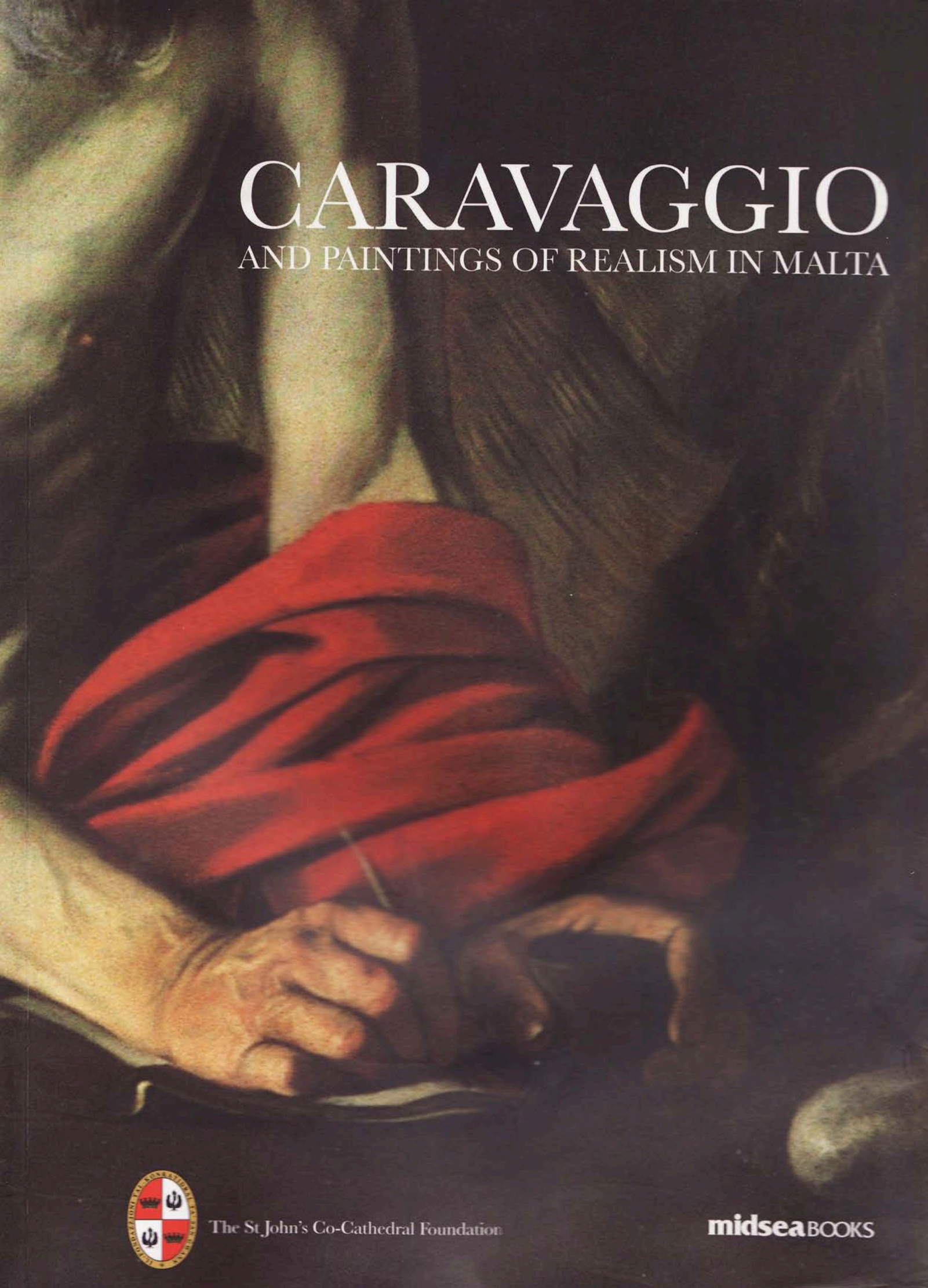

CARAVAGGIO

AND PAINTINGS OF REALISM IN MALTA

The St John's Co-Cathedral Foundation

midsea BOOKS

Roberta Lapucci

THE TECHNIQUE OF CARAVAGGIO'S LATE YEARS (1606–10)

The activity of Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, during the time when painter fled from Naples, to Malta and Sicily (1606–10), is marked by distinctive characteristics. Firstly there is a palpable rush in the execution of his works, which can be seen in his increased use of materials that favour the drying speed of the priming and paint layers, such as burnt umber, malachite, and lead white. As far as such materials were concerned, he was often at the mercy of his travels, as he was obliged to use substances available in town.[1] He rarely had time to copy directly from his models and began reproducing stereotypes represented in previous compositions, either reusing entire figures or else only parts, in the same pose or in counter-pose left to right. He also used mannequins to hold armour or official parade dress, only later inserting the head of the portrayed man,[2] the latter (the portrait) taken *dal naturale* (Fig. 1).

In addition to these changes, Merisi creates new standard formats for his canvases. The size becomes a multiple of fixed proportions (small: 2x3, large: 3x4).[3] During this time, he painted on very large canvases as can be seen in *Beheading of St John* and many of his Sicilian paintings. Instead of overloaded and compressed compositions where figures hardly fit within the limits of the painting's contours, the artist leaves ample breadth for the personages. Vast empty backgrounds isolate figures in a silent scenario, conveying to the viewer a deep sense of solitude. In most episodes the figures are cut not at half-figure length (like the *Fortune Teller*, Louvre, Paris, or the *Cardsharp*, Fort Worth) but at three-quarters (as in the *Salomé*, Madrid or in the *Martyrdom of St Ursula*, Naples).[4]

Merisi frequently modified various elements of his paintings during execution, sometimes changing the dimensions of canvases by the addition of stripes on one side (most often the right). This is evident owing to the fact that, occasionally, the first (underlying) priming layer is absent and only the second layer is present on the added side stripes.[5] In this final period, he would apply priming and paint layers before cutting the canvas to an established size, leaving an extra area along the edges. He would only define the best proportion towards the end when he cut the final shape and adjusted it on the stretcher.

The rich and articulated palette of the Roman period is extremely simplified in this late stage, with a predominance of

Fig. 1. Caravaggio, *Portrait of a Knight (Fra Antonio Martelli?)*, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, detail

Fig. 2. Caravaggio, *Virgin of Loreto*, S. Agostino, Rome, detail

Fig. 3. Caravaggio, *Martyrdom of St Ursula*, Palazzo Zevallos, collection of Banca Intesa, Naples, detail

Fig. 5. Caravaggio, *Seven Acts of Mercy*, Church of the Pio Monte della Misericordia, Naples, detail

charcoal black, burnt umber, lead white, ochre, malachite, and red lacquer in the glazes. In this phase he uses multiple varieties and mixtures of lead yellow, lead and tin yellow, lead and tin and antimony yellow (seventeenth-century variant for *giallorino*).[6] Light becomes more intense; the sharp, shiny, polished surfaces, characteristic of Merisi's Roman period are no longer present but are replaced by figures corroded by light (Figs 2, 3). Luminous contrasts are increased: owing to an economy of means and to the use of priming layers that behave like a dark background colour, or in some cases like an orange-reddish half-tone colour, as testified by a passage in Giovanni Pietro Bellori: 'he let the priming of the canvas showing through the half-tones'.[7] Thus, he was creating a tenebrous muddy effect which would later characterize his followers' production. The shaded volume rendering effect decreases to leave space for essential shapes defined by the minimum number of highly contrasted brushstrokes.[8]

Light sources become numerous; they rotate (clockwise) around the figures, like in the *Beheading of St John*, Valletta (Fig. 4). Each personage or object has his own light ray and projects a differently directed cast

Fig. 4. Caravaggio, *Beheading of St John the Baptist*, Oratory of San Giovanni Decollato, Valletta, detail

shadow.[9] There are no strong diagonal light rays in the background, only just slightly perceivable ones, like that in the *Martyrdom of St Ursula*. Secondary sources of light[10] enter the composition, creating a new effect of luminosity coming from behind and moving towards the spectator's eye (the candle in the *Seven Acts of Mercy* (Fig. 5) or the lantern in the *Betrayal of Christ* (Fig. 6).

Following astronomic research, which established that the orbit of the planets is elliptical and not round, Merisi integrates this shape, the ellipse, into his work (see particularly in the faces of the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, Messina and of the *David and Goliath*, Galleria Borghese, Rome). The ellipse became very fashionable during the Baroque period.

The impasto becomes less dry and harsh and more fluid and soft; owing to the use of a higher amount of oil, especially when mixed to the lead white (see the *Sleeping Cupid*, Florence, Pitti). The whites are executed in a new manner: underneath (but still on top of the brown priming) Caravaggio applied an oil based layer of pure charcoal black; he then sketched with lead white, thick or transparent (to save a grey tonality by transparency from the background) and finally he refinished (especially along the contour lines and in

Fig. 6. Caravaggio, *Betrayal of Christ*, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, detail

the folds of the draperies) with overlapped further glazes of *olio nero* (Fig. 7), which Arciprete does not identify with bitumen but rather with a transparent black[11] that many Baroque painters hold in the centre of their palette for special glaze effects.

At this stage Caravaggio is very attentive to the rendering of surface textures. He works very carefully on the final 'skin' of the paint layer by the use of devices such as the on focus/out of focus effect, which can be seen in the detail of the rosary/hand of the *Portrait of a Knight* (Antonio Martelli), Florence, Pitti (Fig. 8) or in the hand of Christ/hand of the soldier in the *Crowning with Thorns*, Vienna (Fig. 9). Thus sharp objects appear to come out of the composition while fogged objects sink into the background. The artist also plays with the glossy/matte effect to characterize different materials (glass jug and ceramic pottery in the London *Supper at Emmaus*, for instance, Fig. 10). This use of grainy ochre/sand-based substances when rendering matte objects in respect to glossy, shiny objects, made with a combination of oil and varnish with almost no pigment powder ones (glass vase with flowers) brings into question whether Caravaggio would have applied a final protective varnish layer, as such a layer would have hidden the aforementioned effects,[12] despite the mentioning of the *vernice grossa*[13] which will be discussed later on.

Fig. 7. Caravaggio, *Seven Acts of Mercy*, Church of the Pio Monte della Misericordia, Naples, detail

Andrea Suppa's assertion[14] (unfortunately not yet verified by chemical tests) that he executed the background of the Sicilian artworks *a guazzo* (in gouache technique), meaning they had to be seen opaque by the spectators, also favours this argument.

In the later works the number of scorings diminishes; in fact, they almost vanish (the markings rightly disappear with the abandonment of copying directly from models). They are present in a small number in the *Seven Acts of Mercy* and also to a greater extent in the *Resurrection of Lazarus* where we know that he had a deranged mind and obliged his models (with a dagger) to keep a dead corpse in their arms.[15]

Fig. 8. Caravaggio, *Portrait of a Knight (Fra Antonio Martelli?)*, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, detail

Fig. 9. Caravaggio, *Crowning with Thorns*, Kunsthistorisches, Museum, Vienna, detail

Fig. 10. Caravaggio, *Supper at Emmaus*, National Gallery, London, detail

However, the most characteristic aspects of the late period are the dark priming and the use of bitumen and of lacquers. All of these in some way represent the technical weakness of Caravaggio's late production because they all render the artworks dark and almost black. Roberto Longhi[16] considered time '... the worst enemy of the Caravaggesque paintings ... (which soon unifies) in a total bitumen several areas that once had to be finely differentiated in low similar tonalities'. Particularly favourable to this phenomenon is the use of the dark priming, which, with age, tends to come towards the front and flourish on the surface, effectively absorbing the half

tones. Bitumen turns opaque, muddy, and looses transparency in time, often creating a disaggregation of the pictorial film. The lacquers loose transparency and can easily be removed by restorers (especially in the past) during cleaning.

Let us examine these three aspects one by one:

Bellori[17] referring to the *Beheading of St John*, reports that: "In this work Caravaggio put all the force of his brush to use, working with such intensity that he let the priming of the canvas show through the half tones" (Fig. 11). Furthermore, Bellori says:[18] "He never used clear blue atmosphere in his pictures; indeed, he always used a black ground, and black in his flesh tones, limiting the highlights to a few areas" (Fig. 12). On 6 June 1605, during the process against Prudenzia Bruni, a certain 'apprentice Francesco', 'a young boy in the workshop who helped grinding the colours and stretching the canvases and the priming layers'[19] is mentioned. The dark priming absorbs light and shows colours as they really are, very intense and vivid, not blanched by the reflection of the underlying white of the pale priming layers.

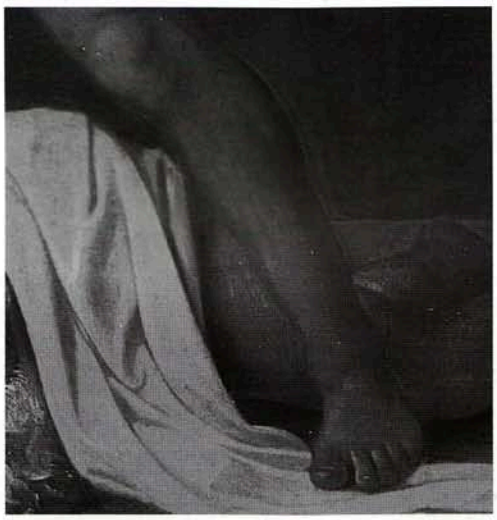

Fig. 11. Caravaggio, *Beheading of St John the Baptist*, Oratory of San Giovanni Decollato, Valletta, detail

Fig. 12. Caravaggio, *Beheading of St John the Baptist*, Oratory of San Giovanni Decollato, Valletta, detail

On the dark priming, one can accelerate working time and obtain colour rendering which is particularly intense and luminous. If priming is used as a half tone, it permits the maximum working speed by overlapping subtle glazes of dark brown (colour that dries very slowly but applied in a thin layer) and rich impastos of lead white (colour that dries very fast applied in a thick layer).

The defect of this technique is that with time, the chromatic balance is altered, reinforcing the shadows and absorbing the half tones. Burnt umber has a unique chemical characteristic; during the drying process of the pictorial film, its manganese molecules tend to migrate towards the external surface to absorb oxygen (the element also needed by oil when it polymerizes). Therefore, by rising up to the pictorial surface, burnt umber eats out the half tones and reinforces the shadowy areas. However, it does not pass through lead white, thus increasing the contrast even more. Such a dark priming layer is used with a chromatic function 'but not ... en reserve' rather 'to intensify the contrasts, to make the pictorial layers vibrate and to absorb lights'; some white strokes 'hardly can cover the dark ground'.[20]

In 1681 Filippo Baldinucci defines burnt umber as 'a natural colour, of dark hair tonality, used to paint and to put in the priming layers of canvas and panel paintings. This is held by the best painters to be an evil colour; it has such a desiccative power that it does not work well in the priming layers and in the oil layers

also due to other poor qualities, it makes colours change; which is why it fooled many artists, who used it in their canvases, even those who were very good in colour rendering'.[21]

In addition to the darkening of the burnt umber, we can add that many artists, including Battistello Caracciolo or Antiveduto Gramatica, laid down oil- or glue-based substances to reinforce the back of the canvas support; this also favoured the general process of blackening by transpiration.[22]

Caravaggio's priming layers change during his life; from pale (grey, ochre) ones applied in one or two layers (progressively darker) with the last stratus compact and polished, and generally very radio-opaque (youthful artworks); to a second maturity period with reddish brown or cold ones (characterized by the use of malachite or azurite) generally in three layers (white, ochre, dark brown, warm or cold); to the final period in which great changes occur.

In Malta and in the early Sicilian works the priming colour is orange-reddish in two layers; then it turns into muddy brown (burnt umber and charcoal black prevail). It commonly contains fossils remnants into the calcite composition (typical Sicilian substances). Finally, in the second Neapolitan sojourn, he uses almost black priming, more porous and grainy, completely radio-transparent, applied in two layers containing oil.[23]

The artist still uses the *en reserve* technique, which means he saves a contour line around the flesh from the priming layer, left visible for the dark tones. In between one and another coloured areas the painter 'left a subtle detachment empty dark area which permitted not to wait till when they dried'.[24] When he starts painting, the priming is still so wet as to leave the trace of the *poggiamano* (see *Madonna dei Palafrenieri*, Galleria Borghese, Rome);[25] the charcoal and the manganese (burnt umber) come out on the surface; therefore

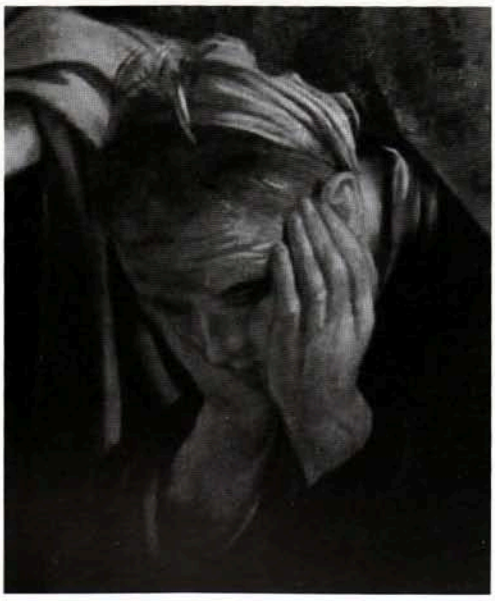

Fig. 13. Caravaggio, *Burial of St Lucy*, Church of Santa Lucia al Sepolcro, Syracuse, detail

the skin of the priming layer containing them immediately dries but remains still wet and soft underneath it.

Recent essays demonstrate an increasingly frequent use of bitumen by seventeenth-century artists.[26] The worst defect of this pigment is that it melts at low temperatures (50° C); simple exposure to the sunlight is sufficient, as probably happened in the *Martyrdom of St Ursula* when Lanfranco Massa, to dry the *vernice grossa* applied by Caravaggio, put the painting in the sun and that varnish, instead of drying, melted again.[27] Other drawbacks include the fact that it has a very low drying speed, therefore it was scarcely used as a body paint but rather as a glaze (transparent and cold brown); however, also as a glaze, with time, it provokes blackening and becomes dull and opaque, ruining the beauty of the subtle coloured tonalities. When applied in a thin layer, only its superficial external part dries out, leaving the inner stratus soft and wet; sometimes this causes the so-called 'crocodile skin craquelure' or else a sliding aside of one pictorial layer from the overlapped one.

Its use to render glossy blond or pale brown hair was suggested by Giovan Paolo Lomazzo[28] and it has been found in artworks by Leonardo, Raphael, Cesare da Sesto, Andrea del Sarto, Correggio,

and Tiziano.[29] Teodore Tourquet De Mayerne also mentions it related to artworks by Orazio Gentileschi:[30] chemical tests confirmed its presence in the flesh and to tone down the yellow or green pigments. Among the Caravaggesque painters Battistello Caracciolo and Carlo Saraceni also painted with bitumen glazes into which they mixed additional dessiccative substances it in order to hasten its drying speed, (like copper green, litharge, manganese oxide) these substances created typical cracks.[31] Caravaggio's use of bitumen has been documented by chemical testing done on the *David and Goliath*, Galleria Borghese, Rome, and its presence in the blue mantle of the *Madonna of the Pilgrims*, Sant'Agostino, Rome.[32]

Presumably Caravaggio used it in connection with the final varnish effects; a strong debate is open on the possible use of a protective final coat of varnish all over the painting or rather on the use or varnish/oil glazes only on those objects that Venetian and naturalistic painters wanted to be differentiated with a glossy aspect in respect to adjacent ones that had to appear opaque. Different materials were chosen to produce translucent or matte glazes and especially the dark backgrounds were pref[illegible] strongly opaque.[33] This way they [illegible] sink in the second plane, while the [illegible] glossy objects could better emerge to[illegible] the front. To obtain such an effect lacq[illegible] and resins were mixed to the pig[illegible] Amber varnish originated in Venice: [illegible] it lutes were coated. De Mayerne refer[illegible] to Gentileschi) mentions its use as a b[illegible] with oil in order to render some colo[illegible] areas shiny; he explains: 'even if red [illegible] colour, it doesn't ruin the white'.[34] In the sixteenth century varnish was also added in the red lacquer glazes to make them dry more slowly in respect to the body colours so as to avoid provoking cracks in the seventeenth century this practice was reinforced because it also conferred a major solidity and brilliancy to the tints, slightly avoiding the yellowing phenomenon typical of final varnish coats.[35]

This mingled use of pigments, lacquers, resins (or sometimes also sand) to obtain a different surface skin rendering gloss and polished or rough and opaque was one of the most astonishing aspects of Caravaggio's naturalism and would have been completely lost if covered by a uniform layer of final varnish.

CARAVAGGIO AND EARLY NATURALISM IN NAPLES

Nicola Spinosa

1 This essay is the text of a lecture on the subject delivered in 2007 at the Caravaggio Studies Programme, Department of History of Art, University of Malta, as part of a series of lectures organized by the University and co-ordinated by Dr Keith Sciberras to mark the 400th anniversary of Caravaggio's stay in Malta. It was translated from Italian for this exhibition catalogue by Louis J. Scerri. For detailed bibliographies on the artists mentioned in this text, see those listed in the following essential bibliography: *Civiltà* 1984; *Battistello* 1991 (in particular, apart from G.-B. Caracciolo, for C. Sellito, F. Vitale, A. Falcone, H. van Somer, and A. Vaccaro); Scütze and Willette 1992 for Massimo Stanzione; Spinosa 1995 for Hendrick van Somer; 'alias' Enrico Fiammingo; De Vito 1998 and Spinosa 2000 for the *Maestro dell'Annuncio ai pastori*; *Preti* 1999 and Spike1999 for Mattia Preti; Causa 2000 for Battistello Caracciolo; *Finoglio* 2000 for Paolo Finoglio; Lattuada 2000 for Francesco Guarino; Naples 2004 for Caravaggio; Spinosa 2006 for Ribera.

THE TECHNIQUE OF CARAVAGGIO'S LATE YEARS (1606–10)

Roberta Lapucci

1 Presumably he carried to Malta the pigments he had bought in Naples, see Sciberras-Stone 2006, 22 (Capeci assisting him buying pigments); in Sicily the priming layers of his artworks contain organogenic substances (Fossils) which are typical of the local ground of that island (see Editech Archive, n. S790).

2 The armours were not necessarily worn in reality by the portrayed persons; sometimes they didn't even tailored their body size (see Wignacourt's armour in the Louvre Portrait which was executed 40 years before and probably belonged to Grand Master Jean de La Vallette), cfr. Marini 1987, 278, 525.

3 *David and Goliath*, Vienna, cm. 90 x 116 (3 x4); *Flagellation*, Naples, cm. 286 x 213 (4x3); *Crucifixion of St Andrew*, Cleveland, cm. 202 x 153 (4x3); *Adoration of the Sheperds*, Messina, cm. 314 x 211 (4x3); *Burial of St Lucy*, Syracuse, cm. 408 x 300 (4x3); *Resurrection of Lazarus*, Messina, cm. 380 x 275 (4x3); *Portrait of Wignacourt*, Louvre, cm. 195 x 134 (4x3); *Beheading of St John*, cm. 361 x 520 (3 ca. x4); *St Jerome*, Valletta, cm. 117 x 157 (3x4), and so on.

4. Maybe a direct evolution from the 'tela da imperatore' typically used by Giovan Battista Moroni (Gregori 1979, 42-44).

5 See in the *Flagellation of Christ* , Naples (Pagano 2005, p.62) and in the *Seven Acts of Mercy*, Naples (Arciprete 2005, 30).

6 Pagano 2005, 63.

7 Bellori 1672, 209 (translated by Hibbard, 1983, 369).

8 Cardinali, De Ruggeri, Falcucci 2005, 55.

9 For the objects on the table projecting a different cast shadow, see the *Supper at Emmaus*, London, National Gallery or the *St. Jerome*, St John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta.

10 Lapucci 2005, 36.

11 Arciprete 2005, 33, 34.

12 For the debate on the varnish use see Lapucci 1997, 37-38.

13 Pagano 2004, 91; Pagano 2005, p. 66.

14 Andrea Suppa's, restorer (1670), assertion is present in Mauceri 1924-25, 562 and in Lapucci, 1994, 36.

15 Susinno 1724, 112: " ...in order to give the central figure of Lazarus a naturalistic flavour he asked to have a corpse dug up that was already in a state of decomposition, and had it placed in the arms of the workmen who, however, were unable to stand the foul odour and wanted to give up their work. Caravaggio, with his usual fury, raised his dagger and jumped on them, and as a result those unlucky men were forced to continue their job and nearly die..." (translated by Hibbard 1983, 384).

16 *'il più terribile nemico dei quadri caravaggeschi.. (che presto unifica) in un bitume totale parecchie zone che un tempo dovevano differenziarsi finemente in tonalità similari e basse'* (Longhi 1915, ed. 1961, 183).

17 Bellori 1672, 209 (translated by Hibbard 1983, 369).

18 Bellori 1672, 212 (translated by Hibbard 1983, 371).

19 Marini 1987, 346-54).

20 *'Uno strato di preparazione così scuro viene utilizzato ... in funzione cromatica', 'ma non ...a risparmio', serve per 'un'intensificazione dei contrasti, fa vibrare le campiture e tende ad assorbire le luci'; alcune pennellate bianche 'stentano a coprire il fondo scuro'.* (Cardinali, De Ruggeri, Falcucci 2005, 54)

21 Baldinucci 1681, (ed. 1975), 167: *'Un color naturale, capellino scuro, che serve per dipignere, e per metter nelle mestiche e imprimiture delle tele e tavole. Questo però è stimato da' più pratici pittori un color maligno; à tanto in se del dissecante, che nelle mestiche non fa un buon lavoro, e nell' a olio, per altre sue triste qualita, fa variare i coloriti; onde à ingannato molti, che l' anno usato nelle lor tele, anche uomini di gran valore nel colorire'.*

22 Catalano 1991, 345; Lapucci 1997, 35.

23 Bracco-Ciappi 1999, 18; Pagano-Arciprete 1999, 29; Lapucci 1994, p. 22; Cardinali et al 1998, 72.

24 Gregori 1985, 254.

25 Cardinali et al 1998, 71.

26 Fabbrica 1986, 164-169; Massing 1988, 99-104.

27 Lapucci 1997, 36; Pagano 2004, 91; Pagano 2005, 66.

28 Lomazzo 1584, ed. 1974, 197-198.

29 Lapucci 1997, 36.

30 De Mayerne, 1620-1646, in Fabbrica 1986, 168; Massing 1988, 99-104.

31 Lapucci 1997, 36.

32 For the *David and Goliath*, many thanks go to Maurizio Seracini, from Editech Firenze, for showing me his chemical report (Editech Archive n. S790). For the *Madonna of the Pilgrims* I have to thank the restorers Valeria Merlini and Daniela Storti, for providing me this information, based

again on a chemical report, see Cardinali et al 2000, 21-32.

33 Again we can refer to the 'guazzo' backgrounds presumed to be in the Sicilian artworks, see note 14 in this essay

34 De Mayerne, 1620-1646, ed. 1995, 55.

35 Rinaldi, in De Mayerne, 1620-1646, ed. 1995, 56; Lapucci 1997, 38.

THE BEHEADING OF ST CATHERINE AT ZEJTUN, MALTA

Mario Buhagiar

1 Archiepiscopal Archives, Floriana, *Visitatio Cagliares 1615*, f. 183v.

2 Most accounts of the painting give the name as Fra Philippus de Wignacourt assuming that he was blood brother to Aloph, the Grand Master. The inscription, however, uses the word 'brother' symbolically while the Cagliares Visitation report makes it very apparent that name is Fra Philippus de Castellet (or Castellit).

3 Information generously given by Prof. Alain Blondy. The family had important ramifications in Catalunya where the variant Castellit was in common usage.

4 Details in Buhagiar 1979, 87–90.

5 Parish Archives, Zejtun: Liber II baptisatorum 1606–1679: '... From this day until 11 September 1614, all children born in this parish were baptized in other churches...' The lament is reproduced on a marble plaque in the chancel. See also *Visitato Cagliares 1615*, f. 183v.

6 *Visitatio Cagliares.1615*

7 Roberta Lapucci and Emily Derse, 'Investigation into the *Martyrdom of St Catherine* – A Restoration', public lecture in the old parish church of Zejtun, May 2007.

8 Archiepiscopal Archives, Floriana, *Visitatio Pontremoli 1634*, ff. 97v–99v.

9 The most important were the coastal forts of St Lucian (c.1612) and St Thomas, built shortly after the 1614 raid. There were also a number of inland towers, among which those known as Ta' Mamo, Tal-Gardiel, and Tal-Bassasa, were the most important.

10 Roque and Sebastian were plague saints and the painting was perhaps commissioned after the small plague epidemic of September 1623 (Cassar 1964, 170–1). The painting stood above the altar of St Roque.

11 On Paladini's Maltese period: Sciberras–Stone 2001, and Buhagiar 1979, 196–8.

12 The new church, built to the designs of Lorenzo Gafà (1630–1704), Malta's foremost Baroque architect, took a long time to complete. The first stone was laid on 25 November (St Catherine's Day) 1692, and the nave completed in 1707, but the church was only consecrated in 1742, and works were not completed until 1778: Details in Buhagiar 1979, 90–4.

13 Zahra 1969, 23.

14 On Cassarino: Cauchi 1977, 133–44; Cutajar 1982; Buhagiar 1988, 71–2; Gash 1993, 540–6; Sciberras 2003, 23–7; Mercieca *infra.*

15 The signature on the *St Sebastian* surfaced during a restoration exercise in 1960 (Cauchi 1977, 133) and is easily discernable. It is less apparent on the *St Maurus* where it was also noticed by Cauchi. The signature on the *St Theresa of Avila*, was noted in Sciberras 2003, 23.

16 See for example, Bonello 1949, 24–5, and Bonello 1960, 53–4. On Spada's Maltese works: Sciberras-Stone 2001, 143-146, and Sciberras 2003, 19-22.

17 The 1624 *Madonna dell'Arco*, church of the Virgin of Sorrows, Pietà (Cutajar 1986, 39–40), is a case in point.

18 Cutajar 1986, 37, who deciphers it: G(iulio) N(ato) F(elici) D(etto) C(assarino).

19 Gaustella 1991, 35–44. The painting is also discussed in *Minniti* 2004, 116–17.

20 Mercieca, *infra.*

21 Mercieca, *infra.*

22 Abela 1647, 22, 345.

23 Cauchi 1977, 135–7.

24 He takes care to emphasize the very high quality of the head: '*che bisogna ammettere é di qualità molto alta*'.

25 Langdon 1999, 98.

26 The painting exists in two versions, the first from 1594 (Musei Capitolini, Rome), the second from 1595 (Louvre, Paris), but the dates in both cases are disputed.

27 Calvesti 1990. The Inquisition documents were discovered and published by Azzopardi 1978, 16–20. See also Azzopardi 19891, 19–44.

28 Susinno 1724, 34–6.

29 See, in particular, Campagna Cicala 1985, 101–44.

30 Moir 1967, i, 183; ii, 87.

31 Campagna Cicala 1985, 104–5. See also Minniti 2004, 70.

32 Lapucci and Derse, 'Investigation into the *Martyrdom of St Catherine* – A Restoration', public lecture in the old parish church of Zejtun, May, 2007.

GIULIO CASSARINO (1588–1637):

Simon Mercieca

1 The paintings are discussed in Sciberras and Buhagiar *supra*; see also Cat. 6, 7 *infra.*

2 Sciberras 2003, 23.

3 Ibid.

4 NLM Lib. MS 1123, 'Uomini illustri di Malta'.

5 *Museum Annual Report* 1946-47

6 J.A. Cauchi, 'L'Enigmatico Cassarino' *Melita Historica*, vii/2 (1977), 133–44.

7 Gaskell 2001, 200.

8 Mercieca 2003, 41–60.

9 Restoration Report 1993 (National Museum of Fine Arts).

10 My research in historical demography, in particular the reconstitution of all the families living in Malta during the early modern times,

CONTENTS

PRELIMS

ESSAYS