Trimming Rubens' Shadow: New Light on the Mediation of Caravaggio in the Southern Netherlands

Author(s): Irene Schaudies

Source: *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek (NKJ) / Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art*, 2004, Vol. 55, RUBENS AND THE NETHERLANDS / RUBENS EN DE NEDERLANDEN (2004), pp. 334-367

Published by: Brill

Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/24706558

Trimming Rubens' Shadow

New Light on the Mediation of Caravaggio in the Southern Netherlands

Irene Schaudies

Introduction

The shadow of Rubens is indeed long, and at times possesses a terrible power to obscure. This is certainly true in the case of Caravaggio reception in the Southern Netherlands.[1] There, Rubens is generally viewed as a positive deterrent to any serious, independent exploration of Caravaggio's art. For proponents of this view, the power of Rubens' artistic personality was such that other artists were inexorably drawn into the orbit of his compelling manner. The basis of this assumption goes back to an early source. According to the German theorist-painter Joachim von Sandrart, the Antwerp artist Gerard Seghers confessed to him in Amsterdam sometime around 1645 that he had completely abandoned his earlier Caravaggist mode around the time of Rubens' death (1640) in order to adopt the more profitable manner of Rubens and Van Dyck.[2] Although examination of the visual evidence shows that this report is inaccurate – Seghers' style had already taken a turn for the lighter around 1630[3] – it is true that the reactions of South Netherlandish painters who experimented with Caravaggio's style and compositional formulae lack the relative unity observed elsewhere.[4] In the Northern Netherlands, for example, the work of Hendrick ter Brugghen, Dirk van Baburen and Gerard Honthorst forms a stylistic, thematic and chronological unity that simply cannot be observed among Rubens and other Antwerp painters who experimented with Caravaggesque strategies. Yet Rubens' imposing artistic personality is only part of the equation. In what follows, I will examine Rubens' role in Caravaggio reception in the Southern Netherlands with an eye toward mapping its limits more precisely.

Part of the difficulty involved in sorting out the nature and extent of Caravaggio's influence in the Southern Netherlands lies in the particular criteria chosen to gauge it. Earlier writers almost unanimously interpreted Caravaggio's reception north of the Alps under the aegis of naturalism – or realism, depending on how the cards were stacked in contemporary artistic discourse. For 19th-century critics like Taine and Thoré and Fromentin, it constituted a circuitous avenue back to the authentic, the autochthonous naturalism of Van Eyck and Metsys and Bruegel, which they defended as a precursor of the realist painting of their own time.[5] Early 20th-century scholars like Oldenbourg and Burchard, operating under critical pressures of a different sort, saw the Lombard's art as an antidote to or reaction against the mannerism of earlier generations of Antwerp Romanists. By the time

Von Schneider wrote his study of Caravaggio in the Netherlands, published in 1933, naturalism and Caravaggio were so indissolubly associated that the pairing required no further explanation.[6] While such writers were apt to toss about terms like 'naturalism' with an easy familiarity that too often gave way to imprecision, their views had the virtue of being rooted in an academic tradition ultimately deriving (however much changed) from principles that once held sway in the 17th century.

Justus Müller Hofstede's 1971 article on Abraham Janssen and the problems of Flemish Caravaggism offered the first serious challenge to the views described above.[7] Although focusing primarily on Janssen, Müller Hofstede has done much to nuance our view of what constituted Caravaggio's importance for Netherlandish painters. He rejects naturalism as the Lombard's principle sign and with it the notion of his supposed radicalism, underscoring indigenous precedents north of the Alps for naturalism generally, for chiaroscuro experiments and half-length formats. Perhaps more fundamentally, he shifts the focus away from the formalist analyses of his predecessors, examining instead the problems posed by Caravaggio's narrative style: an important consideration when viewed as an extension of the *ut pictura poesis* principle, in which the history painter's task is on par with the epic poet's.[8] This last maneuver is elsewhere supported by Müller Hofstede's overall assessment of Rubens' practice, in which he consistently emphasizes the painter's high intellectual reach and humanist basis.[9] He makes of Rubens not a deterrent, but a highly selective mediator who translated Caravaggio's visual language into a more suitable idiom deeply imprinted by his own style.[10]

While Müller Hofstede's study has made much-needed inroads toward a more precise understanding of Caravaggio reception in the Southern Netherlands, a number of caveats are still in order. To begin with, one should not be so quick to dispense with naturalism as an index of Caravaggio reception in the Southern Netherlands. Seventeenth-century critics comment explicitly on this aspect of Caravaggio's practice, and it has the advantage of situating the discussion within the framework of contemporary art theory, a system of norms and expectations potentially shared by Rubens and his colleagues. Secondly, and more fundamentally, the force of Rubens' artistic personality was not so great as to preclude independent reactions to Caravaggio's art, nor was his influence chronologically consistent. In Antwerp, as in Rome, Caravaggio reception occurred in fairly distinct phases distributed across a space of some three decades.[11] Rubens' role as mediator in this process is largely limited to the period between 1609 and 1620, shortly after his return from Italy. Both before and after, other artists and other contextual factors played a more prominent role.

Naturalism: The Missing Link

As a known quantity in the critical discourse of the 16th and 17th centuries, naturalism offers a useful means of tracing the responses of Rubens and his contemporaries to the art and ideas of Caravaggio. Writers from Van Mander to Bellori consistently emphasize this aspect of Caravaggio's practice, citing his insistence on working almost exclusively from live models, his talent

for painting individual heads and half-length figures, his compelling use of color and deceptive mimetic skill as its chief markers. For 17th-century critics and connoisseurs, naturalism was more a position with respect to a number of critical criteria than a style. Their comments on certain elements of Caravaggio's art indicate in what direction this position lies with respect to canonical values. Within a system of critical values that places a premium on sound draughtsmanship, the normative beauty of antique sculpture, and the Idea as the basis of history painting, an artist paints exclusively from nature because he is ignorant of the antiquities of Rome; he excels in the use of color because his draughtsmanship is faulty; he relies on heads and single figures because he cannot frame a composition in a way that expresses an Idea.[12] This essentially negative definition derives from a continuous strand in Italian art theory, present from Vasari onward, which privileged the artistic achievements of Tuscany and Rome.[13] Its application to Caravaggio reached a crescendo in the second half of the 17th century in the writings of Baglione and Bellori.[14] Although their views have come to characterize our notion of Caravaggio's reception by contemporaries, it is not representative of the period under discussion here, namely 1609-1630, when published criticism was sparse and attitudes generally more supple.[15]

This is particularly true of art criticism north of the Alps, where many of the chief markers of Caravaggio's style – heightened or nocturnal chiaroscuro, the use of half-length formats, and folkish figure types – were common to indigenous practice.[16] Northern art and artists had often been the recipients of similarly tainted praise, and northern art writers from the 16th century on were consciously aware of mimesis as an important basis of their own tradition.[17] In fact, the earliest published account of Caravaggio appears in Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boeck* of 1604, which was the only published source of information on Caravaggio before 1620. Van Mander emphasizes Caravaggio's reliance on empirical observation: 'His belief is that all art is nothing but a bagatelle or children's work, whatever it is and whoever it is by, unless it is done after life, and that we can do no better than follow Nature. Therefore he will not make a single brushstroke without the close study of life, which he copies and paints.'[18] He adds that while this approach has its value, it is not to be followed without reserve: 'This is surely no bad way of achieving a good end: for to paint after drawing, however close it may be to life, is not as good as following Nature with all her various colors. Of course one should have achieved a degree of understanding that would allow one to distinguish the most beautiful of life's beauties and select it.'[19] Although Van Mander's comments are tinged with a caution that seems to foreshadow the tenor of later criticism, the context in which they appear has a mitigating effect. Van Mander's brief biographical sketch of Caravaggio, like his biographies of Bassano and other painters typically associated with the Venetian tradition, defends the art of painting well: not of figuring the passions, but of handling paint and describing nature.[20] His promotion of these qualities deviates from the views of his predecessor Vasari in that it presents a revised conception of *disegno*, one which better reflects values typically associated with northern painting and painters.[21]

The degree to which this type of direct, observation-based naturalism was a key element in Rubens' reception of Caravaggio is evident if we com-

pare his approach to that of his slightly older colleague, Abraham Janssen van Nuyssen (1571-Antwerp 1632), for whom it was not.[22] Janssen approached Caravaggio from the vantage point of an earlier generation, for whom empirical observation was somewhat less of a priority. Before Rubens' return from Italy in November of 1608, Janssen was the primary mediator of Caravaggio-related ideas in Antwerp, and his vision was highly influential for younger painters like Theodoor Rombouts and Jacob Jordaens, who looked to Janssen for inspiration during their early years as independent masters.[23] He is documented in Rome between 1598 and 1601, where he would have been able to witness Caravaggio's early work first-hand. In works like *Naiads Filling the Horn of Achelous* (1613)[24] and *Scaldis and Antwerpia* (1609)[25], however, he uses the Lombard's characteristic raking light and dramatic chiaroscuro to enhance the sculptural qualities of his figures rather than to intensify the narrative drama of the scene depicted.[26] Janssen's observations from life, such as they were, were subordinated to the creation of overtly sculptural figures in allegorical clothing borrowed from Caesare Ripa's *Iconologia*.[27] This approach harkens back to an earlier vision of monumental history painting, which promoted a more literal interpretation of *rilievo* as something approximating the appearance of antique relief sculpture.[28] As such, it has more to do with his competition with predecessors like Maarten de Vos and Otto van Veen than with the kind of naturalism alluded to in contemporary Caravaggio criticism.[29] Clearly, Caravaggio's art had a different significance for Janssen than for later painters like Rubens – if only because critical notions of the natural had shifted considerably in the direction of the live model.

For many painters of Rubens' generation, empirical observation had taken on an intensified importance thanks to the so-called Carracci reform, which among other things emphasized drawing directly from life.[30] While Rubens' willing reliance on drawings clearly differs from Caravaggio's alleged insistence on painting directly from life, they were united in an approach to the empirical that distinguished them from their more mannerist-inclined predecessors. Hence, Rubens' approach to sculpture (and Caravaggio) was almost diametrically opposed to that of Janssen. This much is evident from his comments on the appropriate use of copies after the antique in his essay *De imitatione statuarum*, first published in 1708 by the French academician Roger de Piles.[31] In it, Rubens explicitly warns beginner and master alike that copying ancient statues too slavishly will lead to the destruction of art, and that the appearance of stone is to be avoided at all costs.[32] In some instances Rubens even subordinated canonical proportions to observations from life: the bowed legs of his St. Christopher and several figures in his *Life of Constantine* tapestry series contradict ancient ideals, a right he staunchly defended in a letter to the French humanist Nicolas Peiresc.[33] In spite of his occasional insistence on the empirical, however, balance was the key element in Rubens' philosophy. Imitation, whether of nature, antique sculpture, or the art of the more recent past, is to be held in check by the artist's selective faculty of judgment, which constantly negotiates between accidental appearances of material medium and the pursuit of the ideal.[34] In accordance with Aristotle's natural philosophy and the neo-Stoic notion of *Constantia*, what the artist must seek in nature and the art of the past is not the contingent, but the universal.[35]

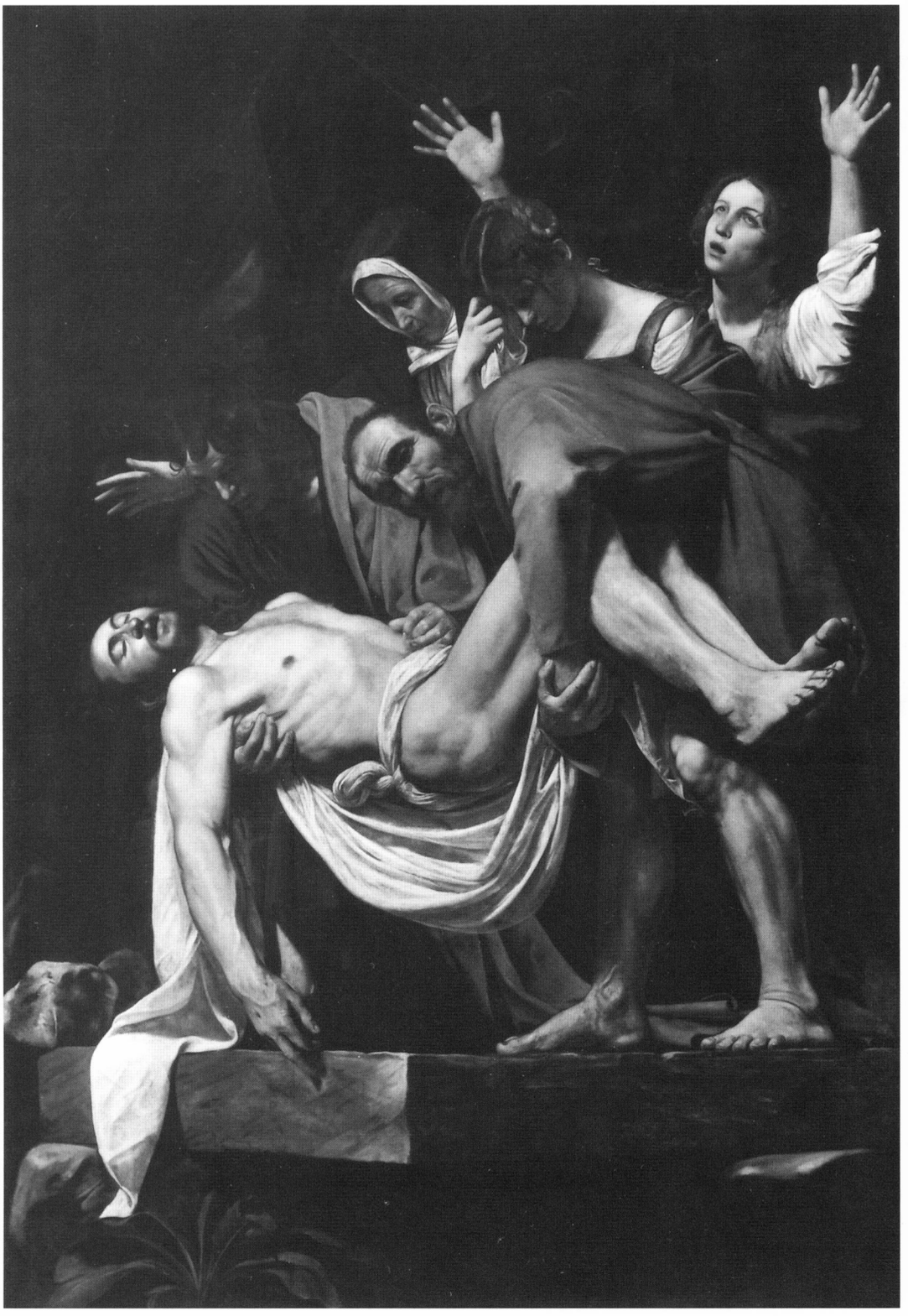
1
Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Entombment of Christ*, ca. 1602-1604, oil on canvas, 300 x 203 cm, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Vatican City.

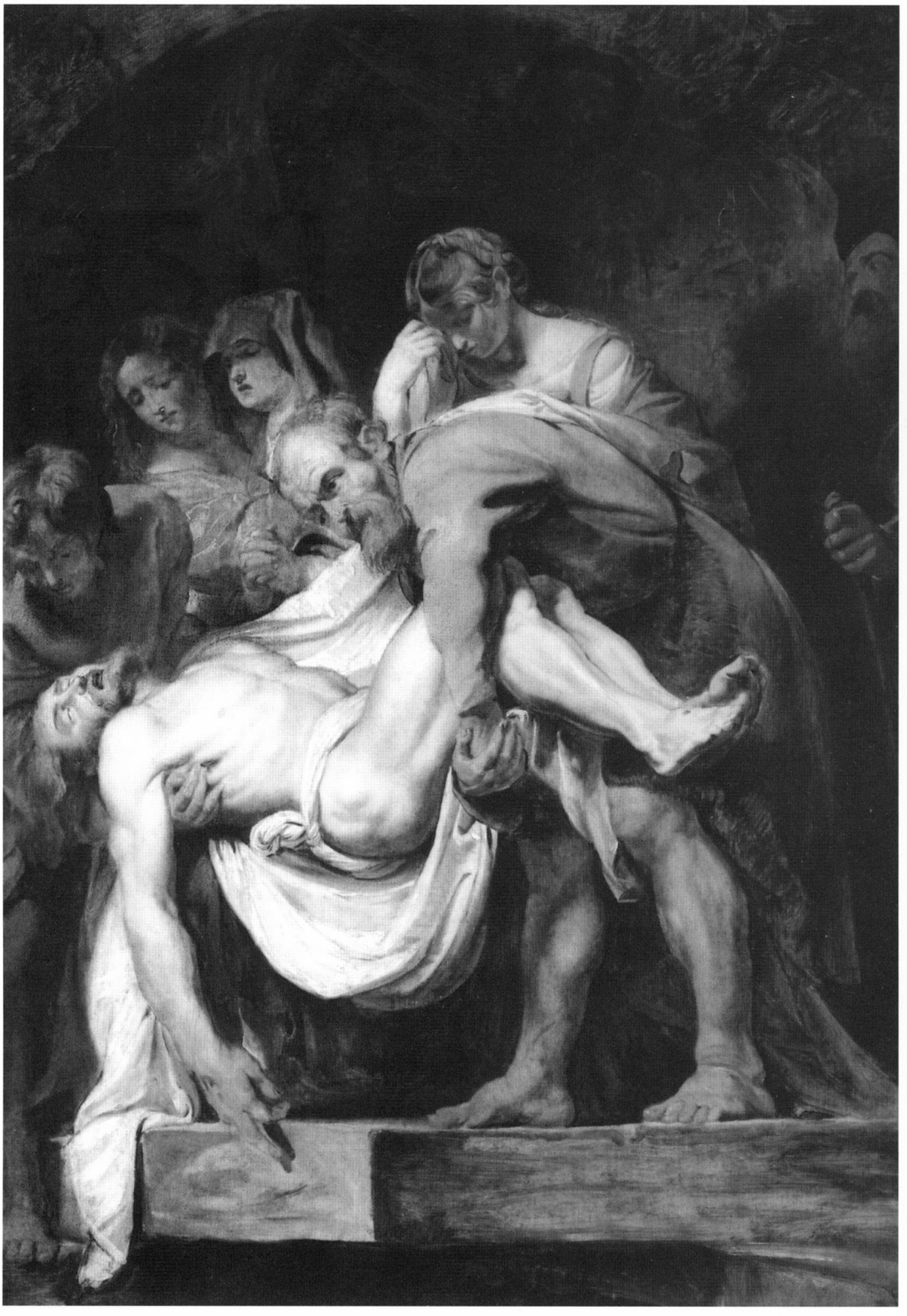
Rubens' Response to Caravaggio: 1609-1620

It is precisely Rubens' finely-tuned theory and practice of imitation that makes it difficult to categorize the uses he makes of Caravaggio under a single rubric. On the basis outlined above, he would have approached Caravaggio as he would any other source: to extract what was true, to reform what was imbalanced and to surpass if he could – always keeping in mind the requirements of narrative decorum.[36] Rubens' approach to his controversial contemporary was marked by caution between 1601 and 1608, when he was still in Rome: he borrowed only the occasional motif, carefully concealing its provenance by altering its context. It was only during the first decade following his return to Antwerp – between 1609 and 1620 – that he gave his interest in Merisi's art greater room to unfold, exploring not only individual motifs but also entire compositions and general elements of style, such as heightened chiaroscuro and half-length compositions.[37] That he helped the Antwerp Dominicans to acquire Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary* (ca. 1607) (fig. 12) further underscores the extent of his admiration for the Lombard's art.[38] Nevertheless, this does not mean that Rubens was ever what we might call a Caravaggist painter: he never took over stylistic features like dramatic chiaroscuro without altering them to suit his own vision; he never showed interest in the pictorial formulas of Caravaggio's early period – the merry companies, musicians and isolated genre figures that so fascinated his Utrecht contemporaries. Rather, he appears to have been more interested in those areas – religious history painting, the rare reference to the antique – that suited his own practice as *pictor doctus*.[39] There, the naturalism appropriate to the lower genres was held in check. In the examples discussed below, it is evident that for Rubens, the direct imitation of nature was acceptably foregrounded whenever the specific decorum of the subject demanded; it was not a pursuit in its own right, to be proclaimed for its own sake in finished works.

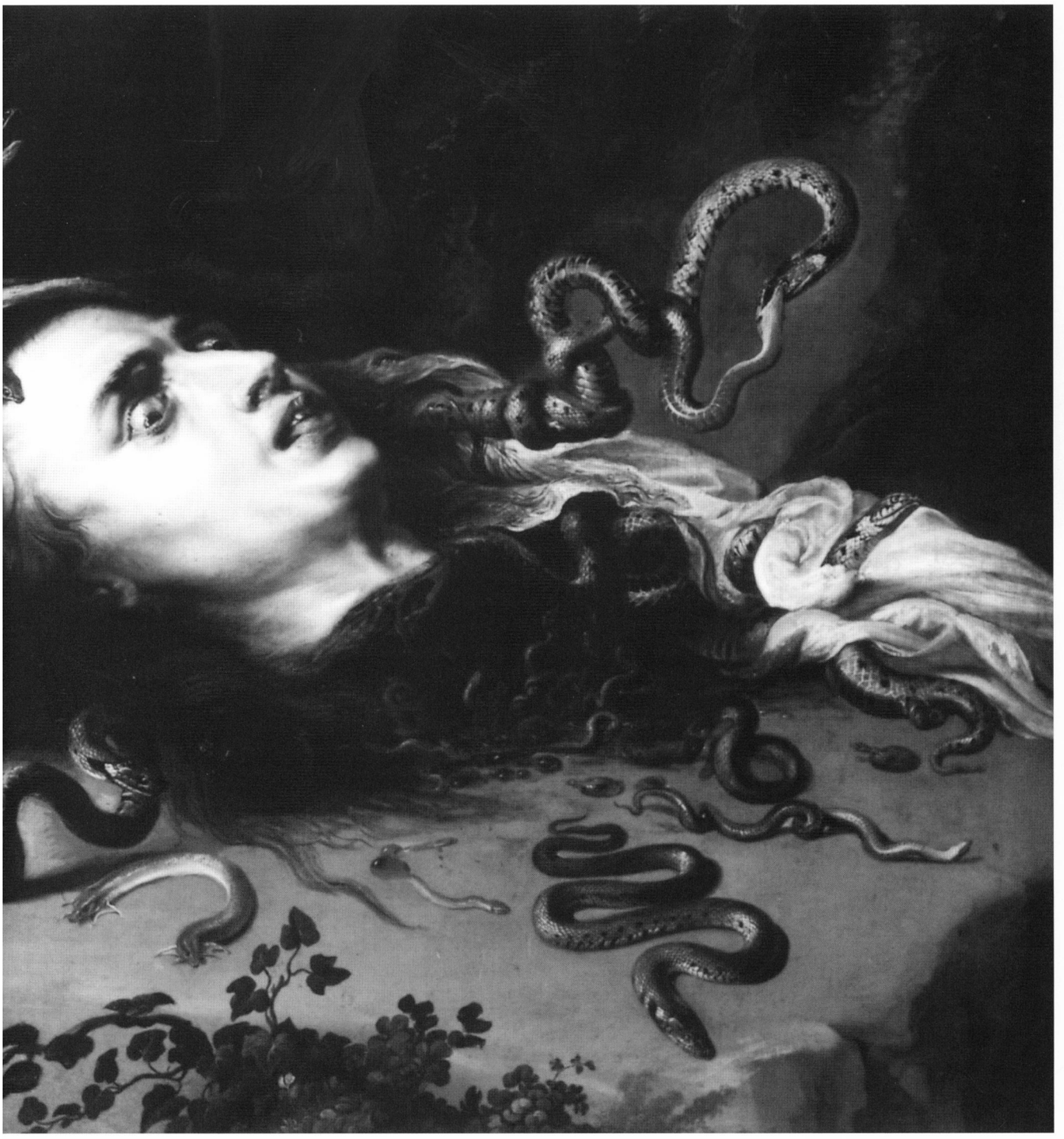
Rubens' sensitivity to the Lombard's perceived violations of decorum is often commented upon. In the most frequently cited example, an oil sketch after Caravaggio's *Entombment* (fig. 1), he edits the gestural drama of the original and softens the abrupt chiaroscuro, recasting it as a meditative image of dignified despair, softly modeled (fig. 2). To a certain extent, his changes are consistent with criticisms put forth by Agucchi and Bellori, who attacked Caravaggio's preference for similitude over beauty and his use of undifferentiated light and poorly articulated pictorial space, respectively.[40] That is, they suggest that Rubens found Caravaggio's imitation of nature too blunt.[41] However, it would be inaccurate to say that Rubens only ever 'corrected' Caravaggio's inventions by toning them down. In some instances, the Lombard's naturalism could be put to good use. Between 1613 and 1618, for example, Rubens produced a number of highly innovative epitaph paintings – such as the Rockox and Michiels triptychs – that took inventions by Caravaggio as a general point of departure, combining them with elements derived from the northern past and motifs based on antique sculpture.[42] The central panel of the Rockox triptych is directly based on Caravaggio's *Incredulity of Thomas*, and that of the Michiels triptych contains echoes of the Lombard's *Entombment*.[43] Here, Caravaggio's almost clas-

2
Peter Paul Rubens, *The Entombment of Christ*, ca. 1613,
oil on panel, 88,3 x 65,4 cm,
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (photo: ©National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; purchased in 1956.





3
Peter Paul Rubens, *The Head of the Medusa*, ca. 1612,
oil on canvas, 68,5 x 118 cm,
Kunsthistorisch Museum, Vienna (photo: KHM, Wien).



sical sense of formal discipline blends seamlessly with the Roman sarcophagi that also served Rubens as a source of inspiration for his early epitaph paintings.[44] The engaging, concentrated naturalism of Caravaggio's half-length figures was perfectly suited to the ends of private commemoration, his strict compositions to the timelessness required of a funerary monument.

In other instances, Rubens amplifies – even exaggerates – the more dramatic aspects of Caravaggio's originals. In the *Head of the Medusa* of ca. 1612 (fig. 3), Rubens sets out to surpass his predecessor in all that is shocking. Constantine Huygens, who had seen a version of it in the Amsterdam home of Nicolaes Sohier, notes that it was so horrifying that it had to be covered by a curtain.[45] To begin with, Rubens' painting is more literally naturalistic than its model, and it is precisely this casual, anecdotal quality that makes it more disturbing.[46] Caravaggio's head of the Medusa was visually embedded in an overtly classical context, a painted simulacrum of Minerva's Aegis (fig. 4). It is clearly a display of the painter's skill in depicting *affetti*, and perhaps also a *paragone* in passing, reanimating what is ordinarily rendered in stone.[47] Rubens' Medusa-head, by contrast, lies shorn in a bare landscape, stripped of any obvious reminder of narrative. The veins of the severed neck, the blackening lips and staring eyes suggest that he had the benefit of empirical observation. While bold, the changes made are justified by their relationship to antique textual sources. The writhing serpents of her hair, painted by Frans Snyders, are joined by a salamander and a mythical, two-headed reptile based on a description in Pliny's *Natural History*.[48] Her spilt blood gives birth to new offspring, and like the barren landscape refers to Ovid's account of the Medusa's death: when Perseus flew across the deserts of Libya with her severed head, drops of her blood fell on the dry and desolate earth, spawning the poisonous serpents that still populate that land today.[49] Rubens' invention simultaneously demonstrates his mastery of antique texts and his unsurpassed powers of observation in the very 'naturalness' of the fallen head; however, his observation of nature does not extend beyond the human. It is Snyders' participation that guarantees an additional level of realism in the lower register occupied by the animal kingdom.

4
Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Medusa Head on Minerva's Shield*, ca. 1597, oil on canvas on wood, diam. 55 cm, Uffizi, Florence.

Rubens' observance of the concerns of decorum in his response to Caravaggio is evident even where there is no narrative as such, and the only decorum involved derives from the principles of *ut pictura poesis*: that is, from the hierarchies of rhetoric and poetics held to apply to painters and poets alike. Rubens' composition depicting a *Nymph and Satyr* of ca. 1617/19, a related version of which survives in an engraving of a *Satyr and Bacchante* by Alexander Voet II (1635-1695) (fig. 5),[50] distantly echoes Caravaggio's bacchic *Boy with a Fruit Basket* (fig. 6). Caravaggio's original poses a street urchin with a fruit basket against a neutral background. The subject is non-narrative, and the boy so crudely painted that scholars have suggested the involvement of another hand.[51] Though unsupported by narrative, Caravaggio's picture derives part of its theoretical legitimacy from an antique source: a description of a painting by the 4th-century painter Xeuxis in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*. According to Pliny, Xeuxis painted a picture of a boy holding a basket of fruit that was so realistic that the birds were fooled into trying to eat it. Xeuxis was not pleased: the birds were not fright-

5
Alexander Voet II after Peter Paul Rubens, ***Satyr and Bacchante,*** after 1662, engraving, 40,4 x 47,2 cm, Stedelijk Prentenkabinet, Antwerp (photo: Collectie Stedelijk Prentenkabinet, cat. IV/V.97 / Peter Maes).

ened, which meant he had painted the fruit better than he had painted the boy.[52] Caravaggio's painting follows this model, asserting the primacy of direct observation not only via the anonymous, unidealized model but also the suppression of the human figure in favor of the fruit: as he is reported to have said to Vincenzo Giuliani, it was 'as difficult for him to make a good painting of flowers as one of figures.'[53] In doing so, he inverts the Aristotelian hierarchy that made man and his doings the primary subject of art – placing himself in a position that Rubens, with his passion for the wisdom of the ancients, would not have shared.

Rubens' satyr and his female companion appear in their natural habitat; the satyr holds a Caravaggesque fruit basket.[54] As Müller Hofstede has already pointed out, Rubens makes of Caravaggio's unspecified genre figure an antique 'Naturdämon'.[55] The shift implied is considerable: where Caravaggio's figure may be read as a bluntly programmatic defense of his art, tenuously supported by a single topos, Rubens displays his talent in a way that is more fully justified by a variety of antique visual and literary sources, and more seamlessly integrated with them.[56] The *Satyr and Bacchante* is one of a group of bacchic subjects in Rubens' oeuvre, all of which draw inspiration from antique sculpture.[57] Although it is difficult to link Rubens' inven-

6
Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Boy with a Basket of Fruit*, ca. 1594, oil on canvas, 70 x 67 cm, Galleria Borghese, Rome (photo: Archivio Fotografico Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Romano).

tion with a specific text, its subject belongs to the general bacchic sphere of fertility and abundance celebrated in Virgil's *Eclogues*.[58] According to the hierarchical division of genres based on Virgil's known oeuvre, such subjects counted as works in the *stilus mediocris*, or medium style, where a greater degree of naturalism was considered appropriate by definition.[59] By introducing antique sculpture into the equation, moreover, Rubens signals the notion of *studium* or *doctrina*, which rivaled nature for pride of place in his theory of imitation. In contrast to Caravaggio, Rubens' artistic fecundity was situated not only in nature, but in nature as filtered (and purified) by the rules of antiquity. Reframed in this way, the half-length satyr offered the *pictor doctus* a more appropriate venue for displaying his own mimetic gifts. As in the works discussed above, his manner of editing Merisi's inventions – whether to curtail or to amplify – gives a fairly clear idea of where such gifts belong with respect to both narrative decorum and Rubens' view of himself as a painter of *historia*: always subordinate to the pursuit of the ideal.

Rubens as an Object of Resistance

Rubens' subordination of Caravaggio's naturalism to the requirements of a narrative decorum based on the principles of *ut pictura poesis* appears to have

made a sharper impression on contemporaries than his incorporation of general aspects of the Lombard's style – which would have registered as part of Rubens' own. In this regard, it is perhaps more apt to see Rubens as a sort of stimulus or irritant: his arsenal of antique references, both visual and textual, imposed itself to a degree previously unfelt in Antwerp, thereby making the 'uncut' naturalism notionally embodied by Caravaggio into a logical counterweight, a potential rallying point for painters like Jacob Jordaens, who had never been to Italy, or Frans Snyders, whose own practice as a still-life and animal painter was directly founded on observations from life. In this context, Caravaggio was not so much a known quantity to be imitated or copied, but a touchstone in a larger dialogue concerning the proper place of imitation in painting, and hence the relative status of painters who, like Caravaggio, relied more on their powers of observation than their knowledge of the antique. For both Snyders and Jordaens, the direct imitation of nature played a more prominent role in their practice than did antique visual or literary sources, and their explicit valorization of mimesis in their own work can be seen as an answer to Rubens' dominance by humanistic means.

As a young, ambitious history painter forced to compete with Rubens, Jacob Jordaens sought to distinguish himself by making the most of his own strengths. Not having had the advantages of a trip to Rome – in particular a well-stocked notebook filled with sketches after the antique – he had to rely on his powers of observation and virtuoso handling of color. His first signed and dated work, the *Adoration of the Shepherds* of 1616 (fig. 7),[60] is among other things a self-conscious assertion of his position. Its composition is deceptively simple: Virgin and Child occupy the center of this half-length devotional image; Joseph approaches from the right with a candle and a bowl of pap;[61] on the left, a young shepherd leans on his staff, gazing in admiration at mother and child; in the background, a young boy, presumably also a shepherd, looks directly at the viewer as he blows on a brazier of hot coals. Yet with this picture Jordaens enters into direct competition with Rubens, whose renewed interest in nocturnal, Caravaggesque chiaroscuro is evident in works like his *Old Woman and a Boy with a Candle* [62] and *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* (fig. 8)[63] both of which date to ca. 1616/17. The close chronological succession of the works considered here – Jordaens' and Rubens' pictures were painted within a year of one another – hints at an intense and intensely competitive artistic dialogue. Striking in this regard is the fact that Jordaens' Adoration, which is firmly dated to 1616, may in fact have prompted Rubens to take up the gauntlet.[64]

Although Jordaens' Adoration is generally considered to be one of his most Caravaggesque works, his knowledge of Caravaggio at this point can have only been second-hand, and his allusion to the Lombard's art here is indirect at best. It is perhaps more accurate to say that he is engaging with Rubens in the more general domain of the nocturne by way of asserting his own virtuosity.[65] Nocturnes were a critically recognized area of specialty both north and south of the Alps – Van Mander, for instance, discusses them at length in his *Grondt der Edel vrij Schilder-const*, noting in particular the importance of empirical observation for painting them well.[66] For this Jordaens could have (and probably did) look to any number of sources in

7
Jacob Jordaens, *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1616,
oil on canvas (transferred from panel),
106,7 x 76,2 cm,
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

addition to Rubens, including Adam Elsheimer, Bassano, and even his own master, Adam van Noort.[67] Elsheimer and Bassano were more widely accessible to northern painters and collectors than was Caravaggio: Elsheimer's *Mocking of Ceres* of ca. 1601, which may have inspired Jordaens' use of multiple artificial light sources in the Adoration, was in the possession of the Antwerp collector Cornelis van der Geest by 1611.[68] Elsheimer was clearly the model for Rubens' *Flight into Egypt* of ca. 1614, which may also served as inspiration for Jordaens' Adoration.[69] Bassano was highly prized by connoisseurs in the Low Countries and England, particularly among those collectors whose names are often associated with Rubens.[70] However, the real key to understanding the programmatic significance of Jordaens' painting is the boy with the brazier in the background. This motif goes back to a passage in

Pliny's *Natural History*, where the author praises the painter Antiphilus for his skillful rendition of a boy blowing on fire in a darkened room.[71] Pliny's ekphrasis was popular as a motif among 16th and 17th century painters – Bassano used it in his own *Adoration of the Shepherds* of ca. 1562, which Jordaens could have known from Jan I Sadeler's engraving after it of ca. 1600.[72] He may also have been familiar with the text itself via Antoine du Pinet's French edition of Pliny.[73] Moreover, Van Mander refers to this passage at least twice in his discussion of light effects in chapter VII of the *Grondt*.[74] By alluding to illustrious predecessors like Antiphilus and Bassano, renowned for their skillful imitation of nature as embodied in the nocturne, Jordaens establishes the parameters – and critical legitimacy – of his own virtuosity.

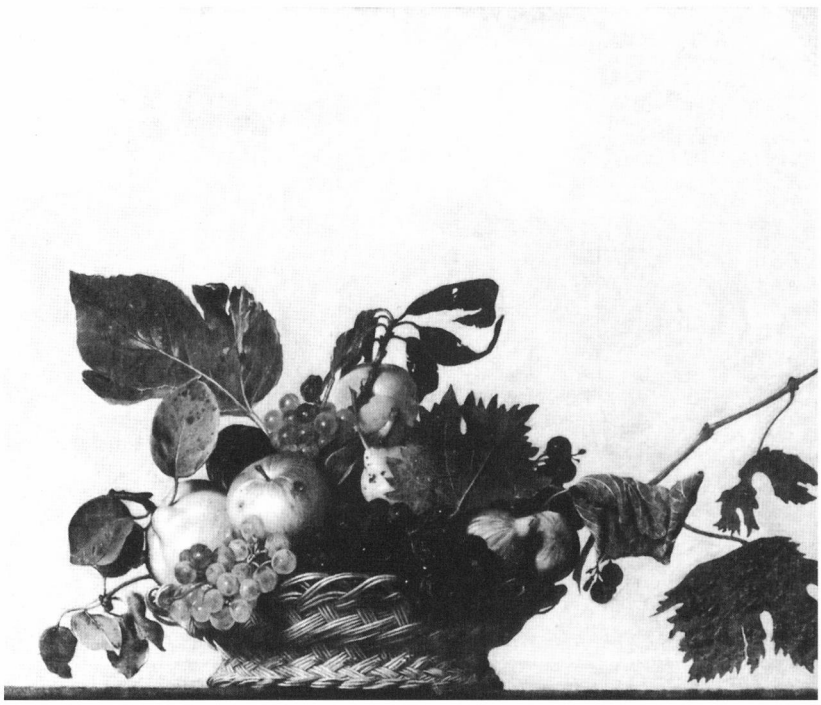
For an established painter like Frans Snyders, the competition must have been more acute.[75] As a still-life and animal painter, Snyders' specialty was directly based on mimesis, which in part accounts for its relatively low status in the hierarchy of genres.[76] Snyders was probably in Italy from 1602 until 1608, where he could have seen Caravaggio's work first-hand. After leaving Rome around 1608, Snyders spent time at the residence of Federico Borromeo in Milan on the recommendation of his friend Jan I Brueghel and remained there until the spring of 1609.[77] Borromeo was an enthusiastic and early patron of landscape and still-life painting, which accorded with the

8
Peter Paul Rubens, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, ca. 1616/1617, oil on panel, 120 x 111 cm, Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig (photo: Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig, Kunstmuseum des Landes Niedersachsen / Bernd-Peter Keiser).

generally positive view of nature he espoused in his theology.[78] He commissioned a number of fruit and flower pieces from Jan I Brueghel, and was the owner of Caravaggio's now-famous *Basket of Fruit* (ca. 1598; fig. 9). The importance of this piece (and the rarefied context in which it was approved) was evidently not lost on Snyders, because during the decade after his return to Antwerp, a strikingly similar basket of fruit appears in his still lifes, such as the fairly representative *Basket of Fruit and Dead Game* of ca. 1615-20 (fig. 10).[79] The level of repetition indicates not only a flourishing commercial practice – the motif begins to take on the aspect of a trademark – but also the popularity of the subject among Snyders' patrons.

As independent works, Snyders' monumental still lifes drew critical legitimacy from a variety of sources: in addition to the positive role assigned nature in Borromeo's theology, there was Pliny's Xeuxis anecdote, Vitruvius' description of *xenia* (gifts of food given to guests), Virgil's celebration of earthly abundance in the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*.[80] However, his frequent collaboration with Rubens would have confronted him with a hierarchy that placed his colleague above him. Collaborative works like the *Recognition of Philopoemen*[81] or *Pythagoras Advocating Vegetarianism*[82] juxtapose figures painted by the *pictor doctus* with Snyders' monumental still lifes – here visibly reduced to outsized *parerga*. Still, Snyders' participation subsidized the excellence of Rubens' inventions by filling in an area of expertise that the master either found beneath his dignity or wished to emphasize by leaving to a hand more skilled than his own. This is particularly true in works like the *Head of the Medusa* or *Prometheus Bound* and verisimilitude in which Snyders' living beasts enhance the overall drama of Rubens' inventions. Nevertheless, Rubens is known to have expressed a certain amount of disdain for Snyders' specialty. In a well-known letter dated February 25, 1617, concerning Dudley Carleton's *Wolf and Fox Hunt*, Toby Matthews reports that 'in this Peece the beasts are all alive, and in the act eyther of escape or resistance, in the expressing whereof Snyder doth infinitlie come short of Rubens, and Rubens saith that he should take it in ill part, if I should compare Snyders with him in that point.' Elsewhere, Matthews states that 'The talent of Snyders, is to represent beasts but especiallie Birds altogether dead, and wholly without any action.'[83] The very fact of this exchange lends credence to Karl Arndt's tentative suggestion that Snyder's *Gallo et iaspide*, a depiction of Aesop's fable of the rooster and the jewel, is in fact a programmatic statement in defense of his art.[84] In it, the monumental rooster rising above the surrounding landscape is invested with all the intelligence of a human subject: a testament to the philosophical force latent in the animal painter's specialty.

The grounds of this mutual struggle are made more explicit in a painting by Jordaens that roughly coincides with the arrival of Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary* in Antwerp: namely, his *Satyr and Peasant* of ca. 1620 (fig. 11).[85] The subject is taken from Aesop's fables, which – if Arndt's hypothesis holds – Snyders also deployed in defense of his own naturalist specialty. The overall composition is loosely based on Rubens' interpretation of Caravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus*, with the Satyr in the role of the surprised apostle leaping out of his chair, setting the tablecloth in motion.[86] As in the 1616 Adoration, Jordaens proclaims his own virtuosity in the imita-



9
Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Basket of Fruit*, ca. 1598,
oil on canvas, 31 x 47 cm,
Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan
(photo: ©Bibliotheca Ambrosiana – Auth. No. F 193/04).

10
Frans Snyders, *A Basket of Fruit and Dead Game*, ca. 1610/11,
oil on panel, 70 x 109 cm,
Rubenshuis, Antwerp (photo: Collectiebeleids, musea stad Antwerpen).

11
Jacob Jordaens, *Satyr and Peasant,*
ca. 1618/20,
oil on canvas, 174 x 205 cm,
Alte Pinakothek, Munich (photo: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek, Munich).

tion of nature. Several elements in the picture allude to his skill in empirical observation: the peasant's wife and child are thinly disguised portraits of Jordaens' own family – real-life tokens of the sylvan world of fertility signaled in Rubens *Satyr and Bacchante*, discussed above. The Caravaggesque bowl of fruit brought by the peasant's wife is analogous to the basket of fruit often featured in Snyders' still lifes of 1610-1620, or carried by Rubens' half-length satyr.[87] Here, the figure of the satyr, half-human, half-animal, further signals Jordaens' claim to mastery in the domains of both Rubens and Snyders: history and animal painting, respectively. However indirectly, Jordaens and Snyders allude to Caravaggio in ways that suggest a conscious awareness of his reputation and its relevance to their own respective practices, particularly as defined against that of Rubens. In this context Caravaggio's practice is transformed into a sort of topos: an emblem, in the form of a bowl of fruit, of the painter who insists on copying nature directly.

1620-1630: New Players, New Venues

Before 1620, Caravaggio's art and the artistic dialogue it generated appears to have been limited to the circle of painters and connoisseurs in close proximity to Rubens: artists like Janssen and Snyders, who had been to Rome and seen Caravaggio's art for themselves, or Jordaens, who worked in close proximity to them. One might also include patrons like Nicolas Rockox, who had commissioned works in a Caravaggist style.[88] Once the Antwerp Dominicans acquired Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary* (fig. 12) around

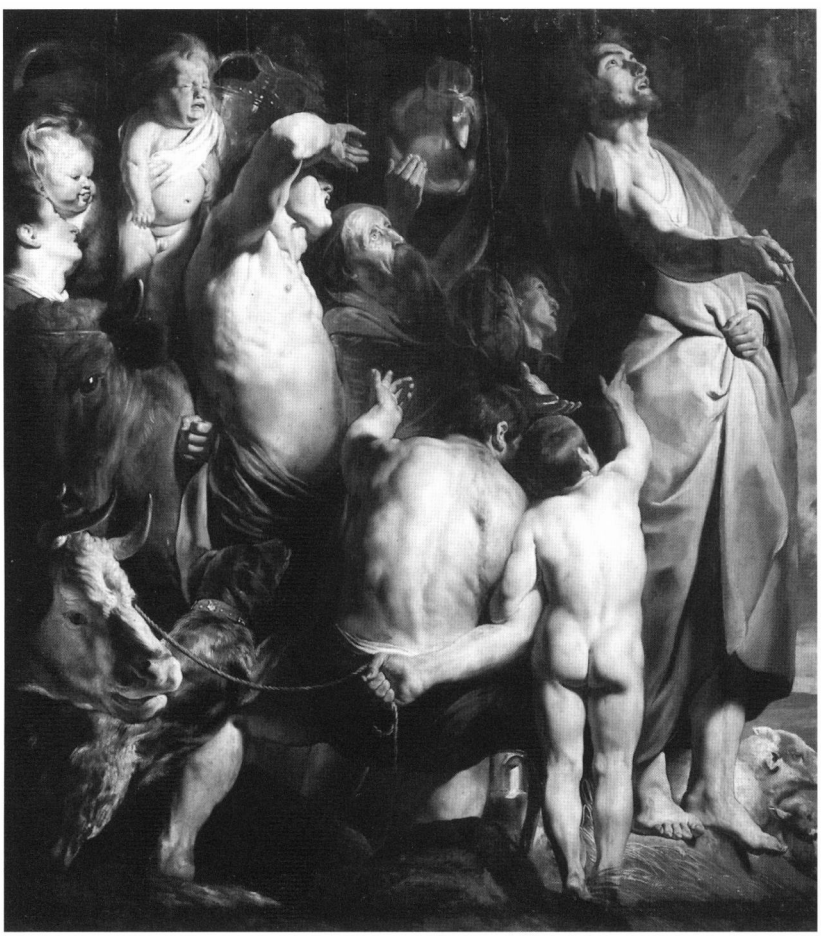
1620, the situation was considerably altered. Although Rubens was initially instrumental in securing the presence of an original work by Caravaggio in Antwerp, and his approval of it was undoubtedly important in establishing the Lombard's manner in a positive light, his own artistic interests had already taken another direction by 1620. However, his diminished interest does not appear to have lessened Caravaggio's impact on younger painters like Jordaens, Seghers and Rombouts; nor did it prevent patrons associated with religious institutions from being taken by the novelty of a new style. From then on, a host of independent factors contributed to the spread of Caravaggism in the Southern Netherlands, beginning in Antwerp and radiating outward to provincial centers like Gent and Bruges.

The exact date from which the Madonna was present in Antwerp has been subject to dispute, but its arrival constituted an important event in the breakthrough of Caravaggism north of the Alps.[89] The painting was brought to Amsterdam around 1616 by the Flemish painter Louis Finson, whose own activities as an avid copyist should also be mentioned as a potential source for the dissemination of Caravaggio's inventions outside of Italy.[90] The circumstances under which the painting made its debut almost certainly established Caravaggio in a positive light. The Madonna was donated by Rubens, Jan I Brueghel, Hendrick van Balen and the merchant-connoisseur Jan Baptist Cooymans 'out of affection for the chapel and in order to have a rare work of art in Antwerp.'[91] Not by chance, all three artists had been in Rome around 1600, and would have been familiar with Caravaggio's early work and reputation. Moreover, the Antwerp Dominicans acquired the *Madonna of the Rosary* in the midst of or just after the completion of an ambitious decorative program in many respects typical for the Counter-Reformation. Around 1615-16, the prior of the order embarked on a quest to decorate the northern side aisle of their church with a devotional series depicting the 15 mysteries of the Rosary.[92] With Rubens serving as coordinator of the project, paintings were commissioned from nearly every prominent painter in Antwerp, including Rubens himself, Van Dyck, Jordaens and Cornelis de Vos, among others. The works were completed between 1617 and 1620 and paid for by pious individuals or groups, many of them associated with the chapel or brotherhood of the Rosary.[93] Taken together, the events surrounding the picture's acquisition add up to a triumphal entry for Caravaggio: Rubens' express seal of approval, surrounded with works by Antwerp's most illustrious artists, and endowed with a sanctioned institutional context.

What follows has the appearance of a chain reaction. From that moment on, Caravaggio's art was made directly and publicly accessible, albeit in the form of a single painting. Perhaps not surprisingly, once Caravaggio became a more widely-recognizable reference, a novelty known to more than a privileged few, Rubens' interest virtually evaporated. With the exception of a *Martyrdom of St. Peter*, painted toward the end of his life, in 1638, obvious references to Caravaggio disappear from his oeuvre after 1620.[94] In the past, Rubens' loss of interest at this point has been interpreted as a stumbling block for other painters interested in Caravaggio. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth: the period between 1620 and 1630 saw the most overtly Caravaggesque painting ever produced in Antwerp, carried out in new contexts but by painters other than Rubens.

For a younger painter like Jacob Jordaens, who – as noted earlier – was attempting to establish his own artistic identity in contradistinction to that of Rubens, the arrival of the Madonna was something of an eye-opener. Here was proof, if such was needed, that naturalist history painting could succeed on a monumental scale and in an institutionally sanctioned context. Although it is usually suggested Jordaens' interest in Caravaggio had petered out by 1620, his engagement really only begins with the arrival of the Madonna. It was only then, for example, that Jordaens began to attend in earnest to Rubens' copies after Caravaggio, all of which had been available to him from an earlier date: in the Munich version of the *Satyr and Peasant* of ca. 1620, discussed above, he draws inspiration from Rubens' *Supper at Emmaus* of ca. 1610 for the first time. Around 1623, he painted a large-scale variation on Rubens' sketch after the *Entombment* of ca. 1613. It was also around 1620 that he executed a series of sketches in the dramatic chiaroscuro typically associated with the Lombard's style.[95] The only surviving painting based on these sketches, *Moses Striking Water from the Rock* (fig. 13), features a crowd of Israelites with eagerly outstretched hands inspired by the supplicants in the foreground of Caravaggio's Madonna.[96] Caravaggio's

12
Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Madonna of the Rosary*, ca. 1607, oil on canvas, 364 x 249 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (photo: KHM, Wien).



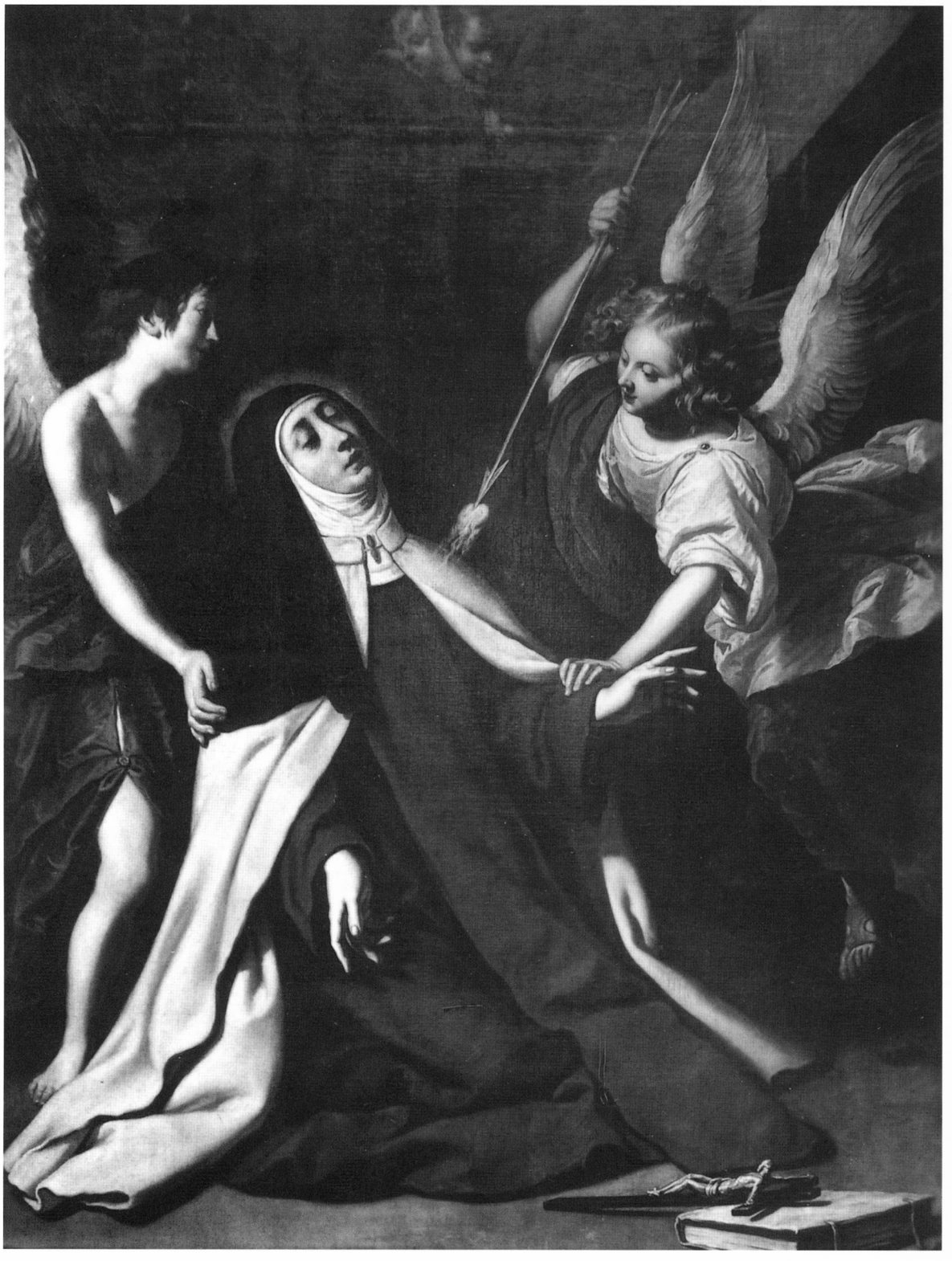
13
Jacob Jordaens, *Moses Striking Water from the Rock*, ca. 1620, oil on panel, 208 x 180 cm, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karsruhe.

14
Gerard Seghers, *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa,*
ca. 1627,
oil on canvas, 265 x 195 cm,
Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten,
Antwerp (photo: KIK-IRPA, Brussels).

striking use of hands also makes itself felt in works like the *Holy Family with a Maidservant* in Stockholm, where Joseph's outstretched hands are clearly set off by firelight against a dark background, or the *Satyr and Peasant* in Kassel, where an animated screen of peasant hands carry out the whole business of narrative. In his Crucifixions from 1620 and afterward, Jordaens abandons his dependence on Rubens' version, so evident in his *Crucifixion* for the Rosary cycle, and produces compositions strikingly similar to those of the Utrecht Caravaggisti.[97] Jordaens' interest in Caravaggio would continue unabated until around 1625, reaching a climax in *St. Peter Finding the Stater in the Fish's Mouth.*[98] While not Caravaggesque in any direct formal sense, this work nevertheless draws inspiration from the Lombard's example in its monumental scale, dramatic lighting, and foregrounding of coarse figure types in the context of a religious history painting.

The momentum generated by the completion of the Rosary cycle and the arrival of Caravaggio's Madonna was given additional impetus by the return of younger generations from Rome: Gerard Seghers in 1620 and Theodoor Rombouts in 1625. Although it has been suggested that the Caravaggesque impulses of these painters were stifled in the cradle by the overwhelming influence of Rubens, a quick examination of the works they produced in the first decade after their return to Antwerp suggests the contrary. Like their Utrecht counterparts, they had worked in close proximity to Caravaggio followers in Rome like Manfredi *et al.*, and upon their return to their native city adopted similar pictorial formulae: the merry company, the loose musician, the sculptural saint in isolation. Seghers and Rombouts continued to paint in this manner until around 1630. Afterward, as in Utrecht – where there was no Rubens to quash alternative stylistic strategies – the novelty of the style wore off, tastes changed, and a lighter manner was preferred.

Seghers in particular was responsive to the potential of the style for religious subjects, executing commissions for the Franciscan, Capuchin, Norbertine and Jesuit orders in Antwerp and environs.[99] His *St. Francis in Ecstasy*[100] of ca. 1622 is a near literal copy after Baglione's version of Caravaggio's original, and his *St. Theresa in Ecstasy* (fig. 14),[101] painted for the Discalced Carmelites in 1627, is likewise executed in the figural style associated with Caravaggio's earlier religious history paintings. Seghers also painted numerous versions of the *Denial of Peter.*[102] The large numbers of surviving contemporary copies after this invention and the fact that it was engraved twice, by Parisian engravers P. Daret (ca. 1604-1675) and A. de Paullis (1598/1600-1639), attest to its popularity and underscore the commercial viability of the new style.[103] It is often forgotten that Seghers' long stay in Rome (ca. 1611-1620) may have been funded by renowned Antwerp art dealers Pieter and Antonio Goetkint, who sent him there to purchase the works of the best masters, regardless of the cost.[104] That Caravaggio was certainly on their list of interesting prospects is confirmed by a letter from the Goetkints to their associate in Seville, Chrysostoom van Immerseel, dated January 21, 1623. In it they discuss a shipment of works containing 'a St. Jeronimus and a St. Sebastian ... which are well painted, being after Italian masters, namely Michelangelo Carwagi [sic], they are very vivid and natural, but not pleasant.'[105] The connection Seghers-Goetkint is revealing not only of the link between commercial interests and the Caravaggist manner of painting,



15
Theodoor Rombouts, *The Card Players*,
ca. 1627/28,
oil on canvas, 152 x 206 cm,
Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten,
Antwerp (photo: KIK-IRPA, Brussels).

but also of the ambivalent nature of that link: like later Roman critics, the Antwerp dealers appear to have found Caravaggio's naturalism a bit too sharp.

Rombouts, although he also painted religious works in a Caravaggist style, is now better known for his merry companies.[106] Works like the *Card Players* (fig. 15)[107] and the *Tooth Puller*[108] still show the decided influence of Manfredi and Valentin in composition, palette and lighting.[109] Like Seghers' *Denial of Peter*, such works were frequently copied during Rombouts' brief lifetime. Although he, too, would adopt a more Rubensian manner of painting by 1630, he continued to paint in a Caravaggist style as well, and Caravaggesque elements persist even in his more Rubens-inflected works.[110] Although less commercially active than Seghers, Rombouts' merry companies sparked a competitive evolution that revisited a central issue of Caravaggio reception from the previous decade, namely, the proper role of imitation in painting. Here, however, the question of copying nature is articulated around portraiture, rather than still life or animal painting. In works like the *Card Players* (ca. 1626/30)[111] and the *Dice Players* (ca. 1626/30),[112] the renowned Antwerp portraitist Cornelis de Vos replaced Rombouts' formulaic, theatrical figures with individuals in fashionable con-

temporary dress, putting his skills as a portraitist to good use rendering the textures of the figures' elaborate costumes and hairstyles.[113] Rombouts responded by going a step further and using actual portraits of family members in his *Tric Trac Players* of 1634, installed in a monumental architectural setting reminiscent of Van Dyck's Antwerp portrait style.[114] Jordaens would rejoin the fray in ca. 1635 and 1638, respectively, with his monumental merry companies depicting traditional Flemish celebrations, *The King Drinks*[115] and *As the Old Sing, So the Young Pipe*[116] – some versions of which also contain portraits of family members, as did *Satyr and Peasant*. Although such works can no longer be called Caravaggesque, they nevertheless represent the further development of a trajectory launched by Rombouts' Manfrediesque merry companies of the late 1620s.[117]

New developments in the graphic arts were also occasioned by the arrival of Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary* and subsequent popularity of Caravaggist painting. Lucas Vorsterman (1595-1675) showed an interest in the technical challenges offered by Caravaggesque painting early on. He commemorated the Dominicans' acquisition in two separate engravings, probably executed between 1622 and 1624.[118] One, with a Latin inscription, was dedicated to Antonius Triest, bishop of Gent, whose portrait replaced that of the original donor; the second, intended for a wider audience, features a simple inscription in Dutch petitioning the intercession of the Virgin.[119] In addition to the *Madonna of the Rosary*, Vorsterman also made an engraving after Caravaggio's *Madonna di Loreto*, then in the collection of Charles I, probably around 1624.[120] During the 1620s, he produced seven engravings after Caravaggesque inventions by Gerard Seghers.[121] Seghers himself, although he had abandoned his Caravaggesque manner of painting by 1630, found a ready market for it in devotional prints. After receiving his privilegium from the archduchess Isabella in 1630, he worked with a number of prominent engravers frequently associated with Rubens, Van Dyck, and Jordaens, including Lucas Vorsterman, Schelte à Bolswert, Cornelis I Galle, Pieter II de Jode, Jacob Neeffs, and Alexander Voet.[122] Among other things, these engravers actively reproduced Seghers' Caravaggesque inventions of the 1620s in devotional prints, mostly during the decade between 1630-1640. In a peculiar reversal, the epicenter of Caravaggesque print production was not Rome, but Antwerp, where a highly-developed industry for the production and export of devotional prints grew and flourished, sensing an area ripe for exploitation.[123]

Finally, the importance of patronage in promoting Caravaggesque painting in the Southern Netherlands after 1620 deserves further investigation. Before that date, private patrons – humanists or connoisseurs in their own right – appear to have been led by the inspiration of artists bearing novelties from Rome.[124] After the Madonna, the trend seems to have caught on in a more 'public' way, among patrons connected with religious institutions. Seen as a group, the donors of the Rosary cycle comprise those members of the affluent middle class who actively subsidized the refurbishment of Antwerp's churches during the most fervent years of the Counter-Reformation. Their interest in and approval of the new style may therefore have led to additional commissions for works in the same style. The circumstances surrounding Jordaens' participation in the Rosary cycle offer fertile grounds

for speculation in this regard. His contribution to the series, a *Crucifixion*, was paid for by a certain Magdalena Le Witer, whose family had already been connected with the Dominican church for two generations.[125] The Jordaens and Le Witer families appear to have been well-acquainted. A Magdalena Le Witer was godmother to Jordaens' brother Abraham in 1608; Rogier Le Witer (probably Magdalena's nephew) was godfather to Jordaens' sister Elizabeth in 1613.[126] In 1635, Jordaens painted the portraits of Rogier Le Witer, his wife, Catherine Behaghel, and his mother, Magdalena de Cuyper. In 1623, Le Witer was almoner of the Antwerp Maagdenhuis, an institution to which Jordaens would later bequeath the Caravaggesque *Washing and Anointing of the Body of Christ*, along with a small legacy, upon his death in 1678. Moreover, the subject of the chiaroscuro sketches made by Jordaens almost immediately after completion of the Rosary cycle – the *Succoring of the Needy* and *Moses Striking Water from the Rock*, two of the seven works of mercy – are typically associated with charitable institutions in the 16th and 17th centuries. Although no evidence has been found linking these works to Le Witer, he is in many ways representative of the Antwerp patrons who commissioned religious paintings for the decoration of a church or charitable institution.

In provincial centers like Gent and Bruges, Bishop Antonius Triest (1576/77-1657)[127] appears to have supported the style's dissemination from within the Church itself. Triest commissioned both sacred and profane works from Antwerp Caravaggists Seghers and Rombouts in the late 1620s, and was the dedicatee of numerous prints, including Vorsterman's engraving of Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary*.[128] As his visitation records show, Triest was deeply interested in the decoration and furnishing of the churches in his diocese.[129] If indeed he studied theology in Rome between 1596 and 1599,[130] as tradition has it, he could have developed a taste for Caravaggio's manner of painting after experiencing it first-hand, or through the influence of art-loving reformers like Federico Borromeo. A renowned Maecenas – David Teniers the Younger portrayed him in a *kunstkamer* with Archduke Leopold Wilhelm[131] – he had his portrait painted by the most famous artists of his time, including Rubens and Van Dyck.[132] Triest's approval of the style, both as a connoisseur and high-ranking church official, may therefore have encouraged its acceptance in religious circles.

Conclusion

I have deliberately downplayed Rubens' role as mediator of Caravaggio reception in the Southern Netherlands, in part because he only served in this capacity between 1609 and 1620 and in part because his own reception of Caravaggio was almost too subtle to be recognized as such by more than a select few. Guided by a theory and practice of imitation informed by ancient philosophy, classical rhetoric and cinquecento art theory, Rubens edited Caravaggio in ways consonant with the demands of narrative decorum: he softened chiaroscuro, or relegated it to proper nocturnes, blunted the sharpness, let it merge with his own manner. Indeed, his humanist-inflected practice was more influential for Caravaggio reception in Antwerp before 1620 than any specific formal or compositional strategy. For his colleagues, the

battle was with Rubens himself, his imposing stature, economic and artistic dominance, and at least initially, Caravaggio was just a signpost in a larger discourse. The intensity of Rubens' humanistically-oriented, theoretically-informed practice set the standard very high in Antwerp, which in part accounts for the difference in Caravaggio reception there as compared to Utrecht. Antwerp was a major center of art production and heir to a long-standing humanist tradition in the arts, and this is evident in the subtle, at times almost unrecognizable responses of Antwerp painters to Caravaggio: none of them were followers, strictly speaking, and it was more the issues raised by Caravaggio's art than the style itself that was important for painters like Janssen, Rubens, Snyders or even Jordaens.

Remove Rubens as stumbling block to alternative paths of inquiry, and one discovers a veritable hive of activity centered around Caravaggesque painting in Antwerp during the decade between 1620 and 1630: a period that almost exactly corresponds to the duration of the style's popularity in Utrecht. This activity was driven by the apparent novelty of Caravaggio's manner, announced by the *Madonna of the Rosary* and fueled by the return of younger painters from Rome bringing new pictorial strategies in a similar vein. Gerard Seghers' involvement with internationally-active art dealers like the Goetkints adds a structural dimension to the equation which bears further investigation, as does the possibility that Antwerp's sophisticated, affluent and above all pious patrons immediately recognized in Caravaggio's style something desirable, suitable for the decoration of chapels, charitable institutions, private homes. Perhaps in Antwerp, as in Rome, the Caravaggesque style won its greatest popularity among those orders concerned with preaching and poor relief – although additional study would be necessary to confirm or deny it. The possible relationship between Caravaggio's engaging naturalistic manner and Counter-Reformation outreach is further suggested by the style's popularity in devotional prints. It was above all Walter Friedlaender who sought to interpret Caravaggio's style as a style of the Counter-Reformation; the outline of Caravaggio reception in Antwerp presented above suggests that his vision was not entirely unfounded. Only obscured by the long shadow of Rubens.

Acknowledgments
A special word of thanks is due to Prof. Dr. Justus Müller Hofstede, who took the time to read an earlier version of this article and whose own study of Caravaggism in the Southern Netherlands was a constant source of inspiration. For their insightful comments, challenging discussions and moral support, my thanks go out to my advisor, Evelyn Lincoln, to Klaus Liebermann, and last but not least, to Dr. Joost Vander Auwera, whose dedication to science cannot be contained by any number of footnotes. Finally, I would like to thank the staff of the Rubenianum, in particular Viviane Verbraeken, whose kind assistance smoothed over many a difficult day of research.

Notes

1 By the Southern Netherlands I mean primarily Antwerp; the precise contours of Caravaggio reception in provincial centers like Gent and Bruges remain beyond the scope of this essay.

2 J. von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der Bau- Bild- und Mahlereykünste*; A.R. Pelzer, Munich 1925, 171.

3 C. Van de Velde, 'In de ban van Caravaggio en Rubens: de schilder Gerard Seghers', *Revue belge d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art* 61 (1992), 181-199, esp. 196-198.

4 In Italy, France and the Northern Netherlands. According to the strict definition of what constitutes a Caravaggist painter, as laid out by R.E. Spear in *Caravaggio and his Followers*, revised ed., New York 1975, 17-18. According to Spear, a painter must have made the journey to Rome, and have seen the works of the master himself or have worked with followers like Manfredi who were still active there in order to qualify as 'Caravaggist'.

5 See P. Demetz, 'Defenses of Dutch Painting and the Theory of Realism', *Comparative Literature* 15 (1963), 97-115, esp. 111-115.

6 A. von Schneider, *Caravaggio und die Niederländer*, Marburg/Lahn 1933.

7 J. Müller Hofstede, 'Abraham Janssens. Zur Problematik des flämischen Caravaggismus', *Jahrbuch Berliner Museen* 13 (1971), 208-305.

8 Müller Hofstede's notion of 'narrative style' is more difficult to reconstruct in contemporary critical terms – hence my decision to reinstate naturalism as a convenient critical marker. Rubens' interest in the *affetti*, or passions, which is more closely related to narrative style than naturalism and constitutes an important area of artistic difference with respect to Caravaggio, is taken up in detail in the recent exhibition in Braunschweig: *Peter Paul Rubens - Barocke Leidenschaften* [2004]. Unfortunately, the catalogue appeared too close to press time for me to give it adequate consideration in the present essay.

9 See esp. J. Müller Hofstede, 'Rubens und die Kunstlehre des Cinquecento. Zur Deutung eines theoretischen Skizzenblattes im Berliner Kabinett', in *Peter Paul Rubens 1577-1640: Katalog I*, Cologne 1977, 50-67.

10 Müller Hofstede 1971, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 277.

11 A. Moir, *The Italian Followers of Caravaggio*, Cambridge, MA, 1967, proposes three distinct phases of Caravaggio reception: Rome before 1610; Rome 1610-1620; Rome after 1620. Apart from this, Moir discusses reception in outlying centers like Naples, Sicily, Genoa and Tuscany and their respective chronologies.

12 J. Emmens, *Rembrandt en de Regels van de Kunst*, Amsterdam 1979, 49; on 'Idea' as 'thought' or 'concetto', primarily in Vasari, see E. Panofsky, *Idea. Ein Beitrag zur Begriffsgeschichte der älteren Kunsttheorie*, 23-38, esp. 37; Panofsky notes that the concept of Idea as invention or concept gave way in later cinquecento and seicento criticism to the notion of Idea as Ideal.

13 Emmens, *op. cit.* (n. 12).

14 Giovanni Baglione, *Le vite de' pittori, scultori, et architetti* [...] (Rome, 1642, 136-139); Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Le vite de' pittori, scultori e architetti moderni* (Rome, 1672, 201-215). Relevant passages appear in translation in H. Hibbard, *Caravaggio*, London], 1983, 351-356 and 360-374, respectively.

15 Here, too, chronology is particularly important; see also Moir, *op. cit.* (n. 11); D. Mahon, *Studies in Seicento Art and Theory*, Westport, Conn., 1971, 36, points out that the vivid and purportedly hostile contrast between Caravaggio and the Carracci sketched by contemporaries like Giulio Mancini around 1619-21 is more fluid in its 'embryonic' form; it would subsequently crystallize into the hardened oppositions of later critics like Bellori.

16 Müller Hofstede, *op. cit.* (n. 7), rightly emphasizes the popularity of these elements in 16th-century Netherlandish art. While he proposes them as a buffer to Merisi's supposed radicalism – something that would not have impressed northern painters as new – I would suggest that their very familiarity was an encouragement to acceptance and further exploration.

17 S. Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*, Chicago 1983, and W.S. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, Chicago 1991, have made sustained investigations of this phenomenon and its implications.

18 Karel van Mander, *Het Schilder-boeck*, III, f191r; English translation cited in Hibbard, *op. cit.* (n. 14), 343-345.

19 *Ibid.*

20 Melion, *op. cit.* (n. 17), 114-115.

21 *Ibid.*, 108.

22 J. Vander Auwera, *Leven, Milieu en Oeuvre van Abraham Janssen van Nuyssen (ca. 1571-75 - Antwerpen 1632), "een seer fameus meester ende schilder in synen levene". Een bijdrage tot de studie van de Historieschilderkunst in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden tijdens de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw*, Ph.D. diss., RU Gent, 2003.

23 On the relationship between Rombouts and Janssen see C. Braet, *Theodoor Rombouts (1597-1637): Een monografie*, thesis, RU Gent, 1987, 60-61 [my thanks to Ms. Braet for allowing me to cite material from her unpublished thesis]; on the relationship between Janssen and Jordaens see Vander Auwera, *op. cit.* (n. 22).

24 Vander Auwera, *op. cit.* (n. 22), cat. 24, 843-846. This work was recently acquired by the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels (J. Vander Auwera, oral communication, 5 November 2004).

25 Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, oil on panel, 174 x 308 cm, inv. 212.

26 J. Vander Auwera, lecture entitled 'Abraham Janssen (ca. 1571/75-Antwerpen 1632), "een seer fameus meester ende schilder in synen levene binnen deser stadt"', presented to the Antwerps Genootschap voor Geschiedenis, AMVC Letterenhuis, May 4, 2004, 361-362.

27 J. Vander Auwera, 'The Artistic Relationship between Abraham Janssen and Peter Paul Rubens. Some Contextual Evidence', *Wallraf-Richarz Jahrbuch*, Band LV, 1994, *Festschrift für Prof. Dr. Justus Müller Hofstede*, 227-238, esp. 234.

28 Although it might seem paradoxical at first glance, Janssen's interest in *rilievo* also relates to naturalism after a fashion. Leonardo, for example, asserted that 'The primary purpose of the painter [was] to make a plain surface display a body in

relief, detached from that plane'; the key to virtuoso relief effects was correct chiaroscuro more than surface texture or color. See M. Barasch, *Light and Color in the Italian Renaissance Theory of Art*, New York, 1978, 44, 46; in a similar vein, Sandrart compliments Caravaggio's *Rondirung* as late as 1675.

29 Vander Auwera, *op. cit.* (n. 26).

30 Namely, Agostino and Annibale Carracci's establishment of an academy in the studio of Ludovico Carracci, after ca. 1590 known as the Accademia degli Incamminati, in which the emphasis lay on drawing and study from life: not only live models, but also plants and animals, landscape, etc.

31 Rubens' theoretical approach is discussed in detail by J.M. Muller, 'Rubens's Theory and Practice of the Imitation of Art', *Art Bulletin* 64 (1982), 229-247. The three-paragraph essay by Rubens was published in Latin in De Piles' *Cours de Peinture par Principe*, Paris, 1708, cited by Muller [229, n. 7].

32 *Ibid.*

33 *Ibid.*, esp. 237-238.

34 Summary of Rubens' principles and sources as presented by Muller, *op. cit.* (n. 31), 229-235.

35 *Ibid.*; U. Heinen comments on the general importance of Rubens' neo-Stoic worldview in his depiction of the passions in *Peter Paul Rubens - Barocke Leidenschaften*, exh. cat. Braunschweig (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum) 2004, 28-38.

36 Müller Hofstede, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 54; Muller, *op. cit.* (n. 31), 231, cites Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, x.ii.10.

37 The distinction between Rubens' approach to Caravaggio in Rome and Antwerp was first made by F. Baudouin, *Caravaggio en de Nederlanden*, exh. cat. Utrecht (Central Museum) / Antwerp (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten), xxx-xxxi, and subsequently elaborated in detail, with numerous examples, by Müller Hofstede, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 267ff.

38 His admiration for even Caravaggio's more controversial work is evident in his having brokered the acquisition of the rejected *Death of the Virgin* (Paris, Louvre, oil on canvas, 369 x 245 cm) by his former patron, the Duke of Mantua, in 1607. Among others see Hibbard, *op. cit.* (n. 14), 204-205.

39 W. Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies*, Princeton 1955, 129, has suggested that the religious implications of Caravaggio's art were not particularly influential outside of Italy, though he makes an exception for Rembrandt. This is not entirely accurate: Rubens appears to have grasped the religious implications of Caravaggio's art quite well, and was able to put this knowledge to good use in Counter-Reformation Antwerp. Rubens' approach to Caravaggio in his religious history painting has yet to be studied in depth. Although the present essay deals more with Rubens' role in Caravaggio reception in Antwerp generally, I touch on these issues below.

40 Muller, *op. cit.* (n. 31), 243. Agucchi's *Trattato della Pittura*, written in Rome between 1607 and 1615, was never published in its entirety. A fragment appears in the preface to the first edition of Simon Guillain's etchings after Annibale Carracci's drawings of Bolognese artisans, published in Rome in 1646. See Mahon, *op. cit.* (n. 15), 113, 233ff.

41 Muller, *op. cit.* (n. 31), 243.

42 On the iconography and sources of the Rockox and Michiels triptychs and their relationship to Caravaggio's originals, see A. Monballieu, 'Bij de iconografie van Rubens' Rockox-epitafium', *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen*, 1970, 133-155; D. Freedberg, 'Rubens as a Painter of Epitaphs', *Gentse Bijdragen tot de Kunstgeschiedenis* 24 (1976-1978), 52-71; C. Eisler, 'Rubens' Uses of the Northern Past. The Michiels Triptych and its Sources', *Bulletin, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Brussels* 16 (1967), 43-78.

43 Although on first inspection it appears that Rubens has again 'toned down' the more graphic elements of Caravaggio's *Thomas* – the apostle's probing fingers in Christ's gaping wound – Freedberg, *op. cit.* (n. 40), has pointed out that it is Caravaggio who is the more conventional of the two with respect to iconographical tradition. Rubens' 'smoothing over' of Christ's body was intended to highlight the centrality of faith, of belief in things unseen, echoing Christ's response to Thomas.

44 Caravaggio's Roman patrons also considered his manner appropriate for highly programmatic religious works intended for contemplation. This aspect of the Lombard's work is explored in depth by B. Treffers, *Caravaggio. Genie in opdracht. Een kunstenaar en zijn opdrachtgevers in het Rome van rond 1600*, Nijmegen 1991. On Caravaggio's classical aspect, see Mahon, *op. cit.* (n. 15), 200, and S.J. Freedberg, *Circa 1600: A Revolution of Style in Italian Painting*, Cambridge, Mass., 1983, 19-20, 62-64.

45 S.A. Worp, 'Constantijn Huygens over de schilders van zijn tijd', *Oud Holland* 9 (1981), 19ff.

46 On the collaboration of Rubens and Snyders and Medusa iconography, see H. Robels, cited below (n. 75), cat. no. 276, 370; P.C. Sutton, *The Age of Rubens*, exh. cat. Boston (The Museum of Fine Arts) / Toledo (Toledo Museum of Art) 1993-1994, cat. no. 12, 245-247; S. Koslow, '"How looked the Gorgon then ...": The Science and Poetics of the Head of Medusa by Rubens and Snyders', *Shop Talk: Studies in Honor of Seymor Slive. Presented on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, Cambridge, MA, 1995, 147-149, ills. 349-350.

47 See for example Barbara Welzel's discussion of the Medusa's head in 'Barocke Leidenschaften im frühneuzeitlichen Sammlungen', in *Peter Paul Rubens - Barocke Leidenschaften*, exh. cat. Braunschweig (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum) 2004, esp. 70.

48 Sutton, *op. cit.* (n. 46); Koslow, *op. cit.* (n. 46). The reptilian 'amphisbaena' is a fictional, worm-like creature with a head at each end described by Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXVIII, VIII, 85; see also A. Balis, 'Facetten van de Vlaamse dierenschilderkunst van de 15de tot de 17de eeuw', *Het Aards Paradijs*, exh. cat. Antwerp (Antwerp Zoo) 1982, 45.

49 Sutton, *op. cit.* (n. 46); Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IV, 662-666.

50 Antwerp, Prentenkabinet, IV.v.70, 40.4 x 47.2. Hollstein XLII, 58-59. Müller Hofstede *op. cit.* (n. 7), 275, made the connection with Caravaggio on the basis of a painting attributed to Rubens, then in its overpainted state [ill. 32, 273], where the satyr appeared alone against a dark background, much like Caravaggio's boy. Although the painting (now in a private collection in Madrid) has since been cleaned and restored, revealing the presence of the nymph, the general outlines of Müller Hofstede's argument still hold. For a discussion of the restoration and the painting's more recent provenance, see F. Healy and K.L. Belkin, *A House of Art*, exh. cat. Antwerp (Rubenshuis) 2004, cat. no. 19, 143-145. The attribution of this work to Rubens remains subject to dispute. The invention shown in Voet's engraving, which was probably made after 1662, is based on a related invention by Rubens now in a private collection [ill. Healy and Belkin, *loc. cit.*].

51 Hibbard, *op. cit.* (n. 14), 17.

52 Pliny, *Historia Naturalis* XXXV, [*loc. cit.*] Hibbard, *op. cit.* (n. 14), 17.

53 Cited by Hibbard, *op. cit.* (n. 14), 346.

54 Although Voet's engraving is generally known as *Satyr and Bacchante*, the figure depicted at the satyr's side is actually the more unusual satyress. Satyresses were comparatively rare even in ancient art; see L. Frier Kauffman, *The Noble Savage. Satyrs and Satyr Families in Renaissance Art*, Ann Arbor 1984, esp. 3.

55 Müller Hofstede, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 275.

56 The wealth and complexity of the meanings potentially accruing to Rubens' bacchic subjects is explored in depth by R. Stephan-Maaser, *Mythos und Lebenswelt. Studien zum "Trinkenden Silen" von Peter Paul Rubens*, Münster/Hamburg 1992. Stephan-Maaser pays particular attention to the neo-Stoic implications of Silenus as a figure of melancholy and pathos (see esp. 291-293). By contrast, S. Alpers, *The Making of Rubens*, New Haven/London 1995, esp. 153, interprets Silenus as a highly personal metaphor of Rubens' own creativity; in her view, Rubens 'identifies with the disempowered, fleshy drunken singer Silenus' because he desires 'access to a potent, extatic mode of creativity.' The anonymous satyr under consideration here is somewhat less symbolically laden than Silenus, who is charged with poetic license as well as sexual innuendo.

57 Stephan-Maaser, *op. cit.* (n. 56), 2, counts at least 50 works by Rubens dealing with bacchic subjects. Whether the satyr in this instance is based on the so-called Rubens vase, a precious agate acquired by the painter in 1619 for 2000 scudi, or one of Rubens' many studies after unidentified sources in Rome is difficult to say. See M. van der Meulen, *Rubens Copies after the Antique*, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, XXIII, London, 1994, esp. 54 *ff*, 212-214; K. Renger and C. Denk, *Flämische Malerei der Barock*, cat. Munich 2002, 366-367; Healy, *op. cit.* (n. 50), 145, potentially assigns the painting a date closer to 1620 on the basis of the Rubens vase.

58 Alpers, *op. cit.* (n. 56), 106-114, pays particular attention to Silenus' role as 'epic' singer in Virgil's VIth Eclogue. Although Voet's print is supplied with a Latin text from an unidentified source ('MERO ET LIBIDINI INDULGERE, ET BLANDIS INSIDIIS NYMPHAS ILLAQUAERE IRRETITA GLORIARI PRAEDA, SOLA MEA VOLUPTAS'), inscriptions on prints cannot always be taken for the meaning originally intended by the artist (*cf.* E. McGrath, 'Rubens's *Susanna and the Elders* and moralizing inscriptions on prints', in H. Vekeman and J. Müller Hofstede, *Wort und Bild in der niederländischen Kunst und Literatur des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, Erfstadt 1984) – particularly in this case, where the print was made several decades after the original. The general connection between the satyr and the sylvan fertility celebrated in ancient poetry still holds, however.

59 The so-called *Rota Virgilii*, discussed John of Garland in the 13th century, matched the three rhetorical *genera dicendi* (*stilus gravis, stilus mediocris* and *stilus humilis*) with the three major works of Virgil (*Aeneid, Georgics, Eclogues*). For a helpful diagram and clear explanation, see A. Wied, 'Zur Geschichte der europäischen Landschaftsmalerei', in exh. cat. *Die flämische Landschaft 1520-1700*, Essen (Villa Hügel) 2003, 13-21, esp. 14-15. The *Rota Virgilii* as a source of genre distinctions in 16th and 17th century painting is discussed at length by J. Muylle, *Genus Gryllorum, Gryllorum Pictores. Legitimatie, evaluatie en interpretatie van genre-iconografie en van de biografieën van genreschilders in de Nederlandse kunstliteratur (ca. 1550-ca. 1750)*, Ph.D. diss., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1986, esp. 129ff. Joost Vander Auwera illustrates this system of classification in action in 17th-century Antwerp in '*Pan und Syrinx* bei Rubens, Jordaens und Janssen. Erotik und Antikenstudium in Konkurrenz', in: *Pan & Syrinx. Eine erotische Jagd. Peter Paul Rubens, Jan Brueghel und ihre Zeitgenossen*, exh. cat. Kassel (Staatliche Museen Kassel) 2004, 81-98.

60 See W. Liedtke, *Flemish Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York, 1984, 121-126; R.-A. d'Hulst, *Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678)*, exh. cat. Antwerp (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) 1993, vol. I, cat. no. A7, 58-60; Müller Hofstede, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 277-279.

61 Liedtke, *op. cit.* (n. 60), argues that this figure is not Joseph, but an older shepherd. Although his argument is to some extent supported by the overpainted figure of an old shepherdess revealed by x-ray analysis, the candle and bowl of pap as attributes are consistent with traditional northern iconography of Joseph. E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, Cambridge, Mass., 1966, I, 164ff, comments on the function of Joseph as a 'substitute cook or nursemaid' in 15th-century miniatures, with additional remarks on the function of Joseph in Adoration scenes in note 2, 125, 408. Two 16th-century works from the Linsky and Lehman collections recently exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum, by a follower of Jan Joest of Kalkar and the Master of Frankfurt, respectively, likewise depict an older Joseph bearing a candle. As M. Ainsworth notes in the accompanying catalogue entries, this attribute derives from the influential account of St. Bridget of Sweden. See exh. cat. *From Van Eyck to Bruegel. Early Netherlandish Painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) 1998-99, cat. nos. 59 and 60, 244-246. Although Panofsky emphasized the tendency in earlier art to portray Joseph as a rather ineffective, doddering figure, H. Erlemann has underscored the positive interpretation of the 'normal', non-miraculous aspects of the childhood of Jesus made possible by the *Devotio Moderna*; she suggests that during the Counter-Reformation the cooking, domestic Joseph may also have been intended to highlight the Christian virtues of *concordia* and *caritas* in a family setting. H. Erlemann, *Die Heilige Familie. Ein Tugendbild der Gegenreformation im Wandel der Zeit. Kult und Ideologie*, Münster 1993, 66-67.

62 London, private collection, oil on panel, 75 x 50 cm; on this painting see J.M. Muller, *Rubens: The Artist as Collector*, Princeton 1989, 118, ill. 58; this invention also survives in several engravings and etchings, discussed by N. Van Hout, *Copyright Rubens*, exh. cat. Antwerp (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) 2004, 71-72, ills. 73.

63 For recent bibliography and information concerning the painting's early provenance, see N. Büttner in *Peter Paul Rubens - Barocke Leidenschaften*, exh. cat. Braunschweig (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum) 2004, cat. no. 1, 120-121.

64 Rubens' *Old Woman with a Brazier* [Dresden, Gemäldegalerie, oil on panel, 115 x 92 cm, inv. nr. 958] is usually held up as the closest likely source for Jordaens' picture, in particular because it too features a boy blowing on a brazier – in this case held by the old woman. However, according to the most recent estimations, this picture may have been painted as late as 1618/20, too late to have served as Jordaens' model. The dating of Rubens' picture remains problematic. It is a fragment of a larger composition, the *Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus* now in

Brussels, which is discussed at length by K. Renger in 'Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus', *Gentse Bijdragen tot de Kunstgeschiedenis* 24 (1976-1978), 190-203. Because of its material condition, this work is also difficult to date. According to H. Verougstraete-Marcq and R. Van Schoute, '"Venus dans la forge de Vulcan" de P.P. Rubens', *Bulletin Musées Royaux de Belgique à Bruxelles*, 1985/88, 149-160, the work was assembled from separate components during the 17th century, but probably not by Rubens or his studio. Additional studies regarding the panel's complicated support structure were carried out by Ray Marchand of the Hamilton Kerr Institute, Cambridge. The support is constructed from an intricate puzzle of interlocking panel fragments, and overpainting in the Brussels version obscures areas painted by Rubens, especially in zones where the separate panels are joined. Hasty alterations to the surface, namely the highlights added to Venus and Cupid, are probably by a later hand, as is the figure of Cupid himself. A special thanks to Hélène Dubois and Joost Vander Auwera of the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels, for sharing their expertise and insights regarding this picture.

65 Most authors, including d'Hulst, Müller Hofstede and Liedtke, link Jordaens' use of nocturnal or dramatic chiaroscuro almost exclusively with Rubens' generalized interest in this aspect of Caravaggio's style. However, as Spear [*op. cit.* (n. 4)] has rightly noted, chiaroscuro alone is insufficient evidence for crying Caravaggio. This is particularly true for a painter like Rubens, who synthesized a wide variety of influences; it is no less true for Jordaens. His range may have consisted of a less-sophisticated collection of elements, but his eclectic manner of proceeding was similar to that of Rubens.

66 Karel van Mander, *Grondt*, chapter VII, vol. I, 182-202; Melion, *op. cit.* (n. 17), 70ff, stresses the importance of description and nature in Van Mander's commentary on the depiction of light.

67 Müller Hofstede, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 298, ill. 44, cites Van Noort's *Christ and Nicodemus* by candlelight, which survives in an engraving by Pieter I de Jode of ca. 1600.

68 Madrid, Museo del Prado, oil on copper, 29.5 x 24.1 cm, inv. no. 2181; K. Andrews, *Adam Elsheimer: Paintings-Drawings-Prints*, Oxford, 1977, 34, cat. no. 23, 152-153, questions its authenticity. Rubens had acquired the picture for his own collection by 1626. For more on the early provenance of this picture see Muller, *op. cit.* (n. 62), cat. 12, 108; Belkin, *op. cit.* (n. 50), cat. no. 4, 98-101.

69 Kassel, Staatliche Museen Kassel, oil on panel, 40.5 x 53 cm, signed and dated. Rubens may have been more directly inspired by Hendrick Goudt's 1613 engraving after Elsheimer's *Flight into Egypt*, which Rubens had attempted (unsuccessfully) to procure for an Antwerp collector. See B. Schnackenburg in: *Pan & Syrinx. Eine erotische Jagd. Peter Paul Rubens, Jan Brueghel und ihre Zeitgenossen*, exh. cat. Kassel (Staatliche Museen Kassel) 2004, cat. no. 102, 102-103.

70 Such as the Duke of Buckingham and Earl of Somerset, among others. Van Mander already mentions Bassano's attractiveness to merchants, who carried his works far and wide, in the Italian *Lives*, f. 180; see also B.L. Brown et al., *Jacopo Bassano, c. 1510-1592*, exh. cat. Bassano del Grappa (Museo Civico) / Fort Worth (Kimbell Art Museum), 1992; B. Aikema, *Jacopo Bassano and His Public. Moralizing Pictures in an Age of Reform, ca. 1535-1600*, Princeton, 1996, 166. I discuss Bassano's popularity in Antwerp and England at length in chapter 2 of my dissertation, *Proverbs, Fables and Folklore: Genre in the Work of Jacques Jordaens* (in progress).

71 Pliny, *Historia Naturalis*, XXXV [H. Rackham, trans.], Loeb Classics Library, London, 1952, 138; the classic discussion of this topos is J. Bialostocki, 'Puer sufflans ignes', *Arte in Europa. Scritti di Storia dell'Arte in onore di Edoardo Arslan*, Milan, 1966, 591-595; see also L.F. Orr's discussion of Gerard Honthorst's 1622 variant in *Masters of Light. Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age*, exh. cat. San Francisco (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco) / Baltimore (Walters Art Gallery) / London (The National Gallery) 1996, cat. no. 36, 239-240, with additional bibliography.

72 Bassano's *Adoration of the Shepherds*, c. 1562: Rome, Galleria Corsini, oil on canvas, 105 x 157 cm, inv. 649, discussed in Brown et al., *op. cit.* (n. 70), cat. no. 36, 347-348; Sadeler's print: Hollstein XXI, 1980, no. 183, 109.

73 *L'histoire du monde, collationnee & corrigee [etc.]. Le tout mis en Francois*, par Antoine du Pinet [etc.], vol. I-II, Lyon, 1562. This was also Van Mander's most likely source. See H. Miedema's commentary in *Grondt*, vol. II, 644-645.

74 *Grondt*, VII, f31r, vol. I, 190, Van Mander praises Antiphilus as an example in his own right; on f33r, vol. I, 198, Van Mander mentions Antiphilus' invention as the source of Hendrick Goltzius' drawing of *Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*, now in London, where Cupid himself plays the part of the boy.

75 On Frans Snyders generally see H. Robels, *Frans Snijders, Stilleben- und Tiermaler 1597-1657*, Munich 1989, and S. Koslow, *Frans Snyders: The Noble Estate. Seventeenth-century Still-life and Animal Painting in the Southern Netherlands*, Antwerp 1995.

76 Koslow, *op. cit.* (n. 75), 31-31, rightly points to the underlying convention of the Great Chain of Being, so influential for so many late-17th- and 18th-century critics, in which all creation was seen as a positive emanation of the Creator, ranged on a continuous scale from inanimate to animate, with three types of souls: the vegetative, animal and rational.

77 Robels, *op. cit.* (n. 75), 22, tentatively suggests that Snyders may also have seen 'pre-Caravaggesque' still lifes by Ambrogio Figino (1548-1608) and Fede Galizia (ca. 1598-ca. 1630); Jan Brueghel wrote two letters dated 26 September 1608, one to Federico Borromeo and one to his secretary Ercole Bianchi, in which he recommends his young friend Snyders, a man of good moral character who stood by him in difficult times [S. Koslow, *op. cit.* (n. 75), 14].

78 P.M. Jones, 'Federico Borromeo as a Patron of Landscapes and Still Lifes: Christian Optimism in Italy ca. 1600', *Art Bulletin* 70 (1988), 261-272.

79 Robels, *op. cit.* (n. 75), cat. no. 122, 259.

80 Koslow, *op. cit.* (n. 75), 45-46.

81 Madrid, Museo del Prado, oil on canvas, 201 x 311 cm, inv. nr. 1851; Robels, *op. cit.* (n. 75), cat. no. 260, 353-354.

82 London, The Royal Collection, Buckingham Palace, oil on canvas, 250 x 334; Robels, *op. cit.* (n. 75), cat. no. 277, 371-372.

83 M. Rooses and C. Ruelens (eds.), *Codex Diplomaticus Rubenianus. Correspondance de Rubens et documents epistolaires concernant sa vie et ses œuvres*, 6 vol., Antwerpen 1887-1909, II, 99.

84 K. Arndt, '"De gallo et iaspide". Ein Fabelmotive bei Frans Snyders', *ARGO-Festschrift für Kurt Badt*, Cologne 1970, 290-296; *Rooster and Jewel*, Aachen, Suermondt Museum.

85 The nature of this three-way competition was the subject of a talk I presented at the Frick Symposium on the History of Art (March 2003), entitled 'Jacob Jordaens'

Satyr and Peasant: Animal Painting in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp'.

86 This unusual detail also appears in Rubens' version of Caravaggio's Supper; however, the overall composition of Rubens' invention is more directly recognizable in slightly later versions of the *Satyr and Peasant* in Brussels and Göteborg.

87 Jordaens' vessel appears to be an earthenware dish (the detail in the painting is not entirely clear). This difference may indicate that he was unfamiliar with the precise appearance of Caravaggio's original motif; it may also indicate his sensitivity to decorum: like the large bowl already on the table, an earthenware dish may have seemed more suitable for a peasant interior.

88 Not only the epitaph painting for himself and his wife, discussed above, but also Rubens' *Samson and Delilah* of ca. 1609 (London, National Gallery, oil on panel, 185 x 205 cm, inv. 6461).

89 The exact date of the painting's arrival in Antwerp remains problematic. As Prohaska (cited below) has noted, on the basis of surviving documents it is only possible to say with certainty that the Dominicans acquired the Madonna between 1617 and 1625, the respective death dates of Louis Finson and Jan I Brueghel. I concur with Müller Hofstede, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 272, his note 216, and Vander Auwera, *op. cit.* (n. 22), who support a comparatively early and more precisely defined date of entry (ca. 1619) on the basis of visual evidence: its composition is reworked in Rubens' *St. Ignatius of Loyola Healing a Possessed Man*, documented in the church of St. Ambrogio in Genoa by 1620, and Janssen's *Madonna and Child with the Infant St. John the Baptist* of ca. 1620/21, now in a private collection. Its impact on the work of Jordaens, considered below, may be added to the list. The fact that some of Jordaens' 'Madonna-inspired' works can be dated as early as ca. 1618 on stylistic grounds is further reason for situating the arrival of Caravaggio's painting before 1620. For published documents and additional argumentation see: A. Goovaerts, *Notices sur un tableau de Michel-Angelo da Caravaggio*, Antwerp-Vienna, 1873, esp. 22ff; N. De Roever, 'Drie Amsterdamsche schilders. (Pieter Isaaksz., Abraham Vinck, Cornelis van der Voort.)', *Oud Holland* 1885, 171-208; A. Bredius and N. De Roever, 'Pieter Lastman en Francois Venant', *Oud Holland* 1886, 1-23; W. Prohaska, 'Untersuchungen zur "Rozenkranz-madonna" Caravaggios', *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, Band 76 (1980), 111-132; M. Roebbroeckx, *De vijftien Rozenkransschilderijen van de Sint Pauluskerk te Antwerpen*, Master's thesis, RU Gent, 1972.

90 D. Bodart, *Louis Finson (Bruges, avant 1580 - Amsterdam 1617)*, Académie royale de Belgique. Classe des Beaux-Arts. Mémories. Deuxième série. Tome XII, Brussels 1970, 17-19; Spear, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 92-92. In addition to Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary*, Finson also possessed a *Judith and Holofernes*. Several presumed copies after Caravaggio are also listed in his inventory.

91 This passage is cited by Goovaerts, *op. cit.* (n. 89), 22; the document itself is an entry dated 1651 in Registry I (1243-1794) of the Antwerp Dominican church. It is reproduced *in extenso* by Robbroeckx, *op. cit.* (n. 89), 6.

92 Robbroeckx, *op. cit.* (n. 89), 17, notes that the commonly accepted date of ca. 1617 for the cycle is based on the date at which Rubens' contribution, a *Flagellation of Christ*, was paid for by a donor. The project was probably initiated earlier, in 1615-16, under the priorate of Joannes Boucquet (d. 1640), who actively promoted the brotherhood and devotion of the Rosary in Antwerp, Mechelen and Lier. Boucquet was the only Dominican to donate a painting to the cycle. Robbroeckx further suggests that the unknown Dominican in Cornelis de Vos's contribution, the *Purification*, is in fact a portrait of Boucquet [25-29].

93 Robbroeckx, *op. cit.* (n. 89), 25-26, notes that although the paintings can generally be dated to 1616/17 on stylistic grounds, this is no guarantee. He proposes a *terminus ante quem* of 1620: the year in which contributing painter Arnout Vinckenborch died.

94 Müller Hofstede, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 268, mentions this work in passing; on Rubens' *Martyrdom of St. Peter*, see H. Vlieghe, *Saints*, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard VIII, 2, cat. no. 139, 137-140, ill. 98. This work was probably commissioned by Everhard IV Jabach, or his widow, for the St. Peter's Church in Cologne. It had been Rubens' parish church when he was young, and his father was buried there. Although the composition is certainly related to Caravaggio's now-lost version, painted for Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome (ca. 1600-1601), the execution and handling are more characteristic of Rubens' manner of the late 1630s, with studio assistance.

95 These include two preparatory versions of *Moses Striking Water from the Rock* [R.-A. d'Hulst, *Jordaens Drawings*, London, 1974, A43, A44] three of the *Succoring of the Needy* [d'Hulst, A45r, A46v, A48] and two of the *Satyr and Peasant* [d'Hulst, A51, A54], among others.

96 In fact, the relationship to Caravaggio's Madonna is more evident in some of the sketches, particularly the *Succoring of the Needy*, where the crowd of supplicants is less thoroughly reworked.

97 The most striking example of these is the *Christ on the Cross* formerly in the Teirninckse School, oil on canvas, 310 x 197 cm, which is featured in the background of Johannes Vermeer's *Allegory of the Faith* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art); see most recently Nora de Poorter in *Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678)*, exh. cat. Antwerp (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten) 1993, vol. I, cat. no. A27, 112-113. De Poorter has noted that, according to F. Baudouin, the figure descending the ladder behind the cross is similar to a figure found in Caravaggio's *Martyrdom of St. Matthew*, which Jordaens could not have seen; however, he may have been familiar with it via Abraham Janssen, who borrowed from it in his *Moses and the Bronze Serpent*. The turbaned, Ter Brugghen-like woman at the foot of the cross may also be taken over from Janssen. My thanks to Joost Vander Auwera for shedding light on the provenance of these elements. There is a similar *Christ on the Cross* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes, oil on panel, 237-171 cm.

98 Copenhagen, Statensmuseum for Kunst, oil on canvas, 281 x 468, inv. no. 350; for the provenance and iconography of this picture, see O. Koester, *Flemish Paintings 1600-1800*, Copenhagen 2000, 135-140.

99 D. Bieneck, *Gerard Seghers 1591-1651. Leben und Werk des Antwerpener Historienmalers*, Lingen 1992, 35-38.

100 Oil on canvas, 236 x 161 cm, Paris, Louvre, inv. nr. 1976; Bieneck, *op. cit.* (n. 99), 54; cat. A31, 154-158.

101 Oil on canvas, 265 x 195 cm, Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, inv. nr. 509; Bieneck, *op. cit.* (n. 99), 72; cat. A49, 172-173.

102 Oil on canvas, 157.5 x 227.7 cm, Raleigh, The North Carolina Museum of Art, inv.nr. 52.9.112; Bieneck, *op. cit.* (n. 99), cat. A12, 140-141.

103 Its popularity was such that Bieneck [*op. cit.* (n. 99), 56, 67-69] devotes a special excursus to discussing the phenomenon; engraving by P. Daret discussed under cat. A14, 142-143; by A. de Paullis, cat. A15, 143. The engravings were probably made after 1630; the fact that they were made in Paris may point to the influence of the art trade.

104 H. Vlieghe, 'Enkele aantekeningen betreffende Florent le Comte's relaas over de reis van Gerard Seghers naar Italië en Spanje', *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis inzonderheid van het Oud Hertogdom Brabant*, 1963, 211-214. Vlieghe corrects Roggen and Pauwels' interpretation of G.P. Mensaert's account of Seghers in Italy, which is virtually lifted verbatim from Florent le Comte's Cabinet des Singularitez, Paris, 1655: namely, that Seghers stay in Rome was subsidized by the Goetkints. As confirmation of the continued commercial relationship between Seghers and the art dealers, he cites a letter from Antonio Goetkint to Chrysostoom van Immerseel dated September 9, 1628, discussing a number of paintings and plates that Seghers wished to sell. For the exact contents of the letter see J. Denucé, *Brieven en documenten betreffend Jan Bruegel I en II*, Antwerp, 1934, document no. XXV, 61.

105 Denucé, *op. cit.* (n. 104), document no. XII, 34-37, esp. 36: '[...] als eenen St Jeronimus ende St Sebastiaen N. 8, die wel geschildert syn, coemmen naer Ittalianse meesters namentlyck Michelangelo Carwagi, syn seer levendich ende natuerlyck, maer niet plaisant.'

106 On Rombouts, see D. Roggen, 'De chronologie der werken van Theodoor Rombouts', *Gentse Bijdragen tot de Kunstgeschiedenis* 2 (1935), 175-190; C. Braet, *Theodoor Rombouts (1597-1637). Een monografie,* thesis, R.U. Gent, 1987.

107 Roggen, *op. cit.* (n. 106), 186; Braet, *op. cit.* (n. 106), cat. B12, 82-84, ill. 16.

108 Roggen, *op. cit.* (n. 106), 179; Braet, *op. cit.* (n. 106), cat. B4, 61, ill. 4.

109 Spear, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 136.

110 Braet, *op. cit.* (n. 106), 73.

111 Stockholm, National Museum, oil on canvas, 171 x 228 cm, inv. 689; discussed by Van der Stighelen and Vlieghe, cited below (n. 113), 19, ill. 36.

112 Amiens, Musée de Picardie, oil on canvas, 137 x 183 cm; discussed by Van der Stighelen and Vlieghe, cited below (n. 113), 20, ill. 37.

113 K. Van der Stighelen and H. Vlieghe, *Cornelis de Vos (1584/5-1651) als historie- en genreschilder*, Brussel 1994, Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Schone Kunsten, 54 (1994), nr. 1, 19-21, ills. 36, 38.

114 H. Vlieghe, 'Theodoor Rombouts en zijn gezin geportretteerd door Van Dijck', *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 8 (1990), 145-157, esp. 149-151. Perhaps not coincidentally, Van Dyck painted portraits of Rombouts wife and daughter only two years before, just prior to his departure for England in 1632. On the related question of 'genre portraiture', which cannot be explored here, see: E. de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, Zwolle/Haarlem,1986; H.-J. Raupp, review of E. de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw*, *Simiolus* 16 (1986), 254-262; D.R. Smith, "Irony and Civility: Notes on the Convergence of Genre and Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting," *Art Bulletin* 69 (1987), 407-430; Idem., 'Courtesy and its Discontents: Frans Hals's *Portrait of Isaac Massa and Beatrix van der Laen*', *Oud Holland* 100 (1986), 2-24.

115 Kassel, Staatliche Gemäldegalerie, oil on canvas, 243 x 373 cm. On Jordaens' use of family portraits in genre paintings see J.S. Held, 'Jordaens' Portraits of His Family', *Art Bulletin* 22 (1940), 70-82; K. Nelson, 'Jacob Jordaens: Family Portraits', *Nederlandse Portretten. Bijdragen over de portretkunst in de Nederlanden uit de zestiende, zeventiende en achtiende eeuw. Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 8 (1989), 105-119.

116 Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, oil on canvas, 120 x 192.

117 W. Liedtke, 'Jordaens and Rombouts in a New York Collection', *Tableau* V, no. 4, 1983, 288.

118 Hollstein XLIII. The approximate date is based on Vorsterman's six-year privilegium, which he received from Archduchess Isabella in 1622; in 1624 he traveled to England, where he remained until around 1629, a year after this privilegium expired.

119 Hollstein XLIII, 52-53; A. Moir, *Caravaggio and His Copyists,* New York 1976, 29. For further bibliography on Triest, see note 116, below.

120 *Ibid.*

121 Bieneck, *op. cit.* (n. 99), 97.

122 *Ibid.*, 95-97.

123 Moir, *op. cit.* (n. 119), 23-24, notes that not a single Italian printmaker is known to have made a print after Caravaggio during the 17th century. By way of an explanation, he cites the close connection between established printmakers and the dominance of the manner of the Carracci, as well as the technical difficulties posed by the deep shadow of Caravaggio's chiaroscuro; he adds that potentially interested northerners would not have been granted access to printmaking facilities in Rome.

124 At least, what we do know about patrons of pictures in this style seems to suggest it: Rubens' copy after Caravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus* was in the De Man collection in Delft almost immediately after its completion [D. Freedberg, *The Life of Christ after the Passion,* Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard]; an engraving after his first *Judith and Holofernes* was dedicated to the Antwerp humanist Johannes Woverius; his second version, now in Braunschweig, may have been the same painting recorded in a private collection in Leiden in 1621, where it ended up after being given to the Amsterdam jeweler Hans Thijs in exchange for Rubens' property on the Wapper [U. Heinen, exh. cat. *Peter Paul Rubens - Barocke Leidenschaften*, Braunschweig (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum) 2004, cat. 1, 121].

125 M. Rooses, *Jordaens Leven en Werken*, Antwerp 1906, 11; Robbroeckx, *op. cit.* (n. 89), 93; on the Le Witer family and Jordaens' relationship to them see J. Bikker et al., 'Drie portretten van Antwerpse burgers geschilderd door Jacob Jordaens', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 2003, no. 3, 234-271, esp. 239-244.

126 *Ibid.*, 243.

127 On Triest's role as bishop, see M. Cloet, 'Antoon Triest, prototype van een contrareformatorische bisschop, op bezoek in zijn Gentse diocees (1622-1657)', *Historica Lovaniensa* 69, 1977; on his artistic engagement see R. Matthijs, *Iconografie van bisschop Triest met biografische aantekeningen*, Gent 1939.

128 Roggen, *op. cit.* (n. 106), 178ff.

129 M. Cloet, *op. cit.* (n. 127), 397-398.

130 *Ibid.*, 396.

131 Petworth House, The National Trust (Lord Egremont Collection), oil on canvas, 127 x 163 cm, signed and dated 1651.

132 The whereabouts of the portrait by VanDyck, oil on canvas, 121.5 x 98, are presently unknown; see S.J. Barnes et al., *Van Dyck. A complete catalogue of paintings*, New Haven/London 2004, catalogue III.A26, 432, for detailed provenance. I have not managed to track down the Rubens portrait.