

ANTONIO BONVICINO AND VENETIAN CRUCIFIXES OF THE EARLY QUATTROCENTO

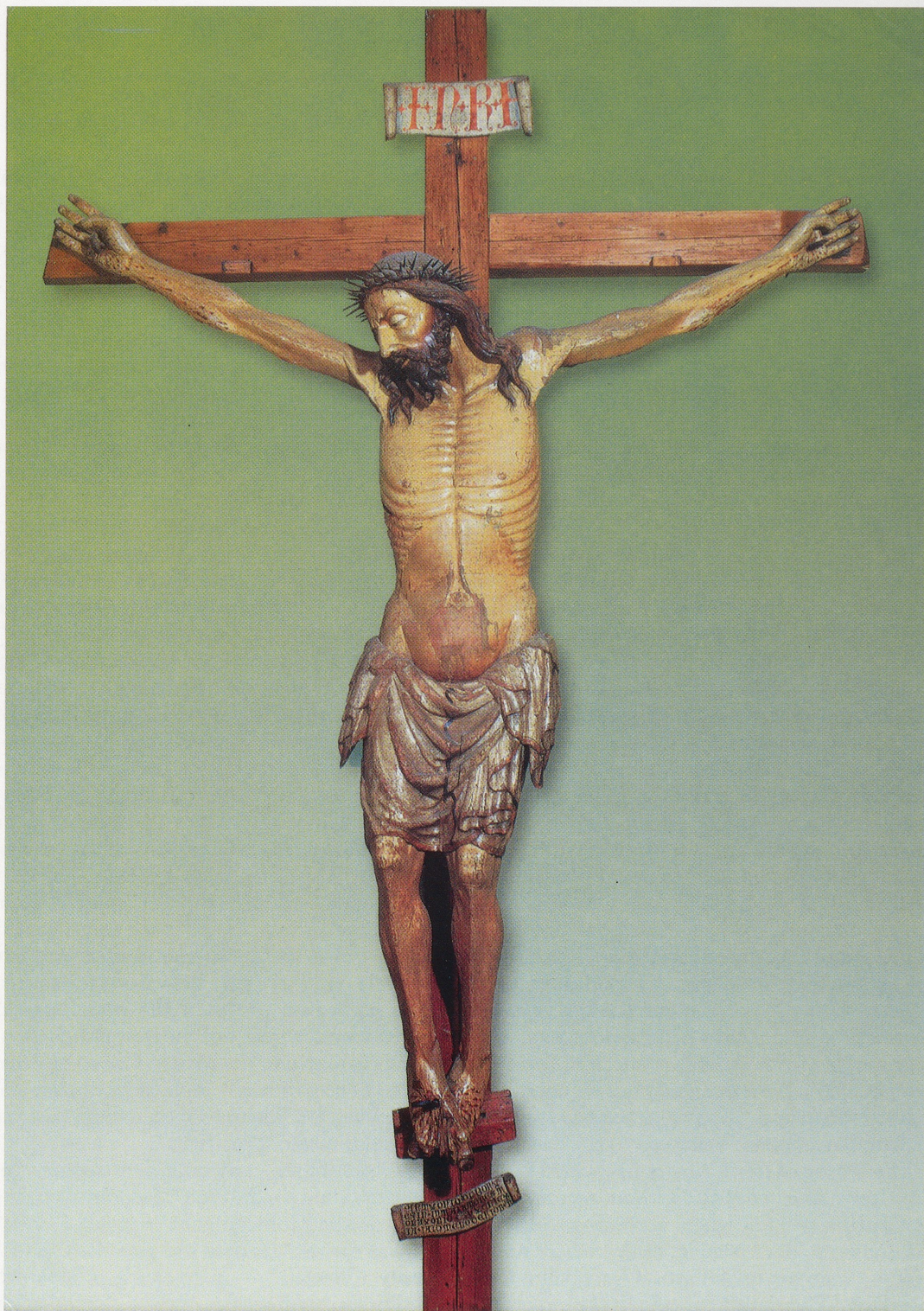
by Anne Markham Schulz

In the right-hand chapel (*in cornu Epistolae*) of the parish church of Santi Apollinare e Cristoforo in the hamlet of Casteldimezzo, sixteen kilometers to the north of Pesaro, is a Venetian Crucifix which not only is the finest Crucifix produced at Venice in the early Renaissance, but has the unique distinction of being signed with its makers' names (Figs. 1-7). Below the figure is a *cartello*, on which Gothic majuscules record in Venetian dialect: ANTUVONIO DE BONV/EXIN . NTAIATOREST/OLAVORIO . (lacuna followed by an upside-down N?) VENIEX/IA . IACOMELO DE FIOR . P(ittore) — Antonio Bonvicino woodcarver (carved) this work (in) Venice. Jacomello de Fiore painter.¹ In the literature on the Venetian painter, Jacobello del Fiore, the Crucifix makes frequent appearances as a secure work executed early in his career. But no one has yet inquired into the identity of Antonio Bonvicino.

Until very recently, all that was known of Antonio Bonvicino was the information contained in the inscription of the Casteldimezzo Crucifix. That he really did exist and lived in Venice in the parish of San Salvatore, where he exercised the profession of woodcarver, is confirmed by the testament of his wife Franceschina, indited on 26 October 1400 when she was gravely ill. In it she named her husband sole executor and residual heir. She asked to be buried in the cemetery of SS. Giovanni e Paolo and left one ducat to the Scuola di San Vito, of which she was a member. Her testament was witnessed by two painters, Giovanni di Vito of the parish of San Salvatore and Simone di Benedetto.² Whether she survived or died soon afterwards is not recorded.

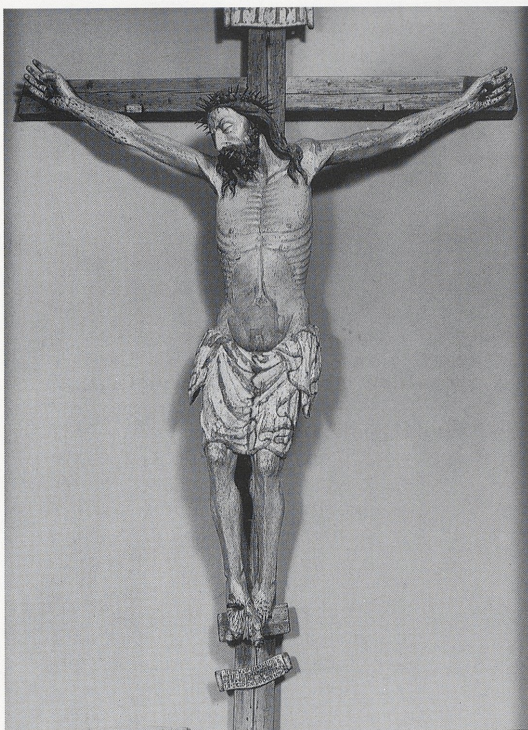
That a Crucifix by the Venetian Antonio Bonvicino should have been exported to a town near Pesaro — like Venice, on the Adriatic coast and therefore easily accessible by ship — is undoubtedly linked to the Pesarese activity of Bonvicino's collaborator, Jacobello del Fiore, at the beginning of his career. In 1795-96 Luigi Lanzi recorded one panel ("tavola") of 1401 in San Cassiano at Pesaro and another of 1409 in an undisclosed location also at Pesaro, both signed by Jacobello.³ Although the former is now entirely or partially lost, it was described — evidently on the basis of an earlier source — at the beginning of the twentieth century. In reality it was a polyptych and its inscription, we are told, read "MCCCCI Jacomello de Flores, Pesar", indicating that the San Cassiano altarpiece had been painted by Jacobello at Pesaro.⁴ The other panel mentioned by Lanzi is either lost or is identical with the triptych of the *Madonna della Misericordia*, painted for the Franciscan church of Santa Maria di Montegranaro just outside the walls of Pesaro and since 1996 on deposit in the Museo Civico di Pesaro, and signed "1407 – adi – X – di marzo invenexia maestro Iacometo deflor depenxe."⁵ Although, as Negro points out, there may be reasons for suspecting the originality of the current inscription, there is no reason to doubt the veracity of the information it transmits. A third polyptych with a carved wooden image of the Beata Michelina at its center, from the Pesarese church of San Francesco, is currently in the Museo Civico at Pesaro (inv. no. 3817). It is not signed but is generally thought to betray the early style of Jacobello. With reason Franco and Sartor rejected the hypothesis enunciated by Chiappini, according to which the wooden statuette belonged to the author of the Casteldimezzo Crucifix.⁶

The dating of our Crucifix has varied little over the years. In the early twentieth century Testi dated it tentatively to 1407 without revealing his reasons for doing so.⁷ In 1968 Chiappini also dated the Crucifix to 1407 when, according to the inscription on the Montegranaro triptych, Jacobello was known to have been in Venice where the Crucifix was carved.⁸ Its date was stretched to 1407-1409 — "anni nei quali l'artista (Jacobello) è sicuramente a Venezia" — in an article of hers a few years later.⁹ This dating has been followed in almost all subsequent mentions of the Crucifix's date.¹⁰





1, 2 Antonio Bonvicino and Jacobello del Fiore, Crucified Christ. SS. Apollinare e Cristoforo, Casteldimezzo (PS). Polychromed wood, 194 cm x 176 cm.



3-5 Antonio Bonvicino and Jacobello del Fiore, Crucified Christ. SS. Apollinare e Cristoforo, Casteldimezzo (PS).





6, 7 Antonio Bonvicino and Jacobello del Fiore, head of Crucified Christ. SS. Apollinare e Cristoforo, Casteldimezzo (PS).

The reasoning behind this dating is suspect. In the first place, Jacobello appears to have been in Venice for most of the first decade of the fifteenth century. Three documents testify to his presence in Venice between 1 May and 3 July 1400.¹¹ He was named as witness again on 12 May 1403¹², and on 21 and 23 January, 1408 (modern style)¹³; on 22 February 1408 (modern style) “Ser Jacobellus de Flor fil. Ser Francisci de Flor pinctor ... de confinio S. Luce” sold a 20-year-old male Tartar slave to Ser Nicolò di Pietro Lipomano for 8 ducats.¹⁴ In the second place, while the inscription on the Crucifix’s *cartello* does state that the work was carved in Venice, it does not state that it was painted there too. In fact, the placement of “in Veniexia” just after the mention of Bonvicino’s contribution, rather than at the end or beginning of the whole inscription, lends a certain plausibility to the assumption that the work was sent to Pesaro unpainted and was painted on the spot by Jacobello. This would yield a date of ca. 1401 for the Casteldimezzo Crucifix — probably fifteen years or so too early, as Lucia Sartor has rightly concluded from the Crucifix’s typological similarity to Matteo Moronzzone’s Crucifix carved at Zadar for its Cathedral of Sant’Anastasia between 1426 and 1431.¹⁵ However that may be, it is most unlikely that Jacobello was responsible for the design of the Casteldimezzo Crucifix, as Chiappini has argued.¹⁶ Indeed, the Crucifix will prove to be one of a consistent group of carved images of the *Dead Christ*, all of which — in some measure — depend from Antonio Bonvicino.

In the mid-fourteenth century, possession of Casteldimezzo had passed from the Archbishopric of Ravenna to the Malatesta, *podestà* of Pesaro. From 1385 until his death in 1429 Malatesta V Malatesta, called “dei sonetti” in recognition of his poetry, was lord of Pesaro; he habitually resided at the Castello di Gradara¹⁷, just four kilometers from Casteldimezzo. A letter dated



8 Venetian School, first half of the fourteenth century, Crucifix. San Nicolò del Lido, Venice.





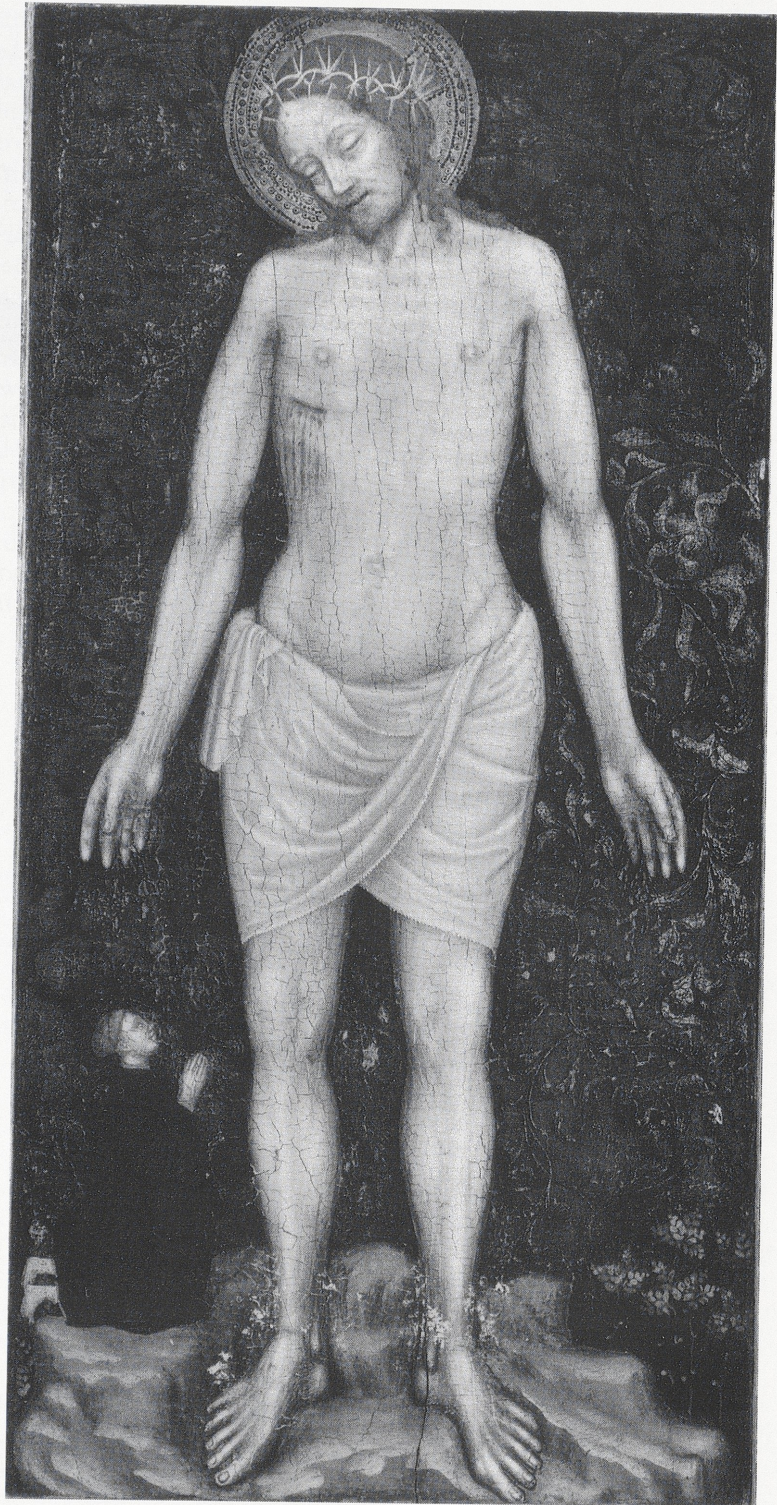
9-11 Antonio Bonvicino, Christ as Man of Sorrows. San Carlo Borromeo, Mestre. Polychromed wood, 178 cm x 83 cm x 22 cm.



12, 13 Antonio Bonvicino, head of Christ as Man of Sorrows. San Carlo Borromeo, Mestre.

1435 with the location of "Castri Medii" suggests that his sons, Galeazzo and Carlo Malatesta, the last lords of Pesaro, in fact, had a residence there.¹⁸ The church of Sant' Apollinare, however, had long been in existence when the Malatesta came to power, for it was paying tithes to Rome as early as 1300.¹⁹

No documentary confirmation of the existence of our Crucifix survives from the fifteenth century; on the other hand, there is no reason to suspect that the Crucifix has not always occupied its current site. The earliest record of the Crucifix's presence in Sant' Apollinare is an epigraph immured in 1652 at the entrance to the chapel housing the Crucifix on the occasion of the chapel's reconstruction in its present form; the epigraph claimed to have replaced, with the selfsame words, an inscription incised in 1518 on the wall of the earlier chapel. The epigraph recounts a miracle effected by the Crucifix in 1517, when Francesco Maria I della Rovere was seeking to recover his duchy from Lorenzo di Pietro de' Medici, installed as Duke of Urbino by his uncle Pope Leo X. Although the 7,000 mercenaries in Lorenzo's pay, massed outside the town, could easily have entered and sacked Casteldimezzo, they refrained from doing so. This the population attributed to its supplications before the Crucifix. In gratitude a special chapel was built to house it and the cult of the Crucifix spread far and wide.²⁰ In 1616 Raffaele Adimari wrote: "... in Castel di mezzo, nel Stato del Sereniss. Sig. Duca d'Vrbino: se ben ui è memoria di Ant. Bonuicino intagliatore, e di Iacomello di Fiore Pitore Venetiano, & che fù il anni [sic] della Christiana salute 1600 [sic]. in circa, qual in effetto si uede vna delle belle Teste, che sia possibile a vedersi, & è di gran deuotione tenuto sempre coperto, come cosa di gran valore."²¹



14 Zanino di Pietro, Christ as Man of Sorrows. Galleria Gilberto Zabert, Turin. Tempera on panel, 91 cm x 48.5 cm.



A seventeenth-century manuscript by Francesco Fabbri transmits the tradition, according to which our Crucifix was found in a large box which came to shore in the vicinity of the near-by port of Vallugola. The inhabitants of the place wished to install the Crucifix in their parish church, but were unable to bring it inside the castle walls because of its great size and weight, until an unknown man, who had ordered everyone to follow him in prayer, succeeded in transporting it to the church.²² Despite the fact that the story of a miraculous discovery at sea of a venerated Crucifix proves to be a *topos*²³, the tradition is still alive today at Casteldimezzo.²⁴

The over life-size *Crucified Christ* measures 194 cm in height by 176 cm in width. It would appear to be made of limewood, though without proper dendrological analysis, certainty is lacking. Unexpectedly, the lower part of the front foot, together with an adjoining part of the rear foot, is made of a separate piece of wood that is joined to the rest at the observer's right of the nail. Arms, as was customary, are also made of separate pieces of wood; the joints were reinforced with linen. Scraps of linen are visible elsewhere on the figure — in the drapery, on the top of the head, and on the torso above the navel — and may once have covered the entire figure as a means of binding seams and limiting the size and number of cracks. The corpus would appear to have been hollowed out from the rear, for a narrow panel at the back of the figure's torso functions as a cover. The wooden thorns in Christ's crown are not original²⁵ but very likely are accurate substitutes. No tongue is represented. A good deal of the original polychromy is preserved. The cross appears to be very old and could well be original. The newly restored Crucifix was exhibited in 1970, but the restorer did not provide the Soprintendenza with a report.²⁶



15, 16 Antonio Bonvicino, *Crucified Christ*. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Skulpturensammlung (inv. no. 45). Polychromed limewood, 192 cm x 168 cm.



17, 18 Antonio Bonvicino, head of Crucified Christ. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Skulpturensammlung.

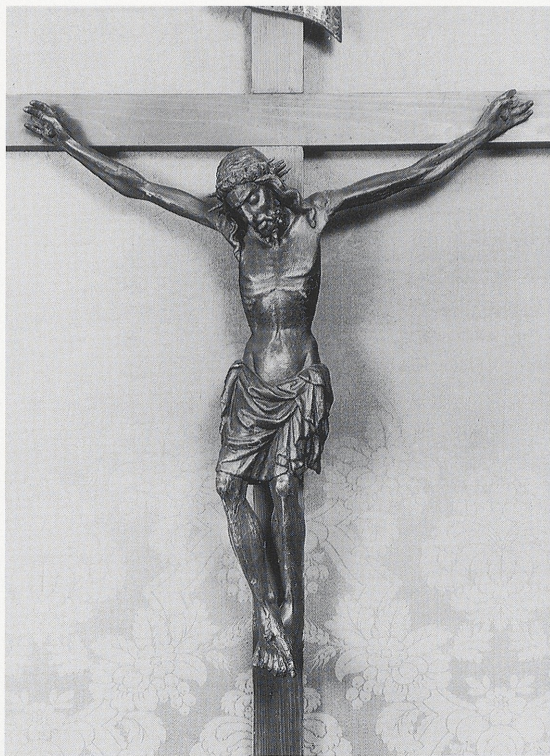
Comparison with a much earlier anonymous Trecento Venetian Crucifix in San Nicolò al Lido (Figs. 3, 8) shows to what degree Bonvicino's Crucifix remains indebted to a schema traditional at Venice. In both the torso is upright, but twisted to its proper right to an almost imperceptible degree; the proper left leg faces forward, the right bends only very slightly to the side; crossing feet make an X; arms are not markedly oblique. The loin cloth sits low on the torso and reaches nearly to the knees; cloth is abundant and gathered principally at the figure's left, although swathes descend both at right and left. Hair covers both ears.

But the execution of the Casteldimezzo Crucifix sets it altogether apart. Although the torso of Bonvicino's *Christ* is almost as elongated as the early Trecento Crucifix in San Nicolò and the bony structure obtrudes as insistently, attention has been given here to the musculature as well, particularly to that of the proper left shoulder, wrenched forward slightly, and to the taut tendons of the arms and neck; by these means, Bonvicino created an impression of muscular tension. The pattern of folds of the loin cloth has been enriched: its rapidly meandering border suggests acquaintance with the International Style. No doubt, Jacobello del Fiore's exquisite polychromy enhances the character of the face (Figs. 2, 6, 7), but the furrowed forehead and serpentine brows, the large and slightly beakish nose, the cavernous cheeks below low but prominent cheekbones, the parted lips



which show the teeth, the finely carved corkscrew tufts of moustache and beard, would have sufficed, without polychromy, to make this an extraordinarily vivid image of heroic resignation.

Resemblance to the Crucifix at Casteldimezzo proves the wooden sculpture of *Christ as Man of Sorrows* in the Church of the Capuchin friars dedicated to San Carlo Borromeo in Mestre to be a work by Antonio Bonvicino (Figs. 9-13). The figure is housed in a glass case beneath the Altar of the Madonna del Don on the left side (*in cornu Evangelii*) of the church, whose construction on the site of the former church was begun in June 1962.²⁷ The sculpture can be traced with certainty no further back than 1940, when the Capuchin monks returned to the convent at Mestre from which they had been expelled in 1810. After the Napoleonic suppressions the church and convent had been auctioned off and remained deserted. Nevertheless, having passed into the custody of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo at Mestre, the church was reopened from time to time.²⁸ There, as part of its temporary furnishing, the monks found the *Man of Sorrows* upon their return. Quite possibly our figure is the "1 Cristo" listed in an inventory on 13 May 1810 together with a confessional and a *prie-dieu* in a passage that led from the sacristy of San Carlo to the cloisters.²⁹ However that may be, our *Man of Sorrows* cannot have been destined originally for Capuchins, whose order was founded only long after it was made.



19, 20 Shop of Antonio Bonvicino, Crucified Christ.
San Carlo Borromeo, Mestre. Polychromed wood, 69
cm x 59.5 cm.

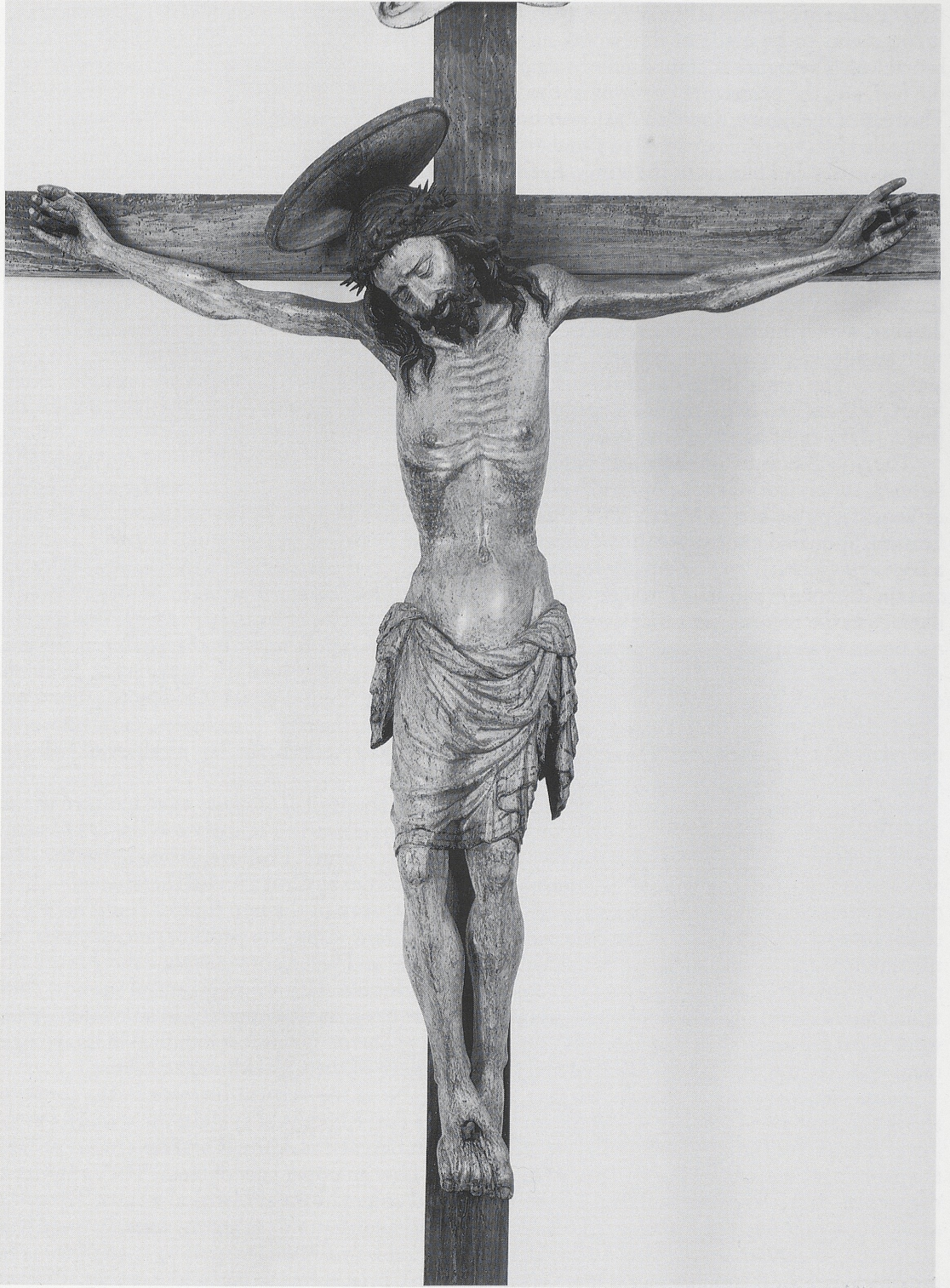
The *Man of Sorrows* is life-size, measuring 178 cm in length, 83 cm in width, and 22 cm in depth. It too seems to be made of limewood, although the restorer's report cautiously calls the wood broad leaf. The figure is composed of a single block of wood, to which the arms, the extremity of the feet, and the projecting portions of the loin cloth at right and left — now lost — were added. The rear of the figure, down to the lower border of its drapery, was hollowed out; the hollow was concealed by two panels, carved to simulate the figure's back and loin cloth and originally attached with mortises and tenons to the trunk. Each arm was initially fixed to the trunk with a single long nail, for whose seating a hollow was carved from the depth of the shoulder and then filled with a piece of painted wood. Traces of a covering of a thin cloth, probably linen, were found along the seams of the feet, shoulders, and panels at the back. At an unknown date the figure was mutilated to produce an image of the recumbent *Christ in the Tomb*. Two wooden wedges and four large nails at the shoulders forced the arms to adhere more closely to the body and the projecting swathes of drapery, which interfered, were eliminated. The original color, which is much abraded and covered with an adhesive resin now oxidated, was applied in a thin layer over a light *imprimatura* of gesso and glue. The original crown of thorns, probably carved from the same block as the rest of the figure, was excised to permit the introduction of an extraneous crown. Both thumbs and the index finger of the right hand, as well as the big toe of the left foot, are lost.³⁰

The only literature on the work, beyond incidental mentions³¹, is a brochure by the late Sandro Sponza, supervisor of the sculpture's restoration for the Soprintendenza ai Beni Artistici e Storici di Venezia; published in March 1989, the brochure is distributed *gratis* in the church. In his publication, Sponza demonstrated that, although the figure is displayed today in a supine position as a *Deposed Christ*, it was originally intended to stand: not only do the perpendicularity of the feet and the absence of modeling in their soles correspond to an upright pose, but the concentration of damage in the feet suggests that they were burned by candles — as would have been the case had the figure been standing on an altar. Indeed, the restoration report records a large ring at the base of the neck, which — attached to a support at the rear — originally held the figure erect. From the degree of finish at the rear of the figure, no longer accessible, Sponza concluded that the figure was originally visible from all sides. As reconstructed by Sponza, the figure resembles, to an extraordinary degree, a painting of *Cristo passo* attributed to Zanino di Pietro in the Turin gallery of Gilberto Zabert (Fig. 14).³²

Knowing of nothing similar in style, Sponza assigned the *Man of Sorrows* to a "scultore veneto degli ultimi decenni del sec. XV". That this date proves to be nearly a century too late is a measure of the rudimentary state of studies on Venetian wooden sculpture. I believe, instead, that the *Man of Sorrows* is an earlier work by the master of the Casteldimezzo Crucifix and therefore should be dated to the beginning of the fifteenth century. The anatomy of the two figures could hardly be more similar (Figs. 3, 9): compare the musculature of taut arms; the protuberant clavicles; the treatment of the rib cage with eight ribs below the breast and seven above — thus three more ribs than normal; the flattened breasts; the contracted abdomen with its two central vertical folds which part around the navel; the huge and protuberant navel itself embedded in an ovoid depression. What remains of the loin cloth of *Christ as Man of Sorrows* is almost identical in its arrangement of folds and the pattern of its border to the drapery of the Casteldimezzo *Christ*.

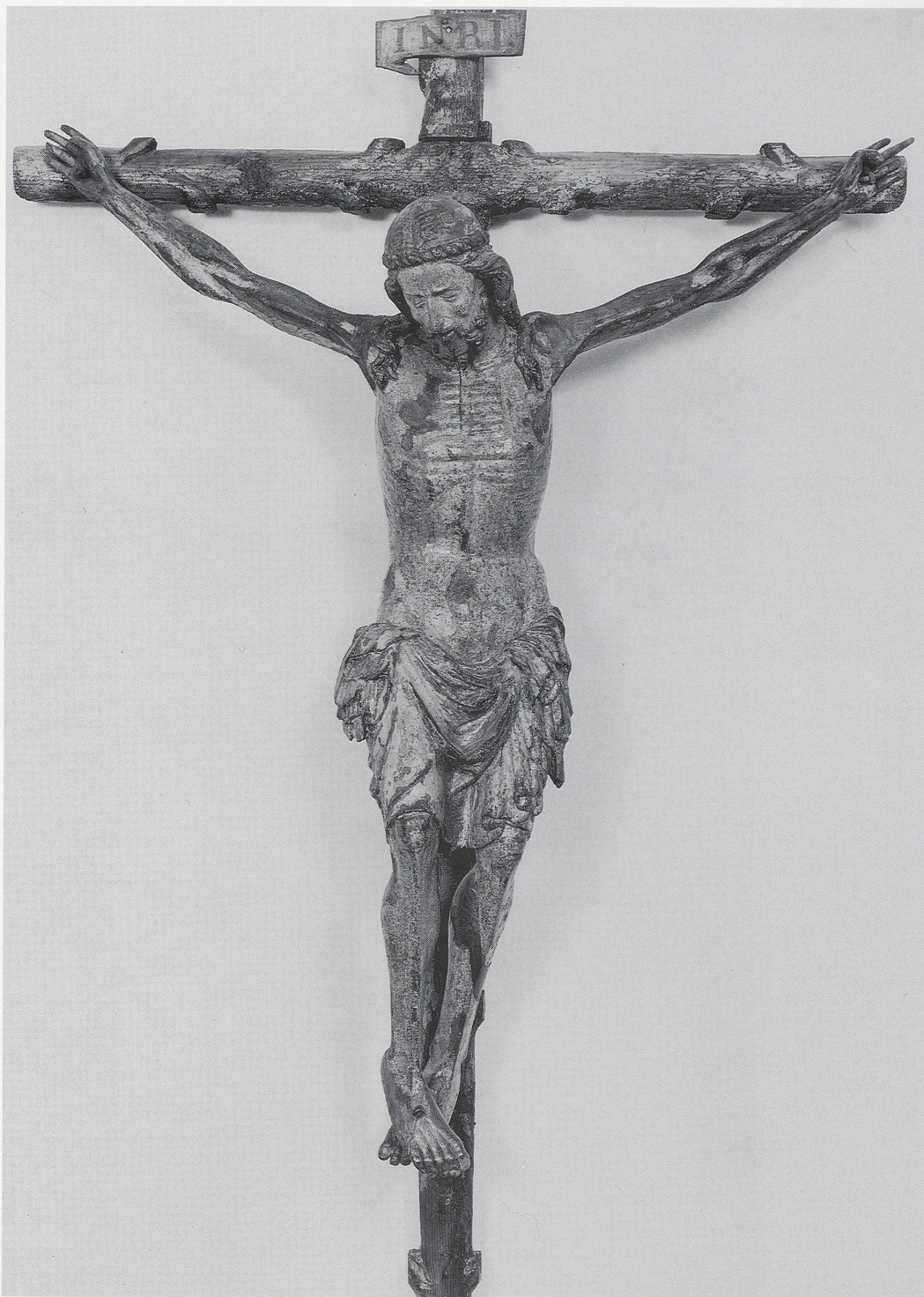
Faces too correspond exactly (Figs. 6, 7, 12, 13). Note the vertical furrows in the forehead above the nose, the fluttering line of the eyebrows, the curved paths of eyelids; the wrinkles in the lower lids and at the corner of the eyes, the low protuberant cheekbones and cavernous cheeks; the prominent beak-like nose and parted lips, which show an upper row of teeth. The contours of the face of each betray the same marked swellings and contractions at identical points. The cork-screw curls of moustache and parted beard are similarly configured, as are the long locks of hair.

In fact, so similar are the two works that they are unlikely to be separated by many years. Yet the carving of the beard and hair of the Casteldimezzo Christ seems to me bolder and less meticu-





21-23 Antonio Bonvicino or assistant, Crucified Christ.
San Giuseppe delle Clarisse Cappuccine, Mestre.
Polychromed wood, 102 cm x 96 cm.



24, 25 Shop of Antonio Bonvicino, Crucified Christ. San Marco, Mestre. Polychromed wood, 136 cm x 116 cm.



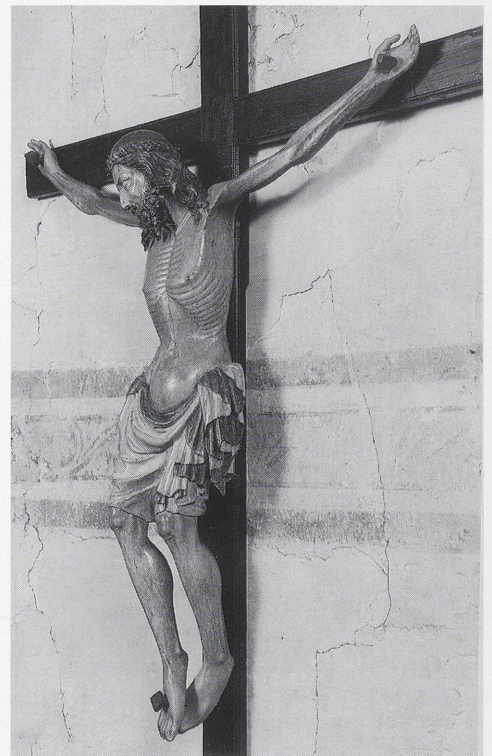
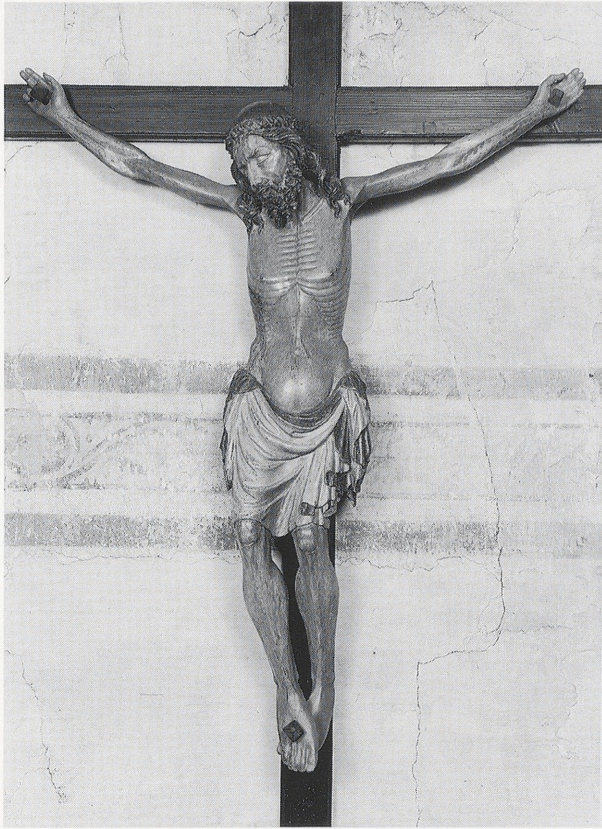
lous, the indentations of furrows in the forehead and the sinuosity of the eyebrows more marked, as though the sculptor had gained in confidence and daring. The pattern of the hem of the loin cloth in the Casteldimezzo Crucifix makes more allowance for the protrusion of the legs and creates a suaver pattern. I would suggest, therefore, a date of ca. 1410 for the *Man of Sorrows*.

A second Crucifix by Antonio Bonvicino belongs to the Skulpturensammlung der Staatliche Museen, Berlin (inv. no. 45) (Figs. 15-18). It was acquired in 1885, as a donation of Heinrich Vieweg of Braunschweig, with a Venetian provenance from the storerooms of Santa Maria dei Frari.³³ The figure, measuring 192 x 168 cm, is as large as the Casteldimezzo *Christ*. Like that and the *Christ as Man of Sorrows*, the rear of the figure, from just below the shoulders to the middle of the thighs, has been hollowed out; the hollow is covered with two panels. A third panel serves as the rear of the loin cloth. Currently under restoration by Marion Böhl in the museum laboratory, the Crucifix proves to be an extraordinarily complex construction.³⁴ The figure is carved from several pieces of limewood. The head alone is composed of four pieces: the front of the head constitutes one piece; two more were used for the side of the head on the figure's proper left, while the rear is a continuation of the block which forms the torso and legs. Four pieces in all — two on either side — were employed for the overhangs of the loin cloth. The figure's proper left big toe is a separate piece as are both arms. (A small triangular piece introduced on the figure's proper right shoulder probably constituted a repair.) Pieces were attached with animal glue and iron nails; there is no trace of the linen often used to reinforce seams.³⁵





26-28 Antonio Bonvicino or assistant, Crucified Christ. Santa Croce, formerly Ospedale di Santa Maria dei Battuti, Treviso. Polychromed wood, 94.5 cm x 83 cm.



29-31 Antonio Bonvicino or assistant, Crucified Christ. S. Nicolò, Treviso. Polychromed wood, 102 cm x 88.5 cm.



Over the entire figure gesso was applied — mostly in a single thin layer, in places in two layers — to provide a ground for polychromy. At 2 mm, the paint layer is also very thin. Flesh color originally tended towards ochre. The loin cloth, both inside and out, is white, decorated with a blue border. The appearance of blood from the wounds in *Christ's* side, hands, and feet was created by means of nails covered with gesso painted red. The green overpainting and brown varnish, which currently mar the surface, date from the end of the 18th, or the beginning of the 19th, century. There is no crown of thorns, which probably was initially added in a different material.

The gigantic cross, 442 cm high, is original. Probably for ease of transport, it was sawn into several pieces at some time in the past. The longitudinal arm of the cross is made of fir, the cross arms and the suppedaneum of spruce. The ends of the cross bar have been cut down. Because of the carpenter's mark found on the longitudinal arm, the restorer surmises that such large beams may once have served for the construction of a building. *Christ* was affixed to the cross by means of a large iron nail driven through the hollow at the rear of the figure into the wood itself to a depth of 5 or 6 cm at the level of the top of the loin cloth. Where the nail exited at the rear of the cross it had an eye so that a pin could be driven through it.

So enormous a Crucifix must have been intended for a very conspicuous site in the Frari: quite possibly it was suspended from the triumphal arch at the entrance to the newly rebuilt *cappella maggiore*.³⁶ That it is by the hand that carved the Casteldimezzo Crucifix needs no demonstration. More interesting are the very minor differences. Although the figure is not attenuated, proportions are elongated in the torso and upper legs; the head is much smaller in proportion to the total height and the torso now manifests nineteen ribs. Signs of agony are more explicit in the Frari *Christ*. The arms, wrenched upward, combined with the slumping head produce an impression of greater tension in the shoulders. The ungainly twist of the torso at the waist and the

accentuated contraction of the stomach muscles testify to a body wracked by pain. Hair shows a new complexity in its interlacing locks and an identical draping of the loin cloth nevertheless produces a richer and more intricate design. For all these reasons I suspect that the Frari Crucifix postdates the Casteldimezzo Crucifix by about a decade; perhaps the Crucifix was made in connection with the completion of the Frari's crossing by 1425. The fineness of incisions that denote the single strands of hair in the Frari Crucifix gives a measure of the importance and prestige of this commission.

I have found nine Crucifixes so closely linked to the Casteldimezzo and Frari Crucifixes that they can be assumed to have issued from Bonvicino's shop, some possibly from his hand. Most of these Crucifixes are unpublished and only one has ever been linked with Bonvicino.³⁷ They comprise: 1. Amsterdam, ex-collection of Otto Lanz³⁸; 2. Mestre, Chiesa di San Carlo Borromeo (Figs. 19, 20)³⁹; 3. Mestre, Convento delle Clarisse Cappuccine, Chiesa di San Giuseppe (Figs. 21-23)⁴⁰; 4. Mestre, Chiesa di San Marco (Figs. 24, 25)⁴¹; 5. Treviso, Chiesa di Santa Croce in the former Ospedale di Santa Maria dei Battuti (currently used as an auditorium by the Trevisan branch of the University of Padua) (Figs. 26-28); 6. Treviso, Chiesa di San Nicolò, sacristy (Figs. 29-31)⁴²; 7. Venice, Chiesa di Sant'Alvise (Figs. 32, 33)⁴³; 8. Venice, Chiesa di San Francesco della Vigna (Figs. 34-36)⁴⁴, and 9. Vicenza, Cathedral of the SS. Annunziata (Figs. 37-39).⁴⁵

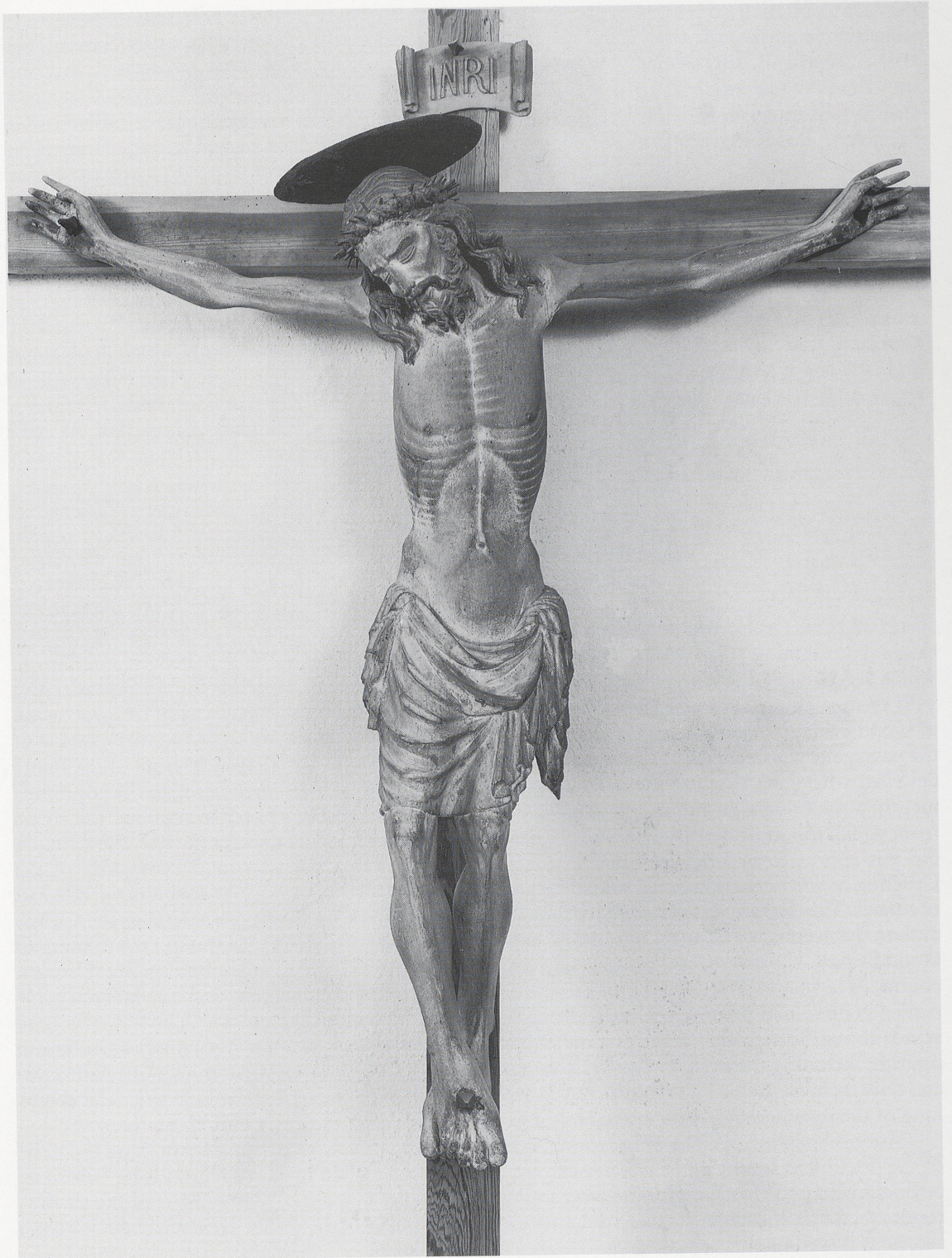


32, 33 Shop of Antonio Bonvicino, Crucified Christ. Sant'Alvise, Venice. Polychromed wood, 118 cm x 114.2 cm.



Of all these Crucifixes, only the one in the Trevisan church of Santa Croce can be traced to its original destination (Figs. 26-28).⁴⁶ Among the papers of the Hospital of Santa Maria dei Battuti, which has occupied its current site since ca. 1332, Luigi Pesce discovered a payment of 30 April 1451 to the painter Dario da Treviso for having "refreshed" the Crucifix carried in the procession of Good Friday.⁴⁷ Attached to this Crucifix is the story of its miraculous origin. On the occasion of the passage of a procession of the Scuola dei Battuti, an olive tree, growing at the head of the Ponte del Siletto-Roggia in Via Riccati at Treviso, in the courtyard of a house belonging to the confraternity, bent its boughs in homage to the holy sacrament. This tree supposedly supplied the wood from which the confraternity had a Crucifix made. (Examined by an architect in 1917, the Crucifix did not appear to be made of olive⁴⁸; in fact, it looks to me like limewood.) Possession of the Crucifix, however, was disputed with the chapter of the Cathedral in whose parish the miracle had occurred. The dispute was resolved by a decision to bring the Crucifix in procession to the Cathedral on the evening of Maundy Thursday and return it to Santa Maria dei Battuti on the evening of Good Friday. The ceremonial transfer of the Crucifix to the Duomo, now shifted to Good Friday, continues to the present day.⁴⁹ Until the end of the Quattrocento members of the sodality accompanied condemned prisoners to their death bearing the Crucifix in question.⁵⁰ The Crucifix now stands above the high altar at the east end of Santa Croce. Reconstruction of the church's facade and interior, including the design of its high altar, are the work of the Trevisan architect Ottavio Scotti and date from ca. 1739. The rebuilt church replaced an edifice in existence at least since the beginning of the seventeenth century. That building in turn replaced an earlier church on the site.⁵¹

Giorgio Fossaluzza is the only scholar to have paid the Crucifix serious attention: on the basis of the document found by Pesce, he surmised that the work had been made, not long before its retouching in 1451, perhaps by the woodcarver Angelo del Mangano — a member of the confraternity of Santa Maria dei Battuti and a former collaborator of Dario da Treviso's.⁵² As we shall see, he was wrong on both counts.





34-36 Shop of Antonio Bonvicino, Crucified Christ. San Francesco della Vigna, Venice. Polychromed wood, 105.5 cm x 99.4 cm.



37-39 Antonio Bonvicino or assistant, Crucified Christ. Cathedral of SS. Annunziata, Vicenza. Polychromed wood, 122 cm in height.



All nine Crucifixes listed above manifest traits typical of Bonvicino. These include the excessive number of ribs and the contracted abdomen, down the center of which runs a pair of vertical folds that splay around the navel. Common to all but the Crucifix in Santa Croce, Treviso, is the upright pose of the torso; legs are moderately bowed, when they too are not straight. The long loin cloth reaches almost to the knees; drapery is drawn tightly around the proper right thigh and is gathered on the left hip, producing an intricate meander which recurs in all. A secondary swathe on the right hip creates a certain degree of balance. In all, the crown of thorns imitates a tightly coiled rope, which sits at approximately the level of the hairline; from the crown of thorns wooden pegs protrude. The faces invariably show the vertical furrows just above the nose and, except in the Crucifixes in Santa Croce, Treviso, and Sant'Alvise, Venice, the wavy line of eyebrows; cheekbones are universally low and extremely protuberant. In four of the examples some upper teeth are visible between the parted lips, as they are in the Casteldimezzo and Frari Crucifixes. The beard, divided in the center, is invariably composed of several discrete corkscrew locks. All nine Crucifixes are smaller than the ones in Casteldimezzo and Berlin. In none of the nine is the carving brought to as high a state of finish; clearly all were far more dependent on color for the definition of form. In all, *Christ's* body is exceptionally attenuated and elongated. The Crucifixes from San Marco and the Convento delle Clarisse at Mestre, San Nicolò and Santa Croce at Treviso, and the Duomo at Vicenza have recently been restored; the Crucifixes from San Carlo Borromeo at Mestre and San Francesco della Vigna at Venice have not and consequently show a considerable blunting of carved details.



40, 41 Follower of Antonio Bonvicino, Crucified Christ. Pensionato alle Mueghette, I. R. E., Venice. Polychromed wood, 108 cm x 104.7 cm.



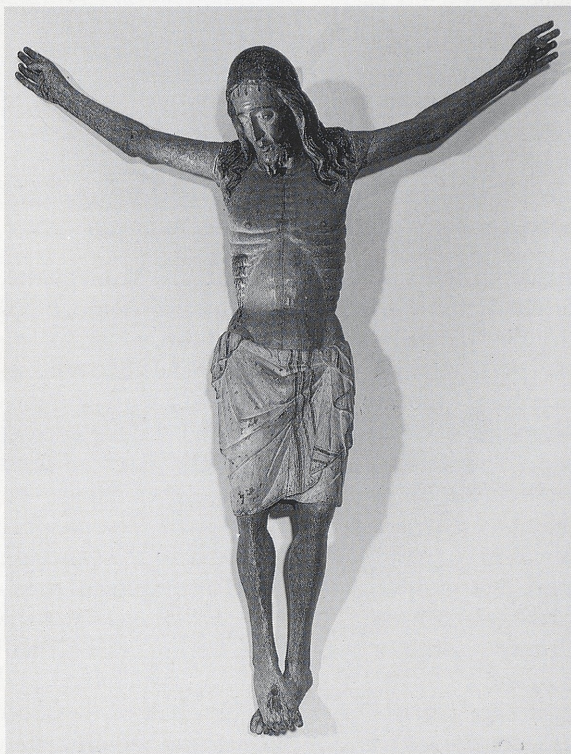
A further Crucifix in the Pensionato alle Muneghette, I. R. E., at Castello 2616 (Figs. 40, 41)⁵³, is dependent on the schema invented by Bonvicino, but shows a certain debasement in the rendering of details that suggests a later and more distant epigone. By contrast, the remainder of the Crucifixes presents no greater discrepancies than what might reasonably be expected in the products of one highly specialized shop. The Crucifixes in the Convent of the Capuchin nuns at Mestre, in San Nicolò and Santa Croce at Treviso and the Duomo at Vicenza (Figs. 21, 26, 29, 37) seem to me finer in quality than the others: whether this is a function of their more satisfactory condition or their execution by the master himself, working — to be sure — to less stringent standards, rather than by an assistant, I cannot decide. The proportions and draping of the loin cloth of the Crucifix in San Marco, Mestre, is closest to the Casteldimezzo Crucifix (Figs. 1, 24), but its face and hair are disappointing (Fig. 25). The draping of the loin cloth in the Crucifixes in the Convent of the Clarisse in Mestre, Santa Croce in Treviso and the Venetian church of San Francesco della Vigna closely resembles that of the Berlin/Frari Crucifix (Figs. 15, 21, 34). The extraordinary elongation and attenuation of the torsos, which lend to the figures the fragility of an infant, recall Sienese painted *Crucifixions* of the first half of the Trecento. The greater poignancy effected by this means, contrasted with the more stoical and ultimately triumphant image of the Casteldimezzo *Christ* (Fig. 1), I take to reflect a later development in the art of Bonvicino. In fact, the contrast corresponds to the difference between the mosaic *Crucifixion* in the background of the Tomb of Doge Michele Morosini (d. 1382) in SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, and the International Style *Crucifixion* in the Galleria Querini-Stampalia, Venice, recently assigned to Lorenzo di Giacomo.⁵⁴ A dating of these wooden Crucifixes to the third decade of the fifteenth century, therefore, seems most plausible to me.

An explanation for the popularity of Bonvicino's Crucifixes is not far to seek. Compared to the late Trecento Crucifixes, hypothetically associated with Caterino Moranzzone, in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg (Fig. 42), the church of San Luigi in Portogruaro and the Galleria Antiquaria "Il Cartiglio" in Florence⁵⁵, for example, the anatomy of Bonvicino's Crucifixes is less schematic: the surface of *Christ's* body is enriched by the reproduction of the muscles and tendons of the limbs and shoulders and by the swelling and contraction of the abdomen. Very slight tilts and turns in the figure's pose, as well as the bowing of the legs, suggest an inherent

mobility unnaturally restrained. The disposition of the loin cloth takes on an independent decorative existence. And the slumping head and agonized expression of the face replace the relative impassivity of the earlier Crucifixes.

In sum, it is not unlikely that Jacobello del Fiore, well-known at Pesaro, was asked to recommend a woodcarver at Venice to make a Crucifix and that he was well informed, when he named Bonvicino as the master who would do it best. For, from the evidence of the *Man of Sorrows* at Mestre and the Crucifixes at Casteldimezzo and Berlin, as well as their numerous off-spring, it transpires that Antonio Bonvicino was the preeminent sculptor of images of the *Dead Christ* in Venice in the early fifteenth century and that his invention established a new type and standard there for the carving of wooden Crucifixes.

42 Attributed to Caterino Moronzzone, Crucified Christ. Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg (inv. no. 1956.47). Polychromed wood, 187 cm in height.



Postscriptum

This article was in proof when I discovered two further Crucifixes by Antonio Bonvicino. One (102 cm high x 100 cm wide) is missing large parts of its hands and feet and is disfigured by a thick coat of black paint. It belongs to the Museo Civico at Treviso and is in storage at the Casa da Noal. It was purchased in the late 19th century by Luigi Bailo, then director of the museum, and probably comes from the Trevigiano.

The second Crucifix (128,5 cm high x 99,5 cm wide) is without any trace of polychromy, gilding, or gesso preparation and is finely enough carved not to have needed color. It was moved to the sacristy of Santo Stefano, Venice, in April 2005 from the former Istituto Pietro Ciliota (since 1999 the Domus Ciliota) at San Marco 2976 in Calle delle Muneghe, which from 1822 on occupied the suppressed Convent of Augustinian nuns dedicated to Santi Rocco e Margherita — itself a late Quattrocento foundation. Nothing is known of the Crucifix's original destination.

NOTES

Many people have given unstintingly of their time and effort, above all, Don Lino Capriotti, priest of Sant'Apollinare at Casteldimezzo. I am greatly indebted as well to Fr. Roberto Genuin prior and Padre Celestino archivist at San Carlo Borromeo, Mestre, to Suor Chiara, Madre Abbadessa at San Giuseppe, Mestre, to Don Adriano Toffoli parish priest at San Nicolò, Treviso, Don Guido Scattolin at San Marco, Mestre, and Padre Adriano Campesato at San Francesco della Vigna. At various soprintendenze I have been assisted by the late Maria Teresa Rubin, Amalia Basso, Luca Carbulotto, Matteo Ceriana, and Maria Giannatiempo Lopez. Dino De Poli, Presidente della Fondazione Cassamarca, Silvia Lunardon formerly at IRE, Michael Knuth at the Skulpturensammlung, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Franco Barbieri, and the restorers Giovanna Menegazzi, Giuseppe Maria Dinetto, and Marion Böhl have been unfailingly helpful. Thanks are also due to my three excellent photographers, Mario Gatti at Casteldimezzo, Giuliano Ghiraldini at Vicenza, and Mario Polesel at Venice. Expenses of travel and photography were defrayed by grants from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation and the Craig Hugh Smyth fund administered by Villa I Tatti, respectively; for their support I am very grateful.

- ¹ This inscription was misinterpreted by Germano Mulazzani in: *Mostra di opere d'arte restaurate*, Urbino 1970, p. 43, to mean that Jacobello carved the work and Bonvicino painted it.
- ² ASVe, Archivio notarile, Testamenti, B. 859 (not. Egidio Ravignan), no. 135: "Ego Franciscina uxor Antonij Bonvisin de [crossed out] incisor S. [sic] de confinio S. Salvatoris infirmitate corpore pergravata etc. In quo meum fidei solum commissarium volo et constituo esse maritum meum suprascriptum etc. ... Item volo sepelire in cimiterio dictorum S. Johannis et Paulj. Item scole S. Viti in qua sum ducatum 1 auri. ... Residuum omnium bonorum meorum ... dimitto viro meo suprascripto. Item dimitto dona Cateruce sorore mee ducatos IIIIor auri pro una capa. Testes: Johannes q. Ser Viti S. Salvatoris inpicitor; Simon q. Benedicti inpicitor." This testament, listed in the index of testaments in the Venetian archives, was also found by Tiziana Franco and published by her in *Andrea De Marchi/Tiziana Franco*, *Il Gotico internazionale*: da Nicolò di Pietro a Michele Giambono, in: *Pittura veneta nelle Marche*, ed. Valter Curzi, Cinisello Balsamo 2000, p. 64.
- ³ Luigi Lanzi, *Storia pittorica della Italia*, Bassano 1795-96, II, p. 15.
- ⁴ Ileana Chiappini di Sorio, *Per una datazione tarda della Madonna Correr di Jacobello del Fiore*, in: *Boll. dei Musei Civici Veneziani*, XIII, 4, 1968, pp. 11-12, repeated by Paride Berardi, *Arte e artisti a Pesaro*. Documenti di età malatestiana e di età sforzesca, I. Pittori (parte prima), in: *Pesaro città e contà*. Rivista della Società Pesarese di Studi Storici, XII, 2000, p. 27, doc. 5a. The claim made by Andrea De Marchi, Gentile da Fabriano. Un viaggio nella pittura italiana alla fine del gotico, Milan 1992, p. 88, n. 23; *idem*, *A sud di Ancona: gli invii da Venezia e la scuola della Costa*, in: *Fioritura tardogotica nelle Marche*, 25 July – 25 October 1998, exhibition catalogue ed. Paolo Dal Poggetto, Milan 1998, p. 36, n. 12, and Franco (n. 2), p. 59, seconded by Lucia Sartor, *Scultura lignea veneziana del Quattrocento (1390-1500)*, tesi di dottorato, Università degli Studi di Udine, 2000-2001, p. 166, n. 61, that "Pesar" is a mistaken transcription of "Pense" or "Pinxit" is unwarranted: in fact, since "painted" was by far the most common locution, the transcriber would have been much more likely to mistake pinxit for Pesar than Pesar for pinxit. From her misinterpretation of the inscription, Franco deduced that the polyptych had been sent to Pesaro from Venice.
- ⁵ Annibale degli Abati Olivieri-Giordani, *Memorie della chiesa di S. Maria di Monte Granaro fuor delle mura della città di Pesaro*, Pesaro 1777, pp. 34 f.; Chiappini (n. 4), pp. 12-14; Emilio Negro, *Jacobello del Fiore e Pesaro agli albori del '400*, in: *Antichità viva*, XXXIII, 6, 1994, pp. 20-25; Maria Rosaria Valazzi in *Claudio Giardini/Maria Rosaria Valazzi*, *Pesaro, Museo Civico. Pinacoteca (Musei d'Italia. Meraviglie d'Italia)*, Bologna 1996, p. 5, no. VIII. This altarpiece is sometimes dated 1408 (modern style), presumably on the mistaken assumption that the Venetian year changed, like the Florentine year, on 25th March. In fact, it changed on March 1st.
- ⁶ Ileana Chiappini di Sorio, *Appunti per la storia dell'arte veneta*. Iacobello ed Ercole del Fiore, in: *Arte documento*, III, 1989, pp. 60-61; Franco (n. 2), p. 64; Sartor (n. 4), pp. 72-74.
- ⁷ *Laudedeo Testi*, *La storia della pittura veneziana*, I, Bergamo 1909, p. 420: "1407?"
- ⁸ Chiappini (n. 4), pp. 14-15.
- ⁹ Ileana Chiappini di Sorio, *Note e appunti su Jacobello del Fiore*, in: *Notizie da Palazzo Albani*, II, 1, 1973, p. 26, n. 10.
- ¹⁰ Ettore Merkel, *ad vocem* Del Fiore, Iacobello, in: *Diz. Biogr. Ital.*, XXXVI, 1988, p. 559; Pietro Zampetti, *Pittura nelle Marche*, I. Dalle origini al primo Rinascimento, Florence 1988, p. 267 (1407); Mauro Lucco, *Venezia, 1400-1430 in: La pittura nel Veneto. Il Quattrocento*, I, ed. Mauro Lucco, Milan 1989, p. 19, and *idem*, *Jacobello del Fiore*, *ibidem*, p. 347; Mirella Simonetti, *Tecniche della pittura veneta*, *ibidem*, p. 264;

- Maria Rosaria Valazzi, Pittori e pitture a Pesaro nel Quattrocento, in: Pesaro tra Medioevo e Rinascimento (Historica Pisaurensis, II), Venice 1989, ed. Maria Rosaria Valazzi, p. 312; Emilio Negro in: Dipinti e disegni della Pinacoteca Civica di Pesaro, ed. Claudio Giardini/Emilio Negro/Massimo Pironcini, Modena 1993, p. 43, no. 18; Stefania Francioni, Monumenti d'arte, in: Casteldimezzo paese di storia, ed. Girolamo Allegretti, (Costellazione, 12), Pesaro 1999, pp. 27-28. The three exceptions include Andrea De Marchi, Ritorno a Nicolò di Pietro, in: Nuovi studi, III, 1997, p. 18, n. 38, who called the date of 1407/1408 erroneous. Franco (n. 2), p. 64, followed by Sartor (n. 4), p. 73, dated the Crucifix at least a decade later on the basis of the "capziosa complessità" of the loin cloth.
- 11 ASVe, Notarile, Testamenti, B. 459 (not. Giovanni Campio), no no.; Chiappini (n. 9), p. 23; Pietro Paoletti, Raccolta di documenti inediti per servire alla storia della pittura veneziana nei secoli XV e XVI, 2, Padua 1895, p. 7. Gino Fogolari, Jacobello del Fiore e la sua famiglia, in: Archivio veneto, ser. 5, XXXIV-XXXV, 1944 (1945), p. 48, doc. I, published the earliest known document concerning Jacobello — his receipt of 1394 for his wife's dowry.
 - 12 ASVe, Cancelleria Inferiore, Misc., Testamenti, Notai diversi, B. 23, no. 1077.
 - 13 ASVe, Archivio notarile, Testamenti, B. 670 (not. Alessandro Marino), loose paper *cedula*, no. 18, and fasc. 3, c. 32r, respectively.
 - 14 ASVe, Cancelleria Inferiore, Misc., Notai diversi, B. 9, fasc. 114 (not. Bernardo Panza detto Gibellino), *sub die*: "Ser Jacobellus de Flor fil. Ser Francisci de Flor pinctor emancipatus ut asseruit de confinio S. Luce vendidit Ser Nicolò Lipamano q. d. Petri S. Fosce unum scilavum tartarum annorum XX vel circa vocatum Aspertus sanum etc. pro pretio ducatorum 8 auri a modo quos habuit." Although not relevant to the dating of the Casteldimezzo Crucifix, it is worth noting the following unpublished documents regarding Jacobello del Fiore that I have encountered in my archival studies.
ASVe, Cancelleria Inferiore, Notai, B. 147, fasc. 7 (not. Manfredino da Ponte), paper protocol, c. 57r: 11 April 1416: "Magister Jacobellus de Flor pictor q. Ser Francisci de confinio Sci. Moysi omni modo via jure et forma quibus melius potest, rogavit comissionem Ser Pantaleoni tayapiera q. Ser Pauli de confinio Sci. Pantaleonis ad petitendum recipiendum et exigendum omnem et totum ac quicquid quacumque ratione et causa habere debet et debebit a magistro Bertucio tayapiera et ab alijs quibuscumque, cartas securitatis, finis, et remissionis facere. Item etiam pasciendum transigendum et componendum. Alios procuratores substituendum. Item in iudicio comparandum ad litem. Testes: Ser Franciscus de Gibilino notarius, Ser Michael Scalori de Florentia, Ser Bartholomeus Donato varotarius."
ASVe, Cancelleria Inferiore, Notai, B. 147, fasc. 9 (not. Giovanni Penato), parchment protocol, c. 6v: 9 June 1417 "Ser Jacobelus de Flore pictor" appeared as witness to three separate acts.
ASVe, Giudici del Proprio, B. 2, c. 60v: 11 September 1432. "Ser Jacobj [sic] del flore pictor q. Ser Franciscj de confinio S. Moysi cum suis heredibus rogavit cartam securitatis done Cateruzie relicte Andree Taiapetra de quodam clamore facto per ipsum super investimenta posita super proprietatem dicti q. Ser Antonij [sic: Andree crossed out] Taiapetra plezij dotis predictae done Cateruzie ad nomen ipsius done Cateruzie vigore sue divisionis carte. Nunc autem. Testes: Bartolomeus Venerii; Angelus Nigro ambo precones." *Ibidem* [c. 67v], 16 May 1432, Lucia, Jacobello's wife, named him her proxy.
 - 15 Sartor (n. 4), pp. 166-167.
 - 16 Chiappini (n. 6), p. 60, followed by Negro (n. 10), p. 43, no. 18.
 - 17 Piergiorgio Parroni, La cultura letteraria a Pesaro sotto i Malatesta e gli Sforza, in: Pesaro tra Medioevo e Rinascimento (Historica Pisaurensis, II), ed. Maria Rosaria Valazzi, Venice 1989, p. 206.
 - 18 Dante Trebbi, Pesaro, storia dei sobborghi e dei castelli, III, Pesaro 1991, p. 102; Nando Cecini, Anemos. Insediamenti e vicende umane nel Parco Naturale Regionale del Monte San Bartolo dall'antichità al XX secolo, Pesaro 2000, pp. 77/80.
 - 19 Pietro Sella, ed., Rationes decimarum Italiae nei secoli XIII e XIV. Marchia, Vatican City 1950, p. 46, no. 453.
 - 20 D. O. M. / A LAVDE DI DIO È FACTA / QVESTA CAPELLA P(ER) GRA/TIA RECEPVTA [sic] DA QVESTA / COMMVNITA NELL'ANNO / M.D.XVII PER ESSERE VNA / GRAN GVERRA. ARRIVÒ / QVA 7000 OLTRAMO(N)TA=/NI, E NON ENTRÒ NESSV=/NO DENTRO P(ER) GRATIA RE=/CEPVTA DAL SS.º CROCIF.º / SBARINO CAPIT.º ANNO / M.D.XVIII. P. Underneath there is inscribed: Monumentu(m) hoc / olim in pariete scri=ptum, patefacto utrinque / et exornato sacello, inscul=ptu(m) in lapide iisdem ver=/bis, ac l(ette)ris huc re=/positum est anno mclii. For an account of this event and subsequent miracles, see Delio Bischì, Casteldimezzo, luogo da favole, Casteldimezzo (PS) 1984, p. 39, and Trebbi (n. 18), pp. 108-109.
 - 21 Raffaele Adimari, Sito riminese, Brescia 1616, bk. I, pp. 131-132.
 - 22 Pesaro, Biblioteca Oliveriana, MS 204, Francesco Fabbri (1574-1659), *Historia della vita et morte del glorioso S. Terentio Martire titolare della cattedrale et protettore della città di Pesaro*, c. 112v, as transcribed by Antonio Brancati, I sei castelli da un manoscritto oliveriano del XVII secolo, in: Gabicce, un paese sull'Adriatico tra Marche e Romagna, ed. Nando Cecini, Gabicce (PS) 1986, p. 344: "Santo Appolinare questa è chiesa parochiale con titolo di arcipretato. Vi è una capella con dentro un grande crocefisso miracoloso, del quale si ha per

- tradizione che nel logo detto Vallugola si fermasse una grande cassa alle rive del mare con dentro il detto Santissimo Crocefisso, quale volendolo quei habitatori portare dentro la detta chiesa parochiale non potterono mai sì per il gran peso come per essere piccola la porta del detto castello verso il mare da quella parte, ma che capitato un homo non cognosciuto lo pigliasse sopra le sue spalle et che ordinasse che ogni uno lo seguitasse con divotione onde passato per la detta porticella lo collocasse in detta chiesa da lui solo." See also the account of the church's rector, Don Francesco Andreolini, written in 1800 and contained in the Visita pastorale of Mons. Filippo Monacelli of 1838: *Trebbi* (n. 18), pp. 106/108.
- ²³ E.g. *Adimari* (n. 21), bk. I, p. 131, with reference to the Crucifix currently in Rimini, Museo della Città (inv. 4 PS) and *Antonio Boscolo* (1677-1713), *Memorie diverse della Città di Chiozza*, ed. Gianni Scarpa, Sottomarina (VE) 1988, p. 28, with reference to the 13th-century German Crucifix in San Domenico, Chioggia.
- ²⁴ *Bischi* (n. 20), pp. 36/39; *Francioni* (n. 10), p. 27.
- ²⁵ Pre-restoration photographs show a crown composed of twigs.
- ²⁶ *Mulazzani* (n. 1), pp. 43-45. The restorer was Paolo Castellani. For a review of the early literature on the Crucifix, see *Sartor* (n. 4), pp. 164-167.
- ²⁷ *Arturo da Carmignano*, I frati cappuccini a Mestre, Mestre (VE) 21989, p. 50.
- ²⁸ *David da Portogruaro*, I Cappuccini a Venezia-Mestre, in: Boll. francescano (Padua), XXXVIII, 1940, p. 113; *Adriana Gusso*, Guida alle chiese, in: Mestre, arte e fede, Venice 1997, pp. 69-70.
- ²⁹ Mestre, Archivio storico comunale, B. 145 (formerly 144), fasc. Demanio, "Degli Arredi Sacri, e delle suppellettili inservienti al Culto, ritrovate nella Chiesa, e Sagrestia nel Convento dei Capuccini detto di S. Carlo di Mestre", [c. 4r]: "Sortiti dalla Sagrestia, e passati nell' Andito a parte sinistra del loco che conduce alli Chiostri, ... Nel detto Andito vi stanno un Confessionario, ed un genuflettorio, 1 Cristo, 1 Una coltrina di detta Gialla ..."
- ³⁰ Relazione tecnica di restauro, Scheda no. 5069 of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici di Venezia. The restoration of the figure was executed between 15 June 1987 and 1 March 1989 by Giovanna Menegazzi, Mira Porte (VE), under the direction of the late Dr. Sandro Sponza.
- ³¹ *David da Portogruaro* (n. 28), p. 112; *Venanzio (Renier) da Chioggia*, La fondazione del convento dei Cappuccini in Mestre (1610-1617), in: Quaderno di studi e notizie del Centro di Studi Storici di Mestre, 5-6, Dec. 1964-June 1965, p. 24; *Giorgio Fedalto*, Il culto dei santi nel Mestrino, in: *Antonio Niero/Giovanni Musolino/Giorgio Fedalto/Silvio Tramontin*, Culto dei santi nella terraferma veneziana, Venice 1967, p. 108; *Arturo da Carmignano* (n. 27), p. 57; *Gusso* (n. 28), p. 70; *Matteo Piccolo et al.*, Le chiese di Mestre (Itinerari di arte e fede, 1), Padua 1999, p. 37.
- ³² *Alberto Cottino*, in: Turin, Galleria Gilberto Zabert. Dipinti dal XV al XIX secolo. Sculture, mobili e oggetti da collezione, exhib. cat. no. 23, Turin 1988, no. 1; *Mauvo Minardi*, in: Fioritura tardogotica (n. 4), pp. 208-209, no. 72. A painting in the Strossmayer Gallery at Zagreb, tentatively assigned to Jacopo Bellini, from the Franciscan convent of Sutjeska, is comparable in iconography: *Grgo Gamulin*, Ritornando sul Quattrocento, in: Arte veneta, XVII, 1963, pp. 13-15.
- ³³ Berlin, Königliche Museen. Beschreibung der Bildwerke der christlichen Epoche, catalogue by *Wilhelm Bode/Hugo von Tschudi*, Berlin 1888, p. 14, no. 37, who thought it characteristic for the beginning of the Quattrocento in Venice. The text in Berlin, Königliche Museen. Bildwerke des Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum. Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz, catalogue by *Wolfgang Fritz Volbach*, Berlin 21930, p. 108, no. 45, hardly differs from that of Bode and Tschudi.
- ³⁴ I am most grateful to Marion Böhl for the information on the condition of the Crucifix which follows.
- ³⁵ The figure has lost a piece at the top of its left shoulder. The last phalanges of all the fingers except the thumbs are missing; the third and fourth fingers of the figure's left hand are very neatly broken off and could originally have been pieced. The tip and upper surface of the right big toe is also missing. A hole at the top of the head was made for the insertion of a halo now lost.
- ³⁶ Construction of the second church of Santa Maria dei Frari began in 1330 with the building of the choir. The crossing was completed during the first quarter of the fifteenth century, at which time the *cappella maggiore* was renewed. For the construction history of the Frari, see *Herbert Dellwing*, Die Kirchenbaukunst des späten Mittelalters in Venetien, Worms 1990, pp. 91-92.
- ³⁷ This is the Crucifix from Sant'Alvise, for which see below n. 43.
- ³⁸ This polychromed Crucifix, flanked by freestanding figures of the mourning *Virgin* and *St. John the Evangelist*, supposedly was carved from limewood and measured 79 cm in height by 41 cm in width. On its socle was an inscription which is only partially legible in the illustration: ADORAMVS TE CRISTE ET BENEDICIMVS ... Called Flemish, 15th century, the group was sold from the Lyon collection of Edouard Aynard between 1 and 4 December 1913 at the Gallerie Georges Petit, Paris, for which see p. 169, lot 243, of the sale catalogue. By 1935, when the group was published as a Ferrarese work of ca. 1430 by *Raimond van Marle*, Two Ferrarese wood-carvings of the XVth Century, in: *Apollo*, XXI, January-June 1935, pp. 10-12, it had entered the Amsterdam collection of Otto Lanz. On 19 March 1951 Lanz sold it: Amsterdam, Frederik Muller & Cie.

Catalogue d'une collection ... du professeur Otto Lanz, p. 28, lot no. 334. I have been unable to trace its subsequent whereabouts.

- 39 The Crucifix is currently located in the corridor outside the sacristy. The corpus measures 69 cm in height x ca. 59.5 cm in width. The figure is missing half of the fourth finger of its proper right hand and most of the second and third fingers of its left hand. That part of the crown of thorns above the face has been consumed, probably by woodworms, and has lost its thorns. The entire surface is covered with numerous layers of paint, which not only hide the original polychromy but blunt the carved forms. Thorns are metal. As far as I am aware, this Crucifix has never been published.
- 40 The Crucifix is located in the nuns' choir of the church. The figure itself, minus the halo, measures 102 cm in height x 96 cm in width. The halo is original but the cross and *cartello* are not. The arms are carved from separate pieces of wood. The rear of the figure is only roughly carved and folds of the loin cloth are barely adumbrated. Thorns are composed of separate bits of wood. The Crucifix was restored not long ago and proves to be in excellent condition. It was illustrated by *Arturo M. da Carmignano*, *Le Clarisse Cappuccine a Venezia*, Venice/Mestre 1985, p. 67, without comment, but is otherwise unpublished. Regarding its provenance, the nuns knew nothing more than that it was brought to San Giuseppe at Mestre on 9 July 1960, when the Capuchin nuns moved from their convent of San Giuseppe on the Fondamenta dei Cereri at Venice to their new house at Mestre. For the history of Capuchin nuns in Venice and their prior convents and churches there, see *ibidem*.
- 41 The Crucifix is kept in an oratory to the left of the main church. The figure measures 136 cm x 116 cm; the cross measures 190 cm x 120 cm x 35 cm. Except for the arms, originally attached to the body with nails or rods, the figure was carved from a single block of wood. The cross, which simulates two unhewn logs, is original. The figure has lost the end of all five fingers of its right hand and the end of the second, fourth and fifth fingers of its left hand. Most of the lock of hair on *Christ's* proper left is missing. Both shoulders are composed of small pieces of wood and reinforcement rods, evidence of a crude early restoration. The front of the figure's forward foot is a separate piece of wood, as are the calf and shin of its left leg; these, too, are the result of restoration. Superposed rectangles, centered on the front of *Christ's* torso, which descend to the upper border of the loin cloth, testify to the fact that separate panels were inserted to cover a hollow excavated from the interior of the corpus; the panels were fixed with nails or rods and their seams were reinforced with linen. Traces of linen were also found at the seams in the shoulders and here and there on the cross. Originally, a part of, or possibly the entire, Crucifix was gilded with a thin layer of gold leaf applied *a guazzo* to a subsurface of red bole: almost all of this is lost. The original site of the cross is not known. Prior to his death on 21 August 1991, the Crucifix hung in the Venice apartment of Pietro Tomasuzzi. Very shortly thereafter, his heirs donated the Crucifix to San Marco at Mestre and between 4 December 1991 and 18 August 1992 it was restored by Giovanna Menegazzi, Mira Porte (VE), whose report provided the above information regarding the condition of the work. As far as I am aware, the Crucifix has never been published.
- 42 The Crucifix is located high on the east wall of the sacristy. The figure measures 102 cm in height by 88.5 cm in width. The Crucifix was restored by Giuseppe Maria Dinetto, Villorba (TV), during the winter of 1995-1996. According to the restorer, the figure is carved from yellow pine (*cirmolo*). Both arms and the calf of the rear leg, as well as the tongue, are composed of separate pieces of wood. Thorns are made of wooden pegs, many of which are lost or broken. The feet, almost in entirety and including the first three toes of the forward foot, are new, as are the hands. Both shoulders also are heavily restored. The cross is modern. Sig. Dinetto reports that the white gesso ground and the polychromy, both of which were applied in very thin layers, were not intended to make up for deficiencies in the carving, which is complete in itself. There are no signs of gilding. The Crucifix is not mentioned by *Luigi Coletti*, *Catalogo delle cose d'arte e di antichità d'Italia*. Treviso, Rome 1935, or any of the guidebooks to the church. This absence should not be taken as evidence that the Crucifix was not destined for the church of San Nicolò or its Dominican convent, for Crucifixes do not commonly find their way into guidebooks in general and our Crucifix may have escaped Coletti's notice in particular because it was not on public view.
- 43 The Crucifix is located on the left nave wall (*in cornu Evangelii*) close to the main entrance. The corpus measures 118 cm in height x 114.2 cm in width. Arms were made from separate pieces of wood. The cross is modern. The second and third fingers of the figure's left hand are broken off; the second, third, and fourth fingers of the right hand are also missing. Several of the wooden pegs that simulate the thorns in the crown of thorns have broken off at their base. None of the original polychromy is visible. *De Marchi* (n. 10), p. 18, n. 38, wrote that the Crucifix could be compared to the Crucifix in Casteldimezzo. He was followed by *Sartor* (n. 4), pp. 18 and 168, who surmised that our Crucifix could be identified with one in the sacristy listed in an inventory of the church on 18 June 1806.
- 44 The Crucifix is kept in storage in the church. The corpus measures 105.5 cm in height (minus its halo) by 99.4 cm in width. Arms are formed from separate pieces of wood. Apart from the opening of the seam at the left shoulder, the figure is well preserved, but its original polychromy is hidden beneath a thick coat of gesso and

several layers of paint and dirt. Neither cross nor halo are original. The thorns in the crown are composed of wooden pegs, of which a few are broken and one is missing. *Silvano Onda*, *La chiesa di San Francesco della Vigna*. Guida artistica, Mestre/Venice 2003, p. 89, listed it as a 15th century work by an unknown artist.

- 45 The figure measures 122 cm in height without its halo. Both of *Christ's* arms are modern, as is his halo and cross. All the toes of his front foot, as well as the tips of the toes of his rear foot, are replacements. The rear is not hollowed out, but is treated summarily. Drops of blood on the chest were modeled in gesso. Most of the wooden pegs, which represented thorns in *Christ's* crown, have broken off. A fissure running down the center of the loin cloth is partly stuccoed over. The loin cloth was originally white with a blue reverse; the border, with its raised pattern of dots, was gilded; a gold stripe in the loin cloth ran down the figure's proper right leg. Tradition holds that the Crucifix was found by a combatant in the First World War, who, fighting in the mountains above Vicenza, discovered it among the ruins of a church and appropriated it. At the end of the war the soldier donated the Crucifix to the Cathedral, where it was deposited first in the crypt and then in the basement of the Curia. Restored by Bruno Vedovato before 1960, it was hung on the wall opposite the Altar of the Madonna in the old Seminario. In the early 1980s it was returned to the Cathedral, finding a place near the High Altar. It is now located on the right-hand balustrade of the choir. This information comes from *Mario Saccardo*, *Ancora in ricordo di Bruno Vedovato*. Raccolto fra le macerie della guerra il Crocifisso ligneo della Cattedrale, in: *La voce dei Berici*, XLII, 46, 30 November 1986, p. 3. I am most grateful to Franco Barbieri for having brought this article to my attention.
- 46 The figure measures 94.5 cm in height x 83 cm in width. The arms of the corpus are made of separate pieces of wood, but there is no trace of linen to reinforce the seams or in any other place. The rear of the figure is not hollowed out but is flattened and simplified. *Christ's* proper left hand has lost all of the fourth finger and half of the second and third fingers. A chip is missing from *Christ's* left armpit. There is a hole for the halo in the figure's head, but the halo is missing. Most of the pegs which formed the thorns in *Christ's* crown are also lost. The crown of thorns and the figure's hair are chipped. Much of the figure's original polychromy survives. The entire loin cloth was gilded. At the wound in *Christ's* side and on his forehead, drops of blood were modeled in gesso and painted red. Blood pours from *Christ's* side, down his torso, loin cloth and proper right leg. Blood trickles down his arms from the wounds in his hands; his forehead is splattered with blood from the punctures produced by the crown of thorns. The cross which, along with the *cartello*, appears to be original, measures 162.5 cm in height by 104.5 cm in width. Its cross-bars are made of separate pieces of wood. In imitation of a tree-trunk, the cross is painted brown, light greyish green and green. The Crucifix was recently restored by Antonio Bigolin of Quinto di Treviso.
- 47 *Luigi Pesce*, *Vita socio-culturale in diocesi di Treviso nel primo Quattrocento*, Venice 1983 (Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie. Miscellanea di studi e memorie, XXI), p. 229. See also *Giorgio Fossaluzza*, *Gli affreschi nelle chiese della Marca Trevigiana dal Duecento al Quattrocento*, I, pt. 3, *Rinascimento e pseudorinascimento*, Cornudo (TV) 2003, p. 75, no. 10. The entry in *Archivio di Stato, Treviso*, S. Maria dei Battuti, B. 3, c. 541 left, reads: "1451 30 dito [April] per far refrescar el cruzifixo se porta ala processione di venere sancto contanti a Corso da Salla porto a Maestro dario pentor lire 2." For the cession of land for construction of the hospital in 1332, see *Giovanni Netto*, *Guida di Treviso: la città, la storia, la cultura e l'arte*, Trieste 1988, p. 236.
- 48 [*Luigi Zangrando*], *S. Maria dei Battuti detta S. Croce dell'Ospedale*, in: *La vita del popolo*, Treviso, XXXI, no. 13, 31 March 1923, p. 4.
- 49 *Attilio Lazzari*, *La tradizionale processione del Venerdi Santo*, in: *Il risorgimento. Corriere delle terre libere e redente*, Treviso, III, no. 82, 7-8 April 1922, p. 3; *Attilio Lazzari/Tito Garzoni*, *Curiosità storiche trevisane ossia delle antiche e nuove denominazioni delle contrade-osterie-caffè ed alberghi*, Treviso 1927, pp. 83-84; *Giovanni Netto*, *Nel '300 a Treviso. Vita cittadina vista nell'attività della "scuola" Santa Maria dei Battuti e del suo Ospedale*, Treviso 1976, pp. 127-128; *idem* (n. 47), pp. 235-238.
- 50 *Attilio Lazzari*, *Altre noterelle su il S. Crocefisso del Civico Spedale*, in: *Il risorgimento. Corriere delle terre libere e redente*, Treviso, III, no. 86, 12-13 April, 1922, p. 3.
- 51 *Giovanni Netto*, *Storia ed arte nell'edificio ospedaliero a S. Leonardo*, Treviso 1968, p. 25; *Eugenio Manzato*, *La chiesa dell'Ospedale dei Battuti*, in: *Treviso 1625 seguendo la croce* (special number of *Dove Sile e Cagnan s'accompagna*. Rivista dell'Unità Locale Socio-Sanitaria, no. 10, Treviso), VII, 1992, p. 17; *Giorgio Fossaluzza*, *Opere restaurate nella Marca Trivigiana: novità, aggiornamenti e progetti*, in: *Fondazione Cassamarca. Opere restaurate nella Marca Trivigiana. 1996-1999*, ed. *idem*, Treviso 1999, pp. xxviii-xxx.
- 52 *Fossaluzza* (n. 47), I, pt. 3, pp. 38-39 and 69, n. 47. *Lorenzo Crico*, *Indicazione delle pitture ed altri oggetti di belle arti degni d'osservazione esistenti nella R. città di Treviso*, Treviso 1829, pp. 41-42, and *Francesco Fapanni* in Treviso, Biblioteca comunale, MS 1355, *Fapanni*, *La città di Treviso esaminata nelle chiese, luoghi pubblici e privati ...*, II, 1892, c. 79, noted the presence of the Crucifix on the high altar, and *Michelangelo Muraro* in Treviso, Biblioteca comunale, Riservato 8, *Muraro*, *Guida per la città di Treviso e le sue opere d'arte*, type-script, 1953, p. 207, termed the Crucifix "goticheggiante".

- ⁵³ The figure of Christ measures 108 cm in height x 104.7 cm in width. In the Pensionato, it hangs on the end wall of the north corridor of the first (upper) floor. The arms of the corpus are made of separate pieces of wood. The nipples, drops of blood and thorns in the crown of thorns are also separate additions made of wood. The figure has lost nearly its entire index finger and the tip of the fourth finger of its right hand as well as the ends of all four fingers of its left hand. In the rear foot, the wood around the nail has been consumed and a large chip is missing from the big toe. A good deal of the original polychromy remains; the rest is recent in-fill. The Crucifix was restored by Alda Bertoncetto in 1985 and by Ditta Volpin in 1995. The cross has been housed in the Pensionato alle Muneghette since it reopened after its restoration, completed in January of 1976. The Crucifix is supposed to have come from the former Ospizio della Frascada at San Vio. The hospice may have been in existence as early as 1278; in any case, a conspicuous bequest of 7 August 1320 from Marco dalla Frasca was applied to its construction or enlargement. The hospice was reconstituted in 1884 at the Muneghette. In a late nineteenth-century inventory of the hospice there is mention of a "Crocifisso grande in legno": Venice, I. R. E., Archivio del patrimonio artistico 1850-1987, PATR 1 D 10, "Ospizio Dalla Fresca a S. Vito ora Muneghette a S. Martino, Stato del Mobiliare e Guardaroba nel 1° Febbrajo 1896", no. 9. Needless to say, there is no certainty that this item refers to our Crucifix. For the Pensionato alle Muneghette and the Ospizio della Frascada, see *Franca Semi*, Gli "Ospizi" di Venezia, Venice 1983, pp. 137-140, no. 30, and pp. 259-260, no. 4; *Giuseppe Ellero* in: *Doretta Davanzo Poli et al.*, IRE: i restauri del patrimonio monumentale e d'arte, Venice 1993, p. 43. This Crucifix is unpublished.
- ⁵⁴ For illustrations of these works, see *Francesca d'Arcais*, Venezia, in: *La pittura nel Veneto. Il Trecento*, ed. *Mauro Lucco*, Milan 1992, I, p. 86, fig. 85, and *Lucco* (n. 10), I, 1989, p. 47, fig. 52.
- ⁵⁵ *Lucia Sartor*, Andrea e Caterino Moranzzone e il Friuli Venezia Giulia, in: *Artisti in viaggio 1300-1450: presenze foreste in Friuli Venezia Giulia*, ed. *Maria Paola Frattolin* (Atti del convegno, Villa Manin di Passariano, Codroipo [UD], 15-16 Nov. 2002), Udine 2003, pp. 107-114, with bibliography. The Crucifix in Florence has recently been acquired by the New York Gallery of Salander-O'Reilly.

RIASSUNTO

Un cartello iscritto registra che il Crocifisso in SS. Apollinare e Cristoforo a Casteldimezzo (PS) fu scolpito a Venezia da Antonio Bonvicino e dipinto da Jacobello del Fiore. Considerazioni stilistiche attestano la sua datazione intorno al 1415. Un *Cristo Passo* leggermente anteriore, in S. Carlo Borromeo, Mestre, e un Crocifisso posteriore proveniente da Santa Maria dei Frari a Venezia e adesso negli Staatliche Museen di Berlino sono evidentemente della stessa mano. A Bonvicino o alla sua bottega possono esser fatti risalire altri undici Crocifissi sparsi in varie chiese tra Mestre, Treviso, Venezia, Vicenza e già in una collezione privata ad Amsterdam. Bonvicino si dimostra così il più importante scultore di Crocifissi in legno a Venezia nel primo Quattrocento.

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