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Some Notes to the Technique of Boccaccino's Drawings

ABSTRACT

In terms of the hitherto known body of Boccaccio Boccaccino's drawings, the only support used was paper, clean, tinted, and colourfully prepared. Boccaccino drew, to a limited extent, using a metal stylus (lead stylus was also employed for squaring) and a pen. Much more often, he would use a brush, red chalk, or black chalk. The support used for Boccaccino's drawing of *St. Jerome*, nowadays kept in Munich, was a green-ochre prepared paper.

KEYWORDS: Boccaccio Boccaccino (Ferrara, ante 1466 – Cremona, 1525); Cremona; Venezia; Drawing; technique; 15th_16th Century

Alcune osservazioni sulla tecnica dei disegni di Boccaccino

ABSTRACT

Per quanto riguarda il corpo noto dei disegni di Boccaccio Boccaccino, sinora era stata indagata solo la carta, pulita, colorata. Boccaccino disegnava con una penna, di rado ha usato uno stilo di metallo (per la squadratura ha usato anche uno stilo di piombo). Molto più spesso ha usato il pennello, un gesso rosso e nero. Il supporto utilizzato per il disegno del *San Gerolamo,* oggi conservato a Monaco di Baviera, è stata una carta preparata color verde-ocra.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Boccaccio Boccaccino (Ferrara, ante 1466 – Cremona, 1525); Cremona; Venezia; Disegno; Tecnica; XV-XVI secolo

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At the end of the 15th century, when Boccaccio Boccaccino entered the art scene, the drawing techniques that were known and most frequently used were those that had been first described by Cennino Cennino at the beginning of the same century. The same holds for the support, although it is true that the reduction in the cost of paper production brought about a significant change, as paper became the prevalent material and overshadowed the various forms of panels. The deciding factor in selecting the appropriate support and technique was perhaps the function ascribed to the particular drawing. It was also important which technique the artist liked and preferred. This was related to the environment in which he was trained and from which he embarked on his artistic journey. The drawing technique would then have an impact on his style. Under certain circumstances, it is nowadays possible to determine the date of the origin of an artwork with the help of the technique, function, and style employed.

In terms of the hitherto known body of Boccaccio Boccaccino's drawings[1], the only support used was paper; clean, tinted, and colourfully prepared. Boccaccino drew, to a limited extent, using a

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[1] These scholars dealt with drawings of Boccaccio Boccaccino: ALFREDO PUERARI, *Boccaccino*, Milano, Ceschina, 1957, pp. 191-194. GIULIO BORA, *Disegni,* in MINA GREGORI (ed.), *I Campi. Cultura cremonese del Cinquecento*, Cremona, Museo civico, 1985, Milano, Electa, 1985, pp. 267-316 (in seguito *I Campi*, cit.). ALESSANDRO BALLARIN, *Attorno a Giorgione l'anno 1500: Boccaccio Boccaccino*, in: ALESSANDRO BALLARIN (ed.), *Dosso Dossi, la pittura a Ferrara negli anni del Ducato di Alfonso I.*, Cittadella Padova, Bartoncello, 1994, 1995. MARCO TANZI, *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, Soncino, 1991, pp. 107-111. MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK, *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, in: GIULIO BORA, MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK (eds.), *I segni dell'arte. Il Cinquecento da Praga a Cremona*, Cremona, Museo civico, Roma, Leonardo Arte, 1997, pp. 155-161. MARIO SOLDATI, *Boccaccino*, Savigliano (Cuneo), Aragno, 2009, pp. 53-73.

metal stylus (lead stylus was also employed for squaring) and a pen. Much more often, he would use a brush, red chalk, or black chalk. The support used for Boccaccino's drawing of *St. Jerome*, nowadays kept in Munich, was a green-ochre prepared paper.[2] This hue (*terra verde*)[3] was regarded as natural, referring back to Aristotle who claimed that colours were the result of a blending of light and shadow, the green colour lying exactly in the middle between black and white. Nonetheless, the significance of paper colouring ran deeper. It allowed the artist to indicate, already in the drawing, the light relations between the individual figures and objects in the composition that was being prepared, bringing about a new perception of space, different from the one based merely on a geometric approach. Drawing on tinted paper was a logical step in the transition from drawing to painting, as a tinted support augments the possibilities of working with space with the principle of chiaroscuro (*chiaro e scuro*). This was described by Cennino Cennini.[4] With regard to the aforementioned drawing of *St. Jerome*, Boccaccino used a brush and an ochre-brown hue, giving the drawing a monochromatic character. The plasticity of the figure and the various objects was rendered using white. White was also recommended for this purpose by Cennini[5] in relation to the term *rilievo*, which in this context means the rendition of lights (using white), that is, it denotes an illuminated area. Boccaccino used a traditionally processed support and a traditional technique in this case. The question remains where he learned the technique. According to Alfredo Puerari, he acquainted himself with the basics of this technique in Ferrara, while the plastic rendition of the scene (using the *chiaro e scuro* method) was taught to him in Venice.[6] It is probable that Boccaccino studied the art of painting in Ferrara, where he received the first commissions in the 1490s. Giulio Bora specified that the drawing technique used in the *St. Jerome* drawing from Munich, based on the use of a brush and lighting using white, was at the time common among Venice-based artists, especially Carpaccio (1465-1520) and Giovanni Bellini (1430-1516). Furthermore, Bora claims that Boccaccino learned it in Venice, where he allegedly resided between the years 1505 and 1506.[7] This assertion can be confirmed on the example of the *Head of an Old Bearded Man* by Bellini from the English royal collection[8] or the *Head of and Old Bearded Man* from the Uffizi in Florence.[9] However, the Berlin drawing by Lorenzo Costa (1459/60-1535) with the *Head of a Bearded Man*[10] proves that Ferrara-based masters were also skilled at this technique,

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[2] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *St. Jerome*, brush, heightened with white, green ochre prepared paper, 231x153 mm, München, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, inv. no. 5623, published GIULIO BORA, *San Girolamo*, in *I Campi*, cit., cat. no. 2.2.1, p. 270.

[3] ALMUT SCHÄFFNER-KNOBLACH, Studien in *Terra verde*. Bedeutungsebenen grünmonochromer Malerei der italienischen Renaissance, in CLAUDIA LEHMANN, NORBERTO GRAMACINI, JOHANNES RÖSSLER, THOMAS DITTELBACH (eds.), *Chiaroscuro als ästhetisches Prinzip. Kunst und Theorie des Helldunkels 1300–1550*, Berlin – Boston, De Gruyter, 2018, pp. 333-350.

[4] CENNINO CENNINI, *Libro dell'arte*, Vicenza, Pozza, 2003, c. XVI.

[5] *Ibidem*, c. XXXI.

[6] ALFREDO PUERARI, *Boccaccino*, cit, pp. 191-192.

[7] GIULIO BORA, *San Girolamo*, in *I Campi*, cit., cat. no. 2.2.1, p. 270.

[8] Giovanni Bellini, *The head of an old bearded man*, pen and brush in white, paper, 260x190 mm, Windsor Castle, The Royal Collection Trust/ HM Queen Elisabeth II (RCIN 912800). SARAH VOWLES, *'Lebendig und wahr'. Mantegna und Bellini als Porträtmaler*, in CAROLINE CAMPBELL, DAGMAR KORBACHER, NEVILLE ROWLEY, SARAH VOWLES, *Mantegna & Bellini, Meister der Renaissance*, cat. exh. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, München, Hirmer, 2018, pp. 206-217, especially p. 214, fig. 211.

[9] Giovanni Bellini, *The head of an old bearded man*, pen and brush, heightened with white, blue prepared paper, 225x185 mm, Firenze, Galleria Nazionale degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei disegni e stampe, inv. no. 595 E. KATHARINA WEICK-JOCH, Zwischen Leiden und Erlösung. Das Motiv des toten Christus, in CAROLINE CAMPBELL, DAGMAR KORBACHER, NEVILLE ROWLEY, SARAH VOWLES, *Mantegna & Bellini*, cit., pp. 156-169, especially p. 167, fig. 160. SARAH VOWLES, *'Lebendig und wahr'*, cit., pp. 206-217, especially p. 216.

[10] Lorenzo Costa, *The head of an old bearded man* (recto), *Allegory of Fortune* (verso), tracks of pencil, brush, heightened with white, paper, 315x193 mm, Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, KdZ 2382, inv. no. 6152, in HEIN-TH. SCHULZE-ALTCAPPENBERG, *Die italienischen Zeichnungen des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts im Berliner Kupferstichkabinett, Kritischer Katalog,* Berlin, 1995, pp. 90-92: *Lorenzo Costa d.Ä., Kopf eines bärtigen Alten*.

including a very fine use of white in the hair and beard. Costa drew it before his relocation to Mantua in 1506. We can therefore correct Giulio Bora's opinion in the sense that the technique of using a brush and illuminating using white on a colourfully prepared paper was also typical of Ferrara masters and that Boccaccino could have learned it in this artistic environment and work with this skillset in Cremona.

For the drawing called *Christ in Glory* from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, Boccaccino used a grey-prepared paper.[11] Once again, he rendered using a brush in a brown hue and the relief effects, especially on Christ's massive robe, were done using white. Boccaccino worked on this drawing in 1506, which was, according to Giulio Bora, the same year when the drawing and subsequently painting of St. Jerome came into existence. For this reason, Bora saw the influence of the Venice school also in this work. The Venetian influence was supposed to modify the basic training that the artist had received in Ferrara.[12] Boccaccino certainly resided in Cremona in 1506 and onward, but it cannot be ruled out that he did so even earlier. In this particular drawing, Boccaccino regularly hatched using a brush and white, applying light onto Christ's robe. However, this hatching is different from the use of white in the St. Jerome drawing. Only a mildly similar hatching can be found on the tree trunk on the right side of the St. Jerome scene. Yet another type of hatching was used in the drawing of the *Swooning Virgin Mary* from the Szépművészeti Múzeum in Budapest.[13] Here, the draughtsman performed the regular brush strokes more intensively and more separately than in the two aforementioned drawings. Only the lower hatching with pen is distantly reminiscent of the technique employed in the *Christ in Glory* drawing. The Budapest drawing was also executed on a prepared paper; the tint is blue on the *recto* and grey on the *verso*.

The last drawing attributed to Boccaccino, on a green prepared paper, is the *Study of a Bishop* from the Uffizi Galleries in Florence.[14] Giulio Bora saw in it the same technique as in the aforementioned drawings. Moreover, he finds a common thread with the other works also in some typological elements, such as the left palm and fingers of the bishop which are similar to the same body parts of the Christ in *Christ in Glory*. Bora dates the work to a period after the Venice sojourn and points to an influence mediated by the contact with Bellini's work.[15]

Only two of the aforementioned drawings relate to paintings by Boccaccino. Therefore, there is no reason to ponder or doubt their authorship. The St. Jerome drawing relates to a painting with the same theme. It was originally displayed in one of the Cremonese churches, the last time in Fatebenefratelli and Ospedale Ugolani, from where it was transferred to the Cremona Pinacoteca, where it remains to this day. There is a card on the bottom left side, bearing the signature of *Bocacinus faciebat*.[16] Based on the Ferrara echoes and Venetian accents, Alfredo Puerari dated the painting to the period between 1505 and 1506.[17] Probably in the late summer of 1506, Boccaccino entered into cooperation with the representatives of the Cremona cathedral, centred around executing the decoration the concha of their church. There, in the centre and with an open book on his left knee, Christ, the *Salvator Mundi*, seated on a throne, gives his blessings, surrounded by St.

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[11] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Christ in Glory*, brush, heightened with white, quatering with metal point, grey prepared paper, 234x179 mm, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, inv. no. P. II, n. 5.

[12] GIULIO BORA, *Cristo in maestà,* in *I Campi,* cit, cat. no. 2.2.2, p. 270. MARCO TANZI, *Boccaccio Boccaccino: il 'Dio Padre' del duomo di Cremona*, «Bollettino d'arte», 67, 1991, pp. 129-136, especially p. 129.

[13] Boccaccio Boccaccino (?), *Swooning Virgin Mary*, pen and brush (recto), heightened with white, blue prepared paper, *Study of drapery* (verso), brush, heightened with white, grey prepared paper, 180x249 mm, Budapest, Szépművészeti muzeum, inv. no. 1845.

[14] Boccaccio Boccaccino (?), *Study of a Bishop*, black pencil, brush, heightened with white, green prepared paper, 296x161 mm, Firenze, Galleria Nazionale degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei disegni e stampe, inv. no. 2088 F.

[15] GIULIO BORA, *Studio di vescovo*, in *I Campi,* cit., cat. no. 2.2.3, p. 270.

[16] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *St. Jerome*, oil on panel, 144x76 cm, Cremona, Pinacoteca Civica. ELISABETTA SAMBO, *San Gerolamo*, in *I Campi,* cit., cat. no. 1.2.10, p. 57.

[17] ALFREDO PUERARI, *Boccaccino*, cit., pp. 89-91.

Irnerius, St. Homobonus, St. Marcellinus, and St. Peter. The drawing of this central figure is a carefully executed model, qith a squaring grid on top of it. We can identify a later redrawing of the fingers on the feet and hands, indicating that the model was used as a template multiple times. According to a testimony by Robolotti[18], Boccaccino executed the same scene in the no longer existing Cremonese church of Sant'Angelo. The same figure of Salvator Mundi was rendered by Alessandro Pampurino (1460/62-1526) in the old church ("chiesa vecchia") in Scandolara Ravara in the second decade of the 16th century.[19]

The drawing of the *Swooning Virgin Mary* kept in Budapest presents a few issues in terms of its attribution. The drawing was published in 1965 by Iván Fenyö[20], dating it to around 1500 and attributing it to a Venice-based draughtsman. Specifically, the name Marco Basaiti was suggested. Lionello Puppi[21] rejected the Venetian provenance of the work and classified it as a drawing by Boccaccio Boccaccino. Based on a recommendation by Giovanni Romano, Silla Zamboni attributed it to Ludovico Mazzolino and linked it to his painting Pietà from the Doria collection in Rome.[22] Subsequently, it was once again attributed to Boccaccino by Alessandro Ballarin, in relation to the artist's painting *Christ carrying the Cross and the Virgin Mary Swooning*.[23] This attribution was also accepted by Marco Tanzi.[24] My opinion is that the drawing is merely a general model for the folds on a cloak or a tunic of a lying female figure rather than a model for a specific figure in a specific painting, since none of the suggested connections between the drawing and the figure in question (the swooning Virgin) is flawless and exact. This assertion is supported by the sketch of a part of the tunic folds in the upper part of the drawing and also the hatching overlapping the face of the lying woman, relegating the face to the background. The back side of the drawing bears a separate study of a loose, folding cloak. It is possible that the female figure on the front side was originally designed for a specific figure and a nowadays unknown painting and later used for other works too. That would explain why the face was overlaid with the squaring grid. The making of drapery models was an ancient method of workshop practice and training, dating back to the late Middle Ages. It remains an open question which workshop might have produced the model and when. Should we accept the herein presented theory that the model of the fainting Virgin came into existence before Boccaccino's painting of *Christ carrying the Cross and the Virgin Mary Swooning*, it is more than probable that it was authored by a Ferrara-based artist active in the early 1490s. There is no comparison available for us to be able to attribute the drawing to Boccaccio Boccaccino, as we know of no other drawing by him from this particular time.

We can deattribute from Boccaccino the drawing of the *Study of a Bishop* kept in the Uffizi. Hana Jiráková[25] found out that the drawing was authored neither by him, nor by his son Camillo Boccaccino (1504-1546), the two of whom it had hitherto been attributed to. The reason is that the figure depicted in the drawing almost completely matches the figure of St. Sylvester found in the San Lorenzo church in Saletto di Montagnana, close to Padua, executed by Bernardino Licinio

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[18] FRANCESCO ROBOLOTTI, *Cremona e la sua provincia*, Milano, 1859, p. 501.

[19] MINA GREGORI, *Alessandro Pampurino, Il Redentore, gli Evangelisti, i Dottori maggiori, Profeti, Apostoli*, in MINA GREGORI (ed.), *Pittura a Cremona dal Romanico al Settecento*, Milano, Cariplo,1990, pp. 245-246.

[20] IVÁN FENYÖ (ed.), *Disegni Veneti del Museo di Budapest*, cat. exh. Venezia, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Vicenza, Neri Pozza editore, 1965, cat. no. 5, p. 19, fig. 5.

[21] LIONELLO PUPPI, *Disegni veneti al Museo di Belle Arti di Budapest*, «Arte veneta», 1967, pp. 288-292.

[22] SILLA ZAMBONI, *Ludovico Mazzolino: una primizia ed altri inediti*, «Prospettiva», 15, 1978, pp. 53-62, esp. p. 56-59.

[23] ALESSANDRO BALLARIN, *Attorno a Giorgione l'anno 1500: Boccaccio Boccaccino*, in ALESSANDRO BALLARIN (ed.), *Dosso Dossi,* cit., pp. 10-11.

[24] MARCO TANZI, *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, cit., pp. 107-108.

[25] HANA JIRÁKOVÁ, *Benátské vlivy na dílo Boccaccia Boccaccina*, MA degree thesis, Philosophical faculty, Charles University, Prague, 2013, pp. 53-54.

(1489-1565) in 1535, perhaps with the participation of the whole workshop.[26] Pope Sylvester is situated on the right, his head tilted backwards, looking up towards the Virgin Mary. The folds on his garment and the arrangement of lights and shadows accurately match the study housed in the Uffizi. The only difference is the cloak decoration; in the painting it is richly embroidered and covered with the figures of saints on the hem, while in the drawing the edge is lined only with the medallions with hinted half-figures. The painting in Saletto di Montagnana is signed by Bernardino Licinio, but it is probable that its majority was painted by the workshop or Licinio's brother Arrigo[27], as Bernardino was at the time also working on the commission for an altar painting for the Venice church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari.[28]

The support and the technique of the hitherto described drawings by Boccaccino indicate that they were works carried out in such a way so that they could be used multiple times in the workshop. It is interesting that they fall into the year 1506 in the catalogue of Boccaccino's drawings and that no other types of drawings have been known from this period to this day. Chalk and red chalk drawings executed on a simple paper are a matter of later years.

Before we proceed to examine them, it is necessary to make a few remarks regarding the artist's stay in Venice. To this day, there is a painting by him displayed in the local church of San Giuliano called the Holy Conversatione (*sacra conversatione*), showing the Madonna sated on a throne with a child and surrounded by St. Peter, Michael, John the Baptist, and John the Evangelist.[29] (Fig. 1) Based on the information published by Peter Humfrey, the painting can be dated to the years 1500 or 1501. What is more, this researcher ascertained, from a report by an apostolic visitation from 1581, that Boccaccino's altar painting pertained to an altar founded by the parish priest Giovanni Grimani. The presence of the two Johns, the Evangelist and the Baptist, in the painting very probably refers to the name of the priest. Giovanni Grimani held his office between 1483 and 26 January 1502, when he died. Twenty days before his demise (on 6 January 1502), he wrote down his testament in which he stipulated that he had left the utensils for holding a mass as part of his altar, mentioning that it had already been furbished with a painting.[30] In 1506, or shortly before that, Boccaccino is documented to have stayed in Venice again. The painter (*Bochazin depentor*) is documented to have paid thirteen ducats for the period of one year to the Venetian patrician Michele Foscari in the latter's house in Calle del Paradiso. Foscari died in 1506 and although the record of the payment does not bear a date, we can assume that this was one of his last records.[31] In the same year, the painter is also documented to have sojourned in Cremona, in the neighbourhood of Sant'Agata.[32]

There is a certain similarity between the figure of John the Evangelist in the Venice painting and the same figure in the *Study of the Figure of John the Evangelist,* a red chalk drawing from Bratislava.[33] (Fig. 2) The standing Evangelist from the drawing could also be placed into the painting composition of *sacra conversazione*. However, he belongs to the opposite side than in

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[26] Bernardino Licinio (e bottega), *Virgin and Child with St. Laurence and Silvestre*, panel, Saletto di Montagnana, San Lorenzo. ENRICO MARIA DAL POZZOLO, *Padova, 1500-1540*, in MAURO LUCCO (ed.), *La pittura nel Veneto. Il Cinquecento,* I, Milano 1996, p. 212, fig. 264.

[27] ENRICO MARIA DAL POZZOLO, *Padova,* cit., p. 211, fig. 264.

[28] MAURO LUCCO, *Venezia, 1500-1540*, in ibidem (ed.), *La pittura nel Veneto. Il Cinquecento,* cit., pp. 91-92.

[29] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Virgin and Child with St. Peter, Michael, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist*, oil on panel, 265x160 cm, inscribed: *B.B.*, Venice, San Giuliano, in ALFREDO PUERARI, *Boccaccino*, cit., pp. 102-105, 228.

[30] PETER HUMFREY, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, New Haven, London, Yale University Press, 1993, p. 262, cat. no. 54, p. 351, fig. 250.

[31] ALFREDO PUERARI, *Boccaccino*, cit., p. 212; Ibidem, p. 206.

[32] MINA GREGORI, *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, in *I Campi,* cit., p. 52.

[33] Boccaccio Boccaccino (?), *St. John the Evangelist*, red chalk, paper, 382x209 mm, Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria, inv. no. K 1523, in MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK, *Drawings from the Clary-Aldringen Collection as Evidence of Lombard Studio Practices in the 16th Century*, «Ars linearis», IX, 2019, pp. 30-43, especially p. 32, fig. 1.

Boccaccino's Venice painting. Moreover, the Evangelist holds the chalice in his left hand, blesses the chalice with his right hand, and directs his gaze towards it. Above his head, there is an indication of a nimbus and there is an eagle standing by his feet. Next, the Evangelist in the drawing bends his right leg, resulting in a more folding cloak, as compared to the painting, where the cloak is more straight and loose. The drapery rendered in the drawing is more similar to the way St. Peter's cloak was executed in the painting, where he stands opposite to John the Evangelist, i.e. on the left, similarly to the design of the Evangelist's figure in the drawing. The drawing manifests certain spontaneity; the half-figure of the Evangelist is repeated, indicating that the author searched for the right facial expression. Similarly, the chalice was also sketched twice. These facts rule out the possible surmise that the drawing is a copy. The first theory regarding the authorship of the drawing points to Boccaccino, in connection with the aforementioned altar painting from Venice. Nonetheless, more circumstances speak in disfavour of attributing the work to Boccaccino. One of them is the question of whether he used red chalk at all at the time. A red chalk drawing showing the *Soldier* from the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge (Mass)[34] was dated to a time prior to the year 1500 in Boccaccino's catalogue by Alessandro Ballarin[35] and Marco Tanzi.[36] Both researchers believed that the drawing was a study of a soldier from Boccaccino's painting called *Christ carrying the Cross and the Virgin Mary Swooning* from the National Gallery in London.[37] Marco Tanzi further elaborated on the idea that Boccaccino learned the technique of using red chalk, which would later become is favourite technique, in Venice around the year 1500, when even Leonardo sojourned there for a brief period of time. He was perhaps the first to use this drawing technique in rendering the heads of the apostles for the Last Supper in Milan.[38] In fact, executed even earlier was Leonardo's Study of Two Figures, kept in the English collection in Windsor, also rendered using red chalk.[39] This drawing is interpreted as one of the first studies for the Last Supper and dated 1493, with a question mark. Venice, where Leonardo moved to from Milan, was home to other painters originally from Milan too, such as Giovanni Agostino da Lodi (c. 1470 – c. 1520), who also used red chalk for drawing.[40] Titian also drew using red chalk in the Floating City in the first decade of the 16th century, as proven by his drawing of the Virgin and Child enthroned with angels from the Christ Church in Oxford.[41] These circumstances could lead us to the opinion that Boccaccino started to use red chalk during his repeated stays in Venice between 1500 and 1506. However, it is necessary to remove the red chalk drawing of the Soldier from the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge (Mass) from the catalogue of Boccaccino's drawings. The way in which hatching is

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[34] Boccaccio Boccaccino (?), *Soldier*, red chalk, paper, 267x139 mm, Cambridge (Mass.), Fogg Art Museum, inv. no. 1932-279.

[35] ALESSANDRO BALLARIN, in ALESSANDRO BALLARIN (ed.), *Dosso Dossi*, cit, pp. 8-9, fig. VI.

[36] MARCO TANZI, *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, cit., p. 109.

[37] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Christ carrying the Cross and the Virgin Mary Swooning*, oil on panel, 136x134 cm, London, National Gallery, inv. no. NG 806, published: ALFREDO PUERARI, *Boccaccino*, cit., p. 79-81.

[38] FRANCIS AMES-LEWIS, MADDALENA SPAGNOLO, *La matita rossa come luce e colore, verifiche sugli studi di teste di Leonardo e dei leonardeschi*, «Polittico», 2000, pp. 65-82.

[39] Leonardo, *Study of two figures*, red chalk, paper, 101x98 mm, Windsor Castle, Royal Library, inv. no. 12703, published in MARTIN CLAYTON, *Leonardo, Studi di due figure*, in *Leonardo e Venezia*, cat. exh. Venice, Palazzo Grassi, 1992, Milano, Bompiani, 1992, cat. no. 20, p. 234.

[40] Giovanni Agostino da Lodi, *Study of nude (David with a head of Goliath)*, red chalk, paper, 198x129 mm, Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, KdZ 1543 (inv. no. 53-1881), published: HEIN-TH. SCHULZE ALTCAPPENBERG, *Aktstudie (David mit dem Haupt des Goliath)*, in HEIN-TH. SCHULZE-ALTCAPPENBERG, *Die italienischen Zeichnungen des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts im Berliner Kupferstichkabinett,* cit., pp. 118-120. Giovanni Agostino da Lodi, *The head of man*, red chalk, paper, 162x108 mm, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. no. C 1923-14, published: GIULIO BORA, *Busto virile a tre quadri*, in *Leonardo e Venezia*, cit., cat. no. 79, p. 372.

[41] Tiziano Vecellio, *Virgin and Child enthroned with angels, and a separate study of a cherub's head*, red chalk, pen and brown ink, paper 265x185 mm, Oxford, Christ Church, inv. no. JBS 718, published: CATHERINE WHISTLER, *Tiziano Vecellio, Virgin and Child enthroned with angels, and a separate study of a cherub's head*, in CATHERINE WHISTLER (ed.), *Drawing in Venice, Titian to Canaletto*, cat. exh. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 2015-2016, Oxford, 2015, cat. no. 10, p. 76, fig.

performed and the manner of execution of the miniature of the hair, beard, and the feather in the hat are completely different than in other Boccaccino's drawings, especially the aforementioned drawing of St. Jerome. The drawing of the Soldier lacks any Ferrara training. It is purely Venetian in its character. This conclusion means that there is still no documented red chalk drawing by Boccaccino from the period between 1500 and 1509 and that, therefore, the artist had not mastered this technique until 1509. The drawing of the John Evangelist from Bratislava is not Boccaccino's study for his painting in Venice either. It does not correspond with the style of his drawings, although it is dependent on his way of approaching his work. The author of the drawing did not manifest a sufficient amount of his individual creative approach, as reflected in its relative looseness. However, we can match it with the painting by Galeazzo Campi (1475-1536) from the private Cremonese collection. It shows the Virgin Mary with the Child, surrounded by St. John the Evangelist (from the left) and St. Albert the Great (from the right). The painting is signed and dated 1515.[42] So far, we have known of only one drawing by Galeazzo Campi, performed mainly using red chalk; a study of St. Christopher for the artist's painting of same subject from the church Santa Maria in Castello in Viadana, kept in the Uffizi in Florence.[43] Two drawings are certainly too little for us to be able to assess and conscientiously evaluate the drawing abilities of the Cremonese master. However, the differences between the styles of the two drawings are so striking that we have to consider a different authorship of the two. The style of the Bratislava drawing is reminiscent of the style of Tommaso Aleni's drawings (documented in the 1500s and 1510s). This brings us to the question of the relationship between the two artists. Antonio Campi (1522-1587), the son of Galeazzo Campi, recorded that his father and Tommaso Aleni were close friends.[44] Based on this, we can assume that a close professional relationship might have existed between the two as well. Nevertheless, this matter would merit further exploration, including the examination of their drawings. It seems that a considerable number of drawings by Aleni were preserved in the album of the Clary-Aldringen family from Teplice in Bohemia. These could help us to determine which Cremonese painting school the drawings came from. Either it could have been Aleni's own workshop or, perhaps more probably, Galeazzo Campi's workshop, as the majority of the album is represented by the drawings of his sons Giulio and Antonio.[45]

However, let us now come back to the technique of Boccaccino's drawings. It follows from the aforementioned information that there are no documented drawings by Boccaccino conducted using red chalk from between 1500 and 1509. It can be generally said that red chalk has a high firmness and a warm colour. It was often used for the studies of a delicate and animate character. As far as the tone intensity is concerned, it is less intensive than black chalk, thus lacking a wide spectrum of tones, necessary for a detailed modelling of the form. Red chalk can be modelled into a fine and sharp point and therefore used on a small area for more detailed and elaborate studies. In the 15th century, the prevalent demand was perhaps for a more full drawing. Although natural chalks were used already in the 14th century and recommended by Cennino Cennini, this concerned mainly black chalk. Red chalk started to be used at the end of the 15th century. It seems that in some cases it even supplanted the use of stylus in miniature drawing. To present an example, we can cite the drawing by Vittore Carpaccio (1465-1520) named The Triumph

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[42] MARCO TANZI, *Risarcimento dell'Aleni: verifiche in margine ad una mostra*, «Bollettino d'Arte», 1985, p. 90, fig. 23.

[43] Galeazzo Campi, *St. Christopher*, red chalk and black pencil, paper, 297x190 mm, Firenze, Galleria Nazionale degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei disegni e stampe, inv. n. 1936 F, published GIULIO BORA, *San Cristoforo*, in *I Campi,* cit., cat. no. 2.3.1, p. 273, fig.

[44] Antonio Campi, *Cremona fedelissima …*, Cremona 1585. p. LIII. Literature about Tommaso Aleni in GIULIO BORA, *Un disegno di Tommaso Aleni per il cenacolo nel refettorio di San Sigismondo a Cremona*, in «Dedicato a Luisa Bandera Gregori», Cremona 2004, p. 50, note. 3.

[45] MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK, *La collezione Clary-Aldringen ricomposta – i disegni*, in GIULIO BORA, MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK (eds.), *I segni dell'arte*, cit., pp. 3-8.

of St. George, a composition study for a painting in the Scuola di San Giorgio in Venice. The drawing came into existence between 1501 and 1504. The underdrawing was executed using red chalk and the second layer was rendered using a pen and ink in a brown hue.[46]

Boccaccino's drawings performed using red chalk, or alternatively black chalk, should be placed to the artist's Roman period, which came after 1509.[47] At the time, he devoted himself to the art of Raphael, as follows from several drawing copies of Raphael's frescoes from the Raphael Rooms in the Vatican, drawn using red chalk.[48] His sojourn in Rome is also associated with the red chalk drawing of the Coronation of the Virgin Mary from Berlin.[49] For a long time, it was considered a study of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary and put into connection with Boccaccino's frescoes in the Cremona cathedral.[50] However, a thorough study by Hein-Th. Schulze Altcappenberg from the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett revealed a hand with a crown above the head of the Virgin.[51] According to Vasari, Boccaccino painted a fresco with the theme of the Coronation of the Virgin in the church of S. Maria Traspontina during his stay in Rome.[52] The Berlin drawing might be a study for that fresco. The German researcher also pointed to the composition relationship between Boccaccino's sketch of the Coronation and the painting by Raphael with the same theme from the years 1502/1503, currently kept in the Pinacoteca Vaticana.[53] The back side of the Berlin drawing studies a female half-figure with clasped hands resting on the chest. This figural study was considered a precursor of the figure of the Virgin Mary on the recto. However, this connection is ruled out by the position of the female head and its cover. It is probably a venerating female figure, perhaps even the Virgin Mary, but possibly a different female saint or donor. The front side of the drawing shows a delicate work with red chalk and the back side manifests Boccaccino's typical regular hatching. It therefore appears that Boccaccino mastered and fully integrated his privileged red chalk (or black chalk) technique in the Roman environment. On the contrary, in Venice, as we can learn from the preserved drawing attributed to Boccaccino, he deepened the ancient and traditional technique of drawing with a brush onto colourfully prepared paper and gave it spatial depth through illuminating using white, which was a method he learned in Ferrara. As of today, we are unable to exactly

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[46] Vittore Carpaccio, *The Triumph of St. George*, pen and brown ink over red chalk, paper, 235x416 mm, Firenze, Galleria Nazionale degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei disegni e stampe, inv. no. 1287 E, published in CATHERINE WHISTLER, *Vittore Carpaccio, The Triumph of St. George*, in CATHERINE WHISTLER (ed.), *Drawing in Venice*, cit., cat. no. 5, p. 70.

[47] Roberto Longhi (ROBERTO LONGHI, *Officina ferrarese* (1934), Firenze, Sansoni, 1968, p. 119) assumed stay of Boccaccino in Rome on the interface of 15th and 16th century; Alfredo Puerari (ALFREDO PUERARI, *Boccaccino*, cit, p. 139) put a Roman stay of him between the second half the year 1513 and March – April 1514; Mina Gregori (MINA GREGORI: *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, in *I Campi*, cit., p. 51, 54) put the first Boccaccino's journey to Rome before 1497 and then same with Puerari into 1513-1514; Marco Tanzi (MARCO TANZI, *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, cit, pp. 7,8) put the journey to Rome between 1509 and 1513.

[48] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Copy after ceiling of Stanza della Segnatura (recto), copy of „Cacciata di Eliodoro" (verso)*, red chalk, paper, 292x433 mm, Milano, private collection, published in GIULIO BORA, *Copie della volta della Stanza della Segnatura* (recto), *Copia della Cacciata di Eliodoro* (verso), in *I Campi,* cit., cat. no. 2.2.4, pp. 270-271. Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Copy of a group of Church Doctors and Pontifices on right side of altar of "Disputa" in Stanza della Segnatura*, red chalk, paper, 412x265 mm, Bergamo, Accademia Carrara, inv. no. AC 1602, published in C. L. RAGGHIANTI, *Antichi disegni e stampe dell'Accademia Carrara di Bergamo*, Bergamo, Lions Club di Bergamo (A. Pizzi), 1963, p. 3, n. 2, AC 1602.

[49] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Study of Coronation of the Virgin Mary* (recto), *Kneeling female figure* (verso), red chalk, tracks of metal point, paper, 278x192 mm, Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. č. KdZ 5110, published in HEIN-TH. SCHULZE ALTCAPPENBERG, *Die italienischen Zeichnungen,* cit., pp. 124-126.

[50] GIULIO BORA, *Studio per la Vergine di una „Nativita" (recto); altro studio a mezza figura per la stessa scena*, in *I Campi,* cit., cat. no. 2.2.6, pp. 272. MARCO TANZI, *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, cit, pp. 109-110.

[51] HEIN-TH. SCHULZE ALTCAPPENBERG, *Boccaccio Boccaccino, Studie zu einer Marienkrönung* (recto), in HEIN-TH. SCHULZE-ALTCAPPENBERG, *Die italienischen Zeichnungen,* cit., pp. 124-126, fig.

[52] GIORGIO VASARI, *Le Vite de'più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi, Firenze, 1878-1885, IV, 1879, pp. 581-583.

[53] HEIN-TH. SCHULZE ALTCAPPENBERG, *Boccaccio Boccaccino, Studie zu einer Marienkrönung* (recto), in HEIN-TH. SCHULZE-ALTCAPPENBERG, *Die italienischen Zeichnungen,* cit., p. 126.

stipulate whether it was the environment around Raphael's workshop in Rome where Boccaccino started to use red chalk. The reason is that we do not know which artistic circle he was close to when he was commissioned the work fo the Roman church of S. Maria Traspontina.

The drawings that were at least inspired by his stay in Rome could newly include the study of the Madonna, holding infant Jesus in her arms, from Bratislava.[54] (Fig. 3) The close contact between the Madonna and infant Jesus and the fact that both figures are set in an indicated circular space correspond with the style of central-Italian or Roman artists. Although such types of Madonnas with infant Jesus are known also from northern Italy[55], they were not very common there at the beginning of the 16th century. This rather loose red chalk sketch from Bratislava reminds us of Raphael's Madonna called della Seggiola; both in terms of the intimate tie between the mother and the child and the circular framing. The problem, however, is the dating. Raphael's Madonna is usually set to the year 1514, maybe even 1513, based on the stylistic analysis. The artists probably started to work on the painting after completing the painting decoration of the Stanza del'Eliodoro and it was perhaps intended for Pope Leo X from the Medici family.[56] However, Boccaccio Boccaccino received a prepayment for the frescoes in the nave of the Cremona cathedral already in April 1514.[57] On the other hand, there is a preserved copy by him of a scene from Raphael's fresco in the Stanza del'Eliodoro, so it is not impossible that he was still in Rome at the beginning of 1514 and saw Raphael's Madonna della Seggiola. Although this source of inspiration is rather vague, it appears that the style of the red chalk drawing from Bratislava corresponds with Boccaccino's drawings that were created using this technique at the time when the artist worked on the frescoes in the Cremona cathedral, i.e. after his return from Rome. Here, Boccaccino started a different style of drawing with red chalk. As compared with the Berlin drawing of the Coronation, where the relief contours have a form of a long but thin line and the relief is created through a tight application of the red chalk surface, one stroke very close to another, there was a change in the accent in the chalk strikes. The new style was based on firm chalk strokes, creating well-marked lines in order to let the contours of the intended scene protrude from the surface of unprepared paper. The effect of light and the creation of shadows were achieved through leaving some spaces blank and through regular hatching. The artist also used a kind of scrums of lines, searching for the right shape of the object being drawn. This group of drawings, from the period of Boccaccino's work in the Cremona cathedral, also includes a drawing from the Uffizi in Florence, which on its front side studies the half-figures of King David from the Old Testament and the priest and theologian St. Jerome, in the indicated tondos. The back side shows a study of two women from the scene of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary.[58] The motifs on both sides fit into the aforementioned decoration programme with the scenes from the life of the Virgin Mary, although Boccaccino ultimately did not execute the Biblical and church personalities in the circular setting. We can also add to this group the drawing

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[54] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Virgin Mary and Child*, red chalk, paper, 99x97 mm, Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria, inv. no. K 1508, published in MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK, *Drawings from the Clary-Aldringen Collection*, cit., pp. 30-43, especially p. 33, fig. 3.

[55] Jacopo Bellini, *Madonna and Child*, tempera on panel, 70x47 cm, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, published in Colin Eisler, *The Genius of Jacopo Bellini*, cit., p. 514, fig. 41. Andrea Mantegna, *Virgin Mary and Child (Humility Virgin)*, engraving, paper, 277x231 mm, Washington, National Gallery of Art, Samuel Kress Collection 1939, inv. 1998.50.1, published SUZANNE BOORSCH, *Andrea Mantegna, La Vierge et l'Enfant (La Vierge d'humilité)*, in GIOVANNI AGOSTI, DOMINIQUE THIÉBAUT, *Mantegna 1431-1506*, cat. exh. Paris, Louvre, 2008, cat. no. 113, p. 282, fig.

[56] Raffaello, *Virgin and Child with S. John Baptist as boy*, *Madonna della seggiola*, oil on panel, diameter 71 cm, Firenze, Galleria Palatina, sala di Saturno, inv. 1912, no. 151, published MINA GREGORI, *Raffaello, Madonna con il Bambino e San Giovannino*, in *Raffaello a Firenze*, cat. exh. Firenze, palazzo Pitti, 1984, Milano, Electa, 1984, cat. no. 13, pp. 151-165.

[57] MINA GREGORI, *Boccaccio Boccaccino*, in *I Campi*, cit., p. 53.

[58] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Two studies for David; St. Jerome* (recto), *Visitation of Virgin Mary* (verso), red chalk, paper, 280x180 mm, Firenze, Galleria Nazionale degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei disegni e stampe, inv. no. 1765 F, published GIULIO BORA, *Due studi per un David; San Girolamo* (recto), *Visitazione* (verso), in *I Campi*, cit., cat. no. 2.2.5, pp. 271-272.

from the Venetian Galleria dell'Accademia, a study of Two Kneeling Ladies with a girl with clasped hands, ready for a prayer[59], or another red chalk drawing of the Madonna venerating the child from the Regional Museum in Teplice.[60] The back side, featuring a study of a kneeling, venerating man, was performed using black chalk. Also the back side of a drawing by Tommaso Aleni, with the scene of the Nativity, shows sketches performed by Boccaccino using black chalk and charcoal. A separate chapter are the drawings of animals.[61] A unique work is the portrait drawing of a boy from the Louvre.[62] These drawings originated in the Cremona environment where they left a significant mark, especially with regard to the way of modelling figures, their coats, and also other objects included in the studied scenes, characterised by regular hatching. This governed the volume and space in the drawing in a much more intensive way than a varying intensity of the strokes. This way of drawing was later adopted by Galeazzo Campi and subsequently by his son Giulio. In later years, Giulio would start to draw with a pen instead.

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[59] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Two Kneeling Ladies with a girl with clasped hands, ready for a prayer* (recto), red chalk, paper, 240x197 mm, Venice, Galleria dell'Accademia, inv. no. 520, published MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK, *Due dame e una bambina inginocchiate volte a sinistra* (recto), in GIULIO BORA, MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK (eds.), *I segni dell'arte*, cit. cat. no. 7a, p. 157.

[60] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Madonna venerating the child* (recto), *Study of male kneeling figure adoring* (verso), red chalk (recto), gessetto nero (verso), paper, 375x224 mm, Teplice, Regionální museum, inv. no. CA 501, published MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK, *Adorazione del Bambino* (recto), *Studio di figura maschile inginocciata adorante* (verso), in GIULIO BORA, MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK (eds.), *I segni dell'arte*, cit., cat. no. 6a, b, p. 156. MARCO TANZI (*Kresby z Cremony 1500-1580, Umění renesance a manýrismu v lombardském městě*, Praga, Galleria Nazionale, 20y settembre – 12 novembre 1995, reveiew, «Dialoghi di Storia dell'Arte», 3. 1996, pp. 139-145, especially p. 140) thought it is a drawing by Giulio Campi.

[61] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Study of bull i.*, red chalk, paper, 143x124 mm, Teplice, Regionální muzeum, inv. no. CA 503, *Study of bull ii.*, red chalk, paper, 158x217 mm, Teplice, Regionální muzeum, inv. no. CA 504, *The saddled horse* (recto), *The head of horse* (verso), red chalk, paper, 193x275 mm, Teplice, Regionální muzeum, inv. no. CA 651, *The saddled horse* (recto), *Study of the head of horse and leg of horse*, red chalk, paper, 278x191 mm, Teplice, Regionální muzeum, inv. no. CA 652, *Study of lioness* (recto), *The head of lioness* (verso), red chalk, paper, 178x128 mm, Teplice, Regionální muzeum, inv. no. CA 650, published Martin Zlatohlávek, *Studio di toro*, in GIULIO BORA, MARTIN ZLATOHLÁVEK (eds.), *I segni dell'arte*, cit., cat. nos. 8-12, pp. 158-161.

[62] Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Ritratto di ragazzo*, punta metallica, red chalk, paper, 248x193 mm, Paris, Louvre, Département des arts graphiques, inv. no. 1722, published GIULIO BORA, in *I Campi*, cit., cat. no. 2.2.7, p. 272.

Fig. 1, Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Virgin and Child with St. Peter, Michael, John the Baptist and John the Evangelis*t, 1500 or 1501, Venice, San Giuliano

Fig. 2, Tommaso Aleni esribed, *St. John Evangelist*, ca 1515, Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria

Fig. 3, Boccaccio Boccaccino, *Virgin Mary and Child,* after 1514, Bratislava, Sloveská národná galéria

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Fig. 1: Archive of the Author.

Per le figg. 2-3: Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria, webumenia.sk