

DRAWINGS BY GIULIO CAMPI FOR THE FRESCOES LOCATED IN THE CHOIR OF THE CHURCH OF SANT'AGATA IN CREMONA: 1537

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ABSTRACT

On 5 April 1537, Giulio Campi (or “magister Giulio Campi Pictor Cremonese”) entered into a contract with the administrators (or “signori Massari et fabriceri”) of the Church of Sant’Agata in Cremona. It concerned decorating both sides of the presbytery of the aforementioned church with four paintings depicting scenes from the life of St. Agatha, two artworks on each side, using good and pure colours, for an agreed price of 200 imperial liras. This succession of the individual scenes complies with the legend of St. Agatha, as recorded by Jacobus de Varagine.

KEYWORDS: Giulio Campi; Martyrdom of St. Agata; Jacobo de Varagine; Cremona; St. Agata; Frescoes; 1537

Disegni di Giulio Campi per gli affreschi nel coro della chiesa di Sant’Agata a Cremona: 1537

ABSTRACT

Il 5 aprile 1537 Giulio Campi (o “magister Giulio Campi Pictor Cremnese”) stipulò un contratto con gli amministratori, i “signori Massari et fabriceri”, della chiesa di Sant’Agata a Cremona. Si trattava di decorare entrambi i lati del presbiterio della suddetta chiesa con quattro dipinti raffiguranti scene della vita di Sant’Agata, due opere per lato, con colori di qualità, per un prezzo concordato di 200 lire imperiali. La successione delle singole scene è conforme alla leggenda di Sant’Agata, come narrata da Jacopo da Varagine.

PAROLE CHIAVE: Giulio Campi; Martirio di Sant’Agata; Jacopo da Varagine; Cremona; Sant’Agata; Affreschi; 1537

On 5 April 1537, Giulio Campi (or “magister Giulio Campi Pictor Cremonese”) entered into a contract with the administrators (or “signori Massari et fabriceri”) of the Church of Sant’Agata in Cremona. It concerned decorating both sides of the presbytery of the aforementioned church with four paintings depicting scenes from the life of St. Agatha, two artworks on each side, using good and pure colours, for an agreed price of 200 imperial liras. The money was agreed to be paid in several instalments, as follows: 50 liras as a prepayment at the start of the work, 50 liras after the completion of the first two paintings, 50 liras after the completion of the third painting, and 50 liras after fulfilling the entire contract. On 9 April, Giulio Campi (or “Julio de Campo Pictor Cremonese”) confirmed that he had received 50 imperial liras, as a partial payment for the paintings he was supposed to create in the presbytery of the Church of Sant’Agata in Cremona, from Bernardino di Crotti, who was the administrator (or “fabricier”) of the church¹. The contract did not explicitly state any specific themes that were meant to be depicted by Campi in the choir of the church. They were perhaps determined by final model drawings, enclosed as an annexe to the contract. Only one of them was preserved to this day; the *Burial of St. Agatha*².

This paper was supported by the grant “GAČR no. 20-09368S.” Translated in English by Daniel Řezníček.

¹ A part of the contract and a receipt regarding the payment of the first instalment were first published by Federico Sacchi in: Sacchi 1872, p. 234. The entire contract, on whose back side there is a confirmation by Giulio Campi relating to his acceptance of 50 imperial liras from 9 April 1537 and which is stored in the Archivio parrocchiale di Sant’Agata, Cremona, Fabbr. Cart. 1°, was published by Gheroldi 2006, p. 37, note no. 1. See also Miller in Cremona 1985, p. 460, doc. 17 and 18.

² Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, P.II, 140; see Gheroldi 2006, p. 28.

The Church of Sant'Agata in Cremona houses a reliquary, dated to the beginning of the 14th century. On the front side, there is *Madonna and Child*, while the back side bears a panel depicting *Scenes from the Legend of the Life and Martyrdom of St. Agatha*. As was pointed out by Vincenzo Gheroldi³, the selected scenes from the Legend of St. Agatha, written by Jacobus de Varagine in the *Legenda aurea*, painted on the back side of the reliquary, reflected the form of the legend that complied with the local tradition and as such might have influenced the selection of scenes for Campi's frescoes in the presbytery of the church. In total, the reliquary represents twelve scenes. A special emphasis is put on a scene in which Peter the Apostle visits and attends to the wounded Agatha in prison. The painted legend starts in the upper left corner of the reliquary. The first scene shows St. Agatha, disgusted by the environment of a brothel kept by the pimp Aphrodisia and her nine daughters. Agatha was sent to the brothel by Quintianus, the Roman prefect of Catania, when the Christian woman rejected his marriage proposal. According to the legend, Quintianus was of un noble birth, licentious, mean, and professing pagan idols («Quintianus (...) consularis Siciliae, ...ignobilis, libidinosus, avarus et ydolis deditus», sending the saint to «cuidam meretrici nomine Aphrodisiae et novem filiabus eius eiusdem turpitudinis, ut per triginta dies suaderent ei quomodo eius animum immutarent», 'The Legend of St. Agatha' in *Legenda aurea*, pp. 10-12). Despite the fact that Aphrodisia tried to use various different means, she was unable to convince Agatha to engage in prostitution. Therefore, she turned to Quintianus again, who had Agatha summoned before him in order to interrogate her regarding her faith. St. Agatha before the prefect Quintianus, seated on a throne, is depicted in the second scene in the upper row of scenes on the reliquary. Agatha declared that she was a servant of Christ and would follow nobody else but him. Thereafter, the offended suitor had her whipped, which is depicted in the third scene, and put in prison, as represented in the fourth scene. The fifth scene in the upper row shows the culmination of Agatha's suffering, as Quintianus ordered that her breasts should be cut off. Wounded, she was put in prison again. At night, St. Peter appeared to her in order to heal her wounds. However, the author of the *Legenda* described him as an old man whom Agatha did not recognize («Et ecce, circa mediam noctem venit ad eam quidam senex quem antecedeat puer luminis portitor», 'The Legend of St. Agatha' in *Legenda aurea*, p. 58). As we have already mentioned, the apostle, coming equipped with a vase of ointment with the aim of healing the saint woman's wounds, is represented in the central scene of the reliquary. Its size matches two rows of the remaining scenes. The light surrounding the old Peter frightened the guard. This can be seen in the central scene on the reliquary, on the right side, as well as read in the original legend («immenso lumine custodes territi»). According to the *Legenda*, St. Peter was accompanied by a young boy bearing a flaming torch⁴. The following unfolding of the legend is represented in the two lower rows of scenes on the reliquary. St. Agatha once again rejected the prefect's paganism and continued to worship Jesus Christ. Therefore, Quintianus had embers and shards prepared in order to torture the naked saint on them. However, at that moment, an earthquake engulfed all of Catania and its prefect with his evil advisors («Quinziano iussit testas fractas spargi et sub testas carbonem ignitos inmitti et ipsam nudo corpore volutari. Quod cum fieret, ecce terremotus nimius factus est et totam civitatem ita concussit ut pars corruens duos consiliarios Quintiani opprimeret», 'The Legend of St. Agatha' in *Legenda aurea*, p. 88, 89). These events are described in the first two scenes of the upper of the two lower rows of painted scenes. The third scene shows the general public, sympathising with the saint's suffering («omnis populus... conclamans quod propter iniustum agathae cruciatum talia paterentur», 'The Legend of St. Agatha' in *Legenda aurea*, p. 89). The dying and praying Agatha was transported to prison, which was subsequently turned into a shrine. The bottom row of scenes starts with the burial of St. Agatha. During the

³ Gheroldi, 2006, p. 33.

⁴ Hans Aurenhammer adds that this boy was in fact Infant Jesus: «hl. Petrus, dem in diesem Fall das Christkind mit einer Kerze in das Gefängnis leuchtet»; see Aurenhammer 1959-1967, p. 68.



1, Giulio Campi, *St. Agatha's Breasts are Cut Off*, 1537, Cremona, Sant'Agata



2, Giulio Campi, *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*, 1537, Cremona, Sant'Agata

ceremony, an angelic youngster appeared, accompanied by more than a hundred men dressed in white. The young man placed a marble slab next to the head of the saint. It bore an inscription that read: MENTEM SANCTAM SPONTANEAM, HONOREM DEO ET PATRIAE LIBERATIONEM. The inscription is actually not legible on the reliquary. Quintianus decided to flee, but while crossing a river on a boat, two of his horses ran into him, knocking him into the river, where he drowned («Quintianus autem, dum ad eius investigandas divitias pergeret duobus equis inter se fremitum dantibus calcesque iactantibus, unus eum morsu appetiit, alter calce percussus in flumine proiecit... », 'The Legend of St. Agatha' in *Legenda aurea*, p. 100). The last scene on the reliquary is damaged, but we can still state that it depicts St. Agatha protecting the city of Catania from disasters, the source of which is the fuming volcano of Mt. Etna⁵.

In the Cremona church that was consecrated to the saint, Giulio Campi painted two rather large frescoes on the left, Gospel side of the choir. The first fresco, which marks the start of the cycle, depicts a scene where *St. Agatha's Breasts are Cut Off* (fig. 1). The other fresco shows *St. Peter Visiting St. Agatha in Prison*. On the opposite, Epistle side of the choir, the cycle continues with a scene (closer to the altar) depicting the *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire* (fig. 2). The cycle is concluded with the *Burial of St. Agatha*. This succession of the individual scenes complies with the legend of St. Agatha, as recorded by Jacobus de Varagine. However, Vincenzo Gheroldi substantiated⁶ that Giulio Campi proceeded in a different order when working on the frescoes. First, he painted the *Burial of St. Agatha* on the right, Epistle side. Next, he continued with the *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire* on the same side. Thereafter, he moved to the left, Gospel side,

⁵ Pace 2015-2016.

⁶ Gheroldi 2006, p. 24.

where he first painted the scene in which *St. Agatha's Breasts are Cut Off*, and ultimately *St. Peter Visiting St. Agatha in Prison*. He completed the work still in the year 1537, which can be deduced from the signature and date found on the bases of the illusive pilasters that separate one scene from another on both sides of the choir. On the right side, which was completed first, we can see a signature written in capital letters that reads: IVLIVS CAMPVS FACIEBAT. On the left side, the artist wrote the date MDXXXVII upon completing the commission.

The first scene of the Cremona church cycle, in which a mercenary cuts off St. Agatha's breasts, is an expression of Giulio Campi's free inventiveness and creativity, i.e. it was not in any way derived from or dependent on the composition of the depiction of this scene on the reliquary. There, the scene only features two figures – the saint and her tormentor – and Agatha's arms are spread out, as if they were tied to a cross. On the other hand, Giulio Campi approached the theme in a different way; as a multi-figural scene set in an environment of classical-antiquity-like architecture characterised by columns. This conception is confirmed and underlined by an inscription on the bottom of a plinth that reads "SPQR". However, the second scene, on the theme of *St. Peter Visiting St. Agatha in Prison*, is similar to the corresponding scene on the reliquary in terms of its composition. St. Peter, bringing with him some healing ointment, and the wounded St. Agatha stand facing each other. In between the two of them, both scenes depict a boy carrying a torch that brings light into the deep night. Giulio Campi also utilised the motif from the legend regarding the fact that the light frightened the prison guards, but in contrast to the version found on the reliquary, he painted more guards and placed them to the left, behind St. Peter. The third scene in the church choir, depicting the *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*, is again very different from the depiction on the reliquary. The author of the reliquary panel followed the legend more closely, representing Agatha completely naked and lying on embers. In contrast to him, Giulio Campi did not adhere to the legend very strictly, as his saint is dressed and kneels on a plinth, under which there is merely some kind of a "heater" with embers. Also this scene was conceived as a multi-figural scene set in classical-antiquity-like architecture by Campi. Its layout is segmented by a balcony with a balustrade. The composition of the fourth scene, depicting the *Burial of St. Agatha*, as represented on the reliquary and in the church choir, shares certain similarities. The dead Agatha is lying on a sarcophagus and an angel is holding a slab with an inscription near her head. The sarcophagus is surrounded by angels and men dressed in white cloaks. Giulio Campi set the burial scene into a church architecture, ending with a concha with a golden mosaic.

Nonetheless, there are two drawings by Giulio Campi that have survived to this day, whose themes were determined by Giulio Bora and Martin Zlatohlávek to be also related to the legend of the suffering and martyrdom of St. Agatha. First, a drawing from Modena (Galleria Estense) was titled by Bora the *Trial of St. Agatha*. It preceded the torturing during which her breasts were cut off⁷. Upon comparing the Modena-kept drawing against the scenes found on the reliquary panel, it is found out that it is compositionally similar to the second scene in the upper row, in which Agatha is summoned before the prefect Quintianus after refusing to work as a prostitute and subsequently sentenced to the punishment of breast cutting. The other drawing comes from the Teplice (Czech Republic) collection of the Clary-Aldringen family and is nowadays kept in the Regional Museum in Teplice⁸. It was originally published by Martin Zlatohlávek in connection with Giulio Campi's frescoes located in the Cremonese Church of St. Margaret (Santa Margherita)⁹, but later it was put into relation with the themes from the

⁷ Giulio Campi, *Trial of St. Agatha*, line drawing in brown tone, traces of black chalk, paper with a 149 mm diameter, Modena, Galleria Estense, inv. no. 1248, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 192, catalogue no. 31.

⁸ Giulio Campi, *St. Agatha Preaching the Gospel*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 182×162 mm, Teplice, Regional Museum, inv. no. CA 509.

⁹ Zlatohlávek in Prague 1995, pp. 152-153, catalogue no. 52.

Legend of St. Agatha¹⁰. Even before that, Marco Tanzi noted that this Teplice-kept drawing was associated with the aforementioned Modena-kept drawing¹¹. Martin Zlatohlávek then established its theme as *St. Agatha Preaching the Gospel* to the pagan prefect who endeavoured to marry her. Zlatohlávek identified the prefect as the seated figure on the left, of which only the legs are indicated. This would mean the scene is closely associated with the *Trial of St. Agatha*, where the saint confessed that her only lord was Jesus Christ. In that case, the Teplice-kept drawing could possibly be a variant of the scene depicting the *Trial of St. Agatha*. Nonetheless, the supernumerary figures do not support this assertion. While in the *Trial*, Agatha is surrounded by men, some of them in armour, the Teplice-kept drawing features mostly women. Therefore, we could interpret this scene as *St. Agatha Preaching in a Brothel*¹². The keeper of the brothel, Aphrodisia, tried to convince Agatha, who was placed there as a result of an order by the prefect Quintianus, to become a prostitute. However, Agatha replied with a reference to Christ, whom she believed and who would not allow her to live this kind of life. The first scene found on the reliquary of St. Agatha represents the disgust of the saint over the brothel environment, where she was involuntarily placed. The scene drafted by Giulio Campi has a positive character, depicting the endeavour of St. Agatha to persuade the “fallen” women to choose a different way of life, which contrasts with the disgust over the environment expressed by Agatha on the reliquary. None of the scenes were painted as a fresco in the choir of the church in Cremona. It is interesting that the drawings kept in Modena and Teplice both have a circular composition. According to the contract with the administrators of the Church of Sant’Agata in Cremona, Giulio Campi was meant to create four paintings. As was already pointed out by Giulio Bora¹³, Giulio Campi eventually decided to depict more dramatic scenes from the saint’s martyrdom than the *Trial of St. Agatha*, to which we can also add the rather serene scene of *St. Agatha Preaching in a Brothel*. Notwithstanding this knowledge, we could still ponder on Campi’s original intention to use the two scenes, and perhaps some more, in the circles that decorate the painted pilasters separating the scenes on both sides of the church choir. The circles could have been used to further elaborate on the legend through more scenes, following the example of the back side of the reliquary.

As was pointed out already by Filippo Baldinucci (1624-1697)¹⁴, some of the figures depicted in the frescoes on the theme of the legend of St. Agatha were derived by Giulio Campi from the work of Antonio de’ Sacchis, known as Pordenone (1484-1539). Namely, it is especially a man with a turban from the scene titled *St. Agatha’s Breasts are Cut Off* or a figure of a bald man leaning out of the gallery in the *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*. They were derived from the rich array of figural supernumeraries depicted in Pordenone’s painting from 1521-1522 titled *Crucifixion*, also known as *Golgotha*, which can be found on the interior wall of the front façade of the Cremona Cathedral. However, figures were not the only source of inspiration that Campi used. Another similarity was the compositional conception of some of the scenes and according to Vincenzo Gheroldi, the artist also drew from Pordenone’s other figurative models¹⁵. A scene in an elusive concha, depicting the of *Sacrifice of Isaac*, located in the architectural element within the scene representing the *Burial of St. Agatha* was based on Pordenone’s fresco titled *Lamentation*, located in the Cremona Cathedral, where this scene including a peacock is also set in an elusive concha. Pordenone worked on it in 1521. Next, the composition of the scene *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire* emulates Pordenone’s fresco from the Church of Santa Maria di

¹⁰ Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 191, catalogue no. 30.

¹¹ Tanzi 1996, p. 145, note no. 23.

¹² This scene, also titled *St. Agatha in a Brothel* or *St. Agatha among Aphrodisia’s Daughters* was painted, for instance, by Paolo Gismondi (1612-1685) in the church of Sant’Agata dei Goti in Rome between the years 1633 and 1636.

¹³ Bora in Cremona 1985, p. 282, catalogue no. 2.6.2.

¹⁴ Baldinucci 1681-1728, V, p. 120: «alcune Pitture del Campi, fatte col gusto di quel Maestro».

¹⁵ Gheroldi 2006, p. 31.

Campagna in Piacenza on the theme of *Disputation of St. Catherine* from the years 1531 and 1532. Furthermore, Gheroldi noticed the identical perspective arrangement of the scene frames of Campi's frescoes and the framing of the aforementioned *Crucifixion* by Pordenone, found on the front wall of the Cremona Cathedral. The framing consists of tilted squares, painted in accordance with the principle of linear perspective, that contain a circular decoration in the middle¹⁶. We might add that regarding the decorative strips above the scenes on both sides of the choir, Campi may have also been inspired by the decorative fruit-like and flower-like festoons found in the vaulting bay of the first chapel on the left in the church of San Giovanni Evangelista in Parma. This painting decoration was one of the early works produced by Francesco Mazzola, known as Parmigianino (1503–1540), and is dated 1522–1523. Here, Parmigianino also painted, among other things, the *Suffering of St. Agatha* and opposite to it *St. Lucia with St. Apollonia*. Giulio Bora suggested¹⁷ that the scene of the *Trial of St. Agatha*, whose conception and composition remains to be known only from the Modena-kept drawing, referred in its composition to a print by Albrecht Dürer on the theme of *Christ before Caiaphas* from the *Little Passion* (published in print in 1511) or from an analogous print from one of the transalpine workshops. In relation to this, Martin Zlatohlávek pointed out a print by Heinrich Aldegrever titled *Potiphar's Wife Accusing Joseph* from 1532 (Holl., I, p. 13). Its composition is based on the aforementioned artwork by Dürer, but the figure of Christ was replaced with Potiphar's wife, who can be said to have been more useful to Campi in terms of depicting Agatha during a trial¹⁸.

The Teplice collection of the Clary–Aldringen family contains the largest number of preserved preparatory drawings for Campi's frescoes executed in the choir of the Church of Sant'Agata. From those that have already been published, they include mainly sketches that were performed using a pen in a rather cursory manner, representing parts of figural compositions and also individual figures¹⁹. No detailed figure studies, such as the drawing titled *Halberdier* kept in the Louvre in Paris²⁰, or modelli, such as the *Burial of St. Agatha* from Oxford²¹, had hitherto been identified in this collection. However, this fact has recently changed with the discovery of several drawings in the Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava which were identified as having once been part of the former collection of the Teplice-based Clary–Aldringen family.²² The Gallery houses

¹⁶ Gheroldi 2006, p. 32.

¹⁷ Bora in Cremona 1985, p. 282, catalogue no. 2.6.2.

¹⁸ Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 192.

¹⁹ Prague 1995, pp. 60–85; Cremona 1997, pp. 190–203.

²⁰ Giulio Campi, *Halberdier*, red chalk, paper 319×215 mm, written in pen on the bottom: *Tiziano*, Paris, Département des Arts Graphiques, inv. no. 5521, identified by Parker 1956, p. 74; Bora in Cremona 1985, p. 282; published by Zlatohlávek in Prague 1995, pp. 70–71, catalogue no. 17; Gheroldi 2006, p. 28. The back side of the folio bears a red chalk sketch of a figure of a soldier who can be found on the very left of the fresco titled *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*. In addition to this, the back side also features a line drawing of St. Sebastian, which might be a study for a painting on the theme of *Madonna and Child, St. Roch, and St. Sebastian*, which is supposedly a very early work by Giulio Campi. Nowadays the painting is located in the chapel of Casa di Sant'Angela Merici in Cremona. The front side of the Louvre-kept drawing was traditionally attributed to Titian, based on the note on the bottom. This figure, allegedly by Titian, was copied by artists all the way into the 19th century, such as Odilon Redon or Edgar Degas. Their drawings depicting this figure are also housed in the Louvre in Paris.

²¹ Giulio Campi, *Burial of St. Agatha*, line drawing in brown tone, squared up using a black pencil, paper 346×244 mm, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, inv. no. 140; published by Parker 1956, pp. 73–74; Bora in Cremona 1985, p. 282; Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 202, catalogue no. 44.

²² Zdeněk Kazlepka first drew attention to the drawings of Giulio Campi in the National Gallery in Bratislava, as part of the former Clary–Aldringen collection, at the *Ars linearis* colloquium held at the National Gallery in Prague in 2018. Drawings for the decoration of the presbytery of the Church of St. Agates in Cremona were first published by Martin Zlatohlávek in: Zlatohlávek 2019. The whole set of drawings by Giulio Campi from the Bratislava National Gallery was then published by Agostino Allegri and Giovanni Renzi in: Allegri, Renzi 2019/2021.



3, Giulio Campi, *Study of a Lying Man Pointing Upwards I*, 1537, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery © Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria, webumenia.sk



4, Giulio Campi, *Study of a Lying Man Pointing Upwards II*, 1537, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery © Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria, webumenia.sk

two *Studies of a Lying Man Pointing Upwards* (figs. 3-4)²³. This man can be seen in the bottom right corner of the fresco titled *St. Agatha's Breasts are Cut Off*. Another Bratislava-kept drawing, a *Study of a Man in Armour* (fig. 5), depicts a man who can be seen in the bottom left part of the same scene in Cremona²⁴. As of today, these three drawings remain to be the only studies associated with this scene; none had been known prior to their discovery. Furthermore, the Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava also houses one more folio, also from the former Clary-Aldringen collection, with sketches on the front side and the back side. These are associated with the scene titled *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*²⁵. The front side bears a half-figure, sketched using a red chalk, of an elderly bearded man who is behind St. Agatha and holds the saint above a fire (fig. 6). On the back side, Giulio Campi used a pen to draw the hands, feet, and sword of a halberdier. Apart from this, there is also a study of clasped hands belonging to St. Agatha (fig. 7).

As we have already noted, according to Vincenzo Gheroldi²⁶ Giulio Campi started his work on the right side of the choir, with the scene of the *Burial of St. Agatha*. For this work, Campi used the

²³ Giulio Campi, *Study of a Lying Man Pointing Upwards I*, charcoal, paper 112×134 mm, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery, inv. no. K 1541; Giulio Campi, *Study of a Lying Man Pointing Upwards II*, charcoal, paper 109×167 mm, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery, inv. no. K 1540, published by Zlatohlávek 2019, pp. 35-37, image nos. 5, 6; Allegri, Renzi 2019/2021, pp. 163, 174-175, image no. 7.

²⁴ Giulio Campi, *Study of a Man in Armour*, black and white chalk, squared up using black chalk, grey-green paper 382×209 mm, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery, inv. no. K 1524, published by Zlatohlávek 2019, pp. 35-37, image no. 4; Allegri, Renzi 2019/2021, pp. 164, 173, image no. 8.

²⁵ Giulio Campi, *Half-Figure of an Elderly Bearded Man*, red chalk, verso: Giulio Campi, *Study of Hands, Feet, and a Sword*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 189×134 mm, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery, inv. no. K 1492, Allegri, Renzi 2019/2021, p. 172.

²⁶ Gheroldi 2006, pp. 27-29.



5, Giulio Campi, *Study of a Man in Armour*, 1537, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery © Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria, webumenia.sk

technique of squaring up and cardboard, which had also been treated with this technique, in a similar way as in the case of the modello of this given scene from Oxford²⁷, in an appropriate enlargement scale. Therefore, the Oxford-kept drawing had more functions, beside the fact that it was enclosed as an annexe to the contract. Its precise pen-drawn lines could be transferred to a larger surface of the choir wall through the technique of squaring up. On top of that, the contract owners were able to use the drawing as a benchmark for monitoring whether the artist did not deviate too much from the template²⁸. Nonetheless, even this final form had its pre-stages. This is substantiated by the more cursory pen-drawn sketch of the entire scene of the *Burial* that is nowadays kept in the National Gallery Prague, originally part of the Teplice collection of the Clary-Aldringen family²⁹. As we can see in the Prague-kept draft, Giulio Campi originally devised lame, crippled figures, seated on the ground or leaning on crutches, around the grave of St. Agatha, in addition to the angels and men dressed in white. In the end, he decided to stick more closely to the *Legenda* and left the handicapped figures out. After all, the medieval reliquary does not display any such figures either. The other scene on the right-hand-side wall of the choir, on the theme of *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*, was also executed through transferring a smaller-scale drawing onto the wall using the technique of squaring up. A closer study of the fresco and the plastering of the scene revealed that the painter

used more pieces of cardboard, perhaps five, because the squaring up that remained on the wall has different dimensions³⁰. No drawing that would capture the entire scene and would be completely covered with squares was preserved to this day. According to Vincenzo Gheroldi³¹, the drawing of the *Halberdier* from the Louvre in Paris³², which indeed is entirely covered with squares, served as the final modello used for the creation of a cardboard used for this individual figure. Yet, it is possible that a final drawing of the entire composition of the scene existed. This assertion seems to be supported by a copy of such potential drawing, also from the Louvre in

²⁷ See note no. 21.

²⁸ Gheroldi 2006, p. 29.

²⁹ Giulio Campi, *Sketch of the Composition of the Burial of St. Agatha*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 92×77 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 57511, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 202, catalogue no. 43.

³⁰ Gheroldi 2006, p. 28.

³¹ Gheroldi 2006, p. 28.

³² See note no. 20.



6, Giulio Campi, *Half-Figure of an Elderly Bearded Man*, 1537, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery, recto © Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria, webumenia.sk



7, Giulio Campi, *Study of Hands, Feet, and a Sword*, 1537, Bratislava, The Slovak National Gallery, verso © Bratislava, Slovenská národná galéria, webumenia.sk

Paris³³. However, there are certain differences between the drawing and the final fresco. The more subtle differences include a figure behind the balustrade, in the upper left part of the scene. Its hands are painted differently and the presence of a turban on its head is also what sets the two works apart. Next, they also include a figure behind St. Agatha, whose head is turned to the left in the drawing, while in the fresco the old man is looking into the saint's face. However, a more profound difference can be identified on the right side. In the drawing, the halberdier from the final fresco has a form of a rider, mounted on a prancing horse and clutching a large banner. It is possible that Giulio Campi was originally considering even a third version of this part of the composition. There are four drawings kept in the National Gallery Prague, also formerly from the Clary-Aldringen collection, that have a form of a study of a flag bearer who seems to be struggling to hold a bent pole with a large flag³⁴. Nonetheless, a figure in one of these four

³³ Giulio Campi (copy from), *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*, pen and brush in brown tone, illuminated using white, paper 360×278 mm, Paris, Département des Arts Graphiques, inv. no. 6268, published by Bora 1977, p. 77, note no. 18; Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 196, as part of the catalogue no. 36; Tanzi 1999, p. 53, as part of the catalogue no. 16.

³⁴ Giulio Campi, *Sketch of a Flag Bearer*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 150×63 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 31094, identified by Bora 1971, p. 28, n. 19, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 194, catalogue no. 33; Giulio Campi, *Three Studies of a Flag Bearer*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 183×172 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 31799, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 195, catalogue no. 34; Giulio Campi, *Study of a Flag Bearer and the Saint in the Background*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 143×94 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 31093, identified by Bora 1971, p. 28, n. 19, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 165, catalogue no. 35; Giulio Campi, *Two Studies of a Flag Bearer with Figures in the Background*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 250×110 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 57508, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 196, catalogue no. 36.

drawings³⁵ proves that Campi gradually reached a position in the study of this flag bearer that finally acquired the form of the *Halberdier*, as depicted in the Louvre-kept drawing. In fact, a rather small sketch of the figural composition of the lower part of the scene of the *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*, originally pertaining to the Clary–Aldringen collection (nowadays kept in the Regional Museum in Teplice³⁶), suggests that right from the start, in relation to the artist's thoughts regarding the arrangement of the figures in space, Giulio Campi considered the position of a flag bearer or a halberdier, leaning his back against a wall and holding a flag or a halberd in both hands, that corresponds with the final solution. Therefore, we can reduce Campi's creative endeavour to two possible versions. One of them was actually transformed into the final form in the fresco in Cremona, i.e. a halberdier standing in the bottom right corner, while the other, featuring a man on a prancing horse, remained only in the aforementioned copy kept in the Louvre³⁷ in Paris and was not further elaborated. Notwithstanding, this second version assumed one more function; it was used by Benedetto Stefani as a template for a print³⁸. A note on a stone confirms this: "Giulio Campi inventor/ Santa agata/ benetto stefani f./ con privilegio." There is very little information about the life and work of the printer and publisher Benedetto Stefani. He probably come from Verona and cooperated mainly with Marco Angolo del Moro (perhaps 1537– after 1586), but engravings by him, after Bernardino Campi (1522–1591)³⁹, are also known. Furthermore, he made engraving copies of prints by Enea Vico (1523–1567), which he then also published. As an engraver and publisher, he was active in the 1570s and 1580s. His engraving on the theme of *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire* exactly copies, in a mirror image, the composition and figures of the Louvre-kept copy. It was originally pasted in Giorgio Vasari's (1511–1574) Book of Drawings (*Libro de Disegni*), with a note about its authorship that read «Giulio Campo Bresc^o: P:». However, Philippe Poncey and Giulio Bora recognised that it was in fact a copy⁴⁰. This means a final drawing by Giulio Campi must have existed, serving as a template for drawing copies and the print by Stefani. It remains a question whether the lost final drawing was also considered as a possible version of the eventual fresco in the church, or only intended for a print. If it was indeed considered for the church fresco, it must have been created prior to the hitherto known studies and the fresco or at about the same time, i.e. April 1537. If it was only intended for a print, how can we determine its date of origin? *St. George Fighting a Dragon*⁴¹, in a painting by Giulio Campi that was painted in the mid-1540s and was also placed in the Church of Sant'Agata in Cremona, was rendered in the same way as the man on the

³⁵ Giulio Campi, *Study of a Flag Bearer and the Saint in the Background*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 143×94 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 31093, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 165, catalogue no. 35.

³⁶ Giulio Campi, *Sketch of a Part of the Figural Composition of the Scene 'Torture of St. Agatha with Fire'*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 63×76 mm, Teplice, Regional Museum, inv. no. CA 528, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 194, catalogue no. 32.

³⁷ See note no. 32.

³⁸ Benedetto Stefani after Giulio Campi, *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*, copper engraving, paper 353×273 mm, on the bottom, in the middle: *Giulio Campi inventor/ Santa agata/ benetto stefani f/ con privilegio*, London, British Museum, Department print and drawing, inv. no. U, 5.5.

³⁹ On a print on the theme of *The Descent of the Holy Spirit* (copper engraving, paper 354×273 mm, London, British Museum, inv. no. 1877,0811.1074) there is a note that reads: *federico Cucari* (sic!) *inventor/ beneto Stefani incidebat et f./ Con privilegio*, but Philip Poncey recognised, as is evidenced by the note on the back side, that the print was not based on an artwork by Federico Zuccari, but Bernardino Campi, namely his drawing that was part of the E. Shapiro collection in London, as of 1957.

⁴⁰ There are more copies of this composition: Florence, Gabinetto disegni e stampe degli Uffizi, inv. no. 13865 F, as Antonio Campi; Florence, Gabinetto disegni e stampe degli Uffizi, inv. no. 13385 F, as Bernardino Campi; Bergamo, Accademia Carra, inv. no. 1661, published by Bora 1977, p. 77, note no. 18; Rodeschini Galati 1982, pp. 27–29, catalogue no. 12; Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 36, as part of the catalogue no. 36; Tanzi 1999, p. 53, as part of the catalogue no. 16.

⁴¹ Giulio Campi, *St. George Fighting a Dragon and a Princess*, oil on canvas 260×140 cm, Cremona, Church of Sant'Agata, published by Bora in Cremona 1997, p. 240, catalogue no. 71.

prancing horse on the right side of the drawing-copy from the Louvre and the left side (mirror image) of the aforementioned print. Moreover, Campi also included a rider on a prancing horse in two drawings from the Uffizi⁴² in Florence and studies the composition of the entire scene in one more drawing from the Teplice collection⁴³ of the Clary-Aldringen family and a drawing from the Theodore Allen Heinrich collection in Toronto⁴⁴. His inspiration came from a fresco painted by Pordenone in 1520 in the Cremona Cathedral. In a scene on the theme of *Pilate Judges Christ*, there is a prancing horse with a mercenary rendered in the same way. Additionally, the aforementioned frescoes by Parmigianino, located in the side chapels of the church of San Giovanni Evangelista in Parma, include a figure of St. Vitalis, who is next to a similarly prancing horse. Giorgio Vasari surely included the copy of the final drawing of the second version of the scene depicting the *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire* (nowadays in the Louvre, Paris) in his Book of Drawings before the year 1574, which is when he died. Benedetto Stefani engraved his print of this scene in the 1570s or 1580s. Still, in a potential pushing of the origin of this second version of Campi's composition to a later date, we probably cannot go any further than the mid-1540s, when Giulio worked on the painting titled *St. George Fighting a Dragon*.

According to Vincenzo Gheroldi's research, Giulio Campi did not use the technique of squaring up, and therefore not even cardboard or a final drawing treated with squaring up, for the frescoes on the left side of the choir, i.e. *St. Agatha's Breasts are Cut Off* and *St. Peter Visiting St. Agatha in Prison*. He supposedly worked faster, completing major parts of the frescoes in just a day. He used sinopia, drawn onto a prepared plaster, but it was only indicative, allowing necessary changes that would arise during the painting process⁴⁵. However, the drawing titled *Study of a Man in Armour*, originally pertaining to the Clary-Aldringen collection and nowadays kept in the Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava⁴⁶, which is associated with the right side of the scene in which *St. Agatha's Breasts are Cut Off*, provides evidence that Campi probably originally wanted to use the same procedure as on the right side even on this side of the choir, as the *Study of a Man in Armour* is covered with squares in a similar way as the *Halberdier* from the Louvre⁴⁷. Although this man in armour was rendered conscientiously and according to the drawing in the fresco, Campi did not transfer the figure onto the prepared plaster using enlargement through the technique of squaring up but using sinopia, as the aforementioned examination of the fresco substantiates. Additionally, the Bratislava-kept drawing evidences that Campi studied the man in armour on a live model, which is even more clear given the presence of other, more detailed studies of his hands and head without a hat in the upper right part of the folio. In fact, the two *Studies of a Lying Man Pointing Upwards*, newly discovered within the collection of drawing in the Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava, were also drawn with the help of a live model⁴⁸. As of now, it is impossible to claim that this figure was finalised in the form of a drawing and covered with squares in the same way as the man in armour or the halberdier, since it was rendered in the fresco using sinopia, without squaring up. The large number of drawings, all in a different stage of completion, that were preserved in relation to the frescoes in the Church of Sant'Agata in Cremona (we need to add to them also four sketches and studies

⁴² Giulio Campi, *Two Studies of a Prancing Horse*, pencil, paper 253×139 mm, Florence, Gabinetto disegni e stampe degli Uffizi, inv. no. 13470 F, published by Tanzi 1999, pp. 50-53, catalogue no. 15; Giulio Campi, *St. George Fighting a Dragon*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 114×106 mm, Florence, Gabinetto disegni e stampe degli Uffizi, inv. no. 13446 F, published by Bora 1977, p. 59, 77, note no. 19, image no. 35a.

⁴³ Giulio Campi, *St. George Fighting a Dragon*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 209×159 mm, Teplice, Regional Museum, inv. no. CA 521, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 143, catalogue no. 72.

⁴⁴ Giulio Campi, *St. George Fighting a Dragon*, published in Ottawa 1976, catalogue no. 1 (as anonymous work (?)) from Venice, approx. 1500; Di Giampaolo 1984, p. 79.

⁴⁵ Gheroldi 2006, p. 35.

⁴⁶ See note no. 23.

⁴⁷ See note no. 20.

⁴⁸ See note no. 22.

for the scene titled *St. Peter Visiting St. Agatha in Prison*⁴⁹) suggests that also the artwork *St. Agatha's Breasts are Cut Off* was being progressively prepared by Campi, starting with small and quick sketches and drafts, from which he moved to studies of individual figures. It is possible he prepared a final modello too, as in the case of the *Burial of St. Agatha*, so that the contract owners could check that the fresco was executed in accordance with the assignment. However, such potential drawings were either lost, or have not been discovered yet.

A peculiar artwork is the draft depicting the *Half-Figure of an Elderly Bearded Man* from the National Gallery in Bratislava, sketched using a red chalk, and the pen-drawn *Study of Hands, Feet, and a Sword* on the back side of the folio⁵⁰. Giulio Campi used the half-figure of the bearded man for the scenes *St. Agatha's Breasts are Cut Off* and *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*. In both cases, the man is located behind the saint. It is possible that the drawing was not completed. It was probably meant to be finalised, i.e. rendered in more detail and perhaps even covered with a raster of squares, in a similar way as the drawing depicting the *Halberdier* from the Louvre. The use of the same technique – red chalk drawing – seems to support this theory. The sketches of hands, feet, and the sword on the back side, drawn using a pen, and their arrangement attest to the fact that the folio had a character of a small book of designs. The precisely rendered parts of hands, feet, and the sword could be used as templates for numerous later applications. In relation to the frescoes in the Church of Sant'Agata, Giulio Campi used them in the *Torture of St. Agatha with Fire*. These templates also had their own pre-stages in the form of swiftly performed sketches, as is evidenced by a *Sketch of a Left Hand Resting on the Crossguard of a Sword* from the Clary-Aldringen collection (nowadays kept in the Regional Museum in Teplice)⁵¹.

The voluminous collection of drawings by Giulio Campi associated with his frescoes in the Church of Sant'Agata in Cremona nicely illustrates the drawing style of the Cremona-based master at the end of the 1530s and sheds light on the sources of inspiration from which he drew. The various smaller sketches capturing an initial conception of parts of a composition or individual figures resemble pen-drawn drafts by Antonio de' Sacchis, known as Pordenone. They are nowadays kept mainly in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana⁵². Pordenone used the same style even when drawing with a red chalk, which is documented by several drawings by him that are kept in the Louvre in Paris⁵³. In spite of this, in Giulio Campi's drawings of this kind, we can see his

⁴⁹ Giulio Campi, *Sketch of St. Peter and St. Agatha with a Torchbearer*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 100×66 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 57512, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 200–201, catalogue no. 39; Giulio Campi, *Two Drafts of St. Peter and a Sketch of St. Peter and St. Agatha with a Torchbearer*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 123×69 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 57509, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, pp. 200–201, catalogue no. 40; Giulio Campi, *Draft of the Composition 'St. Peter Visiting St. Agatha in Prison'*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 122×111 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 31091, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, pp. 200–201, catalogue no. 41; Giulio Campi, *Study of the Composition 'St. Peter Visiting St. Agatha in Prison'*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 136×100 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 57510, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, pp. 200–201, catalogue no. 42.

⁵⁰ See note no. 24.

⁵¹ Giulio Campi, *Sketch of a Left Hand Resting on the Crossguard of a Sword*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 70×73 mm, Teplice, Regional Museum, inv. no. CA 529, published by Zlatohlávek in Cremona 1997, p. 197, catalogue no. 38.

⁵² Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis, known as Pordenone, *Two Scenes of Consecration*, line drawing in brown tone, grey-green paper 113×157 mm, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Cod. F 269 inf. nn. 25, 24, published by Villata 2016, p. 99, catalogue no. 4; Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis, known as Pordenone, *Study for a Scene from Classical Antiquity History*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 57×64 mm, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Cod. F 269 inf. nn. 32, 33, published by Villata 2016, pp. 109–110, catalogue no. 10.

⁵³ Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis, known as Pordenone, *Study of a Naval Battle for a Decorative Frieze*, red chalk, paper 117×172 mm, Paris, Louvre, Département des arts graphique, inv. no. 10370, published by Furlan 1988, p. 317, catalogue no. D88; Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis, known as Pordenone, *Figural Study in Various Positions*,

own distinct way of rendition. He used short, well-marked pen strokes, all with the same intensity, while Pordenone's contours vary in their intensity, from robust, vehement lines to fine, thin lines fading into disappearance. The spatial arrangement of figures and its gradation, i.e. the figures' closeness or distantness, was performed by Campi through hatching rather than making the contour line thicker or thinner. This is how he studied the figure of the flag bearer, which gradually evolved into the halberdier, in his pen-drawn draft⁵⁴. Its final version, which is represented by the drawing from the Louvre, was performed by Campi with a red chalk which allowed him to use the softer material to draw more precisely and with more details, albeit not abandoning his typical hatching⁵⁵. The final pen-drawn sketch of the *Burial of St. Agatha* from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford captures one's attention with its precision⁵⁶. The entire composition was rendered only using precise pen strokes and the architectural elements, as well as the figures within the space, were graded in their relative proximity only through smaller or greater density of hatching line. He did not use a brush or white for illumination, which is what he would do in his final drawings created in a later period of his life⁵⁷. This drawing style is reminiscent of some of the final drawings by Parmigianino from his late Parma period, which also falls into the second half of the 1530s⁵⁸.

red chalk, paper 99×172 mm, Paris, Louvre, Département des arts graphiques, inv. no. 10828, published by Furlan 1988, p. 324.

⁵⁴ See note no. 33.

⁵⁵ See note no. 20.

⁵⁶ See note no. 21.

⁵⁷ Giulio Campi, *Adoration of the Newborn Child with St. Lucia and an Unknown Nun*, pen and brush in brown tone, paper 306×182 mm, Prague, National Gallery Prague, inv. no. K 54786, published by Bora in Cremona 1997, pp. 236-237, catalogue no. 69; Giulio Campi, *The Holy Family with St. Francis and St. Anthony*, pen and brush in brown tone, illuminated using white, paper 330×221 mm, Brno, The Moravian Gallery, inv. no. B 920, published by Bora in Cremona 1997, pp. 238-239, catalogue no. 70.

⁵⁸ Francesco Mazzola, known as Parmigianino, *Pastoral Scene*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 203×152 mm, Hamburg, Kunsthalle, inv. no. 21267, published by Gnann 2007, p. 503, catalogue no. 951; Francesco Mazzola, known as Parmigianino, *A Running Young Man with a Flag*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 265×198 mm, London, British Museum, inv. no. 1858-7-24-7, published by Gnann 2007, p. 508, catalogue no. 981; Francesco Mazzola, known as Parmigianino, *David with the Head of Goliath*, line drawing in brown tone, paper 295×216 mm, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, inv. no. 84. GA.61, published by Gnann 2007, p. 508, catalogue no. 982.

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