

# **‘Professional Passions’: Art Historians as Collectors in the 20th Century**

by  
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PhD Thesis



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I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

In faith,

Sarah Coviello

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Coviello', written in a cursive style.

# Abstract

This thesis systematically investigates the phenomenon of collecting among art historians in the 20th century. Proposing scholars' collections as a distinctive category, it identifies their peculiar features by asking the following questions: How does an art historian collect? How do art historians engage with their collections? What role do the collections play in the formation of their ideas?

In order to answer these questions, this thesis investigates three paradigmatic examples: the collection of Bernard Berenson, that of Roberto Longhi, and that of Kenneth Clark. Exploring the microcosms of these art historians in their role as private collectors, this research sheds light on what is intrinsically characteristic about a scholar's collection - its tie with the collector's profession, turning collecting into a 'professional passion'.

The text is divided in three thematic parts, built upon case studies taken from the three collections. The first part is dedicated to Connoisseurship, the *fil rouge* that runs throughout the thesis. Showing how collecting becomes an exercise of their collectors' expertise, as in the case of Berenson and his painting *The Virgin and Child with Saint Francis of Assisi and Jerome* by Tonino Navaero, when his thoughts on its attribution 'shifted while looking' from Lorenzo Lotto (1912) to Close to Lotto (1955); and in the case of Clark's study of a tondo by Raphael, which he used to illustrate his research approach in an unpublished article. The second part focuses on art historians as lenders to exhibitions, revealing how objects played an active role, accompanying and embodying their collectors' scholarship, as in the case of Berenson at the *Mostra Giottesca* (1937), and of Roberto Longhi at the *Mostra Bolognese del Trecento* (1950) and at the *Mostra del Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* (1951). The last part further investigates the inter-relation between objects and scholarship, through the case of Kenneth Clark and his paintings by Seurat, highlighting the relationship between personal collecting and the professional networks in which art historians operated.

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# 'Professional Passions': Art Historians as Collectors in the 20th Century

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# Introduction

On the 6th of May 1965, *Thos. Agnew & Sons Ltd* inaugurated a new loan exhibition in their premises on 43 Old Bond Street in London. It was titled *Art Historians and Critics as Collectors*, and had been organised 'in aid of the International Association of Art Critics Benevolent Fund'.<sup>1</sup> The exhibition featured sixty-eight works lent by seventeen art historians and critics, ranging from medieval Indian artefacts to eighteenth-century old masters. Denys Sutton, the editor of *Apollo Magazine* (1962-87), chairman of the British branch of the *International Association of Art Critics*, and a lender to the exhibition himself, wrote in the preface:

The basis of so much English writing about art has always been a respect for connoisseurship. It is this characteristic which has lent a specific quality to our approach to the history of art. Thus it should come as small surprise to find that many English art writers have been collectors as well. It is worth recalling, in this context, that even a writer such as Roger Fry, who went in for theory, was as keen a judge and collector of old masters as he was of modern art. In the last century, or the early part of this one, of course the possibilities for the art historian, expert or critic of making 'finds' and of building up a collection was much greater than in our era. Nevertheless, as the group of works in this Exhibition makes clear, the old tradition dies hard.<sup>2</sup>

Situated at the intersection between History of Collecting and Art Historiography, this thesis on 'Professional Passions' is the first systematic study of an overlooked phenomenon - that of collecting among art historians. Drawing from the contributions of studies on private collectors, dealers, artists, and public collections, it starts with a focus on individuals who were at once experts in the field and private collectors, therefore 'professionals' with a 'passion', to then zoom out, drawing a general profile of a distinctive category

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<sup>1</sup> D. Sutton, 'Preface' in *Art Historians and Critics as Collectors: Loan Exhibition*, London, Thos. Agnew & Sons, 1965

<sup>2</sup> Sutton, 1965

of collectors.<sup>3</sup> How does an art historian collect, why does s/he do it, and what does it imply? Is there such an 'old tradition' of collecting, as Sutton calls it, linked to that of Connoisseurship, and if so, what are its characteristics? These are the lines of enquiry that this thesis will set out to follow.<sup>4</sup>

To answer these questions, the thesis will analyse the collections of three prominent figures of Art History, and in particular Connoisseurship, in the twentieth century, whose categorisation of masters and schools have defined the internal geography of museums and art historical narratives to the present day.<sup>5</sup> These are Bernard Berenson (1865-1959) and Roberto Longhi (1890-1970), two rival connoisseurs of Italian art history both based in Italy, and Kenneth Clark (1903-1983), a connoisseur with a wider range active in the United Kingdom. Their three collections are particularly suitable for the purpose of this investigation, because their history is documented from the moment at which they were begun, until their dispersal or preservation through sales, donations, and the creation of foundations for the study of History of Art. The choice of these influential connoisseurs and public figures covers several different approaches over a period of time that stretches from the beginning of the twentieth century to the 1980s, allowing this thesis to trace the influence these scholars had on shaping the canon of Art History, as well as their role as taste-makers, but seen, rather than through the conventional lens of their writings, through their activity as collectors.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In this extent it is not a collection of studies on each individual collections, such as P. Cabanne, *The Great Collectors*, London, Cassell, 1963 or J. Stourton, *The British as Art Collectors: From the Tudors to the Present*, London, Scala, 2014; but rather a study on a category of collection, inspired by A. Higonnet, *A Museum of One's Own, Private Collecting, Public Gift*, New York, Periscope Publishing, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Connoisseurship is here understood as the strand of art history, systematised at the end of the 19th-century, and further developed in the 20th century, that aims at determining an object's attribution, framing its production within a particular time, space, and cultural context.

<sup>5</sup> On 20th-century art historiography see, for example, G. C. Sciolla, *La critica d'arte del Novecento*, UTET, Turin, 1995; E. Fernie (ed.), *Art History and its Methods: A Critical Anthology*, London, 1995; M. Hatt, C. Klonk, *Art History. A Critical Introduction to Its, Methods*, Manchester, 2006; J. Elkins, *Our Beautiful, Dry and Distant Texts. Art History as Writing*, London, 2000 ; G. De Lorenzi, *Arte e critica in Italia nella prima metà del Novecento*, Roma, Gangemi, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> See G. Langfeld, 'The canon in art history: concepts and approaches' in *Journal of Art Historiography*, 19, 2018 ; J. R. Givens, 'The art historical canon and the market' in *Grove Art Online*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oao/9781884446054.013.2000000208>

The boundaries of the term 'Art Historian', as used in this thesis, are rather fluid, given the time frame and the historical figures under consideration, but are linked to the establishment of Art History as an academic discipline. While the first European university to offer a course in Art History was that of Vienna in 1852, in Italy, where two out of three collections were housed (Berenson's, Longhi's), the first official chair was created only in 1901, and given to Adolfo Venturi, the tutor of Roberto Longhi.<sup>7</sup> In the U.S., where Berenson attended university, at Harvard, the first appointments of Art History lecturers occurred a generation earlier, in the 1880s.<sup>8</sup> In the United Kingdom, the first academic courses in Art History were offered in the late 1850s, as part of Fine Art degrees, and often given by foreigner scholars, especially Germans.<sup>9</sup> Yet it is not until the 1930s, with the foundation of the Courtauld Institute in 1932 and the arrival of the Warburg Institute in London in 1934, that Art History was established as an academic subject *per se*.<sup>10</sup>

In the early 20th century, academic Art History kept a close relationship with the art market, and hence with collecting (both private and public), as well as with the museum world, and with the protection of cultural heritage, especially as far as the Italian context is concerned. Just like today, training as an Art Historian could prepare one for a range of different careers, including, but not limited to: art writing, either for the wider public or for specialists; working as expert advisor for dealers, auction houses, and private collectors; and being

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<sup>7</sup> Venturi had already started teaching in 1890. Iamurri, 2012. On the institutionalisation of Art History in Italy, see G. Agosti, *La nascita della storia dell'arte in Italia: Adolfo Venturi dal museo all'università, 1880- 1940*, Venice, 1996; L. Iamurri, 'Art History in Italy: Connoisseurship, Academic Scholarship and the Protection of Cultural Heritage' in *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe : Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks*, Rampley M., Lenain T., Locher H., Pinotti A., Scholle-Glass C., and Zijlmans K. (eds.), Leiden, Brill, 2012, pp. 393 - 406 ; Sciolla, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> C. O. O'Donnell, 'Berensonian Formalism and Pragmatist Perception' in *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, vol. 62, n.2, 2017, pp. 283-305, p. 287

<sup>9</sup> Slade professorships in Fine Art started in 1869 and the first chair was established in Edinburgh in 1880. See G. Pollock, 'Art History and Visual Studies in Great Britain and Ireland' in Rampley, 2012, pp. 355-378

<sup>10</sup> C. Elam, 'Benedict Nicolson: Becoming an Art Historian in the 1930s' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 146, n. 1211, 2004, pp. 76-87; Pollock, 2012 ; J. von Müller, J. Anderson, M. Finch, *Image Journeys: The Warburg Institute and a British Art History*, Dietmar Klinger Verlag, Passau, 2019



employed at a public gallery or museum, or at an art institution.<sup>11</sup> This was certainly the case with the three figures of this thesis, who all covered different roles at once. Bernard Berenson, for instance, never lectured at university, nor was he formally employed by any public institution, despite being involved in many collaborations with such institutions. Instead, as shall be explored at greater length below, he made a living out of providing his services as an expert, working for dealers and collectors, whilst publishing his studies as an independent scholar. With a career that stretches from the end of the nineteenth century well into the twentieth, Berenson is also representative of the blurred concept of the Art Historian that existed at the time. Besides being an art advisor for firms such as Duveen and Wildenstein, and for many private collectors in the US and in Europe, Berenson was one of the many '*marchand-amateurs*', connoisseurs who would also act as a dealers, buying works of art, making use of his skills as expert, with the intention to re-sell.<sup>12</sup> As will be seen on several occasions throughout the thesis, when analysing Berenson's collecting activity, especially at its peak before World War I, it is in fact difficult to discern whether an object was bought for his personal collection, or with the intention to sell it on, even if it was eventually never sold.<sup>13</sup> Roberto Longhi, by contrast, was much closer to our modern concept of the academic art historian. He graduated with Adolfo Venturi, and later became professor himself, first at the University of Bologna in 1933/34, and then at the University of Florence in 1949.<sup>14</sup> Yet, already in 1920, he was also working as advisor for the dealer and collector Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi, and throughout his life he was asked to issue *expertises* for both public and private enterprises.<sup>15</sup> Kenneth Clark, in his turn, was a scholar whose career had developed primarily in the museum sphere, where he worked his way up from Keeper of the

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<sup>11</sup> Elam, 2004, p. 78

<sup>12</sup> Zeri F., *La Collezione Federico Mason Perkins*, Turin, Allemandi, 1988

<sup>13</sup> Strehlke C.B., 'Bernard and Mary Collect: Pictures Come to I Tatti' in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, *The Bernard and Mary Berenson collection of European paintings at I Tatti*, 2015, pp. 19-46

<sup>14</sup> In 1922 he was already lecturing as as a freelancer at the university of Rome.

<sup>15</sup> By 'expertise' it is meant the legally binding document by which an expert authenticate an object's value - a source of income for the issuers. F. Bonan, 'Expertise, perizia e stima' in *Collezione da Tiffany*, <https://www.collezionedatiffany.com/expertise-perizia-stima/> [24MAR21]

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (1933), to Surveyor of the King's Pictures (1934), and Director of the National Gallery in London (1934-1945). He combined this with lecturing at national and international institutions, including universities such as Oxford and Cambridge, and from 1935, he acted as personal advisor to the collector Calouste Gulbenkian.<sup>16</sup> Thus, for the purpose of this thesis, the term 'Art Historian' should be understood according to the definition of Donald Preziosi, as a person who works in a 'field of dispersion wherein *[there is]* a series of intersecting institutions - academic art history, art criticism, museology, the art market, connoisseurship'.<sup>17</sup>

Art Historiography, meanwhile, reveals a plethora of approaches in art history, which have generated at times proper frictions and debates among followers of different strands.<sup>18</sup> One such debate, which is linked to the rise of academic Art History, is particularly relevant in the present context: Art Criticism vs Art History, a dichotomy that has in fact never been resolved.<sup>19</sup> In the 1990s, Richard Read effectively summarised the main differences between the two, taking as example the problematic relationship between Adrian Stokes, albeit with an interest in the recent developments in psychology, and E. H. Gombrich, then Director of the Warburg Institute in London, whose work was rooted in the traditions of German Art History, enriched by the work of Aby Warburg and the Warburg circle, who sought to establish a science-based investigation of the experience of art.<sup>20</sup> According to Read, Art Criticism focuses on the 'expressive significance' of the object studied, relying on 'individualist aesthetics' and 'unhistorical intuitions', and expresses itself through 'subjective eloquence', often characteristic of an 'amateur writer on

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<sup>16</sup> As deduced from the correspondence in the Museum Calouste Gulbenkian Archive

<sup>17</sup> D. Preziosi, 'The Question of Art History' in *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 18, 1992, p. 385, cited in R. Read, 'Art Criticism Versus Art History: The Letters and Works of Adrian Stokes and E. H. Gombrich' in *Art History*, vol. 16, n. 4, December 1993, pp. 499-540, p. 520. This thesis focusses mainly on collecting and studying Western art from the Renaissance, the arguments explored, however, could apply to the study of any kind of global art historian and collection

<sup>18</sup> See Sciolla, 1985 ; Read, 1993

<sup>19</sup> See Read, 1993

<sup>20</sup> Read, 1993, p. 503 ; on aesthetics see F. Tononi, 'Worringer, Dewey, Goodman, and the concept of Aesthetic Experience: A Biological Perspective' in ITINERA, manuscript in publication soon.

art, supported by a private income'.<sup>21</sup> Art History, on the other hand, is concerned with the study of the 'historical progress of modes of representation', based on 'scientific [...] classification, analysis and argument' and 'rational historical criticism', rather than on 'poetic evocation'.<sup>22</sup>

Although Gombrich himself saw these approaches as mutually exclusive opposites, Read argues that it is more fruitful to consider them as parts of a continuous spectrum, with the appreciation of each varying according to context.<sup>23</sup> As far as the case studies in this thesis are concerned, they can in fact very rarely be clearly differentiated.<sup>24</sup> Bernard Berenson and Roberto Longhi, for example, each thought to contribute to a 'scientific' map of art history, but through the practice of Connoisseurship. They blended an experimental method involving the comparison of formal qualities of objects, often expressed in subjective and aestheticising terms by Berenson, and in an even more embellished prose by Longhi, with an attention to the social cultural context of an object's production, as documented in literary and archival sources, which was more typical of the German philological-positivist approach.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, Kenneth Clark often oscillated between the anglophone aestheticising tradition of Ruskin, Pater, Fry, and indeed Berenson on the one hand, and a more Warburgian analytic approach to iconographical themes, such as 'Landscape', on the other.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Read, p. 500. Clark would be in the limbo between.

<sup>22</sup> Read, p. 500

<sup>23</sup> Read, 1993, p. 506. See also E. Wind, *Art and Anarchy*, London, Faber & Faber, 1963

<sup>24</sup> Read, 1993, p. 507

<sup>25</sup> See Wedepohl C., 'Bernard Berenson and Aby Warburg : absolute opposites' in *Bernard Berenson : formation and heritage*, Connors J., Waldman L. (eds.), Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2014, pp. 143-172: On Longhi's language see Garboli C., Montagnani C. (eds.), *Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi: lettere e scartafacci 1912-1957*, Milan, Adelphi edizioni, 1993

<sup>26</sup> Connoisseurship aside, Clark's approach evolved, especially after listening to Aby Warburg's lecture in 1929 at the Hertziana in Rome. Following the example of Roger Fry, he was also interested in Impressionists and Post-Impressionists and in the art of his own time. E. Sears, 'Kenneth Clark and Gertrud Bing: letters on 'The Nude' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 153, n. 1301, 2011, pp. 530-531 ; von Müller, Anderson, Finch, 2019

Connoisseurship, the *file rouge* running through and connecting the work of Berenson, Longhi, and Clark, is in fact the very embodiment of an almost Hegelian synthesis between a more personal, aestheticising approach and a more scientific, historical one.<sup>27</sup> Its core activities, the attributing of works to a master, the situating of the object's creation in a more or less defined time period and geographical frame, the distinguishing of copies and fakes, as well as the reconstruction of dismantled artworks or complexes, lie of course at the heart of every type of Art History, and form the starting point of any approach.<sup>28</sup>

The late nineteenth century saw attempts at the theorisation and systematisation of Connoisseurship, as exemplified by the so-called 'scientific connoisseurship' of Giovanni Morelli.<sup>29</sup> Trained as a physician, Morelli is mostly known for the use of comparative morphology and botany in attributing paintings to the hand of an artist, focusing on the study of the execution of details such as ears and hands. Morelli's system, but also the ones employed by his contemporaries Giambattista Cavalcaselle and Gustavo Frizzoni,

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<sup>27</sup> The literature on connoisseurship is vast. Among the most important contributions for 19th century, see Agosti G., Manca P. (eds), *Giovanni morelli e la cultura dei conoscitori*, Bergamo, 1993; Anderson J., *Collecting connoisseurship and the art market in Risorgimento Italy*, Venice, Ist. Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 1999; Hodgkinson, C., *A Question of Attribution: Art Connoisseurship in the Nineteenth Century*, 2014. On the 20th century, see the most recent contributions: Melius J., 'Connoisseurship, Painting, and Personhood' in *Art History*, April 2011, pp. 288-309, dedicated to the issue of the creation of composite personalities in the attribution of paintings, a practice mastered by Berenson and Longhi, and also practiced by Clark; Locatelli V., ' "Es sey das Sehen eine Kunst" Sull'arte della connoisseurship e i suoi strumenti' in: *Kunstgeschichte*. Open Peer Reviewed Journal, 2014, <http://www.kunstgeschichte-ejournal.net/365/>. She investigated the use of drawings and photographs. See also Bacchi A. (ed.), *I colori del bianco e nero : fotografie storiche nella Fototeca Zeri, 1870-1920*, Bologna, Fondazione Federico Zeri, 2014. In *colori del bianco e nero* (2014); A. Aggujaro, S. Albl (eds.), "Il metodo del conoscitore : approcci, limiti, prospettive", Rome, Artemide, 2016. See also Kobi V. (ed.), *The limits of connoisseurship*, Journal of Art Histoigraphy, n. 12, June 2017.

<sup>28</sup> D. Freedberg, 'Why Connoisseurship matters' in *Munuscula Amicorum: Contributions on Rubens and His Colleagues in Honour of Hans Vlieghe*, K. van Stighelen (ed.), Turnhout, Brepols, 2006, pp. 29-43, p. 32 ; D. Ebitz, 'Connoisseurship as Practice' in *Artibus et Historiae*, vol.9, 1988, p.. 207-212, pp. 207-8

<sup>29</sup> See Agosti, Manca, 1993 ; A. Trotta, *Berenson e Lotto: problemi di metodo e di storia dell'arte*, Naples, La Città del Sole, 2006 ; Zambrano P., Bernard Berenson e l'Amico di Sandro in *Amico di Sandro*, Zambrano P. (ed.), Milan, Electa, 2006, pp. 9-70 ; G. Angelini (ed.), *Giovanni Morelli tra critica delle arti e collezionismo*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2020; M. Cardinali, *Dalla diagnostica artistica alla technical art history. nascita di una metodologia di studio della storia dell'arte (1874-1938)*, Turin, Kermes, giugno 2020

informed the work of Bernard Berenson, as well as that of Roberto Longhi, and later Kenneth Clark.<sup>30</sup> Ultimately, however, Connoisseurship relies on skills that, while ‘central to any art historian’, can only be acquired through practice – practice that can be honed in particular through the personal collecting of art.<sup>31</sup> For this reason, Connoisseurship forms an important theme within this thesis.

Needless to say, Connoisseurship as a skill has been the subject of considerable controversy, precisely because of the suspicion of subjectivity. Connoisseurship is in effect often the product of an interaction between various agents, including ‘scholars, museum professionals, dealers, and collectors’, the institutions they work for, and their relative interests.<sup>32</sup> The same network of agents revolve around a scholar’s collecting activity. There is nonetheless also an analytical side to the process, to which it is essential to devote a few words as Connoisseurship is a crucial element in the formation of the art historians’ art collections discussed here. Serious connoisseurs reach the answers to their enquiries regarding an object’s attribution and quality through a series of steps of trial and error, in which existing hypotheses are frequently re-evaluated on the basis of new evidence.<sup>33</sup> Connoisseurship, in fact, does ‘not give guarantees, but systematises credibly a continuous expanding experience’, to cite a definition of ‘science’ given by Scheffler in 1967.<sup>34</sup>

On the one hand, there is the issue of how scientific connoisseurship is performed, and the difficulty to describe and divulge its practice, allowing for the rise of the myth of the connoisseur as an individual with almost magical skills. Many connoisseurs have attempted to describe the process - some in literary formats such as dialogues, as in the case of Giovanni Morelli, others

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<sup>30</sup> Trotta, 2006

<sup>31</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 207. The topic was also presented and discussed with the author by Magdalena Bialonowska at the conference *Collecting: modus operandi, 1900-1950*, 15-16 FEB 2019, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

<sup>32</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 207

<sup>33</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 209 ; D. Carrier, ‘In Praise of Connoisseurship’ in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, n. 61, 2003, pp. 159-169

<sup>34</sup> Carrier, 2003, p. 162

through showing its application on chosen case studies, as in the case of Berenson and Longhi, and yet others in the form of didactic treatises, as in the case of Max Friedländer.<sup>35</sup> Beside providing a generalised list of aims, such as discerning the hands of artists, and identify originals from copies and fakes, these texts spend relatively little on the 'how'.

Connoisseurship essentially relies on the art of looking, memorising, and recognising similar traits.<sup>36</sup> As emerging from their writings and as underlined by historiographers, the initial steps in the formulation of an argument are usually based on the intuition each practitioner has with the general impression given by the object examined, often mediated and helped by its reproduction.<sup>37</sup> Yet as it was incompatible with the notion of a 'scientific connoisseurship' promoted at the time, and aspirations to develop a systematic method, Connoisseurs such as Morelli, Berenson, and Friedländer acknowledged intuition as part of the process, but sought to relegate it to a marginal role, to avoid the critique of subjectivism.<sup>38</sup> This dismissive attitude towards the role played by intuition for a scholar might also explain why scholars collectors tend to avoid calling themselves collectors. Collecting is in fact rather subjective and passion-driven, and connoisseurs such as Berenson and Longhi and have often distanced themselves from the idea of an obsession to possess that they associated with private collecting.<sup>39</sup>

Criticism of Connoisseurship has often argued against its efficiency, highlighting the changes through time of pronounced attributions. Yet, with the

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<sup>35</sup> M. J. Friedländer, *On Art and Connoisseurship*, London, Cassirer, 1943

<sup>36</sup> See Lorber M., 'In the beginning was the guess: continuità della "connoisseurship" da Johann Domenico Fiorillo a Bernard Berenson ; fonti, questioni di metodo e concetti teoretici' in *Arte in Friuli, arte a Trieste*, n.27, 2008, pp. 117-134 and Provo A., *Notions of Method: Text and Photograph in Methods of Connoisseurship*, unpublished thesis, Wesleyan University, 2010, p. 19

<sup>37</sup> See Caraffa C., Serena T. (eds.), *Photo Archives and the Idea of Nation*, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2015; Kobi, 2017 ; Bärnighausen J., Caraffa C. (eds.), *Photography and the art market around 1900*, Florence, Centro Di edizioni, 2020

<sup>38</sup> Neuroscientific studies explain that the act of recognising a particular style, school, or artist's hand always starts from intuition, identified with an activity of the brain named 'thin slicing'. Freedberg, 2006, p. 30

<sup>39</sup> Molfino F., *Il possesso della bellezza: dialogo sui collezionisti d'arte*, Turin, Allemandi, 1997.

understanding that even ‘sciences do not approve of universally valid methods’, it would not be fair to judge the effectiveness of Connoisseurship by the validity of its results, such as correct attributions.<sup>40</sup> Any argument is to be held true until new evidence suggests the contrary, following the scientific experimental circular process described above, which will always provide fruitful contributions for further research, as often expressed by connoisseurs themselves.<sup>41</sup>

The regular re-attribution of works is often seen as proof of Connoisseurship’s unreliability, but this is perhaps a somewhat unfair point. Even in science there are no ‘universally valid methods’ and any argument is held true until new evidence suggests an alternative.<sup>42</sup> It cannot be denied, on the other hand, that Connoisseurship in practice is dependent on each individual’s experience, knowledge, and status of authority, and therefore subjective.<sup>43</sup> Doubts about the validity of a connoisseur’s judgement arise in particular when the scholar’s expertise was offered for payment and in the service of the art market, where factors of authorship and quality directly influence the value of an object. Issues of remuneration and influence on the art market played a role with all three of the scholar-collectors under consideration. Berenson gained his income working directly for dealers, in particular the firms Duveen and Wildenstein, while Longhi and Clark were consulted or referenced in order to argue for attributions, deriving status from their position as academics (Longhi) or directors of public galleries (Clark). Each also worked as a paid advisor to private collectors, which partially allowed them to build the personal collections at the heart of this study.<sup>44</sup> More importantly, their very experience in the field of Connoisseurship gave Berenson and Longhi the tools and contacts needed to build their collections. This thesis will highlight the role that Connoisseurship played in the formation of the collections, but also through case studies show that in spite of the air of

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<sup>40</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 209 ; Carrier, 2003, pp. 163-4

<sup>41</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 209

<sup>42</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 209

<sup>43</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 209

<sup>44</sup> See Chapter One for further information on the collectors’ work outside academia

suspicion around the subject, Connoisseurship was a serious pursuit for all three scholars.

As important as the theme of Connoisseurship, in the context of this thesis, is that of the art market. The scholarship on the market for Old Masters in the Nineteenth Century is vast.<sup>45</sup> By contrast, only recently scholars have started to look more systematically at the twentieth century in Europe.<sup>46</sup> Characteristic of these later studies is the innovative understanding of the art market and the dynamics of private and public collecting, but also of the wider discipline of art history, as a network of individuals and institutions - a network that revolves around objects, with the individuals and institutions acting as agents (taste

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<sup>45</sup> See for instance J. Warren, A. Turpin (eds.), *Auctions, Agents & Dealers: The Mechanisms of the Art Market 1660-1830*, Oxford, 2007 ; I. Reist (ed.), *British models of art collecting and the American response: reflections across the pond*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2014; *Art crossing borders : the international art market in the age of nation states, 1760-1914*, Leiden, Brill, 2015

<sup>46</sup> On the exportation of art from Europe to America, see I. Reist (ed.). *A Market for Merchant Princes. Collecting Italian Renaissance paintings in America*, The Frick Collection, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015 ; F. Gennari-Santori, *The Melancholy of Masterpieces: Old Master Paintings in America*, Milan, 2003. Others, were more economics-based papers, focusing on the analysis on the fluctuation of works prices, according to schools and artists, as the pivotal work by Reitlinger. See Reitlinger G., 'The Rise and Fall of Objets d'Art Prices, since 1750' in *The economics of taste*, vol. 2, London, Barrie and Rockliff, 1961. For a more recent and systematic overview, see S. Avery-Quash, B. Pezzini (eds.), *Old Masters Worldwide Markets, Movements and Museums, 1789-1939*, London, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021



makers, intermediaries, facilitators) on the 'life trajectory' of these objects.<sup>47</sup> This thesis examines in fact a particular case, in which the collectors themselves were such active agents, being also the scholar or expert. Several of the studies presented here give an insight into the relationship between scholarship, taste, and the art market, and especially the agency of scholarly authority.<sup>48</sup> In the catalogue of a 1984 exhibition entitled *Art, commerce, scholarship: a Window onto the Art World: Colnaghi 1760-1984*, Ellis K. Waterhouse recalled, when writing about the role of connoisseurs in the 1890s:

A new species of art critic, especially foreigners such as [...] Bernard Berenson, was jockeying for position as *the* authority on Old Masters [...]. It resulted in members of the art trade realising they would do well to pay attention, whether they believed them or not, to the views of the new experts.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Understanding provenance as the 'study of historical ownership and circulation of objects', this thesis pays special attention to the moment in which objects entered the collection of the scholars who collected them. See G. Feigenbaum and I. Reist (eds), *Provenance. An Alternate History of Art*, Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 2012. This approach is mainly influenced by anthropological investigations such as A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986 ; Fiona Cheetham 'An actor-network perspective of collecting and collectables' in *Narrating Objects, Collecting Stories*, S. H. Dudley, A. J. Barnes, J. Binnie, J. Petrov, J. Walklate (eds.), London, Routledge, 2012. To learn more about approaches to the history of collections through ANT, see S. Byrne, A. Clarke, R. Harrison, R. Torrence (eds.), *Unpacking the Collection: Networks of Material and Social Agency in the Museum*, New York, Springer, 2011. See also B. Pezzini, 'A Nexus between Private and Public Collecting: Herbert Cook as Patron of the Arts at the Turn of the Twentieth Century', in *Francis Cook as Collector*, Lisbon, Caleidoscopio, 2017; B. Pezzini, 'Book Review: de Munck/Lyna, Concepts of Value in European Culture' in *Journal for Art Market Studies*, vol.1, n.2, 2017 ; B. Pezzini, *Towards a dynamic theory of collecting? Agnew's and their networks in Manchester (1850-1890)*, paper presented at the CAA in Washington DC on 5 February 2016, [www.academia.edu/19609033/Towards\\_a\\_dynamic\\_theory\\_of\\_collecting\\_Agnew\\_s\\_and\\_their\\_networks\\_in\\_Manchester\\_1850-1890\\_-\\_CAA\\_Washington\\_DC\\_5\\_February\\_2016](http://www.academia.edu/19609033/Towards_a_dynamic_theory_of_collecting_Agnew_s_and_their_networks_in_Manchester_1850-1890_-_CAA_Washington_DC_5_February_2016)

<sup>48</sup> See *Economic Engagements with Art* (1999), and in particular D. W. Goodwin's essay on Roger Fry, Clive Bell and Kenneth Clark. N. De Marchi, C. D. W. Goodwin (eds.), *Economic Engagements with Art*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1999 ; C. D. W. Goodwin, 'The Economics of Art through Art Critics Eyes' in De Marchi, Goodwin, 1999. See also D. Garstang (ed.), *Art, commerce, scholarship : a Window onto the Art World : Colnaghi 1760-1984*, London, P. & D. Colnaghi, 1984. In particular, Peter Cannon-Brookes and Denys Sutton essays give a concise but thorough overview of the London art market in the century that followed the Settled Lands Act of 1882 and during the Wall Street Crash. P. Cannon-Brookes, 'The London Art Market: 1882-1931' in Garstang, 1984, pp. 39-41 ; D. Sutton, 'Collecting old masters in the Twentieth Century' in Garstang, 1984, pp. 42-44

<sup>49</sup> E. K. Waterhouse, 'Thoughts in the Cataloguing of Pictures at Exhibitions' in Garstang, 1984, pp. 60-62, p. 61

The expertise of scholars such as Berenson, Longhi, and Clark in determining or arguing for an object's attribution became increasingly relevant to and sought after by both sides of the market - dealers and consumers. Within art market studies, the seminal book written by Harrison White and Cynthia White, published in 1965, had already delineated the importance of the scholarship in the so called 'academic system' for 19th Century French artists' careers, linked with the milieu of the Fine Arts Academy and the *Salon*, with was eventually supplanted with the 'dealer-critic system', in which agency shifted to dealers and galleries such as Paul Durand Ruel.<sup>50</sup> According to White and White, this transition would have occurred in the 1870s.<sup>51</sup> More recent research, however, based on the analysis of auction records dating from the 1870s to the 1920s, demonstrated how the academic system ceased to have a serious impact on art prices only after World War I.<sup>52</sup> These studies have a focus on living artists and art academies, but some of their general conclusions, especially regarding the rise of the dealer-critic system, equally apply to the old masters market. In this case, given the status reached by connoisseurs, the academic system (defined as scholars who canonise the narrative of art history, and not academicians) overlaps, I would argue, with the dealer-critic system, although dealer-expert system would probably be the more appropriate term here.<sup>53</sup> For instance, among the explanatory values considered by econometric analysis, attribution and bibliography, factors directly correlated with scholarship, play a significative role in the performance of objects at auction.<sup>54</sup> As Walter Friedländer wrote in his text on Connoisseurship in 1943: 'every work of art has a financial value which largely

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<sup>50</sup> H. White, C. A. White, 'Canvases and Careers, Institutional Change in the French Painting World', New York, London and Sydney, J. Wiley and Sons, 1965, p. 98,

<sup>51</sup> White, White, 1965, p. 151 ; L. Saint-Raymond, 'Revisiting Harrison and Cynthia White's Academic vs. Dealer-Critic System' in *Arts*, vol. 8, n. 3, 96, 2019, pp. 1-17 , p. 2

<sup>52</sup> Saint-Raymond, 2019, p. 3

<sup>53</sup> Saint-Raymond is also convinced of a collaboration rather than opposition between the systems, Saint-Raymond, 2019, p. 3

<sup>54</sup> Saint-Raymond, 2019, pp. 3-4

depends on the view taken of its authorship'.<sup>55</sup> In 2018, taking the scholar Klaus Ertz and his work on Pieter Breughel the Younger as a case study, a paper entitled *The Effect of Experts' Opinion on Prices of Art Works* has provided some 'empirical evidence' that scholars were and still are 'key actors' that 'help reduce information asymmetry and increase confidence'.<sup>56</sup>

Other studies have also highlighted how old masters dealers have often asked experts for advice in order to secure better deals, either through arguing for a re-attribution or through creating an interest in otherwise over-looked artists and schools. Barbara Pezzini, for instance, in the paper *Provenance as a History of Change: from Caliarì in Scotland to Tintoretto in America*, investigated the 'enmeshment of art and scholarship' within the London Art Market of the early 20th century.<sup>57</sup> Taking as an example the sale of a portrait by Tintoretto in 1927, she uncovered how the dealer behind it, Agnew's, used the authority of three different scholars in order to argue for the painting's re-evaluation. When the painting was bought by Colin Agnew in 1927 (incidentally, a supplier of several pieces in Kenneth Clark's collection) it bore an attribution to Paoletto Caliarì. He recognised however, that the painting might be a more profitable Tintoretto, and sought confirmation from Wilhelm von Bode, the famous German connoisseur and director of the Berlin museums, as well as from Tancred Borenius, the Finnish art historian who was the first art history professor at UCL, both scholars with whom he had previously worked.<sup>58</sup> In addition, Agnew commissioned three articles: from Borenius; from Lionello Venturi, the son of Adolfo, father of Italian Art History; and from Charles Ricketts, artist and connoisseur.<sup>59</sup> The painting was sold to the Boston Museum for 15.000 GBP, with a margin of 13.500 GBP profit. It kept its

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<sup>55</sup> Cited in V. Ginsburgh, A. Radermecker, D. Tommasi, 'The Effect of Experts' Opinion on Prices of Art Works' in *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, Elsevier, vol. 159(C), 2019, pp. 36-50, p. 37

<sup>56</sup> Ginsburgh, Radermecker, Tommasi, 2019, p. 37

<sup>57</sup> B. Pezzini, M. G. Brennan, 'Provenance as a history of change: from Caliarì in Scotland to Tintoretto in America' in *Journal of the History of Collections*, vol. 30, n.1, 2018, pp. 77-89. See also I. Gaskell, 'Tradesmen as Scholars: Interdependencies in the Study and Exchange of Art' in *Mansfield E. Art History and its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline*, London and New York, Routledge, 2002, pp. 146-162

<sup>58</sup> Pezzini, Brennan, 2018, p. 78

<sup>59</sup> Pezzini, Brennan, 2018, p. 84

attribution to Jacopo Robusti (Tintoretto) until the 1990s, when it was eventually changed to Domenico Robusti.<sup>60</sup> The 'synergy' between dealers, other actors of the market, and scholars is further investigated in a recent publication, edited by Susanna Avery-Quash, which is among the first studies entirely dedicated to the networks of the Old Master Market in the 20th century. As stated by Scullen in her case study on Bode and Duveen: 'In the early 20th century, the most successful old master dealers were those who could establish connections with public institutions and museum professionals, as well as with private scholars and connoisseurs'.<sup>61</sup>

Its direct implications for the art market aside, an art historian's authority is also to be measured against their role in shaping the map of art history, both in setting up directions for further studies, and in creating a narrative for the general public, establishing what is called the 'canon' of art history.<sup>62</sup> The latter has been defined as 'the conventional timeline of artists who are sometimes considered as 'Old Masters' or 'Great Artists';<sup>63</sup> it is obviously not a pre-existing reality, but rather a constructed one, recognised and shared as exemplary.<sup>64</sup> As such, the canon is constantly re-shaped and re-defined by different agents, according to the tastes of the time and fashions in the art market.<sup>65</sup> This thesis will show several examples of how aspects of the canon were shaped by our three scholar-collectors, and which role their collections played in that process. Each contributed to the re-discovery and re-evaluation of neglected schools, artists, and genres, which eventually received general recognition, as in the case of Bernard Berenson and Lorenzo Lotto, or Roberto Longhi and Caravaggio. The collecting activity of the scholars accompanied,

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<sup>60</sup> Pezzini, Brennan, 2018, p. 85. Many art historians sold paintings to and through Agnews, such as Venturi, Tancred Borenius, Nicolson, Clark.

<sup>61</sup> C.B. Scullen, 'Authority and Expertise in the Old Master Market: Bode and Duveen' in *Old Masters Worldwide Markets, Movements and Museums, 1789–1939*, Avery-Quash S., Pezzini B.(eds.), London, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021 pp. 147- 160, p.157

<sup>62</sup> Givens, 2019 ; H. Locher, 'The idea of the Canon and Canon Formation in Art History' in *Rampley*, 2012, pp. 29-40, p. 32

<sup>63</sup> See definition at <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/glossary/canon-of-art-history>

<sup>64</sup> Locher, 2012, p. 29

<sup>65</sup> Locher, 2012, p. 32. See F. Haskell, *Rediscoveries in art : some aspects of taste, fashion and collecting in England and France*, London, Phaidon, 1976

and at times stimulated the scholars' studies and efforts to enlarge the canon of the time. Among the means scholars used for this purpose, the organisation of exhibitions played a central role.

Recent studies have stressed the importance of these ephemeral events as indicators of the evolution of art historical narratives, changes in taste, and social and political ideologies.<sup>66</sup> Francis Haskell is considered the father of this particular historical approach, as illustrated in *The Ephemeral Museum*, which posthumously includes his work on the rising phenomenon of Old Master exhibitions from the 17th to the 20th century.<sup>67</sup> This thesis adds something new to this field, demonstrating how art historians contributed to exhibitions not only in their role of scientific advisors, acting once again as taste makers, but also as collectors, lending objects from their own collections.

The thesis is in fact a systematic study of attitudes towards collecting that are shared by a specific type of collector, that of the scholar-collector. Thus it will contribute to the History of Collecting, as well as to Art Historiography, and specifically the historiography of Connoisseurship. The thesis will investigate the experiential interaction established between objects and their collectors, ultimately demonstrating how Collecting and Art History are intellectually and materially intertwined. Both Art History and Connoisseurship are in fact about objects that possess a physical reality of their own.<sup>68</sup> It is arguable that a

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<sup>66</sup> Seminal texts include E. Castelnuovo, A. Monciatti (eds.), *Medioevo/Medioevi. Un secolo di esposizioni d'arte medievale*, Pisa, Edizioni della Normale, 2007; Cimmoli A. C., *Musei Effimeri: Allestimenti di mostre in Italia 1949-1963*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 2007; Catalano M.I., *Snodi di critica. Musei, mostre, restauro, e diagnostica artistica in Italia 1930-1940*, Rome, Gangemi, 2013; L. Carletti, C. Giometti, 'In margine all'"Editoriale mostre e musei" di Roberto Longhi: gli antichi maestri italiani a San Francisco nel 1939' in *Predella*, n. 36, 2014, pp. 71-85; Toffanello M. (ed.), *All'origine delle grandi mostre in Italia (1933-1940). Storia dell'arte e storiografia tra divulgazione di massa e propaganda*, Mantova, Il Rio, 2017; C. Giometti (ed.), *Mostre a Firenze 1911 - 1942. Nuove indagini per un itinerario tra arte e cultura*, Florence, Edizioni ETS, 2019 ; M. Di Macco, Dardanelli G.(eds.), *La fortuna del Barocco in Italia : le grandi mostre del Novecento*, Genova, Sagep Editori, 2019 ; S. Pierson, *Private Collecting, Exhibitions and the Shaping of Art History in London*, London, Routledge, 2019; C. Prete E. Penserini (eds.), *L'Italia delle mostre 1861-1945*, Urbino, Accademia Raffaello, 2020

<sup>67</sup> F. Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum. Old Master Paintings and the Rise of Art Exhibitions*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2000

<sup>68</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 207

collector who lives side by side with the objects gathered, experiences this reality on a daily basis, and in the case of the specific category of the scholar-collector, this experience of a collection is not only one of aesthetic enjoyment, but it is closely linked with the scholar's work, accompanying and, at times, stimulating research.<sup>69</sup>

As this thesis will show, scholar-collectors benefitted from their expertise and their professional networks when it came to build up their collections. With their skilled eye and knowledge, they were in a privileged position to recognise those artefacts that in art market studies are labelled as 'sleepers'<sup>70</sup> - objects whose market value is not yet revealed because of misattribution.<sup>71</sup> At the same time, they were on close terms with suppliers of objects such as collectors and dealers, who sometimes actively proposed and facilitated acquisitions offering favourable conditions. Upon entering the collector's house, the status of these artefacts also shifted from mere domestic ornaments to working and training tools for academic scholarship.<sup>72</sup> In this respect, Roberto Longhi's use of the ex-Gavotti Apostles series is exemplary. As explored in Chapter 5, following the purchase in 1921 of a series of five Caravaggesque canvases, Longhi and his wife experienced a decade of cohabitation with these paintings, which resulted in the successful attribution of his own canvases to the same hand that painted another work, hung in the Borghese Gallery. The objects in a scholar's collection should therefore be seen not only as an embodiment of tastes and interests, but also as tools for thinking as instruments to aid connoisseurship itself, and as a stimulus for research.

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<sup>69</sup> Ebitz, 1988, p. 208

<sup>70</sup> The notion of 'sleepers' is here used in a more figurative sense, for it refers to objects that were acquired also outside of auctions. A. L. Bundle, *The Sale of Misattributed Artworks and Antiques at Auction*, Northampton, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2016, pp. 7-8

<sup>71</sup> Bundle, 2016, pp. 7-8 ; B. Pezzini and M. G. Brennan, 'Provenance as a history of change: from Caliarì in Scotland to Tintoretto in America' in *Journal of the History of Collections*, vol. 30, n. 1, 2018, pp. 77–89, p. 6

<sup>72</sup> On domestic displays, see R. Pavoni, 'La conservazione delle dimore storiche' in *Archeologia del museo : i caratteri originali del museo e la sua documentazione storica fra conservazione e comunicazione*, Lenzi, Zuffirero (eds.), Bologna, Compositori, 2004

In order to investigate of the macrocosm of art collecting among art historians, this study will closely look at the microcosms of the collections of Berenson, Longhi, and Clark. It will not seek to offer a catalogue *raisonné* of these collections. Rather, it will examine mechanisms by which the collections were formed and the role the collections played for their owners.<sup>73</sup> In doing so, the thesis takes inspiration from publications on private collecting that survey a larger number of collections, such as Pierre Cabanne's *The Great Collectors* (1963) and James Stourton's *Great Collectors of our Time: Art Collecting Since 1945* (2007) and *The British as Art Collectors: From the Tudors to the Present* (2014) .<sup>74</sup> These generalising studies offer a useful overview, but often fail to analyse in detail the relationship between specific objects and their collectors; by focussing on only three collections, this thesis will bring that relationship back into focus.

A further important source of inspiration is the pioneering example of Anne Higonnet's *A Museum of One's Own: Private Collecting, Public Gift* (2009).<sup>75</sup> In her book, Higonnet analyses a conspicuous group of collectors' houses that have become museums, such as the *Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum* and the *Frick Collection*. These are houses that were created with the specific intention of becoming a museum open to the public; houses where the preservation of the personal character of the collection and its display have been preserved, often as an essential condition of the gift of the museum to the public. These characteristics of the 'collection museums', as Higonnet defines them, are what differentiate them from 'house museums'. This thesis will follow Higonnet in drawing broader patterns from a number of case studies.

One of the patterns that Higonnet discerns involves the the strong individual character of the collection museums. This individuality is strengthened by the

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<sup>73</sup> Objects in the collections of Berenson and Longhi are well documented, whereas a comprehensive study of Clark's collection is still to be achieved, allowing this thesis to make a timely contribution using original findings about this lesser-known collection.

<sup>74</sup> P. Cabanne, *The Great Collectors*, London, Cassell, 1963 ; J. Stourton, *Great Collectors of our Time: Art Collecting Since 1945*, London, Scala, 2007; J. Stourton, *The British as Art Collectors: From the Tudors to the Present*, London, Scala, 2014

<sup>75</sup> A. Higonnet, *A Museum of One's Own, Private Collecting, Public Gift*, New York, Periscope Publishing, 2009

common practice of giving the collector's name to the museum, which can also be understood as the collector's alter-ego or self-portrait. According to Higonet, collection museums are haunted by the 'ghost of the person who once acquired all those things, who lived with them and wanted them to stay together forever'.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, strict conditions of wills have transformed some museums into virtual 'time capsules'. As in the collection museums, art historians' art collections, too, tend to have a strong individual character; it is certainly the case that in the collections of Berenson, Longhi, and Clark 'time, place, circumstances, personalities and situations of founders, all cause variations'.<sup>77</sup> The three collections investigated in this thesis in fact closely resemble 'collection museums' and also more general 'house museums' in terms of their formation, strong relationship with the collector, their idiosyncratic display, and their lasting legacy. They too are 'documents of a taste of collecting and a taste of living', albeit rather specific one: those of experts in the field.<sup>78</sup> There is, however, also a fundamental difference with Higonet's collection museums. Although some art historians' collections have become, wholly or in part, public collections, they were not created as museums. Instead, where the link between container (house) and content (collection) has been preserved, in a large spectrum of variations, the collections have become part of foundations that promote and support the study of history of art, perpetuating the legacy of their creators, and further stressing the link these collections have with their collectors' profession.

The nature of these collections is private and domestic (they were displayed within the dwellings where the collectors lived) and as it has been stressed by

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<sup>76</sup> Higonet, 2009, p.XII

<sup>77</sup> Higonet, 2009, pp. XII, 17

<sup>78</sup> R. Pavoni, 'Case Museo: prospettive per un nuovo ruolo nella cultura e nella società in Casas Museo' in *museología y gestión, Actas del III Congreso de Casas Museo: la habitación del héroe. Casas museo en Iberoamérica (5-7 marzo 2008)*, Asunción Cardona Suanzes (ed.), Madrid, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2013, pp. 1-2



the existing scholarship, they were also shaped by the collector's wives.<sup>79</sup> The focus of this study being on the intellectual relationship between the collectors as scholars and the objects collected, actions will be reported in the third person masculine. This is not an attempt to downplay the decisive role of their female partners. Berenson's wife, Mary, and Longhi's wife, Anna, both trained as art historians initially, and did at times write about works from their personal collection - as highlighted throughout the thesis. Such was the case of Banti's monograph on Lorenzo Lotto, which features two of her own Lottos.<sup>80</sup> However, the available sources for such interactions are few and scholarship on them remains scant.<sup>81</sup> The collections were displayed in the typical manner of a house collection, which differed from the tidy narrative of a chronological development of art history, with a taxonomical division of objects and techniques, which the scholars themselves sought to establish.

The methodology applied to the case studies composing this thesis combines analysis of diverse types of sources. There is an array of primary resources,

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<sup>79</sup> Numerous women collectors, often wives of prominent businessmen, played a role as tastemakers, but have been neglected: either because their independence of thought has been credited to an agent or spouse; or because only their husband's name has been recorded in receipts and stock books. See F. Fowle, 'A Woman of No Importance?: Elizabeth Workman's Collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Art in Context' in *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, vol. 31, 2021, pp. 1- 8, contained in an issue dedicated to *Women Collectors and Cultural Philanthropy, c. 1850–1920*. On women and Connoisseurship, see M. Clarke, F. Ventrella, 'Special Issue: Women's Expertise and the Culture of Connoisseurship' in *Visual Resources*, vol. 33, Issue 1-2, 2017. On women art historians in Italy and France, see M. Mignini, *Diventare storiche dell'arte: una storia di formazione e professionalizzazione in Italia e in Francia (1900 - 40)*, Rome, Carocci, 2009. See also the women art dealers database 'WADDA' , <http://wadda.info/>

<sup>80</sup> The catalogue part was compiled by Longhi's student Boschetto. See A. Banti and A. Boschetto (eds.), *Lorenzo Lotto*, Florence, Sansoni, 1953. Whilst still a student of Adolfo Venturi's Scuola di Specializzazione, and not yet married, Anna Banti would help Longhi with his major acquisition of seven works from the Gavotti collection. She then gave up her career as art historian and became a novelist.

<sup>81</sup> On Mary Berenson, see M. Clarke, 'The Art Press at the Fin de Siècle: Women, Collecting, and Connoisseurship' in *Visual Resources*, vol. 31, n. 1-2, 2005, pp. 15-30; B. Pezzini, 'More about Mary Berenson' in *The Burlington Magazine Index Blog*, 09APR14, <https://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com/2014/04/09/mary-berenson/> ; Strehlke C.B., 'Bernard and Mary Collect: Pictures Come to I Tatti' in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 19-46 . On Jane Clark, still to be properly investigated, see various references in J. Stourton, *Kenneth Clark : life, art and Civilisation*, London, William Collins, 2016. On Anna Banti see A. Mirabile, ' "Lorenzo Lotto" di Anna Banti: fra Longhi e Berenson' in *Italica*, vol. 93, n. 2, Summer 2016, pp. 262-273 ; a recent RAI documentary part of a series *L'altro 900, S2E2*, <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2018/10/L-altro-900-S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html>.

published and unpublished, such as correspondence, diaries, accounts of visitors to the collections, and autobiographies.<sup>82</sup> There are archival documents, such as Kenneth Clark's papers at Tate Gallery Archive in London, Calouste Gulbenkian and Clark's correspondence at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, and the published records from the Berenson archive at *I Tatti* and the Longhi archive at *Il Tasso*. In addition, among the most important of these sources perhaps, there are the collectors' art historical writings, in particular from the time when objects entered the collections, and when objects were subsequently published or exhibited, shedding light on the engagement collectors entertained with their collections. From the microcosms of each collection with its related sources and documents, recurring patterns of behaviour will be extrapolated to indicate potential trends in collecting by art historians in general.

There is no existing secondary literature directly on the topic of this dissertation. There is, however, three different strands of literature that are highly relevant: that on the personal lives of the collectors (biographies), that on their contribution to scholarship (historiography), and that on the contents of their collections (catalogues). The existing biographies of the three scholars, while not unimportant, are often anecdotal rather than analytical, as sometimes happens to the historiographical examination of the scholars' work. The collections have largely been approached from the point of view of making inventories of their contents. This thesis will combine information from all these strands of literature, but always in an analytical framework, looking for trends that help us to understand the way in which objects were collected and the role they played for their scholar owners. Following the approach of Francis Haskell, in *Rediscoveries in Art*, individual collecting practices will be situated within the social networks of the collectors, including all agents involved in the development of the three collections, and taking into considerations aspects such as as taste, financial status, geographical location, and collaborations with dealers, private collectors, and public collections, and academic discourse.

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<sup>82</sup> When the language of these sources was not English, the author has provided a translation, referred to as 'tr.'

Without dwelling on the wider art historical significance of each object in the three collections, this thesis explores the reasons behind the encounter between certain specific objects and their collectors. It will investigate objects' entry to the collection, their daily interaction with those who had access to them, and their relation to the scholars' academic interests and writings. By exploring a segment of the objects' lives during and after their co-habitation with the scholars, this thesis can formulate questions on what effects their ownership had on the function, value and meaning of the objects themselves. Thus, this thesis thus builds a bridge between objects on the one hand and collectors on the other - collectors who had their personal lives as individuals, but also professional lives as scholars, members of art institutions, and advisers for private collectors and dealers, and who were part of a network of people that belonged to the same professional milieu.

The thesis is built upon a series of case studies, organised in three thematic parts, telling the stories of selected objects, serving as paradigmatic examples of the scholar-collectors' varied *modi operandi*. The case studies are preceded by a framing chapter, (Chapter One) which provides a selective introduction to the three collections that will serve to contextualise each subsequent chapter. It is a critical overview of the formation and evolution of each collection, analysed in a chronological and condensed manner, intertwined with the collectors' biographies and the development of their scholarly production. This chapter will also outline some patterns of characteristic similarities and differences which will be further investigated in the case studies. The collections of Bernard Berenson and Roberto Longhi are presented first, followed by that of Clark, hence following a chronological order. This will facilitate a comparison of the attitudes of two rival masters of connoisseurship who were operating from their villas in the hills outside Florence, identifying how Berenson's *I Tatti* was a model for Longhi's *Il Tasso*, but equally how their creators' different approach to art history is mirrored in their collections. Berenson preferred the canonical Northern and Central Italian schools of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, while Longhi focused on peripheral regional Italian schools and neglected eras such as the *Seicento* and the non-Venetian *Settecento*.

Among the three collections, Bernard Berenson's is the best documented, at least as far as the paintings are concerned. It was first catalogued by Franco Russoli in 1962, on commission from Berenson himself, published in Italian only.<sup>83</sup> In 2015, an English-language catalogue of the 'European Paintings' was edited by Carl Brandon Strehlke and Machtelt Brüggén Israëls.<sup>84</sup> It comprises 110 catalogue entries compiled by forty-five authors, an appendix of works formerly owned by Berenson, a catalogue of counterfeits in the collection, and six critical essays. This 2015 catalogue provides the most up-to date art historical and historiographical research on each painting in the collection, involving new discoveries in some cases, and detailed descriptions of their technical condition and provenance. Some authors dedicate a fair amount of space to the ways in which Berenson engaged with art works, how his thoughts on attributions changed during his life and afterwards, and whether he published anything about them. The entries are accompanied by a useful array of artists' biographies, some of them compiled for the first time, which discuss issues of historiographical appreciation and a new understanding of artists' workshops.<sup>85</sup>

The 2015 catalogue is also the first to offer a critical study of the collection as an integral entity. Two essays, written by the editors, are dedicated to the Berensons as collectors. The essays rely upon extensive archival research, which resulted in the matching of various inventories of the possessions at *I Tatti* with purchase receipts, manuscript notes, and diary entries. Strehlke's essay, *Bernard and Mary Collect: Pictures Come to I Tatti* describes the couple's changes in taste.<sup>86</sup> The purchase of *I Tatti* is confirmed by Strehlke as the driving force behind the couple's collecting, fuelled further by Berenson's increasingly stable income from the picture market. Strehlke reveals how much was spent, and how the collection was constantly changing. The essay makes

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<sup>83</sup> Russoli, F. *Raccolta Berenson*, Milano, Officine grafiche Ricordi, 1962. J. Connors, 'The Berenson Collection: A Guide.' in *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, vol.19, n. 2, 2016, pp. 235-255, p. 250

<sup>84</sup> C. B. Strehlke, M. Brüggén Israëls (eds.), *The Bernard and Mary Berenson collection of European paintings at I Tatti*, Milan, Officina Libraria, 2015

<sup>85</sup> Connors, 2016, p. 243

<sup>86</sup> C. B. Strehlke, 'Bernard and Mary Collect: Pictures Come to I Tatti' in Strehlke, Brüggén Israëls, 2015, pp. 19-46

it abundantly clear that despite not wanting to consider it as a painting collection similar to those Berenson helped to form, the couple was aware of its value, both financial and personal.

Brüggen Israëls's essay is dedicated to Berenson's engagement with the Sienese school.<sup>87</sup> It is strictly connected with the entries for that school's paintings, especially the one for Sassetta's Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece fragment, which was the subject of a seminal work edited by Brüggen Israëls in 2009.<sup>88</sup> She traces the Berensons' interest in Siena through the purchases of works from that school, and the text is particularly rich in quotations from Mary's diary that highlight the couple's view of the works they were buying as a financial asset. Thus, this essay provides a small study on the art historiography of Sienese painting around 1900, focusing on Berenson's relationship with scholars such as Frederick Mason Perkins, Robert Langton Douglas, and the forger Icilio Federico Joni.

Strehlke's and Brüggen Israëls's essays offer a detailed account of how the collection came into being, and, at least for the Sienese school, how it can be used to reconstruct Berenson's interest as a scholar. However, there is no attempt to compare Berenson as a collector with scholar-collectors of the previous generation, such as Giovanni Morelli, nor Berenson's contemporaries, such as his friends Herbert Horne, Charles Loeser, and Frederick Mason Perkins. Roberto Longhi, for instance, is only mentioned by Strehlke as visitor and commentator on Berenson's collection, but not as a collector in his own right, despite being the owner of a companion piece to a panel in Berenson's collection (Benvenuto di Giovanni's *Snow on the Esquiline*).<sup>89</sup> The essays also fail to relate Berenson's personal collecting taste with the 'Berensonian Taste' that informed many collections upon which he advised, such as that of Count

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<sup>87</sup> M. Brüggen Israëls, 'The Berensons 'Connoosh' and Collect Sienese Paintings' in Strehlke, Brüggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 47-70

<sup>88</sup> M. Brüggen Israëls (ed.), *Sassetta: The Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece*, Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance studies, 2009

<sup>89</sup> Strehlke, Brüggen Israëls, 2015, cat n.10. For the relationship between Berenson and Longhi, see Garboli C., Montagnani C., *Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi: lettere e scartafacci 1912-1957*, Milan, Adelphi edizioni, 1993

Vittorio Cini.<sup>90</sup> Lastly, nothing is said about the fact that *I Tatti* and the The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance studies can be considered a model for other institutions, such as the *Fondazione Longhi*.

Before the 2015 catalogue, Patricia Rubin had addressed the evolution of Berenson's collection in her essay *Bernard Berenson, Villa I Tatti, and the visualization of the Italian Renaissance*, published in *Gli anglo-americani a Firenze* (2000).<sup>91</sup> Underlining the use of the collection as a backdrop for Berenson's advising business, Rubin writes how the latter financed Berenson's own art collection. She remarks that the Berensons had a predilection for religious subjects and Sieneese paintings, and argues that the collection was used to visualise Berenson's idea of the Renaissance.<sup>92</sup> She cites, for instance, a case of the parallel drawn between Buddhist and Sieneese Art that Berenson made in his 1903 essay on Sassetta and that was reproduced in the display of Sassetta's fragment of the altar at Borgo Sansepolcro next to oriental art pieces, such as an eighth-century Javanese Buddha head.<sup>93</sup> Yet she does not further explore these general assumptions in-depth, unlike Strehlke's essays on Berenson and Asian art, published in *Bernard Berenson: Formation and Heritage* (2014).<sup>94</sup>

Among the many biographies of Berenson, the most interesting for our purposes is Rachel Cohen's *Bernard Berenson: a life in the picture trade* (2013). Biographies aside, the above cited *Bernard Berenson: Formation and Heritage*

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<sup>90</sup> The only exception is Strehlke's analysis of a certain taste for the eighteenth century in relation to textiles used for interior decoration and to furniture.

<sup>91</sup> P. Rubin, 'Bernard Berenson, Villa I Tatti, and the visualization of the Italian Renaissance' in *Gli anglo-americani a Firenze*, Fantoni M. (ed.), Rome, Bulzoni, 2000, pp. 207-222

<sup>92</sup> B. Berenson, 'A Sieneese Painter of the Franciscan Legend' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol.3, 1903, pp. 3-35, 171-184. Reprinted in B. Berenson, *A Sieneese Painter of the Franciscan Legend*. London, J.M. Dent & Son, Ltd., 1909.

<sup>93</sup> C. B. Strehlke, 'Berenson and Asian Art' in *Bernard Berenson : formation and heritage*, J. Connors, L. Waldman (eds.), Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2014, pp. 207-230, p. 218

<sup>94</sup> Strehlke, 2014, pp. 207-230

offers a very rich study on Berenson and his network.<sup>95</sup> The essays explore the scholar's relationship with patrons, collectors, and pupils, such as Paul Richter, Kenneth Clark, and Yukio Yashiro. In addition, the 2016 catalogue of the Collezione Cini in Venice includes some remarks on the influence that Berenson had on Vittorio Cini's collection: some of Cini's objects are related to pieces in the Berenson collection.<sup>96</sup> A recent PhD Thesis on the dealer Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi examines the relationship between Contini and Berenson, which is represented in Berenson's collection through a *Crucifixion with the Arma Christi* by Lorenzo Lotto and a *Virgin and Child* by Bergognone that the dealer gifted to Berenson in 1953.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, in Berenson's case, there are publications on *I Tatti* and its history, which are essential to link the history of the Berensons' place with the collection's evolution. These include *Villa I Tatti: the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 1961-1991* (1991) and *A legacy of excellence: the story of Villa I Tatti* (1997), which contain many photographs demonstrating how works were displayed, and account for what happened to *I Tatti* after Berenson's death, detailing how his legacy was cultivated by Harvard University.<sup>98</sup> To this end, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies web page is another useful resource, with short blog entries on the history of *I Tatti*, where Berenson's plans are fully transcribed.<sup>99</sup>

Like the Berenson collection, Roberto Longhi's has been catalogued twice since the birth of the eponymous foundation. The first catalogue was edited by

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<sup>95</sup> R. Cohen, *Bernard Berenson: a life in the picture trade*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2013; Connors, Waldman, 2014

<sup>96</sup> A. Bacchi, A. De Marchi (eds.), *La Galleria di Palazzo Cini*, Venice, Marsilio, 2016

<sup>97</sup> F. Zaninelli, *Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi, antiquario (1878-1955): the art market and cultural philanthropy in the formation of American museums*, Published PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2018

<sup>98</sup> *Villa I Tatti, Villa I Tatti : the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 1961-1991*, Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 1991; W. Weaver, *A legacy of excellence : the story of Villa I Tatti*, New York, Harry N. Abrams, 1997.

<sup>99</sup> On the Future of I Tatti, <http://itatti.harvard.edu/future-i-tatti>

Antonio Boschetto, in 1972, only two years after Longhi's death.<sup>100</sup> Similarly to Russoli's catalogue of the Berenson collection, Boschetto's entries are overly rich in citations and rely mainly on Longhi's thoughts. This is particularly evident in the introduction, where Boschetto reproduces, word for word, the drafts that Longhi himself had written when he first thought of compiling a catalogue of his collection, in response to the destruction brought about by World War II and the dramatic 1956 Great Flood of Florence. Boschetto's catalogue is of course helpful when investigating Longhi's own ideas about his collection, but out of date in terms of research on the individual objects. In 1980, a more rigorous study of the works at *Il Tasso* came out.<sup>101</sup> It was edited by Mina Gregori, one of Longhi's most prominent students and honorary president of the Fondazione. The entries in Gregori's catalogue explore the changes in attributions of objects over time, they account for their exhibition and publication history, and also provide, whenever possible, clues regarding their provenance and acquisition. Unlike in the more recent Berenson catalogue, however, prices of artworks are rarely given, and only a few purchases are cited with a precise year or a previous owner, and even when this is the case, no reference is given.

The publication of the catalogue also offered Gregori the opportunity to write the first critical study on how the collection developed over time, and how it related to Longhi's research, with a few more detailed examples.<sup>102</sup> Gregori mentions the collections of Giovanni Morelli and Berenson as pre-existing models with which Longhi was acquainted, and highlights the important role the collections played in inspiring the work of a whole generation of art historians. In her introduction, Gregori looks at Longhi's early acquisitions as particularly interesting, for they are the few instances in which, as she wrote, 'the possession of works precedes their critical study'.<sup>103</sup> In fact, as I shall

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<sup>100</sup> A. Boschetto, *La Collezione Roberto Longhi*, Florence, Sansoni, 1971

<sup>101</sup> M. Gregori (ed.), *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 1980

<sup>102</sup> M. Gregori, 'Introduzione', in *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, Gregori M. (ed.), Milan, Electa, 1980, pp. I-XIV. A re-elaborated version of this text appeared in the 1981 article 'Roberto Longhi as collector', published in *Apollo*. M. Gregori, 'Roberto Longhi as collector' in *Apollo*, n. 113, 1981, pp. 306-310

<sup>103</sup> Gregori, 1980, p. V



explore in Chapter Five, the acquisition of works went hand-in-hand with, or anticipated and stimulated Longhi's scholarly work throughout his entire activity as a collector.<sup>104</sup>

The Longhi collection has been exhibited several times since 2000: *La collezione di Roberto Longhi : dal Duecento a Caravaggio a Morandi*, (Alba, 2007); *Caravaggio, Lotto, Ribera : quattro secoli di capolavori dalla Fondazione Longhi a Padova*, (Padua, 2009) ; *De Giotto à Caravage : les passions de Roberto Longhi*, exhibition catalogue, (Paris, 2014); *Da Lotto a Caravaggio: la collezione e le ricerche di Roberto Longhi*, (2016); *Il Tempo di Caravaggio* (Rome, 2020).<sup>105</sup> Every exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue with up-dated entries on the works shown, at times significantly changed since 1980, and a re-worked versions or elaborations of Gregori's introductory essay on the collection from 1980. The 2007 catalogue of the exhibition *La collezione di Roberto Longhi : dal Duecento a Caravaggio a Morandi*, which showed the largest selection of works from the collection is particularly useful. It contains an essay by Bruno Toscano that returns to the introduction of Boschetto's 1972 catalogue and Longhi's work as an art historian. The 2014 catalogue of the exhibition *De Giotto à Caravage* provides a very useful chronology of Longhi's life and publications, small critical sections on Longhi's engagement with certain artistic schools and a much needed chapter dedicated to the history of *Villa Il Tasso*.

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<sup>104</sup> For this aspect, I will rely on publications on Longhi's work as an art historian, including G. Previtali, *L'Arte di scrivere sull'arte : Roberto Longhi nella cultura del nostro tempo*, Rome, Editori riuniti, 1982; D. Tabbat, 'The Eloquent Eye: Roberto Longhi and the Historical Criticism of Art' in *Differentia: Review of Italian Thought*, vol. 5, Article 14, 1991; J. Nordhagen, 'Roberto Longhi (1890–1970) and his method. Connoisseurship as a Science' in *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, n., vol. 68, issue 2, 1999, pp. 99-116; Ambrosini Massari, Bacchi, Benati, Galli, *Il mestiere del conoscitore: Roberto Longhi*, 2017

<sup>105</sup> M. Gregori (ed.), *La collezione di Roberto Longhi : dal Duecento a Caravaggio a Morandi*, Savigliano, L'artistica, 2007; M. Gregori (ed.), *Caravaggio, Lotto, Ribera : quattro secoli di capolavori dalla Fondazione Longhi a Padova*, Milan, Motta, 2009 ; M. Gregori, M. C. Bandera (eds.), *De Giotto à Caravage : les passions de Roberto Longhi*, Bruxelles, Fonds Mercator, 2014; M. Gregori, M. C. Bandera (eds.) , *Da Lotto a Caravaggio: la collezione e le ricerche di Roberto Longhi*, Venice, Marsilio, 2016

By contrast with the first two art historians, and despite the fame as a cultural figure of its owner, surprisingly very little has been written about Kenneth Clark's collection. It was a much larger collection than the other two, but he did not leave behind a foundation to promulgate his legacy. As I shall further explain in chapter One, Clark's collecting was very 'fluid'. As in the case of Berenson, many objects entered and left the collection during Clark's lifetime, often sold in order to mitigate moments of financial difficulties. Clark's collection was never catalogued. However, as Clark was an active lender, some objects have been studied in the past.<sup>106</sup> In 1984 much of the collection was sold at auction through Sotheby's, recording more than sixty-five lots, albeit with very superficial entries.<sup>107</sup>

In 2004, Tate Britain organised an exhibition which showed part of Clark's collection, re-united for the occasion, and used to investigate Clark as a character of his time.<sup>108</sup> In the exhibition catalogue, particularly in the essays by Stonard and Stephens, many sources were gathered that allowed for a partial reconstruction of how the collection took shape. The accounts, however, only cite the most important pieces, sometimes reporting acquisition sources and prices, but without giving much more in-depth information. Stephens in particular emphasises how Clark used his paintings to illustrate lectures and books. He also outlines how the mix of Post-Impressionists and Old Masters in the collection reflects the two main influences on Clark as a scholar: Bernard Berenson and Roger Fry. Again, however, the text remains rather anecdotal, and it does not put Clark's collecting in the wider context of the activity of other collectors of the time with whom he had frequent contact, such as Calouste Gulbenkian. As this thesis will make clear it was fundamental

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<sup>106</sup> Lord Balniel, K. Clark (eds.), *A commemorative catalogue of the exhibition of Italian art held in the galleries of the Royal Academy, Burlington House, London, January-March 1930*, London, Oxford University Press, 1931 ; Royal Academy of Arts, *Italian Art and Britain : Winter Exhibition*, 1960, London, 1960.

<sup>107</sup> Sotheby's London Sale Catalogue, 23 June, 03 July, 05 July 1984, *Paintings and works of art from the collection of the late Lord Clark of Saltwood*, London, Sotheby Parke Bernet & Co., 1984

<sup>108</sup> C. Stephens and J. P. Stonard (eds.), *Kenneth Clark: Looking for Civilisation*, London, Tate Publishing, 2014

for Clark to have been an adviser to Mr Gulbenkian or public institutions such as Melbourne's National Gallery. Sometimes in fact, it provided Clark with specific opportunities to study as well to collect objects. The Tate Britain exhibition catalogue, while beautifully illustrated, does not have individual catalogue entries, leaving a number of gaps this thesis will seek to fill.

Robert Cumming's *My Dear BB: the letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959* (2015), besides being a vital tool to navigate both the lives of Clark and Berenson and their testy relationship, is another fruitful source for establishing what, when, and how things were acquired.<sup>109</sup> Whenever an object is mentioned in a letter, Cumming gathered as much information about it as possible, although some remained unidentifiable. Cumming, however, only reports essential information about the objects cited and does not engage systematically with Clark as a collector. In 2016 the most recent critical biography of Clark was published by James Stourton.<sup>110</sup> Giving a detailed account of the houses that Clark lived in, the biography is a source of information to help reconstruct what objects were in the collection. Some of the material had been gathered by Stourton when he worked on his seminal book *Great Collectors of Our Time : Art Collecting Since 1945* (2007), where the figure of Clark as a collector is covered in a few paragraphs in a section that is specifically dedicated to art historians.<sup>111</sup> It provides a brief account of several collections, but makes no attempt to distinguish trends or identifying scholars as a distinctive category of collectors, which will be the ultimate focus of this thesis.

Overall, the existing literature on the three case studies presented here is primarily concerned with the art-historical investigation of the objects in the collections, often with a focus on attribution issues. Whenever there is an attempt to portray the individual collector's general taste, objects are often superficially reduced to a 'mirror' of the scholar's interests. It is the contention of this thesis, however, that by living with their collections, art historians

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<sup>109</sup> R. Cumming, *My Dear BB: the letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2015

<sup>110</sup> J. Stourton, *Kenneth Clark : life, art and Civilisation*, London, William Collins, 2016

<sup>111</sup> Stourton, 2007

developed a much more complex relationship with these artefacts. Previous studies, moreover, tend to isolate the practices of each collector, failing to contextualise their *modus operandi*. They overlook how often scholars who shaped the formation of these collections are the same ones involved behind the scenes in the formation of many other public and private collections. In addition, the collections gathered by art historians are rarely compared with each other and with collections at large, necessitating a systematic study of this phenomenon.

As mentioned above, following the framing chapter, the thesis is divided into three thematic parts, each containing chapters devoted to different case studies.<sup>112</sup> The first part illustrates how collecting objects, for a scholar, was also a way to practice Connoisseurship. Here, Chapter Two focuses on Bernard Berenson and his painting *The Virgin and Child with Saint Francis of Assisi and Jerome* by Tonino Navaero, and Berenson's thoughts on its attribution, which after more than forty years of living under the same roof, 'shifted while looking' from Lorenzo Lotto (1912) to Close to Lotto (1955). This chapter, revolving around Berenson's infatuation for the painter, will also allow us to get a full insight in Berenson's own approach to connoisseurship, described by him as Psychological Connoisseurship, studying artists' personalities.<sup>113</sup> Chapter Three then shifts to Kenneth Clark and a Tondo by Raphael in his collection, showing the ability of the scholar-collector to recognise the so-called 'sleepers'.<sup>114</sup> Bought a few years before 1930, after conducting thorough research using both archival resources and pure connoisseurship, Clark presented it as an autograph Raphael in one of the major exhibitions of the time, the 1930 show *Italian Art 1200-1900* at the Royal Academy. The chapter follows the script of an unpublished article, in which Clark argues for its attribution, exemplifying a research method which he thought would be of interest to students. Reconstructing Clark's thoughts, the

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<sup>112</sup> The three collections discussed cover a span of time from the turn of the twentieth century to the 1980s, but many of the patterns identified in the collector's attitudes remained the same. This is the reason why the case studies are not organised chronologically. Instead, they are grouped thematically, in relation to the kind of object-collector engagement they illustrate.

<sup>113</sup> See Trotta, 2006 ; Zambrano 2006

<sup>114</sup> Bundle, 2016, pp. 7-8 ; Pezzini, Brennan, 2018, p. 6

chapter demonstrates how the object offered to Clark the opportunity to practice his skills as a Connoisseur.

The second part of the thesis deals with scholar-collectors as lenders to exhibitions. It will illustrate how, on the one hand, objects in the collections functioned as embodiments of the academic achievements of their collectors, which were further promoted through their inclusion in public displays. On the other hand, it will show how collecting at times accompanied and stimulated the research and re-evaluation of artists and schools, whose inclusion in the canon was consecrated by the organisation of seminal exhibitions. Chapter Four will discuss three paintings that Bernard Berenson lent to the Giotto exhibition that was organised in Florence in 1937. It shows how Berenson's Giottos can be seen as the expression of the scholar's most famous theory - that of tactile values.<sup>115</sup> Chapter Five then explores Longhi's relationship with the Bolognese Trecento, and with Caravaggio and Caravaggism, focusing on two exhibitions which Longhi co-organised and to which he lent some of his works - respectively 'Mostra del Trecento Bolognese' (Bologna, 1950) and 'Mostra del Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi' (Milan, 1951). It will map Longhi's efforts in including the peripheral Bolognese Trecento within the art historical canon through his writings, through a public exhibition, but also through building one of the most important private collections of this school. Similarly, the chapter will underline the impact Longhi's scholarship and collecting had on the taste for Caravaggio, influencing scholars and collectors as far away as Ben Nicholson and Denis Mahon in Britain.

The third and last part will illustrate how works in the collections of art historians can be studied to understand their collectors' interests as scholars, both reflecting and influencing their research. It will also stress how the collecting activity of art historians contributed to and benefited from a network of professionals and collectors that revolved around the studying and collecting of art. Specifically, Chapter Six will show how Clark's collecting and display, characterised by a juxtaposition of works of art from different eras,

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<sup>115</sup> A quality in works of art, to give a sense of dimension through the beholder's look. See Brown, A., 'Bernard Berenson and "Tactile Values" in Florence' in *Bernard Berenson : formation and heritage*, J. Connors, L. Waldman (eds.), Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2014, pp. 101-120

including both Old Masters and Post-Impressionists, find a parallel in his approach as a scholar. This will be explored through an unpublished series of lectures entitled 'Three Scientific Painters: Uccello, Piero and Seurat', in which Clark uses his own paintings by Seurat, internationally recognised as among the best examples of the artist's work in private hands. The chapter will also explore the long-term relationship between Clark and Longhi, which seems to have been fed, as much as by their interaction as scholars, by their involvement in the world of collecting and exhibition making.

Thus, the three sections, through their thematic approach, will form a kaleidoscopic yet coherent picture of the crucial characteristics that set apart the art-historian's art collection of the twentieth century from the broader world of art collecting in general.

# Chapter 1

## A Compromise between Taste and Opportunity: The collections of Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi, and Kenneth Clark

Before delving into the case studies from the collections of Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi, and Kenneth Clark, this framing chapter outlines the ‘biographies’ of each collection, offering a reference to contextualise the chapters of this thesis.<sup>1</sup> The chapter will not present a *catalogue raisonné* of each collection, which falls outside the scope of this thesis, but instead will chart how objects entered their collectors’ life in a chronological order, following them in the various dwellings that welcomed them across time, underlining the essential link that existed between house (container) and collection (content).<sup>2</sup>

Focusing on acquisitions, display, access, deaccessioning, and legacy, this chapter will investigate the ‘compromise between taste and opportunity’ that shaped each collection during the lifetime of the collector. These summarising pictures will serve to better understand the specific impact that the personal and professional networks in which the collectors operated had on these collections. Secondly, by comparing these collections portraits, this chapter will help trace the distinctive features of the *modus operandi* of scholars as collectors, further elaborated in the three central parts of the thesis.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As well as the rest of this thesis, this framing chapter is built upon both existing scholarship on the collections, and original use of archival resources, published and unpublished, as indicated in the introduction.

<sup>2</sup> The idea of object biography is here applied to collections as a whole, understanding them as lively, constantly evolving entities. See C. Gosden, Y. Marshall, ‘The Cultural Biography of Objects’ in *World Archaeology*, vol. 31, n. 2, October 1999, pp. 169-178. On domestic display and the relationship between house and collection, see R. Pavoni, ‘La conservazione delle dimore storiche’ in *Archeologia del museo : i caratteri originali del museo e la sua documentazione storica fra conservazione e comunicazione*, Lenzi, Zuffirero (eds.), Bologna, Compositori, 2004, p. 40

<sup>3</sup> K. Clark, ‘An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art’ in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947, p. 27

## The Collection of Bernard Berenson

Bernard Berenson (1865-1959) did not like to consider himself as a collector (Fig. 1).<sup>4</sup> In his autobiography, he wrote:

To Boudin [...] my home could scarcely seem a residence, let alone a home. A junk shop, a museum of odds and ends, jumbled together with no pattern, no unity of purpose. Every queer art represented by mediocre, often damaged specimens and a few very fine old masters [...] all attached to a library, grown like topsy as luck would have it and parsimony.<sup>5</sup>

It appears to have been a common attitude among art historians to downplay their role as collectors, probably in an attempt to distance themselves from those who considered art only as a commodity, and to take away some of the suspicion that some aspects of the relationship between art historians and the art market arouses, as explained in the introduction. This cavalier pose with regard to collecting, however, did not take away the fact that Berenson was indeed a collector, who gathered a small but choice selection of works which also included acknowledged masterpieces.<sup>6</sup> The works at *I Tatti* tell the story of a great scholar who made a living out of advising in the picture trade, and who both shaped the art historical canon and influenced taste, including by means of his personal collection.

In Berenson's career, both collecting and his passion for the arts in general came as relatively late activities.<sup>7</sup> He grew up in Boston as the son of Jewish Lithuanian parents who had emigrated to America, where he graduated in Literature Studies at Harvard University in 1887.<sup>8</sup> The year after, he switched to art history while touring Europe and seeing many original works of art, thanks

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<sup>4</sup> Strehlke, 2015, pp. 37-40

<sup>5</sup> Strehlke, 2015, pp. 39-40

<sup>6</sup> According to Vitale Bloch Berenson was known as a collector. V. Bloch, 'La Collezione Roberto Longhi by Antonio Boschetto' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 114, n. 829, April 1972, p. 252

<sup>7</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 37

<sup>8</sup> J. Pope-Hennessy, 'Berenson, Bernard' in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Vol. 34, 1988, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bernard-berenson\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bernard-berenson_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/)



to the support of certain Boston benefactors, including Isabella Stewart Gardner, whose own collection was to be largely dictated by Berenson over the following decades.<sup>9</sup> During a stopover in Oxford, Berenson made some life-long friends who were also scholar-collectors, such as Herbert Horne and Jean Paul Richter, who introduced him to Giovanni Morelli's connoisseurship.<sup>10</sup> Berenson was to make the Morellian method his own, but with a personal touch, which he labelled 'psychological', and became one of the best-known connoisseurs of his time.<sup>11</sup> In England Berenson met his future wife, Mary Costello, who left her first husband and two children to follow Bernard in his quest for paintings.<sup>12</sup> They married in 1900, and a year later they moved to *Villa I Tatti* (Figs. 2), in the hills of Settignano outside Florence, which they eventually bought in 1907.<sup>13</sup>

In the years that followed, Berenson would devote himself to studying Italian paintings, matching artworks to artist names in the most accurate way, relying on Connoisseurship. In a practical sense, this resulted in the publication of lists of paintings and their attributions, which were periodically up-dated and revised. At the same time, Berenson became a useful expert for both collectors and for dealers, who benefitted from his expertise in exchange for a financial reward.<sup>14</sup> As shall be explored in detail below, it is due to Berenson's business and role in the picture trade that he was able to assemble the collection still held at *I Tatti*, built at the intersection of his taste as a scholar of Italian art and purchasing opportunities that emerged over time. At his death in 1959, *I Tatti*

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<sup>9</sup> Pope-Hennessy, 1988

<sup>10</sup> C. B. Strehlke, 'Bernard and Mary Collect: Pictures Come to I Tatti' in *The Bernard and Mary Berenson collection of European paintings at I Tatti*, C. B. Strehlke, M. Brüggén Israëls (eds.), Milan, Officina Libraria, 2015, p. 24

<sup>11</sup> Pope-Hennessy, 1988. On Berenson's connoisseurship, explored in chapter 2, see A. Trotta, *Berenson e Lotto: problemi di metodo e di storia dell'arte*, Naples, La Città del Sole, 2006 ; P. Zambrano, *Bernard Berenson e l'Amico di Sandro in Amico di Sandro*, P. Zambrano (ed.), Milan, Electa, 2006, pp. 9-70

<sup>12</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 19

<sup>13</sup> Strehlke, 2015, pp. 19, 28

<sup>14</sup> Pope-Hennessy, 1988; P. Aiello 'Bernard Berenson. Il cantiere delle «liste»' in *Storie di edizioni - 1900*, n. 5, 2020, pp. 207-226 ; E. K. Waterhouse 'Thoughts in the Cataloguing of Pictures at Exhibitions' in (ed.), *Art, commerce, scholarship : a Window onto the Art World : Colnaghi 1760-1984*, London, Colnaghi, 1984, pp. 60-62, p. 61

was left to Harvard University with all its contents, becoming a leading centre with an extensive library and photo archive in 1961 (*The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies*).<sup>15</sup>

The Berenson collection is the oldest of the three considered in this thesis, and is perhaps the best documented.<sup>16</sup> It currently boasts 110 paintings, and about 90 more, known to have been in Berenson's possession at some point, are no longer there, for they were sold or given away before his death.<sup>17</sup> In addition to this well-studied nucleus of paintings, there are also pieces of furniture, textiles, and a whole collection of Eastern art objects, which have not yet been catalogued.<sup>18</sup> Among the so-called European Paintings, the fifteenth century is the best-represented era, with around seventy pieces. There are about thirty-five paintings dating from the sixteenth century, and less than thirty from the fourteenth century. The collection has only a few examples from the seventeenth century and later.<sup>19</sup> In terms of subject matter, religious paintings prevail, compared to a mere six portraits and eleven works with secular subjects.<sup>20</sup> Berenson's wife, Mary, once recorded in her diary that her nephews enjoyed counting the Madonnas around the house.<sup>21</sup> This predilection corresponds to the taste for Quattrocento golden backgrounds that Berenson

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<sup>15</sup> *On the Future of I Tatti*, , <http://itatti.harvard.edu/future-i-tatti>

<sup>16</sup> See the introduction for a more in-depth literature review. Among the key texts, there are F. Russoli, *Raccolta Berenson*, Milano, Officine grafiche Ricordi, 1962 ; P. Rubin, 'Bernard Berenson, Villa I Tatti, and the visualization of the Italian Renaissance' in *Gli anglo-americani a Firenze*, Fantoni M. (ed.), Rome, Bulzoni, 2000, pp. 207-222 ; Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015 ; C. B. Strehlke, M. Brügggen Israëls (eds.), *The Bernard and Mary Berenson collection of European paintings at I Tatti*, Milan, Officina Libraria, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 86-690, see appendix at pp. 735-759.

<sup>18</sup> See C. B. Strehlke, 'Berenson and Asian Art' in *Bernard Berenson : formation and heritage*, J. Connors, L. Waldman (eds.), Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2014, pp. 207-230 and also Pizzorusso C. 'A Failure: René Piot and the Berensons' in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 677-690

<sup>19</sup> P. Rubin, 'Bernard Berenson, Villa I Tatti, and the visualization of the Italian Renaissance' in *Gli anglo-americani a Firenze*, Fantoni M. (ed.), Rome, Bulzoni, 2000, p. 220

<sup>20</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 220

<sup>21</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 220 -

and other colleagues, such as Frederick Mason Perkins, nourished especially among American collectors.<sup>22</sup>

The 1890s was as an embryonic yet fundamental phase in Berenson's collecting. This decade saw the development of two of the most important aspects: his scholarly research, and his career as an expert advising dealers and collectors. In 1894, Berenson published the first book of a series dedicated to the history of Italian schools: *Venetian Painters of the Renaissance*, helped by his wife Mary.<sup>23</sup> At the same time he began to advise dealers such as Otto Gutekunst of Colnaghi, and collectors such as Jean Paul Richter and Isabella Stewart Gardner, for which he received commissions.<sup>24</sup>

The following year, 1895, Berenson wrote two texts illustrating his 'scientific connoisseurship': *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism* (1895), a monograph on Lorenzo Lotto, in which his approach is applied; and the essay *The Rudiments of Connoisseurship (A Fragment)*, later included in *The Study and Criticism of Italian Art* (1902).<sup>25</sup> In 1896, the second book on Italian art schools, *Florentine Painters*, divulged for the first time Berenson's most renowned theory of 'tactile values'.<sup>26</sup> As explored in chapter 4, according to Berenson, Florentine artists, Giotto above all, was able to convey the sense of the third dimension stimulating the beholder's sense of touch through looking.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 220 ; Zeri, 'La Collezione Federico Mason Perkins' in *La Collezione Federico Mason Perkins*, F. Zeri (ed.), Turin, Allemandi, 1988

<sup>23</sup> The series was completed with *Florentine Painters* (1896), *Central Italian Painters* (1897), and *North Italian Painters* (1907), all later published together B. Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, Oxford, The Clarendon press, 1930 and B. Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance*, Oxford, The Clarendon press, 1932

<sup>24</sup> *Bernard Berenson : formation and heritage*, J. Connors, L. Waldman (eds.), Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2014 and Strehlke C.B., 'Bernard and Mary Collect: Pictures Come to I Tatti' in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 19-46.

<sup>25</sup> B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1895 ; B. Berenson, *The Study and Criticism of Italian Art*, London, Bell, 1902

<sup>26</sup> B. Berenson, *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1896

<sup>27</sup> See Trotta, 2006 ; Zambrano, 2006

The bulk of Berenson's collection appears to have been put together between 1895 and 1915, with an intensification of purchases around 1910.<sup>28</sup> Berenson's 'life in the picture trade', to cite Rachel Cohen's book title, allowed them to buy a house and then to fill it with art objects.<sup>29</sup> From 1907, the Berensons were creating a family home at *I Tatti*, acknowledged by Berenson himself and later scholars writing about him as the driving reason behind their collecting.<sup>30</sup> Before *I Tatti* became available to rent in 1901, Berenson and his wife lived in several temporary residences.<sup>31</sup> In those years, Berenson's taste was infused with a *fin de siècle* fascination for the Venetian *Settecento*, expressed in the acquisition of pieces of furniture, and decorative items such as textiles.<sup>32</sup> Traces of this early phase survived in the display of certain paintings at *I Tatti*, which were hung against backdrops of sumptuous cloth (Fig. 3). It was only once they moved to *I Tatti*, however, that Berenson started buying paintings systematically, first with the intention to re-sell, and then also for himself. As Berenson wrote in his autobiography:

Hangings, paintings, few art objects were not acquired first and foremost with an eye to make it a collection, but almost exclusively to adorn the abode and when that was completed [...] I stopped buying.<sup>33</sup>

The purchase of *I Tatti* was financed directly by Berenson's speculation in the art trade. Twelve days before renting the villa in April 1900, Berenson had bought an *Adoration of the Magi* he attributed to Sodoma and two small panels with saints he attributed to Cosmè Tura, from the Marchesa Panciatichi

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<sup>28</sup> Strehlke, 2015, pp. 27-30 ; Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 64

<sup>29</sup> R. Cohen, *Bernard Berenson: A Life in the Picture Trade*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2013

<sup>30</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 211 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 26 ; J. Connors, 'The Berenson Collection: a guide' in *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 19, n. 2, 2016, pp. 235-255, p. 245

<sup>31</sup> Villa Kraus in Fiesole and La Canovaia in via di Camerata. This topic was for the first time investigated by Strehlke in Strehlke, 2015, pp. 20-21

<sup>32</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 22

<sup>33</sup> Cited in Rubin, 2000, p. 210. As investigated by Rubin, it is not true that no other objects was bought after the completed renovation of *I Tatti*

Ximenes d'Aragona for less than 1,000 lire.<sup>34</sup> Berenson eventually sold these works to the Philadelphia collector John G. Johnson for 40,000 dollars.<sup>35</sup> It was this profit, in all probability, that enabled him to buy the *Villa* he had been renting from Lord Westbury, who was incidentally the heir of another famous collector, John Temple Leader.<sup>36</sup>

From 1908 to 1915 Mary Berenson directed a renovation project for *I Tatti*, executed by Cecil Pinsent and Goffrey Scott.<sup>37</sup> It was these two architects who took care of the installation of the many art objects that entered the collection, under Mary's supervision. Being in charge of the technicalities of display, both the architects and Mary were mediating agents that shaped the appearance of Berenson's collection, as the many architects and designers who curated other known private collections. One such case is that of Andrea Busiri Vici (who was also a scholar and a collector), who designed the Villa at Mentana (close to Rome) that housed the collection of yet another art historian collector, that of Federico Zeri.<sup>38</sup> Hence, when referring to the well known display of the three panels of the Sassetta altarpiece, which are still exhibited together with a few East Asian bronzes (Fig. 4), it should be taken into account that the two architects were indirect 'co-authors' of the transposition in the display of

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<sup>34</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 25

<sup>35</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 212 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 25-6

<sup>36</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 209 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 28

<sup>37</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 209 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 29

<sup>38</sup> F. Zeri, *Confesso che ho sbagliato*, Longanesi, Milan, 1995, ed 2009, p. 147. Studies on Federico Zeri as a collector are very scant, and devoted mainly to the many donations he made to public collections. A comprehensive view of his collection and a study on Zeri as a scholar collector (partly investigated by the author but not included in this thesis) is yet to be achieved, despite the recent seminar series organised by the Fondazione Zeri 'Federico Zeri Collezionista Eccentrico', <https://fondazionezeri.unibo.it/it/fondazione/federico-zeri/2021-anno-zeri/federico-zeri-collezionista-eccentrico-1>. See M. Natale, 'A fianco del Museo Poldi Pezzoli' in *La donazione Federico Zeri : cinquanta sculture per Bergamo*, A. Bacchi, F. Rossi (eds.), Bergamo, Accademia Carrara, 2000, pp. 91-101; Andrea Bacchi, 'Federico Zeri collezionista di sculture' in Bacchi, Rossi, 2000, pp. 16-19; L. Nigro, 'I rilievi Palmireni di Federico Zeri nei Musei Vaticani' in *Zenobia il sogno di una regina d'Oriente*, Milan, Electa, 2002, pp. 39-44; *Il Lapidario Zeri di Mentana*, Rome, Istituto italiano per la storia antica, 1982; A.G. De Marchi, 'Su Zeri e sulle cose che ha raccolto' in *Sculture dalle Collezioni Santarelli e Zeri*, Milan, Skira, 2012, pp. 17-24 ; A. Bellandi, 'Il collezionismo, specchio della ricezione nella critica d'arte della scultura fiorentina del Quattrocento' in *Gazzetta Antiquaria*, n. 61, 2012, pp. 28-37.

Berenson's famous comparison that he made between Buddhist art and Sienese Franciscan piety, as first published by Berenson in a 1903 essay.<sup>39</sup>

Unlike the European section of the collection, which saw important input by Mary, the Asian art collection was put together by Berenson on his own, starting in 1909, when he bought a Buddha head that he regarded as an example of non-western art able to stimulate tactile values. The collection was mainly displayed in a direct juxtaposition with the Sienese paintings, recalling the above-mentioned comparison.<sup>40</sup> According to Stephen Bann's concept of the 'museum poetics', each object displayed in a collection can be seen as words within a phrase, syntactically connected one another.<sup>41</sup> In the case of a scholar-collector like Berenson, and especially in this instance, one could say that the objects function as the elements of a visual argument. As such, display was not always a casual arrangement. Kenneth Clark once reported that when he was staying at *I Tatti*, he would do experiments and move a Renaissance bronze every night before going to bed, finding it returned to its original location the morning after.<sup>42</sup>

Despite others being in charge of the display of objects, Berenson's personality 'resides' in his villa.<sup>43</sup> As a distinctive feature, the collection not only speaks to the taste of Berenson as an exponent of the time in which he lived, but equally to his personality as a scholar. Berenson himself, when writing about *I Tatti* said 'my house, I trust, does express my needs, my tastes, and aspirations'.<sup>44</sup> *I Tatti* and its collection (Figs. 5-6) constituted 'a space of study and society' and a proper 'asset for dealing' that 'added to Bernard's authority

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<sup>39</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 220 Strehlke, 2014, p. 218 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 31 ; Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 62-3

<sup>40</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 220 Strehlke, 2014, p. 218 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 31 ; Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 62-3 and also Pizzorusso, 'A Failure: Renè Piot and the Berensons' in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 677-690, p. 677

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Bann , 'Historical Text and Historical Object: The Poetics of the Musée de Cluny' in *History and Theory*, October 1978, vol. 17, n. 3, pp. 251-266, p. 258

<sup>42</sup> Bann, 1978, p. 251. No source is cited by Bann for this account of Clark.

<sup>43</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 211

<sup>44</sup> From Berenson's autobiography, *Sketch For A Self-Portrait*, cited in T. R. Schnadelbach, *Hidden Lives/Secret Gardens: The Florentine Villas Gamberaia, La Pietra, I Tatti*, Bloomington, iUniverse, 2009, p. 221

and influence' that well functioned as a backdrop for Berenson's business.<sup>45</sup> In turn, it was Berenson's income from the art market that allowed him to possess such a house and its contents.<sup>46</sup> Already in 1899, Berenson established a partnership with Herbert Horne to deal pictures available on the London art market, and around 1906, a year before the purchase of *I Tatti*, Berenson started working as adviser to John G. Johnson.<sup>47</sup> And finally, in 1908 he made a secret agreement with the dealer Joseph Duveen, which granted him a 10% commission for every purchase he helped secure (in 1912 the commission was raised to 25%).<sup>48</sup> With more income at his disposal, numerous purchases were made in 1909-10, mainly from Milan (Nosedà), Paris (Godefroy Bauer), and London (Dowdesdell), the most lively centres of the Old Masters market.<sup>49</sup> In those early years the collection at *I Tatti* was very unstable, and objects were constantly bought, stored, moved around the house, and sold.<sup>50</sup> This reflected the hybrid nature of Berenson's initial career as a scholar and a *marchand-amateur*, recalling the personal collection of some of his contemporaries and friends such as Herbert Horne, Charles Loeser, and Frederick Mason Perkins.<sup>51</sup>

Indeed, at times it is almost impossible to know if objects were bought specifically to stay in the collection, or if the collection was partly or largely formed out of objects that ended up not being sold.<sup>52</sup> The latter is the case, for instance, with one of the most important purchases that Berenson made as early as 1900: the Sassetta panels from the Borgo San Sepolcro Altarpiece (*The Blessed Ranieri of San Sepolcro, Saint John the Baptist, and Saint Francis of Assisi in Glory*), referred to above for their relationship with the Oriental art

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<sup>45</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 209 ; Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 60-1

<sup>46</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 212 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 20

<sup>47</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 214 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 29

<sup>48</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 214 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 29

<sup>49</sup> Strehlke, 2015, pp. 27-30

<sup>50</sup> Strehlke, 2015, pp. 27-8

<sup>51</sup> It could be said that Berenson was at first a *marchand-amateur* and scholar and only after would he become a serious collector. See F. Rossi, *Il Museo Horne a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 1966; H. Acton, 'An Anglo-Florentine collection' in *Apollo*, n.82, 1965, pp. 272-283; Zeri, 1988

<sup>52</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 26

collection (Fig. 4.1).<sup>53</sup> Bought for 2,000 lire, Mary wanted them for the chapel at *I Tatti*, but only 'until the Sienese school becomes the fashion (as it soon will) when, unless I am too fond of it, I shall sell it at a great price. It is a capital investment.'<sup>54</sup> As Berenson wrote:

The arts of the Italian Quattrocento were never quite so forgotten [...] as these [...] in the Napoleonic years [...] a Guercino was valued at 30,000, a Baroccio at 45,000 and a Carracci at 100,000 francs, but a Botticelli at only 1500 francs. What a Sienese painter would have fetched we do not know, for the reason, apparently, that the question never came up.<sup>55</sup>

More than 30 years later, Berenson noted in his diary:

Nowadays a tiny Christ on the Cross by Sassetta is priced at thirty thousand dollars. Fifty years ago one could have had it for a couple of hundred francs. And highest prices due to my own writing than to any other reason.<sup>56</sup>

Eventually the panels were never sold, and became a favourite of both owners and visitors. Other pictures, however, were sold immediately after their purchase, or even after several years. Such was the case of those sold to Henry Walters and Grenville L. Winthrop. The latter allowed Berenson to work with a budget of \$ 75,000 to buy paintings for him, granting him a further 10% commission. Between 1911 and 1920, Berenson provided Winthrop with thirty-two paintings, eight of which were actually sold from Berenson's personal collection.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 50-1

<sup>54</sup> Mary's remark cited in Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 51

<sup>55</sup> Extract from Berenson's *Studies on Sienese Painting* of 1918, cited in Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 64

<sup>56</sup> Bernard's diary, 25 oct 1952. Cited in Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 64-5. See Reitlinger G., 'The Rise and Fall of Objets d'Art Prices, since 1750' in *The economics of taste*, vol. 2, London, Barrie and Rockliff, 1961. Berenson's words are here self-celebrating. The rediscovery of the Sienese school and the creation of a taste for it was a shared achievement, with Frederick Mason Perkins and Robert Langton Douglas also played a pivotal role, despite the rivalry emerged among them. See also E. Camporeale, 'La mostra del 1904 dell'antica arte senese a distanza di un secolo' in *Atti e memorie dell'Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere "La Colombaria"*, n. 55, 2004, pp. 45-126 and I. Tedbury, 'Each school has its day' : the Collecting, Reception, and Display of Trecento and Quattrocento Sienese Painting in Britain, 1850-1950, PhD Thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2018

<sup>57</sup> See Rubin, 2000, pp. 212-215



Paintings also entered the collection as gifts from collectors or dealers, as a token of gratitude for Berenson's help in securing a deal - a common reward for scholar-collectors as shall be seen. A famous case is that of the Contini Bonaccossi *Crucifixion*. In 1953, the dealer Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi gave to Berenson a *Crucifixion with the Arma Christi* by Lorenzo Lotto and a *Virgin and Child* by Bergognone (Figs. 7-8), to thank him for his expertise on a large number pictures he had sold to Samuel H. Kress and to gain an introduction to John Walker, a Berenson protégé and the director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington.<sup>58</sup> Such gifts equally shed a light on the collector's preferences. Lorenzo Lotto was Berenson's favourite artist, while Bergognone is one of those lesser known artists to whose rediscovery Berenson made a significant contribution (inspiring at the same time a demand for this artist in the market).<sup>59</sup>

Although Berenson actively speculated in the picture trade, purchases were not always made with a profit in mind. The most significant example is that of works of the Sieneese fourteenth- and fifteenth-century schools, as already seen with the Sassetta alterpiece.<sup>60</sup> While raising the international profile of the Sieneese school, Berenson bought many pieces for himself, most of the time through the mediation of Mason Perkins.<sup>61</sup> Among the 110 paintings in his collection, thirty-four are from the Sieneese school, the great majority with religious subject matter. These works were less likely to leave *I Tatti*, considering the scholar's predilection for Siena.<sup>62</sup> Berenson even reproduced two of his pictures: the Bulgarini's *Crucifixion* and Boccati's *Wedding* in his already cited work on the Sieneese school of 1918.<sup>63</sup> As shall be seen, scholar-collectors often acquired pieces of a certain school or genre whilst working on

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<sup>58</sup> And Berenson in turn gave, at unknown date, to Walker a *Virgin and Child* by Lorenzo di Giovanni and Edward Burne-Jones' *Sidonia von Bork 1560*. Strehlke, 2015, pp. 36-7

<sup>59</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, plate 11, p. 138

<sup>60</sup> This topic is explored in detail by Brügggen Israëls in Brügggen Israëls, 2015

<sup>61</sup> Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 63

<sup>62</sup> Rubin, 2000, p. 220

<sup>63</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, cat. n. 18, 20

them, and often included references to their personal collections in their studies.

Shortly before World War I, the collection had grown sufficiently to pose practical issues of value and space, and was thus insured and inventoried in 1915.<sup>64</sup> By this time Berenson had already established himself as one of the most renowned art historians. In the interbellum, when he published such works as the *Essays on Sienese Painting* (1918), his *Three Essays in Method* (1926), and *Studies in Mediaeval Painting* (1930), the pace of his collecting had almost stopped.<sup>65</sup> Among the few last purchases was the *Crucifixion* by Lorenzo Costa in 1922 (believed to be by Ercole de Roberti until Longhi notoriously questioned its attribution in 1934 in *Officina Ferrarese*).<sup>66</sup> After the war, in 1948, Berenson started working for Wildenstein's of New York, having put an end to his partnership with Duveen in 1937.<sup>67</sup> In these years he mainly published articles in journals and focused on autobiographical writings. In response to the threat that World War II had posed to his collection, he willed *I Tatti* and its contents to Harvard University in 1956, stating that:

My [...] foremost wish is to establish fellowships [...] to [...] students [...] I want this institute to promote aesthetical and humanistic rather than philological and antiquarian interests [...] I have provided a library (which by the way could furnish the surest and completest biography of myself) covering nearly every field of art and literature as well as all the ancillary material [...] I would prefer my works of art to remain distributed over the house and not dumped into a separate room as a museum or gallery.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 31

<sup>65</sup> B. Berenson, *Essays on Sienese Painting*, New York, F. F. Sherman, 1918 ; B. Berenson, *Three Essays in Method*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1927 ; B. Berenson, *Studies in Mediaeval Painting*, London, H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1930 ; Strehlke, 2015, p. 31

<sup>66</sup> It was bought in Lucerne from Fritz Steinmeyer-Boehler for 12.000 Swiss Francs. Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, cat. n. 25 ; Strehlke, 2015, pp. 31, 37

<sup>67</sup> Pope-Hennessy, 1988

<sup>68</sup> To learn more about WW2 and I tatti, see Strehlke, 2015, pp.33-34. Citation from *On the Future of I Tatti*, , <http://itatti.harvard.edu/future-i-tatti>

The intended use of *I Tatti* built on an existing tradition. While the villa functioned as Berenson's showroom for collectors and dealers, who came through in 'processions' like 'kings from the East' to propose 'Monsterpieces' (as Mary used to say), it also attracted scholars who came for its library and photo library.<sup>69</sup> Arranged around the rooms, the collection was often used by Berenson to test the visitors' aesthetic responses and critical intelligence, as recorded by the young Meyer Schapiro, who first visited in 1927.<sup>70</sup> Many students who passed through *I Tatti* became museum directors, such as John Walker and Kenneth Clark. Even nowadays one can read on the *I Tatti* website: 'The Berenson Art Collection serves as a continual source of inspiration for studies, publications, and informal talks at I Tatti.'<sup>71</sup>

Berenson's paintings certainly have received the greatest attention from scholars and students, suggesting the status of a study collection, valuable because of its intrinsic relationship to scholarship. The attribution of pieces in the collection even became a channel through which rivalry among Berenson and his colleagues was voiced out. For instance, Roberto Longhi took great pleasure in deconstructing Berenson's thoughts on his pictures.<sup>72</sup> For instance, Berenson lent three pictures to the legendary show on Renaissance Ferrarese Painting held in Ferrara in 1933. It was curated by Nino Barbantini, who relied heavily on Berenson's suggestions. Berenson presented two panels with St John the Baptist and St Jerome and a Crucifixion, all of which he attributed to Ercole de Roberti. Roberto Longhi did not miss the chance to disagree with Berenson's attribution in his *Officina Ferrarese*, a commentary on the attributions and chronology presented at the exhibition.<sup>73</sup> Longhi argued that the two panels with the saints were by Vicino da Ferrara, and that the

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<sup>69</sup> Rubin, p. 210 ; Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 48

<sup>70</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 31

<sup>71</sup> *Art Collection*, <https://itatti.harvard.edu/art-collection>

<sup>72</sup> Strehlke, 2015, pp. 31, 37

<sup>73</sup> Longhi R., *Officina ferrarese*, Florence, Sansoni, 1934

Crucifixion was instead by Lorenzo Costa ( the attribution to Costa has been kept until today).<sup>74</sup>

Despite Longhi's interference, the example underlines how scholar-collectors frequently lent pictures to exhibitions, contributing to the renown of their collections among a larger audience. Berenson lent objects to major exhibitions, as long as they had what he perceived as a serious scholarly underpinning.<sup>75</sup> In 1937 Berenson lent four pieces to the famous Giotto exhibition in Florence, as shall be explored in chapter 4, and in 1939, three pieces to a show on the Brescia school.<sup>76</sup>

## The Collection of Roberto Longhi

The second case study in this thesis concerns the collection of Roberto Longhi. Similar to Berenson's, it consists of mainly paintings strictly connected with Longhi's interest as a scholar. Longhi started building his collection after the 'golden age' preceding the outbreak of World War I, when experts could buy Bellinis and Giotto's for very little.<sup>77</sup> He preferred instead to acquire paintings from the regional schools and more neglected centuries to which he devoted his research, finding a suitable compromise between his scholarly taste and more affordable opportunities, assembling a collection that eventually became almost an embodiment of the scholar's legacy.

Roberto Longhi (1890-1970) is one of the most renowned Italian art historians, famed for his connoisseurial expertise as well as for his aestheticising writings (Fig. 9). He graduated with Pietro Toesca (1877-1962) at

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<sup>74</sup> Strehlke, 2015, pp. 31, 37 ; Bacchi A., 'Officina ferrarese: inflammable material' in, *Il mestiere del conoscitore : Roberto Longhi*, A. M. Ambrosini Massari, A. Bacchi, D. Benati, A. Galli (eds.), Bologna, Fondazione Zeri, 2017, pp. 165-193

<sup>75</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 32

<sup>76</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 32

<sup>77</sup> Longhi started collecting after the 'golden era' of the turn of the century until the outbreak of WW1, where an expert could buy Bellinis and Giotto's for very little. See Reitlinger, 1961, p. 199; D. Sutton, 'Collecting Old masters in the Twentieth Century' in Garstang, *Commerce, Scholarship : a Window onto the Art World : Colnaghi 1760 to 1984*, London, Colnaghi, 1984, p. 42

Turin University in 1911, with a dissertation on Caravaggio, and continued his studies in Rome, under the supervision of Adolfo Venturi (1856-1941).<sup>78</sup> Before teaching as a freelance in Rome in 1922, he travelled around Europe for two years as adviser to the dealer Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi (1878-1955).<sup>79</sup> While in Rome, Longhi fell in love with a former student of his, the writer Lucia Lopresti, known as Anna Banti (1895-1985), whom he married in 1924.<sup>80</sup> In 1934 he joined the academic staff at Bologna University where he taught until 1949. During his Bolognese years, he extensively published on the art of the Emilia Romagna.<sup>81</sup> In 1937, the education minister Giuseppe Bottai, former high school student of Longhi, called him to collaborate with the *Comando Generale all Direzione Belle Art e Antichità of Rome*.<sup>82</sup> In 1939, he moved to Florence, to the villa he bought on the hills just outside the city, *Il Tasso*. He became Professor of Italian Renaissance Art at Florence University in 1949, a position he held until 1966.<sup>83</sup> Already since the early Bolognese years, Longhi was also part of many art institutions and exhibition committees, playing a central role in the Italian art world.<sup>84</sup> Between 1948 and 1956, for instance, he was involved with 5 Venice Biennale editions, as Chapter 6 will explore.<sup>85</sup> A prolific writer, who had collaborated with many specialised journals, he

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<sup>78</sup> G. C. Sciolla, *La critica d'arte del Novecento*, UTET, Turin, 1995, pp. 59, 168. On Longhi and Toesca, see Vargas C., 'L'Omaggio a Pietro Toesca di Roberto Longhi: più che un omaggio, un testa a testa fra maestri' in *Confronto*, Nuova Serie 1, 2018, pp. 13-30 ; On Longhi and Venturi, see Facchinetti S., 'Dati e date: sul rapporto Adolfo Venturi - Roberto Longhi' in *Adolfo Venturi e la storia dell'arte oggi*, D'Onofrio M. (ed.), Modena, Panini, 2008, pp. 101-106

<sup>79</sup> Facchinetti S., 'Longhi, Roberto' in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 65, 2005 ; Gregori, Bandera, 2014, pp. 7-8 ; To learn more about Contini Bonaccossi, see F. Zaninelli, *Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi, antiquario (1878-1955): the art market and cultural philanthropy in the formation of American museums*, Published PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2018

<sup>80</sup> Facchinetti, 2005 ; On Anna Banti, see RAI documentary part of a series *L'altro 900*, S2E2, <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2018/10/L-altro-900-S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html>.

<sup>81</sup> Between 1935 and 1937 he lived in Bologna too, Facchinetti, 2005.

<sup>82</sup> Facchinetti, 2005. See Mascolo M., Torchiani F., *Roberto Longhi. Percorsi tra le due guerre*, Milan, Officina libraria, 2020

<sup>83</sup> Between 1943-1945, he was suspended from teaching at Bologna, for he did not want to collaborate with the *Republic Sociale Italiana*. Facchinetti, 2005

<sup>84</sup> *Mostra del settecento bolognese*, Bologna, Palazzo comunale, 1935

<sup>85</sup> Facchinetti, 2005

founded his own journal *Paragone* in 1950. As stipulated in his will, at his death in 1971, *Villa Il Tasso* became the *Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi*.<sup>86</sup>

Longhi's collection was built up between ca 1915 and 1971, and is still housed in the villa *Il Tasso* (Fig. 10). 226 objects form part of Longhi's 'small collection', as he called it.<sup>87</sup> These included seven sculptures as well as thirty drawings and miniatures, but the main focus of Longhi's collecting activity was on paintings (Figs. 11).<sup>88</sup> With only a single example from the thirteenth century, around a dozen pictures date from the fourteenth century, and another dozen are from the fifteenth century. The era represented most extensively is the seventeenth century, which was unpopular with the larger public at the time, with almost seventy specimens. The sixteenth and eighteenth century, respectively, were represented by circa twenty paintings each, and the twentieth century with circa thirty.<sup>89</sup>

Longhi himself wrote of his collection:

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<sup>86</sup> M. Gregori, 'Introduzione', in *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, M. Gregori (ed.), Milan, Electa, 1980, p. I

<sup>87</sup> B. Toscano, 'Conoscenza e sentimenti nella <<mia piccola raccolta>>' in *La collezione di Roberto Longhi : dal Duecento a Caravaggio a Morandi*, M. Gregori (ed.), Savigliano, L'artistica, 2007, pp. 23-28; M. Gregori (ed.), *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 1980

<sup>88</sup> The collection was catalogued for the first time in 1972 by Antonio Boschetto in A. Boschetto, *La Collezione Roberto Longhi*, Florence, Sansoni, 1971, and later in 1980: M. Gregori (ed.), *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 1980. See the introduction for a more in-depth literature review. Gregori's introduction, 'Introduzione', in Gregori, 1980, pp. I-XIV and its further elaboration of 2007 (M. Gregori, 'La raccolta di Roberto Longhi', in Gregori, 2007, pp. 17-22) were particularly useful for the redaction of this overview, together with the entries in M. Gregori (ed.), *La collezione di Roberto Longhi : dal Duecento a Caravaggio a Morandi*, Savigliano, L'artistica, 2007; and Bruno Toscano's and Cristina Acidini Luchinat essays in M. Gregori, M. C. Bandera (eds.), *De Giotto à Caravage : les passions de Roberto Longhi*, Bruxelles, Fonds Mercator, 2014 - Toscano, 2007, pp. 23-28 and C. Acidini Luchinat, 'La villa Il Tasso: Des Alberti a Roberto and Lucia Longhi' in Gregori, Bandera, 2014, pp. 44-53. Whereas information on the Caravaggism section of the collection was up-dated thanks to the entries in the exhibition catalogue Bandera M. C., *Il tempo di Caravaggio: capolavori della collezione di Roberto Longhi*, Venice, Marsilio, 2020, (Figs. 13).

<sup>89</sup> On the rediscovery of the *Seicento* in the twentieth century, see A. Bacchi (ed.), *La riscoperta del Seicento: i libri fondativi*, Genoa, Sagep Editori, 2017

my painting collection is [...] parallel to the library and the photo collection, [...] a mirror of [...] the preferences in the development of my research interests. [...] the Trecento padano [...] 'Mannerism', and the presence, in the collection, of originals from the Lombard and Genoese schools of the same style [...] Caravaggio and the Caravaggesques (1928-52). [The collection] ends with examples chosen from the major Italian masters of the last 50 years, to mention only the eleven paintings by Morandi and 4 by Carrà.<sup>90</sup>

Like Berenson, Longhi started collecting after his training as an art historian, during his above-mentioned travel with Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi in 1920-21.<sup>91</sup> It is during these years that Longhi's first acquisitions took place. Being a student without much money at his disposal, he leaned towards more affordable and unconventional artists, such as Piedmontese impressionists.<sup>92</sup>

First explored by Mina Gregori, one particular early purchase is telling of the kind of object-collector engagement that characterises collections of art historians.<sup>93</sup> As a collector, Longhi was often driven by the challenge that old and incorrect attributions could represent, and he was fascinated by objects that belonged to a period of art history which in his own time had become neglected.<sup>94</sup> In 1921 Longhi bought five Caravaggesque canvases known as *The Apostles* (Figs. 12) together with two Caravaggist works by Dirck Van Baburen and Giovanni Lanfranco, once in the collection of Marquis Gavotti of Rome.<sup>95</sup> The works were acquired in Rome, from the dealer Angelelli's, with the help of Lucia Lopresti (one of Longhi's students at the Visconti high school in

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<sup>90</sup> Tr.: 'la mia raccolta di dipinti è, in un certo modo, specializzata in parallelo alla Biblioteca e alla Fototeca: e cioè rispecchiando [...] lo svolgimento preferenziale delle mie ricerche. [...] il Trecento padano [...] Caravaggio e i caravaggeschi (1928-1952) [...] e si chiude con esemplari scelti dei maggiori maestri italiani dell'ultimo 50ennio: per non dir altro, gli undici dipinti di Morandi e i 4 di Carrà'. Longhi's notes as reported in A. Boschetto, *La Collezione Roberto Longhi*, Florence, Sansoni, 1971, p. X.

<sup>91</sup> Gregori, *Bandera*, 2014, pp. 7-8 ; To learn more about Contini Bonaccossi, see F. Zaninelli, *Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi, antiquario (1878-1955): the art market and cultural philanthropy in the formation of American museums*, Published PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2018

<sup>92</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 17

<sup>93</sup> Gregori, 1980, p. I; Gregori, 2007, p. 17-20. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 171- 175

<sup>94</sup> Gregori, 1980, p. I; Gregori, 2007, p. 17-20. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 171- 175

<sup>95</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 170-175 ; Gregori 2007, p. 17

Rome in 1914, who was specialising by then as an art historian with Adolfo Venturi, and who would become Longhi's wife in 1924).<sup>96</sup> In this case, 'the possession preceded the critical thinking'.<sup>97</sup> Only in 1926, having had the paintings in his own house for ten years, Longhi used them to solve the attribution of the *Judgement of Solomon* in the Galleria Borghese, philologically assigning the five apostles and the Borghese canvas to the same hand - a solution reached also with the help of his wife.<sup>98</sup> This example shows that Longhi's acquisitions did not always come in the wake of, but sometimes preceded his writings.<sup>99</sup> As chapter 5 will explore, some acquisitions accompanied and at times directed his findings.<sup>100</sup> Research on these paintings was subsequently divulged through writing and presented through public exhibitions, which Longhi helped to organise, and to which he lent precisely those pictures that had inspired his work.

During the 1920s, when Longhi wrote his monograph on Piero della Francesca (1927), he published repeatedly on *Seicento* artists, mainly in art journals that he himself edited with the critic Emilio Cecchi, *Vita Artistica* and *Pinacotheca*.<sup>101</sup> Not surprisingly, the paintings that he began to acquire in this period have a vivid connection with Longhi's writings on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century naturalism.<sup>102</sup> The link was so tight that Longhi would write on these objects sometimes immediately after they entered the collection, at times years later. In 1922, for instance, he bought a Genoese *Sacred Family* made around the 1650s, which he lent in the same year to the *Mostra della pittura italiana del Seicento e del Settecento* in Florence organised by Ojetti.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> F. Gravini 'Lettere di Lucia Lopresti a Roberto Longhi (Primavera-Autunno 1921)' in *Paragone Letteratura*, n. 63, 2012, pp. 18-81; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 22.

<sup>97</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 18

<sup>98</sup> Gregori, 2007, pp. 17-20; Gravini, pp. 74-75 ; Bandera 2020, cat. n. 22

<sup>99</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 18

<sup>100</sup> Longhi R. (ed.), *Guida alla mostra della pittura bolognese del trecento : Bologna, Pinacoteca nazionale, maggio-luglio, 1950*, Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale, 1950 ; Longhi R., *Mostra del Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi*, Florence, Sansoni, 1951

<sup>101</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 18

<sup>102</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 18

<sup>103</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 120 ; N. Tarchiani, *Mostra della pittura italiana del Seicento e del Settecento*, Rome, Bestetti & Tumminelli, 1922, also explored in Chapter 5.



Shortly after 1922, Longhi also bought Orazio Borgianni's *Lamentation of the Dead Christ*, which would be lent to the 1951 Caravaggio exhibition.<sup>104</sup> In 1926, Longhi acquired a seventeenth-century copy of Guercino's *Vision of Saint Clare*, which he published immediately after.<sup>105</sup> In 1927, he bought further examples of *Seicento* and *Settecento* artists that he would study with great passion, as will be explored in Chapter 5. Among these, there is Carlo Saraceni, whose *Moses and the Pharaoh's Daughters* was found on the Neapolitan art market and later published in 1943.<sup>106</sup> Mattia Preti's *concert* was bought from the dealer and restorer Publio Podio, and published the year after.<sup>107</sup> In 1929, Longhi obtained what he probably considered the 'star' of his collection: Caravaggio's *Boy bitten by a lizard*, which came from the dealer D'Atri in Paris (Figs. 15-16).<sup>108</sup>

In 1930 Longhi bought three pictures that were available on the London art market: the *Stories from the life of Catherine of Alexandria* by the so-called Maestro di S. Maria in Porto Fuori (which would feature in the 1950 Trecento Bolognese exhibition) that Longhi bought from the dealer Giuseppe Bellesi; an *Allegory of Vanity* by Caroselli, which came from Berenson's archenemy Robert Langton Douglas, and which Longhi lent to the 1951 Caravaggio exhibition; and an *enthroned Virgin and Child* by Ermanno Stroiffi acquired at Chenue.<sup>109</sup> As will be explored in Chapter 5, these purchases may further account for Longhi's stays in London and his meetings and exchanges with English art historians there.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 81.

<sup>105</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 76. Guercino will be the focus of another scholar collector, Denis Mahon, as will be seen in Chapter 5.

<sup>106</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 82

<sup>107</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 132

<sup>108</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 78

<sup>109</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 24, 87, 106

<sup>110</sup> This topic has not been investigated yet. Both Bellesi and Langton Douglas lent several pieces to the 1930 Royal Academy Exhibition 'Italian Art 1200-1900', of which Kenneth Clark edited the catalogue, commented upon by Longhi in his article 'Editoriale Mostre e Musei'. Longhi R., 'Editoriale Mostre e Musei (un avvertimento del 1959)' in *Critica d'arte e buongoverno, 1938-1969, Opere Complete, vol. XIII*, Florence, Sansoni, 1985, p. 59

The only painting predating the fourteenth century entered the collection in 1935: a small panel attributed to Cimabue and published in Longhi's famous *Giudizio sul Duecento* which commented on the Giotto exhibition in Florence of 1937 (investigated in chapter 4).<sup>111</sup> By this time, Longhi had become lecturer at the University of Bologna, where he taught until 1949.<sup>112</sup> In Bologna, he particularly engaged with the art of the region, both as a lecturer and as a collector. As explored in Chapter 5, Longhi had acquired two works by Simone dei Crocefissi before 1934, and a panel depicting the *Baptism of Christ* by an anonymous painter from Rimini or Bologna found on the Florentine art market in 1935.<sup>113</sup> Between 1930 and 1940, he also came into possession of a painting from the Publio Podio collection that he attributed to Jacopino di Francesco, with *Scenes from the Life of Catherine of Alexandria*. By 1937, he had acquired a panel by Jacopo di Paolo, with *Stories of the Martyrdom of a Female Saint*, again from Publio Podio.<sup>114</sup>

Between 1937 and 1939 Longhi spent more time in Rome, while collaborating with the proto-ministry of cultural heritage, thanks to his acquaintance with Giuseppe Bottai.<sup>115</sup> In 1939 Longhi bought a villa in Via Benedetto Fortini in Florence, which had once belonged to the Alberti family, and was known as the *Villa Il Ficalbo*, named after the plant 'ficus alba'.<sup>116</sup> It was sold by the heirs of Arthur Francis Trench for 21,500 lire, and became what is known today as *Villa Il Tasso*, named after the plant 'taxus baccata'.<sup>117</sup> Longhi left his mark on the villa by increasing its footprint with the addition of a new longitudinal wing on the south side, which contained a new entrance hall,

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<sup>111</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 17

<sup>112</sup> Gregori, Bandera, 2014, pp. 18-19; Facchinetti, 2005

<sup>113</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 27-8, 23

<sup>114</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 26 (as Vitale da Bologna), 29. Gregori, 2007, cat. 4 (as Maestro della Strage degli Innocenti di Mezzaratta)

<sup>115</sup> Gregori, Bandera, p. 18; Facchinetti 2005

<sup>116</sup> Gregori, Bandera, p. 19

<sup>117</sup> Acidini Luchinat, 2014, p. 46. Federico Zeri once wrote the funds came from Longhi's expertises and commissions for Contini Bonaccossi. F. Zeri, *Confesso che ho sbagliato*, Longanesi, Milan, 1995, ed 2009, p. 46

a living room, and, most importantly, a studio-library that faced the garden, and was lit by a row of portholes (Fig. 10).<sup>118</sup>

Arthur Francis Trench was part of the Anglo-American community that for at least a century had been refurbishing ancient homes and forming collections in the hills around Florence, including the Actons at *Villa Petraia*, Charles Loeser at *Villa la Gattaia*, John Temple Leader at *Vincigliata Castle*.<sup>119</sup> For Longhi, to possess a villa such as *Il Tasso* was a way of up-grading from his humble middle class origins, showing to the Florentine society his status as a scholar and also as a collector. In so doing, he followed in the footsteps of Bernard Berenson, whose *I Tatti* was situated on the opposite side of the city (and had been visited by Longhi since 1912).<sup>120</sup> Inside the villa, his already rich collection of paintings was displayed in sober interiors, within a mix of antique and imitation-antique furniture, paintings, knickknacks, and books.<sup>121</sup> Alvar Gonzalez-Palacios, a connoisseur of 'decorative arts', and a student of Longhi, described it as:

[...] arranged with talent, furniture in Empire style [...] A 'cosiness' reigned over sofas covered in chintz, multicolour petrol lamps, [...] niche book cases, among which the remarkable collection was displayed in every corner.<sup>122</sup>

Although the interiors may have changed since Longhi's days, photos depicting the studio-library of the *Fondazione Longhi* (Figs. 11, 17) still suggest an interaction between works of art, books, and elements of the interior decoration, as described by Gonzalez-Palacios. As Bruno Toscano recalled:

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<sup>118</sup> Acidini Luchinat, 2014, p. 48

<sup>119</sup> Acidini Luchinat, 2014, pp. 46-7; see also F. Baldry, 'Abitare e collezionare: note sul collezionismo Fiorentino tra la fine dell'Ottocento e gli inizi del Novecento' in *Herbert Percy Horne e Firenze*, Nardinocchi E. (ed.), Florence, Edizioni La Meridiana, 2005, pp. 103-126; Lamberini D., 'Residenti anglo-americani e "genius loci": ricostruzioni e restauri delle dimore fiorentine in *Gli anglo-americani a Firenze*, Fantoni M. (ed.), Rome, Bulzoni, 2000, pp. 207-222

<sup>120</sup> The Longhis, after the reconciliation of 1947 visited often *I Tatti*, even just to see the collection. Strehlke, 2015, p. 37. *I Tatti* definitely had an influence according to Mina Gregori. Gregori, 2007, p. 19

<sup>121</sup> Acidini Luchinat, 2014, p. 51

<sup>122</sup> Acidini Luchinat, 2014, p. 51, translated.

In the library, the top shelves, visible from the middle of the room, were at once- and still are- used as supports to hang small 13th or 14th-century panels: golden backgrounds and books almost touching, to summarise, so to speak, the idea of a research prompted from the sensual direct and almost daily experience of the object of study.<sup>123</sup>

In fact, it was among the library shelves, almost in direct dialogue with books, one could say, that Longhi decided to display the five apostles ex-Gavotti and the majority of his Bolognese *Trecento* pictures.<sup>124</sup>

Following the purchase of *Il Tasso*, the collection kept growing. In 1939, Longhi acquired a *Virgin & Child* by Guido Reni, coming from a London private collection.<sup>125</sup> The *Entombement of Christ* by the Seventeenth-Century Neapolitan artist Battistello, which used to hang in the library, was purchased from the collection of the Marchese Auletta.<sup>126</sup> Girolamo di Benvenuto's *Snow on the Esquiline*, a predella companion to a painting in the Berenson collection, can be shown to have been at *Il Tasso* before 1940.<sup>127</sup>

During World War II, Longhi published some of his most famous essays, such as *Carlo Braccresco* (1942) and *Stefano Fiorentino* (1943), which account for his method of connoisseurship, and *Ultimi Studi sul Caravaggio* (1943).<sup>128</sup> Also during the 1940s Longhi reinforced those parts of his collection that were representative of the schools he was most interested in.<sup>129</sup> By 1943 Longhi had acquired another Borgianni and two Saracenis (a *Judith* and a *Portrait of a*

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<sup>123</sup> Toscano, 2007, p. 24, translated.

<sup>124</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 47-8.

<sup>125</sup> The topic of Longhi's visits to London and his contact with the local scholars will be further investigated in chapter 5, when dealing with the impact of Longhi's study of seicento and Caravaggism on Ben Nicolson and Denis Mahon.

<sup>126</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 127

<sup>127</sup> Strehlike, 2015, pp. 31, 37. Strehlike, Brüggen Israëls, 2015, cat n. 46

<sup>128</sup> R. Longhi, *Carlo Braccresco*, Milan, 1942 ; R. Longhi, *Stefano Fiorentino*, re-published in *Paragone*, vol. 2, 1951, pp. 18-40 ; R. Longhi, 'Ultimi Studi sul Caravaggio e la sua cerchia' in *Proporzioni*, n. 1, 1943, pp. 5-63

<sup>129</sup> Gregori, 1980, p. 13

*Cardinal*), and Matthias Stomer's *Arcangel Raphael with Tobias*, accompanying his research on the followers of Caravaggio.<sup>130</sup>

In the post war years, Longhi's research shifted focus to the Adriatic regions, although he also kept collecting works from central Italian schools.<sup>131</sup> In 1945, he bought Dosso Dossi's *Young boy with a flower basket* (work stemming from the Castello Estense in Ferrara, and originally part of a larger round panel together with another painting, which had been at the London National Gallery in London since 1887).<sup>132</sup> In 1946, Longhi found at an auction sale in Florence another Mattia Preti, *Susanna and the Elders*.<sup>133</sup> In 1947, Longhi purchased Pseudo Stefano da Ferrara's *St Francis Receiving the Stigmata* (Fig. 14), and in 1949, the Florentine dealer Giovanni Salocchi gifted to Longhi a *Pietà* by Vitale da Bologna just before the Bolognese *Trecento* exhibition of 1950, as explored in Chapter 5.

In the 1950s Longhi lent many works to seminal exhibitions, on which either Longhi or one of his pupils had worked, such as the *Mostra della Pittura Bolognese del Trecento* (Bologna, 1950), *Mostra del Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* (Milan, 1951) - the topic of Chapter 5- and *Mostra del Manierismo piemontese e lombardo del Seicento* (Turin, 1955). Longhi started this practice already in the thirties, when he lent some of his paintings, among others, to the 1935 *Mostra dei Pittori Riminesi* (Rimini), the *Mostra del Settecento Bolognese* (Bologna), and the 1938 *Mostra di pittori genovesi del Seicento e del Settecento* (Genoa).<sup>134</sup>

The period after 1949, when Longhi was appointed Professor of Italian Renaissance Art at the University of Florence, marks the peak of Longhi's career, when he had a 'school' of pupils, and an influence that went well beyond the scholarly world through his involvement in large scale exhibitions

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<sup>130</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 81, 168

<sup>131</sup> Gregori, 1980

<sup>132</sup> The connection with the NG painting has only been made in 1977 by G. Galli, Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 64

<sup>133</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 133

<sup>134</sup> As deduced from the data collected in the collection catalogues.

as well as TV and radio programs.<sup>135</sup> Increasingly, Longhi used the editorial pages of his new journal *Paragone* to discuss current issues, such as cultural heritage and restoration. He continued collecting, too. Around 1950, he bought Bergognone's *Madonna with child* from Alessandro Contini Bonacossi.<sup>136</sup> In 1953, two paintings with saints by Lorenzo Lotto entered the collection at *Il Tasso*, discussed in the monograph *Lorenzo Lotto* (1953) written by Boschetto and Longhi's wife.<sup>137</sup> As chapter 2 explores, Lotto was Berenson's favourite painter, and in 1953 the first monographic exhibition on the artist was held in Venice, spreading among other things Longhi's view of Lotto, who was seen as the Lombard pre-cursor of Caravaggio.<sup>138</sup>

In 1956, Longhi was already working on the critical re-issue of all his writings. In that year he was also invited to the ceremony for *Laurea Honoris Causa* that the University of Florence awarded to Berenson, marking a late and slow reconciliation between the two critics, who had fallen out in the 1910s over Longhi's unaccomplished proposal to translate Berenson's *Painters of the Renaissance*.<sup>139</sup> Longhi still continued collecting, adding paintings by those artists he had been studying in the past. In 1957 he bought an *Emperor's Triumph* he attributed to Filippo Napoletano, publishing it the same year, after reconstructing the cycle it belonged to.<sup>140</sup> Again in 1957, Longhi bought an *Allegorical Scene* he attributed to Lambert Sustris, a painter whose importance was re-evaluated by his studies. This painting used to hang in Longhi's study, opposite his desk, where it can still be seen today.<sup>141</sup> And in 1964, Longhi managed to obtain a painting that he had known and desired since 1943:

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<sup>135</sup> Facchinetti, 2005

<sup>136</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 49

<sup>137</sup> In 1947 she had published one on Artemisia Gentileschi. Fra Angelico, 1953; Diego Velázquez, 1955; C. Monet, 1956

<sup>138</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 56-7; Banti Anna and Boschetti Antonio, *Lorenzo Lotto, registi*, Florence, Sansoni, 1953; Zampetti Piero (ed.), *Mostra di Lorenzo Lotto*, Venice, Alfieri, 1953

<sup>139</sup> *Opere Complete*, which comprise 14 volumes. For the relationship between Berenson and Longhi, see Garboli C., Montagnani C., *Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi: lettere e scartafacci 1912-1957*, Milan, Adelphi edizioni, 1993

<sup>140</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 182, 129

<sup>141</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 22; Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 60

Valentin de Boulogne's *Denial of Saint Peter*, which at one point was displayed in *Il Tasso's* dining room.<sup>142</sup> He had first seen it in Milan, and it featured in the 1951 Caravaggio exhibition he organised, lent by Vittorio Frascione. In 1963, it was exhibited again in Milan, and Longhi secured it from the owner through exchanging it for a *Moses* by Giuseppe Maria Crespi.<sup>143</sup>

Besides being lent to several exhibitions, objects from the Longhi's collection were mainly known to scholars and students, who often discussed them in the same specialised art journals for which Longhi wrote himself. As Vitale Bloch wrote:

Roberto Longhi was not a collector of paintings as was, for instance, a Berenson [...] It was not known to a wide circle of enthusiasts or even to many of his pupils. Scholars visiting Florence did not telephone to 'Il Tasso' as they did in the case of I Tatti, the Acton or the Contini Bonacossi collections. The relatively small number of first quality works - naturally they tend to be seventeenth century - are already familiar either through Longhi's own writings or from exhibitions. [...] he almost had to be content - I hope I am not too bold in venturing - with the crumbs from the succulent banquet prepared by his own research.[...] Most of the collection, therefore, consists of rare works of great interest to a specialist in a given painter or school, but this has often been achieved - dare we say it? - by sacrificing the beautiful.<sup>144</sup>

Bloch words have a tinge of bitterness, but it is true, however, that instead of the aristocracy as for *I Tatti*, the most frequent visitors at *Il Tasso* were Longhi's students and colleagues.<sup>145</sup> Sometimes Longhi, like Berenson, used his objects as a test to assess the skills of his guests. An eighteenth-century seaside landscape, for example, became an attributional riddle that no one was able to

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<sup>142</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 22

<sup>143</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164

<sup>144</sup> V. Bloch, 'La Collezione Roberto Longhi by Antonio Boschetto' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 114, n. 829, Apr., 1972, p. 252

<sup>145</sup> On Longhi and Bloch, see Tolaini E., 'Molti sgarbi in con Roberto Longhi in Casa Bloch' in *Belfagor*, vol. 56, n. 6, 2001, pp. 730-733

solve. The painting used to hang in the dining room, facing Longhi's seat, from where he would interrogate his guests, asking for clues about its maker.<sup>146</sup>

As his student Bruno Toscano recalled, the paintings that Longhi's students encountered in every corner of the library and house played an inspirational role, stimulating new ideas and debates:

For all the visitors of Longhi's villa, the paintings that were displayed there were an embodiment of new potential fields of enquiry and they offered unrivalled stimuli and orientations [...] It is the case of the big painting by the great Master of the shepherds annunciation at the entrance of Longhi's studio, that in the 1950s attracted the attention of our colleagues coming from the south of the country, like Ferdinando Bologna, who opened up the studies on that painter (the Master of the Shepherd's annunciation) with an essay he wrote in 1958.'<sup>147</sup>

Berenson's decision to create a study centre at *I Tatti* must have inspired Longhi's intentions when planning the future of his legacy at *Il Tasso*. The Longhi Foundation, however, has a different orientation, and is strictly art historical in terms of the research it promotes, and more selective in its terms of access, being 'open to the public on an appointment basis only to Italian and foreign university lecturers, and Italians and foreigners with a degree in Art History. Admission to the Foundation is generally granted for research purposes'.<sup>148</sup>

## The Collection of Kenneth Clark

The third and final case study of this thesis presents a very different collection, that of Kenneth Clark. Kenneth Clark (1903-1983) is one of the most famous British art historians; he was a great public figure who covered roles in

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<sup>146</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 182

<sup>147</sup> Toscano, 1982, p. 244

<sup>148</sup> Fondazione Roberto Longhi, [https://fondazione-longhi.it/wordpress/it/it\\_fondazione/it\\_statuto/](https://fondazione-longhi.it/wordpress/it/it_fondazione/it_statuto/)



many museums and institutions, such as the Arts Council, and equally a popular television broadcaster (Fig. 18).<sup>149</sup> He studied History at Trinity College Oxford, where he met with Charles F. Bell, keeper of the Ashmolean Museum's Fine Art department, who became his mentor. At Oxford, Clark also met his first wife, Elizabeth Winifred Martin, known as 'Jane' (1902–1976), with whom he had three children: Alan, Colette, and Colin.<sup>150</sup> Helped by Bell, Clark went to study with Berenson at *I Tatti* for a two-year project. He helped Berenson to revise his book on Florentine drawings, thus honing his skills as a connoisseur.<sup>151</sup> Following his experience in Florence, he was called to Windsor to catalogue the drawings by Leonardo da Vinci in the Royal Collection in 1929.<sup>152</sup> In 1931, Clark succeeded Bell at the Ashmolean, and in 1933, at the age of 30, he became the youngest ever director of the National Gallery in London, a post he held till 1945.<sup>153</sup> In 1934, he was also appointed surveyor of the King's pictures.<sup>154</sup> And from at least 1936, he was working as adviser to one of Europe's most prolific collectors, Mr Calouste Gulbenkian in Paris.<sup>155</sup> After leaving the National Gallery, he engaged in researching and writing, publishing books such as *Landscape into Art* (1949), *Piero Della Francesca* (1951), and *The Nude* (1956).<sup>156</sup> He is mostly remembered for his pioneering approach to television, culminating in the series 'Civilisation' in 1969.<sup>157</sup> In 1977, a year after his wife had passed away, Clark married Nolwen de Janzé-Rice (1924–1989), with whom he spent his life until he died in 1983.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, 'Clark, Kenneth, Sir', <http://arthistorians.info/clarkk>. See J. Stourton, *Kenneth Clark : life, art and Civilisation*, London, William Collins, 2016

<sup>150</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 30-8, 62

<sup>151</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 39, 50

<sup>152</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 130

<sup>153</sup> Stephens, 2014, pp. 79, 89 ; Stourton, 2016, p. 116

<sup>154</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 98

<sup>155</sup> As deducted from the study of the correspondence held at the Tate Archive in London and the Museum Calouste Gulbenkian archive in Lisbon

<sup>156</sup> K. Clark, *Landscape into Art*, London, J. Murray, 1949 ; K. Clark, *Piero della Francesca*, London, Phaidon Press, 1951; K. Clark, *The Nude: a study of ideal art*, London, J. Murray, 1956. Sciolla (as in n. 3), p. 367

<sup>157</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, 'Clark, Kenneth, Sir', <http://arthistorians.info/clarkk>

<sup>158</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 388

Unlike the collections at *I Tatti* and *Il Tasso*, most of Clark's collection was dispersed after his death, and only a small part survives intact in the family home at Saltwood Castle in Hythe.<sup>159</sup> The collection was formed between probably 1915, the year when Clark received his (possibly) first object as a gift for his twelfth birthday (an album of Japanese prints), and the late 1970s.<sup>160</sup> It is known to have contained at least 200 objects, including pieces from China and Japan, ancient Egypt, ancient Greece and Rome, Medieval enamels and ivories, Renaissance majolica and bronzes, Old Masters paintings and drawings (mainly Italian works ranging from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth century), French impressionists and post-impressionists, and then sculptures, Victorian and Edwardian paintings, and twenty-nine drawings and paintings of the British Modern school.

Clark's collection has never been catalogued, so it is difficult to get a grasp of the extent of his collecting. In absence of the same kind of documentation that was available for the collections of Berenson and Longhi, this section relies on extensive research that put together the few publications that partially record the contents of Clarks' collection, visual evidences, memoirs and correspondence records.<sup>161</sup> While a comprehensive survey of the collection is impossible, this section nonetheless represents a first attempt to chronologically describe the development of Clark's collection, interconnecting

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<sup>159</sup> P. T. J. Rumley. 'Saltwood' in *Kenneth Clark: Looking for Civilisation*, C. Stephens and J. P. Stonard (eds.), London, Tate Publishing, 2014, pp. 115-121.

<sup>160</sup> J.P. Stonard, 'Looking for Civilisation' in *Kenneth Clark: Looking for Civilisation*, C. Stephens and J. P. Stonard (eds.), London, Tate Publishing, 2014, p. 14

<sup>161</sup> Among these, there are the exhibition catalogue C. Stephens and J. P. Stonard (eds.), *Kenneth Clark: Looking for Civilisation*, London, Tate Publishing, 2014 ; the sale catalogue Sotheby's London sale 27/06/1984, 'Paintings and works of art from the collection of the late Lord Clark of Saltwood, O.M., C.H., K.C.B : sold by order of his executors and his family', London, Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1984 ; R. Cumming, *My Dear BB: the letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2015 ; Tate Gallery Archive, Clarks papers, TGA8812 ; Museum Calouste Gulbenkian Archive - Correspondence Papers ; Photographs of 30 Portland Place available at The Survey of London, *30 Portland Place: London's Guggenheim Museum that never was*, <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/survey-of-london/2016/02/26/30-portland-place-londons-guggenheim-museum-that-never-was/> ; K. Clark, 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947, p. 27 (See the introduction for an in-depth discussion of the sources used).

the few known purchases with the collector's biography and interests as a scholar.

Other than Berenson and Longhi, Clark came from a wealthy family, prospering from the profits of a textile firm in Scotland. His father was a collector himself, acquiring various objects for the family home in Suffolk, Sudbourne Hall.<sup>162</sup> Some of those objects, despite being considered out of fashion by the time his son inherited them, became the Victorian and Edwardian nucleus of Clark's collection, with works by artists such as Edwin Landseer, John Everett Millais, and James Tissot.<sup>163</sup> Clark also owned some pre-Raphaelite drawings, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Elizabeth Siddal* and two studies for the *Death of Medusa* by Edward Burne-Jones, but it is unclear whether these were purchased or inherited. As shall be explored at greater length in the chapters devoted to Clark, he was an art lover and, unlike Berenson and Longhi, he openly identified himself as a collector. His taste was shaped by his scholarly interests and benefitted from the opportunities that his expert eye and his professional networks granted him. In a 1947 article in the French magazine *Art et Style*, that was translated into English and published in *Vogue House & Garden* at the end of the same year, Clark wrote:

For 25 years we have been obeying the crazy impulse to buy works of art. What governs the impulse I cannot say. But the result is a strange accumulation in which there are one or two examples of almost every kind of artefact and almost every epoch, from early Egyptian times onwards [...] Any collection must represent a compromise between taste and opportunity. I must confess that I have always been tempted by things which are out of fashion, not simply because they were cheap, but from a sentimental feeling that I must rescue them from neglect.<sup>164</sup>

It is known that Clark bought few objects before the 1920s, and the 'crazy impulse to buy works of art' appears to have taken hold only from the mid-20s

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<sup>162</sup> J. Walker, *Self-Portrait with Donors: Confessions of an Art Collector*, Boston, Little Brown, 1974, p. 288; Stonard, 2014, pp. 13-4

<sup>163</sup> Stephens, 2014, p. 82

<sup>164</sup> Clark, 1947, p. 27. Albeit Jane does not seem to have engaged with the collection as a scholar, she was as fundamental as Clark in building the collection - as confirmed by Clark's use of 'we'.

onwards. Clark attended Winchester College from 1917 to 1922, where the headmaster, Montague Rendall, was an aesthete who greatly inspired him.<sup>165</sup> In 1922, he went to Trinity College Oxford, where he graduated in history in 1925. At Oxford, he was soon absorbed into the circle of art lovers led by Charles Bell. He also attended Roger Fry's lessons on Post-Impressionists, which influenced much his thinking as a scholar and as a collector.<sup>166</sup> Following a suggestion by Bell, Clark decided to write his dissertation on the theme of the Gothic Revival, which he completed only in 1928, when he published it as his first book.<sup>167</sup> Before then, in 1925, Bell had introduced Clark to Berenson, who invited him to succeed Yukio Yashiro in his revision of *Drawings of the Florentine Painters*.<sup>168</sup> This task lasted for two years, keeping Clark away from his Oxford studies, which he eventually completed gaining 'only' a second-class honours degree.<sup>169</sup>

In 1927, after more than two years of 'apprenticeship' in Connoisseurship with Berenson, Clark married and went back to England.<sup>170</sup> In 1929, the above-mentioned invitation to catalogue the manuscripts by Leonardo Da Vinci in the Royal collection followed; the resulting catalogue would eventually be published in 1935.<sup>171</sup> In 1930, Clark was involved in the organisation of the famous *Exhibition of Italian Art 1200-1900* at the Royal Academy in London, for which he co-authored the catalogue together with Lord Balniel (David Lindsay, the future Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, 1900-1975).<sup>172</sup> As shall be seen in Chapter 3, Clark also lent a picture of his own to this show, and it is likely that he met Roberto Longhi for the first time on this occasion. In 1931, as indicated above, Clark obtained his first curatorial position, being appointed as Bell's successor as keeper of the Ashmolean Museum's department of Fine Arts.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 24-5 ; Stonard, 2014, pp. 15-6

<sup>166</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 30-1, 39 80 ; Stonard, 2014, pp. 17-8

<sup>167</sup> Stonard, 2014, p. 19 ; Stourton, 2016, p. 62

<sup>168</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 40-1

<sup>169</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 38, 50-61

<sup>170</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 39

<sup>171</sup> Stonard, 2014, p. 20

<sup>172</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 69-78

<sup>173</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 79

During the first years of his marriage, Clark and his wife lived in at least six different homes.<sup>174</sup> Presumably, whatever was bought for the collection at that time must have moved around with them. From the correspondence between Clark and Berenson it is possible to trace some acquisitions made during those years.<sup>175</sup> By June 1928, several drawings were already in Clark's possession, corresponding to his work as a scholar on drawings both with Berenson and at Windsor: 'an enchanting Correggio & a ravishing Beccafumi' which Clark managed to 'snatch out of the teeth of the dealers', and one that he believed to be by Michelangelo.<sup>176</sup> The 'Correggio' is a drawing of a *Mother and Child*, possibly in preparation of an *Allegory of Virtue* in the Louvre, which Berenson was more inclined to describe as 'After Correggio'. In 1928, a fresco fragment said to come from the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice was purchased at a sale with objects from the collection of John Ruskin, whose writings Clark greatly admired.<sup>177</sup> Around the same time, Clark secured another important acquisition from the London dealer Duits, which will be the focus of Chapter 3. It is a portrait of the artist Valerio Belli by Raphael, as first published as such by Clark himself, and its companion piece portraying Valerio's son, Elio, by the lesser-known painter Antonio Fasolo from Vicenza (Fig. 19).<sup>178</sup> In 1929, while in Paris, Clark made one of his most fortunate purchases from the Guillaume Gallery, securing fifty watercolours by Cézanne for only six pounds a piece from the artist's son.<sup>179</sup> Again in Paris, in 1933, he bought further oil paintings by Cézanne from the dealer Vollard, a friend of the painter, for only 800-1,500 pounds each (Fig. 20). As John Walker recollected in his *Self-Portrait with Donors*, not being able to 'afford to markup the big dealers', Clark made 'many

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<sup>174</sup> As attested by Stourton, 2016

<sup>175</sup> Cumming R., *My Dear BB: the letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2015

<sup>176</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter 15JUN1928 in Cumming, 2015, pp.35-6

<sup>177</sup> Stephens, 2014, p. 82. The acquisition date is not mentioned by the existing literature and was retrieved by the author identifying the date of the sale catalogue following the clues in the article J. Schulz, 'Titian at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 143, n. 1182, Sep. 2001, pp. 567-569.

<sup>178</sup> The literature usually only mentions Raphael's tondo. Stephens, 2014, p. 83

<sup>179</sup> Walker, 1974, p. 289

astute buys', frequenting 'less visited galleries, not yet discovered by Americans'.<sup>180</sup>

Between 1930 and 1933, Clark bought about sixty manuscript illuminations, part of James Dennistoun's collection of miniatures, which came accompanied with the collector's notes on their provenance, described by Clark as a 'really amusing monument in the history of early collecting'.<sup>181</sup> In 1932-3, Clark acquired two paintings by the Ferrarese Dosso Dossi, *Earthly Paradise* and *Scenes from the Aeneid: the Sicilian Games*, once forming part of Alfonso d'Este's *camerino* in Ferrara.<sup>182</sup> This purchase shows how Clark's taste was following the development of scholarship at the time: in 1933, a major exhibition on the Ferrarese school was organised in Italy, as mentioned above in the sections on Berenson and Longhi. As confirmed by a letter to Berenson, 1933 is also the year in which Renoir's *Baigneuse* was purchased.<sup>183</sup> It was considered the finest piece of the collection, and appears in one of Clark's photographic portraits (Figs. 21). The painting was bought together with another Renoir, *Femme en blouse blanche*.<sup>184</sup>

After being appointed as Director of the National Gallery in 1933 and Surveyor of the King's pictures in 1934, Clark settled down in 30 Portland Place in London, a terraced eighteenth-century town-house with Adam designs, where the Clarks lived until the outbreak of World War II.<sup>185</sup> With a stable roof over his head, Clark inaugurated an innovative aspect of his collecting, in which he went beyond Berenson and Longhi, by commissioning design pieces

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<sup>180</sup> Walker, 1974, pp. 289-290

<sup>181</sup> James Dennistoun (1803-1855) was a Scottish Antiquarian, and one of the first primitives collectors. Clark divided the albums in parts, selling some of them. He mounted a few of the illuminations he kept and had others bound in two separate albums. Stephens, 2014, p. 79 -81; Sotheby's, 1984 ; Stourton, 2016, p. 240, Clark to Berenson Letter 09/10/1933 in Cumming, 2015, p.138

<sup>182</sup> The *Scenes from the Aeneid*, was damaged by fire in 1935. Both paintings were sold to Agnew in 1964 and are now held respectively at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts and the National Gallery of Canada. N. Gauld, 'Vads', <https://www.vads.ac.uk/digital/collection/NIRP/id/29613/rec/2>

<sup>183</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter 09/10/1933 in Cumming, 2015, p.138

<sup>184</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 239. Clark to Berenson Letter 09/10/1933 in Cumming, 2015, p. 138

<sup>185</sup> The Survey of London, *30 Portland Place*

from living artists, thus acting as a patron of the contemporary arts. Clark's memoirs and contemporary accounts inform that some curtains were designed by the artist Duncan Grant, a painted screen by Graham Bell, and a rug designed by Marion Dorn, and a dining service with the theme of portraits of illustrious women designed by Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell (Fig. 22).<sup>186</sup>

Like Berenson at *I Tatti*, Clark endeavoured to collect a variety of objects, with the intention of decorating the family home. Photographs from the RIBA archives show the interiors of 30 Portland Place in 1938 (Fig. 23).<sup>187</sup> In one photo (Fig. 23.1), an oval-shaped dining room is populated by some of the masterpieces that were already in the collection. Over the chimney piece is Seurat's *Le Bec du Hoc* which joined the family in 1935 or 1936 after being bought for 3,500 pounds, together with another Seurat, *Sous Bois*.<sup>188</sup> A second photograph (Fig. 24) pictures the sitting room. On top of a chimneypiece, there is a porcelain model for the *Memorial to Cézanne* by Maillol.<sup>189</sup> And above it, hangs Paul Cézanne's *Chateau Noir*. As will be seen in Chapter 6, Clark's Cézannes and Seurats were among the most famous pieces of the collection, held in the highest esteem. Clark also continued buying old masters. A search through the archive of the *Fototeca Zeri*, for instance, revealed that around 1937, Clark came into possession of a portrait of Giovanni Battista Agucchi

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<sup>186</sup> Stephens, 2014, p. 87. Sue Breakell, 'The Exercise of a Peculiar Art-Skill': Kenneth Clark's Design Advocacy and the Council of Industrial Design' in *Visual Culture in Britain*, vol. 15, issue 1, 2015, p. 18. J. Grindley, *The famous illustrious women dinner service*, <https://www.charleston.org.uk/stories/the-famous-women-dinner-service/>

<sup>187</sup> Study carried out by UCL's The Bartlett School of Architecture as part of The Survey of London project. It revealed that the house was to become Peggy Guggenheim's Modern Art Museum in London in 1939, underlining once again its link with contemporary art patronage. Since it was also the place where Henry Moore first met the Clarks, 30 Portland Place stands out as a landmark to the Clarks' engagement with young artists of their time. The Survey of London, *30 Portland Place*

<sup>188</sup> Walker, 1974, p. 290

<sup>189</sup> French artist, (1861-1944) whose works are exhibited in Tuileries and Orsay Museum in Paris

now attributed to Domenichino.<sup>190</sup> In terms of display, works of radically different time periods and geographical areas shared the same rooms, as in many house collections of the time. According to Clark himself, it appeared quite natural and stimulating, as long as they were a match on a visual level.<sup>191</sup>

In the post-war years Clark and his family moved to Upper Terrace House in Hampstead, where Clark lived for about a decade.<sup>192</sup> Just like *I Tatti* for Bernard Berenson, and *Il Tasso* for Longhi, Upper Terrace House accommodated his library, and it was the perfect exhibition space for a growing domestic collection. At the same time, it became the *locus* for encounters with Clark's protégées from the world of the contemporary arts, with scholars, art history students, dealers, collectors, and members of the social elite.<sup>193</sup> Most of the objects that inhabited the rooms of Upper Terrace House came from 30 Portland Place, but with more space at his disposal, Clark kept on acquiring new items. These being the years following the 'Clark Boom' of the 1930s, he had more money than before and could profit from a rich network of contacts including dealers, auctioneers, and other collectors.<sup>194</sup>

Upper Terrace House featured in the House & Garden article mentioned above, which was illustrated by photographs of the interior. The first features the entrance hall with a Bessarabian carpet on the floor in the foreground.<sup>195</sup> John Piper's *Gordale Scar* (1943) hangs on the wall (Fig. 25). In a photograph of the same space, published in the catalogue of the exhibition *Kenneth Clark: Looking for Civilisation*, Piper's painting has been replaced by Degas' *Woman*

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<sup>190</sup> It was then recorded in possession F. D. Lycett Green who of presented it to York Art Gallery through the National Art Collections Fund, 1955. *Zampieri Domenico, Ritratto di Giovanni Battista Agucchi*, <http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/entry/work/59527/Zampieri%20Domenico%20%28Domenichino%29%2C%20Ritratto%20di%20Giovanni%20Battista%20Agucchi> ; [https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/monsignor-agucchi-7768/search/keyword:domenichino/page/1/view\\_as/grid](https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/monsignor-agucchi-7768/search/keyword:domenichino/page/1/view_as/grid)

<sup>191</sup> Clark, 1947, p. 28

<sup>192</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 237-9

<sup>193</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 238

<sup>194</sup> Stephens, 2014, p. 87

<sup>195</sup> A Bessarabian carpet is a flat woven carpet typical of the Russian Provinces during the 18-20th century; Stourton, 2016, p. 239



*drying her back* (Fig. 25.1).<sup>196</sup> Beyond the open door, on the wall of the staircase landing, hangs one of the few large old masters owned by Clark. It is a *Madonna and child* by the 'circle of Pontormo' (c.1520), attributed by Clark to Rosso Fiorentino. Another photo shows part of a room that looks like a study (Fig. 26). On a table, behind a vase with tulips in it, sits a Roman head of an Empress, possibly Agrippina the Elder. On the wall, to the right side of the desk, hangs a framed watercolour – a still life with two quails and a lute by Giovanni da Udine. A third photo offers a view to the so-called 'long panelled drawing room' (Fig. 27). On the left of a sofa, above a wooden bookcase, is the above-mentioned tondo painting by Raphael, which was displayed in a frame, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.<sup>197</sup> It is flanked by two mounted twelfth-century illuminations from the Dennistoun album.<sup>198</sup> It is also known, although it does not appear in the photograph, that the Seurat's *Bec du Hoc*, once in Portland Place's dining room, was hung in this room. Above the chimneypiece, flanked by a couple of ceramic vases, Renoir's *Baigneuse Blonde* has pride of place.<sup>199</sup> A fourth and final photo shows Jane Clark's room (Fig. 28). In the background, on the wall, is William Quiller Orchardson's *View of the Venetian Lagoon in the Fog* which came from Clark's father's collection.<sup>200</sup> On the left, a very tall Chinese porcelain pagoda catches the eye, to the right of the Regency bed. The pagoda is known to have had a twin, which probably is positioned on the other side of the bed, outside of the frame. Clark thought that they came from the Prince Regent's Brighton Pavilion, and must have considered them to be in style with the other furniture in the room, but they are in fact genuine Chinese artefacts from the Yongzheng period (1723-35).<sup>201</sup> On the wall in this bedroom, there is one of the Dosso Dossi paintings bought in 1932-3. Its

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<sup>196</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 239

<sup>197</sup> Stephens, 2014, p. 83 : Stourton, 2016, p. 239

<sup>198</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 240

<sup>199</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 239

<sup>200</sup> Stephens, 2014, p. 82

<sup>201</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 240; Stephens, 2014, p. 79. Clark's understanding of Chinese Art seems to be more aestheticising than his knowledge of Japanese Art, which he started collecting and studying as a young boy.

pendant, *Scenes from the Aeneid: the Sicilian Games*, may have been in Kenneth Clark's bedroom.<sup>202</sup>

The correspondence between Clark and Berenson is a useful source for establishing a timeline for some interesting acquisitions, made in particular between 1947 (the year of the *House & Garden* article with the photos described above) and 1950. It should be noted that these are the years following Clark's resignation as Director of the National Gallery, and his intense advisory relationship with Calouste Gulbenkian, which allowed Clark to be in constant contact with major dealers, and be up to date with all the best works available on the market and in auction sales. In fact, compared to Berenson and Longhi, Clark was more attuned to the omnivorous 'Faustian Taste' of great European Collectors such as Mr Gulbenkian and Vittorio Cini.<sup>203</sup>

Prior to May 1947, Clark bought a 'Lorenzetti-ish Madonna' that he believed to be by Ugolino Lorenzetti and that he 'rescued from Bond Street'.<sup>204</sup> Actually, it was exchanged for a more fashionable painting by Bonnard that had been obtained for only 250 pounds at Wildenstein's.<sup>205</sup> Berenson, who was sent a photograph of the Madonna panel, thought it was more likely by Pietro Lorenzetti.<sup>206</sup> Also in 1947, a painting by Bellini, a *Madonna and Child* with a distinguished provenance (it was once in the Mond and later in the Melchet collection), was added.<sup>207</sup> This painting hung in the library at Upper Terrace House, and was gifted to the Ashmolean after Clark's death in 1987, in lieu of inheritance tax.<sup>208</sup> In 1948, Clark secured another important painting: a *Portrait*

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<sup>202</sup> Nicola Gauld, 'Vads', <https://vads.ac.uk/large.php?uid=201224>

<sup>203</sup> Berenson once used the adjective 'faustian', taken from Goethe's Faust, to describe Count Vittorio Cini's taste for all kinds of objects, and not just paintings and sculptures. L. M. B. Barbero, *Lettera da San Giorgio*, year XVI, n. 30, March – August 2014, p. 15. See J.C. Dias (ed.), *Calouste S. Gulbenkian and English Taste*, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, 2015

<sup>204</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter 03/05/1947 in Cumming, 2015, p. 265

<sup>205</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter 03/05/1947 in Cumming, 2015, p. 265

<sup>206</sup> Berenson to Clark Letter, 20/04/1947 in Cumming, 2015, p. 256

<sup>207</sup> The Mond and Melchet collections were well known to Clark through his directorship of the National Gallery and his work for Gulbenkian

<sup>208</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 239 ; Berenson to Clark Letter, 20/04/1947 in Cumming, 2015, p. 256

of a Woman or Novice of the Order of San Sepolcro by 'Jacometto Veneziano', to which Berenson refers to as an 'Antonellesque panel' in a letter dated 27 July 1948.<sup>209</sup> It had been exhibited at the Burlington Fine Art Club as 'Antonello da Messina' in 1924, when it was in the collection of Lord Rochdale, where Clark saw it for the first time 'and loved it ever since'.<sup>210</sup> It was sold at Christie's in 1948, but Clark, who 'wasn't able to go to the sale' bought it from Agnew and Drey after the auction.<sup>211</sup> Again in 1948, Clark bought another important piece, again from Agnew. It was a drawing by Murillo that had a letter from Murillo to Zurbaran attached to the back.<sup>212</sup> It had first been offered to Clark in 1947, in his capacity of manager of the National Gallery of Victoria's acquisitions fund, as a possible piece for the Melbourne museum.<sup>213</sup> As the Museum seemed not interested, however, he decided to buy it for himself, as it was 'too good to let go', a typical example of an opportunity that presented itself based on his work as an advisor to others.<sup>214</sup>

In 1949, Clark added 'to *their* odds and ends in a last reckless burst before all *their* money disappears', buying a copy by Degas of the Bellini double portrait in the Louvre, attesting to his love of both old masters and French impressionists.<sup>215</sup> Clark's youthful fascination with Japanese art was also kept alive, and in June 1949 he bought a screen by Kano Masonobu from the dealer John Sparks.<sup>216</sup> Many of these purchases demonstrate how Clark's long established relationship with dealers, at a time when experts were in close contact with other art market professionals almost on a daily basis through correspondence, visits, phone calls, etc., gained him some privileges. For

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<sup>209</sup> Berenson to Jane Clark Letter 27/07/1948, in Cumming, 2015. p. 292

<sup>210</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 30/10/1948 in Cumming, 2015, p. 297

<sup>211</sup> Jane Clark to Berenson Letter, 08/08/1948 in Cumming, 2015, p. 293 : Clark to Drey Letter, 12/03/1948, TGA 8812.1.2.1825

<sup>212</sup> Correspondence between Colin Agnew and Clark (Letters 05/02/1947; 06/02/1947; 16/12/1947; 06/02/1948), TGA 8812.1.2.48-63

<sup>213</sup> On Clark and Australian museums, see M. Osborne, 'Buying British: Sir Kenneth Clark's Purchases of Modern British Art for the Art Gallery of South Australia' in *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, vol. 19, n.19, 2019, pp. 70-89

<sup>214</sup> Also cited in Stourton, 2016, p. 246

<sup>215</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 24/06/1949 in Cumming, 2015, p. 313

<sup>216</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 24/06/1949 in Cumming, 2015, p. 313

instance, when Clark bought a bronze relief from Drey in 1949, he sent a letter to the dealer thanking him for 'having kept it for *him*, and for having made such a considerable reduction in the price.'<sup>217</sup> And in December 1949, the dealer Franklin sent 'a selection of the things' to Clark, from which they bought a crystal cross for 15 pounds.<sup>218</sup>

In October of 1950, 'Before *they* had gone under completely', he claimed to have bought 'some lovely things for little money' at the sales of Henry Harris' collection at Sotheby's.<sup>219</sup> These were 'the small relief of the Virgin and Child which he called Jacopo della Quercia for 30 pounds' which appears in many of Clark's portraits and is still displayed at Saltwood (Fig. 31.3); a 'low relief of the rape of Helen which he called Francesco Di Giorgio Martini (but it isn't) for thirty-five pounds; an 'enchanted gilt gesso cassone for 100 pounds'; and a 'little Barnaba da Modena of the nativity - very expensive buy so beautifully preserved and portable as to be worth a sacrifice.'<sup>220</sup>

In 1951, Clark made one of his last purchases of a work by a renowned artist: J.M.W. Turner's *Seascape, Folkestone*, which he bought from Agnew.<sup>221</sup> The Turner was for Clark 'the only consolation' for having sold Renoir's *Baigneuse* the year before to Agnelli of Turin for 760.000 lire.<sup>222</sup> The latter Clark considered as 'the greatest painting he had owned' and it 'cost him more anguish to part with it than anything else'.<sup>223</sup> The Renoir was not the only object to be sold in those years, when the Clarks apparently were in need of

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<sup>217</sup> Clark to F. A. Drey Letter, 21/06/1949, TGA 8812.1.2.1836

<sup>218</sup> Clark to L. Franklin Letter, 02/12/1949, TGA 8812.1.2.2304

<sup>219</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 08/12/1950 in Cumming, 2015, p. 335

<sup>220</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 08/12/1950 in Cumming, 2015, p. 335. As Cumming has discovered and reported in a note, the auctioneers annotated catalogue records that the Francesco di Giorgio Martini was actually bought by the dealer Partridge for 45 pounds. The Barnaba da Modena was also bought by Partridge for 480 pounds. Clark also bought for himself items not mentioned, such as a Florentine gilt shrine for sixty-five pounds, a Flemish bronze for five pounds, and a gilt bronze plaque, with marble columns and capitals for fifty-six pounds.

<sup>221</sup> Correspondence between Colin Agnew and Clark (08/1951), TGA 8812.1.2.48-63

<sup>222</sup> Clark to E. Agnelli Letter, 18/08/1950, TGA 8812.1.2.47

<sup>223</sup> Walker, 1974, p. 290

ready cash.<sup>224</sup> By 1950 he also parted with the two porcelain pagodas from Jane's bedroom at Upper Terrace House, which went to the Brighton museum for 500 pounds.<sup>225</sup> In 1952, Seurat's *Bec du Hoc* (Fig. 29) was sold to Tate Britain through the Marlborough Fine Art Gallery, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, and in 1958, another key modern painting left Clark's collection, Cézanne's *Chateau Noir*.<sup>226</sup> With the purchase of the new family home, Saltwood Castle, such sales intensified.<sup>227</sup>

Saltwood Castle in Hythe, was in fact the last home of the Clark's collection (Figs. 30-31). It is said that Clark first discovered it on the pages of a magazine, and saw it as a new dream-home, away from busy London and capable of housing all the books and objects that he was struggling to keep at Upper Terrace House.<sup>228</sup> Clark bought the castle from Lady Conway for 13,000 pounds in 1953, together with its contents, for another 15,000 pounds.<sup>229</sup> Most of these contents were subsequently sold in an auction held at Saltwood, generating a profit of 8,250 pounds.<sup>230</sup> Clark decided to keep some of them, including tapestries, carpets, some antiques, and a polyptych by Spinello Aretino, which Clark attributed to Allegretto Nuzi (Fig. 31.5).<sup>231</sup> As was mentioned above, the upkeep of Saltwood was the driving force behind many 'de-accessions' that took place between the 1950s and the 1980s, as well as after Clark's death. Yet, Clark did not stop buying objects once in his new home. In June 1954 Berenson had asked Clark for photographs of his Venetian works to be included in the revised 'Venetian Painters of the Renaissance'. In

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<sup>224</sup> Stourton, 2016, pp. 247-8

<sup>225</sup> Correspondence with J. Sparks, TGA 8812.1.2.6122-5

<sup>226</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 248

<sup>227</sup> The art critic John Berger once wrote that although Clark had 'enough money to buy a quarter of what he wanted' *he was hungry for cash, and choosing between shares and objects, he always sold objects, as if to judge his vision of art as commodity only.* Stourton, 2016, p. 248

<sup>228</sup> Rumley, 2014, pp. 115, 117

<sup>229</sup> He sold Upper Terrace for 27,250 GBP and a property in Richmond for 7,500 GBP . Stourton, 2016, pp. 246-7

<sup>230</sup> Rumeley, 2014, p. 118; Stourton, 2016, p. 247

<sup>231</sup> Rumeley, 2014, p. 118; Stourton, 2016, p. 246; Clark to Berenson Letter, 07/06/1954 in Cumming, 2015, p. 402 ; Berenson to Clark Letter, 22/06/1954 in Cumming, 2015, p. 403

his reply Clark added that he had just bought ‘a fascinating quattrocento work of art, an ivory plaque depicting a patriarch’s triumph of death.’<sup>232</sup> The pictures Clark sent to Berenson included a *Portrait of a Man dressed as David* by Tintoretto, sold by Agnew to Tokyo’s Museum of Western Art in 1971.<sup>233</sup> In 1958, Clark made one of his last important purchases. He managed to secure some of the ‘last remnants of the Cook collection’.<sup>234</sup> Both Clark and Berenson knew the collection of Sir Francis Cook at Doughty House, Richmond, very well. Before and after World War II, Berenson, had helped with the sale of the majority of the collection to Samuel H. Kress through Duveen, while Clark secured some pieces for the National Gallery, and assisted Calouste Gulbenkian in his unsuccessful attempt to obtain Rembrandt’s *Portrait of the Artist’s Son Titus*.<sup>235</sup> The works that Clark bought in 1958 were Alonso Cano’s *Tobias and the Angel*, which he hung in Saltwood’s library (Fig. 31.2), as well as a Giulio Romano, and a Garnet, all bought ‘for the price of a small Cezanne pencil drawing’.<sup>236</sup> He also narrated how he ‘nearly bought the Botticelli *Pentecoste*, as the Virgin is so beautiful, but didn’t know where to put it’.<sup>237</sup>

During the 1960s, few purchases have been recorded, whereas many more works were sold.<sup>238</sup> In 1962, Clark wrote to the dealer Wilson:

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<sup>232</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 12/1954 in Cumming, 2015, p. 409

<sup>233</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 12/1954 in Cumming, 2015, p. 409 ; *Robusti Jacopo, Ritratto di giovane uomo in veste di David*, <http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/en/entry/work/46633/Robusti%20Jacopo%20%28Tintoretto%29%2C%20Ritratto%20di%20giovane%20uomo%20in%20veste%20di%20David> ; Brooke H. (ed.), *Italian Art and Britain : Winter Exhibition*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1960. Clark had lent six pictures to the exhibition, which was a ‘spin-off’ of the one organised in 1930. The *Seicento* section featured many works lent by British art historians, showing how they re-evaluated that century also through their personal collections.

<sup>234</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 17/07/1958 in Cumming, 2015, pp. 458-9

<sup>235</sup> See E. Danziger, ‘The Cook Collection, Its Founder and Its Inheritors’ in *The Burlington Magazine*, col. 146, n. 1216, July 2004, pp. 444-58. Gulbenkian Letter to Clark, 17/07/1943, Gulbenkian Museum Archive, MCG02446.0001

<sup>236</sup> Clark to Berenson Letter, 17/07/1958 in Cumming, 2015, pp. 458-9

<sup>237</sup> The lack of space is often used by collectors as a reason or excuse not to conclude a purchase. Clark to Berenson Letter, 17/07/1958 in Cumming, 2015, pp. 458-9

<sup>238</sup> Clark to J. Brendon Letter, 02/11/1965, TGA 8812.1.4.103-112

I have it in mind to sell a number of Old Master drawings, which I collected many years ago, and which have been lying in Solander cases ever since [...] They include a couple of Rubenses, and some very good specimens of seventeenth century Italian drawing. If you have a good sale of old drawings in the Autumn, I would be grateful if you would include them.<sup>239</sup>

In the same year, he sold through Sotheby's a volume of miniatures from the Denniston album, all initials from a choir book from Lucca which he had bought for 3,000 pounds from Hoepli of Milan.<sup>240</sup> In 1964, he sold the two paintings by Dosso Dossi which used to hang in the bedrooms of Upper Terrace House to Agnew, and in 1966 he put on sale, through Sotheby's and Agnew, the Rosso Fiorentino that was photographed on the stairs of Upper Terrace House, a *Virgin appearing to St Jerome* by Gandolfi, and a Lepine that had been gifted to Jane by Mr Gulbenkian.<sup>241</sup> And in 1972, he sold the above-mentioned Jacometto that he had bought from Agnew and Drey, back to Agnew.<sup>242</sup> It is evident that the same privileged channels that he used to acquire works of art were also used to sell. Most of what was left in the collection after this steady exodus during the later years of Clark's life was sold in several sales after his death.<sup>243</sup> Some of the pieces, however, remained in the family and are still housed in Saltwood Castle.<sup>244</sup>

During his lifetime, Clark enjoyed sharing his collection, welcoming visitors, including students, and lending objects to many exhibitions.<sup>245</sup> At one point in

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<sup>239</sup> Clark to Wilson Letter, 30/08/1962, TGA 8812.1.4.103-112

<sup>240</sup> Sotheby's London Sale, 18/06/1962, lot. 125

<sup>241</sup> Correspondence with Gronau of Sotheby's, Letter 14/11/1966 and Correspondence with Geoffrey G. W. Agnew, Letter 10/06/1968, TGA 8812.1.4.103-112

<sup>242</sup> Correspondence with Geoffrey G. W. Agnew, Letter 17/07/1972, TGA 8812.1.4.103-112

<sup>243</sup> Sotheby's London, 23 June, 03 July, 05 July 1984 Sales, Paintings and works of art from the collection of the late Lord Clark of Saltwood, London, Sotheby Parke Bernet & Co., 1984

<sup>244</sup> In 1971 Clark left the castle to his son Alan, and he and his wife moved to a bungalow in the garden. At Clark's death the garden house was left to his daughter Colette and eventually bought by Alan Clark. Rumley, 2014, p. 121

<sup>245</sup> As Stourton has remarked in Stourton, 2014

the 1940s, up to 150 works were away at the same time. As will be explored in chapter 3, Clark lent some of his old masters to seminal exhibitions, such as the 1930 'Italian Art 1200-1900' at the Royal Academy (Raphael's *Portrait of Valerio Belli*) and the 1960 *Italian Art and Britain*.<sup>246</sup> The records in the Tate archive, however, show that Clark's contemporary art was the most frequently requested. The majority of these pieces were eventually given to the Contemporary Arts Society, a generous gift of seventy-five works by thirty-four artists, which were distributed over thirty regional galleries.<sup>247</sup> In this way, although Clark did not establish a research institute with a collection attached like Berenson and Longhi, he crystallised his efforts as a patron of the figurative strand in British contemporary art, making it accessible to a large public throughout the nation.

## General Considerations

This framing chapter has established the physiognomy of the three case study collections, and the ways in which they developed over time and either survived or were dispersed. With these portraits of the collections in mind, what can be said about art historians as collectors? In which way do they stand out as a peculiar category?

In terms of acquisitions, the channels were the same as those of other types of collectors, including active dealing, inheritance, purchases, and gifts. For example, when Clark started collecting, he already possessed a few objects which had been left by members of his family. Perhaps this stimulated an inclination to assemble a collection that preceded his profession, although the latter became the driving force behind his collecting at a later stage. Berenson, active on the art market at the turn of the century, first started buying objects with the intention to sell them to various clients, who were also patrons and friends, and only later began collecting for himself, once he had achieved a certain financial stability and found a suitable house. Longhi, by

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<sup>246</sup> Brooke, 1960

<sup>247</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 248



contrast, began by buying works by modern painters, together with some paintings by artists he was studying professionally.

Connoisseurs and art historians, as explained in the introduction, had some distinctive advantages over other collectors when buying objects. Because of their profession, they were always up-to date on what was available on the market, and often knew before others. Through offering their professional expertise to both sellers and buyers, they knew most dealers and private collectors personally. These would often contact them offering pieces, giving previews of sales, promising special prices, and at times even gifting objects. Frequently, whilst working for third parties and purchasing objects on behalf of others, the opportunities to find objects for their own collection would multiply. As with any collector, how they responded to these opportunities depended on each scholar's personal taste, making these collections a 'compromise between taste and opportunity'. Yet these opportunities were often created thanks to the collectors' profession, and the personal interests that would dictate a collecting taste would often overlap with the collectors' scholarly interests, marking an almost constant bound (direct and indirect) between collecting activities and the collectors' profession.

Of course, with scholar collectors as with others, collecting choices were inevitably subject to external forces, such as availability and affordability, the influence of other existing collections, and the opinion of colleagues and friends, personal tastes and a certain randomness. Yet, as far as external advice is concerned, a distinctive feature of scholars' collections is that they were assembled virtually without mediation by external advisers, a role that was in this case merged with that of the collectors themselves. As seen in this overview, the three scholars investigated in this thesis usually advised both private collectors and public collections in their purchases. But once the advisors themselves were acting as collectors for their own collection, one could argue that the objects collected tended to correspond to the collectors' own taste in a more direct guise.<sup>248</sup> This included works that other collectors (more subjects to fashions and a 'created' general taste) might not yet be

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<sup>248</sup> See F. Haskell, *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1976, p. 25

interested in - as in the case of Longhi and the Caravaggesques. Moreover, in the case of the so-called 'sleepers' mentioned above, the scholar collector's trained eye could detect the object's true value, and due to their connections obtain at a convenient price. In fact, it should be taken into account, that with few exceptions, such as in the case of Kenneth Clark, for instance, scholar collectors had limited financial means, compared to other art collectors as Calouste Gulbenkian or Samuel Kress to name a few. As seen, the funds that allowed them to collect were mostly earned through their profession or in the art trade. The latter, however, often led to accusations of market manipulation, as explained in the introduction. These factors may have contributed to the fact that some scholar collectors, in our case Berenson and Longhi, did not like to label themselves as collectors and and sometimes played down their aesthetic interest in their collections in favour of professional and commercial motives for acquiring art.

One thing that emerges from the mini-surveys in this chapter is that the art collections of scholars were rarely arranged in the kind of 'taxonomical' order of public galleries, which these collectors themselves often contributed to maintain in public museums and exhibitions, as in the case of Kenneth Clark at the National Gallery and at the 1930 Royal Academy exhibition.<sup>249</sup> Their collections, as other domestic collections and house museums, show a juxtaposition of objects in different techniques and with a muddled chronology. At times, the display could work as a visual argument, as in the case of Berenson's Sienese Duecento paintings and Asian art. Scholar-collectors shared their living space with their collection – there was no separate museum or gallery within their house, as in the house collections studied by Higgonnet.<sup>250</sup> It was another distinctive feature that these collections were more than 'epicurean'.<sup>251</sup> The collections spilled over into professional spaces such as libraries and photo collections as well. For all three the art historians

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<sup>249</sup> N. Penny, *How Kenneth Clark transformed the National Gallery*, 16/05/2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2U4HKxpIzNg>

<sup>250</sup> A. Higgonnet, *A Museum of One's Own, Private Collecting, Public Gift*, New York, Periscope Publishing, 2009

<sup>251</sup> Clark's terminology. Clark, 1947

studied here, their home was also their place of work, meaning there was a constant professional interaction with their collection.

The relationship between objects and their collector stimulated researching, thinking, and training the connoisseurial eye. The connection between making art history and art collecting involves not just the collectors but also the primary audience of the scholar collections. Looking at the beholders' share of these collections, to borrow Gombrich's expression – i.e. to investigate who was able to access, learn, and speak about them, either in situ or while works were on loan to exhibitions or discussed in publications – it is possible to understand the art-historical meaning that these collections acquired through the agency of their collector.<sup>252</sup> By means of donations and bequests, and in some cases through the creation of a scholarly institution, the legacy of the scholar collector obtained an extended afterlife.

Visiting a collection represents the most direct type of access. Although none of the collections discussed here were conveniently located in historical city centres, the houses that contained them still functioned as hubs for social and intellectual life. Berenson, Longhi, and Clark all acted as advisors for prominent members of society, they had roles in public collections and institutions, and with the growing of their fame would become themselves part of elite circles. Federico Zeri, for instance, used to describe Berenson's Villa / *Tatti* as 'a place from a past era [...] where you could meet the most unexpected characters like the queen of Romania, the ballet dancer Catherine Dunham, and a Baltic baron'.<sup>253</sup> Yet, celebrities aside, the historically more interesting group of visitors includes art experts and dealers but also fellow scholars and students. This type of specialised audience should count as another defining characteristic of the art-historian's art collection.

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<sup>252</sup> Adaptation from the third part of Gombrich's *Art and Illusion*, entitled 'The Beholder's Share'. E.H. Gombrich's, *Art and Illusion. A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, Bollingen Series XXXV:5, Pantheon, Princeton and Oxford, 1960.

<sup>253</sup> Zeri, 2009, p. 35

In some respects, the most indirect and lasting access to a collection can be achieved through publication of its contents. It is interesting to note that none of the collectors studied here published a comprehensive catalogue of their own collection. Roberto Longhi came furthest in compiling one, but managed to produce only a few drafts of the introduction and some notes for the entries.<sup>254</sup> One explanation for this lacuna could be the already indicated attitude of scholar collectors to downplay the status of their collections. Only Kenneth Clark, in 1947, decided to advertise his collecting activities in the French magazine, *Art et Style*, an article that was re-produced in *Vogue's House & Garden*.<sup>255</sup> Other scholar-collectors, however, appear to have preferred publishing their objects in a more discrete way, writing about them in their articles, books, and lectures. By doing so they introduced their own pieces into current scholarly debates, usually in order to support arguments around matters of attribution.

A frequent form of access to scholar collectors came through exhibition loans. Clarks' contemporary art collection, for instance, spent more time travelling rather than at home with its owners. Being exhibited would also guarantee objects a place in a published catalogue. In many cases, objects would feature in exhibitions with the organisation of which the collectors themselves had been involved. They sometimes would review such exhibitions as well, questioning the attribution of exactly those pieces that belonged to their 'rivals', as when Longhi scrutinised the pieces that Berenson lent to the 1933 exhibition on Ferrara. With Clark, even television broadcasting played a role in opening up his home and collection to a wider public. Saltwood features in the last episode of *Civilisation*.

The collection of Kenneth Clark was dispersed during his lifetime and further after his death, but the collections of Berenson and Longhi survive more or less in their original state in *I Tatti* and *Il Tasso*. Turning one's home into a study centre, but also sales, gifts, and bequests to public institutions provided a further and more durable form of access and impact of the collection. It

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<sup>254</sup> Boschetto, 1971, p. X

<sup>255</sup> Clark, 1947

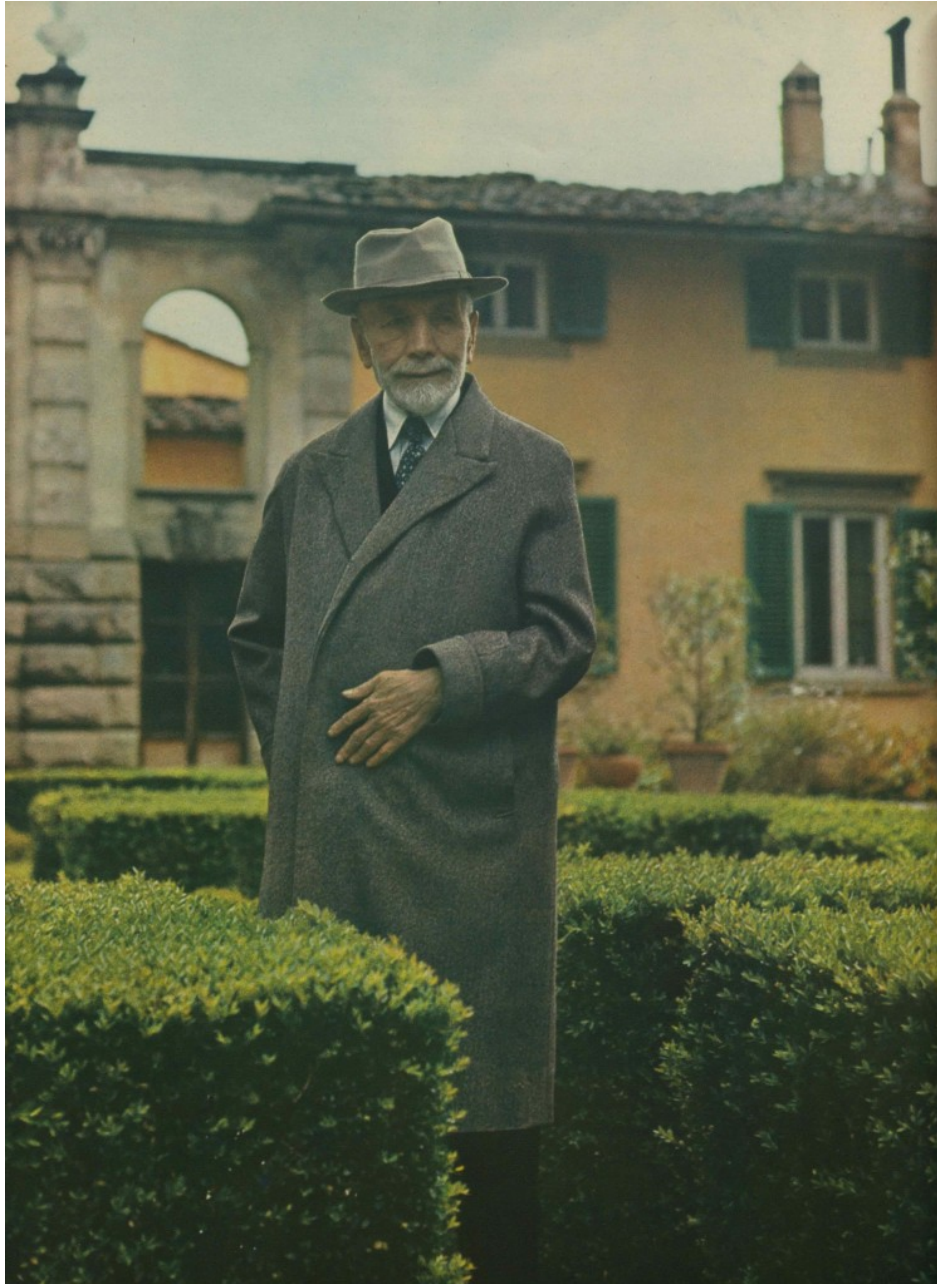
guarantees that collections presented here continue to be relevant and primarily so for a specialised audience, extending their role as research tools that they had for their first owners. Given the close relationship between the works collected and scholarly research, for art historians, making their collection known meant to associate their own name with certain schools and artists, and giving a more tangible dimension to their work as scholars and canon builders. Functioning almost as an extension of their identity as scholars, their collections became ‘official portraits’, which circulated and promoted their owners.<sup>256</sup> If one considers the audiences that these objects have engaged with over time, this particular intertwining of art historiography and private collecting is one of the many possible stories that these collections can tell.

Having outlined the development of the three collections examined in this thesis, the next chapters will explore with concrete and representative examples the kind of engagement that took place between objects and their collectors.

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<sup>256</sup> As explored for instance in Praz, 1940 (Drawing from Walter Benjamin’s thoughts) and Higonet, 2009

# Chapter 1 - Illustrations



◀ *Fig. 1:* Bernard Berenson (1865 - 1959), at the garden in Villa I Tatti, October 1954, portrayed by Theo Banti





◀ *Fig.2.1: 'I Tatti' when first rented by Bernard and Mary Berenson, 1905*



▲ *Fig.2.2: Villa I Tatti today*



◀ *Fig.3.1:  
Berenson and  
Mary at I Tatti  
in the 1950s,  
detail of the  
Domenico  
Veneziano  
displayed  
against an  
historic textile*

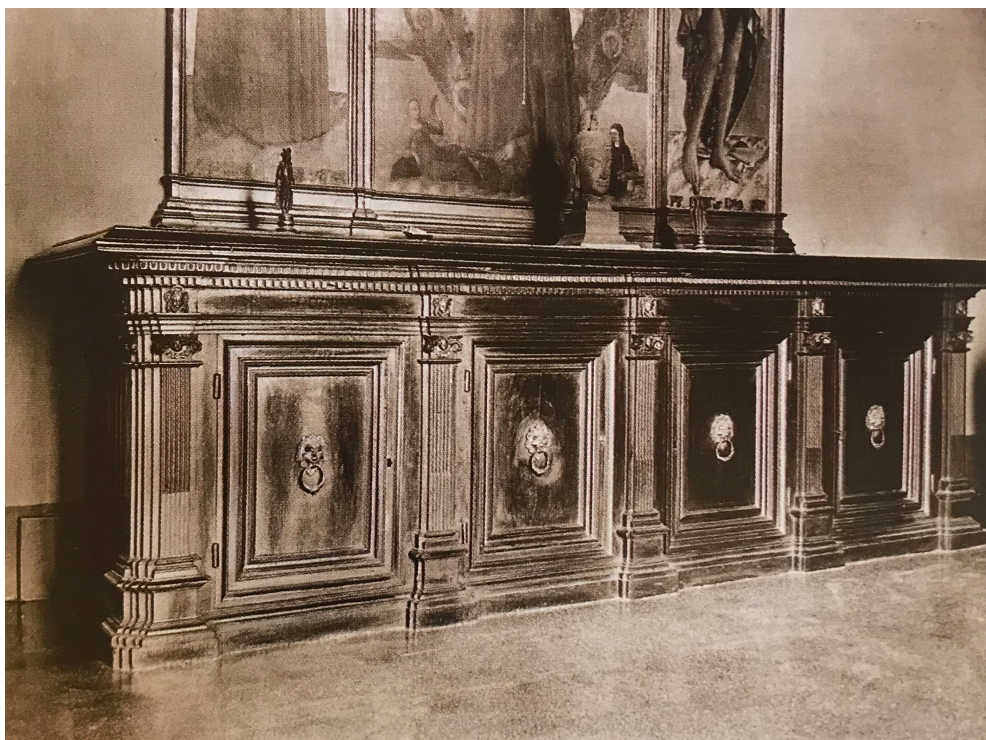


◀ *Fig.3.2:  
Guglielmo  
Alberti at I Tatti,  
detail of the  
paintings in the  
Signorelli  
corridor,  
displayed  
against an  
historic textile*





▲ *Fig.4.1: Sienese and Buddhist Art displayed at I Tatti still today. On the left, Sassetta's altarpiece and some oriental art placed underneath, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, 2000s*



◀ *Fig.4.2: Detail of Buddhist Art displayed underneath the Sassetta, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, 1963*





*Fig.5: View of the Signorelli Corridor, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, 1963*



◀ *Fig. 6: The Dining Room, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, 1950s (?)*





◀ *Fig. 7: Lorenzo Lotto, Crucifixion with the Arma Christi, 1544, oil on panel, 24.4 cm x 17.3 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, gift by Contini Binaccossi in 1953*



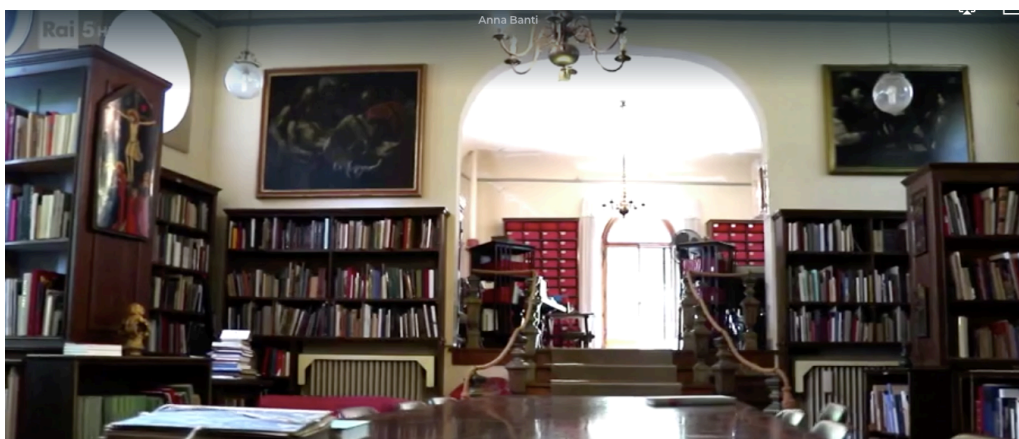
◀ *Fig. 8: Bergognone, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, gift by Contini Binaccossi in 1953*



◀ *Fig. 9:* Roberto Longhi (1890 - 1970), 1950s

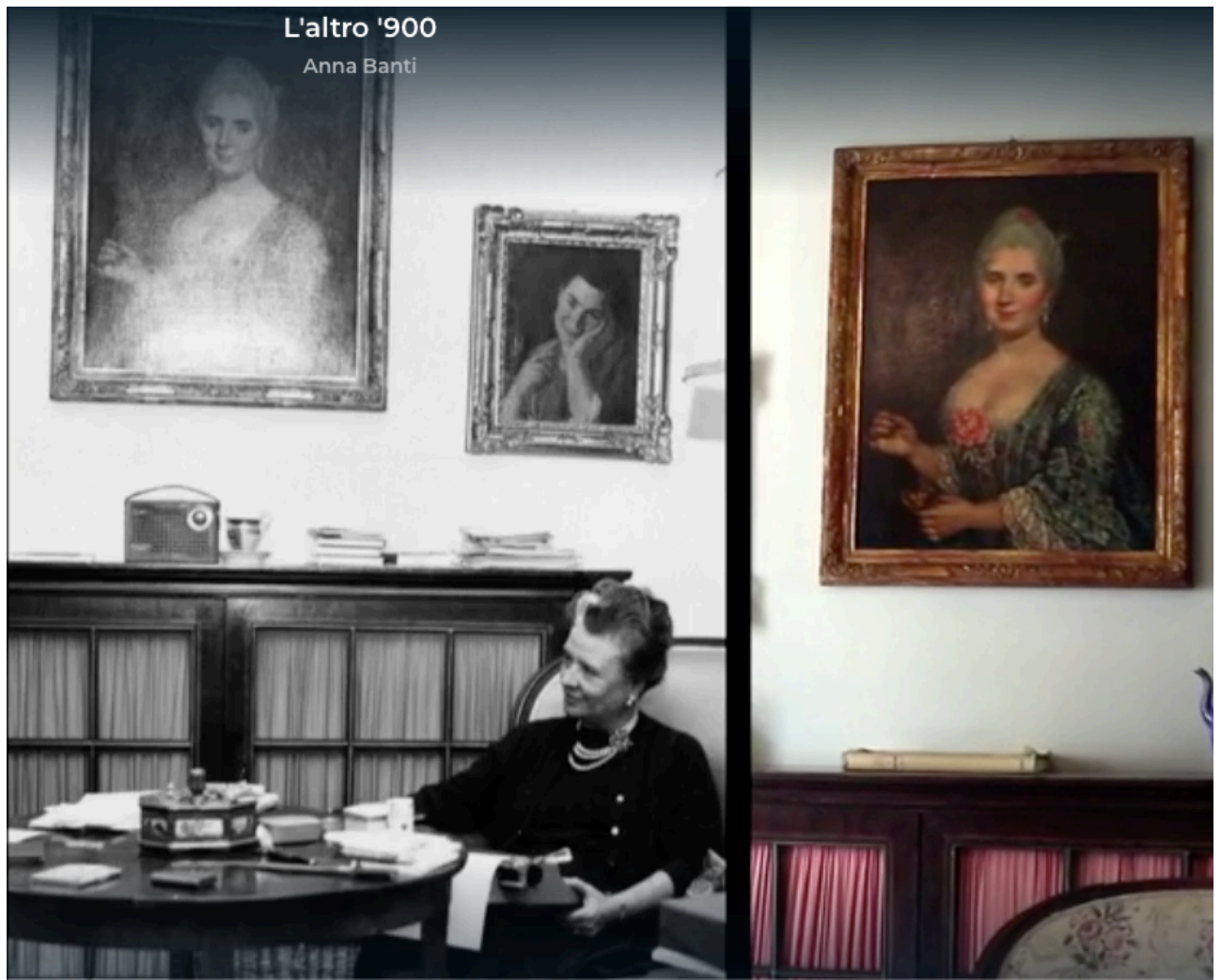


▲  
*Fig.10: Views of Villa Il Tasso, Florence*

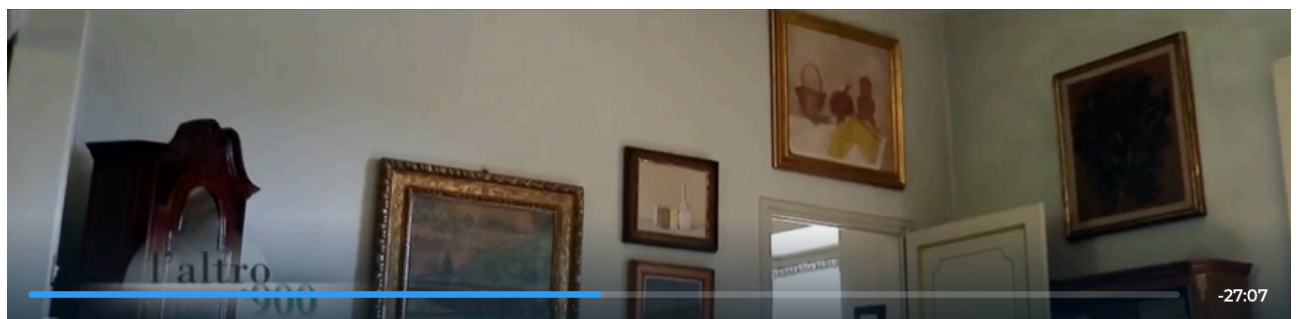


◀ *Fig.11:View of Il Tasso's Library, with Battistello's Christ hung on the left and Mattia Preti's concert hung on the right*

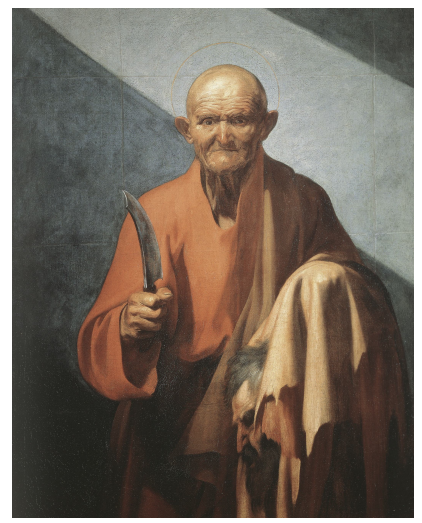
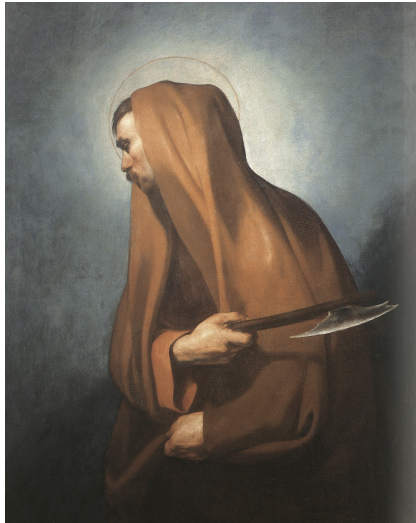




▲  
*Fig.11.1:* View of a room at Il Tasso, with Alessandro Longhi's *portrait* and Traversi's *Fantesca* on the wall, photographed around 1962 at Il Tasso, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi

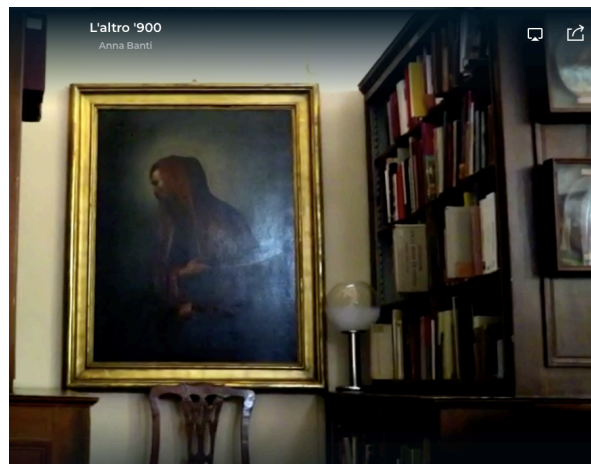
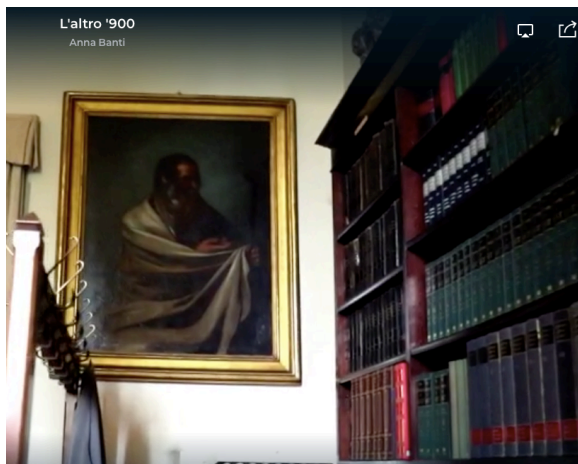


▲  
*Fig.11.2:* View of a room at Il Tasso with 20th-century paintings, including Giorgio Morandi, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi

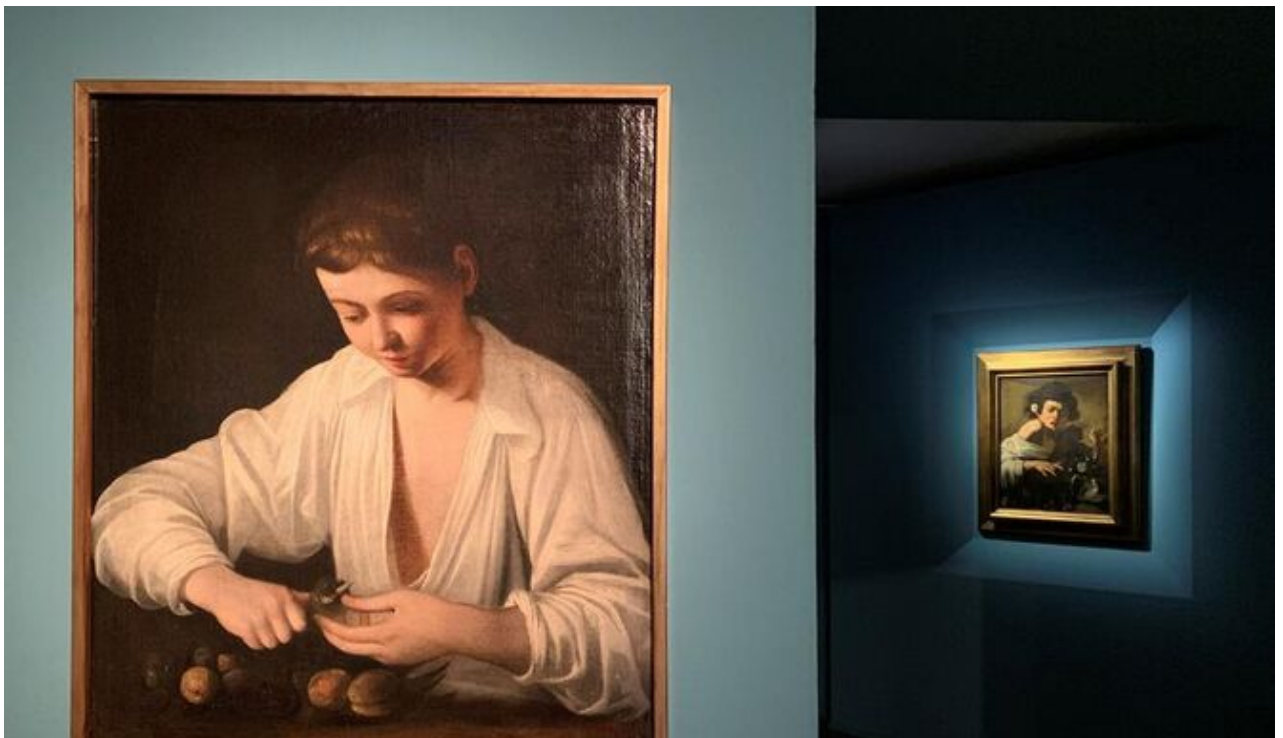


◀ *Fig.12: Joseph de Ribera, Series 5 apostles ex Gavotti, (Saint Thomas, Saint Bartholomew, Saint Paul, Saint Philip) oil on canvas, cm 126 x 97 c. each, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*

*Fig.12.1: Apostles, Series ex-Gavotti displayed at Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi*

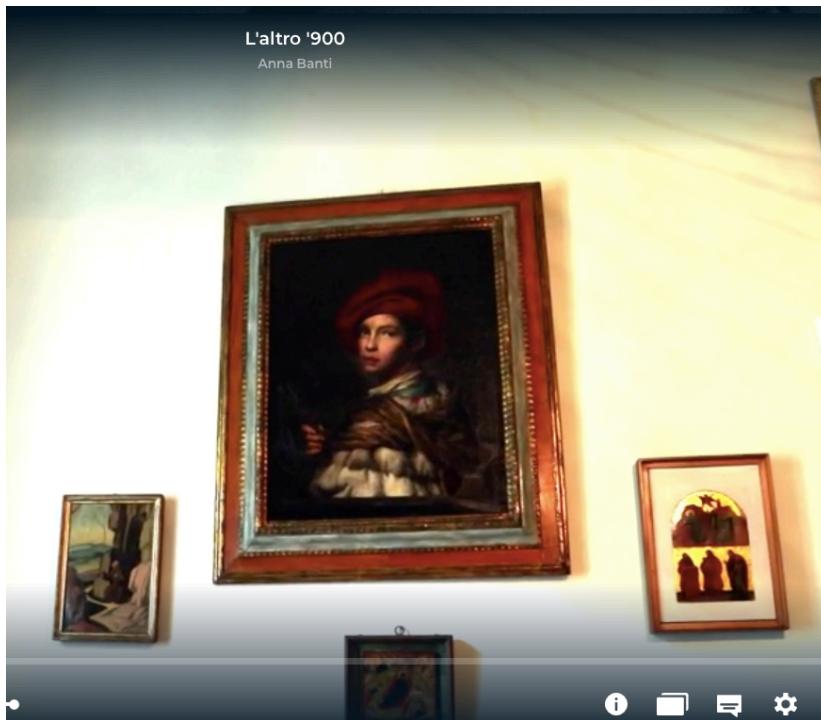






▲  
*Figs.13-13.1: Views of the exhibition *Il tempo di Caravaggio - Capolavori della collezione di Roberto Longhi*, 16/06/2020 - 10/01/2021, Musei Capitolini, Rome*

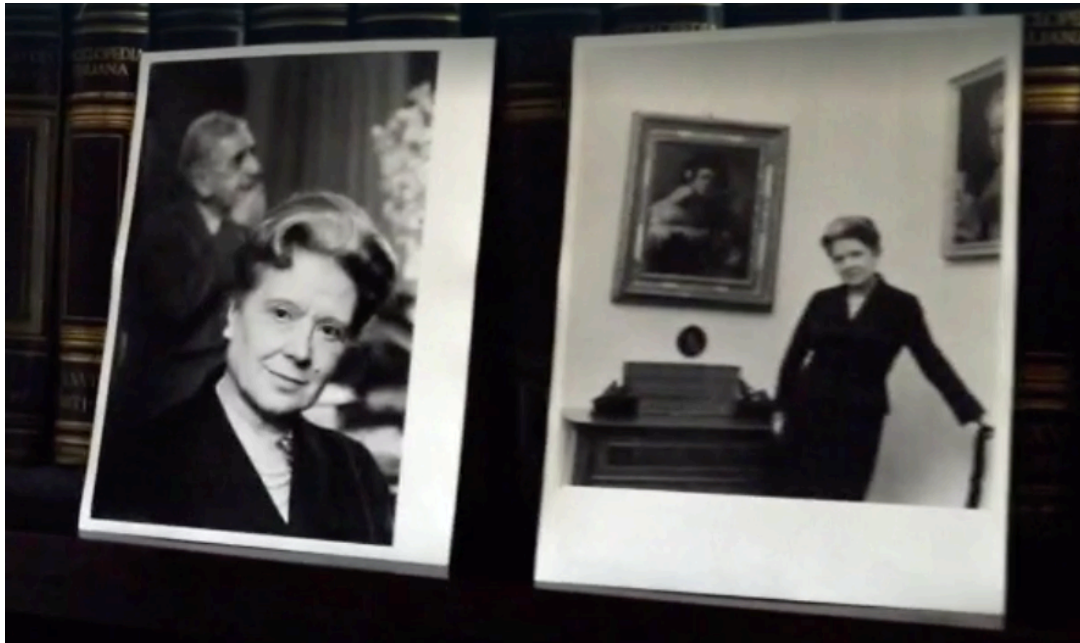




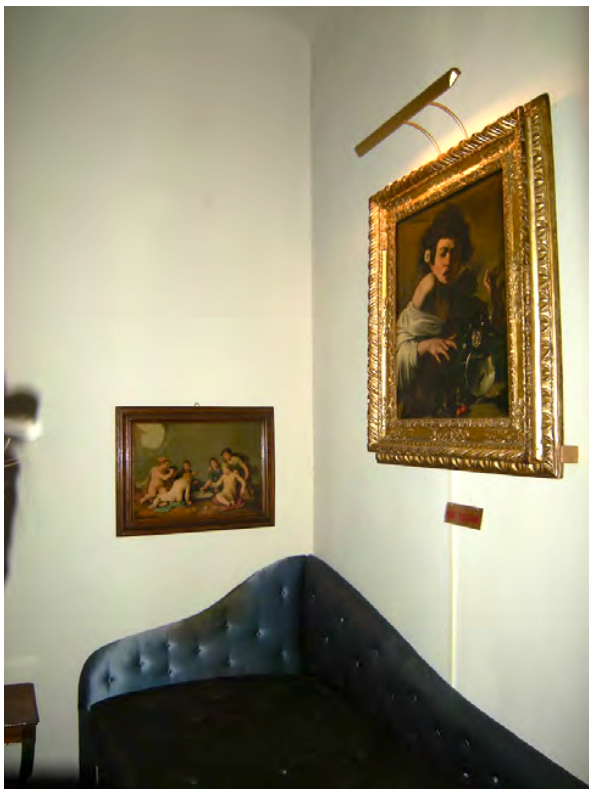
◀ Fig.14: Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara's *Saint Francis*, displayed at Il Tasso, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi



▲ Figs.14.1: Lippo di Dalmasio's *Angel* on the wall, on the left of Anna Banti, photographed around 1962 at Il Tasso, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi



▲  
*Fig. 15: Caravaggio's *Boy bitten by a Lizard* captured in a portrait of Anna Banti around 1962 at Il Tasso, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi*



◀ *Fig. 16: Caravaggio's *Boy bitten by a Lizard* at Il Tasso, 2008, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi , Florence*



▲  
*Fig. 17:* Display of works in the library at Il Tasso, 1971, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi





▲  
*Fig. 18:* Kenneth Clark, portrayed at Saltwood, 1950s



◀ *Fig. 19:* Raphael, Portrait of Valerio Belli, Oil on Panel, d. 12.5 cm, Private Collection



◀ *Fig. 20:* Cézanne's Chateau Noir in the long panelled room at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947



◀ *Fig. 21: Renoir's Baigneuse in the long panelled room at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947*



◀ *Fig. 21.1: Clark portrayed with Renoir's Baigneuse*





*Fig.22: Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, The Famous Women Dinner Service, 1932-34, fifty hand-painted Wedgwood plates, The Charleston Trust*



◀ *Fig.23:* View of the façade of 30 Portland Place, London



▲ *Fig.23.1:* Dining Room at 30 Portland Place in 1938, with George Seurat's *Le Bec du Hoc* on the right





▲  
*Fig.24: Sitting Room at 30 Portland Place in 1938, with Cézanne's  
Château Noir on the left*



◀ *Fig.25: Entrance Hall at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, with John Piper's *Gordale Scar* (1943) instead of Renoir's *Bagneuse**



◀ *Fig.25.1: Entrance Hall at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, undated*



▲  
*Fig.26: Study Room at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947, House & Garden*





*Fig.27: Long Panelled Room at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947, House & Garden*



◀ *Fig. 28: Jane Clark's Bedroom at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947*



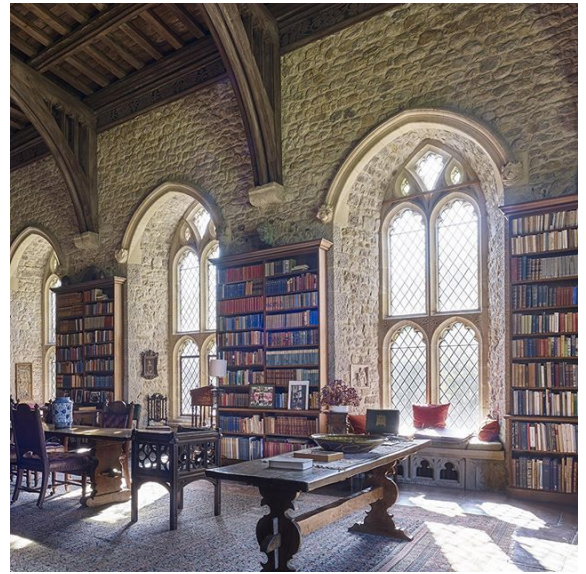


◀ *Fig.29: George Seurat, Le Bec du Hoc, Grandcamp, 1885, Oil on Canvas, frame: 83.9 × 99.8 × 6.5 cm, London, Tate Britain, on loan to The National Gallery*



▲ *Fig.30: Saltwood Castle, Hythe, Kent, 2013*





▲  
*Figs 31, 31.1:* Saltwood Castle, views of the library hall, 2018



◀ *Fig.31.2:* Kenneth Clark in Saltwood's hall, during the filming of *Civilisation's* last episode, 1969





▲  
Figs 31.3-4: Saltwood Castle, views of Saltwood Castle, 2018



*Fig.31.5:* Spinello Aretino's altarpiece hung in Saltwood's hall, during the filming of *Civilisation's* last episode, 1969



# Part I - Chapter 2:

## Bernard Berenson, Lorenzo Lotto, and Connoisseurship

Collecting (private and public) can be seen as a process that typically proceeds through different stages. For each of them, the collector interacts with different agents, and finds his/her actions directed or affected by a range of factors. The stages include finding of the object, its acquisition, its introduction into the display space, the living in that same space with the object, and eventually, in some cases the departure of the object. A crucial aspect of the first phase is 'expertise', which enables the identification and evaluation of the desired object. Connoisseurship is useful in the act of collecting, usually provided as an 'external' service to a collector. But in the case of art historians collectors, the expertise is not provided by an external source, as it is intrinsic to the persona of the scholar-collector, who is not exercising his/her skills for a third party, but for him/herself. As shall be seen in this part of the thesis, however, the way scholar collectors engage with their objects does not stop at the first stage of acquisition - the interaction between collector and collection can in itself become a continuous exercise in connoisseurship.

The first chapter of this section will explore the example of Bernard Berenson, who adopted Morelli's new method of scientific connoisseurship. The chapter will account for his relationship with Lorenzo Lotto, which eventually became a metaphor of Berenson's own connoisseurship. Specifically, the chapter will explore Berenson's engagement with a painting at I Tatti, a Virgin and Child with Saint Francis of Assisi and Jerome, which Berenson hesitated to assign to Lorenzo Lotto. A second painting, Virgin and Child in a Landscape, will be analysed for its role in the construction of a fictional artistic personality.

Three historical photographs portray an 88-year-old Bernard Berenson, the author of the first monograph ever written on the painter Lorenzo Lotto, visiting the first monographic exhibition on the master in the Palazzo Ducale in Venice

in 1953 (Figs. 1-3).<sup>1</sup> One picture was taken at the entrance of the 1953 show (Fig. 1). Behind Berenson, we see his friend and client, the collector and philanthropist Count Vittorio Cini, who was Berenson's host during this visit.<sup>2</sup> In a second photo, the two are portrayed whilst scrutinising works hung on the wall inside the exhibition. Berenson is ready to use the monocle he is holding in his hand, a symbol of his connoisseurship (Fig. 3). Unfortunately, the photographer did not frame the picture that caught their attention. Was it the one owned by Cini, which Berenson as his advisor knew very well?<sup>3</sup> If so, this photograph captures all the core elements of this chapter, which will explore Berenson's approach to Connoisseurship, presenting it as embodied in the critic's relationship with Lorenzo Lotto, and will identify his professional and personal involvement in collecting as closely connected with his practice of connoisseurship.<sup>4</sup>

Lorenzo Lotto was Berenson's self-declared favourite artist.<sup>5</sup> His infatuation with Lotto went back to the 1890s, when the artist was barely known to the wider public, nor even appreciated by specialists. Its emergence coincided with Berenson's decision to abandon the dream of becoming a writer and dedicate his life instead to Connoisseurship.<sup>6</sup> Later, as a collector, he

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<sup>1</sup> B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: an Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, New York, G. P. Putnam's sons, 1895. For a comprehensive study of the monograph, see A. Trotta Antonella, *Berenson e Lotto: problemi di metodo e di storia dell'arte*, Naples, La Città del Sole, 2006. The exhibition was curated by Piero Zampetti, and it was held in the rooms of Venice's Palazzo Ducale, see P. Zampetti (ed.), *Mostra di Lorenzo Lotto*, Venice, Alfieri, 1953. The three pictures have been linked by the author to the same moment in time, thanks to the continuity suggested by Berenson's tartan scarf.

<sup>2</sup> See A. Bacchi, A. De Marchi, 'Vittorio Cini collezionista di pittura antica, una splendida avventura, dal Castello di Monselice alla dimora veneziana, da Nino Barbantini a Federico Zeri' in *La Galleria di Palazzo Cini*, Bacchi, De Marchi (eds), Venice, Marsilio, 2016, pp. 389-97

<sup>3</sup> Bacchi, De Marchi, 2016, p.389

<sup>4</sup> The picture was used to market the conference 'Specchio del Gusto', Venice, Fondazione Cini, November 2017

<sup>5</sup> B. Berenson, *Lotto*, Milan, Electa Editrice, 1955, p. IX

<sup>6</sup> As Berenson himself wrote in 1955, introducing the third edition of the *Lotto*: 'Sono trascorsi ormai piu' di sessant'anni da quando cominciai ad innamorarmi di Lorenzo Lotto', tr.: 'Sixty and more years ago I fell in love with Lorenzo Lotto'. Berenson, 1955, p. IX

possessed a Lotto and a half.<sup>7</sup> The first 'Lotto' to enter Berenson's private collection was a *Virgin and Child with Saint Francis of Assisi and Jerome* (?) (Fig. 4).<sup>8</sup> On 11 October 1912, it was listed in the inventory by Mary Berenson as a 'Lotto Mad & Sts'.<sup>9</sup> From the records, it appears that the panel was not insured until a few years later, in 1915. Berenson published it for the first time in 1932, when the painting was mentioned in a list accompanying that year's edition of *Renaissance Painters*, indicated as 'Lotto', confirming Mary's note in the inventory.<sup>10</sup> Yet, as shall be seen, Berenson kept changing his mind.

It is likely that this *Madonna and Saints* was originally brought to Florence with the aim of selling it to one of Berenson's clients.<sup>11</sup> In those years, Berenson was putting some effort into creating a demand for Lotto among collectors, and it was his usual practice to buy paintings to build up a stock of works to sell, a common practice among *marchand-amateurs*. Following the publication of his monograph in 1895, Berenson actively sought to rescue Lotto from oblivion, and allowing him to enter the 'Pantheon of the arts'.<sup>12</sup> Acting as a taste-maker, not only through his role as art historian, but also as adviser to private and public collectors, Berenson, like Longhi and to a certain extent Clark later, often re-awakened or created the public's interest in artists he had discovered (or sometimes invented himself). The book on Lotto, however, was written for experts, and did not have an immediate impact on the art market. For instance, although it had been featured in the first edition of the the book, a *Sacra Conversazione* listed in the Doetsch collection that appeared

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<sup>7</sup> The first 'Lotto' Berenson bought is now considered a Tonino Navaero, and Berenson himself kept having doubts about its authorship

<sup>8</sup> C.B. Strehlke, M. Brügggen Israëls (eds.), *The Bernard and Mary Berenson collection of European paintings at I Tatti*, Milan, Officina Libraria, 2015, p. 505. There is only another painting by Lotto at I Tatti, technically the only painting actually attributed to Lotto. It is a *Crucifixion* that Contini Bonaccossi gifted to Berenson, to thank him over the supervision of the sale of his collection to Kress, as seen in chapter 1.

<sup>9</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505

<sup>10</sup> B. Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance. A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1932; Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505

<sup>11</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505

<sup>12</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 343

on the market a few years after sold for only 50 pounds.<sup>13</sup> After the publication of the second edition in 1901, however, interest and prices started to grow, first in Europe and then in the US.<sup>14</sup>

In 1902, the Florentine dealer Stefano Bardini managed to sell a painting by Lotto to Christie's for 420 pounds, and in the same year, Roger Fry hoped to sell a Lotto he had bought for 800 pounds for at least 2000.<sup>15</sup> Berenson himself attempted to benefit from his own effort of raising awareness of Lotto.<sup>16</sup> In 1903, he suggested a painting by Lotto to Isabella Stewart Gardner:

As you are aware I am the historiographer of a great Venetian Master named Lorenzo Lotto. Among his townsmen contemporaries he had no rival except Titian, and if Titian surpasses him in subject pictures, Titian but holds his own with Lotto as portraitist. And if you regard the individualisation, the inner life of the sitter, Titian must give place to Lotto. Of all this I wrote long ago in my book on Lotto. [...] Of course I have been looking out, ever since I have been assisting you [...] for some picture by this great master. [...] at last I can offer you a portrait which even among Lotto's must rank as a great masterpiece. [...] how really, and intimately, and vividly the personality of the sitter is grasped. He has the directness of a Holbein or Dürer rather than of any Italian master. But here on the other hand we have a compactness and beauty of composition that neither Holbein nor Dürer could achieve, because it is so eminently Italian. Among Lotto's other portraits it is unsurpassed. Some are over-sensitive; others a little too pretty ; others still either not so well painted nor so well preserved. The technique of this portrait is extraordinarily free and bold, as you can see even in the photograph. The colour is resplendent, dazzling, and as fresh as when it left Lotto's hand. then I simply have never seen another 16th century so beautifully, miraculously preserved. The student will be able to study Lotto's technique from this portrait almost as if he had Lotto by his side to teach him. [...] it is only 2 thousand pounds.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Trotta, 2006, p. 122, n. 29

<sup>14</sup> Trotta, 2006, pp. 122-3

<sup>15</sup> Trotta, 2006, p. 123

<sup>16</sup> Trotta, 2006, pp. 116, 123

<sup>17</sup> Letter from Berenson to Gardner, 01JUN1903 in H. Rollin van (ed.), *The letters of Bernard Berenson and Isabella Stewart Gardner 1887-1924 with correspondence by Mary Berenson, Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1987 (Part I)* , p. 316, also cited in Trotta, 2006, pp. 122-3

Despite Berenson's passion, Gardner decided not buy the painting. In 1906, however, Berenson and Mary managed to sell a Lotto to a US buyer for 18.000 GBP, more than double the price they had paid.<sup>18</sup> Berenson's influence on the Lotto market seems to have been most effective in the US. For instance, in 1908 and again 1911, Johnson of Philadelphia bought two paintings by Lotto on Berenson's advice.<sup>19</sup> Thus, it is possible that the 'Lotto' *Virgin and Child with Saint Francis of Assisi and Jerome (?)* may have remained at I Tatti simply because it was not sold, as in the case of the famous Sassetta mentioned in Chapter 1.

The final edition of the Lotto book, which appeared in 1955, is the first source that gives a hint of Berenson's opinion about the painting, especially the attribution, which by then had shifted to 'Very close to Lotto.'<sup>20</sup> The work is mentioned and illustrated in the book's chapter dedicated to Lotto's influence on his contemporaries and followers in the province of Treviso. According to Berenson, the panel was a type of painting frequently found around the province of Treviso, which 'bear the mark of Lotto's influence.'<sup>21</sup> Berenson describes the painting and expresses his ideas about its attribution and dating, concentrating on the colouring and the general impression each depicted figure gives:

Very close to Lotto, so close indeed that I am perhaps hypercritical in refusing to assign it to him, is the Holy Family with St Francis (wood, 74 x 54 cm.) in my own Collection. The Madonna holds the Child uneasily on her drawn-up knee. The fine Titianesque head of St Francis in profile against the sky to our left and a bearded St Joseph [now perhaps St Jerome] to the right in the shadow of the green curtain. The general intonation silvery. Whoever painted this panel must have done it about 1530.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Trotta, p. 123, n. 30 [Samuels p 310 ; Mary self portrait, p. 128]

<sup>19</sup> Trotta, 2006, p. 127

<sup>20</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. 181

<sup>21</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. 181

<sup>22</sup> Cited in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505

Berenson's choice to include the Virgin and Child with Saint Francis in the updated version of the monograph on Lotto, despite his doubts on the attribution, was not a given. Since its first publication as 'by Lotto' in 1932, the painting had become known to scholars, but it did not feature in the 1953 monographic exhibition on Lotto, nor in its catalogue, nor was it mentioned in Banti and Boschetto's monograph of the same year.<sup>23</sup> So it is possible that when Berenson was invited to re-publish his monograph as a consequence of the publishing interest sparked by the 1953 exhibition, the 90-year-old critic wanted his own painting still to have a place in the literature on the artist, suggesting that his doubts on its authorship had not been cleared in either direction.

By seeing his painting by 'Lotto' on a daily basis in his house, it seems that Berenson kept changing his mind, as if at any fresh glance, he would swing between options: Lotto or not Lotto. In 1953, the art historian Luigi Coletti included the painting in his monograph on Lotto, reporting Berenson's ideas, saying:

In front of the cautiousness of a master like Berenson, and more so concerning a work that must be particularly familiar to him, it is necessary for us to keep our reserve, and, therefore, I shall content myself to signal the attribution as an open matter.<sup>24</sup>

On the occasion of a reprint of the German edition of the Lotto monograph in 1957, Berenson wrote: 'After I had this picture before my eyes for several months last winter, I am rather inclined to see the work of the master between 1535-1540'.<sup>25</sup> Whereas in the English and Italian editions of *Venetian Painters*, published in 1957 and 1958, respectively, the painting appeared in the

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<sup>23</sup> A. Banti and A. Boschetto A., *Lorenzo Lotto*, Florence, Sansoni, 1953

<sup>24</sup> Reported from L. Coletti, *Lotto*, Bergamo, Istituto italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1953 in Strehlke, Brüggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505

<sup>25</sup> Strehlke, Brüggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505

accompanying lists with a question mark next to the name 'Lotto'.<sup>26</sup> And in 1962, in the first catalogue of the Berenson collection, the editor Franco Russoli opted for 'Venetian Master', commenting that 'Berenson always hesitated to assign this beautiful picture to Lorenzo Lotto, even though he believed it to be the closest name, both for quality and style'.<sup>27</sup> Today, scholars agree that the work is not by Lotto, and the current attribution is to the Bergamask painter Tonino Novaero, who trained in Venice and was much influenced by Titian in the 1520s.<sup>28</sup> If, on the one hand, one could think that Berenson, owning the work of art he was writing about, could lead to a biased attribution due to a lack of critical distance, it is also true that this hesitance of his to attribute the work to his favourite master might actually hint at the contrary, showing a rigour in the connoisseur's aim to find the true hand that executed the painting.

This half-Lotto aside, Berenson also owned a signed and unanimously recognised work by the master: a *Crucifixion with the Arma Christi* (Fig. 5).<sup>29</sup> The panel was painted by Lotto for his personal devotional use, as an inscription on the back recalls, in order to praise and preserve the memory of Lotto's piety. The inscription was added by Lotto's friend, the architect Giovanni del Coro, who once owned the painting.<sup>30</sup> The panel later entered the Borromeo collection in Milan, where Berenson saw it on his visit in 1890, when it had just opened to the public. Commenting on it in his notebook, he wrote: 'Little Crucifixion on a somewhat rounded surface', whilst Mary, in her notes, recorded that the picture was signed on the back and that they obtained a

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<sup>26</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505

<sup>27</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 506; F. Russoli, *Raccolta Berenson*, Milan, Officine grafiche Ricordi, 1962, p. 88

<sup>28</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505. For a small artist biography, see Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 505

<sup>29</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 391

<sup>30</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 392. In an essay, Francesco De Carolis reconnected the painting to an item listed in Lotto's expenses book, arguing, on material evidences, that the painting was probably held into a case which would slide open. See De Carolis F., '<<Per sua divotione>> Il crocifisso Berenson nel libro di spese diverse di Lorenzo Lotto' in *Nuovi Studi Rivista di Arte Antica e Moderna*, vol. 19, 2013, pp. 103-108

photo reproduction for their studies.<sup>31</sup> Berenson included the painting in his monograph of 1895, dating it to the mid-1530s, and comparing it stylistically to a crucifixion in Monte San Giusto.<sup>32</sup> In 1896, Gustavo Frizzoni, who was a pupil of Giovanni Morelli's, published the painting for the first time.<sup>33</sup> Probably in the aftermath of World War II, the panel was acquired by the dealer Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi, who, offered it to Berenson as a gift in July 1953, shortly before the Venice Exhibition on Lotto, together with a small picture by Bergognone.<sup>34</sup> On 10th July 1953, Berenson recorded in his diary: 'Lunched with Contini [...] He insisted I should accept two small pictures as a thank-offering for all I had done for him over the last fifteen years and made it impossible to refuse'.<sup>35</sup> Bonaccossi, by offering Berenson a picture by his favourite painter, wanted to thank him for the supervision of the sale of his collection to Kress for the Washington National Gallery of Art. The panel arrived at I Tatti and was put on display in the first corridor on the first floor, at some point after the Venice exhibition (in which the panel did not feature).<sup>36</sup> It was then included and illustrated in the 1955 revised edition of Berenson's book on Lotto, with a few words on the inscription.<sup>37</sup>

For Berenson, as a collector, it must have been a source of satisfaction and pride to own works by his favourite artist. For Berenson, as a scholar-collector, to collect Lorenzo Lotto also had an additional layer of meaning, linked with his professional approach. For him, to own a Lotto, a work by the artist he had rehabilitated, meant to possess the ultimate symbol of his Connoisseurship. To understand this layer of meaning, it is necessary to go back to the 1890s, the

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<sup>31</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 392

<sup>32</sup> Following De Caroli's research mentioned above, it has been possible to argue 1544 as the execution date, as recorded in the artist's expenses book. Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 392

<sup>33</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 392

<sup>34</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 395, n.7

<sup>35</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 395, n. 7

<sup>36</sup> F. Zaninelli, *Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi, antiquario (1878-1955): the art market and cultural philanthropy in the formation of American museums*, Published PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2018, p. 104 ; Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 395, n. 7

<sup>37</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. 302



years of Berenson's falling in love with the artist and his conversion to the study of art, primarily in the form of Connoisseurship.<sup>38</sup>

At the time, Berenson was touring Europe as a young student from Harvard, following his interests in literature.<sup>39</sup> In 1888, having stayed in Paris and in London, he went to Germany, visiting Berlin, Munich, and Dresden. From there he travelled to Lombardy, passing through Zurich. Following a journey to Greece, Berenson then came back to Italy and travelled the country starting from the south. Between December 1888 and early 1889, he was in Rome, but in the spring he moved to Florence.<sup>40</sup> It was there that he would first explore the study of art history, thanks to an encounter with two men who became his friends: Jean Paul Richter and Enrico Costa. With them, Berenson not only began to study the art that surrounded him, but also to adhere to the scientific Connoisseurship that Giovanni Morelli had recently promoted.<sup>41</sup>

Starting in the Autumn of 1889, Berenson and Costa embarked on the first of several tours of Italy together. It was on this first peregrination, to Milan and Bergamo, that they decided to become professional connoisseurs.<sup>42</sup> Reporting Berenson's words from his memoirs:

I was sitting one morning toward the end of May at a rickety table outside a cafe' in the lower town of Bergamo. 'Opposite me sat a chum I had picked up the year before, soon after I first arrived in Florence. He was half Genoese and half Peruvian [...] His name was Enrico Costa [...] one of the most gifted men. [...] I [...] had [...] hopes of becoming a poet, a novelist, a thinker, a critic, a new Goethe in short. [...] Here we were sitting at a little table partaking of our morning meal and enjoying it although the coffee was poor and thin [...] I recall saying: 'You see, Enrico; nobody before us has dedicated his entire activity, his entire life, to connoisseurship. Others

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<sup>38</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. IX

<sup>39</sup> L. Vertova, 'Lotto e Berenson: riflessioni e ricordi' in *Venezia Cinquecento*, n.10, 2000, pp. 47-58, p. 48 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 9

<sup>40</sup> Aiello P., 'Gustavo Frizzoni e Bernard Berenson' in *Concorso*, n.5, 2011, pp. 7-30, pp. 7-8

<sup>41</sup> Aiello, 2011, pp.7-8 ; Trotta, 2006, pp. 9, 12

<sup>42</sup> Strehlke, 2013, p. 56, Trotta, 2006, p. 9 ; Vertova, 2000, p. 48

have taken to it as a relief from politics, as in the case of Morelli and Minghetti, others still because they were museum officials, still others because they were teaching art history. We are the first to have no idea before us, no ambition, no expectation, no thought of reward. We shall give ourselves up to learning, to distinguish between the authentic works of an Italian painter of the fifteenth or sixteenth century, and those commonly ascribed to him. Here at Bergamo, and in all the fragrant and romantic valleys that branch out northward, we must not stop till we are sure that every Lotto is a Lotto [...]<sup>43</sup>

During the same year, Berenson and Costa managed to meet Giovanni Morelli himself, via an introduction by Richter.<sup>44</sup> Letters between Richter and Morelli show us the impression that the young 'kunstbefliessenen' made on Morelli.<sup>45</sup> Interestingly, his first note says that two were 'rather enthusiasts for Lotto, so that they want to go to Marche after having seen Bergamo and its surroundings', demonstrating how for Berenson, an interest in Lotto was intrinsically linked to his development as a connoisseur.<sup>46</sup> Berenson and Costa were hoping Morelli would be their guide in the art galleries of Milan, but being of age, Morelli sent his pupil Gustavo Frizzoni on his behalf. This encounter would form the basis of an important intellectual relationship that lasted for many years, meaning that Frizzoni had a much more direct influence on Berenson than Morelli, as recent studies have brought to light. It was Frizzoni, for instance, who was behind Berenson's interest in the use of photography as a tool for scientific connoisseurship, and stimulated his taste for certain artists, including once again Lorenzo Lotto.<sup>47</sup>

In Bergamo, Berenson, having fallen for Connoisseurship, also fell for Lotto. Berenson had already admired paintings by Lotto in major galleries around

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<sup>43</sup> Berenson, 1949, p. 50

<sup>44</sup> Aiello, 2011, p. 9

<sup>45</sup> 'Kunstbefliessenen' literally means students of art in German. Strehlke, 2013, p. 56

<sup>46</sup> Quoted in Aiello, 2011, p. 9

<sup>47</sup> As shall be often seen throughout this chapter, Frizzoni, together with Morelli, was one of the first critics to study Lotto's works, especially in Lombardy. Aiello, 2011, pp. 7-30

Europe, but it was only when he saw his works in Bergamo in 1890 that a life-long love was sparked. As Berenson recalled:

I had seen the possessions [by Lotto] of London's National Gallery; the small St Jerome of the Louvre bewitched me with its wild and dry? landscape; I admired Brera's portraits, yet it was in Bergamo that his art conquered me. Bewitched by the altarpieces, by the frescoes, by the marquetrys with which he had adorned the noble city and its surroundings, I could never be tired of going to see them again and again: until one day I felt the need to write about their author.<sup>48</sup>

Thus, Bergamo became the site of a double conversion. First, there was a self-styled 'conversion on the way to Damascus', in which Berenson abandoned his dream of becoming a linguist in favour of a connoisseur.<sup>49</sup> Second, Berenson vowed to study and write about Lorenzo Lotto – the start of a life-long pilgrimage. Berenson himself often used the metaphor of the pilgrim when recalling his studies on Lotto, and in fact, we can imagine the painter as a kind of Saint Christopher, accompanying Berenson on his journey to master Connoisseurship.

In the summer of 1890, after the meeting with Morelli and visiting galleries with Frizzoni, Berenson and Costa toured collections around Italy and Europe. Eventually, the two were joined by Mary Costelloe, Berenson's future wife, who would start jotting down notes that later contributed to Berenson's famous lists of painters.<sup>50</sup> Over the next years, Berenson and Mary visited the Veneto, Lombardy, and the Marche on multiple occasions, hunting specifically for Lottos.<sup>51</sup> In the autumn of 1892, for instance, they were in Venice with Costa, when they were called by the sexton of the Carmini church to come have a close look at the signed altarpiece by the painter there. They were even invited to clean it, an experience described by Mary as very entertaining.<sup>52</sup> In January

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<sup>48</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. IX

<sup>49</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 88

<sup>50</sup> Strehlke, 2013, p. 57. For Mary's contribute, see P. Aiello, 'Bernard Berenson. Il cantiere delle «liste»' in *Storie di edizioni - 1900*, n. 5, 2020, pp. 207-226

<sup>51</sup> Aiello, 2011, n. 25 ; Strehlke, 2013, p. 57

<sup>52</sup> Strehlke, 2013, p. 57

1893, the couple then conceived the idea of working on a book on Lorenzo Lotto, and with that aim, they returned to Bergamo and Milan, taking notes and making drawings.<sup>53</sup>

Writing a monograph on Lorenzo Lotto was not an obvious choice at the time.<sup>54</sup> At this time, Lotto studies remained limited to local 'archive hounds' and regional connoisseurs in Bergamo, who first studied the painter's works and attempted to piece his biography together, drawing information from documentary sources and the many works of art scattered around the territory.<sup>55</sup> Besides Morelli and Frizzoni, two other connoisseurs with an interest in the artist were Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle and Joseph Crowe. Lorenzo Lotto is included in their famous history of Italian painting, and Cavalcaselle even accompanied the National Gallery director Charles Eastlake on a trip to procure some Lotto.<sup>56</sup> The critic Alberto Morassi, reviewing the above-mentioned Lotto exhibition of 1953 for the Burlington Magazine, wrote that Frizzoni, Morelli and Cavalcaselle had already laid the basis for the artist's reevaluation.<sup>57</sup>

In the late 19th century, Lotto's popularity increased due to archival discoveries that allowed scholars to get a sharper image of the painter's

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<sup>53</sup> According to Luisa Vertova, the book was almost finished already at the end of 1892, but the earliest records in the archive point more towards the end of 1893. Vertova, 2000, p. 50 ; Aiello, 2011, n. 25 ; Strehlke, 2013, p. 57

<sup>54</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 50 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 23

<sup>55</sup> Trotta, 2000, p. 19. See also P. Humfrey, 'La fortuna critica di Lorenzo Lotto', in *Lorenzo Lotto*, Villa Giovanni Carlo Federico (ed.), Cinisello Balsamo, Silvana Editoriale, 2011, pp. 61-69; G. Angelini, "'Con affettuosa indulgenza": note su Giovanni Morelli e Lorenzo Lotto (tra Berenson e Frizzoni)', in *Lorenzo Lotto: contesti, significati, conservazione*, Coltrinari F. and Dal Pozzolo E. M. (eds.), Treviso, ZeL edizioni, 2019, pp. 393-405

<sup>56</sup> The first Lotto bought for a public collection in the UK, (by Eastlake for the National Gallery) was coming from Morelli's personal collection. Angelini, 2019, p. 398. See also O. Piccolo, 'Le opere di Lorenzo Lotto a Bergamo: questioni di critica e mercato nei manoscritti di Cavalcaselle' in *Saggi e memorie di Storia dell'arte*, n. 41, 2017, pp. 166-193 ; and O. Piccolo, 'Lorenzo Lotto nei manoscritti veneziani e londinesi di Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle: nuove aperture critiche' in *Lorenzo Lotto: contesti, significati, conservazione*, Coltrinari Francesca and Dal Pozzolo Enrico Maria (eds.), Treviso, ZeL edizioni, 2019, pp. 406-421

<sup>57</sup> See Appendix A, A. Morassi, 'The Lotto exhibition in Venice' in *The Burlington Magazine*, n.95, 1953, pp. 290-296, p. 291

biography. An accounting register, known as the *Libro delle Spese*, and the painter's last will were found in 1885 and 1887, respectively.<sup>58</sup> In perfect tune with the 'fascination for the archive' that dominated the incipient discipline of Art History, these findings sparked a number of publications on Lotto, all with a focus on the *Marche*.<sup>59</sup> The finding of the *Libro delle Spese* was of particular relevance for Berenson's engagement with Lorenzo Lotto, as recent studies have highlighted.<sup>60</sup> The book was found by Pietro Gianuzzi in the archive of the bishop of Loreto in 1885. It was not until 1893 that parts of it were published by Gianuzzi and other local historians, such as Anselmo Anselmi, primarily on the pages of a local journal, the *Rivista Mesena*.<sup>61</sup> Guido Levi, a functionary of the State Archive, was then sent to Loreto to re-order the archive in 1892. Stumbling across the account book, Levi recognised its relevance and decided to embark on a full transcription, for which he brought the book back with him to Rome.<sup>62</sup> In August 1893, however, Levi died, leaving the transcription incomplete. Adolfo Venturi, the father of Italian Art History, took up the baton and published the *Libro* in 1894, as part of the first issue of his series *Gallerie Nazionali*.<sup>63</sup>

While the book was in Rome with Guido Levi in 1893, Berenson managed to have look at it, having been alerted to it by Frizzoni.<sup>64</sup> Although the writing of his Lotto study was already advanced at this point, the *Libro Delle Spese* was to play a significant role.<sup>65</sup> As Berenson recalled: 'Levi was good enough to let me look through it and extract the items that seemed to me of the greatest

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<sup>58</sup> Trotta, 2006, p. 19. For the *Libro Delle Spese*, see De Carolis Francesco, *Il libro di spese diverse di Lorenzo Lotto. Analisi e commento*, PhD thesis, University of Bologna, 2015

<sup>59</sup> B. Pezzini, 'A Fascination for the Archive' in The Burlington Magazine Index Blog, 15/09/2015, <https://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com/2015/09/05/herbert-horne-aby-warburg-burlington-magazine/>

<sup>60</sup> See De Carolis, 2015 and De Carolis, 2013

<sup>61</sup> De Carolis, 2013, p. 47

<sup>62</sup> Strehlke, 2013, p. 59; De Carolis, 2013, p. 50

<sup>63</sup> Trotta, 2006, p.19; De Carolis, 2013, p. 47

<sup>64</sup> Aiello, 2011, n. 27

<sup>65</sup> De Carolis, 2015

importance'.<sup>66</sup> For Berenson and others, the document was particularly precious for it cast some light on a lesser known period of the artist's life - that of his stay in Venice and Treviso in the 1540s.<sup>67</sup> Connoisseurs have often been accused of being only interested in works of art as objects in themselves. Yet, as explored in the introduction, methodological borders have always been elastic. As shall be seen, in his book on Lotto, which acted as a methodological manifesto, Berenson praises the use of archival sources on multiple occasions, albeit with caution.<sup>68</sup>

Berenson cites from documentary material regarding the artist's temperament and habits.<sup>69</sup> These documents include the account book, but also the painter's last will, and Lotto's account book, and letters from Aretino to Titian. Having had to base his reconstruction of the first forty years of Lotto's career on his paintings only: 'documents become unusually plentiful ; yet although they would have spared us much labour had they come earlier, they do not come too late to be of great service'.<sup>70</sup> De Carolis has argued that the potential relevance of a document such as Lotto's account book was not recognised during Berenson's time.<sup>71</sup> Yet, Berenson tells us of the account book's discovery and follows its structure analysing the paintings listed in it, proceeding year by year, entry by entry. It is true that he is not interested in it as a document per se, but he did acknowledge its importance for 'cultural studies' or 'social history'. Quasi-apologetically, he states that he has used the document in the way that best fitted his own book's purpose, which was studying Lotto's artistic personality, through his paintings.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 264; Humfrey, 2011, p. 67

<sup>67</sup> De Carolis, 2015

<sup>68</sup> Trotta, 2006, p.13. When writing about the National Gallery portrait of Giovanni della Volta and his Family (one of the first Lottos that Berenson ever studied), Berenson argued that documents can be forged as easily as signatures, saying he prefers the pure Morellian analysis of details, such as the depiction of hands. De Carolis, 2015

<sup>69</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 263

<sup>70</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 262. Trotta has noted how this respect of the sources, tradition, and signatures actually owes to Morelli. Trotta, 2006, p. 13

<sup>71</sup> De Carolis, 2015

<sup>72</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. 264-6, see Appendix B.1

The Lotto book was first sent to a publisher in December 1893.<sup>73</sup> Despite the author's enthusiasm, no one at the time was interested in a monograph on an unknown painter, written by a young critic to promote a new approach to art history.<sup>74</sup> As a matter of fact, Morelli's new method was not yet well-known, nor indeed widely accepted outside of Milan. Moreover, connoisseurship was not recognised as a profession.<sup>75</sup> As Ellis K. Waterhouse wrote about the role of connoisseurs in the 1890s:

A new species of art critic, especially foreigners such as Dr J. P. Richter and Bernard Berenson, was jockeying for position as *the* authority on Old Masters [...]. The New Gallery [...] held a large exhibition [...] in the winter of 1894/5 [...] of *Venetian Art* [...] Berenson prevailed on his friend Herbert Cook to pay for the printing of a small brochure [...] This certainly set the cat among the pigeons. But it resulted in members of the art trade realising they would do well to pay attention, whether they believed them or not, to the views of the new experts.<sup>76</sup>

Only after the success of Berenson's other book, the *Venetian Painters* (1894) and the brochure mentioned in the above quote, did he obtain recognition as an expert in Venetian art. The Lotto book was eventually accepted for publication, seeing the light in 1895.<sup>77</sup>

As already highlighted, Berenson conceived the book on Lotto to be at once a manifesto of his personal contribution to the new science of Connoisseurship, and a practical demonstration of its application.<sup>78</sup> The empirical nature of Connoisseurship favoured an illustration of the method

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<sup>73</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. IX

<sup>74</sup> Vertova, 2000, pp. 50-1 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 116

<sup>75</sup> See D. A. Brown, 'Giovanni Morelli and Bernard Berenson' in *Giovanni morelli e la cultura dei conoscitori*, G. Agosti, P. Manca (eds), Bergamo, 1993, pp. 390-39

<sup>76</sup> E. K. Waterhouse 'Thoughts in the Cataloguing of Pictures at Exhibitions' in Garstang (ed.), *Art, commerce, scholarship : a Window onto the Art World : Colnaghi 1760-1984*, London, Colnaghi, 1984, pp. 60-62, p. 61

<sup>77</sup> Vertova, 2000, pp. 50-1 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 116

<sup>78</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 49 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 13. See for instance E. Lugli, 'Connoisseurship as a system: reflections on Federico Zeri's "Due dipinti, la filologia e un nome"' in *Word & image*, n. 24, 2008, pp. 162-175



through its direct application to case studies. Berenson was original in doing so in a monograph, which was a departure from Morelli's discursive dialogue.<sup>79</sup> As shall be seen, Berenson aimed at investigating an artist's personality through the study of his works and his life, for which a monograph was a more suitable format.<sup>80</sup>

The first edition of *Lotto* was published by Putnam and Sons.<sup>81</sup> Soon after, in 1901, a revised edition came out, published by Bell ; and a second one, also with Bell, in 1905.<sup>82</sup> Then, around 50 years later, following the renewed interest in *Lotto* around the 1953 exhibition, Berenson was invited by the Italian publishing house Electa to re-edit his monograph in Italian. This Italian edition was then translated into English for Phaidon in 1956, and in German in 1957.<sup>83</sup> Understandably, the 1955 edition was rather different from the one of 1895, including a new and more personal prologue.<sup>84</sup> Differences between the earlier editions mainly concerned newly discovered works and new attributions.<sup>85</sup>

In 1895, Berenson stated that the book 'has another object in view than the bringing together of mere information regarding *Lotto*. It is an attempt to

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<sup>79</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 40; Trotta, 2006, p.71. See also F. Ventrella, 'Writing Under Pressure: Maud Cruttwell and the Old Master Monograph' in *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, n. 28, 2019, pp. 1-27; G. Guercio, *Art as Existence: The Artist's Monograph and its Project*, Cambridge MA, MIT Press, 2006

<sup>80</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 40; Trotta, 2006, pp. 71, 76 ; On personhood, see J. Melius, 'Connoisseurship, Painting, and Personhood', in *Art History*, n. 34, 2011, pp. 289-309

<sup>81</sup> B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: an Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, New York, G. P. Putnam's sons, 1895

<sup>82</sup> B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: an Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, Bell, 1901 ; B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: an Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, Bell, 1905

<sup>83</sup> B. Berenson, *Lotto*, Milan, Electa Editrice, 1955 ; B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto*, London, Phaidon Press, 1956 ; B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: Gesamtausgabe*, Köln, Phaidon-Verl., 1957. For an exhaustive comparison of the first and latest edition, see S. Facchinetti, 'Bernard Berenson giovane e vecchio, due diverse visioni di *Lotto* (1895 e 1955)' in *Lorenzo Lotto: contesti, significati, conservazione*, F. Coltrinari, E. M. Dal Pozzolo (eds.), Treviso, ZeL edizioni, 2019, pp. 423-431

<sup>84</sup> For convenience the English edition will be used for both, meaning the text of 1955 will actually be taken from its translation of 1956.

<sup>85</sup> Berenson, 1955, pp. IX-X. Yet, despite not modified extensively in the body of the text, Berenson is thought to have had a methodological crisis in refusing that Burkhardtian vision that was explicated in the first edition. See Vertova, 2000, p.51; Trotta, 2006, p.153

reconstruct Lotto's character, both as a man and as an artist', distancing himself from Morelli and Crowe and Cavalcaselle.<sup>86</sup> At times it functions as a didactic manual of Connoisseurship, as the subtitle 'An essay in Constructive Art Criticism' suggests.<sup>87</sup> In the introduction, in fact, Berenson addresses the reader as 'the student'.<sup>88</sup>

In the first part of the book, Berenson spends a conspicuous number of pages to 'reconstruct the history of an artist's education, and of the early career'.<sup>89</sup> At the core of this interest in the 'embryonal phases' lies one of the first theoretical concepts explained in the *Lotto* - that of the 'habits'.<sup>90</sup> According to Berenson, taking 'a few documentary notices, and a number of pictures' as his sources, the investigation of the artist's formation was to follow from 'discovering what habits have become so rooted in the artist to be unconscious, under what influences he formed them, the training of the painter being altogether a training of habits of attention, visualisation, and execution'.<sup>91</sup> In this formulation, habits of attention stand for the ways in which the painter observes 'all perceptible phenomena', habits of visualisation stand for the ways in which he pictures them in his memory, and habits of execution for the ways in which he transfers his memory image to walls, panels, and canvases.<sup>92</sup> The typical painter is 'taught but one way', although 'he may get more ways later'; hence the importance of a painter's education.<sup>93</sup> 'Habits' concern a painter's 'mnemonic addictions and mental preferences'. It was a concept that Berenson took from his old Harvard psychology professor William James, according to whom every creature is made up of 'bundles of habits'.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. V-IV, see Appendix B.2

<sup>87</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. VI . Angelini, 2019, p. 399

<sup>88</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. XIII, VI ; Vertova, 2000, p. 51 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 79 ; Facchinetti, 2019, pp. 423-4

<sup>89</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. XIII. Francesco Ventrella has also pointed out Pater as one of Berenson's inspiration sources for this concepts. Ventrella, 2019, p. 7

<sup>90</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. X

<sup>91</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. XIII

<sup>92</sup> rephrasing from Berenson, 1895, p. XIII

<sup>93</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. XIII

<sup>94</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 51 ; Melius, 2011, p. 298 , Ventrella, 2019, p. 5

Berenson applied James' concept to determine the steps of artistic processes and the physiological formation of artistic personalities.<sup>95</sup> Berenson's investigation of the artist's habits in fact makes use of Morelli's details such as 'ears, the hands, the ringlets of hair, certain recurring bits of landscape'.<sup>96</sup> He articulates the interaction between the three habits in a hierarchical system, concluding that 'it is in the less expressive features, then, that habits of attention are weakest, and habits of execution, consequently, strongest', explaining that 'Morellian' details 'best clue to a painter's origin, and to the history of his noviciate'.<sup>97</sup>

Berenson, however, distances himself from Morelli, claiming that 'the artist is not a botanical but a psychological problem'.<sup>98</sup> His aim being the studying of an artist's psychological attitude in the observation of reality and the transfer of that observation into a work of art, the role of the connoisseur is to analyse the artist's capacity to let his own personality speak through the elaboration or negation of 'influences' from other artists, in terms of technique, style, and interpretation.<sup>99</sup>

Reviewing her husband's Lotto in several international journals, including the *Gazette Des Beaux Arts*, Mary summed up Berenson's new approach:<sup>100</sup>

Among the writings dedicated to the history of Renaissance art today, we can distinguish three distinctive types of criticism [...] *documentary*, based upon archival documents and historical printed texts [...] the *comparative*, characterised by the patient and meticulous observation of works of art of certain attribution, in order to determine the authorship and chronology of the other works of the same master [...] and a third one, which we could

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<sup>95</sup> Melius, 2011, p. 298. This psychological turn is specific to Berenson's approach to scientific connoisseurship.

<sup>96</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. XIV

<sup>97</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. XV-XVII, see Appendix B.3

<sup>98</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. XVIII. See also Trotta, 2006, p. 11

<sup>99</sup> See Vertova, 2000. p. 51 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 15 ; Melius, 2011, p. 299

<sup>100</sup> M. Logan, 'Lorenzo Lotto' in *Gazette Des Beaux-Arts*, s. iii, XXXVII, 13, 1895, pp. 362- 363; Trotta, 2006, p. 15 ; Aiello, 2011, n. 35. See also I. Della Monica, 'Mary Berenson and The Guide to the Italian Pictures at Hampton Court' in *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, n. 28, 2019, pp. 1-14, n. 16-7

call *subjective*, which exists in two varieties - one consisting in turning the work of art into a pretext for brilliant developments (Ruskin), one in analysing the complex sensations a work of art arises in the spectator (Pater) [...] Berenson's book [...] seems to provide a fourth type of criticism, which we will happily call *psychological* [...] where the author aims at the psychological reconstruction of the artistic personality of Lotto.<sup>101</sup>

Answering the rhetorical question 'What does this method consist of?' Mary explains:

Analysing, throughout his whole career, the psychological laws of habits and resistance to habits [...] of vision, of execution, of feeling and thinking [...] and then asking 'from which master or school did the artist acquire such habits? [...] one the question is answered, the extent of an artist's personality is given by the differences that occur between the artist and the master or the painters who influenced him [...] if he introduces some novelties in the composition, in the form, in the spirit, these innovations have to be considered as personal expressions and manifestations of the intimate nature of his genius.<sup>102</sup>

In the introduction of the book, Berenson returns to the botanical metaphor to criticise Morelli:

A few years ago [...] poetical similes borrowed from popular botany seemed amply to explain all the casualties of artistic development [...] The trouble with the vegetable analogy is the fact that a man has a much larger number of possible moves than a plant. Of a plant we can say that, if it matures at all, it must become precisely such and such, but of a man we can make no such prediction. All we can say is that given a certain temperament plus a certain mental, emotional, and manual training, the product (the artist) will *tend* to act and to express himself in a way that is determined. But his training does not cease; he keeps coming in contact

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<sup>101</sup> tr, by the author from French, Logan, 1895, pp. 362-3. The relationship with Pater and Ruskin was also noted by Trotta in Trotta, 2006, p. 7

<sup>102</sup> tr, by the author from French, Logan, 1895, p. 363

with other influences, each one of which tends to modify the product that was the adolescent artist.<sup>103</sup>

In the book, Berenson states in fact that an artist's importance should be valued according to his resistance to influences. While certain artists 'suffer rather than acquire outside elements', others choose the ones they want, making them their own. Others 'choose them from far as well as from near, from the past, as well as from the present. Some have the 'power necessary to give body to an entirely personal vision of the universe'. Those who fail, remain 'fanciful, suggestive, sympathetic, but never great'. The latter is the case of Lorenzo Lotto, who 'while lacking Michelangelo's power of persuading people of its reality, he yet had had a way of seeing and of registering his vision as personal as Michelangelo's'.<sup>104</sup>

Despite his interest in psychology and his differentiation from Morelli, Berenson's approach was still empirical, i.e. 'aimed at being concrete, specific and to the point, instead of stretching the artist on a Procrustean bed of ready-made antecedent concepts'.<sup>105</sup> In the *Lotto*, Berenson analyses chronologically the works of art attributed to the painter, drawing his conclusions from them.<sup>106</sup> Throughout the chapters, 'every further work by him [Lotto] that [...] was examined, was like a new image added to the images of his personality [...] already acquired'.<sup>107</sup> Berenson here describes the inner visual process of connoisseurship, in which a 'long familiarity with the work of an artist [...] often ends by creating a visual image which rises invariably before the mind at the mention of his name'.<sup>108</sup> As Berenson concludes, that composite image is the result of 'a slow process of selection and combination; certain qualities of expression, certain types of face, certain attitudes, a given scheme of colour, a

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<sup>103</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 127

<sup>104</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. 122-4, see Appendix B.4

<sup>105</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. XI

<sup>106</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. XVIII

<sup>107</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 307

<sup>108</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 340

prejudice for certain effects of light, recur at the thought of the artist'.<sup>109</sup> Leafing through a book such as *Lotto* is equivalent to exploring a folder in the Connoisseur's photo collection, with Berenson's voice commenting in the background.<sup>110</sup>

In *Lotto*, Berenson starts by giving an overview of Lotto appreciation over time through the work of those critics who wrote about the painter before him, going back to the artist's contemporaries, underlining that he did not have many imitators.<sup>111</sup> Analysing the reception of Lotto's art by Vasari and Ridolfi, Berenson points out that the painter was seen as a lesser master compared to Titian and Tintoretto. He then accuses the 'modern critics', Crowe and Cavalcaselle, because they agreed with this early verdict in 'an almost blind acceptance of the printed word, by means of a theory of influence which wholly ignores psychological probability, and scarcely takes cognisance of time and space'.<sup>112</sup> Morelli, on the other hand, sees 'even less clearly than his rivals', for 'he never speaks of Lotto without calling him the pupil of Giovanni Bellini', whereas Berenson's revolutionary idea was to see him as the pupil of Alvise Vivarini.<sup>113</sup>

Berenson acknowledges, however, that the Morelli was the first one to have made the successful comparison between Lotto and Correggio, which was to become almost a *leit motiv* in the literature on the painter.<sup>114</sup> Berenson returns to this point on several occasions throughout the book. He acknowledges the similarity of the masters, but he provides a different explanation for it than Morelli, pointing to an affinity in the artists' temperaments, a psychological

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<sup>109</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 340

<sup>110</sup> Berenson's photo collection at I Tatti was indeed organised alphabetically, per artist or school.

<sup>111</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 300

<sup>112</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 27

<sup>113</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 27

<sup>114</sup> Angelini, 2019, p. 400. These comparisons speak to the taste and time of Berenson. As he acknowledged, they were typical of the thought of late 19th-century critics of French modern Art, especially by Maurice Denis and Charles Blanc. They continued to be popular in the 20th-century, being transmitted through the work of Bernard Berenson and Roger Fry to the later generation of critics including Longhi and Clark, as explored further in Chapter 6. On the topic see lamurri, 1998.

affinity, stemming from a shared formation within the 'Murano-Squacionesque' school.<sup>115</sup> Berenson's identification of Alvise Vivarini instead of Giovanni Bellini as Lotto's master is one of his most original contributions. In fact, besides being the first monograph on Lotto, his book also contained the first effective study of Vivarini.<sup>116</sup> As Berenson remarks in the preface, he 'constantly had to remind himself that this book deals with Lotto, and that Alvise and his following may come in only when they can throw light on the subject in hand'.<sup>117</sup>

As far as Lorenzo Lotto himself is concerned, after analysing 'step by step the developing of his genius', Berenson reconstructs the image of a painter with a rather distinctive artistic personality and personal temper.<sup>118</sup> Berenson's Lotto had 'sensitive, emotional, lyrical natures, to whom painting was not chiefly an affair of architectonic composition, or structure, but a vehicle for the expression of feeling'.<sup>119</sup>

As such, Berenson notes that it is in portraiture that Lotto's artistic personality is best expressed. Comparing him to Titian, he writes:

we might imagine Titian asking of every person he was going to paint, Who are you? What is your position in society? - while Lotto would put the question, What sort of person are you? How do you take life?<sup>120</sup>

As a portraitist, Lotto was 'the first Italian painter who was sensitive to the varying states of the human soul [...] *and* this makes him pre-eminently a psychologist.'<sup>121</sup> Lotto's 'psychological interest', that is to say his 'interest in the effect things have on the human consciousness', can be seen, for instance, when his 'representation of the sitter's physical condition makes us instantly

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<sup>115</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 168

<sup>116</sup> Logan, 1895, p. 306

<sup>117</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. V

<sup>118</sup> tr., Logan, 1895, p. 46

<sup>119</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 168

<sup>120</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 315

<sup>121</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 315



aware of his mental state'.<sup>122</sup> Berenson interpreted his portraits as 'modern', stating they 'Anticipate the spirit of the modern psychological novel'.<sup>123</sup> Lotto's perceived modernity resides in him being at once personal and psychological, but also in his technique, which he compares to that of the French Modernists.<sup>124</sup> Commenting on Lotto's *Presentation to the Temple*, Berenson writes:

The paint is put on in a way even more modern than in Titian. Indeed, to find the like of it, we have to turn to the works of contemporary 'Impressionists' - to Manet in particular. The youth behind St Anne [...] is [...] almost identical with a figure in Manet's *Spanish Dance*, belonging to Durand-Ruel at Paris. As general tone and as drawing, this *Presentation* suggests the work of M. Degas. It is, in short, one of Lotto's greatest achievements, and is perhaps the most 'modern' picture ever painted by an old Italian master.<sup>125</sup>

And writing about Lotto's last works:

As technique [...] he produces with few strokes, and with one or two colours [...] vividly call to mind Velasquez and the greatest living French painters [...] This style of painting is scarcely popular even now [...] it found no recognition then [...] even Titian with all his fame could not make it acceptable.<sup>126</sup>

In his book Berenson thus presented to the public a psychological and modern painter, a complete new Lotto.<sup>127</sup> Showing an art historical approach that goes beyond the borders of stylistic analysis, when acknowledging Lotto's modest place among other artists, Berenson writes:

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<sup>122</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 316, 319-31 ; p. 237

<sup>123</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 322

<sup>124</sup> Trotta, 2006, pp. 35-6, 41. This juxtaposition of old and modern masters will be a returning feature in the poetic of Berenson, Longhi, and Clark

<sup>125</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 292

<sup>126</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 342

<sup>127</sup> Logan, 1895, p. 362

Having granted [...] that Lotto was not the great [...] Why bother our heads about him then?' Because [...] we may be sure [...] that his works were not [...] a mere accident, but representative [...] of certain prevailing although it is true, not dominant tendencies in his own times. If neither supremely original nor supremely powerful, Lotto was at least representative [...] of a very interesting minority.<sup>128</sup>

And further down, when talking about Lotto and other artists who despite being Venetian went to work outside Venice, such as Carlo Crivelli and Jacopo De' Barbari, Berenson labels them as representative of a Venetian 'character', stating his works are 'a comment on the Venetian temperament that supplements [...] the current notion [...] based chiefly [...] upon the study of merely political history, and [...] upon the art-product of the Bellini, [...] Giorgione, Titian, and Veronese' <sup>129</sup>

Berenson effectively combined Morellian empiricism with a notion of the artist as a product of his *Zeitgeist*.<sup>130</sup> He exhorts the reader to cross the borders of 'Art History', stating that: 'to bring out clearly the composite image of Lotto's qualities, it is necessary to [...] relieve them against the epoch in which he was living'.<sup>131</sup> And further on he claims that 'To understand in what way [*art*] expresses a certain epoch, it may be needful to venture beyond its narrow limits into the region of general history'.<sup>132</sup>

It was the young Roberto Longhi who made perhaps the most poignant analysis of this 'historical' approach of Berenson.<sup>133</sup> In 1912, Longhi proposed to translate Berenson's series Renaissance Painters into Italian, whilst also preparing a critical essay on Berenson's aesthetic theories, which were of

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<sup>128</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 124

<sup>129</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. 295-6

<sup>130</sup> Analysing Lotto's personal temperament in a roughly anthropological approach he wrote: 'It is probable, too, that in his analytical, humourous, and bizarre temperament felt itself at home and with friends among people like the Bergamasks'. A. Mirabile, "'Lorenzo Lotto" di Anna Banti: fra Longhi e Berenson' in *Italica*, Vol. 93, n. 2, 2016, pp. 262-273, p. 265 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 154

<sup>131</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 309

<sup>132</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 312

<sup>133</sup> First noted by Trotta, 2006, p. 147. On the matter, see the critical edition of the epistolary Berenson-Longhi, C. Garboli, C. Montagnani (eds), *Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi : lettere e scartafacci 1912-1957*, Milan, Adelphi, 1993

utmost interest to his generation, as shall be seen in Chapter 4.<sup>134</sup> As Longhi noted, the historical contextualisation of facts that one finds in Lotto are a further elaboration of elements already seen in the *Venetian Painters*, published the year before, in 1894.<sup>135</sup> Longhi named such an approach as ‘ambiental’, meaning ‘a point of view [...] still profoundly indebted to Taine and Burckhardt [who] considered Renaissance Art as the expression of Renaissance Civilisation’.<sup>136</sup>

This can be seen, for instance, when Berenson analyses Lotto’s relationship with religion and the Protestant reform, seeing Lotto’s piety as evidence of protestant-friendly environments in sixteenth-century Venice.<sup>137</sup> Yet, in Berenson’s eyes, Lotto’s particular talent was also a source of his later demise in status when the Counter-reformation oppressed and condemned such personal approaches to faith: ‘If the council of Trent meant anything, it meant the eradication of every personal element from Christianity. Bearing this in mind, we can see how inevitable was the failure of such men as Contarini, Sadoleto, and Lotto.’<sup>138</sup> This interest in Lotto’s religiosity has been connected to Mary and Bernard Berenson’s own conversion to Catholicism and their subsequent disappointment with its rigidity, which happened around the same time as when the Lotto book took shape.<sup>139</sup> This may have been the very reason why the only ‘Lotto’ that Berenson bought as a collector, the *Virgin and Child with Saint Francis*, is a religious subject, in consonance with the majority of the collection at *I Tatti*.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Eventually Longhi never translated the volumes, and the critical essay is preserved as a bunch of notes, also published in Garboli, Montagnani, 1993.

<sup>135</sup> Garboli, Montagnani, 1993, p. 196

<sup>136</sup> Tr.: ‘Ma questo suo affermare sul valore di problema psicologico che [...] nell’artista, dipende anche da un altro fatto che si riporta al primo periodo ambientale dei V P ; e si riferisce cioè allo scambio di temperamenti artistici affini per riguardi [sic] agli ideali storici sentimentali che essi esprimono nelle loro opere.’ , Garboli, Montagnani, 1993, p. 207

<sup>137</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. 268-9, 312, 321-22, 324. See appendix B.6

<sup>138</sup> Berenson, 1895, p. 312

<sup>139</sup> Strehlke, 2013, pp. 58-9

<sup>140</sup> Although it was a gift, this is also to be noted for the *Crucifix*. In the 1955 edition, Berenson in fact publishes as in his own collection and includes a few remarks on his importance as an evidence of Lotto’s personal approach to religion. Berenson, 1955, p. 302

The theme of 'modernity' was taken up much later by Roberto Longhi in his rehabilitation of Caravaggio, similarly in many ways to Berenson's re-evaluation of Lotto. Longhi, in fact, saw Lotto as a Lombard predecessor of Caravaggio, as indicated in his early studies on the latter in 1911, re-iterated in the Milan exhibition of 1951, and in the monograph on Lotto published in 1953 by Anna Banti, Longhi's wife, and Antonio Boschetto.<sup>141</sup> The publication of this monograph coincided with the Lotto exhibition held in Venice in the same year, which was curated by Pietro Zampetti.<sup>142</sup> Zampetti's curating partly reflected Longhi's views, opposed to Berenson's, who preferred the traditional interpretation of the painter as a Venetian rather than a Lombard master.<sup>143</sup> In Rome in 1947, for instance, Berenson noted with annoyance in his diary how Longhi's ideas on Caravaggio's and Lotto's Lombard style were cited by others:

We sauntered into San Luigi dei Francesi. [...] Found an elderly man quietly sitting [...] both began to look at photos and compare them with the paintings. [...] I approached and asked what he was there for, and who. He was Walter Friedländer, whom I had been wishing to meet ; told him who I was. Asked what made Caravaggio, and he could only repeat Longhi's guess that Caravaggio had studied Lotto and Savoldo. Unlikely.<sup>144</sup>

Despite these opposing credos and the timid reception compared to the Caravaggio show at Milan, the Venice exhibition certainly contributed to

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<sup>141</sup> A. Banti, A. Boschetto (eds.), *Lorenzo Lotto*, Florence, Sansoni, 1953 ; Trotta, 2006, p. 85 ; see also Mirabile, 2016, pp. 262-273

<sup>142</sup> P. Zampetti (ed.), *Mostra di Lorenzo Lotto*, Venice, Arte Veneta, 1953. See Vertova, 2000, p. 48 ; Strehlke, 2013, p. 59; A. Trotta, 'Bernard Berenson e la mostra su Lorenzo Lotto, Venezia 1953' in *Critica d'arte e tutela in Italia. Figure e protagonisti nel secondo dopoguerra. Atti del Convegno del X anniversario della Società Italiana di Storia della critica d'arte*, Passignano, aquaplano, 2017, pp. 519-531, pp. 519-20. Matilde Cartolari is currently researching the Venetian exhibitions during her doctoral research at TU Berlin. The show investigated some of the themes already explored by Zampetti in 1950, with an exhibition that celebrated Venetian painting in the Marche. Trotta, 2017, p. 527; Angelini, 2019, p. 393

<sup>143</sup> Trotta, 2017, p. 527; Angelini, 2019, p. 393

<sup>144</sup> B. Berenson, *Sunset and twilight: from the diaries of 1947 - 1958*, London, Hamilton, 1964, 16NOV1947, p. 49, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527

popularising Lorenzo Lotto, contributing to one of Berenson's oldest desires.<sup>145</sup> The exhibition opened in September 1953, and Berenson first visited in October, returning several times later, as recorded in his diaries.<sup>146</sup> Although he had been the first to try and increase appreciation for Lotto's work, the show left him perplexed:<sup>147</sup>

Whom does a show like the one of Lotto serve? For the public there is far too much of no interest or aesthetic delight. For the *Buon gusto* too many indifferent pictures. Only the so-called art historians, that is the picture attributors, can profit by such an attempt at exhibiting the painting of an artist as uneven as Lotto.<sup>148</sup>

Yet, to his surprise, a couple of days later he noted : 'The crowds at the Lotto show appear more interested and freer from boredom than I expected'.<sup>149</sup> The 88-year-old critic valued 'the effort made by Professor Zampetti and his staff, under the auspices of the Biennale, in gathering such a large number of Lotto's paintings and having them properly cleaned and restored', but he did not like the display – acknowledging the challenges of illustrating the catalogue of an artist such as Lotto in a real space rather than a book.<sup>150</sup> As he wrote: 'How difficult it is to display them! Seen out of the penumbral light of the altars and in the light of the common day, the Bergamo altarpieces, facing each other, as it were, lighting each other up, make a poor impression as of rustic over-gaiety of colour.'<sup>151</sup> And then: 'There are too many pictures and portraits shown only to induce attributors to find solutions', which sounds ironical, given that it is a practice from which Berenson himself benefitted several times as a scholar.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> The attendance of the Caravaggio exhibition has been around half a million visitors, with an average of 5/6k a day . Trotta, 2017, p. 523

<sup>146</sup> Trotta, 2017, p. 527

<sup>147</sup> His dislike was probably due to his personal agenda, being the only voice out of the choir, as Trotta explains. Trotta, 2017, p. 527

<sup>148</sup> Berenson, 1960, 03OCT1953, p. 42, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527

<sup>149</sup> Berenson, 1960, 07OCT1953, p. 42, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527

<sup>150</sup> Berenson, 1960, 03OCT1953, p. 42, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527

<sup>151</sup> Berenson, 1960, 03OCT1953, p. 42, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527

<sup>152</sup> Berenson, 1960, 03OCT1953, p. 42, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527

He argued that the show failed to stress the importance of Lotto's works and their site-specificity, which he had emphasised himself:<sup>153</sup>

I should like to urge every single visitor not to forget the importance of Bergamo and its surroundings in relation to this show and not miss above all seeing Lotto's fascinating designs for the intarsia at Santa Maria Maggiore nor the delightful frescoes at Trescore and Credaro.<sup>154</sup>

Commenting on the display, he noted the absence of frames:

How different all this from seeing the whole of a master's surviving output, good, bad or indifferent, brought together in crowded rooms without the light and space necessary for their appreciation and even deprived of their raiment [...] (as for me, any frame is better than no frame). Indeed in the Middle Ages and Renaissance the frame was as highly considered and cost as much as the painting itself. Now there is a mania for exhibiting pictures, as the Bellinis four years ago, like corpses wrapped in grave cloths, or as in the Lotto exhibition, shivering, naked against chilly grey backgrounds.<sup>155</sup>

As mentioned above, the exhibition prompted an invitation to Berenson to re-edit his monograph on Lotto for Electa. Published sixty years after the first edition, the 1955 Lotto differs from the previous ones in several respects, but its innovative 'psychological method' is maintained.<sup>156</sup> The most significant change is that the older Berenson gave up on the idea of his younger self to propose Alvise Vivarini as Lotto's master; in general, he appears to have lost his interest in the 'embryonic and puerile phases in the career of an artist'.<sup>157</sup> He is on the other hand even more aware of Lotto's modernity, especially as far

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<sup>153</sup> Trotta, 2017, p. 527. As shall be seen in chapter 5, frescoes were instead included in the 1950 exhibition organised by Longhi on the Bolognese Trecento, posing a rather complicated ethical question about the movability of fresco painting.

<sup>154</sup> Berenson, 1960, 08OCT1953, pp. 42-3, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527

<sup>155</sup> Berenson, 1960, 10OCT1953, pp. 42-3, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527; Strehlke, 2013, p. 66. It is not clear whether Berenson's Lottos retain their original frames, but from pictures of other rooms at I Tatti, it seems that most pieces in Berenson's collection were at least framed.

<sup>156</sup> See Facchinetti, 2019, p. 424

<sup>157</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. X

as portraits are concerned, which he dares to call 'Psychological snapshots'.<sup>158</sup> According to Luisa Vertova, who assisted Berenson during the redaction of the last edition, the greatest practical change was that the methodological section was substituted by an autobiographical preface.<sup>159</sup> As an 'extrovert and fundamentally autobiographic writer', even his innovative approach to scientific connoisseurship was very personal, which further explains his ease in including in the text and the illustrations both Lotto paintings from his personal collection.<sup>160</sup>

Berenson's approach owes much to the subjective aestheticism of Pater and others.<sup>161</sup> In the *Lotto*, he confesses:

I happen to have a temperament which inclines me to forgive much to an artist like Lotto. In thinking of him, I find it difficult to dwell upon his faults: my composite visual image tends to be an image of his qualities only. This may, however, be not an unmixed evil. [...] but a sympathy kept under the control of reason has a penetrating power of its own, and leads to discoveries that no coldly scientific analysis will disclose.<sup>162</sup>

As he admitted in 1955, sixty years after the first edition: 'Lotto [is] my favourite painter, for his appealing to me privately [...] Believing that what appealed to me, no matter how privately, could not fail to appeal to others as well, if only I could bring it to their attention, I was soon writing about him'.<sup>163</sup> Yet, he felt his personal feelings did not undermine his integrity as a scholar: 'I am as proud of nothing in my past as of the fact that, although I was adoring him, in my book about the Venetian painters I only mentioned him briefly and never so lost my

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<sup>158</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. XIII. Facchinetti, 2019, p. 424. [i](#)

<sup>159</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 51

<sup>160</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 50

<sup>161</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 54 ; C. Wedepohl, 'Bernard Berenson and Aby Warburg : absolute opposites' in *Bernard Berenson : formation and heritage*, J. Connors, L. Waldman (eds.), Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2014, pp. 143-172, p.158

<sup>162</sup> Berenson, 1895, pp. 308-9

<sup>163</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. IX



sense of values as to equate him with Titian or Tintoretto'.<sup>164</sup> In the introduction of 1955 he wrote:

Not that I ever took him for a rival or equal of his great contemporaries Giorgione and Titian, or a superior to their galaxy of followers, Palma il Vecchio, for instance. Absorption in his work did not hypnotise me into an undue estimate of his value and place in the realm of art. Indeed, in a little book on the Venetian Painters that I published at the same time, he is given few words.<sup>165</sup> But as illustrator he was more expressive, more psychological, more interpretative, more attentive to what was peculiar in situation and individual in personality than other Italian painters of his day.<sup>166</sup>

Thus, the last edition of *Lotto* is indeed a receptacle of Berenson's memories and reflections on his personal relationship with his favourite painter, as well as with the study of Connoisseurship, all awakened by the Lotto exhibition of 1953. Whilst visiting its rooms, 'comparing one picture to the other, looking at the details of Lotto's enchanting genre scenes and landscapes' the critic was 'continually reminded of his early days when he first fell in love with this quaintly sensitive painter and decided to study him thoroughly'.<sup>167</sup> Looking back at his interest in Lotto, the old Berenson admitted his personal predilection for the painting as a passionate young man, with a fervour similar to that of a pilgrim.<sup>168</sup> As he wrote in his diary:

As a youngster of twenty-two I approached a work of art with reverent receptivity, with longing to feel it, appreciate it and understand it. As for Lotto, I went on Pilgrimage after pilgrimage with an almost medieval

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<sup>164</sup> B. Berenson, *The passionate sightseer: from the diaries 1947 to 1956*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1960, p. 42, entry for 12OCT1953

<sup>165</sup> The 'Venetian Painters' came out for the first time in 1894, the MS of the Lotto was sent to the publisher on December 11, 1893. Strehlke, 2013, p. 58

<sup>166</sup> Berenson, 1955, p. IX

<sup>167</sup> Berenson, 1960, p. 42, entry for 07OCT1953, cited in Trotta, 2017, p. 527. These memories were first crystallised in the critic's diary and later recollected in the preface of the new Lotto edition.

<sup>168</sup> Berenson, 1960, p. 42, entry for 07OCT1953 and p. 48, entry for 12OCT1953; see also Strehlke, 2013, p. 66

pilgrim's difficulties anywhere and everywhere, no matter what season or weather, to see a picture in a church of remote and difficult access.<sup>169</sup>

Translating into words the process of building a mnemonic image of an artist's style, as he first illustrated through the *Lotto*, Berenson recollected:

On the way I got more eager, zestful, got into a state of grace toward the picture I was hoping to see. As I left it I was filled with its image and had the leisure to absorb it, to make it unforgettably my own. After three or four years of living with and for Lotto I had him in my memory as no bringing together of all his output under one roof could have done, for all the while I was unconsciously assimilating, and as unconsciously eliminating and relating and producing the composite image that ends appearing when I pronounce the name 'Lotto'. I had few reproductions nor did I need them, I remembered and recalled the pictures so vividly.<sup>170</sup>

In light of Berenson's memories, one could think of the Lotto paintings at *Tatti*, the *Crucifixion*, but especially the *Virgin and Child with Saint Francis*, as a kind of pilgrim souvenirs. The same impression that he recounts from visiting the exhibition at the Palazzo Ducale in 1953, he may have had when seeing his own Lotto in his own house. By looking at it, he would be reminded of his youth, and at the same time, the composite image of Lotto, memorised thanks to many years of studying the artist's works, would be put to the test. For Berenson, 'A critic only has to contemplate, and contemplate again, until becoming the artwork itself', eventually enjoying the life enhancement that art can offer.<sup>171</sup> Bearing in mind the necessity for a connoisseur to be constantly looking at art, practising the skills of the mnemonic eye, the value of Berenson's personal collection can be better understood in relation to his profession. It can be argued that upon entering the critic's domestic life, paintings such as Lotto's *Virgin and Child with Saint Francis* became tools, which were at the disposal of the critic every day to sharpen his gaze and exercise his memory. By seeing one of his 'Lottos' on a daily basis, Berenson

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<sup>169</sup> Berenson, 1960, p. 42, entry for 08OCT1953

<sup>170</sup> Berenson, 1960, p. 42, entry for 08OCT1953

<sup>171</sup> Vertova, 2000, pp. 54, 56

in fact looked at it so much that he kept changing his mind about its attribution.

Besides being Berenson's favourite painter, Lotto had become a quasi-personification of his aesthetic concept of 'artistic personality', but also a souvenir of his own life, and a reminder of his choice to become a connoisseur.<sup>172</sup> According to Berenson's aesthetics, when contemplating a work of art, the connoisseur poses questions and receives answers that are difficult to translate into words, for they are elaborated through an 'almost temporary symbiosis', an 'identification between the subject examining the object examined'.<sup>173</sup> This could not be more true for the case of Lotto. With him, Berenson felt such an affinity in temperament, that he once stated: 'If I were an artist, I should be a great deal like Lotto.'<sup>174</sup>

Lotto, and implicitly the Lottos that Berenson owned himself, form the ideal example to illustrate Berenson's 'psychological' connoisseurship with its innovative focus on the artistic personality. As Luisa Vertova has noted, Berenson's concept of artistic personality, as expressed in the 'psychological study' that was his Lotto, was influenced by contemporary research and theories in the realm of psychology<sup>175</sup> – not so much Freudian psychology as the psychology of aesthetics, and the concepts of empathy and sympathy, understood as affective participation of the beholder, propagated by the work of William James in the 1890s.<sup>176</sup> Jeremy Melius has analysed the debts of Berenson's thoughts and terminology to the psychological studies of James, but also to the work of Vernon Lee, in relation to the concepts of 'habit' and 'personality'.<sup>177</sup> Melius discusses the way in which connoisseurs construct and study 'personhood', culminating at its extreme in the invention of 'artistic

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<sup>172</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 54

<sup>173</sup> Vertova, 2000, p. 56

<sup>174</sup> Vertova, 2000, pp. 48

<sup>175</sup> See Vertova, 2000. p. 51, but also Trotta, 2006, p. 15, and Melius, 2011, p. 299

<sup>176</sup> Vertova, 2000. p. 52. On Berenson and pragmatism, see C. O. O'Donnell, 'Berensonian Formalism and Pragmatist Perception' in *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, vol. 62, n.2, 2017, pp. 283-305

<sup>177</sup> Melius, 2011, p. 298

personalities [...] on the evidence of the eye alone.<sup>178</sup> Berenson was among the most prolific creators of such fictive personalities, and he often used paintings from his personal collection to support their creation, further showing the collection's status as a tool in the practice of connoisseurship.<sup>179</sup> Such is the case of a *Virgin and Child in a Landscape* attributed to the so-called 'Master of the Castello Nativity' (Fig. 6), recorded as hanging in the stairs leading to the first floor at I Tatti.<sup>180</sup> The panel, badly repainted, was purchased by Berenson from Arnaldo Corsi, an engineer, photographer, collector, and dealer, who lived in Florence, before 1910.<sup>181</sup> As the note on the back of a photograph in the photo archive suggests, Berenson had already baptised the anonymous painter to whom he attributed the picture as 'Master of the Castello Nativity'.<sup>182</sup> But it was not until 1913 that Berenson published the painting with the intention of arguing for the existence of that very master.<sup>183</sup> As Berenson wrote, the master was a Florentine painter, a 'temporary designation for an artistic personality descended from Fra' Angelico, and standing between Fra' Filippo and Baldovinetti. Active probably throughout entire third quarter of the fifteenth century'.<sup>184</sup>

Berenson also named other pictures he knew that could constitute the painter's oeuvre, stating that 'as the personality of the painter of this panel has never yet been integrated, a very brief account of him may not be out of place here':<sup>185</sup>

Undoubtedly by the same hand and in the same phase are three other "Nativities", if anything, more fascinatingly poetical, of finer colour and

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<sup>178</sup> Melius, 2011, p. 290

<sup>179</sup> See P. Zambrano, 'Bernard Berenson e l'Amico di Sandro' in *Amico di Sandro*, P. Zambrano (ed.), Milan, Electa, 2006, pp. 9 - 70; Like in the already mentioned case of Longhi and the attribution of the ex-Gavotti apostles, further explored in chapter 5.

<sup>180</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 401

<sup>181</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 403

<sup>182</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 403

<sup>183</sup> Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 403 and Bernard Berenson, *Catalogue of a Collection of Paintings and Some Art Objects*, v. 1, Italian Paintings, 1913

<sup>184</sup> Berenson, 1913, p.17

<sup>185</sup> Berenson, 1913, p. 18

more monumental aspect than this one. One belonged, in the summer of 1909, to the late Mr. Lesser, the well known Bond Street dealer. The other two are in the collections of the late Mr. Brinsley Marlay (now in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge), and of Lord Brownlow.<sup>186</sup>

After mentioning two more Madonnas he be included in the list, Berenson adds the painting that will give the anonymous master his conventional name:

Connected in colour with the last panel is yet another "Nativity" in the Royal Villa of Castello near Florence. Although probably the latest in date, it is reminiscent of all the other pictures already mentioned, and that is the principal reason for calling the painter after it, the "Master of the Castello Nativity".<sup>187</sup>

Berenson then proceeds to describe the artistic personality of the painter:

Apart from characteristics of expression and general effect which escape description, the most recognisable traits of our painter are a peculiar curve to the cut of the eyes and a singularly ill-formed hand, the fingers looking as if they had been slit out in limp stuff of some sort. The angels in the earlier Louvre picture furnish instances.<sup>188</sup>

Whilst re-constructing this painter's personality, Berenson makes use of a painting in his own collection to support his arguments:

To complete the list of the paintings of this artist thus far known, one may add a half length Madonna with the Child holding a bird, in the University Gallery at Gottingen (No. 70), and a Madonna in the Berenson Collection at Florence.<sup>189</sup>

Starting with the stories of the Lotto-and-a-half from his collection at I Tatti, this chapter has explored the relationship between Bernard Berenson and the Lorenzo Lotto, whose paintings virtually became a synonym of the critic's own

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<sup>186</sup> Berenson, 1913, p. 18

<sup>187</sup> Berenson, 1913, p. 18

<sup>188</sup> Berenson, 1913, p. 18

<sup>189</sup> Berenson, 1913, p. 18

approach to Connoisseurship, which was personal and aesthetic as well as psychological, focussing on the study of artistic personalities. This chapter has illustrated how Berenson exercised his connoisseurship directly on works from his own collection, but also how these were used as tools for his profession, as in the case of the invented Master of the Castello Nativity. The following chapter, by contrast, will delve further into the role of works owned by scholar collectors as tools for Connoisseurship, discussing a case involving Kenneth Clark.

# Chapter 2 - Illustrations



◀ *Fig. 1:* Bernard Berenson at the entrance of the Lorenzo Lotto Exhibition, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 1953



*Fig. 2:* Bernard Berenson and Vittorio Cini at the Lorenzo Lotto Exhibition, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 1953 ▶





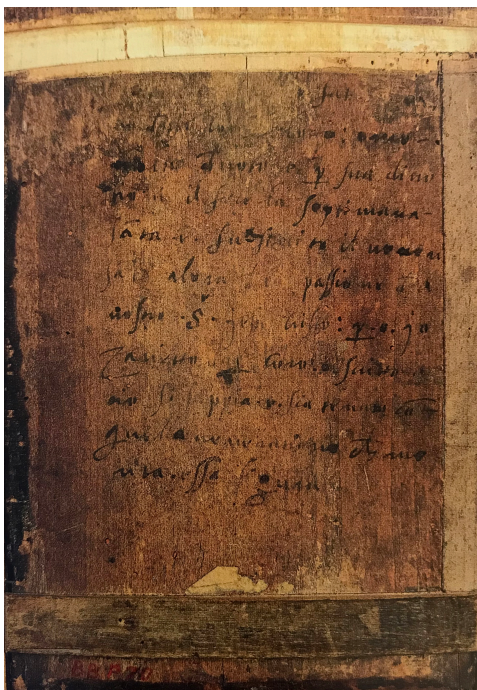
◀ *Fig. 3: Bernard Berenson, Niky Mariano, and Vittorio Cini exiting the Lorenzo Lotto Exhibition, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 1953*

*Fig. 4: Tonino Novaero, Virgin and Child with Saint Francis of Assisi and Jerome (?), 1526-30, oil on panel, 75.7 cm x 58 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano* ▶





◀ Fig. 5: Lorenzo Lotto, *Crucifixion with the Arma Christi*, 1544, oil on panel, 24.4 cm x 17.3 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano







Pl. 59

◀ *Fig. 6: Attributed to Master of the Castello Nativity, Virgin and Child in a Landscape, 1445-1450, tempera on panel, 64.4 cm x 41cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano*

# Part I - Chapter 3:

## Kenneth Clark's Two Round Portraits of Valerio and Elio Belli

This chapter investigates the engagement between Kenneth Clark and two small round paintings portraying the sixteenth-century artist Valerio Belli and his son Elio, that were once part of the scholar's personal collection (Fig. 1). The case study will offer a glimpse of how Clark acted as a collector, highlighting some distinctive traits in the *modus operandi* of an art historian-collector. In particular, in accordance with the theme of this first part, this chapter will illustrate the ability of scholar-collectors to identify 'sleeping' objects, buying them for themselves, and eventually working on them, interpreting the act of collecting as an exercise in connoisseurship.<sup>1</sup> Drawing on the discovery of an unpublished text that reports in detail Clark's own research on the paintings, this chapter will at once shed new light on these portraits, adding a small piece to their provenance mosaic, and illustrate how Clark actively engaged with them by studying them in detail.<sup>2</sup> As will be further explored, once Clark bought the paintings, he argued for their attribution in writing and worked towards making their authorship accepted by the scholarly community, also through loans to public exhibitions. From the moment the historical trajectory of these portraits of unusual format intersected with the trajectory of Clark, their status as collectables and their value changed drastically, and they were lifted from the oblivion that they had fallen into.

One of the two small round portraits of a man in profile can be spotted in a photograph of Upper Terrace House's 'long panelled room' (Fig. 2), featured in the 1947 House & Garden article on Clark's home, already mentioned in

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<sup>1</sup> 'Sleepers' are here intended as objects whose market value is not yet revealed, usually because of misattribution, and therefore 'sleeping'. A. L. Bundle, *The Sale of Misattributed Artworks and Antiques at Auction*, Northampton, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2016, pp. 7-8

<sup>2</sup> K. Clark, *Two Medallions of the Belli Family*, unpublished and undated typewritten article, TGA 8812.2.2.106

Chapter 1.<sup>3</sup> The likeness is mounted in a longitudinal rectangular frame, its three-dimensionality completely lost, and placed on top of a wooden book case, among two twelfth-century illuminations and two terracottas by the French eighteenth-century artist Marin. Commenting upon the juxtaposition of objects of different chronology and material, which pervaded the whole collection display, Clark wrote:

I confess that, even after considerable experience in public and private collections, I never know what works are going to make friends until I have tried them together - I should not have supposed that two twelfth-century illuminated pages would have remained for long on the same piece of furniture as two terra cottas by Marin and a Raphael portrait miniature ; perhaps it is simply the colour of the books which acts as a unifying medium.<sup>4</sup>

The 'Raphael portrait miniature' mentioned here is actually a portrait of a remarkable three-dimensional nature - a small tondo that decorates the inner side of a wooden box-lid.<sup>5</sup> Portrayed in profile, set against a dark background, is a middle aged man. The reverse of the painting, which constitutes the outer surface of the box-lid, is soberly decorated with concentric round mouldings.<sup>6</sup> At the centre, a trace of the now lost lid handle is still clearly visible, and all around it, an inscription with capital letters

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<sup>3</sup> K. Clark, 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947, pp. 26-29

<sup>4</sup> Clark, 1947, p. 28

<sup>5</sup> Royal Academy of Arts, *Exhibition of Italian art 1200-1900*, 4th Edition under revision, London, Royal Academy of Arts, 1930, p. 408 ; Lord Balmiel, K. Clark (eds.), *A commemorative catalogue of the exhibition of Italian art held in the galleries of the Royal Academy, Burlington House, London, January-March 1930*, London, Oxford University Press, 1931, p. 134, cat. n. 388; J. A. Gere, N. Turner, *Drawings by Raphael from the Royal Library, the Ashmolean, the British Museum, Chatsworth and other English Collections*, London, 1983, pp. 174-5 ; C. Gardner von Teuffel, 'Raphael's Portrait of Valerio Belli: Some New Evidence' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 129, n. 1015, October 1987, pp. 663-666, p. 664; Sotheby's New York, 27 January 2016 Sale *The Collection of A. Alfred Taubman: Old Masters New York*, Lot 8, <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2016/old-masters-collection-a-alfred-taubman-n09458/lot.8.html> (Subsequently cited as Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016)

<sup>6</sup> Gardner von Teuffel, 1987, p. 664; J. Shearman, 'Ritratto di Valerio Belli' in *Valerio Belli Vicentino, circa 1468-1546*, Vicenza, Neri Pozza, 2000, p. 269; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

reads in latin: 'RAFAEL URBINATES PINXIT ROM(E) 1517'.<sup>7</sup> Two other inscriptions, in a cursive hand, decorate the lid. The top one reads: 'Facto dell'an(n)o 1517 in Roma p(er) Rafelo Urbinate'.<sup>8</sup> The bottom one, less legible reads: '(n)acque (a)ddí 1471 [?] d'anni 46'.<sup>9</sup> This latter inscription was revealed only recently, probably after a cleaning of the surface, and was not known to Clark.<sup>10</sup> As is clear from these inscriptions, the portrait is likely to have been executed by Raphael in Rome, in 1517. The identity of the sitter, however, had been lost, and was recovered by Clark, who studied the object following its purchase for his private collection. What is not visible in the photograph of Upper Terrace House, is that the tondo came with a companion, also bought by Clark, which has apparently never been reproduced in a publication.<sup>11</sup> It is portrait of another man, in the same wooden-box format. The rear, which shows traces of a handle too, bears an inscription that reads 'ALIVS BELLV D.PH. M. VALERII F.', accompanied by the date '1572'. Clark (and others after him) argued that these two portraits probably formed

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<sup>7</sup> Teuffel, 1987, p. 664; J. Shearman, 'Ritratto di Valerio Belli' in *Valerio Belli Vicentino, circa 1468-1546*, Vicenza, Neri Pozza, 2000, p. 269; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>8</sup> Gardner von Teuffel, 1987, p. 664

<sup>9</sup> Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>10</sup> The inscription is reported only in the catalogue of Sotheby's sale of the Alfred Taubman collection in 2016, albeit not commented upon. An alternative reading could be: *nacque A(nno) D(omini) 1471, età anni 46*. I must thank Dr Stefan Bauer for this suggestion.

<sup>11</sup> By the time the picture was taken, it is likely that the companion had already been stolen from Clark's collection. See Gardner von Teuffel, 1987, p. 665

bottom and lid of a closed wooden box, which explains why they were kept together for so long.<sup>12</sup>

In his autobiography, Clark records that in 1928, he:

Bought two little round portraits by different artists, one of which I felt convinced was by Raphael. [...] It is the portrait of his friend, Valerio Belli, the famous engraver of Crystal; and the other portrait is of his son, Elio Belli, by Fasolo. I discovered the confirmatory documents about a year after buying them.<sup>13</sup>

On 15 March 1929, writing to Bernard Berenson, he stated: 'I have written an article on my small medallion, because whether it is by Raphael or not, it & the documents connected with it are undoubtedly of interest to students.'<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The painting's inscription has first been investigated by Clark, in his unpublished study. Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3. Because the object with Elio's portrait has disappeared, and there is no reproduction available, scholars have not known about the inscription, which would have helped reconstructing the chronology and the aspect of the box. Gardner von Teuffel argued that the initial design of the 'Raphael' portrait, was indeed a box, with the portrait inside the lid. Later, the other portrait was added at the bottom. According to Shearman, instead, the initial portrait would have been at the bottom, and the second added later as a lid. Clark's description of the second portrait in this unpublished source, suggests two hypotheses. The first is that the portraits of Valerio and that of Elio were made as two different boxes, and maybe later they were joined as one. Alternatively, it could be that Valerio's portrait had been designed as the lid of the box, and when Elio had his own portrait made, he moved his father's likeness at the bottom of the box, removing the handle and using his own portrait as the new lid. Gardner von Teuffel, 1987, p. 664; Shearman, 2000, p. 269; Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106. This latter hypothesis would be supported by Antonio Magrini, in his comprehensive study on the painter Antonio Fasolo, where he cites a passage from a manuscript in the Marciana Library entitled 'Notizie della Famiglia Gualdo' that lists the works of art in the Gualdo collection. There, our portraits are described as 'a small portrait on board of Elio physician son of Valerio Belli closed in a gilded round, that closes a small box, in which there was the portrait of Valerio himself, made by Raphael'. Tr: 'un ritrattino in tavola di Elio medico figlio di Valerio Belli chiuso in un tondello dorato, che si chiudeva in un bossolo, nel quale vi avea il ritratto dello stesso Valerio, fatto da Raffaello', cited in Magrini Antonio, *Cenni storico-critici sulla vita e sulle opere di Giovanni Antonio Fasolo, pittore vicentino*, Venezia, Antonelli, 1851, p. 47. A copy of this publication was donated to the Royal Academy Library in 1851 by a friend of the author, but it is not cited in Clark's article.

<sup>13</sup> K. Clark, *Another Part of the Wood, A Self Portrait*, London, 1974, p. 195

<sup>14</sup> The earliest dated record in which Clark speaks about our portraits is a Letter from Clark to Berenson, 15MAR1929 in R. Cumming, *My Dear BB: the Letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2015, p. 45

The 'article' mentioned by Clark was never published, but its content was summarised by him in the short entry written by him for the 'Raphael' portrait, when it was lent to the 1930 exhibition *Italian Art 1200-1900* at the Royal Academy, where he reported what he had discovered in the documents.<sup>15</sup> The type script of this unpublished article is held at the Tate Archive; it is a source hitherto unknown to the literature on the paintings, and it accounts for the circumstances of their purchase.<sup>16</sup> The article is entitled 'Two medallions of the Belli Family', and is unfortunately undated; it must precede March 1929, when the article was mentioned by Clark to Berenson.<sup>17</sup> At the very beginning of the typeset essay, Clark recounts when he was shown both paintings. He writes that 'The two medallion portraits illustrated on plates 1 and 2 were shown to me last autumn'.<sup>18</sup> Then he goes on to say that 'Nothing whatsoever was known of them', preparing the reader to reward him as the detective who discovered the identity of his objects.<sup>19</sup> He adds, rather tantalisingly: 'they came from...', without finishing the sentence.<sup>20</sup> However, an annotation added in Clark's own handwriting, in red cursive, reveals the portraits' provenance (Fig. 5). The handwritten note reads: 'I believe a house near Brighton. I bought them from Mr Duits, who wouldn't give me the address'.<sup>21</sup> Hence, the two portraits entered Clark's collection through Mr Duits, a dealer with shops both in Amsterdam and London, who was probably mediating on behalf of a private

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<sup>15</sup> Balniel, K. Clark (eds.), *A commemorative catalogue of the exhibition of Italian art held in the galleries of the Royal Academy, Burlington House, London, January-March 1930*, London, Oxford University Press, 1931, p. 134, cat. n. 388

<sup>16</sup> K. Clark, *Two Medallions of the Belli Family*, unpublished and undated type-written article, TGA 8812.2.2.106

<sup>17</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106

<sup>18</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 1. The plates were not attached to the document, nor they seem to be in the archive at all

<sup>19</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 1

<sup>20</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 1

<sup>21</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 1. The firm Duits was established in Dordrecht in 1836. It moved to Amsterdam in 1875. They opened a London branch in 1920, where Charles Duits worked with his brother William Henry, his son, Clifford and his grandson Graham. Following the opening the gallery specialised more and more in the dealing of Old Masters, especially Dutch and Flemish works. The gallery in Amsterdam closed in 1938, whereas that in London was closed in 1985. The Frick Collection, Archives Directory for the History of Collecting in America, <http://research.frick.org/directoryweb/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=6008>.



collection in Brighton, in the autumn of the year before the essay was written, possibly 1928.

This archival document is an important source to reconstruct the research that Clark conducted soon after buying the paintings, giving an insight into the process of his rediscovery of the objects' identity and his approach to the question of attribution. At the time of their purchase, in fact, Clark only knew that the sitter of one of the tondos was 'ALIVS BELLV D.PH. M. VALERII F.', and that the author of the other one was said to be Raphael, as stated in the inscriptions on the objects themselves, which could be genuine or not.<sup>22</sup> The text will be analysed here in detail for the first time, to shed light on Clark's application of Connoisseurship, which he tested on objects from his own collection. As revealed by his letter to Berenson, the article, although it was not published in the end, was meant to be of interest to students.<sup>23</sup> It was written as a didactic text 'for students', that would illustrate how to study a painting through connoisseurship. The text, however, is an illustrative case study, rather than a treatise on method, following the long tradition of Connoisseurs' literature on their own trade, as in the case of Berenson's *Lotto*, analysed in the previous chapter.<sup>24</sup>

The article opens with a description of the measurements and materials of the objects, with a few remarks on their condition: 'They were entirely free from repaint, but the paint of that illustrated in plate 1 [Valerio?] had been rubbed away in several places, noticeably in the background to the left of the figure. A few small holes had been stopped with wax'.<sup>25</sup> Observing that 'on the back of each medallion was the remains of a small handle and the front

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<sup>22</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Clark to Berenson, 15MAR1929 in Cumming, 2015, p. 45

<sup>24</sup> retrieve note from Lotto

<sup>25</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 1

edges were bevelled', Clark concluded that the two portraits 'had been used as lids to a box'.<sup>26</sup>

Clark then turns to stylistic analysis and dating, the core of the connoisseurship quest. Stating that the portrait in plate one is recognisable as from the Roman-Florentine school, he notes that 'the décolleté cut of the coat nor the short beard was fashionable much before 1510, and after 1525 beards in Rome began to be longer, following the Spanish fashion'.<sup>27</sup> As for the other portrait, Clark writes that it was visibly a later work and that 'the style of collar and cut of beard are familiar to us from portraits of the octogenarian Titian [...] in the 1570's'.<sup>28</sup> He then states that 'the lumpy form and bricky colour of our medallion did not so much suggest Venice as one of the Venetic provinces - Brescia, for example'.<sup>29</sup>

Next, Clark jumps from 'the evidence on the pictures themselves' to 'an old attribution', saying that the inscriptions on the back of the two medallions: '1572' for plate two, and 'RAFAEL URBINATES PINXIT ROMA 1517' for plate one, 'the suspicious words [...] in letters that suggested the seventeenth century'.<sup>30</sup> This is followed by a didactic digression on the trickiness of Raphael attributions, addressed to both experts and *dilettanti* - the suggested primary readership, as stated in the letter he sent to Berenson. He writes: 'The student of Italian painting need not to be told that an old attribution to Raphael means absolutely nothing. It is to be found on drawings and paintings of every date, from the fourteenth to the twentieth century, and of every school'.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 1. The nature of the object as a wooden box was actually suggested to Clark by some published archival sources, and accepted by later scholarship. Gere, Turner, 1983, pp. 174-5 ; Gardner von Teuffel, 'Raphael's Portrait of Valerio Belli: Some New Evidence' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 129, n. 1987, p. 664; Shearman J., 'Ritratto di Valerio Belli' in *Valerio Belli Vicentino, circa 1468-1546*, Vicenza, Neri Pozza, 2000, p. 269; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>27</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 1

<sup>28</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 1,2

<sup>29</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 2

<sup>30</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 2

<sup>31</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 2, 3

The Raphael attribution was inscribed on the object, hence known to Clark when he was offered the paintings by Duits. Before the purchase, however, the object had never been published, meaning that the attribution had never been discussed by Raphael experts.<sup>32</sup> As transpires from the text in the archive, Clark was aware of the problems of defending a Raphael attribution, especially with regards to an unpublished picture:

There was no doubt that the medallion in question had a number of very Raphaellesque qualities. It combined an antique purity of outline with an exquisite atmosphere. It was painted with an extraordinary freedom of breadth, and with an *impasto* which was almost reckless on so small a scale, yet the drawing was so perfect as to preserve an effect of the utmost refinement, moreover the colour was peculiarly Raphaellesque - the light green-blue background showing off the fresh pinks of the face. Finally the handling of the hair and modelling of the neck were - in so far as small things can be compared with large - very close to the heads in the *Stanza* frescoes.<sup>33</sup>

So, both the quality and the technique of the painting seemed to support at least a Raphaellesque connection. But was it by the hand of the master? Had it at least been designed by him? No work by Raphael and his contemporaries matched the unusual format of the two portraits, nor did Clark know anything about the commissioning of the work, and this, as he saw it, was a problem when defending the attribution.<sup>34</sup> At this point, Clark takes the opportunity to criticise the badly practised connoisseurship of his time, writing: 'The attribution of small works to great names has become too frequent', and he ironically remarks that 'to give one of the smallest of paintings to one of the greatest of names was rather preposterous'.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The lot entry for the Taubman sale of 2016 records that the object was shown in an exhibition at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1927. Yet, consulting the referenced exhibition catalogue, the author did not find any record of it, and it is hence not possible to determine whether it was lent by Clark already, suggesting an even earlier purchase. Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>33</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3

<sup>34</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3

<sup>35</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3

He then looks for evidences outside of what the objects themselves could tell him, starting by considering whose likenesses the two medallions could represent, something which he found 'unexpectedly easy'.<sup>36</sup> He argues that: 'The subject of so small a painting could hardly be a grand person, more probably he was a friend of the painter, perhaps a fellow artist'.<sup>37</sup> This supposition led him to consult 'Mr. G.F. Hill's *Portrait Medals of Italian Artists of the Renaissance*', an iconographic reference book where he found two very similar portraits of the man pictured in the first medallion.<sup>38</sup> It is likely that the choice to look at portrait medals was inspired by the objects' peculiar format. The matching portraits found by Clark depict the artist Valerio Belli (1468-1546), a famous gem-cutter from Vicenza, reproduced in plate three of Clark's article.<sup>39</sup> He compares those to the image of Belli in the 1568 edition of Vasari's *vite*.<sup>40</sup> As a further confirmation, he reports the inscription on the second medallion portrait: 'ALIVS BELLV D.PH. M. VALERII F.', which identifies the man portrayed as Valerio's eldest son, Elio, Doctor of Philosophy and medicine in Vicenza, making the relationship between the two portraits clearer.<sup>41</sup>

At this point Clark inserts a short biography of Valerio Belli:

Valerio Belli was born in 1468 in Vicenza\*. He was brought up as an engraver of gems, and seems to have spent some of his youth in forging - or, at least, imitating antique coins. Naturally he went to Rome ; when we

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<sup>36</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3

<sup>37</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3

<sup>38</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.106, p.3. G. F. Hill, *Portrait medals of Italian artists of the renaissance*, London, P. L. Warner, publisher to the Medici Society, 1912, pl. XXIII, n. 24, 25

<sup>39</sup> The plates are not included in the folder that contains the document, so it has been impossible for now to see them. On Valerio Belli, see Valerio Belli, see Burns (ed.), 2000 and Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>40</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3

<sup>41</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 3. Since the inscription mentioned Elio, it is likely that Clark started by looking at portraits of the Belli family and was struck by Valerio's. But this shows even more the didactic purpose of the text, a sort of practical manual into studying an object.

do not know, but it must have been some time before 1520 for by that time he was famous as a cutter of crystal, and so friendly with Michel Angelo as to have drawn from him the promise of some designs. He remained in Rome for many years, a passionate student and collector of the antique and, apparently, a favourite with most distinguished men in Rome. In 1530 he returned to his native town of Vicenza [...] where he finally settled in 1541, he lived honourably surrounded by a collection of antiques, paintings and designs by great masters, so that his house, says Vasari, was full of such things and a marvel. He died in July, 1546.<sup>42</sup>

As further confirmed by the literature on Belli, the artist had moved to Rome by at least 1520, where he found the favour with several popes, including Leo X, and Clement VII, his main patrons.<sup>43</sup> In Rome, he became part of the humanist and antiquarian circle of Michelangelo and Pietro Bembo, and it was probably through this circle that he met Raphael.<sup>44</sup> In his summary, Clark emphasises that Belli went to Rome before Raphael's death in 1520, citing the relatively recent discovery, based on archival findings, that Belli and Raphael were acquainted, as published by Zorzi in *L'Arte* in 1920.<sup>45</sup> Drawing from Zorzi's article, Clark expands on Belli's travels across the Italian peninsula, reporting that Francisco de Hollanda, in his fourth dialogue on painting, refers to Valerio Belli as a friend of his, showing that de Hollanda had met Belli prior to the latter's return to Vicenza in 1534, confirming Zorzi's hypothesis of a personal friendship between Raphael and Belli.<sup>46</sup> This detail in Clark's article will be later used to corroborate the hypothesis behind the portrait's commission.

Clark next tries to track down to whom the medallions may have passed after his death:

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<sup>42</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 4, 5

<sup>43</sup> Burns, 2000, p.85 ; Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 4, 5 ; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>44</sup> Burns, 2000, p.85 ; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>45</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 3,4 ; Zorzi, *L'Arte*, n. XXXIII, 1920, p. 181. The article is also used by the later literature on the object, reporting from Balniel, Clark, 1931, p. 134. Gere, Turner, 1983, pp.174-5; Gardner von Teuffel, 1987, p. 664; Shearman, 2000, p. 269; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>46</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 5

In his will Valerio leaves his sculptures, coins and drawings to his illegitimate son Marcantonio, but all the other possessions to Elio. We know that Parmigianino's famous picture *Lo Specchio* passed to Elio, and we may safely assume that he inherited all the paintings in his father's collection. Amongst these was our medallion.<sup>47</sup>

Clark argues that the painting of Elio was created as a consequence of the high esteem in which Elio held his father's portrait, which he inherited, arguing that the date 1572 written on the back could be acceptable on the basis of the fashion and the age of the sitter.<sup>48</sup> Clark points out that, following Elio's death in 1576, 'though we know the names and dates of his descendants for the next hundred years, we have no further clue to the fate of his possessions.'<sup>49</sup> But Clark's investigation did not stop there.

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<sup>47</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 5. Parmigianino's picture is the self-portrait now in Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum. Clark's source is once again Zorzi's article of 1920, who, in 1915, had written another article on how most of Belli's collection and his studio possessions, passed on to his natural son Marc'Antonio, was then sold for 470 ducats to Cristoforo Madruzzo, cardinal of Trento, through the mediation of Ludovico Chiericati. See G. Zorzi, 'Come lo "studio" di V. B. trasmigrò, a Trento' in *L'Arte*, XVIII, 1915, pp. 253-257; I. Favaretto, *Arte antica e cultura antiquaria nelle collezioni venete al tempo della Serenissima*, Roma, L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1990, p. 117

<sup>48</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 6

<sup>49</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p.6. Later scholarship reconstructed the objects' provenance almost entirely, drawing on several archival sources such as inventories and last wills. The portraits were inherited by Elio's son, who bequeathed them to his sister in 1598. See Inventory of Valerio Belli, the Younger, December 18, 1598 [ASVi, Galeazzo Pilati, b. 1968], cited in John Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources 1483-1602*, London and New Haven, 2003, vol. III, p. 1427, no. 1598/8. Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016. Afterwards they entered the famous Vicenza collection of Girolamo Gualdo, a friend of Belli, part of the same humanist circles in Vicenza and Rome, where the objects were recorded in an inventory dating 1645. See Girolamo Gualdo, the Younger, *Raccolta delle iscrizioni così antiche come moderne, quadri, pitture [etc.] che serve anco per inventario* (December 27, 1643, BMarc Ms Ital.iv.133 [5102] fol. 23, cited in Shearman, 2003, p. 313; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016. The two tondos were later recorded in 1704 in Venice, in the collection of Giorgio Bregonzi. Linda Borean, studying the dispersal of the Bregonzi collection, has then reconstructed the later provenance of the paintings. The two portraits were left to a confraternity, sold to a lottery in 1712, and then re-acquired by a Bregonzi family member, Emilia, and her husband Bernardo Trevisan. See L. Borean, 'Nel '700 una Doppia Lotteria Polverizza una Collezione: e Un Raffaello è a New York' in *Venezialtrove*, n. 1, 2002, pp. 98-9, 109; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016. Nothing more is known about the portraits, until they entered the collection of Clark. And this thesis, for the first time, has recovered a small missing piece: once in a private collection in Brighton, the portraits passed through the hands of the dealer Duits, who offered them to Clark, as recorded in Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 1

Before continuing with the revelation of the main piece of evidence that he discovered, the *raison d'être* of the entire article, Clark pauses for a moment to reflect on the limits of connoisseurship. Showing a rather positivistic attitude towards attribution-making, which, as seen already, was not not uncommon in Berenson either, he writes:<sup>50</sup>

These facts concerning the life and character of Valerio Belli made it not wholly impossible that our first medallion was the work by Raphael. But even so this attribution still rested chiefly on the quality of the painting (\*I must not fail to mention that Dr Oskar Fischel who kindly looked at the medallion before anything was known of its history, gave it to Raphael on quality alone), and quality, though actually a factor of the greatest importance in the attribution of pictures, is a factor which cannot be proved.<sup>51</sup>

Finally Clark reveals his main discovery, which will give more credit, as he argues, to the Raphael attribution:

Fortunately it is now possible to give more definitive evidence. In course of Valerio's life there are several references to Girolamo Gualdo. [...] in Valerio's will Gualdo is mentioned as the first of his executors. [...] and was known as a collector [...] and [...] was a connoisseur at the court of Leo X. By the seventeenth century the Gualdo Collection at Vicenza was famous and several descriptions survived.<sup>52</sup>

Once Clark started researching into the descriptions of the Gualdo collection, he found two sources that mentioned the medallions. The first is a letter from Francesco Gualdo of Rimini to Nicolò Basilio, a painter from Sicily, where he describes the best paintings in the family collection, listing, as reported by Clark, 'two small round portraits, one of Valerio the gem-

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<sup>50</sup> Positivistic here is to be understood as influenced by the positivistic strand of thought, and characterised by a faith in the documentary evidence of history. L. Morozzi, 'Appunti su Herbert Horne, collezionista e studioso inglese a Firenze tra la fine dell'Ottocento e gli inizi del Novecento' in *L'Idea di Firenze : temi e interpretazioni nell'arte straniera dell'Ottocento*, Florence, Centro Di, 1989, p. 218

<sup>51</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 6

<sup>52</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 6



cutter, by the hand of Raphael of Urbino; one of Elio the Doctor, his son, by Giovanni Fasolo, a famous painter of their time'.<sup>53</sup>

The second source mentioned by Clark would be cited in all the future literature on the medallion, once he had referenced it in the catalogue of the above-mentioned 1930 Royal Academy Exhibition.<sup>54</sup> It is a passage from the catalogue of the collection of Girolamo Gualdo of 1650, a text also known as the 'Giardino di Chà Gualdo', kept in manuscript form at the Marciana Library in Venice, which was first published by Morsolin in 'Nuovo Archivio Veneto, 1894, vol.VIII, pt. 1, p.219' as Clark observes in a footnote.<sup>55</sup> The part of the text cited by Clark refers to the inventory section dedicated to Raphael (the inventory was arranged by the names of artists). It reads:

There lived in Rome at that time Valerio Belis the Vicentine, engraver of rare jewels: being a companion of his daughter, of whom he was fond, [Raphael] painted his portrait on a boxwood tondo, two palmi in circumference, where he put his name F.R (fecit Raphael), and this I find in my possession.<sup>56</sup>

Elio's portrait is mentioned as well, in the section on Antonio Fasolo, where it is described as 'a small panel portrait of Elio the doctor, son of Valerio Belli the gem-cutter, that combines itself like a box with that made of the afore mentioned Valerio by Raphael'.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Tr.: 'due ritrattini in due tondelli, l'uno di Valerio intagliatore, fatto per mano di Raffael d'Urbino; l'altro di Elio Medico, suo figlio, fatto da Giovanni Fasolo, pittore de suvi tempi chiari'. This letter was never cited in the published literature by Clark and all others who treated the medallions after him. Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 7

<sup>54</sup> Balniel, Clark, 1931, p. 408

<sup>55</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 7

<sup>56</sup> Girolamo Gualdo, the Younger, *Giardino di Chà Gualdo*, 1650, first published by Bernardo Morsolin, in 'Il Museo Gualdo in Vicenza' in *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, vol. VIII, 1894, pp. 219, 267, 338 .Original Italian: 'Viveva in Roma in quei tempi Valerio Belli Vicentino, intagliatore di gemme raro. Questo essendo suo compare per una figlia, che gli tenne, gli fece il suo ritratto in un tondo di bosso, di giro due palmi, dove pose il suo nome F.R., e di questo mi trovo possessore', tr. in Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016. Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 7-8.

<sup>57</sup> Tr.: 'un ritrattino in tavola d'Elio medico, figlio di Valerio Bellis intagliatore, che si unisce come un bossolo con quello fatto al suddetto Valerio da Raffaello'. Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 7-8

This newly re-discovered document reveals, for the first time, the reason behind the making of the object: a gift for the baptism of Raphael's daughter at which Raphael's friend (Belli) acted as the godfather. It also gives a clue as to the peculiar format of the paintings, which were part of a *bossolo*, a box.<sup>58</sup> Clark however, didactically reminds the reader that one should not to take every written word for granted, and highlights the importance of cross-referencing information found in documents with the direct analysis of the object. As he writes: 'we must ask ourselves two questions. First: are these necessarily identical with the 'due ritrattini' described by Don Basilio and Girolamo Gualdo? Second: were these two early connoisseurs correct in attributing their medallion of Valerio Belli to Raphael?'.<sup>59</sup>

Regarding the first question, he observes that the subject, the unusual size, the material, and their being part of a box suggest a close match. The only (but important) thing lacking is Raphael's signature, the 'F[ecit] R[aphael]' mentioned by both the 1643 and 1650 descriptions of the Gualdo collection. Clark, however, thinks this might once have been in a spot where there was a 'mysterious smudge to the left of our medallion'.<sup>60</sup> Consequently, Clark postulates that the medallions in his possession are either those described in the sources, or exact copies. He rapidly dismisses the second hypothesis, since copyists would not have reproduced the bevelling on the back of the portraits, indicating that the originals were the lids of boxes.<sup>61</sup> Clark adds that he has actually seen a copy of the Elio medallion, which was of a much lower quality.<sup>62</sup> Hence, he is convinced that they are 'the actual portraits so much esteemed by Girolamo Gualdo'.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> As also later scholarship has remarked, the *Giardino* is the only one referring to a daughter of Raphael. Gardner von Teuffel, 1987, p. 665 ; Shearman, 2000, p. 269

<sup>59</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 8-9

<sup>60</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 9; Shearman, 2000, p. 269; Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>61</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, pp. 8-9

<sup>62</sup> Clark does not give any further information about the copy, nor do we know if he saw it in life or photograph.

<sup>63</sup> He gives no reference to this copy, so it has not been possible to identify it. TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 9

Having established the provenance of the two portraits, Clark comes back to the attribution question: were Girolamo Gualdo and Don Basilio correct in believing that the medallions were painted by Raphael and Fasolo?<sup>64</sup> He rapidly validates the attribution to Fasolo, since the latter was a local painter under the patronage of the Gualdo family. But he spends more words on the one to Raphael, for, as he acknowledges, 'no attribution to Raphael can pass unchallenged'.<sup>65</sup> He then continues arguing that the documentary sources on the paintings transmitted a shared knowledge about the object shortly after its execution, a 'tradition which connects our medallion to Raphael [...] as direct as a 120 year old tradition can be'.<sup>66</sup>

Notably, Clark then further insists on arguing in favour of the Raphael attribution, returning to object-based evidence and quality-driven hypothesis:

Anyone who would say that our medallion is not by Raphael must prove that its style and quality make such an attribution impossible. But far from this being the case, we have seen that the style is so Raphael's, that we were led to suggest his name before anything was known of the medallion's history.<sup>67</sup>

Despite his initial caution, Clark cannot conceal his background as a connoisseur. Clark recognises and argues in favour of the Raphael attribution, synthesising an intuition based on tradition, on stylistic analysis of the object itself, and on information included in documentary evidences.

Clark, who was still to make a name for himself in the art world, also looked for approval by the major authorities on Raphael around him, most of whom were contacted in friendship. In February 1930, Clark sent a copy of the article, plates included, to the art historian Paul Oppé (1878-1957), asking for

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<sup>64</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 10

<sup>65</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 10

<sup>66</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 10

<sup>67</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 10

feedback.<sup>68</sup> Oppé, besides being an acquaintance of Clark, and a collector himself, mainly of British works on paper, was a Raphael expert, who published a monograph on the artist in 1909.<sup>69</sup> As mentioned in a footnote in his unpublished article, Clark had also shown the paintings to another Raphael scholar, 'Dr Oskar Fischel', who, 'before anything was known of its history' confirmed the attribution 'on quality alone'.<sup>70</sup> In fact, in his monograph on Raphael of 1948, Fischel published and reproduced the illustration of Valerio's portrait as by Raphael himself.<sup>71</sup>

The unpublished piece of work is a rare early example of a text on the process of connoisseurship, similar to Clark's own pivotal publications on drawings, such as the Royal Collection's Leonardo catalogue and the re-edition of Berenson's *Florentine Drawings*.<sup>72</sup> Comparing the article on the Belli medallions to a later text on the discovery of an altarpiece segment by Piero della Francesca in 1947, Clark's approach seems to have been consistent.<sup>73</sup> Whilst in Lisbon, for one of his many meetings with the collector Calouste Gulbenkian, Clark recognised that a painting in the *Museo de Arte Antigua*, attributed to 'school of Cima' was actually the missing part of an altarpiece by Piero della Francesca for the church of Borgo San Sepolcro, which Millard Meiss had just re-constructed in 1941.<sup>74</sup> This time, Clark published his finding in the *Burlington Magazine*.<sup>75</sup> The way in which Clark presents his arguments recalls his *modus operandi* with the Raphael medallion. Besides comparisons

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<sup>68</sup> Letter from Clark to Paul Oppé, 19FEB1930, TGA 8812.1.3.2333

<sup>69</sup> His collection of around 3,000 drawings of British school 1750–1850 was secured by Tate in 1996. A. P. Oppé, *Raphael*, London, Methuen and Co., 1909

<sup>70</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.106, p. 6. Dr Fischel published a monograph on Raphael in 1948 and was helped by Clark during the war.

<sup>71</sup> O. Fischel, *Raphael*, London, 1948, p. 122, illustrated no. 119a

<sup>72</sup> See F. Fiorani, 'Kenneth Clark and Leonardo: From Connoisseurship to Broadcasting to Digital Technologies' in *Leonardo in Britain. Collections and Historical Reception*, J. Barone, S. Avery-Quash (eds), Olschki, Florence, 2019, pp. 353-376

<sup>73</sup> K. Clark, 'Piero Della Francesca's St. Augustine Altarpiece' in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, vol. 89, n. 533, August 1947, pp. 204-209 (see Chapter 6)

<sup>74</sup> Clark, BM, 1947, pp. 204-5

<sup>75</sup> Clark, BM, 1947 ; TGA8812.1.2.2328

to other known compositions of Piero, and his treatment of figures and architecture, Clark's comments mainly revolve around considerations of the artist's personal and recognisable style, especially as far as palettes and light modelling are concerned, just as it was with Raphael's portrait of Valerio, although discussing the altarpiece he focusses on the rendering of fabric texture and the dynamic attitudes of the figures.<sup>76</sup>

Publishing aside, another major channel to present a newly discovered painting and have its attribution accepted, was to exhibit. Loan exhibitions in particular, such as those organised by the Burlington Fine Arts Club, of which Clark was an active member, gave many British collectors the chance to promote their possessions and their sometimes questionable attributions.<sup>77</sup> As a collector and art historian, however, Clark did not simply limit himself to lending his paintings to an exhibition. He decided to do so in a show in the organisation of which he was directly involved. Thus, he would find himself in an even more favourable position to promote his attribution of a painting in his possession. He did so with the Raphael medallion at the memorable 1930 Royal Academy show 'Italian Art 1200-1900'.<sup>78</sup> Born out of a long tradition of loan exhibitions on foreign national schools with quite a commercial underpinning, this show 'grew out of a friendship between Lady Austen Chamberlain [wife of the British Foreign Secretary at the time]<sup>79</sup> and Mussolini

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<sup>76</sup> Clark, BM, 1947, pp. 204-209

<sup>77</sup> Although not verified, the two portraits were first shown at the club's the winter 1927/8 exhibition. To know more about the shaping role in art history and the art market of the Burlington Fine Arts Club, see S. J. Pierson, *Private Collecting, Exhibitions, and the Shaping of Art History in London: The Burlington Fine Arts Club*, Taylors & Francis Ltd, 201

<sup>78</sup> Royal Academy, Exhibition of Italian Art 1200-1900, exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy, London, 1930

<sup>79</sup> Sir (Joseph) Austen Chamberlain, Foreign Secretary (1924-9)

[...] basically a piece of Fascist propaganda'.<sup>80</sup> The show had around 1,000 items on display, with almost half of the paintings stemming from public and private collections in Italy.<sup>81</sup> With a recorded attendance of 540,000 visitors in the first three months, the exhibition was greatly successful among the wider public.<sup>82</sup> As reported to Joseph Duveen shortly after the opening in January 1930, the rooms were so crowded that 'during the daytime it is impossible to get near the pictures'.<sup>83</sup> So, what better occasion to make a new Raphael publicly known?

As Tancred Borenius wrote in the January issue of *Apollo* of that year, the exhibition was both an influential stimulus to art criticism and an embodiment of change in fashions and in scholarship.<sup>84</sup> Yet, there were also the voices who condemned it, on both the British and the Italian side, be it for the great risks involved in gathering so many important masterpieces for a temporary event, or for its political implications.<sup>85</sup> Berenson is said to have been among those who did not appreciate it, especially for political reasons, but also because of the meagre scholarship behind the scenes, as recalled by Clark.<sup>86</sup> Yet, even Berenson had to acknowledge the important occasion of study that the

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<sup>80</sup> Clark, 1974, p. 158. The socio-political background of the event has been investigated by Francis Haskell, who drew scholars' attention to this exhibition for the first time. See F. Haskell, 'Botticelli, Fascism and Burlington House - The 'Italian Exhibition' of 1930' in *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 141, N. 1157, Aug. 1999, pp. 462-472. See also B. C. Borghi, 'Una "significant form" svelata L'allestimento della mostra "Italian Art" alla Royal Academy nella Londra del 1930' in *Altre Modernità*, vol. 6, n.3, pp. 13-25, and A. Hayum, "Mussolini Exports the Renaissance: The Burlington House Exhibition of 1930 Revisited" in *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 101, n. 2, 2019, pp. 83-108. However, A PhD student at the TU Berlin, Matilde Cartolari was the first to finally analyse the event in the context of social history, exhibition policies, art historiography, conservation history, and the art market

<sup>81</sup> Hayum, 2019, p. 84

<sup>82</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 73

<sup>83</sup> Letter dated 3JAN30 to Joseph Duveen NY, image 017, Duveen Brothers. Italian Art, 1200-1900, Royal Academy of Arts, London, Burlington House, 1-4, 1930, 1930, part of Duveen Brothers records, 1876-1981 (bulk 1909-1964). Correspondence and papers. Series II.H. Exhibition records, GRI Special Collections, [https://rosettaapp.getty.edu/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps\\_pid=IE1160521](https://rosettaapp.getty.edu/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE1160521) ; Clark, 1974, p. 163

<sup>84</sup> T. Borenius, 'The Italian Exhibition at Burlington House' in *Apollo*, January 1930, p. 116.

<sup>85</sup> Hayum, 2019, p. 86 ; Stourton, p. 72

<sup>86</sup> Clark, p. 158; Hayum, 2019, p. 86

exhibition represented, and keenly asked Duveen to send him photographic reproductions of certain works that interested him.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, as shall be seen in the next chapter, Berenson actually lent three of his pictures to the 1937 Giotto exhibition that was held in Florence, that was with no less propagandistic underpinnings.

Clark, who had been working with Berenson on his Florentine Drawings, was called to assist in the enterprise, being a young scholar who could act neutrally among the rivalling factions of the various committee members, which included personalities such as Sir Robert Witt, Lord Lee of Fareham, Roger Fry, and W. G. Constable.<sup>88</sup> Thanks to this appointment, Clark 'entered what was known as the London Art World' as he himself stated:<sup>89</sup>

An exhibition of this kind is a policy decision made by busy and powerful public men. They then find idle elderly men to form a committee, and take the credit. These have then to find someone to do the work. [...] they had found an industrious official at the National Gallery [...] W G Constable, but it was thought [...] that he could not manage so large an undertaking alone, and in desperation they turned to the untied youth who had just returned from Florence [...] a new member of their circle who was not influenced by their old feuds.<sup>90</sup>

Clark was involved on different levels: he was part of the selection and hanging committee; was in charge of the catalogue of all the objects that did not come from Italy (the Italian ones were catalogued by the Italian counterpart under the supervision of Ettore Modigliani); and gave lectures that had been organised as

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<sup>87</sup> The Duveen firm was involved in the exhibition on several levels, from supplying the logistics to American loans, to acting as patrons for the later editions of the catalogue, as investigated by Matilde Cartolari in her thesis. See Letters from Berenson to Duveen on 16JAN1930 image 020; 30JAN1930 image 20 ; MAR1930 image 091, Duveen Brothers. Italian Art, 1200-1900, Royal Academy of Arts, London, Burlington House, 1-4, 1930, 1930, part of Duveen Brothers records, 1876-1981 (bulk 1909-1964). Correspondence and papers. Series II.H. Exhibition records, GRI Special Collections, [https://rosettaapp.getty.edu/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps\\_pid=IE1160521](https://rosettaapp.getty.edu/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE1160521)

<sup>88</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 71

<sup>89</sup> Clark, 1974, p. 158

<sup>90</sup> Clark, 1974, p. 158



side events to the show.<sup>91</sup> The catalogue, compiled by Constable and Clark in first instance, with additions by David Baniel, later Earl of Crawford for the commemorative editions, was posthumously judged by Clark as ‘below standards’, although, as Haskell himself observed, it was a decent work given the amount of items included and the little time to put it together.<sup>92</sup>

It is understandable that the young scholar and collector managed to have the portrait of Valerio, but not that of Elio, included in the show - presented as a Raphael and published in the catalogue. The portrait was not displayed among the paintings, but in case no. 942, in the so called ‘south room’, where the *objets d’art* were exhibited altogether. Its temporary ‘casemates’ were a sixteenth-century Italian miniature triptych, lent by the Poldi Pezzoli Museum in Milan, and sixteenth-century bronze medals, mostly lent by the famous collector Henry Oppenheimer (1859-1932).<sup>93</sup> In the catalogue too, the tondo was put next to a medal; it was labelled with the letter ‘I’, next to the letter ‘K’, a bronze medal with the profile self-portrait of Valerio Belli, attributed to Valerio Belli himself.<sup>94</sup>

The catalogue entry for Valerio Belli’s portrait was of course written by Clark himself. Clark’s privileged position is underlined by the fact that not all the pictures lent to the show were included in the catalogue. ‘Several hundreds paintings’ were not published for the lack of space, as emerges from the correspondence of Joseph Duveen.<sup>95</sup> In the entry, Clark ‘published’ a much-condensed version of the above-analysed unpublished article, citing the sources he had found:

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<sup>91</sup> Clark, 1974 p. 163-6 ; Stourton, 2016 pp. 71-2

<sup>92</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 72; Hayum, 2019, p. 87; Clark, 1974, p. 162, commented upon as ‘the worst catalogue of a great exhibition ever printed’ ‘puerile’

<sup>93</sup> Royal Academy, 1930, pp. 405-11

<sup>94</sup> Royal Academy, 1930, p. 408 ; Baniel, Clark, 1931 p. 134

<sup>95</sup> Letter from Joseph Duveen to Mr Kellers 15feb1930, image 147, Duveen Brothers. Italian Art, 1200-1900, Royal Academy of Arts, London, Burlington House, 1-4, 1930, 1930, part of Duveen Brothers records, 1876-1981 (bulk 1909-1964). Correspondence and papers. Series II.H. Exhibition records, GRI Special Collections, [https://rosettaapp.getty.edu/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps\\_pid=IE1160521](https://rosettaapp.getty.edu/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE1160521)

He is seen head and shoulders in profile to left. He has a short beard, and wears a blue-green coat with a fur collar. Background a lighter blue-green [...] Valerio Belli (1468-1546) was the celebrated Vicentine engraver of crystal, medallist etc. He spent most of his life in Rome, where he was executed when he acted as godfather to Raphael's daughter. His son, Elio, had a similar portrait of himself painted by Giovanni Antonio Fasolo, and the two medallions were made into lids of a box.<sup>96</sup>

Possibly because he was intending to publish also the larger and more detailed article, this very short entry, a conventional format for loan exhibitions at the time, does not mention any inscription; their presence only became known in 1987, when the medallion was sold by Clark's heirs.<sup>97</sup> In the later commemorative catalogue of the exhibition, edited by Clark, Valerio's portrait is even reproduced.

The 1930 exhibition represented a landmark in the 'lives' of both the portrait and its collector. As John Shearman put it in his monograph on Valerio Belli:

Since the 1930 exhibition at the Royal Academy in London *this* painting by Raphael (exhibited in the medals case next to the bronze profile of Valerio Belli) has become familiar and entered the literature of both artists, with no significant opposition to its attribution.<sup>98</sup>

Once the exhibition was over, the portrait of Valerio returned home to continue life with its companion portrait of Elio, until the latter, which had never been parted from Valerio's likeness, was at some point stolen from Clark's house.<sup>99</sup> It cannot be established whether in the 1947 picture of the long panelled room in Upper Terrace House, referred to above, the portrait of Elio was not displayed on purpose, or was already missing by this time. In

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<sup>96</sup> Clark, Blaniel (eds.), 1931 p. 134

<sup>97</sup> Gardner von Teuffel, 1987

<sup>98</sup> tr from Italian by the author: Fin dalla mostra del 1930 alla Royal Academy di Londra il dipinto di Raffaello - che era esposto nella vetrina delle medaglie - accanto al profilo bronzeo di Valerio - è diventato familiare ed è entrato nella letteratura relativa ad entrambi gli artisti, senza significativi dissensi riguardo alla sua attribuzione.'. Shearman, 2000, p. 269

<sup>99</sup> Gardner von Teuffel, 1987 p. 665

fact, following the exhibition, while Valerio's portrait gained a place within the literature on both Valerio Belli and Raphael due to Clark's initiative to exhibit it and have it published by other scholars, Elio's matching portrait suffered a sort of 'visual' *damnatio memoriae*, culminating in its disappearance. It existed, but it is not known what it looked like, which is odd considering that Clark himself knew of a copy. Its disappearance is especially unfortunate, as it was this forgotten companion that allowed Clark to identify Valerio as the subject of the first portrait, due to the inscription.<sup>100</sup>

The portrait of Valerio experienced further 'celebrity moments', when it was lent to other exhibitions during Clark's ownership. In 1960, it featured in the Winter exhibition of the Royal Academy, 'Italian Art and Britain'; and in the 1983, the year of Clark's death, in the exhibition of Raphael Drawings held at the British Museum.<sup>101</sup> The first show is considered a spin-off of the 1930 exhibition discussed above. This time, the exhibits were works of Italian art obtained only from British collections - an illustration of the British' taste for the Italian schools. Clark was again a lender to the event, which was organised by scholars as 'a scientific engagement with no precedent'.<sup>102</sup> Clark himself was in the committee, together with other art historians and collectors, including A. E. Popham, former curator of the Prints and Drawings department at the British Museum; Francis Watson, curator and soon to be director of the Wallace Collection; and Denis Mahon, scholar of *Seicento* art, especially Guercino, a

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<sup>100</sup> A photo reproduction could be in the Getty Research Institute Archive or in Paul Oppè's archive - yet these are unaccessible at the moment due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The only existing catalogue raisonnè of the artist Antonio Fasolo does not mention the painting. S. Anapoli, *L'opera pittorica di Giovanni Antonio Fasolo*, Vicenza, Editrice veneta, 2009

<sup>101</sup> H. Brooke (ed.), *Italian Art and Britain*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1960; Royal Academy of Arts, *A souvenir of the exhibition Italian Art and Britain*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1960 ; John A. Gere and Nicholas Turner, *Drawings by Raphael from the Royal Library, the Ashmolean, the British Museum, Chatsworth and other English Collections*, London, 1983, pp. 174-175, illustrated p. 174

<sup>102</sup> M. Muraro, 'Arte italiana e Inghilterra' in *Emporium*, vol.56, n.131, 1960, pp. 165-174, p. 168

protégé of Clark's (the show marked a rehabilitation of Sei and Settecento through works from the organisers' private collections).<sup>103</sup>

In the catalogue of the 1983 Raphael Drawings exhibition at the British Museum, the portrait of Valerio is listed as the property of Alan Clark, Kenneth's son, although the acknowledgement indicates that it was Clark the elder who took the initiative to lend the picture before his death.<sup>104</sup> This loan may have been a strategic move on Clark's part to give his painting visibility. In the whole exhibition, there were only two items that were not works on paper, one of which was Valerio's portrait. The catalogue entry is a more detailed version of the 1930 one, but no reference is made to Clark's draft article.

A further key moment in the object's trajectory, since Clark's ownership, is the posthumous sale of Clark's collection, held at Saltwood Castle and managed by Sotheby's.<sup>105</sup> On that occasion, the painting was studied in depth by experts, which resulted in the publication of some 'new' evidence in an article in the *Burlington Magazine* by Christa Gardner von Teuffel, who rejected the identification of the wood of the panel as box wood in favour of a harder wood, probably walnut. She also made comparisons with other likenesses of Belli, in particular, a drawing by Parmigianino, a marble relief in the Victoria & Albert Museum, and a bronze medal profile of the artist, known in different versions. (Figs. 3-4).<sup>106</sup> At the sale, the Raphael tondo was bought for 200,000 pounds by Alfred Taubman, the owner of Sotheby's, who may have been intrigued by the combination of the name Raphael and the

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<sup>103</sup> Clark lent 6 works in total. Brooke, 1960, Cat. n. 61, 271, 291, 352, 353; Longhi commented upon them in a dedicated article in *Paragone*: R. Longhi, 'Uno sguardo alle fotografie della mostra "Italian art and Britain" alla Royal Academy di Londra' in *Paragone*, n. 125, 1960, pp. 59-61

<sup>104</sup> Gere, Turner, 1983, pp. 174-5

<sup>105</sup> Sotheby's, London, July 7, 1987, lot 32

<sup>106</sup> Gere, Turner, 1983, pp. 174-5 ; Shearman, 2000, p. 269

ownership of Clark. The portrait of Valerio subsequently migrated to the other side of the Atlantic, where it remained until 2016.<sup>107</sup>

While it was in the Taubman collection, further publications were devoted to it. Linda Borean reconstructed the provenance history of the object in the eighteenth century based on research in the family archive of the Venetian Trevisan family and the documents related to the lotteries organised by the confraternity of the Poveri Vergognosi.<sup>108</sup> In 2016, Valerio's portrait was sold at Sotheby's, with the rest of the Taubman collection. A captivating short video and an exhaustive catalogue entry accompanied the sale.<sup>109</sup> The name of the artist but also the former ownership of Kenneth Clark propelled the sale price to \$ 3,250,000.<sup>110</sup> One of the many articles commenting on the sale stated 'I'd love to own a picture of Clark's'.<sup>111</sup> This shows how the an art historian collector provenance can have an impact in an object's evaluation through time. Most recently, Valerio's portrait featured in the exhibition 'Raphael 1520-1483', held in Rome in 2020, on the occasion of the 5th centenary of Raphael's death.<sup>112</sup>

While Clark's research on the portrait remains unknown, it was in fact he who was instrumental in its rediscovery and proper attribution. Had Clark been merely a collector and not also a connoisseur and one of the most prominent characters in the British art world, the little tondo might still be shrouded in mystery. This chapter has reconstructed for the first time how the two companion portraits entered the Clark collection, acquired from the dealer Duits. It has shown how Clark's engagement with the object was typical of his

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<sup>107</sup> Art History News, 12 January 2016, [https://www.arthistorynews.com/articles/3745\\_Kenneth\\_Clarks\\_Raphael\\_portrait](https://www.arthistorynews.com/articles/3745_Kenneth_Clarks_Raphael_portrait)

<sup>108</sup> Borean, 2000, pp. 98-9

<sup>109</sup> Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>110</sup> Sotheby's, Taubman, 2016

<sup>111</sup> Art History News, [https://www.arthistorynews.com/articles/3745\\_Kenneth\\_Clarks\\_Raphael\\_portrait](https://www.arthistorynews.com/articles/3745_Kenneth_Clarks_Raphael_portrait)

<sup>112</sup> Faietti M. (ed.), *Raffaello 1520-1348*, Milan, Skira, 2020. It is the only object in the catalogue without an entry. See also the video, D. Gasparotto, Un dono all'amico Valerio Belli, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZptExhWHQbA>

behaviour as a scholar-collector. He must have admired the Raphael portrait's quality, and been intrigued by its unusual format. But the pictures did not just stimulate Clark's senses, they appealed to his vocation and stimulated his curiosity to the point that he conducted a proper study. At the time Clark bought the paintings, all he knew was that the first had probably been by Raphael, made in Rome in 1517, and that the other depicted a doctor and was made in 1572. But after a year of research, Clark had uncovered their history, up until the point they entered the Gualdo Collection. The example shows how collecting, for a scholar such as Clark, was an exercise in connoisseurship, as corroborated by the unpublished didactic text that he wrote.

Due to Clark's use of his position as a member of the 1930 Royal Academy Exhibition organising committee, he managed to promote the portrait of Valerio as a work by Raphael, having its attribution accepted by scholars, as confirmed by loans to other exhibitions in 1960 and 1983. This had an impact on the object's status, which earned a place in the scholarship on both Valerio Belli and Raphael. Interestingly, however, its value, as recorded at the 1987 and 2016 Sotheby's sales, was increased not only by the attribution to Raphael, but also by Kenneth Clark's ownership.

# Chapter 3 - Illustrations



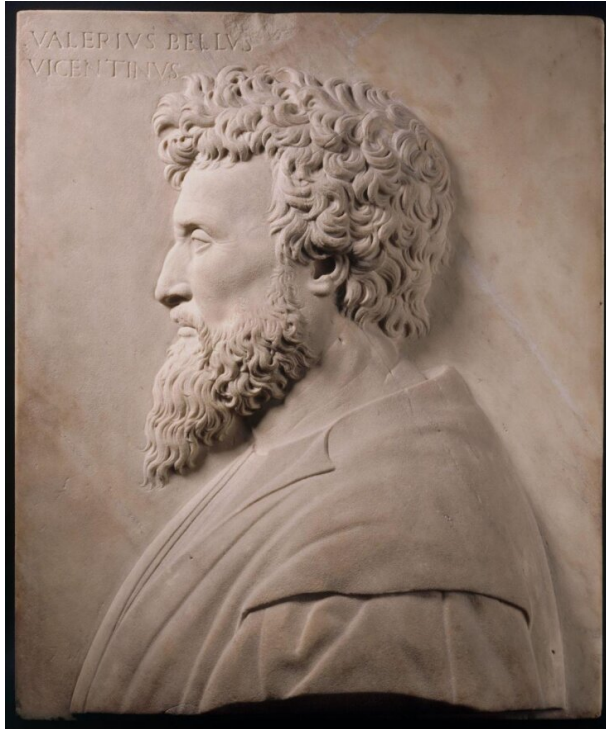
◀ Fig. 1: Raphael, *Portrait of Valerio Belli*, 1517, oil on panel, d. 12,5 cm, Private Collection. Sotheby's Taubman Sale, 27 JAN 2016, Lot 8





*Fig.2:* Upper Terrace's 'long panelled room', *House & Garden*, 1947  
Valerio's Portrait is framed and displayed on the console on the left.





◀ *Fig.3: Italian School, Profile Portrait of Valerio Belli, 1530-40, marble relief, Victoria & Albert Museum, London*

*Fig.4: Valerio Belli, Self-Portrait, lead, d. 4.79 cm, Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C* ▶



TWO MEDALLIONS OF THE BELLI FAMILY.

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The two medallion portraits illustrated on plates 1 and 2 were shown to me last autumn. Nothing whatsoever was known of them save that they came from

*(1 Belli a house near Brighton. I bought them from Mrs. Dicks, who would not give me the address).*

They were painted in oil colours on pieces of boxwood measuring 12.5 cm. (about 5") in diameter and 39.5 cm. (about 15½") in circumference. They were entirely free from repaint, but the paint of that illustrated on plate 1 had been rubbed away in several places, noticeably in the background to the left of the figure. A few small holes had been stopped with wax. On the back of each medallion was the remains of a small handle and the front edges were bevelled; this suggesting that they had been used as lids to a box.

It was not difficult to date and place them approximately. That illustrated on plate 1 was in the Romano-Florentine style of the early 16th century. Neither the décolleté cut of the coat nor the short beard was fashionable much before 1510, and after 1525 beards in Rome began to be longer, following the Spanish fashion. The medallion illustrated on plate 2 was clearly very much later. The style of collar and cut of beard are familiar



Fig. 5: First page of the unpublished article 'Two Medallions of the Belli Family', with Clark's annotations, London, Tate Gallery Archive, undated, TGA 8812.2.2.106

# Part II - Chapter 4:

## Bernard Berenson, Giotto, and the 1937 'Mostra Giottesca'

As seen in chapter One, since the very beginning of his career, Bernard Berenson led a double life, working as a scholar on the one hand, and as an expert for the art trade on the other. As a scholar, he often felt torn between the exercise of pure Connoisseurship and an interest in art theory, and in particular, aesthetics.<sup>1</sup> Multiple times in his *memoires* Berenson would regret not to have managed to articulate his theories fully in a book.<sup>2</sup> But since the 'attribution game' was the primary source of his income, granting him the privileged life he lived, and eventually financing his collecting, it is to his work as a Connoisseur that he chose to dedicate more and more time and resources.<sup>3</sup> This dichotomy of stylistic attribution versus art theory permeated in fact Berenson's professional life. The intrinsic structure of the book series on the Italian Painters of the Renaissance is a telling example.<sup>4</sup> Each volume, dedicated to a different regional school, begins with a series of essays, which illustrate his art theories. In turn, they end with an index of works attributed to the artists named in the book, constituting a prototype of the famous 'lists'.<sup>5</sup>

The duality permeated Berenson's reputation during his life time as well as his legacy. In Italy, where Berenson chose to live, local scholars such as Adolfo Venturi, who were working towards establishing art history as an academic subject, generally dismissed Berenson's ideas on aesthetics as presented in

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<sup>1</sup> L. Iamurri, 'Berenson, la pittura moderna e la nuova critica italiana' in *Prospettiva*, n. 87/88, 1998, pp. 69-90

<sup>2</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 78

<sup>3</sup> A. Brown, 'Bernard Berenson and "Tactile Values" in Florence' in *Bernard Berenson: Formation and Heritage*, J. Connors, L. Waldman (eds.), Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2014, pp. 101-120, pp. 9, 14

<sup>4</sup> Berenson B., *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, Oxford, The Clarendon press, 1930

<sup>5</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 78. On the lists, see P. Aiello, 'Bernard Berenson. Il cantiere delle «liste»' in *Storie di edizioni - 1900*, n. 5, 2020, pp. 207-226

his essays, only acknowledging the usefulness of the accompanying indexes.<sup>6</sup> Yet, around ten years after the publication of the *Painters of Renaissance Italy*, younger scholars such as Lionello Venturi, Roberto Longhi, Emilio Cecchi, and Florence-based futurist artists, such as Carlo Placci and Ardengo Soffici, appropriated Berenson's theories, applying them to the criticism of modern and contemporary art.<sup>7</sup>

This chapter will investigate Berenson as a theorist, touching upon his influence on Italian critics and artists of the 1930s, through an innovative focus on his collecting of paintings by Giotto, and his participation, as a lender, to the famous *Mostra Giottesca* that was held in Florence in 1937.<sup>8</sup> That year, three 'giottesque' panels in Berenson's hands since the 1910s, left their intimate setting at *I Tatti* to be briefly admired by a large public in the rooms of the *Palazzo degli Uffizi*. These were namely the *Crucifixion* (Master of the Spinola Annunciation, 1309 – Fig. 1); the *Entombment of Christ* (Giotto and Workshop, 1320 – Fig. 2) ; and the *Saint Anthony of Padua* (Giotto, c. 1295 – Fig. 3).<sup>9</sup>

Berenson bought his Giottos between 1910 and 1912, the *Crucifixion* being acquired in 1910 ; the *Entombment* in 1911, and the *Saint Anthony of Padua* in 1912 – at a rate of one per year.<sup>10</sup> Berenson's first significant scholarly engagement with Giotto, however, dates back to 1896, the year in which the second book from the series on the Renaissance painters was published: *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance*, where for the first time, he illustrated

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<sup>6</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 69

<sup>7</sup> The topic was first investigated extensively by Laura Iamurri in Iamurri, 1998

<sup>8</sup> *Mostra giottesca: onoranze a Giotto nel VI centenario della morte*, Bergamo, Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1937 ; G. Sinibaldi, *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937*, Florence, Sansoni, 1943. On the history and reception of the exhibition, see A. Monciatti, 'La "Mostra giottesca" del 1937 a Firenze' in *Medioevo/Medioevi*, n.13, 2008, pp. 141-167 ; A. Monciatti, *Alle origini dell'arte nostra: la 'Mostra giottesca' del 1937 a Firenze*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 2010; [...] and the most recent contribution E. D'Ettorre, R. Mencaroni, S. A. Vespari, 'Nuove indagini sulla Mostra Giottesca del 1937' in *Mostre a Firenze 1911 - 1942. Nuove indagini per un itinerario tra arte e cultura*, C. Giometti (ed.), Florence, Edizioni ETS, 2019, pp. 177-191

<sup>9</sup> C. B. Strehlke, M. Brügggen Israëls (eds.), *The Bernard and Mary Berenson collection of European paintings at I Tatti*, Milan, Officina Libraria, 2015, pl. 64, p. 420; pl. 44, p. 319; pl. 43, p. 312

<sup>10</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 64, 44, 43

his aesthetic theories, articulating concepts such as ‘tactile values’ and ‘ideated sensations’.<sup>11</sup> As shall be explored, the art of Giotto and Berenson’s theories were in fact so closely related, that one could argue that, for Berenson, Giotto equalled ‘tactile values’.<sup>12</sup> The investigation of Berenson’s loans to the *Mostra Giottesca* will underline how Berenson’s contribution to Giotto studies assumed a material dimension, and not just for the limited time of the exhibition. When the exhibition designer Giovanni Michelucci redesigned the rooms for the ‘Primitives’ at the Uffizi, together with Carlo Scarpa and Ignazio Gardella under the supervision of Roberto Salvini, he crystallised a standard comparison in the history of art, that between Cimabue’s *Maestà* from Santa Trinità and Giotto’s *Maestà Ognissanti*, received its ‘modern critical foundation’ in Berenson’s *Florentine Painters*.<sup>13</sup>

Berenson’s *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance* was published in 1896.<sup>14</sup> The book was the second of a series dedicated to the Italian schools of art, of which the first volume, *The Venetian Painters*, had come out in 1894.<sup>15</sup> As discussed in Chapter 1, in these early years, Berenson was living between Fiesole and Florence, working on building a reputation as both a connoisseur and an adviser to private collectors on the international art market.<sup>16</sup> Three years earlier, in 1893, Berenson had arranged, with the help of his wife Mary, a series of private lectures in London, which earned him a little money. Notably,

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<sup>11</sup> B. Berenson, *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance: with an index to their works*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1896. On these concepts, see the most salient contributions: Brown, A., ‘Bernard Berenson and "Tactile Values" in Florence’ in *Bernard Berenson : formation and heritage*, J. Connors, L. Waldman (eds.), Florence, Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2014, pp. 101-120; O’Donnell C.O., ‘Berensonian Formalism and Pragmatist Perception’ in *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, vol. 62, n.2, 2017, pp. 283-305; Ventrella F., ‘Befriending Botticelli: psychology and connoisseurship at the fin de siècle’ in *Botticelli Past and Present*, Ana Debenedetti (ed.), London, UCL Press, 2019, pp. 116-147

<sup>12</sup> I shall thank Oliver O’Donnell for the stimulating conversations on this point.

<sup>13</sup> F. Fabbrizzi., ‘1953: Michelucci, Gardella e Scarpa agli Uffizi ; "un lavoro di muratore”’ in *Firenze architettura*, n. 5, 2001, pp. 80-89 ; Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 309

<sup>14</sup> Berenson, 1896

<sup>15</sup> B. Berenson, *The Venetian Painters of the Renaissance: with an index to their works*, London, G.P. Putnam’s sons, 1894

<sup>16</sup> M. Brüggén Israëls, ‘Mrs. Gardner and Miss Topaldy: Connoisseurship, Collecting and Commerce in London (1898-1905)’ in *Visual Resources*, n.33, 2017, pp 158-181



the first lecture Berenson gave was on Giotto, marking an early interest in the painter.<sup>17</sup> Also in 1893, the *New Gallery* at 121 Regent Street, London, organised an exhibition of Old Masters.<sup>18</sup> On this occasion, Berenson probably learned, via Mary, about the existence of a work by Giotto, that will be discussed in greater detail below: the *Presentation in the Temple* (Fig. 4), which was about to be bought by Berenson's friend Jean Paul Richter, and which Berenson himself would eventually sell to Isabella Stewart Gardner in 1900.<sup>19</sup>

The section on Giotto in *The Florentine Painters* is probably the longest dedicated to a single artist (there are four pages devoted to Botticelli, whereas Giotto has nine). In the paragraph headed 'the imagination of touch', Berenson moves from art historical narrative to aesthetics, giving his explanation of the art of painting and using for the first time the phrase 'tactile values'.<sup>20</sup> Returning to painting, Berenson continues:

Now, painting is an art which aims at giving an abiding impression of artistic reality with only two dimensions. The painter must, therefore, do consciously what we all do unconsciously, — construct his third dimension. And he can accomplish his task only as we accomplish ours, by giving tactile values to retinal impressions. His first business, therefore, is to rouse the tactile sense, for I must have the illusion of being able to touch a figure [...] before I shall take it for granted as real, and let it affect me lastingly.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> E. Samuels, *Bernard Berenson: the Making of a Connoisseur*, Cambridge, Mass., Belknap Press, 1981, p. 167

<sup>18</sup> This exhibition launched Berenson's reputation as a connoisseur. Thanks to the generosity of Herbert Cook, Berenson published a pamphlet commenting on the attributions of the pictures. E. K. Waterhouse, 'Thoughts in the Cataloguing of Pictures at Exhibitions' in Garstang (ed.), *Art, commerce, scholarship : a Window onto the Art World : Colnaghi 1760-1984*, London, Colnaghi, 1984, pp. 60-62

<sup>19</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 319

<sup>20</sup> Berenson, 1930, p.62. Citations from now on are taken from the 1930 re-edition, B. Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, Oxford, The Clarendon press, 1930, referred as Berenson, 1930

<sup>21</sup> Berenson, 1930, p.63

According to him 'the essential in the art of Painting' consisted of '[stimulating] our consciousness of tactile values, so that the picture shall have at least as much power as the object represented, to appeal to our tactile imagination.'<sup>22</sup>

Berenson proceeds to present Giotto as the artist who best mastered this particular art. The reader is guided visually in making this association between Giotto and tactile values, as the heading of the page now reads 'Giotto'.<sup>23</sup> According Berenson, Giotto embodied 'the birth of modern painting'.<sup>24</sup> Berenson goes on to describe in detail what he himself felt before Giotto's works:

Giotto's paintings [...] have not only as much power of appealing to the tactile imagination as is possessed by the objects represented — human figures in particular — but actually more, with the necessary result that to his contemporaries they conveyed a keener sense of reality, of life-likeness than the objects themselves ! We whose current knowledge of anatomy is greater, who expect more articulation and suppleness in the human figure, who, in short, see much less naively now than Giotto's contemporaries, no longer find his paintings more than life-like ; but we still feel them to be intensely real in the sense that they still powerfully appeal to our tactile imagination, thereby compelling us, as do all things that stimulate our sense of touch while they present themselves to our eyes, to take their existence for granted. And it is only when we can take for granted the existence of the object painted that it can begin to give us pleasure that is genuinely artistic, as separated from the interest we feel in symbols.<sup>25</sup>

In a section entitled 'Analysis of Enjoyment of Painting', he explains that a painting is perceived as pleasant, because it functions as a 'good illustration', or because it evokes a 'pleasant association', or because of the 'genuinely artistic pleasure' of its colour.<sup>26</sup> Regarding Florentine paintings, and especially

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<sup>22</sup> Berenson, 1930, pp. 63-4

<sup>23</sup> Berenson, 1930, p.64

<sup>24</sup> Berenson, 1930, p.64, see appendix C.1

<sup>25</sup> Berenson, 1930, p. 64-5

<sup>26</sup> Berenson, 1930, p. 66

Giotto, he states that 'form is the principal source of our aesthetic enjoyment'.<sup>27</sup>

As a result, the artist, whose 'chief business [...] is to stimulate the tactile imagination, [...] gives us the pleasures consequent upon a more vivid realisation of the object'.<sup>28</sup> He rounds off his sketchy theory of art as life-enhancement, and concludes by stating that also 'composition,' 'colour', 'movement', and 'associative pleasures' give us pleasure. Yet, 'unless it satisfies our tactile imagination, a picture's "beauty" will not seem more significant at the thousandth look than at the first'.<sup>29</sup> When Berenson was at home at *I Tatti*, walking past his own Giottesque panels, they must have seemed 'beautiful' to him, year after year, just like the first time he saw them.

A section headed 'Giotto and the Values of Touch' follows, analysing how good Giotto was at stimulating the 'tactile imagination'.<sup>30</sup> Berenson does so by drawing a comparison with Giotto's master Cimabue, involving, as mentioned above, the two *Maestà* in Florence (Cimabue's *Maestà* from Santa Trinità and Giotto's *Maestà Ognissanti*).<sup>31</sup> In the 1890s, at the time of Berenson's writing, the two paintings were on display at the *Galleria dell'Accademia*, in the *Sala dei Quadri Grandi*, as can be seen in a painting by Odoardo Borrani, dating 1860-1870 (Fig. 5).<sup>32</sup> Later, around 1919, they were moved to the Uffizi.<sup>33</sup> Berenson used the established comparison between the works to explain his theory of tactile values and to substantiate Giotto's primacy as a painter.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Berenson, 1930, pp. 66, 67. See appendix C.2

<sup>28</sup> Berenson, 1930, p. 68

<sup>29</sup> Berenson, 1930, pp. 68-9

<sup>30</sup> Berenson, 1930, pp. 69-70

<sup>31</sup> Berenson, 1930, p. 69

<sup>32</sup> See G.Videtta, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/blog/projects/guest-post-part-2-the-florentine-copies-of-michelangelos-david-by-clemente-papi-the-plaster-cast-of-the-head-of-david-at-the-accademia-di-belle-arti-in-florence>

<sup>33</sup> Barocchi P., 'La storia della galleria degli Uffizi e la Storiografia Artistica' in *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, Serie III, Vol. 12, No. 4 (1982), pp. 1411-1523 (113 pages), p. 1520

<sup>34</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 309



Starting with Cimabue, he writes that it takes a lot of effort to look at his painting and decipher it, whereas:

With what sense of relief, of rapidly rising vitality, we turn to the Giotto! Our eyes scarcely have had time to light on it before we realise it completely — the throne occupying a real space, the Virgin satisfactorily seated upon it, the angels grouped in rows about it. Our tactile imagination is put to play immediately. Our palms and fingers accompany our eyes much more quickly than in presence of real objects, the sensations varying constantly with the various projections represented, as of face, torso, knees; confirming in every way our feeling of capacity for coping with things, — for life, in short.<sup>35</sup>

Referring to ‘vitality’, Berenson stresses the life-enhancing power of art through the stimulation of the ‘tactile imagination’.<sup>36</sup> After describing Giotto’s manner of painting in general, Berenson returns once again to Giotto’s *Madonna Ognissanti*, using it as the most telling example.<sup>37</sup> The rest of the text is dedicated to Giotto’s other qualities, particularly his symbolism and his rendering of movement.<sup>38</sup>

The formation, impact, and legacy of these theories have been widely discussed in the secondary literature.<sup>39</sup> Between 1894 and 1896 Berenson synthesised the psychological and aesthetic ideas of his time, introducing new phrases such as ‘tactile values’, and ‘life enhancement’.<sup>40</sup> Three principal figures influenced Berenson’s theories: William James, the psychologist, whose writings gave a theoretical ground to Berenson’s intuitive ideas ; Nietzsche, whose works were essential in formulating the ‘life-enhancement’ concept ; and the sculptor Adolf von Hildebrand (together with Konrad Fiedler), whom Berenson had met by 1894, introduced by the Florentine writer and critic Carlo

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<sup>35</sup> Berenson, 1930, p. 69, see appendix C.3

<sup>36</sup> Berenson, 1930, p. 69

<sup>37</sup> Berenson, 1930, pp. 70-71

<sup>38</sup> Berenson, 1930, p. 72

<sup>39</sup> See in particular Iamurri, 1998; Brown, 2014; O’Donnell, 2017; Ventrella, 2019

<sup>40</sup> As praised by Gombrich. Brown, 2014, p. 6

Placci.<sup>41</sup> Yet, Berenson's originality lies in applying these concepts to the study of Renaissance Painters, and later also to modernist art, as shall be seen below.

Between writing *The Florentine Painters* and the start of the new century, Berenson was involved with Giotto-related issues on several occasions. Among the most relevant for our investigation is the sale of the above-mentioned little panel that belonged to Berenson's friend Jean Paul Richter, which was sold to Isabella Stewart Gardner in 1900 (Fig. 4).<sup>42</sup> The panel is the companion of *The Entombment*, one of the three works that Berenson lent to the 1937 exhibition (Fig. 2).<sup>43</sup> Together, the two panels form part of a series of seven, each telling an episode of the life of Christ (Fig. 6).<sup>44</sup> The pieces are divided among several collections around the world today. The *Adoration of the Magi* is currently at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York; the *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston; the *Last Supper*, the *Descent into Limbo*, and the *Crucifixion* are at the Alte Pinakothek in Munich; and the *Pentecost* is at the National Gallery in London.<sup>45</sup> Some of the panels share a common provenance history, offering important clues for our understanding of Berenson's engagement with his own panel.

The panel that Berenson sold to Gardner, the *Presentation in the Temple*, was once in the collection of Prince Stanislaw Poniatowski, together with three other scenes from the series: the *Pentecost*, the *Adoration*, and Berenson's

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<sup>41</sup> Brown, 2014, pp. 5-7

<sup>42</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322 ; Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, web catalogue entry, <https://www.gardnermuseum.org/experience/collection/12894> , from now on cited as ISGM, 12894

<sup>43</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>44</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>45</sup> X-Rays confirmed they were all painted on one single poplar panel, with the scenes divided by a golden strip. No physical trace points towards the existence of a bigger, central representation accompanying the series. However, critics remarked that a missing scene like a *Resurrection* seems plausible, Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

*Entombment*.<sup>46</sup> The collection was sold, some years after the Prince's death, at a Christie's auction in London on 9th February 1839. The *Presentation* was sold as 'by Giotto' and fetched the highest price of the four, 4 pounds. Around 1892, it passed from the owner, Nathaniel Phillip Simes from Horsham, Sussex, to the dealers Colnaghi of London, eventually entering the collection of Henry Willet.<sup>47</sup> In the same year, the work was featured at the Royal Academy, in a loan exhibition of Old Masters, where it was exhibited as 'school of Giotto'.<sup>48</sup> One year later, in 1893, it was shown again, at the New Gallery, in the exhibition of Early Italian Art 1300-1550, this time as 'Giotto'.<sup>49</sup> It is on this occasion that Berenson probably learned about the existence of this panel for the first time. Mary Berenson had been sent over to the exhibition to inspect all the Lorenzo Lottos that were to be included in the famous lists, on which they were collaborating.<sup>50</sup>

A year later, in 1894, Henry Willet sold the panel to the collector Dr Jean Paul Richter, Berenson's friend. In 1898, Richter offered the painting to Berenson, so that he could sell it on to Isabella Stewart Gardner, as he had already done with two other paintings from Richter's collection in 1895.<sup>51</sup> Richter wrote to Berenson: 'I should like very much to sell one or two of my pictures [...] I do not think I can part with the Giotto without telling first Mr Mond and Poynter who both want the refusal. For this picture I want two thousand pounds'.<sup>52</sup> Richter offered Berenson a commission of 500 pounds on the sale, but Berenson preferred to deduct his earnings from the price when he offered the panel to Gardner.<sup>53</sup> In late January 1900, Berenson wrote to

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<sup>46</sup> ISGM, 12894 ; Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322 ; L. Mazzocco, 'La Collezione del Principe Poniatowski' in <https://www.museoetru.it/etru-at-home-villa-poniatowski/la-collezione-del-principe-poniatowski>

<sup>47</sup> ISGM, 12894 ; Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322. Berenson is thought to have worked for Colnaghi only from 1894 onwards.

<sup>48</sup> ISGM, 12894 ; Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>49</sup> ISGM, 12894 ; Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>50</sup> ISGM, 12894 ; Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322. On the lists, see Aiello, 2020

<sup>51</sup> Samuels, 1981, p. 309

<sup>52</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>53</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

Gardner: 'I am not going to insult you by talking to you about Giotto, nor even about his rarity. The national Gallery for instance has nothing whatsoever by him, and it is a rare thing for any of the collections of the world to boast of'.<sup>54</sup> The sale was finalised on 8th March 1900, through Mary and her brother's Miss Topaldy knick-knack shop, which Berenson used more than once as a cover to export paintings he was selling to clients overseas, such as Isabella Stewart Gardner.<sup>55</sup> From Berenson's letter it emerges that he was aware of the rarity value Giotto had for collectors, and the artist's potential market price.<sup>56</sup> His words also suggest that even before buying his own panel, which was part of the same dismantled work, Berenson had a clear idea of its authorship and date. The way he describes the painting to Gardner prove him to be a real connoisseur of Giotto's work. It seems legitimate to ask why Berenson did not attempt to buy the Presentation in the Temple for himself. As seen in Chapter 1, however, this was a period in which Berenson hardly bought pieces for his own collection: the asking price was too high for his still uncertain finances.

In 1902, Berenson's friend and colleague Frederick Mason Perkins published a monograph on Giotto, part of a series named 'Great Masters in Painting and Sculpture' edited by G. C. Williamson.<sup>57</sup> In the preface, Perkins acknowledged his 'deep indebtedness to Mr. Bernhard Berenson for much invaluable assistance during the writing'.<sup>58</sup> In those years, following their marriage and acquisition of *I Tatti*, Berenson and Mary spent much time with Perkins and his

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<sup>54</sup> H. Rollin van (ed.), *The letters of Bernard Berenson and Isabella Stewart Gardner 1887-1924 with correspondence by Mary Berenson*, Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1987, p. 202. ISGM, 12894; Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 325. See Appendix D

<sup>55</sup> In 1989 Mary and her brother Logan Pearsall Smith, together with two Oxford companions of Logan, Philip Morrell and Percy Henry Fielding, opened an antiques shop in London, called Miss Topaldy. Brüggen Israëls has investigated its history, accounting for Berenson's involvement and his using of the shop to sell paintings to his clients, above all to Isabella Stewart Gardner in M. Brüggen Israëls, 'Mrs. Gardner and Miss Topaldy: Connoisseurship, Collecting and Commerce in London (1898-1905)' in *Visual Resources*, n.33, 2017, pp 158-181, pp. 158-9. It is whilst buying for the shop that Mary, Logan, and Berenson found the famous Sassetta altarpiece in Siena in 1900. Brüggen Israëls, 2017, pp. 166-8

<sup>56</sup> See also G. Reitlinger, 'The rise and fall of the picture market, 1760-1960' in *The Economics of Taste*, vol. 1, New York, Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1964 pp. 352-3

<sup>57</sup> F. Mason Perkins, *Giotto*, London, George Bell and Sons, 1902

<sup>58</sup> Mason Perkins, 1902, *Preface*

wife, connoisseurs of Sieneese Art.<sup>59</sup> Perkin's mention in the monograph reveals that, even if Berenson was not publishing extensively on Giotto, he was regarded as an authority on the artist. Reading the text, Berenson's influence on Perkins emerges in the latter's understanding and explanation of the innovative character of Giotto's painting. Compared to both the Latin and the Byzantine tradition, according to Perkins, Giotto had an ability to render 'modelling and form' more 'living' and 'plastic',<sup>60</sup> terms which echo the section on Giotto in *The Florentine Painters*. Perkins, in fact, further explains his ideas by quoting a substantial passage from Berenson's essay, in which he illustrates 'so well and clearly' his theory of tactile values via the example of Giotto.<sup>61</sup> Throughout the pages of his monograph, Perkins carefully sought to enhance Berenson's reputation as an expert of the Florentine master. In the chapter dedicated to Assisi's Upper church, for example, Perkins praises his friend for having been the 'single critic *that* has dared to question the correctness of what I still considered a proven and unquestionable theory' and the 'first and only writer to have cast doubts on the chronological position assigned to those frescoes in the usual lists'.<sup>62</sup>

More than once, Perkins refers to recent work done by Berenson on Giotto, providing useful hints of the critic's engagement with the artist in those years. In the chapter dedicated to the master's early years, for instance, Perkins regrets the insufficient knowledge of the production of Giotto's youth, by stating:

With the possible exception of two or three small panel paintings, which have of late years been attributed by Mr Bernhard Berenson to this early

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<sup>59</sup> As explained in chapter one, both couples were involved in the famous 1904 exhibition held in Siena and in the publicly debated controversy with the British dealer Robert Langton Douglas over the personality of the recently re-discovered painter Sassetta. Perkins moreover, is to be considered one of the greatest facilitators of Berenson's purchases of Sieneese art. See E. Camporeale, 'La mostra del 1904 dell'antica arte senese a distanza di un secolo' in *Atti e memorie dell'Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere "La Colombaria"*, n. 55, 2004, pp. 45-126 and M. Brügggen Israëls, 'The Berensons 'Connoosh' and Collect Sieneese Paintings' in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 47-70

<sup>60</sup> Mason Perkins, 1902, p. 36

<sup>61</sup> Mason Perkins, 1902, pp. 37-8

<sup>62</sup> Mason Perkins, 1902, pp. 37-8

stage of the master's professional activity, we cannot boast of possessing a single work of this particular period of Italian art.<sup>63</sup>

Confirming Perkins's assessment of Berenson's expertise on Giotto, in 1903, one year after Perkins's monograph, Berenson became involved in a debate of attribution involving Giotto. The occasion was a quarrel over a panel in the Gambier-Perry collection at Highnam Court in Gloucestershire.<sup>64</sup> The debate was led by Berenson and two of the founders of *The Burlington Magazine*: Roger Fry and Herbert Horne. Fry was convinced that the panel in the collection depicting the *Nativity and Adoration* was so close to Giotto's style that it could be by the master himself.<sup>65</sup> Berenson on the other hand attributed the panel to 'pseudo-Giotto', an invented artistic personality who was later re-named the Master of the Santa Cecilia Altarpiece.<sup>66</sup> The argument escalated when Fry, who had planned to write a few articles with Berenson on the collection, decided to invite Horne to collaborate, without informing Berenson.<sup>67</sup> Eventually, Fry published an article solely under his own name, in which he attributed the panel to Giotto, in disagreement with Berenson. Horne, meanwhile, owned a Giotto himself (a panel depicting St Stephen, which would also be exhibited at the 1937 exhibition), and, in the words of Caroline Elam, 'had recently shown a suspiciously keen interest in Berenson's opinion on all things Giottesque'.<sup>68</sup>

The next milestone in Berenson's engagement with Giotto was reached around 1908, when he published his single known text dedicated exclusively to Giotto, an open letter that he sent to the art journal *Rassegna d'Arte*, edited by

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<sup>63</sup> Mason Perkins, 1902, p. 28

<sup>64</sup> C. Elam, 'Roger Fry and Bernard Berenson' in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 665-676, p. 665

<sup>65</sup> Elam, 2015, p. 666

<sup>66</sup> Elam, 2015, p. 666

<sup>67</sup> Elam, 2015, p. 667

<sup>68</sup> Elam, 2015, p. 667

his friend, the collector Don Guido Cagnola.<sup>69</sup> The letter is especially relevant as it sheds light on how much Berenson's opinion was sought after by other scholars, including on matters Giottesque. At the beginning, Berenson explains the reason for sending it, saying that, after reading 'a lot of news that erroneously reported my current views on Giotto' and since 'many scholars expressed the desire to really know *his* opinion on such matters', he felt the need to intervene and make his thoughts known.<sup>70</sup> He declared straightaway that 'as far as the most important giottesque issue is concerned, i.e. excluding from the catalogue of Giotto the Franciscan Stories above the tomb of St Francis in Assisi', he was in agreement with Adolfo Venturi.<sup>71</sup>

Among other things, Berenson discusses the vaults of the Lower Church in Assisi and the *Polittico Stefaneschi*, stating that, if he once thought they were to be dated before the Franciscan cycles, he now believed them to be from around 1320, attributing the former to an anonymous painter, and the latter to Bernardo Daddi.<sup>72</sup> After expanding on his doubts on the authorship of the Upper Church frescoes, and of the Maddalena chapel, Berenson also touches upon the master's few known works on panel. This part is particularly relevant, as among these works 'recognised by the critics as by Giotto', he mentions:<sup>73</sup>

Three little panels the Presentation in the Temple of Mrs Gardner, The Crucifixion and the Last Supper in Munich. They are all rather late works, the Crucifixion only in part by Giotto, the Last Supper too not entirely by

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<sup>69</sup> B. Berenson, 'Giotto. Lettera aperta' in *Rassegna D'Arte*, n. 3, 1908, p. 54. On the journal, see A. Rovetta, 'La <<Rassegna d'Arte>> di Guido Cagnola e Francesco Malaguzzi Valeri (1908-1914)' in R. Cioffi, A. Rovetta (eds.), *Percorsi di critica: un archivio per le riviste d'arte in Italia dell'Ottocento e del Novecento*, Milan, Vita e Pensiero, 2007, pp. 281-316, p. 293

<sup>70</sup> Tr.: 'L'aver io letto parecchie notizie che travisano completamente le mie opinioni attuali intorno a Giotto e l'aver parecchi studiosi espresso il desiderio di sapere come realmente la pensi su di questo argomento.', Berenson, 1908, p. 54

<sup>71</sup> Tr.: 'Vi interessará vedere come, riguardo ad uno dei punti piu importanti. e cioè al togliere a Giotto le allegorie sulla tomba di s. Francesco, in sostanza, concordi col Venutri.'. Berenson, 1908, p. 54. Venturi, incidentally, had just published the fifth volume of his *Storia dell'Arte Italiana*, in which he also dealt with Giottesque problems. Rovetta, 2007, p. 294, n. 47

<sup>72</sup> Rovetta, 2007, p. 294

<sup>73</sup> Tr.: 'Debbo ora esprimere il mio giudizio circa agli altri dipinti su tavola seriamente ammessi dalla critica siccome di Giotto.', Berenson, 1908, p. 54

the hand of the master; the small panel of Mrs Gardner is close in date to the frescoes of the Peruzzi chapel, some of which it resembles in style.<sup>74</sup>

What this letter reveals is that already in 1908, Berenson was aware of the connection between the panel he had sold to Gardner some eight years before, and two of the three panels that were in the collection of the Alte Pinakothek in Munich. They all formed part of the same work, together with another three and the one depicting the *Entombment of Christ* he would buy for his own collection in 1911.<sup>75</sup>

In 1910, two years after the above-mentioned letter, Berenson acquired his first Giottesque work: the *Crucifixion*, now attributed to the so-called 'Master of the Spinola Annunciation', and dated around 1309 (Fig. 1).<sup>76</sup> The panel is recorded to have been in London in 1910 before being bought by Berenson in Paris from an unknown source that same year. It was imported to Florence at the end of December as a 'Follower of Giotto', and insured as Giotto in 1912 and 1915.<sup>77</sup> The *Crucifixion* was not made known to the public until 1930, when it was published, for the first time, on the occasion of the already mentioned exhibition 'Italian Art 1200-1900' at the Royal Academy in London.<sup>78</sup> Berenson did not lend his panel to the show, but the painting was referenced in the catalogue, as a comparison with another work that was exhibited: a *Nativity*

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<sup>74</sup> Tr.: 'Cosí ora ci rimangono soltanto tre piccole tavole «La Presentazione al Tempio» di Mrs Gardner, «La Crocefissione» e «L'ultima Cena» di Monaco. Sono tutti lavori piuttosto tardi, La Crocefissione solo in parte di Giotto ; la Cena pure non tutta di lui; la tavoletta di Mrs Gardner si avvicina, come data, agli affreschi della cappella Peruzzi, alcuni dei quali essi ricorda nello stile.', Berenson, 1908, p. 54

<sup>75</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 44

<sup>76</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 64

<sup>77</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 64

<sup>78</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 64



from the Stoclet collection in Bruxelles (Fig. 7).<sup>79</sup> At the same time, however, Berenson published an article in which he commented on his panel, attempting to reconstruct the original complex to which it and the Stoclet *Nativity* belonged.<sup>80</sup> The article is of relevance for it is a rare record of Berenson's opinion on the attribution of his own painting, which would eventually be reflected in the catalogue of the 1937 exhibition.<sup>81</sup> The article was published in the Italian art journal *Dedalo*, founded by Ugo Ojetti, later the main promoter of the 1937 exhibition. It forms part of a collection of articles that would be later translated in English, under the title *Homeless Paintings of the Renaissance*. Famously, these articles discussed paintings of which Berenson possessed a photographic documentation, but of which he did not know the current whereabouts. By publishing them, Berenson was hoping that owners would come forward, thus giving scholars the opportunity to study them.<sup>82</sup>

The text is the first of the series dedicated to the Florentine *Trecento*. It begins with the description of the above-mentioned Stoclet *Nativity*, whose home became known, in fact, at the 1930 Royal Academy exhibition. Berenson begins by saying that the *Nativity* had caught the attention of many scholars when exhibited in London.<sup>83</sup> The same happened with his own panel, which was mentioned in both the guide book and the catalogue of the exhibition. Berenson then goes on to debate the attribution to Giotto, as suggested by Roger Fry in a review of the show in *The Burlington Magazine*. Arguing against

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<sup>79</sup> Balniel, Clark K. (eds.), *A commemorative catalogue of the exhibition of Italian art held in the galleries of the Royal Academy, Burlington House, London, January-March 1930*, London, Oxford University Press, 1931. Even though some works in the collection of Berenson were included in the list of *desiderata*, probably because requested by either Roger Fry or Kenneth Clark who well knew Berenson's collection, Berenson did not sympathise with the relatively low scientific level of the exhibition, and more generally, with the political colour of it, and decided not to participate. Special thanks to Matilde Cartolari for giving me access to the list. See also Hayum, 'Mussolini Exports the Renaissance: The Burlington House Exhibition of 1930 Revisited' in *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 101, n. 2, 2019, p. 86

<sup>80</sup>B. Berenson, 'Quadri senza casa. Il Trecento fiorentino. I' in *Dedalo*, 1930-1931, XI, vol. IV, pp. 957-988, p. 962. In the 1940s, Longhi had argued it formed part of a series of five, including Berenson's Crucifixion, R. Longhi, 'Stefano Fiorentino' (1943), in *Opere complete*, VIII, Sansoni, Florence, 1974

<sup>81</sup> Berenson, 1930-31, p. 962

<sup>82</sup> Berenson, 1930-31, p. 962

<sup>83</sup> Berenson, 1930-31, p. 962

Fry, he wrote: 'I still hesitate, as I always have, to give this panel to the master himself'.<sup>84</sup> Following a stylistic analysis, Berenson reinforces his opinion, arguing that, instead, his own painting, the *Crucifixion*, is closer to Giotto than the Stoclet *Nativity*:

Since the first time that I have seen the Nativity in the Stoclet collection, I realised that I knew a painting by the same hand, a *Crucifixion* that is in my own collection ; and I would like to think that it is not only a prejudice that favours something that I own that lets me believe that my work is intrinsically more worthy of Giotto than the Nativity. The modelling of the bust, the heads of the women, the contained expression of the suffering, the amazed curiosity of the soldiers, all is worthy of an artist. Nonetheless, I cannot find in it not even a small particle of that personality which we call Giotto. The work is certainly by another hand, even though very close ; and I say it with the only aim to increase the corpus of types and forms of this author without names.<sup>85</sup>

At the end of the text, Berenson finally reveals the 'homeless painting' that he was looking for. It is a panel he thought was by the same hand as his *Crucifixion* and the Stoclet *Nativity*.<sup>86</sup> At the end, he proposes to add to the series also a small Madonna in the Vatican gallery, which Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà had identified.

As just seen, Berenson thought his work was by a close follower of Giotto, and in 1937, it would indeed be displayed as such.<sup>87</sup> The 1942 inventory of *I Tatti* discloses where it was kept in the house. It used to hang in Berenson's study - quite a privileged position.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, in an account of Berenson's collection that featured in the journal *Antichità Viva*, Luisa Vertova recalls how

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<sup>84</sup> Tr.: 'La composizione é ampia e chiara, le forme son piene, e i panneggi cosí classicamente soavi da indurre a pensare a Giotto. Tuttavia io esito ancora, come sempre ho esitato, a assegnare questo dipinto proprio a lui [...] appare troppo morbido, rotondeggiante e levigato per un artista, come lui, severo e saldo. Inoltre le teste sono troppo grosse, e gli animali hanno una sentimentalitá che non è in quelli dipinti da lui'. Berenson, 1930-31, pp. 963-4

<sup>85</sup> Berenson, 1930-31, p. 970

<sup>86</sup> Berenson, 1930-31, p. 970

<sup>87</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 64

<sup>88</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 64

the *Crucifixion* was displayed together with other works of the same subject, a criterion that was followed also in the *Mostra Giottesca*.<sup>89</sup> In 1911, only one year after the acquisition of his first Giottesque panel, Berenson bought a second one: it is the already mentioned *Entombment of Christ* (Fig. 2).<sup>90</sup>

The *Entombment* is part of a series of seven panels that included also the *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* from Richter collection that Berenson had sold to Isabella Stewart Gardner. Apart from the three paintings in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich that were already mentioned (the *Crucifixion*, the *Last Supper*, and the *Descent into Limbo*), there is a further one in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (the *Adoration of the Magi*) and one the National Gallery in London (the *Pentecost*) (Fig. 6).<sup>91</sup> As seen above, the *Presentation in the Temple*, and two of the *Crucifixion* and the *Last Supper* from Munich were already familiar to Berenson, and he had argued they formed part of the same work since at least 1908.<sup>92</sup>

By 1805, the original work to which all the panels belonged was dismantled, and the seven panels were split in two groups.<sup>93</sup> The first one consisted of the three panels now in Munich. The *Last Supper* was bought in Rome 1805, by Friedrich ‘Maler’ Müller, a German artist and agent-dealer, who acquired it on behalf of Prince Ludwig of Bavaria. The latter donated it straight away to the Electoral Gallery in Munich.<sup>94</sup> The panel was chosen from among a group of twelve works, as reported by Müller in a letter to the then director of the Electoral Gallery. The remainder of these twelve works had moved from Florence to Rome by 1807, when they were being sold one by one, each for a higher price than the preceding one. From Rome, most of them were shipped to Vienna.<sup>95</sup> It is very likely that the shipment included the other two panels that

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<sup>89</sup> L. Vertova, ‘Firenze: I Tatti’ in *Antichità Viva*, n. 6, Nov-Dec 1969

<sup>90</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 319

<sup>91</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p.319

<sup>92</sup> Berenson, 1908, p. 54

<sup>93</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>94</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>95</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

are now in Munich, the *Descent into Limbo* and the *Crucifixion*, which were bought by the Bavarian King directly from a certain 'Conte Lucchesi' in 1813. It is not known whether the five other pieces mentioned by Müller were actually part of the same polyptych, perhaps from its upper section, or belonged to another disassembled complex.<sup>96</sup>

The second group of four panels (Berenson's *Entombment*, the *Adoration of the Magi* now in the Metropolitan, New York, Gardner's *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, and the *Pentecost* now in London's National Gallery), instead became part of the collection of Prince Stanislaw Poniatowski, a Polish nobleman who lived in Rome from the 1790s and moved to Florence in 1822.<sup>97</sup> The prince probably bought them either in Rome or in Florence at the same time as the Munich pieces were being sold (1805-07). As mentioned above, in 1839, some years after Poniatowski's death, all four panels were sold as 'by Giotto' at a Christie's auction in London.<sup>98</sup> At this point, each panel took a different trajectory. As mentioned above, the *Presentation in the Temple* remained in the United Kingdom until Gardner bought it from Richter via Berenson. The *Pentecost* was bought at a Christie's auction by a certain 'Hall', and was later recorded in Brighton, in the possession of William Coningham.<sup>99</sup> The panel stayed with the family until Geraldine Emily Coningham bequeathed it to the National Gallery in 1942 (under the directorate of Kenneth Clark).<sup>100</sup> Recent research on Parisian auction houses, however, revealed that before entering Coningham's collection, the panel was in Paris.<sup>101</sup> There, it was sold

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<sup>96</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>97</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 320

<sup>98</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pp. 322-3

<sup>99</sup> On Coningham and the NG and the Giotto bequeathed see F.Haskell, 'William Coningham and His Collection of Old Masters' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 133, n. 1063, Oct. 1991, pp. 676-681, p. 680

<sup>100</sup> From a letter Berenson sent to Clark in 1947 it is reported that Clark owned a copy of the 1937 Giotto exhibition catalogue, which he left at I Tatti. R. Cumming, *My Dear BB: the Letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2015, p. 268

<sup>101</sup> Léa Saint-Raymond, presentation entitled 'Knoedler & Co, a Leader of the Parisian Auction Market?' at the conference 'Art Dealers, America and the International Art Market, 1880-1930', at The Getty Research Institute, January 18, 2018. Slides available at <https://ens.academia.edu/LéaSaintRaymond>

by the Galerie George Petit in 1920, during the Alexis Orloff sale (29-30 April), for 172,000 francs.<sup>102</sup>

The last two panels, the *Entombment* (Berenson's) and the *Adoration* (MET), were kept together for a longer time. Like the *Pentecost*, they were bought by 'Hall' at the Christie's auction in 1839.<sup>103</sup> Later, they were recorded in the collection of General Charles Richard Fox in London. As a note at the back of Berenson's panel corroborates, the panels were even framed together.<sup>104</sup> They were sold as such on 4 July 1874, labelled as 'Early Italian School', and bought by a certain 'Daniell'. After that, they entered the collection of William Fuller Maitland at Stansted Hall, Essex.<sup>105</sup> The most up-to-date research argues that at some point before or around 1911, the two panels were divided.<sup>106</sup> The *Adoration* went to London and the *Entombment* to Paris, where Berenson found it at the dealer Steinmeyer's in the same year. It is known that The *Adoration* passed through the hands of Robert Langton Douglas (London), Berenson's rival in the study of Sienese Painting, who sold it to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, where, at the time, Bryson Burroughs was curator of paintings.<sup>107</sup>

However, a letter sent to Martin Davies by Nicky Mariano in 1946 sheds some new light on the trajectory of these two panels.<sup>108</sup> As Mariano wrote, both the *Adoration* and the *Entombment* were together at Steinmeyer's when Berenson saw them:

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<sup>102</sup> The Giotto was the pricest sell. On the sale, see American Art News, vol. 18, n. 33. Saint-Raymond, 2018

<sup>103</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>104</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>105</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>106</sup> See the object's entry on the MET online collection website, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436504>

<sup>107</sup> Bryson Burroughs was an American artist and employee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He began there as an assistant to Curator of Paintings Roger Fry, and when Fry left in 1909, Burroughs assumed the role.

<sup>108</sup> The letter, never referenced before, is held at the archive of the National Gallery London, in the folder dedicated to the Pentecost. Letter from Nicky Mariano to Martin Davies, 1946 in 'NG5360', National Gallery Archive, London.

When Mr Berenson saw his picture at Steinmeyers in Paris in 1907 it had been there for some times together with the Epiphany. The latter was bought by the Metr. museum a few days before Mr B got the *Entombment*.<sup>109</sup>

If this source is reliable, it enriches our knowledge of the provenance of the Metropolitan panel, but it also poses two problems for our investigation. Firstly, Mariano reports the date as 1907, whereas the documentary evidence gives 1911 as the acquisition date for both panels.<sup>110</sup> It is possible that Berenson misremembered when telling Mariano about the circumstances of his purchase. A paper receipt from Steinmeyer's that is held at the *I Tatti* archive confirms that *The Entombment* was bought in June 1911 for a price of 11,000 francs (Fig. 8).<sup>111</sup> The money that actually changed hands, however, was only 500 Francs.<sup>112</sup> The remaining francs were paid from a 10% commission that the auctioneers owed to Berenson for a sale that summer. He had helped them sell a Vivarini for 4,200 francs and a Moroni da Brescia for 3,400 francs.<sup>113</sup> Evidently, Berenson had come across the *Entombment* because he was working for Steinmeyer's, and he took advantage of his privileged position, which allowed him to know first-hand what was available on the market. In July, a month after the opening of this bill, the panel was imported to Italy on a temporary licence. The licence was issued under the name of the restorer Luigi Cavenaghi, who had also worked on Gardner's *Presentation* when it was still in the hands of Richter.<sup>114</sup> Secondly, Mariano's letter confirms that the *Entombment* was framed together with the *Adoration*, meaning that at the time

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<sup>109</sup> Mariano, 1946

<sup>110</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322

<sup>111</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 320; C. B. Strehlke, 'Bernard and Mary Collect: Pictures Come to I Tatti' in Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pp. 19-46, p. 21, Fig. 1.14

<sup>112</sup> As reported in the receipt dated 23OCT1912. Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 320, plate 44; Strehlke, 2015, p. 21

<sup>113</sup> In 1912 Berenson helped the dealers to sell a Tiepolo for 11,000 francs and a Moretto for 2,800. Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 328, n.5

<sup>114</sup> It is known that the importing licence was renewed several times by Mary until 1926. Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 320. Rollin, 1987, p. 294. On Cavenaghi see Civai, Alessandra, *Luigi Cavenaghi e i maestri dei tempi antichi: pittura, restauro e conservazione dei dipinti tra Ottocento e Novecento*, Bergamo, Lubrina, 2006; and Strehlke, 2015, p. 34

of Berenson's purchase, he must have known that the two panels were related regardless of any style-based analysis.

Following the acquisition by the Metropolitan Museum, Borroughs started investigating the panel, sparking the interest of several scholars both by arguing for its attribution and making an attempt to reconstruct the original polyptych that it belonged to.<sup>115</sup> Among these scholars, Frank Jewett Mather was probably the most committed. In October 1911, he told Borroughs he thought the *Adoration* was linked to Gardner's *Presentation*.<sup>116</sup> In November 1911, Borroughs was in touch with Jean Paul Richter, who confirmed Mather's suggestion. A month later, Mather proposed a reconstruction of the series which also included Berenson's *Entombment* and the *Last Supper* in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich.<sup>117</sup> Together with Berenson's thoughts, which he had published in his open letter in 1908, it constituted the hypothesis closest to the eventual accepted reconstruction of the series.<sup>118</sup>

Berenson, being the owner of one of the panels and having already published on the matter, re-joined the debate in 1912. In a letter sent to Borroughs in January 1912, Berenson attributed the *Adoration* to a close pupil of Giotto, i.e. the same hand who painted his own panel at *I Tatti*.<sup>119</sup> With Gardner, Berenson had been willing to risk his reputation in convincing her that she was purchasing a genuine Giotto, but following the purchase of his own panel, he re-confirmed what he expressed in 1908, i.e. that the panels were not by the hand of the master himself. When he wrote to Mary, reporting on the progress of the panel's restoration undertaken by Cavenaghi in 1911, he stated: 'A marvel is the little quasi-Giotto Entombment I got in Paris last time. C

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<sup>115</sup> B. Borroughs, 'The Adoration of the Kings by a Pupil of Giotto' in *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, n. 6, Oct. 1911), pp. 215–16

<sup>116</sup> MET, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436504>

<sup>117</sup> MET, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436504>, F.J. Mather Jr. 'General Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America, December 27–29, 1911.' in *American Journal of Archaeology*, n.16, 1912, p. 102

<sup>118</sup> Berenson also included the Munich Crucifixion. One will have to wait until 1917 for Siren's complete reconstruction of the polyptych (with the exception of the London panel, still unknown), O. Siren, *Giotto and Some of His Followers*, vol. 1, Cambridge, 1917, pp. 79-82. (as Giotto, as possibly a door panel for a sacristy cupboard)

<sup>119</sup> referenced in MET, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436504>

cleaned it before my eyes and it came out intact with its original patina'.<sup>120</sup> Given the date, it is possible that Berenson came to his conclusion because of Cavenaghi's treatment of the panel.

Hanging in the second (western) corridor on the second floor of *I Tatti*, the *Entombment* was probably the Giottesque painting in the house engendering the most debate. Yet, it was not the last Berenson was to acquire. In 1912, Berenson at last gained possession of a 'real Giotto' or, at least, a very credible one, according to the latest scholarship - the *Saint Anthony of Padua* (Fig. 3).<sup>121</sup> Now dated to around 1295, it is another panel with gilded background of around 54x38 cm. It depicts the half-length figure of a monk in a brown habit with three-knotted belt, holding a book in a red binding, who was later identified as Saint Anthony of Padua. Berenson thought the panel was by Giotto himself and dated it around 1325-28, the period of the Bardi chapel frescoes.<sup>122</sup> He never wrote about it, but he included it in his lists as 'by Giotto', and his opinion was adopted by Franco Russoli in his first catalogue of Berenson's collection.<sup>123</sup> The arrival of the painting at *I Tatti* was one of those 'processions of the Magi with Monster- and Masterpieces' referred to by Mary.<sup>124</sup> According to the 1942 inventory of the house, the panel was hung on the staircase leading from the first to the second floor.<sup>125</sup>

Like the bulk of Berenson's collection, all three of the Giottesque panels were bought at the beginning of the 1910s. Whilst critics around the world were struggling to put Giotto's chronology and catalogue into order, some young Italian artists began to look at the figure of Giotto as symbol of the Italian artistic tradition, especially in Florence, the home of the Berensons since

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<sup>120</sup> Letter from Bernard Berenson to Mary Berenson, 28SEP1911, reported in Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 320. C stands for Cavenaghi.

<sup>121</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 43

<sup>122</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 43

<sup>123</sup> The subject matter was identified only in by. Until then it was generally referred to as Franciscan Saint. Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 43

<sup>124</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 43

<sup>125</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 43



1900.<sup>126</sup> Among the protagonists of this renewed interest in the Italian Old Masters, there were people such as Carlo Placci, Ardengo Soffici and Emilio Cecchi, whose relation to Berenson shall be explored in the next few pages. This younger generation of art critics and artists, in contrast with more senior academics, was discovering and re-evaluating Berenson's writings.<sup>127</sup> In particular, the series dedicated to the *Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (Venetian, Florentine, Central Italian and Northern Italian), completed by 1907, played a pivotal role in the formation of a new discourse on art in Italy.<sup>128</sup> As already mentioned, by structure, each volume of the series was composed of two parts. The first section features essays in which general art theoretical concepts are explained, linked to an art historical narrative articulated in artists' names. The second section consists of indices of works of art attributed to the artists discussed in the first section, a prelude to the famous 'lists' that would be published in 1932.<sup>129</sup>

When reviewing *The Venetian Painters* in 1894, the senior scholar Adolfo Venturi heavily criticised Berenson's authority, calling the book's indices 'minimal notes from an amateur's notebook'.<sup>130</sup> But by the 1910s, even the most critical voices, such as those of Venturi and Frizzoni, had softened. They now recognised the value of Berenson's indices, but they still considered the essays unworthy of attention.<sup>131</sup> The younger generation, by contrast, showed an interest precisely in Berenson's theories, as explained in those essays.<sup>132</sup> In the so-called 'Berensonian aesthetic', they saw an abstract scheme of concepts that could be applied to study any artistic period, modern and

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<sup>126</sup> Iamurri, 1998, pp. 69-71 ; Monciatti, 2010, pp. 37-42

<sup>127</sup> Iamurri, 1998, pp.69-71

<sup>128</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p.69

<sup>129</sup> If the books were actually aimed at both a general public, who used it very much as a touristic guide, and at an expert readership, the indexes in particular rapidly became a tool for connoisseurs. In those years, Berenson's popularity within Italy was expanding outside the Milanese circles of internationally renowned connoisseurs, and his opinion was increasingly sought after by dealers, collectors and art historians, with whom he often exchanged photographs. Iamurri, 1998, p.69

<sup>130</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p.69

<sup>131</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p.69

<sup>132</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p.69

contemporary included, advocating for its appreciation.<sup>133</sup> Berenson's essays, moreover, were littered with juxtapositions between artists of the past and modernists such as Monet, Degas, and Cézanne, which were received critically by senior academics, but imitated by younger critics.<sup>134</sup>

One of the theories that was instrumental to this younger generation was that of the 'tactile values', which, as explored above, was illustrated through Giotto's work. Among the youngsters who appropriated this theory, there were some individuals who actively participated or commented on the 1937 Giotto exhibition, such as the artist Ardengo Soffici, who was in the organising committee of the exhibition, including Emilio Cecchi, later translator of Berenson's *Painters*, who wrote a monograph on Giotto in 1937; and Roberto Longhi, who visited the exhibition with his university students, later writing a commentary on the *Mostra Giottesca, Giudizio sul Duecento*, that had a long-lasting impact on the studies on the origins of Italian art, for it questioned the status as 'masterpieces' of many works produced in that century.<sup>135</sup>

Newly founded art journals, such as *La Voce* and *Il Marzocco*, played a fundamental role in both spreading Berenson's ideas and raising awareness of modern art movements, such as impressionism, post-impressionism, cubism, expressionism, etc.<sup>136</sup> Many of the artists and critics that were publishing in these journals had been living in Paris, and met with dealers and critics who were promoting such modern art. Carlo Placci, who was in the 1937 exhibition committee, had been the one who introduced Berenson to Von Hildebrand, giving rise to the formation of the idea of tactile values. In turn, Berenson introduced Placci to his friend Maurice Denis, whose ideas had shaped both

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<sup>133</sup> Iamurri, 1998, pp. 69-70

<sup>134</sup> Iamurri, 1998, pp. 70, 73

<sup>135</sup> Longhi R., 'Giudizio sul Duecento' in *Proporzioni*, n. 2, 1948, pp. 5-54, republished in 'Giudizio sul Duecento e ricerche sul Trecento nell'Italia centrale, 1939 - 1970' in *Opere Complete di Roberto Longhi*, VIII, Florence, Sansoni, 1974. For a deep analysis and relation to the 1937 exhibition, see Monciatti, 2010, pp.148-67; D'Ettorre, Mencaroni, Vespari, 2019, p. 191. *La Voce*, founded in 1908 by Giuseppe Prezzolini, featured a series of articles on French 20th-century art. Iamurri, 1989, p. 71

<sup>136</sup> *La Voce*, founded in 1908 by Giuseppe Prezzolini, featured a series of articles on French 20th-century art. Iamurri, 1989, p. 71

Hildebrand's and Berenson's theories.<sup>137</sup> Ironically, none of these encounters took place in France, but they all happened around Florence, confirming the pivotal and international role this city played for the criticism of modernist art, as well as for the study of the Renaissance.<sup>138</sup> In 1909, Placci convinced Berenson to subscribe to *La Voce*, the journal in which Placci and others promoted Berenson's critical views whilst also writing on modernist art.<sup>139</sup>

Ardengo Soffici, like Placci, had lived in Paris, and was acquainted with Denis from at least 1908.<sup>140</sup> He published a series of articles on French modern art in *La Voce*, including the first article on Cézanne written in Italy. In his texts, Soffici often refers to Berenson's theories, thanks to Placci who had lent Soffici his Berenson books.<sup>141</sup> Writing about Picasso in 1911, Placci wrote that the painter had taken inspiration from primitive art forms, 'that owe their power from what an American critic, Berenson, would call tactile values'.<sup>142</sup> It is unclear at which point Soffici and Berenson met in person, but in 1910, *La Voce* and Soffici organised the '*Prima Mostra Italiana dell'impressionismo*'.<sup>143</sup> Berenson figures among lenders, such as Paul Durand Ruel, Ambroise Vollard, and Egisto Fabbri. He lent a watercolour by Pissarro and the only work by Matisse that was exhibited.<sup>144</sup>

Emilio Cecchi and Roberto Longhi each attempted to synthesise Berenson's theories, which were empirical, with the philosophical idealism of Benedetto Croce, another model for their generation.<sup>145</sup> Both Cecchi and Longhi

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<sup>137</sup> Iamurri, 1998, pp.71, 73, n.34

<sup>138</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 71; see F. Bardazzi (ed.), *Cézanne a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 2007; S. Bietoletti (ed.), *Firenze ai tempi di Cézanne: luoghi e protagonisti di una città moderna*, Florence, Alinari, 2007.

<sup>139</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 72, n. 30

<sup>140</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p.73, n. 34

<sup>141</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p.74, n. 44

<sup>142</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p.72

<sup>143</sup> The 1903 antecedent did not have the same echo (See Chapter 6). Iamurri, 1998, p. 72

<sup>144</sup> Iamurri, 1998, n. 31

<sup>145</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 74

corresponded with Berenson, and they each independently offered to translate Berenson's works into Italian. Eventually, only Cecchi succeeded. As with Placci and Soffici, Berenson's influence can be detected in the writings of Cecchi and Longhi in those years.<sup>146</sup> In an article in *Il Marzocco* from July 1911, Cecchi wrote on the painter Zuloaga that the female bodies he painted 'give an idea of concrete reality, thanks to their plasticity [...] Berenson would say that they arouse our tactile imagination at the highest'.<sup>147</sup> In 1913, some Futurist artists organised their first Italian exhibition in Rome, exhibiting works by Soffici among others. In his review, focusing on the problem of movement in representation, Cecchi once again referred to Berenson's tactile values.<sup>148</sup> And in 1914, he even published an article in a Roman newspaper, praising Berenson as an aesthetic critic.<sup>149</sup> Cecchi met Berenson in person in March 1912, and in April of that year, he visited *I Tatti* for the first time.<sup>150</sup> By that time, all three of the Giottesque panels that would be exhibited in 1937 and included in Cecchi's monograph on Giotto were already in the house, and one can imagine Cecchi and Berenson conversing on Giotto and tactile values while standing in front of them.<sup>151</sup>

Summer 1912 also marks the first interactions between Longhi and Berenson. Back then, Longhi contacted Berenson proposing himself as the translator of his *Painters* into Italian, continuing Placci's work in diffusing Berenson's value as a critic.<sup>152</sup> Longhi's first article in *La Voce* was a review of the above-mentioned futurist exhibition, in which the discussion of

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<sup>146</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 74

<sup>147</sup> E. Cecchi, 'la donna di Zorn' in *Il Marzocco*, vol.XVI, n.28, 09JUL1911, cited in Iamurri, 1998, p. 75, n.53

<sup>148</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 80

<sup>149</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p. 80

<sup>150</sup> Iamurri, 1998, p.75

<sup>151</sup> In January 1910, Soffici went to see Berenson to 'see his paintings and admired his possessions', Letter from Soffici to Papini, 14JAN1910 in M. Richter, *Papini e Soffici: mezzo secolo di vita italiana, (1903-1956)*, Florence, Le Lettere, 2005, p. 166

<sup>152</sup> The episode is often reported for Longhi famously asked Berenson if he had any influence in formulating his theories, and Berenson omitted to mention his acquaintance with Hildebrand. Iamurri, 1998, p. 77; Brown, 2010. On Longhi and Berenson, see C. Garboli, C. Montagnani (eds.), *Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi: lettere e scartafacci 1912-1957*, Milan, Adelphi edizioni, 1993

composition, plasticity, and movement recall Berenson's essays. In the end, however, Longhi never translated Berenson's essays (a project accomplished instead by Cecchi in 1936), and the relationship between the two deteriorated gradually, ending in complete silence.<sup>153</sup> Nonetheless, Berenson's aesthetics and his illuminating comparisons between past and present greatly influenced Longhi's early studies on the *Seicento*, as shall be seen in the last chapter of this part.

It emerges that 'tactile values' was among Berenson's most celebrated theories, becoming the most talked-about and re-used concept within Italian avant-garde circles, especially in Florence, about fifteen years after its conception. It is known that Berenson always regretted not to have been able to elaborate on his theories, giving them a more rigorous and scientific status.<sup>154</sup> His work as an adviser in the art market had become a time-consuming priority, and a necessity, if he wanted to keep up the life-style to which he had become used at *I Tatti*, including his collecting activities.<sup>155</sup> As Berenson himself wrote, he did not have much to add to what had been explained in the volumes on the Italian Painters.<sup>156</sup> His theories, however, kept re-emerging in several articles he published in journals addressed to the collecting public. In these articles, once again, he managed to reconcile a rigorous connoisseurship with his characteristic juxtapositions of modernists and old masters. That was the case, for instance, in a text on the so-called Madonna Benson, which featured in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* in 1913, and another one on Antonello da Messina, where the plasticity of Giotto and Piero della Francesca were compared to that of Cézanne.<sup>157</sup>

Whilst Berenson and his tactile values were being re-interpreted as the premise for a new kind of art criticism, scholarship on Giotto, on his predecessors, and on his followers advanced significantly. With a focus on

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<sup>153</sup> lamurri, 1989, p.81

<sup>154</sup> Brown, 2010, p. 9

<sup>155</sup> Brown, 2010, p. 9

<sup>156</sup> lamurri, 1989, pp.78, 81

<sup>157</sup> lamurri, 1989, p. 78

dismantling the myths that surrounded the painter, scholars around Europe enriched the actual knowledge of materials, subject matter, and workshops, in order to critically configure the artist's catalogue.<sup>158</sup> As a result of this new wave of Giotto studies, Berenson's panels gained a certain renown within the specialised press. Most scholars focused on assessing the attribution of the panels, situating them chronologically, and/or re-composing the disassembled works that they had once belonged to.<sup>159</sup> The *Entombment*, as already seen, was the most frequently discussed of the three, and Oscar Sirén is often cited as the first one to have reconstructed the polyptych to which it belonged, even though Berenson himself in 1908 and Frank Jewett Mather in 1911 had already suggested it.<sup>160</sup> Other scholars interested in analysing its authorship included Iginio Benvenuto Supinio, Raimond Van Marle, Philip Hendy, Roger Fry, Roberto Longhi, and Pietro Toesca.<sup>161</sup>

Pietro Toesca was in close contact with Berenson, with whom he shared many views on Giotto. In consonance with Berenson, Toesca's work on Trecento Florentine Painting (1929) and the text on Giotto in the Italian Encyclopedia (1933) embodied a line of enquiry that argued for the importance played by Byzantine art that would eventually emerge in the 1937 exhibition.<sup>162</sup> By the 1930s, the Italian *Duecento* and *Trecento* had been extensively mapped, with the notable exception of the Bolognese school, as shall be seen in the next chapter of this part.<sup>163</sup> The problem of the origins of Italian art, and in particular the innovation symbolised by Giotto, was a topic of debate between

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<sup>158</sup> In this respect, Monciatti's work on the 1937 Exhibition is the most extensive study. Monciatti, 2010, p. 45

<sup>159</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, pl. 43, 44, 64

<sup>160</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 322; O. Sirén, *Giotto and Some of His Followers*, Cambridge, Mass., 1917, vol. 1, pp. 79–82, pl. 60, no.1

<sup>161</sup> I. B. Supino, *Giotto*, Florence, 1920, pp. 270–71; R. Van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*. Vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century*, The Hague, 1924, pp. 186–88; P. Hendy. 'The Supposed 'Painter of Saint Stephen'-I. in *The Burlington Magazine*, n. 52 and II; P. Toesca, *Florentine Painting of the Trecento*, Florence, 1929, p. 66 ; R. Fry, 'Notes on the Italian Exhibition at Burlington House—I.' in *The Burlington Magazine*, n.56, February 1930, p. 8; R. Longhi, 'Progressi nella reintegrazione d'un polittico di Giotto' in *Dedalo*, n. 2, 1930, p. 290

<sup>162</sup> Monciatti, 2010, pp. 48-51

<sup>163</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p. 51

academics and artists. Fostered by the fascist cult for nationalism and the regime's glorification of the Roman past, the public opinion was divided between those who favoured a continuity with the Byzantine tradition, and those who preferred to argue for a greater influence of Roman art.<sup>164</sup> It is precisely within this divided climate that the celebrations for the centenary of Giotto's death were conceived in 1937.<sup>165</sup>

For the centenary, multiple initiatives were developed in those places that are typically associated with the painter, above all Florence. Already in 1936, a special committee was appointed to organise and supervise the celebratory events.<sup>166</sup> Among the committee members appear the names of Florence's major art historians and contemporary artists, some of whom have already been discussed. The list includes: Mario Salmi, Art History professor at the university of Florence; Carlo Gamba (1870-1963), director of the Herbert Horne foundation; Giovanni Poggi (1880-1961), the *soprintendente* of Florence; Alessandro Contini Bonacossi (1878-1955), the famous art dealer; Ugo Ojetti (1871-1946), the writer, art critic, and exhibition organiser; Ugo Procacci (1905-19919), who would succeed Poggi as *soprintendente* and become famous for the restoration and detachment of frescoes and the re-discovery of the *sinopia*; the futurist artist Ardengo Soffici (1879-1964); and the writer Giovanni Papini (1881-1956).<sup>167</sup>

The centenary celebrations were varied in nature and in scope, ranging from the launch of a new liquor with the name of Giotto to theatre plays and restoration campaigns.<sup>168</sup> Several series of academic lectures and publications also contributed to make 1937 a remarkable year for Giotto studies. Of particular relevance in the present context was the cycle of academic conferences organised by Giuseppe Fiocco at the University of Padua in the

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<sup>164</sup> The theme was central for instance in G. Galassi, *Roma o Bisanzio*, Rome, Libreria dello Stato, 1929 in reply to Josef strzygowsky on biz art as origin of christian art. Monciatti, 2010, pp. 39, 45, n.10

<sup>165</sup> The Florentine tradition actually argues for 1336 as the year of death, but 1937 was chosen. Monciatti, 2010, p. 67

<sup>166</sup> Monciatti, 2008, p. 143

<sup>167</sup> Monciatti, 2008, pp. 146-7

<sup>168</sup> Monciatti, 2008, p. 146

spring of 1937, which were eventually be published in *Rivista D'Arte*.<sup>169</sup> Richard Offner, who was widely recognised as the most important scholar of Giotto at the time, also gave a lecture, but did not allow its publication.<sup>170</sup> Two years later, it resulted in his celebrated 'Giotto - Non Giotto' article in *The Burlington Magazine*.<sup>171</sup> Influenced by the 1937 exhibition, this article set out all the doubts that still surround the attribution of the Franciscan stories in the Upper Church at Assisi.<sup>172</sup> Equally significant was the already mentioned publication of a new monograph on Giotto, written by Emilio Cecchi for Hoepli.<sup>173</sup> As seen above, Cecchi was the most influential perpetuator of Berenson's aesthetics, having translated into Italian the whole series of the *Italian Painters* only the year before. Cecchi's volume reflected the strand of scholarship of which both Berenson and Toesca were exponents, which considered as pivotal the relationship between Giotto, local artistic tradition, antiquity as a source of inspiration, and byzantine techniques and iconography.<sup>174</sup> When reviewing Cecchi's volume (which, incidentally, commented upon all three of Berenson's Giottesque panels), Berenson praised it precisely for the way it treated Giotto's early period and the dialogue with his predecessors in the creation of a new language.<sup>175</sup>

Among the events of the centenary, the one that had the greatest impact was the *Mostra Giottesca* that was held in Florence in the rooms of the Palazzo degli Uffizi (Fig. 9). The press reported at the time that the exhibition had been 'conceived and created by scholars for scholars'.<sup>176</sup> It is important to note, however, that this exhibition was staged in a period in which the fascist regime appropriated the cultural and artistic past of the country for propaganda

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<sup>169</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p. 139 ; Monciatti, 2008, p. 143

<sup>170</sup> Monciatti, 2008, p. 147

<sup>171</sup> Monciatti, 2010, pp. 139-30

<sup>172</sup> Monciatti, 2010, pp. 139-30

<sup>173</sup> Monciatti, 2008, p. 142

<sup>174</sup> Monciatti, 2008, p. 142

<sup>175</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p. 147

<sup>176</sup> Cit. from Coletti L., 'La mostra Giottesca' in *Bollettino d'Arte*, XXXI, pp. 49-72, p. 49, reported in Monciatti, 2010, p. 24



purposes.<sup>177</sup> Alessio Monciatti, who first studied the exhibition, has investigated whether the Mostra Giottesca was an intrinsically fascist exhibition, concluding that it was not. It began as an initiative by a few scholars, for the sake of scholarship. At the beginning, in fact, the regime was even opposed, as it was seen as a mere local event. Eventually, partly due to foreign press advertisements, the organiser managed to overcome this objection, and to convince the regime of the potential propagandistic value of the show.<sup>178</sup>

The exhibition opened to the public on 27th April 1937. A total of three hundred and three artefacts were displayed across eight rooms of the Uffizi Palace, mainly divided by technique and subject matter.<sup>179</sup> The title, *Mostra Giottesca*, mirrored the curatorial choice of showing paintings by those artists working before Giotto and those by his followers, which were represented in greater numbers than works by the master himself. In this way, the comparatively small group of objects attributed to Giotto functioned at once as the heart of the show and as an idealised partition between the art of the *Duecento* and that of the *Trecento*.<sup>180</sup> As usual with such early exhibitions, the design of the show was hardly documented. Visual evidence is limited to a few photographs that portray official events during the opening, in which the works appear in the background (Figs. 10-12).<sup>181</sup> Press releases, correspondence files, and exhibition reviews, however, allow for a partial reconstruction.<sup>182</sup> It is known that Giovanni Michelucci was the architect in charge of the exhibition design (Figs. 13-14). He was one of the most important architects of the rationalist movement, and by the time of the Mostra Giottesca, he had just finished the project of Florence's new train station. His design was

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<sup>177</sup> Monciatti, 2010, pp. 99-103. See for instance Prisco 2013

<sup>178</sup> Monciatti, 2010, pp. 74, 88-103 ; D'Ettorre, Mencaroni, Vespari, 2019, p. 179

<sup>179</sup> Monciatti, 2008, p. 150

<sup>180</sup> Monciatti, 2008, p. 152

<sup>181</sup> Since the work of Monciatti, some new evidence has been recovered. See D'Ettorre E., Mencaroni R., Vespari S.A., 'Nuove indagini sulla Mostra Giottesca del 1937' in *Mostre a Firenze 1911 - 1942. Nuove indagini per un itinerario tra arte e cultura*, Giometti C. (ed.), Florence, Edizioni ETS, 2019, pp. 177 - 191

<sup>182</sup> All information is due to the extensive archive work of Alessandro Monciatti. See Monciatti, 2008 and 2010

characterised by a specific choice of materials, through which Michelucci sought to suggest the original context of many of the works exhibited.<sup>183</sup>

It is known from the sources that the first three rooms were dedicated to the so-called *pre-giotteschi*. On the walls, paintings were hung very close together, a choice favoured by the small size of the artefacts themselves.<sup>184</sup> The hanging did not follow a rigid chronology. There was, instead, an implicit articulation into geographical schools, mainly those of Lucca, Pisa, Siena, Arezzo, Umbria, and Florence. In this way, the public was confronted with the artistic exchanges that occurred between these artistic centres. Works were also organised according to subject-matter.<sup>185</sup> This arrangement facilitated comparisons between schools and artists, some of which, as we shall see, would become canonical. It mirrored recent interests among academics, who were investigating the genesis and evolution of widespread iconographies, such as the Virgin and Child, or the painted cross. Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà, for example had dedicated a monographic study to the painted cross in 1929.<sup>186</sup>

Following the rooms with the *pre-giotteschi*, one would reach the exhibition's main gallery, the *Salone Magliabechiano*. This room hosted the Giotto nucleus, and it is where Michelucci's visual discourse was at its most emphatic. The *Salone* was designed to resemble a church nave with a sacred atmosphere.<sup>187</sup> Although the curators' idea was to isolate Giotto's own works, the *Salone* actually underlined his debts and connections to both Cimabue and Duccio and allowed for a direct confrontation with his contemporaries.<sup>188</sup> As already mentioned, the 1937 exhibition proposed for the first time visual comparisons that were to become canonical in the history of art, the best-known examples of which involve Giotto's *Maestà Ognissanti* next to Duccio's *Madonna Ruccellai*, and Cimabue's *Holy Trinity* next to Giotto's *Crucifix* from

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<sup>183</sup> Monciatti, 2008, p. 151

<sup>184</sup> Monciatti, 2010, pp. 23, 25

<sup>185</sup> Monciatti, 2008, pp.150-53

<sup>186</sup> E. Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della passione*, Verona, Casa Ed. Apollo, 1929. Monciatti, 2010, p. 25

<sup>187</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p.27

<sup>188</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p.27

Santa Croce. Years later, Michelucci would consolidate these comparison when he re-designed the *Sala dei Primitivi* in the Uffizi during the 1950s, in collaboration with Carlo Scarpa and Ignazio Gardella, under the direction of Salvini (Figs. 15-16).<sup>189</sup>

The entire exhibition and more specifically the group of works recognised as ‘by Giotto’, can be seen as a snapshot of the scholarship of the time. The display gives an idea of the most recent understanding of the master’s corpus, which had been constantly re-shaped. By grouping together many works that had never been seen next to each other in one room, the exhibition contributed to further revisions of the artist’s catalogue.<sup>190</sup> Some of the works that were exhibited as by Giotto are no longer attributed to him, e.g. the *Coronation of the Virgin* from the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce, which would eventually, by consensus, be given to Taddeo Gaddi.<sup>191</sup> Other works that are now considered established masterpieces by Giotto did not feature, such as the *Polittico di Badia*. Others were labelled only as ‘attributed to’ Giotto, whereas they are no longer doubted today, such the painted cross from San Francesco in Rimini.<sup>192</sup> As shall be seen, the same applies to the three works that Berenson lent to the exhibition.

After the Salone, the exhibition continued with objects other than paintings. One room hosted manuscripts and illuminations, mirroring the recent interest in illuminations among scholars such as Pietro Toesca. Another room showed casts of the reliefs from the bell tower of the Duomo. The casts had been specifically created for the exhibition and were later donated to the Art History department of the University of Florence.<sup>193</sup> Next to this room, there was a corridor, where a few drawings were exhibited. The route then continued downstairs to the ground floor, past some wooden sculptures situated on the

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<sup>189</sup> Monciatti, 2010, pp.25, 27

<sup>190</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p.28

<sup>191</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p.28

<sup>192</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p. 28

<sup>193</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p. 28

landings of the stairs.<sup>194</sup> On the ground floor, there were three more rooms. The first and most spacious one had been designed by Michelucci to feature a chapel at its centre. The chapel had even been consecrated, and it contained some liturgical objects.<sup>195</sup> Around the chapel, paintings by contemporaries of Giotto were displayed. This and the following section were mainly organised by artist, including Taddeo Gaddi, Bernardo Daddi, and the Master of Santa Cecilia.<sup>196</sup> In these rooms, moreover, there was a clearer focus on Florentine art compared to the first section of the exhibition, omitting Giotto's influence beyond the regional borders.<sup>197</sup>

This latter choice was both a reflection of the interests of the scholars behind the exhibition and a consequence of the geographical distribution of its lenders.<sup>198</sup> Of the three hundred and three artefacts that were on show, only forty-two came from abroad. Seventeen arrived from the US (including thirteen from New York), fourteen from Germany (of which ten came from Berlin), and eight from France (including five from Paris). Tuscany, by contrast, contributed two hundred thirty-six works, one hundred forty-two of which came from Florence and its surroundings.<sup>199</sup> Among them, there were the three pieces coming from *I Tatti* in Settignano: the *Entombment* (Fig. 2), the *Crucifixion* (Fig. 4), and the *Saint Anthony* (Fig. 3), which were probably all displayed in the Salone.

As can be deduced from the catalogue, *The Entombment* was exhibited as 'attributed to Giotto', in accordance with the prevailing scholarly opinion, including Berenson's, who, as seen before, called it a 'quasi-Giotto'.<sup>200</sup> The catalogue entry informs that the work once formed part of a polyptych, which was first reconstructed by Sirèn in 1917, ignoring the contributions by Mather

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<sup>194</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p. 29

<sup>195</sup> This was recalling the 1922 exhibition held in San Marco, *Mostra del Tesoro di Firenze Sacra*. Monciatti, 2010, p. 30

<sup>196</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p. 30

<sup>197</sup> Monciatti, 2010, pp. 24, 33

<sup>198</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p.33

<sup>199</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p.33

<sup>200</sup> *Mostra Giottesca*, 1937, cat. 106, p.44

and Berenson himself from ten years earlier.<sup>201</sup> The *Pentecost*, now in the National Gallery in London, was not yet recognised as a part of the same complex, whereas the entry mentions the three Munich pieces and the Metropolitan Museum *Adoration*. The latter was featured in the exhibition too, catalogued as n. 105, immediately preceding Berenson's panel.<sup>202</sup> In its entry, beside the Berenson and the Munich panels, Isabella Stewart Gardner's is also mentioned.<sup>203</sup> In absence of a description and of a photograph, it is possible to imagine, based on the catalogue numbers, that the *Entombment* and the *Adoration* were hanging side by side in the exhibition.

The panel depicting *Saint Anthony of Padua*, entry n. 111 in the catalogue, was exhibited as a 'Franciscan Saint', 'attributed to Giotto'.<sup>204</sup> The entry reports that the work was first attributed by Mather, who published it in 1925.<sup>205</sup> The *Crucifixion*, finally, was exhibited as 'Follower of Giotto'.<sup>206</sup> Its two-line entry states that it formed part of a diptych with the *Nativity* in the Stoclet collection.<sup>207</sup> Preceding it in the catalogue, work n.116 was another *Crucifixion*, from the Musée des Beaux Arts in Strasbourg, which presumably was hung physically next to Berenson's. The panel was exhibited as 'workshop of Giotto'.<sup>208</sup> Both works were illustrated adjacent to one another on the same page in the catalogue.<sup>209</sup> Interestingly, on the back of a photograph in the Photo Collection at *I Tatti*, a note by Mary Berenson compares this Strasbourg *Crucifixion* with the one owned by Berenson.<sup>210</sup> Sadly, it is not possible to know whether that annotation precedes the exhibition, or was instead inspired it.

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<sup>201</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, cat. 106

<sup>202</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, cat. 105

<sup>203</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, cat. 105

<sup>204</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, cat. 111

<sup>205</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, cat. 111

<sup>206</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, cat. 117

<sup>207</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, cat. 117

<sup>208</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, cat. 116

<sup>209</sup> Mostra Giottesca, 1937, Tav. 70

<sup>210</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 422, pl. 64

Being an exceptional opportunity to examine a large collection of works by Giotto and other masters from his era, the exhibition had a considerable resonance among scholars, as corroborated by the many reviews of the show that appeared in specialised journals.<sup>211</sup> Almost every single review comments on the three Berenson panels, which put them in the public eye in an unprecedented manner. Mario Salmi wrote about them in *Emporium*, Wilhelm Suida in *Pantheon*, Carlo Gamba in *Rivista d'Arte*, and Luigi Coletti in *Bollettino D'Arte*, just to cite a few.<sup>212</sup> Moreover, the exhibition inspired a host of new studies, including the above-mentioned 'Giotto-Non Giotto' by Offner, and the polemical 'Giudizio sul Duecento' by Roberto Longhi. Each of these, too, raise questions about Berenson's panels.<sup>213</sup>

Why did Berenson lend to the 1937 exhibition? By exhibiting his works, Berenson clearly gave an unprecedented exposure to the panels that he had acquired some fifteen years before, which were now seen by around 150.000 visitors.<sup>214</sup> Traditionally, this was a way of validating their status and potentially increasing their value. Yet, this was a strategy not without risk. As seen in Chapter 1, the Ferrarese exhibition of just 1933 had ended up 'downgrading' works from Berenson's collection, owing to the comments by Roberto Longhi published in *Officina Ferrarese*. Then, there was the scholarly nature of the 1937 exhibition. Previously, Berenson's works had been requested for the exhibition on Italian Art at the Royal Academy in London in 1930; he decided, however, not to take part in this show, partly because of its close association with the Fascist regime in Italy and its propagandistic overtones.<sup>215</sup> The *Mostra Giottesca*, on the other hand, was primarily a scholarly enterprise, sanctioned by the regime only in a second instance. Not to be ignored is also the fact that

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<sup>211</sup> Strehlke, Israëls, 2015, p. 422

<sup>212</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p.

<sup>213</sup> M. Salmi, 'La mostra Giottesca' in *Emporium*, n. 86, July 1937, pp. 358–60; W. Suida, 'Die Giotto-Ausstellung in Florenz' in *Pantheon* n. 20, July–December 1937, p. 350; C. Gamba, 'Osservazioni sull'arte di Giotto' in *Rivista d'arte* n.19, 1937, p. 274; L. Coletti, 'La mostra giottesca', *Bollettino d'arte* n. 31, August 1937, p. 57

<sup>214</sup> D'Ettore, Mencaroni, Vespari, 2019, pp.188-191

<sup>215</sup> Strehlke, 2015, p. 32, n. 81 ; Hayum, 2019, p. 86

the exhibition was held in Florence. Berenson had been opposed to sending works to London (1930) for fear that the international shipment might cause damage to the fragile artefacts. For the *Giottesca*, by contrast, his works only had to move from Settignano to the Uffizi.

Most importantly, the *Mostra Giottesca* provided Berenson with an opportunity to promote himself not only as an expert on Giotto, but also to boost his art-theoretical ideas so closely associated with the Trecento master. Although Berenson's authority as a connoisseur was well-established by 1937, many of the leading academics of the previous generation still regarded him with suspicion as an art historian *tout court*. In 1929, for instance, Berenson was famously 'forgotten' at the 1929 congress of Art History that was organised in Rome.<sup>216</sup> As seen before, however, the organisers of the events surrounding the Giotto centenary were admirers of Berenson's theoretical work. Emilio Cecchi had recently completed the Italian translation of the whole series of the *Italian Painters*, and Carlo Placci, and Ardengo Soffici, and other enthusiastic promoters of Berenson as a theorist, all actively contributed to the celebratory events.

The duality of respected connoisseur and under-rated theorist that permeated Berenson's life, also manifested itself in his activities as a collector. Some of his purchases were the result of Berenson exercising his ability as a connoisseur. In the case of Giotto, however, the purchases might have been driven by the desire to secure a material complement to his aesthetic theories. In fact, Berenson never showed much interest in publicly arguing for the attribution of his Giottesque panels, leaving others to deal with it, especially after they featured in the 1937 exhibition. The same can probably be said of Berenson's collection of Sieneese paintings, which was formed in conjunction with his re-discovery and promotion of the school. Interestingly, it was Berenson's essays on the Franciscan spirituality of the Sieneese school, and its parallel with Buddhism that was praised by the same younger generation of critics that actively engaged with Berenson's essays in the *Italian Painters*.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Monciatti, 2010, p. 45

<sup>217</sup> Iamurri, 1998, pp. 69-70

Again this is a comparison with a material parallel in Berenson's collection: as seen, oriental objects were displayed side by side with Sieneese works at *I Tatti*. Luisa Vertova, in her 1968 account of Berenson's collection at *I Tatti*, wrote: 'At the top of the stairs, Giotto's Florence and Duccio's Siena [...] welcome us'.<sup>218</sup> One could argue that the visitor was equally welcomed by the concept of tactile values and the parallel between the Buddhist-Franciscan spirituality. The *Mostra Giottesca* continued this materialising of aesthetic theories in a public format. Michelucci's design of the Salone, which was reprised in the permanent Trecento room at the Uffizi, juxtaposes Madonnas by Giotto and Duccio exactly as once described by Berenson in the *Florentine Painters*.

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<sup>218</sup> Vertova L., 'Firenze: I Tatti' in *Antichità Viva*, n. 6, Nov-Dec 1969



# Chapter 4 - Illustrations

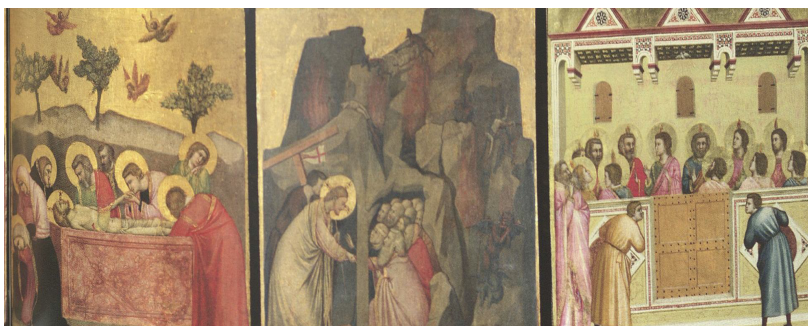


*Fig. 1: Master of the Spinola Annunciation, Crucifixion, 1309-10, tempera on panel, 20 cm x 16,5 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano*





◀ Fig.2: Giotto and Workshop, *The Entombment of Christ*, ca. 1320, tempera on panel, 45.3 cm x 43.9 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano



◀ Fig.6: Giotto and Workshop, *Seven panels of the reconstructed altarpiece*. *The Adoration of the Magi* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York); *the Presentation of Christ in the Temple* (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston); *the Last Supper*, *the Descent into Limbo*, and *the Crucifixion* (Alte Pinakothek, Munich); *The Entombment of Christ* (Berenson Collection, Settignano); *the Pentecost* (National Gallery, London)





*Fig.3: Giotto, Saint Anthony of Padua, c. 1295, tempera on panel, 41.3 cm x 56.7 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano*





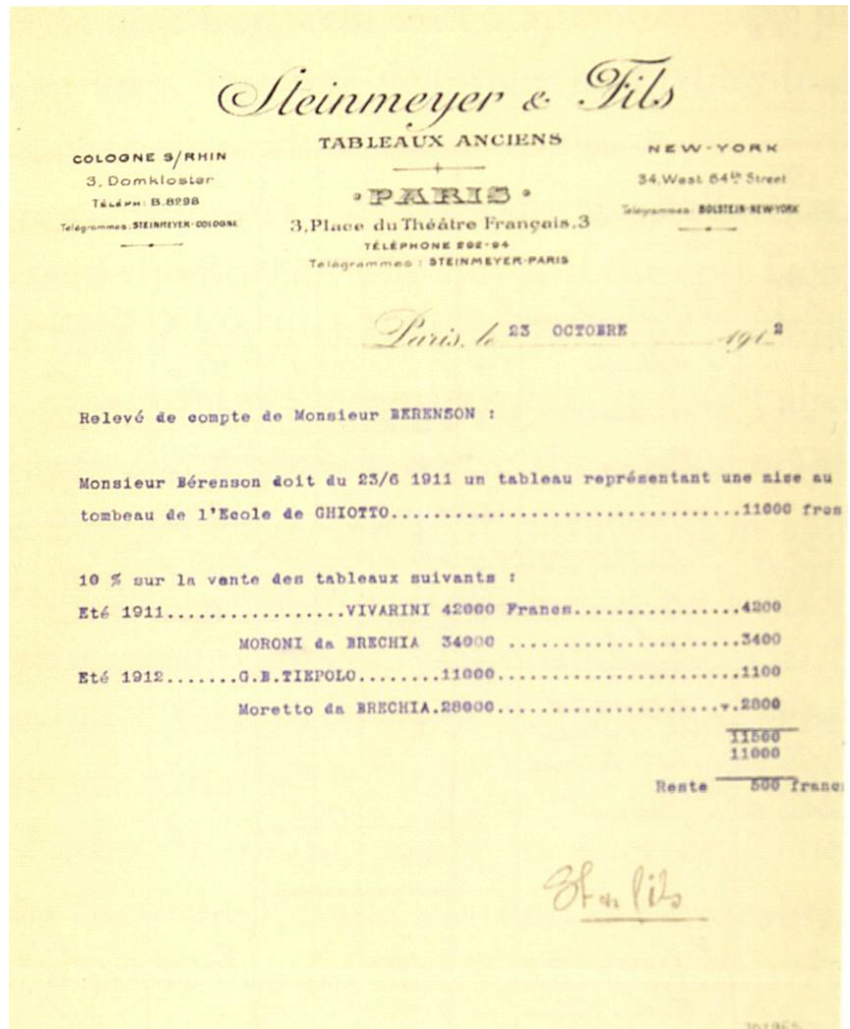
◀ Fig.4: Giotto, *Presentation in the Temple*, ca. 1320, tempera on panel, 45.2 x 43.6 cm, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston



◀ Fig.5: Odoardo Borrani, *Alla Galleria dell'Accademia*, 1860-1870, oil on canvas, 42 cm x 37cm, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence



◀ Fig.7: Capanna Puccio, *Nativity* from the Stoclet collection, 1320-1350, tempera on panel, 20.3 cm x 17.6 cm, Panama, Private Collection



► Fig. 8: Receipt for the Entombment, dated 23OCT1912, Berenson Archive, Villa I Tatti, Settignano





◀ Fig.9:  
Exhibition  
Poster of the  
Mostra  
Giottesca,  
Florence, 1937



◀ Fig.10: King  
Vittorio  
Emanuele III in  
the room with  
works by  
Giotto's  
followers,  
Florence,  
Mostra  
Giottesca, 1937

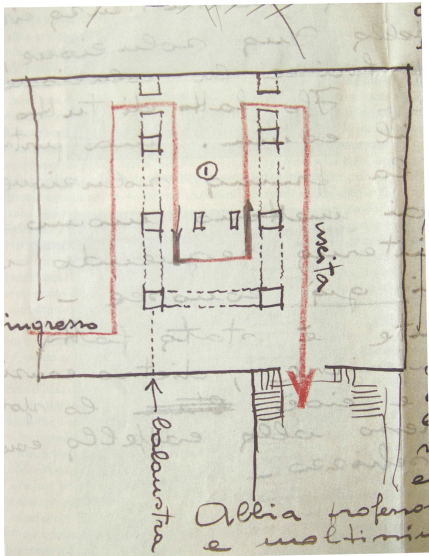
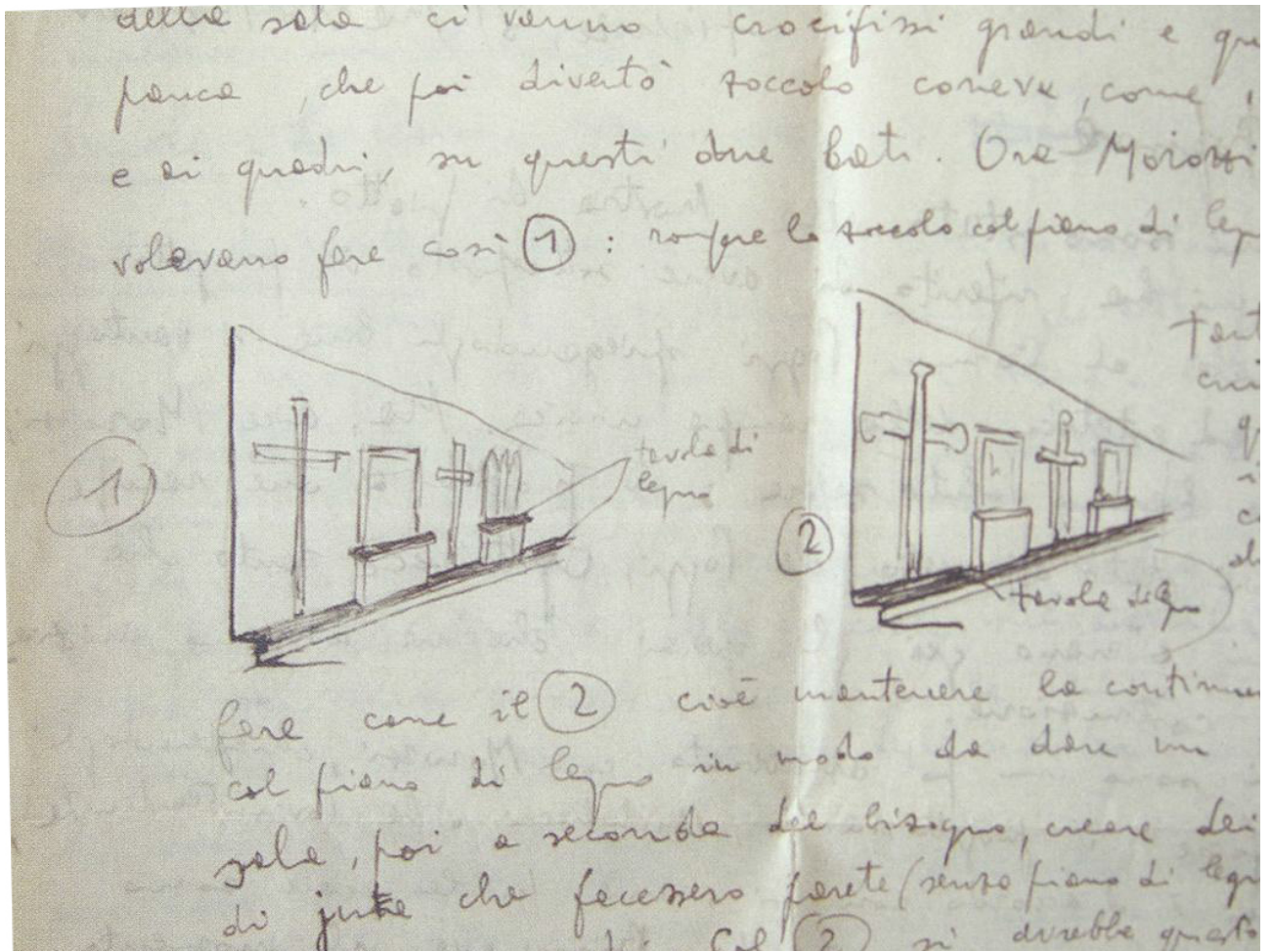


*Fig.11: Vincenzo Buronzo speaks to artists and artisans visiting the exhibition on 7 November. Florence, Mostra Giottesca, 1937*



◀ *Fig.12: King Vittorio Emanuele III in the room with works by Giotto's followers, Florence, Mostra Giottesca, 1937*





▲  
 ◀ Figs.13-14: Michelucci's sketches for the exhibition designs. Florence, 1937





◀ *Fig. 15: Sala Primitivi, Uffizi, Florence, 1953-57*



*Figs. 16: Sala Primitivi, Uffizi, Florence, since 2015*

# Part II - Chapter Five:

## Roberto Longhi, the 1950 Exhibition 'Il Trecento Bolognese', and the 1951 Exhibition 'Caravaggio e I Caravaggeschi'

By looking at Longhi's collecting practices, this part of the thesis will explore his crusades to study and re-evaluate the Bolognese Trecento and the Caravaggesque movement, widely considered to be his most important legacies.<sup>1</sup> It will demonstrate how this critical re-discovery, grounded in the most rigorous practice of connoisseurship, where the hands of forgotten painters were given a name and a personality, went hand in hand with the formation of his personal collection of works by these schools, which still remains today, together with his publications, as a vivid testimony to the role he played in re-shaping the established map of art history.<sup>2</sup> These instances, however, will be investigated through a focus on Longhi's private collection in relation to two seminal exhibitions: the *Mostra del Trecento Bolognese* (Bologna, 1950) and the *Mostra del Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* (Milan, 1951). This chapter will investigate Longhi's engagement with both the Bolognese Trecento and the Caravaggesque artists in his dual capacity of

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<sup>1</sup> Benati D., 'De L'Officina Ferrarese (1934) à la Mostra della pittura bolognese del '300 (1950)' in *De Giotto à Caravage : les passions de Roberto Longhi*, Bandera M. C. And Gregori M. (eds.), Bruxelles, Fonds Mercator, 2014, p. 62

<sup>2</sup> Bellosi, 1982, p. 29; Toscano, 1982, p. 244

collector and scholar, demonstrating how studying and collecting went on hand in hand, reinforcing each other.<sup>3</sup>

As many of his pupils were to emphasise later, Longhi's most important contribution to art history was to have enlarged and enriched the map of Italian art history.<sup>4</sup> His studies, often referred to by Longhi himself as 'journeys', constituted of a 'slow and progressive re-discovery of neglected areas', which he included in his own new vision, constructed around networks and exchanges between centres.<sup>5</sup> He did not, however, merely focus on areas that had not attracted the attention of other critics before him. Nor did he praise neglected areas because of their relations with the Florentines or the Sieneese. Instead, he wanted them to be drawn on the map because of their own inherent quality.<sup>6</sup> Longhi was fascinated by such traditions, which he saw as conscious attempts to create an alternative artistic language. He called the representatives of such centres resilient to classification within a predominant

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<sup>3</sup> Longhi R. (ed.), *Guida alla mostra della pittura bolognese del trecento : Bologna, Pinacoteca nazionale, maggio-luglio, 1950*, Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale, 1950; Longhi R., 'La mostra del Trecento Bolognese', in *Paragone* vol 1, n. 5. 1950, pp. 5-44; Longhi R. (ed.), *Guida alla mostra della pittura bolognese del trecento : Bologna, Pinacoteca nazionale, maggio-luglio, 1950*, Bologna, La Pinacoteca, 1982. The field of exhibition history and the vast literature it produced in a relative short period will offer fitting instruments to understand the role of Longhi as a taste-maker. As already seen in Chapter Four, Francis Haskell was certainly a pioneer in this approach, surviving in his posthumous work *The ephemeral Museum. Old Master Paintings and the Rise of Art Exhibitions*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2000. Seminal texts include E. Castelnuovo, A. Monciatti, *Medioevo/Medioevi. Un secolo di esposizioni d'arte medievale*, Pisa, Edizioni della Normale, 2007; Cimmoli A. C., *Musei Effimeri: Allestimenti di mostre in Italia 1949-1963*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 2007; Catalano M.I., *Snodi di critica. Musei, mostre, restauro, e diagnostica artistica in Italia 1930-1940*, Rome, Gangemi, 2013; L. Carletti, C. Giometti, 'In margine all'"Editoriale mostre e musei" di Roberto Longhi: gli antichi maestri italiani a San Francisco nel 1939' in *Predella*, n. 36, 2014, pp. 71-85; Toffanello M. (ed.), *All'origine delle grandi mostre in Italia (1933-1940). Storia dell'arte e storiografia tra divulgazione di massa e propaganda*, Mantova, Il Rio, 2017; Giometti C. (ed.), *Mostre a Firenze 1911 - 1942. Nuove indagini per un itinerario tra arte e cultura*, Florence, Edizioni ETS, 2019 ; Di Macco M., Dardanelli G.(eds.), *La fortuna del Barocco in Italia: le grandi mostre del Novecento*, Genova, Sagep Editori, 2019 ; C. Prete E. Penserini (eds.), *L'Italia delle mostre 1861-1945*, Urbino, Accademia Raffaello, 2020

<sup>4</sup> Toscano, 1982, p. 245

<sup>5</sup> Benati, 2014, p. 63; Toscano, 1982, pp. 244-5

<sup>6</sup> Bellosi, 1982, p. 36; Benati, 2014, p. 66

style 'geni del malgarbo', literally 'bad-mannered geniuses'.<sup>7</sup> He first encountered some of these bad-mannered geniuses in the Lombardy region, and then found more of them on his journeys, for instance in Liguria, and Umbria.<sup>8</sup> Usually, the process of 'restoration' into the canon of these schools would include a monographic exhibition.

As shall be seen, Longhi, did not recover these schools only through his studies - his collecting played a role too. In 1935, Longhi asked himself, the scholarly community, and his students a question that seemed to him of utmost importance: why was fourteenth-century art from Bologna being ignored, while the appreciation for Trecento Art in general, especially from Florence and Siena, was at its peak? Longhi posed this rhetorical question to his students, and later published in the pages of *L'Archiginnasio*, the journal of the library of the Comune in Bologna, stating:

It is known to all that in the resurrection of the Italian Trecento, brought about by miracle-working modern art criticism, Bolognese painting is the only Lazarus forgotten in the tomb [...] but why should Bologna remain in eternity the city, pardon me, of the bread crusts of the fourteenth century?<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The literature on Longhi's methodology and connoisseurship is vast. The key aspects investigated by the existent literature are his connoisseurship practice, and his preference for neglected schools such as the Lombard one and its 'realistic' style, or for contemporary artists such as the futurists and Giorgio Morandi; the theoretical grounding of his thoughts, the so-called 'pura visibilità', his relationship with Benedetto Croce, but also Von Hildebrand and Berenson; and Longhi's use of language and ekphrasis. See, among many, G. Previtali, *L'Arte di scrivere sull'arte: Roberto Longhi nella cultura del nostro tempo*, Rome, Editori riuniti, 1982; D. Tabbat, 'The Eloquent Eye: Roberto Longhi and the Historical Criticism of Art' in *Differentia: Review of Italian Thought*, vol. 5, Article 14, 1991. J. Nordhagen, 'Roberto Longhi (1890-1970) and his method. Connoisseurship as a Science' in *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/ Journal of Art History*, n., vol. 68, issue 2, 1999, pp. 99-116; and Ambrosini Massari, Bacchi, Benati, Galli, *Il mestiere del conoscitore: Roberto Longhi*, 2017

<sup>8</sup> Benati, 2014, p. 66

<sup>9</sup> Tr.: 'è a tutti noto che, nella resurrezione dei trecentisti italiani operata dalla taumaturgica critica moderna, la pittura bolognese è ormai l'unico Lazzaro dimenticato nella tomba [...] che [...] Bologna debba restare in sempiterno la città, perdonatemi, delle croste trecentesche?'. Longhi R., 'Momenti della Pittura Bolognese' in *L'Archiginnasio. Bullettino della Biblioteca Comunale di Bologna*, XXX, 1-3, 1935, pp. 111-135, republished in 'Lavori in Valpadana', *Edizione delle Opere Complete di Roberto Longhi*, VI, Florence, Sansoni, 1973, p. 189, from now on cited in footnotes as Longhi, 1935. The text reproduces Longhi's first lecture at the University of Bologna, dating 1st December 1934. A. Emiliani, 'Un grande ritorno' in *l'Arte, un universo di relazioni, le mostre di Bologna 1950-2001*, A. Emiliani, M. Scolaro (eds.), Milan, Skira, 2002, pp. 29-102, p. 49

At the time, Longhi was forty-five years old, and held, from December 1934, the position of Art History professor at the University of Bologna. He was mainly known as scholar of the *Seicento* and of contemporary art, but not as a medievalist.<sup>10</sup> He was starting to attract attention, however, by his unconventional interest in overlooked regional schools.<sup>11</sup>

The first part of this chapter will investigate Longhi's involvement, as an organiser and a lender, to the show that resurrected the Bolognese Trecento, held at the Pinacoteca di Bologna in 1950.<sup>12</sup> Before turning to the exhibition itself, it is necessary to consider his personal interest in this school, both as a scholar and as a collector. Scholars agree that Longhi's first serious engagement with the Bolognese Trecento occurred in a lecture that he gave at the university of Pisa in May 1931, later presented again at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence.<sup>13</sup> In this paper, Longhi made a rather bold claim, proposing that the artist who worked on the frescoes of the *Triumph of Death* in the *Camposanto* of Pisa was not Tuscan, but Bolognese - Vitale da Bologna.<sup>14</sup> He gave an overview of negative judgements of the Bolognese Trecento, from Vasari to his own time, in order then to highlight his own role in its re-evaluation.

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<sup>10</sup> Longhi's first serious contribution on Trecento studies dates around 1928, showing a rather late interest for the era he will call 'the great century of art history'. He also decided 'to enter from the window, rather the main door' for he first worked on a minor figure (at the time) such as Giusto de' Menabuoi. Bellosi L., 'Roberto Longhi e l'arte del Trecento' in *L'arte di Scrivere sull'arte. Roberto Longhi nella cultura del nostro tempo*, Previtali G. (ed.), Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1982, pp. 27-8

<sup>11</sup> Toscano B., 'La riscoperta delle aree minori' in *L'arte di Scrivere sull'arte. Roberto Longhi nella cultura del nostro tempo*, Previtali G. (ed.), Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1982, p. 244

<sup>12</sup> Longhi, 1950

<sup>13</sup> The content survives in its published version in R. Longhi, 'Vitale da Bologna e i suoi affreschi nel Camposanto di Pisa' in *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, II-III, 1933, pp. 135-37. An extract, concerning the critical fortune of the Bolognese school is included in R. Longhi, 'La mostra del Trecento Bolognese', in *Paragone* vol 1, n. 5. 1950, pp. 32-3, from now on cited in footnotes as Longhi, 1931. The lecture was also included in R. Longhi, 'Lavori in Valpadana', *Edizione delle Opere Complete di Roberto Longhi*, VI, Florence, Sansoni, 1973, pp. 207-228. Bellosi, 1982, pp. 32

<sup>14</sup> Bellosi later identified the author as the florentine Buonamico Bufalmacco. Bellosi, 1982, pp. 33; Benati, 2014, p. 63

According to Longhi, Vasari carries much of the blame for the lack of acknowledgement of the Bolognese Trecento.<sup>15</sup> The author of the *Vite* is not so much accused of ignoring the art of the Bologna region, as of inciting a reaction among the Bolognese themselves. Referring to it as a proper ‘anti-Vasari war, led by the ‘Bolognese Vasari’ Cesare Malvasia (1616-93), Longhi pointed out how, ‘to demonstrate the noble origins of Bolognese painting, and prove that it was older than the Florentine school’, many Bolognese works were over-painted and thereby compromised in the seventeenth century.<sup>16</sup> This was followed by an invasive restoration campaign undertaken in the nineteenth century, which Longhi lists as another negative influence on the appreciation of the Bolognese Trecento.<sup>17</sup>

Some years later, following his appointment at Bologna, he returned to this issue in his first lecture of December 1934, later published in 1935, entitled ‘*Momenti della Pittura Bolognese*’.<sup>18</sup> Complaining about the scant presence of good quality pieces of the Bolognese school available to the wider public, he stated:

But a gallery of Bologna without an authentic Vitale, is a thankless reality that needs to be changed as soon as possible. Why do we not give ourselves over for a moment, to imagine a gathering, even just temporary, of the dispersed works by that great *Trecento* artist? Once finally removed from the original wall in *Mezzaratta* and taken away from the eastern back-light, and secured the fresco cycle from the cold wall [...] the fabulous fresco of the *Nativity* would fundamentally shine, all would declare it one of the most ingenious inventions of that century [...] even those panels by the

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<sup>15</sup> Longhi, 1931, p. 32

<sup>16</sup> Longhi, 1931, pp. 32-3

<sup>17</sup> Longhi, 1931, p. 33. Longhi here refers to the frescoes in the former church of Sant’Apollonia di Mezzaratta in Bologna, mostly work of Vitale da Bologna, which will be detached in the 1950s, thanks also to Longhi’s pressure, and later entered the collection of the Pinacoteca di Bologna, as shall be explored further on.

<sup>18</sup> R. Longhi, ‘*Momenti della Pittura Bolognese*’ in *L’Archiginnasio. Bullettino della Biblioteca Comunale di Bologna*, XXX, 1-3, 1935, pp. 111-135, republished in ‘*Lavori in Valpadana*’, *Edizione delle Opere Complete di Roberto Longhi*, VI, Florence, Sansoni, 1973, pp. 189-206, from now on cited in footnotes as Longhi, 1935. The lecture was famous for Longhi’s praise of Giorgio Morandi.

hand of the master that are now relegated in secondary museums would be collected, such as the incomparable *Adoration* from Edinburgh.<sup>19</sup>

It is certainly not by chance that, among the many artists from the school of Bologna whom Longhi rehabilitated, he singles out Vitale da Bologna, promoted as the best.<sup>20</sup> This revival of studies on the Bolognese Trecento in the early 1930s appears to have been prompted at least in part by the need to better understand Vitale. At the time when Longhi approached this field, in a relatively late stage of his career, Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà did the same in the English-speaking world, shedding new light on Vitale's biography, chronology, and productions.<sup>21</sup> Sandberg Vavalà was a British scholar who moved to Italy in the 1930s, and had a close intellectual relationship with both Berenson and Longhi.<sup>22</sup> As early as 1926 she published a study on Veronese Trecento painting, and in 1929, encouraged by Berenson, she published a study on painted crosses, as mentioned in Chapter 4. Following her move to Florence, where she studied at the Kunsthistorisches Institut, she would re-organize Alessandro Contini Bonaccossi's photo archive and in 1932 she would be appointed by Berenson to compile the geographical indexes for his 1932 edition of the lists.<sup>23</sup> Longhi evidently held Sandberg Vavalà in high esteem, but this did not stop him from thinking that she had only superficially understood the work of Vitale. Yet, due to Sanberg-Vavalà's efforts, the time was ripe for

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<sup>19</sup> Tr.: 'Ma una Galleria di Bologna senza un autentico Vitale è una ingrata realtà che occorrere annullare al più presto. Perché non abbandonarci un istante alla immaginazione di un'adunata, seppur temporanea, delle creazioni disperse di quel grande trecentista? Posto finalmente in salvo dalla genia parete di Mezzaratta, tolto dall'esotico controluce, scintillerebbe nel fondo il favoloso affresco del 'presepio' e tutti avremmo agio dichiararci su una delle più geniali [...] invenzioni del secolo [...] Verrebbero a raccolta Verrebbero a raccolta [...] anche le tavole del maestro oggi, purtroppo, relegate in musei secondari [...] così [...] da Edimburgo l'impareggiabile Adorazione dei Magi', Longhi, 1935, pp. 191-2

<sup>20</sup> Longhi R. (ed.), *Guida alla mostra della pittura bolognese del trecento* : Bologna, Pinacoteca nazionale, maggio-luglio, 1950, Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale, 1950; reprinted Longhi R. (ed.), *Guida alla mostra della pittura bolognese del trecento*, Bologna, Pinacoteca nazionale, maggio-luglio, 1950, Bologna, La Pinacoteca, 1982.

<sup>21</sup> Benati, 2014, p. 64

<sup>22</sup> V. Marano, *Il fondo Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà*, Fondazione Federico Zeri, 2012, <https://fondazionezeri.unibo.it/it/pubblicazioni/call-for-papers/articoli-2012/il-fondo-evelyn-sandberg-vavala/index.html> ; further biographical information and bibliography can be found at 'Fondo Sandberg Vavalà', Fondazione Giorgio Cini, <https://www.cini.it/fototeca/fondi-fotografici/fondo-sandberg-vavala>

<sup>23</sup> Marano, 2012



Longhi's own critical rediscovery of the Bolognese Trecento.<sup>24</sup> As Daniele Benati has pointed out, Longhi's main contribution was to recognise fully the intrinsic quality of the school and its importance in the European panorama of the time, as well as its independence from Tuscany.<sup>25</sup>

In the imaginary exhibition that Longhi wished for in the 1934 lecture, he mentions precisely one work by Vitale da Bologna that he would love to see displayed: 'the unparalleled *Adoration* from Edinburgh' (Fig. 1).<sup>26</sup> At that moment, he could not have foreseen that his wishes regarding an exhibition of Trecento painters from Bologna would come true 25 years later, nor that in 1949 he would come to possess the *Adoration's* companion panel, a *Pietà* (Fig. 2) that was gifted to Longhi by the dealer Salocchi, as shall be explored later on.<sup>27</sup> The little panel in Edinburgh representing the Adoration of the Magi was first attributed to Vitale by Sandberg Vavalà.<sup>28</sup> She had published it presenting it as an early piece of the master in the art journal *Rivista d'Arte* in 1929 and in another article that appeared in *Art in America*, around the same time as Longhi's lecture on Vitale and the Pisan Camposanto.<sup>29</sup>

In the indexes of the slides used in Longhi's university courses of 1934-5 and 1935-6, published in the *Opere Complete* in 1973, there appear several paintings attributed to Vitale in the hands of London dealers, such as Agnew's

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<sup>24</sup> Benati, 2014, pp. 64, 66

<sup>25</sup> Longhi opposed Vitale's 'vertical gothic' to Giotto's and Florence's 'horizontal gothic', based on a vision that was made rational by the proto-perspective use of space. See Benati, 2014, p. 64

<sup>26</sup> Longhi, 1935, pp. 191-2. The panel was bought in 1908 by Edinburgh National Gallery (inv. NG 952) through Robert Langton Douglas, who had acquired it from the London Fine Arts Society, see Anderson E. J., 'Vitale Da Bologna's *Adoration of the Magi / Man of Sorrows* Diptych reconsidered' in *Laboratorio di Nuova Ricerca : investigating gender, translation & culture in Italian studies*, Boria M., Risso L. (eds), Leicester, Troubador, 2007, pp. 3-20

<sup>27</sup> Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>28</sup> Gregori M. (ed.), *La collezione di Roberto Longhi Dal Duecento a Caravaggio a Morandi*, Savigliano, L'artistica Editrice, 2007, p. 72

<sup>29</sup> E. Sandberg Vavalà, 'Vitale delle Madonne e Simone dei Crocefissi' in *Rivista d'arte*, vol. XI, Jan-March, 1929, pp. 449-480 ; E. Sandberg Vavalà, 'Some Bolognese Paintings Outside Bologna and a Trecento Humorist' in *Art in America*, vol. XX, Dec 1931, pp. 12-37

and Bellesi, and also one in the Lee of Fareham Collection.<sup>30</sup> These attributions seem to have been first made by Longhi, dating back to 1930, when Longhi was in London for study, possibly because of the 1930 Italian Art exhibition at the Royal Academy, mentioned in the previous chapter. In London, Longhi visited the then still private, but publicly accessible and renowned photo library of Sir Robert Witt, at the time president of the National Art Collections Fund, who was in the exhibition committee.<sup>31</sup> In his famous essay on the reconstruction of a Giotto polyptych, Longhi wrote: 'I was in London, revising the painters of the Trecento Riminese school, in the beautiful, welcoming photo library of Sir Robert Witt; and there I found, in the folder of Giuliano da Rimini two companions of the Horne Saint Stephen'.<sup>32</sup> Evidently, there were several examples from Emilia Romagna in British collections. He likely was in contact with dealers and collectors, including Giuseppe Bellesi, from whom, in 1930, Longhi acquired a Riminese panel by the Master of Santa Maria in Porto Fuori (Fig. 3) for his personal collection.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> 'Vitale da Bologna: Madonna col bambino e angeli-Londra, Proprietà Durlacher' might correspond to Fototeca Zeri's record 8455, <http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/scheda/opera/9635/>. It actually was property of R. Kirk Askew, who first opened the Durlacher branch in New York in 1937, the painting being recorded in his NY collection since 1934 by Longhi. It was recently sold at Sotheby's (06JUL12, n.6), <https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2012/old-master-paintings-n08869/lot.6.html> ; 'Vitale da Bologna: Otto figure di Santi-Londra, proprietà Bellesi, might correspond to Fototeca Zeri's record 8452, <http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/scheda/opera/9628/>. Now attributed to Pseudo-Dalmasio, half of it entered the collection of the National Gallery Ireland in 1943 (NGI. 1113), <http://onlinecollection.nationalgallery.ie/objects/1326/four-saints-st-ursula-st-catherine-st-augustine-and-st-d>. The other half joined the Detroit Institute of Arts collection (37.189) in 1937, through the hands of Lionello Venturi in Paris (one of Longhi's rivals), <https://www.dia.org/art/collection/object/saint-john-baptist-41962> . 'Vitale da Bologna: Noli Me Tangere-Londra, Collezione Lord Lee of Farenham, might correspond to Fototeca Zeri's record 8624, <http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/entry/work/9955/> , and since 1947 is at the Courtauld Institute Galleries, London, inv. P.1947.LF.174, attributed to 'Follower of Giotto'. R. Longhi, index of illustrations 1934-6 in 'Lavori in Valpadana', *Edizione delle Opere Complete di Roberto Longhi*, VI, Florence, Sansoni, 1973, pp. XII, XIV.

<sup>31</sup> The Witt Library was object of a critical study of Matilde Cartolari from TU, Berlin at the study webinar of 16OCT21 entitled 'Photography and its uses in the art market - 1880-1939' (October 14th-16th, 2021), available here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHCaQxcVE-M>.

<sup>32</sup> R. Longhi, Progressi nella reintegrazione di un polittico di Giotto, in "Dedalo", XI, pp. 285-291, p. 289. I shall thank Matilde Cartolari for including this citation in her slides, suggesting me the link with the arguments in this chapter.

<sup>33</sup> M. Gregori (ed.), *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 1980, cat. n. 24

According to Longhi, Sandberg Vavalà was the first to assign the Edinburgh *Adoration* to Vitale. A recent study by Emily Jane Anderson, however, revealed that the first attribution to Vitale had in fact been made by Berenson.<sup>34</sup> Regardless, in his university lectures of the year 1934-35, Longhi agreed with Sandberg Vavalá's attribution and dating.<sup>35</sup> He regarded Sandberg Vavalá as an isolated illuminated figure among international scholars, and held Berenson responsible for perpetuating the Vasarian mentality regarding the Bolognese School. As a conclusion to his dream of an exhibition of Bolognese painters, he wrote:

Would other Bolognese artists of the same century crown Vitale in this imaginary collection? We have to suppose not, given the stubborn absence, Vitale included, of all the Trecento Bolognese masters from those famous lists of the old Italian masters that too many - among us - take as the gospel.<sup>36</sup>

Perhaps Longhi knew that Berenson had worked on the Edinburgh *Adoration* and thought that he should have mentioned the painting in his lists, rather than silently excluding it.<sup>37</sup>

Why did Longhi long for an exhibition of Trecento Bolognese art? The answer can be found in a speech he gave in 1959 in Milan, organised by the *Ente Milanese per le Manifestazioni*, and published 10 years later, under the title

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<sup>34</sup> Anderson, 2007. The source is the catalogue of the Edinburgh gallery, and it is unclear whether Longhi knew about it or not. On the panel, see also Gregori, 2007, p. 72

<sup>35</sup> Anderson, 2007

<sup>36</sup> Tr.: 'Potranno altri bolognesi dello stesso secolo far corona a Vitale in quest'accolta immaginaria? Dovremmo supporre di no, a voler concludere dell'assenza pervicacissima di cui brillano, Vitale incluso, tutti i trecentisti Bolognesi in quei famosi indici degli antichi pittori italiani che troppi fra noi per poltroneria mentale tengono per vangelo [...] In quest'atteggiamento del Berenson, per uscir di metafora è un residuo di mentalità [...] postvasariana, di fronte all'anticlassicismo bolognese', Longhi, 1935, p. 192

<sup>37</sup> Anderson suggests that Longhi's interest in the painting, and later in the companion panel he will own, was somehow driven by rivalry, due to the fact that Berenson was the one who first set eyes on it. Anderson, 2007

'Editoriale Mostre e Musei (a 1959 warning)'.<sup>38</sup> In this speech, Longhi elucidates his ideas on temporary exhibitions.<sup>39</sup> Praising some examples from Italy and abroad.<sup>40</sup> To illustrate what an exhibition should *not* do, Longhi takes the example of the already mentioned Italian Art exhibition of 1930. According to him, such 'Cyclopean Italian exhibitions' still had the aura of the nineteenth-century Louvre Salons.<sup>41</sup> He then praises exhibitions that focussed on more contained subjects - a single century, an artist - resulting in the sharing of new knowledge about the themes explored, as perpetuated by catalogues.<sup>42</sup>

Between the 1920s and the 1960s, with a peak in the aftermath of World War Two, the monographic format, with a focus on an artist, a school, or even a century was to become the most popular - a popularity that is still retained today. This development was in part a response to the process of rediscovery and reevaluation of the historical heritage of cities and regions, often embodied in famous personalities active in those areas.<sup>43</sup> The case of Giotto examined in the previous chapter is in fact representative, alongside that of Bellini (Venice, 1949), Lotto (Venice, 1953), and Caravaggio (Milan, 1951) - the latter will be further explored below.<sup>44</sup> Regarding Caravaggio, Longhi mentioned the role of a Paris show *Peintres de la réalité* that would contribute to his own studies on

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<sup>38</sup> Longhi R., 'Editoriale Mostre e Musei (un avvertimento del 1959)' in *Critica d'arte e buongoverno, 1938-1969, Opere Complete, vol. XIII*, Florence, Sansoni, 1985, pp. 59-74. The text is often cited in the literature on past exhibitions in 20th Century Italy, see for instance A. C. Cimmoli, *Musei Effimeri: Allestimenti di mostre in Italia 1949-1963*, Milan. Il Saggiatore, 2007, p. 25. See also L. Carletti, C. Giometti, 'In margine all'"Editoriale mostre e musei" di Roberto Longhi: gli antichi maestri italiani a San Francisco nel 1939' in *Predella*, n. 36, 2014, pp. 71-85. Yet this lines take a further layer of meaning when looking at exhibitions organised by Longhi himself, and to which he lent works from his personal collections.

<sup>39</sup> Longhi, 1985, p. 59. See Appendix F

<sup>40</sup> Longhi, 1985, p. 59

<sup>41</sup> Tr.: 'Le prime mostre 'en masse' [...] furono [...] al Salon [...] É una storia passata, ma che per la pompa della inscenatura [...] pare ancora aver aleggiato sul pensiero di quelle ciclopiche esposizioni italiane di Londra nel 1930 e di Parigi nel 1935'. Longhi, 1985, p. 59

<sup>42</sup> Longhi, 1985, p. 63

<sup>43</sup> Cimmoli, 2007, pp. 22-3.

<sup>44</sup> Cimmoli, 2007, pp. 22-3, 36. With regards to the Venice exhibitions 1930-1960s, innovative research was carried out by Matilde Cartolari from TU Berlin for her PhD Thesis, discussed in July 2022.

Caravaggio and Naturalism.<sup>45</sup> Longhi himself was on the committee of this exhibition, which was a stimulus for his own re-working of the theme in the 1953 exhibition *I pittori della realtà in Lombardia* at the Palazzo Reale in Milan.<sup>46</sup>

As expressed in the text on museums and exhibitions cited above, Longhi favoured an exhibition that generated knowledge, which would also be recorded in a catalogue.<sup>47</sup> The examples he mentions are very likely the ones that influenced him when dreaming of a Bolognese Trecento exhibition. As Daniele Benati has argued, it was after the Ferrarese exhibition of 1933 that Longhi first started to understand the painting histories of Emilia Romagna in their entirety, distancing himself from the singular focus on Ferrara that for instance both Berenson and Venturi had kept.<sup>48</sup> But if there was one exhibition that made Longhi see the potential of a thematic exhibition dedicated to an underestimated regional school, it must have been the 1935 show on the Riminese Trecento, curated by Cesare Brandi.<sup>49</sup>

The Riminese school was lifted out of the realm of the provincial just like Longhi would do with the Bolognese Trecento. The 1935 Rimini exhibition catalogue contained an introductory essay on Riminese painting, a list of the city's frescoes, and an illustrated repertory of the works that were not exhibited. Brandi's opening of the catalogue text reads: 'Only very recently have we heard of a 'Riminese School', even in art criticism'.<sup>50</sup> The purpose of the exhibition was to study and present such an underrated school, identifying masters and defining a chronology, but especially tracing the networks to which it belonged and exchanges with other centres, especially Siena. As

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<sup>45</sup> Longhi, 1985, p. 63

<sup>46</sup> Cipriani R., Longhi R. 'I pittori della realtà in Lombardia', Milano, A. Pizzi, 1953

<sup>47</sup> Longhi, 1959, pp. 59-74

<sup>48</sup> Benati, 2014, p. 66

<sup>49</sup> C. Brandi, *Mostra della pittura Riminese del Trecento*, Rimini, Gattinoni, 1935; see also R. M. Valazzi, 'Cesare Brandi e la mostra sulla pittura riminese del Trecento' in *La teoria del restauro nel Novecento da Riegl a Brandi*, M. Andaloro (ed.), Florence, Nardini, 2006, pp. 131-140

<sup>50</sup> Brandi, 1936, p.

previously pointed out, already in 1930, Longhi himself was studying Riminese paintings at the Witt photo library in London, so it should not come as a surprise to see that he was involved in the organisation of the exhibition, being part of the general committee.<sup>51</sup> He even lent one of his paintings to the show, the already mentioned small panel depicting an *Enthroned Virgin and Child with Saints* (Fig. 3), bought in London from Giuseppe Bellesi in 1930, very likely whilst he was in the city during the opening of the Royal Academy exhibition and to visit Witt's photo-library.<sup>52</sup> It could be argued in fact, that Longhi met Bellesi through the exhibition at the Royal Academy, to which Bellesi lent several paintings that were then in his stock. Once back in Italy, it seems that he maintained contacts with Bellesi, for he included some of his paintings in his university course of 1935, re-attributing them to the Bolognese school, including his small Riminese panel acquired in 1930.<sup>53</sup> In his lecture of 1935, Longhi identified the author of his panel as the Master of Santa Maria in Porto Fuori, an attribution that was presented in Brandi's exhibition and that has stuck till today, despite the discussion that followed its display.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Benati, 2014, p. 63

<sup>52</sup> As also noted in S. Rinaldi, 'Roberto Longhi e la teoria del restauro di Cesare Brandi' in *La teoria del restauro nel Novecento da Riegl a Brandi*, M. Andaloro (ed.), Florence, Nardini, 2006, pp. 101-15. M. Gregori (ed.), *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 1980, cat. n. 24. Very little is known about Giuseppe Bellesi and his activity. Most of the information was retrieved from a study of his photo archive, which was acquired by Federico Zeri. Among the first Italian dealers active in London (active 1924-1957), his shop 'The Italian Art Galley' was first in Bond Street, and later in Paddington Green. A collaborator of Contini Bonaccossi, in 1953 he opened an Italian Branch in Florence. At his death in 1955, his daughter Rita Miriam carried on the business only in Florence. She left no heirs, and her collection was sold in 1967 through Pandolfini of Florence. See P. Bracke, *Il Fondo Fotografico di Giuseppe Bellesi*, 2012 <https://fondazionezeri.unibo.it/it/pubblicazioni/call-for-papers/articoli-2012/il-fondo-fotografico-di-giuseppe-bellesi/index.html>

<sup>53</sup> Longhi, 1935, p. XIV

<sup>54</sup> Brandi, 1935, p. 106 ; M. Gregori (ed.), *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 1980, cat. n. 24. At that time, Brandi was acting as *soprintendente* in Bologna, whilst Longhi was teaching his course on Bolognese painting at the university. It is in these years they held a smooth professional relationship that will last for more than ten years, and that contributed to define the Italian debate on restoration theory and practice, and the foundation of the Institute Centrale per il Restauro (ICR). The literature on the topic is vast, see for instance Rinaldi, 2006 and bibliography. The most relevant implication of their relationship seems to be the detachment of the frescoes of Mezzaratta in 1949 and their inclusion in the 1950 exhibition. See Metelli, 2007

Besides this representative of the Riminese school, Longhi's personal collection includes several works from the Bolognese Trecento, all acquired between the 1930s and the 1950 exhibition. Perhaps in reaction to the absence of Bolognese painters from Berenson's lists, and hence their exclusion from the canon, Longhi thought he would save these works from oblivion through the activity of collecting. Whilst studying, publishing and teaching about the Bolognese Trecento, Longhi acquired a number of pieces by those artists he was bringing back to life with his pen and voice. Between 1935 and 1940 he bought from the Bolognese dealer Publio Podio a small panel with *Two Scenes from the Life of St Catherine* (Fig. 4).<sup>55</sup> Longhi thought the panel had been painted by Jacopino di Francesco around the same time as the artist's *Presentation in the Temple* at Bologna (1360-65). According to Longhi, in those years the painter 'erased the old links with the [...] Riminese school, going back to the young Vitale's fantasy and the vividness of the Great Illustrator'.<sup>56</sup> Scholars later attributed it first to Vitale da Bologna, and finally to the Master of the Strage degli Innocenti in Mezzaratta, pushing the dating backwards.<sup>57</sup>

By 1934, Longhi had also acquired two works by Simone dei Crocefissi (Figs. 5-6), an artist to whom Sanberg-Vavalà had dedicated an article in 1929.<sup>58</sup> One is a *Virgin and Child with two donors and St Bartholomew and St James the major*; the other a *Beheading of St John the Baptist and St Anthony Abbott*.<sup>59</sup> Longhi found them on the market before 1934. In his university course of 1934-35, he cites and illustrates the panels, noting that they were part of the same larger work. He also identifies a third panel belonging to the same series, the *Imprisonment of John Baptist*, in a private

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<sup>55</sup> Longhi, 1950, pp. 18, 31, n. 53 ; Gregori, 1980, cat n. 26; Gregori, 2007, cat n. 4

<sup>56</sup> Longhi, 1950, pp. 18, 31, n. 53 ; Gregori, 2007, cat n. 4

<sup>57</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 26. It is important to notice how Longhi often writes about the Bolognese school starting from studies on either the Riminese, Giottesque or Siense school, witnessing the developments of the relative scholarship in those years. On the taste for Quattrocento Siense school in Britain see Tedbury I., 'Each school has its day' : the Collecting, Reception, and Display of Trecento and Quattrocento Siense Painting in Britain, 1850-1950, PhD Thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2018

<sup>58</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 27-8; Sandberg Vavalà, 1929

<sup>59</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 27-8; Gregori, 2007, cat n. 6-7



collection in Paris.<sup>60</sup> More recent studies have identified the donor figures in the first panel as two convicts sentenced to death, linking the commission of the panels to the confraternity of Santa Maria della Morte at the church of San Giovanni Decollato. The small paintings had probably been part of a rectangular panel composed of small images, held up accompanying those sentenced to death in their final moments.<sup>61</sup>

By 1935, Longhi had also acquired, in Florence, a panel with the *Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 7).<sup>62</sup> The panel was poor in condition, causing Longhi to hesitate whether to attribute it to the Riminese or Bolognese school. He published it in 1950, when it featured in the 1950 exhibition, attributed to an anonymous painter from Rimini or Bologna, and dated around 1350.<sup>63</sup> Among these early purchases, there is also a panel by Jacopo di Paolo with stories of a female saint on a gilded background, later identified as Saint Margaret (Fig. 8).<sup>64</sup> Longhi bought it before 1937, again from Publio Podio. In that year, Francesco Arcangeli, one of Longhi's pupils and the later director of the Pinacoteca in Bologna, studied the panel in his dissertation.<sup>65</sup> Arcangeli compared the work to the frescoes of the stories of Moses in Mezzaratta, suggesting the same execution date. This mirrored Longhi's own idea, formulated in one of the many undated manuscript entries that were prepared for a general catalogue of Longhi's collection, before its posthumous publication by Boschetto in 1971.<sup>66</sup>

In the 1940s, Longhi was working on the re-evaluation of other 'provincial' schools, especially those of the Apennine regions. But Emilia Romagna was still on his mind, both as a scholar and as a collector. In 1946, he bought in

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<sup>60</sup> R. Longhi, *La pittura del Trecento nell'Italia Settentrionale*, university lecture 1934/35 published in Longhi, 1973, pp. 3-90, p.64, from now on cited in footnotes as Longhi, 1934/35; Gregori, 1980, cat n. 27-8; Longhi, 1935, p.64 ; Gregori, 2007, cat n. 6-7

<sup>61</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 27-8 ; Gregori, 2007, cat n. 6-7

<sup>62</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 23

<sup>63</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 23 ; Longhi, 1950, pp. 17, 29

<sup>64</sup> In 1978, the saint was identified as Saint Margaret by Fabio Bisogno. Benati, 2014, p. 69; Gregori, 1980, cat n. 29 ; Gregori, 2007, cat n. 8. The work will be exhibited in 1950, Longhi, 1950.

<sup>65</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 29 ; Gregori, 2007, cat n. 8

<sup>66</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 29 ; Gregori, 2007, cat n. 8

Bologna a small gilded panel depicting an *Angel of the Annunciation* by Lippo di Dalmasio (Figs. 9).<sup>67</sup> An entry in Longhi's handwriting suggests he attributed it to Lippo, an artist active in Pistoia and Bologna, which was supported by Berenson in 1968.<sup>68</sup> In 1947, Longhi made his last known purchase of a work by the Bolognese school, a panel depicting *St Francis Receiving the Stigmata*, now attributed to Pseudo Stefano da Ferrara (Figs. 10).<sup>69</sup> This small panel is divided into two registers, by a line of indented circles, punched into the gilded surface. In the upper register, St Francis is depicted receiving the stigmata with Brother Leo witnessing the miracle.<sup>70</sup> Nothing is known about the provenance of the panel; its dimensions suggest a commission for private devotion, and the subject hints at a Franciscan environment.<sup>71</sup>

Longhi attributed it to Giovanni da Modena, exhibiting it as such in 1950.<sup>72</sup> Between 1947 and 1950, Longhi also realised that it belonged to a diptych, although he had been aware of its companion since at least 1940, maybe even earlier. In 1940, in one of his famous essays, *Fatti di Masolino e di Masaccio*, Longhi argues for a re-attribution of a small panel of the *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Donors* in the upper register, and figures of saints (Saint Louis of Toulouse, St Marin, and St Clare) in the lower (Fig. 11).<sup>73</sup> It had been part of the collection of Édouard Aynard in Lyon, and was exhibited for the first time at the *Exposition des Primitifs Français* at the Palais du Louvre (Pavillon de Marsan) and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris between April and July 1904. On that occasion, it was shown as an example of the early fifteenth-century

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<sup>67</sup> The date was deduced by a note on the back of a photograph in Longhi's photo archive. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 30

<sup>68</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 30. The work will be exhibited in 1950, Longhi, 1950

<sup>69</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31; Gregori, 2007, p. 80. The work will be exhibited in 1950, Longhi, 1950, pp. 9-10

<sup>70</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>71</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>72</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>73</sup> R. Longhi, 'Fatti di Masolino e di Masaccio' in *La Critica d'Arte*, n. XXV-XXVI, 1940, p. 185, n. 23, re-edited in *Opere Complete, vol. VIII*, Florence, Sansoni, 1975, pp. 54-5, n. 23, from now on cited in footnotes as Longhi, 1940 ; Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

school of Provence.<sup>74</sup> In 1913 it was sold at auction, at the George Petit Gallery, with the same attribution.<sup>75</sup> Longhi proposed instead the name of Arcangelo di Cola from Camerino, for its background spoke for a 'Riminese tradition'.<sup>76</sup>

When Longhi cited it in 1940, the panel was in an unspecified private collection. A photograph in the Zeri photo archive shows that it was in the Schubert collection in Milan 1966, and it appeared on the Milanese market in 1972. Longhi therefore may have seen the original in Milan, perhaps in 1940, the year he wrote the footnote on it in *Fatti di Masolino e di Masaccio*.

In 1950, ten years after his comment, Longhi returned to the Aynard panel. He had changed his idea about the attribution, saying he was mistaken and that it:

belongs instead to the restless and unstable Emilian school of the first decades of the new century, as one can deduct from the fact of its being part of a diptych with another work, undoubtedly Emilian, indeed by the very hand of Giovanni da Modena, that everybody will be able to see in the future exhibition on the paintings of Bolognese old masters.<sup>77</sup>

Between the 1940 footnote and this 1950 article, research on masters of the local schools from Rimini, the Marche, and Bologna had advanced considerably. But as Longhi clarified, there was another factor that prompted him to re-open the discussion on the panel he had written about before: the 'lucky encounter' with the panel that he bought for his personal collection, *St Francis receiving the Stigmata* which he realised, based on the elaborated decoration of the panel's gilded background, formed a diptych with the ex-

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<sup>74</sup> G. Lafenestre, *L'exposition des primitifs français*, Paris: Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1904. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 3 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>75</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>76</sup> Longhi, 1940, p. 54, see appendix F

<sup>77</sup> Tr.: 'in una nota in appendice ai 'fatti di masolino e masaccio' hoportato qualche nuovo lume in tema dell'artista camera...incorsi però nell'errore, oggi per me palese, di attribuire ad arcangelo una tavoletta, già della collezione Aynard, che tocca invece alla inquieta e levitante scuola emiliana dei primi decenni del nuovo secolo, ciò che si può sicuramente indurre dal fatto ch'essa si compone in dittico con altra, indiscutibilmente emiliana, anzi proprio di giovanni da Modena, che ognuno potrà vedere nella mostra prossima dell'antica pittura bolognese.' Longhi, 1950, p.49

Aynard panel.<sup>78</sup> When Longhi first saw the *St Francis*, evidently a bell rang in his inner visual archive, for the decoration of the two backgrounds is very similar in the upper registers, with only the lower sections differing.<sup>79</sup>

Once he had reconstructed the diptych, Longhi re-vised his thoughts and changed the attribution from Arcangelo di Cola to Giovanni da Modena. The latter he considered 'the major poet of the Bolognese school and the most daring promoter of the vanishing Medieval culture', according to the introduction to the catalogue of the 1950 exhibition, where he published the newly re-composed diptych, which at the show was represented by Longhi's panel only.<sup>80</sup> In 1983, Carlo Volpe questioned Longhi's attribution, arguing instead for a painter from Ferrara named Stefano, and later Andrea De Marchi proposed the Veronese Antonio di Pietro of Verona.<sup>81</sup> The issue remains unsolved, and the paintings are currently assigned to 'Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara'.

One final example of the Bolognese school joined Longhi's collection around 1949. It is a small *Pietà* by Vitale da Bologna (Fig. 2), gifted to Longhi by the Florentine dealer Giovanni Salocchi.<sup>82</sup> Longhi must have held this panel very dear, not only because it was by the hand of Vitale, but also because he realised that it was the companion of the above-mentioned *Adoration of the Magi* now in the National Gallery of Edinburgh, which he had already praised in 1935.<sup>83</sup> Longhi presented this discovery in the 1950 exhibition, as recorded in the catalogue.<sup>84</sup> Paintings aside, Longhi also possessed several illuminations from the Bolognese Trecento school, but there is little information regarding their acquisition date and provenance. At the 1950 exhibition, he included an

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<sup>78</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>79</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>80</sup> Tr.: 'il maggiore poeta di quella culture', 'il propalatore più ardito della cultura del Medio Evo morente'. Longhi, 1950, pp.18-19. Longhi, 1950, pp. 9-10; Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>81</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. 31 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>82</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 25 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80

<sup>83</sup> Longhi, 1935, pp. 191-2

<sup>84</sup> Longhi, 1950, p. 14

illuminated letter 'D' with a *Virgin and Child* by Tomaso da Modena and an illuminated letter 'V' with a *Dormition of the Virgin* by Jacopo di Paolo, both attributed to their respective artist by Longhi.<sup>85</sup>

It is evident that for Longhi, the 1950 exhibition was the crowning achievement of almost 20 years of studies. Through the exhibition, Longhi finally presented the results of his work to a wide audience, celebrating his role in the re-evaluation of the school. Running from May to July 1950, the *Mostra del Trecento Bolognese* was held in the *Pinacoteca Nazionale* in Bologna, with a display realised by the architect Enrico de Angelis.<sup>86</sup> The event had been conceived by Longhi as early as 1934, and was proposed again by the superintendent of Bologna in 1941.<sup>87</sup> The plans finally came to fruition in 1949, thanks to the joined forces of the Art History Institute of the University of Bologna, where Longhi was teaching, the Soprintendenza headed by Cesare Gnudi, and the association Francesco Francia, a private philanthropic organisation that promoted the arts in the city.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat n. 7; cat. n. 8

<sup>86</sup> R. Longhi (ed.), *Guida alla mostra della pittura bolognese del trecento* : Bologna, Pinacoteca nazionale, maggio-luglio, 1950, Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale, 1950.

<sup>87</sup> According to Ciancabilla, the desire of Sorrentino to detach the frescoes of Mezzaratta and display them in the Pinacoteca played an important role in the reply to Longhi's call of 1934 and later realisation of the exhibition of 1950. See L. Ciancabilla, *L'incanto dell'affresco. Capolavori strappati da Pompei a Giotto da Correggio a Tiepolo*, Cinisello Balsamo, Silvana ed., 2014; C. Metelli, *La rimozione della pittura murale. Parabola degli stacchi negli anni cinquanta e sessanta del XX secolo*, published PhD Thesis, Università Roma Tre, 2007, p. 29.

<sup>88</sup> A. Emiliani, 'Mostra della Pittura Bolognese' in Emiliani, 'Un grande ritorno' in *l'Arte, un universo di relazioni, le mostre di Bologna 1950-2001*, A. Emiliani, M. Scolaro (eds.), Milan, Skira, 2002, pp.118-122, p. 118. A record found in the archive of the Correr Museum in Venice, unpublished and probably unknown to literature, reveals how, prior to its opening in May 1950, there were thoughts about bringing the exhibition to the Museo Correr, and other cities afterwards. However, the initiative was abandoned, due to financial restrictions of the funding body F. Francia and other bureaucratic complications it implied. Archivio Storico Museo Correr (ASMC), 'Mostra della Pittura Bolognese del Trecento', B00132F000-61

There is little documentation of the event: a few photographs of some of the rooms, some reviews, and a small catalogue (Figs. 12-15).<sup>89</sup> The latter, more similar to a souvenir guide, was introduced by a preface written by Roberto Longhi, which explained his ideas on the Bolognese school as presented in the show.<sup>90</sup> The text was also published in that year's number of *Paragone*, followed by a survey on the school's critical fortune.<sup>91</sup> As can be seen in the historical photos, the display was rather simple. Works were hung on plain white walls, mainly panel paintings and detached frescoes (many of them may have been detached specifically for the show, as in the case of Mezzaratta), while works on paper, mainly illuminations, were presented in bulky cases placed at the centre of the rooms. Despite the relatively low budget, around 190 works, including 40 illuminations were dispersed across the rooms along the first courtyard in the Pinacoteca and upstairs in the rooms where the frescoes of Mezzaratta are now permanently displayed.<sup>92</sup> The arrangement was largely chronological, aiming at giving a representative and didactic picture of the school.

Longhi was president of the executive committee, which included the outgoing superintendent Antonio Sorrentino and the incoming Cesare Gnudi; Francesco Arcangeli and Fernando Ghedini, who edited the small exhibition catalogue; Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà; Wilhelm Suida; and Guido Zucchini.<sup>93</sup> The consultation committee included the art historians Paolo d'Ancona, Sergio Bettini, Rodolfo Pallucchini, Giuseppe Fiocco, John Pope-Hennessy, and Matteo Marangoni - the latter a close friend of the dealer Giuseppe Bellesi, with whom he had first moved to London to play music at the end of the 19th

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<sup>89</sup> The reviews include: *Bollettino d'Arte*, 'La Mostra della pittura bolognese del Trecento' in *Bollettino d'arte*, vol.IV, n. 35, Oct-Dec 1950, pp. 368-70; L. Coletti, 'Sulla mostra della pittura bolognese del Trecento: con una coda polemica' in *Emporium*, n. 112, 1950, pp. 243-260; G. C. Cavalli, 'Mostra della pittura bolognese del Trecento' in *Panorama dell'arte italiana*, n.1, 1950, pp.197-210.

<sup>90</sup> R. Longhi (ed.), *Guida alla mostra della pittura bolognese del trecento : Bologna, Pinacoteca nazionale*, maggio-luglio, 1950, Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale, 1950, from now on cited in footnotes as 'Longhi (ed.), 1950'.

<sup>91</sup> R. Longhi, 'La mostra del Trecento Bolognese', in *Paragone* vol 1, n. 5. 1950, pp. 5-44, (from now on cited in footnotes as Longhi, 1950).

<sup>92</sup> Emiliani, 2002, p. 118

<sup>93</sup> Emiliani, 2002, p. 118

century.<sup>94</sup> Regardless of the others involved, the exhibition was treated by Longhi as a showcase for his 15 years of studies on the Bolognese school. As Luigi Coletti commented, the show was 'Another Longhi exhibition', and this time it was explicitly 'Longhiana'.<sup>95</sup> Longhi had indeed been part of the organisation of a series of successful monographic exhibitions around Italy, usually remaining in the background.<sup>96</sup> In the case of his beloved Bolognese Trecento, however, he staged a proper self-fashioning campaign, for which he used, among other things, his own collection. Coletti notes how in the catalogue, Longhi presents himself not only as the first inventor of the show, but also as the president of the executive committee, the author of the scientific plan, and the authority behind all the new attributions.<sup>97</sup>

Designed as a guided tour around the exhibition, Longhi's essay opening the catalogue invites the visitor to reconsider their judgement of the Bolognese Trecento. It begins with a statement of aims:

The last 25 years of studies [...] have changed the judgment of the Bolognese Trecento [...] From the presentation today of almost 200 works both paintings and illuminations, the sincere values of an art that is certainly local, yet not provincial anymore, should become evident.<sup>98</sup>

Longhi accompanies the reader through the rooms, starting with the earliest generations, mainly represented through illuminations, but also showing some Riminese works that highlight the relationship with older and pre-existing works. Almost recalling Berenson's theory of personality and resistance, Longhi concludes stating that the strength of the Bolognese Trecento lies in its Paduan

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<sup>94</sup> Emiliani, 2002, p. 118; Bracke, 2012

<sup>95</sup> L. Coletti, 'Sulla mostra della pittura bolognese del Trecento: con una coda polemica' in *Emporium*, n. 112, 1950, pp. 243-260

<sup>96</sup> Cimmoli, 2007, pp. 22-3.

<sup>97</sup> Coletti, 1950, p. 243. He then remembers the valid contribution of Longhi's collaborators, such as Sorrentino and Gnudi, and claiming the contribution of other scholars, him included, to the studies on the Bolognese school.

<sup>98</sup> tr.'Ma gli ultimi 25 anni di studi [...] hanno mutato il giudizio sul Trecento [...] Dalla presentazione odierna di circa duecento numeri tra pittura e miniatura, i valori schietti di un'arte certamente locale, non già provinciale, dovrebbero meglio spiegarsi' Longhi, 1950, pp.5-6. See Appendix G



roots, and its force to willingly refuse the great Florentine or Sieneese inventions, an element that should suffice to claim its place within the canon.<sup>99</sup> Longhi hoped that the exhibition itself will succeed in this, on two levels.<sup>100</sup> On the one hand, to attract the attention of those who first neglected it, i.e. scholars. On the other hand, to be appreciated by the general public too, for ‘Bolognese painting is overtly human, and hence, in its best interpretation, popular’.<sup>101</sup>

The text follows a narrative based on a list of artists’ names from the Bolognese school, in tandem with the exhibition. Longhi names the most prominent exponents of the school, giving pointers to their style, including Vitale da Bologna; the anonymous illuminator called ‘The Great Illustrator’; Dalmasio and his son, Lippo di Dalmasio; Jacopino di Francesco; and Giovanni da Modena. The tour then ends with the school’s influence in the Quattrocento, outside the regional borders. For most of them, Longhi also presents examples from his personal collection. In fact, with eight works out of the 190 displayed in total coming from *Il Tasso*, Longhi’s personal collection made a significant contribution to the exhibition’s aim. These included the *Scenes form the life of Catherine of Alexandria* by Jacopino di Francesco (now attributed to Vitale); *Stories of the martyrdom of a female saint* by Jacopo di Paolo; the *Baptism of Christ* by a Riminese or Bolognese artist; an *Angel* by Lippo di Dalmasio; a *Pietà* by Vitale ; *St Francis receiving the stigmata* by Giovanni da Modena (now attributed to Pseudo Stefano da Ferrara); and two manuscript illuminations: a *Dormition of the Virgin* by Lippo di Dalmasio and an initial by Tomaso da Modena.<sup>102</sup> All acquired by Longhi during the 1930s and 1940s, accompanying his studies on Bolognese painting, they were all published in the catalogue. As mentioned above, some featured in Longhi’s virtual tour in the catalogue preface. For instance, when discussing Jacopino di Francesco, Longhi

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<sup>99</sup> Longhi, 1950, p. 22

<sup>100</sup> Longhi, 1950, p. 23

<sup>101</sup> The fact Longhi formulates a concept of a ‘popular painting’ (later used for Caravaggio) already in his study on Bolognese Trecento has not been yet given relevance by the existent scholarship. On the topic of Longhi and the rhetoric of popular painting, see Aiello, 2019

<sup>102</sup> Before 1934-35, Longhi had also added to his collection a painting by Simone de’ Crocefissi, a *Madonna and child between two convicts sentenced to death* and *St Anthony Abbott and St John the Baptist Decollation*. This work, illustrated in the published 1934-5 lecture, was not present in the 1950 exhibition

mentions the small *Baptism of Christ* which had been at *Il Tasso* since at least 1935, to illustrate Jacopino's relationship with earlier painters from Rimini,<sup>103</sup> while Jacopino's *Stories of St Catherine* are used to present him as the 'great spirit of our Trecento painting' and its 'popular' character.<sup>104</sup>

When discussing Vitale, considered one of the outstanding masters of the school, Longhi highlights the 'diptych happily reconstructed' and formed by the Edinburgh's *Adoration* and a 'small *Pietà* panel found in Italy', proposed with a later dating.<sup>105</sup> As Longhi had dreamt back in 1934, the Edinburgh *Adoration* was lent to the exhibition, and hung probably next to Longhi's own work by Vitale, a *Pietà* - which had not just been 'found' in Italy, as Longhi writes, but gifted to him by Giovanni Salocchi around 1949.<sup>106</sup>

The section on Giovanni da Modena is another instance of Longhi promoting a discovery inspired by a work in his personal collection, the already mentioned recognition that *St Francis receiving the stigmata* and the ex-Aynard panel belonged to the same polyptych, which was first published in the exhibition catalogue. In the preface, Longhi invites the visitor to reconsider Giovanni da Modena, by reviewing

The material assembled for the exhibition, from which one can understand a lot about the great character of the artist: from a diptych with St Francis receiving the Stigmata with three saints (once united with the one from the Aynard Collection that had been attributed to Arcangelo di Cola) [...] so full of humour in the St John with those worn out pilgrims' boots.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Longhi, 1950, p. 13

<sup>104</sup> Longhi, 1950, p. 14

<sup>105</sup> Longhi, 1950, p. 9, 14

<sup>106</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 25 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 80 ; Longhi, 1935, pp. 191-2

<sup>107</sup> Tr.: 'dalla valva di un dittico con le 'stimate di San Francesco e tre Santi (unita un tempo a quella della raccolta Aynard prima riferita ad Arcangelo di Cola) [...] colma di tanto umorismo nel san giovanni con quei suoi stivaloni sfasciati da pellegrino, alla scavata e smunta madonnina di una raccolta milanese'. Longhi, 1950, p. 19

Although nine works attributed to Giovanni da Modena were exhibited, the first Longhi referred to in the catalogue essay was his own panel.<sup>108</sup> The panels by the Pseudo Stefano da Ferrara and by Vitale discussed above, were the last works to have joined the group of Bolognese Trecento paintings assembled by Longhi at *Il Tasso*. Yet, they illustrate how paintings owned by the scholar guided his discoveries because he was living with them. This fertile environment of contact with originals and the study of secondary literature is evident even from the fact that Longhi's Bolognese Trecento paintings used to hang on the shelves of his library, in direct contact with the books.<sup>109</sup>

In acquiring works by the masters he was studying, Longhi expressed the same hope as in the exhibition catalogue to lift the Bolognese school out from its provincial status. In his intended foreword to the catalogue of his private collection he stated:

My painting collection is, somehow, also specialised, in the same way as the library and the photo collection are [...] mirroring [...] the development of my research interests. Even some extremely relevant examples from the Duecento and Trecento are included: but more meaningful is the fact that my critical re-discovery, around 1930, of the Padania Trecento, from Lombardy to Emilia, is illustrated not simply by my writings, but also in a series of originals in my collections: from Vitale da Bologna to Jacopino di Francesco [...] to Tommaso and Giovanni da Modena, to Jacopo Di Paolo.<sup>110</sup>

Thus, the concept of exhibits as the veritable embodiment of the written word of art history lays at the basis of Longhi's own collecting. Collecting and writing worked in tandem to save an entire school from an unfavourable reputation.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> The *piety* was also illustrated in the review published in *Bollettino d'arte* (Fig. 15), *Bollettino d'Arte*, 'La Mostra della pittura bolognese del Trecento' in *Bollettino d'arte*, vol.IV, n. 35, Oct-Dec 1950, pp. 368-70, p. 368

<sup>109</sup> Actually the Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara is given an even more prominent position in a separate room

<sup>110</sup> Boschetto A. (ed.), *La Collezione Roberto Longhi*, Florence, Sansoni, 1971, p. X

<sup>111</sup> Bellosi recounts how Longhi once hoped for the re-evaluation of the painter Mattia Preti, wishing that his works for San Pietro a Majella in Naples would 'become even more important than Raphael's Stanze, for those who can appreciate it'. See Bellosi, 1982, p. 27

As Hubert Locher has pointed out in his essay *Canon. A critical term for art history*, 'canon' is a concept of recent origin. Today, we mean by 'canon' a 'a group of works, objects [...] texts, recognised within a defined social group as being exemplary and thus embodying a set of binding provisions'.<sup>112</sup> It is equal to 'judging, praising, and compiling a selective best-of list of works'.<sup>113</sup> Too often, as Locher says, the role of the art historian in shaping the canon, which is ever open and changing, has been underestimated:

one has nevertheless to acknowledge that the art historian inevitably is and always has been a player in the game. Any art historian has to make choices, deciding which works to think about, to publish, or to exhibit. His or her choices involve value judgements, which sooner or later contribute to the establishing of a set of objects that become more visible, are discussed more, and thus deemed more valuable than others, which results in what one has called the 'canon of art history'.<sup>114</sup>

Similar to James Ackerman's concept of 'style', the 'canon' is not something that one discovers, but rather something that is constructed as a 'generalisation which we form, by comparing individual works, into shapes that are convenient for historical and critical purposes'.<sup>115</sup> It is shaped by many agents, and their agency would of course affect the art market, with scholars such as Longhi in the business of *expertise* being an essential link in the dealer-expert-collector chain.

Art historians such as Longhi were the ones who 'authenticated' works and artists, inventing artistic personalities to give a 'home' to orphan paintings. The attribution game is a competitive one, in which participants fight for the

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<sup>112</sup> Locher H., 'The idea of the Canon and Canon Formation in Art History' in *Art history and visual studies in Europe : transnational discourses and national frameworks*, Rampley M., Lenain T., Locher H., Pinotti A., Scholle-Glass C., and Zijlmans K. (eds.), Leiden, Brill, 2012, p.31

<sup>113</sup> Locher, 2012, p. 29

<sup>114</sup> Locher, 2012, p. 32

<sup>115</sup> As explained by Andrea Pinotti in essay on formalism. Pinotti A., 'Formalism and the History of Style' in *Art history and visual studies in Europe : transnational discourses and national frameworks*, Rampley M., Lenain T., Locher H., Pinotti A., Scholle-Glass C., and Zijlmans K. (eds.), Leiden, Brill, 2012, pp. 75-90

paternity of the first discovery, and to get as close as possible to the identification of the true hand. Longhi frequently praised himself and his role in re-discovering the Bolognese Trecento in his own writings. The paintings in his collection fulfilled a similar role, as affirmations of his ingenuity in making attributions and recognising the values of works that others overlooked.

A similar case can be made for Longhi's ownership of paintings by Caravaggio and his followers - another group he rehabilitated, again culminating in a large exhibition. Longhi himself recognised that works by Caravaggio and the Caravaggeschi were a highlight of his collection:

In my collection [...] there is an even more explicit crossing from my writings on Caravaggio and the Caravaggesques (1928-52) to those originals that, in my collection, illustrate the great 'naturalistic' movement of Caravaggio himself: (*A Boy Bitten by a Lizard*), to his Italian and European followers, who are present in almost their entirety: from Saraceni to Elsheimer, Borgianni, Caracciolo, Valentin, Babouren, Douffet, Passante, Stomer, Preti, etc.<sup>116</sup>

As with the Bolognese Trecento, Longhi's collecting of Caravaggio and his followers shall be investigated through the works he lent to the seminal exhibition 'Mostra del Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi', which he co-organised in 1951 in Milan.<sup>117</sup> From April to June of that year, around 187 paintings by Caravaggio, his contemporaries, and followers adorned the rooms of the *Palazzo Reale* (Fig. 16).<sup>118</sup> Following this exhibition, the understanding,

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<sup>116</sup> tr.: 'la mia raccolta di dipinti è, in un certo modo, specializzata in parallelo alla Biblioteca e alla Fototeca [...] Il parallelo [...] meglio ancora traspare passando dai miei scritti sul Caravaggio e i caravaggeschi (1928-1952) agli originali che, nella mia collezione, illustrano il grande moto 'naturalistico' dal Caravaggio in persona (Il fanciullo morso dal ramarro) ai suoi seguaci Italiani ed europei che sono quasi tutti presenti: dal Saraceni all' Elsheimer, Borgianni, Caracciolo, Valentin, Babouren, Douffet, Passante, Stomer, Preti'. Longhi's notes as reported in Boschetto, 1971, p. X

<sup>117</sup> *Mostra del Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi*, Florence, Sansoni, 1951

<sup>118</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 51

reception, and fame of Caravaggio changed irreversibly.<sup>119</sup> Although it is hard to imagine nowadays, it was the first ever monographic show on the painter, who was known by name to many scholars, but he had not been studied extensively, nor was particularly appreciated. It was the first time that Caravaggio's *oeuvre* and his influence were presented to the general public, who came in great numbers. It is estimated that half a million people saw the exhibition, with an average of five to six thousand visitors a day.<sup>120</sup>

The exhibition was proposed in 1949 by the mayor of Milan, Antonio Greppi, a socialist and former partisan. His proposal was accepted by Fernanda Wittgens, the Lombardy superintendent, director of the *Pinacoteca di Brera* and wife of Ettore Modigliani, the former director, and one of the organisers of the 1930 Italian exhibition at the Royal Academy in London.<sup>121</sup> The first thing on the agenda was to appoint an organising committee. A special group was nominated to take care of selecting the works, composed of many big personalities from both the academic and administrative worlds of Italian Art History. Among the names we find Giulio Carlo Argan, Inspector of the *Direzione Generale Belle Arti* and co-founder of the *Istituto Centrale per il Restauro*; Mario Salmi, Medieval Art History professor of the University of Rome; Rodolfo Pallucchini, former director of the Gallerie Estense di Modena and Professor of Art History at the University of Padua and Bologna; Giovanni Costantini, president of the *Pontificia commissione centrale per l'arte sacra in*

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<sup>119</sup> See N. Klagka ' 'Caravaggiomania' in The Burlington Magazine – Part I: the late 20th century' in *The Burlington Magazine Index Blog*, 10DEC16, <https://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com/2016/12/10/caravaggiomania-in-the-burlington-magazine-i-the-late-20th-century/> ; N. Klagka ' 'Caravaggiomania' in The Burlington Magazine, part II: 1903-1951' in *The Burlington Magazine Index Blog*, 06JAN17, <https://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com/2017/01/06/caravaggiomania-in-the-burlington-magazine-part-ii-1903-1951/> ; A. Casati, 'Caravaggio a Milano, 1951. Il dibattito sulla carta stampata: critica e militanza' in *Ricerche di S/confine*, vol. VI, n.1, 2015, pp. 81-104; A. Casati, 'Arslan, Longhi e la mostra di Caravaggio del 1951' in *Critica d'arte e tutela in Italia. Figure e protagonisti nel secondo dopoguerra. Atti del Convegno del X anniversario della Società Italiana di Storia della critica d'arte*, Galassi C. (ed), Passignano, aquaplano, 2017, pp. 149-157; A. Casati, 'Caravaggio tra Naturalismo e Realismo. Un percorso nella critica attraverso le mostre 1922-1951', Milan, Mimesis, 2020 ; P. Aiello, *Caravaggio 1951*, Milan, Officina Libraria, 2019; but also A. C. Cimmoli, *Musei Effimeri: Allestimenti di mostre in Italia 1949-1963*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 2007, and A. Trotta, 'Bernard Berenson e la mostra su Lorenzo Lotto, Venezia 1953' in Galassi, 2017, pp. 519-531

<sup>120</sup> Trotta, 2017, p. 520

<sup>121</sup> To learn more see Aiello, 2019, p. 50

*Italia*; Matteo Marangoni, a Seicento scholar and Professor of Art History at the University of Pisa; Lionello Venturi, son of Adolfo, Professor of Art History in Turin and in Rome following his exile and the war; and Roberto Longhi, who at the time had recently been appointed Professor of Medieval Art History at the University of Florence (1949). In addition to the 'experts in the field' an executive committee was formed to cover the operational side, which included Fernanda Wittgens.<sup>122</sup>

Yet, despite the many important names, the success of the exhibition was and still is perceived as the achievement of just one from among their ranks: Roberto Longhi.<sup>123</sup> This was mainly due to a timing issue - a collision with the celebrations of the Christian Jubilee. Once the nominees were approved in the autumn of 1949, the committee started compiling a list of desiderata and began to negotiate loans.<sup>124</sup> The religious anniversary, however, would have implied that many works would not have been available for loan, including fundamental items, such as Caravaggio's cycle from the *Contarelli Chapel* in *San Luigi dei Francesi*, Rome. Hence, it was decided to postpone the opening by one year.<sup>125</sup> With more time to work on the exhibition, there was also more time to increase the loan requests, which demanded some coordination of the committee in charge. A crucial decision was taken: to offer the role of technical commissioner to Roberto Longhi.<sup>126</sup>

By accepting, Longhi not only gained the complete command over the 'experts committee', many members of which were his rivals, but he also

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<sup>122</sup> Mostra, 1951, p.? ; Aiello, 2019, p. 50

<sup>123</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 50-1

<sup>124</sup> In autumn Longhi's Venturi's and Argan nominations to the committee were confirmed but not official yet. It is known that they had personal and political issues. Aiello, 2019, pp. 50-1

<sup>125</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 54-5

<sup>126</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 54-5



ensured that his ideas and name were forever to be linked with the event.<sup>127</sup> In his new role, Longhi controlled the selection and the display of works. His 'dictatorship' also extended to the catalogue, at least in its first edition.<sup>128</sup> In fact, the entries for each work were written by two Longhi's students: Antonio Boschetto and Mina Gregori, who channelled Longhi's thoughts.<sup>129</sup> In the catalogue, the works were organised chronologically and alphabetically. Until recently it was not possible to reconstruct the route of visitors in the exhibition, and fully comprehend Longhi's input, but then a collection of photographs showing the rooms and works exhibited re-emerged from the Alinari archive.<sup>130</sup> As revealed by this new visual evidence, the design of the exhibition was again rather simple. Reflecting a style of display that had been in fashion since the 1930s, and was praised by Longhi, paintings were hung on wooden panels wrapped in fustian, a cheap textile.<sup>131</sup> Some of the larger canvases were hung against loose draping, of the same neutral greyish colour. In addition, Lombard

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<sup>127</sup> As a consequence, the focus was more oriented towards the Caravaggesques, including more loans. Longhi also brought the BBPR architects Ernesto Nathan Rogers and Lodovico Belgiojoso who had worked on the Castello Sforzesco. Longhi's views and method mainly clashed with Lionello Venturi's, who would resign and later come back. Other issues involved the debate on restorations, with Cesare Brandi and Giulio Carlo Argan wanting the new ICR to be in charge, whereas Longhi preferred Mauro Pelliccioli. Aiello, 2019, pp 55-6, 61-2

<sup>128</sup> Some attributions and statements were downplayed in the second edition. Aiello, 2019, p. 64. On the catalogue see L. Barroero, 'Roberto Longhi. <<Caravaggio>> 1952-1968' in *La Riscoperta del Seicento. I Libri Fondativi*, A. Bacchi (ed.), Genoa, Sagep, 2017, pp. 60-75

<sup>129</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 64

<sup>130</sup> See Casati, 2015 and 2020, and Aiello, 2019, p. 68. The exhibition layout with a list of exhibits per rooms have been first proposed by Aiello, 2019, pp. 147-65

<sup>131</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 78. See for instance the photographs of the 1939 Veronese exhibition in Venice in M. Cartolari 'A Ca' Giustinian fu tutto diverso. La mostra di Paolo Veronese a Venezia (1939)' in *Musei e mostre tra le due guerre*, S. Cecchini e P. Dragoni (eds.), *Il Capitale culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage*, n.14, 2016, pp.459-502 and those of the 1949 Bellini exhibition in Venice, published in Cimmoli, 2007

sixteenth and seventeenth century pieces of furniture were placed in some of the rooms, evoking a sense of time and place.<sup>132</sup>

If the design of the exhibition was straightforward, the scholarly principles reflected in it were rather bold. It was little short of an exhaustive summary of Longhi's forty years of research on Caravaggio and the Caravaggeschi. Already in his dissertation of 1911, Longhi had studied Caravaggio alongside his lesser known followers, such as Mattia Preti, Orazio Borgianni and Orazio Gentileschi. His research culminated in his famous essay 'Ultimi Studi sul Caravaggio e la Sua Cerchia', drafted around 1939, but published in 1943.<sup>133</sup> Following this essay, the exhibition dedicated equal attention to the work of the master and to that of his contemporaries and followers, a format that was to influence many future Caravaggesque exhibitions.<sup>134</sup>

In the 1951 exhibition, the first six rooms out of twenty presented the *corpus* of Caravaggio. Three more rooms (A, B, and C) constituted a parallel path (Fig. 17) showing works by Caravaggio's predecessors, mainly Lombard painters, restoration documents and photographs from the Istituto Centrale per il Restauro displayed in cases, and copies of Caravaggio's lost originals (Fig. 24).<sup>135</sup> Rooms seven to twenty hosted works by Caravaggio's followers, from his contemporaries to later artists such as Velazquez.

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<sup>132</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 78. Beside a table and a chair coherent in Seicento style, but coming from other collections, archival research revealed unpublished evidence that, for instance, two great 'galera' boat lights were requested for loan from the Correr Museum in Venice. Records unknown to the recent literature show how the heterogeneous committee met in June 1950 at the Correr, and it might be that on that occasions, the members saw the objects and thought they would fit within the display. In the end works were sent but not displayed. Archivio Storico Museo Correr (ASMC) ; 'Mostra del Caravaggio. Riunione nella sala Riservata della Biblioteca del Museo. ASMC, B00132F000-60

<sup>133</sup> Longhi R., 'Ultimi Studi sul Caravaggio e la sua cerchia' in *Proporzioni*, n. 1, 1943, pp. 5-63. M.C. Terzaghi, 'Roberto Longhi e Caravaggio: dalla copia all'originale' in *Il mestiere del conoscitore. Roberto Longhi*, A.M. Ambrosini Massari, A. Bacchi, A. Benati, A. Galli (eds.), Bologna, Fondazione Federico Zeri, 2015, pp. 319-333, p. 321; Aiello, 2019, p. 70

<sup>134</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 55-6

<sup>135</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 90-93

Scholars have observed close parallels between the 1943 *Ultimi Studi* and the exhibition in Milan.<sup>136</sup> An as yet under-appreciated factor in this equation was that of Longhi's own collecting of Caravaggio and the Caravaggeschi, which took place largely between 1921 and 1943. Almost every single work he owned was cited in the 1943 essay, and works lent by Longhi were present in each section of the exhibition - a common and distinctive practice of scholar collectors. In this way, Longhi made the 1951 exhibition in Milan the perfect showcase for both his studies and his own collection.<sup>137</sup> As in the case of the Bolognese Trecento, Longhi's collection was not just a passive reflection of his ideas, but also an 'instrument of study'.<sup>138</sup> As shall be demonstrated, through its display at the 1951 exhibition, Longhi's collection played an active role in promoting his input in Caravaggio studies. As this chapter will show, his influence, extended to British scholars, including Ben Nicolson and Denis Mahon.

Longhi's *Ultimi Studi* of 1943 re-worked in the catalogue's introduction, offers an insight into Caravaggio's reputation at the time. As with the Bolognese Trecento, Longhi opens with a survey of Caravaggio's critical fortune from the painter's time up to Longhi's, highlighting Longhi's own role in Caravaggio's rediscovery and reintegration within the art-historical canon.<sup>139</sup> Then, he provides the reader with an idea of the status quo in Caravaggio studies and its complications. Here he draws an imaginary parallel, outlining how the French naturalists and impressionists would have fared if their works had been forgotten for a hundred years. As Longhi explains, it would have been very difficult for scholars, with almost no sources other than the works themselves, to distinguish a Manet from a young Renoir or a Monet, or a late Monet from a Sisley, or a Lepine from Renoir, and so on.<sup>140</sup> To Longhi, this was

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<sup>136</sup> Terzaghi, 2015, p. 321 ; Aiello, 2019, p. 70

<sup>137</sup> In 1952 he also published a monograph, Longhi R., *Il Caravaggio*, Milan, Martello, 1952. See Barroero, 2017

<sup>138</sup> Bandera, 2020, p. 11

<sup>139</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 5

<sup>140</sup> This choice of referring to modernist French painters, much indebted to Berenson, as seen in the *Lotto*, will be a constant in Longhi's poetic as a scholar on Caravaggio, and will be seen in Clark too, who would transpose these juxtapositions in his collecting too, as further explored in Chapter 6

what had happened with Caravaggio and his followers, whose patronage mainly involved secular and private works, which critics were not interested in writing about unless it were to discredit them.<sup>141</sup>

Giulio Mancini (1559-1630) and Vincenzo Giustiniani (1564-1637) were among the first to have appreciated the master and write about his production and that of his followers, but the information they present is minimal and often wrong - including so many foreign names that were difficult to spell.<sup>142</sup> Giovanni Baglione (1566-1643) and Giovanni Pietro Bellori (1613-1696) were among Caravaggio's earliest biographers, but they wrote little, and their judgement was biased and negative, affecting others till well into the twentieth century.<sup>143</sup> According to Longhi, their vision of Caravaggio's 'naturalism' caused nineteenth-century scholars, such as Burckhardt, to consider the painter as the last of the Renaissance classicists, the 'night porter of the renaissance', a mannerist or a neo-clacissist.<sup>144</sup>

As recognised by Longhi, a turning point was reached with the Florentine exhibition on the *Seicento* and *Settecento* organised at Palazzo Pitti in 1922.<sup>145</sup> As Longhi states, the organisers of the exhibition failed to recognise the role played by Caravaggio as an innovator - they saw him as a Bronzino, or an Ingres.<sup>146</sup> Restoring this status to the painter was Longhi's first major

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<sup>141</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 5

<sup>142</sup> Longhi, 1943 p. 7

<sup>143</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 6

<sup>144</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 7

<sup>145</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 7. Tarchiani N., *Mostra della pittura italiana del Seicento e del Settecento*, Rome, Bestetti & Tumminelli, 1922. See A. Morandotti, 'Roberto Longhi e la pittura lombarda del Seicento e del Settecento. Il caso di Giacomo Ceruti (1698-1767)' in *Il mestiere del conoscitore. Roberto Longhi*, A.M. Ambrosini Massari, A. Bacchi, A. Benati, A. Galli (eds.), Bologna, Fondazione Federico Zeri, 2015, pp. 385-405 and G.Policicchio, F. Mucciante, M. Stillitano, 'La mostra della pittura italiana del Seicento e del Settecento. Rilettura e riscoperta di uno stile: il Barocco' in *Mostre a Firenze 1911-1942. Nuove indagini per un itinerario tra arte e cultura*, C. Giometti (ed.) Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2019, pp. 41-57.

<sup>146</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 7

contribution to Caravaggio studies. For Longhi, Caravaggio had erased tradition and started painting again.<sup>147</sup>

Longhi's two main arguments were that Caravaggio's style was rooted in the Lombard tradition and that his most poetic innovation was that of modelling by shadows, with his *chiaroscuro*.<sup>148</sup> These ideas were well presented in the exhibition and the documentary on Caravaggio directed by Barbaro that was projected at the opening, where Caravaggio's style is often compared to that of Manet and Courbet for its 'modern' reality.<sup>149</sup> All these innovations were already present in Caravaggio's youthful production, which is discussed at the start of both Longhi's 1943 text, and was shown at the beginning of the 1951 exhibition. Longhi possessed two pieces dating from this period: *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* (Fig. 18) and *Boy Peeling a Pear* (Fig.19).<sup>150</sup> As shall be seen, Longhi used these two canvases to illustrate Caravaggio's innovations both in his texts and in the exhibition.

In 1951, *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* was displayed in Room 1 (Fig. 20), among other smaller canvases featuring boys dressed up as Bacchus and related subjects, such as the first still lives.<sup>151</sup> The canvas was Longhi's first and only

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<sup>147</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 7 ; Casati, 2015, p. 84

<sup>148</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 9. Longhi included also Lotto in the Lombard predecessors of Caravaggio. In the 1953 Lotto exhibition in Venice, as seen in Chapter Two, Longhi's idea of a Lombard Lotto prevailed over Berenson's more traditional idea of a Venetian Lotto, which in fact contributed to Berenson's dislike of the show.

<sup>149</sup> On the documentary, see Uccelli A., 'Due film, la filologia e un cane: sui documentari di Umberto Barbaro e Roberto Longhi' in *Prospettiva*, n. 129, 2008, pp. 2-40. There exist two versions of the voice-over: one manuscript, and one type-script. Appendix 1: 'Caravaggio', type-written, in Uccelli, 2008, pp. 29-30, from now on cited as Uccelli, 2008, Ap. 1, tw. Appendix 2: 'Caravaggio', manuscript in Uccelli, 2008, pp. 31-33, from now on cited as Uccelli, 2008, Ap. 2, ms.

<sup>150</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 78; M. Gregori (ed.), *La Fondazione Roberto Longhi a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 1980; 2020, cat n. 7. The picture, as all those owned by Longhi cited in this chapter part, have been published on multiple exhibition catalogues. Yet, from now on, only the 1980 entries will be cited, for they convey the most complete provenance, alongside with those, most up-dated, of the 2020 exhibition *Il tempo di Caravaggio* (Bandera, 2020). Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 79; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 9.

<sup>151</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 71, 78 ; M.C. Bandera (ed.) *Il tempo di Caravaggio. Capolavori della collezione di Roberto Longhi*, Venice, Marsilio, 2020, cat n. 7, p. 47

autograph painting by Caravaggio.<sup>152</sup> Recorded in the collection of Villa Borghese, Rome (1650) and then in the D'Atri collection in Paris in the nineteenth century, it appeared on the Roman art market in 1925. Longhi first published this canvas before he owned it, and bought it in 1928.<sup>153</sup> This work is both famous and controversial. On the one hand, there has always been a question of its authenticity and dating, and on the other, the issue of its interpretation.<sup>154</sup> Longhi, who wrote about his piece on several occasions (1928, 1943, 1951, 1960, and 1968), thought it to be an original, whereas he considered the best known other version, a canvas previously in the Korda collection, first published by Tancred Borenius in 1925, and in the National Gallery in London since 1986, a good copy.<sup>155</sup> Regarding subject, Longhi proposed a painting by Sofonisba Anguissola as an inspiration. The latter shows a young girl who is giving comfort to a boy that has been bitten by a crab. Longhi must have known it from both a drawing in the Uffizi, and a late copy in the Musée Magnin in Dijon.<sup>156</sup> From the 1960s onwards, later scholars focused on symbolic interpretations reading the work in relationship with the cultural circle surrounding Cardinal del Monte, and elite queerness.<sup>157</sup> In 1985, Richard E. Spear used another known version of the *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* to illustrate the critical fortune of Caravaggio, starting with his contemporaries up

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<sup>152</sup> It is still debated whether *The Boy Bitten by a Lizard* is a copy or an original. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 78 ; Bandera, 2020, cat n. 7

<sup>153</sup> The painting had already been lent by Longhi to an exhibition he organised in 1938, under commission of the fascist education ministry Bottai, and that would tour the US: 'Masterworks of Five Centuries', San Francisco, 1939, n. 24; 'Masterpieces of Italian Art', Chicago, 1939- 1940, n. 6; 'Italian Masters Lent by the Royal Italian Government', New York, 1940, n. 22 On the exhibitions and its context and propaganda implications, see L. Carletti, C. Giometti, "'San Francisco will see old masters". La fiera delle vanità del regime nel 1939' in *Studi storici*, april-june 2011, pp. 465-489, and L. Carletti, C. Giometti, 'In margine all'"Editoriale mostre e musei" di Roberto Longhi: gli antichi maestri italiani a San Francisco nel 1939' in *Predella*, n. 36 (2014), pp. 71-85. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 78 ; Bandera, 2020, cat n. 7.

<sup>154</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 78 ; Bandera, 2020, cat n. 7

<sup>155</sup> With some scholars arguing for both canvases to be original, the pro-Longhi 'faction' counts on the opinion of Denis Mahon (1951), Bernard Berenson (1951), Max Friedländer (1955) and Frommel (1970) whereas Lionello Venturi (1952) and Ben Nicholson (1979) are among the the pro- Konda voices. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 78 ; Bandera, 2020, cat n. 7. See also L. Treves, 'Caravaggio and Britain, Early appreciation, Later Criticism and Missed Opportunities' in *Beyond Caravaggio*, L. Treves (ed.), London, National Gallery, 2016, pp. 21-30, p. 21

<sup>156</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 78 ; Bandera, 2020, cat n. 7

<sup>157</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 78 ; Bandera, 2020, cat n. 7

to the 1980s, hinting at the iconic status of the painting, and paying homage to Longhi.<sup>158</sup> The canvas, although one cannot know which version of it, is cited in most of the earliest sources on Caravaggio, such as Mancini and Baglione, 'mirroring the varied reactions to Caravaggio's art from Van Mander onwards'.<sup>159</sup>

The painting was held in high esteem by Longhi, and it was treated as one of the best pieces in his collection. In a recent photograph taken at the *Fondazione Longhi*, it appears hanging on the wall, above a blue sofa (Fig. 21). In a 1962 photographic portrait of Longhi's wife Anna Banti taken in *Villa il Tasso*, the canvas can be seen hanging above a small tondo portrait above a small book case. In the same photo, on the right, there is another recognisable Caravaggesque painting: Carlo Saraceni's *Portrait of Cardinal Raniero Capocci* (Fig. 22).<sup>160</sup> Among the paintings in his collection, those that can be labelled 'Caravaggesque' were the ones with which Longhi engaged the most. He published them all and referred to them more than once in his work. As a connoisseur, he studied them, among other things, through making drawings after them.<sup>161</sup> In 1930, two years after its acquisition, Longhi made such a drawing after the *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* (Fig. 23).<sup>162</sup> The drawing, made in charcoal on paper, only gives a quick impression of the work. One can recognise Longhi's interest in Caravaggio's art, as expressed in his writings. On the one hand, the bottom right part of the canvas, with the flowers and the lizard, the focus of iconological interpretations, is left blank, perhaps because of a lack of interest for its subject matter. On the other hand, Longhi's hand has

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<sup>158</sup> R. E. Spear, 'The Critical Fortune of a Realist Painter' in *The Age of Caravaggio*, New York. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Electa, 1985, pp. 22-27, p. 22

<sup>159</sup> Spear, 1985, p. 22

<sup>160</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 84; Longhi, 1943, n. 26

<sup>161</sup> As shall be seen with other canvases he lent to the 1951 exhibition in Milan, Longhi made drawings after some of the Caravaggesque works in his collection, in the same way as he did with other paintings when he visited public and private collections around the world. Longhi's drawings have been published in G. Testori, *I disegni di Roberto Longhi*, Parma, 1980

<sup>162</sup> Testori, 1980 ; M. C. Bandera, 'I disegni di Roberto Longhi' in *Nel segno di Roberto Longhi. Piero della Francesca e Caravaggio*, Venice, Marsilio, 2017, p. 65; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 8

captured both the boy's expression and the use of light in the composition, reflecting the critic's interest in Caravaggio's chiaroscuro.

Despite its debated attribution and dating, when exhibited in Milan in 1951, the *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* was not relegated to the 'copies' in rooms A-C. Instead, it featured among Caravaggio's early works in Room 1.<sup>163</sup> In a rare photograph of the room (Fig. 20), one can see the already mentioned *Fruit Basket* from the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, the *Mary Magdalen* from the *Galleria Doria Pamphilj*, in Rome, the *Bacchus* from the *Uffizi*, the *Fortune Teller* from the Louvre, and *Boy with Fruit* from the *Galleria Borghese* in Rome.<sup>164</sup> Also visible are a nut wood table and also a chair in sixteenth and seventeenth Lombard style.<sup>165</sup> The *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* cannot be seen and probably hung on the walls behind the photographer.<sup>166</sup>

In the typescript of the voiceover, Longhi uses his own painting to illustrate the concept of the photo-frame, particularly apt given that he is doing so in a filmed documentary, and Caravaggio's innovative use of *chiaroscuro*:

In the *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, the movement and the subject are like a snap-shot, the light is circulating, the water is condensed on the jug, where a warm roman sunset is mirrored: the model, a youth with the shirt open, prefigures the *Bacchus* painted by Velazquez forty years later.<sup>167</sup>

In his speech for the opening, when speaking about the innovative subjects of Caravaggio's paintings, Longhi said:

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<sup>163</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 78

<sup>164</sup> First published in *Bollettino d'Arte*, 'Mostra del Caravaggio' in *Bollettino d'arte*, vol. 3, n. 36, Jul-Sep. 1951, pp. 283-285, p. 284

<sup>165</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 71, 78

<sup>166</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 78

<sup>167</sup> Tr.: 'Nel fanciullo morso da un ramarro il moto e il soggetto sono istantanee, la luce circola, l'acqua si appanna sulla caraffa ove si specchia un caldo tramonto romano: il modello, giovanetto scamiciato, prelude al *Bacco* del Velasquez dipinto 40 anni dopo', Uccelli, 2008, Ap. 1, tw, paragraph 18. As has been revealed recently, it is likely that the text actually read in the film was rather as follows: 'The *Bacchus* was still an available subject, unlike this *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, only an instance of everyday life, caught in the light of the warm Roman sunset that mirrors in the cloudy jug', Ap. 2, ms, paragraph 19



In his canvases [...] his *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, his *Card Game Players*, become subjects for the first time in European Art History, also through the mediation of the [...] Dutch and the Flemish [...] subjects that will become the *raison d'être* of modern painting.<sup>168</sup>

The *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* is cited by Mancini as among those 'paintings created to be sold' by Caravaggio in his early Roman period, when working at the house of Monsignor Pandolfo Pucci di Recanati. The work is listed together with the other painting of which Longhi possessed a version, the already mentioned *Boy Peeling Fruit*, possibly one of the painter's earliest works (Fig. 19).<sup>169</sup> Longhi's copy, one out of at least nine known versions, was bought from the dealer Aldo Briganti.<sup>170</sup> It is not known when exactly Longhi bought the painting, but the *terminus ante quem* is 1943, when he published it for the first time, in his *Ultimi Studi*.<sup>171</sup>

Longhi never thought his version of *Boy Peeling Fruit* to be anything other than a copy of a lost original - as he used to call it a 'relic':

Among the oldest works by the master, Mancini also cites a 'boy peeling a pear with the knife', a copy of which / figure 8 / albeit coarse, can be found in the gallery at Hampton Court. The beauty, almost lunar, of the first idea of Caravaggio is better observed in the relic / figure 9 / albeit ruined, that I myself devoutly keep. Caravaggio is here exercising with care in the first

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<sup>168</sup> Tr.: 'infatti nei suoi quadri [...] il suo 'fanciullo morso dal ramarro', i suoi giocatori di carte sono per la prima volta nella storia dell'arte europea gli argomenti, anche per il tramite troppo spesso [...] di olandesi e de fiamminghi [...] soggetti pretesto per la pittura moderna', Uccelli, 2008, Ap. 3 , p. 33

<sup>169</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 79; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 9

<sup>170</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 79; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 9. One of the copies is in the Royal Collection, see <https://www.rct.uk/collection/402612/boy-peeling-fruit>

<sup>171</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 79; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 9

effect of a strong lateral light, even though it does not destroy yet or profoundly carve any form.<sup>172</sup>

There are similar problems of dating, attribution, and interpretation around the work as around the *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*. Even Mancini's description of it varies from manuscript to manuscript - the *Codex Marciano* mentions an apple, the *Codex Palatino* mentions a pear, while other sources call the fruit a peach.<sup>173</sup> As with the *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, interpretations ranged from complex Christological metaphors to an allegory of one of the five senses, and queer allusions. Longhi, instead, thought it to be a perfect example of that 'gusto popolare' in painting, which was inspired by the Lombard and Northern Italian genre painting of the sixteenth century.<sup>174</sup>

In his texts, Longhi argues for the status of copies of lost paintings by Caravaggio and their pivotal role in studying the painter with the aim of establishing a chronology and a *corpus*.<sup>175</sup> Through collecting the copy of *Boy Peeling a Fruit*, Longhi identified himself as the custodian of a rare proof of a lost work by the master. The same attitude dictated the inclusion of copies in the 1951 exhibition, for which Longhi reserved several rooms (Fig. 24). Longhi's *Boy peeling a Fruit* was in fact displayed in room C, illustrating Caravaggio's first attempts of modelling the body with the use of light.<sup>176</sup>

Like Longhi's *Ultimi Studi*, the 1951 exhibition explored the extent of Caravaggio's influence on his contemporaries and his followers. From room seven onwards, organised chronologically, the Caravaggeschi section started

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<sup>172</sup> Tr.: 'Fra le cose piu' antiche del maestro e' citato dal Mancini anche il 'Fanciullo che pela una pera con il cortello', una copia del quale /figura 8/ , ma alquanto greve, si vede nella Galleria di Hampton Court. La bellezza quasi lunare della prima idea caravaggesca traspare forse meglio dalla reliquia / figura 9/ , per quanto consunta, che io stesso conservo devotamente. Il Caravaggio sta qui cauamente provandosi nei primi effetti di luce intensamente laterale, pur senza distruggere ancora o incidere profondamente la forma', Longhi, 1943, p. 10

<sup>173</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 79; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 9

<sup>174</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 79; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 9

<sup>175</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 90. See Terzaghi, 2015, p. 319

<sup>176</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 90

with the immediate impact of Caravaggio's revolution, moving through various decades, and ending with works by Jusepe de Ribera, Rubens, Rembrandt, Georges de la Tour, and Vermeer.<sup>177</sup> These were the rooms that hosted most of Longhi's loans, often hung side by side with examples by the same artists from more prestigious public collections. Room 8 featured a *Lamentation* by Borgianni (Fig. 25); Room 11 (Figs. 26-27) an *Apostle* by the Master of the Judgement of Solomon (Fig. 28) and a *Vanity* by Caroselli (Fig. 29); Room 12 a *Judith with the Head of Holophernes* by Saraceni (Fig.30); Room 14 a *Denial of St Peter* by Valentin de Boulogne (Fig. 31) (which only entered the Longhi collection in 1963); Room 15 (Fig. 32) an *Adoration of the Shepherds* by Gerard von Honthorst (Fig. 33); Room 16 (Fig. 34) a *Concert* by Mattia Preti (Fig. 35), and an *Archangel Raphael Healing Tobit* by Matthias Stomer (Fig. 36).<sup>178</sup>

In *Ultimi Studi*, having proposed some additions to Caravaggio's catalogue, Longhi shifts attention to the so called 'cerchia' of Caravaggio. Longhi's main point here is that although research had advanced significantly on the topic of the later followers of Caravaggio, the immediate influence of the master on his contemporaries was still neglected.<sup>179</sup> He suggested to fill that gap, asking 'at which point in time did artists start producing 'Caravaggesque works?'.<sup>180</sup> He refers to Mancini, who reports that from 1615, the northern Caravaggeschi 'come and go without control', but also gives a precious list of the earliest Caravaggeschi.<sup>181</sup> Dedicating paragraphs of the text to some of these artists and discussing their works, Longhi identifies Gentileschi, Elsheimer, and Saraceni as Caravaggio's earliest followers, active from 1605-6. Interestingly, when describing a work by Elsheimer, Longhi uses the adjective 'Courbetiano', which, as seen above, he would employ again multiple times in 1951.<sup>182</sup> Longhi continues by explaining how the influence of Caravaggio was extended across time and space, through 'waves' of Caravaggeschi. As he writes: 'the first

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<sup>177</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 155-64 ; G. Agosti, 'Per Patrizio' in Aiello, 2019, pp. 7-34, p. 19

<sup>178</sup> Aiello, 2019, pp. 155-64

<sup>179</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 19

<sup>180</sup> Tr.: 'quando insomma si incominciarono a dipingere quadri Caravaggeschi?', Longhi, 1943, p. 19

<sup>181</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 19

<sup>182</sup> 'la ignara brutalità di una Courbetiana bagneuse', Longhi, 1943, p. 19

wave of the Dutch, the Flemish, the French, and a second one, better known [...] I, too, have contributed to this field of research, and especially as far as the first wave is concerned [...] as with Terbrugghen.’<sup>183</sup>

When writing about the followers of Caravaggio working in the north around 1630, Longhi acknowledges that his ‘foreign colleagues’ have increased knowledge in the field, and highlights how he instead has focused on the lesser known Roman production of that decade.<sup>184</sup> That was the time in which ‘the baroque diastole starts to dilate and the new revolution continues in two energetic examples [...] the French Valentin and the Ticinian Serodine’.<sup>185</sup> Having created this schematic representation of the Caravaggesque movement, Longhi discusses some key figures in detail, often developing his discourse in the footnotes.<sup>186</sup> And it is precisely in these instances that he also reveals, in some cases for the very first time, the works by these artists that he himself possessed.

Those intuitions on Caravaggio’s influence that were first posited in a systematic way in 1943 were further developed and given a physical dimension in the exhibition rooms in 1951. The texts accompanying the exhibition show a renewed use of the term ‘circle’, rather than speaking of the ‘school’ of Caravaggio.<sup>187</sup> As Longhi explained: ‘Nobody can be called a pupil of Caravaggio [...] by definition, he could not leave a grammar or a style behind him to be followed, but only poetics [...] not having pupils, but only free men who chose to follow him’.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Tr.: ‘anch’io ho contribuito piu’ volte alla ricerca e soprattutto per la prima ondata che c’interessa, e rammento [...] il Ter Brugghen’, Longhi, 1943, p. 24

<sup>184</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 33

<sup>185</sup> Tr.: ‘mentre già si dilata la diastole barocca, la vecchia rivoluzione continua in due energetiche affermazioni...il francese Valentin e il ticinese Serodine’, Longhi, 1943, p. 33

<sup>186</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 70

<sup>187</sup> Casati, 2015, p. 85

<sup>188</sup> Tr.: ‘nessuno di costoro potrà’ dirsi [...] che sia scolaro del Caravaggio; suo figio o nipite [...] Caravaggio non poteva per definizione lasciare una grammatica e una stilistica, ma solo un principio poetico [...] non avendo avuto scolari, ma soltanto uomini liberi di seguirlo’, Uccelli, 2019, Ap. 3, p. 33

In the exhibition one would encounter Caravaggio's 'circle - not school - in Rome, and then the clandestine followers', such as Baglione and Caracciolo in Naples, Gentileschi, Elsheimer, Borgianni and Saraceni in the first and second decades; then Manfredi of Mantua and his northern followers, 'rambling in Via Margutti and Via del Babuino', from the Pensionante de Saraceni to Cecco del Caravaggio; then Valentin and Serodine; and 'it will be like being in Rome, among free people thinking and discussing a new and modern painting, the first one that was created and not tailored for a patron, but for private buyers and merchants [...] to export [...] once again an anticipation of the Ecole de Paris from 1860-80'; then one would encounter Terbrugghen, anticipating Vermeer, Tournier, anticipating Latour, and Gherardo delle Notti, ending with the 1630s.<sup>189</sup>

Concerning Longhi's own Caravaggeschi, the first one would have come across in 1951 was in Room 8: Orazio Borgianni's *Lamentation of the Dead Christ* (Fig. 26).<sup>190</sup> It was acquired by Longhi between 1914, when he referred to it as in the collection of Mingoni in Rome, and 1922, when he first published the painting as being part of his own collection.<sup>191</sup> Already on that occasion, Longhi expressed his thoughts on the influences on the composition from Tintoretto's *Corpse of Saint Mark* and Mantegna's *Piety*, both in the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan, also praising the quality of the *impasto*.<sup>192</sup> Other copies are known, such as the one in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica in Rome, which Longhi judged to be a copy in his 1943 *Ultimi Studi*.<sup>193</sup> Interestingly, when exhibited in Milan in 1951, the painting was hung in the same room of another copy, almost as a way of materialising Longhi's essay.<sup>194</sup> Although it was the

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<sup>189</sup> Tr.: 'poi verra' la cerchia, non la scuola dei caravaggeschi a Roma, e i seguaci clandestini'; 'vaganti in via Margutta e al Babuino'; 'e' circolare a Roma tra gente libera, che pensa e discute la nuova pittura moderna, la prima pittura creata non su misura per committenti ma per privati e mercanti che sanno dove spira il gusto e sanno esportare. Anche questo sempre uno specchio anticipato della Ecole de Paris dal 1860 all' 80', Uccelli, 2019, Ap. 3, p. 33

<sup>190</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 81; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 10

<sup>191</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 81; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 10

<sup>192</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 81; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 10

<sup>193</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 81; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 10

<sup>194</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 103

only Borgianni he lent to the exhibition, the *Lamentation* was not the only painting by the artist that Longhi possessed. Before 1943, he bought another, found on the art market: a *Holy Family with Saint Anne* (Fig. 37), which he published for the first time in *Ultimi Studi*.<sup>195</sup>

Next, in Room 11, there was the *Saint Judas Thaddeus* by Jusepe Ribera, which may be considered one of Longhi's earliest acquisitions (Fig. 28).<sup>196</sup> The painting was bought also with the help of Lucia Lopresti (Longhi's student at the Visconti high-school in Rome in 1914, who became his wife in 1924). They found the work in Rome in 1921, at the dealer Angelelli's.<sup>197</sup> The *Saint Judas Thaddeus* formed part of a series of five Caravaggesque canvases depicting half-bust apostles, which Longhi bought in its entirety (Fig. 38).<sup>198</sup> On the same occasion, he also acquired an *Imprisonment of Christ* by the Dutch artist Dirck van Baburen (Fig. 39), another artist represented in Milan, but not by the work Longhi owned, and a *David and Goliath* by Lanfranco.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 81; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 10. In 2005, G. Papi re-attributed a work in Longhi's collection to Borgianni, but when Longhi bought it in the 1960s he thought it to be by Cesare Procaccini. Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 12.

<sup>196</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 175 (as Saint Thomas) ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 22 (as Saint Judas Thaddeus or Saint Matthias).

<sup>197</sup> Earlier it was thought that Longhi had bought it in 1916, directly from the Gavotti family. Only recently, Lucia Lopresti's agency has been rediscovered in the acquisition and study of the painting and its companions. F. Gravini 'Lettere di Lucia Lopresti a Roberto Longhi (Primavera-Autunno 1921)' in *Paragone Letteratura*, n. 63, 2012, pp. 18-81; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 22. Lucia graduated in 1919 at La Sapienza University of Rome, with a thesis supervised by Adolfo Venturi on the Seicento art critic Mario Boschini. Between 1919 and 1922 she published several articles on Venturi's journal *La Voce*, just as Longhi (including one on Caravaggio in 1922). She then decided to shift to a more narrative approach to history of arte, becoming a famous novelist.

<sup>198</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 171, 172, 173, 174 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 18 (Saint Thomas), n. 19 (Saint Bartholomew), n. 20 (Saint Paul); n. 21 (Saint Philip)

<sup>199</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 170 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 32. Gregori M. (ed.), *La collezione di Roberto Longhi Dal Duecento a Caravaggio a Morandi*, Savigliano, L'artistica Editrice, 2007, p. 17. See also R. Randolfi, 'La Cattura di Cristo con san Pietro che recide l'orecchio di Malco di Dirk van Baburen: dagli inventari dei Gavotti "romani" a Roberto Longhi' in *Storia dell'arte*, n. 137-138, 2014, pp. 117-122; Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 74 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 28

The series to which the *Saint Thomas* belongs is known as the 'Apostles ex-Gavotti'.<sup>200</sup> As seen in the first part of this thesis, works of art from their personal collections functioned as connoisseurship tools for scholar-collectors. Longhi's *Apostles* used to hang (and still are) in the library at *Il Tasso*, among the bookshelves (Fig. 40). After five years of ownership and constant gazing, Longhi first published his and Lucia's thoughts about their author in 1926, in an essay entitled *Precisioni nella Galleria Borghese*.<sup>201</sup> On that occasion, the works laid the basis for the construction of the identity of an anonymous Caravaggesque painter named 'Master of the Judgement of Solomon'.<sup>202</sup> Longhi grouped his five *Apostles* with a work in the Borghese Gallery, the *Judgement of Solomon*, after which the master was named.

Longhi never stopped working on this anonymous painter and his creations, publishing further research in 1935 and again in the *Ultimi Studi* of 1943, where he added more paintings to the artist's catalogue in another famous footnote.<sup>203</sup> The 1951 exhibition offered him another occasion to write about the identity of this painter. Already in 1926, Longhi had attributed to the Master of the Solomon Judgement the French nationality, and a close relationship to Valentin de Boulogne, dating his activity around 1620, a hypothesis re-iterated in the exhibition catalogue.<sup>204</sup> Only very recently, critics have agreed with Giovanni Papi in identifying the works as by the young Felipe de Ribera instead, similar to what happened with Berenson's Amico di Sandro and the

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<sup>200</sup> The five apostles and the Baburen and the Lanfranco were all bought at Angelelli's, coming from the Roman collection of the Gavotti. It has been argued that the apostles, and very likely the Baburen too, were once in the collection of Pedro Cussida, an ambassador of the Spanish reign in Rome. They then passed to the property of his granddaughter, Laura, whose legal tutor was Nicola Gavotti. Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 18-22

<sup>201</sup> R. Longhi, 'Precisioni nella Galleria Borghese' in *Vita Artistica*, vol. 1, 1926, pp. 65-72. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 175; Gregori, 2007, p. 17 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 18-22

<sup>202</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 175 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 18-22

<sup>203</sup> Longhi, 1943, n. 80 ; Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 175 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 18-22

<sup>204</sup> Longhi proposed several names like Guy de Francois (1926), an anonymous French painter working in Rome around 1615 (1935 & 1943) and even the young Valentin (1967). Every time he increased the corpus of paintings ascribed to the master. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 175 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 18-22

young Filippino Lippi in the early 1900s.<sup>205</sup> Due to its appearance at the 1951 exhibition, the Saint Judas Thaddeus became the best known *Apostle* of the series. At the time, the identification of the figure oscillated between Saint Matthew, as first suggested by Longhi in 1926, and Saint Thaddeus, under which title it was exhibited in Milan.<sup>206</sup>

Room 11 also contained a *Vanity* by Angelo Caroselli, bought in 1930 or after (Fig. 29).<sup>207</sup> Longhi had published it when it was still owned by the dealer Robert Langton Douglas, Berenson's main rival.<sup>208</sup> Longhi may have acquired it when he was in London to study at the Witt Library, and to visit the Italian Art exhibition at the Royal Academy. The painting was first published by Collins Baker in an article in *The Burlington Magazine* of 1927. Interestingly, Baker Collins compared the painting with the style of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites, a juxtaposition that would leave traces in Longhi's writings for the 1951 exhibition.<sup>209</sup> The painting's subject matter has been much debated, and the most convincing argument was put forward by Josef Grabski in the late 1970.<sup>210</sup> The canvas is signed on the frame of the mirror, one of the attributes of the allegory of Vanity, with the initials R. M., which were interpreted as standing for the Sieneese painter Rutilio Manetti. Longhi, however, thought the initials to be apocrypha, linking them to the old tradition of signing paintings as if by Rembrandt.<sup>211</sup> When writing about it between 1927 and 1930, just before its acquisition, Longhi was still very tentative about assigning it to the hand of Caroselli.<sup>212</sup> Yet, in 1943, after ten years of ownership, he had discarded any doubt, as in the case of the Apostles by the

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<sup>205</sup> See P. Zambrano, Bernard Berenson e l'Amico di Sandro in *Amico di Sandro*, Zambrano P. (ed.), Milan, Electa, 2006, pp. 9-70. The comparison with Amico di Sandro was also drawn by Alvar Gonzalez Palacios in an article in the magazine *Sole 24 ore*, 12 April 2009, <https://st.ilsole24ore.com/art/arteconomy/2009-04-17/la-rivincita-ribera-073548.shtml?uuid=AXfL1Qw&refresh ce=1>

<sup>206</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 157

<sup>207</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 87 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 13 ; Aiello, 2019, p. 157

<sup>208</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 87 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 13

<sup>209</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 87

<sup>210</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 87

<sup>211</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 87

<sup>212</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 87



Judgement of Solomon Master. In 1951, it was unambiguously exhibited as by Caroselli, an attribution that has since been accepted by scholars.<sup>213</sup>

In Room 12 visitors would encounter Carlo Saraceni's *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* from the Longhi collection (Fig. 30).<sup>214</sup> Longhi bought it from the Bolognese dealer Publio Podio, before 1939. As seen above, Podio was a major provider of Longhi's collection of Bolognese Trecento pieces, and he was also his faithful restorer while he was working in Bologna. One could say that Podio was for Longhi what Cavenaghi was for Berenson. Before entering Podio's collection, Saraceni's work was in Rome, in the collection of the Marquis 'M C' of Vienna.<sup>215</sup> At least nine versions of this painting are known, one of which is in the collection of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Together with the latter, only Longhi's and another in a private collection in Milan (Mansuardi) seem to be autographs.<sup>216</sup> The work was published in 1943, in his *Ultimi Studi*, in a footnote dedicated to Carlo Saraceni.<sup>217</sup> On that occasion, Longhi pronounced it to be the painter's 'latest and most mature redaction of the subject', and dated it around 1618.<sup>218</sup> As in the case of Caravaggio's *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, Longhi also made a drawing after the *Judith* (Fig. 41).<sup>219</sup> The drawing is not dated, but one can see that the scholar's attention is focused, once again, on the chiaroscuro of the composition. By following the lines drawn by Longhi's hand, one seems to hear his words from a 1917 text, where he stated that Saraceni was 'the real creator of nocturnal candle-light games'.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 87 ; Aiello, 2019, p. 157

<sup>214</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 83 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 17

<sup>215</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 83 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 17

<sup>216</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 83 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 17

<sup>217</sup> Longhi, 1943, n. 26 ; M. G. Aurigemma (ed.), *Carlo Saraceni. Un veneziano tra Roma e l'Europa 1579-1620*, Rome, De Luca, 2013, p. 239

<sup>218</sup> Gregori, 2007, pp. 120-1

<sup>219</sup> Testori, 1980

<sup>220</sup> Aurigemma, 2103, p. 239

Roberto Longhi was among the first critics who worked on Saraceni, later followed by the scholar Anna Ottani Cavina.<sup>221</sup> Longhi first published on Saraceni in 1913, re-attributing to the artist a series of paintings in the Capodimonte museum in Naples, which were thought to be by Elsheimer.<sup>222</sup> In this text, entitled 'Due Opere di Caravaggio', he also remarked upon the distinctive manner of the Saraceni: 'It is hard not to remember, once acquainted with it, Saraceni's mannerisms, which are especially clear in the way he paints the drapery - squeezed, wringed, with no depth, which one can see not only in his small works, but also in the large formats'.<sup>223</sup> The *Judith* aside, Longhi owned a further two works by the master. The *Finding of Moses by the Pharaoh's Daughters* entered his collection ten years before the *Judith* (Fig. 42).<sup>224</sup> Longhi had found it in Naples in 1927.<sup>225</sup> Proposing the collection of the Flemish merchant Gaspar Roomer in Naples as a provenance, Longhi published the canvas in 1943, together with the more recently acquired *Judith*, which he used to illustrate Saraceni's 'reminiscence of his Venetian origins' and his 'cursive and long-winged ductus'.<sup>226</sup> By 1943, Longhi had also bought, in Rome, the *Portrait of Cardinal Raniero Capocci* (Fig. 43).<sup>227</sup> He published it, too, in *Ultimi Studi*, dating it around 1613.<sup>228</sup> In the 1951 exhibition, Longhi's *Judith* was hung next to two paintings attributed to the so-called 'pensionante del Saraceni', another of the artistic personalities invented by Longhi, first

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<sup>221</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 20

<sup>222</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 83

<sup>223</sup> Tr.: 'impossibile dimenticare, una volta appresi, i manierismi di Saraceni, visibili soprattutto nel fare dei panneggi strizzati, attorti, incatricchiati, senza identità di spessore, che ritornano non solo nei quadretti, ma anche nelle opere di grandi dimensioni', reported in Testori, 1980

<sup>224</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 82 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 15

<sup>225</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 82 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 15

<sup>226</sup> Tr.: 'ricordi della patria veneta, bonifacesca, romanina [...] segno corsivo e tortuoso', Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 15

<sup>227</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 84 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 16

<sup>228</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 84 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 16

mentioned in the 1943 article.<sup>229</sup> He literally named the unknown painter a 'tenant' of Saraceni, because of his vicinity to Saraceni's style.<sup>230</sup>

Continuing the tour of the 1951 exhibition, in Room 14 one would come upon the *Denial of St Peter* by Valentin De Boulogne (Fig. 31).<sup>231</sup> This painting would later enter Longhi's collection, after he had hunted for it for a long time.<sup>232</sup> Longhi considered Valentin de Boulogne a member of Caravaggio's close circle based in Rome, who along with Cecco del Caravaggio and Gerard Douffet were his other colleagues.<sup>233</sup> When Longhi first published the *Denial of St Peter* in 1943, the painting was in a Milanese collection with an attribution to Caravaggio, which Longhi refuted, proposing the current one.<sup>234</sup> At the time of the exhibition in Milan, it had entered the collection of Vittorio Frascione in Florence. In Room 14, it hung next to another Valentin, the *Crowning of Christ* from the Munich Alte Pinakothek, which Longhi had proposed as a companion in the catalogue.<sup>235</sup> The canvas subsequently passed to the Milanese collection of Guglielmo Canessa, and eventually to that of Napoleone Zucchini, who lent it to another exhibition in Milan in 1963.<sup>236</sup> Longhi finally managed to secure the painting for his own collection in the same year, bartering it for his *Moses and Daughters of Jetro* by Giuseppe Maria Crespi. It still adorns the *Il Tasso* dining room today.<sup>237</sup>

Longhi also possessed paintings by the northern Caravaggeschi. For instance, *The Adoration of the Shepherds* by Wolfgang Heimbach (Fig. 33), which he bought just in time to include it in the 1951 exhibition.<sup>238</sup> The painting

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<sup>229</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 158

<sup>230</sup> Longhi, 1943, p. 24 ; Aiello, 2019, p. 101; See also M. Nicolaci, 'Il "Pensionante del Saraceni" : storiografia di un enigma caravaggesco' in *Aurigemma*, 2013, pp. 371-7

<sup>231</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 31

<sup>232</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 31

<sup>233</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164

<sup>234</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164

<sup>235</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164; Aiello, 2019, p.

<sup>236</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164

<sup>237</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164 ; Gregori, 2007, p. 22

<sup>238</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 178

was exhibited in Room 15 as by Gerard von Honthorst, also known as 'Gherardo delle notti'.<sup>239</sup> The canvas in fact bore a signature 'G. H. fecit 1645', and the attribution to Van Honthorst was supported by some stylistic observations. Yet, the style of the painting did not quite fit with Van Honthorst's manner from around 1614-1620.<sup>240</sup> In 1956, Kurt Bauch suggested Wolfgang Heimbach, arguing that he would have signed in Italian as Gandolfo Heimbach. The style, so strikingly similar to that of Honthorst, might suggest that it was Heimbach's intention to create a fake Honthorst, helped by the ambiguity of the signature.<sup>241</sup>

Room 16 in the exhibition was the last one to host works from Longhi's collection.<sup>242</sup> Visitors would first see Mattia Preti's *Concert with Three Figures* (Fig. 35).<sup>243</sup> Preti was among the *Caravaggeschi* who captured Longhi's interest at an early stage, both as a scholar, and as a collector.<sup>244</sup> The *Concert* came, once again, from the collection of Podio, who also restored it.<sup>245</sup> Longhi acquired it before 1918, when he published it, identifying a companion work in the collection of Marquis Silj in Rome. The work was also mentioned in another famous footnote of the 1943 *Ultimi Studi*, dedicated to Mattia Preti.<sup>246</sup> In the 1951 exhibition, it was hung together with two other paintings by the young Preti, one of which, another *Concert*, used to hang in the Townhall of Alba, Longhi's hometown.<sup>247</sup> The painting from *Il Tasso* was among the most famous works by the artist, until Ben Nicolson published an autograph copy in the Hermitage in St Petersburg, and relegated Longhi's work to the status of a

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<sup>239</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. 152

<sup>240</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164

<sup>241</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 164

<sup>242</sup> Aiello, 2019, p.

<sup>243</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 132 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 47

<sup>244</sup> The article was the first Longhi dedicated to old masters painting, published in *La Voce* in 1913. Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 132 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 47; Terzaghi, 2017, p. 321

<sup>245</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 132

<sup>246</sup> Longhi, 1943, n. 86; Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 132 ; S. Causa, cat. n. 39 in *Da Lotto a Caravaggio: la collezione e le ricerche di Roberto Longhi* M. Gregori, M. C. Bandera (eds.), Venice, Marsilio, 2016, pp. 156-7

<sup>247</sup> Aiello, 2019, p. ; Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 132

copy.<sup>248</sup> Longhi possessed a further canvas by Mattia Preti: a *Susanna and the Elders* (Fig. 44).<sup>249</sup> He bought this work at an auction of the Gallery Ciardiello in Florence in 1946.<sup>250</sup> Despite being a masterpiece of the Longhi collection, it was not lent to Milan, nor was it published until the first catalogue of the Longhi collection in 1977. This is probably due to the long restoration it underwent under the supervision of Mario Modestini.<sup>251</sup> It was cleaned using the novel technique of microscopy, which revealed that the figure of Susanna was heavily overpainted and had originally been a nude.<sup>252</sup>

Longhi's Preti shared Room 16 of the exhibition with another painting from Longhi's collection, *the Healing of Tobit* by Matthias Stomer, which was a gift by Giannino Marchig made at an unknown date (Fig. 36).<sup>253</sup> The canvas shows the episode in which Tobias, assisted by the archangel Raphael, restores his father's sight. There exists an identical copy in Catania, in the Benedettini museum, published in 1902 and 1922. With a dating corresponding to the painter's Sicilian period, 1640-50, there are at least two other known versions, one in Palermo, in Prince Galati's collection, and one in Florence, in the Bartolini collection.<sup>254</sup> Longhi first published the work in the catalogue of the 1951 exhibition in Milan, arguing that it was an autograph copy of the painting in Catania.<sup>255</sup> There was another Stomer in the Longhi collection, which also came from Podio, and was published in 1943 (Fig. 45).<sup>256</sup> The exact identification of its subject is still uncertain. In 1943, Longhi called it *Abraham, Hagar and the Angel*. Nicolson proposed an *Angel Appearing to the Virgin and*

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<sup>248</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 132

<sup>249</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 133 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 48

<sup>250</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 133

<sup>251</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 133; Causa, 2016, p. 157

<sup>252</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 133; Causa, 2016, p. 157

<sup>253</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 169 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 35. Giannino Marchig was a painter and famous restorer based in Florence and Geneva. He was very close to Berenson, helping him to protect I Tatti during the war period.

<sup>254</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 169 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 35.

<sup>255</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 169

<sup>256</sup> Gregori, cat. n. 168 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 34

*St Joseph on the Flight into Egypt*.<sup>257</sup> *The Archangel Raphael Taking Leave of Tobit after his Healing* has also been suggested, but scholars now tend to identify it as *The Annunciation of Samson's Birth to Manoach and his Wife*.<sup>258</sup> In manuscript catalogue entry written Longhi wrote that his canvas was fundamental to understanding the painter's relation with Jan Janssens's palette. Probably from Stomer's Roman period, 1630-32, it was of an earlier date than the work lent to the exhibition, and the canvas must have intrigued Longhi for the artist's treatment of the drapery, sculpted in chiaroscuro, as can be seen in a drawing he made after it (Fig. 46).<sup>259</sup>

The 1951 exhibition represented for Longhi the finish line of more than forty years of studies dedicated to Caravaggio and the Caravaggeschi. As with the Giotto show in 1937, it also became a starting point for new developments. Longhi took the credit of opening up this new field of study.<sup>260</sup> But as in all good scholarship, progress comes out of debate and discussion, and the response to the exhibition was not solely one of praise. The exhibition, and its catalogue, raised a debate around two main issues: chronology and attribution. The Italian side of this debate has been studied thoroughly.<sup>261</sup> Yet, it was in the anglophone world that the most engaged response to Longhi's arguments was voiced, free of personal agendas and with a positive vision of the new paths that were to be investigated.<sup>262</sup> When the exhibition opened, its resonance was such that it went beyond the specialised press. A review that appeared in the Manchester Guardian called the event 'the first Caravaggio show ever to be

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<sup>257</sup> Gregori, cat. n. 168 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 34

<sup>258</sup> Gregori, cat. n. 168 ; Bandera, 2020, cat. n. 34

<sup>259</sup> Testori, 1980

<sup>260</sup> note on Venturi and BB? <https://www.informarezzo.com/new/index.php/2020/01/31/caravaggio-195-i-retroscena-di-uno-scontro-tra-i-giganti-della-storia-dellarte-in-un-nuovo-libro-ne-parla-luigi-ficacci-direttore-dellist-centrale-del-restauro/>

<sup>261</sup> See Casati, 2015; L. Barroero, 'Roberto Longhi. <<Caravaggio>> 1952-1968' in *La Riscoperta del Seicento. I Libri Fondativi*, A. Bacchi, L. Barroero (eds.), Genoa, Sagep, 2017, pp. 60-75; Aiello, 2019.

<sup>262</sup> In a footnote Aiello claims his intention to further investigate the impact of the exhibition on scholars in Italy and abroad, Mahon included, but no mention is made to their personal collections. Barroero interestingly reports the reaction of Friedländer, in Barroero, 2015, p. 70 \* Lotto BB

held'.<sup>263</sup> By labelling the artist as a Lombard-Roman painter, the reviewer showed the impact of Longhi's views, whose words are cited to illustrate the painter's revolutionary subjects and use of light.<sup>264</sup>

The reviewer reports Longhi's most frequently cited contribution, which makes use of ideas by Roger Fry and Berenson: 'Caravaggio 'interpreted a disinherited humanity [...] he was not the last of the Renaissance painters but the first of the moderns [...] let the public read this painter naturally, for he tried to be natural, comprehensible, human rather than humanistic, in a word, popular'.<sup>265</sup> The reviewer also compares Longhi's work, as conveyed through the exhibition, to Berenson's opposing view, which was voiced in the latter's monograph 'Caravaggio, his incongruities and his fame'.<sup>266</sup> The reviewer comments, moreover, on the range of provenance of the paintings at the exhibition, stating that Longhi 'gathered some 80 paintings by these masters from all over Europe to prove his point'.<sup>267</sup> Lastly, the review acknowledges the debate that the exhibition generated, and laments that no British picture had been lent, because the exhibition coincided with the 'Festival of Britain'.<sup>268</sup>

Within the anglophone response to Longhi's challenge, two young and passionate scholars (and collectors) stand out in particular: Denis Mahon and Benedict Nicolson.<sup>269</sup> Both scholars started their careers within a short period

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<sup>263</sup> Review from Manchester Guardian, 8 May 1951

<sup>264</sup> Manchester Guardian, 1951. See Appendix H

<sup>265</sup> Review from Manchester Guardian, 8 May 1951

<sup>266</sup> B. Berenson, *Del Caravaggio, delle sue incongruenze e della sua fama*, Florence, Electa, 1951

<sup>267</sup> Review from Manchester Guardian, 8 May 1951

<sup>268</sup> Neville Rowley, in a talk given for the Warburg Institute on 07MAY2020, 'The Lost "Michelangelo", and Other Works of Art Disappeared in Berlin in 1945', pointed out how Gombrich reproduced the Berlin Caravaggios in his introduction to his 'Story of Art', first published in 1950. Given the date, I would argue that the discussion of Caravaggio in his survey of art speaks of his sensibility towards the Seicento with an early awareness of the artist's importance.

<sup>269</sup> Ben Nicolson, <https://arthistorians.info/nicolson> ; Denis Mahon, <https://arthistorians.info/mahond> . Nicolson's activity as a collector is little known, and a comprehensive study of him as an art historian is lacking. The author hopes to explore the theme further, together with the case of other contemporaries such as Anthony Blunt, Francis Haskell and others.

from each other as ‘honorary attachés’ of the National Gallery, under the aegis of Kenneth Clark.<sup>270</sup> They became two pivotal figures in the re-discovery of the Seicento, a passion which they each explored also as collectors, and both of them were influenced by Longhi’s work.<sup>271</sup> Denis Mahon, showed an early interest in the Seicento, a century that art historians in the UK and Italy tended to overlook at the time. As he himself admitted, ‘it was from [Kenneth Clark’s] advice to read Wölfflin that *he dates* the origins of the entirely new approach necessary [...] for anyone to take the Seicento seriously.’<sup>272</sup> His greatest legacy was the re-integration of Guercino and the Bolognese Seicento into the narrative of art history. By 1934, he was already working on Guercino, and the artist was represented in his personal collection. He gathered his collection of Seicento pictures with the intent to save them from oblivion, and to give them to the public, once the taste for these works would have changed, which it did due in no small measure to his ‘militancy’.<sup>273</sup> He made good on his intentions in 2001, when he donated his collection to several museums, including the National Gallery in London and in Dublin.<sup>274</sup>

Ben Nicolson’s fascination with the Seicento and the International Caravaggesque Movement, meanwhile, was of a later date, and much more directly indebted to Longhi. Longhi’s influence on Nicolson goes back to the latter’s early years as a student of art history in the 1930s.<sup>275</sup> At the time, Nicolson focussed primarily on the Ferrarese school, informed by reading Longhi’s *Officina Ferrarese* (1934).<sup>276</sup> Longhi guided Nicolson also in two other

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<sup>270</sup> C. Elam, ‘Benedict Nicolson: Becoming an Art Historian in the 1930s’ in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 146, n. 1211, 2004, pp. 76-87

<sup>271</sup> Elam, 2004, p. 87 ; A. Bacchi A. ‘Denis Mahon - Studies in Seicento art and theory, 1947’, in Bacchi, Barroero, 2017

<sup>272</sup> Letter from Denis Mahon to Kenneth Clark dated 17SEP1934, TGA8812.1.3.1864/1

<sup>273</sup> Emiliani, 2002, pp. 56-7

<sup>274</sup> G. Finaldi, M. Kitson (eds), *Discovering the Italian Baroque: the Denis Mahon Collection*, London, National Gallery, 1997 ; A. Coliva, M. Gregori, S. Androssov (eds.), *Da Guercino a Caravaggio: sir Denis Mahon e l'arte italiana del 17. secolo*, Rome, L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2014

<sup>275</sup> Caroline Elam was the first one to notice the relationship between the two . Elam, 2004, p. 76

<sup>276</sup> Elam, 2004, p. 86



aspects: Piero della Francesca and Seurat.<sup>277</sup> The 1951 exhibition, however, was a key turning point in Nicolson's academic life, changing 'the overall direction of Ben's studies', towards the Caravaggeschi.<sup>278</sup> Writing to Bernard Berenson about the exhibition of 1951, he stated: 'I am so excited about it that I am having no less than five articles on Caravaggio in the next few numbers of the Burlington'.<sup>279</sup> Nicolson had become editor of that magazine in 1947. His enthusiasm for Longhi finds confirmation in his monograph on Terbrugghen, published in 1958: a chapter of the book is dedicated to a survey of artist's reception, as an homage to the Italian critic.<sup>280</sup>

There is in fact no better place to study the debate that the 1951 exhibition generated than the pages of *The Burlington Magazine*. The 'Burlington Index', run by Dr Barbara Pezzini, has highlighted the role that the journal had in spreading Longhi's arguments as represented in the exhibition.<sup>281</sup> In addition, leafing through the indexes of the journal preceding the exhibition is almost like following Longhi's survey on the reception of Caravaggio in the twentieth century.<sup>282</sup> Before the exhibition, only a few scholars wrote articles on Caravaggio, mainly focusing on the painter's style and subject matter. There were a few reviews of the above-mentioned 1922 exhibition on the Seicento and Settecento in Florence: Carlo Gamba mentioned the artist's preference for choosing the 'common people' as his models, which lay at the basis of his 'naturalism'. Gamba also talks of Caravaggio's 'tenebroso style' and relates his 'realism' to other masters from northern Italy, such as Lorenzo Lotto.<sup>283</sup> Reviewing the same event, Roger Fry, one of the magazine's founders,

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<sup>277</sup> Elam, 2004, p.87. The linking role of Clark awaits further investigation.

<sup>278</sup> Elam, 2004, pp. 83, 87. See Nicolson's posthumous work, B. Nicolson, *The International Caravaggesque movement*, Oxford, Phaidon, 1979

<sup>279</sup> Elam, 2004, p. 87

<sup>280</sup> As first noticed by Elam, 2004, p. 87

<sup>281</sup> Klagka, 10DEC16

<sup>282</sup> Klagka, 06JAN17

<sup>283</sup> Klagka, 10DEC16

expressed his repulsion for the artists shown in Florence.<sup>284</sup> Fry did not like Caravaggio, precisely for being the inventor of a modern genre of ‘popular’ pictures.<sup>285</sup> Ironically, this idea would be used by Longhi to insert, once and for all, Caravaggio’s star in the Hollywood walk of fame of the art historical canon.<sup>286</sup>

After 1951 and the opening of the exhibition, and in tandem with the many scholarly publications that the exhibition generated, there were suddenly more than 59 articles and 210 short notices published on the pages of *The Burlington*.<sup>287</sup> Besides the definition of Caravaggio’s corpus, the most debated issue was Caravaggio’s chronology. Already in June 1951, J. Hess published in the *Burlington* a note on the chronology of the paintings from the Contarelli Chapel in San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome.<sup>288</sup> And in the same issue, Otis H. Green and Denis Mahon published some new evidence concerning Caravaggio’s death.<sup>289</sup>

In July, with the exhibition about to close, a whole issue of the magazine was dedicated to it.<sup>290</sup> An article by Denis Mahon acknowledges the relevance of the exhibition for future studies:

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<sup>284</sup> R. Fry, ‘Settecentismo’, in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 41, n. 235, October 1922, pp. 158-169; N. Klagka ‘Sense and Sensibility: Roger Fry on Caravaggio and Futurism’ in *The Burlington Magazine Index Blog*, 13FEB17, [https://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com/2014/02/13/roger-fry-on-caravaggio-and-futurism/#\\_ftn3](https://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com/2014/02/13/roger-fry-on-caravaggio-and-futurism/#_ftn3)

<sup>285</sup> Klagka, 13FEB17

<sup>286</sup> As seen in Chapter Two, Berenson already in 1895 defined Lotto as ‘the first modern painter’.

<sup>287</sup> See W. Friedländer, ‘Caravaggio by Lionello Venturi; Il Caravaggio by Roberto Longhi’ in *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 35, n. 4, 1953, pp. 315-18; E. H. Gombrich, ‘Review of R. Hinks and B. Berenson on Caravaggio’ in *The Listener*, vol. 50, 1953, pp.11-34, <https://gombricharchive.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/showrev16.pdf> ; Klagka, 10DEC16 ; Casati, 2017 ; Casati, 2020

<sup>288</sup> J. Hess, ‘The Chronology of the Contarelli Chapel’, *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 93, n. 579, June 1951, pp.186-201

<sup>289</sup> O. Green, D. Mahon, ‘Caravaggio’s Death: A New Document’ in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 93, n. 579, June 1951, pp. 202-204

<sup>290</sup> *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 93, n. 580, July 1951

The study and understanding of Caravaggio will receive vital stimulus from the current exhibition in the Palazzo Reale at Milan [...] For the first time comparisons of (for example) handling and colour are possible by at most walking from one room to another, instead of relying exclusively on photographs and storage in the memory. This is likely to result in something of an upheaval in the hitherto accepted conception of the artist.<sup>291</sup>

Mahon was among those fortunate scholars who managed to see the exhibition more than once and managed to inspect all the paintings closely. As he mentions in a footnote: 'I am extremely grateful to Professors Baroni and Dell'Acqua and Dott.sa Balzaretti for kindly allowing me special facilities for examining the pictures; this kind of co-operation is of the greatest value.'<sup>292</sup> Mahon was grateful for the work done by the older generation, and especially Longhi, whose efforts made it possible that an exhibition of this kind was even organised. As he writes: 'we owe the existence of this historic exhibition to the interest aroused by the preparatory work carried out over many decades by pioneers in the subject [among whom...] Professor Roberto Longhi [...] who were not lucky as we are now with it'.<sup>293</sup> Yet, according to Mahon, the 'Catalogue and exhibition [...] represent the pre-exhibition phase of Caravaggio studies [...] Obviously there will be considerable discussion as a result of the exhibition, both as regards chronology and authenticity, and a great variety of discordant opinions will arise'.<sup>294</sup> He claims the exhibition, where the 'possibility of seeing them in first hand introduces for the first time a more Morellian approach' made it clear that there was an 'urgent necessity for a revised chronology'.<sup>295</sup> Mahon then offers his own views on this chronology, so as to 'expose to the artillery of my colleagues my conception of Caravaggio'.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> D. Mahon , 'Egregius in Urbe Pictor: Caravaggio Revised' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 93, n. 580, July 1951, pp. 223-235, p. 223

<sup>292</sup> Mahon, July 1951, p. 223

<sup>293</sup> Mahon, July 1951, p. 223

<sup>294</sup> Mahon, July 1951, p. 223

<sup>295</sup> Mahon, July 1951, p. 233

<sup>296</sup> Mahon, July 1951, p. 233

He would also publish further comments following his second visit to the exhibition, when he examined works even more closely.<sup>297</sup>

Meanwhile, Ben Nicolson's editorial of the dedicated issue of July 1951 is useful to understand the general reception of the event and Longhi's importance as perceived in Britain. Like many others, Nicolson acknowledges the exhibition as the 'most important artistic event of 1951'.<sup>298</sup> Yet, being more interested in the Caravaggeschi than in Caravaggio, he opens with a negative remark:

No attempt is made to present the artistic situation in 1950 [...] the lack of context presents Caravaggio as an unruly youth breaking suddenly [...] whereas, of course, this event was not [...] one isolated [...] exploit but a relay race [...] for which a number of runners had entered, one of whom in the last lap made a prodigious sprint towards naturalism.<sup>299</sup>

According to Nicolson, the exhibition was a 'great occasion to see those works commissioned by churches in Rome and Naples, together with pieces by the late Caravaggio, when he was working in Sicily' but it failed to illustrate the debts that the young Velazquez owed to Caravaggio. There were 'no British loans - Apsley House and Prado [...] no Zurbaran [...] no Elsheimer no Le Nains [...] no sure Rembrandt or Ribera and nothing from Malta'.<sup>300</sup> Nicolson also laments that the exhibition was 'very short', making it difficult for overseas students to organise a trip'.<sup>301</sup> Perhaps unconsciously, Nicolson summarises the debts that Longhi's rhetoric owed to British criticism. First, after acknowledging that 'Caravaggio was well known to the public but not understood', he reports Longhi's statement that Caravaggio was the 'last revolutionary Italian painter of Genius - [...] the first of the moderns'.<sup>302</sup> As seen above this view borrows from Roger Fry's negative opinion on the exhibition on

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<sup>297</sup> D. Mahon, 'Caravaggio's Chronology Again' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 93, n. 582, September 1951, pp. 286-292

<sup>298</sup> B. Nicolson, 'The First Modern Painter' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 93, n. 580, July 1951, p. 211

<sup>299</sup> Nicolson, July 1951, p.

<sup>300</sup> Nicolson, July 1951, p.

<sup>301</sup> Nicolson, July 1951, p.

<sup>302</sup> Nicolson, July 1951, p.

the Sei and Settecento held in Florence in 1922.<sup>303</sup> It is also indebted to Berenson's *Lotto*, which refers to the Lombard master (acknowledged by Longhi as a predecessor of Caravaggio) as 'the first modern painter'.<sup>304</sup>

Like Mahon, Nicolson writes that 'For this wonderful experience we are indebted [...] in particular to Professor Roberto Longhi who for nearly 40 years has been Caravaggio's most constant and most fervent champion.' Yet, he states that 'there are a number of points on which younger students, with this unique opportunity to see so many works under one roof, may feel obliged to part company with him.'<sup>305</sup> Nonetheless, Nicolson's homage to Longhi was conscious and sincere. As he wrote: 'He [Longhi] was not quite responsible for the revival of Caravaggeschi studies: Kallab was the first to prepare the ground for a scientific study of the master. But ever since his student days, Longhi has fought a battle on Caravaggio's behalf'.<sup>306</sup> Nicolson's emphasises especially the critic's impact on the research of the Caravaggeschi:

Organisers [...] introduced to the public artists of great importance for the Seicento who followed in the wake of Caravaggio, but who surprisingly are not yet famous [...] like George de la Tour [...] As early as 1914, when it was customary to treat Pier Francesco Fiorentino with greater reverence than the leading Caravaggesques, *Longhi* could write of an artist who was then almost completely forgotten [...] Borgianni, and in the following year [...] Battistello [...] but the considerable merits of four other artists have not been recognised in the same way, as they deserve to be, except by specialists: Caracciolo, Orazio Borgianni, Matthias Stomer and Giovanni Serodine.<sup>307</sup>

It should be noted that the lesser-known artists Nicolson mentions as first investigated by Longhi were precisely those masters whose works were represented in Longhi's collection: Borgianni, Battistello, Caracciolo, Stomer, and Serodine. Furthermore, I would argue that Longhi not only opened up a

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<sup>303</sup> Fry, 1922

<sup>304</sup> Berenson, 1895, p.

<sup>305</sup> Nicolson, July 1951, p.

<sup>306</sup> Nicolson, July 1951, p.

<sup>307</sup> Nicolson, July 1951, p.

path which both Nicolson and Mahon followed in his studies, but he may have also been a model for them as a scholar-collector. In 1960, for instance, both scholars organised and lent their works to the winter exhibition of the Royal Academy in London, 'Italian Art and Britain'.<sup>308</sup> In the introduction to the section dedicated on the Seicento, Mahon wrote:

Renewed appreciation of this period - the Seicento- began abroad about the time of World War One, mainly in Italy and Germany[...] Since World War Two, however, British collectors have become progressively more interested, and a number of [...] examples come [...] from mixed collections formed by persons specially concerned with the history and criticism of art.<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> It was the 'spin-off' exhibition of the one held in 1930, investigated by the author for a talk at the Accademia di San Luca, Rome in 2019. Royal Academy of Arts, *A souvenir of the exhibition Italian Art and Britain*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1960 ; Muraro, M., 'Arte italiana e Inghilterra' in *Emporium*, vol.56, n.131, 1960, pp. 165-174

<sup>309</sup> D. Mahon, Introduction on the Seicento section in Royal Academy of Arts, 1960, p. 131

# Chapter 5 - Illustrations



◀ *Fig. 1: Vitale da Bologna, Adoration of the Magi, oil on panel, XIV cent., 60.4 cm x 38.6 cm, National Gallery of Art, Edinburgh, inv. NG 952*



◀ *Fig. 2: Vitale da Bologna, Pietà, tempera on panel, XIV cent., 1350-55, 60, 5 cm x 39 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection*





▲ Fig.3: Master of Santa Maria in Porto Fuori or Pietro da Rimini, *Enthroned Virgin with Child with Saint John the Baptist, Agnes, Catherine of Alexandria, Apollonia(?), another Saint and Four Angels*, 1320-40. Tempera on panel, 43 cm x 28,5 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection



◀ Fig.4: Master of the Strage degli Innocenti in Mezzaratta, *Two Scenes from the Life of St Catherine*, 1355-60, tempera on panel, 42,4 cm x 27 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection

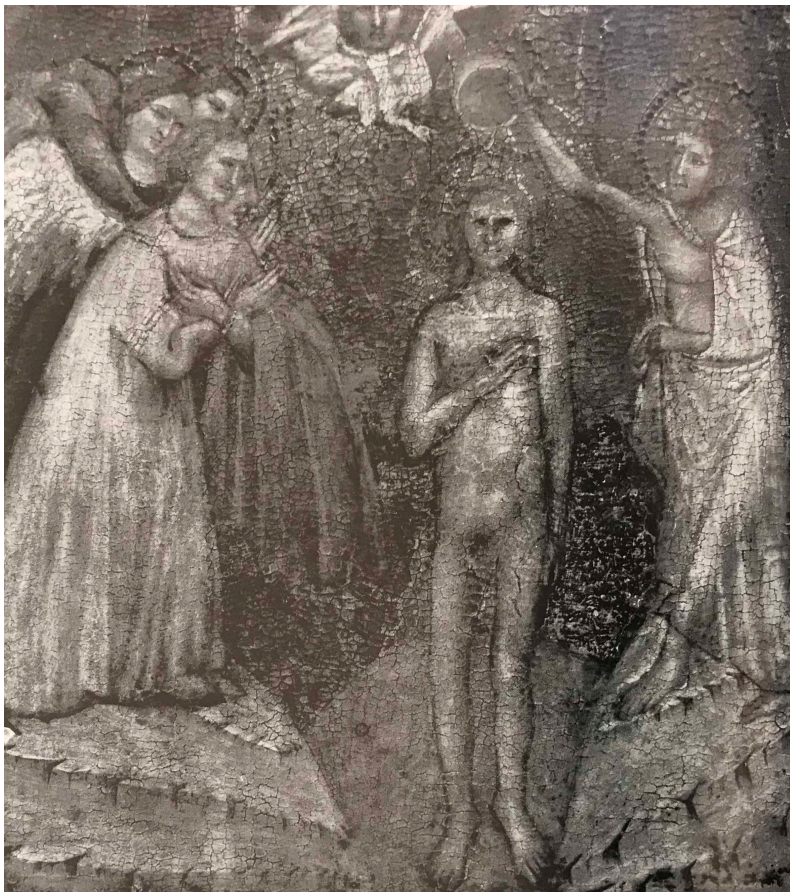




◀ *Fig.5: Simone dei Crocefissi, Virgin and Child with Two Donors, Accompanied by St Bartholomew and St James the major, 1382-1399, tempera on panel, 21 cm x 30,2 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection*

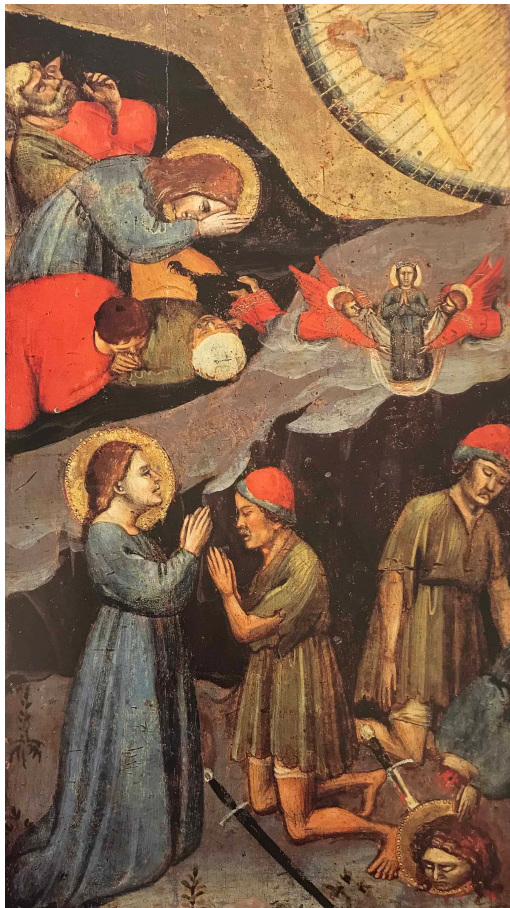


◀ *Fig.6: Simone dei Crocefissi, the Beheading of St John the Baptist and St Anthony Abbott, 1382-1399, tempera on panel, 20 cm x 30 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection*

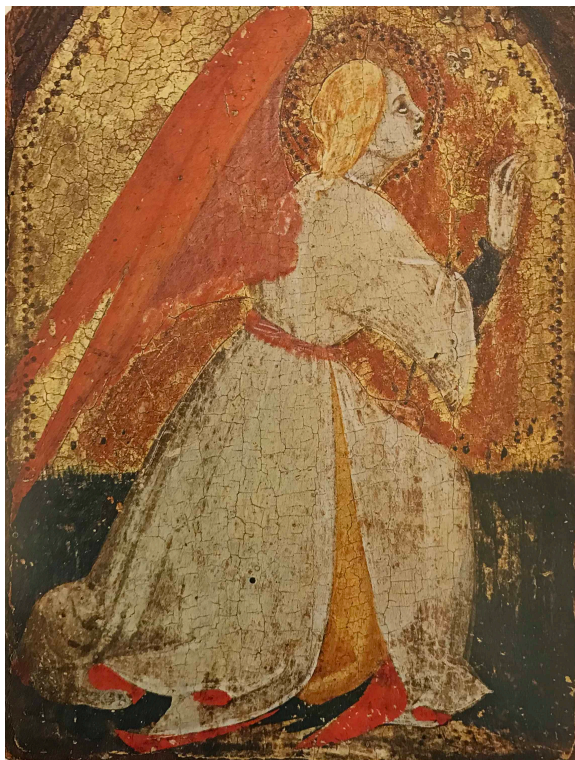


◀ *Fig.7: Anonymous painter from Rimini or Bologna, Baptism of Christ, 1350, tempera on panel, 26 cm x 24 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection*





◀ *Fig.8: Jacopo di Paolo, Stories of Saint Margaret, end of XIV cent., tempera and gold on panel, 37,3 cm x 22 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection*



◀ *Fig.9: Lippo di Dalmasio, Annunciating Angel, 1377-1410, tempera and gold on panel, 19,5 cm x 14,2 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection*





◀ Fig.10: Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara, *Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata*, XV cent., Oil on Panel, 29,2 cm x 18,9 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection



◀ Fig.11: Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara, *Aynard Panel, Virgin and Child with donors with Saint Louis of Toulouse, Saint Marin, and Saint Clare*, XV cent., Oil on Panel, 27 cm x 18 cm, Schubert Collection, Milan





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*Figs. 12-13: View of Rooms of the Mostra della Pittura Bolognese del Trecento, 1950, Bologna*



▲ Fig. 14: View of a Room of the Mostra della Pittura Bolognese del Trecento, 1950, Bologna

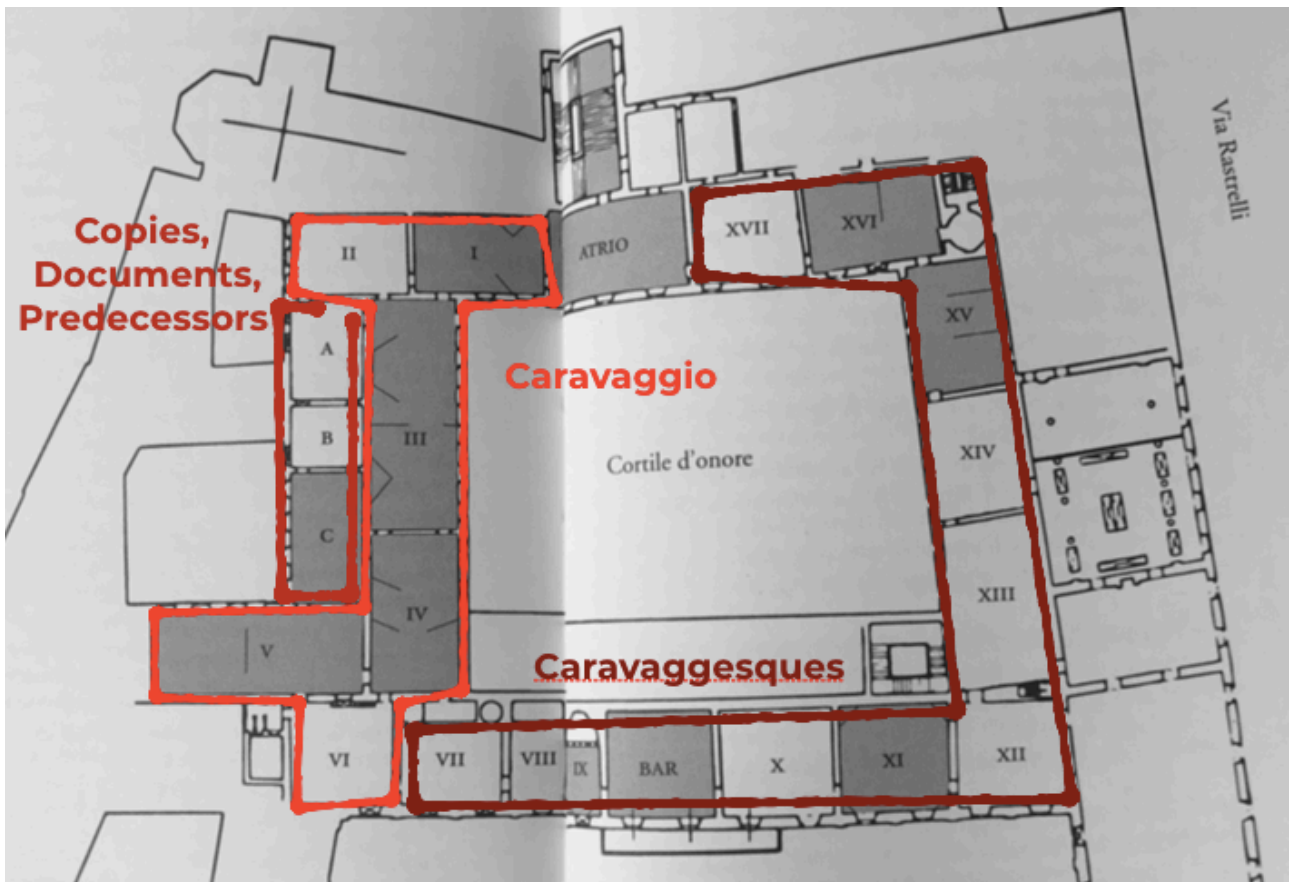


◀ Fig. 15: A page with Longhi's panel by Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara illustrated in the Bollettino d'Arte





◀ Fig. 16: View of the exhibition entrance, Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1951



▲ Fig. 17: Reconstruction of Exhibition Plan, Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1951

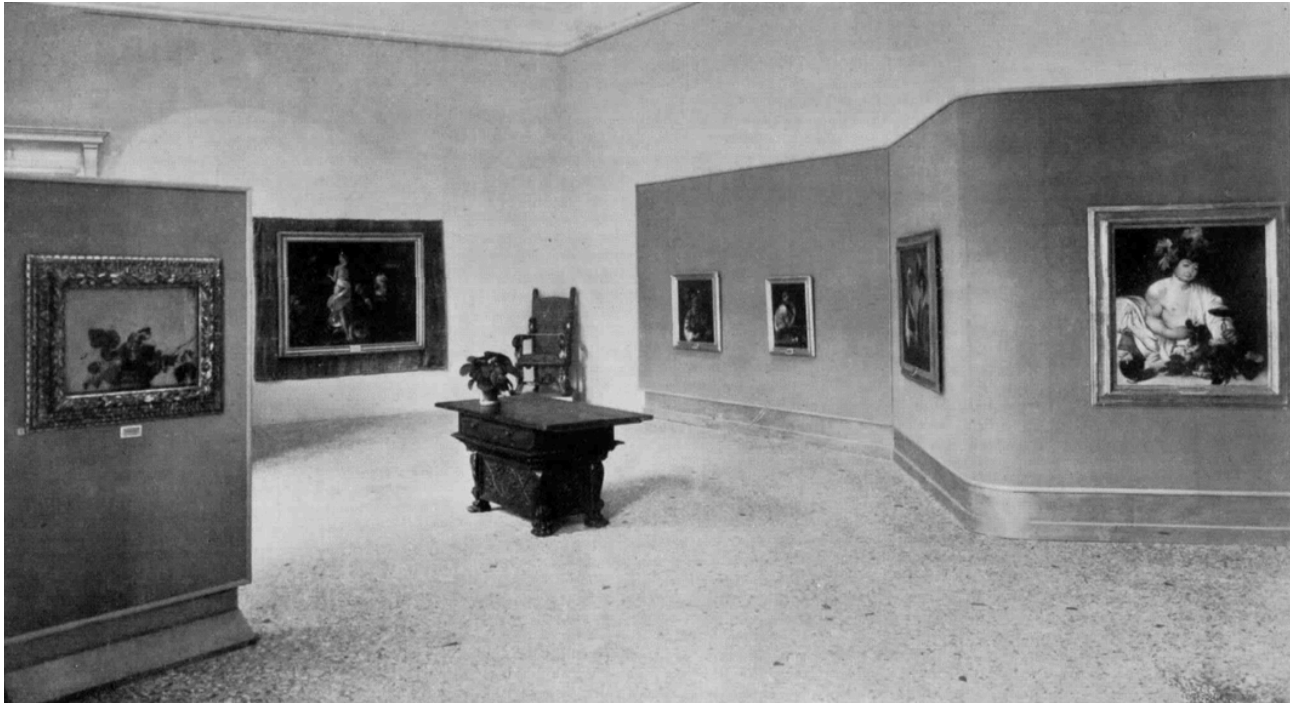


◀ *Fig. 18: Caravaggio, **Boy bitten by a Lizard**, c. 1597, oil on canvas, cm 65,8 x 52,3, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*

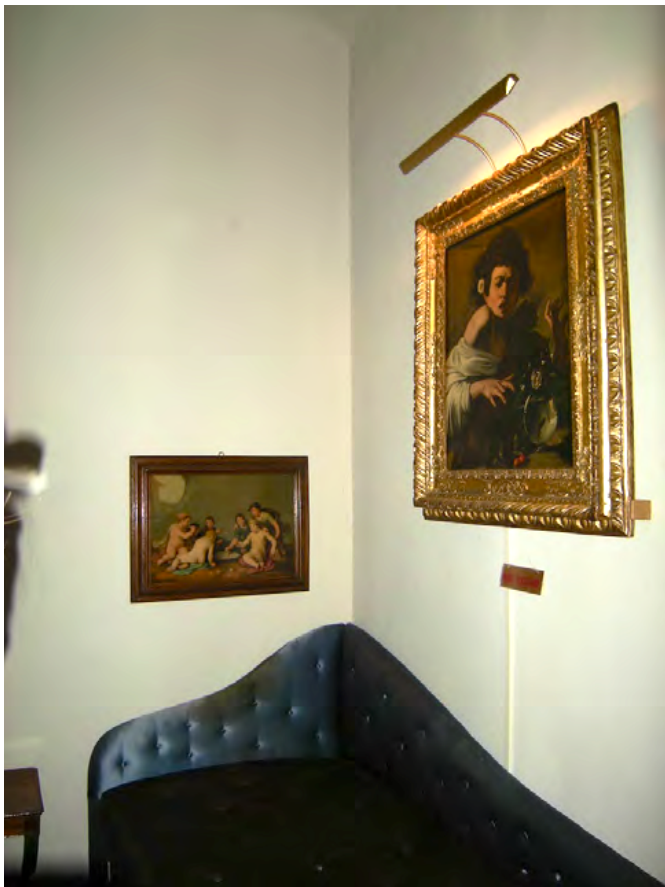


◀ *Fig. 19: Copy from Caravaggio, **Boy peeling a Pear**, end of XVI cent., oil on canvas, cm 65,8 x 62,3, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*





*Fig. 20: View of Room 1, with Fruit Basket from Milan's Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, the Mary Magdalen from the Galleria Doria Pamphilj, the Bacchus from the Uffizi Gallery, the Fortune Teller, from the Louvre, and Boy with Fruit, from the Galleria Borghese in Rome, Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1951*



◀ *Fig. 21: Caravaggio's Boy Bitten by a Lizard at Il Tasso, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence, 2008*

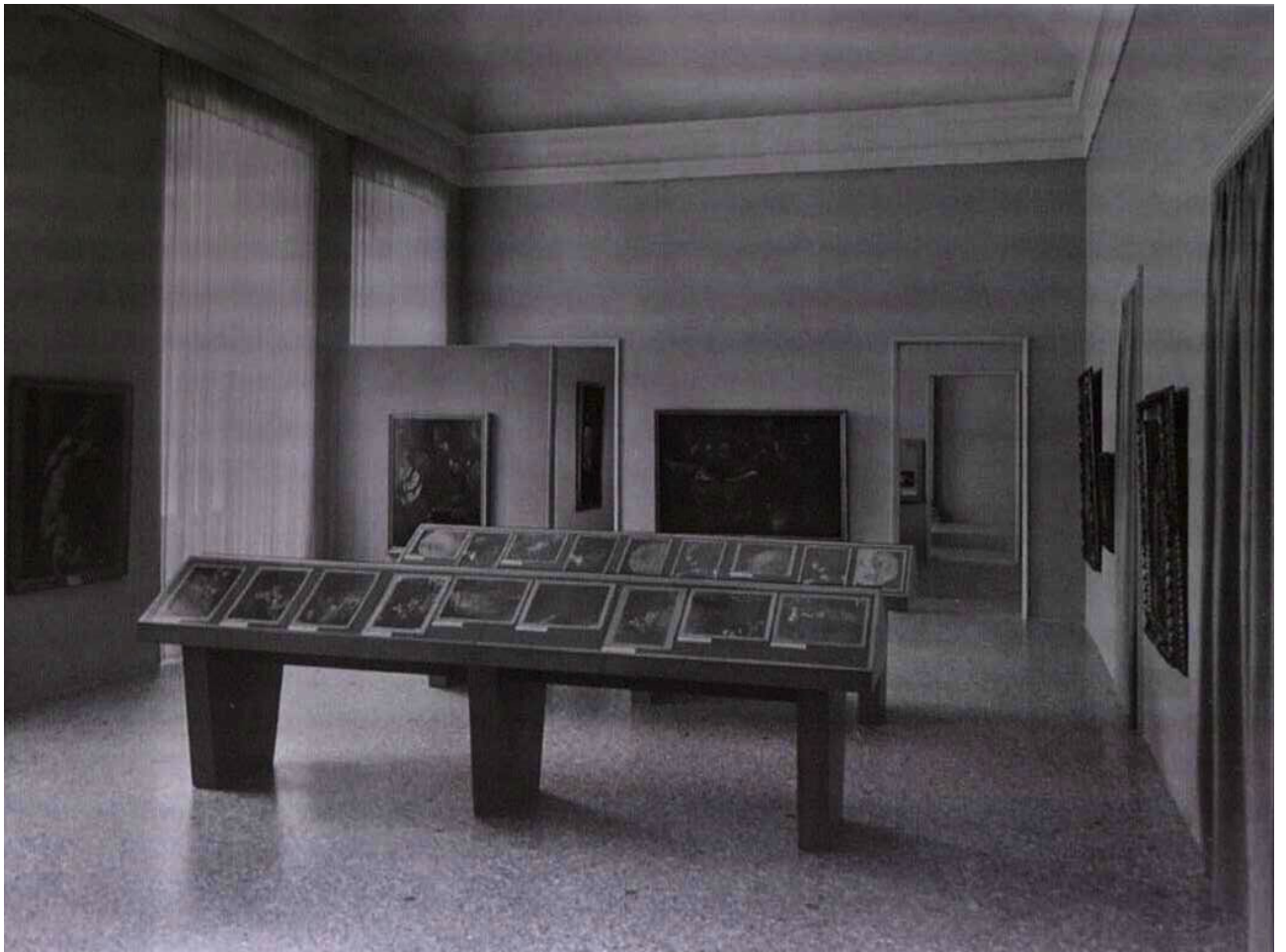




▲ Fig.22: Portrait of Anna Banti at Il Tasso with *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* and Carlo Saraceni's *Portrait of Cardinal Raniero Capocci* in the background, 1962



◀ Fig. 23: R. Longhi, drawing after *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, 1930

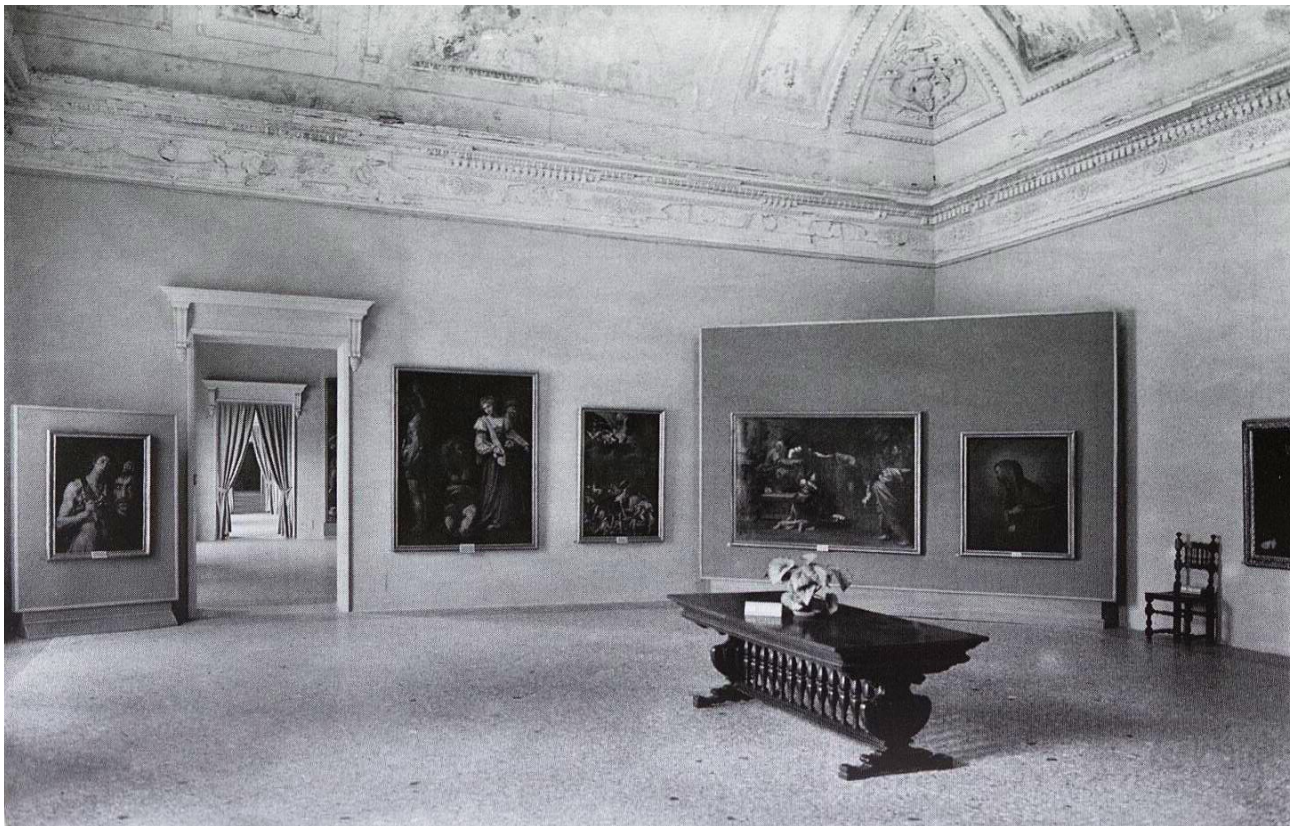
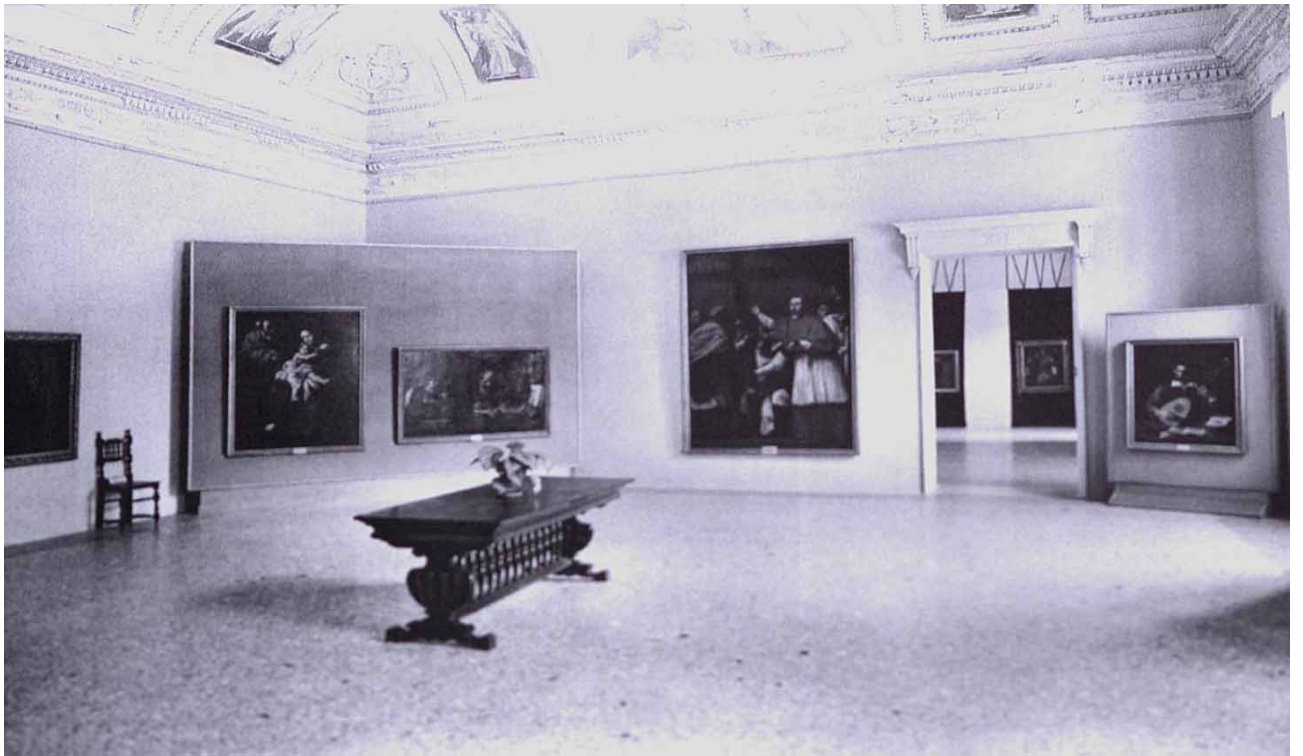


▲  
*Fig.24: View of Room C, with cases displaying photographs of restoration work from the ICR, Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1951*



◀ *Fig. 25: Orazio Borgianni, Lamentation of the Dead Christ, c. 1615, oil on canvas, cm 73,8 x 90, 3, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*





▲  
Figs. 26-7: Views of Room Eleven, Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1951





◀ *Fig. 28: Master of the Judgement of Solomon (Jusepe de Ribera), Apostle (Saint Judas Thaddeus), oil on canvas, cm 126 x 97, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*



◀ *Fig. 29: Angelo Caroselli, Vanity, c. 1620, oil on board, cm 66 x 61, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*

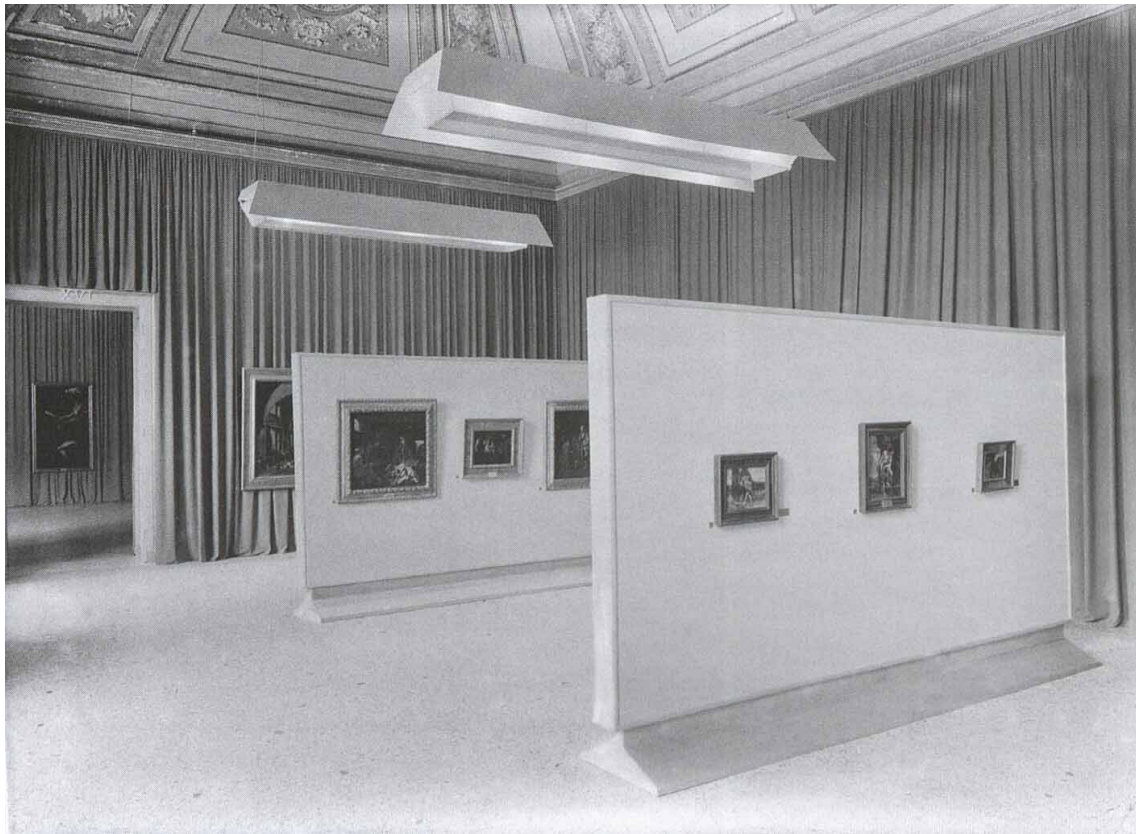


◀ Fig. 30: Carlo Saraceni, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, c. 1618, oil on canvas, cm 95,8 x 77, 3, Fondazione Roberto Longhi



▲ Fig. 31: Valentin de Boulogne, *Denial of St Peter*, c. 1615-7, oil on canvas, cm 171, 5 x 241, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence



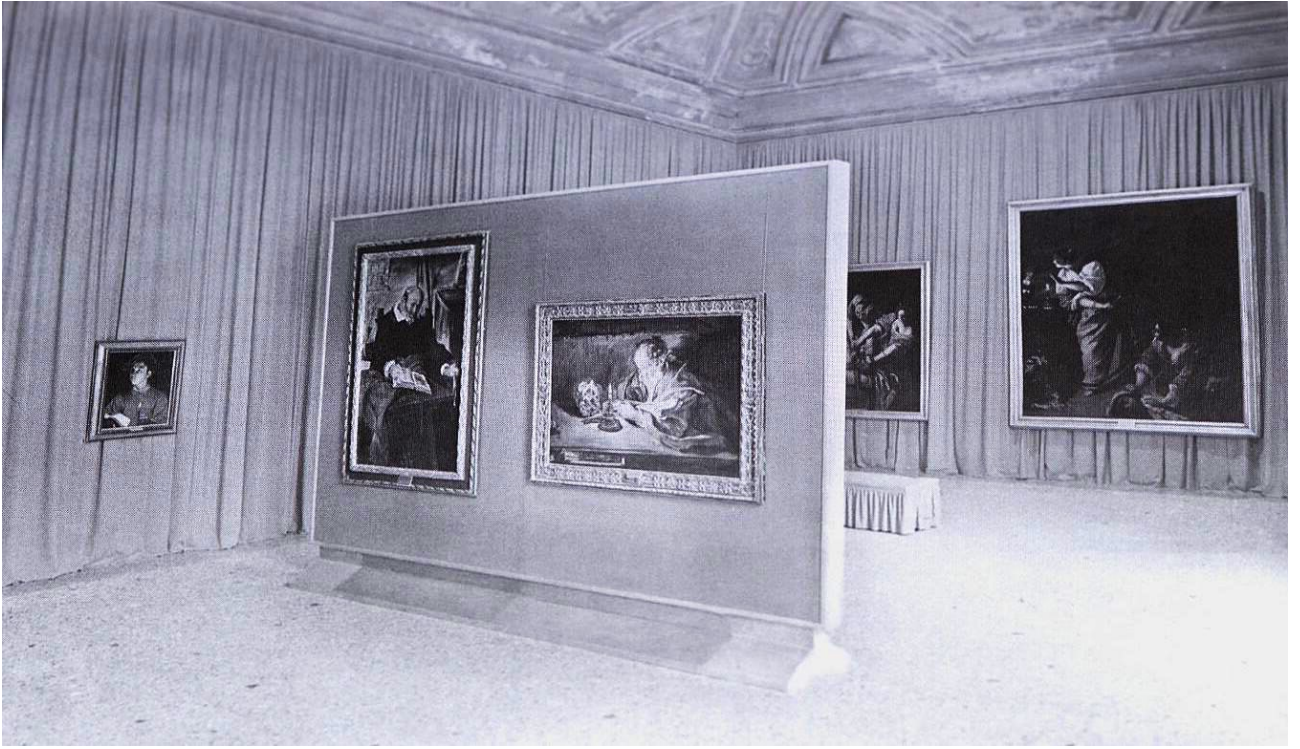


▲  
*Fig. 32: View of Room Fifteen, Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1951*



▲  
*Fig. 33: Wolfgang Heimbach, Adoration of the Shepherds , c. 1618, oil on canvas, cm 71,7 x cm 85,2, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*





▲  
Fig. 34: View of Room Sixteen, Milan, Palazzo Reale, 1951,



◀ Fig. 35:  
Mattia Preti,  
*Concert with  
Three  
Figures*, after  
1630, oil on  
canvas, cm  
103 x 140,  
Fondazione  
Roberto  
Longhi,  
Florence



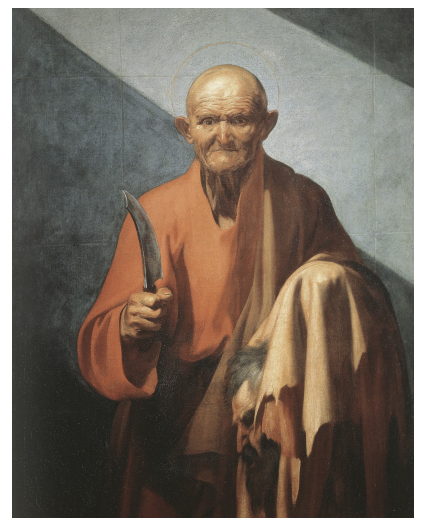
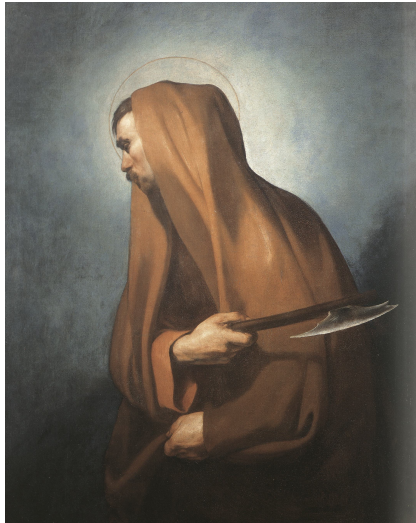


◀ *Fig. 36: Matthias Stomer, *Healing of Tobit*, c. 1640-9, oil on canvas, cm 155 x 207, Fondazione Roberto Longhi*



◀ *Fig. 37: Orazio Borgianni, *Holy Family with Saint Anne*, c. 1616, oil on canvas, cm 97,5 x 79,8, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*



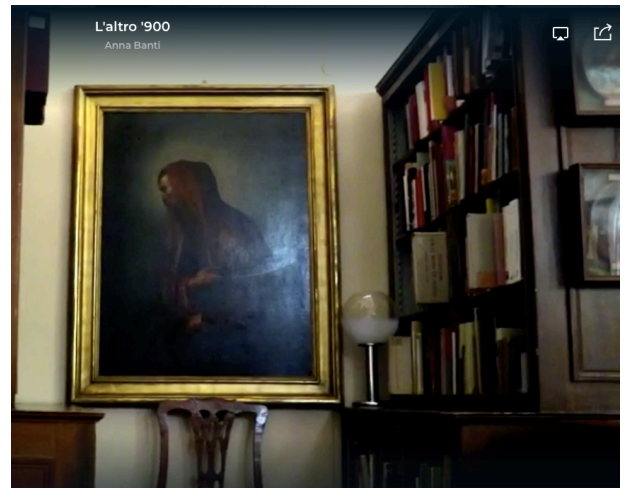
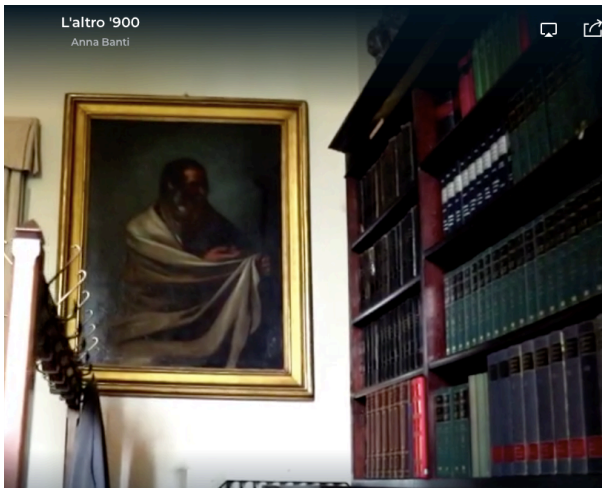


◀ *Fig.38: Joseph de Ribera, Series 5 apostles ex Gavotti, (Saint Thomas, Saint Bartholomew, Saint Paul, Saint Philip) oil on canvas, cm 126 x 97 c. each, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*



◀ *Fig.39: Dirck Van Baburen, Imprisonment of Christ, oil on canvas, cm 125,3 x 95, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence,*





▲  
*Fig. 40: Apostles, Series ex-Gavotti displayed among the bookshelves at Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi*



▲  
*Fig. 41: R. Longhi, drawing after Carlo Saraceni's Judith with the Head of Holofernes*



▲  
*Fig. 42: Carlo Saraceni, Finding of Moses by the Pharaoh's Daughters, c. 1608-10, oil on canvas, cm 99,8 x 128, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*



◀ *Fig.43: Portrait of Cardinal Raniero Capocci, c. 1613, oil on canvas, cm 69, 3 x 54, 4, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence*

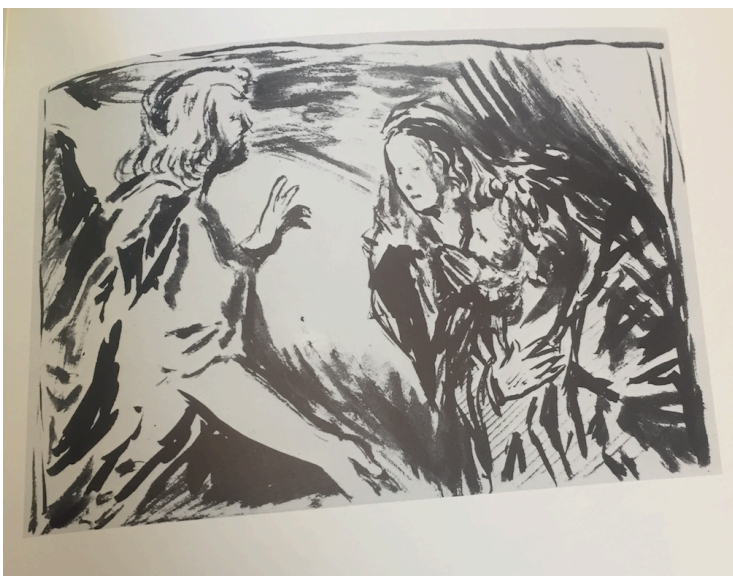




◀ Fig.44: Mattia Preti, *Susanna and the Elders*, c. 1656-59, oil on canvas, cm 120 x 170, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence



◀ Fig.45: Matthias Stomer, *The Annunciation of Samson's Birth to Manoach and his Wife*, c. 1630-2, oil on canvas, cm 99 x 124,8, Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence



◀ Fig.46: R. Longhi, drawing after Matthias Stomer's *The Annunciation of Samson's birth to Manoach and his Wife*

# Part III - Chapter 6

## An I Tatti with Neo-Impressionists: Kenneth Clark, Seurat, and Quattrocento Art

In 1949 Kenneth Clark was invited to advise the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne on how to spend the Felton Bequest for Acquisition of European Art. Whilst travelling throughout Australia, Clark wrote to Berenson:

The landscape [...] is most beautiful and I can only convey it by saying that it is like a Piero della Francesca. The grass is white, the trunks of the trees pinkish white, the leaves glaucous, exactly as in the *Baptism*. The light comes through the leaves, so the woods are all lilac - like the most extreme Impressionist Renoir's of the late 70's.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, comparisons between Renaissance artists and Modern French artists, already alluded to in Chapter 4, will be investigated further through Clark's collecting.

When, in 2014, Tate Britain showcased part of Kenneth Clark's art collection for the first time, most reviewers commented that Clark owned a 'large art collection that included old masters and impressionists'.<sup>2</sup> The combination of Renaissance and late-nineteenth-century art was indeed a distinctive feature of the collection, as mentioned in Chapter 1. Alan Clark, Kenneth's eldest son,

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from K. Clark to Bernard Berenson dated 26MAR1949, reported in J. Anderson, 'The Creation of Indigenous Collections in Melbourne: How Kenneth Clark, Charles Mountford, and Leonhard Adam Interrogated Australian Indigeneity' in *Les actes de colloques du musée du quai Branly Jacques Chirac*, 1, 28 July 2009, <http://journals.openedition.org/actesbranly/332>. During his role as advisor, he also sold a picture, Bonnards's *Siesta*, from his own collection to the Gallery (I thank Jainye Anderson for her suggestion). See also M. Osborne, 'Buying British: Sir Kenneth Clark's Purchases of Modern British Art for the Art Gallery of South Australia' in *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, vol. 19, issue 1, 2019, pp. 70-89

<sup>2</sup> J. Hall, 'Kenneth Clark: arrogant snob or saviour of art?' in *The Guardian*, 16MAY2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2014/may/16/kenneth-clark-arrogant-snob-saviour-art>

called his father's estate, Saltwood Castle, an 'I Tatti with impressionists'.<sup>3</sup> This juxtaposition of the old and the new would also permeate some of Clark's art-historical writings. It has its roots in the work of Roger Fry and Bernard Berenson, Clark's mentors, and a parallel in the work of Roberto Longhi.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the nineteenth-century paintings in Clark's collection are now famous pieces. He owned works by such 'pure impressionists' as Renoir, Degas, Sisley, and Pissarro, but also by the 'post-impressionists', in particular Cézanne and Seurat.<sup>5</sup> In this chapter, the focus shall be on Seurat, for whom Clark was known to have had a certain 'fondness' both as a scholar and as a collector.<sup>6</sup> Clark owned two Seurats: *Le Bec du Hoc, Grandcamp* (Fig. 1), now in the National Gallery in London; and *The Forest at Pontaubert, Sous Bois* (Fig. 2), now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York.<sup>7</sup> The background of the acquisition of these two paintings gives insight to Clark's social network, and especially his yet to be understood relationship with Roberto Longhi. Clark's own observations on the paintings show yet again how an art historian's attitude as a collector was intertwined with their scholarly approach. It will be shown how Clark compared Seurat, using the works from his collection as examples, with Quattrocento artists such as Piero della Francesca and Paolo Uccello, in a hitherto unpublished series of lectures entitled 'Three Scientific Painters'.

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<sup>3</sup> J. Stourton, *Kenneth Clark : life, art and Civilisation*, London, William Collins, 2016, p. 239

<sup>4</sup> Not addressed by scholarship before, this relationship awaits for further investigation, as this thesis first attempts to

<sup>5</sup> Stephens C., 'Patron and Collector' in *Kenneth Clark: Looking for Civilisation*, C. Stephens and J. P. Stonard (eds.), London, Tate Publishing, 2014, p. 82

<sup>6</sup> J. Stourton, *Great Collectors of our Time: Art Collecting Since 1945*, London, Scala, 2007, p. 307

<sup>7</sup> *G. Seurat, Le Bec du Hoc, Grandcamp 1885*, Tate catalogue entry N06067, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/seurat-le-bec-du-hoc-grandcamp-n06067> (from now on cited as Tate, cat. n. N06067); *G. Seurat, The Forest at Pontaubert, 1881*, MET catalogue entry 1985.237, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437655> (from now on cited as MET, cat. n. 1985.237)



An historical photograph shows a view of the dining room at 30 Portland Place, Clark's central London home mentioned in Chapter 1 (Fig. 3).<sup>8</sup> One of Clark's two Seurats, *Le Bec du Hoc, Grandcamp* is hanging above the mantelpiece. Thought to have been painted in 1885, the work is considered to be one of Seurat's first coastal scenes, and it is currently displayed in Room 43 of the National Gallery in London, on loan from Tate Britain, which acquired it in 1952, after Clark had sold it to Marlborough Fine Art.<sup>9</sup>

Not much is known about Clark's acquisition of this painting, only that it had entered his collection by 1936.<sup>10</sup> The provenance and exhibition history of the *Le Bec du Hoc* reveals that in the summer of 1935, it was exhibited in Brussels, at the exhibition *L'Impressionnisme* at the Palais des Beaux-Arts; the year after, in February 1936, it was shown in Paris, at the Galerie Paul Rosenberg, as a loan from the collection Kochentaler.<sup>11</sup> By October of the same year, the painting had passed into Clark's hands, for he lent it to a show at the New Burlington Galleries dedicated to *Masters of French 19th Century Painting*.<sup>12</sup>

John Walker, in his *Self-Portrait with Donors* from 1974, recalls that Clark bought Seurat's work 'without seeing the original'.<sup>13</sup> Yet, from Clark's correspondence with Calouste Gulbenkian and Bernard Berenson, it can be concluded that he was in Paris more than once in 1935 and 1936.<sup>14</sup> It is

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<sup>8</sup> The Survey of London, *30 Portland Place: London's Guggenheim Museum that never was*, <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/survey-of-london/2016/02/26/30-portland-place-londons-guggenheim-museum-that-never-was/>

<sup>9</sup> Tate, cat. n. N06067; the oil sketch is held at Canberra's Australian National Gallery. *Study for Le Bec du Hoc, Grandcamp 1885*, catalogue entry NGA 1984.1933, <https://nga.gov.au/international/catalogue/detail.cfm?IRN=92051&SiteID=2>

<sup>10</sup> Tate, cat. n. N06067

<sup>11</sup> *L'Impressionnisme*, Bruxelles : Palais des beaux-arts, 1935. Brussels, 15 June - 29 September 1935 ; Paris, 3-29 February 1936. *Exposition Seurat (1859-1891)*, Paris, Paul Rosenberg, 1936; Tate, cat. n. N06067

<sup>12</sup> London, October 1936, *Exhibition of masters of French 19th century painting : New Burlington Galleries*, London, Anglo French Art and Travel Society, 1936 ; Tate, cat. n. N06067

<sup>13</sup> Walker J., *Self-Portrait with Donors: Confessions of an Art Collector*, Boston, Little Brown, 1974, p. 288

<sup>14</sup> Correspondence files between Clark and Gulbenkian, Museum Calouste Gulbenkian Archive, MCG02644 - 05DEC1935 KC to CG ; 21JUL1936 KC to CG

possible that Clark saw the Seurat on show at Rosenberg's, and managed to buy it from the then owner, the Hamburg collector, Frau E. Kocherthaler, possibly via the German dealer Alfred Flechtheim.<sup>15</sup> According to Walker's recollections, Clark, who was the kind of collector who 'bought quickly and without hesitation', put down an offer of 3,500 GBP to acquire the *Bec du Hoc* - a payment so generous that the owner presented Clark with the opportunity to buy also a second Seurat, *Forest at Pontaubert, Sous Bois*.<sup>16</sup>

Now in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the canvas represents trees from the forest at the village of Pontaubert outside Paris. Painted in 1881, it is considered to be one of Seurat's earliest pointillist works.<sup>17</sup> The work was in Clark's hands by 1937, for in the winter of that year, he lent it to an exhibition at Wildenstein's in London, dedicated to *Seurat and His Contemporaries*.<sup>18</sup> Before that, the painting had been exhibited together with the *Bec du Hoc* at the above-mentioned locations in Brussels and Paris.<sup>19</sup> Douglas Cooper's review of the Brussels show reveals that the canvas had been lent by Kocherthaler, who was also the owner of *Le Bec du Hoc*.<sup>20</sup> Thus, it can be concluded that Clark acquired his Seurats in the mid-1930s, at the beginning of his successful career.<sup>21</sup> Notably, he became keeper of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford in 1933, succeeding Clive Bell, who also had an interest in post-impressionism, and in Seurat in particular.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Tate, cat. n. N06067

<sup>16</sup> MET, cat. n. 1985.237

<sup>17</sup> MET, cat. n. 1985.237

<sup>18</sup> London, 20 January-27 February 1937, *Seurat and His Contemporaries*, London, Wildenstein, 1937 ; MET, cat. n. 1985.237

<sup>19</sup> MET, cat. n. 1985.237

<sup>20</sup> D. Cooper, 'Shorter Notices: The Impressionists at the Palais des Beaux Arts [Brussels]' in *The Burlington Magazine*, n. 67, August 1935, p. 87, also reported in MET, cat. n. 1985.237.

<sup>21</sup> Stephens, 2014, p. 87

<sup>22</sup> Richard Calvocoressi, 'Douglas Cooper and his catalogue of the Courtauld collection' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 154, n. 1308, March 2012, pp. 187-190, p. 190;

The taste for French modernist painters had been cultivated in Britain by dealers such as Paul Durand Ruel, Felix Ferenon, Alex Reid, Paul Rosenberg, Lefèvre, and scholars such as Roger Fry and Clive Bell.<sup>23</sup> They stimulated a group of collectors, who together gathered some of the most remarkable collections in the field, including Samuel Courtauld and Hugh Lane, but also Eve and Jane Sickert, the Davies Sisters, and Elizabeth Workman, whose purchases, at times, precede those of the better known male collectors by 10-15 years.<sup>24</sup> Collecting Impressionism in Britain seems to have gained pace after World War I, when two exhibitions would lay the basis for a heightened interest in the 1920s. *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* (1910) and *Second Post-Impressionists Exhibition. British French and Russian Artists* (1912) were both curated by Roger Fry and hosted at the Grafton Galleries in Mayfair London.<sup>25</sup> At the first show, Fry coined the successful term 'post-impressionism' and consecrated Cézanne as a classical artist.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Literature on the topic is vast. See M. Korn, 'Exhibitions of Modern French Art and Their Influence on Collectors in Britain 1870–1918: The Davies Sisters in Context' in *Journal of the History of Collections*, n.16, 2004, pp. 191–218 ; F. Fowle (ed.), *Impressionism and Scotland*, Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland, 2008 ; S. Patry (ed.), *Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market*, London, National Gallery, 2015; K. Serres (ed.), *The Courtauld collection: a vision for impressionism*, London, The Courtauld Gallery, 2018; and the recent conference 'Collecting impressionism', 9-13 November 2020, Universities Paris Nanterre and Rouen Normandy, with panels available online at <https://impressionnisme-recherche.net>;

<sup>24</sup> As Fowle explains, there were numerous women, often the wives of prominent businessmen, whose roles as tastemakers have been completely ignored: either because their independence of thought has been credited to an agent or spouse; or because their husband controlled the finances and their name has never been recorded in receipts or dealer stock books'. F. Fowle, 'A Woman of No Importance?: Elizabeth Workman's Collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Art in Context' in *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, vol. 31, 2021, pp. 1-8, p. 1. On Courtauld see Serres, 2018. On Lane see M. O'Neill, *Hugh Lane: The Art Market and the Museum 1893–1915*, London, Yale University Press, 2018. ; Fowle, 2021, p. 1

<sup>25</sup> D. Cooper, *The Courtauld Collection: A Catalogue and Introduction, with a Memoir of Samuel Courtauld by Anthony Blunt*, London, Athlone Press, 1954; Calvocoressi, 2012, p. 187 ; Calvocoressi, 2012, p. 190 ; For a first critical view, see B. Nicolson, 'Post-Impressionism and Roger Fry' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 93, n. 574, January 1951, pp. 10-15

<sup>26</sup> Nicolson, 1951, p. 10 ; N. Ireson, 'The pointillist and the past: three English views of Seurat' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 152, n. 1293, Manet and the Post—Impressionists: A centenary issue, December 2010, pp. 799-803, p. 800 ; Calvocoressi, 2012 p. 188

Despite its ground-breaking approach, the 1910 exhibition included only two paintings by Seurat. Britain was following France in its late appreciation of the artist, whose first French retrospective was organised only in 1909.<sup>27</sup> Fry seems to have developed a keener interest in Seurat around 1916, following a journey to the French capital, when he noted that he had failed to register before ‘the genius of Seurat’, as he reproached himself in 1920.<sup>28</sup> Around this time, Fry lectured on Seurat in his Slade lectures at Oxford, influencing many young students, Clark included. He also bought his own first and only Seurat, *Lucerne at St Denis*.<sup>29</sup> An acquisition of a work by Seurat for a public collection in 1924, when thanks to a generous donation by Samuel Courtauld, the Tate gallery managed to buy Seurat’s *Bathers*, marked a change in the artist’s critical fortune in Britain. In that same year, the Arts Institute of Chicago bought another masterpiece: *La Grande Jatte*.<sup>30</sup> In 1926, the Lefèvre Gallery in London organised an exhibition, which eventually inspired Fry to write the first proper critical overview of Seurat’s work.<sup>31</sup>

At the beginning of the 1930s, when Clark, too, started acquiring French modern paintings, there was a flurry of international loan exhibitions of impressionists, neo- and post-impressionist artists in Britain and elsewhere.<sup>32</sup> In 1932, for instance, fifteen works by Seurat were showcased at the Royal Academy exhibition *French Art 1200-1900*, where many of the works had been lent by British collectors.<sup>33</sup> In 1935, Brussels hosted another loan exhibition entitled *L’Impressionnisme* which *The Burlington Magazine* review called ‘both

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<sup>27</sup> Ireson, 2010, p. 801. Cooper lamented it excluded fauvism and cubism, which would only be appreciated later, blaming Fry for this. Calvocoressi, 2012, p. 188

<sup>28</sup> Ireson, 2010, p. 799

<sup>29</sup> Ireson, 2010, p. 800 ; Calvocoressi, 2012, p. 190. On Fry as a collector see C. Reed ‘The Fry Collection at the Courtauld Institute Galleries’ in *The Burlington Magazine*, n. 132, 1990, pp. 766-69

<sup>30</sup> Ireson, 2010, p. 801

<sup>31</sup> Ireson, 2010, p. 801

<sup>32</sup> Stephens, 2014, p. 87

<sup>33</sup> Royal Academy of Arts, *Exhibition of French Art, 1200-1900*, London, Royal Academy of Art, 1932 ; Ireson, 2010, p. 801

magnificent and instructive as a display of late nineteenth-century French painting'.<sup>34</sup>

Seurat was well represented on this occasion. Both paintings that were later in Clark's collection, *Le Bec du Hoc* and *Sous Bois*, had been lent from Kocherthaler, and were cited in *The Burlington Magazine* review, where they were described as great examples of the artist's scientific approach to painting:

Seurat [...] Like Cézanne [...] saw in geometry the necessary solidification of the Impressionist theory ; this is apparent even in the early *Sous-Bois* (Coll. Kocherthaler) which though heavier in texture made an interesting comparison with *La meule*, the disposition of the trees being similar in both cases. But Seurat's effect is based on a scientific synthesis. An important part of his theory drawn from a study of Tintoretto and Rubens was his *contraste simultané*; shade he held is surrounded by its equivalent plane of light and inversely planes of light create round their edges an effect of darkness. One of the most interesting examples of this was in *Le Bec de Hoc à Grandcamp* (Coll. Kocherthaler) where the deep purple colouring of the rock face, contrasted with the lighter colours as it juts out into the deep, green sea, made it one of the most striking and dramatic works exhibited.<sup>35</sup>

Notably, among the works exhibited, these two in particular were taken as representative of Seurat's technique. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine whether Clark had the occasion to visit the exhibition, but he is likely to have read this review, which may have had an impact on his own future purchases.

As mentioned above, in February 1936, less than a year later, both works, *Le Bec du Hoc* and *Sous Bois*, were lent to a monographic exhibition on Seurat at Paul Rosenberg's gallery in Paris.<sup>36</sup> The correspondence between Clark and

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<sup>34</sup> L. van Puyvelde and D. Lord, 'Two Exhibitions at Brussels' in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, vol. 67, n. 389, August 1935, pp. 83-85, 87-88; Tate/MET cat

<sup>35</sup> Van Puyvelde and Lord, 1935, pp. 84-5

<sup>36</sup> Tate, cat. n. N06067 ; MET, cat. n. 1985.237

Berenson and between Clark and Gulbenkian shows that Clark was in Paris several times in the summer of 1935, as well as in December of that year.<sup>37</sup> By the summer of 1936, Clark had visited, for the first time, the collection of Gulbenkian in his house at *Avenue de Iena* and started in his role as the collector's personal adviser, whilst still holding the post of Director of the National Gallery in London.<sup>38</sup> The Seurat show was held in February, and there is no direct source proving that Clark visited it. However, his close relationship with Gulbenkian, who was also a collector of impressionist works, and his role as Director of the National Gallery, implied that he had frequent contacts with Parisian dealers, Rosenberg included, suggesting that Clark would at least have known of the exhibition and of the works on display.

In 1937, Clark facilitated Gulbenkian's purchase of Renoir's *Portrait of Madame Monet* from the Rosenberg gallery.<sup>39</sup> Once Gulbenkian bought the painting, he sent it on loan to the National Gallery in London.<sup>40</sup> Clark, still the director, suggested to have it cleaned by the same restorer who took care of

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<sup>37</sup> R. Cumming, *My Dear BB: the Letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2015 (1935 chronology) ; Letter from KC to CG, 05DEC1935, Museum Calouste Gulbenkian Archive, MCG02644

<sup>38</sup> Letter from KC to CG, sent from Hotel de Carillon, Place de la Concorde Paris, 21JUL1936, Museum Calouste Gulbenkian Archive, MCG02644. See J. C. Dias (ed.), *Calouste S. Gulbenkian and English Taste*, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, 2015 and J. Conlin, 'Renowned and Unknown: Calouste Gulbenkian as Collector of Paintings' in *Journal of the History of Collections*, Vol. 30, Issue 2, July 2018, pp. 317–337. The relationship of Clark as advisor to Gulbenkian still awaits further investigation. Much of the arguments presented in this thesis are the result of the author's fellowship at the Gulbenkian Foundation, working towards analysing this relationship further in an article. Advising private collectors, dealers, and public collections was a common practice, as explained in the introduction. Berenson, for instance, like Zeri, helped forming Vittorio Cini's collection and worked for Wildenstein, whilst Longhi was working for Contini Bonaccossi.

<sup>39</sup> Letter from Clark to Gulbenkian, 26FEB1937, MSCG02682

<sup>40</sup> Gulbenkian was planning with Clark to increase his collection. In 1937 he lent several of his pictures on long-term. Plans then changed and Gulbenkian tried to do the same in Washington at the National Gallery with John Walker. Eventually, he left his collection to Lisbon, where it still is. See Dias, 2015 and Conlin, 2018



his own Seurats and Cèzannes - Helmut Moritz Ruhemann, a German immigrant employed at the National Gallery.<sup>41</sup> As Clark wrote to Gulbenkian:

I am delighted to know that you have bought the Degas portrait, and £6.000 I think is a very reasonable price. I much look forward to seeing it hung in the National Gallery. My impression is that the picture would benefit by a slight cleaning, but I would not like to say definitely until studying it properly in a good light [...] if I think cleaning is necessary give it to our chief restorer, Mr Ruhemann. I think he is very good at French 19th century pictures. He cleaned both my Cèzannes and Seurats and has done a lot of work for Mr Courtauld.<sup>42</sup>

Clark's personal interests as a collector, his role as a private advisor for Gulbenkian, and his public post as director of a national collection clearly overlapped, influenced, and nourished each other.<sup>43</sup> Assuming the above-mentioned account by Walker is reliable, both Seurats were in Clark's hands by October 1936. He immediately lent *Le Bec du Hoc* to the exhibition *Masters of French 19th Century Painting* at the New Burlington Galleries in London, on which occasion it was published as owned by Kenneth Clark,<sup>44</sup> and *Sous Bois* was lent to *Seurat and His Contemporaries* at the Wildenstein Gallery in London.<sup>45</sup>

During World War II, few exhibitions of physical works were organised at the National Gallery. Among them, however, one was dedicated to Modern French Painting, which lasted one month. The year was 1943, and Kenneth Clark was

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<sup>41</sup> 'Helmut Moritz Ruhemann (1891-1973) was a German painter who had also worked under Maurice Denis in Paris. In 1929 he became Chief Restorer of the Berlin State Galleries. In 1933, he followed Philip Hendy's invitation to visit England, where he fled soon after. Ruhemann worked as a freelancer restorer around England, including at the National Gallery from 1934 - the year of Clark's appointment, where he became one of the first full-time conservators, until 1972, <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/research/research-centre/archive/record/NG29> . See M. Blewett, 'The Art of Conservation VI: Helmut Ruhemann, Paintings Restorer in Berlin and London' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol.158, n.1361, August 2016, pp. 638-646

<sup>42</sup> 01NOV1937, Clark to Gulbenkian, MCG Archive

<sup>43</sup> As explained in the introduction, it was an accepted praxis for many scholars to give their advice to collectors, dealers, and museums whilst working in academia or in a museum, as in the case of Clark and Gulbenkian.

<sup>44</sup> Tate, cat. n. N06067

<sup>45</sup> Tate, cat. n. N06067 ; Ireson, 2010, p. 801

still the director in charge.<sup>46</sup> *The Burlington Magazine* of course did not miss the chance to review the event, although unfortunately, given the difficult circumstances, no reproductions could be included.<sup>47</sup> Among the works displayed and described as ‘unfamiliar’, the *Burlington* critic includes those ‘of an even rarer master, Seurat, to be studied in two admirable examples, *Bec du Hoc* and *Sous-bois*’, but also Cézanne’s *Chateau Noir*, and Renoir’s *Baigneuse*, all works coming from Clark’s personal collection.<sup>48</sup>

Having been exhibited, Clark’s Seurats became known to most scholars of the field, including Roberto Longhi, another key figure in the Italian and international appreciation of the French master. This Italo-British link, led to the two paintings being next put on public display at the 24th Venice *Biennale* of 1948 - the first Biennale held after the war, which sought to catch up with the latest tendencies and tastes in art.<sup>49</sup> Douglas Cooper, who had become a renowned expert of Impressionism and its reception, as well as a student and collector of cubism, reviewed the event, calling it the ‘first occasion of making contact with foremost personalities in contemporary European art, it was also the first occasion of seeing an exhibition of paintings by French Impressionists’.<sup>50</sup>

Evidently, Clark, by lending his work by Seurat, actively contributed towards the new-found appreciation of French modern art in Italy.

Rodolfo Pallucchini was one of the driving forces behind this Biennale, having just been appointed Secretary General, a position he would occupy till

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<sup>46</sup> *Nineteenth Century French Paintings*, December 1942 - January 1943, London, National Gallery, London, 1943

<sup>47</sup> ‘French Nineteenth Century Painting at the National Gallery’ in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, vol. 82, n. 478, January 1943, p. 20

<sup>48</sup> ‘French Nineteenth Century Painting at the National Gallery’ in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, vol. 82, n. 478, January 1943, p. 20 ; Tate, cat. n. N06067 ; MET, cat. n. 1985.237 :

<sup>49</sup> M. C. Bandera, ‘Pallucchini protagonista della Biennale’ in *Saggi e Memorie di storia dell’arte*, n. 35, 2011, pp. 75-92, p. 76

<sup>50</sup> D. Cooper, ‘24th Biennial Exhibition, Venice’ in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 90, n. 547, October 1948, pp. 290, 293, 296

1956.<sup>51</sup> Pallucchini and his collaborators hoped, above all, to make the Biennale into an internationally esteemed event.<sup>52</sup> Although they were trying to impress foreign public opinion, the *Biennale* and its exhibitions played an important role for Italian artists as well. Unlike in Britain, where Impressionists and Post-Impressionists had become common features in public and private shows, in Italy, it was the first time that a monographic exhibition on Impressionism was being held on a national and public level.<sup>53</sup> Describing the rooms dedicated to the *Mostra degli Impressionisti*, Cooper did not neglect to mention that the only Seurat represented in the show came from a British collection:

The exhibition of Impressionist paintings was a fascinating if very unequal show. [...] The Cézanne room was made by the loan of six paintings from the Loeser collection [...] Seurat, represented only by the dramatic *Bec du Hoc* (Sir Kenneth Clark, London), seemed sadly out of place.<sup>54</sup>

On the basis of Pallucchini's correspondence with Roberto Longhi, Maria Cristina Bandera has reconstructed that the topic of the exhibition had been suggested by Longhi.<sup>55</sup> Later remembered by Pallucchini as the most difficult feat of his entire career, the exhibition gave a voice to the debates and disagreements among the committee for the *Arte Figurativa*.<sup>56</sup> The group was composed of both artists, such as Carlo Carrà, Felice Casorati, Marino Marini, and Giorgio Morandi, and scholars, including Roberto Longhi, Nino Barbantini, Ludovico Ragghianti, and Lionello Venturi. At times, the members of the heterogeneous group had different visions and approaches. A contentious issue, which saw Longhi and Venturi joining opposite factions, was whether or not the display should include the later impressionists and *fauve* artists, and in particular, Seurat, Van Gogh, and Gauguin. In addition, there were also the practical difficulties in obtaining the relevant international loans that would add

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<sup>51</sup> Bandera, 2011, p. 76

<sup>52</sup> Bandera, 2011, p.78

<sup>53</sup> Cooper, 1948, p. 290

<sup>54</sup> Cooper, 1948, p. 296

<sup>55</sup> Bandera, 2011, p. 79

<sup>56</sup> Bandera, 2011, p. 79

value to the show.<sup>57</sup> As some archival research has revealed, Kenneth Clark's Seurats seem to stand right at the centre of both these concerns, and all thanks to the acquaintance of Longhi and Clark.

Whilst working on the exhibition, Pallucchini wrote to Longhi, in an attempt to reconcile his and Venturi's points of view on the list of artists.<sup>58</sup> Pallucchini stated that the: 'organisers are committing to see whether it is feasible to get loans from foreign countries of [...] works by impressionists [...] which, at least for the moment, will include Seurat, Van Gogh, and Gauguin'.<sup>59</sup> Pallucchini asked Longhi if he had any particular work in mind that he would like to request for loan. In successive letters, Longhi replied that he would 'admit Seurat, for the same reason that makes me admit Cézanne, i.e that they both are systematisers of a technique that is after all the same of the impressionists.'<sup>60</sup> With regards to possible foreign loans, after reassuring Pallucchini regarding the complications, Longhi suggests to appeal to foreign friends of Italian culture, such as Kenneth Clark, who 'owns beautiful works by Cézanne, Renoir, Degas, among them, there is the *Chateau Noir* by Cézanne, a marvellous piece'.<sup>61</sup>

Clark's being the first name to come up may have resulted from the fact that around the same time, Longhi and Clark had been in close contact regarding Piero della Francesca, as shall be explained later on.

Among the Clark papers at Tate Archive, two letters demonstrate that Longhi's suggestion to approach Clark was taken seriously by Pallucchini. On 11th of November 1947, the London-based Italian dealer Giuseppe Bellesi

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<sup>57</sup> Bandera, 2011, p. 81

<sup>58</sup> Bandera, 2011, p. 80

<sup>59</sup> Tr.: 'la segreteria della mostra farà i passi per vedere se sia possibile ottenere il prestito delle Nazioni straniere di un gruppo di opere degli impressionist [...] ai quali, almeno per ora, si è pensato di aggiungere anche Seurat , Van Gogh e Gauguin (as insisted by L Venturi)'. Cited in Bandera, 2011, p. 81

<sup>60</sup> Tr.: "Lei mi chiederà perché allora ammetto Seurat e risponderò che lo ammetto per un'analoga ragione a quella che mi fa ammettere Cézanne: entrambi sono sistemati di una tecnica che è pur quella degli impressionisti", Cited in Bandera, 2011, p. 81

<sup>61</sup> Tr.: 'pezzi bellissimi di Cézanne, Renoir, Degas, fra gli altri il 'Chateau Noir' di Cézanne che è uno spettacolo.' Cited in Bandera, 2011, p. 83

wrote to Clark on behalf of Pallucchini, asking him if he could facilitate loans from British collectors.<sup>62</sup> A few days after Bellesi's approach, Longhi himself reached out to Clark, inviting him to join the special committee, and remarking how deeply he placed trust on Clark's help for the success of the exhibition.<sup>63</sup>

Longhi then explained that for him it was of fundamental importance that the exhibition and the *Biennale* in general would be an internationally recognised success, which only the loan of the best pieces from all over Europe would guarantee.<sup>64</sup> To conclude, Longhi asked Clark diplomatically to contribute to the exhibition's success both as a lender and by assisting to obtain loans from other collections, such as Courtauld's. As Longhi put it: 'Needless to say, if we could have in Venice some of the best paintings in the UK (and I think of your own, those of Courtauld, and some others), the exhibition would already gain a great significance.'<sup>65</sup>

In the end, Clark lent one of his pieces: *Le Bec du Hoc*, which was to remain the only loan from Britain. As mentioned above, Seurat being represented solely by Clark's piece was perceived as out of place. A documentary by the Istituto Luce, shot as to promote the event, named and showed examples of works by all the artists included in the exhibition, except Seurat.<sup>66</sup> In the exhibition review published by the Italian journal *Emporium*, however, Clark's Seurat is reproduced on the last page (Fig. 5).<sup>67</sup> The reviewer, the critic Attilio Podestà, echoed Cooper's words, saying that Seurat's greatness was 'only

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<sup>62</sup> GB to KC 11NOV47, TGA 8812.1.2.635. See appendix I

<sup>63</sup> Letter written in Italian on Biennale Headed paper, but sent form Il Tasso, RL to KC, 14NOV1947, TGA8812.1.2.3993 (Fig. 4)

<sup>64</sup> RL to KC 14NOV1947, TGA8812.1.2.3993

<sup>65</sup> Tr.: 'Non c'è bisogno di dire che se riuscissimo ad avere per Venezia qualcuno dei dipinti migliori che sono in Inghilterra (e penso ai Suoi, a quelli Courtauld e a qualche altro), un alto significato alla Mostra sarebbe già assicurato.' RL to KC 14NOV1947, TGA8812.1.2.3993.

<sup>66</sup> Archivio Luce, *Biennale d'arte a Venezia: mostra degli impressionisti*, available at: <https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL5000009115/2/biennale-d-arte-veneziana-mostra-degli-impressionisti.html?startPage=0>

<sup>67</sup> A. Podestà, 'Gli Impressionisti' in *Emporium*, vol. CVIII, n. 643-644, 1948, pp. 7-34

hinted at by the vibrant and inspiring marine landscape *Le Bec du Hoc à Grandcamp*'.<sup>68</sup>

In the years after World War II, Clark engaged increasingly with the work of Seurat. Multiple invitations to read lectures at various British and international institutions presented him with opportunities. Two of these presentations, *Landscape into Painting* (1949) and the almost forgotten *Three Scientific Painters* (1947(?)) will be analysed in detail here.<sup>69</sup> These texts, which present the reader with an analysis of an artistic concept, already bear the 'Warburgian' stamp of later publications such as *The Nude*.<sup>70</sup> Most importantly, they have a flavour of a typical aspect of 20th century art criticism - the comparison of modern artists with old masters.<sup>71</sup> In both, Seurat is put next to Quattrocento masters such as Piero della Francesca and Paolo Uccello or classicising artists such as Poussin and Ingres.

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<sup>68</sup> Tr.: 'L'importanza assunta da Seurat [...] in una nuova razionale ricostruzione delle forme con rigore poetico, è appena accennata dal vibrante ispirato paesaggio marino *Le beh du Hoc à Grandcamp*', Podestà, 1948, p. 34. For the reception of Seurat in Italy at the turn of the 20th century, see F. Fregonzi, 'Su alcune fonti visive di Giorgio Morandi' in *Giorgio Morandi 1890-1964*, M.C: Bandera, R. Miracco (eds.), Milan, Skira, 2009, pp. 56-7.

<sup>69</sup> K. Clark, *Landscape into Art*, London, J. Murray, 1949 ; K. Clark, '*Three Scientific Painters*', 1947- 48. The three lectures focus respectively on Paolo Uccello (TGA 88212.2.2.1060), Piero della Francesca (TGA 8812.2.2.753), and Seurat (TGA 8812.2.2.908).

<sup>70</sup> On Clark's Warburgian turn, see for instance E. Sears, 'Kenneth Clark and Gertrud Bing: letters on 'The Nude' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 153, n. 1301, 2011, pp. 530-531

<sup>71</sup> These juxtapositions were already part of the thought of late 19th-century critics of French modern Art, especially by artists such and Academicians such as Maurice Denis and Charles Blanc, when referring to impressionists and post-impressionist artists. These survived through the work of Bernard Berenson and Roger Fry, later taken up by Longhi and Clark, but also Italian artists such as Carlo Placci, Ardengo Soffici, and Carlo Carrà. On the topic see Iamurri, 1998; F. Mazzocca, 'Da Degas al Realismo magico. La riscoperta e la consacrazione di Piero della Francesca nella critica e nella pittura tra Otto e Novecento' in *Piero della Francesca. Indagine su un mito*, A. Paolucci, D. Benati, F. Dabell, F. Mazzocca, P. Refice, U. Tramonti (eds), Silvana Editoriale, Milan, 2016, pp. 51-65;

The comparison between Piero della Francesca and Seurat is of course an anachronism, which is probably the reason for its dismissal by later scholars.<sup>72</sup> Yet, it was one of the most successful analogies in the literature of art history, especially in Britain and Italy. The idea has its roots in the late 19th century, but was developed out of the visual intuition of a few critics of the 1920s, primarily Roberto Longhi and Roger Fry. Already in the 1910s, each of them had applied the same approach to an artist who was to become another favourite of Clark's, Cézanne.<sup>73</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2, the idealisation of Cézanne as a 'classic artist' and his similarities to old masters, such as Giotto, was a popular topic among late 19th and early 20th-century critics such as Maurice Denis, whose ideas were subsequently taken up by Berenson, Fry, Longhi, and eventually Clark, as well as artists, especially in Italy, including Carlo Carrà, Ardengo Soffici, and Carlo Placci.<sup>74</sup>

Surviving as a topic in the critical discourses on both artists till today, the apparent affinity between Piero and Seurat was something that scholars at the time sought to explain. The key issue, investigated by Longhi, was that Seurat had never visited Italy, and could not have seen any of Piero's frescoes. As has been argued, it was likely that Seurat knew Piero's work through his contacts at the Parisian Academy of Arts, who had encouraged the study of 'primitives' such as Piero della Francesca, promoting them as canonical masters.<sup>75</sup> These

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<sup>72</sup> See A. Boime, 'Seurat and Piero della Francesca' in *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 47, n. 2, June 1965, pp. 265-271 ; M. F. Zimmermann, 'Die 'Erfindung' Piero und seine Wahlverwandschaft mit Seurat' in *Piero della Francesca and his Legacy*, M. Aronberg Lavin (ed.), Washington, National Gallery of Art, 1995, pp. 265-271 ; M. C. Bandera, R. Miracco (eds.), *Morandi (1890-1964)*, Milan, Skira, 2009 ; N. Ireson, 'The pointillist and the past: three English views of Seurat' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 152, n. 1293, Manet and the Post-Impressionists: A centenary issue, December 2010, pp. 799-803; N. Rowley, "'Per vie tortuose o non ancora ricuperate": da Piero a Seurat, passando dall'École Des Beaux-Arts' in *Piero della Francesca. Indagine su un mito*, A. Paolucci, D. Benati, F. Dabell, F. Mazzocca, P. Refice, U. Tramonti (eds), Silvana Editoriale, Milan, 2016, pp. 307-313 ; Mazzocca, 2016 ; C. Elam, 'Roger Fry e l'amore per Piero della Francesca in Inghilterra. Cambridge, Bloomsbury e la Slade School' in Paolucci, Benati, Dabell, Mazzocca, Refice, Tramonti (eds), 2016, pp. 315-323

<sup>73</sup> Zimmermann, 1995, p. 269 ; Rowley, 2016, p. 308; Mazzocca, 2016, p. 52; Elam, 2016, p. 315 ; Calogero, 2016, p. 41

<sup>74</sup> Zimmermann, 1995, pp. 275, 293 ; Rowley, 2016, pp. 307-8. On the reception of Cézanne, Seurat and Piero della Francesca by Italian artists in the early 20th century, see Bardazzi F. (ed.), *Cézanne a Firenze*, Milan, Electa, 2007; Bandera, 2009; Mazzocca, 2016 ; Calogero 2016

<sup>75</sup> Boime, 1965, pp. 265-6 ; Zimmermann, 1995, pp. 296-7 ; Rowley, 2016, pp. 311-12



contacts included Charles Blanc, the director of the academy, and Eugene Müntz, the academy librarian. The former had commissioned life-size copies of the Arezzo frescoes for a short-lived museum of copies; they were eventually hung in the academy's chapel, where Seurat could have seen them.<sup>76</sup> The latter ordered and published the first black-and-white reproductions of the frescoes in France, which Seurat likely knew.<sup>77</sup> As mentioned above, Roger Fry and Roberto Longhi were possibly the first art critics to take up this poetic analogy between Seurat and Piero.<sup>78</sup> Clark elaborated on the comparison, and this chapter will attempt to understand the reasons behind his strong personal interest in this analogy, which ultimately points to an intersection between Clark's collecting and his work as an art historian.<sup>79</sup>

When dealing with this particular aspect of art historiography, i.e. the *paragone* between Seurat and Piero, most scholars refer to Clark's texts *Landscape into Art* (1949) and "*Une Baignade*" by Seurat (1957).<sup>80</sup> Instead, this chapter will examine an earlier unpublished text, which was re-worked multiple times and constituted the basis for the above-mentioned publications, in which whole sentences and paragraphs were re-used. This source is a composite series of typewritten and handwritten documents, held at Tate Archive, which Clark prepared for a series of three lectures he was invited to give at the Royal Institution in London.<sup>81</sup> Clark planned to speak on the theme of Science and Art, apt for the hosting institution, and decided to highlight certain painters in

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<sup>76</sup> Boime, p. 271 ; Zimmermann, 1995, pp. 296-7 ; Rowley, 2016, pp. 311-12

<sup>77</sup> Boime, p. 271 ; Zimmermann, 1995, pp. 296-7 ; Rowley, 2016, pp. 311-12

<sup>78</sup> Both of them owe also to Bernard Berenson, who claimed his primacy in the reevaluation of Piero for his common classicism with artists like Cézanne in his monograph on Piero della Francesca. See Calogero, 2016.

<sup>79</sup> Rowley, 2016, p. 309, n. 24. Among the British, also Ben Nicolson developed an interest for Seurat and Piero, influenced by Longhi as seen in Chapter Five, as in B. Nicolson 'Seurat's 'La Baignade' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 79, 1941, pp. 39-46. See Boime, 1965, p. 265 ; C. Elam, 'Benedict Nicolson: Becoming an Art Historian in the 1930s' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 146, n. 1211, 2004, pp. 76-87, n. 107; Ireson, 2010, p. 803, n. 38

<sup>80</sup> Clark, 1949 ; K. Clark, 'Six Great Pictures: 5. "Une Baignade" by Seurat' in *The Sunday Times*, 16JUN1957. Boime, 1965, p. 266 ; Zimmermann, 1995, p. 296 ; Rowley, 2016, p. 309;. ; Ireson, 2010, p. 801

<sup>81</sup> K. Clark, *Three scientific painters*, TGA 8812.2.2.908.

whose art science played a fundamental role.<sup>82</sup> Clearly taking inspiration from Fry and Longhi, he decided to focus on Paolo Uccello, Piero della Francesca, and Georges Seurat, ‘three scientific painters’.<sup>83</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, only the text of the Seurat lecture will be examined, which was first drafted in 1947 and delivered at the Royal Institution in 1948 (references to the other two lectures, the one on Uccello and on Piero, will be made when necessary).<sup>84</sup> In 1949, Clark re-worked the Seurat paper for a lecture given at Cambridge, adding hand-written edits to the typescript.<sup>85</sup>

At the beginning of the lecture, Clark claims that Seurat ‘wished to give impressionist vision the same kind of precise and logical order which is discoverable in the great classic landscape painters.’<sup>86</sup> Those who associate Seurat with paintings such as the *Bathers at Asnières* or *La Grand Jatte*, the first ones to enter public collections in the English-speaking world, might not immediately think of the master as a landscape painter. Yet for Clark, who

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<sup>82</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908

<sup>83</sup> K. Clark, ‘*Three Scientific Painters*’, 1947- 48. The three lectures focus respectively on Paolo Uccello (TGA 88212.2.2.1060), Piero della Francesca (TGA 8812.2.2.753), and Seurat (TGA 8812.2.2.908). Clark had already written about Paolo Uccello, mentioning him in *Landscape Into Art* (1949), where he is put in relation with Seurat. Both the National Gallery and the Ashmolean, where Clark worked, had some Uccello paintings, which had been donated in the 1850s. The *Hunt in the Forest* (WA1850.31) was mentioned in *Landscape into Art* for its background. Moreover, in 1949, Clark assisted the National Gallery of Victoria with the purchase of a work by Uccello, through the Feldon Bequest. While scholars in Italy were publishing monographs on the painter (Mary Pittaluga in 1946), John Pope-Hennessy published one in English in 1950, accompanied by a foreword of Clark. And in Clark's *The Art of Humanism* (1983) a whole chapter is dedicated to the artist. With regards to Piero della Francesca, as already mentioned, Clark published an article in the *Burlington Magazine* in 1947, adding a piece in the Lisbon Museum to an altarpiece recently reconstructed by Millard Meiss. And in 1951 he published his own monograph on Piero (K. Clark, *Piero della Francesca*, London, Phaidon, 1951). In 1949 Longhi's re-edition of his monograph on Piero was published in English, and in 1950 Berenson published his monograph too. Moreover, in 1949, Adrian Stokes published his ‘*Art and Science. A study of Alberti, Piero della Francesca and Giorgione*’.

<sup>84</sup> The lecture was delivered at the Royal institution, 10NOV1948 and later at Cambridge, 02DEC1949. However, a first draft was used in 1947 for another lecture in December 1947 at the Central School of Art. The chronology was deducted from correspondence in the Tate archive.

<sup>85</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908 Cambridge 02DEC1949, with a note ‘first given R.R. 10NOV1948. Quotes from the text will be taken from this version. In the same archive folder, there exists a further version, given at Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1952. The contents are very similar.

<sup>86</sup> Clark, 1947, TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 2

owned two landscape paintings by Seurat, this vision of the artist came logically, especially taking into consideration that at the time when he was writing this lecture, he was working extensively on the topic of landscape as a subject in art, eventually resulting in his Slade lectures at Oxford.<sup>87</sup> As indicated above, the content of the two lecture series overlaps at times. Thus, the last chapter of *Landscape into Art* is dedicated to Seurat and Cézanne, under the title of *The Return to Order*.<sup>88</sup>

Clark's Seurat lecture, meanwhile, opens with a brief overview of landscape painting, referring to such artists as Poussin, Turner, Monet, Pissarro, and finally, Seurat.<sup>89</sup> The lecture explains some basic principles of landscape composition, of which Poussin was declared to be the 'supreme master', to lay the basis for Clark's discourse on Seurat.<sup>90</sup> According to Clark, Poussin 'fit into his scaffolding of horizontals and verticals a subsidiary scheme of diagonals which will lead the eye smoothly and rhythmically back into the distance', defined by Clark as 'an essential of landscape'.<sup>91</sup> As an aside, it should be noted that the pairing of Poussin and Seurat was also explored, at the same time, by another British art historian and a collector of Poussin, to whom Clark was close: Anthony Blunt.<sup>92</sup> In 1949, the theme chosen for the Royal Academy's winter exhibition was *Landscape in French Art, 1550-1900*, showcasing nine Seurats, exhibited in the last room, almost following Clark's Oxford lectures to the letter.<sup>93</sup> Reviewing the show, Blunt wrote that 'Cezanne and Seurat were reimposing the Cartesian orderliness of Poussin.'<sup>94</sup> Given the connection

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<sup>87</sup> K. Clark, *Landscape into Art*, London, J. Murray, 1949

<sup>88</sup> Clark, 1949, p. 112

<sup>89</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 2

<sup>90</sup> GA 8812.2.2.908, p. 2

<sup>91</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 4

<sup>92</sup> Ireson, 2010, p. 803 ; on Blunt see A. Chastel, 'Anthony Blunt, Art Historian (1907-1983)' in *The Burlington Magazine* , vol. 125, n. 966, 1983, pp. 546-49

<sup>93</sup> In the 1949 Cambridge version of the Seurat lecture, which, Clark stated that this lecture 'may be of use when you come to visit the exhibition of French landscape painting in Burlington House.', referring to an exhibition on display December 1949-March 1950 at the RA. Catalogue of an exhibition of landscape in French art, 1550-1900, London, Royal Academy of arts, 1949. TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 2

<sup>94</sup> As reported in Ireson, 2010, p. 803

between Blunt and Clark, and given the dates of the exhibition and Clark's lectures cited above, it would seem that Blunt's claim is indebted to his exchanges with Clark, rather than being a legacy of Roger Fry's, as suggested by Ireson.<sup>95</sup> Be that as it may, Blunt was to develop these ideas further in the 1960s.<sup>96</sup>

In his Seurat lecture, once he had established the essential principles of landscape painting, Clark moved on to explain that, with the advent of Impressionism, but preceded by Constable and Turner, the composition tool that conveyed distance in landscapes was to face a problem at the turn of the 20th century - that of the 'predominance of colour over form, sensation over idea', which were instead synthesised by Seurat.<sup>97</sup> Clark then continues to explore Seurat's *oeuvre*, starting precisely with the painter's early landscapes. Commenting upon their composition, he once again stressed the 'classical' element in Seurat's paintings, inserting a reference to Japanese art:

Characteristic is the way he makes his design by the continual interplay of light on dark, dark on light; and the way in which he at first leads us in with a powerful, swinging diagonal, then a diminished diagonal, and so up to the final tranquillity of these horizontals [...] typical of Seurat's strange, personal sense of proportion that he should put the horizon right at the top of the canvas, so that only a strip of sky is visible. [...] those very wide intervals of proportion going down to a tenth or even a sixteenth, may perhaps be inspired by Japanese art, though they are also to be found in such a classical designer as Bramantino.<sup>98</sup>

Clark chose to illustrate his interpretation of Seurat as a landscape painter by presenting a slide of *Le Bec du Hoc*, accompanied by the following text:

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<sup>95</sup> Ireson, 2010, p. 803

<sup>96</sup> As to be found for instance in Blunt's the preface of a re-edition of Fry's text of 1926, stating that if 'it is true that Seurat produced some of the most perfectly satisfying formal designs since Piero della Francesca [...] it is also true, and this is a fact Fry admits but of which he minimizes the importance - that his pictures represent in vivid form the life of the middle classes of Paris and its suburbs'. A. Blunt, 'Preface', in Seurat, R. Fry, London, 1965, p. 7; Ireson, 2010, p. 803

<sup>97</sup> Clark, TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 5

<sup>98</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 10

The landscape of the period which takes us furthest from Impressionism is the *Bec du Hoc*. It is a typical Monet subject of cliff and sea, but the Monet scheme of composition is, so to say, inverted. Instead of Monet's fluency, which partly accounts for the air of naturalness in his picture, Seurat has achieved a magnificent construction of the kind usually called monumental, although monuments do not as a rule display quite such exuberant vitality. Once more we may notice the high horizon - the relation of the cliff to the horizon line is particularly cunning - and the careful placing of each boat and bird.<sup>99</sup>

This is probably the most direct account available of Clark's thoughts on one of his own Seurats. It is also another significant example of the habit of scholars-collectors to reproduce works from their personal collections to accompany lectures or scientific publications. In these instances, a scholar's collection can be indeed seen as a tool and inspiration for their scholarly work, in the same way as books and photographs.

*Le Bec du Hoc*, however, did not play a central role in the remainder of the Seurat lecture. In *Landscape into Painting* Clark only included the general sentence that, in the lecture, had followed the description of his own painting: 'The coast scenes which Seurat painted at Grandcamp and Honfleur between 1884 and 1886 show a perfect point of balance between his need for intellectual order and his poetic sensibility.'<sup>100</sup>

In the lecture, Clark explains the scientific nature of Seurat's practice, as explored in works such as *Le Bec du Hoc*, by drawing comparisons with Italian Renaissance art:

They [the seascapes] are consciously based on classical rules of composition and they employ a technique which is scientific [...] Science is still in the background; and we may be tempted to wish that Seurat had been content to rest at this point of perfection. But true perfection is achieved only by those who are prepared to destroy it. It is a by-product of greatness. And

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<sup>99</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, pp. 10-11

<sup>100</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 11

Seurat's ambitions were very great indeed. He wished not only to tidy up impressionists, but to employ its luminous technique and contemporary vision in the creation of pictures which should have the scale and timelessness of Renaissance frescoes. [...] The so-called monumentality quality which we saw in the *Bec du Hoc* was also extended to figures, as we can see from his charcoal drawings.<sup>101</sup>

Evidently, Clark saw in *Le Bec du Hoc* a direct example of those principles he considered Seurat to have in common with Quattrocento art.

Scholars often see Clark's comparisons of modern and Renaissance art as mere borrowings from Berenson, Fry and Longhi.<sup>102</sup> The lecture makes it clear, however, that Clark engaged seriously with the issue.<sup>103</sup> For instance, while attempting to clarify the problems Seurat encountered in taking inspiration from Italian art, he embarked upon an in-depth art-historical analysis:

First there was the difficulty of style: the frescoes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were based on the unquestioning acceptance of a conceptual and linear style. [*then*] There was the difficulty of scale: a way of painting evolved from the sketch, and so suitable for small impressions, had to be used to cover a large surface without trickery. And there was the difficulty of vision: ordinary, every day people had somehow to be given the air of permanence, without looking self-conscious or stuffed, like the figures in official art.<sup>104</sup>

Clark then explains that Seurat:

set about meeting these difficulties in his usual logical manner. He had always felt a sympathy for fifteenth century painting, and he now made a

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<sup>101</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, pp. 11-12

<sup>102</sup> Elam, 2004 ; Ireson, 2020 ; Rowley, 2016

<sup>103</sup> As reported by Boime, Müntz wrote that Piero 'is at the same time an impressionist and a mathematician', Boime, 1965, p. 271. If for Berenson, the common ground was 'tactile values', and for Longhi it was the synthesis between form and colour through perspective, for Clark it is precisely the mathematics and scientific attitude that is shared by Seurat and artists such as Piero della Francesca and Paolo Uccello. This idea was later picked up by André Chastel. Zimmermann, 1995, p. 297.

<sup>104</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 12

further study of its principles. Although he felt no record of the fact - for he was the most secretive of men. There is no doubt that he was particularly influenced by Piero della Francesca.<sup>105</sup>

Although this notion derives directly from Fry's and Longhi's work, Clark gave it a Berensonian twist by speaking of the painter's supposed 'artistic temperament'.<sup>106</sup>

Elaborating on Longhi's arguments, Clark proceeds by providing an historical explanation of the affinity between the two artists, taking the Tate's *Bathers at Asnières* as his example:<sup>107</sup>

This [*that Seurat was influenced by Piero*] is obvious to anyone who looks at the Baignade, but it has long been a puzzle how Seurat, who had never been to Italy, was familiar with the work of an artist who, as I said last week, was practically unknown in the nineteenth century. The answer is that a very intelligent critic of art, Charles Blanc, the then director of the Beaux-Arts, had heard of Piero through his studies of perspective, in 1814, and had sent a painter named Loyal to make copies of the two of the frescoes at Arezzo. They were placed in the chapel of the Beaux-Arts, where Seurat saw them every day, both as a student and later when he went, as was his practice, to work in the library.<sup>108</sup>

Longhi had first put this notion of how Seurat might have known the work of Piero forward in 1927, and developed it further in his seminal monograph on Piero in 1946 (typically, in a lengthy footnote).<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 12

<sup>106</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 12. In the preface to his monograph on Piero of 1950, Berenson claims his primacy in recognising Piero della Francesca importance and his affinity with the Classicism of Cézanne, which was influenced by Denis. See Calogero, 2016, pp. 39-41. On Fry and Piero, see Elam, 2016

<sup>107</sup> As Rowley has remarked, Fry was the first to see Piero's reminiscences in the Baignade, whereas Longhi was at first looking at the Grand Jatte, Rowley, 2016, p. 308

<sup>108</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, pp. 12-13

<sup>109</sup> On the impact of the monograph, see M.M. Lamberti, M. Fagiolo dell'Arco (eds.) *Piero della Francesca e il Novecento. Prospettiva, spazio, luce, geometria, pittura murale, tonalismo 1920/38*, Venice, Electa, 1991



His contacts with Longhi aside, Clark also took an active interest in Piero della Francesca at this time. In 1946, whilst in Lisbon because of Calouste Gulbenkian, he made the significant discovery of a new panel by Piero.<sup>110</sup> The *Museo de Arte Antigua* in Lisbon had acquired a panel painting picturing a saint, attributed to 'school of Cima' in 1936.<sup>111</sup> Clark connected this work with Millard Meiss's 1941 reconstruction of a dismantled altarpiece by Piero, commissioned for the church of St Augustine in Borgo San Sepolcro, from which the Frick Collection had just acquired a panel depicting *St John the Evangelist*. The other known pieces of the polyptych were in the Poldi Pezzoli Museum in Milan (*St Nicholas of Tolentino*) and in the National Gallery in London (*St Michael*).<sup>112</sup> Meiss, in his reconstruction, had conjectured that there was yet one more panel to discover, depicting St Augustine; Clark recognised that the Lisbon saint was indeed the missing St Augustine.<sup>113</sup>

The discovery took place in the immediate aftermath of World War II, at a time when the circulation of scientific publications was slow. So, to avoid any doubt, as attested by a letter dated late January 1946, Clark informed the Frick staff of his discovery, requesting them to send pictures of their recent acquisition and any known publication about it, for he was 'anxious to know if it is mentioned in the documents'.<sup>114</sup> By December 1946, less than a year later, Clark had already written an article, which would be published in *The Burlington Magazine* in August 1947.<sup>115</sup> Clark's article came to the attention of Roberto Longhi, who, in his turn, was about to publish a new edition of his monograph on Piero della Francesca. The occasion provided an important

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<sup>110</sup> TGA8812.1.2.2328, first published by Clark in 1947. See K. Clark, 'Piero Della Francesca's St. Augustine Altarpiece' in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, vol. 89, n. 533, Aug 1947, pp. 204-209. See also G. C. Sciolla, 'Kenneth Clark, Bernard Berenson e Roberto Longhi, contrappunti per Piero della Francesca', in *Arte Documento*, n. 32, 2016, pp. 60-69 (where the collection of the *Museo de Arte Antigua* is mistaken for the Gulbenkian collection).

<sup>111</sup> Clark, 1947, pp. 204-209

<sup>112</sup> Clark, 1947, pp. 204-209

<sup>113</sup> Clark, 1947, pp. 204-209

<sup>114</sup> Letter from K. Clark to Frick Reference Library, 25FEB1946, TGA 8812.1.2.2324

<sup>115</sup> Letter from K. Clark to Helen Frick, 14DEC1946 TGA8812.1.2.2328

point of contact between the two art historians, which may have led to Clark's subsequent involvement in the 1948 Venice *Biennale* discussed above.

In 1947, reading of Clark's discovery, Longhi decided to contact Clark directly, sending him a letter which was subsequently published in *The Burlington Magazine*, through the agency of Clark, who contacted the editor Ben Nicolson.<sup>116</sup> In the letter, published in English translation, Longhi explained that he was not aware of Meiss's 1941 article on the St Augustine polyptych, and claimed that he himself had reached the same conclusions independently.<sup>117</sup> Longhi concluded by saying that his hypothesis 'goes even further than Meiss', for he had also identified the *predella* panels in the Lehman, Liechtenstein, and Rockefeller Collections.<sup>118</sup>

As indicated above, it is difficult to pinpoint when Longhi and Clark first began a communication. The Royal Academy exhibition on Italian Art in 1930, which Longhi visited (see Chapter 5) is a possible contact point. In 1939, Clark was in touch with Longhi about a matter of attribution involving a painting that Clark was suggesting to Calouste Gulbenkian. In a letter addressed to the latter, dated 26 July 1939, Clark wrote: 'Another Italian critic for whom I have a great admiration is Roberto Longhi, and I had hoped he was coming to London for the Conference, but unfortunately the Italian Government refused to grant him a passport.'<sup>119</sup> In those years, Ben Nicolson, still Clark's protégé at the National Gallery, also felt an admiration for Longhi, sharing the Italian critic's interest in 'the Ferrarese, [...] Piero, and Seurat', and later in Caravaggism, as already seen in Chapter Five.<sup>120</sup> As Caroline Elam has observed:

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<sup>116</sup> Letter from R. Longhi to K. Clark, 05AUG1947, TGA 8812.1.2.1704. K. Clark, R. Longhi and M. Meiss, 'Piero della Francesca's St. Augustine Altarpiece' in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, vol. 89, n. 535, October 1947, pp. 285-286 ; Letter from K. Clark to B. Nicolson, 16AUG1947, TGA 8812.1.2.1705

<sup>117</sup> Longhi, 1947, TGA 8812.1.2.1704

<sup>118</sup> Longhi's letter was when followed in the following issue by another letter from Meiss to Clark, re-his discovery, with a further reply by Clark. Clark, Longhi and Meiss, 1947

<sup>119</sup> Letter from 26JUL1939 K. Clark to C. Gulbenkian, Museum Calouste Gulbenkian Archive

<sup>120</sup> Elam, 2004, p. 87

In the first three years at the Burlington, Ben published short reviews of the second edition of Longhi's book on Piero della Francesca (drawing attention to the added paragraph on the copies of the Arezzo frescos at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and their potential importance for Seurat) as well as of a picture book on Piero's frescos with an introduction by Longhi [...] He also commissioned Longhi to write an important review of the Bellini exhibition in 1949.<sup>121</sup>

Although Nicolson was his own person, it is hard to imagine that the reviews that Caroline Elam refers to do not owe their existence at least in part to Clark.<sup>122</sup> The invitation to Longhi to review the 1949 Bellini exhibition in particular was contemporaneous with a moment of close interaction between Clark and Longhi in the context of the 1948 Biennale. It almost seems as if Clark was seeking to thank Longhi for having involved him in the Biennale exhibition.

Returning to Clark's lecture on Seurat, following the comparison with Piero, Clark turns his attention to drawings, providing another link with his collection. Around this time, there was in general a growing interest in Seurat's drawings, as attested by a publication by Seligman, *The drawings of Georges Seurat* from 1947.<sup>123</sup> In April 1948, Clark in fact bought a drawing by Seurat for £ 350 from a dealer named 'Calmann'.<sup>124</sup> Clark saw in Seurat's drawing style another connection to Renaissance art, in particular with Paolo Uccello<sup>125</sup>:

The way in which Seurat has simplified his drawing, and raised it to the ideal condition of classic art, is very impressive [...] I need not to emphasise how close is the general impression to Piero [...] but already we see a curiosity of shape which points in another direction [...] by sheer application Seurat has overcome all, or nearly all those difficulties I

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<sup>121</sup> Elam, 2004, n. 107

<sup>122</sup> To learn more about Nicolson and Seurat, see Elam, 2004, p.87

<sup>123</sup> G. Seligman, *The drawings of Georges Seurat*, New York, Curt Valentin, 1947

<sup>124</sup> K. Clark to H. M. Calmann, 06APR1948, TGA8812.1.2.1164

<sup>125</sup> Among Italian artists and critics of the early 20th century such as Carlo Martelli and Carlo Carrà, Paolo Uccello was already praised as inspiration for their art. Zimmermann, 1995, p. 258, n. 30. Also for Longhi, Uccello was one of the initiators of that 'sintesi prospettica di forma e colore'. Calogero, 2016, p. 41

enumerated earlier. [...] Seurat preserved and even enhanced the original sensation from which the composition took its point of departure [...] within the circle of nineteenth century aesthetics. Such a notion would have been incomprehensible to Uccello, or to any of the great Florentines. To them, it would have seemed impossible to base a durable, architectural design on what Cezanne called '*ma petite sensation devant la nature*'.<sup>126</sup>

Interestingly, at this point, Clark also showed himself aware that the parallel between Seurat and the Renaissance had its limits.

The final part of Clark's lecture is concerned with the theme the three artists of his lecture series had in common: science. 'After finishing the *Baignaie* [Seurat] decided that his compositions must be based on *certezze*: he therefore turned to science. That which Signac referred to as method in the *Baignaie*, became science in the *Grande Jatte*'.<sup>127</sup> Explaining that, as a scientific painter, Seurat was primarily concerned with colour and light, Clark contextualises his work within the scientific discoveries of Seurat's time, including Chevreul's famous *La Loi du contrast simultane des couleurs*, showing a thorough understanding of Seurat's sources, just as he would do with a Quattrocento artists.<sup>128</sup> At this point, the parallel drawn between Seurat, Paolo Uccello, and Piero della Francesca comes to the foreground again:

You will have already anticipated how closely pointillism is connected with Brunellesco's problems of the sky [...] In the first lecture I compared this [the Grand Jatte] with Uccello [...] the only painter with a comparable interest in geometric shape [...] and there is no doubt that Seurat had given deep study to the battle piece in the Louvre [...] the difference between the *Bagaine* and the *Grande Jatte* is practically the difference between Piero and Uccello. Piero, as we saw, was an atmospheric painter. The unity of his compositions was very largely dependent on tone. Uccello's unity is entirely dependent on design. [...] Now, a painter in the age of light could assimilate the first influence, but not the second.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Clark, 1047-8, TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 14

<sup>127</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 15

<sup>128</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, pp. 16-7

<sup>129</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, pp. 18, 20

Following this analysis, Clark's argument becomes subjective, in the tradition of Pater, when he notes how despite 'Seurat's great ingenuity in the discovery of interesting shapes', his work resulted in a feeling of uneasiness.<sup>130</sup> Clark blamed this on the artist's intellectual approach to colour, which was based upon a pseudo-scientific idea, rather than on perception. The result, as Clark explained, was as harmonic in theory, as it was unpleasant to the eyes, just like Schonberg's music to the ears.<sup>131</sup>

In a similar way, Clark noted, Vasari had complained about Uccello's excessive research, which produced a 'dry style, full of profiles'.<sup>132</sup> Drawing upon these considerations, Clark analyses a late work of Seurat, *Le Cirque*, a 'scientifically gay picture, based on the arrangement of upward painting forms which he believed to be automatically productive of gaiety'.<sup>133</sup> And in a tone that resembles the Berenson of the Giotto chapter in *The Florentine Painters*, he adds:

No doubt there are other symbols to which he attributed a direct psychological action on one's vasomotor system. But I cannot say any of these stimuli produce the proper reactions in me [...] [instead] It reminds me of a twelfth century Tuscan church, with bands of black and white marble [...] It seems to me the last, surprising example of that Tuscan tradition from which in fact Uccello derived his sense of design.<sup>134</sup>

Going beyond Longhi's and Fry's considerations on the affinities between Seurat and the *Quattrocento*, Clark, however superficially, seeks to explain 'why from the point of view of art history Seurat's attempt to apply science to painting was less successful than that of Uccello and Piero della Francesca.'<sup>135</sup> Among other things, he argues that:

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<sup>130</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 22

<sup>131</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 22

<sup>132</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 28

<sup>133</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 32

<sup>134</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, pp. 32-3

<sup>135</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 33

The science of the *quattrocento* was extremely simple. It presented a consistent world. It was thus for the artist a means of reducing and ordering the data of sensory perception. By Seurat's time it had become extremely complex. Far from limiting the data of perception it had enormously extended them.<sup>136</sup>

This, according to Clark, presented Seurat with a dilemma:

Of the two religions of the nineteenth century, Wordsworthian nature and science, Seurat had deliberately chosen the latter, although, as we saw, his feelings had inclined him to the first. It was a mistake. For science had destroyed our faith in the validity of the image, and left us nothing in its place except the photograph. [...] in the end it is among the symbolists that Seurat must be placed [...] Like the saint of symbolism [...] Mallarmé, he had killed within himself the spontaneity of impression.<sup>137</sup>

Seurat, in Clark's eyes, had opted for science, earning himself the label of a scientific impressionist as opposed to Manet's romantic impressionism, as their colleague and mutual friend Pissarro first observed.<sup>138</sup> Despite Clark's aesthetic condemnation, he clearly owned two paintings that he felt embodied the artist's choice for science: 'Seurat, [...] like Cézanne [...] saw in geometry the necessary solidification of the Impressionist theory ; as apparent even in the early *Sous-Bois*' and 'One of the most interesting examples of this (contraste simultané;) was in *Le Bec de Hoc à Grandcamp* (Coll. Kocherthaler) where the deep purple colouring of the rock face, contrasted with the lighter colours as it juts out into the deep, green sea, made it one of the most striking and dramatic works exhibited'.<sup>139</sup>

*Le Bec du Hoc* must have been particularly dear to Clark, given the prominent place reserved for the canvas in the room photographed at Portland Place (Fig. 3). Hung above the chimney in the dining room, it co-existed with

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<sup>136</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 34

<sup>137</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 34

<sup>138</sup> TGA 8812.2.2.908, p. 32?

<sup>139</sup> Van Puyvelde and Lord, 1935, pp. 83

other works from different time periods. As discussed in Chapter 1, the display style of the Clark collection, persistent in his successive homes at Upper Terrace House and Saltwood Castle, is perhaps another instance of the ‘anachronistic’ analogies that also pervade both Clark’s writings. As Clark himself stated in 1947:

It has not proved at all difficult to hang Victor Pasmore with Seurat and the impressionists, or Henry Moore’s drawings with those of the High Renaissance. Sutherland, Piper, Hartrick, Hennell, Paul Nash, Mary Kessell and Colquhoun, to name only a few, seem to have settled down in harmony among Palmers, Gainsboroughs, Sieneese primitives and Coptic textiles.<sup>140</sup>

Like many other favourites in Clark’s collection, Seurat’s *Le Bec du Hoc* had to be sold during the 1950s to sustain the family living at Saltwood Castle. Having been approached more than once, Clark eventually gave in to the request of the Marlborough Art Gallery to buy the the canvas in 1952. It was sold almost immediately on to Tate Britain for £15,000, about five times more than Clark had paid for it.<sup>141</sup> At least, Clark had the consolation of keeping *Sous Bois*, which was, according to John Walker, his favourite of the two paintings.<sup>142</sup> In 1962, in response to a request to borrow *Sous Bois* for an exhibition on the Barbizon School, Clark replied:

I am very glad to know that you are having a first class exhibition of Barbizon painting - it is long overdue. Alas, I cannot agree to lend my Seurat, because it is the only important French painting that I have been able to keep, and I cannot bring myself to part with it now. I am sorry, as I see how well it would fit in with the scheme of your exhibition.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Clark K., ‘An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art’ in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947, pp. 26-29, p. 28

<sup>141</sup> Stourton, 2016, p. 242 ; Letter from R. Alley to K. Clark, 29MAY1953 TGA 8812.1.2.6302

<sup>142</sup> Walker, 1974, p. 288

<sup>143</sup> Letter from K. Clark to Mr Herbert, 05MAR62, TGA 8812.1.4.104



It remained indeed in the Clark collection until the final auction, when it was sold to the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1985.<sup>144</sup>

This chapter has shown how for Kenneth Clark, an interest in modern art was connected integrally with his study of the Renaissance. Like other art historians of his day, Clark drew parallels between Renaissance art and works by recent artists. These parallels found expression both in his research and writing and in his collecting. It is important to note that Clark's acquisition of works by a late nineteenth-century painter such as Seurat was not merely an aesthetic preference or a collector's whim, but was rooted in a particular art-historical vision that was prevalent at the time. Once again, it is evident that looking at art historians' collections offers a new perspective on the history of art, and of art criticism.

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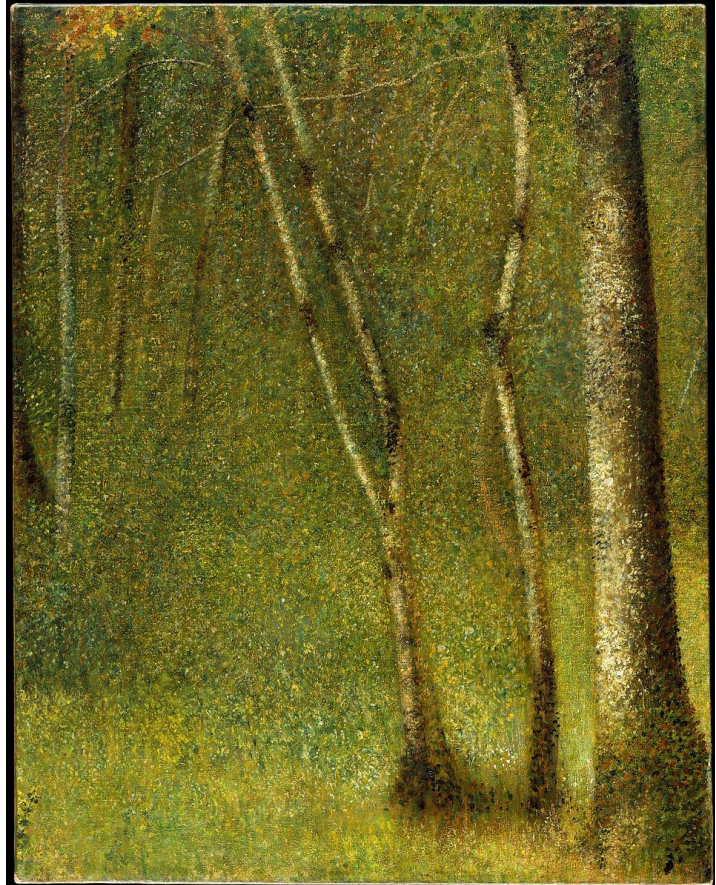
<sup>144</sup> MET, cat. n. 1985.237

# Chapter 6 - Illustrations



◀ Fig.1: George Seurat, *Le Bec du Hoc, Grandcamp*, 1885, Oil on Canvas, frame: 83.9 × 99.8 × 6.5 cm, London, Tate Britain, on loan to The National Gallery

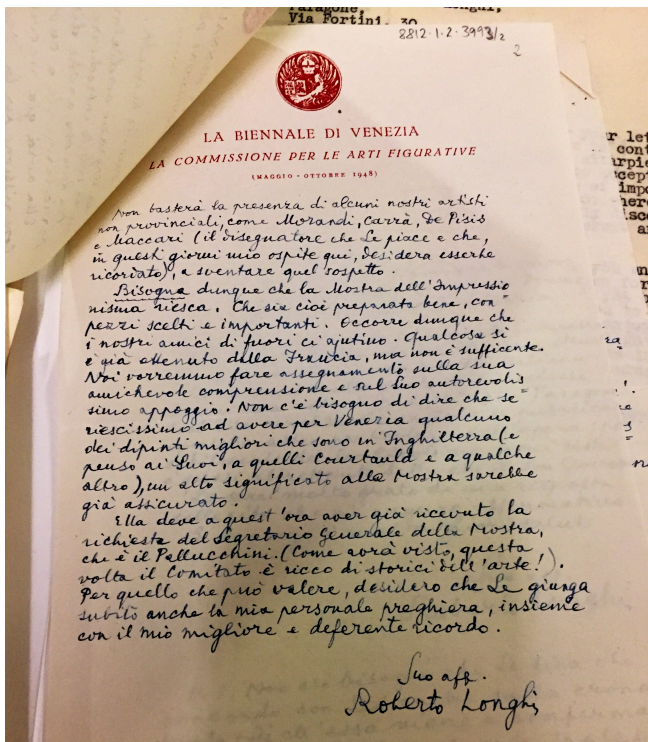
Fig.2: George Seurat, *The Forest at Pontaubert, Sous Bois*, 1881, Oil on canvas, 79.1 x 62.5 cm, New York, The Metropolitan Museum







▲  
 Fig.3: Kenneth Clark's dining room at 30 Portland Place in 1938, with curtains designed by Duncan Grant, and George Seurat's *Le Bec du Hoc, Grandcamp* above the chimneypiece. Photograph by Alfred Cracknell, © RIBA



◀ Fig. 4: Letter from Roberto Longhi to Kenneth Clark dated 14NOV1947, written in Italian on Biennale Headed paper, but sent from // Tasso, RL to KC, 14NOV1947, TGA8812.1.2.3993



Seurat: *Le bec du Hoc à Grandcamp* (1885) (Londra, Collezione di Sir Kenneth Clark)

certo uno dei suoi rari momenti di emozione pittorica prima della partenza per Tahiti, al *Ritratto di Miss Bambridge*, a *Nave nave mahana*, a *Vairumati*, a *Tahiti*, tra i migliori e più equilibrati raggiungimenti dei vari passaggi nelle isole oceaniche. Una scelta ampia e selezionata conforta la nostra ammirazione per il talento prodigioso di Toulouse-Lautrec, la cui opera acce, incisiva, dolorosa, reagì isolatamente, ma in profondità, all'impressionismo. Come rileva Wilhelm Uhde, ricchezza inesauribile dell'arte di Toulouse-Lautrec furono i valori d'espressione e di movimento: *Il ritratto del signor Wagner*, *La donna tatuata*, *La Donna seduta su di un divano*, *Al Caffè*, *il Ritratto di Manzi* sono esempi intensissimi, tra quelli presenti a Venezia, della potenza creativa di questo spietato testimone della sua epoca. L'importanza assunta da Seurat, fuori di ogni programmatico scientismo «pointilliste», nel superamento dell'impressionismo, in una nuova razionale ricostruzione delle forme con rigore poetico, è appena accennata dal vibrante, ispirato paesaggio marino *Le bec du Hoc à Grandcamp*.

Attilio Podestà

◀ Fig.5: Half-page Illustration of *Le bec du Hoc à Grandcamp* in Podestà A., 'Gli Impressionisti' in *Emporium*, vol. CVIII, n. 643-644, 1948, p. 34

# Conclusion

This thesis offers the first systematic investigation of the phenomenon of art collecting among art historians. It does so using three main case studies from the early-to-middle twentieth century: the collections of Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi, and Kenneth Clark, which can be regarded as indicative of broader trends. Examining how art historians collect and engage with their collections, the central proposition of the thesis is that art historians' collections should be seen as a distinctive category within the wider field of art collecting.<sup>1</sup>

The history of art collecting in the 20th century has been researched extensively. Some art historians' collections are included in surveys of private collections, such as Pierre Cabanne's *The Great Collectors* (1963), James Stourton's *Great Collectors of our Time: Art Collecting Since 1945* (2007), and *The British as Art Collectors: From the Tudors to the Present* (2014), where they are, however, merely described rather than analysed.<sup>2</sup> More analytic scholarship around the collecting of old masters in the 20th is continuously growing, and although some scholars have focused on specific types of collectors, the figure of the art historian collector is still neglected.<sup>3</sup> Northern American private collectors, whose collections shaped those of many public institutions, have been the subject of studies such as *The Melancholy of Masterpieces: Old Master Paintings in America*, edited by Gennari-Santori in 2003; and *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response:*

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of 'art historian' is explained and contextualised in the introduction. The idea of a category of collectors owes to scholarship on historic house museums and their collections, where scholars have attempted to classify historic house museums according to their content and history, distinguishing, for instance, artists' houses from those of writers, or from period style houses, as canonised by Rosanna Pavoni in R. Pavoni, 'Towards a definition and typology of historic house museums' in *Museum International*, vol. 53, 2001, pp. 16-21

<sup>2</sup> P. Cabanne, *The Great Collectors*, London, Cassell, 1963 ; J. Stourton, *Great Collectors of our Time: Art Collecting Since 1945*, London, Scala, 2007; J. Stourton, *The British as Art Collectors: From the Tudors to the Present*, London, Scala, 2014

<sup>3</sup> See the exhaustive assessment of old masters collecting as a field of study in S. Avery-Quash, B. Pezzini (eds.), *Old Masters Worldwide Markets, Movements and Museums, 1789–1939*, London, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021



*Reflections across the Pond* and *A Market for Merchant Princes. Collecting Italian Renaissance Paintings in America*, edited by Inge Reist in 2014 and 2015 respectively.<sup>4</sup> These studies discuss the role of agents and the dynamics of art collecting and taste making in the United States, whilst establishing the reasons behind the ‘new world’ collecting of works from the ‘old world’.

Among the types of collectors to have received special attention are artists. In 2016, the National Gallery in London dedicated an exhibition to the topic, *Painters' Paintings: from Freud to Van Dyck*, while the Getty Research Centre focused on drawings in their 2021 show *Artists as Collectors*.<sup>5</sup> Following the increasingly wide availability of archival resources such as stock books and correspondence, other scholars have investigated the collecting and selling strategies of dealers and the networks they operated in, e.g., Westgarth (2006 [PhD thesis published in 2017]), Warren and Turpin (2007), and Pezzini (2018).<sup>6</sup> And in 2009, Anne Higonnet studied a distinctive type of public collections, which she labelled ‘collection museums’, and their characteristics.<sup>7</sup> This thesis draws on the above-mentioned studies for insights and methodology, embracing their understanding of the dynamics of private and public collecting and of the wider discipline of art history as a network of individuals and

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<sup>4</sup> F. Gennari-Santori, *The Melancholy of Masterpieces: Old Master Paintings in America*, Milan, 2003; I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections across the Pond*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2014; I. Reist (ed.), *A Market for Merchant Princes. Collecting Italian Renaissance Paintings in America*, The Frick Collection, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> A. Robbins (ed.), *Painters' Paintings : from Freud to Van Dyck*, London, National Gallery Company, 2016 ; Getty Research Centre, *Artists as Collectors*, 2021, [https://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/artists\\_collectors/](https://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/artists_collectors/)

<sup>6</sup> M. Westgarth, *The Emergence of the Antique and Curiosity Dealer in Britain 1815-1850: the Commodification of Historical Objects*, Abingdon, Oxon, New York, Routledge, 2020; J. Warren, A. Turpin (eds.), *Auctions, Agents & Dealers: The Mechanisms of the Art Market 1660-1830*, Oxford, 2007; B. Pezzini, *Making a Market for Art: Agnews and the National Gallery, 1855-1928*, PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 2018. See also S. Bracken, A. Turpin (eds.), *Art Markets, Agents and Collectors: Collecting Strategies in Europe and the United States, 1550-1950*, New York, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021.

<sup>7</sup> As discussed in the introduction, these are private domestic collections that were created with the specific intention of becoming a museum open to the public, where the personal character of the collection and its display have been preserved. Higonnet’s study inspired this thesis’ objective to define and investigate the type of art historians’ collections. A. Higonnet, *A Museum of One’s Own, Private Collecting, Public Gift*, New York, Periscope Publishing, 2009

institutions which revolves around objects,<sup>8</sup> and it fills a distinctive gap by looking at art historians' art collections as another specific type with its own distinctive characteristics.

Existing scholarship on collections assembled by art historians mainly consists of collection catalogues, treating them as by-products of the art historians' research and as historical curiosities. Such is certainly the case with the existing literature on the collections of Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi, and Kenneth Clark, where individual essays allude to some relationships between objects and their collectors' work and interests, but generally in a factual manner without drawing general conclusions.<sup>9</sup> This thesis has sought to make a start in remedying this state of affairs by looking in-depth at the collections of these three major art historians. Although these professionals with a passion did not like to be seen as art collectors, this thesis has demonstrated that collecting was a substantial activity for them and that it was related to and interacted with their work.<sup>10</sup> As in a reference to Federico Zeri's art collection, art historians' collections are the equivalent of 'a laboratory where the connoisseur's unrivalled eye can practice on a daily basis'.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout this thesis, it is clear that objects accompanied and sometimes guided the collector's studies. Chapter 2, for example, showed how Berenson, after the purchase of a panel depicting a *Virgin and Child in a Landscape* in

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<sup>8</sup> This approach is mainly influenced by anthropological investigations such as A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986 ; Fiona Cheetham 'An actor-network perspective of collecting and collectables' in *Narrating Objects, Collecting Stories*, S. H. Dudley, A. J. Barnes, J. Binnie, J. Petrov, J. Walklate (eds.), London, Routledge, 2012. See also S. Byrne, A. Clarke, R. Harrison, R. Torrence (eds.), *Unpacking the Collection: Networks of Material and Social Agency in the Museum*, New York, Springer, 2011 and B. Pezzini, *Towards a dynamic theory of collecting? Agnew's and their networks in Manchester (1850-1890)*, paper presented at the CAA in Washington DC on 5 February 2016.

<sup>9</sup> See introduction for literature discussion.

<sup>10</sup> Objects rarely entered an art historian's art collection without a link to the collector's professional interest. If these collections speak to a personal taste, as for any other collector, it is also true that in parallel, they speak to their 'scholarly' taste.

<sup>11</sup> tr.: 'un'officina, un laboratorio dove sperimentare ogni giorno il suo impareggiabile occhio di conoscitore', in *Federico Zeri Collezionista Eccentrico*, <https://fondazionezeri.unibo.it/it/fondazione/federico-zeri/2021-anno-zeri/federico-zeri-collezionista-eccentrico-1>



1910, used it to support the creation of the fictive artistic personality known as the 'Master of the Castello Nativity', published in the catalogue of the Johnson collection in 1913.<sup>12</sup> Chapter 5 demonstrated how Longhi's purchase of a *St Francis Receiving the Stigmata* led to his re-attribution to Giovanni da Modena of a small panel formerly in the Aynard collection.<sup>13</sup> Owning a work of art could in theory lead to a lack of critical distance and perhaps be a temptation to capitalise on one's expertise. Yet, no trace of bias or indeed market manipulation has emerged among the case studies; art historians seem to take their own works as seriously as those owned by others. Chapter 2, for instance, showed how Berenson kept hesitating over the attribution to Lotto of one of his paintings, instead of proposing with authority a name that would have increased the value of his collection. Likewise, as revealed in Chapter 3, Clark found sources that proved his tondo portrait of Valerio Belli was by Raphael, but did not cash in on his discovery and kept the work in his collection until his death.

Moreover, this thesis has looked beyond the collections themselves, focusing on the *modus operandi* of art historians as collectors, their relationships with dealers and other agents of the art market, as well as with other known private collectors, professionals working for public collections, and other scholars, including hitherto unknown facets. These include the advising relationship between Clark and Gulbenkian and the dialogue between Clark and Longhi (Chapters 1, 3, 6). It has highlighted the agency of overlooked figures such as the dealer-restorer Publio Podio and the dealer Giuseppe Bellesi (Chapter 5). It has presented new visual resources that document 20th-century domestic collections, and brought to light information on the availability of objects on the market and their status as collectors' items at the time of acquisition (Chapter 1). Since the three collectors considered here were all connoisseurs, this thesis has also, implicitly, become a study of aspects of Connoisseurship in the 20th century. In this capacity, it has built on publications such as Locatelli's *Es sey das Sehen eine Kunst* (2014) and Kobi's *The limits of connoisseurship* (2017),

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<sup>12</sup> Strehlke C.B., Brüggem Israëls M. (eds.), *The Bernard and Mary Berenson collection of European paintings at I Tatti*, Milan, Officina Libraria, 2015, p. 403

<sup>13</sup> Gregori, 1980, cat. n. 31; Gregori, 2007, p. 80. The work will be exhibited in 1950, Longhi, 1950, pp. 9-10

and the seminar series 'Il mestiere del Conoscitore' promoted by the Fondazione Zeri (2017), as well as on more specific explorations of individual connoisseurs, including Berenson and Longhi, as analysed by Zambrano (2006) and Trotta (2006).<sup>14</sup> The thesis has documented thus far unknown instances of Berenson's, Longhi's, and Clark's practice of connoisseurship involving the formation of their own collections, rather than their contribution to the general art market, public collections or other private collections. For instance, using an unpublished archival resource, Chapter 3 showed Clark's own breakdown of the connoisseurship process as applied to his tondos of Valerio Belli and his son, attributed to Raphael and Antonio Fasolo, respectively.

Berenson, Longhi, and Clark all helped to form major art collections of others (private and public), but as this thesis shows, their own collections were different from these. An art historian's art collection is not simply another instance of an art collection, and its distinctive characteristics lie in the relationship with the collectors' profession, i.e., the 'professional' nature of the scholars' 'passion' for collecting. One aspect that sets them apart is that they do not revolve around pieces by established masters. Instead, they contain works that were undervalued at the time of collecting, even if they have entered the canon since, often as a result of the interest of the art historian collector. They are not immune from the randomness, the influence of external agents, and from fashions that characterise other collections, as investigated by Haskell.<sup>15</sup> Yet, they tend to have outspoken trends reflecting the scholar-collector's professional interests, other than their personal. Berenson, for instance, owned a strong contingent of Sienese paintings (Chapter 1), a school he sought to promote – as did others who engaged with the same material,

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<sup>14</sup> V. Locatelli, ' "Es sey das Sehen eine Kunst" Sull'arte della connoisseurship e i suoi strumenti' in *Kunstgeschichte*, 2014, [http:// www.kunstgeschichte-ejournal.net/365/](http://www.kunstgeschichte-ejournal.net/365/); V. Kobi (ed.), 'The limits of connoisseurship', in *Journal of Art Historiography*, n. 12, June 2017. See the introduction for a detailed literature review. On Berenson see A. Trotta, *Berenson e Lotto: problemi di metodo e di storia dell'arte*, Naples, La Città del Sole, 2006 ; Zambrano P., 'Bernard Berenson e l'Amico di Sandro' in *Amico di Sandro*, Zambrano P. (ed.), Milan, Electa, 2006; and on Longhi see A.M. Ambrosini Massari, A. Bacchi, D. Benati, A. Galli (eds.), *Il mestiere del conoscitore: Roberto Longhi*, Bologna, Fondazione Federico Zeri, 2017

<sup>15</sup> F. Haskell, *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France*, London, Phaidon, 1976

such as Frederik Mason Perkins.<sup>16</sup> Longhi's collection stood out for its Caravaggesque artists (Chapter 5), overlooked in his day but gaining in reputation due to Longhi's efforts – as did the collection of Benedict Nicolson, who had similar interests.<sup>17</sup>

Another common feature of art historians' collections is the relatively low budget at which they were assembled, compared to the collections of noblemen and captains of industry. Art historians simply did not have the means to buy everything they would have liked. For example, Yukio Yashiro, Berenson's Japanese pupil and Clark's friend, an expert in Botticelli, recalled in his *memoire* that he once had an opportunity to buy an unknown Botticelli, but he could not have afforded the amount asked for it, despite it being a time 'before the history of Italian painting had been exhaustively researched and put in order'.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, the art historian collector can have access to a currency unique to their profession. Berenson's panel by Giotto and Workshop, *The Entombment*, was bought from the dealer Steinmeyer and partly paid from Berenson's commission for work done for this dealer (Chapter 4). Also, the particular set of skills of the art historian collector, if necessary boosted by advice from acquaintances in their professional network, may help to secure advantageous deals, as in the case of 'sleepers' objects. In the days under discussion, the professional status and contacts of the art historian collector sometimes gave rise to situations that would now seem problematic, but were totally acceptable at a time when the boundaries between the various figures acting in the art world were still flexible, without the specific laws, best practices, and shared professional ethics awareness of today. For example, Kenneth Clark bought a Murillo from Agnew's that had been offered to the Melbourne National Gallery, and he had one of his Seurats cleaned by the London National Gallery restorer (Chapter 1, 6). A further distinctive feature of the art historian's art collection is a quirkiness that reflects the knowledge and varying interests of the collector. Berenson, Longhi, and Clark each made juxtapositions of old masters and modern works in their scholarship, and in the

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<sup>16</sup> Zeri F., *La Collezione Federico Mason Perkins*, Turin, Allemandi, 1988

<sup>17</sup> Dictionary of Art Historians, 'Nicolson, Ben', <https://arthistorians.info/nicolsonb>

<sup>18</sup> Y. Yashiro, autobiography extracts available at <https://yashiro.itatti.harvard.edu/10-i-miss-my-chance-purchase-work-botticelli>

case of Clark this was happening also in his collection. He displayed his paintings by Seurat and Cézanne alongside antiquities and Renaissance pieces, just like in a previously unpublished lecture (Chapter 6), he compared the work of Seurat to that of Piero della Francesca and Paolo Uccello (even citing one painting in his collection). Whereas Longhi used to display works by Morandi and Carrà alongside with the masters of the school of Bologna, and Berenson used to display Sienese and Oriental art together (Chapter 1).

Art historians' art collections tend to reflect, at least in part, specific art-historical ideas, and objects from the collections can at times be used, for instance through exhibition loans, to reinforce these ideas. Longhi sought to enhance the status of the Bolognese Trecento, and works from his collection featured in the 1950 exhibition on this school (Chapter 5). Berenson wrote about Giotto's 'tactile value' and his Giottesque paintings that featured in the 1937 Giotto exhibition in Florence can be seen as an illustration of this concept (Chapter 4). We find similar examples among other art historians. Denis Mahon, like Longhi, promoted the Bolognese Seicento, and relevant works from his collection, including by Guercino and Guido Reni, were lent to numerous exhibitions.

Other art collections often merely reflect art history as it was envisaged at the time when the collection was assembled, with objects showing the influence of the experts who advised them or of the dealers who sold them. In comparison, art historians' art collections are unique in that they were used to change art-historical narratives actively. As shown in this thesis, this happened mainly via three interrelated mechanisms. The first one is when art historian collectors write about works in their own collection, integrating them into the broader art-historical narrative. One example is Longhi's pivotal text of 1943 on Caravaggio and his followers, in which he systematically mentioned paintings from his own collection in the footnotes (Chapter 5). Another example, is when Berenson used objects to sustain attribution arguments, as in his catalogue of the Johnson collection of 1913 (Chapter 2). Or in the case of Clark, as mentioned above, he used his Raphael tondo to describe his connoisseurship process for the advantage of students, and illustrated his own Degas painting in his book *The Nude*. A second mechanism, already mentioned above, involves the

lending of works to exhibitions that they helped organise, and that were instrumental to the critical reaffirmation of artists, schools, and centuries, as in the case of Longhi lending his works to, respectively, the 1950 Bolognese Trecento exhibition and the 1951 Caravaggio exhibition (Chapter 5). Another good example of such 'activism' is the 1960 Royal Academy Winter exhibition 'Italian Art and Britain'.<sup>19</sup> The section dedicated to the 17th and 18th century was curated by Denis Mahon and Francis Watson, and it featured primarily loans from art historians who specialised in those centuries, at a time when they were still being rediscovered. Last but not least, the third mechanism by which art historians shaped art historical narratives through their collections was through foundations, donations, and bequests. Berenson and Longhi left instructions for their collections, together with their libraries and photo collections, to be reformed into permanent study centres continuing to foster research. Others, such as Federico Zeri, followed their example. Donations and bequests were often made with the specific intent to improve or fill gaps in public collections, showing an attitude similar to that of a museum curator. Sir Denis Mahon, in 2011, donated his collection of Seicento paintings, of an estimated value of 100 million pounds, to the Art Fund, for it to be split up among British and Irish museums, including the National Gallery in London and Dublin, contributing to the appreciation of this once neglected century (interestingly, the donation was on condition that entry to the museums would remain free of charge).<sup>20</sup> Through such foundations and donations, art historian collectors perpetuated the impact of their ideas and their related collections beyond their own lifespan.

Thus, by studying the collections assembled by art historians, this thesis has opened up a new field of investigation. Other collections need to be researched to see if the findings of this first systematic inquiry are confirmed or need to be revised. Collections that have already been studied, such as those of Frederick

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<sup>19</sup> Royal Academy of Arts, *A souvenir of the exhibition Italian Art and Britain*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1960.

<sup>20</sup> His paintings were left to the National Gallery in London, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, the National Gallery of Scotland, the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna and the National Gallery of Ireland. Coliva A., Gregori M., Androsov S.(eds.), *Da Guercino a Caravaggio: sir Denis Mahon e l'arte italiana del 17. secolo*, Rome, L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2014

Mason Perkins, Charles Loeser, Federico Zeri, and Denis Mahon can now be investigated not just as personal collections, but as art historians' collections meeting the above-mentioned criteria. Others that still need to be inventoried can now be put in a new context, e.g., the collections of Giuseppe Fiocco, John Pope-Hennessy, Benedict Nicholson, Philip Pouncey, Francis Watson, Denys Sutton, Anthony Blunt, and further figures who lent works to the 1965 exhibition *Art Historians and Critics as Collectors*.<sup>21</sup> This thesis provides a model for further research, and a set of research questions that can be addressed. This thesis had a specific focus on connoisseurs and connoisseurship, but research can be expanded to scholars with a different methodology. Even a social art historian such as Frederick Antal allegedly had a collection, as did Rudolf Wittkower.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the tendency of art historians to collect works from their own time and from the previous century, manifest in Longhi and in Clark, can also be found in others: Charles Loeser collected Cézanne; Douglas Cooper had a great collection of Picassos; and André Breton collected De Chirico, to name but a few.<sup>23</sup>

The study of art historians' art collections offers an innovative discussion of issues at the intersection between art historiography, the history of exhibitions, the history of the art market, and the history of collecting of the past, as well as of more recent days. As the example of Denis Mahon's donation to the Art Fund in 2011 shows, 'the old tradition dies hard',<sup>24</sup> and objects once collected by art historians can be found in many collections accessible to the public. This thesis offers a key to interpret them and make the particular provenance history of these works known, relevant, and appreciated.

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<sup>21</sup> D. Sutton (ed.), *Art Historians and Critics as Collectors: Loan Exhibition*, London, Thos. Agnew & Sons, 1965

<sup>22</sup> For Antal see the programme of *Picture Collections as Food for Thought. Materialisms, Realisms, Art (1900–1960)*, seminar at the KHI, 07-08DEC2016, [https://www.khi.fi.it/pdf/veranstaltungen/20161207\\_bildersammlungen.pdf](https://www.khi.fi.it/pdf/veranstaltungen/20161207_bildersammlungen.pdf). For Wittkower see *Old master and 19th century European paintings : The properties of [...] Rudolf and Margot Wittkower : Auction: Wednesday, 26 February 1997, New York, Christie's East, 1997*.

<sup>23</sup> I shall thank Dr Ben Thomas for bringing to my attention the interesting case of André Breton's collection.

<sup>24</sup> Sutton, 1965

# Appendices

## Appendix A

A. Morassi, 'The Lotto exhibition in Venice' in *The Burlington Magazine*, n.95, 1953, pp. 290-296, p. 291:

To be accurate, the course of revaluation had already been plotted by Frizzoni, in his various studies, since he, being a Bergamasque, had a special predilection for Lorenzo, whom he regarded more or less as his fellow citizen. Nor must it be forgotten that in those days Morelli also, partly on the inspiration of Muindler, partly because he had grown enamoured of Bergamo, was captivated by Lotto's art, and wrote memorable pages about him on an entirely new aesthetic plane. On the other hand we must remember that Cavalcaselle, having finished his admirable task of research, of co-ordination of historical documents, of recognition of unknown works, had formed a rather hostile judgement on the artist; whilst recognizing in him certain exquisite qualities, he regarded him as an artist of the second rank who 'lacked the pure originality of genius and independent power.

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**Appendices B** - Extracts from B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1895

## Appendix B.1

B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1895, pp. 264-6

We have a still further source of information, unfortunately not so illuminating as it is copious. This is nothing less than a codex in Lotto's own hand, discovered two or three years ago in the archives of Loreto. In the spring of 1893 it was in the hands of Signor Guido Levi of Rome, who was intending to publish it. He was good enough to let me look through it and extract the items that seemed to me of greatest importance. This I did,



taking care to confine myself strictly to our subject ; for, interesting as this codex will be to the general student of Italian art and civilisation, it is comparatively meagre in personal items, in spite of being, as I have said, in Lotto's own hand. This codex of foolscap size is, in fact, nothing but an account-book [...] as might have been done by any other business-like Venetian. It is however difficult to consult, because the items are entered under the Christian names. All the items of special interest that a rapid glance through the codex discoveries, will be found duly entered in this chapter ; but they contain little, if anything, that adds to our knowledge of Lotto's personality [...] Certain inferences that we can draw from these (his works) are, however, confirmed by the codex. [...] The codex is more interesting for the light it throws on the business relations between the Italian artist and his employers than for its illumination of Lotto's own character.

## Appendix B.2

B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1895, pp. V-IV

[*The book*] has another object in view than the bringing together of mere information regarding Lotto. It is an attempt to reconstruct Lotto's character, both as a man and as an artist [...] Happily criticism is so much of one accord regarding the bulk of paintings attributed to Lotto, that the study of him can afford to become something more than 'Bilderbestimmung'. The author is confident that the student who has devoted as much time as himself to the study of Lotto, and has as many of the painter's works fresh in his mind, will agree with him in the exclusions he has made,— even when he has against him Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle [...] or Morelli-

## Appendix B.3

B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1895, pp. XVI-XVII

Certain details singled out from the many [...] neglected in our general impression of a picture, but pounced upon by recent connoisseurship as likely to yield the best clue to a master's antecedents. There [...] are the ears, the hands, the ringlets of hair, certain recurring bits of landscape,

certain awkwardness of attitude, and other such unimportant and even trivial things [...] It is his most in rooted habits [...] that the painter acquires from his teacher. The details just mentioned [*the Morellian details*] are least liable to change from the way they were done, when first learned. [...] details best clue to a painter's origin, and to the history of his noviciate [...] however [...] Habits of attention, and of visualisation ; habits of feeling and of thinking do, no less than habits of execution, intervene between the artist and the object.

## Appendix B.4

B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1895, p. 122

Our estimate of the artist is largely determined by his manner of acquiring the outside elements, by the proportion in his work of outside to personal factors, by the kind of assimilation that has taken place between them. Certain artists suffer rather than acquire outside elements [...] artists of the least personality and the least interest. Others, endowed with greater powers of assimilation, pick and choose from the motives in favour of their youth all that they can assimilate and make their own [...] these artists [...] are [...] the greatest, at least the most delightful, the Raphaels and Giorgiones. Others still are irreconcilably personal. They cannot dispense with outside elements, but they choose them from far as well as from near, from the past, as well as from the present. This is the class that comprises a few of the very greatest artists [...] of the stamp of Donatello and Michelangelo, and also [...] all those artists who lacked the Titianesque power necessary to give body to an entirely personal vision of the universe, and therefore remained fanciful, suggestive, sympathetic, but never great. To this last category we should relegate Lorenzo Lotto if, while lacking Michelangelo's power of persuading people of its reality, he yet had had a way of seeing and of registering his vision as personal as Michelangelo's.

## Appendix B.5

B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1895, pp. 324-326-7, 330

Lotto, as distinguished from other artists of his time, is psychological. He is intensely personal as well [...] psychological signifying an interest in the

personality of others, and personal, an interest in one's own psychology. In his portraits, Lotto is more distinctively psychological ; in his religious subjects [...] personal as well. [...] He interprets profoundly, and his interpretation expresses his entire personality, showing at a glance his attitude toward the whole life.

[...] *His* expression is less complete than either Correggio's or Titian's, for in him there is ever the element of self-consciousness. This consciousness [...] so far as beauty is concerned, is to make the artist linger more over his work, with more intimate delight. Lotto has too keen a joy in his art to treat any detail [...] as a matter of indifference or convention. His landscapes never sink to mere backgrounds [...] showing that he was well aware of the effect scenery and light produce upon the emotions.

[...] The psychological interest - the essential element of his genius - is never absent [...] and indeed in all his sacred subjects, his psychology finds employment in interpretation. He seems never to have painted without asking himself what effect a given situation must have on a given character. Thus it is rare to find in any of his canvases, two faces which were the same expression. [...] The study of character being the real aim of the psychological artist, and not the ethical situation or problem, he reverses the procedure of the epic artist, and makes the situation or problem an excuse for the study of character. [...] in the one case, the subject is the event itself, in the other, the emotion roused by the event [...] as felt by distinct individuals.

## Appendix B.6

B. Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1895, pp. 268-9, p. 312, p. 321-2, p. 324

It is curious that one of the first entries in Lotto's account-book should concern Martin Luther in a phase most abhorrent to Catholicism. [...] Luther, it is well to remind people [...] was not only an arch-heretic, but a priest who had married, thereby committing one of the most horrible and [...] disgusting crimes that the Catholic mind can conceive of. Well!- on October 17, 1540 Lotto completed the portraits of Martin Luther and his wife, not for himself [...] but without the least disapproval [...] These portraits were executed by Lotto at the commission of his nephews, [...] intending them as a gift for a friend named Tristan. [...] in all probability [...] a sincere admirer of Luther [...] Lotto must have come in close contact

with the religiously minded people of Protestant tendencies, who were unusually numerous in Venice at this time.

[...] Lotto at times seems more like a precursor of the Counter-Reformation, but at all events, he is there to witness to an attitude of mind in Italy which, although not the dominant, could have been by no means rare.

[...] The charity of Lotto's spirit gives us a very different idea of the sixteenth century [...] indeed the study of Lotto would repay if it did no more than help us to a truer and saner view of the sixteenth century in Italy than has been given by popular writers from Stendhal downwards - a human balance to its lurid side.

[...] One of the points distinguishing Lotto from earlier painters, and even from his contemporaries, is that he drew his inspiration as directly from the Scriptures as if he were a militant Lutheran, whereas other painters were content with the semi-mythological form given to Biblical episodes by centuries of popular tradition. It is unfortunate that the records of Lotto's life up to his sixtieth are so scant. That he was living in Venice between 1527 and 1544 is fairly certain, but it would be of greater interest to know to what extent he came in contact with the many Reformers who then frequented Venice.

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**Appendices C** - Extracts from B. Berenson, *The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance: with an index to their works*, London, G.P. Putnam's sons, 1896, citations taken from the 1930 re-edition, B. Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, Oxford, The Clarendon press, 1930

## Appendix C.1

B. Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, Oxford, The Clarendon press, 1930, p. 64

Well, it was of the power to stimulate the tactile consciousness — of the essential, as I have ventured to call it, in the art of painting — that Giotto was supreme master. This is his everlasting claim to greatness, and it is

this which will make him a source of highest aesthetic delight for a period at least as long as decipherable traces of his handiwork remain on mouldering panel or crumbling wall.

[...] For great though he was as a poet, enthralling as a story-teller, splendid and majestic as a composer, he was in these qualities superior in degree only, to many of the masters who painted in various parts of Europe during the thousand years that intervened between the decline of antique, and the birth, in his own person, of modern painting. But none of these masters had the power to stimulate the tactile imagination.

## Appendix C.2

B. Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, Oxford, The Clarendon press, 1930, p. 67

[...] Form [...] lends a higher coefficient of reality to the object represented, with the consequent enjoyment of accelerated psychical processes, and the exhilarating sense of increased capacity in the observer. (Hence, by the way, the greater pleasure we take in the object painted than in itself.) [...] We remember that to realise form we must give tactile values to retinal sensations.

## Appendix C.3

B. Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, Oxford, The Clarendon press, 1930, pp. 69, 70-71

The difference is striking, but it does not consist so much in a difference of pattern and types, as of realisation. In the "Cimabue" we patiently decipher the lines and colours, and we conclude at last that they were intended to represent a woman seated, men and angels standing by or kneeling. To recognise these representations we have had to make many times the effort that the actual objects would have required, and in consequence our feeling of capacity has not only not been confirmed, but actually put in question.

[...]But how does Giotto accomplish this miracle? With the simplest means, with almost rudimentary light and shade, and functional line, he contrives to render, out of all the possible outlines, out of all the possible variations of light and shade that a given figure may have, only those that we must isolate for special attention when we are actually realising it. This

determines his types, his schemes of colour, even his compositions. He aims at types which both in face and figure are simple, large-boned, and massive, — types, that is to say, which in actual life would furnish the most powerful stimulus to the tactile imagination. Obligated to get the utmost out of his rudimentary light and shade, he makes his scheme of colour of the lightest that his contrasts may be of the strongest. In his compositions, he aims at clearness of grouping, so that each important figure may have its desired tactile value.

Note in the "Madonna" we have been looking at, how the shadows compel us to realise every concavity, and the lights every convexity, and how, with the play of the two, under the guidance of line, we realise the significant parts of each figure, whether draped or undraped. Nothing here but has its architectonic reason. Above all, every line is functional ; that is to say, charged with purpose. Its existence, its direction, is absolutely determined by the need of rendering the tactile values. Follow any line here, say in the figure of the angel kneeling to the left, and see how it outlines and models, how it enables you to realise the head, the torso, the hips, the legs, the feet, and how its direction, its tension, is always determined by the action. There is not a genuine fragment of Giotto in existence but has these qualities, and to such a degree that the worst treatment has not been able to spoil them. Witness the resurrected frescoes in Santa Croce at Florence!

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## Appendix D

Letter from Berenson to Gardner, January 1900, in H. Rollin van (ed.), *The letters of Bernard Berenson and Isabella Stewart Gardner 1887-1924 with correspondence by Mary Berenson*, Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1987 , p. 202

For four years I have been trying to get hold of a picture for you. At first and for a long time the man who owns it would not sell at all, and then only if he were tempted by [...] fabulous price. At last I can get it, and considering *de qoi il s'agit* at a very reasonable price. You will appreciate why I have been so keen to get hold of this picture when I tell you that it is by - guess, but you never would - by GIOTTO. I am not going to insult you by talking to you about Giotto, nor even about his rarity. The national Gallery for instance has nothing whatsoever by him, and it is a rare thing for any of the collections of the world to boast of. The one [...] is a small

panel only 17 inches square, representing on a gold ground the Presentation of the Christ Child in the temple. The composition is very nearly the same as in the fresco at Padua, and the date by the way is toward 1306. As you will see the subject is treated with the grand impressive simplicity that was the very essence of Giotto's style. Only four figures, beside the Infant: but how much character and purpose there is to each figure, how superabundantly well they tell the story, what dignity there is to each! Then look how delicately intimate is the movement of the child towards the extended hands of His mother. As for the colour it is gorgeous, harmonious and transparent, the greens, and whites, and blues truly exquisite. The condition is excellent. Of course there is not a shadow of a doubt about this picture being by Giotto. I am ready to stake my reputation upon it myself, and altho' it has been in London exhibited a number of times, its authenticity has never been called into question. [...] Considering all of which things the price at which I can get it for you is most reasonable. It is 1500 pounds.

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## Appendix E

Longhi R., 'Editoriale Mostre e Musei (un avvertimento del 1959)' in *Critica d'arte e buongoverno, 1938-1969, Opere Complete, vol. XIII*, Florence, Sansoni, 1985, pp. 59-74

At that time, after the splendid and huge exhibitions of Flemish and Dutch art held at the Royal Academy in London, how could Italy remain behind? Mussolini [...] stunned the world, leaving it with bated breath, when the ship with the nation's treasures faced serious trouble in the heart of a royal storm between Brittany and the Channel [...] I remember the enthusiastic Italian commissioner of the exhibition [...] Ettore Modigliani, at the Park Lane Hotel, where he invited me for breakfast, telling me of the storm [...] But what was there to gain for culture - because this is what we are here to



discuss today, the effect of cultural diffusion that exhibitions can have [...] I would not be able to answer.<sup>1</sup>

[...] From 1930 to 1940, many Italians (*soprintendenti*, state and municipal museum directors) preferred to embark on smaller scale projects, less ambitious, but certainly more effective [...] that was the decade of the first great shows of personalities [...] Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese in Venice [...] the names of the organisers were the talk of the town [...] Barbantini [...] Pallucchini [...] And as regards those exhibitions that were not just a 'one man show' but of the old regional kind, how could one not remember that it was the decade of the Ferrarese exhibition (1933), organised by Barbantini, the one on the Riminese school (1935), curated by Brandi, and the one on the Bolognese Settecento in Bologna [...] none of those exhibitions were lazily put together. They were all accompanied by often excellent catalogues, always useful, and as a matter of fact we all used them and took advantage of them.<sup>2</sup>

[...] For years was having a serious impact with its exhibitions, of which one has to mention the one organised on 'Peintres de la réalité' at the

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<sup>1</sup> Tr.: 'Le mostre [...] stentavano ancora a farsi le ossa [...] Dopo le splendide e amplissime mostre di arte fiamminga e olandese tenute alla royal academy di Londra, poteva l'Italia tornare indietro? Mussolini [...] stupì infatti il mondo e anche trattenne il respiro, quando la nave dei tesori si trovò in serie difficoltà nel cuore di una tempesta reale tra la Bretagna e la Manica [...] Ricordo che l'entusiastico commissario italiano della mostra [...] Ettore Modigliani, al Park Lane Hotel, dove mi aveva invitato a colazione, mi narrava della tempesta, del rullo delle casse e dei quadri usando un tono di sfida [...] Ma cosa venisse poi a guadagnarsi per la cultura - perché noi siamo qui per discutere il risultato di utile diffusione culturale che possono avere le mostre - da quella grande parata, non saprei dire. Non ne resta [...] che un triste ricordo.' Longhi, 1985, pp. 62-3.

<sup>2</sup> Tr.: 'Voglio però subito aggiungere che nel decennio seguente, dal 1930 al '40, molti italiani ([...] soprintendenti, direttori di musei statali e civici) preferirono assegnarsi compiti più limitati, meno ambiziosi, ma certamente più efficienti [...] fu pure quello il decennio delle prime grandi 'personali': [...] Tiziano, Tintoretto, Veronese a Venezia [...] I nomi degli ordinatori sono sulla bocca di tutti [...] Barbantini [...] Pallucchini. E in quanto alle mostre non più [...] 'one man show' ma di antiche tendenze regionali, come non ricordare che quello fu pure il decennio della mostra Ferrarese (1933), tenuta appunto dal Barbantini, di quella del Riminese (1935) curata dal Brandi, dei Settecentisti bolognesi a Bologna, delle due mostre Bresciane del 1935 e del '39 [...] nessuna di quelle mostre fu oziosa. Tutte furono dotate di cataloghi spesso eccellenti, sempre servibili, e tutti infatti ce ne servimmo e ce ne avvantaggiamo.' Longhi, 1985, p. 63

Orangerie (1934), which, among other things, brought to light the good research by a young conservator at the Louvre, Charles Sterling.<sup>3</sup>

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## Appendix F

R. Longhi, 'Fatti di Masolino e di Masaccio' in *La Critica d'Arte*, n. XXV-XXVI, 1940, p. 185, n. 23, re-edited in *Opere Complete*, vol. VIII, Florence, Sansoni, 1975, pp. 54-5, n. 23

A certain Riminese culture, presumably the point of departure of Arcangelo di Cola, could have easily flourished in contact with the Masaccesque culture. In fact it seems that not only the crucifixion of the Frick diptych alludes to this, but also this exquisite small panel, a little worn, ex Aynard collection, with a partition in two registers, as in the Riminese school, with a Madonna enthroned with an evangelist and a patron in the upper part, and St Ludwig, St Leo (?) and a saintly nun in the lower section. The gilded background is also clearly of Riminese tradition, freely decorated with globular designs, random yet altogether fortunate encounters between the old Riminese culture and the new one of Masaccio, with the not ignoble spirit of Arcangelo.<sup>4</sup>

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## Appendix G

Longhi R., 'La mostra del Trecento Bolognese', in *Paragone* vol 1, n. 5. 1950, pp. 5-44, pp. 5-6

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<sup>3</sup> Tr.: 'Parigi [...] che stava svolgendo da anni nel campo delle mostre un'azione ben [...] seria: di cui preme ricordare [...] quella dei Pittori della realtà all'orangerie (1934) che mise in luce, fra l'altro i buoni studi di un giovane conservatore del Louvre, Charles Sterling.' Longhi, 1985, p. 63

<sup>4</sup> Tr.: 'una certa cultura riminese, presumibile punto di partenza di arcangelo, possa esser fiorita agevolmente a contatto con la prima cultura masaccesca,,a fatti di questo genere sembrano alludere non soltanto la 'crocifissione' del dittico Frick ma anche una squisita tavoletta un po' guasta già nella collezione Aynard con la partitura in due piani, come nei riminesi, nell'alto di una Madonna in. Trono fra un santo evangelista e un committente; in basso, di San Ludovico, San Leo (?) e una santa Monaca. Di schietta tradizione riminese è anche il fondo d'oro liberamente motivato a disegni globulari. Ma perché nei santi in basso l'azione di Gentile è già piena e perciò dopo il '20, può credersi che la massa quasi informe, eppure non priva di possanza, della Vergine ed anche l'acutezza di collocazione, dietro il trono, del santo gravemente ammantato e col nimbo in inclinazione prospettica, siano incontri fortuiti, e tuttavia felicissimi, tra la vecchia cultura riminese e la nuova di Masaccio, entro lo spirito non ignobile di Arcangelo.' Longhi, 1940, p. 54

Almost ten years ago, 1985, in his 'Cicero' that was conceived to present a sober and enduring tract on how to savour Italian works of art, Jacob Burckhardt erased even the last trace of aspiration of the Bolognese school [...] by claiming that 'only the less able remained apparently independent from Giotto' and among them, especially the Bolognese, 'frighteningly clumsy and insignificant' [...] But the last 25 years of studies, preceded by the humble and fruitful work of local hunters or archival evidences, in tandem with conservation initiatives [...] have changed the judgment of the Bolognese Trecento, positing with greater and greater clarity the possibility and urgency of this exhibition. From the presentation today of almost 200 works both paintings and illuminations, the sincere values of an art that is certainly local, yet not provincial anymore, should become evident.<sup>5</sup>

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## Appendix H

Review from Manchester Guardian, 8 May 1951

He seems to have filled his studio with young roman boys such as are still to be seen any day playing cards on the pavement or carrying baskets in the *Campo Dei Fiori* outside *Palazzo Farnese*. Then he dressed them up in the bright colour costumes of the high Renaissance of fifty years earlier, grouped around a table, with an bearded Roman in their midst, he cast an oblique bright light on the whole and plunged the rest into utter darkness and painted straight from life with [...] *chiaro-scuro* or light-dark, or to use the Italian art critic Roberto Longhi's phrase 'nocturnal magic'.

[...] This [...] exhibition seems to have roused as much controversy around it as the painter himself aroused when his pictures first came known in Rome [...] No English pictures are being lent abroad during the Festival of Britain [...] The Malta Caravaggios have not come either, because they

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<sup>5</sup> tr.'Quasi cent'anni fa, nel 1855, in quel suo 'Cicerone' che intendeva fornire una sobria e durevole traccia per bene gustare le opere d'Italia, Jacob Burckhardt cancellò fino l'ultimo segno delle pretese di Bologna..affermando che 'apparentemente indipendenti da Giotto rimasero solo gli 'inabili' e fra questi, soprattutto i Bolognesi, 'spaventosamente maldestri e insignificanti'0.. Ma gli ultimi 25 anni di studi, preceduti dallumile, proficuo lavoro dei cercatori locali di di documenti bene fiancheggiati dalle provvidenze conservative..hanno mutato il giudizio sul Trecento, ponendo con sempre maggiore chiarezza la opportunità e, infine, l'urgenza di questa Mostra. Dalla presentazione odierna di circa duecento numeri tra pittura e miniatura, i valori schietti di un'arte certamente locale, non già provinciale, dovrebbero meglio spiegarsi. Longhi, 1950, pp.5-6

badly need cleaning, and plans are being made to clean them in Malta [...] the *Death of the Virgin* at the Louvre, his last picture, was in too poor of a state to travel [...] and four works from Berlin were burnt in a fire in 1945.

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## Appendix I.1

Letter from Giuseppe Bellesi to Kenneth Clark, 11NOV47, TGA 8812.1.2.635

Although many years since I had the pleasure of meeting you I hope you will remember me. Dr. Pallucchini of Venice writes me that he is planning & arranging an Exhibition of French Impressionists to take place at the Biennale - Venice. He asks me to get in touch for him with Collectors of master such as : Manet, Monet, Pisarrò, Sisley, Renoir, degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Gaugin & Van Gogh - who might be good enough to lend their pictures by any of the mentioned artists. I was wondering if this might interest you or if you would be kind enough to suggest to me Collectors that might be happy to take advantage of this opportunity. The exhibition opens in May [...] the Biennale will pay all the cost of transport, packing, insurance ect.<sup>6</sup>

## Appendix I.2

Letter from Roberto Longhi to Kenneth Clark, 14NOV1947, TGA8812.1.2.3993

I must tell you of another thing I particularly care about. You should have already received the invitation to be part of the exhibition committee of the '*Mostra degli Impressionisti Francesi*' that the Venice *Biennale* is planning [...]. When it was discussed [...] who, among the foreigners, should be included in the Special Commission, I immediately proposed your name, because, beside having personally experienced your limitless kindness and comprehension, I know you are friend of Italy's highest culture and

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<sup>6</sup> GB to KC 11NOV47, TGA 8812.1.2.635. It should be noted here that the *Biennale* seems to have been interested in Clark for being both a collector and a very influent public personality, rather than an expert of that kind of art.

because I understand than no other help is more influential than yours in making our enterprise a really successful one.<sup>7</sup>

[...] The programmed '*Mostra dell'Impressionismo*' (which would be seen for the first time in Italy!) is the first act of reparation that Italian Culture wants to express publicly, in response to the European artistic culture, from which, for almost a century, it was badly separated. If we do not succeed in this enterprise, the Biennale will be a failure and we will give the impression we want to stay in the damaging grounds of provincialism. [...] We need the exhibition to be a success. With means well thought, with works that are important and have been chosen with judgement. Thus it happens that our friends from abroad can assist us. We have obtained something from France already, but it is far not enough. We would like to count upon your [...] support.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Tr.: 'Ma devo ora anche dirLe di altra cosa che mi sta particolarmente a cuore. Ella avrà già ricevuto l'invito a far parte della Commissione per la 'Mostra degli Impressionisti Francesi' che la Biennale di Venezia ha in animo di allestire con ogni cura per l'esposizione dell'anno prossimo. Quando, in seno alla 'Commissione per le arti figurative' si discusse a Venezia sugli stranieri da includere nella Commissione Speciale io feci subito il Suo nome, perché, oltre ad aver sperimentato personalmente la sua illimitata cortesia e comprensione, La so amico della migliore cultura Italian e perché intendo che nessun aiuto è più autorevole del suo per procurare un successo vero all'impresa che abbiamo progettato.' RL to KC, 14NOV1947, TGA8812.1.2.3993

<sup>8</sup> Tr.: 'La progettata '*Mostra dell'Impressionismo*' (che si vedrebbe in Italia per la prima volta!) è il primo doveroso atto di riparazione che la cultura Italiana vuole esprimere pubblicamente nei confronti con la cultura artistica europea della quale, per quasi un secolo, si era malamente appartata. Se noi non riusciamo in questa impresa la Biennale sarà un insuccesso e sembrerà che s'intenda continuare nella dannosa segregazione provinciale. [...] Bisogna (underlined) dunque che la mostra dell'*Impressionismo* riesca. Che sia cioè preparata bene, con pezzi scelti e importanti. Occorre dunque che i nostri amici di fuori ci aiutino. Qualcosa si è già ottenuto dalla Francia, ma non è sufficiente. Noi vorremmo fare assegnamento sulla sua amichevole comprensione e sul Suo autorevolissimo appoggio.' RL to KC 14NOV1947, TGA8812.1.2.3993

# ILLUSTRATIONS LIST

## Chapter 1 - A Compromise between Taste and Opportunity: The collections of Bernard Berenson, Roberto Longhi, Kenneth Clark

*Fig. 1:* Bernard Berenson (1865 - 1959), at the garden in Villa I Tatti, October 1954, portrayed by Theo Bandi, <https://ilmanifesto.it/berenson-la-connoisseurship-abbellisce-le-pareti/> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 2.1:* 'I Tatti' when first rented by Bernard and Mary Berenson 'I Tatti', by Unknown photographer, printing-out paper print, 1905, NPG Ax160753, <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw211103/I-Tatti-when-first-rented-by-Bernard-and-Mary-Berenson?> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 2.2:* Villa I Tatti today, <https://itatti.harvard.edu> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 3.1:* Berenson and Mary at I Tatti in the 1950s, detail of the Domenico Veneziano displayed against an historic textile, <http://www.neldeliriononeromaisola.it/2019/07/279710/> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 3.2:* Guglielmo Alberti at I Tatti, detail of the paintings in the Signorelli Corridor, displayed against an historic textile, undated, <http://www.guglielmoalberti.it/it/sezione-2-luoghi> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 4.1:* Sienese and Buddhist Art displayed at I Tatti still today. On the left, Sassetta's altarpiece and some oriental art placed underneath, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, 2000s, photo by Giovanni Trambusti, <https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2009/11/sassetta-renaissance-altarpiece-reconstructed> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 4.2:* Detail of Buddhist Art displayed underneath the Sassetta, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, Cabanne P., *The Great Collectors*, London, Cassell, 1963, p.72

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*Fig. 6:* The Dining Room, Villa I Tatti, Settignano, 19 , Strehlke, Israels, 2015

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*Fig. 9:* Roberto Longhi (1890 - 1970), 1950s, Arturo Galansino, 'Con Longhi' in *Prospettiva*, 'Giovanni Previtali, storico dell'arte militante' (Gennaio-Ottobre 2013), n. 149/152, pp. 10-18, p. 11

*Fig. 10:* Views of Villa Il Tasso, Florence, Acidini Luchinat C., 'La villa Il Tasso: Da Alberti a Roberto and Lucia Longhi' in *Gregori*, Bandera, 2014, p. 44

*Fig. 11:* View of Il Tasso's Library, with Battistello's Christ hung on the left and Mattia Preti's concert hung on the right, photo frame from the documentary 'Anna Banti' in 'L'altro 900', Rai 5, S2E2, available at <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2018/10/L-altro-900-S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 11.1:* View of a room at Il Tasso, with Alessandro Longhi's *portrait* and Traversi's *Fantesca* on the wall, photographed around 1962 at Il Tasso, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, photo frame from the documentary 'Anna Banti' in 'L'altro 900', Rai 5, S2E2, available at <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2018/10/L-altro-900-S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 11.2:* View of a room at Il Tasso with 20th-century paintings, including Giorgio Morandi, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, photo frame from the documentary 'Anna Banti' in 'L'altro 900', Rai 5, S2E2, available at <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2018/10/L-altro-900-S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 12:* Jusepe de Riebera, *Apostles*, Series ex-Gavotti, Oil on canvas, c. 126 x 97 cm each, Florence, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, Bandera, 2020, pp. 65-6

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*Fig. 13:* Views of the exhibition *Il tempo di Caravaggio - Capolavori della collezione di Roberto Longhi*, 16/06/2020 - 10/01/2021, Musei Capitolini, Rome, <https://www.tribune.com/arti-visive/archeologia-arte-antica/2020/06/caravaggio-collezione-roberto-longhi-roma/> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 14:* Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara's *Saint Francis*, displayed at Il Tasso, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, photo frame from the documentary 'Anna Banti' in 'L'altro 900', Rai 5, S2E2, available at <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2018/10/L-altro-900-S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 14.1:* Lippo di Dalmasio's *Angel* on the wall, on the left of Anna Banti, photographed around 1962 at Il Tasso, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, photo frame from the documentary 'Anna Banti' in 'L'altro 900', Rai 5, S2E2, available at <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2018/10/L-altro-900-S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 15:* Caravaggio's *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* captured in a portrait of Anna Banti around 1962 at Il Tasso, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, photo frame from the documentary 'Anna Banti' in 'L'altro 900', Rai 5, S2E2, available at <https://www.raiplay.it/video/2018/10/L-altro-900-S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html> [last accessed March 2022]



*Fig. 16:* Caravaggio's *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* at Il Tasso, 2008, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, Florence, <https://rotaryfirenze.org/evento/dettaglio/1152> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 17:* Display of works in the library at Il Tasso, 1971, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, photo frame from "Roberto Longhi - Un Maestro" di i Pier Paolo Ruggerini e Roberto Tassi, con la collaborazione di Attilio Bertolucci (1971), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yd4CmcRhMH0> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 18:* Kenneth Clark, portrayed at Saltwood, 1950s, Cumming R., *My Dear BB: the Letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2015

*Fig. 19:* Raphael, *Portrait of Valerio Belli*, 1517, oil on panel, d. 12,5 cm, Private Collection. Sotheby's, Sotheby's Taubman Sale, 27JAN2016, Lot 8

*Fig. 20:* Cézanne's *Chateau Noir* in the long panelled room at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947, Clark K., 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947

*Fig. 21:* Renoir's *Baigneuse* in the long panelled room at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947, Clark K., 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947

*Fig. 21.1:* Clark portrayed with Renoir's *Baigneuse*, <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/kenneth-clark-a-return-to> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 22:* Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, *The Famous Women Dinner Service*, 1932-34, fifty hand-painted Wedgwood plates, The Charleston Trust, <https://www.piano-nobile.com/news/128-insight-no.-xvii-vanessa-bell-and-duncan-grant-the-famous/> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 23:* View of the façade of 30 Portland Place, London, <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/survey-of-london/2016/02/26/30-portland-place-londons-guggenheim-museum-that-never-was/> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 23.1:* Dining Room at 30 Portland Place in 1938, with George Seurat's *Le Bec du Hoc* on the right, photograph by Alfred Cracknell, RIBA archive, <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/survey-of-london/2016/02/26/30-portland-place-londons-guggenheim-museum-that-never-was/> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 24:* Sitting Room at 30 Portland Place in 1938, with Cézanne's *Château Noir* on the left, photograph by Alfred Cracknell, RIBA archive, <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/survey-of-london/2016/02/26/30-portland-place-londons-guggenheim-museum-that-never-was/> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 25:* Entrance Hall at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, with John Piper's *Gordale Scar* (1943) instead of Renoir's *Baigneuse*, Clark K., 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947

*Fig. 25.1:* Entrance Hall at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, undated, Stonard J.P., 'Looking for Civilisation' Kenneth Clark: Looking for Civilisation, Stephens C. and Stonard J.P. (eds.), London, Tate Publishing, 2014.

*Fig. 26:* Study Room at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947, Clark K., 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947

*Fig. 27:* Long Panelled Room at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947, Clark K., 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947

*Fig. 28:* Jane Clark's Bedroom at Upper Terrace House, Hampstead, London, 1947, Clark K., 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947

*Fig.29:* George Seurat, *Le Bec du Hoc, Grandcamp*, 1885, Oil on Canvas, frame: 83.9 x 99.8 x 6.5 cm, London, Tate Britain, on loan to The National Gallery, N06067, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/seurat-le-bec-du-hoc-grandcamp-n06067> [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 30:* Saltwood Castle, Hythe, Kent, 2013, <https://frustratedgardener.com/2013/05/04/saltwood-castle-hythe-kent/> [last accessed March 2022]

*Figs 31, 31.1:* Saltwood Castle, views of the library hall, 2018, C. Aslet, 'Seat of civilisation' in *Country Life*, 5 December 2018, pp. 52-7

*Fig. 31.2:* Kenneth Clark in Saltwood's hall, during the filming of *Civilisation's* last episode, 1969, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0208t7l/p0208s37> [last accessed March 2022]

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*Fig. 31.5:* Spinello Aretino's altarpiece hung in Saltwood's hall, during the filming of *Civilisation's* last episode, 1969, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0208t7l/p0208s37> [last accessed March 2022]

## **Chapter 2 - Bernard Berenson, Lorenzo Lotto, and Connoisseurship**

*Fig. 1:* Bernard Berenson at the entrance of the Lorenzo Lotto Exhibition, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 1953, interfoto/4092 riva Carbon/Venezia in P. Aiello, 'Gustavo Frizzoni e Bernard Berenson' in *Concorso*, n.5, 2011, pp. 7-30

*Fig. 2:* Bernard Berenson and Vittorio Cini at the Lorenzo Lotto Exhibition, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 1953, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Istituto di storia dell'arte, Archivio fotografico, [http://www.impresesanculturali.it/web/impreses/protagonisti/galleria-protagonista?pid=san.di.SAN:IMG-00682484&titolo\\_origine=CINI,%20Vittorio&ambito=protagonisti](http://www.impresesanculturali.it/web/impreses/protagonisti/galleria-protagonista?pid=san.di.SAN:IMG-00682484&titolo_origine=CINI,%20Vittorio&ambito=protagonisti) [Last accessed March 2022]

Fig. 3: Bernard Berenson, Niky Mariano, and Vittorio Cini exiting the Lorenzo Lotto Exhibition, Palazzo Ducale, Venice, 1953, <http://www.marinaretti-venezia.it/pagine/pagine%20storia/Vittorio%20Cini.htm> [Last accessed March 2022]

Fig. 4: Tonino Novaero, *Virgin and Child with Saint Francis of Assisi and Jerome (?)*, 1526-30, oil on panel, 75.7 cm x 58 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano. C.B. Strehlke, M. Brügggen Israëls (eds.), *The Bernard and Mary Berenson collection of European paintings at I Tatti*, Milan, Officina Libraria, 2015, p. 505

Fig. 5: Lorenzo Lotto, *Crucifixion with the Arma Christi*, 1544, oil on panel, 24.4 cm x 17.3 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano. Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 391

Fig. 6: Attributed to Master of the Castello Nativity, *Virgin and Child in a Landscape*, 1445-1450, tempera on panel, 64.4 cm x 41cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano. Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, p. 401

### Chapter 3 - Kenneth Clark's Two Round Portraits of Valerio and Elio Belli

Fig. 1: Raphael, Portrait of Valerio Belli, 1517, oil on panel, d. 12,5 cm, Private Collection. Sotheby's, Sotheby's Taubman Sale, 27JAN2016, Lot 8

Fig. 2: Upper Terrace's 'long panelled room', House & Garden, 1947, Valerio's Portrait is framed and displayed on the console on the left. Clark K., 'An Attempt to Keep Alive a Tradition in English Art' in *Vogue House & Garden Book*, Vol. 2, n. 4, issue n. 11, Winter 1947

Fig. 3: Italian School, *Profile Portrait of Valerio Belli*, 1530-40, marble relief, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, V&A, A.4-1932, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O94208/valerio-belli-relief-belli-valerio/> [Last accessed March 2022]

Fig. 4: Valerio Belli, Self-Portrait, Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C, National Gallery of Art, 1957.14.1312, <https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.45581.html> [Last accessed March 2022]

Fig. 5: First page of the unpublished article 'Two Medallions of the Belli Family', with Clark's annotations, London, Tate Gallery Archive, undated, TGA 8812.2.2.106

### Chapter 4 - Bernard Berenson, Giotto, and the 1937 'Mostra Giottesca'

Fig. 1: Master of the Spinola Annunciation, *Crucifixion*, 1309-10, tempera on panel, 20 cm x 16,5 cm, Berenson Collection, Villa I Tatti, Settignano. Strehlke, Brügggen Israëls, 2015, pl 64

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Fig.5: Odoardo Borrani, *Alla Galleria dell'Accademia*, 1860-1870, oil on canvas, 42 cm x 37cm, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, <https://www.vam.ac.uk/blog/projects/guest-post-part-2-the-florentine-copies-of-michelangelos-david-by-clemente-papi-the-plaster-cast-of-the-head-of-david-at-the-accademia-di-belle-arti-in-florence> [Last accessed March 2022]

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Fig.10: King Vittorio Emanuele III in the room with works by Giotto's followers, Florence, Mostra Giottesca, 1937, Photo Archive Locchi, 1937\_L602-6, D'Etorre E., Mencaroni R., Vespari S.A., 'Nuove indagini sulla Mostra Giottesca del 1937' in *Mostre a Firenze 1911 - 1942. Nuove indagini per un itinerario tra arte e cultura*, Giometti C. (ed.), Florence, Edizioni ETS, 2019, pp. 177 - 191

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Fig.12: King Vittorio Emanuele III in the room with works by Giotto's followers, Florence, Mostra Giottesca, 1937. Monciatti A., 'La mostra giottesca del 1937 a Firenze' in *Medioevo/Medioevi*, n.13, 2008, pp. 141-167

Figs.13-14: Michelucci's sketches for the exhibition designs. Florence, 1937, Monciatti A., *Alle origini dell'arte nostra: la 'Mostra giottesca' del 1937 a Firenze*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 2010

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## Chapter Five - Roberto Longhi, the 1950 Exhibition 'Il Trecento Bolognese', and the 1951 Exhibition 'Caravaggio e I Caravaggeschi'

*Fig. 1:* Vitale da Bologna, *Adoration of the Magi*, tempera on panel, XIV cent., 60.4 cm x 38.6 cm, National Gallery of Art, Edinburgh, inv. NG 952, <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/5544> [Last accessed MAR22].

*Fig.2:* Vitale da Bologna, *Pietà*, tempera on panel, XIV cent., 1350-55, 60, 5 cm x 39 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection, Gregori M. (ed.), *La collezione di Roberto Longhi dal Duecento a Caravaggio a Morandi*, Savigliano, L'artistica Editrice, 2007, cat. n. 4

*Fig. 3:* Master of Santa Maria in Porto Fuori or Pietro da Rimini, *Enthroned Virgin with Child with Saint John the Baptist, Agnes, Catherine of Alexandria, Apollonia(?), another Saint and Four Angels*, 1320-40. Tempera on panel, 43 cm x 28,5 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection, Gregori, 2007, cat. n. 9

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[S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html](https://www.fondazione-longhi.org/it/collezioni/collezioni-2019/S2E2-Anna-Banti-2387de25-7af2-4c3b-bf7f-30e53b045f2e.html) [last accessed March 2022]

*Fig. 10:* Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara, *Saint Francis receiving the Stigmata*, XV cent., Oil on Panel, 29,2 cm x 18,9 cm, Florence, Fondazione Roberto Longhi Collection, Gregori, 2007, cat. n. 10

*Fig. 11:* Pseudo-Stefano da Ferrara, *Aynard Panel, Virgin and Child with donors with Saint Louis of Toulouse, Saint Marin, and Saint Clare*, XV cent., Oil on Panel, 27 cm x 18 cm, Schubert Collection, Milan (in 1966), <http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/scheda/opera/29961/Giovanni%20da%20Modena%2C%20Madonna%20con%20Bambino%20in%20trono%20tra%20san%20Giovanni%20Evangelista%20e%20donatore%2C%20Santi> [Last accessed MAR22].

*Fig.12:* *A Room of the Mostra della Pittura Bolognese del Trecento, display by Enrico De Angelis*, 1950, Bologna, Archivio Soprintendenza BAS - A. Emiliani, 'Un grande ritorno' in *l'Arte, un universo di relazioni, le mostre di Bologna 1950-2001*, A. Emiliani, M. Scolaro (eds.), Milan, Skira, 2002, pp. 29-102, p. 31

*Fig.13:* *A Room of the Mostra della Pittura Bolognese del Trecento*, 1950, Bologna, Archivio Soprintendenza BAS - A. Emiliani, 'Un grande ritorno' in *l'Arte, un universo di relazioni, le mostre di Bologna 1950-2001*, A. Emiliani, M. Scolaro (eds.), Milan, Skira, 2002, pp. 29-102, p. 31

*Fig.14:* *A Room of the Mostra della Pittura Bolognese del Trecento*, 1950, Bologna - 'La Mostra della pittura bolognese del Trecento' in *Bollettino d'arte*, vol.IV, n. 35, Oct-Dec 1950, pp. 368-70, p. 369

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