

UMETNOSTNOZGODOVINSKI INŠTITUT FRANCETA STELETA ZRC SAZU

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## ACTA HISTORIAE ARTIS SLOVENICA

Illuminating the Soul, Glorifying the Sacred

Religious Confraternities and the Visual Arts  
in Early Modern Europe

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# The Artistic Patronage of the Confraternities of Schiavoni/Illyrians in Venice and Rome

## Proto-National Identity and the Visual Arts

Jasenka Gudelj, Tanja Trška

Early modern immigrant communities across Europe often organized themselves in confraternities, creating durable institutions based on the criteria of common origin, faith, and language. These “national” confraternities became a reference point for immigrants, pilgrims, or students of the same origin. The churches, chapels, hospices, and houses these foreigners maintained embedded them into the host society and urban space.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the shape and embellishment of their buildings were expected to reflect both the “otherness” of the group and their intention to be recognized by local observers, thus creating a particular visual identity. Moreover, these groups were also used as more or less formal diplomatic networks, highlighting tendencies in European politics.

Given its proximity and the importance of its trading centers, universities, and pilgrimage sites, as well as its relative safety from Ottoman invasion, Italy was a destination for numerous men and women arriving from what are now the territories of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro.<sup>2</sup> They formed confraternities with the appellative “Schiavoni” or “Illirici”. *Schiavoni*

<sup>1</sup> A large-scale comparative study of national confraternities and their patronage in Europe is still lacking. Confraternal grouping and patronage of churches has been identified as one of the key aspects of foreigners’ lives in early modern European cities: see *Comunità forestiere e “nationes” nell’Europa dei secoli XIII–XVI* (ed. Giovanna Petti Balbi), Pisa-Napoli 2001; Claudia CONFORTI, Maria SANCHEZ DE MADARIAGA, Churches and Confraternities, *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe. 2: Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe 1400–1700* (eds. Donatella Calabi, Stephen Turk Christiansen), Cambridge 2007, pp. 349–363. The phenomenon of national confraternities in Italy had already been mentioned by Christopher F. BLACK, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge 1989, pp. 43–45. Recent anthologies, such as *Identità e rappresentazione. Le chiese nazionali a Roma 1450–1650* (eds. Alexander Koller, Susanne Kubersky-Piredda), Roma 2015, and *Chiese e “nationes” a Roma. Dalla Scandinavia ai Balcani (secoli XV–XVIII)* (eds. Antal Molnár, Giovanni Pizzorusso, Matteo Sanfilippo), Roma 2017 (Bibliotheca Academia Hungariae – Roma. Studia, 6), concentrate on the proto-national question in Rome and include some essays on confraternities. Other edited collections concentrate more on all types of confraternities, their patronage and ritual, see, for example, *Confraternities in the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy. Ritual, Spectacle, Image* (eds. Barbara Wisch, Diane Cole Ahl), Cambridge-New York 2000; *Brotherhood and Boundaries/Fraternità e barriere* (eds. Stefania Pastore, Adriano Prosperi, Nicholas Terpstra), Pisa 2011; *Space, Place, and Motion. Locating Confraternities in the Late Medieval and Early Modern City* (ed. Diana Bullen Presciutti), Leiden 2017, with bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> On Schiavoni/Illyrian migrations to Italy and their institutions, see Lovorka ČORALIĆ, *Hrvatska prekomorska iseljavanja i kolonije na zapadnoj jadranskoj obali, Hrvatska/Italija. Stoljetne veze. Povijest, književnost, likovne umjetnosti* (ed. Natka Badurina), Zagreb 1997, pp. 41–63; Ratko PERIĆ, *Les Instituts Croates et Illyriens en Europe,*

derives from the Latin *sclavus* and maintains a derogatory nuance, while *Illirici* stems from the humanist use of the name of the pre-Roman inhabitants of the Eastern Adriatic coast, and served to ennoble the reputation of the area and its peoples. These Slavic brotherhoods are documented from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century in Rome, Venice, Udine, and in the smaller centers of the Marche region. Despite their significance, a comparative study of their patronage—most importantly, in terms of the construction of self-defining visual narratives—has escaped the attention of scholars.<sup>3</sup>

Two particularly important and long-lived Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternities were located in Venice and in Rome, with their residences adorned with magnificent painted cycles. The Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone in Venice<sup>4</sup> is mainly known for Vittore Carpaccio's narrative cycle (1502–1507), relocated from the first floor of the Hospice of St. Catherine, the Scuola's first provisory seat, to the newly reconstructed mid-16<sup>th</sup>-century meetinghouse, which continued to be embellished in the following centuries (fig. 1).<sup>5</sup> The Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternity in Rome maintained the hospital and the church now known as San Girolamo dei Croati, rebuilt between 1586 and 1591 and decorated with a fresco cycle executed by a team of painters led by Giovanni Guerra (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup> As in Venice, the confraternity continued



1. Interior of the lower hall, Scuola di San Giorgio e Trifone, Venice

*Croatie. Le temps du baroque et des lumières. Trésors d'art et de culture XVII<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (eds. Ivan Golub, Ivan Supičić), Rennes 2011, pp. 149–154; *Visualizing Past in a Foreign Country. Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternities and Colleges in Early Modern Italy in Comparative Perspective* (eds. Giuseppe Capriotti, Francesca Coltrinari, Jasenka Gudelj), Macerata 2018 (*Il Capitale Culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage*, Supplementi, 7).

<sup>3</sup> On Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternities in the Marche and their patronage, see Giuseppe CAPRIOTTI, Defining the Boundaries of the Lawful Cult. History of an Adriatic Icon, *IKON*, 9, 2016, pp. 243–252; Giuseppe CAPRIOTTI, The Cauldron of St. Venera and the Comb of St. Blaise. Cult and Iconography in the Confraternities of Albanians and Schiavoni in Fifteenth-Century Ascoli Piceno, *Confraternitas*, 27/1–2, 2016, pp. 30–45; Francesca COLTRINARI, Loreto as an Illyrian Shrine. The Artistic Heritage of the Illyrian Confraternities and College in Loreto and Recanati, *Confraternitas*, 27/1–2, 2016, pp. 46–61; Francesca COLTRINARI, Gli schiavoni e la Santa Casa di Loreto fra '400 e '500. La confraternita, gli architetti, le maestranze e i materiali fra tradizioni storiografiche e verifiche documentarie, *Ars Adriatica*, 7, 2017, pp. 181–194; Giuseppe CAPRIOTTI, The Painting Owned by the Schiavoni Confraternity of Ancona and the Wooden Compartments with Stories of St Blaise by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro, *Visualizing Past* 2018 (n. 2), pp. 187–209; Francesca COLTRINARI, Some Notes on Confraternities, Immigrants and Artistic Production of the “Illyrians” in the Marche. The Unknown Master Piero di Giorgio da Sebenico in Fermo (1462), *Visualizing Past* 2018 (n. 2), pp. 165–185; and the essay by Giuseppe Capriotti in the present volume.

<sup>4</sup> “Scuola” is the Venetian term for a confraternity, although the city's systematic regulation of these brotherhoods was very different from the Roman model. The official name of the confraternity as it exists today is Scuola Dalmata dei Santi Giorgio e Trifone, although it was founded under the name Scuola di San Giorgio e Trifone. In literature it has been given diverse names: Scuola di San Giorgio e Trifone, Scuola degli Schiavoni, Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Scuola di San Giorgio degli Illirici.

<sup>5</sup> For a survey of the artistic heritage of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, see *Le Scuole di Venezia* (ed. Terisio Pignatti), Milano 1984, pp. 99–118, with relevant bibliography.

<sup>6</sup> On San Girolamo dei Croati, see Giovanni BIASOTTI, Josip BUTKOVIĆ, *San Girolamo degli Schiavoni in Roma*, Roma 1925; Giorgio MAGJEREC, *Istituto di S. Girolamo degli Illirici 1453–1953*, Rome 1953; Giorgio KOKŠA, *S. Girolamo degli Schiavoni (chiesa nazionale croata)*, Roma 1971; Maurizio CAPERNA, *Influssi lombardi a Roma*.





2. Interior, *San Girolamo dei Croati, Rome*

to adorn the church and its many chapels as well as the hospital.<sup>7</sup> These visual testimonies of programs promoted by the two most prominent early modern Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternities in Italy have never been thoroughly compared, mostly owing to the obvious differences in their urban, political, and artistic contexts. Nevertheless, the shared origin of their members does provide a critical platform on which to base a discussion and comparison of Schiavoni visual strategies to differentiate themselves in the highly competitive environments of cosmopolitan and artistic centers, such as Venice and Rome.

### The Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternity in Rome

Originally, the Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternity in the Eternal City was situated in the Borgo, but in 1453, Pope Nicholas V conceded permission to certain members of the Slavic community to found a hospice for national pilgrims at Ripetta, next to the derelict church of Santa Marina, enabling them to transform it into their national church dedicated to St. Jerome.<sup>8</sup> Soon after, a national confraternity was mentioned in documents as the responsible body for the hospital's maintenance, sealing the connection of the Schiavoni with the Ripetta area near the Tiber. The papal concession, issued shortly after the successful Jubilee of 1450, coincided with the siege and fall of Constantinople in 1453, and can be understood in two ways. First, as a symbolic act of foreign policy directed towards the inhabitants of the region directly endangered by the Ottoman invasions. The confraternity's connections with the Bosnian court in exile after the Ottoman conquest of the regime in 1463 are significant in this sense.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the concession was part of an urban policy to gentrify a

La chiesa di S. Girolamo degli Schiavoni, opera di Martino Longhi, il Vecchio, *Atti del XXIII Congresso di storia dell'architettura. L'architettura a Roma e in Italia 1580–1621*, 1 (ed. Gianfranco Spagnesi), Roma 1989 (Atti del Congresso Nazionale di Storia dell'Architettura, 23/1), pp. 219–225; *Chiesa Sistina*, 1–2 (ed. Ratko Perić), Roma 1989–1990; Maurizio CAPERNA, La Chiesa di San Girolamo dei Croati (già 'degli Schiavoni' o 'degli Illirici'), *Storia architettura*, 1, 1992, pp. 255–285; Rosanna BARBELLINI AMIDEI, San Girolamo dei Croati, *Roma sacra*, 2/6, 1996, pp. 43–48; Milan IVANIŠEVIĆ, Hrvatska crkva Svetoga Jeronima u Rimu, *U križu je spas. Zbornik u čast nadbiskupa-metropolita mons. Ante Jurića* (eds. Marin Škarica, Ante Mateljan), Split 1997, pp. 407–446; Zvonimir SERŠIĆ, *San Girolamo dei Croati. Viaggio nell'arte*, Roma 2011; Jasenka GUDELJ, San Girolamo dei Croati a Roma. Gli Schiavoni e il cantiere sistino, *Identità* 2015 (n. 1), pp. 297–325; Jasenka GUDELJ, The Hospital and Church of the Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternity in Early Modern Rome, *Confraternitas*, 27/1–2, 2016, pp. 5–29, with bibliography.

<sup>7</sup> GUDELJ 2016 (n. 6).

<sup>8</sup> On the origins of the confraternity, see Jure BOGDAN, 550 godina hrvatskih ustanova svetog Jeronima u Rimu, *Obnovljeni život*, 58/4, 2003, pp. 479–489; Jadranka NERALIĆ, Il ruolo delle istituzioni illiriche di Roma nella formazione della nazione croata, *Chiese* 2017 (n. 1), pp. 133–160; Jasenka GUDELJ, San Girolamo degli Schiavoni/Illyrians/Croats in *Roma communis patria*. Constructing National Identity Through Papal Interventions, *RIHA Journal*, in press, with bibliography.

<sup>9</sup> The Bosnian queen dowager, Katarina Kotromanović Kosača (1424–1478), came to Rome in 1467 and lived with

degraded area around the Mausoleum of Augustus that would serve pilgrims from South-Slavic historical lands.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the immigrants in the Papal States from the extensive territories of the Republic of Venice, the lands of the Hungarian and/or Habsburg Crown, the Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik), and parts of the Ottoman empire, now organized as the Schiavoni confraternity, primarily hosted pilgrims of the *natio*, who also represented a permanent, albeit fluid, tie with the homeland. Moreover, the brotherhood, presided over by a president, two guardians, and two syndics, helped the sick, the impoverished, students, poor marriageable girls, and single or widowed women of the nation.<sup>11</sup>

One of the facets of their increasingly public identity was to change the titular saint of what was fast becoming a Schiavoni “national” church. The cult of St. Jerome had become widespread in Rome after the arrival of the Church Father’s relics in Santa Maria Maggiore at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but it seems that no church was dedicated to him before Pope Nicholas’s donation to the Schiavoni.<sup>12</sup> The cult of Jerome as the national saint of the Schiavoni/Illyrians was based on his much-discussed birthplace of Stridon, on the border of Dalmatia. For example, Pier Paolo Vergerio (1370–1444) and Biondo Flavio (1392–1463) placed Stridon in Istria, while Dalmatian humanists Marko Marulić (1450–1524) and Vinko Pribojević (?–after 1532) recognized it in Skradin, near Šibenik.<sup>13</sup> The two opinions, although concurring that Jerome was born on the Eastern coast of the Adriatic, were not without wider political implications. Biondo, writing in 1453, the year of the endowment to the Schiavoni in Rome, included Istria among the regions of his *Italia illustrata*, but he also confirmed the attribution of the Glagolitic alphabet and the translation of the Holy Scriptures to Jerome, thus triggering centuries-long discussions on the ethnicity of the saint. Nevertheless,

her court under the protection of Pope Sixtus IV. She left a relic of the Holy Cross and some liturgical books and objects to the church of St. Jerome. One of her ladies in waiting, Paola Mirković, was buried in that church while the other, Marija Mišljenović, bequeathed a house for the poor women of the nation, see NERALIĆ 2017 (n. 8), pp. 139–140. The importance of the last Slavic ruler in the region and the papal support of the exiled court for the church of St. Jerome cannot be overestimated.

<sup>10</sup> GUDELJ 2016 (n. 6), pp. 6–9.

<sup>11</sup> The Italian terms are *presidente*, *guardiani*, and *sindici*; see Josip BURIĆ, *Iz prošlosti hrvatske kolonije u Rimu*, Roma 1966, pp. 17–20; GUDELJ 2016 (n. 6), pp. 5–29; NERALIĆ 2017 (n. 8), p. 150. The organization of Venetian *scuole piccole* was somewhat different (see Francesca ORTALLI, «Per salute delle anime e delli corpi». *Scuole piccole a Venezia nel tardo Medioevo*, Venezia 2001, pp. 17–28); the Schiavoni confraternity was governed by a Guardian Grande (governor, in other confraternities called the *gastaldo*) aided by a Vicario (assistant and deputy to the Guardian Grande), Guardian da Matin (supervisor of ceremonies), Scrivano (bookkeeper), ten Decani (executive officers) and a varying number of Sindaci (officers), appointed for specific tasks, such as the supervision of construction sites, legal matters, etc. See Guido PEROCCO, *Carpaccio nella Scuola di S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni*, Venezia 1964, pp. 20–21.

<sup>12</sup> GUDELJ (n. 8), in press.

<sup>13</sup> Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (BAV), Giovanni d’Andrea, Hierononymianus, Ottob. Lat. 480, 16: *locus, quo sepulti sunt parentes Hieronymi, hodie vocatur Sdregna in diocesi Triestina et ibi est ecclesia Beati Hieronymi tamen pauperima et dicitur quod olim vocabatur Strido*; published in John M. McMANAMON, *Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder and Saint Jerome*, Tempe, Arizona 1999, p. 199: n. 1. See also Darko NOVAKOVIĆ, Novi Marulić. Vita divi Hieronimi, *Colloquia Maruliana*, 3, 1994, pp. 5–24; *Blondo Flavio’s Italia Illustrata. 1: Northern Italy* (ed. Catherine Jones Castner), Binghamton, New York 2005, pp. 224, 226; Vinko GRUBIŠIĆ, Trojica humanista o rodnome mjestu svetog Jeronima. Flavio Biondo, Marko Marulić i José De Espinoza De Sigüenza, *Colloquia Maruliana*, 17, 2008, pp. 227–298; Julia VERKHOLANTSEV, *The Slavic Letters of St. Jerome. The History of the Legend and its Legacy, or How the Translator of the Vulgate became an Apostle of the Slavs*, DeKalb, Illinois 2014; Ines IVIĆ, Jerome Comes Home. The Cult of St. Jerome in Late Medieval Dalmatia, *Hungarian Historical Review*, 5/3, 2016, pp. 618–644; Ines IVIĆ, The Making of a National Saint. Reflections on the Formation of the Cult of Saint Jerome in the Eastern Adriatic, *Visualizing Past* 2018 (n. 2), pp. 247–278.

Biondo clearly embraced the idea of the Church Father as author of the alphabet and the translation, much promoted by the Eastern Adriatic priests who supported liturgy in the Slavonic language and wanted to upgrade the status of the script.<sup>14</sup> This attribution, concomitant with the popularization of the image of St. Jerome as scholar-saint in the late 14<sup>th</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>15</sup> was dear to the humanist Pope Nicholas, and was certainly an important element in the self-image of the immigrant community in question. Therefore, the papal endowment became an official response of the Curia to strategies promoting Jerome as a “national” saint of the Schiavoni, although this never became the sole identity of the Church Father throughout Italy.

### The Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni in Venice

On the other hand, the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni was founded in 1451 in the church of St. John the Baptist (San Giovanni Battista del Tempio), when it was still held by the Venetian branch of the Knights Hospitaller. The Scuola gathered immigrants from the Dalmatian territories under Venetian rule and provided charitable support to “Dalmati, et altri Schiavoni”<sup>16</sup> residing in Venice. The choice of the Scuola’s patron saints, as one would expect, was motivated by the original hometowns of the confraternity members, many of them from Antivari (Bar) and Cattaro (Kotor), towns that sought heavenly protection from Sts. George and Tryphon, respectively. Both saints had special significance for immigrants from Cattaro, whose numbers increased drastically in the years around the foundation of the Scuola di San Giorgio e Trifone.<sup>17</sup> Tryphon was venerated as the official patron saint of Cattaro, who replaced the town’s earlier patron St. George, following the translation of his relics from Asia Minor to Cattaro in 809,<sup>18</sup> while devotion to St. George remained embedded in local ceremonial practices related to celebrations dedicated to St. Tryphon.<sup>19</sup> Far from Venetian Dalmatia, but still within the same state, St. George assumed special, even political significance appropriate to the Scuola’s adopted home. As one of the most renowned warrior saints, George shared the iconographic features of an armor-clad warrior slaying a dragon with Theodore, whose veneration in Venice was second only to that of St Mark. The importance of St. George and

<sup>14</sup> The Glagolitic script was invented by the 9<sup>th</sup>-century Salonico brothers, Sts. Constantine-Cyril and Methodius. The pair gained popularity in the Orthodox lands, but was not entirely accepted by the Catholic Church; see VERKHOLANSTEV 2014 (n. 13).

<sup>15</sup> Bernhards RIDDERBOS, *Saint and Symbol. Images of Saint Jerome in Early Italian Art*, Groningen 1984; Eugene Franklin RICE, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, Baltimore-London 1985; Daniel RUSSO, *Saint Jerome en Italie*, Paris-Roma 1987; Christiane WIEBEL, *Askese und Endlichkeitsdemut in der italienischen Renaissance*, Weinheim 1988; Nicholas TERPSTRA, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion in Renaissance Bologna*, Cambridge 2002, pp. 19–23.

<sup>16</sup> Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASV), Provveditori di comun, Reg. P, Matricole delle scuole-Castello, Matricola della Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, fol. 582v. Key contributions to the history of the Scuola remain: Rodolfo PALLUCCHINI, *I teleri del Carpaccio in San Giorgio degli Schiavoni*, Milano 1961 (with an Appendix by Guido Perocco); PEROCCO 1964 (n. 11), and numerous studies by Lovorka ČORALIĆ, collected and reprinted in *U gradu svetoga Marka. Povijest hrvatske zajednice u Mlecima*, Zagreb 2001, and Lovorka ČORALIĆ, *Hrvatski pri-nosi mletačkoj kulturi. Odabrane teme*, Zagreb 2003.

<sup>17</sup> Lovorka ČORALIĆ, *Iseljenici iz grada Kotora u Mlecima XV.–XVIII. st.*, *Povijesni prilozi*, 17, 1998, p. 134.

<sup>18</sup> On the veneration of St. Tryphon, see Ivanka PETROVIĆ, *Hagiografska tradicija sv. Trifuna i bokeljskih svetaca, Zagovori svetom Tripunu. Blago Katorske biskupije. Povodom 1200 obljetnice prijenesa moći svetoga Tripuna u Kotor* (ed. Radoslav Tomić), Galerija Klovičevi dvori, Zagreb 2009, pp. 38–46.

<sup>19</sup> Valentina ŽIVKOVIĆ, *Religioznost i umetnost u Kotoru. XIV–XVI vek*, Beograd 2010, pp. 147–148.

his association with St. Theodore is attested by the mosaics of St. Mark's Basilica, where the two saints appear side by side in three scenes, even though George's popularity and the longevity of his cult did not earn him official recognition comparable to that of Theodore.<sup>20</sup> In addition to locally flavored, Cattaro-related reasons and his obvious suitability in the context of Venetian religious life, the choice of George as patron saint of the Dalmatian community, comprising predominantly sailors and maritime soldiers, must have seemed appropriate in light of the saint's image of a prototypical ideal Christian knight and protector against misfortunes at sea. Almost as a confirmation of that choice and a contribution to the visibility of the recently founded Scuola, in December 1462, the veneration of George in Venice was reinvigorated with the arrival of the relic of the saint's head from the island of Aegina, which was deposited in the church of San Giorgio Maggiore.<sup>21</sup> Four decades later, the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni obtained a precious relic of its own. In 1502, Paolo (Polo) Valaresso, the Venetian nobleman and military commander of Corone in Peloponnese, presented the Dalmatian confraternity with a relic of St. George that had belonged to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who had died in Corone.<sup>22</sup> The relic's donation has long been associated with Carpaccio's narrative cycle, either as the occasion that prompted its commission,<sup>23</sup> or as the event that marked the end of the artist-patron relationship between Carpaccio and commissioner Paolo Valaresso, as proposed by Augusto Gentili, who argued that the *teleri* (paintings on canvas) dedicated to St. George were already in place at the time of the relic's arrival.<sup>24</sup> Associating the relic with such a high-ranking church official as the Patriarch of Jerusalem (although unnamed) might well have been perceived as both authenticating and enhancing the status of the donation, allowing both the noble Venetian donor and confraternal recipients to augment the importance and public image of their Scuola in Venetian society.

In Carpaccio's cycle, scenes from the lives of the locally venerated George and Tryphon were complemented by two episodes from the life of St. Jerome and another representing St. Augustine in his study. Augustine had held Jerome in special reverence, as reported in the written sources proposed for the scene's inclusion: the *Golden Legend*, *Catalogus sanctorum*, and *Hieronymus vita et transitus* (fig. 3, 4, 5). St. Jerome introduced a palpable connection with the confraternal members' homeland, since by the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, the recognition of Jerome's Dalmatian origin had been firmly established in scholarly work produced in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which resulted in the growing veneration of Jerome as patron saint of Dalmatia.<sup>25</sup> This suggests a significant shift away from the distinctly local cults of the two saints, to which the confraternity was dedicated,

<sup>20</sup> Edward MUIR, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, Princeton 1981, pp. 95–96.

<sup>21</sup> Kenneth Meyer SETTON, St George's Head, *Speculum*, 48, 1973, pp. 9–10; MUIR 1981 (n. 20), p. 96.

<sup>22</sup> ASV, Proveditori di comun, Reg. P, Matricole delle scuole–Castello, Matricola della Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, fols. 595v–596. See also the transcription from the original *mariegola* in PEROCCO 1964 (n. 11), pp. 215–216. The identity of the Patriarch of Jerusalem is not given in the document, which begins with: *Vegnando a morte el Patriarca de Gierusalemme in Coron uomo de buona vita, e fama, ed era vecchissimo, ed al ponto della sua morte manifestò havere appresso de lui una Reliquia de San Zorzi /.../*. ASV, Proveditori di comun, Reg. P, Matricole delle scuole–Castello, Matricola della Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, fol. 595v.

<sup>23</sup> PEROCCO 1964 (n. 11), p. 9; Patricia Fortini BROWN, Carpaccio's St. Augustine in His Study. A Portrait Within a Portrait, *Augustine in Iconography. History and Legend* (eds. Joseph Cletus Schnaubelt, Frederick Van Fleteren), New York 1999, p. 510.

<sup>24</sup> Augusto GENTILI, *Le storie di Carpaccio. Venezia, i Turchi, gli Ebrei*, Venezia 2006<sup>3</sup>, p. 77. On relics owned by the Scuola, see Ana MARINKOVIĆ, Saints' Relics in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni. An Anti-Ottoman Pantheon, *Visualizing Past* 2018 (n. 2), pp. 25–44.

<sup>25</sup> IVIĆ 2016 (n. 13); see also IVIĆ 2018 (n. 13).

3. Vittore Carpaccio:  
*Funeral of St. Jerome*,  
1502, Scuola di San Giorgio  
e Trifone, Venice



4. Vittore Carpaccio:  
*St. Jerome and the Lion*,  
1502, Scuola di San Giorgio  
e Trifone, Venice



5. Vittore Carpaccio:  
*Vision of St. Augustine*,  
1502, Scuola di San Giorgio  
e Trifone, Venice



towards a more universally venerated saint whose divine protection encompassed the entire territory of Venetian Dalmatia. An image of St. Jerome was included in the 15<sup>th</sup>-century polyptych that probably adorned the Scuola's first altar in the church of San Giovanni del Tempio,<sup>26</sup> although the saint's presence in the daily life of the Dalmatian confraternity was not as pronounced in its earliest decades. Instead, devotion to Jerome remained restricted to extraordinary events that were later recognized as the most important in the Scuola's history.

Jerome was first mentioned alongside George and Tryphon in 1464 in the 100-day indulgence granted to the members by Cardinal Bessarion, which included the feast days of George (23 April), Jerome (30 September), Tryphon (3 February), Corpus Domini, and the first Sunday of the Ascension.<sup>27</sup> In ordinary religious devotions prescribed by the confraternity's statutes, approved in 1455, Jerome was overshadowed throughout the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by George and Tryphon to whom, after all, the Scuola was originally dedicated. Several reasons might explain Jerome's exclusion from the initial choice of saints at the time of the Dalmatian confraternity's foundation. First, a confraternity dedicated to San Girolamo in the *sestiere* of Cannaregio (founded in 1367) already existed among Venetian *scuole piccole*, and a 1440 deliberation of the Council of Ten prohibited confraternal foundations dedicated to the same saint, although this rule seems not to have been strictly enforced.<sup>28</sup> This gradually changed at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The patron saint of Dalmatia was first mentioned in the statutes in early 1498, when confraternity members devoted to assisting the poor of the "Dalmatian nation" asked for their prayers to be directed towards the intercession of the Lord and Sts. George, Jerome, and Tryphon.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, in 1502—when devotion to Jerome found its artistic expression in Carpaccio's famous *teleri*—the Scuola was given a concession by the apostolic legate to perform religious services in the church of San Giovanni del Tempio on Jerome's feast day.<sup>30</sup>

### Selecting Events from the Life of St. Jerome: Venice

The choice of events from the life of St. Jerome in Carpaccio's cycle seem particularly significant in the context of the Scuola's charitable functions and its position in Venetian society. The *Funeral of St. Jerome* and *St. Jerome and the Lion* suggest a firm connection with the ritual practices of the Scuola, since one of their fundamental missions was to provide a proper funeral and burial for

<sup>26</sup> The two panels, one with St. Jerome and the other with St. Tryphon, are now preserved in the *sala superiore* of the Scuola's meetinghouse, see *Le Scuole di Venezia* 1984 (n. 5), p. 118.

<sup>27</sup> PEROCCO 1964 (n. 11), pp. 214–215.

<sup>28</sup> ORTALLI 2001 (n. 11), pp. 14, 45–46; see also Lia SBRIZIOLO, Per la storia delle confraternite veneziane. Dalle deliberazioni miste (1310–1476) del Consiglio dei Dieci. *Scolae communes*, artigiane e nazionali, *Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti. Classe di scienze morali, lettere ed arti*, 126, 1968, p. 432.

<sup>29</sup> ASV, Provveditori di comun, Reg. P, Matricole delle scuole—Castello, Matricola della Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, fols. 594v–595: *Siando questa Scuola fatta, e dedicata in beneficio della Nanzion [sic] Nostra dalmatina, e per accrescer la devotion delle persone, ed augmentar questa nostra Scuola, vedendo, che molti, e molti poveri de questa nostra benedetta Scuola sono impotenti, ed in estrema necessit  /.../ et acci  che le oration loro et per loro prieghi Missier domenedio, San Zorzi, e San Gierolimo, e San Trifon mantegna, ed augmenti sempre questa nostra Scuola, e fraternitade.*

<sup>30</sup> *In sancti Georgij, sancti Ioannis Baptistae, sancti Triphonis, et sancti Hieronymi festivitibus, ac omnibus, et singulis secundis Diebus Dominicis Cuiuslibet Mensis   primis Vesperis usq. ad secundas vespas inclusive.* Archivio della Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, Venice (ASD), Catastico, fol. 12v.

“Dalmati, et altri Schiavoni” residing in Venice, an act of mercy typically performed by confraternities (fig. 3, 4). Neither religious nor literary sources provide elaborate descriptions of Jerome’s funeral. Jacopo de Voragine states that “./../ Jerome arranged a tomb for himself at the mouth of the cave where the Lord had lain, and after living for ninety-eight years and six months, he died and was buried there.”<sup>31</sup> Pietro de Natalibus’s *Catalogus Sanctorum* (first published in 1493) provides a somewhat more detailed version of the saint’s death, describing him as dying while prone on the ground with arms crossed at his chest in the form of a cross.<sup>32</sup> In Carpaccio’s interpretation, Jerome’s funeral is represented as a collective event, perhaps alluding to the rites held for members buried in the Scuola’s tombs in the church of San Giovanni del Tempio. The choice of subject reflects the charitable character of *scuole piccole*, and finds its precedent in Lazzaro Bastiani’s canvas for the Scuola di San Girolamo, which must have influenced Carpaccio’s rendering of the scene.<sup>33</sup>

The same is true of *St. Jerome and the Lion*, which finds a possible model in Alvise Vivarini’s canvas of the same subject for the Scuola di San Girolamo, now lost but known from an engraving of a later date.<sup>34</sup> Both Vivarini and Carpaccio emphasize the dramatic moment of the monks fleeing from the wild beast that Jerome had brought to the monastery, but the detail that stands out in Carpaccio’s painting is the lion’s position. In the frieze-like narrative, the lion entering from the left bears a striking resemblance to the lion of St. Mark, symbol of the *Serenissima* and well known throughout the Venetian dominion (including Dalmatia). The similarity here was perhaps a subtle visual reminder of the confraternity’s loyalty to the Republic of Venice, explicated in their statutes that mandated the expulsion of any member who committed an act against the state, the Doge, or the city of Venice.<sup>35</sup> As Dalmatians, members of the Scuola di San Giorgio e Trifone sought celestial protection from the region’s patron saint Jerome, but at the same time they strongly supported the Venetian state, hoping that the Signoria would be “revered by foreigners, feared by enemies and dreaded by rebels.”<sup>36</sup>

Scholars have traditionally insisted on there being an anti-Ottoman sentiment present in the Venetian cycle, understandable considering the history of the Schiavoni/Illyrians’ native lands. Figures attired in eastern garb appear throughout Carpaccio’s paintings, not only in the scenes dedicated to the victorious St. George, but also in the background of the stories illustrating Jerome’s life. The appearance of turban-wearing, presumably Muslim figures in situations where they do not belong—for obvious reasons of chronology and geography—seems to broaden the targeted audience of Carpaccio’s Dalmatian patrons. The subtle anti-Ottoman message contained in the presence of these figures entering a Catholic church and conversing with the monks—and therefore

<sup>31</sup> Jacobus de VORAGINE, *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints* (transl. William Granger Ryan), 2, Princeton 1995, p. 215.

<sup>32</sup> Pietro de NATALIBUS, *Catalogus sanctorum et gestorum eorum ex diuersis voluminibus collectus*, Venetiis 1506, p. 197v.

<sup>33</sup> Peter HUMFREY, The Life of St. Jerome Cycle from the Scuola di San Gerolamo in Cannaregio, *Arte Veneta*, 39, 1985, p. 45; Patricia Fortini BROWN, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio*, New Haven-London 1988, pp. 270–271.

<sup>34</sup> HUMFREY 1985 (n. 33), p. 41.

<sup>35</sup> ASV, Provveditori di comun, Reg. P, Matricole delle scuole–Castello, Matricola della Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, fols. 584–584v.

<sup>36</sup> ./../ *eccetto per commandamento della nostra Serenissima Signoria, a cui piovano mai sempre dal Cielo le celesti benedizione [sic], e sia riverita dagli Stranieri, temuta da Nemicj, e paveritata da ribelli*. ASV, Provveditori di comun, Reg. P, Matricole delle scuole–Castello, Matricola della Scuola dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone, fol. 590.

accepting a different faith—reveals the intent of the Dalmatian community to further accentuate their participation in the Ottoman wars and reassert their shared destiny with the Venetian dominions. Although tempting, these posited connections must be considered with caution, given Carpaccio's ability and inclination to create imaginary pictorial spaces filled with exotic figures that cannot be associated with particular places, but remain products of his vivid imagination as "the last interpreter of the dream of Mediterranean power".<sup>37</sup>

Nevertheless, the historical moment that marked the emergence of Schiavoni confraternities both in Rome and in Venice is highly suggestive. As mentioned, the Roman hospice was founded during the siege and fall of Constantinople in 1453, and in the following decades its institutions bore strong connections—unfortunately without any significant, extant visual testimonies—with the Bosnian court in exile, which represented the last Slavic rulers from the region before the Ottoman conquest.<sup>38</sup> The visibility of the Slavic *natio* within the galaxy of Roman and Venetian national institutions reminded the host society of the dangerous situation on what had become the border of Catholicism.

### Visual Celebrations of St. Jerome in Late Cinquecento Rome

Some 80 years after the completion of Carpaccio's paintings for the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, the visual celebration of Jerome became a central theme of the frescoes adorning the saint's new Roman church promoted by Sixtus V (reigned 1585–1590), who had previously been the titular cardinal. The grand edifice, designed in 1586 by Martino Longhi the Elder, was paid for entirely by the Curia. The Sistine painters—Antonio Viviani, Andrea Lilli, Paris Nogari, Avanzino Nucci, and Paolo Guidotti Borghese—coordinated by Giovanni Guerra were commissioned to execute the decoration.<sup>39</sup> As the iconographic program for the paintings was being developed, a national chapter of priests of Illyrian origin and speaking the Illyrian language was also established. It is probable that Aleksandar Komulović (1548–1608) from the Split diocese, the first archpriest of the chapter and president of the confraternity in 1590, took part in creating the program.<sup>40</sup>

The scenes related to St. Jerome are concentrated in the new rectangular presbytery of the church, with three large compositions explained by the Latin inscriptions below: *The Dalmatian saint explains difficult passages of the Holy Scriptures*; *The priestly ordination of St. Jerome in Antioch by Bishop Paolino*; *St. Jerome disputes with two Doctors of the Orthodox Church, St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzeno* (fig. 6, 7, 8).<sup>41</sup> While the first scene, praised by Claudio Strinati for its fresh naturalism,<sup>42</sup> is an interesting interpretation of the more canonical iconography of Jerome in

<sup>37</sup> PALLUCCHINI 1961 (n. 16), p. 37.

<sup>38</sup> NERALIĆ 2017 (n. 8), pp. 139–143.

<sup>39</sup> GUDELJ 2015 (n. 6), pp. 297–325.

<sup>40</sup> GUDELJ 2015 (n. 6), p. 316.

<sup>41</sup> The scenes are explained with Latin inscriptions: *CONSULTUS A DOCTORIBUS LEGIS SCRIPTURARUM ARCANA RESERAT DIFFICULTATES EXPLANAT* (north wall); *ANTIOCHIAE PER PAULLINUM ANTISTITEM SACERDOTIO INITIATUR / ROMAM VENIT PRO CONPONENDIS EPISCOPORUM CONTROVERSIIS / DAMASO PONTIFICI MAXIMO IN SCRIBENDIS EPISTOLIS ADIUTOR FUIT* (east wall); *DE SACRIS LITTERIS DISSERIT CUM GREGORIO NAZIANZENO ET BASILIO MAGNO* (south wall). See IVANIŠEVIĆ 1997 (n. 6), p. 435.

<sup>42</sup> Claudio STRINATI, Girolamo Nanni e il Naturalismo, *La festa delle arti. Scritti in onore di Marcello Fagiolo per cinquant'anni di studi* (eds. Vincenzo Cazzato, Sebastiano Roberto, Mario Bevilacqua), 1, Rome 2014, pp. 282–285.



6. Giovanni Guerra  
and other painters:  
*St. Jerome Explains Difficult  
Passages in the Holy Scriptures,*  
fresco, 1589–1591,  
*San Girolamo dei Croati, Rome*



7. Giovanni Guerra  
and other painters:  
*Priestly Ordination of St. Jerome  
in Antioch by Bishop Paolino,*  
fresco, 1589–1591,  
*San Girolamo dei Croati, Rome*



8. Giovanni Guerra  
and other painters:  
*St. Jerome Disputes with Two  
Doctors of the Orthodox Church,  
St. Basil the Great and  
St. Gregory Nazianziano,*  
fresco, 1589–1591,  
*San Girolamo dei Croati, Rome*



the cave, the central one is a post-Tridentine visual explanation of the rite of priestly ordination and the role of the bishop, who was extremely important in the establishment of the national chapter. The third scene represents the dialogue with Orthodoxy, a crucial part of the discussions of the Council of Trent, resulting in the recognition of the Four Church Fathers (or Doctors) of the Eastern Church by the papacy.<sup>43</sup> St. Jerome, holding two books and with a lion at his feet, floats over the presbytery, and is further identified by the inscription: “S. Hieronymo Illyricorum”. The books, particularly numerous throughout the cycle, accentuate the significance of the new edition of the Vulgate, published in 1590, the result of Pope Sixtus’s personal efforts. The pontiff also had Jerome depicted by the same painters as the inventor of the Glagolitic alphabet in the Vatican Library.<sup>44</sup>

Two other national saints represented in the Sistine program were the medieval Dalmatian popes, Gaius and John, situated in the lunette above the *Ordination of the Priests*. Sts. Doimus and Rainerius, particularly venerated in the Split diocese, are depicted in the lunette of the transept, thus promoting the civic cults of the Dalmatian archbishopric, whose bishop held the title of *primas Dalmatiae totiusque Croatiae*. The strong influence of the Split clerics in the chapter, who were also members of the confraternity, put a substantial accent on the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The iconography of St. Jerome at the Schiavoni national church was specially devised for the papal investment in the visibility of the confraternity and the chapter, whose members originated from the border between Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Islam. The figures to whom Jerome speaks, standing before the cave wearing Turkish robes and turbans (but not exclusively), turn their backs to the viewer and gesticulate dramatically; some indicate stages of acceptance while others seem to disagree vehemently. They may prefigure the role of the Schiavoni in disseminating Holy Scripture. The emphasis is not on military conflict, but on Jerome’s reconciliatory actions that transmit a delicately expressed message of superiority, which had few parallels in the contemporary world of adamant confessional strife. The same feeling pervades the scene of the *disputa* with the Orthodox. Here, this superiority is demonstrated by a man wearing a Greek hat (on the far right): his pointing finger clearly indicates Jerome as the winner of the learned disputation. The language spoken (and written) by Catholic Schiavoni was understood throughout Southeastern Europe and, therefore, used in missions, following the example of the other saintly pair represented, the interconfessional saints Cyril and Methodius. The Slavic apostles, though very popular among both the South-Slavic Orthodox and in Bohemia, were still disputed in Rome and in Dalmatia. Their placement in the Schiavoni church is another innovative element, consecrating their role in post-Tridentine Rome.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> The Doctors of the Eastern Church—John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Athanasius of Alexandria—were officially recognized by the Latin Church in 1568. The Schiavoni confraternity’s new protector, Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santori, was previously responsible for the Greek church and college in Rome, Sant’Atanasio dei Greci, promoted by Pope Gregory XIII, see GUDELJ 2015 (n. 6), p. 308.

<sup>44</sup> On the cycles, see GUDELJ 2015 (n. 6), pp. 306–316.

<sup>45</sup> GUDELJ 2015 (n. 6), pp. 310–312. For the hagiography of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, see Franciscus GRIVEC, Franciscus TOMŠIČ, *Constantinus et Methodius Thessalonicenses. Fontes*, Zagreb 1960 (Radovi Staroslavenskog instituta, 4). On the Salonico brothers in the visual arts in the Slovakian, Czech, and Slovenian lands, see CM 863. *Svatí Cyril a Metoděj. Dějiny, tradice, úcta. Průvodce výstavou* (ed. Štěpánka Chlumská), Praga 2013; Katarína BEŇOVÁ, Cyril a Metod vo výtvarnom umení 19. storočia na Slovensku, *Studia Academica Slovaca*, 42, 2013, pp. 39–58 (with previous bibliography for Slovakia); *Mezi Východem a Západem. Svatí Cyril a Metoděj v kultuře českých zemí* (ed. Simona Jemelková), Olomouc 2013; Ana LAVRIČ, Sv. Ciril in Metod v slovenski umetnosti, *Acta historiae artis Slovenica*, 21/1, 2016, pp. 93–120, with bibliography for Slovenia.

## Venerating Jerome in Seicento Venice

The veneration of Dalmatia's patron saint in Venice seems to have increased still more in the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the Scuola's altar in the church of San Giovanni del Tempio was adorned with a new altarpiece by Matteo Ponzone, with Jerome depicted equal in importance to George and Tryphon.<sup>46</sup> In this context it seems significant that less than two decades later, in 1633, on the occasion of the donation of relics of a number of saints, including those of Jerome, the donor Count Giovanni Angelo Andrea Flavio Comneno referred to himself as the "Guardian Grande della Veneranda Scola delli santi Georgio Triffon et Gieronimo", even though there is no evidence to suggest that the confraternity had officially altered its name.<sup>47</sup> By that time, the iconographic choices for representing Jerome in the meetinghouse of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni had shifted from the highly narrative, suggesting connections to the confraternity's status and mission, to the more learned, universal iconography of St. Jerome as cardinal and author of the Vulgate, similar to the depictions desired by the Illyrians in Rome. Seicento paintings in the *sala superiore* of the Scuola's meetinghouse depict Jerome as a penitential hermit, kneeling before a crucifix and beating his chest with a rock, with an open book and a lion below (in an oval compartment of the wooden ceiling, attributed to Andrea Vicentino<sup>48</sup>), and as a dignified cardinal (*St. George Fighting the Dragon with Sts. Jerome and Tryphon*, attributed to Gaspar Rem<sup>49</sup>). For the Schiavoni, St. Jerome was all that and more: a Church Father who legitimized and elevated their origin, language, and alphabet.

The question of language was central to both confraternities discussed here, and can be considered one of the key elements that defined their identities. Liturgical services in both Latin and the "Dalmatian" language seem to have been performed in the church of San Giovanni del Tempio since the confraternity's foundation.<sup>50</sup> This was so idiosyncratic that in 1505 the Prior of the church of San Giovanni Battista complained to the Venetian Patriarch that the Scuola was administering religious services "alla lingua schiavona" without his previous consent.<sup>51</sup> In 1514, the Dalmatian confraternity obtained a license from the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitaller Fabrizio del Carretto to celebrate mass in the "lingua Dalmata", since the confraternity members were inexpert in Latin.<sup>52</sup> The

<sup>46</sup> On the altarpiece, see Tanja TRŠKA, Marco Boschini, Matteo Ponzone, and the Altar of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni in Venice, *Confraternitas*, 27/1–2, 2016, pp. 62–78, with bibliography.

<sup>47</sup> ASD, Catastico, fol. 224.

<sup>48</sup> PEROCCO 1964 (n. 11), p. 204.

<sup>49</sup> Alberto RIZZI, Le tele parietali dell'«albergo» di S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni, *Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone*, 16, 1983, pp. 23–24.

<sup>50</sup> Gastone VIO, *Le Scuole Piccole nella Venezia dei Dogi. Note d'archivio per la storia delle confraternite veneziane*, Costabissara 2004, p. 133.

<sup>51</sup> ASD, Catastico, fol. 25v. *Per el tenor della presente significamo à Vui gastaldo, et compagni della schuola di schiavoni appresso san Zuane dal Tempio come habbiamo inteso à querimonia del Reverendo missier lo Prior de ditta Giesia, che da certo tempo in qua senza sua licentia, ne altra legitima auctorità fatta cantar messa, et offitij alla lingua schiavona, In quella scuolla, dove etiam se administra sacramenti, come è confessar et comunicar, et altri etiam riti, al tutto prohibiti sel non Intervien el consentimento di superiori in spiritual.*

<sup>52</sup> ASD, Catastico, fols. 26–26v. *Noi havemo receputo vostre lettere, et visto quanto scrivette sopra il celebrare della messa in lingua Dalmata in la scola sive compagnia vostra situata in le case del nostro Priorato del Templo de Venetia quale dicete essere stata Instituta ad spirituale consolatione della Nation Dalmata Inexperta della lingua latina circa la qualle dal venerando Priore del ditto nostro Priorato è facta alcuna Difficultate. Noi stimando, che sia Il Dalmato, et Latino uno medesimo rito, et approbato dalla santta Matre Ecclesia Romana, et che solumodo Distet in Idiomate*

same issue was accentuated almost three centuries later, in 1806, when the Dalmatian confraternity strived to prevent suppression of their sodality: liturgical services in the Illyrian language, like those performed in their national languages by the Greek and Armenian communities, guaranteed the continuity of religious observance.<sup>53</sup>

The possible role of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni in the production of printed work in their native language in Venice is yet to be determined,<sup>54</sup> but a suggestion of likely connections is given by Fra Matija Divković's bestowal of letterpress letters used for printing his work *Nauk karstianski (Christian Doctrine)*, published in Venice in 1616, to members of the Scuola "who are of our language".<sup>55</sup> In Rome, the language of their native land was a requirement of members of both the confraternity and chapter, and Aleksandar Komulović even managed to get them to finance the printing of his Croatian catechism in 1582.<sup>56</sup>

Interestingly enough, both the Venetian and Roman seats of the Schiavoni confraternities were decorated with scenes of saints in their book-filled studies, surprised by inspirational visions while writing. Moreover, none of these scenes depicts Jerome, the saint most commonly represented in a *studiolo*. Venetian scenes in which the Dalmatian saint appears feature him curing the lion or supine in death. In Rome, he is shown more intellectually active. His cave is furnished with a small desk and books, and he energetically disputes, takes holy orders, and finally ascends while holding two volumes.

However, the Venetian *Vision of St. Augustine* has attracted considerable scholarly attention with its sophisticated program of naturalistic perception of the divine,<sup>57</sup> while also suggesting that the confraternity understood and supported intellectual work and the dissemination of knowledge and Holy Scripture. This is not surprising given the donations of Bessarion and Valaresso (fig. 5). Moreover, an interesting, but as yet unacknowledged, aspect of the scene's iconography is the connection with St. John the Baptist, who is also a protagonist of St. Augustine's visions and appears to Augustine alongside Jerome.<sup>58</sup> Given that the old Hospice of St. Catherine housed both

*scrivemo al detto vener.do Priore la alligata per la quale ordinamo, che lassa à voi fare le vostre Devotione, in lo Gremio, et Unione della ditta Santta Matre Ecclesia accio di quella ne resultino le bone opere quale à Noi scrivete, valete.*

<sup>53</sup> ASD, Catastico, fol. 248. *Siccome però è di costante pramatica di que' Popoli non istrutti nella lingua lattina di officiare il Sacro Culto nell'Idioma Illirico al pari dei Greci, e degli Armeni, cosi per poter soggiornare in Venezia, ed abbinare colle viste di comercio le pie osservanze di Religione tradussero alcuni loro Ministri del Culto li quali celebrar potessero li Sacri Uffizj ed amministrare li Sacramenti. /.../ Al pari dei Greci, e degli Armeni che col nativo Idioma celebrano in Chiese aposite i Divini Misterj, anco li Slavi nella sola Dalmata Scuola antidedta assistono alle Predicazioni, ed a tutte l'Ecclesiastiche solennità, che appunto si funzionano soltanto nella lingua Illirica.* See also Luka ŠPOLJARIĆ, Vecijanski Skjavoni i povijesno-liturgijska knjižica u čast sv. Jeronima Ilira iz 1498. godine, *Colloquia Maruliana*, 27, 2018, pp. 43–74.

<sup>54</sup> An interesting case in this context is the activity of the Venetian printer Bartolo Occhi, "Libraro a la Riva de Schiavoni", active in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, whose printing house published various titles in "lingua illirica", see Ambroz TUDOR, Bartol Occhi—Kgnighar hervatskih kgnigh, *Mogućnosti*, 43/7–9, 1996, pp. 97–104.

<sup>55</sup> Vine MIHALJEVIĆ, Fra Mate Divković i hrvatska bratovština u Mlecima, *Croatica Christiana Periodica*, 38, 1996, pp. 176–180.

<sup>56</sup> It was the first catechism in Croatian: *Nauch Charstianschiza Slovignschi Narod v vlaasti iazich [Christian Doctrine for the Slavic People in Their Own Language]*, Roma 1582. On role of the language, see Stjepan KRASIĆ, *Počelo je u Rimu. Katolička obnova i normiranje hrvatskog jezika u XVII. stoljeću*, Dubrovnik 2009.

<sup>57</sup> Among more recent studies, see Victor STOICHITA, De quelques dispositifs télépathiques. Vittore Carpaccio à la Scuola degli Schiavoni de Venise, *Voir l'au-delà. L'expérience visionnaire et sa représentation dans l'art italien de la Renaissance. Actes du colloque international Paris, 3–5 juin 2013* (eds. Andreas Beyer, Philippe Morel, Alessandro Nova), Turnhout 2017, pp. 153–171, with bibliography.

<sup>58</sup> IVIĆ 2018 (n. 13), p. 265; for visual representations of St. John the Baptist and St. Jerome appearing to St. August-

the confraternity of St. John the Baptist and that of San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Carpaccio's *Vision of St. Augustine*, although part of the Jerome cycle—and described as the most “intellectual” composition of the entire narrative cycle—could be interpreted as an ideal visual reminder of the connection between Jerome and the Baptist, and even as a conciliatory element in the often fraught coexistence of the two *scuole piccole*.<sup>59</sup> As we will see, St. Augustine's “auditory” scene of his vision is quite different from the dramatic apparition revealed to St. Thomas Aquinas in the late Cinquecento fresco in San Girolamo.

### A Dominican Decorative Program in San Girolamo, Rome

Much less attention has been given to the lunettes in the Chapel of the Pietà at San Girolamo in Rome, painted by Andrea Lilli (or Lillio) at the same time as the Sistine campaign. The chapel is not mentioned in the payments to Giovanni Guerra for the rest of the cycles, nor are the frescoes mentioned in the confraternity registers, so the two lunettes and the vault scenes with landscapes and the Holy Trinity should be considered a separate, private commission.<sup>60</sup> The lunettes were recently recognized as two episodes in the life of St. Thomas Aquinas: the *Miracle of Healing the Hemorrhagic Woman* and the *Vision of St. Thomas*.<sup>61</sup> The introduction of the Dominican saint, proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1567, into the visual program of the chapel may be seen as a certain counterbalance to the presence of the two Eastern Doctors in the presbytery frescoes, whose status was recognized by the Latin Church in 1568.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the post-Tridentine interest in the Angelic Doctor was also fueled by the Piana edition of his work, published in Rome in 1570, which also contains his *Vita*.<sup>63</sup>

The *Miracle of Healing the Hemorrhagic Woman* represents St. Thomas on the steps of a church in Rome after giving a fervent Easter sermon;<sup>64</sup> in the center of the composition a woman with a pained expression crawls toward him and grasps the hem of his white habit. Her miraculous cure is witnessed by another friar, three women, and a seated, bare-chested man, all of whom gesticulate towards the marvelous event. It is possible that this miracle was chosen because the hagiographic

tine, see RICE 1985 (n. 15).

<sup>59</sup> For disputes between the two confraternities, see VIO 2004 (n. 50), p. 130; Emanuela ZUCCHETTA, La facciata della Scuola dei santi Giorgio e Trifone. Considerazioni e appunti in margine al restauro, *Florilegium artium. Scritti in memoria di Renato Polacco* (ed. Giordana Trovabene), Padova 2006, pp. 263–273.

<sup>60</sup> KOKŠA 1971 (n. 6); GUDELJ 2015 (n. 6), p. 317.

<sup>61</sup> IVANIŠEVIĆ 1997 (n. 6), pp. 443–444; SERŠIĆ 2011 (n. 6), pp. 46–47. Massimo PULLINI, *Andrea Lilio*, Milano 2003, p. 146, identifies the saint as B. Augustin Kažotić, a medieval Dalmatian Dominican and bishop of Zagreb and Lucera, but no hagiographical or visual source has been identified to corroborate this reading.

<sup>62</sup> On the iconography of St. Thomas Aquinas, especially after the Council of Trent, see Aliénor CAMBOURNAC, *L'iconographie de saint Thomas d'Aquin après le concile de Trente (1567–1700)*, Paris 2009.

<sup>63</sup> On the role of Aquinas's *Summa* in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, see Jacob SCHMUTZ, *From Theology to Philosophy. The Changing Status of the Summa Theologiae 1500–2000, Aquinas's Summa theologiae. A Critical Guide* (ed. Jeffrey Hause), Cambridge 2018, pp. 221–241. For the 1570 edition of Thomas's life, see *D. Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici complectens. Vitam ipsius beati Thomæ ex diuersis authoribus collectam*, 1, Romae 1570.

<sup>64</sup> This particular miracle, regularly recorded among Aquinas's miracles, is the first cited in the 1570 edition of the *Vita*, see *D. Thomae Aquinatis* 1570 (n. 63). The church is identified as St. Peter's by Guglielmo DA TOCCO, *Storia di san Tommaso d'Aquino* (ed. Davide Riserbato), Milano 2015, p. 203: n. 369, while the Neapolitan *Processus canonizationis S. Thomae* suggests Santa Maria Maggiore.



9. *Andrea Lilli:*  
*Miracle of Healing the Hemorrhagic Woman,*  
*fresco, c. 1590–1591,*  
*San Girolamo dei Croati, Rome*



10. *Andrea Lilli:*  
*Vision of St. Thomas Aquinas,*  
*fresco, c. 1590–1591,*  
*San Girolamo dei Croati, Rome*

narrative occurred in Rome, while St. Thomas was living at the mother church of the Dominicans in Rome, Santa Sabina,<sup>65</sup> originally built by Pietro from Illyria in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, the strong female presence may also be connected with the charity towards women of the *natio* practiced by the confraternity.

The image in the opposite lunette is somewhat enigmatic. While praying at an altar with a small crucifix, St. Thomas dramatically turns towards the vision above his desk. The large bookshelf and writing table with open book, sheet of paper, pen, and inkwell indicate that the friar had been writing before he began to pray. The setting thus encompasses two of Thomas's visions related

<sup>65</sup> See n. 64.

<sup>66</sup> On Pietro (Petrus) from Illyria as the commissioner of the basilica of Santa Sabina, see Ivan FOLETTI, Manuela GIAN-ANDREA, *Zona liminare. Il narcece di Santa Sabina a Roma, la sua porta e l'iniziazione cristiana*, Roma-Bрно 2015, pp. 81–83. Given that he lived before the arrival of the Slavic Croatian tribes to Illyria, his ethnicity could not be Slavic, but he fits into the Illyrian narrative and the contribution of the people from Illyria to the Roman religious horizon.

to his interpretation of Holy Scripture.<sup>67</sup> However, the figures within the red nebula of the vision are still open to interpretation; two figures wrestle in the center with the defeated one wearing a (Roman?) helmet, while more soldiers are climbing a ladder in the background.<sup>68</sup>

This iconography exalting Thomas's vision does not correspond to earlier depictions.<sup>69</sup> Lilli's lunette is highly descriptive and gives almost equal space to *oratio*, *studium*, and *contemplatio*, the saint's main activities, leaving little to the imagination.<sup>70</sup> This is also true of Giovanni Guerra's other narrative compositions in the church. Like the grand Sistine cycle in San Girolamo, the iconography of the Dominican Church Father is innovative, but remains an isolated attempt at transforming the theme visually.<sup>71</sup>

The line connecting St. Jerome—St. Augustine—St. Thomas Aquinas was much favored by the Dominicans, but does not appear in scenes commissioned by the Franciscan Sixtus V. However, two influential Dominicans appear in the Roman confraternal documents at the same time that the presbytery frescoes were underway, and suggest their possible involvement in designing the program: Agostino Quinzio (1541–1611), Korčula bishop and expert in oriental languages; and Giovanni Domenico Marcot Foconio (1541–1602), Split archbishop and founder of a short-lived seminary in his see.<sup>72</sup> This connection needs further assessment, but it should be noted that they were responsible for higher education in Dalmatia and were never replaced by the Jesuits in the

<sup>67</sup> According to the saint's hagiography, two visions take place in a setting comparable to what is represented in the lunette, the so-called Parisian vision and the Neapolitan vision, the latter better known as *Bene scripsisti Thoma*. Both visions are important confirmations of Thomas's correct interpretation of the Eucharist, one of the central tenets of the Council of Trent. *D. Thomae Aquinatis* 1570 (n. 63); CAMBOURNAC 2009 (n. 62), pp. 47–55; DA TOCCO 2015 (n. 64), p. 203.

<sup>68</sup> The figure on the right, possibly also wearing Roman military clothing, remains unclear against the dark background. The present state of research does not allow us to precisely identify the actions represented within the vision in the hagiographic narratives. The fight and the ladder are elements of the iconography of Jacob, to whom St. Thomas is compared by his biographer Guglielmo da Tocco, see DA TOCCO 2015 (n. 64), p. 126, although the figures represented here are not angels. The scene might also be interpreted in a more abstract manner, given Thomas's interest in *Aristotle's scala naturae*, but the issue requires further investigation. An interesting visual version of the *Ascension of St. Thomas Aquinas*, attributed to the Genoese painter Giacchino Assereto (1600–1649) and now in Palais des Beaux-Arts in Lille, depicts the Angelic Doctor climbing a ladder towards the Holy Trinity, see CAMBOURNAC 2009 (n. 62), pp. 66–70.

<sup>69</sup> See Diana NORMAN, *In Imitation of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Art, Patronage and Liturgy Within a Renaissance Chapel*, *Renaissance Studies*, 7, 1993, pp. 1–42; David GANZ, *Bild und Buch als Pforten des Auges. Exklusive Sichtbarkeit in Filippino Lippis Cappella Carafa, Ästhetik des Unsichtbaren. Bildtheorie und Bildgebrauch in der Vormoderne* (ed. David Ganz, Thomas Lentjes), Berlin 2004 (KultBild. Visualität und Religion in der Vormoderne, 1), pp. 260–290; Adriano OLIVIA, *Theologica depicta. La rappresentazione e l'esaltazione della teologia di san Tommaso in una lunetta della cappella Carafa alla Minerva. Nuove proposte interpretative sulla base di alcune fonti letterarie*, *Memorie domenicane*, 42, 2011, pp. 223–241.

<sup>70</sup> Personifications of the three activities depicted in the chapel are also present in the frontispiece of Otto van Veen's book, see Ralph DEKONINCK, *Visual Representation as Real Presence. Otto van Veen's Naples Vision of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, *The Secret Lives of Art Works. Exploring the Boundaries between Art and Life* (eds. Caroline van Eck, Joris van Gastel, Elsje van Kessel), Leiden 2014, pp. 179–199.

<sup>71</sup> The most studied example is Santi di Tito's Florentine depiction of 1593, but that painting concentrates on the relationship between the Crucified Christ and the Angelic Doctor, see Ralph DEKONINCK, *Visio intellectualis vel sensualis. La vision napolitaine/parisienne de saint Thomas d'Aquin d'après Santi di Tito*, *Voir l'au-delà* 2017 (n. 57), pp. 131–148. For the highly influential print by Otto van Veen of 1610, see CAMBOURNAC 2009 (n. 61), pp. 47–55; DEKONINCK 2014 (n. 70), p. 180.

<sup>72</sup> GUDELJ 2015 (n. 6), p. 317.

coastal towns, apart from Dubrovnik.<sup>73</sup> Another possible commissioner for the St. Thomas frescoes is the titular-cardinal, the Spaniard Pedro de Deza Manuel (1520–1600), nephew of the respected Thomist Diego de Deza (1443–1523). Moreover, the cardinal was instrumental in the construction of San Girolamo, and the same architect was building his palace nearby.<sup>74</sup>

### Concluding Comparisons

Books, language, translation, and the alphabet were important parts of the life of both confraternities. The Roman confraternity financed the translations by Aleksandar Komulović, the ideator of the grand pictorial program of the Schiavoni/Illyrian national church, while Matija Divković entrusted the Venetian confraternity with Illyrian letters for printing books in 1616, a reminder of the importance of Venice as a center for publishing. Celebrating mass in Illyrian was also essential for both confraternities. Although the Venetian confraternity was granted permission to recite the liturgy in “lingua Illirica” shortly after its foundation, the *scuola* still had to argue for its use in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. In Rome, knowledge and use of the native language was written into the statutes of both the brotherhood and the chapter. Therefore, it is not surprising to find images of intellectual effort as they creatively adorned their spaces, since those themes were deeply embedded in the Catholic culture they so proudly defended.

Moreover, during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the two largest Schiavoni/Illyrian confraternities in Italy commissioned or created programs for works of art that represented their social standing within the urban matrix and political systems of Rome and Venice. The interplay of the collective character of confraternities as commissioners of art and the importance of large investments and donations from powerful individuals are also apparent in their visual expressions, although the process was not linear. To be sure, the highly different contexts of a ducal and a papal metropolis produced very different narratives, but there are a number of points in common. These support Zrinka Blažević’s idea of an Illyrian *ideologeme* consisting of different *topoi*,<sup>75</sup> including, as we have demonstrated, national saints, anti-Ottoman sentiment, and scholarship on language, the alphabet, translations, and books, which were among the most important during the early modern period.\*

<sup>73</sup> On the Dominicans in Croatia, see *Dominikanci u Hrvatskoj* (ed. Igor Fisković), Zagreb 2011, with previous bibliography.

<sup>74</sup> Diego de Deza, archbishop of Seville and inquisitor, wrote *Novarum defensionum doctrinae Angelici doctoris beati Thomae de Aquino*, Sevilla 1517.

<sup>75</sup> Zrinka BLAŽEVIĆ, *Ilirizam prije ilirizma*, Zagreb 2008.

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## Umetnostno mecenstvo slovanskih/ilirskih bratovščin v Benetkah in Rimu Protonacionalna identiteta in likovna umetnost

### Povzetek

Zgodnjenovoveške imigrantske skupnosti po Evropi so se pogosto združevale v bratovščine, s čimer so ustvarile trdne institucije, temelječe na skupnem izvoru, veri in jeziku. Te t. i. nacionalne bratovščine so postale referenca za poznejše imigrante, romarje ali študente istega porekla. Kapele ali cerkve, hospici in hiše, za katere so ti tujci skrbeli, so jih usidrale v družbo, katere gostje so bili, in v urbani prostor. Oblika in okrasje teh stavb naj bi zato odražali tako »drugačnost« teh skupin kot tudi željo, da bi jih lokalni gledalci razumeli, s čimer so ustvarjale posebno vizualno identiteto. Te skupine so uporabljali tudi kot bolj ali manj formalne diplomatske mreže, ki so poudarjale tendence v evropski politiki.

Italija je bila zaradi svoje bližine ter pomembnosti svojih trgovskih središč, univerz in romarskih krajev pa tudi zaradi sorazmerne varnosti pred otomanskimi vpadi cilj številnih emigrantov, ki so prihajali z območja današnje Slovenije, Hrvaške, Bosne in Hercegovine in Črne gore. Osnovali so bratovščine, poimenovane slovanske (*Schiavoni*) ali ilirske; dokumentirane so od sredine 15. stoletja dalje v Rimu, Benetkah, Vidmu in po manjših središčih Mark, njihovo naročništvo pa z vidika oblikovanja samoopredeljujočih vizualnih pripovedi še ni bilo predmet primerjalnih znanstvenih raziskav.

Posebno pomembni in dolgoživi slovanski/ilirski bratovščini sta bili v Benetkah in Rimu; njuna sedeža se odlikujeta tudi s pomembnima slikarskima cikloma. Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone v Benetkah je v glavnem poznana po pripovednem ciklu (1502–1507) Vittoreja Carpaccia. Slovanska/ilirska bratovščina v Rimu je upravljala bolnišnico in cerkev, ki je danes poznana kot San Girolamo dei Croati; na novo je bila zgrajena med letoma 1586 in 1591 in takoj okrašena s ciklom fresk, ki ga je izvršila skupina slikarjev pod vodstvom Giovannija Guerre. Ti dve vizualni priči programov, ki so jih propagirali člani obeh najvidnejših zgodnjenovoveških slovanskih/ilirskih bratovščin v Italiji, še nista bili deležni podrobne primerjave, predvsem zaradi očitnih razlik v njunem urbanem, političnem in umetniškem kontekstu. Vendarle pa predstavlja skupni izvor članov teh bratovščin dobro izhodišče za razpravo in za analizo slovanskih vizualnih strategij, s katerimi so se v tekmovalnih okoljih svetovljanskih in umetniških središč, kot sta Benetke in Rim, razločevali od drugih.

Bistveno različna konteksta dožve in papeške prestolnice sta porodila zelo različne narative, vendar obstajajo skupne točke, ki podpirajo idejo Zrinke Blažević o ilirskem »ideologemu«, sestavljenem iz različnih motivov, med katerimi so najpomembnejši nacionalni svetniki, antiotomanski nazor ter delo na jeziku, abecedi, prevodih in knjigah.