Chapter 2: The Caravaggesque Moment

Roman Charity as Figure of Dissent

In 1606, Caravaggio single-handedly, and momentously, changed the iconography of Pero and Cimon by integrating the motif in his altarpiece *The Seven Works of Mercy* at the Church of Pio Monte della Misericordia in Naples. He turned the scene into an eye-catching act of mercy performed on a busy street corner densely packed with various other protagonists immersed in distributing alms, offering hospice, and burying the dead (Figure 2.1). In his *Lives of the Modern Painters* (1672), Giovanni Pietro Bellori (1613–96) emphasizes right away that "the head of an old man can be seen sticking through the bars of a prison, sucking the milk of a woman who bends toward him with her breast bare," before describing the rest of the painting.[1] Bellori goes on to mention that Caravaggio's *Denial of Saint Peter,* likewise painted for a church in Naples, "is considered one of his best pictures; it depicts the serving maid pointing to Peter, who turns with open hands in the act of denying Christ; and it is painted in nocturnal light, with other figures warming themselves at a fire."[2] Both paintings sent shock waves through the art world right after Caravaggio's death in the summer of 1610, informing the peculiar style and unorthodox choice of subject matters among artists from all over Europe now known as "Caravaggisti" or "Caravaggeschi."[3] It is hard to think of a painting by Caravaggio that did not fascinate, inspire, or scandalize his colleagues, collectors, and wider audience, but the idiosyncratic rendering of Pero and Cimon in the *Seven Works of Mercy* as well as his peculiar secular approach to representing Saint Peter and other apostles became hallmarks of his fame. While several art historians have noticed that Caravaggio's *Denial of Saint Peter* was formative for Caravaggisti such as Bartolomeo Manfredi, Gerrit van Honthorst, Dirck van Baburen, Valentin de Boulogne, Simon Vouet, Nicolas Regnier, Nicolas Tournier, Giovanni Antonio Galli (Lo Spadarino), Giuseppe Vermiglio, Lionello Spada, the Pensionante del Saraceni, and Jusepe de Ribera,[4] interest in the motif of Roman Charity is routinely overlooked as a defining feature of his followers.[5]

Figure 2.1: Caravaggio, The Seven Works of Mercy, 1606

This neglect is quite astounding, given that eight of the above-mentioned twelve artists painted copies of *Pero and Cimon* alongside their renderings of the *Denial of Saint Peter*[6] and that other great artists who briefly flirted with Caravaggismo, such as Peter Paul Rubens and Guido Reni, produced their own, multiple, versions of *Roman Charity* starting in 1612.[7] Reni the "divine" even acquired Caravaggio's *Denial of Saint Peter* at twice the price he fetched for his own paintings.[8]

In this chapter, I argue that formal resemblances between Caravaggio's Pero and the maid in his *Denial* from 1610 as well as between Cimon and Saint Peter in his *Crucifixion of Saint Peter* connect the paintings on the level of meaning and establish relationships that later artists amplified (Figure 2.2). What does it mean if Caravaggio's suckling father, condemned to death by starvation, seems identical to Saint Peter in the act of being crucified – especially when keeping in mind that Saint Peter was precursor to the popes of Rome? The convenience of using the same model for both paintings cannot answer the question, since *The Seven Works* and *The Crucifixion of Saint Peter* were completed six years

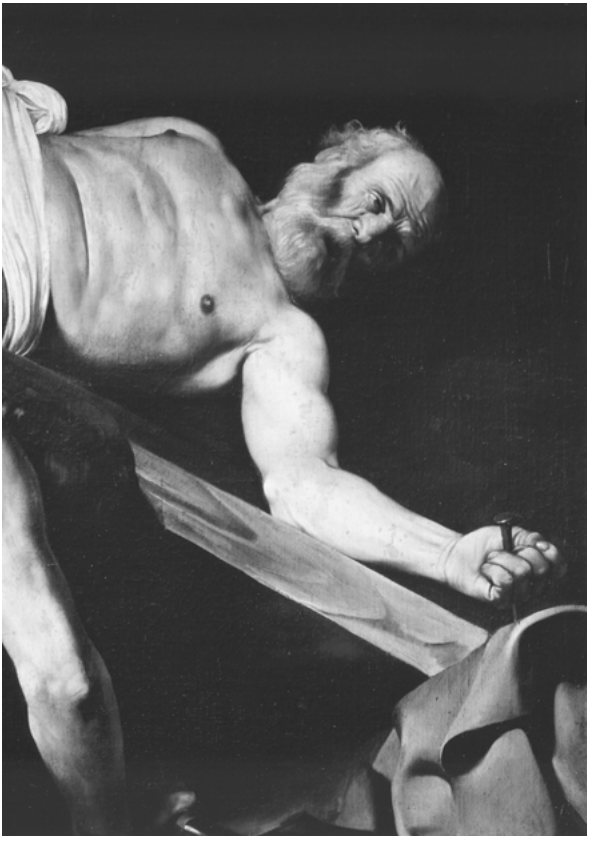

Figure 2.2: Caravaggio, The Crucifixion of Saint Peter, Detail, 1600–01

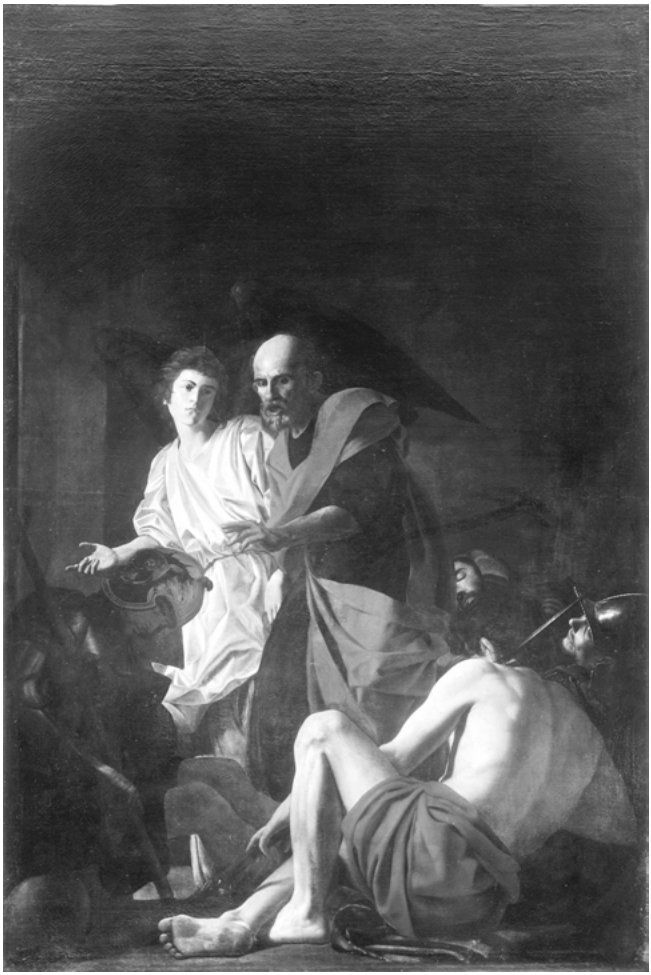

Figure 2.3: Battistello Caracciolo, The Liberation of Saint Peter, 1615

apart from each other in different cities. Furthermore, Caravaggio's patrons from the Pio Monte della Misericordia seem to have wanted to accentuate the view of Pero's needy father as the first of the apostles when matching the *Seven Works of Mercy* with Battistello Caracciolo's *Liberation of Saint Peter* in 1615 (Figure 2.3). Caracciolo's Saint Peter not only emerges from prison through the help of an angel – just as Cimon gets rehabilitated through the intervention of his daughter – but also recalls the suckling father's physiognomy from the adjacent altarpiece. The doubling, fracturing, and reversing of meaning that results from these formal connecting signifiers suggests that the art works in question thrive on a high dose of irony. In the following, I hope to show that the

integration of Maximus's anecdote in Caravaggio's *Seven Works of Mercy* was meant as a figure of dissent vis-à-vis mainstream post-Tridentine Catholicism, expressing a heterodox approach to questions of faith, confession, and grace. A similarly skeptical view of the Roman church is articulated in Caravaggio's portrayal of the apostles, mainly in *The Denial of Saint Peter, The Calling of Saint Matthew,* and *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*. Given Caravaggio's fame and currency, both friends and foes had to reckon with his challenge, by adopting, diluting, or rejecting his critical view of Counter-Reformation Catholicism, with *Roman Charity* emerging as a measure of their appreciation of his style and "manner."

The novelty of Caravaggio's rendering of the story of Pero and Cimon comes into clearer focus when looking at precursors of the motif in the later sixteenth century. In France, the workshop of Jean Goujon produced a massive relief of *Pero and Cimon* for the attic of the Louvre's "cour carrée" between 1560 and 1564, one of five reliefs with judiciary motifs. Two of the other sculptures depict ancient examples of "justice" involving fathers and their sons, such as *The Judgment of Cambyses* and *The Son of Zaleucus,* whose cruelty and sternness provide a vivid contrast to Pero's act of filial piety.[9] In 1572, Sébastian Nivelle published a print illustrating the concept of filial love, with a pelican feeding her young at the center and four medallions in each corner depicting ancient examples of filial devotion. Two of these medallions illustrate Maximus's anecdotes about a mother and a father being nourished with the milk of their

Figure 2.4: Sébastien Nivelle, Filial Piety, Woodcut, 1572

Figure 2.5: Étienne Delaune, The Daughter Breastfeeds her Mother, Drawing, before 1583

daughters (Figure 2.4). Finally, Étienne Delaune (1518/19–83) made a miniature ink drawing of the mother-daughter scene with an intricately classicizing interior and a prison guard peeking around the corner. This is a very tender and slightly eroticized scene, with Pero's nipples and belly button showing underneath a delicate, flowing garment (Figure 2.5).

In Northern art, the iconography is particularly well represented. Shortly before his death in 1532, already Jan Gossaert drew the scene, imaginatively rendering Pero as a veiled, Madonna-like figure holding a naked baby, with a toddler tugging impatiently at her garment.[10] Cimon crouches uncomfortably before her while suckling from her right breast; he is not manacled but holds a staff as if he were a pilgrim. Pero's body is clearly discernible underneath the soft fabric of her garment; a slit in her skirt reveals her left leg. The Latin inscription in the upper right-hand corner quotes a dictum by Saint John,

Figure 2.6: Pero and Cimon, Carved Boxwood Bowl, 1540–50

positioning the breastfeeding scene squarely within the framework of Christian love: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you" (John, 13.34).[11]

In mid-century, a German boxwood bowl appeared, with an adaptation of Barthel Beham's print from 1525 carved into the interior (Figure 2.6). Around the same time, a drawing by Flemish artist Lambert Lombard (1505/06–66) positions the mother-daughter scene among plenty of onlookers in an urban environment reminiscent of ancient Rome (Figure 2.7). A miniature engraving formerly attributed to Nürnberg printmaker Virgil Solis (1515–62) shows a buttoned-up Pero somberly offering her breast to a diminutive father sporting a long beard and moustache.[12] A Dutch terracotta sculpture from 1570

Figure 2.7: Lambert Lombard, The Daughter Breastfeeds her Mother, Drawing, before 1566

features the nude body of the suckling father in a graceful embrace, with his fully clothed daughter standing slightly bent before him.[13] Some time before 1585, Johannes Wierix completed a finely chiseled print of *Pero and Cimon,* with father and daughter properly dressed in fashionable garments.[14] Their modest posture and demeanor recall the anonymous print attributed to Solis mentioned above. Its inscription unambiguously defines it as an illustration of Valerius Maximus's anecdote of filial piety.[15] Two miniature woodcuts by German printmaker Jost Amman (1559–91) refer, again, to the Beham brothers' versions, showing Pero stark naked, Cimon's nipples aroused, and the couple's legs entangled. One of these prints appeared posthumously in

Figure 2.8: Jost Amman, Pero and Cimon,Woodcut, Kunstbüchlein, 1599

Figure 2.9: Hans Bernaert Vierleger, Pero and Cimon, Ceramic Dish, 1601

Figure 2.10: Theodor de Bry, The Seven Works of Mercy, Cup Design, 1588

a *Little Book of Art* from 1599 (Figure 2.8). At the end of the century, a large South-German pendant (12 cm long) with the breastfeeding couple modeled in enamel at the center highlights Cimon's almost entirely nude body.[16] Pero's left breast and right leg coquettishly peak out from underneath her garment. In 1601, a deep ceramic dish from the Southern Netherlands depicts Cimon eagerly nursing from his daughter's huge and naked breasts, clutching her right arm, and it features, in the manner of Rosso Fiorentino, Pero's baby as an add-on (Figure 2.9).

Last not least, Theodor de Bry produced an intricate design for the interior decoration of a porcelain cup in 1588, devoted to various themes of charity (Figure 2.10). In a startling departure from the rather modest depiction of various acts of mercy such as the clothing of the naked, the distribution of alms to the poor, the washing of the feet, the visiting of the sick, and the feeding of the hungry, the artist inserts an almost pornographic image of *Pero*

Figure 2.11: Roman Master, Pero and Cimon, late 16th c.

and Cimon, both of them stark naked, in a clear quotation of Sebald Beham's prints from 1540 and 1544. This is the very first time that Maximus's story of the breastfeeding daughter is included in a panorama of charitable acts. Caravaggio would most likely not have known the design – his sources were Perino del Vaga's fresco at Palazzo Doria and possibly Reverdy's prints of Rosso Fiorentino's relief – but it is interesting to recall Walter Friedlaender's remarks about prior Flemish representations of the *Seven Works of Mercy* by Marten de Vos (1532–1603) and Bernard van Orley (ca. 1487–1541).[17] In his eyes, these two artists were the first to devise a compositional strategy to depict all seven acts in one frame, rather than as a series of disjointed acts.[18]

The flourishing of the motif in late sixteenth-century German and Flemish art is not matched by samples from Italy, with the exception of a few pharmaceutical bottles from the workshop of Orazio Pompei (1540–80),[19] two drawings of insecure attribution, and two anonymous oil paintings hidden in the depositories of Roman collections. The drawing attributed to Amico Aspertini

(1474–1552) does not present as a full-fledged *Roman Charity*, with the old man only staring at the young woman's breast, and the lack of prison accoutrements.[20] The other drawing, attributed to Alessandro Casolani (1552–1606), does show the breastfeeding couple inside a dungeon, but in a manner reminiscent of Simon Vouet's version from Riazan (1613–27).[21] The early dating of the two oil paintings by Rome's Soprintendenza per i Beni Storici, Artistici ed Etnoantropologici is equally insecure. One is attributed to a late sixteenth-century Roman master, showing Pero poised and richly clad, modestly casting her eyes away from her father as she offers him her left breast (Figure 2.11).[22] Cimon chastely crosses his hands in front of his chest and seems to be wearing a hermit's garment. In fact, his features anticipate a certain resemblance to the physiognomy of Saint Peter alluded to above. It is tempting to assume that Caravaggio might have seen it before leaving for Naples, but the painting could equally well belong to the throng of gallery pictures produced in the wake of Caravaggio's death in 1610. The other early oil painting is attributed to a late sixteenth-century Bolognese artist by the Soprintendenza di Roma mentioned above (Figure 2.12). Of interest are its small size (26x20 cm) and its uncanny compositional resemblance to Rubens's 1630 *Roman Charity* from Amsterdam (Figure 1.6), which, again, leaves doubts about its anterior dating. It is a very

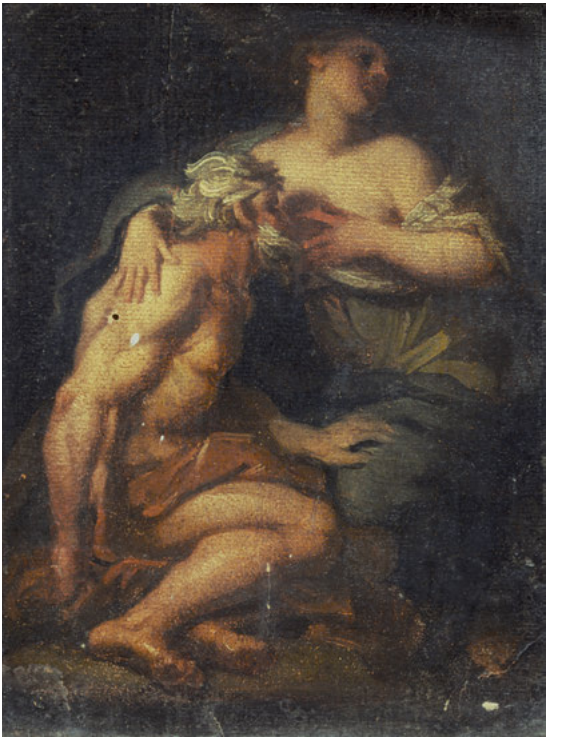

Figure 2.12: Bolognese Master, Pero and Cimon, late 16th c.

erotic portrayal of the breastfeeding couple, featuring Cimon's nude, muscular body and erect nipples. It depicts a scantily clad Pero in the act of bending backwards to avoid making eye contact with her father.

The relative lack of Italian renderings of the theme in the second half of the sixteenth century can, perhaps, be explained through artists' self-censorship in an era of religious orthodoxy and surveillance, but only if one assumes that already prior to Caravaggio's treatment, the topic carried a certain religious significance. Tridentine reformers such as Bishop Gabriele Paleotti (1522–97) were, after all, careful to limit their insistence on decorum to images of sacred content.[23] Such an infusion of Maximus's anecdote with spiritual meaning by Italian artists before Caravaggio's *Seven Acts of Mercy* is unlikely, given the early sixteenth-century framing of Pero as a bella donna and "woman on top" à la Judith and Salome, or else as Egyptianized fertility goddess. The only exceptions to this overwhelmingly secular interpretation of Pero's story in the sixteenth century are Jan Gossaert's drawing and Theodor de Bry's cup design mentioned above, which indicate a certain difference in religious style among Flemish artists, i.e., a greater tolerance for eroticization. Nonetheless, it is puzzling that of several documented Italian paintings of the motif – in addition to the assumed original of Bernardino Luini, the wished-for Titian, and the early Venetian piece that surfaced on the Viennese art market in 1922 – none should have survived except for the two paintings inventoried by the Roman Soprintendenza.[24] The disappearance of other early oil paintings of the topic might thus suggest a certain amount of censorship in an era of increased concern about lascivious subject matters.

Be that as it may, it is important to point out that in the sixteenth century, Northern artists and their audiences continued to be quite familiar with the topic, thanks to its frequent depiction in the applied arts, prints, and drawings, while Italy experienced a certain hiatus in its appreciation for Maximus's anecdote. Nonetheless, the craze for gallery paintings of *Pero and Cimon* starting in 1610–12 hit Italy, France, the Southern Netherlands, and Utrecht equally hard; even Spanish painters such as Ribera and, later, Murillo participated in it. The timing and form of the movement suggests that it needs to be seen as an effect of Caravaggio's treatment of the scene in his altarpiece *The Seven Works of Mercy*. Its peculiar religious enhancement and simultaneous hyper-real rendering constitutes what I would like to call a Caravaggesque "moment" à la J.G.A. Pocock, which resulted in the effacement and resignification of the iconography's prior meanings while preserving and extending its critical core.[25] Similar to what Pocock termed the "Machiavellian moment" in early modern political thought and its – unlikely, but extremely successful – fruition in Anglo-Saxon republican discourse, Caravaggio's take on Pero's "filial piety" crystallizes and redirects the story's subversive potential through a fusion with "charity," one of the most embattled Catholic concepts

of the Counter-Reformation. This momentous application constitutes a crisis of signification whose ripple effects Caravaggio's imitators and enemies alike were trying to appease. Pero's colonization through Charity – or was it the other way round? – set an end to both pictorial traditions. Gone is Charity's allegorical innocence, with its pretensions to abstract from any erotic connotation, but gone also is Pero, Dionysian goddess and pornographic superstar. What surfaces is a politically provocative gallery picture in an era of Catholic militancy and empire-building.

So what does Caravaggio's altarpiece actually show? Most viewers would probably start to approach it by examining the unusual and well-lit breast-feeding scene to the right, as Bellori did. It shows Pero pressing against the bars of a prison window, through which Cimon squeezes his head to reach his daughter's breast. His physiognomy resembles, as already noted, that of Saint Peter in his *Crucifixion of Saint Peter,* while Pero's features recall those of the maid denouncing the apostle in his *Denial*. Her dress falls in elegant folds, mainly because Cimon seems to be using her upper skirt as a bib. In fact, her milk streams so abundantly that drops collect on his beard. Pero seems to have heard some noise – perhaps the screaming man with a torch behind her – because she startlingly turns her head to observe the men to her side. She seems breathless and scared, perhaps anxious to satiate her father before being chased away. She looks onto a group of men who perform a variety of charitable acts, among them a well-dressed man offering his red cloak to a naked, muscular beggar seen from behind, crouching on the ground in the manner of a repoussoir figure from a Venetian religious painting.[26] Right next to them stand two pilgrims and a host in an impossibly dense arrangement – of the second pilgrim we only see his left ear. The host points to a location outside of the picture plane. Behind them, a tall, sweaty man drinks water from what art historians have called the jawbone of an ass, which serves to identify him as the biblical figure of Samson. Directly behind Pero, two men help to remove a corpse from the dungeon, whose feet almost touch Pero's skirt. Except for Pero, who watches the six men to her right, everybody is intently absorbed in their activities.[27] Nobody makes eye contact with the beholder or with each other, with the exception, perhaps, of the beggar and the donor of a cloak.

On this bustling street corner, all seven mandatory works of mercy are performed simultaneously, as if they were everyday activities that deserve no further mention, praise, or comment: Pero is helping a prisoner as well as feeding a hungry person; the well-dressed Saint Martin is clothing a naked beggar, who is possibly also ill; the man to the left is hosting pilgrims; somebody has offered Samson water to drink; and the two men behind Pero are burying a dead pauper and ex-convict. The upper forty percent of the picture plane is populated by four divine figures, densely arranged in a vortex-like composition. Two angels with enormous wings seem to precipitate towards

earth, decoratively wrapped in a green velvet cloth; the lower end of this curtain or blanket dangles down low enough to be in danger of catching fire from the prison guard's torch. The right angel embraces – and possibly tries to hold back – the left one, who stretches his arms as if to arrest the scene below. Tucked into what must be the angels' legs and lower bodies is the Madonna with her child, showing heads and shoulders only. Christ, who is no longer a baby but a pre-teen, looks tenderly, and perhaps amusedly, at Pero, while his mother watches her with a rather stern expression, frowning. After all, it is no longer she who is allegorically nursing needy mankind; the job seems to have passed on to Pero, leaving the Virgin unoccupied, watching from her post in heaven.

This substitution is the single-most creative, and provocative, iconographic reinterpretation in the history of Charity and the Madonna Lactans. It indicates Caravaggio's wish to secularize this most important of Catholic virtues, and to uncouple it from the notion of grace the Virgin Mary used to embody. At the same time, Pero's breastfeeding of her father – as hyper-real as it may look on Caravaggio's canvas – is spiritually enhanced through association with the Madonna, and perhaps it is this peculiar mixture of the sacred and the secular to which the angels object. It is not quite clear why else the left angel looks as if about to interfere in Pero's performance of "mercy." To arrest time, making visible a moment of grace? To assist Pero and the others, participating in the alleviation of human suffering? To remind the protagonists that Christ should be the ultimate recipient of all acts of charity? To end their self-absorption and oblivion?[28]

What is most remarkable is that the source of light in this nighttime scene is actually not the torch held by the man with the corpse; it could not very well illuminate the persons and objects in front of it, facing the spectator. The light seems to come from the position of the viewer in front of the picture plane, spotlighting the lame man's muscular back, Saint Martin's right lower calf and left upper leg, Pero's face and chest, the torch-bearer, the angels' arms and shoulders, and Mary's and Christ's faces. Does this mean that the entire scene would not exist if it were not illuminated by and for the artist and his audience? That it is the observer for whom the scene is taking place like a tableau vivant? That light is not a measure of grace but a facilitator of reality effects? In any case, the painting's play with light and shadow reiterates Caravaggio's rather complicated view of "truth" and its connection to the "visible." It is not necessarily empirical sight that establishes truth, rather the observation of reality and its reproduction in a lifelike, but also highly selective and controlled, manner. For this purpose, as Bellori already observed, Caravaggio "never brought any of his figures out into open sunlight, but found a way of setting them in the dusky air of a closed room, taking light from high up that fell straight down on the principal part of the body, and leaving the remainder in shadow in order to gain force through the intensity of light and dark."[29]

Despite the sometimes polemical assertions about his art and its supposedly slavish relationship to empirical reality – as indicated by Karel van Mander in 1604[30] and Louis Marin in 1981,[31] among others – Caravaggio's use of light has always been recognized as highly artificial, mystical, or psychological.[32] It is the peculiar mixture of lifelike presentation and dark context that cancels spatiality and produces the effect of hyper-real proximity that Friedlaender defines as Caravaggio's manner of "bringing … the object – the supernatural included – near to the spectator, almost to the degree of physical tangibility."[33]

Iconographically speaking, Caravaggio quotes his predecessor Perino del Vaga, whose fresco of *Roman Charity* he must have seen during his stay in Genoa in 1605.[34] Perino's idiosyncratic rendering shows Pero in the act of breastfeeding through the bars of a prison window, connecting the fresco to the story as it circulated in contemporary oral culture instead of Maximus's anecdote. Given Caravaggio's love for portraying people and things as if observed from nature, and for his representation of the "marginal" as "lifelike," he must have appreciated this – surprising, for a Mannerist artist – anti-classicizing move.[35] Whether he also saw Georges Reverdy's prints of Rosso's reliefs at Fontainebleau is unclear (Figure 1.50), but Caravaggio does envision the scene as taking place on a busy street corner, as did his Florentine predecessor (Figure 1.49).[36] Caravaggio's interpretation of the breastfeeding daughter as Charity might be indebted to Rosso as well, who not only inserted a mother-and-child group to the left of the scene but also had a child accompany Pero on her mission, squirming and tugging at her right arm. Unlike Rosso and later French artists, Caravaggio does not merge the motif with Charity by adding a child but refers to the erstwhile nursing Madonna in order to enhance the scene religiously. While his choice of a street scene is motivated by compositional reasons – how else could he have integrated the other five acts of mercy? – and by his distaste for illustrating classical literature, Caravaggio does not shun Maximus altogether. Instead of representing a "true slice[s] of life caught in the act," as if he had actually observed a young woman breastfeeding an old man through the bars of a Neapolitan prison, his eye-catching portrayal of Pero and Cimon engages Maximus stylistically, by taking up his ekphrastic challenge.[37] It is this demand for "enargeia" to which later artists responded repeatedly, while "correcting" Caravaggio for his misquote of the anecdote proper. Never again would the lactation scene be depicted from the outside through the bars of a prison window. Never again would Pero be competing with the Madonna in terms of charitable nursing. And only one artist would take up his challenge of dissolving the allegory of lactation into a larger narrative composition. That it had to be Poussin, his greatest foe, is not only ironic but also indicates that his lesser admirers found it hard to engage with the overall composition of the *Seven Works of Mercy* and the complex religious content matter it expressed.

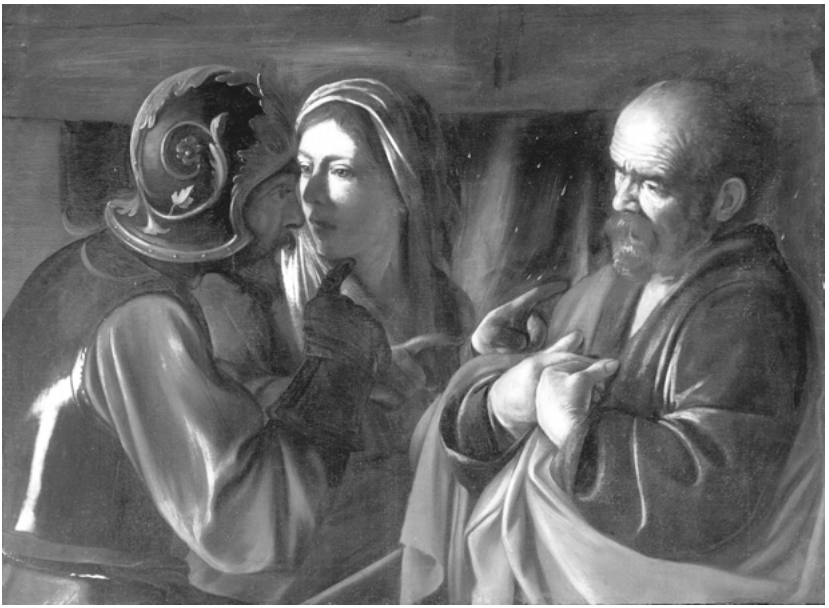

Figure 2.13: Caravaggio, The Denial of Saint Peter, 1610

What exactly the provocation may have consisted of becomes clearer when juxtaposing the *Seven Works of Mercy* to Caravaggio's other late work, *The Denial of Saint Peter* (1610) (Figure 2.13). This painting, of a hitherto unusual subject matter, illustrates how Peter denied his acquaintance of Jesus the night of his arrest after being denounced by a servant woman and a man while warming himself at a campfire, an event recorded in all four gospels (Matthew 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:55–62; John 18:17–18, 25–27). It shows three half-length figures standing up close. To the left is a soldier wearing a fancy helmet, which Battistello Carracciolo quotes in his *Liberation of Saint Peter,* the companion piece to the *Seven Works of Mercy*. At the center we see the half-lit face of the maid, whose features and headdress resemble Pero's. Both are pointing to Peter in the act of making their accusations. His face is illuminated a bit better than the other two, perhaps from the fire located in front of the painting outside the picture plane, such that his sweaty forehead and nose reflect the light. Peter's features conform to a standard type developed in Italian art: deeply receding hairline, frowning forehead, bushy grey beard cropped underneath the chin.[38] His hand gesture is not so much one of outright denial but of fear and disbelief at having been found out: his fists are turned inward, his thumbs pointing at his chest. His facial expression shows stress or grave concern. From the Bible we know that right after denying Jesus three times, the rooster crowed a second time – just as Jesus

Figure 2.14: Bartolomeo Manfredi, The Denial of Saint Peter, 1615–16

had foretold. Peter then became aware of his betrayal and started weeping. Caravaggio caught the moment right before Peter's emotional breakdown, stressing his act of apostasy rather than the repentance that followed. In an era in which the papacy pronounced infallibility with renewed emphasis, and irritated secular governments by claiming supremacy in both temporal and spiritual affairs, Caravaggio's portrayal of Peter's *Denial* was of delicate political import.[39] That it should have been the first of the apostles to commit the mortal sin of apostasy was certainly embarrassing to Tridentine hardliners, and to remind them of the pope's predecessor's failing in such graphic manner as Caravaggio's must be read as an expression of the painter's internal resistance to Counter-Reformation Catholicism.[40]

The topic became immediately popular among his followers, closely followed by *Roman Charity*.[41] Table 1, "Caravaggisti, Caravaggeschi, and Their Iconographical Choices," shows how 139 painters identified by Alessandro Zuccari and Benedict Nicolson as followers of Caravaggio produced a total of sixty versions of the *Denial of Saint Peter* and fifty-three of *Roman Charity* (see Appendix).[42] Bartolomeo Manfredi (1580–1622), since Joachim von Sandrart's *Lives of Famous Painters* (1675) known to have devised a special method for presenting Caravaggio's ambiguous and complicated subject matters in the form of easier-to-digest gallery paintings,[43] produced a version of the *Denial* in 1615/16 that Roger Ward qualifies as a "supreme example of the [Caravaggist]

Figure 2.15: Dirck van Baburen, The Denial of Saint Peter, 1620–24

genre," following Bellori's assessment (Figure 2.14).[44] It shows Saint Peter – with his signature hairline, silver grey beard, and frowning forehead – crowded in by the accusatory maid and seven men, some of them soldiers with iron helmets. As in Caravaggio's painting, his gesture is ambiguous, as he points to himself rather than rejecting the accusation with hands turned outward. Dirck van Baburen painted a version of the topic in 1620–24 that relates more closely to Caravaggio's predecessor, featuring a soldier to the left, a turbaned maid at the center, and a frowning, bearded, and half-bald Saint Peter to the right (Figure 2.15). While Caravaggio's invisible campfire illuminates the three faces from the left, Baburen's source of light enters from the right, creating interesting shadows on Peter's face and spotlighting the servant girl's white skin and bosom. A similar stress on the maid's face, neck, and breasts, this time produced by a candle she holds in her hands, can be seen in the three versions attributed to Gerrit van Honthorst, produced between 1612 and 1624.[45] Saint Peter is, again, identified by his three trademark features (frown, beard, and circular hairline); the servant maid wears the obligatory turban in at least two cases; while the men's headdresses vary between helmets and plumed hats, as in Baburen's version. Deviating from Caravaggio's painting, Saint Peter's hand gestures more explicitly oscillate between denial and

acceptance, with one hand raised and the other one pointing inward. A similar gesture is repeated by the so-called Pensionante del Saraceni in his minimal version, featuring Peter and the maid only,[46] while the painting believed to be by Jusepe de Ribera in the Certosa of San Martino, which might be the work that Bellori wrongly attributed to Caravaggio, shows the apostle raising both hands in unambiguous defiance.[47]

Among the many other Baroque painters with an interest in the topic, Nicolas Tournier (1590–1639) stands out because he produced five extant versions of it. In each case, Saint Peter conforms to the prototype (grey, bushy, chin-long beard; receding hairline; wrinkles on his forehead), but his hand gestures differ in each painting. In Tournier's version preserved in the UK, Saint Peter repeats the gesture Caravaggio devised, with both hands ambiguously pointing inward.[48] As in Caravaggio's painting, the only other protagonists are the maid and a helmeted soldier (Figure 2.13). In Tournier's Atlanta version, Peter's right pointer is turned toward him, while his other hand is mysteriously tucked in beneath his garment.[49] In his Dresden picture, we do not see Peter's hands at all,[50] which produces problems in "reading" his response to the accusation, especially in the absence of a strong facial expression. In the Prado copy, the apostle raises his right hand in a gesture of rejection.[51] The different hand movements are combined in the painting of unknown whereabouts, showing his right hand turned inward and well lit and his left hand raised in defense, cast into shadow.[52] More examples could be mentioned, but the ones listed here might suffice to show that artists and their audiences took delight in determining the exact nature and extent of Peter's denial, a complex emotional response measurable through hand gestures that included varying degrees of fear, self-denial, acceptance, and resignation.

The concrete religious significance of Caravaggio's *Denial* is debated among art historians, some of whom call it a devotional painting in sync with the requirements of Tridentine image theory. As Marcia Hall observes, the capacity of a painting to move the spectator to worship is among those qualities.[53] In my view, a painting that highlights Saint Peter's guilt and doubt could hardly have aroused veneration and focused the worshiper's attention. Luisa Vertova points out that contrition and repentance are core values of Catholicism, but she neglects to mention that Caravaggio represents the apostle in the act of betrayal rather than contrition and that Counter-Reformation Catholicism was not exactly known for its generosity toward skeptics, dissenters, or apostates.[54] Commenting on all of Caravaggio's art, Maurizio Calvesi even detects religious symbolism in his hyper-erotic *Amor Vincit Omnia,* claiming that "obedience to the church is … continuously reconfirmed in Caravaggio's work, such that one can exclude … any suspicion of collusion or sympathy with Reformers." Unfortunately, he avoids the question of queer eroticism and provocative address in Caravaggio's secular art, favoring a somewhat sterile analysis of symbols and

allegorical allusions and neglecting to consider that internal Catholic dissent was not necessarily synonymous with Protestant leanings.[55]

More perceptively, Michele Nicolaci limits the appeal of Caravaggio's "naturalistic" style in religious imagery to the "more progressive and reform-oriented fringes of the church,"[56] perhaps in tacit agreement with Walter Friedlaender's thesis about Caravaggio's fascination with the Oratorian theology of Saint Filippo Neri (1515–95).[57] By contrast, Ferdinando Bologna sees Caravaggio as a painter whose ambition was to "reverse all hitherto accepted values" on the level of genre, iconographic elaboration, and style.[58] In his eyes, the naturalistic, "empirical" style of Caravaggio relates to the anti-authoritarian, egalitarian methods of the new sciences, inspired by Giordano Bruno's, Tommaso Campanella's, and Galileo Galilei's stress on the close observation of nature.[59] Bologna details how many of Caravaggio's religious paintings purposefully transgress Gabriele Paleotti's rules about the orthodox representation of sacred subject matter, such as the prohibition on integrating novelties and "superfluous" details and the observance of decorum.[60] He concludes that Caravaggio's religious iconographies, although by no means heretical, "do not conform under any point of view to the theoretical and disciplinary orthodoxy of Tridentine Catholicism."[61] Valeska von Rosen agrees with Bologna's view of Caravaggio as a dissenter, adding that the artist's play with ambiguities, paradox, and irritation subverts the Tridentine reformers' demand for clarity and objectivity in religious art.[62] Mieke Bal, finally, analyzes Caravaggio's painting of *Saint John the Baptist in the Wilderness* as an expression of heterodox thought and sacred eroticism, as an affirmation of subversive creativity in the face of the church's absolutist claims to power, rejecting Bert Treffer's view of Caravaggio's art as conforming to post-Tridentine demands.[63]

I agree with the more subversive readings of Caravaggio's art but would like to add that his religious paintings draw particular attention to the need for observation. Instead of arousing empathy with Christ's or a saint's sentiments and pains of martyrdom, or stimulating the spectator's hyperdulia for the Virgin Mary, they not only are the product of the artist's careful imitation of "nature," i.e., the close observation of his models and seemingly insignificant details such as ripped sleeves and dirty feet, but also often portray bystanders of an eschatologically important act in the very process of observing it. As such, they invite the beholder to witness the witnessing that takes place in front of his or her eyes in a process of reflective doubling or distancing that Niklas Luhmann has called "second-order observation." If we approach early modern religious art as a "system of communication" à la Luhmann, we see that in many of Caravaggio's religious iconographies, accidental onlookers are involved in making the initial and, for the system, foundational distinction of categorizing the events they see as "sacred" or "not sacred," which Luhmann would call a first-order observation.[64]

Figure 2.16: Caravaggio, The Calling of Saint Matthew, 1599–1600

Caravaggio emphasizes that this distinction is difficult to make, as in *The Calling of Saint Matthew,* for example, where, despite the stress on finger-pointing, the apostle's appellation remains ambiguous (Figure 2.16).[65] His *Incredulity of Saint Thomas* dramatizes the very doubt about what the apostles are seeing – is it or is it not the risen Christ? – without reassuring the viewer about his or her own power of observation; after all, the beholder cannot touch the wound, as Thomas does.[66] In his *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew,* every single person in the painting makes eye contact with the saint about to be martyred, including the angel who comes to his rescue, but whether they all agree on the sacred nature of the event is debatable.[67] By contrast, the two elderly pilgrims in the *Madonna of Loreto* seem clear about their object of hyperdulia, while the beholder is distracted by the Virgin Mary's coquettish posture, low neckline, and classic beauty, in addition to the pilgrims' famous dirty feet (Figure 2.17). A very busy scene of cross-observations is depicted in the *Madonna del Rosario,* in which the Virgin Mary looks at Saint Dominic, Saint Dominic at Christ, Christ and the donor at the beholder, the kneeling worshippers at Saint

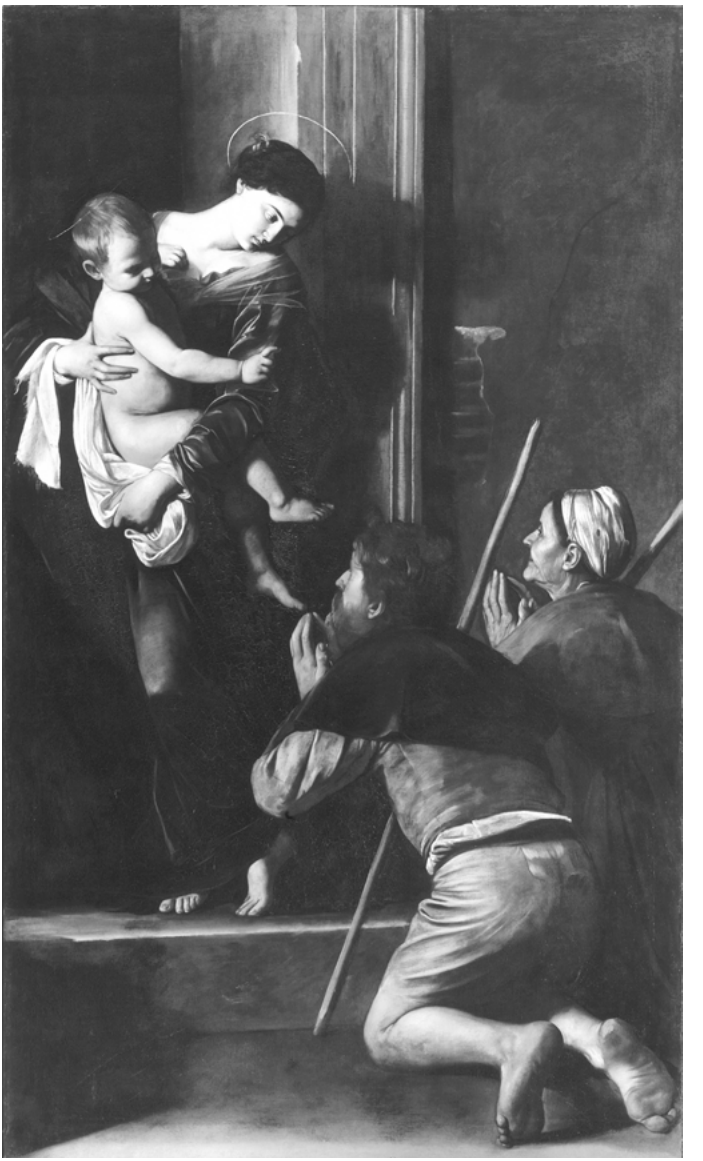

Figure 2.17: Caravaggio, The Madonna of Loreto, 1604–06

Dominic, Saint Peter Martyr at another monk standing in front of him, the latter one at the Madonna and her child, and a fourth monk at Saint Dominic.[68] If the protagonists' first-order observation is supposed to authenticate the sacred nature of the event they are witnessing – the Madonna's gift of the rosary to Saint Dominic – utter confusion reigns in this picture, and the mira-

cle remains ambiguous. In his altarpiece *Death of the Virgin,* rejected because of the Madonna's resemblance to a drowned prostitute believed to have been Caravaggio's lover, three of the closest bystanders conspicuously bury their eyes in their hands – whether out of sorrow, desperation, or disbelief is hard to tell.[69] Only two bearded men actually look at the cadaver, while a third man facing the viewer seems immersed deep in thought, and additional groups of witnesses are busy chatting. In Luhmannian terms, the task of the second-order observer – in this case, the artist and his audience – consists of monitoring the choices made by the protagonists engaged in first-order observations, who, as already mentioned, are charged with distinguishing between who and what belongs to the system (sacred) or the environment (not sacred). The proliferation of such distinctions expands the autopoetic, or self-reproducing, system, which aims to colonize ever growing parts of the secular environment for its communication of the "sacred." This observation is useful in describing the purpose of Caravaggio's programmatic integration of indecorous details from secular life, but what is important for our purposes is his insistence on representing the difficulties not only of monitoring those distinctions but also of making them in the first place.[70] Caravaggio emphasizes the need for close observation but problematizes the search for religious truth in visibility. Rather than making paintings fit for worship, as some art historians claim,[71] Caravaggio encourages skepticism, doubt, and scrutiny in his audience.[72]

A similar effect is produced by the *Seven Works of Mercy,* in which the relationship between observers and performers of holy deeds is reversed, for it is the Madonna and child surrounded by two angels who authenticate the "sacred" nature of the charitable acts performed below. By no stretch of the imagination does the altarpiece "present an iconic image at its center … one worthy of veneration," as demanded by Tridentine image theory.[73] Furthermore, the comparison of Cimon's features with those of Saint Peter's in Caravaggio's *Crucifixion* (Figure 2.2) produces a startling political subtext. If, as I find likely, the portrayal of Cimon as Saint Peter's look-alike was intended, the heroic impact of the apostle's martyrdom is somewhat diminished by his identification with a guilty old patriarch who is at the mercy of his daughter's breast. Other depictions of the first of the apostles are similarly inflected by reference to *Roman Charity*. Like Cimon, who achieves his unexpected release from prison through his daughter's courageous, and utterly gratuitous, sacrifice, Saint Peter is liberated by an angel, as mentioned in Acts 12:3–19. In Caracciolo's painting of the event, the companion piece to Caravaggio's Neapolitan altarpiece, a beautiful adult angel leads Saint Peter out of prison, as if completing what his colleague from the *Seven Works of Mercy* aims at with his precipitous fall to earth. The sleeping guards make reference to Caravaggio's crouching beggar with his beautiful muscular back and to the helmeted soldier in the *Denial of Saint Peter,* respectively. These quotations seem to

establish a faux causality between Peter's stay in prison, the question of guilt, and his liberation, perhaps alluding to the fact that in both prior works by Caravaggio, contrition and repentance are conspicuously absent. Caracciolo's painting seems to confirm that, like Cimon, Saint Peter is released from prison through no effort of his own. The sticky question of guilt and repentance is never broached.

Pero's resemblance to the maid in Caravaggio's *Denial* complicates the web of interconnections even further, establishing her as a figure of righteousness as well as charitable grace. If the nursing father really does represent the papacy as fallible, guilty, and in need of rehabilitation and reform, Pero's identity needs to be clarified in tandem. On the one hand, she can be seen as a Madonna-like figure, calling for divine intervention as a last resort in a moment of crisis; on the other hand, she looks like a "real" working-class woman and, as such, is re-allegorized to contain wider associations with the people and city of Rome.[74] As the anonymous compiler of an advice book for the nephew and cardinal of Pope Urban VIII, Francesco Barberini (1597–1679), proclaimed: "if one comes to Rome, one comes to the Mother, to the place where virtuous men are nurtured," as if the saying were a commonplace.[75] Furthermore, Pero's title *Roman Charity* originates most likely with Caravaggio's altarpiece in Naples. Paintings of Pero and Cimon were very common in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Neapolitan collections (11 copies), where inventories refer to them without fail as *Roman Charity*.[76] By contrast, most other early modern references identify the paintings by spelling out the iconography's literal signifier, i.e., the breastfeeding scene between a young woman and an old man in prison.[77] In other words: Neapolitan viewers and collectors identified the story as quintessentially "Roman," despite the fact that Maximus orientalized it as a Greek, i.e., "external" example.[78] The reason for this deliberate misnomer might lie in contemporaries' view of Pero's filial piety as Catholic charity and in their comparison of Cimon's pitiful state with the papacy's dire need of reform and rejuvenation.

A digression on Pero's headdress, seen in the context of a somewhat complicated chain of associations, might support the view of her as a specifically "Roman" allegory. This web of signifiers takes as its point of departure Stefano Maderno's statue of Saint Cecilia (1600), passes through Guido Reni's self-portrait as a Raphaelesque young woman in his *St. Benedict Presented with Gifts by Farmers* (1604), and ends with the eighteenth-century identification of a young woman as Beatrice Cenci in a painting attributed to Guido Reni. In all three instances, the young women wear turbans. Maderno's beautiful statue of Saint Cecilia, a third-century martyr, was completed right after Cardinal Sfrondato miraculously discovered her intact body under the altar of an ancient church dedicated to her in Trastevere on October 20, 1599. Her corpse was said to have worn a turban, which Maderno dutifully

Figure 2.18: Stefano Maderno, Saint Cecilia, 1600

represents (Figure 2.18).[79] The discovery of Saint Cecilia's body happened right after the execution of Beatrice Cenci, daughter of a Roman aristocrat, on September 11 of the same year, which had moved the people of Rome to great pity. Beatrice, alongside her older brother and stepmother, was convicted of parricide, after having been held hostage by her father in a remote castle for several years. Because Francesco Cenci was known for his violence and sexual abuse, the defendants and their many supporters expected the pope to pardon his son, daughter, and young wife, but in vain.[80] Like Saint Cecilia 1200 years before her, Beatrice Cenci was decapitated in a public spectacle that many artists, including Caravaggio and possibly Artemisia Gentileschi, may have witnessed. According to several art historians, this experience may have influenced their respective renderings of "Judith and the Head of Holofernes."[81]

Contemporaries commemorated Beatrice as a martyr, dedicating a mass for the dead in her honor sung to this day on the anniversary of her execution.[82] Guido Reni arrived in Rome only in 1601, i.e., too late to have seen her die; nonetheless, it was assumed that he represented Beatrice Cenci in a portrait of a turbaned young woman in the act of casting him a last glance (Figure 2.19).[83] Reni might not have authored this painting, nor does it necessarily represent Beatrice, but that Reni had a deep interest in images of beautiful, innocent, and vulnerable young women with a turban is a fact. As he confided to his biographer Carlo Cesare Malvasia (1616–93), he chose to represent himself as

Figure 2.19: Guido Reni, Assumed Portrait of Beatrice Cenci, 17th c.

a turbaned woman in a painting of Saint Benedict from 1604, probably in reference to the momentous discovery of Saint Cecilia's relics and the completion of her statue. As a result, contemporaries referred to Reni's self-portrait as *La Turbantina*.[84] In 1606, he portrayed Saint Cecilia wearing a scarf draped in complicated folds around her head.[85] Reni's idiosyncratic self-presentation as a virginal saint and the eighteenth-century "discovery" of his alleged portrait of a turbaned Beatrice Cenci suggest that at some point, the parricidal daughter and third-century martyr merged in the imagination of contemporaries.

Caravaggio used the public image of a turbaned Saint Cecilia, which contains references to the merciless execution of Beatrice Cenci, to endow his breastfeeding daughter with an allegorical identity signifying the innocence, courage, and sacrificial energy of the city of Rome and its inhabitants.[86] Her decidedly working-class, thus "urban," appearance suggests such allegorical enhancement, in particular because the symbolic identification of cities with female virtues was a ubiquitous phenomenon in medieval and early modern Europe.[87] The cult status of Beatrice Cenci and Saint Cecilia in the city of Rome reinforces the assumption of such allegorical connections, and might have served to articulate Caravaggio's political message with greater clarity. Caravaggio's portrayal of Pero and Cimon at the heart of the *Seven Works of Mercy*

expresses his contempt for the Roman papacy, which, guilty and condemned to die, is shown to parasitically consume the vital body fluids of his dutiful daughter, the people of Rome. Beatrice's and Saint Cecilia's blood and Pero's milk blend to form one combined image of female sacrifice, innocence, generosity, and mercy symbolically overcoming the injustice of clerical – and patriarchal – rule. The fact that also the denunciatory maid in Caravaggio's *Denial* wears a turban establishes a further link between representations of Saint Peter and *Roman Charity* and adds truthfulness and courage to the list of virtues she embodies. In several *Roman Charities* produced by leading Caravaggisti, Pero's turban would go on to have a complex and vivid afterlife.

A further measure of Pero's quasi-religious enhancement, and of Cimon's and Saint Peter's merging identities, consists of three paintings of *Saint Agatha Healed/Liberated/Visited by Saint Peter:* one by Giovanni Lanfranco (1614), another one formerly believed to be authored by Guido Reni, and a third one attributed to a follower of Simon Vouet.[88] Saint Agatha, whose martyrdom included the amputation of her breasts, was according to legend healed by an apparition of Saint Peter. She is usually represented in the act of offering her breasts on a platter, but Lanfranco shows her languishing in prison, in the company of Saint Peter and an angel who are in the process of mending her wound by touch (Figure 2.20).[89] Bright light enters through a barred window on the right, which illuminates Saint Agatha's boyish, still bleeding, chest;

Figure 2.20: Giovanni Lanfranco, Saint Agatha Healed by Saint Peter, 1614

Figure 2.21: Follower of Simon Vouet, Saint Agatha Healed by Saint Peter, 17th c.

Figure 2.22: Follower of Guido Reni, Saint Agatha Visited by Saint Peter in Prison, 17th c.

Figure 2.23: Vincenzo Camuccini, Anti-Roman Charity, 1797

a prison guard watches the miracle through the prison window as if it were Maximus's scene of filial piety. Saint Peter is about to touch the wound, recalling Saint Thomas in his incredulity. The follower of Simon Vouet echoes this composition but depicts the assembly of saints and angels a moment later, after Saint Agatha's breasts have been restored. References to the motif of Roman Charity consist of Saint Peter's Cimon-like features and Saint Agatha's chains (Figure 2.21). Jacopo Vignali concentrates on the moment of healing, with Saint Peter touching the young woman's bleeding chest. The painting from Geneva, associated with the school of Guido Reni, contains, quite literally, a reverse image of *Roman Charity* (Figure 2.22).[90] It shows a young woman, imprisoned and in chains, with her breasts, visible through the low neckline of her dress, restored as the result of Saint Peter's intervention. In both cases, the features of Saint Peter correspond to the prototype analyzed above and to those of Cimon in Caravaggio's and his followers' representations of *Roman Charity*.

In addition to associations between Pero and Saint Agatha and between Cimon and Saint Peter, other, less convincing, cross-identifications have been made. In a recent article, Arabella Cifani and France Monetti mistakenly "correct" the identification of a drawing by Vincenzo Camuccini from 1797 (Figure 2.23). While the collector Damiano Pernati called it *Roman Charity,* Cifani and Monetti refer to it as *Salomè Visiting Saint John the Baptist in Prison*. The drawing is unusual in that it depicts a young male prisoner with his right

nipple erect and in full view and a young woman who squeezes her head in between the bars of a prison window as if wanting to suckle from his breast. In my view, the drawing expresses yet another play with reversals of the theme of Roman Charity, rather than depicting Salome about to nurse from Saint John's breast, unless we assume that the mapping of Pero's and Cimon's identities onto Saint John and Salomè, respectively, was meaningful to the artist and his viewers. Cifani's and Monetti's iconographic "error" is nonetheless interesting because it shows the fluidity of associations the imagery produces, and its creative use in making cross-references between different prison stories.[91]

Any allegorical reading of Caravaggio's *Seven Works of Mercy* ought to be accompanied by a more literal reading of the subject matter, given the "realist" effects of his religious art and the debate on Caravaggio's conformity to contemporary trends in Catholic devotion. Aside from the – by now well-established – circumstances of the altarpiece's commission by a lay confraternity, the painting seems to respond to certain trends in contemporary religious culture. As a reflection of anti-clerical devotional practices, a certain "progressive" intention emerges, which matches and confirms the results of its visual and allegorical interpretation. The confraternity of Pio Monte della Misericordia, who commissioned the altarpiece, was devoted to tending the sick, assisting prisoners, burying the dead, redeeming Christian slaves, providing for the "shame-faced poor," i.e., impoverished elite members of society, and helping pilgrims.[92] The care and burial of prisoners was among its most important – and perhaps most useful – tasks, given the high mortality rates in Neapolitan prisons reported in 1622.[93] While Caravaggio's altarpiece depicts the biblical acts of mercy rather than the confraternity's actual performance of poor relief, it does pay special attention to the care of prisoners by depicting Pero's act of breastfeeding and the burial of an inmate.

Conspicuously absent from the Misericordia's activities is the distribution of charitable dowries to poor but deserving girls, the most popular form of social welfare in early modern Italy. As I have tried to show in an article on Tintoretto's decoration of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco in Venice, the selection and endowment of working-class brides by charitable institutions had the purpose of promoting legal marriage and patriarchal kinship structures rather than helping women in need.[94] Female poverty was, to a large extent, caused by unwanted pregnancies and the abandonment of pregnant women, which the transfer of a nominal dowry to a young girl's husband chosen by the confraternity could not prevent or alleviate. In Tintoretto's religious art, reproductive themes are so prevalent as to suggest his critical stance vis-à-vis an institutional policy that excluded those single women with infants as welfare recipients, who, as allegories of Charity, promote the concept of charitable giving itself. Unlike Tintoretto, Caravaggio was not in the difficult position of having to work for a confraternity whose politics he may have disagreed with;

nonetheless, his proposal to view pagan Pero as Catholic Charity may have had the intention of criticizing the ideological construction of this highest form of Christian virtue in the context of gendered forms of giving that left women empty-handed.

The dialectic between the exclusion of needy persons from the list of welfare recipients and their very much sought after representation in religious art has recently attracted the attention of art historians. Pamela Jones, for example, discusses Caravaggio's portrayal of the pilgrims' dirty feet in his *Madonna of Loreto* at Sant' Agostino in the context of a policy that banned beggars and "vagabonds" from the churches of Rome rather than assisting them.[95] According to a survey of 1625 on the "disturbances" of pilgrims during service, many churchgoers complained about "false" and unworthy beggars, which is why the Augustinian church of Santa Maria del Popolo stopped distributing alms in public.[96] Jones nonetheless concludes that the monks who commissioned and accepted Caravaggio's *Madonna of Loreto* (1604–06) must have continued to assist the vagabond poor, since they appreciated Caravaggio's lifelike representation of the pilgrims' dirty feet (Figure 2.17).[97] Without producing hard data of the monks' almsgiving practices at Sant'Agostino, however, this claim is hard to ascertain. By contrast, Todd Olson has recently argued that the popularity of low-life genre scenes such as Caravaggio's *Fortune Teller* (1596) was predicated upon the actual removal of gypsies from the streets of Rome. By no stretch of the imagination did the "zingara's" domestication for elite consumption "erase[d] her roots in actual social abjection."[98] Similarly, the fashion for Caravaggio's lifelike depiction of the poor among secular and clerical elite circles did not necessarily translate into greater sympathy for actual beggars.[99]

The monks' easy acceptance of Caravaggio's altarpiece *The Madonna of Loreto,* which Tridentine hardliners would have found objectionable because of its indecorous details, can be explained by reference to the contemporary debate surrounding the foundation of a reformed branch within the Augustinian order. This new branch, originating in Spain, had as its outward defining feature the monks' unshod feet, which signaled their devotion to a more austere lifestyle. In 1599 and 1604, Pope Clement VIII sanctioned the authority of the "discalced" vicar-general, not without provoking heavy protests within the unreformed quarters of the order.[100] The church of Sant'Agostino that commissioned Caravaggio's altarpiece was the hub of the "conventual" Augustinians who resisted the reform.[101] Caravaggio's depiction of the pilgrims' naked feet probably confirmed their opinion about who should and should not walk around barefoot, leaving the meaning of dirty soles as a symbol of social abjection intact. Thus the altarpiece did not necessarily conflict, conform, or in any way resonate with the Augustinians' alms-giving practices but expressed the conservative branch's wish for clean feet and shoes and for the maintenance

of strict boundaries between privileged givers of charitable contributions and the misery of their receivers.

Dirty feet were especially relevant as markers of humility because of Christ's washing of his apostles' feet the night before his arrest (John 13:1–17). In late sixteenth-century Rome, pauperist members of the elite competed for participation in the ritual staging of this event, as did Venetian patricians earlier in the century.[102] Pamela Jones has shown how Cardinal Carlo Borromeo (1538–84) revived the rite in Milan and later Rome, periodically inviting select beggars for the public display of washing their feet and feeding them.[103] Traditionally, bishops and secular elites washed the feet of thirteen beggars and thirteen canons each as part of their Maundy Tuesday celebrations at the Lateran Palace.[104] These and other performances of humility belonged to elite practices of charitable giving that did not necessarily alleviate the fate of the poor who crowded into early modern cities, but they served to anchor the elite's claims to power. Poverty itself was not to be abolished, since it was the raison-d'être for the kind of giving that promised grace and redemption to middle- and upper class practitioners of pious donations.[105] The discalced Augustinians' decision to imitate the involuntary poor by walking around barefoot – actually in sandals – thus threatened to confuse the boundaries between privileged washers of the dirty feet of others and the latters' abject situation in life.

While Caravaggio's art could not evade the dialectics of exclusion that governed the elite's fashion for his lifelike representations of the poor, he does endow the marginal with a rare, perhaps unprecedented, dignity and reality effect. In this sense, the pilgrims' dirty feet are meaningful, because they broaden the range of what could be included in representations of the "sacred." In Helen Langdon's words: "Caravaggio, like Filippo Neri … [pushes] the world of the poor before an elite audience … using a language that seems rough and vernacular … Yet his figures are also grand, and his massive, sculptural style conveys the power of a primitive, heroic era."[106] In the *Seven Works of Mercy,* however, the emphasis is less on the lifelike depiction of beggars than on the de-allegorization of figures of poverty. The lame recipient of Saint Martin's cloak and breastfeeding Pero recall the repoussoir figures that populate Tintoretto's religious paintings as embodiments of Charity and narrative witnesses to biblical events.[107] In Caravaggio's altarpiece, beggar and Charity have become full-fledged participants, even protagonists, of the events themselves; there is no other central person or activity their foregrounding brings into focus. At the same time, they cannot avoid being re-allegorized as embodiments of noble poverty and Roman Charity, respectively. The somewhat "unrealistic" beauty with which they are depicted – note the beggar's perfect muscular back and buttocks as well as Pero's stylishly elongated legs and posture – marks them as classically enhanced, thus dignified. The mysterious light that illuminates

them underscores their compositional importance as counterpoints to the divine group floating above. As such, Pero and the beggar are endowed with a symbolic significance that exceeds their role as literal representations of the Neapolitan underclass.[108]

The extent to which the details of Caravaggio's politico-religious message were appreciated and repeated by his followers varied. While the many renderings of his *Denial of Saint Peter* suggest that a critical view of the pope's predecessor became quite popular, the reconceptualization of Roman Charity as a gallery picture softened its political impact. All paintings of *Pero and Cimon* subsequent to Caravaggio's death removed the couple from the Catholic framework the artist had invented for them and re-established the topic as a historicizing genre scene. This enabled staunch promoters of Tridentine Catholicism such as Peter Paul Rubens and Guido Reni, who only briefly toyed with Caravaggismo and avoided the theme of *Denial,* to produce quite a few *Roman Charities* of their own. By contrast, artists who painted both topics can be suspected of sympathizing with Caravaggio's expressions of dissent, especially if they continued the master's game of casting Cimon as Saint Peter and Pero as a turbaned lady.

Up until now, *Roman Charity* has been systematically overlooked as a subject matter favored by many Caravaggisti, despite the frequency with which painters all over Europe started to depict it after 1610. Already two decades ago, Anna Tuck-Scala deplored this neglect, but no art historian has followed her suggestion of investigating the phenomenon in greater depth.[109] Given the explosion of books on Caravaggio and Caravaggismo and the proliferation of accompanying exhibitions since then, this omission is all the more surprising. It can only be explained by a variety of mutually reinforcing factors: many *Roman Charities* have not been securely attributed; they are hidden in private collections or museum depositories, presumably in a poor state of preservation; their subject matter does not conform to the genre scenes or religious paintings that most Caravaggisti are known for today; and the topic itself continues to generate embarrassed bafflement rather than genuine interest. All of these factors combined have the effect of decreasing the valuation of *Roman Charities* on the art market, which in turn perpetuates their scholarly neglect. As Natasha Seaman has remarked recently, academic attention and collectors' prices often go in tandem.[110]

Nonetheless, it emerges that Manfredi's *Roman Charity* from 1610–14, last seen on the Milanese art market in 1963, established the blue print for his famous "methodus" that allegedly launched Caravaggismo as a Europe-wide phenomenon (Figure 2.24).[111] Joachim von Sandrart is usually credited for having recognized this "Manfredian method" in his *Academy of the Arts of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting* (1675) by describing the essentials of his art as follows:

Figure 2.24: Bartolomeo Manfredi, Roman Charity, 1610–14

"A Mantovan named Bartholomeo Manfredi diligently followed the good manner of Caravaggio, so that little difference [between their works] can be detected. He imitated life with great truthfulness and painted for the most part half-length figures true to life, and elaborated on his conversations, gambling-and tavern scenes, soldiers and other such perfect works."[112]

While Sandrart does not mention Caravaggio's religious paintings as significant for his approach, Nicole Hartje points out that Manfredi's treatment of Caravaggio's *Seven Works of Mercy* establishes a decisive feature of his method – namely, to isolate groups of figures from Caravaggio's more complex compositions into smaller-scale gallery paintings.[113]

In fact, Manfredi's early *Roman Charity* (1610–14) recalls the posture of Pero and Cimon in the Neapolitan altarpiece, with Pero standing to the left, slightly bent, one of her knees articulated to suggest a stylish pose underneath her garments. Caravaggio's Pero observes, with a startled expression, the activities taking place in front of the prison, but Manfredi's Pero stares intently out of the left picture frame, perhaps in response to some noise she just heard. Of Cimon, we see a lot more than in Caravaggio's picture, which reduces him to a disembodied head. Manfredi's father is half-naked except for a garment loosely

draped around his shoulder; his hands are in chains; he suckles discreetly, as his mouth is overshadowed, staring intently in the same direction as his daughter. Pero's left hand rests tenderly on his shoulder, a gesture made possible through the lack of bars separating the two. The couple is in an undefined, dark interior space into which light falls from the left, probably through a window behind which guards are approaching. Manfredi's painting is not overly eroticized; its chief aim seems to have been to isolate a "moment" à la Caravaggio, catching the protagonists "absorbed," as it were, in their fear of discovery, while being oblivious to the artist and its beholders.[114]

Figure 2.25: Bartolomeo Manfredi, Roman Charity, 1615–17

While this painting was completed shortly after Manfredi's return from Naples, a second version was produced in 1615–17 (Figure 2.25).[115] This latter version seems to be more refined and finished, but also less dramatic and "in the moment." Pero gazes vaguely, somewhat pitifully, but also gratuitously out of the picture plane into complete darkness, without indicating what might have aroused her attention. She is situated to the right, her bosom and face illuminated by an invisible light source placed to the left. Cimon again suckles discreetly, his face in the dark, overshadowing Pero's breast. He is seated, wrapped in a brown cloak, holding both hands in chains in front of his body. While we cannot identify his facial features, his bushy white beard and barely visible frown place him squarely in the vicinity of the prototype developed for representations of Saint Peter. On occasion, other biblical figures such as Saint Jerome also correspond to this prototype – as in, for example, Caravaggio's paintings *Saint Jerome Writing* (1605–06) and *Saint Jerome in Meditation* (1605) – but whenever Saint Peter is represented in the vicinity of other characters, his features are guaranteed to conform to this type. Variations do occur, of course, mostly with respect to the color and volume of Saint Peter's hair. In Caravaggio's *Denial*, for example, Saint Peter seems entirely bald, and his beard is neither bushy nor grey, but his deep and accentuated frown helps to identify him immediately. While the *Denial* seems to be the perfect picture for his frown, the gesture seems somewhat misplaced in Caravaggio's *Crucifixion,* where the saint wrinkles his forehead as if surprised and irritated at the martyrdom performed on him (Figure 2.2). He does have a bushy white beard and receding hairline, however, just as Cimon in the *Seven Works of Mercy*. This is the type Manfredi quotes in his second *Roman Charity,* even though Manfredi's father has more beautiful and abundant hair than Caravaggio's: it is silver, shiny, and curlier. Manfredi's Cimon recurs again in his *Denial of Saint Peter,* painted roughly at the same time (1615–16), where we detect his aquiline nose, frowning forehead, receding hairline, grey curly hair at his temples, and a bushy beard (Figure 2.14). The Cimon figure from his prior *Roman Charity* vaguely conforms to the prototype as well, but given the poor quality of the old reproduction, details are hard to make out.

At about the same time as Manfredi practiced his "methodus" by turning Caravaggio's Pero and Cimon into a gallery painting, Abraham Bloemaert from Utrecht (1566–1651), who never traveled to Italy, became interested in the topic as well. After producing a series of drawings in which he experimented with different postures, Bloemaert completed an oil painting of the scene in 1610, which he copied in grisaille (Figure 2.26).[116] This painting does not bear any traces of Caravaggismo except for the stark contrast between the couple's spotlighted body parts and the dark prison interior. However, the shaded background is architecturally defined with bricks, arches, and a barred window, thus not entirely corresponding to Caravaggio's undefined black

Figure 2.26: Abraham Bloemaert, Roman Charity, 1610

surroundings.[117] Pero's posture seems affected in its Mannerist elegance, an impression that the wonderfully complicated and unnecessarily abundant folds of her silken skirt magnify. Cimon's elongated right arm occupies the left foreground in a similarly unrealistic arrangement. The figures' nude upper bodies, and Cimon's gesture of grabbing his daughter's skirt, give the painting a decidedly erotic flavor, even though Pero's sweet devotion is at the center of attention. The painting is quite original in its composition, compared with prior renderings of the topic by Northern European and Italian artists.

Figure 2.27: Peter Paul Rubens, Roman Charity, 1610–12

Were it not for its Mannerist style, it would be most tempting to see it as early evidence of Caravaggio's influence on Bloemaert. Bloemaert was the teacher of Hendrick ter Brugghen and Gerrit van Honthorst, who, like Dirck van Baburen, went to Italy in the second decade of the seventeenth century to learn about – in Karel van Mander's words – the "wonderful things" of Caravaggio.[118] Upon their return to Holland in 1615–20, these three painters formed the artistic elite of Utrecht. According to Albert Blankert, Gerrit van Honthorst taught his former master to paint in Caravaggio's manner, as evidenced by Bloemaert's *Flute Player* of 1621.[119] Nonetheless, Axel Hémery calls Bloemaert the spiritual father and mediator of Caravaggismo in Utrecht.[120] Bloemaert's gallery painting of *Roman Charity,* completed in the year Caravaggio died and ter Brugghen left for Italy (1610), can be viewed as a transitional piece that inaugurated the craze for the topic in Utrecht, even though stylistically it remains stuck in a former era.

Another early example of a *Roman Charity* painted in the wake of Caravaggio's death is Rubens's Hermitage version (Figure 2.27).[121] Dated to 1610–12, it highlights the nude and aging body of Cimon in his sufferance, while Pero is shown properly clothed in a red dress and white blouse. Her blond curly hair is neatly braided and partially covered by a scarf; her left breast and nipple are clearly visible and highlighted through the V-hold with which she feeds her

father. This painting reminds of Caravaggio's preference for strong chiaroscuro effects and ochre coloring; it is full of realist details such as the straw Cimon sits on, the chain that reflects the light and throws a shadow, and the spider webs collecting between the bars of the window. The scene is very intimate, tender, and quiet: Pero observes her father feed, resting her left hand on his naked shoulder, while Cimon concentrates on his suckling. The couple is oblivious to the beholder as well as any danger of interruption. Rather than depicting the moment of Pero's scare, the painting shows the couple's continuous absorption, offering the spectator time for prolonged and undisturbed voyeuristic pleasure. The scene is erotically enhanced through the father's naked body and erect nipples. If Bellori was said to have objected to Caravaggio's "perceived assault … on the integrity of the male heroic body" because of the many "vile things" he depicted, a similar, perhaps more provocative and encompassing attack on classicizing masculinity is launched by Rubens's representation of an aging and starving yet beautiful male body shown in abject dependence on his breastfeeding daughter.[122] As a figure of male vulnerability and objectification, Rubens's Cimon competes with, even precedes, his *Saint Sebastian* of 1614. As a figure of male regression and submission to women's maternal powers, Cimon predates Rubens's famous depiction of Mars resisting temptation through a lactating Venus in *Minerva Protects Pax from Mars* (1629–30) (Figure 3.16). If the latter painting shows how "Venus's desire is both infantilizing and castrating in its maternal and carnal aspects," *Roman Charity* casts a patriarchal figure quite literally in the role of a baby.[123] Cimon's genitals are covered by a black cloak, but we have no reason to suspect they are missing. His body is marked as fully masculine through his sinewy muscles and full beard, despite the fact that he is engaged in the most infantile of all activities. As such, he resembles Rubens's Hercules in *Hercules and Omphale* (1606), who was temporarily "emasculated" by fulfilling the tasks of women but retained his heroic male appearance. Both Hercules and Cimon thus appear in stark contrast to Rubens's various representations of *Drunken Silenus* (1616–17), whose Bacchanalian revelries in the vicinity of breastfeeding satyrs made him assume the flesh of an aging female (Figure 2.28).[124]

Rubens and his followers went on to paint at least three further copies of *Roman Charity,* which shows how deeply he was attracted to representing male figures involved in, threatened by, or juxtaposed to performances of maternity. All subsequent versions attributed to Rubens have the same focus: the muscular yet haggard nude body of the starving father.[125] His *Roman Charity* from Amsterdam (1630) gives a slightly altered version of the scene, with two prison guards peeking in through the window to the right and Pero's head bending backwards in response to some noise she might have heard behind her (Figure 1.6). Cimon conforms to the prototype of Saint Peter with his full grey beard, receding hairline, and a frown; he sits on a stone bench, bent over to

Figure 2.28: Peter Paul Rubens, The Drunken Silenus, 1616–17

reach the beautiful white bosom of his daughter. Again, he is fully naked except for a piece of white cloth and a green blanket loosely draped around his genitals and upper legs. The many folds of his aging flesh and the ochre color of his skin contrast nicely with Pero's rosy cheeks and perky white breasts, both of which push out of her open blouse and the low neckline of a bright red gown. This painting is less intimate than the Hermitage version, even slightly pornographic, exposing Pero's breasts to full frontal view. In addition, the guards' voyeurism reflects and doubles that of the spectator in a somewhat preoccupying manner. Followers of Rubens copied this painting, not without introducing the novelty of a baby sleeping at the feet of the couple.[126] In both versions, the chiaroscuro is less pronounced, and Pero's breasts are modestly covered, but Cimon's wrinkled, ochre-colored body is rendered most accurately. This proves that contemporaries appreciated Rubens's *Roman Charities* primarily for his depictions of a nude old man. A similar version, last seen on the London art market in 1954 and dated to 1625, is also attributed to Rubens (Figure 2.29). Its

composition resembles the Amsterdam version from 1630, with Cimon sitting left and Pero standing to the right, but the daughter's bland facial expression and her covered bosom render it less eye-catching. Also, the prison window and the guards are missing, which is why Pero's gesture of bending backwards and staring out of the picture plane seems somewhat unmotivated. All three versions that can be securely attributed to Rubens himself – dated 1610–12 (Hermitage), 1625 (London art market), and 1630 (Amsterdam) – have been disseminated in the form of prints.[127]

Whether there is a relationship between Caravaggio's depiction of Pero and Cimon in his *Seven Works of Mercy* and Rubens's early *Roman Charity* is hard to tell. Rubens would not have known of Manfredi's painting of the subject matter, because he returned to Flanders from Italy in 1608, but might have seen or heard of Bloemaert's copy. He did not travel to Naples but

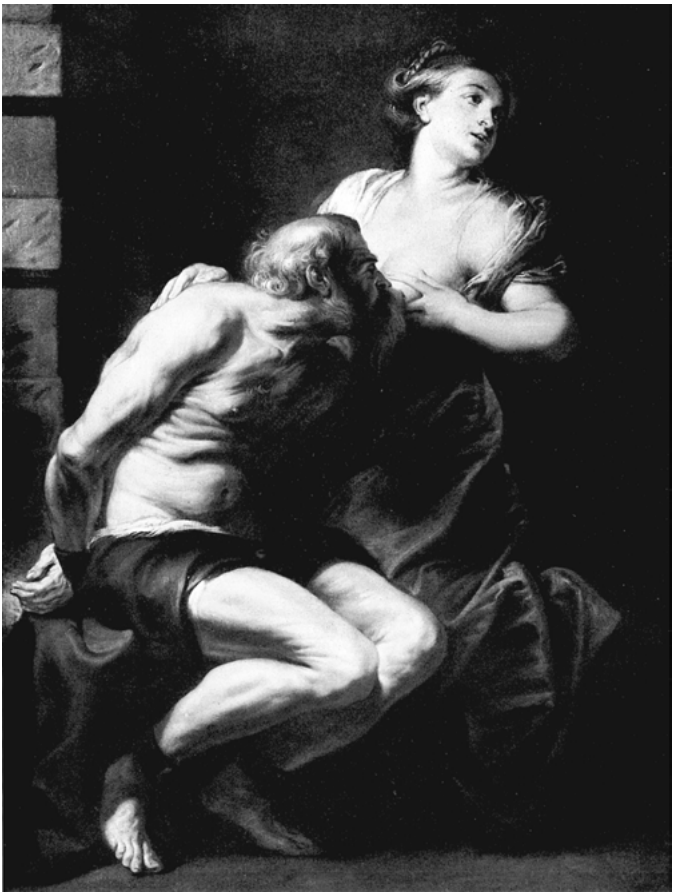

Figure 2.29: Peter Paul Rubens, Roman Charity, 1625

went to Genoa in 1606, which is where he could have been just as inspired by Perino del Vaga's fresco as Caravaggio had been a year earlier. He also spent extended time periods in Mantua (1604–05), where he could have seen the relief designed by Giulio Romano.[128] In fact, Renzo Villa declares Rubens's Hermitage painting to be the Ur-model of all Baroque *Roman Charities,* denying any influence through Caravaggio whatsoever.[129] This seems unlikely, however, because of the fame of Caravaggio's altarpiece and the formal properties of Rubens's Hermitage painting. Its pronounced chiaroscuro, ochre toning, and "realist" details remind of Caravaggio's style, even if the stress on Cimon's body proves Rubens's own idiosyncratic approach to the theme. Of Perino del Vaga's fresco, no influence can be detected, nor of the stucco relief at Palazzo Tè.

Several scholars have remarked that Rubens was influenced by a variety of painters during his stay in Italy (1600–1608), including Caravaggio.[130] Sure sign of his appreciation for Caravaggio was Rubens's advice to the Duke of Mantua to buy his rejected *Death of the Virgin*.[131] Rubens's *Entombment* (1611) and *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* (1616) seem both indebted to Caravaggio.[132] Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani, famous collector and patron of the arts, classified Rubens as a full-fledged Caravaggista alongside Jusepe de Ribera, Gerrit van Honthorst, Hendrick ter Brugghen, and Dirck van Baburen.[133]

Given that no gallery painting of *Roman Charity* predates Caravaggio's death in 1610 – with the exception of the two Italian paintings of uncertain date and attribution mentioned above – the *Seven Works of Mercy* remains the only plausible reference point for a fad that would continue for another two centuries. Manfredi's, Bloemaert's, and Rubens's early versions of *Roman Charity* were completed just before or around the time that Caravaggismo became a full-fledged European-wide phenomenon. As Alessandro Zuccari points out, it was in 1612–13 that Jan Janssens, Simon Vouet, Valentin de Boulogne, Gerard Seghers, Battistello Caracciolo, and Jusepe de Ribera moved to Rome on purpose to study his art.[134]

But aside from these formal considerations, Rubens's repeated portrayal of a pathetic and naked old man condemned to suckle from his daughter's breast for survival – who on one occasion bears Saint Peter's features – was surely inspired by Caravaggio's subversive, anti-authoritarian attitude. While Caravaggio's art was more pointedly political in its attack on Counter-Reformation Rome, Rubens's intention might have been to explore philosophical questions deriving from his love for neo-stoicism.[135] As his teacher Justus Lipsius (1547–1606), himself a convert to Catholicism, would have taught him, rigid confessionalism was to be avoided in favor of a differentiated observation of political realities. Lipsius's book *Politica* was put on the index in 1590 because of its cautious defense of Machiavelli's concept of reason of state; it

Figure 2.30: Dirck van Baburen, Roman Charity, 1623

stands out because of its cento-format, consisting entirely of quotations from ancient authors.[136] Such "weak" rhetoric expresses, on the level of content, his rejection of facile certitudes and polarized opinions. Above all, it performs stoic self-restraint. In Rubens's art, Lipsius's disciplined thinking manifests itself through a high degree of self-reflection, leading to an acknowledgment of male weakness and vulnerability. In this latter sense, the motif of Roman Charity is of almost programmatic importance, as it highlights the undoing of a guilty patriarch and his salvific regression into dependence on his daughter.

In 1623, Dirck van Baburen (1595–1624), one of the three famous Utrecht Caravaggisti, painted a *Roman Charity* inspired by both Rubens's Hermitage version and Manfredi's early rendering (Figure 2.30).[137] The seated figure of Cimon, naked except for his loincloth, reminds of Rubens's muscular yet aging male nude, while Pero stares out of the picture plane in analogy to Manfredi's composition. Pero seems startled, indicating that it is the moment of discovery the artist caught on canvas; even Cimon looks to the left in anticipation of an imminent interruption. Entering from the left, bright light illuminates the father's body as well as the daughter's naked chest and shoulder, creating a strong chiaroscuro effect. Yellowish-brown and red hues prevail in homage

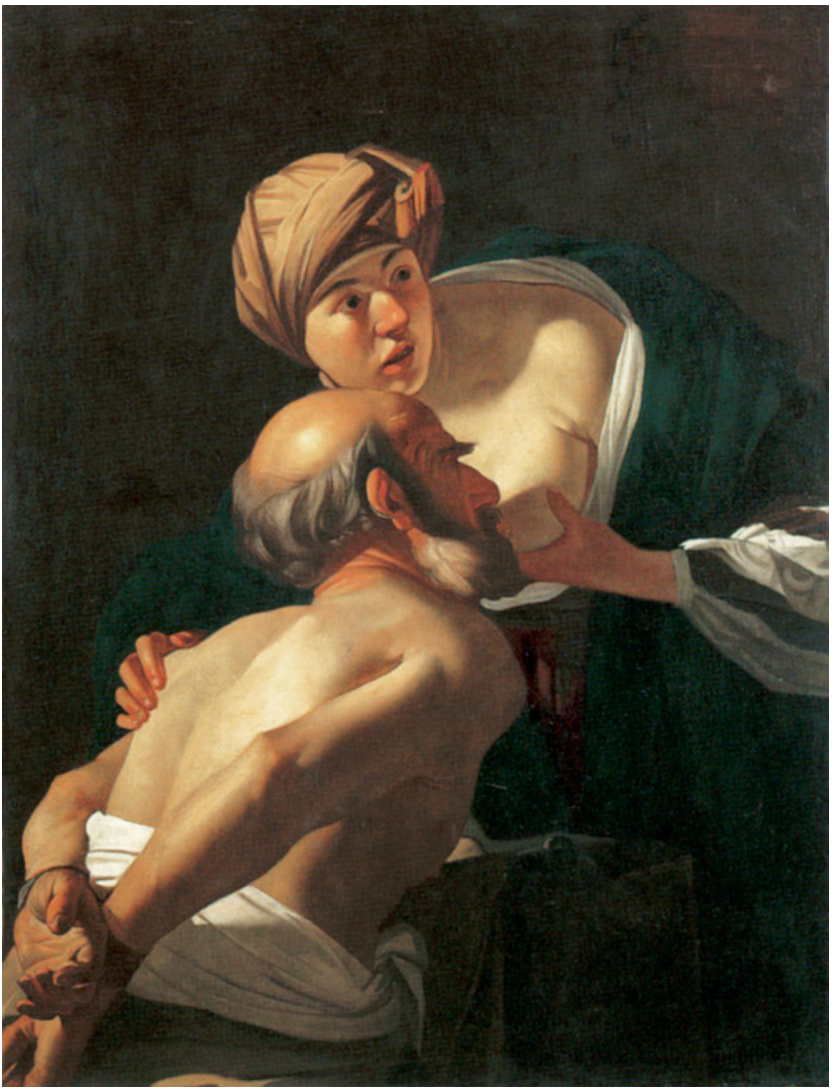

Figure 2.31: Dirck van Baburen, Roman Charity, 1622–24

to Caravaggio. Also, Pero wears a turban wrapped around her head that does not reveal a single strand of hair. Cimon has a dark grey beard and a shock of hair with no sign of beginning baldness, thus not resembling his frowning *Penitent Saint Peter* (1618–19),[138] which in turn quotes Caravaggio's *Crucifixion* (Figure 2.2). Rather, Cimon's features replicate those of Prometheus in Baburen's *Prometheus Chained by Vulcan* (1623), creating a narrative continuum of masculine vulnerability and suffering.[139]

At about the same time, Baburen completed another version of *Roman Charity* (1622–24), last seen at Sotheby's on December 16, 1999 (Figure 2.31). This is a rather unique composition, with Pero standing in front of her father, offering him her left breast, and Cimon kneeling, revealing his naked torso and tied hands from the back. In this painting, Cimon looks less muscular; his features, with frown, grey beard, and deeply receding hairline, do conform to the prototype of Saint Peter. Pero wears a turban and a precious gown that reveals her left bosom and shoulder. Her left arm seems elongated and misplaced. This time, the noise that upsets Pero comes from the right, even though the window seems located on the left, judging from how the light enters the picture

Figure 2.32: Jan Vermeer, A Lady at the Virginals, 1662–65

Figure 2.33: Hans Jordaens III, An Artist's Cabinet, 1630

plane. The couple's glowing white skin is offset nicely through the black, undefined background; as in the York version, Baburen emphasizes the moment of imminent discovery, in analogy to both Caravaggio's Neapolitan altarpiece and Manfredi's first version. Georg Weber has recently identified this painting as appearing, cropped, in Vermeer's *A Lady at the Virginals* (1662–65), recognizable through Cimon's tied hands on his back (Figure 2.32).[140] It enjoyed a further cameo appearance in Hans Jordaens III's (1630) depiction of a collector's gallery, where it is hung in the upper left corner of the cabinet's northern wall, flanked by a painting of Salome and the head of Saint John the Baptist (Figure 2.33).[141] This painting was copied by Cornelis de Baellieur in 1637. Unlike Vermeer, who had the painting in front of him, as it – or a copy of it – formed part of his mother-in-law's collection, Jordaens must have painted it from memory or hearsay.[142] Cimon's torso can be seen from the back, as in Baburen's original, but Pero recalls the breastfeeding daughter in Rubens's Amsterdam version of the theme, given her posture and ample red dress. Whether this is a mishap or a deliberate fusion of two famous *Roman Charities*, its prominent position in Jordaens's and Baellieur's paintings affirms that by 1630, *Roman Charity* was recognized as a quintessential gallery painting. Matched with a painting of *Salome*, its placement suggests that collectors continued to associate it with depictions of man-murdering "strong women."

Gerrit van Honthorst (1592–1656), another Utrecht Caravaggista known for his tavern and gambling scenes but also for his religious works such as the

Denial of Saint Peter and the *Incredulous Saint Thomas,* painted numerous versions of *Roman Charity* himself. In their catalog raisonné, Judson and Ekkart attribute six paintings under this title to him, his workshop, and his brother Willem, but they do not include a single reproduction.[143] The most beautiful of the three images I have been able to locate is his studio version from Münster (Figure 2.34). Honthorst, famous for developing Caravaggio's chiaroscuro style into naturalistic nighttime scenes illuminated by visible, artificial light sources, situates the scene in a pitch-dark dungeon illuminated by a lantern. The lantern throws light onto Pero's bosom, entirely revealed under a loose-fitting blouse, and Cimon's torso, which, slightly emaciated, reminds of Baburen's version seen at Sotheby's. Departing from Rubens's model, Honthorst and Baburen depict a more "lifelike," less classicizing and heroic, old man, whose skinny upper body shows signs of starvation. His hands tied to the back, he concentrates on suckling, while Pero is alert and slightly startled, looking out of the picture plane.

A similar version attributed to Gerrit van Honthorst and his workshop is preserved at the Alte Pinakothek, München.[144] This time, the scene is illuminated by Pero's candle. She is just about to offer her father the breast but seems to hesitate, staring out of the picture to the left. Cimon looks in the same

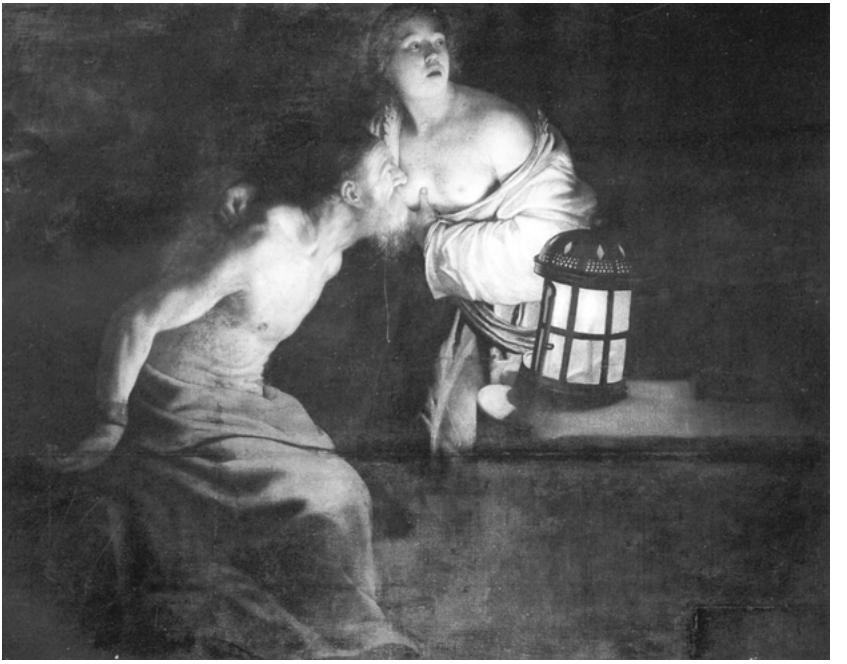

Figure 2.34: Gerrit van Honthorst, Roman Charity, before 1656

Figure 2.35: Paulus Moreelse, Roman Charity, 1633

direction; his left biceps and chains are clearly visible in a posture recalling Baburen's painting last seen at Sotheby's. As in the Münster version, he has a frown, receding hairline, and bushy beard, just like Saint Peter in Honthorst's many representations of the apostle's *Denial*. The Potsdam copy attributed to his brother Willem is of lesser artistic merit.[145] It shows a skinny, bald father, his hands chained to the wall; he is in a seated position, modestly suckling from a breast that is not clearly visible. Pero, fully clothed, looks startled to the right, where a prison guard is just about to burst through an opened door, making a hand gesture of arrest.

We have no extant *Roman Charity* by the third major Utrecht Caravaggista, Hendrick ter Brugghen (1588–1629), even though Andor Pigler and Benedict Nicolson attribute a copy to him, last seen in Amsterdam, 1687, as part of the Peronneau collection.[146] Given his proximity to Dirck van Baburen, with whom he may have shared a workshop, it is not unlikely that he should have produced a version.[147] Like Honthorst, he was trained by Abraham Bloemaert, whose 1610 painting he must have seen prior to his trip to Italy (1615–20). Other Dutch artists with a strong Utrecht connection also painted *Roman Charities:* for

example, Jan van Bronckhorst (1603–61), who frequented Honthorst's workshop; Matthias Stomer, who was born in Utrecht but died in Sicily (1600–52); Christiaen van Couwenbergh (1604–67), who spent two years in this town (1622–24); and Paulus Moreelse (1571–1638), Dirck van Baburen's teacher.[148] Bronckhorst's painting is lost, and Stomer's is of insecure attribution, but Moreelse's version (1633) is preserved in the National Gallery of Edinburgh (Figure 2.35). It is inspired by both Rubens's Hermitage version and Baburen's

Figure 2.36: Christiaen van Couwenbergh, Roman Charity, 1639

copy from Sotheby's, as it shows the father, half-naked with outstretched legs, analogous to Rubens's painting, his hands tied behind his back. The light falls onto his right biceps and shoulder, as in Baburen's version. Pero, dressed in a beautiful, blue and yellow, silk gown, offers him an engorged breast in lifelike fashion. As in Rubens's picture, her V-hold is clearly visible, making deep indentations on her white and shiny flesh. Cimon has not yet put her rosy nipple to his mouth, first wanting to make eye contact with his daughter; she, however, averts her eyes sweetly and modestly. Like Rubens, Moreelse depicts the couple without hurry or fear of interruption, quietly immersed in their activity. Christiaen van Couwenbergh's version from 1639 takes Rubens's display of the pitiful nude father to a new level, depicting Cimon frontally (Figure 2.36). He is entirely naked except for a tiny transparent loincloth, exposing his body to a bright light in an otherwise pitch-dark prison interior. His body is muscular but shows signs of aging such as folds around his belly and neck. He is utterly helpless, as both feet and hands are chained. Seated on a bench, he bends over to reach the breast of his daughter, who is cast in shadows except for her bosom and face. As in Rubens's and Moreelse's painting, nobody has yet disturbed the couple in their self-absorption.

Flemish artists other than Rubens also depicted the theme, such as Jan Janssens (ca. 1591–c.1646), who copied Dirck van Baburen's York version, and Gerard Seghers (1591–1651), who seems to have produced two, now no longer extant, paintings of the theme.[149] However, it does seem to have been the particular religious and political climate of Utrecht, a residually Catholic city within the Calvinist Dutch Republic, which made the motif of Roman Charity thrive rapidly, in conjunction with representations of the *Denial of Saint Peter*. Even Seghers, who in addition to his two potential *Roman Charities* painted ten (!) versions of the theme of *Denial,* seems to have followed Gerrit van Honthorst rather than the other way round.[150] Early seventeenth-century Utrecht, in which one-third of the population remained Catholic despite the victory of Calvinism in 1581, was a relatively tolerant microcosm on a continent ravaged by wars and confessional strive.[151] In the words of Natasha Seaman: "Utrecht seems to offer the Third Way … neither Calvinist, nor Tridentine Catholic, yet Christian, in the form of the unchurched, or a-confessional believer … Its relation to art use or production has not yet been considered."[152] Seaman goes on to show how ter Brugghen's religious paintings did not conform to Counter-Reformation image theory[153] but reflected a "yearning for unmediated, personal contact with the divine."[154] In my view, paintings such as the *Denial of Saint Peter* resonated less with the – shrinking – "unchurched" segments of the population than with dissenters in both Protestant and Catholic camps. Utrecht Catholics, many of whom sympathized with the heterodox theories of Luis de Molina (1535–1600) and Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638), might have appreciated the iconography's implicit critique of the Roman papacy and its emphasis on doubt, moral failure,

and predestination, while Calvinist spectators might have revised their rejection of images for the purpose of religious introspection.[155] It is definitely not a theme that the Catholic clergy of Utrecht would have commissioned for their hidden churches. Xander van Eck has shown how most Catholic paintings ordered for official display in Utrecht depict medieval Flemish and Dutch saints alongside scenes from the life of Christ and the Virgin Mary, i.e., images fit for worship and missionizing.[156] On occasion, Caravaggesque subject matters were also chosen, such as the *Calling of Saint Matthew* and the *Doubting Thomas,* but never the *Denial of Saint Peter.*[157] Rubens, who worked for the Catholic churches in Antwerp, did not paint the subject matter.

It is thus fairly certain that the many paintings of Saint Peter's *Denial* by Gerrit van Honthorst, Dirck van Baburen, and Hendrick ter Brugghen were sold to private collectors. The latter two artists, being Protestant, were not on the list of painters who worked for Utrecht's hidden churches, in contrast to Honthorst.[158] The *Denial of Saint Peter,* which often includes scenes of gambling soldiers, was of immense interest also because of its presentation of New Testamentary subject matter as a genre scene. *Roman Charity* had the opposite effect, in religiously enhancing and distorting a historical legend. Both iconographies are part of the same visual universe, in which the similarity of Cimon to Saint Peter's prototype establishes cross-references of signification.[159] In the context of early seventeenth-century Utrecht, the motif of Roman Charity acquired anti-papist connotations that reflect Caravaggio's anti-hierarchical, anti-clerical approach. In nearby Flanders, the more overt political connotations receded in favor of a view of patriarchal vulnerability and weakness.

Simon Vouet (ca. 1590–1649) presented a different take on the iconography, painting at least two versions of the topic during his stay in Rome between 1613 and 1627.[160] His version from Riazan became immediately famous, with copies being made in the form of oil paintings, prints, a ceramic platter, and watch faces (Figure 2.37).[161] He must have seen Manfredi's Uffizi rendering of the theme, as his painting produces the same mystically enhanced and quietly erotic impression (Figure 2.25). As in Manfredi's painting, the focus is exclusively on the breastfeeding couple, surrounded by darkness. While Manfredi shows Cimon's hands in chains, Vouet limits himself to depicting the father's head and left shoulder, tightly held in Pero's embrace. The painting is a close-up of Pero, whose ample bosom and entranced face present themselves to the voyeuristic pleasure of the spectator, who is near enough to be brushed by the abundant folds of her silken sleeve. Pero's eyes are ecstatically directed heavenwards, her head bent to the left, as if pulling away from the task at hand. Nonetheless, Cimon is engulfed by the heavy corporeal presence of his daughter. The symbiotic proximity of the two bodies produces a pronounced erotic effect, which is offset, or even enhanced, by Pero's mystic facial demeanor.

Figure 2.37: Simon Vouet, Roman Charity, 1613–27

A copy of this painting is preserved in Nantes.[162] Claude Mellan engraved it sometime between 1624 and 1636 in reverse (Figure 2.38). His print served as a model for Ippolito Rombaldotti's ceramic dish from mid-century, which situates the couple in a well-articulated prison interior, cancelling the beholder's impression of immediate proximity.[163] Toward the end of the century, Henry Arlaud used it for his watch face (1675–1700), not without endowing Pero with fashionably blond curls and an oblique view almost addressing the spectator.[164] At about the same time, Augustin Rummel, Jean-Pierre Huaud, and Amy Huaud produced a similar watch, which locates the couple inside a prison and gives Pero the features and hairdo of a

Figure 2.38: Claude Mellan, after Simon Vouet, Roman Charity, 1624–36

contemporary dame à la mode (Figure 2.39). This Pero stares directly at the beholder, undisturbed in her charitable task. What identifies Mellan's print as the unambiguous model for these two watch faces and the ceramic bowl is Pero's splayed hand with which she pulls Cimon's balding head toward her. While indicating the eagerness with which she puts him to her breast, this gesture also marks her as a "woman on top," who at any minute might press down on her father and make him disappear. A third watch by Jean-Pierre and Amy Huaud takes Rubens's Hermitage version as its model (Figure 2.40), probably in the form of an engraving by Cornelis van Caukercken.[165]

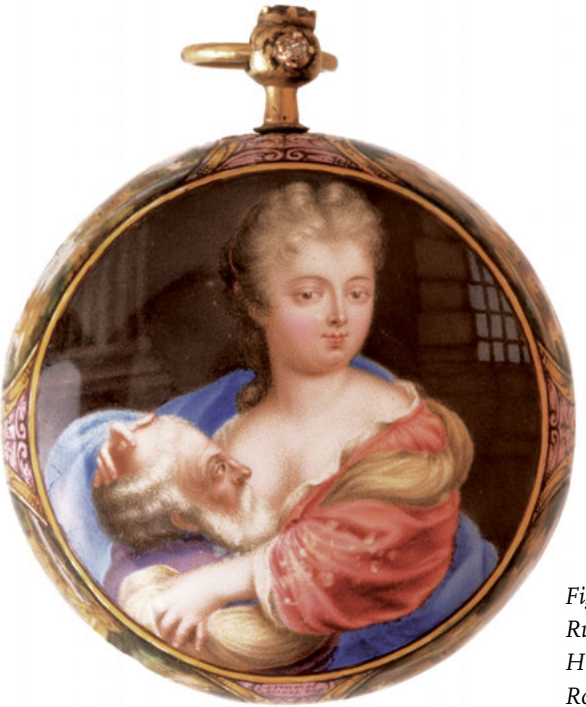

Figure 2.39: Augustin Rummel, Jean-Pierre Huaud, Amy Huaud, Roman Charity, 17th c.

Figure 2.40: Jean-Pierre Huaud, Amy Huaud, Roman Charity, after Rubens, Hermitage version, before 1723

Figure 2.41: Nicolas Régnier, Roman Charity, 1638

Subsequent to his famous Riazan version, Vouet painted another *Roman Charity,* now held in Bayonne.[166] Here the couple is a bit further removed from the spectator, and the two are not melting together in a symbiotic embrace. Pero still directs her eyes heavenward but seems more poised. Rather than pulling on her father's shoulder and pressing down on his head, she offers him her breast with the typical V-hold and supports him at his neck. Cimon is not chained or otherwise placed in a prison interior. The composition of the painting reminds even more strongly than the preceding one of Manfredi's Uffizi version, with its dark surrounding and the couple's quiet, mystical demeanor (Figure 2.25).

Nicolas Régnier (1591–1667), a Flemish Caravaggista who came to Rome in the second decade of the seventeenth century and left in 1626, painted the theme twice.[167] One painting, held in Modena, it is a beautiful Caravaggesque rendering that shows Pero and Cimon in red and brown hues, pronounced chiaroscuro, and lifelike details (1638) (Figure 2.41).[168] The artist captured the moment of the couple's fear of discovery, with both father and daughter looking at the window to the right. The focus is on Cimon's muscular torso and erect nipples. His hands are tied to the back, recalling Baburen's composition of 1622–24 (Figure 2.31). This painting was copied, presumably by Régnier

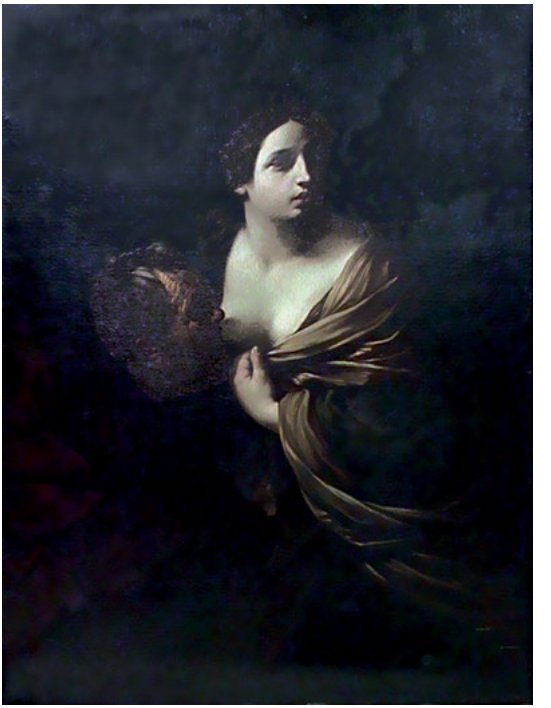

Figure 2.42: Guido Reni, attr., Roman Charity, before 1642

himself, in a version now held in Braunschweig.[169] As in Manfredi's early rendering, the stress is on the moment in which prison guards appear near the window. Other followers of Caravaggio who traveled to Rome and seem to have painted a *Roman Charity,* but whose paintings are no longer extant, are Jusepe de Ribera (1591–1652) and Valentin de Boulogne (1591–1632).[170] The two latter painters also produced versions of the *Denial of Saint Peter.*[171]

It is perhaps appropriate to conclude this chapter with remarks on Guido Reni (1575–1642), Caravaggio's outspoken foe, who nonetheless took inspiration from him and seems to have produced – or had produced by his workshop – nine versions of *Roman Charity.*[172] This number is probably exaggerated; I have been able to identify three versions that may have been authored by him, even though one of them was recently attributed to Giovanni Giacomo Sementi (1580–1638). They are a painting held in Marseille (Figure 2.42), one, almost identical, preserved in Rouen,[173] and another one housed in Genoa.[174] All three versions show the breastfeeding couple in a pitch-dark environment, with an unnaturally bright light illuminating the white skin of Pero's face, hand, and bosom. Cimon's features are visible only insofar as they are illuminated by reflections radiating from Pero's naked body parts. As in Vouet's versions, the impression is one of mysterious sensuality, which the beholder can co-inhabit, undisturbed by architectural details that remind of a prison interior.

The couple occupies a dreamlike non-space; the light illuminating Pero's skin does not seem to come from an exterior source but radiates outward from her white skin.[175] Even though the Marseille and Rouen versions show Pero directing her eyes outside the picture plane, she does not seem startled or upset. No other human could possibly surprise the two in their intimacy, given the amorphous, utopian darkness that surrounds them like a protective shield.

The message of these pictures is a far cry from Caravaggio's intent, who cast Pero as the Madonna's successor in an entirely secular ambience. In those three paintings believed to be by Reni, Pero is mystically enhanced as a source of grace, which is indicated by the extra-terrestrial light emanating from her bosom. Richard Spear has shown how Reni's religious art expresses his undisturbed belief in grace and redemption, which remained unaffected by any doubts about predestination despite a raging debate among contemporary Catholics.[176] In the words of Jesuit Giovanni Domenico Ottonelli (1584–1670), Guido Reni's figures in the Cappella Paolina are the "gracious expression of devout inner feeling," rendering "the inward feeling of true devotion in such a vivid manner and so marvelously well that every judicious viewer who looks at them finds himself, rightly enough, greatly absorbed in thought and nearly overwhelmed by intense and unwanted wonder."[177] Spear echoes this opinion, stating that "Reni's figures are so persuasively self-assured of salvation through their infusion of divine grace that they can alienate even the most intelligent of viewers … The figures tend to make spectators with different beliefs uninvited, uninitiated, unbaptized outsiders."[178] Needless to say, Reni never painted Saint Peter in the act of denial but instead portrayed him weeping, in the act of penitence.[179] While Caravaggio addresses the skeptic as a second-order observer, inviting him to detect the sacred in the secular, Reni presents salvation as a fait accompli, in an imperturbable belief in the attainability of God's grace. The two artists' different use of light marks their diverging religious convictions. If Caravaggio's black, "negative" spaces express his existential doubts about visuality and certitude, Reni's use of light imitates how God "infuses figures with his splendor, making visible Ficino's metaphysical equation of lightness with nearness to God."[180] In this sense, the stark contrast between light and shadow in Reni's above-mentioned *Roman Charities* does not encourage close scrutiny of what is visible but, rather, blinds the viewer through the mystical beauty of Pero's bosom. In Reni's art, *Roman Charity* has shed all ironic, subversive, philosophical, or political connotations; instead, it has become what Tridentine picture theorists might have called an image worthy of veneration.[181]

Notes

1 | Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors and Architects,* transl. by Alice Sedgwick Wohl, notes by Hellmut Wohl, introduction by Tomaso Montanari (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005; first It. ed. 1672), 183.

2 | This painting is not identical with Caravaggio's *Denial of Saint Peter* from 1610 (Figure 2.13), preserved at the Metropolitan Museum of New York, as this latter version does not show other figures warming themselves at a fire. Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters*, 183.

3 | *I Caravaggeschi. Percorsi e protagonisti,* ed. by Alessandro Zuccari with the assistance of Claudio Strinati, 2 vols. (Milan: Skira, 2010); Benedict Nicolson, *Caravaggism in Europe*; revised and enlarged by Luisa Vertova (Turin: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1990, first ed. 1979), 3 vols.

4 | Roger Ward, "Those Who Came Before: Caravaggio and His Principal Italian Followers," in: *Sinners & Saints, Darkness and Light. Caravaggio and his Dutch and Flemish Followers*; exhibition catalog; North Carolina Museum of Art, Sept. 27–Dec. 13, 1998; Milwaukee Art Museum, January 29–April 18, 1999; Dayton Art Institute, May 8–July 18, 1999; ed. by Dennis P. Weller (Raleigh: North Carolina Museum of Art, 1998), 17–34, especially 26; Michele Nicolaci and Riccardo Gandolfi, "Il Caravaggio di Guido Reni: la Negazione di Pietro tra relazioni artistiche e operazioni finanziarie," *Storia dell'arte* 130 (2011): 41–64.

5 | The only exceptions are: Anna Tuck-Scala, "Caravaggio's 'Roman Charity' in the Seven Acts of Mercy," in: *Parthenope's Splendor: Art of the Golden Age in Naples,* ed. by Jeanne Chenault Porter and Susan Scott Munshower (College Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 127–63; with respect to followers of Caravaggio in Utrecht, see the catalog entry for Paulus Moreelse, "Cimon und Pero," in: *Holländische Malerei in neuem Licht: Hendrick ter Brugghen und seine Zeitgenossen;* Ausstellung im Centraal Museum Utrecht, 13. Nov. 1986–12. Jan. 1987; Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum in Braunschweig, 12. Feb. 1987–12. April 1987, ed. by Albert Blankert and Leonard J. Slatkes (Braunschweig: Das Museum, 1986), 326.

6 | Bartolomeo Manfredi, Gerrit van Honthorst, Dirck van Baburen, Valentin de Boulogne, Simon Vouet, Nicolas Regnier, Giovanni Antonio Galli (Lo Spadarino), and Jusepe de Ribera.

7 | Elizabeth McGrath identifies five versions of *Roman Charity* by Rubens, plus a plethora of copies, prints, and drawings inspired by these. Elizabeth McGrath, *Rubens: Subjects from History*, vol. 2, Catalogue and Indexes, ed. by Arnout Balis (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1997), 97–98. Stephen Pepper identifies a total of nine paintings under this title for Guido Reni, attributions that most other art historians and museum curators find insecure, however. Stephen Pepper, *Guido Reni. L'opera completa* (Novara: Istituto Geografico di Agostini, 1988; first English ed. London, 1984), 350.

8 | Patrizio Barbieri, "Caravaggio's 'Denial of St. Peter' acquired by Guido Reni in 1613," *The Burlington Magazine* 154, no. 1312 (July 2012): 487–89.

9 | *The Judgment of Cambyses* refers to a story in Herodotus, according to which the son of a corrupt judge had to render justice on a seat furnished with the skin of his father, who had been flayed alive for his crimes by the Persian King Cambyses II. Zaleucus was the first Greek ruler to write up a law code in the seventh century BCE, and shared with his son the punishment for adultery he himself devised: the loss of an eye each.

10 | Jan Gossaert, *Pero and Cimon,* Drawing, before 1532, London, British Museum, 1911, inv. no. 0412.2. This female figure could be compared to representations of the Madonna with baby Christ and Saint John the Baptist, or with depictions of Charity. For the attribution of this drawing to Gossaert, see J.G. van Gelder, "Jan Gossaert in Rome, 1508–09," *Oud Holland* 59 (1942): 1–11.

11 | I am very grateful to my friend Heinrich Kuhn for deciphering and translating the Latin quote: "MANDATUM DO / VOBIS VT DILI / GATIS INVI / CEM SICUT DI / LEXI / VOS."

12 | Virgil Solis, attr., *Pero and Cimon,* Print, 90x60 mm, before 1580, London, British Museum, inv. no. 1873,0809.676.

13 | Netherlandish, *Pero and Cimon,* Terracotta Statue, 465 mm, Rome, Collection Capparoni.

14 | Johannes Wierix, *Pero and Cimon,* Engraving, before 1585, 26.5x18.5 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-1904–838.

15 | This inscription is grammatically incorrect, but it does highlight that a daughter served her father through piety, offering him her breast while he was old and languishing in a dungeon. "Filia patrem suum Cimon pietate servavit Val. Max. lib. 5 ca. 4, ss. 8. En pia nata suum proprio fouet ubere patrem ille senex duro carcere pressus erat." *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts 1450–1700*, vol. 67, The Wierix Family, Part IX, ed. by Zsuzsanna van Ruyven-Zeman, Marjolein Leesberg, and Jan Van der Stock (Rotterdam: Sound and Vision, 2004), 31.

16 | *Pero and Cimon,* Pendant, late 16th c., London, British Museum, inv. no. 1978.1002.536.

17 | On Caravaggio's immediate sources, see Walter Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 209; and Tuck-Scala, "Caravaggio's 'Roman Charity'," 133.

18 | Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies,* 208. Note that Leonard Slatkes misunderstands Friendlaender's remarks in suggesting that these two Flemish artists already represented a *Roman Charity* as one of the seven acts of mercy (they did not). This is not what Friedlaender intended to say. Leonard A. Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen (c. 1595–1624): A Dutch Painter in Utrecht and Rome* (Utrecht: Haentjens Dekker & Gumbert, 1965), 83.

19 | *Pero and Cimon,* Pharmaceutical Bottle, 16th c., Smithsonian Museum, Whitney Warren Collection. Grazia Maria Fachechi, "L'allattamento filiale nella ceramica da farmacia cinquecentesca e la sua fortuna nei secoli successivi," in: *Allattamento filiale: la fortuna*; colloquio di Urbino, 28–29 aprile 1998, ed. by Roberto M. Danese, Daniela De Agostini, Renato Raffaelli, and Gioia Zaganelli (Urbino: Quattro Venti, 2000), 93–101, especially 93–94.

20 | Amico Aspertini, *Pero and Cimon,* before 1552, Paris, Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, inv. no. 11848, recto.

21 | Alessandro Casolani, *Pero and Cimon,* before 1606, Paris, Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, inv. no. 1034, recto.

22 | See also Andor Pigler, *Barockthemen: eine Auswahl von Verzeichnissen zur Ikonographie des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974; first ed. Budapest: Verlag der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1956), vol. 2, 301; and Paolo Della Pergola, *Galleria Borghese: I dipinti* (Rome: Istituto poligrafico dello stato, 1959), vol. 2, Figure 148; inv. no. 187.

23 | Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane*, ed. by Stefano della Torre, Gian Franco Freguglia, and Carlo Chenis (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002; first ed. 1582); see also the original text of the Tridentine decree "On the Invocation, Veneration, and Relics of Saints, and on Sacred Images," in: *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent,* Twenty-Fifth Session, ed. and transl. by J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), 232–89; http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct25.html [accessed 1/9/14].

24 | On the speculative painting by Titian, see Tuck-Scala, "Caravaggio's 'Roman Charity'," 135–36; Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., "A Titian Problem: The Seven Acts of Mercy," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 22 (December 1942): 165–72.

25 | No pun on Michael Fried's book intended, which will be discussed below. Michael Fried, *The Moment of Caravaggio* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

26 | Bernard Aikema, "L'Immagine della Carità Veneziana," in: *Nel Regno dei Poveri: Arte e Storia dei grandi ospedali veneziani in età moderna 1474–1797*, ed. by Bernard Aikema (Venice: IRE, Istituzioni di Ricovero e di Educazione, 1989), 71–98.

27 | See Michael Fried's observations about absorption and address in Caravaggio's protagonists. Fried, *The Moment of Caravaggio*; Michael Fried, "Notes toward a Caravaggisti Pictorial Poetics," in: *Caravaggio: His Followers in Rome*, ed. by David Franklin and Sebastian Schütze (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 102–23.

28 | Michael Fried identifies "absorption" as one of the defining features of Caravaggio's gallery paintings, but in my eyes, it can be detected in this altarpiece as well. Fried, *The Moment of Caravaggio*.

29 | Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Artists*, 181.

30 | Karel van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck waer in voor eerst de leerlustighe iueght den grondt der edel vry schilderconst in verscheyden deelen wort voorghedraghen* (Haerlem: Paschier van Wesbvsch Boeck Vercooper, 1604), 191a=r.

31 | Louis Marin, *Die Malerei zerstören* (Berlin: Diaphanes, 2003; first Fr. ed. Paris: Éditions Flammarions, 1981), 137.

32 | Joachim von Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Akademie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675; Leben der berühmten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister,* ed. by A.R. Peltzer (München: G. Hirth's Verlag A.G., 1925), 275. "Caravaggio's

significance lies in his fusion of realism with chiaroscuro in such a way that the realism is accentuated by the mystical light emanating from an unknown source, which establishes a strong psychological and religious mood." J. Richard Judson and Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst 1592–1656* (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 1999), 8. See also Valeska von Rosen, *Caravaggio und die Grenzen des Darstellbaren: Ambiguität, Ironie und Performativität in der Malerei um 1600* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009), 76.

33 | Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies*, 120.

34 | Friedlaender, C*aravaggio Studies*, 209; Vincezo Pacelli, *Caravaggio: Le Sette Opere di Misericordia* (Salerno: cooperative editrice, 1984), 57; Francesca Cappelletti, *Caravaggio: un ritratto somigliante* (Milan: Mondadori Electa, 2009), 131. Cappelletti dates his stay in Genoa to August 6–17, 1605.

35 | Todd P. Olson, "The Street Has Its Masters: Caravaggio and the Socially Marginal" in: *Caravaggio: Realism, Rebellion, Reception,* ed. by Genevieve Warwick (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 69–81, especially 79.

36 | Tuck-Scala, "Caravaggio's 'Roman Charity'," 133.

37 | Ferdinando Bologna, *L'incredulità del Caravaggio e l'esperienza delle "cose naturali"* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2006; first ed. 1992), 391; on Caravaggio's reception of Maximus, see Rudolf Preimesberger, "Textfaszination: Caravaggio liest Valerius Maximus," *Jahrbuch des kunsthistorischen Museums Wien* 11 (2009): 75–88.

38 | For an early version of this prototype see Jacopo Bellini, *The Apostle Peter* (ca. 1430/35), Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 1161.

39 | See Chapter 7.

40 | Ferdinando Bologna, "Il Caravaggio al Pio Monte della Misericordia," in: *Il Pio Monte della Misericordia di Napoli nel quarto centenario,* ed. by Mario Pisani Massamormile (Naples: Electa Napoli, 2003), 173–90, especially 180.

41 | On the popularity of the *Denial* after Caravaggio, see Von Rosen, *Caravaggio und die Grenzen des Darstellbaren,* 128. On the high value placed on Caravaggio's *Denial of Saint Peter,* see Barbieri, "Caravaggio's 'Denial of St. Peter' acquired by Guido Reni in 1613," 487–89. On the importance of the painting for the Manfrediana Methodus and as an expression of dissent with the Tridentine papacy, see Nicolaci and Gandolfi, "Il Caravaggio di Guido Reni." On connections between the *Seven Works of Mercy* and the *Denial of Saint Peter,* see Maurizio Marini, *Caravaggio "pictor preastantissimus" L'iter artistico completo di uno dei massimi rivoluzionari dell'arte di tutti i tempi* (Rome: Newton & Compton Editori, 2001), 75–76.

42 | Zuccari, *I Caravaggeschi: Percorsi e protagonisti*; Nicolson, *Caravaggism in Europe*. These authors' iconographic attributions are supplemented by information derived from Judson and Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst*; Pigler, *Barockthemen*; and my own data collections.

43 | "A Mantuan named Bartolomeo Manfredi followed the manner of Caravaggio very diligently, so that little difference appears [between the two artists' works]. He imitated life with great truth, and painted mostly life-sized, half-length figures, in addition to

conversations, gambling and tavern scenes, soldiers and similar motifs, many of which could be seen ... [in Holland, France, and Italy], which were all painted very diligently and beautifully, and were done directly from life." Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Akademie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675*, 277.

44 | Ward, "Those Who Came Before," 26; Albert Blankert, "Caravaggio und die nördlichen Niederlande," in: Blankert and Slatkes, *Holländische Malerei in neuem Licht,* 17–41, especially 20; Bellori, *The Lives of the Modern Painters*, 186.

45 | Gerrit van Honthorst, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* 1622–24, Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of the Arts; Gerrit van Honthorst, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* 137x244 cm, England, Private Collection; Gerrit van Honthorst, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* 1612–20, Rennes, Musée des Beaux Arts.

46 | Pensionante del Saraceni, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* 1620–30, Dublin, National Gallery.

47 | Jusepe de Ribera, attr., *The Denial of Saint Peter,* 1620, Naples, Certosa di San Martino, Sacrestia.

48 | Nicolas Tournier, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* 100x134 cm, UK, Private Collection.

49 | Nicolas Tourner, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* Atlanta, High Museum of Art, inv. no. 1986–52.

50 | Nicolas Tournier, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, inv. no. 413.

51 | Nicolas Tournier, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* Madrid, Museo del Prado.

52 | Nicolas Tournier, *The Denial of Saint Peter,* 133x175 cm, Private Collection.

53 | Marcia B. Hall, *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 139–40.

54 | Luisa Vertova, "La religiosità di Nicolas Tournier a Roma," in: *Nicolas Tournier et la peinture caravagesque en Italie, en France et en Espagne*, ed. by Pascal-François Bertrand and Stéphanie Trouvé (Toulouse: Université de Toulouse II–Le Mirail; Collection "Méridiennes," 2003), 91–102, especially 91. On Counter-Reformation politics, see the vast bibliography on surveillance and confessionalization, the prosecution of Jews and heretics by the inquisition, and the criminalization of dissenters in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Rome. Regarding the latter, see, among others: Peter Rietbergen, *Power and Religion in Baroque Rome: Barberini Cultural Politics* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

55 | Maurizio Calvesi, *La realtà di Caravaggio* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1990), 59. For a critique, see, among others, John Varriano, "Caravaggio and Religion," in: *Saints and Sinners: Caravaggio & the Baroque Image;* exhibition catalog, February 1–March 24 1999, McMullen Museum of Art (Chestnut Hill: McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College; distributed by University of Chicago Press, 1999), 191–207, especially 195.

56 | Nicolaci and Gandolfi, "Il Caravaggio di Guido Reni," 45.

57 | Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies*, ix, xi, 126–29.

58 | Bologna, *L'incredulità di Caravaggio,* 9.

59 | Bologna, *L'incredulità di Caravaggio,* 154.

60 | Bologna, *L'incredulità di Caravaggio,* 34, 47, 54. Valeska von Rosen, likewise, points out that Caravaggio's ambiguous paintings violated Paleotti's dictate of clarity. Von Rosen, *Caravaggio und die Grenzen des Darstellbaren.*

61 | "The position emerging from the sacred iconographies of Caravaggio – which is not heretic, but adhering substantially and profoundly to Catholic demands, and yet, does not conform under any point of view to the theoretical and disciplinary orthodoxy of Tridentine Catholicism – belongs ... to the context of internal resistance against the movement of the Counter-Reformation that I alluded to above." Bologna, *L'incredulità di Caravaggio,* 82.

62 | Von Rosen, *Caravaggio und die Grenzen des Darstellbaren*, 1, 12, 14.

63 | Mieke Bal, "The genius of Rome: Putting things together," *Journal of Visual Culture* 1, no. 1 (2002): 25–45, especially 37–40; Bert Treffers, "The Arts and Craft of Sainthood: New Orders, New Saints, New Altarpieces," in: *The Genius of Rome:* 1592–1623; exhibition catalog; Royal Academy of Arts, London, 20 Jan.–16 April, 2001; Palazzo Venezia, Rome, May–August, 2001, ed. by Beverly Louise Brown (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2001), 340–71.

64 | For a brief introduction into Luhmann's systems theory, see Ilana Gerhon, "Seeing Like a System: Luhmann for Anthropologists," *Anthropological Theory* 5, no. 2 (2005): 99–116.

65 | Von Rosen, *Caravaggio und die Grenzen des Darstellbaren,* 246.

66 | Caravaggio, *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas,* 1601–1602, Potsdam, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.

67 | Caravaggio, *The Martyrdom of Saint Matthew,* 1599–1600, Rome, San Luigi dei Francesi, Contarelli Chapel.

68 | Caravaggio, *Madonna del Rosario,* 1604–1605, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

69 | Caravaggio, *Death of the Virgin,* 1604–1606, Paris, Louvre. Helen Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1998), 249.

70 | As also Valeska von Rosen points out, Caravaggio's art is characterized by deliberately staged ambiguities. Von Rosen, *Caravaggio und die Grenzen des Darstellbaren*, 224.

71 | Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life*, 236–37; Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies*, 120; Hall, *The Sacred Image*, 258, 267.

72 | Von Rosen, *Caravaggio und die Grenzen des Darstellbaren*, 53–61.

73 | Hall, *The Sacred Image*, 258.

74 | Helen Langdon calls her a "Neapolitan" working woman, but I am trying to identify her allegorical significance as a "Roman" Charity. Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life*, 329–30.

75 | See "Ambt und Stellung des Kardinalnepoten zur Zeit Urbans VIII (1623)," ed. by A. Kraus, *Römische Quartalschrift für Christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* (1958), 238–43; quoted in Rietbergen, *Power and Religion in Baroque Rome*, 152.

76 | Gérard Labrot, *Collections of Paintings in Naples 1600–1780* (München; New York: K.G. Saur, 1992), 105, 107, 173, 175, 190, 191, 193, 232, 239, 262, 272, 278, 280, 309, 316, 401, 403, 458, 460. He lists a total of eleven paintings under this title.

77 | I have found two exceptions to this rule: in 1625, the Abbot Alessandro Scaglia, agent for the Duke Carlo Emanuele I di Savoia, talks most likely about the *Roman Charity* of Bartolomeo Manfredi in the following terms: "The Duke of Buckingham has declared to be of service to Your Highness, who would do well donating him a nice picture ... I gave one to the Most Serene Father, a Roman Charity, which would be most dear to him." Quoted after Nicole Hartje, *Bartolomeo Manfredi (1582–1622): Ein Nachfolger Caravaggios und seine europäische Wirkung* (Weimar: VDG, Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, 2004), 79. Furthermore, Leonard Slatkes quotes from an inventory dated Feb. 11, 1675, by the Flemish art firm Forchaudt in Antwerp, who apparently tried to sell a *Roman Charity* by Dirck van Baburen. It reads "n. 73. 1 grooten doeck van Barbier Caritas Romeyn oft Suijger van Babuer niet gevonden, maer in plaets eenen Blomkrans naer Breugel gevonden." Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen (c. 1595–1624),* 125. Contrast this with the entries from Venetian inventories mentioned in Chapters 1 and 4 and with the inventory of the treasury of Prag in 1621: "No. 946: how a daughter feeds her father in prison from her breasts, by Georg Pencz." Quoted after: Heinrich Zimmermann, "Das Inventar der Prager Schatz-und Kunstkammer vom 6. Dezember 1621, nach Akten des K. und K. Reichsfinanzarchivs in Wien," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* XXV, part 2 (1905), XIII–LXXV, especially XL, no. 946 (Reprint Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1967).

78 | Valerius Maximus lists the anecdote as the first of his "external" examples; his choice of names – Pero and Myko – suggests that he meant his protagonists to be Greek. Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Doings and Sayings,* ed. and transl. by D.R. Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000), vol. 1, 499. See also Giovanni Battista Bronzini, "Mitemi incestuosi fra ingorghi di latte e scambi parentali," in: Danese et al., *Allattamento filiale,* 13–32, especially 14, 32.

79 | Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life,* 162; Petra Polláková, "The Case of Beatrice Cenci: From Guido Reni to David Lynch," *Umění Art* 59 (2011): 380–95, especially 387.

80 | On Francesco Cenci's prior convictions for homosexual rape, see Elisabetta Mori, "L'eredità di Francesco Cenci, il patrimonio, la memoria, la scrittura," in: *Beatrice Cenci: la storia di un mito*, ed. by Mario Bevilacqua and Elisabetta Mori (Rome: Fondazione Marco Basso; Viella, 1999), 38. On Beatrice's supporters during the trial: see Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life,* 161.

81 | Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life*, 161; Rossella Vodret, "Un volto per un mito, il "ritratto di Beatrice" di Guido Reni," in: *Beatrice Cenci: la storia di un mito*, ed. by Mario Bevilacqua and Elisabetta Mori (Rome: Fondazione Marco Basso; Viella, 1999), 131–41, especially 136–38.

82 | Belinda Elizabeth Jack, *Beatrice's Spell: The Enduring Legend of Beatrice Cenci* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2004), 2.

83 | Polláková, "The Case of Beatrice Cenci," 382.

84 | Richard E. Spear, *The "Divine" Guido: Religion, Sex, Money and Art in the World of Guido Reni* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 54–56.

85 | Guido Reni, *Portrait of Saint Cecilia,* 1606, Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum.

86 | Of course, already his *Fortune-Tellers* of 1594 and 1595 wear a turban, but my contention is that with the discovery of the remains of Saint Cecilia, Reni's self-portrait, and the merging of Cecilia's and Beatrice's identities, this type of headdress acquired a more specific signification.

87 | For a wonderful example of an art-historical analysis of Florence's identity as "dovizia," see Adrian W.B. Randolph, *Engaging Symbols: Gender, Politics, and Public Art in Fifteenth Century Florence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002). For a study of Venice's allegorization as Venus and the Virgin Mary, see David Rosand, *Myths of Venice: The Figuration of a State* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

88 | This last painting, attributed to a follower of Vouet, was sold by Millon & Associés on June 26, 2013, for 4200 Euro; http://www.millon-associes.com/flash/index.jsp?id=15172&idCp=61&lng=fr [accessed 1/25/14].

89 | Brown, *The Genius of Rome: 1592–1623,* 334, catalog no. 127.

90 | Mauro Natale, *Peintures italiennes du xvie au xviiie siècle* (Genève: Musée d'art et d'histoire, 1979), 67. The archivists at the Fototeca of the Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence, entitled a photo of this painting *Anti-Carità Romana.*

91 | Arabella Cifani and France Monetti, "Angelica Kauffmann, Luigi Sabatelli, Pietro Benvenuti e Vincenzo Camuccini: Disegni Inediti nella Raccolta di Damiano Pernati," *Bollettino d'Arte* 115 (2001): 75–92, especially 83.

92 | Pacelli, *Caravaggio. Le Sette Opere di Misericordia*, 15–17; Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life*, 328.

93 | "Relatione del stato delle carceri del Regio Tribunale della Vicaria di Napoli prima dell'anno 1609 e della mutatione fatta sin al presente 1622," quoted in: Pacelli, *Caravaggio,* 15.

94 | Jutta Sperling, "Allegories of Charity and the Practice of Poor Relief at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* LXX (2009): 119–46.

95 | Pamela Jones, *Altarpieces and Their Viewers in the Churches of Rome from Caravaggio to Guido Reni* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2008), 109.

96 | Jones, *Altarpieces and Their Viewers,* 108.

97 | Thus it is possible that poor beggars in S. Agostino did receive charitable assistance from the Augustinians despite being classified among the 'false' poor. What is undeniable, however, is that the friars at S. Agostino tended to the spiritual and material needs of poor pilgrims ... In summary, then, the Augustinians had many reasons to appreciate the imagery in the Cavalletti Chapel, including Caravaggio's altarpiece (Madonna di Loreto)." Jones, *Altarpieces and Their Viewers,* 109–10.

98 | Olson, "The Street Has Its Masters," 74.

99 | Roger de Piles, *The Art of Painting, with the Lives and Characters of ... the most Eminent Painters ...* (London: printed for Thomas Payne, in Castle Street, 1706; first Fr. ed. 1699), 42.

100 | Rietbergen, *Power and Religion in Baroque Rome*, 222.

101 | Rietbergen, *Power and Religion in Baroque Rome*, 240.

102 | Marino Sanudo reports in this diary on March 24, 1524: "Today after dinner in the hospital [of the Incurabili], the washing of the feet took place with great devotion. The patrician [hospital] guardians and others, twelve altogether, with great humility washed the feet of the impoverished and ill syphilitic men, and the gentlewomen washed the feet of the women, that is, the females sick with this disease. There was quite a crowd watching, and many were moved to piety seeing this pious work performed by the prominent people of the city." Quoted in: *Venice: Città excellentissima: Selections from the Renaissance Diaries of Marin Sanudo*, ed. by Patricia H. Labalme and Laura Sanguineti White, transl. by Linda L. Carroll (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2008), 329; http://books.google.de/books?id=3qNzBgnkXSUC&pg=PA329&lpg=PA329&dq=sanudo+washing+feet&source=bl&ots=HizS8f-3fB&sig=daycgG7XVPe7eWh8wnaNMf-2Q0cE&hl=de&sa=X&ei=yS_dUraTN8W1tAaknIHoDQ&ved=0CDwQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=sanudo%20washing%20feet&f=false [accessed 1/20/14]

103 | Jones, *Altarpieces and Their Viewers*, 186–88.

104 | Jones, *Altarpieces and Their Viewers*, 187.

105 | See Cardinal Bellarmino (1542–1621), who in his homily from July 7, 1602 encouraged the poor "to content themselves with their own ranks." Jones, *Altarpieces and Their Viewers*, 123.

106 | Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life*, 225.

107 | On the depiction of Charity as repoussoir figure in sixteenth-century Venetian art, see Sperling, "Allegories of Charity;" Aikema, "L'Immagine della Carità Veneziana;" on future developments of this compositional device, see R. Rookmaker, "'Charity' in seventeenth century art," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 23 (1972): 61–66; on Honthorst's use of repoussoir figures – which Judson and Ekkart call a "Bassanesque" tradition, but which in reality is indebted to Bassano's master Tintoretto – see Judson and Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst*, 18; on repoussoir figures in the work of Baburen, see Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen*, 55.

108 | Langdon, *Caravaggio: A Life*, 330.

109 | Tuck-Scala,"Caravaggio's 'Roman Charity'," 137; for a few more references to the phenomenon, see Pigler, *Barockthemen*; idem, "Valère Maxime et l'iconographie des temps modernes," in: *Petrovics Elek Emlékkönyv* [Hommage à Alexis Petrovics] (Budapest, 1934), 214–16; Marcel G. Roethlisberger, *Abraham Bloemaert and his Sons: Paintings and Prints*, vol. 1 (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1993), 152.

110 | Natasha Therese Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen: Reinventing Christian Painting after the Reformation in Utrecht* (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2012), 15.

111 | See, most recently and most convincingly, Hartje, *Bartolomeo Manfredi*, 19.

112 | Since Sandrart himself does not mention the word "methodus," I am frankly not sure why art historians continue to affirm that he invented the term "Manfrediana methodus." Sandrart, *Joachim von Sandrarts Akademie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste*, 277; http://ta.sandrart.net/en/text/404?item=auto13291#auto13291 [accessed 1/24/14].

113 | "Next Manfredi used the possibility of isolating single motives or constellations of figures from his blue print and of transferring them into a comparable context. This is documented by [his treatment of] the couple of Cimon and Pero, which derives from the *Seven Works of Mercy* ... and became its own subject matter in the form of *Roman Charity* in Manfredi's work." Hartje, *Bartolomeo Manfredi*, 94.

114 | Fried, *The Moment of Caravaggio*.

115 | Hartje, *Bartolomeo Manfredi*, 309–10.

116 | Jaap Bolten, *Abraham Bloemaert, c. 1565–1651: The Drawings* (Netherlands: J. Bolten, 2007). According to Marcel Roethlisberger, this painting, preserved by the Kunsthalle, Kiel, has never been on display. Roethlisberger, *Abraham Bloemaert and his Sons*, vol. 1, 151–52.

117 | On Caravaggio's black backgrounds: see Itay Sapir, *Ténèbres sans leçons: Esthétique et épistémologie de la peinture ténébriste romaine 1595–1610* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2012), 141, 225.

118 | "Daer is oock eenen Michael Agnolo van Caravaggio, die te koom wonderlijcke dinghen doct." Van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck*, 191a=r; Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen*, 3, 15.

119 | Blankert, "Caravaggio und die nördlichen Niederlande," 34.

120 | Axel Hémery, "La génération de Caravage dans le Nord: attractions et résistances," in: *Corps et ombres: Caravage et le Caravagisme européen*; exhibition catalog, Musée Fabre de Montepellier Agglomération et au Musée des Augustins de la Ville de Toulouse, 23 June to 14 October, 2012 (Milan: 5 Continents Editions, 2012), 139–56, especially 139.

121 | *Rubens and His Age: Treasures from the Hermitage Museum, Russia*, ed. by Christina Corsiglia (London: Merrell Publishers; Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 2001), 42. On Rubens's painting in the context of other lactation images, see J. Vanessa Lyon, "Full of Grace: Lactation, Expression and "Colorito" Painting in Some Early Works by Rubens," in: *Medieval and Renaissance Lactations: Images, Rhetorics, and Practices*, ed. by Jutta Gisela Sperling (Aldershot, England; Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2013), 255–77.

122 | Olson, "The Street Has Its Masters," 78; Bellori, quoted in Jones, *Altarpieces and Their Viewers,* 121.

123 | Lisa Rosenthal, *Gender, Politics, and Allegory in the Art of Rubens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 155–56.

124 | See also Rubens's *Bacchanal,* Moscow, Pushkin Museum, undated. Svetlana Alpers, *The Making of Rubens* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 119–20, 133, 138, 139, 153.

125 | For information on the other paintings, see McGrath, *Rubens: Subjects from History*, 97–98. I have been able to identify four additional images of different copies of *Roman Charity* by Rubens and his followers: 1) a copy last seen on the London art market in 1954 of the dimensions of 61.5 x 45 inches (= 156 x 114 cm) dated to 1625, described in *A Loan Exhibition of Works by Peter Paul Rubens*; exhibition catalog,

London, Wildenstein, Oct. 4–Nov. 11, 1950, ed. by Ludwig Burchard (London: Wildenstein, 1950), 8, and in *Burlington Magazine* 96 (1954): Plate X (no pagination); 2) a copy owned by the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (1630); 3) a similar version with baby authored by a follower of Rubens with the dimensions 78 x 111 cm, sold by Sotheby's on Nov. 1, 2007; 4) and a painting attributed to Rubens's workshop supposedly held by the Rubenshaus in Siegen, according to Elisabeth Knauer, "Caritas Romana," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 6, Neue Folge (1964): 9–23. Apparently, there is another copy by Rubens held in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dunkirk, according to *Burlington Magazine* 96 (1954), but I have not been able to procure an image of it.

126 | Peter Paul Rubens and workshop, *Roman Charity,* after 1630, Siegen, Rubenshaus; Peter Paul Rubens and workshop, *Roman Charity,* after 1630, London, Sotheby's, sold November 1, 2007.

127 | For prints of the Hermitage version, see the engravings by Cornelis van Caukercken, 1650–60, British Museum (=BM) (reg. no. 1891,0414.900) and John Smith, 1681–1706, BM (reg. no. 1891,0414.901). For a print of the 1625 version, see Willem Panneels's engraving in reverse (ca. 1631), BM (reg. no. S.5352). For a print of the Amsterdam version, see Alexander Voet II (1650–90), BM (reg. no. 1917,1208.549).

128 | *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, founded by Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, ed. by Hans Vollmer, vol. 29 (Leipzig: Verlag von E.A. Seemann, 1935), 138.

129 | Renzo Villa, ""Quid hoc est rei?" Persistenze di una fortuna fiamminga," in: Danese et al., *Allattamento filiale,* 79–92, especially 86.

130 | Sebastian Schütze, "Caravaggism in Europe: A Planetary System and Its Gravitational Laws," in: *Caravaggio: His Followers in Rome,* ed. by David Franklin and Sebastian Schütze (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 26–47, especially 26; Beverly Louise Brown remarks that Rubens "like a sponge absorbed whatever crossed his path." Beverly Louise Brown, "The Birth of the Baroque: Painting in Rome 1592–1623," in: Brown, *The Genius of Rome,* 16–41, especially 29.

131 | Genevieve Warwick, "Introduction: Caravaggio in History" in: *Caravaggio: Realism, Rebellion, Reception,* ed. by Genevieve Warwick (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 13–22, especially 15.

132 | Leonard J. Slatkes, "In Caravaggio's Footsteps: a Northern Journey," in: Weller, *Sinners & Saints, Darkness and Light*, 35–46.

133 | Blankert, "Caravaggio und die nördlichen Niederlande," 30.

134 | Alessandro Zuccari, "Il caravaggismo a Roma: Certezze e ipotesi," in: Zuccari, *I Caravaggeschi,* 31–59, especially 40.

135 | See, among others, *Peter Paul Rubens: Barocke Leidenschaften*; Ausstellung im Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum Braunschweig, 8. August bis 31. Oktober 2004, ed. by Nils Büttner und Ulrich Heinen (München: Hirmer Verlag, 2004).

136 | Jan Waszink, "Introduction," in: Justus Lipsius, *Politica: Six Books of Politics or Political Instruction,* ed. and transl. by Jan Waszink (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2004; first publication 1589), 200–03.

137 | On the Utrecht Caravaggisti, see Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen; Caravaggio in Holland;* exhibition catalogue, 1 April–26 July 2009, Städel Museum, Frankfurt, ed. by Jochen Sander, Bastian Eclercy, Gabriel Dette (Frankfurt a.M.: Städel Museum; München: Hirmer Verlag; 2009); Leonard J. Slatkes and Wayne Franits, *The Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen 1588–1629: Catalogue Raisonné* (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2007); Wayne Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Judson and Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst;* Blankert and Slatkes, *Holländische Malerei in neuem Licht;* Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen;* Benedict Nicolson, *Hendrick Terbrugghen* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1958). On the Utrecht painters' interest in Rubens, see Judson and Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst,* 14.

138 | Dirck van Baburen, *Penitent Saint Peter,* 1618–19, Private Collection.

139 | Dirck van Baburen, *Prometheus Chained by Vulcan,* 1623, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Wayne E. Franits, *The Paintings of Dirck van Baburen: Catalog Raisonné* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2012), 53. Franits does not address Prometheus's facial features but detects a compositional similarity between the two paintings.

140 | Gregor J.M. Weber, "Caritas Romana: Ein neu entdecktes Bild von Johannes Vermeer," *Weltkunst* 70, no. 2 (Feb. 2000): 225–28. Wayne Franits doubts Weber's attribution to Baburen; Franits: *The Paintings of Dirck van Baburen,* 173.

141 | S. Speth-Holterhoff, *Les Peintres Flamands de Cabinets d'Amateurs au XVIIe siècle* (Bruxelles: Elsevier, 1957), 113–17.

142 | Franits, *The Paintings of Dirck van Baburen*, 175.

143 | Judson and Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst*, 111.

144 | Gerrit van Honthorst, *Roman Charity,* München, Alte Pinakothek, Photo 6670.

145 | Willem van Honthorst, *Roman Charity,* Potsdam, Schloss Sanssouci, inv. no. GK I 2372; Photo: Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.

146 | Nicolson, *Hendrick Terbrugghen,* 113; Pigler, *Barockthemen*, 303; Slatkes and Franits, *The Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen*, 269.

147 | Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen*, 11–12.

148 | On Bronckhorst, see Pigler, *Barockthemen*, vol. 2, 304. On Couwenbergh, see Hartje, *Bartolomeo Manfredi*, 180. On Stomer, see Pigler, *Barockthemen*, vol. 2, 303; Stomer's painting in the Prado is now attributed to Gaspar de Crayer (1584–1669). On Paulus Moreelse as Baburen's teacher, see Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen*, 3.

149 | On Jan Janssens (or Jansens), see *Real Academia de San Fernando, Madrid, Guía del Museo* (Zabalaga-Leku, VEGAP, Madrid, 2012), 64; http://www.realacademiabellasartessanfernando.com/assets/docs/guia_museo/guia_museo.pdf [accessed 1/30/14]. On Gerard Seghers, see Pigler, *Barockthemen*, vol. 2, 303.

150 | Benedict Nicolson, "Gerard Seghers and the 'Denial of Saint Peter'," *Burlington Magazine* 113, no. 819 (June 1971): 302–09, especially 307.

151 | Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen,* 5, 49.

152 | Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen*, 62.

153 | Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen*, 94.

154 | Benjamin Kaplan, quoted in: Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen*, 62.

155 | Xander van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor: Paintings for the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2007), 139.

156 | Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor*, 204.

157 | Xander van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction: Clandestine Catholic Churches as Patrons of Dutch Caravaggesque Painting," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 4 (1993–94): 217–34, especially 225.

158 | An inventory of paintings completed for the hidden Catholic churches in Utrecht reveals that of 201 paintings, 179 were executed by Catholic painters and only 11 by Protestants. Gerrit van Honthorst and Abraham Bloemaert are on this list but not Dirck van Baburen and Hendrick ter Brugghen. Nicolson, *Hendrick Terbrugghen,* 36; Natasha Seaman must be wrong in stating that ter Brugghen was the only painter not to have painted for the hidden churches of Utrecht – that is, she assumes that Dirck van Baburen also painted for them. Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen,* 6. On the Protestant baptism of ter Brugghen's children, see Blankert and Slatkes, *Holländische Malerei in neuem Licht,* 66–67. On Baburen's father, who already seems to have been a Protestant, see Franits, *The Paintings of Dirck van Baburen,* 41.

159 | Other art historians have noticed that the Utrecht Caravaggisti endowed Saint Peter with recognizable features, sometimes transferring them to other figures. I cannot detect the similarities Slatkes and Nicolson see between Saint Peter and the apostle to the left in ter Brugghen's Toledo *Supper at Emmaus.* Also, no convincing interpretation of this resemblance has been offered. Nobody so far has noted any similarity to representations of Cimon. See Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen,* 49; Nicolson, *Hendrick Terbrugghen,* 11.

160 | On Simon Vouet as Caravaggista, see Schütze, *Caravaggism in Europe*, 43; Fried, "Notes toward a Caravaggisti Pictorial Poetics," 105; Hartje, *Bartolomeo Manfredi*, 22, 55, 286; Ward, "Those Who Came Before," 26; Zuccari, *Il caravaggismo a Roma: Certezze e ipotesi*, 40.

161 | Vittoria Markova, "Un Dipinto di Simon Vouet in Russia," *Bolletino d'Arte* LXVI/12, nos. 88–89 (1981): 139–42.

162 | Simon Vouet, *Roman Charity,* 1626, Nantes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. 266. Claire Gerin-Pierre, *Catalogue des peintures françaises XVIe-XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2005), 82.

163 | Ippolito Rombaldotti, *Roman Charity,* Ceramic Dish, 1650, Bologna, Museo Civico. For a reproduction, see Guido Arbizzoni, "La pietas erga parentes negli emblemi (e dintorni)," in: *Pietas e allattamento filiale: la vicenda, l'exemplum, l'iconografia*; il colloquio, Urbino, 2–3 maggio, 1996, ed. by Renato Raffaelli, Roberto M. Danese, and Settimio Lanciotti (Urbino: Quattro Venti, 1997), 247–69, especially 263, Figure 6.

164 | Henry Arlaud, *Roman Charity,* Watch Face, 1675–1700, Paris, Louvre, Département des Objets d'art, inv. no. OA 8330.

165 | Cornelis van Caukercken, *Roman Charity,* after Rubens, Hermitage version, 1650–60, London, British Museum, inv. no. 1891,0414.900.

166 | Simon Vouet, *Roman Charity,* Bayonne, Musée Bonnat.

167 | Schütze, *Caravaggism in Europe,* 42; Ward, "Those Who Came Before," 26. "Joachim von Sandrart … bezeichnete Gerard Seghers, Nicolas Regnier und Valentine de Boulogne as "Nachfolger von Manfredi." Blankert, "Caravaggio und die nördlichen Niederlande," 20. See also *Dopo Caravaggio: Bartolomeo Manfredi e la Manfrediana Methodus,* ed. by Maria Cristina Poma (Milan: Mondadori Editore, 1987); Beverly Louise Brown, "The Birth of the Baroque: Painting in Rome 1592–1623," in: Brown, *The Genius of Rome: 1592–1623,* 16–41, especially 26.

168 | Annick Lemoine, *Nicolas Régnier, ca. 1588–1667: Peintre, collectionneur et marchand d'art* (Paris: Arthena, 2007), 271–72.

169 | Ugo Ruggieri, "Nouvelles Peintures d'Antonio Triva (1626–1699) en France et en Italie," *Revue du Louvre* 46, no. 2 (1996): 43–48; Lemoine, *Nicolas Régnier,* 288–89.

170 | Pigler, *Barockthemen,* vol. 2, 303, 305. On Ribera, see Schütze, *Caravaggism in Europe,* 37; Friedlaender, *Caravaggio Studies,* 15; Zuccari, *Il caravaggismo a Roma: Certezze e ipotesi,* 34, 40; Blankert, "Caravaggio und die nördlichen Niederlande," 30; On Valentine de Boulogne, see Zuccari, Il caravaggismo a Roma: Certezze e ipotesi, 40; Blankert, "Caravaggio und die nördlichen Niederlande," 30; Brown, "The Birth of the Baroque: Painting in Rome 1592–1623," 26.

171 | On Ribera's and Valentin's *Denial,* see Nicolaci and Gandolfi, "Il Caravaggio di Guido Reni," 54.

172 | Pepper, *Guido Reni. L'opera completa*, 350.

173 | Guido Reni, also attr. to Giovanni Giacomo Sementi, *Roman Charity,* Rouen, Musée des beaux arts de Rouen, inv. no. 859.6.

174 | Guido Reni, attr., *Roman Charity,* 1618–1619, Genoa, Palazzo Durazzo Pallavacini. Paul Louis Bouillon-Landais, *Catalogue des objets d'art composant la collection du musée de Marseille précédé d'un essai historique sur le musée* (Marseille: impr. Marseillaise, 1884), 129. The painting in Rouen is now attributed to Giovanni Giacomo Sementi (1580–1638) but was previously attributed to Carlo Dolci (1616–1686), Francesco Gessi (1588–1649), and Guido Reni. See *Musée des beaux arts de Rouen,* inv. no. 859.6. On the painting in Genoa, see Pepper, Guido Reni. *L'opera completa,* 350.

175 | Compare this with Caravaggio's black surroundings: Sapir, *Ténèbres sans leçons*, 141, 225.

176 | Spear, *The "Divine" Guido*, 116–19.

177 | Spear, *The "Divine" Guido*, 122.

178 | Spear, *The "Divine" Guido*, 124.

179 | Pepper, *Guido Reni: L'opera completa*, 248–49, 288.

180 | Spear, *The "Divine" Guido*, 200.

181 | Hall, *The Sacred Image,* 258.