NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings

Paolo Veneziano
Venetian, active 1333 - 1358

The Crucifixion

c. 1340/1345

tempera on panel
painted surface: 31 x 38 cm (12 3/16 x 14 15/16 in.)
overall: 33.85 x 41.1 cm (13 5/16 x 16 3/16 in.)
framed: 37.2 x 45.4 x 5.7 cm (14 5/8 x 17 7/8 x 2 1/4 in.)
Inscription: upper center: I.N.R.I. (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews)
Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.143

ENTRY

The Crucifixion is enacted in front of the crenellated wall of the city of Jerusalem. The cross is flanked above by four fluttering angels, three of whom collect the blood that flows from the wounds in Christ's hands and side. To the left of the Cross, the Holy Women, a compact group, support the swooning Mary, mother of Jesus. Mary Magdalene kneels at the foot of the Cross, caressing Christ's feet with her hands. To the right of the Cross stand Saint John the Evangelist, in profile, and a group of soldiers with the centurion in the middle, distinguished by a halo, who recognizes the Son of God in Jesus.[1] The painting's small size, arched shape, and composition suggest that it originally belonged to a portable altarpiece, of which it formed the central panel's upper tier [fig. 1].[2] The hypothesis was first advanced by Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà (originally drafted 1939, published 1969), who based it on stylistic, compositional, and iconographic affinities between a small triptych now in the Galleria Nazionale of Parma [fig. 2] and a series of small panels now in the Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts [fig. 3]. Sandberg-Vavalà recognized the latter as fragments of the shutters of a triptych [fig. 4] very similar to the one now in

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Parma.[3] Thus, as in the example at Parma, the dismantled triptych would have represented on the exterior Saints Christopher and Blaise ([fig. 1], panels a and e). When opened, the left shutter would have shown Saints Michael Archangel and John the Baptist at the top, and in the lower register Saints George and Francis; the Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene would have appeared at the top of the right shutter, and below it Saints Barbara and Anthony Abbot (in the Parma triptych, the place of Saint Barbara is taken by Saint Ursula). The Washington Crucifixion therefore may be assumed to have formed part of the centerpiece of a triptych, probably placed, as at Parma, above an image of the Madonna and Child. The measurements of the fragments[4] would seem to confirm that the painting in the National Gallery of Art and the fragments in Worcester belonged to the same altarpiece. Other scholars later independently proposed the same conjectural reconstruction of the complex.[5] It was further developed by the suggestion that it could be completed with the triangular gable panels depicting the Angel of the Annunciation and the Virgin Annunciate now in the J. Paul Getty Museum at Los Angeles [fig. 5],[6] and with the Madonna and Child now in the Musée du Petit Palais at Avignon [fig. 6],[7] proposed as the lower register of the central panel of which our Crucifixion formed the upper part. Not all authorities have found these proposals convincing, and some have rejected them,[8] but at least the common origin of the panels now in Avignon, Washington, and Worcester seems quite plausible.[9]

As for the hand that painted the panel in Washington, apart from the first tentative attributions to Nicoletto Semitecolo [10] and to Lorenzo Veneziano (an artist who belonged to a younger generation and was probably a disciple of Paolo Veneziano, but someone to whom early twentieth-century art historians frequently attributed Paolo's paintings) [11] made during the time when it was still on the art market, Paolo's authorship is now almost universally recognized.[12] Uncertainties concern not so much the painting's attribution as its chronological position in Paolo's oeuvre. This is variously assessed depending on the chronological sequence of the master's paintings proposed in the literature. Roberto Longhi, followed by many, argued for an execution toward the middle of the fourteenth century,[13] but other art historians have preferred an earlier dating, proposing the 1340s,[14] the years around 1340,[15] the fourth,[16] or even the third decade.[17] In the absence of secure points of reference, it may be assumed that the panel in the National Gallery of Art should precede the polyptych with the Crucifixion and saints now in the Museum of the Cathedral of Rab, or the painted cross in the church of Saint Dominic at Dubrovnik (both in Croatia), works generally and convincingly

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dated after the mid-fourteenth century.[18] In their conspicuous elongation of the figures' proportions, their more realistic treatment of the anatomy of the body of Christ, their measured language of gesture and less dynamic linear rhythms, these works have undeniable affinities with paintings securely dated to the artist's last creative phase. On the other hand, a *terminus post quem* for our painting can be deduced from the Crucifixion in one of the panels of polyptych no. 21 in the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice, a work that the more recent literature tends to place within or not long after the fourth decade of the fourteenth century. With its more animated and crowded composition and its more schematic description of the slender body of Christ, it can undoubtedly be assumed to belong to a phase preceding the Washington version of the subject.[19]

If, as seems to me plausible, we accept that the painting discussed here belongs to the same complex of which the fragments in the Worcester Museum and the Madonna in Avignon formed part, the scope for comparisons and for formulating more precise chronological parameters is widened. The Saint Francis of the Worcester Museum seems more slender than the corresponding image of the saint in the Museo Civico in Vicenza, dated 1333,[20] and should be later in date. Conversely, a period of some length must have elapsed between the figure of the Baptist in the Worcester Museum and that in the polyptych in the church of San Martino at Chioggia in 1349: there, the Baptist, a very tall, aristocratic personage who turns with timorous discretion to the Christ child on his mother's knee in the central panel, reveals characteristics rather different from those of the Worcester Baptist.[21] The slight hanchement of the Worcester Saint George, holding his lance between his fingers with inimitable nonchalance, seems to repeat in a very similar way, though perhaps with an even more studied quest for elegance, the pose of another warrior saint, the Saint Theodore in the *Pala feriale* of 1343–1345.[22] As for the Madonna in Avignon, the liveliness of the Christ child's gesture, his arms outspread, and the slender figure of Mary, with her wan face and melancholic gaze, invite comparison with the panel dated 1340 in the Crespi collection in Milan and, even more persuasively, with the Madonna now in the Museo Diocesano in Cesena with a provenance from Carpineta, dated 1347.[23]

To these stylistic observations we may add some comments on the iconography and costumes worn by the figures in the panels. Bearing in mind that iconographic changes may depend on the requirements of particular patrons and that their use as criteria for dating a work of art should be evaluated with a great deal of caution, I do not think it accidental that in the Madonna of Carpineta and in Paolo's later

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representations of the same subject Mary is always shown with a dress sumptuously decorated with floriated motifs in gold and that the child, instead of wearing the traditional long tunic, is represented nude (even if draped in a mantle) or is shown wearing a transparent chemise that leaves his legs exposed. This motif, of Byzantine origin, soon spread in Tuscan painting,[24] but it apparently enjoyed less success, or made less rapid headway, in northern Italy. Rare in Venetian paintings of the early fourteenth century, it is still not present in Paolo's Crespi Madonna (1340), though it appears in his later works and also in the panel of the Madonna in Avignon. The conclusion that the triptych in question might have been executed within the 1340s seems further corroborated by the costume of Saint Barbara in Worcester. Her dress is characterized by a conspicuous *manicottolo* (a long sleeve whose upper fitted part reaches down to the elbow, where it sharply widens and then hangs down in a loose flap to the mid-thigh).[25] This *dernier cri* of fourteenth-century court dress, a fashion by no means confined to ladies, appears here in a less evolved form than in the dresses that adorn the Saint Ursula of the polyptych of San Severino Marche (1358) [26] or the Dancing Salome in the mosaic of the baptistery of San Marco (c. 1350),[27] but in a far wider (and presumably later) variant than in the elegant dresses of the female saints depicted in the laterals of the triptych of Saint Clare in the Museo Civico of Trieste, executed by Paolo within the third decade.[28] From the sum of these observations, it seems possible to deduce that the triptych of which the Washington Crucifixion formed part should date to the early 1340s, soon after the triptych in the Galleria Nazionale in Parma, which it follows in composition and, in large part, iconography.

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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

fig. 1 Reconstruction of a portable triptych by Paolo Veneziano. Panel A: *Saint Christopher* (reverse of panel B). Panel B: a. *Angel of the Annunciation* (fig. 5); b. *Saint Michael Archangel* (fig. 3); c. *Saint John the Baptist* (fig. 3); d. *Saint George* (fig. 3); e. *Saint Francis* (fig. 3). Panel C: a. *The Crucifixion*; b. *Madonna and Child* (fig. 6). Panel D: a. *Virgin Annunciate* (fig. 5); b. *The Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene* (fig. 3); c. *Saint Barbara* (fig. 3); d. *Saint Anthony Abbot* (fig. 3). Panel E: *Saint Blaise* (reverse of panel D)

fig. 2 Paolo Veneziano, *Portable Triptych*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale, Parma

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fig. 3 Paolo Veneziano, *Panels from the Wings of a Triptych*, c. 1340/1345, tempera on panel, Worcester Art Museum (MA), Museum Purchase, 1927.19. Image © Worcester Art Museum

fig. 4 Saints Christopher and Blaise on the reverse of the lateral panels of Paolo Veneziano, *Portable Triptych*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale, Parma

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fig. 5 Paolo Veneziano, *The Annunciation*, c. 1340/1345, tempera on panel, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. Image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program

fig. 6 Paolo Veneziano, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1340/1345, tempera on panel, Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon. Image © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Rene-Gabrile Ojeda

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RECONSTRUCTION

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.

Reconstruction of a portable triptych by Paolo Veneziano

Panel A
Saint Christopher (reverse of panel B)

Panel B
a. *Angel of the Annunciation* (Entry fig. 5)
b. *Saint Michael Archangel* (Entry fig. 3)
c. *Saint John the Baptist* (Entry fig. 3)
d. *Saint George* (Entry fig. 3)
e. *Saint Francis* (Entry fig. 3)

Panel C
a. *The Crucifixion*
b. *Madonna and Child* (Entry fig. 6)

Panel D
a. *Virgin Annunciate* (Entry fig. 5)
b. *The Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene* (Entry fig. 3)
c. *Saint Barbara* (Entry fig. 3)
d. *Saint Anthony Abbot* (Entry fig. 3)

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Panel E
Saint Blaise (reverse of panel D)

NOTES

[1] The artist follows the iconography developed after the iconoclastic period in Middle Byzantine art; it is here that such motifs as the mourning angels, the centurion (cf. Matthew 27:54), the walls of Jerusalem in the background, and the skull of Adam hidden in a fissure of the rock of Golgotha below the Cross appear for the first time; cf. Marcus Mrass, "Kreuzigung Christi," in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1995), 5:312–350. Motifs of Western origin, on the other hand, also are present in the painting: Mary Magdalene embracing the Cross, or the swooning Madonna; cf. Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 123–124, 148–151. On the haloed centurion, a widespread motif in Italian fourteenth-century painting, cf. Gertrud Schiller, *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 2:166–167.

[2] The relatively small dimensions of the panel and its particular format, favoring width at the expense of height, preclude the hypothesis that it formed the central gable of a polyptych. The alternative suggestion, that it might have been part of the predella of an altarpiece, would seem to be discounted by the vertical graining of the wood. For small portable triptychs in which the Crucifixion appears above the image of the Madonna and Child, cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), fig. 74, 202, 366, 524.

[3] The article by Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà (in English) was prepared for the Worcester Art Museum Bulletin in 1939 but long remained unpublished. It was finally printed in an Italian translation by Michelangelo Muraro, as Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, "Maestro Paolo Veneziano: Suoi dipinti in America e altrove," in *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 99–101. Sandberg-Vavalà was the first to point out the close resemblances between the panel then in the Kress Collection and the corresponding scene in the small triptych of the Galleria Nazionale in Parma (no. 438), for which see Rosa D'Amico, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall'antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 44–46. More especially, she noted the virtual identity in iconography and composition between this triptych and a very similar altarpiece of which the fragments now in the Worcester Art Museum originally formed part (no. 1927.19); see Martin Davies, "Italian School," in *European Paintings in the Collection of the Worcester Art Museum*, vol. 1, *Text*, ed. Worcester Art Museum (Worcester, MA, 1974), 412–417. She concluded that the Crucifixion now in the National

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Gallery of Art originally belonged to the same ensemble.

[4] The dimensions of the panels with figures of saints in the Worcester Museum, cut from the shutters of a triptych, vary between 27.7 and 28.3 × 9 and 9.2 cm, while the *Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene*, the only panel to preserve the entire width of the triptych's right wing, is 27.7 × 18.1 cm. Therefore, the shutters—without the upper gables, which could (on the analogy of the model in Parma) have been some 20–30 cm high—would have measured c. 56 × 18 cm; see Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), pls. 77–78. After various transfers on the Italian art market, where they were recorded at least until 1925, the seven fragments were purchased by the Worcester Museum in 1927 from the dealer Paul Bottenwieser (New York and Berlin). See Martin Davies, "Italian School," in *European Paintings in the Collection of the Worcester Art Museum*, vol. 1, *Text*, ed. Worcester Art Museum (Worcester, MA, 1974), 415–416.

[5] Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs italiens dans les musées de France* (Paris, 1956), 19; Michel Laclotte, "Peintures italiennes des XIVe et XVe siècles à l'Orangerie," *Arte veneta* 10 (1956): 226; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 8, fig. 10; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 156–158. Michelangelo Muraro (1969, 125) accepted the hypothesis but believed the Madonna now in Avignon to be later in date and not part of the complex. Michel Laclotte and Elisabeth Mognetti, *Avignon, Musée du Petit Palais: Peinture italienne*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1976), no. 202; and Robert Gibbs, "Paolo Veneziano," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 24:32, also accepted the reconstruction.

[6] No. 87.PB.117; 22.5 × 13.5 each; see David Jaffé, *Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue of the Collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum* (Malibu, 1997), 129. The two fragments come from the Florentine collection of Charles Loeser (1864–1928). Joanna R. Dunn of the National Gallery of Art's conservation department, who has examined the two panels at my request, thinks they probably were cut down along the diagonal sides as well as on the acute-angle corners. She estimates that their original width might have been as much as 18 cm.

[7] No. 20194; 44 × 40 cm. See Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), no. 224. The painting, first recorded in the famous Roman collection of Giampiero Campana (1808–1880) in the mid-nineteenth century, was sold in 1862, together with the entire Campana collection, to the Musée Napoléon III in Paris. It was subsequently placed on loan in the museum in Montargis, where it remained on display for almost a century before being transferred to the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon. Since the Madonna was catalogued

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as a work of Ottaviano da Faenza in the Campana collection, it may be, or has been, inferred that it was originally intended for a patron in Emilia-Romagna. Cf. Roberto Longhi, *Viatico per cinque secoli di pittura veneziana* (Florence, 1946), 44–45.

[8] Rodolfo Pallucchini (1956) doubted the reconstruction on chronological grounds, though subsequently (1964) he did not discount the possibility that the Crucifixion discussed here and the Madonna now in Avignon might have belonged to the same complex. Muraro, as we have seen, rejected this hypothesis. According to Martin Davies (1974), the various conjectural reconstructions of the complex "are unproved." According to Filippo Pedrocco (2003), two circumstances would have precluded the reconstruction: the differences (though minimal) in measurements and the chronological disparities in style. See Rodolfo Pallucchini, "Nota per Paolo Veneziano," in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Lionello Venturi*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1956), 1:135; Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 32; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 125; Martin Davies, "Italian School," in *European Paintings in the Collection of the Worcester Art Museum*, vol. 1, *Text*, ed. Worcester Art Museum (Worcester, MA, 1974), 415; Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 126, 131 n. 79.

[9] For the problems of chronology, see below. With regard to the tiny disparity of 1.1 cm between the present width of the panels in Washington and Avignon, it should be borne in mind that the latter only partially retains its engaged frame; originally it must have been wider. The cropping of the panels now in Worcester is far more considerable, but not even their measurements contradict, in my view, the proposed reconstruction. It is difficult, however, to incorporate the gable panels in Los Angeles in the reconstruction.

[10] See Roger Fry, "Exhibition of Pictures and the Early Venetian School at the Burlington Fine Arts Club," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 21 (1912): 47, pl. 2, and Provenance note 1.

[11] In a handwritten expertise on the back of a photograph of the painting, Raimond van Marle declared, "No doubt it is a work of Lorenzo Veneziano." Other expert opinions supporting an attribution of Paolo Veneziano were sent to Samuel H. Kress by Bernard Berenson, Giuseppe Fiocco, Roberto Longhi, F. Mason Perkins, Wilhelm Suida, and Adolfo Venturi. Presumably written at the same time as van Marle's, most bear the date 1934; copies in NGA curatorial files.

[12] The only dissenting voice was that of Edoardo Arslan (1956), who thought that the Crucifixion was a work by an assistant of Paolo's. Edoardo Arslan, "Una nuova Madonna di Paolo Veneto," *Commentari* 7 (1956): 21 n. 8.

[13] Roberto Longhi, *Viatico per cinque secoli di pittura veneziana* (Florence,

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1946), 45, based his proposal on the affinities he identified between the work and polyptych no. 21 of the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice—although the more recent literature no longer accepts the late dating of this polyptych—and on presumed reflections in the paintings of Vitale da Bologna in his phase around 1350. Maria Walcher Casotti, *Il Trittico di S. Chiara di Trieste e l'orientamento paleologo nell'arte di Paolo Veneziano* (Trieste, 1961), 19; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 156; Michel Laclotte and Elisabeth Mognetti, *Avignon, Musée du Petit Palais: Peinture italienne*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1976), no. 202; Hanna Kiel, "Das Polyptychon von Paolo und Giovanni Veneziano in Sanseverino Marche," *Pantheon* 35 (1977): 107, 108 n. 8; Robert Gibbs, "Paolo Veneziano," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 24:32; Cristina Guarnieri, "Per la restituzione di due croci perdute di Paolo Veneziano: Il leone marciano del Museo Correr e i dolenti della Galleria Sabauda," in *Medioevo adriatico: Circolazione di modelli, opere, maestri*, ed. Giovanna Valenzano and Federica Toniolo (Rome, 2010), 140, 152, have all endorsed Longhi's dating.

[14] According to Francesca Flores D'Arcais (1994), the Washington Crucifixion was "forse vicina alla Pala marciana" (perhaps close to the altarpiece in San Marco), i.e., the *Pala feriale* executed in 1343–1345. Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench (2005) suggested the decade c. 1340–1350 as the most plausible period for the execution of the painting. Andrea De Marchi (2005) preferred a slightly later dating, towards the end of the 1340s. See Francesca Flores d'Arcais, "La pittura," in *Storia di Venezia: Temi; L'Arte*, ed. Rodolfo Pallucchini, 2 vols. (Rome, 1994), 1:259; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 172; Andrea De Marchi, "Polyptyques vénitiens: Anamnèse d'une identité méconnue," in *Autour de Lorenzo Veneziano: Fragments de polyptyques vénitiens du XIVe siècle*, ed. Andrea De Marchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2005), 19, 20.

[15] Also supporting the dating c. 1340 given in NGA 1965 and NGA 1985 were Frankfurter 1944, Shapley 1966 and 1979, and Mori 2002. See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 99; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 299; Alfred M. Frankfurter, *The Kress Collection in the National Gallery* (New York, 1944), 71, 74; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 8, fig. 10; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:354–355; Francesco Mori, "Paolo Veneziano," in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:676–677.

[16] The work was dated between 1330 and 1340 by Laclotte in his first publication on the painting: Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs*

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italiens dans les musées de France (Paris, 1956), 19; and by Grgo Gamulin, "Un crocefisso di Maestro Paolo e di altri due del Trecento," *Arte veneta* 19 (1965): 37; Francesca Flores d'Arcais, "Venezia," in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 1:30; Francesca Flores d'Arcais, "Paolo Veneziano," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1998), 9:158; Francesca Flores d'Arcais, "Paolo Veneziano e la pittura del Trecento in Adriatico," in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 22; Giorgio Fossaluzza, ed., *Da Paolo Veneziano a Canova: Capolavori dei musei veneti restaurati dalla Regione del Veneto 1984–2000* (Venice, 2000), 43; Angelo Loda, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 148; and Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 154. In another publication, even Andrea De Marchi (2005) seemed to accept the proposal. See Andrea De Marchi, in *Splendeurs de la peinture italiane, 1250–1510* (Paris, 2005), 32, 37.

[17] Clara Santini, "Un episodio della pittura veneziana di primo Trecento: Il 'Maestro dell'Incoronazione della Vergine di Washington,'" *Il Santo* 37 (1997): 144, but perhaps only by an involuntary lapsus, meaning instead to indicate the 1330s.

[18] The altarpiece in Rab (Arbe) representing the Crucifixion flanked by six saints was thought to belong to the sixth decade by Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 50, 59; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 103; and Igor Fiskovi, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 164. Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 190–191, on the other hand, proposed a slightly earlier dating, to around 1350. For the crucifix and the figures of mourners in Dubrovnik, cf. Grgo Gamulin, "Alcune proposte per Maestro Paolo," *Emporium* 139 (1964): 154; Rodolfo Pallucchini, "Considerazioni sulla mostra 'Paolo Veneziano e la sua cerchia' di Zagabria," *Arte veneta* 21 (1967): 261; Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 126–127.

[19] The polyptych, with a provenance from the Venetian church of Santa Chiara, was considered until not many years ago as indicative of Paolo's presumed return to or reuse of Byzantine figurative models in the final phase of his career. More recently, Andrea De Marchi (1995), followed by Robert Gibbs (1996), proposed its execution, surely more correctly, around 1340. Filippo Pedrocco (2003) went further and pushed back its date to c. 1333–1336. Cf. Andrea De Marchi, "Una tavola nella Narodna Galleria di Ljubljana e una proposta per Marco di Paolo Veneziano," in *Gotika v Sloveniji: Nastajanje kulturnega prostora med Alpami, Panonijo in Jadranom; Akti*

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mednarodnega simpozija, Ljubljana, Narodna galerija, ed. Janez Höfler (Ljubljana, 1995), 243; Robert Gibbs, "Paolo Veneziano," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 24:32; Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 150–153.

[20] Inv. A 157; cf. Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 142–145.

[21] Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 180–183. The fragmentary inscription, still legible on the panel, also contains a date, usually interpreted as 1349.

[22] Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 170–173. Commissioned in 1343, the *Pala feriale* bears not only the signatures of Paolo and of his two sons but also the date 1345.

[23] Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 166–167, 176–177.

[24] According to Rebecca W. Corrie, the motif alludes to the Crucifixion and to the theme of the Eucharist, but her argument does not seem entirely convincing. Rebecca W. Corrie, "Coppo di Marcovaldo's Madonna del Bordone and the Meaning of the Bare-Legged Christ Child in Siena and the East," *Gesta* 35 (1996): 43–65.

[25] On the motif of the *manicottolo* and its significance as a clue for dating, see the perceptive remarks of Luciano Bellosi (1974), the first to evaluate its importance in art historical terms. He developed his proposals further in later studies. Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 51–54.

[26] Cf. Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 202–203.

[27] Cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 75–78, figs. 244, 247.

[28] Cf. Maria Walcher Casotti, *Il Trittico di S. Chiara di Trieste e l'orientamento paleologo nell'arte di Paolo Veneziano* (Trieste, 1961); Carla Travi, "Il Maestro del trittico di Santa Chiara: Appunti per la pittura veneta di primo Trecento," *Arte cristiana* 80 (1992): 81–96.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting, executed on a single piece of wood with vertical grain, has triangular additions of relatively recent date at the upper corners.[1] Narrow strips of wood have been attached to the vertical edges of the panel, which has been thinned and cradled at least twice. The paint is applied on a gesso ground; there is a layer of

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red bole under the gilded areas. The x-radiographs reveal two pieces of fabric under the gesso, which were probably applied to conceal flaws in the panel. An incised line marks the inner periphery of the now lost original frame. The paint was applied thinly with green underpaint beneath the flesh tones. The halos are punched, and the soldiers' armor is embellished with mordant gilding.

The panel has numerous old wormholes and some small cracks along the bottom edge. A light overall abrasion can be observed on the painted surface, which has two significant paint losses: one on Christ's torso, and the other on his left arm. Other, smaller losses are present in Christ's loincloth, Mary Magdalene's nose, and in the face and torso of the lower right-hand angel. The right half of the gold background has been regilded. The dark outer contours have been reinforced in some areas. Stephen Pichetto removed a discolored varnish and inpainted the panel when he cradled it in 1934–1935.[2]

TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Already by 1912, Roger Fry reproduced the panel with the upper corners integrated with modern additions and the background regilded. Roger Fry, "Exhibition of Pictures and the Early Venetian School at the Burlington Fine Arts Club," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 21 (1912): pl. 2.

[2] According to Fern Rusk Shapley, the panel was "cradled, cleaned, restored and varnished by S. Pichetto c. 1934/35." Evidently, it had also been treated before Pichetto's intervention, which presumably occurred after the painting entered the Kress collection. Indeed, according to the examination report of the NGA painting conservation department dated December 5, 1988, x-ray documentation proves that "an earlier, heavier cradle [probably added during the early twentieth century restoration] was replaced by the present one." Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:335 n. 6.

PROVENANCE

(Italian art market, probably Venice), by 1902.[1] Achillito Chiesa, Milan, early twentieth century;[2] (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Florence); sold July 1934 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[3] gift 1939 to NGA. [1] In his article of 1912, Roger Fry reproduces the painting together with another, similarly

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attributed to the school of Semitecolo, explaining that it was present “some years ago in the market in Italy” (Roger Fry, "Exhibition of Pictures and the Early Venetian School at the Burlington Fine Arts Club," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 21 [1912]: 47, pl. 2). Fry had probably seen it in October 1902; in fact, in a letter dated 10 October 1902, written to his wife from Venice, he reports, “I’ve had great luck today, managed to get to see some pictures by Semitecolo what I’ve never managed before”; *Letters of Roger Fry*, ed. Denys Sutton, 2 vols., New York, 1972: 1:196. [2] The collection of Achillito Chiesa, which the great art dealer Luigi Bellini calls the “più importante e intelligente collezione di oggetti d’arte italiana fondata in questi ultimi cinquant’anni in Italia” ("the most important, and intelligent, collection of Italian art objects formed in Italy within the last fifty years") (Luigi Bellini, *Nel mondo degli antiquari*, Florence, 1947: 223–224), was dispersed between 1925 and 1931 because of the collector’s financial difficulties; see Elisabeth E. Gardner, *A Bibliographical Repertory of Italian Private Collections*, 3 vols., ed. Chiara Ceschi and Katharine Baetjer, Vicenza, 1998: 1:227-228. [3] The bill of sale is dated 13 July 1934 (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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To cite: Miklós Boskovits (1935–2011), "Paolo Veneziano/*The Crucifixion*/c. 1340/1345," *Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*, NGA Online Editions, http://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/284/2016-03-21 (accessed March 21, 2016).

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