

The Four Dimensions (Ef 3,18) in the Baptistery in Parma. Byzantine Models and the Franciscan Intellectual Elite around 1250

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Although the subject of many studies in the past twenty years, the Byzantinising paintings in the Baptistery in Parma still present many critical problems as far as the date of execution is concerned (which oscillates between 1233 and the 1260s), the patronage and the interpretation of some of the iconographical *hapax*.

The present study deals with the problem of dating and patronage indirectly, by starting with the singular representation of the 'Four Dimensions': *Altitudo*, *Longitudo*, *Latitudo* and *Profundum*. For the first time, the personifications of these concepts give visual form to a difficult verse in one of the Letters of St. Paul to the Ephesians (3,18).

The 'Four Dimensions' assume, in three of the four cases, the traits of ancient geniuses, and they are accompanied by allegorical figures of the Four Elements, the Four Rivers of Paradise and the Four Seasons. This iconography is aligned with thirteenth century cosmological-theological exegesis, which gave life to vast, complex figurative programmes, but there was never any illustration of the abstract *quaternitas* of St. Paul in them. In turn, the representation of *Profundum* in the guise of an old man who carries a cross on his shoulders constitutes a figurative *unicum*, the origins of which may be two texts by St. Bonaventure, who was *lector* of theology in the *studium* of Paris around 1250: the *Commentarium* on the Sentences of Peter Lombardo and the *Breviloquium*. Giovanni da Parma, general minister of the Minorite Order from 1243 to 1257, probably played the role of mediator because he was linked both to his city in Emilia as well as to the *studium* of Paris and to Bonaventure.

The analysis of iconic models – parallel to those of the exegetic texts – also reveals in this case (as in the narrative registers above) a derivation from a late Byzantine Comemnian repertory. Hence this also seems to confirm a possible role for Giovanni da Parma between 1251 and 1254, the year in which he was legate to Innocent IV at the court of Emperor John III Vatatzes. The pope in turn was connected with Parma by emotional ties as well as by the political interests linked to his struggle against Frederick II.

An extended examination of the exegetic, figurative and historical sources reinforces the position of those who in the past have found Franciscan inspiration in the

decoration in Parma and who have thus dated the work to around mid-century.

Giusto de' Menabuoi in Santa Maria di Brera

FRANCESCA FLORES D'ARCAIS

The space opposite the left apsidal chapel of the church of Santa Maria di Brera (now reduced to a studio in the Academy of Fine Arts in Milan) still preserves traces of frescoes in the vault. There are figures of the *Virtues* in the vault, of busts of the *Prophets* on the soffit that divides this bay from the others, and of busts of *Milanese Saints* in the soffit that separate this space from the presbytery area.

The frescoes have been attributed to Giusto de' Menabuoi and to the so-called *Maestro della lunetta del 1349*, that is, to the painter who worked in Viboldone in the lunette that bears the date 1349.

The frescoes of Santa Maria di Brera must go back to 1348 and hence, as far as Giusto de' Menabuoi is concerned, they could be the first work carried out by the Florentine master in Milan. His pictorial language is characterized by very soft, *sfumato* colour, which was imported to Lombardy from Giotto and his more mature pupils, and Giusto followed in their wake. These frescoes show a mature sense of space, above all in the ample thrones of the *Virtues* and in the intelligent solution of the imitation marble arch, where, as if from hexagonal windows, the half figures of *Saints* look out. This sense of space and delicacy of colour yield interesting results in local painting from the mid-fourteenth century onwards.

A 'Falcon Room' And Other Late Gothic Decorations in the Palazzo Cavalcabò Sommi in Cremona

LIDIA AZZOLINI

The fragmentary fresco decorations in the residence of Ugolino Cavalcabò (Cremona, via Trecchi 29) help us to better delineate the characteristics of local late Gothic painting at the beginning of the fifteenth century, before Bembo's workshop became dominant. In various episodes, the influence of the figurative culture that was widespread at the Visconti court is clear, above all in the exemplary value of many of Giovannino de' Grassi's creations.

A room on the *piano nobile* is decorated with false windows with falcons perching on stands. Another room is painted with a

loggia opening out onto a starry night sky (the blue of the sky has been lost); imitation coloured marbles simulate a parapet held up by slender columns.

On the ground floor, in two rooms, there are remains of geometricising decoration with stars, arabesques and lozenges. However, the discovery of several aedicules in another room bursting with decorations of spires and pinnacles that refer to the Cathedral in Milan and to Giovannino's miniatures is the most interesting feature. Inside the aedicules, there were large armed figures (unfortunately in a very poor state of conservation), which may have been part of a cycle of *Illustrious Men*.

Lombard Stonecutters in Savona in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: Matteo da Bissone and Gabriele da Cannero

MANUELA VILLANI

Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere entrusted Giuliano da Sangallo with the project for his noble residence in Savona, but it was actually carried out (beginning in 1495) by the less well-known «magister picator petrarum Mateus de Bixono». The union of Sangallo's refined classicism and Matteo's technical ability is borne out by the two *all'antica* capitals of the Via Pia portal.

A year later, Matteo da Bissone was given the commission for a «tabernaculum sacri corporis Christi» for the cathedral in Savona. The marble reliefs re-assembled in the old sacristy are probably the remains of this great marble altarpiece. The sculptural style is close to the styles of Amadeo and the Mantegazza, which was already widespread in the '70s and '80s. Analogous formal characteristics can also be found in the relief (perhaps to be attributed to Matteo) with the *Resurrection of Lazarus* in the inside portal of the Palazzo di Andrea Doria in Genoa (piazza San Matteo 17). He can also be linked to the two reliefs with the *Crucifixion* and the *Deposition* (Savona, Museo della Cattedrale), which came from the cathedral. They were created around 1489-1490, probably with the assistance of several skilled workers from northern Europe.

The documents reveal another leading figure in the panorama of sculpture in Savona: Gabriele da Cannero, nominated *procuratore* by Tamagnino in 1503 for work in the chapel of Cardinale Girolamo Basso della Rovere, in the church of Santa Chiara in Savona. The decoration of the portals in Savona (of the Palazzo Del Carretto and of the Palazzo Gentile Ricci) should also be attributed to this sculptor. Both show panoply

decoration which was derived from the portal of the Palazzo Grillo Cattaneo in Genoa. The commission for this work was given to Tamagnino in 1505, and this type of decoration also appeared on a fragment for the tomb of the parents of Margherita di Foix (on which Gabriele da Cannero worked together with others).

The Sepulchres of the Stampa Marquises in Santa Maria delle Grazie in Soncino. A Document for Cristoforo Lombardo and Giulio d'Oggiono

MARIO MARUBBI

In the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Soncino, there are three sepulchral monuments for the same number of members of the noble family Stampa. The most important is Marquis Massimiliano's. Despite the fact that his mausoleum bears the signature of the sculptor Giulio d'Oggiono, an unpublished document in the Archivio di Stato in Cremona attributes its creation to Cristoforo Lombardo, called Il Lombardino, one of the most famous architects and stone-cutters in Spanish-ruled Milan in the mid-sixteenth century.

According to an agreement of 24 November 1553 signed by Anna Moroni, the marquis's widow, Giulio was supposed to carry out the monument in Candoglia and Carrara marble based on a drawing by Cristoforo Lombardo, who was then to evaluate it and approve the final result. Formal analysis of the construction makes it possible to connect it with the principal monuments Lombardino did in Milan and in the Duchy.

Finally, the article offers some reflections on the other two Stampa tombs in the choir of the same church: the sepulchral arch of Massimiliano's son, little Francesco, who died in 1528, and the epitaph for the marquis's father, Senator Pietro Martire Stampa, who also died in 1528.

Painted Theology. Form and Colour at the Service of Christological Thought: Considerations on the Sistine Chapel

EIKO M. L. WAKAYAMA

One of the sources of inspiration of the Sistine Chapel was certainly the sermon delivered on 21 December 1507 by Egidio da Viterbo, the Prior General of the Augustinian Order who gave official sermons for Julius II. He forcefully recalled how necessary it was to be converted and to evangelise the whole world so that Rome could become the «sancta latina Jerusalem».

Nevertheless, what most specifically characterizes Michelangelo's undertaking is the conceptual architecture of the work, which is set up so that it makes a continuous, compelling play on pictorial references to the fifteenth century paintings on the walls below. This is particularly evident in the choice of *Seers* and in the subjects for the medallions, as well as the way they are distributed, their particular iconographical qualities and the 'typological' link between characters with an analogous function or religious mission. This link is made evident by the colours, clothing and ornaments.

The article is especially concerned with

the representations of the *Lybian Sybil* and *Jonah*. From a careful reading of these figures – their attitudes, poses, facial colouring and expressions, and colours – it is possible to understand the links with the scenes and surrounding characters. What is more, it also makes it possible to understand the metaphorical and symbolical content that lies hidden within them.

Visualizing the *Imitatio Christi* in Chapel 36, the *Ascent to Calvary*, At the *Sacro Monte* of Varallo

YOKO OHNO

Chapel 36 at the *Sacro Monte* of Varallo was created between 1595 and 1607 under the careful direction of Carlo Bascapè. For the *Ascent to Calvary*, the bishop of Novara made some important innovations in the traditional way of representing the 'mysteries': on the walls above, hovering angels hold three imitation panels with episodes from the Old Testament, while on scrolls prophetic verses underline the salvific meaning of the episode. Moreover, the main image shows an episode that was not traditionally considered a prefiguration of the Passion: *Abimelech, King of Sichem, and his Men Cut and Transport Tree Trunks*. One of the main statues, Simon of Cyrene, is portrayed in an unusual way.

From an analysis of the relationship between the Biblical episodes, the writings and the statues, and from the way the pilgrims are obliged to look at the scene, we can conclude that the figures were chosen to visualise the concept of *imitatio Christi*, which was central to the spirituality of Catholic Reform. The pilgrims, who look at the scene while on their knees, find they are 'guided' by a female statue pointing out Jesus to a child. Her gesture leads their gazes first to the statues around Jesus, and hence, deeper and deeper into the scene, to the central wall populated by angels. The faithful thus link Jesus' fall with the image of Abimelech, and they see a double contrast: the first is Abimelech's wickedness contrasted with the gentleness of Jesus; the second is among Abimelech's men, who carry out his orders, and the Cyrenian, who is reluctant to carry the cross as *sequela Christi*.

This scene was supposed to be an effective way to recall the task assigned to the faithful: if Abimelech's soldiers are willing to obey even an evil king, then who would not be willing to respond to Jesus' invitation to carry the cross with him? Bascapè was probably inspired for this scene by the *Vita Jesu Christi*, a treatise by Ludolphus de Saxonia that offered a negative reading of the character of Simon of Cyrene.

Giovan Battista and Giovan Mauro Della Rovere in Brescia and in the Brescia area

GIUSEPPE FUSARI

The Della Rovere brothers were first present in the Brescia area in 1616, the very time in which other works by Milanese artists reached the city: it was a short season in which the pictorial culture of Milan came into contact with the Breascian milieu,

which was dominated by Venetian painting. Unlike other Milanese painters (Cerano, Camillo and Giulio Cesare Procaccini) the two Della Rovere brothers – and especially Giovan Mauro – kept up contacts with the Brescia area until 1633.

In Brescia, the Fiamminghini first worked in the city church of San Domenico (destroyed). Thus in 1617, only Giovan Mauro frescoed the presbytery of the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, and perhaps some of the parts of the church of Sant'Afra. The central medallion of the vault of Santa Maria del Carmine, done at the end of the '20s, is probably also his work.

The Della Rovere brothers' activity immediately branched out into the territory: at various times in Chiari (in 1616, 1621, 1628 and 1630), for the *Mysteries of the Rosary* in Santa Maria Maggiore, for the *Triumphs of Sts. Faustinus and Jovita* which were once in the collegiate church and for the Franciscan canvases in the church of San Bernardino; in Bienno in 1621 for the decoration of the parish church and in 1631 for a canvas in Santa Maria Annunciata; in Breno in 1621; in Trenzano in 1631 and, a final stop, in 1632, in Berzo Inferiore, where Giovan Mauro did a canvas of the *Birth of the Virgin*.

An Anti-Jansenist Painting by Vincenzo Orelli

RENZO MANGILI

The article publishes a small oval canvas by Vincenzo Angelo Orelli (Locarno, 1751 - Bergamo, 1813) of *The Christ Child Showing the Sacred Heart*, now in a private collection and datable to around 1800. Orelli painted many variations of this iconographical theme, which was a true manifesto of Catholic orthodoxy in opposition to the heresy of Cornelis Jansen in the second half of the eighteenth century. Orelli's works can be distinguished from each other by their format and the use they were destined for (altarpieces or devotional pieces in the home), by their layout in terms of composition or narrative, and by the age at which the divine figure was represented each time.

What makes the painting presented here especially interesting is that there is writing from the nineteenth century on the back, and it reveals the name of the patron: the Jesuit Luigi Mozzi, archpriest of the cathedral of Bergamo and «propagator of devotion to the Sacred heart of Jesus against the Jansenists».

Finally, the author points out a canvas of an analogous theme, which is now in a Swiss private collection: the work is by Vincenzo's father, that is, Giuseppe Antonio, champion of a more flamboyant Lombard Rococò style.

Fifty Years of Art in Lombardy

RAFFAELE DE GRADA

The celebration the fifty years since the birth of *Arte Lombarda* has given the author the opportunity to reflect on the artists and movements that have determined the development of the artistic process in Italy starting from the mid-twentieth century.

The Lost Polyptych by Stefano De' Fedeli for the Basilica in Desio: Episodes and Hypotheses

LUCA TOSI

The article intends to take up several questions concerning a lost polyptych painted in 1480 by Stefano De' Fedeli for the basilica of SS. Siro e Materno in Desio.

The author underlines the unusual iconography employed by De' Fedeli in this polyptych, which was originally composed of six main panels on a gold ground and a predella. The figures in the panels can be identified thanks to pastoral acts written in 1596: in the central panels, the Virgin and Child with Saints Ambrose, Materno, Victor and Theodore; in the upper part, a Crucifixion with Saints Roch, Sebastian, Anthony Abbot and Theodore again, but this time dressed as a bishop. The fact that St. Theodore appears twice is singular, but the present author thinks it is connected with local religious traditions in which the two saints – both of whom were named Theodore – had an important role. In Desio, there was a special devotion to St. Theodore martyr and to St. Theodore bishop of Sion, and this devotion must have been especially strong at the end of the XV century. A beautiful processional cross made for the basilica in the same years as the polyptych also bear witness to this, since Theodore is represented with both the attributes of a martyr and a bishop.

The author maintains that the altarpiece could have disappeared between the XVIII and XIX centuries; he suggests identifying one of the panels in the painting with St. Sebastian and a bishop saint, which was once in the Roman collection of Giuseppe Maria Fiamingo.

Three Capuchin Nunneries in Milan Between the XVI and XVII Centuries

MARIA CECILIA GALAFFU

There were four Capuchin nunneries in Milan: Santa Prassede (founded in 1578), Santa Barbara (1585), Santa Maria di Loreto (1626) and Santa Maria degli Angeli (1655).

Saint Charles Borromeo, one of the main authors of the reform of the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century, wanted the Capuchin order to be present in his city so that the Tridentine spirit could be fully accomplished. The founding of the first two nunneries is due to his precise will. In the spirit of continuity, Cardinal Federico Borromeo encouraged the foundation of the other two.

The present article considers the nunneries of Santa Barbara, Santa Maria degli Angeli and Santa Maria di Loreto, going through their history from the foundation to the suppression, using documents housed in the archives of Milan. They provide data on the location of the nunneries, on the phases in their foundation, which are not always linear, and on the practices of religious life that the nuns led there. In particular, the inventories drawn up at the time of the suppression list, among the many humble objects for ordinary use, several canvases by seventeenth century Milanese artists.

Bergamo Additions to Gian Giacomo Barbelli's Catalogue

LAURA PAOLA GNACCOLINI

The great altarpiece in the church of the Immacolata in Pognano – portraying the *Visitation* – is an unpublished painting by Gian Giacomo Barbelli. The canvas, which has recently been restored, originally decorated the main altar of the old parish church, which was in fact named after the *Visitation*. The church was rebuilt by popular vote after the plague of 1630; the new altarpiece was probably commissioned from the artist by the lay community. As for the dating, a *post quem* for the work can be placed around 1632, when the building was not yet finished, and ca. 1634, because of analogies with other works by the painter.

The article provides an opportunity to make more precise statements on two other canvases by Barbelli in the Bergamo area that are now housed in Piazzatorre in the upper Val Brembana.

Cesano Maderno: the Furnishings of Palazzo Arese Borromeo. Preliminary Considerations on the Inventories of 1697, 1704 and 1716

MASSIMO REBOSIO

Bartolomeo III Arese adorned the Palazzo Arese Borromeo in Cesano Maderno with a wealth of fresco decoration, most of which has survived to our own day. However, the rooms also had a significant number of paintings, sculptures and furnishings. This aspect has not been studied very much until now, but the first inventories of the Palazzo, which were drawn up between 1697 and 1716, can shed light upon it.

Through an *ad hoc* investigative method, and starting with the data in the inventories, the article systematically examines

the furnishings of some of the rooms on the *piano nobile*. The inventory of 1697 was chosen as the reference inventory, and it was integrated with more data taken from later inventories. Characteristics, connection routes and intended uses were identified for individual spaces.

The furnishings were divided by typology: beds; chairs; tables; containers (wardrobes, desks, cabinets...); paintings; sculpture and objects. The inventory of 1697 summarily describes the subject and type of frame of the paintings, but in many cases, the later inventories integrate our knowledge with the measurements and the most minutely detailed descriptions of the subjects, as well as a few cases of attributions.

The article is completed with a final glossary of the most typical terms used in inventories and a plan of the building as it was between the end of the XVII and beginning of the XVIII century, with the old names of the rooms.

Catalogues for Art History or Art History for Catalogues?

STEFANIA VECCHIO

For many art historians, the work of cataloguing is no longer a priority, nor a scientific, reliable tool. It is no longer felt to be a model for conceptual organization and the formal representation of knowledge.

The present article analyses some of the fundamental reasons that have led to this separation of the discipline of art history and cataloguing carried out according to present national norms.

In the first place, what has been defined as the methodological 'original sin' of the work of cataloguing should be noted: that is, the prevalence of juridical-administrative form over historical-artistic form. In more recent times, the adoption of computers, understood for that matter as mere technical instruments that are partly extraneous or hostile to art historians, can be noted. In fact, art historians continue to maintain that the applicative aspect is a task for experts, excluding the possibility of understanding the logical-formal model that makes it possible to transform data into information.

Finally, it should be noted that training qualified personnel is a problem, and their role cannot be identified solely as architects, art historians or traditional archaeologists, just as a purely technical role for the computer expert cannot be defined as such. Instead, it is necessary to have completely new professional figures who can mediate in the different areas of scientific and technological expertise.