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Tiepolo and Self-Representation: A 'Family Affair'[1]

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Abstract

This essay explores the various facets and implications of the captivating process of self-representation by Giambattista Tiepolo and his sons and students, Giandomenico and Lorenzo, in their artistic work. This common theme resembles a true 'family affair'. It presents an in-depth study of several unpublished documents housed in the Archivio e Fototeca Antonio Morassi in Venice related to Giambattista's only known independent self-portrait, along with new insights into the ongoing desire of the 'three Tiepolos' to depict themselves and one another in their artwork. Such an analysis allows for a broader contextualization of the genre of the self-portrait as a socio-cultural phenomenon, in relation to the growing awareness of the role of the artist and the function of the patron. Finally, the research assesses the methodological implications inherent in this intriguing 'search for the effigy', proposing a range of case studies that examine the blurred boundary between interpretation and the potential for over-interpretation of Tiepolo's self-portraits.

Keywords

Portrait – Self-Portrait – Identity – Giambattista Tiepolo – Giandomenico Tiepolo – Lorenzo Tiepolo

This study sheds new light on the varied solutions devised by Giambattista Tiepolo and his two sons and pupils, Giandomenico and Lorenzo, in modeling their image over time. The analysis of

the numerous self-portraits scattered throughout their artistic production allows for a broader contextualization of the genre of the self-portrait as a socio-cultural phenomenon, a tradition of ancient origin that developed over the centuries and took on different stylistic forms. With the extensive tradition of studies as its foundation, this study aims to bring new light and reflect on the reiterated desire of the 'three Tiepolos' to portray themselves and each other throughout their careers in a witty pictorial game that sees them at times depicted as the undisputed protagonists in their works, and at others concealed within their creations. The research also questions the issues inherent in this fascinating 'search for the sitter' and the fine line between identification, interpretation, and the borderline case of the over-interpretation of the Tiepolo self-portraits. Finally, the study offers a fascinating insight into documents in the Archivio e Fototeca Antonio Morassi in Venice, presented here for the first time, relating to Giambattista Tiepolo's only known autonomous self-portrait.

Identifying the self-portraits of Giambattista, the *caposcuola* (Venice, 1696–Madrid, 1770), is made easier by his particularly characteristic physiognomy—an oval and sharply drawn face, clear eyes, and an aquiline nose. These physiognomic features, supported by documentary and iconographic evidence, are confirmed in several portraits of the artist. Among these, it is important to highlight the engraving by Giovanni Cattini, based on an invention by Bartolomeo Nazari, titled 'in perpetuae aestimationis signum' (1744), and the one by Alessandro Longhi in the *Compendio delle vite de' pittori veneziani istorici più rinomati del presente secolo* (1762), accompanied by inscriptions that reveal the sitter's identity without leaving any room for doubt.[2]

[2] See, respectively, Bianchi, 'I ritratti incisi da Giovanni e Francesco Cattini', 67 and 69–70; and Delorenzi, 'Il "Compendio" di Alessandro Longhi'.

Although lacking inscriptions or signatures, the artist's numerous self-portraits have been handed down by a long tradition of scholarship, which identifies Tiepolo as 'reincarnated' in the protagonists of his creations or disguised amongst his crowded compositions. One of his most famous self-portraits appears in the episode of *Rachel Hiding the Idols* in the fresco in the gallery of the Palazzo Patriarcale in Udine (1726; **Fig. 1**), in which Giambattista appears in the guise of Jacob, flanked by Rachel, who has the features of his wife, Cecilia Guardi, and in direct dialogue with the bust of his patron, Cardinal Dionisio Dolfin, thus proposing a reinterpretation of *Genesis* in a key of 'fairytale domesticity'.[3] One should also note *Apelles Painting the Portrait of Campaspe* in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (c. 1726), in which Giambattista, who appears in the crowd on the far left, turns his gaze towards the spectator, asserting his presence as the protagonist and architect of the painted vision he created.[4] Aware of his talents and growing fame, Tiepolo took on the guise of the most famous painter of Antiquity in the canvas *Alexander and Campaspe in the Studio of Apelles* in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (1725–1726): Giambattista-Apelles is focused on painting the beautiful Campaspe, depicted with the features of his wife Cecilia, as seen in Udine. He is accompanied by a young Moor, identified as Ali, who was an actual servant in the Tiepolo household, and a Maltese dog, which also connects back to

[3] Rizzi, *Gli affreschi del Tiepolo*; Gemin and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: i dipinti*, 252 and 255, no. 82; Pavanello, 'Un pittore "tutto spirito e foco"', 55. Mangili in 'Tiepolo a Udine: 1729' postpones the dating to 1729.

[4] Christiansen, *Giambattista Tiepolo*, 86–103, no. 12e.

the artist's domestic environment (**Fig. 2**).[5] The painting presents a complex blend of myth and daily life, enabling the painter to journey through time in search of glorification that traces its roots to the dawn of the Western civilization.

One of Tiepolo's most famous self-portraits appears in the grandiose project in Würzburg, where the master painter arrived in 1750, accompanied by his two sons and collaborators. In the fresco *The Olympus and the Four Continents*, in correspondence with *Europe*, the artist chose to place his self-portrait alongside that of Giandomenico, who played such a large part in that commission.[6] Here Giambattista is positioned right next to the personification of *Painting* and is depicted in simple work clothes, unlike his son, who is fashionably dressed and wears a wig. Suppose Giandomenico looks in the viewer's direction as if intrigued by what is happening outside the pictorial sphere. In that case, his father 'has eyes only for the spectacle he has created'.[7] In the vault have also been identified the portraits of Tiepolo's colleagues and collaborators, as had already been the case in Palazzo Labia (1746–1747), where Giambattista

[5] The large canvases leaning against the wall in Apelles's studio have been identified as two works by Giambattista himself, in a solemn and smug self-celebration of his own work. Given the great self-referentiality of the work, it is very likely that Tiepolo painted the canvas for himself or at least for a small audience capable of appreciating his refined humor; see D. Ton, in Bergamini, Craievich, and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo 'il miglior pittore di Venezia'*, 222, no. 11.

[6] Gemin and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: i dipinti*, 426, no. 415.

[7] 'non ha occhi che per lo spettacolo che egli stesso ha creato', Mariuz, *Tiepolo*, 325, but see also 361 and 365. For an interesting insight into the graphic qualities found in Tiepolo's self-portrait frescoed on the vault in Würzburg, see Dombrowski, 'Disegnare a fresco', 59 and 68–69.

portrayed himself flanked by his collaborator—the *quadraturista* painter Girolamo Mengozzi Colonna—between the monumental columns of the loggia on the far left in the *Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra*. In the preparatory canvas for the latter Venetian project, Tiepolo decided not to include his self-portrait, only to portray himself as the director of the whole affair in the final fresco version with a real *coup de théâtre*.[8] It is interesting to note that Giambattista carried out an opposite operation in his *Martyrdom of St. Agatha* (1734–1737, Padua, Basilica di Sant'Antonio), in which he appeared as an eyewitness to the sacred episode only in the small preparatory canvas (**Fig. 3**). This may have been an unusual operation of self-elimination in the final version, a change of heart perhaps induced by the commissioners, perhaps motivated by a personal rethinking of the composition, or by a rediscovered Christian *humilitas*.[9]

Giambattista Tiepolo's explicit desire for self-modelling follows in the wake of the broader genre of the artist's self-portrait, a tradition that timidly raised its head during the Middle Ages—mainly in connection with the search for Christian salvation—and reached full artistic dignity in the Renaissance. From the sixteenth century it became very much *à la mode*, undergoing significant developments and increasing popularity, also in the centuries that followed, and to the

[8] Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo*, 275–276, nos. 201/7 and 201/7a.

[9] Tiepolo depicts himself on the far right of the composition as he closely observes the unfolding of the tragic event with a furrowed brow and a contrite gaze. The current location of the preparatory canvas, formerly in the Broglio collection in Paris and reported on the London antiques market in 1969, is unknown; Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo*, 237–238, nos. 124 and 124a. Morassi (*A Complete Catalogue of the Paintings*, 40, fig. 123) mentions another sketch from the Broglio collection related to the altarpiece in Padua, where the artist's self-portrait does not appear.

present day.[10] The phenomenon is closely linked to the broader genre of portraiture, the aim of which was to hand down over time the memory of a particularly worthy subject, in order to celebrate their power, social status and noble descent.[11] The self-portrait, however, presupposes the artist's emancipation and the growing awareness of his own position in society, bringing together aspects related to patronage, the history of collecting, and the cultural and socio-economic frame of reference.[12]

In confirmation of the important implications of the tradition of *self-fashioning* in Giambattista's production, we here propose some significant comparisons between the self-portraits created by Tiepolo and the varied solutions of self-representation adopted by artists in earlier centuries, highlighting the similarities and differences. It cannot be excluded that some of the cases investigated below were also known to Giambattista and had stimulated his imagination, either because of their past fame, or as handed down in the sources, or even as works considered worthy of interest by eighteenth-century artists, scholars, and collectors.

Among the most famous examples from the Italian Renaissance is Benozzo Gozzoli's self-portrait in the Chapel of the Magi in Palazzo Medici Riccardi in Florence (1459), where the

[10] For an investigation of the self-portrait genre from the Middle Ages to the contemporary age, see Hall, *The Self-Portrait: A Cultural History*. See also Kuspit, 'The Self-Portrait as a Clue'; and Bonafoux, 'Autoritratti o tratto autori'.

[11] Delorenzi, *La galleria di Minerva*, 119–121, but see Zuffi, *Il ritratto: capolavori* for a wide-ranging investigation into the portrait genre.

[12] Impelluso, 'L'autoritratto', but see also the section 'The Intellectual, Social and Psychic Contexts for Self-Portraiture' in Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture*, 13–41.

painter depicted himself as one of the crowd participating in the *Procession of the Magi*, a pageant that flows seamlessly along the three main walls of the room and symbolically ends in the *Adoration of the Child* painted in the altarpiece in the square-plan apse.[13] Gozzoli depicts himself looking towards the spectator—as was customary in the fifteenth century for self-portraits in a 'setting'[14]—wearing a red cap with the inscription 'OPVS BENOTII': this signature, in gilded capital letters, proudly emphasizes the artist's role in the prestigious project commissioned by Cosimo de' Medici the Elder.[15] This illustrious fifteenth-century precedent is

[13] Acidini Luchinat, 'La cappella con il "Viaggio dei Magi"'. See also the chapter 'The Florentine Artist as Witness in Religious Narrative' in Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture*, in particular 43–53 for further discussion on the subject.

[14] Self-portraits were painted with the help of a mirror, an element that contributed to the diffusion of the compositional model characterized by the artist's gaze directed towards the viewer. In *De Pictura* (II 46), Leon Battista Alberti suggested that painters use the mirror as a useful expedient to improve the quality of their work, as it is an instrument of truth: 'E saratti a ciò conoscere buono giudice lo specchio […]. Adunque le cose prese dalla natura si emendino collo specchio' [Certainly a mirror will be an excellent judge to examine this result […]. Let, therefore, things taken from Nature be corrected through the control of a mirror]; Di Stefano, 'Leon Battista Alberti e la metafora dello specchio', 489, but also 501–502; quotation and translation in Sinisgalli, *Il nuovo 'De pictura'*, 231.

[15] A second self-portrait by Benozzo Gozzoli has been identified on the west wall of the Chapel of the Magi (this time unsigned), in the man with the blue and white turban with his head turned to the right. In this instance, the artist depicts himself in a less official pose and wearing working

linked to the numerous works in which Tiepolo depicts himself among the figures in his crowded compositions—historical, allegorical or religious—with his gaze directed at the observer as the undisputed architect of the scene, as is the case, for instance, in the aforementioned *Triumph of Marius* painted for Palazzo Dolfin in Venice. It is important, however, to point out one significant difference compared to the Florentine example: to date, there is no known signed self-portrait by Giambattista, an element that would have allowed the artist's features to be unequivocally immortalized. An objective confirmation of these is only possible thanks to the engravings in which Tiepolo's portraits are accompanied by inscriptions that confirm the identity of the sitter.

Another interesting trend, already in vogue in the fifteenth century, was the practice of placing alongside the self-portrait of the 'main' artist responsible for the work a portrait of his most talented collaborators. Among numerous examples is the cycle of frescos *Storie degli Ultimi Giorni* [*Stories of the Last Days*] in the Chapel of San Brizio in Orvieto Cathedral. In the lunette *Preaching and Deeds of the Antichrist* (c. 1503), Luca Signorelli, dressed in a black cloak and wearing a cap, portrays himself on the edge of the scene with his gaze turned towards the spectators, as if to invite them to enter, placing himself in the position of a mediator between the painted action and the faithful.[16] The painter from Cortona, however, did not forget to pay

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head-covering, in contrast to the signed self-portrait on the east wall in which he presents himself as an elegant citizen with a proud gaze. See Acidini Luchinat, *Benozzo Gozzoli*, 367; Cole Ahl, *Benozzo Gozzoli*, 96–98; and Padoa Rizzo, *Benozzo Gozzoli: un pittore insigne*, 109.

[16] Henry, 'Gli gettò addosso il suo mantello'; Davanzo, *Memorie, rimorsi, terrori, tormenti*, 99–101, but see the whole volume for a recent and in-depth analysis of the Chapel of San Brizio.

homage to the artist responsible for the first phase of the decoration of the chapel (1447) and depicted at his side the (presumed) *post mortem* portrait of Beato Angelico in Dominican robes, captured in the act of indicating their joint creative effort.[17]

A slightly different case in point is that provided by the contemporary example of Pinturicchio's self-portrait flanked by the portrait of the young Raphael that tradition has identified in the two figures with the refined poses and clothing in the lower left portion of the scene *Pius II canonizes Saint Catherine of Siena* (c. 1505) in the Piccolomini Library of Siena Cathedral.[18] In contrast to the Chapel of San Brizio, where the contemporary and black robes of

[17] The supposed portrait of Fra Angelico, as such already referred to in the earliest historiography, has been identified by some scholars as the possible portrait of the Dominican who inspired the iconographic-doctrinal project of the cycle of frescos; see Delogu, 'L'anima e la carne', 91–93. Sara Nair James takes a different view in *Signorelli and Fra Angelico at Orvieto*, 69; in her opinion, the identification of the two figures clothed in black as the two artists is incorrect, interpreting them rather as 'anonymous commentator figures, or *festaiuoli*, who mark the beginning of the narrative'.

[18] The young Raphael is identified as the figure in the foreground on the far left, flanked by the self-portrait of the older Pinturicchio, who is depicted with a candle in his hand and a red cap on his head. See Shepherd, *A Monument to Pope Pius II*, 161–162 and note 90; Mancini, *Pintoricchio*, 246, but see the whole of Chapter IX for an in-depth study of the Piccolomini Library in Siena. Pinturicchio seems to have recalled his collaboration with Raphael in the episode of the *Departure of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini for the Council of Basel* by depicting the capital letters 'B(ernardo)'

the two artists strongly suggest both a chromatic and symbolic detachment from the sacred scene taking place, in Siena, Pinturicchio depicts himself and his young collaborator from Urbino as two secular gentlemen perfectly inserted and at ease among the public consisting of religious orders attending the event.[19]

This same type of portrait and self-portrait can also be found in some of Tiepolo's works, as confirmed, for instance, by the aforementioned *Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra* in Palazzo Labia, in which Giambattista is depicted alongside his collaborator Girolamo Mengozzi Colonna, both wearing oriental-style head-coverings to better immerse themselves in the exotic

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and 'R(affaello)' on the tablet of the *grottesca* decoration on the left pillar of the scene; Frommel, 'Raffaello nella Libreria Piccolomini', 56.

[19] Pinturicchio's self-portrait in the Piccolomini Library has been linked to the self-portrait painted in fresco in the Baglioni Chapel in Spello in 1501, where the artist depicts himself in a half-length portrait in a *trompe-l'oeil* painting, accompanied by a plaque bearing the inscription 'BERNARDINVS PICTORICIVS PERVSINVS' embellished with a coral necklace from which hang paint brushes. It is a hybrid self-portrait, halfway between a 'set' and an autonomous representation, a device already used by Perugino in the Sala dell'Udienza of the Collegio del Cambio in Perugia (around 1500); see Benazzi, *Pintoricchio a Spello*, 24; Scarpellini and Silvestrelli, *Pintoricchio*, 214; Mancini, *Pintoricchio*, 192–193 and 197; and Rejaie, 'Pintoricchio's Self-Portrait'. For Perugino's self-portrait, see Guerrini, 'L'Autoritratto del Perugino', and F. Piagnani, catalogue entry in Mancini and Natali, *Perugino e Raffaello. Modelli nobili*, 164–169, no. 1, but see also Mancini, 'Fuit hic perusinus Apelles' for an interesting contextualization of the artist self-portrait between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

atmosphere (**Fig. 4**). Although integrated within the scene—as we have already observed in the Piccolomini Library—Tiepolo never abandons his role as director, appearing from behind the scenes 'like a scenographer' supervising 'the smooth running of the spectacle'[20]—as we saw, centuries earlier, in the Chapel of San Brizio. A further parallel can be found in the vault of the ceremonial staircase in Würzburg, where Giambattista portrayed himself together with the numerous collaborators who had made it possible to complete the project.[21] In this gallery of portraits we recognize the architect Balthasar Neumann (lying on top of a cannon with his dog by his side), the sculptor Bossi (wrapped in a large light-colored cloak near the symbols of sculpture), and the decorator Franz Ignaz Roth (near Tiepolo's self-portrait),[22] in a gratified celebration of the protagonists of the grandiose project.

Among the countless examples of artists' self-portraits in the Italian Renaissance, it is worth singling out Raphael's famous self-portrait in the *School of Athens*, painted in fresco on the east wall of the Stanza della Segnatura in the Palazzi Apostolici Vaticani (c. 1509–1511). Here the artist from Urbino—positioned on the far right with his gaze directed towards the spectator—is

[20] 'come uno scenografo […] sorveglino il buon svolgimento dello spettacolo'; see Mariuz, *Le storie di Antonio e Cleopatra*, 56.

[21] Gemin and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: i dipinti*, 426 no. 415.

[22] This figure, 'with a fiery complexion and a shiny nose' ('dal colorito infuocato e il naso lustro'), is instead identified by Morassi as his collaborator Urlaub; see Morassi, *G. B. Tiepolo*, 26. The portrait of Franz Ignaz Neumann, son of the great architect Balthasar, has also been identified as the man in the red uniform holding the bridle of the brown horse; see Büttner and Mülbe, *Giovanni Battista Tiepolo*, 120.

depicted in contemporary dress: the black hat, in a style later referred to as a 'raffaella', and the red cape correspond to simple work clothes, thus making explicit his profession and his role.[23] It seems, moreover, that Raphael portrayed himself as the Greek painter Apelles[24] and that he painted the greatest philosophers of Antiquity with the facial features of the greatest artists of his own time, a choice aimed at strongly affirming the intellectual dignity of the modern artist by equating Painting with the Liberal Arts.[25] The Greek painter Apelles was an artist well known

[23] The comparison with Raphael's *Self-Portrait* in the Uffizi (c. 1506) is fundamental. This is an autonomous self-portrait in which the artist represents himself with the same physiognomic features, hairstyle, and dress that he would employ again a few years later in the *School of Athens*. See C. Filippini, catalogue entry in Giusti and Sframeli, *I volti dell'arte*, 72–73, no. 2; F. Marcelli, catalogue entry in Mancini and Natali, *Perugino e Raffaello*, 170–175, no. 2; and Marcelli, 'Oltre l'icona del genio'.

[24] Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura*, 110–112. Certain scholars have also identified in the *Parnassus* in the Stanza della Segnatura Raphael's self-portrait in the figure of laurel-crowned poet Statius, thus appearing among the greatest ancient and modern poets. See Reale, *Raffaello: il 'Parnaso'*, 126–127.

[25] Art is therefore configured as supreme delight in the Good and Truth (the object of philosophical research) through the Beautiful; see Reale, *Raffaello: la 'Scuola di Atene'*, 39–41. The search for these "hidden" portraits must have already intrigued Raphael's contemporaries, as is confirmed by Vasari, who in his *Lives* identified 'Bramante architettore' in the bending figure intent on tracing geometric figures on a blackboard; see Reale, *La 'Scuola di Atene' di Raffaello*, 125. And it is precisely on the border of the tunic of this figure—depicted alongside the artist's self-portrait—

during the Renaissance, as confirmed by the presence in the library of Pope Julius II of the *Historia Naturalis* by Pliny the Elder, in which the Roman writer celebrates Apelles's superiority over all the painters of ancient Greece.[26] It is interesting to bear in mind, also, that Raphael was compared to Apelles while he was still alive: for instance, Antonio Tebaldeo's sonnet (c. 1516) thanking Raphael for the portrait he had painted of him, and the epigram by Girolamo Borgia, in which 'Raphaelem Urbinatem pictorem nobilissimum' is extolled as 'alter Apelles' (1516–1520).[27]

This illustrious precedent is linked to Tiepolo's painting of *Apelles Painting the Portrait of Campaspe* in Montreal, in which Giambattista—like Raphael—takes on the appearance of the famous Greek painter, aware of his own talent and growing fame. This episode, a *topos* throughout the eighteenth century, became an ingenious device for praising the artist's work. Unlike Raphael, who portrays himself in contemporary dress, Giambattista paints Apelles—and

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that we find Raphael's signature, in the letters 'R V S M' to be read as 'RAPHAEL VRBINAS SVA MANV'; see Redig de Campos, *Raffaello e Michelangelo*, 15–16 note 2.

[26] For further details, see the chapter 'The Stanza della Segnatura and Its Painted Program: The Library of Julius II' in Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura*, 9–16.

[27] Also in the epitaph dedicated to Raphael by Lelio Gregorio Giraldi (c. 1520), Raphael is compared to Zeuxis and Apelles, a comparison that recurs in Vasari's preface to the third part of the *Vite* (1568). See Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources*, 1:277–279 and 1:653–654; Ebert-Schifferer, 'Raffaello e le sue reincarnazioni', 5–7; and Maffei, 'Un giano bifronte', 138–141.

therefore himself—with a touch of whimsy, which can be seen in his choice of dress, neither ancient nor contemporary in style.[28]

The Vatican frescos offer a further insight into the broader issue of the process of creation of a work of art. If one compares the initial preparatory studies with the final version, it is possible to observe changes in the composition and the addition or elimination of figures, as is the case in the preparatory cartoon for the *School of Athens* (Milan, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana) in which Raphael's self-portrait is absent, only to appear in the fresco.[29] In the same way, Tiepolo decided not to include himself in the preparatory canvas for the *Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra* in Palazzo Labia (Stockholm, Universitet Konsthistoriska Institutionen)[30] nor in that for *Olympus and the Four Continents* in Würzburg (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art),[31] while

[28] K. Christiansen, catalogue entry in Christiansen, *Giambattista Tiepolo*, 84–86, no. 11.

[29] In the preparatory cartoon, Raphael left a blank space where his self-portrait would be inserted in the fresco, a detail that seems to imply its later addition; see Redig de Campos, *Notizie intorno all'autoritratto di Raffaello*, 4. On the preparatory cartoon, see also Beltrami, *La scuola di Atene alla Pinacoteca Ambrosiana*; and Rocca, *Raffaello: il cartone della Scuola di Atene*.

[30] Gemin and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: i dipinti*, 396–397, nos. 376 and 376a, in which an interesting comparison is made between the *bozzetto* and the final version in fresco. For further discussion on the subject of the *Banquet*, the result of years of 'variations on the theme' by Tiepolo, see Callegari, 'Banchetti e cene'.

[31] The preparatory canvas also lacks the portrait of the patron, Von Greiffenclau, who in the Würzburg fresco stands out triumphantly supported by *Fame* and *Glory*. This addition—certainly at the behest of the patron—only occurred at a very advanced stage of the work, when the

consciously depicting himself in the fresco compositions. In the aforementioned *Martyrdom of Saint Agatha* in Padua, Giambattista's approach was reversed, as he included his self-portrait only in the small preparatory canvas, completely disappearing in the final version.

Among the many offshoots of the self-portrait genre in the seventeenth century is to be noted the increasing popularity of the allegorical self-portrait, in which the artist depicts himself as a mythological, historical, or religious figure.[32] One of the most striking examples is the *Self-Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria* by Artemisia Gentileschi (c. 1615–1617; London, National Gallery), in which the painter portrays herself as a female martyr.[33] This choice of

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preparatory cartoons had already been partially transferred. Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo*, 289, nos. 229 and 229a.

[32] For an in-depth discussion on allegorical portraits and self-portraits, see Impelluso, 'Nei panni di un altro'.

[33] Initially conceived as a simple self-portrait, the work was later modified with the addition of the crown, halo, palm leaf, and broken wheel, Saint Catherine of Alexandria's characteristic attributes. The effigy of Artemisia Gentileschi thus was transformed during the creative process, becoming a fourth-century martyr. Also in the *Self-Portrait as a Female Martyr* (c. 1613–1614, Private Collection), the artist depicts herself wearing a turban and holding a palm branch, the latter probably added at a later stage, as in the London painting. See, respectively, L. Treves, catalogue entry in Treves, *Artemisia*, 140–142, no. 11, and 134–135, no. 9, but see also Treves, 'Artemisia portraying her self' in the same volume. The *Self-Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria* shares technical and formal aspects with Hartford's *Self-Portrait as a Lute Player* and the *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* in the Uffizi, all painted in the same years; see Keith, Treves, Melchiorre Di

subject may be linked to the traumatic autobiographical event, namely the violence inflicted on her by the painter Agostino Tassi in 1611: the crime culminated in a trial in which Artemisia was tortured to test the truthfulness of her testimony.[34]

The self-portrait, therefore, can become a pretext for conveying autobiographical meanings and at the same time fostering an introspective and psychological investigation, as can be seen in Caravaggio's numerous self-portraits. In *David with the Head of Goliath* (1609–1610, Rome, Galleria Borghese), Caravaggio depicted himself in an extremely realistic way in the severed head of the giant Goliath, alluding to the death sentence by beheading that hung over him for the murder of Ranuccio Tomassoni that he had committed in Rome in 1606.[35]

Crescenzo, and Russell, 'Artemisia Gentileschi's "Self-Portrait"'. For more information on the subject of the female self-portrait between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see De Luca, 'L'autoritratto femminile'; and Vitali, 'E nulla cosa desidero più'.

[34] The trial ended on 27 November 1612, and Agostino Tassi was condemned to exile; see D'Orazio, 'Orazio, Agostino, Artemisia'. For the trial documents, see Menzio, *Artemisia Gentileschi. Lettere.*

[35] The artist's self-portrait, already identified as such in seventeenth-century sources, has been interpreted existentially as a self-representation of Caravaggio as a victim. It has also been hypothesized that the work was sent by the artist to the nephew of Pope Paul V together with a request for clemency, as proof of repentance and a request for a pardon. A further interpretation, this time in a psychoanalytical key, recognizes the artist's likeness in both the sinner Goliath and the avenger David in a kind of double self-identification, between punishment and salvation; see S. Rossi, 'Un doppio autoritratto del Caravaggio'; S. Rossi, 'Peccato e redenzione', 322–324;

Tiepolo also explores the interesting genre of the allegorical self-portrait with a religious setting—albeit with less gory subjects and, perhaps, with fewer autobiographical implications—as can be seen in the episode *Rachel Hiding the Idols* in the Palazzo Patriarcale in Udine. Here, Giambattista takes on the role of the Old Testament prophet Jacob, depicted in the center of the scene wearing a strange hat and turning a penetrating gaze towards the viewer. Certain scholars have identified also as a self-portrait of the young Tiepolo the profile of the Apostle John in the Venetian church of Santa Maria dei Derelitti (1715–1716),[36] who holds the book of the Gospel with the initials 'T P' that, interpreted as 'Tiepolo Pinxit', confirm his authorship.[37]

This 'hunt for self-portraits' suggests a fundamental methodological issue. The question is: how far should one go in asserting with certainty that a self-portrait can be regarded as such? In

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Stone, 'In Figura Diaboli'; and Coliva, 'Davide con la testa di Golia'. For further discussion on the collecting history of the work, see Cappelletti, 'Il "David con la testa di Golia"', 15–33, but see also Iommelli, 'David con la testa di Golia', 117–121. For a comparative discussion of Caravaggio's accepted self-portraits, and those that remain a matter of debate, see Di Vito, 'Iconografia del Caravaggio attraverso gli autoritratti'. Koomen in 'The Self-Portrait "en décapité"' offers an interesting insight into self-portraits in the three biblical stories of decapitation (Salome and John the Baptist, Judith and Holofernes, David and Goliath) between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries.

[36] Scarpa, 'Rosalba Carriera', 197 and 202 note 1, where it is stated that this identification was also proposed by Giuseppe M. Pilo (oral communication).

[37] Gemin and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: i dipinti*, 216–218, no. 6; Pilo, 'Per la giovinezza di Giovan Battista Tiepolo', 20–21.

the obstinate search for Tiepolo self-portraits, one sometimes encounters subjective or forced interpretations, up to the borderline case of over-interpretation.

Among the attempts that could be described as uncertain are some of the painter's early works, beginning with the self-portraits that some critics have identified in the aforementioned profile of the Apostle John in Venice, in the small Louvre painting *The Triumph of David* (1716), and in the figure of Bacchus in the fresco in the *salone* of Villa Baglioni in Massanzago (1719).[38] These proposed identifications offer an interesting, albeit highly hypothetical, interpretation of the artist's first timid steps towards self-discovery, proposing a sampler of dissimulated, almost metaphorical self-celebrations that seem to lapse into the refined vein of the crypto-portrait.

Another challenging task is that of identifying Tiepolo among the pupils of the *Scuola del Nudo* [*Life-Drawing Class*] (c. 1716), a brilliant early graphic example of the artist's work.[39] Some scholars have recognized Giambattista in the three-quarter figure in the foreground in the center of the scene, intent on portraying the model from life,[40] while most have preferred not to

[38] Scarpa, 'Rosalba Carriera', 197.

[39] Private Collection, formerly Rasini-Morassi Collection. See Morassi, 'A "Scuola del Nudo" by Tiepolo'; and Pavanello, 'Un pittore "tutto spirito e foco"', 27 note 18 and previous bibliography. The drawing is also referred to in Pancheri's recent contribution, 'Un collezionista milanese di Tiepolo', 194.

[40] Scarpa, 'Rosalba Carriera', 197 and 202–203 note 7, where he even tries to identify the other figures depicted, 'painters, some of whom are known, fellow students of Tiepolo' ('pittori, in parte noti, coallievi del Tiepolo').

take up a position, confining themselves to indicating in a general way the presence of the painter among the students attending the class.[41]

In other cases, however, Tiepolo's self-portraits have been the subject of controversial and sometimes contradictory interpretations, for instance for the vault of the gallery of Palazzo Clerici in Milan (1740), where the man in a blue robe wearing a cap has been identified by some as the artist's self-portrait,[42] while other scholars have considered this figure to be too old and too dark-skinned.[43]

To demonstrate how significant the gap between the different interpretations can be, one should also consider the fresco cycle in the Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris, formerly at the Villa Contarini-Pisani in Mira (c. 1745). While until recently most scholars were unanimous in identifying the painter's self-portrait in the figure behind the balustrade in the ceiling who is pointing (**Fig. 5**),[44] today this hypothesis has been refuted by a new and convincing proposal that identifies Tiepolo as one of the spectators on the balcony, on the left (**Fig. 6**). Giambattista Tiepolo, standing behind, wearing a painter's cap with a cane in his right hand, is looking directly at the spectator.[45] The prominent nose, the intense eyes, the broad, furrowed brow, and

[41] Mariuz, *Tiepolo*, 358; Magani, 'Fatica grande certamente', 22.

[42] Magani, 'Fatica grande certamente', 34, but also Mariuz, *Tiepolo*, 359–361; and Lucchese, 'Attorno alla Galleria di Palazzo Clerici', 78.

[43] Scarpa, 'Rosalba Carriera', 197.

[44] Mariuz, *Tiepolo*, 361; Gemin and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: i dipinti*, 388–390, no. 360; Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo*, 271–272, no. 193.

[45] Korte, Tiepolo und das Kostüm, 181–183.

the arched eyebrows confirm this hypothesis, as they are typically Tiepolo's facial features that are recognizable in other self-portraits of the artist. The frescos in the Musée Jacquemart-André bring to the surface further questions regarding attempts to identify his son, Giandomenico. Some see him as the boy dressed in blue depicted on the ceiling next to the aforementioned man pointing his finger,[46] while for others, this same boy is to be considered 'a Moor',[47] which only goes to show how divergent scholarly interpretations can at times be.

Finally, doubts also arise on the possible identification of the other son and pupil who participated in his father's projects: some have proposed to identify Lorenzo Tiepolo in the page dressed in blue silk behind the personification of *Painting* on the Würzburg ceiling,[48] while more recently he has been identified in the figure seen from behind preparing the luggage with the

[46] Mariuz, *Tiepolo*, 361. In his recent contribution, Korte puts into doubt that the boy in question is Giandomenico, since in the portrait of the Würzburg fresco, painted only a few years later, he appears as an adult beside his father and with completely different somatic features; see Korte, *Tiepolo und das Kostüm*, 183 note 87.

[47] Gemin and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: i dipinti*, 388–390, no. 360. It is interesting to note, moreover, that the woman sheltering herself from the sun with a small umbrella in the ceiling has been identified in Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo*, 272, as his wife Cecilia Guardi—an inclusion that would certainly not be new for Tiepolo, as previously investigated cases confirm—a hypothesis not shared by Korte, *Tiepolo und das Kostüm*, 183 note 88.

[48] Hypothesis not considered reliable in Büttner and Mülbe, *Giovanni Battista Tiepolo*, 120–121, also due to the cursive treatment with which this figure was sketched in the preparatory canvas, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

family assistant,[49] a hypothesis that identifies Lorenzo as a 'non-portrait', relegating him to an highly marginal position (**Fig. 7**).[50]

Therefore, it is very difficult to find unequivocal and objective evidence that would enable one to identify without any shadow of a doubt the numerous portraits and self-portraits scattered throughout the extensive *corpus* of Tiepolo's works.[51] This fundamental lack of certainty, however, makes the investigation all the more fascinating, as the boundaries between the artist's real intentions and our interpretation of these become blurred but also more intriguing.

Despite the numerous self-portraits—actual or presumed—that Giambattista executed with great panache in his own painted compositions, to date, only one autonomous self-portrait by the artist is known (c. 1730). In it, Tiepolo decides to explore a very successful genre, the diffusion of which began in the second half of the fifteenth century to then 'explode' in the sixteenth

[49] 'Lorenzo […] è di spalle che prepara i bagagli con l'assistente di famiglia'; see Magani, 'Fatica grande certamente', 42.

[50] It is worth remembering, however, that the father's attention to his younger son never waned, as testified by numerous works by Giambattista (but also by Giandomenico) in which scholars have identified the likeness of the young Lorenzo: C. Crosera, catalogue entry in Bergamini, Craievich, and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo 'il miglior pittore di Venezia'*, 263–264, no. 67.

[51] Among the rare cases in which it has been possible to trace objective evidence is Lorenzo Tiepolo's *Portrait of Cecilia Guardi* (1757; Venice, Ca' Rezzonico), in which the identification of the woman was ascertained thanks to the correspondence between the jewelry depicted in the pastel and that listed in the inventory of her possessions; see Montecuccoli Degli Erri, 'Giambattista Tiepolo e la sua famiglia', 24–25.

century and in the following centuries becoming the predominant trend. Giambattista displays himself as the fulcrum of the composition, the sole and undisputed protagonist of the scene, intently scrutinizing the observer with a strong-willed and proud gaze. The painting (oil on canvas, 68 x 58 cm), the location of which is currently unknown, was first published in 1993 based on photographic documentation from the *Fototeca Antonio Morassi* in Venice and was attributed to Giambattista for 'the vibrant and full-bodied quality of the brushstroke, which closely resembles that of works datable to the early years of the fourth decade […]'.[52]

The hitherto neglected material in the Fondo Morassi relating to the self-portrait is of the most significant interest.[53] This documentation is contained in unit 180 'Tiepolo Italia Milano', subunit 26 'Tiepolo (autoritratto?)', and consists of three photographs with annotations on the back (inventory nos. 23851, 23852, 23853), a color photograph with notes on the sleeve (inventory no. F236), and a typewritten letter with the photograph inventory no. 23852 attached (**Figs. 8–9**). Thanks to these, it is possible to establish the provenance of the painting, formerly in London with a certain 'Laszlo Roth', as is annotated on the verso of the photograph inventory no. 23851, 'poi Milano' [then Milan], without any further indications as to location, as stated on

[52] 'la qualità vibrante e corposa della pennellata, che ricorda da vicino quella delle opere databili agli anni iniziali del quarto decennio […]', Gemin and Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo: i dipinti*, 282, no. 129. See also Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo*, 224, no. 85; the work is also referred to in De Grazia, 'Tiepolo and the "Art" of Portraiture', 255.

[53] *Archivio e Fototeca Antonio Morassi* in the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage, Ca' Foscari University, Venice.

the sleeve of the color photograph received by Morassi on 5 January 1973. Also of interest is the typewritten letter sent by Professor Renato Bonazzi on 26 April 1976 from Stresa:

> Egr. Sig. / Dr. Prof. Antonio MORASSI / Bastioni Venezia n. 1 / MILANO / Come da accordi telefonici, unito alla presente Le allego la fotografia del ritratto perché Lei lo possa esaminare. / Attendo una Sua comunicazione in merito, oppure un appuntamento e nel contempo La ringrazio molto e porgo i miei migliori saluti. / All.to: n. 1 fotografia.[54]

Among Morassi's numerous notes, added in pen to several sections of the typewritten letter, one reads 'oggi fra le 4 e le 6' [today between 4 and 6 o'clock] and the date '29/4/76', a probable allusion to the day and time of the appointment—perhaps only by telephone—with Professor Bonazzi. The handwritten annotation '6/VI/76 tenere in evidenza!!' [6/VI/76 keep in evidence!!] at the foot of the letter confirms that this correspondence touched on a subject of great interest to Morassi, who had just published the article 'Alcune tele giovanili di Giambattista Tiepolo' [Some Early Paintings by Giambattista Tiepolo] in the journal *Arte veneta*.[55] It may be that this

[54] Dear Mr. / Dr. Prof. Antonio MORASSI / Bastioni Venezia n. 1 / MILAN / As agreed by telephone, I enclose with this letter the photograph of the portrait so that you may examine it. / I wait to hear from you, or [to have] an appointment and in the meanwhile I thank you very much and send my best regards. / Enclosed: no. 1 photograph.

[55] The correspondence with Bonazzi continued throughout 1976, as confirmed by Morassi's handwritten note '8/VIII/76 telephoned Stresa from Gardone and received direct news from him after the accident that broke his sternum and 8 ribs. He is now better!' ('8/VIII/76 telefonato a

Bonazzi was the owner of the work (or perhaps an intermediary) at that moment in time, given that the heading of the letter also refers to Milan as one of the contact details, the city already referred to in inventory no. F236 is the place of origin of the canvas.

Although only one stand-alone self-portrait by Tiepolo is known, there is no lack of portraits of Giambattista by other artists of his time, including, in addition to the aforementioned prints by Cattini and Longhi, the *Raccolta di Teste* by Giandomenico, who as early as 1758 referred to the 'ritrato del Sig.r Padre' [Portrait of Father].[56] Among the various proposals as to the prototype for the engraving, it has been suggested that the etching derives from an independent self-portrait by Giambattista (now lost), as the frontispiece itself seems to suggest: 'Raccolta di Teste numero trenta dipinte Dal Sig.r Gio: Batta Tiepolo Pittore Veneto […]'.[57] This engraving is not too

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Stresa da Gardone ed avute sue notizie dirette dopo l'incidente, che gli ha rotto lo sterno e 8 costole. Ora sta meglio!'). Renato Bonazzi, in fact, is mentioned among the correspondents of the Morassi Archive in 1976 in the Appendix of Agazzi's contribution, 'Il deposito dei saperi di Morassi', 54.

[56] A portrayal that was most probably painted only around 1773–1774. See Succi, 'Itinerario dell'avventura acquafortistica di Giandomenico', 31; and Succi, 'Giandomenico Tiepolo: l'opera incisa', 203, no. 96.

[57] 'Collection of thirty heads painted by Sig[no]r Gio[vanni] Batt[ista] Tiepolo Venetian Painter'; this proposal is made in Scarpa, 'Rosalba Carriera', 199. Byam Shaw, however, considers the model for the engraving to be the *Portrait of Giambattista Tiepolo* in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, a drawing attributed to his younger son Lorenzo, a hypothesis also accepted by Knox; see Byam Shaw, 'Tiepolo Celebrations', 275–276 note 9; and Knox, *Giambattista and Domenico Tiepolo*, 235, no. M. 204.

dissimilar from Tiepolo's self-portrait known from the photographs in the Fondo Morassi, creating an interesting parallelism: the image of the artist, with such characteristic and incisive features, seems to perpetuate itself over time without losing any of its keenness and depth.

Also of considerable interest is the *Portrait of Giambattista Tiepolo* attributed by Pietro Scarpa to Rosalba Carriera (c. 1726; Venice, Private Collection), in which the artist is depicted elegantly dressed, with a swagger, at the age of about thirty. The extremely high quality of this painting has led to the suggestion that the artist responsible is the renowned Venetian woman-painter who specialized in portraits steeped in Italian and French influence.[58] The work in question, which can be dated immediately after Rosalba Carriera's triumphant sojourn in Paris (1720–1721), does present some problems in relation to the technique used, oil on canvas,[59] since the painter is known above all for her miniatures and pastels.[60] Carriera is also known for her numerous series of self-portraits painted throughout her life, which investigate the changes in her own features reflecting the changes in her character, offering an increasingly intimate and

[58] Scarpa, 'Rosalba Carriera'. For an in-depth analysis of Rosalba Carriera's portraiture, see Sani, *Rosalba Carriera: 1673–1757*, 7–28.

[59] To confirm the possibility of Carriera as a painter in the oil medium, Scarpa cites the letter of Nicholas Vleughels, in which the French artist addresses Carriera with the expression 'vous savez assez peindre à l'huile'; see Scarpa, 'Rosalba Carriera', 200.

[60] For further discussion on Rosalba Carriera as a miniaturist and pastelist, see, respectively, Craievich, *Rosalba Carriera: miniature su avorio*; and Enke and Koja, *Rosalba Carriera: Perfection in Pastel*.

introspective painting.[61] If in her youthful works she portrayed herself smiling and resolute, as in the celebrated self-portrait in the Uffizi (1709),[62] in her later works she painted 'her own portrait with a garland of leaves; and when asked what this signified, she replied that this was *Tragedy*, and that Rosalba was to meet a tragic end [...]'—as Zanetti informs us in *Della pittura veneziana e delle opere pubbliche de' veneziani maestri libri cinque* (1771)—almost a foreboding of the blindness that would afflict the artist in the last years of her life.[63]

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[61] See the chapter 'Carriera's Ways of Self-Fashioning' in Oberer, *The Life and Work of Rosalba Carriera*, 259–296, for an interesting insight into the subject.

[62] Here Rosalba portrays herself at about thirty years of age, looking directly at the observer and with a white rose in her hair—in Latin *rosa alba*: a charming allusion to her name—shown in the act of displaying one of her pastels, commonly identified as a portrait of her sister Giovanna; see A. Pasian, catalogue entry in Pavanello, *Rosalba Carriera 'prima pittrice de l'Europa'*, 86–87, no. 3; and F. Kanazawa, catalogue entry in Giusti, Natali and Osano, *Autoritratti dalla collezione della Galleria degli Uffizi*, 42, no. 14.

[63] The original reads: 'Pochi anni prima fec'ella il proprio ritratto con una ghirlanda di foglie; e venendole chiesto che volesse significare per ciò, rispose, ch'era qualla *Tragedia*; e che Rosalba doveva finire tragicamente, come fu in verità'; see Oberer, *The Life and Work of Rosalba Carriera*, 294 note 171. It has been hypothesized that the self-portrait in question is the one now in the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice: the smile has vanished, and the lifeless gaze no longer intercepts that of the observer; see A. Perissa Torrini, in *Nepi Scirè, Ritratti e autoritratti d'artista*, no. 2 (unnumbered page); Mariuz, '"Grazia" e "verità"', 29–31. For further details on the long-

This interesting series of self-portraits reflects an increasingly frequent practice in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—a form of self-celebration and also self-awareness—as though portraying oneself several times, and at intervals, was a way of 'taking stock' of one's self and the development of one's art.

Particularly relevant is the case of Giovan Battista Piazzetta, a Venetian artist of fundamental importance in the youthful training of Tiepolo[64] and founder in 1750 of the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice, where Giambattista would hold the position of its first president.[65] Piazzetta often dedicated himself to self-portraiture, investigating its many facets in drawing, engraving and painting.[66] Of particular interest is the *Portrait of Giovanni Battista Piazzetta* aged seventy,

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lasting friendship between the painter and Anton Maria Zanetti, see Barcham, 'Rosalba Carriera e Anton Maria Zanetti'.

[64] Giambattista Tiepolo probably attended the drawing academy established by Piazzetta in 1722 at his busy Venetian workshop in San Zulian; see Pasian, 'La scuola del nudo', 1:301, but see also Pavanello, 'Accademia del nudo'.

[65] For further details, see Del Negro, 'L'Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia'.

[66] Pallucchini, 'Miscellanea piazzettesca', 110–115. Among the drawings, we should at least mention those in the Albertina in Vienna (dated 20 December 1735), the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid (c. 1739), and Windsor Castle (engraved by Giovanni Cattini in 1743); see, respectively, Pallucchini, *Piazzetta*, 48 and 52–53; Pita Andrade and Borobia Guerrero, *Old Masters: Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum*, 368, no. 317; and Blunt and Croft-Murray, *Venetian Drawings*, 28, no. 29. Among the autonomous painted self-portraits are the oval canvas in a private collection (U. Ruggeri, in Ruggeri, *Giambattista Piazzetta: il suo tempo*, 111, no. 40) and the two

engraved by Marco Alvise Pitteri in about 1754, which probably derives from a self-portrait by Piazzetta himself, as the print suggests: indeed, beneath the effigy of the artist in the lower left we read 'Ioannes Baptista Piazzetta Venetus Pinxit', and in the lower right 'Marcus Pitteri Venetus Sculpsit C.P.'.[67] The engraving seems to be the *pendant* to another print depicting the portrait of Marco Alvise Pitteri (c. 1754), the model for which may perhaps be the portrait of the engraver painted by Piazzetta.[68] The close link between the pair of prints seems to reflect the long and fruitful collaboration between the two artists over their careers,[69] proposing a kind of 'role play' in which the task of the portraitist and that of the sitter seem almost interchangeable.

identical canvases (one in a private collection and the other stolen in 1972, formerly in the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts) in which Piazzetta appears to have portrayed himself wearing a large cap and holding a chisel (Mariuz, *L'opera completa del Piazzetta*, 101, nos. 111–112).

[67] The model for the print is probably a lost painting by Piazzetta; see Chiari Moretto Wiel, *L'eredità di Piazzetta*, 70, no. 138. A preparatory drawing is known for the title page of *Studj di pittura* (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library), in which a self-portrait by Piazzetta appears that is very similar to the one engraved by Pitteri; see Knox, 'Disegni per illustrazioni di libri', 46, no. 90; Knox, *Piazzetta: A Tercentenary Exhibition*, 210, no. 96.

[68] This print also in fact bears the inscription 'Ioannis Baptista Piazzetta Venetus Pinxit', which suggests the existence of a painting by Piazzetta that has either been lost or is yet to be identified. See Chiari Moretto Wiel, *L'eredità di Piazzetta*, 71, no. 139.

[69] The creative partnership between the two artists did not end even with Piazzetta's death, as confirmed by the album *Studj di pittura* published posthumously by Albrizzi 'con l'intaglio di

This potential role reversal between portraitist and the subject portrayed once again emphasizes the complexity inherent in the deciphering of the identity of the subjects, as confirmed by the curious case of the *Portrait of Giambattista Tiepolo* by Vittore Ghislandi, known as Fra' Galgario (Bergamo, Accademia Carrara), which in the past was considered to be a self-portrait of Fra' Galgario himself (**Fig. 10**). In 1910, Bernardi identified the canvas in the Accademia Carrara as Ghislandi's last self-portrait, animated by a 'flash of that artistic light' that 'is maintained here in all its splendor, as if his soul wished in a final effort to merge with it, not desiring to ever be separated'.[70] The identification of this painting with the portrait of Tiepolo, now unanimously accepted by scholarship, was first proposed in 1923 by Caversazzi, not only because of the physiognomic similarity with other portraits of the artist but also on the basis of documentary evidence.[71] In addition to the reference to the work in the catalogue drawn up by Bartolomeo Borsetti on the death of Giacomo Carrara (1796), the information reported by Francesco Maria Tassi in his *Vite de' pittori, scultori e architetti bergamaschi* (1793) is of considerable importance:

Marco Pitteri' [with the engraving by Marco Pitteri] (1760); see Moretti, 'Giambattista Albrizzi, amico', 81–82; and Pavanello, 'Gli Studj di Pittura'.

[70] The original reads: 'Però nelle ultime sue opere vi è sempre lo sprazzo di quella luce artistica […]; solo nell'ultimo suo ritratto (1733) quello sprazzo vi è mantenuto in tutto il suo splendore, quasichè l'anima sua volesse riunirvisi in un ultimo sforzo e non volesse più staccarsene'; see Bernardi, *Il pittore Fra Vittore Ghislandi*, 40.

[71] Caversazzi, 'Fra' Vittore Ghislandi', 18–19.

> Fra i molti pittori, che hanno desiderato il ritratto loro di mano del nostro Ghislandi […] il notissimo Giambattista Tiepolo, il quale in occasione che faceva le bellissime e non mai abbastanza lodate pitture nella cappella del famoso Capitano Bartolomeo Coleone, portavasi frequentemente nella sua stanza per vederlo a dipignere[72]

The painting, which depicts Giambattista in a three-quarter view with a paintbrush in his hand, can therefore be dated to Tiepolo's years in Bergamo (1732–1733), suggesting that the two assiduously frequented one another, as is confirmed by the sources.[73] It could therefore be hypothesized that Tiepolo intervened in some way in the shaping of his own image, perhaps coming to an agreement with Fra' Galgario on the composition of the work, or the pose to be taken.

It is should also be noted that Ghislandi not only dedicated numerous portraits to other artist friends, often painted with the attributes of their profession,[74] but also painted a considerable

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[72] 'Among the many painters who wanted their portrait by the hand of our Ghislandi [...] was the renowned Giambattista Tiepolo, who, when he was executing the beautiful and never sufficiently praised paintings in the chapel of the famous Captain Bartolomeo Colleoni, frequently went to his room to watch him painting'. See Tassi, *Vite de' pittori, scultori e architetti Bergamaschi*, 66. The paintings Tassi refers to are the *Stories from the Life of St John the Baptist*, frescoed by Tiepolo in the Colleoni Chapel in Bergamo in 1732–1733.

[73] Gozzoli, *Vittore Ghislandi*, 100, no. 7; F. Rossi, *Accademia Carrara*, 94–95, no. 165; F. Rossi, in F. Rossi and Valagussa, *Fra' Galgario e la ritrattistica della realtà*, 68–69, no. 21.

[74] F. Rossi, 'Modernità di Fra' Galgario', 65.

number of self-portraits, the most famous of which is the painting signed and dated 1732 in the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo.[75] In contrast to his other self-portraits, in which the painter limited himself to depicting his own face, in this one Ghislandi portrayed himself as a half-length figure at the age of seventy-seven, intent on painting a canvas on which the sketch for the head of a young man can be seen.[76] The work was originally intended for the Galleria dei Ritratti [Portrait Gallery] of the Uffizi, but—according to Tassi—it found itself at the center of a dispute between collectors, 'for which reason that famous gallery was deprived of it' ('per la qual cosa è restata priva quella famosa galleria').[77] The collection of self-portraits in the Uffizi, inaugurated by the erudite cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici,[78] testifies to the exponential growth of interest in

[75] Milesi, *Fra Galgario tra Seicento e Settecento*, 94–95; F. Rossi, catalogue entry in F. Rossi, *Fra' Galgario: le seduzioni del ritratto*, 200–201, no. VI.3..

[76] An X-radiograph has revealed an earlier version of the work, in which Fra' Galgario portrayed himself next to a classical sculpture, replaced in the final version by the canvas with the portrait of a young man; see Pacia, '"Lacche", pigmenti e tele in Fra' Galgario', 347–348 and 350 figs. 3–4.

[77] Continued: '[…] Ma fra tutti bello e vivacissimo quant'altro mai, fu quello che doveva aver luogo nella mentovata galleria di Firenze, ora conservato dal Co: Giacomo Carrara' [[...] But most beautiful and lively of all, was the one that should have found a place in the aforementioned Gallery of Florence, now in the possession of Count Giacomo Carrara]; see Tassi, *Vite de' pittori, scultori e architetti bergamaschi*, 67–68. The self-portrait is duly recorded in the *Inventario della Galleria di Giacomo Carrara* drawn up by Bartolomeo Borsetti in 1796.

[78] Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici, a prominent figure in the European collecting scene, acquired a conspicuous number of 'Ritratti di pittori fatti di lor propria mano' [Portraits of painters made by

the collecting of the genre, which was very much in vogue in the eighteenth century, as the examples presented confirm.

This long digression leads us to the question of the context of commissioning of the *Self-Portrait of Giambattista Tiepolo*, known thanks to the photographs in the Fondo Morassi, for which it is only possible to put forward hypotheses, given the current lack of documentary evidence. The austerity of the composition and the proud gaze might indicate that the work was commissioned by a prestigious patron, perhaps destined for an aristocratic audience driving this particular pictorial genre. However, the possibility cannot to be excluded that it was commissioned by a person more intimately connected with the artist, from a more affective context: perhaps a gift for an artist friend—a common practice in the eighteenth century, as we have seen above—or perhaps Tiepolo decided to portray himself with a more introspective slant, capturing on canvas the resolute character of an artist proud of who he was?

The practice of executing self-portraits found an echo in the work of Tiepolo's sons, Giandomenico (Venice, 1727–1804) and Lorenzo (Venice, 1736–Madrid, 1776). Sometimes

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their own hand], listed in detail in the *Inventario dell'eredità* of the cardinal (1675–1676); see Fileti Mazza, *Eredità del cardinale Leopoldo*; and Fileti Mazza, *Il cardinal Leopoldo: Archivio*. For further details on the cardinal's strategies for the purchase and examination of self-portraits, which can be deduced from the extensive correspondence with his agents, see Procajlo, 'Leopoldo de' Medici'. On the collection of self-portraits in the Uffizi Gallery, see Sframeli, 'Consacrati all'eternità'; Osano, 'La Collezione di autoritratti'; and the very recent contribution by Franconi, *Vedere ed essere visti*, which deals with an in-depth historical-archival investigation into the history of the collection at the time of the Habsburg-Lorraine family.

they emulated their father, reintroducing styles and elements absorbed during their years as his disciples. At other times they broke away from Giambattista's legacy and created new and original self-celebratory solutions.

Among the many examples, it is worth mentioning Giandomenico's self-portrait in the aforementioned *Raccolta di Teste*, possibly derived from a portrait of him by Franz Joseph Degle.[79] Here the artist seems to allude in a veiled fashion to the tradition established by Vasari in his *magnum opus*, the *Lives*, reinterpreting it in a highly original way. The Arezzo-born historian will be remembered for his essential collection of biographies of the 'più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori', illustrated with engraved portraits of the artists, to which in the second edition of 1568 he added his own autobiography with a self-portrait.[80] Giandomenico would be celebrated for his 'infinite series of Venetian characters and human types',[81] inserting his own engraved self-portrait at the beginning of the *Libro secondo* [Second Book] of the *Raccolta di Teste*—preceded in the *Libro Primo* [First Book] by the aforementioned portrait of his father—proudly claiming authorship of the famous 'Teste di carattere', one of the distinctive traits of the entire Tiepolo family's paintings and etchings.

[79] Knox, *Domenico Tiepolo: Raccolta di teste*, (unnumbered page) Testa II.1. Scarpa, besides doubting that this painting depicts Giandomenico Tiepolo himself, observes that in 1773 the sitter would have been forty-six years old, but in Degle's portrait and the relative engraving the artist is depicted in his early thirties; Scarpa, 'Rosalba Carriera', 199 and 203 note 9.

[80] Prinz, 'La seconda edizione del Vasari'.

[81] 'l'infinita serie dei caratteri e tipi umani veneziani'; see Villa, 'Giandomenico Tiepolo', 51.

More singular is Giandomenico's self-portrait in *Il Mondo Novo* (1791), formerly in the villa in Zianigo and now in Ca' Rezzonico in Venice (**Fig. 11**).[82] It is precisely among this crowd that turns its back on us, in this paratactic sequence of 'anti-portraits', that Giandomenico, commissioning himself, depicts himself in profile and with a monocle in his hands: with an ironic and disenchanted gaze he is intent on observing the crowd, a 'world of puppets' from which he tries to detach himself.[83] It is interesting to find a similar character in the drawing *The Punishment of Punchinello* (1797–1804; New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art), in which a man appears in profile with a monocle, observing the flogging in progress.[84] The connection between Giandomenico's self-portrait and the caricatured, almost grotesque character in the drawing, seems to underline once again the sarcastic irony with which the artist investigates not only the world around him but also himself. Among the crowd gazing at images of distant lands, which is precisely the *Mondo Novo*—the New World—there is another figure in profile, wearing a black wig and a red dress, which has been identified as a portrait of Giambattista Tiepolo: the

[82] Pedrocco, *Giandomenico Tiepolo a Zianigo*, 24, no. 1.2; Spieth, 'Giandomenico Tiepolo's "Il mondo nuovo"', 195–197. For an interesting insight into Giandomenico Tiepolo's multiple depictions of the *Mondo Novo* and the related meta-pictorial implications inherent in the artist's representation strategy, see Tumanov, 'Wir sehen was, was Du nicht siehst', 99–110.

[83] Even in the fresco *La passeggiata in villa*, formerly at Zianigo, a possible self-portrait of the painter from behind was identified in the older character who unfurls a fan, now almost completely faded; see Favilla and Rugolo, 'Il colore è luce', 62.

[84] Gealt, *Domenico Tiepolo: i disegni di Pulcinella*, 98–99, no. 37; McHale, 'Child's Play?', 109–110.

son thus pays homage to his father, who had died many years earlier, by depicting him in a fresco in his own home and next to his own self-portrait, picking up on the motif of the 'figure from behind' that has its source precisely in the caricatures of his father, the *caposcuola*.[85]

Concerning this, it is interesting to note that in the eighth station of the *Via Crucis* at the Oratorio of San Polo in Venice (1747–1749), another self-portrait of the young Giandomenico has been identified in the figure on the far left with his gaze turned towards the observer. His younger brother Lorenzo also appears in this painting, identified as the child seen from behind in the foreground (**Fig. 12**).[86] The possible presence of the latter (perhaps also depicted from behind on the ceiling of the Residenz in Würzburg) seems to emphasize the reiteration of this motif, a kind of *fil rouge* running through the entire Tiepolo family.

In the two cases investigated above, Giandomenico follows the tradition of self-portraits in a 'setting', one that we have seen used on several occasions also by his father and teacher. In the Oratory of San Polo in Venice, the artist depicts himself in a peripheral position with his gaze directed at the observer, according to a custom already indicated by Leon Battista Alberti.[87]

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[85] Mariuz, *Tiepolo*, 94–98 and 381–383.

[86] Thiem, 'Lorenzo Tiepolos Position', 139; Barcham, 'Giandomenico Tiepolo's "Via Crucis"', 296.

[87] In *De Pictura* (III 56), the presence of portraits within narrative painting seems to find a theoretical formulation in the sentence 'ove poi che in una storia sarà uno viso di qualche conosciuto e degno uomo […] pure quel viso conosciuto a sé imprima trarrà tutti gli occhi di chi la storia raguardi: tanto si vede in sé tiene forza ciò che sia ritratto dalla natura' [If, in fact, in a *historia*, the figure of some known person appears […] nevertheless, a known face attracts to itself

Meanwhile, in the *Mondo Novo*, Giandomenico depicts himself in profile among the crowd in a more original solution, a kind of *divertissement* aimed at encouraging the playful search for his self-portrait within a pictorial fiction.

Lorenzo also embarked on this introspective journey of self-discovery on several occasions, as various drawings of remarkable quality testify. Among the self-portraits—more or less unanimously recognized by scholarship—it is worth mentioning the drawing from the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo (1756; **Fig. 13**), in which the artist depicts himself 'with a fixed gaze, probably intent on studying his own reflected image',[88] which can be related to the miniature self-portrait in the Musei Civici in Venice, which is remarkably similar in its physiognomy.[89] In the drawing in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge (c. 1760), Lorenzo appears more mature and self-conscious, as is confirmed by his confident gaze directed towards the viewer,[90] while in the *Portrait of a Man with a Cap (Self-Portrait?)* in the Staatliche Museen

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the eyes of all observers. So much grace and strength inhabits in itself, what has been taken from Nature!]; translation in Sinisgalli, *Il nuovo 'De pictura'*, 256–257.

[88] 'con lo sguardo fisso, intento probabilmente a studiare la propria immagine riflessa', A. Dorigato, catalogue entry in F. Rossi, *I Grandi disegni italiani dell'Accademia Carrara*, (unnumbered page), no. 54. See also Garberi, 'Il terzo dei Tiepolo: Lorenzo', 57; and Succi, 'Un dipinto inedito di Giandomenico'.

[89] Favilla and Rugolo, 'Tant plus petit, tant plus beau', 15 and 59, no. 25.

[90] Garberi, 'Il terzo dei Tiepolo: Lorenzo', 57; Succi, 'Un dipinto inedito di Giandomenico', 77–78. Of a different opinion is Bettagno, who considers the drawing to be in Lorenzo's hand but 'the features are undoubtedly those of Domenico, as can be seen in Giambattista's fresco in the

in Berlin (c. 1760), the artist appears in less formal clothing, as one can see by his head-covering and the absence of a wig.[91] Such self-portraits demonstrate Lorenzo's ongoing interest in shaping his own image through an in-depth psychological investigation, repeatedly experimenting with the genre of the autonomous self-portrait, also practiced by his father in the painting that is known thanks to the photographs in the Fondo Morassi.[92]

Lastly, one cannot fail to mention the *Portrait of the Tiepolo Family*, an interesting painting depicting a glimpse of domestic life (c. 1755; **Fig. 14**).[93] The figure on the left has been

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Residenz in Würzburg' ('i lineamenti sono senza dubbio quelli di Domenico, come risulta dall'affresco di Giambattista della Residenz di Würzburg'); see Bettagno, *Da Pisanello a Tiepolo*, 230–231, no. 106.

[91] F. Pedrocco, catalogue entry in Pedrocco and Romanelli, *Lorenzo Tiepolo e il suo tempo*, 124. No mention of Lorenzo's possible self-portrait in Roelofs and Aikema, 'Los dibujos de Lorenzo Tiepolo', 161, no. 2.

[92] It should be mentioned, however, that Lorenzo Tiepolo's self-portrait has also been identified in the work *Card Players in the 'Ridotto'* (1757–1762; oil on canvas; 109 x 195 cm; Private Collection), in which the artist is contextualized within the scene, caught in the act of removing his mask with his right hand and grasping his tricorn hat with his left; see Thiem, 'Lorenzo Tiepolos Position', 140–142.

[93] Private Collection, formerly London, Rosebery Collection. The work last appeared on the London antiques market on 8 July 2015 (Sotheby's, lot 22). See J. Redondo Cuesta, catalogue entry in Úbeda de los Cobos, *Lorenzo Tiepolo*, 100–101, no. 2; and Magani, 'Fatica grande certamente', 44–45.

identified as Lorenzo Tiepolo, who is intent on painting a pastel portrait of his mother Cecilia, seated opposite him. This episode—a veritable *mise en abyme*—testifies to the desire to emphasize, within a group portrait, the very act of portraying, and is evidence of the importance of the (self) portrayal of Tiepolo as a 'family affair'. His brother Giuseppe Maria, a Somascan priest, also appears in the painting, as do three of the four sisters, depicted posing and playing an active role in the scene. One of them holds a small dog in her arms that wears a collar bearing Giambattista's initials, an interesting expedient that enables the presence of the important figure of his father and *caposcuola* to be evoked, albeit in a veiled fashion.[94]

The painting has sometimes been attributed to Giandomenico and at other times to his younger brother, the attribution swinging between the two: if the author were Lorenzo, we would once again find the artist grappling with his self-portrait, here depicted within a scene that is a true manifesto for the Tiepolo family.[95] It is therefore to be considered as an original reinterpretation of the genre of the group self-portrait, a strand parallel to the autonomous self-portrait in which artists portray themselves in the company of other people, usually family or friends. In contrast to the drawings referred to above, Lorenzo here portrays himself as a painter—indeed as a pastelist, his favorite medium—proudly and consciously asserting himself

[94] In contrast to Pignatti in *Novità su Lorenzo Tiepolo*, 4, Thiem reads the letters 'LBT' on the dog's collar, thus referring to Lorenzo Baldissera Tiepolo. See Thiem, 'Lorenzo Tiepolos Position', 141.

[95] The first scholar to attribute the work to Lorenzo was Pignatti (*Novità su Lorenzo Tiepolo*, 4–6), a proposal that has recently been reconfirmed, albeit with caution, in Úbeda de los Cobos, 'Dn Juan Batta. Tiepolo inv. et pinx', 81.

as the portraitist of his own family. As it is clearly an unfinished work, one wonders if Lorenzo had also planned to include Giandomenico in the painting in order to complete the serene 'family picture': in this way, he would have paid homage to his elder brother, who flanked him in numerous projects and who in turn portrayed him in a variety of works, demonstrating the constant interchange between the role of portraitist and that of model.

The Portrait of the Tiepolo Family encapsulates the various implications and facets inherent in the complex processes of Tiepolo representation and self-representation. This leitmotif accompanied the progenitor, Giambattista, throughout his long career and was reiterated with skill and inventiveness in the body of works created by his sons, Giandomenico and Lorenzo, ultimately culminating in an intriguing pictorial play involving the entire Tiepolo family.

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Captions

Figure 1. Giambattista Tiepolo, *Rachel Hiding the Idols*, 1726, fresco. Palazzo Patriarcale, Udine. Photo credit: Per concessione del Museo Diocesano e Gallerie del Tiepolo di Udine. Ph Luca Laureati

Figure 2. Giambattista Tiepolo (Venice 1696 – Madrid 1770), *Apelles Painting the Portrait of Campaspe/Apelle peignant le portrait de Campaspe*, c. 1726, oil on canvas, 57,4 x 73,7 cm. The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Adaline Van Horne Bequest, Acquisition No. 1945.929. Photo credit: Photo MMFA, Christine Guest.

Figure 3. Giambattista Tiepolo, *Preparatory Canvas for the 'Martyrdom of St. Agatha' in Basilica di Sant'Antonio in Padua*, c. 1734–1736, oil on canvas. Location unknown– Photographic reproduction, Fototeca della Fondazione Federico Zeri, Bologna, inventory no. 128544. Photo credit: La riproduzione fotografica è tratta dalla Fototeca della Fondazione Federico Zeri. I diritti patrimoniali d'autore risultano esauriti

Figure 4. Giambattista Tiepolo, *The Banquet of Cleopatra*, 1746–1747, fresco. Palazzo Labia, Venice, detail. Photo credit: Web Gallery of Art / Wikimedia Commons (public domain).

Figure 5. Giambattista Tiepolo, *Fame Announcing the Arrival of Henry III to the Inhabitants of the Villa Contarini*, c. 1745, fresco mounted on canvas. Jacquemart-André Museum, Paris, detail. Photo credit: Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André – Institut de France © Culturespaces/Nicolas Héron

Figure 6. Giambattista Tiepolo, *Spectators at the Balcony*, c. 1745, fresco mounted on canvas. Jacquemart-André Museum, Paris. Photo credit: Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André – Institut de France © Studio Sébert Photographes

Figure 7. Giambattista Tiepolo, *Olympus and the Four Continents*, 1752–1753, fresco. Residenz, Würzburg, detail. Photo credit: Photo DI016551 © Bildarchiv Foto Marburg/Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung/Achim Bunz (CbDD)

Figure 8. Giambattista Tiepolo, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1730, oil on canvas. Location unknown–Photographic reproduction, Archivio e Fototeca Antonio Morassi, Dipartimento di Filosofia e Beni Culturali, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia, Venice, inventory no. 23852 recto, unit 180. Photo credit: Per gentile concessione dell'Archivio Fototeca A. Morassi, Dipartimento di Filosofia e Beni Culturali, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia.

Figure 9. Typewritten letter sent by Renato Bonazzi to Antonio Morassi on 26 April 1976 enclosed with photograph inventory no. 23852. Archivio e Fototeca Antonio Morassi, Venice. Photo credit: Per gentile concessione dell'Archivio Fototeca A. Morassi, Dipartimento di Filosofia e Beni Culturali, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia.

Figure 10. Vittore Ghislandi known as Fra' Galgario, *Portrait of Giambattista Tiepolo*, 1732–1733, oil on canvas. Accademia Carrara, Bergamo.

Figure 11. Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Il Mondo Novo*, 1791, detached fresco (*a strappo*). Ca' Rezzonico, Venice. Photo credit: Per gentile concessione della Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia

Figure 12. Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Christ Meeting the Pious Women (Via Crucis, station eight)*, 1747–1749, oil on canvas. Oratorio del Crocifisso, Church of San Polo, Venice. Photo credit: Per gentile concessione della Diocesi Patriarcato di Venezia

Figure 13. Lorenzo Tiepolo, *Self-Portrait (?)*, 1756, black and white chalk on beige paper. Accademia Carrara, Bergamo. Photo credit: ©Fondazione Accademia Carrara, Bergamo

Figure 14. Lorenzo Tiepolo (?), *Portrait of the Tiepolo Family*, c. 1755, oil on canvas. Private Collection. Photo credit: © Sotheby's