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THE ONTOLOGY OF THE VENETIAN HALO IN ITS ITALIAN CONTEXT

by

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THE ONTOLOGY OF THE VENETIAN HALO IN ITS ITALIAN CONTEXT

This thesis aims to reposition the halo’s status within an artwork through arguing a reassessment of its activity ‘as a sign’ rather than acceptance of its passivity. This active state is further explored and expanded by a heuristic application of semiotic theory to interrogate its fluctuation between sign/non-sign and its oscillation between a seemingly real status and behaviour juxtaposed with its very consciously artificial “manifestation”.

A variety of halo shapes are considered, together with texture contained in and on its surface, and this has revealed the Venetian and Venetan artistic innovation of “glass” and “silk” haloes, through artists’ utilisation of contemporaneous industrial practices and their application to halo appearance. Additionally, extant architectural vocabulary is translated and reformulated into internal halo motifs by Venetian and Venetan artists, further enhancing the halo’s somatic characteristics, contextualized by examination of halo representation in various media in Florence, Rome and Siena, and a consideration of haloes within other, mainly Italian, centres. Additionally, the fugitive and transient qualities of the nimbus are noted, with its mimesis of the dying corporeal body in its fading insubstantiality, a further factor in its inexorably reductive form as increasing realism in art challenges its ontological traits.

Textual characters contained within the halo body are also examined in their many forms and languages and their contribution to an intertextual function espoused by the ideologeme. An adjunct to this function is the halo’s propagandist role presented by artists. It will be demonstrated how all these different strands of interpretation are imbricated in the changing theological, political and societal landscape, encapsulated within the halo.
# THE ONTOLOGY OF THE VENETIAN HALO IN ITS ITALIAN CONTEXT

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Sta tesi xé dedicada a Michele Crestani.

Elo ghe voleva tanto ben ala so Venesia, e, generoso come che'l gera, ghe piaseva da morir spartir i so secreti. El so continuo farme coragio, i so sapienti pensieri, el so fidar de mi, gà fato sì che sia riussia a realizar sto gran lavoro. Tute le ore passade drento le ciese e i musei, e dopo a parlar de tuto quelo che gavevimo visto, le gera un piazer anché piú grando proprio parchè gerimo sempre insieme, mi e lu.

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The impetus for undertaking this huge project came from the original research carried out for my dissertation, which not only highlighted many lacunae in our knowledge about the halo, but also left me with an absolute fascination for the subject, and a determination to provoke a re-evaluation of the halo.

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In Venice, too, many people have been so thoughtful and generous, and I would like to thank Dr. Victoria Avery, Dr. Louise Bourdua and Dr. Susan Grange of the University of Warwick for sparing time to discuss particular paintings or arguments with me. Additionally from Warwick, Dr Lucca Molà suggested sources and Dr Donal Cooper shared his knowledge of the Frari Reliquary. The staff of the Museo Correr have always been helpful and efficient. Gianni Maddalon has very kindly assisted with the preparation of images, as has Colin Yapp, while Ivano Burato has helped me with Italian translations on several occasions. I much appreciated Fabio d’Este’s Venetian translation, and also thank Giovanni dell’Olivo. Prof.ssa Maria Vittoria Fontana of La Sapienza, Rome, generously sent me copies of articles and answered my questions on several occasions. John Nolan, the Curator of the Bob Jones University Museum and Gallery sent me articles and photographed specific haloes for me, after Louise Hurrell, a fellow Plymouth student, brought this collection to my attention. Marion Yapp has guided me through the intricacies of Excel.

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Last, but not least, my family have been so supportive, and I must thank my children for their great patience, particularly during the final stages of this process. Abigail and Eleanor, David and Iain, Paul and Mark have all produced many nutritious meals and timely cups of tea, allowing me to concentrate on my work. My mother and sister, likewise, have always been very supportive.

To each and every one of you, thank you.
AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Committee.

Relevant seminars and conferences were regularly attended, at which work was often presented; external institutions have been visited for consultation purposes and several articles prepared for publication.

Publications:


Presentations and Conferences Attended:

From Dinner Plates to Rings of Confidence – Association of Art Historians’ Summer School, 2006
Crossroads: Fukuoka and Venice ) Papers delivered at
The Propagandist Halo ) the University of Plymouth
Cristallo and Glass Haloes ) Art History Seminar
Patristics
Haloes: Transient or Eternal? - Renaissance Dualisms Conference, Queen’s University, Belfast, 2008. I have also been requested to submit an article for a potential publication of the Conference Proceedings, and await a decision.

I attended the Seri di Conferenze sulle I Primi Ordine Religiosi a Venezia, 2009

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Word count of main body of thesis: 79,624

Signed........................................................................................................

Date...........................................................................................................
CHAPTER ONE

Prolegomena to the Thesis Hypothesis

1.1 Aims of the thesis

The halo is a symbol which is found in several religions across a very broad time-span and a vast geographical area. In Christian art it usually denotes that a being, mostly human although occasionally an animal or bird, is ‘different’ and therefore needs to have this distinction made visually manifest. This ‘difference’ is usually a higher, celestial, divine or blessed status and so the halo is a very familiar component of Western Christian art, with which this thesis will be concerned. Although accepted unthinkingly by spectators as part of a specific repertoire found within a religious scene or narrative, it does not exist as an actual object - it cannot exist in the reality of our terrestrial, physical world. Thus, the halo is very problematic, since although non-existent, it appears to oscillate between object and sign, yet this fluctuation has never been addressed previously, perhaps because it is so difficult to interpret. Therefore, a study is required to investigate the halo and its behaviour, but a synoptic survey would not be sufficient. To interrogate this question of exactly what the halo is, object or sign or both, this thesis will argue that the halo functions within an artwork on several different levels. Its response – if any - to external societal, theological and aesthetic stimuli, will be monitored to assess if it is behaving as an active rather than passive instrument. If it is much more active than hitherto suspected, then this thesis will propose that the halo (as visible/invisible object/sign) needs a re-evaluation and re-positioning within the discipline of Art History. The Venetian halo will be used as an
exemplar to which these investigations may be applied and to ascertain whether Venetian industrial practices were reflected by artists in contemporary representations of haloes, thus actively manifesting modern technological references as well as historical features within them. The hypothesis of this thesis therefore, is that an in-depth investigation of the halo, particularly its object/sign oscillation, and with specific reference to the Venetian halo, will reveal a more important status for the halo per se.

Although it seems familiar, the halo itself has changed vastly over the centuries, and not just in appearance. Previous scholars have investigated different aspects of the halo: tooling or punching within halo borders; Latin appellations and Kuficising “inscriptions”; differing shapes; the application of colours, and all this discrete information is very helpful although this research has tended to privilege the visual and representational viewpoint. An analysis of the halo’s “behaviour” is a problematically contentious proposition, as previously highlighted, since a conundrum is faced immediately in the “assessment” of something that does not exist, which is why this has not been previously undertaken. Synoptic assessment, as stated previously, is insufficient to reach a full interpretation for the object/sign oscillation thus it is evident that a new tool is required for this interrogation. Therefore, this thesis will additionally employ a semiotic approach as an extra instrument to analyse the halo’s functioning as a contribution towards the dynamics within an artwork not just visually, but in a multiplicity of layered meanings, rather than being the hitherto accepted mere attractive embellishment. This oxymoronic investigation of the ontology of a non-existent object to help ascertain and define the halo’s exertion of influence, requires the application of a modern specialist tool like semiotics, juxtaposed with visual analysis, in order to re-assess and tease out the halo’s auxiliary and protagonistic roles.
The combined realisation of visual analysis and semiotic application will lead to a new way of “entering” and analysing Renaissance thought and art, thereby adding a new element to the vast repository of Renaissance scholarship, and furthermore will support the argument of this thesis to relocate the halo’s position within historical and art historical narratives.

1.2 Explanation of Methodologies Utilised – Sources and Techniques

This thesis will deploy two approaches, namely an empirical assessment and a semiotic strand to provide interpretation regarding the halo’s behaviour as a sign/object, that empirical research alone would not provide.

The overall empirical interrogation will deploy several methodologies in order to provide deep, wide, but also detailed evidence to support the halo’s re-evaluation. These methodologies are sphragiology, epigraphy, cultural anthropology and patronage studies. Visual analysis data has been recorded within a Table of Haloes [See Appendix I]. Thus the thesis will explore empirically the physical changes and modifications to the halo’s texture and location/orientation and behaviour between 1250 and 1580, together with artists’ treatments of it. This has involved artworks being examined in situ where possible, otherwise in museums, exhibitions, exhibition catalogues and books, and via museum websites on the internet. Haloes have been examined in illuminated manuscripts, ivories, mosaics, frescoes, ampullae, coins and medals, icons, marble and bronze statuary, painted wooden crucifixions, altarpieces, marble reliefs, painted tiles, processional banners, glazed terracotta, tapestries, silver reliquaries, gold leaf on/in glass, glass, drawings, mariegole and intarsia. The Table of Haloes (hereafter referenced as ToH) records “Date, Artist, Medium, Title”, with more detailed data on whether the halo was punched, if it contained an internal design, or internal textual elements, a
description of its appearance, size, shape, position, and the artwork’s current location. It must be noted that this Table is not a corpus; such a task would be beyond the parameters of this specific document and would merely allow for a cataloguing of haloes. While a fascinating exercise in itself, it would not allow for the further and deeper investigation which is the scope of this project. Although haloes in other religions may be briefly referred to, the research will concentrate on Western Christian art, and specifically Italian art, as stated earlier. In order to provide a manageable framework for the data collected, and a purposeful scope for the study, selected geographical boundaries and a time frame have created parameters for a focused investigation. Thus, halo execution in the cities of Venice, Rome, Siena and Florence has been explored, with a deeper concentration on Venice as a form of “control” against which to check/compare the evidence collected from other centres. Venice has been utilised for this function, since it appeared to be the epicentre of both traditional and innovative artistic practices, absorbing influences flowing in eastwards from Dalmatia, Byzantium and the East, from Flanders, Germany and Austria in the north, and from Lombardy in the west and Tuscany and Umbria in the south, subsequently assimilating and/or exporting these to other areas. The time frame has been set as 1250 – 1580 because during this long historical period, many changes can be seen in the halo, both in terms of its design and its function. Additionally, this was a time of unprecedented patronage and artistic production, with artists travelling between different city states or countries to fulfil commissions, factors which it was thought would have an important impact on the halo and its appearance. However, it will be necessary at times to stray outside these temporal and geographical parameters, to point up precedents which have a direct relevance on the particular epoch specified, and to extrapolate texts which may have a subsequent bearing on artworks under discussion.
The empirical methodology must assess the contributions made to the central interrogation by the use of different media, and their impact on the halo’s physicality in terms of its colour and texture. Contemporary artistic treatises will feed into this discourse and their application to the halo will highlight variations in its shape and size, position or location, meshing with other physical characteristics given to the halo by the various artists mentioned, in terms of structure, and ornamentation on and within its surface to produce an element of texture, and a consequently enhanced visibility. Factored into this consideration will be exemplification of the halo’s slippage backwards and forwards between its suggestion of divinity or transcendence of reality and thus unreal status, and its depiction as a tangible object that obeys the laws of Nature. In order to analyse this oscillation, the development of the iconography of light will be considered, utilising a two-pronged approach combining a theological examination of Divine light with the emergence of *perspectiva* and optical studies, and how these were assimilated by artists into halo design. These analyses will relate to the unreality of the halo and its status as a semiotic sign. Its materiality and tangibility, and thus its “reality” as represented will be addressed by an examination of corporeal light and its relationship with the halo, including the manifestation of effects such as light and/or shadows thrown onto the halo, and conversely situations where light and/or shadows are being cast by the halo. This will address the halo’s status as a natural sign obeying the laws of Nature. Consequently, Peirce’s triadic semiotic model of the *representamen* – the form the sign takes, the *interpretant*, (my italics) i.e. the “comprehension” of this sign, or what it was believed to stand for, and finally, the “object” to which the halo is referring to, will also be considered, to tease out the ambiguities between the halo’s “natural” and “semiotic” phases. The previously-mentioned sphragiological approach will be applied to examine halo texture, specifically regarding artists’ engagement with tooling and punching practices.
Sphragiology” is the term coined by Erling Skaug, Professor Emeritus at the University of Oslo, to describe the study of punch-marks, derived from the Greek word “sphragistics” used to describe the study of seals, and this has led to the discovery of a new element of halo design that has not been previously discussed in the existing literature, namely the elaboration of external pinnacle borders and their variations. Epigraphic practices will form part of the investigation into the textual elements of some haloes, cross-referencing with medieval sources, and their assimilation into contemporaneously established and developing theological exegesis and liturgical praxis.

A cultural anthropological approach will also be layered into the investigation, particularly with regard to agency and patronage studies. As my study considers the late quattrocento, this will also encompass contemporary industrial practices and innovations, specifically relating to glass manufacture and sericulture, both of which, this thesis argues, have a very visible and textural impact upon halo production in Venice and Florence, since it will be argued within Chapter Three that glass can be considered analogous with the halo in the sense that something very ephemeral is being shown in material terms (i.e. glass can appear in some circumstances to be completely clear and almost invisible). Underlying these approaches, as stated previously, the development of the sciences of optics and perspectiva must be considered, together with how artists have applied differing facets of luminist exploration to the halo. Finally, the halo’s function and operation as a didactic vehicle within specific narratives will be examined, alongside pertinent theological or liturgical texts, to gauge their interaction, within the on-going semiotic enquiry.
The second methodological tool to be deployed is the application of an over-arching and ongoing semiotic analysis appropriating Julia Kristeva’s redefinition of Medvedev’s term of the ‘ideologeme’.\(^1\) The ‘ideologeme’ is the linguistic equivalent of the atom, it is the basic ideological unit, although the ideologeme is additionally shaped through a process of social discourse. Kristeva reformulates thus: “the ideologeme is that intertextual function read as “materialized” at the different structural levels of each text, and which stretches along the entire length of its trajectory, giving it its historical and social coordinates.”\(^2\) This term will be transferred from her locus of the novel and applied to the halo to analyse its impact upon the halo and its function during the period stated, and its application to Giotto’s frescoes within the Arena Chapel at Padua will be specifically considered as an exemplar for this methodology.

The thesis is arranged as follows: within the remainder of this Chapter, the historiography of the halo will be examined, Chapter Two will consider etymological roots of terms for the halo and survey contemporary sources relating to the relationship between divinity, the representation of light, Divine Light, and the consequent import for haloes. Chapter Three will examine halo changes in terms of texture, the application of ornamentation to its internal field and surface, and variations in shape and size. This exploration of the dichotomy between physicality and theological concepts encapsulated within the halo will demonstrate the halo’s behavioural versatility and its oscillating status between object/sign. The inclusion of contemporary industrial manufacturing references in the halo’s ontology will contribute to this treatise. Chapter Four will concentrate on the presence of text within and around the halo and analyse how this is functioning, contrasting these written elements with those of ornamentation.

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discussed in the previous chapter. Discourse relating to the production of the ideologeme will be particularly pertinent at this juncture, and the hypothesis that the construction of such is both overt and covert within the halo’s design and execution will be tested. Chapter Five will consider corporeal light, and how this can be manifested onto, or by, the halo utilising firstly the phenomenon of shadows, and secondly perspective and its application to the halo, to further expand observation of the halo’s increasingly naturalistic behaviour and ontogenetic qualities. Chapter Six will consider the halo in the Bellini Bottege, utilising works from Jacopo, Gentile and Giovanni as a paradigm to examine the evidence presented throughout the thesis. Additionally, it will consider how the halo may function in an actively propagandist mode in a banner painted by Gentile, specifically with regard to the canonization process of Lorenzo Giustiniani, the first Patriarch of Venice. There is an Appendix of Documents (Appendix II) pertaining to this latter chapter, mostly gathered from the Archivio di Stato in Venice, or reconstructed from assimilations of published versions by other authors, compared with those original documents. Thus, through the arrangement of these chapters, a periegesis of the changing physicality, meaning and function of the halo will be unfolded with the enhancement of a semiotic analysis of signification. Chapter Seven, the Conclusion, will close the investigation with a summary of the findings arrived at.

1.3 Historiography of the halo

One of the most surprising factors discovered during this study, is the paucity of specific ekphrasis commenting on the presence or ontology of the nimbus or halo in
early Christian and Byzantine art,\(^3\) noteworthy in itself, since Patristic writings are the source of much later comprehension regarding specific items, objects or practices.

Similarly, there is no specific formula in Holy Writ for the manifestation of the halo per se, although there are references to the glory of the Lord, or the *doxa*. It seems that the halo was developed by artists as a visual response to the verbal glosses and anagogical interpretations of theologians, particularly from the twelfth century onwards, as will be examined in other sections of this thesis. There is not a huge corpus of scholarship devoted specifically to the halo or nimbus. The main authors are: Johann Nicolai, (*Disquisitio de nimbis antiquorum*, 1699), Adolphe Napoléon Didron, (*Christian Iconography: The History of Art in the Middle Ages*, 1844), Ludolf Stephani, (*Nimbus und Strahlenkranz in den Werken der alten Kunst*, 1859), Emile Mâle (*L’art religieuse du XIIIe siècle en France*, 1898), Adolf Otto Hermann Kruecke, (*Der Nimbus und verwandte Attribute in der frühchristlichen Kunst*, 1905), Gerhard B. Ladner (*The So-called Square nimbus*, 1941), Marthe Collinet-Guerin (*Histoire du nimbe des origine aux temps moderns*, 1961), Mark Zucker (*The Polygonal Halo in Italian and Spanish Art*, 1978), Sylvia Auld, (*Kuficising Inscriptions in the work of Gentile da Fabriano*, 1984) and Christian Hecht, (*Die Glorie: Begriff, Thema, Bildelement in der europäischen Sakralkunst von Mittelalter bis zum Ausgang des Barock*, 2003). Each is concerned with the halo or nimbus as some form of attribute, some chronicle evolutionary stages within halo representation, others record a specific halo shape, but none of them has considered the halo or nimbus semiotically. All regard it as a passive “motif”, and no-one has proposed it as an active, functioning component within a narrative, which is a key point that this thesis will be arguing.

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\(^3\) Louth, Andrew, ([Andrew.louth@durham.ac.uk](mailto:Andrew.louth@durham.ac.uk)). *Haloes*. E-mail to Susan Martin ([susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk)), 24th January 2007.
The first work completely devoted to the nimbus was Johann Nicolai’s 1699 *Disquisitio de nimbis antiquorum: imaginibus dorum, imperatorum olim, & nunc Christi, Apostolorum & Mariae capitibus adpictis*. Setting out the etymology of the nimbus, which for him was derived from the Greek word for “heavy rain”, νιμμά, he cites from Elisa Coles’ *English Lexicography* her definition of the nimbus as “a storm, a shower of rain, tempest, watering-pot”, and described the significance of the cleansing and purifying importance of the rain and how the ground was left clean and pure afterwards. He tracked different forms of nimbus, for example Plautus in *Poenulus* (Act. I, Sc. 2), who discussed certain women wearing a linen band decorated with gold leaf around their heads to make them more noticeable, but many of these were considered prostitutes rather than women of high social status. Horace, on the other hand, (*Ode 33* and *Letter 7*) spoke of women wearing a nimbus described as a small wreath lying around the head, threaded through the hair, to make them more distinguished. The nimbus was also light - “…Nimbus erat lumen…” – surrounding the head of a holy person.

In a woodcut of Jove, printed by Nicolai, the god is shown with a semi-circle of rays around the upper portion of his head, behind his crown. Greek heroes, such as Alexander the Great and emperors were similarly endowed. Additionally, the sun is personified with a face, surrounded with waving rays, interspersed with a fringe of fine rays. Nicolai presents this appropriation of the straight “solar” rays by emperors, Sol of course being highly venerated. Coins show Augustus as the Sun-God with rays around his head, later Constantine the Great is shown on a coin where on the obverse a

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4 Nicolai, Johann, *Disquisitio de Nimbis antiquorum: Imaginibus dorum, imperatorum olim, & nunc Christi, Apostolorum & Mariae capitibus adpictis*. Jena: Johannis Jacobi Ehren, 1699, Nicolai, pp 3-5.
5 Nicolai, p. 6. The comedy Poenulus was written around 202. [http://web.tiscali.it/alphaomega/Poenulus.pdf](http://web.tiscali.it/alphaomega/Poenulus.pdf) [accessed 19.11.09.]
6 Nicolai, p. 6.
7 Nicolai, p. 24.
phoenix with a semi-circle of rays around its head stands on a star-spangled globe, representing the eternal nature of this Christian symbol.  

Constantine was a crucial figure in this osmosis of the nimbus from pagan to Christian iconography, as explained by Patrick Bruun, who pointed out that Constantine was appropriating elements relating to Augustus via the nimbus and the globe of victory. Following his victory at Ponte Milvio in 312 AD, Constantine had had a vision of Apollo, consequently assuming *Sol Invictus* as his protector. Additionally, by depicting his portrait with a halo on coinage, he was referencing divinity through the nimbus as a symbol of the sun, translating this as a sign of the divine status of the emperor. The halo is also operating as a “legitimation” of the emperor’s predecessors Claudio il Gotico and the emperor Costanzo. Ten years later, the halo was regarded as a Christian legitimation of the emperor, and Constantine’s dynasty became a holy dynasty through the inspiration of God.  

Usually, Constantine was shown enthroned, endowed with a halo, possibly a source for subsequent images of Christ and saints with haloes. Thus, it is possible to see the cross-over of the halo from pagan to Christian meaning during this early period of art.

Very early Christian art shows Christ depicted as the Helios in a quadriga, often with the vine of Dionysius as a symbol of immortality. Fig. 8 shows an altar dated 200 AD, dedicated to Sol Invictus. Fig. 9, a mosaic dating from the second half of 300 AD shows Christ’s head surrounded by the long, sharp rays of the Hellenic Sun-God, so this syncretic process is seen to be at play already at this time.

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8 Nicolai, p. 61.
Nicolai discusses the type of nimbus given to the Apostles and the Virgin, noting the lozenge-shaped rayed halo bestowed upon Christ to differentiate Him from the Apostles.\(^\text{10}\) There is also a woodcut of the type of monogram that San Bernardino would later use (although here the letters are reversed as SHI rather than HIS) surmounted by a cross.\(^\text{11}\) Nicolai’s treatise remained the authoritative text on the nimbus unaugmented by other publications for at least another one hundred and fifty years.

It is very noticeable that much of the literature concerning what Stratton McAlister later terms “haloism”\(^\text{12}\) appeared in the nineteenth century, stimulated by extensive archaeological expeditions and discoveries. Adolphe Napoléon Didron was in the vanguard writing this next tranche of literature, his seminal work *Christian Iconography: The History of Christian Art in the Middle Ages* a major reference point cited by all scholars interested in the halo. In Volume I, he refers to the “nimbus, or glory” distinguishing the nimbus as an attribute applied to the head of a holy figure, vertically, while the glory enveloped the entire body, although the nimbus appears to be a derivative of the glory in his definition. He describes a print of a miniature from the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* as follows:

> the elliptical figure within which the Saviour is represented is an *aureole*; the transverse line intersecting this ellipsis in the centre, is the rainbow, or perhaps clouds, as they were usually drawn by Italians at that epoch. This line seems, also, to form a support for the Saviour in His ascension to Heaven.\(^\text{13}\)
This exemplifies the confusion about the term *aureole* and the loss of its special distinction as an “extra reward”, as defined by Aquinas, discussed later. Didron’s etymological sources for “nimbus” concur and differ from those of Nicolai, as he asserts that both Latin and Greek meanings are synonymous, although he considers the Greek verb νιφω νιφειν, meaning “to snow, to water, to wet”, to be the origin of the word. The noun derived from this refers to “snow, shower, dew, a raindrop, and even by extension, hail.” As it also means a cloud, the place where these phenomena are formed, it links back with the idea of a cloud of mist. Didron pushes the meaning further, citing Virgil’s use of the cloud as a chariot for the gods, finally linking it metaphorically with the very fine veils worn by women. He also quoted Isidore of Seville’s *Origines*, who had in turn cited the same passage from the *Poenulus* that Nicolai had discussed, although Didron disagreed with Isidore’s definition of the nimbus as a form of headband ornamented with gold worn around the head of a woman. Instead, Didron suggested that the state of being *nimbata* discussed by Isidore actually served as a metaphor for an ideal type of beauty, expressed by the adjective “radiant”. He was concerned that artists did not properly consider the etymology of the nimbus when they executed it within artworks, which according to him “ought always to have the character of a cloud, a vapour, or flakes of snow”. He additionally examined the form of the halo, as well as the specific nimbus of God and those given to saints and angels, and noted nimbus typologies for living people and allegorical personages. Drawings commissioned by him from the original artworks

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14 An aureole is also defined as “a glory enclosing the whole body” in Twining, L., *Symbols and Emblems of Early and Medieval Christian Art, London: John Murray, 1885*, p. 27. In Didron’s figure, this motif of ascension is termed a mandorla.
15 Didron, p. 25.
17 Didron, p. 27.
illustrate both volumes, and they are undoubtedly one of the most important and extensive texts on the nimbus (alongside Collinet-Guerin’s later study of 1961).

Gilbert J French’s 1854 Notes on the Nimbus, issues a riposte to Didron’s theory concerning the “cruciform (sic) nimbus”, formed when two intersecting diagonal lines within the halo disk form a cross. The adjective “cruciferous” will be used to describe this form, and “cruciform” to describe the type of halo that is composed from the arms of a cross following Edward Hulme’s definition. However the authors are using the adjective “cruciform”, so it is necessary to follow suit in order to report their arguments accurately. Didron asserted that it was a Christian motif adopted by artists of other religions. French argued that it probably originated with “eastern pagans” citing the Hindoo (sic) goddess Maya (also mentioned by Didron) as having a large circular nimbus of beams radiating from her head.

Stephani’s 1859 paper Nimbus und Strahlenkranz in den Werken der alten Kunst concentrated on a Hellenic origin for the nimbus, and is another foundational text for scholars of the halo. Examining the presence of glories and aureoles in manuscripts,

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18 This edition includes within Volume II, Appendix II, “The Byzantine Guide to Painting”, translated into French from a Greek manuscript by Dr Paul Durand, and then from French into English by Margaret Stokes. It sets out prescriptive formulae for the representation of specific narratives and scenes from the Bible, as well as such events as The Oecumenical Synods at Constantinople and Chalcedon. Didron footnoted the entries extensively, including information about when and where a nimbus had been included or omitted.


22 Additionally combined with three separately marked rays, he concluded that this halo design was common to both pagans and Christians, designating divinity. French, pp. 10-12.

he quoted extensively in Latin and Greek, from Aristophanes, Virgil, Martial, Homer and Plutarch, demonstrating, for example, Aeneas talking of Venus in the Aeneid: “Dazu bemertet schon Servius: ‘In luce; in nimbo, qui cum numinibus semper est’”\(^\text{24}\), continuing “Die Servius mit der Bemerkung erklärt:

Nimbo effulgens, nube divina. Est enim fulgidum lumen, quo deorum capita cingentur; sic etiam pingi solet.\(^\text{25}\)

He considered Herculaneum and Pompeii, supplying an extremely detailed list of haloed Greek heroes and gods, all supported by quotations and/or references to the images, many of which are contained in the *Virgil Codex* and *Vaticanische Handschrift*. Stephani also expanded Didron’s discussion on “the family of shapes” including the half-moon *Halbmond*, together with variations of the *Schwankend*\(^\text{26}\). He highlighted different versions used for coins and statuary, and the use of the nimbus in imagery found on vases and terracotta and gems, providing an inventory of these.\(^\text{27}\) He considered the later use of the nimbus in Constantinople and Rome, particularly at San Giovanni di Laterano.\(^\text{28}\)

In 1864, Crowe and Cavalcaselle noted Saints Peter and Paul painted in the fourth or fifth centuries identified by nimbi, in the Neapolitan catacombs, and Christ’s halo containing the alpha and omega. The earliest mosaics in Rome are fourth century, at Santa Costanza, including the Saviour, with a simple nimbus, and at San Paolo fuori le

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\(^{24}\) *Aeneid*, II, 588 ff, Stephani, p. 4.

\(^{25}\) “Radiant nimbus, divine cloud. It is certainly a flashing light, that girdles the head of a god; as such it was accustomed to be painted.” This is akin to Densham’s later description of the *doxa* portrayed as a "storm-cloud” nimbus encircling the head of a deity.

\(^{26}\) Stephani, p. 39.

\(^{27}\) In particular, he referred to Syriac deities with haloes, found on vases. Further sub-division of nimbed figures includes The Virtues, and The Seasons. Stephani, p. 73.

\(^{28}\) Stephani, p. 132.
Mura, they noted the nimbus around the Saviour “of vast diameter and rainbow hue, from which rays of light diverge”.  

Three books published in 1885 and 1891 examined symbolism in Christian art and of necessity, considered the nimbus. Hulme and Lindsay quoted extensively from Latin and Greek sources, all authors referenced Didron. A principal text of the iconography of medieval art, Emile Mâle’s *L’art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France*, 1898, is also cited by scholars writing about the nimbus. Mâle suggested that there might be a *Summa* incorporating a ‘manual of iconography’ for painters and sculptors, similar to the book written by the monk Denys which Didron discovered on Mount Athos, the Byzantine Guide to Painting (previously discussed). Although Denys’s manual only dates from the eighteenth century, Mâle concurred with Didron that it had incorporated some ancient traditions, and described the aureole as an attribute designating eternal bliss, bestowed upon the three persons of the Trinity, the Virgin and the souls of the Blessed.

In 1905, a thesis written by Adolf Otto Hermann Kruecke considered the protocols for using the halo when the Christ Child was represented. He identified three hierarchies where haloes were endowed, although this was still rather random in the early centuries of Christianity. However, one rule that always pertained was that the cruciferous

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30 Lindsay, Lord, *Sketches of the History of Christian Art*, Vol 1, London: John Murray 1885. “Nimbus”, however, was the preferred term to “halo”.
nimbus, the *Kreuznimbus*, was only used for Christ, or representations of Christ as the Holy Lamb.\textsuperscript{33}

J Tavenor-Perry published two articles in 1907 entitled “The Nimbus in Eastern Art”\textsuperscript{34} where he considered Nero’s Colossus in Rome which was “encircled by an aureole of seven rays, each of which projected no less than twenty-two feet from the head”.\textsuperscript{35} Similarly, the Colossus of Rhodes had large rays projecting from its head and he suggested that it must have been specially strengthened, possibly by a circular band, immediately giving the impression of a halo. He further proposed that the use of marble or stone rather than bronze necessitated more substantial support in the form of a disk, which also seemed like a halo. Noting the halo’s use in the West by the first Christian emperors and subsequently in Byzantium as a symbol of power and authority gradually transferring to a sacred use, he cited the mosaics at Ravenna, particularly that of Empress Theodora, as an example of the former function. His second article, noted that in India during the reign of Emperor Akbar the halo became more like that executed by the Italian painters. Similarly, it retained its royal significance in Persia, and Emperor Akbar’s contemporary, Shah Abbas, dispatched Persian artists to Italy to study, with a consequent effect on halo depiction in Persian art.\textsuperscript{36}

In 1910, Mrs Henry Jenner published *Christian Symbolism*\textsuperscript{37}, consolidating information from previous publications, (particularly Twining) but additionally noting much extra information concerning symbolism, which is quoted extensively in later twentieth century papers. She defines the nimbus as something that encircles the whole head, whereas the aureole encloses the whole body, but both signify a luminous cloud. She

\textsuperscript{33} Kruecke, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{34} Tavenor-Perry, J., “The Nimbus in Eastern Art”, *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol 12, 1907.
\textsuperscript{35} Tavenor-Perry, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{36} Tavenor-Perry, p. 95.
cites the face of Moses shining after his descent from the Mount, and the vision of John the Evangelist, as examples of the idea of the emanation of light being linked with God. Quoting examples of fourth century gilded glass where it appears (see Fig. 4) she mentions that although eventually used for sacred purposes, its original function denoting dignity meant that on occasions, Satan was so honoured. Like Kruecke, she describes both the earliest instances of the cruciferous halo applied to Christ found in a Constantinian terracotta dish at the British Museum, and its application to the Holy Lamb, signifying Christ. Acknowledging its etymological origin in luminosity, she records that for many centuries it had lost this meaning, being executed as a circle of gold or coloured disk around the head, sometimes with rays extending beyond its circumference, although the luminous nimbus reappeared in the Renaissance. The aureole should only have been used for Divine Persons and the Virgin, and it was occasionally used to represent the soul released from the body, in this instance, she is using it synonymously with mandorla, to show an ascent. Invariably, light is contained within it, although not always. She defines the most common usage of the aureole for depictions of Christ in Majesty, followed by the Immaculate Conception and images of the Virgin and Child together. She highlights an ancient practice of enclosing the Christ Child within an aureole, which is enclosed within the body of the Virgin. Discussing The Trinity, she describes the Holy Dove as the natural representation of the invisible and intangible “Breath” of God, which is invariably endowed with a gold or yellow-gold nimbus intersected by a red cross.

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38 Jenner, pp. 89-91. A new Marian iconography developed in the mid eleventh century, known both as Episkepsis, “Visitation or protection” and also as a Blachernitissa by virtue of its promotion by the Blachernai Monastery in Constantinople. It conflated an image of the Mother of God with her hands raised with that of the Virgin holding a “medallion with the Christ Child inside”. However, the new iconography showed the Virgin orans with this medallion (which corresponds to a mandorla) as if it is suspended on her chest. In the fifteenth century, this representation was also designated Znamenie, the Russian word for “sign”. Pentcheva, Bissera V. pp. 146 and 237.
The considerable archaeological activity of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century stimulated much literature concerning Christian symbols. In 1912 Wladimir de Grüneisen, wrote an article about the “so-called rectangular nimbus”. Usually, as discussed later in this thesis, within Christian art this type of nimbus was bestowed upon people such as popes during their life-time as an acknowledgement of their privileged status but also as a recognition that they had not been beatified. He discusses the case of Apa Jérémie in Egypt, distinguished by two haloes, a square halo contained within a circle, and the presence of square haloes within Egyptian funerary motifs.\footnote{Grüneisen, Wladimir de, “Le portrait d’Apa Jérémi: Note à propos du soi-disant nimbe rectangulaire” in \textit{Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l’Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres}, tome XII, deuxième partie, Paris : Librairie Klincksieck,1912.} The square or rectangular halo represents the passage of life, the circular represents eternal life, and this is examined further in Chapter Three, in relation to Christian art.

The next two decades of twentieth century scholarship emphasised the halo’s physical appearance, particularly through the practice of gold tooling and, using this as a tool of connoisseurship, the attribution of artworks. This strand of halo decoration was picked up, and refined by Øsvald Siren, Richard Offner, Henry Maginnis and Bernard Berenson. Richard Offner published \textit{Studies in Florentine Painting} in 1927, and then began the publication of his \textit{Critical and Historical Corpus} over several decades in ten volumes.\footnote{Continuing after his death through the editorship of Klara Steinweg, Miklos Boskóvits and Mina Gregori} Utilising tooling style as a means of establishing chronology, in Volume 5, he applied halo style in order to connect Orcagna with Daddi. He used black and white photographs for his plates, like Berensen, which are helpful when examining specific tooling details. Berensen began to publish his \textit{Lists} in 1932 detailing Italian pictures of
the Renaissance (later revised in 1957 and 1959) becoming one of the standard reference texts of Art History, still utilised today.\textsuperscript{41}

In 1933, D. V. Thompson translated Cennino Cennini’s \textit{Il Libro dell’Arte}, a handbook written by Cennini (c. early 1400s),\textsuperscript{42} a practising artist, in the quattrocento detailing artistic practice in the trecento. The chapter on gold tooling and its application within haloes is particularly interesting, as are the sections on grinding pigments, and painting on parchment and banners. This text has become an extremely valuable art historical source, quoted extensively by scholars examining haloes.\textsuperscript{43}

In 1941, Gerhard B. Ladner published “The So-called Square Nimbus”, in which he examined the iconography of the square nimbus, specifically within mosaics and frescoes in Rome.\textsuperscript{44} Citing Apa Jeremias, he tracked the origins of the square attribute, examining Greek and Roman-Egyptian sources for it. This has remained the seminal text on this subject.

Meanwhile, Byzantine scholarship expanded and André Grabar published \textit{Byzantine Studies} in 1953, a very rigorous study of the fifth to the fourteenth centuries, covering mosaics from Salonica, Ravenna and Constantinople to Rome, Venice and Sicily. He

\begin{thebibliography}{99}

\bibitem{thompson1933} http://www.aneira.org/grisaille_scroll_documentation.pdf [23.12.09.]


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also considered frescoes in the Balkans and Greece, as well as icons, and the haloes contained therein.\(^{45}\)

In 1955, Gertrude Coor-Achenbach discussed the iconography of Ugolino di Nerio’s Santa Croce Altarpiece in Florence, which had been broken up between 1810 and 1814. Using halo position and design, amongst other observations, to attribute various predella scenes in other museums to this altarpiece, she noted that Ugolino used Duccio’s method of halo design, but also alluded to a “quick” practice of halo execution which Simone Martini had used in his *Maestà*. This article is cited by several other scholars.\(^{46}\)

In 1957 Meyer Schapiro reiterated proposals he had made in an earlier article on the frescoes at Castelseprio, subsequently taken up and challenged by André Grabar. Schapiro had argued for a re-dating of the frescoes, probably to the second half of the eighth century. They feature a specific type of cross nimbus, and he had contrasted this with the more solid Byzantine example he had cited in the earlier article. He believed that this cross nimbus was much more suggestive of its etymological derivation of luminosity, likening it to the halo given to the personification of the sun, and to the phoenix in Roman art, in which rays of light are very prominent. He linked the idea of the triple ray with metaphors written by Pseudo-Dionysius and Tertullian, arguing that at Castelseprio, the three rays of the nimbus represented light, rather than the idea of the Trinity suggested by the three cross arms.\(^{47}\)

André Grabar’s *Christian Iconography – A Study of its Origins* which examined the antecedents of the nimbus and its very early usage within Christian iconography, was

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published in 1961.\textsuperscript{48} His examination of the Transfiguration discusses the fourth century Christian appropriation of the Roman apotheosis of the emperor, within which a quadriga containing the emperor crosses the sky diagonally, observed by a human eyewitness, thereby attesting to the emperor’s new divine status. Christian artists changed the iconography so that in early Ascension scenes, the chariot was shown face-on, and then in later Theophanic narratives, an “aureole of light” appears around God. Grabar likened this light emanation to that of early images of the personified sun, haloed by light, which he suggested probably came from Mazdean in Persia, recording its first appearance in the nave mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore, Rome.\textsuperscript{49}

An extremely important study was also published in 1961, one of the definitive texts of the study of the halo and nimbus, Marthe Collinet-Guerin’s \textit{Histoire du nimbe des origine aux temps modernes}. This very extensive survey, covering not only Europe but also Mexico, Peru, Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica and Bolivia, examines the subject in three sections: “Pre-Nimbus, the Pagan Nimbus and the Christian Nimbus”.\textsuperscript{50} At the end of each section, she provides a bibliography which includes many works not cited by other scholars, in addition to the accepted corpus. Within the last section on the “Christian Nimbus”, she examines its presence in catacombs and churches in Naples, Ravenna, Rome and Milan. Analysing works in mosaic, sculpture, miniatures, ivories, intarsia and gems, she notes the difference in usage between the East and the West and the influences of eastern and Byzantine art on the nimbus in the West via works from Bulgaria, Rumania and Russia. Treatment of different Biblical scenes is covered, rather like the Byzantine Guide included in Didron’s work, and she identifies fifteen iconographic themes.

\textsuperscript{49} Grabar, 1961, p. 117.
\textsuperscript{50} Collinet-Guerin.
Of particular interest is the chapter entitled “Le Nimbe Gothique – ses transformations ses prolongements – du XIIe a la Renaissance” which compares haloes found in sculpture, paintings, glass, engravings, textiles and manuscripts in Italy, France, Spain, England and Germany. The next section, “Le nimbe dans la peinture Italienne de la fin du Dugento au debut du Cinquecento” considers the influence of Siena, Florence, Pisa and Assisi. The use of Latin text within the halo border of the Virgin is noted and the works of Simone Martini and the Lorenzetti brothers are considered for their innovations in the trecento. Quattrocento haloes are considered through the works of Gentile da Fabriano, Fra Angelico and Lorenzo Monaco amongst others. The only illustrations in the entire publication are those showing the “family” of haloes.

In the 1960s, both Mojmir Frinta and Erling Skaug began researching punch marks found in halo designs, regularly publishing their findings over the last fifty-five years. Frinta initially wrote about these in “An Investigation of the Punched Decoration of the Mediaeval Italian and non-Italian Panel Paintings”, followed by “Notes on the Punched Decoration of Two Early Painted Panels at the Fogg Art Museum: St Dominic and the Crucifixion”. Also in 1971, Skaug published “Contributions to Giotto’s Workshop”. In 1972, Frinta gave two papers on punched decoration and between 1975 and 1998 both published

51 She particularly references The Adoration of the Magi, Tabernacle des Linaioli di S Michele and The Virgin and Saints by each of these three artists respectively.  
54 Skaug, Erling, “Contributions to Giotto’s Workshop”, Mitt., KIF, XV  
extensively. The works most pertinent to this study are footnoted herewith, but there are two particular studies, cited earlier, which are essential. These are Skaug’s *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting c 1330-1430, Vols I and II* which is a synthesis of his many previous publications. Like Frinta, he has photographed many haloes in close-up to demonstrate the distinctive punch marks which he uses to track the dispersal of punch tools and calls for the development of “sphragiology” – the study of punch marks – as a separate discipline within Art History. The other major study of punch marks is Frinta’s *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting, Part I. Catalogue Raisonné of all Punch Shapes*, which includes over 3,000 macro-photographs of punch marks, found in tooled decoration, of which the greater number are within haloes. He examined works across Europe, including Bohemia, although he used a different system to Skaug to classify punch marks.

In 1974, Eileen McAlister Straton’s University of Tulsa thesis also considered what she termed medieval use of colour haloism.

In 1978, Mark Zucker highlighted differences in halo shapes occurring between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries in Italian and Spanish art, particularly those he termed “- ‘scalloped’ polygonal form”, suggesting there was a need for a “full-scale

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57 Skaug, E. S., *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting, c 1330-1430, Vols I and II*, Oslo: ILC Nordic Group, The Norwegian Section
59 Straton, 1974, p. 234. She records halo development as beginning in the sixth century and appearing in Egyptian, Indian and Hebrew art, with an expansion of shapes between the seventh and fourteenth centuries.
This article is frequently cited by scholars considering the halo, with a very useful appendix of works.

During the 1970s and 1980s, small, but important, studies were undertaken. Technical evidence about the physical execution of haloes was discussed by Hayden B. J. Maginnis in 1976 in his article about the Lorenzetti Passion Cycle at Assisi. The editorial of a special issue of The Burlington Magazine devoted to the Italian trecento in memory of Millard Meiss specifically noted that Frinta and Skaug had attributed certain panels based on an examination of halo tooling, acknowledging Meiss’s influence as a catalyst on the departure from utilising stylistic evidence to that of hard, physical proof.

Ladner’s 1983 “An Additional Note on Hexagonal Nimbi” is an expanded version of his original 1942 Mediaeval Studies article, considering number symbolism allied to Franciscan theology, and applying this to the hexagonal halo.

Following Sylvia Auld’s 1984 article “Kuficising Inscriptions in the work of Gentile da Fabriano”, great interest has centred on pseudo-cufic (or pseudo-Kufic) lettering.

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63 Ladner, 1983.
contained within borders of mantles, and also within haloes.\textsuperscript{64} This has tended to
develop alongside a tranche of interest in Islamic decoration within artworks. Auld has
continued to develop scholarship concerning Mamluk commercial interests with
Venice. Maria Vittoria Fontana has also examined Islamic epigraphy in many different
sites within Italy, specifically examining those within the haloes of Giotto at Santa
Maria Novella, Florence.\textsuperscript{65} Rosamund Mack’s 2003 \textit{Bazaar to Piazza: Islamic Trade
and Italian Art 1300-1600}, re-examined the presence of what she terms pseudo-Arabic
elements in Gentile da Fabriano’s work, particularly lettering within haloes, and
highlighted other works in which these are present.\textsuperscript{66}

The presence of textual elements within the halo, whether Latin or pseudo-Arabic, are
not discussed by Christian Hecht, who published his work \textit{Die Glorie}, in the same year.
Amongst other themes, he explores the concept of holiness, including how artists
represented Heaven.\textsuperscript{67} After examining the theological theories pertaining to the
“Gloria”, he considers themes of the Transfiguration and The Assumption of the Virgin
as a visual expression of this holiness. He also cites Virgil and the antique mosaics at S
Pudenzia in Rome, (c. 401-407) noting the shift from the practice of nimming Roman
emperors to endowing Christian figures with the attribute. Angels, similarly had been
honoured with the nimbus for quite some time, confirmed by Isidore of Seville, who

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\textsuperscript{64} Auld, Sylvia, “Kuficising Inscriptions in the work of Gentile da Fabriano”, \textit{Oriental Art}, 32, No. 3, 1986.  \\
nimbus of rays, yet at other times they have a full halo, as if fully canonized, seemingly a deliberate strategy to assist and promote a canonization process, according to the author of this thesis. Bisogni, Fabio, “Raggi e aurole ossia la distinzione della santità”, \textit{Con l’occhio e col Lume}, Atte del Corso Seminariale di Studi su S. Caterina da Siena, Università per Stranieri di Siena, Dipartimento di Scienze Umane, Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli, 1999.  \\
\end{flushleft}
described its vaporous nature, as noted previously.\textsuperscript{68} Hecht quotes the advice of Sicardus that Christ should always be painted crowned, “Dominus Jesus semper coronatus depingitur...”, and then repeated his additional statement on the triple crowns of Christ.\textsuperscript{69} Christ’s halo in Fra Angelico’s 1436 \textit{Deposition} is provided as a visualisation of Durandus’ and Aquinas’ exegesis of the “corona”,\textsuperscript{70} together with the presence of three cross arms within it. Cyril of Alexandria’s \textit{Cantica Canticorum} in praise of using gold to glorify the Lord, and the darker nimbus bestowed on Judas by Giusto de’ Menabuoi in the Dome mosaics at Padua are mentioned.\textsuperscript{71} Remaining in Padua, the problems of perspective and the halo are instanced by Giotto’s frescoes at the Arena Chapel, Padua, as well as works by Masaccio, Andrea del Castagno and Francesco del Cossa in connection with this. The section on “The Aureole” also references Bede’s anagogical exegesis of the passage from Exodus, underlined by the Franciscan Alexander von Hales’ assertion that the “aurea” is always superior to the “aureola”.\textsuperscript{72} A section on the use of gold ground and the changes that occurred when this was discontinued is included, and Hecht also considers the “Heilige” as the alter \textit{Christus}. The second section, “Religion und Kunst” includes an analysis of the \textit{kreuznimbus}, the cruciferous nimbus, and reproduces two helpful tables of cross and monogram designs\textsuperscript{73}, as well as listing examples. Within this, he considers tetramorphs, and the Hand of God that may have a cruciferous nimbus, before going on to discuss the presence of different types of crosses within varying locations, such as an eighth century marble tablet from Narbonne.\textsuperscript{74} Section IV considers the altarpiece within the Florentine and Roman High Renaissance, and within the beginning of the sixteenth


\textsuperscript{69} Hecht, Footnote 24, p. 54.

\textsuperscript{70} Hecht, pp. 56-57.

\textsuperscript{71} Hecht, p. 58 and Footnote 43.

\textsuperscript{72} Hecht, p. 63.

\textsuperscript{73} Taken from the \textit{Lexikon der Symbole} and Erklärendes Wörterbuch z. christl. Kunst.

\textsuperscript{74} Hecht, Part II, pp. 1-33.
century in Venice, he includes a discussion on Titian’s *Assunta*, and Lotto’s *St Nicholas of Bari*.

Cruciferous haloes were briefly addressed by Didron in 1851 and latterly much more fully by Hecht in 2003, as mentioned above. The exploration of this point within my study will cover different ground from Hecht’s, i.e. within Chapter Six of this thesis, where a possible “propagandist” motive will be proposed in a specific variation utilised by Giovanni Bellini within the internal cross design.

Within this first Chapter, the aims of this thesis to alter the perception of the halo as a passive component of an artwork to that of a dynamic element, through the deployment of various methodologies, have been set out. Similarly the interrogation of its slippage between sign/non-sign has been signalled. The quest of artists to represent something that is in theory, unrepresentable, since it is non-existent, is part of this process. The metamorphosis of the halo in terms of its physicality and thus ontology has been signalled. The deployment by artists of new modes of “depiction” subtly alters what the halo does within an artwork, acting as a catalyst for semiotic shifts, which need to be more fully examined. As stated earlier, contemporaneous theological texts impacting upon the halo will be contrasted with a presentation of contemporaneous industrial practices and commercial factors. A reprise of the existing literature specifically relating to the nimbus or halo has been set out. Some of the ground covered by this will now be revisited again, of necessity, because it is intended to additionally expand the exploration of the variations in the halo’s appearance and function over the designated period and its contribution to *karoi* - the Christianisation of time, and *topoi* - the
Christianisation of space,\textsuperscript{75} utilising proxemics, the semiotics of space, and chronemics, the semiotics of time.\textsuperscript{76} The investigation will thus activate new areas of interpretation relating to the halo in order to stimulate a greater and higher appreciation of its performance within an artwork.


CHAPTER TWO

Medieval Written Sources Relating to the Halo, Divinity, Light and its Representation

2.1 Etymology of the words “nimbus” and “halo” and related terms

The etymological roots of the terms “halo” and “nimbus” will now be examined. “Halo” is derived from the Latin word *halōs*, meaning “the circle of light around the sun”. The Greek word *hálōs* refers to “a threshing–floor, disk of the sun, moon or a shield”.¹ The “halo” was the circular area left on the ground in the threshing room by the ambulatory trajectory of a beast continuously turning a millstone whilst threshing. This circle could be visually differentiated from the remaining surface, and its transposition to the head of a special person or special creature, such as the dove or lamb, consequently highlighted their “otherness”. This “otherness” was a different status, a holy or divine rank that needed to be signified visually to the viewer. The word “nimbus” is derived from the Latin words *nebula* or *nephele* meaning “vapour” or “cloud”. The corresponding Greek word is νεΦέλη.² Like the application of a halo it is used to describe the luminous cloud or mist around the head of a “different” person or creature, a mimesis of the similar phenomenon appearing naturally around the sun, the “anthelia”, and the “halo” around the moon,³ the latter also known as an “alóne” in Italian, (Fig. 1). Although also circular, they are not strictly defined by a circumscribed perimeter, because there is a fugitive quality, as with mist, to their appearance. The

³ *The Catholic Encyclopedia on Line*, [www.newadvent.org](http://www.newadvent.org) [accessed 01/02/05].
Greek sense of “halo” seems to denote a delimited area, since the total surface area of both halo and circumference, of necessity, would have been curtailed by the length of rope securing the working beast to the mill-stone. Therefore throughout this thesis, the word “halo” will be used to describe that sign used to denote divinity that has a visible periphery. The word “nimbus” will be utilised to describe the type of luminous and ethereal mist used to suggest holiness or divinity, and which has a much more indistinct boundary, (unless specific texts are being discussed which do not follow this distinction).

Within the Septuagint, the word *doxa* denotes “cloud” surrounding the Godhead. Derived from the Greek verb *dokeo* meaning “to think”, it is used synonymously in the LXX to discuss the Lord’s glory, described in Exodus 24:17, paralleling the Hebrew *Shekinah*. However, in the LXX, the word *doxa* is used instead of glory. (The Greek word δόξα “belief”, was used to translate the Hebrew word כבוד “glory”. Thus the Greek word shifted its meaning. Christ is considered to be the *radiance* of God’s glory, and this word is derived from *apagausma*, from the noun *apaugázo* meaning “to emit light or splendor”, derived from *apó*, “from” and *augázo*, “shine”. The resulting combination has a literal meaning of “off-flashing” and relates to the effulgence which arises from a luminous body. The description can applied in situations relating to both reflected and refulgent light.

6 The Catholic Encyclopedia on-line
2.2 Terminology used for the Nimbus and Halo in the Medieval and Renaissance Periods

The *aurea* is a “golden crown” (and *aureole* its diminutive form), which became synonymous with the saint’s “crown of glory”, the *corona* described by Thomas Aquinas in several works, such as *IV Sententiarum, Dist. 49, Q.5. A.1, Parma, II, 1233:*

> The first essential reward of man is the state of beatitude, resulting from his complete union with God . . . and this reward was metaphorically called a crown or halo...  

Saints are those souls who live in Heaven in a state of beatitude and bliss, and the *aurea* visually represents this bliss. In *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, Durandus compared it with a shield, which would have been disk-shaped:

> Thus all the Saints are depicted, crowned, as if they would say: O Daughters of Jerusalem, come and see the martyrs with the crowns with which the Lord has crowned them. And in the Book of Wisdom: The Just shall receive a kingdom of glory, and a crown of beauty at the hands of the Lord. And a crown of this kind is shown in the form of a round shield, because they enjoy the divine protection of the Holy God, whence they sing rejoicingly: O Lord, Thou has crowned us as with a shield of Thy good-will

(The German word for a halo, *Heilingenschein* connects the blissful state with the iconographic sign very clearly, but it was unused until the seventeenth century. So, *corona, aurea* and the halo were synonymous and would eventually be bestowed upon God, Christ, the Virgin Mary, the saints and the Holy Spirit in the form of the Dove or the Holy Lamb. However, the *aurea* is termed the “essential reward” that was awarded

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11 Hall and Uhr, 1978, Footnote 7, p. 249.
to all saints, although there were also two more rewards of merit, discussed by St Thomas Aquinas, in both Sententiarum and Question 96 of the Supplementum to the Summa Theologica. These were the aureole and the fructus or fruit, termed “accidental rewards”. The aureola is an extra, special distinction given to specific categories of saints, a “small golden crown”, accorded to martyrs, virgins or doctors of the Church, or preachers. According to Aquinas:

Accordingly it must be said that an “aureole” denotes something added to the “aura”, a kind of joy, to wit, in the works one has done, in that they have the character of a signal victory: for this joy is distinct from the joy in being united to God, which is called the “aurea”.\(^\text{12}\)

Previously, Bede (c. 673 – 735 AD) was the first theologian to link the aureola with the Vulgate text of Exodus 25:25, where God gives instructions to Moses on making a special table for the Bread of the Presence:\(^\text{13}\)

You shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide and a cubit and a half high. You shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a moulding of gold round it. You shall make round it a rim a handbreadth wide, and a moulding of gold round the rim. You shall make for it four rings of gold, and fasten the rings to the four corners at its four legs. The rings that hold the poles used for carrying the table shall be close to the rim. You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with these. You shall make its plates and dishes for incense, and its flagons and bowls with which to pour drink-offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before me always.\(^\text{14}\)

Bede interpreted the “moulding of gold” as a “coronam interrasilem”, a “polished crown”, and the “moulding of gold around the rim” as a “coronam aureoolam”, “a little golden crown”. Thus the “polished crown” was a metaphor for the aurea or “gold

\(^{12}\) [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/5096.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/summa/5096.htm), Question 96, Article 1, Whether the aureole is the same as the essential reward which is called the aurea?, “On the aureoles” [accessed 14.11.09].

\(^{13}\) Hall, and Horst. 1985 p. 568, Footnote 7.

\(^{14}\) The Holy Bible, NRSV Catholic Edition
crown” that was rewarded to all saints, and was subsequently depicted as a halo. The “little golden crown” is represented as a small crown awarded in addition to a halo, and which can be seen, for example in the frontispiece of the Letters of St Catherine, the 1500 Aldine edition compiled of sources originating from Prior Bartolomeo d’Alzano, who was closely linked with S. Pietro in Martire, Murano, (Fig. 2). In this, flying angels hold three distinct crowns, to award her the additional aureole for her virginity, her martyrdom and the fact that she was a Doctor of the Church, or preacher. In the trecento, a Gothic crown was often added to the halo to represent the extra distinction. The noun sertum is synonymous with aureola, originally having the meaning of a “garland”, and then in the Middle Ages it became synonymous with “crown”, an interpretation often used later in the cinquecento.

The word glory is frequently cited throughout the Old and New Testaments to signal the divine presence of God, and this is represented by light that surrounds both the head and the body. By association, therefore, it is used by artists in depictions of saints. In Carpaccio’s c. 1491 Apotheosis of St Ursula, (Fig. 3) the saint is surrounded by a whole body glory, while two flying putti hold a golden crown above her head, as she stands on a column of palms. The Virgin is also given a crown to represent the aureola of virginity (different to her crown during her coronation as the Queen of Heaven), for example in Botticelli’s 1481 Madonna del Magnificat, (Fig. 192) where the presence of the words of the Magnificat she has written resonate with the imminent event of the Incarnation, and the actual representation of the Christ Child in the painting, doubly

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16 Hall and Uhr, 1985, p. 571.
17 Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, c. 1491.
emphasising her virginity. If the word *corona* is used alone without its qualification of *aurea* or *aureola*, it can confusingly mean both, i.e. the halo, or the extra award signalled by a smaller golden crown. The term *glory* is also utilised by Barthélemy de Chasseneux (1480-1541) in his “Catalogus Gloriae Mundi” published in 1546. He writes that “Deus dabit gloriam sanctis in Gloria”

*Dives et Pauper* was a treatise upon the Ten Commandments, attributed to the Carmelite Henry Parker, probably written circa 1405-10 and published by Richard Pynson in 1493, republished in 1496. The dialogue sermon discusses the importance of all the Commandments, following Patristic commentaries and in the First Precept there is a discussion about images in churches and why they are not idolatrous. Within this, “those round things painted on their heads or about their heads” is mentioned, and the explanation provided that they are “all shining” and “betoken the bliss that they have without end”

Dives: Qhat betokenyn þe rounde thynggys þat been peynted on here hedys or abouten here hedys?

Pauper: Þey betokenyn þe blisse þat þey han wytouten ende, for as þat rounde thyng is endeles, so is here blisse endeless, of queche blisse seygt Ysaye þe prophete, li [11]; leticia sempiterna super capot eorum, etc. Endeles merthe shal been on here hedys; þey shullyn han ioye inward and outward wytouten ende; al syhyng and sorwe shall flein away.

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19 Hall and Uhr, 1985, p. 585
20 Hecht, p. 22.
In his 1646 edition of the *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, Sir Thomas Browne believed the “glory” to show the divine light of saints had been imported from France.

The *fructus* was recognition of a rejection of carnal pleasures for spiritual ones, on which Bede wrote a gloss, subsequently cited by Thomas Aquinas in Article 5 where there were doctrinal significances between the *aurea*, the *aureola* and the *fructus*. However, since the eighteenth century, the terms *aureola* and *aurea* have become conflated and their individual meanings, and very precise distinctions, have thus been lost.

For the sake of completeness, the other distinctive signs utilised for holy persons should also be considered at this point. A *mandorla* is oval-shaped, derived from the Latin word for “almond”, frequently used in artworks to depict a vehicle for the ascension of Christ and/or the Virgin to Heaven. Sometimes it appears to be supported by, or composed of, clouds, at other times it appears to be delineated by a host of cherubim. Occasionally, it is made of seven doves, representing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, but at all times Christ and the Virgin are situated inside the mandorla. It is found as early as 553 AD at St Catherine’s Monastery, Mount Sinai. Sometimes, the Latin term *vesica piscis* has been used to describe a mandorla, which has been interpreted as an appropriation of an ancient pagan symbol, that in subsequent Christian iconography signified Christ’s passage from death into the new life of the Resurrection.

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22 Hall and Uhr, 1978, 252.
23 Hall and Uhr, 1985, p. 250.
25 Lord Lindsay, p. 257.
The etymologies and contemporary usage of the *halo, nimbus, doxa, aureola, glory* and *mandorla* have been presented, and it will now be visually demonstrated throughout this thesis how artists materially depicted these words, in their changing manifestation of the sign. Following the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Council of Trent in 1563, it will be seen from Jacopo Tintoretto’s works in the Table of Haloes that the increasing tendency to omit haloes, not just for saints, but also for the Holy Family, is reversed, and that a variety of halo and nimbus forms and colours reappear (ToH pp. 27-28). The “Decree on the Invocation, Veneration, and Relics of Saints, and on Sacred Images” does not actually specify that haloes must be used; nevertheless, Pius IV reiterated that

“the legitimate use of images. . . . the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God and the other saints are to be had, and retained particularly in temples and that due honour and veneration are to be given to them”. Furthermore, “. . . the bishops shall carefully teach this. – that by the means of the histories of the mysteries of our Redemption, portrayed by paintings or other representations, the people are instructed and confirmed in the habit of remembering, and continually revolving in mind the articles of faith; as also that great profit is derived from sacred images, not only because the people are thereby admonished of the benefits and gifts bestowed upon them by Christ, but also because the miracles which God has performed, by means of the saints, and their salutary examples, are set before the eyes of the faithful”26

Much later in 1696, an engraving of Father Francis Suárez, a Spanish Jesuit theologian, was the subject of a complaint to the Inquisition. It showed him alongside the Virgin Mary “with beams of light coming out of the image of the Virgin in the same manner from the image of Father Suárez”. This was against the Council of Trent’s edict that only saints canonised by the Church may be painted with rays and a diadem.27

26 [http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct25.html](http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct25.html) [accessed 06.05.12.]
2.3 Christ and the “Traits of Hermes” – without haloes

Four centuries after Christ’s death, Athenagoras, Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexander incorporated Homer’s poetry into their syntheses of the Hebraic Corpus into its newer Hellenic form, believing it championed the immortality of the soul. Consequently Old Testament events and Hellenic myths were similar, specifically the Virgin Birth, Christ’s Passion and Ascension, although Justin Martyr believed the pagans had plundered the ideas from Christianity. In *Apologies*, he wrote,

“If we say that Christ, the word of God, was born by a particular divine generation this is a phenomenon he has in common with Hermes whom you call the logos or divine messenger”. (*1 Apol, 22.2*).

Justin insisted that Christians were re-appropriating their heritage from the pagans, yet both pagans and Christians were using these same motifs and elements to bolster their arguments, simultaneously. Hermes underwent a syncretic transformation, uniting with the Egyptian Wisdom God Thoth in the second and third centuries AD, thenceforward worshipped and known as Hermes Trismegistus, “the thrice-wise Hermes”. There are parallels between the Hermetic and the Gnostic schools, the former worshipping Hermes as the “embodiment of salvific teaching and initiation”, the Gnostics worshipping Christ, consequently Hermes is often depicted as The Good Shepherd, or *Buon Pastore*, frequently within idealised bucolic scenes. Gradually, this melding of

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29 Murphy, p.2.


31 Murphy, p. 2, citing Justin Martyr.

pagan and Christian iconography resulted in Christ’s depiction as The Good Shepherd too, with “the traits of Hermes”, although noticeably at this early stage, He does not yet have a halo. A later depiction of the same subject, a late fourth century gilded plate, (Fig. 4), shows Christ with arms raised, but similarly He is not endowed with a halo, and Hermes, likewise never in “Good Shepherd” scenes.

The concept of a spiritual guide as a form of shepherd can be traced in Hermetic literature and many parallels are seen between the figures of Hermes and Jesus Christ, and their conflations within early Christian art. Hermetic concepts seem to mirror those of early Christianity, such that even their liturgical rituals are closely allied, pre-figuring the roles that both John the Baptist and Christ would later play. It is noteworthy, however, that neither Hermes nor Christ are endowed with any form of halo at this stage, nor even the glimmer of any form of ray near their heads, so the suggestion of any visible holy or divine distinction was not of obvious theological or critical concern up to the fifth century AD.

2.4 The Semiotic Celestial Hierarchy, Divine Light and the Halo

Circa 500 AD, in De coelisti hierarchia Pseudo-Dionysius drew up a taxonomy of Heaven, including a hierarchy of angels. Other writers had attempted to establish an angelic hierarchy, but the Triad structure envisaged by Pseudo-Dionysius was the most well-known and accepted, based on the neo-Platonic Doctrine of Degrees through which the entire universe is related, via a series of ascending cosmic and spiritual stages to the

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33 Murphy, p. 3.
Supreme Being. He cautioned artists that the images are only symbols, suggesting that they should not be perfect so that the worshipper would always recall the spiritual essence beyond the physical appearance. Thus, and following the logic of Pseudo-Dionysius, when it is present, the halo or nimbus is operating dually as a spiritual signifier in this situation, and also an aide memoire reminding the worshipper of the spirituality both implicitly inherent in the referent in the image, and furthermore represented by the image. *De coelis hierarchia* was a very comprehensive description of the spiritual creations of God, “an essentially allegorical framework”. Like Origen, Pseudo-Dionysius advocated the value of symbols as a path for mankind to try to approach knowledge of God; they made him more accessible and comprehensible. (Dun Scotus, 1265-1308, later wrote a formal commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy*.)

Stephen Gersh refers to these symbols as “enigmatic utterances which display one meaning on the surface of the letter but keep within a loftier meaning for the understanding”. He continues:

> Utterances of this kind are called symbols from “syn”: that is, together and “olon”: that is, a whole because a multiple knowledge is contained in these utterances, and because a literal understanding resounds on the surface of the letter while a tropological and anagogic understanding is contained within.

Thus Pseudo-Dionysius is layering meanings into his symbols, but his necessity to create this taxonomy of symbols in order to provide some sort of clarification about angels and Divine Powers highlights the continuing limitations of language – its

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35 Peers, p. 4.
37 Peers, p. 90.
39 Gersh, p. 226.
ineffability - to describe presences or perceptions that are immaterial or transcendent, - such as a halo - and it also suggests a shift in the Church’s thinking about acceptance of a need for visual aids. The hierarchy of angels is also known as the Divine Ray, the means by which mankind can be led to God, and simultaneously, God is revealed to mankind, and is arranged in the Nine Choirs of Angels.40

This arrangement seems to have a resonance with representations of the halo in terms of who receives one, and will be discussed further in relation to The Last Judgement mosaic at Torcello, in Chapter Three. This principle of a transfer between the different levels was originally formulated by Plotinus, resulting in each level assimilating the image of its superior level, simultaneously becoming the prototype for its immediate inferior level, what Dionysius terms “the imitation of Divine Power”, as follows:

“According to the same law of the material order, the Fount of all order, visible and invisible, supernaturally shows forth the glory of its own radiance in all-blessed outpourings of first manifestation to the highest beings, and, through them, those below them participate in the Divine Ray. For since these have the highest knowledge of God, and desire pre-eminently the Divine Goodness, they are thought worthy to become first workers, as far as can be attained, of the imitation of Divine Power and Energy, and beneficently uplift those below them, as far as is in their power, to the same imitation by shedding abundantly upon them the splendour which has come upon themselves; while these, in turn, impart their light to lower choirs. And thus, throughout the whole hierarchy, the higher impart that which they receive to the lower, and through the Divine Providence all are granted participation in the Divine Light in the measure of their receptivity…. The holy orders both lead and are led, but not the same ones, nor by the same ones, but that each is led by those above itself, and in turn leads those below it.”41

40 Temple, p. 78.
41 Temple, p. 80, quoting De Coelisti Hierarchia.
Light as a symbol of Divine, spiritual presence, is brought to the forefront of the discussion, although Dionysius distinguishes between the concept of spiritual light, which is invisible, and its binary opposite, physical, visible light, and in these, as stated, he is following Plotinus, who himself had followed Plato by asserting that the light of the sun “is a corporeal substance but from it there shines forth that other ‘light’ which, though it carries the same name, we pronounce incorporeal”\(^\text{42}\). This next section will therefore continue the discussion about the *Celestial Hierarchy* but in terms of light imagery.

### 2.5 Medieval Exegesis Relating to Divine Light and Pertaining to the Halo

Pseudo-Dionysius’ hierarchy was adopted into the Christian canon and utilised over the centuries as a visual aid to the “symbolic interpretation” referred to above. In a wax encaustic icon at Mount Sinai, circa 600 AD, *Christ Pantocrator*, (Fig. 5) Christ holds a book symbolising wisdom, His raised fingers encompass the teaching gesture. Behind His head, is a large flat disk gold halo, heavily outlined, with what seems to be a simple punched border lying inside this delineation, (Fig. 5a). According to Plotinus, “*Spirit penetrates Matter* to endow *Form*”, and this has been given visible expression by the painter, who has been the intermediary between the lower and the higher, the Christian “divine spark” of the soul. Temple elucidates thus:

. . . This is why traditionally, in icons of Christ, the nimbus around the head contains letters signifying the mystery of Existence: *Ho on (III ON)* meaning) ‘Existence’, ‘The Being’, or ‘I am that I am’ as the Authorised Version has it.\(^\text{43}\)


\(^{43}\) Temple, p. 94
A much later example of the application of the *Celestial Hierarchy* can be seen in a c. 1350–1355 *Biblia historiale*, illuminated in Paris, now in the St Petersburg State Library. Compiled by Guyart des Moulins in the 1290s, it was a collection of sacred history which included a translation of Petrus Comestor’s *Historia scholastica*. The entire scheme of Creation is shown, and each of the nine orders of angels is identified by a golden letter, arranged like a ladder, thus the angels are linking the invisibility of heaven, with the visibility of earth.\(^{44}\) Within the *Biblia*, Hugh of St Victor wrote a commentary on the *De Coelisti Hierarchia*:

> Our soul could not ascend to the truth of these invisible things, if not through the learned consideration of visible things. Thus it is seen that visible forms should be considered to be representations [or similitudes] of invisible beauty.\(^{45}\)

This seems to be an important shift in rendering the invisible visible, indeed it is a very positive and substantial support of visibility as a didactic aid.

Another visible form used in a symbolic manner was the cloud in Ascension imagery. Both Jerome and Ambrose had considered Isaiah’s statement, “And the Lord will ascend on a light cloud, and will enter Egypt” (Isaiah 19:1) as a prophecy of Christ entering the world via the agency of the Incarnation. The “cloud” was a reference to his mortal flesh received from the Virgin, because she was chaste and therefore without mortal sin, this cloud/flesh was “light” in the sense of weightlessness.\(^{46}\) Robert

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\(^{45}\) Hamburger, Footnote 59.

\(^{46}\) Densham, p. 526.
Densham considers the cloud in the Annunciation scene in his discussion of the eleventh century Benedictional of Æthelwold thus:

The cloud, however, assumes a radial configuration around the Virgin’s head, forming a kind of nimbus. Usually a nimbus was depicted as a conventional geometric disk, like the one around Gabriel’s head, and it commonly symbolized an aura of supernatural light. But the literal meaning of the nimbus, which etymologically [derives] from the combination of nubis (cloud) and imber (rain), was a storm cloud. Ancient classical authors often used nimbus to describe the flashing storm cloud around the body or head of a deity, essentially what the Septuagint termed the doxa of the Godhead. Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*, a standard medieval school text well known in Anglo-Saxon England, defined the nimbus as both a storm cloud and the light painted around the heads of angels. In the Benedictional, the radial pattern of cloud around the Virgin’s head is evidently a literal representation of the nimbus as a divinely lit cloud. Conceived in this fashion, the Virgin’s nimbus became a profound symbol of the weightless cloud of Christ’s humanity overshadowing and tempering the radiance of his divinity, which literally illumines her in the Incarnation."47

In this passage, Densham seems to suggest that the nimbus, already a symbol, operates on two levels simultaneously, both as a sign of the holy distinction bestowed on the Virgin herself and as a visual reference to Christ’s incarnation. In his discussion of the Ascension, Augustine asserts that Christ had to disappear from corporeal sight in order that he could be perceived as God by the Apostles. Their “eyes of flesh” could only see Christ in his human image, but after his Ascension and physical disappearance, they were able to “see” with “the eyes of the mind” that he was not only with God, but also at one with God.48

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47 Densham, p. 526.
Both Augustine and Bonaventura grappled with the conundrum of representing the Trinity because in Augustine’s opinion, “it was invisible in such a way that it cannot be seen [even] by the mind”. In *De genesi ad litteram*, he had formulated a tripartite theory of vision, whereby the viewer saw things of the terrestrial world by *corporeal vision*. Using *spiritual vision*, the viewer could “see” images internally by using mental images similar to tangible, earthly ones, and through *intellectual vision*, the viewer “saw” the imageless truth, that produced by divine action. Bonaventura discussed vision in the *Breviloquium*, drawing on the *Celestial Hierarchy* and Diadochus’ fifth century theory regarding progression towards perfection moving “‘from glory to glory’ (Perf 89)”, each degree resulting in a more intense amount of illumination. When perfection is achieved, “‘when the intellect begins to come frequently under the influence of the divine light, it becomes entirely transparent, with the result that it can see its own light in abundance,’ ” perfectly complementing Augustine’s assertion that:

> The reward for those who imitate God is that like the spirits they come to be penetrated by intelligible light and enjoy perfect happiness in the participation of God.

Thus it can be seen repeatedly that light represents God, but it is not a metaphor, and varying degrees of exposure to this light result in different levels of transparency denoting a journey towards God, very important regarding the representation of the halo.

49 McGinn, Bernard, “Theologians as Trinitarian Iconographers”, p. 186, and Footnote 3, p. 203, quoting Augustine *Ep. 120.2.7 and 12* (PL 33:444 and 458).
51 Russell, p. 247.
Robert Grosseteste, writing in the early thirteenth century, utilised both Pseudo-Dionysius, whose work he translated from Greek into Latin, and Augustine in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics*:

I [Grosseteste] therefore say that there is a spiritual light (*lux spiritualis*) that floods over intelligible objects (*res intelligibiles*) and over the mind’s eye (*oculus mentis*) - [this is a light] that is related to the interior eye and to intelligible objects just as the corporeal sun relates to the bodily eye and to corporeal visible objects. Therefore, the intelligible objects that are more receptive of this spiritual light are more visible to the interior eye . . . And so things that are more receptive of this light are more perfectly penetrated by the mind’s gaze (*acies mentis*) that is likewise a spiritual irradiation, and this more perfect penetration is greater certitude.\(^{53}\)

Although referencing the extramission theory of vision in Grosseteste’s treatise, the *lux spiritualis* is not a metaphor, for him it is a reality, it has a dimension, well illustrated in *The Triumph of Aquinas* circa 1340, (Fig. 6), recently ascribed to Francesco Traini and Lippo Memmi in the Chiesa di Sta. Caterina, Pisa.\(^{54}\)  The panel depicts four separate levels, the uppermost occupied by Christ, the *Logos*, whose words literally “pour” from his mouth in golden rays onto the head of the Thomas Aquinas, endowed with a halo, occupying the panel centre, situated directly below Christ. Other rays, directed at the heads, thus minds, of all the protagonists, radiate to the prophets and wise men, also haloed, arranged in an arch above Aquinas. These rays are then further “transmitted” to Aquinas’s mind from the words of the books they have written and which are all directed at him. Flanking the Dominican, smaller in stature, are the philosophers

\(^{53}\) Tachau, Katherine H., “Seeing as Action and Passion” in *The Mind’s Eye*, pp. 343 - 344, quoting from Grosseteste’s *In posteriorum analyticum*

\(^{54}\) Tachau, Fig. 5, p. 344. This thesis has utilised the same example of Thomas Aquinas as Tachau, since it contains all the elements it wishes to discuss at this particular juncture.
Aristotle and Plato, who have received divine rays radiating from Christ’s body into their works, and which they, too, reflect to/at Thomas Aquinas, who in turn, holds open a large book containing his texts, which continues the transmission of rays down to the lower register of theologians and clergy beneath him. Thus, we see an application of the Divine Ray espoused by Pseudo-Dionysius, and the receipt by Thomas Aquinas of “personal, direct, unmediated, and unbroken divine illumination, as well as reflected, and therefore indirect illumination”.\(^{55}\) Similarly, via the agency of Aquinas’s teaching, “the Word” will continue to be disseminated.

This representation of divine light, \textit{lux spiritualis}, is not confined to the “Truth” which Christ speaks, but also, it can be argued, to the haloes of the philosophers and Thomas Aquinas himself. The spectators’ corporeal vision sees the tangible objects, books and texts, visual representations of the verbal, but Traini and Memmi are both representing and invoking spiritual vision not only for Aquinas, but also for the viewer, to “see” and understand the haloes, along with the divine ray.

An example of St. Bonaventura’s argument, allied with both divine light and divine love, is Fra Filippo Lippi’s Barbarordi Altarpiece predella, commissioned around 1437, where Augustine is represented “spiritually seeing” the Trinity and receiving divine love through the agency of divine rays. Like his definitions of light, Augustine had categorized love as \textit{cupiditas}, “the love of anything at all without regard for God”, and \textit{caritas}, “the love of God, self, and neighbours, only for God’s sake”.\(^{56}\) Augustine’s attribute of the pierced heart is exemplified by Fra Lippi’s representation of Augustine

\(^{55}\) Tachau, p. 344.
in a study, his upturned face gazing at three cherubim contained within a mandorla of golden rays as three golden arrows, representing each person of the Trinity, pierce his heart. As Newman points out, the cherubim in the mandorla “must be meant to evoke the imageless visio intellectualis, the saint’s highest category of vision, which by definition eludes the painter’s art.”57 It is we, the spectators, who require an “image” of the Trinity, Augustine can see it through his oculus mentis. Lippi has not bestowed a halo on Augustine in this work, unlike Zanobi Strozzi’s miniature from an antiphonary showing the young Augustine’s conversion, where the haloed saint looks up to a haloed angel holding three arrows representing the Trinity, aimed at Augustine’s heart.58 The presence of Augustine’s halo here suggests that God has already imbued him with divine grace and accepted him as a proselytiser of the Truth even though this is the moment immediately prior to his conversion. A similar representation of this scene is in the Chiesa di San Stefano, Venice, in a quattrocento fresco, (Fig. 7).

The concept of Christ’s humanity would become one of the central tenets of Franciscan theology, and a theme explored by many artists especially within the quattrocento. Irenaeus had spoken of the prophecies that God should be seen by men:

> For man does not see God by his own powers; but when He pleases, He is seen by men, by whom He wills, and when He wills, and as He wills . . . For as those who see the light are within the light, and partake of its brilliancy; even so, those who see God are in God, and receive of His splendour.59

Thus, it can be seen that later, there will be two separate considerations that artists will need to tackle, the physical incarnation of Christ, and the metaphysical quality of the

58 Museo di San Marco, Florence, mid-fifteenth century.
mystical brilliance of God’s light, and both will have ramifications for halo “representation”.

2.6 Conclusions

It has been shown within this Chapter that Divine Light signifies the presence of God, and of God’s grace, and it is manifested in different modes: as rays, sometimes but not always, pouring into a halo; as a nebulus mist of light; as a bounded circle; as a gold ‘representation’ of the doxa; as an all-enclosing “shell” surrounding Christ, the Virgin or a saint. Each of these “manifestations” refers back in some way to its etymological foundations.

It has been demonstrated that early representations do not utilise a halo for Christ, but later, when they are bestowed, there is no suggestion of an alteration of shape – the “rounde things” remain circular, whether nebulus or radiated rays. There is no geometric variation in these examples, and no discussion of colour. “Shining”, “effulgent”, are the adjectives utilised to help the perception of Divine Light. Therefore, the examples provided all contribute to the narrative of the scene and consequent comprehension of the story being unfolded to the viewer, particularly through the encapsulation of contemporaneous theological discussion.
CHAPTER THREE

Texture, Ornamentation and Shape of the Halo

3.1 Introduction

The first section of this Chapter will explore the physical appearance and structure of the halo in terms of texture, how this has been achieved, and why artists have felt it necessary to texturize this holy signifier. By using this term “texture”, this thesis is referencing the process of the building up of materials, either with plaster or the suggestion of other materials on the surface of, and/or integral to, the halo design to allow patterning and focus on the material substance of the halo’s construction. These attempts by artists to represent materially this non-existent object will demonstrate the cultural transition of thinking based on the symbol to that based on the sign occurring between the 1200s and 1400s, and this shift is manifested in the representation of the halo. Thus, the theological terminology presented in the previous chapter will now be tested against the actual practice of painting or otherwise constructing haloes. The noun “texture” is defined as “… anything woven, a web; manner of weaving or connecting; disposition of the parts of a body; structural impression resulting from the manner of combining or interrelating the parts of a whole; the quality conveyed to the touch, especially by woven fabrics”. All these different elements of texture will be extracted from visual sources through the course of this Chapter, and it is the author’s intention to demonstrate that sometimes artists are texturizing haloes with an actual representation of woven fabrics, thus literally activating the transitive Latin texere.

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1 Kristeva, 1977, p. 38.
meaning “to weave” from which the English verb derives. The second section of this Chapter will consider different shapes and positions of the halo, when changes to these occur, and to which personages. The plain disk halo undergoes an evolutionary process in its manifestation within mosaics, frescoes, statues, ivories, icons, illuminated manuscripts, crucifixes and altarpieces, so that the flat, even colours are replaced by many techniques and substances imbuing it with an unprecedented texture and tactile quality, hence this tangibility results in more perceptible visibility. Embellishment of the halo by ridging, tooling and punching, pastiglia, the insertion of “jewels”, enamelling, the use of precious metals and sgraffito, specifically within frescoes, altarpieces and icons will be considered, in terms of the sensorial and visual impact of these practices mediated by the halo, on the spectator. The decoration within mosaic haloes will be considered in Chapter Five. The presence of script within the halo, textuality, will be discussed separately in Chapter Four.

Although it seems oxymoronic to talk about the texture of a halo, this is one of the fundamental pieces of evidence proposed within this thesis for re-evaluation, because the author believes that the importance of the texture of the halo resides in specific functions. Firstly, it has the ability to enhance its owner’s appearance with the richness and quality of its surface, thus assisting the spectator to concentrate upon the figures within a narrative, assigning a hierarchy to them guided by their different haloes, and consequently aiding the meditative and didactic process. Secondly, both texture and halo shape have roles as temporal and sometimes geographical indicators by virtue of their intrinsic and/or extrinsic designs, consequently also an identifying firma of a particular artist or workshop, as demonstrated in the Table of Haloes. Referencing these faculties, external social, civic, religious and technological factors impacting upon its design will be presented, adding cultural anthropological threads that will be
highlighted within the discourse, and specifically, the proposition of this thesis that the deployment of local technological innovations, particularly within the Veneto, are major sources of halo texture. Consequently halo representation, from the mid-quattrocento, will be shown as a factor hitherto unexplored in any systematic or analytical manner. There will be some cross-referencing with Chapter Five, particularly regarding tooling and punching, since the texture thereby produced enhances the light-reflecting or light-absorbing qualities of the surface, and thus the halo’s visibility. The classifications laid down by the late Møjmir S. Frinta in his 1998 *Catalogue Raisonnée of all Punch Shapes* will be applied to discuss and examine specific punch marks, alongside Erling S. Skaug’s *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico*, since these are the two ground-breaking and seminal works regarding sphragiology, discussed previously in Chapter One. The former was published with the implicit intention of becoming a verification tool for museum curators (see Fig. 11 for Frinta’s Classification Charts), and includes many examples from different schools, not just in Italy, but also within Bohemia, Bulgaria, Spain and Portugal. Skaug’s work concentrates mainly on Tuscany, particularly Florentine artists and as well as these, this thesis will also consider halo ornamentation within Venice. However, as both scholars point out, one of the major obstacles to utilising punchmarks is their inaccessibility; Skaug had undertaken detailed examinations during restoration work following the 1966 floods in Florence, and Frinta had spent thirty years travelling around Europe photographing artworks in high magnification for his *Catalogue Raisonnée*. Observations regarding Venetian halo ornamentation therefore, will be based primarily on this author’s empirical examination of the artworks in situ, with its attendant limitations. The internal cruciferous design of the halo will be discussed separately in Chapters Four and Five. The cruciform halo, i.e. a halo that is actually structured in the shape of a cross, is considered later within this Chapter. Each section of this Chapter examines a specific strand of the halo’s
physicality demonstrated with examples, in order to amplify the hypotheses set out in Chapter One.

3.2 Texture, the Servi’s Madonna and a Franciscan semiotic radiance

The flat disk halo in frescoes, situated parallel to the picture plane, exhibits gradual changes over the centuries, especially in its colouring. It alters from a pale yellow-brown or pale blonde field in the fourth century catacombs in Rome and Naples, (and in a different medium, the fifth or sixth century fragment of the *The Cotton Genesis*, see Fig. 12)³ to a dark yellow, as in the remains of the early trecento frescoes in the Apostoli Church, Venice, (Fig. 13) or to the bright gold field that Giotto uses at the Arena Chapel, Padua (1300-1305, Figs. 166-172I), although the pale blonde tones continue to be utilised in Treviso by Tommaso di Modena in 1354, (Fig. 14).⁴ Eventually internally coloured fields disappear altogether in the cinquecento; Lotto merely applies a bright gold ring halo to St. Clare in his Tresco 1524 fresco cycle. In addition to colour, a decorative surface is often applied via the use of “ridging” inside the halo, the breadth, length and distance between the ridges all factors that can be manipulated; similarly radiation of the ridge to the absolute circumference of the halo or to a smaller internal border, or ridge radiation immediately from the head itself or from a zone apart from the head, are also motifs that differentiate simple halo designs, and not only within frescoes. In his c. 1268 *Madonna col Bambino*, commissioned for the Church of Sta Maria dei Servi, Risalit, Orvieto, Coppo di Marcovaldo (1225–1276) produced an innovative composition. Synthesising *Hodegetria* and Romanesque *Maiestas* forms⁵ (Fig. 16), he drew additionally on the *Madonna degli occhi grossi* ¹

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⁴ Tommaso di Modena, 1352 fresco of St Jerome at San Nicolò, Treviso.
panel in the Duomo at Siena, culturally very significant, since its site linked it with the High Altar, where Buonaguïda had consecrated Siena to the Virgin, becoming the city’s Protectress as the Hodegetria was the Protectress of Constantinople. The devotion of the Servi di Maria focused on the Sorrows of the Virgin, who will suffer during the Passion of her Son, thus, Coppo’s referencing of the Duomo Madonna in the Servi’s Madonna with Child operates on three levels simultaneously: religious, civic and also fraternal. Coppo has both changed the hieratic arrangement of the figures to incorporate the Hodegetria pose, and additionally the positioning of the haloes of the Virgin and Child, which in the antependium Duomo panel overlap the frame. In the Duomo panel, there are large oval impressions in the nimbus, but in his Orvieto Madonna and Child panel (Fig. 16a), Coppo has “crimped” the outer circumference of the Virgin’s halo, with short, sharp, deep arrow-shaped incisions, rather like a pie-crust, whereas the remainder of the inner field is completely plain, a design he uses on several occasions, possibly mimicking the metallic haloes found specifically in Cypriot icons, or which may have a prototype in the Istorja vvizantiskoj ziropisi icon (Fig. 17). Cypriot haloes are executed in gilded pastiglia to imitate embossed gold or silver sheets, for example the c. 1200 Archangel icon from the Monastery of St Chrysostomos featuring very large scroll designs, a motif that continues in Venice, Croatia and Crete until the mid-quattrocento. (Pastiglia is discussed further in 3.7, Paolo Veneziano’s use of scrolls in 4.5.) Coppo’s lay-out innovation for the Servi has been echoed within the haloes by a new type of design, assimilated, it would seem, from an icon prototype.


7 The 1262 Statutes of Siena show the city council supplied funding to the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Augustinians and the Servi and these subsequent new premises were situated in a quadrant around Siena, the Virgin was “present” in a protective ring around the city. Corrie, p. 55-57.

8 Frinta, Mojmir S., “Raised Gilt Ornament of the Cypriot Icons and the Occurrence of the Technique in the West”, Gesta, Vol 20, No. 2 (1981), pp. 333-347. p. 33, fig. 6. See also Fig. 40, the Cretan icon recently sold by The Temple Gallery.
In Cimabue’s fresco, c.1280, of the *Enthroned Madonna between the Angels and St Francis* (Lower Church, Assisi) all figures have bright yellow-gold flat disk haloes behind their heads, devoid of any decoration, against a dark blue ground, (Fig. 18). However in the *St Francis* panel (Museo di Santa Maria degli Angioli, c. 1285) he changed the saint’s halo, so that from some angles, the very broad, deep, pointed ridges echo the type of sun-ray halo bestowed upon Helios, (Fig. 9) although all rays are of equal length, radiating to the outer circumference in Cimabue’s version, (Fig. 19).⁹ St Francis wrote *Laudes Creaturarum* or *Praise of all Creatures*, including the *Canticle of the Sun*, around 1224, in which “Brother Sun” was singled out for special praise amongst God’s creatures. The resemblance of the decoration of the saint’s halo to the radiance of a sunburst is, this thesis proposes, a direct reference by Cimabue to this text of St Francis, particularly the last section, “. . . And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendour”. This would be most appropriate in terms of the light that is brought to Mankind from God via “Brother Sun” and the original location of this particular work.¹⁰

Additionally, through the agency of St. Francis, the divine light of God is being referenced in a simultaneous transference of meaning, overlying a secondary existing understanding.¹¹ Cimabue is utilising the halo, the “sign”, as the visual locus of communication about Brother Sun, which is in turn a reference to the Creator of everything, and simultaneously a visualisation of God Himself within the light rays, the “representamen”.¹² The development of St Francis as the *alter Christus* is possibly also

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⁹ It is similar to Coppo’s in the two works mentioned earlier, but in Cimabue’s work, the ridges are deeper and broader and more extensive.

¹⁰ Written in Umbrian dialect.

¹¹ “A work of art, therefore, is a complete and closed form in its uniqueness as a balanced organic whole, while at the same time constituting an open product on account of its susceptibility to countless different interpretations which do not impinge on its unadulterable specificity. Hence every reception of a work of art is both an interpretation and a performance of it, because in every reception the work takes on a fresh perspective for itself.” Eco, Umberto, *The role of the reader: explorations in the semiotics of texts*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984, p. 49.

¹² Peirce, Charles, 1.540, “By sign, I mean anything that conveys any definite notion of an object in any way, as such conveyors of thought are familiarly known to us. Now I start with this familiar idea and make the best analysis I can of what is essential to a sign, and I define a representamen as being whatever that analysis applies to.” Cited in Eco, p.180.
being referenced via this halo. Along with the wounds of the *stigmata* imposed/endowed upon Francis, the multiplicity of light references (including the traces of the Apollonian pagan “sunburst”) within the halo can be said to mirror what Keane describes as “metapragmatic statements”. Citing the recitation of certain passages from the Qur’an as a means of the recitor acquiring the specific powers being mentioned, he describes this process by which the passages are changed from a completed narrative into instructions for actions occurring when the words are physically uttered. Thus, the words of St Francis in his *Canticle of the Sun*,

> Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendour! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness

both in their actual and mimetic significance, are being manifested, using the halo as their vehicle.

### 3.2 The Crucifixion and a punched proleptic halo

In contrast to the *St Francis* tavola, Cimabue’s painted *Crucifixion* in Santa Croce, Florence, has a very solid disk nimbus behind Christ’s head, three concentric circles incised into the inner gold field and two cross arms made up of “jewels”, the uppermost arm “tilted” to arise from the top of Christ’s head, seemingly a transitional version between Christ *triumphans* and Christ *patiens*. In the main Venetian Franciscan Church, S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, there is a painted *Crucifixion*, (Fig. 20) finally

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14 Keane, p. 51.
attributed to an Umbrian duecento artist, the *Maestro del Crocifisso del Frari*, after its 1992 restoration.\(^{16}\) The halo is gold leaf, circumscribed with red and although large sections are abraded, it is possible to see some of the internal halo decoration, firstly the inner, single ring punch border that closely follows the outer circumference. Within this is a hexa-punch design, and then inside the halo field a smaller single ring punch border, the innermost circle being a very small single punch delineation, (Fig. 20a). The whole halo design is very plain, referencing Christ’s special status as the Son of God, but in keeping with St Francis’ teaching, His humanity is emphasised, the flesh that has been tortured for mankind is literally purged of the blood that He has shed for us, so that the faithful can pray “*mentaliter potius quam vocalitum*”( in the mind more than out loud), before the Crucifix, in fixed contemplation: “*continuatis aspectibus***\(^{17}\) The image of Christ on the cross is assisting in this process, the realism of His bowed head and His suspended body highlighted by the musculature of the slung arms and the scapular sheath. This is a Franciscan Church, within which both uneducated and educated people worshipped, therefore they required help and based on the beliefs of St Francis, this came through image, realities that they could relate to and understand.

Additionally, St Bonaventura had discussed the function of painting as stirring the viewer emotionally, and particularly in consideration of the *Crucifixion* he urged the worshipper to study and meditate on this. The Frari *Crucifixion* is a visual exegesis of this dictum, subtle details such as the red delineation of the proleptic halo referencing the shedding of the Holy Blood, helping the viewer comprehend the import of what is before him or her. Here, this thesis uses the adjective “proleptic” in its morphological

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\(^{16}\) The *Crucifixion* was installed in the new, enlarged Frari Chuch circa 1260-65 when the High Altar was consecrated. Following the religious suppression of 1810, it was handed over to the diocese Gatti, Isidoro, Padre, *S Maria Gloriosa dei Frari: Storia di una presenza francescana a Venezia*, Venice: Grafiche Veneziane, 1992, pp. 128-130.

\(^{17}\) Settis, p. 176, citing Bonaventure’s *Legenda maior sancti Francisci*. 

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sense, since the blood of Christ has already been shed, as noted above. If this halo is read philologically, rather than as a visual text, appropriating Stephens’ hypothesis regarding the use of the Latin future infinitive with the subjunctive plus *ut*, it could be posited that what he terms as “the constituents of a predication” may be considered to be those elements he defines grammatically as “subject, direct object and indirect object”. Thus, Christ can be read as “subject”, His blood as “direct object” and the halo as “indirect object”. Furthermore, the “adjuncts” Stephens references, “time, means, manner, result, attendant circumstances” may be transposed onto the halo as well. “Ut” means “so that” or “in order to”, therefore something happens in order that a consequential event may occur. Thus the grammatical distinctions can be paralleled as the Crucifixion is referenced, the death of Christ, the reasons for this event and the future salvation of mankind, all packed as meanings into the halo field circumscribed by the red perimeter.

3.4 **Duccio’s Maestà, Simone Martini’s Maestà, and their textural treatments**

These two treatments of the same theme have been selected to demonstrate their artists’ responses to a religious and a civic commission, and how both commercial and theological Mariological currents are incorporated within their halo designs. As well as their Christological devotion, the Franciscan Order greatly honoured the Virgin, and the Frari religious community was very active in its efforts to preach and diffuse the Cult of the Immaculate Virgin throughout Venice. The 1260 General Chapter of the Franciscan Order agreed that the main window behind the high altar, one of the most visible zones within the church, could show a Crucifixion scene, or the Virgin and St Francis and St Anthony. Marian devotion has entered a new era, the status of the

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19 Stephens, p. 604.
Mother of God has been elevated. Now her image is considered a worthy and acceptable alternative to that of Christ, and as such a new trend in altarpieces dedicated to the Virgin began to develop, an important theological shift. Duccio was commissioned to produce an altarpiece dedicated to her for the Duomo of Siena, 1308-11. Entitled Maestà, it features the enthroned Madonna flanked by the other four kneeling Siena City Saints, and ranks of angels, each figure endowed with a large gold disk halo embellished with different decorative features, all hand-tooled (Figs. 21 and 21a-c). These haloes are quite intricate including concentric internal circles interspersed with lozenge shapes and a double-punch design, plus additional areas of hatching delineating arabesques, themselves sometimes intersected by oval shapes.²⁰ For example, in the Angel Gabriel’s halo, two sets of concentric circles make up the border area where a single ring punch alternates with a hexa-rosette surrounding a single ring punch, like flower petals. Between the border of Gabriel’s halo and his head, the internal field contains a tetra-lobe flower design interspersed with beaded groups. In this halo, unlike some, there is no hatching.²¹ Other angels have different haloes, some with apparent pseudo-Arabic script within their borders. This thesis argues, therefore, that along with similar, though diverse, facial characteristics for each angel and saint, the different manifestation of haloes suggests an individuality of this “sign”, much like corporeal and physiognomic individuality, which is part of the transitional process referred to at the beginning of this Chapter, where in the mindsets relating to symbol and sign, the latter began to dominate. In Kristeva’s definition:

The transcendental foundation evoked by the symbol seemed to capsize. This heralds a new signifying relation between two elements, both located on the side of the ‘real’ and ‘concrete’.²²

²¹ Although granulation often replaced cross-hatching between motifs within halo borders, the practice continued into the quattrocento, for example Fra Angelico utilised the technique in his San Domenico Altarpiece, c. 1425, Fiesole, Skaug, p. 144.
Maestà was the title usually associated with Christ, enthroned, signifying His role as the triumphant Redeemer, thus its application to the Virgin signals a different usage, in that not only a religious but also a political message is being highlighted. This political message continues with Simone Martini’s Maestà of 1315-16, commissioned by the Nove for the Palazzo del Comune, Siena, where again the enthroned Madonna is surrounded by the patron saints of Siena, (Fig. 22). The medium is fresco, not panel, and Martini continues to use the traditional rayed design for the haloes – made through the impression of a ruler into built-up layers of plaster - but additionally innovates new designs by using panel-painting techniques experimentally on the fresco medium within the haloes of the Madonna and Christ Child, producing flowers, leaves and stars, more ornate than the familiar ridge.\(^{23}\) By overlaying gold leaf on secco (the dried plaster) rather than fresco, after gilding them Martini texturizes the surface, suggesting simultaneously relief and metallic surfaces, such as the Virgin’s crown and her throne. It is believed Martini may have replaced these in 1321 when he amended his own work of 1315. Onto these, he applies semi-transparent coloured oil glazes, so they physically reflect light, making them more realistic.\(^{24}\) The final embellishment is to insert lozenges of painted glass, verre églomisé, which glitter like precious gems, in the Fanciullo’s halo and in the large brooch on the Virgin’s gown (Figs. 22a-c).\(^{25}\) The formats of the two works are very different; the Virgin’s throne becomes a piece of beautifully tooled Gothic architecture in Martini’s version, she is seated underneath a canopy/baldacchino, and the Byzantine maphorion transformed into contemporary vestments. Although still surrounded by the Protector Saints of Siena, she no longer seems to be in the celestial golden realm, but instead of the terrestrial world, a shift not only in place but also

\(^{23}\) Hoeniger, p. 67 discusses the technique of pressing matrices of the designs into the built-up plaster.

\(^{24}\) Hoeniger, pp. 68-69.

jurisdiction, in that as part of the latter, although simultaneously the Mother of God, and Queen of Heaven, she also functions as the Protectress of the City of Siena within the very seat of the Government of that City. The halo designs vary considerably; those on the upper right side have short evenly-spaced rays within concentric circles, prompting speculation that some of these were produced by aiute in Martini’s shop, although it is accepted that those haloes on the left side (as the spectator views the fresco) are autograph works. Beautifully-veined leaves curl around a penta-rosette (see Figs. 22a and 22b), repeated not only within this fresco, but also in the Five Saints within the transept of the Lower Church of San Francesco, Assisi. Another motif that is repeated is the “moonface” design, so distinctive in the halo of St Clare, and which also appears in the Dream and the Meditation in the Capello di San Martino in the same Church, (Figs. 23, and 23a).26 In both the Maestà and Five Saints frescoes, Martini has used pure gold leaf for the haloes which is why they are still in such good condition, whereas other gilded areas, such as the rods supporting the baldacchino/canopy, are not.27 (Cennini explained that stagnato dorato could be a cheap substitute for gold, and discussed a form of laminated gold, oro fino.)28 This repetitive design within the frescoed halo was probably created by using wooden matrices, which would have been larger than the early punch tools that were beginning to be developed, and used particularly by Simone Martini. The period between 1315 and the early 1320s was quite crucial in the transition from a design produced by free-hand tooling with a stylus to an entirely punched design, not only within the halo but also in the background and on the frames.29 Ground stippling, and simple punch motifs were used pre-Duccio, as noted in the Frari Crucifixion, and also in the ancona of San Donato attributed to Paolo

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26 In Laudes Creaturarum, St Francis also praised sora Luna, “Sister Moon”, referring to her and the stars which God had made as “clear and precious and beautiful”.
27 He had used copper resinate, azurite and carmine for the Christ Child’s halo and the Virgin’s crown and halo. Tintori, p. 95.
28 Cennini, p. 60
29 Skaug, Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico, p. 124.
Veneziano, c. 1310, the very simple hexa-bar-star motif circumscribes the inner single-point border, (Figs. 24 and 24a). This hexa-bar-star may have been made with a stylus, since the (Frinta) Dbb26 punch used by Paolo, also a hexa-bar-star, in the signed and dated 1358 Coronation altarpiece (Frick Collection, New York) has each bar more closely spaced. However, Simone Martini seems to have been the catalyst for the development and use of combining motifs, evidenced by the increase in the number of punches utilised in his workshop, experimenting with them in both fresco and altarpieces. For example, in (Frinta) Punch No. I15, the serrated leaf motif has been translated from the Assisi frescoes into a specific punch, and the penta-rosette has been translated into (Frinta) Punch No. Kb5a, both of which Martini subsequently uses in the Enthroned St Louis with Robert of Anjou altarpiece, (Figs. 25, 25a). Lippo Memmi was also involved with the use of these punches, as seen from the frequency that they appear in the latter’s autographed works as well as collaborative efforts with Simone, collated in Frinta’s catalogue, (Fig 26), and also tabulated within Skaug’s charts. Additionally, Ugolino di Nerio and the Lorenzetti brothers began exploiting the new technique during the 1320s thus Siena became the centre of innovation for punched design, itself a source of civic pride. Around 1333, the Florentine artists enthusiastically embraced this new technique, which soon spread to other Italian centres, thereafter, into France, Spain and Bohemia. Between 1320 and 1340, Martini and Pietro Lorenzetti developed a more sophisticated design by combining different punches to realise a complex and recurring pattern, (Skaug references as the “cluster style”) and this type of motif occurs particularly within halo execution. The attention to the detail of texturising these haloes again emphasises the transitional phase of the halo to its status as a sign, in the sense that it is still referring to something that is

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30 This ancona of San Donato, Bishop of Evorea, was commissioned by the Podestà of Murano, Donato Memo.
31 Frinta, 1998, p. 310, (2.7 x 2.3 magnification).
32 Skaug, p. 495.
33 Probably the result of Giotto’s adoption of the method. Skaug, p. 134.
unrepresentable (because it does not exist) and yet it is being presented, indeed *represented* as something very tangible, very visible and as an individually distinctive object.

3.5 Complex punched designs, and external pinnacle patterns

Simone Martini’s 1333 *Annunciation*, painted for the Duomo, Siena, (Fig. 33) will be discussed in Chapter Four in terms of *splendor* and the halo’s interaction with light and the dense iterative punching he uses to create this specific effect, so here seems an appropriate juncture to explore the actual process of creating this richly textured surface.

The initial preparation of a trecento altarpiece was of crucial importance, because a blemish-free surface was vital for the subsequent execution of the work. Invariably poplar in Northern Italy, the panel was sized with *gesso grosso* followed by a layer of *gesso sottile*, subsequently polished many times to give an ivory-like surface. Since gold was the first colour to be applied, successful adherence of the gold leaf was vital to the finished project, and so after the panel surface had been glaired and dried, the gold leaf was laid onto the next layer, *bole*, a form of sticky red clay. The constant polishing of the gold leaf to give a surface “as even as a mirror . . . almost dark from its own brilliance” results in a physical change to the underlying clay so that the plate-like elements of the bole lie in a horizontal direction, facilitating the essential smooth and perfect surface, thus the spectator’s attention is drawn to the tooling in the burnished gold rather than any imperfection. It is now that all the tooling and punching of the gold leaf takes place, before the execution of the painting, so it would seem to

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34 Cennini, p. 74.
35 They lie flat because they are not round. The bole is usually red because of its iron oxide content, but it is possible to have yellow and other colours. Skaug, [www.punchmarks.net, Glossary](http://www.punchmarks.net). [02.09.09.]
inevitably affect the subsequent work of the artist or shop within the project, because he/she was constantly having to adapt to, and accommodate, what was already there. The work would have been very labour-intensive and perhaps self-limiting in the sense that once tooled, there was little possibility for changing the design, thus alterations to physiognomy, positions, indeed the actual figures themselves, would have been very difficult. It can be seen therefore, that the punching and decoration of a halo within an artwork on panel was not a final finishing-off stage - the “icing on the cake” - but the very beginning of the work’s execution, around which everything else would revolve, a fundamental point to bear in mind.

Even though the gold leaf had been affixed and prepared as described, the gesso layers underneath still had a sufficient quantity of moisture in the glue components to ensure their plasticity, so the three types of tooing - incision/indentation, punching, and granulation or stippling - could be executed without danger of cracking the under-surface or injuring the malleable gold leaf. Particularly in the duecento much of the linear design was executed free-hand by the artist, with a stylus or pair of compasses, or alternatively indentation with a ruler or stylus was utilised, giving a broader impression.36 Even with such simple instruments, through altering the amount of pressure applied, the size/breadth of the stylus, and the frequency of the impressions, it was possible to produce variations in the decorative effects. Examples of both techniques can be seen in the Saints’ haloes in Martini’s Maestà (see Figs. 22 and 22a-c). In this first stage in the tooing process the artist’s intimate connection with the whole process can be seen, initiating these guidelines ready for the main patterns to be produced by the use of motif punches, and then for the background and interstitial areas.

36 Skaug, p. 62. Footnotes 90 and 91, points out that incising actually removes matter from the surface, therefore leaving a jagged outline when magnified, which is deeper than an indented impression. He notes it is possible to see many Florentine haloes of the early 1330s where indented patterns cover large areas of what is otherwise punched design.
to be granulated or stippled. Skaug organises punching into three separate groups: “simple punching, combined punching, and re-worked and composite punching”.

Simple punching, as previously mentioned, is found in duecento work, particularly within halo borders, often the outer circumference, where every punch mark stands alone as a decorative motif, and usually this is a simple ring punch, such as (Frinta) C. The ring punch was the most common punch design in all centres, probably because it was the easiest punch to produce. The design was utilised extensively over a period of time in the Venetian Veneziano bottega, for example: Paolo Veneziano’s *St John the Baptist* (Fig. 10); Lorenzo Veneziano’s 1369 *Jesus giving the keys to St Peter* (Figs. 27 and 27a); Stefano Veneziano’s 1376 *St. Christopher* (Figs. 28 and 28a). It was used into the quattrocento, for example, in Jacobello del Fiore’s delightful *Virgin and Child*, (1420-30, Museo Correr, Venice), where outer circumferences of both the Virgin and her sleeping Fanciullo’s haloes are punched with a single ring punch, although also containing more complex internal punch designs, (Figs. 29, 29a-c). The Venetan (not just Venetian) taste for simple punching also extended into the cinquecento, for example in Lorenzo Lotto’s 1529 *Virgin and Child*, (Museo Correr) where a very simple ring punch provides the decorative element of the haloes of the Virgin and Christ Child and those of the angels, and texturizes the Virgin’s gown, (Figs. 30, 30a-c).

The enhancement of the simple punch design by Florentine artists in the 1330s resulted in another new style. Instead of just utilising one simple circular punch in a band or border, they produced concentric circles of different, single punch motifs, “pearls on a string”, utilised by Giotto and Bernardo Daddi amongst others, giving a quite different effect from the “cluster style” of Siena, or combined punching, mentioned previously.

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37 Within his two volumes, Skaug had indexed 742 types of motif punches. Frinta’s catalogue raisonné is based on over 16,000 negatives of punch work detail. Skaug’s classification is divided into nine divisions which are further sub-divided, Frinta’s into sixteen divisions. They both agree that the simple circular ring punch is the least rewarding punch in terms of attribution because it is so general, thus their examples are selective.
This “pearls on a string” design, although popular in Florence, did not translate across to Venice or Padua, where a simpler form of punching continued to be preferred throughout the trecento. For example, in Jacobello di Bonomo’s St. John the Baptist, c. 1370-90, Museo Correr, he executes a very simple tetra-prong border with (Frinta) Punch Ad14 within a double band, two smaller, undecorated concentric bands are inscribed in the middle of the halo, (Fig. 31). He bestows similar haloes on St Peter and St Andrew, (Figs. 31a-b). Incision work, often in the form of a scroll-like pattern, was preferred within Venetian examples, as in this work where it is used as an additional component of a punched design. This motif also appears within Paolo Veneziano’s shop where the scroll-work is contained between, and connects, the punched designs. The shop comprising Paolo, with his sons Luca, Giovanni and Marco, together with his brother Marco and pupil Lorenzo, developed a “trade mark halo”:

“. . . the form of the aureoli, very large, engraved flat against the gold background with a series of tiny excrescences in triple groups, these being connected by invisibly fine scroll works. This nimb (sic) is one of the “trade marks” of the bottega of Maestro Paolo”39

This scroll-work translates across into Croatian works, notably the 1445 Ugljan Triptych by Ivan Petrov. A later quattrocento panel by an anonymous Greek painter in the Correr contains two very delicate haloes bestowed on the Virgin and Fanciullo, made up of individual single points, swirling into arabesques with curlicues, the Fanciullo’s further delineated by a voided red cross, (Figs. 32, 32a) thus it can be seen that this motif is exploited over a number of years. Combined punching is the utilisation of several motifs together to produce a pattern which is repeated, the previously mentioned “cluster style” developed by Martini and the Lorenzetti. Quite

38 Jacobello di Bonomo, like several Venetian artists, worked along both Adriatic coasts. Strehlke, p. 303. Footnote 67, gives details of his garzone.
frequently this covers a larger surface area than the pattern produced with a single punch, although both patterns may be found simultaneously within works, as for example in Simone Martini/ Lippo Memmi’s *Annunciation*, Uffizi, (Fig. 33 Frinta I32), and this design often includes vegetal shapes, both simple and serrated. Leaves were also used in Paduan and Venetian punching, some typical examples are the SS Sebastian and Prosper panel, from the School of Marco Zoppa (Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale), (Frinta) I62, Niccolò Semitecolo’s 1367 *Trinity* polyptych in the Duomo, Padua, (Frinta) I86a and in Jacobello del Fiore’s *Crucifixion* at the Museo Civico, Padua (Frinta) I96b, (Figs. 33a-c).  

Within re-worked punching, one single motif is made more ornate via extra punches or rings or incisions, a trait detected in the 1340s in Florence, and continuing into the quattrocento. Again, both Martini and Memmi utilise this variation, as in their *Annunciation* and Memmi’s *St Louis of Toulouse*, where (Frinta) Ea Cusped Oval appears. Another common variation is the poly-circle and poly-lobe, (Frinta) punch-marks Oc, 1-8 appearing, for example, in Jacobello del Fiore’s c. 1410 *Storie della vita di S Lucia*, (Figs. 34 and 35).  

Composite punching consists of trilobes and hexarosettes made using simple ring punches arranged in a specific pattern, utilising basic rings and dots, which may appear in the internal borders, or as part of the halo decoration of the internal field. There is however a feature of halo border decoration which has not been addressed in the existing literature. This thesis has detected it as often prevalent in Venetian art but also present in Dalmatian, Greek, Cretan and (occasionally in Florentine works), making it worthy of further consideration. This feature is the poly-lobed “pinnacle” border often

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40 Punch-mark I86a which is a very slightly serrated leaf punch also appears in works in Siena and Florence, and in the Martini/Lippi *Annunciation*.
41 This work, Musei Civici di Fermo, consists of eight small panels, originally from an altarpiece in the Chiesa di S. Lucia del Fermo.
found as an external embellishment to the halo circumference, for example in Giovanni da Bologna’s 1377 *St. Christopher* tavola, (Museo Civico, Padua), commissioned by the *Scuola dei Mercanti* in Venice, where a small pyramidal design has been executed with a simple ring punch. In the Correr’s afore-mentioned fourteenth century *Virgin and Child* executed by an anonymous Greek artist (Fig. 32), and detail, (Fig. 32a), the pyramidal border is quite high, and the entire filigree design of the nimbus appears to have been executed with a stylus. This deep decorative border is also present in a fourteenth century Veneto-Byzantine *Crucifixion with Saints* (Correr, Venice) (Figs. 36, 36a-b), but here the motif has been altered to produce a pronounced external pinnacle border, similar to those borders produced by the knotted lace tradition of the eastern Mediterranean, and especially to Pag Lace, derived from the eastern Mediterranean lace tradition, (Fig. 38). This needlepoint lace was made in the fourteenth century by the Benedictine nuns at Zadar, and at the Franciscan convents on the Croatian islands of Hvar and Visovac. Pag is also an ancient Croatian island, and although its main town, also called Pag, was only constructed in 1453, there had been communities at Stari grad centuries earlier, when the island was strategically important because of its salt panning activities. After coming under Venetian jurisdiction, a Ducal Palace was built in Pag in the Quattrocento, functioning like the Palazzo Ducale in Venice, as both official residence and the seat of government. Thus there was constant contact between Venice and Pag/Zadar, evidenced by the commissions awarded to Venetian artists, and the number of Croatian artists working in Venice, recorded in archival sources. Zadar was the locus of great artistic activity and consequent dissemination of ideas and techniques to the Dalmatian communities. In the mid-quattrocento Donato Bragadin,
the Venetian painter who had signed a “trading agreement” with Jacopo Bellini, (see Document No. 6, Appendix 1), was working in Zadar with his sons Jacopo and Tommaso in the Chapel of St. Anastasia in the Cathedral of Zadar. On 7th October 1460, Pietro Bragadin, another son, was contracted to decorate a new chapel in the Monastery of St. Demetrius. Additionally, there is a panel of the *Mother of Christ and Child* in the Benedictine Monastery at Pag, thought to be by Andrea Mantegna. Thus, it can be seen that there was a great deal of two-way transmission of artists and works between Croatia/Zadar and Venice/Padua. Several of the artists cited used a trilobate pinnacle border in their haloes, such as in St Jerome’s halo in Ivan Petrov’s *Ugljan Polyptych* (Fig. 37). The pyramidal punch marks are quite closely spaced, similar to the pinnacle border found in the late fourteenth century unattributed Gothic *Madonna dell’Umilità*, in the Franciscan Chiesa di San Francesco della Vigna, Venice resembling a border design utilised in Pag lace, which remained unchanged in its Renaissance motifs until the nineteenth century (Fig. 38). Pag lace is different from reticello, the mixture of lace and embroidery utilised in Venice prior to the development of the delicate *punto in aria* lace stitch there in the fifteenth century. However, reticello does not use this pinnacle motif. In his 1450 *St Louis of Toulouse*, (Louvre), Antonio Vivarini used a variety of techniques to decorate the saint’s halo, (Fig. 39) and the pinnacle border has been produced by a stylus rather than a ring punch, like that of the *Virgin and Child* from the Cretan School, (Fig. 40). This is more like an undulating perimeter with a small triple-lobed “knot” at the top of each “wave”, a very simple

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44 Hilje, website.
45 Squarcione’s influence can also be detected within Zadar, and Croatian works. Hilje, website.
47 The Virtual Museum of Textiles cited here has the academic advisor Dott.ssa Doretta Davanzo Poli, an expert on historical textiles, from the Università of Ca’Foscarì, Venice. [www.museocapra.it](http://www.museocapra.it). [accessed 10.08.09.]. *Reticello* is also the name of a design applied to a late quattrocento/cinquecento Muranese glass design which has net-like features overlaying the glass base.
48 This work was in The Temple Gallery, London, (sold 2008) and it can be seen that the curlicues decorating the Virgin’s maphorion and the Christ Child’s gowns are similarly included within their haloes.
design. The Vivarini bottega utilised both pinnacle designs in their works. Within Antonio Vivarini’s signed and dated 1464, altarpiece, the *Polittico di Pesaro* (Pinacoteca Vaticana, Rome), there are widely-spaced quadrilobe pinnacled borders, whereas in the (circa 1467) *St. Clare* panel (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Fig. 41), the saint has a tall hexa-lobe pinnacle halo border. The stylus technique to execute this pinnacled border is utilised frequently by the Vivarini bottega, for example in Bartolomeo’s 1486 *Madonna and Child with Sts Christopher, Sebastian and Roche, Bernard of Clairvaux and Bernard of Siena* (Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan, Fig. 43), where similar pinnacles appear, the internal fields of the haloes covered with floral and geometric motifs.

Bartolomeo’s *St Sebastian* has a quadrilobe pinnacled border, slightly shorter and more usual in later quattrocento works than the taller Greco-Venetian or Cretan-Venetian external pinnacle borders in indigenous Venetian works, such as Jacobello’s del Fiore’s.

Bartolomeo has combined it with a beaded border within two bands, executed with a simple ring punch, the internal field of the halo is incised with very slim rays, and as can be seen from the black and white reproduction, the pinnacles catch light, like a granulated field. In addition to lacework motifs, the pinnacle borders discussed to date resemble a specific Venetian architectural feature, the *merli*, decorative elements on the top of building façades derived from Islamic stele tombstones. Originally defensive in function, they gradually lost this role, becoming purely decorative. The original terracotta *merli* began to be produced in stone and their designs and size varied from triangular to arched summits. The author’s photograph, (Fig. 43), shows the *merli* on the Palazzo Ducale. The word *merli* referring to the

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49 Temple, Richard. ([Richard@templegallery.com](mailto:Richard@templegallery.com)), *Icon of Virgin and Child from Cretan School, Late Fifteenth Century*. E-mail to Susan Martin ([susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk)) (15.08.09.). Dr Sir Richard Temple noted that the punching did not seem to be as delicate and skilful as the execution of the painting which he said was of a very high quality. He suggested the halo execution seemed to be “routine professional work” and discussed the multitude of assistants employed within the Cretan workshops.

50 The Virgin in this work is very similar to his Virgin in the *Chiesa di Bragora* in Venice.

51 Pinnacle borders can also be found in his *Madonna col Bambino*, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, and his *Madonna della Misericordia*, 1415-20, Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice.

architectural motif is very similar to the Italian noun *il merletto* meaning “lace”. This thesis suggests a synthesis between the two media, lace and architecture, appropriated by artists and used as a decorative motif, the locus of this process being Venice. On Pag, remnants of Byzantine fortifications date from the Justinian period, but much of the architecture, particularly in the city of Pag, dates from the later quattrocento, without the melding of Arabic and Byzantine styles that were absorbed into architecture, as in Venice. There is not a causal link between these two media and external pinnacle borders within artworks, but it can be speculated that the presence of both Pag lace within the great trading centre of Venice and the very visible and constant presence of Arabic ornamentation on the façades of many Venetian *palazzi* had an impact on the mindsets of artists and a developing aesthetic turn. Thus this thesis proposes that these factors influenced their subsequent execution of halo decoration, like the presence of silks and other ornamented luxury textiles, glassware and brassware, that were subsequently translated into designs in haloes in artworks, as argued later in this Chapter and within Chapter Four. Although there may have been a strong desire to decorate all forms, nevertheless it could be argued that this appropriation and assimilation into halo representation of architectural motifs, themselves possibly translated from fabrics and other luxury ware, is a further example of the halo’s journey from symbol to sign, its “concretisation” utilising everyday visual experience. Thus, this immaterial paradoxical “object” is seen to be in contention with the previous century’s thinking where “the symbol does not ‘resemble’ the object it symbolizes”. Rather, through its incorporation of recognisable commercial and architectural designs within its body and on its periphery, the halo is demonstrating “the strained ambivalence of the

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sign’s connection, which lays claim to resemblance and identification of the elements it holds together, while first postulating their radical difference.”

However, pinnacle borders were not always a feature of Vivarini production; frequently they utilised an internal arcaded border, such as those found in the Ancona di Santa Sabina at San Zaccaria, 1443, Venice, incorporating many elements of High Gothic decoration and style, including a very ornate frame, complete with soaring architectural pinnacles, (Fig. 44). The saints’ haloes are elliptical disks, the plain gold field internally bordered with a simple small arcade, whereas the Archangel’s halo is punched with a high external pinnacle border (Figs. 44a-b).

Gentile da Fabriano, who had sojourned in Venice between 1409 and 1415, also bestowed similar halo borders in his Virgin and Child (1408-1410, Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria, Figs. 45, 45a) and the earlier Virgin and Child between St. Francis and St. Clare, (1390-95, Malspina Pinacoteca, Pavia, 46, 46a). However, he also executed a triangular border intersected by a vertical line, around the halo perimeters, (see Fig.110), more geometric in style than the usual Venetian drop pendant border, but reminiscent of the triangular dentata design on the external façade of the Duomo at Murano, (Fig. 47, 47a).

### 3.6 Granulation and pastiglia work

Once the main pattern had been punched, stippling or granulation was executed in two ways, free-hand or by using a specific punch(es), usually mostly covering the interstitial spaces, although in the Annunciation Martini/Memmi have also used the technique to

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55 In Chapter Five, the appropriation of Venetian architectural motifs is noted both within Jacopo Bellini’s artworks and the frames of his works.
distinguish different types of fabric. In this work, amongst others Martini used a type of punch with several points, square or rectangular, (also used in fresco) for granulating. In the Virgin’s halo, granulation detail is seen between the motifs executed with a simple ring punch, whereas in the Five Saints fresco at Assisi, the background surrounding the “moonface” motif has a reticulated texture, (see detail in Fig. 23a), a pattern found in some Neapolitan panels which have been linked with Cypriot works by Crusader artists, very probably where Martini first encountered it when he was working in Naples.

Cennini described the reason for granulation as making the ground “sparkle like millet grains”, which helps throw out light and reflect it, very similar to the Byzantine practice in luxury relief icons in which repoussé, filigree and enamel work provide a distinct texture to their surface. An example is the late tenth century Icon of the Archangel Michael, booty from the Fall of Constantinople in 1204, now in the Treasury of San Marco, Venice, (Fig. 48). Beautifully intricate filigree patterns decorate the internal nimbus field and also the external background. The halo is circumscribed by a double border containing enamelled white-outlined diamonds with an internal red pattern, surrounded by blue enamel, all interspersed at regular intervals with gems. Thus form and radiance are simultaneously experienced in the icon, which is the same experience that Cennini is describing, when discussing the granulated surface of gold leaf “sparkling like millet grains”. In both instances, therefore, although executed several hundred years apart, the texturised upper layer of the halo is physically activating the viewer’s senses, the coruscating surface is an integral component of the

56 Cennini discusses a rosetta, an iron tool to granulate the panel. Milanese, Gaetano and Carlo, “Trattata della Pittura di Cennino Cennini da Colle de Valdese: di nuova pubblicato, con molte correzioni e col’aggiunta di più capitoli tratti dai codici fiorentini”, Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1859, p. 184 (Tavola). Skaug, p. 65, points out that a specific tool, a cog-wheel, called a rotella or rulino was utilised by Northern and Central European artists, although he says that execution of granulation by this means “is extremely rare in Italian Trecento painting”.
58 Cennini, (Milanese), Capitolo CXL, p. 93.
viewing/contemplative process, (Fig. 48a). As Pentcheva points out, the relief icon “responds to the prevailing theory of vision known as extramission”, because the spectator’s eye is constantly roving over the icon’s surface engaging with its varying textures. Additionally, she discusses the performativity of the icon “through its materiality” and the halo described above is an intrinsic element of this materiality.

This taste for ornamentation also encompassed pastiglia and cast application, two forms of raised decoration technique much favoured by Venetian artists, such as Jacobello del Fiore, Michele Giambono and the Vivarini bottega, as well as Venetan artists such as Stefano da Verona. Pastiglia, recommended by Cennini as particularly suitable for reliquaries, was produced in two ways. Gesso sottile was laid directly onto the ground while still warm, and then layers were built up using a brush. Alternatively, a technique similar to piping royal icing from a bag could be employed with gesso sottile of a thicker consistency to form foliate or scroll-like motifs, which were later gilded and burnished. According to Frinta, pastiglia was a cheap substitute used by immigrant workers in thirteenth century Cypriot icons (and a group found at St Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai) for the precious metal repoussé work found on luxury icons. Consequently, the traditional Eastern spiritual meanings attached to gold, silver and precious gems may have changed. Gilded pastiglia was not a Byzantine ornamentation. In a Sienese Crucifix in San Gimignano, attributed to the Guidesque Clarisse Master (active in the 1290s), there is a pastiglia halo, which was not contemporaneous in Sienese art but did appear in Crusader art following the flight to Cyprus after the Fall of Acre. Its later appearance on Balkan icons may have resulted from its great popularity in Venice. It lends itself to tactility and to the play of light,

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59 Pentcheva, p. 641.
62 Derbes, Footnote 64.
expertly exploited not only in Venice, but also in Florence by Gentile da Fabriano where a fine demonstration of its qualities can be found in his 1423 Pala Strozzi, (Fig. 49) produced some fourteen years after his sojourn in Venice. He has used pastiglia to model both Gaspare’s and Melchiore’s crowns, the hilt of the servant’s sword and the gold bells on the kestrel’s legs (Figs. 49a-b).

Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d’Alemagna’s Coronation of the Virgin, 1444, Chiesa di San Pantalon, Venice, contains gilding work on the books, copes and mitres orchestrated into a sumptuous display of the differing light effects of gold, complemented by an internal arcaded border in the haloes, (Figs. 50, 50a.). Antonio Vivarini’s trittico, San Bernardino with Sts Jerome and Louis, c.1451-56, at San Francesco della Vigna, Venice, also contains pastiglia work, on St Jerome’s book and St Bernard’s emblem, seemingly functioning as a “surrogate” halo here, (Figs. 51, 51a). The haloes are quite thick but very plain, the ornamentation is in St Bernard’s I H S monogram, the visual focus for the spectator, quite different from the St Louis panel, c. 1450 (Fig. 39) which again has very noticeable pastiglia work on the mitre, the pastoral staff, the embossed book cover and the saint’s stole. The halo has an external pinnacle border with a darker gold inner broad band of pseudo-Arabic script, which seems to be in relief work, as though a form of pastiglia, (Figs. 52a-c). Similarly, the signed and dated 1446 Enthroned Madonna and Child with Saints, (Accademia, Venice, Fig. 53) has much pastiglia decoration within it. Commissioned by the Scuola della Carità for their albergo, it resembles Martini’s 1315-16 Maestà at The Palazzo del Comune, Siena, in the sense that the Virgin is located in a place where meetings and business are to be conducted (although in the Venetian Scuola’s case, these meetings are not civic). Vivarini’s Virgin is flanked by the four Church Fathers, Sts Gregory, Jerome, Ambrose and Augustine. The figures are seated or standing on a raised stone pedestal, and they
are in a space surmounted by *merli*, slightly taller than those of the Palazzo Ducale, behind which it is possible to see the sky and trees, so this conflation of divine with terrestrial is in a specifically Venetian site, (Fig. 53a).\(^{63}\) The gilded *pastiglia* similarly gives a presence and solidity to the haloes of the Virgin, Child and saints, thereby affirming their presence in the terrestrial *Scuola*, (Figs. 53b-g). Once again, the halo is interposing in the terrestrial/celestial relationship, signifying the holiness of the figures, yet its undeniable materiality further complicates its oscillating status as an immaterial, non-existent sign. The earlier 1421 *Triptych of Justice* (Fig. 54) commissioned from Jacobello del Fiore for the Magistrato del Proprio at the Palazzo Ducale does not specifically situate the Virgin/Justice/Venezia and the Archangels Gabriel and Michael within Venice, but again the liberal use of *pastiglia* in the haloes is not only eye-catching because of the light play on the gilded surfaces, but its projection from the surface is three-dimensional. Thus, in Jacobello’s work there is both a temporal and physical rupture of the viewing space of the spectator, and additionally, there is an intrusion into the liminal space of the viewer’s presence. Time is an essential factor in the viewing process and of necessity the mind requires time, indeed a time lapse, when the spectator is viewing an artwork. This is part of the sifting process where the mind “encounters obstacles, interprets, rejects, then repudiates or transcends its rejection”.\(^{64}\)

### 3.7 Cristallo – the Venetian industrial realisation of a theological metaphor

Light plays not only on gilded surfaces, but also on the medium of glass, and glass was one of the most important Venetian industries both for her home market and for exports. Based on Murano, glass manufacturing was strictly controlled by the Venetian Senate,  

\(^{63}\) Final “proof” of the Venetian location is the emblem of the Scuola delle Carità appearing several times within the painting.  

with the two-fold purpose of maintaining its high quality and the secrets of its manufacturing processes. Several different types of glass were produced at Murano, including a type of white glass, vetrum blanchum, (sic) cristallino and an opaque white glass called lattima, in which oxide of tin produced the porcelein-like effect. Prior to 1450, luxury glass was a colourless, Islamic-style enameled product, exemplified in a group named the Aldrevandin beakers, (Fig. 55) made by Magister Bartolomeus Aldrevandin, with his brother Petrus, important makers of vetrum bianchum. The enameled decorations are considered to have been inspired by the Pillars of Acris, standing in front of the Basilica di San Marco, Venice (Fig. 156), another example of an architectural motif within Venice being used by artists as a decorative element within their work. Glass enamellers were usually local, although archival records mention enamellers from Zadar and Greece. The use of the Levantine flux, allume catina, in the Venetian furnaces had been mandatory since the trecento to regulate quality, and a 1384 Decree of the Senate reinforced the ban on its sale to other glass-making centres, like Milan, Verona, Vicenza and Padua. Venetian merchants used the allume catina ashes as ballast in their ships in the cotton trade with Syria. In 1450, however, Angelo Barovier through lixiviation, perfected the art of making cristallo, a very high quality and truly transparent glass, much more so than even rock crystal. The Aldrevandin glass was of a darker hue, and its quality was not as fine, so immediately cristallo became the benchmark for glass manufacturing. Thus it can be seen that cristallo not only had a high financial value, but its social and cultural status was also considered important for

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65 In 1419, Bartolomeo di Giovanni and colleagues were fined two and a half lire because they had gone “ad laborandum de arte vitrorium fuori di Venezia”. ASV Podestà di Murano, Busta 12, fasc. 3
66 Lattima first appears in records in 1420. Turner, Guy, “‘Allume Catina’ and the Aesthetics of Venetian Cristallo”, Journal of Design History, Vol. 12, No. 2, (1999), pp. 111-122, p. 116. Throughout this next section of the thesis, it will be seen that cristallo is written in a variety of ways, these have been taken from the archival records and thus are reproduced as shown there.
68 The ashes of allume catina come from a type of coastal plant high in sodium alkali. Turner, p. 115.
69 This is a method of purifying the glass flux. Turner, p.111.
70 In his 1612 treatise L’Arte Vetraria, the Florentine monk Antonio Neri, described the process in very descriptive alchemical language, comparing its production with that of gold from base metal.
the Venetian state, so much so that during the mandatory cavata recess when the furnaces were repaired, Angelo Barovier, Jacopo d’Anzolo and Niccolò Mozetto were granted official permission to keep their furnaces burning in order to fulfil orders for cristallo. Additionally, imitation glass gemstones were manufactured on Murano, specifically calcedonia, (like banded agate), and in 1475 Jacopo d’Anzolo delivered eleven calcedonia vessels to Filippo Strozzi in Florence, a demonstration that wealthy and powerful Florentine customers, as well as those in many other parts of the world where Venetian merchants traded, were appreciative of the prestige associated with this Venetian luxury ware, (Fig. 56). In 1480, a group of pilgrims from Venice en route to Jerusalem gave cristallo ware to the diodero in Damascus. It is therefore not inconceivable that the impact of the experiments leading up to the stabilisation of the manufacturing method of cristallo should excite some form of response within artworks, themselves extremely prestigious “commodities” within which an element of innovation was often appreciated by their committente. The presence of Venetian artists in Florence and Florentine artists in Venice during the first half of the quattrocento is well documented, and the 1440s were particularly rich in this trans-State diffusion of artistic influences. The Chiesa di San Zaccaria, Venice, is an interesting locus to consider this artistic exchange, specifically that of Domenico Veneziano, (active 1438-1461), an artist not particularly well documented owing to a dearth of archival records, although seemingly born in Venice c. 1410. He always retained his Venetian

74 Florentine merchants commissioned Donatello’s signed and dated polychrome wooden 1438 St John the Baptist for the Frari Church, and Salviata Martini, widow of the Florentine Giovanni Martini commissioned the Martini Chapel in the Chiesa di San Giobbe, its ceiling decorated in polychrome terracotta roundels of Padre Eterno e gli Evangelisti by the Della Robbia bottega in 1475.
citizenship, signing himself as \textit{Domenico da Vinesia dipintore}, in a letter to Piero’
de’Medici dated 1\textsuperscript{st} April 1438.\textsuperscript{75} He seems to have worked for Gentile da Fabriano in
Venice, before his apprenticeship to him between 1422 and 1423 in Florence.\textsuperscript{76} According to Vasari, he was so well-known in Venice that it was impossible for Jacopo
Bellini to achieve any form of recognition until “after the departure of the said
Domenico” to work in Florence and Perugia.\textsuperscript{77} Michelangelo Muraro had become
convinced of Domenico’s involvement in the execution of the figure of \textit{St John the
Evangelist} in the fresco cycle within the Capello di San Tarasio during the course of
extensive restoration work, when he noted the different colour palette used by the artist
in comparison with Castagno, who was also working on the cycle in August 1442.\textsuperscript{78}
Muraro tracked the eight stages of the intonaco junctions, and specifically mentioned
Domenico’s luminous treatment of the hands, where he:

\begin{quote}
.. has lightened the knuckles with discontinuous touches of red to suggest want
of blood in the diaphanous hands”, and the use of white “…and bone black in
the eyebrows . . . to suggest a subtle visual sense of vaporous material.\textsuperscript{79}
\end{quote}

From this description, it can be seen that Domenico is experimenting with light and as a
Venetian, albeit a temporary visitor, he surely would have become aware of the
experiments leading to the development of \textit{cristallo} production because not only is
Venice a very small city, but there was also a documented commercial exchange

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{75 His burial documentation describes him as Dominicho Vineziano and Domenicho Veniziano. Wohl, Hellmut, \textit{The Paintings of Domenico Veneziano. A Study in Florentine art of the Early Renaissance}, Oxford and New York: Phaidon, 1980, p. 6.}
\footnote{76 Robertson, Giles, “Untitled Review of \textit{The Paintings of Domenico Veneziano, c. 1410-61, A Study in Florentine Art of the Early Renaissance}, by Hellmut Wohl, Phaidon, 1980”, p. 61. Gentile had three great pupils, Pisanello, Jacopo Bellini and Domenico Veneziano, and he left his tools in his Will to Pisanello. Wohl p.7.}
\footnote{78 As noted in the signed inscription found in the 1950 restoration.}
\footnote{79 Muraro, p. 158.}
\end{footnotes}
between artists and the glass factories since the former supplied designs to the glass factories, and the *vendecolori* supplied pigments to both artists and glass manufacturers. The father of the Vivarini brothers was involved in the glass industry on Murano, although the brothers appeared to live and work in central Venice. Antonio Vivarini, Giovanni d’Alemagna and Ludovico da Forlì were commissioned by the nuns of San Zaccaria to produce their beautiful triptych for the High Altar, as well as the Santa Sabina and the Corpus Christi altarpieces but this was the following year in 1443, so although the idea is tantalisingly appealing, it is unsafe to assume that Domenico and the Vivarini/d’Alemagna did have contact at San Zaccaria, though it is most certainly possible that they already knew each other. However, the following year, 1445, Domenico produced his *Virgin and Child with Saints* pala, commonly known as the *St Lucy Altarpiece*, for the Chiesa di Lucia de’Magnoli in which for the very first time, the figures are endowed with gold-rimmed “glass” haloes, in a variety of positions, flat or above or behind their heads, (Fig. 57). There is the slightest suggestion of a gold “wash” on parts of St Lucy’s halo, almost as though the gold rim was reflecting its colour onto the glass halo. This thesis proposes that this new “glass” halo is Domenico’s response to the exciting new glass he had encountered in Venice, only just being produced in a more transparent form as *cristallo*. This is particularly appropriate in view of the inclusion in this altarpiece of St Lucy, the patron saint of eyesight owing to the circumstances of her martyrdom, and whose very name means

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81 Steer, Susan Dr., (susanruthsteer@gmail.com) Bartolomeo Vivarini – Christ Enthroned. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), 14th August 2009.

82 The Church is dedicated to John the Baptist’s father.

“light”. Proud of his Venetian citizenship, Domenico signed this work and that of the Carnesecchi Tabernacle

OPUS DOMINICI DE VENETIIS and DOMI[NI]CUS D[E] VENECIIS P[INXIT]\(^{85}\)

The St Lucy Altarpiece has been considered very innovatory in terms of both spatial composition and particularly colouring (it is tempera on panel)\(^{86}\) and its antique Byzantine format overlaying a new Renaissance composition. Situated in a loggia with orange trees visible above the upper horizontal borders through the arches, this has visual echoes in the previously-mentioned Vivarini 1446 Carità work (Fig. 53) where foliage is visible in the dark sky behind the merli, thus based on a comparison of these two compositions, this thesis suggests that the artists had had some form of Venetian contact. The St Lucy haloes are quite large, (Figs. 57a-c) more precisely their gold rims are, and prototypes for these can be traced in the gold-lipped edges of solid disk haloes in Domenico’s Carnesecchi Tabernacle, c. 1440-04, particularly the Head of a Tonsured, Beardless Saint.\(^{87}\) Additionally, the St Lucy haloes are up above, or behind, the heads, not lying flat to the picture plane, another innovation much more obvious in this composition than in gold-tooled panels. This innovation of the “glass halo” was slow to be taken up initially, then Cosmè Tura bestowed gold-rimmed “glass” haloes on the Virgin and Christ in his 1460 Pietà, (Correr, Venice) but these are more like Aldevandrin glass than cristallo, opaque rather than crystal clear, and instead of “floating” behind her head, the Virgin’s halo is a slim ellipsis on top of her head, (Figs.

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\(^{84}\) Her relics are now venerated in the Chiesa di San Geremia, Venice on 13\(^{th}\) December, the shortest day, in anticipation of the increasing light to come.

\(^{85}\) De Venetiis and De Veneciis are statements of Venetian nationality. Wohl, p. 17.

\(^{86}\) Keith Christiansen discusses Domenico’s “paleness of palette”, cautioning that this altarpiece is badly-bleached. He describes Domenico’s “detailed intellectual approach to narrative” and Longhi’s correct understanding of “the deep affinity that exists between Domenico’s approach to painting – his narrativa ornata – and ideas developed by Alberti in De Pictura”, in his review of the exhibition Masaccio and the ‘pittura di luce’. Florence in The Burlington Magazine, Vol 132, No.1051 (Oct 1990), pp. 736-739, p. 739.

\(^{87}\) National Gallery, London.
Venetian artistic currents flowing into Padua during Tura’s sojourn there between 1453-56 may have been osmotically retained by Cosmè. There was certainly a two-way transmission of ideas in Padua, for example, the *sacra conversazione* format used by Domenico Veneziano and also Filippo Lippi\(^88\) may well have influenced Donatello’s *Santo* altar, which in turn has many resonances in Andrea Mantegna’s *San Zeno Altarpiece* of 1457-60, further evidence of the slow, rather than immediate, filtration of particular elements into the artistic mainstream. Indeed, Lippi’s triptych can be seen to have influenced Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d’Alemagna’s *Four Fathers of the Church* altarpiece, previously discussed.\(^89\) A drawing by Tura, originally attributed to Lippi, of *The Virgin and Child with Saints Sebastian, Francis, Dominic and Agatha* certainly echoes a specific Paduan influence, found in an extant composition used by Pizzolo in a sculpted relief in the Ovetari Chapel. In this, the Virgin’s head and that of the Christ Child are situated below those of the saints, which is quite a rare design. Additionally, elements of Squarcione’s School are present in Cosmè’s works,\(^90\) this bottega was the locus for more artistic exchange since Marco Zoppa is recorded as working in Squarcione’s shop in an adoption contract at the same time that Cosmè was in Padua, and simultaneously, Andrea Mantegna and Donatello.\(^91\)

In 1465, Marco Zoppo produced three wonderful haloes in his *Dead Christ Supported by Saints* (National Gallery, London), in which the translucency of disks of fine glass can be seen, the edges not gold nor even silver, but crystal rims where light meets the hard material yet the sky behind can be viewed through it.  Almost like slabs of ice

\(^{88}\) *Madonna and Child with Four Saints*, now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of New York and the Accademia Albertina, Turin.


\(^{90}\) Cosmè never quite lost the awkwardness of his early experiments, such as in *Saints Peter and Paul, Maurelius and a kneeling donor*, c. 1474. The small “glass” halo of Maurelius is placed above, but the rear circumference obscured by, his head, and St Paul’s is flat to the picture plane behind his head, though not a perfect disk, neither exactly in ellipsis

\(^{91}\) Chapman, p. 8, citing a document of 24\(^{th}\) May 1455 suggesting that Zoppo had already been in the shop for two years, however a later document suggests he began working there in April 1454.
illuminated by the sun, the haloes are present, yet their very translucency endows them with an insubstantiality, (Figs. 59, 59a-c). This is a total reversal of the textural elements examined to date; here it is the absence of texture that is so noticeable, the spectator’s gaze skates across the smooth, even surface, the only caesura, using a literary phrase, caused by the reflection of the pure light bouncing off and through the haloes. Zopp bestows a similar halo on St Jerome in *St Jerome in the Wilderness* (c.1460-70, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Fig. 60) the very “iciness” of the nimbus contrasting with the dry rock contours, recalling the etymology of “nimbus” examined in 1.1. Again, this nimbus is in ellipsis and just “hovering” above the saint’s head. Yet there is another rupture in the *Dead Saints* panel, which will be echoed by Giovanni Bellini in his Palazzo Ducale Pietà, and this is the hand that is interposed between Christ’s halo and His head, a representation of two carnal objects “sandwiching” a representation of a non-existent and “unrepresentable” object in a believable sequence.

From this point artists in both Venice and Florence began depicting haloes in two new modes, as well as continuing with the traditional punched halo on gold leaf. Firstly, haloes became more transparent as if made from glass, (rather than ice), usually in ellipsis and frequently gold-rimmed like goblets, which was an appropriation of another manufacturing practice developing from around the 1450s, the gilding of glass drinking glasses. At this stage, Venetian glass-makers were working in Florence, although because of the different raw materials (and absence of *allume catine*), the Florentine glass still had a slightly greenish hue, the Venetian glass-makers used manganese oxide

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92 Hills also considers Zoppo an innovator, but says Zoppo is developing a new grammar of colour. Hills, (1999), p. 104. This thesis is proposing a different argument, namely arguing for the mimesis of cristallo by Zoppo.

93 This thesis thanks Ma. Eugenio Alonson, Curator Assistant Old Masters at the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, for bibliographic information concerning this painting.
to clarify their glass and remove the green tints of the iron in silica.\footnote{Cagno, Simone, (Simone.Cagno@ua.ac.be), Tuscan Glass. E.mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), 19th August 2009. Simone Cagno of the University of Antwerp kindly provided this information, based on an examination of samples collected from the Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza, Florence. The later Tuscan examples of high quality glass scientific instruments, such as thermometers, produced for the Medici, were dated to the late cinquecento and are evidence of a well-established industry.} It was therefore not surprising that the earlier “glass” haloes painted by artists there have a slightly more opaque quality with a yellowish tint, rather than the crystalline effect produced by Zoppo.\footnote{Vanoccio Biringuccio (1480-1539) wrote De la pirotechnica, a metallurgical treatise, published in 1540, which discussed the decoration of glass after its removal from the furnace.} There was a fascination about the aqueous content of rock crystal and glass, a lingering superstition that somehow ice was suspended within it. Furthermore, there was a belief that by virtue of its transparency, crystal was very pure, anything evil could be shown up by it, and indeed it was thought that crystal would spontaneously shatter if it came into contact with any form of poison, hence because of its incorruptibility it was an ideal medium with which to distinguish particularly the Virgin and Christ and saints.\footnote{Breeze, Andrew, “The Blessed Virgin and the Sunbeam Through Glass”, Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies, 2, (1991), pp. 53-64, p. 54-63, passim.} Sunbeams passing through glass without causing any harm acted as a metaphor both for the Annunciation and the Incarnation, and had been a part of the theological “landscape” in Europe for centuries.

The printing of Pliny the Elder’s Natural History in Latin in Venice in 1472 by Nicolas Jensen, and the subsequent edition of Cristoforo Landino’s Italian translation in 1476, again in Venice, may well also have spurred interest in the “glass halo”, since the production of glass was discussed in this.\footnote{Inc. B.3.2., Cambridge University Library. Hills, (1999) also noted this.} The application of the “glass halo” continued into the cinquecento, Carpaccio frequently utilised it and in his c. 1515 Flight into Egypt, (Figs. 61, 61a-b), beautiful, polished glass haloes are bestowed on the Holy Family.\footnote{Oil on panel, 72 x 111 cm., National Gallery of Art, Washington. Interestingly Carpaccio is using oil, whereas Zoppo was using tempera, to produce these beautiful, translucent surfaces.}
3.8 Silk veil haloes - interpreting Holy Writ through halo agency

In the 1470s, simultaneously, artists began producing haloes that were very diaphanous, as if composed of an extremely fine and light material, more like a veil than glass, sometimes with an internal cruciferous design if the Christ Child was depicted. This development coincided with a parallel growth in the manufacture of very light silk veils, both in Venice and also in Bologna. Until the late trecento, Bologna had been the largest producer of silk veils in Italy, and one of their largest markets was Venice. A raft of legislation, similar to that imposed upon the glass industry to control and uphold quality – but also protectionist in nature - was imposed upon the many different types of silks and luxury fabrics both produced in, and imported into, Venice. Bolognese veils were made from an extremely fine silk produced in Emilia, and then imported into Venice. Additionally, veli sottili were produced in Venice using Emilian silk and became an important sector of the Venetian silk trade. There were many different weights, sizes and thus transparency, of silk veils. Different veils distinguished the social hierarchy within Venetian society so the silk veil was an intrinsic factor in

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99 Molà, Luca, “Le Donne nell’Industria Serica Veneziana del Rinascimento” in eds. Luca Molà, Reinhold C. Mueller, and Claudio Zanier, La seta in Italia dal Medioevo al Seicento: Dal baco al drappo, pp. 423-459, p. 435. Dr Molà very kindly suggested sources to the author of this thesis and confirmed that precisely from the 1470s there had been a great development in the production of silk veils. Molà, L. (L.Mola@warwick.ac.uk) Silk Veils. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk) 27.08.09.

100 Molà, Luca, La Comunità dei Lucchesi a Venezia: Immigrazione e Industria della Seta nel Tardo Medioevo, Istituto Veneto di Scienza, Lettere ed Arti, Vol LIII, 1994, pp. 29-30. The Venetian silk industry was very well established, and had been given a great impetus in the trecento when silk-workers from Lucca emigrated to Venice between 1314 and 1430, concentrating around San Giovanni Crisostomo, although the Venetian silk industry lay in a swathe from the Rialto to Cannaregio, including the parocchi of S. Bartolomeo, S. Cancian and SS. Apostoli. In this exhaustive analysis Dr Molà concludes that in the early quattrocento, the silk industry in Venice, Florence and Genova was no longer dominated by the Lucchese, but instead by ‘home-grown’ entrepreneurs, producers and workers, p. 277. He had only found one recorded Lucchese fabric designer “pictor operum sete”, Bartolomeo da Tassignano, but noted that in the quattrocento they were recorded in both Florence and Genova. He noted that Anna Rinversi, Jacopo Bellini’s wife, was the niece of Pietro di Coluccino Rinversi, a Lucchese silk merchant resident in Venice, p. 189 and footnote 145, in Molà, Luca, (1994). Jacopo Bellini has already been mentioned supplying designs to the Muranese glass factories, and his book of fabric designs in the Louvre contains designs for silk fabrics.

everyday life, viewed constantly on the *fondamente* of Venice, and was an important export, specifically from the 1470s onwards, tightly regulated by government controls. It is therefore quite natural that, as with *cristallo*, elements of this precious Venetian commodity were appropriated by artists, like Bartolomeo Vivarini, and transposed into gauze-like, exquisitely-textured haloes, such as in his 1473 *Madonna of the Misericordia* at the Chiesa di Santa Maria Formosa, Venice, (Figs. 62, 62a) where the Virgin’s halo beneath her crown held by two angels is like a dark gold silk veil. Bartolomeo paints this new type of diaphanous halo again in the *Virgin and Child* c. 1475\(^\text{102}\) (Fig. 63) where the Fanciullo’s cruciferous nimbus overlies the Madonna’s veil, and His blonde ringlets lie over the sky viewed through the nimbus. Her nimbus similarly shows the background of the slim dark curtain (rather than a cloth of honour as in trecento Sienese paintings) situated behind her. His 1480 *Virgin and Child*,\(^\text{103}\) (Fig. 64) is a similar composition. The 1487 Frari *Virgin Enthroned with Saints*, (Fig. 65, 65a) also features “silk veil” nimbi, flat and foreshortened, with a yellowish-gold hue inside their gold circumferences, as does his 1490 *Virgin and Child* (Figs. 66, 66a).\(^\text{104}\)

In Homily I, among many other descriptions, Proclus of Constantinople develops the concept of the Virgin as a textile loom. Her womb represents the workshop, and the loom inside it weaves the flesh of God.\(^\text{105}\)

Additionally, in a well-known metaphor, Mary is described as the “tabernacle” of Christ. In his paintings, it could be argued that Bartolomeo is highlighting the Virgin’s role as both the “tabernacle”, and the “weaver” of Christ’s “flesh”, superimposing these

\(^{102}\) Tempera on panel, 54.4 x 42.6 cm., Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington.  
\(^{103}\) Tempera on panel, 66.4 cm., x 49.4 cm, John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art. The nude Christ Child, stands directly on the parapet rather than a tasselled cushion, a slim, plain, dark curtain behind the Virgin, glimpsed through her sheer nimbus.  
\(^{104}\) Tempera and oil on canvas, transferred from panel, 57.5 x 46.5 cm. The Hermitage Museum, Moscow. Here, the nude Christ Child sits on a tasselled cushion on a parapet, both He and the Madonna are in front of a dark green curtain, its creases easily viewed through their “silk” haloes, His is subtly cruciferous, and both have a dark gold circumference.  
\(^{105}\) Constas, p. 145, citing Homily I on the Incarnation.
meanings upon her halo which has the likeness of a textile, a silk veil. Thus, through the agency of her “silk veil halo” he is reinforcing both this function, and Christ’s role.

However, it is not just in Venice that the “silk halo” is encountered. In Chapter Five several examples are given of haloes with gold stippling, and/or linee serpentine, the gold “twirl” patterns, particularly utilised within Florence, especially by Fra Lippi and Botticelli, to decorate their “silk veil” haloes. Botticelli’s Madonna del Libro, c. 1480 is a fine example of this usage, (Fig. 67). Both haloes are exquisitely ornamented, (Figs. 67a-b) the Virgin’s has a deep border surrounding the internal linee serpentine radiating from her head. The Fanciullo’s is cruciferous, the cross arms containing a delicate internal decoration, areas of gold stippling separating them extending to the gold rim. Each halo is a yellowish gold, contrasting with the absolute sheerness of the Virgin’s long, white silk veil, with its gold border and tasselled fringe, the colour echoing her halo border. Vasari claimed that before Botticelli entered the workshop of Fra Filippo Lippi, he had been apprenticed to a goldsmith, and certainly the intricacy of Sandro’s designs within his haloes could have been influenced by this early training. In the Virgin’s halo border in the Madonna del Libro, within the roundels, there is a hexa-bar star design, similar to those found within punched haloes. Bartolomeo Vivarini also sometimes utilised linee serpentine, for example in his 1482 Madonna Enthroned (Fig 65) at the Frari, but they tend to be slimmer and much less complex than those produced by Botticelli. Quattrocento and cinquecento fabrics were frequently embellished with gold or silver threads, imported from the Middle East, Cyprus, Calabria and Lucca until the end of the trecento. Alongside the development of the silk industry in Florence, there was a parallel development of the arte dei battiloro, the “gold-beaters” who began to produce the gold

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106 Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan, 58x 39.6 cm.
107 Conaway and Bondanella, p. 224.
and silver threads for their domestic markets from 1420. However, at Genoa and Venice, the *battilori* had already been operating since the end of the *duecento*, and so again, it can be seen that the stuff of everyday life is being translated into a sacred form by artists. It may be surmised that this exquisite ornamentation of the Virgin’s halo, especially, was a reaction against sumptuary laws, and that the decorative embellishments were transferred from clothing where they may have transgressed the legislation, to the site of the halo. Here, in addition to being aesthetically beautiful, they simultaneously paid homage to the Virgin, like the traditional use of lapis lazuli exclusively for her.

The first section of this Chapter has traced artists’ practice of texturizing and decorating their haloes. It has examined the changes in colour initially from the very early Christian frescoes through a variety of media. The very simple device of “ridging” within the halo field has been examined and traced from its early *ducento* and *trecento* use in frescoes by artists such as Cavallini at Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome, and Giotto at the Arena Chapel, Padua. Additionally, its use by Cimabue in his *St Francis* tavola has been considered. It has been shown that ridging was not just utilised in frescoes, however, the application of very fine ray-like lines, incised into gold leaf haloes has been demonstrated, for example in Mantegna’s *St Sebastian*. The immediate effect of applying ridged ornamentation to a halo, whether in fresco or gold leaf, is to texturize it, giving it depth and substance, relief and conversely, light. The extraordinary care artists took when embellishing haloes with “jewels” or producing complex punched designs, similarly affected the way they were viewed because of the halo’s reaction with, and to, light, a factor that could change at different times of day.

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109 Vincenzo Foppa still ridged the internal field between the Virgin’s head and her halo border in the c. 1468 fresco of *The Assumption of the Virgin*, at the Chiesa di Sant’Eustorgio, Milan.
110 This autograph work is tempera and gold leaf on panel, 1453-54.
and during different seasons. Giotto, particularly, exploited this factor in the Arena Chapel, utilising natural light to literally “illuminate” the Marian metaphors relating to the Annunciation and the Incarnation discussed earlier, where a sunbeam passes through glass without harming it. Additionally, candlelight was an important component of the Arena Chapel, the flickering illumination similarly “activating” figures and elements as it struck them, this coruscation necessarily playing upon the halo surface, drawing the spectator’s eye to the glittering area, giving substance to the concept of Divine light. This was something that had been recognized by the Byzantine icon-makers, who with their finely-crafted filigree work similarly provided the locus for a display of light play, reverberating between the icon itself and the spectator, “bonding” each to the other.

Cennini’s description of granulating halo fields has been cited, the “sparkle” like many thousands of millet grains so effectively evoked by him, this effect translated into artworks via punch tools with which artists executed both simple and complex halo designs with extraordinary care. Their preoccupation with these designs seems to have been interlinked with contemporary theology, overlaid with a desire to pay homage to the Virgin and Christ through the beauty of their haloes, in much the same way that precious pigments were reserved for them. Thus, we see that in Giotto’s Christ in Judgement, within the cruciferous halo, he has placed mirrored disks on the cross arms, to reflect both daylight and candelight, in addition to “jewels” as befits the Prince of Heaven, the Redeemer, the Son of God. After two centuries of manipulating light through the agency of hand and punched tooling, artists began appropriating contemporary technology to provide different types of texture to their haloes, be they...
“crystal”, “ice” or “polished glass” with their attendant durability and thus physicality, or the ethereality of the diaphanous “silk” haloes, whether or not embellished with gold linee serpentine. Literally a physical manifestation of the word “texture” with which this Chapter opened, “silk” haloes demonstrate a degree of “tactility” by virtue of their ontological qualities. As with tooled haloes, and the beautifully freehand-incised haloes, they are all drawing the viewers’ gaze, not necessarily kinetically as the didactic haloes discussed in the next Chapter, but in a sense through their rupture of reality, however subtle this may be. They are not real, but their physical, decorative beauty or delicacy and gauze-like sheerness belie this; their reaction to and within light is an actual reality, and because of these factors, they are playing a vital role within an artwork.

Several haloes have already been observed changing location from a position parallel to the picture plane to an elliptical stance behind or above the heads of their “owners”, and the next section will consider their changing shape and the impact this may have upon their position and function.

3.9 The Square Halo

So far, texture and ornamentation have been examined. Mostly, the inquiry has been concerned with the disk halo, in its many manifestations, affected by external factors such as light and perspective, and also, as previously mentioned in the first section of this Chapter, its ornamentation and internal decoration, whether by a cross for Christ, gems, pastiglia, or by text as will be investigated in Chapter Four. It has already been demonstrated how the internal ray, of differing dimensions, lengths and interspersion, was a fairly constant motif throughout Renaissance halo design, although not always used.
However, there are occasions when the halo is not represented as a disk in any of its perpetuations, but with an altogether different shape and this next section will seek to set out and consider these varying and less pervasive designs. As previously, it will be necessary at times to pass outside the temporal and geographic boundaries of the study to extrapolate information for comparison and provide a basis for contextualisation.

The Table of Haloes demonstrates that the flat disk halo lying parallel to the picture plane has been the original and most common shape bestowed upon holy and imperial personages for centuries. However, in early Christian art this was not the only shape utilised, since a motif that appears in Rome within mosaic and fresco portraits between the eighth and twelfth centuries is that of a square or rectangular halo. Extensive research by the archaeologists Grüneisen and Wilpert in the early twentieth century revealed a pre-Christian Egyptian source for this motif from the Roman period. An unusual example of a frescoed square halo is that of Apa Jeremias, who died at the end of the fifth century. Situated at Quibell at Saqqara, Egypt, his figure is depicted

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112 Examples abound, from wall paintings at Constantine’s Palace, Trier, circa 307 AD, fourth century catacombs in Rome and El Baghaouat in Libya, sixth century wax encaustic icons of Christ at St Catherine’s Monastery, Mount Sinai, to the c. 1570 mosaic that Arminio Zuccato executed from Tintoretto’s cartoons in the Chiesa of San Pietro in Castello, Venice.


114 Mummification procedures changed so mummies were decorated with naturalistic portraits, in two forms. The head and neck were painted on a rectangular wooden panel which was fastened onto the mummy’s face, or an image of the deceased was painted directly onto the shroud, showing them in front of their sepulchral pylons, so that their heads appeared “framed” by the pylon’s top edge. This became the accepted format of the funerary portrait. Unlike the wooden portrait, shroud portraits could be full length, could include other figures, and were also square or rectangular, despite the contemporary use of the clipeus form for backgrounds. Ladner, p. 136, and Grüneisen, M. W., in “Le Portrait d’Apa Jérémie: Note à Propos du Soi-Disant Nimbe Rectangulaire “, in Extrait des Mémoires Présentés par Divers Savants à L’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Tome XII, 2 Partie, Paris: Librairie Klincksieck, MDCCCXII, pp 1-10, 2-7, passim.

115 Grüneisen, p. 2. Collinet-Guerin, classifies this square shape under "Pseudo-Nimbe ", describing it as “carré planchette à portraits”.
frontally, his head surrounded by a square halo which is in turn encircled by a disk halo, although at this stage he was merely “venerable Jérémie”, therefore not canonised.\textsuperscript{116}

The symbolism of the square as a symbol of righteousness and excellence can be traced from Philo (1 AD), who additionally discusses the number four, and right angles in several treatises. Clement of Alexandria in \textit{Stromata} (written after 200 AD) and Origen in \textit{Homilies on the Book of Genesis} (c. 185-254) both describe the perfection of the square.\textsuperscript{117} Gradually the conflation of Hermes-Logos-Thoth–Anubis diffused into Egyptian mummification procedures so that what had once only been a decorative practice also embraced a new symbolism, thereby providing a source of this square halo, although the example found at Bawit is what Ladner terms a “mere frame-line” rather than a coloured field.\textsuperscript{118}

The first textual evidence of a square halo is John the Deacon’s reference to the portrait of Pope Gregory (c. 540-604 AD) in his \textit{S Gregorii Magni Vita}, written in the late 800s, noting that Gregory was “bearing around his head the likeness of a square, which is the sign for a living person, and not a crown”.\textsuperscript{119} Unlike the disk nimbus, this suggests that the square was not a type of halo, rather an indication that it should be considered as a picture panel.\textsuperscript{120} It can be surmised from this that the presence of a square halo did not necessarily mean that the portrait was painted while the subject was still alive, it could have been painted posthumously. Two other early Roman examples where the square

\textsuperscript{116} Grüneisen, p. 2. Ladner, p. 129. Two frescoes show Apa Jeremias with the square and disk nimbus, one with the Virgin and Archangels, and one where he is alone. Ladner believes the frescoes were painted in the first half of the sixth century, soon after his death.

\textsuperscript{117} Ladner, p. 142.

\textsuperscript{118} Ladner, ibid., pp. 142-147, passim.

\textsuperscript{119} Migne, \textit{Patrologia Latina}, \textit{Vita Gregorii Magni}, 75, col. 230, 231. “\textit{circa verticem vero tabulae similitudinem, quod viventis insigne est, praeferens, non coronam}”

\textsuperscript{120} The portrait was painted in \textit{rota gypsea}, which was a very old form of portraiture. Ladner, p. 116.
nimbus is utilised are portraits of Pope John VII, (705 – 707 AD, and Pope Paschal I (c. 882), see Figs. 68 and 69).121

The shift in the significance of the square halo occurs in the cycle of papal portraits in St Peter’s commissioned by Pope Nicholas III (circa 1277-1280) in which Pope Liberius (325-366) appears. Previously, all the popes before Silvester I were endowed with a circular halo and those after him with a papal tiara and circular halo.122 Now, Liberius has a square halo, he is “separated” from his peers and predecessors, which Ladner suggests is because of his stance on the Arian heresy, he was given a square halo in the second cycle as a mode of showing his ‘difference’.123 This perfectly exemplifies the reasoning Durandus applies to the square halo, as a sign of someone who was human, but not as holy as a saint, although still deserving some form of visual distinction to elevate him or her from ordinary people. In Rationale Divinorum Officiorum (circa 1295) he spoke of the square halo as being less perfect than the circular halo bestowed on saints, but typifying additionally the four Cardinal Virtues.124 He described it as “cum aliquis praelatus aut sanctus virus pingitur, non in forma scuti rotundi, sed quadrati, corona ipsa depingitur”,125 therefore continuing the early significations discussed previously assigned by Philo, Clement of Alexandria and Origen of the square as a sign of excellence.

121 Osborne, p. 64, Footnote 39, signals that the icon in S Maria in Trastevere where a donor has a square halo might be a portrait of John VII, although other sources cited suggest it may have been a later addition. He cautions that “from the early eighth century until the late ninth century all known representations of contemporary figures in Roman art make use of this attribute, and that during this period the motif is used exclusively in this context.
122 Ladner, pp. 120-123.
123 Ladner, p. 121.
124 Gietmann, G., The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol XI, pp. 80 – 81. Also cited by Grüneisen, Footnote 1, p. 2, as follows: “Any living prelate or Saint……the glory is not fashioned in the shape of a shield, but four-square: that he may be shown to flourish in the four cardinal virtues”
As well as Rome, the square or oblong halo is found in other centres, for example, a large collection of manuscripts and frescoes connected with Monte Cassino contain square haloes, as do many pontifical and exultet rolls. Sometimes in these liturgical rolls, its sides fold in so that it appears to be like a scroll. Occasionally, the Church is personified by the application of a square halo. The use of the square halo did not continue into the quattrocento, although in the (1459-60) Crucifixion panel from the predella of his San Zeno Altarpiece, (Figs. 70, 70a) Andrea Mantegna positioned the shield of the centurion in the foreground of the picture plane in such a manner that its top half suggests a square halo, thereby alluding to Longinus, the Roman centurion who recognized Christ as the Son of God. However, this was not the usual iconography for Longinus, as will be examined later in this section when polygonal haloes are discussed.

3.10 The Triangular Halo

Another halo form appearing from the quattrocento, particularly in Italy and Greece was the triangular nimbus. Usually given to God the Father, the triangle, suggests the Holy Trinity.

Prototype representations of the Holy Trinity had been developing since St Athanasius set out the doctrine relating to the Paraclete in his Creed, and the subsequent arguments propounded by the Church Fathers were being worked out by artists through experimental arrangements of the Trinity as three persons, sometimes only one of whom

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126 Collinet-Guerin, classifies this under “Pseudo-Nimbus”, describing it as “en rouleau”.
127 Musée Louvre, Paris.
128 Didron, Vol. 1, p. 58, cites an example at Mount Athos in which the letters representing “The Being” were inscribed in the three corners of the triangle.
130 *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 80. The triangular halo is a specific response by artists to dogmatic pronouncements debated and accepted by the Ecumenical Councils relating to the Holy Trinity.
had a flat disk cruciferous halo, at other times shown with a flat disk halo behind their heads or angels.\textsuperscript{131} The Fourth Lateran Council of November 1215, had declared the doctrine of the Filioque as a dogma of faith, in the First Constitution. During Session 6 of the Council of Basel (1431-1534 AD), the Definition of the Holy Ecumenical Synod of Florence was established and the doctrine was again clarified.\textsuperscript{132}

From this point, the triangular halo began to be adopted by artists as a symbol of the Trinity, and its use for God has continued up until the twenty-first century; sometimes its outline was coloured red, at other times it had a gold delineation, but it was always plain, there was never any decoration within the internal field, aside from its colour.\textsuperscript{133} Particularly popular during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, examples can be found in the lunette above Cima da Coneglione’s \textit{Baptism} in San Giovanni in Bragora, Venice, (1492-94, Figs. 71, 71a),\textsuperscript{134} in Gerolamo Moccetto’s stained glass windows in SS Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, in Antoniazzo Romano’s \textit{Altarpiece of the Confraternity of the Annunciation} in Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome, (1500)\textsuperscript{135}(Figs. 72, 72a) and Tintoretto’s \textit{Martyrdom of St Stephen} of 1594 in S Giorgio, Venice.\textsuperscript{136} Jacopo della Quercia executed triangular haloes for God in his marble reliefs on the portal of San Petronia in Bologna, (1425-38, Figs. 73, 74). Completely different from the \textit{doxa} of Chapter One, the triangular halo, although plain and simple, nevertheless conveyed quite explicitly its iconography of the ultimate power wielded by the God-head, but in none of its manifestations does it emit light, an important point to note.

\textsuperscript{132} Tanner, Norman, P., ed., \textit{Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils}, www.ecum08.plus[accessed 14.07.09.]
\textsuperscript{133} The iconography of this type of nimbus is slightly different from the triangle surrounding the all-seeing eye of God, which developed in the Renaissance
\textsuperscript{134} This lunette has been tentatively attributed to Cima.
\textsuperscript{135} The panel is painted with tempera, but the triangular halo behind God’s head, situated in the upper left corner, is very faint and difficult to discern, especially owing to the position of the altarpiece.
\textsuperscript{136} Also, within S. Giorgio, there is a statue of God with a triangular halo in front of the High Altar.
3.11 The Polygonal Halo

Another example of the halo being influenced by theological discourse is the polygonal halo, most specifically the hexagonal halo. The first hexagonal halo occurs in Giotto’s cycle of Franciscan Virtues in the Lower Church at Assisi. This design was innovated by the Franciscans based on the connection of the number six with various virtues propounded by Bonaventura in several of his works. Discussing the six degrees of sanctity in *In Festo Omnium Sanctorum Sermo* I, IX, (Quaracchi, 1901), p 598 ff, the six degrees of humility in *De S. Patre Nostro Franciscus Sermo* II, and in *De Sex Alis Seraphim*, he sets out the six virtues that Franciscan superiors require, highlighting the connection to the six wings of the seraphim that were present when St Francis was stigmatised, thus it can be seen that the number six references many qualities important in Franciscan liturgy. Andrea Pisano subsequently used hexagonal haloes for the personification of the Virtues on the Baptistry doors in Florence between 1330 and 1336, (Figs. 75, 75a-e) and in 1347 Alessio di Andrea bestowed a pink hexagonal halo on *Hope* in the Duomo at Pistoia. Hexagonal haloes appear in a *cassone* panel of 1436 executed by Giovanni della Ponte, showing *The Seven Liberal Arts*, (Prado, Madrid), which is also the subject of the companion panel to the Pesellino shop’s c. 1460 *The Seven Virtues* cassone panel (Figs. 76, 76a-g) where dark blue heptagonal haloes are replicated. In both these examples, their circumference is scalloped rather than straight-edged, traced by an internal gold linear border. The Virtues’ heads lie in a variety of poses against their haloes, which lie parallel to the picture plane. A rather different use for the hexagonal halo occurs in Bernardo Daddi’s 1338 *Crucifixion* at the

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137 Ladner, p. 167.
138 *The Seven Virtues* cassone panel is at the Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama. Dr Jeannine O’Grody, Chief Curator and Curator of European Art at Birmingham, kindly confirmed for this thesis that the haloes are painted in tempera and the gold lines have been applied using mordant gilding, some of which may have been reinforced. O’Grody, J., (jogrody@artsbma.org) Pesellino Seven Virtues. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk) 21st September 2009.
Courtauld, (Figs. 77, 77a) where a hexagonal halo, containing very large punch-marks, has been given to Longinus, the Roman centurion who pierced Christ’s side and then pronounced that he was truly the Son of God.\footnote{Mark Zucker supplies a very helpful appendix, writing that the occurrence of the polygonal halo within unattributed Italian Crucifixion scenes is almost a guarantee of a Sienese provenance, p. 68.}

Aside from the hexagonal halo and its specific Franciscan usage, there does not seem to be any particular formula relating to the number of sides a polygonal halo may have, nor any rule relating to whether the edges are scalloped or straight. Taddeo Gaddi’s tondos (1327-32) of Two Virtues in the Baroncelli Chapel, Florence, (Fig. 78), have pentagonal sides which give a concave effect, whereas he has bestowed full lozenge-shaped haloes on the Two Theological Virtues, (Figs. 79, 80) in the same locus, as a distinction of their superiority in the hierarchy of Virtues. However, Santa Croce, where the Baroncelli Chapel is situated is a Franciscan Church, and the Franciscans venerated the five wounds of Christ, so this thesis proposes it is another Franciscan innovation. In Padua the 1370 frescoes attributed to Giusto de’Menabuoi feature nine-pinnacled polygonal haloes bestowed on The Cardinal Virtues of Fortitude and Temperance (Fig. 81) lying flat to the picture plane, although their heads are slightly turned.\footnote{The Cardinal Virtues of Fortitude and Temperance fresco, Giusto de’Menabuoi (attributed), 1370s, Salone, Palazzo della Ragione, Padua.} Most unusually, God is given a gold-sprinkled, sixteen-pinnacled, scalloped halo in Francesco Pesellino and Filippo Lippi’s 1455-60 Trinity and Four Saints, from The Pistoia Santa Trinità Altarpiece, (Figs. 82, 82a).\footnote{Egg tempera and oil on panel, National Gallery, London.} Semi-oval in shape and seemingly slightly concave, to the author’s knowledge this is the only occasion that such a nimbus has been given to God.
3.12 Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d’Alemagna’s Adoration of the Magi and a proposal for their polygonal haloes

The examples supplied so far have demonstrated that the polygonal halo, regardless of the number of sides, was frequently utilised in Siena and Tuscany, but more rarely in Venice and Padua, (see ToH, pages 12–23). Although the Florentine Giusto de’Menabuoi did employ them in Padua as mentioned above, Giotto did not utilise any haloes for the Virtues in his Arena Chapel frescoes, not even for the personification of Justice, whose pivotal position means that she is functioning simultaneously as a Virtue and also as a parallel to Christ as Judge in the Last Judgment fresco. However, one fine Venetian example is that of Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d’Alemagna’s 1445-47 Adoration of the Magi panel, (Gemaldegalerie, Berlin, Fig. 83) in which the Three Wise Men have a total of ten, seven or five visible pinnacles on their haloes, their heads and/or crowns obscuring the others. These specifically-shaped haloes appear to be operating very particularly. In the quattrocento and later, there was a renewed interest in the Magi’s dual status as philosopher-astronomers/Kings. There was no Cult of the Magi in Venice although humanist circles there constantly exchanged literature particularly via the Florentine/Venetian Camaldolese communities. The Camaldolese themselves were heavily influenced by the texts of the Egyptian Desert Fathers and disseminated “this Christian Platonic spirituality” throughout Europe via their translations. As well as translating Patristic texts, Traversari, the Calmaldolese Hellenist at the monastery of S. Maria degli Angeli, Florence, had been involved with Cardinal Bessarion in writing the decrees at the Council of Florence, seeking to reconcile the culture of the East with the Latin West. The Adoration of the Magi by Vivarini and D’Alemagna is a visual realisation of this ecclesiastical reconciliation,

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142 The importance of Justice’s parallellism with Christ is emphasised through postural mirroring. Riess, Jonathon, B., “Justice and Common Good in Giotto’s Arena Chapel Frescoes”, Arte Cristiana, Vol LXXII, 1984, pp. 69-80. However, this thesis notes that Justice is crowned like an enthroned Madonna but without any halo, and Christ is adorned with a large cruciform disk halo.

143 Lackner, p. 15.

144 Lackner, p. 23.
suggesting that the Eastern and Western Churches needed to be united to thwart the growing Turkish threat.\(^{145}\) Additionally, important reference is being made to the Doctrine of the *Filioque* adopted by both Churches at the Council of Florence, through the rather spectacular gold nimbus lying flat behind the Holy Spirit, in the shape of the dove. Almost central it is also receiving rays of divine light from God’s “three-dimensional” nimbus above, both haloes are also surrounded by gold rays, (Fig. 83a).

Some Carolingian theologians had suggested that the Three Magi were descendants of Noah’s sons, but writing in 1489 in *Apologia*, Ficino asked, “Why do you doubt to use the name of Magus, a name gracious in the Gospel, which does not signify a Witch or Conjurer, but a wise man or a Priest?”\(^{146}\) This indicates a shift in perception of the Magi, and this modification of their role will be visualised in the Vivarini/d’Alemagna *Adoration* as will be seen shortly.

In 1403, thanks to a bequest by a humanist donor, two public schools were established, one at San Marco and one at Rialto, both a public commitment by La Serenissima to *studia humanitas*, their educational emphasis was upon the practical application of humanist studies.\(^{147}\) Within this Venetian humanist atmosphere therefore, in a city of many churches dedicated to Old Testament Saints and with renewed interest in “rehabilitating” the image of the Magi, this thesis proposes that it was an innovative and sophisticated step for Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d’Alemagna to have used scalloped polygonal haloes for the Three Magi. If the tradition that they were descended from the sons of Noah had been accepted, still they were not divine like the

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\(^{145}\) Blass-Simmen, Brigit, “*Laetentur coeli oder die byzantische Hälfte des Himmels. Die Anbetung der Könige von Antonio Vivarini und Giovanni d’Alemagna in der Gemäldegalerie Berlin*”, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, No. 4, 2009, pp. 449-478, p. 449. This thesis is grateful to Dr Blass-Simmen for her communications regarding her recent research on this painting. Blass-Simmen, B. ([bbs@blass-simmen.de](mailto:bbs@blass-simmen.de)) *The Adoration of the Magi*. E-mail to Susan Martin ([susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk)), 1\(^{st}\) September 2009.

\(^{146}\) Serracino-Inglott, Peter, “Ficino the Priest”, in *Marsilio Ficino: his theology, his philosophy, his legacy*, p. 1.

Holy Family and additionally they were Gentiles so they could not have a disk halo, like a saint; yet they were involved in the narrative of the Nativity so the by-then obsolete square halo was inappropriate. The bestowal of the polygonal halo, however, distinguishes the Magi from the other figures within the narrative, according them a status above their regal rank, and indeed the different number of sides also acts as a mode of separation between them, (Figs. 83b-d). The sign is dualist, hierarchical and hierarchizing,\textsuperscript{148} therefore these particular haloes are designating a hierarchy. According to Durandus the disk nimbus was a representation of perfection without beginning or end and thus was utilised for Christ, Mary (and sometimes, Joseph, in Italian works, as in this \textit{Adoration of the Magi}), angels, The Apostles, Mary Magdalen and saints. However, Joseph was also given a slightly different type of nimbus, as in Luca Signorelli’s \textit{Sacra Famiglia}, oil on panel, c. 1495, Uffizi, Florence, where the Virgin and Christ Child have large gold-rimmed, gold sprinkled transparent haloes, and Joseph’s head is surrounded by a “sunburst” nimbus of slim gold rays. He is given a gold polygonal scalloped nimbus with six points visible, in the \textit{Retablo del Presepio} (Fig. 196), so his status seems to be alternating between a saint and quasi-saintliness.\textsuperscript{149}

However, one final and important point to note is that the eldest, kneeling Magi is actually a portrait of the Greek emperor, John VIII Paleologus – who was still alive at this time.\textsuperscript{150} Immediately, therefore, the polygonal halo has acquired yet another new stratum of meaning in this work, not only differentiating mortal and holy figures, but additionally identifying a contemporaneous living person. Once again, as posited in the Prologemena, the halo is playing an active role within a narrative, it is mediating

\textsuperscript{148} Kristeva formalises this semiotic function by claiming that “the ideologeme of the sign is therefore, in a general way, like the ideologeme of the symbol”, p.40.

\textsuperscript{149} Pinacoteca Nazionale, Cagliari, Sardinia, tempera on panel, attributed to the Maestro del Presepio, late 1400s.

\textsuperscript{150} Blass-Simmen, p. 9, and E-mail.
between being a decorative adornment and a sign that is imparting information about its owner’s status and character, an identification mark, and contemporaneous issues.

3.13 The halo of rays and artistic Treatises

The ray halo has been considered regarding its formulation as ridges within frescoes, but there is also a type of halo composed entirely of rays. Here, it is not the intention to consider the circle of rays placed around the head of a Beato or Beata, i.e. a person who has not yet been canonized but who is considered “Blessed”, such as in the Chiesa di San Pietro Martire in Murano, where a series of Dominican Beati and Saints have been frescoed under the ceiling and between the arches, probably dating from the cinquecento, (Fig. 84). They do not have, strictly speaking, a halo. Artists such as the Dominican Fra Angelico also used rays like this around the heads of those considered worthy of salvation in The Last Judgement altarpiece of 1425-30 (Museum of San Marco, Florence). Instead, the halo of rays to be considered next is one that is utilised for Christ, both as the Christ Child and also as the adult Christ, in addition to its application to the Virgin.

The second century marble head of Sol Invicto, (Fig. 8) has five very solid rays radiating from the top of the figure’s head, but thereafter this is not a design that will be utilised constantly within Christian art until much later in the trecento. Prior to this, in illustrated manuscripts, flat disk haloes are used, often coloured and circumscribed with gold. Bartolomeo Pellerano da Camogli’s 1346 signed and dated panel, Madonna of Humility, (Figs. 85, 85a-b), is a good example of a halo of rays. Slim gold rays

151 On 30th October 1625, Pope Urban VIII issued a Bull prohibiting the use of a halo for anyone who was not officially a saint.

152 Tempera and gold leaf panel, Galleria di Palermo, Sicily.
radiate from around the Virgin’s head, punctuating in tiny stars in the longer rays. The Christ Child also has graduated rays around His head, the very longest emerging from the top. Although the artist was Genoan and had a workshop there, he may have painted this at Avignon. As well as the Annunciation scene in the upper borders outside the fictive frame, the lower register shows the instruments of Christ’s Passion, flanked by kneeling worshippers. The tiny stars at the ends of the rays match those contained in roundels bordering the scene, and also on the Virgin’s maphorion, the *Stella Maris*, “Star of the Sea”. The halo of rays continued to be developed and used into the quattrocento when, for example, a *Virgin and Child with Angels* (circa 1410, Fig. 86, 86a) tentatively attributed to Jean Malouel features the Christ Child with two sets of extremely long rays, the upper tips of some having a tiny cross motif, thus referencing His future sacrifice.\(^{153}\) Jacques Daret’s 1434 *Visitation* (Fig. 87, 87a) also has very long metallic-looking rays surrounding the heads of the figures, as does Hans Multschen’s 1437 tavola containing scenes of both the *Oration in the Garden* and the *Resurrection*, (Figs. 88, 88a). In the former, Christ’s nimbus contains two or three red rays interspersed with golden rays, in the latter, a “fleur de lys” forms a cruciform design, surrounded by medium-length golden rays. (See pages 24-25 of the Table of Haloes for later examples of the halo of rays.)

It is important to distinguish between these arrangements of rays currently under discussion, and the rays that will be discussed in Chapter Five, “Light, Shadow, Perspective and the Halo” in connection with works by Simone Martini/Lippo Memmi. The rays circumscribing the Virgin’s halo in Martini’s *Annunciation* are an additional highlighting of *divine light* as an agent of God, and they radiate from the nimbus rather

\(^{153}\) This canvas, in the Gemaldegalerie, Berlin, also has a flat disk gold halo for the Virgin.
than being a **nimbus of rays**.\textsuperscript{154} This is very different, however, from Bartolomeo Vivarini’s signed 1459 *San Giovanni di Capistrano* tavola (Musée Louvre, Paris, Fig. 89). The Franciscan, a follower of San Bernardino of Siena, is shown in miniature as if about to step out from the flag on which he stands, his *IHS* emblem held forward.

His head is surrounded by tripartite alternating bunches of short and long, slim gold rays. This type of ray nimbus was also very popular in France, Flanders and Northern Europe, not just for God, but for the Virgin and the Christ Child, (see ToH, pp. 20-23).

It is noticeable how prominent the Northern European artists made their ray haloes, both in terms of extreme length and sometimes breadth, but this practice was not followed in the Italian schools. Rather, when implementing this “fringe” of rays around the Virgin, like Hans Memling’s *Standing Virgin and Child*, (Figs. 91, 91a), the Italian artists arranged them in a more delicate “sunburst” arrangement, with equal undulations of shorter rays.\textsuperscript{155} In the Chiesa di SS Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, there is a circa late thirteenth century panel, *Madonna della Pace* by an anonymous Byzantine artist, in which the Christ child has red rays radiating around His head, (Fig. 90). In c. 1455, Rogier van der Weyden used a design of three bunches of graduated rays for Christ in his panel showing the *Life of John the Baptist* and this more subtle manner is frequently used from then on, particularly within Venice, (see ToH, pages 21 and 25). In his 1460 *Cristo Benedicente* (Musée Louvre, Paris, Fig. 92), Giovanni Bellini has painted a semi-lozenge design of three sets of bunched golden rays radiating from the top and each side of Christ’s head. The outer rays of each bunch graduate in size so that the central six rays are the tallest, thus he has formed a new cruciform design additionally, although

\textsuperscript{154} In Paolo Veneziano’s *Madonna col Bambino e due committeni* tavola, circa 1330, Accademia, Venice, the Christ Child sits within a mandorla in which gold rays radiate from His body to the outer circumference of the mandorla, each segment of rays interspersed with stars. The Virgin’s left hand holds the lower border of the mandorla, complying with the “Playtera” Byzantine formula of representation.

\textsuperscript{155} There is a rather unusual example of rays lying over a flat gold disk nimbus in Jean Malouel’s c. 1400 tavola, *Compianto sul Cristo*, Musée Louvre, Paris, but this is not a practice executed by Italian artists.
this is only a trace of the former heavy red cross pattée arms previously utilised. A similar design is found in his *Baptism*, 1500-02 at the Chiesa di San Corona, Vicenza, (Figs. 93, 93a) although additionally here he uses tiny rays interspersed between the bunched larger rays around the circumference of Christ’s head. A later version of *The Risen Christ Blessing* shows Christ, full frontal again, a half-lozenge shape of three bunches of graduated golden rays radiating from each side and the top of his head, (Figs. 94, 94a). A further refinement of this type of design can be found in Giovanni’s *The Blessing Christ* of c. 1505-10, (Fig. 95). In this, only two of the rayed bunches are visible, there is a trace of the bunch radiating from the right side of Christ’s head. However, these graduated rays are extremely fine and silver-coloured, graduating to two high points, as opposed to one highest ray in the other examples just cited. Vincenzo Foppa similarly uses this ray lozenge in several of his *Madonna col Bambino* panels, specifically his 1485 panel in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan, where gold rays adorn the head of the Christ Child Benedicente. In his 1498 *The Blessing Redeemer*, Alvise Vivarini (Fig. 96) refines the ray lozenge to very small, short rays, but then Marco Basaiti in *The Risen Christ* enlarges and enhances the rays once more so that a central high ray is surrounded by two curved rays on either side. In some ways this is a “quasi-cruciform” halo, but one that perhaps is more obvious is from Giotto’s shop, *The Peruzzi Altarpiece*, in which a blessing Christ in a central panel flanked by saints in other, separate panels, gazes out at the spectator, three long, rectangular cross arms radiate from His head, all containing an ‘X’ design running through them, (Figs. 97, 97a). What distinguishes the cruciform halo from the usual cruciferous halo is that

156 Hugo van der Goes bestowed long golden rays all around the Virgin in his *Adoration of the Magi* panel, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.
157 Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.
158 Oil on poplar panel, currently at the National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.
159 Usually at the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, North Carolina, currently on loan to the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. The painting is c. 1310-15, tempera and gold leaf on panel, 105.7 x 250.2 cm.
there is no bounding circle to define any sort of perimeter. Cruciform haloes are uncommon, the cruciferous is the usual form.

In the cinquecento, the half lozenge and lozenge-shaped nimbus undergoes a further metamorphosis in the workshops of Raphael, Tintoretto and Titian, so that the individual rays of gold become merged into a mistiness of white or yellow light, becoming an actual half or full lozenge. Different from the triangular haloes discussed earlier in this Chapter, they can fulfil the same function. Raphael in his Disputà fresco of 1505-10 in the Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican, Rome, (Figs. 98, 98a) places a lozenge nimbus behind God’s head.

Over the course of his prolific career, Tintoretto utilised a variety of nimbus shapes and designs, their luminosity and size also changing along with their colour, which often ranged from a bright yellow glow to a nebulous white emanation. His work for the Scuola di San Rocco is a virtuoso display of these many nimbus varieties, including another change to the semi-lozenge where instead of being a vaporous mass, once again rays are present, but this time they are rays of light, rather than rays of gold, and this signals a shift in artistic practice. Two excellent examples from the Scuola di San Rocco programme are The Ascent to Calvary (1565-67)\(^\text{160}\) (Figs. 99, 99a) and the Adoration of the Magi, 1583-87, (Figs. 100, 100a).\(^\text{161}\) In the latter a yellow rayed semi-lozenge surrounds the Christ Child’s profile, His mother’s circular light-evanescence contrasting with it; in the former, the half-diamond light radiation is punctuated by three slightly broader rays. These nimbi are different from the previous haloes discussed

\(^{160}\) Painted for the entrance to the Sala dell’Albergo in front of the Crucifixion, signed, dated oil on canvas, 525 x 390.

\(^{161}\) Painted for the Sala Inferiore of the Scuola di San Rocco, signed, oil on canvas, 525 x 544 cm.
from the ducento and trecento, they are much more fugitive, once again Kristeva’s term *semanalysis* is perhaps more appropriate to analyse these.\textsuperscript{162}

Like Alberti’s work, the Milanese Lomazzo’s (1538-1600) *Trattato*, published in Venice in 1584 had a great impact on artists. He considered proportion, movement, colour, light and perspective in the first five books but additionally considered iconography, and like Armenini (although writing slightly later at the end of the cinquecento), felt that painting should further the cause of Christianity via its images, reiterating Alberti’s proposition that painting assists its spectator to be pious.\textsuperscript{163}

As in Gilio da Fabriano’s 1564 dialogue on painting, elements of Counter-Reformation responses can be detected, in that much more realism and accuracy is expected, particularly to invoke an appropriate emotional response.

Prior to this, Pietro Aretino (1452-1556) had published *Lettere*, in Italian rather than Latin, in Venice in six volumes between 1537 and 1557. Particularly fluent on the use of Venetian *colorito*, he also utilises the concept of *ekphrasis* to convey the concept of naturalism.\textsuperscript{164} In 1548 Paolo Pino published *Dialogo di pittura*, also in Italian, in Venice. He himself was a painter, his teacher was Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo, an artist who worked mostly in Venice although originally from Brescia.\textsuperscript{165} Pino’s *Dialogo* was a response to Alberti’s *De pittura*, which the former felt was written from a mathematical viewpoint rather than from a painter’s, and consequently there is much

\textsuperscript{162} Roudiez, p. 18, “Kristeva’s concerns have sometimes led her to prefer ‘semanalysis’ to ‘semiotics’ – owing to the etymology of ‘analysis’: *analyein*, to dissolve; dissolving the sign, taking it apart, open up new areas of signification”.


\textsuperscript{164}  Hall, James, “Pietro Aretino (1492-1556), Paolo Pino (fl. 1534-65), and Lodovico Dolce (1508-68) in Murray, C., ed., *Key Writers on Art: From Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century*, London and New York: Routledge, [2003], 2005, p. 61.

\textsuperscript{165} Hall, p. 61.
more emphasis on colour in Pino’s treatise, less on mathematical formulae to achieve perspectival effects.\textsuperscript{166}

In Tintoretto’s work, colour and the colour of light are pre-eminent concerns of the painter. The emotion he conveys is very strong, and referring to Gilio da Fabriano’s and later, Armenini’s, expectations of art aiding Christianity, it can be seen that Tintoretto’s new, dazzling yet transient nimbi are operating as a component which is assisting in this process of asserting Christ’s humanity. He has dissolved the sign from its trecento “materiality” in semiotic terms. Although the nimbus did not and could not physically exist in the terrestrial world, nevertheless it can be seen that it is intrinsic to the “display” of Christ to the spectator, mediating between viewer and the Son of God, and adhering to the Council of Trent’s 25\textsuperscript{th} Decree that

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\ldots \text{ nothing may appear that is disorderly or unbecoming and confusedly arranged, nothing that is profane, nothing disrespectful, since holiness becometh the house of God.}\textsuperscript{167}
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3.14 The ring or circlet halo

\textit{Ekphrasis} and naturalism have just been mentioned, and the latter certainly has an impact on yet another type of halo, the gold circlet that begins to make an appearance from 1460 in the works of Giovanni Bellini. Although there are simultaneously “glass” and “silk” haloes being produced in Venice, Bellini begins to bestow a plain gold circlet halo, parallel to the picture plane, on many of his Madonnas in paintings from 1460 onwards, (see ToH, pages 16-21). He does not always use them, his shop has a repertoire of halo designs, textures and colours, and as will be seen in Chapter Six, on

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{166} Hall, p. 62. \\
\textsuperscript{167} Decree 25, The Catholic Encyclopedia}
occasions he deletes them completely from his compositions, (see ToH, pages 17–25). Many patrons in Venice contemporaneously commissioned private devotional works and works for public view in a “conservative” format, i.e. they still required gold-leaf flat disk haloes, which the Vivarini bottega accomplished with great skill into the very late quattrocento, and Lotto also was able to produce when required even in the early cinquecento. However, inexorably, more and more artists begin to execute the very simple gold circlet halo, often situated in the same position as the flat disk halo, although there were also elliptical, hovering ring haloes, such as the Bolognese Amico Aspertini’s in his 1515 Adoration of the Shepherds (Figs. 101, 101a) at the Uffizi. One of Aspertini’s hallmarks is the great size of his ring haloes, they seem to have a very broad diameter even when foreshortened. Other artists, such as Lotto, sometimes utilised circlet haloes of a very small diameter, almost “hugging” the outline of its subject’s head, as in his Madonna and Child with Sts Jerome, Peter, and Francis and a Female Saint, c. 1505, (Figs. 102, 102a), although on other occasions his, too, were large, though parallel to the picture plane. The ring halo was also adopted in Florence in a variety of positions, as demonstrated by Ghirlandaio in his fresco cycle in the Tornabuoni Chapel, Chiesa di Santa Maria Novella, where they are also quite large.

A specific variation on the ring halo utilised for the Virgin and a further example of theological discourse directly influencing the halo’s depiction is that of the twelve-starred halo, as this is a direct reference to the Immaculacy of the Virgin, i.e. her conception without sin, not the Incarnation of Christ. Originally Bonaventura had linked the Revelations text of the ‘Woman of the Apocalypse’, who “was robed with the sun, beneath her feet the moon, and on her head a crown of twelve stars” with the Immaculate Virgin. The concept of her immaculacy had caused great debate,

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168 National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh. Lotto has signed the work “LOTVS” across St Jerome’s scroll.
particularly between the Franciscans and the Dominicans, the latter believing she had been absolved *in utero* like John the Baptist, though not exempted from original sin. Conversely, the Franciscan scholar the Blessed John Duns Scotus cited the doctrine of *potuit, decuit, fecit*, meaning that God could create a person who was simultaneously human but exempt from original sin in body and soul. In 1477, Pope Sixtus IV recognized the Immaculate Conception as a Feast Day in December, and gave special indulgences to those who attended services on that day. A great supporter of the Virgin, he also established the Feast of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, in Siena, as well as encouraging devotion to the Rosary. The *Song of Songs* and many other metaphors relating to her purity were used, and typological references were made to her as the Second Eve, and so the representations of her with a halo of twelve stars began to appear, particularly in the late cinquecento, as illustrated by Tintoretto’s post-1588 *Paradiso* (Figs. 103, 103a).

The only other time a starred halo is endowed is for St John of Nepomuk, a Bohemian saint, (c. 1345-93), killed for opposing the seizure of Church property. Legend says that on the night he was killed, five stars appeared over the river where he was drowned, hence he has a five-starred halo.

### 3.15 Chapter Conclusions

This Chapter has examined major changes in the way that the halo has been “made” by artists, from a simple circle in early manuscripts and frescoes to its sophisticated depiction as a nebulous mist around the Saviour’s head, thereby reverting to its etymological antecedents, (see 1.1). The word “made” rather than “depicted” is used,

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because it seems that there has been an actual process of “construction” of these haloes. This is evidenced in the great care taken by artists in the execution of haloes through the use of colour, ridging, punching, incision work and pastiglia embellishments within the internal fields which have been considered, together with stylus decoration of their external pinnacle border. Additions of precious metals and precious gems have been noted, together with substantial alterations in the physical shape of the halo. Theological discourse has been shown to have been displayed via the halo, as in the square nimbus bestowed on Liberius, the proleptic red-rimmed halo in the Frari Crucifixion and Paolo Veneziano’s St John the Baptist, the hexagonal halo given to Longinus and the Virtues, and the twelve-starred halo endowed on the Virgin. Therefore it can be seen that far from being a mere decorative element within an artwork, the halo is a site of information, it is where dogma resides and from whence it is visually disseminated. It is also hierarchising, e.g., Fig. 196, Adoration of the Shepherds, where the Virgin has a disk halo, symbol of perfection, and Joseph has a polygonal halo. He is her husband, part of the Holy Family and has been distinguished from the shepherds by this halo, and also his rich gown. The two kneeling figures adore the Christ Child, unadorned, unlike the Vivarini/d'Alemagna Adoration, (Fig. 83), where the multi-pinnacled haloes of the Magi highlight their difference from the crowd, yet unlike their crowns, also symbols of their rank, the haloes do not emit light like those of the Holy Family. This relates to Pierce’s triadic semiotic model referred to in the Introduction: the representamen is being manipulated by the artists and the interpretant consequently changes. The halo is engaging in a contemporaneous, cultural discourse with the society in which it is produced, as highlighted in Chapter One, such as in Giotto’s application at Assisi, or in Cimabue’s “sunburst” arrow haloes. Additionally, economic and industrial factors have been shown to impact significantly upon the halo, most specifically in artists’ appropriation of motifs from architectural and
commercial sources, and the application of cutting-edge technology as a new means of “depicting” this important component, and in developing a new quality of translucency. Finally, in relation to this last point and its innovation within Venice, it cannot be stressed too much how the unique environment of this city exerts an influence on the new technology of the “glass” and “silk veil” haloes; the constant shifting of light and its reflection off the ever-present water and buildings, the vaporous Autumn mists and the Summer ṁafā, the humidity brought by the Sirocco, are all factors that must be constantly acknowledged when considering the haloes of the Venetian artists, which changed forever the way that they were painted.
CHAPTER FOUR
TEXTUALITY IN THE HALO

4.1 Introduction

The presence of ornamentation within, and on the halo by decorative elements has just been considered, and this Chapter will now consider the application of text to the halo, in the form of letters or characters which may be monograms, appallations, names, invocations and salutations, in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and pseudo-Kufic. Oleg Grabar suggests that writing cannot be considered as “the signifier of the signified”. Instead, and drawing on Derrida, he moots that it is “the signifier of the signifier”,¹ because in the relationship between the writing itself and its subject matter, the actual words stand between them.² Derrida states that:

The formal essence of the signified is presence, and the privilege of its proximity to the logos as phonè is the privilege of essence.³

Within this Chapter, the grammé, the term Derrida uses for a unit of writing, will be utilised to consider the presence of pseudo-scripts, imitative of Arabic and Hebraic writing (often without any literal meaning), as well as actual Kufic script within Renaissance halo design. In some instances, this script may itself be an ornamental embellishment, a “calliphoric” means of providing pleasure, or what Grabar defines as

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² Grabar, ibid.

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“terpnopoietic”, something that carries beauty.⁴ There will therefore be two main strands to this investigation of textuality: firstly the consideration of the actual letters and/or words and their relationship to the halo, together with the application by certain artists of pseudo-scripts and why they have used these instead of actual lettering; and secondly, how these “scripts” functioned within the halo. As indicated in the Prolegomena, the presence of certain forms of text may additionally be a temporal indicator, and this will be argued, in parallel with Derrida’s sense of “une trace instituée”, the built-in trace that is resident in text.⁵ Here, it is important to distinguish between epigraphy and palaeography, the latter concerned with studying actual modes of writing in ancient manuscripts, epigraphy examining both the lettering and the meaning of inscriptions on stone and metal.⁶ Immediately, therefore, an oxymoronic situation will pertain in this Chapter when the noun “inscription” and the verb “to inscribe” are considered in relation to the halo, since although its surface is visible to the spectator inside the artwork in which it is situated, and though sometimes the halo is itself “constructed” from gold leaf, and there has to be a physical, i.e. visual, engagement with it in order to read its text, in the terrestrial world the halo does not have actual, physical properties. Again, it will be seen that this oscillation of the halo between terrestrial/other-worldly is problematic, therefore additional semioticians’ approaches will be applied to the textual elements to attempt to unravel this conundrum. Writing can be made eternal,⁷ and although the halo does not exist in reality, the text contained on/within it does, even if it has not been uttered in speech. Thus precise epigraphic terms are being used with the proviso that this enigma is borne in mind, together with the consideration that the pseudo-texts may additionally have inherent palaeographic qualities which are also being applied to an

⁵ Grabar, p. 102.
⁷ Grabar, p. 103.
object that is essentially non-existent. In this Chapter, epigraphy and palaeography will be drawn on to provide tools for interpretation of the halo's design and the implications for understanding it as a bearer of meaning. These tools will be applied heuristically, i.e. rather than rehearsing extensive research in epigraphy and palaeography in its own right, its insights will be deployed to aid further interrogation of the ontology of the halo, the central question of this study.

Didron’s 1886 Christian Iconography described his acquisition of a manuscript from Mount Athos, the Guide de la Peinture, which he subsequently published,\(^8\) (see also 1.8). Only written in the eighteenth century by Dionysius of Fourna, the greater part of it discusses Christian iconography utilising very old Byzantine sources. Mostly textual, it deals almost exclusively with painting, unlike similar treatises which considered other artistic practices and frequently contained designs as reference points.\(^9\) It contains instructions to inscribe specific letters on the internal cross arms of the nimbus, so that the omicron is to be placed on the right-hand arm, the omega on the upper, vertical arm, and the nu on the left-hand arm, thus spelling out the words “I am that I am”.\(^10\) On other occasions, the words “He is” appear on the cross arms. In the Latin West, Didron notes that artists additionally sometimes apply the word “Rex” on the three cross arms citing a drawing in the Thesaurus Veterum Diptychorum of an ivory book cover used for the Gospels, which had originally been in the Museum of San Michele in Murano.\(^11\)

\(^8\) Didron’s discovery of the Hermeneia, as it is also known, are discussed in Scheller, Robert, W., trans. Michael Hoyle, Exemplum: Model-book Drawings and the Practice of Artistic Transmission in the Middle Ages ca. 900 – ca. 1450, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995, in “Appendix: Byzantine Model Books?”

\(^9\) Barasch, Mosche, Theories of Art: from Plato to Winckelmann, London: Routledge, 2000, p. 84

\(^10\) Didron, 1965, pp. 46-47. He refers to a “cruciform” nimbus when describing a halo intersected by internal cross arms, rather than the descriptor “cruciferous” that is utilised throughout this study for the same design, as set out in Chapter One.

\(^11\) Didron, p. 47, quoting Gori, Antonio Francesco, Thesaurus Veterum diptychorum Consularim et Ecclesiasticorum. Vols 3 folio, Florence: Gaetano Albizzini, 1759. Although this author has seen another ivory Evangelorium from the Camaldolese monastery of San Michele in Murano said to date from the sixth century, she has not seen the specific example cited by Didron. The Evangelorium she viewed, however, did not have any text within Christ’s nimbus.
Very occasionally, in early Christian art, the Greek letters “X” and “P” appear within Christ’s halo as a monogram of the name \( \text{XP\Sigma\Sigma} \), and although the Alpha and Omega, “\( \text{A} \)” and “\( \text{\Omega} \)”, (the beginning and end) sometimes appear at the top of the artwork, or flanking the figure of Christ, they do not appear within the halo field itself.\(^{12}\)

Saints were not specifically identified with their written name before Iconoclasm, but a subsequent shift saw their names inscribed within the halo border. Additionally the sigla \( IC \) and \( XC \), a monogram for \( \text{Iesous Cristos} \), started to appear within His halo field.\(^{13}\)

Furthermore, the initials of the Archangels Gabriel and Michael and the Prophets, appear inside their nimbus, and the monogram \( MP \text{\ OY} \) “Mother of God” for the Virgin.\(^{14}\)

Prior to Iconoclasm, Henry Maguire argued, the identification of a saint within an icon was irrelevant, since it was the icon not its subject matter that conferred protection, although operating outside the Church’s control. However, a central tenet of post-Iconoclastic Byzantine belief was that the icon itself was the actual presence of the person it was depicting, whether Christ, the \( \text{Theotokos} \) (Mother of God) or a saint. This illustrates how different the post-Iconoclastic climate was, including this change in the status of saints, who as the mediators between worshippers and God were now under the jurisdiction of the Church. In this transfer of values relating to the “sign”, i.e. the contained “presence” of the saints, it was they themselves who were considered to perform miracles rather than the sum total of the icon, thus their individual identification became essential, not only through their physical representation, i.e. a specific type of beard, or hair colouring and style, but additionally through the inscription of their name.\(^{15}\)

This belief that the saints themselves were actually “present” in their icons was God’s revelation through their visibility; even though they

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\(^{12}\) Didron, p. 66.  
\(^{14}\) Didron, p. 75.  
\(^{15}\) Boston, pp. 35-36.
were physically dead, they were spiritually active via their intercessory role, and the consequent power of the icons to work miracles thus ensured, and accumulated, further veneration.

In 787 AD, the Second Council of Nicaea, the Seventh Ecumenical Council, enacted the necessity of venerating icons, because this was the affirmation of the Incarnation of God through Christ, and the possibility of the deification of Man. The teaching of John of Damascus, encapsulated the new theology:

If he who is imaged is filled with grace, the materials [i.e. wood and paint, mosaic, tesserae, etc.] become participants of grace in proportion to his faith.  

This revelation of God is the presence of God, so by participating in this revelation the spectator is deified. The icon was not a representation of an absent person, it was the presence of the person, which is very significant, and as will be demonstrated, this will have ramifications for the didactic halo discussed in 4.3.

4.2 Trecento use of pseudo-Kufic, pseudo-Mongol and pseudo-Hebraic script

As described above, in Byzantine icons, name inscriptions were frequently situated at the side of a halo, or flanking a figure, whereas in Europe, the practice of inscribing a saint’s name inside his or her halo gained popularity; during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in France, saints’ names were often written within scrolls held by their owners instead. Halo inscription was especially popular in Italy during the trecento and quattrocento, appearing until the early sixteenth century in Italy and late sixteenth

17 Perl, ibid.
18 Maginnis, Painting in the Age of Giotto, p. 161, notes the sudden emergence of the word in the 1340s, particularly in the use of books and banderoles, and discusses the “dichotomous experience” that painters were creating for their spectators.
century in Germany. These “didactic haloes”, particularly the Italian examples, gradually became more sophisticated, incorporating both names and appellations, especially when applied to the Virgin. Furthermore, it will be evidenced by the examples presented throughout this Chapter and the Table of Haloes that specific social influences were embedded within the inscriptions in the form of humanist lettering, Latin formulae or theological dogma, sometimes also manifesting regional variations, thus realising the Prolegomena’s earlier claim regarding temporal indications. From the duecento in Italy, a majuscule form of Gothic script was used in inscriptions in paintings, and before the fifteenth century adoption of humanistica, the humanistic script, it can be seen that a miscellany of scripts incorporating elements from Arabic, ‘Pags Pa, Kufic, naskh (or nashki), thuluth (or thuth), Hebrew and Latin were used by artists, particularly in trecento Italy. Thuluth or thuth is a large, ornamental cursive script used for official documents during the Umayyad dynasty between 661 and 749, and frequently used in Mamluk Qur’ans, especially for chapter headings and titles, from the twelfth century throughout the eastern Arab world. Nashki script, developed in the tenth century, is smaller than thuluth, and considered to be very legible. ‘Pags Pa (also called hPags Pa or Phagspa) is a ‘quadratic’ Tibetan script commissioned by Kublai Khan (1216-94) in 1260, named after the monk who developed it. The preceding cursive script, commissioned by Gengis Khan (1162 – 1227), was Uighur, a Turkish script, but the new script’s alphabet transcribed the sounds of the Mongol

language more effectively than Uighur. From 1278, all official documents sanctioned with the Royal Seal were written in ‘Pags Pa, especially “passports” issued by Kublai, the pai-zu.23 Between the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries, there was a great appropriation of “exotic” texts in European art generally, not just Italian, but often, artists produced a hybrid imitation, mixing elements from different ancient eastern Mediterranean scripts with those of Arabic scripts.24 Within Italian Renaissance art they frequently resembled elements of the cursive Hebraic and Arabic alphabets, although they were not exact copies. Medieval pseudo-Kufic inscriptions however contained letters which were not derived from cursive Arabic, but from Kufic.25 Fontana utilises “pseudo-Kufic” to distinguish two situations where Kufic is used: firstly as elements which do not form an actual Arabic word, “pseudo-ductus or kufesque”, secondly where an actual word is written in Kufic, but not in the correct sequence, or where this ‘word’ is repeated or alternated within a pseudo-inscription.26 The incidence of these certainly bears witness to the exposure of trecento artists to these different cultures,27 if not through a direct, “first person experience”, instead via

23 www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2004/artexchange [accessed 15.11.05.] Mack, p. 52 describes metal passports as a pai-zu. The website http://arts.cultural-china.com/en/143Arts4308.html [accessed 20.09.09.] highlights a thirteenth century example, described as a paiza or plural paizi. It was circular or rectangular, metallic, and worn as a necklace or fastened to clothing, immediately visible to ensure safe passage. In Footnote 9, p. 194, Mack suggests Italian painters knew ‘Pags Pa from the red authorisation seals on paper money and from Marco Polo, who would have had a paiza inscribed with ‘Pags Pa. The National Gallery of Art, Washington, website, accessed in 2005 stated that Europeans considered the paper money and the passports as “exotic curiosities”.

24 Mack, citing Spittle, Footnote 11, pp. 151-152. Fontana presents examples of pseudo-inscriptions with textual elements derived from the Arabic alphabet appearing in Italian Renaissance art derived from medieval pseudo-Kufic inscriptions, and explores the relationship between Islamic and Western art through the mediation of Byzantium, in “Byzantine Mediation of Epigraphic Characters of Islamic Derivation in the Wall Paintings of Some Churches in Southern Italy” in Burnett, Charles and Contadini, Anna, eds., Islam and The Italian Renaissance, Warburg Institute Colloquia, 1999, pp. 61-75.


27 Although heavily influenced by the luxury textiles, glassware, illuminated manuscripts, ceramics and metalwork imported from the East, as discussed later in this Chapter, artists did not “read” the Arabic text, and thus did not reproduce a true text. Nolan, John, “Considerations on the Halo and Garment Patterns in the Work of Tommaso del Mazza”, The Twilight of a Tradition. Exhibition Catalogue by John Nolan et al, Greenville: The Bob Jones University Museum and Art Gallery, 2009, pp. 19-21. The author of this thesis is grateful to John Nolan, the Museum’s Curator, for his kindness in forwarding both copies of this article and photographs for her use herein. Fontana distinguishes between two types of ornamental pseudo-Kufic used in architecture as a decorative feature in six churches in south-eastern Italy included in her article. One style is composed of pseudo-Kufic with “an interrupted ductus, comprising small groups of elements, always on a vegetal scroll”, p. 62. The other is what she terms “pseudo-Kufic with a
encounters with their artefacts. Semiotically, therefore, this utilisation of hybrid or pseudo textual characters within haloes could be considered a “quasi” example of Derrida’s “hinge”, (La bresure) because it allows the “difference between space and time to be articulated”.28 Thus, these haloes are exhibiting a visual shift from the belief of the presence of a saint or person contained within an icon, (what we could surmise as Barthes’ “here-now”)29 to a manifestation of emic (i.e. culturally specific) time, illustrated and represented by the pseudo-Kufic and ancient eastern Mediterranean scripts.30 However, this thesis has demonstrated that despite the insertion of the hybrid and pseudo-scripts into the halo resulting in simultaneous chronemic and proxemic functions, the halo itself, as sign, does not fulfil all the conditions for the passage from Derrida’s (written) “graphic” to (uttered) “phonic” chain because – despite their multiple functions within the halo site - these textual elements are not spoken, they are only viewed by the spectator,31 even though referencing what were perceived as being the words spoken by Biblical figures in these ancient scripts.

The Council of Vienna’s Decree 42 of 1311-1312, approved the study of Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldaic32 for Catholic scholars to evangelise and convert33 unbelievers, stipulating two experts in situ at each of the designated study centres should “make faithful translations of these books into Latin”, thus the vast scope of this project can be envisaged. Some of the first instances of the pseudo-Arabic scripts were found in

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28 Derrida, p. 66. Derrida sees this as a single word for designating difference and articulation.
30 “The study of time becomes emic when it is concerned with culture-specific and thus arbitrary segmentations and conceptualizations of the temporal continuum”. Nöth, p. 416.
31 Derrida, ibid.
32 Katō, Toshiaki, “Analisi delle lettere ornamentali nella pittura italiana del XIII e XIV secolo” in Art History (Tohoku University), No. 18, 1997, pp. 97-112 in the original Japanese text, pp. 113-120, in the accompanying Italian text. 119
33 Tanner, p. 63.
frescoes considered to be early works of Giotto and his shop, c. 1290, at Assisi in the Upper Church,\(^{34}\) where in a vault fresco (destroyed in the 1997 earthquake), the book held by St Ambrose in the Four Doctors of the Church had text in pseudo-Arabic and those of St Augustine and Pope Gregory in pseudo-Mongol\(^{35}\). Additionally, pseudo-Kufic characters are used as part of a narrative format by Giotto in this cycle, and within the Scrovegni Chapel at Padua.\(^{36}\) He also used pseudo-Arabic designs on his representations of fabrics, such as tiraz bands on the collars and cuffs of garments, as in the Arena Chapel at Padua, on the border of the Virgin’s mantle and that of the cloth of honour in the Ognissanti Madonna (Fig. 235).\(^{38}\) Originally from the Persian word tarāzidan meaning “embroidery”\(^{38}\), a tiraz was a legible inscriptive band containing the name and title of a Muslim ruler that was used on his garments and textiles produced in the royal weaving-mills. Sometimes conferred on important officials, they were consequently highly prized in the Islamic world as a sign of social status. They were diffused into Italy and the rest of Europe by returning Crusaders, where they were often utilised as liturgical garments.\(^{39}\) Subsequently appropriated by Italian artists as a designation of status,\(^{40}\) Giotto uses the tiraz for the Virgin and the Christ Child. Later it

\(^{34}\) http://expo.khi.fi.it/gallery/assisi/frescoes-in-the-upper-church/the-vault-of-the-doctors-of-the-church [01.01.2010]. The area around St Jerome was almost completely destroyed, the project is on-going.

\(^{35}\) Mack, p. 52. The National Gallery of Art website accessed in November 2005 (see Footnote 24) spoke of Giotto’s blending of letter shapes that had been derived from “both Arabic and Mongol Pags-pa”, which, it was suggested, he probably knew from the travels of Italian merchants to Mongol emperors.

\(^{36}\) Fontana, Maria Vittoria, “The influence of Islamic art in Italy”, Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale, (Naples), Vol. 55, 1995, pp. 296-319, p. 298 and Footnote 2. The author of this thesis wishes to extend her grateful appreciation to Prof.ssa Fontana of Sapienza,University of Rome, for her generous assistance in supplying articles and references.


\(^{38}\) Nolan, p. 19.

\(^{39}\) http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2004/artexchange/artexchange_glossary.shtm#mamluks [04.08.09.].

\(^{40}\) “The medieval weavers of these stuffs were so accustomed to working inscriptions that they had come to regard them as so much decorative material, and, in arranging a new pattern, they cut up a sentence and turned it about as their design and loom might dictate. To them the meaning of the words they used was a matter of importance quite secondary to the completeness of their pattern”. A H. Christie, “The Development of Ornament from Arabic Script in The Burlington Magazine, 40 (1922), pp. 287-292, and 41 (1922) pp. 34-41. Also, “...considering that to simulate Cufic lettering was the normal practice in Islamic art, it is to be expected that Christian craftsmen would copy both the correct and the simulated inscriptions”, S. D. T. Spittle, “Cufic Lettering in Christian Art”, in Archaeological Journal 111,(1954), pp. 138-152, both articles cited by Fontana, Maria Vittoria, “I caratteri pseudo epigraphici dall’alfabeto arabo” in Giotto: La Croce di Santa Maria Novella, eds. Ciatti, Marco and Seidel, Max, Florence: Edifir – Edizione Firenze, 2001, pp. 217-227, p.218.
will be used in Florence in sculptures such as Ghiberti’s (1412-1416) *St John the Baptist* at Orsanmichele, where his mantle hems are decorated with pseudo-Kufic lettering.\(^{41}\) Similarly, Verrochio’s *David* (1473-1475) has a broad border of seemingly *thuluth* script along his breastplate, (Figs. 105 and 105a).\(^{42}\) The *tiraz* was also used in Cretan icons commissioned for Serbian churches at a similar date.\(^{43}\)

Initially, trecento use of pseudo texts seems to have been a mode of elevating decorative elements in the representation of painted fabrics, mimicking designs seen in imported fabrics, but also acknowledging the royal, thus exclusive, connections of the *tiraz*. The Council of Vienna’s on-going project to convert pagans via acquisition of their languages was realised in many different ways, for example, at the Chiesa di Santa Maria Maggiore, Florence, in the *Madonna col Bambino* of the Scuola di Coppo di Marcovaldo, the Madonna’s shoes are embellished with a pseudo-Kufic inscription.\(^{44}\)

Later, Giotto utilised pseudo-Arabic lettering within his halo borders, such as in the 1300 *Crucifixion* at Santa Maria Novella, where both the Virgin’s and the Evangelist’s haloes contain pseudo-inscriptions based on the Arabic alphabet.\(^{45}\) The Arabic *grammées* of Christ’s halo seems to be executed in *sgraffito*, here reminiscent of Islamic niello patterning, between the *verre églomisé* “gems”, (Fig. 106).\(^{46}\) This practice of separating elements of pseudo-Arabic lettering or pseudo-epigraphs by a different shape

\(^{41}\) Bronze, executed between 1412-1416, restored in 1992, now in the Museo di Orsanmichele.

\(^{42}\) Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence. Fontana, 1990/91, compares David’s breastplate with the *muwashshah*, an element of eleventh century Spanish Islamic poetry, the etymology of which derives from the Arabic words describing a type of double-folded sash decorated with gold Kufic calligraphy, pp. 80-81.


\(^{45}\) The same elements additionally found within the frame of the Crucifix. Fontana, *Giotto: La Croce di Santa Maria Novella*, p. 217.

\(^{46}\) Fontana, p. 218, notes the presence at the base of the Cross of an Islamic fabric, the design of which is made up of crosses and eight-pointed stars, seemingly a Spanish fabric widely imported into Italy in the late thirteenth century.
such as a circle or penta-circle resembling a rosette is very typical of the type of decoration found on Mamluk metalware, considered a luxury object in trecento Italy.\(^{47}\) Similarly, designs on silks and other textiles were often broken up by circular shapes.\(^{48}\) Additionally, in the titulus for the *Crucifixion*, Giotto used actual, rather than pseudo-Hebraic script, a practice more evident in the early quattrocento.\(^{49}\)

Notwithstanding the practice in Islamic art, previously referenced, of utilising actual Kufic characters or words, sometimes mis-assembled so that they form a non-sensical inscription, Fontana feels that Giotto’s motivation for utilising pseudo-Arabic script within the *Crucifixion* haloes stems from a desire to ornament them, rather than impose any form of “magical” intervention upon them.\(^{50}\) This seems to fit in with his appropriation of textile designs, and his utilisation of these motifs within the frames of the *Madonna di Ognissanti*, (Uffizi), and *Stigmate* (Louvre) altarpieces, in the *Croce* in the Scrovegni Chapel, Padua and within the haloes in the *Madonna di San Giorgio alla Costa*.

Pseudo-Arabic letters also appear in the Virgin’s halo in Giotto’s 1330 *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Baroncelli Chapel at Santa Croce, Florence, of necessity much larger than those of the *Crucifixion*. Bernardo Daddi, Giotto’s apprentice, similarly used a conflation of pseudo-Arabic and pseudo-Mongol inscriptions, although after his last

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\(^{47}\) Luxury Byzantine icons also had a pattern in the outer circumference of the halo where a regularly interspersed different colour or shape broke up the general pattern, see the *Icon of St Michael*, San Marco, Venice, (Fig. 48). Mack, p. 63, likens the haloes to *thuluth* inscriptions found on shallow circular Mamluk dishes.


\(^{49}\) Hebraic lettering sources may have been extant books and tombstones. However, many Hebrew inscriptions in quattrocento works were translations of Latin, rather than being actual Hebraic texts. Wood, p. 278, and Footnote 68.

\(^{50}\) Fontana, “I caratteri . . .” p.219.
work of 1347, it seems that pseudo-Arabic halo inscription diminished until its quattrocento revival\(^{51}\) as discussed in Section 3.6.

### 4.3 Didactic Haloes and Latin inscriptions

This Chapter’s Introduction described the presence of Latin inscriptions.\(^{52}\) In Chapter Three, the Lorenzetti brothers’ rapid adoption of new punching techniques and designs to produce innovative haloes was highlighted, and Ambrogio’s workshop was equally receptive to Latin-inscribed haloes. His c. 1330 *Madonna col Latte*\(^{53}\) contains the salutation:

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written in a wide internal band circumscribed by a beaded border plus plain bounding circle. The Angelic Salutation of the Annunciation is translated as “Hail Mary, full of grace, The Lord is with thee”, or sometimes “Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you” and is derived from the Gospel of St. Luke, 1:28. One of the most common inscriptions written in the Virgin’s halo, it is found in all regions where inscribed haloes appear, although the original Greek salutation from which the subsequent Latin translation was taken actually reads “Be graced”, rather than “Full of grace”.\(^{54}\) Another *Madonna and Child* by Ambrogio, (undated), in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

\(^{51}\) Mack, p. 63.
\(^{52}\) Covi, p. 15, reports the first Latin halo inscription in a fresco cycle of Santa Cecilia dated 1011, in S Urbano of Cafarella (also cited by Auld, Footnote 23).
\(^{53}\) Tempera on wood, 90 x 48 cm., Palazzo Arcivescovile, Siena.
\(^{54}\) GoFFen. R., “Bellini, S. Giobbe and Altar Egos”, in *Artibus et Historiae* 7, 1986, pp. 57 – 70. Footnote 21, p. 68, citing Professor Salvatore I. Camporeale,
York, (Fig. 107) contains the inscription

\[ AVE \ . \ MARIA \ . \ GRATIA \]

in the Virgin’s halo, and

\[ JESV \ CRIS \ [TVS] \]

in the Christ Child’s.  

Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s 1332 *Madonna and Child with St Nicholas and St Proculus* contains the salutation

\[ Ave \ Maria \ Gratia \ Plena \]

in the Virgin’s halo, and the Christ Child’s halo is inscribed with the letters spelling out *Christi*, with the words *SANCTUS NICCHOLA* within the halo border of St Nicholas.  

Once again, halo inscriptions are found within the haloes in his 1342 *Presentation of Jesus in the Temple*, (Fig. 108) based on the Gospel of Luke 2:22-38, where Mary, The Christ Child, Joseph, the prophetess Anna and Simeon all have Latin-incised haloes, Simeon’s reads *SANCTUS SIMEON*.

It is noteworthy that the lettering on his headdress has been identified as “pseudocufic” by Maginnis, and intended to be read as “holiness to the Lord”. In this scene, Lorenzetti conflated elements of the *Purification of the Virgin*, the *Presentation of Christ* and the *Circumcision*. Until the quattrocento, Simeon was usually depicted as a haloed elderly man in flowing robes, sometimes

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55 Originally from the Cappella di San Francesco at Pompano near Siena, this work is tempera and gold on wood, measuring 94 x 56.2 cm. but the panel is in a very poor state.
56 Tempera on panel, 171 x 57 cm.,Uffizi. The panel was cited in Ghiberti’s *Commentaries* of 1453, Fossi, p. 130.
57 Uffizi, tempera on panel, 257 x 168 cm.
58 Maginnis, p. 138.
holding the Christ Child, otherwise the High Priest holds Him. Lorenzetti is emphasising not only Simeon’s role in this narrative, but also through his cradling of the Infant the *Presentational* aspect, rather than Mary’s *Purification*. Artists’ quests for increasing naturalism of the picture field in the early trecento resulted in a consequent shift in identification information. Like the early Christian works referenced at the beginning of this Chapter, saints’ names had often flanked their image, but the desire to reduce the tension between the new plasticity of figures and the presence of inscriptions meant that textual information had to be displayed in a less obtrusive and disruptive site. From around the 1320s, names were included within haloes, but generally, Maginnis records a switch in the locus of all forms of explanatory textual elements. These include text on *banderoles*, that written in codices which are held by figures, (see Footnote 95 regarding their specific signification), inscriptions written on the risers of steps and still, occasionally, free-floating inscriptions, such as the Annunciate Angel’s gold *pastiglia* words in Simone Martini’s and Lippo Memmi’s *Annunciation*, (Fig. 33).

In addition to name identification, one of the simplest inscriptions found is that in Nardo di Cione’s c.1450 *Crucifixion* in which the description *MARIA MATER* can be seen in the Virgin’s halo, (Fig. 109), an intrinsically didactic process. It continues into the quattrocento, for example, on six newly-rediscovered panels by Gentile da Fabriano of Sts. John the Evangelist, James, Jude Thaddeus, Matthew, Peter and Bartholomew, all saints’ names are inscribed in Gothic script within their haloes. In his Perugia

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60 Maginnis, pp. 150-151.
61 Maginnis, p. 160.
62 Tempera on panel, Uffizi, Florence, 145 x 171 cm.
63 Catalogue Note relating to Lot No. 2, *St John the Evangelist*, Sale No. NO8516, New York, 29th January 2009, by Sotheby’s. Inside St John’s halo is inscribed *S(t) JOHANN*. The work is tempera and gold ground on panel, and it has been proposed by Andrea di Marchi, and supported by Keith Christiansen that these panels were originally from the Perugia altarpiece before it was broken up. Professor Di Marchi’s proposal is to be published, pp. 50-53, in A Di Marchi and M Mazzalupi, eds,
Madonna and Child, the Virgin’s halo contains the salutation

Ave Maria gratia plena dominus tecum bened [icta].  

64

In the saints’ haloes of Gentile da Fabriano’s Valle Romita Altarpiece, c. 1405, the inscriptions read:

Santus ieronim(us) docto(r)
Santus Dominicus confessor
Santus Franciscus confessor
Santa Maria Magdalena

In the Virgin’s cloak there is the inscription

“Ave gemma pretiosa super solem speciosa virginal gaudium”.  

65

The Ferrara Madonna and Child, also 1405, contains the inscription

Ave Maria gratia Dominus tecum

in the Virgin’s halo, in a mixture of majuscole and maioscole Gothic script, the words separated by rosette motifs, (Fig. 110). The Madonna and Child with Angels, in the National Gallery, Athens, attributed to Gentile da Fabriano c. 1418, also has Latin halo

64

Auld, Appendix. The work is tempera on panel, its dimensions are 115 x 64 cm and it is in the Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria, Perugia. Di Marchi has offered a slightly earlier dating, c. 1405 of this panel, because of the Venetian artistic vocabulary which he has used, meaning that Gentile was actually in Venice earlier than the documented date of 1408, possibly as early as 1402. The Madonna and Child at the Metropolitan Museum, New York, also has quotations from the same antiphon in the angel’s scroll, although spelt slightly differently.

65

See Domenico di Bartolo’s Madonna and Child discussed in 4.4 of this Chapter. The Valle Romita altarpiece is in the Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.
inscriptions. Its composition is of a *Madonna of Humility* type, three angels are situated above her and two on the ground beside her. Similar to the Perugia *Madonna*, the Athens panel is not included in Auld’s Appendix, but the inscriptions read as follows:

_Santa (sic) Maria Mater Dei_

in the Virgin’s halo, and

_Jesus Naçarenun rex Judaeorum_

in the Christ Child’s halo.

Unusually, the Christ Child’s halo is not cruciferous, and this internal inscription is more commonly found on the titulus of the Cross. In the 1425 *Quaratesi Madonna* (Figs. 111 and 111a) Gentile bestows Latin-inscribed haloes, with

_Ave Maria. Gratia. Plena_

in the Virgin’s halo, and the appellation

_YHS/XPS/filii_

in the Christ Child’s.

The other sections of the Uffizi’s *Quaratesi Altarpiece*, similarly have Latin-inscribed haloes, “Santa Maria Magdalena” for the Magdalene, “Sanctus Nicholaus” for St Nicholas of Bari, “Sanctus Iohannes Baptis” for the Baptist, “Sanctus Georgius Martir”

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67 Brandi. ibid. See Footnote 51, Chapter Six, “The Halo in the Bellini Botteghe” for Lucco and Pontarini’s explanation of the titulus execution.
68 The Royal Collection, oil on panel, 220.5 x 85 cm. Accession Number RCIN 407614.
for St George, (Figs. 111b and 111c). Two more depictions of the *Madonna and Child* by Gentile da Fabriano, one a fresco at Orvieto c.1425, and one at Velletri, also have the inscription “Ave Maria gratia plena” and “Ave Maria Gratia”.

### 4.4 Domenico di Bartolo’s *Virgin of Humility* and her cartiglio-circumscribed halo

The Virgin’s salutation by the Annunciate Angel is found, as mentioned earlier, in many centres, e.g. Pietro di Domenico da Montepulciano’s 1420 *Madonna and Child with Angels* contains the inscription

\[
\text{AVE GRATIA PLENA DOMINUS TECUM .}\]

However, an inscription actually circumscribing the external lower border of the Virgin’s halo, rather than being situated inside it, is found in the Sienese artist Domenico di Bartolo’s 1433 *Virgin of Humility* (Fig. 112). The Virgin, with the Christ Child on her lap with a rank of angels, one playing a stringed instrument, is seated on

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69 Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, tempera and tooled gold leaf. 139.9 x 83 cm.
70 Auld Appendix.
the ground, barefoot. In front of her, a *cartiglio* bears the words:

\[
O \ DECUS \ O \ SPETIES \ O \ LUX \ O \ STELLA \ SUPREMI \ / \ ETERIS \ EXAUDI \\
MISEROS \ FAMULOSQUE \ PRECANTES. \ / \ DOMINICUS \ DOMINI \ MATREM \\
TE \ PINXIT \ ET \ ORAT- \ MCCCCXXXIII
\]

from which it can be seen that this is a laudatory painting to the Virgin, who, as previously explained, was, and is, the Protector of the City-State of Siena, the *Civitas Virginis* (the city of the Virgin). Her foreshortened halo is placed high above her head and skirting its lower border, supported by wings, is another *cartiglio* on which is written

\[
AVE \ MARIS \ STELLA \ GEMMAQUE \ PRETIOSA
\]

These inscriptions refer to light and beauty, and Strehlke argues that both the words and iconography of the entire painting, are based on sermons previously delivered by San Bernardino, the Sienese preacher, who as discussed in 3.3, Chapter Three, had a particular and profound devotion to the Virgin.\(^75\) This use of the appellation *Maris Stella* in the salutation *Ave Maris Stella* instead of the usual *Ave Maria* as previously seen in the Lorenzetti panel, is Domenico’s visualisation of an ancient descriptor of her, originally utilised by St Jerome, then quoted by San Bernardino in *Le Prediche Volgari*, when he was preaching about the Annunciation.\(^76\) A further example of its use can be seen in the mosaic titulus at the Duomo in Torcello, where extra resonance is given to

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73 Strehlke, 1984, p. 381. His translation of the inscription is: “Oh Beauty, oh Splendour, oh Light, oh Star of the highest Heaven, Listen to the poor servants who pray to you. Domenico painted me, Mother of God, and prays to you. 1433.”

74 “Hail Star of the Sea and Precious Gem”.

75 He was collating these sermons into a treatise in 1432. Strehlke, 1984, p. 388, Footnote 4.

76 Strehlke, 1984, p. 382, and Footnote 9, p. 388, citing San Gerolamo, *De Interpretatione nominium hebraicorum in Patrologiae cursus completes*, Migne, JP, Paris 1844-1875, Col XXIII, c. 842. There is a hymn traceable to the eighth century, entitled “Ave Maris Stella”.

129
the stellar imagery by the gold star on the shoulder of the Virgin’s maphorion.\textsuperscript{77} Although the use of three gold stars is a frequent motif in Byzantine icons\textsuperscript{78}, Domenico has synthesised this ancient use with contemporaneous Franciscan theology in which the area between the upper clavicle and the neck of the Virgin was considered to be the origin of the Divine Grace which the Virgin herself transmitted.\textsuperscript{79} It can be seen that in Domenico’s panel, this concept of Divine Grace is overlaid with the light imagery of the star within the halo circumference, and the star-like radiation of gold rays inside the halo, enhancing its presence and signification as a star. Her barefoot position, seated on the ground, is quite typical of the Sienese Madonna dell’Umilità, although additionally she is wearing a small crown of precious gems because she is La stella supremi eteris, or as San Bernardino described her in Le Prediche Volgari, the “star of heaven”, La stella caeli.\textsuperscript{80} This simultaneous presentation of the Virgin as humilis on the floor, barefoot and yet crowned was repeated in Siena and Florence.\textsuperscript{81} It showed her dual role as the Mother of God and the Queen of Heaven.\textsuperscript{82} The five precious stones in her crown are echoed within her halo.

The cartiglio itself is suspended by two wings, representing the Holy Spirit, thus further emphasising the Virgin’s role as the “vessel” through which the Divine Grace was transmitted to mankind.\textsuperscript{83} This particular halo is certainly didactic, its meanings

\textsuperscript{77} See Chapter Four, regarding the Torcello Virgin.

\textsuperscript{78} Usually, three stars are used in Byzantine icons to represent the Virgin’s eternal virginity, before the Annunciation, during the birth of Jesus, and post-parturition. Constas, p. 213.

\textsuperscript{79} Strehlke, 1984, p. 382 and Footnote 11 discusses the collo sfundente. In his Adiutricem populi of 1810, Leo XIII referred to the Virgin as the “dispensatrix of all the gifts” and she is “‘the neck’, connecting the Head of the Mystical Body to the Members. But all power flows through her neck”. Father William G. Most, “Mary, Mediatrix of all Graces” in http://www.ewtn.com/faith/teachings/marya4.htm, [accessed 23.11.10.]


\textsuperscript{81} Meiss, Millard, “The Madonna of Humility”, The Art Bulletin, Vol. 18, No. 4, December 1936. pp. 435–464, notes the adoption of this composition throughout Italy in the late quattrocento and early cinquecento, as well as diffusion into Spain, France and Germany, p. 435.

\textsuperscript{82} Similar examples by Guariento and Nicoletto Semitecolo at Padua may be the source of the composition in the late trecento. Strehlke, (1984), Footnote 28, p. 388. Florence.

intelligently layered: its symbolic internal stellar rays visually reinforce the textual appellation physically supporting it, and both of these messages additionally strengthen and echo the *cartiglio* at the Virgin’s feet, thus framing her and the Christ Child in an actual, physical “frame” and simultaneously within the conceptual “frame” of San Bernardino’s sermons.

The inscriptions are written in humanistic letters imitating ancient Roman inscriptions, an innovation in Siena and one of the first examples of this use in quattrocento art.  

Four years later, he painted a *Virgin and Child*, (Fig. 113) again using inscriptions, this time on a scroll held by the Christ Child, in whose cruciferous halo are the words *MU[N]DI EGO*, an abbreviation from the Gospel of St John 12, verse 12.

The Virgin’s halo, (Fig. 113a) like the Fanciullo’s, is tooled and bears the inscription

\[ AVE REGI [N]A C [AELOREUM] \]

intersected by a red pentagon rosette seemingly topped with pearls. Again, the lettering is in humanist script, and is an abbreviation from the antiphon used at the Feast of the Purification. The rosette patterns echo the red and white roses climbing up a trellis behind the Virgin, a reference to her purity, possibly derived from St Bernard of Clairvaux who likened her chastity to a white rose and the red rose to charity. The *rosa charitatis* reflected the contemporaneous belief that red was the colour of charity and

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84 Strehlke, 2004  
85 “Hail, Queen of the Heavens”. The painting is in the John G. Collection at The Philadelphia Museum of Art, tempera on panel, signed and dated 1437, 62.2 x 44 x 3.6 cm. Strehlke, (2004), p. 116. Fig. 113a shows the work prior to its recent cleaning and restoration.  
86 Strehlke, ibid. describes four antiphons dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, “Alma Redemptoris Mater”, “Salve Regina”, “Ave Regina Coelorum”, and “Regina Coeli”.
was cited by many medieval writers as such.\textsuperscript{87} It may also refer to her status as a “hortus conclusus”, the image derived from King Solomon’s \textit{Song of Songs} 4:12:

\begin{quote}
A garden locked is my sister, my bride,
A garden locked, a fountain sealed.
\end{quote}

Domenico’s halo exemplifies the assertion posited by this thesis that theological dogma is embedded within the halo site, and simultaneously its function as a hierarchizing vehicle is illustrated by the jewels contained within it, echoing those of her crown as the Queen of Heaven.

\textbf{4.5 Madonna and Child with Saint Anne and Angels, Sant’Anna Metterza and her halo by Bicci di Lorenzo}

The Sienese use of humanistic script seen in Bartolo’s \textit{Madonna of Humility} seems to be earlier than in Florence, where Fra Angelico is credited with appropriating its principles in \textit{The Coronation of the Virgin}, c. 1437 and the Perugia polyptych of c. 1437-38. However, this lettering is not contained within the haloes, and it is still a rather hybrid style.\textsuperscript{88} In c. 1422-23, upper case Roman capitals were used by Masaccio and Masolino in the \textit{St Anne with the Virgin and Child} (or the \textit{Sant’Anna Metterza}), panel for the words \textit{AVE MARIA GRATIA} on the base of the Virgin’s throne (Fig. 114). The origin of this title comes from mediaeval Latin \textit{mettertia}, “the same third” because St Anne extends her arm protectively towards the Virgin and Child.\textsuperscript{89}


\textsuperscript{88} Covi, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{89} Covi, p. 5.
her halo (Fig. 114a) are inscribed in Gothic majuscules

\textit{AVE MARIA GRATIA DOMINUS}.

St. Anne’s halo is inscribed with the appellation

\textit{SANT’ ANNA È DI NOSTRA DONNA FASTIGIO}.

Similarly, Bicci di Lorenzo’s \textit{Sant’Anna Metterza} panel, (early 1420s-1430s, Fig 115) which is compositionally based on Masaccio and Masolino’s panel, has Latin halo inscriptions.\textsuperscript{90} St Anne’s reads:

\textit{SAN ANNA MATER VIR\[INIS\]}

but this is not in humanistic script, with its crisp, clear lines, neither is it Northern Gothic, with its elegant and elongated outline, (Fig. 115a). These letters do not have serifs, and their bases are rounded with a deep intersection, particularly noticeable in the majuscule “I” and “R”. The details of the lettering show how Bicci has executed it using a stylus to punch the outlines into the gold leaf, (Figs. 115b and 115c). An amalgam of different texts is occurs at this period, evidenced by the “exotic mixed alphabet” written in 1436 by Sigmund Gotzkircher, the Munich court physician who had studied medicine at Padua in the 1430s. His alphabet includes seven types of ‘N’, nine types of ‘A’, and eleven types of ‘M’, all based on pre-Gothic letters.\textsuperscript{91}

Bicci has utilised a simple ring punch in St Anne’s halo circumference and the lettering is contained in a broad band circumscribed by a concentric “stand-alone” single ring
punch border rather than a reticulated pattern, and he has covered the interstitial areas between letters with dots produced by stylus, leaving the inner field of the letters plain, giving the effect of highlighting the letters, thereby making them more visible. In contrast to St Anne’s stark, hieratic appearance, the halo lettering is quite decorative with its curling embellishment, with an almost “feminine” aspect, (Figs. 115b-d). The lower “feet” of some letters, such as the ‘A’ and the ‘N’ with their intersection, betray a similarity to the feet of Pisanello’s thuluth script, (discussed in 4.6, see Fig. 124).

In contrast to the trecento haloes containing pseudo-Kufic and pseudo-Hebraic grammées, Bicci’s haloes demonstrate the contemporary practice of combining different textual shapes based upon Latin script, rather than Mediterranean or Arabic characters. Once again, the precision applied to the “construction” of the letters may be calliphoric, simultaneously enhancing the texture of these haloes. Semiotically, this contemporary practice based on Latin script demonstrates the difference between perception and recognition, the halo is now socially recognized as a sign, the “arc that extends from person to person and across inter-individual space”.

4.6 Quattrocento use of pseudo-Arabic text in Florence and Rome

Around 1420, there is a resurgence in the use of pseudo-Arabic text in textiles within paintings and sculptures via the application of tiraz bands, and now additionally within halo inscriptions. In a study of Tommaso del Mazza’s works, John Nolan found that of a possible forty-eight panels, there is a repetition of his garment border design in around thirty. Produced freehand in mordant gilding, it includes a pair of ‘X’ shapes together with pseudo-Arabic characters, reduced according to their placement, and

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approximating the Islamic calligraphy for “Allah” or “God”. Bicci di Lorenzo’s garment border, (Fig. 116) also uses pseudo-Arabic elements, but excludes the double ‘X’ pattern. Gentile da Fabriano’s 1420 Coronation of the Virgin at The J Paul Getty Museum (Fig. 117) contains the appellation “YHS/XPS (Fil)ius” in the Christ’s halo (Fig. 117a) with a pseudo-Arabic inscription in the Virgin’s halo. Furthermore she has an inscription in Latin on the hem of her gown, which reads:

\[\text{Ave Maria g (ratia) plen (a) dominus tecum be (nedicta)}\]

The Getty Coronation was originally a double-sided processional standard, the second panel featuring St Francis with his name “Franciscus” inscribed in his halo, is now in a private collection in Italy. Although his contemporary Washington Madonna and Child Enthroned (Figs. 118 and 118a) features script imitative of thuluth, including the actual Arabic letter alif, the halo inscription was nonetheless “invented” by Gentile and therefore it cannot be read. Wood raises the interesting proposition that because it was removed from reality, an artwork could become a locus where opposite themes could be juxtaposed, and particularly the concepts of stability and instability encapsulated. He further suggests that pagan motifs could, and did, rest alongside Christian icons, both simultaneously offered for display to the spectator, perhaps a strategy to create a sense of unity within Christian spectators, in its referencing of illegible exotic texts. Thus, the presence of this pseudo-Kufic text was “an opaque signifier that signified ‘alien

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93 Nolan compared this design with contemporaneous panels and after a vast survey of several hundred works, only found all the same constituents in Matteo di Paccino’s altarpiece of St Bernard’s Vision of the Virgin with Sts. Benedict, John the Evangelist, Quintinus and Galgano, (Uffizi, Florence). In his Fig. 28, there is an outer border of two dots intersected by a vertical line, echoing the halo external pinnacle pattern discussed in Chapter Three. Nolan, pp. 24-30.

94 Tempera and gold leaf on panel, 34½ x 25½ ins.

95 Kerber Peter Bjorn, (PBKerber@getty.edu) Gentile da Fabriano – Coronation of the Virgin. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), 14th October, 2009.

96 http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2004/artexchange/artexchange_ss5.shtm. [05.08.09.] Simultaneously, Latin inscriptions on hems and neckbands are used, the appellation MATER [DEI] is inscribed on the Virgin’s neckband, and on the hem of her mantle the usual angelic salutation AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA DOM[INVS] TECVM BEN[EDITA]. The work is in the Samuel H. Kress Collection at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, measuring 108.6 x 64.8 x 8.9 cm in its frame.
signifier’. This could be considered to be “an insurgent act of cultural translation . . . the space of intervention emerging in the cultural interstices that introduces creative invention into existence”. The pseudo-scripts are thus an “unlockable”, strange code, but overlaying this is a sense of magical power in their depiction because of this very association. The reconciliation between Eastern and Western Latin Churches was still more than a decade away, and domestic politics were also problematic. On 12th July 1420, Pope Martin issued an encyclical supporting the crusade against the Turks, highlighting the spiritual rewards for the Crusaders, thus once again, the halo has been demonstrated as reflecting contemporary societal concerns.

Gentile da Fabriano’s 1422 Pisa Madonna of Humility (Fig 119) contains a pseudo-Arabic inscription in the Virgin’s halo which has been quartered by a decorative motif, this separation echoing a similar style found on Mamluk brassware (Fig. 137). Depending upon the amount of script to be separated, within Mamluk brassware the divisions can be at intervals of two and four, or six and eight. Gentile’s preference seems to be for three or four, (Figs. 119a-b) similar to Jacopo Bellini’s designs discussed later in this Chapter. In the Pisa Madonna of Humility, the Christ Child lies on a blanket, (Fig. 119c) edged with what seems to be a border of pseudo-Arabic script, the traditional reading of the “inscription” has been “La Illahi Illa Allah”, “There is no God but God”, together with a Latin inscription of “Fabr. Gen” on the Virgin’s halo. However, this Islamic reading has been refuted by Mohamed Zakariya, and previously Auld had expressed doubts.

99 Wood, p. 279.
101 Mack, pp. 64-65.
102 Mack, p. 195, Footnote 37. The border actually reads: “(a)ve m(tate)r dicgna (d)ei” Auld, p. 256. Mohamed Zakariya is an American Muslim master calligrapher, who has been awarded distinguished
In the sumptuous 1423 Strozzi Altarpiece both the Virgin’s halo and, unusually, that of St Joseph have pseudo-Arabic inscriptions, (Fig. 120). Gentile used pseudo-Arabic haloes exclusively for the Virgin in seven works dating between the 1420 Coronation and the Villa I Tatti Madonna, with this single exception of Joseph. As far as this author is aware, it is the only example where he has been endowed with such a nimbus by any artist. As in the Pisa Madonna, Gentile has separated the text, this time with a tooled hexa-circle surrounding an internal octa-circle inside which is a central single punch, the entire motif surrounded by a design of three single punch marks arranged in a pyramidal shape at each of its corners. Gentile seems to have utilised a simple ring punch, (Frinta’s Group L, Fig. 11) to create this ornamentation. St Joseph’s halo is slightly less ornate with fewer punch marks delineating the outer circle. Additionally in the Adoration Gentile incorporated oriental elements in the page’s sash and the midwife’s stole, described by Auld as a “whirling rosette” motif in the sash, a popular motif in Mamluk Egypt,\(^\text{103}\) and which this thesis has found frequently within Venice, for example, as a decorative element within the walls of the tenth century Duomo at Torcello, although this rosette is “reversed”, (Fig. 122). It is also found within architecture in Venice at Desdemona’s house, (Figs. 123 and 123a) and the motif is appropriated by Jacopo Bellini in his frame (Fig. 131a) architecture, as well as by Gentile himself in the Virgin’s gown in the Getty Coronation of the Virgin, (Figs. 117, 121 and 121a discussed previously).

Gentile’s “version” of thuluth script is a hybrid including some Gothic features, and in addition to Mamluk brassware, textiles may well have been a likely source of his diplomas in thuluth, naskh and taliq scripts. He was commissioned by President Obama to create a piece of calligraphy as a gift for King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabi during the Presidential visit of June 2009. [www.artfacts.net](http://www.artfacts.net) [accessed 10.09.09].

\(^{103}\) Auld, p. 250. Similar to Klesse’s black and white illustrations of textile patterns, these are helpful in discerning repetitive motifs.
Islamic epigraphy. He utilised many luxury textiles in his paintings, including brocades, silks and velvets, (his father, Niccolò di Giovanni di Massio, was a textile merchant).  

Examining the oriental designs on some of these luxury fabrics, it is possible to see that Gentile has copied very carefully the slanting wedges of the vertical strokes and included left-sided “flicks”, elements also found in Pisanello’s drawing of thuluth script (Fig. 124), where, as in Jacopo Bellini’s drawing books, several different compositions and decorative designs are being worked out. Underneath the band of thuluth script, at the left of the drawing, Pisanello has sketched out a rosette type of design, similar to, but different from, Gentile’s.

Masaccio used pseudo-Arabic text in his 1422 San Giovenale triptych, possibly also imitated from Mamluk brassware, but the lettering is not as elegant and well-formed as Gentile’s script. With Masolino, he produced several more pseudo-Arabic haloes, as in the Enthroned Madonna and Child with Angels, c. 1425-25 (Uffizi) where the pseudo-script is slightly different. In his 1426 Enthroned Madonna, for the Carmine, Pisa, (National Gallery, London, Fig. 125) the Virgin also has a halo with pseudo-Arabic script. However, these letters are much broader and squatter, and there only seems to be one text separation with a “rosette” division; this is much less imitative of Mamluk brassware.

Within paintings, pseudo-Kufic script became less frequent in Florence after the 1430s, although in c.1464, a stained glass tondo attributed to Alessio Baldovinetti included

104 Auld, p. 258, giving examples of textiles, including those of Spanish origin.
105 Studien zu Kaiser Johannes VIII. Palaiologus und arabische Schrift in Thuluth, Blass-Simmen, Fig. 8, p. 459. Louvre, Paris.
Mamluk pseudo-*nashki* characters in six compartments around the Medici coat of arms.\(^{107}\)

It has been suggested that Gentile’s use of these pseudo-Arabic inscriptions was a response to the buoyant mercantile ambience in Florence because a new trading treaty had been negotiated between the Mamluk Sultan of Egypt and the State of Florence. The inscriptions could therefore represent “an interpretation of the common bond between Christianity and Islam with regard to the Virgin as a sort of public relations exercise for the people and church of Florence”.\(^{108}\)

Like the Northern and Eastern Baptistry doors in Florence, Filarete’s Vatican doors in Rome also contain epigraphic motifs. In addition to the pseudo-Kufic ornamented garment borders of St Paul at the Vatican, there is a cursive pseudo-Arabic epigraph within the haloes of Christ, and Sts. Peter and Paul.\(^{109}\)

Like the trecento haloes discussed in 4.2, these Florentine and Roman haloes could be considered temporal bridges reaching out to those ancient lands and scripts where the Biblical figures lived, spoke and wrote. In Islamic Qu’ranic calligraphy, it is believed that Allah is present in the textual elements, but here, we may surmise that Gentile and Masaccio were not attempting to impose this concept into their haloes. Although it seems that Masaccio did depict an actual shāhada, he did so incorrectly and deliberately, like Gentile’s “invented” Washington halo inscription. The mystique of the Islamic “magic” calligraphy is a vehicle which can be appropriated to show their appreciation of


\(^{108}\) Auld, Sylvia, p. 247. Mack feels that there is no conclusive proof of this.

\(^{109}\) Fontana, “The influence of Islamic art in Italy”, p. 311 and Footnote 39, citing Lanci’s description of Christ’s halo when he published it in 1845-6.
its aesthetic and graphic qualities, which they then reproduce on their terms. Even though once again the owners of the haloes have not *uttered* these words, this function is very different from that of the trecento use of pseudo-Kufic script, where its royal exclusivity and decorative qualities were paramount.

4.7 Quattrocento use of pseudo-Arabic script in Venice

The surge of interest in Islamic brassware occurred not only in Florence but also in the Veneto and Venice.\(^{110}\) During the quattrocento, increasing quantities of Islamic brassware, particularly Mamluk, were imported into Venice, and many objects have been found bearing the *stemmi* of Venetian families, leading to speculation that there were Islamic craftsmen based in Venice producing “Veneto-Saracenic” brassware, although this has now been discounted.

In Venice itself, the use of Latin-inscribed, didactic haloes was not very common, as can be seen from a “trawl” of extant works within the Churches recorded in the Table of Haloes, small devotional works, sculptures, or in the *mariegola* of the various *Scuole*, although there was a taste for pseudo-Arabic epigraphy or ornamentation in carpets and decorated glassware. This dearth of Latin-inscribed haloes is surprising, in view of the fact that more workshops, particularly those of the Bellini and the Vivarini were beginning to sign their works in the form of *cartellini*, and additionally include palaeographic inscriptions, sometimes in Roman capitals, or in Gothic script.\(^{111}\) Jacopo Bellini, however, in his commissions, did use Latin inscriptions within many of his

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\(^{111}\) Matthew, p. 620.
Madonna paintings, such as the late 1420s/early 1430s Lochis Madonna in Bergamo where the salutation

**AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA**

is inscribed in the Madonna’s halo, although the inscription in the Christ Child’s is now illegible.\(^{112}\) In the Ferrara Madonna col Bambino the salutation is varied to

**AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA DOMINUS TECUM**

and in the Enthroned Madonna and Child, (Fig. 126) another work of the early 1430s, in the Cagnola Collection, Gazzada, he has again inscribed

**AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA DOMINUS**

This work has wonderful Kufic mantles and very rich textiles, like the Brescia Annunciation, (Figs. 127) and the Madonna and Child (Figs. 132) at the Uffizi, amply demonstrating Jacopo’s great interest in contemporary exotic textiles and artefacts, and his utilisation of textile books and patterns.\(^{113}\) The Brescia Annunciation contains the words

**PLENA GRATIA AVE**

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in gold Gothic lettering, although not as a halo inscription, they are instead the actual words spoken by the Annunciate Angel physically visualized. Completed in 1444, this pala was most probably based on an Annunciation commissioned from Fra Angelico for the Order’s mother church, Santissima Annunziata, Florence. The Virgin Annunciate is clothed in beautiful oriental fabrics, edged with pseudo-Arabic tiraz bands, as is the suspended curtain behind her. Her halo, however, (Fig. 127a) slightly angled behind her head, has an outer border of ornamental designs, with some arabesques but no pseudo-Arabic text. There are also bunched golden rays within the inner circumference, punctuated by tiny stars which are echoed in the receding coffered ceiling. This could well be a reference to the Twelve Apostles, cited by Bonaventura in the Speculum Humanae Salvationis in his discussion of the Annunciation when he describes the Virgin with a crown of stars.

As can be seen, Jacopo is utilising a mixture of oriental “pseudo” text and Gothic lettering, although his halo inscriptions always appeared in Gothic text. After winning the commission to paint the Madonna of Humility for Lionello d’Este, (Fig. 128) Jacopo again positions the halo flat behind the Virgin’s head, (Fig. 128a), four outer and four inner concentric bands creating a border containing the words:

\textit{Nues.ave.mater.regina.mundi.avei}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{114} Matthew, p. 618. \textsuperscript{115} Humfrey, P. “The Bellini and the Vivarini in Venice”, in eds. E. Borsook and Fiorella Superbi Giofreddi, \textit{Italian Altarpieces 1250 - 1550: Function and Design}, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994, p. 144. \textsuperscript{116} Meiss, p. 462, citing Bonaventura, Chapter 36. Meiss cites Bonaventura’s First Sermon on the Incarnation, to be understood by twelve metaphors. \textsuperscript{117} Covi, p. 279 highlights that Gothic script is used for such inscriptions until the end of the quattrocento. Additionally, most printers utilised Gothic typefaces. \textsuperscript{118} Document 7, Appendix 2 of this thesis is the notification of a gift from Lionello d’Este to Jacopo of two bushels of wheat, published by Ricci, \textit{Il Libro di Louvre}, who also reports that a poem was written about this work by Ulisse, perhaps known as Aleotti, praising Jacopo very much. \textsuperscript{119} Eisler, p. 518.}
The lettering is Gothic lower case, the words separated by a decorative element, like the pseudo-Arabic texts broken up in imitation of the Mamluk brassware. The Christ Child has a cruciferous halo, which is placed above His head, although so close as to seemingly touch His crown, and additionally Jacopo utilised richly-gilded pseudo-Arabic text on the Virgin’s garment borders. In 1450, Jacopo inscribed a more sophisticated “message” in the Virgin’s halo in the Madonna col Bambino, (Figs. 129, 129a). In the outer rim, positioned in the border between two outer concentric bands and two inner bands with ridged arches, is the antiphon

REGINA. CELI. LETARE. ALLELUIA. QUA. QUEM. MERUISTI. PORTARE. ALLELUIA

This is part of an antiphon written to the Virgin, praising her as the “carrier” of Christ, “Queen of heaven. Rejoice because you are worthy to carry [Him]. Rejoice” and is written in Italian Gothic miniscule script. This echoes the Virgin’s description by Proclus of Constantinople in Homily I as “the living tabernacle containing not the law but the giver of law”. This metaphor of the Virgin as a holy “carrier” was further developed by San Bernardino, and latterly within Venice by Lorenzo Giustiniani, its first Patriarch.

In the Lovere Madonna and Child, (Fig. 130) Jacopo has used exactly the same frame architecture for this work as the Madonna con Cherubini, (Fig. 131), demonstrating the bottega’s application and re-use of a repertoire of design elements, as highlighted by

120 Huter, p. 19.
121 Gallerie d’Accademia, Venice.
122 Moschini Marconi, Sandra, Gallerie dell’Accademia di Venezia I, Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1995, p. 34. Covi cites Luigi Lanzi’s observation in 1785 that the Roman characters of lettering were revived”, for inscriptions in Italian painting after the mid-1400s, p. 2.
123 Constas, p. 131.
124 Dated by Eisler to the 1440s, but by Humfrey to 1450, it is signed on a cartellino with the signature JACHOBUS BELLINUS in uppercase Roman letters. The work is in the Museo Tadini, Lovere.
125 Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice.
Ricci below. Comparing the *Madonna con Cherubini* with the Loreve *Madonna* and the central panel of the *trittico* with the *polittico* of the Raccolta Cagnola in Milan, he writes: 126

Compare, moreover, the haloes of the Madonna and of the Putto in the Cagnola artwork with those of the Madonna of Loreve and of Venice (*Madonna con Cherubini*). In the halo of the Cagnola a recurring exhortation to the Virgin is written in gold letters in the same position and in the same characters as those of the Loreve panel. The rose-petalled design, that divides each word, is identical to the rose designs that are seen in the halo of the *Madonna con Cherubini* in Venice. Also, the lower central section of the halo, with incised lines, appears to be similar to the Loreve and Cagnola paintings. The haloes of the Christ Child in all Jacopo’s artworks show a same division by a Greek cross. 127

This division of the Gothic halo inscription by the rose-petal motif is again, a reference to the Mamluk metalware encountered earlier in the work of Gentile da Fabriano in Florence some twenty years previously, although it can be seen that the pseudo-Arabic elements in Jacopo’s *Madonna con Cherubini* are not as broad as Gentile’s pseudo-thuluth script, because they are pseudo-cursive characters, possibly pseudo-Nashki. 128

This appropriation of pseudo-Arabic elements is shared by the Venetan (rather than Venetian) artists, especially from the ambit of Padua and Squarcione’s influence. The brass roundel given by Donatello to his Florentine physician in 1456, shaped like a plate with a recessed centre, has a lip with a concentric band containing a gilded pseudo-Arabic inscription, considered ornamental rather than didactic. There is evidence that perhaps Donatello executed it whilst in Padua rather than after his return to Florence in 1453. 129 Squarcione (c. 1397-1468) had a large collection of drawings and also

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126 Ricci, p. 25.
127 In the Galleria’s guides of 1845, 1846 the work was not noted, but it is registered in that of 1852.
128 Fontana, Maria Vittoria (mariavittoria.fontana@gmail.com). E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), *Grafici Thuluth e Grafici Kufic o Pseudo-Kufic*, 8th January 2011: “..But I believe that it is a pseudo-Nashki, (or, in any case, a cursive writing), rather than a pseudo-Kufic, as is more common in the fifteenth century”.
129 Radcliffe, p. 377, footnote 3, and Avery, p. 384. The roundel is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.
antiquities for the instruction of the garzone in his bottega. He himself has left only two signed works, one of which, the Madonna and Child has haloes with pseudo-cursive textual elements within their rims, (Fig. 134). Another pupil, Andrea Mantegna, studied Squarcione’s collection of antiquities, something which would become a lifelong passion for him and one of the most important elements in many of his works. In his San Zeno Altarpiece, Mantegna’s version of pseudo-Arabic script can be seen on the haloes of all the figures, Sts Peter, Paul, John the Evangelist and Zeno on the left of the picture plane, and Sts Benedict, Lawrence, Gregory and John the Baptist on the right, who are all flanking the central composition of the enthroned Virgin and Christ Child, (Fig. 135). As noted in Chapter Three, the haloes are in a variety of positions and ellipsis behind their owners’ heads, and a consistent factor is that all have pseudo-Arabic characters in the broad halo borders. Mantegna has foreshortened these grammées in the haloes of John the Evangelist (Fig. 135b) and the little singing angel beneath the left corner of the Virgin’s throne (as viewed by the spectator, Fig. 135c). Additionally there are tiraz neckbands and cuffs and pseudo Arabic script in the book cover held by St Zeno and a richly-coloured Turkish carpet which contains actual Kufic script (Fig. 135a). Gregorio Correr commissioned this altarpiece and perhaps all these exotic elements utilised by Mantegna would have been seen as a conflation of those early tongues of the Christian Church discussed previously, together with Arabic scholarship and the connotations of status referenced by the tiraz elements. A

130 Tempera on wood panel, 82 x 70 cm, c. 1455, Gemäldegalerie, Staattisches Museen, Berlin, Presussischer Kulturbesitz. Fontana, Maria Vittoria (mariavittoria.fontana@gmail.com). E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), Grafici Thuluth o Grafici Kufic o Pseudo-Kufic, 9th January 2011. “The Nashki, and, generally, the cursive writings, tend to be curved and round (Arabic: mugawwar wa mudawwar). There are six cursive canonical styles: Thuluth, Nashki, Muhaqqaq, Rayhani, Riqa, Tawqui, but – as you mentioned – the Nashki is one of the most common in the manuscripts in Arabic.”

131 Piotrovsky, Mikhail, “God Loves Beauty”, Hermitage 8 [Online] http://www.hermitagemagazine.com/netcat_files/Issues/08HermitageEn.pdf, October 2007, pp- 8-9. [12.09.09.]. Mills, John, Carpets in Pictures, London: The National Gallery, 1975, notes that like the use of the tiraz, the original symbolic interpretation of the designs on the carpet is not translated into the painting, p. 3. In European paintings, they are hung up like tapestries, or placed on the tops of tables, so that they may be admired.
simultaneous over-layering of the many classical architectural references would probably have made the whole “package” irresistibly attractive to a humanist intellectual like Correr. This appeal was not just aesthetic, since Correr was additionally the Abbot of San Zeno, there would have been a multiplicity of important references for him in this artwork.

There was a further impetus within Venice for the use of pseudo-Arabic script within artworks, the importance of which may not have been realised previously, and that is the presence in San Pietro di Castello, of the *cathedra di San Pietro*, a marble and sandstone throne said to have belonged to St Peter himself, and which he had used in Antioch, (Figs. 136, 136a). However, the reality is more prosaic; it seems that the back of the throne was actually an Islamic tombstone, a *stele* dating from the eleventh or twelfth century. Inscribed with verses from the Qu’ran, which are in Kufic script, the invocation “*La ilah illah Allah*” is also inscribed on the throne, together with Islamic ornamentation on its back. However, the presence of such a prestigious Islamic treasure, in the very church that had been the Cathedral of Venice until the construction of the Basilica di San Marco, could well have stimulated curiosity in Arabic calligraphy.

Another contributory factor to the presence of pseudo-Arabic scripts in Venetian artworks may have been the regular auctions conducted by the Procurators of St Mark’s  

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132 Carboni, Stefano, “Serenissima Arabesque”, *Hermitage 8*, October 2007, Exhibition Review, p. 62. The author of this thesis attended a “Round-Table Discussion” on *The Feste del San Piero in Castello* on 23rd June 2010 and was able to view a new wall text situated by the “Throne”, with the Italian translation from the Kufic that reads: “O SIGNORE! DACCI QUEL CHE TU CI PROMETTESTI PER BOCCA DEI TUOI MESAGGERI, E NON CI SVEROGNARE NEL GIORNO DELLA RESURREZIONE!”.

This is taken from Corano Sura XXIII: Versetto 118. It continues: “E TU DI’ I PERDONA. ABBI PIETA’IT TU SEI PIETOSI IL MIGLIORE!” This text had not been present on her previous visit in 2008.

133 Fugagnollo, Ugo, *Bisanzio e l’Oriente a Venezia*, Trieste: Edizioni LINT, 1974, p. 221, transcribes the invocation as “There is no other God but Allah”, slightly different from that said to have been utilised by Gentile da Fabriano, “*La Illahi Illa Allah*”, “There is no God but God”, cited by Mack and discussed earlier in this Chapter.
in Piazza San Marco or at Rialto, where books were frequently sold, attracting buyers not only from Venice but also from the mainland.\textsuperscript{134} The subjects ranged from encyclopaedias, devotional works, classical texts such as Cicero and Seneca, more recent works such as Dante, theological treatises, and Commentaries on these, to specific manuals on law and medicine, astrological treatises and translations of Arabic works.\textsuperscript{135}

The presence of such scripts and St Peter’s Throne, combined with the thriving import of Mamluk brassware (Fig. 137), silk, spices and pigments, must surely have additionally exerted an influence on the Venetian/Venetan artists who consequently utilised pseudo-cursive script within their haloes. The fact that they resemble pseudo-Nashki does suggest a strong link with the physical presence of Arabic manuscripts in Venice. A fine example is Antonio Vivarini’s \textit{St Louis of Toulouse}, now in The Louvre, (Fig. 39). Although there is much \textit{pastiglia} work throughout this piece, (as discussed in Chapter Three), Antonio has utilised a pseudo-cursive motif only in the halo border, (Fig. 138) it does not appear on the bookbinding, nor on the saint’s cope, and there is no separation by a floral design. The saints depicted on his cope have plain flat disk haloes. The script is neither an epigraph nor a legible piece of writing, so it does not communicate any message, but rather implies an oriental mystique consonant with the status of the bishop from the royal House of Anjou.\textsuperscript{136} Another contemporary use of pseudo-Arabic elements appears in Giovanni Bellini’s \textit{Pietà} of 1453-55, in the gold halo borders of Christ and the putti, (Figs. 139, 139a). Again, they are very different from the broad \textit{thuluth} script that Gentile da Fabriano produced, more akin to Jacopo


\textsuperscript{135} Connell, p. 180.

Bellini’s “script” and Mantegna’s, they are much slimmer. Behind Christ’s head is a dark gold, solid-looking, foreshortened halo, circumscribed with continuous pseudo-cursive script, though, again, it is not an inscription. The light source enters from Christ’s right and the halo casts a shadow across His left shoulder, an assertion of the physical presence of the divine signifier. There is a deep emotional input by Giovanni into this work, combined with his attention to physical detail on the halo surface. The inner disk is intersected by slim red foreshortened rays radiating from the centre, and transposed on these is a sliver of a red cross, the arms of which are blunted-ended. The red cross of the halo, facing down towards the edge of the sepulchre is a reminder of Christ’s blood, shed for humanity and the edge of the tomb also functions as a reminder of the altar on which later, Christ’s blood would be celebrated in the Eucharist. The halo is in three temporal zones simultaneously, reminding the spectator of what has happened, viewed against the continuation of everyday life, and then in its relationship with the sepulchre/altar, of what will happen. The combination of the halo’s positioning underneath the celestial sphere but highlighted against the sky of the earthly world and its perpendicular placement behind Christ’s head juxtaposed with the lip of the undeniably solid tomb jutting out, firmly sites it in our world, the red of the cross within it picking up the hints of blood of Christ’s wounds. An even later example of Giovanni’s pseudo-Arabic haloes can be found in his Dead Christ between St. Mark and St. Nicholas of Bari, the date of which now seems to be accepted as

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137 When Gentile da Fabriano came to Venice to work on the Sala del Maggior, he was registered as a member of the Scuola di San Cristoforo dei mercanti (see Document 21, Appendix of Documents), which Giovanni Bellini would later join. De Marchi, Andrea, Gentile da Fabriano, Florence: Giunti Industrie Grafiche S.p.A., 1998, p. 49.
139 For a similar design of cross, albeit on a much more transparent halo, see his Man of Sorrows, 1460, at the Poldi-Pezzoli Museum in Milan. The cross in the Correr Pieta is also much slimmer. A similar pose, Christ supported by two angels, is present in the Politico di San Vincenzo Ferrer, 1464-68, in SS Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, where Christ’s halo is very transparent but plain, and there is no cruciform design within it.
140 See Goffen, 1975, pp. 499-501, and p. 504, for her exposition of the parapet as altar/tomb.
In some ways these haloes seem to be rather anachronistic for Giovanni, since he had already used gold circlet haloes in many works over the previous decade. The very red cruciferous style of Christ’s halo as a temporal marker is further discussed in Chapter Six with relation to the Cult of the Precious Blood of Christ, and its appearance at this late stage, together with *tiraz* inscriptions on the Virgin’s mantle and the Evangelist’s neckband, are noteworthy, (Fig. 140).

This thesis wishes to highlight the most unusual way that Giovanni has shown the Virgin’s left hand, curling around her dead son’s head, between the halo and the crown of thorns, (Fig. 140a) both depicted as solid, and thus material, objects. This is similar to Marco Zoppo’s 1465 *Dead Christ Supported by Two Saints*, (Fig. 59) where again, a hand interposes between the flesh of His head and the ice-like halo. These are classic examples of the application of perception by the spectator, what Umberto Eco describes as “perception as interpretation of sensory data which are organized through a complex transactional process by a cognitive hypothesis based on previous experience”. The crown of thorns is a real, tangible thing being represented in this image. The halo, of course, is not a real object, and yet Giovanni has given ontogenetic substance to both, the Virgin is the intercessor between celestial and terrestrial through the agency of her hand interposing between the real and unreal. The spectator views both the halo and the crown of thorns, selectively defining terrestrial and spiritual elements, yet reading and accepting all within the narrative, based on empirical experience. Bellini’s representation of the Virgin’s curling hand is mimetic, but the “constructed” halo cannot be mimetic, it is not of the “natural” world. However, Bellini has represented delicate white floral motifs on the deep red, broad cross arms, almost as an amelioration of the

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shock they present. Surrounding them in the border, he has imposed a graphic system, which in the words of Greimas, Collins and Perron, “… depends on the oppositions between its various graphic features (“round”, “hooked”, and so on)…”\textsuperscript{143} The calligraphy is imitative of Arabic script, but like other examples discussed previously, it is not a visual articulation of formal language because it is random. However, this thesis proposes that what it is signifying is a reference to Christ’s human life on earth, His speech to and with others in the Aramaic language, this is Giovanni’s “version”, juxtaposed with the deep red cross signifying Christ’s sacrificed blood. This is Christ’s “trace”, even though He is now dead, it is His presence inside the halo. This is not the delicate gold circlet halo that Giovanni has endowed, and will continue to bestow, on many of his Madonnas. This dark gold halo is like a piece of Mamluk brassware, sections of it illuminated in the light, picking out gold highlights in the fictive calligraphy. Following the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, Venice suddenly depended much more on Ottoman support both for vital grain imports and to maintain her own military force;\textsuperscript{144} perhaps this halo is a subtle reference to that situation, not implausible in view of the fact that Giovanni’s brother, Gentile, would go to Constantinople to paint Sultan Mehmet II just eight years later. A multiplicity of messages is simultaneously being received by the spectator and, despite the fact that the halo is not a natural phenomenon, nevertheless the direct communication can be recognized by its recipient.

### 4.8 Conclusion

This Chapter has considered the appearance of text and textual elements within the halo infrastructure. These have been demonstrated as responses to cultural and religious


factors, as for example in the post-Iconoclastic necessity of identifying saints by name. This didactic practice subsequently developed to provide extra information, and was found within haloes throughout the Italian peninsula, for example, in Benozzo Gozzoli’s *The Virgin and Child Enthroned among Angels and Saints*, the otherwise-named *Altarpiece of the Society of the Purification*, commissioned in 1461 (Fig. 141).\(^{145}\)

Within this, all the saints have their names inscribed in Latin, black, humanistic script against the gold ground of their haloes,

\[
\begin{align*}
SANCTVS HIERONIMV \\
SANT . ZENOBIVS \\
SANCT IOHANNES BAT ISTA \\
SANCTVS PETRVS APOSTOLVS. \\
SANCTVS * DOMINICVS \\
AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA DOMINI
\end{align*}
\]

and Jesus’s cruciferous halo overlies the Virgin’s, His inscription reads “HIESVS CRISTVS”. Gozzoli has slimmed some of the inscribed letters to fit within the halo field, further reducing the artistic tension of including them within the picture plane (as discussed earlier). Within these haloes, Gozzoli has utilised several abbreviations where it has been difficult to write them in entirety, the punctuation mark he uses is like a combination of a figure ‘9’ and an apostrophe, thereby additionally contracting “Sanctus” to “Sant”, and further identifying St Peter as an Apostle.\(^{146}\) St Dominic’s

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\(^{146}\) There is no specific name for this type of punctuation mark, which is commonly used in Latin to denote the missing letters “-us”. Waghorn-Milton Nicola (Nicola.Waghorn-Milton@ng-london.org.uk), Benozzo Gozzoli – Virgin and Child Enthroned amongst Saints. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), 28\(^{th}\) September, 2009.
name is intersected by a star, a reference to his brow radiating a supernatural light because his godmother had seen a star alight on it at his baptism.\footnote{Hall, J., \textit{Hall’s Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art}, London: John Murray (Publishers) [1974], 1996, p. 106.}

Vincent Foppa (1427/30–1515-16), who had also studied under Squarcione, likewise bestowed didactic haloes, particularly on his Virgins, for example, in the \textit{Madonna of the Book}, (1460-68, Fig. 142), where the usual salutation applies.\footnote{Tempera on panel, Castello Sforzesca, Milan} However, and with reference to the appearance of “silk haloes” which this thesis has identified and explored in Chapter Three, his 1480 \textit{Virgin and Child} has the invocation

\begin{center}
\textbf{GENUISTI EUM QUI FE FECIT}
\end{center}

physically woven into the vaporous silk, (Figs. 143, 143a)\footnote{Tempera on canvas, 61 x 38 cm. Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan, n. inv. 1644.} As posited in the Prolegomena, a devotional epigraph has been embedded within the halo site, by a contemporary industrial practice, the silk industry, thereby simultaneously operating emically within the artwork as a temporal indicator.

Butinone and Zenale’s late quattrocento, early cinquecento \textit{Polittico di San Martino} (Fig. 144) contains several saints with halo name inscriptions.\footnote{Chiesa di San Martino, Treviglio.} The partnership worked mainly in Milan and across North Italy. In Sardinia, there are examples of didactic haloes, in the bright gold haloes of the Virgin and St Michael, from the \textit{Retablo di Tuili}, (Fig. 145) by the Maestro di Castelsardo, 1489-1500, Chiesa di San Pietro, Tuili; by now all Gothic lettering has disappeared and the clean-cut lines of the humanistic script, often giving the impression of deeply-carved impressions, is the most popular form of halo inscription lettering. As previously stated, the practice of
inscribing saints’ names within haloes continued into the sixteenth century, particularly in engravings, such as that of *St Francis and His Three Orders* by an unknown Paduan printmaker, (Fig. 147), based on a composition executed circa 1500 by Benedetto Montagna of Vicenza of four Benedictine saints. These include St Giustina, who as well as being venerated in the Veneto generally, is a Paduan patron saint (Fig. 146). However, there are no inscribed haloes in Montagna’s engraving, although in the anonymous work, a flying angel holding a *cartellino* above St Francis provides the title in the written text, and the saints have their names inscribed within their haloes. Additionally, there are the five Franciscan protomartyrs of Morocco, with an “M” as well as their names within their haloes, designating their status as “martyr”. At the rear of the group are several *beati*, who have rays emanating from their heads, though strangely there are also four *beati* with a solid halo, but with the letter “B” before their names or initials, designating “Blessed”. The relics of the Moroccan protomartyrs were venerated at the Santo in Padua, thus as Zucker suggests, it is most probable that the engraving was produced for a Franciscan clientele.\(^{151}\) Therefore in both Gozzoli’s altarpiece and this engraving, it can be seen that the halo is still operating as a site of information, supplying names, status – whether as Apostle, Saint or Beatus - and historical data. In the latter, it additionally references a specific geographical site, the Santo at Padua, a function propounded in the Prolegomena.

Contemporary aesthetic developments in lettering have transferred across to the halo site. Biblical references, such as the Annunciate Angel’s salutation to the Virgin was one of the commonest halo inscriptions, but the halo’s internal field was also the locus of information, as shown in the previously-discussed *St Anne Metterza* of Bicci di Lorenzo where her status as Mother of the Virgin is displayed, or in Jacopo Bellini’s

Accademia Madonna where the Virgin’s special role as the “carrier” of Christ is emphasised. The halo’s circumference is also utilised for the application of Franciscan devotional Mariological theology exemplified in Domenico di Bartolo’s Virgin of Humility. Cultural and visual elements were inserted by artists into the halo borders in the form of pseudo-Arabic grammés, but the deliberate manipulation of these to produce a non-sensical “inscription” suggests that the visual and aesthetic elements override any suggestion of linguistic accuracy; later the exoticism was associated with the elitism of the tiraz inscriptive bands and the prestige of Mamluk luxury ware, rather like the use of ultramarine as the most precious pigment for the Virgin’s garments to enhance status. The semiotic functions of the halo were additionally manipulated by artists, as all of the haloes containing text are exerting an influence of some sort on the spectator, be it uniting the Christian observer in their inability to “crack” the mystical Islamic lettering, or additionally drawing them into the artwork by their very mode of viewing what may be just terpnopoietic elements. The term “viewing” rather than “reading” is an acknowledgement that perhaps not all spectators were fully literate. However, where textual haloes are present, the viewing process is not straightforward because it occurs in sequential stages, necessitating a physical engagement, as stated in this Chapter’s introduction. Trying to read a halo inscription involves a rupture in the spectator’s scanning of the artwork because the viewing of the halo text is a linear action, so there is immediate engagement with the signifiers, the words. However, the first act of looking at the entire artwork is imposed on the spectator, followed by the focusing of the gaze onto the halo itself. This may necessitate a change of viewing position for the spectator, requiring a shifting of the head in different directions, physically moving nearer or further away from the artwork to access the words, visually “sweeping” the work. Thus the halo is kinetically subverting the spectator’s gaze, it is operating

actively in the artwork and it is interacting with the viewer, not tactically but legibly and visually. The textual halo is functioning in a perlocutionary manner because it is making the spectator do something, the importance of which has not previously been sufficiently recognized.  

The textual halo, therefore, operates in many roles: location for name labels, site of hierarchical information, temporal indicator, locus of devotional theology, recipient of contemporary aesthetic and industrial practice, and of course signifier of divine presence. Its didactic qualities have been accepted but not greatly appreciated previously. Additionally, haloes containing devotional inscriptions, such as Jacopo Bellini’s 1450 Virgin and Child, demonstrate yet another function displayed by the halo, that of promoting a much more active participation from the viewer, and hence referencing the original aim of this thesis, dynamically helping to activate the artwork.

Transferring Kristeva’s application of the term *ideologeme* from its literary locus to the halo site, this thesis argues that its intertextuality – here, the halo’s text in the different forms discussed interacting with the many theological, societal, industrial and economic factors – does engender historical and social co-ordinates, that in Jameson’s definition “can project itself variously in the form of a ‘value system’ or philosophical concept, or in the form of a protonarrative, a private or collective narrative fantasy.” The textual halo, therefore, with all, or some, of these elements in play, hitherto under-appreciated, has been demonstrated – as hypothesised by this thesis - to be an active and important component of an artwork’s iconography on several different levels.

153 Gandelman, pp. 143-145.
CHAPTER FIVE

Light, Shadow, Perspective and the Halo

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter argues that the cumulative evidence so far presented in order to re-evaluate the halo and nimbus will be reinforced through examining its treatment by image-makers in different light conditions and its consequent behaviour, leading to further semiotic analyses of its function and somatic qualities. Examining artists’ representation of real light, coupled with further probing of their representation of conceptual Divine Light, will demonstrate how these two factors may affect their treatment of the halo, with the consequent import this has on nimbus/halo depiction, and thus the real/other worldly dichotomy. Since the etymological roots already suggest two separate “entities”, the nimbus, a vaporous-like fugitive mist, and the halo, a slightly more solid, therefore possibly “tangible” item, both terms will be used. Thus, aspects of texture will also be pertinent in this Chapter, as it will be shown that both the nimbus and the halo react in different ways under diverse light conditions, and in some situations this may be because of their varying surface texture or composition. Thus, an investigation of their actual physical construction within the artwork, as in mosaic, must consider whether this may be a contributory factor to this behaviour. Additionally, they may exhibit actual physical traits, as in reflecting light themselves, receiving reflecting light and/or creating a shadow, although of course with the caveat already stated, that this current examination is similarly being conducted on an object that does not exist in the terrestrial world – or perhaps it may appear only fleetingly.
Consequently, this will again give rise to certain semiotic considerations vis-à-vis the nimbus and the halo so that the physicality and/or ontology of a non-existent object can also be examined in terms of its function. The impact of liminal time and space will be referenced. Optical theories, in addition to colour symbolism and theories relating to perspective, will also form part of the investigation within this Chapter in order to consider their effect upon the halo’s representation, and there will be some cross-referencing and linkage with Chapter Three, regarding ornamentation, as for example, with Giotto’s fresco of *Christ in Judgement* at Padua, where mirrored glass was inserted within His cruciferous halo. The analysis will encompass different halo shapes, or rather different modes of suggesting divinity to interrogate what may be perceived as “halo-like”, including the utilisation of light rays rather than the bestowal of a circular evanescence of light. Changes in position and size will also be considered, as artists try to resolve specific representational problems and engage with increasing naturalism within their artworks, in whatever media. The application of these different approaches will provide a matrix in which to examine further strands of both passive and active behaviour of the nimbus and halo.

5.2 **Theories of Optics**

One of the very ancient Greek theories about optics and light almost parallels the science underpinning current heat-seeking missile technology; the supposition that the eye itself emitted rays, which sought out the object of sight, but rather than destroying it like the missile, they returned the image of the object to the mind. This “extramission theory” was postulated by, among others, Pythagorus and Hipparchus of Alexandria, Euclid and Plato. Augustine described these rays as being produced in the liver, travelling to the
brain and then to the eyes through “slender ducts”. The converse theory held that the eye was actually a passive instrument receiving “rays” from external objects, which were then “translated” in the mind, the “intromission theory”, supported by Aristotle and Democritus. Five Islamic scholars - al-Kindi, Alhacen, Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes, contributed to the debate between the ninth and twelfth centuries. Their treatises and original sources were subsequently translated into Latin at the beginning of the twelfth century, an important period in the examination of the physiology of vision and the development of optical treatises. These discussions were developing alongside, and interlaced with, theological arguments, most particularly the polarisation between the Aristotelian and Platonic viewpoints. Al-Kindi’s ninth century treatise De Spectibus considerably influenced Robert Grosseteste’s (ca. 1168 – 1253) c. 1235 De Iride. Both defended the extramission theory Neoplatonically. Alfarabi’s tenth century De Scientiis had separated optics from physics allying it to geometry. Grosseteste adopted these principles, and utilising Patristic texts, went on to assign a metaphysical status to light in De luce. Grosseteste and William of Auvergne disseminated the new optical theories within Franciscan and Dominican communities, influencing subsequent theological writers like Albertus Magnus, and his student, Thomas Aquinas (1226 - 1274). Roger Bacon, (ca. 1214 –1292) assimilated Alhazen’s theories, with a synthesis of those of Augustine, Aristotle and Grosseteste, leading to the establishment of perspectiva. After centuries of argument, by the early trecento, different types of light had been identified

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5 Eastwood, p. 308.
6 Tachau, pp. 337 – 339, passim.
8 Gage, John, *Colour and Culture: Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1993, p. 70, citing *Etymologies XIII, X, 12 ff.* An earlier seventh century exposition was
as *lux* and *lumen* in Latin, respectively translated into Italian as *luce* and *lume*. St Bonaventura described *lux* as:

... threefold, that is in itself, and in transparent media, and as terminated at the limits of the perspicuous: in the first mode it is *lux*, in the second *lumen*, in the third the hypostasis of colour.  

*Lux* is now accepted as the light source, and *lumen* as the light radiated from this, i.e. it is received light, as synthesised in Grosseteste’s exposition of the multiplication of *species*, utilising al-Kindi’s treatise *De Radiis (On Rays)*. For Grosseteste, the word *species* was almost synonymous with the notion of “what is visible”. He and Bonaventura considered colour, and *color* is defined as light that is on the surface of an object but which halts the passage of *lumen*, this latter ordinarily believed to be invisible. However, *splendor* referred to the brightness of a surface, and thus was a visible manifestation. These three definitions of *lux*, *lumen* and *color* were discussed by San Bernardino of Siena. Quoting Avicenna in his *Opera Omnia*, he considered *claritas*, which is the luminosity of the bodies of the saints, the most important of the four gifts bestowed upon them. The second gift is *subtilitas*, which is transparency or translucency. We are able to see the Saints, thus, according to San Bernardino, their bodies must receive *lux* and *color* but not *lux* and *lumen*, citing Avicenna’s hypothesis,

devolved by Isidore of Seville thus: “*Lux* is substance itself, and *Lumen*, what flows from *Lux*, that is the whiteness of *Lux*, but writers confuse these two”

10 Hills, 1987, p. 11.
12 Tachau, p. 340.
13 Hills, 1987, p. 11.
as follows:

If anyone should object that according to the saying of Gregory cited above, a blessed body will be permeable and coloured glass, and in addition that body will be lucid, I say that it seems miraculous. For according to Avicenna, *Naturalia*, book 6 *[De Anima*, part 3, ch. I], *lumen*, *lux* and *color* are received by different things, and it is less possible for a person or thing to receive *lux* and *lumen* than *lux* and *colour*, since that which is susceptible of *lux* is opaque and dense, but that which is susceptible of *lumen* is transparent. [...] And, therefore, if the bodies of the blessed ones are lucid, it does not seem that they ought to be permeable, or that any body should be visible through them. But that which is susceptible of colour is dense, since colour only exists in a finite transparent object. Therefore it seems more possible that the body of a blessed one is lucid and coloured than lucid and luminous”.\(^{14}\)

*Lux, lumen, color, splendor* and *claritas* will become increasingly important in artists’ exploration and manifestation of the halo, as will be demonstrated within this Chapter. Camille suggests that “the transforming power of transparency articulates an increasing dematerialization” and this thesis proposes that artists are responding to this change in the psychology of light in their representation of the halo.\(^{15}\)

### 5.3 Light, Colour and the Halo in Mosaics

The wall or vault mosaic halo will be considered first, centuries-old, and in Italy found specifically in Rome, Sicily, Ravenna, Florence and Venice/Torcello, spanning a very wide time-frame, (early third century to late fifteenth century) thus contemporaneous artistic traits and practices can be traced within them. For example, in the vault mosaic at the Mausoleum of the Julii, under St. Peter’s in Rome, dating from the early third century AD, Gage has noted the introduction of metallic tesserae in the gold halo of the

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\(^{15}\) Camille, p. 204.
risen Christ, coinciding with the gilding of glass vessels where, like the tesserae, gold is sandwiched between two layers of glass. Gradually, tesserae began covering the whole field, as in the late fifth century cielo d’oro in the Capello di San Vittore, Basilica di San Ambrogio, Milan, where this vast field represents Heaven, so it was necessary to adapt setting techniques with metallic tesserae, because the traditional pavement mosaic method produced a very smooth, regular surface with a consequently uniform lustre, inappropriate for a monumental wall or vault mosaic. Gage noted that Early Christian mosaicists commenced setting gold tesserae downwards at angles of up to 30° in haloes and mandorlas, to deflect light down to the spectator, citing the mid-sixth century mosaics at St Catherine on Mount Sinai, although by the ninth/tenth centuries this had waned. Sometimes the cubes were reversed or interspersed with silver cubes to modulate the gold ground. In Italy, the gold tesserae often had a base of red glass with a red setting-bed reflecting the red glass base over the gold, enhanced by the under-colouring of the bed, further modulating the gold ground.

5.4 The Murano and Torcello Virgins

In Venice and Torcello, like frescoes, a cartoon was transferred by brush-stroke onto a first layer of plaster, followed by the embedding of hundreds of tesserae onto a second layer of damp plaster to realise the design of the sinopia. Various materials were used

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16 Previously, glass tesserae were more commonly used, with small “pebble-like” tesserae. Until the fourth and fifth centuries when the term musivum was used to describe mosaics, both wall and vault mosaics were described as vitris or “glass”. Gage, (1993), p. 40.

17 Gage, ibid. Many glass vessels have been found in Roman Catacombs e.g., Christ as Buon Pastore in the fourth century glass plate, Fig. 4. Silver tesserae were also used to create light, but initially only in small quantities.


20 Theophilus, writing in the twelfth century, specified white glass for use as a basis for gold mosaic. At Sta Maria Maggiore, Rome, gold tesserae are “on a base of several colours: greenish, brown, yellowish, pink as well as colourless.” Gage,(1993), p. 43 and Footnote 41, p. 275.

for the tesserae, ranging from marble, glass, stone, terracotta to mother-of-pearl, all of
which could be set at differing angles to produce an uneven surface which picks up and
reflects back light, like musical notes reverberating in an enclosed space. This
luminosity was a vital function of mosaics since they were intended as a means of
expressing and realising the Christian iconography of light. In the Torcello Duomo, it
is possible to see how the tesserae were set within haloes radially to produce a
difference against the gold ground, and also an impression of a dynamic force. Mosaics
were viewed originally by candlelight in the interior of churches; the nocturnal services
in the Eastern Church lend additional darkness to the viewing atmosphere, further
influenced by the passage of worshippers, disturbing and wafting the candles, causing
enhanced flickering of the flames, which play onto the mosaic surface and animate it,
suffusing it with a sense of movement.

Viewing mosaics by daylight is also an uplifting experience. In the Duomo of Santa
Maria e Donato at Murano, Venice, there is a wonderful late twelfth-century apse
mosaic of the Vergine Orante, realised as a very hieratic figure, standing on a small
pedestal with a geometric patterned border (Fig. 148). Unlike the almost
contemporaneous Torcello apse mosaic, the Virgin is solitary, she is not holding the
Christ Child, although in both mosaics, her appellation of \(\text{MP твор} \), “Mother of God” is
written on the gold ground by each side of her head. In Murano, inside the arc, there is
an inscription referring to her as the Second Eve who will redeem Mankind. She faces
the spectator, her hands facing outwards, raised in the orans gesture, a very simple and
tranquil figure. Her gold halo is circumscribed by pink and blue tesserae and is

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23 This Virgin seems to have been influenced by the Torcello Madonna, and although anonymous, the
mosaicist was Venetian rather than Greek, since the mosaic demonstrates contemporaneous early
Trecento local Venetian features, such as “linearism”, Demus, Otto, “Studies among the Torcello Mosaics
200, passim.
24 Perry, Marilyn, trans. Mamoli Zorzi, Rosella, La Basilica dei SS. Maria e Donato di Murano, Venice:
differentiated from the rest of the gold ground although as one walks around the Church, light is picked up and thrown out from the apse at different angles, thus this very spiritual vision changes and alters, its content evidence of the growing cult of devotion to the Virgin, (Fig. 148a).

At Torcello, the Virgin also stands on a small pedestal, in a Hodegetria pose directly meeting the spectator’s gaze, particularly if standing in front of the altar looking up at her, (Fig. 149). Both the Virgin’s and Christ Child’s haloes at Torcello (Fig. 149a) have a mixture of blue and red tesserae delineating their circumference, red predominating. Around the apse arc, and beneath her pedestal, there are invocations to her, inspired by St Bernard of Clairvaux’s Mariological doctrines, the “Star of the Sea” and the “Gate of Salvation” and once again she has been transformed into the Second Eve. Beneath these inscriptions, stand the haloed Twelve Apostles, their names appearing to their left, outside their blue-bordered haloes preceded by the initials SCS, (the abbreviation for Sanctus), all lying against the celestial gold ground, quite obviously not part of the terrestrial zone sharply terminating at the lower edges of their gowns, just above their ankles, (Fig. 149b). The Duomo is well-lit by its high windows; underneath the Virgin and above the small panel depicting the similarly haloed St Eliodorus, there is another small arched window through which light pours. Still very beautiful when viewed by daylight, as the spectator moves around the building, there is a slight sense of movement as the eye notes the tesserae catching light, although the effect is not as marked as if viewed in darkness lit by candlelight.

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25 Her neck seems almost Mannerist, consequently, although her halo is probably the same proportion as the Muranese Virgin’s, it seems larger because her shoulders are also longer so the lower circumference only just seems to skim the base of her neck, whereas at Murano, the lower perimeter intersects further down her scapula.


27 St Eliodorus was the first Bishop of Torcello in 639 AD.
5.5 Divine Light in Venice and Rome

Within the Basilica of San Marco, Venice, is a thirteenth-century atrium mosaic representing *The Separation of Light from Darkness*, where Light is shown as red and Darkness is blue, echoing Sta. Maria in Trastevere, Rome, where Cavallini uses red for Divine Light in the *Dormition* (1291). A variation of this code is very well demonstrated in the *Last Judgement* mosaic at the Duomo, Torcello, (Fig. 150) set on five different levels, the third level containing Christ in Judgment within a blue-framed mandorla, flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist, surrounded by the Apostles and in front of ranks of saints. Christ’s halo contains three cross arms, the Virgin’s is rimmed with blue-red tesserae, the Baptist’s with blue. All their haloes, together with the white or black-rimmed Apostles’ haloes are large and parallel to the picture plane regardless of the facial angle. The saints and angels behind them have smaller haloes, which could be read as a demonstration of perspective in that they are farther away, or perhaps a more oblique reference to the distance of their relationship to Christ in comparison with that of the Virgin and Apostles, His closest companions. Curving its way down from Christ’s mandorla into the next two levels a thick, pinkish-red feathered cord finally discharges its fiery light into the inferno, like an estuary emptying into the sea. Two Archangels, (pink from the fierce light) with blue-rimmed haloes prod the Damned (Fig. 150a).

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29 Discussing an original fragment from the *Last Judgement* mosaic, Otto Demus describes the Byzantine use of the three quarter profile for figures who speak to each other, noting that in this fragment of an angel’s head, the tilting could suggest veneration, and that there is a red portion of a halo outline. In the extant mosaic, nineteenth century restorers have copied an angel’s head but not as the original. “Studies amongst the Torcello Mosaics – II”, *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, Vol. 84, No. 491, (Feb., 1994), pp. 41-39, pp. 42-44.
30 They include a selection of oriental and Byzantine faces, and assorted blue devils. Above this scene, a Byzantine emperor with a black-rimmed blue halo and his empress with a red-rimmed green halo are seen.
In most of the previously mentioned centres where mosaics are found, the halo is usually realised as a flat gold disk.\textsuperscript{31} Within San Giovanni in Fonte, Rome\textsuperscript{32}, there is a mid-seventh century mosaic in the Oratorio di San Venanzio, The Blessing Christ between Two Angels, (Fig. 151). The Virgin and Apostles in the lower register have haloes circumscribed by an inner border of white cubes and an outer band of blue tesserae, (Fig. 152). Above them, Christ and the angels appear against a background of red, blue and white curved waves, representing the Divine Light of Christ. The mosaicist has given the haloes of Christ and the angels a degree of opacity by covering the area immediately adjacent to the heads in gold ground, but surrounding this with very pale white tesserae, the full halo then encircled with a border of solid white. It is possible to see the tapering ends of these waves through Christ’s halo and the angel flanking His left. A much broader wave can be seen through the upper portion of the right-flanking angel, and over the halo of both angels. Additionally, their streaming white hair “ribbon” fillet decoration can be seen, picking up the white band within the diadem. The halo appearance contrasts greatly with those of the Virgin and Apostles, the angels’ are much more fugitive, Christ’s slightly less so, thus the evocation of a mist of translucence is very competently realised, suggesting more of a nimbus than a halo. This helps distinguish the divine light of these supernatural beings from the mortals below – even though they are the Virgin and the Apostles. As in many early depictions of Christ, He does not have a cruciferous halo, although by 705 AD in Rome, a mosaic depicting the Lavanda del Bambino (Fig. 153) shows the Christ Child’s halo field intersected by three arms of a Latin cross composed of an upper band of white tesserae and a lower band of dark blue tesserae, His head shown in three quarter profile, turning

\textsuperscript{31} There are exceptions, for example, in Rome, where Pope John VII is depicted wearing a blue square halo outlined in black, (see Fig. 70).

\textsuperscript{32} The mosaics were commissioned by Pope Theodore just before 650 AD.
to His right.\textsuperscript{33} Within the same cycle commissioned by Pope John II, there is a mosaic of the Virgin with crossed arms, bowing her head to her left, where again the proportions of the halo are very large so that its lower circumference touches her upper clavicular border (Fig. 154).

5.6 The Cruciferous Halo

Halo size is a constant factor within these mosaics, also at San Marco, Venice, although here the adult Christ is invariably endowed with a cruciferous halo outlined in red, or a combination of red and white, or red and gold tesserae, colours referencing the shedding of His blood to redeem Mankind, the proleptic halo discussed in Chapter 3.3. Additionally, the tripartite cross arms refer to the fact that Christ’s body was “to be damaged on the Cross”, it “asserts the reality of the Cross”.\textsuperscript{34} Various types of internal cross are utilised by artists in Christ’s halo, the most common form is the cross pattée in which the outer edges of the cross angle inwards as they approach the “limb”, (Fig. 155). (Didron’s spelling \textit{pattée} will be used in preference to Ellwood Post’s \textit{patée}, since the former is the most commonly accepted.) This is one of many types of cross to be seen within church architecture, on walls, on altars, (Figs. 156-157) and its angled edges may be quite blunt, or very sharply delineated.\textsuperscript{35} Within mosaics, the cross arms may be a solid block of colour, frequently red, (Fig. 158) or decorated with jewels or other colours, as discussed below. Sometimes, they may be “voided”, that is a single or

\textsuperscript{33} Bisconti, Fabrizio and Gentili, Giovanni, (eds.), \textit{La Rivoluzione dell’Immagine}, Exhibition Catalogue, Milan: Silvano Editoriale Spa, 2007, p. 254. These mosaics are from the antique basilica of St Peter’s, Rome.
\textsuperscript{35} The Vivarini bottega executed some unusual examples of cruciferous haloes: Antonio Vivarini’s 1440 \textit{Polittico di Parnezo}, Basilica Enfrasiana, features Christ with three very thick cross arms in His halo. Bartolomeo Vivarini’s c. 1473 Virgin has a cruciferous halo with four visible cross arms, as does the Christ Child, in \textit{Madonna col Bambino}, Museo Sanna, Sassari, most unusual since the Virgin also is thus honoured.
double coloured cross pattée outline is applied with an empty internal arm field, as in the Temptation of Christ, (Fig. 159). The limbs may also take the form of a simple Greek cross, terminating at right angles, usually internally coloured red.\textsuperscript{36} The San Marco mosaics span the late eleventh to late sixteenth centuries, so contemporary and traditional influences can be detected within them, also translating into some of the haloes. For example, in the thirteenth century mosaic of The Blessing Christ (Fig. 160) in the north wall of the eastern arm of the Basilica, Christ has a large halo, the lower perimeter of which reaches the margins of His upper shoulders, its interior made up of silver tesserae, mostly cubes but also some triangular shapes. Three arms of a cross pattée are outlined by a single red tessera border. The main background within the arm crosses is gold tesserae, but there is a smaller cross pattée within the arms, outlined in green tesserae. Between the two cross pattée outlines, the gold tesserae are interrupted by silver orbs, thus echoing the external halo border pattern. Finally, within the inner cross pattée between its outer perimeter and Christ’s head, four turquoise orbs lie in a quadrant arrangement around a large central silver orb, possibly a reference to the four Cardinal Virtues. This is very similar to the halo designed by Giotto in his Crucifixion in Santa Maria Novella in Florence, 1290 – 1300, although only two cross arms are visible within this latter work, (Fig. 161).\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{36} Although these different types of crosses pre-dated the Crusades by centuries, seemingly the organisation of these designs was formulated then for heraldic reasons. Therefore, to utilise recognized descriptions of these different types of crosses, their heraldic names will be applied throughout this thesis, consulting Fox-Davies, A. C., Complete Guide to Heraldry, London, New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., [1909], 1961, and Parker, James, A Glossary of Terms Used in Heraldry, 1894, now available online at http://www.heraldsnet.org/saitou/parker/Jpglossc.htm#Cross [accessed initially 10.05.08].
5.7 Colour Symbolism

Precious stones and their colour symbolism were discussed by both medieval theologians and scientific writers. The twelve precious stones decorating the foundations of the Heavenly City of Jerusalem are described in Revelations 21:18, although it should be borne in mind that the descriptions are not necessarily the same colours as understood by a twenty-first century viewer. For example amethyst was often allied with the same symbolism as red, thereby referring to Christ’s human nature, although simultaneously purple was considered a royal colour. Pearl was usually a symbol of purity, and within the narthex at San Marco, a dome mosaic executed between 1240 and 1270 narrating the story of the Creation, (Fig. 162) features a figure much more like Christ than God, in which pearls are quite evident. The cycle is based on the illustrations from The Cotton Genesis, (Fig. 12) believed appropriated in Alexandria to consolidate Venice’s claim to be the “City of St Mark”, following the “transfer” of the Apostle’s body from there. Thus, the figure in the Garden of Eden in the San Marco mosaics is an unarded, young Christ with a red-rimmed cruciferous halo, the three internal cross arms made up of a pearl field. Iconoclasts at the Council of 754 insisted that “Christ” was a simultaneous reference to “God” and “man”, although they were using this as a defence against the use of images. In the San Marco mosaic, the red halo border is once again proleptic, foretelling the shedding of the mortal man’s blood. In this liminal moment, therefore, Ephrem’s fourth century proclamation that “He gave us divinity, we gave Him humanity”, is referenced.

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5.8 Unifying elements

One unifying element to be seen within the mosaics discussed is that the haloes lie flat behind the owner’s head, parallel to the picture plane, regardless firstly, of whether the figures are portrayed from a frontal, three quarter or full profile view; secondly, if they are divine personages or imperial, for example as at Torcello, or thirdly, Apostles’ attributes such as in San Paolo fuori le Mura, Rome. The overriding point to note in the examples quoted is that the haloes never cast any form of shadow, nor is there any penumbra, despite the fact that the mosaicists have used modelling and shadowing, and have illustrated real light falling across their mosaics, such as in Jacopo Torriti’s cycles in Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, (Fig. 163). The angels’ haloes at Torcello (Fig. 150a) have a hint of volume by dint of the lower darker gold inner circumference paralleling its opposite upper white area, but still do not cast a shadow.

A final point to note regarding light and mosaic technique occurs from the sixth century in scenes of the Transfiguration and the light surrounding God’s hand in certain Byzantine churches. For example, at the Monastery of St Catherine, Sinai, the spectator sees Christ face-on, with a large gold three-armed cruciform halo, enclosed within a mandorla. The area closest to Christ is very dark blue, and it is only as the Divine Light rays extend outside the mandorla that they become whiter, therefore “stronger”, which is a reversal of the usual behaviour of light. Pseudo-Dionysius explained ‘The divine darkness is that “unapproachable light” where God is said to live’ in On the Divine Names, thus mosaicists were trying to represent this emanation of darkness, which as Gage highlights is very appropriate at Sinai because this is where

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41 The "usual" mandorla is executed in the Torcello The Last Judgement mosaic where Christ is shown within a brilliance of white light gradually becoming two shades of darker grey than the dark-blue outline of His mandorla. Gage, (1993), p. 59.
Moses “went into that darkness where God was”. The mosaicists had been grappling with the problem of representing the un-representable, and they have realised this conundrum via a valid, visual solution.

Mosaicists faced a common problem over several centuries, that of adapting their raw materials to the surface of a dome vault or wall, necessitating a different technique to the Antique pavement mosaicists, in order to provide a modulated surface for light reflection. Regional and theological influences were assimilated into their programmes, and specific colours utilised to further underline iconographic meanings for both sophisticated and unsophisticated audiences. The gradual appearance of a cruciferous nimbus for Christ, whether in his role of Infant, Redeemer, or Enthroned Majesty has been noted, a motif that will continue well into the cinquecento. More realism has been detected in the mosaics, via the use of modelling, contouring and penumbra, although it is very noticeable that these tools have rarely been applied in any instances to the halo. Although delineated with coloured borders, and differentiated from the gold field through radial placing of internal halo tesserae, the one characteristic of a physical entity under specific lighting conditions, i.e. its ability to cast a shadow, is completely absent in all of the centres, cycles, specific locations and for any of the personages so endowed, over a period of some eight centuries. This is despite the increasing naturalism of the scenes depicted, and the heightened emotionalism of the protagonists. The mosaicists had been able to resolve certain issues of conceptual representation, e.g. the diffusion of Divine Light from the mandorla, and actual representation, e.g., the creasing of drapery, though other problems continued to await different treatments.

43 The first appearance of the cruciferous halo was around the sixth century, when it was also used for the Lamb of God.
5.9 Light, the Halo and Frescoes

The flat, large disk halo is also utilised within fresco decorations, not only within Italy, but in many other centres, such as Constantinople, Cyprus, Mount Athos, Mount Sinai, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia, to name a few. The frescoes span centuries, through many different political situations and influence of various Church Fathers and theologians. Like the mosaic haloes just discussed, frescoed haloes all share the common factor of neither casting any form of shadow, nor receiving any shadow themselves. In one of the oldest Venetian churches, the Chiesa di San Zan Degolà, there is a 1250 fresco of the Annunciation, (Fig. 164).\(^{44}\) The Angel’s wings are open, his face profiled against his large pale blonde halo. The Virgin stands upright against a foreshortened building, with a typical Venetian balcony and bifora, her robes very heavy and stiff compared with the fluidity of the Angel’s. She faces him, in three quarter profile against her blonde halo, and yet despite the modelling of the internal recesses of the bifora and underside of the balcony, the haloes do not radiate light or cast any shadows. Within the same church, in a fresco of St Helena with Saints, similar pale blonde haloes are realised for each of the figures situated in a variety of poses against them, their names above their haloes, separated from the scene depicting St Helena.\(^{45}\) The pale blonde colour of the haloes in this fresco against the cream background of both levels, and of the architecture, certainly give an impression of light surrounding the heads of their owners, but like the Annunciation fresco, this is different from the modelling used inside the arches of the basilica and the folds of the saint’s drapery which is the darkness used to suggest shadow.\(^{46}\)

\(^{44}\) Dedicated to St John the Baptist Beheaded, it can be seen on Jacopo de’ Barbari’s map of Venice.

\(^{45}\) Two bands surmounted by a chequered border are simultaneously “read” as the underside of a balcony.

\(^{46}\) Hills, (1987), p. 83, reports that it was only after 1310 that pure yellow was used significantly by Italian panel painters, a point to bear in mind even though this is a different medium.
5.10  Giotto’s experiments with ridged frescoed haloes at Assisi and Padua, and their semiotic shock

Almost fifty years later, Giotto’s (1266/67 – 1337) fresco cycles at Assisi and Padua herald increasing trecento realism, but his revolutionary treatment of their haloes has not been commented on. Certainly, chemical analysis of their physical make-up has been carried out, but Giotto’s manipulation of their ontogenetic qualities and the semiotic shock he inflicts has not, and therefore this thesis is calling attention to these points.

Circa 1290 – 1295 he was preparing a fresco cycle of Old Testament stories for the Upper Church at Assisi, after returning from Rome, fulfilling his commission from Fra Giovanni di Muro della Marca, General of the Friars of St Francis, to paint thirty-six stories from the life of St Francis in the Upper Church. In Homage of a simple man (Fig. 165), 1300, a simple citizen of Assisi spreads his coat for Francis to walk upon, the drapery of the garment flowing down the steps immediately adjacent and above it.

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47 It is probable that he had come into contact with works by Cavallini and Arnolfo.
48 Tintori and Meiss suggested three different artists worked on the cycle, but conceded that the work followed a pre-conceived plan, charting the progression of the giornate in addition to carrying out a stylistic analysis. Tintori L, and Meiss, M., The Painting of the Life of St Francis of Assisi, with Notes on the Arena Chapel, New York: New York University Press, 1962. The technical development of buon fresco is compared with Pompeian and Roman practices and late thirteenth techniques. Buon fresco was preferred because it was so practical in that a binding medium was not necessary, and it was easier to divide the areas of work, and this adoption of the giornata system consequently allowed for a greater degree of chiaroscuro. Tsuji, Shigeru, “The Origins of ‘buon fresco”’, Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte. 46 Bd., H. 2, (1983), pp 215-222, p. 222. Subsequently, in an untitled review of Il Cantiere di Giotto. Le Storie di San Francesco ad Assisi, by Bruno Zanardi, Julian Gardner highlighted Zanardi’s discovery, as both a restorer who had worked on the frescoes, and an art historian, that there are 546 giornate compared with the 272 cited by Tintori, because Zanardi also included areas not discussed by Tintori and Meiss. Zanardi discovered that the giornate also worked across several scenes, sometimes traversing different bays, implying that the work was done horizontally across several scenes, rather than working in a consecutive scenic pattern, suggesting therefore that several artists could work simultaneously on the same scaffold. Gardner, Julian, Untitled Review, The Burlington Magazine, Vol 140, No. 1141, (April 1998), pp. 269-270.
49 There are suggestions that this was executed by the Maestro of Santa Cecilia to Giotto’s design, since it was one of the last frescoes to be realised, and Giotto had been summoned to Rome by Pope Bonifacio VIII. Cooper, Donal and Robson, Janet, provide new evidence regarding the commissioning of the cycle in “A great sumptuousness of paintings”: frescoes and Franciscan poverty at Assisi in 1288 and 1312”, Burlington Magazine, October 2009, Vol. 151, pp. 656-662. Binski, Paul, considers patronage and dating in “The patronage and date of the legend of St. Francis in the Upper Church of San Francesco at Assisi”, Burlington Magazine, October 2009, Vol 151, pp. 663-665. Frugoni, Chiara, discusses the
The titulus clarifies that it represents an event described by Bonaventura in the first chapter of his *Legenda Maior*. The symmetrical scene is balanced by the foreshortened campanile of the Palazzo del Comune on the left, and the tall rectangular building on the right, with its double storeys of colonnaded logge and their internal receding coffered ceilings. Between them is the Temple of Minerva supported by very thin columns with a substantial tympanum containing a rose window with two flying angels holding palms on the tympanum façade. At each edge of the picture plane there is a group of two men in animated conversation. The dark blue ground of the sky does not feature a sun or moon, but the light seems to be falling from the left (as the spectator faces the scene) and Giotto specified darker hues on the architecture and draperies to suggest this. Discussing syntactical space in relation to the Assisi cycle Hubert Damisch asserts that the fresco schema is “dramatic, representational” in a theatrical sense and that “…the unity of the representation is nevertheless above all dramatic, for the relations between the actors – as conveyed by their respective positions, attitudes, gestures, and even the direction of their gazes and the meetings of their eyes – suffice to turn a relatively indefinite spatial framework into a stage”. Francis is shown in profile against his very large halo, looking down at the simple man who has spread his coat and looks up to meet the saint’s gaze. This halo is different from the usual flat disks encountered in frescoes, such as those of Cimabue’s *Enthroned Madonna between Angels and St Francis* (circa 1280) in the Lower Church, because there is a ridged pattern within it, giving a solidity and texture to the gold surface. The ridged rays do not extend to the edge of the head, but there is an area of plain gold from which they emanate. Lying as it does across both the campanile’s light rose-pink lit external façade

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and its receding dark wall which is in shadow, the halo’s dark gold colour and textured surface is emphasised, but neither light nor shadow issue from it, it is suspended in space behind the left side of St Francis’s face, (Fig. 165a). Once again, a halo is contrasted with reality, in the sense that Giotto has deliberately situated the scene in an actual setting, the Piazza del Comune in Assisi, yet the “fictive object”, the halo, is just as much a component of the narrative as the actuality of the architecture.

Between 1303 and 1306, Giotto worked in Padua, on the fresco cycle in the Arena or Scrovegni Chapel, commissioned by Enrico degli Scrovegni to honour the Virgin. This scheme consists of episodes from the life of Christ (including the events immediately preceding it, such as the meeting of Joachim and Anna), up until Pentecost, and was based on Jacobus de Voragine’s *Golden Legend*. Although only a few years separate the Franciscan cycle at Assisi and the Paduan frescoes, there are substantial differences in appearance, size and “construction” between the haloes that Giotto (or aiute working to his schema) has bestowed on his figures. In Assisi, in the Upper Church, the size of the halo frequently appears to be approximately three times that of

52 In the *Passion Cycle* painted by Pietro Lorenzetti, also at Assisi, the haloes were built up from the head to the outside perimeter, with some instances of an outer incised band. Maginnis, Hayden B., “The Passion Cycle in the Lower Church of San Francesco, Assisi: The technical evidence”, in Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte 39 Bd., H.2/3, 1976, pp. 193-208, p. 195. Giotto was painting his Franciscan cycle in the Upper Church of St Francis, but his technique there seemed to be very similar. During restoration of L’omaggio di un semplice, examination of the intonaco showed that the head of St Francis alone required an entire giornata, most probably because of the preparation of the halo, which was particularly elaborate. Tintori, and Meiss, (1962) cited in Vir Gorelli, G., and Bacchieschi E., *L’Opera Completa di Giotto*, Milano: Rizzoli Editore, 1978, p. 91. Similarly, Damisch, p. 92, citing Tintori and Meiss, notes that in The Ecstasy of Saint Francis, a whole day was spent executing the head.


54 The Chapel was important in a civic sense in Padua, because it was built very close to the Roman arena where an actual “performance” of the Annunciation had taken place for some considerable time before its construction. The celebrants of the Feast were led by the Bishop and other priests together with the Podestà of Padua and other leading citizens, in procession through the city behind two young boy actors dressed to represent the Annunciate Angel and the Virgin. Jacobus, p. 93 and Footnote 8, p. 106.

its owner’s head, whereas in Padua, their proportions seem to have decreased to a
doubling of the head size. In Assisi, the haloes are decorated with a slim ribbed pattern.
In Padua, these ridges are broader and obviously shorter because of the smaller distance
to the halo’s outer circumference, and they also appear more luminous, the gold is more
obvious than at Assisi. In Padua, when a black outline is used on the halo
circumference, it is quite broad and serves to delineate the halo from what is behind it,
thus “anchoring” it in space, very apparent in the scene showing the Meeting at the
Golden Gate, (Fig. 166). Not only the size and colour have changed, more importantly,
Giotto has also changed the viewing angle of the haloes, they are beginning to be seen
“side-on” and the halo itself is gaining a “profile”, it is no longer the flat disk situated
behind its owner’s head. Now, it too, becomes more plastic, its outline elongating into a
slight ellipsis. This happens in scene after scene, for example in The Presentation of the
Virgin in the Temple, (Fig. 167) St Anne’s halo is very slightly angled, but Joachim’s
has definitely “turned” and his face is not seen in profile against it, like Francis in the
Assisi cycle, rather the spectator sees its furthermost edge arising from behind
Joachim’s mid-crown, curving upwards then down, to beneath his shoulders. At the
upper margin of the halo, the internal ridges fan out, but along the elliptical edge
behind/beside his head, the ridges are horizontal and continue like this into the lower
circumference, therefore this is not a “true” ellipsis. It seems that Giotto is still
experimenting with the halo in perspective. In Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem, (Fig. 168)
the presentation of the halo as something “affixed” to Christ’s head is even more

56 A study of approximately thirty golden haloes in the Arena Chapel was carried out using Energy-
dispersive x-ray fluorescence analysis, a non-intrusive technique undertaken with portable equipment.
Some haloes were in good condition, others had been completely blackened, so it was concluded that
Giotto utilised gold of a relatively high purity. Analysis showed that the gold leaf was extremely thin,
and of a constant thickness. Seven black haloes did not contain gold, but instead there were large
quantities of lead, although it was surmised that the gold leaf had possibly been lost from this, based on a
series of calculations that are set out. Two other black haloes were examined and found to contain large
quantities of lead and tin, although the x-ray spectra were similar to the golden haloes. Cesareo Roberto,
Castellano Alfredo, Buccolieri Giovanni, Quarta Stefano, and Marabelli Maurizio, “Giotto in the Chapel
of the Scrovegni: EDXRF analysis of the golden haloes with portable equipment”, X-ray Spectrometry,
(www.interscience.wiley.com) DOI: 10.1002/xrs. 727, [accessed 27.10.09.].
insistent, He is seen in profile blessing His followers, and the furthermost edge of His cruciferous halo arises from behind His temple, almost directly above the nose, but the foreshortening of the internal cross arm reinforces this halo as an almost physiological feature of Christ. Giotto paints this same design in *The Kiss of Judas*, (Fig. 169) and in this scene also shows the lipped outer edge of the halo nearest the spectator, thereby giving a two-dimensional solidity to it. In the *Virgin Annunciate*, (Fig. 170) Giotto reduces the halo to a semi-circular slim ridged gold border extending from the Virgin’s right temple, almost flowing around the contours of her head, echoing her coiffed hair, before disappearing below the nape of her neck.\(^{57}\) In the *Cleansing of the Temple*, (Fig. 172) Christ is again endowed with a foreshortened cruciferous halo but there is a very curious halo given to one of the Disciples, whose head is bowed, seemingly arising from the centre of his crown and running along his head to the lower nape of his neck, a ridged half-moon gold block. The viewer sees the upper perimeter as a lipped border extending to the lower curve on the neck, the lower margin then merges with the hairline, increasing in volume as it meets the upper segment. The viewing point is from below, and the head is in bowed profile, but the halo seems to lie simultaneously along the left side of the head, and also down the centre, rather like a Mohican-style haircut. Giotto has tried to tilt the halo forward, but its appearance jars. In *The Last Supper*, Giotto presents a startling new feature in the scene. The seating around the table results in two tiers of Disciples, the upper tier faces the spectator, the lower five figures have their backs to us, (Fig. 171). Christ is at the head of the table with Peter, both viewed slightly diagonally, the former with a cruciferous halo\(^{58}\), the latter’s ridged halo slightly elongated into an oval to compensate for the spectator’s viewing angle. Two of the

\(^{57}\) Jacobus, p. 100 and Fig. 11, in her discussion of the *Annunciation* fresco and its representation of contemporary performative scenes, points out that Giotto has painted the Virgin wearing a braided hairpiece and that the loose tendrils on her neck are in fact those of the actor playing her. She furthermore notes, p. 103, that Giotto has destabilised the spatial area which results in an intrusion into actual time and space. This is similar to Jacobello del Fiore’s *Justice* triptych previously discussed.

\(^{58}\) In the study discussed in Footnote 66, Christ’s halo in this scene was one of those chosen for analysis.
Disciples are shown half-turning towards Christ and their haloes are similarly slightly foreshortened, the remaining Disciples have circular ridged haloes. However, in the lower tier, the haloes are placed in front of the Disciples’ faces, but there is no compensatory reduction in surface solidity, no lessening of the patterning or a more translucent treatment. Even more startling is the treatment of the two figures at the extreme right of the table. In the upper tier, the Disciple sits opposite a slim column which passes over his halo and his head, but as it approaches the figure in the lower tier, a strange thing happens. The column overlies the halo but crosses between it and the head then emerges from behind the hair at the neck and is shown passing over the Disciple’s back through the drapery and over the edge of the wooden bench on which the lower tier is seated, (Fig. 171a). The usual fresco execution was from top to bottom and left to right and gilded haloes were added to true fresco after the plaster was dry. If the haloes were realised first, the faces would have been consciously produced in a more perspectival and humanist manner. Regardless, this is a new use of the halo, and its separation from its owner could suggest that Giotto is highlighting the imminent separation from His mortal life that Jesus is about to face. Giotto is perhaps giving a presentiment here of the events about to unfold through this unusual and disruptive element, and as throughout this thesis, semiotic considerations have a role to play here. This halo separation has not occurred in frescoes before; in this same cycle, the Pentecost format is almost identical, except that the Disciple is most definitely behind the column without any separation from his halo. Until now, haloes have been orientated parallel to the picture plane, sometimes faces are in profile against them, but they do not appear in front of the faces, and they are not separated from their “owners”. Giotto has instituted a major shift in image-making. From hereafter this placement of

60 Also within the same cycle, in the Epiphany scene, the King’s gold halo overlies the column situated behind him.
the halo in front of the face is a feature that will be utilised well into the quattrocento, particularly in Florence, by painters such as Fra Angelico, in *The Coronation of the Virgin*, c. 1430, *The Last Judgement*, 1425-30, and the c. 1432 *Coronation of the Virgin*\(^61\) although in all instances without this strange separation that Giotto has produced here. The drama of the “psychological web of his biblical narratives”\(^62\) is superimposed upon and simultaneously reinforced by the architectural transgression. This rupture that Giotto has presented is very significant because the spectator’s acceptance of the (non-real and therefore non-existent) halo as a “normal” feature of these narrative scenes has been confronted and shattered in this particular representation. As this thesis has shown, in other works of art the ontological peculiarities of the halo mean that its image, which in physical objects would correspond to the referent (the real object in the world) remains at the level of the signified (an ideational or mental concept). And because the halo is acknowledged to be something that does not obey physical laws and cannot, strictly speaking, have a referent, for this reason the painted signifier of the sign 'halo' has not been subjected to the same representational laws that govern the rest of the composition. Here, however, the sign is not functioning in the same way. The signified Divine Light of the halo has had the corporeal mass of the column superimposed upon it, a complete reversal of the usual situation pertaining when the halo is present.

It could be argued that the violent rupture of the halo by the column is more than a physical intrusion. Traditionally, the halo’s role within such narratives operates as a signal of special grace bestowed upon its “owner” and so interacting with the other haloes and their “wearers”, all of which enhances its synchronicity (which for Saussure places it on the axis of simultaneities). Giotto has intersected – albeit conceptually – the

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\(^{61}\) The first two works are in San Marco Museum, Florence, the latter in the Uffizi.

axis of simultaneities with the axis of successions, via the diachronic event of the rupture, and thus activates the precognition of the events about to unfold.\textsuperscript{63} In Fra Lippi’s Trivulzio \textit{Madonna}, there is also a rupture in the sense that the knife lodged in St Peter Martyr’s head seems to pass between his head and his halo. The author of this thesis believes that in fact it is in front of, rather than between, his head and halo, therefore overlying the nimbus, which is a crucial distinction.\textsuperscript{64} Within Venice, in his 1518 \textit{San Mark Baptises Aniano}, (Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan) Giovanni Mansueti (originally an apprentice in the Bellini bottega) similarly interposes a capital between St. Mark’s head and his halo, even though the column itself is some distance behind him, (Fig. 237).

The halo’s somatic qualities need to be considered here, particularly related to light, which Bonaventura (1221-1274) rationalizes as a corporeal form thus:

\begin{quote}
If light names or articulates form, then light cannot possibly be a body; it must be a \textit{something Else Than} body . . . Augustine says that humor and the earth’s soil are fundamental counterparts, and philosophers say that warmth is a certain subtle kind of substance . . . Therefore, it seems clear that light, both strictly and figuratively speaking, is not a body, but a corporeal form\textsuperscript{65}.
\end{quote}

If his argument that light is the Other of the body is accepted, then it can be seen that Giotto has reversed this position here, by the behaviour of the column. The corporeal light has articulated the form of the column, and this solid, tangible architectural structure, which of course is simultaneously just a painted illusion on a flat surface, has imposed its solidity over the Divine Light of the halo.

Giotto further manipulates halo shapes in the *Crucifixion* and *The Lamentation* (Fig. 172) so that as the angels “swoop” and their bodies hang down, their half-nimbus is situated behind the shoulders rather than the heads, similar to half scallop shells, the internal ridged pattern echoing the feather design of their outstretched wings, (Fig. 172a). There is also an expanse of drapery between one angel’s head and the halo, as it plunges down, but although this seems to be another subversion of visuality, it is not as radical as the ruptured halo presentation in the *Last Supper*. What is very noticeable, however, is that at the top of the huge narrative schema of *Universal Justice*, two Byzantine angels in traditional military dress roll back a “scroll” of the sky, thus Giotto highlights to the spectator the artificiality of the scene, what Peirce/Damisch describe as “*the representation of a representation*”.

Both angels have a halo comprising a flat circle of gold around their heads circumscribed by a broad brownish band, the gold virtually transparent, suggesting more ephemerality than the usual Giottoesque fresco halo. Beneath the angels, enclosed within a mandorla which seems to be internally illuminated, Christ sits in judgement, a large flat cruciferous halo lies behind His head. Three cross arms are visible, each containing a large orb, the arms themselves intersecting the long slim ridges which are circumscribed by an inner double border with single punch marks, echoed within the borders of the arm crosses. An outer border containing a four-petalled design surrounds a single round punch. However, once again there is no penumbra near any of the haloes and they are not radiating any form of light themselves. This fresco cycle has been acknowledged by many scholars in terms of its new emotional and psychological elements. However, there is another important experiment that Giotto is conducting in the Chapel, which has not been highlighted in previous studies, and this is his treatment of the halo. It has been demonstrated that he has altered it in terms of its texture, shape and orientation, size, and colour, as illustrated

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66 *In Decameron*, VI, 5, Boccaccio praised Giotto’s ability to paint such an accurate likeness of things that they were mistaken for reality, thus this “scroll” further emphasises Giotto’s deliberate manipulation of reality/unreality. Damisch, p. 63.
in *The Annunciation* (Fig. 170). He had incorporated contemporary dress fashions and traditional paraliturgical elements into the cycle and this thesis proposes that such realistic treatment necessitated a fundamental re-think of the representation of the halo. Dualistically, as seen, he has also engaged it as an artifice, he has subverted the spectator’s acceptance and reading of it as a naturalistic sign, destabilising the space of the *Last Supper*, thereby creating an “anxiety” in the spectator, resulting in a spontaneous emotional engagement with, and automatic participation in the events about to unfold. Experiments in Giotto’s “laboratory” here would also shortly be tried in other centres as will be shown below.

It was not just in Padua that foreshortening was being utilised with reference to haloes. For example, in Prato in 1391, a fresco of the *Enthroned Madonna with Four Angels* was commissioned for the Tabernacolo del Ceppo from Niccolò di Pietro Gerini (active 1368 - 1414/15) by Francesco Datini, a local merchant. In the completed fresco, there is no evidence of any foreshortening, but in the *arriccio* which has now been detached, it is possible to see an obliquely-positioned halo above the head of the lower right angel, whose face is seen in profile, (Fig. 236). The *intonaco* has also been detached, but is in such a poor state that it is impossible to see the exact angle of the head. Gerini’s composition shares some common features with Giotto’s *Madonna in Gloria* tavola painted circa 1310 for the Chiesa di Ognissanti, Florence, (Uffizi), most particularly in the two kneeling angels at the front of the picture plane, (Fig. 235). Their facial features are similar and in both artworks, they are holding vases containing lilies, allusions to the Virgin’s purity. Both sets of angels wear Byzantine diadems and similar coiffures. The position of Giotto’s haloes painted against rocks, walls and in interiors in fresco has

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67 For a discussion of clothing, particularly in *The Visitation* and *The Annunciation*, see Jacobus, pp. 98-100.
69 There are other changes between the final fresco and the *sinopia*, for example in the Virgin’s mantle.
already been discussed, and in this tavola the haloes of the serried ranks of angels flanking the Virgin partially obscure the faces and heads of those behind them. Although again there is no penumbra, these large flat disks, lying parallel to the picture plane are exhibiting some ontological traits, the halo of the lower right angel in Giotto’s tavola partially obscures the base of the Virgin’s throne and those of the higher-tiered pair in Gerini’s fresco overlie the serpentine columns of her throne, insisting that, as Bonaventura posited, the light of the nimbus, its luminosity, has a corporeal form which is able to block out solid architectural details. The nimbus of Gerini’s Christ Child overlies that of the Virgin, intersecting its lower margin, so once again there is a duality, a confrontation between the haloes, “something-other-than-body”, exhibiting corporeal traits. This is of course not a new convention within other media, the halo of Cimabue’s Maestà della Madonna, circa 1272, originally in the Church of San Francesco, Pisa, overlaps the back of her throne, similarly obscuring both the architectural detail and the cloth of honour suspended behind her. In Torriti’s previously-discussed Nativity mosaic, Joseph’s halo blocks out the lower edge of the bier and the column overlying it. Thus, we can see that in these examples, the halo is operating on two levels simultaneously, it has one role as a “figure”, i.e. “a nonsign that, as part of a sign, belongs to a system of signs”, and it is additionally functioning “as a sign that serves to designate . . . a spatial relationship”. To conclude, it seems that artistic matters of technique and plasticity have overridden conventions of spiritual symbolism or transcendence, a significant shift from the Byzantine artistic practice previously imposed upon representational works.

70 Musée du Louvre, Paris. 424 x 276 cm. Tempera on panel.
5.11  **Light and Splendor and the Halo**

Franciscan theologians have already been mentioned regarding their treatises on light and optics. Another Franciscan, Bartolomeo da Bologna, like Bonaventura, described the generation of rays from a source, lux, and its subsequent radiation as lumen in his *Tractatus de Luce*. He described splendor thus:

\[\ldots \text{when rays emanating from a luminous body reach another body that is smooth, polished and shining, such as a sword or gilded panel (*tabulum deauratam*), and rebound back from that body this is called *splendor*. And by such reflections on a polished and shining body the light (*lumen*) in space is multiplied and such multiplication of light is properly called *splendor*.}\]  

Here, it is possible to see that he is comparing this visible manifestation of light, *splendor*, with the invisible *species*, *lumen*. As a tutor at the Franciscan School in Paris around 1265, da Bologna’s dissemination of Franciscan optical theory would have been wide and influential, and consequently incorporated into artworks commissioned by Franciscan patrons.

Simone Martini’s 1333 *Annunciation* (Fig. 173) is based entirely on gold ground, the haloes are differentiated magnificently against this, their light is immediately visible to the spectator because Martini has densely punched them with a mixture of very small ring and rosetta punches. Around their circumference, the haloes are surrounded by rather long, fine, incised rays, emanating from the haloes themselves, convincing the spectator of their physical and oscillating presence, quite different from the ridged fresco haloes previously discussed; Martini’s punching “catches” light and reflects it through the differentiation on the halo surface. Although both saints in the side panels and the Angel Gabriel also have rays emanating from their haloes, those of the former

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are slightly shorter and Gabriel’s are more closely bunched and interspersed by longer rays, whereas those of the Virgin are much longer, echoing those of the star on the right shoulder of her mantle. This flaring effect emphasises the physical manifestation of her great emotional disquiet as she hears the words of the Angel, “Ave Gratia Plena Dominus Tectum” and shrinks away from him. The radiation of the rays echoes the swirling of the Angel’s stole and his half-closed wings. In this tavola, her discomfort is much more apparent than the same scene in the Orsini polyptych,73 also of 1333, (Fig. 174). Notwithstanding the differences in composition caused by the enclosure of the Angel and the Virgin within their own separate frames in the Orsini polyptych, the spectator can see that in this latter version, her halo is receiving rays of divine light from the Holy Spirit – the incarnation of the Son of God. The halo remains static behind her head, but it is passive, receptive, it is not playing an active role in the dialogue of the drama as it is in the Uffizi Annunciation with its flame-like rays of light. Immediately, there is a dualism here: in the former Annunciation Martini has represented what seems to be real light radiating from the Virgin’s halo, it is imitating physical light in its behaviour, and yet this light remains unreal - it is an imaginative conceit if we accept that the halo does not exist, but if it is a signifier, then perhaps Martini has perfectly captured its “likeness”. In the Uffizi Annunciation there does not appear to be a direct light source, although light from the left seems to follow the Angel’s urgent entry into the scene, rather like the air disturbing his stole, and the direction of the words issuing from his mouth, passing from left to right to the Virgin. The angel’s garland lies over his halo, but so do the letters of the word “Ave”, and the Virgin’s halo lies over the cloth which is draped behind her shoulder, so once again the spectator is confronted by unreality/reality binaries, the visible form of the non-physical word having a physical

73 Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp. Gold and tempera on panel, 3.5 x 14.5 cm.
presence superimposed on the real/unreal halo and the real/unreal light of the real/unreal halo obscuring the substance of the cloth, all being realised in a fictive space.

Another scene, or rather three scenes, displayed in fictive space are those in Jacobello del Fiore’s 1421 triptych *Justice between the Archangels Michael and Gabriel*, (Fig. 54), previously discussed in Chapter Three, 3.7, regarding *pastiglia* decoration.\(^74\) The archangels in this work have wonderfully decorative haloes, the tooling similarly “catches” the light. *Splendor* was a vital element in Fra Angelico’s c. 1435 *Coronation of the Virgin*, Uffizi, (Fig. 175) the entire composition set against a vast gold ground, and yet the gold haloes can be distinguished against this, light bouncing off them, but with a different effect to that playing on the central “explosion” of light above and below the cloud mandorla of Christ and His mother. In Venice, this execution of *splendor* was continued in Antonio Vivarini & Giovanni d’Alemagna’s 1446 *Madonna and Child with the Four Fathers of the Church* from the *Carità Trittico*, (Fig. 53) previously discussed in Chapters Three and Four. It is painted on canvas, perhaps because it was commissioned for the *Sala Albergo*, rather than a Church.\(^75\) Bartolomeo Vivarini’s c. 1477 *San Sebastian*, (Fig. 42) previously discussed in Chapter Three, similarly demonstrates *splendor* through the finely incised internal rays radiating from the head and the beaded pyramidal border, all “catching” and reflecting back the light. Within the Veneto, it can be seen this practice continues into the cinquecento in the later example of Cima da Conegliano’s (1459/60-1518) *Olera Altarpiece*, from Bergamo, c. 1517-18, (Fig. 176) particularly in the panel depicting St Francis holding a Crucifix and gazing down at the Christ figure. Cima has continued to use tooling and a stylus in his

\(^74\) Although the frame stretches across the three scenes they do not constitute a continuous scene.

\(^75\) Although painted on canvas, unlike similarly executed *gonfalone* (banners), it was meant to be static, not paraded in processions, highlighted by the *pastiglia* contained within it. Cennini suggested the use of honey or starch within the gesso to render it more pliable so that the image could be rolled up if it was painted on fabric. Jacopo Bellini is cited by Vasari as being one of the first artists to utilise canvas for his works. Cennini had additionally described painting on fabric in *Il Libro dell’Arte* as had Le Begue in his *De Coloribus Diversis Modis Tractatis*, including great technical detail concerning gilding on cloth.

halo execution, to accomplish splendor even though his earlier Madonna of the Orange Tree, (c. 1495, Fig. 177, Accademia, Venice) is much more “modern” in the sense that it mirrors Giovanni Bellini’s subtle gold ring haloes, here painted parallel with the picture plane. Cima’s Baptism at the Chiesa di San Giovanni in Bragora Venice, has no halo for Christ, despite the golden ray of divine light emanating from the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. In his c. 1495-96 John the Baptist with Four Saints, painted for the Chiesa di Madonna dell’Orto in Venice, even though exploiting the favourable natural light falling onto the altarpiece, he has not endowed haloes on the figures. His St Christopher with the Christ Child and St Peter, c. 1504-06 has semi-transparent “silken” haloes. Similarly, his 1509-10 Adoration of the Shepherds at the Chiesa di Carmine, Venice, does not contain any haloes.

It can be seen from the examples cited that the use of splendor in haloes declined in the late quattrocento, and early cinquecento, not least because the medium of oil was frequently preferred by artists, thus Cima’s application of the effect in the Olera Altarpiece may well have been the patron’s choice. Cima’s collaboration with patrons and clerics had already been demonstrated with the Saraceno commission at Madonna dell’Orto, John the Baptist with Four Saints, since his patron’s onamastic saint St Peter is included within the scene together with the “family saint”, John the Baptist. As well as the Virgin, John the Baptist was also a subject of sermons delivered by San Lorenzo Giustiniani, the first Patriarch of Venice, originally one of the Canons of S. Giorgio in Alga who officiated at Madonna dell’Orto (also discussed in Chapter Six). Humfrey has suggested that the Canons had highlighted the text of his sermon for the Feast of the Nativity of John the Baptist to Cima for this altarpiece.76

76 Humfrey, (1979), p. 124, also citing Cima’s execution of an Adoration of the Shepherds in 1497, for S. Giorgio in Alga, in which he included San Lorenzo.
Thus, as the use of gold ground declined in keeping with Alberti’s advice, so the frequency of *splendor* began to diminish, replaced by pigments and painting techniques which imitated the effect of *splendor*, and translated into halo depiction. This transition from gold ground was very important, altering centuries of tradition, and embracing new technology, both in terms of execution and media, but also in representation, especially within Italy. The Table of Haloes from page 18 onwards shows a parallel decline in the use of haloes compared with the decrease in *splendor*.

5.12 The Halo and light reflected onto it – some case studies

Quattrocento artists began endowing extra characteristics on the halo, such as the ability to reflect light, or indeed to have light and/or shadow reflected upon it, as if it were a solid, metallic object. Selected case studies from different regions will be deployed to exemplify these new qualities.

In *The Crucifixion between the Virgin and Sts. John the Evangelist, Mary Magdalene, Benedict and Romualdo* fresco\(^\text{77}\) painted for the Camaldolese monastery of S Maria degli Angeli, Florence, Andrea del Castagno (1421–1457) provides a splendid example of this light-reflection. Like Giotto, he uses a dark blue ground, which Christ is silhouetted against, flanked on the right by San Romualdo, founder of the Camaldolite Order, and St Benedict on the left, but the haloes of the Virgin and St John the Evangelist are particularly interesting for their appearance of solid, slightly foreshortened disks of gold (rather than golden disks), both haloes exhibiting three plumes of light radiating from the heads of the Virgin and the Apostle, (Fig. 178). Although they seem to be cross arms as in Christ’s usual cruciferous halo, in fact they are reflections of light, and they are arranged in the opposite direction of the light

plumes shown on the top of Mary Magdalene’s halo, which is placed on her head rather than behind or above. Castagno has produced a very strong downward movement in all the elements of this group around Christ. His head is bowed, His hair and beard lead the spectator’s eyes down the expanse of His mid-torso to dark vertical modelling which parallels the flow of blood, then sweeps over his draped loincloth via a diagonal border, following the fall of His legs to the top of Mary Magdalene’s halo and the light plumes. There appears to be a dynamic interaction here, the light falling down upon her halo, being reflected back up to the Virgin’s and Evangelist’s haloes, which is then similarly reflected back outwards and downwards. Two different light sources seem to be operating, one from the upper left and one from below. As all the haloes have lipped edges, this “physicality” enhanced by the two different light sources emphasises their appearance as solid disks of gold. Considered one of Castagno’s early works, probably executed in the late 1430s between his arrival in Florence and before his 1442 trip to Venice to fresco the Cappella di San Tarasio, the Crucifixion panel exhibits similarities to the Venetian frescoes. Although the seven figures in the Venetian vault frescoes have traditional gold leaf haloes, that of Hosea, the Old Testament prophet is not only foreshortened, but as with Mary Magdalene’s in the earlier Crucifixion, it is possible to see the halo from above. Additionally, the heads of Hosea and Daniel can be seen to be reflected onto their haloes which, like those in the Crucifixion, seem to be polished. Castagno realised his most extraordinary haloes, however, in the L’Assunta fra S Giuliano e San Miniato, (Fig. 179), now in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin. Originally commissioned for the Chiesa di S Miniato fra le Torri, Florence, by its Rector,

78 The frescoes had been cleaned by Leonetto Tinttori under the supervision of Michelangelo Muraro in 1959.
77 Hartt, p. 164 wrote that this was the earliest example he knew of such a design.
80 Hartt also noted this and wrote that Castagno would develop this “characteristically artificial and perverse device which Andrea was to exploit where possible in all his mature works.” Hartt, p. 170.
Leonardo de’ Falladanzia da Orta\textsuperscript{82} it was completed by 20 April 1450. Against a gold ground, the veiled Virgin is “suspended” within a huge golden mandorla composed of orange, red and yellow bands, rather like flames except they are horizontal rather than vertical. She is perhaps enthroned, but there is no visible throne, merely what could be a throne arm protruding to the observer’s left, over which her red gown and green overmantle cascade. She is flanked in the upper tier by two angels and by the two saints, San Giuliano to the (viewer’s) left and San Miniato to the (viewer’s) right, in the lower terrestrial register. Another pair of angels by the feet of the saints hover at the mandorla’s lower border. The whole composition is very symmetrical with a coherent rhythm supplemented by the gold, red, yellow, orange and green colours, picked up in the angels’ wings, the draperies of all the figures and the seemingly substantial mandorla. Bonaventura discusses the Triumph of the Virgin, her Assumption and subsequent Coronation in \textit{Lignum Vitae}. Referring to her Triumph, he discusses its radiance thus:

\begin{quote}
When the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun and the light of the sun will be seven times greater like the light of seven days.\textsuperscript{83}
\end{quote}

This mandorla is a visible manifestation of that text, its brilliance touching all around it, and Castagno’s most outstanding feature is that each of the figures has a vivid red halo, whether shown in ellipsis like those of the angels, or parallel to the picture plane, like that of the Virgin, whose face is raised upwards and which consequently appears disproportionately to the left circumference of her halo. There are varying degrees of scorci present in this work, and it is possible to see the top and back of the halo belonging to the angel on the left. Most of the haloes have golden swirling lines where

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{82} Andrea del Castagno was paid 104 lire for the work. Van Marle, p. 337.
\end{footnotes}
the brilliant light emanating from the mandorla touches their surface. This is not the same as the light plumes reflected in the Santa Maria Nuova Crucifixion fresco previously discussed, the pattern of these twisting Assunta motifs cannot correspond directly to a light reflection, and yet this is what the spectator “reads”, and furthermore, accepts the halo as a much more substantial entity than the ephemerality of the mandorla “cloud” in which the Virgin is ascending to Heaven. This is because the mandorla seems to be composed of waves, the previously-mentioned “horizontal flames” which simultaneously overlie and obscure the arms of the upper angels, suggesting an oxymoronic transient substantiality coupled with ephemerality. It is difficult to interpret what these “horizontal flames” are, their bright red colour gives an ambiguous reading to the viewer, and because of this ambiguity, the haloes, because of the presence of light patterns – they cannot be described as rays - reflected on to their surfaces, are operating like solid bodies that “terminate vision”, according to Bacon’s optical theory. His consideration of the heavenly spheres of fire and the seven planets reasoned


... that only is visible ... which can terminate vision, and this is a fact. But if they are not visible, they are non-luminous, because what is luminous is visible.

Thus, once again, the spectator is presented with a scene in which non-existent objects – the mandorla, the haloes – are functioning like tangible objects in the real world.

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84 One possibility is that they are sunset clouds, hence the richness of colour.
85 Roger Bacon, Opus Maius, Pt IV, dist. 4, ch. I. (Bridges, 1900, I., p. 128) cited in Hills, p. 66 and footnote 12, 154.
86 Around 1200, Pope Innocent III, established a canon of liturgical colour, suggesting that red should be used for Apostles’ and martyrs’ feasts because of its association with blood and the Pentecostal fire. Gage, (1993), pp. 82, 84. Castagno might be citing this medieval use of red here, along with the rather archaic gold ground, in deference to the commissioning Rector’s wishes. This thesis is grateful to Dr Stefan Weppelmann, Curator of the Museen Staatliche, Berlin, for confirmation that the painting has neither technically examined, nor received serious scholarly attention and awaits a monographic study. Weppelmann, S., Andrea Castagno – L’Assunta fra S. Giuliano s San Miniato. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), 06.04.09.
Andrea Mantegna (1431 – 1506) was also experimenting with haloes and light, as seen in his *Dormition of the Virgin* tavola, (Fig. 180) painted c. 1462 following his move to the Court of Gonzaga in Mantua.\(^87\) It is possible to see his mastery of perspective and also the consequent effects of light upon haloes. The Virgin is lying on a bed, surrounded by the Disciples, in front of an aperture symmetrically framed by three decorated receding columns through which can be seen an expanse of water.\(^88\) Light seems to fall from the upper right portion (as the spectator faces the work) at a 45° angle, lighting the right-hand sides of the candles, the candelabra, and their upper bowl edges. The Disciples’ heads are positioned variously with a consequent differential in the angling of their haloes; in particular Peter’s is an ellipsis which lies on the tip of his head. Mantegna has realised varying degrees of *scorci* resulting in differing perspectival shapes, so that it is possible to see the dark undersides of haloes where they are not illuminated by the light source. Where the light shines on them, in particular the halo of the kneeling Disciple wafting incense over the Virgin, it is possible to see the brightness as the light hits the exterior halo surface. The contrast between the haloes of the two Disciples at the extreme left of the picture plane emphasises the darker gold colouring of the halo nearest to the foreground, the back of which is not reached by the light source, but the upper right lip of which just catches the light. The neighbouring Disciple’s halo is at such an angle that the entire underside visible to the spectator is lit by the light source, and thus is much brighter. Mantegna’s haloes are slimmer and smaller than those of Castagno, but they still have the same suggestion of solidity, a disk of gold which seems to be actually attached physically to its owner’s head, most particularly that of the Virgin. Mantegna’s fascination with Antiquity and his


\(^{88}\) This framing feature appears to be Mantegna’s execution of Alberti’s “window”.

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meticulous representation of marbles and other stone material is well documented.\(^89\) Similarly his depiction of the metallic censer and the ornamentation on the candlesticks is very precise, as is the folding and creasing of the different textures of the fabrics in the work. However, although this scene shows the Virgin’s Death, there is also action within this work. The censer is at an oblique angle as it swings through the air, the candle above the Virgin’s head has been lit for some time judging by the wax dribbling down its left side, and the Apostles are reciting the Office of the Dead, their mouths open. The Apostles are not dead, they are of this human world, bidding farewell to the Mother of God, and all have haloes reacting to the physical, tangible conditions of the human world at this liminal moment.

In his 1486 *Annunciation*, (Fig. 181) Carlo Crivelli (1430–1495, originally from Venice) provides a mixture of Divine and real light effects, reflecting onto haloes. The spectator’s low viewing point provides a cornucopia of scenes, but in the lower left quarter of the picture plane, the Angel Gabriel and St Emidius are lit obliquely from below, evidenced by the shadows cast by the saint onto the floor and lower wall border, and those of the *cetriolo* and apple on the edge of the “parapet”. The underside of Gabriel’s elliptical halo at the lower left and right circumference is a brighter gold than the central area, itself intersected by two diagonal rays, evidence of light reflected onto this underside. Inside the house, the young Virgin bows her head, meekly accepting the Divine rays of the Holy Spirit emanating from the epicentre of two tiers of golden cherubim within a cloud in the upper left eighth of the picture. Cloud strata, similar to those in Mantegna’s works, are viewed in the blue sky above and behind the cloud, but this Divine cloud is circular, echoing the rings of cherubim, it is operating as a sign of Divinity, nevertheless still hidden. Rays of golden light initially parallel a solid slim

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shaft which passes through a form of oculus in the external façade and thence via the Holy Spirit represented by a white dove balanced on a halo of rays, into the Virgin’s head, behind her hair decoration, the mystical act of Incarnation. The top of her head behind this decoration is lighter blonde because of illumination by the Divine light, and the outer areas of the underside of her very slim elliptical halo are a brighter gold, the central area painted in the same way as the Annunciata Angel’s halo with similar intersection by two reflected rays, although here this is because of Divine light rather than the purported “real” light shown in the external scene. The fall of light and light reflection on the halo surfaces has been realised very effectively, contrasting with corporeal light falling onto the candlestick and the glass decanter on the shelf above and behind the Virgin.

In Florence, artists like Fra Angelico and Zanobi Strozzi were still producing flat disk haloes, parallel to the picture plane, but now they have a polished appearance. In the *Bosco ai Frati* Altarpiece\(^90\), 1450-52, Fra Angelico bestows haloes of burnished gold, (Fig. 182).\(^91\) The haloes of the Virgin and Christ Child and their flanking angels, stand out against the golden background of the brocaded cloth of honour because of their plain-textured surface. The Virgin’s name is inscribed in her halo in humanistic lettering, the Fanciullo’s halo has an internal red cross, but all contain patches where the light source at the left (from the spectator’s viewpoint) hits the top of the haloes, including those of Saints Francis, St Anthony and St Louis (Fig. 182a). The other trio of saints on the Virgin’s right are further from the light source, and so Cosmas and Damien have a noticeably darker area on their haloes’ upper perimeters where the light hits them (they are both also wearing their usual large red hats, contributing to the


\(^91\) Painted for the monastery of San Bonaventura at Bosco ai Frati, in the Mugello, commissioned by Cosimo the Elder, thus both Medici onamastic saints, Cosmas and Damian, are present.
diminution of light absorption) and St Peter Martyr’s halo is in shadow, so no light strikes it.

In Zanobi Strozzi’s *Annunciation*, c 1453, punching in the outer borders of the angel’s and Virgin’s halo, together with incision of fine rays towards the outer circumference texturises the halo surfaces, but these are not Mantegna’s solid gold disks, nor Giotto’s inflexible stone ridged haloes, (Fig. 183). Like Fra Angelico’s saints’ haloes, these haloes are also struck by ambient light, containing much paler areas where this occurs. Ordinary light is realised by the lighter lilac of the architecture nearest the Virgin, the darker modelling of the lower borders of the cloth on which she is seated/enthroned, and Divine Light by the spiked rays of gold surrounding the angel and also the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, the latter also endowed with a tiny red cruciferous halo, (Figs. 183a-c). The angel has two paler areas above and below his head profiled against the halo where light strikes it, the Virgin’s halo is marked by light above her right crown as her face is in three quarter profile against the nimbus. However, where Fra Angelico’s appear to be burnished dark gold, Strozzi’s haloes are bright gold and the incised rays give a very slight impression of concavity, thereby further highlighting the effect of the light hitting the halo surface.

5.13 Light, and Shadow Reflected onto the Halo

Mantegna’s *St George*, dated 1446 (Fig. 184) also has a very slim halo of gold, elliptical and positioned diagonally to his head which is turned in three quarter profile, his body firmly parallel with the picture plane. The halo seems to touch the crown of St George’s head and then passes behind it. His armour and broken stave are all lit from

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92 John G Johnson Collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Halo gilding has been applied over orange-red bole with decorative mordant gilding on the rays emanating from the angel and dove, and the lower border of the Virgin’s mantle and ornamentation in the angel’s robe. Strehlke, 2004, p. 400.
93 Tempera on panel, Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice.
a source rising from the bottom right of the painting, casting shadows below the dragon’s head and on the inner and outer aspects of the saint’s true left and right legs respectively. He stands simultaneously in and on a fictive marbleised frame, the left side of which is lit, the upper and right hand borders of which are dark. Slung above him from each side of the “frame”, suspended by red ribbons is a weighty swag of fruit, the vivid coloured ribbons picking up the reds of his cloak, his armour decoration and the end of the lance behind him, which has pierced the dragon, the swag “protruding” into the liminal space between the frame and the spectator. Behind him, through the fictive frame, a landscape spirals into a receding distance, where a hilltop town is glimpsed over his left shoulder, under a sky delineated with long, horizontal banks of fluffy clouds. Above this snaking horizon-line, St. George’s head is profiled against the sky, the right side of his face and hair is in shadow, and similarly, there is a large semi-oval cast shadow on the halo, corresponding to the mass of his face, (Fig. 184a). Mantegna is playing with many elements here; the head of the dragon juts out over the “edge” of the frame, as does the saint’s hand with the splintered edge of his lance, which also casts a faint shadow, and the elements are in proportion. His 1457-59 San Zeno Altarpiece, (Fig. 135) demonstrates several figures with shadows on their haloes, particularly the angels in the central section and San Lorenzo in the right-hand section. The haloes remain behind their owners’ heads, still solid and with pseudo-Arabic perimeters, various angles of scorci sometimes providing a lipped edge as they are seen in profile, contrasting with the differing effects of syntactical space that Mantegna has “manufactured”, via a synthesis of architectonic elements, such as friezes, receding marble pavimentazione, pilasters, and coffered ceiling. These are themselves overlaid with very precise pictorial and decorative Classical references lending an authority and veracity to this constructed locus, paralleled with contemporary references such as the precious Turkish carpet laid in front of the Virgin and the Temple lamp positioned
above her, (Fig. 135a). The delicacy of her silk veil contrasts with the hard, inflexible stone of the *rosone* situated behind her head (Fig. 135d). Simultaneously, the scene is ruptured by the large decorative swags, like Crivelli’s, their components impossibly disproportionate, leading ultimately to the symmetrical cloud strata in the dark sky glimpsed outside. Yet within this fictive space, the haloes are behaving more naturalistically than the “real” and therefore tangible, things, of the terrestrial world, such as the fruit and vegetables contained in the swags. Thurlemann and McKie, in their study of fictionality in this work by Mantegna, write:

The success of a particular representational image as a vehicle of meaning is, to a large extent, dependent on the code, or conditions, or reception associated with the particular genre to which it belongs. However since this code is predicated on the competence of the subjects in the communication system, it is subject to historical change.

Noth also discusses the evolution of codes thus:

The temporal dimensions of speech and communication discussed above belong to the synchronic dimension of semiotics. The changes in time implied by this dimension are the trivial prerequisite of communication and do not affect the semiotic code. Only when code changes take place is time a feature of the diachronic dimension of semiotics. Linguistic evolution and stylistic innovations in the arts are examples of code changes. The transformation of code structures is emic and thus of diachronic relevance whenever the structural difference is interpreted as being a result of differences between historically distinguishable codes. Chronemic signs are metasigns. They refer to the historical dimension of a sign and thus to a code.

The application of these models suggests that Mantegna may be a catalyst for a temporal shift in the coding of a halo, through its juxtaposition with different elements in this work.

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94 This thesis is utilising this term, usually used for the “rose window” in a church, as being most appropriate to describe the decorative stone circle surmounting the Virgin’s throne, since their inherent structures are similar.
95 Thurlemann and Spiese McKee, p. 748.
96 Nöth, p. 418
In Jacopo da Montagnana’s (1494-1497) Virgin Annunciata, the kneeling Virgin, painted in the fourth Laudable Condition, Humiliato, gazes in wonder, her arms crossed over her breasts, her halo lies in a perpendicular position parallel to and behind her head, (Fig. 185). The halo is much smaller than, for example, Simone Martini’s in the same scene, it is a completely different object, with no flaring rays emanating from its circumference. Instead, Jacopo has ornamented it with delicate over-painting of a floral motif rather than punching, and on the lower left quadrant, a shadow cast by the Virgin’s head can be seen, extending to the very edge of the halo’s thick-lipped edge. In reproductions, the halo seems to be a convex vessel; however in reality it does have less volume. Tiny rays radiate from the centre to the broad foliate border, and as in Mantegna’s and Crivelli’s works cited previously, the halo almost seems to be affixed to the back of the Virgin’s head, there is no visible space between them, and the tip of her crown seems to correspond to the centre of the halo, (Fig. 185a). The coffered ceiling, architectural frieze, pilasters and broken column, plus receding floor pattern all attest to da Montagnana’s wish to portray this event in the real, earthly world as naturalistically as possible, and he has extended this treatment to the unreal object, the halo, the “sign” of the Virgin, and its behaviour is like Thurleman and McKie’s “competent objects”, it has been subjected to change historically.

5.8. Shadows: Andrea Castagno’s Crucifixion and Giovanni Bellini’s Pietà

The shadow was a subject of research both iconographically and scientifically, and artists strove to depict it realistically. In del Castagno’s previously-mentioned Crucifixion of the late 1430’s, (Fig. 178) there are several diagonal cast shadows caused by the upper left light source. However, there is a strange secondary light source from

97 Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice.
below which illuminates Christ Himself, the Cross and His feet on the suppadaneum, resulting in shadows being cast by His arms and fingers onto the crossbar, and the halo’s much fainter shadow is thrown onto the upper arm of the Cross.  

Alhacen stated that seeing a very transparent body at night will change the viewer’s perception of it, since as it is not possible to see an opaque object clearly behind it, it will be considered less transparent. If an object is less transparent, it will be considered opaque. If an object is transparent, it will not cast a shadow. Therefore the representation by Castagno of a shadow cast by the halo is in fact obeying natural law relating to an actual object, Christ’s halo is acting like a solid object, halting the passage of rays because of its very tangibility and physical properties.

Giovanni Bellini’s Cristo Morto Sorretto da Due Angeli, or Pietà, of 1460 (Fig. 186, detail of Fig. 139a) has a dark golden elliptical halo, placed diagonally behind the crown of the dead Christ’s bowed head. Its internal red cross arms are foreshortened, as is the pseudo-Nashki script, sections of which glint as they catch the light, seeming to come from two separate directions, a lower right light source directed up towards the triangular group, but also a more disparate light from behind the figures, illuminating the town architecture at the “western” edge of the painting, the architecture in the other half much darker. This secondary light source illuminates the haloes of the putti supporting Christ, particularly their undersides. The lower light source seems to produce cast shadows of the feet of the angels on the tomb edge, and particularly darkens the right leg of the angel supporting Christ’s left arm. His physiognomy is similarly modelled with darkness by this light source, but what is very striking is the

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98 Hartt, p. 165.
huge shadow cast across the lower edge of His left cheek, hair and left shoulder. There is a mass of shadow between the tip of His clavicle falling to just below His chin. On the other side of His face, there is a small area of penumbra caused by the hair, but it is not nearly as dark, nor as sharply delineated as that cast by the halo, and indeed it is the halo casting the shadow, the crown of thorns is not forming any sort of reflected outline. Bellini has very deliberately created this illusion. Everything else within this painting is very naturalistic, it is full of life demonstrated by activity, from the people chatting on the path behind the holy group, to the very distant figures in the town engaged in routine activities, yet the heavy dark shadow on Christ is evidence of a substantial, tangible object, obeying physical laws of optics. This demonstrates the shift from the Augustinian classifications of vision\textsuperscript{100} and Grosseteste’s theory regarding the “reception of light as knowledge to the reception of grace”.\textsuperscript{101} The viewer gazes on this scene, interacting emotionally to its quotidian normality and the tortured body of Christ, rather than being commosso, “moved . . . elevated, in contemplation, to the realm of sacred things”, as when confronted by Fra Angelico’s celestial saints. Christ’s corporal, rather than spiritual, aspects are highlighted by Giovanni, reinforced by the halo’s behaviour. This seems normal and yet if analysed, it is a contradiction within this visual context, because as stated previously, haloes do not exist in reality. Leonardo da Vinci studied the representation of shadows in painting, yet it could be argued that Bellini’s Pietà not only anticipates much of his work, but also that of Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo’s Trattato dell’arte della pittura, scultura, ed architetture, published at the end of the

\textsuperscript{100} “Corporeal” vision seen with the eyes, “spiritual vision” seen in dreams or the imagination and “intellectual vision”, occurring in the highest levels of the mind. Hahn, Cynthia, “Visio Dei”, in Robert S. Nelson (ed.), \textit{Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance}, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 169-195, p. 171.

\textsuperscript{101} Hahn, p. 175. She cites the elevation of the Host as a “means” of the faithful receiving some sort of grace from its sight.
cinquecento. In a document found in Leonardo’s Codex Atlanticus, (post 1506) he outlined a proposal for a book on light and shadow, writing that:

Shadow is the obstruction of light. Shadows appear to me to be of supreme importance in perspective, because without them opaque and solid bodies will be ill-defined; that which is contained within its outlines and the outlines themselves will be ill understood unless it is shown against a background of a different tone. Therefore, I state as my first proposition concerning shadows that every opaque body is surrounded and its whole surface enveloped in shadow and light. And to this I shall devote the first book.

Developing this theme, he went on:

Shadow is the diminution of light by the intervention of an opaque body, shadow is the counterpart of the luminous rays which are cut off by an opaque body.

Although Leonardo wrote this later than the execution of the Pietà, there is a resonance here in that Giovanni is treating the halo as a “solid body” and is being punctilious about its consequent effect when viewed in sunlight, therefore this “sign” has once again been translated visually as a tangible object with physical properties. The shadow has become the “other”, but of the halo rather than the body. Although Christ is now dead, there is still an ontological presence, His body is a dead shell. The halo is manifestly present too, the red internal cross slivers may be read as Derrida’s “trace”. The halo’s ontological qualities demonstrate that it is not just essence, but it is as tangible as the stone of the tomb and the iron of the nails, and Bellini has positioned it so that it slices across the lower level of the sky, further demonstrating its earthly, physical traits. It is visible, it obscures the architecture at its upper limit and because of

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102 Published in 1585, Milan, it discusses how different lights produce variations in shadows in Book Four, and asserts that it is essential to study shadows in order to understand perspective, in the fifth Book. Da Costa Kauffmann, p. 261.
104 W 19152V, (from the Windsor Collection), Richter, 131.
all of these factors, it can be claimed that it has an “other”, the shadow lying across Christ’s neck and upper shoulder.\textsuperscript{105}

\section*{5.14 Light, Transparency and the Halo}

Chapter Three of this thesis, proposed that from the mid to late quattrocento the halo’s appearance was influenced by the perfection of the \textit{cristallo} technique in Venice, and the subsequent improvement in the Tuscan glass industry. Additionally, the possibility that the silk industry was impacting upon the depiction of haloes was considered, and in this section, these two factors will be explored in terms of their effect on the transparency of the halo. It was noted earlier that in Domenico Veneziano’s 1445 \textit{St Lucy altarpiece}, for the first time, haloes appear to be glass with gold rims and they are no longer flat disks, they are hovering above their owner’s heads, foreshortened into ellipsis,\textsuperscript{106} an interesting development, as seemingly the first occasion that the halo appears in this position, rather than behind its owner’s head. Cosimo Tura’s 1460 \textit{Pietà}\textsuperscript{107} (Fig. 60) was discussed earlier and the clumsy orientation of the Virgin’s halo, lying flat on her head, resulting in awkwardness and slightly more opacity than transparency. Artists on the terra firma also took up this new style, for example, Bartolomeo Montagna (1449-1523) painted “glass” haloes in his works. Exhibiting influences from Giovanni Bellini, the Vivarini and Carpaccio, this is perhaps not surprising, for example in his c. 1483-84 \textit{Madonna and Child under a Pergola between St John the Baptist and St Onofrio}, Montagna’s smaller elliptical haloes hover above the

\textsuperscript{105} As Lacan would later posit, the mirror stage is the identification of “I”, and the shadow stage is the identification of the “other”, Stoichità, Viktor Ieronim, \textit{A Short History of the Shadow}, London: Reaktion Books Ltd., [1997], 1999, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{106} Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Tempera on panel, 209 x 216 cm. This work is so different from the \textit{Head of a Saint}, circa 1440, fresco transferred to tile, now in the National Gallery, in which he has endowed a very solid halo with an extremely thick outer lipped edge on the saint.

\textsuperscript{107} Museo Correr, Venice.
heads of the figures, a slim band of gold delineating the glass circumference.\textsuperscript{108} Two other works show similar features, his c. 1482 \textit{Madonna and Child between Sts Roch and Sebastian}, although here, both the Virgin and Child, situated frontally and centrally within the composition, have flat disk haloes behind their heads. St. Roch’s halo appears to receive less light, and is consequently darker, slightly more opaque than those of the Virgin and Child.\textsuperscript{109} The \textit{Madonna Adoring the Child between Sts Monica and Maria Magdalena} c. 1483, (Fig. 187) also features “glass” haloes, and they are noticeably smaller in comparison with others examined in this Chapter, as well as being situated close behind the figures’ heads rather than hovering above them. Again, the degree of translucency is determined by the light source and the halo’s position, so that the Magdalene’s is shown against the sky with a different effect to that of St Monica’s through which it is possible to see the grassy bank behind her.\textsuperscript{110}

5.16 Some Florentine silk haloes and linee serpentine

There was a parallel development in the opacity of haloes, in that the Florentine artists continued to make their haloes ever more fragile and delicate, particularly Fra Filippo Lippi, (1406-1469), Filippino Lippi (1457-1504) and Sandro Botticelli (1445 or late 1446 -1510). Their sheerness could be likened to that of silk, rather than glass, particularly in their use of stippling, the application of tiny dots of gold within the halo circumference to enhance the effects of translucency of the halo. In Filippo Lippi’s \textit{Adorazione del Bambino con S Giovanni e S Romualdo}, both John the Baptist and San Romualdo have transparent gold-stippled haloes, whereas the angels have polygonal golden-rayed haloes. In Filippino’s \textit{Adorazione del Bambino con San Giovanni},\textsuperscript{111} he

\textsuperscript{108} Musei Civici, Vicenza, 195.7 x 160 cm, transferred from panel to canvas.\textsuperscript{109} Accademia Carrara, Bergamo, 59 x 59 cm.\textsuperscript{110} Musei Civici, Vicenza, 184 x 169 cm.\textsuperscript{111} All three works are in Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.
also endows translucent disk haloes with some gold stippling and in his 1496 *Adoration of the Magi* panel he has additionally “sprinkled” gold on the gold-rimmed haloes of the Holy Family, giving a shimmer effect, (Fig. 188). Filippino Lippi’s *The Virgin and Child with Sts Jerome and Dominic* of c. 1485 shows all the figures with haloes of “spun gold”, which gives a quality of transparency although this is different from the “crystal” or “silken” haloes. It is possible to see the gold waves and stippling within them, which gives a slightly different effect as the light hits them. The Christ Child’s also contains a red cross, and as with Botticelli, the Virgin’s sheer veil emphasises the delicacy of the haloes. This stippling seems to have become a popular practice in the late 1480s in Florence, and parallels the growing tendency to depict the Virgin as a very beautiful young girl.

In his 1485 *San Barnaba* Altarpiece, Botticelli inserts gold markings within his “glass” haloes, foreshortened and hovering above the angels’ heads, the Virgin’s is parallel to the picture plane, (Fig. 189). These delicate gold twirling effects on a glass-like halo is a motif which Botticelli exploits often. It seems to be particularly prevalent in Florence during the latter half of the quattrocento, but does not seem to have translated to Venice, (Fig. 189a). Although Castagno used this “linee serpentine” design in his 1450 *L’Assunta* previously mentioned, he does not seem to have “imported” this design into Venice. Botticelli refined and developed this, in his *Madonna della Loggia* (Figs. 191, 191a) and in the 1487 *The Madonna and Child with Pomegranate* altarpiece (Fig. 190), it is possible to see Divine Light “raining” down onto the Virgin through her transparent gold halo, (Fig. 190a). The Christ Child on her lap has the slimmest of

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112 Filippino depicts the three Magi as Pier Francesco de Medici the Elder, with his two sons, Lorenzo il Popolano and Giovanni il Popolano.
113 Panel, 203 cm x 186 cm. National Gallery, London, also called the *Rucellai Altarpiece*.
114 Tempera on panel, 280 x 268 cm., Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.
115 Tempera on panel, 72 x 50 cm., Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.
116 Tempera on panel, tondo, 143.5 cm., Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.
gold rings behind His head with beautiful filigree patterns, matching the gold threads on the wrap in which she holds Him, (Fig. 190b). Like the sweetness of his Virgins, Botticelli imbues his haloes with a great delicacy and beauty, their translucency contrasted with the sheerness of the fine veils around their heads. In his *Madonna of the Book*\(^{117}\), although there is opacity of the haloes against the sky and dark background, the beautiful dark gold filigree designs, stippling and *linee serpentine* seem to be of a slightly less flexible material, with more rigidity, (Figs. 67, 67b). Additionally, Botticelli started to make the cross arms in the cruciferous haloes of gold rather than red. In yet another variation on the halo theme, Botticelli endowed a circle of bunched graduated rays around the Virgin’s and angels’ heads in the 1480-81 *Madonna del Magnificat*,\(^{118}\) the Christ Child has a half-lozenge of graduated gold bunched rays, (Figs. 192, 192a-b).\(^{119}\)

### 5.17 Venetian silk haloes

This new lightness also finds expression in Venice, as previously discussed. In his Pesaro Altarpiece, Giovanni Bellini endows Christ and the Virgin with “spun gold” haloes, the circular brush-strokes giving the impression of a slight shimmer through which the spectator views the distant landscape behind them, (Fig. 193, Figs. 193a-c).\(^{120}\) Bartolomeo Vivarini’s (1432-1491) *Trittico di San Marco* signed “*OPVS FACTUM PER BARTHOLEVM VIVARINVM DE MVRANO 1474*” in the Cappella di S Marco o dei Corner, in the Chiesa Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, exhibits a new, lighter touch in the haloes of St Mark and the two angel musicians in the central panel, (Fig. 194, Figs. 194a-b). The Evangelist is seated on a tall, marble throne and through his translucent

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117 Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan,  
118 Galleria degli Uffizi.  
119 Tempera on panel, tondo, diameter 118 cm., Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence  
120 Musei Civici Pesaro, oil on panel, 260 x 235 cm. Lucco, *Giovanni Bellini*, p. 190-194 gives a very comprehensive bibliography but no specific date.
pale halo, it is possible to see the carved, highly ornate motifs behind his head. Likewise, through the halo of the angel musician seated at his left foot, it is possible to glimpse the base of the throne and the red gown of the standing angel behind it. In the Cappella Bernardo, also in the Frari, is Bartolomeo Vivarini’s signed 1482 politico, *The Virgin Enthroned with the Christ Child on her Knees*. The Virgin and Child are flanked by Sts Andrew and Nicholas of Bari (on the spectator’s left) and by Sts. Peter and Paul on the right. Again, the haloes are like sheer silk, very delicate. This move towards a “lightening” of the halo through the agencies of more transparency and a less-solidly delineated circumference seems to be coinciding with a much more naturalistic treatment of the figures themselves.

5.18 Light, Vaporousness and the Halo

Lorenzo Lotto’s *St Nicholas in Glory* in the Chiesa dei Carmini, Venice, (Fig. 198) demonstrates a virtuoso display of vaporosity in his treatment of the halo, which certainly imitates the meteorological phenomenon found around the moon, (see Fig. 1) and which can correctly be referred to here as a nimbus. The *tela* was painted between 1527 and 1529 for the altar dedicated to John the Baptist by the Scuola dei Venditori di Pesce. The iconography of the painting reflects the patrons’ choice of their onomastic saints, John the Baptist and St George, the distant sea-shore referencing the Scuola’s activities.

Lotto’s elderly St Nicholas of Bari sits on a cloud bank, ascending to Heaven, attended by three angels, one holding a dish containing his attribute. John the Baptist and St Lucy\(^{121}\) are seated at his feet on very volumetric billowing clouds, praying and gazing Heavenwards. This scene dominates the painting and with the celestial sky takes up a

\(^{121}\)Her attribute, her eyes, are beside her feet,
good two thirds of the surface area. Beneath this, is a landscape to the left and right of the picture plane, skirting an inlet. To the right, St George can be seen from the rear, killing the dragon, on a path leading to a building on a hill, and to the left, a track leads into the distant wooded countryside, two figures ambling along on it. What is extraordinary in this work is the contrast between the fugitive light of St Nicholas’s halo and the absolute corporeality of the clouds, such that St Lucy’s gown flows over the outer edge of her “bank” and the Baptist’s right foot is at a 45° angle to his, although where his cloudbank meets St Lucy’s leg, it is possible to glimpse her green gown through the vapour. This cloudbank seems to have such materiality that the saint’s feet “disappear” into it, it is even more substantial than Mantegna’s *nuvole*, so that the Baptist’s body casts a shadow onto it.

St Nicholas’s halo is situated behind his head, but it is a broad circle of light, within and outside which, is a hazy evanescence, very much like the halo around the moon on a misty night, (as in Fig. 1). The Italian *alòne*, has been realised very competently. The halo seems to throw light onto the upper tips of the angel flanking St Nicholas’s (true) left, and also the edge of his bishop’s crozier. There is a distinct contrast between this very natural-looking halo and the artificiality of the huge cloudbank, as there is between the cloudy-looking sky of the terrestrial level beneath the ascending figures, and the calm darker blue of the celestial sphere they are entering. Lotto himself was interested in alchemy, evidenced in his Bergamo cycle of intarsia, and perused Bishop Bernardo de’ Rossi’s library of hermetic texts in Treviso, as well as meeting the alchemist poet Giovanni Aurelio Augurello, whose *Chrysopoeia* was published in Venice in 1515.122

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Lotto’s nimbus in this work is different from the other haloes previously discussed, it is a representation of a natural phenomenon, that of the alône found around the moon, perhaps as a result of his alchemic interests.

5.19 The Halo and Light Evanescent

Titian (?1490–1578) and Tintoretto (1519–1594) are major exponents of the evanescent halo, in both its dramatic format and also as a mere suggestion of fugitive or flickering light presence. Like other artists, they utilised diverse forms of the halo, but additionally developed this evanescent type into a minuscule sign, almost but not quite invisible in several works, nevertheless perhaps more powerful exactly because of its reductive “physical” presence.

Both artists tended to work on very large pieces, Tintoretto’s works mostly remain in situ in Venice, functioning as he intended, whether in churches or in the Scuole, instantly recognizable through his vigorous brushwork, which seems to energize his narratives and imbue his religious works with an intense spirituality. His innovative The Miracle of the Slave of 1548 commissioned by the Scuola di San Marco was originally rejected by them (Fig. 199). Within this, it is possible to see a fine example of the “dramatic” evanescent halo, as St Mark hovers upside down over the naked freed slave, his head encircled by a white halo which gradually dissolves into long fine rays, (Fig. 199a). His cycle of works for the Scuola di San Rocco provides a detailed record of his variations on the evanescent halo theme. Completed in three separate tranches, they are absolutely compelling and spell-binding in their impact.124

123 Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, oil on canvas, 416 x 544 cm.
124 The albergo was decorated between 1565-67 with Christ’s Passion, the Great Hall between 1575-81 with scenes from the Old Testament on the ceiling, New Testament narratives on the walls, and the Lower Hall between 1583-87 contains scenes from the Virgin’s Life and the Nativity.
In *Christ before Pilate* (Fig. 200), Tintoretto presents Christ dressed in a white robe, still and calm, His head slightly bowed, behind which is a recognisable yellow-gold elliptical disk, fine rays radiating from its centre to beyond its perimeter, yet there does not seem to be a permanence, the spectator has the sensation that it is transient, almost that it would be possible to pass one’s hands through it, if it did not disappear beforehand, contrasting with the stream of water being poured for Pilate from a jug by a kneeling servant, the water seemingly much more tangible than the halo. In *The Ascent to Calvary*, Tintoretto has painted Christ’s halo into a lozenge shape where a half-diamond of yellow-white evanescence is visible behind His head, three broader and more substantial rays like the arms of a cross visible within the “mist”. The magnificent *Crucifixion* renders the spectator speechless with its drama and emotion. The crucified Christ dominates the composition, all diagonal and horizontal lines from the multitude of characters highlighting Him, (Figs. 201, 201a). He is surrounded by an enormous misty-white halo of light in which fine rays overlay the glimpses of sky behind Him, the halo reaches to the top of His thighs and each of His outstretched wrists, (almost like Vitruvius’ design). This divine light illuminates the upturned face of the female figure at the base of the Cross, and the space behind the Cross, adding an extra spiritual dimension to the narrative. Repeatedly, Tintoretto manipulates light effects and halo sizes so that in the *Annunciation* painted for the Sala Inferiore, the Virgin has a very slim fugitive nimbus around her head and above her the Holy Spirit in the form of a white-gold dove, encompassed within a gold circumference of concentric circles radiates fine gold rays to her, (Fig. 202). Another intensely spiritual work is *St Mary of Egypt Meditating* (Fig. 203). Behind her is a large yellow luminous glow, the viewer feels that the saint’s head is surrounded by the divine mist, and similarly the golden

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125 Sala dell’Albergo, Scuola di San Rocco, Venice, containing three episodes from the Passion of Christ, *Christ before Pilate, Christ Crowned with Thorns* and *The Ascent to Calvary.*
highlights on the tree trunks and the foliage and the tumbling stream intensify the deep stillness of the scene.

Tintoretto’s halo palette seems to vary from a very pale blonde to a translucent white light, suggested at times by very, very long thin rayed effects. On occasions, these rays are extremely elongated, as in *The Resurrection*, where the pyramidal formation of pale gold spikes lie against Christ’s billowing cloak as He ascends. Tintoretto’s other *Resurrection*, also in the Sala Grande of the Scuola, shows Christ ascending, His face in left profile against a circular evanescence – it cannot be called a disk because there is not a solidity, nor substance to it – which is surrounded by tiny rays, very much as the eye perceives an extremely bright light, (Fig. 204).

In the *Last Supper* painted for the Sala Grande, Christ and the Disciples are within the central band of the composition in a variety of poses. Christ’s halo is a large indeterminate yellow mist around His head, the Disciples’ are mostly viewed from behind or above. Foreshortened, it is possible to see the tops of their crowns inside the gold-circumscribed ellipses. Perhaps his greatest evocation of this particular theme, which he had painted many times for different churches within Venice, is the 1594 *Last Supper* at the Chiese di S. Giorgio, Giudecca, Venice. In this, it is possible to see his manipulation of different light effects, representing both Divine Light and the corporeal light cast by candles and oil lamps within the dark interior of the room where Christ and the Disciples are eating, (Fig. 205). Wherever Tintoretto’s works are placed in a church, it is always possible for the eye to pick out these evanescent haloes, no matter how high or how dark the location, and this *quadro* displays a huge variation in fictive light and shadow. The spectator’s eye is drawn to Christ, again surrounded by a large yellowish haze, radiating from which are three rays, a form of cruciform halo. At the upper left of the painting, an oil lamp burns, flames leaping out from the top and light
rays raining on to the figures beneath. The Disciples have tiny evanescent haloes delineating their heads, which are turned in a variety of directions, against the dark interior walls. Large, heavy shadows are cast from the oil lamp across the table, the viewer sees that of the pottery drinking vessel falling onto the translucent glass flask, which in turn picks up highlights from the oil lamp. Thus, Tintoretto is juxtaposing corporeal light produced by the oil lamp with divine light emanating from the nimbi of the Holy people. They are similarly juxtaposed with ordinary mortals who, although dressed in contemporary Venetian costume, still adhere to Decrees issued by the Council of Trent.

5.18 Conclusions

In conclusion, this Chapter has considered the many changes to the halo over centuries, beginning with early mosaics, and moving on to examine frescoes and pala. Over centuries, new theories relating to optics, perspectiva, colour, gem symbolism, light, and shadow projection have all impacted upon the mode of representing the halo. Additionally, this thesis has demonstrated changes in its function, at times signalling a hierarchical rank, as at Torcello and Ravenna, at other times operating as a liminal time indicator, as for example in its ruptured state in Giotto’s Last Supper, where its division from the Disciple foretells the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, and Christ’s enforced separation from the Apostles. Different light effects have been realised by the application of various designs, or by the treatment of the halo surface, as in the depiction of a glass-like texture or a finish like that of polished gold, or an opaque “silken” halo. Relief effects have been produced in early frescoes, and shadows have been found on later haloes. Although not existing in reality, haloes have also sometimes radiated light, like a material light source such as a fire or candle. In short,
despite changes in artistic practice and media, the importance of the halo has not diminished even though its physicality has reduced in terms of size and position. It is now more ethereal or fugitive than the flat disk or heavily tooled haloes, and it has still engaged in and maintained a dialogue with its referent, whilst simultaneously operating as a sign. It is much closer to its etymological description, this sense of vapour with its attendant fugitive connotations. As “an invented visual shorthand”, Tintoretto’s haloes are so realistic and believable, behaving in naturalistic modes, especially when juxtaposed with “natural light” or “artificial light” from candles and oil lamps. Their transient quality reinforces the sense of Derrida’s trace and may also be seen to encapsulate Kristeva’s sense of the ideologeme if this is translated/ transferred from a textual to a visual locus, such as the halo. The halo in this Chapter has been demonstrated to be connected to contemporary culture and adherence to the Decrees of the Council of Trent’s final session, as well as having “imported” and “transported” all the historical meanings associated with it, and as such, it is reflecting contemporaneous society.

126 Peers, G., (gpeers@nail.utexas.edu), Angels and Haloes. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), 29th January, 2007.
127 Allen Graham, Intertextuality, London: Routledge, 2000 cites Kristeva: “The concept of text as ideologeme determines the very procedure of a semiotics that, by studying the text as intertextuality, considers it as such within (the text of) society and history. The ideologeme of a text is the focus where knowing rationality grasps the transformation of utterances (to which the text is irreducible) into a totality (the text) as well as the insertions of this totality into the historical and social text. Kristeva, 1980:37), p. 37.
CHAPTER SIX

The Halo in the Bellini Bottega

6.1 Introduction

This Chapter will examine artworks produced both in the Bellini family bottega, and by the brothers in their own shops, as a form of paradigm to “test” the evidence so far presented regarding the halo’s development and changes, in terms of its physical appearance and functions. The raison d’être for selecting this studio was because of its great innovation and influence on contemporaneous artistic representation between the mid-quattrocento and early cinquecento and the subsequent generation of artists in their execution of haloes. In addition to those already examined, a mixture of works will be considered, including small devotional works for private patrons and artworks such as pala meant to be viewed by a large, static audience, either in a holy environment such as a Church, or in a secular situation such as the Albergo of a Scuola, (the large Meeting Room where the members of the confraternity gathered). A Scuola was both a society of lay people and also the place where this organisation met. Each was an important site, thus their commissions, whether architectural or painted decorations, were considered prestigious. The processional banners belonging to the Venetian Scuole, called gonfalone, which were paraded in Piazza San Marco on ceremonial occasions will also be considered because these were very active and highly visible events and so the related archival sources that have been examined are reproduced in Appendix Two of

1 The Venetian Scuola or scholae was the meeting place of a society of lay people. There were six Scuole Grandi, and many minor Scuole. Molmenti, Pompeo, La Storia di Venezia Nella Vita Privata I, Bergamo: Istituto Italiana d’Arte Grafiche, 1905, pp. 185 – 190.
this thesis. In the pursuit of design changes of the halo, its exhibition of physiognomic traits will be considered in a comparison of two Crucifixion scenes by Jacopo and Giovanni Bellini. An overarching theme of this section will probe whether or not halo design was a matter of artistic choice, or if specifications were supplied by the commissioner, be it an organisation or an individual. Additionally, as already referenced, there are specific motifs flowing from the general quotidian atmosphere of the city of Venice which are osmotically absorbed into the works of Venetian artists and/or artists sojourning in Venice, and these will be highlighted.

6.2 Ambient influences in Venice

Quattrocento Venice was “the first industrial centre in Europe”, a major export being glass, in its many different forms. From the East, as well as the import of flux materials and raw metals, luxury silks and other textiles, metalware, porcelain, gold, spices, pigments and wax were important commodities. From the north, iron and other metals were imported from Villach. Consequently, many different communities were established within Venice, evidenced by the names of buildings and areas: the Ghetto, the Fondaco dei Turci, the Fondaco Tedesco. As previously noted, silk-spinners from Lucca had fled to Venice at the end of the duecento. In addition to the robust trading links between Venice and her colonies, the development of these internal immigrant communities and resultant exposure to foreign clothes and hairstyles, language, philosophy, science and technology, both abroad and at home, stimulated the reproduction of these by Venetian artists. The absorption of oriental motifs and scenes was also fuelled by the acquisition of “souvenirs” by Venetian merchants. This

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2 The archival evidence collated has already been published, but while examining the original documents, this thesis discovered that frequently small extracts of a document had been published by one author, and different extracts from the same document by another. Where considered pertinent to this thesis, these have been reconstructed, using the published extracts and with this author’s own insertions from the original documentation. A great debt is owed to the following: Paoletti, Ricci, Goffen, Sohm, Eisler and Bätschmann.
secondary impact of Venetian mercantile activity is shown in the presence of many eastern design motifs within Venetian architecture, exemplified by façade plaque of the Scuola dei Calegheri, Campo san Tomà. (Fig. 206). In Chapters Three and Four, a “whirling rosette” motif was discussed, a popular motif in Egypt, and appearing on the Torcello Duomo façade, and Desdemona’s House in Venice (Figs. 122, 123-a), also something that Jacopo will utilise in the frame architecture of several of his paintings, as discussed in 6.3. Additionally, a variation of this motif continued to be utilised in Venice, like that found in a fifteenth-century silk velvet produced there, (Fig. 207).³ The development of the pigment business sector by the vendecolori in Venice through processing, exporting and importing pigments, and raw minerals was another ambient factor. Elsewhere, colouring agents and other materials were purchased from apothecaries. In Venice vendecolori sold colouring pigments, the quality of which was recognized widely, so consequently they had customers from a very wide catchment area⁴ As well as the pigments sold by the vendecolori, the Bellini would have been doubly exposed to the colours used in mosaics, firstly from their presence in the Basilica di San Marco, and also because the vendecolori supplied the Murano glass makers, who also made cubes for mosaic work.⁵ Plain gold or yellow flat disk haloes, frequently though not always outlined in black, red or blue, found in frescoes in catacombs and many other centres within and outside Italy have been discussed elsewhere in this thesis. Additionally, they are found in Byzantine mosaics and icons, as well as their translation into centres such as Rome, Ravenna and Torcello. Jacopo Bellini would have known this type of design from the Basilica of San Marco, specifically the mosaic of The Transportation of St Mark’s body, a lunette above St

³ Davanzo Poli, F., and Modanato, S., (eds.), Le Stoffe dei Veneziani, Venice: Albrizzi Editore di Marsilio s.p.a., 1994, Fig. 38. There is also a section of stone facciata in the Chiesa di San Polo, Venice, with this motif, and within the arch mosaics over the nave in the Basilica di San Marco, although there are several more “vanes” within this one.


⁵ The prominence of the Bellini as artists who had worked at the Palazzo Ducale, would suggest that they must have had some contact with the mosaics within the Basilica.
Alipio’s Door, circa 1260 – 1270, as well as the many Byzantine icons encountered in Venetian Churches utilising this plain disk halo, always situated flat behind the head of its owner.

Stefano Veneziano’s 1385 *St Christopher* tavola indicates a slightly different halo, gold ground helping intensify the effect of the decorative tooling, particularly in the halo. Its outer circumference is decorated with a triangle of three circular punches, this simple external pinnacle decoration, giving a “teardrop fringe” effect. Within the internal halo cross arms, Stefano uses a simple ring punch containing a hexa-rosette punch, further embellishing the halo. Although still quite large, it is more reduced than those of Paolo Veneziano sixty years earlier in his *Trittico di Santa Chiara*, 1328-1330, Lorenzo Veneziano’s *Sant’Antonio Abate e San Giovanni Battista* tavola of 1357, Nicoletto Semitecolo’s *Santa Lucia e le pie compagne danno sepoltura a San Sebastiano* of 1367 (where he has bestowed red-rimmed haloes) or even Lorenzo’s 1370 tavola *Jesus giving the Keys to St. Peter*. Differing positioning of the haloes can be observed in these works: they are very large, the outer circumference lying much lower than the nape of the neck, brushing the upper borders of the shoulders. Even in Lorenzo’s 1370 tavola, the heads and/or profiles of the angels and St Peter, himself, are in a sense silhouetted against the central segment of their haloes. Varying techniques of halo decoration can also be seen clearly in these examples, particularly this latter artwork, where the angels’ haloes are very foliate. Christ is enthroned and within the designs at its base, there are painted subjects with ridged haloes, rather like those found within the frescoes of Giotto or Simone Martini.

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7 Museo Correr, Venice.
9 Sagrestia dei canonicici of the Duoma of Padova.
10 Museo Correr, Venice.
discussed earlier, so it can be seen that there are certain stylistic similarities between the Venetian and Sienese artists, and a continuity of these motifs in the different centres. This, then, was the ambience influencing the Bellini bottega.

6.3 Pseudo-Arabic halo borders

In view of the foregoing, therefore, it seems almost inevitable that Eastern, Byzantine or oriental objects were incorporated by Jacopo, Giovanni and Gentile into their artworks, such as the turban found in La flagellazione di Cristo all’interno di un’architectura di Palazzo from Jacopo’s Louvre Drawing Book.\textsuperscript{11} Jacopo used orientalising motifs in the haloes of his Madonna paintings, for example in the previously-discussed Madonna con Cherubini, 1435–1444, in the Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, (Fig. 131). Executed in tempera and gold leaf on panel, Jacopo has painted the Christ Child seated to the Virgin’s left, directly confronting the viewer’s gaze, His right hand raised in the gesture of benediction, the left clasping a pear, representing His love for mankind.\textsuperscript{12} The Virgin’s right arm rests at right angles on the parapet/ledge as she holds her son, the other arm protectively placed around His shoulders, forming a square segment within the arched frame. A brooch clasps together her mantle, the Fanciuullo’s gown cascades onto a tasselled cushion with an oriental design, overhanging the parapet on which his sandalled foot also rests. To the right of the picture plane, a closed book juts over the parapet edge. In every available space between the top of the parapet and the arched frame, Jacopo has painted a background of cherubini, in profile, frontally, or gazing downwards, their wings crossed or raised, and all of them have tiny gold haloes.\textsuperscript{13} The Virgin’s halo has a double-banded outer circumference, bordered within by a circular

\textsuperscript{11} Jacopo should be called “the father of Venetian orientalism” rather than Gentile, according to Catarina Schmidt Arcangeli, “La pittura ‘orientalista’ a Venezia dal XV al XVII secolo” in the exhibition catalogue Venezia e l’Islam 828 – 1797, p. 141.
\textsuperscript{13} Also seen in Jacopo’s drawing of Padre Eterno che regge il Crocifisso fra i cherubini. See Ricci, British Museum Book of Drawings, No. 56. a).
bead design, inside is a broad section of cursive Arabic (non-Kufic) script, probably pseudo-Nashki\textsuperscript{14} intersected by a repetitive delicate red rosette design. Another double-banded, border highlights the ornamentation of the halo, the space nearest the Virgin’s head is plain. The Christ Child’s halo has a similar design, although the Arabic ornamentation is intersected by three cross pattée arms coloured red, forecast of His future sacrifice. The Fanciullo’s tunic collar has a \textit{tiraz} design, echoing that within His halo. Additionally, Jacopo has used exactly the same frame architecture for this work as the Lovere \textit{Madonna}, (Fig. 130), derived from the “whirling rosette” motif. The halo itself is similar to that he bestowed on the San Diego Strauss Madonna, further evidence of the bottega’s recycling of a repertoire of design elements, as highlighted by Ricci.\textsuperscript{15} The rosette in this is not the same “whirling rose” motif, but this design additionally became part of the bottega’s repertoire. In his \textit{Madonna col Bambino che regge una mela} (Figs. 208, 208a), Giovanni also uses this type of oriental design with coloured rosettes in the Virgin’s halo, the Infant’s contains a red internal cross-pattée.

Andrea Mantegna, Jacopo’s son-in-law (1431–1506) utilised a semi-oriental design within his halo rims, but they are very different from Jacopo’s and also those of Squarcione, to whom he had been apprenticed, (Fig. 134). Before painting, Squarcione had worked as a tailor and embroiderer, travelling in the East, making drawings and collecting designs,\textsuperscript{16} so Mantegna, also the son of a tailor, was perhaps very fortunate in his mentor, Squarcione, and his father-in-law, Jacopo Bellini, both of whom provided invaluable resources for him, which are subsequently re-presented in his artworks.

\textsuperscript{14}Ricci, p. 254
\textsuperscript{15}Welch, Evelyn, \textit{Art in Renaissance Italy} 1350 – 1500, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 90.
Mantegna’s orientalising designs however, are more elongated and perhaps more in relief than his mentors’, although these too are cursive Arabic characters.\(^\text{17}\)

### 6.3 Didactic Haloes and the new attribution to Giovanni

Jacopo Bellini’s haloes differed from his Venetian contemporaries in terms of their simplicity. Jacobello del Fiore, Michele Giambono and the Vivarini bottega were still producing very ornate, tooled gold haloes, although the tooling of their designs seems less complex than their Tuscan counterparts because they were using simpler punch tools and possibly more incised patterning, rather than the typical Tuscan combination of sphragistic techniques used to provide texture for decoration, previously discussed in Chapter Three, especially 3.6.\(^\text{18}\) Jacopo’s haloes differed in other ways, since didactic haloes did not seem to be executed by other Venetian artists. However, as discussed in Chapter Three, 3.6, Jacopo does endow didactic haloes on his Virgins and although common within Florence to bestow inscribed haloes upon the Virgin, for example in works already discussed by Masaccio, Masolino, Bicci di Niro, Gentile da Fabriano and later Fra Angelico, it seems that Jacopo was the only Venetian artist who used this design. The links between Jacopo and Gentile da Fabriano are well documented, and when Gentile came to Venice to work on the Sala del Maggior, he was registered as a member of the Scuola di San Cristoforo dei mercanti (see Document 23 in Appendix Two), which Giovanni Bellini would later join.\(^\text{19}\) Throughout the Churches and the Scuole of Venice, there are many examples of the different types of haloes already considered within this thesis, but inscribed haloes and particularly Latin-inscribed haloes, are not represented. It appears Jacopo’s use of this design was only for external

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\(^{17}\) Fontana, Maria Fontana (mariafontana.fontana@gmail.com) 8th January 2011, and Fontana, Maria. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), 9th January, 2011.

\(^{18}\) This practice would continue sporadically, into cinquecento works of Cima di Conegliano and Lorenzo Lotto in the Museo Correr.

patrons, such as Lionello d’Este, rather than Venetian patrons, a practice he imported into his Venetian bottega, after his time in Florence, for ‘foreign’ commissions. Unlike the cartellino device which he seems to have innovated based on antique Roman tradition, Jacopo’s contemporaries have not appropriated the didactic halo; competitors, such as the Vivarini, maintained their Gothic decorative motifs but did not embrace the inscriptive halo.\textsuperscript{20} The Bellini Madonna paintings cited so far have retained a hieratic Byzantine pose, with its echoes of the solidus, the gold coins of the Byzantine emperors which also contained inscribed exhortations to the Virgin along their circumference. The fact that he is utilising didactic haloes implies that this is innovative for Venice, rather like the box-frame he executed for the Brescia Annunciation, both of which were perhaps too modern for Venetian taste.

However, the didactic halo did survive until c. 1460 in Venice, displayed in a Madonna and Child owned by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, (Fig. 209). The work had been purchased and exhibited as being by Jacopo Bellini, and Keith Christiansen in 1980 had refuted suggestions that it was by Giovanni. However, in July 2008, the work was on the Museum website with an attribution to Giovanni Bellini. The author of this thesis contacted LACMA for clarification, since to her knowledge, this would have been the only occasion in his entire oeuvre that Giovanni had executed a didactic halo, and learned that there had been a new attribution, which was to be unveiled at the forthcoming Giovanni Bellini exhibition in Rome September 2008.\textsuperscript{21} The Virgin’s head is in profile against the halo which is inscribed with the usual Lukan salutation

\textit{AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA DOMINU TECUM}


\textsuperscript{21} Marandel, P. (Patrice@lacma.org) Jacopo and Giovanni Bellini. E-mail to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk), 30th July, 2008.
The background is dark, like Jacopo’s *Madonna con Cherubini* examined earlier, although here it is plain, minus mourning cherubini. There is a similar rosette motif to that of Giovanni’s *Trivulzio Madonna* (1460-65), here unpatterned, of the same colour and texture as the inscription, and at the upper margin of the painting, the letters *HP θV* appear in two red roundels, an appellation and site much favoured by Giovanni, (Fig. 209a). The catalogue entry of this work referenced the musings and differing attributions of art historians between Jacopo and Giovanni. The only mention of the halo was a statement that there were Gothic characters contained within it. The panel was painted in oil, a medium unused by Jacopo in his other works, and it had been variously dated as 1460-65 by Christiansen, early 1470s by Rand, 1453 by Eisler, and 1459-60 by De Nicolò Salmazo. This exhibition and catalogue finally attributed the work to Giovanni, proposing a date of c. 1457.

Here, then, is an example of a motif/inscription that has been “tried and tested” in the bottega by Jacopo, complementing a textual technique that is not overly popular within Venice, translated across into a new work by a younger member of the studio, thus suggesting that the patron may have had some influence on this halo design.

6.5 The physiognomy of the halo in two Bellini Crucifixion works

This thesis has previously noted the changing position and size of the halo. Surface embellishment, and gems embedded into its surface, have similarly been discussed. A further strand in teasing out the halo’s ontology will now consider its exhibition of


23 Lucco, ibid., cites Christiansen’s 2004 observation that Giovanni used the Greek appellation “Mother of God” more as a stimulus to prayer, than an accession to his patrons’ wishes. No details are given of the patron either on the website or within the Catalogue.
physiognomic “traits”, with a complementary inquiry into the effect of increasing naturalism upon this, via two different treatments of *The Crucifixion*.

The first version, is Jacopo’s, with some assistance by Giovanni, dated approximately 1460 by the Museo Correr, where it currently hangs, (Fig. 210). This scene shows Christ on the cross, surrounded by soldiers, St John the Evangelist to His left and the kneeling figure of Longinus the Roman centurion, gazing up at Him. Jacopo foregrounds Christ by His pale flesh and by placing the cross against a low horizon. St. John’s halo is a very solid-looking yellow disk behind his head, above the nape of his neck. Christ’s yellow nimbus also seems to have materiality and there is a hint within it of two red arms of a cross, referring to His sacrifice, (Figs. 210, a-b)²⁴ The nimbus is slightly tilted to Christ’s right as His head is bowed in that direction, and seemingly tucked in behind the right shoulder held aloft because the arm is nailed to the cross. (Christ’s pose is the same as in Jacopo’s Louvre drawing, but in that, the halo is more definite with a distinct internal cruciferous design.) Unlike the didactic haloes examined in the last section, this halo is functioning differently, because although it is imparting some information, this is not via an inscription, but through its physiognomic positioning, responding to the angle of Christ’s head. The manifestation of celestial light, the halo, is the link between the living and the dead. The spectator knows that Christ is now dead because His side has been pierced and yet, there is still the presence of the halo over His head, as it is behind the head of His living witness, the Evangelist. It is a signal of life everlasting, the eternal hope, the promise of our salvation and it is still shining around the head of the dead Christ, it has not been diminished by His death although it has altered its position to reflect His dead posture. It could be argued that

²⁴In Jacopo’s Louvre Book, he has drawn this scene with tear-shaped groups of cherubini. At the base of the cross there are crowds of people and soldiers, in the background, to Christ’s right there is a castle. Above the cross is a titulus. Canova, Giordana Mariana, “Riflessione su Jacopo Bellini e sul Libro dei Disegni di Louvre”, *Arte veneta*, Vol. 26, 1972, p. 20.
this work contains both proxemic and chronemic elements, since the halo’s non-verbal communication - its proximity to Christ’s head matching that of the Evangelist’s - insists to the spectator that there is a link between “what is”, “what was” and “what will be”. The appropriation of these tools from their usual sociological milieu and their melding in this situation assist the viewer in assimilating and processing these “messages”

Later, on 14th July 1466, the Scuola Grande di San Marco commissioned an altarpiece of The Crucifixion, as well as The Carrying of the Cross (from Master Jacopo Bellini, painter of the altar).\(^{25}\) The contract for these two commissions by Antonio Zivram, the Guardian of the Scuola, is reproduced in Document 12, Appendix Two, in order to show the tight conditions imposed upon the artist by the Scuola, in connection with quality, colours and pigments to be used, together with penalty clauses and periodic payment specifications. In the contract, the positioning of the first work is discussed, “on the first floor facing towards the campo”\(^{26}\) referencing the campo of San Giovanni e Paolo in front of that great Church and the Scuola di San Marco, bounded by a canal. Additionally its size, “the entire wall”,\(^{27}\) and the subject of the tela are specified: “...a Passion of Christ on the Cross filled with many figures and details...”\(^{28}\)

The second tela is to be positioned “above the door of the meeting room, where it will begin, and will finish at the window of the storeroom, where there is another artwork”\(^{29}\) and must depict Christ and the thieves.\(^{30}\) The work must be executed well and Jacopo should undertake to work only on this contract for the two paintings until they are finished, otherwise he will be subject to penalties to be decided by the officials of the

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\(^{25}\) ASV Scuola Grande di San Marco, Registro (Notatorio) 16 bis, p. 35 - within the second section. (Bätschmann notes that Eisler has cited this reference also).

\(^{26}\) “la testa de la Scuola varda suxo el champo” ASV, ibid. Sohm, Doc. 19, p. 259.

\(^{27}\) “tuta quela faza” ASV, ibid., Sohm, ibid.

\(^{28}\) “... una pasion de Cristo in croxe richa de figure et altro che stia benessimo ...”

\(^{29}\) “...sopra la porta de lalbergo che principia a mezo el volto e copie fina ala finestra con laltro quaro suxo...”

\(^{30}\) “el qual quaro la Instoria de Ieruxalem con Cristo e i ladroni”
Scuola. He, personally, must select only the best quality pigments for the colours especially *azzurro*, (lapis lazula). His fee will be 375 gold ducats, however, if the paintings exceed the Scuola’s expectations a possible further discretionary award of 25 gold ducats can be made.  

An initial payment of 10 ducats is to be made for expenses, followed by 25 ducats for his design of the first *tela* and then another 25 ducats for his design of the second painting. As soon as the work has commenced, further payments will be dependent upon the quality of the work and the time taken. As was the usual practice, these decisions were to be taken by a panel of his peers, and the officials of the Scuola. It can be seen from this contract that although the Scuola have certainly specified some content – “full of figures and other details” – and they have requested that Jacopo, himself, choose the pigments, they have not stated anything about the appearance of Christ, and no mention is made about the style or size of the halo.

The subject of *The Crucifixion* was a popular commission; Jacopo had also painted an altarpiece, now lost, for the Duomo in Verona, a work highly praised in a letter dated 1st July 1759 (see Document 30, Appendix Two), possibly written by Giambettino Cignaroli, published by Ricci.

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31 . . . *El qual lavor sia fato si belo e ben fato melio che maj lavor l’abia fato de bontà e de colori perfeti d’azuri e de altri colori. Ubligandose de non tuor per fin el farà questi lavori altro lavor de alguna condizion sotto pena de quello parerà a i ofiziali se troverà ila scuola a sua deschrizion e consienza. El qual lavor el dito maistro Iachomo Belin aver debia de suo manifattura e spexe de colori, chola e horo e zeso ed ogni altra claxon aspeta a la pentura per tuti do lavori ducati 375 d’oro; e se el dito se pontate de i diti lavori si perfettamente che ai ofiziali per suo consienza parese de darge ducati 25, questo sia in suo libertà e consienza loro; ma per i diti ducati 25 non posi esser astretti salvo tanto quanto piacerà ai ofiziali se troverà per i tempi.....”*

32 ASV Scuola Grande di San Marco Notatario 16 bis, Sohm, p. 259
Giovanni’s version of The Crucifixion, circa 1453-55, (Fig. 211) is very different, despite the mutual presence of objects such as the titulus. The inclusion of the letters IC XC in red on the Cross arms is suggestive of a Greek derivation, as most Venetian crosses of the trecento executed under a Byzantine influence have this motif. However, in the quattrocento, the inscribed titulus began to replace it. It is believed that the presence of both elements in this painting by Giovanni suggests it was commissioned by a Greek patron resident in Venice, hence the unusual iconography.

The paleness of Christ’s dead flesh on the high elongated Cross delineates Him, although there is much less presence of blood than in Jacopo’s version, where it flows from his wounds and also down the base of the Cross. Christ is flanked on either side by the Virgin and St John, standing on Mantegnesque rocks, and behind Him lies a complex landscape with distant hills and a winding river. Mary stands with clasped hands, a posture echoing duecento art, while St John gazes up at Christ, his arms lowered and apart. The transverse arms of the Cross divide the blue celestial sky, filled with cherubini, from the lighter sky with billowing clouds of the terrestrial world, where behind the stillness of the mourning figures, life continues with a lone soldier ambling along the path towards a group of his chatting comrades. The attention to detail in both groups, the sadness of the mourners and the indifference of the people involved in their everyday lives, adds a psychological element. The nimbi of Christ, Mary and St. John, however, are subtle, yellow emanations of light, appearing around their upper heads, rather than solid disks behind their heads. They are definitely visible, and present, but unlike Jacopo’s version, they are more insubstantial. Christ’s halo is cruciferous,

34 Lucco and Pontani, Footnote 38, p. 118.
35 Lucco and Pontani, ibid.
36 Shorr, p. 68.
37 Unlike Jacopo’s tear-shaped groups, Giovanni has placed his cherubini across the sky.
38 Goffen and Nepi Scirè, p. 144.
(Fig. 211a) but only two red arms of the cross are visible and they are blunt-ended, unlike Jacopo’s cross pattée motif. Christ’s head in Jacopo’s version is also lower and consequently that halo’s position means that the observer sees more of it than in Giovanni’s version.

These haloes are so different “physically” from the tooled haloes of the preceding centuries, or from the didactic haloes considered in the previous section. What has provoked this substantial ontological change? Jacopo’s fascination with perspective has already been mentioned, his Drawing Books attest to this. Additionally, a familiarity with Alberti’s ideas may be being worked out in these paintings. Jacopo and Alberti had possibly met in Venice in 1437 when the latter was there, or perhaps he had read Alberti’s De lla pittura while at the humanist Court of Ferrara. The treatise was published in Latin in 1435-36 and it can be argued that both Jacopo and Giovanni are utilising some of Alberti’s suggestions here with regard to vision and visibility. In particular, his assertions that:

No-one would deny that the painter has nothing to do with things that are not visible. The painter is concerned solely with representing what can be seen

and

The philosophers say that nothing can be seen which is not illuminated and coloured.

At the end of Book II, Alberti rejects the use of gold ground, exhorting artists instead to use light to model form, citing a panel of gold ground in which some areas that should have been light were dark and vice versa. The depiction of light, and not just divine

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39 Humfrey, p. 44. Canova, p. 14 also makes observations on this point.
40 Spencer, p. 19.
41 Spencer, Footnote 84, p. 130.
light, was a continuing process of refinement, and it is well known that Giovanni da
Fontana, a scientific writer on light and perception in Padua, dedicated his (lost)
*Ttractatus*, c. 1454, to Jacopo.\(^{42}\)

Like Alberti, Da Fontana is interested in colour and light as well as perspective and by
the

greater and lesser absorption of light by an opaque body . . . by the greater and
lesser reflections of luminous rays . . . and in the variations of distance between
objects . . . or in the variations of the intensity of light.\(^{43}\)

Both Jacopo and Giovanni are applying these scientific principles to their paintings.
Giovanni’s landscape, particularly, shows the graduations in colour he is using to
produce depth. In one sense Jacopo and Giovanni are working against Alberti’s
Ciceronian treatise, because they are making the *invisible*, the unreal nimbus, *visible*.
Yet they show the spectator physical traits of the halo. It is just possible to glimpse the
edges of the paths through the emanations of the Virgin’s and St John’s haloes in
Giovanni’s version, (Figs. 211b–c) suggesting that he is applying da Fontana’s theory
of light absorption. Consequently, via this application, a mixture of reality is being
actually viewed by the spectator through unreality operating under laws of Nature in the
terrestrial world, a dualism nevertheless both convincing and believable.

Mantegna’s *San Zeno Altarpiece* (Fig. 135) was discussed previously, and it is
appropriate here to examine how the haloes are “behaving” within it. Christ’s halo is
cruciferous with one arm of the cross pattée visible and the left arm ending above His
right ear. The haloes are positioned in a “naturalistic” format, i.e. St Zeno’s is virtually

\(^{42}\) Gilbert, Creighton E., *Italian Art 1400-1500 – Sources and Documents*, Illinois: Northampton

\(^{43}\) Gilbert, ibid.
flat behind his head but St John’s is above his head and tilted to reflect his head’s downward posture. Similarly, the angels’ haloes “move” according to their postures, the little angel on the left who is singing with head upraised, almost “loses” his halo because of the backward and upward tilt of his head and the halo’s corresponding positioning.

The halo is acting, and reacting, physiognomically not only to light, but also to gravity, demonstrated in the halo positioning. Yet simultaneously, and logically, because of gravity, (if they were real) it should be impossible for them to stay where they are in mid-air, but because of their naturalistic behaviour, the spectator accepts this unthinkingly.

The haloes are communicating their message emotionally as well as visually. The turning of Jacopo’s halo is “read” because the upper internal halo cross arm, arising from the top of Christ’s head, has shifted from a vertical position to a slightly oblique one, thus indicating its own movement, rather like a clock face, (seen also, for example, in Giotto’s much earlier Santa Maria Novella Crucifixion). Giovanni’s reductive halo has also shifted, indicated by the oblique position of its upper cross arm. Yet this is also a depiction of a liminal moment, this transitional switch from the “quick” body of the man, Jesus, to the deceased corpse on the Cross. Just as the pale flesh has been leached of blood, so has the halo diminished in brightness, a very physical manifestation of a physical condition. In Giovanni’s hands, the halo has become the visual equivalent of a whisper.
6.6  *Venetian cruciferous haloes and the Cult of the Precious Blood*

The internal cross arms of Christ’s halo have been particularly discussed in Chapter Four. This Chapter has spoken of the ambient culture in Venice, and the cross pattée shape is constantly seen around Venice. For example, as previously mentioned, outside the Porta della Carita in the Arco Foscari leading into the Palazzo Ducale in Piazza San Marco there are two *pilastri* known as *Pilastri Acritani* or *Pilastri di Acri*. As well as an illegible monogram, a cross pattée design is carved onto the lower sections, which would most certainly have been seen by Jacopo Bellini, (Fig. 156), together with the presence of this cross pattée in works within the Venetian Churches. This design is found within other architecture throughout Venice, for example, on the external walls of the Basilico San Marco, and also within the Chiesa di Sant’Alvise the same upper three arm crosses are seen, although the lower fourth ends in a tri-lobate design, rather than this orb design shown above.\(^44\)

Variations on the cross design are found in many trecento Veneto-Byzantine works, such as the *Crucifixion* in the Correr (Fig. 36). In common with many other late trecento and early quattrocento artists, Jacopo utilised the motif regularly within haloes, although unlike the Latin Cross ratio shown in the photograph of the Acri Pilastri but similar to the design in the *Crucifixion*, he alters the proportions so that the three cross arms appear to be equidistant from a central part. Usually within his works, they are undecorated but red, the proleptic signifier. Sometimes, Greco-Veneto artists used a voided cross pattée, with the cross outlined in red, at other times they also decorated the arm crosses with stars as in (Fig. 32), but Jacopo’s preferred version was the undecorated, red, cross pattée, the ends of the cross usually touching the rim of the halo.

\(^{44}\) Other cross designs are also found repeated within the architecture of specific churches, as in SS Giovanni e Paolo, the great Dominican Church, where trilobate crosses are found on altar bases, and on the walls.
However, contemporaries such as Michele Giambono (active 1420 – 1462) in his *Madonna col Bambino* bestow a cruciform halo on the Fanciullo, but manipulate the cross design, so that it becomes a really solid, blunt, two-dimensional object within the halo, highlighted by the thin golden rays between each cross arm, (Figs. 212, 212a), whereas Giovanni still endows a solid halo on Christ in his *Pietà* of 1453, (Pignatti, 1460) but alters the internal halo cross by slimming it into perpendicular foreshortened red slivers, (Figs. 139, 186). In his *Madonna and Child*, (1460-64) also known as the *Madonna ‘Greca’* in the Brera, Milano, the Fanciullo has a voided, slim, gold plain internal halo cross with blunt arm ends, (Figs. 213, 213a).

Twenty years later, Giovanni utilised the same design with a red voided cross in the Fanciullo’s halo in his *Madonna col Bambino* (circa 1480) in the Chiesa Madonna dell’Orto.

In an earlier commission, the *Pietà* for the Palazzo Ducale, he used a much broader, “impasto” cross pattée. Painted for the Chapel of St Nicholas in the Palazzo Ducale, Venice, this artwork was meant for public display, (Figs. 140, 140a and Figs. 214-a). The central section shown here was from an altarpiece, Christ supported between Mary and St. John, the central group flanked by St Mark and St Nicholas of Bari. The colouring is sombre, the substantial haloes look like incised copper, with a broad outer rim of oriental design, similar to that in his earlier Correr *Pietà*. Christ’s halo contains the broad arm ends of two red crosses, the third arm end obscured by His head and the

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46 Brizio, Anna Maria, “Considerazioni su Giovanni Bellini”, *Arte Veneta*, III, 1949, pp 23-39 doubted the date of 1472 for this work. Goffen later states that according to the last restoration between 1989 and 1972, her proposed date of approximately 1460 is authenticated. See Goffen & Nepi Scirè, p. 153.
Virgin’s halo. The very delicate cursive pseudo-Nashk script designs overlying the red of the cross, apparently incised, are actually painted, picking up the gold patterning of the tiraz, the gold borders on the mantles and robes of the Virgin and St John. The haloes lie flat behind their owners’ heads, quite high, St. John’s ending above the back of his neck. The Virgin’s halo is very awkwardly placed, she is in profile but the nimbus has not turned with her head, and this exact pose, including the awkwardness of the halo, is executed in one of Jacopo’s designs in the Louvre.47 The halo rims appear to be very metallic, and the Virgin’s overlaps that of Christ, whose body is very awkward in this work too, gaunter, the skeletal structure more noticeable and tortuous than in the Correr Pietà.48 The wound in His side is much more obvious, the spectator’s gaze directed to it by the deep red cruciferous segments of the halo. This thesis proposes that in this work, Giovanni is deliberately referencing the Cult of the Precious Blood of Christ, and he is highlighting the sacrificial aspect here of Christ’s death.49 Although the Cult was suppressed in 1464, it had been very deeply-rooted, particularly in Flanders, Germany and Italy. The importance of Venice as a city of relics has already been recorded.50 Additionally, within the Frari, is an extremely important Franciscan Relic, Christ’s Blood congealed with the Magdalen’s oil, bought in Constantinople in 1479, either by Marco Trevisan or Admiral Melchior.51 The five

47 Goffen, Rona, *Giovanni Bellini*, trad. Anna De Lorenzis, Milano, Federico Motta Editore, 1990, p. 71, supplies the reference as Foglio 53 r in Jacopo’s book of designs in the Louvre. However, an examination of the drawing published by Ricci shows that in Jacopo’s version, St. John is holding Christ’s right arm and pressing His hand to his lips in a kiss.
48 Goffen, (1994), p. 73, also feels that this is an almost anachronistic work.
51 The Relic is housed in a silver reliquary commissioned from Evangelista Vidulic, a goldsmith from Zadar in 1485. Cooper, Donal, “Sacred Space and the Moving Viewer: Revisiting Bellini and Titian in the Frari”, Lecture given at the University of Sussex Art History Research Seminar, on research
wounds of Christ were venerated, in particular the side wound, known as the “Laver of Love”. St Catherine of Siena described it as the “barile di vino” and the “bottega del sangue”, and it was thought that its exact measurements were known. Like the feud between the Franciscans and the Dominicans over the Immaculacy of the Virgin, so there was another rift caused by the Precious Blood of Christ, i.e. was the Blood shed during the Crucifixion “hypostatically united with the Godhead during the three days that the body remained in the Sepulchre, and therefore entitled to worship?” The British Library holds manuscripts written on blood-red paper, to remind worshippers about their salvation through Christ’s ultimate sacrifice. The Blood of the Redeemer, c. 1460-65 by Giovanni is an explicit rendition of this theme of sacrifice, (Fig. 216) depicting a kneeling angel saving the Precious Blood in a chalice. In Quirizio di Murano’s c. 1461-78 Christ showing His Wounds and the Host to a Clarissan nun, (Fig. 217). Christ enthroned is flanked by two flying angels displaying scrolls on which are written the invitation/instruction:

Venite dilectissimi mei in cellulam vinarium sanguinque meo inebriate vos

and

Comedite, amici, e bibite et inebriamini, charissimi

conducted by Dr. Donal Cooper and Joanne Allen, PhD student at the University of Warwick. This thesis is most grateful to Dr. Donal Cooper for his email correspondence and for allowing her access to this unpublished material. Cooper, Donal, (donal.cooper@googlemail.com). Emails to Susan Martin (susan.m.martin@plymouth.ac.uk). The Cult of the Precious Blood of Christ, 11th April 2009, and 17th April, 2009.


53 Saxl, p. 348.

54 Saxl. pp. 348-9. The Cult was particularly strong within Northern Italy. Mantua has a Relic of the Holy Blood in the Basilico di Sant’Andrea, apparently brought there by Longinus, the Roman centurion who lanced Christ’s side.

55 Tempera on poplar, 47 x 34.3 cm., the National Gallery website suggests this may have been a tabernacle door. [accessed 15.01.10.]

56 Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, tempera and oil on panel. Only consecrated and ordained priests could administer the Eucharist in Church, which meant that nuns were unable to officiate themselves. Welch, p. 187.

57 Saxl, 350.
Christ’s halo in this painting is quite substantial, there is no element of transparency, but it is also quite small, parallel to the picture plane behind His head. The connection between Christ’s wound and the Host is obvious in this work because it shows the Resurrected Christ. There is also a link with Alessandro Alessandri and Polidoro Virgilio, contemporaries of Giovanni and Quirinio, who had been writing about ancient liturgical rites and bloodless sacrifice, referencing the Egyptians “who had appeased their gods with a host of bread”, a direct parallel with the Host, and it seems that both artists were acquainted with their work.\(^{58}\)

In Giovanni’s Palazzo Ducale Pietà, the temporal sequence is different to Quirinio’s work. Giovanni has used oil to paint on canvas and the authentic light effects he achieves can be seen in the gems of the cope of St Nicholas. Light falls from the right on the left side of St John’s forehead, the left side of Christ’s face and the Virgin’s tiraz. In addition to the two large altar candlesticks placed on the sepulchre at the edge, there is another smaller votive candle, its flame blown to the left.\(^{59}\) Below this is a label with Giovanni’s signature, “\textit{IHOANES BELLINUS}”, which seems to be very real, as though attached to the sepulchre.\(^{60}\)

The Palazzo Ducale was the seat of political power in Venice and St Mark was the patron saint of the Republic.\(^{61}\) The positioning of the haloes, their ‘metallic’ qualities and inflexibility all contribute to a strange mood within this artwork. Bellini’s use of the \textit{cartellino} seemingly curling into the liminal space between the sepulchre in the

\(^{58}\) Saxl, p. 346.  
\(^{60}\) Renato and Pignatti, p. 59. See also Goffen & Nepi Scirè, p 9 and Footnote 35, p. 21, where Jacopo Bellini is credited with inventing the \textit{cartellino} containing a signature.  
painting and the viewer’s space causes a rupture in the gaze, just as the odd siting of the Virgin’s halo does. The use of the cursive pseudo-Nashki script rather than the usual pseudo-Kufic script is another striking aspect. The enhanced visibility of the red cruciform arms in the halo and the blood of the wounds juxtaposed with the altar candles and St Mark’s and St Nicholas’ kneeling posture reminds the viewer of Christ’s sacrifice to redeem Mankind and the future celebration of this via the Eucharist consumed at the altar.62 This concept of the tomb as altar is a Byzantine inheritance that Giovanni is utilising, a reference to the vision of St Gregory the Great, who was celebrating Mass “when the Eucharist was miraculously transfigured into the Christ himself, still in pain and yet already dead”.63

Benedetto Diana, a follower of the Bellini, similarly utilised this very broad, almost squat, cross design within a solid golden nimbus in his Pietà, (Fig. 218).64 Like the Bellini, Diana also received commissions from the Scuole, such as that set out in the contract drawn up on 12 February 1507, between himself and the Scuola Grande di S Maria della Carità, (see Documents 26-27) for a processional banner, a gonfalone. The Scuola wanted him to paint the Madonna in Majesty, enthroned, and also to gild her.65 This had to be done in “absolute beauty and perfection.”66 Additionally, Diana was to include portraits of specifically mentioned members of the confraternity and also to paint other saints and decorations of the highest quality, within the banner,67 because the Carità wanted their gonfalone to surpass the new banner of the Scuola Grande di San Marco. Benedetto was therefore not to skimp on gold or figures, as was made

64 The Correr does not have a date for this work.
65 Document 27.
66 Document 27.
67 Document 27.
explicit in the Contract, but no mention was made of the design or decoration of the Virgin’s or saints’ haloes, even though this could have affected the overall result.

In his 1529 *Vergine col Putto incoronata da due angeli*, (Fig 30) Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480 – 1556) gives the Virgin and angels solid gold leaf elliptical haloes, with a circumference border of single punching giving a “beaded” effect. The Christ Child also has an elliptical gold leaf halo, intersected by three slim, red, painted pattée arm crosses, but the depth of the red is not as great as that of Giovanni’s *Pietà*, even though the cross design is similar.68

However, Marco Palmezzano (1459–1531) alters the internal cruciferous design completely by abandoning the cross pattée, instead substituting delicately-traced gold cross arms in his *Christ Carrying the Cross* (Fig. 219), reminiscent of those produced by Petrus Christus in his *Man of Sorrows*, 1475-76, (Fig. 220).

In this section, the cruciferous halo has been shown in a variety of styles and the breadths of internal cross arms, even the number of visible arms, is variable. Additionally, it has been shown to project a specific Christian message that referenced a contemporaneous practice that was also a developing and controversial doctrine concerning Christ’s Blood. The Cult was banned in 1464; if Giovanni’s *Pietà* was dated 1460, then it is most certainly referencing the Cult, since at this stage, the artist was producing slim gold ring haloes, which were much less substantial. If it was painted post-1464, (and Pignatti had queried a date of 1472 for it) then it could be a

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68 The cross pattée motif was used across Northern Italy, examples are seen in the frescoes of Fra Angelico at San Marco, Florence, particularly *The Mocking of Christ*, 1438-1443, in Cell 7, where the cross pattée seems slimmer and therefore more elongated than in Jacopo’s works. Another variation Fra Angelico uses is in his *Tabernacle of the Linen Drapers*, 1433-35, San Marco Museum, Florence, where the Christ Child has an internal halo cross pattée, but a shorter one, contained within the halo and which does not reach the circumference. Filippo Lippo also uses the device in *Adoration of the Christ Child*, c. 1459 and includes it within God’s halo as well as that of the Infant Jesus, although by altering the angle of the arm ends where they reach the halo circumference, he makes a subtle differentiation between the two.
defiant referencing of the Cult, working in concert with all the ruptures of reality Giovanni has introduced, (previously discussed elsewhere in this thesis) from the strange musculature, the awkwardness of the Virgin’s halo, the delicate Arabic lettering on the “metallic” solidity of the halo, and the startling sight of her fingers curling around Christ’s head, between His hair and crown of thorns and His halo, “reality” sandwiched between unreality and “reality”, the very question of this thesis.

6.7 Gentile Bellini and (San) Lorenzo’s propagandist halo

The cruciferous halo just discussed had a form of promotional function in a devotional sense. This next section will consider how the halo might operate in an overtly propagandist function relating to potential canonization procedures. Venice had promoted herself as a mythic city so successfully that she became the first stage in many pilgrimages to the Holy Land. There are so many relics in holy sites around La Serenissima, frequently brought back by merchants sometimes bought from markets in Constantinople, as earlier exemplified.69 Relics equalled “business” to put it bluntly, the more faithful there were, the more opportunities for cash flow into the church or holy site housing the relics. Similarly the same situation pertained with an altar dedicated to a specific saint, because this meant that those who wished to venerate that saint would buy candles, leave bequests in their Wills for a mass to be said for their souls, and quite often also money for the upkeep of the altar. If the church could offer burial rights inside, this too would generate much income, so the business of faith permeated many different levels, not simply veneration; there were also commercial and political considerations in play. Many of the Orders found it very beneficial for the aforementioned reasons to

69 Santo Brasca’s Viaggio in Terrasanta di Santo Brasco 1480: Con l’itinerario di Gabriele Capodilista, 1458, itemises different Venetian sites where he saw and touched relics or entire sacred corpses, Munk, footnote 4, p. 89.
have a new saint, and so there was great competition between them, particularly the
Dominicans and the Franciscans, and Venice was no exception to this “jockeying”.

The acquisition of a halo was an affirmation of divine validation and protection. Many
campaigns were mounted to have certain individuals canonized, such as that in support
of Luca Belludi whose status changed from witness to thaumaturge in early trecento
historiography, and shifted again by the 1380s, in Giusto di Menabuoi’s cycle of the
Siege of Padua at the Santo in Padua, from passive witness to active “superhero” in the
city’s struggle. Belludi has been painted to strongly resemble St. Anthony in the fresco
cycle, and has been bestowed with a halo - all before he had been canonized. There is
no difference in the size or the luminosity of his halo compared with that of St.
Anthony, perhaps another “strand” in the propagandist campaign for his canonization.
Louise Bourdua has established that there is no textual basis for the fresco showing
Belludi’s glorification by Christ, rather it is an appropriation of the stigmatisation of St.
Francis, interpreted through the emanation of two golden rays of divine light from
Christ onto the upper torso and head of Belludi. Although his beatification was only
formalized centuries later in 1910, the Franciscans had “made” him into a saint through
the agency of his halo and the divine rays from Christ.

The Dominicans were just as eager to have a new saint at their great church, SS
Giovanni e Paolo, situated in a position of both political and confraternal importance, in
addition to its own status as the primary Dominican Venetian church, factors not lost on
the Dominican Order. The second altar on the right, after entering the Church, is the St
Vincent Altarpiece, now recognized as an early work by Giovanni Bellini, although the

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70 Bourdua, L, The Franciscans and Art Patronage in Late Medieval Italy, Cambridge: Cambridge
71 Bourdua, p. 135.
72 Bourdua, p. 137.
73 Bourdua, p. 138.
subject of much controversy. The polyptych itself is made up of nine panels, the central panels are now accepted as autograph early works. Vincent himself, the titular saint of the polyptych, dominates the central panel, surrounded by cherubim and foregrounded by the very low horizon, the bulk of his figure filling the panel much more than his companion saints, (Fig. 221). He is dressed in a Dominican habit, simultaneously holding open the Bible and holding a flame in his right hand, which almost seems to mimic the contours of the Church itself. Unlike St Christopher who is standing in water, and St Sebastian who is standing on earth, Vincent stands on a cloudbank, further evidence of his holy status, although, once again, at this stage he had not yet been canonized, although he has the honour of a halo, a shrewd move by the Dominicans, since a cult of a saint would often spring up locally, as in the case of Luca Belludi, irrespective of the lack of full canonization credentials.

This was something that happened in the case of Lorenzo Giustiniani. (1381 – 1456) one of the most venerated of the Venetian saints. The son of Bernardo Giustiniani and Quirina Querini (both from noble Venetian families) he joined a monastic and contemplative community on the island of S. Giorgio in Alga, in the Lagoon of Venice. Comprising secular Venetian noblemen like Giustiniani, as well as young priests and clerics, it followed Augustine’s Rule and its members spent their time in communal prayer, and studying doctrinal texts. In 1433, he was elected Bishop of Castello, this Church being the seat of the Venetian Bishops and the Cathedral of Venice. It was also a semi-political appointment in the sense that the Bishopric was independent of the Patriarchy of Aquelia, although its jurisdiction did not include the “minor” islands of Murano and Burano. His appointment as the first Patriarch of Venice in December 1451, at the instigation of Doge Foscari, greatly increased his “territory”. Giustiniani

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74 The predella contains the lower three panels, the main sections depicting Saints Christopher, Vincent and Sebastian, the upper section represents the Annunciation flanking the Dead Christ supported by two Angels.
had a particular interest in the poor and sick, everyone baptized a Christian was his concern, and to this end, he obtained financial donations from both the Senate and rich citizens in order to assist those in need, granting Indulgences to those who helped him. Especially remembered for his activity during the plagues of 1424 and 1447, helping the sick alongside the other monks, these episodes are some of the most common representations of him throughout Venice. He constantly educated his flock, proselytising the message of God’s love. Although not a theologian, he studied Patristic texts, and as well as treatises also wrote and published thirty-nine sermons, on subjects ranging from celebrations of Christ’s life, liturgical feasts for the Virgin, and the saints.

There was great veneration of Lorenzo in Venice, with many altarpieces and altars specifically dedicated to him, both on the mainland and within Venice. Most images show him dressed in the white woollen habit of the Congregation of S Giorgio in Alga, with a white or black vescoval bonnet, sometimes wearing a double pectoral cross and holding a book in his left hand.

The vigorous campaign to have him canonized was launched almost immediately after his death. On the first anniversary, in 1456, Jacopo Bellini was commissioned and paid 16 ducati by his successor at the Patriarchy for an image of Lorenzo, to be placed above his tomb in S Pietro di Castello, the original Cathedral of Venice, “ser Iacomo Belin de aver una figura del nostro predecessore posto sopra la sua sepultura”, (Document 11, Appendix Two), but this is no longer above the tomb. However, the extant bust in the Church believed to be this “figura” is considered by Colin Eisler to be the work of his son, Gentile.

75 ASV Mensa Patriarcale. Registro di Casa 1444 - 1459
The commission underlines the importance attached by the Church itself to Lorenzo’s reputation, but again this is further enmeshed with Venetian politics. Despite Venice’s reputation as the *patria dei santi*, there was only one officially canonized local Venetian saint actually buried there, San Gerardo Sagredo (993-1046), (also represented outside the Church of San Rocco, with Lorenzo Giustiniani). Therefore if Lorenzo were to be canonized, this would greatly enhance the political prestige of Venice.

The Congregation at San Giorgio in Alga commissioned a processional panel from Gentile, which he signed and dated 1465.\(^\text{76}\)

\textit{MCCCCLXV OPUS GENTILIS BELLINI / VENETI /}

The portrait of Lorenzo that Gentile produced corresponded very closely to the physical description written by his nephew, Bernardo, in *Vita Beati Laurentii Justiniani patriarchae Venetiarum* published in both Latin and Italian in 1475, making it one of the earliest printed works in Venice.\(^\text{77}\) The Italian translation was made by Nicolò Manerbi, a Camoldolese monk, one of his contemporaries:

A little taller than normal, frail, emaciated straight deportment, with eyes expressing devotion and saintliness.\(^\text{78}\)

Many of the subsequent images and altarpieces found around Venice adhere to this physiognomy, he is instantly recognizable.

\(^\text{76}\) Tempera on canvas, 221 x 155 cm, Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice.


\(^\text{78}\) Tramontin, p. 215.
Gentile’s banner contains an explicit propagandist message. Lorenzo is shown in full-length profile, between two kneeling members of the Alghenese community, behind him are two angels holding his tiara and his vescoval cross, (Fig. 222). There are mountains in the background, and a Mantegnesque/Crivellian swag of fruit in the sky. The really notable and unique feature however, is that Gentile has given Lorenzo a halo, it seems to be almost a double halo, an inner scalloped halo surrounded by a slim golden luminous halo, and this is without any papal authority. Bearing in mind that Gentile was by this time undertaking major commissions for the Scuola Grande di San Marco and working on the Doge’s Palace, the fact that an artist of his stature bestowed a halo on Lorenzo is note-worthy. Additionally, the gesture of benediction was a prerogative of saints, and again Gentile has used this alongside the halo, to reinforce the message that Lorenzo fully merited sainthood.

Lorenzo was considered Thaumaturge, Reformer, Peace Mediator, Herald of God, even during his lifetime, and on his death, his body was laid in state for 67 days while the Venetian citizens came to pay their respects. The family ordered a marble tomb (there is correspondence between Bernardo’s son, Lorenzo, and the Abbess of S Croce alla Giudecca regarding payments for its decoration in the Stato di Archivio), and as Labalme, citing Rosa, writing in 1630, points out, the Church would never have permitted the worship of Lorenzo’s body as a holy relic, prior to his beatification in 1524, if there had not already been a “de facto attribution of sanctity to him by public grido and fama universale”.

So, it is possible to see that in a united effort, the local Church, and the family are promoting the development of the cult of Lorenzo, and on

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80 Labalme, Footnote 14, p. 21.
26th June 1473 the Venetian Senate wrote to Pope Sixtus IV, asking him to commence the canonization process, evidence also of official State intervention and participation.\(^8\)

Scalloped haloes were usually bestowed on the Virtues, as discussed in Chapter 3, where Giotto used them in the Arena Chapel in Padua. A constant theme in San Lorenzo Giustiniani’s written texts and sermons, was the union of the spirit with Divine Wisdom, and it could be conjectured that Gentile is alluding to this within the scalloped shape, it is another “prong” of the propaganda apparatus. As discussed previously, Durandus had stated that the circle was a perfect shape since it had no beginning nor ending, hence its suitability for members of the Holy Family. As noted earlier, St. Catherine of Siena was frequently bestowed with a scalloped halo. Considered a Doctor of the Church, her Cult was particularly strong in Venice, attested both by her altar in SS Giovanni e Paolo, and Giovanni’s altarpiece there painted for the Scuola di Santa Caterina. Possibly this was Gentile’s motive in bestowing a scalloped halo on Lorenzo, highlighting the latter’s desire to proselytise the “correct” path for his flock.

The examples cited feature people who were considered worthy of sainthood, sometimes this valorisation was tinged with political considerations additionally. However, the bestowal of a halo in these instances was not only a wishful acceleration of the due process, but by its very presence, also an insistent simultaneous assertion of sanctity and yet a questioning as to why this had not yet been bestowed.

\(^8\) Labalme, ibid., p. 23.
San Lorenzo Giustiniani is one of the patron saints of Venice, along with the Virgin and St Mark and another minor patron saint of Venice is San Bernardino, one of the titular saints of the Franciscan Church of San Giobbe and San Bernardino in Cannaregio, Venice. The pala of San Giobbe painted by Giovanni Bellini is a huge work, which was removed from the Church in 1815, following the suppression of Religious Orders by Napoleon.\(^{82}\) Signed “IONNES BELLINVS”, it was originally situated on the second altar on the right-hand side of the Church, that dedicated to San Giobbe, between Marco Basaiti’s (1470 – 1530) Agony in the Garden, (signed 1510) above the first altar\(^ {83}\), and La Presentazione di Gesù al Tempio by Vittore Carpaccio (signed and dated 1510) on the third altar.\(^ {84}\) This altar was dedicated to the purification of the Virgin. All three altarpieces have been reunited in one room at the Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice. Pietro Lombardo had already made fundamental alterations to the Gothic Church at the request of Cristoforo Moro, a devotee of the new Renaissance style, working there between 1470 and 1485,\(^ {85}\) so he had probably advised Giovanni on the fictive frame architecture he painted, so that the pala itself melded seamlessly into the actual frame of Istrian stone.

Giovanni’s San Giobbe Altarpiece is a very beautiful, and innovative, work, in which the artist has combined specifically Venetian motifs with Franciscan iconography. This synthesis activates the altarpiece which, in its original setting, would have resulted in a dialogue with the Chiesa di San Giobbe, simultaneously addressing San Marco itself, through all the consonant elements resonating and referencing the Basilica (Fig. 223).

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\(^{82}\) Originally measuring 494 cm in height, it was mutilated, losing its upper 52cm when removed from the Church. This was discovered during the 1994 restoration by Luigi Santo Savio. Goffen &Nepi Scirè, p. 129.

\(^{83}\) Commissioned by the Foscari family.

\(^{84}\) Possibly commissioned by Pietro di Matteo Sanudo.

\(^{85}\) Goffen &Nepi Scirè, p. 154.
The composition shows the Virgin enthroned with the Christ Child, flanked by Sts Francis, John the Baptist, Job, Dominic, Sebastian and Louis of Toulouse, and below them is a group of angel musicians. The fictive space is very realistic as the coffered barrel vault recedes into the cupola of seemingly glittering gold mosaic, directly referencing the Basilica di San Marco, secondarily its related links to Byzantium. Within this patria di santi, San Marco was/is the most sacred site in Venice, alongside the Palazzo Ducale, the seat of power, so immediately Bellini’s artistic “conversation” links Doge Moro at San Giobbe with the heart of the Venetian government, literally a visual and political “mosaic”. Thought to have been commissioned following the plague of 1478, the presence of the thaumaturges, Sebastian and Job, helps underpin this theory, since as well as the Virgin herself, both saints were invoked frequently as protectors against the plague. Job is no longer suffering from his dermatological problems, and his presence is amplified because he is also represented in the border of the gown that St. Louis wears.

San Giobbe’s interior is very light, and the particular site where the altarpiece had been placed would have meant that the spectator could have seen it well from any position. The light also helps “illuminate” the fictive cupola, on which is inscribed:

\[† \text{AVE} \cdot \text{VIRGINEI} \cdot \text{FLOS} \cdot \text{INTEMERAE} \cdot \text{PVDORIS}\]

which means “Hail, undefiled flower of virgin modesty”\(^87\). Written in upper case Roman characters, Bellini has incorporated this very ‘new’ all’antica style within the

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\(^{86}\) In the paper delivered by the author of this thesis at the Renaissance Dualisms and Distinctions Conference held at Queen’s University, Belfast, in January 2008, she had quoted the inscription cited by Renato and Pignatti, p. 97, \textit{AVE. VIRGINEI. FLOS. INTEMERATE. PVDORIS}. However, she has subsequently noticed that the catalogue entry for this work in Goffen and Nepi Scirè, p. 129, cites the inscription as \textit{AVE VIRGINEVS FLOS INTEMERATI PUDORIS}. Finotto, p. 24 [second edition 1993] cites the inscription as \textit{AVE VIRGINEI FLOS INTEMERATAE PUDORIS} and gives the Italian translation, “Salve, o Fiore del pudore verginale dell’Intemerata”. The inscription does read \text{VIRGINEI} as quoted by Renato and Pignatti.

‘ancient’ Byzantine architecture, with a very different effect from those Gothic halo inscriptions of Jacopo examined earlier. Below the inscription lies a row of five haloed seraphim, placed behind gold disks with blue roundels, the borders of which imitate the outer beaded circumference found on tooled haloes. Within this space is the Lukan salutation already seen in many didactic haloes:

+ AVE + GRATIA + PLENA

a reference to the Incarnation, its theological definition according to Kristeva as:

. . . an impossible elsewhere, a sacred beyond, a vessel of divinity, a spiritual tie with the ineffable godhead, and transcendence’s ultimate support . . .

Directly below, on the top of the Virgin’s stone throne, is a large disk surmounted by a cross. The wide decorative border surrounds a plain section within which is an eight-petalled design, the “undefiled flower” of the inscription, within a Franciscan Church; a reference to the Virgin’s Immaculate Conception, the cause of another bitter feud between the Franciscans and the Dominicans. The presence of Sts. Francis, Louis of Toulouse and John the Baptist is symbolic of their specific belief in the Virgin’s Immaculate Conception. Furthermore, as in Jacobello del Fiore’s conflation of the Immaculate Virgin, Justice and Venezia, the Virgin and the Republic of Venice are one, represented by the fictive San Marco architecture, and the referencing of the foundation of Venice on the Feast of the Annunciation. The stone disk is reminiscent of the much larger decorative “spoked” disk that Mantegna places on the Virgin’s throne and which lies behind her pseudo-Nashki halo in the (1456-59) San Zeno Altarpiece. At San

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89 Kristeva, cited in Roudiez, p. 237.
91 Goffen, ibid., p. 66.
92 Goffen, ibid.
Giobbe, (Fig. 223a) it has echoes of a very large tooled and punched halo, although it is above the Virgin’s head rather than behind. 93

All the figures in the painting, except the angel musicians, are endowed with exquisitely thin gold circlet haloes behind their heads, that of St. Francis lies over John the Baptist’s wooden cross, reflecting light as it does so. Sections of hair of both the Baptist and St Sebastian obscure parts of their halo, adding to the realism of the scene. The baldacchino seems to hang between the saints and the spectator, above us in our space, and the illusion is further overlaid by the architecture within the altarpiece imitating that of its actual setting within the Church, thus melding the sacred space into our world. This is not a Sacra Conversazione, in that although this may be read as a “holy community”, such as in Titian’s later Pesaro Madonna, the San Giobbe Altarpiece actually shows no interaction between the figures, unlike a true Sacra Conversazione. Each of the figures is completely engaged in their own thoughts, and isolated, spiritually, physically and psychologically and the Virgin and Child are isolated from each other additionally. 94 The observer is invited into this realm to contemplate through the angel’s gesture, but the Virgin and Child do not meet the viewer’s gaze. St Dominic is deeply engaged in his book, (Fig. 223b) St Francis, the alter Christus shows his stigmata, here already foreshadowing the Christ Child’s inevitable sacrifice. The Virgin and her son are engaged in their own internalised contemplation and although the spectator has privileged information about His awful fate, all is calm in this sacred space. It is also harmoniously balanced architecturally, the central stone disk perfectly dissecting the space between the two stone pilasters, and within this, Bellini has realised

93 Usually, the largest punch tool was the hexa-rosette.
some very subtle haloes, slim circlets of gold that lie parallel to the picture plane, behind the heads of the figures. They are traces of the disk haloes and yet they are very new. Although present, they are unobtrusive, and playing their role in the multiplicity of meanings layered into this work. Their reduction in colour, size, volume, decoration, the very stripping down by Giovanni of all these elements results, this thesis proposes, in a literal Derridean “trace”.

It is in the specific zone of this imprint and this trace, in the temporalization of a lived experience which is neither in the world nor in “another world”, which is not more sonorous than luminous, not more in time than in space, that differences appear among the elements or rather produce them, make them emerge as such and constitute the texts the chains, and the systems of traces. These chains and systems cannot be outlined except in the fabric of this trace or imprint. The unheard difference between the appearing and the appearance [l’apparaissant et l’apparâitre] (between the “world” and “lived experience”) is the condition of all other differences, of all other traces, and it is already a trace.\textsuperscript{95}

Job is the Old Testament prefigurement of Christ, he is the “lived experience”, Francis is the alter Christus, he is yet to assume this role, as is the Christ Child’s destiny yet to happen. Somehow, in this timeless sacred space, temporalization of past and future is combined, the halo is the unifying factor, this trace of what was, and what will be, and its new pared-down physical appearance reinforces this message.

6.9 The Absent Halo

Throughout this investigation, this thesis has examined the presence of the halo, its iconography, its materiality, its ornamentation, its orientation, its colour and its provenance. However, there are also many occasions in sacred pictures when the halo is absent, or perhaps only suggested by surrounding spatial framing of the Saints’ or Virgin’s head, or by architectural or other elements, a form of “surrogate” halo. There

\textsuperscript{95} Derrida, p. 65.
seems to be a marked incidence, and although there will not be space within this thesis to deeply engage with this event, nevertheless, it is important to at least consider its occurrence from the 1460s, albeit briefly.

In the Chiesa di S. Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice, hangs Bartolomeo Vivarini’s trittico *Madonna col Bambino tra I Santi Giovanni Battista e S Andrea* signed by the artist, “Bartholomeus Vivarinus de Muriano pinxit 1478”, and although he is still using gold ground, the content of this work is very different from the extravagant and highly ornamented *pala* in San Zaccaria, dated 1443, painted with Giovanni d’Alemagna, in which the figures have tilted, solid haloes bestowed upon them. In Bartolomeo’s later panel, the saints are no longer endowed with haloes, but those of the Virgin and Child lie behind their heads, they are like glass with gold rims. He has also simplified the Virgin’s throne and it is noticeable that no tooling has been employed in this work. Alvise Vivarini’s *Cristo Risorto*, dated 1497-1498 in the same church is dominated by the huge figure of Christ, painted on gold ground, but once again, no haloes are present. Similarly, his *Cristo benedicente* of 1494 and *Madonna col Bambino* circa 1485-1490, both also in S Giovanni Battista in Bragora, do not contain any haloes, not even an “architectural suggestion”, although in the latter the Virgin is centrally seated between two arched windows through which we glimpse the *paessagio*, a scene which owes much to Giovanni Bellini’s influence. Giovanni Bellini seems to be one of the artists providing the impetus for this new representation of holy figures without haloes. In circa 1465, he produced his *Presentation of Jesus at the Temple*[^96] (Fig. 226) which has a very similar composition to Andrea Mantegna’s treatment of the same subject, except that Mantegna has used thin gold circlet haloes behind the heads of the Holy Family and

[^96]: Galleria Querini Stampalia, Venice.
the High Priest, whereas Giovanni has completely excluded them. The High Priest, whereas Giovanni has completely excluded them.97 Joseph and Mary are presenting the Baby Jesus to the High Priest at the Temple in Jerusalem, forty days after his birth, according to custom.98 Both artists have given prominence to the Virgin holding the tightly-swaddled Child and to Simeon, the High Priest, with Joseph observing the scene from behind them. Mantegna’s composition contains six figures, Giovanni’s has eight, all of whom have been proposed as members of the Bellini family, from right to left, Giovanni, Andrea Mantegna, Nicolosia (Giovanni’s sister and Andrea’s wife) or Ginevra Bocheta (Giovanni’s wife) and Anna, the mother of Giovanni, (or alternatively Ginevra).99 But Mantegna’s tela is replete with haloes including bunched rays for the Christ Child’s halo, and Giovanni’s is completely devoid of them. The Presentation was an important event for the Holy Family, at which God is thanked for a safe delivery by the recitation of the Nunc Dimittis.100 Both artists have devised the scene within a marble frame, representing/echoing the altar. If it is accepted that the Bellini family are the models for the Holy Family, then it is not a great step further to consider that maybe the Virgin is based on Ginevra Bochetta, Giovanni’s wife and the Baby Jesus is actually modelled on Alvise, Giovanni’s son.101 If so, as a regular Church worshipper, in the family tradition a follower of Bernardino of Siena,102 and furthermore, well-known to Lorenzo Giustiniani, the Patriarch of Venice, perhaps

97 Andrea Mantegna’s version of this scene is in the Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.
99 Pignatti, (1969), Dazzi, Merkel (1979), Lightbrown, (1986), cited by Caburlotto, Il Colore Ritrovato, p. 150. Trevisan, Giovanni Bellini, p. 176. Pignatti, in L’Opera Completa, p. 89, suggests that the male figure on the right in Mantegna’s tela is perhaps identifiable with Gentile Bellini, the female figure on the extreme left in Bellini’s painting with his mother. Both writers concur that the figure of Joseph is most probably a representation of Jacopo Bellini.
100 Humfrey, P., Giovanni Bellini, Exhibition Catalogue, p. 248.
101 Oscar Bätschmann’s Chronology confirms Alvise’s birth date is not recorded, he merely writes “148? – birth of their son, Alvise”. The author of this thesis has examined both Alvise’s Will(s), and Ginevra’s Will, but neither give Alvise’s date of birth. Alvise made his Will on 14 December 1498, and there are actually two copies in two different Buste, but neither gives his date of birth. Ginevra’s Will is dated 23 September 1489, and she refers to Alvise as “Alovisium, filium meum carissimum”. He had been considered as a candidate for a post as Secretary for the Consiglio di Dieci in 1495, referred to as “unius iuvenis . . . Aloisius Bellini filio Ioannis”, suggesting that he was still quite young.
102 Jacopo had sketched the preacher in his portable wooden pulpit on his last visit to Venice in 1442/43, see British Museum Book, fol. 82.
Giovanni did not wish to appear disrespectful by also endowing haloes on his own family. In support of this proposition, it is possible to see that in his *Presentation of Jesus at the Temple* in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, (dated by Humfrey as between 1480 and 1490), Giovanni has given the very slimtest of gold circlet haloes to the Holy Family, the Christ Child is unswaddled, and none of the figures resemble those of the Querini *Presentation*.

Sometimes, Giovanni does not use haloes in his religious paintings if a non-holy person is included within the picture scheme, e.g. *The Barbarigo Altarpiece* Chiesa di San Pietro Martire, Murano. However, in his San Zaccaria altarpiece of 1505, neither the Virgin and Child, nor Sts Peter, Catherine, Lucy, or Gerolamo have haloes. Additionally the angel musicians do not have haloes. No human figures intrude in this *Sacra Conversazione*, unlike the *Madonna con il Bambino Benedicente, Quattro Santi e Donatore*, in the Chiesa di San Francesca della Virgin, (signed *IONNES BELLINVS / M.D. VII*) where Giacomo Dolfin is shown kneeling at the left lower margin.

On examining his oeuvre, it would appear that from 1470 onwards, in Venice, the halo is frequently dispensed with in sacred paintings, The Table of Haloes shows this occurrence earlier outside the Veneto, 1450, (see p. 13 of Table), although exceptionally Jacopo Bellini does not endow haloes on Sts. John the Evangelist and Peter in 1420, (p. 10), thereafter they are present. In Giovanni’s *Trittico dei Frari*, neither the Virgin nor Child has haloes and the saints are no longer haloed, and this is despite the fact that two of Venice’s Protectors, the Virgin and St Mark, are depicted here, along with Sts. Nicholas, Peter and Benedict. This “absence” seems to be an element in Giovanni’s

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103 Pignatti, (1999), p. 106 supplies a date of 1505. On a rock at the base of the painting is an inscription “JOANNES BELLINVS”.

104 It is signed *IOHANNES BELLINVS 1488*. 

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quest to represent a more naturalistic scene, with greater plasticity in his figures and a very great degree of verisimilitude, something that he continues to operate, for example in his *Pietà Donà delle Rose*105 dated 1505, Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, (Fig. 232). Here, an aging Mary holds her adult Son, His hair hanging down and still wearing His crown of thorns, but there is not even a slight evanescence of light surrounding His head. This is a dead man, cradled by his grieving mother, firmly situated in the terrestrial plane, they are on a rocky outcrop, alone, there is no visual evidence of the Cross only allusion to it by the broken tree stump, and no other witnesses, this mother is totally alone in her sorrow and loss. Behind them, Bellini has synthesised many actual architectural elements, e.g. the Duomo of the old Palazzo della Ragione, Vicenza, the bell-tower of the Chiesa di Sant’Apollinare Nuova di Ravenna as well as the Chiesa of San Vitale, Ravenna, and the Natisone of Civedale, most probably the behest of the patron.106 The overall effect is one of great naturalism, superimposed on which is this visual evocation of loss.

Originally in the Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Miracoli, Venice, now in the Accademia, two organ doors are painted with scenes of the *Annunciate Angel* and the *Annunciation*; internally there had been a depiction of *San Pietro* and *San Paolo*. The beautiful marble panels have been designed by Bellini to match in colour and graining those of the Miracoli, a delightful little church with its different types and colours of marble decoration, (similar to his assimilation of the San Giobbe altarpiece with its surroundings). Probably executed in 1490 by Giovanni, neither the kneeling Virgin nor the Angel Gabriel has haloes, possibly because Bellini was incorporating contemporary theological debate into this work. The Franciscans and Dominicans had already had bitter arguments about the Immaculacy of the Virgin, the Dominicans maintaining the

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105 This work is known as *Pietà Donà dalle Rose*, after the Collection from which it was acquired in 1934.
106 Goffen, 2000 p. 137.
doctrine of *sanctificatio in utero* whereby she had been absolved, rather than exempted, from original sin in the womb, like John the Baptist, (discussed elsewhere in this Thesis). Thomas Aquinas. Bonaventura, Albertus Magnus and Henry of Ghent all adhered to this. However, the Franciscans upheld the view that no exemption was required because the Virgin had been immaculate since conception, utilising the formulation of John Duns Scotus, *potuit, decuit, fecit* meaning that God could make a person who was simultaneously human yet whose body and soul were exempt from original sin.\(^{107}\) In 1477, Pope Sixtus IV approved the celebration of the feast of the Virgin’s conception, but the debate still continued since there remained confusion as to whether Mary herself was immaculate or her conception. The Papal Bull *Grave nimis* was published in 1485 in which the threat of excommunication was extended to anyone who continued to debate the subject.\(^{108}\) Giovanni has utilised the conventional *Annunciation* light metaphor which dated from the ninth century, i.e. light enters the room from a window on the left-hand side of the painting, because the light of the rising sun came from “Jerusalem, to the south and east”.\(^{109}\) The Virgin herself was also known as the *fenestra coeli*, in addition to the appellation *porta coeli*, which simultaneously referred to her purity and her role as co-redemptrix. Additionally the Archangel Gabriel holds a lily in his hand, but Bellini’s new combination of traditional Marian iconography, the typical *paessagio* of the terra ferma married with the absence of the halo, contributes to a newer, more human and naturalistic *Annunciation*.


\(^{108}\) Reeves, p. 142. The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary only became dogma in 1854 when the Papal Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* was published, p. 141.

\(^{109}\) Reeves, p. 146.
6.10 Conclusions

This Chapter has demonstrated the importance and power of the Bellini bottega to influence, absorb and innovate. Many traditional motifs were re-cycled, such as Jacopo’s frame architecture, and the “whirling rosette” and the angel prototype from the San Marco mosaics, which were absorbed in the bottega’s production. Other fundamental features were discarded, such as haloes in the San Zaccaria Altarpiece, but invariably, it was one of the Bellini family of artists who was in the forefront of these new developments. The insistent move towards more naturalism has been seen in Giovanni’s Trittico dei Frari and in his 1505 Pietà, so different from the earlier Correr and Palazzo Ducale versions examined above, not only in his depiction of the Virgin, but also in this absolute lack of holy signification via the halo. Propagandist motives have been displayed within the site of the halo, whether advocating and promoting a specific campaign of canonization, or referencing a Cult that has been suppressed. The halo has demonstrated “physical” qualities in its orientation and its brightness in the hands of the Bellini, at other times, its didactic message re-affirming the importance of the Virgin and imparting information about her status. Contemporaneous influences, such as pseudo-Arabic ornamentation, have appeared within it, as well as inherited decoration, such as the internal cross arms.

At all times, within the Bellini bottega, the halo has been executed with great care and as an important feature of an artwork, combining with all the other elements to “work” within it, an inherent component of the narrative.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this thesis was to examine a seemingly bland and unimportant element of an artwork, the halo, from many different angles, covering its appearance, its “behaviour”, and its oscillation between sign/non-sign, and consequently to argue that it can be a dynamic rather than passive component, thus meriting a re-positioning of its narrative role within Art History.

It has been demonstrated that in early Christian works, the halo was not present in any form. In the late 300s AD, the Table of Haloes shows Christ as Maiestas Domini on a glass vessel, with a gold leaf disk halo behind His head, and from then until 1250, the disk halo, parallel to the picture plane is the standard halo format, (see ToH, pages 1-4). After this, it may be enhanced with internal embellishments, such as ridging, (see ToH, page 3). One of the most surprising findings of this thesis is the dearth of written sources about the halo or nimbus, both in Patristic exegesis, and later within Medieval/Renaissance scholarship. Thomas Aquinas discusses the aurea, the sign of being united to God and living in bliss. Durandus refers to a crown “shown in the form of a round shield”. Almost two centuries later, Dives asks Pauper about those “rounde thynggys”, once again a reference to the disk shape he has seen around the heads of different figures. These all relate to comprehension of the state of eternal bliss that the halo/nimbus is denoting, but surprisingly there is no additional discussion about their execution or any change of shape, either theologically or in artistic treatises, apart from Cennini’s advice. Almost contemporaneously, de Chasseneux utilises the term “glory”, the Biblical term that describes God’s divine presence represented by light surrounding both the head and the body. Augustine’s assertion that the nearer one comes to God, the
more transparent one is because of the penetration of intelligible light\(^1\) is something that artists are trying to show in their “portrayals” of haloes, although without any formal articulation of what they are doing. Thus Grosseteste’s *lux spiritualis* is concentrated within the halo, for the spectator to “read” and “understand”, one example of contemporary theology being incorporated into the halo, as posited in the Prologomena of this thesis.

The first decade of the fourteenth century appears to be a fulcrum for many changes in halo design. Chapter Three of this thesis has discussed many techniques utilised by artists in their “construction” of haloes or “depiction” of the nimbus, and it has been shown that Giotto is one of the main innovators, at Padua, along with Simone Martini in Siena, (see ToH, pages 4-5), in terms of using ellipsis and internal embellishment. These change both the form and appearance of the halo. This utilisation of ellipsis is important, because it is signalling a new realism about the halo, it is being given some “natural” characteristics so that it behaves as if in the terrestrial world, although remaining a spiritual signifier, hence, an oscillation of its object/sign status. Almost simultaneously, from 1320s onwards, paradoxically, the halo is “depicted” polygonally, the antithesis of naturalism. This thesis concludes that artists are attempting to articulate a new hierarchy, suggested by the earlier practice of utilising a square halo, they are promoting new levels of awareness for non-divine, non-human semi-conceptual personifications such as the Cardinal Virtues and the Theological Virtues, so the polygonal halo reverts to a sign status. This situation pertains for more than a century, between 1320 and the late 1400s, although the use of the trecento and quattrocento haloes changes from distinction of personifications, to firstly distinction of mortals, and then uniquely, Pesellino uses a sixteen-pinnacled “halo” behind God’s head, (ToH, pages 5-23, Fig. 82a). Neither trecento nor the majority of quattrocento polygonal

\(^1\) Chapter Two, Footnote 71.
haloes are mimetic haloes of light, and they are frequently coloured, e.g. blue or pink. Instead they are operating as signs, with the exception of Pesellino’s unique multi-pinnacled gold halo that does seem to be a manifestation of divine light. Longinus, the Roman centurion, is a saint, venerated particularly in Mantua, although he usually has a polygonal halo, as discussed earlier. However, Vivarini and d’Alemagna’s Adoration of the Magi depicts three Kings, mortal men, who were not actually saints, yet here are shown as ‘quasi-saints’. Again, they do not have light-mimetic haloes, rather they are being differentiated from their retinues, not only by their regal real crowns, but also with these unreal polygonal haloes, a recognition of their importance within the Nativity narrative. Likewise, Joseph is distinguished both by a spun gold polygonal halo (not as perfect as the Virgin’s disk halo) and luxurious clothes in the Adoration of the Shepherds (ToH, page 23, Figs. 196 and 196a) painted by the Maestro di Castelsardo, Cagliari. He is painted as a mature man, rather than the apocryphal white-bearded man, so this could be considered as a propagandist use of the polygonal halo, supporting his “sainthood” before St Teresa of Avila promoted his Cult after the Council of Trent, following which he was depicted as a younger man. This thesis recognises that polygonal haloes change their function from trecento theological personification to quattrocento suggestions of a quasi-saintly status, particularly in Florence and Siena, but although executed sometimes by Venetian artists, this does not occur within Venice. The triangular halo is a sign of God and is not in any way light mimetic. It is found in many centres, there is no geographical distinction in its use.

This thesis has also highlighted differences in “haloes” of radiant light, not only in length and distribution of rays, but also in colour, both gold and silver. The northern European examples provided as a comparison with the Italian works are utilised in several narrative formats: Virgin and Child, The Visitation, the Passion, the Life of John the Baptist, the Nativity and the Lamentation. Varying in date from 1410 to 1490,
realised in silver, they surround their owners’ heads like a disk halo, (Figs. 86, 86a, 87, 87a, 88, 88a, 91, 91a, and ToH, pages 8, 11-14, 19 and 21). These are different from the Italian artists’ utilisation of “haloes” of radiant light, which are usually given to an adult Christ, illustrating different time periods of His life: Baptism, Transfiguration, post-Resurrection, where graduated bunches of rays are bestowed, sometimes in a cruciform shape, at other times “fringing” His head. It is often possible to distinguish a Northern European halo by its very large size in comparison with Italian ones, and also by its positioning, usually the base is congruent with the nape of the neck, different from Italian representation. Similarly, the Italian radiant light “haloes” can be distinguished because of their different format. The definition “haloes” is being differentiated here, because although placed around the head, they are rays rather than mist or effulgence, thus they are not true to the etymology considered earlier. There seems to be more similarity between the Northern European halo and the “conventional” halo, and although functioning as a sign of divine light the Italian, and specifically Venetian, radiant light “haloes” are most certainly different. This thesis argues that the Northern European “halo” is operating here as an object, whilst the Italian one functions much more as a sign, thereby this slippage between object/sign is perfectly exemplified here by these two different artistic practices in different geographical regions.

Another geographical difference that this thesis concludes is important is the use of different textual elements within the halo. The early Sienese preference for miscellaneous pseudo scripts between the duecento and trecento was disseminated into the Veneto by Giotto, particularly into Padua, and later into Florence, taken up by followers of Coppo di Marcovaldo, although its use declined in the second half of the trecento there.
However, the use of Latin inscriptions inside haloes developed from the 1300s, again in Siena, particularly within didactic examples in which names were utilised to identify specific saints, or Maria Mater for the Virgin. This continues into the quattrocento, in all centres in Italy where inscribed haloes are utilised, executed in Gothic script. Again, in Siena, Domenico di Bartolo innovates by using inscriptions in humanistic script, but this time it is for a devotional rather than didactic inscription, one of the first occasions in the quattrocento, (although it should be recalled that it circumscribes rather than inscribes the halo). In the early 1420s-1430s, in Florence, Bicci di Lorenzo adapts Masaccio and Massolino’s *St Anne with Virgin and Child* panel but uses a textual design based on Latin script that is nevertheless not clean and crisp like that of humanistic script, the use of which is a feature of this decade in Florence. The simultaneous re-emergence of pseudo-Arabic text within Florence and Rome, initially based on textile decoration like trecento Sienese use, testifies to the appreciation of these exotic languages, even though there is not an intention to utilise them as “readable” texts. In a more sophisticated use than in the trecento, they are deliberately manipulated, so that whilst they resemble the original writing, in fact they are nonsensical, and even when Masaccio and da Fabriano used an actual word, they mixed it up so that it was unrecognisable and therefore not conveying any legible message, the visual impact was the most important element.

The Venetian use of Latin-inscribed haloes has been shown by this thesis to be completely different, in that it was a little-used practice. Jacopo Bellini did utilise them, but only for external patrons, and he incorporated a Mamluk-type rosette to divide the text. This rather startling absence of Latin-inscribed haloes has never been discussed before, and yet it is a very different situation from that prevailing in other centres, and consequently needs to be highlighted. The Venetian artists are producing different haloes, perhaps – although this has not been confirmed by archival sources – because
they are following their patrons’ wishes. Another major difference that must be considered is that although Pseudo-Arabic elements are found in quattrocento Venetan and Venetian works, the graphemes are of a pseudo-Nashki type, exemplified by Vivarini and Bellini works, rather than pseudo-thuluth. Thus they can be used as an identification aid. The preference could be the result of the previously-mentioned Venetian book auctions, or an exposure to different mercantile sectors, or a mixture of both circumstances. It is a situation that requires further research now that it has been identified.

The later quattrocento/early cinquecento sees a complete transfer to humanistic script across Italy, there are still didactic haloes, e.g. naming of saints, but also many containing devotional inscriptions, such as Foppa’s 1480 Virgin and Child (Figs. 143, 143a). Thus inscribed haloes can be seen to be functioning in two modes: didactic and devotional, the devotional inscriptions are found mostly within the Virgin’s halo, sometimes utilising parts of an antiphon, at other times independent inscriptions, but these always remain in Latin, they are not transcribed into Italian or dialect.

The investigation of the halo’s behaviour in respect of light has shown that, post-Giotto, there is a gradual development where artists have begun to treat it as an object obeying the laws of Nature, hence on occasions it casts shadows, at other times light plumes are reflected upon it from light sources, it obeys the laws of perspective, thus changing position according to its owner’s head, it is shown in ellipsis, and at other times, it is itself a light source. Mimesis becomes reality. Despite this, as already mentioned, the examination of archival documents did not produce evidence of prescriptive formulae for halo “representation”, rather it seemed to be left to individual artists to interpret this. The fact that naturalism was impacting upon this interpretation reinforces this thesis’s assertion that the halo was being treated as a physical object, innovated by Giotto’s
Paduan frescoed haloes. The decline in the use of gold ground may have similarly acted as a catalyst in this process. The halo actually becomes more prominent when it is not displayed against a gold ground, even though it may not be so intricately punched or inscribed, but as an object it is often more insistent, although simultaneously, more natural, challenging the competence of artists to include it as an integral component, without it appearing incongruous. Thus the absence of gold ground has a specific impact upon the realisation of the halo, in Italian and Flemish/Northern European art.

This thesis has also proposed that Venetian artists incorporated elements of contemporaneous industrial practice into their haloes, a synthesis of the earlier innovations by Zoppo and da Veneziana in portraying “glass” haloes. Their appropriation of this new manufacturing technique into their works shows a great modernity and a desire for complete verisimilitude of transparency, to imitate the perfection of cristallo glass that rapidly became one of Venice’s most prestigious exports. Although rock crystal had always been available, depending upon the quality of workmanship, it did not always have the absolute transparency that cristallo offered. Camille points out (Chapter 5.3), the increasing dematerialisation articulated by transparency, reiterating San Bernardino’s exegesis of subtilitas, which is transparency or translucency, when he discusses the bodies of blessed ones being lucid. San Bernardino had preached several times in Venice during this period, recorded by Jacopo Bellini.

Additionally, the mimesis of silk was another insertion of a contemporary industry that impacted on the Venetian halo’s appearance. Also considered luxurious, like cristallo, and subject to similar legislation, silk was a prestigious commodity, although unlike their Florentine counterparts, the Venetian artists did not heavily embellish their silk veil haloes, preferring the gauze-like quality with perhaps light linee serpentine
decoration and very light stippling incorporated. (This thesis has “invented” the phrase *linee serpentine* to describe the snaking lines that can be found within some haloes.)

The Florentine artists used more gold stippling and more complex coverage of the halo surface, (ToH, pages 18 – 24). Although this practice seems to have been concentrated between the 1470s and 1480s, it is possible to see that Raphael still uses it in 1504 (ToH, p. 25). The silk haloes appear to have originated in Venice and transferred across to Tuscany.

Another motif that has been identified by this thesis is that of the halo’s external pinnacle decoration, whether filigree and stylus-produced, or punched poly-lobed. There is frequently a strong resemblance to Pag lace, and the constant traffic of artists between Pag/Zadar has been discussed. At other times, the external pinnacle borders appear very similar to the *merli*, an architectural feature situated on the top of buildings. Gentile da Fabriano’s late trecento work includes a *dentata* (tooth-like) external pinnacle design, like that on the façade of the Duomo at Murano, perhaps something he had absorbed during his Venetian sojourn. The Greco-Venetian and Cretan-Venetian external pinnacle borders tended to be higher than the usual quattrocento ones. This thesis concludes that Venetian artists appropriated many motifs and patterns from their daily visual experience and incorporated them both, and either/or, within their artworks and frequently their haloes. These ranged from the “whirling rosette” (also appearing in Florence via the agency of Gentile da Fabriano), and the Mamluk brassware rosette divisions to incorporation of these Venetian architectural motifs and that of the Pag lace border, appearing in the external halo pinnacle borders.

The Bellini bottege frequently innovated shifts towards more naturalistic haloes, although it can be seen that there is an evolution in their depiction over two generations. One of Giovanni’s most striking results is the use of the slim gold circle, placed behind
the head, the first of which is 1460-64 in *The Virgin and Child* (*Madonna Greca*, Fig. 213 p. 16 ToH), the same position as the traditional disk halo, but so much lighter, a trace of a Holy signifier, rather than an object. Giovanni continues producing this design, (although alongside others), up to the late 1480s, usually in *Virgin and Child* formats. Other Venetian artists follow suit, Alvise Vivarini, Mantegna, Diana, all use the gold circle and in 1487 and 1490, Rogier van der Weyden and Pietro Perugino (p. 21 ToH) also utilise them, another innovation has transferred to other centres.

The “behaviour” of the halo reflecting Christ’s dying moments and His death is manipulated by Giovanni into a misty dissolution in the 1452/3 Correr Crucifixion. Here, the object/sign has ontological traits, it is operating like a dying body, “life” draining from it, dimming as Christ’s life ebbs away, the spectator accepts this as completely normal in the circumstances.

In conclusion, therefore, this thesis has discovered new information about the halo, particularly in Venice, where artists treat it differently in terms of textual embellishment, and also innovate its appearance by the inclusion of local industrial and architectural elements within it. In a rather ironic “twist”, Giovanni sometimes used pulverized silica to enhance transparency, literally producing a “glass” halo.

Propagandist ideals are also encapsulated, as in (San) Lorenzo Giustiniani’s halo. The Bellini family, particularly, have led the way in changing the form and design of the halo, responding to contemporary societal, political and theological influences.

The evidence for the halo's development and use in this period demonstrates that it is an active and dynamic element, in terms of its iconography, the materials used to depict it and its positioning within a composition. This thesis has shown, additionally, that its semiotic status - the halo being used variously as a sign and as an entity - is complex, such that its identity in representation is not stable over history.
APPENDIX ONE

ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

ASV is the abbreviation for Archivio di Stato di Venezia

Document 1

1416, 20 marzo C. G., nº 1.72 S. 31 (Altar in Sala)

“Parte di far una Pala con un altar de legno, come parerà al Guardian e Compagni su la nostra Sala per onor e devozion de Fradelli.”

ASV. Scuola Grande di S Giovanni Evangelista, Reg 38m Trassata pag. 58. Published by: Ricci, 1908, p. 49.

Document 2

1421 10 April C. G. nº 1. 75 S.33 (Istoriar la Sala)

“Parte – Essendo sta’ deliberà dalla Banca de far istoriar la Sala della nostra Casa a torno, a torno, del Testamento vecchio e novo. Proposta al capitola detto prò e contra, essendo 56

De sì ………48 } Presa
De nò ……… 8 }

Con condizion che el nò se metta man nelli Cavedalli d’Imprestidi, né contra el prò che se ha da quelli. Item che se possa far compir e depenzer l’Altar suso la sala e fornirlo de tutte le cose necessarier.”

ASV Scuola Grande di S Giovanni Evangelista, Reg 38 m Trassata pag. 60 Published by: Ricci, 1908, p. 49.

Document 3

19 luglio 1421 Note de tute le reliquie e sanctuarie e argenterie e arnixie e masaricie de la congregation e fraternitate de la scuola del vangeliaste Miser Santo Marcho – El dito libro fo fato in 1421 a di 19 de lujo (Scuola Grande di San Marco)

“A l’altar de misier san Marcho suzo la sala ne son do teleri compidi per maestro Iacomo Belin pentor la palla de l’altar con misier San Marcho dorado.

1° cortina azura de tella con san Marcho in mezo con 1° vida d’oro atorno……………”

Museo Correr Ms perg IV, no 19 c. 9ª. Published by Ricci, 1908, p. 49.
Document 4

A receipt from Jacopo Bellini to the Guardian Grande of the Scuola after being registered in the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista

“Ihesus MCCCCXXXVII Adi III Marzo

Al nome sia de Dio e de la graciossa Vercene madre Madonna Santa Maria, e de lo apostolò Evangelista misser S. Zuane cavo e governador de questa benedeta fraternitade de dissipiena, qui soto scriverò tutti quei i quali son stadi recevudi a pien in tempo del provido homo misser Iacomo de Zorzi vardian grando e di suo compagni.

………………… Ser Iacomo Belin pentor”

ASV Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, Reg 72.C
Published by Paoletti, 1894, p. 6, Ricci, 1908, p. 48, Eisler, 1989, p. 530.

Document 5

Jacopo Bellini buys a table with intarsia from the estate of Jacobello del Fiore

“(Incanto delle cose di Iacobello del Fiore)

Primo incanto † 1439 a di 8 Novembrio …………………

E a di dicto have maistro Iacomo Bellin una tavolla intarsiada duc. – L1s.8…….”

ASV Scuola Grande di S. Maria della Carità, Busta 56, Commissarian Giacomel del Fior, fasc. IV, testamento doc. 2
Published by Paoletti, 1894, p. 6, (there is more than one list, which is why my date does not accord with that of Bätschmann’s of 6 December 1439), Ricci, 1908, p. 51, Eisler, p. 530.

Document 6

“Trading” agreement between the painters Jacopo Bellini and Donato Bragadin

“1440. Die 14 Septembris

Magister donatus q. ser Iohannis bragadino pictor de confinio Sancti Leonis pro una parte, et magister Iacobus Belino q. ser Nicolaj Bellino pictor de confinio Sancti Jeminiani pro altera, sponte et libere contraxerunt et invicem fecerunt Societatum et mutuaum utilitatem de omnibus et singulis picturis et magisterio pictuarum cuiuscumque sortis et conditionis qua facient et evenient sorte cuilibet eorum ad apothecas et stationes suas Ita hic Venetijs quam alibj ubicumque extra Venetias. Ita quod quicquid lucrabantur dictis …. ex picturis et lucro picturarum provenientibus sibi hic Venetijs et utrique partj eorum dividatur equaliter sine ulla exceptione et contraditione. Excess laborerij que sibj et cuilibet eorum pervenirent extra Venetias que sint cuuislibet ipsarum partium specialiter. Et hec Societas duret usque ad annos quinque proxime jncipiendos die primo mensis octubris proxime sequeturj. Et convenerunt et pactum fecerunt invicem per totum dictum tempor.”

Published by Paoletti, 1894, p. 6, Ricci, 1908, p.51.
There are slight differences between Paoletti’s and Ricci’s texts, in that Ricci has been able to supply words which Paoletti perhaps had been unable to read or transcribe. In addition, Paoletti tends to use the original spellings in his transcriptions, Ricci sometimes ‘modernizes’ them.

Paoletti also wrote: “Osservando però come questa convenzione sia stata cancellata dal rogatore,sorge il dubbio che essa non abbia avuto effetto.”

Ricci wrote: “……propose od accettò di fare un accordo di reciproco vantaggio, nella vendita dei lavori, con Donato Bragadin, pittore fiorito fra il 1438 e il 1473, di cui non conosciamo il valore artistico mancandoci opere o modo di riconoscerle. L’accordo però o non ebbe effetto o l’ebbe di breve durata. Certo nel 1441 ogni lega era sciolta, la convenzione cancellato dallo stesso rogatore, e Iacopo se ne andava a Ferrara. Nell’agosto, infatti, di quell’anno si trova che Lionello d’Este gli donò due moggia di frumento da condurre con sé a Venezia” op cit. p. 9.

**Document 7**

A gift from Lionello d’Este to Jacopo Bellini

**1441, 26 agosto**


Modena ASV, Registro de’mandati, 1441 – 42
Published by Ricci, 1908, p. 52. (On p. 9, he continues “….E segui, pur là, la gara fra lui e il Pisanello, ingaggiati a fare in concorrenza il ritratto dello stesso Lionello.”) P. 10 “..Nel 1443 Iacopo si trova nuovamente in Venezia, dove riconferma come aiuto e scolaro Leonardo del quondam ser Paolo suo nipote, che già stava con lui da circa dodici anni.

**Document 8**

Extract from an agreement made when Jacopo employed his nephew, Leonardus, in his workshop. Leonard was his sister, Elena’s, son. Unusually, in this document, there are three sections where words have been crossed out. This is something I have not come across in other documents.

**23 Agosto 1443**

“Cum ser Iacobus Bellino quondam ser Nicolay pictor de gonfinion S Jerminianus iam annis XII vel circa tenuerit Leonardum quondam ser Pauli nepotem suum et eum nutriverit tamquam filium ex debito tam karitatis quam affinitatis usque presens; nunc vero considerans et advertens ipsum Leonardum sibi utilem fore in arte et magisterio suo pictoriet et ideo velle sibi providere de mercede aliqua et utilitate decenti promittet et se obligate idem anmoduo dare pro duobus annis inceperis die primo mensis septembris proximi, videlicet pro primo anno ducatos XII auri et pro secundo ducatos XIII auri sine ulla exceptione, solvendos de quatuor mensibus in quatuor menses pro rata; . . .

ASV Cancelleria Inferiore, Notaio Francesco (dagli) Elmis, Busta 74/75. Fasc 28, fol 20
Published by Paoletti, 1894, pp 8-9, Eisler 1989, p. 531, Goffen, 1990, p. 262.
Document 9

Jacopo Bellini receives a commission from ser Nicola Inversi of Venice

“Carta di Commissione data da Nicola Inversi a Jacopo Bellini
Die XIIII Februarii 1452 (1451 m.v.)

"Ser Nicolaus Inversij de Venetijs rogavit cartam Commissionis ser Iacobo bellino pictorj de confinio Sancti Jeminiani specialiter ad utendum juribus et rationibus ipsius committentis in quocom que iuditio et officio hic Venetijs contra quascumque personas et personam tam agendo quam difiniendo, producendum et alligandum et petendum terminos et dilationes, iurandum etc. audiendum quamlibet sententiam, et determinationem et fatiendum mitti exequitioni. Apellandum etc. Et generaliter etc.


ASV. Sez. Notarile, Cancelleria Inferiore, Atti Elmis Francesco Busta 76, Reg. 1451 - 1455, pag. 11. Published by Paoletti, 1894, p. 8, Ricci, 1908, p. 53, but Ricci’s transcription is much more detailed.

Document 10

Jacopo offers to paint a large gonfalone (processional banner) for la Scuola di Santa Maria della Carità and this is the contract drawn up between them.

1452 19 Giugno

“In Christi nomine, amen. Anno a nativitate Eiusdem millesimo quingentos et quinquagesimo secundo. Indicione ser Franciscus Spiera vardianus magnus scole batutorum Sancte Marie de Charitate de Venetiis, ser Pantaleo lapizida vicarius dicte scole, ser Paulus Zuchato scriba dicte scole, ser Andreas de Savina, ser Antonius Augustino, ambo dechani dimidii anni dicte scole, ser Iohannes Bernardus de Aleotis, ser Sanctus de Vazonibus, ser Vitus Bono, ser Antonius Marioni, ser Marcus Francisci, ser Lodovicus de Stropis, ser Lodovicus Salvazo, omnes dechani dicte scole et tamquam maior pars offitium dicte Scole per se et nomine dictorum eorum Scole ex una parte, et providus vir ser Iacobus Belino quondam Ser Nicolai pinctor ex alia parte, pacta compositiones et conventiones fecerunt et contrassserunt ad invicem in hunc modum videlicet: quod predictus ser Iacobus facere tenetur et debet atque promixit predictis officialibus dicte scole Sancte Marie de Charitate nomine predictorum eorum Scole recipiebantibus et acceptantibus unum penelum magnum pro dicta eorum Scole de septem tilis sindonis et longum brachiis septicem vel circha laborandum per dictum ser Iacobum de figuris auro fino et de l’azurio ultramarino fino secundum formam et designum datum per dictum ser Iacobum eisdem officialibus dicte Scole, pro quo penelo fiendo ut supra dicti officialibus solum ponere tenetur et debent sindonem et tellarium in quo fieri debet dictus penelus, dictus vero ser Iacobus ponere debet aurum et colors necessarios pro dicto penelo, quem quidem penelum dictus ser Iacobus proprius manibus laborare tenet et promixit cum illis laboratoribus, qui erunt necessarii, facies vero figurarum dicti peneli dictus ser Iacobus solus proprius manibus laborare teneatur et in quo penello dictus ser Iacobus nichil laborare debet de argento, et hoc nominatim pro pretio et nomine pretii ducatorum centum quadraginta auri. Quod quidem pretium predicti officiales dicte scole dare teneantur et promiserunt eidem ser Iacobo ipso laboranti et continuando laborerium predictum quod mercatur solutionem predictam ad pagas
infrascriptas, in quatuor pagis infrascriptis videlicet: de presenti ad voluntatem dicti ser Iacobi quartum sive quartam partem pretii predicti et quibuslibet tribus mensibus proximis venturis, unamiam quartam partem dicti pretii ita quod ultima paga solvatur quando factum fuerit dictum laborerium et ultima paga sit de ducatis quadraginta de pretio antedicto ducatorum centum quadraginta proinde dando tantum minus de alii pagis cum omnibus infrascriptis pactionibus et conventionibus inter predictos contrahentes et partes factis, habitis et firmatis videlicet: quod dictus ser Iacobus dare tenetur et promixit dictum penelum compleatum eisdem officialibus dictae Scole a modo usque ad medietatem mensis martii proximi venturi, intelligendo in tempore predictorum officialium salvo iusto impedimento infirmatis et ut dictus penellus compleatur ad dictum terminum dictus ser Iacobus donec dictus penelus fuerit completus non potest nec debet recedere de Venetiis pro laborando. Item in quantum dictus ser Iacobus usque ad dictum terminum non compleverit dictum laborerium, sit in libertate suprascriptorum officialium vel successorum suorum facere completere dictum laborerium per quacumcumque persona voluerint dicti officiales, et in quantum pro faciendo completere dictum laborerium expeenderent ultra ducatos centum computato illo quod solventer dicto ser Iacobo illud plus dictus ser Iacobus de suo solvere teneatur et promixit, ita quod dicta Scole tali casu non habeat expensam pro dicto laborerio nisi de ducatis centum computato illo quod solutum fuerit dicto ser Iacobo. Item in quantum dictus ser Iacobus ad dictum terminum compleverit dictum laborerium ultra pretium suprascriptum ducatorum centum quadraginta esse debet in libertate predictorum officialium donandi dicto ser Iacobus illud plus quod eis videbitur ultra pretium suprascriptum prout eis videbitur ipsum ser Iacobum meruisse. Item in quantum dictus ser Iacobus faceret debitum suum et predicti officiales non attenderent ipsi ser Iacobos eius solutionem pretii suprascripti ad terminos pagarum suprascriptarum, tunc predicti officiales cadant in pena ducatorum quadraginta auri, qui esse debeant dicti ser Iacobi pro suo damno ultra pretium suprascriptum si dictus ser Iacobus ad terminos petierit suam solutionem sibi fieri. Que omnia et singula suprascripta et in presenti instrumento et carta contenta, suprascripti contrahentes et partes promixerunt et convenerunt sibi ad invicem hinc inde firma, rata et grata habere et tenere, attendere, facere et observare et non contrafacere vel venire per se vel alios aliqua racione vel causa, de iure vel de facto sub pena dupli totius eius in quo, vel de quo ullo modo contraferent pro solemne stipulacione sibi ad invicem hinc inde promissa, solvenda per partem contracenticis in aliquo aut per omnia non servantem parti servanti et observare volenti totiens quotiens fuerit in aliquo quomodolibet contrafactum aut per omnia non servatum et non adimpletum, ut supra dicitur. Et in super reflectionis et emendationis damnorum expensarum et interesse liti extra. Qua pena soluta vel non et expensis damniis et interesse refectionis et non nichilominus rato manente presenti contratru cum omnibus et singulis in eo contentis. Et pro observatione premissorum omnium et singulorum suprascripti contrahentes et partes, videlicet prefati officiales dicte Scole obligaverunt se et successores suos et omnia et singola bona predictorum eorum Scole mobilia et immobilia presentia et futura. Et predictus ser Iacobus Belino obligavit se et heredes et successores suos et omnia et singula bona sua mobilia et immobilia presentia et futura realiter et personaliter, promittentes et constituentes suprascripti contrahentes et partes se sibi ad invicem hinc inde soluturos, facturos et observaturos atque adimleturos omnia et singula suprascripta Venetiarium, Padue et alibi ubicumque locorum, et fori, et in qualibet particulariter et in totum locorum distantia vel aliquo alio non obstante. Renuntiantes exceptioni rei non sic vel aliter geste privilegio fori conditioni indebiti et sine causa vel ob inustam causam doli, mali, deceptioni fraudis in factum actioni feriis et diebus feriatis, et omnibus et singulis aliis exceptionibus, privilegio, auxilio, et beneficiis per quas vel que premissis vel aliqui bus premissorum possit aliquid quomodolibet excipi obici vel opponi. Ulterius
predictus ser Franciscus Spiera, vardianus predictus, in presentia mei notarii et testium infrascriptorum dedit et solvit dicto ser Iacobo ducatos triginta tres et grossos octo pro prima paga pretii suprascripti.

Actum Venetiis in Rivoalto ad stationem mei notarii infrascripti, presentibus domino presbitero Iacobo quondam ser Mathei diacono Sancti Marci, ser Bartolomeo de Graxolariiis notario etiam mecum rogato de premissis et aliis.

S:T : Ego Bartholomeus de Graxolariis filius quondam ser Antonii de Venetiis publicus imperiali auctoritate notarius et iudex ordinarius ex auctoritate, licentia et libertate, atque concessione michi tradditis et concessis per illustrissimam et excellentissimam ducalem dominationem Venetiarii de libris, registris et prothocholis quondam.

Circumspecti viri ser Antonii Gambaro notarii, suprascriptum instrumentum sumpsi et exemplavi a predictis libris, registris et prothocholis dicti quondam ser Antonii Gambaro notarii et ad fidem me subscrispi et in hanc publicam formam reddi signumque meum apposui consuetum. Anno a nativitate domini nostri Ihesu Christi millesimo quadringentesimo quinquagesimo secundo, indicione quintadecima, die quarto mensis Octobris.

In Christi nomine amen. Anno a nativitate eiusdem millesimo quadringentesimo quinquagesimo secundo. Inditione quintadecima die vigesimo mensis Septembris. Providus vir ser Iacobus Bellino quondam ser Nicolai pictor, per se et heredes et successores, suos fecit et facit finem et securitatem pleniam egregio viro ser Francisco Spiera vardinio magno Scole batutorum Sancte Maria de Charitate de Venetiis et ceteris sociis suis offitallibus predicte Scole et suis successoribus de ducatis triginta tribus et grossis octo ad aurum qui sunt pro parte et secunda paga ducatorum centum quadraginta auri pretii una penelli fiendi per dictum ser Iacobum Belino pro dictis de dicta scola pro prout apparat per instrumentum exinde factum manu ser Antonii Gambaro notarii, dice monono mensis Iunii proxime preterita. Nunc autem quia dictos ducatos trigintatres et grossos octo ad aurum qui sunt pro parte et secunda paga ducatorum centum quadraginta et pro solutione predicte secunde page predictus ser Iacobus Belino habuit et recepit hoc modo videlicet: ducatos decem, quos dictus ser Franciscus Spiera sibi dedit et solvit die vigesimosexto mensis augusti proxime preteriti et reliquis ducatis vigenti tres et grossos octo ad aurum pro resto dicte secunde page dictus ser Iacobus habuit et recepit ac sibi dedit et solvit, traddidit et numeravit predictus ser Franciscus Spiera, vardinianus predictus, in presentia mei notarii et testium infrascriptorum. Ideo predictus ser Iacobus reddidit predictum ser Franciscum vardinanum predictum et ceteros socios suos officiales predicte Scole atque predictam eorum scolam et successores suos securos exinde in perpetuum, quia nichil inde remansit, unde amplius exinde compelli vel molestari valeant per ullum ingenium sive modum.

Actum Venetiis in Rivoalto ad stationem mei notarii infrascripti presentibus domino presbitero Bernando de Regio beneficiato in ecclesia Sancti Baxilii, ser Florino Gavatelo varotario et aliis.

(S.T.) Ego Bartjolomeus de Graxolariis filius quondam. ser Antonii de Venetiis publicus imperiali auctoritate notarius et iudex ordinarius premisissi omnibus interfui et rogatus scripsi et publicavi, meisque signo et nomine roboravi.

ASV Scuola Grande di S. Maria della Carità, Busta 3, Pergamena no. 105. Published by Paoletti, 1894, pp.8-9, Ricci, 1908, p. 53 (much longer transcription) and Sohm cited short extracts, p. 303
Jacopo Bellini receives payments for work undertaken for the Patriarch. Having examined the original document, I am reproducing Ricci’s transcription:

**1456 - 1457**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1456</td>
<td>Misser Bellin de dar a di primo fevvr per capara et parte de una figura contadi per d Vetor …….duc</td>
<td>1456. ser Iacomo Belin de aver una figura del nostro predecessore posto</td>
<td>1456</td>
<td>ser Iacomo Belin de aver una figura del nostro predecessore posto</td>
<td>1456. ser Iacomo Belin de aver una figura del nostro predecessore posto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1457</td>
<td>1º Aprilis contadi per capara de una depentura de S Piero e S Polo . . . contadi per dom Vetor . . . so fio contadi duc. 2 ………….</td>
<td>1457 e de aver per 3 figure fate su tela mese in la sala del patriarca c.te 107²…….</td>
<td>1457</td>
<td>c.te 107 e de aver per 3 figure fate su tela mese in la sala del patriarca c.te 107²…….</td>
<td>c.te 107 e de aver per 3 figure fate su tela mese in la sala del patriarca c.te 107²…….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1º Aprilis contadi per capara de una depentura de S Piero e S Polo . . . contadi per dom Vetor . . . so fio contadi duc. 2 ………….</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1457</td>
<td>Per una palla mese in la sala grande, la qual fese Iachomo Belin par c.te 122.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Per una palla mese in la sala grande, la qual fese Iachomo Belin par c.te 122.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1º Aprilis contadi per capara de una depentura de S Piero e S Polo . . . contadi per dom Vetor . . . so fio contadi duc. 2 ………….</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1457</td>
<td>2 c.te 107 1458</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 c.te 107 1458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1º Aprilis contadi per capara de una depentura de S Piero e S Polo . . . contadi per dom Vetor . . . so fio contadi duc. 2 ………….</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1457</td>
<td>Posta in sella c.te.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Posta in sella c.te.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1º Aprilis contadi per capara de una depentura de S Piero e S Polo . . . contadi per dom Vetor . . . so fio contadi duc. 2 ………….</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1457</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASV Mensa Patriacale, Registro di Casa 1444 – 1459, Busta 66, p. 122 (this was the reference for Paoletti and Ricci, but the current reference is Busta 58, I, Librette carte cop. Perg. Elenco affitali, spese, and also fol 106, 107, carta 122 (left) and 12 (right)

Published by: Paoletti, 1894, p. 9, Ricci, 1908, p. 57, Eisler, p. 521.

**Document 12**


**1466 17 luglio**

† *In Christo nomine MCCCCLXVI a di XVII Luio*

–Chonvinzion e pati fati tra misser Antonio Zivran guardian grando de la Scuola de misser S. Marcho et de suo compagni da una parte et maistro Iachomo Belin depentor dal altra, chome apar per scrittura de man del dito misser lo guardian et sotoschrita de man de ser Alvixe de Usnagi avichario per confermazion de quella et sotoschrita de man del dito maistro Iachomo Belin chome el contenta ai diti pati i qual dixe in questo modo
Mercado fato
cum maistro
Iacomo
Belin
depentor

A de chiarazion de la veritade questi son i pati et convinzion fata tra misser Antonio Zivran, guardian grando de la Scuola de S. Marcho e suo compagni da una parte e maestro Iachomo Belin da l’altra parte.

El dito maestro Iachomo Belin promete de far in la testa de la Schuola varda suxo el champo tuta quella faza nela qual ne entra una Pasion de Christo in chroxe richa de figure et altro che stia benissimo……Item uno teler dal chanto sopra la porta de l’albergo, che prinzipia a mezo el volte e compie fina a la fenestra conzonzese con l’altro quaro, suxo el qual quaro farà la Instoria de Ieruxalem chon Christo e i ladroni e sa. El qual lavor sia fato sì belo e ben fato melio che mai lavor l’abia fato de bontà e de cholori perfeti de azuro e de altri cholori, ubligandose de non tuor per fin el farà questi lavori altro lavor de alguna condizion soto pena de quelo parerà a i ofiziali se troverà in la Schuola a sua dischrizion e consienzia. El qual lavor el dito maestro Iachomo Belin aver debia de suo manifatura e spexe de cholori, chola e horo e zeso e ogni altra chaxon aspeta a la pentura per tutti do lavori ducati 375 d’oro e se el dito se portase de i diti lavori si perfetamente che ai ofiziali per suo consienzia paresse de darge ducati 25, questo sia in suo libertà e consienzia loro; ma per i diti ducati 25 non posi esser astreti salvo tanto quanto piaxerà ai ofiziali se troverà per i tempi. El pagamento de diti die aver al prexente per chapara ducati X d’oro e desighnato l’averà el quaro davanti de la Pasion abia ducati XXV et disegnà l’averà l’altro quaro davanti abia altri ducati XXV et chusì de tenpo in tenpo segundo chomo lo lavorerà e soliziterà lo lavor de parte in parte l’abia danari fin compido lavor in perfizion chomo è dito da esser zudegà per tutti intendenti de simel mestier et ancho per i fradelli e ofiziali de la Schuola che Christo a tutti dia sanità e contento de le aneme e di chorpi.

Adi 16 Luio 1466

Fo prexo a la bancha tra nui ofiziali i pati sorascriti chon la condizion soprascrita, de qual se atrovase in l’albergo XII, di qual fo de si 8 e 3 de no et el guardian da matin non volse meter balota et mi Alvixe de Usnagi indegno avichario ho sotoscrito de consentimento et de volontà de tutti nui.

M.CCCCLXVI, adi XVII luio
E mi Iachomo Belino depentor som chento chomo è schrito de sopra.
E mi Nicho lò da le Charte scrivan de la dita Schuola de mia mano propria ho scrito la soprascrita schritura.”

ASV Scuola Grande di San Marco, Notario 1479 - 1503, p. 3, Sala Diplomi, Autografi
Published by: Molmenti, 1888, pp 225 – 227, Ricci, 1908, p. 56.
Sohn also cites extracts from this, p. 259, his reference is ASV S Marco, Reg 16 bis, fol 35, quoted by Bätschmann (who additionally notes Eisler, pp 524, 532), who provides Not. 1428 - 1503, 35, Sala Diplomatica, autografi, and this is the reference I used to find this document. I have noted that within the document, the Scrivan uses different spellings of the same word, e.g. Scuola or Schuola, and inconsistent punctuation, e.g. l’albergo or lalbergo, often within the same paragraph. As is usual with these documents, on the left margin, a note of the contract is noted.
Document 13

A commission is given to Gentile Bellini for two paintings by the Scuola Grande di San Marco. The subjects are Moses in the Desert and Flood of Sin, or The Downfall of Pharoah. Gentile’s fee will be 150 ducats for each work.

1466, Dec 15

“Chonvenzion e pati fati chon maistro Gentil Belin de plui lavori apar qui de soto, e prima dise chusi:

Sia manifesto a chi vedrà questo scurito chome misser Antonio Zivran vardian de la scuola de misser S. Marcho e romani dachordo chon maistro Gentil Belin pentor, el qual maistro Gentil de far suso la dita schuola over sala de la dita schuola de miser S. Marcho do teleri de pentura suso terlise (Sohm) suso la losa (Ricci). I qual teleri lui a nele man suso i qual ed de far suso uno istoria chome faraon escau fora dela zità chon el so ezerzito e chome el se sommerse et in laltro chomeal so populo se sommerse, e chome l’altro populo de Moisè furzi nel deserto, chome in parte a mostrà per el disegno; el de far el dito lavor ben e diligentemente e meter boni colori azuro o chome accadrà a tute sue spexe in modo chel stià a pararigon con i altri.

E per so manifattura de aver de la scuola de misser S. Marcho ducati zento zinquanto senza qualì li a promexo ser Nicolò da le Carte. El pagamento de aver in questo modo, che subito inzesado che l’averà i diti teleri de aver per chapara ducati 5. Chome lui li averà poi designadi de aver ducati 12½. El resto del pagamento de aver secondo che de tempo in tempo el lavorerà a chusi de tempo in tempo i se de andar dagando danari, e faxando el suo dover anchera lui avia el suo. E perché el dito maistro Gentil se ubliga far mior e maior opra over tanta istoria quella de so padre maistro Iacomo Belin, faxando chome è dito, de aver de so manifattura tanto per tanto, quanti sarà plui fatura e mancho fatura de quella del dito maistro Iacomo Belin de aver pluj e mancho.”

ASV Scuola Grande di S. Marco, Registro 16bis, Notatorio 1478 – 1503, p. 36. Sala Diplomatica, Autografi
Published by: Ricci, 1908, p. 57, Sohm, p. 259, cited by Bätschmann.

Document 14

Extract from commission to Bartolomeo Vivarini and Andrea da Murano. Their fee will be the same as that paid to Jacopo Bellini, and the contract specifies that their artwork must be the same size as that made by him.

1467 gennaio 10

“…………uno teller in do pezi suso j qual de depenzer la jstoriae de buran zoe una per pezo le qual istoriae………..”

ASV S Marco, Reg 16 bis.,fol 37
Published by: Paoletti, 1894, p. 10, Ludwig Geschichte der veneziaischen Malerei, p. 17, Sohm, The Scuola Grande di San Marco, p. 259, Bätschmann also notes it, p. 216
Document 15

Extract from commission to Lazzaro Bastiani. His fee will be the same as Jacopo Bellini’s.

**1470 gennaio 7**

La-zaro sabestian, Depenton

“….. far el teller el qual e in do campi sopra et proxima al volto de la scalla ne li qual el debi depenzer linstoria de david secondo el desegno ….”

ASV S Marco, Reg 16 bis, fol 38. Published by: Molmenti, 1888, pp 228-229, Sohm, p. 259.

Document 16

Signed contract between Giovanni Bellini and the Scuole Grande di San Marco

**1470, aprile 24**

zuan belin

“….Fo deliberato de dar el teller in cavo de la scuola primo versa laltar grando de campi 2……… ser zuan bellin nel qual die far el deluvio et larcha de Noe cum le sue pertinentie…..”

“Io Zuan Bellini sono contento di quanto e sopra scripto sopra.” (signed by Giovanni Bellini)

ASV S Marco, Registro 16 bis, Not 1428 – 1503, fol 38, Sala Diplomatica, autografi Published by: Molmenti, 1888, p. 228, Paoletti, 1894, pp 11-12, Goffen, 1990, p. 263, noted by Bätschmann, p. 216

Document 17

Letter from Elisabetta Morosini to her brothers Pietro e Marco de Paola

**1471 11 maggio**

“…. Prego caramente vui messer Marco che ve piaqua per la amicità qual intendemo che havedi con zentile over zuane belin depentors astrenzerli per tal modo che i vogliano insegnar la rasom (sic) del desegno a pre domengo nostro …. ”

Published by: Anedetto, F. S., “Nuovo Archivio Veneto” 2 (1891), p. 382 and cited by Goffen, p. 263, who goes on to write that Anedetto said that the letter was conserved in ASV Atti di Carlo Bruni di Loreo but that she had been unable to find it. I, too, have not been able to locate this document yet.
Document 18

Letter from Antonio di Choradi da Pera, to his brother in law, Nicolò Gruatto, intagliator. He wanted him to commission Lazzaro Bastiani to paint an artwork of Christ and if this was not possible, or if he accepted the commission then died, Giovanni Bellini was to be asked instead.

1473 18 aprile

“…..Apresso andatte da Lazaro Bastian che stanno sopra el champo di San Polo che chusi li schrivo a lui e fateme far uno quadreto ……. Con la figure di misser Iesù Cristo che siano belo chome li scrivo a lui, o se per chaxo che idio el guarda el fusse morto, over lo nol volese far, andate da Ziane Belino e mostrateli el mio e distese il voglio a quel modo chome stano quelo con quela soaza d’oropolita e bela…”

ASV Scuola Grande delle Misericordia, Busta 23, Published by: Paoletti, 1894 , p. 12.

Document 19

Marco Bastiani receives a commission from the Guardian da Matin of the Scuole Grande di San Marco.

“…..depeントor a san lio... do fare el penello….duc. 40/ duc. 40/ fina n. 50/ …”

ASV S Marco Reg 16 bis, fol 2r. Published by: Molmenti, 1888, Sohm, p. 261 (who gives the folio reference as 2v, but I found the document on 2 recto.)

Document 20

The College appoint Giovanni “pittore del nostro Dominio” and this means that he no longer has to pay a subscription to the Confraternitá dei pittori.

1483, 26 febbraio (1482 m.v.)

“..Joannes pictor nostri Dominii est appellatus, et Ideo assumptus ad renovandam Salam Maioris Consilii et a nostro Dominio publice permittatus utque ad eam solam rem vacare possit liber ab omnia alia cura. Per intrascriptos Dominos Consilians exemptus cactus fuit ab omnibus officiis et beneficiis scollae seu fratralae pictorum….“

Document 21

Giovanni Bellini is registered as a member of the Scuole Grande di San Marco. He was, already a member of the Scuola di S. Cristoforo dei Mercanti in which from the beginning of the fifteenth century, “Maistro Zentil da Fabriano S Sofia” was also registered. (See ASV S Maria e San Cristoforo dei Mercanti, Scuola alla Madonna dell’Orto, Busta 406). Paoletti also reports that both Gentile and Giovanni were registered as members of the Scuole Grande della Misericordia.

1484

“…. Ser Zuane belin depenter qm. Ser Iachomo…..”

ASV Scuole Grande di San Marco, Marejola no. 4
Published by: Paoletti, 1894, p. 56..

Document 22

Giovanni Bellini signs a contract guaranteeing Ginevra Bocheta, his wife, her dowry. It can be seen that at this time, they are living in Santa Marina.

1485, 30 luglio

“Plenam et irrevisible securitatem facio ego Ioannes Bellino q.d. Jacobi pictor de confinio Sancte Marine….”

ASV Notarile, Lorenzo Stella, Busta 875, n. 162
Published by: Paoletti, 1894, p. 13, Goffen, 1990, p. 263, the latter cited by Bätschmann, p. 217.

Document 23

Extract from document listing the painters working on Sala del Maggior Consiglio and their payments.

1493 – 1495

“.depentori de la Sale de gran Confero

Maistro Zuan bellin depentore in gran confero cominze adi 25 marzo 1492
Adint 5 al missoe al ano         duc 60..”

Others mentioned are “Maestro alinxe vivarein depentor”, also paid 60 ducats per annum, who commenced on “24 marzo 1492”. “Christofalo da parma depentor” is to be paid 8 ducats monthly, 44 per annum, “Latantio damano banina” is to be paid 48 ducats per annum, “Moneori mareciam depentore” is to be paid 24 ducats per annum, “Vizonzo da trompo” is to receive 36 ducats per annum, “Francs.o bussuol” (Francesco di Vittore Bissolo) will receive 24 ducats per annum, and “Perin fasste di depintezer” and “Mathio dicto maxo fanti di depentores” will both receive 6 ducats per annum.

ASV Consiglio de Dieci, Misto Registro 26, C.X. Misti No. 26, 1493 – 1495, Fol 199r and 200v
**Document 24**

Will of Donato Civalelli, a Knight (eques nobilis), stipulating an altarpiece by Giovanni Bellini for the Chapel in honour of the Virgin Mary in the family tomb in the Church of Santa Maria in Zara in Dalmatia. He leaves 300 ducats for its execution. I noted that in the original document, he states his name as “Donatus Cievalelus”, Goffen refers to him as “Donaldo Civalelli” and Bätschmann calls him “Donato Civalelli”. In the Alfabetto Testamenti (the alphabetical index of the Wills) of Busta 48 the notaio, Pietro Florian, has written his name as “Donati Cievaleli”, and this is also on the cover sheet of the actual Will.

**1497 10 agosto**

“..Ego Donatus Cievalelus eques nobilis iadrenis de confini Sancti Johannis Novi ..........(there is a large section of the actual Will missing in this translation of Goffen). . Item volo et orino quod residuarii mei teneantur et sint obligati in termino anni unius cum eorum comeditate portavi facere corpus meus iadrem simul cum cadavere quondam domini Hyeronimi fra tris mei quod est Paude . . . et sepeliatur dictum cadaver meum et cadaver supra scriptum quondam fratris mei apud ecclesiam Sancte Marie ordinis Sancti Benedicti. In qua ecclesia volo quod de bonis meis fiat capella in honorem Virginia Marie . . . in qua expendatur duc ati trecenti auri simul cum eius palla altaris, quam fieri volo per dominum Joannes Bellino . . “

ASV Testamenti Pietro Florian, Busta 408, n. 95

**Document 25**

In 1492, Giovanni and Gentile Bentile had agreed the production of two paintings for the meeting room of the Scuola Grande di San Marco. Gentile now suggests another painting for the Scuola and has already prepared a design.

**1505 9 Marzo**

“….chom sit per lj deputado altre volte sopra la fabrjcha dela schuola nostra insieme con al vardin che a quel tempo se trovava el fose fate zerte composizioni con messer zentjl belin et messer zuane suo fradelo i qual avese a dover depenzer 1 albergo dita scuola nostra (ut in ea legitur) la qual putura may fo prenziapiada fina al ano 1504 che per el spetabel messer marco pelegrin degnissimo vardin grando et suo compagnj fo fate prinzipiar per el predito messer zentil uno teler in t esta di laboro predito el qual teler dito messer zentil fina questo zorno a fato bona parte chome se pol veder, et perche el prefato messer zentil e sunamente desideroso de far qualche benefijto a questa scuola chome zua manifestemente se pol beder per lopera per luj prinzipiada che non se troverja homo che tolse tal impraxa per altretantj danarj et farsi molto piuj, et perho eso messer zentil non senza gran studio a preparato uno zerto model in desegnjo che sono una bela fantasia per dover far uno altro teler secondo qual desegnjo, nel dito nostro albergo di sopra dela porta che sara la faxa oposita a quella dove laxe prinzipia el primo teler el qual teler sara alquanto mazor a quello che la prenziapi tamen eso messer zentil se offerse a farlo per el prexio chel fa el prjmo in tuta perfezion de colorj e doro dove la chadera e questo de consentimento e voler del prefato messer marcho pelegrin chome guardian grando.

ASV Scuola Grande di S Marco, Notatorio Registro 17, fol 28
Published by: Paoletti, 1894, p. 19, Sohm, 179.
Document 26

The Banca of the Scuola di Carità wish to match the other Scuole with a new processional banner.

1506 agosto 27

“…Tute le scuole de questa nostra inclita cita cercano con tutti I mezj a loro posibilj in exaltar et gloriar quelle con diversj modj et principue in adornamenti et forniche maxime de cosse necessarie dele qual operation non se puol se non quelle grandmente laudar fazendo tuto a laude e gloria del omnipotente dio…. E perche la scuola nostra sia le altre cosse che li e necessarie a honorar prima i dio e poi esser equal a le altre scuole li e de gran necessita haver uno penello over gonfalon che possi star al paragon con quelli dele altre scuole, et haver etiam uno pano da corpi che sia bello per poter honorar le sepolture de nostri fradelli…”

ASV Carità, Reg 253, fol 84 r.
Published by Sohm, p. 305 (who also cites Rosand’s reference in Titian, noting that the latter has not quoted another version in Reg 236, fol 31.)

Document 27

After winning the competition, the contract for the processional banner is drawn up between the Scuola Grande di S Maria della Carità and Benedetto Diana.

1507, febraio 12

“…debia depenza uno penello per dicta schuola da portar un procession el qual debia esser in total belleza et perfection depento et dorado con la nostra Dona in maiesta sentada in sedia eminente con anzoli atorni che sia in reverentia de quella et con tanti batudi quanti piasea ali predominati misser Alvixe rizo, misser Nicolo di rampiaxi, misser Nadal di Jacopo et misser Ant.o vidual over a la mazor parte de loro per la liberta gli e sta concessa cerca questo per la parte presa in albergo se dicta scuola tracti al natural che j siano con quella reverentia et meglio modo sia possibile et far altri sancti et altri ornamenti al dicto penello che sia ben quanto sia possibile se che la bonta et perfection di quello sia estima piu et exceda el penero nuovo bello de la Scuola de misser San Marco in figure et adornamenti del dicto penelo zoe quanto apertine et depentura et oro si chel non sia de mancho beleza e perfection di quello ma piu tosto meglio come e dicto di sopra et el dicto m.o. Benedecto se obliga de far facto et compido dicto penello come el die star siche non li manchi cossa alguna per quanto aspecta altri danno a la festa de la nativit de nostra signor prooxima che e MCCCCCVII a modo de venexia senza alguna contradiction. Et per sua manifatura et integro pagamento dicto m.o. Veneto die haver quello ponera ali prefati misser Alvixe, misser Nic.o, misser Nadal et misser Ant.o over a la mazor parte de loro da duc. Cento in zoso…………refundar dicto lavor et farlo over refar ad altri maistri come a loro ponera a tute spexe dano et interesse de dicto m.o. Benedecto el qual in tal case ha bia refar a la dicta scuola ogni spexa fosse case senza alcuna contradiction…”

ASV Carità B, 2 perg. No. 107
Published by: Sohm, p.305
Document 28

Contract between Giovanni Bellini and Scuole Grande di S Marco for a painting of the martyrdom of San Marco. There is a specification that its quality must surpass that of the Preaching of St Mark on the opposite wall.

1515 4 – 5 luglio

“.. de far uno teller de tella sopra el qual se die far depenzer una historia di misser S Marco come essendo in Alexandria el ditto fo strassinato per terra da quelli mori infideli. El qual teller die esser sopra la porta de Albergo grando fra uno muro e l’altro per meso l’altro teller depenno che se trovål sopra la bancha dove stanno el vardian et compagni. El qual teller die esser fatto per el dito messer Zuan Belin cum i patti, tempi, pretio, et condition infrascritti, et primo: Dienen el ditto vardian et compagni dar al ditto messer Zuan le telle andarano a far el ditto teler a spexe dela scuola. Sia etiam obliato el ditto meser Zuan depenze suso el ditto teller la istoria soprascritta, cum suo casamenti, figure, animali, et tutto quello achedera a tutte sua spese ….. si de colori, come de ogni altra cosa in tutta perfection, come se convien a quel luogo, et come richiede la excellentia dela virtù del ditto messer Zanne, memorando el teller che se trova al incontro el qual fece messer Gentil suo fredello. Promettemo (il guardian e compagni) dar al ditto messer Zanne per sua merce de depenzer el sopra scritto teller quel medemo pretio have messer Gentil soprascritto, cum quelli medemi modi et patti have ditto messer Gentil. Se obliga el ditto messer Zanne dar compido el ditto teller a tutta aperation in tanto tempo quanto dete, el soprascritto messer Gentil el sopraniminato teller cum quel modi precisi. Siamo obligati i soprascritti vardian et compagni dar al ditto messer Zanne de presenti per capara del soprascritto lavor fatto sara el teller ducati 10 de contradi. Siamo anche obligati i soprascritti ….. dar al ditto messer Zanne de tempo in tempo danari secondo esso messer Zanne lavorara. El qual lavoro deba de tempo in tempo el ditto vardian et . . . messer Andrea prevededor . . . andar a vedar et secondo el proceder del lavor tanto dar al ditto messer Zanne in come per parte presa in capitolo zeneral appar . . .

1515, adì 4 luio. (Firmato).
Io, Vettor Ziliol, varzian grande ….
Io, Andrea Ruzier, provedador…….
Io, Zuan Belin sono contento de quanto è soprascritto”

The following day Giovanni supplied a receipt for the initial payment of 10 ducats

“1515, adì 5 luio – Recevi mi Zuan Belin da messer Vettor Ziliol … ducati diese … per parte del lavor soprascritto…."

ASV Scuole Grande di S Marco, Registro 17, foglio 60
Published by: Paoletti, 1894, p. 14, (who also noted a copy of the document dated 11 August 1515).
Sohm, p. 281 Goffen, 1990, p.269, cited by Bätschmann who also quoted Tempestini’s publication on p. 107
**Extracts from Codicil to the Will of Jeronimo hollivier, made in 1524, requesting that his altarpiece of Madonna col Bambino painted by Giovanni Bellini should be placed in the Church of Madonna dell’Orto, above an altar.**

**1528, 16 maggio**

“...Io Jeronimo hollivier... ho considerando esser nezesario azonzer al mio testamentto quello che per hobliviori ho pretermesso ....

Vollgio siano datti per la fabbriche della giexia de san fellixe duc. Cinque....

Interzettera vollgio et hordenro che el quadro de nostra dona fatto per man de Zuan bellin che a el retratto della bon memoria del q. messer Marcho fo mio fradella vollgio . . . quello sia soazado de jnttaio dorado e fatto tanto bello e sontuoxo quanto possibile posj esser e quello sia posta in lla giexia de Madona Sancta Maria dell’ortto in llugo de palla a qualche unto delli altari della ditta giexia...ho veramente della sagrestia secondo chome parera aj padri della ditta giexia a questi vollgio sia fatto senza fallo..al qual quadro fo fatto delli danari della spiziallita del quondam messer Marcho……

ASV Sez notarile, Busta 190 and 192, Testamenti notaio Girolamo Canal, no. 139, codici l 190. Published by: Paoletti, 1894, p. 15, Goffen, 1990, pp 90-92, 271, cited by Bätschmann, p. 219

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**Document 30**

This is an extract from a letter published by Ricci, which had been written in 1759 about Jacopo Bellini’s Crocifissione in the Duomo, Verona. Although anonymous, Ricci suggests that perhaps it was written by Giambettino Cignaroli.

“Amico Carrissimo

Verona 1 Luglio

1759

“......Quest’opera numerosa di quaranta figure o poco meno, rappresentava la Crocifissione di Cristo; e fu dipinta nel quattrocento trentasei o in quel torno, de Iacopo Bellini cittadino veneziano, padre di Gentile, e di Giovanni, che tu poi del divino Tiziano guide e maestro ... . Sotto la croce stavano soldati con vari attitudini sopra la veste inconsutile, mettendo la sorte. Si vedevano pure diverse donne devote, e fra queste Maria, ornato il capo di aureola dorata alla greca, e di un lungo manuta e grave ....

Ricci also writes that several laudatory sonnets and a poem were written about this particular artwork, by Giuseppe Torelli, Antonio Tirabosco and Marcantonio Pindermonte.

Published by: Ricci, 1908, p. 59.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>MEDIUM</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PUNCHED</th>
<th>INTERNAL HALO DESIGN</th>
<th>INTERNAL SCRIPT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>SIZE</th>
<th>SHAPE</th>
<th>HALO POSITION</th>
<th>ABSENT HALO</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-3 AD</td>
<td>II century</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>White marble</td>
<td>Soli Invicto</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5 long rays</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Individual rays</td>
<td>Above upper head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Musei Vaticano, Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II century, 2nd half</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Christ-Helios</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7 long rays</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Graduated rays</td>
<td>Around head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Musei Vaticano, Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 AD</td>
<td>Bottega 3, Rome</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>G. leaf / enamel / glass</td>
<td>Buon Pastore</td>
<td>NO HALO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Christ</td>
<td>Musei Vaticani, Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV century, 2nd half</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>Maiestas Domini</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold leaf</td>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>Slightly flattened disk</td>
<td>Behind head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Saints Peter &amp; Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 5 AD</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Portrait of Giustinian</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, v. broad red cube / white orb rim</td>
<td>V. large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Behind head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Musei Vaticani, Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>493-526</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Portrait of Sant' Ambrogio</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Blue lesserae</td>
<td>V small</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Around head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Basilica di Sant' Ambrogio, Milan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V century</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Wax encaustic icon</td>
<td>Christo Pantocrator</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, decorated cross arms outlined in red</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Patterns made with simple ring punch</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400-500 AD</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Illustrated manuscript</td>
<td>Cotton Genesis, Abrah &amp; angl's</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1 fragment seems to have rays</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, black circumference</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>650 AD</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>The Blessing Christ between two angels</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No, nor in Christ's</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, white-rimmed</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind heads</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Baptistry San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Ivory</td>
<td>Annunciation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Slightly concave</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind heads</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Castello Sforzesco, Milan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>706-706 AD</td>
<td>? Palestinian</td>
<td>Lead/tn Ampulla/ Rel</td>
<td>Adorazione del Bambino</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Virgin's 2-bordered 8-rayed star in nimbus above her</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Museo e Tesoro del Duomo, Monza</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI/VII cent</td>
<td>? Palestinian</td>
<td>Lead/tn Ampulla/ Rel</td>
<td>Ascensione</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3 arm crosses</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2 angels in profile against disk Christ in mandorla</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Apostles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Lavanda del Bambino</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes, Latin cross</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, blue-white rim, internal blue-white cross arms</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Behind head in profile</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Vatican Grotto, St Peter's, Rome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Vergine della Natività</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, silver, double-blue border</td>
<td>V. Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Vatican Grotto, St Peter's, Rome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Crosses</td>
<td>Disk Details</td>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Encaustic on canvas</td>
<td>Icon of Theotokos</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>V simple, Christ’s double border</td>
<td>V small</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Low, flat behind head</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Maria Nova, Rome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI century</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Portrait of Pope John VII</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, green black border</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Flat, behind head</td>
<td>Vatican Grotto, St Peter’s, Rome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>705-707</td>
<td>Lombard sculptor</td>
<td>Marble relief</td>
<td>Christ in Glory</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>White, internal carving in cross arms</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat, behind head</td>
<td>Duomo, Cividale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 AD</td>
<td>? Constantinople</td>
<td>Silk fragment</td>
<td>Anunciation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold disk, black rim, black border</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat, behind head</td>
<td>Musei Vaticani, Rome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>882 AD</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Pope Paschal I</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Slightly 3-dimensional “frame” effect</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Rectangular</td>
<td>Flat, behind head, to below shoulders</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Prassede, Rome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Gold coin</td>
<td>Gold solidus of Constantine VII</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Disk with cruciform design</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>Emperor Collection, Dumbarton Oaks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>914-19</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Gold coin</td>
<td>Gold solidus of Basil II</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Disk with 3 cross arms</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat, low behind head</td>
<td>Emperor Collection, Dumbarton Oaks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>963</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Illustrated manuscr’t</td>
<td>Adoration of the Magi</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>White disk, gold cross, red outline</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head/profile</td>
<td>Bibliotheque Municipale, Rouen</td>
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<tr>
<td>963-984</td>
<td>Anon. Egypt</td>
<td>Illustrated manuscr’t</td>
<td>A Book of Homilies, Repose St J</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>V’s halo is blue, St John’s gold</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>989-990</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Gold &amp; enamel icon</td>
<td>Archangel Michael</td>
<td>Filigree</td>
<td>Outer band contains enamelling</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>Tesoro di San Marco, Venice</td>
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<td>1000</td>
<td>X century Theodore</td>
<td>Illustrated manuscr’t</td>
<td>Theodore Psalter, Psalm 26</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, with red circumferences for all</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head/profile</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
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<td>1066</td>
<td>Anon. Spanish</td>
<td>Illustrated manuscr’t</td>
<td>The Silos Apocalypse</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold field, angel has blue halo Arch Michael has blue halo</td>
<td>Med / small</td>
<td>Not true disks, blunt bottle</td>
<td>Flat behind head/profile</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
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<td>1109</td>
<td>Venetian but anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Vergine orante</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold halo circumscribed with pink / blue border</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>Duomo Santa Maria e Donato, Murano</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Artist/Location</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Title/Description</td>
<td>Techniques/Details</td>
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<td>Late 1100</td>
<td>Venetian but anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Hodegetria</td>
<td>Gold halo circumscribed with blue border. Apostles’ haloes blue-bordered</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Duomo, Torcello</td>
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<td>? Constantinople Anon</td>
<td>Icon</td>
<td>Nicopea</td>
<td>V badly abraded, but revetment has precious gems</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Basilica di San Marco, Venice</td>
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<td>1200s</td>
<td>Maestro del Crocifiso dei Frari</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>The Crucifixion</td>
<td>Yes, simple ring punching around circumference</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di S Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice</td>
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<td>1200-1220</td>
<td>Venetian but anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Giudizia Universale</td>
<td>Gold, Virgin’s blue-red rim, Baptist’s blue, Blue-white border for C, others black rimmed. Apostles’ white or black-rimmed halo</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Duomo, Torcello</td>
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<td>N. Iraq, anon.</td>
<td>Illustrated codice</td>
<td>Syriac Gospel Lectionary</td>
<td>Christ’s 3 red cross pattee, gold</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind head/profiles</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
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<td>1220-1230</td>
<td>Limoges, anon.</td>
<td>Metal &amp; enamel</td>
<td>Pyx</td>
<td>Blue enamel inner field</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Victoria &amp; Albert Museum, London</td>
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<td>1st half XI</td>
<td>Nuns of Hedingham</td>
<td>Ink with colour</td>
<td>Obituary Roll of Lucy de Vere</td>
<td>Angels have blue or pink halo</td>
<td>Small Disk Flat behind profiles</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
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<td>1230-1240</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Brass inlaid</td>
<td>The Black Ewer</td>
<td>Iraqi, given to archers and harpist</td>
<td>Small Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>British Museum, London</td>
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<td>1240-1250</td>
<td>Venetian but anon.</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Annunciation</td>
<td>White blonde haloes circumscribed with outer border</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Zan Degola, Venice</td>
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<td>1240-70</td>
<td>Venetian but anon.</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Story of Genesis</td>
<td>V. Large gold halo</td>
<td>Very large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Basilica di San Marco, Venice</td>
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<td>1250</td>
<td>Maestro di Tressa</td>
<td>Gold, tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna con Occhi Grossi</td>
<td>Deep internal hollows in halo</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, Siena</td>
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<td>c. 1265</td>
<td>Coppo di Marcovaldo</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td><em>Pie-crust</em> internal ridging</td>
<td>Gold disk halo Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, Orvieto</td>
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<td>Work Description</td>
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<td>1267</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Mad &amp; Child &amp; Sts. &amp; donor</td>
<td>Yes, Rays, different motifs No Flat disk halo Medium Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Basilica di Sant'Ambrogio, Milan</td>
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<td>1260-1270</td>
<td>Novgorod School</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Ascension of Elijah</td>
<td>No, No, No Pale blonde/gold Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Gallerie di Palazzo Leoni Montanari, Vicenza</td>
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<td>1272</td>
<td>Cimabue</td>
<td>Tempera su legno</td>
<td>Maestà della Madonna</td>
<td>Yes, Internal punched border No Flat gold V. large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Museo du Louvre, Paris</td>
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<td>1285</td>
<td>Cimabue</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>St Francis tavola</td>
<td>No, Yes, internal &quot;flutes&quot; No Deep, heavy internal ridges Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Museo di Santa Maria degli Angeli, Assisi</td>
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<td>1280-1290</td>
<td>Cimabue</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>EnthronedMadonna between St Francis and angels</td>
<td>No, No No Flat gold halo Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Museo di Santa Maria degli Angeli, Assisi</td>
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<td>1280-1290</td>
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<tr>
<td>1290s-1300s</td>
<td>Venetian</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Cristo benedicente</td>
<td>No, 3 decorated cross arms No Silver, red cube &amp; gold orb rim Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Basilica di San Marco, Venice</td>
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<td>1290s-1300s</td>
<td>Venetian</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Vergine Orante</td>
<td>No, No Flat with red/blue border Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Duomo di Santa Maria e Donato, Murano</td>
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<tr>
<td>1290s-1300s</td>
<td>Venetia</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Virgin and Child</td>
<td>No, No Cruciferous, voided cross arms Large Disk Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Duomo di Torcello, Venice</td>
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<td>1290-1295</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td></td>
<td>Old Testament</td>
<td>No, No No Flat gold halo Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Chiesa Superiore, Assisi</td>
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<td>1295-1300</td>
<td>Jacopo Torriti</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>The Nativity</td>
<td>No, Yes, 3 cross arms No Blue for angels, Virgin's red-rimmed gold, Infant's cruciform Medium Flat disk Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Sta. Maria Maggiore, Rome</td>
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<td>1300</td>
<td>Giotto - ?workshop</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>L’onaggio di un semplice</td>
<td>No, Slim ridges No Dark gold V. large Disk Behind head in profile</td>
<td>Chiesa Supeiore, Assisi</td>
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<tr>
<td>1300</td>
<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>Crucifixion</td>
<td>Yes, Ring punch delineates cross arms No, but niello patterning in rim Very solid, with &quot;gems&quot; Large Disk Behind head in profile</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Maria Novella, Florence</td>
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<td>1300</td>
<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Meeting at the Golden Gate</td>
<td>No, Broad shorter ridges No Gold halo with black border Smaller Disk, v slight ellipsis Behind head in profile</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<td>1303-06</td>
<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Presentation of the Virgin</td>
<td>No, Broad shorter ridges No Gold halo with black border Smaller Disk, more ellipsis Behind head in profile</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td></td>
<td>Christ's Entry into Jerusalem</td>
<td>No, Gold, black rimmed Smaller Elliptical Disk Behind head in profile</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<td>Artist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>The Kiss of Judas</td>
<td>No, As above, No, As above, Smaller, Less ellipsis of disk</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>The Annunciation</td>
<td>No, Broad ridges, No, Gold, black-rimmed, Smaller, Sharper disk ellipsis</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>La Scacciata dei Mercanti</td>
<td>No, Gold, Black-rimmed, Smaller, Some disk ellipsis</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Compianto su Cristo Morto</td>
<td>No, As above, but fainter, No, Gold, Black-rimmed, Christ's is much smaller</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Ultima Cena</td>
<td>No, Christ as above, No, As above, Apostles' plain, Smaller, Behind His left profile</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<td>Giotto</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Universal Justice</td>
<td>No, Angels' - No, Yellow light emanescence, Small, Flat behind head</td>
<td>Scrovegni Chapel, Padua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Deposition</td>
<td>No, Christ's blue cruciform x 2, Yellow, black-rimmed, Medium, Disk</td>
<td>Chiesa SS XII Apostoli, Venice</td>
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<td>Early 1300</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Episodes of Creation in Atrium</td>
<td>No, God has 3 while cruciform arms, No, Gold halo, grey, Medium, Disk</td>
<td>Basilica di San Marco, Venice</td>
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<td>Early 1300</td>
<td>Tempera on poplar</td>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>No, No, No, Dark yellow gold disks, Large, Disks</td>
<td>National Gallery, London</td>
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<td>1300s</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Deposition</td>
<td>No, No, No, Gold, outlined in black, Medium, Disks</td>
<td>Chiesa di Apostoli, Venice</td>
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<td>1310</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>Ancona of San Donato</td>
<td>Yes, Ring and hexa-bar star punch patterns, Large, Disk</td>
<td>Patriarchal Palace, Venice</td>
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<td>1311</td>
<td>Temp/gold on poplar</td>
<td>Madonna in maestà</td>
<td>Yes, Vegetal, different punches, Bright gold all different, Large, Disks</td>
<td>Museo dell'Opera, Siena</td>
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<td>1310-1320</td>
<td>Temp/or legno</td>
<td>Madonna in maestà</td>
<td>Yes, Cross patee arm, No, Gold, Large, Disk</td>
<td>Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence</td>
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<td>1308-11</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Maestà</td>
<td>Yes, vegetal, rosette, different punch, Gems, incision, No, Bright gold disks, some ridging, Medium, Disk</td>
<td>Palazzo del Comune, Siena</td>
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<td>1310-15</td>
<td>Tempera on poplar</td>
<td>The Peruzzi Altarpiece</td>
<td>A little, Coloured &quot;gems&quot; within cross arms, No, Cruciform halo, Medium, Cruciform</td>
<td>North Carolina Museum of Art</td>
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<tr>
<td>1320-1330</td>
<td>Tempera on poplar</td>
<td>Santa Croce Altarpiece</td>
<td>Yes, Cruciform halo, Medium, Cruciform, Parallel to head</td>
<td>National Gallery, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium/Technique</td>
<td>Work Title/Description</td>
<td>Halo Field</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>Location/Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>1317</td>
<td>Simone Martini</td>
<td>Tempera, gold, pastiglia</td>
<td>St Louis Enthroned with Robert of Anjou Pastiglia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head, reaching to below neck</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1324-25</td>
<td>Simone Martini</td>
<td>Tempera su legno</td>
<td>Annunciation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1325</td>
<td>Jacobello del Fiore</td>
<td>Gold leaf on panel</td>
<td>Sante</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di S Giovanni Battista in Braga, Venice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1327-1332</td>
<td>Taddeo Gaddi</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Tondos of Two Virtues</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Bristol City Art Gallery, Bristol</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1330-36</td>
<td>Andrea Pisano</td>
<td>Bronze relief</td>
<td>Faith, Charity, Humility, Fortitude &amp; Temperance, Justice &amp; Prudence</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>South Doors of Baptistery, Florence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1333</td>
<td>Simone Martini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Annunciation from Orsini Politico</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1338</td>
<td>Bernardo Daddi</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>Crucifixion panel from triptych</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The Courtauld Gallery, London</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paolo Veneziano</td>
<td>Tempera, gold leaf</td>
<td>Lunetta di Madonna con Bambin</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Maria in Gloriosa, Venice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1336</td>
<td>Simone Martini</td>
<td>Tempera su legno</td>
<td>Annunciation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Musee des Beaux-Arts, Paris</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1340</td>
<td>Francesco Traini/Lippo Memmi</td>
<td>Oil and gold on wood panel</td>
<td>The Triumph of St Thomas Aquinas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di Sta. Caterina, Pisa</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Work Description</td>
<td>Virgin's gold disk heavily embossed, also Christ's halo</td>
<td>Christ's is arabesque</td>
<td>Flat behind profiles</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1340-1350</td>
<td>Taddeo Gaddi</td>
<td>Tempera &amp; gold leaf</td>
<td>Madonna con Bambino e Santi</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Flat behind profiles</td>
<td>Karlstein, Castello</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1340</td>
<td>Venetian</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>San Michele attesa il demonio</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Elliptical, tilted back</td>
<td>Biblioteca Correr, Venice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1342</td>
<td>Ambrogio Lorenzetti</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>The Presentation in the Temple</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yellow-gold haloes</td>
<td>Flat behind heads/profile</td>
<td>Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1345</td>
<td>Anon</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>L'Albero della vita</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Santa Maria Maggiore, Bergamo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1346</td>
<td>Guarietto</td>
<td>Tempera &amp; gold leaf</td>
<td>Angel Principalities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Flat disks</td>
<td>Museo Civico, Padua</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1346</td>
<td>Bartomomeo da Camogli</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna dell'Ultriltà</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Flat behind profiles</td>
<td>Galleria Nazionale, Palermo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1347</td>
<td>Greek-Venetian</td>
<td>Inv. Cl. I. n. 383</td>
<td>Madonna con Bambino e Santi</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1350-60</td>
<td>Tommaso da Modena</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Santa Caterina</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Paline blonde circle, much smaller than Giotto's</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Caterina, Treviso</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1350</td>
<td>Tommaso da Modena</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>San Gerolamo in his studio</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Very pale, with fringed rayed circumference</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Monastery of San Nicolo, Treviso</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1352</td>
<td>Simeon (Bulgarian)</td>
<td>Manuscript</td>
<td>Gospels of Tsar Ivan Alexander Holkham Bible Picture Book, Noah and the Ark</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>White voided cross pattee x 3</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1352</td>
<td>English, Anon.</td>
<td>Illustrated Manuscript</td>
<td>Incoronazione della Vergine con angeli</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4 large red petal cross arms</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1355-56</td>
<td>Tommaso da Modena</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Storie di Sant'Orsola</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Plain blonde disk</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Museo Civico, Treviso</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1350</td>
<td>Orcagna</td>
<td>Marble relief</td>
<td>Death &amp; Assumption of Virgin</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not exactly positioned centrally behind head</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Chiesa di Orsanmichele, Florence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1357</td>
<td>Catarino</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Incoronazione della Vergine con angeli</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Venetian Gothic, red-rimmed</td>
<td>Flat behind profile</td>
<td>Galleria dell'Accademia, Venice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium/Support</td>
<td>Work Description</td>
<td>Technique Details</td>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>Display Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>1359</td>
<td>Taddeo Gaddi</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>St Eligius in the Goldsmith’s Shop</td>
<td>Yes, Mixture of circular punches</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind profile</td>
<td>Museo del Prado, Madrid</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1360</td>
<td>Paolo Veneziano</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>St. Eligius in the Goldsmith’s Shop</td>
<td>Yes, Star-punch border</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1365</td>
<td>Andrea Bonaiuti</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>The Pentecost</td>
<td>No, Deep ridges</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Medium Disk Flat bhd/in front</td>
<td>Spanish Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1366-68</td>
<td>Paolo Veneziano</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>St. John the Baptist</td>
<td>Yes, Simple ring punch border</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1366-68</td>
<td>Paolo Veneziano</td>
<td>Painted wood</td>
<td>Crucifixion</td>
<td>Yes, Simple ring punch border</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind head, arm, cross tilted</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Stefano, Venice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stefano Veneziano</td>
<td>Tempera / gold on panel</td>
<td>Madonna in trono col Bambino</td>
<td>Yes, Foliate design, 3 gold cross arm</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium Disk Flat behind head and profile face of Christ</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1369</td>
<td>Lorenzo Veneziano</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>Christ giving the Keys to St. Peter</td>
<td>Yes, ring punches, 4 x &quot;gems&quot; arranged in square around central &quot;gem&quot;</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large Disk Flat behind head</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Later 1300s</td>
<td>Greek-Venetian</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>Yes, Cruciform with star in arms</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large Disk Behind heads</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1300s</td>
<td>Venetian-Byzantine</td>
<td>Oil on wood</td>
<td>Crucifixion with Saints</td>
<td>Yes, v. Ornate design</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large Slightly foreshortened</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1300s</td>
<td>Frere Laurent</td>
<td>Illustrated Manuscript</td>
<td>La Somme le roi, Moses r’g Law</td>
<td>No, 3 red, decorated cross arms</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Medium Disk Flat behind heads</td>
<td>British Library, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>1370-80</td>
<td>Giusto de Menabuoi</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Fina Buzzaarina pr’d to Virg The Cardinal Virtues of Fortitude and Temperance</td>
<td>No, 3 red/white cross arms</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Medium Disk Flat behind heads/profile</td>
<td>Battistero, Padua</td>
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<tr>
<td>1370</td>
<td>Giusto de Menabuoi</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>San Cristoforo</td>
<td>No, No, No Polygano halo</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Medium Scalloped Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Palazzo della Ragione, Padua</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1376</td>
<td>Stefano Veneziano</td>
<td>Tempera/gold on panel</td>
<td>San Cristoforo</td>
<td>Yes, ring punches, 3 x cross arms in Christ Child’s</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large Flat behind heads</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Artist/Attribution</td>
<td>Medium/Support</td>
<td>Work Description</td>
<td>Illustrated</td>
<td>Holography</td>
<td>Hurricanes</td>
<td>Blazon</td>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1376</td>
<td>Antonio Veneziano</td>
<td>Tempera/gold on panel</td>
<td>L’Apostolo San Giacomo Magg</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>V simple beaded internal border</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold flat disk</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind profile</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1370-90</td>
<td>Attrib to Jacobello da Bonomo</td>
<td>Tempera/gold on panel</td>
<td>St John the Baptist and St Paul</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Incised rays, double border</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Internal swirls, outer 4 point border ring punch border</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Behind heads</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1380-90</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>Tempera on oak</td>
<td>The Wilton Diptych</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Incised nails &amp; crown of thorns</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Virgin’s has outer punched border, like polished gold</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat, behind profile</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1390-1400</td>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Virgin &amp; Child with Sts. Nicholas &amp; Catherine &amp; donor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Incised rays, double border</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Quite decorative internal field</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat, head slightly turned</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1395</td>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>Virgin &amp; Child with Sts Francis &amp; Clare</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Different external border, Latin</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Quadrilobe external pinnacles</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Disks</td>
<td>Flat, behind heads/profiles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1395-1400</td>
<td>Cristoforo Cortese</td>
<td>Miniature Illust Ms</td>
<td>Lettere</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8-pointed halo for Santa Caterina</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Polygonol</td>
<td>Flat behind head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1395</td>
<td>Jean Malouel</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>Compianto sul Cristo Blessed Francisca di Venetis</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Zig-zag linear design in internal field</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Quite decorative internal field</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat, head slightly turned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400-1410</td>
<td>Paduan school</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Beheading of a female saint</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Beheaded borders round script, external pinnacles</td>
<td>Meium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head, brushing necks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1405</td>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Several punches used</td>
<td>Latin, miniscule</td>
<td>Several sets rays with unusual little crosses</td>
<td>V long</td>
<td>Disk/rays</td>
<td>Behind/sides of head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1405</td>
<td>Gherardo Starmina</td>
<td>245. NG</td>
<td>Beheading of a female saint</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2 x sets rays with unusual little crosses</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Beaded borders round script, external pinnacles</td>
<td>Meium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head, brushing necks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1410</td>
<td>Jean Malouel</td>
<td>Tempera on canvas</td>
<td>Virgin &amp; Child with angels</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Disk &amp; rays for V, long rays for C</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Beaded borders round script, external pinnacles</td>
<td>Meium</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind head, brushing necks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1408-10</td>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col/ Bambino</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Several punches used</td>
<td>Latin, miniscule</td>
<td>Several sets rays with unusual little crosses</td>
<td>V long</td>
<td>Disk/rays</td>
<td>Behind/sides of head</td>
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<tr>
<td>1408-10</td>
<td>Greek, anon</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>Virgin and Child</td>
<td>Yes, Scrolls, cross arms for Christ Child</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Red delineations of cross arms, high external pinnacles</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Disk</td>
<td>Flat behind heads</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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**Sources:**
- Gemaldegalerie, Berlin
- Museo Correr, Venice
- National Gallery, London
- Pinacoteca Malaspina, Pavia
- Biblioteca Comunale, Siena
- Musee du Louvre, Paris
- Chiesa di San Stefano, Venice
- Pinacoteca nazionale, Ferrara
- National Gallery, London
- Galleria Nazionale, del Umbria
- Museo Correr, Venice
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Work Description</th>
<th>Museum/Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antonio Vivarini &amp; Giovanni d’Alemagna</td>
<td>c. 1405</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Madonna in trono col Bambino e i Santi Gregorio, Girolamo, Ambrogio e Agosto</td>
<td>Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Masaccio</td>
<td>c. 1410</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Virgin &amp; Child &amp; 12 Apostles, NO HALOES, but in v poor condition. However cannot see any trace of haloes for any figures</td>
<td>Santa Maria Novella, Florence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zanino di Pietro</td>
<td>c. 1410</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Anastasis /tempera Virgin &amp; Child &amp; 12 Apostles</td>
<td>All Duomo di Torcello, Venice</td>
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<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>National Gallery of Art, Washington</td>
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<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>The Seven Virtues</td>
<td>Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacobello del Fiore</td>
<td>1420-30</td>
<td>Tempera/gold leaf on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>Tempera and gold leaf on panel</td>
<td>Coronation of the Virgin</td>
<td>John Paul Getty Museum, Malibu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacobello del Fiore</td>
<td>1421</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Justice between Michael &amp; Gabriel</td>
<td>Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>1422</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>Museo nazionale di San Matteo, Pisa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>1420-23</td>
<td>Tempera, gold, pastiglia</td>
<td>Adoration of the Magi</td>
<td>Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fra Angelico</td>
<td>1420-30</td>
<td>Tempera / gold</td>
<td>The Last Judgement</td>
<td>San Marco Museum, Florence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Work Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>1421</td>
<td>Robert Campin</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>Madonna del Muretto Fionto</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1420-23</td>
<td>Masolino</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>St Peter &amp; St Paul</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1425-30</td>
<td>Andrea del Castagno</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Crucifixion between the Virgin e i Santi Giovanni, Madalena, Benedetto e Romualdo</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Masolino &amp; Masaccio</td>
<td>Tempera and gold on panel</td>
<td>Madonna &amp; Child with St Anne</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1425</td>
<td>Jacques Daret</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Vitsitation</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1425</td>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Four Saints from Quaratesi Altarpiece</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1425</td>
<td>Gentile da Fabriano</td>
<td>Tempera and gold on panel</td>
<td>Quaratesi Altarpiece</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1425-38</td>
<td>Jacopo della Quercia</td>
<td>Bronze relief</td>
<td>Creation of Adam, Creation of Eve</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1426</td>
<td>Masaccio</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Enthroned Madonna</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 20's</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>S Giovanni Evang &amp; San Pietro</td>
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<tr>
<td>1420s-30's</td>
<td>Bicci di Lorenzo</td>
<td>Tempera and gold on panel</td>
<td>Sant'Anna Metterza</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1430-1440</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Enthroned Madonna &amp; Child</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>1433</td>
<td>Domenico di Bartolo</td>
<td>Tempera and gold leaf on panel</td>
<td>Madonna of Humility</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1434-35</td>
<td>Rogier Van der Weyden</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>The Descent from the Cross</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1434</td>
<td>Stefano da Verona</td>
<td>Tempera su tavola</td>
<td>Adorazione dei Magi</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1434</td>
<td>Jacques Daret</td>
<td>Oil on oak panel</td>
<td>The Visitation</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1430-35</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambine &amp; L d'Est</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early 30's</td>
<td>Hans Multschen</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>Orazione nell'Orto</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1435-38</td>
<td>Hans Multschen</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>Resurrection</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?1435</td>
<td>Stefano Sassetta</td>
<td>Tempera on poplar</td>
<td>The Stigmatisation of St Francis</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1435</td>
<td>Donatello</td>
<td>Polychrome wood sta</td>
<td>St John the Baptist</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1437</td>
<td>Benezzo Guzzoli</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Adoration of the Magi</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1437</td>
<td>Domenico Veneziano</td>
<td>Fresco on tile</td>
<td>Head of a Saint</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1437-44</td>
<td>Stefan Lochner</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Virgin and Child in a Rose Arbour</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1437</td>
<td>Hans Multscher</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Wurzacher Passion</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1437</td>
<td>Domenico di Bartolo</td>
<td>Tempera and gold leaf on panel</td>
<td>Virgin and Child with embedded &quot;gems&quot;</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1438</td>
<td>Vivarini</td>
<td>Hieronymus Altarpiece</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Lots of punching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year(s)</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Work Description</td>
<td>Halo Description</td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1438-43</td>
<td>Fra Angelico</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td><em>Crucifixion and Saints</em></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 1440</td>
<td>Andrea del Castagno</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td><em>Hosea</em></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1440</td>
<td>Fra Filippo Lippi</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td><em>Coronation of the Virgin</em></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1441</td>
<td>Michele Giambono</td>
<td>Inv, Cl. L. n.</td>
<td><em>Madonna col Bambino</em></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1441-42</td>
<td>Vivarini</td>
<td>Madonna della Misericordia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>V sheer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1442</td>
<td>G D'Alem &amp; Ant Viv</td>
<td>Panel</td>
<td><em>St Sabina altarpiece</em></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1441-47</td>
<td>Giovanni D'Alemagna &amp; Antonio Vivarini</td>
<td>Pala</td>
<td><em>Coronation of the Virgin</em></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1440</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Panel</td>
<td><em>Annunciation</em></td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1443</td>
<td>Enguerrand Quarton</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td><em>Compianto sul Cristo &amp; donatore</em></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1443</td>
<td>Michele Giambono</td>
<td>San Crisogno</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Very plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1443</td>
<td>G. D'Alem &amp; A Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td><em>Ancona of Santa Sabina</em></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1444</td>
<td>G D'Alem &amp; A Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td><em>Adoration of the Magi</em></td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1444</td>
<td>Giov D'Alem &amp; A Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera, gold pastiglia</td>
<td><em>Coronation of the Virgin</em></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1444</td>
<td>Bartolomeo Bon</td>
<td>Istrian stone tympan</td>
<td><em>Virgin &amp; Child with Kneeling Members of Misericordia</em></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>Gold rims, seem to be glass</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1444-66</td>
<td>Domenico Veneziano</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>St Lucy Altarpiece</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1445</td>
<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Cat 588</td>
<td>St George</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1445-47</td>
<td>Giov D'Alem &amp; A Vivarini</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
<td>Four Fathers of the Church</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c1445-50</td>
<td>A. Vivarini</td>
<td>Triptych</td>
<td>Annunziatazione tra i SS. Antonione e Michele Arcangeli</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1445</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on poplar</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1445</td>
<td>Ivan Petrov</td>
<td>St Jerome from Ughjan Altarpiece</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Single punch designs, external pinnacle</td>
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<tr>
<td>1446</td>
<td>Antonio Vivarini</td>
<td>St Peter Martyr burns</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1446</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Crucifixion</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1448-50</td>
<td>Andrea del Castagno</td>
<td>Pala</td>
<td>Assumption of the Virgin</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1448</td>
<td>Stephan Lochner</td>
<td>Oil on oak</td>
<td>Sts Matthew, Cat of Al, John Ev</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1440-1450</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on canvas</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1450</td>
<td>Nardi di Cione</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>The Crucifixion</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>Petrus Christus</td>
<td>Exeter Madonna</td>
<td>Exeter Madonna</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>Petrus Christus</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Man of Sorrows</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>Antonio Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera, gold, pastiglia</td>
<td>St Louis of Toulouse</td>
<td>Yes, borders simple ring punches</td>
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<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>Michele Giambono</td>
<td>Tempera, gold, pastiglia</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Michele Giambono</td>
<td>Tempera, gold on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1450</td>
<td>Giovanni di Paolo</td>
<td>Tempera / gold panel</td>
<td>St John the B going into Wild</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1450</td>
<td>Jean Fouquet</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Virgin and Child</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>Piero della Francesa</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>The Baptism of Christ</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 1450</td>
<td>Fra Angelico</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Bosci ai Frati</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1450</td>
<td>Petrus Christus</td>
<td>Pala</td>
<td>Annunciation &amp; Nativity</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna with Child</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1450</td>
<td>Rogier van der Weyden</td>
<td>Pala</td>
<td>Nativity</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>1450s</td>
<td>Zanobi Strozzi</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>St Bernard of Siena, St Jerome &amp; St Louis</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1451</td>
<td>Antonio Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Annunciation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1452</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Crucifixion</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1452</td>
<td>Marco Zoppo</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna &amp; Child with 8 angels</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium &amp; Support</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1453</td>
<td>Alessio Baldovinetti</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col/ Bambino e Sanzi Gold foreshortened disks, V's has reflection of head.</td>
<td>Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1453-55</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Cristo morto sorretto da due angeli Looks solid but very slim</td>
<td>Museo Correr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1453-55</td>
<td>Rogier van der Weyden</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Life of St. John the Baptist</td>
<td>Gemaldegalerie, Berlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>1453-55</td>
<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Tempera &amp; oil on panel</td>
<td>San Zeno Altarpiece</td>
<td>Chiesi di San Zeno, Verona</td>
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<tr>
<td>1455-55</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>The Crucifixion</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1455</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna with Child</td>
<td>Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1455-60</td>
<td>Alessio Baldovinetti</td>
<td>Half-bust</td>
<td>Annunciation</td>
<td>Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence</td>
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<tr>
<td>1455-60</td>
<td>Francesco Pesellino &amp; Filippo Lippi</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Trinity and Four Saints Long, polygonaell halo for God</td>
<td>National Gallery, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1455-60</td>
<td>Francesco Squarcione</td>
<td>Panel</td>
<td>Madonna col/ Bambino</td>
<td>Gemaldegalerie, Berlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>1456-59</td>
<td>attrib Giov Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna on il Bambino</td>
<td>Los Angeles County Museum of Art</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Oil on wood</td>
<td>Trasfigurazione</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1456</td>
<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>St Sebastian</td>
<td>Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna</td>
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<tr>
<td>1457</td>
<td>Cosimo Tura</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Pietà</td>
<td>Museo Correr, Venice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1457</td>
<td>Cosimo Tura</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Leichnam Christo von Engel</td>
<td>Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna</td>
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<td>?1457-60</td>
<td>Filippo Lippi</td>
<td>Inv. VV 1877</td>
<td>Madonna &amp; Sta Adoring Christ</td>
<td>Staatliche Museen, Berlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium/Technique on Support</td>
<td>Location of Work</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1457-60  | Andrea Mantegna      | Tempera on panel           | San Zeno Altarpiece | No Broad outer band of script, plain inner field, Pseudo-Arabic script
                                                                 |                    | No Yellow-gold, upper half shield like square nimbus, Red cross pattee arms in Christ Child's
                                                                 |                    | Medium Disks in ellipse, Behind, diagonal to heads | Chiesa di San Zeno, Verona
| 1457-60  | Andrea Mantegna      | Tempera on panel           | Crucifixion predella from San Zeno altarpiece | No No No
                                                                 |                    | Yellow-gold, upper half shield like square nimbus, Red cross pattee arms in Christ Child's
                                                                 |                    | Small Disks Behind heads | Musee du Louvre, Paris
| 1457-59  | Maestro della Natività di Castello | Tempera on panel | Adorazione del Bambino | No
                                                                 |                    | No Pseudo-Arabic script | Accademia, Florence
| ca. 1459 | Gentile Bellini      | Tavola                     | Madonna and Child with Donors | Yes
                                                                 |                    | No Lightly punched outer border, No Mixture opaque, solid haloes | Gemaldegalerie, Berlin
| 1459     | Bartolomeo Vivarini  | Tempera on panel           | San Giovanni di Capistrano Madonna col Bambino | No No
                                                                 | Francesco Squarcione | Kufic border, looks dark, Looks punched, pseudo-Kufic border | Musee du Louvre, Paris
| 1460-70  | Bernardino Butinone  | Tempera on panel           | Madonna e Angeli | No No
                                                                 |                    | No Mixture opaque, solid haloes | Gemaldegalerie, Berlin
| 1460     | Shop of Pesellino    | Tempera/mord ant gilding   | The Seven Virtues | No No
                                                                 |                    | Gilded inner edging, No Semi-opaque gold nimbus, gold haloes, mixed shapes of disk | Colli, Duca Gallerati Scotti, Milan
| 1460     | Andrea Mantegna      | Tavola                     | The Agony in the Garden | No No
                                                                 |                    | Foreshortened red cross on back, No Semi-opaque gold nimbus, gold haloes, mixed shapes of disk | Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama
| 1460-68  | Vincenzo Foppa       | Tempera on panel           | Madonna of the Book | No No
                                                                 |                    | Double outer border, Latin Semi-opaque gold nimbus, gold haloes, mixed shapes of disk | National Gallery, London
| ?1461-78 | Quirizio da Murano   | Tempera on panel           | Christ showing Wounds to Nun | ?
                                                                 |                    | Seems to be pentar-bar star, No Concave circular borders | Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice
| 1460-62  | Andrea Mantegna      | Tempera/ oil on panel      | Dormition of the Virgin | No No
                                                                 |                    | No Cruciform rays for Jesus, gold disk for Virgin | Prado Museum, Madrid
| c. 1460  | Giovanni Bellini     | Oil on panel               | Cristo Morto Sorretto da due An Pietà | No No
                                                                 |                    | V Slim foreshortened cross arms | Museo Correr, Venice
| c. 1460  | Giovanni Bellini     | Tempera on panel           | Pietà              | No No
                                                                 |                    | 3 x slim, red arm crosses | Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Medium and support</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Ornament</th>
<th>Ornament description</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>1460</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Cristo Benedicente</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3 x bunched rays</td>
<td>Small</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post 1460</td>
<td>Michele Giambono</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Coronation of the Virgin</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>All different but simple</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Very bright gold</td>
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<tr>
<td>1460</td>
<td>Gentile Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Lorenzo Giustiniani</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Slim gold outer halo</td>
<td>Small</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gems, Kufic but ? Punched</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1460</td>
<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>San Ludovico da Tolosa</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Single-punch internal border</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold disk, pinnacle ext border</td>
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<tr>
<td>1460</td>
<td>Jacopo Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>The Crucifixion</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Very faint arm crosses</td>
<td>Small</td>
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<tr>
<td>1460-64</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino aka Madonna Greca</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Voided gold cross arms in Christ Child's</td>
<td>Very slim gold rings</td>
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<tr>
<td>1460-64</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Trivulzio Madonna</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Rosette divisions</td>
<td>Pseudo-Nashki</td>
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<tr>
<td>c.1460-65</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>The Blood of the Redeemer</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Part of 1 red arm cross visible</td>
<td>? Pseudo-Nashki</td>
<td>A little similar to Correr Pieta halo</td>
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<tr>
<td>1460</td>
<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Presentation at Temple</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Slim gold ring circlets, C's has tiny gold rays inside</td>
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<tr>
<td>1460</td>
<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>St. George</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Solid gold disk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1461-62</td>
<td>Benezzo Gozzoli</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Virgin and Child Enthroned amongst Saints Dead Christ supported by Sta.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Plain field</td>
<td>Names</td>
<td>Very bright gold haloes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1465</td>
<td>Marco Zoppo</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>The Blessed Lorenzo Giustiniani</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>White crystalline ellipses</td>
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<tr>
<td>1465</td>
<td>Gentile Bentile</td>
<td>Processional banner</td>
<td>The Blessed Lorenzo Giustiniani</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Seems to be scalloped design</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1465</td>
<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>Adoration of the Magi</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>? Kufic border, looks punched</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Mix. Dark &amp; light gold, depending on light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Gold haloes</td>
<td>Cross arms directional design</td>
<td>Cross arms &amp; oriental design</td>
<td>Gold haloes in halos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1464-68</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>St Vincent Ferrer Pala</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, Pinnacle border</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>1465</td>
<td>Andrea Verrochio</td>
<td>Bronze relief</td>
<td>David</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yellow, but transparent opaque</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1465-66</td>
<td>Antonio Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>Santa Chiara</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Penta-prong, penta.bar star</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, Pinnacle border</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Bronze relief</td>
<td>Politico di Genzano</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dark gold, V's &amp; C's outlined in deep red</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1466-67</td>
<td>Gentile Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Thin circlets of gold</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1467</td>
<td>Antonio Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold, very high external pinnacles</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1460s</td>
<td>Gregorio Schiavone</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Bright circular incandescence</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1467</td>
<td>Fra Negroponte</td>
<td>Tempera, paper on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child with Sts.</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Outer border contains gems &amp; ornate designs</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?1468-70</td>
<td>Marco Zoppo</td>
<td>Tempera su tavola</td>
<td>Enthroned Madonna &amp; Ch &amp; Sts.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Mixture glass/gold</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? Post '69</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>Madonna in Trono che Adora il Bambino Dormiente</td>
<td>? Painted</td>
<td>Cross arms &amp; oriental design</td>
<td>Double-bordered, 6 point pattern</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?1450-70</td>
<td>Verrochio &amp; Leonardo</td>
<td>Tempera / oil on panel</td>
<td>The Baptism of Christ</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold haloes in Staurothea, different from original</td>
<td>Small</td>
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<tr>
<td>1470-80</td>
<td>Hugo van der Goes</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Adoration of the Magi</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2 red cross pattee arms</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>1470-75</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Very solid-looking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Material/Technique</td>
<td>Image Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1471</td>
<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera su tela cent</td>
<td>Meeting between Sts Gioa &amp; Anna, Spino, Pezaro, Altemps, Sts Paul, Maurelius and donor</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Chiesa Santa Maria Formosa, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1471</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Small Gold-rimmed Flat behind head</td>
<td>Museo Civici, Pesaro</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1472</td>
<td>Cosimo Tura</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Dead Christ between Sts Mark and St. Nicholas of Bari</td>
<td>No No No No</td>
<td>Galleria Colonna, Rome</td>
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<tr>
<td>1472</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>No 2 v broad, short cross arms, white designs, crimson short cross</td>
<td>Medium Dark gold disks</td>
<td>Palazzo Ducale, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1472-75</td>
<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Enthroned St Mark with Saints</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Maria in Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice</td>
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<td>1472-75</td>
<td>Verrochio &amp; Leonardo</td>
<td>Tempera/oil on panel</td>
<td>The Baptism of Christ</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1470-75</td>
<td>Shop of Della Robbi</td>
<td>Marble statues</td>
<td>SS Francis, John, Anthony</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Bernardino e San Giobbe, Venice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1472</td>
<td>Antonio Rossellino Sh</td>
<td>Glazed terracota</td>
<td>Descent of Christ into Limbo</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Bernardino e San Giobbe, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1473</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tapestries</td>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Bristol City Gallery, Bristol</td>
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<td>1473</td>
<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna of the Misericordia</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Treasury of San Marco, Venice</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tapestries</td>
<td>Enthroned Madonna Adoring Child</td>
<td>No No No</td>
<td>Galleria dell'Accademia, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Haloes</td>
<td>Halo Shape</td>
<td>Halo Size</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>1474</td>
<td>Alvise Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>Assumption of the Virgin</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold mesh</td>
<td>Pinacoteca di Brera, Brera</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1475</td>
<td>Antonella da Messina</td>
<td>Tempera mista sul ta</td>
<td>St Jerome in his Study</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>National Gallery, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>1475</td>
<td>Francesco Botticini</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Assumption of the Virgin</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gemaldegalerie, Berlin</td>
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<td>1475</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>Resurrection</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1475</td>
<td>Luca della Robbia</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>Madonna &amp; Child &amp; 2 Angels</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Prev. Chiesa Madonna dell'Orto, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1475</td>
<td>Maestro del Libro di Casa di Tavola</td>
<td>Glazed terracota</td>
<td>Ultima Cena</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>National Gallery of Art, Washington</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1475-76</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Gold ground</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1475</td>
<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1475-77</td>
<td>Cosimo Rosselli</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Virgin &amp; Child Enthroned &amp; Sts</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Victoria &amp; Albert Museum, London</td>
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<td>1475-79</td>
<td>Alvise Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna in trono fra santi</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Galleria Strozzi, Zagabria</td>
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<td>1475-80</td>
<td>Hugh van der Goes</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Palazzo Pitti, Florence</td>
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<tr>
<td>1475-80</td>
<td>Giovanni Gaggini</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>The Annunciation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chi C. di San Giov. Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Slate panel</td>
<td>Sts Augustine &amp; Benedicto</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1478</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>2 x panels</td>
<td>San Gerolamo in deserto</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Chiesa di San Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<td>1478</td>
<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera and gold on panel</td>
<td>Madonna &amp; Child with Baptist St Andrew</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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<td>1480</td>
<td>Lazzaro Bastiani</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>Votive painting of Giovanni degli Angeli</td>
<td>No, No, No, Gold</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Donato, Murano</td>
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<td>1480</td>
<td>Sandro Botticelli</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna della Magnificat, gold stippling in Child's</td>
<td>No, Linee Serpentine, transparent, gold, silk-like, cruciferous in Child's, No, No, No, Medium, Sheer disks, behind heads, ending at necks</td>
<td>Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence</td>
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<td>? 1480</td>
<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
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<td>Enthroned Madonna with Sts</td>
<td>No, Cruciform, tiny rays, stippling</td>
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<td>Leonardo da Vinci</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Madonna &amp; Child &amp; Sts</td>
<td>No, No, No, Small, Small, Elliptical</td>
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<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>? Ancona</td>
<td>Virgin of the Rocks</td>
<td>No, No, No, Transparent gold disk</td>
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<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
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<td>No, No, No, Flat behind head</td>
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<td>1480</td>
<td>Vincenzo Foppa</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>No, Plain field, Yes</td>
<td>Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan</td>
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<td>1481</td>
<td>Evangelista Vidulic</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Reliq of Precious Blood of Chr</td>
<td>No, No, No, Small, flat on heads</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Maria Gloriosa, Venice</td>
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<td>1481-85</td>
<td>Lorenzo di Credi</td>
<td>Silver reliquary</td>
<td>Annunciation</td>
<td>No, No, No, Small, flat on flat</td>
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<td>1483-84</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Miracle of St Mark-recov Aniano</td>
<td>Yes, Unusual lettering, Medium, Elliptical disks, diagonally behind heads</td>
<td>Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin</td>
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<td>1483</td>
<td>Butinone &amp; Zenale</td>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Politico di Treviglio</td>
<td>? Painted, Plain but Sts' names, No, Unusual lettering</td>
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<td>No, No, No, &quot;Glass&quot; halo</td>
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<td>No, Exquisite gold rays, rosettes, Medium, V delicate disks, flat behind heads</td>
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<td>Filippino Lippi</td>
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<td>Ruccellai Altarpiece</td>
<td>No, Gold waves &amp; stippling, No, Small, Spun gold circles, Above/behind heads</td>
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<td>Alvise Vivarini</td>
<td>Panel</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No Slim rays radiating from head</td>
<td>Chiesa di S Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<td>1485</td>
<td>Cosmè Tura</td>
<td>Pala</td>
<td>S Domenico</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No Gold-rimmed chiffon-like circles</td>
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<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>San Barnaba Altarpiece</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No Lacy gold patterning on V's halo</td>
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<td>c. 1485</td>
<td>Hans Memling</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Johannesaltarhen</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No Long slim gold spiked rays</td>
<td>Kunsthistoriesches Museum, Vienna</td>
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<td>Annunciation</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No Bright gold, Tiny</td>
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<td>Vision of the Blessed Gabriel</td>
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<td>Pesaro Altarpiece</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No Transparent gold</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Maria Novella, Florence</td>
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<td>Domenico Ghirlandaio</td>
<td>Fresco</td>
<td>Birth of the Virgin</td>
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<td>No Spokes, seen from behind, No Transparent gold</td>
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<td>1486</td>
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<td>Enthroned Mad &amp; B key to St P</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No V small Bright gold concave disks - shadows reflected on them</td>
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<td>1486</td>
<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>Madonna col Bambino</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No V small Y's spun gold, C's transparent disk, v. strange size</td>
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<td>Filippino Lippi</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Virgin &amp; Child with the Baptist &amp; Sts. Victor, Bernard &amp; Zenobius</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No Transparent &quot;silk&quot; haloes, Medium</td>
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<td>Benedetto Diana</td>
<td>Tempera &amp; oil on panel</td>
<td>Enthroned Madonna between donors and Sts.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No Gold ring circlets, Medium</td>
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<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>St Sebastian</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No Transparent, Small Gold-rimmed, High behind head</td>
<td>Ca d'Oro Museum, Venice</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Work Description</td>
<td>Haloes</td>
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<td>Tempera</td>
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<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Virgin enthroned with Saints</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di Maria Gloriosa dei Fari, Venice</td>
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<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
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<td>San Giobbe Altarpiece</td>
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<td>Late 1480s</td>
<td>Leonardo Boldrian</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Crucifixion</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4 petals - cruciform</td>
<td>Chiesa di S Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Votive Painting of Doge Barbari</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Chiesa di San Pietro Martire, Murano</td>
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<td>Vittore Carpaccio</td>
<td>Wood carving</td>
<td>St. Ursula Allelogorical Crucifixion</td>
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<td>Giovanni Mansueti</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>St Michael the Archangel</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>1489-1500</td>
<td>Maestro di Castelsardo</td>
<td>Tempera, pastiglia on panel</td>
<td>St Michael the Archangel</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Pietro, Tulli, Sardinia</td>
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<td>1490</td>
<td>Pietro Perugino</td>
<td>Trochet over</td>
<td>Maria mit dem Kind und vier Heiligen</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Kunsthistorische, Vienna</td>
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<td>Pietro Perugino</td>
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<td>La Pietà</td>
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<td>Bartolomeo Vivarini</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
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<td>Standing Virgin and Child</td>
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<td>Alvise Vivarini</td>
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<td>Cristo benedicente</td>
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<td>Chiesa di S Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<td>Work Title</td>
<td>Haloes?</td>
<td>Gold/Other Stippling?</td>
<td>Gold-rimmed?</td>
<td>Halo Shape &amp; Location</td>
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<td>1491</td>
<td>Luca Signorelli</td>
<td>Sacra Famiglia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sprinkling gold stippling</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold-rimmed elliptical disks, J's rays &amp; serpentelline</td>
<td>Elliptical, above/around head</td>
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<td>1492</td>
<td>Quinten Massys</td>
<td>Enthroned Mad &amp; Ch &amp; 4 angels</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Solid gold stick rays</td>
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<td>Cima da Conegliano</td>
<td>NG 6282 Enthroned Mad/Ch &amp; 4 Sts</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Cima da Conegliano</td>
<td>Oil on panel The Baptism</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lunette panel, plain halo field for God</td>
<td>Medium Triangular halo bestowed on God</td>
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<td>1492-94</td>
<td>Filippino Lippi</td>
<td>Tavola Adorazione del Bam con S G Battista</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold stippling</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Alvise Vivarini</td>
<td>Cristo Risto</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Perpendicular, seems affixed to head</td>
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<td>1494</td>
<td>Jacopo da Montagna</td>
<td>Virgin Annunciata</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Delicate floral over-painting</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Small Parallel &amp; behind head</td>
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<td>Cima da Conegliano</td>
<td>Tempera on poplar The Healing of Ananius</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No haloes, even for St Mark</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No haloes, even for St Mark</td>
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<td>1494-97</td>
<td>Lazzaro Bastiani</td>
<td>Deposizione</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Dark gold elliptical circles, worn like hats</td>
<td>Small Christ's is concave</td>
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<td>c. 1495</td>
<td>Giovanni Mansueti</td>
<td>Arrest and Trial of St Mark</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Transparent gold</td>
<td>Small Gold-rimmed</td>
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<td>c. 1495</td>
<td>Lazzaro Bastiani</td>
<td>Padre eterno e angeli</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Red circlet halo for God</td>
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<td>Cima da Conegliano</td>
<td>Oil on panel Madonna of the Orange Tree</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold rings</td>
<td>Medium Ring circlet</td>
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<td>Michelangelo</td>
<td>Marble Pietà</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>1496</td>
<td>Cretan, but anon.</td>
<td>Icon, temp &amp; gold Virgin and Child</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Semi-vegetal, swirls</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pinnacled border, v delicate</td>
<td>Small Silver-gold, simple ring punch</td>
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<td>1497-98</td>
<td>Shop Andrea Ritzos</td>
<td>Icon, temp &amp; gold Virgin and Child Psychrosotria</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>V large hexa-rosette</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Beaded border, v dark gold, no cross arms in CDs</td>
<td>Medium V dark, disks</td>
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<td>Filippino Lippi</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Adoration of the Magi</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Late 1490</td>
<td>Vittore Carpaccio</td>
<td>Tempera on wood</td>
<td>The Presentation of Jesus</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pinacoteca Brera</td>
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<td>Alvise Vivarini</td>
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<td>The Redeemer Blessing</td>
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<td>Andrea Mantegna</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Mad &amp; Child with Sta John B &amp; Mad</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Treasury of San Marco, Venice</td>
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<td>Zanino di Pietro</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>The Passion of Christ</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2 red cross arms</td>
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<td>1499</td>
<td>?Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Tapestries</td>
<td>Cristo portacroce</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Maestro di Castelsardo</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Adoration of the Shepherds</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Pinacoteca Nazionale, Cagliari</td>
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<td>1490-1500</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Presentation of Christ in the Temple Kreuzigung Christi</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>1499-1500</td>
<td>Lucas Cranach</td>
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<td>S Ambrogio in trono e Santi</td>
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<td>1500</td>
<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
<td>Pala</td>
<td>Head of Christ</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Real Academia de San Fernando, Madrid</td>
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<td>1500-10</td>
<td>Antoniazzo Romano</td>
<td>Tempera/oil on panel</td>
<td>Altarpiece of the Confraternity of the Annunciation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome</td>
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<td>Alvise Vivarini &amp; Marco Basaiti</td>
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<td>Michelangelo</td>
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<td>The Doni Tondo</td>
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<td>Michel Sittow</td>
<td>Tempera on panel</td>
<td>Katherine of Aragon</td>
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<td>Lippi/Perugino</td>
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<td>Adorazione dei Magi</td>
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<td>Maria mit Kind</td>
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<td>Benedetto Montagna</td>
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<td>St. Benedict &amp; Saints</td>
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<td>1500-02</td>
<td>Andrea Previtali</td>
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<td>Caterina, Orsola, Pietro, Gerolamo</td>
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<td>Christus und die Samariterian</td>
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<td>Madonna col Bambino e S Gio</td>
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<td>Madonna del Baldacchino e 4 Sts</td>
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<td>Chiesa di S Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<td>Francesco Bissolo</td>
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<td>S Andrea tra i San Martini e Girolamo</td>
<td>Chiesa di S Giovanni Battista in Bragora, Venice</td>
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<td>Andrea Solario</td>
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<td>Madonna col cuscino verde</td>
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<td>Mad con Bamb, St Anna e John</td>
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<td>Giovanni Bellini</td>
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<td>Cristo portacroce</td>
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<td>Giovanni di Udine</td>
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<td>Enthroned St Mark with Saints</td>
<td>Duomo, Udine</td>
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<td>1507</td>
<td>Giovanni Mansueti</td>
<td>Oil on poplar</td>
<td>The Nativity</td>
<td>Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona</td>
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<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Enthroned Mad &amp; Child with Sts</td>
<td>Chiesa di Santa Mustiola alla Rosa, Siena</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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<td>St Catherine</td>
<td>1508</td>
<td>?Fraciabigio</td>
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<td>Antonio da Solario</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>The Holy Family</td>
<td>Early 1500s</td>
<td>Vittore Carpaccio</td>
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<td>Disputa</td>
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<td>Ludovico Mazzolino</td>
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<td>1510-20</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
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<td>Joachim Patinier</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>The Baptism of Christ</td>
<td>1510-20</td>
<td>Luca Signorelli</td>
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<td>1511-14</td>
<td>Luca Signorelli</td>
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<td>San Gerolamo</td>
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<td>Lucas van Leyden</td>
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<td>Vittore Carpaccio</td>
<td>Tavola</td>
<td>San Giorgio uccide il drago</td>
<td>1513</td>
<td>Amico Aspertini</td>
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<td>Tempera on canvas</td>
<td>Resurrected Christ with Saints</td>
<td>1514</td>
<td>Albrecht Altdorfer</td>
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<td>1515</td>
<td>Giovanni Mansueti</td>
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<td>Giovanni Mansueti</td>
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<td>St Mark baptising Aniano</td>
<td>1515</td>
<td>Amico Aspertini</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
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**National Gallery, London**

Convent of Santa Maria dei Candeli, Florence

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

Bristol City Art Gallery, Bristol

Louve, Paris

Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican, Rome

National Gallery, London

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

The British Museum, London

Gemaldegalerie, Berlin

Gemaldegalerie, Berlin

Chiesa di S. Giorgio Maggiore, Venice

Palazzo Pitti, Florence

Uffizi, Florence

Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan

Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Medium</th>
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<th>Haloes</th>
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<tr>
<td>1515</td>
<td>Jacopo Palma il Vec</td>
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<td>Glass-like halo, gold rim</td>
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<td>Vittore Carpaccio</td>
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<td>The Flight into Egypt</td>
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<td>Medium Disk</td>
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<td>Vit. Carpaccio &amp; bot</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Storning of St Stephen</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Medium Ring circlet</td>
<td>Staatsgalerie, Stockholm</td>
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<td>c. 1516</td>
<td>Girolamo da Treviso</td>
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<td>Christus und die Samaritanian</td>
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<td>1517-18</td>
<td>Cima da Conegliano</td>
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<td>External pinnacles</td>
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<td>Jacopo da Pontormo</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>1518</td>
<td>Dorso Dossi</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>St Jerome</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Only Virgin's white halo seen</td>
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<td>Parmigianino</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child with Sts</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>Jesus &amp; Saints, National Gallery, London</td>
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<td>Manuscript</td>
<td>Executioner Presents John the Baptist's Head to Herod</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence</td>
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<td>Lorenzo Lotto</td>
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<td>Virgin &amp; Child with Sts Cat &amp; T</td>
<td>No ; No</td>
<td>Gold circlets</td>
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<td>Dosso Dossi</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Riposo in Egitto</td>
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<td>C's grad rays, bright gold spikes</td>
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<td>Parmigianino</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Madonna with the Long Neck</td>
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<td>Gold disk</td>
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<td>Lorenzo Lotto</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Sacra Conversazione</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gold</td>
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<td>Bachiacca</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Christ before Pilate</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>V small Gold disk</td>
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<td>1526</td>
<td>Lorenzo Lotto</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
<td>Madonna and Child</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Flat behind profile</td>
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<td>1526</td>
<td>Lorenzo Lotto</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>St. Nicholas of Bari in Glory</td>
<td>Nimbus, a typical alone Large Disk nimbus Behind head</td>
<td>Chiesa dei Carmine, Venice</td>
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<td>1528-30</td>
<td>Paolo Veronese</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Christ addressing kneeling woman</td>
<td>V fine rays from nimbus, cruciform pattern of rays Small Pale blonde Around head</td>
<td>National Gallery, London</td>
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<td>1530-40</td>
<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Kreuzabnahme Christi</td>
<td>Suggestion yellow light but q. fuzzy V small Yellow Around head</td>
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<td>Geraloma da Santa Croce</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Ultima Cena</td>
<td>3 x bunched rays V Small Yellow Top/sides head</td>
<td>Chiesa di San Martino di Geminis, Venice</td>
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<td>1534</td>
<td>Michelangelo</td>
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<td>Pietà</td>
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<td>1535-40</td>
<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
<td>Marble statue</td>
<td>Christ washing feet of Disciples</td>
<td>Christ's like rayed nimbus, denseness on top part Medium Very transparent, 3 seen behind 3 from behind,</td>
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<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Crucifixion</td>
<td>Huge circle light V large Misty white light Around head</td>
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<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
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<td>Martyrdom of St Stephen</td>
<td>God has triangular halo Small Light emanation Round head St</td>
<td>S Giorgio, Venice</td>
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<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
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<td>The Miracle of St Mark freeing the Slave</td>
<td>Misty-white nimbus close to head Very large Long rays extending from nimbus Radiating behind head</td>
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<td>1560-70</td>
<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Christ before Pilate</td>
<td>Architectonic rays Medium Yellow elliptical emanation Hovering diagonal to head</td>
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<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
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<td>Ascent to Calvary</td>
<td>Nimbus of light rays Broad graduated rays Semi-lozenge Behind head</td>
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<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Bacchus, Venus &amp; Ariadne</td>
<td>Salo of stars Quite large Circular in ellipsis Being held horizontally above head</td>
<td>Palazzo Ducale, Venice</td>
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<td>1580-90</td>
<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>Adoration of the Magi</td>
<td>Circular nimbus for Virgin, Rays for Child Medium Semi-lozenge for Christ Child Behind head</td>
<td>Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice</td>
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<td>1583-87</td>
<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>St Mary of Egypt Meditating</td>
<td>Nebulous nimbus Large Nebulous disk Behind head in profile</td>
<td>Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice</td>
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<td>1583-87</td>
<td>Jacopo Tintoretto</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>The Annunciation</td>
<td>Nimbus Medium Nebulous disk Behind head</td>
<td>Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice</td>
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<td>1590</td>
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<td>Last Supper</td>
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BOOKS IN BRIEF

SACRED
BOOKS OF THE THREE FAITHS: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM
British Library Publications 2007 £25.00 HB  £14.95 PB
224pp  197 col illus
ISBN 978 0712349758 HB  978 0712349550 PB

The British Library’s exhibition (27th April to 23rd September 2007) presented a unique opportunity to view some very rare and priceless sacred texts from the three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Drawing from its own collection, together with loans from other institutions, and supported by donors from the three faiths, its exhibition aims were to inform the public about these faiths in order to break down prejudices and misconceptions. Similarities between the faiths were explored through the thematic lay-out of the exhibition and displays of sacred texts alongside each other, this juxtaposition allowing the visitor to see the interaction between them.

The exhibition catalogue, a slim, sophisticated-looking volume condenses the exhibition’s eight sections into five sections, “The Sacred Texts”, “Dissemination, Division and Difference”, “Establishing the Sacred Texts”, “Illuminating the Word in Colours and Gold” and “Religious Life: Encountering the Sacred”. Further sub-division by helpful categories at the bottom of the pages means the reader is able to absorb the overall rationale of the display whilst other factors are simultaneously addressed. Thus, in the section on illumination, beautiful examples firstly of calligraphy, secondly, illumination, from the three faiths are presented, and then in a sub-category, “Comparisons between the Faiths” different treatments of, for example, scenes from Genesis illustrated in The Golden Haggadah, (c 1320 from Northern Spain) and within The Egerton Genesis, (late 1300s, Southern England) or the designs of medallions in the San’a Pentateuch of 1469 (Yemen) and those of a Moroccan Qur’an of 1568.

Three essays by noted scholars present different aspects of the three faiths. In “The Idea of a Sacred Text” Karen Armstrong provides concise explanations of the origins of the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur’an, pointing out that within Judaism and Christianity, constant revisions of the texts were undertaken over many years as exegetical developments occurred, whereas the Qur’an was revealed in twenty-three years. She states that the Qur’an is an oral Scripture, meant to be recited with others, a point further taken up by F E Peters’
essay, “The Poet in Performance: The Composition of the Qur’an”. Peters tracks the transition of the Qur’an through an oral to a written culture, highlighting similarities between the Torah and the Qur’an. God’s direct words were spoken to His prophet, for subsequent recitation, and these holy words were ultimately written down, according to Peters, for fear that “the original oral version would be lost”. Thus, the heavenly book became a recited book and then a written book. Everett Fox, in “Living with Sacred Jewish Texts” also writes that the Jewish Scripture has been a way of preserving the spoken word, and again, the texts are meant to be recited. All three authors discuss the importance of the rhythm of the words and the poetry within the sacred texts. Peters describes the development of diacritical marks and symbols to aid pronunciation, further explained within the contributions supplied for the catalogue items by Colin F Baker, Kathleen Doyle, Scot McKendrick, Vrej Nersessian and Ilana Tahan. Overall, this is a very accessible and informative catalogue, one well worth having on a bookshelf.

Susan Martin
University of Plymouth
Professor Pentcheva’s syllogistic study explores what she perceives to be a gap in Byzantine and medieval studies. This is how the cult of the Theometor, the Mother of God, was expressed through the physical presence of icons of her and specific rituals and devotional practices related to them. She argues that these particular icons and their role in Byzantine society then became an essential component in comprehension of the cult of the Virgin. Concentrating on Constantinople between the fifth and thirteenth centuries, the development of the Marian cult is tracked, from the Virgin’s initial assumption not only of the attributes of the Roman Victoria, but also the associated concept of victory, and hence imperial authority. Imperial support of Marian devotion was realised through the construction of churches and three major monasteries discussed in this book, the Blachernai, the Hodegon and the Pantokrator, together with the institution of feasts dedicated to the Virgin. By the tenth century, public processions dedicated to the Theometor had become weekly events and it is the simultaneous occurrence of these processions and rituals, allied with imperial patronage, that subsequently acted as a catalyst for Byzantium to change to a culture of icons, rather than of relics, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, an enormously important shift. Professor Pentcheva suggests it is a symbiotic relationship, ultimately exploited by the Byzantine rulers operating a degree of political “spin” to re-invent history so that icons of the Theometor in a championing role resulted in the presentation of Byzantium as an empire dedicated to the Mother of God, with the Hodegetria icon, allegedly painted by the evangelist Luke, as protectrix of its capital, Constantinople.

An impressive array of textual evidence is marshalled, ranging from poems and prayers, homilies and hymns, specifically the Akathistos Hymn, dedicated to the Virgin, the significance of which has not been fully recognized, argues Professor
Pentecheva. She notes André Grabar’s analysis of poetic epithets originating in hymns which refer to the powers of the Theometor, but which do not refer to a specific visual formula. Her study has focussed on how these poetic names can be shown to determine how a specific icon functioned. Pentecheva suggests that the Virgin’s appellations Theotokos (Bearer of God) and Meter Theo (Mother of God) suggest a shift from passive to active power which she exerts as protectrix of city and state. This special power results from her unique state of virginal motherhood and is utilised by the Byzantine rulers in their preparations for battle. Exhaustive analysis of written sources demonstrates the change in the understanding of the manifestation of this power, from seventh century descriptions of the Theometor’s physical presence in battle to accounts of the Middle Byzantine processional icons of the Virgin, and the belief that her power was then concentrated in these tangible images, the reiteration of the shift to relics firstly and then icons.

In addition to textual evidence, ivories, panels, mosaics, coins and seals are all utilised to show the development of the shift and the development of iconographic formulae. An example is the examination of the Blachernai Monastery’s icon of the Virgin orans (hovering) with a medallion containing the Christ Child on her chest, intimating her metaphorical status within Byzantium as an “unbroken seal”. Pentecheva also considers “hodegetria”-type iconography, in which the Virgin is a mediatrix between the faithful and Christ: their prayers are addressed to her and she in turn intercedes by presenting them to Christ and obtaining a divine response. This iconography, it is argued, was most probably generated by the inclusion of icons into the ritual processions, and it develops in two separate forms. The first is merely images showing the hodegetria visual formula. The second, in addition to this specific imagery, also includes the name Hodegetria, (“She who leads the way”) which was perceived by viewers to be what Pentecheva describes as a “conscious copy” of the original cult icon, and by dint also possessed some of the special power of the original. The intersection of imperial sponsorship and public participation in the Cult of the Theometor, via processions with such icons, results in this cultural shift from venerating relics to icons.

The book is arranged in two sections, each containing three chapters. The first section considers the history of imperial power and its alliance with the Mother of
God, the second section examines how icons function. There is a very useful chronology of Emperors, divided into dynasties, and extensive notes for each chapter. Although terms and names are explained within the body of the text, this reader would have found a glossary a helpful addition for quick reference. An excellent bibliography provides rich sources for further study.

Aimed at Byzantine scholars primarily, this important study will also be of great benefit to medievalists and theologists.

Susan Martin, University of Plymouth
Fig. 1. Crestani, Michele, (November 2009) *Halo around the moon, Cannaregio* [Photograph]. In possession of author, Venice. Permission to reproduce this has been granted by Michele Crestani.

Fig. 2. Aldine edition of frontispiece of *Epistolae Devotissime di Sancta Catharina da Siena*, 1500, Venice. Woodcut, Schiede Collection, Princeton. This image has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.
Fig. 3. Vittore Carpaccio, *The Apotheosis of St Ursula*, c. 1491. Tempera on canvas, 481 x 336 cm. Galleria dell’Accademia, Venice. Web Gallery of Art, (no publication date given), *Apotheosis of St. Ursula*, Available at: [http://www.wga.hu](http://www.wga.hu). (Accessed 24.06.11.)

Fig. 4. *Il Buon Pastore (The Good Shepherd)*, dating from the second half of the fourth century AD. Blown glass plate, pale green with gold leaf and enamelled edges. Città del Vaticano Collection, Musei Vaticani, Museo Cristiano. Inv. No. 60718. This image has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.
Fig. 5. *Christ Pantocrator*, Icon, c. 600 AD. Painted in wax encaustic. St Catherine’s Monastery, Mount Sinai. No source/photographer (2011). *Christ Pantocrator.* Available at: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ASpas_vsederzhitel_sinav.jpg. (Accessed 18 March 2012)

Fig 5a. Halo detail, showing simple punch marks and three red-delineated internal arm crosses
Fig. 7. Unknown artist, *Blessed Franciscus di Venetis* of Augustinian Order pierced with arrow. Vault fresco, right of central nave. 1400s, Chiesa di San Stefano, Venice. Crestani, Michele, (2007), *Franciscus fresco*, [photograph]. In possession of author. Venice. Permission to use this image has been granted by Michele Crestani.

Fig. 8. Altar devoted to Sol Invictus. White marble, 44 x 30 x 17 cm. Originally from via del Mare, Rome, now in the Collection of the Città del Vaticano, Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Profano. Inv. No. 9906. This image has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.
Fig. 10. Paolo Veneziano, *St John the Baptist*, c. 1366-68. Tempera on panel. Museo Correr, Venice. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Fondazione Musei Civici Venezia
## GROUP A: BASIC SHAPES

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## GROUP B: RECTANGLE, LOZENGE, SPADE AND VARIA

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## GROUP C: CIRCLE

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## GROUP D: CONCENTRIC PRONGS AND BARS (SIMPLE STARS)

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Fig. 139a. Giovanni Bellini, Pietà, c. 1453-55. Tempera and oil on panel. Museo Correr, Venice. Web Gallery of Art, http://www.wga.hu/ (2010), Dead Christ Supported by Two Angels (Pietà). Available at: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AGiovanni_bellini%2C_piet%C3%A0_del_museo_correr_01.jpg. (Accessed 5 January 2011)

Fig. 140. Giovanni Bellini, Dead Christ between St Mark and St Nicholas of Bari, c. 1472. Tempera and oil on canvas. Palazzo Ducale, Venice. Web Gallery of Art, http://www.wga.hu/ (no publication date given) Pietà. Available at: http://www.wga.hu/html_m/b/bellini/giovanni/1470-79/. (Accessed 5 January 2011)
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Fig. 146. Benedetto Montagna, *St. Benedict with Sts. Scholastica, Giustina, Maurus and Placid*, c. 1500-1520. Engraving, 280 x 229 mm. Registration no. 1842,0806.31. British Museum, London. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by ©Trustees of the British Museum
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Fig. 148a. Detail of Virgin’s halo and appellation. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted © Svetlana Tomeković
Fig. 149. Anonymous, *Virgin and Child*. Mosaic, apse. Duomo di Santa Maria Assunta, Torcello, Venice. Image from Svetlana Tomekovic Database of Byzantine Art, Index of Christian Art, Princeton University. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted © Svetlana Tomeković
Fig. 149a. Detail of Virgin and Child. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted © Svetlana Tomeković
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Fig. 153. Anonymous, *Lavanda del Bambino*, 705-706 AD. Mosaic, 60 x 54 cm. (Originally in the Old Basilica of St. Peter’s). Galleria di Clemente VIII, Grotte Vaticane, St. Peter’s, Rome. This image has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.
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Fig. 155. Different cross designs illustrated by Ellwood-Post, W., *Saints, Signs and Symbols: A concise dictionary*. Manchester: Morehouse-Barlow Co. [1962], 1974. This image has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

Fig. 156. Martin, S., (2007), *Base of Pillar of Acris, Piazza San Marco, Venice, showing three cross pattée arms*, [photograph]. In possession of author, Venice.
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Fig. 160. Anonymous, *The Blessing Christ.* Mosaic, north wall of eastern Basilica di San Marco, Venice. This image has been removed due to Copyright restrictions.

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Fig. 172. Giotto di Bondone, *The Lamentation*, 1304-06. Fresco, Scrovegni Chapel, Padua. Web Gallery of Art

http://www.wga.hu/ (no publication date given) *No. 36 Scenes from the Life of Christ: 20. Lamentation (before restoration).* Available at: http://www.wga.hu/index1.html

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Fig. 172 (i) Giotto Bondone, *The Cleansing of the Temple*, (No source provided), (2005), *Expulsion of the Money-changers from the Temple.* Available at: 

Fig. 173. Simone Martini. Detail of halo of *Annunciate Virgin*, (see Fig. 33)

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Fig. 177. Cima da Conegliano, *The Virgin and Child between St. Girolamo and St. Louis of Toulouse*, also known as *Madonna of the Orange Tree*, c. 1495. Oil on panel, 212 x 139 cm. Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice. Moty (2011), *Madonna Dell'Arancio tra i santi Ludovico di Tolosa e Girolamo*. Available at: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AConegliano_-_Madonna_Dell'Arancio_tra_i_santi_Ludovico_da_Tolosa_e_Girolamo.jpg. (Accessed 31 May 2011)
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