



IRSA

---

Some Seventeenth-Century Appraisals of Caravaggio's Coloring

Author(s): Janis C. Bell

Source: *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol. 14, No. 27 (1993), pp. 103-129

Published by: IRSA s.c.

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1483447>

Accessed: 01-04-2019 18:32 UTC

---

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

IRSA s.c. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Artibus et Historiae*

## Some Seventeenth-Century Appraisals of Caravaggio's Coloring

---

### Introduction

Writing less than a decade after Caravaggio's death, Giulio Mancini opened his biography of the artist with a statement about the importance of Caravaggio's color: "Our age owes much to Michelangelo da Caravaggio for the coloring (*colorir*) that he introduced, which is now widely followed."<sup>1</sup> While the biography says little to help us understand exactly what Mancini thought was influential about Caravaggio's coloring, a passage in the life of another artist, Terenzio Terenzi, makes it clear. Here, Mancini contrasted Caravaggio's manner with Barocci's, and found it, like that of Annibale Carracci's color, "more tinted (*tento più*) and thus able to give more forcefulness (*più forza*)" to his pictures.<sup>2</sup> Baglione praised both *The Gypsy Fortune-Teller* [Fig. 1] and the *Giustiniani Cupid* [Fig. 2] for their attractive coloring.<sup>3</sup> He assessed Caravaggio's most positive contribution to the history of art as his "good manner ... of coloring from nature." Bellori wrote in similar terms in his *Le Vite de' Pittori, Scultori et Architetti Moderni* of 1672. "Caravaggio's colors," he wrote, "are prized wherever art is valued."<sup>4</sup> Carlo Cesare Malvasia described Caravaggio's coloring in similar terms in his *Felsina Pittrice: Vite de' Pittori Bolognesi* (1687). When, in his *Life of Guido Reni*, he described

the history of painting in Rome in the late Cinquecento, he contrasted the "weak and whitewashed" coloring of the Mannerists and the "imaginary and faint" colors of Giuseppe Cesari d'Arpino with Caravaggio's "real and true-to-life" coloration (*reale e vero*).<sup>5</sup> Clearly, Caravaggio's coloring was one of the principal features of his art, perhaps *the* most significant. It was praised on three accounts: it was innovative, it was influential, and it had an admirable quality of "truthfulness" or verisimilitude.

Most modern studies of Caravaggio's reputation have emphasized the negative criticism of his work, which centered on his poor *invenzione*, dependence on the model, and lack of *disegno* and decorum.<sup>6</sup> Baglione was the first to condemn the artist's impact on the history of art, because he did not use good judgment in selecting "the good from the bad" in his imitation of nature.<sup>7</sup> This criticism of unselective imitation became a leitmotif of seventeenth-century art criticism, and Bellori was its most vocal exponent. In his influential essay "L'Idée" (1664), published as the preface to his *Lives of Modern Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, Caravaggio was compared to Demetrius for being "too natural," painting men as they appear, with all their defects and individual peculiarities.<sup>8</sup> The definitive French view was voiced by André Félibien



1) Caravaggio, «The Gypsy Fortune-Teller», Capitoline Museum, Rome.

in his sixth *Entrétién*, published in 1679.<sup>9</sup> He attacked Caravaggio's slavish copying of nature, and also Cavalier d'Arpino's failure to study nature, to set the stage for an encomium of Annibale Carracci as the savior of painting.<sup>10</sup> As a result of these influential criticisms, which dominated Caravaggio's critical fortunes until the twentieth century, we have not given sufficient attention in the literature to the high praise of Caravaggio's coloring in his own times. Thus, we have overlooked a fundamental aspect of the artist's importance.

Modern studies of Caravaggio's contribution have also failed to emphasize the importance given to his coloring in his own lifetime and by succeeding generations.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, they have focused predominantly upon a modern view, in which Caravaggio's innovation in coloring is attributed to his strong *chiaroscuro*. For this viewpoint we are indebted to Roberto Longhi, who showed that Caravaggio's tenebrism has a long ancestry in the works of his Lombard predecessors.<sup>12</sup> Mina Gregori has continued this research, identifying night scenes,



2) Caravaggio, «Amor Vincit Omnia», Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin-Dahlem.

candlelight, and strong *chiaroscuro* effects in the Campi, Savoldo, Moretto, Moroni, and other Lombards.<sup>13</sup> While such an abundance of sources admirably reveals Caravaggio's debt to the past, this approach overlooks the aspects of his coloring that brought forth admiration on the part of Seicento critics. While sixteenth-century "Lombard" coloring received high praise in the Seicento, these comments were not directed at the Milanese and Brescian predecessors of Caravaggio but rather at Correggio and even Titian.<sup>14</sup>

Howard Hibbard refined this viewpoint, describing the darkening of the shadows as the principal innovation of Caravaggio's religious paintings around 1600 and labelling the "extreme and unnatural use of light-dark," in the paintings on the lateral walls of the Contarelli chapel as a "forced *chiaroscuro*."<sup>15</sup> Following Herwarth Röttgen's work on Giuseppe Cesari, Hibbard emphasized that Caravaggio's propensity for dark backgrounds and restricted areas of high illumination was not alien to the artistic milieu of late-sixteenth-century Rome.<sup>16</sup> Giulio Argan and Richard Spear both cited earlier Roman models. Argan interpreted his *chiaroscuro* as the extreme consequence of Raphael's late experiments with *chiaroscuro*.<sup>17</sup> Spear expanded on Argan's view and proposed that Caravaggio's intensified contrasts were indebted to his study of Raphael's *Transfiguration*, which he qualified further by showing how Caravaggio's own Lombard experiences of Leonardo's dark manner prepared him to absorb the lessons of Raphael.<sup>18</sup> This argument has the virtue of accounting for the first few years in Rome when Caravaggio painted in a "blond" manner without strong *chiaroscuro*, for Spear's logic is that he was stimulated to study and emulate Raphael only when his own commissions called for religious *istorie*. Carlo Del Bravo recently proposed that Caravaggio's tenebrism develops qualities of Tintoretto, particularly in regard to the contrast of light to darkness as a metaphor of grace overcoming evil.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, Benedict Nicolson and Maria Rzepińska have emphasized instead that tenebrism was a widespread phenomena of which Caravaggio was certainly the most daring, notorious exponent but not the "originator."<sup>20</sup>

Charles Dempsey has been an exception to this fixation on *chiaroscuro* by underscoring the importance of the artist's use of saturated pigments, which Walter Friedlaender identified many years ago as a characteristic of the "anti-Mannerist" reformers.<sup>21</sup> Dempsey has extended to the crucial issue of coloring the position advocated by Malvasia and Bellori that the Carracci were the principal reformers of Italian painting and that Caravaggio was dependent on them. But he fails to demonstrate this dependence with specific analyses, nor is he able to show how it played out in the crucial years before

1600.<sup>22</sup> I believe his view misinterprets the position of these Seicento critics, as I plan to show, for it totally overlooks the extent to which these writers saw Caravaggio's coloring as innovative.

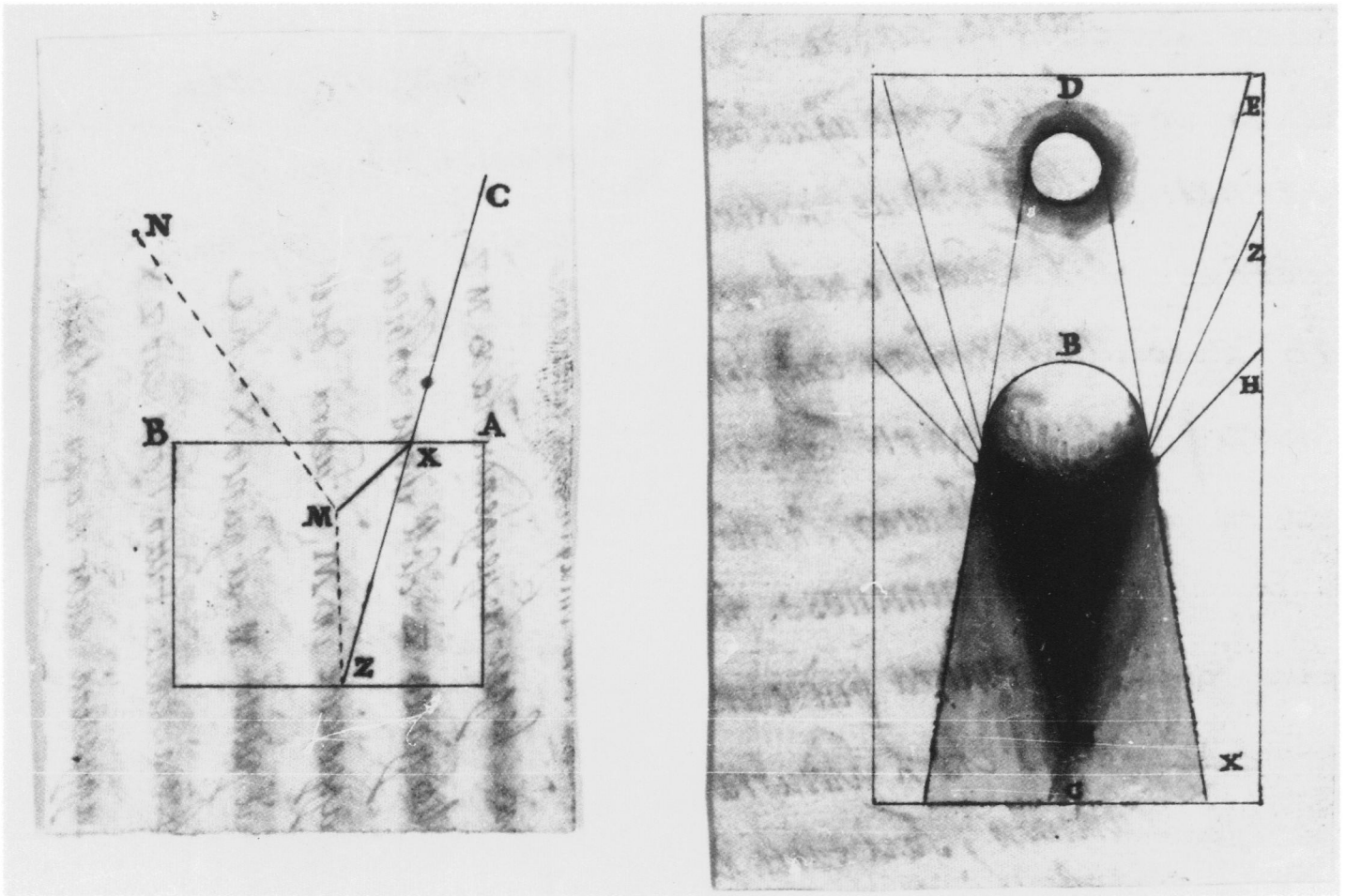
I believe we can go further towards understanding the importance of Caravaggio's color by looking closely at the way it was discussed in the Seicento. Such an examination will reveal the way in which Caravaggio's coloring was seen to be influential, as well as providing a critical assessment of the value and shortcomings of that view.

### Natural and Unnatural *Chiaroscuro*

Surprisingly enough, the earlier writers emphasized Caravaggio's lack of naturalism more than Bellori and Malvasia. Mancini, writing c. 1621, was of the opinion that Caravaggio's coloring was artificial and unnatural, lacking *somiglianza* and *similitudine*—that resemblance to nature and verisimilitude which he found in the works of the Carracci and their followers.<sup>23</sup> One reason for this was explained elsewhere: Caravaggio's color was too dark, lacking the brilliance of colors in nature. "Caravaggio's coloring tends towards black," he explained in a section on framing, where he argued that, like old pictures that have lost the strength of their colors, such dark works could be displayed in gilded frames without dazzling the eyes.<sup>24</sup> Yet it was not as extreme as that of certain followers, such as Ribera, who, when adopting Caravaggio's coloring for his own, made it "more tinted and more fierce" (*più tinto e più fiero*).<sup>25</sup>

However, it was Caravaggio's system of lighting—not his coloring *per se*—that really made his works look "unnatural" in Mancini's eyes. This was because he eliminated all the reflections that normally make forms partially visible in the shadows. Mancini suggested that the reason he exaggerated the contrast of light and dark was to enhance the illusion of relief. In his description of the four schools of contemporary Roman painting, the lighting system of the Caravaggesque school is described as an artificial device for enhancing relief:

A quality of this school is to illuminate [the scene] with a single light that comes from above without reflections, as it would look in a room where there was one window and the walls were painted black, which thus, making the lights and the shadows very light and very dark, results in giving more relief to the picture, however, in a way that is not natural, nor was it done, or thought of, in any other century or by any previous painter, such as Raphael, Titian, Correggio, and others.<sup>26</sup>

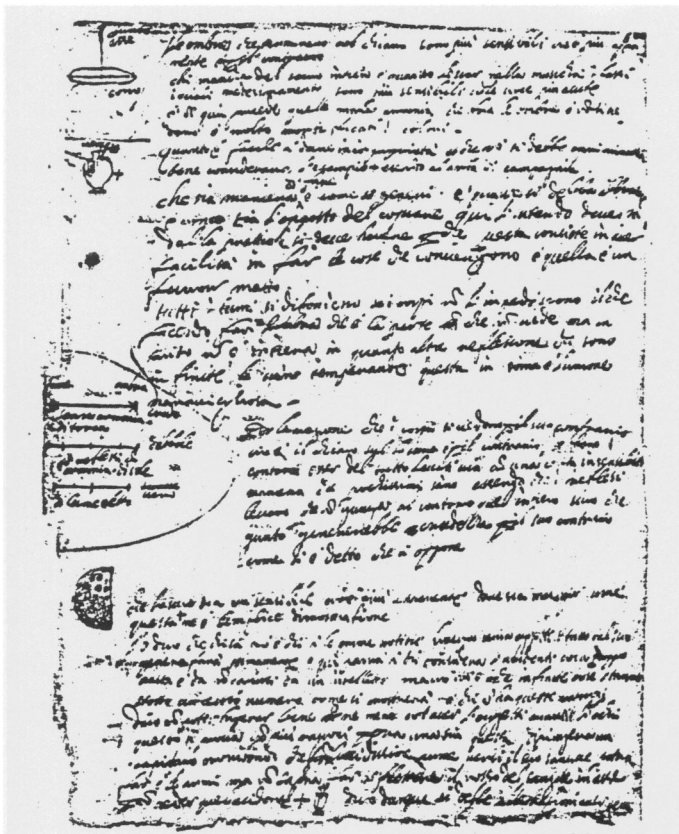


3) Matteo Zaccolini, reflected light in the shadow of a sphere illuminated by a small light, from *Prospettiva del colore*, MS Ashburnham 1212<sup>2</sup> folio 160, Laurentian Library, Florence.

By contrast, the ideal pictures of the Carracci and their school were said to be characterized by a natural light like that of Raphael and the painters of Lombardy.<sup>27</sup> It was not as if Caravaggio had completely ignored the scientific principles of light and shadow in nature: it was just that he had chosen a situation that rarely, if ever, occurs in nature. Hence, he earned the label “unnatural.”<sup>28</sup>

A similar criticism of the unnaturalness of Caravaggesque light and shadow was voiced by the painter Matteo Zaccolini, whose four-volume manuscript treatise on color and perspective was written between 1618 and 1622.<sup>29</sup> He devoted con-

siderable attention to the theory of light and shadow, promoting an ideal of soft, natural light and transparent shadow, and harshly criticized the dark shadows of tenebrism. His remarks on shadow occur in two places: in the volume entitled *Prospettiva del colore*, there are 25 chapters which make up Book IX (“On Shadows”), plus a few remarks on light and shadow in Book XVI, a collection of miscellaneous chapters [Fig. 3]; and there are occasional remarks in the volume entitled *Della descrizione dell’ombra prodotte da corpi opachi rettilinei*, a treatise on the geometrical projection of shadows. Zaccolini promoted a scientific ideal in which light and shadow were



4) Pietro Testa, diagram of three types of lighting, *Notebook*, folio 7 recto, Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf.

based upon the appearance of nature and the underlying principles of the physics of light. But he also had an aesthetic viewpoint which seems to be similar to that manifested in the paintings of the Carracci, Domenichino, and other Emilian artists.

Although Zaccolini never mentions Caravaggio *per se* (Raphael and Michelangelo are the only artists cited), he presents several criticisms of tenebrist painting which his readers would have understood as referring to Caravaggio and his followers. In his volume on cast shadows, he argued that Caravaggesque *tenebrism* was not a good imitation of nature:

Without the tempering of reflected light, the said shadowy space will not seem to be a shadow but will appear to be total darkness (*dense tenebre*), as in nighttime; this is not a good imitation of nature, but rather makes a crude, cut-

ting manner, and does not contribute to the beauty of appearances; therefore, this [practice] should be abhorred by the Painter.<sup>30</sup>

Like Mancini, he believed that shadow always contained some reflected light; otherwise, it would be total darkness. Painters who eliminated such reflections would produce an unnatural obscurity. He recommended that very dark shadows be placed only in the foreground, juxtaposed to the brightest lights, restricted to a few places unreached by reflected light. So strong was his abhorrence of unnaturally dark shadows that he advised against them even in the portrayal of night scenes.<sup>31</sup> Instead, he recommended that the painter create a naturalistic setting with carefully placed artificial lights at a distance from the figures. Since light from a point source radiates outward, the distance would diffuse the light by the time it reached the figures, and the contrast between light and shadow would be less extreme. Cast shadows also would be less defined, and fewer would be projected upon other forms. As a result, the artist would create a picture that revealed the form and color of figures, thereby maximizing relief, and the clarity of spatial relationships.

Pietro Testa expressed similar ideas in his notes for a treatise on painting. Although he did not refer to Caravaggio or other contemporaries, his ideas on *chiaroscuro* were formulated in reaction to the tenebrist style, in an ambience nourished by the ideas of Zaccolini. Testa was connected with the Dal Pozzo workshop in the 1630s during the period that Cassiano prepared his own copy of the Zaccolini manuscripts and guided Poussin to prepare copies for his trip to Paris. Furthermore, soon after Testa's arrival in Rome, he had gained entrance to Domenichino's studio, where he would have absorbed ideas of this master, who had actually studied perspective and optics with Zaccolini. Thus, although we have no evidence that Testa ever read the Zaccolini manuscripts, he had ample opportunity to be exposed indirectly to ideas contained within them, and this debt is revealed in some of his notes on *chiaroscuro*. Like Zaccolini, he regarded the light of torches with their dark shadows as crude and lacking harmony (*crudo* and *senza armonia*) [Fig. 4].<sup>32</sup> He preferred instead the transparent shadows resulting from reflected light, which he believed was always present in nature.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, he justified an aesthetic of moderation with an appeal to naturalism: the excessive contrasts of a forceful style imitating effects of torchlight could not compare to the natural look of sunlight diffused through a veil of air.<sup>34</sup> However, Testa was also reacting against an excessively sweet style in which the darks were eliminated, as in the late works of Guido Reni; he also criticized the unnaturalness of excessive reflections which destroyed the balance between light and shadow.



5) Caravaggio, «Penitent Mary Magdalene», Galleria Doria Pamphilij, Rome.





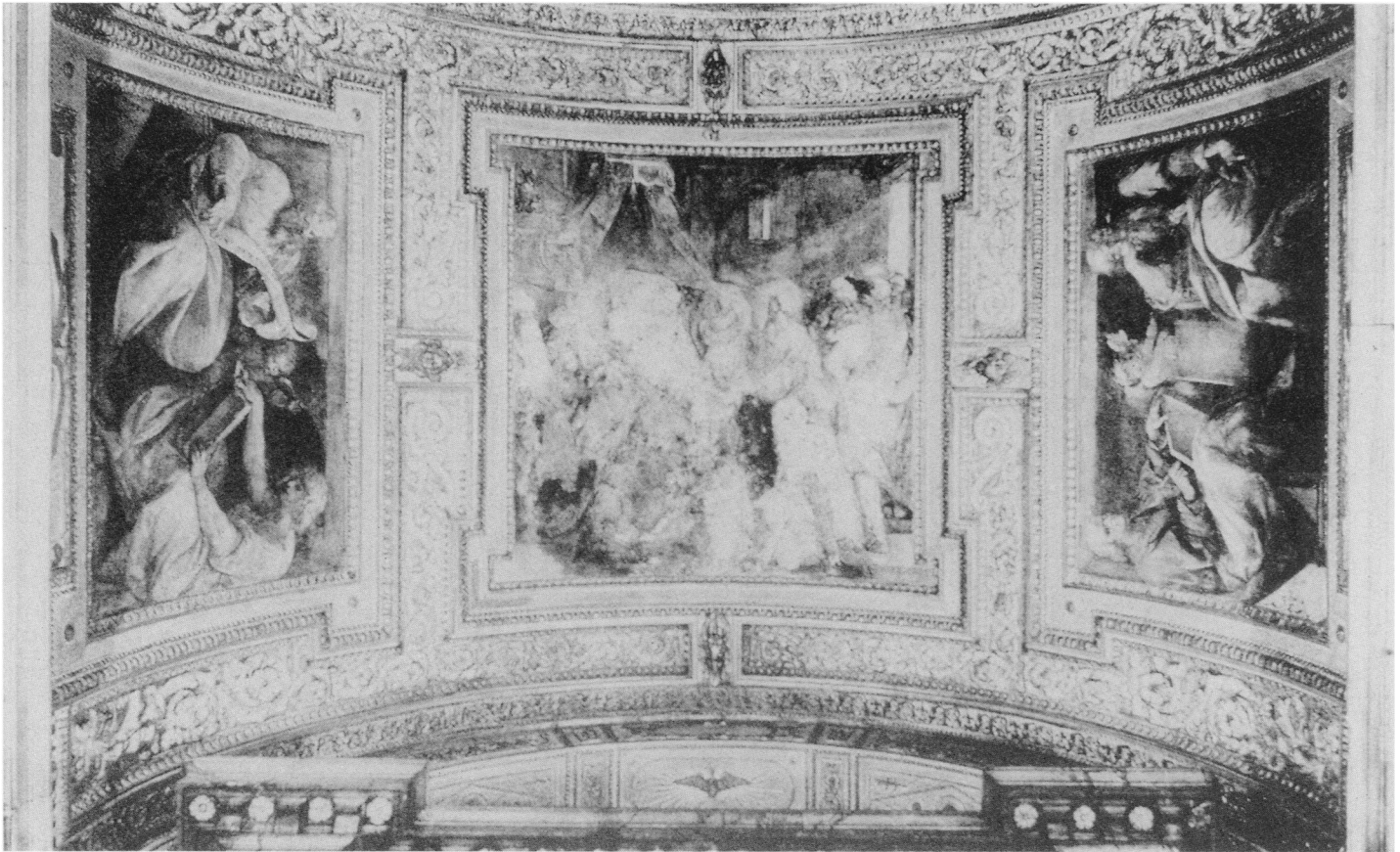
6) Correggio, «Pietà», Galleria Nazionale, Parma.

The same type of criticism appeared thirty years later in *Sentimens sur la distinction des diverses manieres de peinture, dessein, & graveurs...*, Paris, 1649, by the engraver and perspective expert Abraham Bosse. He shared Zaccolini's concern for the importance of tempering shadows with reflected light, a position he had developed in his treatise of the previous year on shadow projection and color, perhaps inspired by the manuscript copy of Zaccolini which Poussin brought to France.<sup>35</sup> He argued that Caravaggio erred by making his shadows too black and exaggerating the contrast of light and dark. Surely this criticism arose not because he relied on reproductive engravings that toned down Caravaggio's naturalism, as Goldstein suggested,<sup>36</sup> but because he upheld a scientific ideal that paintings should be clear, legible, and founded upon principles derived from a study of nature and mathematics. Indeed, this scientific

ideal characterized all of his treatises on perspective, but his rigid insistence on mathematical accuracy brought him into conflict with other artists and eventually led to his demise.<sup>37</sup>

#### Surface Verisimilitude and Relief

As the tide of Caravaggesque followers diminished later in the century, the focus of criticism shifted from the unnaturalness of Caravaggio's lighting to an appreciation of his skill at creating illusions. We first see this in the writings of Scannelli (Cesena, 1657), who extolled the surface verisimilitude and relief that Caravaggio created with his mastery of coloring. This surface verisimilitude (*verità*) was something so extraordinary that Caravaggio was deemed "a unique exponent of naturalism"



7) Giuseppe Cesari d'Arpino, vault frescoes, Contarelli Chapel, San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome.

(*unico mostro di naturalezza*). He added that many people believed him to be "most excellent above all others" (*sopra d'ogni altro eccellentissimo*), but his own assessment was more cautious: Caravaggio "was endowed with a particular genius, by means of which he made his works look like extraordinary and truly singular imitations of nature, and in communicating force and relief to the painting he was not inferior, perhaps even superior to any other painter."<sup>38</sup>

Scannelli's reservation was that Caravaggio's imitation of nature was all surface; his work lacked the profound lifelikeness of the *affetti*, that imitation of internal states of mind conveyed by gesture, body posture, and facial expression. Therefore, he ranked him below the highest rank of painters, which was filled by Raphael, Titian, and Correggio. Comparing Caravaggio's *Mary Magdalene* [Fig. 5] with Correggio's Magdalen in the *Pietà*

for the Del Bono Chapel [Fig. 6], Scannelli observed the deep expression of sorrow in Correggio's figure, which he called both natural and appropriate. He argued that because she is so beautiful and appears to cry, she moves the spectator to compassion. By contrast, Caravaggio's figure was judged lacking in naturalism of expression: "The work by Caravaggio does not demonstrate naturalism (*la naturalezza*), except in its purely superficial appearance: because he was not able to animate it, the figure appears without spirit, grace, and appropriate expression, so that one could say that everything appears dead."<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, in comparison with his immediate predecessors, Barocci and the Cavaliere d'Arpino, Caravaggio was "the leader of the naturalists," due to the great relief and realism (*verità*) of his figures.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, in contrast to Arpino [Fig. 7], his works had the extraordinary capacity to deceive the viewer,

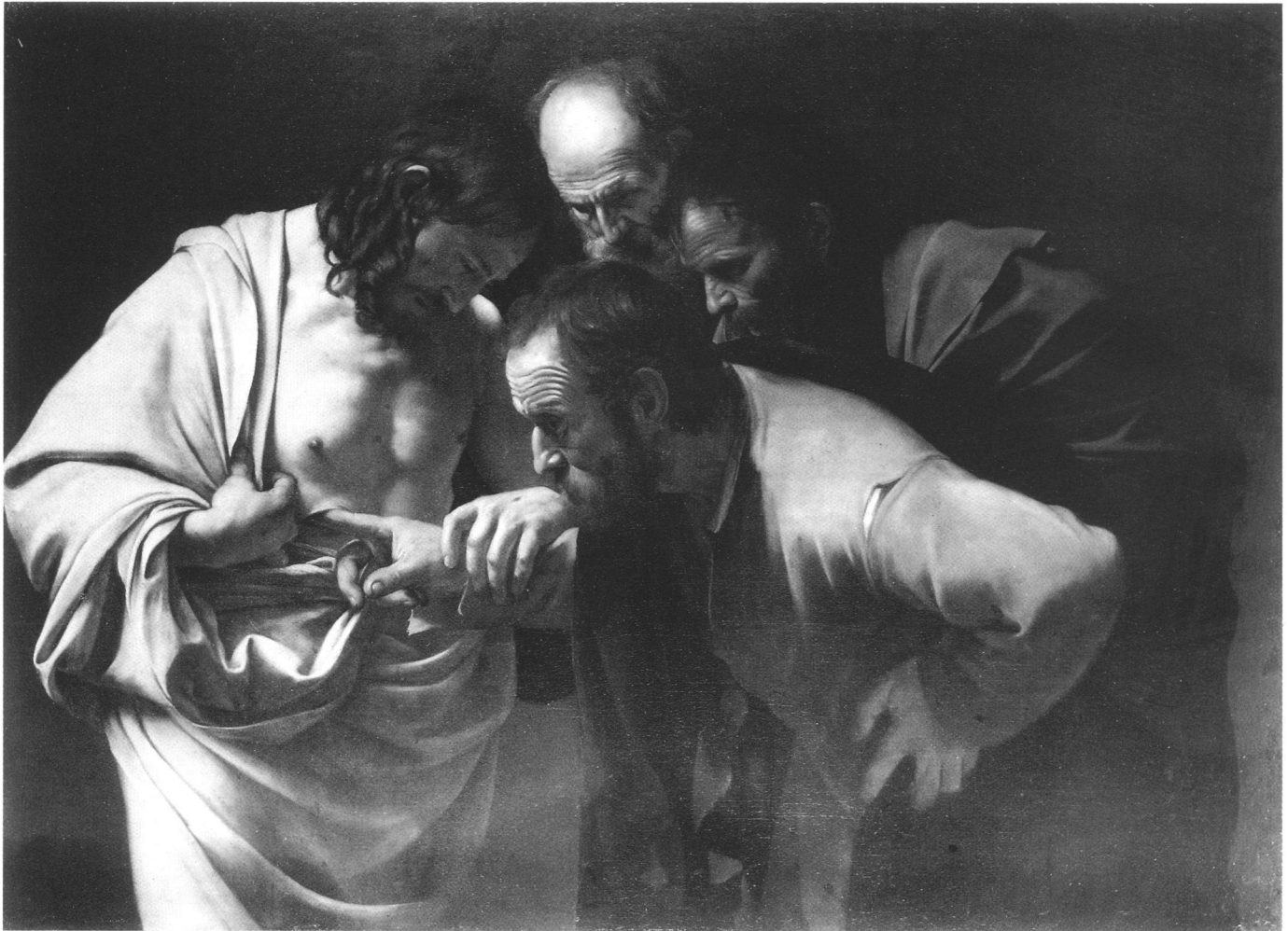


8) Caravaggio, «The Calling of St. Matthew», Contarelli Chapel, San Luigi dei Francesci, Rome.

and made Arpino's works look far from nature, weak, lacking, and worse, "not even [worthy of being called] in fact Painting."<sup>41</sup> The offensive remark was justified by defining painting as an adequate imitation of the effects of nature (*adequata imitazione de gli effetti di natura*). This is a rather unusual definition in that it takes into account the beholder's judgment of the imitation as "adequate." Scannelli's standard is not the scientific principles of nature but the judgment of the spectator's eye.<sup>42</sup>

It was this attitude which led Scannelli to emphasize the importance of surface verisimilitude to good painting. He opined that the first step in convincing the eye is the imitation of "natur-

al appearances." "Surface verisimilitude" refers to aspects of appearance such as the textures of cloth, flesh, hair, and metal; the play of light on flat and curved surfaces; the variety and intensity of colors in nature. These effects should be distinguished from the illusion of three-dimensional space and volumes, which were equally important to deceive the eye. Scannelli wrote that, by creating *trompe l'oeil* effects with color, Caravaggio engaged the viewer, "charming and ravishing the eye."<sup>43</sup> The ravishment of the eye and the deceitfulness of pictorial illusions are literary *topoi* deriving from Graeco-Roman literature and they were reintroduced into art criticism by the early humanists.<sup>44</sup> By Scan-



9) Caravaggio, «Doubting Thomas», Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten, Potsdam.

nelli's time, they had become standard in art biography and criticism. But that does not diminish the aptness of this criterion to describe the achievement of Caravaggio. Indeed, although all early biography and criticism is replete with literary "fictions" and *ekphrases*, other artists were praised quite differently.<sup>45</sup> It is significant that encomia pertaining to verisimilitude appear with greater frequency and insistency in the literature on artists (such as Giotto, Leonardo, and Titian), who were particularly innovative colorists, and whose discoveries in coloring seemed to their contemporaries to "advance" the naturalistic imitation of light and color.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, Scannelli made it clear that such mastery was particularly laudable because it was not achieved by a mere copying of nature; rather, the artist had to know "how to animate his colors with a most excellent artifice." Thus, *The Calling of St. Matthew* [Fig. 8] was espoused as "truly, one of the most *pastoso*, relief-like (*rilevate*), and natural works," which demonstrated "the artifice of painting through its imitation of mere surface appearances."<sup>47</sup> The Ludovisi *St. Thomas*<sup>48</sup> [Fig. 9] and other paintings of half figures were called "very relief-like and lifelike" (*molto rilevate, e simile al vivo*).<sup>49</sup> The nude *St. John the Baptist* once in the Pio gallery [Fig. 10]<sup>50</sup>



10) Caravaggio, «St. John the Baptist», Capitoline Museum, Rome.



11) Leonello Spada, «David with the Head of Goliath», Gemäldegalerie, Dresden.

and the Giustiniani *Cupid* [Fig. 2] were praised for the lifelikeness of the coloring, which “could not reveal truer flesh if he had been alive.”<sup>51</sup> But as for describing the practices involved in this artifice, Scannelli remained mute, content to extoll their realistic appearance with the standard phrases of encomiastic praise that Italians took from Pliny.

Malvasia (1678) also used terms of praise to describe Caravaggio’s color. He admired the surface realism the artist created with convincing textures and forceful relief. Like Scannelli, he saw *colore* as the key to imitating the external appearance of nature; but he also saw its limitations within the broader context of pictorial naturalism. Both writers believed that true naturalism required making visible the internal states of mind and actions. When Malvasia paraphrased some of Albani’s notes for a *Treatise on Painting* (begun in the 1640s with Orazio Zamboni), he chose to start with Albani’s condemnation of Caravaggio, introducing at the outset the difference between Caravaggio’s “*somiglianza del vero*” and true verisimilitude which required *costume*, the expression of

emotions, and a *concetto*.<sup>52</sup> This then allowed him to set up a dichotomy between the bad imitation of Caravaggio and the good imitation of masters such as Raphael, Correggio, and Titian, whose coloring was more praiseworthy for its conformity to nature.<sup>53</sup>

Malvasia was more critical than Scannelli of Caravaggio’s coloring in that he saw it as faulty even as an imitation of surface verisimilitude, for which reason the artists who imitated it were obliged to make “corrections.” Although Malvasia did not write a biography of Caravaggio, he discussed his influence on the art of Guido Reni, Guercino, and Leonello Spada. From these accounts we can deduce what Malvasia thought was characteristic, praiseworthy, faulty, and influential about Caravaggio’s coloring.

Spada, known as “the ape of Caravaggio,” was praised as “one of the best colorists ever seen: his figures were so lifelike and ‘full of blood’ it seemed as if he ground up human flesh and used it for his colors.”<sup>54</sup> When he imitated Caravaggio in some paintings of David and Goliath [Fig. 11], his coloring became

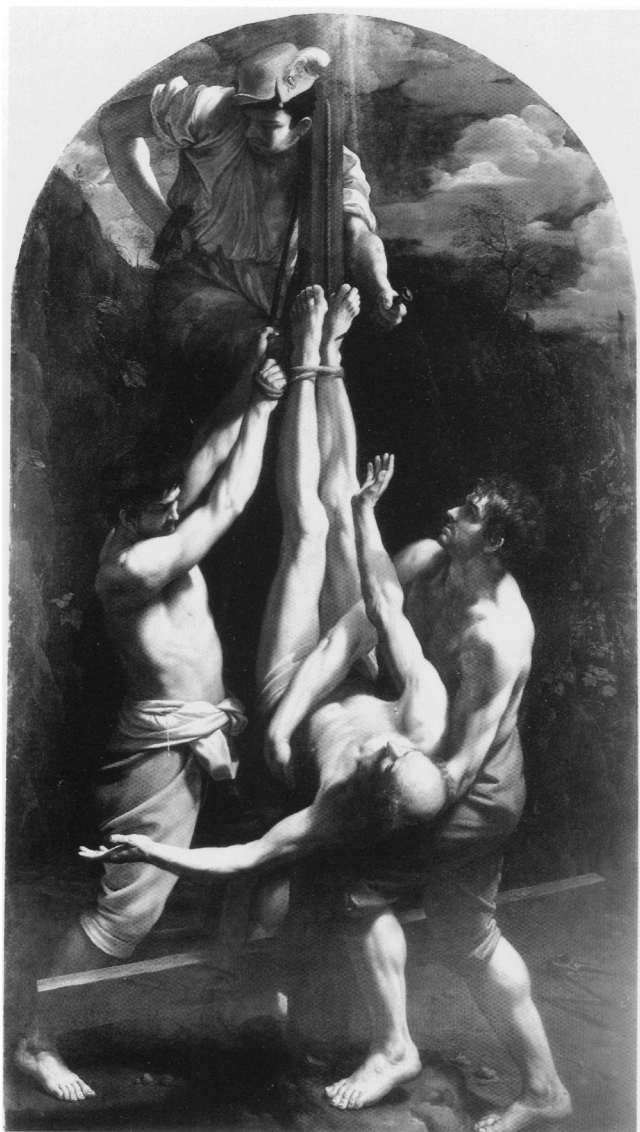


12) Guercino, «The Incredulity of St. Thomas», National Gallery, London.

“so tremendous that among fictive and dead things it itself became true and alive.”<sup>55</sup> Guercino similarly became a great colorist by imitating the strong coloring (*il colorire forte*) and fierce tinting (*il fiero tingere*) of Caravaggio [Fig. 12].<sup>56</sup> But Malvasia added that Spada had to “temper the severe shadows of Caravaggio” in order to make his works more correct and

graceful, while Guercino also found it necessary to make corrections and add more grace.<sup>57</sup>

What was it about Caravaggio’s coloring that made it so compelling, and what was so wrong that Spada and Guercino had to correct it and make it graceful? What Malvasia admired was the appearance of vividness of color, which he saw as



13) Guido Reni, «The Crucifixion of St. Peter», Pinacoteca, Vatican.



14) Guido Reni, «Pietà with Five Saints», Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna.

a prerequisite for creating verisimilitude. He claimed that this was the quality that lured both Spada and Guercino away from the sweetness and softness of Reni. Spada looked to Caravaggio when he became determined to find a "more grand and fierce manner" than Guido's, and returned from Malta to Bologna with a coloring that was more intense and brilliant

(*vivace*).<sup>58</sup> Guercino also turned to Caravaggio's forceful manner as the alternative to Guido's pretty, sweet style.<sup>59</sup> Even Reni himself learned something from Caravaggio. While forced to copy his style literally in the early *Crucifixion of St. Peter* [Fig. 13] due to Arpino's dare, Reni was later able to select from Caravaggio the qualities that would "heighten his





15) Ludovico Carracci, «The Calling of St. Matthew», Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna.

style and give fierceness to his colors.”<sup>60</sup> Thus in the *Pietà with Five Saints* for the Bolognese church of the Mendicanti [Fig. 14], he produced a work with so much relief and such awesomeness that he regained the admiration of the jealous Ludovico Carracci, who was then compelled to respond by deepening the shadows in his own *Calling of St. Matthew* [Fig. 15].<sup>61</sup> Malvasia recognized that deep shadows created

a strong contrast with lighter colors, making them appear more vivid. In conclusion, it was Caravaggio’s use of strong contrasts and limitation of very bright areas to a few spots that made his work so compelling and forceful; Malvasia frequently described it as dark and eye-catching (*maniera cacciata e scura*).

This was also Caravaggio’s downfall, because he limited himself to one particular type of lighting, thus eliminating the vast number of natural situations where the light of day was clear and diffused. Such limitations made his coloring ultimately “unnatural,” necessitating the “corrections” that Spada and Guercino so wisely undertook. Guido Reni’s lighting was seen as more natural because it was “the type everyone sees daily on the streets, in the squares, and in churches,” in contrast to the “awesome and forced shadows that occur when the light of the sun falls from high above through a half-closed window, or from a lit torch, both of which are, in every way, too artificial, violent, and affected, are not seen naturally and in ordinary circumstances, except for the case of representations of night scenes, fires, or similar things.”<sup>62</sup>

Everything that Malvasia thought was wrong with Caravaggio’s coloring is revealed in an anecdote put in the voice of Annibale Carracci in the *Life of Guido Reni*.<sup>63</sup> Malvasia related that Annibale Carracci, after having learned about Caravaggio’s dramatic success in Rome, resolved to better his rival by developing a manner categorically opposed to it in four aspects: color, light, shadow, and imitation of nature. Annibale would replace Caravaggio’s fierce coloring with one that was more “tender.”<sup>64</sup> In place of Caravaggio’s broken and cutting light, he would substitute an open, frontal lighting.<sup>65</sup> And, instead of night scenes using dark shadows that obscure forms, he would set his scenes in a clear daylight in order to “reveal his most learned and erudite studies [of nature].”<sup>66</sup> It is only at the end that Annibale resolved to replace Caravaggio’s unselective approach to nature with a style that adds nobility and harmony by selecting and combining the most perfect and admirable parts of nature.<sup>67</sup>

Malvasia’s anecdote is a rhetorical device to make a point about the ideology of Reni’s coloring and its sources in Emilian practice. It is not a historical account of an event that really happened, yet it has real value for us as historians. For it records Malvasia’s understanding of two opposing attitudes towards coloring and gives us a sense of how Malvasia thought Caravaggio’s position needed to be modified. We learn that Malvasia thought Caravaggio’s coloring lacked the quality of tenderness (*tenero*), a descriptive term often used in conjunction with “sweetness,” which in practice would be manifested in less extreme contrasts and more gentle transitions. Caravaggio’s lighting also disrupted pictorial unity, breaking

forms into parts with its strong contrasts. This is the same thing that Zaccolini criticized in tenebrist painting as a crude, cutting manner, lacking *unione*.<sup>68</sup> Gradual transitions from the illuminated to the shadowed parts of bodies had been repeatedly espoused since Leonardo da Vinci. Vasari and later writers saw them as one of the principle qualities distinguishing modern painting from the hard, dry manner of the Quattrocento. Thus, while this fictive dialogue functions to justify Reni's choice of a sweet manner by emphasizing its endorsement by Annibale [Fig. 16], it also helps us to better understand Malvasia's comments on the "improvements" to Caravaggio's fierce manner that were undertaken by Spada and Guercino.

When Malvasia talked of Spada's "tempering" of shadows, he meant that he introduced reflected light to soften the transitions between light and dark and eliminate the excessive darkness of the *tenebre*. Zaccolini used the verb "tempering" in a similar way. It was something the painter did to reduce the intensity of very dark shadows so that they would seem to unite with the less dark parts.<sup>69</sup> Similarly, what Guercino did to add "grace" was doubtlessly a softening of the transitions between degrees of light and shadow. Numerous writers before Malvasia had argued that such gradual transitions produced "sweetness" (*dolcezza*), "tenderness" (*tenerezza*), "grace" (*grazia*), and "union" (*unione*).<sup>70</sup>

But there is still more to Malvasia's criticism: the extreme contrast which can make relief so forceful and colors appear so vivid will create a problem of compositional unity and harmony. Malvasia believed that vivid colors were difficult to unify, that they rarely go together well, and often look excessive. This view was typical of mid-Seicento authors.<sup>71</sup> It underlies his appraisal of Guercino:

His coloring was a caricature that exceeded naturalness; when past masters reached this level they could not do anything more; whereas, when the colors were held [by Guercino], they were mortified because they did not clash. If he delighted in reinforcing them, [it was] because they exceeded the limits, thus moderating them with a burning judgment that only rendered the excess pleasing.<sup>72</sup>

In sum, Guercino's coloring was unnatural because it was too strong, because such vivid colors and intense contrasts only occasionally occur in nature, and because his lighting was limited to two "accidental" conditions in nature—dark nights illuminated by a single light, and broad, intense daylight. But he deserved praise because he found a way to organize these colors effectively in a way that no one had done before.

Giovanni Pietro Bellori also recognized the difficulty of harmonizing strong colors, and was the first to publish the idea



16) Annibale Carracci, «The Assumption of the Virgin», Cerasi Chapel, Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome.

that Caravaggio actually avoided truly vivid colors. Describing his contribution to the reform of late *maniera* painting, Bellori explained that

by avoiding all prettiness and vanity in his color, Caravaggio strengthened his tones and gave them blood and flesh, reminding painters of [the importance of] imitation.



17) Caravaggio, «The Card Players», Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.

However, one finds that he never used cinnabar reds and azure blues in his figures; and even when he sometimes had to use them, he weakened them (*li ammorzava*), saying that they were the poison of colors.<sup>73</sup>

Bellori's use of the verb "ammorzare," which means to extinguish a fire, and by extension, to attenuate or diminish the intensity of something, clearly suggests the reduction of color saturation. This is the quality that makes colors vivid and

"fiery," as writers on art had recognized from the time of Leonardo.<sup>74</sup> This crucial passage demonstrates Bellori's recognition that, while Caravaggio's colors seemed stronger and more lifelike than the artificial pastel colors of Arpino and other predecessors, such intensity was not merely due to a use of pure, bright pigment.

Like Malvasia and Scannelli, Bellori made a distinction between the excessive naturalism of Caravaggio's unselective models and the naturalness of his color. He praised the



18) Caravaggio, «The Supper at Emmaus», Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.

verisimilitude of color in many of the works that he described. The imitation of color in *The Card Players* [Fig. 17] was so effective, he said, that it did not even look fictive.<sup>75</sup> He marveled that the *Magdalene* [Fig. 5] imitates real color “using only a few tints.”<sup>76</sup> Concerning the versions of *The Supper at Emmaus* (Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan [Fig. 18], and National Gallery, London [Fig. 19]),<sup>77</sup> he wrote that “the first [the Patrizi version] is more tinted (*più tinta*), but both are praiseworthy for the imitation of natural color, even though they are lacking

in decorum, since Michele frequently degenerated into lowly and vulgar forms.”<sup>78</sup>

The problem, however, was that what should have been only the means to an end became the end in itself. Caravaggio, he wrote, “aspired *only* to the glory of coloring, so that flesh, skin and blood and natural surfaces would appear real, and to this *alone* he turned his eye and industry, leaving aside all other ways of thinking about art [emphasis mine].”<sup>79</sup> Bellori regarded verisimilitude as a necessary condition of ideal



19) Caravaggio, «The Supper at Emmaus», National Gallery, London.

painting. Of course, naturalistic coloring was not sufficient; art must also have an intellectual content manifested in an appropriate visual form, as Bellori made clear in *Idea* and throughout his praise of Annibale Carracci and Domenichino. He thus critiqued the ancient tradition of pictorial panegyric (of which the Zeuxis story is the most celebrated example), which Vasari had revived and in which other modern biographers continued to work, and tried to replace it with one based upon literary standards in which meaning and style were inseparable. Caravaggio was *admired* for showing the way

towards the ideal by his innovations in coloring, and for this reason his biography was included in the *Lives* while artists of the caliber of Bernini and Pietro da Cortona were excluded. But he was also “too natural,” for his works lacked the intellectual content to raise them to the level of the ideal: his works were condemned as “without *invenzione*, *decorum*, *disegno*, nor any science of painting.”<sup>80</sup>

Although Bellori clearly preferred Caravaggio’s early works (*Mary Magdalene*, *The Flight into Egypt*, *The Card Players* [Figs. 5 and 17]) with their sweet, pure colors, and trans-

parent shadows, he did not condemn the later works for their lack of naturalism. He recognized that the strong, dark shadows and the restricted areas of light were practices that gave great relief to the figures, and did imitate one particular natural situation: a windowless room, with a lamp placed very high, shining directly onto the figure. Such a light would strongly illuminate one part of the figure, leaving the rest in shadow.<sup>81</sup> This new style left behind the sweetness and purity of the early works; its coloring was instead described as most fierce (*fierissime*), and Bellori appreciated the way that small areas of bright light could enliven a composition.<sup>82</sup>

Nevertheless, these examples make it clear that Seicento writers were not referring simply to Caravaggio's strong *chiaroscuro* when they praised the verisimilitude of his coloring. Although his use of *chiaroscuro* was regarded as novel, it was not the most praiseworthy quality of his coloring.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, none of these critics suggested that Caravaggio's coloring was a facile *copying* of nature, despite the fact that Caravaggio was criticized for aping nature in nearly every other respect. Indeed, these writers recognized the artifice of his coloring, whether they condemned it as artificial or praised its efficacy at imitating the appearance of colors in nature.

### The Artifice of Art

The most perspicuous statement of Caravaggio's artifice was expressed by Vincenzo Giustiniani, one of Caravaggio's principal patrons.<sup>84</sup> In a well-known letter to Teodoro Amaden written in the decade following Caravaggio's death, Giustiniani identified twelve types of painting and ranked them on a scale from easiest to most difficult.<sup>85</sup> He put servile copying from a cartoon at the bottom, and ordered his hierarchy by the amount of skill and knowledge required to conceive and execute the work. His letter is an important document of early Seicento taste, for he ranked Caravaggio together with Annibale Carracci in the twelfth and highest category, which was defined as "working both from nature and *di maniera*." His description made clear that Caravaggio had mastered the challenges described in the lower levels of the artistic scale, such as "painting from the imagination without a model," a characteristic of the tenth category, and "working directly from nature," a characteristic of the eleventh category, where Giustiniani placed Rubens and Honthorst. Combining nature with imagination involved greater competence than either alone. However, as Giustiniani surely knew, Caravaggio worked directly on the canvas before a model,<sup>86</sup> and one wonders what role he thought imagination played in Caravaggio's art. Given the critical tradition in which Caravaggio's



20) Caravaggio, «Basket of Fruit», Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan.

coloring was seen as unnatural and full of artifice, can we assume that Giustiniani regarded his coloring as a transformation of nature?

In order to answer this question, we must first examine what Giustiniani said about the difficulties of coloring, looking at remarks incorporated in the descriptions of three of the twelve categories. In discussing the fifth category, flower painting, he remarked upon the difficulty of managing coloring to indicate both the position of objects in space and their illumination. As a youth in Rome, Caravaggio had worked as a flower painter in Arpino's workshop, and later continued to do independent still lifes of fruit and flowers, as in the *Basket of Fruit* in the Ambrosiana, Milan [Fig. 20], his only extant independent still life. Giustiniani followed this by citing Caravaggio's opinion that as much effort is involved in painting flowers as figures:

The first thing that the painter has to know well is how to manage colors, especially regarding the effects they make, in order to be able to make evident the various inclinations and distances of all these small objects and the variety of lights. It is rather difficult to succeed at uniting these two circumstances and conditions if one has not mastered this mode of painting.... And Caravaggio used to say that it was as much work to do a good painting of flowers as of figures.<sup>87</sup>

This important observation requires further commentary. Flower painting required that position be indicated by coloring because the different distances from the eye were so slight that linear perspective would be inappropriate. The ways an artist could use coloring to indicate distance were first outlined by Zaccolini in his *Prospettiva del colore* of 1618–22. There were three principal methods, each of which could be used independently or in conjunction with the other two. One was to create a degradation of color, moving from pure color in the immediate foreground to mixed color in the distance. Another was to diminish focus and finish, injecting more details in the foreground and delineating sharper contours than in the more distant forms. The third was to present a great contrast of light and shadow in the foreground—with lusters and the darkest darks—and successively diminish contrast as the distance increased. Any of these means could serve to distinguish nearer from more distant forms, or even the near parts from the far parts of a single object.

The second difficulty, representing the variety of lights, required that the painter distinguish the appearance of light on surfaces of different color and texture. Since painters normally represented one principal source of light in a single painting, he was not likely to be referring to effects of multiple light sources. Rather, what was important in still life painting was revealing the play of light on surfaces: otherwise, petals and leaves would look opaque and artificial. This is accomplished by varying the lightness and darkness of colors, and particularly by paying attention to the position and shape of lusters and highlights.<sup>88</sup> We use the same visual cues to distinguish wax and silk flowers from real ones whenever the imitation of form is accurate. Caravaggio, as we have seen, was praised by Scannelli, Malvasia, and Bellori for his ability to render these effects of surface verisimilitude. Bellori also lauded his sensitivity to creating textural illusions in still life: “He painted a vase of flowers with the transparencies of the water and glass and the reflections of a window of the room, rendering flowers sprinkled with the freshest dewdrops.”<sup>89</sup>

Giustiniani concluded by explaining that it was particularly difficult to take account of both at the same time. We will return to this point after talking about the other passages in which the handling of color is mentioned.

In discussing the coloring of *maniera* painters in the tenth category, Giustiniani said that they colored their works to make them pretty or pleasing (*vago*). Since these artists had been characterized as painting from the imagination without a model, we can assume that their pretty coloring was also seen as imaginative and full of artifice.

In his discourse on the eleventh category, working from nature, Giustiniani explained the difficulties of imitating the

colors of nature.<sup>90</sup> Here he included the artists Rubens, Spagnoletto, Honthorst, Terbrugghen, and Rombouts. First, he described the coloring of these artists as “pretty” or “pleasing” (*vago*), but then added that their coloring was appropriate. In other words, these painters did not deviate from the decorum of nature by following the fantasies of the imagination as did the *maniera* paintings. Second, he again used the expression “to manage colors” (*maneggiare i colori*) adding “this knowledge is almost instinctual, and a gift given to very few.” The idea that certain aspects of artistic talent, coloring in particular, were intuitive, and could not be taught, was not unusual. Then he explained the criteria for a successful imitation of nature.

Above all, one has to know how to give the appropriate light to the color of each part, so that the greyed colors (*sudici*) are not crude but are blended [into the lighter colors] with sweetness and unity. However, the dark areas and the lighted areas must remain distinct so that the eye is satisfied by the blending of the lights and darks without perceiving an alteration of the true color....<sup>91</sup>

This passage reveals that Giustiniani conceived of three conditions for a convincing illusion of natural light and color: (1) that there is no confusion between the illuminated and the shadowed parts of objects, (2) that both light and shadow are perceived as part of a continuum of natural light, and (3) that the eye does not perceive any alteration in the true color of the objects. All three describe the viewer’s perception, not the pictorial techniques, which the masterly painter “knows” how to achieve. This passage helps us to understand why in the section on flower painting it was said to be difficult to coordinate “two circumstances and conditions”—illusions of position with effects of light. Pictorial technique in both instances requires variations in the lightness, darkness, and intensity of color.

Caravaggio is mentioned in the following category, the twelfth and highest, which is defined as a combination of working from nature and from the imagination (e.g., from the two preceding categories). If we extend what was previously said about coloring to the twelfth category, then Caravaggio’s virtue was his ability to combine the successful imitation of natural appearances with an imaginative use of color to create that which was not normally visible. Giustiniani asserted that he shared this with his contemporaries Annibale Carracci and Guido Reni. Annibale was also praised by Seicento sources as a great innovator in *colore*.<sup>92</sup>

Although this pairing of Caravaggio and Annibale is unique at this time, Giustiniani’s remarkably positive assessment of

Caravaggio is not totally at odds with that of other Seicento writers. There is no doubt that others regarded Caravaggio as an imitator of nature, but we have also seen that many of his visual effects were considered imaginative (although this was normally grounds for criticism). Mancini, Zaccolini, and Malvasia noted the artifice of his lighting, criticizing its unnaturalness while recognizing its potency as a pictorial device. Bellori noted his limited palette, which avoided excessively fiery colors like cinnabar red and azure blue in order to maintain pictorial unity. All of the writers were in agreement on one crucial point: Caravaggio's coloring was not a servile matching of nature, but required the artifice of art.

Even though many of the details of Caravaggio's life and his relationship to his contemporaries have been shown to be fallacious by modern scholarship, this does not undermine their value as critical assessments. Indeed, the very fact that Caravaggio was cited as the source of both forceful and tenebristic modes of coloring testifies to the extent to which his *colore* was seen as innovative and, consequently, influential. The negative assessment of this alleged influence is well known, but I have shown that there was also a strong positive current in which Caravaggio's innovations were regarded as masterly, historically significant, and worthy of imitation, although never reaching the ultimate level of perfection.

This paper was written in 1986–87 and rewritten in 1991 during a Mellon fellowship at the American Academy in Rome. I wish to acknowledge helpful editorial comments and advice by David Stone, Anthony Colantuono, Diane De Grazia, and Patricia Rubin.

<sup>1</sup> G. Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, ed. A. Marucchi, Rome, 1956, p. 223. Due to space limitations, quotations in the original language have been eliminated except in those instances where the text is unpublished or is not translated. H. Hibbard, *Caravaggio*, New York, 1983, p. 346, translates *colorir* as "method of painting," which is often a synonym for the English "to paint." However, Mancini's specific use of the word *colorir[e]*—not a more general word for style or painting such as *maniera* or *dipingere*—is indicative of his reference to color. In examining the appearances of the word throughout Mancini's writings, I have found that he employs it to distinguish the use of colors in painting from drawing (with the brush or another instrument) and monochrome or *chiaroscuro* painting; see pp. 17–18, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, p. 257. *Tento più* cannot be translated as greater saturation without some problems. Although Caravaggio's colors are more saturated than Barocci's, the concept of

color saturation independent of value did not exist in the seventeenth century, where colors were organized on a value scale, and changes in lightness/darkness and saturation were frequently not distinguished from one another. A closer equivalent is *acceso*, as Mancini uses it, p. 18: "...con la lontananza, vicinanza e profondità del colorito più o meno *acceso*..." See n. 30, below.

<sup>3</sup> G. Baglione, *Le Vite de' pittori scultori et architetti dal Pontificato di Gregorio XIII fino a tutto quello d'Urbano VIII*, 1642, 2nd ed., Rome, 1649. Facsimile: C. Pesci, 2 vols., Bologna, 1975–76, pp. 136–37. Baglione referred to the Del Monte copy of *The Fortune-Teller*, now securely associated with the Capitoline version, for which see M. E. Tittoni Monti, "La Buona Ventura del Caravaggio: note e precisazioni in margine al restauro," *Caravaggio: nuove riflessioni*, Quaderni di Palazzo Venezia 6, Rome, 1989, pp. 179–84.

<sup>4</sup> G. P. Bellori, *Le Vite de' Pittori, Scultori et Architetti Moderni*, 1672, ed. E. Borea, Intro. by G. Previtali, Turin, 1976, p. 232. Borea, n. 4, comments that this affirmation undermines Bellori's attempt to convince the reader that Caravaggio's work is not "artistically valid." But see p. 121, below.



<sup>5</sup> C. C. Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice: Vite de' Pittori Bolognesi*, ed. and comm. Giampietro Zanotti, 2 vols., Bologna, 1841, fac. rpt. Bologna, 1974, II, p. 9. The Mannerists are described as "debole ancora di colorito, e dilavata," Arpino as "immaginario e languido," Caravaggio as "reale e vero."

<sup>6</sup> For an overview of Caravaggio criticism see M. Cutter, "Caravaggio in the Seventeenth Century," *Marsyas* 1 (1941), pp. 89–115; D. Mahon, *Studies in Seicento Art and Theory*, London, 1947, rpt. Westport, Conn., 1971, pp. 155–91; C. Goldstein, "Forms and Formulas: Attitudes Towards Caravaggio in Seventeenth-Century France," *Art Quarterly* 3–4 (1971), pp. 345–55; F. Bologna, *Il Caravaggio nella cultura e nella società del suo tempo, Caravaggio e i Caravaggeschi*, Rome, 1974, pp. 149–88; as well as the notes and introduction to Bellori; G. Dell'Acqua, "Interpreti del Caravaggio antichi e nuovi," *Novità sul Caravaggio*, ed. M. Cinotti, Regione Lombardia, 1975, pp. 147–61, and "La Critica," in M. Cinotti, *Michelangelo Merisi detto il Caravaggio: tutte le opere* (Extract from *I pittori Bergamaschi*; Il seicento, I: 204–642) Bergamo, 1983, pp. 257–87; and R. Spear, "The Critical Fortune of a Realist Painter," *The Age of Caravaggio*, New York-Milan, 1985, pp. 22–27. Dell'Acqua gives equal attention to positive assessments of Caravaggio, including the strength of his realism and illusionism.

<sup>7</sup> Baglione, *Le Vite*, p. 139.

<sup>8</sup> Bellori, *Le Vite*, pp. 15–16.

<sup>9</sup> A. Félibien, *Entrétiens sur les vies et les ouvrages des plus excellents peintres anciens et modernes*, 5 vols., Paris, 1666–88; rpt. Trévoux, 1725; facsimile rpt. Farnborough, 1967, III, 288–91.

<sup>10</sup> Goldstein, "Forms and Formulas," n. 6, pp. 345–55.

<sup>11</sup> The literature on Caravaggio is vast, and this does not purport to be a complete survey. The most comprehensive modern studies are M. Marini, *Io Michelangelo da Caravaggio*, Rome, 1974, and revised edition *Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio "pictor praestantissimus"*, Rome, 1987; and Cinotti, *Michelangelo Merisi*, 1983. A. Prater, *Licht und Farbe bei Caravaggio: Studien zur Ästhetik und Ikonologie des Helldunkels*, Stuttgart, 1992, appeared too late to take into consideration.

<sup>12</sup> R. Longhi, "Quesiti Caravaggeschi: II, I Precedenti," *Pinacotheca* 5–6 (1929), pp. 258–320, rpt. *Opere complete di Roberto Longhi*, Florence, 1968, IV, pp. 97–143.

<sup>13</sup> *I Campi e la Cultura Artistica Cremonese del Cinquecento*, exhib. cat., Milan, 1985, pp. 197–98 on V. Campi and various entries; "I temi della luce artificiale nel Savoldo e le radici lombarde di Caravaggio," *Giovanni Gerolamo Savoldo: tra Foppa, Giorgione e Caravaggio*, Milan, 1990, pp. 87–91. For general treatments see G. Panazza, "I precedenti bresciani del Caravaggio," *Novità sul Caravaggio, Regione lombarda*, 1975, pp. 163–74; and *idem*, "Caravaggio's Precursors in North Italy," *The Age of Caravaggio*, pp. 49–87.

<sup>14</sup> For example, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, in P. Féart de Chantelou, *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France*, ed. A. Blunt, commentary G. Bauer, trans. M. Corbett, Princeton, 1985, refers to Lombard color and then to Titian and Veronese in his remarks on August 9 (pp. 107–08), September 29 (p. 238), and October 6 (p. 258) (But see n. 41, in which Bauer suggests that the illusionistic potential of color led Bernini and others of the seventeenth century to associate *colore* with Lombardy, rather than Venice.) See also E. Cropper, *The Ideal of Painting: Pietro Testa's Düsseldorf Notebook*, Princeton, 1984, pp. 132–33 and 253–54 for Titian's importance in the history of coloring.

<sup>15</sup> Hibbard, *Caravaggio*, p. 95.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Cesari's *Betrayal of Christ* (1596–7) in the Borghese Gallery, Rome: Hibbard, *Caravaggio*, 71; H. Röttgen, *Il Cavalier d'Arpino*, Rome, 1973, and *Il Caravaggio: ricerche e interpretazioni*, Rome, 1974.

<sup>17</sup> G. C. Argan, "Caravaggio e Raffaello," *Caravaggio e i Caravaggeschi*, Rome, 1974, pp. 19–28, esp. p. 24.

<sup>18</sup> R. Spear, "Leonardo, Raphael, and Caravaggio," *Light on the Eternal City: Observations and Discoveries in the Art and Architecture of Rome, Papers in Art History from the Pennsylvania State University*, Volume II, Penn. State, 1987, 59–90, pp. 62–65.

<sup>19</sup> C. Del Bravo, "Sul significato della luce nel Caravaggio e in Gianlorenzo Bernini," *Artibus et Historiae* IV, 7 (1983), pp. 69–77.

<sup>20</sup> M. Rzepińska, "Tenebrism in Baroque Painting and Its Ideological Background," *Artibus et Historiae* VII, 13 (1986), pp. 91–112. B. Nicolson, *Caravaggism in Europe* (rev. ed. of The International Caravaggesque Movement), ed. L. Vertova, *Archivi di Storia dell'Arte*, Turin, 1990, pp. 25–28.

<sup>21</sup> C. Dempsey, *Annibale Carracci and the Beginnings of Baroque Style*, Villa I Tatti, Harvard Center for Renaissance Studies, 3, Glückstadt, 1977, pp. 22–36; *The Age of Caravaggio*, exhib. cat., New York, 1985, pp. 109–19; and "The Carracci Reform of Painting," *The Age of Correggio and the Carracci: Emilian Painting of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1986, pp. 237–54. See also W. Friedländer, "The Anti-Mannerist Style," in *Mannerism and Anti-Mannerism in Italian Painting*, New York, 1957, p. 58 (orig. German, Rep. K.W., XLVI, 1925, pp. 49–86.)

<sup>22</sup> See Dempsey, *ibidem*, for his analysis of Carracci's color innovations, in which he asserts a systematic, rational approach without sufficiently demonstrating how this was put into practice in distinction from other, earlier artists. For example, Dempsey writes, p. 32, that Carracci's "radically new means of organizing pictorial illusion," depends upon his combination of "Barocci's quantification of color-value relationships" and "Correggio's exact location of color in the center of a chiaroscuro system." This vague language fails to distinguish Barocci's use of color-value relationships from Michelangelo's, and Correggio's central location of color from Raphael's (for Raphael demonstrated in *The Transfiguration* that he knew how to place color in the center of a *chiaroscuro* system), yet no one would confuse Michelangelo's coloring with Barocci's nor Correggio's with Raphael. Furthermore, the anecdote in Bellori's *Life of Annibale*, that Caravaggio admired Annibale's *St. Margaret* when it was unveiled at Santa Caterina dei Funari in 1598 or 1599, is hardly sufficient evidence of his dependence or study of the Bolognese artist. One must account for the changes in Caravaggio's style in works prior to the Contarelli Chapel (July 1599). His hypothesis (1985, p. 111) that Caravaggio "must initially have become acquainted with the innovations of the Carracci as a youth passing through Bologna on his way to Rome," which Longhi initially proposed, has not been widely accepted by scholars.

<sup>23</sup> Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, pp. 135–36. For an English translation of the 1956 Mancini edition, see T. Bowcott Butler, "Giulio Mancini's Considerations on Painting," diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1972, UM no. 7306276.

<sup>24</sup> Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, p. 146.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 249.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 108.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 109.

<sup>28</sup> The phrase "a certain naturalism" with which Mancini summed up his description of Caravaggesque painting in his earlier "Discorso di pittura" of 1617–19, p. 303, was not about the artist's light and color but referred to the artist's attitude towards the model.

<sup>29</sup> Laurentian Ashburnham MS 1212<sup>1-4</sup>, entitled "De colori," "Prospettiva del colore," "Prospettiva lineale," and "Della descrizione dell'ombre prodotte da corpi opachi rettilinei." The date of the treatise

is discussed in my articles "The Life and Works of Fra Matteo Zaccolini," *Regnum Dei* XLI, no. 111 (1985), pp. 227–58, and "Cassiano dal Pozzo's Copy of the Zaccolini MSS," *JWC/LI* (1988), pp. 103–25. Zaccolini ideas are discussed further in my "Zaccolini's Theory of Color Perspective," *The Art Bulletin* LXXV (1993), pp. 91–112.

<sup>30</sup> Laur. Ash. 1212<sup>4</sup>, fol. 64b-65: "... perche altrimenti senza il temperamento del lume riflesso il detto spatio ombroso non sarebbe ombra ma si dimostrerebbe di dense tenebre, come di notte tempo, il che non essendo buona imitatione, farebbe maniera cruda, tagliente, et inutile alla vaghezza dello sguardo, essendo questa quella parte, che deve dal Pittore esser abborrita."

<sup>31</sup> Laur. Ash. 1212<sup>2</sup>, IX.23, folio 72 recto: "E perciò il Pittore si devera guardare nell'immitatione dell'Istorie successe di notte tempo, di non mettere i lumi delle torce accese mai troppo vicine al alcuno obietto, per il quale si cagionerebber l'ombra di tal grandezza, che potrebbe rendere tutte l'altre figure talmente ripiene di oscurità, giacendo nell'ombra, che renderebbe la pittura piena di disgratia e di poca divisione, e manco rilievo."

<sup>32</sup> Cropper, *The Ideal of Painting*, 7.15G, p. 208 and 16.58, pp. 238–39.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, 7.15F, p. 207.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, 16.58, pp. 238–39.

<sup>35</sup> A. Bosse, *Manière universelle de M. Desargues pour pratiquer la perspective par petite-pied, comme le Géometral. Ensemble les places et proportions des Fortes e Foibles Touches, Teintes et Couleurs*, Paris, 1648. On Poussin's copy of the Zaccolini manuscripts see my "Cassiano dal Pozzo's Copy of the Zaccolini MSS,"; and E. Cropper, "Poussin and Leonardo: the Evidence of the Zaccolini Manuscripts," *The Art Bulletin* LXII (1980), pp. 570–83. The evidence that Bosse knew Zaccolini's volume on cast shadows is suggested by Bosse's reference to an Italian manuscript which treats shadow projection; Zaccolini's treatise was probably an inspiration to Bosse to write about aerial perspective, as I plan to show in the future.

<sup>36</sup> Goldstein, "Forms and Formulas," pp. 351–52, n. 6.

<sup>37</sup> A. Blum, *Abraham Bosse et la société française au dix-septième siècle*, Paris, 1924; C. Goldstein, "Studies in Seventeenth Century French Art Theory and Ceiling Painting," *The Art Bulletin* XLVII (1965), pp. 231–56; and "Abraham Bosse, Painting and Theory in the French Academy of Painting and Sculpture, 1648–1683," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1966; M. Kemp, "A Chaos of Intelligence: Leonardo's 'Traité' and the Perspective Wars in the Académie Royale," *Il se rendit en Italie: Etudes offertes à André Chastel*, Paris, 1987; and *The Science of Art: Optical Themes in Western Art from Brunelleschi to Seurat*, New Haven-London, 1990, pp. 123–25. Bosse's scientific ideal is admirably discussed in two articles by F. Fiorani which appeared too late for consideration here: "Abraham Bosse e le prime critiche al *Trattato della Pittura* di Leonardo," *Achademia Leonardi Vinci* V (1992), pp. 78–95; and "The Theory of Shadow Projection and Aerial Perspective. Leonardo, Desargues and Bosse," *Actes du colloque international Girard Desargues*, Paris, 1991.

<sup>38</sup> F. Scannelli, *Il microcosmo della pittura*, Cesena, 1657, p. 51, fac. rpt. with index and introduction by R. Lepore, 2 vols., Bologna, 1989, p. 51.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 277.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 197.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 198.

<sup>42</sup> On the judgment of the eye, see D. Summers, *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics*, Cambridge, 1987; and J. Thornton, "Renaissance Color Theory and Some Paintings by Veronese," Ph.D. diss., 1979, U. of Pittsburgh, 8015329.

<sup>43</sup> Scannelli, *Il microcosmo della pittura*, p. 51.

<sup>44</sup> See the general discussion in E. Kris, O. Kurz, *Legend, Myth and Magic in the Image of the Artist: A Historical Experiment*, New Haven, 1979, pp. 61–71. On early humanist criticism of the arts, see M. Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators*, Oxford, 1971. On charming and ravishing the eye as a standard criticism of color, see J. Lichtenstein, "Making Up Representation: The Risks of Femininity," *Representations* (special issue: *Misogyny, Misandry, and Misanthropy*, University of California Press) XX, 1987, pp. 77–87. Studies of seventeenth-century biographical literature include C. Goldstein, *Visual Fact Over Verbal Fiction: A Study of the Carracci and the Criticism, Theory, and Practice of Art in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, Cambridge, 1988; C. Soussloff, "Old Age and Old-Age Style in the 'Lives' of Artists: Gianlorenzo Bernini," *Art Journal* XLVI (1987), pp. 115–21; and *idem*, "Imitatio Buonarroti: Michelangelo and Bernini," *Sixteenth Century Journal* XX, no. 4 (1989), pp. 581–602.

<sup>45</sup> I am indebted to Catherine Soussloff, Patricia Rubin, and Paul Barolsky for discussing this issue with me. The recent literature is substantial; see especially Soussloff's "Lives of Poets and Painters in the Renaissance," *Word and Image* VI (1990), pp. 154–62, with earlier bibliography. See also P. Rubin, "What Men Saw: Vasari's *Life of Leonardo da Vinci* and the Image of the Renaissance Artist," *Art History* XIII, no. 1 (1990), pp. 34–46; P. Barolsky, *Michelangelo's Nose*, University Park, Pa., 1990; and *idem*, *Why Mona Lisa Smiles*, University Park, Pa., 1991.

<sup>46</sup> P. Hills, *The Light of Early Italian Painting*, New Haven, 1987, discussing Giotto's innovations in color showed that the artist "advanced" naturalism by imitating the way that variations in light provide information on slant and orientation; thus Giotto demonstrated how to manipulate color to create illusions of volume and space. On Leonardo's innovations in color, see J. Shearman, "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* XXV (1962), pp. 13–47; and J. Ackerman, "On Early Renaissance Color Theory and Practice," *Studies in Italian Art and Architecture 15th Through 18th Centuries*, ed. H. Millon, Cambridge, Mass., 1980, pp. 11–44. On Titian's innovations, see T. Hetzer, *Tizian, Geschichte seiner Farbe*, Frankfurt, 1948; M. Barasch, *Light and Color in the Italian Renaissance Theory of Art*, New York, 1978, pp. 90–119; and J. Steer, "Titian and Venetian Color," *The Genius of Venice*, ed. J. Martineau, C. Hope, New York, 1984, pp. 41–43.

<sup>47</sup> Scannelli, *Il microcosmo della pittura*, p. 358. *Pastoso*, meaning literally doughy, and by extension, mellow, softly colored, has been associated with the impasto effects of the Carracci, for which see Dempsey's comments in *The Age of Caravaggio*, p. 111, and also two studies of Malvasia's vocabulary by G. Perini, "Il lessico tecnico del Malvasia," *Convegno nazionale sui lessici tecnici del sei e settecento*, Pisa, 1981, I, pp. 219–53, and "Il lessico del Malvasia nella sua *Felsina Pittrice*," *Studi e problemi di critica testuale* XXIII (1981), pp. 107–29, and also Lepore's intro. to Scannelli, II, 26. *Pastoso* here refers to the soft, pliable quality that paint shares with dough, as opposed to the hardness of marble sculpture; thus, as a quality of Caravaggio's painting, it refers to the absence of hard edges and sharp contours more commonly associated with the illusion of sculptural relief, created by a spontaneous, impastoed handling of the paint associated with Lombard and Venetian practice. F. Balducci, *Vocabolario toscano dell'arte del disegno*, Florence, 1681, rpt. SPES, n.d. [after 1974] under *pastoso* cross-references to *morbido*, which he defines as "delicato, trattabile contrario a zotico, e a ruvido. I pittori si servono di questo termine per lodare quella sorta di colorito, che è lontano da ogni crudezza, o durezza, quale chiamano colorito

morbido, & anche pastoso, e carnoso." *Rilevate* means raised, like relief, that is, the figures seem to be three-dimensional. *Pastosità*, *morbidezza*, *dolcezza*, and similar qualities of a painterly aesthetic were seen in opposition to the imitation of the effects of sculpture, which were pejoratively labelled *statuino* by Malvasia and other. Rubens made a similar distinction between a soft, painterly manner and the harshness of sculpture in his essay "On the Imitation of Statues" which was published posthumously by Roger de Piles, *Cours de peinture par principes*, Paris, 1708, pp. 139–47, English trans. in J. R. Martin, *Baroque*, London, 1977, pp. 271–73. His remarks emphasize the painter's need to avoid harsh effects of light, color, and outline—qualities associated with the aesthetic of *pastosità*.

<sup>48</sup> According to Cinotti, *Michelangelo Merisi*, p. 193, n. 409, no *Doubting Thomas* is listed in the Ludovisi inventories of 1623 or 1633. The Potsdam version (Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten) is considered the original, which was in Giustiniani's collection c. 1606 by Hibbard, *Caravaggio*, p. 311, n. 104, Marini, *Michelangelo Merisi*, pp. 176, 423–24, no. 32; and Cinotti, *Michelangelo Merisi*, p. 489, no. 44.

<sup>49</sup> Scannelli, *Il microcosmo della pittura*, p. 359.

<sup>50</sup> Identified with the version in the Capitoline according to Tittoni-Monti as in n. 3 above, p. 180, n. 7, relying on a 1697 inventory of the collection compiled by Ghezzi. In the full report of the painting in G. Correale, ed., *Identificazione di un Caravaggio: nuove tecnologie per una rilettura del San Giovanni Battista*, Rome, 1990, F. Cappelletti and L. Testi, pp. 77–78, published the probable payments from the account book of Ciriaco Mattei (July 26 and December 5, 1602) and a record of the picture in a newly discovered Pio inventory from 1641.

<sup>51</sup> Scannelli, *Il microcosmo della pittura*, p. 199.

<sup>52</sup> Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, p. 163. According to Malvasia, Albani began collaboration with Orazio Zamboni in the early 1640s on a treatise on painting, of which rough notes are recorded by Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, II, pp. 163–72. For a discussion of the treatise, see E. Van Schaak, "Francesco Albani 1578–1660," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1969, pp. 44–46, 143–47, who distinguishes the parts derived from Albani from those by Zamboni. The extent to which Malvasia accurately paraphrased Albani is controversial, as is Malvasia's reliability in general as an accurate reporter of letters and other documents, for which see B. Basile, "Qualche fonte per gli aneddoti caravaggeschi della *Felsina pittrice* del Malvasia," *Filologia e critica* X (1985), pp. 422–34; D. Mahon, "Malvasia as a Source for Sources," *The Burlington Magazine* CXXVIII (1986), pp. 790–95; C. Dempsey, "Malvasia and the Problem of the Early Raphael and Bologna," *Raphael Before Rome*, ed. J. Beck, *Studies in the History of Art*, vol. 17, CASVA Symposium Series V, Washington, D.C., 1986, pp. 57–70; and G. Perini, "Carlo Cesare Malvasia's Florentine Letters: Insights into Conflicting Trends in Seventeenth-Century Italian Art," *The Art Bulletin* LXX (1988), pp. 273–99.

<sup>53</sup> Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, II, 165.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 76. Caravaggesque influence on Spada has been minimized by modern scholars until his visit to Rome in 1611, for which see F. Frisoni, "Leonello Spada," *Paragone. Arte* XXVI, no. 299 (1975), pp. 53–79, and for a list of his Caravaggesque pictures, Nicolson as in n. 20 above, p. 91–92.

<sup>55</sup> Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, II, p. 76.

<sup>56</sup> Guercino's independence from Caravaggio is insisted upon by modern scholars, among whom see L. Salerno, *I dipinti del Guercino*, Rome: Ugo Bozzi, 1988, esp. pp. 20–32 and 40, D. Mahon, *Il Guercino. Catalogo critico dei dipinti*, Bologna, 1968, pp. 7–8 and xxix–xxxi, and *Il Guercino, 1591–1666*, Bologna, 1991, pp. 1–15. For a different

view, see R. Longhi, "The Climax of Caravaggio's Influence on Guercino," *Art in America* XIV (1926), pp. 133–48. The point at issue here, however, is not Malvasia's accuracy but his critical assessment.

<sup>57</sup> Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, II, pp. 79, 255–56.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 75–76.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 255–56. "Ebbi egli un fare a quello di Guido contrario ed opposto, che dove questi della vaghezza troppo forse fu vago..." This same polarity between a forceful style using strong chiaroscuro and a pretty style using little contrast is found in Testa's notes; see n. 34, above.

<sup>60</sup> On this relationship, see S. Pepper, "Caravaggio and Guido Reni: Contrast in Attitudes," *Art Quarterly* XXXIV (1971), pp. 325–44.

<sup>61</sup> Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice...*, II, p. 20. The relationship Malvasia suggests is not possible, for Ludovico's painting for the Mendicanti was probably painted 1609–09 according to G. Feigenbaum, "Lodovico Carracci: A Study of His Later Career and a Catalogue of His Paintings," diss., Princeton University, 1984, no. 115, pp. 400–404; whereas Guido's painting dates from 1613–16, for which see S. Pepper, *Guido Reni*, New York, 1984, no. 46; and *Guido Reni 1575–1642*, exhib. cat., Bologna, 1988, no. 21.

<sup>62</sup> Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, II, 59.

<sup>63</sup> For an interesting proposal on the source of this anecdote, see G. Perini, "Biographical anecdotes and historical truth: an example from Malvasia's Life of Guido Reni," *Studi Secenteschi* XXXI, 1990, pp. 149–60.

<sup>64</sup> Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, II, 9: "Saprei ben io, soggiuns'egli, un altro modo per far gran colpo, anzi da vincere e mortificare costrui: a quel colorito fiero vorrei contrapporne uno affatto tenero:"

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 9: "prende egli un lume serrato e cadente? e io vorrei aperto, e in faccia."

<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 9: "cuopre quegli le difficoltà dell'arte fra l'ombra della notte? ed io un chiaro lume di mezzo giorno vorrei scoprire i più dotto ed eruditi ricerchi."

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 9: "Quanto ved'egli nella natura, senza isfiornare il buono e'l meglio, tanto mette giù; ed io vorrei scegliere il più perfetto delle parti, un più aggiustato, dando alle figure quella nobiltà ed armonia di che manca l'originale."

<sup>68</sup> See p. 108 above.

<sup>69</sup> Zaccolini, *Prospettiva del Colore*, Bk. 9, ch. 4: "...quella parte più vicina dell'obbietto ombroso, e perciò temprandosi in questa la rigidezza dell'ombra si unisce con la più oscura della parte ombrosa, e questo, con tal dolcezza deaverà essere usata dal Pittore, che non si possa comprendere il termine del suo finimento..." And Bk. 9, ch. 18: "perche se il lume sarà fiero, l'ombra anch'ella sarà fiera, se il lume sarà debole, e temprato con più ò manco unione di dolcezza, le ombre saranno medesimamente unite, e sparte secondo, che il lume sarà unito e sparso anch'egli..." And Bk. 9, ch. 21: "essendo che la luce discaccia le tenebre, onde si potrà vedere in che modo la natura si parta dall'oscurità accostandosi alla dolcezza dell'unione dell'ombra, che inegualmente se ne stanno temprate col lume..."

<sup>70</sup> P. Accolti, *Lo inganno degli occhi*, Florence, 1625, pt. 3, ch. 12, p. 108; and P. Testa in Cropper, *The Ideal of Painting*, folio 1R, §1, p. 189, folio 7R, §15F, p. 207, folio 16R, §58, p. 238–40.

For Cinquecento examples of a related ideal, see Vasari, *Le Vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architetti*, Florence, 1568, 8 vol., Novara, 1967, I, pp. 126–28; D. Barbaro, *La pratica della prospettiva*, Venice, 1569, p. 176; G. B. Armenini, *De' veri precetti della pittura...libri tre*, Ravenna, 1587, Bk. 2, ch. 2, p. 85, trans. E. Olszewski, *On the True Precepts of the Art of Painting*, New York, 1977, p. 1. See Thornton, "Renaissance..." pp. 73–78, 97–98, on *unione* in Veneti-

an theory. On the difference between the Cinquecento and Seicento ideals, see Cropper, *The Ideal of Painting*, p. 131.

<sup>71</sup> B. Teyssèdre, "Peinture et Musique: la notion d'harmonie des couleurs au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle français," *Akten des 21 Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte: 9. Sektion: Stil und Überlieferung in der Kunst des Abendlands*, Bonn, 1964, III, pp. 206–14. This view was also widespread in the late Cinquecento, where Vasari, Armenini, and many Venetians advised against excessively bright colors and against complementary hue contrasts, preferring instead closely related colors. See J. Gavel, *Colour: A Study of Its Position in the Art Theory of the Quattro- & Cinquecento*, Stockholm, 1979, pp. 96–98, who sees a shift from unison contrast to polar contrast in the late Cinquecento; and L. Caron, "The Use of Color by Painters in Rome from 1524 to 1527," Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College, Pa., 1982, University Microfilms 8220694, pp. 150–56, who explores the aesthetic of unison contrast as part of the concept of *unione*.

<sup>72</sup> Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, II, 256.

<sup>73</sup> Bellori, *Le Vite*, p. 229.

<sup>74</sup> See also Leonardo's use of *ammorzare* in *Codex Urbinas* 67v, for which see P. McMahon, ed., *Leonardo da Vinci: The Treatise on Painting*, Princeton, §187, to describe what happens to color in shadow in contrast to the "liveliness" and "truth" of color seen in light. For Leonardo's discussion of the vividness of colors in different degrees of illumination, see Shearman, as in n. 46; Barasch, pp. 67–70; and C. Farago, "Leonardo's Color and Chiaroscuro Reconsidered: The Visual Force of Painted Images," *The Art Bulletin* LXXIII (1991), pp. 63–88.

<sup>75</sup> Bellori, *Le Vite*, p. 216.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 215.

<sup>77</sup> On the date of the London (Mattei) version, see the publication of the probable payment in Ciriaco Mattei's account book in Corrales, p. 77.

<sup>78</sup> Bellori, *Le Vite*, p. 223. Bellori's use of "più tinta" to describe the darker coloration of the Patrizi *Supper at Emmaus* (Brera, Milan) in contrast to the earlier London version seems to contradict other uses of *tinta* which could be interpreted as indicating color saturation. However, the derivation of the word from *tingere* = to dye, to color, suggests a concept that has no equivalent in modern color terminology, in which *tinta* refers to how far the object is from being colorless. (See G. Cantini Guidotti, "Lessici: Non solo bianco," *Imago* 2/3, 1989, p. 83, on the use of *bianco* to signify "colorless" or "undyed" fabric.) Thus it applies equally to darkness and to saturation, since both required the addition of more dye to the natural lightness of the cloth. I have gone through all occurrences of *tinta* and its derivatives in Bellori's *Lives*, finding that it sometimes best translates as "tinted," "tones," (as in *le mezze tinte* = the half-tones) or just "colored," but always within the limits suggested above. A philological study of Seicento color terminology is greatly needed.

<sup>79</sup> Bellori, *Le Vite*, p. 215.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 230.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 217. Borea, n. 4, objects to Bellori's emphasis on *relievo*, seeing Caravaggio as diametrically opposed to the Renaissance, and citing Longhi's opinion that the heart of his art was not the illusion of relief but rather the way that darkness breaks up the forms.

The Seicento concept of *rilievo* needs further study; it was undoubtedly different from Leonardo's view, for which see J. Bell, "Color and Theory in Seicento Art: Zaccolini's *Prospettiva del Colore* and the Heritage of Leonardo," diss. Brown University, 1983, and Cropper, *The Ideal of Painting*, pp. 30–133.

<sup>82</sup> Bellori, *Le Vite*, p. 223–24: *The David with the Head of Goliath* (Borghese, Rome) is "colored with fierce shadows and backgrounds which usually serve to give force to the figures and the composition." And, p. 226, in the *Seven Acts of Mercy* (Pio Monte della Madonna della Misericordia, Naples), the rays of light from the torch illuminate the color of the priest's white surplice, animating the composition.

<sup>83</sup> Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, p. 108, specifically noted its novelty when he added to his description of the Caravaggesque style of lighting: "This was not done, or thought of, in any other century or by any previous painter, such as Raphael, Titian, Correggio, and others."

<sup>84</sup> See L. Salerno, "The Picture Gallery of Vincenzo Giustiniani," *The Burlington Magazine* CII (1960), pp. 21–27, 93–104, 135–48; and R. Enggass, "'La virtù di un vero nobile': L'Amore Giustiniani del Caravaggio," *Palatino* XI (1967), pp. 13–20. There is also some discussion in D. Mahon, "The Singing Lute-Player by Caravaggio from the Barberini Collection, Painted for Cardinal Del Monte," *The Burlington Magazine* CXXXII (1990), pp. 5–20; and in *A Caravaggio Rediscovered: "The Lute Player,"* ed. K. Christiansen, New York, 1990.

<sup>85</sup> V. Giustiniani, *Lettere Memorabili dell' Ab. Michele Giustiniani*, Rome, 1675, repr. in *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura ed architettura...*, ed. G. Bottari and S. Ticozzi, 8 vols., Milan, 1822–25, VI, 121–29, Eng. trans. R. Enggass and J. Brown, *Italy and Spain 1600–1750, Sources and Documents*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1970, pp. 16–20. Also reprinted in V. Giustiniani, *Discorso sulle arti e sui mestieri*, ed. A. Banti, Florence, 1981. Banti dates the letter c. 1610, while Hibbard, *Caravaggio*, p. 345, suggests a date closer to 1620.

<sup>86</sup> This has been demonstrated by laboratory analysis of Caravaggio's technique analyzed by K. Christiansen, "Caravaggio and 'L'esempio davanti del naturale,'" *The Art Bulletin* LXVIII (1986), pp. 421–45.

<sup>87</sup> Giustiniani, *Lettere Memorabili*, p. 122.

<sup>88</sup> E. Gombrich, "The Heritage of Apelles," and "Light, Form, and Texture in Fifteenth-Century Painting North and South of the Alps," in *The Heritage of Apelles*, Ithaca, N.Y., 1976, pp. 3–35. See also J. Beck, *Surface Color Perception*, Ithaca, N.Y., 1972.

<sup>89</sup> Bellori, *Le Vite*, p. 202.

<sup>90</sup> Giustiniani, *Lettere Memorabili*, p. 126: "Undecimo modo è di dipignere con avere gli oggetti naturali d'avanti. S'avverta però che non basta farne il semplice ritratto; ma è necessario che sia fatto il lavoro con buon disegno, e con buoni e proporzionati contorni, e vago colorito e proprio, che dipende dalla pratica di sapere maneggiare i colori, e quasi d'istinto di natura, e grazia a pochi conceduta."

<sup>91</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 126.

<sup>92</sup> See Dempsey, *Annibale Carracci*. And see also G. Mosini, *Diverse figure al numero di ottanta, disegnate di... Annibale Carracci...e cavate dagli originali da Simone Guillino Parigino*, Rome, 1646, which includes Agucchi's treatise and Mosini's own discussion of Annibale's illusionistic feats.