

The background of the cover is a complex Renaissance landscape painting. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, suggesting a distant or ethereal setting. In the foreground, a woman in a vibrant blue dress sits on the ground, holding a small child. Beside her, an older man with a white beard, dressed in dark, heavy robes, kneels and holds a small object, possibly a staff or a religious icon. The landscape is filled with lush green trees, rolling hills, and a small village with several houses. In the distance, a large, fortified city or castle sits atop a hill. The overall scene is rich in detail and color, with a focus on the figures in the foreground.

OLD MASTERS in NEW COLOURS

edited by
PATRIK FARKAŠ
JANA ZAPLETALOVÁ

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NEW
COLOURS**

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**OLOMOUC
2023**

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1st edition

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Martin Zlatohlávek, Eliška Zlatohlávková, 2023

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Introduction

Jana Zapletalová

For many years now, the study of artworks of the Old Masters has not been the exclusive preserve of art historians. Today, connoisseurship and other art-historical methods can make much greater use than in the past of the findings of the exact sciences, which make it possible to acquire new knowledge about the artworks of the past that is not visible to the naked eye.¹ Imaging and instrumental methods for visual arts research often enables us to literally “look into the painting”, below the surface of the visible, for example to observe the work in different regions of the invisible spectrum of electromagnetic radiation. By using various research methods – with the necessary caution and awareness of their limitations – it is often possible to gain an insight into the hypothetical process of the creation of an artwork, as well as into different layers of the work. It is possible to characterise the material essence, technological processes or to study the artist’s modifications and later interventions in the work. In short, various research

methods allow us to view artworks from different perspectives and to study them figuratively speaking “in new colours”, often the colours in which they appear to our eyes using a variety of imaging methods. Despite the fact that the knowledge of the natural sciences is well established and commonly used within the international and Czech art-historical and restoration environment, real interdisciplinary integration of knowledge from the humanities and natural sciences into human knowledge about artworks still remains a considerable challenge for art historians, and often proves to be a very difficult task.² In this publication, we have therefore decided to apply the results of primarily non-invasive imaging methods in art-historical practice, and to use them to the greatest extent possible in the interpretation of the individual artworks under study.

The publication presents seven case studies on selected hanging paintings by Old Masters from the Olomouc Museum of Art, which in addition to its own valuable art collections manages the collections of the Archbishopric of Olomouc within the Archdiocesan Museums in Olomouc and Kroměříž.³ The collection of paintings of the bishops and later archbishops

of Olomouc, which is home to five of the works studied in this book, is one of Europe’s significant collections, with its roots reaching back to the most valuable European picture galleries of the 17th century.⁴ The most valuable pieces of the collection were acquired by Bishop Karl von Lichtenstein-Castelcorno (1624–1695) in the second half of the 17th century through the acquisition of larger collections of artworks, primarily from brothers Franz (1632–1694) and Bernard Albert von Imstenraedt (1637–1694) of Cologne. The Imstenraedt collection included paintings from the estate of the English King Charles I Stuart (1600–1649), the nobleman, diplomat and collector Thomas Howard Lord Arundel (1585–1646) and works from the estate of the Parisian merchant and banker Everhard Jabach (1618–1695). Since the 17th century, the collection has decorated not only the interiors of the two main bishop’s residences in Olomouc and Kroměříž, but also smaller residences in Vyškov, Brno, Mírov, Kelč, Chropyně and Hukvaldy. None of the subsequent bishops and archbishops was more committed to the collection than Karl von Lichtenstein-Castelcorno. The collection was expanded to a lesser extent in the following centuries and moved

between the residences of the episcopal network. Unfortunately, it also suffered a number of significant losses under some bishops or archbishops, as the collection did not receive the attention it merited. In 1830, the collection probably sustained its greatest impoverishment when it was partially sold off at public auction. Of the original bishop's collection, only a part, though still impressive, has survived to the present day, containing a number of very fine works of art.

The selection of artworks that have been studied and included as case studies in this publication is based on the professional focus and personal scientific preferences of the individual authors. The oldest piece in the Imstenraedt brothers' collection of paintings in the Archbishop's collections is *The Last Supper* by Pieter Coecke van Aelst (1501–1550), which was brought to Olomouc in 1673.⁵ The other two paintings in question are documented in the collection of the Olomouc bishops from 1691. The painting *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath* is a copy based on a famous work by Orazio Gentileschi (1563–1639) from the Galleria Spada in Rome.⁶ As the author's overpaintings, the so-called *pentimenti*, have shown, this is not just an ordinary copy, but

is either the work of his daughter Artemisia (1593–1653), as stated in the inventory of the Olomouc collection from 1691, or a work created in the immediate vicinity of Orazio Gentileschi by one of his collaborators or imitators. The 1691 inventory of the bishop's collection also documents the small painting *Landscape with the Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, originally identified as the work of a follower, Joachim Patinir (approx. 1480–1524) and here attributed to Lucas Gassel (1480–approx. 1568/1569).⁷

The other two works from the archbishop's collections, to which separate chapters of the book are devoted, belong among the more recent acquisitions of the Olomouc archbishops. A painting on wood with the specific subject *Christ as the Good Shepherd among Angels* was purchased in Rome by Archbishop Theodor Kohn (1845–1915) from an antiquarian in 1901 as a work by the famous painter Parmigianino (1503–1540).⁸ This attribution did not stand for long. Only recently, however, after more than a century, has it been possible to attribute the work convincingly to its author, the Tuscan painter Ulisse Ciocchi (approx. 1570–1631).⁹ By contrast, *The Crucifixion*, which was inspired by a famous

drawing by Michelangelo (1475–1564) or one of his reproductions, and was long attributed to Marcello Venusti (1515–1579), remains an anonymous work by an artist from the second half of the 16th century.¹⁰ This work enhanced the archbishop's collection of paintings thanks to the care of Leopold Prečan (1866–1947), who purchased it in 1931 from the Prostějov antiquarian Vladimír Seidl (1888–after 1946).

In addition to paintings from the property of the Archbishopric of Olomouc, two hanging paintings from the collections of the Olomouc Museum of Art have also been examined.¹¹ The painting *Diana after the Hunt* by Jan Brueghel the Younger (1601–1678) and Hendrick van Balen (1575–1632) was taken into the collections of the Olomouc Museum of Art after 1945,¹² while the famous *The Nursing Madonna* by Bernardo Cavallino (1616–1656) arrived in Olomouc two years later.¹³ Non-invasive research using advanced imaging methods yielded a number of valuable previously unknown findings for both works, including the discovery of significant authorial overpaintings in Cavallino's work.

The connecting element of the artworks under analysis, which are quite

diverse in terms of their authorship, time of creation, the materials used, technique, and last but not least provenance, is the methodological approach that seeks to apply the methods of “technical art history”.¹⁴ The individual studies attempt to use the results of various imaging and instrumental methods for visual arts research for the purpose of art historical interpretation.¹⁵ As the research was always conducted *in situ* in order to ensure the maximum protection of the artworks under study, the team of authors limited themselves to the use of only selected analytical survey methods, or to the evaluation of previously collected samples analysed using scanning electron microscopy with energy dispersive spectrometry (SEM-EDS). Already standard and commonly applied methods were used in the research, in particular infrared reflectography (IRR), infrared technical photography (IR TP), UV-induced visible fluorescence (UVF), X-ray imaging, and X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF).¹⁶

The use of these selected research methods has enabled us to gain new knowledge about the analysed works in terms of their material composition, the techniques used, secondary interventions and the current state

of conservation. These were further compared with existing knowledge and contemporary sources. Information on authorial changes, the form of underdrawings, the method of applying colour pastes, the use of organic dyes, pigments or grounds and *imprimitura* was particularly valuable for the art-historical interpretation. Thus, the research confirmed that a good knowledge of the material, technological processes and state of preservation of the work is essential for

art-historical interpretation. Thanks to the possibilities and qualities of state-of-the-art technology provided today by the exact sciences, new or expanded knowledge can be obtained which, employing an interdisciplinary approach to the material under study, can lead to a better understanding of the artworks, their valorisation and, last but not least, better protection for the future.

Notes:

- 1 Cf., for example, Bomford 1998. – Hermens – Ouwerkerk – Costaras 1998. – Ainsworth 2005. – Freedberg 2006. – Poldi – Villa 2006. – Hermens 2012. – Cardinali 2017. – Dupré 2017. – Jongh – Leeuw – Mass – Pinna – Shindell – Spapens 2018. – Burnstock – Klemm – Laaser – Leonhard – Neugebauer – Reden 2023. – Ravaud 2023, and many others.
- 2 From recent literature published in the Czech Republic with references to other literature, for example, Dáňová – Chlumská 2017. – Šefců 2020. – Chlumská – Šefců – Antušková 2022.
- 3 The authors would like to thank the management and staff of the Archbishopric of Olomouc and the Olomouc Museum of Art for kindly allowing the scientific examination of the collections.
- 4 On the history of the archbishop's picture gallery cf. Breitenbacher 1925. – Breitenbacher 1927. – Breitenbacher – Dostál 1930. – Kurz 1943, pp. 279–282. – Grossmann 1944a, pp. 151–154. – Grossmann 1944b, pp. 173–176. – Šafařík 1964, pp. 171–182. – Tognier 1998. – Slavíček 2010, pp. 191–204. – Kindl 2014, pp. 83–98. – Daniel 2019.
- 5 Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *The Last Supper*, 1528, oil, canvas, 112 × 164 cm, Archbishopric of Olomouc, Olomouc Museum of Art – Kroměříž Archdiocesan Museum. See chapter by Miroslav Kindl, *The Last Supper by Pieter Coecke van Aelst* (Chapter 4).
- 6 Artemisia Gentileschi (?) based on Orazio Gentileschi, *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath*, after 1610, oil, canvas, Archbishopric of Olomouc, Olomouc Museum of Art – Kroměříž Archdiocesan Museum. Cf. the Chapter by Jana Zapletalová, *An Extraordinary Copy? Artemisia Gentileschi (?) based on Orazio Gentileschi, David Contemplating the Head of Goliath* (Chapter 1).

- 7 Lucas Gassel, *Landscape with the Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, second quarter of 16th century. Oil, oak panel, 32 × 48 cm, Archbishopric of Olomouc, Olomouc Museum of Art – Kroměříž Archdiocesan Museum. Cf. the Chapter by Miroslav Kindl, *A Landscape with the Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (Chapter 5).
- 8 Ulisse Ciocchi, *Christ as the Good Shepherd among Angels*, ca. 1614, oil, wood, 29.8 × 64.3 cm. Olomouc Museum of Art – Archdiocesan Museum Kroměříž. Cf. the Chapter by Jana Zapletalová, *The Tale of a Lid that Ended Up in a Picture Gallery* (Chapter 3).
- 9 Cf. Zapletalová – Nesi 2019. The chapter in this book, however, presents additional unpublished findings based on newly conducted research of the work compared to the article.
- 10 Anonymous of 2nd half of 16th century, *The Crucifixion*, 2nd half of 16th century, oil, poplar wood, 48 × 34.5 cm, Archbishopric of Olomouc, Olomouc Museum of Art – Olomouc Archdiocesan Museum. Cf. the Chapter by Martin Zlatohlávek, *Olomouc The Crucifixion based on Michelangelo* (Chapter 7).
- 11 On the history of the Olomouc Museum of Art, cf., for example, Zatloukal 2012.
- 12 Jan Brueghel the Younger and Hendrick van Balen, *Diana after the Hunt*, oil, oak panel, 59.5 × 86 cm, Olomouc Museum of Art. Cf. the Chapter by Eliška Zlatohlávková, *Diana after the Hunt by Jan Brueghel the Younger and Hendrick van Balen* (Chapter 6).
- 13 Bernardo Cavallino, *The Nursing Madonna*, ca. 1650, oil, canvas, 91.5 × 75 cm, Olomouc, Olomouc Museum of Art. Cf. Chapter by Eliška Zlatohlávková and Patrik Farkaš, *The Nursing Madonna by Bernardo Cavallino: Painting inside a painting* (Chapter 2).
- 14 On the technological history cf. note 1 and 2. The last chapter by Martin Zlatohlávek differs in its conception and methodological approach, as it makes only limited use of the knowledge obtained by means of imaging methods, focusing predominantly on the question of image prototypes and authorship.
- 15 The team leader and author of most of the analyses was Patrik Farkaš.
- 16 A certain limitation in deciding which analyses to carry out was also represented by the possibilities of instrumentation within the project *OA ITI-ARTECA: Advanced physical-chemical methods of research and protection of cultural and artistic heritage* (No.: CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/17_048/0007378).



1.

An Extra/ordinary
Copy? Artemisia
Gentileschi (?)
Based on Orazio
Gentileschi, *David
Contemplating the
Head of Goliath*

Jana Zapletalová

**Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi:
multiplications of successful
compositions**

Several original versions of *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath* by Orazio Gentileschi (1563–1639) and his daughter Artemisia (1593–1653),¹ as well as various authorial replicas or copies, circulated throughout a number of European collections during the 17th century. From his known work, we know that, like many other famous painters, Orazio Gentileschi created a series of his compositions in several replicas, variants or versions. The existence of several authorial copies is documented in the case of his works *Nursing Madonna*, *St. Jerome*, *David with the Head of Goliath*, *Nursing Mary Magdalene*, *Danaë* and *Rest of the Holy Family on the Flight into Egypt*, which exist in four authorial variants. The composition *Lot and His Daughters* is known to exist in at least seven versions, five of which are usually considered to be the author's original works.²

The painter's precise motivations for replicating his own, older works, have not been fully clarified.³ Indisputably, a role in the multiplication of the works was played by the success of the individual compositions, in some cases probably also by the wishes of the client, and without doubt also by economic motivations, since less exertion was required while at the same time success was guaranteed. This practice was very widespread, indeed highly characteristic in the work of both Orazio and his daughter. Both father and daughter in fact copied their own works after an interval of several years and frequently even decades. The medium which they both made use of in order to accomplish a faithful reproduction of older painting compositions, which were frequently by now in the ownership of someone else, was probably thorough templates and preparatory sketches.⁴ In the view of Keith Christiansen, who studied replicas and the process of their creation in the work of both Gentileschi, Artemisia learned the craft of painting by using her father's templates or tracings.⁵ She subsequently adopted this procedure herself for replicating her own later compositions. In her own words, she guarded her templates very carefully so that they could not be misused by

other painters from her milieu. Of Artemisia's authorial replicas, variants or versions we could mention for example two famous versions of *Judith Slaying Holofernes* (first variant in Naples, Museo di Capodimonte; second variant in Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi).

The Kroměříž copy?

The picture collection of the Olomouc bishops and archbishops in the Kroměříž chateau boasts one such copy or replica of a painting by Orazio Gentileschi⁶ [fig. 1–2]. The original of his famous composition *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath* is housed in the Galleria Spada in Rome⁷ [fig. 3]. The Old Testament story of the future King David and the giant Goliath was usually depicted by painters at one of the climactic moments in the plot: as a rule when David fired the stone from his catapult at the Philistine warrior, who was renowned for his stature and bravery. David, then of a tender age and juvenile stature, felled the giant, in defiance of all those who had initially mocked his audacity. He then sealed the ignominy of the uneven contest by beheading Goliath with his own sword, thereby affirming the triumph of spirit, boldness and faith over mere physical size.



Fig. 1: Artemisia Gentileschi (?) based on Orazio Gentileschi, *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath*, after 1610, oil, canvas, previous state of the painting before 1998 with secondary canvas additions, measuring 198 × 153 cm in its historical adjustment
Archbishopric of Olomouc, Olomouc Museum of Art – Kroměříž Archdiocesan Museum

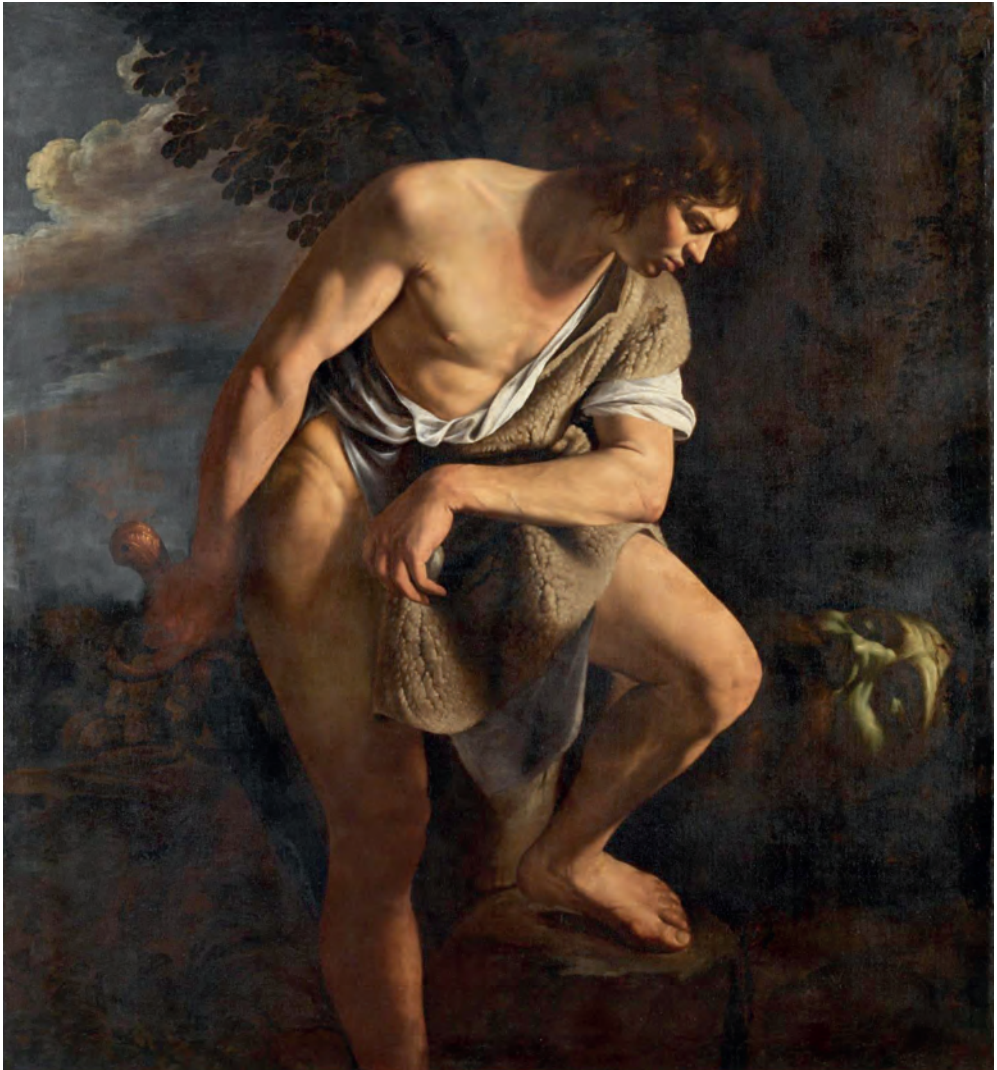


Fig. 2: Artemisia Gentileschi (?) based on Orazio Gentileschi,
David Contemplating the Head of Goliath, after 1610, oil, canvas, 152.5 × 142 cm
Archbishopric of Olomouc, Olomouc Museum of Art – Kroměříž Archdiocesan Museum



Fig. 3: Orazio Gentileschi, *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath*, oil, canvas, 173 × 142 cm
Rome, Galleria Spada



Fig. 4: The outline of David's figure from Kroměříž artwork shown on top of Gentileschi's painting of the same theme from Galleria Spada. The resulting overlay shows a slight shift in the head area and other minor proportional differences.



Fig. 5: Orazio Gentileschi, *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath*, oil, copper, 36.7 × 28.7 cm
Berlin, Staatliche Gemäldegalerie

In the painting in Kroměříž there is no trace of this unequal battle. The painter expected viewers to be familiar with the story from the first book of Samuel and like David himself, alone in the landscape, stooped over the severed and disfigured head of the giant, to reflect upon the painting and contemplate the impermanence of earthly life and the meaning of higher things.

The painting *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath* is first documented in the collection of the Olomouc bishops and archbishops in an inventory of today's Archbishop's Palace in Olomouc dated 9 April 1691, which was made during the episcopate of Karl von Lichtenstein-Castelcornio (1624–1695).⁸ The entry recorded under item 109 reads “*David mit dem Haupt Goliath in schwartz vergolter Ram, vom Arthemio.*”⁹ This inventory, judging by its content and the quality of its processing, was compiled by a person adept in such matters, who evidently managed the collection in the bishop's services and also took care of acquisitions. No other inventory of the archbishop's collections was of such high quality.

The subsequent inventories from the end of the 18th century were inconsistent and only broadly sweeping.¹⁰ Artemisia's painting was probably kept in Olomouc until the end of the 18th century, since it cannot be identified under any item of the inventory of the Kroměříž part of the collection that was conducted in 1776. Due to the lack of interest in the collection throughout the course of the 18th century, knowledge about a series of attributions was lost, and as a result the possibility cannot be excluded that the painting is hidden in the so-called “Cerroni” inventory of the Olomouc residence from the end of the 18th century under the item “*David mit dem Haupt Goliats – Palma*”,¹¹ since in the great majority of cases this inventory lists the authors of the paintings entirely erroneously and groundlessly. The painting was probably transported to Kroměříž at the end of the 18th century, and on the occasion of its installation in the upper section of the panel gallery of the Throne Hall of the chateau, where it was housed until 2011, it was enlarged by strips of canvas at the top and on the right [fig. 1]. Thanks to its placement in the panel gallery, the painting was evidently spared the infamous auction of 1830, and has been preserved in the archbishop's collections up to the present day.

For many years, scholars considered the Kroměříž painting, due to its location on the highest level of the panel gallery, to be merely a later copy of the renowned Roman work. Thanks to an art historical and technological survey conducted in connection with a restoration intervention (Marie Dočekalová, 2011–2012), it has been possible to valorise the work and demonstrate that the Kroměříž painting is not merely an ordinary historical copy of the famous original.¹² However, first of all let us take a look at the artworks by Orazio and Artemisia on this theme that have been preserved or documented in writing.

Orazio paints David with the Head of Goliath

During the course of his life, Orazio Gentileschi painted a number of works on the theme of David and Goliath. His earlier work, now housed in the collections of The National Gallery in Dublin, depicts David at the moment of beheading the giant. Later, around the year 1610, by which time he had become an acclaimed and sought-after painter, Orazio reworked the theme and created a new, successful iconographic type – *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath*, today located in the Galleria Spada in Rome. This

inventively conceived story gained considerable popularity among patrons and lovers of art. Orazio's composition was indisputably influenced by Caravaggio's *David with the Head of Goliath* from the Galleria Borghese, as well as by the rendering of the theme by Guido Reni of the Louvre, who at that time was also working in the city on the Tiber.¹³ Orazio succeeded in capturing the harmony between David's physical beauty and his profundity through the wistful expression on his face, with hints of sorrow, melancholy and contemplation of the impermanence. It was also thanks to this that Orazio's depiction of the story reaped considerable acclaim during his lifetime, becoming a highly-valued and sought-after work among collectors. As a result, several original versions of *David Contemplating the Head of Goliath* by Orazio and Artemisia, as well as various authorial replicas or copies, were produced immediately afterwards, and circulated in a number of European collections during the 17th century. A fundamental question remains concerning their provenance: which existing painting to attribute to which archive or literary reference.

Orazio's painting from the Galleria Spada was originally owned, together

with other prestigious works, by the Roman collector Alessandro Biffi, after which it was transferred “*per pegno di una pigione*” into the estate of the Veralli family in 1637. Upon this occasion it was listed in the inventory as “*Un David tela grande mano di Oratio Gentileschi*”.¹⁴ Maria Veralli, the family heiress, was married in 1636 to Orazio Spada, and at some time afterwards Gentileschi’s *David* found its way to the Palazzo Spada, where it has remained to this day. The same fate was shared by Artemisia’s paintings *Nursing Madonna* and *St. Cecilia*, which were also owned by Alessandro Biffi.¹⁵ For several centuries, *David* was listed in the inventories of the Galleria Spada under the name of Caravaggio, and it was not until 1916 that Roberto Longhi identified as the work of Orazio.¹⁶

Longhi identified the hand of Agostino Tassi¹⁷ in the landscape painting, and for this reason he proposed that the painting was dated to before 1611, when the two painters became sworn enemies as a result of Tassi’s rape of Artemisia, after which they ceased working together. With reference to the fact that Tassi’s contribution had been ruled out, there was no longer any reason to date the *David* of Spada to the years 1610–1611. For this rea-



Fig. 6: Based on Orazio Gentileschi, *David with the Head of Goliath*, oil, chert, 32 × 22 cm
Milano, Galleria dell’Arcivescovado

son, in the past for example Gianni Papi proposed dating the *David* of Spada to the period around 1620.¹⁸ Papi assumed a greater passage of time between the two paintings by Orazio on this theme, namely the *David* from Dublin (traditionally dated to 1605–1610) and the *David* from the Galleria Spada (traditionally dated to 1610–1611). Even though the painting from the Galleria Spada shifted the focus of the scene from the rather plot-centred rendering of the painting from Dublin to a deeper,

more mature and meditative level, and the change in conception of both paintings is pronounced, in the light of the discovery of the Kroměříž work I propose that we consider reinstating Longhi's original dating for the reasons stated below.

Orazio Gentileschi created at least one version of his painting. It is kept at the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Berlin¹⁹ [fig. 5]. This smaller painting on copper with minor alterations repeats the large canvas from the Galleria Spada, and thereby provides us with an idea of the form of Orazio's original work. In this case also, in which Orazio created a variant of his own work after a certain period of time, we can observe that he left the figure of the Old Testament king in an identical position, while by contrast he substantially altered the landscape framing and the rotation of the head of Goliath. One copy of this version from the Gemäldegalerie belongs to a private collection in Berlin, another is housed in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum in Braunschweig.²⁰

In addition to the author's replicas and versions, there are also two more works which relate to the canvas from the Galleria Spada. This is a copy of *David* from the Galleria Spada, which

is housed by the Galleria dell'Arcivescovado in Milan²¹ [fig. 6]. We are informed that in February 1650, the Archbishop of Milan Cesare Monti (1593–1650) bequeathed two smaller works painted on chert to his successors, together with other artworks. These were two copies with variants of *Judith Beheading Holofernes* by Artemisia and *David with the Head of Goliath* by Orazio. The donation inventory from 1650 states: “l'altro un *David nudo con poca pelle, e panno bianco sopra una spalla, piede alzato sopra una pietra, la Testa del Gigante...*”²² The authorship of both works caused confusion throughout the entire 20th century. Roberto Longhi attributed both to Artemisia, who more often painted works of smaller dimensions on slate. At present both paintings are considered copies, without any determination of the author.²³

We also have documentation of a further painting, namely “*Davide trionfante di Golia*”, which was housed in the Palazzo Brignole in Genoa a during the 17th century, and was viewed in the 18th century by Carlo Giuseppe Ratti and Luigi Lanzi. According to Lanzi's description, “*Davide che sovrasta al morto Golia*” may have concerned an authorial replica or copy of Orazio's *David* from

the Galleria Spada or a composition closely resembling it.²⁴

Artemisia paints David with the Head of Goliath

During the course of her life, Artemisia Gentileschi also produced a number of paintings on the theme of David with the Head of Goliath. According to reports from the historiographic literature this concerned at least three paintings, none of which had been considered to have been preserved until recently. This consensus was overturned only when Gianni Papi, with extraordinary intuition, recognised Artemisia's work from a black and white photograph of a painting auctioned at Sotheby's on 9 July 1975²⁵ [fig. 7]. Thanks to the new owner, who purchased the painting at an auction in Munich in 2018, Papi recently had the opportunity to study this painting from a private collection during a restoration intervention, upon which he published an article in *The Burlington Magazine* accompanied by a technological survey.²⁶ Papi's superb expert ability was confirmed by the finding of a signature on the blade of a sword, with the remainder of a no longer legible date.²⁷

According to Papi's convincing view, this newly discovered painting by Artemisia can be dated to the end of the 1630s, and therefore linked with the painting documented in the collections of the English King Charles I Stuart,²⁸ about which we have simultaneous reports from Horace Walpole and Matthew Pilkington.²⁹ Both mentions are relatively late – originating from the 18th century, when this painting was probably no longer present in the royal collections.

Horace Walpole's five-volume work *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, published between the years of 1762 and 1771, was based upon the manuscript notes of the engraver, antiquarian and art expert George Vertue (1684–1756), who compiled a detailed catalogue of the collections of the royal family. According to Walpole's *Anecdotes*, “*King Charles had several of her works. Her best was David with the head of Goliath.*”³⁰ Walpole does not specify the themes of the other paintings by Artemisia from Charles I's collection, which again attests to the esteem in which this composition was held among her works in the royal collection. Following Walpole's example, and evidently without knowledge of the painting itself, Matthew Pilkington in 1770 commented that Artemisia's David “*the most celebrated picture*