

New information on the 19th century provenance of Albertinelli's Old Testament cycle

Ljerka Dulibić, Iva Pasini Tržec

Editing and peer review managed by

Andrej Žmegač, Institut za povijest umjetnosti / Institute of Art History, Zagreb

Reviewers

Jim Harris, Miroslav Gašparović

Abstract

Analysis of the correspondence of Bishop J. J. Strossmayer and his agents, and of W. Buchanan and his agents, has provided new evidence of the 19th century provenance of Mariotto Albertinelli's paintings *The Expulsion from Paradise* in the Strossmayer Gallery in Zagreb, and *The Creation and Fall of Man* in the Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery in London. The material analysed provides an insight into the then common practice of fragmenting artworks, sometimes very violently, and enables a revision of some assumptions and claims concerning the fate of the two paintings by Albertinelli, ultimately suggesting some guidelines for conclusions as to the original appearance of his Old Testament cycle.

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- [1] The painting *The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise* by Mariotto Albertinelli (fig. 1) was one of the last acquisitions of Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (Osijek, 1815–Đakovo, 1905)¹ whose many years of vigorous collecting activity were crowned in 1884 by the achievement of his ultimate aim – the opening of his collection to the public.² In that same year, 1884, just before the grand opening of today's Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters in the building newly constructed for this purpose in Zagreb, Albertinelli's painting arrived from Rome, bought for Strossmayer by Imbro Ignjatjević Tkalac (Karlovac, 1824–Rome, 1912), one of the bishop's most important agents and advisers in the procurement of artworks in Rome.³ This highly-educated politician, writer and journalist lived in Italy from 1863. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, he was a member of the Italian cultural elite, particularly closely connected with the Italian art historian Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle (Legnano, 1819–Rome, 1897).

¹ Josip Juraj Strossmayer (Osijek, 1815–Đakovo, 1905), bishop of Bosnia, Đakovo and Srijem, was a central figure in Croatian political, social, clerical, and cultural history of the second half of the nineteenth century.

² Today's Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters developed from the collection of Bishop Strossmayer, who for several decades collected works of the European old masters, his aim being to found a public gallery. The gallery was founded as one of the component parts of the Croatian (then South Slav) Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb.

³ Imbro Ignjatjević Tkalac (Karlovac, 1824–Rome, 1912) was a journalist and publicist who emigrated from Croatia in the 1860s for political reasons, and afterwards became an employee of the Italian government. Cf. Angelo Tamborra, *Imbro I. Tkalac e l'Italia*, Rome 1966. More on his role in the formation of the Strossmayer collection in: Iva Pasini Tržec and Ljerka Dulibić, "Doprinos Imbre I. Tkalca (i G. B. Cavalcasellea) formiranju zbirke biskupa J. J. Strossmayera" [The contribution of Imbro I. Tkalac (and G. B. Cavalcaselle) in the formation of the collection of Bishop J. J. Strossmayer], in: *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 34 (2010), 201-211.



1 Mariotto Albertinelli, *The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise*, ca. 1514, oil on panel, 56.8 x 55 cm. Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters, HAZU, Zagreb, Bequest Josip Juraj Strossmayer 1884, SG-95 (photograph Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters, Zagreb)

- [2] Among the Strossmayer Papers in the archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (HAZU) there are forty-two letters from Tkalac addressed to Strossmayer, revealing Tkalac's role as a mediator in the acquisition of artworks for the Bishop's collection.⁴ Particularly detailed is the correspondence in which Tkalac reports on the process of purchasing the Albertinelli painting.⁵
- [3] Tkalac first encountered the picture in 1881.⁶ It was offered for sale by "the son of the Roman art dealer Baseggio", who had come into possession of the painting after the division of the estate of his father "who thirty-four years ago had the biggest and finest private gallery in Rome".⁷ Johann David Passavant, who published the painting in 1860 in

⁴ Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 1-42.

⁵ A transcription of parts of Tkalac's letters in which he reports to Strossmayer about the purchase of this picture can be seen in: Vladimir Koščak, "Kako je čuvena Albertinellijeva slika dospjela u Strossmayerovu galeriju. Iz neobjavljenih pisama Imbre Tkalca" [How the famed Albertinelli painting came into the Strossmayer Gallery. From the unpublished letters of Imbro Tkalac], in: *Narodni list* 8/2182 (1952), 3.

⁶ Tkalac to Strossmayer, 14 August 1881. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 23.

⁷ Tkalac to Strossmayer, 15 July 1884. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 29. Cavalcaselle says that the painting is owned by Enrico Baseggio. Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle and Joseph Arthur Crowe, *Raffaello, la sua vita e le sue opere*, Firenze 1884, 203-205. Gardner quotes alongside the bibliographical entry for Giovanni Battista Baseggio (?-Rome, 1858) the reference from Passavant that the art dealer Baseggio had bought the painting *Expulsion from Paradise* from

his work about Raphael (suggesting the Albertinelli attribution), described it as "*un petit panneau provenant d'un tableau a trois sujets*", with the note that the dealer Baseggio had acquired it from Buchanan in 1835.⁸ Passavant's note about the painting is quoted by Tkalac in his letter to the bishop.⁹

[4] Although the purchase was relatively rapidly agreed, Strossmayer then withdrew his consent to the deal.¹⁰ Tkalac accordingly felt obliged to give additional explanation of the reasons he had decided to buy the painting.¹¹ Among other things, he referred Strossmayer to Cavalcaselle's writing about Albertinelli and said that a *pendant* of the painting that he had determined to purchase was in the collection of the Duke of Carlisle in Castle Howard.¹² To this he added: "This pendant, the consequence of the first sin, is also 'ein kleinod' and the *paessaggio* is so lovely that it can be ascribed to no painter but Fra Bartolommeo himself [who is] one of the greatest artists in the world."¹³ Quite offended, for he had found himself in a disagreeable situation because of the cancellation of the agreement to acquire the Albertinelli, Tkalac wrote to Strossmayer that after this "it would never again even remotely occur to him to buy anything in the world on [his] account".¹⁴

[5] Nonetheless, some years later, during May 1884, Strossmayer was in Rome and a direct meeting with Tkalac appears to have led to the smoothing over of relations between the bishop and his agent. Tkalac not only went on buying pictures for Strossmayer, but in the end purchased Albertinelli's *Expulsion from Paradise* as well.

[6] In 1884, the painting was in the Sterbini Collection, where the bishop himself had seen it during his Roman sojourn.¹⁵ At the outset, Strossmayer and Tkalac were sure that the painting was Sterbini's property; however it turned out that at that time it was still

Buchanan. Elizabeth E. Gardner, *A bibliographical repertory of Italian private collections*, Vicenza 1998, 89.

⁸ Johann David Passavant, *Raphael d'Urbini et son père Giovanni Santi*, Paris 1860, vol. 2, 314, no. 249 [Supplement au catalogue des peintures de Raphael].

⁹ Tkalac also quotes the same edition of the Passavant book. Tkalac to Strossmayer, 11 September 1881. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 24.

¹⁰ During the sale, Baseggio insisted on the Raphael attribution, for under this name he had inherited the painting, and accordingly set a high price on it: he sought 10,000 francs, invoking, among other things, the letter of a Berlin museum that had offered him that much in 1878, when, however, the sale did not take place, for at that time the seller was looking for 50,000. But circumstances had clearly changed, and Tkalac managed to agree with him on a price of 4,500 francs. He gave him a bill for this sum, without waiting for Strossmayer's authorisation. Tkalac to Strossmayer, 11 September 1881. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 24.

¹¹ Tkalac to Strossmayer, 23 September 1881. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 25.

¹² Tkalac to Strossmayer, 23 September 1881. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 25. Joseph Arthur Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *Geschichte der italienischen Malerei*, Leipzig 1871, 492-499. On the identification of the painting, see Eleanor M. Tufts, "Albertinellis Rediscovered at Yale", in: *Art Journal* 27/3 (Spring 1968), 266-270.

¹³ Tkalac to Strossmayer, 23 September 1881. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 25.

¹⁴ Tkalac to Strossmayer, 23 September 1881. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 25.

owned by Baseggio, who had given it as collateral to a bank, whence it had been taken by Sterbini, who probably wanted to keep it for himself if the debt to the bank should not be redeemed in time.¹⁶ Tkalac was informed of this by an unnamed mediator, who organised a meeting with the owner, at which they finally agreed on the sale.¹⁷

[7] Later in 1884, Tkalac again explained the importance and value of the Albertinelli to the bishop, this time referring to its similarity to another painting, today ascribed to Pietro Perugino.¹⁸ This painting, an *Apollo and Marsyas*, had been sold to the Louvre a year earlier by the English writer and collector Morris Moore, with an attribution to Raphael, after the London National Gallery had turned it down over doubts regarding its authenticity.¹⁹ "Apart from Morris Moore's *Apollo and Marsyas*, which this painting of Albertinelli's very closely resembles, I have not in my lifetime ever found a painting capable of being attributed as this can be with some likelihood to the young Raphael."²⁰

[8] Not long after that, Strossmayer himself referred to his misgivings relating to the purchase of the Albertinelli, in the speech he gave at the opening of the Gallery in 1884:

"At the beginning I resisted buying this painting, for Albertinelli was better known to me as a conspirator and trader than a real and ideal artist; but when the last time being in Rome I observed the painting more closely, it seemed to me that the Adam and Eve in our painting are so excellently done that it was not from Albertinelli's hand but from that of Fra Bartolommeo the Dominican, one of the greatest artists of the fifteenth century, from whom Raphael himself learned much. Fra Bartolommeo, after the burning of his teacher Savanarola, fell into a melancholic decline and his spirits flagged. The plotter Albertinelli made use of this chance and clung for selfish reasons to Fra Bartolommeo with whom he allegedly at the same time painted pictures, later on to sell them expensively. There are

¹⁵ Giulio Sterbini, advocate, who was appointed in 1878 by Pope Leo XIII *Scalco segreto*, was a leading figure in the circle of Roman art connoisseurs and the Roman antiques market. He collected a remarkable number of pictures, which after his death partially ended up abroad, while some are today in the collection of the Museo del Palazzo di Venezia. Cf. Luisa Morozzi, "Da Lasinio a Sterbini: 'primitivi' in una raccolta romana di secondo Ottocento", in: *Aeimnestos: miscellanea di studi per Mauro Cristofani*, ed. Benedetta Adembri, Firenze 2006, 908-916, here 910-911. It is clear from a speech given by Bishop Strossmayer just before the opening of the gallery that he had really seen the painting. "Svečana sjednica Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti dne 9. studenoga 1884. prigodom otvorenja Strossmayerove galerije, II. Besjeda pokrovitelja biskupa J. J. Strossmayera" [Festive session of the South Slav ...], in: *Rad JAZU* 73 (1884), 162-185, here 171.

¹⁶ Together with "a Mantegna picture" it was given as security to the Banco Santo Spirito for 6,000 francs. Tkalac to Strossmayer, 2 July 1884. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 28.

¹⁷ Tkalac beat it down to a sum of 4,500 francs. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 28.

¹⁸ Pietro Vannucci Perugino, *Apollo and Daphne*, 1500, oil on panel, 39 x 29 cm. Louvre, Paris. Élisabeth Foucart-Walter, ed., *Catalogue des peintures italiennes du Musée du Louvre: catalogue sommaire*, exh. cat., [Paris] 2007, 44.

¹⁹ Cf. "Moore, Morris J.", in: *Grove Art Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.groveart.com/> (accessed 30 January 2012).

²⁰ Tkalac to Strossmayer, 15 July 1884. Zagreb, Archives of HAZU, XI A / Tka. Im. 29.

then paintings that are ascribed to Albertinelli but are for the most part the work of Bartolommeo. It seems to me that our painting is within this class and that in particular the Adam and Eve are the work of his hand and not of Albertinelli's."²¹

[9] However, in spite of Strossmayer's wish for the work to be that of Fra Bartolommeo (with whose oeuvre the painting does indeed show certain similarities)²² the attribution to Mariotto Albertinelli is generally accepted²³ and a hypothesis has been put forward as to its real origin. In relevant literature, the painting is correlated with a paragraph in Vasari's biography of Albertinelli, which mentions "*tre storiette*" done for the Florentine banker Giovanmaria di Lorenzo Benintendi, after the election of the Medici pope Leo X (1513).²⁴ David Franklin expresses doubt that it was actually Giovanmaria Benintendi who commissioned this work, since he thinks that at twenty-two years old he was too young, but does not dispute the commission coming from another member of the family.²⁵ Among other things, Vasari's ambiguous reference to these "three stories" encourages the identification of other possible components of the same whole. Thus, the Zagreb *Expulsion from Paradise* has been connected with a number of works from a group of Albertinelli paintings sharing a similar or related iconography: *The Creation and Fall of Man*, Courtauld Art Gallery, London (fig. 2); *Cain Slaying Abel*, Accademia Carrara, Bergamo (fig. 3); *The Sacrifice of Cain and Abel*, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge (fig. 4); *The Fall of Man* and *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven;²⁶ and *Incident from Genesis (?)*, National Gallery and Alexandros Soutyos Museum, Athens.²⁷

²¹ "Besjeda pokrovitelja biskupa J. J. Strossmayera", 171.

²² For instance, there is a clear similarity with the Fra Bartolommeo painting *Creation of Eve*, ca. 1510, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle. Cf. Arthur R. Blumenthal, *Cosimo Rosselli: painter of the Sistine Chapel*, exh. cat., Winter Park 2001, 189-193, 202.

²³ Cf. John Shearman, *The Gambier-Parry Collection – Provisional Catalogue*, London 1967, 8-10; Ludovico Borgo, "Mariotto Albertinelli's Smaller Paintings after 1512", in: *The Burlington magazine* 116 (1974), 245-250; Ludovico Borgo, *The Works of Mariotto Albertinelli*, New York and London 1976, 164-167, 348, 349; Federico Zeri and Francesco Rossi, *La raccolta Morelli – nell'Accademia Carrara*, Bergamo 1986, 114-117; Blumenthal, *Cosimo Rosselli*, 201-203; David Franklin, *Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence*, exh. cat., Ottawa 2005, 104-107; Caroline Campbell, *Love and marriage in Renaissance Florence: the Courtauld wedding chests*, London 2009, 104.

²⁴ "Et lavorò a Giovan Maria Benintendi tre storiette di sua mano." Corrado Ricci, ed., *Le vite del Vasari* [1550], Milan s. d., vol. 3, 59 [612]. For relevant literature cf. Shearman, *The Gambier-Parry Collection*, 10; Borgo, "Mariotto Albertinelli's Smaller Paintings", 245; Borgo, *The Works of Mariotto Albertinelli*, 164-167, 348, 349; Zeri and Rossi, *La raccolta Morelli*, 114; Franklin, *Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence*, 104; Campbell, *Love and marriage in Renaissance Florence*, 104.

²⁵ See Franklin, *Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence*, 104.

²⁶ Mariotto Albertinelli, *The Fall of Man*, ca. 1509-1513, oil on panel, 23.5 x 17.5 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven; Mariotto Albertinelli, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, ca. 1509-1513, oil on panel, 23.6 x 17.6 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.

²⁷ Mariotto Albertinelli, *Incident from Genesis (?)*, ca. 1513, oil on panel, 57 x 43 cm. National Gallery and Alexandros Soutyos Museum, Athens.



2 Mariotto Albertinelli, *The Creation and Fall of Man*, ca. 1514, oil on panel, 56.2 x 165.3 cm. Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery, London, Bequest Mark Gambier-Parry 1966, P.1966.GP.6 (photograph © The Samuel Courtauld Trust, The Courtauld Gallery, London)

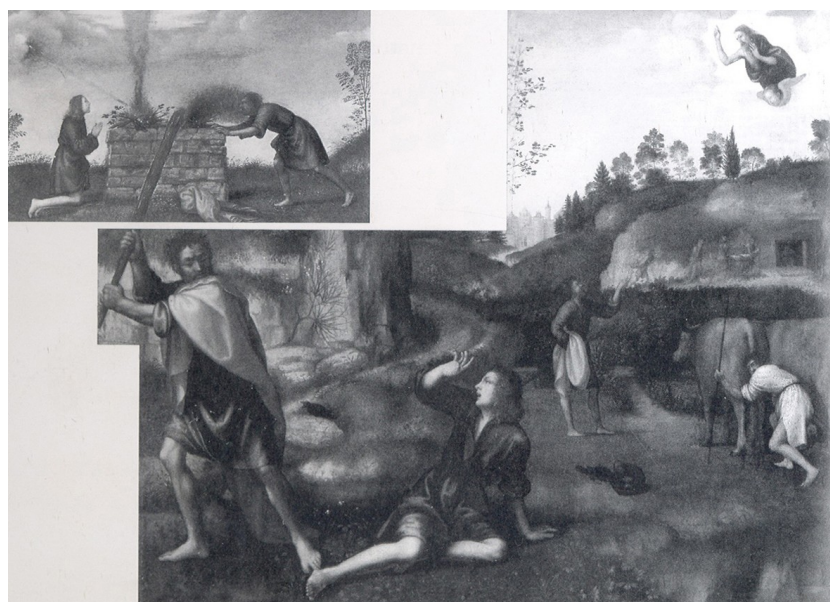


3 Mariotto Albertinelli, *Cain Slaying Abel*, ca. 1514, oil on panel, 56.2 x 68.2 cm. Accademia Carrara, Bergamo, Bequest Giovanni Morelli 1891, 941-1891 (photograph Accademia Carrara, Bergamo)



4 Mariotto Albertinelli, *The Sacrifice of Cain and Abel*, ca. 1514, oil on panel, 21.6 x 35.4 cm. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Edward W. Forbes, 1906.5 (photograph Imaging Department © President and Fellows of Harvard College)

- [10] Already in 1903, Knapp describes the *Expulsion* as being "wohl identisch" with the *Creation*, and Berenson in his 1963 edition of *Italian Pictures* gives cross-references to the two pictures.²⁸ Shearman mentions, along with these two pictures, the paintings from Yale and the painting from the Fogg Museum. However, he only considers the paintings from Zagreb and London to be part of the same cycle.²⁹ Borgo likewise states that the paintings from Yale and the one from the Fogg Museum do not belong to the same whole as the works from Zagreb and London. However, inspired by Vasari's writing on the subject, he includes the painting from Bergamo as the third part of the proposed whole, and suggests their sequence as follows: first Zagreb's, second London's and third Bergamo's painting.³⁰ In the year 1986, Zeri and Rossi accept the paintings from Zagreb, London and Bergamo as parts of the same whole, and integrate the work *The Sacrifice of Cain and Abel* from the Fogg Art Museum in the same cycle, identifying it as the upper left part of the Bergamo painting (fig. 5).³¹



5 Zeri and Rossi's reconstruction of Albertinelli's *Creation Cycle*, detail with Fogg Art Museum and Bergamo fragments (reproduced from: Blumenthal, *Cosimo Rosselli*, 203)

- [11] Tamvaki places Albertinelli's painting from Athens into the same context as the mentioned four paintings, all the while remaining very cautious in ascertaining the claim that the painting from Athens was a part of the same cycle.³² Franklin again limits cycle

²⁸ Cf. Borgo, "Mariotto Albertinelli's Smaller Paintings", 245.

²⁹ Cf. Sherman, *The Gambier-Parry Collection*, 8-10.

³⁰ Cf. Borgo, "Mariotto Albertinelli's Smaller Paintings"; Borgo, *The Works of Mariotto Albertinelli*, 164-167, 348, 349.

³¹ Cf. Zeri and Rossi, *La raccolta Morelli*, 114-117. Their suggestion for the reconstruction and an illustration of the proposition taken in its entirety by Blumenthal. Cf. Blumenthal, *Cosimo Rosselli*, 203.

³² Cf. Angela Tamvaki, "Mariotto Albertinelli, Episodio della Genesi (?)", in: *L'eta di Savonarola - Fra' Bartolomeo e la scuola di San Marco*, exh. cat., ed. Serena Padovani, Firenze 1996, 143-144.

to only two of the Albertinelli's paintings – the one from London, and the one from Zagreb. He claims that the Zagreb work was originally connected to the right hand side of the London work, and treats both paintings as mere fragments of one painting, stressing that the two remaining works of the "*tre storiette*" still need to be identified.³³

- [12] Out of all the various propositions on the reconstruction of the cycle, the only mutual agreement is that the works from Zagreb and London belong to the same whole. The persuasiveness of such a hypothesis is enhanced by their almost equal vertical dimensions, the scale of their painted figures and the close relationship of their iconography.
- [13] In addition to their formal and stylistic similarities, it is also possible to link the *Creation and Fall of Man* and the *Expulsion from Paradise* on the basis of research into their provenance, which demonstrates that both paintings were once connected with the Scottish art dealer William Buchanan (1777–1864). The Zagreb painting is said to have been bought by the Italian dealer Baseggio from Buchanan in 1835,³⁴ while the London work is said to have been sold at a Buchanan sale at Christie's in 1804.³⁵
- [14] From the correspondence of Buchanan and James Irvine, his agent for the purchase of paintings in Rome, we learn that in Florence in December 1802 Irvine had agreed on the purchase of two "Raphael paintings" from a Florentine gallery, and that he sent them to England at the beginning of March the following year.³⁶ Buchanan looked forward to making a good profit and, even before the sale was finalised, he was thinking about cutting up the two paintings, which was possible since several different scenes were shown on each of the pictures.³⁷ Although Irvine referred to the paintings as a particularly important purchase, writing that "these two pictures [...] will, I hope, turn out a capital purchase, being the most precious thing of their kind I have seen",³⁸ Buchanan met with disappointment since there was no response to them: "Nobody will look at the Raffaelles – they are called hard, brown, early and Gothic pictures."³⁹ Hence,

³³ Cf. Franklin, *Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence*, 104-105. Campbell states six Albertinelli's paintings of similar subject matter (she leaves out the Athens painting) and proposes that the Zagreb, London and Bergamo pictures are part of the same whole. Cf. Campbell, *Love and marriage in Renaissance Florence*, 104.

³⁴ See n. 7.

³⁵ Cf. Franklin, *Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence*, 338.

³⁶ Irvine to Buchanan, 28 December 1802 and 8 March 1803. William Buchanan, *Memoirs of painting, with a chronological history of the importation of pictures by the great masters into England since the French Revolution*, London 1824, 119, 122.

³⁷ Buchanan to Irvine, 19 November 1802. Hugh Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade: 100 letters to his agents in London and Italy*, London 1982, Letter 2, 49, 50.

³⁸ Irvine to Buchanan, 28 December 1802. Buchanan, *Memoirs of painting*, 119. Buchanan sent Irvine's praise to David Stewart, his agent for the sale of paintings, with the remark that it would be a good idea to see if they could be cut up. Buchanan to Stewart, 17 February 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 10, 74, 75.

Buchanan wanted to divide the "second painting" into three parts and send "the first" back to Italy.⁴⁰

[15] From one of Buchanan's subsequent letters, it is clear that the "second painting" was indeed cut, though there is no detail about into how many parts.⁴¹ Originally, before one of them was fragmented, the two paintings were the same size and were placed in heavy frames.⁴² From a later letter, we learn that Buchanan wanted the two parts "of the second painting" together with the "first" painting that had not been cut through, to be sent urgently to Italy in the hope that it might be possible to replace them with some others.⁴³ The paintings were indeed sent to Venice and then to Rome.⁴⁴ The letters do not say how many pictures eventually were sent, but we do know that two fragments remained in England.

[16] These fragments were then listed in the auction catalogue of a Buchanan sale at Christie's in London on 12 May 1804:⁴⁵ "Raffaelle /6/ A Cabinet Picture of this Master, from the Buonacorsi Palace of Florence /7/ A Cabinet Gem of the same great Master, from the same Palace, a most poetical and highly desirable Picture. These Two Pictures originally formed Two of the Departments of Two larger Pictures, containing a Series of Subjects from the Creation down to the Death of Abel, painted by Raffaelle for the Chevalier Buonacorsi Perini, in whose Family they remained till within the last 15 Months [...]."⁴⁶ Since the catalogue entry for the Buchanan sale makes clear that the two fragments were offered for sale, and since we know that paintings, in plural ("the Raffaelles"), were sent to Italy,⁴⁷ we can be certain that at least another one fragment

³⁹ Buchanan to Irvine, 3 June 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 12, 77.

⁴⁰ Buchanan to Irvine, 6 June 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 13, 86.

⁴¹ Buchanan to Irvine, 23 July 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 14, 93, 94.

⁴² Buchanan twice gave their sizes in feet, the first time stating that they were about five foot long and two and a half high (ca. 152 x 61 cm) (Buchanan to Stewart, 25 January 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 5, 59), and the second time about six and a half times three foot (ca. 183 x 91.4 cm) (Buchanan to Stewart, 17 February 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 10, 75).

⁴³ "[...] and shall leave the first picture of Raffaelle and two parts of the second cased up [...] to be sent you by the first opportunity." Buchanan to Irvine, 6 August 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 15, 102, 103.

⁴⁴ "I formerly wrote you of having sent back the Raffaelles as per Weymouth to Venice [...] to whom you will give instructions about forwarding them to Rome." Buchanan to Irvine, 17 October 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 17, 107.

⁴⁵ For the discussions between Buchanan and Stewart about the sale, see Buchanan to Stewart, 9, 14 and 21 April 1804. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letters 46, 49, 54, 232, 245, 267.

⁴⁶ "Catalogue of Celebrated pictures", in: Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, 281.

⁴⁷ See n. 44.

had been sent along with the uncut painting. It is also clear that the dismembered painting was cut into at least three parts.

[17] An examination of the correspondence between William Buchanan and his advisers and sellers has consequently brought to light new information about the sale, purchase and original appearance of the "Raphael pictures". From the letters it is clear that Buchanan possessed two paintings, the width of which would have been triple their height,⁴⁸ and that he had one of them dismembered into at least three parts. He sent the intact painting and at least one fragment back to Italy, and sold the other two sections at the auction in London. From the descriptions preserved, it can be seen that the two paintings originally represented a cycle about the first people and their children, which must have been the creation, fall, expulsion and the sacrifice and death of Abel.

[18] Because of its dimensions and theme, it is likely that the first, intact painting is *The Creation and Fall of Man*, now in the Courtauld Gallery. This un-cut painting, which was sent to Italy in 1803,⁴⁹ was there in 1804:

"I lately learn from Stewart [David Stewart, Buchanan's exhibiting and selling agent in London] that a person has gone to, or soon will be in Rome to purchase pictures for a number of Gentlemen in America [...] you [James Irvine] may probably be able to sell the Raffaele, which is not cut to him [...]."⁵⁰

[19] Evidently, the un-cut picture was at that time in the hands of James Irvine in Italy and could not have been sold at the Christie's auction, for this took place in the same month, May 1804. It is clear, then, that the history of this painting requires revision; the claim that it was sold in London in 1804 is untenable and should be omitted from its provenance. The picture could have found a new owner in Italy, before reappearing on the English art market in 1841, when it was recorded at the Duke of Lucca's sale, as is actually stated on the list of previous owners.⁵¹

[20] On the other hand, it is not entirely clear where the Zagreb picture was at the time of the Buchanan auction in 1804, that is, whether it was or was not one of the two paintings sold at the Christie's auction. Passavant's statement that the Italian dealer Baseggio had bought it from Buchanan can be interpreted as indicating either that the painting was one of the two fragments Buchanan was selling in London, or that it was the fragment that Buchanan had sent to Italy before his London sale with the intention of selling it there.⁵²

⁴⁸ See n. 42.

⁴⁹ See n. 43 and n. 44.

⁵⁰ Buchanan to Irvine, 5 May 1804. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 61, 300.

⁵¹ See Franklin, *Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence*, 338.

⁵² The English translation gives London as the place where Baseggio bought the painting, but leaves out the name of Buchanan. Johann David Passavant, *Raphael of Urbino and his father Giovanni Santi*,

On the back of the Zagreb painting is a red-wax seal containing papal insignia and the inscription "RCA (Reverenda Camera Apostolica) – Dogana di Terra". In the nineteenth century, right up until the unification of Italy, circulation of paintings were registered with precisely this kind of seal, placed on the backs of the works.⁵³ Accordingly, the Zagreb painting had certainly been in the roman region a few decades before it was purchased for Bishop Strossmayer in 1884. However, the location of the painting at the time of the Buchanan sale in 1804 remains uncertain.

- [21] The intact Courtauld painting and the fragmentary Zagreb picture make up the point of departure for a reconstruction of the original appearance of the whole group. Since the catalogue entry for the fragments sold at Christie's in 1804 defines the iconography of the first and last depicted scenes of the whole cycle (Creation and Death of Abel), the last in the sequence of the parts of the dismembered painting was probably Albertinelli's *Cain Slaying Abel* from the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo, which is habitually connected with the cycle. This conclusion is supported by the dimensions of the figures, which are in scale with those in the *Creation* and the *Expulsion from Paradise*, and the height of the panel, almost identical to that of the London and Zagreb pictures (about 56 cm), proof of which is found in the correspondence. Though the catalogue entry of the fragments sold in London describes the iconography of the whole cycle very broadly, more details are given, along with some frank qualitative assessments, in the letters:

"Indeed there is a want of drawing throughout which is horrible – particularly in the second picture which is now cut – and in the disposition of heads of angels in the first – where noses are out of place."⁵⁴

"You will find they are full of bad drawing, particularly the arm of Abel fallen – the Deity in the Clouds, in both places – and the Colouring on Adam driven out of the Garden is quite leathery."⁵⁵

- [22] The clumsily depicted arm of Abel in the Bergamo painting clearly matches the description from the previous quote, which can also be seen as confirmation of its belonging to the original cycle as the final fragment of the dismembered whole.

London and New York 1872, no. 249; the Italian version is closer to the French original: the year of purchase is given – 1835 – and Baseggio's and Buchanan's origins – Rome and London. Johann David Passavant, *Raffaello d'Urbino e il padre suo Giovanni Santi*, Firenze 1899, 3, no. 246.

⁵³ Miklós Boskovits and Daniela Parenti, eds., *Da Bernardo Daddi al Beato Angelico a Botticelli, Dipinti fiorentini del Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, exh. cat., Firenze 2005, 200. The crate containing the "Rafael paintings" was forwarded from Venice to Rome by Buchanan's mediators, to a certain Signor Carracciolo: "The reason for directing it to Carracciolo was to make it appear Roman property". Buchanan to Stewart, 26 December 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 19, 116.

⁵⁴ Buchanan to Irvine, 23 July 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 14, 94.

⁵⁵ Buchanan to Irvine, 6 August 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 15, 103

- [23] Technical examination of the Bergamo painting has shown that it is not a preserved whole.⁵⁶ Two parts of the painting are missing, replaced with fills: a narrow vertical strip to the bottom left, below Cain's hands, and a horizontal rectangle at the top left, that extends half way up the tree in the background landscape. The fills have been repainted in order to balance out the organisation of the composition and to give an impression of surface integrity, disguising its having been cut. Zeri and Rossi were the first to propose that the *Sacrifice of Cain and Abel* from the Fogg Museum was most probably the upper left part of the Bergamo painting. Apart from the almost identical dimensions of the Fogg Museum painting and the fill in the picture from Bergamo,⁵⁷ on the part of the *Sacrifice of Cain and Abel* depicting the altar there is a staff which "continues" into the staff in Cain's hand in the *Cain Slaying Abel* painting. The Fogg Museum painting was, just like the Zagreb one, the property of the art dealer Baseggio. However, we know nothing about its acquisition and purchase, and we still know nothing about the acquisition and purchase of the Bergamo painting, which ended up in the Accademia Carrara as a part of the bequest of Giovanni Morelli.⁵⁸
- [24] Although insufficiently precise to allow for a certain identification, a quote from the exchange of letters between Buchanan and David Stewart matches the description of the Fogg Museum picture: Buchanan had in January 1804 offered "a small department of a Raffaele, the Sacrifice" to a private collector (a Mr Gordon), but without success, so the painting appeared as one of the two fragments at the Christie's sale later that year.⁵⁹
- [25] The integrally preserved London painting offers a sound source for the reconstruction of the original dimensions of the other dismembered painting, which was formed by the Zagreb and Bergamo pictures, as confirmed by the analysis of the correspondence. The width of the Zagreb painting is 55 cm, the Bergamo picture is 68 cm, which leaves an empty space 42 cm wide. Of corresponding dimensions is the painting attributed to Albertinelli from the Athens, with a depiction of an unidentified Old Testament scene: at a

⁵⁶ Zeri and Rossi, *La raccolta Morelli*, 114.

⁵⁷ The fill is 22.4 x 37.3 cm, and the dimensions of the Fogg Art Museum painting are 22 x 35. Zeri and Rossi, *La raccolta Morelli*, 114.

⁵⁸ Sherman states that the *Sacrifice of Cain and Abel* was the property of Baseggio from 1844, which was confirmed by Cavalcaselle and Crowe in their work on Rafael from 1882. Cf. Sherman, *The Gambier-Parry Collection*, 8. For the provenance of *Cain slaying Abel* see Zeri and Rossi, *La raccolta Morelli*, 114. Anderson states that Morelli advised Strossmayer on the acquisition of *Expulsion from Paradise*, which Morelli did not realize belonged to the same altarpiece as the painting of Cain and Abel, which he had bought for his own collection. Cf. Jaynie Anderson, *Collecting connoisseurship and the art market in Risorgimento. Giovanni Morelli's letters to Giovanni Melli and Pietro Zavaritt (1866-1872)*, Venice 1999, 43. For the encounter of Bishop Strossmayer with Giovanni Morelli in Milan in February 1872, and the paintings that Bishop then acquired, see Iva Pasini Tržec and Ljerka Dulibić, "Slike starih majstora u Strossmayerovoj zbirci nabavljene posredstvom kanonika Nikole Voršaka u razdoblju od 1869. do 1880" [Old Masters' paintings in Strossmayer's collection acquired through the canon Nikola Voršak between 1869 and 1880], in: *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 35 (2011), forthcoming.

⁵⁹ Buchanan to Stewart, 24 January 1804. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 20, 122.

door stands a man with a turban on his head, arms raised in gesticulation; opposite him comes a youth carrying a lamb on his left arm.⁶⁰ A closer identification of the scene is not possible, while its peculiar architectural setting also leaves room for confusion. We have to admit that the idea that the Athens painting sat in between the Zagreb and Bergamo fragments seems, visually speaking, extremely unconvincing. Furthermore, the acceptance of the convincing proposition that the Fogg Museum picture formed the upper left part of the Bergamo painting narrows down the empty space to 33 cm wide, which does not correspond with the Athens painting's dimensions but would still easily leave room for another depiction from the life of the First People.

- [26] Buchanan possessed one more painting of a similar subject that was also attributed to Raphael; for this painting he also strived to find a buyer, or at least to agree on an exchange: "I believe Champernowne [Arthur Champernowne] wishes to possess something of Raffaele's hand. Should he be inclined to part with the landscape and figures he has by Berchem, you may let him have the Eve and children for it [...]."⁶¹ However much we find this quote to be indicative, it still does not give enough proof to allow for a further conclusion.
- [27] What has been determined with certainty here by comparative analysis of 19th century sources is that Buchanan had two paintings, one of which he had cut into fragments. Apart from its being clear that the London painting was not sold at the Buchanan auction in London, some assumptions about the earlier provenance of the paintings can also be corrected. Knowing that Buchanan had one painting sawn through, it is obvious that Passavant's reference to "*un petit panneau provenant d'un tableau a trois sujets*"⁶² refers to the fragments created by the act of sawing. There is no reason to identify these fragments alone with the "three stories" cited by Vasari as being painted by Albertinelli for the Benintendi family. The letters analysed record that Buchanan acquired the paintings in "a Florentine gallery" – the connection of their origin with the Buonacorsi Perini family of Florence was clearly a Buchanan fabrication aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the painting that he was selling with an attribution to Raphael. Hence, the provenance of the paintings to the Buonaocorsi Palace is shown to be just as untenable as their identification with the *storiette* mentioned by Vasari.
- [28] The sources analysed provide an insight into the then common practice of fragmenting artworks, sometimes very violently, and enable a revision of some assumptions and claims concerning the fate of the two Albertinelli paintings, ultimately suggesting some additional guidelines for conclusions as to the original appearance of his Old Testament cycle.

⁶⁰ Cf. Angela Tamvaki, "Mariotto Albertinelli, Episodio della Genesi (?)".

⁶¹ Buchanan to Stewart, 5 March 1804. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 30, 162.

⁶² Passavant, *Raphael d'Urbino et son père Giovanni Santi*, vol. 2, 314, no. 249.

[29] Furthermore, the analysed sources indicate the reasons for the fragmentation. Buchanan had been aware even before his purchase that the paintings "may probably be considered more in the light of Connoisseur pictures than great works of that Master", and came to the idea, on the basis of given descriptions, "to have them cut down into different pictures, each containing its own subject and given as a series", even before he saw the paintings in person.⁶³ Upon their arrival in London, he was able to ascertain his earlier conclusion: "Nobody will look at the Raffaelles – they are called hard, brown, early and Gothic pictures", to which he only added: "This will show the necessity in future of humouring the taste of purchasers here [...]."⁶⁴ His decision to have one of the paintings dismembered he clarified as follows:

"With regard to the Raffaelles which I have no hopes will do well here, being too much in the old hard or brown manner and the story told in a way which is not comprehended here where people are led so much by the general effect of a picture, I think of probably cutting the second into three pictures [...]."⁶⁵

[30] In one of his following letters, he explains his decision further, reiterating the taste of English art collectors of the time:

"Always holding Subject as a leading matter, a thing you seem to place less stress upon than is absolutely necessary, for you talk of the Raffaelles fine subjects, when in fact they are of that leathery and grave cast which an Englishman will not look at, and the taste of the day whatever it be must govern our transactions. [...] Indeed the subjects and mode of treatment is the most distant from those likely to sell in this Country that can be figured. [...] The Raffaelles have turned out worth nothing."⁶⁶

[31] Bishop Strossmayer's unwillingness to acquire *The Expulsion from Eden* is of a different nature, but nevertheless shows clearly the preferences and boundaries of taste prevailing among art collectors of his time and in his region. Reflecting the time in which it came to be, the final form of Strossmayer's collection is at the same time a mirror of Strossmayer's fundamental desires, as much as the resourcefulness of his advisors. The persistence of one of them, Imbro I. Tkalac, is perhaps the main reason for Albertinelli's *Expulsion from Eden* today being a part of the permanent collection of the Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters.

Translation by Graham McMaster

⁶³ Buchanan to Irvine, 19 November 1802. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 2, 49.

⁶⁴ See n. 39.

⁶⁵ See n. 40.

⁶⁶ Buchanan to Irvine, 6 August 1803. Brigstocke, *William Buchanan and the 19th century art trade*, Letter 15, 97-98.

