie Berlin…*, 1996, p. 15; Casu, 2000, p. 42; Kruger, 2001, pp. 47-59; Lightbrown, 2004, p. 18; Moench, 2008, pp. 87-88 (Cat. 17); Vinco, 2012, p. 74 (n. 9); Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 22, 100-106; Russo, 2018, pp. 7, 14 (note 23), 17 (note 43); Russo, 2019, p. 171.

Formerly in Edward Solly private collection in Berlin, the panel was purchased as part of the entire Solly collection by the Gemäldegalerie in 1821 (Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 101-102. For further information on Edward Solly, refer to: Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 13-29. *Fig. 150*).

The painting shows a peculiar representation of the *Madonna and Child* motif, as the two figures are inserted into a painted frame decorated with cherubim and putti holding the instruments of the Passion. The half-length figure of the Virgin is depicted behind a red marble (perhaps red Verona marble?) parapet seen from above. The infant Jesus sits on a book placed on the parapet and leans against his mother. He is supported by his mother's left hand that holds him by his chest and which he clasps. The Virgin is clothed in a blue and gold dress, almost entirely covered by a pink mantle and white veil, the latter is fastened at her throat by a golden brooch enriched with pearls and gemstones. The infant Jesus wears a green tunic over a white long-sleeved shirt. The heads of mother and son are close, but they look in opposite directions beyond the painting space. The legs of the infant Jesus and a portion of the Virgin's mantle extend beyond the parapet, exceeding the fictional limits of the painting and establishing a link with the real world of the observer. Mantegna had already

employed this device in his *Saint Mark the Evangelist* in the Städel Museum of Frankfurt (Fumian, 2006, pp. 174-175 [Cat. 18]. *Fig. 151*). Attached to the parapet there is a *cartouche* that in the past underwent aggressive restoration treatment, so that today the inscription is no longer readable (the letters A and Z on it are not original. Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, p. 105 [note 5]). To the top of the picture, behind the figures, is hung a fruit garland. The background is neutral, blue in colour. All around the central image of the *Madonna and Child* an external frame is painted with eleven putti bearing instruments of the Passion of Christ (the so-called *arma Christi*) and cherubim are variously coloured according to the hierarchy of angels. A painted frame like this is peculiar in paintings, however, the inclusion of the putti holding the instruments of the Passion in a composition of the *Madonna and Child* is not unusual, and an example can be found in Crivelli's *Madonna and Child* in Castelvecchio in Verona (Leopardi, 2010, pp. 166-168 [Cat. 118]. *Fig. 152*). The putti are evidently derived from Paduan examples, the primary example being the putti carved by Donatello on the High Altar of Saint Anthony in Padua. The idea to place the putti along the frame might have been inspired and developed from further Paduan examples, as Giorgio Schiavone's *Madonna and Child* in Galleria Sabaudia of Turin (Astrua, 2006, pp. 250-251 [Cat. 28]. *Fig. 153*), or Marco Zoppo's *Nursing Madonna* in Louvre Museum (De Nicolò Salmazo, 2006, pp. 244-245 [Cat. 48]. *Fig. 154*).

In the lower area of the painted frame there is a red coat of arms with a single greyish-white wing (*semivolo*). This coat of arms has been identified to that of the Veronese Bevilacqua family (Weigelt, 1934, p.43), but further research must be carried out for confirmation (Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, p. 105 [note 7]).

In the Solly collection the painting was ascribed to Andrea Mantegna, as recorded in the handwritten manuscript of the collection (Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 22, 101). Since the acquisition by the Berlin Museum, the attribution of the panel has long been discussed. In museum catalogues, it was initially presented as School of Squarcione (1830, 1837, 1838), to then re-establish Mantegna as artist for a long time (1878, 1880, 1883, 1888-1909, 1891, 1891,

1904, 1906, 1909, 1911, 1921, 1931, 1934). Finally, even the museum catalogues accepted the attribution to Bastiani (1975, 1996).

The debate among scholars regarding the ascription was more intense. In 1870 Frizzoni accepted the attribution to "School of Squarcione" for this "Madonnina alquanto goffa". In their *A History of Painting in North Italy* (1871), Crowe and Cavalcaselle assigned the work to Mantegna, believing it was the present Mantegna once made for his friend Matteo Bosso, Abbot of Fiesole (pp. 386-387, note 2). Morelli (1880 [as Lermolieff], 1883), on the other hand, firmly rejected Crowe and Cavalcaselle's opinion and ascribed the picture to Bartolomeo Vivarini, as the modelling of the face, the drawing of the folds, the oval of Mary's face and other elements are not typical of Mantegna, but rather are in harmony with Bartolomeo's production. The discussion on the authorship of the painting continued in the following years. Frizzoni (1886), Morelli (as Lermolieff, 1893), A. Venturi (1888), Berenson (1894, ed. cons. 1895), Crutwell (1901), Van Marle (1936, pp. 95-96) supported the ascription to Bartolomeo Vivarini, while Longan (1902) gave it to the School of Bartolomeo and Borenius (1912) to a pupil of Bartolomeo. Other scholars, however, still assigned the panel to Mantegna (Kristeller, 1901, pp. 120-124, 427 [n. 2]; Yiriarte, 1901, p. 193; Bode, 1903-1904, p. 132; Weigelt, 1934; Fiocco, 1937) or to his followers (Knapp, 1910, as School of Mantegna; A. Venturi, 1914, as by an early follower of Mantegna). Some other art historians generically referred to it as "Paduan School" (L. Venturi, 1907; Testi, 1915; Fiocco, 1927), while Van Marle (1935) ascribed it to Antonio da Negroponte, in connection with the earliest and most ornate works of Bartolomeo Vivarini (he later ascribed the picture to Bartolomeo).

Bode (1889), attributing the work to the young and not yet mature Mantegna, underlined the relationship between Mantegna and Giovanni Bellini by comparing this *Madonna and Child* with another by Bellini (inv. n. 1177) in the same museum, in addition he observed that the putti bearing the instruments of the Passion had been inspired by Donatello's bronze putti on the High Altar of Saint Anthony in Padua. At the "Exhibition of Venetian Art" in The New Gallery of London in 1894-1895 a *Madonna and Child*, at that time in Charles

Butler collection (previously in the collection of Prince Napoleon), was exhibited. This work almost exactly replicates the composition of the Berlin panel (without the painted frame). The picture differs from the Berlin one for the natural landscape background, the slightly higher parapet, and the coat of arms (in the catalogue identified as the Donato family's coat of arm, while later Suida (1953) recognised it as the coat of arm of the Menegaldo family from Treviso). Both the works were assigned to Andrea Mantegna. In his review on the exhibition, Gronau (1895) rejected the ascription to Mantegna of the Butler *Madonna*. In a short article of 1939 Richter analysed the evolution of Mantegna's *Madonna* paintings (also in relation with Giovanni Bellini's production) and conjected that the Berlin panel was probably a studio replica after a lost *Madonn*a by Mantegna of the 1460s, while the composition of the Butler work was believed to be by Mantegna himself in the latter part of his career, but the execution by an assistant, perhaps Francesco Bonsignori. Today the painting is in the Philbrook Art Center of Tulsa (Oklahoma, U.S.A.) and is recorded as being by a follower of Andrea Mantegna (Rusk Shapley, 1968, pp. 26-27 and previous bibliography. *Fig. 155*). Given the strict similarities in composition between the two pictures, Casu (1996, p. 83 [note 52]; 2000, p. 42), followed by Russo (2018, p. 14 [note 23]) hypothesised they had been made following the same cartoon, but Moench (2008, p. 88) dismissed this assumption owing to the different size of the panels (it must be observed, however, that this discrepancy in size of the support does not necessarily exclude the use of the same cartoon). In the early 1900s the scholars noticed further similarities between the *Madonna* in the Gemäldegalerie and another one attributed to Mantegna also in the Butler collection and today in The Metropolitan Museum of New York (Kristeller, 1901, pp. 120-124; Yriarte, 1091, p. 193. *Fig. 156*). The critics have correctly identified the Metropolitan *Madonna* as the earliest example of *Madonna and Child with Seraphim and Cherubim* by Mantegna, thus the prototype from which derived the variations in Berlin and Tulsa (Richter, 1939; Christiansen, 1992 and previous bibliography. Fiocco [1937] pointed to Jacopo Bellini as the source of this motif

and Jacopo as well painted a *Madonna and Child with Cherubs*, today in the Gallerie dell'Accademia).

The early attribution of the Berlin *Madonna* to Lazzaro Bastiani was made by Collobi (1939), who compared it to the Poldi Pezzoli *Madonna* dating from around 1470, emphasizing that both paintings show elements derived from Mantegna; the putti, for instance. The ascription was not immediately accepted, as in the following years the scholars that mentioned the painting still gave it to Mantegna or placed it in his artistic *milieu* (Tietze-Conrat, 1955, pp. 179, 191; Rusk Shapley, 1968, p. 26. Mantegna was indicated as artist of the painting until the 1980s, see for instance Lightbrown, 1986), also claiming the influence of Mantegna's *Madonnas* in New York, Tulsa and Berlin over the Madonna and Child figures in Antonio Vivarini's *Sacred Family* in Strasbourg (Laclotte, 1956a; Laclotte, 1956b; Paccagnini, 1961). In his monograph on the *Vivarinis* Pallucchini (1962) assigned again the Gemäldegalerie panel to Bartolomeo Vivarini, an idea followed by Rizzi (1969) and Goffen (1975). Coletti proposed a painter close in style to Antonio da Negroponte and Quirizio da Murano (1953, p. XLIX), while Wazbinski (1963) suggested the old ascription to the Squarcione's atelier. In 1941 Lauts was the first that cautiously supported Collobi's ascription to Bastiani. A broader adhesion to the attribution to Bastiani started in the 1960s with Longhi (1962), Cipriani (1962[3]) and Camesca (1964). From the 1970s the museum catalogues also switched to Bastiani. Grimm (1978) assigned the *Madonna and Child* to Bastiani, and the painted frame to an anonymous Italian painter between 1460 and 1470. From 1990s onwards virtually all scholars agreed in ascribing the Berlin *Madonna* to Bastiani (Lucco, 1990; Christiansen, 1992; Casu, 1996; Casu, 2000; Moench, 2008; Vinco, 2012; Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015; Russo, 2018; Russo, 2019), except Krüger (2001), who still supported the execution by a painter in Mantegna's *milieu*.

Casu (1996, pp. 68-69), agreeing with the assumption of a Mantegnesque model for the composition, pointed out similarities with Mantegna's works (the putti in the *Agony in the Garden* in The National Gallery, London) and more generally with Paduan art (for example the festoon). He also noticed

similarities, especially in the frame of putti, to the Paduan, Ferrarese and Venetian manuscripts which were produced in the 1460s and early 1470s**.** To further underline the Paduan influence of the Berlin panel, Casu correctly identified the model from which the pose of the infant Jesus (one leg bent, the other leg stretched, the foreshortened face) is derived, being the Hellenistic statue of the *Child with the Egyptian Goose* (2000, p. 42). He suggested that Squarcione might have had a copy of the statue in his atelier, and the pose of the painted infant Jesus might have been invented in Squarcione's workshop according to this example. This assumption seems to be confirmed by Crivelli's and Giorgio Schiavone's *Madonna and Child*, respectively in Fondazione Cini of Venice (Martoni, 2016, pp. 32-33. *Fig. 157*) and in Galleria Sabaudia of Turin. For Casu (1996, p. 69) Bastiani painted the Berlin Madonna in the mid-1460s or slightly later, as he employed here, for the first time, typological elements, and compositional ideas that he further developed in other works of the following years. The infant Jesus' foreshortened face seen from below, his partially open mouth and the putti carefully described, can be found also in the Poldi Pezzoli *Madonna* and in the *Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine* in Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, UK.

Vinco (2012) underlined Bastiani's adhesion to the Paduan manner between the second half of 1450s and the early 1460s. Schmidt Arcageli (2015, pp. 102-103) as well emphasized the Mantegnesque inspiration for this painting, to which she also added the Vivarini's influence, specifically identified in Antonio's *Holy Family* in Strasbourg, France. Both Mantegna's and Antonio's works are dated around the mid-1450s, thus Bastiani's picture is necessarily later. For the complexity of the subject and the fine execution Schmidt Arcangeli estimated the picture to have been executed between 1460 and 1465, in Bastiani's period of maturity.

Russo (2018, 2019) placed the Gemäldegalerie *Madonna* in a period of stylistic closeness to Bartolomeo Vivarini in the early 1460s, when Bastiani, in order to compare himself to Bartolomeo, applied to his paintings compositions and typological elements derived from Mantegna (see also the *Madonna and Child* in the Eremitani Museum in Padua).

I agree with Russo's and Schmidt Arcangeli's interpretation of the picture, where a period of execution in the early 1460s seems appropriate.

Further bibliography:

Astrua, 2006, pp. 250-251 (Cat. 28); De Nicolò Salmazo, 2006, pp. 244-245 (Cat. 48); Fumian, 2006, pp. 174-175 (Cat. 18); Leopardi, 2010, pp. 166-168 (Cat. 118); Martoni, 2016, pp. 32-33.

Further images



Fig. 150. The painting on display in Kaiser Friedrich Museum (1933), Room 40, Paduan and Ferrarese paintings of the 15th century © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.



Fig. 151. A. Mantegna, *Saint Mark the Evangelist*, Frankfurt, Städel Museum.



Fig. 152. C. Crivelli, *Madonna and Child with putti bearing the instruments of the Passion*, Verona, Museo di Castelvecchio.



Fig. 153. G. Schiavone, *Madonna and Child*, Turin, Galleria Sabaudia.



Fig. 154. M. Zoppo, *Nursing Madonna*, Paris, Louvre Museum.



Fig. 155. Follower of Andrea Mantegna, *Madonna and Child*, Tulsa, Philbrook Museum of Art.



Fig. 156. A. Mantegna, *Madonna and Child with Cherubim and Seraphim*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum.



Fig. 157. C. Crivelli, *Madonna and Child*, Venice, Fondazione Cini.



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Number: AP05

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Nativity*

Location: formerly, Berlin (Germany), Kaiser Friedrich Museum (lost in 1945)

Date: late 1490s

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 60 x 72 cm

Inscription: "GLORIA · IN · EXCELSIS · DEO", on the cartouche hold by the flying angels above the shed.

Provenance: Edward Solly collection (sold in 1821).

Bibliography:

Beschreibendes verzeichnis…, 1906, p. 524 (n. 1546); *Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1931, p. 503 (n. 1546); Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 139; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 54; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 48 (note 45); Pallucchini, 1949, p. 191; Norris, 1952, p. 346; *Verzeichnis…* 1952, p. 25; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Russo, 2019, p. 178.

This *Nativity* was acquired from the Edward Solly collection in 1821. It was among the artworks stored in the deposit at Flakturm Friedrichshain that are believed to have been destroyed in the fires of May 1945, at the end of the Second World War (Norris, 1952; *Verzeichnis der im Flakturm…*, 1952). The work having generically been assigned to "Venetian School, end of the XV century" in old museum catalogues (*Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1906; *Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1931), Sandberg Vavalà (1932) was the first to recognise here the style of Bastiani's late production, after 1480. Collobi (1939) pointed out an application of "archaic" elements derived from early works and dated the panel in a period of late artistic crisis, post 1490. Berenson accepted Vavalà's attribution and listed the *Nativity* among Bastiani's paintings in his *Indexes* (1932; 1936; 1957; 1958).

I believe that a period of execution in the late 1490s, as proposed by Collobi, is most appropriate for this painting.

The picture portrays composite actions combined in a single pictorial field. The main scene shows the *Nativity* with the Virgin kneeling on the left, in adoration of the infant Jesus, who is lying naked on the straw manger, and with Saint Joseph sitting, leaning on his stick. Behind the manger, the ox, and the donkey watch over the baby. The episode is set within a shed, whose structure recalls the one in the *Nativity* for the Church of Sant'Elena, built against a small rocky mountain with an open tunnelled arch in the centre. Flying above the shed there are five angels, three of which hold a cartouche reporting the sentence "Gloria in excelsis deo". Outside the holy space, the astonished shepherds, accompanied by their herd of curious sheep, witness the scene, exhorted by the angel. On the right, the three Magi on horseback, led by the Star of Bethlehem, are approaching the place of the blessed event, to visit the new-born Saviour and offer him gifts. In the sky, the angel Gabriel, on the left, is announcing to Mary, kneeling on a rocky outcrop on the right, that she will miraculously conceive and give birth to the "Son of God". The scheme employed for the *Annunciation* episode is derived from the *Annunciation* in Museo Correr and in Klosterneuburg: the angel and the Virgin disposed at opposite sides, and the half-length figure of God the Father at the centre sending the Holy Spirit to

Mary in the form of a dove. The walled town separated from the main scene by a lake, the high mountains on the sides, and the hilly landscape in the distance represents Bastiani's typical background composition.

As already observed by Vavalà, this composition was probably very popular at the end of the 15th century, since there are several paintings with similar composition, two of which are in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, one ascribed to Francesco da Santacroce (*Fig. 158*) and the other to Giovanni Mansueti (*Fig. 159*). In 2017, moreover, another *Nativity* extremely close in style and composition to the one in Berlin was auctioned at Millon (Paris, Millon, *Collections et Successions*, 22/3/2017, lot 2. *Fig. 160*). Here the painting was presented as "Lombard School (Brescia), around 1480-1490". Arguably, it is evident, rather, that the work was executed in Bastiani's *milieu*, and confirms that compositional models were reused, sometimes with slight modifications, in Bastiani's workshop.

Further images



Fig. 158. G. da Santacroce, *Nativity*, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.

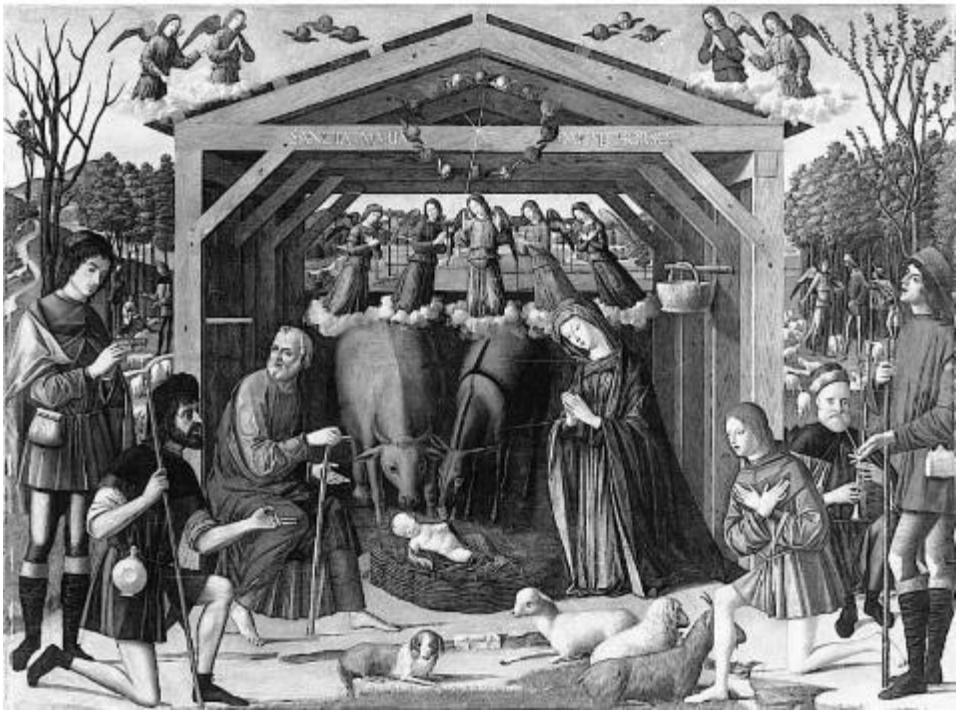
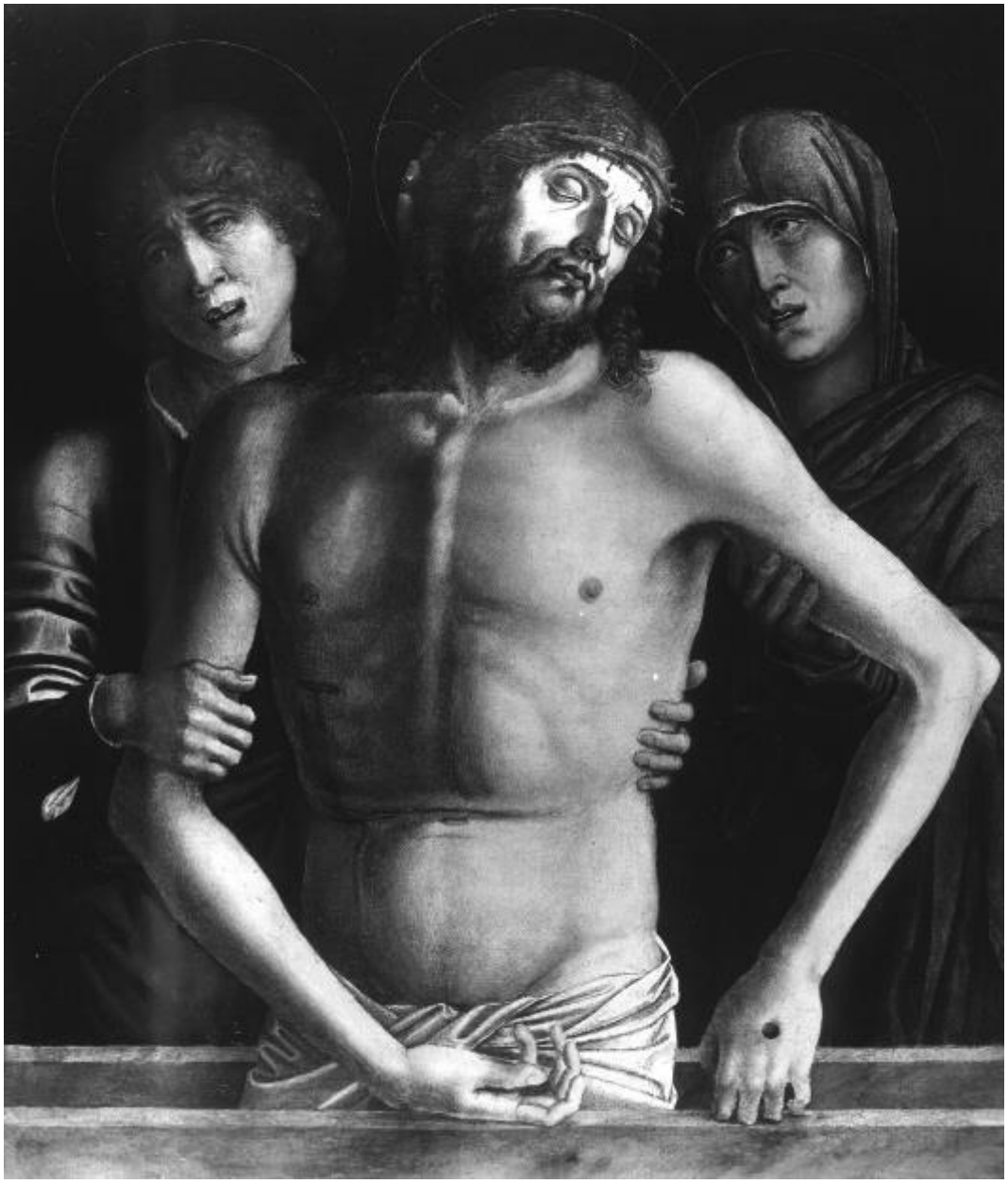


Fig. 159. G. Mansueti, *Nativity*, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.



Fig. 160. L. Bastiani workshop, *Nativity*, last recorded Millon auction (22/3/2017) – image reproduced in Millon's auction catalogue.



© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

Number: AP06

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Pietà with the Madonna and Saint John the Baptist*

Location: formerly, Berlin (Germany), Kaiser Friedrich Museum (probably destroyed in 1945)

Date: 1480 c.

Material and dimensions: Wood panel, 94 x 78 cm

Provenance: Berlin, Edward Solly collection (sold in 1821).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: In 1871 Crowe and Cavalcaselle reported the colour of this panel was injured (p. 217 [note 4]).

Bibliography:

Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, pp. 216-217 (note 4); Meyer-Gronau, 1888-1909, p. 37; *Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1906, p. 424 (n. 1170A); *Die Gemäldegalerie…*, 1909, pp. 106-107 (n. 1170A); Borenius, 1912, I, p. 219 (note 1); A. Venturi, 1915, p. 382; Borenius, 1916, 160, p. 164; *Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1921, pp. 23-24 (n. 1170A); *Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1931, p. 34 (n. 1170A); Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 134; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 54; Van Marle, 1936, pp. 175-176; Collobi, 1939, p. 53; Pallucchini, 1949, p. 191; Norris, 1952, p. 339; *Verzeichnis…*, 1952, p. 16; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 218 (V. 15); Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43); Russo, 2020, pp. 176-177; Tempestini, 2021, p. 256 (n. 1328).

The painting was acquired by the Berlin Museum in 1821 from the Edward Solly collection (*Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1906, p. 424 [n. 1170A]. For further information on Edward Solly, please refer to: Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 13-33). The panel was shown in Kaiser Friedrich Museum (*Fig. 161*) and got most likely destroyed in May 1945, during the Second World War (*Verzeichnis der im Flakturm…*, 1952, p. 16; Norris, 1952, p. 339).

It is portrayed the half-length figure of the dead Christ supported by the Virgin Mary and Saint John. Christ's torso is naked, showing the bleeding wound on his chest. The Madonna holds Christ's left arm and head, while Saint John holds Christ right arm and bust. They prop him upright, outside the tomb/sarcophagus. As pointed out by Borenius, in the picture "there is a strong Bellinesque element" and "the figure of Christ is a copy in the reverse of that in Bellini's picture of the same subject in the Mond collection", and today in London National Gallery (Borenius, 1912, p. 219 [note 1]; Borenius, 1916, p. 164; Heinemann, 1962, p. 218 [V. 15]). Indeed, the awkward position of Christ's arms and hands, the head slightly bent to the left, the grimace on his face, and

even the curly tuft of hair on the temple straightforwardly derive from Bellini's *Dead Christ supported by two angels* in the National Gallery, today dated 1472-1475 (on Bellini's painting see Lucco, 2019, pp. 382-383 [cat. 49]. *Fig. 162*). In addition, the strongly characterized physiognomy of Christ reminds to certain pronounced facial features by Bartolomeo Vivarini – compare, for instance, the dead Christ painted in the lunette of Bartolomeo's *Sacra Conversazione* altarpiece in the Basilica of San Nicola (Bari), dated 1476. It can be stated, therefore, that the compositional idea is derived from Giovanni Bellini, but the stylistic features are still Vivarinesque.

A strong lightning coming from the right illuminates the group of people, whose bodies are this way emphasized and stand out from the flat dark background, recalling again the painting in the London gallery. However, differently from Bellini's *Pietà*, in Bastiani's picture we cannot perceive the weight and inertia of Christ's dead body falling. On the contrary, he seems lightweight, and the Madonna and Saint John do not exert themselves to support him. In any case, the feeling of grief and sorrow is well expressed by their countenance. Moreover, particularly remarkable in this sense is the Madonna's tender gesture of placing her hand on Christ's head to gently move it towards her.

The panel was assigned to Bastiani by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, who included the work in Bastiani's early production, in his phase of imitation of the Paduan masters, together with the *Pietà* in the Church of Sant'Antonin. The scholars pointed out the "Mantegnesque arrangement and force imitated and combined with low technical skill". Moreover, in their opinion the tones and texture were close to the abovementioned painting in the Venice church (1871, pp. 216-217 [note 4]). In the Kaiser Friedrich Museum catalogues, the artwork was previously recorded as "School of Mantegna" (Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 217 [note 4]) or as "School of the Vivarinis" (*Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1906, p. 424 [n. 1170A]; *Die Gemäldegalerie…*, 1909, p. 106 [n. 1170A]), but then the attribution to Bastiani was accepted and reported in the following catalogues (*Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1921, pp. 23-24 [n. 1170A]; *Beschreibendes verzeichnis…*, 1931, p. 34 [n. 1170A]). Borenius, as previously said, observed

the strict similarities in composition with Bellini's *Dead Christ supported by two angels*, today in the National Gallery (Borenius, 1912, p. 219 [note 1]; Borenius, 1916, p. 164). Adolfo Venturi compared the panel with the *Pietà* of the *cimasa* of the *Saint Jerome altarpiece* in Asolo, also claiming a similarity to Bartolomeo Vivarini's shapes (1915, P. 382). For Sandberg-Vavalà "the three compositions of the *Pietà* contain little that is original" and "the set grimaces disfigure the not desplicable group at Berlin" (1931, p. 134). Van Marle affirmed that the composition and the figures were more Bellinesque and slightly of more mature manner. He again suggested a comparison with Bellini's *Dead Christ* in the National Gallery, which he dated to 1468, and of which Bastiani's work is considered "a slavish copy" (1936, pp. 175-176). In his *Indexes* Berenson recorded this panel in the list of Bastiani's artworks (1932, p. 63; 1936, p. 54; 1957, I, p. 25; 1958, I, p. 26). A discordant voice was Collobi (1939), that rejected the attribution to Bastiani because the painting resembles too much Giovanni Bellini's style. Recently, Russo proposed a dating between 1478 and 1480 for comparisons with the *Saint Jerome* in Springfield and the *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell' Accademia (2018, p. 17 [note 43]; 2020, pp. 176-177). He observed also that the "expressive and pathetic" expression of Saint John's face is derived from Giovanni Bellini's youth *Pietà* in Accademia Carrara.

Giovanni Bellini's *Christ supported by two angels* is the *terminus post quem* to date Bastiani's painting. Therefore, in accordance with Bellini's London painting chronology and for internal comparisons of Bastiani's production, it seems plausible to date the Berlin *Pietà* around 1480.

Further bibliography:

Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 13-33; Lucco, 2019, pp. 382-383 [cat. 49].

Further images



Fig. 161. The painting on display in Kaiser Friedrich Museum (1910-1933), Room 46, Venetian paintings and sculptures of the 15th century © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.



Fig. 162. G. Bellini, *Dead Christ supported by two angels*, London, National Gallery, 1472-1475.



Number: AP07

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Christ and the three Marys and the Ascension*

Location: Bologna (Italy), Private collection (last known)

Date: 1465-1470

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 27 x 27.5 cm (*Cent tableaux…*, 1952); 25 x 28 cm (Iseppi, 1986); 30 x 25 cm (Casu, 1996)

Technique: Tempera

Provenance: Paris, Carlo Broglio collection (reported in 1950); Palais Galliéra, *Tableaux et dessins anciens haute curiosité…*, Paris, 20/3/1974, lot 25 (Broglio collection sale); Bologna, Private collection (Iseppi, 1986, p. 37); Finarte, *Dipinti antichi*, Milan, 30/5/1991, lot 127.

Past exhibitions: *Cent tableaux d'art religieux: du XIVe siècle à nos jours* (Paris, Galerie Charpentier, 18 December 1952 – 15 March 1953).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Iseppi reported the poor condition of the painting (Iseppi, 1986, p. 37).

Bibliography:

Cent tableaux…, 1952 (n. 5); Volpe, 1983, p. 56; Iseppi, 1986, pp. 36-40; Boskovits, 1992, p. 27; Casu, 1996, pp. 64-65, 77-78 (notes 30-33); Sartor, 1997, pp. 40, 51 (note 12); de Manincor, 2020, pp. 109-123.

The small panel, once in Carlo Broglio's collection in Paris with the attribution "École florentine fin du XVe siècle", was sold to a private buyer in a 1991 Finarte Auction in Milan. The painting is considered part of a complex work, probably an *antependium*, with three similar scenes showing *Stories from the Life of Christ* on the lateral sides and the *Crucifixion* in the centre. The other panels are: *Resurrection and Noli me Tangere* and *Christ and the disciples on the road to Emmaus and the Supper at Emmaus*, now in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice; *Deposition and Descent into Limbo*, in a private collection; and finally, the *Crucifixion* scene, the location of which is unknown. Volpe was the first to propose that the two panels at the Gallerie dell'Accademia, already assigned to Bastiani by Collobi (1939-40, p. 27), and two other unspecified paintings in private collections (Volpe, 1983, p. 56) were a unique work, probably in the light of Moschini-Marconi's theory (1955, p. 51). Volpe's assumption was further investigated by Iseppi, who identified the paintings in private collections with an attribution to Bastiani and combined them with the two in Venice (1986, pp. 37-39). Finally, Casu accepted Iseppi's statement and suggested a convincing reconstruction of the altar frontal, also with the identification of the *Crocifissione* scene as the central panel (1996, pp. 64-65). For further analysis of the critical theories regarding the groups of paintings, please refer to *Resurrection and Noli me Tangere* and *Supper in Emmaus* catalogue entry (AP59).

The painting presents two subsequent episodes concerning the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus. The first scene, portrayed on the left in the foreground, shows the meeting of Jesus and the apostles with the holy women after the Resurrection. Behind this group there is a rural road that climbs a hill to the right, on top of which, seen in the distance, Jesus blesses the group of apostles around him just before rising into Heaven. The same road also goes to

the left and leads to a house with a typical Venetian-style chimney. Next to it a palm tree, symbol of Heaven, stands out. A fortification with two military towers, painted in perspective and probably representing the external wall of Jerusalem, closes the scene on the right. The background is closed by sloping hills, behind which the upper parts of two towers arise. As in *Resurrection and Noli me tangere*, on top of the hill on the left there is a fortress (*Fig. 163*). Moreover, the infrared reflectography image of the Venice episode shows the underdrawing of a palm tree, not realized in the final execution, placed in the same position as the palm tree depicted here, perhaps suggesting a similar compositional drawing for landscape representation in both paintings (de Manincor, 2020, p. 117. *Fig. 164*). In addition, the palm tree is a commonly used to symbolise salvation. Unlike the panels in Venice, this one does not show the inscription in the lower part. This has probably been cut away.
This panel, together with the others composition the altar frontal, can be dated in the second half of 1460s (see Cat. AP59).

Further bibliography:
Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 51-52 (n. 50 a/b); Volpe, 1978, pp. 56-60.

Further images



Fig. 163. L. Bastiani, *Christ and the three Marys and the Ascension*, already in Bologna, private collection.



Fig. 164. L. Bastiani, *Resurrection and Noli me Tangere*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (detail of the underdrawing of the palm tree).



Number: AP08

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint John the Baptist*

Location: Bologna (Italy), private collection (last known)

Date: 1465-1470

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 53 x 27 cm

Inscription: "ECCE \ A", on the cartouche held by the saint

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: unknown.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1990, Tarozzi Camillo.

Bibliography:
Arcangeli, 1950, pp. 54-56; Rizzi, 1969, p. 29 (note 6); Iseppi, 1986, pp. 36, 40 (note 14); Tognoli Bardin, 1987, p. 76; Boskovits, 1992, p. 27; Szylin, 1993, p. 423; Casu, 1996, p. 81 (note 44); Russo, 2017, s. p.; Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43).

This panel showing the standing Saint John the Baptist, in frontal position, against a golden background was first presented by Arcangeli in a short article published in "Paragone" in 1950. The art historian discovered it in a private collection in Bologna, with provenance from the South of Italy. For the stylistic closeness to the Matera polyptych and the *Christ blessing* in Bayonne, Arcangeli straightforwardly ascribed the *Saint John* to the early production of Lazzaro Bastiani ("alla sua fase più viva, ch'è quella giovanile"), remarking its Paduan reminiscences, although mitigated by Bastiani's moral inclination, but also pointing out a comparison with the triptychs for Santa Maria della Carità by the Bellinis that surely had an impact on the young Bastiani. Taking as reference the Matera polyptych, dated in the early 1460s' according to Collobi, and comparing the Saint Peter with the same saint in Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini's Pausula polyptych, dated 1462, Arcangeli suggested his newly discovered painting was dated after 1462 and no later than 1465 (Arcangeli, 1950, pp. 54-56). After Arcangeli's contribution, the attribution of the *Saint John the Baptist* to the young Bastiani has been largely accepted by the scholars, who also agreed with a dating in the first half of the seventh decade (Rizzi, 1969, p. 29 [note 6]; Iseppi, 1986, pp. 36, 40 [note 14]; Tognoli Bardin, 1987, p. 76; Boskovits, 1992, p. 27; Szylin, 1993, p. 423; Casu, 1996, p. 81 (note 44); Russo, 2017, s. p.; Russo, 2018, p. 17 [note 43]).
Today the dating of the Matera polyptych must be assigned to the following decade, thus the early 1470s, as well as the *Christ blessing* in Bayonne is placed around 1473. Nonetheless, Casu already underlined the precedence of the

Saint John over the Matera artwork, as the panel with the saint constituted the joining link between Bastiani's early works and the Matera polyptych (1996, p. 81 [note 44]). The pose and the gestures of the saint seem to repeat those of the namesake saint in Bartolomeo Vivarini's *Polyptych of the Madonna*, signed and dated 1464. However, the Bastiani's Saint John the Baptist does not follow the lesson of the Muranese master, who influenced him in the early 1960s', while in accordance with Boskovits, although the saint seems "sculpted from a harder material" and is "not without some nervous graphic divagations", "we can detect numerous features and various morphological details close to the production of the young Giovanni Bellini" (1992, p. 27). Furthermore, Casu pointed out that the study of the triptychs for Santa Maria della Carità lead Bastiani to make a qualitative leap in his works, where the volumetric figures are included in the space and the draperies are arranged in soft folds (1996, p. 67). Today Bellini's triptychs are dated 1464-1468 (Lucco, 2019, pp. 315-320 [cat. 18]), thus if Bastiani had the chance to apply their lesson to his production, the *Saint John the Baptist* should be postponed to late 1460s, however in continuity with the later *Matera polyptych* and the *Christ blessing* in Bayonne.

Further bibliography:

Lucco, 2019, pp. 315-320 (Cat. 18).



Number: AP09

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Virgin and Child with Cherubs*

Location: Brighton (East Sussex, U.K.), Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, (from 1903, inv. n. FA000075)

Date: 1475-1480

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 67.4 x 42 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: Henry Willett private collection (gift to the museum in 1903).

Past exhibitions: *Exhibition of works by the Old Masters and by deceased Masters of the British School* (Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1892 –n. 176, as

Andrea Mantegna); *Early Italian Paintings and Works of Art 1300-1480* (Matthiesen Fine Art Ltd, London, 1983 – n. 36).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: The painting has undergone conservation or restoration several times (1969/70, 1977, 1983, and 2006). A condition report was filled in 1998 (personal communication of the museum). Today the conservation status of the painting is fair.

Bibliography:

Exhibition…, 1892, p. 39 (n. 176); Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 46; Rogers, 1964, p. 25; Wright, 1976, pp. 216, 234; Volpe, 1983, p. 56 (n. 36); *Paintings and drawings…*, 1986, p. 99; *Oil Paintings in Public Ownership in East Sussex*, Public Catalogue Foundation, London, 2005, pp. 186, 385; Russo, 2018, pp. 6, 14 (note 21), 17 (note 43).

Website:

The *National Inventory of Continental European Paintings* (Bryony Bartlett-Rawlings, 2007):
https://www.vads.ac.uk/digital/collection/NIRP/id/29183/rec/1.

This arched panel portrays the Madonna after the Humility model adoring the infant Jesus. The Madonna, placed in a garden rich in flowers, wears a red dress and a brown brocade cloak with a blue floral pattern and sewn with gold thread. The mantle is fastened by a precious brooch covered in gemstones and pearls. The Madonna gazes at the naked infant Jesus, who lies on a cushion in front of her, with his arms crossed. Two angels hover in mid-air at the sides of the Madonna and hold a crown over her head. The background is painted as a natural landscape and contains the buildings of a walled town. In the backdrop a poor man and a horseman on the left, and a pastoral scene on the right are also depicted. These could be generic genre figures, or they might have had a specific meaning for the commissioner.

When still in Willet's private collection, the painting was exhibited as a work by Andrea Mantegna (*Exhibition…*, 1892, p. 39 [n. 176]), an attribution

probably based on a forged signature which read "Andreas Mantegna Fecit", as pointed out by Collobi (1939, p. 46). The panel was donated to the museum in 1903 as a gift by the former owner, Henry Willett, brewer and amateur art collector, who enthusiastically promoted the project for a museum and art gallery in Brighton by offering the institution numerous paintings of from his personal collection (Rogers, 1964, pp. 25, 38). The gift of 1903 included over 60 antique artworks of foreign Old Masters to celebrate the reconstruction of the gallery building that had occurred in 1902 (Rogers, 1964, p. 4). Once in the museum collection, the panel was recorded as being by Bartolomeo Vivarini. Bryony Bartlett-Rawlings, who researched the Brighton collection while compiling the *National Inventory of Continental European Paintings*[560] in 2007, reported that the painting had been variously attributed to Bartolomeo Vivarini in collaboration with Andrea da Murano, or to the young Bastiani (in a personal communication of the museum. As Bartolomeo Vivarini and Bastiani in *Paintings…*, 1986, p. 99). In an oral communication Frederick Antal had suggested the name of Lazzaro Bastiani as the painter of this panel (Rogers, 1964, p. 25). Moreover, he considered this work unlikely to be executed by the hand of Andrea da Murano, whose style is cruder than that shown here, but did not exclude Bartolomeo Vivarini as a possibility (personal communication of the museum). The painting had, however, already been attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani, and executed in early 1480s, by Collobi (1939, p. 46), who remarked that it was painted by the hand of the master himself for its high quality. The ascription to Bastiani has been confirmed by Volpe (1983, p. 56) and Russo (2018, p. 6), even if the panel is still exhibited as an early work produced by the School of Bartolomeo Vivarini (*Oil paintings…*, 2005, pp. 186, 385) or by the School of Lazzaro Bastiani (*NICE*).

[560] The *National Inventory of Continental European Paintings (NICE)* is an open access on-line inventory of pre-1900 Continental European oil paintings in the UK's public collections. Information on Bastiani's *Virgin and Child with Cherubs* in Brighton can be retrieved at this link: https://www.vads.ac.uk/digital/collection/NIRP/id/29183/rec/1 (last accessed: 15th February 2022).

Collobi compared the iconography of this *Madonna and Child* to earlier works showing the same subject (those in Poldi Pezzoli and in the Gemäldegalerie), which had in fact revealed Bastiani's close contacts with the Mantegna and the Vivarini's art. Anyway, the scholar included this panel in a group of paintings (two of them considered to be late replicas by the workshop) dated around 1480 (1939, p. 46). Introducing the Brighton painting, Volpe stressed Bellini's influence on the young Bastiani, underlining his belief that "Bastiani was the link between the two brothers from Murano, Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini and the innovations of Bellini". Volpe found Bellini's influence being reflected in the landscape, suggesting a dating shortly after 1470 (1983, p. 56). Russo, as well, remarked that this panel shows Bastiani's style as it evolved after more than twenty years of following on the examples of the two older Vivarinis, Andrea Mantegna and, uppermost, Giovanni Bellini. For Russo, the Brighton *Madonna* should be grouped with the *Madonna and Child with Angels* formerly in D'Annunzio collection in Settignano (one of the paintings already mentioned by Collobi), and with the *Saint Jerome* in Monopoli, which are all dated between 1475 and 1480 (1475, the D'Annunzio *Madonna*; 1478-80, the Brighton *Madonna* and the *Saint Jerome*. Russo, 2018, pp. 6-7, 17 [note 43]). As already stressed, this Madonna shows Bastiani's early Vivarinesque legacy, especially if we compare the rendition of the Virgin with the one in Poldi Pezzoli. In the treatment of the landscape, however, it shows the transition towards a more Bellinesque manner, therefore a dating between 1475 and 1480 seems correct.



Number: AP10

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian*

Location: Charlotte (North Carolina, U.S.A.), Mint Museum of Art (from 1937, gift by the Kress Foundation, inv. K 1076)

Date: 1460-1465

Material and dimensions: panel, 31.4 x 28 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Florence, Alessandro Contini Bonacossi collection (until 1931); purchased by Samuel H. Kress (13th September 1931).

Past exhibitions: Center for the Fine Arts, Vero Beach, Florida, U.S.A. (May 1988 – February 1989); *Sacred treasures: early Italian paintings from Southern collections* (Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, U.S.A. 2002).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: When purchased by Samuel H. Kress, the painting was restored in 1932-33. In that occasion the panel was cradled, cleaned, retouched, varnished, and coated (*Condition and Restoration record*). From a 1930's x-ray image the cradle mounted on the back is clearly visible, as well as the holes caused by an earlier attack of xylophagous insects (which were probably filled and closed with lead white injection). Alan Burroughs pointed out few small holes, one at the lower right of the background and another in the skirt of the figure at the left

(National Gallery of Art, Gallery Archives, 46A3 Kress Collection Object Files - Other Locations). In 1968, as reported in Kress catalogue, the conservation status of the painting was fair. An evaluation of the piece made in 2022 pointed out that the old varnish was dull, shomehow oxidised and discolored; the painting surface was generally in good state, even though some old restorations noted in the paint layer and numerous repairs to the gold ground. On that occasion the painting underwent some minor conservation treatments.

Bibliography:

Van Marle, 1937, XVI, p. 484; Rusk Shapley, 1968, pp. 110-111; Fredericksen-Zeri, 1972, p. 76; Roberts, Cole, Maginnis, 2002, pp. 188-190; Boskovits, 2009, p. 14; Casu, 2011, p. 68.

This small panel shows two standing martyr saints identified as Cosmas and Damian; they hold the palm branches that are symbolic of their martyrdom. They are also carrying objects associated with medical matters, probably pillboxes. Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian, whose story is described in Jacopo da Varagine's *Legenda Aurea* (1995, pp. 786-789), were two Christian brothers skilled in the art of medicine. After their martyrdom, their cult became widespread and they were considered protectors against illness, as well as being patron saints of physicians, pharmacists and all those who practice the healing arts. In the painting, the two figures are portrayed as two young, beardless men, clothed in richly decorated garments, covered with long red cloaks and the saint on the right perhaps also wears a brown fur. The brothers are placed against a golden sky and a panoramic landscape, with the river that flows through the plain and the trees and shrubs beside the river are reflected in the water. On the right there is a mound topped with luxuriant trees. In the distance are barren hills, one with a fortress on top, which gently fade into the low horizon.

This painting was bought as *Predella with two Saints* by Samuel H. Kress from Count Contini, Rome, the 13th of September 1931 (*Fig. 165*) and paid in three

instalments. The old attribution to Bernardino Fungai, already assigned in Count Contini collection, was later accepted and confirmed by several critics, who sent their handwritten opinions to Samuel H. Kress (National Gallery of Art, Gallery Archives, 46A3 Kress Collection Object Files – Other Locations): Giuseppe Fiocco ("Work by Bernardino Fungai in his youth period"), Roberto Longhi ("[…] Bernardino Fungai nella sua forma più giovanile e cioè più schiettamente locale […]"), Wilhelm Emil Suida ("[…] An attractive work by Bernardino Fungai") and Adolfo Venturi ("Opera giovanile, schiettamente senese"). Van Marle listed it as by or attributed to Fungai (1937, p. 484) In another written note, Frederick Mason Perkins considered the artwork by a Sienese artist in the immediate entourage of Fungai. The analysis of the x-ray "shadowgraph" of the panel performed in 1930's caused Alan Burroughs, expert in this scientific technique, to discard the attribution to Fungai at least initially. Indeed, Burroughs pointed out the lack of resemblance to the work of the delicate Fungai, as "the remarkable feature of this unknown artist's technique […] is the stiff, diagonal brushwork in the robes and the bold modelling visible in the shadowgraph record of underpaint", and moreover "the style is almost mechanical and suggests the hand of an artist trained as an engraver". This last sentence perfectly links with Longhi's statement in *Officina Ferrarese* (1934 [1968[2]], p. 97), where the Italian scholar first suggested a connection between Bastiani's drawing in his paintings and a possible earlier career as a miniaturist and engraver, with the employment of the burin. Given the technical results and the pattern of the robes that reminded him Spanish designs, Burroughs firstly proposed the work to be by a provincial Spanish painter, but ultimately, (1936) he did accept the attribution to Fungai. In the Kress collection catalogue of 1968, Shapley (pp. 110-111) took into consideration the Sienese stylistic *milieu*, but he pointed out that "the firm stance of the figures and, as shown especially in the x-ray, the solid modelling are not characteristic of Fungai", thus he generically gave the panel to *Sienese School, c. 1500*. Fredricksen and Zeri (p. 76) restored the attribution to Fungai. From 1937 the artwork has been in the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte, North Carolina, U.S.A. It was donated as gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, and

here is still listed as Bernardino Fungai (*Sacred Treasures…*, 2002, pp. 188-190). Earlier in this century however, Miklos Boskovits (2009, p. 14) attributed the painting to Lazzaro Bastiani, as he observed the strict similarities between this artwork and the two panels with *Saint Jerome* and *Saint Catherine* by Lazzaro Bastiani in Museo Diocesano of Milan: he saw the same proportions, same golden sky, and the same barren hilly landscape. The scholar convincingly assigned the three small panels to the same *paliotto*. He also dubitatively suggested that the *Resurrection*, once in Kleinberger Galleries, was the central part of the complex, however evidence shows that this interpretation must be discarded (Casu, 2011, p. 68). To further support Boskovits' assumption, it must be pointed out that the Mint Museums' saints closely resemble the *Saint Catherine* in facial features (curved eyebrows, sunken eyes, straight nose, and small mouth), her pose and the floral pattern of her tunic (this last was a motif often employed in numerous Bastiani's paintings throughout his career). Moreover, the left part of the American painting, with a row of shrubs on the bank of the river, the watercourse in the plain and the low hills with the castle on top, seems to coincide and to be in continuity with the right landscape area of the *Saint Jerome* panel. The lack of the polylobate frame on top of the *Saints Cosmas and Damian* work, however, does not support the hypothesis that the panels were next to each other. The same landscape, however, even if specular, could indicate that Bastiani used the same preliminary compositional drawing in both paintings, a practice also employed in the *Resurrection and Noli me tangere* and *Christ and the three Marys and Ascension* episodes of the *antependium* with *Stories of the Life of Christ* (de Manincor, 2020, p. 117). If it is part of the same complex with the Milanese panels, also the *Saints Cosmas and Damian* panel must be dated in the first half of the seventh decade.

Further bibliography:

Longhi, 1934, ed. cons. 1968[2], p. 97, (note 59); Da Varazze (a cura di A e L. Vitale Brovarone), 1995, pp. 786-789; de Manincor, 2020, p. 117.

Further images



448. Predella with Two Saints, On Panel.

By BERNARDINO FUNGAI , Sienese, XV. Cent.

Fig. 165. List of paintings purchased by Samuel H Kress from Count Alessandro Contini in 1931 (Series 1.7b Dealer Correspondence and Bills of Sale. Samuel H. Kress Foundation Archive).



Photo © National Gallery of Ireland

Number: AP11

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child Enthroned with the Archangel Gabriel, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias*

Location: Dublin (Ireland), National Gallery of Ireland (inv. n. NGI 352)

Date: 1490-1495

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 145 x 117 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: Venice, antiquarian Ricchetti; purchased by the museum from Christie's London, 1891.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1970 (Lucco, 2014, p. 419).
In the past the panel was largely repainted, especially the figures of the Virgin and the infant Jesus, as is clearly evident from the UV and IR images (*Fig. 166* and *Fig. 2*). In 1970 a cleaning procedure was carried out.

Bibliography:
L. Venturi, 1907, pp. 281-282; Berenson, 1932, p. 352; Bereson, 1936, p. 315; Van Marle, 1936, pp. 182-184; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 47, note 35; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Puppi, 1962, pp. 47, 168; *National Gallery…*, 1971, p. 7; *National Gallery…*, 1981, p. 7; Lucco, 2014, p. 419 (Cat. 134).

The painting shows the Madonna and the infant Jesus enthroned, flanked by the archangel Gabriel and the archangel Raphael and Tobias. The Virgin is sitting on a marble throne with a brocade cloth of honour hung behind her. She supports the infant Jesus who is sitting on a green cushion placed on her lap and is raising his right hand to make the blessing. The central group is flanked by the standing archangels, and also Tobias (this latter carries the fish, his symbol). The figures are enclosed in the foreground by a parapet and a vertical wall behind the throne. In the background a natural landscape is just visible. From 1480s onwards Bastiani used a parapet to separate the foreground (often a sacral space where he placed the holy figures) from the background, generally a landscape with an ample portion of sky.
At the base of the throne there are, from left to right, a peacock, a boxwood in a pot, an open book, a fruit (perhaps an orange?), a dove and a dog. All these elements have a symbolic meaning that refers to the Virgin, Christ and the future Resurrection and Salvation. Both the peacock and the boxwood can symbolise the Virgin Mary (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 173). Being an evergreen, the boxwood can also indicate the faith in Salvation (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, p. 65). Since ancient times it was believed that the flesh of the peacock did not decay, therefore it has been associated to immortality. Christians adopted the

symbol of the peacock and its immortality to refer to Christ and the Resurrection (Charbonneau Lassay, 1994, II, pp. 205-212). The presence of the dove and the open book directly below the Virgin Mary might be associated with the Annunciation and the Immaculate Conception. When the Archangel Gabriel – here depicted holding the white lily (symbol of Mary's chastity and spiritual purity. Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 210-212) at the left of the Virgin – descends to tell the Virgin that she will give birth to the son of God, she is often shown reading a book. Many of the symbols painted here have often been included in the scene of the *Annunciation* (compare, for instance, the peacock and the boxwood in Carlo Crivelli's *Annunciation with Saint Emidius* made in 1486 and today in The National Gallery of London. *Fig. 168*). The dog generally evokes fidelity. According to Piccinelli, however, the dog also leads the blind as the Archangel Raphael guided Tobias (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 73). The dog next to Tobias seems to have this meaning (see also, for example, the dog in Cima da Conegliano's *Adoration of the Shepherds with Saint Catherine of Alexandria, Saint Helen, the Archangel Gabriel and Tobias* in the Church of Santa Maria dei Carmini in Venice, painted around 1508-1509. *Fig. 169*). The symbolic elements disposed in the foreground, moreover, could have been inspired by Antonello da Messina's *Saint Jerome in His Study* (1475 c.) in The National Gallery of London (*Fig. 170*).

The animals, the boxwood, the fruit, and the book incorporated in the painting likely had a specific meaning, most likely related to a request of the commissioner. Unfortunately, we do not have any information concerning the patron of the picture, nor its original location and function.

Purchased by the National Gallery of Ireland from Christie's in London in 1891, the panel entered the museum collection as Lazzaro Bastiani's (L. Venturi, 1907, pp. 281-282). When it was in possession of the art dealer Richetti in Venice an anonymous eminent scholar suggested Girolamo Dai Libri as artist (verbal communication by prof. Thomas McGreevy, previous director of the National Gallery of Ireland. Information reported by Puppi, 1962, p. 168). Lucco (2014) hypothesized that, since in 1955 Richetti purchased Gianfilippi's collection near Garda Lake (Verona), the ascription to Girolamo Dai Libri given

by the scholar would be attested by this provenance. No evidence, however, has been found to prove Lucco's assumption.

In the first half of the 20th century the critics did not agree on the attribution of the panel. Lionello Venturi (1907), Van Marle (1936) and Collobi (1939) assigned it to Bastiani. Venturi noticed here Carpaccio's evident influence. Van Marle found less obvious characteristics of Bartolomeo Vivarini's influence over Bastiani, thus by implication dating the work later than 1484. Collobi included the Dublin *Madonna Enthroned* in a group of paintings (e.g., the Howarth *Tryptych*, the Verona and Redentore *Madonnas*) to be dated in the second half of the 1480s. Berenson, in the first edition of his *Indexes* (1932, 1936) believed that the central group of the *Madonna and Child* had to be ascribed to Bartolomeo Montagna (Puppi [1962, p. 168] reported that Berenson gave the archangels to Carpaccio, but I have not been able to find this reference in the *Indexes*). Later Berenson accepted the attribution to Bastiani, listing the picture as late work (1957, 1958). Bastiani as painter of the National Gallery of Ireland panel did not fully persuade Puppi (1962), though he did not suggest an alternative artist. Later museum catalogues (1971, 1981) confirmed the attribution to Bastiani. Lucco stated that the style of the painting is unequivocally by Bastiani in the late phase of his career, around 1490.

The horizontal parapet interrupted by the vertical wall and cloth of honour is reminiscent of the setting of the *Saint Jerome Enthroned* (1488 c.) in Asolo and of the *Coronation of the Virgin* (1490) in Bergamo. The Archangels' vestments, moreover, can be compared to those of Saint Ursula in the *Coronation* (especially the Archangel Gabriel). The muscular infant Jesus recalls that in the Verona *Madonna*, as does the Virgin's holding of his torso and his foot. The position of the infant Jesus and the way the Virgin Mary supports him are somewhat reminiscent of those in Giovanni Bellini's and his workshop's *Madonna and Child with Saint John the Baptist and Saint Elizabeth* in Frankfurt, which are dated between 1490 and 1495 (Humfrey, 2019, pp. 497-498 [Cat. 134]. *Fig. 171*). Humfrey found affinities in the pose of the infant Jesus between Giovanni's Frankfurt painting and Cima da Conegliano's *Oderzo Altarpiece* in Brera, Milan (*Fig. 172*), dated around 1486-1488, which could indicate a

terminus post quem for the study of the Madonna and Child group by Giovanni. Humfrey also reported Rearick's suggestion concerning the existence of an original painted prototype of the central group of the Madonna made by Giovanni himself. It is more likely, however, that Giovanni realised a drawing of the composition that was then elaborated by his followers into finished cartoons. The Madonna and the Blessing Child Type, indeed, had been replicated (sometimes with slight modifications) several times by Giovanni's collaborators and followers in the second half of 1490s and in the early 1500s (see Golden, 2004, pp. 110-121). As Russo (2019, pp. 164-179) observed, since the 1470s, Bastiani was familiar with Giovanni's atelier and more than once replicated, almost exactly, his compositional ideas. It can be hypothesised, therefore, that Bastiani was aware of the compositional idea for the Madonna and the infant Jesus group, and that he developed his personal version, which he painted in the Dublin panel, based upon this example.

Given the similarities with Bastiani's works dated around 1490 and for the elaboration of the Madonna and Child Type upon Giovanni Bellini's idea, I would suggest that Bastiani painted the *Madonna and Child Enthroned with the Archangel Gabriel, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias* in Dublin in the early 1490s.

Further bibliography:

Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 65, 210-212; Charbonneau Lassay, 1994, II, pp. 205-212; Levi D'Ancona, 2001, pp. 73, 173; Golden, 2004, pp. 110-121; Humfrey, 2019, pp. 497-498 [Cat. 134]; Russo, 2019, pp. 164-179.

Further images

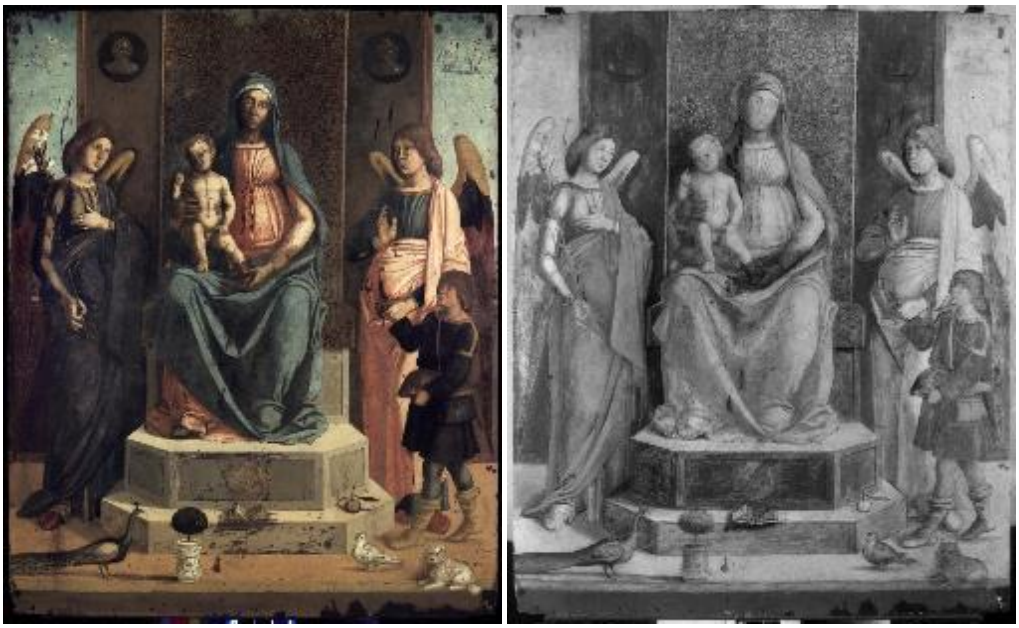


Fig. 166 and Fig. 167. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with the Archangel Gabriel, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias*, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland (UV and IRR images).



Fig. 168. C. Crivelli, *Annunciation with Saint Emidius*, London, The National Gallery, 1486.



Fig. 169. Cima da Conegliano, *Adoration of the Shepherds with Saint Catherine of Alexandria, Saint Helen, the Archangel Gabriel and Tobias*, Venice, Church of Santa Maria dei Carmini in Venice, 1508-1509 c.

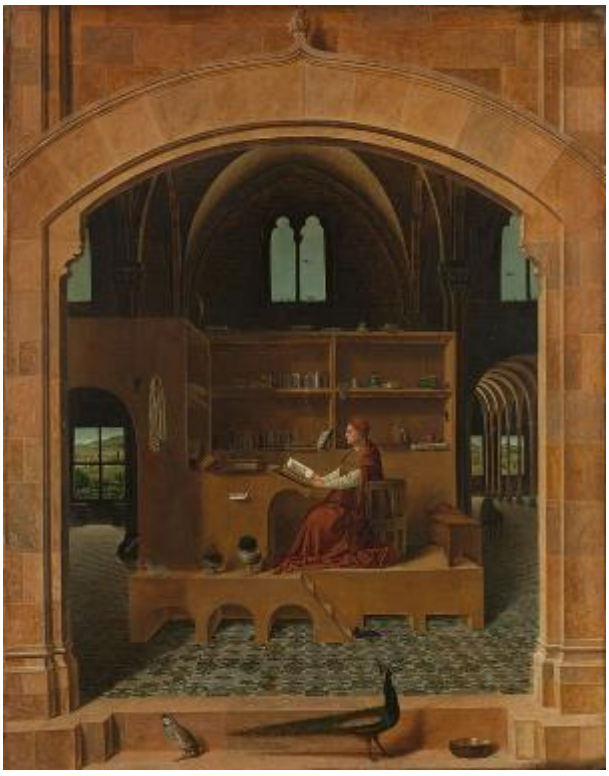


Fig. 170. A. Da Messina, *Saint Jerome in His Study*, London, The National Gallery, 1475 c.



Fig. 171. G. Bellini and workshop, *Madonna and Child with Saint John the Baptist and Saint Elizabeth*, Frankfurt, Städel Museum, 1490-1495.



Fig. 172. G. B. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna con il Bambino in trono e i Santi Sebastiano, Giovanni Battista, Maria Maddalena, Rocco e membri della Confraternita di San Giovanni Evangelista*, Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera, 1486-1488 (detail of the Madonna and the infant Jesus).



Number: AP12

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Annunciation*

Location: Klosterneuburg (Austria), Monastery Museum (inv. n. GM 143)

Date: 1495-1500

Material and dimensions: Wooden panel, 70.5 x 82.5 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Unknown.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Ritschl, 1894 c. (Drexler, 1894, p. 236).

There are no records regarding any conservation treatment. In 1894 Drexler (p. 236) mentioned a restoration performed by Ritschl. The painting was extremely damaged, and on that occasion the surface was cleaned, removing the old superficial varnish layer, and the damaged areas were reintegrated. In the 1937 Catalogue (p. 155) it was pointed out that the figures heads, the landscape, and a large portion of sky had been repainted recently. Nonetheless,

it has been underlined by the author of the 1937 catalogue entry that, although largely retouched, the figures and the overall composition are still original. Today the conservation status is fair.

Bibliography:
Drexler, 1894, pp. 235-236; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900, p. 280; Ludwig-P. Molmenti, 1903, p. 10; Logan, 1903, p. 319; Ludwig-P. Molmenti, 1906, p. 22; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 221 (note 3); A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 381, 388; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 134-139; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 54; Van Marle, 1936, p. 190; Benesch, 1937, pp. 154-155 (n. 143); Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939 p. 48 (note 44); Berenson, 1957, p. 25; Mariacher, 1957, p. 30; Berenson, 1958, p. 26; Longhi, 1995, pp. 442, 444; Russo, 2017, s. p.; Tempestini, 2021, p. 309 (n. 2007).

Of unknown provenance, this *Annunciation* is today on view in the Klosterneuburg Monastery Museum. In 1894, Drexler presented it as the masterpiece of the Klosterneuburg collection, executed by an anonymous Venetian master of the 15th century (pp. 235-236). In 1900, Ludwig-Paoletti pointed out that Doctor Theodore von Frimmel was the first to discover this painting in the Klosterneuburg, although did not offer any further evidence in support of this statement.
At a first glance, the Klosterneuburg panel strictly follows the composition of the Correr *Annunciation*, with the main "actors" in the foreground, separated from the backdrop by a low parapet. The archangel Gabriel, on the left, announces to Mary, who is on the right, who kneels in front of a prayer desk, that she will give birth to the son of God. Mary wears a red dress and a golden brocade mantle. From God the Father, hovering in mid-air, a ray is sent to Mary, carrying upon it the Holy Spirit dove and the fully formed Child that she will bear. This peculiar iconography of the Annunciation, inspired by San Bonaventura's *Lignum Vitae*, was widespread in/spread throughout Italy in 14th and 15th centuries but was banned after the Council of Trent (for a further explanation and the related bibliography, please see Cat. AP48). Similarly, there

are the goldfinch, the helmeted guineafowl, and the parrot, which are present also in the Venetian painting, Bastiani added two further animals, a quail and a deer. The quail is an eucharistic symbol referring to the blood of Christ (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 186), while the deer, which is depicted beyond the parapet, could generically represents the nature of the site chosen by Saint Jerome, portrayed in the background, for his period of penitence (Friedmann, 1980, p. 207).

The confident use of perspective is again emphasised by the converging lines of the floor tiles and of the foreshortened side buildings. This, however, changes in the landscape behind the main scene. There is an open landscape where the perspective runs free to the horizon in the Correr work, while the background of the Klosterneuburg *Annunciation* is enclosed by a rocky setting where the penitent Saint Jerome is placed, kneeling in front of the crucifix, with the tamed lion next to him. The vanishing point corresponds to the crucifix. Highlighting the Saint Jerome scene in this way might be indicative of the commissioner's name.

From Ludwig and Paoletti onwards, all the scholars except Logan (1903, p. 319), who was uncertain, agreed in ascribing this painting to Lazzaro Bastiani, all remarking upon the strong similarities with the Correr version (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 10; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 22; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; Borenius, p. 221 [note 3]; A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 381, 388; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 134-139; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 54; Van Marle, 1936, p. 190; Benesch, 1937, pp. 154-155 [n. 143]; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 48 [note 44], Berenson, 1957, p. 25; Mariacher, 1957, p. 30; Longhi, 1995, pp. 442, 444; Russo, 2017, s. p.).

Generally included in Bastiani's late works, Adolfo Venturi was the only one who-argued that the Klosterneuburg *Annunciation* was an early work, painted before the Correr panel, and under the influence of Antonio Vivarini and Jacopo Bellini (1915, p. 381). Judging the perspective construction to be very precise, however, lead-Ludwig and Molmenti to place this painting in a mature phase of Bastiani's art (1906, p. 22). Lionello Venturi argued the Austrian panel was a *replica* of the Venetian model, showing few differences and but being more

finely executed (1907, p. 279). For Van Marle "rounder forms and a more evolved style" characterise this artwork, which he related to the *Saint Lucy and the kneeling donor* today in Portland (1936, p. 190). Berenson also listed the Klosterneubug panel as late work in his *Indexes* (1932, p. 63; 1936, p. 54; 1957, p. 25; 1958, p. 26). Benesch found it more delicate and closer to the–16th century, for citing comparison with the *Nativity* once in Kaiser Friedrich Museum (1937, p. 155). In Collobi's view this *Annunciation*, together with the Berlin *Nativity* and the *Nursing Madonna* in Correr Museum, is part of a body of work resulting from a late artistic crisis for Bastiani, which started after the 1490 *Coronation*, which led to a revival of the use of archaic motifs derived from previous paintings (1939, p. 48). In accordance with Benesch and Collobi, a dating in the late 1490s seems appropriate for this *Annunciation*.

A copy of the Klosterneuburg painting appeared on Paris Antiquarian Market (property of Brimo de Laroussilhe) in 1964 (*Notable works…*, 1964, plate V; Tempestini, 2021, p. 309 (n. 2008b). *Fig. 173*). Curiously, in the catalogue entry the attribution to Bastiani is based on comparisons with various works of our artist, but not including the Austrian *Annunciation*. Examining the two *Annunciations*, the Paris one seems only a poor copy of the master's original, thus I would assign it to Bastiani's workshop. The presence of a copy that accurately retraces all the details of the original, however, might suggest the existence of a cartoon of this composition that Bastiani's collaborators could reuse, following a practice that was common in the successful workshops of Venice.

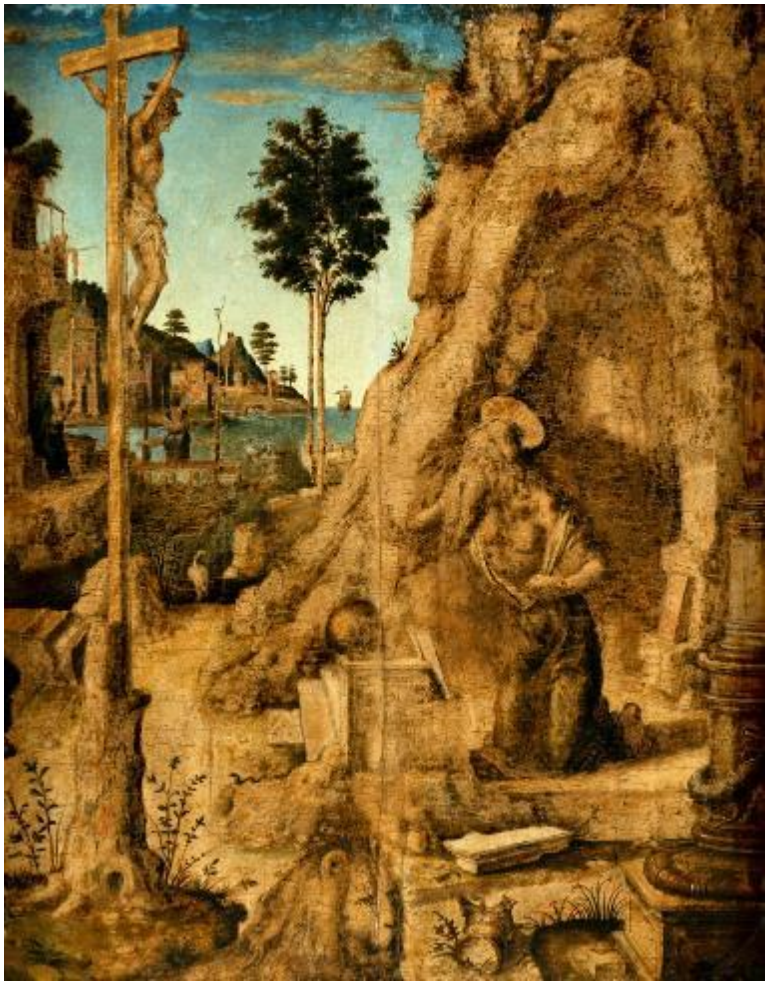
Further bibliography:

Notable works…, 1964, plate V; Friedmann, 1980, p. 207; Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 186.

Further images



Fig. 173. Workshop of Lazzaro Bastiani, *Annunciation*, unknown location.



Number: AP13

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Penitent Saint Jerome*

Location: Klosterneuburg (Austria), Klosterneuburg Monastery Museum (inv. GM 416)

Date: 1485-1490

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 53 x 41 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Vienna, Private collection (until 1833).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: The painting is in extremely poor condition. The surface is widely abraded, mostly lacking the paint layer, showing the preparatory ground and the underdrawing.

Bibliography: Conti, 1977, pp. 59, 61 (note6).

The panel was given to the Klosterneuburg monastery by a private Viennese owner in 1833. Previously unknown, it was only ascribed to Bastiani in 1977 by Alessandro Conti. In spite of the poor state of preservation, the work shows several features that are characteristic of Bastiani. For instance, the tamed lion and the crucifix are extremely similar to those in the *teleri* with *Scenes from the Life of Saint Jerome*. Concerning the composition, however, the more relevant comparison is with Bastiani's *Penitent Saint Jerome* in Springfield (U.S.A.). Conti observed that Bastiani did not use a modification of tone to create the sense of depth, rather he used perspective to create the linear illusion of depth by intersecting vanishing lines (in this case, for example, the row of trees on the right) with planes perpendicular to the observer (here illustrated by the jetty with the reading monk and the landscape in the distance). Russo (2019, pp. 174-175, note 30) suggested that Bastiani possibly developed this perspective representation having studied Marco Zoppo's drawings and systematically applied it in his mature works from the Springfield *Saint Jerome* onwards, thus from about 1480. Conti believed the work to have been executed after the *telero* with the *Offering of the Relic of the Cross* (1494 c.), in a very late phase of Bastiani's career. I would place the realisation in the second half of 1480s, since the picture does not have the mediocre and monotonous quality those 'old-fashioned' paintings belonging to that phase of late artistic crisis, but the perspective definition is not as geometric as in the Springfield work (we can also compare this work to the *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia and the *Annunciation* in the Correr Museum).

Further bibliography:

Russo, 2019, pp. 164-179.



© Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Langres

Number: AP14

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Christ Blessing*

Location: Langres (France), Musée d'Art et d'Histoire (from 1857, inv. n. SRMF 1547 – F9807)

Date: 1480 c.

Material and dimensions: poplar panel, 100 x 67 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: Venice, Reale Accademia delle Belle Arti (?); Paris, Jules Claude Ziegler private collection (until his death).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 2000, Patrick Mandron (Restoration report); 2001, Sophie Deyrolle (Restoration report); 2001, SEM-EDS analysis, C2RMF (Scientific report).

The work undoubtedly underwent at least one other undocumented restoration treatment in the past, most likely in the 19th century, as confirmed by the SEM-EDS analyses that characterised pigments known to have been introduced later than the 15th century (e.g., lead antimonate yellow, arsenic green and barium sulphate). The varnish film that covered the entire painting surface was altered and darkened. The dark blue appearance of the sky, as well as the reddish colour of the clouds, however, were due to a very thick overpainting covering this large area. Once this additional layer was removed, the original light tone of the sky was revealed, although further localized repainted parts in darker blue colour were present. Two cracks in the wood support were visible in the lower right corner. A lacuna reaching down to the support in the flag had already been reintegrated with mastic in the past. Once the surface was cleaned of old varnishes and overpainting, several small lacunae were unveiled, especially in the figure of Christ. The mastic was removed as well and replaced by stucco. The treatment then consisted of the consolidation of the cracks and of the original paint. Finally, all the lacunae have been inpainted.

Bibliography:

Catalogue…, 1861, p. 77; *Catalogue…*, 1902, pp. 176-177; Royer, 1931, p. 258; Berenson, 1932, p. 35 (Basaiti); Collobi, 1939, p. 39; Pallucchini, 1958/59, p. 102; Longhi, 1995, p. 444; Russo, 2017, s.p.

The panel depicts the resurrected Christ blessing. He stands on his tomb, amongst Roman soldiers, in a natural landscape. He is clothed in a pink mantle that partially shows his chest and his wound. He holds a flag in his left hand. He rises above the astonished soldiers who witness the holy event. In the background there is a hilly landscape with a fortified town on the left. The light yellow-pink sky indicates that the episode takes place at sunrise.

The painting was bought in 1857 from the sale of artist Jean-Claude Ziegler's collection after his death by the "Societé Historique et Archéologie" that founded the museum at Langres.[561] In addition, according to a wax seal attached on the verso of the panel reporting the inscription "REALE ACCADEMIA DELLE BELLE ARTI IN VENEZIA", we might cautiously suggest that the Venice Academy was the previous owner (*Fig. 174*). Initially assigned to Mantegna in museum catalogues (1861, 1902, 1931), Collobi, following a suggestion of Roberto Longhi, attributed the work to Lazzaro Bastiani with a dating of around 1480, owing to stylistic similarities to the *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. Pallucchini (1958/59) followed Collobi's assumption and dated the picture around 1480. In his essay on Lazzaro Bastiani, written in 1925-26, but published posthumously only in 1995, Longhi already ascribed the Langres *Christ Blessing* as Bastiani's work executed around 1480. For Longhi the French *Christ* is exemplary in demonstrating how Bastiani adapted Renaissance artistic language, especially the perspective construction of the tomb and the proportions of the figures, to reach an extra-figurative meaning, in Bastiani's case a religious meaning. Longhi concluded that "la composizione è dunque di un classicismo che si serve del rinascimento per accentuare gli elementi misurati del simbolismo cristiano medievale" (1995, p. 444).

The most immediate comparison is with Bastiani's *Christ Blessing* in Modena, dated around 1485, which is similar both in composition (Christ blessing in central position in the foreground), and in the folding of his mantle. A previous example of Christ Blessing standing on the sarcophagus and holding a flag by Bastiani is in one of the panels depicting *Stories of the Life of Christ* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia.

[561] Information retrieved from AGORHA, the online platform and database for art historical research built by INHA (Institut National de l'Histoire de l'Art): https://agorha.inha.fr/ark:/54721/5708d367-91cf-4380-a9da-3872e5ee2e3e (last viewed 22nd February 2023).

Given the formal analysis done by Collobi and Longhi, I agree that the Langres *Christ blessing* should be included in the period of Bastiani's maturity which saw the execution of the Venice *Nativity*, thus around 1480.

Further images



*Fig. 174.*Verso of the panel with the wax seal recording "REALE ACCADEMIA DELLE BELLE ARTI IN VENEZIA".



Number: AP15

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child*

Location: London (U.K.), The National Gallery (NG 1953)

Date: 1475-80

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 83.2 x 64.1 cm

Inscription: Signed on the lower central part of the parapet: "LAZARVS BASTIANVS PINXIT".

Technique: tempera and oil

Provenance: Monte di Pietà, Rome (1857); Collection of Father O'Connor, Keighley, Yorkshire, UK; presented by the National Art Collection Fund (1905).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1955-1956, National Gallery Conservation Department (*The National Gallery, January 1955-June 1956*, Publication Department, London, 1956, p. 80).
In the 1951 catalogue, Davies reported that "the picture is much worn, and considerably repainted" (p. 38). Between 1955 and 1956 the support of the painting was repaired (*The National Gallery…*, 1956, p. 80). The painting today is not on display owing to its poor condition.

Bibliography:
Catalogo de' quadri…, 1857, p. 12 (n. 252); *Bryan's dictionary…, V (S-Z)*, 1905, s.p. (ill. *Lazaro Bastianus called Sebastiani, Madonna and Child*); *The National Gallery…*, 1909, p. 12; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 221 (note 4); *The National Gallery…*, 1913, p. 12; *National Gallery…*, 1920, p. 11; *National Gallery…*, 1929, p. 12; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 131, 134; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 54; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 188; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 46 (note 34); Davies, 1951, pp. 37-38; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Davies, 1961, p. 48; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; *The National Gallery...*, 1973, p. 22; Togneri-Anderson, 1985, p. 238 (n. 252); *National Gallery...*, 1986, p. 23; Baker-Henry, 1995, p. 23; Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43).

Before entering the National Gallery's collection, the panel, signed "LAZARVS BASTIANVS PINXIT", was in Monte di Pietà, in Rome (*Catalogo de' quadri…*, 1857, p. 12 [n. 252]), where in May 1958 it was seen by Otto Mündler, who recorded and described it in his *Diaries* (Togneri-Anderson, 1985, p. 238 [n. 252]). *Bryan's Dictionary* (1905) reported that the artwork was in Father O'Connor's collection, before being presented by the National Art Collection Fund in 1905.
The painting portrays the half-length Virgin supporting the infant Jesus who half-kneels on a white cushion atop a marble parapet. The infant Jesus' arms are crossed on his chest. In his proper right hand, he holds a string attached to a goldfinch, symbol of the Passion of Christ and his future sacrifice (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 79). The Child's torso is fully dressed in a green tunic with

white sleeves. The Virgin is clothed in a red dress, fastened around the waist, covered by a blue mantle. A white pleated veil is arranged partially on her forehead. Hanging in mid-air there is a garland of fruits and foliage. This element, as well as the cushion which partially juts out over the parapet, toward the viewer, are evidently a reminiscent of, or a derivation from the art of Padua. Behind the pair, a purple cloth of honour is hung vertically, separating the holy space from a natural landscape in background, showing Bastiani's characteristic elements, such as the degrading hills and the compact globular trees reflecting in the quiet water of a lake or of a river (Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 135).

Being signed, the attribution has never been questioned, and the panel has been included in Bastiani's *corpus* of secure artworks by all the scholars.

Sandberg-Vavalà (1931) grouped the London *Madonna* with the *Madonna* in Redentore owing to the "strong inter-resemblance as scheme and as manner". The scholar compared the style of the infant Jesus' and his costume, and the Virgin's features and right hand to an earlier group of *Madonna and Child*, such as that in Poldi Pezzoli, which she assumed was painted under Bartolomeo Vivarini's immediate inspiration. However, she remarked that here the master was in a phase of greater independence, because, despite the persistent Squarcionesque festoon, the treatment of the landscape reveals his emancipation from Bartolomeo, and there are also suggestions of Alvise Vivarini "in sentiment and expression" and also of Giovanni Bellini (Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 131, 134). Vavalà grouped the National Gallery *Madonna* and the *Madonna* of the Redentore together with the *Madonna* once in the Pitt-Rivers collection (Oxford, UK?). This latter is considered by the art historian to be the most ambitious work of this period and is dated at the end of the 1470s (after the collaboration with Giovanni Bellini in the Scuola Grande di San Marco), thus it goes without saying for Vavalà that for the London panel is likely to have been executed in the 1470s, slightly earlier than the Pitt-Rivers painting (1931, p. 134). In Van Marle's view, here Bastiani "was obviously influenced by Alvise" (specifically, by Alvise's mature manner), with whom Bastiani would probably have come into contact after 1484 (1936, p. 188).

Collobi believed that this "aristocratic" Madonna, showing a calm and evocative landscape, was executed before the end of the 1480s. Moreover, the scholar pointed out that the composition was evidently a commissioner's request (1939, p. 46). In National Gallery catalogues the panel is considered a middle period work (1951, p. 38; 1961, p. 48; 1973, p. 22; 1986, p. 23). In the 1995 catalogue it is placed between 1480 and 1490 (p. 23). Russo dated the London *Madonna* between 1476 and 1478 (2018, p. 17 [note 43]).

The peculiar position of the Child is worth further investigation and discussion. Indeed, in a painting depicting the *Holy Family* in Musée des Beaux-Arts de Strasbourg, France that today is attributed to Antonio Vivarini at the beginning of the 1450s the posture of the infant Jesus, half-kneeling on the cushion partially projecting from the marble, as well as his long-sleeved green tunic, are clearly redolent of our painting (the painting in Strasbourg, please refer to: Mœnch, 2017, pp. 64-65 and previous bibliography; Russo, 2020c, pp. 54-55. In the past the panel has been variously attributed to the School of Mantegna, Antonio da Crevalcore, Quirizio da Murano and Bartolomeo Vivarini). In another *Holy Family* sold at a Sotheby's auction in 1984 and attributed to "Gregorio (Giorgio) Schiavone" during the early years of his time in Padua which he started in 1456 (Sotheby's, *Old Master Paintings*, London, 12/12/1984, lot 17; Casu, 2000, pp. 42-43), there are further affinities with the National Gallery panel. Like in our painting, here the infant Jesus' head is turned towards his mother, his arms are bent, and his hands folded on his chest. In addition, the Virgin supports the infant Jesus in his uncomfortable position, holding him by one of his legs and by his chest. For Mœnch the composition is derived from a Mantegnesque example, as proven by the two *Madonnas and Child* works, respectively in Berlin and in Tulsa, U.S.A. (Mœnch, 1993, p. 68). Casu, underlining the strong resemblances between the two artworks, which could be dependent on each other or could have been developed from upon a common prototype, argued that the posture of the Child is securely derived from a classical model, which could be either the act of Mithras killing the bull, or the pose of the defeated hero in the Amazonomachy (Casu, 2000, pp. 42-43). However, although the specific source

is unknown, Casu suggested that the roman model of the Mitraeum once under the Aracoeli, and today in Louvre Museum, was imported in Veneto by Ciriaco d'Ancona, who probably saw it and sketched it (2000, p. 43).[562] This reference to the Mitraeum, together with other examples, has also been mentioned by Lucco to explain the peculiar posture of the infant Jesus in Giovanni Bellini's Lochis *Madonna* (1475 c.), emphasising Bellini's fascination for classical antiquity (2019, p. 400 [Cat. 58]). Bellini further developed this composition in at least two other *Madonna and Child* works, one that was for sale at Sotheby's in 2015 and which has recently been included in Bellini's catalogue (Sotheby's, *Old Master & British Paintings*, London, 10/12/2015, lot 165; Lucco, 2019, pp. 401-402 [Cat. 59]), and the other slightly later (1480 c.) in The National Gallery of Washington (Lucco, 2019, p. 426 [Cat. 76]). The infant Jesus on the panel sold at Sotheby's is exactly repeated in a *Sacra Conversazione* ascribed to Girolamo da Santacroce by Heinemann (1962, I, p. 17 [n. 53b]; II, p. 231). Later examples showing the same curious position (although depicting the Infant Saint John) are two *Madonna and Child with the Infant Saint John the Baptist* works by Beccafumi (Sricchia Santoro, 1990, pp. 76-77) and Genga (Morandotti, 1993, pp. 277, 290 [fig. 20]). Therefore, this classical-derived posture was employed more than once in and outside Veneto in the 15th and 16th centuries. In Marco Zoppo's sheet of studies for the *Madonna and Child* in Staatliche Graphische Sammlung of Munich (inv. n. 2802 recto), the first pair drawn on the left top corner shows again the infant Jesus in this uncomfortable position.

It should be noted that this pose was not only applied to sacred paintings, but also in non-religious works, as in Marco Zoppo's drawing *Death of Pentheus*

[562] It must be observed that it is not proved that Ciriaco found a Mitraeum in Rome (Silvestro, 2018, pp. 611-612). Mithras complicated pose, however, was apparently borrowed from scenes of the goddess Nike and the bull, which were popular in the Roman empire and duplicated on different artistic media (from carved reliefs to coins) (Faraone, 2013, pp. 108-111). It is well-known that in his atelier Squarcione had a collection of classical objects and perhaps he was familiar also with this iconography, rather than with that of Mithras.

(Armstrong, 1976, pp. 288-303) or *Death of Orpheus* (Calogero, 2020, pp. 128-130). Relating to this drawing, Calogero argued that it derives from a drawing by Pollaiolo ("cartonum cum quibusdam nudis Poleyoli") stolen from Squarcione's collection at the beginning of the 1460s' and from a Mantegnesque prototype portraying the *Death of Opheus* derived from Pollaiolo's drawing, which today could be seen in an engraving by the Maestro "E" of the so-called *Mantegna Tarocchi* in Hamburg Kunsthalle (Calogero, 2020, pp. 130-132).

From this excursus, it appears that this iconography was well-known in Padua in the 1450s and then in Venice in the 1470s. The posture and gestures of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus in Bastiani's Madonna evoke the Paduan examples, but the style of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus, is closer to Giovanni Bellini's examples, especially the Lochis Madonna. Overall, the atmosphere and the landscape suggest a transition towards Giovanni Bellini's manner, despite the presence of certain Paduan elements which still recur, such as the fruit garland. For these reasons, it seems plausible to suggest a period of execution in the second half of the 1470s.

Further bibliography:

Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 17 (n. 53b); Heinemann, 1962, II, p. 231; Sricchia Santoro, 1990, pp. 76-77; Mœnch, 1993, p. 68-69; Morandotti, 1993, pp. 277, 290 [fig. 20]; Casu, 2000, pp. 42-43; Faraone, 2013, pp. 108-111; Mœnch, 2017, p. 64-65; Luciani, 2018, 611-612; Lucco, 2019, pp. 399-401 [cat. 58], 401-402 [cat. 59], 426 [cat. 76]; Calogero, 2020, 128-132; Russo, 2020c, pp. 54-55.



Number: AP16

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child*

Location: Lovere (Bergamo, Italy), Pinacoteca Tadini (from 1827)

Date: 1480 c.

Material and dimensions: panel, 53.5 x 36 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Count Luigi Tadini private collection, Crema (until 1827).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1943, Mauro Pellicioli (*Guida…*, 1992, p. 14).

Today the preservation status of the painting is fair.

Bibliography:

Descrizione…, 1828, p. 47 (n. 258); *Descrizione…*, 1837, p. 63 (n. 258); *Catalogo…*, 1903, p. 9 (n. 21); *Catalogo…*, 1929, p. 37 (n. 21); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; *La Galleria Tadini…*, 1969, s. p. (n. 21); Sgarbi, 1983, p. 158; *Guida…*, 1992, p. 14 (n. 21); Tambini, 1998, p. 447; Sgarbi, 2011, pp. 60-62; Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43); Russo, 2019, p. 176, notes 34, 37.

Any information concerning the provenance and the year of acquisition of the painting is unknown. However, from a manuscript inventory compiled between 1816 and 1827, the panel was already included in the former Count Tadini's private collection in Crema.

The artwork shows the Virgin in half-length figure and in three-quarter profile, behind a parapet, adoring the naked infant Jesus. She looks down towards him with a solemn gaze, resting her hands together in prayer. Her red dress is covered by a blue cloak. The infant Jesus, with curly blond hair, is lying on a marble parapet, reclined upon a luxurious green cushion. The parapet not only separates the group from the "real" word of the observer, i.e. the worshipper, and creates the illusion of depth, but also anticipates the "unction slab" upon which Christ's body was anointed with oil before his burial, representing also a prophetic sign of Christ's future suffering. The Virgin's worship is thus addressed to her son's death, which is crucial to salvation (GOFFEN?). Behind the figures is hung a festoon with oranges and lemons, fruits associated with the Virgin Mary and to Christ (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 205-206, 274) and a red cloth of honour. The backdrop is simple, showing a light blue sky.

The panel entered the Count's collection with the attribution to "Scuola antica veneta", repeated in the following guides or catalogues of the gallery until the end of 1920s' (1828, p. 47 [n.258]; 1837, p. 63 [n. 258]; 1903, p. 9 [n. 21]; 1929, p. 37 [n. 21]). In the 1969 catalogue, it is recorded as "Vivarinesque painter of the second half of the 15th century", which was probably taken from a manuscript inventory of 1960s', perhaps written by G. A. Scalzi, at that time director of the Pinacoteca. Berenson was the first to suggest the name of Lazzaro Bastiani in a written communication of 1947 (*Guida…*,1992, p. 14 [n.

21]), an attribution he then confirmed in his *Indexes* of 1957 (p. 25) and 1958 (p. 26) and which was approved also by Pallucchini in a written communication of 1960 (*Guida…*,1992, p. 14 [n. 21]). The ascription to Bastiani was finally accepted in the last published guide of the gallery (*Guida…*,1992, p. 14 [n. 21]), and by Sgarbi (1983, p. 158; 2011, pp. 60-62), Tambini (1998, p. 447) and Russo (2018, p. 17 [note 43]; 2019, p. 176, notes 34, 37).

In Sgarbi's view the early inspiration derived from Antonio Vivarini is developed here following Giovanni Bellini's or Alvise Vivarini's more mature manner. Thus, notwithstanding the presence of the archaic festoon of Mantegnesque derivation – not uncommon in Bastiani's production even at a later date – the Tadini *Madonna* must be placed around 1480 (1983, p. 158). This dating is repeated by Russo, who affirms that the composition is deduced from a lost Giovanni Bellini's prototype, which has been replicated in numerous varied versions made by the master himself or by his workshop between the eighth and ninth decade of the 15th century. As examples, he mentions the panels showing the *Virgin and Child* in Sorlini Foundation (formerly in Contini-Bonacossi collection), in Museo di Castelvecchio (Verona. *Fig. 175*) and in The National Gallery (London. *Fig. 176*). For Russo, the affinities between Bastiani's *Madonna* with the first Bellini's outputs showing the scheme of the Virgin behind the parapet adoring the infant Jesus resting on a cushion would be indicative that Bastiani was a careful observer of Bellini's work, and that he embraced and applied this new paradigm soon after its introduction (2019, p. 176). The gesture of the infant Jesus in the Tadini painting, with one arm rested on his chest and the other stretched along his body, recalls more his pose in The National Gallery panel and that of another version of the same composition in the Harvard Art Museum (Cambridge, Massachusetts), both painted by Giovanni and his workshop in the last years of the eighth decade (Tempestini, 1992, p. 94; Lucco, 2019, p. 403 [cat. 60]. *Fig. 177*) or around 1480 (Humfrey, 2019, pp. 450-451 [cat. 87]), confirming the dating of 1480 suggested by Sgarbi and Russo.

Finally, a comparison between this *Madonna and Child* and another *Madonna and Child* very close in composition has been useful for Anna Tambini to place

the latter, of unknown location (the scholar only found a picture in the Rimini library photo archive), in Bastiani's circle, perhaps made in his workshop, between 1480 and 1490 (Tambini, 1998, p. 447). Russo attributed the Rimini *Madonna* to Bastiani himself, painted in around 1470, pointing out the artist's early adhesion to Giovanni Bellini's style (2019, p. 176).

Further bibliography:

Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 205-206, 274; Tempestini, 1992, p. 94; Humfrey, 2019, pp. 450-451 (cat. 87); Lucco, 2019, p. 403 (cat. 60).

Further images



Fig. 175. Giovanni Bellini, *Madonna Adoring the Sleeping Child*, 1475 c., Verona, Museo di Castelvecchio.



Fig. 176. Workshop of Giovanni Bellini, *Madonna Adoring the Child*, London, National Gallery.



Fig. 177. G. Bellini and workshop, *Madonna and Child (Madonna Winthrop)*, 1480 c., Cambridge (MA), Fogg Art Museum.









Number: AP17

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Dismembered and recomposed* p*olyptych*, from the left: *Saint Louis of Toulouse, Saint Mary Magdalene, Saint Francis, Saint Paul, Virgin and Child Enthroned, Saint Peter, Saint Anthony, Saint Mustiola, Saint Bernardino of Siena*

Location: Matera (Italy), Church of San Francesco d'Assisi

Date: 1472-73

Material and dimensions: wood panels, *Saint Francis, Saint Paul, Saint Peter, Saint Anthony*: 105 x 37 cm; *Saint Louis of Toulouse, Saint Mary Magdalene, Saint Mustiola, Saint Bernardino of Siena*: 58 x 37 cm; *Virgin and Child enthroned*: 110 x 52 cm

Inscription: "HVMILIAVIT · SEMETIPSVM · [factvs] · HOBEDIENS · VSQVE · AD · MORTEM", on the cartouche hold by Saint Paul.

Technique: tempera

Past exhibitions: *Matera. Piazza San Francesco d'Assisi. Origine ed evoluzione di uno spazio urbano* (Matera, 1986).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1928-29, Brizi (Arslan, 1928b, p.565-566; Galli, 1930, pp. 172-173); 1982, Giannitrapani (personal communication from the Superintendence of Basilicata).

Only two restoration treatments, both performed in the 20th century, are known. The first was carried out soon after the publication of his work about the polyptych by Arslan, as the art historian himself reported the bad conservation status of the complex: all the panels appear to have been cut and slightly shortened ("resecati") on the upper or lower parts (but not on the lateral margins); a long crack crossed the figure of the Virgin and the figure of Saint Mary Magdalene; the faces of the Virgin and Child were disfigured; the contours of the saints and the Virgin's throne were traced over with a thick black outline, probably made when the polyptych was mounted in the new frame; the tufts of grass and clovers at the base of the throne were covered by a new layer of gold. Pictures of the painting before the 1920s' restoration are published in Arslan's work entitled *Un politico di Bartolomeo Vivarini in Basilicata* (1928b). The restoration was recorded by Galli in "Bollettino d'Arte" and consisted in the removal of the panels from the frame, their cleaning, and the retouching of the paint layer. In 1982 the entire complex underwent a new treatment promoted by the Superintendece of Basilicata. Again, the artwork was in a poor condition: two battens attached on the back of the panels had led to an enlargement of the old cracks; the readability of the painting was limited due to the dirt deposited on the paint surface over more than fifty years and also to the oxidized varnish; the Virgin and the Child's faces were again disfigured, the former on the right eye and the left eyebrow, the latter on the right cheekbone (*Fig. 178*); the area of the background once covered by the arched frame was gilded with gold powder. During the restoration work the battens were removed, the wooden support consolidated, and the cracked panels glued. Old overpainting, including the gilded parts, have been removed and the *lacunae* have been stuccoed and retouched (*Fig. 181*). Extensive photography carried out before and during the 1982 restoration treatment gives information on Bastiani's artistic technique, as well as reporting the

conservation status of the panels. The outline of the figures is incised and then traced over with a strong dark contour, as it is evident from the images in raking light of Saint Mary Magdalene and Saint Bernardino of Siena (*Fig. 179*). A detailed hatching in the shadows is visible in some areas, as in Saint Mustiola's hand and in Saint Francis' habit (*Fig. 180*, *Fig. 183*). At the sides of the figures, close to the edges of the panels, a drawn schematic outline of the frame indicates the presence of capitals to support the arch where the Saints are contained (*Fig. 182*). Today the conservation status of the polyptych is fair.

Bibliography:

Arslan, 1928, pp. 85-86; Arslan, 1928b, pp. 565-572; Galli, 1930, pp. 172-173; Berenson, 1932, p. 601; Longhi, 1934, p. 97 (note 59); Van Marle, 1934, p. 601; Berenson, 1936, p. 517; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939-40, p. 35; Arcangeli, 1950, pp. 54-56; Berenson, 1957, p. 201; Berenson, 1958, p. 207; Prandi, 1964, p. 228; Arslan, 1965, p. 167; Rizzi, 1966, p. 206; Grelle Iusco, 1981, pp. 58, 247; Giannatiempo, 1986, pp. 285-296; Humfrey, 1990, p. 734; Boskovits, 1992, p. 27; Casu, 1996, pp. 67, 81 (note 43); Palumbo, 1999, pp. 233-236; Palumbo, 2002, pp. 174-179; Fossaluzza, 2004, p. 138; Gelao, 2013, pp. 199-202; Palumbo, 2018[2], pp. 196-201; Russo, 2018, 7-11, 14-16 (notes 26-27, 31); Russo, 2019, pp. 175-176 (note 33).

In 1928, Arslan was the first to publish information about this polyptych in a report on a research journey in Basilicata whose aim was the discovery of artworks "della più negletta tra le regioni d'Italia" (pp. 6, 85-86. Arslan referred to this region with the appellative "neglected" not in a negative way, but to underline the underdevelopment that characterized Basilicata region at that time). Arslan saw the polyptych on the choir (*cantoria*) balustrade in the Church of San Francesco d'Assisi, in Matera, where it is still on display today. The artwork is composed of nine panels disposed in horizontal arrangement on the front side of the 17th century choir of the church. The gilded wooden frame of baroque style, which is not the original one, as well as the current location and the peculiar disposition of the panels are the result of the late 17th

century refurbishment/renovation of the church. The altarpiece, as it is on display today, shows at the centre the *Virgin and Child enthroned*, on the left *Saint Paul and Saint Francis of Assisi* as full-length figures, and symmetrically on the right are *Saint Peter and Saint Anthony*, while on the far sides there are *Mary Magdalene and Saint Louis of Toulouse* on the left, and *Saint Mustiola* (once believed *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*. Russo, 2018, pp. 8-9) and *Saint Bernardino of Siena* on the right, all portrayed as half-length figures. All the panels have a flat golden background. An attempt to include the figures into a three-dimensional space is given by the marble floor where the full-length saints are standing with one foot projecting out of the base. Another element is the marble throne of the Virgin, even if not perfectly shown in correct perspective, where at the lower corner there are some tufts of clovers, symbol of the Trinity and Salvation (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 99-101). When Arcangeli discovered the panel with *Saint John the Baptist* in a private collection of Bologna, he suggested it could have been part of the altarpiece in San Francesco as it is quite close in style and dimension to the panels of Matera (1959, pp. 54-56). This hypothesis was reiterated by Giannatiempo (1986, p. 286), even though it cannot be confirmed, and other scholars did not consider this idea as relevant. Originally, the artwork was most likely designed/assembled as an ordinary 15th century Venetian polyptych, with the panels organized along two registers and encased in a richly carved and decorated frame, like those commonly produced in the Vivarini's workshop (regarding the structure of the altarpieces in Veneto in the second half of the 15th century, please refer to: Humfrey, 1993, pp. 163-193): the Virgin and Child enthroned at the centre, flanked by the full-length saints (unfortunately, we do not know which saint was placed closer to the Virgin and which saint was further away), the half-length saints on the upper level (for a picture with a reconstruction of the artwork, see: Giannatiempo, 1986, p. 287). The piece probably included a *Pietà* at top centre, as a coronation, but today this is lost. Galli's statement declaring the side panels were hinged and foldable to protect the main panel with the Virgin proved to be totally unfounded (1930, p. 172). In times past, the polyptych must have been placed on the main altar, in a

central and preeminent position, clearly visible from the nave, as it played a didactic function for the faithful, then was lost in favour of a scenographic effect of the complex (Giannatiempo, 1986, p. 286). Any document concerning the commission of the painting is missing (quite likely destroyed), thus it is impossible to determine with any certainty if the altarpiece was requested by the friars of the convent or if it was a donation, for instance by a nobleman, or a prelate. Grelle Iusco (1986, p. 58) suggested that Bastiani's altarpiece came to the church at a later date, just as Cima da Conegliano's polyptych arrived in the Chiesa Madre of Miglionico a century after its execution (Palumbo, 2002, pp. 184-19; Palumbo, 2018, pp. 206-215. Even if in recent years the story of the acquisition of the painting by Marcantonio Mazzone in the 18th century has been questioned. Gelao, 2003, pp. 268-269), and this would explain the lack of its influence or inspiration on the production of local artists, as well as the absence of archival sources. On the other hand, Palumbo (2002, p. 174; 2018, p. 196) believed the artwork was already *in loco* at the end of the 15th century and it was not mentioned in any later document, for instance inventories of the church, probably because the frame quickly degraded and later was destroyed, thus the need for a new location inside the church for the remaining panels. Indeed, as previously said, the current frame is not the original one and the baroque framework is so clearly distinguishable from the Renaissance painted panels for them not to be considered as part of a unique original complex (Prandi, 1964, p. 228).

The altarpiece was first assigned to Bartolomeo Vivarini by Arslan ("un'opera tra le più belle di Bartolomeo". 1928, pp. 85-85), who also suggested that the part with the *cartouche* showing the signature, quite common in Bartolomeo's paintings, was cut off when the panels had been shortened in the past (1928b, pp. 565-566). Gallo (1930, pp. 172-173) saw in the artwork "più apprezzabili mani", suggesting it was painted not only by Bartolomeo, but also by two unconvincing disciples ("scolaro alquanto sciatto" and "scolaro, forse umbro"). The name of Bartolomeo was then repeated by Berenson in his *Indexes* (in 1932 and 1936; and more dubitatively in 1957 and 1958). Today critics totally agree in assigning the polyptych to Lazzaro Bastiani. Longhi was the first to

suggest the name of Bastiani for this painting in a short but accurate note of his *Officina Ferrarese* (1934, p. 97 [note 59]). This attribution was accepted by all subsequent scholars, except Berenson and Prandi (Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939-40, p. 35; Arcangeli, 1950, pp. 54-56; Arslan, 1965, p. 127; Rizzi, 1966, p. 206; Grelle Iusco, 1981, pp. 58, 247; Giannatiempo, 1986, pp. 285-296; Humfrey, 1990, p. 734; Boskovits, 1992; p. 27; Casu, 1996, pp. 67, 81 [note 43]; Palumbo, 1999, pp. 233-235; Palumbo, 2002, pp. 174-179; Fossaluzza, 2004, p. 138; Gelao, 2013, pp. 199-202; Palumbo, 20182, pp. 196-201; Russo, 2018, pp. 67, 81 [note 43]). It must be mentioned that Pallucchini has not even mentioned the artwork in his monography on the Vivarinis as he took the attribution to Bastiani for granted. The only exception is Prandi who, ignoring Longhi's statement and agreeing with Arslan attribution, proposed the execution to be by Bartolomeo's workshop under the guidance of the master, as "i caratteri pittorici di Bartolomeo sono certo presenti […] ma appaiono come attenuati e talvolta incoerenti" (1964, p. 228).

Since the first publication, the altarpiece has been dated at the beginning of 1460s. Arslan, while assigning the painting to Bartolomeo Vivarini, took as *terminus post quem* Mantegna's *San Zeno altarpiece* and Bartolomeo's *Saint John of Capistrano*, both dated 1459 (1928, p. 566-567). Longhi, in attributing the work to Bastiani, included it in the early period of his career (1934, p. 97 [note 59]). This perspective was shared by Collobi, who talked about Bastiani's "prima maniera", and dated the polyptych at the beginning of 1460s when compared with Antonio and Bartolomeo's *Polyptych of Pausola*, *or Corridonia* (1939-40, p. 35), and by Giannatiempo, who placed the altarpiece in the same years, at the peak of Bastiani's early production ("all'apice della produzione giovanile"), as it represents "un superamento delle precedenti esperienze pittoriche ed uno dei più alti raggiungimenti della sua arte" (1986, p. 294). Giannatiempo discussed the artwork with reference to Antonio Vivarini for the saints' solemn expressions, Bartolomeo Vivarini for the bright colour, Mantegna's *Saint Luke polyptych* for the golden background that mitigates the monumentality of the figures', and Carlo Crivelli for the richly decorated fabrics and precious stones (1986, pp. 294-295). In Boskovits' opinion the altarpiece~~s~~

"offers a very delicate elaboration of Bellinian and Mantegnesque features, though not without an autonomous poetical vein of its own", even if showing tendencies that are reminiscent of the Vivarinis, specifically of the dismembered polyptych of Corridonia, datable to 1462, and a point of reference to help date the painting (1992, p. 27). For Casu the Matera artwork is "il capolavoro della prima maturità" of Bastiani and must be dated in the middle of 1460s, coming after the study of Giovanni Bellini's art in the triptychs for the Church of Santa Maria della Carità, with the rendering of the volume of the figures and for the soft draperies. Moreover, Casu also noticed an echo of Marco Zoppo's Venetian production, specifically in Saint Paul's hand placed on the hilt of the sword, reminiscent of Zoppo's Saint Paul in the polyptych for the Church of Santa Giustina dated 1468 (today this fragment is conserved in the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford), in turn recalling Mantegna's invention in the *Saint Luke polyptych* (1996, p. 67). In his contributions on the altarpiece, Palumbo (1999; 2002; 2018) claimed influences of Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini, as well as Crivelli, to date the complex generically to the 1460s. Russo (2018, p. 8) established the year of 1468 as *terminus post quem* to date the complex, as the volumetric definition of the figures and the light effects must be considered in relation to Giovanni Bellini's *polyptych of Saint Vincent Ferrer* in the Santi Giovanni e Paolo and the abovementioned polyptych of Santa Giustina by Zoppo. He assigned the Matera altarpiece a decade later than previously believed, specifically between 1471, the peak of Zoppo's production in Venice, and 1473, when Bartolomeo Vivarini executed his greater works (2018, p. 10; 2019, pp. 175-176 [note 33]). Furthermore, Russo recognized the young female saint holding the ring on the right not as Saint Catherine, but as Saint Mustiola (2018, pp. 8-9). This identification can be linked with the fact that during those years the cult of Saint Mustiola was increasing and between 1473 and 1474 the so-called "Guerra del Santo Anello" (the war of the sacred ring) was fought between Chiusi, where the ring of Saint Mustiola was previously conserved and was stolen in 1473, and Perugia, to which the ring was donated. The latter city enjoyed the support of Pope Sisto IV (Barini, 2005, pp. 32-34). The identification of this saint supports the

hypothesis of the Franciscan commission of the altarpiece since the exhibition of the relic related to the return of the pilgrims from Assisi, where they were gone for the indulgence of the Great Pardon of Assisi (Barini, 2005, p. 30) Further, it is also the case that in the 15th century Franciscanism spread widely in the Basilicata region and numerous new convents were founded. Indeed, between 1472 and 1484, after the general council of the Order of Friars Minor that took place in L'Aquila in 1472, the Franciscan convents, so far managed by the ecclesiastical provinces of Campania and Puglia (Matera was aggregated to this latter) had been unified under an independent ecclesiastical province of Basilicata (Bochicchio, 1999, pp. 205-208; Bochicchio, 1977, pp. 1-49). Furthermore, in 1472 Pope Sisto IV established the new archdiocese of Matera that previously was "aggregated" to the archdiocese of Acerenza (Pellettieri, 1999, pp. 23-24). In the 15th century, the monks of San Francesco in Matera received numerous donations by the rich families of the city and, thanks to this financial boost, refurbished the church (Altavilla, 1986, p. 223) and built the convent (Lafratta, 1986, p. 240). Thus, the commission of Bastiani's polyptych by the Franciscans of the Matera complex could be included in this framework and time frame, confirming the dating suggested by Russo. Finally, several altarpieces executed by Venetian artists had been requested by the Franciscans of the nearby Puglia region (Gelao, 2013, pp. 219-222), therefore, as already pointed out by Palumbo (1999, p. 233), it is likely that the monks of San Francesco also played a pivotal role in the commission of the artwork.

Further bibliography:

Bochicchio, 1977, pp. 1-49; Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 99-101; Altavilla, 1986, pp. 213-238; Lafratta, 1986, pp. 239-251; Humfrey, 1993, pp. 163-193; Bochicchio, 1999, pp. 205-212; Pellettieri, 1999, pp. 21-26; Palumbo, 2002, pp. 184-193; Barini, 2005, pp. 25-36; Gelao, 2013, pp. 219-224; Palumbo, 2018, pp. 206-215.

Further images[563]



*Fig. 178.*Detail of the Virgin and Child enthroned during the 1982 restoration treatment with the crack that runs longitudinally along the panel, crossing the figure of the Virgin.

[563] All the images concerning the restoration of the polyptych are property of the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio della Basilicata.

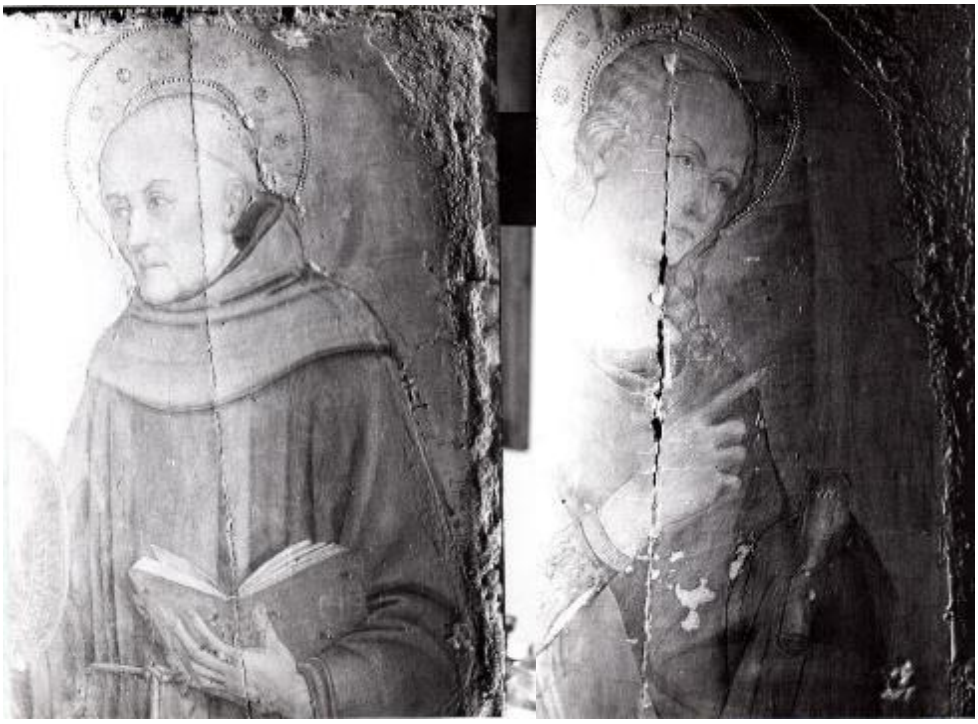


Fig. 179. Details of Saint Bernardine of Siena and Mary Magdalene seen in raking light during the 1982 restoration treatment, where we can appreciate the incised outlines of the figures.



Fig. 180. Detail of the hand of Saint Mustiola, where the incised outline of the hand and the fine hatching for the *chiaroscuro* definition are both clearly visible.



Fig. 181. Uncleaned area on Saint Peter's vestment during the 1982 cleaning process.



Fig. 182. Schematic outline of the frame in Saint Paul's panel.



Fig. 183. Saint Francis during the 1982 restoration treatment. The fine parallel hatching in the shadows and the schematic drawing of the frame are both clearly evident.





Number: AP18

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Jerome and a Nun*; *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*

Location: Milan (Italy), Museo Diocesano (from 2001, inv. MD 2000.018.044, MD 2000.018.045)

Date: 1460-1475

Material and dimensions: panel, 32,2 x 29,1 cm (*Saint Jerome and a nun*); 32,1x28,7 cm (*Saint Catherine of Alexandria*)

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Gambier-Parry collection (Highnam Court, Gloucester); Fondi oro in Alberto Crespi collection (until 2001).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

2003 (Conservation report); 2016, Centro di restauro Zanolini Paola (Restoration report).

There are no records of ancient restoration works. In 1987 Tognoli Bardin reported the thinning of the support on the *verso* and the presence of scratches on the golden surface of the *recto*. The scholar also pointed out that the Saint Jerome panel had been cut in the upper part, at some point in the past, noticing that originally in that area the artwork was probably covered by a frame and that the painted polylobate frame was a later addition, possibly added in the 18th century (Tognoli Bardin, 1987, p. 72). Infrared reflectography images acquired in 2004 seem to confirm this assumption as the brush strokes in the frame appear rough, and completely different from Bastiani's careful painting technique. In 2000 and 2011 catalogues, Casu underlined the darkening of the green pigments, that appeared brownish (Casu, 2000, p. 166; Casu, 2011, p. 68). The last restoration treatment was carried out in 2016. In that occasion two wooden slats previously applied on the back of the panel, probably in the early 2000's, as reported in the 2003 conservation record, were removed to allow for the natural movement of the panel. Indeed, these fixed slats deformed the panels, resulting in a double bending of the support, and caused several cracks both on the *recto* and on the *verso*. Nonetheless, the pigments layer proved to be stable. In both paintings the darkened varnish layer was removed

revealing the original colour (Restoration report, 2016). X-ray fluorescence analysis performed in 2004 on the golden sky confirmed that this layer is original, as the only elements detected were gold, iron, and lead particles (Poldi-Bonizzoni, 2009, p. 133).

Bibliography

Tognoli Bardin, 1987, pp. 72-76; Casu, 2000, pp. 166-169; P. Biscottini, N. Righi, *Museo Diocesano…*, 2005, pp. 152-153 (n. 32-33); *Il Museo Diocesano…*, 2006, p. 146; Poldi-Bonizzoni, 2009, pp. 133-135, 157; Casu, 2011, pp. 68-70; Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43).

The two small panels, both depicting a saint in a hilly landscape with a golden background, were certainly originally part of the same complex, probably a *paliotto* disposed on different levels/registers. *Saint Jerome* being truncated at the top, owing to the polylobed frame, had to be in the upper order/level, possibly constituting the cymatium, while *St. Catherine* had to occupy a lower position (Tognoli Bardin, 1987, p. 72). Boskovits recently identified another element which formed part of the altar frontal, namely the painting with the *Saints Cosmas and Damian*, property of the Kress collection and donated to the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1937 (Cat. AP10). The art historian also suggested that the complex was composed of side panels portraying different saints and a central panel with an episode from the life of Christ, hypothesizing that the central element could be the *Resurrection* ex Kleinberger Galleries. To support his proposal, he pointed the size of the *Resurrection*, being double that of the saint scenes, and to the trefoil frame in the upper area, which is similar to the polylobate frame in the Saint Jerome (Boskovits, 2009, pp. 13-14). This hypothesis has been discarded by Casu, as the sky of the *Resurrection* is not golden and the date of the painting arguably later (2011, p. 68).

The painting of *Saint Jerome* shows the Father of the Church in central position. He is standing, looking down at a worshipping nun that is kneeling in front of him, while next to him there is the tamed lion facing the viewer. The saint is

portrayed as an old man with a long grey beard, dressed in scarlet cardinal's garments, wearing the *galero* on his head and holding a scale model of a church (symbolising the Church) in his hands, according to an iconography widespread in Venice at that time (Casu, 2000, p. 168). The background shows a hill on each side, one with thick/bushy trees and the other with a manor/castle on top, while the plain is crossed by a river with shrubs along its embankment. It is interesting to note that the landscape perfectly replicates the symmetry of the *Saints Cosmas and Damian*, indicating the reuse of the same compositional scheme for the background. The painting with *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* depicts the standing saint clothed in a red and gold brocade dress, with a dark cloak on top. She is holding the palm in her right hand and is leaning against the spiked breaking wheel, the symbol of her martyrdom. The saint is placed in an open *loggia* supported by slender pillars with capitals decorated with acanthus leaves. The sunrays enter from the left side projecting the shadows on the ground and on the rear wall, suggesting the artist's effort in researching spatial depth in the area of the loggia. Although this element is "of great formal elegance" ("di grande eleganza formale"), there are also other elements that denote a less accurate execution, such as the bricks of the back wall (Tognoli-Bardin, 1987, p. 71). Behind the *loggia* a tall thin tree stands out against the golden background. Close to the tree's foliage some dark birds are flying, a further confirmation of the search for naturalism. High in the sky there is a kingfisher (or *alcione*), a bird whose nest was considered unsinkable and indestructible. For this peculiar characteristic, in Christian symbolism the bird was identified as Christ and the nest as his church (Charbonneau-Lassay, 1994, pp. 121-122). In the background the usual landscape with sloping hills is painted and there is a lake in the plain on the right.

The presence of the kneeling nun, who seems to be wearing a Dominican robe, caused Stefano Casu to suggest an original location of the *paliotto* in the only Dominican female monastery in Venice i.e., the *Corpus Domini* (Casu, 2000, p. 166). It is necessary to remark that Lazzaro Bastiani produced various artworks for the Corpus Domini church and monastery along his career.

Indeed, the nuns commissioned him to produce the altarpiece of the *Saint Veneranda*, considered one of the artist's masterpieces. Other Bastiani's works, however, dating from the 1470s, come from the monastery of Corpus Domini, such as the two big panels of the encounters between *Christ and the Samaritan woman* and *Christ and the Canaanite woman*, now in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, and the paintings with *Saint Jerome* and *Saint Martin of Tours*, today in Correr Museum. Convincing comparisons can be suggested between these artworks and the *Saint Jerome* and *Saint Catherine*: the use of the hilly landscape with the golden sky and the typology of the buildings with the sharp roofs of the Accademia pictures, the facial features of *Saint Jerome* and the model of the church of the Correr panel.

The two paintings entered the Museo Diocesano, in Milan, in 2001, as a gift by the lawyer Alberto Crespi. The panels came from the Gambier-Parry collection of Higham Court (whose story can be read in: Blunt, 1967, pp. 112-116). In 1987, Tognoli Bardin was the first to publish them with the correct attribution to Lazzaro Bastiani, a proposal previously advanced by Giuliano Briganti in a manuscript record (Casu, 2000, p. 168). Tognoli Bardin (1987), who believed the painter to be of remarkable quality, halfway between the last Jacopo Bellini and the Vivarinis' workshop ("un pittore di qualità notevole, partecipe di una cultura pittorica che si può definire a mezza strada tra l'ultimo Jacopo Bellini e la bottega Vivariniana", p. 72), supported her thesis by comparing the Milanese saints with the *Saint John the Baptist* in a private collection, presented for the first time in a contribution by Arcangeli in *Paragone* (1950, pp. 54-56), and the saints of Bastiani's polyptych in the Cathedral of San Francesco in Matera (Tognoli Bardin, 1987, p. 76). These references are undoubtedly correct, indeed the attribution to Bastiani has been confirmed in all following museum catalogues or guides (2000, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2011). As far as the dating of the paintings is concerned, Briganti suggested an interval between the 1470s and 1480s (Casu, 2000, p. 168), which was brought forward by about a decade by Tognoli Bardin ("Lazzaro Bastiani nell'attività prossima al settimo decennio", p. 76). Casu highlighted further similarities between the *Saint Jerome* in the Museo Diocesano and those of the museum in Monopoli and in

the Correr museum, both datable to circa 1475, as well as resemblances between the Saint Catherine and the Saint Louse of the *Matera polyptych*, thus proposing a dating towards the last years of the seventh decade (2000, p. 168; 2011, p. 68). Russo (2018) confirmed a dating between 1460 and 1465.

To conclude, a short additional remark concerning Bastiani's interest in and research into perspective, which is one on his peculiar characteristics. This interest had been evident in other works, such as in the *portico* painted in the *Supper at Emmaus* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, slightly later than the *Saint Catherine*'s *loggia*, and it carries on throughout his career, as in the building of the Frick *Adoration of the Magi*, to culminate in the shed of the Venice *Nativity*. I cannot find here, however, the same concern for luminous treatment Bastiani showed in the *paliotto* with *Stories from the Life of Christ* (Cat. AP07, AP23, AP59), therefore I would suggest a period of execution slightly earlier, perhaps in the first half of the 1460s, in agreement with Russo.

Furthery bibliography:

Arcangeli, 1950, pp. 54-56; A. Blunt, 1967, pp. 113-116, 119, 135, 141, 145, 146, 150, 153, 159-160, 167, 171; Charbonneau-Lassay, 1994, II, pp. 121-122.







Number: AP19

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Scenes from the Life of Saint Jerome: Saint Jerome Bringing the Lion into the Convent, Saint Jerome in the Desert, Funeral of Saint Jerome*

Location: Milan (Italy), Pinacoteca di Brera (Reg. Cron. 1218, 1219, 1220)

Date: 1485-1491 (1488)

Material and dimensions: poplar wood panel, 25 x 152 cm (*Saint Jerome Bringing the Lion into the Convent*: 25.5 x 50.5 cm; *Saint Jerome in the Desert*: 25.5 x 50.5 cm *Death of Saint Jerome*: 25 x 51 cm)

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Saint Jerome ChapelCathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, Asolo – Saint Jerome chapel.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Before 1990s; 1994, Studio di Restauro Pinin Brambilla Barcilon; 2017-2018, Carlotta Beccaria.

The predella was originally made of a single poplar wood panel. In the past it was cut in three pieces corresponding to the three episodes depicted. Before 1990s, the wooden support was made thinner and a framework with a vertical crossbeam was applied on the back. This led to much tension to the panels and caused wrinkles of the preparatory layers along the wood fibres, and flattened areas of fracturing on the whole painting surface. In 1990, indeed, Humfrey (p. 40) reported that the panels were in poor general condition, and extensive retouching were visible. The predella underwent a conservation procedure in 1994, which was limited to the cleaning and consolidation of the pigment layers. Finally, between 2017 and 2018 a major conservation treatment was carried out on the whole artwork, including both the support and the paint film. The wood panels showed several cracks and woodworm holes, visible both on the recto and on the verso. The conservation procedure of the support consisted in replacing the old, fixed framework with a new one that allows the natural expansion and contraction of the wood owing to fluctuations in temperature and humidity and eradicating the insect infestation. The condition of the paint layers was extensively influenced by the structural issue. Cracking, flacking, and paint loss were visible on the surface of the three scenes. Old, stuccoed areas and paint integrations were present, as well. Where the original pigment film was well preserved, however, it showed compact brushstrokes and intense colour. The superficial varnish film was matted and

oxidised, causing a general yellowish appearance of the paintings. The conservation treatment included the cleaning and consolidation of the painting layers and the inpainting of the damaged areas.

Bibliography:

Malaguzzi-Valeri, 1903, p. 34; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 19; Ricci, 1907, p. 269, ill. pp. 266-267; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 278; Malaguzzi-Valeri, 1908, p. 128; Borenius, 1912, I, pp. 217-218 (note 2); *Elenco…*, 1913, p. 36 (n. 221); A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 386-387; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Fogolari, 1932, p. 282; Berenson, 1936, p. 54; Fiocco, 1933, p. 33; Van Marle, 1936, pp. 174-175; Gamba, 1937, pp. 57-58; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 45 (note 31); Morassi, 1942[3], p. 29 (n. 221); Galetti-Camesca, 1950, p. 245; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 219; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Comacchio, 1976, pp. 57-58; *Pinacoteca…*, 1977, p. 29; Humfrey, 1990, p. 40; Humfrey, 1990, p. 40; Sartor, 1997, pp. 46-48; *Pinacoteca…*, Milano, 2010, p. 72 (n. 93); Lauber, 2012, p. 134; Tempestini, 2021, p. 256 (n. 1332).

These three small panels with *Scenes from the Life of Saint Jerome* originally constituted the *predella* of the Saint Jerome altarpiece in the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta in Asolo. As part of the Asolo *pala*, the predella must have been painted in the same period, between 1484 and 1491. The panels were sold to the Pinacoteca di Brera, in Milan, by Giuseppe Colbertaldo in 1900 (Malaguzzi-Valeri, 1908, p. 128 [n. 221]). This contradicts Van Marle's statement suggesting that the predella was part of a lost artwork, probably executed for the Scuola di San Girolamo in early 1470's (Van Marle, 1936, pp. 174-175).

Each *predella* panel represents a scene of the life of Saint Jerome. The first one shows the episode of *Saint Jerome bringing the lion into the convent*, as reported in the *Legenda Aurea* by Jacopo da Varagine (Da Varazze, 1995, p. 807). The moment when the wounded lion arrives limping at the convent where Saint Jerome and the other monks lived is depicted. The monks, frightened at the sight of the beast, flee in fear, some of them seeking shelter under a porch/*portico*, others run in the opposite direction, one hiding behind

a palm tree trunk. Unlike the other brothers, Saint Jerome is not scared by the poor lion and takes care of its injured paw in front of the monastery's church. The scene is set in the convent courtyard, which is enclosed by a wall, but with an open entrance to the outside. The manner in which the monks flee was described as "disorganized and unintegrated" by Patricia Fortini Brown, lacking that concerted movement present in Carpaccio's later *telero* of the same subject (1502 c.) in Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, while the main moment – Saint Jerome removing the thorn from the lion's paw – is relegated in rear position (Fortini-Brown, 1988, pp. 190-191). According to the legend, the convent was in Bethlehem, which is recalled by the exotic detail of the palm trees, but the presence of a typical Venetian chimney sets the episode in 15th century Venice. In the background there is a hilly landscape with a fortress on top, typical in Bastiani's paintings. The cave on the left could be the lion's lair, as in front of the entrance seems to be some red drops of blood. On top of the cave a fig tree bears fruit, not uncommon in representations of Saint Jerome in the wilderness. Fogolari and Gamba believed that the structure was realised following Alvise Vivarini's composition for the now lost *telero* of same subject in the Scuola di San Girolamo. In addition, in Gamba's opinion, the cave could integrate an interruption to the original canvas, maybe due to a door (Fogolari, 1932, p. 282; Gamba, 1937, p. 58). This suggestion was proved wrong, as the general composition of Vivarini's painting, known through a small engraving of 1823 by Séroux d'Agincourt (Steer, 1982, pp. 112, 174; Humfrey, 1985, p. 44), was different. Moreover, Humfrey believes Bastiani's *predella* is earlier than Vivarini's canvas (painted between 1480-1490, see Humfrey, 1985, p. 44; Humfrey, 1991, p. 67), adding a further reason to reject the hypothesis of Alvise's influence on Bastiani (Humfrey, 1990, p. 40). However, if the *telero* was somewhat earlier in time than Bastiani's predella (Fortini Brown, 1986, p. 270-271), it could have inspired the movements of the fleeing monks.

The next panel depicts the story of the penitent *Saint Jerome in the desert*. In a barren and rocky landscape (see the bare trees) there is Saint Jerome kneeling in front of a crucifix with an open book before him to show that his eremitic life was also characterized by an intense study of the religious texts. Behind

him there is the entrance of the cave, his refuge, and before the entrance a closed book is placed on a rock. The old, bearded Saint Jerome, dressed in a white tunic, is portrayed holding a stone in his hand. He is about to beat his chest with the stone, in act of penitence. On the left, the meek lion quietly observes the scene. In the background, separated by a lake or the sea, there is a hilly landscape with shrublike trees, and a fortified citadel overlooking the basin. On the right, a monk reading a book stands on a balcony, facing the sea. This figure is interpreted as "figura di genere" with episodic meaning by Gamba (1937, p. 58), recalling that seated reading monk in the *Communion* episode at the Gallerie dell'Accademia. Again, Fogolari considered the composition being based upon the *teleri* of the Scuola di San Girolamo, in this case following Giovanni Bellini's canvases, which that might have inspired the figure of the penitent Saint Jerome and the distant landscape (Fogolari, 1932, p. 282). In this case it is not possible confirm or discard Fogolari's statement since the canvas is lost and the composition unknown, however Giovanni's, as well as Jacopo's, pictures of *Saint Jerome in the wilderness* or *the penitent Saint Jerome* might have influenced Bastiani's outcome.

The last episode portrays the *Death of Saint Jerome*. The scene is set in an interior, probably a room of the monastery, open on the left towards the cloister and the church of the convent. A priest is holding the funeral mass, while behind him there are some clerics in procession carrying the thurible, the incense boat, the cross and candles for the ceremony. The deceased Saint Jerome, in central position, lies on the floor, in front of a simple altar enriched with an altarpiece showing the Virgin and Child on a gold background and the dead Christ on top. All around, the monks mourn the loss of their beloved Jerome. On the lower left corner, the lion in grief stares at the scene. Although slightly simplified, the general composition of this episode is arranged on the basis of Bastiani's *telero* of the same subject in the Scuola di San Girolamo. Even the fresco of the *Crucifixion with the Virgin Mary and Saint John* on the rear wall evokes, in simpler forms, the one portrayed in the canvas, as well as the lake landscape in the background.

As the main panel of the altarpiece, even the *predella* has been variously attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani, or to his workshop (L. Venturi, 1907, p. 278), or to his son Prè Sebastiano Bastiani (Fogolari, 1932, pp. 279-282; Comacchio, 1976, p. 49). Furthermore, it was suggested that the composition of the episodes portrayed in the *predella* were replicas of Bastiani's larger paintings (L. Venturi, 1907, p. 278), or copies derived from the compositional models of the Saint Jerome cycle at the Scuola di San Girolamo (Fogolari, 1932, p. 282), or even copies of Giovanni Bellini's examples (Gamba, 1937, p. 58). Most authors agree, however, to assigning the predella to Lazzaro Bastiani, which is the same attribution given in the Pinacoteca di Brera catalogues when the panels entered its collection (Malaguzzi-Valeri, 1903; Malaguzzi-Valeri, 1908; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 19; Borenius, 1912; A. Venturi, 1915; Berenson, 1932; Berenson, 1936; Van Marle, 1936; Gamba, 1937; Morassi, 1942[3];Galetti-Camesca, 1950; Arslan, 1965; Heinemann, 1962; Matalon, 1977; Humfrey, 1990; Sartor, 1997).

Further references:

Casanova, 1965, coll. 1109-1137; Steer, 1982, pp. 112, 174; Humfrey, 1985, pp. 41-46; Fortini-Brown, 1988, pp. 190-191, 270-271; Humfrey, 1991, p. 67; Da Varazze, ed. cons. 1995, pp. 805-810.



Number: AP20

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saint Mark, Saint Theodor, and Angels*

Location: Milan (Italy), Pinacoteca di Brera, on loan in Conservatorio "Giuseppe Verdi" (from 1959 – Reg. Cron. 5963)

Date: 1504 c.

Material and dimensions: Canvas, 94 x 196 cm

Inscription: "Toma Mocenigo m[…]o Scr[…]o", on the verso (*telaio*) of the painting.

Technique: tempera

Provenance: First room of the Procuratia de Supra, Venice (until 1808 c.); Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan (1808-1847); Garegnano Charthouse, Milan (1847-1905); Depository of the Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan (1905-1959).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: February – April 1959, Ottemi Della Rotta.

At the end of the 19th century, Carotti (1896) reported the poor condition of the painting, advising that it had been shortened at the top and at the bottom, and that its overall appearance was dull and dark, with numerous repainted areas, especially the figure of Saint Mark, which appeared to have been completely repainted probably at the end of the 16th century (Humfrey, 1990). The ruined state of the canvas was then also underlined by Collobi (1939), Berenson (1957, 1958) Humfrey (1990). Malaguzzi Valeri (1909) pointed out

that for preservation reasons the work was moved from the Charterhouse of Garegnano and relocated in the Brera depository. A conservation treatment (cleaning and removal of old retouching) was carried out by Ottemi Della Rotta before the canvas was relocated in the Conservatorio "Giuseppe Verdi" in 1959. In 1985, after an inspection of the artwork, the official of the Soprintendenza reported that the condition of the picture was fair. Today the painting is still in a badly conserved status, with cracking and flacking of the paint layer and loss of material. In certain areas the reduced paint layer allows the preparatory ground and the underdrawing to show through. The old superficial varnish is oxidized and darkened.

Bibliography:

Boschini, 1664 p. 96 (San Marco); Boschini, 1674, p. 74 (San Marco); Zanetti, 1733, p. 157; Zanetti, 1771, p. 78; Carotti, 1896, p. 23; Malaguzzi Valeri, 1909, p. 143; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 190 (note 2); Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 48 (note 42); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Arslan, 1965, p. 167; Humfrey, 1990, pp. 41-42; Sartor, 1997, p. 38; Russo, 2019, p. 165 (note 3).

The canvas portrays the Madonna and Child enthroned, flanked by six angels playing Renaissance instruments (lutes, vielle, harp and flutes) and adored by six angels hovering in mid-air. The Virgin offers what is probably a peach to the naked infant Jesus who sits upon her left thigh/leg. At the extremities, Saint Mark, holding the Book of Gospels, and Saint Theodore, in military dress with the spear, witness the scene. On the Virgin's throne, two vessels containing pears and two small peach trees at the throne's sides enrich the composition and are symbols of the Virgin Mary and of the Child. Moreover, the peach sometimes replaces the apple as symbol of Salvation (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 294-299). In the distance is depicted a mountainous landscape as an uninterrupted line with no specific characterization, which is typical of Bastiani late works.

Boschini first mentioned “un quadro con Maria il Bambino, molti Angeli, S. Marco e San Teodoro” which was “dalla parte della porta” of the first room of the *Procuratia de Supra*, ascribing it to Vincenzo Catena (1664; 1674). Zanetti, confirming Vincenzo Catena as the artist who made this work (1733), later reported the painting was in the same room, but apparently relocated “sopra la porta internamente” (1771). After the Napoleonic suppressions, the artwork, entered in the Soprintendenza Generale dei Beni della Corona in 1808, was deposited at the Garegnano Charterhouse (*Certosa di Garegnano*) in Milan, where it was displayed as *paliotto* of the main altar from 1847 until 1905 (Carotti, 1896; Malaguzzi Valeri, 1909; Humfrey, 1990). Carotti (1896) suggested that once in Garegnano the canvas was probably shortened at the top and at the bottom, as the cut arch of the throne might indicate, to be adapted in size for its use as an altar frontal (this hypothesis was echoed by Collobi, 1939). Once it had been retrieved from Garegnano, the painting was conserved in the Brera deposit (Malaguzzi Valeri, 1909), and finally put in storage at the Conservatorio “Giuseppe Verdi” in Milan (Humfrey, 1990), where it is still located today.

As previously stated, both Boschini and Zanetti assigned the work to Vincenzo Catena, an attribution that was then maintained in the early Brera catalogues and further confirmed by Carotti (1896). At the beginning of the 20th century Malaguzzi Valeri (1909) described it more generally as being of the Veronese School. The ascription to Bastiani was advanced for the first time, albeit with a question mark, by Berenson in his 1932 *Indexes* (p. 63), although he mistakenly identifies Saint Theodore as Saint George. From that moment onwards, however, the ascription to Bastiani’s corpus has never been questioned. Collobi (1939) highlighted the affinities in composition and craftmanship (“assonnate e rigide figure entro ambienti tipicamente bastianeschi”) with the Zara altarpiece, the Murano *lunette*, the organ shutters in Padua and the Bergamo *Coronation*, thus implicitly suggesting a dating between 1484 and 1490 (it must be said that Collobi too erroneously believed the saints were Saint Michael and Saint Peter). Arslan dated the execution as being 1470 (1965, p. 167). Carotti recorded an inscription on the support (*telaio*) of the painting

which read "Toma Mocenigo m[…]o Scr[…]o", which caused Humfrey to link the commission of this canvas to the election of Tommaso Mocenigo as *Procuratore de Ultra* in 1504 (Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 303; Litta, 1819, Tav. V [Mocenigo di Venezia]. *Fig. 184*) and would also explain its original location in the *Procuratie* (Humfrey, 1990, pp. 41-42).[564] This interpretation and this dating were then accepted by Sartor (1997), and Russo (2019). Agreeing with Humfrey in considering the realisation of this painting in 1504, or slightly later, would mean not only adding another fixed date in Bastiani's catalogue, but also provide a further yardstick against which to compare and date Bastiani's later works.

The prestigious commission, not the first by the Procurators of Saint Mark (Sartor, 1997, p. 38), would also legitimize the presence of Saint Theodore and Saint Mark, the two patron saints of Venice. Moreover, in this context the peaches and the pears are not only symbols linked with the Virgin and Child but may also refer to the Saints' virtues (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 295, 298). Finally, at least which regard to the composition, with the Madonna and Child enthroned flanked by the saints, Bastiani might have taken inspiration from doges' votive paintings displayed in the Senate or in Doge's Palace, which were traditionally requested by the Doge in thanks for achieving his office. Notable examples, although earlier than Bastiani's canvas, are Giovanni Bellini's votive *telero* for Agostino Barbarigo (1488) in the Church of San Pietro Martire of Murano (Humfrey, 2019, pp. 477-479 [cat. 115]), and Gentile and Giovanni Bellini's *Madonna and Child enthroned, with Saints Christopher and John the Baptist, and Doge Giovanni Mocenigo* (1478-80), now in The National Gallery, London (Lucco, 2019, pp. 417-419 [cat. 71]).

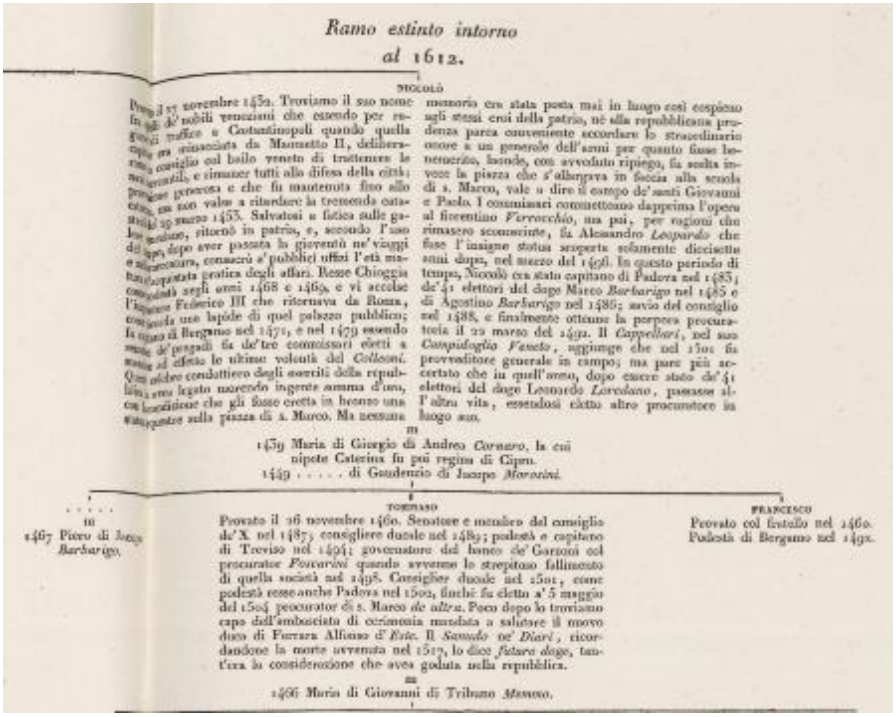
Further bibliography

Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 303; P. Litta, *Famiglie celebri di Italia, IV*, Presso Paolo Emilio Giusti, Venezia, 1819, Tav. V (Mocenigo di Venezia); Levi D'Ancona,

[564] Unfortunately, I have not had the chance to personally check the inscription.

1977, pp. 294-299; Humfrey, 2019, pp. 477-479 (cat. 115); Lucco, 2019, pp. 417-419 (cat. 71).

Further images



Ramo estinto intorno al 1612.

NICOLÒ

Prima il 27 novembre 1432. Troviamo il suo nome fra gli 80 nobili veneziani che essendo per recarsi traffico a Costantinopoli quando quella capitale era minacciata da Maometto II, deliberarono in consiglio col bailo veneto di trattenere le navi armate, e rimanere tutti alla difesa della città; provvisione generosa e che fu mantenuta fino allo estremo, ma non valse a ritardare la tremenda catastrofe, 29 marzo 1453. Salvatosi a fatica sulle galere [illegible], ritornò in patria, e, secondo l'uso [illegible] dopo aver passata la gioventù ne' viaggi del [illegible], consacrò a' pubblici uffizi l'età matura e [illegible] esperta pratica degli affari. Resse Chioggia [illegible] negli anni 1468 e 1469, e vi accolse [illegible] Federico III che ritornava da Roma, [illegible] una lapide di quel palazzo pubblico; [illegible] il Bergamo nel 1471, e nel 1479 essendo [illegible] de' provedi fra de' tre commissari eletti a [illegible] al difetto le ultime volontà del *Colleoni*. Quel celebre condottiero degli eserciti della repubblica, [illegible] legato morendo ingente somma d'oro, [illegible] con [illegible] che gli fosse eretta in bronzo una [illegible] sulla piazza di s. Marco. Ma nessuna memoria era stata posta mai in luogo così cospicuo agli stessi eroi della patria, nè alla repubblicana prudenza parea conveniente accordare lo straordinario onore a un generale dell'armi per quanto fosse benemerito, laonde, con avveduto ripiego, fu scelta invece la piazza che s'albergava in faccia alla scuola di s. Marco, vale a dire il campo de' santi Giovanni e Paolo. I commissari commettevano dapprima l'opera al fiorentino *Verrocchio*, ma poi, per ragioni che rimasero sconosciute, fu Alessandro *Leopardo* che fece l'insigne statua scoperta solamente diciassette anni dopo, nel marzo del 1496. In questo periodo di tempo, Niccolò era stato capitano di Padova nel 1483; de' 41 elettori del doge Marco *Barbarigo* nel 1485 e di Agostino *Barbarigo* nel 1486; savio del consiglio nel 1488, e finalmente ottenne la perpetua procuratoria il 22 marzo del 1492. Il *Cappellari*, nel suo *Campidoglio Veneto*, aggiunge che nel 1501 fu provveditore generale in campo; ma pare più accertato che in quell'anno, dopo essere stato de' 41 elettori del doge Leonardo *Loredano*, passasse all'altra vita, essendosi tratto altro procuratore in luogo suo.

m

1459 Maria di Giorgio di Andrea *Cornaro*, la cui nipote Caterina fu poi regina di Cipro.
1449 . . . . . di Gaudenzio di Iacopo *Morosini*.

TOMMASO

Provato il 26 novembre 1460. Senatore e membro del consiglio de' X. nel 1487; consigliere ducale nel 1489; podestà e capitano di Treviso nel 1494; governatore del banco de' Garzoni col procurator *Foscarini* quando avvenne lo strepitoso fallimento di quella società nel 1498. Consigliere ducale nel 1501; come podestà resse anche Padova nel 1502, finchè fu eletto a' 5 maggio del 1504 procurator di s. Marco *de ultra*. Poco dopo lo troviamo capo dell'ambasciata di cerimonia mandata a salutare il nuovo duca di Ferrara Alfonso d' *Este*. Il *Sanudo* ne' *Diarii*, ricordandone la morte avvenuta nel 1517, lo dice *fidato doge*, tant'era la considerazione che avea goduta nella repubblica.

m

1496 Maria di Giovanni di Tribuno *Memmo*.

. . . . .
m
1467 Piero di Iacopo *Barbarigo*.

FRANCESCO

Provato col fratello nel 1460. Podestà di Bergamo nel 1492.

Fig. 184. P. Litta, *Famiglie celebri di Italia, IV*, Presso Paolo Emilio Giusti, Venezia, 1819, Tav. V (Mocenigo di Venezia).



Number: AP21

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child crowned by two angels, with musical angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father*

Location: Milan (Italy), Poldi Pezzoli Museum (inv. n. 1583/619)

Date: 1471 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 79.7 x 55.4 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli private collection, Milan (before 1862 [perhaps before 1856]).

Past exhibitions: *L'antico tessuto d'arte italiano nella mostra del tessile nazionale* (Roma, 1937-38); *Botticelli to Titian. Two centuries of Italian masterpieces* (Szépmúvészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 2009-2010); *Giovanni Bellini dall'icona alla storia* (Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milano, 11th September 2012 – 4th March 2013).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1862, Giuseppe Molteni (Russolo 1955, p. 118; *Gian Giacomo…*, 1979, p. 69 [note 163]; *Giuseppe Molteni…*, 2000, p. 243 [n. 22]); 2001, Anna Bianchini and Daniela Bucher (Vinco, 2012, p. 74).

The painting was restored by Giuseppe Molteni in 1862, when it was in Count Poldi Pezzoli's private collection. The expensive cost of the treatment is indicative of the bad conservation state of the panel at that time. Following the last restoration procedure, carried out in 2001, today the artwork is in good preservation state.

Bibliography:

Bertini, 1881, p. 39 (n. 147); Molinier, 1889, p. 319; *Museo artistico…*, 1902, p. 73 (n. 619); L. Venturi, 1907, p. 178; A. Venturi, 1914, VII/III, p. 338, fig. 262; Testi, 1915, II, pp. 407, 502, 503 (fig.); Costantini, 1921, p. 108; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 126, 134; Morassi, 1932, p. 26 (n. 619); Morassi, 1936, p. ; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, pp. 96 (fig.), 97-98; Collobi, 1939, pp. 36 (note 4), 38, notes, 8, 10; Becherucci, 1942-1943, p. 23 (note 21); *Il Museo…*, 1951, p. 31; *Il Museo…*, 1952, p. 42 (n. 619); Coletti, 1953, p. XLIX; Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 163; Russoli, 1955, pp. 118-119; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 205; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 73 (n. 259); De Bosque, 1965, p. 326, fig. p. 324; Waterhouse, 1967, p. 324 (n. 164); *Il Museo…*, 1972, p. 243; *Il Museo…*, 1978, p. 57; *Gian Giacomo…*, 1979, p. 69 (note 163); Natale, 1982, p. 120 (n. 110); Casu, 1996, pp. 69, 83-84 (note 56); *Giuseppe Molteni…*, 2000, pp. 241, 243 (n. 22); Minardi, 2009, pp. 210-211 (n. 42); Vinco, 2012, pp. 75-77 (n. 9); Russo, 2018, pp. 6, 13-14 (note 20), 17 (note 43); Russo, 2019, p. 175, note 32.

Purchased by Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli for his private collection, this painting was included in the very first collection of the museum that opened in 1881 (Bertini, 1881, p. 39 [n. 147]). We do not know when Poldi Pezzoli acquired the panel, however we have some suggestions from different sources. For instance, a list concerning the cost of each restoration carried out by the painter and restorer Giuseppe Molteni on paintings belonging to Count Poldi Pezzoli reports that the latter paid for the work in two instalments, for a total amount of 1400 francs, in 1862 (2/1/1862 and 1/4/1862). Clearly, this payment is a terminus *ante quem* for the purchase of the artwork (*Giuseppe Molteni…*, 2000, pp. 241, 243 [n. 22]). Further evidence may be deduced from Otto Mündler's *Travel Diaries*, as Russo has suggested (2018, p. 14 [note 20]). On the 29th of February 1856, Mündler, along with Molteni and Baslini, visited a collection of pictures in a Milanese private house near Brera, where he saw a *Madonna and Child* that he described as follow: "Madonna with Child, above God the father with angels – heads & hands painted about 1490, draperies and hair made of silk, with gold-thread, pearl, precious stones, emails etc." (Togneri Dowd-Jayne Anderson, 1985, p. 101). If this detailed observation referred to our *Madonna*, as it seems it might, then the year 1956 would be another terminus *ante quem* to date the acquisition of the picture by Count Poldi Pezzoli. Unfortunately, this information cannot be confirmed and must remain only a tantalizing suggestion.

When the museum opened to the public, the painting was believed to be Alvise Vivarini's work, the same attribution it had when it was in Poldi Pezzoli's private collection (Bertini, 1881, p. 39 [n. 147]; Molinier, 1889, p. 319). In 1902 Museum Catalogue it is presented simply as being from the "School of Murano" (p. 73 [n. 619]), an attribution repeated until the 1930s (Costantini, 1921, p. 108; Morassi, 1932, p. 26 [n. 619]). Lionello Venturi believed it was the output of a follower of Antonio Vivarini influenced to a certain extent also by Bartolomeo Vivarini (1907, p. 178), a theory–contradicted by Testi, who assigned it to a follower/imitator of Bartolomeo who still followed the style of Antonio (1915, pp. 407, 502), while Adolfo Venturi gave it to a skilled follower of Bartolomeo Vivarini; one able to 'keep up with' Bartolomeo's Mantegnesque

phase (1914, p. 338). The attribution to Bastiani was suggested for the first time by Vavalà in her fundamental contribution on Bastiani's *Madonnas*. The art historian grouped this *Madonna* with the Frick *Adoration* and the *Madonna of Humility* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia, assigning them to an early phase of Bastiani career when he was under direct influence of Bartolomeo Vivarini (1931, pp. 126, 134). This ascription was accepted by Collobi, who placed the panel in a Paduan-Mantegnesque phase (shortly after 1460, in which Bastiani experiments with new compositions based on decorative elements derived from Mantegna (1939, 36 [note 4], 38, notes 8, 10). Even though the attribution of this work to Bastiani became gradually predominant among scholars and today this belief is well-established, some art historians have still supported the ascription of a painter active in the Vivarinesque circle. Van Marle suggested the name of Bartolomeo Vivarini himself as the artist (1936, pp. 97-98), Coletti believed the artist was a follower of Bartolomeo Vivarini working at the end of the century, between Antonio da Negroponte and Quirizio da Murano (1953, p. XLIX), Moschini-Marconi was convinced the painter was the same follower of Bartolomeo Vivarini that executed the Frick *Adoration*, the Eremitani *Madonna* and the Gallerie dell'Accademia *Madonna of Humility*, while Berenson included the picture among those anonymous artworks of the Venetian School between Bartolomeo Vivarini and Giovanni Bellini (1957, p. 205). Natale pointed out that this *Madonna* is a typical example of Bastiani's production that shares typological, stylistic, and graphic analogies with other paintings today that are generally assigned to Bastiani, such as the abovementioned *Adoration* and *Madonna of Humility*. He also noticed affinities with Bartolomeo Vivarini's artworks of 1470s, such as the *Madonna and Child* once in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (sold by Sotheby's in 2013. New York, Sotheby's, *Old master paintings*, 31/1/2013, lot. 2), dated 1472, that The National Gallery of Art in Washington, dated 1475 c., and the triptych in San Giovanni in Bragora, dated 1478. Given these comparisons Natale suggested the execution of the Poldi Pezzoli *Madonna* to be around 1475 (1982, p. 120 [n. 110]). Casu underlined that from mid-1460s Bastiani developed specific typological characters and compositional ideas the origin of

which should be identified with the *Madonna and Child* in Berlin Gemäldegalerie, as the infant Jesus is seen foreshortened from below and the angels are described with anatomical precision. Therefore, Casu argued, this Milanese panel might have been realised between the end of the 1460s and around 1475, and reveals Bastiani's early mature manner (1996, p. 84 [note 56]). In recent years, besides the evident Paduan-Mantegnesque derivation of the compositional elements (the festoon, the cloth of honour from Squarcione, the checkered floor from Mantegna, the "somewhat theatrical accentuation of the trumpeting angels" from Zoppo's Dardani *Madonna*), scholars have also pointed out the impact of Giovanni Bellini's distinctive use of light. In this work this can be seen in the shine on the precious pearls and gemstones, and the light shed on the velvet brocade of the Virgin's cloak, on the infant Jesus and in the hovering angels' golden and silver garments (Minardi, 2009, p. 210; Vinco, 2012, pp. 74-77). If for Vinco the strong Squarcionesque element ("forte componente squarcionesca") is predominant here, however, and lead to his belief that the painting can be dated slightly before 1470, for Russo the treatment of light to characterise different materials and to obtain various chromatic effects, as well as the spatial construction derived from Zoppo's graphic production, prevail over the Squarcionesque component ("gli effetti di differenziazione materica delle superfici e il commento cromatico delle luce sulla pelle della cose, calati entro schematiche ma lucide maglie spaziali [da leggere in relazione alla produzione grafica dello Zoppo], prevalgono sulla 'componente squarcionesca'". 2018, pp. 13-14 [note 20]). Therefore, Russo dated the Poldi Pezzoli Madonna around 1471 (slightly before the Frick *Adoration*), which corresponds to the apogee of Marco Zoppo in Venice (when he executed his Pesaro altarpiece), and the most fruitful moment of his artistic relationship with Giovanni Bellini (Russo, 2019, p. 175 [note 32]). I believe that Russo's suggestions on virtuosity of light effects should be read from an evolutive perspective of Bastiani's production, and the Paduan aspect should be considered a legacy from his development during a period of personal artistic advancement. Hence, I feel believe that this painting should be dated as

being from the early 1470s, in accordance with Russo's estimation for an approximation around 1471.

Finally, as already noticed by Casu and remarked upon by Vinco and Russo, a similar compositional idea had been repeated in the old-fashioned *Madonna of humility* formerly in D'Annunzio collection in Settignano (Collobi, 1939, p. 46 [around 1480]; New York, Sotheby's, *Old master paintings*, 2/6/1989, lot. 10) and had been rearranged in the *Mystical marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria* in Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, UK (Waterhouse assigned the Waddesdon picture to the same artist as that of the Poldi Pezzoli artwork, although he generically regarded it as from the "Venetian School 1470 c.". 1967, p. 324 [n. 164]), meaning that in Bastiani's productive workshop established cartoons and models could also be reused (Casu, 1996, p. 69, 83-84 [note 56]; Russo, 12019, p. 175).

Further bibliography:

Togneri Dowd-Jayne Anderson, 1985, p. 101; New York, Sotheby's, *Old master paintings*, 2/6/1989, lot. 10.



Number: AP22

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Pietà* or *Lamentation over the dead Christ*

Location: Milan (Italy), Museo Poldi Pezzoli (inv. n. 1586/622)

Date: 1470 c.

Material and dimensions: parchment glued on wood panel, 12.9 x 8 cm

Inscription: "Questa è opera di Andrea Mantegna preziosissima", old ink inscription added on the verso of the panel.

Technique: tempera

Provenance: perhaps Giuseppe Baslini private collection (before 1855); Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli private collection (from 1856).
Past exhibitions: *Giovanni Bellini dall'icona alla storia* (Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milano, 11th September 2012 – 4th March 2013).
Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:
Two woodworm holes are visible in Saint John's hair and near the cross. IRR reveals an integrated *lacuna* on the Virgin's mantle, slightly below Christ's right leg. Today the state of preservation of the painting is fair.

Bibliography:
Bertini, 1881, p. 20 (n. 22); Molinier, 1889, p. 319; *Museo artistico…*, 1902, p. 73 (n. 622); Berenson, 1907, p. 196; Bernath, 1912, p. 21; Morassi, 1932, p. 26 (n. 622); Longhi, 1934, p. 98 (note 59); Collobi, 1939, pp. 38-39, 50; Tietze-Tietze-Conrat, 1944, p. 60 (n. A 251); *Il Museo…*, 1951, p. 31; *Il Museo…*, 1952, p. 42 (n. 622); Russoli, 1955, pp. 119-120; Berenson, 1957, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, p. 26; *Il Museo Civico…*, 1957, p. 23; *Il Museo…*, 1972, p. 243; *Il Museo…*, 1978, p. 57; *Gian Giacomo…*, 1979, p. 65 (note 142); Natale, 1982, p. 120 (n. 109); Volpe, 1983, p. 56 (n. 36); Boskovits, 1992, p. 24; Casu, 1996, pp. 66, 78 (note 38); Vinco, 2012, pp. 71-73; Russo, 2018, pp. 8, 15 (note 29), 17 (note 43); Calogero, 2020, p. 219; Tempestini, 2021, p. 315 (n. 2077).

This small painting is composed of a parchment glued on a wooden panel within in a carved wooden frame, which could be original (Natale, 1982, p. 120 [n. 109]). At the centre of the composition there is the seated praying Madonna with the dead Christ lying on her lap, characteristic of the northern iconography of the *Vesperbild* that diffused in Veneto and Emilia in the 15th century through the circulation of small wooden sculptures (numerous painters had been inspired by this iconography e.g., Giovanni Bellini, Bartolomeo Montagna, Cosmè Tura, Ercole de' Roberti, Francesco del Cossa, Perugino). The naked body of Christ has an almost transparent perizonium placed to preserves his dignity, while, in contrast, Mary is heavily clothed in a light blue dress and a long blue mantle. The slumped right arm of Christ further

emphasizes the lifelessness of his body. The Virgin is flanked by the kneeling Saint John the Evangelist, supporting Christ's head, and by the crouched Mary Magdalen, touching the wound in Christ's foot. Saint John wears a green tunic overlayed with a pink mantle, while Mary Magdalen is clothed in a brocade blue-golden dress covered by a bright red mantle. The feeling of sorrow and grief of the scene is well highlighted by the mourning facial expressions of the figures. Behind the group in the foreground, a representation of the Golgotha surmounted by the cross flanked by two hovering angels is depicted. The background is occupied by a natural landscape with a spur of rock on the left and a lake, and shows animals, hunting scenes, figures walking, a man riding, and sailing vessels. In the distance, a turreted city, probably Jerusalem, and mountains overlook the lake.

The artwork was already in count Poldi Pezzoli's collection when Otto Mündler saw it in the house of Giuseppe Molteni the 16th of January 1856. In his *Diary,* he reported that it was "a charming miniature, worth of Mantegna, belonging to young Sr Poldi" (Togneri Dowd-Anderson, 1985, p. 94). It is possible that formerly the painting was in Giuseppe Baslini's collection, as in a document dated 16th of January 1855, he requested Poldi Pezzoli to settle the payment for a small 12th century painting portraying the *Deposition from the Cross* ("Un dipinto antico del XII secolo rappresentante la deposizione di Gesù Cristo dalla croce". *Gian Giacomo…*, 1979, p. 65 [note 142]). The original provenance and function of this work are unknown, however for its small size and material the scholars suggested it could have been a painted *pax* (Russoli, 1955, p. 119), or an object for private devotion, perhaps part of a bigger complex (Casu, 1996, p. 78 [note 38]), or even a clipping cut from an illuminated manuscript (Vinco, 2012, p. 72).

An old ink inscription on the *verso* of the frame records an ascription to Mantegna ("Questa è opera di Andrea Mantegna preziosissima". Natale, 1982, p. 120 [n. 109]). Initially, the painting was described as a work by the "School of Murano" (Bertini, 1881, p. 20 [n. 22]; Molinier, 1889, p. 319; *Museo artistico…*, 1902, p. 73 [n. 622]; Morassi, 1932, p. 26 [n. 622]), while both Berenson (1907, p. 196), and then Bernath (1912, p. 21), dubitatively assigned

it to Civerchio. In his significant foot note on Bastiani in *Officina Ferrarese*, Longhi first attributed the Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà* to the young Bastiani (1934, p. 98 [note 56]). This attribution was promptly accepted by Collobi and the scholars thereafter, as well as in Poldi Pezzoli Museum catalogues. In Collobi's opinion Mantegna was the main inspiration behind this *Pietà*, although it also echoes northern artworks. She believes, however, that given the virtuosity shown in the landscape and in the figures, the picture must be dated not to a juvenile phase of Bastiani's art, but to slightly later, around 1470, in time of intellectual reflection by the artist, when he revised and updated his technique, as can be seen in various examples (1939, pp. 38-39). Natale suggested a comparison with the *Polyptych* of Matera, dated at the beginning of the seventh decade by Collobi, to support Longhi's assumption that the Milanese painting is an early example (1982, p. 120 [n. 109]). For Volpe this artwork proves "Bastiani's evident superiority to the brothers Vivarini" (1983, p. 56 [n. 36]), while Boskovits took Antonio and Bartolomeo's dismembered Polyptych of Corridonia, painted in 1462, as a comparison to place the execution of the Poldi Pezzoli small *Pietà* at the beginning of 1460s. Boskovits also detected "numerous features and various morphological details close to the production of the young Giovanni Bellini" (Boskovits, 1992, p. 27). Casu, with an early date prior to 1465, suggested a comparison with Bastiani's dismembered *antependium* portraying *Episodes from the Life of Christ*, especially in the figures of Saint John and Mary Magdalene of the central panel showing the *Crucifixion* and in the *Deposition* scene (1996, p. 66). Vinco largely agreed with Boskovits and Casu's previous observations on the painting (2012, pp. 72-73). Finally, for Russo, the ample drapery of Saint John's garments and the animated landscape are representative of a new phase of Bastiani's production, based upon a reflection on Giovanni Bellini and Marco Zoppo's altarpieces for San Zanipolo and for Santa Giustina, realised between 1468 and 1471. This new phase was characterised by a divergence from the previously predominant Vivarinesque influence (2018, p. 15 [note 29]).

The dating of this *Pietà* is puzzling, however, the narrative and naturalistic streak shown in the landscape, as already remarked by Collobi, points to a date

more advanced than the early 1460s'. Moreover, Russo's suggestion on the impact of Giovanni Bellini and Marco Zoppo's altarpieces on the relationship between light and volume, that Bastiani developed shortly after in the *Madonna* Poldi Pezzoli, in the Frick *Adoration* and in the Matera Polyptych – paintings that must be placed in the first half of 1470s' –, seems to further confirm an approximate date of execution for the Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà* of around 1470 (Calogero [2020] supported the influence of Marco Zoppo by pointing out the expressiveness of the figures and agreed for the execution around 1470).

Finally, it must be pointed out that Collobi argued that a drawing portraying the *Pietà* in the Akademie der Bildenden Künste of Düsseldorf (published by Budde, 1930, p .78 [n. 272]) was a later variation of the Milanese painting (1939, p. 50). Previously the drawing had been assigned to Crivelli by Levin, placed in the neighbourhood of Boccaccio Boccaccini or Galeazzo Campi by Berenson, and published as "Venetian-Cremonese School" in the Düsseldorf catalogue. Tietze-Tietze-Conrat rejected the ascription to Bastiani and the connection to Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà* ("the attribution of which to Bastiani, moreover, is completely in the air"). These scholars placed the drawing in the neighbourhood of Ferrarese School around 1500-1505, following Longhi's proposal in *Officina Ferrarese* (Tietze-Tietze-Conrat, 1944, p. 60 [n. A 251] and previous bibliography). According to Tietze-Tietze-Conrat, the Dusseldorf picture did not show any stylistic resemblance with Bastiani's graphic art.

Further bibliography:

Budde, 1930, p .78 [n. 272].



Number: AP23

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Deposition and Descent into Limbo*

Location: Milan (Italy), Private collection (last known)

Date: 1465-1470

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 25 x 28 cm

Technique: Oil? (M. Cinotti, 1964, p. 38)

Provenance: Hohenzollern Castle, Austria; Milan, private collection.

Past exhibitions: *Maestri della pittura dal '300 al '700* (Milan, Galleria Levi, 1964).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Cinotti (1964, p. 38) pointed out the ruined state of the panel, which shows areas with paint loss, especially in the faces of Christ and Mary Magdalen. The poor condition of the painting was also underlined by Iseppi (1986, p. 37).

Bibliography:

Cinotti, 1964, p. 38 (n. 12); Volpe, 1983, p. 56; Iseppi, 1986, pp. 36-40; Boskovits, 1992, p. 24, 27; Casu, 1996, pp. 64-65, 77-78 (notes 30-33); Sartor, 1997, pp. 40, 51 (note 12).

From the Hohenzollern Castle Collection (Austria), the painting passed to a private collection in Milan, as stated by Mia Cinotti, who attributed the artwork to a Belliniesque-Mantegnesque anonymous artist (Cinotti, 1964, p. 38). The panel was mentioned by Iseppi, who, agreeing with Volpe's suggestion (Volpe, 1983, p. 56), considered it to be part of a series concerning the *Stories from the Life of Christ* executed by Lazzaro Bastiani. This series includes this panel along with two others in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, and another in a private collection in Bologna (Iseppi, 1986, pp. 36-39). Casu accepted Iseppi's assumption and considered the group of paintings as an *antependium*, to which he added the central panel showing the *Crucifixion* scene (Casu, 1996, pp. 64-65). For an extensive description of the critical reception of the *antependium*, please refer to *Resurrection and Noli me Tangere* and *Supper at Emmaus* catalogue entry (Cat. AP59).

The painting shows two consecutive episodes: the *Deposition* to the right in the foreground and the *Descent into Limbo* to the left in the background. The first scene shows the entombment of Christ after his crucifixion. The Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalen and a disciple lay the body of Christ in the foreshortened tomb, while Joseph of Arimathea and an acolyte support the feet of the dead Christ on a strip of linen, which will then be used to wrap the body. The event is touching, especially in the Virgin Mary's support of Christ's lifeless arm and her face wrought with grief, with its open mouth and the half-closed eyes. A rocky background and the lid of the sarcophagus placed on the ground on the left isolate the group and separate this episode from the adjacent scene. On the left, behind the deposition the moment is represented when Christ descends into the world of the dead, to bring salvation to the righteous (forefathers, patriarchs, martyrs, and prophets) since the beginning of the world who have already died, and while they are not damned, have been unable to enter Heaven

until Christ's coming. Christ is portrayed standing, in profile, and he bears the white banner with the cross, symbol of his victory over death, with his right arm. He stoops slightly towards the entrance of the cave, stretching his left arm to reach the hand of the first of the kneeling souls waiting to be rescued. Meanwhile, dark winged devils are escaping from Hell. The standing male figure behind Christ is probably identifiable as the Good Thief Disma, who accompanied Christ into Limbo. He is usually depicted holding the Cross, but here he simply observes the event, with his hands joined in prayer. The rocky background on both sides closes the entire scene, giving little space for the landscape, in which only a rural road recedes into the distance. Comparison with young Alvise Vivarini's *paliotto* is necessary, especially in the *Descent into Limbo* episode (*Fig. 185*), and a further connection with the same scene is evident in Jacopo, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini's *predella* for the Gattamelata altarpiece (*Fig. 186*), which in turn derives from Jacopo Bellini's drawings of the same subject, one of which is in the Louvre (RF 1489, 22, Folio 21v. *Fig. 187*) and one in the British Museum (museum number 1855,0811.25. *Fig. 188*). As pointed out by Cinotti, the artist of the *Deposition and Descent into Limbo* here discussed should have had free access to the Bellinis' workshop and would have been well acquainted with the work of both father and son (Cinotti, 1964, p. 38). The cartouche with the biblical inscription in the lower part of the panel, which is present in the Venetian paintings, is missing here, suggesting that the support have been reduced in size at some point.

This painting, together with the others composing the *antependium*, can be dated in the second half of 1460s (see Cat. AP59).

Further bibliography:

Volpe, 1978, pp. 56-60.

Further images



Fig. 185. A. Vivarini, *Descent into Limbo*, once in Bergamo, private collection.

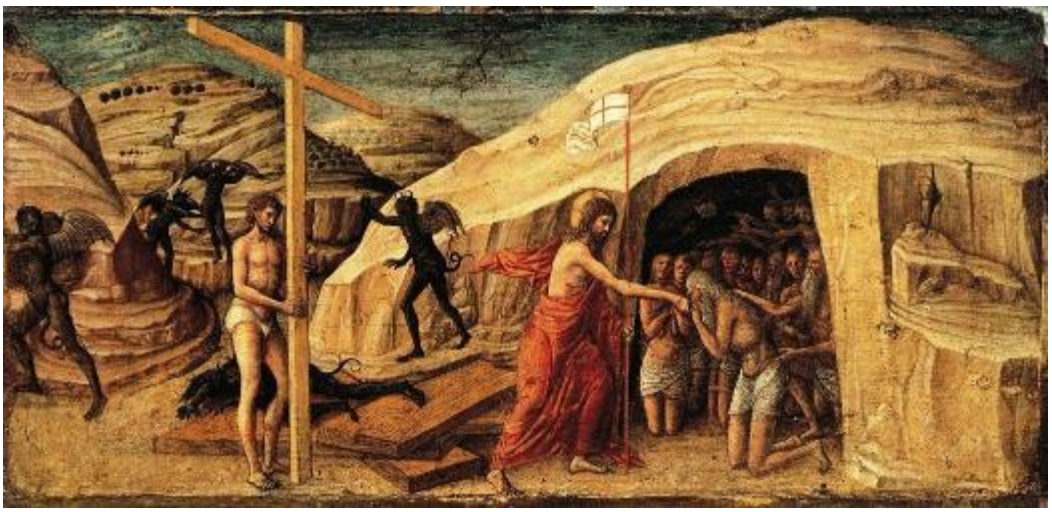


Fig. 186. Jacopo Bellini, Gentile Bellini and Giovanni Bellini, *Descent into Limbo*, Padua, Musei Civici agli Eremitani.



Fig. 187. J. Bellini, *Descent into Limbo*, Paris, Louvre Museum, Cabinet des dessins.



Fig. 188. J. Bellini, *Descent into Limbo*, London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings.



Number: AP24

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Christ Blessing*

Location: Modena (Italy), Galleria Estense (from 1884, inv. n. 293)

Date: 1485 c.

Material and dimensions: poplar wood, 26 x 18 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: Modena, Professor Magnanini private collection (ante 1880); Modena, Accademia di Belle Arti, as bequest of professor Magnanini, acquired by Adeodato Malatesta (1880).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: X-ray, prof. Ruggero Balli, 1935 (Argan, 1935, pp. 202-204); Giovanni Forghieri, 1937

(Pallucchini, 1945, p. 164); Chiara Davoli (conservation treatment), Alessandro Burani (non-invasive imaging analyses), 2020 (Restoration report) Studying the x-ray analysis carried out in 1935 by professor Ruggero Balli, Giulio Carlo Argan observed several retouched areas in the figure of Christ (face, mantle, and in general in the contours), and in the village in the background (*Fig. 190*). In addition, by the 1930s, a long longitudinal crack of the wooden support that extended from the upper border down to Christ's chest was already present (*Fig. 189*). The scholar suggested proceeding with a conservation treatment of the painting, although one to be carried out extremely carefully, since the paint layers were already abraded by aggressive cleaning during previous restorations, most likely during the 19th century. The procedure was performed in 1937 by restorer Giovanni Forghieri. In 2020 the panel was subjected to another treatment, which was preceded by non-invasive imaging analyses. From raking-light photography an extended craquelure pattern that follows the wood grain was observed. The paint layers showed losses, tenting and cupping. UV photography highlighted several retouched areas in the sky, in the landscape and in the figure of Christ (face, hands, book). IR photography revealed the underdrawing, which carefully outlines all the elements of the composition and defines the *chiaroscuro* through hatching, but also showed a faded apparently 'printed' text in the sky, which read "Primo Ministro", "Duce", "Roma" in reverse (*Fig. 191*). It was hypothesised that during the 1930s treatment, a journal had been placed on the painting surface. Due to humidity variations or to the varnish layer not completely having dried, the journal article had become 'printed' on the superficial varnish film. The conservation procedure included an anti-woodworm treatment on the back of the support, the cleaning of the old, oxidised varnish, and the removal of old stuccoed and inpainted areas to an extent which did not compromise the readability of the picture. The paint layers were stabilised, and the longitudinal crack in the support was repaired, consolidated, stuccoed, and retouched.

Bibliography:

A. Venturi, 1882, pp. 463, 466; Botteon-Aliprandi, 1893, p. 148; Burckhardt, 1905, p. 118; Berenson, 1907, p. 294; Ricci, 1925, pp. 98, 171 (n. 242); Berenson, 1932, p. 24; Zocca, 1933, p. 19; Van Marle, XV, 1934, pp. 538 (note 1), 546, 626; Argan, 1935, 4, pp. 202-204; Berenson, 1936, p. 21; Palluchini, 1936, pp. 533-536; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 41, note 18; Pallucchini, 1945, pp. 22, 164 (cat. 370); Salvini, 1955, p. 9; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 6; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 57 (192j); Berenson, 1958, I, p. 7; Russo, 2019, p. 177; Tempestini, 2021, p. 106 (n. 78f).

This small panel was certainly conceived for private devotion. It represents Christ giving the blessing, standing in a natural landscape The full-figure Christ, standing on a stone slab, is portrayed in the foreground, he is clothed in a red tunic, fastened by a belt around the waist, and covered by a blue mantle. His right hand is raised in blessing, and the left one holds a book against his chest. The background shows a rocky cliff on the left and a river on the right. Gradually fading hills and a walled city are depicted in the distance. The backdrop is populated by genre figures dressed in oriental clothing. Of particular interest are the two nimbed men in the left corner, who are probably two apostles. These distinctive elements became characteristic of Bastiani's background since the *Nativity* of 1480.

Today exposed on show in the Galleria Estense in Modena, the artwork was bequeathed to the Accademia di Belle Arti in 1880 by Professor Magnanini (A. Venturi, 1882, p. 466; Pallucchini, 1945, p. 164). In his work dedicated to the *R. Galleria Estense in Modena*, published in 1882, Adolfo Venturi mentioned this artwork as one of the latest additions to the gallery collection. Indeed, on the occasion of the relocation of the Galleria Estense from the Accademia di Belle Arti, where the collection had been temporarily housed, to the new museum site, the painting was selected by Adeodato Malatesta to enrich the collection of the museum.

Initially the work had been ascribed to the Ferrarese painter Ludovico Mazzolino. Venturi immediately discarded this attribution, and instead

believed the painting to be by Cima da Conegliano (A. Venturi, 1882, p. 466). The attribution to Cima was also supported by Botteon-Aliprandi in their monography on the painter (1883, p. 148), and by Ricci (1925, pp. 98, 171 [n. 242]) and Zocca (1933, p. 19) in their guides to the Gallery. Burckhardt, who had also written a monography on Cima, found here an "individuelle schülehand" (1905, p. 118). In 1907 Berenson assigned the work to the young Andrea Solario (p. 294), to subsequently revise his opinion in favour of Antonello da Messina, although with a slight reservation as the painting appeared ruined or extensively restored (1932, p, 24; 1936, p. 21). Van Marle noted that the work was in a very ruined condition and thought it was a work of an able imitator of Antonello (1934, pp. 538, 546, 626). In Pallucchini's opinion, the atmosphere of the spacious landscape was the result of Antonello's inspiration on a Venetian painter who worked in the last fifteen years of the quarter of the 15th century. He identified this artist as being Benedetto Diana in an early period of his career, in the last decade of the 15th century (1936, pp. 533-536; 1945, p. 164). In addition, Pallucchini identified other panels of similar composition: the *Christ blessing* by Cima da Conegliano in Dresda, the *Blessing Redeemer* attributed to Pier Maria Pennacchi in Parma Galleria Nazionale, and another small panel assigned to Bartolomeo Montagna once in private collection in Vienna. Pallucchini was persuaded that all these artworks were derived from a lost prototype executed by Antonello himself (1936, pp. 533-534; 1945, p. 164). The Pallucchini attribution evidently influenced Berenson's views on the painting, indeed in 1950s edition of his *Indexes* he still gave the panel to Antonello, but also wondered if it was a copy by Diana (1957, p. 6; 1958, p. 7). In 1939, Collobi was the first to suggest the name of Lazzaro Bastiani under Antonello's inspiration as the artist of the Modena panel (p. 41). The art historian underlined that Bastiani knew and admired Antonello, rather than fully understanding his art. Agreeing with Pallucchini regarding an original prototype made by Antonello, Collobi discarded his ascription to Diana highlighting that the way the mantle folds and the genre figures in the background are characteristic of Bastiani rather than Diana. In the museum catalogue, Salvini (1955) did not commit himself

and recorded both the attribution to Diana and to Bastiani Heinemann proposed to assign the panel to the young Rocco Marconi, pointing out that the palms were typical of his art (1962, p. 157 [192j]). Heinemann included the work in a group of paintings showing the full-length figure of Christ giving the blessing against a low landscape, which he believed to have been developed from Bellini's Christ in the Naples *Transfiguration*. In recent years, Russo supported Collobi's ascription to Bastiani, dating the panel around 1485 for following comparisons within Bastiani's catalogue (2019, p. 177). For Russo, the close connection between this artwork and the group of Bellinesque works presenting the same compositional scheme, is evident and it is perhaps derived from a Bellini painting for public devotion, hence well-known and easily accessible and visible to everyone. Notable examples bearing this compositional scheme are the painting already cited as *Christ Blessing* by Cima in Dresden (Humfrey, 1983, p. 98), and two others by Bellini's workshop, one in National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (assigned to Rocco Marconi by Berenson in 1912, who then gave it to Giovanni Bellini. The attribution to Rocco Marconi has been recently restored by Ervas, although in the museum the painting is still referred to as Workshop of Giovanni Bellini. *Catalogue of the National…*, 1987, pp. 15-16) and the other in Berlin's Gemäldegalerie (Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 189-194). All are believed to be dated in the early years of the 16th century. Schmidt Arcangeli estimated that the starting point for this type of work was Giovanni Bellini's Naples *Transfiguration* (compare Benedetto Diana's *Saviour* in Lowe Art Gallery, Florida. Rusk Shapley, 1968, pp. 56-57), even if it is not easy to define if the prototype for the following pictures of the *Christ Blessing* was a painting by Bellini himself or a model produced in the workshop. From the infrared reflectography analyses performed on the abovementioned examples no evidence suggesting the use of a cartoon emerged. The strong similarities among the three works, however, caused Schmidt Arcangeli to suppose the use of a template. The scholar theorised also that Bellini's collaborators were allowed to produce a collection of motifs (cartons, drawings etc.) derived from Bellini models to be re-employed outside Bellini's workshop (Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 190-191).

The IRR image of Bastiani's painting does not give any useful evidence to prove the use of a cartoon (no pouncing or tracing). On the contrary, the underdrawing of Christ is well defined, and the mantle folds are modelled through a fine hatching indicating dark and light areas. Even the landscape elements are outlined at the underdrawing level, including the walled city and the genre figures, and are then developed by giving an atmospheric rendering in the painting phase. As a comparison to Bastiani's painting, in 1936 Pallucchini presented another panel attributed to Bartolomeo Montagna, once in private collection in Vienna and sold in 1934 (Luzern, H. Gilhoger & H. Ranschburg, *Gemälde alter Meister des 14. Bis 18 jahrhunderts*, 30/11/1934, lot 10. *Fig. 192*), which had been assigned to Girolamo Mocetto by Heinemann (1962, I, p. 57 [192o]). This artwork showed striking similarities with Bastiani's one, not only in the general composition, but also in elements of minor importance, as the nature of the trees. Moreover, it is almost the same size as the Modena work (26.5 x 22 cm). Two such similar paintings of the same small size might suggest that the two artists followed a specific model, for example, a painting by Bellini for private devotion or a workshop prototype, which could be different from that employed by Cima and the other artists that was perhaps developed at a later date. To support this theory, the positioning of the left hand holding the book in the two small panels and the other mentioned examples is different, as is the mantle design, which is dissimilar between the two groups of paintings, covering Christ shoulders in the small pictures and draped over the left shoulder in the bigger ones. This conclusion could further support Russo assumption that the shared Bellinesque prototype could have been developed prior to the early 16th century, as believed so far.

Regarding the period of execution, Pallucchini proposed a date in 1490s, although included in Diana's perspective. Collobi did not specify any date but placed it as being more than likely after the arrival of Antonello in Venice, thus after 1475. Russo, as previously stated, suggested an execution of no later than 1485, which seems correct if, for example, one compares the sharp way the mantel is folded to that of the Verona Madonna.

Further bibliography:

Rusk Shapley, 1968, pp. 56-57; *European and American…*, 1987, pp. 15-16; Schmidt Arcangeli, 2015, pp. 189-194.

Further images



Fig. 189. L. Bastiani, *Christ Blessing*, Modena, Galleria Estense. "Historic" photograph (© The Frick Digital Collections – Photoarchive).



Fig. 190. X-ray, 1935 (image retrieved from G. C. Argan, *Ricognizioni radiografiche di alcuni quadri della R. Galleria Estense di Modena*, 1935, p. 202).

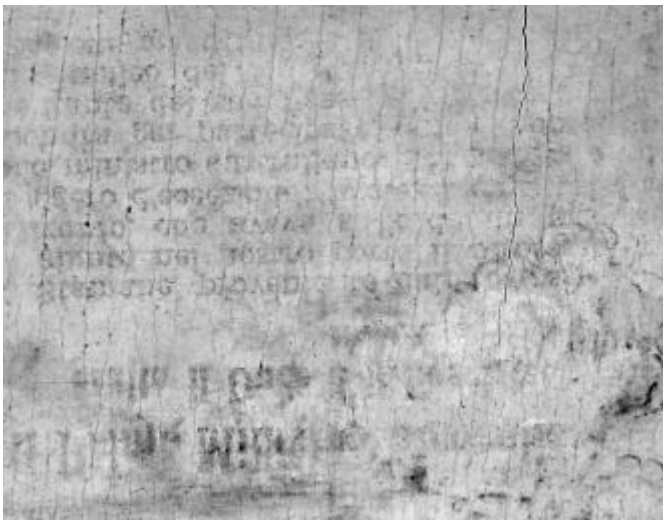


Fig. 191. Detail of the journal text printed in reverse on the superficial varnish film before cleaning.



Fig. 192. G. Mocetto (?), *Christ Blessing*, unknown location (image retrieved from the auction catalogue).



Number: AP25

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Jerome in his study and the donor Saladino Ferro*

Location: Monopoli (Italy), Museo Diocesano (from 2002)

Date: 1475-1480

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 155 x 123 cm

Inscription: "O · MISERABILIS · HUMANA · CONDITIO · ET · SINE · CHRISTO · VANUM · OMNE · QUOD VIVITIS", on the open book Sain Jerome is reading.

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Monopoli, Cathedral of Santa Maria della Madia, Saint Jerome Chapel; Monopoli, Cathedral of Santa Maria della Madia, Sacristy; Monopoli,

Cathedral of Santa Maria della Madia, Chapel of the Madonna del Rosario; Monopoli, Episcope.

Past exhibitions: *Mostra dell'arte in Puglia. Dal Tardo antico al Rococò* (Bari, Pinacoteca provinciale, 1964); *Andar per mare. Puglia e Mediterraneo tra mito e storia* (Bari, Castello Svevo, 14 giugno – 16 novembre 1997); *Rinascimento visto da Sud. Matera, l'Italia meridionale e il Mediterraneo tra '400 e '500* (Matera, Palazzo Lanfranchi, 19 aprile – 19 agosto 2019).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1928, Brizzi (Riferimento bibliografico); 1954, Istituto Centrale del Restauro (Urbani, 1954, p. 76).

Today the conservation status of the artwork is quite fair, even though the general tone of the painting surface is yellowed due to the oxidized upper layer of varnish. Borenius (1912, p. 123 [note 4]) and Frizzoni (1914, p. 35) reported the damaged condition of the artwork before the restoration treatment of 1928. Specifically, Frizzoni pointed out paint flaking and overpainting in the lower area of the panel ("guasto da screpolature e sollevature nella metà inferiore e insozzato quivi da rozza ridipintura"). During the restoration treatment carried out in 1954 the wood boards, previously warped and cracked, were straightened and two flexible battens were applied on the back. The old overpainting was removed, revealing the authentic modelling and colour of the figures, as the draperies of the saint's vestment. The *lacunae* and the numerous abrasions were reintegrated, except for a big *lacuna* in the lower part of the donor's robe.

Bibliography:

Berenson, 1894, p. 89; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 123 (note 4); Fry, 1913, p. 301; Frizzoni, 1914, pp. 34-35; A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, p. 248 (note 2); Salmi, 1919, p. 169-170; Salmi, 1920, p. 212; A. Perotti, 1923, p. 95; F. Hermanin, 1930, p. 79; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Longhi, 1934, ed. cons 1968, p. 97 (note 59); Van Marle, 1934, XV, p. 600 (note 1); Van Marle, 1935, XVII, p. 183; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Russo-Minerva, 23-3-1936, p. 4; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 190 (note 2); Gamba, 1937, p. 59; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, pp. 41-42 (note 20); Olivieri,

1949, p. 8; Urbani, 1954, 17-18, pp. 76-78; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Pallucchini, 1962, p. 15; *Mostra dell'arte…*, 1964, pp. 72-73; Pallucchini, 1964, p. 216; Arslan, 1965, p. 167; Rizzi, 1969, p. 21; *La cattedrale…*, 1978, p. 110; Laclotte, 1978, pp. 49-51 (n. 30-31); Bellifemmine, 1979, p. 239 (Tav. 9); Meyer zur Capellen, 1985, p. 155 (cat. C 16); Tognoli Bardin, 1987, p. 72; Nuovo, 1988, I, p. 398 (note 49); Campanelli, 1989, p. 56; Boskovits, 1992, p. 27; Conti, 1994, p. 263; Casu, 1996, pp. 73, 87-88 (note 73); Mavelli, 1998, p. 367 (cat. 13); Gelao, 2002, pp. 15-17; Fossaluzza, 2004, pp. 138, 154-155 (notes 59-60); Gelao, 2004, pp. 8-10; *Giovanni Bellini…*, 2008, pp. 11-12, 28; Bianchi-Gelao, 2013, pp. 120, 240-243; Gelao, 2016, p. 71; Russo, 2018, 142, pp. 11, 17 (note 43); Vinco, 2019, pp. 108, 356-358 (cat. 5.10).

The arched panel, today on display in the Museo Diocesano di Monopoli (founded in 2002), was originally in the Cathedral of the Madonna della Madia in Monopoli. According to a document retrieved in the Archivio Capitolare di Monopoli, D'Elia stated that the artwork was "nel primo luogo della navetta" (1964, p. 72). Thanks to extensive archival research carried out by Clara Gelao (Gelao, 2004, p. 8; Gelao, 2008, pp. 11-12, 28 [notes 28-30]) it has been possible to discover/identify the original location in the Saint Jerome chapel in the Cathedral, founded by Saladino Ferro, as written in his son's (Giacomo) testament drawn up on the 15th of December 1509. Specifically, Giacomo declared that in his "codicillo celebrato manu q. notarii pascalis capoblanchi de monopoli" his father bequeathed to the Saint Jerome Chapel "macinaturas quindecim terrarium et olivarum" (Gelao, 2004, p. 8; Indelli, 2000, p. 268). Giacomo's last will was also previously partially published by Bellifemmine (1979, p. 44), who erroneously believed the chapel was founded around 1509. Saladino Ferro was a famous doctor and *aromatario* (a dealer in spices) native of *Ascoli della Marca*. There is a long-lasting dispute regarding his native hometown, whether it should be Ascoli Piceno or Ascoli Satriano, near Foggia. The latest research seems to confirm Ascoli Piceno, as Indelli already suggested in 1779 (Sisto, 2014, pp. 95-102 and previous bibliography; Moulinier-Brogi, 2017, p. 645). Saladino went to Padua to study at the

prestigious university there, where he graduated in 1431. At that time numerous young students from the Southern regions moved to Padua for educational purposes and here many became fascinated by the Paduan and Venetian culture and art, requesting paintings or other artworks of the famous artists they met during their stay once they returned home. When he returned to southern Italy, Saladino relocated in Monopoli, where he married and lived with his family. He was already there in 1448, as attested in his treatise on the plague (*Consilium de peste*) written on Christmas Eve of that year. In 1451 he was local authority doctor in Bitonto, and then became personal doctor of Giovanni Antonio del Balzo Orsini, prince of Taranto, to whom Saladino dedicated his masterpiece, the *Compendium aromatariorum*, considered the very first text of pharmacy, published in Bologna in 1488 (for further information on Saladino Ferro's life, please refer to: Capriglione, 2014, s.p.; Moulinier-Brogi, 2017, pp. 645-647). The *Saint Jerome* panel was removed from the eponymous chapel upon the complete renovation of the Cathedral during the 18th century on (Bellifemmine, 1979, pp. 135-158) and placed in the sacristy of the church, where Frizzoni (1914, p. 34) and Salmi (1919, p. 169) remembered it. From a short guide of the Cathedral published in 1949 by Mons. Antonio Olivieri (p. 8), it seems that by that time the painting, mentioned under the name of Antonio Solario (an attribution probably based on old guides and inventories of the church. D'Elia, 1964, p. 72), was moved again in the church, to the left of the Altar of the Santo Rosario, in the transept. Then the altarpiece was registered in the local bishop's palace before entering the museum collection (D'Elia, 1964, p. 72; Bellifemmine, 1979, p. 239 [Tav. 9]; Campanelli, 1989, p. 56; Casu, 1996, p. 87 [note 73]; Gelao, 2002, p. 16).

The painting portrays the traditional representation of *Saint Jerome in his study* that had largely spread through in Europe in the 15th century, not only in Italy, but also in Flanders, establishing an iconography in which the Italian definition of space in perspective encounters the Flemish taste for careful descriptions (Gelao, 2004, pp. 8-9). The saint is depicted as an old, bearded man, with large nose, clothed in red cardinal garment over a white tunic with tight sleeves, and wearing the *galero*. He is sitting on a stool, turned in three-quarter view,

reading an open book placed in front of him. Specifically, he is reading a passage of the letter he wrote to his friend Heliodorus regarding the death of his nephew Nepoziano (*Epitaphium Nepotiani*): "O MISERABILIS HUMANA CONDITIO ET SINE CHRISTO VANUM OMNE, QUOD VIVITIS". This might suggest a funerary function/purpose for the picture, but for the lack of any further information concerning the commission of the artwork, this is only a hypothesis. The left hand is placed on the correspondent knee, while the right hand is about to turn the page of the book. The monumental figure of the saint is in a typical 15th century *studiolo*, or cell, whose space is perspectively defined by shelves painted in a "U"-shape on two levels. On the upper shelves are placed numerous books, some of them are open, others are closed and still others are piled one over the other, as well as various other objects, such as wicker wine bottles, a candlestick holding a candle, a small crucifix, carved in wood and painted, with the cross fixed on a mountain rocky base and Adam's skull at its foot. Attention should be drawn to the exquisite execution of the books on each side of the crucifix: to the left, the dark leather cover enriched with precious gold decorations at the extremities and a sort of gold medallion showing a winged horse (a Pegasus?) at the centre of the book; the miniature and the painted frame of the illuminated manuscript on the right. From the upper shelf are hanging two rulers, a small bell and what appears to be a pair of scissors. On the lower shelves other books and objects are scattered, including a round shaped box, some pens, and a small glass filled with ink, and a stylus. From the ceiling is hanging a fruit garland interlaced with a rosary composed of a string of coral beads crossing at the centre, and a lamp. Gelao suggested that the mysterious inscription written on the base of the lamp, which might have been misinterpreted by the restorer and whose meaning is still unknown, could give further information useful to dating the painting (Gelao, 2004, p. 9). At the top of the left wall there is a small window, from which a diffused light enters illuminating the cell. At the saint's feet, on the left, there is the tamed lion, one of his symbols, showing the pawfrom which the saint removed the thorn. On the right, in the foreground, there is the kneeling donor, Saladino Ferro, in three-quarter rear view to the observer and facing

towards the saint. He is portrayed as young man with short dark hair, wearing a purple vestment with ample sleeves and a red scarf. Given that the commissioner of this work was a doctor, the presence of the lion curiously showing the wound to the viewer has been interpreted as an allusion to Saladino's occupation (Vinco, 2013, p. 356).

The painting has been variously attributed to different artists. The most accredited painter has been Gentile Bellini (Berenson, 1894, p. 89; Borenius, 1912, p. 123 [note 4]; Fry, 1913, p. 301; A. Venturi, 1915, p. 248 [note 2]; Salmi, 1919, p. 169; Van Marle, 1935, p. 183), but other attributions have been advanced/suggested as well: Antonio Solario, called lo Zingaro (in old guides and inventories of the church. D'Elia, 1964, p. 72; Olivieri, 1949, p. 8), Senese School (Frizzoni, 1914, p. 35), a local artist follower of Venetian painters, aware of Antonello da Messina's example and the Flemish taste for descriptive data (Hermanin, 1930, p. 79), Colantonio (Russo-Minerva, 1936), and the illuminator Reginaldo de' Pirani (D'Elia, 1964, p. 73; Calò Mariani-Guglielmi Faldi, Strinati, 1978, p. 110. Bellifemmine believed the donor was Matteo III Acquaviva, protector of Reginaldo. 1979, p. 239 [Tav. 9]). Berenson (1932, p. 63; 1936, p. 55) was the first scholar that assigned, even if dubitatively, the panel to Lazzaro Bastiani. The majority of the following art historians agreed with this attribution (Longhi, 1934, p. 97 [note 59]; Collobi, 1939, p. 42 [note 20]; Pallucchini, 1962, p. 15; Pallucchini, 1964, p. 216; Arslan, 1965, p. 167; Rizzi, 1969, p. 21; Laclotte, 1978, p. 50; Meyer zur Capellen, 1985, 150 [C 16]; Tognoli Bardin, 1987, p. 72; Nuovo, 1988, p. 398 [note 49]; Boskovits, 1992, p. 27; Conti, 1994, p. 263; Casu 1996, pp. 73, 87-88 [note 73]; Gelao, 2002, pp. 15-17; Fossaluzza, 2004, pp. 138, 154-155 [notes 59-60]; Gelao, 2004, pp. 8-10; Gelao, 2008, pp. 11-12, 28 [notes 28-30]; Russo, 2018, pp. 11, 17 [note 43]; Vinco, 2019, p. 356 [cat. 5.10]), even if some of them only hesitantly accepted the name of Bastiani (Berenson, 1957, p. p. 25; Berenson, 1958, p. 26; D'Elia, 1964, pp. 72-73; Mavelli, 1997, p. 367 [cat. 3]). Van Marle (1936, p. 190 [note 2]) did not agree with Berenson's attribution, while Gamba (1937, p. 59), following a hypothesis previously suggested for the cycle of the Scuola di San

Girolamo, imaginatively suggested that Bastiani's execution partially following a composition made by Giovanni Bellini.

Bastiani must have certainly seen Giovanni Bellini's *teleri* for the Scuola di San Girolamo, both of which are now lost, but whose subjects are known from Ridolfi's descriptions (Ridolfi, 1965 [1648], p. 64). The one dated 1464 showed the saint reading in his study together with other monks (Lucco, 2019, p. 311 [cat. 16]. Today it is believed an echo of these compositions can be found in Carpaccio's paintings with the *Stories of Saint Jerome* and the *Vision of Saint Augustine* for the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, in Catena's *Saint Jerome in his study* in The National Gallery in London and in Städel Kunstinstitut of Frankfurt, and in Giovanni Mansueti's *Vision of Saint Augustine* in the Instituut voor Kunstgeschiedenis in Groningen). At the end of 1470s, Bastiani himself executed two canvases for the same confraternity in which the depiction of Saint Jerome is quite similar to that of Monopoli, especially in the large nose, the long white beard and the bony hands. Moreover, the pose of the lion showing the injured paw in another *Saint Jerome* from the Church of Corpus Domini, today in Correr Museum, dating from the 1470s is like that of the lion in the Puglia painting. Further examples of *Saint Jerome in his study* Bastiani could have been influenced by are the panel painted by Antonello da Messina, today in The National Gallery in London (Lucco, 2006, pp. 156-159 [cat. 31]), dated 1475 ca., but also other reproductions of Flemish artworks that were circulating in Venice and elsewhere in Italy in the 15th century, for instance the small panel attributed to Jan van Eyck now in the Detroit Institute of Art (Aikema, 2000, pp. 212-213 [cat. 15]) copied as a miniature by an anonymous master in a *Book of Hours* conserved in Walters Art Gallery of Baltimore. Flemish pictures, like Antonello's masterpiece, showed a detailed representation of the saint's cell and objects in Bastiani's painting (see the detail of the white bookmark sticking out of the book both in Antonello and Bastiani's works). The festoon, not uncommon in the artist's production, reveals Paduan influences, the figure of the donor echoes Mantegnesque characters, while the draperies recall Andrea del Castagno's outputs in Venice (Gelao, 2004, p. 9).

Longhi (1934, p. 97 [note 59]), followed by Rizzi (1969, p. 21), believed this *Saint Jerome* to be one of Bastiani's early works. Collobi underlined Gentile's influence here, as a consequence of the crisis of the mid-1470s (Collobi, 1939, p. 41). Arslan dated the painting around 1470, for its delicate colour (1965, p. 167). Tognoli Bardin assumed it was executed in early 1470s or even some years before, because it reminded her the later works of Jacopo Bellini, influenced by Mantegna and Bartolomeo Vivarini (2987, p. 72). Boskovits remarked that here "Bastiani shows an increasing concern to register with fidelity the subtle intelligence, the calm passage of time in a luminous and well-ordered world" and assigned it to late 1470s, after the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Frick Collection, New York, and *The Penitent Saint Jerome* in Springfield Museum of Fine Arts (1992, p. 27). According to Casu (1996, p. 73), Bastiani's typical language here has evolved following Antonello's lesson, and the panel must therefore be dated around 1475, while for Fossaluzza (2004, pp. 154-155 [note 59]) its execution must be postponed to at least 1480, or even a bit later, as an improvement of Bastiani's ability in perspective construction ("sperimentalismo prospettico") developed some years after Antonello's stay in Venice. Gelao initially considered the artwork to date from the early 1470s (2004, p. 9), but then placed it in the second half of 1470s (2013, p. 243). Vinco, confirming the latest assumptions concerning the dating, claimed this panel as the masterpiece of Bastiani's maturity, when he surpassed the Paduan artistic language under the influence of Giovanni Bellini (2019, p. 356). This was in agreement with two short comments made by Laclotte (1978, p. 50) and Conti (1994, p. 363) on the relationship between Bastiani and the Bellinis' workshop, and how Lazzaro evolved his language according to Giovanni's lesson. Thus, based only on the stylistic analysis, owing to the lack of documents concerning the commission of the altarpiece, today art historians agree in considering the painting to be executed between 1475-1480 (Russo narrowed the time frame to 1478-80. 2018, p. 17 [note 43]).

Bastiani's panel in Monopoli was surely seen and appreciated by local artists and commissioners, as a simplified copy is present in the Basilica of San Nicola, in Bari, on display on the funeral monument of Giacomo Bongiovanni, canon

and prefect of the Scuola di San Girolamo, who had requested this artwork in 1510 (Gelao, 2004, p. 9. As reported by Urbani, after the removal of old overpainting, it was rediscovered the original *cartouche* showing some fragments of the signature, which is unreadable, and the date 1512. See Urbani, 1951, pp. 72-73). Showing, as it does, "a strong Venetian inspiration" (Van Marle, 1934, pp. 599-600), in the past the painting was erroneously believed to have been executed by Gentile Bellini, after his mission to Constantinople (1496. Nitto de Rossi, 1897, p. LVI [note 7]), or by a painter from Veneto around 1510, after Gentile's death (Salmi, 1919, p. 170). Collobi underlined the great quality of this panel, which in her opinion was an early work by Gentile or by an artist from his artistic *milieu* (1939, p. 41 [note 20]). Other authors did not express an opinion on the painter. For example, Colavecchio described the painting of Sain Jerome dressed as a cardinal in general terms but did not give a name to the artist (1910, p. 68). or Hermanin affirmed that only a careful restoration treatment could have revealed the autography of the painting (1930, p. 79). Today scholars agree, following D'Elia's attribution of 1963 (pp. 156-157; Vona, 1995, p. 215 [n. 34], in considering this panel executed not later than the first decade of the 16th century by the local artist Costantino da Monopoli.

Further bibliography:

Nitto De Rossi-Nitti Di Vito, 1897, p. LVI (note 7); Colavecchio, 1910, p. 68; Van Marle, 1934, XV, pp. 599-600; Urbani, 1951, 7-8, pp. 72-73; D'Elia, 1963, pp. 156-157; Ridolfi, 1648, ed. cons. 1914, p. 64; Vona, 1995, p. 215 (n. 34); Aikema, 1999, pp. 212-213 (cat. 15); Indelli, 2000, p. 268; Lucco, 2006, pp.156-159 (cat. 31); Capriglione, 2014, s.p.; Sisto, 2014, pp. 95-102; Moulinier-Brogi, 2017, pp. 645-647; Lucco, 2019, p. 311 (cat. 16).



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Number: AP26

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Augustine Giving the Rule to the Canons*

Location: Montevideo (Uruguay), Private collection (Uruguay – last mention here in 1997)

Date: 1477-1480

Material and dimensions: Unknown dimensions. From Planiscig we know that the panel is substantial

Inscription: On the books of the Rule Saint Augustine is giving to the monks ~~it~~ is written the *incipit* of the *Regula ad Servos Dei*: "AN[T]E · OMNIA / FR[ATR]ES · KA[RISSI]MI / DILIGATVR / DEVS · DEIN[DE] / PROXIMVS / QVIA · ISTA / PRECEPTA / S[UN]T · P[RI]NCIPALI[TER] / NOBIS · DATA / H[A]EC · IGITVR / S[VN]T · QV[A]E · VIT (UT?) / OBS[ER]VETIS / P[RAE]CIPIP / ĪM · MO[N]AST[ER]IO".

Provenance: Venice, Church of San Salvador (until circa 1740); Venice, San Salvador monastery (until the first years of the 19th century); London (UK), private collection (?); Vienna, Antiquarian market (before 1929); Paris, Fernando Perez private collection (at least until 1935).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: When the panel reappeared on the art market in Vienna, at the beginning of the 20th century, Planiscig reported that it was in fairly good condition (Planiscig 1929, p. 258).

Bibliography:

Sansovino, 1581, p. 48; Ridolfi, 1648, ed. cons. 1914, p. 50; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 121; Boschini, 1664, p. 134; Boschini, 1674, p. 105; Pacifico, 1697, p. 293; Martinelli, 1705, p. 65; Zanetti, 1733, p. 186; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 219 (note 3); Borenius, 1912, I, p. 222 (note 4); Planiscig, 1929, pp. 257-260; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 134; Fogolari, 1932, p. 284; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 192; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 44 (note 27); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Sartor, 1997, 50, pp. 41-43.

Archival documents: *Studi autografi di Gianfrancesco Pivati per illustrare la Città di Venezia dalla sua fondazione sino all'anno 1740*, BMVe, Cod. It. VII, 2319 [8489], fasc. VI, fol. 119r.

The painting was once part of an altarpiece on the altar dedicated to Saint Augustine, which was located in the Venetian church of San Salvador (*Fig. 193*). Sansovino was the first to mention the panel with Saint Augustine and the kneeling monks by Lazzaro Bastiani in the church of San Salvador (Sansovino, 1581, p. 48; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 121). The ascription of the artwork to Bastiani has been confirmed by all authors since. From Ridolfi, we know that the portrayed scene representsed the moment the canons receive the Rule from Saint Augustine. Moreover, the author informed us about the structure of the artwork by reporting the presence of a *predella* at the bottom ("nel basamento"), showing the pope ordaining Augustine by clothing him in liturgical vestments, surrounded by cardinals who observe the act (Ridolfi,

1648, p. 50). Boschini provided further details concerning the structural composition of the artwork, which consisted of five parts: the central panel ("nel mezzo"), with Saint Augustine giving the Rule books to the kneeling friars; a crowning element ("nel di sopra in frontespicio") portraying the dead Christ supported by angels (*Pietà*); and the *predella* showing various other unidentified figures ("varie figure"). Finally, in the second half of the 18th century, Boschini confirmed the location in the church where the altarpiece had been placed: on the altar in the right transept, before one enters the Sacristy ("alla destra per entrare nella Sacrestia"; Boschini, 1664, p. 134; Boschini, 1674, p. 105). This was not the original location of the painting since the church underwent a major restoration from 1506 until the 1530s (in 1530 the church reopened to worshippers and in 1534 the new main altar was erected. Later in the 16th century, the façade, the lantern in each dome and the choir were added. For further references concerning the church, the architecture, and the rebuilding, please refer to: Franzoi-Di Stefano, 1976, pp. 355-356; Tafuri, 1983, pp. 5-36; Concina in Caputo, 1988, pp. 73-153; Concina in Guidarelli, 2009, pp. 9-28. *Fig. 194*). New tombs, altars and monuments were built in the new church and many citizens bought simple tombs or purchased the *jus patronatus* for a funerary altar (as example see: Finocchi-Ghersi, 1997, pp. 21-39). This was the case of Antonio Cornovì della Vecchia, a rich merchant, native of Ancona,[565] and member of the board of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. He purchased from the "reverendi padri" of San Salvador the altar dedicated to Saint Augustine in order to create a family tomb. This information can be found in Cornovì's testament, dated 1559 (published in Maschio, 1975, pp. 178-179). In the document, he gave notice that he was already in contact with an unspecified workshop of stonemasons to build a new marble altar. Moreover, he confirmed that he had commissioned Titian to paint a large altarpiece representing the *Annunciation* (in the testament the painting is referred to as *Incarnation*) to decorate the altar (for Titian's *Annunciation* and further bibliography: Maschio, 1975, pp. 178-179; Nepi-

[565] Bohde affirms that Antonio Cornovì came from Bergamo. Cfr. Bohde, 2001, p. 455.

Scirè in Valcanover, 1990, pp. 318-320. *Fig. 195*, *Fig. 196*). After Titian's *pala* had been installed, probably between 1563 and 1566, the altar changed its dedication to Saint Augustine and was referred to as *altare annunciationis*, i.e., altar of the Annunciation (Bohde, 2001, pp. 458-460). Thus, Cornovì's family tomb replaced the previous Saint Augustine altar, which had been the last one on the right of the nave, before the crossing. Bastiani's altarpiece was moved on to the neighbouring altar in the right transept, where Boschini saw it and where it was recorded as being located in 17th and 18th century guides of Venice written by Martinelli, Pacifico and Zanetti (Martinelli, 1684, p. 65 and Martinelli, 1705, p. 65; Pacifico, 1697, p. 293; Zanetti, 1733, p. 186). In 1736 the Corner family requested the rebuilding/renovation of the outdated wooden altars on either side of the right transept (*Fig. 197*). On entering the sacristy, the altar on the right was dedicated to Saint Augustine and was enriched with Bastiani's panel, while the one on the left was devoted to Saint Leonard and was decorated with a fresco by Francesco Vecellio. The Corner family commissioned Giambattista Tiepolo and Francesco Fontebasso to paint two new altarpieces portraying the altars' patron saints and other saints. According to records, Tiepolo and Fontebasso completed the canvases in 1738 and in 1737 respectively (Pichi 2009b, pp. 61-63. For Tiepolo: Levy, 1955, pp. 116-120; Mariacher, 1959-1960, pp. 237-239. For Fontebasso: Bertoli-Romanelli, 1997, pp. 36-37. *Fig. 198*). Tiepolo's *pala* with Saint Augustine replaced Bastiani's polyptych, which was removed from the church. According to a manuscript book written by Gianfrancesco Pivati, who remembered Bastiani's panel on the transept altar, only to then observe that it was no longer in that place, and also to Albrizzi, who mentions only "Tiepoletto", it can be convincingly suggested that Bastiani's work had been removed in the years of the renovation of the altar, hence after 1736 and before 1740 (Pivati, 1740, fol. 119r; Albrizzi, 1740, pp. 68-71). Tiepolo's *pala* was lost in a fire, probably between 1765 and 1772 (Mariacher, 1959-60, p. 238; Pedrocco, 2002, p. 39 [n. 131, 131a]), and was replaced after some time with another altarpiece of the same subject painted by Antonio Regagiolli in 1804 (not in 1778, as Moschini believed. Gaier, 2002, p. 223). Regagiolli's artwork was also described as being

on that altar in 19th century guides of Venice by Moschini, Albrizzi and Paoletti (Moschini, 1815, p. 547; Albrizzi, 1819, p. 145; Paoletti, 1839, p. 159). Subsequently this altarpiece was also lost, probably during some restoration works carried out in 1868-79 and was replaced by Brusaferro's *Saint James altarpiece*, which is still in situ (Gaier, 2002, p. 234 [note 117]. It is important to note that Brusaferro's *pala* was previously on the Saint James altar, on the left of the chapel dedicated to the *Santissimo Sacramento*. For Brusaferro, see: Bertoli-Romanelli, 1997, pp. 37-38; Pietropolli, 2002, p. 67 [n. 61] and related bibliography; Pichi, 2009, p. 60b. *Fig. 199*). In the light of the above, the "Pala rappresentante S. Agostino, ed altri Santi" reported in an inventory of art pieces still present in the church in 1807 is most probably Regagiolli's altarpiece, and not Bastiani's one, as believed by Sartor (Sartor, 1997, pp. 42, 50 [note 29]). In support of this, it must be noted that from 1740 onwards no guide mentioned the Saint Augustine altarpiece by Bastiani, but did make reference to Tiepolo's and then Regagiolli's altarpieces portraying Saint Augustine, and, above all, no description of Bastiani's polyptych ever mentioned any other saints besides Augustine. Thus, from around 1740 until 1929 all traces of the altarpiece had been lost and it was believed missing (Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 219 [note 3]; Borenius, 1912, p. 222 [note 4]. In 1936, Van Marle still included it in the list of Bastiani's lost works). Considering the significant meaning of Bastiani's painting for the Augustinian canons, who were in charge in the church and, as we will see, were the commissioners, it can be hypothesized that the *pala* had been relocated somewhere in the monastery. Subsequently it was broken up and dispersed during the Napoleonic suppressions of the religious orders at the beginning of the 19th century, which lead to the requisition of artworks from churches, convents and Scuole (for information concerning the secularization in Venice during the French domination see: Zorzi, 1972, pp. 70-137). Indeed, it is known that in 1806 the congregation of canons regular in Sal Salvador was abolished, the art pieces became a state-owned property (*demanio*), and the former monastery was used as a military base (Concina in Caputo, 1988, pp. 188-189; Bertoli-Romanelli, 1997, p. 24. Moschini remembered the military soldiers based in

the monastery in his *Guida per la Città di Venezia*: Moschini, 1915, p. 553). The central panel showing Saint Augustine, which had been in London, reappeared on the antiquarian market in Vienna at the beginning of the 20th century (the precise year is unknown), where it was recognized by Planiscig, who reported the important discovery in an article published in "Rivista di Venezia" in 1929 (Planiscig, 1929, pp. 25). Planiscig was given credit for revealing this long-lost missing altarpiece, presenting a clear description of the portrayed scene, as well as for the publication of the first picture of the painting, while Fogolari, in 1932, was able to confirm, in addition, that the panel was in the private collection of Fernando Perez, the Argentine ambassador in Italy (Fogolari, 1932, p. 284). The artwork was also recorded as being in the Perez collection in Paris, by Berenson in the Italian version of his *Indexes* published in 1930's (Berenson, 1936, p. 55). Fernando Perez was an Argentinian medical doctor, passionate about art, who had a diplomatic career in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century, during a period of cordial consular relations between France and Argentina. Perez worked and successfully collaborated with another Argentinian doctor, Carlos Mainini, to support art and culture in Argentina. They bought European artworks to donate to the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires, in order to enrich its collection (Buletín 1945, pp. 1104-1106), and promoted exhibitions of contemporary Argentinian painters in Europe. Today Perez is mostly known for the scientific research he carried out on paintings with the creation of a new discipline he called *Pinacologia* (Perez, 1931, pp. 405-412), and, for the foundation, together with Mainini, who economically financed the project, of the *Laboratoire pour l'ètude scientifique de la peinture* in Louvre Museum in 1931 (Cerasuolo, 2013, pp. 195-223; Péquignot, 2016). Between 1909 and 1913 Perez was designated minister plenipotentiary in Vienna and after the First World War, a period he spent in Argentina, he travelled across Europe visiting important European museums in major cities, such as Paris, Vienna, Madrid and Rome. In 1922 he was appointed minister plenipotentiary in Rome, a role he held until 1930, when he withdrew from office to dedicate himself completely to the scientific analysis of paintings (Péquignot, 2020). Considering the involvement of Perez

in collecting art and his extensive travels throughout Europe, owing to his diplomatic roles, and also given his work as conservation scientist *ante litteram*, it is not impossible to believe that he saw Bastiani's altarpiece on the antiquarian market in Vienna (when he was in such an elevated position there, or during one of his travels) and purchased it for his personal collection. Furthermore, Perez would surely have recognised the subject of Saint Augustine giving the Rule and linked the panel to that Bastiani's altarpiece once in San Salvador before Planiscig did, since Fogolari declared that when the Argentine ambassador came to Venice, he had personally committed himself to finding the church and the altar therein where the artwork was on display, a place he wished the painting would be returned to one day (Fogolari, 1932, p. 284). After Perez's death, in 1935, Berenson reported that the panel formerly was in Perez's collection in Paris in his 1950's *Indexes* ("Fernando Perez collection [ex]". Berenson 1957, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, p. 27). Since 1965 the painting has been found in a private collection in Montevideo, Uruguay (Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Sartor, 1997, pp. 41-43).

The scene is set in an interior, the walls are bare, probably to help the viewer focus on the main event represented. The only elements open towards the outside are two windows in the background wall, through which we can see a clear sky and some laurel branches. At the centre of the room there is the enthroned Saint Augustine, in frontal position, staring at the observer. He is presenting two Rule books to twelve kneeling canons, who have carefully rendered facial features, just as Bastiani had done with the monks of his Saint Jerome's *teleri*. The canons are disposed all around the throne, symmetrically, six on each side. Two of them, in the foreground, shown in three-quarter rear view, are actively receiving the books, whereas the others, behind, are praying or in awe at witnessing the event. On the open pages of the books, the *incipit* of Saint Augustine's *Regula ad servos dei* is written. The room is illuminated by an external lateral light from the left, projecting shadows to the right, and by the back light coming through the windows.

Saint Augustine is portrayed as a bishop in splendid garments. He wears an adorned mitre and a white tunic, which is covered by a cope, richly

embroidered with portraits of saints on the edging, and fastened by a jewel brooch. The canons are dressed in the distinctive habit of the canons regular: the white tunic, the scapular, and the capuche. Today we only have a black and white picture of the painting, but according to Planiscig the saint's vestment is richly coloured ("ricchi paludamenti, sazii di colori"), while the canons' habits are in monochromatic greyish tones. In his opinion, the contrast in colour between these elements would represent a connection between Venetian art in the Early Renaissance and ancient Byzantine art, underlying the long-lasting relationship between Venice and the Orient (Planiscig, 1929, p. 258).

The picture is characterised by a strong symmetry in the poses and gestures of the figures, as well as in the arrangement of the windows in the background wall. The frontality and the central raised position of the main saint, as well as the symmetrical balance of the elements, both emphasised by the one-point perspective, increase the hieratic monumentality of Saint Augustine and the inner solemnity of the moment. Furthermore, the carefully equilibrated composition and the reposeful arrangement of the elements, even if rather austere sometimes, is characteristic of Bastiani's mature and most personal paintings. Vavalà believed Gentile Bellini to be the basic influence for this group of characteristic works, among which she also included the *Saint Veneranda* and the *Saint Anthony on the nut tree* altarpieces (Vavalà, 1931, p. 134). Before Vavalà, Planiscig had already pointed out affinities with the abovementioned panels, as well as to echoes of Gentile's art (Planiscig, 1929, p. 258).

Owing to the lack of archival documents concerning the circumstances of Bastiani's commission for this work, important information about the picture is missing, i.e. the commissioner of the altarpiece, when the work was requested and the reasons behind the execution of this specific painting. Nonetheless, some of the answers to these questions may be found in the iconography and in the structure of the altarpiece itself.

The iconography of the panel prompted Lucia Sartor to identify the commissioners as the canons regular who were in charge in the church and in the monastery of San Salvador from 1442. The canons regulare of San Salvador were associated with the canons regular of the congregation of San Salvatore

from Bologna. Before, at the beginning of the 15th century, the numerous arguments between the Augustine friars of San Salvador and the clergymen of the nearby church of San Bartolomeo had brought disrepute on the church (the animosity of the previous canons of San Salvador for questions of money and the hostility with San Bartolomeo clergymen date back to the 13th century: Fabris, 1988, pp. 80-84; Franzoi-Di Stefano, 1976, pp. 354-355). Cardinal Gabriele Condulmer, nominated prior of San Salvador, tried to restore the good name of the church by inviting the canons regular of the Laterans from Santa Maria della Carità, but they decided to leave the church after a few months. Finally, the Augustinian canons of San Salvatore were established in San Salvador in 1442, upon request of bishop Tommaso Tommasini, who obtained permission through a papal bull issued by the Condulmer, who had recently been elected pope with the name Eugenio IV in 1431. From an anonymous manuscript, called *Analomario*, conserved in the archival collection of San Salvador, it is known that the congregation was founded by a certain Stefano di Giovanni from Silvaloro, near Siena, and was approved by Pope Gregorio XII in 1408. The canons first settled in Gubbio, then moved in the church of San Salvatore in Bologna (Corner, 1758, pp. 227-229; Sartor, 1997, pp. 42-43).

In Sartor's opinion, the choice of this specific iconography of the painting by the canons of San Salvatore can be interpreted generically as a tribute to Saint Augustine, the founder of the Augustinian order, and specifically as a celebration of the recent foundation of the congregation of San Salvatore itself. Moreover, the allusion to the foundation can also be found in the only known subject of the *predella*, which represents the ordination of Augustine as bishop, receiveing the episcopal vestments. This scene should refer to the event of the clothing of the founder of the congregation of San Salvatore, as reported in a passage of the manuscript *Analomario* (Sartor, 1997, p. 43).

Concerning the dating, from the abovementioned similarities with the *Saint Antony on the nut tree*, Planiscig believed the Saint Augustine altarpiece to be painted in 1470s (Planiscig, 1929, p. 258), while Collobi assumed it had been completed slightly later, between the 1470s and the 1480s (Collobi, 19939, p. 44 [note 27]). As specified by Boschini, the painting was a unified altarpiece,

with a *predella* and a topping panel, following the main examples created by Zoppo and Giovanni Bellini in their Pesaro masterpieces, dated 1471 and circa 1475 respectively (For Zoppo: Ruhmer, 1966, pp. 85-88; Calogero, 2013, pp. 3-21. For Bellini: Lucco-Humfrey-Villa, 2019, pp. 392-397. For the unified altarpiece: Schmidt in Lucco, II, 1990, pp. 707-709; Campbell et al, 2018, pp. 170-179. *Fig. 200*, *Fig. 201*). Taking into consideration the structural composition of the artwork and pointing out further affinities with Bastiani's Saint Jerome *teleri* and with Bartolomeo Vivarini's *Saint Ambrose* of the homonymous polyptych of 1477 (which, in turn, derives from Bartolomeo's Saint Augustine in the homonymous triptych in Santi Giovanni e Paolo church, painted in 1473. *Fig. 202*), Sartor suggested a late 1470s dating, to which I feel to agree (Sartor, 1997, p. 43).

The commission of the painting could have been included in the project of spiritual and formal renovation of the church that started earlier in the 15th century. Indeed, between 1434 and 1450 San Salvador witnessed a *revival* of the cult of Saint Theodore that culminated with the recognition of the saint as patron of Venice (the Confraternity of Sain Theodore had its own chapel in the church of San Salvador: Pichi, 2009a, pp. 67-85). In those same years, as previously said, the canons regular of San Salvatore had been called to settle in San Salvador in order to restore the importance of this ecclesiastical institution. The religious renovation set the basis for the formal refurbishment of the building. Some documents dating between 1442 and 1475 prove the intention to proceed with the renovation of the church, even if the major restoration was not carried out until the 16th century (Tafuri, 1983, p. 8, 27 [note 27], 32 [Appendice 1]; Concina in Caputo, 1988, pp. 89-90). In the 15th century, however, the monastery had been enlarged, as testified by archival records of 1440's and 1470. Moreover, in 1483 and in 1484, the church stipulated agreements with *maestro* Cristoforo da Cremona and another unspecified painter for works in the monastery (Franzoi-Di Stefano, 197, p. 355; Concina in Caputo, 1988, pp. 90-91). Given this timeframe, the canons might have decided to request the *Saint Augustine Altarpiece* to mark the

spiritual renovation of the church that started when they arrived in San Salvador.

Finally, it must be underlined that a long-lasting quarrel between the Augustinian hermits and canons regular intensified between 1470s and 1480s. The dispute concerned the foundation of the order, and the taking of precedence of one congregation over the other as the first one to have initiated the Augustinian order. We also need to consider the ongoing debate at this time concerning images of Augustine, specifically regarding the vestments the saint must be portrayed in. Between the 14th and 15th centuries, the interpretation of the episode of Saint Augustine giving the Rule was investigated more deeply by the Augustinian hermits and consequently had assumed a new meaning. The new interpretation of the event meant that it was no longer to be read as an allegory but was instead rather an illustration that Saint Augustine was the direct founder of the order, and any pictorial representation should, therefore, illustrate the strong connection between the order to its founder. In the case of a specific commission by one of the Augustinian orders, the habit worn by the saint is therefore crucial in revealing the commissioner (on this topic, please refer to: Cosma, 2011, pp. 155-177; Cosma, 2015, pp. 31-51). Given these premises, the decision to portray this peculiar episode in Bastiani's altarpiece, and in a period between 1470s and 1480s, could be interpreted not only as a tribute to the saint, but also as a declaration of identity. Indeed, the precise depiction of the saint in episcopal vestments, and the canons in their typical habits, can be seen to represent a further confirmation that the canons regular of San Salvatore commissioned the work.

Further bibliography:

Albrizzi, 1740, pp. 68-71; Corner, 1758, pp. 221-232 (Chiesa di San Salvador); Moschini, 1815, I/2, pp. 547, 553; Albrizzi, 1819, p. 145; Paoletti, 1839, p. 159; Perez, 1931, 782, pp. 405-412; *Boletín del Ministero…*, 1945, 65, pp. 1104-1106; Levy, 1955, pp. 116-120; Mariacher, 1959-1960, pp. 237-239; Ruhmer, 1966, pp. 85-88; Zorzi, 1972, I, pp. 70-137; Maschio, 1975, pp. 178-182; Franzoi-Di Stefano, 1976, pp. 353-359; Tafuri, 1983, pp. 5-36; Concina, 1988,

pp. 73-153; Mancini, 1988, pp. 155-199; Fabris, 1988, pp. 80-84; Nepi-Scirè, 1990, pp. 318-320; Schmidt, 1990, pp. 703-726; Bertoli-Romanelli, 1997; Finocchi-Ghersi, 1997, pp. 21-39; Bohde, 2001, pp. 450-472; Gaier, 2002, pp. 197-234; Pedrocco, 2002, p. 239 (n. 131, 131a); Concina, 2009, pp. 9-28; Pichi, 2009a, pp. 67-85; Pichi, 2009b, pp. 29-65; Cosma, 2011a, pp. 31-51; Cosma, 2011b, pp. 155-178; Calogero, 2013, pp. 3-21; Cerasuolo, 2013, pp. 195-223; Péquignot, 2016, 83, pp. 133-150; Rowley, 2018, pp. 170-179; Lucco 2019, pp. 392-396; Péquignot, 2020.

Further images

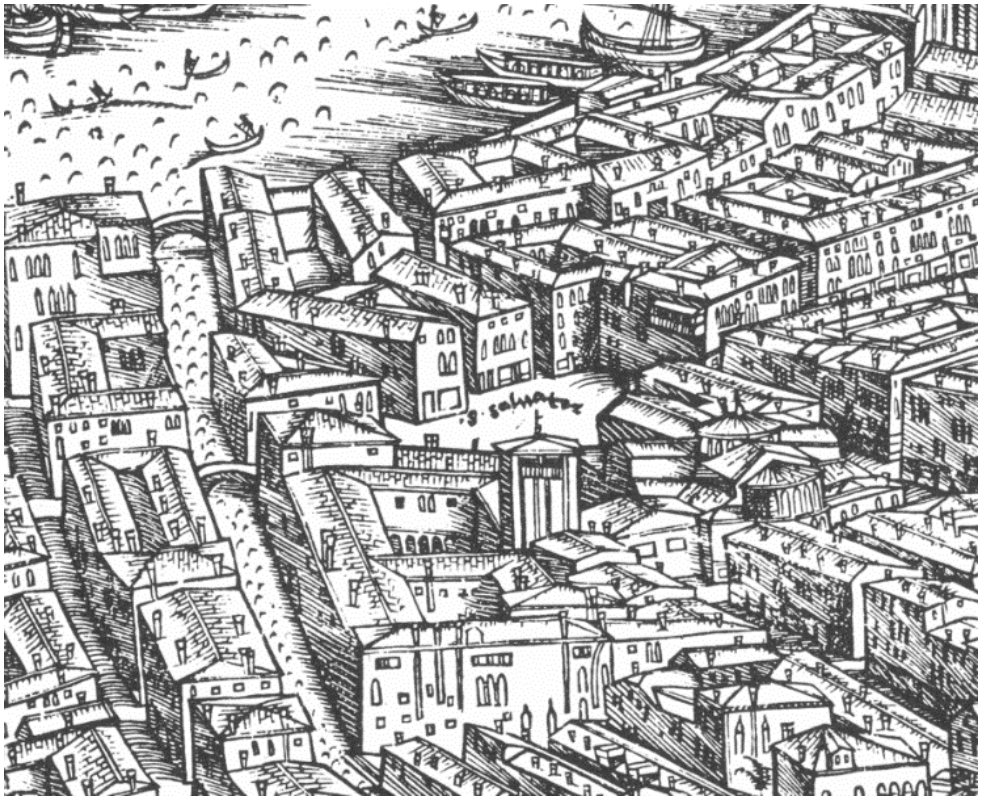


Fig. 193. J. de' Barbari, *Veduta di Venezia*, 1500 (detail of the church and the monastery of San Salvador before the XVI century renovation).

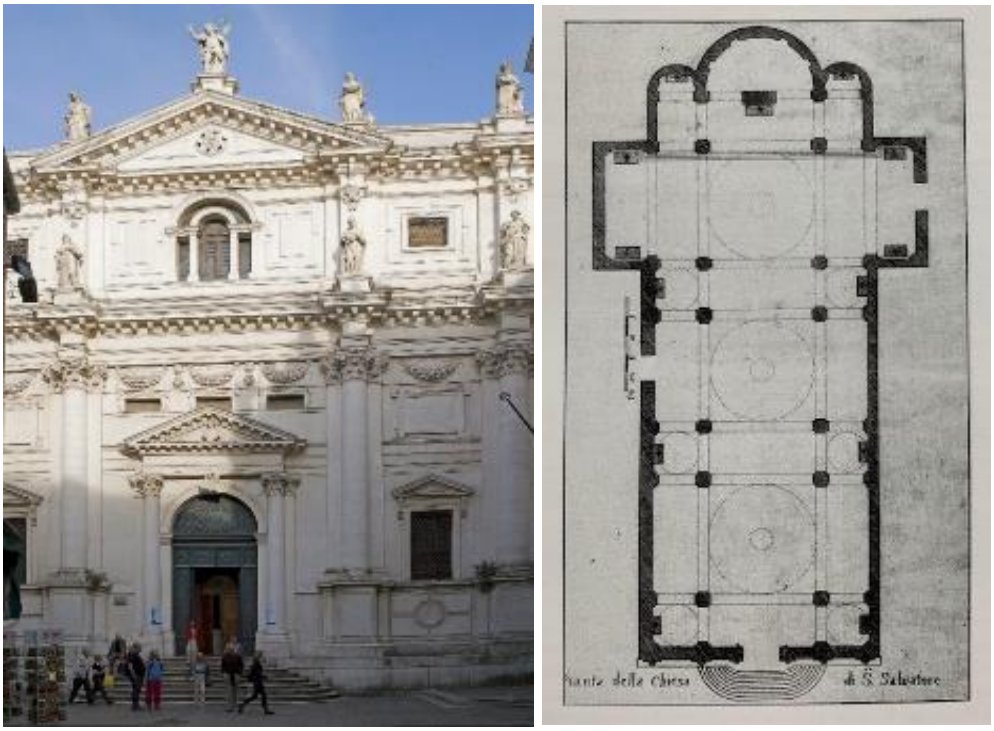


Fig. 194. Left: Venice, Church of San Salvador (façade). Right: plan of the Church of San Salvador.



Fig. 195. Venice, Church of San Salvador, Altar of the *Annunciation*.



Fig. 196. Titian, *Annunciation*, 1563-1566, Venice, Church of San Salvador.



Fig. 197. Right transept of San Salvador showing Caterina Cornaro's funerary monument and the side altars with Francesco Fontebasso (left) and Girolamo Brusaferro (right) altarpieces.



Fig. 198. G. B. Tiepolo, *Saint Augustine and saints*, 1737, London, The National Gallery – oil sketch for the altarpiece in San Salvador.



Fig. 199. G. Brusaferro, *Altarpiece of Saints James, Lawrence, Mary Magdalene, and Francis of Sales*, 1729, Venice, Church of San Salvador.



Fig. 200. M. Zoppo, *Madonna and Child enthroned with Saints*, 1471, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – central panel.



Fig. 201. G. Bellini, *Pesaro Altarpiece*, 1475 c., Pesaro, Musei Civici.



Fig. 202. Left: B. Vivarini, *Saint Augustine*, 1473, Venice, Basilica of Santi Giovanni e Paolo (detail). Right: B. Vivarini, *Saint Ambrose*, 1477, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (detail).



Number: AP27

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Donatus and the Donor Giovanni degli Angeli*

Location: Murano (Venice, Italy), Church of Santi Maria e Donato (from 1484 until 1858, then from 1873 until present)

Date: 1484

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 100 x 180 cm; 125 x 255 cm (Pallucchini, 1945)

Inscription: signed "HOC OPVS · LAZARI · SEBASTIANI · MCCCCLXXXIIII", as if it was engraved on the marble base of the throne.

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: Murano (Venice), Church of Santi Maria e Donato, Murano (until 1858); Murano (Venice), Casa di educazione delle suore di S. Dorotea, Murano (from 1858); Murano (Venice), Economo spirituale Ab. Pavanello (until 1873).

Past exhibitions: *Cinque secoli di pittura veneta* (Venice, Procuratie Nuovissime, 21st July – 31st October 1945).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1830-1831, Giuseppe Lorenzi (Zanotto, 1860; V. Zanetti, 1873, p. 195); 1979, Giuseppina Fazio and Gloria Tranquilli (*Restauri a Venezia 1967-1986*, 1986).

In Zanotto's second volume of *Pinacoteca Veneta* of 1860, Vincenzo Zanetti reported that at the beginning of the 19th century the lunette was in poor

condition ("rivelava i guasti della mano sterminatrice del tempo") and needed to be restored (Zanotto, 1860). A restoration treatment was carried out between 1830 and 1831 at the I. R. Accademia di Belle Arti, in Venice, by Giuseppe Lorenzi, restorer and member of the Accademia (Zanotto, 1860; V. Zanetti, 1873, p. 195). In 1979, during the last massive renovation of the church, which occurred between 1973 and 1979, the painting was again restored (*Restauri…*, 1986). This time, some old overpaintings, already pointed out by Vincenzo Zanetti ("Che se nell'angelo che ti si presenta nel basso alla tua destra, vedi qualche lieve maltrattamento, non si deve imputarlo se non agli inesperti che lo maneggiarono") and probably due to old treatments not cleaned in the 19th century, were removed in order to re-establish the proper readability of the picture.

Bibliography:

Boschini, 1664, p. 537; Boschini, 1674, p. 31; A. M. Zanetti, 1733, p. 453; A. M. Zanetti, 1771, p. 29; Moschini, 1808², p. 107; Moschini, 1815, II/2, p. 434; Paoletti, 1837, p. 159; Burckhardt, 1855, p. 829; Zanotto, 1856, pp. 685-686; Zanotto, 1860; V. Zanetti, 1866, pp. 145-146; V. Zanetti, 1869, pp. 142-143; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, pp. 217-218, note 4; Zanetti, 1873, pp. 193-196, 225-226, 249; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, pp. 278-279; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 10; Logan, 1903, p. 319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 21-22; L. Venturi, 1907, pp. 276, 280; Burckhardt, 1908, p. 89f; L. Venturi, 1909, p. 21; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 220 (note 2); A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, p. 388; Paoletti, 1929, p. 126; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 133-134; Berenson, 1932, p. 64; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 184; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 45 (note 30); *Cinque secoli…*, 1945, pp.45-46; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 27; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Arslan, 1965, pp. 167-168; Lorenzetti, 1981 (1974), p. 818; Sartor, 1997, pp. 45-46.

The *lunette* in the church of Santi Maria e Donato, in Murano, is the first signed and dated work by Lazzaro Bastiani known to us. Although the signature is clearly readable, numerous authors, starting with Boschini (1664, 1674), who

was the first to mention the panel in the Muranese church, to Moschini (1808), gave/assigned the painting to the Vivarinis (as "de' Vivarini", A. M. Zanetti, 1733; as Bartolomeo Vivarini, "della buona maniera vivarinesca", A. M. Zanetti, 1771). Finally, in his "Guida per la città di Venezia", published in 1815, Moschini himself corrected the erroneous attribution by accurately reading the inscription at the base of the throne: "HOC OPVS LAZARI SEBASTIANI MCCCCLXXXIIII". From this moment onwards all the authors who wrote about the Murano *lunette* confirmed Bastiani's autography (E. Paoletti, 1837; Burckhardt, 1855; Zanotto, 1856, 1860; V. Zanetti, 1866, 1869; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871; V. Zanetti, 1873, p. 195; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903; Logan 1903; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906; L. Venturi, 1907; Burckhardt, 1908; Borenius, 1912; A. Venturi, 1915; P. Paoletti, 1929; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931; Berenson, 1932, 1936; Van Marle, 1936; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939; Berenson, 1957, 1958; Lorenzetti, 1981; Sartor, 1997).

The painting portrays the Virgin and Child enthroned in central position. The Virgin is holding the infant Jesus, who is seated on her left knee and is giving a blessing with his right hand to the donor, portrayed as a canon, kneeling at the base of the throne, slightly on the right. This devotee, whose facial features are well characterized, is shown in three-quarter rear view, looking at Jesus and with his hands joint/folded in prayer. He is presented to the Virgin and Child by a bishop, often identified as Saint Augustine by ancient authors (Boschini, 1664; Boschini, 1674; A. M. Zanetti, 1771; Moschini, 1808), who is stepping forward and is leaning towards the throne and his protégé, even if this physical movement seems frozen, as it is typical of Bastiani. The bishop, clothed in rich garments, wears the mitre, and holds the crosier. On the other side, in symmetrical position and acting in the same way, Saint John the Baptist, easily recognizable from his distinctive camel-skin clothing covered by a green cloak, and the long thin wooden cross, is introducing two winded angels to the Virgin and Child. To close the scene, at both far sides of the lunette, there are two little angels playing the lute and the viola, recalling the similar playing angels in Poldi Pezzoli's panel of the *Madonna and Child*. Next to the playing angels there are, respectively, a green parrot on the right, and two birds, one recognizable

as a goldfinch for its red face, and one on the left, whose meaning in the context of this painting will be investigated/explained further below. Two decorative fruit garlands, each composed by oranges, lemons, plums, and pears joined to a string of coral beads, which can be identified as a rosary, hang at both sides of the throne. The main scene in set in the foreground. This space is separated from the distant mountainous landscape in the background by a short parapet. A simple contour line defines the mountains' shape. They are designed only as flat surfaces coloured in green and brown tones, lacking any further naturalistic element ("Il paesaggio è limitato ad una linea incerta di monti". Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939) The sky, as well, is a flat surface painted in light blue tones degrading to white. The parapet and the schematic background have been noted to be peculiar characteristics in Bastiani's late works, e.g., *Saint Jerome enthroned* in Asolo (1484-1491), *Coronation of the Virgin* in Bergamo (1490) (Casu, 1996, p. 71).

Given the definite date of 1484, this painting can provide us with information on Bastiani's mature and fully formed manner. The composition with the rigid/stiff figures equipoised to the sides of a central axial figure (the Madonna and Child group or a single Saint) is not uncommon in Bastiani's paintings that can be dated slightly before or after the Murano *lunette*. Previous notable examples are the *Saint Augustine giving the Rule* and the *Saint Veneranda* altarpiece. In the ninth decade, comparisons can be observed in the *Nativity*, dated 1480 on the basis of archival documents, in the *Saint Anthony on the nut tree* and in the slightly later *Saint Jerome* altarpiece in Asolo. A further and final example at the beginning of the last decade of the century is the signed and dated (1490) Bergamo *Coronation*. In these paintings Sandberg-Vavalà (1931, p. 133) recognized "the best and most personal works of Bastiani, showing most clearly his better qualities of lucid construction and reposeful, if cold, arrangement", even if the art historian herself underlined "his limitations of insensitiveness, lack of imagination and frigidity". Referring specifically to the Murano lunette, Sandberg-Vavalà (p. 133) affirmed that "it is a fully personal creation in which all the artist's most salient modes of construction find expression". Collobi-Ragghianti (1939) noticed that the elements of the

composition Bastiani used to geometrically arrange in the landscape are here advanced to the foreground. The scholar suggested to interpret this voluntary geometrization as a moralistic rule Bastiani imposed to himself, persuaded to find beauty not in the forms, but in their religious meaning. In the Murano *lunette*, Gentile Bellini's influence has been pointed out, especially in the throne shapes and figures (A. Venturi, 1915, p. 388) and in the "carefully equilibrated formal" composition (Vavalà, 1931, p. 134), implying that Bastiani was aware of contemporary Gentile's outcomes and that the two artists got to know each other (indeed, both Lazzaro and Gentile worked for the Scuola Grande di San Marco in the preceding years).

Vincenzo Zanetti is credited with identifying the kneeling donor as Giovanni degli Angeli, who was acolyte, canon of Torcello, protonotary apostolic and archpriest of the Congregation of San Canziano, and settled in the church of Santi Maria e Donato in 1461 ("[…] Era egli canonico di Torcello, priore di S. Cipriano di Burano *di mare*, accolito pontificio, protonotaro apostolico, presidente del Clero veneto ed arciprete della Congregazione di S. Canciano". V. Zanetti, 1873, p. 249). Hence, the group of Saint John (Giovanni) and the two angels (*angeli*) evidently refers to the commissioner's name. Moreover, the bishop behind him must be recognized not as Saint Augustine, but as Saint Donatus, the bishop the church was dedicated to. Thus, the presence of the Virgin enthroned, and Saint Donatus are intended as an homage to the patrons of the church Giovanni degli Angeli served with deep devotion for twenty years (Zanotto, 1860; V. Zanetti, 1869, pp. 145-146; V. Zanetti, 1873, pp. 193-194, 249). Indeed, "molto fu il De Angeli benemerito nella sua chiesa" (V. Zanetti, 1873, p. 249), and his dedication to the church of Santi Maria e Donato is further highlighted in his testament, compiled in 1478, in which he declared that all proceeds from the sale of his vineyards and mills must be donated to the church (Sartor, 1997, p. 45). Furthermore, in his last will he explicitly requested to be buried "in ecclesia predicta, Sancte Marie de Muriano" (Sartor, 1997, p. 45, 52 [note 55]), where, in fact, he was interred, as reported by a memorial ledger stone placed in front of the main entrance door, in the central nave ("D. IMMOR. VIRTUTI IMMORTALI DICATUS JOANNES DE ANGELIS

HUIUS TEMPLI ANTISTES BENEMERITUS ET ACCOLITUS APOSTOLICUS S. V. F. MCCCCLXXXI", V. Zanetti, 1873, p. 225). Today the stone is almost unreadable, eroded by the passage of worshippers and other visitors, but, according to Vincenzo Zanetti (1873, p. 226), it must have been "un vero capolavoro […] principalmente nei gentilissimi e finissimi ornati che la riquadrano". Sartor convincingly suggested that Bastiani's painting could have been ordered by Giovanni degli Angeli as further decorative element of his burial site (1997, p. 45). Indeed, in the counterfacade, above the main entrance and in correspondence of the commemorative stone, there is an empty lunette, slightly larger than the panel, where it is not unlikely to assume that the artwork, including his original frame (now lost), could have been placed, as coronation of the tomb. In 1664, and then in 1674, Boschini saw the *lunette* above the entrance door of the right nave, meaning that it was previously moved here from its original location. After the first massive renovation of the church, carried out between 1866 and 1873, the painting was placed above the entrance of the newly erected Saint Filomena chapel, on the left nave, "perché ha miglior luce" (V. Zanetti, 1873, p. 196. For an overview of the church refurbishments: Niero, s.d., pp. 23, 25-26; Zaniol-Mazzucco, 1999, pp. 9-12). More precisely, the panel was removed from the church in 1858, when this latter closed to worshippers because of its precarious stability. On that occasion Bastiani's work was given first to the nuns of the Casa di educazione delle suore di Santa Dorotea, in the church and convent of San Mattia Apostolo in Murano, and then to the Economo spirituale Ab. Pavanello, who conserved the painting with great zeal until 1873 (Zanotto, 1860; V. Zanetti, 1873, p. 196). As part of Giovanni degli Angeli's tomb, the *lunette* must be considered in its funerary context (Schmidt, 2002, pp. 83-101). It should be noted that the composition arranged in extended horizontal format of the *lunette* was typical in Doges' tombs. The scene of the *commendatio animae*, meaning the donor kneeling in front of the Virgin and Child, or Christ, enthroned, and presented by his patron saint, could have been painted, or decorated with mosaics, or carved in stone. This representation was commissioned for the private funerary space, following a pre-existing and long-lasting local tradition

(Franco in Benjamin, 2016, pp. 240-241). Indeed, noticeable examples can be traced back to the 14th century, with the lunette of Francesco Dandolo's tomb painted by Paolo Veneziano in Basilica dei Frari (1339. Pedrocco, 2003, pp. 164-165; Wolters, 1976, pp. 163-164 [Cat. 32]; C. Guarnieri, 2015, pp. 151-162), Giovanni Dolfin (1360-70. D'Ambrosio, 2013, pp. 85-88 [Cat. 13A]; Murat, 2013, pp. 88-90 [13B]. Today the painted part is lost, see: Moschini, I, 1815, p. 149) and Michele Morosini's tomb in the Basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo (1382-1385 circa. Wolters, 1976, pp. 205-206; D'Ambrosio, 2013, pp. 98-104 [17A]; Murat, 2013, 104-105 [Cat. 17B]). Examples from the 15th century include Michele Steno (ninth decade of the 15th century. Wolters, 1976, pp. 233-234 [Cat. 163]; D'Ambrosio, 2013, pp. 116-118 [Cat. 21]), Nicolò Marcello (Markham-Schulz, 2013, pp. 150-157 [Cat. 29]) and Andrea Vendramin's funerary monuments in Santi Giovanni e Paolo (1493 circa. Markham-Schulz, 2013, pp. 160-171 [Cat. 31]). Furthermore, this devotional composition was adopted also in votive pictures requested by private citizens for personal statements of worship (Goffen, 1975, p. 511; Goffen, 1990, p. 101): in Bastiani's painted *lunette* for Giovanni degli Angeli's tomb in Murano, but also in the carved *lunettes* for the rich and noble Bartolomeo Paruta, in the ex-cloister of Santi Giovanni e Paolo (post 1408. Wolters, 1976, pp. 77, 231), and for the wealthy doctor Jacopo/Giacomo Suriano in the church of Santo Stefano (1488-1493. Markham-Schulz, 1983, pp. 51, 68-69; Wolters, 1987, p. 94). Besides, as pointed out by Sartor (1997, p. 46), another possible influence to be taken into consideration includes Doges' votive paintings, even if it must be underlined that the *motif* of the Doge kneeling in front of the Virgin and Child, as already said, was not innovative, but already a consolidated tradition in Doges' tombs (Wolters, 1987, pp. 93-94). Examples are the votive canvas of Doge Agostino Barbarigo by Giovanni Bellini (1488. Humfrey, 2019, pp. 477-479) or that of Doge Giovanni Mocenigo, today assigned to Gentile and Giovanni Bellini (1478-79. Humfrey, 2019, pp. 417-419). From this latter could be derived the same structure of the throne in Bastiani's panel (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 21; Sartor, 1997, p. 46. Adolfo Venturi sees a generic influence of Gentile Bellini in the throne. A. Venturi, 1915, p. 388), however, this does not imply any strict

and straightforward dependence of the Murano *lunette* from Giovanni Mocenigo's votive canvas, as affirmed by Heinemann (1962, I, p. 222).

Some elements of the painting must be read/interpreted in the funerary circumstance in which the artwork was commissioned. The parrot is usually connected to the Virgin Mary for its ability to say/repeat "AVE", the greeting of the archangel Gabriel, foretelling the birth of Jesus. Thus, the parrot symbolises both mother and son, and can be interpreted as a wish for salvation and redemption (Gentili, 1988, p. 105; Ciofetta, 1991, pp. 67-69; Rigon, 2007, pp. 25-35). Moreover, the goldfinch is associated to the Passion of Christ and his future resurrection, thus is another symbol of hope for the afterlife (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, pp. 79-80; Charbonneau-Lassay, II, 1994, pp. 91-92). The scene is set in a garden with tufts of grass, plants and flowers that may indicate a Paradisiac Garden. The clover, on the right of the panel, is a symbol of Salvation (Levi-D'Ancona, 1976, pp. 99-100). The fruits of the garland are all attributes connected to the Virgin Mary and to Christ (Levi-D'Ancona, 1976, pp. 207, 274, 311, 296), while the rosary composed of a string of coral beads is usually linked to the Passion of Christ, since the red coral represents his blood (Charbonneau-Lassay, II, 1994, pp. 633-636). Finally, Sartor (pp. 45-46) associates the hovering leaf on the right to the inevitability of the death and to the uselessness of the wordly goods, but also to the hope of Resurrection ("all'ineluttabilità della morte e alla inutilità dei beni terreni ma anche a una speranza di resurrezione"). To me, Sartori's hovering leaf should be identified with a kingfisher. In Christian symbology the kingfisher and his unsinkable nest are identified with Christ and the Church that always protects the faithful (Charbonneau-Lessay, II, 1994, pp. 121-122). Furthermore, according to Picinelli's *Mundus Symbolicus*, when the kingfisher builds his nest, the sea storm ceases, and this represents the Virgin's protection (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 161), perfectly. Thus, all the symbolic elements here listed well represent the funerary meaning of the lunette and, above all, Giovanni degli Angeli's hope for salvation and redemption under protection of the Virgin and Christ. To further underline the overall purpose of the painting, it must be noticed that the centre

of the lunette does not correspond to the enthroned Virgin, but to the Child's hand giving the blessing to the donor.

Further bibliography:

Corner, 1758, pp. 612-619; Moschini, 1815, I/1, p. 149; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 222; Goffen, 1975, p. 511; Wolters, 1976, pp. 77, 163-164 [Cat. 32], 205-206, 231, 233-234 [Cat. 163]; Levi-D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 99-100, 207, 274, 311, 296; Markham Schulz, 1983, pp. 51, 68-68; *Quaderni…*, 1986, pp. 159-160; Wolters, 1987, 93-94; Gentili, 1988, p. 195; Goffen 1990, p. 101; Ciofetta, 1991, pp. 67-69; Charbonneau-Lassay, 1994, II, pp. 91-92, 121-122, 631-636; Casu, 1996, p. 71; *La Basilica…*, 1999, pp. 9-12; Levi D'Ancona, 2001, pp. 79-80, 161; Schmidt, 2002, pp. 83-101; Pedrocco, 2003, pp. 164-165; F. Rigon, 2007, pp. 25-35; D'Ambrosio, 2013, pp. 88-89 [Cat. 13A]; D'Ambrosio, 2013, pp. 98-104 [Cat. 17A]; D'Ambrosio, 2013, pp. 116-118 [Cat. 21]; Markham-Schulz, 2013, pp. 150-157 [Cat. 29]; Markham-Schulz, 2013, pp. 160-171 [Cat. 31]; Murat, 2013, pp. 88-90 [Cat. 13B]; Murat, 2013, pp. 104-106 [Cat. 17B]; Guarnieri, 2015, pp. 151-162; Franco, 2016, pp. 240-241; Humfrey, 2019, pp. 417-419 [Cat. 71]; Humfrey, 2019, pp. 477-479 [Cat. 115]; Niero, s.d., p. 48.



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Number: AP28

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Adoration of the Magi*

Location: New York (New York, U.S.A), Frick Collection (from 1935, inv. n. 35.1.130)

Date: 1470-75

Material and dimensions: panel, 52 x 28 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Sir William Neville Abdy private collection (until 1911); London, Christie's, *Catalogue of Highly Important Picture by Old Masters*, 3/5/1911, lot 131 (as Bartolomeo Vivarini); London, purchased by Colnaghi (1911); acquired by J. Pierpont Morgan for his collection.

Past exhibitions: (Metropolitan Museum, 1912); *Loan exhibition of Italian primitives* (F. Kleinberger Galleries Inc., New York, November 1917, n. 88); *The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Fiftieth anniversary exhibition* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1920); *Exhibition of Italian paintings of the Renaissance* (Century Association, New York, 2-24 March 1935, n. 17).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1944, Suhr (restoration record; *The Frick…*, 1968, p. 193); 1971, Suhr (restoration record) In 1944 Suhr noticed that the original poplar panel, heavily worm-eaten, had been mounted on a solid mahogany panel during a previous restoration treatment (probably carried out before the painting came to the Frick Museum). This procedure had not allowed the panel to move freely, causing wide cracks and separations between paint film, gesso, and panel. Nonetheless the gesso ground and the paint layer were still in excellent condition, except for some paint loss and the cracking. In addition, the varnish was still clear, apart from the darkened green areas due to–incorrect cleaning. Suhr's treatment in 1944 consisted in the cleaning of the old varnish in the greens and a little retouching. In 1971 the painting needed a further restoration procedure to re-attach the fillings in some of the wider cracks that had been restored during the previous treatment. In thinning the impaired varnish by careful rubbing, Suhr had discovered that "what it seemed to be a small, damaged area in the right upper side of the sky above the floating red angels is actually a slightly damaged crown-like design in gold with one thin vertical beam emanating from it down towards the center angel touching its halo. The imaginary continuation of this golden beam bypasses the Child in Mary's lap". Thus, Suhr probably revealed that the comet that led the Magi to Bethlem which had been covered by an old restoration. Overall, today the painting is in good condition.

Bibliography:

Borenius, , 1911, pp. 197-198; A. Venturi, 1914, VII, 3, p. 338; Testi, 1915, pp. 488-489; Berenson, 1916, pp. 15-16; Siren and Brockwell, 1917, pp. 221-222 (n. 88); *The Metropolitan…*, 1920, p. 9; Graves, 1921, III, p. 307; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 126, 131, 134; Berenson, 1932, p. 602; *Exhibition of Italian…*, 1935, n. 17; Berenson, 1936, p. 518; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 102; Kellner, 1938, p. 70; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 37; Coletti, 1949, p. 10; *The Frick…*, 1949, p. 61; Berenson, 1952, fig. 2; Coletti, 1953, pp. L-LI; F. M. Godfrey, *Early Venetian painters 1415-1495*, London, 1954, p. 14; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Pallucchini, 1962, p. 83; *The Frick…*, 1963, p. 70; *The Frick Collection...*, 1968, pp. 193-196; Longhi, 1968², p. 97 (note 59); *The Frick…*, 1971, p. 3; Klesse, 1971, pp. 283-284; Fredricksen-Zeri, 1972, p. 20; De Nicolò Salmazo, 1976, p. 28, note 146; Volpe, 1983, p. 56; Hahnlose-Brugger-Koch, 1985, pp. 197-198 (n. 392); Lucco, 1990, pp. 445-446; Humfrey, 1990, pp. 733-734; Heinemann, 1991, III, p. XI; Boskovits, 1992, pp. 24, 26-27; Casu, 1996, pp. 63, 69, 84-85 (note 58); Russo, 2018, pp- 6, 13-14 (note 20), 17 (note 43); Russo, 2019, pp. 173-174, note 26.

It is unknown whether this small arched panel was an independent devotional painting or whether it was part of a small portable polyptych. It seems likely, however, that it was originally used for private devotion. An insight into the original design of the frame is suggested by incised dark lines which follow the outer edge of the picture, outlining a semi-circular arch at the top supported by a half-column or pilaster on each side.

In the foreground the moment the Magi give Jesus the gifts they have brought him is depicted. Melchior is the old, bearded king crouching to pay homage to Jesus, who is sitting on the Virgin's lap (Melchior's much bent spine, is in some ways characteristic of Bastiani – see for instance the Child in the Verona Madonna –, and may have inspired Clergino da Capodistria, who repeated it in his Cologne *Adoration*. Klesse, 1971, pp. 283-284). Melchior has removed his crown, which is placed on a Verona marble slab on the ground, and has already delivered his gift, which is held by Joseph. Next to him, the Magus portrayed as

a middle-aged king with darker skin is Balthazar, who is traditionally believed to have been African. The young, blond king standing behind them, is Caspar. The three Magi wear richly embroidered garments bright in colour, trimmed with pearls and fur. The Holy Family, also including a servant woman appearing at the door, is placed under a wooden porch (that would represent the stable) leaning against a building wall with a decorated marble moulding on top. The building is partly made of Verona marble, as can be seen in the capitals of the pilasters and in the slabs disposed horizontally or foreshortened. An element that points to Venice is the polished porphyry column with marble capital supporting the moulding, on the very right edge of the picture. The journey of the Magi to meet the Saviour is illustrated in the background, starting from the fortress on top of the twisted cliff on the right. Then they sail to Jerusalem, the walled city on the left, where they have been called to meet king Herod. The meeting scene is portrayed in an open balcony of one of the city buildings. Finally, the Magi leave the city followed by their retinue of servants and knights and approach the site where Jesus was born in Bethlem. The bright sky is light blue, fading to pale rosy ivory towards the horizon, and gives light to the whole scene. Hovering in the mid-air there are small compact clouds bearing angels coloured according to their place in the hierarchy of angels.

Borenius deserves credit for having introduced/presented this *Adoration of the Magi* to a wide public by publishing it in a short article on three newly discovered works by Bartolomeo Vivarini (1911, pp. 192-193, 196-198). In fact, when Borenius wrote his contribution in 1911, the painting had just been sold at Christie's in London (p. 197). Previously owned by Neville Abdy, it appears the panel was purchased by Colnaghi in London (A. Graves, *Art Sales*, London, III, 1921, p. 307 [as Bartolomeo Vivarini]), before entering J. Pierpont Morgan collection shortly afterwards (A. Venturi, 1914, p. 338; Testi, 1915, II, p. 488; Vavalà, 1931, p. 126). Finally, the artwork was purchased by the Frick Collection in 1935, the year the museum opened, and today it is still here on display.

Borenius presented the painting as work by Bartolomeo Vivarini, an attribution accepted by scholars such as Adolfo Venturi (although he

downgraded the picture to school product. A. Venturi, 1914, p. 338 [note 1]), Testi (1915, II, pp. 488-489), and Berenson (1916, pp. 15-16). In 1931 Sandberg-Vavalà first attributed the *Adoration* to the young Lazzaro Bastiani, pointing out that it was executed, together with other paintings, under Bartolomeo's direct inspiration (pp. 126 ,131, 134). In the following years some critics concurred with this ascription (Longhi, 1934, p. 97 [note 59]; Collobi, 1939, p. 37, note 5), while others kept the conventionally accepted attribution to Bartolomeo Vivarini (Berenson, 1932, p. 602; Berenson 1936, p. 518; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 102; Kellner, 1938, p, 70; Godfrey, 1954, p. 14), as, indeed, did the museum in the catalogues until 1963 (1935, pp. 56-57; 1949, p. 61; 1963, p. 70). Ultimately, from Berenson's second edition of *Indexes* onwards (1957, p. 26; 1958, p. 26), Bastiani has been unanimously recognised as the artist who created the *Adoration*. Two scholars, nevertheless, did attempt to assign – without success – the work to other painters besides Bartolomeo and Bastiani. Coletti first suggested the young Giovanni Bellini (1949, p. 10), and Andrea da Murano in the early period of his career when he was working in Venice ("fase prima e vorrei dire più civile o più cittadinesca del campagnolo", 1953, pp. L-LI), while Heinemann believed it was the work of a Veneto miniaturist (1991, p. XI). In any event, some art historians did agree upon the influence of both Mantegna and Jacopo Bellini in the elaborated landscape, the classical architectural setting, the perspective construction, and the figures (Borenius, 1912, pp. 97-98; Testi, 1915, pp. 488-489; Berenson, 1916, pp. 15-16; Catalogue, 1968, p. 194; Casu, 1996, p. 69). Jacopo Bellini's drawings portraying the *Adoration*, which can be found in both London and Paris sketchbooks, have been claimed to be an inspiration for the horses and figures of the parade/procession (Levi D'Ancona, 1955, p. 47; Casu, 1996, pp. 69, 84-85 [note 58]). For Collobi, the painting must be included in a period of artistic evolution from the Vivarinesque models, when Bastiani became acquainted with the art of the painters working in first half of the 15th century, namely Jacopo Bellini, Jacobello del Fiore, Pisanello and Masolino. Furthermore, in Collobi's opinion, some elements, such as the skittish horse and the servant woman peeking out behind the door, may derive from a

preliminary knowledge of Giovanni Bellini (1939, p. 37). In an insightful comment on the painting, Lucco argued that the panel, in some ways stylistically linked to Bartolomeo Vivarini's polyptych in Santa Maria Formosa (1475[566]) and to Marco Zoppo's Pesaro altarpiece (1471), follows Antonello's lesson on perspective and light effects on different materials, which was adopted by Venetian artists in 1475-76 (1990, pp. 445-446). Boskovits persisted in reiterating the attraction of Bastiani to Mantegna, whose style he interpreted "in a way not unlike Bartolomeo Vivarini, though he reveals a more authentic poetical inspiration" (1992, p. 24). Indeed, the "self-satisfied virtuosity of the perspective setting is here combined with an evident desire to invest the episode with a grandeur and atmosphere of classical nobility", recalling for comparison the abovementioned Bartolomeo's polyptych and Crivelli polyptych in Sant'Emidio Cathedral of Ascoli Piceno depicted in 1473 (Boskivits, 1992, p. 26). Casu, on the other hand, repeated the previous suggestion of Mantegna and Jacopo Belllini's influence, underlining that for the ability shown in the foreshortening, the bright colours, and the well-defined composition, the execution of the work should be placed around 1470 (1996, p. 69). Finally, Russo considered the Frick panel "il punto di più lampante bellinismo" in a proto-Antonellesque moment, in which Bastiani became acquainted with Antonello's work through Giovanni Bellini's interpretation of his paintings sent to Venice before his arrival, and of Marco Zoppo's Venetian paintings which in turn explored further Giovanni Bellini's ideas. Moreover, Zoppo's drawings may have suggested to Bastiani the idea of perspective and spatial construction obtained through the use of numerous elements of the composition such employed as perspective lines, rather than through a decreasing of light and contrast. Therefore, Russo suggested the picture to be dated between Zoppo's Pesaro altarpiece (1471) and 1473 (Russo, 2018, pp. 13-14 [note 20], 17 [note 43]; Russo, 2019, pp. 173-175, note 26).

[566] When Lucco wrote his contribution, the polyptych was dated 1473. The IRR performed in 2001 revealed the date "MCCCCLXXIIIII" was partially covered by an overpainting, see Sponza, 2001, pp. 117, 308.

The picture repeats some recurring elements of Bastiani's production, such as the twisted cliff, as shown in the Accademia *Madonna of Humility* and in the Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà* (perhaps a Paduan reminiscence, as a spur of rock is present also in Mantegna's *Adoration* in Uffizi, and also in Zoppo's *Noli me Tangere* in Edinburgh), but also the Virgin 'type', which is an updated version of the *Madonna and Child* n. 2193 in Correr, showing some revisions, and which is also the case in the Accademia and in Poldi Pezzoli *Madonnas* (Casu, 1996, pp. 63, 66). Jacopo Bellini's *Adoration* scenes in his drawing sketchbooks may have provided inspiration for some specific element of Bastiani's panel. The page in the middle distance and the turned horse he is holding may have been derived from the page in the middle and the turned horse with similar harness on the very right edge of folio 34r in the Louvre book (it should also be noted that this group is also present in the Gattamelata predella. Eisler, 1989, p. 305). Other examples include the infant Jesus turned toward his mother from folio 19r of the British Museum book, the unusual (and in some ways monstruous) heads of the camels in the distance from folio 60r of the British Museum book (Eisler, 1989, pp. 307, 267), the rampant horse from folio 12r of the British Museum book (as suggested by Russo in response to Casu, who believed it derived from folio 18r of the Louvre book. Russo, 2019, p. 173 [note 27]; Eisler, 1989, pp. 317, 407). I believe that the idea of the porch-like stable projecting from the building in foreshortened view is taken from folio 79r of the British Museum book (*Fig. 203*). The ox and the donkey eating from the trough, close to the Madonna and the Magi in the drawing, are moved behind the shed in the New York painting. The foreshortened city, as well, might have been inspired by one of Jacopo's drawings, but also, as suggested by Russo, by the study of Zoppo's drawings in Resebery album at the British Museum. Therefore, Bastiani might have executed this *Adoration* in a period of close contact with Jacopo and during which he had free access to consult his drawings, such as during the years in which they were both active in the cycle of works for the Scuola Grande di San Marco, i.e. in 1470-71. In fact, as already remarked by Eisler, "Bastiani may well have followed Bellini's drawing for his own *David*" (1989, p. 86). Therefore, in the early 1470s Bastiani was close to Jacopo but also to his sons,

who were both called to realise a *telero* for the Scuola. This close relationship with the Bellinis can be seen as an ideal opportunity for Bastiani to get acquainted with Giovanni's latest progress~~es~~ and artistic achievements, specifically regarding the treatment of light (and colour) to shape volume~~s~~ and render different materials. The greatest example of this improvement of Giovanni's art in these very early years of the 1470s is, without any doubt, the *Saint Vincent Ferrer Polyptych* in Santi Giovanni e Paolo (1468-1471. Lucco, 2019, pp. 325-332 [cat. 22]). Furthermore, as underlined by Lucco (1990, pp. 445-446), the presence of Antonello in Venice from 1475 until 1476 increased this new perception of light further, a process that Giovanni perhaps started slightly prior to Antonello's arrival, through the study by Venetian artists of his artworks sent to Venice, as suggested by Russo. In any event, Bastiani's *Adoration* appears not to be dated after Giovanni's Pesaro *Coronation*, which is too far advanced in comparison to the Frick panel. From this perspective, the timeframe for the execution of Bastiani's *Adoration* seems to be 1470-1475.

Further bibliography:

Eisler, 1989, 89, 267, 305, 307, 317, 407; Sponza, 2001, pp. 117, 308; Lucco, 2019, pp. 325-332 (cat. 22).

Further images



Fig. 203. J. Bellini, *Adoration of the Magi*, London, British Museum, folio 79r.



Number: AP29

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Michael Archangel*; *Archangel Gabriel*

Location: Padua (Italy), Musei Civici agli Eremitani (*Saint Michael Archangel*: from the 6th of March 1899 – inv. n. 612; *Archangel Gabriel*: inv. n. 613)

Date: 1500 c.

Material and dimensions: canvas, *Saint Michael Archangel*: 258 x 130 cm; *Archangel Gabriel*: 268 x 135 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: *Saint Michael Archangel*: Vicenza, Giuseppe Riva private collection; Padua, Chiesa di Santa Maria del Pianto o del Torresino (before 1853).

Archangel Gabriel: donation by Michele Lanari (before 1871).

Past exhibitions: *Saint Michael Archangel*: *La potenza del bene: San Michele arcangelo nella grande arte italiana* (Mestre, 30 settembre 2008-6 gennaio 2009).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

Saint Michael Archangel: Early XX century (Grossato, 1957, p. 26)

In 1871 Crowe and Cavalcaselle recorded the poor condition of both the paintings. The *Archangel Gabriel* was "injured and almost entirely repainted in oil, yet in better condition than the *St. Michael*" (1871, I, p. 296 [note1]). By 1957 the artworks were still in bad condition, with "molte spellature" probably due to delamination and flaking. Moreover, a loss of paint occurred in a big area of the lower portion of the painting of the Saint Michael Archangel (Grossato, 1957, pp. 25-26). Today the conservation status of the canvases is fair.

Bibliography: Crowe- Cavalcaselle, 1871, pp. 295-296 (note 1); Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 280; Ludwig- Molmenti, 1906, pp. 22-23; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279 (note 3); Borenius, 1912, I, pp. 221-222 (note 4); Borenius, 1912, II, pp. 3-4 (note 1); Berenson, 1916, p. 154; Fiocco, 1929, pp. 264-265; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 182; Moschetti, 1938, pp. 204-205; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, pp. 47-48 (note 41); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; *Il Museo Civico…*, 1957, pp. 25-26 (n. 110, 112); Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; De Nicolò Salmazo, 1991, pp. 78-80 (n. 13-14); Pedrocco, 2008, p. 70 (n. 6).

These large canvases, which were once two organ shutters, portray Saint Michael Archangel and the Archangel Gabriel. The first is shown as a young man standing, piercing the Devil with his long lance. The defeated Devil appears as a monstrous dark figure lying down in a rectangular hollow under the floor. The archangel is wearing a green armour, covered with a long red cape. He is holding in his left arm a naked baby at prayer, while another standing child is wrapping himself in Saint Michael's cloak. The two children are unusual in Saint Michael iconography (Niero, 2008, pp. 27-37). Pedrocco identified the naked baby as Jesus and suggested an interpretation of his presence as a confirmation of the protective role of Saint Michael for the

Christian church (2008, p. 70). Since the other baby is also seeking protection under Saint Michael's mantle, Pedrocco's explanation seems convincing, however further research on this curious iconography could be carried out. The archangel is placed under an arch supported by two pilasters, while a decorative festoon is hanging at the top. These architectural elements, together with the parapet behind Saint Michael, frame the main scene in the foreground. In the background there is a landscape, with mountains in the distance. Saint Gabriel is depicted in the act of announcing to Mary, who was most likely painted on the lost shutter originally next to this, that she would conceive the son of God. He is in near profile, standing on his left leg, blessing Mary with his right hand, and carrying the lily, an attribute connected to the Annunciation and to the purity of the Virgin (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 211-212), in his left hand. Hovering in mid-air there is a dove, symbolizing the Holy spirit (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, pp. 102-103). The archangel is clothed in a dark green tunic with yellow sleeves, and a pink cape. The scene is set under a loggia, open on the outward sides with arches and a balustrade, which separates the holy event from the background. The external wall of the loggia is decorated with high reliefs of Medieval style in the corners, representing the *Creation of Adam* and the *Creation of Eve from Adam's rib*. The landscape shows Bastiani's typical background, with the mountains in the distance, a walled city facing a lake or a river, and two standing men as genre figures. Saint Gabriel in the foreground is surrounded by animals with symbolic meaning: the sleeping dog represents fidelity, the dove is the Holy spirit, and the two peacocks symbolise immortality of Christ.

The paintings, which today are on display at the Musei Civici agli Eremitani, were probably the shutters of the organ in the Church of San Michele in Padua. The paintings entered the museum collection separately and at two different times. The *Saint Michael Archangel* was purchased from the "Fabbriceria" of the Paduan Church of Santa Maria del Pianto or del Torresino and was officially included in the collection on the 6th of March 1899 (De Nicolò Salmazo, 1991, p. 78). The *Archangel Gabriel* was donated to the gallery by Michele Lanari (Grossato, 1957, p. 25) certainly before 1871, as Crowe and Cavalcaselle

mentioned the painting in the Communal Gallery of Padua at that time (1871, p. 296 [note 1]). Regarding the latter artwork, Grossato reported that Michele Lanari bought the canvas from a "rigattiere" (secondhand dealer), with whom the painting arrived from the Church of San Michele, together with the lost *Virgin annunciate*, even though he did not specify the source of this information (1957, p. 25) On the other hand, the *Saint Michael Archangel* was given to the Church of Santa Maria del Torresino before 1853, as a donation by Giuseppe Riva, "passionato amatore delle belle arti" who bought the artwork "or son parecchi anni" (Grinzato, 1853, pp. 31, 33 [note 14]). It was mistakenly believed to be that panel portraying "S. Michele Arcangelo in figura gigantesca, che trafigge Lucifero posto sotto a' suoi piedi", signed by the Paduan painter "Jacobus de Neritus discipulus Gentili de Fabiano", that Rossetti first described in the Church of San Michele in Padua (1765, p. 237) and that Moschini thought to be dispersed (1826, pp. 19-20) after the suppression and the demolition of the church, between 1812 and 1815 (for information on the church see: Beltrame, 1979, pp. 14-19). Riva was most likely convinced about the correspondence between his painting and that depicted by Jacopo Nerito, and to preserve the only known output of this mysterious Paduan artist, he decided to donate it to the Church of Sant Maria del Torresino ("non volle che l'opera unica di quel pittore rimanesse più a lungo nel pericolo di perire o di essere danneggiata più davantaggio" (Grinzato, 1853, p. 33 [note 14]; De Nicolò Salmazo, 1991, p. 78). Once acquired by the Musei Civici, the canvases were both recorded with the attribution to Jacopo Nerito, not taking into consideration Crowe and Cavalcaselle's remark about the more likely ascription to Lazzaro Bastiani, to whom the style of the *Saint Michael Archangel* and the *Saint Gabriel* were closer (1871, *I*, p. 296 [note 1]. The attribution was further confirmed in the second edition of *A history of painting in North Italy* edited by Borenius, as the author also added the paintings to the chapter regarding Bastiani: 1912, *I*, p. 221 [note 4]). Ludwig and Paoletti (1900, p. 280), and later Ludwig and Molmenti (1906, pp. 22-23), accepted Crowe and Cavalcaselle's attribution to Bastiani and indicated that the lost *Virgin annunciate,* and the *Saint Gabriel* were placed on the exterior, while the *Saint*

Michael Archangel was on the interior, although they did not mention the source of this information, which cannot be confirmed. For Lionello Venturi the execution of the pictures was so poor and crude ("grossolano") that the two artworks in Padua must have been given to a mediocre imitator ("miserabile discepolo imitatore". 1907, p. 279 [note 3]). However, all the art historians believed the *Saint Michael Archangel* was the painting described by Rossetti, Moschini and Grinzato, formerly ascribed to Jacopo Nerito on the authority of the forged inscription with the signature, which must have been cut at a certain time, as the canvas was shorter than the other. Only in 1929, thanks to Rigoni and Fiocco's contributions, the *vexata quaestio* of Jacopo Nerito's signature was finally solved. Rigoni published a document, dated to 1430, with the evaluation of a picture showing Saint Michael "cum certis adornamentis" depicted by Jacopo Bellini for the Church of San Michele. Once it was proved that Jacopo Bellini worked for the Church of San Michele and painted a Saint Michael, Rigoni convincingly suggested that Rossetti misread the signature of the artist, which was "Jacobus de Venetiis discipulus Gentili de Fabriano pinxit" (Rigoni, 1929, pp. 261-264). In a comment on Rigoni's conclusion, Fiocco briefly discussed the provenance of Bastiani's organ shutters from the Church of San Michele, which was confirmed by all the previous authors, probably based on their reading of Rossetti's text. Moreover, he further pointed out that the figure of the archangel in the Paduan museum could not be the painting seen by Rossetti, as this latter reported that it was a panel and it was placed on the wall of the main altar ("tavola sopra il muro dell'Altar maggiore", Rossetti, 1765, p. 237), while Bastiani's artwork is clearly an organ shutter painted on canvas (Fiocco, 1929, p. 265. For a summary of this issue please refer to: Land, 1982, pp. 283-286). Once this issue was cleared up , the attribution to Bastiani suggested by Crowe and Cavalcaselle has been confirmed by all the following authors (Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, p. 182; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939-40, pp. 47-48 [note 41]; Berenson, 1957, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, p. 27), and in the museum catalogues (Moschetti, 1938, pp. 204-205; *Il Museo Civico…*, 1957, pp. 25-26 [nn. 110, 112]; De Nicolò Salmazo, 1991, pp. 78-80). There is still the issue of the origin of the piece, however,

which all the scholars, starting from Crowe and Cavalcaselle, believed to be the Church of San Michele, although this information has not been confirmed by the study of the archival sources. Nicolò De Salmazo (1991, p. 79) considered it probable that the work was produced for this church because originally it was dedicated to the Archangels ("Santi Arcangeli". Beltrame, 1979, pp. 14-15). The art historian added that a possible link between the Paduan church and Bastiani could have been the congregation of Canons regulars of Saint Augustine of the Island of Santo Spirito in Venice, to whom the Church of San Michele had been affiliated between 1479 and 1656 (Nicolò De Salmazo, 1991, p. 80; Beltrame, 1979, p. 18). This observation could be the right path to follow to retrace the commission, since in the early 16th century Bastiani provided the cartoon for the tapestry with the *Pentecost* that decorated the altar of the Virgin in the Church of Santo Spirito in Isola and that was most likely requested by the Augustinian canons of Santo Spirito.

Van Marle listed the canvases among those artworks Bastiani painted under the influence of Bartolomeo Vivarini, between 1480 and 1484, for the "faces with those rounds swollen features so dear to Bartolomeo" (1936, p. 182). Collobi put in relation the "assonnate e rigide figure entro ambienti tipicamente bastianeschi" with Bastiani's late production, as the Murano *Lunette* (1484), the *Coronation* in Accademia Carrara (1490), the Zara altarpiece and the *Madonna enthroned with angels, Saint Peter, and Saint Michael* (today the saints are recognized as Saint Mark and Saint Theodore) in the Pinacoteca di Brera (1939-40, p. 48). For Nicolò De Salmazo (1991, p. 80), the monumental construction of the scene and figures, the sharp outlines and the flattened volumes of the Paduan organ shutters must be evaluated in comparison with Alvise Vivarini's lost altarpiece for Santa Maria dei Battuti in Belluno of about 1486 (Lucco, 1990, I, p. 583) and Bastiani's *telero* of the *Stories of the Relic of the True Cross* for San Giovanni Evangelista, datable to 1496, pushing forward the period of execution to mid-1490s. Numerous comparisons with elements in artworks executed in 1480s and 1490s can be suggested: the *Nativity* of Klosterneuburg in the pose and hand gesture of Saint Gabriel, as well as the buildings in perspective on the left; *Madonna enthroned*

in The National Gallery of Ireland in the peacock; the Saint John the Baptist of the Murano *lunette* in the blown cloth/drape of Saint Gabriel; the *telero* of San Giovanni Evangelista in the decorated base and capital of the columns in Saint Gabriel panel. Furthermore, numerous other elements are typical of Bastiani late outputs: the parapet, or the balustrade, separating the main scene from the background; the bushy trees; the hilly landscape with fortress and flat blue mountains in the distance and the two standing men chatting. However, I find closer resemblances with the *Madonna enthroned with angels, Saint Mark, and Saint Theodore* of Brera in the swollen faces and the sharp crisp draperies. Moreover, the upper part of the armour of Saint Michael is likely that of Saint Theodore. According to an incomplete inscription on the back, the painting in Brera was commissioned by Tommaso Mocenigo and should be dated around 1504, when Tommaso Mocenigo was elected procurator (Humfrey, 1990, pp. 41-42). Hence, I believe Bastiani's organ shutters could have been executed in the early years of the 16th century, so slightly later than usually believed.

Further bibliography:

Rossetti, 1765, p. 237; Moschini, 1826, pp. 19-20; Grinzato, 1853, pp. 31, 33 (note 14); Rigoni, 1929, pp. 261-264; Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 211-212; Beltrame, 1979, pp. 14-19; Land, 1982, pp. 283-286; Humfrey, 1990, pp. 41-42; Lucco, 1990, I, p. 583; Levi D'Ancona, 2001, pp. 102-103; Niero, 2008, pp. 27-37.



Number: AP30

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child* (*Madonna col Bambino*)

Location: Padua (Italy), Musei Civici agli Eremitani (from 1917, inv. 2297)

Date: 1460 c.

Material and dimensions: Wooden panel painting, 47 x 30 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: bequest of Countess Adele Sartori-Piovene (1917).

Past exhibitions: *Cento opere restaurate del Museo Civico di Padova* (Padova, Nuovo Museo Civico agli Eremitani, 15 aprile – 12 giugno 1981); *Da Bellini a*

Tintoretto. Dipinti dei Musei Civici di Padova dalla metà del Quattrocento ai primi del Seicento (Padova, Musei civici, 19 maggio 1991 – 17 maggio 1992).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1963, Lazzarin (Grossato, 1963, pp. 70-72;); 1981, Biasiolo (*Cento opere…*, 1981, pp. 104-106).

Two restoration treatments have been carried out on this work in the 20th century. In 1963 the over-painting in the upper corners were removed. After the cleaning procedure it was revealed the original arched shape of the picture, and it has been suggested that the painting originally was part of a polyptych. However, in the left corner the final part of the festoon is clearly visible, confuting this hypothesis. In 1981 the oil inpainting that altered the painting surface was cleaned, revealing the ground layer. Moreover, a longitudinal fracture on the wooden support was repaired and a cradled frame was applied to the verso of the panel, which had become curved. Although several lacunae and retouching, especially in the sky area, do not allow us to appreciate the picture in its entirety, today the conservation status of the artwork is fair.

Bibliography: Moschetti, 1921, p. 93; Porcella, 1927; Van Marle, 1935, p. 54; Moschetti, 1938, pp. 181-182; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 36; Coletti, 1953, p. XLIX; *Il Museo Civico…*, 1957, 1957, p. 144; Gamulin, 1963, p. 19; Prosdocimi, 1963, p. 64; Grossato, 1963, pp. 70-72; Prosdocimi, 1965, p. 52; *Cento opere…*, 1981, pp. 104-106; Sgarbi, 1983, p. 158; Spiazzi, 1991, pp. 80-81; Heinemann, 1991, p. XI; Casu, 1996, pp. 66, 80 (note 41); Biffis, 2016, p. 63; Russo, 2018, pp. 7, 12 (note 3), 14 (note 23), 17 (note 43).

The painting entered the museum collection as bequest of the Countess Adele Sartori-Piovene in 1917 (Moschetti, 1921, p. 93). The small panel, most likely employed for private devotion, portrays the Virgin sitting on a faldstool and adoring the naked infant Jesus, who lies sleeping on a white cloth laid out on her lap, preluding the future sacrifice of Christ. The Virgin is clothed in a brown dress with long sleeves, covered by a golden brocade cloak, and wearing a white veil on her head, fastened on her breast by a brooch decorated with a red

gemstone in the centre and pearls all around. The pair are placed in an extremely detailed landscape in its description of naturalistic elements with the river flowing in the plane, the distant hills on the sides, the flowers around the faldstool, and the animals (rabbits and storks) that populate the background. At the top, a garland composed of fruits symbolizing the Virgin and Christ is fixed to the corners and hangs in the sky. The composition is derived from Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini, who first influenced the young Bastiani, but the festoon and the lion protomes of the faldstool evidently reveal a knowledge of the Paduan *milieu* and of Mantegna, which is also manifest in the detailed rendering of the landscape. The attribution of this *Madonna and Child* has been long discussed, indeed the manuscript inventory of the museum gives the names of three different artists: Quirizio da Murano, written in brackets, Bartolomeo Vivarini (suggested by Venturi. Porcella, 1927), and Antonio da Negroponte (*Cento opere restaurate…*, 1981, p. 104) Initially Moschetti assigned the panel to Carlo Crivelli under the influence of Francesco Squarcione (1921, p. 93), only to change his mind few years later in the catalogue of the museum, ascribing it to Antonio da Negroponte, an artist that used to mix elements both of the Paduan and of the Muranese School (1938, pp. 181-182). This view was supported by Van Marle (XVII, 1935, p. 54). In the next catalogue of the Civic Gallery, Grossato, under suggestion of Fiocco, dubitatively attributed the artwork to Quirizio da Murano by comparing it with his *Cristo Redentore*, or *Christ showing his wounds and the host to a Clarissan nun*, today in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (1957, p. 114). The author declared that the picture shows Quirizio da Murano's typical traits, with elements derived from different cultures, not homogeneously mixed, but, rather, juxtaposed: the flat mantle of the Virgin of Gothic origin, the volume of the bodies derived from Lippi and the Florentines' examples, the already Bellinian naturalistic landscape. In his attribution, however, Grossato did not consider Collobi's ascription to Bastiani's early production. Collobi, in her comprehensive essay on Bastiani's art published in 1939 (p. 36), remarked upon the conscious application of Mantegna's lesson ("mantegnismo cosciente e puntuale"), probably due to a Paduan experience of Bastiani (impossible to

confirm so far) or to the direct contact with Mantegna himself during his Venetian journey in 1459. Coletti grouped this panel with other pieces nowadays included in Bastiani's catalogue, such as the *Virgin and Child in a painted frame* of the Berlin Museum, the *Virgin and Child, musical angels and the Trinity* in Poldi Pezzoli and the *Virgin and Child* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, suggesting that the artist was "una personalità diligente e garbata", a follower of Bartolomeo Vivarini close to Antonio da Negroponte and Quirizio da Murano (1953, p. XLIX). In 1963 in the catalogue entry referring to the restored paintings of the Civic Museum, Grossato repeated his previous statement, still confirming – if doubtfully – the name of Quirizio da Murano, although underlining the presence of the animals and other elements in the landscape more familiar to Bastiani's works, than to Quirizio da Murano's production (1963, p. 72. See also: Prosdocimi, 1965, p. 52). On the other hand, for Gamulin the landscape of the Paduan panel was typical of Quirizio (1963, p. 19). Finally, in 1981 Parise accepted attribution to Bastiani's, placing the artwork in his early period, when inspired by the Vivarinis and the Paduan manner, and the shapes were accurately defined, but not yet as stiff as they would be later (pp. 104-106). In a short article appeared on "Arte Veneta" in 1983, Sgarbi analysed this *Virgin and Child* in comparison with other Bastiani's paintings of similar subjects. He supported the opinion of Mantegna's main influence on Bastiani in this artwork, where the Paduan master's suggestions are combined with elements of Antonio Vivarini, Giovanni d'Alemagna and Antonio da Negroponte. Moreover, Sgarbi considered the *Virgin and Child* n. 2193 in the Correr Museum as one of Bastiani's first works, which must be dated to 1450-55, when our artist was not impressed by Mantegna yet, but was evidently influenced by Antonio Vivarini (p. 518). Heinemann confirmed the name of Bastiani, remarking that Quirizio da Murano used to draw the Virgin's hands differently (1991, p. XI) Spiazzi highlighted Bastiani's mixed sources of influence here, derived not only from the Muranese and the Paduan masters for the gestures and the attitude of the figures, or the plastic modelling of the bodies, but also from Venetian gothic art in general, for instance in the detailed description of the natural elements typical of tapestries, or in the lion

protomes of the Virgin's faldstool that are redolent of similar architectural adornments. For the use of light, which clearly defines the figures in the foreground, as well as the landscape in the background, the art historian dated the panel before the end of 1450s, before a more profound adhesion to Giovanni Bellini's manner (1991, p. 81). Casu considered the panel executed in the early years of the 1460s, comparing the careful representation of the animals in the landscape with the *Pietà* in Poldi Pezzoli, believed to be contemporary, or with slightly earlier or later artworks, such as the *Virgin and Child* already mentioned by Sgarbi in Museo Correr, or as the *Virgin and Child* in the Hermitage Museum. He also pointed out the presence of "Squarcionesque" elements, such as the festoon and the faldstool, that indicate a derivation from the Paduan School probably due to the mediation of the Paduan manner through Bartolomeo or owing to a possible journey to Padua (1996, p. 66). In recent years, Russo confirmed the attribution to Bastiani's early catalogue underlining the lessons of Mantegna in the Virgin's veil and in the Child's face in perspective (2018, 7, 14 [note 23], 17 [note 43]). To conclude, from the 1980s onwards scholars largely agree in assigning this small *Virgin and Child* of Paduan style to Bastiani's production of the first years of the 1460s (The only discordant voice is Biffis, who still includes this work to Quirizio da Murano's corpus of paintings. 2017, p. 63).



Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André – Institut de France © Studio Sébert Photographes

Number: AP31

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Episodes from the life of Paul I of Constantinople: The sermon and the imprisonment of Saint Paul; The judgment and martyrdom of Saint Paul; Transfer of the body of Saint Paul*

Location: Paris (France), Musée Jacquemart André (Inv. MJAP-P 2250)

Date: 1493 c.

Material and dimensions: Three wood panels, 34.9 x 48.6 cm

Inscription: "LAZARI BASTIANI O.", on the lower border of the central panel.

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: Venice, Michelangelo Guggenheim, Venice (until 1888).

Past exhibitions: *Due collezionisti alla scoperta dell'Italia. Dipinti e sculture dal Museo Jacquemart-André di Parigi* (Milano, Museo Poldi Pezzoli, 16 ottobre 2002 – 16 marzo 2003).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Cracks and flacking are visible on the paint surface.

Bibliography:

Lafenestre, 1913, pp. 451-452; *Musée Jacquemart-André...*, 1913, p. 145 (n. 1027); Lafenestre, 1914, pp. 17-18; *Musée Jacquemart-André...*, 1914, p. 145 (n. 1027); Venturi, 1914b, p. 74; A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, pp. 387-388; *Musée Jacquemart-André...*, 1926, p. 143 (n. 1027); *Musée Jacquemart-André...*, 1929, p. 143 (n. 1027); Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 134; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Fiocco, 1931, p. 101; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, pp. 178-179; Collobi-Ragghianti, p. 43; Fiocco, 1942[2], p. 105; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, pp.

59-60; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Mariacher, 1957, p. 40; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; *Musée Jacquemart-André...*, 1967, p. 45 (n. 1027); Blondel, 1995, pp. 141-142; Babelon, 2000, pp. 82-83, 154, 168, 179; Sartor, 2002, pp. 80-81.

The artwork was purchased by Mr and Mrs André in 1888 from the Venetian antiquarian and art dealer Michelangelo Guggenheim (*Primitifs…*, 2000, p. 168 [n. 6]). The complex is composed of three small panels, showing episodes of the life of a saint, explained by a short caption below, which, unfortunately, is almost unreadable today. The central panel is signed "LAZARI BASTIANI O.". The right-hand panel (from the observer's point of view) portrays a saint delivering a speech to a group under a porch and the same saint imprisoned, while a servant delivers him some food. A hovering angel sends a gold ray towards the saint. The central panel describes a judgement scene, flanked by two side scenes of martyrdom. God the Father, in the sky, sends his blessing to the kneeling saint in the centre, who is about to be judged. To the left the saint is beheaded. Finally, the left panel shows the transfer of the body of the martyred saint. The funeral procession accompanies the saint's dead body to a docked ship. People outside a church witness the event, while a deer witness follows the procession.

For a long time, the scholars described the triptych as a *predella* with scenes of the life of an unknown saint, or various unknown saints (Lafenestre, 1913, pp. 451-452; Lafenestre, 1914, pp. 17-18; L. Venturi, 1914, pp. 73-74; A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 387-388; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, pp. 178-179; Berenson, 1957, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, p. 27).

In 1975, Nicole Blondel first defined the saints as Saint Isidore of Chios, Saint Marcian and Saint Myrope. Specifically, the central panel would have represented the *passio* of Saint Isidore, the right one panel the sermon of Saint Marcian and the imprisonment of Saint Myrope, and the left panel the transfer of Saint Isidore's or Saint Marcian's body (Blondel, 1995, pp. 141-142; Sartor, 2002, p. 80). According to the life of Paul I, Bishop of Constantinople and Christian martyr, was imprisoned and killed by strangulation. Sartor suggested this saint as being the one represented here by Bastiani. This hypothesis was

then confirmed by Blondel, who independently read the name "PAVLO" under the scene with the *Transfer of the Saint's Body* (Sartor, 2002, pp. 80-81).

Sartor presented historical evidence to support her identification. In 1226 the remains of Saint Paul's body were transferred from Constantinople to Venice and placed in the Church of San Lorenzo. The relic had been lost until 1493, when it was rediscovered in the same church during some renovation works involving the erection of the new main altar, promoted by the nuns of the annexed Benedictine monastery. In an old inventory one of the nuns found the reference to the relic of Saint Paul's body, which had once been conserved in the same place where it was excavated (Fiamma, 1645, pp. 19-20). Once it was confirmed that the remains belonged to Saint Paul, the patriarch of Venice ordered that they must be conserved in the church. For these reasons Sartor assumed that the artwork was requested by the nuns of the monastery nearby the Church of San Lorenzo around 1493 (Sartor, 2002, p. 80. See also Corner, 1758, pp. 136, 138-140).

This dating is consistent with the style of the painting which is really reminiscent of the *telero* of the *Relic of the Cross* for the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista, which was executed around 1494. Furthermore, the ship portrayed in the last episode reveals the influence of the young Carpaccio, as it appears to be derived from the *Arrival of the pilgrims in Cologne* (1490), one of the *teleri* of the Saint Ursula cycle (Sartor, 2002, p. 80). Fiocco already pointed out that the whole triptych was inspired by Carpaccio (1930, p. 101; 1942[2], p. 43), while for Sandberg Vavalà (1931, p. 134) and Van Marle (1936, pp. 178-179) it was more Gentilesque. The child sitting on the floor in the foreground of the first episode echoes Jacopo Bellini's drawing of the *Presentation of Jesus at the Temple* (Sartor, 2002, p. 80), and not the drawing in Fenwick collection (Cheltenham, UK) that Tietze and Tietze-Conrat assigned to Lazzaro Bastiani, but today unanimously ascribed to Carpaccio (Cat. RD04). Next to the child, there is the artist's stick in perspective, an element not uncommon in Bastiani's signed paintings (see the altarpiece of Saint Veneranda, Cat. AP61). Finally, it must be remarked that this is not the first commission Bastiani received from the nuns of the Church of San Lorenzo. These latter, indeed, requested

commissioned him to decorate the coffin conserving the remains of Saint Leone Bembo's body, which was once on display in the oratory of San Sebastiano next to the Church of San Lorenzo, and today is in the Church of San Biagio in Vodnjan (Croatia).



Number: AP32

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Lucy and the Kneeling Donor*

Location: Portland (Oregon, U.S.A.), Portland Art Museum (from 1961, gift by Samuel H. Kress collection– inv. n. 61.45)

Date: 1490 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 42.4 x 39 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: Enrico Marinucci collection, Rome (reported in 1934); Count Alessandro Contini Bonacossi collection (probably purchased 1936/37);

Samuel H. Kress Collection (acquired 1st September 1939 – K 1185); on loan to the National Gallery of Art, Washington (1946-1951).

Past exhibitions: *Paradise by Fallen Fruit* (Portland Art Museum, 24th October 2015 – 17th January 2016).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Restored two times since acquired, in 1940 (cradled, cleaned, and retouched) and in 1959 (brushing of numerous white spots that had formed and retouched. National Gallery of Art, Washington Gallery Archives, 46A3 Kress Collection Object Files - Other Locations). The condition reports (1940 c., 1960 c., 1962, 1976, 1892) described an abrasion on the saint's face, small losses and quite extensive inpainting, however the status of the painting was judged to be generally good overall. X-ray analysis has been performed. Today the preservation state is good.

Bibliography:

Suida, 1934, p. 123; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 190; Colt, 1952, p. 55; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Rusk Shapley, 1968, p. 55; Fredericksen-F. Zeri, 1972, pp. 20, 623.

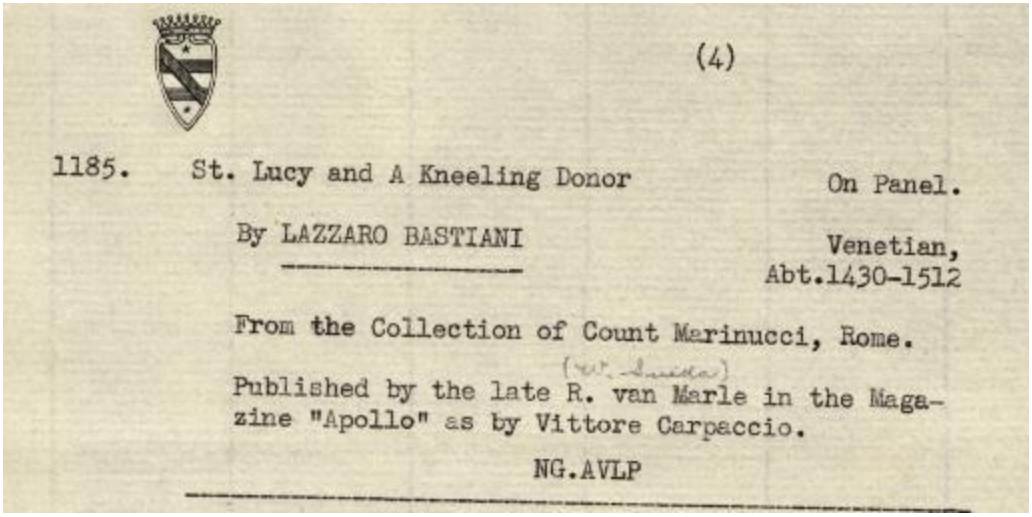
This small panel portrays the standing full-length figure of Saint Lucy, crowned by two floating angels, with the kneeling donor at her feet. The two figures are shown in a wide natural landscape animated by animals and peasants. The saint, clothed in a long red dress and a golden brocade mantle, is recognisable by the palm branch of her martyrdom and a lamp. The donor, of a smaller scale still according to a medieval fashion, seems to be a clergyman.

Formerly in Marinucci collection in Rome (Suida, 1934, p. 123), the panel was then purchased by Count Alessandro Contini and then acquired from him by Samuel H. Kress on the 1st of September 1939 (*Fig. 204*). Later, the artwork was lent by the Kress collection to the National Gallery of Washington (1946-1951). Transferred to the Portland Art Museum in 1952 (Colt, 1962, p. 55), in 1961 the painting was finally donated as a gift to this museum, where it is still on display today (Rusk Shapley, 1968, p. 55).

When it was in Marinucci collection, Suida attributed the *Saint Lucy* to Carpaccio (1934, p. 123). When Kress bought the panel, however it was already ascribed to Bastiani. In addition, numerous scholars attributed the work to Bastiani by sending their "expert opinions" to Kress himself (A. Venturi, Perkins, Fiocco, Longhi and Berenson). Tietze-Tietze-Conrat, however, suggested "School of Bastiani", and Suida reiterated his previous opinion and assigned the work to the young Carpaccio ("I am inclined to believe that he [Carpaccio] is the author of this fine picture, revealing the first steps he made towards his independent style"). In the 1952 Kress catalogue of paintings in the Portland Museum, Suida wrote that the *Saint Lucy* was a Venetian master (Colt, p. 55). Generally, the attribution to Bastiani was accepted (Van Marle, 1936, p. 190; Berenson, 1957, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, p. 27; Rusk Shapley, 1968, p. 55; Fredericksen-Zeri, 1972, p. 20, 623). Concerning the dating, scholars agreed upon the late period in the artist's life, at the end of the 15th century, especially given the Carpacciesque landscape (Van Marle, 1936, p. 190: probably after 1490, influenced by the work of Alvise Vivarini and close to the Klosterneuburg *Annunciation* owing to the rounder forms and a more evolved style; Longhi, written opinion; Berenson, 1957, p. 26; 1958, p. 27; Rusk Shapley, 1968, p. 55: as late as 1480/1490).

As already remarked by Rusk Shepley, the composition with the full-length saint crowned by a pair of hovering angels, was probably popular in late 15th century Venice, but also into the 16th. This is proven by at least three panels by Girolamo da Santacroce showing the same composition (*Saint Agnew*, Christopher Loyd, Lockinge House, Wantage, Berkshire, UK; *Saint Lawrence*, The Courtauld, London; *Saint Stephen*, Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan). Bastiani's painting differs from Girolamo da Santacroce's owing to the addition of the kneeling adorer, which must be linked to a specific request of the commissioner. As in the case of the *Christ blessing* in Modena, however, the panel's size is almost identical, suggesting perhaps the existence of a compositional model of this size that artists followed and then worked up according to their taste.

Further images



(4)

1185. St. Lucy and A Kneeling Donor — On Panel.

By LAZZARO BASTIANI — Venetian, Abt.1430-1512

From the Collection of Count Marinucci, Rome.

Published by the late R. van Marle in the Magazine "Apollo" as by Vittore Carpaccio.

NG.AVLP

Fig. 204. Document attesting the purchase of the painting from Count Marinucci, Rome (Series 1.7b Dealer Correspondence and Bills of Sale. Samuel H. Kress Foundation Archive).



Number: AP33

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna Adoring the Child and Scenes from the Life of Tobias in the Background*

Location: Poznań (Poland), Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu (from 1925, inv. n. Mo 1017)

Date: 1480-1485

Material and dimensions: panel, 86,5 x 67,5 cm

Technique: tempera and oil

Provenance: Gift/Donation by The Association of the Friends of the Museum in Poznań (1925); Transferred to Germany (1943); Reclaimed from Moscow (1956).

Past exhibitions: *Malarstwo włoskie XV i XVI wieku* (Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, Galeria Czartoryskich, Krakow, October – December 1961);

Malarstwo obce XVI – XVIII wieku. Wystawa malarstwa włoskiego, flamandzkiego I holenderskiego ze zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Poznaniu (Muzeum w Koszalinie, Koszalin, 1962); *Malarstwo weneckie XV – XVIII wieku* (Muzeum Narodowe W Warszawie, Warzawa, 1968).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1989-1990, Toruń, Nicolaus Copernicus University.

The painting was restored six times. The first treatment was carried out in late 19th century in Italy. At that time the cradling was applied to the verso of the panel. The following procedures were limited to the painting surface, gluing crack and reintegrating losses. The last restoration included stabilization of the support, cleaning, paint integration and varnishing (Skubiszewska, 1995, p. 41).

Bibliography:

Rozycka-Bryzek, 1961, p. 95 (n. 97); R. T., 1963, p. 226; Ragghianti, 1963, p. 56; *Malarstwo weneckie…*, 1968, p. 45 (n. 14); Ballarin, 1968, p. 242; Heinemann, 1991, III, p. 77 (V. 12 bis); Skubiszewska, 1995, pp. 40-43 and previous bibliography

Entering the museum collection in 1925 as a gift by The Association of the Friends of the Museum, this painting was at first generically recorded as "Venetian School, around 1500" (*Malarstwo weneckie…*, 1968, p. 45 [n. 14]). In 1957 Dobrzycka advanced the attribution to Bastiani based on comparisons with the signed *Virgin and Child* in London's National Gallery (Skubiszewska, 1995, p. 41). The ascription to Bastiani has been accepted by the following scholars and never questioned (Rozycka-Bryzek, 1961, p. 95 [n. 97]; R. T., 1963, p. 226; Ragghianti, 1963, p. 56; *Malarstwo weneckie…*, 1968, p. 45 [n. 14]; Skubiszewska, 1995, pp. 40-43). In 1960s', the artwork was presented/shown as by Bastiani in three exhibitions (1961, 1962 and 1968) in Poland.

The panel portrays the well-established composition of the half-length Madonna adoring the infant Jesus, who lays on a parapet in front of her. The Virgin is clothed in a red dress, a white veil, and a blue mantle. The infant Jesus

props his back against a luxurious–bluish cushion and his naked body is partially covered by an ochre cloth tied on his chest. The group is presented against a dark cloth of honour. In the background Bastiani's typical landscape is filled with scenes from the Life of Tobias (*Book of Tobit*, 5,17-8,3), starting from top left and reading anti-clockwise: the departure of Tobias from his blind father Tobit and the start of his journey to recover money from a relative in the city of Medea, under protection of the archangel Raphael in human disguise and the loyal dog; the catching of the fish from which Tobias will make a curative ointment following Raphael instruction; the journey of Tobias carrying the fish; the receival at Rachael's house, where Tobias is welcomed like a son and his cousin Sarah is given to him in marriage; the banishment by Raphael of Asmodeus, the evil spirit that killed Sarah's previous suitors, by binding it beneath the desert.

The *Virgin adoring the Child* laying on a parapet was typical in Giovanni Bellini and Alvise Vivarini's production and Bastiani repeated this iconography in several artworks (for instance, the *Virgin adoring the Child* in the Church of Redentore in Venice, and the *Virgin adoring the Child* in Pinacoteca Tadini in Lovere, as well as the already mentioned *Virgin and Child* in London, even if the infant Jesus in this case is depicted kneeling on the parapet). Heinemann (1991, p. 77 [12 bis]) suggested that this Madonna is a late work under influence of the Vivarinis. The infant Jesus depicted here bears and striking resemblance to that in the *Nativity* of the Gallerie dell'Accademia (1480), except for the positioning of the legs (here he has his left knee bent). Given the abovementioned comparisons with Bastiani's works, I would suggest a period of execution in the early 1480s, though no later than the 1485.

As pointed out by Maria Skubiszewska, the traditional composition of the Poznan panel with the Virgin adoring the infant Jesus resting on a parapet might be due to the commissioner's taste. However, it was a popular composition in Bastiani's workshop as evidenced by the fact it was repeated in at least three other works to be found in American private collections, one previously in E. Speyer collection (already mentioned by Collobi, 1939, p. 47. Collobi dated the Speyer *Madonna* in the second half of 1480s), the other

formerly in Paul Dray collection (Skubiszewska, 1995, p. 42), and in Minneapolis Institute of Art, MIA (donated to the museum by Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Bennett in 1983).[567] The three pictures show almost identical figures, but different landscapes, as in the American paintings a natural landscape is represented, while the Polish painting includes the abovementioned episodes of the Life of Tobias.[568] This characteristic could also be in response to a specific request advanced by the commissioner, for instance as a dedication to ensure a safe journey, or as a thanksgiving for the safe return. It is necessary to emphasize that from the mid-15th century onwards various depictions of *Tobias and the Angel* became popular and widespread in Florence. To explain this phenomenon, it has been suggested that, since an essential part of the story of Tobias regards the travel made by Tobias and Raphael, they were commissioned by Florentine merchants to protect their sons who were about leave for a long trade mission abroad (Philpot, 2009, p. 148).

Further bibliography:

Collobi, 1939, p. 47; Philpot, 2009, p. 148.

[567] The painting was previously ascribed to Jacopo da Valenza in the museum collection. I personally contacted Rachel McGarry, curator of European paintings and works of paper in the Minneapolis Institute of Art (MIA), who agreed in modifying in the attribution to Lazzaro Bastiani or his workshop (https://collections.artsmia.org/art/3206/madonna-adoring-the-christ-child-circle-or-workshop-of-lazzaro-bastiani).

[568] For further insights on these *Madonna* paintings and the use of cartoons in Bastiani's workshop, refer to Chapter 4.4.2.1.



Number: AP34

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Christ Carrying the Cross to Calvary and Meeting with the Virgin Mary and the Three Marys*

Location: Rovigo (Italy), Pinacoteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi (from 1838 – inv. n. 79/107)

Date: 1490 c.

Material and dimensions: panel, 37.5 x 45 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Casilini family collection, Rovigo (1824).

Past exhibitions: *Da Bellini a Tiepolo. Capolavori dell'Accademia dei Concordi* (Forte di Bard, Bard [Ao], 20th June 2015 – 8th November 2015); Bellini e i belliniani dell'Accademia dei Concordi (Palazzo Sarcinelli, Conegliano, 25th February 2017 – 18th June 2017).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Soprintendenza di Verona (Riferimento bibliografico); 2020, MAUVE srl (personal communication by Dr. Paolo Roma, restorer at MAUVE srl).
Before the last conservation procedure carried out in 2020 some flaking of the pigment layers was visible along the bending axis of the panel, due to the natural tendency of wood to bend. The restoration treatment was limited to maintenance work. Today the painting condition is good.

Bibliography:
Collezione di quadri… 1824, p. 3; Biscaccia, 1846, p. 51; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 417 [note 5]; Bernardini, 1905, p. 670; Borenius, 1912, II, p. 117 [note 4]; *Guida della Pinacoteca…*, 1931, p. 42; Berenson, 1932, p. 370; Berenson, 1936, p. 318; Moschetti, 1934-1939, pp. 83-86; Moschetti, 1940, pp. 163-166; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 49, note 50; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 119; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 123; Valcanover, 1962, p. 3; Semenzato, 1966, p. 72; Romagnolo, 1981, p. 48; Lucco, 1985, pp. 31-32; Casu, 1996, pp. 67-68, 82 (note 48); Lucco, 2015, pp. 48-49; Cavalli, 2017, pp. 86-89.

Formerly in the private collection of the Casilini family in Rovigo (*Collezione…*, 1824, p. 3), the panel was bequeathed to the Pinacoteca dei Concordi in 1838. The painting portrays the weary Christ carrying the cross outside Jerusalem and the meeting with the Marys who are all overwhelmed by sorrow. Slightly behind, on the right, some guards and a rabbi exit from the gate of the walled Jerusalem. In the background, on the right there is the walled city, while on the left there is a hilly landscape with fortress and tall palm trees.
In the Gallery's early catalogues the artwork was attributed to Mantegna (Casilini, 1824, p. 3; Urbani, 1833, n. 75 [manuscript]; Biscaccia, 1846, p. 51), or to Bonsignori following Mantegna's example during his Mantuan journey (Bernardini, 1905, p. 670), only to then be generally assigned to an artist of the Paduan School in the 15th century (Inv. 1930, n. 107 [manuscript]; Guida, 1931, p. 42; Guida, 1953, p. 16). Crowe and Cavalcaselle found in this work "a caricature of the manner of Alunno" (Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 417 [note

5]; Borenius, 1912, II, p. 117 [note 4]). In his *Indexes*, Berenson assigned it to Jacopo da Montagnana (1932, p. 370; 1936, p. 318; 1957, p. 119; 1958, p. 123). This attribution was rejected by Moschetti, who instead suggested the execution by the workshop of Lazzaro Bastiani (Moschetti, 1934-39, pp. 83-86; Moschetti, 1940, pp. 163-166), a proposal later supported by Moschini Marconi (1955, p. 60) and Casu (1996, pp. 67-68, 83 [note 48]). Finally, Collobi ascribed the work to Lazzaro Bastiani himself, although highlighting that here, in her view, Bastiani was almost parodying his manner ("la legnosa tavoletta […] col Cristo portacroce nell'Accademia dei Concordi a Rovigo arriva alla parodia dei modi bastianeschi". 1939, p. 49). The attribution to Bastiani was accepted and repeated in the following museum and exhibition catalogues from 1960s onwards (Valcanover, 1962, p. 3; Semenzato, 1966, p. 72; Romgnolo 1981, pp. 48-49*; Lucco,* 1985, pp. 31-32; Lucco, 2015, pp. 48-49; Cavalli, 2017, pp. 86-89).

Moschetti paired the *Christ Carrying the Cross* in Accademia dei Concordi with a picture in Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice which depicts another episode of the Passion of Christ, the *Agony in the Garden*. He argued that the two panels were executed by the same artist from Bastiani's workshop (pointing to comparisons between the figures, the colours, the walled city, and the tall trees), and that they surely belonged to the same *predella* being the same height (1934-39, pp. 83-86; 1940, pp. 163-166). Moschetti hypothesis was confirmed by Moschini Marconi (1955), Romagnolo (1981) and Lucco (1985, 2015). It must be said that Moschetti probably misread the dimensions of the two artworks, because they differ in size, measuring 37.5 x 45 cm (*Christ Carrying the Cross*) and 45 x 60 cm (*Agony in the Garden*). The Rovigo panel could have been slightly shortened on the lateral sides, because one of the three Marys and the cross seem to have been cut (in the oral opinion of Dr. Paolo Roma, restorer at MAUVE srl). The battens applied on the back, which seem to be original, perfectly fit the height of the panel and so do not suggest that the panel could have been shortened in height. The existence of another panel, however, attributed to Girolamo da Santacroce, representing *Christ Carrying the Cross* in the Berlin Gemäldegalerie (Fig. 205. G. Da Santacroce,

Christ Carrying the Cross to Calvary and Meeting with the Virgin Mary and the Three Marys, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie), shows exactly the same composition as Bastiani's one (except for the lacking palm trees), underlining not only that this was a well-known composition and one reproduced by Venice artists, but also that the cross and the Mary on the extreme left side were meant to be cut. In addition, the Venetian painting has a painted frame that is absent in the Rovigo one. Finally, even considering the poor condition of the *Agony in the Garden*, with its badly damaged paint, the underdrawing of the Christ carrying the cross seems more defined and accurate, with fine hatching for the shaded areas. For these reasons I would reject Moschetti opinion that the Rovigo and the Venetian panels were part of the same predella coming from the Monastery of San Lorenzo.

From Collobi onwards, the artwork has been unanimously assigned to the late activity of Lazzaro Bastiani, after 1490. It is not possible to date precisely Bastiani's late outputs, however, the strong geometrization of the folds seems to be characteristic of his paintings from around 1490.

Further images



Fig. 205. G. Da Santacroce, *Christ Carrying the Cross to Calvary and Meeting with the Virgin Mary and the Three Marys*, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.



Number: AP35

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child*

Location: Saint Petersburg (Russia), State Hermitage Museum (from 1920, inv. N. ГЭ-5518)

Date: 1473-1475

Material and dimensions: Canvas, transferred from wood panel, 58 x 38 cm

Inscription: On the cartouche, unreadable

Technique: oil

Provenance: Petrograd, I. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov Collection (until 1920).

Past exhibitions: *Paintings from the Early Renaissance in Italy* (Petrograd, 1922); Florence and Venice: Italian Renaissance Paintings and Sculpture from the State Hermitage Museum (Tokyo, The National Museum of Western Art, 20th March – 20th June 1999).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

When the painting was transferred from panel to canvas, a new white lead ground was applied and the signature on the cartouche was overpainted and is now illegible. Infrared reflectography analysis has revealed several small, restored areas and some lacunae in the sky. as well as in the Virgin's face and neck. There are three vertical cracks (one down to the Virgin's halo).

Bibliography:

Gosudarstvennij Ermitaz, Pietrograd, 1922, p. 31; *The State Hermitage…*, 1957, I, p. 20 (fig. 35); *Musée de l'Ermitage…*, 1958, I, p. 109; Musée de l'Ermitage, 1976, p. 101; Heinemann, 1991, pp. XI-XII; Fomichova, 1992, p. 70; Casu, 1996, pp. 66, 79 (nota 39); Artemieva, 1999, pp. 279-280 (Cat. 15); Russo, 2018, p. 14 (note 23), 17 (note 43); Russo, 2019, p. 175.

The painting portrays the Virgin holding the Infant Jesus on her right knee. The Virgin gazes at Jesus, who gazes and points his index finger at the observer. The Virgin is clothed in a red dress, covered by a golden floral brocade mantle, and Jesus wears a green tunic over a long-sleeved white shirt. The pair are-placed on a marble pedestal covered by an oriental carpet. The landscape shows a river, a steep twisted cliff on the left, a lake, with mountains in the distance. On the left side, behind the crag, there is a small walled/fortified town. The background is populated by animals, a fisherman, horsemen, and knights in combat.

The artwork, previously in Vorontsov-Dashkov collection, entered the State Hermitage Museum of Petrograd (today Saint Petersburg) in 1920. It has been variously attributed to different artists: initially considered to be by Bartolomeo Vivarini, in 1922 Karl Edward Liphard proposed assigning it to Girolamo da Santacroce, while in 1956 Fiocco thought it was by Quirizio da

Murano (this ascription was accepted in the 1957, 1958 and 1976 museum catalogues) and, finally, in 1961 Federico Zeri suggested the attribution to Lazzaro Bastiani (the scholars' opinions have been all expressed verbally. Fomichova, 1992, p. 70). Even subsequently art historians did not agree on a specific artist. For instance, Heinemann (1991), although finding some similarities to The Frick *Adoration* – which was already generally ascribed to Bastiani – believed that both the Hermitage *Madonna* and The Frick *Adoration* were both by a Veronese miniaturist close to Giovanni Pietro da Birago. In the 1992 museum catalogue, Formichova presented the artwork again as Bastiani's and suggested a date of execution between 1480s and 1490s following comparisons with the *Saint Lucy and the Kneeling Donor* in the Portland Art Museum (Oregon, U.S.A.). Irina Artemieva has more than once declared that she rejects the attribution to Bastiani (Fomichova, 1992; Artemieva, 1999; personal communication). Today in the State Hermitage Museum the artwork is classified as "Anonymous Italian artist of the late 15th century". Casu (1996) and Russo (2018, 2019) accepted Bastiani as painter of the Hermitage *Madonna* on the basis of comparisons with The Frick *Adoration* and the Matera *Polyptych* (especially, given the similarity with the central panel portraying the *Madonna and Child Enthroned*). In addition, both scholars also observed that here Bastiani re-interpreted elements of Mantegna's work (Casu named this phase as "fase di mantegnismo maturo". 1996, p. 80 [note 40]), such as the foreshortened infant Jesus, the Virgin's veil, or the oriental carpet which was perhaps inspired by that in the *San Zeno Altarpiece*.

If the Madonna and Child pair is derived from the *Matera Polyptych*, the general composition of the scene reflects that of the *Madonna and Child* n. 616 in the Gallerie dell'Accademia and that of the *Pietà* in Poldi Pezzoli Museum. The narrative scene shown in the Hermitage picture, however, is far more advanced than that of the Venetian *Madonna* and points to the Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà* (Casu, 1996, p. 66). Casu, indeed, suggested that Bastiani realised the Russian *Madonna and Child* shortly after the Milanese painting (p. 66). It must be underlined, however, that Casu considered the Pietà in Poldi Pezzoli as being painted prior to 1465, thus he also dated the *Madonna* in the State Hermitage

Museum as being from the 1460s. But according to Bastiani's chronology confirmed/outlined in this thesis, the Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà* was realised around 1470, therefore the production of Hermitage Madonna should also be postponed until at least to the early 1470s. In accordance with the abovementioned comparisons, Russo dated the Hermitage *Madonna* between 1473 and 1475, thus shortly after the *Matera Polyptych* and the Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà* and *Madonna and Child*. I agree with Russo on this period of execution.



Number: AP36

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *The Penitent Saint Jerome*

Location: Springfield (Massachusetts, U.S.A.), D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts (from 1967, inv. N. 67.01)

Date: 1475-1480

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 61 x 45 cm

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: Art Market, Paris (1931); Private collection, Paris (1939); Bettoni collection, Brescia (before 1957); Wildestein & Co., New York (until 1967).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1962-1963, Giovanni Marchig (personal communication from the museum); 2004, Michael

Heslip at Williamstown Art Conservation Center (personal communication from the museum).

Prior to its acquisition by the museum in February 1967, staff member Alan Thielker performed an infrared analysis. After the examination it was determined that the painting had likely been transferred to a new support and that more significant modern restoration had been performed than was originally reported by the seller. Subsequently, Wildenstein & Co. provided the original treatment report as completed by Giovanni Marchig between 1962 and 1963. The report states that Marchig determined the painting to have been transferred from the original panel to canvas, and so he transferred it back to a new panel support. Marchig also reported performing surface cleaning and inpainting various areas. In 1997, a survey by Barbara Wojcik recommended additional surface cleaning, varnish removal, and improved inpainting. In 2004, a new treatment was performed, including removing grime, old varnish, and old retouching. Old areas of filling were then improved, before losses were inpainted and new varnish was applied. Today the artwork is in fairly good condition.

Bibliography:

Sandberg-Vavala, 1931, pp. 131, 134; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 36 (note 4), tav. 39 (fig. 43); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Robinson, 1967-68; *Accessions of American…*, 1968, pp. 205, 211; B. Fredricksen – F. Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth- Century Italian paintings in North American public collection*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1972, p. 20; Volpe, 1983, p. 56; Boskovits, 1992, p. 24; Casu, 1996, pp. 69-70, 85 (note 60); Russo, 2018; Ferretti, 2019, in Artibus et historiae; Russo, 2019.

In the foreground of the painting, the bearded Saint Jerome is portrayed, in penitence before a crucifix, with a *memento mori* at the base. The saint kneels awkwardly on one knee, while his other leg is stretched in front of him, and he holds a stone in his right hand. He wears a bright blue robe that stands out against the brownish tones of the rocky setting. Behind him, on the right, is the

tamed lion, his personal symbol, entering a cave. Other symbolic animals are depicted: two frogs, generally seen as creatures of evil when included in the story of Saint Jerome, and a lizard-like creature, associated to the salvation (Friedmann, 1980, pp. 217-219, 268-269) The immediate background shows a house on the left with a watermill and, behind it, a church, while in front of the buildings there are a donkey, two monks, one of whom is reading quietly, and three palms. This scene could be representative of the period Saint Jerome spent in the convent, with an explicit reference to the episode of the stolen donkey. In the distance the interior area of a walled city is depicted, with typical Venetian buildings and a crenelated bridge which is crossed by two horsemen. These three different scenes (the penitent Jerome, the convent, and the city) are separated by a moat with where two pairs of both swans and ducks swim. These birds do not have any specific symbolism pertinent to Saint Jerome but are used here as casual bits of naturalism (Friedmann, 1980, pp. 211, 299). A natural landscape with distant mountains is depicted beyond the city wall.

The panel, today in the D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts in Springfield (Massachusetts, U.S.A.) was purchased in 1967 with income from the James P. Gray fund for inclusion in the collection bearing his name, from Wildenstein & Co. in New York (Robinson, 1967-68). Formerly the painting was in Bettoni collection in Brescia (prior to 1957. Berenson, 1957, p. 25), while in the early 1930s' it was on Paris art market (Vavalà, 1931, p. 131), but by the end of the decade it was in a private collection in Paris (Collobi, 1939, tav. 39 [fig. 43]).

Vavalà first mentioned the painting with the attribution to Lazzaro Bastiani for comparison with the Frick's *Adoration of the Magi* (1931, p. 131). For the art historian this was the masterpiece of the earlier development of Lazzaro Bastiani: the rugged figure of Saint Jerome being "eloquent of the direct ascendancy of Bartolomeo", while the careful perspective being "a direct leaning on Jacopo Bellini". Vavalà, however, pointed out that, in her opinion, the picture was "still unproven and tentative", not yet tendent to that "almost glacial severity" and "over-symmetrized" appearance characteristic of Bastiani's later work (Vavalà, 1931, p. 131). The ascription to Bastiani was later accepted by Collobi (1939, p. 36 [note 4]), Berenson (1957, p. 25; 1958, p. 26),

Fredricksen-Zeri (1972, p. 20), Volpe (1983, p. 56 [n. 36]), Boskovits, (1992, p. 24), Casu (1996, pp. 69-70), Russo (2018, p. 17 [note 43]) and Ferretti (2019, p. 87). When the panel entered the museum collection, it was already assigned to Bastiani (Robinson, 1967-68; *Accessions of American…*, 1968, pp. 205, 211). If Collobi and Robinson placed the painting in a late period of Bastiani's career, the former comparing it with the *Saint Jerome altarpiece* in Asolo, which she dated around 1484, and the latter claiming the strong influence of the young Carpaccio around 1500, subsequent scholars agreed for a dating in 1470s. For Volpe this "superb" Saint Jerome should be considered in the context of Bastiani's artistic development in 1470s, in the period when Bastiani was moving between Paduan and Bellinis' influences (1983, p. 56). Boskovits included it as being from the same phase as the Frick *Adoration*, and he gave a date of circa 1473, the *Saint Jerome* being probably slightly anterior (1992, p. 24). Casu suggested the painting to have been executed slightly before 1475, as it shows a combination of elements derived from Bastiani's early phase, as demonstrated in the intense facial expressiveness of Paduan and perhaps Ferrarese influence, combined with features typical of works of his mature manner around the 1480s and 1490s. To support his statement, Casu cited details, already recorded by Vavalà, which could be compared to the Frick *Adoration* for example , the left hand of Saint Jerome and the right hand of Caspar (a further comparison that can be added is the right hand of the apostle on the extreme left in *Christ and the Canaanite woman*, dated 1475 c.), the donkey in the background in both pictures, and generally present in the naturalistic description of the landscape with tall palm trees and slim genre figures. This latter characteristic is similarly observable in the predella panels with *Stories from the life of Saint Jerome* in Brera, in the two *teleri* for the Scuola di San Girolamo, and in the *predella* in Musée Jacquamart André. Furthermore, the anatomy of the saint could have been inspired by Marco Zoppo's *Saint Jerome in the Desert*, today in Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum in Madrid (Casu, 1996, pp. 69-70). In Ferretti's opinion the landscape is again redolent of the young Carpaccio though not being simply copying the latter's style, while the peculiar figure of the saint ("pungente come un agrifoglio") could be

inspired by a lost work by Tura as it is not dissimilar to his *Pietà* in Correr Museum in Venice (2019, p. 87). Finally, Russo remarked upon evidence of the evolution of perspective construction, enhanced/emphasised by subsequent panels parallel to the observer and making use of numerous perspective lines rather than the feeling of depth being created by atmospheric painterly effects (as it has been described by Conti, 1977, p. 59). This kind of perspective construction points to the *Nativity* of 1480 (2019, pp. 174-176, notes 30, 38).
As already highlighted by Vavalà and Casu, the Springfield Saint Jerome appears to be in continuity with the Frick *Adoration*, but its spatial definition tends towards the *Nativity* as noticed by Russo, therefore I would suggest a timespan between 1475 and 1480 to date this painting.

Further bibliography:

Friedmann, 1980, pp. 211, 217-219, 268-269, 299.



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Number: AP37

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (and workshop?)

Title: *Nativity*

Location: Stuttgart (Germany), Staatsgalerie (from 1851 – inv. n. 206)

Date: 1490s

Material and dimensions: panel, 32 x 27.4 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Venice, Barbini-Breganze collection (until 1852)

Past exhibitions: *Frühe italienische Tafelmalerei* (Württembergischen Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, 13th May – 25th June 1950).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: the overall condition of the painting is fair.

Bibliography:
Zanotto, 1847, pp. 152-153 (n. 233-79); Zanotto, 1850, p. 79 (n. 202); *Plastische und Gemälde-Sammlung…*, 1856, p. 54 (n. 99); *Katalog der Plastischen…*, 1867, p. 60 (n. 97); *Provisorischer Katalog…*, 1877, p. 38 (n. 97); *Verzeischnis der Gemälde-Sammlung…*, 1891, p. 17 (n. 115); *Verzeichnis der Gemälde-Sammlung…*, 1899, p. 18 (n. 115); Paoletti -Ludwig, 1900b, p. 285; *Verzeichnis der Gemälde-Sammlung…*, 1900, p. 18 (n. 115); *Verzeichnis der Gemälde-Sammlung…*, 1903, p. 114 (n. 514); Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 30; Lange-Tübingen, 1907, p. 186 (n. 514); Venturi, 1907, p. 282; Sandberg Vavalà, 1931, p. 139; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, p. 190 (note 2); Collobi, 1939, p. 48, note 46; *Frühe italienische…*, 1950, p. 28 (n. 10); Pallucchini, 1950, p. 181; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; *Katalog…*, Stuttgart, 1957, pp. 32-33; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; *Katalog…*, 1962, p. 34.

The small panel portrays in the foreground the Nativity under a shortened shed, with the kneeling Madonna and Saint Joseph adoring the Child baby Jesus who lies in a manger, an ox and a donkey add tenderness to the scene and two angels holding a cartouche hover in mid-air above the holy family group. In front of the manger, a hoopoe, has been painted; a bird which is generally linked to negative meanings, as it is traditionally representative of lust, sin, or mourning (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 220). Behind the nativity scene, on the right, a flying angel appears to two shepherds watching their flocks in a field and announces to them the news of the birth of Jesus. In the background there is a walled city overlooking a lake and a mountain landscape in the distance.
Formerly in Barbini-Breganze collection in Venice, where Zanotto described it in his gallery catalogues published in 1847 (pp. 152-153 [n. 233-79]) and 1850 (p. 79 [n. 202]), the painting was purchased by the German king Wilhelm I of Württemberg sometime between 1850 and 1852, along with the entire collection (Collavin, 2012, p. 74; *Plastiche…*, 1856, pp. 41, 54). In the Venetian

gallery, the panel was recorded as being by Girolamo da Santacroce, an attribution that was kept in Stuttgart Museum catalogues until at least the end of the 19th century (1856, 1867, 1877, 1891, 1899). In the early 20th century, the work was referred to, rather vaguely, as being of the "Venezianische Schule um 1500" (1903, 1907). In 1900 Ludwig and Paoletti grouped this painting with others defined as "immagini scolastiche" (pedantic pictures) that were generally accredited to Girolamo da Santacroce, but which showed the typical landscape, forms, and composition of Bastiani (p. 285). Ludwig and Molmenti downgraded the panel as being by the "School of Bastani" (1906, p. 30), Lionello Venturi agreed, assigning it to "Workshop of Bastiani" (1907, p. 282). Vavalà was the first to restore the Stuttgart *Nativity* to Bastiani, although she considered it to be a minor composition (1931, p. 139). The ascription to Bastiani was then accepted by Berenson, who included it among his late works (1932, p. 63; 1936, p. 55; 1957, p. 26; 1958, p. 27), Van Marle (1936, p. 190 [note 2]) and Collobi (1939, p. 48, note 46). For this latter the painting belongs to that phase of late artistic crisis, started with the Bergamo *Coronation* of 1490, in which Bastiani's *oeuvre* became old fashioned, as he used to repeat the same compositional ideas. Relying upon the knowledge and experience of the abovementioned scholars, Bastiani was confirmed as the painter of the *Nativity* when the panel was exhibited in 1950 in Stuttgart (*Frühe italienische…*, 1950, p. 28 [n. 10]. Pallucchini also agreed with this attribution in his review of the exhibition published on "Arte Veneta" (1950, p. 181) and in the following museum catalogues (1957, 1962).

Compared to the 1480 *Nativity*, the Stuttgart painting is indubitably poorer. The Child infant Jesus is simply a derivative and unimaginative copy of the one depicted in the previous work. The Madonna appears to be a weak version of the one in Klosterneuburg, especially in the harsh and marked folds of the red dress and of the golden brocade mantle. On the left two standing men are included as genre figures, as Bastiani used to do in his late works. The mountains in the distance lack modelling and are traced as a simple outline which is then coloured in green and light blue.

According to both Collobi and Berenson, the panel is likely to be a late work, executed after the Bergamo *Coronation* of 1490, and perhaps with the aid of the workshop.

Further bibliography:

Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 220; Collavin, 2012, pp. 73-74.



Number: AP38

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna col Bambino*

Location: Unknown

Date: 1460-1465

Material and dimensions: Wood panel, 43.5 x 30.5 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Milan, Achillito Chiesa private collection; American Art Association, *The Chiesa Collection. Italian, Dutch and Flemish XV-XVII century paintings. Portraits and Genre Subjects. Part IV*, New York, 16/4/1926;

Florence, Count Alessandro Contini Bonacossi collection; Vienna, Max Bondi collection; Galleria Lurati, *Vendita all'asta Max Bondi*, Milan 9/12/1929, lot 51; Milan, Finarte, 1972; Finarte, *Importanti dipinti antichi*, Milan, 21/4/1988.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

Comparing the picture published in the Max Bondi auction catalogue of 1929 and in Vavalà's article with the images printed in the following publications it is evident that a restoration treatment was carried out on the painting. Specifically, it seems that old, overpainted areas covering the original paint were removed. For instance, the cleaning revealed the Virgin's and infant Jesus' original faces, both of whose features, previously extensively retouched, radically changed. Unfortunately, we do not have any written documentation to date this intervention or any further conservation treatment. In 1939 Collobi underlined the bad conservation status of the work, which appeared heavily retouched ("ritoccattissima e straziata *Madonna* ex Bondi"), therefore the conservation treatment might have been performed after this date.

Bibliography:

Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 131; Collobi, 1939, p. 36 (note 4); *Mostra di dipinti…*, 1972, pp. 10-11; Morandotti-Saibene, 1988, pp. 122-123; Angelelli – De Marchi, 1991, p. 85 (n. 146); Heinemann 1991, III, pp. X-XI; Casu, 1996, pp. 80-81 (note 42); Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43).

The painting portrays the Virgin in half-length figure and frontal position. Her eyes are lowered, gazing at the naked infant Jesus, while her hands hold him. Jesus stands on a parapet, with one leg turned towards the viewer and the other leg turned in profile view – and his body in three-quarter profile towards his mother. He clasps the Virgin's mantle with his right hand and holds her hand with his left hand. His head is frontal, looking outside the painting, at the observer. The Virgin wears a crimson mantle, enriched with a golden floral pattern, typical of Bastiani, over a long sleeve scarlet/crimson dress and has a thin veil covering her forehead. The group is placed against a dark, flat background. The artwork was once placed in a decorated cuspidate frame

(compare the pictures in the catalogue of Asta Lurati, 1929, and in Angelelli-De Marchi, 1991, p. 85. *Fig. 206*).

This small panel was once owned by the art merchant Achille Chiesa, whose collection was inherited by his son Achillito at his death. Achillito tried to emulate his father's collector's instinct but ended getting into debt. Thus, the entire collection was sold at the American Art Association in New York between 1925 and 1927 (for further information concerning Achille and Achillito Chiesa, please refer to the 1927 American Art Association auction catalogue, and to Toffali, 2016). Bastiani's *Madonna and Child* was most likely included in the group of artworks sold in 1926[569] and was bought by Alessandro Contini Bonacossi, who in the past had helped Achille Chiesa to acquire it (Toffali, 2016). The painting appeared then in three other auctions: in 1929 as part of the "Raccolta Max Bondi" in Vienna, for sale at the Galleria Lurati, in Milan (Asta Lurati, n. 51, p. 25, Tav. XXVI); in 1972 and in 1988, auctioned by Finarte, also in Milan (Asta Finarte 1972, 1988). The actual location of the panel is unknown and the only coloured picture I could find is that published in the 1988 auction catalogue.

In the Galleria Lurati auction catalogue the painting was listed as "School of Carlo Crivelli", underlining the arabesque pattern of the Virgin's mantle as used by Crivelli. In her article focussed on the production of Bastiani's *Madonnas'* production, Sandberg Vavalà (1931, p. 131) gave this work to our painter, an attribution rejected by Collobi (1939, p. 36, note 4), who suggested, instead, the name of Quirizio da Murano. This ascription was also approved by Mirella Levi D'Ancona in 1954 (see The Frick Digital Collection – Photoarchive report 707-8 A). The considerable overpainted areas might have misdirected Collobi's and Levi D'Ancona's judgments on the artist. Volpe (1972, p. 20; 1988, p. 122) reassigned the painting to Bastiani, following comparisons with previous

[569] I obtained this information from Fondazione Zeri Photographic Archive. Having examined the catalogues produced for the selling of the Achillito Chiesa collection, as far as I can ascertain, the painting was not included in any published catalogue, however, what I have concluded does not negate the information supplied by Fondazione Zeri, who no doubt obtained their evidence from an alternative reliable source.

outputs, already pointed out by Vavalà, as the *Virgin and Child, angels and the Trinity* in Poldi Pezzoli and the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Frick Collection of New York, to which he added the *Virgin and Child, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Dorothea*, once in the Chalandon collection in Parcieux, and the *Virgin and Child* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia of Venice. Moreover, Volpe emphasised Bastiani's position in the Venitian artistic panorama, highlighting his artistic closeness to Bartolomeo Vivarini, as well as his similarities with Alvise Vivarini and Giovanni Bellini. Heinemann, Casu and Russo confirmed the attribution to Bastiani. Heinemann pointed out the influence of Jacopo Bellini regarding the composition, and of Antonio Vivarini for the depiction of the Virgin (1991, pp. X-XI). For Casu the statuary anatomy of the Child is close, especially in the muscular legs, to the body of Squarcione's infant Jesus in his *Virgin and Child* painting today at the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin. In his opinion this comparison could suggest a direct knowledge of Squarcione's work, perhaps inspired by a common model of a Florentine bas-relief, and in general it could be indicative of a personal experience in the Paduan artistic *milieu*, as already proposed by the art historian himself in relation with the Mantegnesque *Virgin and Child* in the Paduan Museum (1996, pp. 80-81 [note 42]). Walter Angelelli cautiously included this panel in Bastiani's corpus as he–drew attention to some repainting that seemed to alter the drawing and the *chiaroscuro* (1991, p. 85 [n. 146]).

Volpe dated the *Virgin and Child* between the *Christ blessing* at Musée Bonnat in Bayonne, France dated 1473 and the *Nativity* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia dated 1480. A time span considered relatively late by Casu, who placed the work in the first half of the 1460s, as it is reminiscent of Bastiani's style when he was influenced by Paduan art. Conversely, Russo indicated 1473 as the year of execution, probably linking the *Madonna* with the *Christ* in Bayonne. Referring to the suggested dates, 1480 seems quite late, as at that date Bastiani's manner was already mature. In accordance with Casu, the infant Jesus' anatomy could be reminiscent of Paduan examples, maybe inspired by Squarcione, who first adopted the style after seeing Donatello's *putti* on the high altar of the Basilica di Sant'Antonio in Padua or from a bas-relief brought

to Padua by Florentine artists. The pose of the infant Jesus is similar to that in Giovanni Bellini's *Madonna and Child* of Anton Philips Collection, in Eindhoven, The Netherlands (*Fig. 207*) – a painting that curiously had been assigned to Bastiani in the past (The Early *Venetian…*, 1978, pp. 27-28. For further information on the artwork, today dated 1459-1460, please refer to: Lucco, 2019, pp. 290-291 [Cat. 3]) – albeit Bastiani's painting appears to be more rigid and less tender than that of the young, but more talented and creative, Giovanni. Lucco (2019, p. 291) explained that the pose of the infant Jesus in Giovanni's *Madonna* must be surely derived from the Roman marble slabs of the so-called *Saturn's Throne* of Ravenna that, at that time, were integrated in the walls of some houses close to Piazza San Marco (*Fig. 208*). If Giovanni was influenced by this classic example so common in Venice, Bastiani could easily have been influenced too. Bastiani also applied the muscular body to the *putti* bearing the instruments of the Passion of the painted frame of the *Madonna and Child* in the Berlin Museum, which, in the past had been attributed to Andrea Mantegna and then to Bartolomeo Vivarini. The Virgin's gestures recall those of the *Madonna and Child* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, especially the peculiar right hand with the thumb and the fifth finger lifted, a pose which recurs in other Bastiani's works, at a later date, as for instance in the case of the *Madonna and Child* in the Hermitage Museum. The oval face, the small nose and mouth are reminiscent of the *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* at Museo Diocesano in Milan. For the abovementioned reasons, a date of execution between 1460 and 1465 could be appropriate for this Madonna.

Further bibliography:

Toffali, 2016; Lucco, 2019, pp. 290-291 (Cat. 3).

Further images



Fig. 206. L. Bastiani, *Madonna and Child*, before restoration (The Frick Digital Collections – Photoarchive).



Fig. 207. G. Bellini, *Madonna and Child*, Eindhoven, Anton Philips Collection.



Fig. 208. Throne of Saturn, Venice, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Venezia (detail of putti).



Number: AP39

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani,

Title: *Madonna and Child* or *Madonna del Baldacchino*

Location: Unknown

Date: 1475-1480

Material and dimensions: Canvas transferred from panel, 86.5 x 66 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: Rushmore (Wiltshire, UK), Pitt-Rivers collection in King John's House; purchased by Burkell (Sotheby's, *Catalogue of Fine Old Master and*

English XVIII Century Paintings, London, 4/7/1956, lot. 117); London, Chaucer Fine Arts, 1989; Finarte, *Dipinti antichi*, Milan, 29/11/1990, lot. 129.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1928 c., Augustus Vermehren (Von Hadeln, 1928, p. 270).

Von Hadeln noted the transfer of the painting from wood to canvas, a procedure carried out slightly before the publication of his article in 1928, adding that the artwork was then in excellent condition.

Bibliography:

Von Hadeln, 1928, pp. 268, 270-271, 274-276; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 132; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 47; Berenson, *1957, I, p. 25; Berenson*, *I*, 1958, p. 26; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 218 (V. 10); Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43); Tempestini, 2021, p. 255 (n. 1324).

This *Madonna and Child* was once in the General Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt-Rivers collection. General Pitt-Rivers started collecting artistic artefacts from the 1850s onwards. Although it is unknown when and where this painting was purchased, in 1894 it was already part of a small collection illustrating the history of painting on display in Pitt River's King John's House in Rushmore, Wiltshire, UK, as proved by a picture of it published in 1894 guide of the collection (*Fig. 209*). After the death of the General in 1900, General Pitt-Rivers' estate was inherited by his eldest son, Alexander. Upon Alexander's death in 1927, his son George managed the collection. In 1927, during a visit to "Rushmoor, near Salisbury" two representatives of the Duveen Brothers saw and described the painting, ascribing it to Giovanni Bellini (*Fig. 210*). In the Pitt-Rivers family art catalogue it was recorded as "Madonna and Child, Venetian School 1427-1516" and described in its caption as being "Madonna and Child Venetian School BASTIANI at Rushmore Pitt-Rivers Museum" (information retrieved from "Rethinking Pitt-Rivers, analysing the activities of

a nineteenth-century collector"[570]: http://web.prm.ox.ac.uk/rpr/index.php/article-index/12-articles/288-pitt-rivers-art-collection.html, last visited 20th February 2022). In 1956 the Pitt-Rivers *Madonna* was sold at Sotheby's and purchased by Burkell for £2,800. The work last appeared on the art market in 1991, when it was auctioned at Finarte in Milan. Its current location is unknown. Von Hadeln wrongly reported that the previous owner was Mr. P. M. Turner, and that the artwork was previously assigned to one of the Vivarini (1928, p. 270).

The painting portrays the half-length Madonna behind a parapet supporting the infant Jesus with her hand. Jesus is dressed in a green tunic with long white sleeves, like that of the The National Gallery, London panel. The Madonna seems thoughtful and, as already pointed out by the Duveen representative, her facial expression is neutral. The Madonna stands before a sort of baldachin of a pale cerise colour woven with of a large pomegranate pattern. This structure gives the picture a solemn character. In the background there is a natural landscape, not that different from the London work, with isolated tall trees on either side of the baldachin and genre figures to vivify this empty space.

When the representatives of the Duveen brothers described the painting, they defined Bellini's style as still "strongly influenced by Mantegna". However, the two appreciated the artwork, commenting that the "composition [was] delightful and very monumental" (*Fig. 210*). In 1928 Von Hadeln discussed the work, naming it *Madonna del Baldacchino* (to differentiate it from the *Madonna degli Alberetti*, which is very similar in composition), with the attribution to Giovanni Bellini and a dating in the second half of 1460s (pp. 270-271, 274-276). Von Hadeln attribution was not confirmed by his colleagues, and in 1931 Sandberg-Vavalà correctly included the picture in the catalogue of Lazzaro

[570] *The Pitt-Rivers project*, run from 1995 to 1998 and then from 2009 to 2012, surveyed/examined all the published and unpublished material wrote by Pitt-Rivers or written about him, resulting in expanding our knowledge of this art collector and compiling a comprehensive catalogue of his collection. All the information retrieved from this extended research is published in: http://web.prm.ox.ac.uk/rpr/index.html.

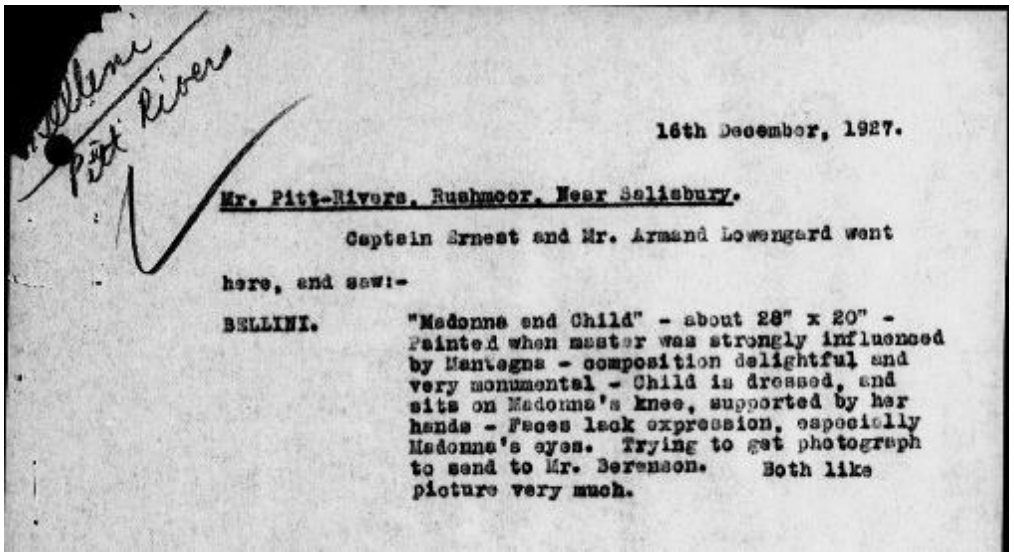
Bastiani. For this scholar, the Pitt-Rivers Madonna represents "Lazzaro Bastiani at the zenith of his capabilities, the most notable work of his second period", although spiritually inspired by Alvise Vivarini, rather than by Giovanni Bellini, especially in "the somewhat disconsolate expression of the Virgin's countenance" that is redolent of some of Alvise's works at Naples, at San Giovanni in Bragora, at Vienna and at the Redentore. Finally, to confirm the ascription to Bastiani, Sandberg-Vavalà also established a parallel with Bastiani's National Gallery panel, pointing out similarities in the landscape with the globular bushes and in the Virgin's facial features and expression (p. 132). The Pitt-River *Madonna* is placed by Vavalà as being at the end of 1470s, just after the recorded collaboration with Bellini at the beginning of the decade (p. 135). Collobi, assigning the painting to Bastiani, postponed the date of execution to the second half of the 1480s, and referred to a "bellinismo indiretto, secondario" here, remarking upon the closeness to Alvise Vivarini, who she believes Bastiani was closer to than to Giovanni Bellini in this period (1939, p. 47). Berenson (1957, p. 25; 1958, p. 26) confirmed his agreement with the attribution to Bastiani, as did Heinemann for the similarities he saw to the *Sacra Conversazione* ex Chalandon and the Murano *lunette* (1962, I, p. 218 [V. 10]). Russo suggested a dating between 1478 and 1480 (2018, p. 17 [note 43]).

For the close resemblances, already underlined by the scholars, with The National Gallery (London) *Madonna and Child*, especially in the landscape, in the rendering of Jesus and in the Virgin's face and expression, it seems convincing to place this painting in the same years as the London one, thus in the second half of 1470s. However, owing to the addition of the tall trees and the genre figures in the landscape, the Pitt-Rivers painting seems slightly later than the National Gallery one, closer to the *Nativity* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia. Moreover, it seems that the trees are organized in perspective, perhaps a prelude of Bastiani's interest in perspective construction, as shown in his most typical work, starting from the abovementioned *Nativity*.

Further images



Fig. 209. Illustration of Room n. 1 at King John's House showing Bastiani's *Madonna the Baldacchino* on display (image retrieved from Lt.-Gen. Pitt-Rivers, *A short guide to the Larmer Grounds, Rushmore; King John's House; and the Museum at Farnham, Dorset*, printed privately, 1894, ill. p. 45).



16th December, 1927.

Mr. Pitt-Rivers, Rushmoor, Near Salisbury.

Captain Ernest and Mr. Armand Lowengard went here, and saw:-

BELLINI. "Madonna and Child" - about 28" x 20" - Painted when master was strongly influenced by Mantegna - composition delightful and very monumental - Child is dressed, and sits on Madonna's knee, supported by her hands - Faces lack expression, especially Madonna's eyes. Trying to get photograph to send to Mr. Berenson. Both like picture very much.

Fig. 210. Correspondence of the representatives of the Duveen Brothers reporting their visit at Rushmore and the description of the *Madonna del Baldacchino* (here attributed to Giovanni Bellini) © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (960015).



The Frick Digital Collections – Photoarchive

Number: AP40

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Triptych: Madonna and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist, Mary Magdalene*

Location: Unknown

Date: 1485-1490

Material and dimensions: panel, 82 x 42 cm (central compartment); 82 x 35.5 cm (side compartments)

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: London, Sir Henry Howorth Collection (reported in 1912); London, sold at Christie's (14th December 1923); Berlin, Lepke, *Gemälde alter meister*, 7/2/1928, lot 19; München, Hugo Helbing, *Gemälde alter meister, alte möbel / porzellane aus dem Nachlass Karl ed. Von Liphart-Rathshoff*, 27-28/3/1931, lot 180; last recorded in Munich, Stuckenberger (around 1964).

Past exhibitions: *Early Venetian pictures and other works of art* (The Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, January 1912).

Bibliography:

Borenius, 1912, I, p. 221 (note 4); Borenius, 1912a, p. 89; *Early Venetian…*, 1912, p. 28 (n. 15, plate XIII); A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 389-390; Rosenbaum, 1930, p. 403; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 133-134; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 184, note 1; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 47, note 35; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 25; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 26; Heinemann. 1991, III, p. XII.

Website: Fondazione Federico Zeri Photoarchive, http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/scheda.v2.jsp?decorator=layout_resp&apply=true&tipo_scheda=OA&id=26549&titolo=Bastiani+Lazzaro%2C+Madonna+con+Bambino+in+trono%2C+San+Giovanni+Battista%2C+Santa+Maria+Maddalena&locale=en (last viewed, 23rd March 2022).

In January 1912, this arched triptych, owned at the time by Sir Henry Howorth, and already attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani, was shown at the exhibition of Venetian primitives at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in London (Borenius, 1912a, p. 89; *Early Venetian…*, 1912, p. 28 [n. 15, plate XIII]). The caption in the catalogue clearly describes the painting and its colours, sadly, today its actual location is unknown, and we only have black and white picture of it. The central section shows the Madonna and Child enthroned. The Madonna wears a crimson tunic and a blue mantle, which partially covers a thin veil which falls over her forehead. The naked infant Jesus stands on his mother's right thigh and clutches her left hand. His right hand imparts the benediction. The throne is marble and behind the Madonna a cloth of honour is hung. On the left, Saint John the Baptist in three-quarter profile points with his right hand to the central group, while holding in his left hand a thin cross and a scroll with the inscription "ECCE AGNVS DEI" partially visible. He is clothed in his typical torn leather coat, which is covered by an ample green mantle. On the right, Mary Magdalen, turned in three-quarters to the left, is portrayed holding the vase of ointment in her right hand. She wears an olive-green tunic and a pale purplish-pink mantle. The three figures are depicted within a short marble enclosure behind them. A natural landscape is painted in the background, showing a plain bordered by hills.

Before the Burlington exhibition the painting was unknown to critics and scholars, but afterwards it was included in Bastiani's *corpus* of artworks by Borenius (1912, I, p. 221 [note 4]), Adolfo Venturi (1915, p. 389-390), Sanbderg Vavalà (1931, pp. 133-134), Van Marle (1936, XVIII, p. 184), Collobi (1939, p. 47 [note 35]) and Berenson (1957, I, p. 25; 1958, I, p. 26). The scholars noticed stylistic similarities with other Bastiani works, such as the Murano *lunette* (1484) with reference to the rendering of Saint John the Baptist and the Bergamo *Coronation* (1490) regarding the depiction of Mary Magdalene, as well as with Alvise Vivarini's *Sacred Conversation* in Venice Gallerie dell'Accademia (1480), with reference to the painting of the Madonna and Child. Moreover, the Madonna's hands are reminiscent of those of the *Madonna* in Verona (especially her left hand), a work which is dated 1485-1490. Finally, the marble enclosure that separates the foreground with the holy figures from the landscape background is typical of Bastiani's production from the Murano *lunette* onwards.

Vavalà placed the Howorth triptych in the late 1480s, close to the creation of the *Coronation*. Collobi agreed with her and suggested it was painted in a period when Bastiani was influenced by Giovanni Bellini and Alvise Vivarini. Van Marle, on the other hand, included this picture in the group of artworks under Bartolomeo Vivarini's influence, and executed slightly before the Murano *lunette*. Given the abovementioned comparisons, and in agreement with Vavalà and Collobi, I suggest the painting to be dated in the second half of the 1480s.

After Howorth's collection, the painting left the Sir Henry Howorth Collection when it was sold at an auction held by Christie's on the 14th of December 1923 (Van Marle, 1936, p. 184 [note 1]), then it was presented for sale at two German auctions, the Lepke auction in Berlin on the 7th of February 1928, and then the Helbing auction in Munich on the 27th-28th of March 1931. The painting was last recorded as being located in Stuckenberger in Munich around 1964 (according to the Fondazione Zeri online Photoarchive).



Number: AP41

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Dorothy*

Location: Unknown

Date: 1485-1490

Material and dimensions: panel, 83.8 x 117,5 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Chalandon Collection, Château de Grange Blanche, Parcieux (Lyon, France); Wildenstein, Paris (presumably acquired on the 14th of December 1926, according to a written comment on the back of a photograph at I Tatti. Here at least until 1962); Helen Clay Frick Foundation, Pittsburgh; University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh (from 1966, on permanent loan from the Helen Clay Frick Foundation); New York, Christie's, *Old master paintings*, 30/5/2003, lot 24.

Past exhibitions: *Early French and Italian painting and illuminations* (Wildenstein, London, 29th June – 30th July 1949, n. 34); *Religious themes in*

painting from the 14th century onwards (Wildenstein, London, 16th March – 5th May 1962, n. 12).

Bibliography:
Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 133-134; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 47, note 39; *Early French…*, 1949, n. 34; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 218 (V.10); *Notiziario…*, 1962, p. XVI; *Religious themes…*, 1962, n. 12; Geske, 1966, p. 54; *La chronique…* 1967, pp. 270-271 (n. 254); Heinemann, 1991, III, p. XII; Russo, 2019, p. 165, note 3.

The panel shows at its centre the Virgin and Child before a dark cloth of honour, flanked by Saint John the Baptist, dressed in his typical camel skin robe and holding a thin cross and a scroll, and Saint Dorothy, clothed in rich garments and with an elaborated *coiffure*, holding the palm symbolising her martyrdom and offering the infant Jesus a basket of roses, her characteristic attribute (*Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1964, vol. 4, coll. 824-826. It must be underlined that in the catalogues of past exhibitions Saint Dorothy has been identified, erroneously, as Saint Catherine). The foreground space is enclosed by a short parapet, partially visible behind the figures. The background is a simple light sky with high clouds.
Sandberg Vavalà first attributed the picture to Lazzaro Bastiani remarking the similarities to the figures of the Murano *lunette* and the Pitt-Rivers *Madonna* (1931, p. 133). The ascription was then also accepted by Collobi (1939, p. 47), Berenson (1957, p. 26; 1958, p. 27), Heinemann (1962, I, p. 218 [V. 10]), and, more recently, by Russo (2019, p. 165). At the two exhibitions at Wildenstein in 1949 and 1962, the work was also described as being a Lazzaro Bastiani.
The current location of the painting is unknown. Formerly, it was part of the Chalandon collection at Château de Grange Blanche, in Parcieux, near Lyon. In the 1930s, Collobi and Sandberg-Vavalà wrote that the work was at Wildenstein in Paris, who apparently acquired it in December 1926, according to a written inscription on the verso of a photograph in the I Tatti photo archive. In 1949 and in 1962, the panel was exhibited at Widlenstein in

London. In 1966, it was given to the Pittsburgh University Museum on permanent loan from the Helen Clay Frick Foundation (Geske, 1966, p. 54; *La chronique…*, 1967, pp. 70-71 [n. 254]). It was last auctioned at Christie's in 2003 (lot 24).

Vavalà placed the execution of the panel between the Murano *lunette* (1484) and the Bergamo *Coronation* (1490). Collobi, as well, suggested a dating in the second half of 1480s, with Bastiani under influence of both Giovanni Bellini and – above all – Alvise Vivarini, owing to the full, rather swollen bodies "che paiono lucido metallo". Russo placed this work as being from the same period that Bastiani painted the *Madonna and Child enthroned, between Saint Theodore and Saint Mark and angels* in Brera (1504 c.). As already remarked upon by Vavalà, Saint John, the Virgin Mary, and the infant Jesus recall those of the Murano lunette. The round face of the Madonna is elongated here to a large oval shape, however, which suggests that it could be closer in date to that of the *Madonna* in the Dublin altarpiece, dated around 1490, and to Alvise Vivarini's outputs of the second half of 1480s, as for instance the *Madonna adoring the Child* in San Giovanni in Bragora. Moreover, to me Saint Dorothy's pointed nose and pronounced jaw call to mind the *Madonna* in Castelvecchio, dated 1485-1490. Similarly, the infant Jesus' facial features and his left hand can be readily seen to be very similar to those of the infant Jesus in Verona. For these reasons, I believe that the *Madonna and Child with Saint John and Saint Dorothy* can be dated in the late 1480s, as asserted by both Vavalà and Collobi. Furthermore, this 'style' of representation of the Virgin with the slightly inclined head and the white veil around her breast has been employed by Bastiani in coeval examples, as the *Madonna and Child with a nun* ex Cini collection, or in later works, as the *Madonna and Child with a nun* in Correr, or the *Madonna and Child* n. 407 in the Eremitani Museum (this latter by his workshop).

Further bibliography:

Bibliotheca Sanctorum, 1964, vol. 4, coll. 824-826.



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Number: AP42

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child with angels*

Location: Unknown

Date: 1475 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 56 x 42 cm

Inscription: "IC XC", above the infant Jesus' head

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Ferdinand II, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (1810-1859); Settignano (Florence), G. D'Annunzio collection; Galardelli e Mazzoni, *Collezione Gabriele D'Annunzio esistente nella Villa La Capponcina presso Settignano*, Florence, 3-4/6/1911, lot 303); Florence, Wilkins Collection; Sotheby's, *Old Master Paintings*, New York, 2/6/1989, lot 10; Bologna, antiquarian market (1991).

Past exhibitions: *Collezione Gabriele D'Annunzio* (Galardelli e Mazzoni, Florence, 1st – 2nd June 1911); *Old Master Paintings* (Sotheby's, New York, 27th May – 1st June 1989)

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Collobi (1939) pointed out that the painting was extensively repainted, with forged/false shading.

Bibliography:

Collobi, 1939, p. 46; Vinco, 2012, p. 74; Russo, 2018, pp. 6, 14 (note 21), 17 (note 43); Russo, 2019, p. 175.

This *Madonna of Humility* shows the Virgin Mary sitting on a cushion and holding the infant Jesus on her lap. She is flanked by two kneeling angels at prayer and is being crowned by two hovering angels. The scene is set in a garden enclosed by a row of bushes in the background and there is a gold sky. The Virgin and the infant Jesus are a reproduction of the same group in the *Madonna and Child crowned by two angels, with musical angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father* in Poldi Pezzoli. The cushion and the peculiar fold of the Virgin's red dress within the frame, are redolent rather of the *Madonna and Child* n. 616 in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. Of note is the general archaic appearance of the picture, owing to the gold background, the Christogram above the infant Jesus' head and the crowning angels (though it should be noted that this latter is a recurring element in Bastiani's production, even at a later date). We can find these characteristics in the two large panels depicting *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, both at

the Gallerie dell'Accademia, as well as in the two paintings portraying *Saint Martin of Tours* and *Saint Jerome in His Study* in Correr Museum.

In the 19th century the artwork was property of Ferdinand II, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. According to an old collection label on the reverse of the frame, at that time it was ascribed to Andrea Verrocchio. Then it entered Gabriele D'Annunzio's collection, housed in his Settignano villa. In the catalogue of D'annunzio's sale (1911), it was generically given to "Scuola Toscana, 15th century". Collobi (1939) was the first to include the painting in Bastiani's *milieu*, although she believed it was a workshop replica dated around 1480. It was sold at Sotheby's as a Lazzaro Bastiani's work in 1989, subsequently scholars (Vinco, 2012; Russo, 2018, 2019) always presented it as an autograph work.

Given the abovementioned derivation from the Venetian and the Milanese *Madonnas*, executed, respectively, around 1465 and 1471 as well as the gold background and the archaic elements comparable to the two large panels depicting *Episodes of the Life of Christ* at the Gallerie dell'Accademia, and to the two *Saints* in Correr Museum, all realised around 1475, it appears plausible to also date the *Madonna* in ex D'Annunzio collection as being executed around the mid-1470s.



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Number: AP43

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child with a Nun*

Location: Unknown, Private collection

Date: 1485 c.

Material and dimensions: panel

Provenance: Private collection (until 1948 c.); Vittorio Cini private collection.

Bibliography: Bacchi-De Marchi, 2016, pp. 399, 448 (note 62).

This work entered Vittorio Cini's private collection in around 1948, after a suggestion by Cini's friend Nino Barbantini, who wrote him a letter highly recommending the purchase of this painting of Bellinesque fashion/style. The

artwork was already attributed to Bastiani. As reported by Barbantini, it was actually ascribed to Bastiani by Longhi, who judged this work as Bastiani's masterpiece (Bacchi-De Marchi, 2016, p. 118 [note 62]). After the death of Vittorio Cini, the artwork was not included in Palazzo Cini Gallery, nor in the Gallery of Fondazione Giorgio Cini. Now it is confirmed as being in a private collection and the only known image of the panel is an old black and white picture (personal communication by Alessandro Martoni, Fondazione Giorgio Cini).

The painting portrays the group of the Madonna and the infant Jesus and a nun, who is most likely the donor, in the foreground. The half-length Madonna is in frontal position behind a parapet. She wears a dress covered by a light veil and a dark cloak. The infant Jesus, clothed in a light tunic, is depicted sitting on a dark cushion, clasping his mother's left hand with his left hand and holding a small bird, probably a goldfinch, in his right hand. The praying nun, who we see only in part is painted in the right corner before the parapet, so that she is outside the sacred space. The Virgin gazes at her, probably in a way that denotes protectiveness. Behind the Virgin, a cloth of honour divides/separates this group from a distant natural landscape.

This panel can be grouped with other artworks showing the *Virgin and Child* produced by Bastiani in 1480s' (such as for instance those in in Poznan National Museum, Poland and in the Church of the Redentore in Venice), which follow the examples of Giovanni Bellini and Alvise Vivarini. The Virgin's face recalls the Murano *lunette* and coeval works by Alvise Vivarini. Only by relying on the visual analysis of the picture and on comparisons with Bastiani's other works, as well as Giovanni Bellini's and Alvise Vivarini's painting, can a dating of around mid-1480s be suggested.



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Number: AP44

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Resurrection* or *Christ Arising from the Tomb*

Location: Unknown

Date: 1480 c.

Material and dimensions: panel, 61 x 45 cm

Provenance: Rome, Count Alessandro Contini collection; New York, Mortimer L. Schiff (bought 9th January 1928); Paris-New York, F. Kleinberger Galleries (bought 22nd(?) March 1929); New York, Arnold Seligmann Rey & Co. (1935); Venice, sent to Adolph Loewi (1935); Rome, sold to Alessandro Morandotti (April 1951).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: The painting was restored in 1935 (Letter Kleinberger Galleries – Arnold Seligmann Rey & Co., March 15th, 1935).

Bibliography:

New York, American Art Association – Anderson Galleries Inc., November 18th, 1932, sale number 4000, pp. 48-49 (n. 37); New York, American Art Association – Anderson Galleries Inc., February 8th, 1935, sale number 4153, p. 28 (n. 65); Van Marle, 1935, XVIII, p. 190 (note 2); Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 39 (note 14); Boskovits, 2009, pp. 13-15, note 9; Casu, 2011, p. 68.

The painting, probably part of a dispersed *paliotto*, shows Christ, in central position, arising from the tomb, giving the benediction with his right hand, and holding a pennant in his left hand. The exact moment of Christ resurrection is depicted, as suggested by the right leg on the parapet of the open tomb. Although the artwork is known to us only through black and white photographs, from descriptions written in old auction catalogues (1932, 1935), we know that the Saviour is dressed "in gold-brocaded white draperies". To the front of the tomb there are the donor, robed as a nun, with her hands joined in prayer, and a soldier asleep holding a sword, both seen in three-quarter rear view, while behind the sarcophagus a soldier holding a spear witnesses the miracle with surprise. Sitting on the rear parapet of the tomb there is the angel that, according to the Gospels, will then appear to the three Marys announcing them that Jesus has risen. The three women are approaching the burial site by walking on a rural road that originates from a walled/fortified city, probably Jerusalem, on the left. The salvific meaning of the portrayed episode is further highlighted by the symbolic presence of the parrot in the landscape (Rigon, 2007, pp. 25-35). The background is closed on the right by a mound with a tree on top and on the left by gently sloping hills in the distance. Next to the arched bridge to enter the city two standing men are chatting. The entire composition is framed within a painted trefoil arch, unfortunately cut away at the top, supported by four piers/pillars.

The actual location of the panel is unknown. In 1930s it was in Kleinberger Galleries, in Paris-New York, as proved by two auction catalogues of the American Art Association (1932, 1935), where Van Marle probably saw it (Van Marle, 1936, p.190). From Kleinberger Galleries stock cards we can retrace the provenance, thus the chronology of the ownership of the painting. The previous owner was Mortimer L. Schiff, in New York, who bought the artwork from count Contini in Rome in January 1928. Schiff sold the panel to the Kleinberger Galleries one year later, in March 1929. The picture was purchased by Arnold Seligmann Rey & Co. in February 1935, as proved also by the correspondence between Kleinberger Galleries and Arnold Seligmann Rey & Co, in which the debt for the acquisition of the panel and its restoration are noted (Letter Kleinberger Galleries – Arnold Seligmann Rey & Co., March 15th, 1935; Letter Arnold Seligmann Rey & Co. – Kleinberger Galleries, March 19th, 1935). Later in 1935 the painting was sent to the Jewish art and antiquities dealer Adolph Loewi, whose gallery was in Venice. Finally, the record reports that the artwork was sold to Alessandro Morandotti, in Rome, in April 1951. It is important to recall the peculiar relationship between Loewi and Morandotti, indeed when the Italian racial laws were promulgated Loewi left Italy and settled in the United States, but he turned the firm of his Venice galley over to Alessandro Morandotti. Morandotti moved to Rome and established the firm "Antiquaria", whose official owner was still Loewi. Indeed, when this latter came back to Italy after the Second World War, Morandotti returned the firm to him. Finally, Loewi sold the Rome gallery to Morandotti in 1950 (Cecutti, 2012, p. 39, note 31) and one year later the Italian dealer purchased Bastiani's panel. Unfortunately, this is the last information/data we have about the ownership of the painting. In her article on Lazzaro Bastiani of 1939, Licia Collobi-Ragghianti (p. 45 [note 14]) stated Bastiani's *Resurrection* was in the Samuel H. Kress collection. This is probably a mistake of the scholar, as the painting has never been published in Kress collection catalogues and the stock cards never mention the Kress Foundation.

Collobi-Ragghianti (p. 39) compared this *Resurrection* with the panel of same subject in Langres, which is similar in the armourers, but also in the disposition

of the elements of the background, with the city on the left and the mound on the right, even if the point of view in the Kleinberger picture is frontal and the landscape appears spacious, while the Langres Christ is seen from a lower point of view, resulting in a flattened perspective. Other comparisons, however, especially for the figure of Christ and the soldiers, can be made with earlier Bastiani's *Resurrection* episodes, as the one in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (part of the *paliotto* with *Stories of the Life of Christ*) and another one seen for sale in a Finarte auction in 1985 (Casu, 1996, pp. 67-68, 82 [note 48]). Moreover, Bastiani must have recalled also Giovanni Bellini's juvenile example and Mantegna's predella for the San Zeno altarpiece. Collobi-Ragghianti (p. 39 [note 14]) believed the Kleinberger *Resurrection* to be more archaic ("più primitivo") than the Langres one, suggesting a dating around 1470, which seems too early, while a dating of around 1480, as indicated by Casu (Casu, 2011, p. 68), seems more appropriate. The *genre* figures just outside the city wall appear also in the Venice *Nativity* of 1480 and in other later works.

Boskovits tentatively suggested, that this painting originally was the central part of a *paliotto* with various saints as side panels. Specifically, he believed the *Saint Jerome with a Nun* and the *Saint Catherine* of the Museo Diocesano of Milan, and the *Saints Cosmas and Damian* of the Mint Museum of Art of Charlotte (North Carolina) constituted/composed the lateral panels of the complex, as their height is almost half that of the *Resurrection* (Boskovits, 2009, p. 13). However, the different Dominican nuns portrayed in the *Resurrection* episode and in the *Saint Jerome* scene, as well as the colour of the sky, presumably blue in the Christ episode, but gold in the pictures of the saints, do not support Boskovits' hypothesis, which has been discarded by Casu (2011, p. 68). Nonetheless, Boskovits' suggestion could be valid for another Bastiani's *paliotto*, indeed this typology of artwork was common at that time and in Bastiani's workshop as well.

Further bibliography:

Casu, 1996, pp. 67-68, 82 (note 48); Rigon, 2007, pp. 25-35; Cecutti, 2012, p. 49.



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Number: AP45

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *A Female Saint (Saint Catherine of Alexandria)*

Location: Unknown

Date: 1473-1475

Material and dimensions: panel, 66 x 47 cm

Inscription: "STA KTERINA VIRGO DE SIENNA", in a cartouche on the marble pedestal

Provenance: Milan, Gustavo Frizzoni (before 1914); Minneapolis, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, MIA (1914-1956, purchased thanks to William Hood Dunwoody fund/trust); New York, Victor Spark art dealer (September 1956); Rensselaer (Indiana, U.S.A.), St. Joseph's College (1972) (?).

Past exhibitions: *The Inaugural Exhibition* (The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, 7th January – 7th February 1915).

Bibliography: Fredericksen-Zeri, 1972, pp. 20, 628; Vinco, 2012, p. 77.
Website: The Frick Digital Collections – Photoarchive, https://digitalcollections.frick.org/digico/#/details/bibRecordNumber/b14787271/Photoarchive (last viewed, 7th February 2023); Fondazione Federico Zeri Photoarchive, http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/entry/work/26585/Bastiani%20Lazzaro%2C%20Santa%20Caterina%20d%27Alessandria (last viewed, 7th February 2023).

The painting portrays the half-length figure of a female saint holding a book (perhaps the Gospel) against her chest with her left hand and the martyr's palm branch in her right hand. She is clothed in a sumptuous floral brocade mantle. A ribbon with a decorative jewel is tied around her head.
Formerly in Milan, as property of Gustavo Frizzoni,[571] the panel was purchased for USD 843.74 by The Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 1914, following a gift to the museum of one million dollars by William Hood Dunwoody, the President of The Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts (*Memorials…*, 1914). The Dunwoody Fund/Trust was used in this way to enrich the permanent collection of the museum, which was inaugurated in January 1915. At this time, the painting was exhibited in the Renaissance room and presented as *A Saint* by the artist Liberale da Verona (n. 23 of the catalogue). According to the entry of the Frick Collection Photoarchive, the panel was still listed in the permanent collection as work of Liberale da Verona in 1941,[572] but not in later catalogues (for

[571] I retrieved this information from the file of the painting in The MIA archive, for which I thank Dr. Rachel McGarry, curator of the museum, who sent me a scanned copy of the entry.
[572] The work was included in the *Checklist of Paintings in the Permanent Collection of The Minneapolis Institute of Arts*, 1941 (p. 22), but not in the *Handbook of The Minneapolis Institute of Arts* of 1917 and of 1926. This information is given in the entry attached to the pictures of the Saint in the Frick Digital Collections – Photoarchive.

instance, in the 1970 *Catalogue of European Paintings in The Minneapolis Institute of Arts*). In fact, in September 1956 the painting was deaccessioned and sold to the New York art dealer Victor Spark for an unknown price. In 1972 Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri mentioned an *Anonymous Female Saint* by Bastiani in the collection of St. Joseph's College of Rensselaer (Indiana), which I believe is this painting. The actual location of the work in unknown.

The Fondazione Zeri Photoarchive also holds a photograph of the panel with the entire standing figure of the saint on a marble pedestal and showing the breaking wheel, symbol of the martyrdom of Saint Catherine of Alexandria, next to her left leg (inv. n. 62001. *Fig. 211*). A cartouche which has the wording "STA KTERINA VIRGO DE SIENNA" is attached to the marble pedestal, but given the presence of the wheel, we might reasonably infer that the inscription is forged. When the panel entered The Minneapolis Institute of Arts collection, however, it was already cut, as proven by the photograph of the Renaissance room and by the museum file. The size of the picture (66 x 47 cm), therefore, refers to the dimensions of the fragment.

None of the early scholars who researched Bastiani and reconstructed his corpus of paintings (e.g., Bernard Berenson, Adolfo and Lionello Venturi, Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà, Licia Collobi) ever mentioned this work, whose ascription to Bastiani's catalogue was restored independently by Zeri in August 1957 (according to the entry in Fondazione Zeri Photoarchive) and by Luisa Vertova (note on the *verso* of the photograph in Villa I Tatti Photoarchive, V 49.4. See Vinco, 2012). In a personal communication of 1939, however, Wilhelm Suida already questioned the attribution to Liberale da Verona, but did not ascribe the painting to any other master. He also suggested that the panel probably had an arched shape originally.

As pointed out by Vinco, in his composition of this picture Bastiani was influenced by Andrea Mantegna's *Saint Justine*, part of the *Saint Luke Altarpiece* (Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera, 1453-1454), and Saint Euphemia (Napoli, Museo e Gallerie Nazionali di Capodimonte, 1454). Bastiani moved beyond his usual archaic inspiration, however, as can be seen in the well-defined volume of the

monumental saint and the spatial construction of the pedestal. The space is better defined here than is the case with the *Matera Polyptych*, despite the strong similarities with some of the saints that are portrayed, such as Saint Louis of Toulouse and Saint Mustiola. I would suggest, therefore, a period of execution around mid-1470s; specifically, between 1472-1473 – when Bastiani realised the *Matera Polyptych* and the *Christ Blessing* (in Bayonne Museum) – and 1475 – when he painted the two big panels of *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* in the Gallerie dell'Accamia (Venice) and the *Madonna and Child* in the Hermitage Museum (Saint Petersburg).

Further images



Fig. 211. L. Bastiani, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, formerly Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA).



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Number: AP46

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna Adoring the Child*

Location: Venice (Italy), Church of Redentore, Sacristy

Date: 1480-1485

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 80 x 66 cm

Inscription: "AVE MARIA", on the top left corner (non-original inscription, added at a later date)

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Unknown.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1901, Bettio (Basaldella, 1989, p. 407).

In 1930 Da Portogruaro complained of the painting's poor state of preservation, especially in the colour rendering due to previous conservation treatments (p. 58).

Bibliography:
Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 281; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 9; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, fig. s.p.; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 281; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 222 (note 4); Da Portogruaro, 1930, p. 58, fig. p. 51; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 131, 134; Berenson, 1932, p. 14; Berenson, 1936, p. 12; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 188; Collobi, 1939, p. 47 (note 38); Berenson 1957, I, p. 6; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 6; Mariacher, 1967, p. 24, fig. p. 21; Basaldella, 1989, pp. 375, 407; Gallo-Spadavecchia, 1994, p. 33.

The painting, on display in the Sacristy of the Church of Redentore, has never been mentioned in Venetian guides nor in commentaries on the church. Its provenance is unknown.
The panel shows the half-length Madonna behind a marble parapet adoring the infant Jesus. She looks down at him with a solemn gaze, which is both tender and sorrowful. Over her brocade red dress, she wears a white veil and a dark cloak. The infant Jesus, clothed in a greyish-blue coarse drapery, is lying on the parapet, reclining upon a brown cushion. His head is turned towards his mother. As in the case of the *Madonna Adoring the Child* in the Pinacoteca Tadini (Cat. XX), the parapet refers to the "unction slab" that predicts the future sacrifice of Christ. Unlike the Tadini *Madonna,* however, there is no fruit garland in this painting. An apple, however, is placed on the parapet, next to Jesus, as symbol of his Salvation (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, p. 48). Behind the figures hangs a cloth of honour. Beyond, the backdrop shows a natural hilly landscape with a lake and bush-like trees; a landscape characteristic of Bastiani.
Ludwig and Paoletti first ascribed the painting to Bastiani in 1900 and reported that previously it had been considered as Carpaccio's. Subsequent scholars who wrote about the artwork agreed in attributing it to Bastiani,

except for Ludwig and Molmenti in 1903, who, curiously, downgraded it as being by Bastiani's workshop, and Berenson, who assigned it to Andrea da Murano both in the 1930s and in the 1950s editions of his *Indexes* (1932, 1936, 1957, 1958).

In the Redentore *Madonna* several scholars found Giovanni Bellini's and, especially, Alvise Vivarini's influence (Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931; Van Marle, 1936; Collobi, 1939; Mariacher, 1967; Gallo-Spadavecchia, 1994), which lead them consider the picture a late work and suggesting a date in the second half of the 1480s (Collobi), or in the 1490s (Mariacher). Despite the archaic fashion of the Madonna's brocade dress (which is reminiscent of that in the Poldi Pezzoli *Madonna*), I agree that the period when this work was executed was probably after the 1480s. An immediate comparison within Bastiani's catalogue, indeed, must be made with the abovementioned Tadini *Madonna*, dated around 1480, which was based upon Giovanni Bellini's compositions of the *Madonna Adoring the Child*. As already noticed by Ludwig and Paoletti in 1900, the infant Jesus is similar to that in the Castelvecchio Madonna. The Redentore painting, however, seems to be mostly influenced by Alvise Vivarini's work, especially the Madonna's head slightly bent to one side and slightly downward as she looks at the infant Jesus and with her fingers touching in prayer. These elements are recurrent in Alvise's works, for instance in the central part of the Urbino *Polyptych* (1976. Steer, 1982, pp. 149-150 [Cat. 25]. *Fig. 212*) and in the later *Madonna Adoring the Child* in the Church of San Giovanni in Bragora in Venice (dated around 1488-90 by Steer, 1982, p. 157 [Cat. 33]. *Fig. 213*). The gesture of the infant Jesus holding an edge of his cloth in the Redentore is reminiscent of the similar gesture that he makes in Alvise's Urbino picture, but with the opposite hand. For internal comparisons with Bastiani's paintings, I would date the *Madonna Adoring the Child* in the Church of Redentore to have been completed after the Tadini *Madonna*, but not later than 1485 and the Castelvecchio Madonna, as I do not see close enough resemblances with the Madonna in the later Howorth *Tryptych* and in the *Virgin and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Dorothy* once in Chalandon collection, both of which are dated to be from around the second half of 1480s. A careful

conservation treatment of the Redentore panel, however, is necessary and this would reveal further useful information to better understand its period of execution.

Further bibliography:

Levi D'Ancona, 1977, p. 48; Steer, 1982, pp. 149-150 (Cat. 25), p. 157 (Cat. 33).

Further images



Fig. 212. A. Vivarini, Madonna Enthroned Adoring the Child, with Saint Francis and Saint Peter, Saint Paul and Saint John, Urbino, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, 1476 (detail).



Fig. 213. A. Vivarini, *Madonna Adoring the Child,* Venice, Church of San Giovanni in Bragora, 1488-1490 (detail).



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Number: AP47

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Pietà* or *Deposition from the Cross*

Location: Venice (Italy), Church of Sant'Antonin

Date: 1480-1485

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 150 x 113 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Church of San Giovanni in Bragora (from 1810 to 1847).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: (1847, Zanotto, 1856, pp. 216, 220); A. Lazzarin (1989, *Restauri…*, 2001, p. 50).

Due to the precarious condition of the chapel where it was once displayed, by the 17th century sources reported that the panel was in poor conservation

status (1620: “la pala e rotta e ruinata”; 1715: “è questa pittura del Sebastiani con fissure nel mezo”. Sartor, 1997, p. 40). In 1847, when rediscovered by Zanotto in a room behind the Sacristy of San Giovanni in Bragora, it was restored. The last restoration was carried out in 1989 by Lazzarin. At that time the painting showed an extended crack along the vertical axis, cutting through the figure of Saint John. The pigment layer was abraded and there were numerous lacunae. Nonetheless, the treatment proved efficacious as the removal of the dirt and the old varnish layer revealed warm and intense colours effective for the volumetric body construction (Sartor, 1997, p. 41).

Bibliography:

Sansovino, 1581, p. 10; Ridolfi, 1648 (ed. cons 1914), p. 50; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 37; Boschini, 1664, pp. 193-194; Boschini, 1674, pp. 36-37; Zanetti, 1733, p. 229; Piacenza, 1768, p. 576; Zanotto, 1856, pp. 216, 220; Zanotto, 1860; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 216; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 279; Logan, 1903, p. 319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 24; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; Borenius, 1912, I, pp. 218-219, p. 218 (note 4); A. Venturi, 1915, p. 381; Paoletti, 1929, p. 125; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 134; Berenson, 1932, p. 64; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 175; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 40 (note 17); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 219 (V. 17); Lucco, 1990, II, p. 463; Sartor, 1997, pp. 40-41; *Restauri…*, 2001, p. 50; Tempestini, 2021, p. 256 (n. 1330).

This *Pietà* portrays the moment shortly after the deposition of Christ from the cross and shortly before his entombment. The naked dead body of Christ, draped only in a white cloth, is raised by Saint John, who has put his foot on a marble slab placed on the tomb help him to lift Christ. In the bottom right corner, there is Mary Magdalen holding Christ’s hand, while on the left the mourning Madonna is supported by one of the three Marys. In symmetrical position another Mary cries with her fisted hands covered by the mantle. Finally, two male figures, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, gripped by grief and sorrow are shown in the background. The semi-illuminated figures

emerge from a dark background, and the scene takes place under the cross where Christ has been crucified. Attached to the front of the marble tomb there is a cartouche which was signed by Bastiani (Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 216). Today the signature is no more visible, as it has been erased by old aggressive treatments.

The autography of this panel has never been questioned since this *Pietà* by Lazzaro Bastiani has been mentioned as being in the Church of Sant'Antonin since the late 17th century. Down the centuries, the painting had been relocated within the church and for a period it was also housed also in San Giovanni in Bragora (Zanotto, 1856, pp. 216, 220; 1860). Today it is on display in Sant'Antonin, although the church is close to the public. The present church is essentially a different building from the one shown in Jacopo de Barbari's engraving with the *View of Venice* of 1500 (*Fig. 214*). This is due to the massive restoration it underwent from 1636 to 1682 under the supervision of Baldassare Longhena (Vio, 1976, pp. 228-233; Favaro, 1995, pp. 72-79). From documentary sources we know that the church had a main altar flanked by two chapels with their respective altars (the story of the church based on documentary sources has been very well described in Toniolo, 2010, pp. 63-73). In a document concerning an apostolic visitation of 1581, it is reported that on the proper left of the main altar there was the chapel that housed the altar where the Blessed Sacrament (*Santissimo Sacramento*) was exposed (Sartor, 1997, p. 40). Here, as we will see, Bastiani's *Deposition* was exhibited. In 1593, during a visit to the church, Patriarch Priuli ordered a renovation and enlargement of the main altar in order to move the Blessed Sacrament there. Moreover, he commanded that the door near the chapel of Saint Anthony to be walled up, because it was not appropriate to keep the Blessed Sacrament so close to an entrance door (Toniolo, 2010, p. 64). These documents inform us that the Blessed Sacrament was on the altar of the chapel of Saint Anthony, on the proper left of the main altar. After the erection of the new main altar and the transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to the new location (1659, transfer of the Blessed Sacrament; 1662, consecration of the new altar), the main altar has been dedicated to the Santissimo Sacramento, causing some

misunderstandings in the interpretation of the old guides and documents. Concerning the chapel of Saint Anthony and its altar, the sources record that in 1537 it needed a restoration. The situation of the chapel got worse in the 17th century, as in 1620 Patriarch Tiepolo noticed that there were "delle sfessure, che portano già delle immonditie verso l'altar", hence probably some holes in the roof through which the rain entered and dripped on the altar and pointed out the necessity of the relocation of the Blessed Sacrament on the main altar (Sartor, 1997, p. 40). By 1641 the chapel was in a ruinous state and was finally refurbished in 1664, with a new altar dedicated to the Virgin (Toniolo, 2010, p. 66).

Sansovino was the first to advise that a *Pietà* by Lazzaro Bastiani was placed on the Corpus Domini, which commonly was the altar where the consecrated sacramental bread and wine, i.e. the Blessed Sacrament, were exposed (1581, p. 10r; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 37). Ridolfi only listed the painting among Bastiani's works (1648, p. 50), while Boschini specified that there was an altarpiece on the altar to the proper left of the main one, adding that two small panels ("due quadretti") portraying Saint Atanasius and Saint Roch by Bastiani further decorated the chapel "dalle parti dell'Altare", thus probably flanking the altarpiece (1664, pp. 193-194; 1674, pp. 36-37). Shortly after, in 1684, Martinelli recorded that on the altar was not Bastiani's *Deposition*, but rather a painting showing *Saint Anthony of Padua* (p. 235). This description was repeated also in 1712 by Braccioli (p. 71) and in 1785 by Zucchini (pp. 260-261), who mistakenly attributed the *Saint Anthony* to Bastiani, and again in 1815 by Moschini (1815, I, 1, p. 87). This latter reported that the panel was signed and dated "Gioseffo Einz 1664". Gioseffo Einz is the Italian translation for Joseph Heintz (il Giovane), a German painter who lived in Venice and in 1660 had already executed two panels for the new main altar of the church (Zucchetta, 2010, p. 113). Curiously, in 1733 Zanetti stated that the *Deposition* was still in the left chapel (p. 229), but this information is contradicted not only by all the guides since the end of 18th century, but also by an *Inventory* written in 1715 that mentioned Bastiani's painting "nel Mezado sopra l'organo" (Sartor, 1997, p. 40). Therefore, the *Inventory* confirms that the panel was no

longer to be found in its previous location, explaining why from Martinelli onwards the historiographers mentioned only the Joseph Heintz painting. In another *Inventory* drafted in 1733, it was pointed out that the altarpiece "era nella chiesa vecchia, cioè la palla dell'Altar maggior mentovato dal Sansovin" (this is repeated also in following inventories, for instance one from 1736 mentioned in Zucchetta, 2010, p. 130 [note 69]). Since, after the refurbishment works, the main altar changed its dedication to the Santissimo Sancramento, but at the time of Sansovino the altar of the Santissimo Sacramento was in the Sant'Antonio chapel, this information is wrong and has caused a misinterpretation of Sansovino's record (Sartor, 1997, p. 40). According to Zanotto, after the Napoleonic suppressions (1810) the painting was transferred in San Giovanni in Bragora. Here, it was left in a room behind the Sacristy, where Zanotto found/rediscovered it in bad condition in 1847. The priest ordered its restoration (which was not well executed in Zanotto's opinion) and placed it again in Sant'Antonin (Zanotto, 1856, pp. 216, 220; 1860). Andreis identified this *Deposition* with another one which was once in the Church of San Severo and that the old guides ascribed to School of Lazzaro Bastiani (1902[2], p. 44. Today the San Severo *Deposition* is in Gallerie dell'Accademia and is attributed to Francesco di Girolamo da Santacroce. Moschini-Marconi, 1962, pp. 186-187). Today the panel is on the altar of the left chapel once more.

The exhibition of Bastiani's *Pietà* on the altar of the Santissimo Sacramento in the past is not fortuitous, as the eucharistic meaning of its iconography seems to confirm that it was specifically requested for this place. Therefore, Sartor suggested that most likely the commissioner was the *fabbriceria* of Sant'Antonin, who later relocated the painting on the organ due to the precarious condition of the chapel of Saint Anthony (1997, p. 41). It may be possible, however, that the altarpiece had been removed after the renovation of the chapel of Saint Anthony, which no longer hosted the Blessed Sacrament, and explain the installation of the new painting by Joseph Heintz on the new altar.

For Crowe and Cavalcaselle the entombment of Christ in Sant'Antonin is the first picture executed by Bastiani after he had moved from Padua to Venice. The Paduan style was still evident in the Squarcionesque anatomy of the figures and "the dry character of their tempera" (1871, p. 216; Borenius, 1912, pp. 218-219). Ludwig and Molmenti did not find any strong Paduan influence here, however, instead they suggested comparing this *Deposition* with Jacopo Bellini's drawings of same subject in the Louvre sketchbook (1906, p. 12). Lionello Venturi compared it with the *Pietà* of Asolo lunette and assigned it to Bastiani's late period (1907, p. 279), while his father Adolfo Venturi supported the Paduan-Mantegnesque connection, although not directly as a result of a direct knowledge, as but rather in that it is slightly perceivable in this composition (1915, p. 381). Similarly, Paoletti underlined the "second-hand" Paduan influence that Bastiani poorly interpreted here (1929, p. 125). Agreeing with Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Van Marle reported that this *Deposition* shows "a strong and direct Paduan influence", as "the types and the severe breadth of treatment rather suggest an influence of Andrea Mantegna or Giovanni Bellini in his Mantegnesque phase" (1936, p. 175). For Vavalà, in Bastiani's works of intimate character, his capabilities are less in evidence, as is the case with his *Pietà* pictures, whose "composition becomes frankly mediocre in the poorer variant at S. Antonino" (1931, p. 134). Collobi included this altarpiece in a period of acculturation in Bastiani's career around 1470 1475s, when his personal inclination did not contradict his artistic instruction/training. Positively evaluated by the scholar, the painting shows an equilibrated ensemble of figures around the central dead Christ, in a rare and new composition for the Venetian school that could be derived from a Donatellesque bas-relief (1939, p. 49). Sartor included this *Pietà* among some works of Christological subject directly influenced by Giovanni Bellini in the second half of the 1470s (1997, p. 40). Lucco dated the picture between 1484 and 1490 on stylistic grounds (1990, II, p.463).

Bastiani was surely aware of Giovanni Bellini's paintings and drawings portraying the *Pietà*, as in his *Pietà*, once in Berlin Museum, he replicated in specular position Giovanni's *Dead Christ supported by two angels* in the

National Gallery of London. With reference to the dead body of Christ falling forward Sartor suggested a comparison with the *Pietà* drawing in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, that has been variously attributed to Giovanni and to Andrea Mantegna (1997, p. 51). For the crowded scene Bastiani may have been inspired by Jacopo Bellini's *Entombment* drawing of the Louvre sketchbook (Folio 63r). The contained sentiment of grief and sorrow is well represented here, as is the physical effort of Saint John to support the lifeless body of Christ, where conversely to the mourning Virgin and Saint John in the Asolo *lunette* that do not seem to make any effort. When Bastiani painted the Sant'Antonin *Deposition* he was probably still developing new compositions and ways to express the figures' feelings. He made a basic study of Giovanni's examples, though did not follow them as closely as he did with the Berlin *Pietà* of the second half of the 1470s. On the other hand, in the Asolo *lunette*, dated in the second half of 1480s, his less careful late manner seems to already be emerging. Therefore, I would date the Sant'Antonin *Pietà* slightly before the Asolo picture, in the early 1480s, between 1480 and 1485.

Further bibliography:

Corner, 1758, pp. 31-34; Zucchini, 1785, I, pp. 260-261; Moschini, 1815, I, 1, p. 87; Andreis, 1902[2], p. 44; Vio, 1976, pp. 228-233; Favaro, 1995, pp. 72-79; *Chiesa di Sant'Antonin: storia e restauro*, a cura di T. Favaro, Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici e Paesaggistici di Venezia e Laguna, Venezia, 2010; Toniolo, 2010, pp. 63-73; Zucchetta, 2010, pp. 107-131.

Further images

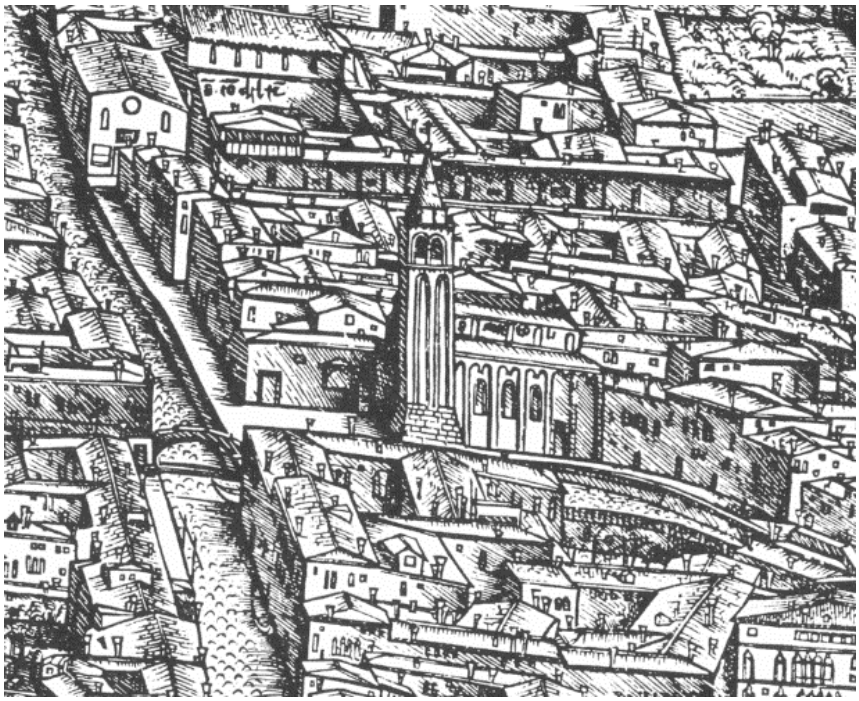


Fig. 214. J. de' Barbari, *Veduta di Venezia*, 1500 (detail of Church of Sant'Antonin).



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Number: AP48

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Annunciation*

Location: Venice (Italy), Correr Museum (from 1830 – CI. I n. 33)

Date: 1480-1484

Material and dimensions: poplar panel, 78 x 182 cm

Inscription: "LAZARVS BASTIANI", at the centre of the grey frame

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Teodoro Correr private collection (until 1830).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1955, Pedrocco (Mariacher, 1956, pp. 85-86); 1979, Pedrocco (*Quaderni…*, 1986, p. 238); 1981 (C. B. C. restoration report, 1992-1993); 1991, C. B. C. Conservazione Beni Culturali (C. B. C. restoration report, 1992-1993; Vedovello, 1993, pp. 134-136; *Restauri…*, 2001, p. 342).

The painting consists of two thick poplar boards arranged horizontally. A canvas strip was applied over the joints of the wood planks, probably to prevent possible fractures on the painting layer along the joints, a procedure not unusual for Bastiani. The supporting structure is made up of two poplar crosspieces nailed vertically on the back of the boards. The preparatory ground is the standard *gesso e colla*, light yellow in colour. The painting area is included in a sort of frame, delimited by deep incisions traced 5 cm from the edge of the panel (Vedovello, 1993, p. 134).

In 1871 Crowe and Cavalcaselle had already observed that "the tone is dull and the colour opaque" (p. 218 [note 4]). The panel underwent three restorations during the 20th century: in 1955 and 1979, both carried out by Giuseppe Pedrocco, and the last was completed in 1991 by C. B. C. Conservazione Beni Culturali. According to the report published in *Bollettino dei Musei Civici Veneziani*, before the 1955 restoration, the panel was in a mediocre state of conservation, with a transversal crack in the centre, and with numerous areas of repainting, stuccoing and retouching dating back to old undocumented restorations. The overpainting was particularly evident in the sky, in the architecture and in the figures, while the perimeter was painted red. The whole pictorial surface had darkened owing to old overlapping varnish layers. The restoration process consisted in the removal of oxidized paints and old stuccoed area and inpainting, revealing numerous lacunae, especially in the sky and on the face of the Madonna. Nonetheless, after the cleaning, areas of original painting emerged, vivid colours were revealed, applied using tempera *a corpo*. The signature has also been preserved in its entirety. The restoration ended with plaster repair of the lacunae and retouching with watercolour (Mariacher, 1956, pp. 85-86).

In 1981 an anti-woodworm treatment was performed (C. B. C. restoration report, 1992-1993).

Before the restoration carried out by C. B. C. the painting's condition was appalling, as an old and very invasive attack of xylophagous insects had profoundly damaged both the back and the painted surface. In addition, an unexpected change in the storage environmental conditions had caused a sudden contraction of the wood support. For these two reasons, the entire surface of the painting showed extensive flaking of the preparatory ground and pictorial layers, even with partial loss of material down to the ground. In addition, numerous areas of inpainting were visible in the sky and overpainted superficial glazes were visible in the clothes and in the buildings. An aggressive former cleaning had removed the paint of the angel's robe revealing the preparatory ground. The Virgin's dark cloak was also lacking the superficial pigment layer, (which had probably been blue). Perhaps owing to the natural

alteration of the copper resinate employed, the green areas of the landscape had turned brown. Small traces of gold, probably later additions, were present on the garments and on the rays of God's *aureola*. Finally, the varnish layer was heavily oxidized. The restoration treatment mainly consisted of the cleaning and removal of the old yellowish varnish and of the repainted areas, followed by the consolidation of the materials and the re-adhesion of the various layers. A crossbeam was applied on the back of the panels to reinforce the supporting structure (Vedovello, 1993, pp. 134-136; C. B. C. restoration report, 1992-1993).

An IRR examination carried out during the last restoration revealed the underdrawing in the figures (the drawing of the angel was, in fact, actually visible to the naked eye) and in the prayer desk, while the very accurate perspective construction, including that of the buildings, seems to have been executed directly during the painting process. No measurement points or preliminary incisions, often employed by Bastiani, have been detected. (Vedovello, 1993, p. 134; C. B. C. restoration report, 1992-1993).

Restorers warned, after the 1991 restoration that that the treatment would not be permanent, as the painting was still very sensitive to any environmental variation. Today the work is very fragile and is located in the museum deposit where, owing to the issues connected to the adhesion of the painting layers, it is impossible to hang it vertically.

Bibliography:

Zanotto, 1856, p. 397; Lazari, 1858, p. 8 (n. 33); Crowe- Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 218 (note 4); *Guida…*, 1881, p. 70 (n. 22); *Guida…*,1885, p. 100 (n. 22); Jacobsen, 1894, p. 261; *Elenco…*, 1899, p. 242 (n. 41); Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900, p. 280; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, pp. 10-11; Logan, 1903, p. 319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 22; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; *Guida…*, 1909, p. 111; Borenius, 1912, p. 221 (note 3); A. Venturi, 1915, p. 388; Berenson, 1916, pp. 153-157; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931 p. 139; Berenson, 1932, p. 64; Fogolari, 1932, p. 282; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 182; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 45 (note 29); *Civico museo…*, 1949, p. 29 (n. 49); Mariacher, 1956, pp. 85-86;

Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Mariacher, 1957, pp. 29-30; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Pallucchini, 1958-59, p. 104; Mariacher, 1960, p. 28; Mariacher, 1961, p. 56; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Romanelli, 1984, p. 82; *Quaderni…*, 1986, p. 238; *Restauri…*, 2001, p. 342; Dorigato, 1993, pp. 50-53; Vedovello, 1993, pp. 134-136; Mariacher, s.d., p. 28.

Of unknown provenance, this *Annunciation* was once in Teodoro Correr's private collection (Zanotto, 1856, p. 397). In 1830 it was bequeathed to the city of Venice along with the entire collection and today is conserved in Correr Museum. Exposed for a long time in the permanent collection (Zanotto, 1856, p. 397; Lazari, 1858, p. 8 [n. 33]; *Guida…*, 1881, p. 70 [n. 22]; *Guida…*, 1885, p. 100 [n. 22]; Jacobsen, 1894, p. 261; *Elenco…*, 1899, p. 242 [n. 41]; *Guida…*, 1909, p. 111; *Civico museo…*, 1949, pp. 29 (n. 49); Mariacher, 1957, pp. 29-30; Mariacher, 1960, p. 28; Mariacher, 1961, p. 56; Romanelli, 1984, p. 82), today the painting is not on display, owing to its poor conservation status.

The composition is arranged horizontally, showing the main episode in the foreground and a natural landscape in the backdrop. Depicted is the moment Saint Gabriel, on the left, announces to Mary that she will conceive the son of God. The archangel is in near profile, standing on his left leg, blessing Mary with his right hand, and holding the white lily, symbol of Mary's virginal purity (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 211-212), in his left. Mary, on the right, is portrayed kneeling at a *prieu-dieu* (the prayer desk) while reading a book. Her hands crossed over her chest and her head lowered bespeak her humble submission and acceptance to fulfil the role. She is clothed in a red dress covered by a dark cloak, which was supposed to be blue originally (see "Conservation status and previous restoration treatments"). The impregnation of Mary is here indicated by a ray falling on her breast. The flash emerges from the *aureola* surrounding the half-figure of God the Father in mid-air and it carries the dove of the Holy Spirit and the fully formed Child, who glide towards Mary. In the Italian states this peculiar iconography of the Annunciation was introduced in early the 14th century and spread throughout the regions until the late 15th century, as exemplified by various works (Robb, 1936, p. 524; Réau, 1957, pp. 190-191;

Trentini, 2014, pp. 127-132). The earliest example is that in Pacino da Bonaguida's *Tree of Life*, today in Galleria dell'Accademia (Florence), who probably intended to portray *Iesus emissus coelitus* as described in San Bonaventura's *Lignum vitae* (Robb, 1936, p. 524; Giovanardi, 2015, p. 172). In Venice, the motif appears in Lorenzo Veneziano's polyptych of the *Annunciation with Saints* in Gallerie dell'Accademia, dated 1371 (Robb, 1936, p. 524. For general information on Lorenzo Veneziano's polyptych, please refer to: Guarnieri, 2006, p. 208). In the 15th century, the archbishop of Florence denounced the painters who depicted the Annunciation scene according to this iconography because he believed that the fully formed Child represented the heretical idea that Jesus did not grow in Mary's womb. The motif was finally condemned and officially banned in the 16th century, after the *Concilium Tridentinum* (Réau, 1957, p. 190).

In addition to the dove representing the Holy Spirit, other birds populate the foreground – namely, from left to right, a kingfisher, a goldfinch, a helmeted guineafowl (*Numidia meleagris*) and a parrot – all having symbolic meaning and specific reference to the Virgin Mary, Christ, and the painted scene, as already explained by Dorigato (1993, pp. 50-51). In the past it was said that the kingfisher's nest could not sink, being able to endure even the strongest hurricane and protect the kingfisher's chicks. Therefore, in Christian symbology, the unsinkable nest has been interpreted as the Church that always protects the faithful, while the kingfisher, being the bird able to build this resistant nest, corresponds to Christ, the holy founder of the Church (Charbonneau-Lessay, II, 1994, pp. 121-122). Moreover, according to Picinelli's *Mundus Symbolicus* when the kingfisher builds his nest, the sea storm ceases, and this represents the Virgin's protection (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 161). The goldfinch traditionally prefigures the Passion of Christ and his future resurrection (Charbonneau-Lassay, II, 1994, pp. 91-92), but for Piccinelli, it also symbolises the Virgin Mary because the goldfinch punched its chest while eating the cardoon's seeds (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 80;). The helmeted guineafowl refers to the concept of brotherly love (Cairo, 1967, p. 134, 262) For its ability to repeat "AVE", the greeting of the archangel Gabriel, the parrot

is usually connected to the Virgin Mary and the immaculate conception, thus symbolizing both mother and son, but can also be interpreted as a wish of salvation and redemption (Rigon, 2007, pp. 25-35). Finally, another symbolic element is the olive tree depicted next to the pool the kingfisher is diving into, on the extreme left side of the picture. The olive tree is usually a symbol of peace, and the olive wood was said to be employed, together with the cedar, the cypress and the palm, to assemble Christ's cross. Furthermore, it might also refer to the immaculate conception of the Virgin, as in the *Corona Duodecima Coronarum Virginis Mariae* it is reported that Mary was like the olive tree, which has bitter roots (Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 261, 263).

The whole scene is set outside on a sort of terrace delimited by a short parapet and buildings in the wings. The setting resembles a theatrical stage set (Vavalà, 1931, p. 139) or to a chessboard (Collobi, 1939, p. 45) owing to the strong geometrical treatment of the whole perspective, with the front pavement tiles and the rear hedgerows and trees forming continuous perspective lines converging to a single vanishing point on the horizon line. This central one-point perspective is further underlined by the hills receding in orderly procession each behind the last and by the windows and the open door of the side buildings (an illustrative graphical representation of the perspective lines has been reconstructed by Paola Frattaroli. Dorigato, 1993, p. 51, fig. 32). Therefore, here Bastiani is fully focused on a perfectly rendered geometrical perspective, not on the psychological concerns of the figures. As already remarked by Sandberg-Vavalà "Bastiani had no such sense of his own unreality. He depicts not the Annunciation but two actors representing the Annunciation" (1931, p. 139). A few years later, Collobi explained her view by saying that owing to a moralistic code that Bastiani imposed upon himself, his paintings, based as they are upon the resultant strict geometry, can appear rather formulaic in composition. For Collobi it seemed that Bastiani had persuaded himself to find beauty not in the shapes/forms, but in the religious meaning of the painted elements (Collobi, 1939, pp. 45-46). Mariacher suggested that the panel was an *antependium* originally, and this might explain the rigorous central perspective construction (1961, p. 56).

Signed "LAZARVS BASTIANI", this *Annunciation* has been unanimously included in Bastiani's *corpus* of artworks (Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 218 (note 4); Paoletti-G. Ludwig, 1900, p. 280; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, pp. 10-11; Logan, 1903, p. 319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 22; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 279; Borenius, 1912, p. 221 (note 3); A. Venturi, 1915, p. 388; Berenson, 1916, pp. 153-157; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931 p. 139; Berenson, 1932, p. 64; Fogolari, 1932, p. 282; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, p. 182; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 45 (note 29); Berenson, 1957, p. 26; Mariacher, 1957, pp. 29-30; Berenson, 1958, p. 27; Pallucchini, 1958-59, p. 104; Mariacher, 1961, p. 56; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Dorigato, 1993, pp. 50-53). In Klosterneuburg Monastery Museum another *Annunciation* concordantly attributed to Bastiani shows a further version of the same composition, surely derived from the Correr one, and executed in later years.

With the exception of Ludwig-Paoletti (1900, p. 280) and Ludwig-Molmenti (1906, p. 22), both of whom dated the Correr painting early in Bastiani's career, judging the one-point perspective construction as indicative of his inexperience, all the scholars agree in fixing its execution at a later date, sometime between 1480 and 1485. For Crowe and Cavalcaselle Bastiani style here combines the Bellinesque and the Vivarinesque manner, recalling the *Nativity* once in Sant'Elena dated 1480 (Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 218 [note 4]). In Lionello Venturi's opinion this small rough panel ("piccola tavoletta alquanto rozza") could have been made before 1485 (1907, p. 279). Sandberg-Vavalà pointed out that this composition/artwork represents "the quintessence of the slowly matured personal expression of Bastiani, painted certainly in old age, yet clearly bearing in it traces of long absorbed and half-forgotten formative influences" (1931, p. 139). Van Marle grouped the panel among those works he considered as having been executed following Bartolomeo Vivarini's example, whose influence may have affected Bastiani's production between 1480 and 1484 (1936, p. 182). Collobi also placed it around 1480 (1939, p. 45), while Mariacher (1957, p. 30), followed by Romanelli (1984, p. 82), believed the work to be from slightly later, probably

around 1485. Finally, Dorigato further recognised Bastiani's mature manner and the dating she gave was between 1480 and 1485 (1993, p. 50).

From the 1480s onwards Bastiani introduced a horizontal element/structure to confine the main "actors" of the scene to the foreground and increased/deepened his interest in the perspective construction of the setting, which was progressively reduced to the basic components. Examples of this "subtraction" tendency are the *Nativity* (1480), the *Saint Anthony on the nut tree* (1479-82), the Murano *lunette* (1484), the *Enthroned Saint Jerome* (1488 c.) and the *Coronation* (1490). As Dorigato underlined, for the simple symmetrical composition and the wide central area, where the distant rows of bushes converge according to the perspective line, the Correr *Annunciation* is closer to the *Nativity*. Therefore, in accordance with the opinion of most of scholars, it seems reasonable to date this painting in the early 1480s, in the period between 1480 and 1484.

Further bibliography:

Robb, 1936, p. 524; Réau, 1957, pp. 190-191; Cairo, 1967, p. 134, 262; Levi D'Ancona, 1977, pp. 211-212, 261-263; Charbonneau-Lessay, II, 1994, pp. 91-92, 121-122; Levi D'Ancona, 2001, pp. 80, 161; Guarnieri, 2006, p. 208; Rigon, 2007, pp. 25-35; Trentini, 2014, pp. 107-146; Giovanardi, 2015, p. 172.



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Number: AP49

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child*

Location: Venice (Italy), Correr Museum (from 1830, CI. I n. 0372)

Date: 1485-1490

Material and dimensions: poplar panel, 75 x 62 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: Venice, Teodoro Correr private collection (until 1830).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1954, Pellicioli (Mariacher, 1957, p. 34); 2000-2001, C.B.C. Conservazione Beni Culturali (C.B.C. restoration report, 2000-2001).

We are not aware of any old restorations. At the beginning of the 20th century the painting was already in an extremely poor state of conservation, as was reported by Ludwig and Paoletti ("condizioni estremamente disastrose".

Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900, p. 281) and probably any restoration procedure was carried out later in the century decades, as the ruined state of the panel was pointed out by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Van Marle and Collobi-Ragghianti ("a ruined replica of the picture at Verona", Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1912, p. 222, note 4; "in very poor condition", Van Marle, 1936, p. 184; "dato il cattivo stato di conservazione […]", Collobi-Ragghinti, 1939-40, p. 47. *Fig. 215*). The first 20th century restoration work was executed by Pellicioli in 1954 (Mariacher, 1957, p. 34). The painting was in a poor state, and the process concerned its consolidation and cleaning. The most recent restoration was performed in 2000-2001 by C.B.C. Conservazione Beni Culturali, as the painting was once again badly in need of conservatory work (*Fig. 216*). The poplar wooden support, showing the damage caused by a previous attack of xylophagous insects, had become perilously thin, measuring only 0.8 cm (probably it should have had a thickness of about 2 cms). Four small walnut panels were attached to the back of the support using animal glue, and it was further reinforced with a wooden support structure and a central crossbeam which were nailed directly on the support (*Fig. 217*). The preparatory ground, in gypsum and glue, was uniformly applied on the surface, with no priming layer present. The paint layers were largely abraded by previous aggressive cleaning treatments. This was evident especially in the flesh tones, which were reduced to the first paint layer, or in the Virgin's mantle, which lacked the final glazes. The green curtain seemed to have been completely repainted. The painting surface showed an extended *craquelure* and a large crack developed vertically from the fingers of the Virgin's left hand up to the infant Jesus's chest. Furthermore, a big *lacuna* of triangular shape, resulting in the loss of material down to the support, occurred in the upper area, directly above the Virgin's head. It was reintegrated with grey *stucco*/plaster and overpainting, which also cover the original paint layers. The painting surface had then been covered by an additional layer of different varnish that oxidized, affecting the general appearance. The last restoration treatment consisted in the cleaning of the old varnish and retouching, and in the removal of the old *stuccature*. The missing parts of the support, in the areas of the vertical crack and the *lacuna*, were then

reintegrated, stuccoed and retouched. The old framing was replaced by a new supporting structure on the back. Today the painting's condition is fair.

Bibliography:

Elenco…, 1899, p. 67 (n. 27); Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 281; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 24; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 281; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 222 (note 4); Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 133-134; Berenson, 1932, p. 64; Van Marle, 1935, XVII, p. 388; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 184; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 47, note 37; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Mariacher, 1957, p. 34; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 218; Heinemann, 1991, III, pp. 38, 77; Fossaluzza, 2010, pp. 203-205; M. Vinco, *Quattro Madonne con Bambino di Lazzaro Bastiani*, 2013 (Fondazione Zeri website: https://fondazionezeri.unibo.it/it/pubblicazioni/call-for-papers/articoli-2013/quattro-madonne-con-bambino-di-lazzaro-bastiani/index.html); Tempestini, 2021, p. 256 (n. 1325).

The composition of the painting matches the one in Verona. It portrays the Virgin, in half-length and in three-quarter profile, looking down at the nude infant Jesus, who is seated on her knee, with his spine slightly arched and his face turned towards the observer. The figures are placed in a central position, behind a low parapet. In the background a green curtain is hanging to the right, just behind them, revealing a distant hilly landscape with a tree and a castle to the left. As was the case with the *Madonna* in Castelvecchio, the painting was most likely requested for private devotion, even if the original location and the commissioner are unknown. It appears to be the case that most of these replicated compositions were conceived for a generic market (Dal Pozzolo, 2003, pp. 49-65).

The panel, now in Museo Correr, was part of Teodoro Correr's private collection, which was donated to the city of Venice at the time of his death in 1830. The painting might have been mentioned in old museum guides or catalogues, but none of them can be said to refer specifically to our panel. In 1859, in the very first guide of Correr's gallery, Lazari described a panel

generically attributed to the school of the Bellinis ("Scuola dei Bellini"). This could be referring to our painting. It talks of the seated Virgin caressing the infant Jesus, who is grasping at the breast area of her dress; behind them there is a green curtain that reveals a hilly landscape with a castle ("La Madonna assisa accarezza il Divin Figliuolo intento a rimuoverle la vesta che le copre il seno; dietro le pende una tenda verde che, raccolta al centro, lascia vedere dai lati colline e castella"; Lazari, 1859, p. 5, n. 20). As previously mentioned, the painting discussed by Lazari seems to refer to our panel, except that the dimensions given differ (52 x 44 cm), but this is perhaps due to a mistake (Heinemann also gave the wrong sizes of this painting: 43.8 x 32.5 cm). Similarly, the artwork might be one of the paintings portraying the "Virgin and Child" from "Raccolta Correr" mentioned in 1881 and 1885 *Guida del Museo Civico e Raccolta Correr*, published when the gallery was moved to its new location, the Fondaco dei Turchi (*Guida*, 1881; *Guida*, 1885). The first attribution of the painting to Lazzaro Bastiani, however, even if dubitative, (as a question mark follows the name of the painter), can be found in the 1899 *Elenco degli oggetti esposti* in Museo Correr (*Elenco*, 1899, p. 67, n. 27). In the 20th century, critical analysis of the panel has been linked to that of the signed *Madonna and Child* in Verona. The painting in Museo Correr has been mentioned as a *replica* of the one in Verona by Ludwig and Paoletti (1900, p. 281), Ludwig and Molmenti (1906, p. 24), Lionello Venturi (1907, p. 281), Borenius (1912, p. 222, note 4), Sandberg-Vavalà (1931, pp. 133-134), Van Marle (even if in 1935 he believed the painting approximates Cima, 1935, p. 388; 1936, p. 184) and Collobi-Ragghianti (1939-40, p. 47). This latter critic was the first to wonder if the artwork was by the artist himself or if it was a product of the workshop. It was a question to which she could not give an answer, because of the poor condition of the panel. In the 1957 museum catalogue, Mariacher attributed the *Madonna and Child* to "modi del Bastiani" and argued that the painting in Verona was actually a copy, not the original by Bastiani himself, with a false signature (1957, p. 34). Mariacher's statement was later proved wrong, as the restoration of the panel in Verona, performed in 1985, confirmed that the signature is original, and not a later addition

(Marinelli, 1987, p. 76). Heinemann stated that the *Madonna col Bambino* in Correr was a characteristic artwork in Bastiani's production and suggested a comparison not with the panel in Verona, but with the painting of same subject in The National Gallery in London, with particular reference to the Infant Jesus's facial expression (1962, I, p. 218). Fossaluzza (2010) believed the panels in Venice and Verona are both originals and depend upon the same cartoon. He cautiously advanced, moreover, the hypothesis that the earlier work to be executed could be the one in Correr.

Given its close connection with the *Madonna* in Castelvecchio, this painting can also be dated to the late 1480's.

Further bibliography:

Trecca, 1912, p. 122; Marinelli, 1987, p. 76; Dal Pozzolo, 2003, pp. 49-65.

Further images



Fig. 215. The painting surface before Mariacher's conservation treatment of 1954 © The Frick Digital Collections – Photoarchive.



Fig. 216. The painting surface, *recto*, before the restoration treatment carried out in 2000-2001 by C.B.C. Conservazione Beni Culturali.



Fig. 217. The *verso* of the painting showing the support before (left) and after (right) the restoration treatment carried out in 2000-2001 by C.B.C. Conservazione Beni Culturali.



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Number: AP50

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child with angels* or *Nursing Madonna*

Location: Venice (Italy), Correr Museum (from 1906, CI. I n. 0352)

Date: 1490-1495

Material and dimensions: Poplar wood panel, 43 x 37 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: Venice, Vincenzo Favenza bequest (1906).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

18th century? (Mariacher, 1957, p. 32); 1956, Giovanni Pedrocco (Mariacher, 1957, p. 32); 2001, C.B.C. Conservazione Beni Culturali (Restoration report).

Bibliography:

Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 133, 134; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 190 (note 2); Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 48 (note 47); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Mariacher, 1957, p. 32; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Sgarbi, 1983, p. 158.

The small panel, probably for private devotion, shows the nursing half-length Madonna crowned by two hovering angels. This specific iconography portrays the Virgin Mary while she nurses the infant Jesus. The Madonna is clothed in a rich brocade dress covered by a dark mantle enriched by golden highlights. The infant Jesus is wearing a white drapery, and his head is turned towards the observer. The natural landscape in the background shows buildings, genre figures and animals. On the left there is a hoopoe, a bird which is generally linked to negative meanings, as it is traditionally representative of lust, sin, or mourning (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 220). On the right a white rabbit is represented. Plinius believed that this very fertile animal, being hermaphroditic, did not necessarily need to mate to produce young, so is a symbol of the Virgin Mary who conceived Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit (Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 108).

The painting was bequeathed to the Correr Museum by the Cremonese antiquarian and art dealer Vincenzo Favenza in 1906 (Mariacher, 1957, p. 32. For further information on Favenza, please refer to Cafà, 2018, pp. 114-122). Vavalà (1931, p. 133) first ascribed this *Madonna* to Bastiani arguing that despite being a "work of very secondary quality and in poor condition", it "bears the unmistakable stamp of Bastiani". The art historian noticed that the Virgin was reminiscent of the earliest examples derived from Bartolomeo Vivarini, however she included it among those works of a "tardily fully formed style" belonging to the 1480s (p. 134. Vavalà mentioned the Verona *Madonna* and its *replica* in Correr Museum, the *Virgin and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Dorothy* at that time in Wildenstein collection, the Murano *lunette* and the Howarth Tryptych). The attribution was accepted by Van Marle (1936), Collobi (1939), Mariacher (1957), Berenson (1957, 1958) and Sgarbi

(1983). Mariacher (1957) noted that previously this *Madonna* was assigned to Girolamo da Santacroce.

In Collobi's opinion, Bastiani realised this *Madonna*, as well as the *Annunciation* in Klosterneuburg and the *Nativity* in Stuttgart, in a period of late artistic crisis that started around 1490, when he painted the Bergamo *Coronation*. This crisis is characterized by the repetition of the same "archaic" compositional ideas (e.g., the half-length Madonna with her head turned in three-quarter view and the crowning angels) and also of secondary elements (e.g., the golden brocade dress). Mariacher accepted Collobi's suggestion. For Sgarbi, who agreed on a late execution – surely not before 1490 –, the reiteration of "archaic" formulas must be found in Bastiani's belief that he formed a bridge between the Late Gothic and the Renaissance i.e., between the Vivarinis and the Bellinis. In accordance with Vavalà, Collobi and Sgarbi, I believe that a date of execution around 1490-1495 could be appropriate for this *Madonna*.

Finally, as already underlined by Mariacher, the compositional idea is repeated by Lorenzo Lotto in a *Nursing Madonna* – whose gestures follow closely those of Bastiani's *Madonna* – still on display in the Correr Museum (Poltroneri, 2021, pp. 278-279 [Cat. I.78]). This is, arguably, indicative that this composition, even if old-fashioned, was diffused, appreciated and, above all, requested by commissioners also in the 16th century.

Further bibliography:

Poltroneri, 2021, pp. 278-279 (Cat. I.78).



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Number: AP51

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna of Humility*

Location: Venice (Italy), Correr Museum (CI. I. n. 2193)

Date: 1451-1455

Material and dimensions: willow panel, 60 x 46 cm

Technique: tempera (probably addition of oil in the Virgin's mantle)

Provenance: Unknown.

Past exhibitions: *Pisanello. I luoghi del Gotico internazionale nel Veneto* (Verona, 1996); *Venezia: la tutela per immagini. Un caso esemplare dagli archivi della Fototeca Nazionale* (Rome, 2005-2006).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1955, Pedrocco (Mariacher, 1956, pp. 92-93; *Venezia: la tutela…*, 2005, pp. 337, 357 [V.23-V.24]); Piovan, 1999 (*Restoration report*, 1999).

Until the 1950s the artwork was in a bad state of conservation. The background appeared completely obscured, and the figures had been altered by a darkening of the painting surface. The cleaning tests performed by Pedrocco before the complete restoration treatment unveiled a golden background under the layer of dark pigment and a garden beneath the Virgin. Radioscopic and radiographic analyses confirmed the presence of a well-defined painted composition hidden by the flat overpainting. The complete removal of the dark upper layer restored the original golden background and halos, as well as the flowery meadow, the low wall, and the line of trees. The pigments were well preserved, revealing bright colours in the Virgin's vestments, and a fine shading executed with brush tip for the volumetric construction of the bodies. The second restoration treatment was for routine preservation of the painting, as its conservation status was fair. This consisted of the consolidation of the support, and of the preparatory ground and pigment layers, the removal of the old, oxidized varnish, and the stuccoing and retouching of the *lacunae*. Today the painting is in fairly good condition.

Bibliography:

Mariacher, 1955, pp. 16-17; Mariacher, 1957, pp. 176-177; Mariacher, 1961, p. 34; Sgarbi, 1983, pp. 157-158; Boskovits, 1992, p. 27; Merkel, 1994, p. 410 [as Pisanello]; Casu, 1996, pp. 62-63; Merkel, 1996, p. 290 [as Pisanello]; Russo, 2018, pp. 12-13 [note 5], 17 [note 43]; Russo, 2019, pp. 167 [note 11], 171.

Of unknown provenance, this panel portraying the *Madonna of Humility* has not been on display for a long time due to its poor condition before Pedrocco's 1950s restoration (Mariacher, 1955, pp. 16-17; Mariacher, 1956, pp. 92-93. See

also “Conservation status and previous restoration treatment”). Once the dark old overpainting was cleaned off, a well-preserved golden background, and a beautiful garden, rich of flowers and populated by white rabbits, enclosed by a low wall decorated with bas-reliefs of Paduan taste and a row of trees were all revealed. The group of the Virgin and Child is placed in the garden, where the Virgin is sitting on the ground – according to the iconography of the Madonna of humility –, holding the naked infant Jesus on her right knee. The painting was shown for the first time in the Correr Museum catalogue in 1957 by Mariacher, who simply assigned it to an anonymous Venetian painter of mid-15th century (“Pittore veneto, metà del XV secolo”), and the same attribution is still reported on the museum label today. Mariacher explained difficulty in attributing the painting as it bears gothic elements in the composition, deduced from Jacopo Bellini or Pisanello, mixed with Tuscan characteristics, derived from Filippo Lippi and Gentile da Fabriano (1957, pp. 176-177; Mariacher, 1961, p. 34). Longhi, in an oral communication, suggested this work was executed by a master of Late Gothic taste of early 15th century, such as, for instance, Donato Bragadin (Mariacher, 1957, p. 177). The name of Lazzaro Bastiani as creator of this artwork was proposed by Sgarbi in an article published in 1983 on “Arte Veneta”, although this attribution was already expressed verbally by Volpe almost ten years before (Boskovits, 1992, p. 27). Sgarbi placed this *Madonna* between 1450-1455, when Bastiani followed Antonio Vivarini’s style, and before his Mantegnesque phase. Moreover, he also pointed out that Bastiani’s archaistic tendency was rooted in the artist’s personal taste for late Gothic art (1983, p. 158). Boskovits agreed in ascribing this panel to the young Bastiani, underlining the mark of the late Gothic tradition in the realization of the illusionistic spatial effects and in the features of the figures. He also claimed that the Madonna here depicted appears very close to the Mary of the *Adoration of the Magi* in Frick collection, therefore considering it “a precocious version of the same compositional idea” (Boskovits, 1992, p. 27). Casu supported Bastiani’s attribution listing the typical features of the figures in his early works: the regular round face, the straight nose, the thin semi-circular eyebrows, the small heart-shaped mouth,

the tapered fingers, and the swollen back of the hand. In his opinion, the main comparisons must be advanced with Antonio Vivarini's paintings of same subject executed in the years approaching the mid-century. For the close stylistic similarities, he also advanced the proposal of master-pupil relationship between Antonio Vivarini and Bastiani. The latter would have made use in his paintings of *exemplaria* taken from the repertoire of the Vivarini's workshop. Casu showed as examples for comparisons the *Madonna of Humility* once in Carminati collection (Gallarate) and today in the Pittas collection, for the multitude of trees in semi-circular arrangement in the background (it must be highlighted that this *Madonna* has been variously attributed to Antonio Vivarini and also to Giovanni D'Alemagna – the artist to whom the experts today largely agree to assign it. See Casu, 2011, pp. 70-75 and previous bibliography). Casu saw further similarities in the *Madonna and Child* in Worcester Art Museum (*Fig. 218*), dated 1451 by Zeri, for example, the inclined head of the Virgin, the naked infant Jesus, and the precious brooch that embellish the Virgin's mantle (1996, pp. 62-63). In recent years, Russo confirmed the ascription to Bastiani's early catalogue, agreeing in recognising Antonio Vivarini's influence, and including the impact of the Paduan art developed in Squarcione's workshop (2018, pp. 12-13 [note 5], 17 [note 43]; 2019, pp. 167 [note 11], 171). Since Sgarbi's contribution, most of the scholars that discussed the *Madonna of Humility* in Correr Museum, presented it as work of Bastiani. The only exception is Merkel, who ascribed it to Pisanello with a period of execution around 1440-1445 (1994, p. 410; 1996, p. 290). Merkel is the only discordant voice, and I do not feel to agree with him, as I do not see those resemblances he suggested with Pisanello *Madonna of the quail*. Instead, in my opinion another painting produced by Antonio Vivarini, probably in collaboration with Giovanni d'Alemagna, could be taken into consideration for comparisons with our painting. I am referring to the *Virgin Adoring the Child* in Davia Bargellini Museum in Bologna (*Fig. 219*), whose overall composition is similar to our painting: the Virgin sitting on the ground in a woodland setting, with her head bent towards the Child and her mantle fastened by the brooch composed of a central stone and pearls all around.

Furthermore, the dimensions of the Bolognese panel (61 x 38 cm) constitute another element of similarity to the Correr artwork. Pallucchini (1962, pp. 21-22) considered the Davia Bargellini panel, as well as another *Virgin Adoring the Child* in a private collection in the United States (which formerly had been in the Speroni collection in Milan), to be close in style to the Virgin annunciate of the *Annunciation* panel in the San Giobbe triptych, which in turn is contiguous to the polyptych once in San Francesco in Padua, and today in the National Gallery of Prague, dated 1447. Lucco agreed with Pallucchini's considerations and advanced the proposal of a collaboration between Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d'Alemagna for the creation of the *Madonna* in Davia Bargellini, whose Gothic characters might suggest the execution by the German painter (Lucco, 1987, p. 83). Finally, here I see Antonio's influence on the young Bastiani not only in the compositional scheme, but also in "secondary" features, such as the rendering of Virgin's hands, specifically in the tapered fingers, and in her tender gestures, which are elements that remind me, for instance, of the *Madonna and Child Blessing* conserved in Gallerie dell'Accademia dated by the experts at around 1441 (Pallucchini, 1962, p. 96 [n. 11]; Rossi, 2016, p. 131 [n. 2]. *Fig. 220*). To conclude, given the close stylistic resemblances to artworks dating from to the late 1440s, or even as late as 1451, it seems correct to place the *Madonna of Humility* of the Correr Museum in mid-century, between 1451 and 1455, as suggested by all the scholars.

Further bibliography:

Pallucchini, 1962, pp. 21-22, 96 [n. 11]; Lucco, 1987, p. 83; Casu, 2011, pp. 70-75; Rossi, 2016, p. 131 [n. 2].

Further images
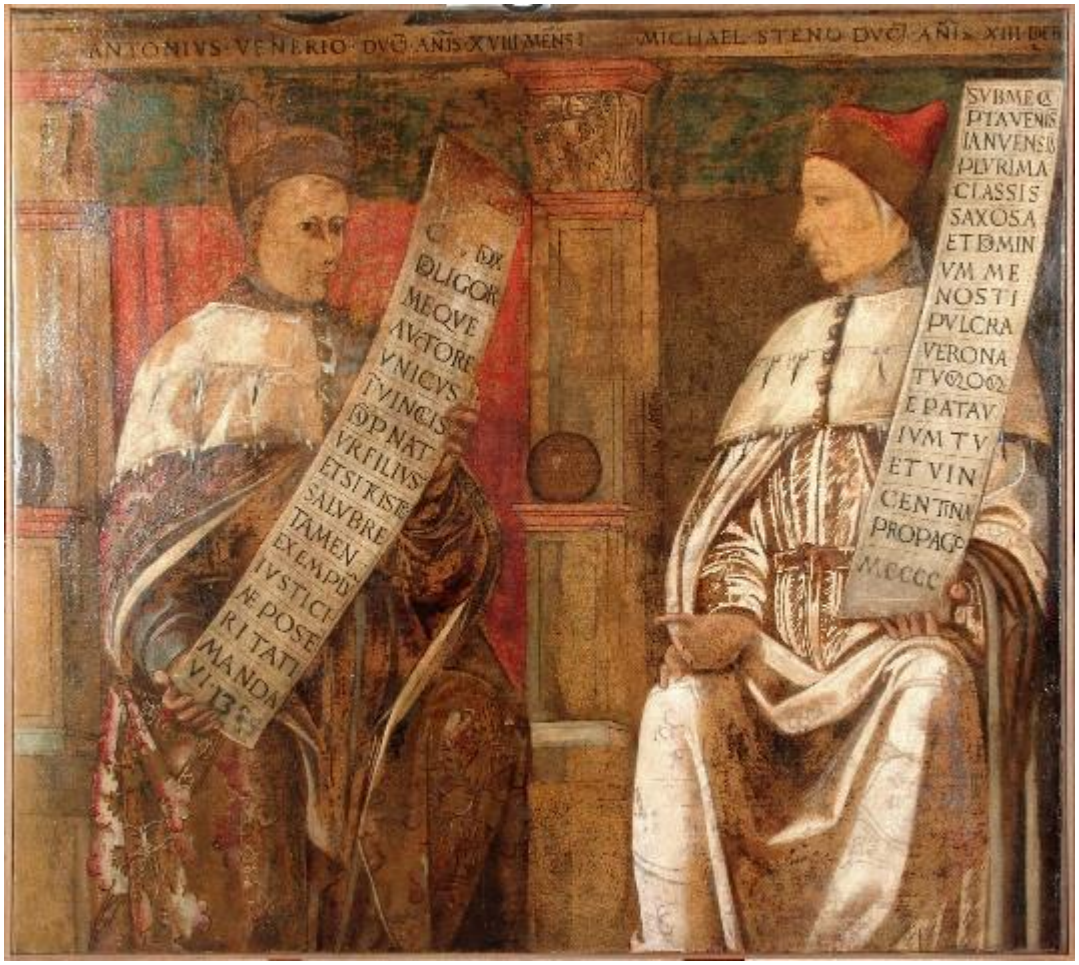


Fig. 218. A. Vivarini, *Virgin and Child*, 1451, Worcester, Worcester Art Museum.



Fig. 219. A. Vivarini, *Virgin Adoring the Child*, Bologna, Museo Davia Bargellini.



Fig. 220. A. Vivarini, *Madonna and Child Blessing*, 1441, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia.



Number: AP52

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Portraits of Doge Michele Steno and Doge Antonio Venier*

Location: Venice (Italy), Correr Museum (CI. I n. 1863)

Date: 1479-1483

Material and dimensions: Canvas, 97 x 104 cm

Inscription: "C[RETAE] DVX DELIGOR MEQVE AVCTORE VUNICVS IN VINCLIS DAMPNATVR FILIVS ET SI TRISTE SALVBRE TAMEN EXEMPLVM IVSTICIAE POSTERITATI MANDAVI. 1384", text of the *breve* written on Antonio Venier's scroll. "ANTONIVS · VENERIO · DUC · ANNIS · XVIII · MENS · I", on the architrave above Antonio Venier.

"SUB ME CAPTA VENIS IANVENSIS PLVRIMA CLASSIS SAXOSA ET DOMINVM ME NOSTRI PVLCRA VERONA TV QVOQVQ PATAVIVM TV ET VICENTINA PROGPAGO MCCC", text of the *breve* written on Michele Steno's scroll.

"MICHAEL · STENO · DVC · ANNIS · XIII · DIEB · 26", on the architrave above Michele Steno.

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Venice, Doge's Palace, "Camera di doxi" (until 1483); Venice, Doge's Palace, Sala del Consiglio dei XXV (from 1483); Venice, Count Giovanni Battista Venier's house (until 1921).

Past exhibitions: *Marco Polo: mies ja myytti / Mannen och myten* (Expoon Kaupunginmuseo, 2012).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

18th century? (Lorenzetti, 1933, p. 397 [note 11]; Mariacher, 1953, p. 205); 1921, Correr Museum (Lorenzetti, 1933, p. 390); 1952, Giovanni Pedrocco (Mariacher, 1953, pp. 205-206).

In 1921 a cleaning procedure was carried out on the painting to remove dust and dirt. Indeed, when the work entered the museum collection, its surface was blackened, and its condition was extremely poor. The paint was dry and showed burned areas, as well as abraded parts due to the mechanical cleaning to remove the damaged paint. Probably in the 18th century, perhaps when the work was exposed as an overdoor in Venier's house, the original canvas (which had a twill weave) was relined on a new canvas shorter in height and greater in width (98 x 127 cm). Whatever the reason, the upper and lower border of the original canvas was folded by 2 cm (4 cm in total), while the lateral sides were painted to fill in the blanked areas. In 1952 Giovanni Pedrocco performed a complete conservation treatment: the canvas was further relined on a new support compatible with its size, old restoration and overpainting were removed showing the original paint, where it survived (the red cloth, Steno's ducal hat, Venier's brocade mantle). Unfortunately, the doge's faces and hands, and part of the architectural setting are extremely damaged. The lacunae have not been reintegrated. Considering the troubled conservation history of the painting, today its preservation is fair.

Bibliography:

Sansovino, 1581, p. 124; Ridolfi, 1648 (ed. cons. 1914), p. 50; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 326, 346?; Fogolari, 1932, p. 284; Lorenzetti, 1933, pp. 387-398; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 192; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 44 (note 27); Gallo, 1943, pp. 1-2 (note 2); Mariacher, 1953, pp. 205-206; Mariacher, 1957, pp. 33-34; Wolters, 1987, pp. 85 (fig. 55), 86; Casu, 1996, p. 88 (note 74); Sartor, 1997, pp. 38, 50 (note 5); G. Romanelli, 2012, p. 34; Russo, 2017, s.p.

When included in the Correr Museum collection in 1921, as a bequest by count Giovanni Battista Venier, the painting was in extremely poor condition. As pointed out by Lorenzetti, in Venier's house the work was exhibited as an overdoor. It was darkened in appearance and the subject was hardly visible, nonetheless the portraits of the two doges were recognizable. After the removal of the dust and dirt covering the surface, the artwork proved to be an original painting from the second half of the 15th century (Lorenzetti, 1933, p. 390).

The canvas shows the portraits of Doge Antonio Venier (on the left) and of Doge Michele Steno (on the right), who ruled over Venice between the end of the 14th century and the early 15th century (Antonio Venier: 1382-1400; Michele Steno: 1400-1413). The figures, painted almost full length/body, sit on a sort of marble throne, which is divided by a pillar with a Corinthian capital supporting an architrave where the name of the corresponding doge and the duration of his reign is given. The half pillar on the left border suggests that the representation originally continued as an uninterrupted frieze where other doges were also depicted. The figures are clothed in ducal vestments, wearing a red brocade cloak covered by a *bavaro* (made of ermine fur and decorated with golden buttons), and a ducal horn over a *camauro* on their head. They both hold and present to the observer an unrolled scroll with a short text (called *breve*) describing the main events of their reign. The doges' posture, facing each other, and Antonio Venier's gesture, with his raised finger pointing to Michele Steno, allude to a dialogic interaction between the two.

Although no information concerning the provenance of the canvas prior Venier's collection is known, and since it is quite unlikely that Venier's family requested a portrait of the eminent ancestor together with that of his successor, Lorenzetti correctly argued that given the subject, the painting was originally executed for the Doge's Palace, where it was on display (p. 392).

The attribution of the artwork to Bastiani was suggested by Lorenzetti for various reasons, linking the poor condition of the canvas and its dimensions to the descriptions of the series of *Doges' Portraits* in Doge's Palace made by Sansovino and Ridolfi, and to the style of the painting (1933, pp. 392-396). The manner of the picture pointed to an artist active in Gentile Bellini's artistic *milieu*. As explained by the scholar, even after the cleaning, the canvas showed large areas where the paint was dry and altered, as if in the past it had been damaged by a fire. In his *Venetia Città Nobilissima* (1581) Sansovino recorded that Bastiani executed several portraits of doges in ancient costume, which were displayed in the "Sala del Collegio delli XXV" (p. 124v), while Ridolfi (1648) added that the paintings got burned ("si abbruciarono", p. 50). Ridolfi did not explain when the pictures got ruined, but he surely referred to the massive fire of 1577 that involved most of the notable rooms of the Doge's Palace – included the Sala del Maggior Consiglio and the Sala dello Scrutinio – and destroyed their artistic heritage (Martinioni referred that another big fire broke out in 1573. See Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 346). In addition, Sansovino specified the height of the pictures in the Sala del Collegio dei XXV ("passati d'altezza di un braccio e mezzo"), that corresponds to that of the canvas in Correr Museum.[573] Given the abovementioned evidence, Lorenzetti considered the painting from Venier's house as a surviving portion of the frieze executed by Bastiani for the Sala del Consiglio dei XXV. General stylistic traits of Bastiani's art (elongated bodies, sharply delineated rendering of folds in fabric folding, arched eyebrows, geometrically built architecture), as well as

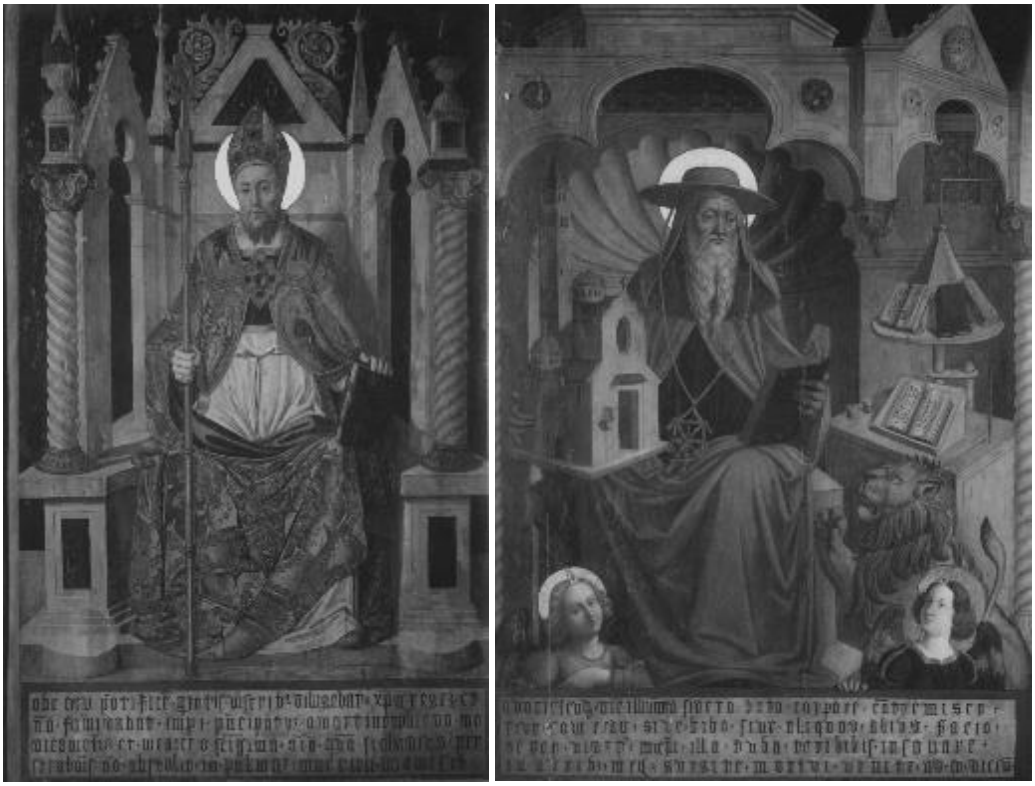
[573] The "braccio di lana" used in Venice as unit of measurement corresponds to 68 cm. One "braccio di lana" and a half is exactly 102 cm i.e., the height of the original painting (*Tavole di ragguaglio…*, 1877, p. 741).

stylistic comparisons with Bastiani's artworks (e.g., *Saint Augustine Giving the Rule*) further persuaded Lorenzetti that Bastiani was the painter of the canvas. The attribution to Bastiani was later accepted by most subsequent scholars who mentioned the painting, such as Fogolari (1932), Collobi (1939), Mariacher (1952, 1957), Casu (1996), Sartor (1997), Russo (2017). In 1936, Van Marle was probably not aware of Lorenzetti's publication, as he still included the *Portraits of Doges* in the Doge's Palace among Bastiani's lost artworks. Only Wolters (1987) rejected Lorenzetti's conclusion about the original location of the canvas because of the substantial size of the doges, and for this reason he also rejected Bastiani as the artist (he assigned the picture to an anonymous painter). He stated, however, that the painting was surely part of a similar series of *Doges' Portraits* in the Doge's Palace.

According to the chronicle written by Marin Sanudo il Giovane (*Vite dei Dogi*, see the text in Lorenzi, 1868, pp. 92-93) and Domenico Malipiero (*Diarii*, see the text in Zanotto, 1842, pp. 95-96 [note 3]), on 14th of September 1483 a fire broke out in the Easter area of Doge's Palace and destroyed several rooms (the so-called "Sala delle do nape", the Doge's private chapel and other unspecified rooms). Sanudo recorded that a room called "camera di doxi", where a series of *Doges' Portraits* showing their *breve* decorated the walls, survived the fire ("Si bruso tuto il palazzo dil doxe excepto una parte dove era una camera con tuti li doxi depenti con li soi brievi come el gran conseio che si chiamava la camera di doxi"). From this description, Rodolfo Gallo (1943) argued that originally the frieze by Bastiani was in that "camera di doxi" mentioned by Sanudo and it could have been moved at a later date to the Sala del Collegio dei XXV. Gallo's statement implies that Bastiani's work for the "camera di doxi" had been realised before 1483, which could be considered a *terminus ante quem* to date the canvas in Correr Museum. Concerning the chronology, a few scholars expressed their opinion. Mariacher (1957) placed the work in the 1460s or 1470s based on stylistic references. Casu (1996) believed that the painting was later, when Bastiani became one of the official painters of the Repubblica but did not specify a date or a time frame. Finally, Sartor (1997) accepted Gallo's

conclusion and suggested a period of execution between 1479, when Gentile Bellini left for Constantinople, and 1483.

Despite the poor preservation of the canvas, the stylistic characteristics of the figures and of the architectural setting already highlighted by Lorenzetti are comparable with Bastiani's *Saint Augustine giving the Rule* (Montevideo, private collection, Cat. AP26) and *Saint Martin of Tours* and *Saint Jerome in His Study* (Venice, Correr Museum, Cat. AP53) and are in general compatible with Bastiani's production during the second half of the 1470s or early 1480s. For instance, the vertical element of the throne with the sphere on top is also employed in the Virgin's throne in the Murano *lunette* (1484, AP27), or the cloth hung behind the doges in also present in the *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* altarpiece. The stylistic evidence, therefore, is coherent with Gallo's and Sartor estimation for a period of execution during/between the two decades. Agreeing with Sartor on the 1479 as a *terminus post quem* to date the picture implies that Bastiani was an appreciated and requested painter – even for prestigious commissions – whose work was not considered inferior to that of the two Bellini brothers (Bastiani's closeness to Giovanni has been explained by Russo, 2019). In fact, it is worth mentioning that from archival sources we know that in 1460s he painted the altarpiece for the altar of Marco Venier, *procuratore de citra*, in the Church of San Samuel. In 1470 the Scuola Grande di San Marco commissioned him a *telero* for which he was to be paid at the same rate by size of work as Jacopo Bellini, and in 1473 Antonio Choradi from Pera preferred Bastiani to Giovanni Bellini when commissioning a small picture of Christ for personal devotion (See Chapter 4.3). In addition, from 1488 onwards Bastiani was involved, together with his sons Alvise and Vincenzo, in the renovation and restoration of the mosaics in the Basilica of San Marco.



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Number: AP53

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Martin of Tours Enthroned*; *Saint Jerome in His Study*

Location: Venice (Italy), Correr Museum (from 1840, inv. n. CI. I 0353, 0354)

Date: 1475 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panels, 148 x 107 cm (*Saint Martin*); 148 x 95 cm (*Saint Jerome*)

Inscription:

Sain Martin of Tours: "O BEATUM PONTIFICEM QUI TOTIS VISERIBUS DILIGEBAT CHRISTUM REGEN ET / NON FORMIDABAT IMPERII PRINCIPATUM O MARTIRII DULCEDO ME / DICAMENTUM ET MEDICE O SANCTISSIMA ANIMA QUAM SI GLADIUS PER / SECUTORIS NON ABSTULIT TAMEN PALMAM MARTIRII NON AMISIT". On a scroll in the lower part of the painting, in black gothic font over a light background (gilded). Short passage from the Roman Breviary, Magnificat Antiphon, Saint Martin of Tours (11th November).

Saint Jerome: QUOTIESCUMQUE DIE ILLUM CONSIDERO TOTO CORPORE CON TREMISCO / SIVE COMEDO DIVE BIBO SIVE ALIQUOD ALIUD FACIO / SEMPER VIDETUR MIHI ILLA TUBA TERRIBILIS INSONARE / IN AURIBUS MESI SURGITE MORTUI VENITE AD IUDICIUM". On a scroll, held by the angels, in the lower part of the painting, in black gothic font over a light blackground. Short passage from the Commentary on Saint Matthew's Gospel by Saint Jerome.

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: Venice, Monastero del Corpus Domini (until 1806); Venice, State repository in the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista (until 1840).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Pedrocco, 1956 (Mariacher, 1957).

The paintings were largely repainted at some point. In 1956 Pedrocco cleaned the old restoration works, showing the real appearance of the compositions. Several restored areas are visible in the reflectograms.

Bibliography:

Guida…, 1881, p. 71 (n. 55, 57); *Guida…*, 1885, p. 101 (n. 50, 52); Elenco, 1899, p. 67 (n. 20, 23); Jacobsen, 1894, p. 260; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 275; Berenson, 1932, p. 593; Bereson, 1936, p. 510; Van MArle, 1935, XVII, p. 49; Collobi, 1939, pp. 40-41; Mariacher, 1957, pp. 36-37; Casu, 1996, pp. 71-72, 86-87 (note 68); Nardin, 2009, pp. 114, 157, 159; Zaru, 2014, pp. 81-84; Zaru, 2015, pp. 221-224; Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43).

Old inventories record the provenance of the two panels from the monastery of the Corpus Domini (Nardin, 2009, pp. 157, 159; Zaru, 2014, p. 272). After the suppression of the religious orders by Napoleon in 1806, the works were moved to the State depository in San Giovanni Evangelista, and in 1840 they were assigned to the Correr Museum (Mariacher, 1957, p. 36). No mention of these two paintings is present in old guides to the city of Venice and no source regarding the commission is known.

The panel of *Saint Martin of Tours Enthroned* shows the saint clothed in episcopal vestments, holding the crozier with his right hand, and a book in his

left hand. Saint Martin of Tours was only identified in 1957 by Mariacher – who correctly read the inscription at the base of the painting taken from the Roman Breviary – while previously the saint was generically referred to as "A Bishop Saint" (both in old inventories and in early museum catalogues. For the inventories, see Nardin, 2009, pp. 157, 159; Zaru 2014, p. 272. For the museum catalogues, please refer to: *Guida…*, 1881, p. 71 [n. 57]; *Guida…*, 1885, p. 101 [n. 52]; *Elenco…*, 1899, p. 67, [n. 23]), or as Saint Ambrose (Berenson, 1932, p. 593; 1936, p. 510), or as Saint Augustine (Collobi, 1939, p. 40). The painting of *Saint Jerome in His Study* depicts the old saint with a long grey beard, dressed in red cardinal vestments, holding a scale model of the church with his right hand and a book with his left hand. Beside him there is the tamed lion rising the right paw to show him the thorn. In the lower part of the picture, two angels hold a panel with an inscription. The angel on the left indicates the inscription to invite the worshipper to read what is written.

What is striking in these two panels is the contrast between the figures and the architectural setting. Indeed, the throne and the study are not depicted according to the perspective laws of the Renaissance and their style is clearly reminiscent of the Late Gothic period. The saints and the other figures, in contrast, are clearly of Renaissance style.

The attribution of the paintings has long been debated. In the inventories of the depository in San Giovanni Evangelista, the artworks were assigned to an anonymous "Antico Maestro" (Nardin, 2009, pp. 157, 159; Zaru 2014, p. 272), or to an artist following Bartolomeo Vivarini's manner ("modi di Bartolomeo Vivarini". Casu 1996, p. 87 [note 68]). Once included in the Correr Museum collection, the paintings had been variously attributed to an anonymous painter (*Guida…*, 1881, p. 71 [n. 55, 57]), or to Bartolomeo Vivarini (*Guida…*, 1885, p. 101 [n. 50, 52]), or to School of Alvise (Luigi) Vivarini (Jacobsen, 1894, p. 260), or, more generically, to "Muranese School of the second half of the 15th century" (*Elenco…*, 1899, p. 67 [n. 20, 23]). Paoletti and Ludwig found in these works affinities with the *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* panels in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. They did not ascribe the four paintings to Bastiani, but to a minor Venetian painter whose style was

neither completely Muranse, nor Paduan (Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 275). In his *Indexes* (1932, 1936) Berenson listed the artworks generically as being by an unknown Venetian artist. Van Marle suggested Quirizio da Murano as painter (1935, p. 49). Collobi was the first to attribute the two saints in the Correr Museum to Bastiani (1939, p. 40). Mariacher was not totally persuaded by Collobi's ascription, therefore he cautiously assigned the panels to Bastiani's manner. He also recorded that Fiocco (in a verbal opinion) suggested Donato Bragadin as artist (1957, pp. 36-37). The attribution to Bastiani was later accepted by Casu (1996), Nardin (2009), Zaru (2014), and Russo (2018). As far as the chronology of the panels is concerned, owing to the lack of documents regarding the commission, the period of execution has been suggested by scholars on the basis of stylistic analysis. Collobi placed the artworks in the 1470s, observing affinities between the drapery of Saint Martin and the *Madonna* in the Poldi Pezzoli, but also noticing that the drapery of Saint Jerome and the facial features of the figures point to works of around 1480. Casu, substantially in accordance with Collobi, dated the panels around 1475, along with the two big panels of the Canaanite and the Samaritan women. Russo (2018) accepted Casu's assumption. Of a different opinion was Zaru, who suggested the patrons were the Dominican nuns of the church and linked the commission of the paintings to the involvement of Fantino Dandolo, who was very close to the monastery and the nuns, in Church matters. Zaru proposed that the *Saint Jerome* was on the altar in the *barco* dedicated to the eponymous saint, which was consecrated in 1445 thanks to the financial aid of Fantino Dandolo. In the church, however, there was not an altar dedicated to Saint Martin, but there was the tomb of Fantino Dandolo. This latter died in 1459 in Padua but was buried in the Corpus Domini, near the high altar, in front of the *barco*. Zaru proposed that the nuns requested the painting of Bastiani to celebrate their benefactor, who had received the *insignia* of the Equestrian Order of Saint Martin in 1410. From these premises, Zaru hypothesized that the *Saint Martin* was commissioned around 1460 for the tomb of Fantin Dandolo, and perhaps on this occasion the nuns might have asked Bastiani to restore the panel of Saint Jerome on the eponymous altar. This dating would

explain, according to Zaru, the general Late Gothic style of the pictures. The different years of execution, however, would arguably be evident in the absence of the angels and the more rational perspective of the throne in the *Saint Martin of Tours*. Although fascinating, I do not accept Zaru's proposal, as the suggested date is too early when comparing the figures of the saints with Bastiani's works of the 1460s. Collobi's comparisons are still valid (compare also the saints with *Saint Jerome* in Monopoli, and with *Saint Augustine* in Montevideo, which are both dated in the second half of 1470s) and a date around 1475, as suggested by Casu, to me seems the most appropriate.

Finally, concerning the abovementioned discrepancy between the architectural setting and the figures, Collobi suggested that Bastiani was influenced by Tyrolese or Austrian examples in realising the throne and the study. Mariacher pointed out that the works had been largely repainted, as was revealed by the cleaning trials performed by Pedrocco in 1956 (1957, p. 37). Casu hypothesized that Bastiani realised the saints and other elements (for instance, the knife projecting the shadow on the desk) over an already existing architectural setting, that had been painted several years before (1996, p. 72). In addition, for Casu this stylistic updating of two Late Gothic works would be indicative of Bastiani's interest in artworks of Medieval Venetian tradition.

Zaru observed the familiarity of the pictures with a visual culture associated with the production of written and printed books. Indeed, it reflected the existence of a scriptorium in the convent and the dedication of the nuns to create liturgical manuscripts themselves, by copying images by the Florentine illuminator Silvestro the Gherarducci and the Venetian Cristoforo Cortese, retrieved from manuscripts loaned by the Camaldolese monks of S. Michele in Isola (Zaru, 2014, p. 78).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the panels with inscriptions at the base of the paintings are reminiscent of manuscript texts (for instance the *Biblia pauperum*) that had short texts inserted into large-scale pictures. Bastiani employed a similar composition in the small panels with *Stories of the Life of Christ* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. The dialogue with the worshipper and the exhortation to prayer is thus supported by the inscription and, in the case of

the saint Jerome picture, by the angel staring at the observer and indicating the text. As emphasized by Zaru, in the woodcuts of the *Passion* ascribed to Cristofo Cortese a design with angels holding the scroll in the lower part of the picture had already been used. From these premises, it could be suggested that the visual culture linked to late Gothic examples of illuminated manuscripts and book production might have influenced the nuns of the Corpus Domini more extensively than supposed. When they commissioned the panels, therefore, they might have specifically requested a Late Gothic architectural frame in which to insert the saints.



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Number: AP54

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Christ and the Canaanite Woman; Christ and the Samaritan Woman*

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia (from 1919, inv. n. 966, 967)

Date: 1475 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panels, 226 x 165 cm (*Christ and the Canaanite Woman*); 226 x 167 cm (*Christ and the Samaritan Woman*)

Inscription:

Christ and the Canaanite Woman: "UTIQUE · DOMINE · NAM · ET · CATELLI · EDUNT · DE MICIS / QUE CADUNT · DE MENSA · DOMINORUM SUORUM" (cfr. Matthew, 15,27). On the golden cartouche, in Medieval Gothic font. "TIRIS ET SIDON". On the rectangular golden plaque above the city gate, in Medieval Gothic font.

Christ and the Samaritan Woman: "VERI · A[D]ORATORES · A[DOR]A BUNT PA / T[REM] SPIRITU ET · [VE]RITATE" (Cfr. John, 4, 23). On the golden cartouche. "EST · NO[ME]N · SICHAR". On the rectangular golden plaque above the city gate.

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Venice, Church of the Corpus Domini, convent (?); Venice, State repository in the Church of San Giovanni Evangelista (n. 222, 223, until 1838); Vienna, Academy (n. 55, 60, until 1919).

Past exhibitions: *Opere d'arte tolte a Venezia nel 1808-1816-1838 restituite dopo la vittoria* (Venice, 1919); *Oggetti d'arte e di storia restituiti dall'Austria-Ungheria* (Rome, Palazzo Venezia, 1923, n. 8-9, as "Scuola muranese").

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

The panels today are damaged and in poor condition. There are several vertical cracks along the entire surface of the work, with flaking and lifting of the pictorial layer. The painted surface is darkened due to dirt and strongly oxidised old varnishes. Infrared reflectography highlighted areas of previous restorations, not reported in any surviving restoration record in the Gallerie dell'Accademia.

In the documents certifying the state of conservation of the works placed in the state-owned deposit of San Giovanni Evangelista (1828 and 1832), the paintings were recorded in poor condition and "urgentemente rimediare onde non [eccrescono] sicuramente" was requested (Nardin, p. 155).
It is possible that a restoration was carried out once the work returned to Venice (many paintings were restored when returned from Vienna), but no written documentation can confirm this assumption.

Bibliography:
Von Lützow, 1889, pp. 92-93 (n. 55, 60); Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 275; Ludwig, 1901, pp. XI, XXXI; Fiocco, 1919, p. 4 (n. 3, 4); Modigliani, 1923, p. 14 (n. 8-9); *Le Regie Gallerie…*, 1924, p. 152-153 (n. 827-828); Berenson, 1932, p. 370; Berenson, 1936, p. 318; Longhi, 1934, ed. cons. 1968[2], p. 97 (note 59); Collobi 1939, pp. 35, 39; Moschetti, 1934-1939, pp. 80-82; Moschetti, 1940, pp. 160-161; Coletti, 1949, p. 10; *Le Gallerie…*, 1949, p. 16; Coletti, 1953, pp. L-LI; Moschini Marconi, 1955, pp. 58-59 (n. 57); De Bosque, 1965, p. 325; Boskovits 1992, p. 24; Longhi, 1995, pp. 439-449; Casu, 1996, pp. 70-71, 85-86 (nota 66); Nardin, 2009, pp. 113-114, 153, 155, 159; Zaru, 2014, pp. 84-85, 270-271; Russo, 2017, s.p.; Russo, 2018, pp. 4, 10, 17 (note 43).

These two large panels depict two stories of the life of Christ. The first one shows the episode when Jesus encountered the Canaanite woman. This latter came to him to ask help for her daughter, who was tormented by demons. The other scene shows Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the well, where Jesus asked the woman for some water to drink. Two golden cartouches contain a sentence of the dialogue the two women had with Christ. Both the stories are portrayed in the foreground, enclosed by a walled city (which represent, respectively, Tyre and Sidon and Sychar, where the episodes take place) and a hilly landscape in the background. The golden sky is reminiscent of the Late Gothic tradition and miniatures.
The paintings were originally in the Dominican Church of Corpus Domini, in the sestiere of Cannaregio (for the same church Bastiani also painted the *Saint*

Veneranda Enthroned and two other panels showing *Saint Martin of Tours* and *Saint Jerome*. For more information on the church, please refer to Cat. XX). Several guides to Venice, published in the 17th and 18th centuries, described two pictures showing the same episodes, but all the authors recorded them as Bartolomeo Scaligero's works, an attribution unrealistic for our pictures[574]. Since it is unlikely that all these historic authors mistakenly identified the artist, Longhi (1995, p. 440) suggested that perhaps Bastiani's pictures were previously in the church and then, when the main altar was refurbished in early 17th century, they had been replaced by Scaligero's works. Moschini Marconi (1995, p. 59) hypothesised that they had been moved to a private space, for instance the cloister, on different occasion. This would explain why no author ever mentioned them. After the Napoleonic suppression the church was closed and demolished, and the two panels were allocated, along with other artworks from the same church to the state repository in the Church of San Giovanni Evangelista (Ludwig, 1901; Nardini, 2009). In 1838, they were sent to Vienna, to enter the collection of the Academy (Von Lützow, 1889). Finally, in 1919, following the First World War, the panels were returned to Venice, and they were included in the Gallerie dell'Accademia collection (Fiocco, 1919). Today they are conserved in museum storage.

The attribution of the paintings has been debated for a long time. In the Vienna Academy the panels were exhibited as "Florentine School, 15th century" (Von Lützow, 1889). In 1900, Paoletti and Ludwig ascribed the pictures to Bastiani, but in 1919, when the works came back to Venice, they were presented dubitatively as Bartolomeo Scaligero by Fiocco in the exhibition *Opere d'arte tolte a Venezia nel 1808-1816-1838 restituite dopo la vittoria*. Fiocco followed the attribution given by the authors of the old Venice guides, but in the catalogue entry he observed that the artist was a Muranese latecomer, also influenced by painters outside Venice. In the 1924 museum catalogue the panels were assigned to Jacopo da Montagnana. The ascription to this painter

[574] Bartolomeo Scaligero was a follower of Padovanino, active in the first half of the 16th century.

was then repeated by Berenson (1932, 1936) and Moschetti (1934-1939, 1940). Coletti ascribed the pictures first to the young Giovanni Bellini (1949), then to Andrea da Murano (1953). After Paoletti and Ludwig, Lazzaro Bastiani was recognised as the artist of the *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and the *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* by Longhi in 1934. Longhi already assigned the paintings to Bastiani in an article written in 1926, which was published posthumous only in 1995. This attribution was later accepted in the museum catalogues (1949, 1955), and by Collobi (1939), Boskovits (1992), Casu (1996), Nardin (2009), Zaru (2014) and Russo (2017, 2018).

In the unpublished article of 1926, Longhi considered the panels as being executed around 1460 (1995, p. 443); an opinion he confirmed in 1934, when ascribed them to the young Bastiani (p. 97 [note 59]). Collobi postponed their creation to the early 1470s (before 1476), in a period of Bastiani's career the art historian defined as "intellectual", in which the painter improved his work following Mantegna's examples. The scholar also observed the miniature character of the pictures (the golden background above all) which is due, in her opinion, to miniature work executed at the same time by the artist. Finally, Collobi concluded by stating that medieval reminiscences are here finely combined with Bastiani's characteristic rigid compositions (1939, p. 39). Boskovits agreed with a period of realisation in the early 1470s, pointing out that "Bastiani shows an increasing concern to register, with fidelity and subtle intelligence, the calm passage of time in a luminous and well-ordered world" (1992, p. 27). For Casu the two artworks must be dated around 1475, when Bastiani's art, after the impact of Mantegna's work, once again followed Giovanni Bellini's. In addition, Casu pointed out that in the attempt to adapt his production to Giovanni Bellini's use of light and colour, from this moment onwards Bastiani toned down the intensity of his colours, which previously were generally bright. In more recent years, Nardin (2009, p. 113) and Russo (2018, p. 17 [note 43]) accepted the 1475 as the date Bastiani painted the panels. I agree to a dating of around 1475.

Only Zaru estimated the period of execution to be around 1460 (2014, pp. 84, 270-271). Zaru, however, offered some interesting thoughts on the pictures (p.

85). For instance, she observed that the reference to the bread and the water in the two cartouches could refer to the sacraments of the Eucharistic and Baptism (see also the octagonal shape of the well that corresponds to that of a baptistery). The two women, moreover, are depicted alone, in opposite position to the group of Christ and the apostle. Since the paintings were most likely commissioned of Bastiani by the nuns of the Corpus Domini, the importance given to the women in the pictures could mean that they were role models for the nuns, who were expected to behave following their example.

Further bibliography:

Boschini, 1664, p. 497; Boschini, 1674, p. 71 (Sestier di Cannaregio); Pacifico, 1697, p. 344; Martinelli, 1705, p. 326; Braccioli, 1712, p. 121; Zanetti, 1733, p. 424.





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Number: AP55

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Scenes from the Life of Saint Jerome: Last Communion of Saint Jerome, Funeral of Saint Jerome*

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 1021, 1004)

Date: 1475-1480

Material and dimensions: linen canvas, 191 x 239.5 cm (*Communion*); linen canvas, 209 x 263 cm (*Funeral*)

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: Venice, Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo;Venice, State repository in the ex Commenda di Malta (until 1838, *Communion*); Venice, State repository in the Church of San Giovanni Evangelista (until 1838, *Funeral*); Vienna, Hofsmuseum (n. 8, 11, until 1919).

Past exhibitions: *Opere d'arte tolte a Venezia nel 1808-1816-1838 restituite dopo la vittoria* (Venice, 1919).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

17th century (Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 52); probably between 1838 and 1919 while in Vienna (Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 52); 1948-1949, Mauro Pellicioli and Giuseppe Arrigoni (Restoration report; V. Moschini, 1949, p. 170); 1996-1997, Valentina Piovan (Restoration report; Spadavecchia, 1996); 1996-1997, Stefano Volpin, cross-section analysis (Report; Spadavecchia 1996); 1996-1997, Paolo Spezzani, IR imaging analysis (Spadavecchia); 2018, Nicole de Manincor, IRR.

In 1929 Pietro Paoletti recorded the very poor preservation of the canvases after they returned from Vienna ("Ritornati maltrattati in guisa tale da non richiamare che l'attenzione di qualche ben paziente studioso che tentasse di scoprire attraverso siffatti disgustosi ripassi, qualche elemento riguardo all'arte di Lazzaro Sebastiani", p. 125). Few years later, in 1932, Fogolari (p. 284) underlined their bad condition due to aggressive cleaning ("lavature brucianti") of previous treatments. Between 1948 and 1949 Mauro Pellicioli and Giuseppe Arrigoni carried out an extensive conservation procedure on both paintings. The paint was abraded and extended overpainted areas were

present, in some cases altering the overall picture. For instance, in the *Communion* scene further mountains had been added above the original ones (*Fig. 221*), while in the *Funeral* episode the floor and the wall had been recoloured uniformly in a dull colour. The removal of the overpainting revealed the very poor condition of the pigment layer and *lacunae* that had been previously covered. In addition, in the *Communion*, another portion of the surrounding monastery wall was unveiled, as well as landscape with a house outside the window of Saint Jerome's cell (*Fig. 222*). Prolonged exposure to humidity had caused severe damage on the right side of the *Communion*, which appeared extremely damaged, being reduced to the preparatory ground and, in places, the entire stratigraphy was lost (these lacunae had been repainted without the application of stucco first). Pellicioli and Arrigoni proceeded with the removal of the old overpainting, the stuccoing and inpainting of the lacunae. They did not reline the canvases. Almost fifty years later, when Valentina Piovan carried out another conservation procedure, the painting surface had become dimmed and yellowish in colour owing to a thick layer of "beverone" (made of glue and oil) that had been applied on both the front and back of the canvases, to the oxidation of the varnish film and to the alteration of the 1940s repainting. The treatment included the relining of the support, the cleaning and removal of the "beverone" layer, of the superficial varnish and of the old inpainting. The lacunae had been stuccoed and retouched. At that time IR imaging analysis was performed, some samples were taken and analysed in cross-section. Expensive or precious pigments, such as ultramarine blue and malachite, were identified, proving the prestigious commission. It must be emphasised, however, that although today the condition of the works is fair, the paint layer is still severely abraded and ruined, as proved by the latest IRR images collected/acquired in 2018.

Bibliography:

Ridolfi, 1648 (ed. cons. 1914), p. 45?; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 176; Boschini, 1664, p. 463; Boschini, 1674, pp. 44-45 (Sestier di Cannaregio); Pacifico, 1697, p. 345; Martinelli, 1705, p. 293; Braccioli, 1712, p. 103; Zanetti,

1733, pp. 404-405; Piacenza, 1768, I, p. 574; Zanetti, 1771, pp. 37-38; Lanzi, 1795-1796, p. 30; Moschini, 1815, II/1, p. 8; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, pp. 197 (note 2), 198 (note 2); *Führer durch…*, 1892, pp. 155-156 [n. 597, 599]; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 276; Ludwig, 1901, pp. VII, XXVI; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 9; Logan, 1903, pp. 318-319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 19; Logan, 1907, p. 339; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 278; Borenius, 1912, I, pp. 197 (note 1), 217 (note 2); A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, pp. 384-386; Fiocco, 1919, pp. V, 21 [n. 58], 27 [n. 82]; Paoletti, 1929, pp. 122-125; Fiocco, 1930, p. 101; Berenson, 1932, p. 64; Fogolari, 1932, p. 284; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, pp. 174, 177-178, 182; Gamba, 1937, pp. 55-57; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 42 (note 21); Moschini-Marconi, 1955, pp. 53 (n. 52); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 219 (V. 21-22); Arslan, 1965, p. 167; *Le Scuole…*, 1981, p. 226; Humfrey, 1985, pp. 41-46; Nepi Scirè-Valcanover, 1985, p. 84; Lucco, 1987, p. 202; Fortini Brown, 1988, pp. 49, 270-271; Lucco, 1990, p. 414; Humfrey, 1990, p. 733; Casu, 1996, p. 73; Spadavecchia, 1996; Sartor, 1997, p. 38; Russo, 2020b, pp. 46-47; Tempestini, 2021, p. 256 (n. 1333-1334).

The two *teleri* portraying the *Last communion of Saint Jerome* and the *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, today in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, were originally hung on the walls of the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo in Cannaregio.

An original plan, conserved in the Archivio di Stato di Venezia, shows that the Scuola was built on the left side of the Church of San Girolamo, enclosed on three sides by the church and the sacristy, and facing the Fondamenta di San Girolamo and its canal on the other side (Humfrey, 1985, pp. 41, [fig. 5]). In an old inventory of the Scuola, the building is presented as "una casa de muro con cortesela" (Vio, 2004, p. 497). Unfortunately, Jacopo de' Barbari's woodcut with the bird's-eye view of Venice shows the complex from the opposite side and so the Scuola is hidden by the church. The church and the monastery of San Girolamo were founded in the second half of the 14th century by a group of nuns devoted to Saint Augustine. The construction of the buildings took longer than expected for economic reasons and the complex was finally finished in

1425. Unfortunately, in 1456 a fire caused damage to the monastery and therefore it was necessary to partially rebuild it. (Corner, 1758, pp. 324-326; Franzoi-Di Stefano, 1974, p. 112). We do not have any further information concerning the foundation of the Scuola and its building, except that its *mariegola* (statute book), listing the duties and the responsibilities of its members, was written the 16th of December 1377 (Vio, 2004, p. 497). In the 19th century the *mariegola* was owned by Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna who published a list of the members in the *Correzioni e giunte finali* to his *Delle iscrizioni veneziane* (1853, VI, pp. 954-955). As underlined by Humfrey, it is apparent that the confraternity grouped members that belonged to the moderately prosperous artisan class, but also members employed in professions that required a considerable degree of literacy. Moreover, many members were foreigner residents who were not allowed to hold office in the Scuole Grandi (1985, p. 41). Among the artists that joined the Scuola in 1470, it is worth mentioning the sculptor-architect Pietro Lombardo, the printers Nicholas Jensen and John of Cologne, and, in addition, Lazzaro Bastiani.

Bastiani's *teleri* were part of a cycle of canvases showing episodes of the *Life of Saint Jerome*. The cycle ran round the walls of the Scuola and it has been recorded by historiographers and in Venice guides since the 17th century. Ridolfi (1648 [ed. cons. 1914], pp. 36-37, 45, 64) and Martinioni (1663, p. 176) carefully explained each canvas but did not mention where they were exhibited in the Scuola. Boschini first described their sequence, giving the location of the pictures and the general arrangement of the meeting room (1664, p. 462-464; 674, pp. 44-45). The doorway into the confraternity opened on the Fondamenta and, according to Humfrey, the entrance wall was empty because of the two windows that allowed the room to receive natural light (1985, p. 41). From Boschini and other sources after him we know that, once inside the Scuola, the left wall was entirely occupied by Alvise Vivarini's *Saint Jerome Leading the Lion into the Monastery*. Following this, on the wall opposite to the entrance, there were two *teleri* by Giovanni Bellini portraying *Saint Jerome Discoursing Outside the Monastery* and *Saint Jerome in His Study*. This latter was signed and dated 1464 (Ridolfi, 1648 [ed. cons. 1914], p. 64; Martinioni, 1663,

p. 176). After that, in the middle of the wall, came the altar with the altarpiece assigned to Alvise Vivarini. This was composed of five panels depicting the *Dead Christ with Saint Nicodemus and Mary Magdalene* above, the *Archangel Gabriel* and the *Virgin Annunciate* lower down, *Saint Augustine* (left) and *Saint John the Baptist* (right) below (Boschini, 1664, p. 463; Boschini, 1674, pp. 44-45). According to an inventory of the Scuola's possessions attached to the *mariegola* in 1504, we know that the centre of the polyptych was occupied by a carved statue of Saint Jerome (Fortini Brown, 1988, p. 271). In 1771 the polyptych had already been broken up, and the only remaining elements were the two saints of the lower register, hung above the entrance door (Zanetti, 1771, p. 14). The surviving saints have been identified as two panels in the Gallerie dell'Accademia depository that Moschini Marconi assigned to Antonio Vivarini and his workshop (Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 38). This attribution persuaded Humfrey to ascribe the entire altarpiece to Antonio too (Humfrey, 1985, p. 43. Recently Russo further reconstructed the polyptych by discovering the panels with the *Archangel Gabriel* and the *Virgin Annunciate*: Russo, 2020a, pp. 99-112). After the altarpiece, the sources mentioned the last two canvases as works executed by Carpaccio. These canvases are now accordingly attributed to Bastiani. The first is the *Communion of Saint Jerom*e, on the altar wall, and the second is the *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, on the right-hand wall. These are the only known extant *teleri* of the cycle, while those of Bellini and Alvise were lost or destroyed. Luckly, we are aware of the general composition of Alvise's work thanks to a tiny engraving included in Séroux d'Agincourt's *Histoire de l'art par ses monuments* (Steer, 1982, pp. 47, 112 [fig. VIIIa], 174-175). According to Boschini, the meeting room was further adorned with an ornamental monochrome frieze on the walls between the canvases and the ceiling, and a painted roundel showing *God the Father* attached to the ceiling, both ascribed to Alvise Vivarini (Zanetti affirmed the right-hand frieze was by Vivarini, while the right-hand part was by a minor painter. 1733, p. 405). The roundel, initially believed lost, survived, and today is conserved in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 157-158). Steer rejected the attribution to Alvise, suggesting Pier Maria Pennacchi as the painter (1982, pp.

195-196), but recently Russo restored the ascription to Alvise (2020b, pp. 46-47).

With the Napoleonic suppressions, the Scuola was closed in 1810 and re-opened four years later, but in the meanwhile its artistic heritage had been confiscated, becoming state-owned property. The building was reopened to the public in 1814, but closed again a few years later, and finally in 1844 the building was barbarically devastated and plundered by the "rea plebaglia" (Moschini, 1815, II/1, p. 8; Paoletti, 1840, III, p. 35; Tassini, 1885, p. 114). Bastiani's *teleri* were collected in the public depositories, also the *Communion* in the Commenda (n. 398), and the *Funeral* in the Scuola of San Giovanni Evangelista (n. 386) (Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 52). In 1838 they were sent to Vienna, to be exhibited in the Hofmuseum (n. 8 and 11. Ludwig, 1901, pp. VII, XXVI; *Führer…*, 1892, pp. 155-156 [n. 597, 599]). Finally, in 1919, after the First World War, they were returned to Venice and entered the Gallerie dell'Accademia (Fiocco, 1919, pp. V, 21 [n. 58], 27 [n. 82]).

The *Last Communion of Saint Jerome*, depicted on the left side, takes place in the saint's cell, a bare room without superfluous ornaments, characterised only by the crucifix, the bed, the whip hung to the wall, an open book for study, and a small window to look outside. The kneeling saint receives the sacrament from the priest who stands in front of him. The priest is turned from the viewer, so showing his sumptuous brocade cloak. Eusebio da Cremona, close friend, and disciple of Jerome, sustains him, while other monks in prayer witness the event. On the right side, under a porch, Jerome debates with two men, one wearing a turban. The saint is also depicted walking in the convent courtyard, next to a tree and a puteal (*vera da pozzo*), with another man wearing a hat of Oriental style. The garden of the convent is enclosed by a brick wall. In the foreground, sitting in the right corner of the porch, there is a monk reading, while opposite to him there is an aspersorium. Spadavecchia suggested that the man wearing the turban might be Origen of Alexandria, always admired by Jerome. The reading monk, in her opinion, could be Pelagio, an opponent of Jerome who emphasised human choice in salvation, hence the aspergillum should be interpreted as the symbol of Christian sacraments (Spadavecchia,

1996). Moreover, the relevance of sacraments is further underlined by the communion scene, an uncommon episode in the 15th century Saint Jerome iconography, and by the presence of the quail, which has a eucharistic meaning (Charbonneau Lassay, 1994, II, p. 47; Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 186). The tamed lion outside the porch on the right represents Saint Jerome, but also Saint Mark and therefore Venice. In the background, outside the convent wall, there is a mountainous landscape. Although portrayed together in one *telero*, the Communion and the porch scene clearly shows two different moments of the life of the saint. The separation is highlighted by the central column in the foreground.

The *Funeral* is set in an interior, probably the chapel of the monastery. A big arch on the left opens the view towards the cloister and the church of the monastery. The deceased Saint Jerome lies on the floor, in front of a simple altar ornamented with two candles and an altarpiece portraying the Holy Family on a golden background in the lower register and God the Father with red cherubs above. All around, monks in black habits grieve over the loss of the beloved Jerome. The funeral ceremony takes place behind the saint: a priest in rich garments officiates the funeral mass, some clerics in procession carry the thurible, the incense boat, the cross and candles for the ceremony, a monk rings the bell. On the lower left corner, the tamed lion in grief stares at the scene. The rear wall is decorated with an early 14th century fresco of the *Crucifixion with the Virgin Mary and Saint John*, flanked by two windows showing a natural landscape with a lake and mountains in the distance. Bastiani was quite attracted by Venetian Medieval wall paintings, as he often included Medieval features in his artworks. Longhi called him "il più acuto trascrittore dei muri medievali" (1995, p. 444) and Casu highlighted Bastiani's almost philological description of Medieval pictures (1996, pp. 72-73). In any event, it is reasonable to think that this anachronistic *Crucifixion* had a further symbolic meaning which refers to a "similarly retrospective ideal of early Christian asceticism and authentic imitation of Christ that had always united cloistered communities and lay brotherhoods with the example of Saint Jerome" (Krüger, 2002, pp. 61-62). Although slightly simplified, the general composition of this

episode has been rearranged in the small predella panel now in Brera, once part of the Saint Jerome altarpiece in Asolo.

As previously said, the canvases had been assigned to Carpaccio since the 17th century and bore this ascription until the end of the 19th century. Even Crowe and Cavalcaselle, although pointing out that Bastiani was a member of the Scuola di San Girolamo from 1470, attributed the *teleri* to Carpaccio (1871, I, pp. 198, 215). Ludwig and Paoletti first suggested the name of Lazzaro Bastiani, as they found in these works neutral tones and stiff forms, not consistent with Carpaccio's characteristic bright colours and elegant figures (1900, p. 276). Then, shortly afterwards Ludwig and Molmenti downgraded the canvases to Bastiani's workshop (1903, p. 9). Logan disagreed firmly with this conclusion, she did not see "why the two pictures in Vienna, agreeing so well with many of Lazzaro's paintings, should be set down as mere atelier work" (1903, p. 318). Ultimately, in the monographic work on Carpaccio, Ludwig and Molmenti changed their opinion and recognised that the painter of the artworks to Bastiani himself. Moreover, the scholars considered the drawing portraying the *Head of an Oriental*, in Dresden Kupferstichkabinett, to be a study by Bastiani for the Oriental figure conversing with two monks in the *Communion* (1906, p. 19). This attribution was later rejected by Collobi (1939, p. 51), who defined it as "Titianesque", and by Tietze and Tietze-Conrat, further underlined the richness of movement as not being characteristic of 15th century artists, but typical of the early 16th century (1944, pp. 59-60, n. A 250). In any event, after Ludwig and Molmenti, attributing this teleri to Bastiani has never been questioned. Lionello Venturi appreciated the architectural construction and the careful perspective (1907, p. 278). For Borenius "these pictures are of great interest as foreshadowing Carpaccio's narrative style of composition" (1912, p. 217 [note 2]). Adolfo Venturi acknowledged Bastiani for the solid figures defined through the *chiaroscuro* in the *Communion* but considered the scene of the *Funeral*, especially in the mourning monks, too contained and not up to the standard of Gentile Bellini (1915, pp. 382-386). Fiocco believed that Bastiani tried unsuccessfully to emulate/imitate Carpaccio when he painted these works (1932, p. 101) Van Marle was of the

opinion that the impact of Gentile's art helped Bastiani in evolving the modelling of the human figures and their features, although he still showed Paduan characteristics (1936, pp. 174, 176-178, 182). Collobi also emphasised Gentile's influence here, specifically in certain figures derived from Gentile's early examples, as could be seen in the organ shutters for San Marco. The art historian also underlined the noteworthy spatial construction (1939, p. 42). The quality of the *teleri* persuaded Gamba to hypothesise that Giovanni Bellini conceived the scenes and Bastiani painted them (1937, pp. 55-57) According to Moschini Marconi, Bastiani merged Vivarinesque elements in the canvases to suggestions derived from Gentile, with no influence from Carpaccio (1955, p. 52).

No documentary source concerning the commission of the cycle has survived, thus dating suggestions for the Saint Jerome paintings have been based on stylistic grounds, spanning a timeframe that ranges between the 1460s ~~to~~ and the 1490s. Paoletti believed Bastiani worked on the *teleri* in 1460s, in the same years as he worked on the lost altarpiece for the Church of San Samuel (1929, p. 122). Most scholars, however, placed the execution in the 1470s (Moschini Marconi, 1955, p 52; Humfrey, 1985, p. 43; Fortini Brown, 1988, p. 270). Some believed that the Scuola commissioned the artworks in the early 1470s, shortly after Bastiani was admitted as a member of the confraternity (Ludwig-Paoletti, 1900, p. 276; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 19; Borenius, 1912, p. 217 [note 2]; Arslan, 1965, p. 167), while others place the realisation to in the second half or to the last years of the decade (Collobi, 1939, p. 42; Lucco, 1990, p. 414; Spadavecchia, 1996; Sartor, 1997, p. 38). Humfrey considered the pictures "probably of the 1480s" (1990, p. 733). Russo dated the canvases at the beginning of 1480s (2020b. pp. 46-47). Van Marle drew uncertain conclusions about the year of execution, as he was inclined to think that the *teleri* would have been produced sometime in the 1490s, but he also conjected that they could have been painted under influence of Gentile Bellini in an early phase of Bastiani's career (Van Marle, 1936, pp. 174, 176-178, 182). Finally, Fiocco (1931, p. 101) and Nepi Scirè (1985, p. 84), supporting a late influence from Carpaccio, suggested a dating in the last decade of the century.

The chronology of the decoration for the meeting hall is most likely to have started with the altarpiece by Antonio Vivarini in the early 1460s (Russo, 2020a, pp. 99-112), after which the request for the *teleri* followed, to fill the areas on either side of the altarpiece, and to directly face the spectator when they entered the room. The Bellini's were the first to be installed, as indicated by the date 1464, followed by the Bastiani's, which surely cannot be dated in the 1460s. Finally, Alvise's picture would have been commissioned, albeit the episode portrayed in it was, in fact, the first of the cycle. Calculating on the average cost of each work, a large expense for a Scuola Piccola, Humfrey pointed out that progress on the project is likely to have been slow, for it would have taken years to raise funds to pay each painter (1985, p. 44). The expensive pigments analysed in the *Funerals* (ultramarine, malachite, red lake), even in areas of secondary interest, support this observation (Spadavecchia, 1996). Furthermore, with reference to the antecedence of Bellini's pictures, Humfrey also observed that in the 1460s "Lazzaro Bastiani, although already active, was not yet capable of the broad atmospheric handling evident in his extant contributions" (1985, p. 43). At this point it is necessary to remember that in 1470 Bastiani was requested to execute a *telero* in two parts for the Scuola Grande di San Marco portraying the *Story of David*. After this experience, in which he had the chance to came into contact with Venetian masters, such as Jacopo, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, Bartolomeo Vivarini and Andrea da Murano, Bastiani must have been trained and gained expertise in working on large canvases, but also might have been a skilled and valued artist eligible and sufficiently proficient to be hired for this project. Therefore, supposing that the realisation of the *telero* for San Marco lasted some years (as was in the case of Jacopo Bellini's artoworks for the Scuola), it might be plausible to suggest the commission being made in the second half of the 1470s. Moreover, the closeness in style between the monks of San Girolamo and those of the *Saint Augustine altarpiece* for San Salvador, seems to further confirm this dating, which however, in my opinion, could not be later than 1480, as I do not see close resemblances with the *Nativity* and later works.

A further element that points to a date in late 1470s is the rigorous and geometrical spatial construction of the two compositions. Bastiani's interest in perspective increased throughout his career, gradually developing in his works of the late 1470s works and emerging as a definite characteristic in the works from 1480 onwards. Spadavecchia suggested that the progress in this area might have been made through Bastiani's exposure to the knowledge of the mathematician Luca Pacioli, who came in Venice in the early 1470s and, as far as we know, had the chance to discuss perspective with the Bellini brothers. The architectural setting and the perspective construction, however, clearly seems to have been inspired by Fra Carnevale's companion panels depicting the *Birth of the Virgin* (Metropolitan Museum, New York, U.S.A. *Fig. 223*) and the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A. *Fig. 224*), parts of an altarpiece commissioned in 1467 for Santa Maria della Bella in Urbino, as brilliantly observed by Ceriana (2004, pp. 124-125) and Guerra (2006, pp. 105-108, 118 [note 59]). When Fra Carnevale painted the two panels, Urbino was a melting pot of artists studying the mathematical laws of perspective and geometry (Piero della Francesca and Leon Battista Alberti, above all). How the knowledge of Fra Carnevale's paintings specifically came to Bastiani is unknown, so far. The scholars, however, pointed out resemblances in the architectural construction, especially the arcade seen in perspective foreshortening, in Bastiani's *Funeral* scene, in Carpaccio's *Arrival of the Ambassadors* for the Scuola di Sant'Orsola, and in the two bas-reliefs portraying scenes from the *Life of Saint Mark* that flank the entrance door of the Chapel of the Madonna della Pace in the Scuola Grande di San Marco which were executed by the Workshop of the Lombardo family. These similarities suggested the two art historians not only that Fra Carnevales's paintings were known in the Venetian artistic *milieu*, but also that, hypothetically, Bastiani's picture may have influenced Carpaccio's composition (Ceriana, 2004, p. 125). The two scenes differ, however, in the treatment of the architectural elements, Carpaccio's being more splendid and richer in decorations than Bastiani's, probably as the former artist was "consciously seeking to compete with the decorations of the Scuole Grandi", as explained by Humfrey (1985, p. 45).

Conversely, the sombre colours and the solemn reverence that characterise Bastiani's pictures have been interpreted by Humfrey as "the original ideals of piety and humility of the thirteenth century flagellant movement [that] survived in a much purer form in the many Venetian scuole piccole" (1985, p. 45).

Further bibliography:

Corner, 1758, pp. 324-329; Paoletti, 1840, III, p. 35; Cicogna, 1853, VI, pp. 954-955; Tassini, 1885, p. 114; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, pp. 59-60, n. A 250; Zorzi, 1972, II, p. 565; Franzoi-Di Stefano, 1976, p. 112; Steer, 1982, pp. 47, 112 [fig. VIIIa], 174-175, 195-196; Charbonneau Lassay, 1994, II, p. 47; R. Longhi, *L'esordio di Lazzaro Bastiani 1925-1926*, in *Il palazzo non finito. Saggi inediti 1910-1926*, Electa, Milano, 1995, p. 444; Levi D'Ancona, 2001, p. 186; Krüger, 2002, pp. 56-82; Vio, 2004, p. 497; Russo, 2020a, pp. 99-112.

Further images



Fig. 221. Detail of the landscape with the overpainted mountains, of the monastery surrounding wall, and of the obscured window in Saint Jerome's cell before Pellicioli and Arrigoni treatment of 1948-1949.



Fig. 222. Detail of the original landscape, of the monastery surrounding wall, and of the landscape outside the window in Saint Jerome's cell after Pellicioli and Arrigoni treatment of 1948-1949.



Fig. 223. Fra Carnevale, *The Birth of the Virgin*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum, 1467.



Fig. 224. Fra Carnevale, *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1467.



Number: AP56

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Virgin and Child* or *Madonna of Humility*

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia (from 1812, inv. n. 144)

Date: 1465 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 53 x 32 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Venice, Santa Croce monastery (until 1812).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1979 (Nepi Scirè-Valcanover, 1985, p. 155); 1987, Gloria Tranquilli (*Restoration report* n. 823).

Today the painting is in fairly good condition.

Bibliography:

Moschini, 1815, II/2, p. 491; F. Zanotto, 1834, p. 71; F. Zanotto, 1845, p. 16 (n. 42); *Catalogo…*, 1852, p. 15; *Catalogo…*, 1858, p. 15 (n. 44); *Catalogo…*, 1862, p. 25 (n. 318); *Catalogo*, 1863, p. 26 (n. 318); J. A. Crowe-G. B. Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 345 [note 1]; *Catalogo…*, 1879, p. 24 (n. 318); G. Botti, 1891, p. 9; A. Conti, 1895, p. 184; P. Paoletti, 1903, p. 180; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 185; L. Serra, 1914, p. 186 (n. 616); A. Venturi, 1914, p. 338; Testi, 1915, p. 547; *Le Regie Gallerie…*, Casa editrice Apollo, Bologna, 1924, p. 119 (n. 616); E. Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 126, 134; R. Van Marle, 1936, p. 100; L. Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 46 (note 33); *Le Gallerie*, p. 112 (n. 616); L. Coletti, 1953, p. 49; S. Moschini-Marconi, 1955, pp. 162-163 (n. 185); Berenson, I, 1957, p. 150; Berenson, I, 1958, p. 155; G. Gamulin, 1963, p. 18; G. Nepi Scirè-F. Valcanover, 1985, p. 155; M. Giannatiempo, 1986 p. 295; F. Heinemann, 1991, p. XI; S. G. Casu, 1996, pp. 63, 79 (note 39); M. Biffis, 2016, p. 63; Russo, 2017, s.p.; Russo, 2018, pp. 7-8, 17 (note 43); Russo, 2019, p. 171, note 22.

Formerly in the monastery of Santa Croce (Moschini, 1915, II, 2, p. 491), this small arched panel entered the Gallerie dell'Accademia collection in 1812, after the Napoleonic suppressions, and was included in the first group of state-owned artworks selected by Edwards to establish the early Gallerie dell'Accademia collection (Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 162).

The painting portrays the Virgin, seated on a cushion after the Humility model, holding the Infant Jesus on her right knee. The Virgin gazes at Jesus, who clutches her left hand while looking at the observer. The Virgin is clothed in a red dress, covered by a golden floral brocade mantle, and Jesus wears a green tunic over a long-sleeved white shirt. The pair is placed against a landscape background, showing a steep twisted cliff on the right, a lake being crossed by a boat on the left, with hills and beyond them mountains in the distance. On the right side, under the crag, there is a small town with houses of German or Flemish style (to Paoletti these peculiar elements evoked German prints), and a man and two horsemen are shown leaving the village.

Originally assigned to Gregorio (Giorgio) Schiavone by Edwards, this attribution was confirmed by Moschini, Zanotto and the following museum catalogues until 1887, with the only exception of the 1852 catalogue, where it was attributed to Carlo Crivelli. In Crowe and Cavalcaselle's opinion "this picture recalls Crivelli in the landscape and figures", representing "a very careful Venetian piece" (1871, p. 345 [note 1]). From 1891 catalogue onwards the panel was ascribed to an unknown vivarinesque painter of the "School of Bartolomeo Vivarini". According to Lionello Venturi (1907, p. 185), Adolfo Venturi (1914, p. 338) and Testi (1915, p. 547) the artist was a close follower of Bartolomeo Vivarini, while for Van Marle it was by Bartolomeo Vivarini himself, because the painting is close in style to the Frick *Adoration*, at that time listed under the name of Bartolomeo (1936, p. 100). The first attribution to the young Bastiani "under Barlommeo's immediate inspiration" was advanced by Sandberg Vavalà (1931, p. 126), which was not fully accepted by Collobi, who judged the panel a later replica of Bastiani's manner around 1480 (1939-40, p. 46). Additionally, in a written communication Longhi ascribed the work to Bastiani (*Le Gallerie…*, 1949, p. 112). Sandberg Vavalà's suggestion was not, however, accepted by most of scholars, as the painting was again assigned to a painter in the artistic *milieu* of Bartolomeo Vivarini, either Antonio da Negroponte or Quirizio da Murano, by Coletti (1953, p. 49), and to a generic follower of the Muranese master by Moschini Marconi (1955, pp. 162-163). Berenson included the *Madonna and Child* in Quirizio da Murano's catalogue (1957, p. 150; 1958, p. 155), an attribution later approved, even if dubitatively, by Nepi Scirè and Valcanover (1985, p. 155). In addition, Gamulin found similarities between this *Madonna* and another *Madonna* in Trogir which he assigned to Quirizio da Murano, although he still supported the generic attribution of the Gallerie one to "School of Bartolomeo" (1963, p. 18). Finally, in the late 1980s ascription to Bastiani was again proposed by Giannatiempo, following comparisons with Crivelli's art and with the Matera polyptych, dating the Venice panel to the early 1460s (1986, p. 295). Attributing the painting to Bastiani, Heinemann mentioned Gentile Bellini's influence in the landscape (1991, p. XI). Casu (1996, pp. 63, 79 [note 39]) and, in recent years, Russo

(2017; 2018, pp. 7-8, 17 [note 43]; 2019, p. 171 [note 22]) confirmed the attribution to Bastiani and suggested a mid-1460s dating. Nonetheless, it must be emphasised that in 2016 the panel was still included in Quirizio da Murano's production by Biffis (p. 63), even though today the painting is exposed as a Lazzaro Bastiani's work in the Gallerie dell'Accademia.

While attribution has long been discussed/debated, this *Madonna and Child* shows elements and *motifs* that are common in Bastiani's production and that can further confirm the ascription to our artist. The pose and the gestures of the figures are redolent of those of the n. 2193 in the Correr Museum, one of Bastiani's early works, the composition of which is derived from that of Antonio Vivarini. Indeed, as already pointed out by Casu, Bastiani used to repeat the compositional schemes he learned in the early years of his artistic development, even if updated and revised according to the latest references (1996, p. 63). Sandberg Vavalà (1931, p. 126) already noticed the matching of the floral brocade of the Virgin's cloak with those of the Virgin in the *Virgin and Child, the Trinity and Playing Angels* in Poldi Pezzoli, and of the Magi and servant with the horse in the Frick *Adoration*, to which we can also cite that of Saint Mustiola in the Matera polyptych. Moreover, the same scholar observed that the curious twisted rock spur reappears not only in the New York *Adoration* (1931, p. 126), but also in the *Pietà* in Poldi Pezzoli and the *Virgin and Child* in the Hermitage Museum. The way the Virgin's dress and mantle fit in the Venice and Milan panels is quite similar. Furthermore, the sharp creases of the lower part of the dress are then evoked and further developed in the Matera polyptych and in the Hermitage painting.

The immediate reference for our *Madonna* is the central part of Bartolomeo Vivarini's *Lehman polyptych* (*Fig. 225*), as already pointed out by Casu (1996, p. 79 [note 39]). The iconography and woodland setting of Bartolomeo's *Madonna* also links with Bastiani's Virgin and Child n. 2193 in Correr Museum and further suggest that in the early stages of their career both Bastiani and Bartolomeo were influenced by Antonio's work (Bartolomeo's polyptych is dated around 1465. Pope-Hennessy, 1987, pp. 230-236). Russo observed, however, that Bartolomeo's lesson is already mitigated here by the early

Giovanni Bellini's naturalistic influence (Russo, 2018, p. 7; Russo, 2019, p. 171). The abovementioned comparisons with Bastiani's outputs dated in the early years of the eighth decade, likewise for the similarity with Vivarini's *Lehman Madonna*, I believe that a dating in around 1465 or shortly after in that decade is appropriate for the *Virgin and Child* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia.

Further bibliography:

Pope-Hennessy, 1987, pp. 230-236.

Further images



Fig. 225. B. Vivarini, *Madonna of Humility with Two Angels and a Kneeling Nun*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum.



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Number: AP57

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Nativity* or *Adoration of the shepherds, with Saint Eustache, Saint James, Saint Philip, and Saint Benedict*

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 174)

Date: 1480

Material and dimensions: Wood panel, 160 x 191 cm

Inscription: S EVSTACIVS, on the red flag hold by Saint Eustache.

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Venice, Island of Sant'Elena, Church of Sant'Elena in Isola (until 1812).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1995, Paola Borghese-Savio (*Restoration report*, 1995; Sartor, 1997, p. 51 [note 38]; *Restauri a Venezia 1987-1998*, 2001, p. 221); 2001, Monfardini (*Restoration report*, 2001); 2009, Saccuman (*Restoration report*, 2009).

No old restorations are known. For Moschini the work “molto sofferse” (p. 489), while for Ludwig-Paoletti “l’immagine è ben conservata” (p. 281). In 1955, Moschini-Marconi recorded minor lifting here and there on the surface but considered the state of conservation to be good overall (p. 55). In 1995, a conservation treatment was carried out on both the recto and the verso of the painting (*Fig. 226*, *Fig. 227*). The paint film had numerous vertical micro-lifts and a vertical crack alongside Saint Joseph. There were some lacunae caused by candle burns (for example near the sheep in the lower left-hand corner) and some scratches (one on the manger and one on the Virgin's cloak). Significant colour abrasions caused by an old cleaning treatment could cautiously lead to the hypothesis of a 19th century restoration, when the painting entered the museum's collection. Finally, the severe yellowing of the varnishes and the numerous repaintings in the sky and the in the figures' vestments had compromised the legibility of the image. An extensive cleaning of the varnish, the removal of the old repainting, the consolidation of the preparation layers, the re-adhesion of the paint film, the stuccoing of the lacunae and pictorial reintegration restored a unified and clear appearance of the painting. The intervention on the verso was mainly focused on modifying the old parquet system that blocked the natural phenomenon of the wood panels’ adjustment to changes in humidity and temperature. Subsequently, two further restorations, 2001 and 2009, mainly focused on the support system (*Fig. 228*). In 2001, two horizontal crossbeams were inserted at the back, but they were too rigid and caused an additional crack alongside Saint Joseph. In 2009, a new frame with four crossbeams was created. Today, the state of preservation is good overall.

The two vertical cracks and scratches on the painted surface are perfectly visible under infrared reflectography. Similarly, through infrared images, the reintegrated areas are evident as well, especially in the mantle of *Saint Eustace*, in the robe of *Saint Joseph*, on the ox and on the mountains on the left side.

Bibliography:

Boschini, 1664, p. 558; Boschini, 1674, p. 49; A. M. Zanetti, 1733, p. 466; Moschini, 1815, II/2, pp. 489-490; E. Paoletti, 1839, II, p. 150; *Guida…*, 1832, p. 21; Zanotto, 1834, s.p.; Zanotto, 1845, p. 17; *Catalogo…*, 1862, p. 27 (n. 348); *Catalogo…*, 1863, p. 27 (n. 348); Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 218 (note 2); *Catalogo…*, 1879, p. 25 (n. 348); *Catalogo…* 1887b, p. 187 (n. 79); Della Rovere, s.d. (1888 c.), pp. 72-73 (n.79); Botti, 1891, p. 196 (n. 82); Conti, 1895, pp. 37-38 (n. 100); Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 281; Paoletti, 1903, p. 41 (n. 100); Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 24; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 280; *Allgemeines Lexikon…*, 1909, p. 21; Testi, 1909, p. 165; Borenius, 1912, pp. 220-221 (note 4); Serra, 1914, pp. 51-52 (n. 100); Testi, 1915, pp. 222, 727-728; A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, p. 388; *Le Regie Gallerie…*, 1924, p. 33 (n. 100); Gallo, 1926a, pp. 24-26, 81-82; Gallo, 1926b, pp. 442-444, 499-500; Paoletti, 1929, p. 126; Fiocco, 1931, p. 101; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 131, 135, 139, 140; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 182; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, pp. 44-45 (note 28); *Le Gallerie…*, 1949, p. 15 (n. 100); Moschini-Marconi, 1955, pp. 55-56 (n. 55); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Arslan, 1965, pp. 167-168; Lucco, 1990, II, p. 453; Humfrey, 1993, p. 347; Longhi, 1995, p. 444; Sartor, 1997, pp. 43-44; *Gallerie dell'Accademia…*, 1998, p. 231 (n. 23); Dal Pozzolo, 2010, p. 122.

The panel, almost square in shape, depicts the nativity of Christ and the adoration of the shepherds. The holy family is depicted under the roof of an open, wooden structure at the centre of the scene: the new-born infant Jesus lying on a manger in the middle, to the right the Virgin kneeling in adoration, and Saint Joseph in the far-left corner. Outside the enclosure of the shed four saints stand. From the left anti-clockwise are depicted Saint Eustace, Saint James, Saint Philip, and Saint Benedict. Beyond a further fence that encloses the space of the sacred event, the curious shepherds observe the scene, while their sheep graze heedlessly in the surroundings. From beyond the fence the ox and the donkey try to reach the infant Jesus, probably to warm him with their breath. The disposition of the figures under the shed, outside the

enclosure, and outside the fence, reminds Dal Pozzolo of a hierarchical arrangement (Dal Pozzolo, 2010, p. 122). On the right, set back from the main group, is a fortified turreted city, not unusual in Bastiani's works (to be compared with those pictured in *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* and *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*). According to Longhi (p. 442) this city evokes memories of the culture of the Christian East. The city overlooks a lake basin and extends in the distance and to the left side of the painting, where there are two tall palm trees symmetrical to the city towers. Similarly, a tree with a slender trunk and twisted branches, an element also found in the *Madonna* of Castelvecchio, stands opposite the Saint Joseph. The background is characterised by a landscape with high, rocky mountains on the left, and with lush green mountains on the right, enriched with bushy trees and with a fortress, a typical Bastianesque element. The mountains gradually become gentle hills. Populating the background, again on both sides, are genre figures: on the left, an angel advises one of the shepherds about the holy event; on the right, two men are in conversation in front of the entrance of the town. The light is pale, the blues, browns and greens of the background are soft, while the colours of the garments are more intense. In front of the shed, in the foreground, there are several tufts of grass and flowers, among which shamrocks can be recognised, whose meaning of salvation (Levi-D'Ancona, pp. 99-100), heralds the fate of the newborn Christ. The colour range employed by Bastiani here is considered by Sandberg-Vavalà to be "the best-balanced stage of his colouristic progress" (p. 139).

The panel entered the collection of the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice in 1812, among those works selected by Edwards after the Napoleonic suppressions. The painting was originally in the Church of Sant'Elena in Isola, which became state property in 1806. Here, it was seen and remembered by Boschini (1664; 1674) and Zanetti (1733). The provenance was correctly noted by Moschini in his *Guida di Venezia* (1815, pp. 489-490), but in later catalogues it was erroneously reported that the artwork came from the Convento degli Scalzi in Padua (1832; 1834; 1862; 1863; 1879; 1887; E. Paoletti, 1839; F. Zanotto, 1845). The error was explained in Della Rovere's

catalogue (1888 c., p. 72-73). In fact, Bastiani's *Nativity* was mistakenly confused for another work depicting the *Madonna in Adoration of the Child and Angels Playing Instruments* by a Paduan painter, from the Paduan Convento degli Scalzi (Spiazzi, 1991, pp. 91-92 [n. 25]). The provenance was corrected by Moschini (p. 490-91). Moschini-Marconi (1955, p. 55) also added that the painting by Parentino was donated to the Municipality of Padua, where it was exhibited in the Musei Civici agli Eremitani, in exchange for the *Madonna and Child with Four Saints* (inv. no. 287), at the time given to Giovanni Bellini (Moschini-Marconi, 1955, pp. 64-65 [no. 65]), which is now attributed to Francesco Benaglio. The correct provenance of Bastiani's panel was reported correctly given in all subsequent catalogues (1903; 1914; 1924; 1949; 1955; 1998). Gallo, in his publication on the Church of Sant'Elena (1926a, 1926b), definitively confirmed the original location of the work from that church, which is also supported by documentary evidence. The work was, in fact, commissioned by Eustachio Balbi in his last will, written by his own hand in 1478, when he was *podestà* of Brescia. Balbi requested his commissioners to erect an altar close to that of the Loredan family, thus leaning against the transverse masonry septum that separated the space of the congregation from that of the choir and the apse. The altar would have been enriched at that time with "una bella palla [...] in la quale palla sia fato el presepio, tanto bello et honorevol quanto se po" (p. 82). Finally, the family tomb was in front of the altar (Cicogna, 1758). Balbi's executors were his brothers, Filippo, Giacomo and Benedetto, his sons and daughters, Andrea, Zaccaria, Crispina and Chiara (see Balbi's family tree, *Fig. 229*). This information allowed Sartor to correctly identify the four saints in adoration of the infant Jesus with Balbi's brothers. On the left, Eustace and James show unequivocal attributes (the former has the banner reading 'S EVSTACIVS', the latter holds the pilgrim's stick and a book), so they have always been correctly recognised (except by Boschini, who clearly/evidently did not read the inscription on the banner held by Saint Eustace and proposed this saint was Saint George in armour). The two saints on the right, on the other hand, have always been the more problematic, often being mistaken for Saint Mark and Saint Nicholas (Boschini; Gallo, 1926, p. 25;

Moschini-Marconi; Berenson 1957, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, p. 27; Humfrey, 1993, p. 347) or simply generically identified as an apostle and a bishop.

Sartor recognised the long, hooded, white garment with wide sleeves worn under the richly decorated cope of the bishop saint as the cowl (*cocolla*), which is usually worn by Saint Benedict as it appears from pictures of members of the reformed Benedictine orders, to which the Olivetans of Sant'Elena belonged. The scholar, thus, suggested that the bishop saint was indeed Saint Benedict, who is the eponymous saint of one of the Balbi brothers. Similarly, the other saint, characterised only by the book in his hand, can be identified with Saint Philip (Sartor pp. 43-44), and not with Saint Nicholas, as Humfrey had also believed, owing to homonymy with one of Eustace's sons. Sartor, in fact, pointed out that Nicolò was not recorded in the *Avogaria di Comun* because he probably died before becoming adult. In addition, Nicolà was not even mentioned in his father's will.

The attribution to Lazzaro Bastiani was not straightforward. Boschini and Zanetti described the painting as being executed in an "ancient manner" ("antichissima" for Zanetti). To Moschini, who agreed with Edwards' opinion, suggested the Vivarinesque manner, mixed with other influences, especially from the Paduan school. Zanotto, who correctly reported that previously the panel was in the Church of Sant'Elena, although he did not believe this was the original location, attributed the *Nativity* to Parentino. In support of this attribution, he admired the colour and the gracefulness of the drawing (which, he asserted, were typical of Squarcione's school), the ornaments that originally framed it (also mentioned by Edwards and most likely lost. Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 56), and the composition designed on a square-shaped panel. Zanotto's error, as with that of the incorrect provenance, was repeated in the following museum catalogues (1862; 1863; 1879). The correct attribution to Bastiani was suggested by Crowe and Cavalcaselle (1871), who, in their *A History of Painting in North Italy*, included the *Nativity* in Bastiani's catalogue. The scholars commented that the previous attribution to Parentino had "small authority" and added that "it is hard to say how the name of Parentino was suggested". In support of their attribution, Crowe and Cavalcaselle stated that

the figures are "all in the character of the figures in Lazzaro's inscribed works" and that "the colour is clear as at Bergamo". In the museum catalogues, the correction was reported by Della Rovere and confirmed in all subsequent editions.

The attribution was no longer questioned by subsequent authors who discussed this *Nativity*. The only exception was Testi, who, in the first volume of his history of Venetian painting, believed that the *Nativity* mentioned by Boschini was lost (1909, p. 165), but in the second volume he revised his previous opinion and assigned the panel to Bastiani – albeit with some hesitation – in agreement with other authors (1915, pp. 727-728). In fact, the attribution to Bastiani can be further confirmed by some stylistic elements typical of the artist that can be compared with works which are unquestionably attributed to him. Specifically, the elements are: the strongly central perspective of the entire composition and the figures arranged symmetrically with respect to the central axis, as can be seen in *Saint Augustine Giving the Rule* and in *Saint Veneranda Enthroned*; the landscape of the background, flat in the centre and surrounded by hills and/or mountains at the sides, similar to that of *Saint Anthony in the Walnut Tree* and in the *Annunciation* in Correr Museum; the static figures, communicating a sense of glacial immobility ("ritte come piuoli " said Lionello Venturi referring to the four saints of the *Nativity*. 1907, p. 280) and solemnity, which is characteristic of Bastiani's paintings, and it is particularly evident for the purpose of comparison in the Murano *lunette* and the Bergamo *Coronation*.

Concerning the perspective, the construction of the wooden shed structure is carefully studied. The vanishing point is in the centre of the scene. To make it easier for the eye to converge on this point, the artist also opened a gap between the city walls, and perfectly aligned the trees in the background. In a backward path, however, diverging from the vanishing point and returning to the shed, the lines open up to show us the main figure of the *Nativity*, namely the infant Jesus. This insistence on perspective lines converging to one point reminded Lucco an intarsia. It is undeniable, moreover, that the composition and, specifically, the shed had been constructed following the examples in

Jacopo Bellini's drawings, especially in folio 99 recto of the British Museum drawing book (*Fig. 230*). This observation was noticed by Testi, and later confirmed by Collobi and Moschini-Marconi. The compositional scheme was then repeated by Leonardo Boldrini in the small *Nativity* in the Correr Museum (Mariacher, 1957, pp. 60-61. *Fig. 231*). Besides the emphatic static nature of the figures, a general elongation of their bodies has also been observed by Ludwig and Molmenti, Lionello and Adolfo Venturi. Collobi referred to this period as "periodo delle creature assonnate" for their "fisionomie volutamente eguagliate e composte".

This panel is the first work by Bastiani that we can date using documentary evidence. Initially, it was believed to be painted in a later period of Bastiani's career, around 1490, by Crowe-Cavalcaselle, Ludwig-Paoletti and Ludwig-Molmenti ("seconda maniera di Lazzaro", p. 24). Testi (p. 727) believed it was even later, between 1490 and 1500. The Venturis, however, believed the period of execution to be during the 1480s, having compared the work with the other two Bastiani's dated works. Adolfo Venturi considered it as being contemporary with the Murano *lunette*. Finally, for Longhi, it was a relatively youthful work (1995, p. 444). Thanks to Gallo's extensive archival research, it was discovered that the painting was commissioned by Balbi in his final will, written in 1478. The document has provided a valuable indication for the dating of the panel. In the will Balbi specifically requested a "palla" depicting the *Nativity* to be placed on his altar. Balbi's death occurred in April 1480 as indicated on his tomb slab (Cicogna, 1758) and owing to a footnote in his will, 1480 has been considered by many scholars to be the year of execution of the altarpiece. Though this date only provides a *post quem* date for the realisation of the painting (Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 56). However, a clause ignored by Gallo but reported by Sartor (1997, p. 43) confirms the execution in 1480, because Balbi explicitly requested that the painting and his burial had to be completed within six months of his departure, therefore by October 1480.

The scholars who have written about this work pointed out various influences: the Vivarinis in the stiff draperies (Collobi) and in the faces (close to Bartolomeo Vivarini according to Van Marle); Jacopo Bellini in the landscape

and basic composition scheme (A. Venturi, Collobi), Gentile Bellini (Boskovits), Giovanni Bellini in composition and general atmosphere (Dal Pozzolo).

Further images



Fig. 226. L. Bastiani, *Nativity, Venice*, Gallerie dell'Accademia, 1480. Detail a) before, b-c) during, d) after the 1995 restoration treatment.



Fig. 227. Bastiani's fingerprint in the sky.



Fig. 228. Verso of the painting: a) cradle before, b) reinforced cradle after 1995 conservation treatment, c) two horizontal crossbeams attached in 2001 conservation treatment, d) wooden support framework with four crossbeams applied in 2009 conservation treatment.

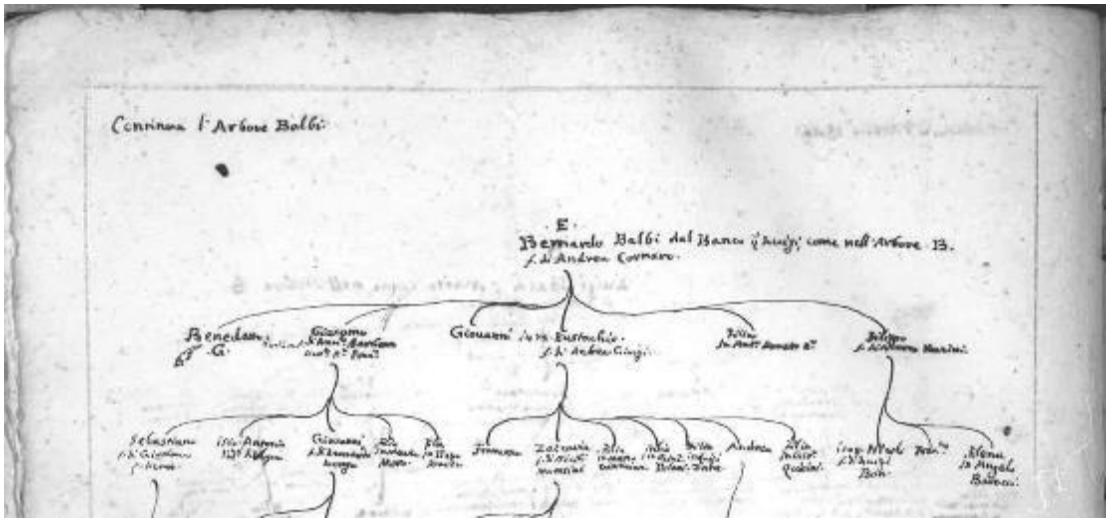


Fig. 229. G. A. Capellari Vivaro, *Campidoglio Veneto*, 1741. BMVe, Codd. It. VII, 15 (=8304), f. 81r – Eustachio Balbi's family tree.



Fig. 230. J. Bellini, *Nativity*, London, British Museum, 1440-1470 (Folio 99 *recto*).



Fig. 231. L. Boldrini, *Nativity*, Venice, Museo Correr, 1490 c.



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Number: AP58

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Offering of the Relic of the Cross to the Members of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista*

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia (acquired in 1820, after the Napoleonic suppressions; inv. n. 377)

Date: 1494 c.

Material and dimensions: canvas, 324 x 441 cm

Technique: tempera/oil

Provenance: Venice, Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, Sala della Croce or Sala dell'Albergo.

Past exhibitions: *Venezia: la tutela per immagini. Un caso esemplare dagli archivi della Fototeca Nazionale* (Roma, Complesso Monumentale di San Michele a Ripa, ex Chiesa delle Zitelle, 2005-2006) [exhibition showing archive photographs of the painting].

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1560; 1766; 1784, Mattio Zais; 1826, Gaetano Astolfoni; 1959, Mauro Pellicioli (Moschini, 1960, pp. 353-354, 365); 1992, Ottorino Nonfarmale (Restoration report; Nepi Sciré, 1998, p. 200).

In the catalogue entry of 1955, Moschini Marconi recorded all the old restorations performed on the paintings of the cycle (pp. 57-58). When the *teleri* were still in the Scuola, two conservation treatments had been carried out, one in 1560 and the other in 1784. In the first case a cleaning procedure was performed, in order to remove the dirt on the darkened surface of the artworks. In the second, the canvases had been relined. It also appears that in 1766 Corner, who at that time was "inquisitore e revisore sopra le Scuole", committed to the conservation of the cycle. This piece of information, however, is quite generic and we do not know what kind of conservation procedure had been done. Before being moved to the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Moschini (1815, II/2, p. 496-497) recorded that Bastiani's *telero* was more damaged than other paintings. In 1826, when the work was already in the museum and prior to exhibiting it, Gaetano Astolfoni restored it (Moschini, 1960, p. 354). In 1930s, however, the painting was already in a ruined state, with "lavature brucianti" and clearly visible restored areas, as reported by Fogolari (1932, p. 284). A new conservation procedure was carried out by Pellicioli in 1959. The canvas was once more relined. During this treatment the underdrawing of the composition, executed by brush, emerged from the *verso* of the support, especially where the preparatory ground had become more thinned. Pellicioli removed old overpainting that had altered the appearance of the picture in the sky and in the lower corners. The dark overpainting in this latter area covered the half-length figures painted here. Finally, the last conservation treatment was performed by Ottorino Nonfarmale in 1992 (Nepi Sciré, 1998, p. 200).

Bibliography:

Sansovino, 1581, p. 101r; *Miracoli della Croce…*, 1590, s.p.; Ridolfi, 1648, ed. 1914, I, p. 49; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 284; Boschini, 1664, p. 292; Boschini, 1674, p. 37 (*Sestier di San Polo*); Pacifico, 1697, p. 483; Martinelli,

1705, pp. 376; Braccioli, 1712, p. 156; Zanetti, 1733, p. 293; Piacenza, 1768, p. 575-576; Zanetti, 1771, p. 41; Dionisi Capitanio, 1787, pp. 14-15; Moschini, 1815, II/2 pp. 496-497; Zanotto, 1856, pp. 533-534; *Catalogo…*, 1858, p. 36 (n. 24); *Catalogo…*, 1862, p. 43 (n. 550); *Catalogo…*, 1863, p. 43 (n. 550); Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 218-2019 (note 6); *Catalogo…*, 1879, p. 41 (n. 550); Della Rovere, 1888 c., p. 91 (n. 24); Botti, 1891, p. 239 (n. 24); Conti, 1895, p. 162; Urbani de Gheldof, 1895, pp. 5, 15, 16, 19, 26; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 279; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 12; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 22; L. Venturi, 1907, pp. 280-281; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 221 (note 2); Serra, 1914, p. 162 (n. 561); A. Venturi, 1915, p. 390-391; Lorenzetti, 1929, pp. 12, 51-54; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 134; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Fogolari, 1932, p. 284; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 178; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 43, note 23; *Le Gallerie…*, 1949, p. 15 (n. 561); Moschini-Marconi, 1955, pp. 56-58 (n. 56); Berenson, 1957, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, p. 27; Moschini, 1960, pp. 353-354, 365; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Mason-Rinaldi, 1978, p. 293-294; Ballarin, 1979, pp. 237-238 (note 1); Bernasconi, 1981, pp. 198-202; *Le Scuole…*, 1981, p. 59; Nepi Scirè-Valcanover, 1985, p. 84; Lucco, 1987, I, p. 201; Fortini Brown, 1988, pp. 129-142, 285; Humfrey, 1990, p. 733; Lucco, 1990, I, p. 316; Longhi, 1995, p. 444; Casu, 1996, p. 73; *Gallerie dell'Accademia…*, 1998, p. 200; *Venezia: la tutela…*, 2005, pp. 118-119, 121; Pericolo, 2015, pp. 139-145.

This large canvas was originally part of the cycle of *teleri* that decorated the *Sala della Croce*, or *Sala dell'Albergo*, of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, in Venice. Since the Scuola was in possession of the Relic of the True Cross, the cycle was dedicated to the miracles of this holy relic. The late 15th century cycle replaced a previous one that had been lost. As recorded by Fortini Brown (1986, p. 60), a small booklet (an *incunabulum*) was printed between 1490 and 1506, recounting the history of the relic, from its donation to the confraternity in 1369, to the miracles that occurred from that moment onwards (until 1480). In 1590 the Scuola published a revised and updated text (*Miracoli della Croce*) that also included, for each miracle described, the artist that painted the corresponding canvas and the year of execution. To realise this

enormous undertaking, several important masters active in Venice in the second half of the 15th century were called to execute one or more canvases. The artists were Gentile Bellini and Vittore Carpaccio, but also Giovanni Mansueti, Benedetto Diana, Lazzaro Bastiani, and, according to the sources, also Pietro Perugino (unfortunately his canvas was lost, probably during the fire of 1567, and was substituted in 1588 by a painting by Andrea Vicentino. Sansovino also mentioned Giovanni Bonconsiglio, said Marescalco, (but he probably misidentified a work by Perugino), making a total of nine canvases (for an overview of the *teleri* and related general bibliography, please refer to: Fortini Brown, 1988, pp. 282-286).

Identified by all the ancient authors since Sansovino (1581) as Lazzaro Bastiani's, the authorship of this painting has never been questioned. In some cases, the sources ascribed to Lazzaro another work of the cycle too, which is today unanimously identified as Giovanni Mansueti's *Miraculous Healing of the Daughter of Benvegnudo da San Polo* (Cat. RP14).

The subject of Bastiani's *telero* is not one of the miracles attributed to the relic, but the moment the relic was donated to the Scuola by Philip de Mézières. The main aim of the painting, thus, "was to establish the provenance and document the legitimate ownership of the relic" (Fortini Brown, 1988, p. 139). The story of this crucial event is narrated in the 15th century *incunabulum* and in the 1590 pamphlet. The relic was received following a deathbed request of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Philip de Mézières, the Grand Chancellor of Cyprus, who had heard the fame of the Scuole in Venice, and especially of that devoted to Saint John the Evangelist, decided to donate his precious gift to the Scuola.

Bastiani set the episode in the neighbourhood of the confraternity building, specifically outside the Church of San Giovanni Evangelista. The core of the scene, however, takes place inside the church, at the high altar, where the Guardian Grande of the Scuola, Andrea Vendramin, receives the relic from Philip de Mézières. The two men are flanked by two symmetrical rows of witnesses. The balanced disposition of the confraternity members participating to the event continues outside the church, under the classical

porch, and into the courtyard in front of the building. It is worth mentioning that the old man behind the parapet where a lute is placed on the lower left side of the picture has been identified as the German lutenist Nicolò Sconvelt, who became a member of the Scuola in 1482 (Glixon, 1983, p. 17; Blackburn, 2015, pp. 37-38) Bastiani's characteristic central perspective is further emphasized by the disposition of the figures along the perspective lines (traced on the pavement) and the positioning of the two main protagonists just below the vanishing point. On the left side the meetinghouse of the Scuola is depicted foreshortened and, in the background, a marble screen with an eagle, the symbol of the confraternity, and the angels are visible – realised by Pietro Lombardo between 1478 and 1481 – and separate the urban space from the Scuola courtyard. Bastiani's canvas, therefore, is a useful visual document that shows the church and the Scuola buildings at the end of the 15th century, before the renovation works that modified their appearance in the following centuries (Pignatti, 1981, pp. 48-50). The bass-relief and the frescoes on the walls on the right that show Bastiani's peculiar interest and desire to depict the late Gothic pictures that were still visible on Venetian buildings at that time (Casu, 1996, p. 73. See also the *teleri* for the Scuola di San Girolamo). It is worth noticing that the pose of the sculpture of the Evangelist Luke on the right side of the external *pontile* (rood screen) of the porch is copied in Bastiani's mosaic portraying *Saint Sergius* in the Basilica of San Marco (Cat. AM07).

According to historic sources (Sansovino, 1581; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663; Boschini, 1664; Boschini, 1674; Pacifico, 1697; Martinelli, 1705; Braccioli, 1712; Zanetti, 1733; Piacenza-Baldinucci, 1768) the painting was on display on the wall to the left of the altar (North wall). Down the years, the Scuola was refurbished several times, renovating the rooms and the general appearance of the building according to the current style of the various artistic periods (regarding the works that occurred in the Scuola, please see: Pignatti, 1981, pp. 48-50). Urbani de Gheltof (1895, pp. 18-19) recorded that in 1568, owing to the renovation of the altar of the Sala della Croce, Bastiani's *telero* and two other canvases by Gentile Bellini and Giovanni Mansueti were removed from the room and in 1594 (he mistakenly reported 1694) they were relocated in

the Sala Maggiore, with the new *teleri* executed by Domenico Tintoretto, Sante Peranda and Andrea Vicentino that replaced the old cycle by Jacopo Bellini (Lorenzetti, 1929, p. 52). After the major refurbishment of the Sala Maggiore that occurred in the 18th century, both Zanetti (1771, p. 41) and Dionisi (1787, pp. 13-15) reported that Bastiani's painting (along with Bellini's and Mansueti's) was on display in this room, specifically on the wall with the windows.

After the Napoleonic suppressions (1806) the confraternity was abolished, and its artworks became a state-owned property (while the building became a state depository). The canvases of the *Stories of the True Cross* were chosen to enter the Gallerie dell'Accademia collection but not taken into the museum until 1820 (Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 57. Indeed, Giannantonio Moschini recorded the paintings still being in the Scuola in 1815, pp. 495-500, 504-505). They were exposed as a uniform cycle in a dedicated room only after the rearrangement of the collection promoted by Cantalamessa in 1895 (Conti, 1895, p. 162-165).

From Crowe and Cavalcaselle onwards, most of the scholars that discussed Bastiani's *telero* dated it in the late 15th century, pointing out affinities with Gentile Bellini (who probably most influenced Bastiani here) and Carpaccio's narrative canvases of the same cycle (Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1872, pp. 218-219; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 279; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 22; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 280; A. Venturi, 1915, pp. 390-391; Vavalà, 1931, p. 134; Van Marle, 1490, p. 178; Collobi, 1939, p. 43). Only in Fogolari's opinion, did Bastiani follow Jacopo Bellini's manner here (1932, p. 284).

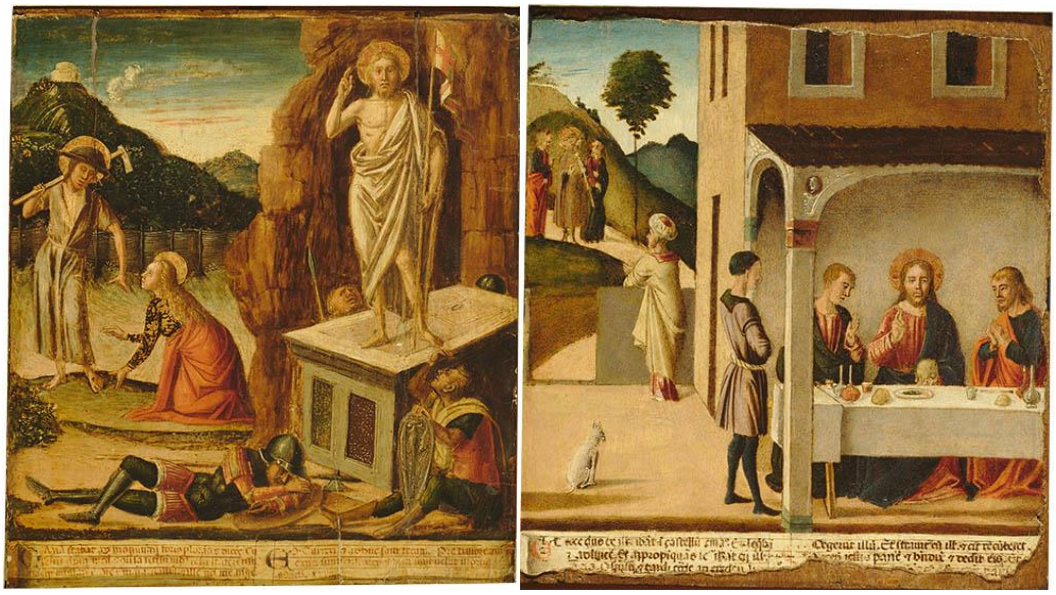
Concerning the period of execution, as already stated, most art historians placed it in the last twenty years of the 15th century: in the 1490s for Paoletti and Ludwig (1900, p. 279) and Van Marle (1936, p. 178), between 1486 and 1500 for Ludwig and Molmenti (1906, p. 22), shortly before 1500 for Lionello Venturi (1907, p. 280) and Arslan (1965, p. 168), in the 1480s for Collobi (1939, p. 43), though in the early years of 1500 for Longhi (oral opinion reported by Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 58).

The pamphlet published in 1590 recorded that Bastiani painted the canvas in 1494. This date was accepted by Moschini Marconi (1955, p. 58). In 1978 Stefania Mason Rinaldi delayed the date of realisation of the painting to at least 1496 on the evidence of an archival document written in November 1495 (the document and reasoning was published also by Ballarin, 1979, pp. 252-353 [note 1]). The document recorded that, owing to the heightening of the building, the Scuola requested a new cycle of narrative paintings to decorate the walls ("[…] et pero volendo far alguna bella historia sopra et coprir dicto muro […]"). Mason Rinaldi associated this commission with the initiation of the cycle in the Sala della Croce, as she believed the heightened room was the Sala della Croce. In 1981 Bernasconi replied to Mason Rinaldi's article by citing another document concerning the same request. This new document specified that the new paintings were intended to go above existing paintings, in order to fill the void/space created by the raised ceiling and given the huge dimensions of the teleri of the *Miracles of the True Cross*, they could hardly have been conceived for this aim. In addition, the archival document also recorded that this new cycle was going to be placed in the room called "sala". The Sala della Croce was often referred to as "Albergo", while the term "sala" was often used to indicate the Sala Maggiore. Bernasconi, therefore, inferred that the commission of the "belle istorie" in 1495 was for the Sala Maggiore, which was the room previously heightened. In support of this conclusion, Bernasconi observed that in Bastiani's canvas the building on the left foreground is the part of the Scuola housing the Sala Maggiore that was heightened. Here, indeed, it is evident that, above the gothic windows, there is an additional section, clearly divided from the lower floors, lighter in colour and with round windows. Finally, Bernasconi mentioned three other archival records reporting works in the Scuola building undertaken in 1491, 1492 and in 1493, albeit that they do not report any specific request for paintings to embellish the room of the Sala della Croce. From these documents it is apparent that between 1491 and the early 1493 works on the ceiling of the "Albergo" (Sala della Croce) had been undertaken, while shortly after it was established that also the "Sala" (Sala Maggiore) would have been raised in height. Regarding

this last project, Bernasconi (pp. 199-200) recorded a petition of the Council of Ten, approved in 1493, that authorised the works in the "Sala", but also defined that part of the income had to be used to pay for works on the "Albergo". From this last information, Bernasconi stated that "since the work in the 'Albergo' was seen as providing an appropriate setting to honour the Relic of the Cross, it would seem reasonable that a cycle of paintings recording the miracles of that relic should have been conceived as an integral part of the decoration of the room" (p. 200). In conclusion, as far as the chronology of the cycle for the Sala della Croce is concerned, the abovementioned reasons and explanations by Bernasconi relate satisfactorily to the date of 1494 given to four *teleri*, among which there is Bastiani's, in the 1590 pamphlet.

Further bibliography:

Glixon, 1983, p. 17; Blackburn, 2015, pp. 37-38.



Number: AP59

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Resurrection and Noli me Tangere*; *Christ and the Disciples on the Road to Emmaus and the Supper at Emmaus*

Location: Venice, (Italy) Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 560, 565)

Date: 1465-1470

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 31 x 27 cm (*Resurrection and Noli me Tangere*), 29 x 27 cm (*Christ and the disciples on the road to Emmaus and Supper at Emmaus*).

Inscription:

Resurrection and Noli me tangere: "MARIA STABAT AD MONUMENTUM FORIS PLORANS ET DICENS TU/ LERUNT DOMINUM MEUM CONVERSA RETRURSUM VIDIT IESUM STANTEM (...)/ (...) QUI MARIA: RABBI ET ILLE: NOLI ME TANGERE/ (...)/ / ET SURREXIT ET (...) PRE TIMORE AUTEM/ EIUS EXTERRITI SUNT CUSTODES ET FACTI SUNT VELUT MORTUI/ HACTENUS XXXIII" (cfr. Giovanni 20, 11-17 and Matteo, 28, 4). On a cartouche in the lower margin of the painting, written in red pigment and black pigment for the capital letters.

Christ and the disciples on the road to Emmaus and Supper at Emmaus: "ET ECCE DUE EX ILLIS IBANT IN CASTELLUM EMAUS ET LOQUEB / ANTUR AD INVICEM. ET APPROPINQUANS IESUS IBAT CUM ILLIS / (ET IPSE DIXIT AD

EOS:) STULTI ET TARDI CORDE (AD CREDENDUM) // ET COEGERUNT ILLUM. ET INTRAVIT CUM ILLIS. ET CITUS RECUMBERET: (ACCEPIT) IESUS PANEM ET BENEDIXIT ET DEDIT EIS (…)" (cfr. Luca 24, 13-30). On a cartouche in the lower margin of the painting, written in black pigment and red pigment for the capital letters, in Gothic font.

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Venice, Girolamo Ascanio Molin collection (until 1816); Venice, Regie Gallerie di Venezia (1816-1932); Murano (Venice), storaged in Museo Vetrario di Murano (1932); Venice, storaged in Museo Civico Correr

Past exhibitions: *Christ and the Disciples on the Road to Emmaus and the Supper at Emmaus*: *Ritrovarsi a Emmaus* (Padova, 1997).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

Resurrection and Noli me tangere: between 1954, Antonio Lazzarini (Restoration report; V. Moschini, 1957, p. 81).

Christ and the disciples on the road to Emmaus and Supper at Emmaus: between 1954, Antonio Lazzarini (Restoration report; V. Moschini, 1957, p. 81); 1997, Alfeo Michieletto (*Restoration report*).

In 1950s the general condition of both paintings was poor, with cracks and inpainting and overpainting that affected the visual appearance (for example, the cartouche in the *Supper at Emmaus* was completely covered with a dark pigment). The old, retouched layers had then been removed, showing the original painted surface, which was rather abraded. A movable cradle was applied on the back of both panels to reinforce the support and to preserve the paint surface from further cracks. In the 1997 restoration account of the *Supper at Emmaus*, the restorer pointed out the bad conservation status of the support. On the paint surface he reported new cracks, numerous areas of inpainting, and the yellowish appearance due to the old superficial varnish layer. During the restoration treatment, the paint surface was cleaned, the *lacunae* were stuccoed and retouched with watercolours, and the cracks were reinforced with resin. Today the general condition of the panels is fair, but it is strongly advised that the paintings are conserved in conditions of stable temperature and humidity to avoid further cracks. The infrared reflectography

analysis highlighted the old restoration treatments, as retouched areas are evident, especially in the *Supper at Emmaus* scene, where a big lacuna (revealed during 1954 conservation procedure) is visible above Christ's head. Vertical cracks are present in both panels.

Bibliography:

Catalogo…, 1887, p. 89; Botti, 1891, p. 101; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 37; Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 51-52 (n. 50 a/b); V. Moschini, 1957, p. 81; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 27; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Volpe, 1983, p. 56; Iseppi, 1986, pp. 36-40; M. Boskovits, 1992, p. 24, 27; Casu, 1996, pp. 64-65, 77-78 (notes 30-33); Sartor, 1997, p. 40, 51 (note 12); de Manincor, 2020, pp. 109-123.

The *Resurrection and Noli me tangere*, and the *Christ and the disciples on the road to Emmaus and Supper at Emmaus* are two small wooden panels which are part of the Gallerie dell'Accademia collection.

Each panel represents two subsequent moments of the same event, concerning two appearances by Jesus following his resurrection. In *Resurrection and Noli Me Tangere*, in the foreground, on the right, the triumphant Christ stands on the marble sarcophagus, holding the white banner with the red cross, and rising over four Roman soldiers, one laying asleep, and the others awakening and observing the event with surprise. A rocky brown background works as a frame to the scene, enhancing the bright figure of Jesus, and separating this scene from the one to its left. On the left side, slightly at a distance, Mary Magdalen recognizes the arisen Jesus, dressed as a gardener, following his resurrection. The exact moment when she tries to touch him is depicted. She kneels and reaches out her hands towards him, but he stops her, saying that she cannot touch him ("Noli me tangere"), as he has not yet ascended to heaven. A wooden fence and a row of trees divides the episode in the foreground from the hilly landscape in the background, where there is a fortress on top of the hill on the left. The pinkish colour of the clouds indicates the scenes are taking place at dawn.

In the second panel, Christ joins two disciples, who do not recognize him, and they walk together to the city of Emmaus. Here the narration of the episode begins in the background, where the three men, portrayed as pilgrims, are depicted in the distance on the left, as they approach the city. On the right and in the foreground, again the principal event of this biblical episode is depicted, the supper at Emmaus. The scene is set outside, under a roof, and the exact moment when Jesus reveals himself to the disciples is illustrated in the breaking of bread, while the innkeeper looks on, apparently oblivious to the event. A standing man in three-quarter profile, leaning on a small wall that separates/divides the inn in Emmaus from the landscape, but turned towards the approaching pilgrims, is the link between these subsequent events. Behind him, a sitting dog observes the entire episode from the left corner. In the lower part of the frame in both panels, there are Latin inscriptions describing the portrayed episodes, probably a request of the commissioner of the works, who, to date is unknown. This presentation with a central image and a brief explanatory text can be compared to the visual feel of a *Biblia Pauperum*, as suggested by Casu (1996, p. 65), or to a reversed representation of miniatures in liturgical books, in which images are bigger and more illustrative than the written text, as pointed out by Mariani Canova and Spiazzi (1997, p. 121).

The two panels entered the Gallerie dell'Accademia collection in 1816, as a bequest of Girolamo Ascanio Molin. Initially, the paintings were considered as separate works and ascribed to different artists, both in the Molin collection and then in the 1870 Gallerie dell'Accademia *Inventario*. The *Resurrection and Noli Me Tangere* was referred to Girolamo Mocetto in the catalogue of Molin collection, and then to "Scuola di Giotto, forse Nicolò Semitercolo" in the *Inventario*. The *Supper at Emmaus* was accepted to be a painting by Bernardino da Siena. For the first time, in 1887 *Catalogo delle RR. Gallerie di Venezia* (1887, p. 89) the small panels were recognized to be part of the same sequence and were mentioned as in the "Manner of Carpaccio". This attribution was then repeated in 1891 catalogue by Botti (1891, p. 101). In later museum catalogues, and until mid-1950's, the paintings hadn't been mentioned. In the complex attempt to reconstruct Lazzaro Bastiani's early career and influences,

as part of a comprehensive study dedicated to the artist published in *Critica d'Arte* in 1939, Licia Collobi-Ragghianti proposed the attribution to Bastiani for both paintings and a dating of slightly later than 1460 (Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939-1940, p. 37). Sandra Moschini-Marconi accepted Collobi's suggestion, in 1955 *Gallerie dell'Accademia Catalogue*, presented the paintings as part of a unique series to which further panels with similar biblical episodes could possibly be added (1955, pp. 51-52). She underlined, moreover, the miniature characteristics of the artworks, which are evident in other paintings attributed to the artist in the same period, e.g., the small *Pietà* in Poldi Pezzoli Museum, Milan; or from a slightly later date, in the big panels *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well* and *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, for example. In the short entry of the 1983 exhibition *Early Italian Paintings and Works of Art: 1300-1480* catalogue, Carlo Volpe briefly outlined his theory regarding the chronology of Bastiani's early output (1983, p. 56). He considered the two *Stories from the Life of Christ* in the Venetian museum, Bastiani's interpretation of Giovanni Bellini's manner before 1460. In particular, he compared Bastiani's panels with a *paliotto* representing *Stories from the Life of Christ and Saints*, which he considered to be executed by the young Giambellino at the beginning of 1450's (Volpe, 1978, pp. 56-60; Cavanna reconstructed the *paliotto* conservative story and its iconographical interpretation in: Cavanna, 2000, pp. 97-113 and Cavanna, 2003, pp. 36-45). It is important to note that the *paliotto* was already attributed to Antonio Vivarini at the beginning of 1460's by Longhi, who also linked the artwork to Bastiani's production by stating that even though the panels recall "ricordi dal Bellini giovane, soprattutto negli sfondi […] il Vivarini riduce le invenzioni nuove a uno schema più monastico e ortodosso che servirà subito a Lazzaro Bastiani per soddisfare i gusti delle sue clientele provinciali e bigotte" (Longhi, 1946, p. 56 [n. 45]). Volpe also suggested adding two other panels in private collections to Bastiani's small panels in Venice, but specified neither the subjects, nor the exact locations. Three years after Volpe's catalogue entry, in 1986, this proposal was examined further by Luigi Iseppi, who discussed the early stages of Bastiani's career and the artistic relationship with the young Giambellino.

On the suggestion of Volpe, the author focused his attention on our panels, and on two other small paintings representing the *Deposition and Descent into Limbo* and the *Christ and the three Marys and Ascension*, both in private collections (at that time respectively in Milan and Bologna). The four paintings are considered to be part of the same series and assigned to Bastiani's early catalogue, between 1450 and 1455. This proposal is supported by stylistic/formal comparison with the previously mentioned *paliotto* attributed to the young Bellini by Volpe (Iseppi, 1986, pp. 36-40). Boskovits assigned the four paintings, together with the *Saint Jerome in His Study and Donor* (Museo Diocesano, Monopoli) to the 1460s, a period "in which Bastiani shows an increasing concern to register, with fidelity and subtle intelligence, the calm passage of time in a luminous and well-ordered world" (Boskovits, 1992, p. 27). A late dating for the *paliotto*, after 1975, was suggested by Sartor, who believes Bastiani embraced Giovanni Bellini's influence in a later phase of his career (Sartor, 1997, p. 51). In 1996 in his essay focussing on "Lazzaro Bastiani: la produzione giovanile e della prima maturità", Stefano Casu accepted Iseppi's assumption of a unique artwork, adding the identification of the central panel, twice the size of the others, representing the *Crucifixion* (the location of the panel is unknown. The author found only an image in Fondo Fiocco in the photographic archive of Fondazione Cini, in Venice. The image is reproduced in Casu's essay). Casu dates the production of the panels at the beginning of the 1460s in relation with the typology of the altar frontal produced in Venice in that period (e.g. Antonio Vivarini's *Polyptych with Stories of the Passion*, once in Corpus Domini, now in the Galleria Franchetti, Ca' d'Oro, Venice), with the naturalism of Giovanni Bellini, already present in the altar frontal studied by Volpe, and with the bright colours derived from Bartolomeo Vivarini's vestments (Casu, 1996, pp. 64-65). Moreover, in the *Resurrection* episode scene an echo of the same scene in the *paliotto* the scholars ascribed to Bellini is evident, particularly in the stupefied and dazzled soldier, portrayed in the act of looking up, covering his eyes with his hand (*Fig. 232*). This figure is also present in the same scene of Mantegna's *predella* of San Zeno altarpiece (1457-1459. *Fig. 233*). It is worth remembering that Collobi-Ragghianti also

attributed to Bastiani an embroidered *antependium* with *Scenes from the Passion of Christ*, once located in the Varenius collection, Stockholm, which was believed to be executed on the basis of Mantegna's design (Kurth, 1932, pp. 344-347; in her monographic work on Mantegna, Erica Tietze-Conrat mentioned the tapestry, stating that in her opinion "it shows only a slight dependence on Mantegna", but not mentioning the name of Bastiani as possible artist. Tietze-Conrat, 1955, p. 248). The art historian dated the tapestry around 1460 and pointed out the relationship with the scenes painted by Jacopo Bellini in his *predella* for the Gattamelata altarpiece, as well as stylistic similarities with our Venice panels, underlining a certain continuity in Bastiani's production throughout his early career (Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939-40, p. 37).

Even though the scholars agreed in ascribing to Giovanni Bellini the paliotto taken as reference to date Bastiani's altar frontal, it must be pointed out that in 1997, the central panel with the *Nativity* episode was dubitatively given to Giovanni by Andrea De Marchi, who suggested comparisons with Alvise Vivarini's early works (De Marchi, 1997, p. 51). This observation was cautiously emphasised also by Fossaluzza (2012, p. 81), while in the latest entry of the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* on Alvise Vivarini, Russo ascribed the altar frontal to the young Alvise in the second half of 1460s, in a phase of his young career in which he was influenced by Mantegna and Bellini, and in which he also showed Zoppo's suggestions (Russo, 2020b, pp. 48-49). Confirming the abovementioned observations and comparisons, in light of this new attribution to Alvise, I would suggest to posticipate the execution of Bastiani's paliotto to 1465-1470, when he (as the young Alvise) was still under the Vivarinis' influence as far as the figurative and compositional sources are concerned but was also gradually increasing his concern for light effects by studying Bellini's lesson.

Further bibliography:

Kurth, 1932, pp. 344-347; Longhi, 1946, p. 56 (n. 45); E. Tietze-Conrat, 1955, p. 248; Volpe, 1978, pp. 56-60; *Incontrarsi a Emmaus*, 1997; De Marchi, 1997,

p. 51; Cavanna, 2000/2001, pp. 97-113; Cavanna, 2003, pp. 36-45; Fossaluzza, 2012, p. 81; Russo, 2020b, pp. 48-49.

Further images



Fig. 232. A. Vivarini, *Resurrection*, private collection, unknown.



Fig. 233. A. Mantegna, *Resurrection*, 1457-59, Tours, Musée des Beaux-Arts.



Number: AP60

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Anthony of Padua in the Nut Tree with Saint Bonaventure and the Blessed Luca Belludi*

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia (from the 4th of April 1862, inv. n. 275)

Date: 1480-1482

Material and dimensions: willow panel, 234 x 140 cm

Inscription: "LAZARVS·BASTIANVS / P", on the cartouche (*cartellino*) attached on the lower part of the walnut tree trunk.

Technique: egg tempera

Provenance: Venice, Scuola di Sant'Antonio at the Frari, altar of the *Scuola* di Sant'Antonio, (until 1806); Venice, state-owned depository in church of San

Giovanni Evangelista; Venice, state-owned depository in Palazzo Ducale; Venice, state-owned depository in church of San Giuliano (from 1854 – until 1862).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1891, Guglielmo Botti (Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 54); 1999-2000, Valentina Piovan (V. Piovan, *Restoration report, n. 1071*, 1999-2000).

In 1871, Crowe and Cavalcaselle had already described the painting surface as "dimmed" (1871, p. 218 [note 3]). The report of the last restoration treatment, carried out on the painting in 1999-2000, pointed out the ruined condition of the artwork. The supporting structure was not adequate, its instability leading to cracks and micro and macro flaking in the paint. An old aggressive cleaning had damaged the surface, causing abrasions and areas of loss of the original pigment layer. These which had been repainted in oil medium (easy to recognize because of the typical oil medium *craquelure*), e.g., on the saints, and on the trunk and the leaves of the tree. Damage to the painted surface and retouched areas that altered the figures of the saints were also reported by Paoletti in 1929 (p. 126). Finally, a superficial, thick, brownish-yellow varnish layer affected the overall visual appearance. The bad conservation status of the painting was probably due to a late 19th century restoration treatment performed by Botti in 1891 (Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 54). Any further ancient restoration work carried out on this painting is not recorded. In the latest restoration work, the old framing was replaced with a new one, to improve the stability of the support. The varnish layer was removed, and the early repainting in oil was cleaned and retouched with watercolours. It is worth pointing out that during IR Reflectography analysis it was discovered that an old repainting of saint Bonaventura's face changed his appearance, turning him to profile instead of in a three-quarter view. The face was then repainted in the original position (*Fig. 234*). Two samples were taken and analysed in cross-section to investigate the original stratigraphy of the painting. The preparatory ground is made of a typical thick yellow-brownish layer of *gesso e colla*, covered with an additional priming layer of animal glue, to prevent the absorption of the paint by the ground. Furthermore, a dark red

canvas layer (*teletta d'incamottatura*) was glued over the joints of the wood planks, to prevent possible fractures on the painting layer along the joints. This practice was not uncommon in Bastiani's works, as a similar, red-coloured canvas has also been found in the Accademia Carrara *Coronation of the Virgin* (Poldi, 2010, p. 194). The painting layer, in egg tempera medium, is thin and irregular on the external surface, probably due to the past abrasive cleaning treatment. The pigments identified are: verdigris, lead-tin yellow and white lead in the leaves; red lakes in Saint Bonaventura's vestment; vermillion in the book held by Saint Anthony; azurite in the sky. A superficial thin brown layer containing copper, calcium and potassium in the leaves sample suggests an original copper resinate glazing, this then became altered in colour owing to the reaction with the potassium present in the alkaline solution used in the past aggressive cleaning (probably caustic potash, potassium hydroxide – *soluzione di potassa*). This suggests that originally the colour of the leaves was greener and lighter. Today the overall condition of the painting is not fair.

Bibliography: *Catalogo*, 1863, p. 35 (n. 447); Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 218 (note 3); *Catalogo…*, 1879, p. 33 (n. 447); *Catalogo…*, 1887, p. 153 (n. 71); Della Rovere, 1888 c., p. 64 (n.71); Botti, 1891, pp. 156-157 (n. 69); Conti, 1895, p. 39 (n. 104); Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, pp. 279-280; Paoletti, 1903, p. 43 (n. 104); Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 18-19; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 278; L. Venturi, 1909, p. 21; Borenius, 1912, I, pp. 220-221 (note 1); Serra, 1914, p. 54 (n. 104); A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, pp. 394-396; *Le Regie Gallerie…*, 1924, p. 34 (n. 104); Paoletti, 1929, pp. 125-126; Planiscig, 1929, p. 258; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 134, 139; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Fogolari, 1932, pp. 282-284; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, pp. 188-190; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 44; *Le Gallerie…*, 1949, p. 15 (n. 104); Moschini-Marconi, 1955, pp. 54-55 (n. 54); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Humfrey, 1988, pp. 408-409; Lucco, 1990, II, p. 453; P. Humfrey, 1993, p. 347; Nepi Sciré, 1995, pp. 18-20; Sartor, 1997, pp. 44-45; *Gallerie dell'Accademia…*, 1998, p. 249.
This arched altarpiece portrays Saint Anthony while preaching in the nut tree. The saint, clothed in the religious habit of the Franciscan Order, is seated on a

board supported by the branches. He is represented as a young, beardless man, iconically presented in front view, staring at the observer. His right hand is raised, making an admonishing gesture, while his left holds a closed book with red cover and the white lily stalk, his distinguishing attributes (*Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1962 vol. 2, col. 186). Saint Anthony is flanked by Saint Bonaventure, at his right, and by the Blessed Luca Belludi, at his left, all disposed in a pyramid scheme. The two men are seated on a marble parallelepiped seat placed equidistant from the base of the tree. Behind the tree there is another marble parallelepiped structure supporting the ladder that leans against the trunk. These elements geometrically disposed at the tree sides create a sort of enclosure, dividing the space of this holy event from the background, recalling the fence around the shed in the *Nativity*, of the rear parapet in the Murano *lunett*e or in the *Saint Jerome* in Asolo, both of which had a similar function. Saint Bonaventure, wearing the red cardinal vestments and the *galero*, is looking at Saint Anthony, his right hand is raised, while his left hand holds a closed book. The Blessed Luca Belludi, dressed as a Franciscan monk, is intent on reading a book. The fact that the three figures have a book in their hands underlines Anthony's message, which had been reiterated by Bonaventure, in which he declared the necessity of the study of the sacred texts (Pavone, 1988, p. 52). The panel depicts a specific episode of Saint Anthony's life. When the saint was old and exhausted, he retired to Camposampiero, close to Padua, the home of the nobleman Tiso, his friend. This latter ordered the construction of a cell on a nut tree, where the saint spent much time praying, writing and preaching (*Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1962, vol. 10, col. 161). In the past, however, authors did not properly recognize the subject of the painting, which was generically mentioned as "Three saints" ("Tre santi" in 1863 and 1879 Catalogue), or as "Franciscan family tree" ("Genealogia francescana" in 1887), or even as "Three Franciscan saints" ("Tre santi dell'ordine francescano" in 1891) in Gallerie dell'Accademia catalogues. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (1871, p. 218 [n.3]) erroneously believed the saints were Onuphrius, another dendrite saint (Andergassen, 2016, p. 383 and related bibliography), Jerome, probably for the cardinal vestments (Van Marle

made the same mistake. 1936, p. 188) and Mark. Other authors mistook the Blessed Luca Belludi for Saint Leo (Ludwig-Paoletti, 1900, p. 279; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 18; Borenius, 1912, p. 221 [note 1]) or for friar Roger Bacon (as did Künstle, see Andergassen, 2016, p. 383 [note 17]). The representation of Saint Anthony in the nut tree follows an iconography that evolved during the 13th century. In the beginning the saint alone was depicted in profile while busy writing, according to the *typus* of the evangelist writing the Gospel. From the 14th century the saint began to be portrayed in front view facing forward, sitting at the desk placed in the nut tree, with an open book in front of him and in the act of teaching. Moreover, from this period onwards the scene is enriched with the presence of the audience, in which the figures, as saints connected to Saint Anthony, the nobleman Tiso or other common people are witnessing the event. This iconography spread especially through the circulation of manuscripts with miniatures, woodcut prints and engravings, reliquaries and seals of the Franciscan Order (Andergassen, 2016, pp. 381-386). In addition, Bastiani could have been also inspired by Jacopo Moranzone's wooden statue of the saint carved for the fifteenth-century altar of the confraternity. The background shows Bastiani's characteristic landscape composed of a plain, closed at both sides and in the distance by a circle of hills and mountains with fortresses and castles on top. L. Venturi (1907, p. 278) and Nepi Scirè (1995, p. 18) pointed out similarities with Jacopo Bellini's typology of landscape. The plain is crossed by a river that leads to a walled city on the left. On the right there is a monastery complex, which include the church, the bell tower and other buildings. The façade of the church at the extreme right, behind Luca Belludi, could be a reference to the Walnut Chapel, the sanctuary built in Camposampiero in 1432, in the place where the nut tree once was. Today the sanctuary walls are covered with a sixteenth century cycle of frescoes by Gerolamo dal Santo portraying the miracles performed by Saint Anthony (Cionini Visani, 1964, pp. 37-45), while the apse is embellished with Bonifacio de' Pitati's canvas of about 1536-1537, showing *Saint Anthony preaching in the nut tree*, whose compositional scheme is quite similar to Bastiani's one (Simonetti, 1986, p. 109), even though Bonifacio further developed the historic

event in his artwork, while Bastiani reduced the episode to a *sacra conversazione*, a common subject of Venetian altarpieces at that time (Gasparini, 2012, pp.16-18). Nepi Scirè (1995, p. 18) pointed out that all the elements of the landscape are attributes connected to the Virgin Mary (Battisti, 1991, pp. 9-25), suggesting that the mediation of the Virgin is still necessary to Saint Anthony's preaching. Humfrey (1993, p. 67) pointed out that the tree is "reduced to a kind of identifying attribute", while Collobi (1939-40, p. 44) compared it to a garland. On a cartouche (*cartellino*) fastened to the lower part of the walnut tree trunk are the words "LAZARVS·BASTIANVS / P" that confirm Bastiani's autography (the IR image further confirmed the authenticity of the signature. *Fig. 235*).

The altarpiece, never mentioned by ancient authors, entered the Gallerie dell'Accademia collection on the 4th of April 1862 (Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 55) and was listed in museum's catalogues from 1863 as coming from state-owned repositories ("Dai depositi demaniali". p. 35 [n. 447]). Crowe and Cavalcaselle erroneously reported that the panel was once in the church of San Giuliano, which caused Della Rovere (1888 c., p. 64 [n. 71]) to confuse the saints with "san Iacomo, S. Marco & San Hieronimo" (Saint James, Saint Mark and Saint Jerome) that, according to Sansovino (1581, p. 49r), Bastiani must have painted for this church (the painting is now lost). This error of provenance was then repeated in the 1891 (pp. 156-157 [n. 69]) and 1895 (p. 39 [n. 104]) museum catalogues. The mistake was finally corrected when Ludwig and Paoletti reviewed the old catalogues that reported the painting provenance from the *Scuola* di Sant'Antonio at the Frari. The scholars also suggested that the altarpiece was originally in the church, decorating the altar of the confraternity, and was then transferred to the nearby confraternity building (now house of the Venice National archive. Tassini, 1855, p. 64) at the time of the renovation of the altar in the 17th century (1900, p. 279). From archival research it is known that the *Scuola*, previously in the church of San Simeon Profeta, established at the Frari in 1439, upon approval of the Magnifico Consiglio dei Dieci (*Archivio Sartori, II/2*, 1986, pp. 1841-1842), and obtained the permission to build its own confraternity space in 1444 (*Archivio*

Sartori, II/2, 1986, p. 1844-1845). In 1441, the friars granted the first chapel on the right upon entering the church to the *Scuola* di Sant'Antonio. Here the institution was free to erect its own altar "quanto sontuoso parerà et piaserà a quelli della ditta Scuola", even if the agreement established that the floor had to be composed of white and red stones, the window of the nave (today covered by the Baroque altar) had to be glazed and the round window of the façade had to be made in stone and glass (*Archivio Sartori, II/2*, 1986, p. 1843; Bisson, 2015, pp. 96-97; For further notices on the confraternity see: Bettiolo, 1912, pp. 52-68). In 1663, in his "aggiunte" to Sansovino, Martinioni informs us about the refurbishment of the altar decoration, which was rebuilt in marble ("per finezza di marmi, per dissegno, e per ornamenti di figure, d'intagli, e d'altro, sarà stimatissimo, e memorabile". Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 194). The baroque altar is still visible today. Ludwig and Paoletti hypothesis, which was accepted by all subsequent authors, was, however, only a suggestion, and not supported by further evidence. In 1997 Sartor clarified this issue by pointing to the contract dated the 14th of January 1450 between the offices of the Scuola and "Iacobus marangono q. s. chatarine intaiator de chonfinio sancti salvatoris", who must be identified as the woodcarver Jacopo Moranzone (the contract, as well as other documents concerning the confraternity, are included in a manuscript conserved in Biblioteca Marciana, Venice: G. B. Bertoco, *Le croniche Antiche della Confraternita del Santo nuovamente ritrovate e poste in luce da Gio. Battista Bertoco*, Venezia, 1664. The document is published in *Archivio Sartori, II/2*, 1986, pp. 1849-1857. The contract is on page 1855). According to the agreement, the altar had to be enriched by a carved wooden altarpiece portraying a seated Saint Anthony and other saints ("el santo Antonio suso la nogera sentado suso una bella chariega e die esser de longeza el dito santo sentado pie 4 e mezo". This is the only element of the wooden altar that survived and is still on display today on the baroque altar. *Fig. 236*) and other saints. The payment of 140 ducal gold coins promised to the artist was high (*Archivio Sartori, II/2*, 1986, p. 1855-1856). For Sartor the choice of the carved wooden altarpiece, which had to measure against Donatello's statue of *Saint John the Baptist* on the opposite altar of the *Scuola* dei Fiorentini, and the

high fee paid to Jacopo Moranzone indicate that the confraternity would have not commissioned a painted altarpiece for the same space few years later. Furthermore, in the 17th century the *Scuola* opted for another carved altar when renovating the chapel. For these reasons, Sartor suggested that Bastiani's *pala* was originally requested not for the altar in the church, but for the altar in the nearby *Scuola* building (Sartor, 1997, pp. 44-45). After the Napoleonic decree of the 25th of April 1806, the *Scuola* di Sant'Antonio was suppressed, all its artworks were requisitioned and became a state-owned property (Zorzi, II, 1972, p. 558). Bastiani's panel was relocated in the repository in San Giovanni Evangelista, then in the depository of the Ducal Palace and finally, from 1854 until 1862, in a temporary storage set up in the church of San Giuliano (Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 55). It is after this that Crowe and Cavalcaselle make their mistake concerning the provenance of the painting.

Owing to the lack of documents related to this artwork, the scholars had to propose a date, or a timeframe, for *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree* altarpiece based on stylistic analysis and comparisons with artworks by Bastiani himself and by contemporary painters. The suggested datings include a period of Bastiani's career ranging from the 1470s to around 1490. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (p. 218 [n.3]. Borenius, 1912, pp. 220-221, [note 1]), Adolfo Venturi (1915, pp. 393-396) and Van Marle (1936, pp. 188-189) saw in the painting influences of Alvise Vivarini, especially in the shapes of the figures, hypothesizing a late execution, in the region of 1490, or at least after 1484 (Van Marle). Ludwig and Paoletti (1900, pp. 279-280) and Ludwig and Molmenti (1906, pp. 18-19) anticipated the date to about 1470, during the "fiorente virilità del pittore" (Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 18). Lionello Venturi (1907, p. 278) believed the *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree* was later than the *Saint Veneranda*, which he dated before the ninth decade. Planiscig (1929, p. 258), then followed by Moschini-Marconi (1955, p. 55), Arslan (1965, p. 168) and Nepi Scirè (1995, p. 20), remarked the similarities with Bastiani's *Saint Augustine* and suggested that the two panels were both painted between 1470 and 1480. In Collobi's opinion the artwork must be dated around 1480, slightly before the *Nativity*, because of its closeness to the *Saint Veneranda* altarpiece,

specifically in the spatial construction (also considering Antonello da Messina's influence), where the ladder leaning against the tree has the same function of perspective definition as the artist's stick has in the Corpus Domini altarpiece (1939, p. 44). While Lucco affirmed that for the amplification of the space in the *Saint Anthony* panel, meant that this latter came slightly after the *Nativity* (1990, p. 453). Finally, Humfrey underlined that because Bonaventure is shown without the halo, the altarpiece must predate 1482 (the year of his canonization. *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1963, vol. 3, col. 256), a year *ante quem* the panel must have been executed, but for stylistic reasons it could not have been painted much before, suggesting a timeframe ranging from 1475 and 1482 (1988, pp. 408-409, 420). Moreover, he adds that the altarpiece "should therefore be interpreted not as a celebration of a success, but as a weapon in the intensifying propaganda on behalf of Bonaventure" (Humfrey, 1988, p. 409). Humfrey's suggestion proved to be convincing and Sartor (1997, p. 45) agreed with him, repeating a dating before 1482. However, 1475 seems too early to date the artwork, while I believe that, for the stylistic resemblances already pointed out with the *Saint Veneranda* and the *Nativity*, a dating between 1480 and 1482 could be considered more appropriate.

Further bibliography:

Sansovino, 1581, p. 49r; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 194; Tassini, 1885, p. 64; Bettiolo, 1912, pp. 52-68; *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1962, vol. 2, coll. 161, 186; *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1963, vol. 3, col. 256; Cionini Visani, 1964, pp. 37-45; Zorzi, 1972, II, p. 558; Battisti, 1991, pp. 9-25; Sartori, 1986, II/2, pp. 1841-1845, 1849-1857; Simonetti, 1986, p. 109; Pavone, 1988, p. 52; Poldi, 2010, p. 194; Gasparini, 2012, pp. 16-18; Bisson, 2015, pp. 96-97; Andergassen, 2016, pp. 381-386.

Further images



Fig. 234. Detail of Saint Bonaventure' face: a) before, b) during, c) after restoration treatment, d) infrared reflectography revealing the underdrawing of the face in three-quarter profile.



Fig. 235. Detail of the cartouche with the artist's signature, "LAZARVS·BASTIANVS / P": a) visible light, b) infrared reflectography image.



Fig. 236. J. Moranzone, *Saint Anthony of Padua*, Venice, Basilica di Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, 1450.



Number: AP61

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Veneranda Enthroned*

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 1023)

Date: 1479-1485

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 325 x 218 cm

Technique: oil

Inscription: "LAZARVS BASTIANVS / PINCXIT", on the plinth/rectangular piece of marble above the decorated stool/cylindrical column of the throne, which serves as a *suppedaneum* for the saint.

Provenance: Venice, Church of Corpus Domini, Venice (until 1810); Venice, State repository in the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista (from 1810, until 1838); Vienna, Academy (from 1838, until 1919, n. 53).

Past exhibitions: *Opere d'arte tolte a Venezia nel 1808-1816-1838 restituite dopo la vittoria* (Venice, 1919).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1838-1919, in Vienna Academy (Mauro Pellicioli, *Restoration report, n. 19*, 1940); 1940, Mauro Pellicioli (*Restoration report, n. 19*, 1940); 1980, Gabriella Fazio (*Restoration report, n. 796*, 1980); 1996, Stefano Volpin (*Restoration report, n. 967*, 1996; *Indagini microchimiche e stratigrafiche della pellicola pittorica*, 1996); 2012, Giovanna Menegazzi (*Restoration report, n. 1332*, 2012).

There are no reports of ancient restorations. It is known that the *pala* was in a ruined state after the Napoleonic suppression (in the lists of painting collected in the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista state repository written in 1828 and in 1832, the condition of the altarpiece reported that "Il suo stato non è più felice" and that its preservation was bad. Cfr. Nardin, 2009, pp. 157, 159). When the work was in the Vienna Academy, Crowe and Cavalcaselle confirmed the panel was "in a ruined state" (Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 217). In 1932, when the painting was back in Venice, Fogolari pointed out the damage~~s~~ caused by the "lavature brucianti" (aggressive cleaning) during previous restoration treatments to the *Saint Veneranda* altarpiece and other major works by Bastiani (Fogolari, 1932, p. 284). In 1940, Pellicioli performed major restoration work on the painting. Firstly, he carefully eliminated the old yellow varnishes and removed the altered inpainting, (probably made in Vienna. *Fig. 237*, *Fig. 238*), which he then retouched. Secondly, he reinforced the frame/supporting structure that had been applied in Vienna by adding a couple of battens on the reverse. This was done to avoid raising and flaking the paint (Pellicioli 1940). Later restorations (1980, 1996, 2012) were limited to small maintenance works.

Moreover, in 1996, five samples were collected and analysed in cross-section to investigate the layers' structure and the materials that had been employed, as well as to study Bastiani's artistic technique (Volpin, 1996). His technique

was simple, as he applied only one, or two overlapping pigment layers. Oil has been confirmed as the binding medium. The ground layer is made of *gesso e colla*, and the palette of colours is composed of the typical pigments employed by Venetian artists in the Renaissance period (for comparisons, see: Lazzarini, 1983, pp. 135-144; Poldi, 2010, pp. 190-197). The pigments identified were azurite and lapis lazuli for the blues, and vermilion, and red ochre for the reds. The azurite was mixed with lead white for the light blue colour of the sky. Lapis lazuli and *biacca* were spread *a risparmio* on a layer of azurite pigment mixed with lead white to obtain the blue colour of Saint Veneranda's cloak/vestment, in accordance with a practice common among Venetian artists of that period. Regarding the reds, vermilion was used in Maria Maddalena's Mary Magdalen's cloak, and red ochre mixed with lead white for the skin tones. Finally, it is worth emphasising that aligned carbon particles, found over the preparatory ground, confirmed the presence of the underdrawing, which would have been interesting to compare with the preliminary drawing of the painting which Vasari affirmed he had in his possession (Vasari, 1568).

Bibliography:

Vasari, 1568, ed. cons. 1971, III, pp. 622-623; Sansovino, 1581, p. 62; Ridolfi, 1648, ed. cons. 1914, I, p. 50; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 174; Boschini, 1664, p. 497; Boschini, 1674, pp. 71-72 (Sestier di Cannaregio); Onofri, 1688, p. 165; Pacifico, 1697, p. 344; Martinelli, 1705, pp. 326-327; Braccioli, 1712, p. 122; Zanetti, 1733, p. 425; Piacenza, 1768, I, p. 576; Zanetti, 1771, pp. 41-42; *Della pittura veneziana…* 1797, II, p. 118; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 217; Von Lützow, 1889, pp. 260-261 (n. 53); Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 276; Ludwig, 1901, pp. XII, XXXI; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 10; Logan, 1903, p. 319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 17-18; L. Venturi, 1907, pp. 276-277; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 219, note 2; A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, pp. 392-394; Fiocco, 1919, pp. VI, 28-29 (n. 85); Paoletti, 1929, p. 125; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 134, 140; Berenson, 1932, p. 63; Fogolari, 1932, p. 284; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, pp. 186-188; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 41 (note 19); Moschini-Marconi, 1955, pp. 53-54 (n. 53); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson,

1958, I, p. 27; Longhi, 1934, ed. cons. 1968[2], pp. 97-98 (note 59); *La pittura nel Veneto...*, 1990, II, pp. 462-463; Sartor, 1997, pp. 48-50; Nardin, 2009, pp. 109-164; Zaru, 2013, pp. 28-38; Zaru, 2014, pp. 103-110, 273-274.

The *pala* of *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* is a monumental altarpiece signed LAZARVS BASTIANVS PINCXIT.

The composition is symmetrically balanced around the central axis of the painting. The central fulcrum is represented by the crowned Saint Veneranda, who sits, in a raised position, on an elaborately designed throne with antique monochrome motifs. The saint holds in her right hand a long thin cross, and an open book (probably the Gospels) and the palm branch in her left hand. These Christian symbols are attributes referring to Veneranda's lifetime of preaching and her martyrdom (Réau, 1959, III, pp. 1027-1028; *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, Vol. 10, 1968, col. 328-331; *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, Vol. 12, 1969, col. 1003-1005). The throne has a complex architectural structure. It is composed of a polygonal pedestal decorated with motifs of the battles of sea gods and it rests upon spherical feet. A small column with an antiquarian pattern stands above the base. On top of the column there is a marble parallelepiped, containing the signature of the artist, that serves as a *suppedaneum* for the saint. The lower part of the semi-circular back of the throne is made of dark green marble and the upper part is light marble. Along the lateral side, up to half of the height, two carved pillars reinforce the structure of the throne and partly support the ~~s~~upper structure, whose flat moulding is enriched with four medallions, framing the symbols of the evangelists, and *bucrania*. The richness of the throne's ornamentation recalls the decorative patterns of manuscripts and *incunaboli*, suggesting a direct comparison with/a reminder of Bastiani's activity as miniaturist, as suggested by Zaru, and a particular skill of this artist already observed by Longhi and Quattrini (Longhi, 1968, pp. 97-98; C. Quattrini, 1992, pp. 56-62; Zaru, 2013, p. 31). Furthermore, the decorations of the capitals and of the intradoses might echo/refer to a similar pattern on the frame, since this practice was not uncommon at that time, as can be seen in

Giovanni Bellini's altarpieces in Basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo and in Chiesa di San Giobbe.

Beside the throne there are six female saints, three on each side. These saints were mentioned in Vasari's description of the painting (Vasari, 1568, p. 623), and Boschini identified them as far as has been possible (Boschini, 1664, p. 497; Boschini, 1674, 71-72). On the left, as the painting is viewed there are: Saint Catherine of Alexandria, crowned, standing next to the spiked breaking wheel, and carrying the martyr's palm; Mary Magdalene, with long unbound blonde hair, wearing a red cloak over a blue dress, and holding the pot of ointment with which she anointed Christ's feet; a third saint, behind the former two, is unidentifiable. The right-hand group are made up of: Saint Agnes, depicted with the lamb and the martyr's palm; Saint Lucy, carrying a book and the palm branch. Again, the third saint in the background is unnamed, as she is unrecognizable. The decision to portray these specific saints is not accidental, for two reasons. Firstly, they had to be taken as examples to follow by the nuns of the Corpus Dominis, and secondly, their peculiar characteristics relate them to Saint Veneranda (Sartor, 1997, p. 50). Moreover, Saint Lucy and Saint Agnes are directly involved with the monastery's foundation. The decision to represent Saint Lucy was not only because of the nuns' particular devotion to this saint, but it could also be read as an homage to Lucia Tiepolo, the founder of the church; while Saint Agnes could have been portrayed here to show the nuns' respect to this saint, because on Agnes' feast day, in 1394, pope Bonifacio IX approved the foundation of this Dominican convent (Corner, 1758, pp. 312-317).

On each lateral side of the two groups of saints there are two nuns. On the left, a Dominican nun, whose distinctive features suggest that this is probably a portrait of an actual nun in the monastery (Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 54). On the right, is a nun of the Order of Saint Clare who is holding a small red cross. They can be both identified by their habits: the white hood and the black cloak for the first; the white kerchief, black veil covering the head, and stripped mantle the second. To the sides of the base of the throne, in front of the saints, two angels playing the lute are depicted. A white dove, that has apparently

landed in front of the angel on the left, may be a reference to the Holy Spirit that led Veneranda in her preaching work (Zaru, 2013, p. 33), or may allude to her lifetime devotion to God, until her martyrdom (Sartor, 1997, p. 50). Leaning against the pedestal of the throne there is a painter's stick leaned in perspective, which might refer to Bastiani's efforts in studying the perspective construction throughout his career, as has been noted by Paoletti and Ludwig (1900, p. 276). It may also, perhaps, be an allusion to the stick depicted in Antonello da Messina's *San Sebastiano*, now in the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden (Collobi also noticed an echo to the "principio spaziale di Antonello" here; 1939, p. 41. *Fig. 239*). Ludwig and Molmenti interpreted this peculiar element as a votive offering by the painter ("Curioso particolare: sul primo grado del trono è posta con felice scorcio l'asticella d'appoggio dei pittori, quasi ingenua offerta votiva"; 1906, p. 18). A similar explanation is also given by Tagliapietra, who affirms that the painter stick could represent Bastiani's *ex voto*, like the saints' attributes, which proves the participation, even if as an invisible presence, of the artist in the *Sacra Conversazione* he painted (Tagliapietra, 2015, p. 190). This detail might also underline, however, the importance the artist gives to this altarpiece, as well as to his creativity and freedom of expression, whereby he highlights the painter's possession in the foreground and situates his signature in a central and clearly visible position (Zaru, 2013, pp. 29, 31).

The group is placed under an *aedicula* with coffered ceiling. The outer lateral walls are open and supported by round arches held up by two columns. A *baldacchino*, decorated with a fruit garland, hangs from the centre of the ceiling, exactly above the head of Saint Veneranda. Slightly behind the figures four columns support a rectangular wall that enclose the area of the *aedicula*. This rear wall is organised in two tiers, divided by a painted frame. In the lower tier four standing male saints are portrayed (from left to right there are Saint Jerome, Saint Francis, Saint Bernardino of Siena and Saint Benedict). On each side of the upper tier, there are two medallions showing the half bust of Christ giving the blessing on the left, and the Virgin and infant Jesus on the right, both painted in Byzantine style. It is worth noting that similar medieval

iconographical references were not uncommon in Bastiani's paintings (for comparisons: *The funerals of Saint Jerome* and *The offer of the relic of the Cross*, both in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice), as Bastiani seemed to play the role of mediator between medieval elements and modern "manner" (Merkel, 1994, p. 89).

Behind a dark sheet hung up on the columns, a city wall reveals a glimpse of an urban landscape in the background. The Venetian-style chimney on the roof of the building on the left suggests that the painted city may be Venice.

Today the altarpiece is in the collection of the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, but originally it was in the Church of Corpus Domini. It was on display in the altar dedicated to Saint Veneranda, which was the first altar on the left upon entering the church.

The church and the monastery of Corpus Domini were founded in 1366 by the Benedictine nun Lucia Tiepolo, who was helped financially by the merchant Francesco Rabia. Between 1393 and 1394 the complex was rebuilt and enlarged. This was made possible thanks to funding from the sisters Elisabetta and Andriola Tommasini, obtained through the mediation of their confessor Fra Giovanni de' Dominici. In exchange, Lucia Tiepolo agreed to establish the Dominican Order that was formally approved by the bishop of Caorle in 1394 (Corner, 1758, pp. 312-320; Tassini, 1863, I, pp. 183-184; Nardin, 2009, pp. 109-110; Zaru, 2014, pp. 54-63). The church and the cloister were located in the *sestiere* of Cannaregio, in the northernmost area and near the western end of the Grand Canal (*Fig. 240*). The exterior design of the buildings is depicted in the well-known Jacopo de' Barbari's map of Venice, printed in 1500. For information concerning the internal arrangement of the church/liturgical space, we rely on the chronicle of the convent written by the nun Bartolomea Riccoboni, but also to documents compiled by state officials, or regarding Patriarch's visits (Zaru, 2014, pp. 76-78). The convent was dissolved in 1810 during the Napoleonic suppression of Italian religious orders and the consequent requisition of their property. In the nineteenth century the religious complex was demolished to make room for the construction of Santa

Lucia railway station and its forecourt. The artworks adorning/embellishing the liturgical space have been dispersed.

In 1810, the *Consiglio della fabbrica* of the Church of San Geremia advanced a request for the altarpiece by Bastiani, but Pietro Edwards, who was the official in charge for the works of art coming from the suppressed monasteries and convents, denied this request. In fact, the artwork had already been selected by Edwards himself to be put on display in the founding collection of the Museo di Belle Arti dell'Accademia di Venice that was in the process of being established. Edwards considered the *pala* of Saint Veneranda "la migliore fatica" by Lazzaro Bastiani, thus worthy to be part of the royal collection, whose aim was "quello di unire, se sia possibile, la storia dimostrata della Veneta Scuola". (Nardin, 2009, p. 145 (note 57); Sartor, 1997, p. 48, nota 80; Zorzi, 1972, p. 301).

In 1838 the *pala* was sent to Vienna, to join the *Akademie der Bildenden Künste* collection (Von Lützow, 1889, pp. 260-261 [n. 53]), where it was remembered by Crowe and Cavalcaselle (1871, p. 217), who pointed out its ruined state. It was finally sent back to Venice, together with other seized paintings, in 1919, after the end of the First World War, and to celebrate that special occasion, an exhibition was organized to show the regained artworks (Fiocco, 1919, pp. 28-29 [n. 85]).

The panel had already been appreciated in the past. Positive comments had been written about it down the years, from Giorgio Vasari (1568), who affirmed that "è nella chiesa del Corpus Domini, all'altare della Vergine, una tavola […] molto bella", to Anton Maria Zanetti, who declared that this is "la pittura tuttavia più lodata" by Lazzaro Bastiani (1771, p. 41).

Giorgio Vasari's second edition of *Le Vite* is the first documentary source to mention the altarpiece. In the chapter dedicated to "Vita di Vittore Scarpaccia et altri pittori viniziani e lombardi", he described the painting in the Church of Corpus Domini by saying "all'altare della Vergine, una tavola dove ella è a sedere in mezzo a S. Caterina e S. Marta con altre Sante e due Angeli che suonano, e una prospettiva di casamenti per campo di tutta l'opera". Zaru explained the erroneous identification of Saint Veneranda as the Virgin by

reflecting upon the lack of a pre-existing and well-established iconography of the saint in Venice: "In fact Lazzaro Bastiani's *pala* seems to be the first significative painting of the saint" she wrote (2014, p. 105). Moreover, the composition visually evokes the genre of the *sacra conversazione*, in which the Virgin and the infant Jesus are depicted in a raised position amidst an array of saints in an idealised setting. Thus, Bastiani's altarpiece of *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* gives us (and gave Vasari) the possibility of "witnessing the creation of an iconography for a nearly unknown saint, through reference to pre-existing visual schemes" (Zaru, 2014, p. 105). Vasari added that he was also in possession of the original preparatory drawing for this painting, a proof that the composition has been carefully studied in advance on paper.

Sansovino (1581, 1663) echoed Vasari's mistake ("La palla di nostra Donna con una prospettiva di casamenti, di Lazaro Sebastiani"), which was finally corrected by Ridolfi (1648) in his biography of the Venetian painters: "nelle Monache del corpo di Nostro Signore ritrasse con molto decoro in un Altare Santa Veneranda sedente in alto con libro in mano e la Croce: e dalle parti sono alcune Sante Vergini & Angeli co' liuti vagamente dipinti con belle & adorne architetture".

Further references to the *pala* of Saint Veneranda had been made by later authors in their publications concerning Venice, including guides of the city of Venice with inventories and descriptions of the artworks found inside each church: Boschini (1664, 1674), who indicated the presence of "nostro Signore sedente in alto" in the description of the panel (today we cannot confirm if the altarpiece had a crowning element showing God the Father), Pacifico (1697), Martinelli (1704), Braccioli (1712) and Zanetti (1733, 1771).

Not a single document relating to Bastiani's altarpiece, neither a contract nor payments, has survived, thus the artwork is surrounded by mystery as regards both its commission and date of completion. Therefore, art historians estimated a date, or a timeframe, for the panel of Saint Veneranda based on stylistic analysis and comparisons with artworks by Bastiani himself and other contemporary painters. Ludwig and Paoletti (1900) suggested a dating around 1470. Ludwig and Molmenti (1906), hypothesizing Bastiani's birth date to be

around 1425, suggested a dating between 1460 and 1470, arguing that the artwork shows "le migliori doti del pittore" and had been executed by Bastiani "nel pieno vigor d'età". Lionello Venturi (1907) considered the panel "il capolavoro dell'artista" and that it must have been painted before the 1480s, at the peak of Bastiani's career, and in any case before the beginning of his decline in quality which started with the Murano lunette of 1484. Venturi recognized the influence of Mantegna on the structural frame ("travatura") and of Tura in the elaborate design. While, on the contrary, Adolfo Venturi (1915) believed the *Saint Veneranda* was later than the *Coronation* of 1490, in which the stylization of shapes is overcome, in the attempt to reach magnificence, although without success. Even Van Marle (1936) though the altarpiece was a late work, placing it after 1484, and following the influence of Alvise Vivarini. In the short but exhaustive footnote about Bastiani in *Officina Ferrarese*, Roberto Longhi affirmed that "a giudicare dalla struttura dello spazio" Bastiani couldn't have painted the *pala* of Saint Veneranda before 1475 (1934, ed. cons. 1968[2]). Collobi (1939) followed Longhi's suggestion regarding the period of execution (around 1475-1480), and noticed elements from Antonello da Messina, though not without a knowledge of Alvise Vivarini. Sandra Moschini-Marconi (1955), in accordance with Lionello Venturi, Longhi and Collobi, dated the altarpiece as sometime after 1475, but before 1490.

Notwithstanding the lack of any surviving documents concerning the *pala*, a reconstruction of the events that led to the decoration of the altar dedicated to Saint Veneranda may allow us to provide the date of execution of the altarpiece dedicated to the saint.

Moschini-Marconi (1955, pp. 53-54) mentioned the inscription on a tombstone in front of the altar, which had been already noted by Cicogna (1827, II, p. 20), and hypothesised that Bernardo Contarini could have been interested in the embellishment of the altar with an altarpiece. In fact, according to the epigraph/inscription, in 1479 Bernardo Contarini placed the funerary monument there for his brother Domenico, for himself and for their family members. Linking to Moschini-Marconi's observation and taking into account the genealogy of Contarini family, Sartor (1997, pp. 48-50) affirmed

that the key event for the commission of the *pala* was the death of Francesco Contarini which occurred in 1491. Francesco Contarini was the father of Bernando and Domenico's, and their two brothers, Giovanni and Girolamo. Thus, for the art historian, the panel cannot have been painted before 1491, and this is in line with Lucco's suggested date based on stylistic analysis and comparisons with Bartolomeo Vivarini's contemporary artworks (*La pittura nel Veneto...*, 1990, II, pp. 462-463). Moreover, carrying on a proposal already suggested by Moschini-Marconi, Sartor added the iconographic interpretation of the painting to support her hypothesis about the patron. In fact, three of the four saints represented on the rear wall of the *aedicola* are Francesco's, Bernardo's, Domenico's, Girolamo's patron saints, while the medallion with Saint John the Evangelist may refer to the other brother, Giovanni. And above all, the fact that three Franciscan saints are portrayed is a valid reason for Sartor to discard the possibility that the commission was made by the Dominican nuns of the convent of the Corpus Domini. The peculiar decision to portray an almost unknown saint was explained, both by Moschini-Marconi and by Sartor, by referring to the presence of a relic (a hand) of Saint Veneranda (Onofri, 1688, p. 165) that was enshrined in the church of Corpus Domini (Moschini-Marconi, 1955, p. 54; Sartor, 1997, p. 50). Finally, according to the *mariegola* of the Scuola dei Barcaiuoli (*Traghetto del Corpus Domini*), which was located in the church and was particularly devoted to Saint Veneranda (Vio, 2004, p. 453), Sartor (1997, p. 48) proved that the Scuola was founded only in 1643. Hence, she discarded Humfrey's and MacKenney's hypothesis stating that the members of this confraternity requested the altarpiece around 1480 (1986, p. 325; the dating was then postponed to 1490 c., probably in accordance with Lucco: Humfrey, 1993, p. 113). For Denise Zaru, the dispute which had arisen between the nuns of the Corpus Domini and the Servites sisters (*suore servite*) of the near church of the *Annunciata*, followed by the purloining of the precious relic (the body) of Saint Lucy from the eponymous church, is the key point in discovering the name of the commissioner and the date of execution of the altarpiece of Saint Veneranda. The request by the *suore servite* to the Patriarch of Venice to hold services in the church of Santa Lucia

triggered the quarrel with the nuns of the Corpus Domini, who were interested in the conspicuous donations made to the relic of Saint Lucy by the faithful, a benefit that would have been lost. In 1472, thanks to the Patriarch and the Pope mediation, the two parties came to an agreement, but one night, shortly before the officialization, probably for an excess of zeal, the nuns stole the precious relic of Saint Lucy. The controversy ended in 1478 and both the church and the relic were assigned to the Servites sisters, though the whole affair had negative repercussions on the nuns and the community (Zaru, 2013, pp. 34-35 and 2014, pp. 108-109).

From this perspective the promotion of Saint Veneranda was seen by Zaru (2014, p. 109) as an opportunity for redemption for the nuns of the Corpus Domini, as "the creation of a *pala*, and likely of an altar, in one of the most visible places in the church for the laity is consistent with their desire to restore the image of the convent by associating it with the possession of the relic of a saint which the visual composition of the *pala* defines as superior to other traditional saints, including Saint Lucy". Furthermore, given the small dimensions and the modest position of saint Francis in the work, there are no real reasons to explain why the altarpiece would have been explicitly made and dedicated to Francesco Contarini after his death, in 1491. Zaru's hypothesis seems more consistent with the nuns' request for the *pala*, and perhaps for the altar as well. The concessions for the Contarinis' tomb in 1479, just one year after the end of the dispute that gave the nuns a bad reputation, together with their desire to restore the image of the convent, could represent a valid reason and a *terminus post quem* to date the artwork. The income received for Contarini's sepulchre have been probably used to pay the fee to the artist (Zaru, 2013, p. 34). Finally, a stylistic comparison – in favour of an earlier date – can be made to the destroyed Bellini's altarpiece dedicated to Saint Catherine of Siena, once in Basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo, the date of production of which is usually placed around 1475 (Zaru, 2013, p. 34. In the latest published catalogue on Giovanni Bellini, the date has been slightly anticipated to 1472-1474, see Lucco, 2019, pp. 367-369 [Cat. 42]. *Fig. 241*). The model of the *sacra conversazione* introduced by Bellini in the Saint Catherine panel was quickly

accepted by Bastiani and a similar composition was presented few years later in the *pala* of Saint Veneranda. Another reminder to Giovanni Bellini's altarpieces production of that period can be found in the *baldacchino* hanging above Veneranda's head that recalls, not in shape, but in its intrinsic meaning, the similar one in Bellini's altarpiece for the Chiesa di San Giobbe (now in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice), dated circa 1480 (Humfrey, 2019, pp. 435-438 [Cat. 79]. *Fig. 242*). Indeed, as stated by Goffen regarding the San Giobbe panel, the *baldacchino* was a common ornament of altars at that time and it is associated with the Virgin Mary, but also carries a civic meaning, with the identification of the Virgin with the city of Venice (Goffen, 1990, pp. 154-155). Thus, Bastiani, in his research into a new iconography for this almost unknown saint in Venice, also conceives a parallel between the virgin Saint Veneranda and the Virgin Mary, which might have led Vasari's to erroneously identify the saint in his *Vite*. Zaru's hypothesis concerning the nuns' desire to restore their image as soon as possible after the end of the dispute in 1478, together with Contarini's donation for the funerary monument in 1479, and these references to coeval Bellini's altarpieces suggest that the *pala* of Saint Veneranda was more likely to have been painted at the beginning of the 1480s, instead of a decade later. For internal stylistic comparisons with Bastiani's *Nativity* and Murano *lunette*, dated respectively 1480 and 1484, and with *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree*, most likely executed around 1482, however, would not place the execution of the *Saint Veneranda Altarpiece* at the very beginning of 1480s (shortly after the conclusion of the controversy with the Servites sisters), rather than few years later, around mid-decade, perhaps shortly after the Murano *lunette*. The peculiar throne on which Saint Veneranda is sitting might have also inspired the curious shape of the throne in Benedetto Diana's *Madonna and Child Enthroned between Saints Jerome and Francis and Two Donors* – once in the Uffici della Zecca and now housed in Galleria Giorgio Franchetti, Venice – which is dated 1486 (*Fig. 243*). Finally, these conclusions reveal that Bastiani was an attentive and careful observer of his contemporaries, and also an inspirer of others himself, certainly not a lazy latecomer.

Further bibliography:

Corner, 1758, pp. 312-320; Cicogna, 1827, II, p. 20; Tassini, 1863, I, pp. 183-184; Tassini, 1885, p. 103; Réau, 1959, III, pp. 1027-1028; *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1968, vol. 10, pp. 328-331; *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1969, vol. 12, pp. 1004-1005; Zorzi, 1972, II, pp. 301-303; Kaftal, 1978, p. 1044; Lazzarini, 1983, pp. 135-144; Humfrey- MacKenney, 1986, p. 325; Goffen, 1990, pp. 154-155; Quattrini, 1992, pp. 56-62; Humfrey, 1993, pp. 91, 113, 201; Merkel, 1994, p. 89; Longhi, 1995, pp. 435-449; Vio, 2004, p. 453; Poldi, 2010, pp. 190-197; Tagliapietra, 2015, pp. 189-190; Humfrey, 2019, pp. 435-438 (Cat. 79); Lucco, 2019, pp. 367-369 (Cat. 42).

Further images



Fig. 237. L. Bastiani, *Saint Veneranda Enthroned,* Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (picture taken during the conservation treatment carried out in 1940 by Mauro Pellicioli).



Fig. 238. L. Bastiani, *Saint Veneranda Enthroned*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (1940 conservation treatment, detail of a small, uncleaned area on Saint Martha's face to demonstrate the differences between cleaned and uncleaned surface).



Fig. 239. A. da Messina, *Saint Sebastian*, 1478, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister (detail of the stick).

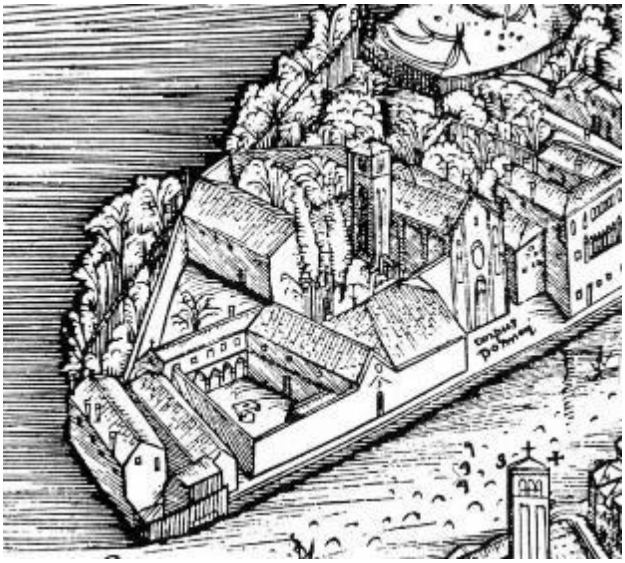


Fig. 240. J. de' Barbari, *View of Venice, 1500* (detail of the church and convent of the Corpus Domini).



Fig. 241. G. Bellini, *Saint Catherine Altarpiece*, once in Venice, Basilica dei Santi Pietro e Paolo (image taken from F. Zanotto, *Pinacoteca Veneta*, 1858).



Fig. 242. G. Bellini, *San Giobbe Altarpiece*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia.



Fig. 243. B. Diana, *Madonna and Child Enthroned between Saints Jerome and Francis and Two Donors*, 1486, *Venice, Galleria Giorgio Franchetti (detail of the throne).*



Number: AP62

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna and Child*

Location: Verona (Italy), Museo di Castelvecchio (from 1871, inv. 889-1B109)

Date: 1485-1490

Material and dimensions: wooden panel painting, 75.3 x 59 cm

Technique: tempera

Inscription: "LAZARVS/BASTIANVS", in white lettering, on the rear parapet, towards left corner.

Provenance: Verona, Cesare Bernasconi private collection (until 1871).

Past exhibitions: *Proposte e restauri. I musei d'arte negli anni Ottanta* (Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona, 1987).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1985, Pedrocco and Stevanato (Marinelli, 1987, pp. 76-77)

From a visual inspection before the conservation procedure, the painting surface appeared dimmed and dull in colour. This was probably caused by the characteristic general darkening of the superficial varnish layer. The brownish tones of the panel were also noted by Sir Charles Eastlake, when it still was in Bernasconi's collection ("M[adonna] & C[hild]. brown monotonous flush", 1860; "C[hild]. too brown & body quite ruined", 1864, Vangelisti, 2009, pp. 89, 99), and by Bernardini once it entered the museum collection ("[la Vergine] ha la carnagione molto scura, fortemente ambrata", Bernardini, 1902, p. 88). Pictures taken before the treatment clearly show the condition of the painting, where the wide varnish brush strokes are evident. During the cleaning process, the paint surface was revealed to be largely abraded and to have thinned owing to old aggressive cleaning, probably carried out in the 14th century. *Chiaroscuro* tonal contrasts to suggest the volume of the figures appeared weak, resulting in a broken modelling of the clothing, which seemed to be even sharper especially in the Virgin's vestment because of the typical *tempera* hatching technique employed here. The flesh tones of the Virgin and infant Jesus turned out to be to be particularly poor in colour after cleaning, revealing the underdrawing. The conservation treatment carried out by Pedrocco and Stevanato in 1985 was limited to the removal of the varnish layer and old retouchings, and to verify/examine the conservation status of the painting. It is important to underline that Bastiani's signature has been proven to be authentic. Today the painting is conserved in the museum deposit and its condition is fairly good.

Bibliography:

Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 281; Bernardini, 1902, p. 88; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 11; Logan, 1903, p. 319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 24; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 281; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 222 (note 4); Trecca, 1912, p. 122; A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, p. 396; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 133-134; Berenson, 1932, p. 64; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 184; Avena, 1937, p. 33;

Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 47, note 37; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 27; Mariacher 1957, p. 34; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Marinelli, 1987, pp. 76-77; Heinemann, 1991, III, pp. 38, 77; Vangelisti, 2009, pp. 84, 89, 99 (pp. 73-106); Fossaluzza, 2010, pp. 203-205 (Cat. 149); Vinco, 2013 (Fondazione Federico Zeri website: https://fondazionezeri.unibo.it/it/pubblicazioni/call-for-papers/articoli-2013/quattro-madonne-con-bambino-di-lazzaro-bastiani/index.html); Russo, 2019, p. 178.

Archival documents:

Ferrari, BMCVr, ms 2629, 1871 (cc. 48v-50r n. 177).

Before entering the Museo Civico di Verona collection, the panel was in Cesare Bernasconi's private gallery (Ferrari, 1871). During his travels to Verona, Sir Charles Lock Eastlake often visited Bernasconi's collection, where he saw Bastiani's *Madonna and Child*. He described the painting in his notebooks three times (1857, 1860, 1864), supplementing his descriptions with freehand sketches which he drew himself (Vangelisti, 2009, pp. 84, 89, 99). The poor condition and the defective drawing of the artwork, noticed by Eastlake rendered it of insufficient quality to be bought and, most likely, added to the National Gallery's collection in London (Vangelisti, 2009, p. 99).

In his 1869 will, Bernasconi decided to bequeath his collection to the Comune di Verona. Bernasconi's bequest officially joined/entered the Museo Civico di Verona in 1871, when it was catalogued by Ferrari (Ferrari, 1871). At that time, the museum was in Palazzo Pompei and in that location Bastiani's panel was remembered/mentioned both by Bernardini (Bernardini, 1902, p. 4) and by Trecca (Trecca, 1912, p. 122). Even when the entire collection was moved to his present location in Castelvecchio, the painting was exhibited in a room showing "memorie venete" (Avena, 1937, p. 33). Later on, given its poor condition, the panel was moved to the museum archive and now it is no longer on display.

The painting portrays the Virgin and infant Jesus behind a low parapet. The position of Jesus is quite unusual, as he seems to be trying to balance, sitting on his mother's knee, and grabbing at her neckband, with his spine quite

arched (a detail already noticed by Eastlake, who also drew it, Vangelisti, 2009, p. 80, 84) and his head turned, looking quite surprised, at the observer. The Virgin is depicted in half-length and in three-quarter profile, embracing her baby while gazing at him, with her head bent towards him. She wears a red dress, tied at waist with a lace, and over this a blue mantle, which also covers her head. The mantle is sharply delineated and cut into folds due to both the peculiar way Bastiani used to model garments, but also to the poor conservation of the painting that led to the loss of the tonal contrast involved in volume construction (the mantle is similar in conservation status to that of Bastiani's *Madonna and Child* in the National Gallery in London). Behind the Virgin and Child, on the right, a green curtain is hung, separating the group in the foreground from the landscape background on the left. Behind the rear parapet, there is a tall, thinly trunked tree with spaced apart leaves and an offshoot at its base, receding rocky hillsides, a castle with fortified walls, a watermill, and a double arched bridge to access the buildings and the mountains in the distance. The type of tree with single spread leaves represented here is peculiar of Bastiani's style, as already highlighted by Eastlake (Vangelisti, 2009, pp. 80, 84) and pointed out by Ludwig and Molmenti. The latter writers suggested a comparison with the tree in Museo Correr's *Annunciation* ("Bastiani représente les arbres d'une telle manière qui'ils ne peuvent être peints d'après nature, mais cette manière constitue une marque de convention tout à fait individuelle […]. Dans quelques tableaux de Bastian, comme dans l'*Annonciation* du Musée Civique de Venise et dans la *Vierge* du Musée de Vérone, les arbres sont peu touffus et fort plats"; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1903, p. 11), to which I add a further comparison with the foliage of the nut tree in *Saint Anthony in the nut tree*, in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. The painter of the work is attested by the presence of the signature "LAZARVS BASTIANVS", the authenticity of which was confirmed during the last restoration in 1985 (Marinelli, 1987, pp. 76-77; in 1977 the painting was thought to be made by an anonymous artist at the beginning of the 16th century ["ignoto inizi XVI"], as noted in the paper record of the artwork).

Who commissioned the work, the reasons behind the commission and the original location of the panel are unknown, moreover, no detail in the composition can provide further information on the artwork. Given the subject and the painting's small dimensions, however, we can suggest that it was commissioned for private devotion, considering that requests for this kind of artwork~~s~~ for this purpose were popular in Venice at that time, as attested by the great number of artworks of same subject produced by Giovanni Bellini and his workshop.

The critical analysis of the panel in the 20th century started with Ludwig and Paoletti with their *Neue archivalische Beiträge zur Geschichte der venezianischen Malerei* article which focused on Bastiani's artistic activity. The authors first identified a connection between the *Madonna and Child* in Verona and another one in Museo Correr, Venice, that they believe to be a close *replica* – not a copy – of the Veronese painting (Ludwig-Paoletti, 1900, p. 281). The link between the two panels has also been observed by Ludwing and Molmenti (1906, p. 23), Lionello Venturi (1907, p. 281), Borenius (in the second edition of *A History of Painting in North Italy*, published in 1912 with corrections and additions. The first edition was published in 1871, when the painting entered the Musei Civici collection, thus it is plausible that Crowe and Cavalcaselle did not have time to add the artwork to Bastiani's catalogue; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, I, 1912, p. 222, note 4), Sandberg-Vavalà (1931, p. 133-134), Van Marle (1936, p. 184) and Mariacher (1957, p. 34). The Veronese and Venetian artworks have also been mentioned in Berenson Indexes since 1932 (1936, 1957, 1958).

Concerning the dating, Lionello Venturi believed that the painting, as well as the *replica* in the Correr, was executed at the turn of 16th century, after the *telero Offering of the relic of the Cross*, which he dated as being produced shortly before 1500 under the influence of Gentile Bellini. But in the Veronese panel he did not see Bellini's influence, even he did not recognize the 16th century elegance in the rigid pose and in the hard/sharp design (1907, p. 281). Adolfo Venturi placed the panel at a late date in Bastiani's career, more inspired by Alvise Vivarini's manner and slightly by Giovanni Bellini (1915, p. 396). In her extensive essay on 'Lazzaro Bastiani's *Madonnas*', Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà

considered the Castelvecchio and the Correr *Madonnas* to be representative of Bastiani's third and final period, in which he showed his most mature and fully formed *Madonna* pictures. Making a comparison with the securely dated *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (1480), the Murano *lunette* (1484) and the *Coronation* in Accademia Carrara (1490), Sandberg-Vavalà dated the Veronese and Venetian *Madonnas*, as well as another example that had come to light during the 1980s at Agnews art dealers in London. The panels are in the same style as the precedent *Madonna and Child*, formerly in Captain George Pitt-Rivers' collection, and are grouped with the previously mentioned dated panels, to which the art historian also included the *Nursing Madonna* crowned by hovering angels in the Museo Correr, the *Sacra conversazione* (*Madonna and Child between Saint John the Baptist and Saint Dorothy*), previously in the Wildenstein in Paris, and the triptych showing the *Madonna and Child Enthroned, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Mary Magdalene*, once in the Howarth Collection (Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, pp. 133-134). Van Marle suggested dating the paintings at the end of a period of transition under Bartolomeo Vivarini's influence, however no later than the 1484 Murano *lunette* (1936, p. 184).

Essentially in accordance with what Sandberg-Vavalà stated, Licia Collobi-Ragghianti considered the panel to be from the second half of the 1480s, together with the Howarth *Triptych*, the *Madonna and Child Enthroned, Tobias and the Angel* in the National Gallery of Ireland, in Dublin, the *Madonna Adoring the Child* in the Redentore in Venice, and the painting of a similar subject formerly in the Speyer collection, in New York. Collobi-Ragghianti believed Bastiani was inspired by Giovanni Bellini's contemporary artworks, and specifically by Alvise Vivarini's antonellesque manner (1939-40, p. 47). Collobi-Ragghianti believed the date of production to be around 1480 for the Correr *Madonna* but, given the poor state of the painting, she did not take a clear stand whether the panel was made by the artist or by his workshop (1939-40, p. 47, note 37). In 1957 the Museo Correr cataloguer, Mariacher substantially agreed with Sandberg-Vavalà and Collobi-Ragghianti suggested dating, but he affirmed that the Correr *Madonna* was the original one by

Bastiani, while the Castelvecchio one was a copy made after it, with a signature of doubtful authenticity ("Il dipinto analogo (n. 109) del Museo Civico di Verona è probabilmente copia non autografa tolta da questo, con firma apocrifa". 1957, p. 34). Having confirmed the authenticity of the signature, the whole attribution has been reviewed by Marinelli, re-establishing the primacy of the Veronese panel over the Venetian one (1987, p. 76). The debate has been furthered by Fossaluzza who, taking into consideration the very similar dimensions of the paintings (the one in Correr is slightly larger), as well as the same composition, and the fact that Bastiani had a well-structured workshop that produced the cartoons for the mosaics in Basilica di San Marco, suggested the presence of a single cartoon ('cartone memorativo') employed in both cases. According to Fossaluzza, the *Madonnas* are both original Bastianis, but given its diffuse light and drawing, the Venetian one could be the first to be executed (Fossaluzza, 2010, p. 205). For Fossaluzza, however, the accentuated *chiaroscuro* and the earthy colours employed in Veronese panel fixes its date of execution in the 1480s, in comparison with the two paintings of known date in Murano and Bergamo (1484 and 1490 respectively), and the *Saint Veneranda* altarpiece (which he believed to have been executed around 1490, according to Sartor, 1997). Vinco (2013) mentioned Giovanni Bellini's *Madonna Roger* (The Metropolitan Museum, New York. *Fig. 244*), which presents the same general composition, as further reference to date the panels in Verona and in Venice at around 1490.

Given the comparisons with Bastiani's artworks of proven date and the lack of further documentation, I believe that a dating in late 1480's is appropriate, in accordance with the majority of the scholars.

Further images



Fig. 244. G. Bellini, *Madonna and Child (Madonna Rogers)*, The New York, Metropolitan Museum, late 1480's.



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Number: AP63

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (and workshop?)

Title: *Scenes of the Life of the Blessed Leone Bembo*

Location: Vodnjan (Croatia), Collection of Sacral Art of the Parish Church of Saint Blasius (from 1818)

Date: 1490-95

Material and dimensions: poplar panel, 35.5 x 168 cm

Inscription: Below the central panel: "SANCTVS LEO EPISCOPVS CLARVS DE BEMBA PROPAGO / VIVVUS ET MORTVVS MVLTA MIRACVLA FECIT"

Below the left panel: "DE FRONCONELLIS CATHERINA CECCA / ORAT AD DIVVM ET ILIO VISV RECEPIT / ANNO DNI MCCVII" and "ASTRA DEMOSTRANT DIVI LEONIS SEPVLCHRVM / CVRVNT INFIRMI ORANT ET REDEVNT SANATI ANNO DNI MCCVII".

Below the right panel: "INCORRVPTIO CORPORIS MVLTOS ANNOS HVMI IACENTI / INDICAT NOBIS LEO TVAM SANTA VITAM PERENNEM ANNO DNI MCCVII" and "DISPERATA SALVTE PVELLA AD DIVV ACCESIT DAT / PRO FILIA MATER ET IMPETRAT SANITATEM ANNO DNI MCCCXXI".

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Venice, Church of San Lorenzo, Chapel of San; Gaetano Grezler private collection.

Past exhibitions: *Tizian, Tintoretto, Veronese. Veliki majstori renesanse* (Galerija Klovićevi dvori, Zagreb, 22nd November 2011 – 22nd January 2012).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1922-1923, Rossi-Vergara (Morassi, 1923, p. 264); 2013-2014, Hrvatski Restauratorski Zavod (Restoration report).

Between 1922-23 the panels were restored, although the old varnish was only "lightened" and not removed. This would explain why in 1935 Santangelo declared that the painting was in a poor state and the varnish was oxidised. In 2013-2014 the Croatian Conservation Institute performed a complete conservation treatment of the entire artwork (panels and frame). The old, oxidised varnish had caused a darkening of the pigments' tone. The cleaning procedure revealed numerous overpainted areas, due to old restorations (and perhaps due to the 1920s' treatment), which have been removed. The IR reflectography analysis performed after the cleaning treatment highlighted the poor state of the painting, with several cracks on the support and substantial *lacunae* down to the preparatory ground.

Bibliography:

Fiamma, 1645a, p. 27; Fiamma, 1645b, pp. 3-13; Ridolfi, 1648, p. 35; Boschini, 1664, p. 184; Boschini, 1674, p. 30 (sestier di Castello); Martinelli, 1684, p. 142; Martinelli, 1705, p. 142; Zanetti, 1733, p. 223; Corner, 1749, pp. 83-87; Jannick, 1751, pp. 479-481; Corner, 1758, pp. 133-146; Zanetti, 1771, pp. 18-19; Cicogna, 1827, pp. 411-412; Ricci, 1834, pp. 207, 226 (note 9); Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 71 (note 1); Caffi, 1888, p. 59; Caprin, 1889, p. 313; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 70 (note 3); Testi, 1915, II, pp. 575-577 (note 4); Morassi, 1924, pp. 264-266; Santangelo, 1935, p. 87; Semi, 1937, pp. 144, 147; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 49 (note 49); Muraro, 1969, p. 25; Gamulin, 1969-70, pp. 29-30; Gamulin, 1970, pp. 259-260; *Collezione d'arte sacra…*, 1984, pp. 14-15; Casu, 1996, pp. 72, 87 (note 70); Craievich, 1997, pp. 345-366; Belušić, 2005, pp. 81-83; Krekic, 2005, pp. 147-160; Tomić, 2011, pp. 91-93; McCluskey, 2020, p. 110.

Bastiani's *Episodes of the life of the Blessed Leone Bembo* is a late 15th century copy of an early14th century painting of same subject attributed to Paolo Veneziano (On Paolo Veneziano's Leone Bembo panel, please refer to Welcher, 2006, pp. 135-136 and related bibliography. *Fig. 245*).

Today both Paolo Veneziano and Bastiani's works are on display in the Museum of Sacral Art of the Parish Church of Saint Blasius, in Vodnjan (Croatia). The paintings entered the church collection in 1818 as a donation by the Veronese painter Gaetano Grezler, when he moved from Venice to Vodnjan. The reason for Grezler's relocation in Istria, suggested by Craievich (1997, p. 345) and confirmed by Delorenzi's latest research on the painter (2013, pp. 105-106), is explained by his being given an invitation to decorate the recently refurbished church of Saint Blasius and by his which presented him with the chance to give his substantial and precious collection of relics and sacred objects to the same church. In fact, after the Napoleonic suppressions, Grezler gathered an enormous collection of secular and sacral artworks, relics, and remains of saints' bodies from the dissolved churches and monasteries of Venice. The Veronese artist acquired these two particular paintings from the Church and Benedictine convent of San Lorenzo, in Venice, where they were displayed in the Chapel of San Sebastiano.

Bastiani's artwork is composed of three distinct panels of the same size aligned horizontally. The central one, showing the iconic image of the Blessed Leone Bembo, is flanked by two lateral panels portraying four of his posthumous miracles, two on each side (for the life of Leone Bembo please refer to: Niero, 1963, pp. 127-129).

Paolo Veneziano's work is a unique wooden panel portraying the four narrative scenes horizontally arranged in two tiers around the centrale image of the *beato*. This latter is depicted as a forward-facing full-length figure, between two angels who hover in the upper corners and one holding an aspergillum and an aspersorium and the other a thurible to proclaim him as an object of veneration, and a tiny kneeling layman, probably the donor, in the lower left corner. At the bottom of the picture is the inscription: "ANNO MCCCXXI FACTUM FUIT HOC OPUS". The narrative scenes of the miracles are represented anti-clockwise, starting from top right, and each episode is described by a Latin inscription (see Krekic, 2005, pp. 149-151). The upper ones show the solemn funeral of Bembo, which took place in 1187, and the miraculous reappearance of the *beato*'s lost relics (*apparitio*), which occurred

in 1207. The lower ones illustrate two of the beato's well-known posthumous miracles: the restoration of her sight to the blind Caterina Roncorelli (left) and the recovery of a sick child (right). The whole painting is enriched by a golden background finely elaborated. Bastiani's version replicates Paolo Veneziano's content, except for a few divergences. In the central panel the blessed Leone Bembo is again flanked by the two angels, one holding an aspergillum and an aspersorium and the other a thurible, but in this instance two Benedictine nuns kneel before him, who must be identified as representing the new benefactors, replacing the previous single male donor. A short parapet encloses the figures in the foreground. This distinct area has been interpreted as the enclosed space of the cloistered convent (McCluskey, 2020, p. 110). A natural hilly landscape, showing a walled city in the distance, extends in the background. In Bastiani's version, the side panels present horizontally the fourteenth century episodes that were disposed vertically and are thus no longer arranged in chronological order. Regarding the differences between the two central panels, McCluskey argued that the 14th century golden backdrop situates Leone Bembo in heaven and "as a citizen of heaven, Leone was meant to inspire awe and admiration in the viewer with his powerful intercessory role highlighted by his proximity to the divine and his hieratic relationship to the diminutive patron", while the natural scenery of the 15th century version "functions to locate Leone in earthly time and space, localising his cult at least to the temporal present, and even, with the additions of the nuns and the cloister, to the contemporary convent of San Lorenzo" (2020, p. 122). Moreover, the scholar added that here the nuns not only demonstrated their piety, but also intended to underline "their status as patrons of art and custodians of significant relics" (2020, p. 122). The three panels are included in a carved gilded wooden frame from the 19th century (Restoration report), where inscriptions under each scene describe what is represented.

The two paintings were mentioned for the first time by Paolino Fiamma in two books published in 1645. One book concerned the foundation of the Churches of San Lorenzo and San Sebastiano (*La vera origine delle chiese de gloriosi martiri San Lorenzo, et san Sebastiano*), while the other focused on the life of

the blessed Leone Bembo (*Vita et miracoli del glorioso san Leon Bembo*). Fiamma reported that the "Pallio del 1321", Paolo Veneziano's artwork, was on the altar of Saint Leone, in the Church of San Lorenzo (1645a, p. 19). He then added that on the occasion of the renovation works to the Church of San Sebastiano, which occurred between 1629 and 1632, the remains of the *beato*'s body were removed from the casket on the altar, and that the casket was adorned with small panels showing the saint's miracles, in his opinion painted by the Vivarinis ("Si levò il corpo di San Leona dalla sua propria Cassa, che era sopra l'Altare, intorno alla quale stavano dipinti i suoi miracoli, di mano dei Vivarini in quadretti disposti". 1645a, p. 27). Indubitably, the "quadretti" he referred to here were Bastiani's. In *Vita et miracoli del glorioso san Leon Bembo*, he meticulously discussed presented the older panel, describing the figure of Leone Bembo and the posthumous miracles, also recording the inscriptions of the central section and of the top scenes but indicating only the dates of the bottom miracles (1645b, pp. 8-9).

Today Fiamma's books are crucial as they prove that Paolo Veneziano and Bastiani's artworks were both on display on the altar at that time. Uppermost, Fiamma was the only one to witness the paintings on display together, since no other author after him reported the presence of two paintings dedicated to the blessed Leone Bembo. The Bollandist Konrad Jannick, who visited Venice and the complex of the Church of San Lorenzo in 1686, did not see the 14th century panel, even though he described it. Indeed, in the *Acta Sanctorum* he accurately presented Bastiani's panels and inscriptions but had to admit that he did not actually see the other "tabulam" recorded by Fiamma, which he discussed based on his predecessor's texts (Jannick, 1751, pp. 479-481). Also Ridolfi (who mistakenly identified the saint as Saint Fabiano. 1648, p. 35), Boschini (1664, p. 184; 1674, p. 30), Martinelli (1684, p. 142) and Zanetti (1733, p. 223; 1771, pp. 18-19) recorded only one artwork, Bastiani's, which they assigned to Carlo Crivelli. Thus, from a certain moment onwards, only Bastiani's work was visible on the altar. Fiamma careful description of the 14th century artwork, however, caused some misinterpretations between the two paintings. For example, Corner described the 15th century artwork and recorded the

inscription “FACTVM FVIT HOC OPVS MCCCXXI” on it. Owing to this inscription he firmly rejected Ridolfi’s attribution to Crivelli, whose art flourished only in mid-15th century (Corner, 1749, p. 86; 1758, p. 143). He most likely did not personally see this inscription on the painting but copied it from Fiamma’s book. In fact, as observed by Krekic, Corner was surely aware that in San Sebastiano there was only one painting showing Leone Bembo, but he discussed it according to Fiamma’s *Vita et miracoli del glorioso san Leon Bembo*. Corner’s mistake is evident in his books, in which he published an engraving of Bastiani’s 15th-century version of the complex (in vertical arrangement probably for editorial reasons) with the 14th-century inscription, that proves which artwork he was really referring to (*Fig. 246*). Corner’s mistake caused also the generally held erroneous idea that Bastiani’s central panel had the same date (1321) on it, as the original 14th-century one (Krekic, 2005, p. 154). In 1771 Zanetti stated that this inscription was absent in the work on display in the church, and to support his attribution to Crivelli he argued that at that time (in 1321) artists did not paint this way (“non dipingeasi di quella maniera”) and went on to say that the work was signed “OPVS KAROLI CRIVELLI VENETI” (1771, p. 18), a signature never recorded by any other author. Cicogna, who wrote his *Delle iscrizioni veneziane* when the paintings were already in Vodnjan, hence did not have the chance to observe them, gave credit to Ridolfi and Zanetti, but also to Fiamma, suggesting a possible error of transcription of the date, which originally would have been 1421 (1827, p. 412). The ascription to Crivelli was promoted also by Ricci (1834, p. 207), while Crowe and Cavalcaselle (1871, p. 71 [note 1]), followed by Borenius (1912, p. 70 [note 3]), did not want to commit themselves on the attributive issue between Crivelli and the Vivarinis. Testi (1915, p. 577) discarded the attribution to Crivelli. Different opinions on the painting have been expressed by Morassi (1923), who gave it to the “School of Bellini”, and by Semi (1937, pp. 144, 147), who believed this was a 15th century copy executed by a painter of the “School of Paolo Veneziano”. The first attribution to Bastiani was suggested by Santangelo (1935, p. 87), based on the stylistic analysis of the panels, and was confirmed by Collobi (1939, p. 49) and all the following

scholars (Gamulin, 1969, pp. 29-30; Gamulin, 1970, p. 259; *Collezione…*, 1984, pp. 1415; Casu, 1996, pp. 72, 87 [note 70]; Craievich, 1997, pp. 261-362 [notes 8-9]; Belušić, 2005, pp. 81-83; Krekic, 2005; Tomić, 2011, pp. 91-93; McCluskey, 2020, p. 110).

Another debate between the art historians concerned the reasons for the commission of Bastiani's artwork, as well as its original function and location in the church. Krekic suggested that when the altar was refurbished, the nuns requested Bastiani to execute a new painting as a substitute for the old one but stipulated that he must replicate Paolo Veneziano's subject and composition (2005, p. 154). For Belušić the commission is connected to the process of beatification of Leone Bembo, started after 1471 (2005, p. 82). Once painted, the work was placed on Saint Leone altar in the Chapel of San Sebastiano, where it had been recorded by all sources until the Napoleonic suppressions. Craievich (1997, p. 362 [note 9]) and Krekic (2005, pp. 155-156), supported in their reasoning by the historic sources, convincingly suggested that Bastiani's panels enriched the façade of the *beato*'s wooden casket, as a sort of removable *paliotto* or *antependium* to show the saint's remains to worshippers, replacing Paolo Veneziano's artwork as front panel (it must be underlined that Gamulin, on the basis of Caffi, had already suggested this solution. See: Caffi, 1888, p. 59; Gamulin, 1970, pp. 259-260). The 14th century painting thus changed location and function, as it was hinged to the casket back, decorating the inner part of the casket lid. Adorning the inner part of the casket lid with a painting was not uncommon, as demonstrated by the *cassa* of Giuliana da Collalto (originally in the convent of Santi Biagio e Cataldo and today in Museo Correr), therefore the decision to reuse the old Paolo Veneziano panel as image for the inner casket lid is not exceptional. Moreover, the dimensions of the two artworks further support the hypothesis that they were both parts of Leone Bembo's *cassa*, as they are the same length (168 cm), but differ in height, as Bastiani's panels measure almost half of Paolo Veneziano's height (Bastiani: 35,5 cm; Paolo Veneziano: 75 cm). Additionally, the long, narrow format also explains why Bastiani integrated horizontally the episodes previously disposed vertically (Krekic, 2005, p. 154-155). On special occasions, the caskets were opened and,

to give a full view of the saint's body to the faithful who prayed before the sepulchre, the lid was lifted, and the front panel removed (McCluskey, 2020, p. 103). As explained by Krekic (2005, p. 152), Fiamma probably saw Paolo Veneziano and Bastiani's paintings together in a specific circumstance: the opening of Leone Bembo's *cassa* to check his body remains after the 17th century renovation of the church.

Being the altar of Saint Leone embellished with Giovanni Mercati's altarpiece portraying *Leone Bembo and an Angel Praying Before the Virgin Mary* (Boschini, 1664, p. 184; Martinelli, 1684, p. 142), Morassi (Krekic, 2005, pp. 156, 160 [notes 40, 42]) and McCluskey (2020, p. 110) suggested that Bastiani's *paliotto* was mainly employed as *predella* of an unknown lost altarpiece (Morassi), or of Mercati's altarpiece itself (McCluskey). This hypothesis is less convincing than the previous one, however it cannot be totally discarded, as Bastiani's casket placed on the altar, below the altarpiece, could have had this further decorative and narrative function (Krekic, 2005, p. 156).

Regarding the year of execution, all the scholars agree in a late dating. Collobi considered the painting contemporary to the Bergamo *Coronation* of 1490, as it is a faded memory of the artist's painting skills ("a sua volta sbiadito ricordo delle capacità dell'artista". Collobi, 1939, p. 49). For comparisons with Bastiani's *Episodes of the life of Paolo I bishop of Constantinople* in Musée Jacquemart André of circa 1493, Sartor deduced the Vodnjan panels to have been realised in the same years (2002, p. 81). For Belušić the artwork was executed after the *teleri* for the Scuola di San Girolamo painted in 1480s, thus in the last decade of the 15th century, influenced by the narrative style of Gentile Bellini and Vittore Carpaccio (2005, p. 83). For Krekic it was realised in the very last years of the 15th century (2005, p. 154). In Tomić's opinion it must have been executed circa 1471, as he was probably influenced by Belušić's comment about the process of beatification of Leone Bembo (2011, p. 91). For the abovementioned reasons pointed out by Collobi and Sartor, as well as for the central perspective of the middle panel, with the frontal hieratic position of the *beato* and the parapet to distinguish between foreground and background (in Bastiani's production the use of the parapet has been

introduced and largely employed from 1480s onwards) a dating in the second half of 1490s is convincing. Belušić conjected also that the composition, the figures, and the landscape are redolent of Lazzaro Bastiani, but the poor execution suggest the extensive participation of the workshop in the realisation (2005, p. 83).

Further bibliography:

Niero, 1963, pp. 123-127; Sartor, 2002, p. 81; Welcher, 2006, pp. 135-136; Delorenzi, 2013, pp. 105-106.

Further images



Fig. 245. P. Veneziano, *Vita panel of the Blessed Leone Bembo*, Vodnjan, Collection of Sacral Art of the Parish Church of Saint Blasius.

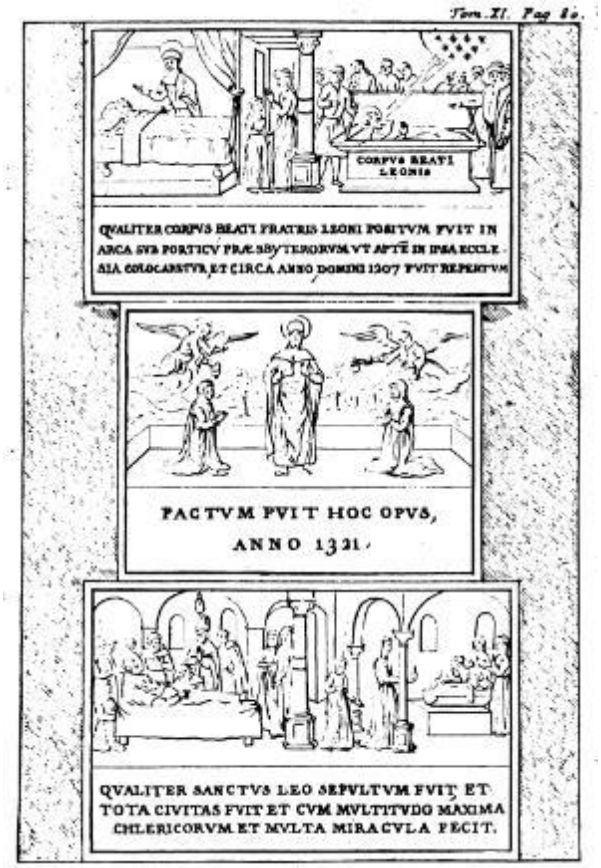


Fig. 246. Engraving published in F. Corner, *Ecclesiae Venetae*, XI, 1749 showing Bastiani's 15th-century painting in vertical arrangement with the 14th-century inscription in the central panel.



Number: AP64

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani and workshop

Title: *The Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria*

Location: Waddesdon Manor (Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, U.K.), The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust) at Waddesdon Manor (inv. n. 8072)

Date: 1475 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 59.6 x 40.5 cm

Technique: oil

Provenance: acquired by Alice de Rothschild at the end of the 19th century; inherited by James de Rothschild; accepted by the Treasury Solicitor in lieu of taxes on the Estate of James de Rothschild in 1963; given to The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust) at Waddesdon Manor in 1990.

Bibliography:

Waterhouse, 1967, pp. 324-325; Wright, 1976, p. 99; Casu, 1996, pp. 64-65, 77-78 (notes 30-33).

The panel exhibited today in The Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor shows the event of the mystical marriage of Saint Catherine to Christ. The Virgin Mary holds the infant Jesus on her lap while he celebrates his symbolic marriage with Saint Catherine of Alexandria by offering her a ring. Saint Catherine, kneeling before the infant Jesus, receives the ring. The Virgin, slightly turned towards Catherine and looking down at her, sits on a marble throne with concave~~s~~ sides on which there are angels playing instruments. The scene is enclosed by a baldachin decorated with a string of red coral beads and two bunches of fruit hanging from either side.

The artwork was purchased by Alice de Rothschild in the 19th century and was then inherited by her great-nephew James. In 1963 it was offered to The UK Government's Treasury Solicitor in lieu of taxes on the Estate of James the Rothschild. Finally, in 1990 it was given to The Rothschild Collection, at ~~in~~ Waddesdon, where it is still conserved.

Ellis Waterhouse (1967) observed similarities to the *Madonna and Child crowned by two angels, with musical angels, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father* in Poldi Pezzoli and with the *Madonna and Child* n. 616 in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, suggesting that the artist was the same for the three pictures. The scholar, however, generically assigned the panel to a painter of the Venetian School and proposed a date of execution of around 1470. Casu (1996) agreed on the derivation of the composition from the Poldi Pezzoli *Madonna*, emphasising the re-employment of models and compositional ideas in Bastiani's workshop. In fact, the scene appears to be rather formulaic in general, suggesting the extensive participation of Bastiani's assistants. This is evident most particularly in the figure of Saint Catherine, which is certainly not good enough to be painted by Bastiani.

For the abovementioned reasons, Casu estimated the execution of the work to be some years after the Poldi Pezzoli panel, at around 1475 – a date I agree with.



Number: AP65

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Church triumphant and Militant* or *Our Lady of Mercy*

Location: Zadar (Croatia), Monastery of Saint Francis, Sacristy

Date: 1487-1488

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 335.5 x 245 cm

Inscription: "HEC EST ARA CELI", on the scroll under the Virgin; "SANCTA DEI GENITRIX VIRGO ORA PRO NOBIS", on the scroll held by the Pope; "VIRGO MATER CHRISTI I(N)TERCEDE PRO NOBI", on the scroll held by the queen; "VERBV(M) CARO FACTV(M) EST ET HABITAVIT IN NOBI" (John, 1,14), on the scroll held by the eagle, the symbol of John the Evangelist; "VICIT LEO DE TRIBV IVDA RADIX DAVID" (Apocalypse, 5,5), on the scroll held by the lion, the symbol of Mark the Evangelist; "QVI IN EA NATV(M) EST DE SPIRITV SANCTO

EST" (Matthew 1,20), on the scroll held by the angel, symbol of Matthew; "AVE GRACIA PLENA DOMINUS TECVM" (Luke 1,28), on the scroll held by the ox, the symbol of Luke the Evangelist.

Technique: oil

Provenance: Zadar (Croatia), Monastery of Saint Francis, Chapel of *S. Marie de le Gratie.*

Past exhibitions: *Velika i mala slika – vrhunske zadarske umjetnine* (Zadar, November 1996); *I croati – cristianesimo, cultura, arte* (Musei vaticani, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano, 28 ottobre 1999 – 15 gennaio 2000); *Tizian, Tintoretto, Veronese, veliki majstori renesanse* (Galerija Klovićevi dvori, Zagreb, November 2011 – January 2012).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

17th or 18th century; 1905 c., Gerisch; 1930 c., Colmignoli (Serra, 1930); 1950s; 1980-84, Winkler and Bogdanovic (lower part); 1987-1990, Kranjčec and Denich (upper part); 1988-1992, Turk and Črešnjek (painted frame), Gebaj, Smolković and Gorup (carved wooden frame).

In 1844 Poiret observed that the painting was in extremely poor condition ("nel più deplorabile stato": Fabianich, 1845, p. 16). In a letter published by Sabalich in 1906 (p. 37), Smirich, conservator of ancient artworks of the city of Zadar, declared that the panel had been aggressively cleaned and retouched in the past, so that the lower part was irremediably damaged. He also suggested changing the location of the altarpiece in the church, because where it was on display (i.e., in the Chapel of the Crucifix) it was too exposed to the drying effect of the sun. Sabalich (1906, pp. 37-38) agreed with Smirich on the deleterious effect of the sun and on the necessity of relocating the picture, and he also added that the upper section was better conserved, probably because it had not been so much affected by humidity and heat from candles. Dudan (1921-1922), too pointed out the bad state of preservation, caused by humidity and the negligent conservation of the work. He emphasized, indeed, that after a recent treatment, the lower and the upper panels composing the altarpiece no longer matched as well as they had before. Around 1930 the painting underwent a conservation procedure performed by Alberto Colmignoli (the

panel showed “sollevamenti di mastice e prosciugamenti”. Serra, 1930, p. 538). Between 1980s and 1990s the artwork, including both the painted area and the carved wooden frame, was entirely restored (the treatment was promoted by the Institute for the Restoration of Works of Art, today Croatian Conservation Institute). The conservative history of the altarpiece and the results of the 1980s-1990s conservation procedure are discussed in the exhibition catalogues *Zavod za restauriranje umjetnina 1948-1983* (1983, pp. 72-75) and *Velika i mala slika – vrhunske zadarske umjetnine* (1996, pp. 11-15).

Bibliography:

Fabianich, 1845, pp. 16-17; Kukuljević Sakcinski, 1858, p. 140; Fabianich, 1864, pp. 13-14; Kukuljević Sakcinski, 1873, p. 36; Bianchi, 1877, p. 364; Fabianich, 1882, pp. 121-122; Sabalich, 1897, p. 105; Sabalich, 1906, pp. 30-38; Benevenia, 1909, pp. 132-133; Battara, 1911, pp. 104-105; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 215 (note 2); Sabalich, 1912, s.p.; Dudan, 1922, II, p. 390 (ristampa anastatica 1999); Bernardy, 1928, pp. 50, fig. p. 54; Praga, 1928, pp. 75-76; Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 133; Berenson, 1932, p. 64; *Catalogo delle cose d’arte…*, 1932, p. 131; Berenson, 1936, p. 55; Praga, 1935, pp. 305, 315; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 188; Collobi, 1939, p. 46, note 32; Perlini, 1943, pp. 42-48; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 27; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Fisković, 1959, pp. 50-51; Arslan, 1965, p. 168; Petricioli, 1980, pp. 118-121; Velnić, 1980, pp. 50, 51, 53, 63; *Zavod za restauriranje…*, 1983, pp. 11-15; Prijatelj Pavičič, 1995, pp. 49-51; *Velika i mala slika…*, 1996, pp. 11-15; Tomić, 1999, pp. 479-481; Tomić, 2010, pp. 121, 125; Tomić, 2011, pp. 37-38; Tomić, 2011, pp. 93-98; Jurković-Prijatelj Pavičić, 2020, pp. 225-285.

This big wooden altarpiece has an elaborate composition. At the centre a church with an open door and a Medieval triptych on the altar is seen in a hilly landscape. Above the church, in the sky, there is the Virgin holding the infant Jesus on her lap, and surrounded by angels, cherubim and seraphim disposed in a mandorla-shape structure to support her. The infant Jesus has a golden sphere in his left hand. The Virgin is crowned by God the Father who descends

from Heaven. Two angels (or archangels – the one on the left wearing armour could be the Archangel Michael) hold up her cloak to shelter two rows of kneeling saints on either side, the male saints on the left, the female saints on the right. Among the male saints, Saint John the Baptist (first saint of the upper row), Saint Peter and Saint Paul behind him and Saint Jerome (first saint of the lower row) have been recognised. Saint Jerome is the patron saint of Dalmatia and, from the 14th century, became the patron saint of the Franciscan province in which the Church of Saint Francis was included. There is a canonised pope next to him. Behind them there are canonised bishops and monks of the Franciscan order (Petricioli, 1980, p. 119). Among the female saints Saint Catherine with the spiked wheel (first saint of the upper row), and Mary Magdalen carrying the box of ointment (first saint of the lower row) have been recognised and next to her, positioned symmetrically to the Pope, there is an unidentified canonised nun. Behind them there are various other canonised nuns. Beneath the Virgin's feet hovers a horizontal quarter moon and, further down, a scroll reporting "HEC EST ARA CELI".

The lower part of the composition contains two groups of kneeling people, the men to the left, the women to the right. Some children and a dog are placed in the centre. The leading worshippers of the two groups are a Pope and a queen respectively, both holding a scroll with invocations to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The composition is contained within an oval area with a painted frame. At the four corners outside the oval frame the four symbols of the Evangelists with scrolls recording sentences from the Gospels are depicted.

The richly carved and gilded wooden frame is original. It shows a painted dove flanked by red cherubim in an oblong box at the top. "ALTARE PRIVILEGIATVM PRO DEFVNCTIS" written in the lower border of the frame was added after 1579 (Jurković-Prijatelj Pavičić, 2020, p. 226, note 3).

Since the 19th century, all the sources have recorded the painting as being in the Church of Saint Francis (part of the eponymous monastery) in Zadar (Croatia), where it is still on display. Today the altarpiece is in the Sacristy, but until the 20th century it was recorded as being in the Chapel of the Crucifix (Fabianich, 1845, 1864, 1882; Kukuljević Sakcinski, 1858, 1873; Bianchi, 1877;

Sabalich, 1897, 1906; Praga, 1928, p. 76), also called the Chapel of the Detrico Family (Dudan, 1921-22). This chapel was on the North side of the building and was composed of three arches open to the left nave of the church. The chapel had three altars: in the centre was that dedicated to *Saint John the Baptist*, on the right that of the *Immaculate Conception*, and on the left that consecrated to the *Sancte Marie de Gratia*. On this latter, as we will see, was exhibited Bastiani's altarpiece (several documents referred to the altar by calling it a chapel, which was somewhat misleading). The Chapel of the Crucifix was commissioned by the noble family Detrico. The building works started in 1480, at the request of Giovanni Detrico, *cavaliere e sopracomito* from Zara. Praga (1928, p. 78) reported that the chapel was finished in 1488, while Fabianich (1882, II, p. 167) postponed the date until after 1532, according to the testament of Giovanna, Giovanni Detrico's widow, who bequeathed some money to complete the chapel (See also Velnic, 1980, p. 52).

In volume 21 of the "Gazzetta di Zara", printed in 1844, the French painter Poiret mentioned the painting for the first time. He wrote: "Nella cappella del Crocifisso a sinistra avvi un grand Quadro della Vergine della Misericordia, dipinto a tempera del terzodecimo secolo, quadro mirabile per lo stile e per l'espressione, ma nel più deplorabile stato" (Poiret's comment was quoted by Fabianich, 1845, p. 16). Poiret, therefore, recorded the altarpiece in the chapel of the Crucifix and identified the subject as the "Virgin of Mercy". For its peculiar iconography, however, the painting had been believed, for a long time, to be a representation of the *Ecclesia Militans* and the *Ecclesia Triumphant*. The first to suggest this identification was Kukuljević Sakcinski in 1858. He also hypothesized that the church depicted in the painting was the *Ara Coeli* in Rome and that the natural landscape showed the hilly Roman countryside (Atanasije Matanić in 1997 supported this description. See Tomić, 2011, p. 97). Sabalich (1906, pp. 30-31) reported the comment of Father Luigi Pogatscnig (an enthusiast connoisseur of the artworks on display in the monastery), who identified the church and the landscape with the Porziuncola and the neighbourhood of Assisi, or, as an ideal, the Heavenly Jerusalem. Later, Fiskovic

(1959) suggested that the church and the rural scenery did not refer to any specific existing place but were imagined by the artist.

Archival documents retrieved by Benevenia (1909) and by Praga (1928) confirmed the original location of the painting as being in the church. Two testaments discovered by Praga, dated 1479 and 1487 are particularly important. In both documents, the testators donated some money for the decoration of the "Cappelle S. Marie de gratia". In his will, dated 1479, *ser Girolamo fu ser Niccolò de Begna* specified that the money was for the "anchone faciende super altari dicte cappelle". In addition, in the testament of Draga, widow of *mastro Niccolò orifice*, dated 1487, she requested the sale of "una sua cassa dipinta" and that any money obtained was "pro pictura seu ornamento palle capelle S. Marie de le gratie". A further will of 1476 gives evidence that the "altare beatissime Virginis Marie gratiarum" was already existent in the church at that time (Praga, 1928, pp. 75 [note 5], 76). The discovery of the archival documents recording the commission of an altarpiece for the "Cappelle S. Marie de gratia" convinced Giuseppe Praga to correctly identify the painting Bastiani's and to indicate the subject as being *Santa Maria delle Grazie* (*Our Lady of Mercy*). Given the fact that the discovered records often mentioned bequests for the execution of the altarpiece, Praga also suggested that its request was advanced by the Zadar citizens as an *ex-voto* painting to thank the Virgin, perhaps after a plague outbreak in the city. Thus, the scene depicted in the lower part, was not the *Ecclesia Militans*, but a real representation of the fulfilment of the vow and the donation of the artwork to the Church of Saint Francis that, in Praga's opinion, is the church portrayed (1928, p. 76). According to the documents, the altar kept the name *Cappelle S. Marie de Gratia* from at least 1476 to 1592, when in another testament it was referred to as *Ara Coeli*. Then it was known as *Altare Privilegiato in Ara Coeli* (1597 and 1612), or simply *Altar Privilegiato* (1608 and 1672). This last designation was made in 1586, as recorded by a lapidary inscription to the right of the altar (Benevenia, 1909, p. 125). As previously reported, the Detrico family started building the chapel in 1480, but the documents proved the altar of Our Lady was already in existence in 1476. Tomić (2011, p. 93) suggested that the altar was already

present on the north side of the church wall and was refurbished by the Detrico family.

When Poiret wrote about the painting, he attributed it to Carpaccio ("L'autore parmi il Carpaccio"), albeit he thought that Carpaccio was active in the 13th century (Fabianich, 1845, p. 16). After Poiret, for almost eighty years most scholars assigned the picture to Carpaccio: Fabianich (1845, 1864, 1882), Kukuljević Sakcinski (1858, 1873), Bianchi (1877), Sabalich (by the young Carpaccio: 1897, 1906, 1912), Battara (1911). Benevenia (1912) did not want to commit himself to ascribing the painting to Carpaccio ("Non io però m'impanco a giudice, ed altri dirà quindi se la tavola che serve di pala all'altare privilegiato sia opera o no di Vittore Carpaccio", p. 132), while Borenius (1912) tentatively suggested that it was "supposed Carpaccio's". Bianchi recorded that in a "cronaca" the artwork was given to "Scuola del Palma" (1877, p. 364, note). The first scholar who (in some ways accidentally) noticed some similarities with Bastiani was Sabalich (1906, p. 34), but he still fiercely supported the attribution to Carpaccio. The first scholar to suggest Lazzaro Bastiani as the painter who executed the Zadar altarpiece was Dudan (1921-22). The ascription was accepted by most scholars and art historians thereafter who wrote about the church and/or the painting: Bernardy (1928), Praga (1928), Serra (1930), Perlini (1943), Petricioli (1980), Prijatelj Pavičić (1995), Tomić (1999, 2010, 2011) and Jurković-Prijatelj Pavičić (2020). Perlini (1943, p. 45) recorded that Antonio Zink, a Zadar citizen who had moved to Rome, published a letter in volume 22 of the journal "Dalmata", printed in 1913. Here Zink declared that in 1912 two young Italian scholars, Giuseppe Fiocco and Carlo Anti, visited Zadar and took a photograph of the altarpiece. They showed the picture to Giacomo De Nicola, pupil of Adolfo Venturi, who, in turn, showed it to his mentor. Fiocco, Anti, De Nicola, and Venturi were all convinced that the artist was Bastiani. Even those art historians that specifically studied Bastiani agreed on the attribution to this artist (Vavalà, 1931; Van Marle, 1936; Collobi, 1939; Berenson, 1932, 1936, 1957, 1958). Only Cecchelli (1932) rejected the ascription because, in his view, the vigorous style and the strict composition of the painting are not typical of Bastiani, but closer to Giovanni Bellini. Cecchelli,

however, assigned the altarpiece to an anonymous Veneto painter, because of some archaic elements characteristic of provincial art. Probably influenced by Cecchelli, Praga, who in 1928 had agreed on Bastiani as artist, subsequently changed the ascription to a painter following the manner of Giovanni Bellini (1935, pp. 305, 315).

Vavalà (1931) noticed stylistic resemblances between the Zadar panel, especially in the upper part, and the *Saint Veneranda altarpiece*, claiming that "this is undoubtedly a mature, if not a late production" (surely made after the 1484 Murano *lunette*), but the attitude of the infant Jesus refers back to simple and primitive *Madonnas*, such as the one in Gallerie dell'Accademia. Van Marle (1936) also found similarities with the *Veneranda Enthroned* and suggested a period of execution after 1484, when, in his opinion, Bastiani came under influence of Alvise Vivarini. For Collobi (1939) this is a work redolent of the complex compositions produced by Gentile Bellini but being somewhat 'overcrowded' it is less successful than the work that Bastiani was attempting to emulate, which he had perhaps seen in the Scuola di San Marco around 1470. To date the work, the scholar recorded that the altarpiece was requested by G. Belli in his testament of 1480. I have not found this testament among the documents published by Fabianich (1864), Sabalich (1906) or Praga (1928). It might be that Collobi got confused with the building works of the Chapel of the Crucifix by the Detrico family which commenced in 1480. It is unlikely that she mentioned a document not recorded by those scholars who searched for archival papers concerning the commission of the painting. Collobi, however, argued that the picture was painted later, in the 1480s, because it shows similarities to the Murano *lunette*. Basing their comments on stylistic grounds, art historians placed the realisation of the painting in the second half of 1480s. According to the archival sources published by Praga in 1928, Cecchelli (1935) dated the panel around 1480, as the first record that mention its commission was from 1479.

In the last thirty years, art historian Ivana Prijatelj Pavičič has extensively researched the painting and realised that the key to correctly interpreting its iconography, to understanding the reason for its commission and to identifying

the period of execution is not only to be found in the archival records, but also in the identification of the numerous people portrayed. In a study published in 1994 (*Loretske teme: novi podaci o štovanju Loretske Bogorodice u likovnim umjetnostima na području Ilirika*, Vitagraf, Rijeka) and then summarised in an article of 1995, Prijatelj Pavičič recognised several kneeling worshippers in the lower area: queen Caterina Cornaro and Pope Sixtus IV (already identified by Cecchelli, 1932, p. 131) as the two leading adorers, Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary and Croatia and his wife Beatrice of Aragon, Ferdinand II of Aragon and his wife Isabella I of Castile, cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, the cardinal and admiral of the papal fleet Oliviero Carafa, the Doge and admiral Pietro Mocenigo and, finally, friar James of the Marches. Having identified the people portrayed, the scholar suggested that the painting is linked to the Ottoman invasions in the Balkans that occurred in the 1470s. The iconography of the painting, therefore, could be described, once again, as *Ecclesia Militans* and *Ecclesia Triumphant*. The Pope is the Vicarius of Christ and the "defensor pacis", and the sovereigns and cardinals around him are the Christian soldiers that struggle against the Ottoman enemy. The saints in the upper part of the picture represent the *Church Triumphant*. The Virgin Mary plays an intermediary role between God the Father and the men on Earth, who can receive God's grace through her.

According to the traditional account, when the Holy House where the Virgin Mary was born and lived was carried by angels from Nazareth to Loreto, it was rested en route in Croatia for a given period. For this reason, the Illyrians had a specific veneration for the Blessed Virgin of Loreto. From these premises, Prijatelj Pavičič suggested that the church depicted in Bastiani's altarpiece was the Basilica della Santa Casa in Loreto as it was in the second half of the 15th century and that the landscape showed the surroundings of Loreto. For the composition and the depiction of the Santa Casa, the painting, therefore, had also a votive meaning.

Concerning the commission and the execution of the altarpiece, Prijatelj Pavičič pointed out that in 1476 a fire occurred in the archive of the Monastery of Saint Francis, probably destroying the important documents that would

have revealed the name of the patron and the reason for the request of the work. She dated the painting in 1476 however, as in that year Pope Sixtus IV visited Loreto, the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament for the "Schiavone" which was built close to the church of Loreto, and the "altare beatissime Virginis Marie gratiarum" in Zadar was mentioned for the first time in a will discovered by Praga.

Tomić observed that, according to the archival records, in 1487 the altarpiece was not yet completed (see also Petricioli, 1980, p. 120), or it was requested that year and finished shortly after (Tomić, 2011, p. 96. For further bibliography, please refer to Jurković-Prijatelj Pavičić, 2020, p. 227 [notes 10-12]).

The latest results of the research carried out on the Zadar panel were published in a comprehensive article by Jurković and Prijatelj Pavičić in 2020. Here the scholars suggested new identifications of the portrayed worshippers and corrected the identities of some of the older ones (for instance, Matthias Corvinus King of Hungary and Croatia was recognised as Ferdinand or Ferrant I of Naples. For the identification of all the figures please see pp. 233-263). Jurković and Prijatelj Pavičić conjected that the people depicted were the members of the anti-Ottoman league that Pope Sixtus IV and Ferrant of Naples formed to defeat the Ottomans that invaded the city of Otranto between 1480 and 1481. The scholars suggested that, given the accurate portraits in the painting, the commissioner must have provided Bastiani with portraits of the people to be depicted. Among the people identified there are Marco Barbo and Ercole I d'Este, who had frequent contact with Venice and might have known Bastiani, and others such as Giovanni d'Aragona, Girolamo Basso della Rovere and Giuliano della Rovere, who might had got in touch with Bastiani via Barbo and Este. Since Marco Barco is painted *en face*, the authors wondered if he might have been a crucial figure for the commission of the artwork or for its financing, but lacking the archival documents, they could have not confirmed this hypothesis. Concerning the period of execution, Jurković and Prijatelj Pavičić dated the altarpiece after the Second Conspiracy of the Barons, around 1487-1488. After 1488 the members of the league no longer agreed on a

common political activity and, consequently, could not have been depicted together in a painting. This date also fits well with the information retrieved from the few archival records collected. The church has been again identified as the Basilica della Santa Casa in Loreto, emphasizing the devotion the members of the league had for Our Lady of Loreto, especially Pope Sixtus IV and his nephews, the cardinals Giuliano della Rovere and Girolamo Basso. The Pope and the cardinals also established a place of pilgrimage here dedicated to the Virgin Mary for those who could not go to the Holy Land. This also became the centre of the Church that triumphed against the Ottoman enemy (Church Triumphant). The representation of the Sanctuary of Loreto would also represent a metaphor of the mission of the Church on Earth. In addition, Sixtus IV and then Giuliano, when he became Pope Julius II, persistently advocated the recognition of the Franciscan interpretation of Mary's immaculate conception, so during their pontificates the Basilica della Santa Casa in Loreto became extremely important from a theological point of view. Sixtus IV also was the first pope to be officially devoted to Mary as Our Lady of Mercy. In the altarpiece the Virgin is also depicted as the Queen of Heaven and Earth, coronated by God the Father and invoked by the worshippers on Earth. Moreover, she is the leader of the Ecclesia Triumphant against the infidels (the Ottomans).

To conclude, the interpretation of the painting discussed by Jurković and Prijatelj Pavičić is convincing and could be the right path to follow for further research on the altarpiece, for instance regarding the commission. The suggested date of 1487-1488 seems convincing and in accordance with the stylistic analysis.



Image retrieved from Perović, 2018

Number: AP66

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Adoration of the Magi*

Location: Zagreb (Croatia), Mimara Museum (inv. n. ATM 685)

Date: 1470 c.

Material and dimensions: panel, 27.5 x 31 cm

Technique: tempera and oil

Provenance: unknown.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: the overall condition of the painting is fair.

Bibliography: Lucco, 1990, II, pp. 440, 446; Perović, 2018; Russo, 2018, p. 17 (note 43).

The small panel depicts the episode of the adoration of the Magi, who came to bring gifts to the new-born Jesus. In the foreground, on the left, the standing Saint Joseph, leans upon a wooden stick, and the kneeling Madonna, with her hands joined in prayer, gazes at the naked infant Jesus, who lays on a straw manger placed in perspective at the centre of the scene. Behind the manger are an ox and donkey. The Holy Family is positioned under the roof of a shed, while outside, on the right, there are the three kings with their servants. In front of the Child, opposite the Madonna, an elderly Melchior kneels on one knee and worships Jesus. He has taken off his crown and put it on the ground, next to his gift, a box shaped like a small sarcophagus. Behind him the young Caspar and older Balthazar are represented standing and in lively conversation. They are each holding a sort of pyx, their gifts to the infant. The three Magi are clothed in rich garments, with their vestments are covered in golden decorated brocade mantles. Moreover, they all have a golden crown enriched with pearls and Balthazar wears a turban. The scene is set in a natural landscape, with trees, a river, and hills fading into the background. In the distance the geometrical outline of a fortified city is depicted, with a rectangular tower in the centre. The sky is not blue, but gold. From top right, a golden flash points to the manger with the infant Jesus. This is the tail of the comet that led the Magi to the place where the Saviour was born.

The painting entered the Mimara Museum collection as a work said to be by Gentile da Fabriano, an attribution immediately considered uncertain. The panel was thus described loosely as "Italian school of the mid-XV century". In later years the museum label was changed, giving the ascription to the "Florentine school of the first half of the XVI century" (Perović, 2018). In 1990 Lucco assigned the artwork to Lazzaro Bastiani (p. 446), an attribution recently supported by Perović (2018) and Russo (2018, p. 17 [note 43]).

An immediate comparison must be advanced with Bastiani's *Adoration of the Magi* in the Frick Collection of New York, as the two panels share some common aspects. For instance, the three kings have been painted in both cases as an old man who is virtually bald and with a long grey beard (Melchior), a mature man with brown beard and wearing a turban (Balthazar) and a young

man with curly blond hair (Caspar). Their facial features are similar in the two paintings, although in the New York version there has been more research done in this particular area. Moreover, in both works Melchior's crown has been placed on the ground and Caspar holds the gift in his left hand, while his right hand is raised with the fingers stretched out and bent at the joints. In the Frick *Adoration* the Kings' garments are sumptuous, however, in the Mimara picture they also wear golden mantles decorated with Bastiani's typical pomegranate brocade pattern. A substantial difference between the two paintings is in the spatial construction. In the Zagreb panel the shed and the manger where the infant Jesus lies are painted in perspective, but this approach is limited to the foreground elements only (one should also compare the rendering of Melchior's gift), while in the background the perspective lines are not followed elsewhere, as Bastiani used to do in his most typical works (for instance in the 1480 *Nativity*). On the contrary, the spatial definition of the whole scene is studied in the New York painting, as the perspective lines of the shed on the right and of the walled city on the left point to the horizon. A further comparison must be advanced, in my opinion, with the natural hilly landscape with globular trees and the golden sky of the small panels showing *Saint Jerome and a nun* and *Saint Catherine* in Museo Diocesano of Milan, and *Saints Cosmas and Damian* in Mint Museum of Charlotte, which I dated between 1465 and 1470, although the horizontal line is higher in the Mimara picture suggesting more depth.

Lucco dated the Frick *Adoration* between 1473 and 1475, assuming the Mimara one to be contemporary (1990, p. 446). Perović more loosely suggested the 1470s (2018, p. 29) and Russo placed it in 1475 (2018, p. 17 [note 43]). Reflecting upon previous analyses of the two artworks, I would tentatively suggest the execution date of the Croatian panel to be around 1470.

5.2. REJECTED PAINTINGS



Number: RP01

Author: Giovanni Mansueti (?)

Title: *Portrait of philosopher Lucio Crasso*

Location: Bergamo (Italy), Accademia Carrara (purchased in 1804 – inv. n. 58AC00027)

Date: 1490s

Material and dimensions: canvas transferred from panel, 32.3 x 26.3 cm

Inscription: "LVCIO CRASSO PHILOSOPHO", apocryphal inscription on the top central area of the painting.

Technique: tempera and oil

Provenance: Venice, Salvatore Orsetti private collection (until 1804).

Past exhibitions: *Renaissance: 15th & 16th century Italian paintings from the Accademia Carrara, Bergamo* (Canberra, National Gallery of Australia, 9th December 2011 – 9th April 2012).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:
1835-1836, Alessandro Brison; 1864, Giuseppe Fumagalli; 2017, Centro Conservazione e Restauro "La Venaria Reale".

Bibliography:
Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 214 (note 4); *Catalogo…*, 1881, p. 27 (n. 114); Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 77 (ill.), 78; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 215 (note 2); Ricci, 1912, p. 44 (n. 166); A. Venturi, 1915, p. 392; Locatelli Milesi, 1916, p. 104; V. Moschini, 1930, p. 4; Ricci, 1930, p. 119 (n. 166); Fiocco, 1931, p. 98; Berenson, 1932, p. 325; Morassi, 1934, p. 47 (n. 166); Van Marle, 1935, XVII, p. 200 (note 1); Berenson, 1936, p. 289; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, pp. 43-44, note 25; *Elenco…*, 1954, p. 5 (n. 166, cat. 49); *Elenco…*, 1955, p. 7 (n. 166, cat. 49); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 108; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 111; *Immissione…*, 1958, p. 5 (n. 27); Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 220 (V. 29); Russoli, 1967, p. 29; Russoli, 1976, p. 29; Rossi, 1979, p. 43; Rossi, 1987, pp. 17, 55, n. 447; Giannini, 1988, p. 86; Rossi, 1988, p. 38, n. 447; Anderson, 2011, pp. 144-145 (cat. 36); Piccolo, 2014-2015, p. 292; Valagussa, 2018, pp. 257-260 [cat. III.10].

This small painting shows the portrait of a middle-aged man, in three-quarter profile, dressed in a sober black suit over a white shirt that can be distinguished on the collar, and wearing a black spherical cap on his head. The solemn attitude of the figure is further underlined by his lined face, smirk, and bright eyes, suggesting that he is absorbed in his thoughts. The background is flat, coloured in blue. On top of the picture an apocryphal inscription records "LVCIO CRASSO PHILOSOPHO". So far, it has been impossible to determine whether the inscription is just a later addition, or if it traces over an old original inscription. Valagussa, in accordance with Rossi (1979, p. 43), believes that Lucio Crasso the inscription refers to is not the philosopher, but rather the Roman orator and politician (2018, p. 257). He also added that three members of a Crasso family from Ragusa moved to Padua in an unspecified date and perhaps requested the portrait of an illustrious ancestor (Valagussa, 2018, p. 260).

Formerly in Salvatore Orsetti collection in Venice, with an attribution to Giovanni Bellini (*Catalogo…*, 1803, p. X), the painting entered the Accademia Carrara in 1804. The acquisition followed the visit to Orsetti by count Carlo Marenzo, who was asked to evaluate the collection for a possible purchase by the Accademia. Marenzo judged the work as "mediocre" for its conservation status. He also rejected the ascription to Bellini and assigned it to Vittore Carpaccio, reporting that on the back of the panel someone in the past wrote the name "Masaccio Fiorentino", an attribution that cannot even be taken into consideration today (Valagussa, 2018, p. 257). The attribution of the picture has long been discussed among art historians, although in the Accademia Carrara catalogues the name of Carpaccio has been accepted at least until 1964 (*Catalogo…*, 1881, p. 27 (n. 114); Ricci, 1912, p. 44 (n. 166); Ricci, 1930, p. 119 (n. 166); *Elenco…*, 1954, p. 5 (n. 166, cat. 49); *Elenco…*, 1955, p. 7 (n. 166, cat. 49); Ottino Della Chiesa, 1964, p. 72), with the only exception of Morassi, who generically gave it to "Scuola veneziana" (1934, p.47 [n. 166]), supported also by Fiocco's same opinion in his monography on Carpaccio (1932, p. 98). However, from Crowe and Cavalcaselle onwards the debate seems to have been focused on Mansueti or Carpaccio as the painter of this portrait. The first scholars that supported the attribution to Mansueti were Crowe and Cavalcaselle ("probably by Mansueti": 1871, I, p. 214 [note 4]; Borenius, 1912, p. 215 [note 2]). Before the publication of their *History*, Cavalcaselle saw the painting in Accademia Carrara and in his notes reported the following comment "[…] Carpaccio, no Mansueti […]". Piccolo, 2014-2015, p. 292). Other art historians that Ludwig and Molmenti (1906, pp. 77 (ill.), 78), Vittorio Moschini (1930, p. 4), Berenson (1932, p. 325; 1936, p. 289; 1957, I, p. 108; 1958, I, p. 111), Van Marle (1935, XVII, p. 200 [note 1]), and finally Fiocco, who expressed in favour of this opinion in a manuscript comment of his personal copy of the 1954 *Elenco* (p. 5). Conversely, the promoters of the ascription to Bastiani were Adolfo Venturi (1915), who believed the portrait was derived from the second to last standing man on the left side of the *Offering of the Relic*, Locatelli Milesi (1916), Collobi (who discarded Venturi's comparison with the man in the *telero*. 1939), Heinemann (who accepted the attribution under

reserve, “forse di Lazzaro Bastiani”. 1962), and Anderson (2011), including all the Accademia Carrara catalogues from 1967 (Russoli) to the last one published in 2018 (Valagussa. Before: Russoli, 1976; Rossi, 1979, 1987, 1988,). Casu (1996) and Russo (2017, 2018, 2019) did not mention the portrait in their publications on Bastiani’s early production.

I do not feel to accept the attribution to Bastiani. I rather find in this picture more convincing comparisons with certain Giovanni Mansueti’s portraits (see, for instance, the unespressive eyes and the marked facial features) in the teleri for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, even though his typical brilliant tones are not present in the Bergamo work (probably because of the troubled preservation history of the painting).

At this point, it must be underlined that Mansueti’s discipleship and later close relationship with Gentile Bellini (Matino, 2010, pp. 18-28), who was one of the most talented, skilled, and appreciated portraitists of Venice in the second half of the 15th century, not only might have influenced his practice of portrait painting but might represent further evidence to assign him the picture in the Accademia Carrara.



Number: RP02

Artist: Andrea da Murano

Title: *Deposition* or *Lamentation Over the Dead Christ*

Location: Cittadella (Padua, Italy), Museo del Duomo

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 206 x 137 cm

Provenance: Cittadella (Padua), Church of Santa Maria del Torresino.

Bibliography: Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 217, note 2, presented as Bastiani's; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 23, ascribed to Bastiani; Borenius, 1912, I, p. 219-220, note 3, as Bastiani; De Nicolò Salmazo, 1976, p. 56 and previous bibliography, attributed to Andrea da Murano.



Number: RP03

Artist: Veneto artist, 15th century

Title: *Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to Carry His Cross*

Date: Mid-15th century

Location: Cosenza (Calabria, Italy), Galleria Nazionale, Palazzo Arnone (from 2009)

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 25.5 x 29.3 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Florence, Private collection; Collezione della Cassa di Risparmio di Calabria e di Lucania; Raccolta Banca Carime; Arte UBI Banca.

Past exhibitions: *La collezione della Cassa di Risparmio di Calabria e di Lucania* (Cosenza, Convento di San Francesco, October – November 1986); *La banca e*

l'arte: la collezione della Cassa di Risparmio di Calabria e di Lucania (Cosenza, 30 June – 25 July 1997).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: ?, Luigi Cavenaghi (*La collezione…*, 1986, p. 20).

The panel was cut and slightly shortened on the left side. According to Longhi, Cavenaghi restored an abrasion on that side (*La collezione…*, 1986, p. 20).

Bibliography:

Longhi, 1946, pp. 54-55 (n. 41), attributed to Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, hypothetically as part of the predella of the Gattamelata altarpiece; Fiocco, 1950, p. 10, ascribed to Jacopo da Montagnana; *La collezione…* 1986, pp. 20-23, as Workshop of the Bellinis; Conti, 1994, p. 264, assigned to a Venetian master who would have mechanically absorbed Giovanni Bellini's inventions, perhaps Gentile Bellini; Heinemann, 1991, p. 78 (n. V. 39 bis), as executed by a collaborator of Gentile Bellini, namely Giovanni Mansueti; *La banca e l'arte…*, 1997, pp. 16-17, given to Jacopo, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini; Lucco, 2019, p. 14, note 31, rejected Conti's opinion.

The panel was presented/introduced for the first time by Roberto Longhi in his *Viatico per cinque secoli di pittura veneziana* (1946). The scholar believed it was realised in collaboration by Giovanni and Gentile Bellini in the1460s. Since then, the painting has been downgraded to being work executed by a painter active in Bellinis' *milieu* (*La collezione…* 1986; Conti, 1994; Heinemann, 1991). The attribution to Bastiani is a recent suggestion when the panel entered the Galleria Nazionale of Cosenza. In general, the picture shows the influence of Mantegna (especially in the natural background) and the Bellinis. The work can safely be ascribed to a Veneto painter of the 15th century, perhaps an artist from the mainland.



Number: RP04

Artist: Giovanni Bellini

Title: *Genzano polyptych* **(***Madonna and Child Enthroned; Saint Anthony the Abbot and Saint Peter; Saint John the Baptist and Saint Sebastian; Archangel Gabriel and Christ Crucified; Virgin Annunciate and Saint Francis; Nativity; Christ and the Apostles; Adoration of the Magi)*

Location: Genzano di Lucania (Potenza, Italy), Church of Santa Maria della Platea (Chiesa Madre)

Date: 1470 c.

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 37 x 56 cm (upper register); 112 x 57 cm (Madonna and Child); 70 x 57 cm (lower register); 12 x 182 cm (predella)

Technique: tempera

Bibliography: Rizzi, 1966, p. 206; Rizzi, 1969, pp. 21-31, assigned to Lazzaro Bastiani; Boskovits, 1992, p. 27, attributed to Giovanni Bellini; Casu, 1996, 67, confirmed the ascription to Giovanni Bellini; Lucco, 2019, pp. 335-337 and previous bibliography, as Giovanni Bellini.



Number: RP05

Author: Giovanni Bellini

Title: *Madonna and Child*

Location: Harewood (Leeds, U.K.), Harewood House Trust (inv. n. HHTP: 2001.1.4)

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 71.2 x 53.4 cm

Provenance: Legnago (Verona), private collection; Milan, Fratelli Grandi; London, Arthur Ruck private collection; Harewood House, Earl of Harewood private collection (1919).

Bibliography:

Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 132, as Lazzaro Bastiani; Lucco, 2019, pp. 304-305 (Cat. 12) and previous bibliography, attributed to Giovanni Bellini by all the following authors.



Number: RP06

Artist: Gentile and Giovanni Bellini

Title: *The Virgin and Child with Saints Christopher and John the Baptist, and Doge Giovanni Mocenigo*

Location: London (U.K.), The National Gallery (inv. n. NG 750)

Material and dimensions: canvas, 184.2 x 295.9 cm

Inscription: "VRBEM REM VE/NETAM SERVA/ VENETVMQUE/ SENATVM/ ET MIHI SI ME/REOR VIRGO/SVPERNA (F)AVE", on the memorial stone in the middle.

Bibliography: Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900, p. 278; Logan, 1903, pp. 317, 319; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 19-21; L. Venturi, 1907, pp. 282-283; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, pp. 190-192 (note 2); Collobi, 1939, p. 53; Pallucchini, 1951, p. 196; Lucco, 2019, pp. 417-419 (cat. 71) and previous bibliography.



Number: RP07

Artist: Giovanni Bellini

Title: *Madonna and Child* or *Trivulzio Madonna*

Location: Milan (Italy), Pinacoteca del Castello Sforzesco (inv. n. 542)

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 78 x 50 cm

Inscriptions: "IO… ES / BE… US", on the cartouche attached to the parapet

Provenance: Milan, Prince Trivulzio private collection (until 1935).

Bibliography: Sandberg-Vavalà, 1931, p. 132, ascribed to Bastiani; Tempestini, 2000, pp. 18, 186, hypothetically to Bastiani; Lucco, 2019, pp. 301-302 (Cat. 10) and previous bibliography, recognised as Giovanni Bellini's by all the previous and following scholars.



Image retrieved from Sotheby's, *Important Old Master Paintings*, 17/1/1985

Number: RP08

Artist: Venetian artist, mid-15th century

Title: *Saint Peter* and *Saint Paul*

Location: New York (New York, U.S.A.), Martello Collection

Date:

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 45.5 x 15 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Florence, Art market (1950 c.); Battle (East Sussex, U.K.), Ashburnham Place; Sotheby's, The Ashburnham Collection, London, 24/6/1953, lot 33; Greenwich (Connecticut, U.S.A.), Mr & Mrs T.S. Hyland; Sotheby's, *Important Old Master Paintings*, 17/1/1985, lot 40, as by Bartolomeo Vivarini.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1992 c.
Before entering the Martello Collection, the panels underwent an aggressive cleaning that caused the diminution of the superficial glazing and small paint losses, that were filled during a second conservation treatment carried out around 1992.

Bibliography:
Boskovits, 1992, pp. 24-27; Casu, 1996, pp. 63-64.

Sold as works by Bartolomeo Vivarini in Sotheby's auction of 1985, the panels were ascribed by Miklos Boskovits (1992) to the young Lazzaro Bastiani at a time when the painter was influenced by Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini. Casu agreed with this attribution, suggesting a comparison with the upper panels of Antonio and Bartolomeo's Bologna polyptych, dated 1450. Russo (2018) did not include the two saints in Martello's collection in Bastiani's early catalogue. I would discard the attribution to our artist since I cannot see strong resemblances with Bastiani's early works. I believe that the panels could be attributed to an anonymous Venetian painter, most likely of the Vivarinis' *milieu*, who was active around the mid-15th century.



Number: RP09

Artist: Michele da Verona (?)

Title: *Dispute between Athena and Poseidon for Supremacy over Attica*

Location: Unknown

Material and dimensions: wood panel, transferred to canvas and then fixed on panel, 148 x 178 cm

Provenance: Vienna, Miethke Galerie (1906); Vienna, Stephan von Auspitz collection (by 1925 to shortly before 1931); Vaduz, private collection (1969-1978); Sotheby's, London, *Old Master Paintings*, 8/7/1987, lot 25; Phillips, London, 11/12/2001, lot 114; Koller, Zurich, 20-23 March 2007, A140/2, lot 3006; Newark (Delaware, U.S.A.), Alana collection; Florence, Fabrizio Moretti; Sotheby's, New York, *Selected Renaissance and Mannerist Works of Art Assembled by Fabrizio Moretti*, 29/1/2015, lot 135.

Bibliography: Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 23, presented as Bastiani's; Fogolari, 1932, p. 286, given to Carpaccio; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, pp. 179-182, as possibly by Bastiani; Collobi, 1939, p. 152, rejected the attribution to Carpaccio, suggested Michele da Verona as artist; Vinco, 2011, pp. 186-192 (Cat. 29) and previous bibliography, ascribed to Michele da Verona.



Number: RP10

Author: Venetian painter, last quarter of the 15th century

Title: *Saint Michael Archangel*

Location: Unknown

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 73.5 x 90 cm

Provenance: Conegliano, G. Gera collection (as by Cima da Conegliano); Frederik Muller & C., *Collection Marczell de Nemès, Amsterdam*, 13-14/11/1928, lot 20 (ascribed to Bastiani by L. Venturi); Zurig, Abegg-Stockar collection; Christie's, *Important old master pictures…*, London, 8/7/1988, lot 73; Sotheby's, *Old Master Paintings*, Milan, 28/11/2006, lot 259 (attributed to Bastiani).

Bibliography:

Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 226 (note 2), as by Benedetto Diana; Borenius 1912, vol. I, p. 229 (note 2), as work by Benedetto Diana; Gronau, 1924, pp. 59-65, ascribed to Vittore Carpaccio; A. Venturi, 1927, pp. 255-256, assigned to

Vittore Carpaccio; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, pp. 42-43, note 22, attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 27, confirmed the ascription to Bastiani; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27, as by Bastiani; Conti, 1977, p. 59, ascribed to Bastiani.

Variously ascribed to Benedetto Diana, Vittore Carpaccio and Lazzaro Bastiani by the scholars. None of these attributions are convincing. It can be generally given to an anonymous Venetian painter active in the last quarter of the 15th century.



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Number: RP11

Artist: Alvise Vivarini

Title: *Madonna and Child, Archangel Gabriel, Virgin Annunciate*

Location: Venice (Italy), Correr Museum (from 1830, inv. n. CI. I 0355)

Date: 1465-1470

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 45 x 80 cm

Technique: tempera and oil

Provenance: Venice, Teodoro Correr private collection (until 1830).

Past exhibitions: *Attorno a Tiziano. L'annunciazione e la luce verso il contemporaneo* (Mestre, Centro culturale Candiani, 14th April – 2 July 2017); *Venetia 1600. Nascite e rinascite* (Venice, Doge's Palace, 4th September 2021 – 25th March 2022).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1954, Pedrocco (Mariacher, 1957, pp. 30-31); 1999, Piovan (Conservation report); 2020, de Manincor, IRR.

Bibliography:

Guida…,1885, p. 101 (n. 47), assigned to an anonymous artist of the early 16th century; *Elenco…*, 1899, p. 243 (n. 50), as an anonymous artist of the early 16th century; A. Venturi 1914, VII/3, p, 338, ascribed to a follower of Bartolomeo

Vivarini; Berenson, 1932, p. 64, attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani; Van Marle, 1935, XVII, p. 49, given to Quirizio da Murano; Berenson, 1936, p. 55, as Bastiani; Collobi, 1939, p. 48, downgraded to being a product of Bastiani's workshop; *Civico museo…*, 1949, p. 30, assigned to Bastiani; Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26, as Bastiani; Mariacher, 1957, pp. 30-31, attributed to Bastiani; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27, as Bastiani; Ballarin, 1968, p. 253, as Bastiani's workshop; Romanelli, 1984, p. 82, as Bastiani; Casu, 1996, p. 63, ascribed to Bastiani; Belli-Barbero, 2017, p. 108 (n. 11), as Bastiani; *Venetia 1600…*, 2021, p. 350 (n. 2a.1), given to Bastiani.

Attributed to Bastiani by Berenson (1932, 1936), the triptych was ascribed to our painter by the all the following scholars, except for Van Marle (1935) and Collobi (1939), who respectively assigned the work to Quirizio da Murano and to Bastiani's workshop (this latter opinion was also accepted by Ballarin, 1968). Mariacher (1957) observed that for the iconography and some harsh features (for instance, in the angel's drapery) Bastiani was influenced by Alvise and Bartolomeo Vivarini, dating the work to the 1480s. Casu (1996) postponed the execution further to 1490, stating that the compositional scheme of the Virgin and infant Jesus pair was a variation of the *Madonna of Humility* in the Correr Museum, which in turn was derived from a *Madonna and Child* archetype/model by Antonio Vivarini, whose location is unknown.

Although most art historians agreed on attributing the painting to Bastiani, I am not fully convinced of this ascription: the underdrawing revealed by the recent IRR analysis is not characteristic of Bastiani and, in general, the style of the three panels is heterogeneous. The faces of the Virgin and infant Jesus-faces are inspired by Bartolomeo's Vivarini's works, while the compositional scheme of the pair seems to be derived straightforwardly from the central part of the *Galatina polyptych*, which has been ascribed to Antonio Vivarini, aided by Bartolomeo and other collaborators, and dated between 1455 and 1460 (*L'oro, la santità e la gloria…*, 2020, pp. 64-75). The side panels depicting the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin annunciate are rather sketchier and less refined. This is also confirmed by the infrared reflectography analysis, which

shows a roughly outlined underdrawing, including incisions in the Virgin's mantle. The overall figure of the archangel, as well as the marked way that his tunic is folded clearly brings to mind the angel kneeling on the left of the *Cristo Passo* in Alvise Vivarini's *Pentecost polyptych* of 1478, originally in the Franciscan convent of Santo Spirito in Feltre, and today in the Gemäldegalerie (perhaps the *cimasa* of the polyptych was started by Antonio, and later reworked by Alvise; see Russo, 2020b, p. 46). The archangel can be further compared to Antonio Vivarini's *Archangel Gabriel* in the Matthiesen Gallery (London), a work that recently Russo (2020a, pp. 99-112) identified as being part of the polyptych that Antonio realised in the early 1460s (1460-1464 c.) for the altar of the Scuola Piccola di San Girolamo, and that was mentioned by several historic authors. Another feature in common with Alvise Vivarini is the landscape. This brings to mind some of his early works, such as *The Penitent Saint Jerome* and in *Three Saints*, both on display in the Accademia Carrara (Bergamo) and dated between 1468 and 1471 (Russo, 2020b, p. 48).

Given the abovementioned elements, the painter of the Correr triptych could be an artist of the Vivarinis' *milieu*. Recently, Gianmarco Russo suggested verbally that the young Alvise Vivarini executed the painting. Personally, I agree with this attribution. I would further propose the period of execution to be around the mid-1460s, or shortly after, when Alvise, at the beginning of his career, was still influenced by his father and uncle.

Further bibliography:

Russo, 2020a, pp. 99-112; Russo, 2020b, pp. 45-51.



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Number: RP12

Artist: Workshop of Gentile Bellini

Title: *Portrait of Doge Francesco Foscari*

Location: Venice (Italy), Correr Museum (inv. n. CI. I n. 0014)

Material and dimensions: wood panel, 52 x 41 cm

Technique: tempera

Provenance: Venice, Teodoro Correr private collection (1830).

Past exhibitions: *Ritratto italiano nei secoli* (Belgrade, Prince Paul Museum, 1938); *I capolavori dei musei veneti* (Venice, 1946); *Trésors de l'art vénitien* (Lausanne, Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts, 1947); *Venezia e l'Islam 828-1797* (Venice, Palazzo Ducale, 28th July – 25th November 2007); *Venezia 1600: nascite e rinascite* (Venice, Palazzo Ducale, 4th September 2021 – 25th March 2022).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments:

1953, x-radiography (Mariacher, 1957, p. 33); 2020, de Manincor, IRR.

The reflectogram revealed small, restored areas following the outline of Doge's face.

Bibliography:

Zanotto, 1856, p. 397; Lazari, 1859, p. 4; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, pp. 121-122, note 1; Jacobsen, 1894, pp. 259-260; *Elenco…*, 1899, p. 246 (n. 19); Lafenestre-Richtenberger, 1907, p. 253; Reinach, 1907, p. 450; L. Venturi, 1907, p. 186; Ricci, 1908, p. 22; *Allgemeines Lexikon…*, 1909, p. 254, as Jacopo Bellini; *Guida…*, 1909, p. 125; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1912, p. 122 (note 4); Testi, 1915, pp. 283-285, fig. 283; A. Venturi, 1915, p. 248, note 2; Planiscig, 1928, p. 61; Berenson, 1932, p. 68; Longhi, 1934, ed. cons. 1958[2], p. 97 (note 59); Van Marle, XVII, 1935, pp. 136, 144; Berenson, 1936, p. 59; *La mostra del ritratto…*, 1938, p. 24 (n. 26); Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 38; *I capolavori…*, 1946, p. 49 (n. 99); *Trésors…*, 1947, p. 63 (n. 25); Muraro, 1948, p. 7; *Civico museo…*, 1949, pp. 28-29 (n. 45); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 28; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 29; Heinemann, 1962, I, p. 221 (V. 31); Arslan, 1965, p. 167; Meyer zur Capellen, 1985, p. 176; Casu, 1996, p. 88 (note 74); Sartor, 1997, p. 38; *Venezia e l'Islam…*, 2007, p. 321; Romanelli, 2011, p. 64 (n. 23); Russo, 2017, s.p., note 7; Tempestini, 2021, p. 257 (n. 1345); *Venetia 1600…*, p. 53 (fig. 53), p. 351 (cat. 2c.6).

The attribution of this painting has been long debated. Zanotto (1856) presented it as being executed by Giovanni (d'Alemagna?) or Antonio Vivarini. Lazzari (1859) ascribed it to Gentile Bellini. Crowe-Cavalcaselle (1871), Jacobsen (1894), Lafenestre (1907), Reinach (1907), A. Venturi (1915), Berenson (1932, 1936, 1957, 1958), Van Marle (1935), and Barbantini (1938) all agreed with him. Other art historians assigned it to Bartolomeo Vivarini (Morelli writing as Lermolief in Jacobsen, 1894), to his school (L. Venturi, 1907), or even to an anonymous Vivarinesque painter (Testi, 1915). Ricci (1908) and Paoletti attributed it to Jacopo Bellini. Arslan (1965) did not express any opinion about the painter. Longhi (1934) first assigned it to the

young Lazzaro Bastiani. This ascription was accepted by Collobi (1939), Mariacher (1957), Heinemann (1962), Meyer zur Capellen (1985, based on a model by Gentile), Sartor (1997), Tempestini (2021. He also believed the work could also have been made by Gentile). Both Casu (1996) and Russo (2017) rejected Lazzaro Bastiani as the artist of this portrait. Casu added that a significant similarity could be observed with miniaturist Leonardo Bellini's *Portrait of Doge Francesco Foscari* depicted in *folio* 6r of his *Promission of Doge Antonio Venier* (dated 1458 c., BMVe, Cod. Lat. X. 190-3555. *Fig. 247*).

Personally I agree with Casu and Russo because I cannot find convincing similarities with Bastiani's works to support the attribution to our painter.

In addition, the underdrawing revealed by IRR analysis (the Osiris camera) does not show any hatching, while Bastiani used to model the *chiaroscuro* of his figures by means of a careful hatching. The IR photography by means of the Sony camera (low resolution) seems to show small traces of *spolvero* in the wrinkles of the eye that might indicate the use of a cartoon and perhaps mechanic execution by a member of Gentile's the workshop (*Fig. 248*). I believe that further analyses of this artwork (by means of the Apollo camera in multispectral modality) could be useful to confirm or discard the presence of *spolvero*. It is also worth noting that Meyer zur Capellen's emphasisd the hard outlines and the weak modelling, suggesting that the painting was probably a posthumous portrait of the doge based on a model by Gentile.

Finally, scientific investigations could be extended to Gentile Bellini's portraits of doges (until now, only old IR photography has been performed on Gentile's portraits of Pasquale Malipiero and Niccolò Marcello. See Meyer zur Capellen, 1985, Tafel 5, 17). The information obtained from such investigation could then be used for the purposes of comparison in helping to ascertain more accurately the artistic methodology used by Gentile for his portraits of doges and, consequently, help to identify the painter of this particular work.

Further images



Fig. 247. L. Bellini (miniaturist), *Promission of Doge Antonio Venier*, folio 6r (BMVe, Cod. Lat. X. 190-3555).



Fig. 248. Detail of the eye showing *spolvero* traces (Sony Camera).



Number: RP14

Artist: Francesco di Girolamo da Santacroce

Title: *Deposition of Christ*

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 381)

Material and dimensions: canvas, 235 x 149 cm

Provenance: Venice, Church of San Severo (until 1812).

Bibliography:

Boschini, 1664, p. 182 (Sestier di Castello); Boschini, 1674, p. 28 (Sestier di Castello); Martinelli, 1705, p. 138; Zanetti, 1733, p. 425; Zanetti, 1771, p. 42; Moschini, 1815, II/2, p. 497; Zanotto, 1845, p. 22 (n. 44); *Catalogo…*, 1852, p. 22 (n. 43); Zanotto, 1856, p. 534; *Catalogo…*, 1858, p. 36 (n. 27); *Catalogo…*, 1862, p. 44 (n. 553); *Catalogo…*, 1863, p. 44 (n. 553); Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 219 (note 3); Borenius, 1912, I, p. 221 (note 4); Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 192; Moschini Marconi, 1962, pp. 186-187 and previous bibliography.



Number: RP15

Author: Giovanni Mansueti

Title: *Miraculous Healing of the Daughter of Benvegnudo da San Polo* (previously: *Miracle of the Relic of the Holy Cross to Antonio Riccio*)

Location: Venice (Italy), Gallerie dell'Accademia

Material and dimensions:

Provenance: Venice, Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista.

Bibliography:

Boschini, 1664, pp. 293-294 (Sestier di San Polo); Boschini, 1674, p. 38 (Sestier di San Polo); Martinelli, 1705, p. 377; Braccioli, 1712, p. 157; Zanetti, 1733, p. 294; Zanetti, 1771, p. 43; Moschini, 1815, II/2, p. 497; Zanotto, 1834, s.p.;

Zanotto, 1845, pp. 22-23 (n. 51); *Catalogo…*, 1852, pp. 22-23 (n. 50); Zanotto, 1856, p. 533; *Catalogo…*, 1858, p. 35 (n. 19); *Catalogo…*, 1862, p. 43 (n. 545); *Catalogo…*, 1863, p. 43 (n. 545); Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, pp. 220-221 (note 3); Moschini Marconi, 1955, p. 137 and previous bibliography.

5.3. LOST PAINTINGS

Number: LP01
Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani
Title: *Christ*

Bibliography:
Paoletti, 1894, pp. 12-13; Thode, 1895, p. 193; Ludwig-Paoletti, 1900, p. 184; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34; Goffen, 1990, p. 263; Barausse, 2009, p. 338; Barausse, 2019, p. 37

In 1473 *Antonio di Choradi* from Pera (Constantinople) sent a letter to his brother-in-law *Nicholò Gruatto lapicida* commissioning Lazzaro Bastiani to paint a small painting showing the figure of Christ. *Choradi* specified that the size of the artwork should have been *mezo foio de charta di pizolj* (approximately, 30 x 21 cm), and that for the figure of Christ Bastiani should have followed an example/a model ("quelo con quela soaza d'oro polita e bela"). If Bastiani was already deceased or unable to fulfil the request, Nicolò Gruatto would have been ordered the panel to Giovanni Bellini. In 1474 the Christ is painted and on the 25th of July the Scuola Grande della Misericordia noted the payment to Bastiani (Paoletti, 1894, p. 13; Ludwig-Paoletti, 1900, p. 185; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 34).

Number: LP02

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint John, Saint Mark, Saint Jerome*

Location: Venice (Italy), Church of San Giuliano

Bibliography:

Sansovino, 1581, p. 49r; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 126; Pacifico, 1697, p. 298; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 190 (note 2).

The saints were depicted on three different small paintings, as reported first by Sansovino: "Lazaro Sebastiani vi fece san Iacomo, S. Marco & San Hieronimo con tre quadretti nello Scabello" (1581, p. 49r). The artworks are recorded also Martinioni's addition to Sansovino (1663, p. 126) and in Pacifico's *Cronica veneta* (1697, p. 298). Van Marle listed the paintings among Bastiani's lost works (1936, p. 190 [note 2]).

Number: LP03

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Nativity*

Location: Venice (Italy), Church of San Silvestro

Bibliography:

Boschini, 1664, p. 134; Boschini, 1674, p. 105; Martinelli, 1684, p. ; Martinelli, 1705, p. 362; Braccioli, 1712, p. 148.

Boschini (1664, p. 134; 1674, p. 105) first recalled this *Nativity*, echoed by Martinelli (1705, p. 362) and Braccioli (1712, p. 148). On the panel we do not have any further information, as it is not reported the place where the painting was located, neither its dimensions nor any other detail. Bastiani depicted numerous *Nativity* scenes along his career (first and foremost, the *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia), thus we can suppose/presume also this panel beared Bastiani's typical characters.

Number: LP04

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Misericordia*

Location: Venice (Italy), Santa Maria dei Carmini

Bibliography:

Sansovino, 1581, p. 93v; Sansovino-Martinioni, 1663, p. 262; Pacifico, 1697, p. 455; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, I, p. 219 (note 3); Borenius, 1912, I, p. 222 (note 4); Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 192.

Sansovino first mentioned this painting in Santa Maria dei Carmini. He described the subject of the artwork as follows: "[…] la Misericordia col Dio padre che Lancia saette con s. Rocco a guazzo" (1581, p. 93v). Martinioni repeated Sansovino's description (1663, p. 262), while Pacifico reported the location where the picture was placed at the end of the XVII century: the altar of Saint Mary Magdalene (1697, p. 455). Crowe and Cavalcaselle (1871, p. 219 [note 3]), then followed by Borenius (1912, p. 222 [note 4]) and Van Marle (1936, p. 192), included the painting in the list of Bastiani's works that got lost.

Number: LP05

Author: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Athanasius* and *Saint Roch*

Location: Venice (Italy), Church of Sant'Antonin

Bibliography:

Boschini, 1664, p. 193; Boschini, 1674, p. 36 (Sestiere di Castello); Martinelli, 1705, p. 235; Braccioli, 1712, p. 71, Zanetti, 1733, p. 229; Piacenza, 1768, p. 576; Crowe-Cavalcaselle, 1871, p. 219 (note 3); Borenius, 1912, p. 222 (note 4).

Boschini was the first to report that "nella Cappella sinistra, vi sono due quadretti dalle parte dell'Altare: nell'uno S. Atanasio, nell'altro S. Rocco; di mano di Lazaro Sebastiani" (1664, p. 19; 1674, p. 36 [Sestiere di Castello]). When mentioned, the two paintings were recorded with another panel executed by Bastiani, the *Entombment of Christ*, today still in the church (Martinelli, 1705, p. 235; Braccioli, 1712, p. 71; Zanetti, 1733, p. 229; Piacenza, 1768, p. 576). The small panels were on display in the chapel of Saint Anthony of Padua, located to the left of the main altar (Braccioli, 1712, p. 71). In his Pinacoteca veneta, Zanotto reported that after the suppression of the church in 1810 some of the artworks of the church were removed. Among the removed paintings there was also the *Entombment* that he rediscovered in the sacristy of the church of San Giovanni in Bragora (Zanotto, 1860). Hence, from the voice of Zanotto, it can be suggested that the *Saint Athanasius* and *Saint Roch* got dispersed during the Napoleonic suppressions, as several other artworks in the Venetian churches. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (1871, p. 219 [note 3]), followed by Borenius (1912, p. 222 [note 4]), included the panels in the list of Bastiani's lost works.

Number: LP06

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani and Benedetto Diana

Title: *Banners/Standards for Piazza San Marco*

Location: Venice (Italy), Piazza San Marco

Bibliography:

Gualandi, 1842, p. 91; Ludwig, 1905, p. 59; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 34-35.

The *Illustrissima Signoria Veneta* requested Lazzaro and Benedetto Diana to execute three banners "a perfection ultima et compimento" for Piazza San Marco. The Signoria would have supplied the artists with the painting materials (gold and ultramarine), and the cloth (*cendado cuxido*) for each banner, the size of which should have been "de longeza braza diexe octo et largo tele tredexe". The painters were also asked to gild the sphere or the cross that would have been place on top of the flagpole. Diana was appointed to realise the preparatory drawings. The payment amounted to 630 ducats each for the three banners.

Number: LP07

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Story of David*

Location: Venice (Italy), Scuola Grande di San Marco, Chapter Hall

Bibliography:

Molmenti, 1888, pp. 228-229; Paoletti, 1894, p. 11; Ludwig-Paoletti, 1900a, p. 184; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 33-34; Fortini-Brown, 1988, p. 269; Barausse, 2009, p. 337; Barausse, 2019, pp. 34-35.

On the 7th of January 1470, Gabriel Zilberti, the *guardian grande* of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, and the confraternity members deliberated to commission Lazzaro Bastiani, upon his own request, a *telero* to decorate the *Sala Capitolare* of the Scuola building. Bastiani was assigned the Story of David, to be painted in two fields. His work would have been placed "sopra et proximo al volto de la scalla". The canvas was part of a cycle of *teleri* with *Stories of the Old and New Testament* executed by Jacopo Bellini, Gentile Bellini, Francesco Squarcione, Bartolomeo Vivarini, Andrea da Murano, Lazzaro Bastiani, Giovanni Bellini, and Bartolomeo Montagna. The entire cycle was destroyed by a fire on the 31st of March 1485 (Paoletti, 1929, p. 17).

6. CATALOGUE OF DRAWINGS

6.1. AUTOGRAPH DRAWINGS



Number: AD01

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Madonna della Misericordia*

Location: London (U.K.), The British Museum (from 1895, inv. n. 1895,0915.804)

Date: 1490 c.

Material and dimensions: blue paper (top arched), 163 x 88 mm

Technique: brush, grey ink, heightened with white

Provenance: Sir John Charles Robinson private collection (according to departmental records, bought by him in Rimini in 1860); John Malcolm of Poltalloch, Scotland, UK, private collection; Col. John Wingfield Malcolm.

Bibliography:
Robinson, 1876, p. 128 (n. 357); Parker, 1927, p. 32 (n. 49); Collobi, 1939, pp. 50-51; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, pp. 59-61 (n. 253); Popham-Pouncey, 1950, p. 4; Rearick, 1985, p. 50; Quattrini, 1992, p. 58.

The *Madonna della Misericordia* (Virgin of Mercy) is portrayed in a central elevated position, sat upon an elaborated dais. At the base of the throne, she is flanked by two groups kneeling in adoration and above these by two winged figures (angels) who uphold her cloak. Upon the Virgin's chest, an oval pectoral on which the Infant Christ giving the blessing is represented fastens her mantle closed.

Entering The British Museum's collection in 1895, the drawing was acquired from John Wingfield Malcolm, son of John Malcolm of Poltalloch, who had inherited his father's collection. Here the work had been assigned to Giovanni Bellini (Robinson, 1876). K. T. Parker (1927) first ascribed the picture as being by Lazzaro Bastiani, an attribution accepted by Collobi (1939), the Tietzes (1944), Popham-Pouncey (1950), Rearick (1985), Quattrini (1992) and Russo (2021, oral communication at the conference *Venetian Disegno: New Frontiers*). Parker observed that the drawing was "archaic in type", but that the heads were "distinctly Carpaccesque". Collobi further emphasized that the antiquated style was demonstrated by the rigid symmetry, the harsh hatching depicting lit and shaded areas, the marked/heavily delineated draperies, and also by the static composition (pp. 50-51). The sharply described outlines and folds and the painstaking rendering of *chiaroscuro* effects by parallel hatching, of greater or lesser density according to the desired effect, are characteristic of Bastiani, as is evident in his underdrawings.

Collobi also suggested that the highly finished drawing was most likely a drawing to be presented to the commissioner (p. 51). For Parker it was possibly the design for a *Pax*.

Having made a comparison to the Bergamo *Coronation*, Collobi, followed by the Tietzes, dated the drawing around 1490.



Number: AD02

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *The Marriage of the Virgin and Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*

Location: Paris (France), Louvre Museum (inv. n. 5600, Recto)

Date: 1495 c.

Material and dimensions: Paper, 220 x 360 mm

Technique: pen, brown ink, brown wash, black chalk, blue wash

Provenance: Paris, Musée Napoléon.

Bibliography: Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, pp. 59, 61.

Archival sources: *Musée Napoléon. Inventaire général. Dessins. 1. École italienne. 1-1366*, 1807-1813, p. 22 (n. 12)

This is a highly finished drawing in two fields depicting the *Marriage of the Virgin* on the left and the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* on the right. The Marriage scene is set in a church interior, while the Presentation scene takes places in a city setting that appears to be Venice. Given the thoroughly detailed character of the work, it was probably a compositional drawing to be

presented to the patron, such as that the Scuola di San Marco requested to Bastiani in 1470 for the *telero* depicting the Historia de David.

Generically assigned to the "École Florentine" in the manuscript *Inventory* of the Musée Napoléon (p. 22 [n. 135]), the drawing was then given to an anonymous Venetian painter working between the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century. Linzeler verbally ascribed it to Bastiani. The Tietzes (1944) confirmed this attribution.

Given the similarities to Bastiani's works in the 1490s, especially with the telero of the *Offering of the Relic of the Cross* (1494) in the Gallerie dell'Accademia and the predella panels depicting the *Stories of the Life of Saint* (1493 c.) in the Musée Jacquemart André in Paris, a date of around 1495 could be appropriate for the drawing. The Tietzes noticed "a certain contrast between the archaic setting and the figures whose style points to a period around 1500" (1944, p. 61).



Number: AD03

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Seated Male Saint (an Evangelist?)*

Location: Rotterdam (Netherlands), Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (inv. n. 1895,0915.804)

Date: 1480-1488

Material and dimensions: linen, laid down on paper, 183 x 131 mm

Technique: Pen and brush, brown-black ink, grey wash, heightened with white and pink tempera

Provenance: Lucerne, Art dealer Julius W. Böhler; Haarlem, Franz W. Koenigs (purchased in 1929); Rotterdam, D.G. Van Beuningen (acquisition of the

Koenigs Collection in 1940); Foundation Museum Boijmans (donated by van Beuningen in 1940).

Previous exhibitions: *Italiaansche Kunst in Nederlansch Bezit* (Amsterdam, Stedelick Museum, 1st July – 1st October 1934, n. 450); *Schilderijen, Teekeningen en Beeldhouwwerken Uit Particuliere Nederlandsche Verzamelingen* (Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans, December 1938 – January 1939, n. 52); *Disegni Veneti di collezioni olandesi* (Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 8th September – 3rd November 1985; Florence, Istituto Universitario di Storia dell'Arte, 9th November – 15th December 1985, n. 8).

Bibliography:

Becker, 1922, p. 11 (n. 28); *Italiaansche Kunst…*, 1934, p. 130 (n. 450); *Catalogus…*, 1938, p. 19 (n. 52); Collobi, 1939, p. 50; Meijer, 1985, p. 26 (Cat. 8).

Formerly in the collection of the art dealer Julius Böhler, this small drawing was purchased by Franz Koenigs in 1929 and then acquired by Van Beunigen in 1940. Shortly after, this latter donated the drawing to the Boijmans Museum. The picture portrays a *Seated Male Saint*, probably an Evangelist without his attribute, or an apostle (Becker believe he was Saint Ambrosius). In this hieratic frontal view, the saint holds a book with his left hand and a pen with his right hand. The carefully detailed drawing has been worked out paying much attention to the definition of the drapery of the vestments and to the effects of light. Dark parallel hatchings, of varying density, model the folds in the cloak, while white hatched lines indicate those areas with where there is an intense incidence of light.

Ascribed to Paduan School of the mid-15th century in the Böhler and the Koening collections (Becker, 1922; *Italiaansche Kunst…*, 1934; *Catalogus…*, 1939), Collobi (1939) was the first to suggest Bastiani as artist. The scholar found similarities to the Matera Polyptych and dated it between 1460 and 1470, during the period when Bastiani followed Mantegna's manner. Collobi's attribution was not taken into consideration by other art historians, neither by

the Tietzes, who did not mention the drawing in their book on Venetian drawings, and, in addition, the artwork has been catalogued as Antonio Vivarini's in the museum (Meijer, 1985). Recently, Russo presented this drawing at the conference *Venetian Disegno: New Frontiers* (London, The Warburg Institute, 20th – 21st May 2021. Conference proceedings in print) proposing the ascription to Bastiani once more and making convincing comparisons with the artist's and his circle's paintings of the 1480s.

6.2. UNCERTAIN DRAWINGS



© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett

Number: UD01

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (?) or workshop of Vittore Carpaccio

Title: *Two Venetian Patrician Standing*

Location: Berlin (Germany), Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (inv. n. KdZ 468)

Material and dimensions: faded blue paper, 196 x 207 mm

Inscription: Sandro Botticelli, on the low right corner (late addition).

Technique: brush, grayish blue pigment, heightened with white

Bibliography: Bock, 1910, p/n 75, ascribed to Carpaccio; Von Hadeln, 1925, p. 44, plate 10, given to Bastiani (?); Collobi, 1939, p. 51, confirmed the attribution to Bastiani; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, pp. 59-60 (n. 248),

accepted the ascription to Bastiani with reservation; Muraro, 1977, pp. 28-29, fig. 83, assigned to workshop of Carpaccio.

Dubitatively given to Bastiani by Von Hadeln (1925), Collobi (1939) confirmed the ascription, while the Tietzes (1944) accepted the attribution with reservation. This latter, in fact, pointed out that for the lack of any connection with Bastiani's paintings, the attribution was based solely on the use of Carpaccio's drawing technique "by a weaker and dryer artist". Perhaps we could find a general comparison between the position and gestures of the two Patricians represented in the Berlin drawing and the standing man next to the *vera da pozzo* in the foreground of the panel showing an *Official Ceremony on the Piazzetta*, which is conserved in the Correr Museum of Venice and is generally assigned to School of Bastiani. This is, however, a very weak comparison – considering also the extremely poor condition of the painting – and cannot support further the ascription of the drawing to our artist. Muraro gave the Berlin sheet to workshop of Carpaccio.

6.3. REJECTED DRAWINGS



Number: RD01

Artist: Vittore Carpaccio

Title: *Two Groups of Clergymen*

Location: Cambridge (U.K.), Fitzwilliam Museum (from 1979, inv. n. PD.3-1979)

Material and dimensions: paper, 214 x 278 mm

Technique: pen and brown ink over red chalk

Provenance: Padre Sebastiano Resta; Arezzo, Bishop Giovanni Matteo Marchetti; Cavaliere Marchetti da Pistoi; John, Lord Somers (purchased through John Talman in 1716); Thomas Hudson; Sir Joshua Reynolds; Thomas Banks; Mrs Lavinia Forster (?); Ambrose Poynter (?); Sir Edward John Poynter; London, Sotheby's, *Catalogue of the Superb Collection of Drawings by Old Masters, the Property of Sir Edward J. Poynter*, 24-28/4/1918, lot 23; Lord Lascelles; London, Earl of Harewood (inherited by his father); London, Christie's, *Catalogue of Highly Important Drawings and Prints by Old Masters*, 6/7/1965, lot 118; Captain Norman Colville; Mrs Norman Colville.

Bibliography: Borenius, 1916, p. 271, plate A, as Carpaccio; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, p. 61 (254), ascribed to Bastiani for comparisons with the *Funeral of Saint Jerome* in Gallerie dell'Accademia; Menato, 2017, pp. 243-245 (n. 39) and previous bibliography, accepted as Carpaccio's by all the following scholars.



Number: RD02

Title: *Head of an Oriental*

Location: Dresden (Germany), Kupfestich-Kabinett (inv. n. C 267)

Material and dimensions: paper, 304 x 219 mm

Technique: Black chalk, wiped in places, remains of a framing line in brown

Bibliography: Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, p. 19, fig. p. 22, ascribed to Bastiani (probably following the museum catalogue, where it was published as Bastiani with reservation), suggesting it was a preparatory drawing for the Oriental man in the *telero Communion of Saint Jerome* (Gallerie dell'Accademia); Fiocco, 1931, p. 93, copy after a study of Carpaccio; Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 192 (note 2), not convinced by the ascription to Bastiani; Collobi, 1939, p. 51, rejected the attribution to Bastiani, because of the "Titianesque" style of the drawing, too far advanced for Bastiani; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, pp. 59-60 (n. A 250), in agreement with Collobi, rejected the attribution to Bastiani.



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Number: RD03

Artist: Ferrarese painter, end of 15th century

Title: *Pietà*

Location: Düsseldorf (Germany), Kunstpalast,G raphische Sammlung, Sammlung der Kunstakademie (inv. n. KA (FP) 3531recto)

Material and dimensions: blue paper, 198 x 192 mm

Technique: pen, brown ink

Provenance: Lambert Krahe private collection (until 1778).

Bibliography: Budde, 1930, p. 78 (n. 572), plate 82, assigned to Venetian-Cremonese School of the 15th century (previously attributed to Carlo Crivelli, and then placed in the neighbourhood of Boccaccio Boccaccino, or Galeazzo Campi by Berenson through verbal opinion); Collobi, 1939, p. 50, ascribed to Bastiani, perhaps a later variation of the Poldi Pezzoli *Pietà*; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, p. 60 (A 251), rejected the attribution to Bastiani, suggested

Ferrarese School early 16th century; *Idea et inventio…*, 2017, pp. 85-87 (Cat. A 31) and previous bibliography, given to “Ferrarisch, um 1500” in the museum.



Number: RD04

Artist: Vittore Carpaccio

Title: *The Virgin Reading to the Infant Christ* (*recto*); *The Virgin Adoring the Infant Christ with Saint John the Baptist* (*verso*)

Location: London (U.K.), The Courtauld Institute of Art (inv. n. D.1978.PG.82)

Material and dimensions: paper, 128 x 94 mm

Technique: pen, brown ink over a preliminary drawing in red chalk

Provenance: Lawrence; Chetenham, Phillips Fenwick collection; London, Count Antoine Seilern; New York, Wildenstein.

Bibliography: Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, pp. 59-60 (n. 249), ascribed to Carpaccio in Fenwick collection, the Tietzes tentatively assigned the drawing to Bastiani; Menato, 2017, pp. 216-218 (n. 28) and previous bibliography, all the following authors agree on attributing the drawing to Carpaccio.



Number: RD05

Artist: Alvise Vivarini (?)

Title: *Virgin Annunciate*

Location: Los Angeles (California, U.S.A.), The Getty Museum (inv. n. 91.GG.35)

Date:

Material and dimensions: paper (top arched), 102 x 84 mm

Inscription: "Luca d'Olanda", in brown ink at the bottom.

Technique: pen, brown ink, brown wash

Provenance: Venice, Zaccaria Sagredo private collection (?); Munich, Private collection; Lyons, Boissieu collection; Lugano, Private collection; Zurich, Art market.

Bibliography:

Rearick, 1985, pp. 48-50; Scarpa, 1987, p. 385, attributed to Bastiani; *Acquisitions/1991*, 1992, p. 159 (n. 50), as Bastiani; Tuner, Hendrix, Plazzotta, 1997 pp. 10-11, confirmed the ascription to Bastiani; Russo, 2023, suggested the attribution to Alvise Vivarini.



Number: RD06

Artist: Paduan artist, Circle of Mantegna

Title: *Christ Enthroned, on the dome of a Circular Temple, Holding a Globe and Blessing with his Right Hand*

Location: New York (U.S.A.), Pierpont Morgan Library (inv. n. 1335)

Material and dimensions: paper, 396 x 265 mm

Technique: Pen and brown ink, over metalpoint and stylus indentations

Provenance: Milan, Leo S. Olschki; London and Florenze, Charles Fairfax Murray; New York, Pierpont Morgan (purchased through Galerie Alexandre Imbert, Rome, in 1909); New York, J. P. Morgan Jr. (inherited from his father).

Bibliography: Artioli, 1899, 125-144, given to Mantegna workshop or a closer follower of Mantegna; Fairmax Murray, 1912, III, s.p., assigned to Bartolomeo Vivarini; Fairmax Murray, 1912, IV, plate 54, as Bartolomeo Vivarini; Collobi, 1939, p. 50, ascribed to Bastiani; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, p. 61 (A 256), rejected Collobi's attribution to Bastiani and to the style of Venetian art.



Number: RD07

Artist: Follower of Vittore Carpaccio

Title: *Four Gentlemen in Conversation* (recto)

Location: Paris (France), Fondation Custodia / Frits Lugt Collection (inv. n. 1335)

Material and dimensions: blue paper, 166 x 253 mm

Technique: Black chalk, pen and brown ink, point of the brush with brown ink, heightened with white

Provenance: Verona, Francesco Calzolari; Verona, Count Lodovico Moscardo; Florence, Luigi Grassi (purchased from Moscardo's descendants in 1905 – L.1171b); Paris, Frits Lugt collection (acquired from Grassi in 1923).

Bibliography: Van Marle, 1936, XVIII, p. 350 (note 1); as Carpaccio; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, p. 60 (n. 252), rejected Van Marle's ascription, suggested Lazzaro Bastiani as artist; Lauts, 1962, p. 283 (n. 82r), to Lazzaro Bastiani with reservation; Shaw, 1983, I, pp. 227-228 (n. 224) and previous bibliography, attributed to Carpaccio; Shaw, 1983, III, plate 256.



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Number: RD08

Artist: Venetian School, second half of the 15th century

Title: *Two Female Saints*

Location: Turin (Italy), Biblioteca Reale (inv. n. 15906, B. 5)

Material and dimensions: paper, 220 x 174 mm

Technique: Brush, dark pigment, enlightened with lead white

Bibliography: Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, pp. 59, 61 (n. 258), tentatively ascribed to Bastiani; *I disegni italiani…*, 1958, p. 11, fig. 5, as School of Carpaccio; Lauts, 1962, p. 279 (n. 60), believed to be a copy of a drawing by Carpaccio made by a pupil; Pignatti, 1963, p. 48, as Bastiani; Muraro, 1966, p. 111-112, attributed to school of Carpaccio; Muraro, 1977, p. 78, fig. 132, assigned to an anonymous painter contemporary to Carpaccio; *I grandi disegni…*, 1978, p. 33, to school of Carpaccio; *Le collezioni d'arte…*, 1985, p. 39,

as Venetian School, late 15th century; Forlani Tempesti, 1990, p. 22, generically ascribed to an anonymous Venetian painter active in the second half of the 15th century.



Number: RD09

Artist: Lorenzo Costa

Title: *Composition for a Ceremony*

Location: Vienna (Austria), Albertina Museum (inv. n. 24344)

Material and dimensions: Paper, 199 x 257 mm

Technique: Pen and bistre

Provenance: Alfred Stix collection (purchased in 1924).

Bibliography: Stix, Frölich-Bum, 1926, I, pp. 12-13 (n. 17), assigned to Bastiani; Collobi, 1939, p. 51, rejected the attribution to Bastiani and suggest Lorenzo Costa as artist; Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, 1944, p. 61 (A259), confirm the ascription to Costa; Birke-Kertész, 1997, pp. 2351-2352 (inv. 24344), as by Costa.

6.4. LOST DRAWINGS

Number: LD01
Title: *Saint Veneranda Enthroned*
Bibliography: Vasari, 1568, ed. cons. 1971, p. 623

In his *Vite* (1568), Vasari stated that he was in possession of the drawings of the *Saint Veneranda Enthroned* (mistakenly identified as the Virgin Mary): "della quale n'avemo i proprii disegni di mano di costoro nel nostro libro".

Number: LD02
Title: *Story of David*
Bibliography: Molmenti, 1888, pp. 228-229; Paoletti, 1894, p. 11; Ludwig-Paoletti, 1900, p. 184; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906, pp. 33-34; Fortini-Brown, 1988, p. 269; Barausse, 2009, p. 337; Barausse, 2019, pp. 34-35

In the contract stipulated with the Scuola Grande di San Marco in 1470 for the execution of the *telero* in two fields depicting the "Instoria de David", it was specifically requested that Bastiani must have provided a drawing of the overall composition for approval by the confraternity members, who could have added or removed elements to their liking.

7. CATALOGUE OF OTHER WORKS

7.1. MOSAICS



Image retrieved from Merkel, 1994

Number: M01

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (cartoon), Vincenzo Bastiani (mosaic)

Title: *Saint Ambrose*

Location: Venice (Italy), Basilica of San Marco, left Choir, impost

Date: 1506 c.

Inscription: "VINCEN / TIVS · B · F", to the right of the saint.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1867-1880; 1959-1966.

Bibliography:

Merkel, 1977, p. 668; Merkel, 1987, p. 29; Merkel, 1990, p. 245; Merkel 1994, p. 93; Merkel 1996, pp. 171, 177.

Signed “VINCENTIVS B.F.”, this was probably the first work of *rifacimento ex novo executed* by Vincenzo when he was officially engaged as mosaicist in the Basilica in 1506 (Merkel 1977; 1987, 1990, 1994).





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Number: M02

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (cartoon), Vincenzo Bastiani (mosaic)

Title: *Saint Erasma, Saint Euphemia, Saint Techla*

Location: Venice (Italy), Basilica of San Marco, Dome/Cupola of San Leonardo, pendentive

Date: 1510-1512

Inscription: "VINCENTIVS · B · F", on the pedestal of *Saint Techla.*

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1953 (*Saint Techla*).

Bibliography:

Zanotto, 1856, p. 54; Sanudo, 1886, XIV, col. 228 [123v]; Saccardo, 1896, pp. 42-43, 245; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900a, p. 190; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 286; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906 pp. 17; Merkel, 1977, pp. 667-668; Merkel, 1987, p. 29; Merkel, 1990, p. 245; Vio, 1990, p. 114; Merkel 1994, p. 94; Merkel 1996, pp. 171, 177-178; Russo, 2023.

The signature "VINCENTIVS · B · F" confirms the execution of the *Saint Techla* to Vincenzo Bastiani, who died in 1512, most likely while working on this mosaic (see Sanudo, 1886. Zanotto misinterpreted the signature and believed the artist was Vincenzo Bianchini). Paoletti (1990b), Ludwig and Molmenti (1906), however, did not believe the artist was Lazzaro's son, as they found that a certain *Vincenzo di Sebastiani chondam misier Lazaro* witnessed a will in 1513. The closeness of this saint and the other works signed by Vincenzo to Lazzaro's style remove any doubt about it. The *Saint Techla* is a *rifacimento ex novo* of a mosaic that got destroyed during the 1483 fire. The compositional idea and the monumentality led Merkel to hypothesise that Vincenzo realised the *Saint Techla* on the basis of a cartoon provided by Cima da Conegliano (compare Cima da Conegliano's *Saint Catherine* in The Wallace Collection, London. *Fig. 249*). Recently, Russo (2023) pointed out more convincing similarities with Lazzaro's works, such as the Saint Lucy and the Kneeling Donor in Portland Art Museum. In accordance with the idea of the family

workshop involved in the mosaic decoration of the Basilica, it is more consistent the assumption that Lazzaro realised the cartoon employed by Vincenzo.

Merkel (1994, 1996) believed that Vincenzo also previously restored the mosaics showing *Saint Erasma* and *Saint Euphemia*. If it is correct that Vincenzo was engaged in the renovation of three saints in the pendentives of the Dome of San Leonardo, it could be suggested that he also re-integrated the missing parts (left part of the body and left hand) of the *Saint Dorothy*, the only remaining saint in the pendentives– which dates from the 12th century (*Fig. 250*).

Further images



Fig. 249. G. B. Cima da Conegliano, *Saint Catherine*, London, Wallace Collection.



Fig. 250. Saint Dorothy, Venice, Basilica of San Marco, Dome of San Leonardo, pendentive, mid-12th century.



Number: M03

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (design/cartoon), Alvise Bastiani (mosaic)

Title: *Saint George killing the Dragon* or *Saint Theodore Killing the Dragon*

Location: Venice (Italy), Church of San Teodoro (Basilica of San Marco) *lunette* above the main entrance door

Date: 1482 c.

Bibliography:

Saccardo, 1896, p. 42 (note 1); Gamba, 1923-1924, p. 180; Fiocco, 1927, pp. 89-91; Van Marle, 1928, X, p. 342; Berenson, 1932, p. 138; Berenson, 1936, p. 119; Salmi, 1936, p. 118; Collobi-Ragghianti, 1939, p. 40, note 15; Merkel, 1977, p.

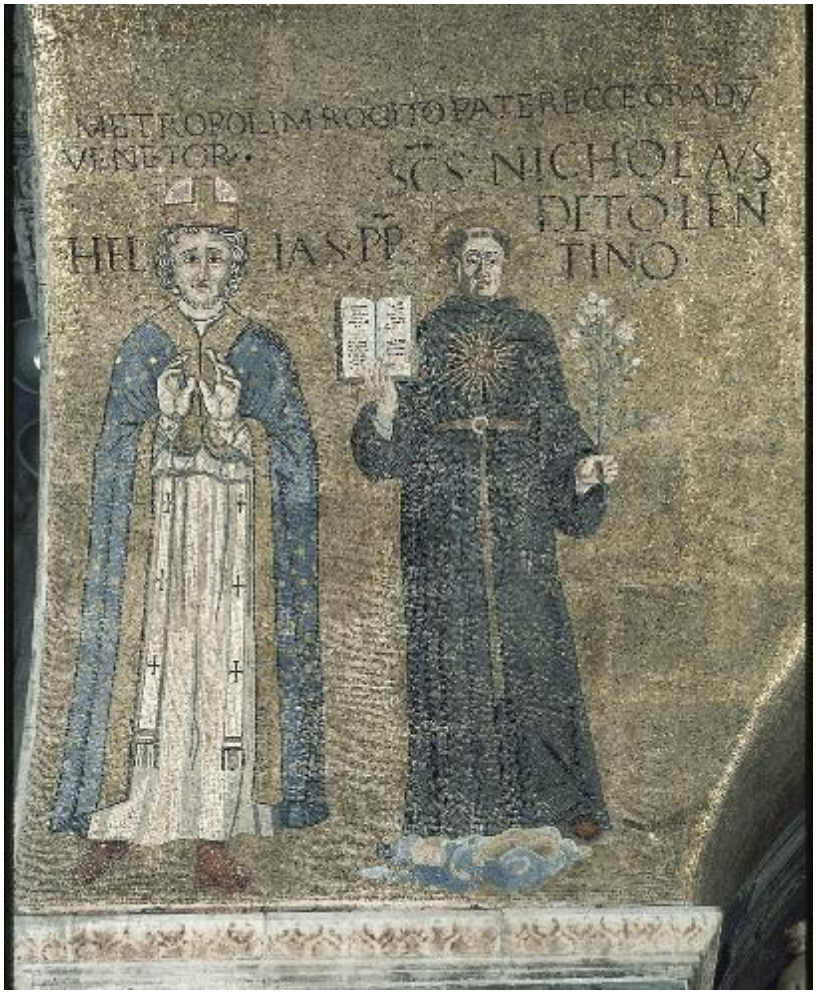
666; Merkel, 1987, p. 29; Merkel, 1990, p. 243; Merkel, 1994, p. 92; Merkel, 1996, pp. 171, 177; Marinelli, 2007, pp. 13-14.

Today this mosaic *lunette* showing *Saint George* (or *Saint Theodore*) *Killing the Dragon*, is above the main entrance door of the Church of San Teodoro, in San Marco (*Fig. 251*). Previously it was in the Church of Santa Maria Nuova and once transferred to San Teodoro, in the early 1490s, it was cut and adapted to the new location (Fiocco, 1927, p. 91; Merkel, 1987, p. 29).
Variously ascribed to a certain *Tomaso depentor* that in 1492 painted the façade of the Church of San Teodoro (Saccardo, 1896. Merkel [1994, p. 94, note 6] suggested that this referred to Tommaso Bragadin), or to Andrea del Castagno (Gamba, 1923-1924; Van Marle, 1928. For Berenson [1932, 1936] it was executed after his design), or to Pietro Barbetta (Fiocco, 1927), or to an anonymous Veneto mosaicist perhaps inspired by Andrea del Castagno (Salmi, 1934), this mosaic was finally attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani by Licia Collobi (1939). Merkel (1987, 1990, 1994, 1996) suggested that the mosaicist was Alvise, Lazzaro's son, on the basis of Lazzaro's cartoon. The date of execution has been fixed by Merkel around 1482 – before Alvise was engaged in the decoration of the mosaics in San Marco – pointing out affinities with the *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia (1480) and the Murano *lunette* (1484).

Further images



Fig. 251. Venice, Church of San Teodoro, Basilica of San Marco.



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Number: M04

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (design/cartoon), Alvise Bastiani, attr. (mosaic, *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino*), Vincenzo Bastiani, attr. (mosaic, *Patriarch Elias*)

Title: *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino* (right, Alvise Bastiani); *Patriarch Elias* (left, Vincenzo Bastiani)

Location: Venice (Italy), Basilica of San Marco, Chapel of San Pietro, intrados

Date: 1488-1490 c.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1941-1942; 1958-1960.

Bibliography:

Zanotto, 1856, p. 40; Merkel, 1977, p. 667; Manzoni-Bortolozzo, 1987, pp. 21-23; Merkel, 1987, p. 29; Merkel, 1990, pp. 242-243; Merkel 1994, p. 92; Merkel 1996, pp. 171, 177.

Merkel (1977, 1987, 1990, 1994) suggested ascribing the mosaics showing *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino* and the *Patriarch Elias* to Alvise Bastiani and to Vincenzo Bastiani, respectively. The "mosaic icon" ("icona musiva", according to the definition by Merkel) of the *Saint Nicholas* was commissioned by the *procuratore de Supra* Giovanni Cappello (1486-1499) as ex-voto to thank the saint for having miraculously extinguished the flames of the 1483 fire (Manzoni-Bortolozzo, 1987, pp. 19-24). The restoration (*rifacimento*) of the *Patriarch Elias* has been assigned by Merkel (1987, 1990, 1994, 1996) to the early activity as mosaicist of Vincenzo in San Marco.



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Number: M05

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (cartoon), Vincenzo Bastiani (mosaic)

Title: *Saint Peter the Apostle* (*Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well*)

Location: Venice (Italy), Basilica of San Marco, Altar of the Santissimo Sacramento (East wall of the Dome/Cupola of San Leonardo), vault

Date: 1508-1510

Inscription: "VINCEN / TIVS / B · F", to the left of the apostle.

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1891; 1968.

Bibliography:

Zanotto, 1856, p. 52; Saccardo, 1896, pp. 277-278; Merkel, 1977, p. 667; Merkel, 1987, p. 29; Merkel, 1990, p. 245; Vio, 1990, p. 114; Merkel 1994, pp. 93-94; Merkel 1996, pp. 171, 177.

Vincenzo Bastiani partially restored the mosaic depicting the episode of *Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well*, that was damaged during the 1483 fire, by realising the *rifacimento ex novo* of the figure of Saint Peter the Apostle on the far left of the scene. The autography is certain since the mosaic is signed "VINCENTIVS B. F.". The stylistic update of the figure is evident and clashes with the Medieval "language" of the original mosaic.



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Number: M06

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (cartoon), Vincenzo Bastiani (mosaic)

Title: *Saint Philip the Apostle* (*Feeding of the multitude*)

Location: Venice (Italy), Basilica of San Marco, Altar of the Santissimo Sacramento (East wall of the Dome/Cupola of San Leonardo), vault

Date: 1508-1510

Inscription: "VINCEN / TIVS / B · F", to the left of the apostle

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1891; 1968.

Bibliography:

Zanotto, 1856, p. 52; Saccardo, 1896, p. 277; Merkel, 1977, p. 667; Merkel, 1987, p. 29; Merkel, 1990, p. 245; Vio, 1990, p. 114; Merkel 1994, pp. 93-94; Merkel 1996, pp. 171, 177.

Vincenzo Bastiani realised the *rifacimento ex novo* of the figure of Saint Philip the Apostle on the far left of the scene that was damaged during the 1483 fire. The mosaic is signed "VINCENTIVS B. F.". The stylistic update of the figure is evident and clashes with the Medieval "language" of the original mosaic.



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Number: M07

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani

Title: *Saint Sergius*

Location: Venice (Italy), Basilica of di San Marco, Chapel of Saint Clemente, intrados

Date: 1494 c.

Inscription: "LAZAR / VS · B · F", on the left of the saint

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: 1891; 1962-1970.

Bibliography:

Zanetti 1771, p. 565; Zanotto, 1856, pp. 50-51; Saccardo, 1896, p. 43, 225; Paoletti-Ludwig, 1900b, p. 286; Ludwig-Molmenti, 1906 pp. 14; A. Venturi, 1915, VII/IV, p. 88; Testi, 1915, II, p. 57 (note 5); Collobi, 1939, pp. 40, 43 (note 24); Berenson, 1957, I, p. 26; Berenson, 1958, I, p. 27; Arslan, 1965, p. 167; Merkel, 1977, pp. 666-667; Merkel, 1987, pp. 28; Merkel, 1990, p. 243; Merkel 1994, pp. 89-92; Merkel 1996, pp. 171, 177.

Between the late 15th century and the early 16th century, Bastiani's workshop, composed of Lazzaro and his sons Alvise and Vincenzo, was involved in the decoration and renovation of the mosaics in the Basilica of San Marco. This was a peculiar period in the evolution of the San Marco mosaics, balancing the Medieval technique to the stylistic and poetical development of Renaissance art. Pietro Saccardo (1896, pp. 277-278), Ludwig and Molmenti (1906, p. 35 [n. 76-77]) and Ettore Merkel (1972-1973, pp. 399-414 [doc. 34-80]; 1977, p. 66, fig. 28) discovered archival sources reporting payments to Alvise (1488-1493) and to Vincenzo Bastiani (1506-1509) for works carried out in the Basilica. Payments to Alvise were recorded from 14th of July 1488, when he was presented as *Alvise Bastiani di ser Lazaro dal musaico*, until 1493; while payments to Vincenzo were recorded (not continuously) from 1506 to 1512, when on 18th of March tragically he died falling from scaffolding while working. This information was reported by Marin Sanudo in his *Diarii* (1886, XIV, col. 228 [123v]). Sanudo specified that the artist who died in the fatal accident was the mosaicist who realised the *Saint Techla*. Since Vincenzo used to sign his works "VINCENTIVS B. F." – perhaps following his father's example – his identification has been straightforward as the mosaic is signed by him.

The presence of Bastiani's workshop in San Marco means not only that, after more than fifty years of Tuscan "hegemony", Venetian masters were finally involved again in the decoration of the Basilica, but also that the relationship between the cartoonist and the mosaicist was closer and more direct, as Lazzaro provided the cartoons to his sons who actually made the mosaics (Merkel, 1977, p. 663; Merkel, 1990, p. 242). The reasons for Bastiani's official

engagement in the Basilica are still unknown, however, Merkel (1987, p. 28; 1994, p. 89) observed that at least two factors might have been key: the closeness to the Muranese artistic *milieu* and his personal knowledge of glass-makers that produced the mosaic glass tesserae (which further suggests Bastiani received a Muranese education early in life, as appears to be proved by his previous works), and Bastiani's role of mediator between the Medieval and the Renaissance artistic "languages" (as proved by the incorporation of Medieval frescoes and mosaics in his paintings). In addition, it must be underlined that Lazzaro had already realised artworks for important commissioners linked to the Venetian government (the altarpiece for San Samuel, requested by the *Procuratori de Citra* in 1460, and the *Portraits of Doges* for the Sala dei XXV in Doge's Palace, likely painted between 1479 and 1483), so he was probably an artist who was well known to the Doge and the *Procuratori de Supra*, who superintended the work in San Marco (Sartor, 1997, p. 38).

The mosaic portraying *Saint Sergius* located on the intrados of the Chapel of Saint Clemente is signed "LAZAR/VS · B · F". The artwork has been known to scholars since the 18th century when Zanetti mentioned it in *Della pittura veneziana* (1771). Zanetti, however, did not link this *Lazarus* with Lazzaro Bastiani, neither did Zanotto (1856). Only in 1896, in his comprehensive book on the mosaics of San Marco, did Pietro Saccardo first identify the artist as Lazzaro Bastiani. This attribution has never been questioned by subsequent art historians.

The *Saint Sergius* is a *rifacimento ex novo*, which means that it was a new mosaic executed on the basis of a cartoon made by a master. This work replaced *in toto* the previous mosaic by altering its stylistic and iconographic aspects but keeping the iconological factor (Merkel, 1977, p. 658). The reason for the *rifacimento ex novo* of the *Saint Sergius* was the fire that broke out in 1983 in the Chapel of Saint Nicholas in the Doge's Palace and damaged the Basilica, destroying the Dome of Saint Leonard and ruining the mosaics nearby (Manzoni-Bortolozzo, 1987, pp. 19-21, 24).

Unlike the case with his sons, no documents can attest Bastiani's activity as mosaicist in San Marco, but the signature, the stylistic closeness with his late works and, above all, the clear derivation of the peculiar pose of the saint from the statue of the Saint Luke painted in his *telero* of the *Offer of the Relic of the True Cross* for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista (*Fig. 252*) are sufficient elements to prove Bastiani's presence in the *cantiere* of San Marco. For Merkel, who extensively studied the San Marco mosaics from 1970s onwards, it is unlikely that Lazzaro alone executed the mosaic. In his opinion, indeed, Lazzaro only composed the cartoon, while his son Alvise physically realised the mosaic, albeit that Lazzaro signed it to declare his compositional idea (1977, p. 666; 1987, p. 28; 1990, p. 243; 1994, pp. 89-92; 1996, pp. 171, 177). In my view, however, the signature could be indicative that Lazzaro made the mosaic, since his son Vincenzo, probably following his example, also signed the *rifacimenti ex novo* (e.g., *Saint Ambrose*, the two apostles in *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* and in *Feeding of the Multitude*), but not the mosaics which he only restored, by imitating the Medieval style (e.g., the *Prophet Elias*, *Saint Erasma* and *Saint Euphemia*. Merkel, 1977, p. 667; Merkel, 1987, p. 29). In addition, of the mosaics Merkel attributed to Alvise on the basis of Lazzaro's cartoon (the lunette with *Saint George* or *Saint Theodore Killing the Dragon*, *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino*), none are signed. Finally, the chronological issue could be another reason to ascribe the full execution of the *Saint Sergius* to Lazzaro (it is worth recalling here that Collobi placed the mosaic at the end of the 1490s for its affinities with the Saint Luke in the *Offer of the Relic of the Cross*; while Arslan found evident here characteristics demonstrating the Tuscan influence of Andrea del Castagno, thus he believed it was an early work by Lazzaro made around 1460). In fact, if the mosaic was contemporary to the *telero* for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, it would be dated around 1494 (Merkel, 1977, p. 666) or shortly after (1496 c.: Merkel, 1994, p. 177), but since sometime between 1493 and 1494 Alvise died, as emerged from the testament of his son Cristoforo, it would be impossible that he realised the artwork.

Further images



Fig. 252. L. Bastiani, *Offer of the Relic of the True Cross*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia, 1494 c. (detail of the statue of Saint Luke).

7.2. TAPESTRIES

AUTOGRAPH TAPESTRIES



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Number: AT01

Artist: Lazzaro Bastiani (design/cartoon); Flemish weaver? (manufacture)

Title: *Pentecost*

Location: Venice (Italy), Church of Santa Maria della Salute (from 25th of January 1657)

Date: 1505 c.

Material and dimensions: wool, linen, silk, silver metal thread, 100 x 216 cm

Technique: tapestry

Provenance: Venice, Church of Santo Spirito in Isola.

Past exhibitions: *Restituzioni '90. Dodici Opere Restaurate* (Vicenza, Palazzo Leoni Montanari, 1st December 1990 – 20th January 1991); *Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 12th March – 19th June 2022).

Conservation status and previous restoration treatments: Morassutti, 1990 (*Restituzioni '90…*, 1990, pp. 44-45).

Bibliography:

Moschini, 1819, p. 13; Moschini, 1842, p. 52; Urbani De Gheltof, 1878, p. 25; Piva, 1930, pp. 48 (note 1), 98; Longhi, 1940, p. 179 (note 7); Viale Ferrero, 1961, p. 13; Muraro, 1963, pp. 122, 130-134; Lorenzetti, 1963, ed. cons. 1975, pp. 533-534; Davanzo Poli, 1990, p. 40, 62 (fig. 2); Lucco, 1990, II, p. 463, fig.

544 *Restituzioni '90…*, 1990, pp. 42-45; Salerni, 1994, p. 24; Forti Grazzini, 2002, pp. 117-122; Dal Pozzolo, 2010, p. 114.

This modest-scale tapestry portrays the Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles and other followers of Jesus on the fiftieth day from Easter Sunday (the episode is described in the *Acts of the Apostles*, 2:1-4). The scene depicts at the centre the Virgin enthroned, flanked by the apostles, arranged in a semicircle around her, and by two angels kneeling at the base of the throne. Hovering in mid-air, above the Virgin, there are the dove of the Holy Spirit and winged seraphim. Generally, the iconography of the Pentecost also includes the flames of the Holy Spirit, which are omitted here. The scene takes place in an unusual architectural setting that encloses the main figures on three sides, as if they were placed in a sort of sacred central area (comparable to the enclosure of the *Nativity* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia). On both sides there is a floral garden populated by various animals with symbolic meanings. Two wide arches open to show the background landscape: a Venetian-like fortified city with an arched bridge and various genre figures on the left, and on the right naturalistic scene with a hermit reading in a rocky cave, a lake and a ship approaching on the right. The horizontal arrangement of the tapestry suggests that it was most likely employed as altar frontal (*antependium*). The design of the composition was evidently made by a Venetian artist (identified, as we will see, with Lazzaro Bastiani). The place of manufacture is unknown, but given the colours and the style of weaving, Viale Ferrero, Augusti and Forti Grazzini reasonably assumed that it is likely that the tapestry was made in Venice, possibly by a Flemish or a Netherlandish émigré (Viale Ferrero, 1961, p. 13; *Restituzioni '90…*, 1990, pp. 42-43; Forti Grazzini, 2002, p. 120). To support this hypothesis, it must be emphasised that in the 15th and 16th centuries Italian patrons collected tapestries enthusiastically and several weavers from northern Europe established their workshops in Italy (Campbell, 2002, 85-101). In addition, it is known that from the beginning of the 15th century Flemish weavers lived and worked in Venice (Viale Ferrero, 1961, pp. 12-13; *Restituzioni '90…*, 1990, p. 44). Sometime in the past, the tapestry was

modified with the addition of two fragments (probably cut from another tapestry) depicting the personification of the virtues to the lateral extremities, the *Fortitude* on the left and the *Justice* on the right. Given the style of the design and the manufacture, these additions must be assigned to a Flemish weaver, probably from Bruges (*Restituzioni '90…*, 1990, p. 43).

The tapestry, today in the Church of Santa Maria della Salute (Venice), was originally located in the Church of Santo Spirito in Isola in the Venetian lagoon, where it was probably used as *antependium* for one of the altars of the church. After 1656, when the order of the Augustinian canons in charge in the church was suppressed (Corner, 1758, p. 496), several artworks (paintings and liturgical objects) embellishing the church and the monastery were removed and given to the Church of Santa Maria della Salute upon request of the Venetian Senate. At that time the church was still under construction so the works coming from Santo Spirito were delivered from 1657 (Piva, 1930, pp. 47-51, note 1).

In 1819 Moschini noticed that the tapestry was employed as antependium of the altar where Titian's *Pentecost Altarpiece* (*Missione dello S. S.*) was displayed. He pointed out that the artwork was exhibited on solemn occasions (Moschini, 1819). In 1842, the same author wrote that the work ("uno è in arazzo, e rappreseta la Discesa dello Spirito Santo sopra gli Apostoli"), along with the other altar frontals of the church, was conserved in a closet in the sacristy (p. 52). In both cases, Moschini ascribed the design of the picture to Titian ("È bel lavoro che sembra condotto su disegno di Tiziano", 1819; "Lavoro condotto diligentemente sopra disegno tizianesco", 1842). Urbani de Gheltof, agreeing with Moschini on attributing the cartoon to Titian, linked the commission to the request by Giulio Gherardo, Venetian ambassador in Florence, in 1597 to a Florentine manufactory for a *paliotto* to be produced (1878, p. 25). This assumption is totally inconsistent, as it is not supported by any documentary evidence. In a footnote of his *Note Brevi agli Ampiamenti* to the *Officina Ferrarese*, published in 1940, Longhi first identified Lazzaro Bastiani as the artist that provided the cartoon (p. 170 [note 7]). This ascription was not agreed by other scholars, albeit that they found influences of both Andrea

Mantegna and Giovanni Bellini in the tapestry (Lorenzetti, 1963, ed. cons. 1975; Davanzo Poli, 1990; Augusti in *Restituzioni '90…*, 1990; Salerni, 1994). Only in 1990 did Lucco confirm Longhi's attribution to Bastiani (p. 463, fig. 544), a view followed more recently by Forti Grazzini (2002, pp. 117-122) and Dal Pozzolo (2010, p. 114).

Augusti suggested that, because of the composite aspect of the piece, the weaver did not work on the basis of a unique cartoon, but instead he merged elements derived from contemporary paintings and drawings (*Restituzioni '90…*, 1990, p. 44). Not excluding the possibility that the weaver could have had re-elaborated some elements (e.g., the big flowers in the garden), Forti Grazzini stated that "the character of the main composition and the figures is more idiosyncratic than Augusti allows" (2002, p. 119). In fact, by comparing the tapestry with Bastiani's autograph and attributed paintings, the ascription of the work to this artist appears to be evident. The hieratic frontal rigidity of the Virgin is typical of Bastiani's pictures after 1475-80, as is the painstaking central perspective construction, further emphasized by the architectural elements that enclose the main figures (see, for instance, the *Saint Veneranda Altarpiece*, the *Nativity*, the *Saint Anthony in the Nut Tree* and the *Offering of the Relic of the Cross* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia). Similar carved and decorated columns are depicted in late works such as the telero of the *Relic of the Cross* (1494) and, especially, the central panel of the small *predella* with *Episodes of the Life of a Saint* in the Jacquemart André Museum of Paris (about 1493). In addition, it seems that the peculiar architectural setting of the antependium is derived from this latter panel. The turned pose of the man dressed in yellow and wearing the turban on the right of the Paris picture is repeated (with slight differences) similarity can also be seen in the apostle clothed in red on the right of the tapestry. The same pose is echoed also in the man wearing the blue mantle in the *Relic of the Cross* and in Saint John in the panel of *Christ Carrying the Cross* in Rovigo. The two peacocks, the lion, the ship, the palm trees, and the genre figures are all further elements often reiterated in Bastiani's paintings, particularly in the late pictures.

As far as the period of execution is concerned, various dates have been suggested, ranging from shortly before the end of the 15th century (Davanzo Poli, 1990; Lucco, 1990), to 1510-20 (Viale Ferrero, 1961), and up to 1520-30 (Augusti in *Restituzioni '90…*, 1990). The abovementioned comparisons with Bastiani's late works, with specific regard to the Jacquemart André predella, suggest the execution to have been from at least in the mid-1490s or shortly after, into the early years of the 16th century. Forti Grazzini pointed out that, given the subject of tapestry, the artwork was probably requested by the Augustinian canons of Santo Spirito to decorate the altar of the Virgin in the church. Corner reported that, according to an engraved inscription on a marble slab in the church, two altars, that of the Virgin and that of the True Cross, were consecrated on Easter day in 1505. In accordance with this information, Grazzini proposed that a date around 1505 for the cartoon and its weaving might be appropriate. I personally agree with this proposal.

REJECTED TAPESTRIES



Number: RT01

Artist: Paduan artist of the 15th century (cartoon)

Title: *Episodes of the Life of Christ.* In the rectangular frame at the centre: *Deposition;* in clockwise order: *Descent from the Cross, The Three Marys at the Tomb, Noli Me Tangere, On the Road to Emmaus, Descent into Limbo*

Location: Berlin (Germany), Kunstgewerbemuseum (inv. n. 60.7)

Material and dimensions: silk, gilded and silver threads, 1.02 x 1.65 m

Technique: embroidered tapestry

Provenance: Stockholm, Varenius collection (last recorded 1939); Paris, Frédéric Spitzer private collection (at least until 1891); A. M. de Madrazo private collection.

Bibliography: *La collection Spitzer...*, 1891, p. 385 (n. 109); Kurth, 1932, pp. 344-347; Collobi, 1939, p. 37, Tav. 24; Tietze-Conrat, 1955, p. 248 (fig. 58); Ruhmer, 1966, pp. 102-103; Calogero, 2020, p. 138 (note 199) and previous bibliography.

In 1939 Collobi assigned to Bastiani this embroidered *antependium*, that at that time was in Varenius Collection in Stockholm. Previously, the artwork was

in Spitzer collection in Paris (1891), where it was recorded as "Travail Florentin (XVI^{e} siècle). Betty Kurth (1932) first noticed Paduan influences in it and ascribed the design of the cartoon to the young Mantegna from about the middle of the 15th century (but assumed the execution of the *antependium* was made by Mantegna's followers in Squarcione's workshop), while Erika Tietze-Conrat (1955) found in the tapestry "only a slight dependence on Mantegna". In Collobi's opinion the *antependium* clearly shows Bastiani's reception of the Paduan manner. To support her assumption, the scholar suggested comparisons not only with Mantegna, but also with Jacopo Bellini's *Descent into Limbo* of the *Gattamelata Altarpiece* in Padua, Marco Zoppo's *Noli Me Tangere* in National Gallery of Scotland of Edinburgh, and Bastiani's two small panels depicting *Stories of the Life of Christ* in the Gallerie dell'Accademia of Venice. Owing to the similarities to the abovementioned *Noli Me Tangere* by Zoppo, Ruhmer (1996) suggested that the Bolognese painter was the cartoonist of the *antependium*. This similarity has been judged too tenuous by Calogero (2020), who believes the tapestry is a patchwork of heterogeneous inventions derived from graphic models common in weaving workshops at that time.

8. APPENDIX: EQUIPMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC CAMPAIGN

Osiris camera

The Osiris camera system has been developed by the National Gallery in London,[575] and manufactured by Opus Instruments.[576]

The device is equipped with an InGaAs (Indium Gallium Arsenide) linear sensor, sensitive in the range 900-1700 nm (operation wavelength), with image size up to 4096 x 4096 pixels for each acquisition. The camera works in wide band modality. The lens is a 150 mm focal length and lens f/number is selectable to optimize the depth of field.[577] The exposure time is set at 10 ms. The final output is an 8-bit Bitmap image.

As infrared sources, two 800 W Halogen lamps controlled in power (from 1 to 4) have been used. They have been set at low power to limit the heating of the painting surface. The lighting system employed in the Gallerie dell'Accademia was made at disposal by the museum itself.

Apollo camera

As a further development of the well-known Osiris camera, the Apollo is the new standard in IRR.[578]

As an improvement of the Osiris system, the Apollo camera features a 128 x 128 pixels InGaAs area sensor with sampling grid up to 5100 x 5100 pixels. The lens is still a 150 mm focal length with selectable lens f/number. The device in equipped with a filter set to split the sensitivity of the camera into three bands. The filters are: 1250 nm short wave pass filter, 1250-1510 bandpass filter, 1510 long wave pass filter. This multispectral modality allows to study the spectral behaviour of the materials at different wavelengths and to reveal underdrawn features otherwise not detectable in wide band mode. A

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[575] SAUNDERS ET AL., 2006, pp. 277-290.

[576] https://www.opusinstruments.com/cameras/osiris-camera/ (last visited: 18th March 2022).

[577] F/number varies from f/5.6 to f/45 in step.

[578] https://www.opusinstruments.com/cameras/apollo-camera/ (last visited: 18th March 2022).

further feature of the Apollo includes the possibility to adjust the exposure time up to 50 ms when using filters, as they pass less light, and if it would not be possible to increase the lighting. The obtained resulting output consists of a 16-bit TIFF image.

The light sources used with the Apollo camera have been made available by OpDATeCH Lab. In this case the halogen lamps could not be regulated, thus, to not overheat the painting surface, bulbs at various power have been utilised depending on the object-source and source-camera distances.[579]

With both devices, the camera-object distance has been set to obtain the optimal field of view (FOV) and the best spatial resolution for each imaged artwork, in order to sample the thin traces of underdrawing. The lens f/number selected has been set at 8 or 11, depending on the curvature of the panels and on the light intensity. To provide uniform illumination across the imaged area, the light sources have been placed either side of the camera in a typical illumination geometry with angle of illumination between 30 and 60 degrees. Small paintings have been imaged in one recording, while for bigger works, it has been necessary to take multiple recordings. Finally, the images have been processed and merged, if necessary, by means of Photoshop. A schematic picture of the diagnostic setup is shown *in Fig. 253*.

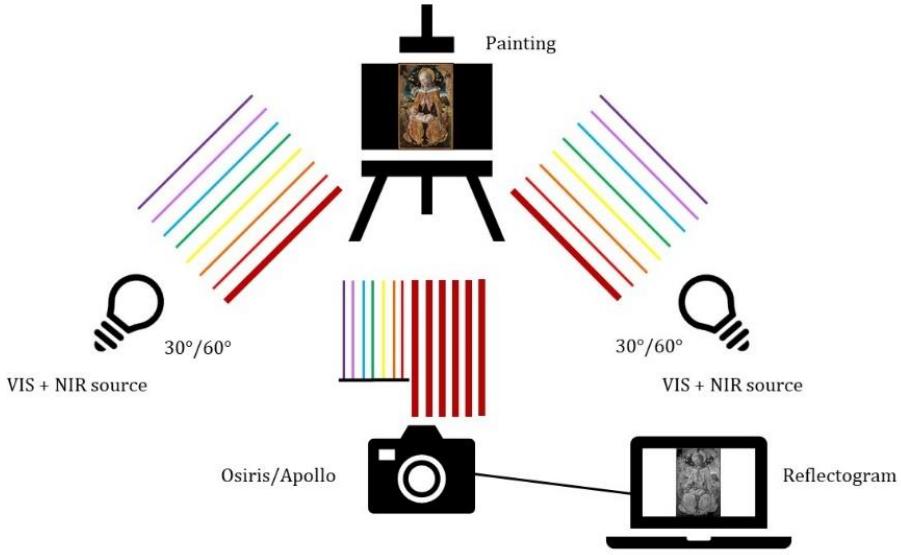


Fig. 253. Schematic representation of the setup with two halogen lamps irradiating the painting. The sources, positioned at 30°/60°, emit in the visible and in the IR portion of the electromagnetic spectrum.

[579] The power of the bulbs ranges between 300 and 1000 W.

The camera collects only the infrared portion of the backscattered radiation. The recorded information returns the reflectogram visible in real time on the computer screen.

When possible, the analysis has been integrated with VIS and IR photography carried out by means of two reflex cameras. The obtained photographs have been used to create IRFC images of the paintings for a preliminary and qualitative identification of pigments and to better visualise restored areas.

The technical specifications of the devices are hereafter briefly summarised:

- **Nikon D-810**: CMOS sensor, 7360 x 4912 pixels, spectral sensitivity from about/approximately 380/400 nm to 1100 nm, spectral sensitivity from about 700 nm to 1050 nm when equipped with Hoya high-pass IR filter R72.
- **Sony DSC-F828**: Si CCD sensor, 3264 x 2448 pixels, spectral sensitivity from about/approximately 380/400 nm to 1100 nm, spectral sensitivity from about 700 nm to 1050 nm when equipped with Hoya high-pass IR filter R72.

Diagnostic campaign

The tables report the setup parameters for each autograph painting investigated. When not specified, the analysis with the Apollo camera is performed in wide band modality and exposure time set at 10 ms.

For some artworks, further acquisitions have been carried out to investigate closely specific areas or details – sometimes by using the macro lens –, but the parameters listed here are intended for the recording of the whole painted area only.

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Resurrection and Noli Me Tangere* Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 565) Panel, 29 x 27 cm
Camera	Osiris
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	0,984 m
F/number	8
FOV	40 x 40 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 97 μm
N. of acquisitions	1

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Christ and the Disciples on the Road to Emmaus and Supper at Emmaus* Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 560) Panel, 31 x 27 cm
Camera	Osiris

Distance Object-Camera	0,984 m
F/number	8
FOV	40 x 40 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 97 μm
N. of acquisitions	1

Title	*Madonna of Humility*
Location	Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 144)
Material and dimensions	Panel, 53 x 32 cm
Camera	Osiris
Distance Object-Camera	0,940 m
F/number	8
FOV	37 x 37 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 90 μm
N. of acquisitions	2

Title	*Christ and the Samaritan Woman*
Location	Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 967)
Material and dimensions	Panel, 226 x 167 cm
Camera	Osiris
Distance Object-Camera	1,371 m
F/number	11
FOV	66 x 66 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 161 μm
N. of acquisitions	4 x 3 = 12

Title	*Christ and the Canaanite Woman*
Location	Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 967)
Material and dimensions	Panel, 226 x 165 cm
Camera	Osiris
Distance Object-Camera	1,371 m
F/number	11
FOV	66 x 66 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 161 μm
N. of acquisitions	4 x 3 = 12

Title	*Nativity*

Location Material and dimensions	Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 174) Panel, 160 x 191 cm
Camera	Osiris
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,371 m
F/number	11
FOV	66 x 66 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 161 µm
N. of acquisitions	3 x 4 = 12

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Communion of Saint Jerome* Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 1021) Canvas, 191 x 239.5 cm
Camera	Osiris
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,371 m
F/number	8
FOV	66 x 66 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 161 µm
Light Intensity	400 W
N. of acquisitions	4 x 5 = 20

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Funeral of Saint Jerome*[580] Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (inv. n. 1004) Canvas, 209 x 263 cm
Camera	Osiris
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,371 m
F/number	8
FOV	66 x 66 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 161 µm
N. of acquisitions	7

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Madonna and Child* Verona, Castelvecchio Museum (inv. n. 889-1B109) Panel, 75,3 x 59 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,57 m

[580] The IRR analysis performed on this painting covers only the lower part of the painting.

F/number	8
FOV	80 x 80 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 156 μm
N. of acquisitions	1

Title	*Christ Bearing the Cross and Meeting with the Three Maries*
Location	Rovigo, Pinacoteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi (inv. n. 76)
Material and dimensions	Panel, 37,5 x 45 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,13 m
F/number	8
FOV	50 x 50 cm^2
Filters	1250 nm; 1250-1510 nm; 1510 nm (Opus Instruments) 1150; 1350 nm; 1550 nm (Edmund Optics)
Exposure time	10 ms (Opus Instruments) 20 ms (Edmund Optics)
Resolution	Sampling step = 98 μm
N. of acquisitions	1 in wide band and 1 for each filter employed

Title	*Madonna and Child*
Location	Venice, Correr Museum (CI. I n. 0372)
Material and dimensions	Panel, 37,5 x 45 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,57 m
F/number	8
FOV	80 x 80 cm^2
Filters	1510 nm
Exposure time	20 ms (Wide band) 40 ms (filter)
Resolution	Sampling step = 156 μm
N. of acquisitions	1 in wide band and 1 with the 1510 nm filter

Title	*Nursing Madonna*
Location	Venice, Correr Museum (CI. I n. 0352)
Material and dimensions	Panel, 43 x 37 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,017 m

F/number	8
FOV	47 x 47 cm^2
Filters	1510 nm
Exposure time	20 ms (Wide band) 40 ms (filter)
Resolution	Sampling step = 92 μm
N. of acquisitions	1 in wide band and 1 with the 1510 nm filter

Title	*Doge Michele Steno and Doge Antonio Venier*
Location	Venice, Correr Museum (CI. I n. 1863)
Material and dimensions	Canvas, 97 x 105 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,323 m
F/number	8
FOV	67 x 67 cm^2
Filters	1510 nm
Exposure time	20 ms (Wide band) 40 ms (filter)
Resolution	Sampling step = 131 μm
N. of acquisitions	2 x 2 = 4 1 in wide band and 1 with the 1510 nm filter

Title	*Madonna of Humility*
Location	Venice, Correr Museum (CI. I n. 2193)
Material and dimensions	Panel, 60 x 46 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,263 m
F/number	11
FOV	63 x 63 cm^2
Filters	1510 nm
Exposure time	20 ms (Wide band) 40 ms (filter)
Resolution	Sampling step = 123 μm
N. of acquisitions	1 in wide band and 1 with the 1510 nm filter

Title	*Saint Martin of Tours*
Location	Venice, Correr Museum (CI. I n. 0353)

Material and dimensions	Panel, 148 x 107 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,326 m
F/number	8
FOV	67 x 67 cm^2
Filters	1510 nm
Exposure time	20 ms (Wide band) 40 ms (filter)
Resolution	Sampling step = 131 μm
N. of acquisitions	3 x 2= 6 1 in wide band and 1 with the 1510 nm filter

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Coronation of the Virgin* Bergamo, Pinacoteca dell'Accademia Carrara (inv. n. 81LC00028) Panel, 90 x 131 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,746 m
F/number	8
FOV	92 x 92 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 180 μm
N. of acquisitions	1 in wide band and 1 with the 1510 nm filter

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Madonna and Child* Lovere, Galleria dell'Accademia Tadini (inv. n. P 21) Panel, 53.5 x 36 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance $_{\text{Object-Camera}}$	1,218 m
F/number	8
FOV	60 x 60 cm^2
Filters	1250 nm, 1250-1510 nm, 1510 nm
Exposure time	10 ms (Wide band) 20 ms (1250 nm filter) 30 ms (1250-1510 nm filter) 40 ms (1510 nm filter)
Resolution	Sampling step = 117 μm

N. of acquisitions	1 in wide band, 1 with the 1250 nm filter, 1 with the 1250-1510 nm filter, 1 with the 1510 nm filter

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Madonna adoring the Child* Padua, Musei Civici agli Eremitani (inv. n. 2297) Panel, 47 x 29,5 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance Object-Camera	1,187 m
F/number	11
FOV	61 x 61 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 119 μm
N. of acquisitions	1

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Saint Michael Archangel* Padua, Musei Civici agli Eremitani (inv. n. 612) Canvas, 258 x 130 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance Object-Camera	1,642 m
F/number	8
FOV	90 x 90 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 176 μm
N. of acquisitions	4 x 2 = 8

Title Location Material and dimensions	*Archangel Gabriel* Padua, Musei Civici agli Eremitani (inv. n. 613) Canvas, 258 x 130 cm
Camera	Apollo
Distance Object-Camera	1,642 m
F/number	8
FOV	90 x 90 cm^2
Resolution	Sampling step = 176 μm
N. of acquisitions	4 x 2 = 8

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