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*The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist,  
St. Elisabeth and Two Angels*  
from the collections of the Liechtenstein family  
and its origin\*

**Abstract:**

*The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and Two Angels* painting from Château Lednice was an integral part of the art collections of the Princely House of Liechtenstein from 1680 (after it had been purchased by Karl Eusebius of Liechtenstein) until the end of World War Two. Throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century it was considered to be Raphael's monochromatic sketch to *The Holy Family of Francis I*, but this painting was already located in France at that time. From the early 1800s, the painting received less and less attention as it was attributed to Raphael's pupil Polidoro da Caravaggio, and this trend also continued later when scholars classified it as another example of numerous Baroque paintings which copied the famous original. It was not until 2010 that an attempt to rehabilitate the painting from Château Lednice was made by the restoration specialist Pavel Klimeš, who came to the conclusion that it is merely a sketch – a preparatory grisaille by Raphael. That is also why, Klimeš argued, a delicate and obviously cheaper canvas had been chosen, and the painting had been made with an emphasis on the composition, drawing and modelling. Klimeš's conclusion is acceptable, but only for the function of this work of art; the proposed attribution is not supported by evidence. However, it turns out that the painting was made in Raphael's studio along with the original and it may have been finished at the same time, i.e. already in 1518. In this paper, the authors attribute the painting to Tommaso Vincidor, Raphael's pupil from Bologna, who came to Brussels after his master's death to supervise the preparation and realization of the tapestries for the Vatican Palace. He probably took the record of *The Holy Family of Francis I* with him to Flanders as a studio material 'to be used later', and not only did he use it himself, which is obvious from his design of the tapestry *Meeting of the Two Holy Families*, but he also helped a number of Flemish artists become familiar with the famous painting of Raphael from the royal art collections and learn about the latest style trends coming from Rome.

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At the very end of 1680, a large grisaille painting with the Holy Family, St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and two angels was purchased for the collections of the Princely House of Liechtenstein. (**fig. 1**). This work of art, painted on canvas and with an underlying wood panel which was glued to the canvas later, was bought by Karl Eusebius, the second Prince of Liechtenstein (1611–1684), who is now rightly considered the initiator of the magnificent art collections of his family. A German-language inscription on the back says: *Vom Rafael Vrbín / gekauft / Vom Bousin / 1680*. This brief text in black paint indicates that the painting was considered to be Raphael's work and the seller was Peter Bousin, a tailor and art dealer residing in Vienna.

The large number of archive materials documenting art acquisitions of the Liechtenstein family, which were carefully prepared and published by Herbert Haupt, reveal that Peter Bousin sold art to Karl Eusebius repeatedly. A document dated to December 20, 1680 which seems to be related to *The Holy Family* shows that Bousin in fact offered several paintings to the prince. The item no. 10 was *1 grand piece, de la main de Raffael Urbín, fl. 900*<sup>1</sup>. Although it appears from a side note that Bousin originally wanted 900 florins for the piece, the final price was settled at 600 florins<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps Karl Eusebius believed that he was buying 'only' a sketch by Raphael, not the final painting, and that is why the final price was reduced so much.

The Prince of Liechtenstein was a systematic collector, for whom art was a passion, and he knew a great deal about it. As a cultured collector, familiar with the art production of his own time as well as art created in the past, he kept himself up to date with the situation on the market and he was willing to pay an appropriate price for a work of art that he was buying if it was worth it. He had no doubts that this was a piece by Raphael Santi, and after he acquired the painting, he had Raphael's name written on the reverse. The same authorship attribution appeared in the inventory of the Liechtenstein collections a hundred years later.

Today, *The Holy Family* can be found in the collections of the state-owned Château Lednice. Yet it was relocated there only after the property of the Liechtenstein family had been confiscated in Czechoslovakia after World War Two; it did not hang in the château at any time while the place was owned by the Liechtensteins. For many decades, *The Holy Family* was located in the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna, as mentioned by Vincenzo Fanti (1719–1776), a di-

<sup>1</sup> Vienna, Hausarchiv der Regierenden Fürsten von und zu Liechtenstein, Kart. 69 (Kunst und Wissenschaft, bis 1800), N 1733. – Victor FLEISCHER, Fürst Karl Eusebius von Liechtenstein als Bauherr und Kunstsammler (1611–1684) (Wien – Leipzig 1910) 68. – Herbert HAUPT, Von der Leidenschaft zum Schönen: Fürst Karl Eusebius von Liechtenstein (1611–1684) II: Quellenband (Vienna 1998) 278s.

<sup>2</sup> HAUPT 279.



**fig. 1:** *The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and Two Angels*, c. 1520, Château Lednice (© National Heritage Institute / Martin Kučera)

rector of the gallery, painter, drawer and the author of the first published guide to the art collections of the Liechtenstein City Palace at Bankgasse *Descrizione completa di tutto ciò che ritrovasi nella galleria di pittura e scultura di Sua Altezza Giuseppe Wenceslao, principe regnante della casa di Lichtenstein*. In a document published in 1767, the painting is listed as no. 481, located in Room 9: *La sacra Famiglia con degli Angioli dipinta a chiaroscuro, di Raffaello d'Urbino*<sup>3</sup>. Thirteen years later, it was also mentioned by Johann Dallinger (1741–1806) in his French-language guide to the Liechtenstein Gallery. This new director of the art collections of the princely family provided a more detailed description than Fanti, and included basic characteristics of each of the paintings. The grisaille

<sup>3</sup> Vincenzo FANTI, *Descrizione completa di tutto ciò che ritrovasi nella galleria di pittura e scultura di Sua Altezza Giuseppe Wenceslao, principe regnante della casa di Lichtenstein* (Vienna 1767) 96.



**fig. 2:** Raphael, *The Holy Family of Francis I*, 1518, Paris, Musée du Louvre (© RMN-Grand Palais / Musée du Louvre / René-Gabriel Ojeda)

painting *The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and Two Angels* (no. 53) was located in Room 1 at that time – *Raphaël. La sainte Famille* – and

Dallinger believed that it was the original sketch of Raphael's painting *The Holy Family of Francis I*<sup>4</sup> (fig. 2).

While neither Vincenzo Fanti nor Johann Dallinger appeared to have any reason to dispute the attribution of *The Holy Family* from the Liechtenstein collections to Raphael, the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought a change of perspective. Johann David Passavant, the author of a key monograph *Rafael von Urbino und sein Vater Giovanni Santi* published in 1839, ignores the piece from the Princely Collections entirely. Betty Paoli includes it in her guide to important Viennese art collections from 1865 but attributes it to Polidoro da Caravaggio (c. 1499–1543) instead of Raphael: Polidoro whose “bedeutendsten Werke sind allo sgraffito, andere Grau in Grau ausgeführt”<sup>5</sup>. The name of this pupil of Raphael's, who was particularly famous for his grisaille paintings, is also mentioned later by another director of the Liechtenstein Gallery: Jakob von Falke (in the catalogue from 1873 and its re-edition from 1885)<sup>6</sup>. Another comment on *The Holy Family* from the Liechtenstein collections was made seven years later by Wilhelm von Bode, an art historian and influential expert on Renaissance paintings, who disputed the accepted attribution to Polidoro da Caravaggio: “[...] In dem grau in grau gemalten Bilde vermag ich nicht mit Bestimmtheit die Hand dieses Künstlers zu entdecken [...]”<sup>7</sup>. Later authors shared von Bode's perspective – specifically Wilhelm Suida in “Moderner Cicerone” and Adolf Kronfeld in his two guides to the Liechtenstein Gallery, published at the turn of the 1930s<sup>8</sup>. *The Holy Family* was probably relocated during the 1930s and stayed at the Château Valtice until after the property of the princely

<sup>4</sup> Johann DALLINGER, Description des tableaux, et des pieces de sculpture, que ... la gallerie de Francois Joseph ... Prince ... de Liechtenstein (Vienna 1780) 28s., no. 53: “[...] Ce tableau peint en grisaille est l'esquisse originale du fameux tableau de Raphaël, qu'on voit à Versailles dans le Cabinet du Roi.”

<sup>5</sup> Betty PAOLI, Wien's Gemälde-Galerien in ihrer Kunsthistorischen Bedeutung (Vienna 1865) 235s.

<sup>6</sup> Jakob FALKE, Katalog der Fürstlich Liechtensteinischen Bilder-Galerie in Gartenpalais der Rossau zu Wien (Vienna 1873) 35, no. 278. – ID., Katalog der Fürstlich Liechtensteinischen Bilder-Galerie in Gartenpalais der Rossau zu Wien (Vienna 1885) 2, no. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Wilhelm von BODE, Die Bilder italienischer Meister in der Galerie des Fürsten Liechtenstein in Wien, in: Die graphischen Künste XV (1892) 85–102, esp. 97.

<sup>8</sup> Wilhelm SUIDA, Moderner Cicerone, Wien. II: Die Gemäldegalerie der K. K. Akademie d. Bildenden Künste, die Sammlungen Liechtenstein, Czernin, Harrach und Schönborn-Buchheim (Stuttgart – Berlin – Leipzig 1904) 75: “[...] eine Grisaillekopie der hl. Familie Franz des I. (Nr. 8, Louvre), die wohl ganz unberechtigterweise den Namen des Polidoro da Caravaggio führt”. – Adolf KRONFELD, Führer durch die Fürstlich Liechtensteinsche Gemäldegalerie in Wien (Vienna 1927) 3, no. 8. – ID., Führer durch die Fürstlich Liechtensteinsche Gemäldegalerie in Wien (Vienna 1931) 3, no. 8.

family was confiscated by the Czechoslovak government<sup>9</sup>. Then it was relocated to Château Lednice and became a part of the château tour. In the documents of the National Heritage Institute, as well as in recent Czech art history sources, the painting is registered as a copy of Raphael's painting *The Holy Family of Francis I* and it is not clearly dated or attributed to any artist<sup>10</sup>.

#### RAPHAEL'S *HOLY FAMILY OF FRANCIS I*, ITS EARLY COPIES AND VARIANTS

The presumed original painting, Raphael's *Holy Family of Francis I*, which today can be found in the Musée du Louvre, was ordered by Lorenzo de Medici (1492–1519): the piece was meant to be a gift for Claude of France (1499–1524), the wife of King Francis I (1494–1547)<sup>11</sup>. The contract was realized thanks to Lorenzo's uncle and long-term patron of Raphael Santi, Pope Leo X (1475–1521), and the painter and his studio made the painting in the spring of 1518. In August, it was presented to the French royal couple in Nantes. What happened to the painting in the following decades is somewhat unclear.

Scholars assumed for a long time that *The Holy Family of Francis I* had been located at the Château of Fontainebleau, but this assumption has recently been corrected by Jan Sammer<sup>12</sup>. As a matter of fact, there is no evidence for this location prior to 1625 – the year when the painting was mentioned by the Italian art expert and collector Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588–1657) as being located in the gallery at the Château of Fontainebleau. Sammer points out that the painting could not have been at Fontainebleau in the 16<sup>th</sup> century because at that time it was located at a much less exposed place: the Château of Blois, where Claude of France, for whom the painting had been made, died on July 20, 1524. The piece was 'rediscovered' in this royal residence in the late 1620s by the young

<sup>9</sup> NA, SPS, Soupis inventáře nalezeného inventarizační komisí NPF a NKK na zámku valtickém, 1947, 24, no. 756; Seznam inventáře ze zámku Valtice, 1951, 6, no. 756.

<sup>10</sup> ABC kulturních památek Československa (Prague 1985) 262. – Dalibor KUSÁK–Miloš STEHLÍK, Lednice–Valtice (Prague 1986) fig. 10. – Olga PUJMANOVÁ, Raphael – copy, *The Holy Family of Francis I*, in: *Italian Painting c. 1330–1550, I: National Gallery in Prague, II: Collections in the Czech Republic*, ed. by EAD. (Prague 2008) 378s., cat. no. 285. – Michal KONEČNÝ, Zámek Lednice (Kroměříž 2018) 119.

<sup>11</sup> Paris, Louvre, Inv. no. 604, wood panel transferred to canvas, 207 × 140 cm. Cf., e.g., Johann David PASSAVANT, *Rafael von Urbino und sein Vater Giovanni Santi II* (Leipzig 1839) 312–316. – Jürg MEYER ZUR CAPELLEN, *Raphael. A Critical Catalogue of his Paintings II: The Roman Religious Paintings ca. 1508–1520* (Landshut 2005) 170–177, cat. no. 62. – Tom HENRY–Paul JOANNIDES, *Raphaël. Les dernières années*, Catalogue of Paris 2012 Exhibition (Paris 2012) 135–143.

<sup>12</sup> Jan SAMMER, Tommaso Vincidor and the Flemish Romanists, in: *Late Raphael. Proceedings of the international symposium, October 2012*, ed. by Miguel FALOMIR (Madrid 2013) 124.

painter Jean Mosnier (1600–1656)<sup>13</sup>. It was not until then that the painting was relocated to Fontainebleau and received the attention and appraisal it deserved, including a vast number of painted copies and engravings which were created as a result of the enormous interest that the piece had attracted. Then the painting was sent to Versailles and installed in the Louvre in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, where it can also be found today.

Copies and prints of Raphael's *Holy Family of Francis I* did not begin to appear in French art circles until the 17<sup>th</sup> century – after the painting had been 'rediscovered' and sent to Fontainebleau. It can therefore be assumed that the painting was far less visible to outsiders at the Château of Blois and artists had virtually no access to it. And yet there *were* new works of art clearly based on this painting which started to appear soon after the piece had been finished. But it did not happen in France – it was in Italy, and somewhat surprisingly, also in Flanders.

On the Apennine Peninsula, *The Holy Family of Francis I* was reflected by artists who began their career in Raphael's studio and had an opportunity to observe how the painting for the French royal couple was being made; some of them may even have assisted in the process. These artists also had access to the preparatory sketches (red-chalk drawings and cartoons), some of which have been preserved and are discussed in detail below<sup>14</sup>.

Several of Raphael's pupils and followers used the overall composition or individual motifs of *The Holy Family of Francis I* in their own art. One of them was Gianfrancesco Penni (c. 1496–1528) at the very beginning of the 1520s, who used the figures of the Virgin, the Christ Child and St. Joseph in two versions of his painting *The Holy Family with John the Baptist and St. Catherine* (Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe; Boston, private collection)<sup>15</sup> (fig. 3). A decade

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Jean BERNIER, *Histoire de Blois contenant les antiquitéz et singularitez du comté de Blois* (Paris 1682) 572.

<sup>14</sup> *A Study of the Virgin and Child*, red chalk, paper, 173 × 120 mm (Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. 3862); *A Study of the Virgin and Child and Virgin's Drapery*, red chalk, paper, 338 × 214 mm (Florence, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, inv. no. 535 E); *A Study of Child Jesus*, red chalk, paper, 269 × 209 mm (Florence, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, inv. no. 534 E); *St. Elisabeth with St. John, the Christ Child and Angel* (cartoon fragment), black chalk, 59 × 52 cm (Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Bequest of Howard Spensley, 1939, inv. no. 587/4); *Head of St. Joseph* (cartoon fragment), black and white chalk, 49.5 × 35.6 cm (Bayonne, Musée Bonnat, inv. no. NI 1705). Cf., e.g., HENRY-JOANNIDES 135, no. 17–20, 143, fig. 75.

<sup>15</sup> Inv. no. 128832, wood, 115.5 × 95 cm; canvas, 125 × 93.5 cm, both dated to 1520–1522. Cf. HENRY-JOANNIDES 306–309, no. 84, fig. 132. – David LOVE, Gianfrancesco Penni: A Biographical and Iconographic Introduction to His Two Versions of The Holy Family with Saint John and Saint Catharine, in: *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie. Nowa Seria/Journal of the National Museum in Warsaw. New Series* 3/39



**fig. 3:** Gianfrancesco Penni, *The Holy Family with John the Baptist and St. Catherine*, 1520–1522, Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe  
(© Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie / Krzysztof Wilczyński)

later, Raffaellino del Colle (1490–1566) created *The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and Two Angels* on the wall of the Oratorio del Corpus Domini in Urbania<sup>16</sup>. And Gianfrancesco Penni and Raffaellino Del Colle were definitely not the only artists inspired by this painting of Raphael's.

(2014) 217–231. – Paul JOANNIDES, Gianfrancesco Penni's Two Versions of The Holy Family with Saint John and Saint Catharine, *ibid.* 245–254.

<sup>16</sup> Marco DROGHINI, *Dipinti e disegni. Di Raffaellino del Colle per l'Oratorio del Corpus Domini di Urbania*, in: Francesco Maria I Della Rovere di Tiziano. Le collezioni roversche nel palazzo ducale di Casteldurante, ed. by Feliciano PAOLI–John T. SPIKE (Urbino 2019) 105–119.

Already in the mid-1520s, Leo X began to order designs of tapestries from Raphael and his studio, which were later woven by Pieter van Aelst and his workshop (c. 1495–c. 1560) in Brussels<sup>17</sup>. The first pieces that were prepared and realized were part of a series called *Acts of the Apostles* for the Sistine Chapel. This was followed by a series of tapestries *The Triumph of the Gods*, then a series of twenty tapestries of children at play called *Giochi di putti*, and tapestries for the papal ceremonial bed *Letto de paramento*, located in the *camera pappagalli* (Sala dei Pappagalli/later called Sala dei Palafrenieri)<sup>18</sup>. The last-mentioned couple of series were made in van Aelst's workshop after Raphael's death. Their weaving (in 1519–1521) was supervised in Brussels by Tommaso di Andrea Vincidor (1493–1536), Raphael's pupil from Bologna, who was authorized to create the cartoons for the weavers. In one of the cartoons, he also used the composition of Raphael's *Holy Family of Francis I*. A large-size cartoon called *The Meeting of the Two Holy Families* was meant to be used for the last series of *Letto de paramento*, the three main parts of which (*lato*, *capo* and *sopracielo*) represented the *Meeting* (side part – *lato*), the *Nativity of Jesus – Adoration of Infant with Pope Leo X and His Cousins, Cardinals Innocenz Cibo and Giuliano de Medici* (front part – *capo*) and the *Vision of Ezekiel with God the Father Surrounded by Symbols of the Four Evangelists* – also called the *Trinity* (top part – *sopracielo*)<sup>19</sup>. The only parts of the whole project that have been preserved are the tapestry with Ezekiel's vision (Madrid, Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas)<sup>20</sup>, two cartoons of the *Trinity* and *The Meeting of the Two Holy Families* (both in Northamptonshire, Boughton House, the collection of Duke Buccleuch)<sup>21</sup>, including the drawing *Nativity of Jesus* (Paris, Musée du Louvre)<sup>22</sup>. One can see from the sketch for the *Meeting* that Vincidor, who is believed to be the author

<sup>17</sup> John SHEARMAN, Raphael's cartoons in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen, and the tapestries for the Sistine Chapel (London 1972). – Raffael. Macht der Bilder: die Tapisserien und ihre Wirkung, ed. by Stephan KOJA (Dresden 2020).

<sup>18</sup> Tristan WEDDIGEN, Raffaels Papageienzimmer. Ritual, Raumfunktion und Dekoration im Vatikanpalast der Renaissance (Emsdetten 2006) 106. – HENRY-JOANNIDES 31–33, fig. 13.

<sup>19</sup> WEDDIGEN 105–108. – HENRY-JOANNIDES 116, fig. 67.

<sup>20</sup> Inv. no. CE26806, linen, silk, wool, 425 × 347 cm, 1521. Cf. HENRY-JOANNIDES 109, no. 9.

<sup>21</sup> Black chalk, charcoal, gouache, paper, 380 × 368 cm; detto, 298 × 308 cm. Cf. Tom CAMPBELL, Pope Leo X's consistorial 'letto de paramento' and the Boughton House cartoons, in: The Burlington Magazine 138 (1996) 436–445.

<sup>22</sup> Inv. no. 4269, ink, washed, gouache, square grid in black chalk, grey toned paper, 295 × 285 mm. Cf. Oskar FISCHER, Ein Teppichentwurf des Thomas Vincidor, in: Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen 55 (1934) 89–96. A copy of the drawing from the same period can be found in the collections of the Moravian Gallery in Brno (inv. no. B 21, ink, brown-washed, gouache on grey toned paper, 325 × 285 mm). Cf. Zdeněk KAZLEPKA, Italian drawing of the Renaissance and Baroque. A complete catalogue of



**fig. 4:** Tommaso Vincidor – attributed, *The Meeting of the Two Holy Families*, c. 1521, Boughton House (© The Buccleuch Collections)

of all the preparatory work, based it on *The Holy Family of Francis I* (**fig. 4**), but he made some changes: he flipped Raphael's composition horizontally and added the figure of St. Zachariah as well as other figures in the background.

It was the Pope's order and the subsequent stay of Tommaso Vincidor in Brussels at the very beginning of the 1520s that provided a significant impulse for the local art circles: both of them made Raphael's influence stronger and

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Italian drawings from the 16th–18th centuries in the Moravian Gallery in Brno (Brno 2015) 92, no. 174 (Tommaso di Andrea Vincidor).



**fig. 5:** Jan van Hemessen, *Madonna with Child*, 1520–1525, Bruges, Groeningemuseum  
(© Groeningemuseum Brugge / Hugo Maertens)

they are also connected with the above-mentioned second group of paintings, which have compositions based on *The Holy Family of Francis I*<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> Nicole DACOS, Tommaso Vincidor, un élève de Raphaël aux Pays-Bas, in: *Relations artistiques entre les Pays-Bas et l'Italie à la Renaissance*, ed. by Suzanne SULZBERGER (Brussels 1980) 61–99. – EAD., Raphaël et les Pays-Bas. L'école de Bruxelles, in: *Studi*

Paintings that are clearly inspired by Raphael's *Holy Family* began to appear in Flemish circles as early as the 1520s, i.e. immediately after the painting had been finished. One of them is *The Holy Family with St. Elisabeth, St. John the Baptist and Two Angels*, a painting by an anonymous Flemish master dated to the 1520s, which can be found in the collections of the Museo de Bellas Artes in Bilbao<sup>24</sup>. In the same period, Jan van Hemessen (c. 1500–c. 1556/1557) painted the *Madonna with Child*, which is now kept by the Groeninge Museum in Bruges (fig. 5)<sup>25</sup>. This painting, too, is based on Raphael's composition but in a reduced form, focusing solely on the central figures of the mother and the child. A different example is *The Holy Family* from St. James' Church in Antwerp: its author copied Raphael's composition entirely (also this anonymous painting is of Flemish origin) (fig. 6)<sup>26</sup>. Another painter that can be mentioned in this context is Bernard van Orley (before 1490–1542), who was inspired by Raphael's work in his *Holy Family* from 1522. In this work, now located in the collections of the Museo nacional del Prado in Madrid, he creatively used the figures of the Virgin, the Child and the crowning angel (fig. 7)<sup>27</sup>.

None of these artists can be assumed to have known Raphael's *Holy Family of Francis I* directly from the autopsy as the painting was already in France at that time. They must have seen the main figures as well as the composition of the painting in another source – the drawings that were brought to Flanders

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su Raffaell I (Urbino 1987) 611–623. – Maryan W. AINSWORTH, Romanism as a catalyst for change in Bernard van Orley's workshop practices, in: *Making and marketing. Studies of the painting process in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Netherlandish workshops*, ed. by Molly FARIES (Turnhout 2006) 99–118. – Jan SAMMER, Tommaso Vincidor and the Flemish Romanists, in: *Late Raphael. Proceedings of the international symposium*, ed. by Miguel FALOMIR (Madrid 2013) 116–125.

<sup>24</sup> Inv. no. 69/198, oak panel, 197 × 143.7 cm, 1520–1530. Cf. José DE LA FUENTE MARTÍNEZ–José Luis MERINO GOROSPE–Rocío SALAS ALMELA–Ana SÁNCHEZ-LASSA DE LOS SANTOS, *The Holy Family with Saint Elizabeth, the Child Saint John the Baptist and Two Angels*, a copy of Raphael. Technical report, restoration and new light on its history and attribution, in: *Buletina/Bilboko Arte Ederren Museoa 2* (2007) 17–64. – Ana SÁNCHEZ-LASSA DE LOS SANTOS, *La Sacra famiglia con sant'Elisabetta, san Giovannino e due angeli del Museo de Bellas Artes di Bilbao: una copia fiamminga da Raffaello*, in: *Culture figurative a confronto tra Fiandre e Italia dal XV al XVII secolo* (Milano 2008) 63–69.

<sup>25</sup> Inv. no. GRO0232.I., wood, 150.5 × 116.5 cm, 1520–1525. Cf. Burr WALLEN, *Jan van Hemessen: an Antwerp Painter between Reform and Counter-Reform* (Ann Arbor 1983) 289–290, no. 14. – *Groeningemuseum Brugge*, ed. by Tine VAN POUCKE (Antwerp 2016) 54s.

<sup>26</sup> Wood, 127 × 113 cm, 1530–1540.

<sup>27</sup> Inv. no. 2692, wood, 90 × 74 cm. Cf., e.g., Alexandre GALAND, *The Flemish Primitives VI. The Bernard van Orley Group* (Brussels 2013) 34, 91, 99, 102, 107, 114–116, 125.



**fig. 6:** Flemish master, *The Holy Family*, 1530–1540, Antwerp, Church of St. James  
(© KIK-IRPA, Brussels)

from Rome by Tommaso Vincidor after Raphael's death. This paper is the first one to propose that the Liechtenstein grisaille variant of *The Holy Family of Francis I* from Château Lednice should be included in this group of preparatory materials. It is highly probable that it can also be attributed to Tommaso Vincidor.

Unfortunately, a more detailed comparison with Vincidor's work would not take us any further in this case: the works, including the Boughton House cartoon, are merely attributed to him. However, as we shall see below, by com-



fig. 7: Bernard van Orley, *The Holy Family*, 1522, Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (© Photographic Archive Museo Nacional del Prado)

paring the compositions of the Lednice painting, the Boughton House cartoon and works produced in the Netherlands in the 1520s, we can find a number of aspects that all of these have in common. This suggests that the Lednice painting is directly related to works produced by Raphael's studio and this particular piece by Raphael was very probably a source of inspiration for Flemish artists.

THE HOLY FAMILY FROM THE LIECHTENSTEIN COLLECTIONS, ITS  
FUNCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE

*The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and Two Angels* from the Liechtenstein collections has been continuously, as far as we know, regarded and presented as a hanging picture. However, it is not clear if it was originally meant to be hung – some details, both in the composition and materials, suggest otherwise. For instance, it is an oil painting on a very delicate linen canvas, which degrades quickly. The oil colour layer is also quite subtle: a closer examination reveals that in several parts of the painting there is a drawing underneath which was made with a metal stylus. The painter obviously did not feel that he needed to cover all the preparatory drawings. The canvas is glued to a panel made of six oak planks of German origin. This additional modification was made in 1680 at the latest, when the painting appeared in the art collections of Karl Eusebius of Liechtenstein. Nevertheless, it is also possible that some material had already been used to fix the canvas before and it was replaced in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the oak planks. Using the wood panel was probably intended to provide support to the delicate (and probably already quite damaged) canvas and prevent its further degradation. The last examination also detected that a small number of nails had been used in the past to fix the canvas to the stretcher bar. The nails were some 20 to 25 centimetres apart, which is unusually widely spaced<sup>28</sup>. The choice of a delicate, easily degradable canvas, thin colour layer, through which the preparatory drawing can be seen, as well as the small number of nails used to stretch the canvas all suggest that the painting was not originally intended for long-time presentation – in other words, the final painting was not meant to hang on the wall. The restoration specialist Pavel Klimeš, who examined the painting in 2010, even described it as Raphael's original study sketch<sup>29</sup>. However, this attribution is unacceptable.

The underlying drawing, clearly visible in infrared reflectography images, was made by a sure hand and shows no signs of adjustments or modifications, which makes the authors of this paper assume that the painter of the Liechtenstein *Holy Family* used a cartoon to create it (**figs. 8, 9, 10**)<sup>30</sup>. Hypothetically, it could have been the same cartoon, the two fragments of which (from Melbourne and Bayonne), today attributed to Raphael's collaborator Giulio Romano (1499–1546), have been mentioned above (**figs. 11, 12**)<sup>31</sup>. Both frag-

<sup>28</sup> Pavel KLIMEŠ, Lednice: státní zámek—obraz Svatá rodina Františka I. (2010, unpublished restoration report, file available at the National Heritage Institute, Brno).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> The images were taken by The Joint Laboratory of Optics of the Palacký University in Olomouc (Karel Lemr, Antonín Černoch), Olomouc 2021.

<sup>31</sup> See note 14.



**fig. 8:** *The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and Two Angels* (infrared reflectogram), c. 1520, Château Lednice (© Palacký University Olomouc / Karel Lemr, Antonín Černoch)

ments are now believed to be records of *The Holy Family of Francis I*, which were made ex post; they are not deemed to be preparatory drawings. This hypothesis is based on the comparison of the underlying drawing of the original Louvre painting (which can be observed in the infrared reflectography images) and the drawing in the Bayonne cartoon: the lines of St. Joseph's sight are different in the two drawings<sup>32</sup>. And yet the size of the face in the Bayonne drawing and the drawing in the Liechtenstein and Paris paintings are identical.

<sup>32</sup> HENRY–JOANNIDES 143. – Bruno MOTTIN–Élisabeth RAVAUD–Gilles BASTIAN–Myriam EVENO, Raphael and his entourage in Rome: Laboratory study of the works in the



**fig. 9:** *The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and Two Angels* (detail, infrared reflectogram), c. 1520, Château Lednice (© Palacký University Olomouc / Karel Lemr, Antonín Černoch)

Therefore, it appears from the restoration specialist's examination of the Liechtenstein painting that the work was not intended to be used as a hanging picture. Nor is it a classic copy of Raphael's *Holy Family*. It rather seems that it was made as a record for painters who might wish to copy the famous painting in the future, and it was probably really used that way in the southern Netherlands, as evidenced by numerous paintings with similar themes created there from the early 1520s to the late 1540s. In their paintings, Flemish artists fol-

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Musée du Louvre, in: HENRY-JOANNIDES 351–364, particularly 351.



**fig. 10:** *The Holy Family with St. John the Baptist, St. Elisabeth and Two Angels* (detail, infrared reflectogram), c. 1520, Château Lednice (© Palacký University Olomouc / Karel Lemr, Antonín Černoch)

lowed the formal structure of the *Holy Family of Francis I*. However, we can find several identical motifs in their works which make them distinct from Raphael's *Holy Family*. The same motifs can be found in the *Holy Family* from Lednice.

One of the most striking details that the paintings from Lednice, Antwerp, Bruges, Boughton House and Bilbao have in common is the cradle: its front part is a simple construction with spokes, not the solid piece of wood with a palmette carving that we find in the Louvre painting. In addition, the Virgin is barefoot in all the other paintings and her hair is richly plaited; the infant St. John, if included in the composition at all, is not holding a cross in his arms;



**fig. 11:** Giulio Romano – attributed, *St. Elisabeth with St. John, the Christ Child and Angel* (cartoon fragment), c. 1518, Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria (© National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne)

and while St. Elisabeth's headdress in the Louvre painting has stripes, it only has one colour in the other paintings. Another detail that the other paintings have in common is the missing haloes. An important modification in the composition of the Liechtenstein painting is its background: there are buildings with an arch in the central part. A closer look at St. Joseph reveals that the painter made the hair above his forehead more noticeable, and this feature is clearly visible in the underlying drawing revealed during the examination as well. The same detail can be found in the cartoon fragment from Bayonne.



**fig. 12:** Giulio Romano – attributed, *Head of St. Joseph* (cartoon fragment), c. 1518, Bayonne, Musée Bonnat-Helleu (© Musée Bonnat-Helleu, Bayonne / A. Vaquero)

Generally speaking, the author of the Lednice painting was very skilful. One of the remarkable qualities of the piece is a precise two-tone modelling of volumes, which helps a number of features stand out: the long and slender arms of the angel, the naked body of the Christ Child and his mother's face, but also the loose folds of the drapery that the Virgin Mary is wearing, a motif that can be found in the red-chalk drawing from Florence. Another reason to assume that the Liechtenstein painting was a studio's record intended for future use is the chiaroscuro technique – this would have been quite unusual if the painting had been a regular copy. The purpose of the painting was rather mak-

ing a record of the lighting design of the Paris original, i.e. to record its tonal structure (how the lights and shadows are related) – this was more important for future loose multiplications than copying the colour saturation and shades used by Raphael.

The above-mentioned clues suggest that the *Holy Family* from the Liechtenstein collections is a studio record of the *Holy Family of Francis I*. It is evident that the author of the Lednice painting was familiar with the both the form of the famous painting by Raphael and the material from the studio (preparatory drawings and cartoons), which he undoubtedly used when creating this painting. We assume that the piece, not intended for long-term display or to be used as a hanging picture, then travelled with Tommaso Vincidor to the southern Netherlands, where it very probably inspired both Vincidor's Boughton House cartoon and Flemish artists who were in touch with Vincidor and became familiar with his work.