

THE SUPREMACY OF FAITH: VENETIAN SPIRITUALITY AND TRIDENTINE DOCTRINE IN THE SALA CAPITOLARE AT THE SCUOLA GRANDE DI SAN ROCCO

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ABSTRACT · The most comprehensive manifestation of Venetian religiosity during the Reformation, Tintoretto's pictorial cycle for San Rocco is analyzed here as a faithful exposition of Tridentine doctrine and a part of broader efforts aimed at reinforcing religious uniformity and social cohesion in sixteenth-century Venice.

KEYWORDS · Tintoretto, Scuola Grande di san Rocco, Counter-Reformation, Venetian Renaissance Art.

RIASSUNTO · Il ciclo pittorico più rappresentativo della religiosità veneziana all'epoca della Riforma, quello di Tintoretto per San Rocco è qui esaminato come fedele espressione della dottrina tridentaria e manifestazione di più vaste tendenze volte a imporre uniformità religiosa e coesione sociale nella Venezia del Cinquecento.

PAROLE CHIAVE · Tintoretto, Scuola Grande di san Rocco, Controriforma, arte rinascimentale veneziana.

By act of the Venetian Senate on 22 July 1564, the Republic of Venice unreservedly adopted the canons and decrees of the Council of Trent which were declared binding throughout the Venetian do-

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The Author gratefully acknowledges the assistance and contribution of Dott. Stefano Trovato, *Biblioteca universitaria di Padova*; Dott.sa Susy Marcon, *Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana*; Prof. Harold Brent and Prof. Louise Klusek, *Baruch College*. The citations of patristic authors and works are in conformity with V. VOLPI, *DOC. Dizionario delle opere classiche. Intestazioni uniformi degli autori, elenco delle opere e delle parti componenti, indici degli autori, dei titoli e delle parole chiave della letteratura classica, medievale e bizantina*, Milano, Editrice Bibliografica, 1994. Unless otherwise indicated, scriptural passages are quoted from the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition. The decrees of the Council of Trent are quoted from *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, transl. by T. A. Buckley, London, George Routledge and Co., 1851. The *Catechismus Romanus ex decreto Concilii Tridentini* is quoted from *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, transl. by J. Donovan, Dublin, R. Coyne, 1829.

[HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.19272/202203102003](https://doi.org/10.19272/202203102003) · «STUDI VENEZIANI» · LXXXV-LXXXVI · 2022

[HTTP://STUDIVENEZIANI.LIBRAWEB.NET](http://studiveneziani.libraweb.net)

SUBMITTED: 22.9.2021 · REVIEWED: 6.3.2023 · ACCEPTED: 26.5.2023

minions.¹ In gratitude for this acceptance, Pius IV granted Palazzo Barbo to the Republic as its diplomatic seat in Rome, and in letters he encouraged the rulers of Florence and Genoa to follow Venice's laudable example.² At least for the immediate intentions of the Pope, Venice was the model Catholic State, far removed from the city that Paul III and Jacopo Cardinal Sadoletto had regarded in 1546 as infested by the «Lutheran plague».³ At that time, Venice was arguably the Italian city most exposed to the ideas of the Reformation and seemed the most likely to embrace and propagate them.⁴ Widely known for

¹ Cf. A. BIANCHINI, *Istituzioni del pubblico ecclesiastico diritto accomodate alla pratica di Venezia*, Venezia, A. Zatta, 1771, p. 94, note b. The Council of Trent closed on 5 December 1563. Although Pius IV issued the bull *Benedictus Deus* on 26 January 1564, confirming all of the Council's decrees without exception or modification, it was not published in Rome until 30 June 1564: cf. K. MEYER SETTON, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204-1571*, vol. IV - *The Sixteenth Century from Julius III to Pius V*, Philadelphia (PA), The American Philosophical Society, 1984, p. 827. The Venetian Senate, on 22 July 1564, ordered the publication of the papal bull throughout the Republic's territories «for the glory of God, the service of Christendom, and the satisfaction of His Beatitude»: («per Gloria del signor Dio, servizio della Christianità et satisfatione di suo Beatitudine»): cf. B. CECCHETTI, *La repubblica di Venezia e la corte di Roma nei rapporti della religione*, vol. I, Venezia, P. Naratovich, 1874, p. 76. Four editions of the Tridentine decrees were printed in Venice in 1564: cf. P. SACHET, *Privilege of Rome: The Catholic Church's Attempt to Control the Printed Legacy of the Council of Trent*, in *The Council of Trent: Reform and Controversy in Europe and Beyond (1545-1700)*, vol. 1 - *Between Trent, Rome and Wittenberg*, edited by W. François, V. Soen, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018, p. 358. See note 63 for the editions.

² Cf. BIANCHINI, *op. cit.*, p. 94, note b. Bianchini references C. BARONIO, *Annales ecclesiastici*, anno 1564 (50).

³ Cf. J. MARTIN, *Salvation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Venice: Popular Evangelism in a Renaissance City*, «The Journal of Modern History», 60, 2, 1988, p. 205. Sadoletto's opinion regarding the diffused presence of Lutheranism in Venice was reiterated to Giovanni Antonio Venier, Venetian ambassador to Rome, by Pope Paul III: «Disse [il papa] sospirando, questa materia de luterani non è bene intesa dal mondo, et maxime da quei principi che la lasciano pullulare, Il re di Francia solo pare che l'habbi intesa, il quale fino adesso ne ha fatto molte volte horribile vendetta ... mai non fu heresia più pernitiiosa di questa credenza et di questa libertà Hoi la città di Venezia (aveva detto un mese fa dolentemente il card. Sadoletto) è molto infettata di questa peste lutherana, in tanto che è già passata in quelli che governano, che scrivano et in ogni ordine di persone, sì che l'altre terre di Lombardia ammorbate della medesima infettione se gloriano di aver Venezia per compagna o più presto per autrice»: cf. G. DE LEVA, *Storia documento di Carlo V in correlazione all'Italia...*, vol. 3, Venezia, P. Naratovich, 1867, p. 524. Giovanni Antonio Venier's dispatch to the chiefs of the Council of Ten, dated 6 February 1545 (*more veneto*), is in Archivio generale di Venezia, Dispacci da Roma, fasc 3, msc. In his 1532 missive to Clement VII, Gian Pietro Carafa similarly laments the diffusion of the «plague» of the «Lutheran heresy» in Venice: cf. D. SANTARELLI, *Eresia, Riforma e Inquisizione nella Repubblica di Venezia del Cinquecento*, «Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni», LVII, 2007, p. 81.

⁴ Cf. J. MARTIN, *Venice's Hidden Enemies: Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City*, Berkeley

its toleration, it was a commercial city frequented by traders of various provenance and beliefs. In addition to transient merchants and itinerant preachers who espoused Reformation ideas, many Venetians themselves shared the Protestant tenet that human works are inadequate for salvation and that it is necessary to have faith in the benefits of Christ's death. Their piety was inspired by Pauline spirituality and Augustinian theology. Inner-looking and deeply personal, it stressed the role of grace in salvation and de-emphasized the need for religious rites and ceremonies.⁵ Some of these 'evangelicals' lat-

(CA), University of California Press, 1993, pp. 25-48. The aspiration that Venice could become the center of a reformation church was nurtured by prominent Italian reformers. Writing from Geneva, Bernardo Ochino expressed the hope in his letter to the Signoria on 7 December 1542. The same hope is manifest in Pier Paolo Vergerio's oration for the election of Doge Francesco Donà in 1545, which explicitly invited the doge to promote the Reformation: cf. MARTIN, *Salvation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, cit., p. 215; SANTARELLI, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80. Similarly, Bartolomeo Altieri, secretary to the English representative Edmond Harwel, remarked in a 1545 letter to Marin Bucer in Strasbourg that many young Venetian senators were sympathetic to the reformation cause: cf. MARTIN, *Salvation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, cit., p. 218. Political, economic, and social factors made Venice particularly receptive to heretical ideas. The Republic's commercial activities with the Swiss and German cities favored the presence of foreign merchants and in consequence the penetration of reformation ideas and printed material, including Protestant books which were discovered in the city as early as 1520. Venetian booksellers themselves purchased prohibited books at fairs in Basel and Frankfurt and smuggled them into the city. German and French students in Padua included Lutherans and Huguenots who also possessed prohibited books, but the students were nevertheless welcome in consideration of their expenditures in the local economy and the prestige of the university which benefited from an international student body: cf. P. GRENDLER, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540-1605*, «The Journal of Modern History», 47, 1, March 1975, pp. 58-59, 61; A. PALLUCCHINI, *Pittura religiosa del Cinquecento*, «Studi Veneziani», xiv, 1972, pp. 160-161; P. ULVIONI, *Cultura politica e cultura religiosa a Venezia nel secondo Cinquecento. Un bilancio*, «Archivio storico italiano», cxli, disp. iv, 1983, p. 600. Historically resistant to papal interference, Venice also enjoyed a reputation as a tolerant city. Furthermore, as a place of political refuge for republican-minded humanists during the upheavals of the Italian wars, it was animated by republican ideals that were considered to be more compatible with the Protestant emphasis on the individual and its criticism of the ecclesiastical hierarchy: cf. MARTIN, *Salvation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, cit., pp. 214-219. See also Prodi's discussion in P. PRODI, *Chiesa e Società*, in *Storia di Venezia. Dalle origini alla caduta della Serenissima*, vol. VI - *Dal Rinascimento al Barocco*, a cura di G. Cozzi, P. Prodi, Roma, Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1994, pp. 317-320.

⁵ This 'evangelical' spirituality was present elsewhere in Italy, but it was particularly felt in Venice and its mainland territories. For the nature and development of Italian 'evangelism', see E. M. JUNG, *On the Nature of Evangelism in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, «The Sixteenth Century Journal», 9, 3, Autumn 1978, pp. 3-26. For its history in Venice specifically, see MARTIN, *Salvation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, cit., pp. 205-233.

er apostatized from the Catholic Church once the Council of Trent issued the *Decretum de iustificatione* (1547),⁶ clarifying the theological divide between Catholicism and Protestantism on the issues of justification, faith, and grace. Others became Nicodemites, internalizing their religious convictions while living ostensibly Catholic lives. Most continued to emphasize the role of faith and grace in the economy of salvation, without overtly denying the necessity of human cooperation in the form of sacramental confession and the performance of good works as reparation for personal sin.⁷

In this period of doctrinal debate and spiritual restlessness, the obligatory participation of the *savii sopra l'eresia* in the proceedings of the Holy Office ensured that the Church's efforts to combat religious heterodoxy coincided with the Venetian government's desire to maintain social cohesion and neither infringed upon Venice's sovereignty nor adversely affected the diplomatic and economic interests of the Republic. For the most part, individual dissention was pragmatically tolerated, unless it threatened social order.⁸ Heretical books were confiscated and burned, but the owners themselves were normally only fined without any further investigation into their religious views.⁹

With regard to the Council of Trent, the Republic initially viewed it with skepticism and showed marginal interest.¹⁰ Of the seventy-eight Venetian dioceses, only twenty-one were represented during the first period between 1545-1549. Notably absent were the bishops of Padua,

⁶ The *Decretum de iustificatione* was published in Venice by Andrea Arrivabene in 1547.

⁷ M. A. MULLETT, *The Catholic Reformation*, London, Routledge, 1999, p. 147; PRODI, *Chiesa e Società*, cit., p. 323. The 'evangelical' soteriology, strongly Christocentric, is reflected in Venetian wills of the sixteenth century. The saints are invoked, and provisions are made for endowing suffrage Masses and pious works. However, there is a profound recognition of the spiritual unworthiness and helplessness of the individual, as well as a trusting abandonment to Christ's mercy. The preeminence of faith in Venetian piety is also evident in sermons and contemporary publications, most notably *Il Beneficio di Gesù Christo Crocifisso* (1543): cf. MARTIN, *Venice's Hidden Enemies*, cit., pp. 86-89. For studies of sixteenth-century Venetian wills, see O. M. T. LOGAN, *Grace and Justification: Some Italian Views of the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries*, «Journal of Ecclesiastical History», xx, 1, April 1969, pp. 67-78; F. AMBROSINI, *Ortodossia cattolica e tracce di eterodossia nei testamenti veneziani del Cinquecento*, «Archivio Veneto», Venezia, Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie, 1991, pp. 5-64.

⁸ Cf. MARTIN, *Venice's Hidden Enemies*, cit., p. 73.

⁹ Cf. GRENDLER, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

¹⁰ For Venice's participation at the Council of Trent, see H. JEDIN, *Contributo veneziano alla Riforma cattolica*, in *La civiltà veneziana del Rinascimento*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1958, pp. 120-122.

Verona, Vicenza, and Brescia as well as the patriarchs of Venice and Aquileia. Venetian participation declined further in the second period of 1551-1552,¹¹ which nonetheless corresponded to heightened efforts by the Holy Office in Venice to eradicate pernicious heretics who most threatened the good ordering of the society, particularly the Anabaptists.¹² For the third and final period of the Council, 1562-1563, Venice was fully engaged, represented by Nicolò da Ponte and Matteo Dandolo as *oratoribus ad Concilium*. Most Venetian prelates were also present. In part, the greater attendance was attributable to the agenda which included discussions on ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and these were likely to touch political and judicial matters affecting Venice's sovereign prerogatives. Other European nations, similarly absent in the earlier periods, were now present as well.¹³ But fundamentally, Venice's interests had come to converge with those of the Church, despite ongoing resistance to papal interference in local ecclesiastical matters.¹⁴ Beyond the need to secure Rome's assistance in forming anti-Ottoman alliances among the Christian nations, the Catholic faith was integral to Venice's collective self-identity. It was widely embraced and intensely felt.¹⁵ As the Council of Ten declared on 7 August 1562, responding with indignation to rumors at the French court that Protestant preachers had large followings in the city, Venice was «cattolissima».¹⁶

For the more conservative nobles who effectively governed the Republic, the defense of Catholicism as the communal religion had become a means to counter dissent and promote social cohesion. Moreover, support of the Church's teaching on the value of good works

¹¹ Cf. PRODI, *Chiesa e Società*, cit., p. 321.

¹² Cf. *ibidem*, p. 318.

¹³ Cf. W. J. BOUWSMA, *Venice and the Defense of Republican Liberty: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter Reformation*, Berkeley (CA), University of California Press, 1968, p. 120. For a discussion, see G. ALBERIGO, *La riforma dei Principi*, in *Il Concilio di Trento come crocevia della politica europea*, a cura di H. Jedin, P. Prodi, Bologna, il Mulino, 1979 («Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico», Quaderno 4), pp. 161-178.

¹⁴ For a discussion of Venice's shifting relationship with the papacy in the sixteenth century, see PRODI, *Chiesa e Società*, cit., pp. 305-334.

¹⁵ Cf. ULVIONI, *op. cit.*, p. 597. The intense religious devotion was further fueled by anxieties for the food shortages and speculative hoarding that resulted after the crop failure of 1569 and for the expansion of the Ottoman Turks in the Mediterranean, with a sense of imminent catastrophe and the resulting need to atone for sin and invoke divine favor. See Ulvioni's discussion in *ibidem*, pp. 591-594.

¹⁶ Cf. GRENDLER, *op. cit.*, p. 56. The relative letter is in Consiglio dei Dieci, Segrete, R. 7, fol. 88r-88v.

encouraged charitable initiatives on behalf of the weaker elements of the population, thus contributing to social stability.¹⁷ Broad participation in elaborate religious processions also ritualized civic life and defined structure and hierarchy, making political institutions sacred and confirming in turn the sanctity of the Republic.¹⁸

Hence in an age of increasing confessionalization, Catholicism in accord with the Tridentine decrees became an instrument of 'social discipline' both to inculcate a model of accepted practices and to build popular consensus in the traditional institutions that were essential for civic stability.¹⁹ Repression of religious heterodoxy consequently increased in the decade that followed the conclusion of the Council of Trent with greater involvement of the populace in the denunciation of religious deviation and public penance as a deterrent.²⁰ Regulations on the censorship of heretical books also became more extensive and were more strictly enforced.²¹

To this revitalized Catholic orthodoxy, the most significant response of Venetian art was Tintoretto's vast pictorial enterprise for the sala capitolare of the Scuola Grande di san Rocco, executed between 1575 and 1581. While allegorical references to individual reformation themes are routinely noted in critical analyses of the ensemble – primarily Eucharistic piety and the value of good works – a careful reading of the cycle on the basis of the Tridentine decrees reveals that it is actually a coherent illustration of Trent's definitive statements on the

¹⁷ Cf. PRODI, *Chiesa e Società*, cit., p. 313.

¹⁸ Cf. G. BENZONI, *Venezia nell'età della Controriforma*, Milano, Mursia, 1973, pp. 43-44. See in general E. MUIR, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1981, pp. 185-250.

¹⁹ Cf. PRODI, *Chiesa e Società*, cit., p. 323. For the building of consensus and 'social discipline', see P. PRODI, *La Chiesa di Venezia nell'età delle riforme*, in *La civiltà veneziana del Rinascimento*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1958, pp. 70-72.

²⁰ The decade of 1565-1574 was the most intense for religious repression, the number of cases before the Holy Office nearly doubling with respect to earlier periods. The use of torture increased; galley service was restored as punishment; and the death penalty became more frequent. Also public penance, consisting in holding a lighted candle before the Church of San Geminiano, began in 1566. For the period of heightened inquisitorial activity, see MARTIN, *Venice's Hidden Enemies*, cit., pp. 181-195.

²¹ The Tridentine Index, accepted in 1564, was more strictly enforced after the Council of Ten passed comprehensive legislation on censorship on 28 June 1569. Random inspections of local bookshops for forbidden titles began, carried out by both the Holy Office and the *Esecutori contro la bestemmia*, and controls over imported books at the customs house were tightened: cf. GRENDLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58.

deeper theological debates surrounding justification, faith, and grace. It is the premier example in Venice of religious imagery used at the popular level to theologically instruct the faithful and reaffirm them in Catholic beliefs.

THE SALA CAPITOLARE:
THE DECORATIVE ENSEMBLE

In its basic arrangement, the decorative program of the sala capitolare shares certain organizational principles with near contemporary ceilings created for the Doge's Palace and the Marciana Library. While the affinity may simply reflect the desire to keep pace with current artistic trends in the city, it may also indicate a deeper aspiration on the part of the citizen class that administered the Scuola to bring prestige upon the institution by emulating the halls of power.²²

As in the hall of the College in the Doge's Palace, the ceiling of the sala capitolare is dominated by three large paintings oriented along a central axis (see DIAGRAM: Iconographic scheme).²³ These three principal works, each flanked by either two vertical ovals or two obrounds, are interspersed with four horizontal ovals, which are accompanied by two rhomboidal verdaillies each.²⁴ Despite the differing sizes and shapes of the canvases and the rendering of some of the paintings in monochrome, the overall layout of the ceiling is similar to those of

²² Patricia Fortini Brown suggests that such a desire is reflected in the meeting halls of the Scuole: cf. P. FORTINI BROWN, *La pittura nell'età di Carpaccio: i grandi cicli narrativi*, transl. by M. Moriondo, C. Mundici, Venezia, Albrizzi, 1992, pp. 27-28. Peter Humfrey also sees a similar desire, given the prevalence of narrative cycles in the meeting halls of the Scuole, reminiscent of those in the Doge's Palace: cf. P. HUMFREY, *Painting in Renaissance Venice*, New Haven (CT), Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 28-29, 81-82.

²³ De Tolnay sees the definition of the decorative program as evolving over time and attributes to Tintoretto the choice of the specific biblical events to be depicted. In his reconstruction, Tintoretto is said to have conceived the program as centered on *The brazen serpent* and only later to have introduced a longitudinal orientation with the addition of the ovals depicting original sin and Passover, which are located at the opposite ends of the sala capitolare: cf. C. DE TOLNAY, *L'interpretazione dei cicli pittorici del Tintoretto nella Scuola di San Rocco*, «Critica d'arte», 7, 41, 1960, p. 350.

²⁴ The current monochromes are copies realized by Giuseppe Angeli in 1777-1778 as substitutes for Tintoretto's originals, which were executed in tempera and damaged over time. Despite stylistic differences, they are considered faithful to the earlier versions: cf. A. ZENKERT, *Scomparti romboidali*, in *La Scuola Grande di San Rocco a Venezia*, a cura di F. Posocco, S. Settis, Modena, Panini, 2008, pp. 289-290; D. TOSATO, *Visione di Geremia*, in *La Scuola Grande di San Rocco a Venezia*, cit., p. 290.

the hall of the College and the reading room of the Marciana Library in that there are seven rows consisting of three interrelated paintings each.²⁵ Also similar to the Marciana,²⁶ the whole ensemble is transversed by a central axis running the length of the room that promotes a single thematic reading.²⁷

Given the prevalence of the three large canvases around which the smaller ovals and monochromes are arranged, the ceiling is customarily understood as consisting of three sections, each with a distinct theme. This interpretation follows the pioneering analysis of Henry Thode in 1904.²⁸ In this scheme, the three paintings in the central row of the ceiling – *The brazen serpent* (DIA. 10), *The vision of Ezekiel* (DIA. 11), and *The vision of Jacob* (DIA. 12) – are seen, together with the wall paintings *The Resurrection* (DIA. E) and *The Ascension* (DIA. F), as forming a section dedicated to the delivery of man from sin through Christ's triumph over death. For Thode, the resulting sections on either side, dominated by *The waters of Massah and Meribah* (DIA. 6) and *The gathering of manna* (DIA. 16), allude to the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist respectively. However, since several paintings in the first section cannot be related to the theme of baptism, they are considered to form a separate prologue. The first section in Thode's

²⁵ In the Marciana Library, the ceiling is composed of twenty-one identical roundels. The ceiling of the hall of the College, like the sala capitolare of San Rocco, presents a variety of forms, sizes, and color schemes.

²⁶ The decorative program of the Marciana Library illustrates the Neoplatonic ascent of the soul. Specifically, the central axis of the ceiling in the Reading Room follows the progression of the intellectual soul within the Intellectual Realm, beginning with its awakening. The axis, centered on ecstasy and illumination, concludes with the representation of the Ideal State ruled by the philosopher-kings who control their appetites and passions and wisely govern the State by using the higher reality as a model: cf. J. M. BRODERICK, *Custodian of Wisdom*, «Studi Veneziani», LXXIII, 2016, pp. 15-94.

²⁷ That the paintings composing this central axis have different sizes and shapes in no way precludes the single reading in light of the fact that several sixteenth-century Venetian ceilings have a similar variety of forms but are nevertheless intended to be read as a unified whole. Veronese's ceiling in the Church of san Sebastiano, for example, consists in three large canvases – two ovals flanking a smaller central square – which narrate the story of Queen Esther and are organized chronologically. Similarly, Girolamo Bardi's explanation of the hall of the Great Council in the Doge's Palace makes clear that the three principal paintings of the ceiling – two ovals and a central rectangle – are meant to be read in sequence: cf. G. BARDI, *Dichiaratione di tutte le istorie...*, Venetia, F. Valgrisisio, 1587, cc. 62v-63v. See also D. ROSAND, *Myths of Venice. The Figuration of a State*, Chapel Hill (NC), The University of North Carolina Press, 2001, p. 41.

²⁸ Cf. H. THODE, *Tintoretto. Kritische Studien über des Meisters Werke*, «Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft», 23, 1904, pp. 24-45.

scheme is consequently truncated and unbalanced with respect to the third section, since only two of the three rows that compose it are said to actually relate to baptism.

Although this tripartite scheme has become conventional over time,²⁹ the three thematic sections that Thode posits (with the addition of the prologue) are in reality only approximate. As routinely noted, the theme of the Eucharist is not confined to the third section but pervades the entire decorative program.³⁰ While a number of the canvases can be more or less clearly connected to the three proposed dominant themes on the basis of the subject matter, some are linked merely by recurring figures or repeated poses.³¹ Others are given non-standard interpretations. *The waters of Massah and Meribah* (DIA. 6), for example, is routinely considered to allude to baptism, even though the event is associated with the piercing of Christ's side in the Medieval typological tradition and has greater Eucharistic connotations.³² Furthermore, significant details are inconsistent with

²⁹ De Tolnay maintains that Thode's tripartite reading was eclipsed with the addition of the wall paintings. He sees the entire program as a series of transversal axes, resolving the numerical difference between the ten wall paintings, five on each side, and the seven ceiling rows, by awkwardly grouping the paintings into five axes, two of which encompass two rows of the ceiling: cf. DE TOLNAY, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-359.

³⁰ Various Authors have noted recurrent Eucharistic images and allusions outside the section that Thode sees as specifically representing the Eucharist. These include the bread offered by the shepherds in *The Nativity*, the bread and wine in the foreground of *The Resurrection*, and the specific trial to transform the stones into bread in *The temptation of Christ*. Astrid Zenkert sees the theme of the Eucharist as a *leitmotiv* that underpins the entire decorative program, and she demonstrates parallels between the decorative program of the sala capitolare and those in the chapels of the Scuole del Corpus Christi and in the sacristies of contemporary Venetian churches: cf. A. ZENKERT, *La Sala superiore*, in *La Scuola Grande di San Rocco a Venezia*, cit., pp. 111-117; Hüttinger makes similar comparisons with the decorative programs of sixteenth-century Eucharistic chapels, considering this to reflect the function of the sala capitolare as a place for the celebration of Mass: cf. E. HÜTTINGER, *Die Bilderzyklen Tintoretto's in der Scuola di S. Rocco zu Venedig*, Zurich, Neuer Zürcher Zeitung, 1962, pp. 33-36.

³¹ See *infra*, note 69. For a discussion of the analogical relationships between the wall paintings, see also A. ZENKERT, *La Sala superiore*, in *La Scuola Grande di San Rocco a Venezia*, cit., p. 124.

³² The *Biblia pauperum* sees the event of Moses' striking of the rock at Massah and Meribah as an Old-Testament type for the piercing of Christ's side; the other associated type is the creation of Eve from Adam's rib. Astrid Zenkert, noting the typological tradition, sees the painting preeminently as a prefiguration of the Eucharist. She also references the chapel of Eleanor of Toledo in Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, where the scene of Moses striking the rock is coupled with the depiction of the gathering of manna in allusion respectively to the blood and body of Christ: cf. A. ZENKERT, *La Sala superiore*, in *La Scuola*

the proposed theme, such as the battle of Rephidim in *The waters of Massah and Meribah*, the inclusion of which is difficult to explain if the painting is to be understood in relation to baptism. Also, several paintings fit only loosely into the scheme. *The raising of Lazarus* (DIA. I), although located within the third section, is often seen in relation to *The Ascension* in the second section.³³ Similarly, *The calling of Moses* (DIA. 4) is alternatively associated with the first section or the prologue.³⁴ The eight monochromes are generally glossed over and only rarely interpreted as an integral part of the decorative program.³⁵

Grande di San Rocco a Venezia, cit., pp. 113-114; IDEM, *Mosè fa scaturire l'acqua dalla roccia*, in *La Scuola Grande di San Rocco a Venezia*, cit., p. 299; IDEM, *La raccolta della manna*, in *La Scuola Grande di San Rocco a Venezia*, cit., p. 299.

³³ Cf. E. BRUNET, *La Bibbia secondo Tintoretto. Guida biblica e teologica dei dipinti di Jacopo Tintoretto nella Scuola Grande di S. Rocco*, Venezia, Marcianum Press, 2012, p. 57; G. ROMANELLI, *Tintoretto a San Rocco: Pittura, teologia, narrazione*, in *Tintoretto: la Scuola Grande di San Rocco*, Milano, Electa, 1994, p. 36. On the basis of Augustine, Astrid Zenkert interprets *The raising of Lazarus* as an allusion to the sacrament of penance in preparation for communion, and as such, she associates the painting to the theme of the Eucharist in the third section: cf. A. ZENKERT, *La resurrezione di Lazaro*, in *La Scuola Grande di San Rocco a Venezia*, cit., p. 285. De Tolnay groups *The raising of Lazarus* with *The sacrifice of Isaac*, both of which are said to show divine intervention: cf. DE TOLNAY, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

³⁴ See *infra*, note 69.

³⁵ In his tripartite reading of the decorative program, Thode sees «*Melchizedek brings wine and bread to Abraham*» (*Melchizedek and Abram* - DIA. 20) in relation to the Eucharist, his proposed unifying theme of the third section. The rhombus that he identifies as «*The vision of Jeremiah*» (*Cain and Abel* - DIA. 21) is said to be similarly linked to the theme of the Eucharist, but solely on the basis of the reference to bread and wine in *Lamentations* (2, 12). Thode sees the rhombus depicting Daniel in the lions' den (DIA. 14) and the «*Ascension of Elijah*» (*Elisha inherits the spirit of Elijah* - DIA. 15) as bridging between the third and second sections. Daniel is said to be linked to the Eucharist, presumably on the basis of the bread that Habbakuk offers him, and simultaneously to the Resurrection in the second section following an analogy by Cyprian in an unspecified text. The translation of Elijah into heaven is seen in relation to the Ascension of Christ in the second section, although Thode acknowledges that no clear connection exists to the theme of the Eucharist. Logically, *Samson drinks from the jawbone of the ass* (DIA. 8) and «*The anointing of Saul by Samuel*» (*David anointed by Saul* - DIA. 9) should similarly bridge between the first section and the second. Thode, however, relates them exclusively to the theme of baptism, which he sees as underpinning the first section: Samson drinking is linked to baptism through the presence of water, Saul by the oil in reference to christening. The representations of the three youths in the furnace (DIA. 2) and *Moses drawn from the Nile* (DIA. 3) are said to show salvation from fire and water respectively. Thode does not link these paintings either to baptism or to the prologue: cf. THODE, *Tintoretto*, cit., pp. 37, 39.

Romanelli sees the eight monochromatic rhombi as depicting primarily scenes of vocation and mission: cf. ROMANELLI, *Tintoretto a San Rocco: Pittura, teologia, narrazione*, cit., p. 34. While this is certainly the case with *David anointed by Samuel* (cf. 1 Samuelis (= Vulgata, 1 Regum), 16, 1-13) and can be argued for Elisha, whose mission actually begins when

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