THEATRICALITY

IN TINTORETTO'S RELIGIOUS PAINTINGS

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RÉSUMÉ

Tintoret se distinguait des grands maîtres vénitiens du seizième siècle par son exceptionnelle fusion des arts, l'illusionnisme théâtral dans ses compositions picturales. Cette thèse propose une étude approfondie de la théâtralité dans les oeuvres religieuses de Tintoret. Il est étonnant que cet aspect multidisciplinaire est jusqu'à date pratiquement inexploré. En fait, le peintre travaillait comme metteur en scène pour la *Compagnie della Calza* et son langage esthétique est celui du théâtre. Au lieu de l'esquisse préliminaire, la construction d'une scène en miniature lui permettait de mieux visualiser le décor de l'espace ludique, la chorégraphie gestuelle de ses personnages et le jeu de l'éclairage. Dans ces 'spectacles' de couleur et de lumière, Tintoret établit un ensemble de signes destinés à provoquer des émotions intenses. Ainsi, il réussit à créér une ambiance du drame susceptible de transporter le spectateur dans son monde de pure magie. C'est à travers ces fictions dramatiques que Tintoret projette la fureur de sa création afin d'exprimer sa profonde piété et sa foi inébranlable envers Dieu.

ABSTRACT

Tintoretto, one of the great Venetian masters of the sixteenth century, is renowned for his compositional innovations. The painter also worked as a stage and costume designer for the *Compagnie della Calza*. As a result, he selected and combined elements of other disciplines in his pictures.

This thesis focuses on the fusion of the arts in Tintoretto's imagery. A comprehensive analysis of this interdisciplinary aspect reveals the subtlety of Tintoretto's creative mind. The challenge is to discover Tintoretto as a stage designer who conceived pictures as theatrical performances. Instead of the traditional preparatory sketch, he built a miniature stage in order to visualize the scene in tangible forms existing in light and space. The design of the setting, the gestural choreography of his personages and the distribution of lighting were analysed and then translated into painted illusion. With this unusual methodology, Tintoretto invented forceful *mise-en-scènes* which induce the spectator to perceive the imaginary as real. A substantial knowledge of stagecraft also enabled him to bring to vibrant life the dramatic episodes of the Bible on canvas. Through such artfully constructed theatrical illusion, Tintoretto not only re-creates a vision for his audience, but above all, conveys the depth of his spiritual experience.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1994, Venice celebrated the four-hundredth anniversary of Tintoretto's death. To commemorate this event, red flowing banners with the inscription *IV Centenario del Tintoretto* were suspended in front of museums, on the sides of bridges and on façades of the *Ala Napoleonica* and the Library of San Marco. The city also organized two exhibitions, *Jacopo Tintoretto e i suoi incisori* at the Palazzo Ducale and *Jacopo Tintoretto Ritratti* at the *Gallerie dell'Accademia.* Coinciding with this was Antonio Manno's publication, *Sacre rappresentazioni nelle chiese di Venezia*, listing all the churches with Tintoretto's altarpieces still *in situ* for all to visit, admire and experience. The tribute also included musical performances (Plates 1A-B) at the magnificent premises of the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco* of which Tintoretto became a member in 1564. Visitors were overwhelmed by the devotion of Venice to its most acclaimed artist, as nothing was spared in the festive activities undertaken to honour him.

Since the sixteenth century, the city has been renowned for its numerous spectacles. Entertainment was employed by the Republic to propagate its politico-religious ideology and to magnify the prestige and authority of the Doge and his office. During the carnival season, ceremonial specialists were responsible for a multitude of shows which helped greatly strengthen communal cohesiveness and stability. In the service of the Church and the State, the *Scuole Grandi* organized ostentatious processions with parades of relics and biblical representations through the streets of Venice. Lavish concerts were provided for distinguished guests. Throughout the *cinquecento*, there was a growing

interest in the civic and religious liturgy so that by the end of the century, more than eighty-six ceremonies were listed on the annual festive calendar.[1]

The love for theatre and ceremony is even visible in Venetian architecture. The layout of buildings and public places, the preference for surface decoration and the careful selection of dramatic architectural elements may be recognized as contributing to the creation of an opulent outdoor stage. As illustrated in an anonymous woodcut (Plate 2), a view from the lagoon shows the magnificent scenography of the centre of Venice. Two giant columns of the Lion of Saint Mark and Saint Theodore serve as framing devices through which the eye is led to the perspectivally laid out street and the richly decorated backdrop, the Clock Tower. Adjacent to this structure is the *Procuratie Vecchie* (Plate 3) which resembles a long corridor of a theatre with multiple openings onto the main scene. Nearby, buildings such as the Basilica, the Campanile and the Doge's Palace display a rich combination of texture, shape, style and scale that lends a flamboyant note to the festive scene.

The fascination for theatrical aesthetics permeated all facets of Venetian life. Observation of the countless celebrations undoubtedly enriched Tintoretto's pictorial repertory. Since he was a stage designer for the *Compagnie della Calza*, it is not surprising that he also selected, combined and fused elements of other disciplines in his paintings, thus giving them a unique quality.

Although the theatricality in Tintoretto's *oeuvre* was noted in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the interdisciplinary aspect and the theatrical semiotics of his tableaux have been virtually unexplored. To Charles Baudelaire, the San Rocco pictures were

veritable "*miracles et spectacles*,"[2] while John Ruskin described them as being "magnificent scene-painting."[3] For David Rosand, Tintoretto's canvases create a "theater of piety."[4] Terms such as "acting area"[5], "theatrical wings"[6] or "proscenium"[7] have been used to describe the pictorial space of *The Miracle of Saint Mark* (Plate 4). In addition, formal similarities between Serlio's stage arrangement and Tintoretto's treatment of background were pointed out in Valcanover-Pignatti's monograph.[8] Yet, a parallel with the contemporary theatrical practices has been left undeveloped. Despite the fact that scholarship relegated the importance of theatricality to brief references, these allusions remain a testimony to Tintoretto's inventiveness and originality. Tintoretto's religious pictures are here considered in a new and distinct manner, through an investigation of how the artist presented his 'plays' according to the stage designer's perspective: the design of the backdrop, the performance of the actors and the orchestration of lighting.

This thesis explores how Tintoretto employed his knowledge of theatre and music in his paintings. Elements such as the visualization of the scene through the constructed model-box, the art of acting and its gestural variations, and the functions of stage lighting are analysed. This in-depth study reveals how the artist conceived and organized signs, symbols and non-verbal language into a cohesive whole so that the compositions can be easily deciphered. For instance, Tintoretto translated dialogue into perceptual signs enabling the spectator to read and discover the 'actor''s intention and motivation. A proper coding and decoding process is thus devised and effectively establishes communication with the audience. Such works selected from all periods of Tintoretto's artistic career, including *The Washing of Feet* (Plate 28), 1547; *The Miracle of*

Saint Mark (Plate 4), 1548; *The Crucifixion* (Plate 39), 1565; *The Ecce Homo* (Plate 41), 1566-67; *The Massacre of the Innocents* (Plate 47), 1583-87 and *The Last Supper* (Plate 36), 1592-93, provide incisive examples illustrating the fusion of the arts in Tintoretto's imagery.

A study of the pre-eminence of ceremonies and festivities in sixteenth-century Venice demonstrates how Tintoretto's use of theatrical semiology suited the Venetian *penchant* for spectacle.

Cinquecento writers showed appreciation for Tintoretto's paintings, although they expressed reserve and incomprehension with regard to his speed of execution and his ability to translate his initial *pensieri* into frenzied brushwork. Francesco Sansovino described Tintoretto as "all dash and verve."[9] Giorgio Vasari called Tintoretto "the most extraordinary brain that the art of painting has ever produced" and yet he deplored Tintoretto's "rapidity, that, when it was thought that he had scarcely begun, he had finished...working at haphazard and without design, as if to prove that art is but a jest."[10] In contrast, Andrea Calmo, playwright and friend of Tintoretto, was amazed at his ability to "[twiddle] with his paintbrush" and to complete a portrait in half an hour.[11]

It is surprising that no remark was made, at this time, on the fusion of the arts in Tintoretto's pictures: one can conclude that the passion for theatre was so evident and so much an integral part of Venetian taste that the interrelation between stagecraft and painting was perhaps taken for granted by critics. Carlo Ridolfi, in comparing Venice to a "theatre of all marvels",[12] asserted that the city was transformed into a spectacular stage

for human activity. However, to the twentieth-century observer, it is an exciting challenge to discover the reflection of theatre and music in Tintoretto's religious paintings.

Tintoretto often sought analogies in other arts for his creations. He was fascinated by the illusion of perspectival scenery. Endless vistas and complex architectural construction serve as backdrops for his biblical representations. Ruskin notes Tintoretto's ability to execute large scale "scenes at a small theatre at a shilling a day,"[13] while Ridolfi recounts that the artist

> also invented bizarre caprices of dress and humorous sayings for the representations of the comedies that were put on in Venice by young students for amusement. For these productions he created many curiosities that amazed the spectators and were celebrated as singular. Because of this everyone applied to him on like occasions.[14]

For his pictorial formulation, Tintoretto adopted a peculiar working method which is comparable to the preparations of a stage designer. He created small figures of clay or wax and placed them in a box-stage made of wood and cardboard with openings cut out in the sides. Light was projected into the setting, producing dramatic *chiaroscuro.* His models were dressed so that the forms and contours of the bodies underneath the costumes as well as the folds of drapery could be thoroughly studied.[15] Tintoretto would rearrange his figures until he was satisfied with his grouping. Dialogue was then made visual through the choreography of attitudes, gestures and movements.

Tintoretto interpreted and transformed the Bible into an inexhaustible pageant of dramatic representations. His chosen themes denote a careful selection of the most tragic moments. Tintoretto's pictures are comparable to an artfully constructed theatrical illusion. He translated his vision by means of an unusual synthesis of *disegno* and *colorito.*

The impetuous brushstrokes, the *chiaroscuro*, the skilled draftsmanship and the dramatic conception of space reflect his highly original approach to painting. With the spectacular *mise-en-scènes*, he makes the audience believe the imaginary is real.

CHAPTER I: THE PRE-EMINENCE OF SPECTACLES AND CEREMONIES IN CINQUECENTO VENICE

> "In Venice, it seems, all the world was indeed a stage, and all the men and women merely players."
> Edward Muir.[1]

The vast majority of Tintoretto's works remain in Venice and as the eighteenth-century travel writer, P.J. Grosley observed "Buildings both public and private and the very streets of Venice are teeming, so to speak, with his [Tintoretto's] compositions."[2] Indeed, Tintoretto's omnipresence can be felt even today. During his lifetime, he painted almost exclusively within the city, not because of a reluctance to travel nor the serendipitous coincidence of birthplace but mainly because of his attachment to his hometown.[3] He was deeply devoted to Venice, more so than any of his contemporaries. He differs from Titian who travelled to Rome and Germany, painted at the request of foreign patrons and received honours as well as material awards from Popes and Emperors.

Many believe that Tintoretto's art can be only fully appreciated in Venice. For example, C.N. Cochin, an eighteenth-century writer, stated that "One can really only get to know him in Venice, what one sees of his elsewhere only seems to give an idea of his weaknesses."[4] Indeed, the contemplation of his pictures *in situ* reveals the undeniable spell cast by the city on his creation.

Tintoretto was bound to the world he knew, to the place in which he lived and worked. Venice is unique in its history and customs, its communal government and

ideology, its saints and festivals. Through the years, the Venetians came to attach increasing importance to their civic and religious ceremonies. In the thirteenth century, twelve major annual festivities were celebrated [5] while Marino Sanudo, a Venetian historian, reported twenty at the end of the fifteenth century.[6] By the end of the sixteenth century, the festive calendar had grown to eighty-six ceremonial events.[7]

Special attention was devoted to religious ceremonies. Major feasts commemorated the life and ministry of Christ--Christmas, Lent, Easter and the Resurrection. On Palm Sunday, the Doge became the principal actor on the ceremonial stage, holding palm branches to adopt the gestures Christ used while entering into Jerusalem.[8] Christ's last days were also re-enacted by the Doge himself during the Holy Week performances.[9] The scenes were designed to fuse images of the secular ruler and Christ as close as possible. Such political overtones to the ritual aimed to reinforce the patrician's power and authority.

On Good Friday, a tragic mood was re-created in front of San Marco by the funeral cortege of processionners dressed in black; the bells ceased to chime while the mournful silence added a sombre note to the dramatization of the event. Inside San Marco, the burial of Christ was re-enacted: the Consecrated Host, (the body of Christ), was transported from the processional coffin to the ciborium on the high altar. The Doge placed his signet ring in the hands of the grand chancellor who in turn solemnly transferred it to the vicar who then sealed the door of the vessel while the choir sang: "I have buried the Lord, and the door of the tomb has been sealed."[10]

The great mystery of Christ's Resurrection on Easter morning came to life through

effective stagecraft. The spectators witnessed the following dialogue between the vicar and four singers standing behind the door of San Marco:

"Whom do you seek in the tomb of Christ" inquired the four singers;

"The crucified Jesus of Nazareth, O Angel of Heaven" said the vicar;

"He is not here; for He has risen, just as He said. So proclaim the news again and again, for He is risen", the reply from inside was then accompanied by the chanting of "Alleluia".[11]

As the doors opened, the Doge and the vicar proceeded to the high altar where the vicar broke the ducal seal on the ciborium and unveiled its empty content. Upon this 'discovery', the vicar announced "Christ has risen" and received a 'kiss of joy' from the Doge. The embrace between members of his office was exchanged in the midst of the joyful response "*Deo Gratias*" from the chorus. For this occasion, the Basilica was transformed into a splendid stage: the choir and the Doge's throne were richly decorated with brocades; and the treasures and the *Pala d'Oro*, a golden screen studded with gems and precious stones, were on display at the high altar. The Doge and Signoria wore costumes of silk and gold as they celebrated the greatest event of Christian history.[12]

The use of performance proved to be effective in convincing the audience of the actual happenings of such miraculous events. The re-enactment of Christ's life allowed the spectators to visualize the reality of the religious mysteries. Symbols, rites and music were employed to capture the viewers' imagination and to foster maximum participation in the ceremonies. The Doge, as principal 'actor' in the drama, was omnipresent. His role was to reassert his effectiveness as leader and to proclaim the ducal right to authority over

the ecclesiastical patriarch.[13] It was the Doge who impersonated Christ in the religious plays, who gave his signet ring to the vicar so that the ciborium could be sealed and who initiated the liturgical kiss at the announcement of Christ's Resurrection.

The *Corpus Christi* procession was yet another instance of ostentation. The confraternities took an active part in many of the elaborate ceremonies. They produced pageants, floats and *tableaux vivants* which included either live performance or a display of portable sculptures.[14] In 1532, the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco* manifested the piety of the Republic with a parade of floats carrying silver liturgical vessels and three Old Testament scenes.[15] *San Giovanni e Paolo* members presented a cart with two nude infants portraying Adam and Eve, and another with adults, depicting Christ and four monks.[16] The *scuole* invented lively biblical representations in order to delight the people and to disseminate profound messages in a form comprehensible to all.

One may assume that Tintoretto, as a member of the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco*, would share a similar point of view. Stagecraft was indeed the best medium of capturing the imagination of the audience, and the best vehicle of propounding abstract thought which could not be otherwise widely diffused. The staged 'performances' re-created in Tintoretto's paintings served a specific purpose, that of awakening the faith and love of God. As a devout Christian, Tintoretto attended the numerous *Corpus Christi* celebrations and observation of these countless *mise-en-scènes* enriched his pictorial repertory.

The feast of *Corpus Christi* retained its ostentatious character throughout the years. In 1581, Sansovino commented on the lavish productions of the *Scuole Grandi*, "with so much greater solemnity [than the other processionners] because they are

pompously turned out with decorated robes, with silver-plate, with relics in their hands and with scenes on platforms so rare and beautiful that it is a worthy thing to see."[17] The most magnificent *Corpus Christi* procession took place in May 1606, defying the Interdict of Pope Paul V forbidding all celebrations of the sacraments.[18] This spectacular ceremony demonstrated the unshakable support of the people of Venice for their government and proclaimed their victory over papal jurisdiction.[19] A document concerning the Interdict gave a detailed description of the biblical scenes devised by the *Scuole Grandi*, tableaux which clearly reflected the Venetians' fascination for theatre:

> The Scuole Grandi in particular made many fine floats, with scenes which alluded to the rightful claims of the Republic against the Pope *(alla pretentione ragionevole della Republica con il Papa)*, because on one float appeared a Christ and two Pharisees with a motto which said 'Reddite quae sunt Cesaris Cesari et que sunt Dei Deo'. On another float they put Moses and Aaron in front of God with a motto saying 'Segregate mihi tribum Levi etc'. On another they put Christ with all twelve apostles, 'Reges gentium dominantur earum, vos autem non sic', and all these persons were represented by young men with make-believe clothes and beards, and the floats were carried by brothers of the Scuole. The friars also devised some scenes, and in particular a church collapsing but upheld by the Doge of Venice. Next to this were St Francis and St Dominic, helping the Doge to prop the church up. On another float, dressed as a Doge with a beard similar to that of the present Most Serene Doge, was a young man kneeling before a St Mark, who was giving him his blessing. There was also a Venice who had the figure of the Faith in front of her, and was supported by lions with a motto which spoke of her constancy in faith. In short, it was a fitting and a memorable spectacle.... [20]

The positioning of the actors, their gestures, costumes and makeup were carefully conceived to bring to vibrant life a vision for the audience. The mottoes exhibited on the floats faithfully expressed Venetian ideology, with its anti-clerical policy and its absolute disdain for sacerdotal power. Giacomo Lambertengo, a Jesuit spy who attended the ceremony, reported seeing the inscription "*Viva il Dose*" on the swords of two friars

standing on either side of the collapsing church.[21] Through the *dédoublement* of theatrical devices, the righteous position of the government was inculcated in the mind of thousands of spectators. This can be viewed as a cunning manoeuvre on the part of the Republic to employ the very means prohibited by the Pope, a spectacular pageantry, as its sole proclamation of independence from ecclesiastical institutions.[22]

Besides the annual celebrations of Christian history, the Venetian festive calendar included numerous spectacles which can be classified into four categories: revering the patron saints; commemorating historical events such as victories in war or political achievements at home and abroad; thanking God for intervention in natural disasters; and magnifying the liturgy of the State which consisted of diplomatic receptions, the mystical marriage of the sea or the *Sensa*, ducal coronations, state funerals, the election of the Doge, and so forth.

According to the *Libro Ceremoniale* of the *Collegio,* 171 celebrations took place between 1556 and 1607 in honour of distinguished visitors.[23] In these cases, the Venetians were particularly concerned with such issues as the selection of meeting places, the settings for diplomatic receptions, the choice of gifts to ambassadors, the etiquette and the costumes of the representatives.[24] Depending on the rank and prestige of each dignitary, an appropriate choreography of gesture and movement would be conceived. The simple nod by the head of the Doge, the removal of his crown, the rising from his throne or his descent from the dais in the *Collegio* to greet a diplomat, reflected the depth and seriousness of the alliance.[25]

A good performance required a convincing stage setting and competent actors

capable of arousing desirable emotions from the audience. Similarly, a suitable decor and the presence of dignified officials would enhance the image of the foreign visitor. It was believed that the more distant the initial meeting place from the *Collegio* and the higher the rank of the representative, the greater the prestige accorded to the dignitary by Venice.[26] In a letter, Sir Henry Wotton described the privilege conferred on Cardinal Joyeuse, ambassador of Henry IV of France:

> He was met three miles off at one of their islands by some threescore, all senators, in their best robes, with the barges of the Prince, whereas other ambassadors are commonly received in gondolas....[27]

It was felt that a careful orchestration of ceremonial acts, as in the production of a play, would stir in the visitor the desired emotion, such as fear, vulnerability, respect and admiration for the Venetian Republic. Machiavelli once said:

> Men in general make judgments more by appearances than by reality, for sight alone belongs to everyone, but understanding to few. Everyone sees what you appear to be, few know what you are, and those few do not dare to contradict the opinion of the many who have the majesty of the state to defend them; and in the actions of all men, and most of all of princes, from whom there is no appeal, one must consider the end result.[28]

He advised the ruler to build up a reputable image as had the Romans in the past by organizing feasts for the lower classes, for the participation of both ruler and citizens in these celebrations would strengthen the social bonds and maintain the unity of the people.[29] Views such as these illustrate how festivals were not just pure entertainment and sumptuous display, but civic rituals where hierarchical duties were clearly defined.[30]

Participants were constantly reminded of the prominent position of the Doge as head of the state. Intrinsic political symbolism was also devised in order to boost the

public presence of the Doge. Complex allusions linked the Doge to Saint Mark, as well as the delegation of authority from God to the saint to the Doge.[31] At civic ceremonies, the theatrical appearance of the patrician with umbrella, white candle, sword and banners, together with the triumphant sound of silver trumpets, elevated his status to the rank of pope and emperor.[32] During the *Sensa* festival, the image of the Lordship of the Sea was reiterated. The lavish ducal galley, the *Bucintoro,* followed by thousands of adorned gondolas, moved toward the Lido where the ceremony took place (Plate 5). Holy water was poured into the sea and as the Doge threw his gold ring overboard, the right to a maritime empire was proclaimed: "We espouse thee, O sea, as a sign of true and perpetual dominion."[33] This mystical union was repeated year after year like the performance of a play celebrating the political ideals of the Republic, wherein the actors comprised all "participants on the stage of the city itself",[34] as Brown remarked. The production of various spectacles, following Machiavelli's dictum, proved to be the most effective propagandistic contrivance of the Venetian government.

Co-incidentally, the theatre season commenced at the same time as the feast of the *Sensa* and ended in July. Venice boasted an array of popular diversions: comedies, tragedies, farces, mimes, classical drama, improvised plays and allegorical *momaria* in which actors or amateurs wore masks to perform. The city relied upon the *Compagnie delle Calze* for the orchestration of its festivities. Small groups of young nobles, professional troupes and amateurs were formed, and were distinguished from other organizations by their number, wealth and privilege. Being designated by the Council of Ten (the Ministry of Police), they were in charge of public and private entertainment.[35]

Between 1497 and 1553, Sanudo reported thirty-four *compagnie* including the *Sempiterni*, the *Zardinieri*, the *Immortali*, the *Trionfanti*, etc...each identifiable by different embroideries and stocking (*calza*) colours.[36] They are depicted in Gentile Bellini's *Procession in the Piazza San Marco* (Plate 6) wearing hosiery in various hues.[37]

These *compagnie* were renowned for their significant contributions to theatre and art. For instance, the *Sempiterni* engaged Titian to design an *apparato* for their initiation *feste*; they commissioned Aretino to write *La Talanta* and then hired Vasari as stage designer for the play's first performance in 1542.[38] Tintoretto was also appointed to produce sets and costumes for comedies.

As for the location of the *platea*, or acting-area, the *compagnie* sometimes organized spectacles in public squares where a large audience could attend, or in palaces at the request of the patricians.[39] In the case of public performances, it was imperative to embellish the cityscape or even to transform its architecture into a suitable stage-set. Streets, narrow *calle*, bridges and canals were richly decorated for the processions. By the end of the sixteenth century, the *Scuole Grandi* seemed to have attached more importance to the pompous display of relics and vessels along the sinuous routes turned into *viae sacrae* on feast days, than to the demonstration of devotion and penitence. Rich ornaments adorned various edifices along the processional route.[40]

The ultimate destination of most civic and religious ceremonies was the Piazza San Marco, the Basilica and the Palazzo Ducale. From the lagoon one feels overwhelmed by the architectural composition of the palace (Plate 7): a continuous colonnade and an upper loggia support the imposing third story which in turn dissolves into a myriad of

shimmering lozenges in Istrian stone and red Verona marble. The crenellations on the roof and the quatrefoiled *oculi* piercing the second and third stories create a vibratory effect across the large expanse of solid wall. The Molo façade (Plate 7) continues around the corner onto the Piazzetta, forming an L-shape measuring over 600ft long. Despite its impressive exterior, it is the ceremonial staircase, the *Scala dei Giganti* (Plate 8), which remains the climactic feature of the palace. This freestanding stairway appears to have been conceived exclusively for the civic rituals of the Republic. The first three steps extend outward as if to welcome all participants into the scene (Plate 8). Then a calculated rhythm of steps and landing, analogous to the verses and pauses in a musical play, prepared the viewer for the climax of the drama performed on the platform at the top of the stairs. At the upper landing (Plate 8), the enlargement of one bay on each side of the flight provided a greater *platea* by forming a triple-arched backdrop. This impressive entrance leads to the halls of state and the *piano nobile* where most important decisions were made.

After religious ceremonies in the Basilica, the cortege returned to the Ducal Palace through the painted and gilded *Porta della Carta* (Plate 9), and went along the five-bay tunnel of the Foscari entrance hall to approach the grand staircase. On the vast upper landing, the Doge made his appearance before the assembled nobility to perform the final civic rites: reception of the beretta, the ceremonial horned Doge's cap at the ducal coronation (Plate 10); promissory oath to the office when he pronounced "*Accipe*

coronam ducalem ducatus Venetiarum"; and distribution of coins to the cheering crowd.[41] The Palazzo Ducale became an architectural monument of magnificence and prestige, and its ceremonial staircase unmistakably reflected the Venetian taste for dramatic ritual space.

Throughout the sixteenth century, major rebuilding and embellishment around the Piazza San Marco transformed the centre of the city into a more glorious setting for civic and religious ceremonies (Plate 11). Sansovino was commissioned to replace the undignified food stalls (Plate 12) of the Piazza and the Piazzetta with lavish edifices. Facing the lagoon, the *Zecca* or Mint (Plate 13) displays an unusual façade of rusticated bands and ringed half columns. The exterior of San Marco Library (Plate 14) composed of the Doric order on the ground floor and the Ionic on the second--following the Roman Colosseum structure--is richly decorated with lions' heads, garlands, friezes of putti and sculptures in order to match the magnificent façade of the Doge's palace on the opposite side. The *Loggetta* (Plate 15) at the base of the *Campanile* displays the triumphal arch motif, thus creating a visual match with the triple-arched entrance at the top of the ducal stairway.[42]

The arcade of the *Procuratie Nuove* preserves the same articulation as the *Procuratie Vecchie* (Plate 16) located on the north wing of the Piazza: two window bays above a single ground-level arch. The *Procuraties*' loggia provided a covered passageway all around the Piazza, allowing the spectators to watch the ceremonies through the multiple openings. As represented in Matteo Pagan's engraving *The Procession of the Doge on Palm Sunday* (Plate 17), the public could also obtain a good view of the festivities through the windows on the second storey. A comparison with Fossati's print,

Représentation musicale durant le carnaval (Plate 18), shows that the sidewall of the auditorium is also divided into rows of arched loges where masked viewers enjoy the spectacle. Thus, a similar spatial configuration is employed for the audience attending a performance whether in a public square or inside a theatre.

The Piazza San Marco, ceremonial centre of Venice, is famous for its grandiose enclosure measuring over 800ft long. The screen of columns and its sequence of light and dark, solid and void, further enhance the dramatic illusion of deep space. The colonnade suggests an open air proscenium, the *Procuratie* forming the oblique wings of a perspectival scenery.

The *Basilica di San Marco* (Plate 19) viewed from the *Ala Napoleonica* offers a sight of exceptional splendour. Pinnacles and domes rise against the sky. The western façade is transformed into a glittering backdrop, as seen in Bellini's painting of *Procession in the Piazza San Marco* (Plate 6). A hundred columns and pilasters, made of precious marble cut from eastern quarries, were fitted into the structure of the portals. The interplay of light on this exuberant surface decoration and on the mosaics covering the tympana creates the illusion of a gigantic screen studded with gold and gems.

Spectators standing in the Piazza would have been impressed and probably intimidated by such a rich juxtaposition of architectural settings around the square. The *Torre dell'Orologio*, (Plate 20), the Clock Tower, established a focal point at the north end of the Piazzetta. Its main arch was placed over the entrance leading to the commercial quarter of the *Rialto,* thus connecting the administrative centre to the *Merceria.*[43] The repetition of the archway motif at the base of the tower creates visual harmony with the

edifices erected nearby. In order to add a lively quality to the festive framework of the Piazza, the decorations on the roof and façade of the building consist of two small mechanized 'plays' which re-enact at every hour of the day during the *Sensa* festival and Ascension week. While the Moors standing on a high platform on top of the tower strike an enormous bell (Plate 21), Magi and angel appear through a small opening at the left of the Virgin and Child seated in a niche above the entablature (Plate 22). They move toward the Madonna, make a genuflection then proceed to exit at right.[44]

Venice's love for spectacle and ceremony is clearly reflected in its buildings. Indeed, Venetian architecture may be considered as the best artistic expression of its government's political and religious aspirations. Throughout the sixteenth century, the embellishment and restructuring of the ritual centres were carried out in accordance with the growing interest in civic liturgy. Edifices erected in the Piazzetta and the Piazza were built as components of an ostentatious stage where annual spectacles continually magnified the glorious past of Venice, the living authority of the Doge and the sacredness and complex ideology of his office. According to Giovanni Caldiera, a *quattrocento* humanist, the "Republican virtues are identified with divine virtues, and God and the State, patriotism and religion, are metaphorically fused."[45]

The study of civic and religious rituals in sixteenth-century Venice not only reveals the propagandistic nature of the ceremonies but also indicates the Venetian fascination for theatrical aesthetics. Special attention was given to the appropriateness of stage positions of principal personae, the choreography of gestures, the exchange of dialogue and the selection of settings and costumes. The orchestration of these elements aimed to provoke

desired responses from the audience as well as foster its involvement and participation in the celebration.

Tintoretto who spent most of his life in Venice would certainly be aware of the pre-eminence of spectacles in the Venetian life. It is therefore not surprising that his aesthetic orientation reflected the thinking and viewing habits of his contemporaries. In addressing them in a familiar idiom, an effective communication was thus established. In this way, the audience became more responsive to the profound messages in his religious tableaux. Observation of the numerous *feste* undoubtedly offered visual ideas and yet, it is the communicative character of this medium that appears to have inspired Tintoretto to conceive pictures as staged performances.

The dramatic universe of Tintoretto is explored in the following chapters. A brief survey of contemporary theatrical practices introduces the reader to Venetian stagecraft. It also provides a greater appreciation of Tintoretto's *mise-en-scènes.*

CHAPTER II. THE DESIGN OF THE STAGE

> "[The] scene is a living thing...[It] remains always the same, while incessantly changing." Gordon Craig.[1]

In the sixteenth century, Venetian patricians entrusted the organization of private entertainment to the *Compagnie delle Calze* which had the reputation for providing excellent festivities, including masquerades, banquets, ballets and theatrical productions.

Some stages set by the *compagnie* were simple and unpretentious while others, such as Vasari's perspectival scenery for Aretino's comedy *La Talanta* in 1542 took on a monumental scale. After the play, the scenery was dismantled although it could be reconstructed later from the artist's accounts and drawings.[2] Vasari's stage offered a perspective view of Rome that included representations of twelve monuments and seven houses for the delight of spectators.[3] It was artificially lit from a sun made of glass illuminating the setting's sky.[4] However, despite the great acclaim of the audience at this production, Vasari's design had little impact on Venetian stagecraft.[5] In contrast, Sebastiano Serlio's seven illustrated volumes on architecture, entitled *Regole generali di Architettura,* and published in Venice in 1537-47, exerted considerably more influence.

Serlio's second book, dealing with perspective, theatre construction and scenery, was conceived as an expansion of Vitruvius's treatise. In the latter's discussion of the *periaktoi* and methods of changing the stage setting, he mentioned three different scenes designed for comedies, tragedies and pastoral spectacles. These were to be affixed to the three panels of a turning prism which could rotate and display the appropriate *apparato* according to the kind of play performed. According to Vitruvius:

> When there are to be changes in the play or when the gods appear with sudden thunders, they are to turn and change the kind of subject presented to the audience ...There are three styles of scenery: one which is called tragic; a second, comic; the third, satyric. Now the subjects of these differ severally one from another. The tragic are designed with columns, pediments and statues and other royal surroundings; the comic have the appearance of private buildings and balconies and projections with windows made to imitate reality, after the fashion of ordinary buildings; the satyric settings are painted with trees, caves, mountains and other country features, designed to imitate landscape.[6]

This brief description of Vitruvius' treatise inspired Serlio to formulate his own principles for full-stage decorations. Following Vitruvius, Serlio distinguished three standardized scenes, one for tragedy--a street flanked by palaces, towers, an obelisk, a triumphal arch, pyramids etc...(Plate 23); another for comedy, a square bordered by edifices typical of an Italian city of the period (Plate 24); and the third (Plate 25), a natural surrounding decorated with trees, flowers, rocks, hills, cottages and a fountain appropriate for satyric plays.

Serlio also compiled information on theatrical practices of his time, having had opportunities to see many sets during his visits to Rome, Urbino, Vicenza and France. For instance, his illustrations of architectural views (Plates 23 & 24) shows an awareness and indebtedness to Peruzzi's design (Plate 26) for *La Calandria* performed in Rome in 1514, in which Peruzzi depicted a street bordered by palaces and churches, porticos and cornices, all represented in perspective to give the stage an illusion of great depth.[7] Among Serlio's drawings presently in the Uffizi museum, a scenographic view of the Piazza of San Marco displays similarities with a composition by Peruzzi. Included in it are the Clock Tower, the domes of San Marco, the *Ca' D'Oro* and the church of San

Zaccaria against a forest of steeples and chimneys.[8] Elena Povoledo in *Scène et Mise en scène à Venise dans la première moitié du XVIe siècle* speculates that the sketch was probably designed for a comic scene, therefore Serlio replaced the severity of classical edifices represented in Peruzzi's scenery with the flamboyant architecture of Venice.[9] The drawing seems to have been an immediate success with Serlio's friends including Calmo, Aretino and Dolce, and according to Povoledo, it would probably have exercised a great influence on the art of stage setting in Venice.[10]

Serlio did not put forward new concepts; he merely elaborated on the ideas of previous masters, yet his illustrated treatise revived interest in theatrical practices. The Italian edition was subsequently translated into major languages of Europe. His illustrations of scenic designs offered visual ideas and were often reproduced in books dealing with stage construction, while recommendations with regard to artificial lighting, thunder effects and other illusionistic devices were useful to scenic artists.[11]

Tintoretto was fascinated with the illusion of contemporary theatrical practices. He constantly associated with the theatre circle, and kept close contact with the playwrights Calmo and Aretino, as well as with Marcolini, a printer and engraver, who was in charge of the *Regole generali di Architettura* publication in 1537.[12] Thus, it is likely that Tintoretto would have been familiar with Serlio's treatise on perspective scenery. In fact, the layout of the buildings depicted at the right of his painting *Christ and the Adulteress* (Plate 27) of 1546, attests to Tintoretto's awareness of Serlio's *Tragic Scene* (Plate 23).

In *The Washing of Feet* (Plate 28), the artist reproduced Serlio's illustration

(Plate 23) in the background,[13] and designed a suitable backdrop for his painting, the dramatic event alluding to Christ's mission to save humankind. On the right, the same sequence of buildings can be recognized: a loggia of five bays supported by pilasters; a two-storey edifice with Doric columns on the ground floor and a temple with a *pteron* and pediments. The illusion of deep space is suggested through a variety of architectural features and proportions gradually diminishing toward the horizon.

The jutting cornices and balconies are also faithfully reproduced. However, Tintoretto replaced the perspectival street with a reflecting pond as if to recall the familiar view of a lagoon, and probably to transport the event to the city of Venice. He added trees and shrubs to enhance a poetic quality to the idealized vista. To interweave multiple meanings in the painting, Tintoretto conceived of two points of perspective. He oriented the central theme to the right side of the picture, and created a focal point above Christ's head, thus directing the viewer's attention to the depiction of a supper scene in the background. At this vanishing point, he alludes to Christ's humility and His sacrifice for humankind. In contrast, the second focus at the horizon refers to the eternal Glory of God. Tintoretto reinforces the idea of the everlasting triumph of Christ by placing the obelisk, symbol of *vera gloria*,[14] next to the triumphal arch. With this subtle symbolism, he devised a theme for the faithful to meditate on during their lifetime journey.

The narrative can also be read from left to right, and the inclusion of a tableau within a tableau effectively relates successive events in a single representation: the washing of feet on the evening of the Passover and the Last Supper. To this end, Tintoretto produced a large 'platform', wherein his 'cast' convincingly re-enacts episodes

from the Life of Christ. He meets the challenge of constructing a 'stage', vast both in depth and width on which the 'actors' can move freely from foreground to background.

The orthogonals of the floor design further emphasize the illusion of a deep recession. Floors of the interior, hall and piazza (Plates 29,30 & 31) are divided into a number of tiles. Human figures are placed on these squares and their sizes proportionately reduced as their location approaches to the vanishing point. Architectural elements that parallel the picture surface also recede on different planes. The duplication of forms, visible one behind the other, also produces a series of successive stages, and creates the impression of deep space.

The pavements depicted in *The Washing of Feet* (Plate 28) and *Christ and the Woman taken in Adultery* (Plate 32) display an identical alternation of lozenge and octagon. It is as though Tintoretto re-employed the miniature model he had built specifically for his pictorial formulation. It is also important to note that in *The Finding of the Body of Saint Mark* (Plate 33), 1562-66, the square pattern of the tiles has started to show through the faded layers of colour of the drapery. This demonstrates that Tintoretto first depicted the scenery, then subsequently arranged the characters according to the 'script of the play'.

For an experienced painter and stage designer, it is preferable to visualize the settings not in terms of a preparatory sketch, but in terms of their actual existence in light and space. A two-dimensional drawing offers only a fixed vantage point while a constructed model can be observed from various angles. A view from above or below,

right or left, and even a slight turn or inclination produces a completely different effect. With several box-stages at hand, one would have an infinite combination of pictorial possibilities. Tintoretto's working method enabled him to choose the most appropriate set for his pictures.

Scenery in any theatrical production fulfills certain functions. First, it locates and describes conditions surrounding the action. Second, it creates the appropriate atmosphere for the play. Third, it assists the actors by supplying them with a well conceived framework, and last, it transports the audience into the imaginary realm by being pictorially attractive.

Probably with this in mind, Tintoretto erected three settings for the episodes from the life of Saint Mark. This series was commissioned to decorate the meeting hall of the *Scuola Grande di San Marco.* In *The Miracle of Saint Mark* (Plate 4), 1548, the drama takes place in a courtyard of a noble's residence. There is a platform flanked by angle wings. To the right, steps lead to the throne and on the left is an unusual disposition of a colonnaded portico next to a projecting balcony. These two features are functional only as *periaktoi,* for one can hardly find any parallel in real architectural settings. At the rear stage, a scene-painting depicts a wall with its pedimental gate opening into a luxuriant garden. At the top, Tintoretto placed a vine-covered espalier along the frame of his model-box. According to Newton, this decorative device serves "to conceal the upper edge of the 'skycloth'".[15] Steer also refers to the model. He remarks: "the space is defined by the perspective of a curious box-like pergola."[16] Its use allows for the recession into the distance suggested through the placement of architectural forms in diminishing

proportions.

In the illuminated foreground, Tintoretto gave significance to the action of the drama by displaying the broken instruments of torture scattered near the victim. He skillfully condensed a succession of events into one final act. A slave disobeyed his master and travelled to Venice to pay homage to Saint Mark. Upon his return, orders were given to gouge out his eyes and sever his limbs. Through the intervention of Saint Mark, he was rescued from this grim fate. The evidence is presented to the audience at the base line of the painting with the spike, axe, hammer and a swarm of executioners who are unable to persecute the pious servant. Tintoretto employed the design of the pavement to direct the viewers' attention to the defenseless and humble faithful lying on the ground. He also devised a brightly-lit 'stage' with a panoply of vivid colours and exotic costumes to emphasize the joyful atmosphere celebrating the invincible power of Venice's patron saint. In dressing the action with a pleasing backdrop, Tintoretto succeeded in creating a suitable environment for his 'actors'.

Tintoretto may have had props which would have been used as embellishments for a scenery or stock settings according to the place of action. For an event in *plein-air,* scenic units painted to resemble sky, trees, shrubs or trellis are employed to give the illusion of naturalistic surrounding. *Salomon and the Queen of Saba* (Plate 34) painted in 1546, two years earlier than *The Miracle of Saint Mark* (Plate 4), displays a similar scene-painting. The white wall and gate delineate the boundaries of a verdant garden. Although, one may suggest that in *The Washing of Feet* (Plate 28), the espalier of foliage is not just mere decoration, but may be charged with deeper, symbolic meaning. The border of vine

leaves conspicuously placed adjacent to the Last Supper scene may allude to the salvation of the soul through the observance of the Eucharist, as indicated in John 15:1 (I am the true vine), John 15:5 (I am the vine, ye are the branches), and John 6:54 (Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life).

A well designed setting must immediately absorb the spectators into the play. Consequently, Tintoretto had to produce more dramatic effects for the tragic events of the discovery and the removal of the body of Saint Mark. In *The Finding of the Body of Saint Mark* (Plate 33), the action takes place inside a Christian shrine, somewhere in the Muslim controlled harbour of Alexandria. The stage is re-created with a sombre tunnel impetuously delineated by a series of arcades and pilasters. A row of sarcophagi located beneath the protruding capitals further enhances the gloomy atmosphere of the surroundings. The succession of identical forms suggests a long and narrow corridor projecting into space. A similar device was used in *The Removal of the Body of Saint Mark* (Plate 31). A screen of arches and columns on an inclined ground provides the illusion of much a greater depth to the perspectival street scene. A plunging view to the architectural backdrop is effectively rendered through the steep orthogonals of the pavement and the converging steps of the loggia. Furthermore, a thundering sky against a strangely conceived pictorial space creates a disturbing tension.

Tintoretto convincingly translated the legend of Saint Mark into visual terms for his audience. For example, he represented the sudden outbreak of a storm which enabled the faithful of Alexandria to successfully remove the body of the saint from the pyre on which it had been left to be incinerated.

It has been suggested that the colonnaded arcade on the right resembles the *Procuratie*,[17] thus one may assume that Tintoretto observed the visible world around him and selected elements which would add a realistic quality to his imaginary settings. Moreover, the depiction of the building located in the famous Piazza of San Marco effectively links this episode to the final resting of the evangelist. According to legend, when Saint Mark stopped at the lagoon of Venice, an angel appeared in a dream to predict that *'Pax tibi, Marce evangelista meus. His requiescet corpus tuum'*.

Linear perspective construction had been developed by artists long before Tintoretto. However, he gave a radically new look to the pictorial space. For his interior settings, Tintoretto took advantage of the model-box, and rearranged the miniature furnishing until the most dramatic composition was reached. In *The Marriage at Cana* (Plate 35), 1561, *The Last Supper* (Plate 29), 1578-81, and *The Last Supper* (Plate 36), 1592-94, the diagonal placement of the long table cutting across the room produces an effect of endless depth. Unlike traditional representations of the furniture in frontal and horizontal positions, the ingenious steep and oblique angle reflected Tintoretto's obsession with a theatrical use of perspective. The tilting composition and abrupt leap of scales of the figures further accentuate the illusion of deep recession (Plate 29).

According to Ruskin, *The Last Supper* (Plate 29) is the "most unsatisfactory picture...they [the apostles] are here not only vulgar, but diminutive, and Christ is at the end of the table, the smallest figure of them all."[18] Similarly, Henry James, a nineteenth-century writer, points out that "*The Marriage in Cana*, at the Salute, has all his

characteristic and fascinating unexpectedness--the sacrifice of the figure of our Lord, who is reduced to the mere final point of a clever perspective, and the free, joyous presentation of all elements of the feast."[19] Despite the minute scale of Christ at the far end of the picture, He still remains the prominent figure of the scene. The luminescent halo attracts the attention of all participants of the *feste* as well as all onlookers. Tintoretto also placed Christ at the most strategic point of the composition where all lines of perspective converge. In *The Marriage at Cana* (Plate 35), a pyramidal configuration is formed with Christ at the apex whereas in *The Last Supper* (Plate 29), He is the principal 'actor' in the drama performing the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Saint Peter is about to receive the consecrated Host from His hand. Thus, it is evident that the diminutive size of Christ does not necessarily imply a lesser consideration of His status. On the contrary, the depiction of Christ at the nucleus of the pictorial space indicates that He will forever play an indispensable role in the life of humankind.

Newton remarks that "the convincing creation of space, the filling of that space with forms that will give it unity and take their unity from it is his [Tintoretto's] main objective."[20] Although it seems obvious the painter was fascinated with spatial construction, it is more likely that he also aimed at achieving a unity between pictoriality and iconography. The paintings, *The Marriage at Cana* (Plate 35) and *The Last Supper* (Plate 29), were executed for church altars and for the *Sala Grande* of a devotional confraternity. As objects of veneration, they should undoubtedly reflect the depth and the strength of religious beliefs. Therefore, they could not be conceived as mere exercises of formalistic virtuosity. In both, the perspective illusionism can be understood as conveying

spiritual meaning alluding to Christ as the True Point, the absolute Truth, Who draws all man to Himself. The orthogonals intersecting at the vanishing point refer to the correct and direct path leading to God and to the journey undertaken by the faithful in the quest for eternal life.

Tintoretto constantly explored different possibilities for dramatic composition using the box-stage. In *The Last Supper* (Plate 37), 1580, the front row of the auditorium was employed as vantage point, placing Christ closer to the foreground. The Son of God is again placed on the perspective line which, unlike that of the previous pictures, projects the event into the viewers' space, thereby unifying the real to the fictive realm of the stage while inviting the spectators' participation in the solemn breaking of the Eucharist Bread.

Towards the end of his life, Tintoretto created an even more complex spatial illusionism. In 1592-94, the artist was commissioned to depict *The Last Supper* (Plate 36), which decorates the choir of the church San Giorgio Maggiore. Tintoretto conceived of two distinctive perspectives for viewers approaching from the nave and from the opposite side through the choir. During a visit to Venice, an old priest in charge of collecting small donations near the sanctuary showed me how to appreciate fully Tintoretto's mastery of space. He communicated to me his admiration for the artist's ability to produce two distinct lines of vision. Standing to the left of the main altar, one has the illusion that the immensely long table projects endlessly across the constructed stage; on the opposite side the furniture looks shorter and recedes abruptly into the pictorial space. The furniture's prominent position in the picture was also designed to

separate the material and spiritual spheres.[21] On the right, the bustling activities of the servants after the supper are contrasted with the apostles' solemn partaking in the religious meal in which the holy bread becomes nourishment for their souls.

Tracy Cooper, in *History and Decoration of the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore*, points out the peculiar appearance of the table: "wherein to the viewer entering the church and confronting the high altar, the end of the table seemed to be turned towards him, but upon walking through the sanctuary behind the organ, the end seemed to have revolved to the opposite side--together with all the persons represented eating at the table."[22] My attempt to reproduce with a camera these different vantage points has proven unsatisfactory, but as Cooper has rightly observed "It is not an effect that photographs can easily capture."[23]

Tintoretto created two perspectives for his spectators yet all lines of depth from both angles converge on the figure of Christ standing at the focal point of the platform. Acting as *maestro cerimoniale*, Christ performs the Communion ritual on the last evening with His Apostles. Imaginary architecture which usually filled the background in Tintoretto's work herein gave way to an unprecedented orchestration of stage lighting. This device is analysed in greater depth in the last chapter.

Unlike the previously discussed settings where the best view of the perspective is at the central 'seat', in *The Last Supper* (Plate 36), Tintoretto intentionally produced two off-center viewpoints since an elaborate sculpture (Plate 38) by Campagna occupies a conspicuous place on the main altar of the chancel with the Holy Trinity standing on the globe supported by four evangelists. It has been suggested that the sculptural ensemble

was specifically designed to comply with the demands of the Council of Trent for the visual arts.[24] The Fathers required that the representation on the high altar should be clearly visible to viewers entering the church.[25]

It has also been noted that *The Last Supper* (Plate 36) by Tintoretto reflects similar propagandistic nature since the liturgical vessels employed during the Eucharistic celebration are depicted in the foreground, on a small stand against the long table.[26] Yet, their placement in the shadowed area is not easily noticeable. It seems that emphasis is given to the spiritual union with God which is revealed at the centre of the composition. Furthermore, it is more appropriate that the painting, as a pendant to *The Gathering of Manna* on the opposite wall, illustrates the concordance between the Old and New Testament. This is stated in First Corinthians 10:2-4 that the people led out of Egypt were baptized "in the cloud and in the sea" and "did all eat the same spiritual meat [manna]." This episode is a visualization of the passage in John 6:31-35 where Christ proclaimed: "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat ... For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world ... I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Thus, the direct influence of the Counter-Reformation movement on Tintoretto's later works can only be approached in general terms.[27]

Tintoretto's working method for a public commission always included a careful study of the location the painting was to occupy. The interrelation of distances, height and light were examined in order to achieve spatial unity within and beyond the framework of his creation.[28] In *The Last Supper* (Plate 36), the celebration of the holy sacrament

complies with the Eucharistic theme of the sanctuary that has been devised by the abbot Michele Alabardi.[29]

In 1564-66, the artist was asked to decorate the meeting hall of the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco* with episodes from the Passion cycle. In accordance with the plan of the room, Tintoretto decided to place *The Crucifixion* (Plate 39) against the long backwall, and the *Christ before Pilate* (Plate 40) and *Christ Bearing His Cross* on two smaller spaces on either side of the door. The *Ecce Homo* (Plate 41) was designed to fit into the narrow area above the pedimental threshold.

The relation of the paintings to their surroundings was once again carefully considered in order to create a *coup de théâtre*. Through the open door to the *Sala dell'Albergo* (Plate 42), one can only perceive the gathering of devotees at the foot of the cross of *The Crucifixion* (Plate 43), upon entering the room, one is overwhelmed by the immense panorama at Golgotha. Tintoretto extended his setting into the realm of the viewer who seems to share the same pictorial space and thereby actively takes part in the spiritual event. Due to the narrow dimension of the room, the width being half of its length, and the gigantic scenery measuring over forty feet, a claustrophobic feeling is also evoked. One has the impression that the stage invades the environment of the spectators and surrounds them on all sides. In this way, the experience of physically entering the painting is effectively suggested. The dramatic intensity of the stage is further reinforced by the quiet isolation of the suffering Christ on the cross (Plate 44) at the end of the *Sala dell'Albergo.*

An equally spectacular *mise-en-scène* was devised on the opposite side. In the *Ecce Homo* (Plate 41), Christ wearing the crown of thorns humbly sits on the first step of a staircase ingeniously conceived to fit around the actual pediment. His prominent position is further enhanced by the white robe theatrically unfolded behind His back in such a way as to attract attention to the principal 'actor' in the drama. Tintoretto placed the action on a very shallow stage so as not to distract the audience from the performance of the cast. In the background, a figure lifting the curtain slightly aside is the only hint of an opening into the scene.

In contrast to the simple set in the *Ecce Homo* (Plate 41), Tintoretto returned to his complex architectonic construction in *Christ before Pilate* (Plate 40). He filled two third of the backdrop with massive, imposing buildings, leaving a narrow platform for a large group of 'actors' gathering around Pilate's throne. Christ is isolated against an opulent decor. The role of a stage designer is to express as best as possible to the audience the underlying meaning of the play with an appropriate *mise-en-scène*. By showing the dignified Christ in the midst of a tumultuous and pitiless crowd, and by presenting His pale, tall silhouette against the sombre, oppressive setting, Tintoretto succeeded in arousing compassion, admiration, and devotion for the Son of God. Through the contrasting juxtaposition, he effectively conveys his religious belief in the everlasting Glory of God as opposed to the temporary power of a Roman judge.

Tintoretto re-created a vision for his audience. He translated the 'script of the play' into visual terms. He observed the visible world around him and extracted elements

suitable to his artistic formulation. Decorative sets for theatrical productions, the dramatic quality of architectural settings and Serlio's treatise on stage arrangement enriched his pictorial repertory. It is important to note, however, that Tintoretto did not merely reproduce the inventions of his contemporaries, but also demonstrated his own talent as an indisputable master of perspective.

As a stage designer for the *Compagnie della Calza*, Tintoretto was fully aware of the impact of well conceived scenery. Adopting the scenewright's method, he built cardboard box-stages which have the outstanding advantage of offering views from diverse angles. This allowed him to visualize any scene from any viewpoint, to explore countless compositional possibilities and to devise an appropriate surrounding for the 'theatrical production'. Tintoretto's settings place, reinforce and complement the action of the drama. They also provide a convincing space within which 'actors' can move and perform.

CHAPTER III: THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ACTORS

> "Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant more learned than the ears."
> Shakespeare, Coriolanus (III, 2, 76-7).

Through dialogue, action and costume, the actors strive to complete the visualization of the play for the spectators. In the artificial and illusory world of theatre, it is crucial that the performance makes the audience perceive the imaginary as real. For an artist employing the silent medium of painting, this task is even more challenging. To bring the representation of his 'cast' to vibrant life and to illuminate a vision for his audience, Tintoretto had to control movement, gesture and posture carefully and to convey vividly the effect of spoken exchange. Only in this way could the desired emotions and reactions from the viewers be provoked. The positions of the actors on the platform and their physical relationship *vis-à-vis* the observers also had to be well conceived. In this regard, Boschini observed that Tintoretto strived to achieve a harmonious arrangement in his paintings: alteration of a single figure in space would require a shifting of all surrounding elements.[1]

In *Christ and the Woman taken in Adultery* (Plate 32), the viewer's attention is directed to Christ, the only seated figure in the picture. His prominent position is further emphasized by an imposing assembly of apostles arranged in an arc-like configuration. At the left, the immediacy of the scene is suggested by the woman in the foreground who appears to be walking into the pictorial space. Her right hand points toward Christ, the principal 'actor' in the drama, Who in turn extends His arm in a welcome to the adulteress isolated in the middle distance. The inclination of her head, the lowering of her eyes and

her halted stance express a paralyzing dismay while her suspended hand movement indicates a verbal pleading for forgiveness of her past. The juxtaposition of her frail silhouette with the impressive crowd gathered around Christ conveys the dramatic tension of the contrite sinner before the Supreme Judge. The dispersal of Pharisees and Scribes running in opposite directions heightens the drama in addition to giving the illusion of a vast expanse on the 'platform'.

The immense interior in *The Washing of Feet* (Plate 28) is also animated by a realistic *mise-en-scène*. In the foreground, an individual taking off his sandal is counterbalanced by the figural grouping at the right. Dialogue between Christ and Saint Peter is established by their placement facing each other and their simultaneous reactions. Their profile positioning allows Tintoretto to strengthen the reciprocity of the emotional state of his characters. Peter's raised hand, expressing confusion and embarrassment, is juxtaposed with Christ's warm and attentive gesture of love. Right beside them, a figure with bowed head and joined hands attends the washing of feet. His humble posture indicates to the onlookers that a solemn ritual is taking place.

Others in various activities and poses are scattered across the stage. Their arrangement creates depth in the picture and leads towards the focal points of the altarpiece at the horizon and the adjoining room in the background. The significance of several vantage points has been previously discussed. To enhance the naturalistic quality of the setting, Tintoretto depicts a dog lying on the tiled floor, perhaps also indicating that he is familiar with Serlio's treatise concerning decorative elements:

> In these Scenes, although some have painted personages therein like supporters, as in a Gallery, or doore, as a Dog, Cat, or any other beasts: I am not of that opinion,

> for that standeth too long without stirring or mooving; but if you make such a thing to lie sleeping, that I hold withall.[2]

It seems that Tintoretto employed animal symbolism to interweave layers of meaning into his narrative. The dog here, symbolizing fidelity, looks solely at Christ, and its prominent place in the foreground alludes to the faith and devotion due to the Son of God.

Tintoretto's skill in grouping painted actors is once again notable in the *Miracle of Saint Mark* (Plate 4). He carefully selects personage in compliance with the psychological intensity of the drama. A gamut of vivid emotions is conveyed through the realistic portrayal of the spectators witnessing the miraculous event, while a variety of postures and movements adds animation and excitement to the work. Seen from behind, foreground figures at the right front of the proscenium transmit a conscious awareness of the spatial relationship between the 'acting area' and the audience which requires an unobstructed view of the scene. In this way, onlookers are able to follow every move and action of the actors. On the left, a woman looks over her left shoulder to have a better glimpse of the event. Here is a rather contrived and theatrical posture. It is as if she is fully conscious of her shared position on stage with the other characters, and thus employs her body language within the prescribed space to communicate with the viewers. The figures clinging to the column share similar curiosity and interest. It has been suggested that they are reminiscent of the rendering of spectators attending a comedy as illustrated in a print (Plate 45),[3] although, their positions could be as easily observed during the numerous ceremonies in the *Piazza San Marco* along the *Procuraties*.

The convergence of the staring gazes, the huddle of the crowd and their expressive

gestures successfully convey their incredulity (Plate 4). Immediately below Saint Mark, a figure rhetorically points to his eyes as if to express his failure to understand why the slave's vision remains unaffected by the sharp spikes. Conversation is visualized with the turn of his head toward his interlocutor wearing a black hat. Nearby, the state of mental shock is effectively rendered through a choreography of varied actions. An individual completely absorbed by the sensational event distractedly leans his elbow on his neighbour's back, while another bends forward and extends his neck to be closer to the dramatic scene. The clasping hands in front of his chest further stress the incredulity of such a miraculous happening. The turbaned soldier expresses his bewilderment with a violent twist of his body, as his outstretched arms show the broken hammer to the knight who in turn leaps out of his elevated seat. The diverse *airs de tête*, the individual gestures and the different postures also denote Tintoretto's determination to give a convincing performance to his 'actors'. He is fully aware of the characters' impact on the observers, and carefully depicts feelings that are easily communicated. He gives his cast naturalistic movements which enhance the immediacy of the drama. Aretino praised the artist's acute sense of observation. In a letter to Sansovino, he wrote: "the colours are flesh, indeed, the lines rounded and the body so lifelike that I swear to you, on the goodwill I bear you, that the faces, airs and expressions of the crowd surrounding it are so exactly as they would be in reality,..."[4]

As a 'stage director', Tintoretto devised a spectacular entrance of the leading 'actor' in the 'play': Saint Mark is shown plummeting into the stage to rescue the pious servant (Plate 4). A sudden apparition from the frame of the proscenium proved to be the

best *mise-en-scène* to persuade the audience of the unexpected intervention taking place. This view also confirms the artist's working method of observing figures suspended from the ceiling and his fascination with dramatic foreshortenings. Involved with the theatrical milieu, Tintoretto would have been familiar with stage practice simulating the motion of flight. This device was employed in a religious performance of *The Annunciation* to convince the spectators of the actual happenings of supernatural events. Isabelle d'Este, duchess of Mantua, who attended the play, described the mechanism as follows:

> Then Mary appeared, under a portico supported by eight pillars and began to repeat some verses from the Prophets, and while she spoke, the sky opened, revealing a figure of God the Father, surrounded by a choir of angels. No support could be seen either for His feet or those of the angels, and six other seraphs hovered in the air, suspended by chains. In the center of the group was the Archangel Gabriel, to whom God the Father addressed His word, and after receiving his orders, Gabriel descended with the admirable artifice and stood, half-way in the air, at the same height as the organ. Then all of a sudden, an infinite number of lights broke out at the angel choir, and hid them in a blaze of glory.... At that moment the Archangel Gabriel alighted on the ground, and the iron chain which he held was not seen so that he seemed to float down on a cloud....[5]

Thus, it is more dramatic to depict the patron saint of Venice flying in from the audience's space, his foreshortened feet projecting out of the picture plane as if to reduce the gap between the real and fictive world. This motion is counterbalanced by the reverse position of his *protégé* and the opposite direction further reinforces the illusion of depth. The active pose of the flying saint is sharply contrasted with the motionless body of the slave lying on the ground. This supernatural confrontation of divine and human is enhanced by the blazing light emanating from Saint Mark's halo. Such distribution of lighting is discussed at greater length in the next chapter.

The controversy which met *The Miracle of Saint Mark* led by the brothers of the

Scuola Grande, resulted in their wanting the picture to be removed from its location. Eventually, the furious artist took the picture home. This negative reaction to Tintoretto's novelties was probably due to the fact that the dynamic composition was too innovative to be appreciated by the majority of his contemporaries. Critical reactions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries continue to reflect similar misconceptions of Tintoretto's artistic approach. One critic, Pietro Selvatico writes: "there is the great canvas of *The Miracle of St Mark* which is opposite *The Assumption* in this Academy, a canvas which, to speak frankly, I do not greatly admire, because it seems to me oddly composed, packed with useless and unsuitable figures."[6] Theophile Gautier derogatively describes the evangelist as "a powerful figure ... of a colossal proportion and with the muscles of an athlete, hurtling through the air like a rock flung from a catapult,..."[7] Cecil Gould also disapproves of Tintoretto's bold representation of the saint, because he is "a whirl of fluttering drapery ... He might almost as well be a flash of coloured light."[8] To stress his view, he contrasts the lack of decorum in *The Miracle of Saint Mark* (Plate 4) to the nobility of Titian's *The Assunta Virgin* (Plate 46) which shows a frontal view of an elegant and majestic Madonna ascending to Heaven, borne upon a curving cloud.[9] He criticizes the artist for not making any of Saint Mark's facial features clearly visible to the viewers.[10] This may be regarded as a plausible explanation for the cold reception of the work.

As in any play, the audience appreciates seeing the actor's face in order to catch every expression and emotion since good acting requires the ability to portray all feelings. Obviously, if Tintoretto had depicted Saint Mark flying forward, his visage would be

viewed more clearly, but at the expense of the dramatic composition. The element of surprise is more effectively suggested by the seemingly sudden plunge of the saint from above the auditorium to the stage on account of the fact that the spectators would be less aware of what was happening above or behind them. Furthermore, to have Saint Mark approach from the backstage would denote a radical departure from the 'script of the play' whose aim was to suggest the unexpected intervention by the evangelist.

In order to capture the miraculous intercession, Tintoretto felt the need to translate the fury of flight into violent foreshortening and tumultuous display of drapery. The climax of the occurrence is further emphasized by the commanding gesture at the very centre of the composition. The hand of Saint Mark is strategically placed next to the broken implement of torture so as to underline his invincible power to exterminate all evil intention.[11] It has been suggested that the painting also celebrates the long lasting power of Venice under his saintly protection in compliance with Jacobus de Voragine's etymological interpretation of the evangelist's name:

> Mark means high in the commandment,... Or Mark comes from marco, a heavy hammer: it forges the iron, strengthens the anvil, and makes the blow to ring out at one and the same time. So, with the sole teaching of his gospel, Mark struck down the evil of the heretics, strengthened the Church, and permitted the praise of God to ring out.[12]

Tintoretto effectively condenses into a single but powerful action a wealth of visual data and allegorical nuances. Saint Mark is not only the protector of the city of Venice; he forever embodies the image of faith and fame.

It is to be noted that the visualization of a painting or a play depends not only on the actions and behaviour of the actors but also on their appearance on stage. Well

designed costumes inform the onlookers of the status, occupation, age, and origins of the character. For instance, Tintoretto underlines the prominent position of the nobleman by showing him in distinctive attire with a collar, fastened in front by a row of decorative buttons. None of the other garments in the picture display similar features. The high ranking officers are distinguished by their gleaming cuirass. As for the soldiers and people gathering around the pious victim, a variety of colourful accoutrements is used to enhance the composition: the striped garment, the patterned outfit, the tight fitting top, the fringed shirt, the scale-like tunic, the pleat skirt, the turbans, the hat, the headdress, and the helmet. The depiction of Turkish and Moorish clothing may indicate the astonishment of all nations at witnessing the miracle of Saint Mark. Stringa suggests this in his *Vita di S. Marco Evangelista* in the following: "Without doubt this miracle occasioned the greatest amazement through all the City, all of Italy, all the World."[13]

Tintoretto depicts the costume of the saint with an unusual scheme of warm colours, the golden yellow mantle shimmering against a deep red cloak. By distributing similar shades throughout the composition, a bold harmony is created. The juxtaposition of complementaries adds brightness to the painted surface, specifically as in the olive green foliage next to the scarlet attire of the knight. The panoply of sonorous and glaring tonalities reflects Tintoretto's emphasis on the celebratory aspect of the painting and his deliberate attempt to attenuate the cruelty of the martyrdom. Such a rich range of vivid colours undoubtedly creates a joyful atmosphere on the stage. Nineteenth-century British painter, Joseph Mallord William Turner, in his lecture of 1818 on Reflection and Colour at

the Royal Academy, expressed his admiration for Tintoretto's "forcible combinations" of "buoyant" nuances.[14]

According to Ridolfi, Tintoretto "trained himself also by concocting in wax and clay small figures which he dressed in scraps of cloth, attentively studying the folds of the cloth on the outlines of the limbs."[15] This working method allowed him to lend realistic poses and gestures to the characters who seem to move with *aisance* in their exotic attires. Drapery is sometimes utilized to reinforce violent action as with the billowing mantle of Saint Mark (Plate 4), or to express inner turmoil through the turbulent folds on the lap of the noble leaping out of his seat. The bulging pleats gathered around the thigh of the turbaned soldier further accentuate the twisted position of the body. However, the naturalistic pattern of the cloth scattered on the foreground bench is merely decoration. Thus, apparel and drapery were used as embellishments which unmistakably add a dramatic quality to his stage decoration.

Tintoretto studied the effects of folds on the wax figurines, but also made observations of live models to capture the correctness of form and to enhance the optical veracity of his imagination.[16] At the extreme left of the painting *The Miracle of Saint Mark* (Plate 4), the white bearded figure is in fact a portrait of Tommaso Rangone, a great humanist and supporter of the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco.*[17] The heads of other characters are individually rendered in order to produce an impression of a varied and lively crowd. They seem to share the same excitement and amazement. Yet the depth of feeling is expressed mainly through telling gestures and postures rather than facial expressions. According to the artistic approach at the time, emotions conveyed through

facial features were not highly recommended.[18] In his discussion of Beccafumi's work, Vasari remarked that the "expression of terror" is "by no means agreeable", a comment which clearly indicates the distaste for emotional demonstration.[19] Although the observation was made with regard to Florentine artists, Tintoretto also felt the necessity to give dignity to his cast. Expressions and movements were carefully conceived in order to arouse the desired response from the audience, without becoming overly dramatic.

Ruskin succinctly expressed his admiration for Tintoretto's ability to avoid unnecessary depiction of overt emotions in his painting, *The Massacre of the Innocents* (Plate 47). He writes:

> all the ordinary representations of this subject are, I think, false and cold: the artist has not heard the shrieks, nor mingled with the fugitives; he has sat down in his study to convulse features methodically, and philosophize over insanity. Not so Tintoret. Knowing, or feeling, that the expression of the human face was, in such circumstances, not to be rendered, and that the effort could only end in an ugly falsehood, he denies himself all aid from the features, he feels that if he is to place himself or us in the midst of that maddened multitude, there can be no time allowed for watching expression....[20]

It is evident that the role of the figures in the picture is to intensify and illuminate the vision of the audience. Therefore, actors must find ways of creating emotion on stage without recourse to empty gestures, uninspired expressions or exaggerated manifestations of the emotions.

Abbé Coyer points out that "Great painters have surpassed him [Tintoretto] in certain respects, but no one perhaps has equalled him in the action, movement and warmth of his figures. It is at the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco* above all that one should study the fieriness of his compositions."[21] In *The Crucifixion* (Plate 43), the intense grief of the

mourners massed around the swooning Virgin denotes Tintoretto's great sensibility and deep understanding of human feelings and passions. The huddle of the foreground group is effectively rendered by the interwoven forms, head movements and embracing arms. The protective gestures convey their vulnerability to the hostile surrounding.[22] On the right, the desolate pose of the kneeling female saint expresses the depth of her despair. Tintoretto added the detail of covering up her face with her hands to suggest a spell of weeping.

The relationship of one character to another is firmly established by the hand motion and body position as Saint John holds the hand of the Virgin. She in turn embraces a disconsolate faithful, the depth of whose sorrow is conveyed by the physical inertia of her body, in her lifeless hands placed on the thigh, and her head and knees leaning limply against Mary. As for the figure supporting the Virgin's back, the interlaced fingers resting on the shoulder express a deep concern for the well being of the Mother of Christ. This is a notation of attitudes of actors who are conscious of the calculated impact of their movements on the viewer. These vivid stimuli succeed in arousing devotion and in promoting the mystical union with God. Furthermore, the noble feeling of the mourners is emphasized through juxtaposition with the indifferent manner of the soldiers gambling under a rock nearby. Unaffected by the Saviour's death, they are completely absorbed in their petty dispute over Christ's garment.

In Tintoretto's *Ecce Homo* (Plate 41), Pilate and an officer serve as framing devices focusing the attention of the viewer to Christ, the principal 'actor' in the scene. His melancholic gaze is directed across the *Sala dell'Albergo*, towards the tumultuous hord of soldiers and tormentors located at the foreground of *The Crucifixion*. For

this re-enactment of the Passion of Christ, Tintoretto establishes a relationship between 'actors' on two facing 'platforms' across the meeting hall. Christ is shown as a sort of spectator, seated on top of the staircase, Who witnesses His own death, and this *mise-en-scène* successfully enhances the dramatic intensity of the scene. In this way, the artist creates stimuli vivid enough to cause a sensation among and response from the audience. He also conveys his deep reverence for the Son of God by placing Him at the centre and the highest position within the picture. Any viewer, entering or leaving the room, would be overwhelmed by the imposing presence of Christ at the very top of the *platea*. Along the lower section of the *Sala dell'Albergo*, a horizon band of human activities displays diverse incidents, relating the episodes from the trial before Pilate, the carrying of the cross, and on to the successive phases of the elevation of the cross. Tintoretto placed the executions of the thieves on each side of the Crucified Christ, like two corresponding choruses. On the left, the accused is being raised up, and the physical exertion of six executioners is contrasted to the impassive preparation at the right where a soldier mechanically drills a hole in the cross to which the convict is about to be affixed.

The dialogue of the criminals before the crucifixion in accordance with Luke 23:39-43 is visualized through the glances and head movements.[23] The one who reproaches Christ is depicted with his back to the Saviour while the other who recognizes the Redeemer is placed nearby looking intently at him.[24] Tintoretto persuades us that a spoken exchange has already taken place even without gesture. Jesus' words "I tell you truly, this very day you will be with me in paradise" in reply to the thief's prayer is conveyed through his look of admiration across the stage towards the Saviour.[25] Members

of confraternities often referred to this biblical passage as a reminder of Christ's message of love and mercy.[26]

Tintoretto felt attracted to the spirit of the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco.* He became a member in 1565 and for the next twenty-five years produced grandiose religious spectacles exemplifying its teaching and its principle of charity and love.[27] The concordance of scenes taken from the Old and New Testament, and the formal and iconographic unity of the decorative program, required a sound interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.[28]

In *The Crucifixion* (Plate 39), Tintoretto convincingly presents the most profound drama of humankind--the cruelty and the turmoil of the world too preoccupied to realize what it has done to its Saviour.[29] The admiration for Tintoretto's 'religious theatre' has been expressed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Newton draws a parallel between the "poignancy" of *The Crucifixion* to "Shakespeare's Lear".[30] Thode makes an analogy between Tintoretto's works, Greek tragedy and Wagner's opera, based on the similarities in the creation of the sublime, the combination of ideal and real, the importance of melody and the exteriorization of deep emotions through demonstrative gestures.[31] He cites a comment by Wagner on music and art to demonstrate the uniqueness of Tintoretto's creation: "it is the spirit of music that causes us to forget, when we gaze at their saints and martyrs, that we are using our eyes."[32] March Phillips finds the artist's dramatic vision analogous to:

> a musician [expressing] moods and passions by symphonic modulations, so by the adjuncts of radiant light and grey half-tones and luminous darkness he grapples with moments of the spiritual life, moments tragic, tempestuous and of piercing

> pathos ... Tintoretto strikes those chords which so many artists have left unsounded, and by swift and keen imagination, and burning sympathy, he achieves what no study or calculation could accomplish.[33]

As an accomplished musician, Tintoretto was steeped in the Venetian musical milieu.[34] Among his influential friends, Giuseppe Zarlino, the *Maestro di Capella* at Saint Mark's composed pieces for civic and religious ceremonies.[35] It is tempting to explore Tintoretto's enthusiasm for music as reflected in his pictorial formulations. Similarities between a composer and a painter lie in the conception of form and colour as a melody, with its high and low pitches, its intensity and its various *tempo* intersected by a climactic pause. For example, in *Christ before Pilate* (Plate 40), the silence of Christ is dramatically juxtaposed with the crescendo influx of emotions from the animated crowd. As Wagner has suggested, the viewers can easily *visualize* the sound as they *listen* to form and colour.

Tintoretto proves to have had a significant knowledge of the art of acting. He intensified his observation of the external world as well as the comprehension of his inner life to enrich his dramatic imagination. He studied the human scene in terms of attitudes, emotions and behaviour and created stimuli forceful enough to evoke strong sensations and responses. The careful selection of 'actors', the skilful grouping of figures on stage, and the choreography of telling gestures and postures convincingly seduce the audience into believing that the illusory realm is real and that even the most supernatural event, miracle or apparition is actual. Tintoretto has presented fervently religious spectacles intelligibly to viewers across time. The virtuoso performances of his 'cast' persuade the observers of the imagined reality through recognizable manifestations of emotions. Great

attention is also given to well-designed costumes which enhance the appearance of the characters and embellish the composition of the stage setting. Light, projected through the openings of Tintoretto's model-box and then translated into painted illusion, provides the final magic touch to the scene.

CHAPTER IV: THE ORCHESTRATION OF LIGHT

> "...a stage set forth with pomp and pride
> Where rich men cost and cunning art bestow
> When curtains be removed that all did hide,
> Doth make by light of torch a glittering show."
> Lodovico Ariosto.[1]

The illumination of the set plays a crucial role in every theatrical production because it sets the mood and spirit of the play. Obviously, light adds visibility to the scene, but more than that, through a well-composed distribution, it can optimize the maximum participation of the viewers. Highlight, shadow and reflection are meticulously analysed before the presentation of any spectacle. Interestingly, Ridolfi recorded that projections from various angles through the openings of the box-stage [2] allowed Tintoretto to visualize the final image in advance. This method enabled him to select a range of luminosity appropriate to the pictoriality and iconography of the painting at hand.

Since in *The Washing of Feet* (Plate 28), the story unfolds in the right foreground, strong illumination from the edge of the proscenium and from the right wing is appropriate. The shadows of the furniture on the tiled floor indicate that the source of light comes from behind Saint Peter. It highlights the silhouette of the individual standing nearby and draws the spectators' attention to his posture of humility. The interplay of light and shade on the garments also enhances the three-dimensionality of the figures. To produce the theatrical impression of an intense floodlight, a lamp had to be placed in front of the platform. Hence, the imposing stature of the saint does not cast any shadow on the kneeling Christ whose attire is described with a gradation of chromatic brilliance. This creates the illusion that Christ emits light which irradiates the surrounding space.

Brushstrokes which describe the radiance of Christ's halo are extended to flow into the lighted steps of the adjoining room in the background, implying that His luminosity even reaches the far end of the stage. There, a dimly lit interior creates a mysterious atmosphere which is appropriate to the magic communion of the disciples in the blessed flesh and blood of Christ. The sombre aura excites the curiosity of the spectators who have to strain their eyes in order to read the silhouettes of the apostles gathering around Christ. In addition, by alternating the bright foreground, the shadowed loggia with the sunlit vista in the distance, the painter gives the illusion of much greater depth. A *vue d'ensemble* of *The Washing of Feet* (Plate 28) reveals that a luminous setting was conceived promoting a joyful mood in keeping with the iconography of the altarpiece centered on the everlasting Glory of God and the certain hope of eternal life for the Christian.

Light is a valuable tool for both theatre and painting. In *The Miracle of Saint Mark* (Plate 4), the distribution of lighting across the pictorial space adds to the dramatic intensity of the scene. Tintoretto probably placed a brightly lit lamp on top of the model-box. Illumination filtered through the aperture of the ceiling just above the flying figure so that the blazing radiancy of Saint Mark's halo could be visualized and naturalistically captured on canvas. In this way, the confrontation of divine and human is admirably pronounced. The projection of intense irradiation and its intangible quality effectively convey the supernatural power of the evangelist. These shafts of light describe the 'invisible' intervention of the saint who, from above, miraculously destroys

all the implements of torture. Directly below him, the pious servant is the only person who is touched by the precious illumination. Saint Mark is thus unseen by the numerous pagans [3] who are still bound to the dark prison of earthly existence. Through dramatic lighting, Tintoretto interweaves the visible and the invisible in the presentation of his religious mysticism. The sacred mystery is revealed.

It is light, symbol of spiritual love, that Tintoretto found appropriate for the representation of divine intercession. Here, the intention of the painter is to demonstrate that the immediate bond between man and God is actually a spiritual experience accessible to all through faith and love of God. The message explicitly stated through the humble and calm attitude of the servant. A devout Christian believes that faith blossoms out into love (Gal 5:6), and that God's love and the return of this love constitute the justification of men (Mark 12:30-32 and II Cor 3:3). Therefore, one should be at peace with all men and forgive all offences and evil works. The juxtaposition of the soldier's frenzied action and the slave's passive endurance emphasizes the noble soul of the devotee, which is in accord with the philosophy of piety, humility and philanthropy of the *Scuola Grande*. It must be remembered that these religious organizations were founded in order to assist the less fortunate in society as one means of expressing the devotional spirit of their members.[4]

Tintoretto illuminated the base line of the tableau to guide the viewer to the naked victim (Plate 4). Seen from behind, *chiaroscuro* patterns on the attires of the foreground soldiers indicate the paths of beams radiating from the front and right. Painted shadow on

the pavement further reinforces their directions. The shadowed details on the steps leading to the elevated seat clearly allude to the placement of a lamp from the right wing. Rays streaming into the scene through openings on the left, project a diffuse gleam on the base of the columns. In the middle ground, stronger floodlight is used to produce a glaring effect on the stark-white balcony. Illumination from the wings adds contrasting nuances to the for-front and overhead lighting sources, isolating small groups of characters, enhancing the sculptural quality of the 'actors', and accentuating every telling gesture of Tintoretto's cast. At the left, spontaneous squiggles of paint capture the reflection of the folds of the golden drapery on the gleaming cuirass of the officer. Light is also employed to intensify the colouristic panoply and to suggest the various textures of the costumes. In the background, highlights on the pedimental gate and fence of the garden allude to bright shafts of sunlight. Tintoretto explores the realm of the senses with the sole intention of expressing the religious mysteries in simple and understandable terms. The realistic representation of each pictorial component through colour and light effectively reduces the distance between mystical and worldly reality.

Furthermore, Tintoretto's approach to *colorito* complies with contemporary Venetian artistic practice which demanded not only the ability to mix colours on canvas but also an aptitude for creating *trompe l'oeil* effects with the application of paint.[5] Through the colouristic two-dimensional illusionism, Tintoretto manages to suggest a three-dimensional reality to the objects and figures of his paintings. The sculptural light is an essential element of his stage setting, while his prior visualization of the scene with the model-box allowed him to conceive different levels of illumination so as to direct the

audience to the most dramatic action of his 'play'.

The orchestration of lighting in *The Crucifixion* (Plate 39) commands even greater attention from the viewers. Against the turbulent sky, the quiet isolation of the suffering Christ on the cross is enhanced by a masterful play of light. Christ's head is cast in dark shadow and vividly contrasts with His illuminated body (Plate 44). This successfully conveys the dualism of Christ in His insufferable dolour and His astonishing appearance of inner peace. Ruskin expresses his admiration for Tintoretto's forceful use of *chiaroscuro* in the following passage:

> But Tintoret here, as in all other cases, penetrating into the root and deep places of his subject, despising all outward and bodily appearances of pain, and seeking for some means of expressing, not the rack of nerve or sinew, but the fainting of the deserted Son of God before his Eloi cry, and yet feeling himself utterly unequal to the expression of this by the countenance, has, on the one hand, filled his picture with such various and impetuous muscular exertion, that the body of the Crucified is, by comparison, in perfect repose, and, on the other, has cast the countenance altogether into shade. But the Agony is told by this, and by this only; that, though there yet remains a chasm of light on the mountain horizon where the earthquake darkness closes upon the day, the broad and sunlike glory about the head of the Redeemer has become wan, *and the colour of ashes.*[6]

In the foreground, the frieze of human activity presents a complexity of interlocking planes which are enhanced by a rapid alternation of light and dark. The contrast between highlighted and shadowed areas reflects the artist's intention to control the audience attention on the appropriate action of the picture. Adjustments of 'light-intensity' also affect the mental state of the viewer. They induce a wide range of emotional responses and heighten the inscrutable atmosphere of the Calvary scene.

Light is again projected from above, illuminating the core of the 'platea' of an unusual elongated diamond shape. Tintoretto creates a stage within a stage by painting a

raised platform in the centre for the disposition of a large 'cast' consisting of more than eighty 'actors' requiring the construction of a vast 'acting space'. A sophisticated distribution of lighting was then carefully devised so that the complex drama becomes clearly presented to the audience.

On the right, the procession of the women on mules suggests that a vast multitude is coming towards the spectators from behind the hill to witness the Crucified Christ (Plate 39). The crowd approaching from the left implies that eventually a circle will be formed around the cross. The circle, by virtue of its having no beginning and no end, is often associated with the idea of eternity. Thus, a circular configuration produces the appropriate impression of an endless cortege which forever pays reverence to the Son of God. This subtle allusion requires specific illumination best suited to each grouping of figures. Tintoretto introduced several light sources and modified their intensity in accordance with the climax of the tragedy at Golgotha. The spectators are led to see clearly and comfortably without any distraction from the most important part of the drama.

At the topmost point of the scene (Plate 44), Tintoretto painted luminescent rays emanating from the body of Christ to illustrate an episode in John 12:32, when upon hearing a voice from heaven, Christ proclaimed: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Obviously, the depiction of the blaze of light is meant to suggest a magnetic force, which attracts the attention of every single participant located within and beyond the pictorial space. Regarding this representation, Emile Bernard poetically describes Christ "opening his arms within a radiant semicircle, as if he were

drawing aside a veil of light."[7] This intense brightness mesmerizes all viewers and maximizes their involvement in the emotionally charged tragedy. The rendering of numerous incidents around this central 'stage' brings to life the turmoil of the world, and yet, a less glaring illumination is used so that the audience sees only what is intended to be the central narrative, the sacrifice of Christ for humanity. The dazzling iridescence may also be understood as an allusion to Christ's power to illuminate the mind of men. It is through the inspiration and guidance of faith that one can reach the true wisdom of eternal life.

In order to avoid an overall diffusion of light, Tintoretto employed dramatic changes in lighting to give a pulsating rhythm to the magnificent human panorama portrayed. Flickering and shimmering reflections produce luministic effects on the rich assortment of characters and textures: cavalier, soldier, executioner, Oriental rider, turban, silk garment, armour, cuirass, implement and horse. On the horizon, a sinister dark sky is painted next to a well-lit area, while on the wings, the subtle gleam is juxtaposed with shadowed zones. These contrasts enhance the tragic mood of the Crucifixion scene and profoundly affect the mental state of the spectators. A panoply of red tones, in conjunction with the orchestration of light, heightens the emotional content of the drama. At the foot of the cross, the illusion of brilliance is rendered with the apposition of warm hues creating a sonorous ensemble of carmine, orange, pink and salmon costumes. These tints of red are distributed throughout the composition. They exert considerable influence on the viewers' psyche because of their visual association with blood, cruelty, murder and destruction. John Opie in his discourse on colour of 1807 observed that:

> In the famous picture of the Crucifixion by Tintoretto, the ominous, terrific and ensanguined hue of the whole, the disastrous twilight, that indicates some more than mortal suffering, electrifies the spectator at the first glance, and in such an instance of the powerful application of colouring to expression as has probably never been exceeded, except by Rembrandt.[8]

The costumes painted in similar gradations of red become reflectors of the light to the eye, and, in concert with the surrounding elements heighten the colour symbolism of the drama. It should be noted that Tintoretto maintained close contact with the textile industry through his father's trade of dyer.[9] He also worked as a costume designer for the *Compagnie della Calza.* As a result, he demonstrates a thorough understanding of coloured costumes in light, as well as the visual and emotional impact they can have on the audience.

In *Ecce Homo* (Plate 41) on the opposite wall of the *Sala dell'Albergo*, Christ is shown watching the cruel tragedy at Calvary. His scourged body is covered with streaks of blood. Tintoretto's palette is once again centered on the poles of red. The attire of Pilate, the leggings of the officer, the garment and mantle of the background figure are defined in brilliant reddish tones. Impetuous brushstrokes of red delineate the luminous reflections on the gleaming cuirass along with the stains of blood on the shroud and body of Christ. For the sanguineous trickles on Jesus' hands, varnish was added to produce a glowing effect.[10]

It is important to note that the illumination in the picture corresponds to the natural light from the left window of the *Sala dell'Albergo.* This allows Tintoretto to exploit the dramatic effect of the shadow cast by the officer, by extending it across the wounded Jesus. A sombre and menacing shade reaches along the steps of the staircase and

creeps toward the pale body of Christ. Its murky trail across the narrow stage alludes to the executioner's malefaction. In contrast, the submissiveness of the Saviour arouses heartfelt compassion in the spectators.

As for *The Massacre of the Innocents* (Plate 47), located in the Lower Hall of the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco*, the terrifying episode is once again captured with strokes of sanguineous tonality. Squiggles of bright red suggest the blood dripping from the forehead of the innocent child onto the chest of his mother (Plate 48). The poignancy of the incident is further enhanced by the gestures of love and torment from the woman. Her left arm tenderly embraces the infant while the naked right hand firmly grasps the sharp blade of the sword as if she can arrest time and somehow reverse the inevitable outcome of this bloody slaughter. Violence is further depicted through the forceful orchestration of colour and light. Illumination falls onto the stage from the openings on the right. The reddish shadow on the floor indicates that Tintoretto was familiar with the theatrical use of coloured light. According to Serlio's directives on artificial lighting, a lamp or torch placed behind tinted glass projects coloured light into the scene through apertures in the wings.[11] A large expanse in the middleground is evenly illuminated with gleams of a ruby tint creating a vivid contrast to the glaring amber lighting in the foreground. It appears that Tintoretto put different coloured glasses in front of his lamps, controlled the intensity of light sources and ingeniously evoking the sensations of fear and terror, which Ruskin so aptly describes:

> Still less does he depend on details of murder or ghastliness of death; there is no blood, no stabbing or cutting, but there is an awful substitute for these in the chiaroscuro. The scene is the outer vestibule of a palace, the slippery marble floor is fearfully barred across by sanguine shadows, so that our eyes seem to become

bloodshot and stained with strange horror and deadly vision.[12]

With dramatic sanguineous gradations, Tintoretto re-creates charged spectacles which capture the imagination of the viewers. The predominance of reddish tones also creates a visual harmony between the Upper and Lower halls of the *Scuola Grande di San Rocco. The Massacre of the Innocents* hangs in the *Sala Terrena* on the wall facing the double staircases leading to the *Sala dell'Albergo* where scenes of cruelty and destruction are once again rendered with a scheme of red nuances. Hence, the faithful visitor would be led to ponder the spiritual message of the decoration from the beginning to the end of his passage through the *Scuola.* In contemplating these religious scenes, the spectator witnesses the episodes of the Life of Christ culminating in His Sacrifice on the cross for humanity and thus meditates on the significance of the Christian way of life. It is through the participation in the Eucharist, or the renewed partaking in the Death of Christ, that the rebirth as Infant of God will be granted.

By means of the unique orchestration of light in *The Last Supper* (Plate 36), the mystery of the Eucharistic rite is revealed to the audience. Highlight and shadow pattern are carefully controlled so that the principal form of the setting is brought out. It was imperative to reinforce the peculiar placement and significance of the table within the scene. An oil lamp hangs from the beam close to the foreground and its floodlight produces a rich interplay of highlight and shade contrasting sharply with the tenebrous background. Close observation reveals that the brilliant patches of light on the furniture are not only projections from the chandelier, but also reflections of the dazzling halos of the apostles. Christ is depicted with the most luminous aureole, and the vivid juxtaposition

of the blazing light with the dark shadow draws the viewers' attention to the principal 'actor' in the drama. This phosphorescent effect adds a supernatural quality to the painting. Moreover, the length and the angle of the shadows cast on the table intimate the mystery surrounding the ritual.

Near the beams of the ceiling, an air-borne swarm of translucent angels seems to emerge from the flames of the hanging lamp. Nicola Sabbatini, an Italian engineer and architect, in the *Practica di fabricar scene e machine ne' teatri*, points out the inconvenience of placing the oil lamp on the platform. He writes:

> The lamps must have strong wicks if they are to give a strong light. But if the strong wicks are chosen, smoke will develop to such density that a sort of haze will interfere with the view of the spectators, who will have difficulty in distinguishing the smaller details on the stage.[13]

However, this is not the case for Tintoretto who, in his painting, ingeniously transformed the wisps emanating from the chandelier to a transparent host of angels hovering across the room. This pictorial improvisation inspires the admiration of countless observers, for no other of the innumerable versions of *The Last Supper* could vividly capture the profound depth of this spiritual event, the interaction of the visible and the invisible realms, the communion with God through the Eucharist. Frederick Hartt observed that "At the end of his life, Tintoretto's light-on-dark technique, invented to lend speed to his brush, becomes a vehicle for revelation."[14]

Tintoretto constantly returned to the Last Supper during his long artistic career, not because of a lack of imagination nor compliance with the nature of his commission, but because of the great opportunities this subject offered to fully convey his religious

fervour. Each version of *The Last Supper* reflected the personal experience of the artist and his vision of the Eucharistic celebration. Tintoretto gives concrete form to abstract thought in his painting.[15] The realistic description of the setting, the depiction of flesh and blood characters displaying their emotions are designed to bring the sacred event down to a level that everyone could identify with and comprehend. Tintoretto invented his own pictorial vocabulary in order to make the religious mysteries visible, and to emphasize the transcendence of Christ along with the Glory of God. The salvation of the soul remains the principal preoccupation of Christianity, and the observance of the Sacraments is a means to bring about divine assistance. With each interpretation of *The Last Supper*, Tintoretto not only relived the dramatic episode of the Bible, but also actively took part in the solemn ritual of the *Corpus Christi* and thus entered into deeper communion with God. It is precisely the search for spiritual nourishment that drove Tintoretto with each painting to re-explore the mystery of the Redemption and to convey his yearning for the unity of body and soul with God. In fact, the depth of his religious fervour is explicitly expressed in his testament of May 30, 1594, written a day before his death. In his last words, Tintoretto dedicated his "mind and intellect but infirm body ... to the Eternal God, our Saviour Jesus Christ."[16]

Tintoretto employed light as a major contributing element in his 'theatrical production'. The distribution of highlight and shadow across his 'platform' guides the viewer to the most tragic moment of the 'play'. Not only does illumination guide the eye, but it also enhances the sculptural quality of the figures. The reflection on their costumes and gestures offers the illusion of living 'actors' on stage. Such artifice effectively reduces

the gap between the real and fictive space. Tintoretto successfully captures light on canvases, translating the immaterial, luminous energy into a vision of colours. Furthermore, he also carefully devised the intensity, direction, flow and rhythm of lighting as to exploit the emotional and psychological state of the viewer. These controllable elements are, however, not just merely sensory stimuli but effective vehicles which reveal the depth of Tintoretto's spiritual experience. Through the drama of light, Tintoretto weaves the invisible with the visible, and embodies the ethereal within the corporeal in his painted essays of the religious supernatural.

It is also important to note the sensitivity required for a sincere representation of religious feelings. As Saint Gregory remarks, if the painting is viewed as "the book of the unlearned, what light can it provide if it be false?"[17] The sincerity of Tintoretto's pious sentiments has never been doubted. The numerous pictures still *in situ* attest to the Venetian appreciation of his talent as painter, stage designer and exegete.

CONCLUSION

Both stagecraft and painting pertain to the art of seeing. It is therefore evident that the stage designer and painter face the same challenges of how to visualize the script of a play and how to translate it into action and movement, costume and setting, colour and lighting; their sole intention is to illuminate a vision for the audience.

In any representation, the creation of space is the first aspect for the stage designer and painter to consider, since the backdrop describes and provides the place of action within which characters can move and perform. This space can also be suggested by the physical presence of the actors, their gestures and attires. A gestural choreography, if well conceived, can be even more effective than an exchange of dialogue. It is mainly through body language that actors slip into their roles and interact not only with other characters on stage, but also with the spectators. That is to say that scenic actions can exert considerable influence on the state of mind and emotions of the observers. Light is also contributive and complementary to interpretative art. An effective distribution of highlight, shadow and reflection can magically set the mood and tone of a play. Once a reciprocal emotional involvement is firmly established between the representation and the audience, the vision is capable of travelling through time and space fusing past and future, fiction and actuality.

Theatre and painting, which are illusory yet may be seemingly real at the same time, prove to be the best media for persuading viewers. Systems of signs in theatre and painting are conceived as channels to transport the messages to the audience. The analysis

of Tintoretto's religious pictures demonstrates how he established sets of signs in order to create a continual communication with his spectators and to stimulate their imagination.

Tintoretto's visualization of the scene through the constructed miniature stage-box enabled him to explore countless pictorial possibilities and to devise the most vivid and forceful compositions. The evidence of theatrical practices in his picture-making also enhances the realism of his tableaux. Imbued with the Venetian fascination for spectacle, Tintoretto re-created images employing the well-known idioms of scenery, lighting and gesture, thus addressing the viewers in a way familiar to them. The grandeur of his 'dramatic production' complies with the Venetian taste for ostentation, whereas his sincere representation of pious sentiments reflects his deep religiosity.

The grand celebration of the four-hundredth anniversary of Tintoretto's death in 1994 attested to his position amongst the most acclaimed masters of Venice. The attraction of Tintoretto's art lies in his ability to exercise visual and intellectual control over the observers. Any spectator contemplating his *oeuvre* would recognize the distinctive characteristics of his pictures which stem from the remarkable fusion of a wealth of experiences collected during his long career as painter, stage designer and musician. Ruskin's statement "I much doubt if Tintoret ever imitated anybody,"[1] and Tietze's assertion, "Tintoretto had no other teacher but himself"[2] attest to the unique abilities. Tintoretto invented, for the audience of all time, intelligible religious spectacles which indubitably reveal his profound personal comprehension of Faith.

NOTES

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

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[21] Pullan, p. 60, footnote no 127, doc VI in the Appendice to Gaetano Cozzi, "Paolo Sarpi tra il cattolico Philippe Canaye de Fresnes e il calvinista Isaac Casaubon", *Bollettino dell'Istituto di Storia della Societa e dello Stato Veneziano*, I (1959).

[22] Muir, p. 230.

[23] Ibid., p. 232.

[24] Ibid., pp. 232-33.

[25] Ibid., p. 233.

[26] Ibid., p. 235.

[27] As quoted in Muir, p. 234, note no 51: Logan Pearsall Smith, *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton* (Oxford, 1907), 1:377.

[28] As quoted in Muir, p. 74, footnote no 28, Machiavelli, *Il Principe*, 18.5.

[29] Muir, p. 75 (footnote no 29, Machiavelli, *Il Principe*, 21.7) and p. 76.

[30] Ibid., p. 75.

[31] Ibid., p. 84.

[32] Ibid., p. 118.

[33] As quoted in Muir, p. 122, footnote no 51: Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobillissima et singolare*, 1663, p. 501: "*Desponsamus te Mare, in signum veri perpetuique dominii*".

[34] Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 39.

[35] Elena Povoledo, "Scène et Mise en scène à Venise dans la première moitié du XVIe siècle", Actes du XIXe Stage International de Tours, *Renaissance Maniérisme Baroque* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1972), p. 76.

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2 Ridolfi, p. 17.

3 Rosand, p. 184.

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7 As quoted in Lepschy, p. 136.

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9 Ridolfi, p. 15.

10 Rosand, p. 300, note no 44.

11 Nagler, p. 79: excerpt from Sebastiano Serlio, *Regole generali di Architettura* (Paris, 1545): "Behind the painted house..., you must set a thin board, cut out in the same manner that these lights shall be placed...You may also make glasse of all collours and formes, some four square, some with crosses, & any other forme with their light behind them..."

12 Ruskin, p. 327.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Plate 1A
Music program of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco.

S C U O L A G R A N D E D I S A N R O C C O

ANNO del TINTORETTO

MERCOLEDI' 6 GIUGNO - ORE 11 A.M.

INTERMEZZO MUSICALE

* * *

ORGANO: ROBERTO MICCONI

GIULIO SEGNI (1498-1561)	-	Ricercare
VINCENZO BELLAVERE (1530-1588)	-	Toccata
ANDREA GABRIELI (1510-1585)	-	Pass'e mezzo antico Intonazione del VII tono Canzon francese Petit Jaquet Fantasia allegra

* * *

CLAUDIO MERULO (1533-1604)	-	Ricercare del IV tono Toccata dell'XI tono detto V
GIOVANNI GABRIELI (1557-1612)	-	Ricercare del X tono Fantasia del IV tono Fantasia del VI tono Toccata

* * *

ROBERTO MICCONI:
Organista titolare e Maestro di Cappella della Basilica di S.Marco di Venezia.
Docente di organo e composizione organistica al Conservatorio "Benedetto Marcello" di Venezia.

* * *

ORGANO POSITIVO costruito in Venezia da Eugenio Muner nel 1993

Plate 1B
Music program of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco.

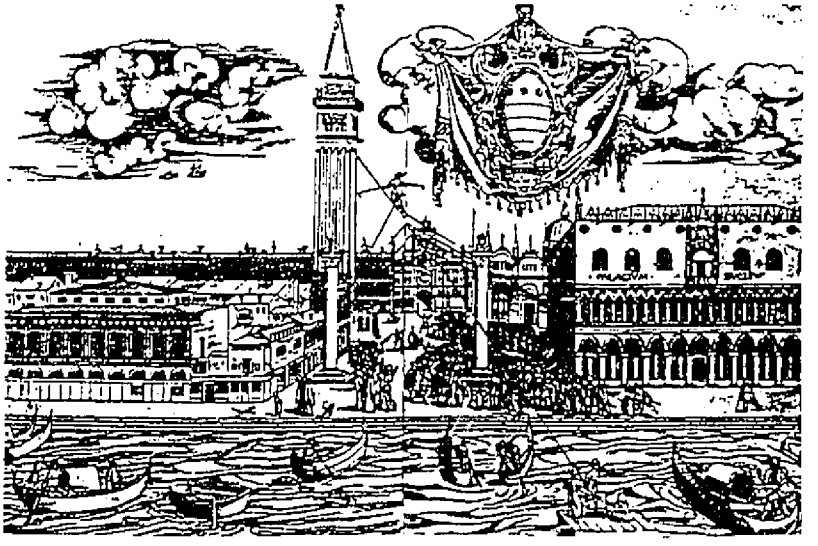

Plate 2
Anonymous woodcut with arms of Doge Francesco Donà (1545-53)
Venice, Museo Correr.

Plate 3
Procuratie Vecchie. Passageway behind the arcades, looking east.

Plate 4
Tintoretto, *The Miracle of Saint Mark*, 1547-48
Venice, Gallerie dell' Accademia

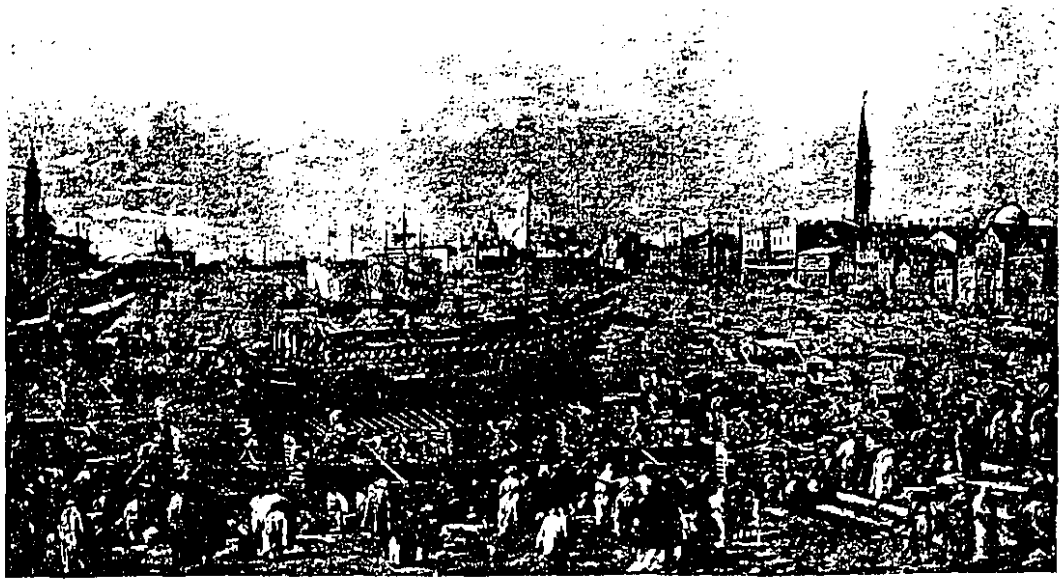

Plate 5
Francesco Guardi, *The Doge in the Bucentaur leaving the Lido to celebrate the annual wedding of the sea*, Paris, Louvre.

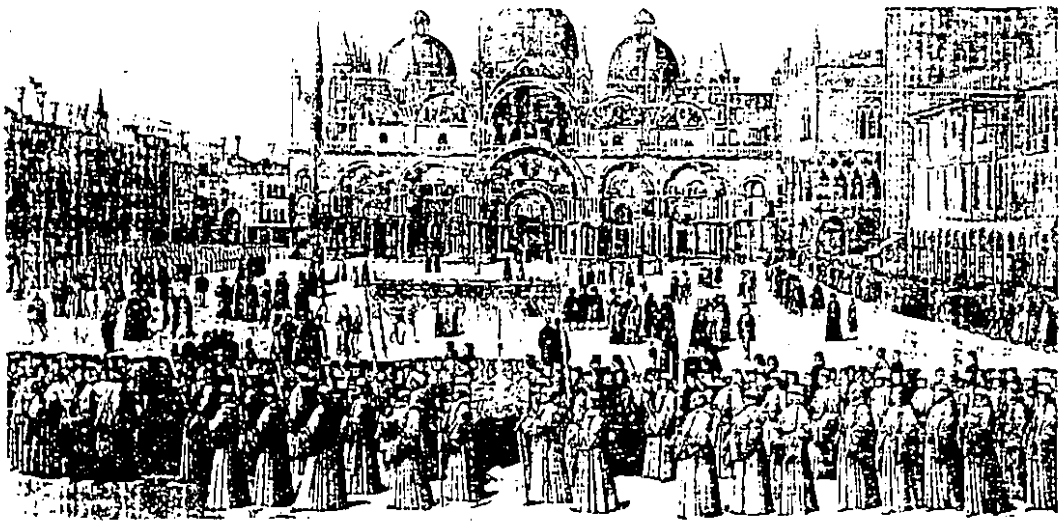

Plate 6
Gentile Bellini, *Procession in the Piazza San Marco*, 1496, Venice, Gallerie dell' Accademia.

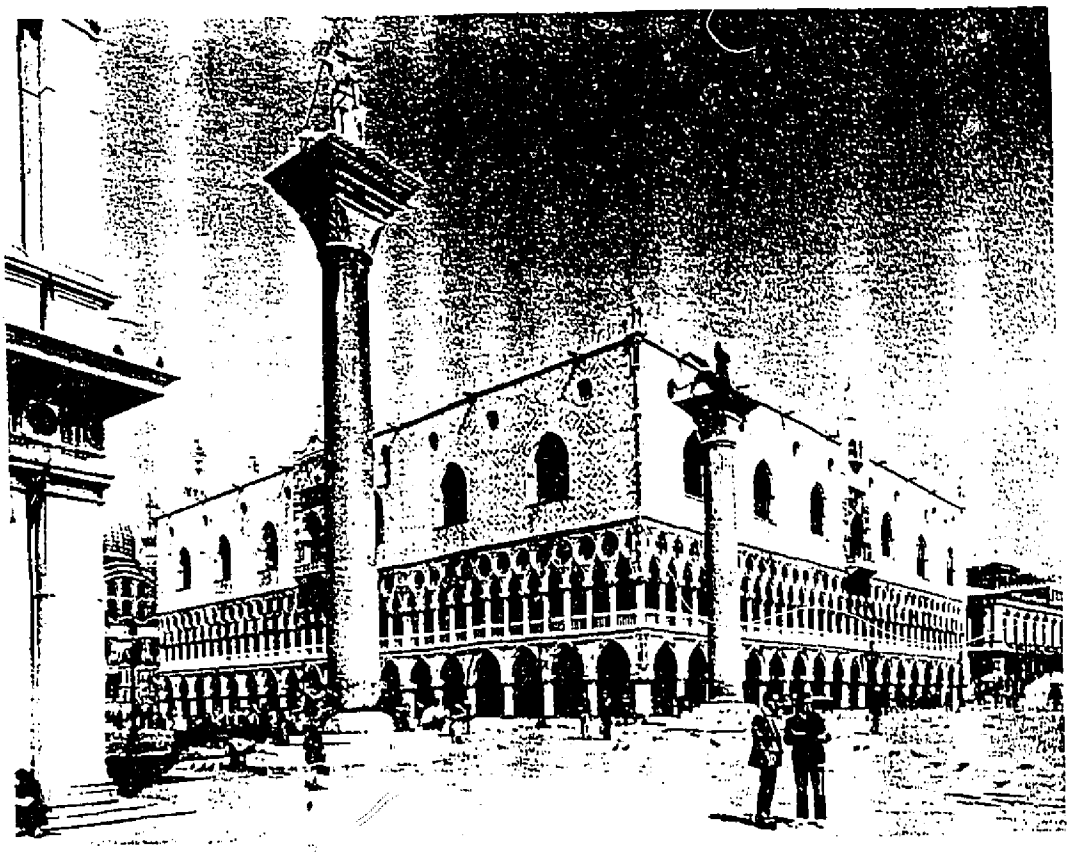

Plate 7
Ducal Palace, Molo facade, c.1340 and Piazetta extension begun 1424.

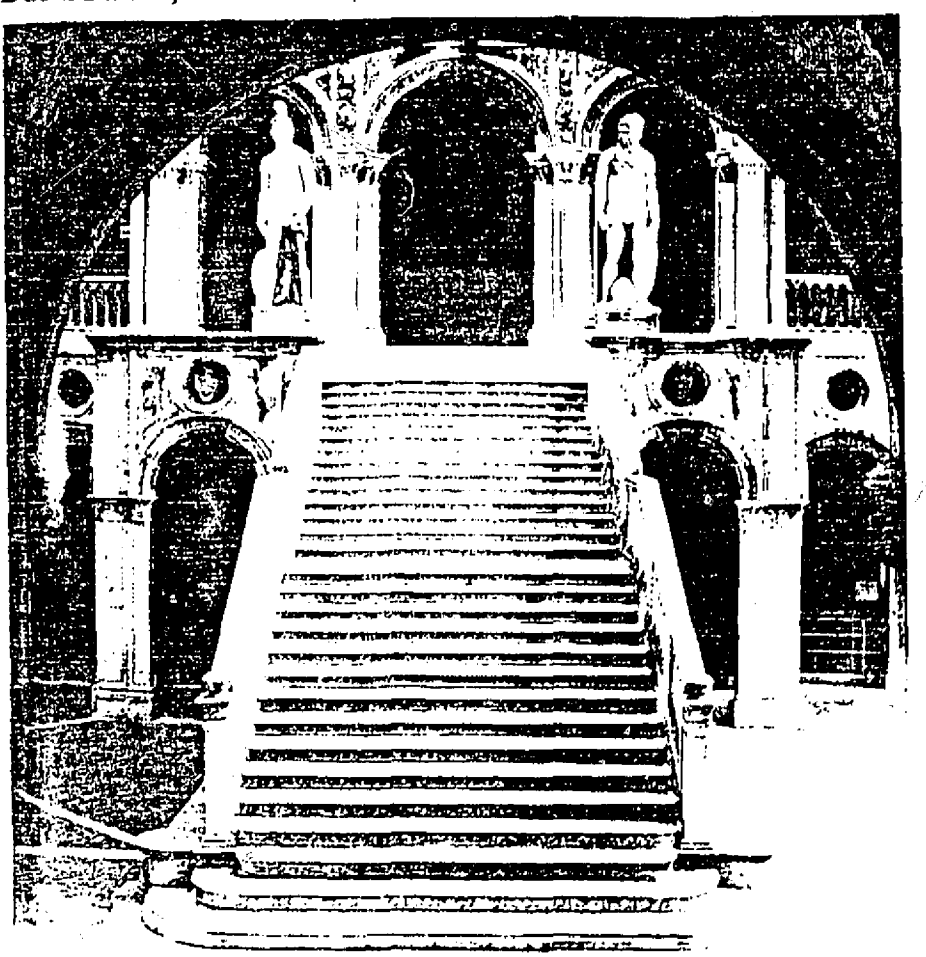

Plate 8
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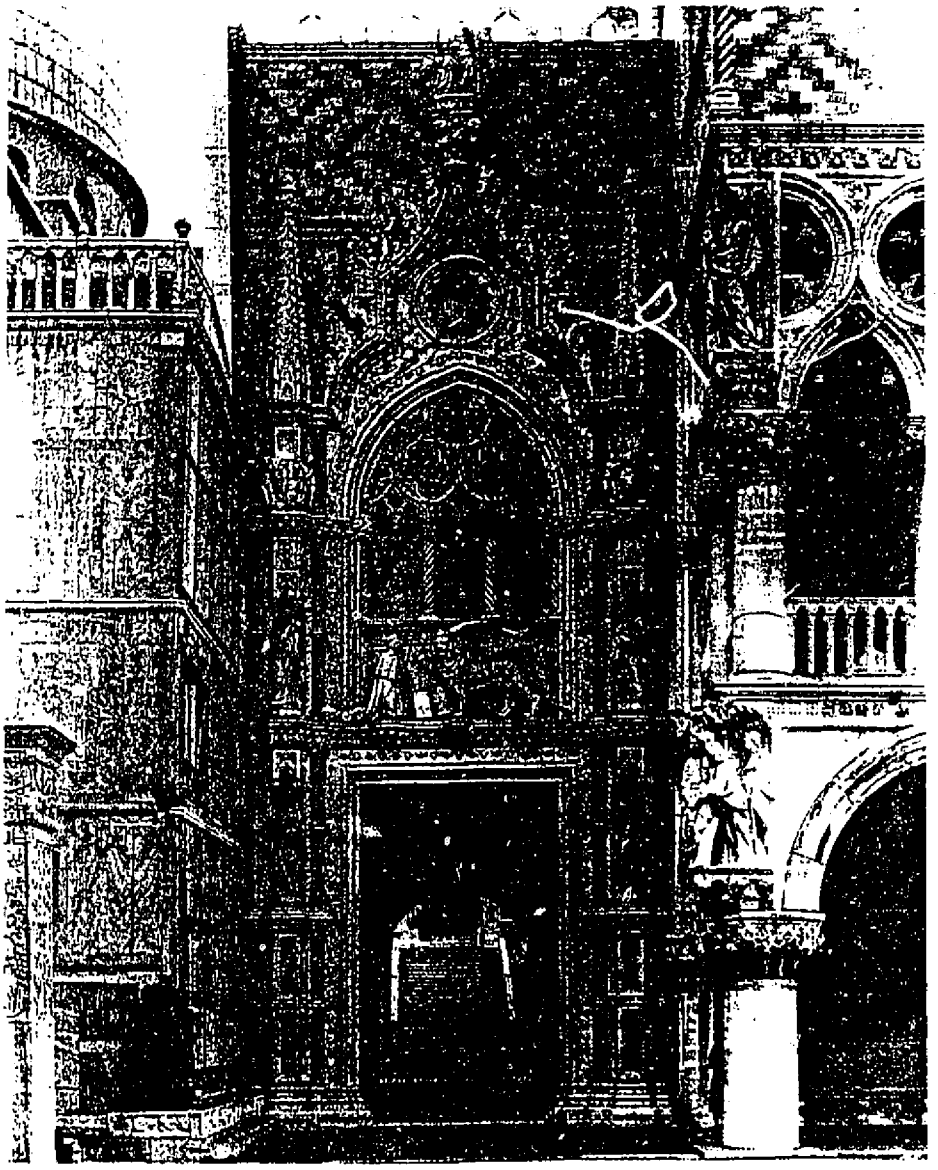

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Batolomeo Buon, Porta della Carta, Ducal Palace,
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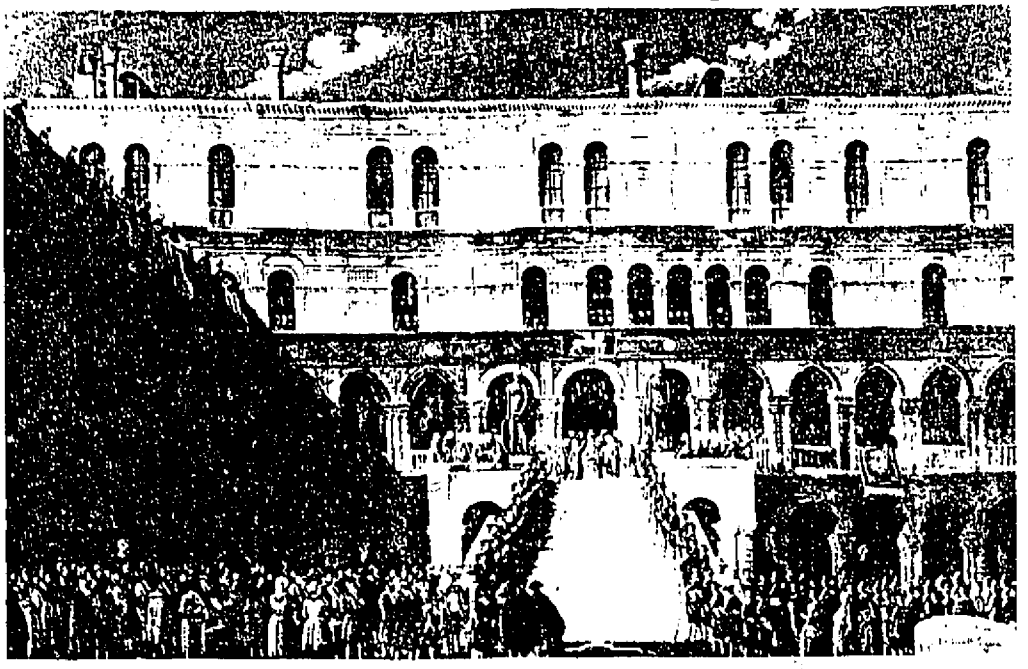

Plate 10
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Querini Stampalia Foundation

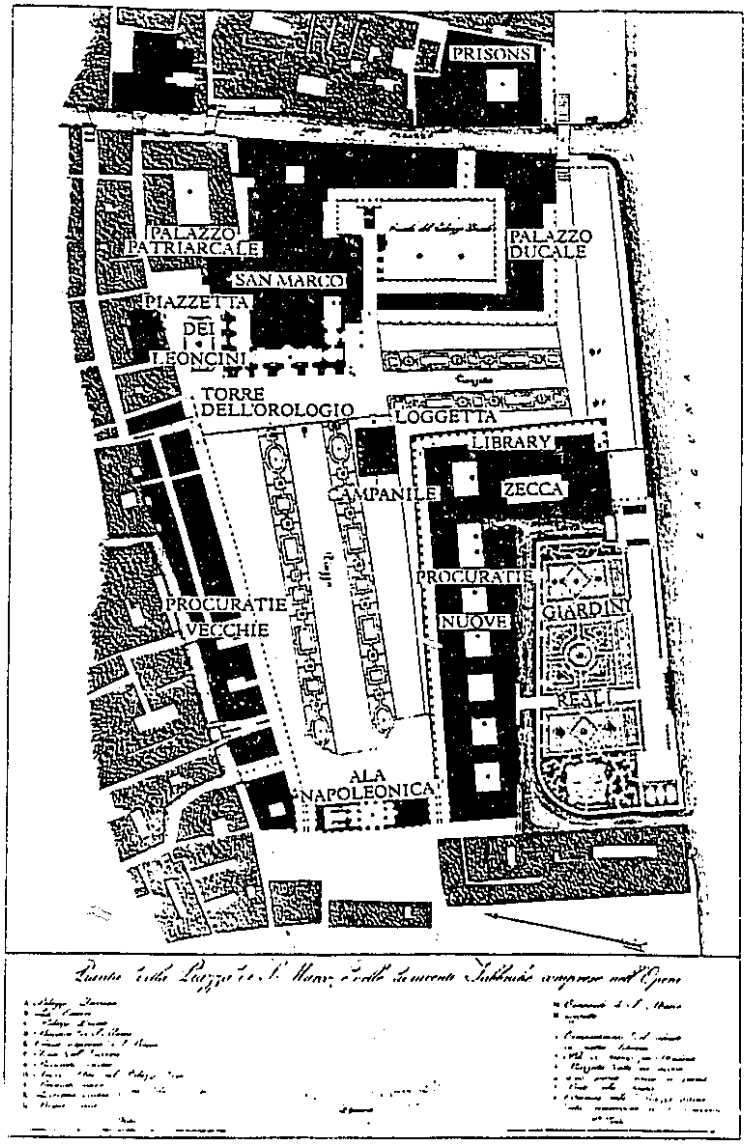
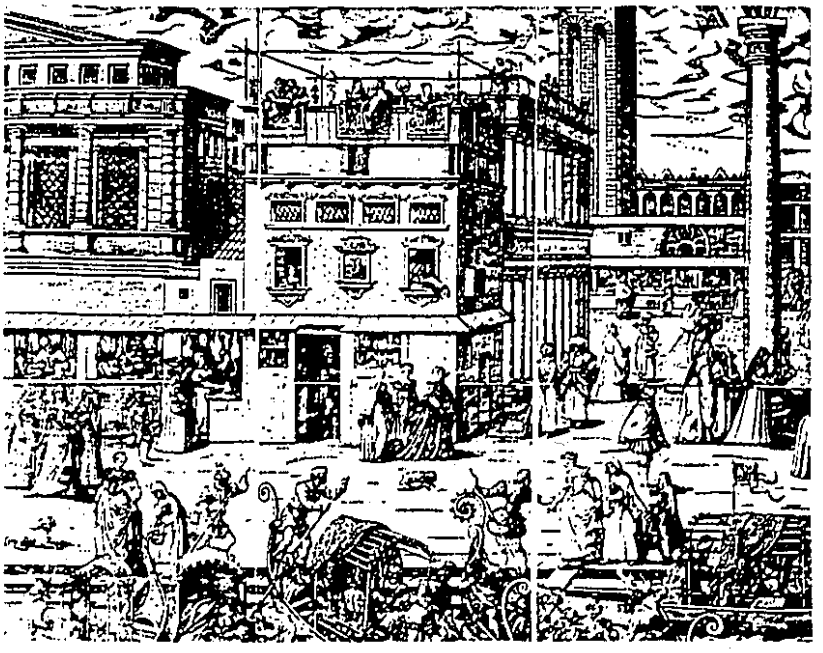


Plate 11
Piazza San Marco, Plan showing layout after Sansovino's remodeling Sixteenth century.



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Jost Amman, *The Procession of the Doge's Marriage with the Sea,* detail, woodcut, c.1550, Venice, Museo Correr.

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Jacopo Sansovino,
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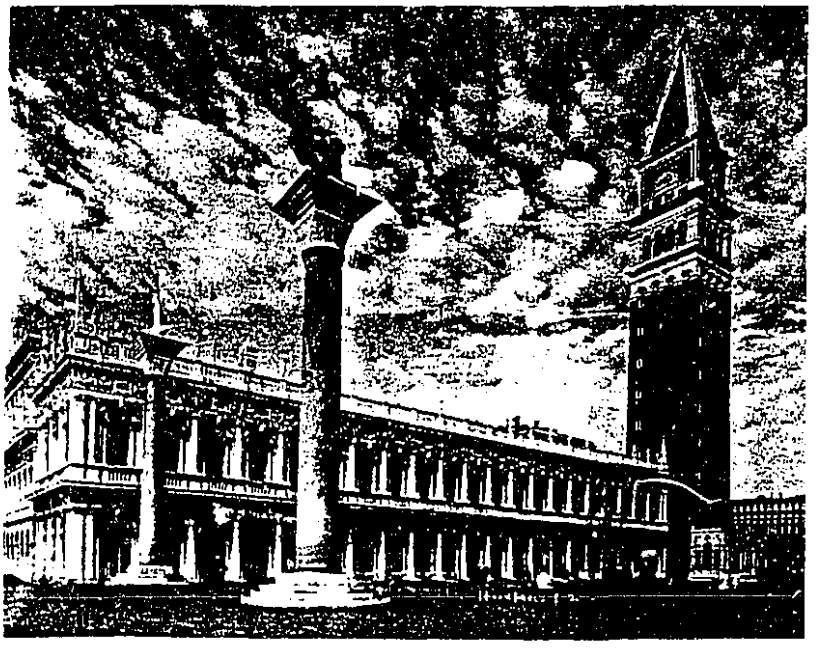

Plate 14
Jacopo Sansovino,
Library of San Marco,
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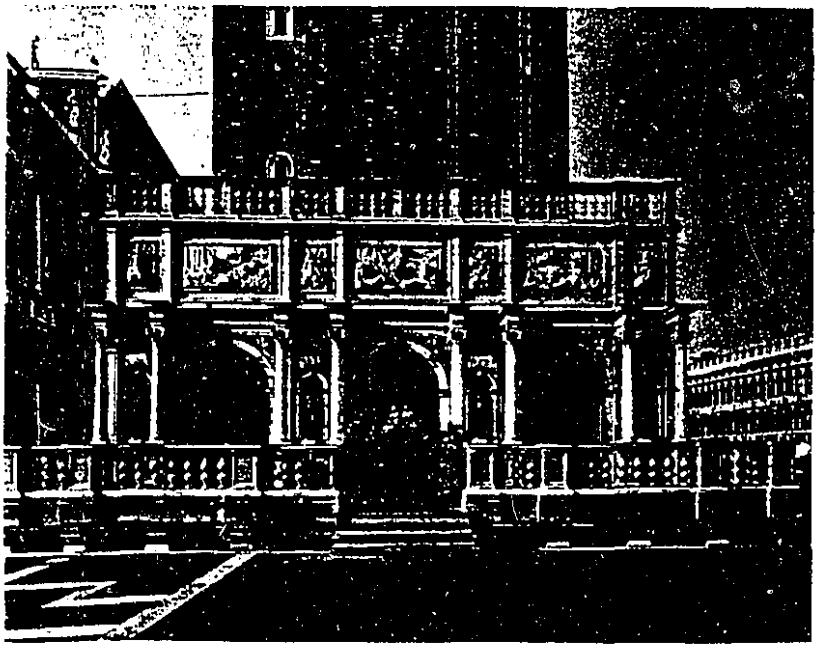
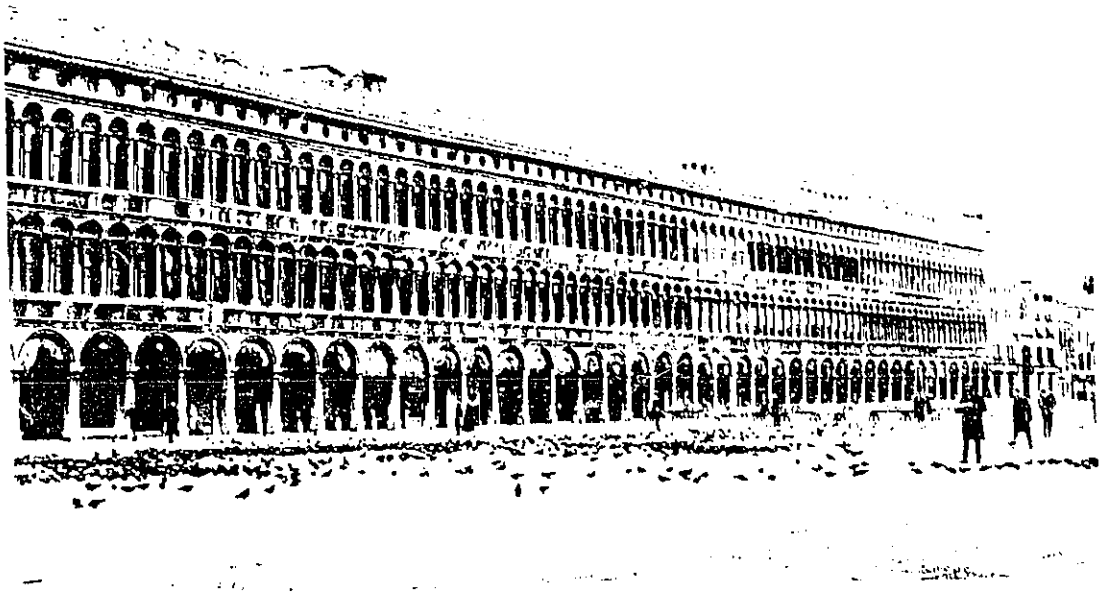


Plate 15
Jacopo Sansovino,
Loggetta, begun 1538,
Venice.



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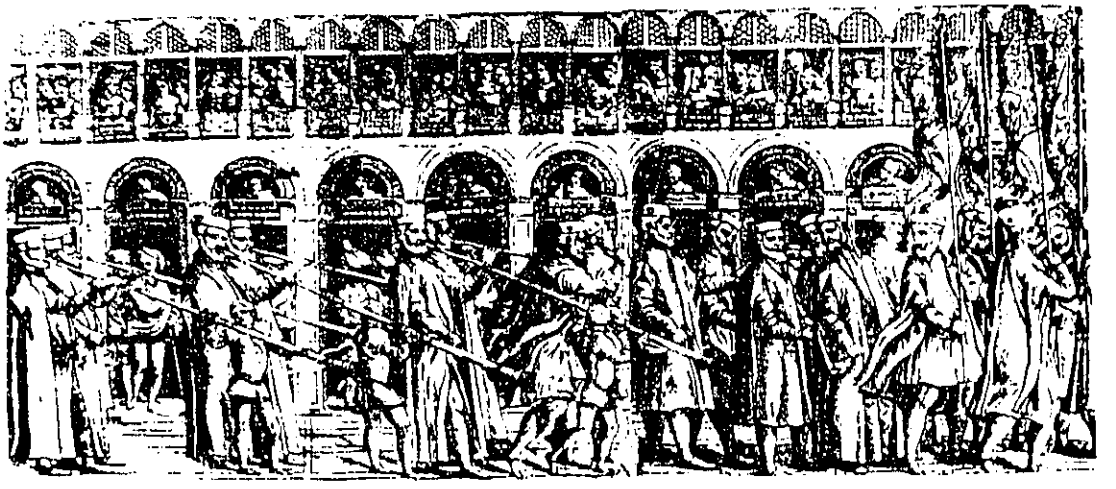

Plate 17. Matteo Pagan, *The Procession of the Doge on Palm Sunday.*

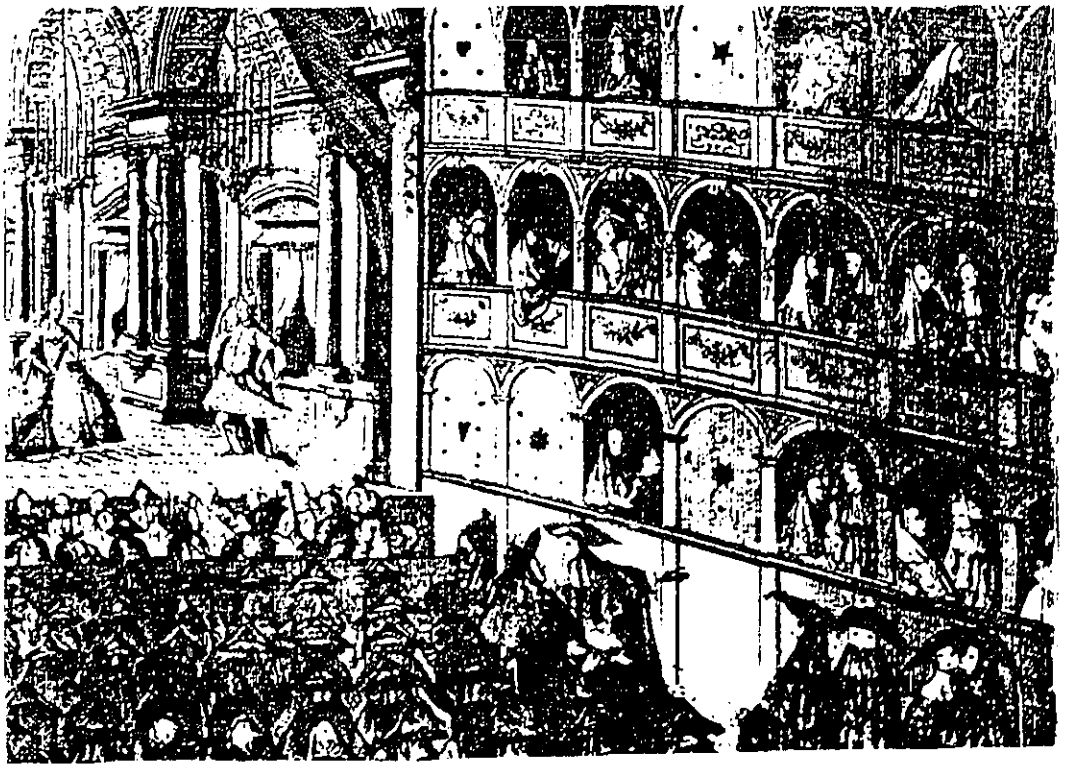

Plate 18. Fossati, *Représentation musicale durant le carnaval.*

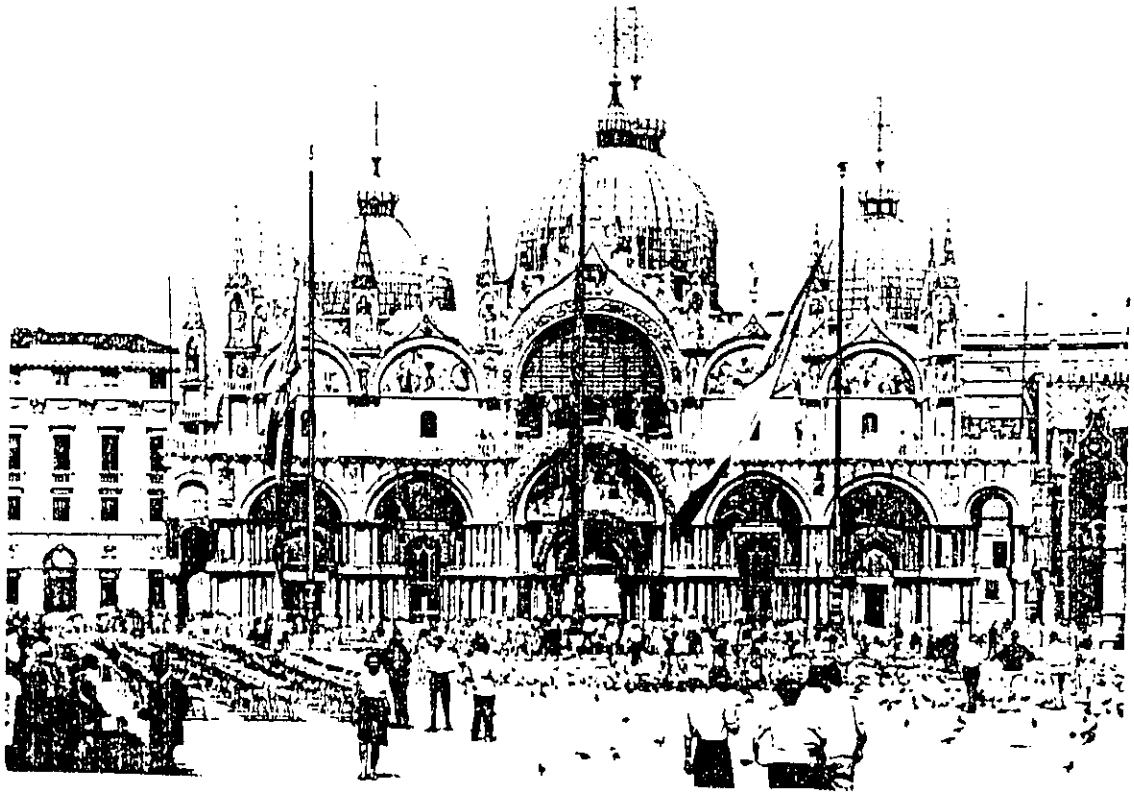

Plate 19
Basilica di San Marco, Venice.

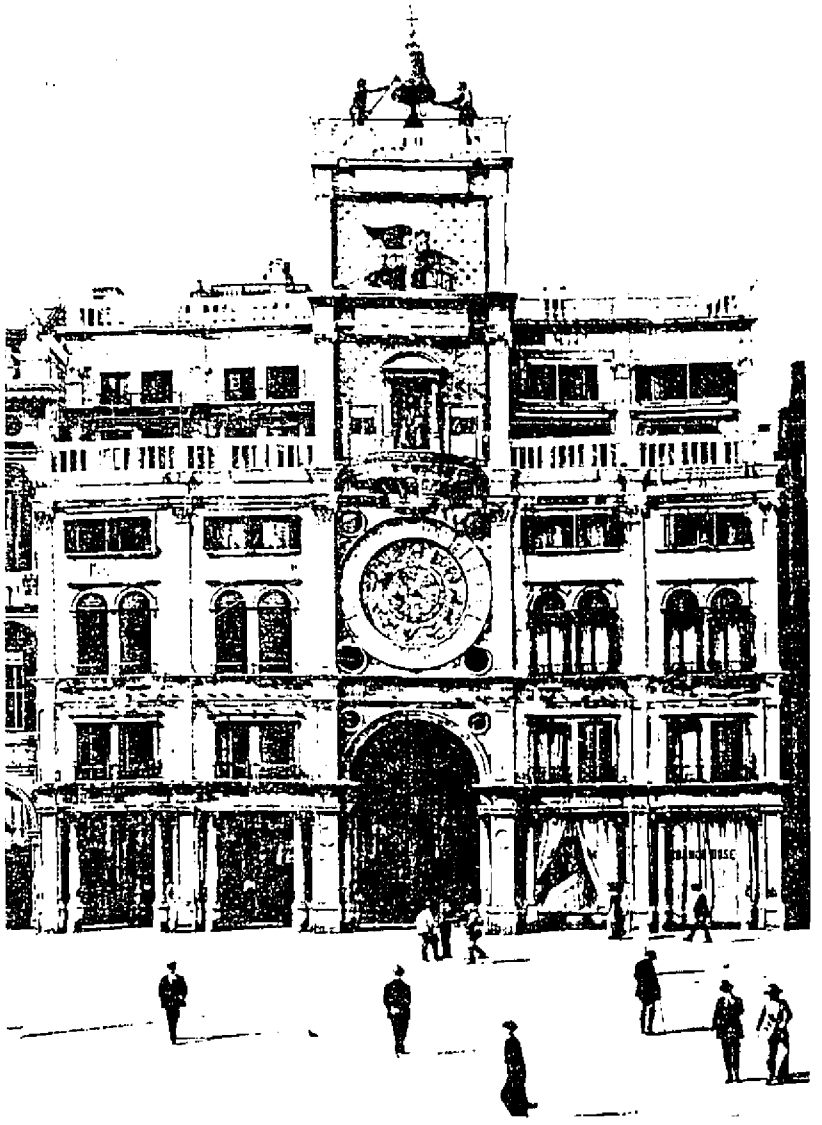

Plate 20
The Torre dell' Orologio,
Entrance to Merceria,
Venice.

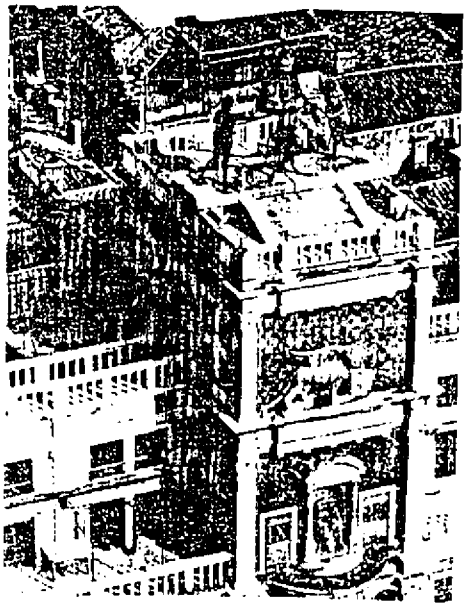

Plate 21
The Torre dell' Orologio,
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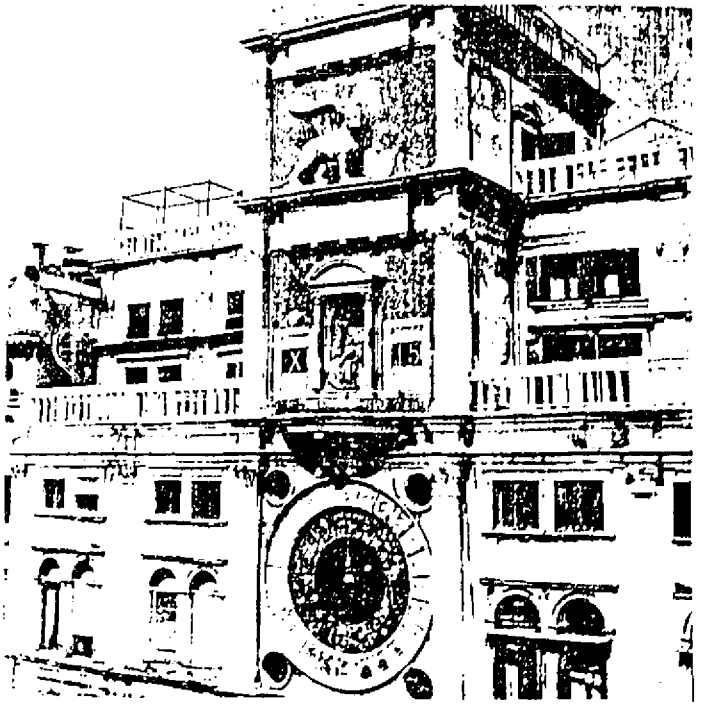

Plate 22
The Torre dell' Orologio,
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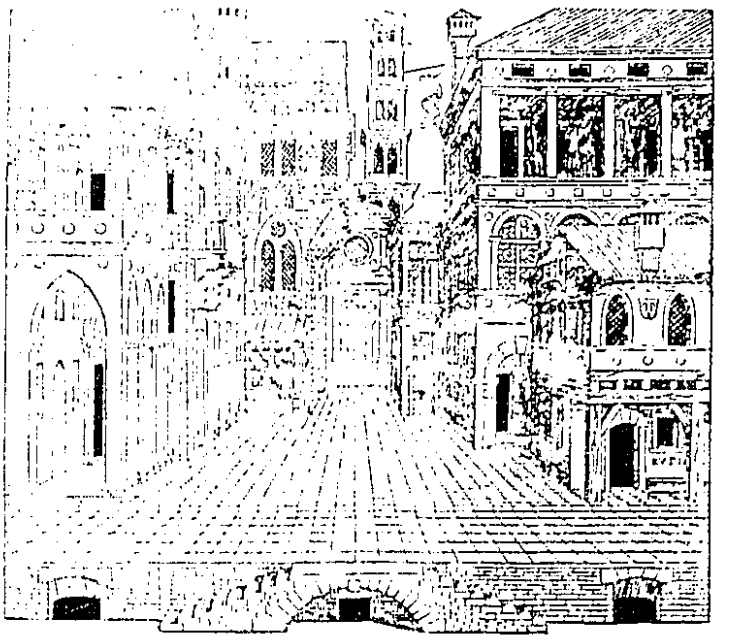
Plate 23
Sebastiano Serlio,
The Tragic Scene, 1545,
Theatre Arts Prints.



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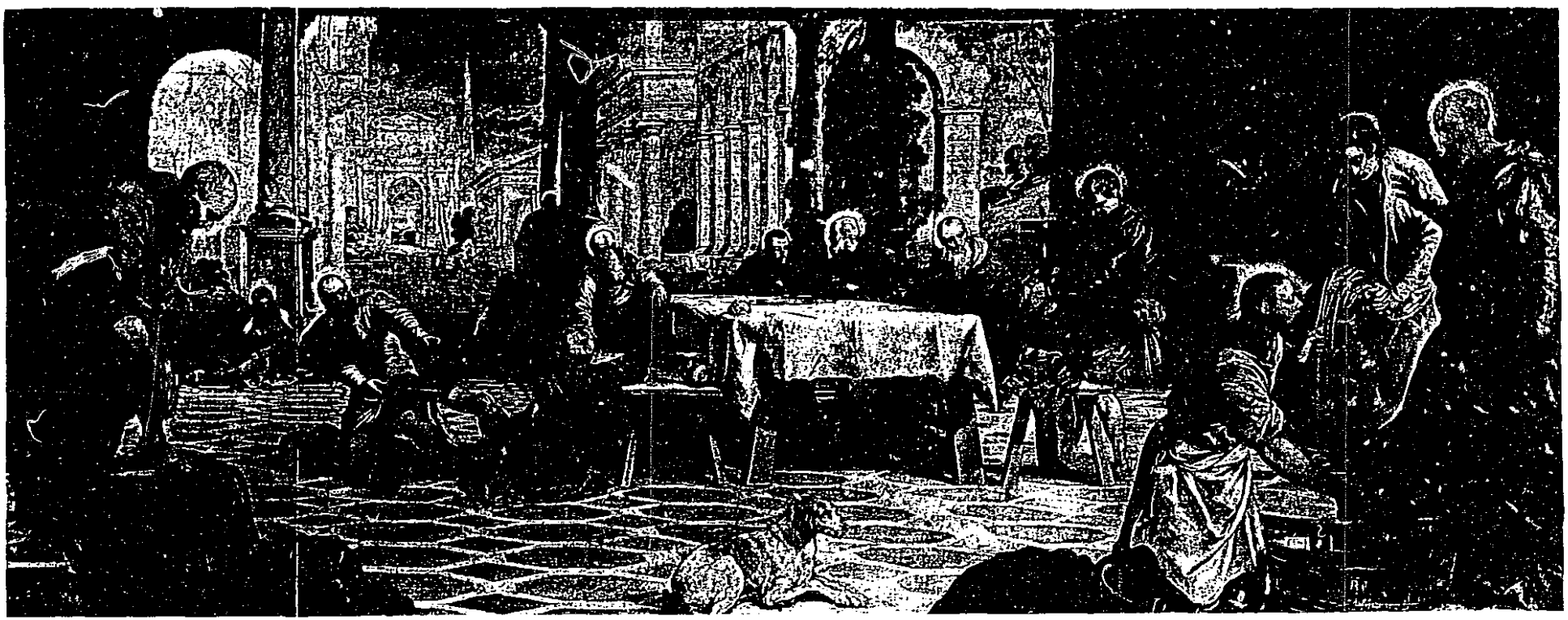

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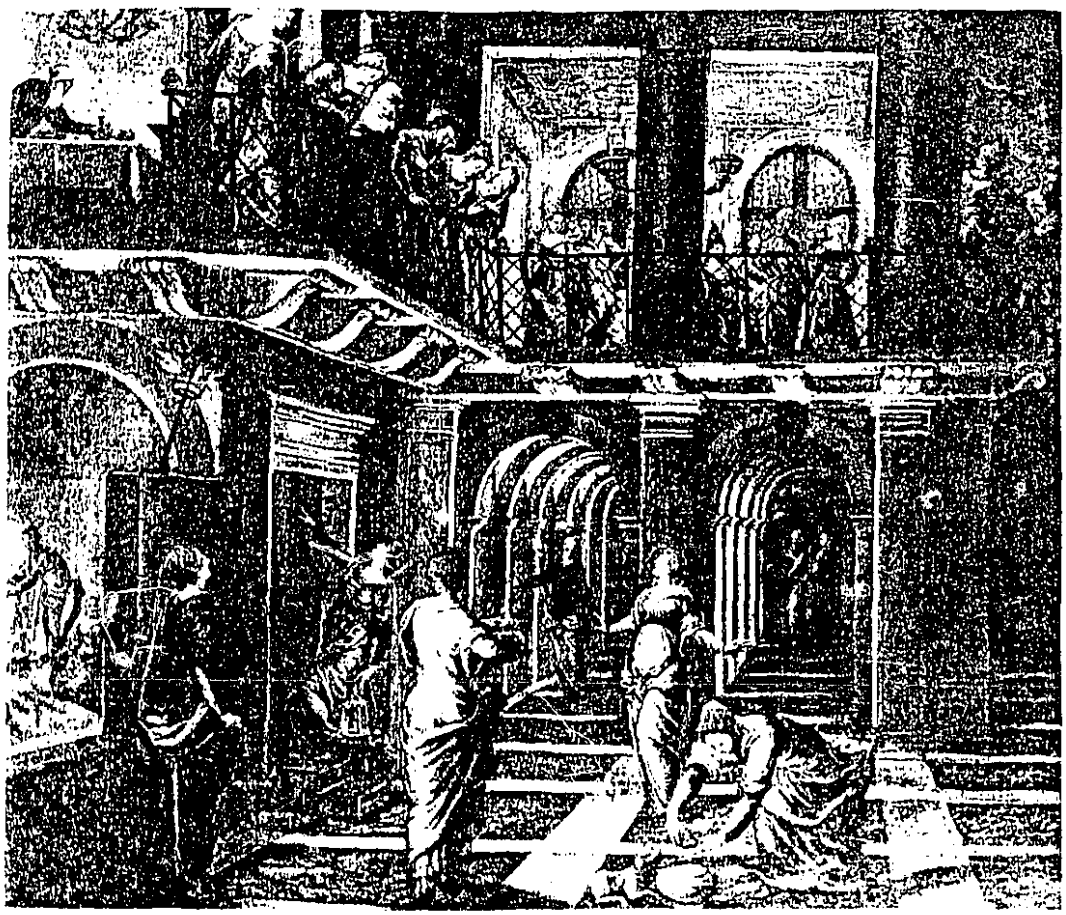

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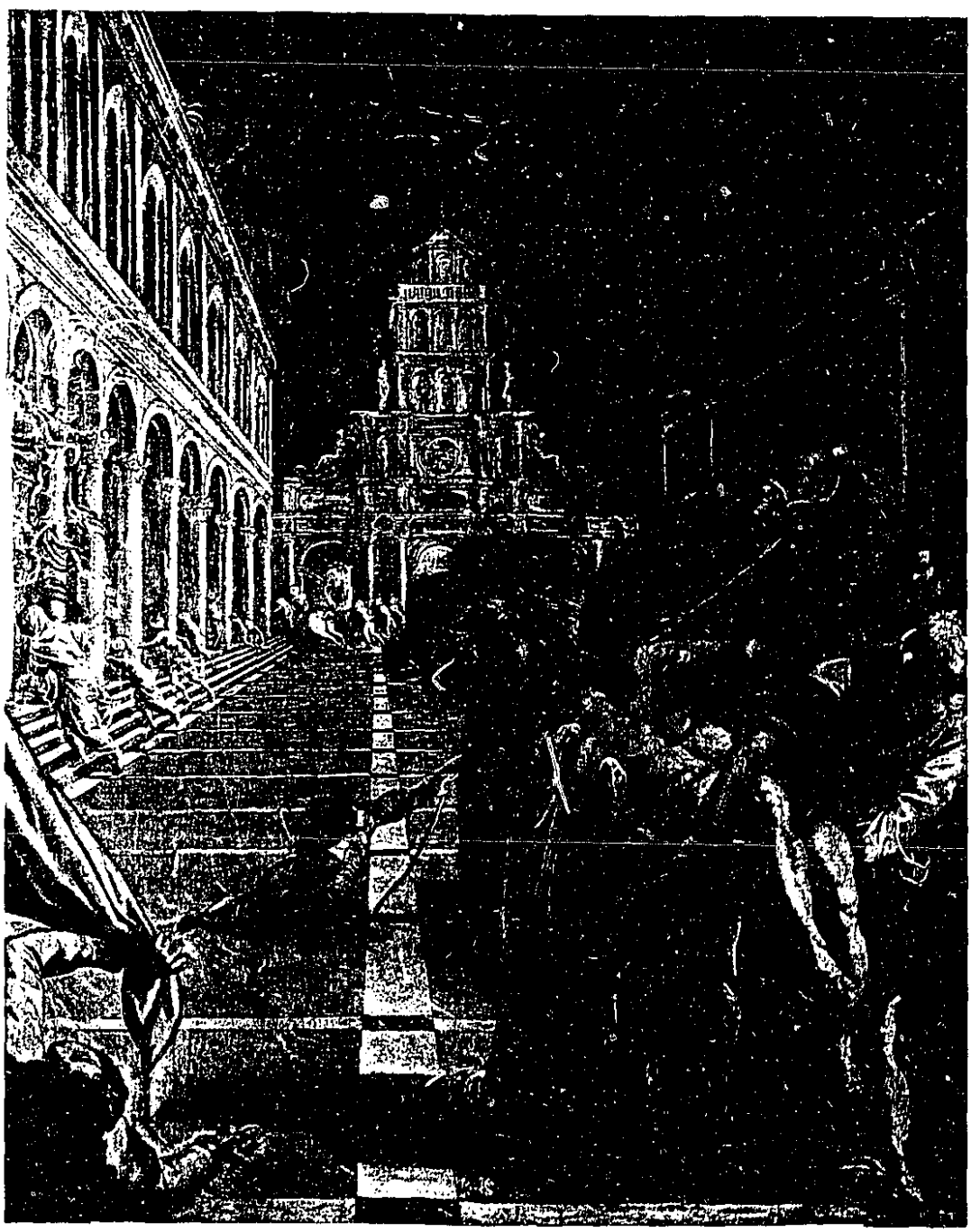

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Plate 33
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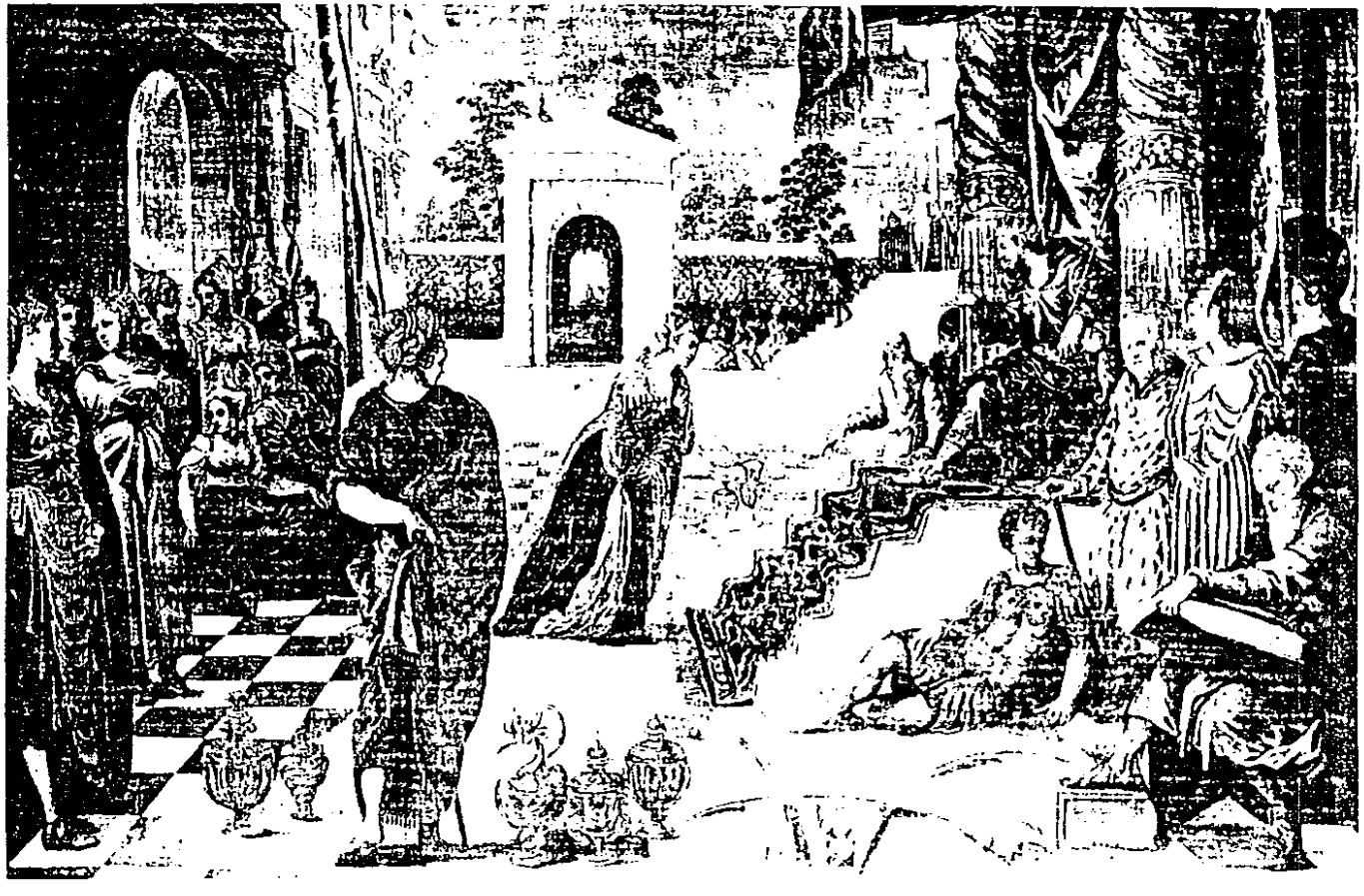

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Plate 36
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Plate 41
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Venice, Sala dell' Albergo, Scuola Grande di San Rocco.

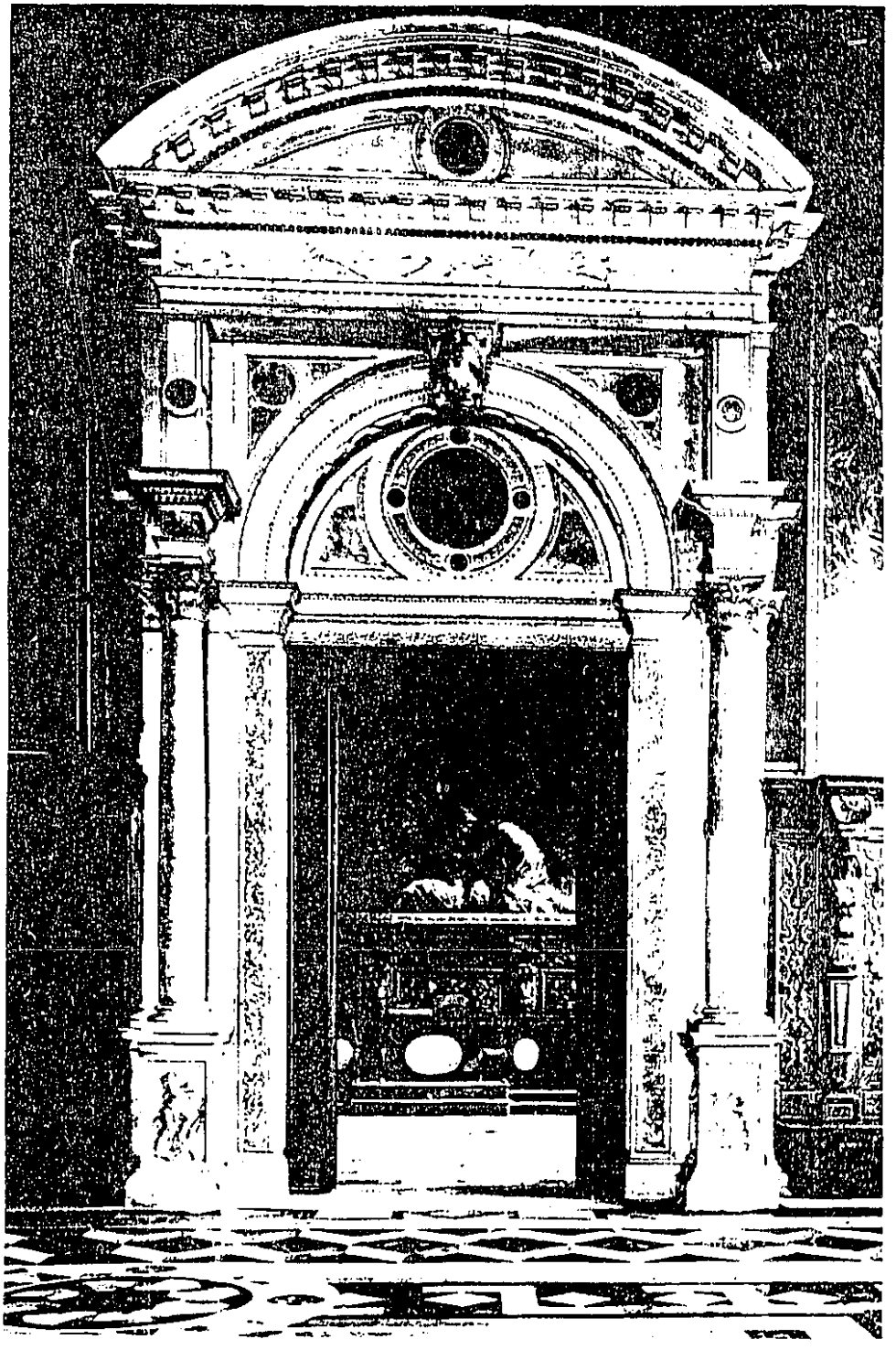


Plate 42
Entrance door of Sala dell'Albergo, Scuola Grande di San Rocco.

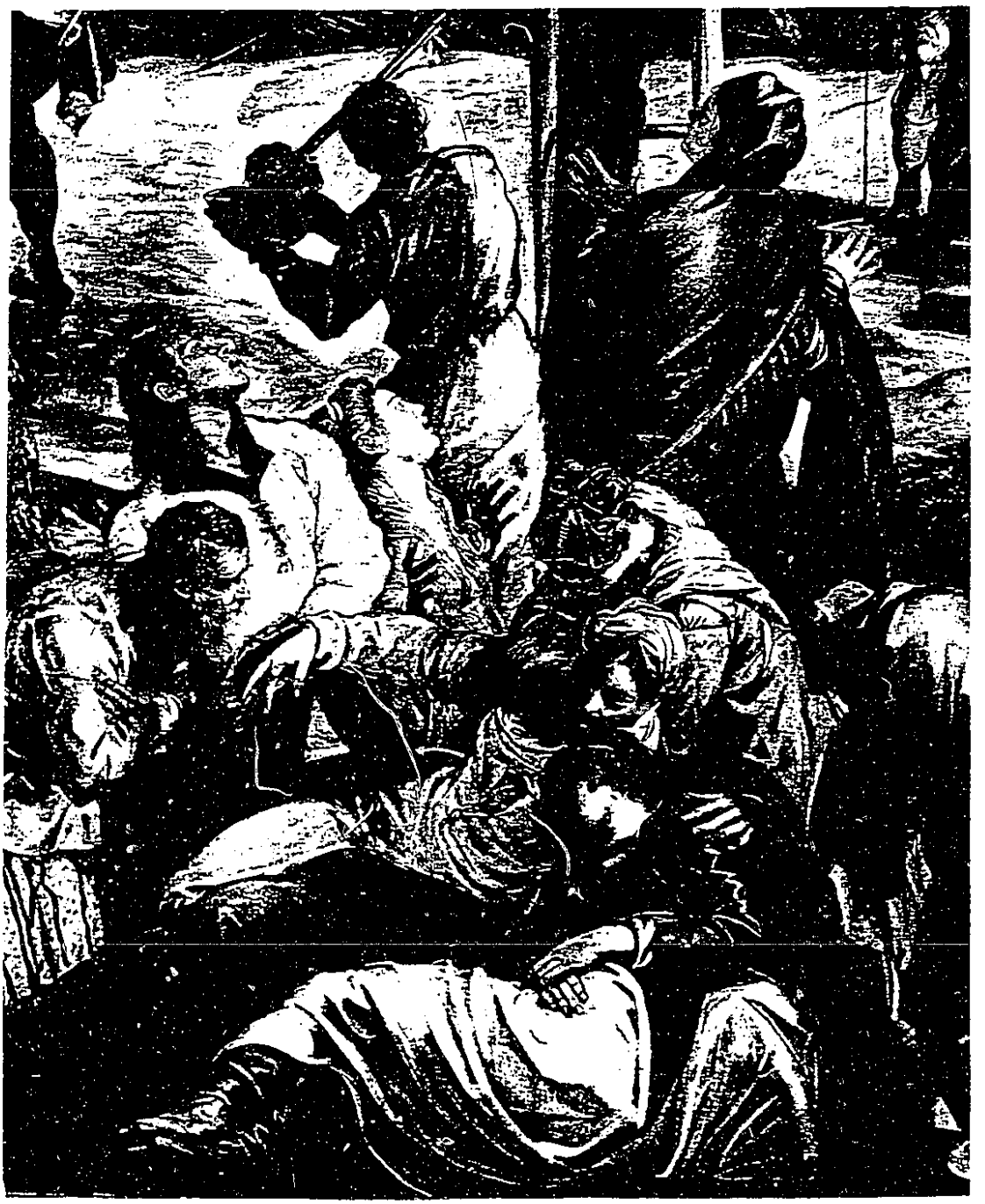


Plate 43
Tintoretto, Detail of *The Crucifixion*, 1565.

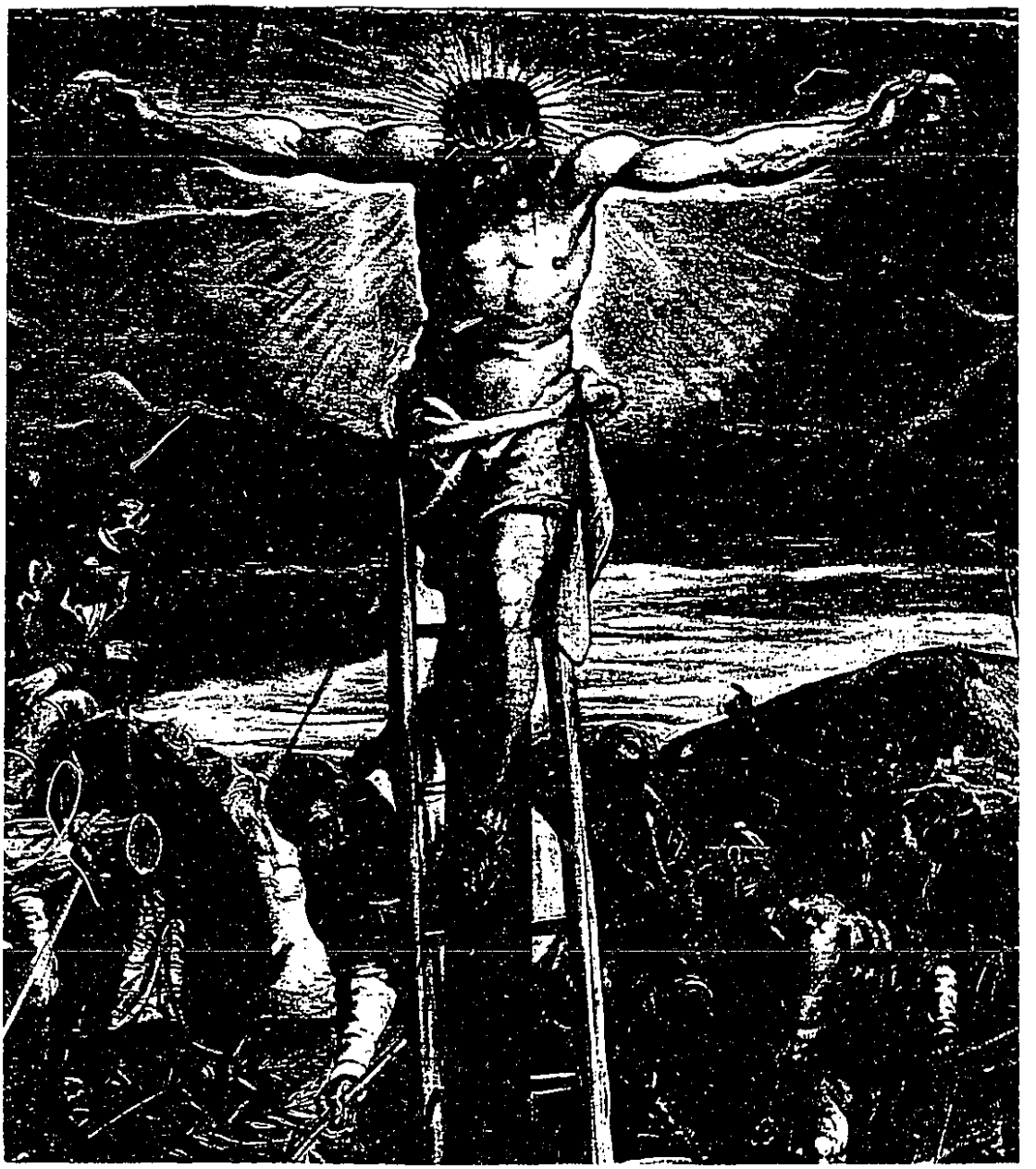
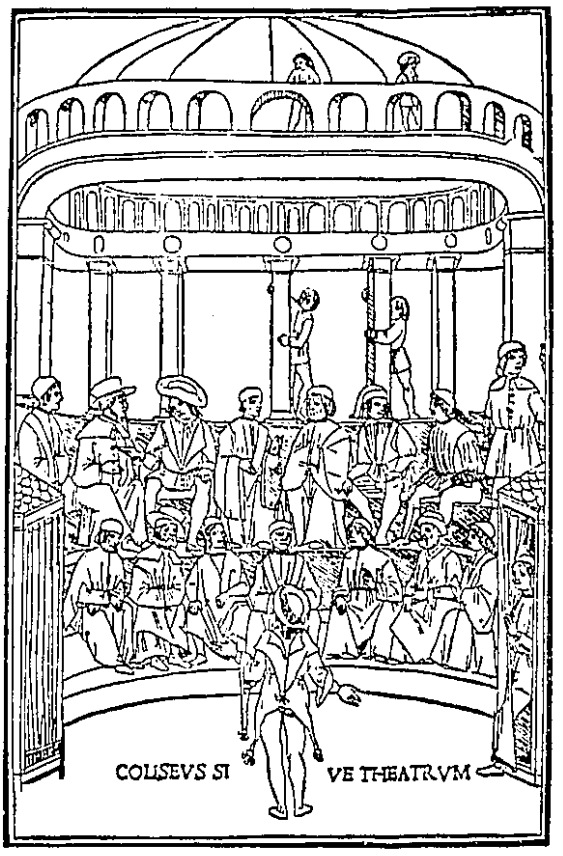


Plate 44
Tintoretto, Detail of *The Crucifixion*, 1565.



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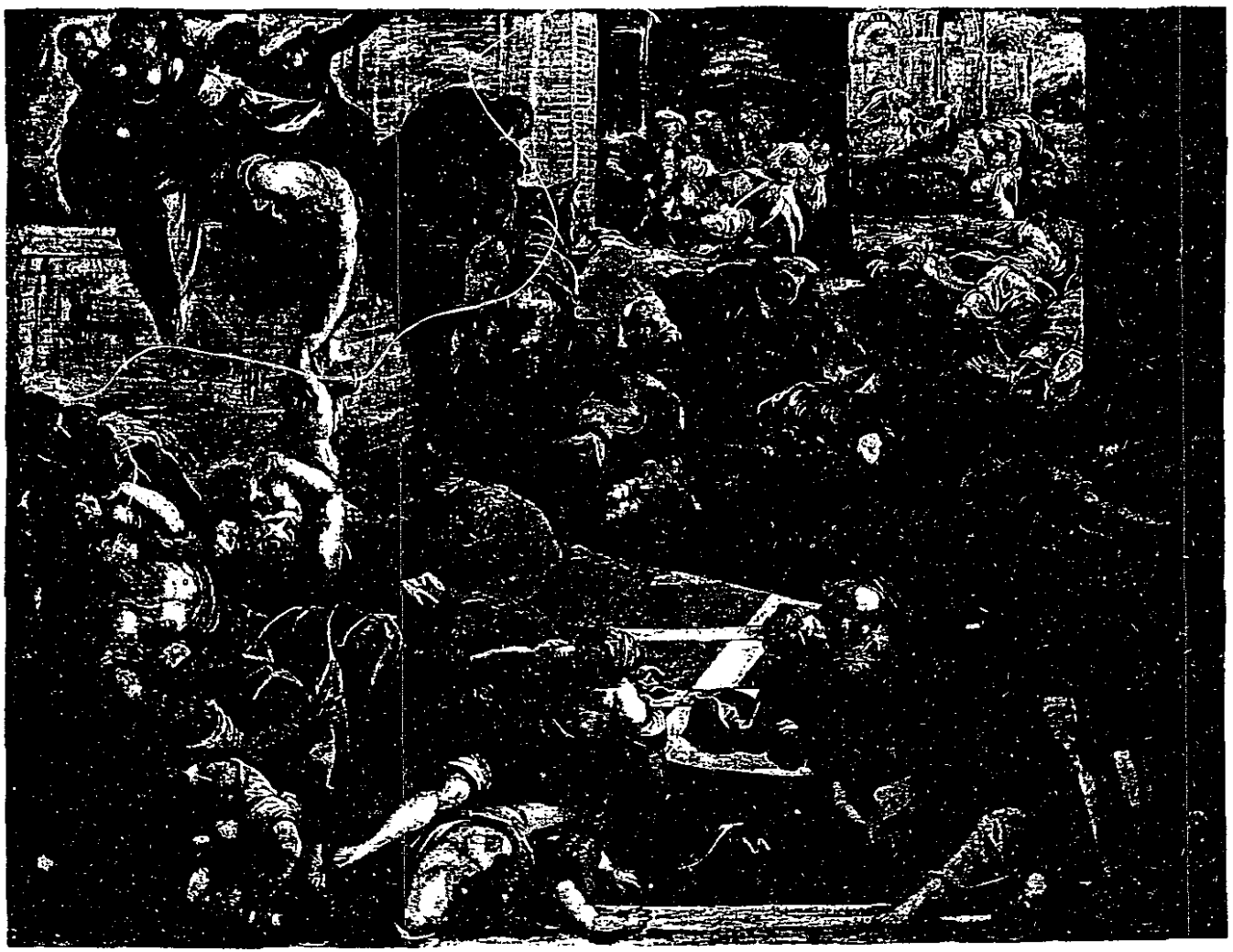

Plate 47
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Venice, Sala Terrena, Scuola Grande di San Rocco.

Plate 48
Tintoretto, Detail of *The Massacre of the Innocents*, 1583-87.