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Unknown Paintings by Pace Pace in Dalmatia and a Proposal for Gabriele Caliari

Certain facts about the painter Pace Pace could be summed up in a few sentences. He is first mentioned in the documents of Venetian *Fraglia de' pittori* in 1594, as Pase Pase de Felippo Bontecchi. His name appears there for the last time in 1617.¹ On 24 May 1598 Pace Pace acted as witness to the second draft of the last will of Benedetto Caliari (Verona, 1535/1536 – Venice, 1598), Paolo Veronese's younger brother. On 15 June of the same year he witnessed the wedding of Paolo's eldest son, Gabriele Caliari (Venice, 1568–1631) and Angela Galini. In the relative documents the name appears in the form of 'Pasin Pase', but already Ricciotti Bratti noticed that it was the same person as the Venetian painter, son of Filippo Bontecchi.² Marco Boschini records Pace Pace only as the author of the signed *Lavanda dei piedi* [Figs 2, 3 and 4] from the Venetian church of Santa Croce, while Antonio Maria Zanetti mentions also the altarpiece on the altar dedicated to the Virgin in Chiesa della Madonna de'Carmini [Fig. 5].³ The latter was praised by Gianantonio Moschini as being 'di buona tinta e vigorosa' although he dates it erroneously in 1692.⁴ Filippo De Boni in his *Biografia degli artisti* basically repeats the words of Moschini as does Francesco Zanotto in 1856.⁵

To Pace Pace's meagre catalogue Georg Gronau added the signed painting representing the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian which he obviously knew from the catalogues of the Venetian Accademia [Fig. 1].⁶ In 1944 Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-



1. Pace Pace, «Saint Sebastian», Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. Photo: Archivio fotografico, Polo Museale Veneziano

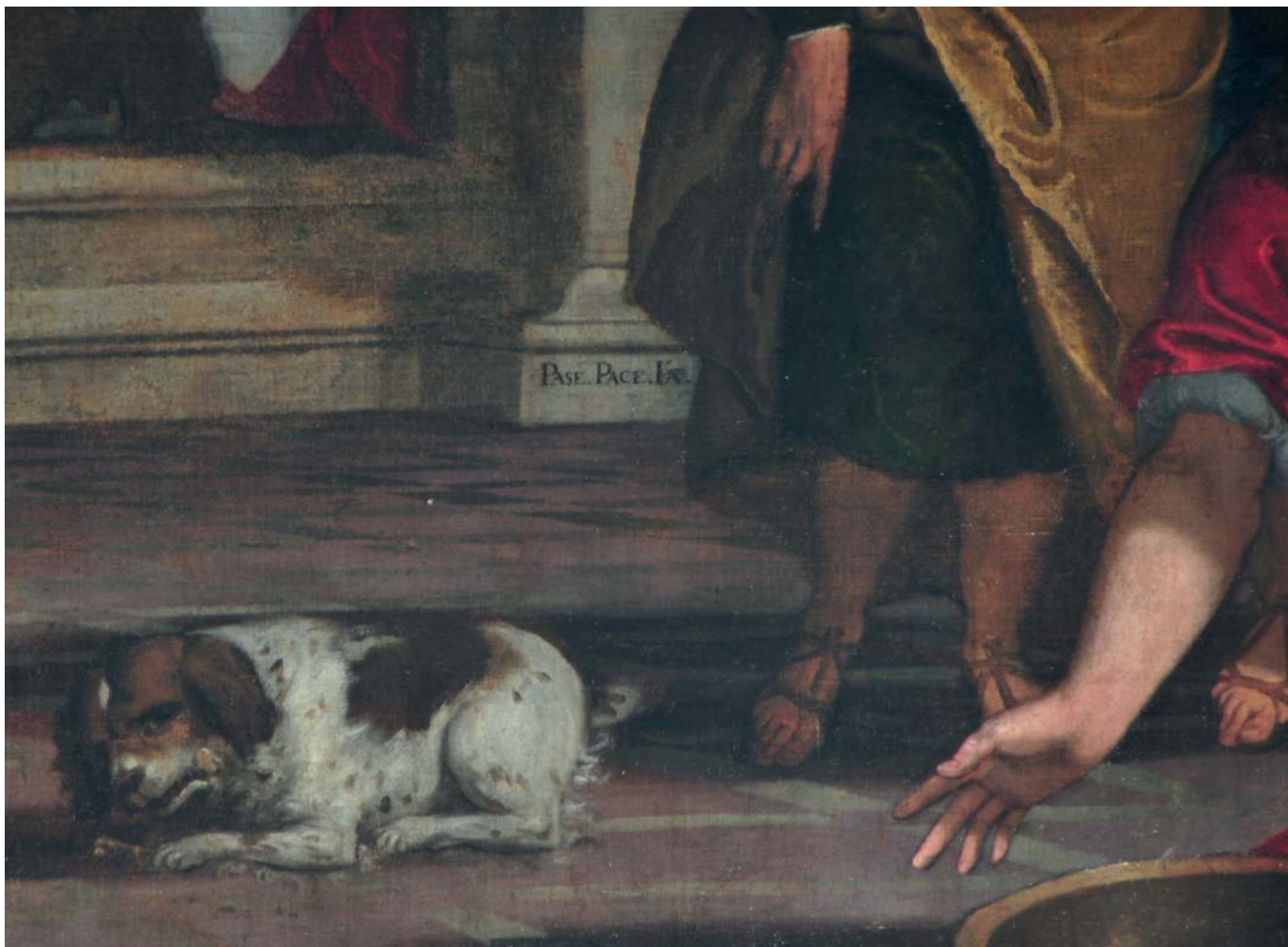


2. Pace Pace, «Christ Washing the Feet of the Disciples», Chioggia, La chiesa del Patrocinio di Maria Santissima (Chiesa dei Filippini).
Photo: Damir Tulić

Conrat attributed to Pace Pace four chiaroscuro drawings from Galleria degli Uffizi, on the basis of an old inscription with the artist's name (*Pase Pase*) which one of them bears.⁷ Such an inscription was mentioned already in 1673, in the catalogue of drawings owned by Cardinal Leopoldo de Medici and compiled by Filippo Baldinucci (Florence, c. 1624–1696), which convinced the scholars of the drawing's provenance and authorship.⁸ Furthermore, one of the four drawings that the Tietzes attribute to Pace Pace represents *Friedrich Barbarossa before the Anti-Pope Octavian*. It is a copy of one of the paintings by Paolo Veronese executed for Sala del Maggior Consiglio in Palazzo Ducale that was destroyed by fire in 1577. All these facts, together with Pace

Pace's appearance as witness to Benedetto's will and Gabriele's wedding, induced the scholars to place the young painter in 'the intimate circle of the Caliari family'.⁹

In her catalogue of Gallerie dell'Accademia, Sandra Moschini Marconi determined that, apart from the painting representing *Christ Washing the Feet of the Disciples*, the painting of *Saint Sebastian* came from the demolished Venetian church of Santa Croce, as well.¹⁰ Since the paintings were very probably originally executed for this edifice, they should be dated some years after 1583, when a thorough reconstruction of the church originally dating from the twelfth or, more likely, fourteenth century, commenced.¹¹ Both paintings were executed probably



3. Pace Pace, «Christ Washing the Feet of the Disciples» (detail of Fig. 2): signature

about a decade before *The Virgin in Glory with Saints and the Souls in Purgatory* from the church of Santa Maria dei Carmini that Annalisa Pandolfo recently dated between 1597 and 1604, according to the documents found in the Mariiegola of the Scuola dei Carmini.¹² Finally, Hans Dieter Huber dedicated to Pace Pace a short chapter in his book on Paolo Veronese's collaborators and workshop, basically summing up the most important known facts about the painter. The scholar counts him among the first generation of the masters that came of age in Paolo Veronese's *bottega*. Apart from Pace Pace, according to Huber, these were Francesco Montemezzano (Verona, 1555 – Venice, after 1602), Antonio Vassilacchi (Milos in Greece, 1556 – Venice, 1629), called Aliense, and Pietro Longhi (documented from

1570 to 1588). In Pace's paintings originating from the church of Santa Croce, as well as in drawings, Huber detects a strong mark of what he defines as 'Tintoretto's Mannerism', probably acquired through the influence of Antonio Vassilacchi. In *The Virgin in Glory with Saints and the Souls in Purgatory* he also notices the shift in Pace's style towards the colouristic vividness and accentuated expressiveness of the figures, typical for the products of Paolo's workshop in the late seventies and eighties of the sixteenth century.

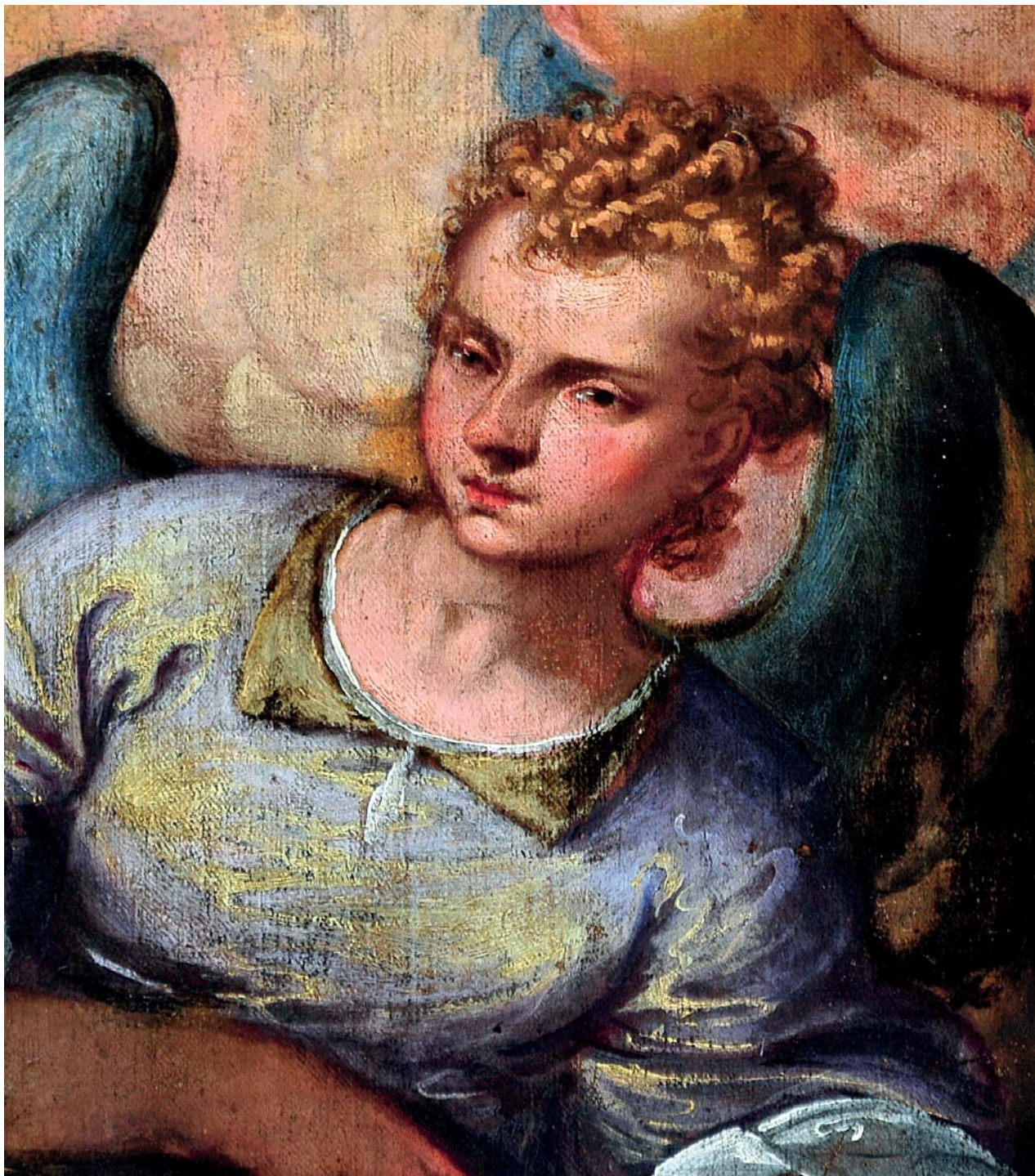
To such a rather meagre catalogue of Pace Pace, four new paintings could be added. They were made for the Franciscan church Gospa od Anđela (Our Lady of the Angels) that is situated on the slope of the Sveti Ilija (St Elias) mountain and



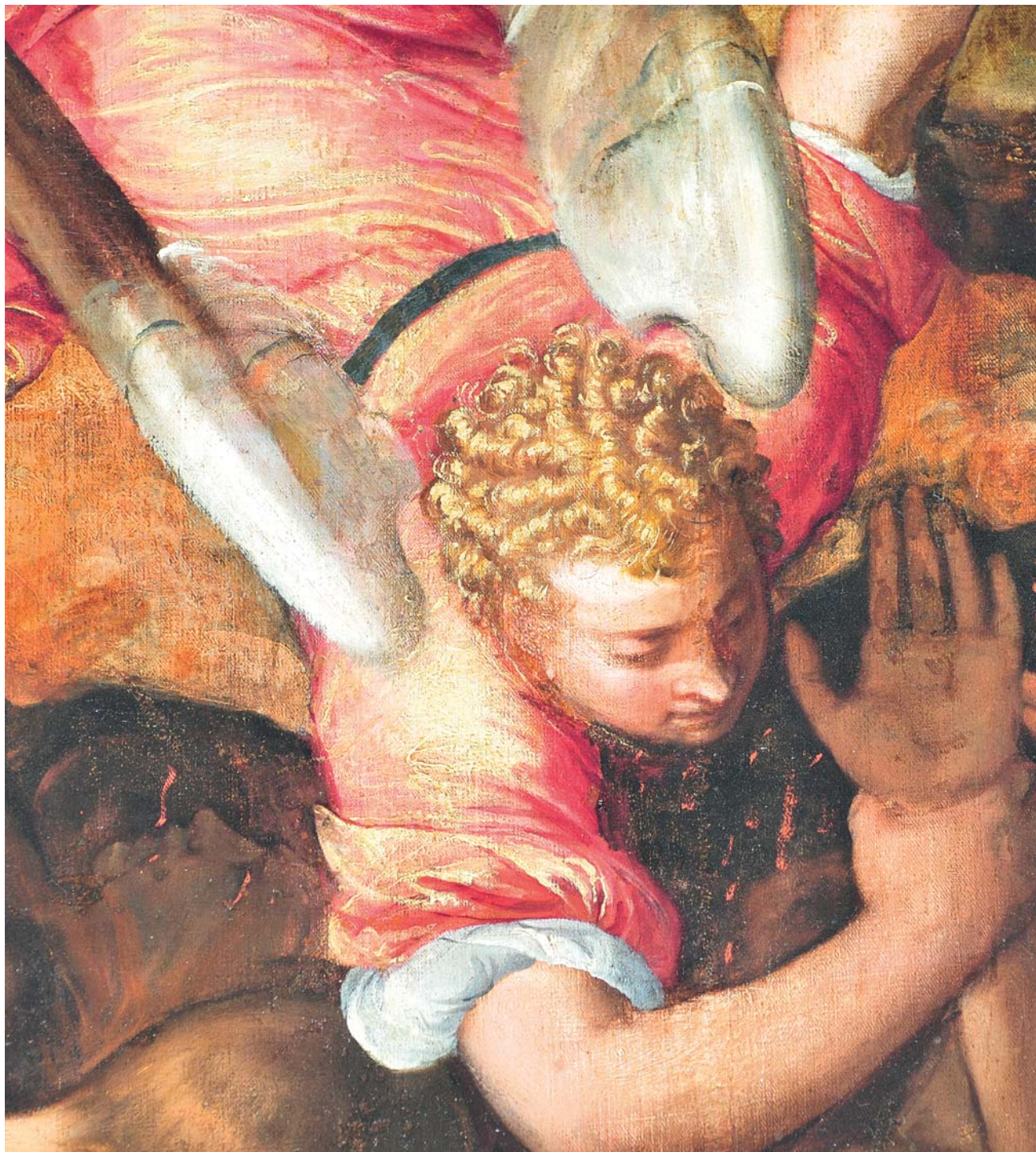
4. Pace Pace, «Christ Washing the Feet of the Disciples» (detail of Fig. 2), Chioggia, La chiesa del Patrocinio di Maria Santissima (Chiesa dei Filippini). Photo: Damir Tulić



5. Pace Pace, «The Virgin in Glory with Saints and the Souls in Purgatory», 1597–1604, Venice, Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Carmini. Photo: Damir Tulić



6. Pace Pace, «The Virgin in Glory with Saints and the Souls in Purgatory» (detail of Fig. 5), Venice, Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Carmini. Photo: Damir Tulić



7. Pace Pace, «The Virgin in Glory with Saints and the Souls in Purgatory» (detail of Fig. 5), Venice, Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Carmini.
Photo: Damir Tulić



8. Pace Pace, «The Virgin in Glory with Saints and the Souls in Purgatory» (detail of Fig. 5), Venice, Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Carmini. Photo: Damir Tulić



9. The High Altar of the Church of Our Lady of the Angels, 1599, Orebići, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia. Photo: Damir Tulić

above the small town of Orebić on the Dalmatian peninsula of Pelješac (Sabioncello). It was built on the territory of the Republic of Dubrovnik, overlooking the channel that divides the peninsula and the town of Korčula, at the time a very important Venetian port and stronghold on the homonymous island. The construction of the Franciscan church started immediately after 28 August 1479, when the representatives of the Republic of Dubrovnik, the noblemen Ivan Ranjina, Stjepan Gradić and Stjepan Džamanjić signed a contract with the fairly well documented Dubrovnik builder Mihoča Radišić.¹³ The existing main altar of the Gospa od Anđela church was erected in 1599 [Fig. 9]. Its wooden, heavily and repeatedly repainted structure was at least once renovated, so at present it is almost impossible to say whether it is of the Venetian or more local, that is, Dubrovnik origin. Apart from the altarpiece which is painted, rather archaically, on wood, the altar is furnished with four lateral panels representing standing saints, four small *predella* panels and three painted compositions in the attic. The inscription on the lateral panel representing Saint Anthony of Padua [Fig. 10] testifies not only to the date of the altar's execution but also to the name of the donor: Nicolai Flori, that is, Nikola Cvitković, member of a famous local family that gave many seafarers and ship owners. Like many other Dalmatian families of Croatian origin the Cvitkovićs Latinized their family name in the sixteenth century for commercial as well cultural reasons. It is quite probable that the donor of the main altar could be identified as *Nicolaus Florij dictus Zuietcovich* that appears as vice owner of the galleon of Rusko Rusković in 1597 and as 'Nicolo de Florio, Raguseo di Sabioncello' in the guise of the captain of a galleon that he hired in 1598 for the trip from the Island of Rhodes, via Dubrovnik, to Ancona. In 1616 he was at command of the galleon dedicated to Our Lady of Carmel and after having survived a sea storm near Ancona, he donated a votive painting to the same Franciscan church above Orebić that he already endowed with the main altar in 1599.¹⁴ Nikola Cvitković's choice of a Venetian painter, for what he perceived as a very important donation, testifies not only to the existence of his rather intense business relations with the capital of the Serenissima but also to the lack of painters or workshops in Dubrovnik, during the last decade of the sixteenth century, that could satisfy his demand.

The altarpiece representing the *Assumption of the Virgin* [Fig. 11] (216 × 123 cm) was first mentioned in 1769 by the Friar Ivan Grizostom Klešković who described it as an old painting by an unknown, but very skilled painter.¹⁵ In 1970 it was attributed to



10. Unknown painter, «Saint Antony of Padua» (detail of Fig. 9), 1599, high altar of the Church of Our Lady of the Angels, Orebić, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia. Photo: Damir Tulić



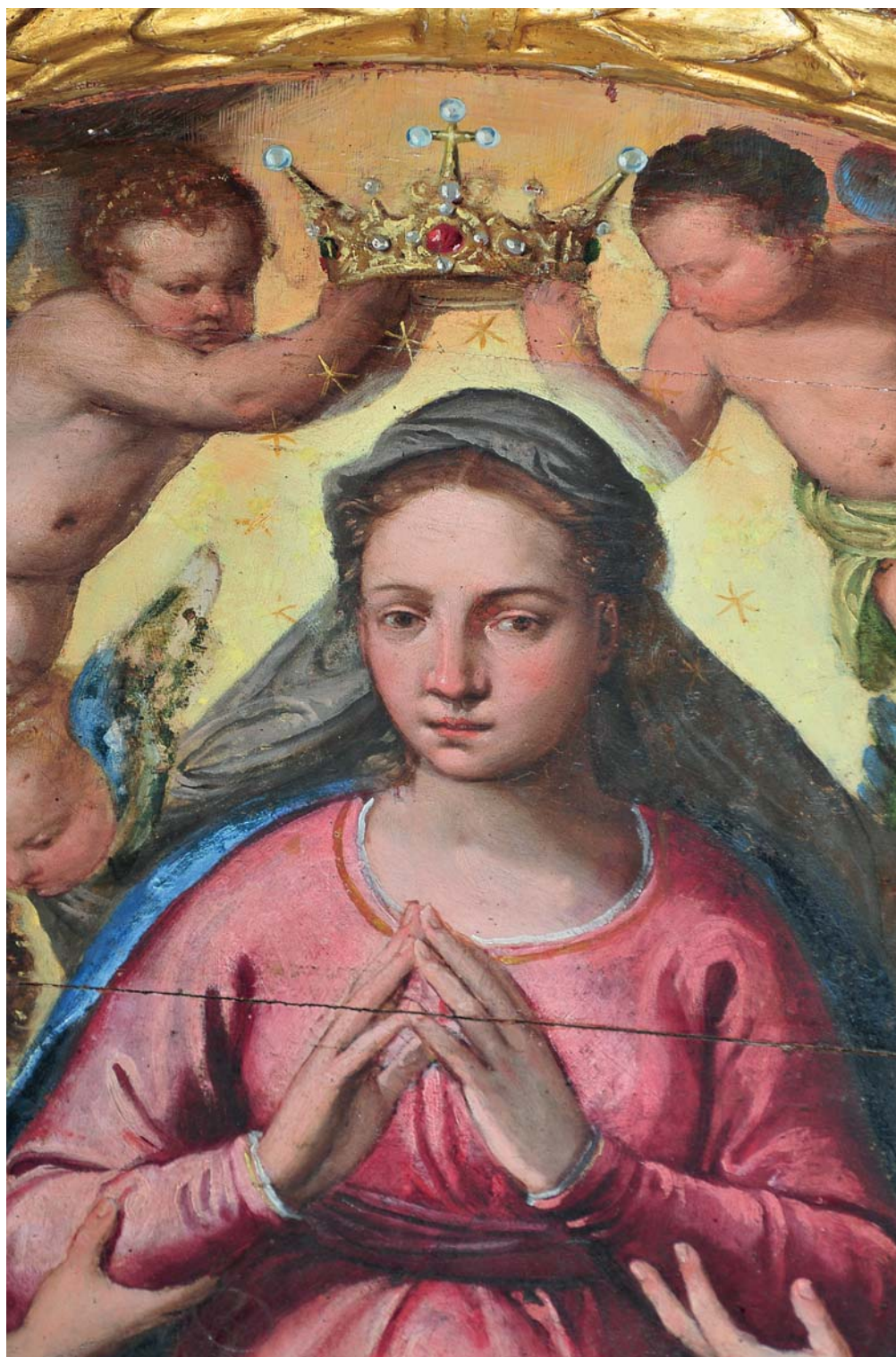
11. Pace Pace, «Our Lady of the Angels» (detail of Fig. 9), 1599, high altar of the Church of Our Lady of the Angels, Orebići, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia. Photo: Damir Tulić

Maffeo Verona (Verona, c. 1576 – Venice, 1618) by Cvito Fisković who credited the same author also with the smaller panels representing: *Saint Francis*, *Saint Peter*, *Saint Anthony of Padua*, *Franciscan Saint with the Donor*, *Saint Claire* and some other works.¹⁶ Finally, in 2009 Timothy Clifford attributed it to Pietro Malombra (Venice, 1556–1618).¹⁷

The specific and recurrent typology of the figures, their less than perfect anatomy and rigid gestures, the stylised drapery, but above all the strong, vibrant palette relying on pinks, yellows, crisp greens and azures, tie the *Assumption of the Virgin* to the known works by Pace Pace, especially to the altarpiece in Santa Maria dei Carmini.¹⁸ The difference between the two works, that is, the harshness of rather stylised forms, exaggerated *chiaroscuro* and loudness of colours in the Dalmatian painting, could be the result of various factors: the use of different supports, that is, canvas for the Venetian and wood for the Dalmatian painting, the discrepancy in the importance of the destination of the two altarpieces and, last but not least, manifestation of Pace Pace's creative fatigue, although the tightly packed, symmetric but highly dynamic composition of the *Assumption of the Virgin* reveals a competent master. In fact, although he is documented until 1617, the group of paintings from Orebići, if we assume that the altarpiece in the Carmini had been executed earlier, are the latest known works by the painter. Pace's later works may be of such inferior quality as to make them unrecognisable as the works by the author of the paintings from Santa Croce and the Carmini or he might have stopped painting at all, like Gabriele Calviari was reputed to have done.¹⁹

Predictably enough, the lateral, smaller panels on the main altar of the Gospa od Anđela church, that were painted by Pace Pace, that is *Saint Peter* [Fig. 15] and *Saint Francis* [Fig. 16] (both 99 × 37 cm), are of a rather higher quality than the altarpiece itself. The figures of saints are monumental and simple, their gestures are more natural and the toned down *chiaroscuro* adds to the plasticity of their forms, connecting them stylistically to Pace's paintings from Santa Croce. The influence of Veronese's works, as well as those of his closest collaborators, is here more obvious in the classic forms and postures as well as in the marked volumes of the figures that fill in the composition. The small, almost square (36 × 30 cm) panel [Fig. 17], representing the donor, Nikola Cvitković or Nicolai Flori, kneeling in front of a Franciscan saint, most likely Saint Bernardine of Siena, was originally set in the altar's *predella*. After what seems to be a rather radical renovation that probably took place in the nineteenth century, the image of the donor was replaced by another panel and has been on display in the convent's artistic collection ever since.

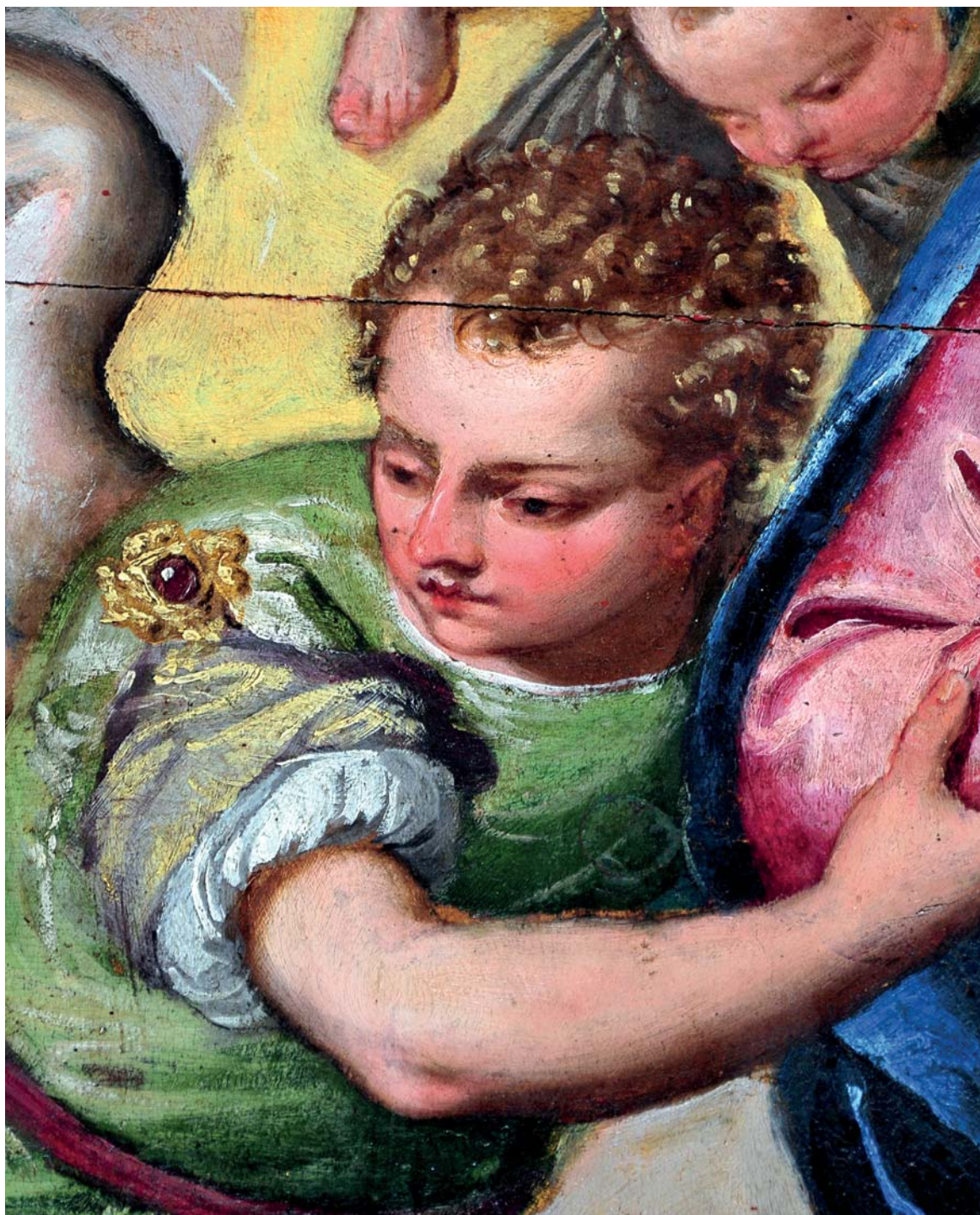
Judging by the quality and stylistic characteristics of Pace's best known work that also represents the peak of his career – the altarpiece in Santa Maria dei Carmini, it really should be dated before the paintings from Orebići. So the time of its execu-



12. Pace Pace, «Our Lady of the Angels» (detail of Fig. 9), Orebići, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia, Church of Our Lady of the Angels. Photo: Damir Tulić



13. Pace Pace, «Our Lady of the Angels» (detail of Fig. 9), Orebići, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia, Church of Our Lady of the Angels. Photo: Damir Tulić



14. Pace Pace, «Our Lady of the Angels» (detail of Fig. 9), Orebići, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia, Church of Our Lady of the Angels. Photo: Damir Tulić



15. Pace Pace, «Saint Peter» (detail of Fig. 9), 1599, high altar of the Church of Our Lady of the Angels, Orebići, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia. Photo: Damir Tulić



16. Pace Pace, «Saint Francis» (detail of Fig. 9), 1599, high altar of the Church of Our Lady of the Angels, Orebići, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia. Photo: Damir Tulić



17. Pace Pace, «The Donor with a Franciscan Saint (Saint Bernardine of Siena?)», 1599, Orebići, Pelješac Peninsula (Sabioncello), Croatia, Church of Our Lady of the Angels. Photo: Damir Tulić



18. Gabriele Caliari ?, «The Virgin and Child with Saint Anthony the Abbot, Saint Francis and the Donors», Venice, San Francesco della Vigna. Photo: Damir Tulić

tion can be narrowed down to the period between 1597 and 1599. After the execution of the rather unhandy and colouristically dull compositions, such as *Saint Sebastian* and *Christ Washing the Feet of the Disciples*, that should not be dated before the last years of the ninth decade of the sixteenth century, Pace's painting approaches the vividness and colouristic vigour of the products of *Heredes Pauli*. Such as manifested in the painting that has, up to now, been ascribed to Antonio Vassilacchi called l'Aliense, although its quality transcends the standard performance of the painter of Greek origin. It is situated on the right lateral wall of the famous Cappella Giustinian²⁰ in the Venetian church of San Francesco della Vigna and represents *The Virgin and Child with Saint Anthony the Abbot, Saint Francis and the Donors* [Fig. 18] (129 × 265 cm).²¹ It is rather improbable that this is the painting's original location, but, unfortunately, at present we know nothing of its provenance.²² A restoration, carried out in 1990, made its colouristic opulence, as well as subtle drawing and modelling of forms easily legible. The solemn, symmetric composition, built around the Virgin with fine lineaments, the rather smooth strokes that lack delicate highlights and that are unable to evoke the cobwebby quality of fabrics, the refined interplay of red and azure in contrast with tones of beige, brown and dark grey enlivened with mauve

and sienna, reveal that it was executed by Paolo's successors. The specific typology and the abundant use of the contour line indicate that it might have been painted by Gabriele Caliari, the least prominent among them, in the years that succeeded Paolo's death in 1588.²³ Some marked analogies exist between *The Virgin and Child with Saint Anthony the Abbot, Saint Francis and the Donors* and the signed Gabriele's altarpiece representing *The Immaculate Conception with Saint Anne* originally from the Paduan church of the Immaculate Conception (Immacolata Concezione) and now in the parish church in Liettoli near Padua.²⁴ They relate to the structure of the symmetrical composition, as well as the rather simplified rendering of volumes by plain *chiaroscuro*, folding of the drapery and details of the figures. The same solemnity, as well as typology, is present in Gabriele's *Marino Grimani Receiving the Persian Ambassador* (1603/1604) in the Sala delle Quattro Porte in the Ducal Palace in Venice.²⁵ In particular, the figure of Saint Anthony the Abbott on the painting from San Francesco della Vigna displays considerable similarities of physiognomy as well as in 'Morellian' details with the figure of the Doge Marino Grimani in the painting from Palazzo Ducale. Even more convincing analogies could be detected between the typology of the saints in the painting from Cappella Giustinian and several drawings from Louvre that



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19. Gabriele Caliri ?, «The Virgin and Child with Saint Anthony the Abbot, Saint Francis and the Donors» (detail of Fig. 18): the Virgin



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20, 21. Gabriele Caliri ?, «The Virgin and Child with Saint Anthony the Abbot, Saint Francis and the Donors» (details of Fig. 18): the donor and his coat-of-arms



22. Gabriele Caliari ?, «The Virgin and Child with Saint Anthony the Abbot, Saint Francis and the Donors» (detail of Fig. 18), Venice, San Francesco della Vigna. Photo: Damir Tulić

could be connected to the painting representing *Marino Grimani Receiving the Persian Ambassador*, especially the drawings representing the *Doge Marino Grimani* and *Male Figure in Front View and a Boy in Rear View*. Although some of these drawings bear the contemporary inscription 'Carlito Calari' or 'C. Calari', because of the fact that they must have been executed some time after painter's death in 1596, Hans Dieter Huber concluded that they were quite probably made by Gabriele.²⁶

The prominent stylistic and typological analogies between *The Virgin and Child with Saint Anthony the Abbot, Saint Francis and the Donors*, now on display in Cappella Giustinian (San Francesco della Vigna), and the works by Pace Pace additionally corroborate the possibility that it was executed by Gabriele Calari. It is quite possible that Pace Pace had strong artistic and more than only personal ties with Gabriele at whose wedding in 1598 he acted as witness.

¹ E. Favaro, *L'Arte dei pittori in Venezia e i suoi statuti*, Firenze, 1975, pp. 142, 151. See also H. D. Huber, *Paolo Veronese. Kunst als soziales System*, Munich, 2005, pp. 100, 431, nn. 152, 153.

² R. Bratti, 'Notizie d'arte e di artisti', *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, N.S., vol. XXX, part II, 1915, p. 451.

³ M. Boschini, *Le minere della pittura*, Venice, 1664, p. 501; A. M. Zanetti, *Descrizione di tutte le pubbliche pitture della città di Venezia...*, Venice, 1733, pp. 351, 429.

⁴ G. A. Moschini, *Guida per la città di Venezia all'amico delle Belle Arti*, Venice, 1815, p. 257.

⁵ F. De Boni, *Biografia degli artisti*, Venice, 1840, p. 729; F. Zanotto, *Nuovissima Guida di Venezia e delle isole della sua laguna*, Venice, 1856, p. 435. See also C. Donzelli, G. A. Pilo, *I pittori del Seicento veneto*, Florence, 1967, p. 306.

⁶ G. Gronau, in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. U. Thieme, F. Becker, vol. XXVI (Olivier – Pieris), Leipzig, 1932, p. 117.

⁷ H. Tietze, E. Tietze-Conrat, *The Drawings of the Venetian Painters in the 15th and 16th Centuries*, New York, 1944, p. 192.

⁸ P. Barocchi, 'Il registro dei disegni degli Uffizi di Filippo Baldinucci', in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Ugo Procacci*, vol. II, Milan, 1977, p. 575; Huber, *Paolo Veronese*, p. 432, n. 162.

⁹ Tietze, Tietze-Conrat, *The Drawings*, p. 192; Huber, *Paolo Veronese*, p. 103.

¹⁰ Both paintings were handed over to Accademia on 28 November 1838 from the state-owned deposit in the church of San Giovanni Evange-

lista, although Pace's *Saint Sebastian* was confused with the painting of the same subject by Antonio Vassilacchi, called Aliense, originating from Chiesa delle Vergini. Already in 1901 the *Christ Washing the Feet of the Disciples* was given on loan to Chiesa del Patrocinio di Maria Santissima (Filippini) in Chioggia, where it can still be seen on the counter-façade of the church, immediately above the entrance. The *Saint Sebastian* has been kept in the deposit of Gallerie dell'Accademia. S. Moschini Marconi, *Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia. Opere d'arte del secolo 16*. Rome, 1962, cat. nos 242, 243, pp. 149–150.

¹¹ A. Zorzi, *Venezia scomparsa*, Milan, 2001, p. 218. The new church of Santa Croce was consecrated in 1600.

¹² The altarpiece has been variously dated, between 1592 and 1595, by different authors. Although the Confraternity – Scuola dei Carmini, of which Pace Pace himself was a founder and a member – obtained permission to erect the altar in 1594, in 1597 its construction hadn't started yet, due to the lack of money. A. Pandolfo, 'Note per i pittori Pace Pace, Pietro Liberi e Gaspare Diziani nella chiesa di Santa Maria dei Carmini a Venezia', *Arte veneta*, XLIX, 1996, pp. 66–68. See also L. Moretti, S. Branca Savini, *Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Carmini. Arte e devozione*, Venice, 1995, pp. 5, 18. For the iconography of Pace Pace's altarpiece see A. Niero, *La chiesa dei Carmini*, Venice, 1960, pp. 21, 39–40. According to Umberto Franzoi (*Scuola Grande dei Carmini. Devozione e Carità. Giambattista Tiepolo*, Ponzano Veneto, 2006, p. 48), Pace Pace donated his painting to the Confraternity.

¹³ C. Fisković, 'Franjevačka crkva i samostan u Orebićima', in *Spomenica Gospe anđela u Orebićima 1470 – 1970*, ed. J. V. Velnić, Omiš, 1970, pp. 40–41.

¹⁴ Fisković, 'Franjevačka crkva', pp. 59–62.

- 15 Ivan Grizostom Klešković was the Guardian of the Franciscan Friary above Orebič during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. In a letter to the Jesuit priest Ivan Marija Matijašević dated in December 1769 he describes the church and the monastery, their history, as well as furnishings. The content of the letter is recorded in the manuscript *Memorie storiche su Ragusa raccolte dal P. Gian-Maria Mattei della compagnia di Gesù (Zibaldone III, p. 526)*, kept in the library of the Franciscan Friary (Mala braća) in Dubrovnik.
- 16 Fisković, 'Franjevačka crkva', p. 59. Such an attribution proposal was accepted by Vladimir Marković in *Zlatno doba Dubrovnika. XV. i XVI. stoljeće*, ed. V. Marković, M. Šimat, I. Čukman Nikolić, Zagreb, 1987, cat. no. SI/48, p. 363 and by A. Rizzi in *Guida della Dalmazia*, vol. II, Trieste, 2010, p. 443.
- 17 T. Clifford, 'Italy and Dalmatia: Architecture, Sculpture, Painting and Decorative Arts, c. 1400–1800', in *Croatia. Aspects of Art, Architecture and Cultural Heritage*, London, 2009, p. 147.
- 18 Pandolfo, 'Note per i pittori', p. 68.
- 19 C. Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte*, Venice, 1648, ed. D. von Hadeln, 2 vols, Berlin, 1914–1924, vol. I, p. 361.
- 20 On the famous painting by Paolo Veronese situated on the altar in Cappella Giustinian, see P. Humfrey, 'La pala Giustinian a S. Francesco della Vigna. Contesto e committenza', in *Nuovi studi su Paolo Veronese*, ed. M. Gemin, Venice, 1990, pp. 299–307.
- 21 S. Onda, *La chiesa di San Francesco della Vigna. (Guida artistica)*, Venice, 2003, p. 142.
- 22 The coat of arms with the initials 'Z F D', displayed in the bottom left corner of the painting, behind the middle-aged donor does not belong to the Venetian *blasonario*.
- 23 On Gabriele Caliari's life and work, see W. R. Rearick, *Il disegno veneziano del Cinquecento*, Milan, 2001, pp. 179–180, and Huber, *Paolo Veronese*, pp. 114–127.
- 24 L. Crosato Larcher, 'Per Gabriele Caliari', *Arte veneta*, XIX, 1965, pp. 174–175; R. Fontana, '"La Vergine e Sant'Anna" di Gabriele Caliari', in *Venezia e Venezia*, ed. F. Borin, Padua, 2003, pp. 69–77.
- 25 Huber, *Paolo Veronese*, p. 122.
- 26 Huber, *Paolo Veronese*, pp. 123–125.