

Alessandro Simbeni

Decoration in Fourteenth Century Apsidal Chapel of San Francesco in Udine

This paper presents points for discussion for the analysis of the original iconographic program of the apsidal chapels, it reflects on the identification of fragmentary scenes and their chronological arrangement, as well as on models Franciscans followed when deciding on the subjects of decorative campaign of the first half of the fourteenth century. The earliest frescoes were done by an artist of great quality, whose figurative language stands between neo-hellenistic byzantinism and the tradition of Giotto in the Venetian hinterland between 1310 and 1315. To the second decorative campaign (about 1320), the work of a master who refers more closely to the new style of Giotto in Padua, belong the figures on the back wall: St. Louis of Toulouse, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Anthony of Padua. The persistence of the themes close to Friars Minor, such as major saints of the Order, the *lignum vitae* of Bonaventure of Bagnoregio and Martyrs of Thana, make the decoration of the church of San Francesco extremely interesting. Many of the solutions and iconographic schemes in San Francesco in Udine can be found in the Franciscan church of San Fermo Maggiore in Verona suggesting that it was taken as a model favored by the Udinese Friars.