

Dutch Painters in Roman Churches in the Early Seventeenth Century: *The Entombment of Christ* by Dirck van Baburen in the Context of Patronage*

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Dutch Painters in Roman Churches

It is well known that many Netherlandish artists travelled to Italy, especially to Rome, beginning in the sixteenth century. Some returned home after a stay of several years, while others died in Italy. Only a few, though, were able to build successful careers in that foreign land, and many found it very difficult to secure even one prestigious commission in the Eternal City.

According to Timon Fokker, who inventoried the works by Netherlandish artists in Italian churches, based on his own direct observations as well as on various documents and reports, they were by more than 130 artists.¹ If one restricts the period to 1550–1640 and the land of origin to the northern provinces of the Low Countries, the number is reduced to a mere 15. This is in stark contrast to the number of artists from the southern Netherlands, for in the same period more than 80 Flemish artists are recorded as the makers of work in Italian churches. The 15 from the northern provinces were Dirck van Baburen, Dirck Barendsz, David de Haen, Gerard van Honthorst, Aert Montagne, Cornelis Rosman, Jan van Santen, Eerst van Schayck, Jan Soens, Matthias Stom, Lambert Sustris, Herman van Swanevelt, Hendrick ter Brugghen, Dirck de Vries and Simon Wolberck. If the scope is narrowed even further to *Dutch painters* in Roman churches in the early seventeenth century the candidates are reduced to just four. Barendsz and Sustris were active in the sixteenth century, and the works by Montagne, Rosman, Schayck, Soens, Stom, Ter Brugghen and Wolberck were in cities other than Rome.² Jan van Santen and Dirck de Vries are eminent artists, but not painters. As a result, Dirck van Baburen, David de Haen, Gerard van Honthorst and Herman van Swanevelt are the four Dutch painters who somehow managed to obtain commissions for works intended for churches in Rome.

The highly competitive situation and the apparent contrast with Flemish artists might have something to do with the religious conflict in the Low Countries and the choice of religious denomination in the north, but it is still surprising that despite the sheer number of painters who visited Italy back then, only four of them were considered worthy of such a commission. It is also notable that three of them were from Utrecht, or Woerden, a town nearby. Van Baburen and Van Honthorst are generally known as Utrecht Caravaggists, who went to Italy in the 1610s.³ Herman van Swanevelt of Woerden belonged to a slightly younger generation, being born around 1600, and arrived in Rome in 1628/29. He left two lunette frescoes in the sacristy of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, and also enjoyed the patronage of Cardinal Barberini and King Philip IV of Spain.⁴ David de Haen was from Rotterdam, but it seems that he worked as a kind of assistant or colleague of Van Baburen, as Mancini described him as the “Compagnio di questo [Van Baburen]”,⁵ or at least as far as the church commission

was concerned.⁶ Consequently, artists from Utrecht can be said to have had a monopoly on the rare commissions for churches in Rome, at least among the Dutch painters.

It might be worth emphasizing that Van Baburen and Van Honthorst were rather young foreigners when they were offered their commissions. Given the competition, they must have regarded this as a crucial opportunity to demonstrate their ability and establish their positions in Rome. In this article the altarpiece by Dirck van Baburen will be taken as a case study, partly in order to examine how he tried to match the expectations of his patron.

Van Baburen's Altarpiece in San Pietro in Montorio

Legend has it that San Pietro in Montorio was built on the site of St Peter's martyrdom, and it has been adorned with many exceptional works of art, such as Raphael's *Transfiguration*, the *Flagellation* by Sebastiano del Piombo (fig. 1), and Bramante's *Tempietto*.⁷ Among those treasures is an altarpiece with *The Entombment of Christ* (fig. 2) by Dirck van Baburen in the fourth chapel on the left. There are four other paintings on the walls of the chapel: *The Carrying of the Cross* (figs. 3–4) on the right wall as one faces the altar, *The Mocking of Christ* (fig. 5) in the lunette above, *Christ among the Doctors* by an unknown artist on the left, and *Christ on the Mount of Olives* (fig. 6) in the lunette. *Christ among the Doctors* was not there originally, but was installed when the chapel was restored and refurbished. It replaced a picture of *The Elevation of the Cross*,⁸ the composition of which is known from a drawing made after it by Charles-Nicolas Cochin (fig. 7).⁹ The altarpiece and the other three paintings are by Dirck van Baburen and David de Haen, but it is difficult to separate their hands, as few works have been



Fig. 1 Sebastiano del Piombo, *The Flagellation of Christ*, 1516–1524, mural painting in oil, San Pietro in Montorio, Rome.

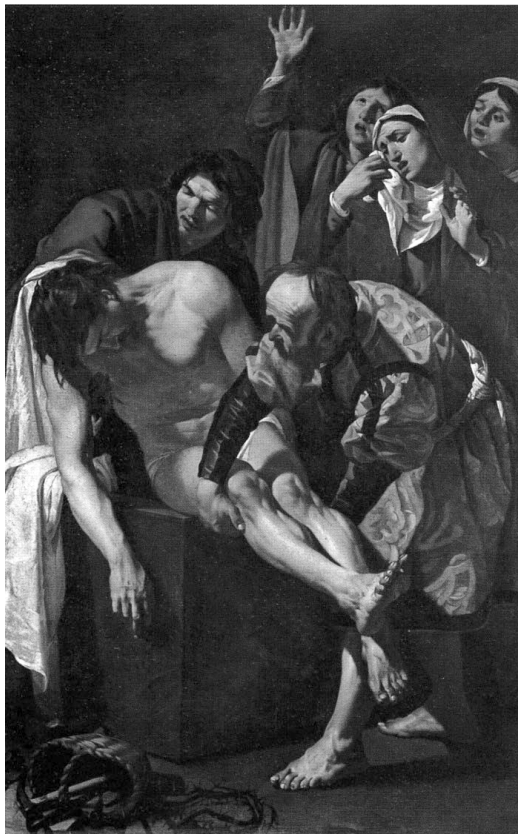


Fig. 2 Dirck van Baburen, *The Entombment*, 1617, oil on canvas, 222 x 142 cm, Pietà Chapel, San Pietro in Montorio, Rome.



Fig. 3 Interior of Pietà Chapel.



Fig. 4 Dirck van Baburen, *The Carrying of the Cross*, oil on canvas, 199.4 x 248.9 cm, Pietà Chapel, San Pietro in Montorio, Rome.



Fig. 5 David de Haen(?), *Mocking of Christ*, oil on canvas, 330 x 155 cm, Pietà Chapel, San Pietro in Montorio, Rome.



Fig. 6 Dirck van Baburen and David de Haen, *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, oil on canvas, 330 x 155 cm, Pietà Chapel, San Pietro in Montorio, Rome



Fig. 7 Charles-Nicolas Cochin (after the lost painting by Dirck van Baburen), *Raising of the Cross*, 1750, drawing with black chalk, 17.5 x 13.3 cm, private collection.

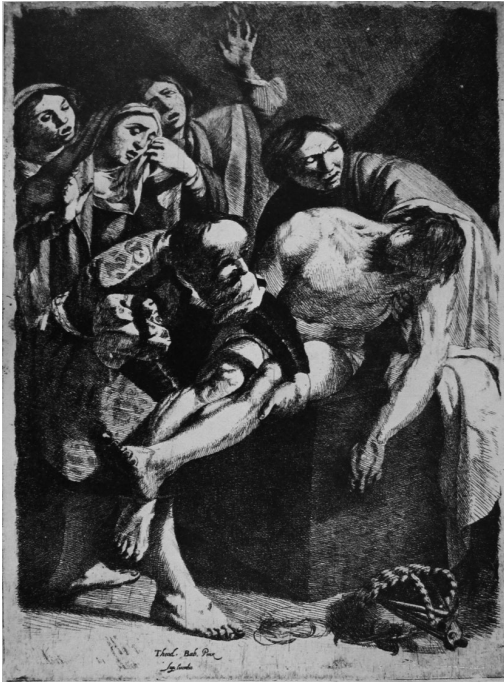


Fig. 8 After Van Baburen, *The Entombment*, etching, 29.2 x 21.3 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

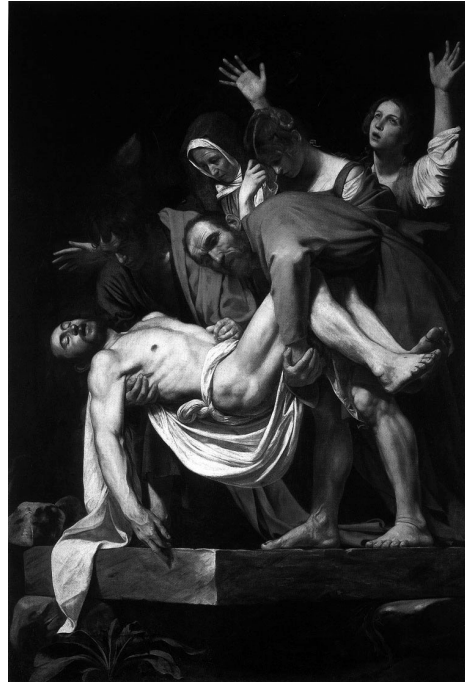


Fig. 9 Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Entombment*, oil on canvas, 300 x 203 cm, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Rome.

securely attributed to De Haen and the lunettes above are not easy to inspect. But the altarpiece and *The Carrying of the Cross* are unanimously regarded as works by Van Baburen on stylistic grounds.¹⁰ He is also identified as the artist in a reproductive etching of the altarpiece (fig. 8) that is inscribed “Theod. Bab. Pinx/ Sup. Licentia”.¹¹ In addition, in the late nineteenth century Gsell Fels noticed a signature with initials on this altarpiece, which he misread as “T. R.” instead of “T. B. [Theodoor Baburen]”, and the date 1617. They cannot be seen any more, but the report is considered trustworthy.¹²

Van Baburen’s *Entombment* raises some questions. In the first place, how did a young foreign painter manage to obtain such an important commission? Both Slatkes and Treffers have already posed that question,¹³ and an attempt will be made here to explore the situation more fully. Secondly, how did the painter tackle the task, which must have been the greatest opportunity that he had ever been given? What did he take from pictorial traditions, and how did he react to tendencies or vogues in artistic circles in Rome? It is immediately apparent that Van Baburen studied and referred to an altarpiece of the same subject by Caravaggio (fig. 9) for the Vittrice Chapel in the Chiesa Nuova.¹⁴ The direct influence is evident from the strong chiaroscuro and from the number of figures and their lamenting gestures. Christ’s pose, though, with his upper body rather upright and the legs protruding towards the viewer, is totally different from the one by Caravaggio. Some scholars have attempted to find other pictorial sources for this pose. I have done the same, and would like to propose that Titian’s *Entombment* could also have been a source for Van Baburen. The borrowing from Titian may not seem persuasive at the first sight, but the reference to Titian would

have had a special significance in the artistic circle in which Van Baburen moved. In addition, it will shed a new light on his art. He is said to have had a particular interest in the paintings of Rubens, which must be true, but it is also possible that he shared with Rubens the interest in the dynamic and painterly art of Titian, as will be argued below.

Pictorial Sources for the Pose of the Dead Christ

Since Christ's pose in the altarpiece is peculiar enough to have drawn attention, attempts have been made to pinpoint Van Baburen's pictorial sources. The suggestions have ranged from Rubens's *Lamentation* (fig. 10),¹⁵ *Carrying the Dead Christ* by Tegnagel (fig. 11),¹⁶ the slanting pose of Christ in *The Holy Trinity with the Dead Christ* (fig. 12) by Ludovico Carracci,¹⁷ and Angelo Caroselli's *Pietà* (fig. 13), which was situated in the apse just above the Vittrice Chapel.¹⁸ However, the affinity between those works and the altarpiece does not seem very convincing. The dead body in Carracci's painting is rather affected, with the neck twisted and elegantly stretched. It is the very opposite of the kind of directness or bluntness of Van Baburen's heavy Christ. The overall impression of the work by Tegnagel is totally different from that of Van Baburen's, which is above all due to the small size of the figures. Rubens's imposing Christ might have impressed Van Baburen, but the arrangement of the disciples supporting Christ and the backward inclination of the body makes the work essentially different from the altarpiece in San Pietro in Montorio. No reasons are given for these suggested borrowings, though Slatkes does mention the northern preference for Christ's rather upright pose.



Fig. 10 Peter Paul Rubens, *Lamentation of Christ*, oil on canvas, 180 x 136 cm, The Borghese Gallery, Rome.



Fig. 11 Jan Tegnagel, *The Entombment*, 73 x 95 cm, oil on canvas, Louvre, Paris.



Fig. 12 Ludovico Carracci, *Holy Trinity with the Dead Christ*, oil on canvas, 173 x 127 cm, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Rome.



Fig. 13 Angelo Caroselli, *Pietà*, oil on plaster; size unknown, Vittrice Chapel, Santa Maria in Vallicella, Rome.



Fig. 14 Titian, *The Entombment* (first version), oil on canvas, 137 x 175 cm, Prado Museum, Madrid.

The painting by Titian has a far greater affinity with Van Baburen's Christ. As far as I know, only Valentina White has associated it with the Rome altarpiece.¹⁹ However, she merely points out the similarities without going into the question any further. So the hypothesis is examined below in the context of patronage, and will shed new light on Van Baburen's art and career.

Titian made several versions of *The Entombment of Christ* and *The Deposition* in his career, but the one that concerns us here is the version he painted for Philip II of Spain, and the replicas or versions of it.²⁰ Titian's *Entombment* (fig. 14), together with his *Adoration of the Magi* and *Martyrdom of St Laurence*, hung originally in the Old Church, *Iglesia Vieja*, which was built at an early stage in the construction of El Escorial and functioned as a place of burial for the royal family. The *Entombment* was later moved to the Prado. Since there is another *Entombment* by Titian there (fig. 15), and their compositions are similar, the painting that Philip II received in September 1559 is referred to as the first version in this article,²¹ and the later one as the second version.²²

There are some similarities between the first version and Van Baburen's altarpiece, although they differ in both format and overall composition. It is worth noting the resemblance in Christ's pose; the body is bent sharply at the waist, and the center of gravity is in the hips. The torso and upper thighs are close together, and the right arm is hanging heavily without any inner strength. The forward inclination of the upper body, with the shoulder a bit nearer to the picture plane than the hips, is a rare posture even in many depictions of the *Entombment*. The position of the head of the man supporting Christ's upper body with his arm under the shoulder is the same in both works too. Van Baburen also added the patterned fabric, a possible allusion to Joseph of Arimathea's wealth, which is present in the Titian but absent from the Caravaggio. The moment, with the disciples cautiously lowering the body onto the sarcophagus, resting its weight around the thigh, is exactly the same.



Fig. 15 Titian, *The Entombment* (second version), oil on canvas, 130 x 168 cm, Prado Museum, Madrid.

On the other hand, other elements like the figure holding Christ's legs and the people lamenting in the background are clearly derived from Caravaggio. Four figures in the right half of the picture are so close to those in the Caravaggio that one wonders why Van Baburen only changed the pose of Christ so drastically. The difference in size of both altarpieces seems to clarify this point. Caravaggio depicted his Christ a little larger than the life-size, making the most of the two-meter width of his altarpiece, while Van Baburen's space is far narrower at 142 centimeters. As it was customary to depict figures in altarpieces life-sized or even larger in the early decades of the seventeenth century in Rome, Van Baburen was unable to repeat Caravaggio's recumbent pose. He therefore had to find another pose and composition, and in the meantime, or beforehand, he must have found the pose of Titian's Christ. He made the figure more upright, as if adjusting to the vertical format of his painting, and gave it such a daring posture that one can hardly see the face of the dead Savior. Although he used the popular device of one arm hanging limply, borrowed from classical examples and Raphael, he did not adopt another widespread detail, namely another arm taken by an accompanying woman. In doing so he created the forceful composition with Christ's shoulders and legs seemingly protruding towards the viewer.

Copies after the King's Painting: Titian's *Entombment of Christ* in Italy

The Titian, however, was sent to Spain in 1559 and has remained there ever since,²³ and the second version is known to have been in Spain since at least 1572.²⁴ How and why, then, did Van Baburen consult it and acquire his knowledge of the composition?

It should be noted here that the donor of this chapel and altarpiece was a Spanish nobleman. As San Pietro in Montorio was then the Spanish church in Rome, the Pietà



Fig. 16 Giulio Bonasone after Titian, *The Entombment*, 1563, etching and engraving, 29.2 x 18 cm, Kunsthalle, Hamburg.

Chapel belonged to a Spanish family called Cussida (Cosida in Spanish). Pietro Cussida, who commissioned the picture, was the Spanish king's representative in Rome,²⁵ with the task of supervising the Spanish College there and reporting about it to the Duke of Lerma, Philip III's favorite. It is also said that he bought works of art on the king's behalf. Needless to say, Titian was for a long time the most favored painter at the Spanish court, and it is well known that not only the royal family but also high officials and the king's favorites tried to obtain a work of his, or at least a copy. Dirck van Baburen may have considered his patron's status at the Spanish court, and would have included references to characteristic details of Titian's painting, which was in that most prominent of locations: El Escorial. In the process he managed to solve the problem of the composition by giving it added value through the reference to an authentic painting owned by the king himself.

In order to test this hypothesis we have to discover how Van Baburen was able to obtain some knowledge of the Titian. The original pictures, as we have seen, were in Spain, but the composition could still to be seen in Italy. For example, Giulio Bonasone made a print after the composition with some minor alterations.²⁶ The print (fig. 16) dates from 1563, well over half a century before Van Baburen's altarpiece, but we do have evidence that a print after the painting was seen in Rome in the seventeenth century. In 1626, having seen the second version of Titian's *Entombment*, Cassiano dal Pozzo wrote in his travel diary that "in a chamber that served as an oratory we saw a



Fig. 17 Workshop of Titian (?), *The Entombment*, oil on canvas, 180 x 208 cm, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan.



Fig. 18 Johann Carl Loth after Titian, *The Entombment*, drawing, red chalk on paper, 25.4 x 32.2 cm, Kunsthalle, Hamburg.

painting about three braccia high and about five wide; it is a Pietà, or dead Christ, with glorious Virgin and Marys. It's a very beautiful work by Titian, the print of which can be seen".²⁷ In addition to the print by Bonasone, there were also copies in oil. For example, it is known that Federico Borromeo owned a version based on Titian's composition (fig. 17).²⁸ The Cussida family were connected with Borromeo, and lent a palazzo in Rome to Papiro Bartoli, agent of Cardinal Borromeo.²⁹ It is possible that that connection enabled Van Baburen to see the version owned by the cardinal. It has also been pointed out that Caravaggio himself would have known Titian's composition through the version in the Borromeo collection.³⁰ Interestingly, it is only in this version by or after Titian that the impressive depiction of the lamenting Virgin's open palm is directly above Christ's body, as it is in the altarpieces by Caravaggio and Van Baburen. There was yet another version to be seen in seventeenth-century Italy. Johann Carlo Loth made a drawing (fig. 18) after a replica or a version of the Titian, which itself was probably after an oil painting.³¹ Among the surviving versions and copies, the one now in the Hungarian National Museum is the closest to this drawing.³² The man supporting Christ's body has no headgear, and the sarcophagus is adorned with a relief. The combination of these details is only seen in the drawing by Loth and the oil painting in Hungary. Wetthey lists other variants made in the seventeenth century,³³ so it is difficult to identify precisely which version Van Baburen could have seen. But it can be safely assumed that he did have access to one of these many options, which is how he knew the composition of Titian's *Entombment* at the Spanish court.

Significance of the Allusion to Titian

Having confirmed that the composition of Titian's *Entombment* was known in seventeenth-century Rome, we need to examine the validity of the hypothesis that Van Baburen referred to it not only to solve his compositional problem but also to add some value to his altarpiece for the representative of the Spanish king.

It is helpful, here, to consider the provenance of the second version of Titian's *Entombment*. According to Ost, Titian started painting it on his own initiative, speculating that he would find a buyer,³⁴ and in 1572 it too was sent to Spain. The first owner of this second version was Antonio Perez, the famous favorite of the King of Spain. Through the Venetian ambassador in Spain Perez expressed a desire to receive some works by Titian from the Venetian government in return for favors.³⁵ The Counsel of Ten in Venice decided to accept this thinly veiled demand, and sent someone to the artist's workshop to pick up two paintings as a gift for Perez. One of them is supposed to have been the second version of the *Entombment*. In 1585, when Perez fell out of favor and all his possessions were confiscated, Rudolf II sent someone called Khevenhiller as his agent to obtain some of the works from Perez's collection. Khevenhiller reported that it contained "an Entombment of our Savior by Titian, like the one which the King owns in Escorial".³⁶ It should be noted that the variant or version of the painting owned by the king was chosen as a gift for the king's favorite. Titian took part in the selection of the paintings, and it must have been a deliberate choice. The Venetian government thought that a painting similar to the king's would be a fine token of respect. And there was a similar tendency at the Spanish court. For example, the Duke of Lerma, Pietro Cussida's superior, employed the artists who had worked on the construction of El Escorial, and had his churches in Lerma and



Fig. 19 Anthony van Dyck, a folio from the Italian Sketchbook, *Detail of the Entombment of Van Baburen and Detail of Christ Carrying the Cross.*

Madrid built in a similar style.³⁷ In the 1607 inventory of one of those churches, for the monastery of Madre de Dios in Lerma, there was a copy of *The Flagellation of Christ* by Sebastiano del Piombo, which must have alluded to the connection with the Spanish church in Rome, San Pietro in Montorio.³⁸ And the finest paintings that he collected in his own quarters at San Blas monastery were works by great Venetians, including Titian.³⁹

There are many ways of alluding to an authoritative work. One way is to trace or reproduce the composition literally, but it is also possible to take some distinctive details and use them as a reference to the original. The altarpiece by Van Baburen is of the latter type. He began with the style and basic concept of Caravaggio, which Cussida obviously appreciated and Van Baburen himself had studied well, and then adopted the pose of Titian's Christ, adjusting it to the vertical format of his picture. The comparable boldness and peculiar pose would make Cussida or his fellow Spaniards see its connection with the authoritative work in the Escorial, and make viewers aware of its owner's status as the king's representative. Still, one wonders whether the altarpiece by Van Baburen has a sufficiently persuasive affinity with the work by Titian, as their dates of execution are far apart and their brushwork and color are different. However, there is indirect evidence that the altarpiece, or Christ's pose at any rate, could well have been regarded as close enough to that of Titian. Van Dyck's Italian sketchbook contains a drawing after Van Baburen's Christ (fig. 19), but for a long time it was assumed that the model was an unidentified Titian,⁴⁰ until Slatkes pointed out that it was actually after Van Baburen.⁴¹

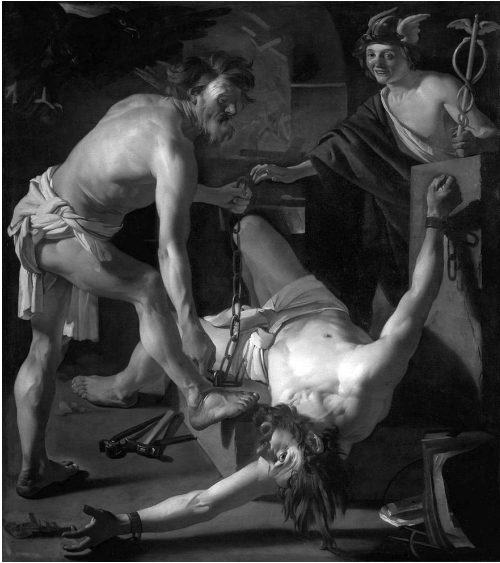


Fig. 20 Dirck van Baburen, *Prometheus Chained by Vulcan*, 1623, oil on canvas, 202 x 184 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



Fig. 21 Cornelis Cort after Titian, *Tityus*, 1566, engraving, 38.0 x 31.2 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

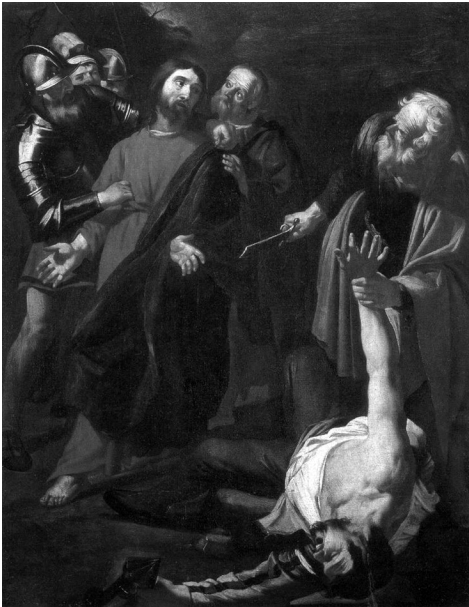


Fig. 22 Dirck van Baburen, *Arrest of Christ with the Episode of Malchus*, oil on canvas, 125.3 x 95 cm, Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, Florence.

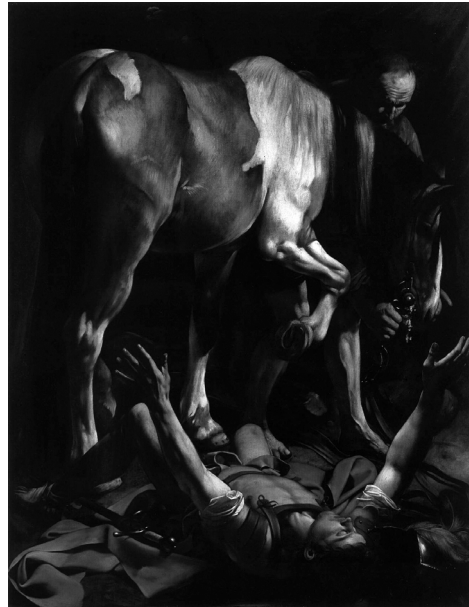


Fig. 23 Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Conversion of Saint Paul*, oil on canvas, 230 x 175 cm, Cerasi Chapel, Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome.

The Dutch artist eagerly studied and absorbed the art of Caravaggio, but at the same time he seems to have paid attention to Titian's legacy. Take his *Prometheus Chained by Vulcan* (fig. 20), for example. Suggestions for the source of inspiration for this picture include Rubens's *Prometheus Bound*, a print by Simon Frisius, and another by Cornelis Cort (fig. 21) after Titian's *Tityus*.⁴² Authors also noted that the pose of Prometheus had already been seen as the fallen Malchus in his earlier *Arrest of Christ* (fig. 22).⁴³ It has been pointed out that Malchus's pose, with one arm stretched out and held by St Peter, is based on Caravaggio's fallen saint in *The Conversion of St Paul* (fig. 23) or on the *Martyrdom of St Matthew*,⁴⁴ and Van Baburen doubtlessly knew and studied them. However, the resemblance that the pose of Van Baburen's Malchus bears to Cort's print is closer than to these Caravaggio figures, especially in the slanting angle of the twisted upper body. Taking into account that Malchus's pose would later be used as Prometheus again, it is highly plausible that the young Van Baburen had consulted the print of Tityus, which has such a similar setting and story as Prometheus that the two can be confused or even blended.⁴⁵

The Arrest of Christ with the episode of Malchus is the first known work that Van Baburen made in Rome,⁴⁶ and it too was intended for Cussida. Grilli discovered that it entered the Gabotti collection through the marriage of Gian Francesco Cussida, a son of Pietro, and Maria Gabotti.⁴⁷ This means that Cussida was Van Baburen's very first patron in Rome. And both works for this representative of the king of Spain allude to Titian.

In addition, it is not simply that his first patron happened to be a Spaniard, but Utrecht artists in general seem to have been associated with pro-Spanish circles in Italy, which is where he could well have heard about Titian's popularity and high standing at the Spanish court.

Van Baburen's Early Career and the Pro-Spanish Faction

Van Baburen is supposed to have left Utrecht soon after 1611, which is when his name disappeared from the guild records. He is first documented in Italy in Parma. According to the memoirs of Baistrocchi and Sanseverino there was a *Martyrdom of St Sebastian* in the Chiesa dei Servi in Parma, with Van Baburen's signature and the date 1615 on the back.⁴⁸

Jan Soens, a painter from the Low Countries, was active as court painter in Parma until the beginning of the seventeenth century. The Italian city had a strong link with the Netherlands through the marriage of Ottavio Farnese and Margaret of Parma, the illegitimate daughter of Charles V and the governor of the Netherlands, and it may have been for that reason that painters like Leonard Bramer lived and worked there in the seventeenth century.⁴⁹ Needless to say, one cannot base an assertion that Van Baburen was associated with the pro-Spanish faction simply because he received a commission in Parma. But since his early patrons in Rome were mostly from that faction, and his early career had some similarities to that of Jusepe de Ribera,⁵⁰ it is tempting to assume that the young painter from Utrecht established a Spanish connection in Parma, through which he acquired access to Spanish circles in Rome.

As Thomas Dandeleet has shown, the Spanish faction played an indispensable role in Roman society at the time through their influence on conclaves, pensions, rituals and so on.⁵¹ That influence was not limited to the court, for society as a whole was one

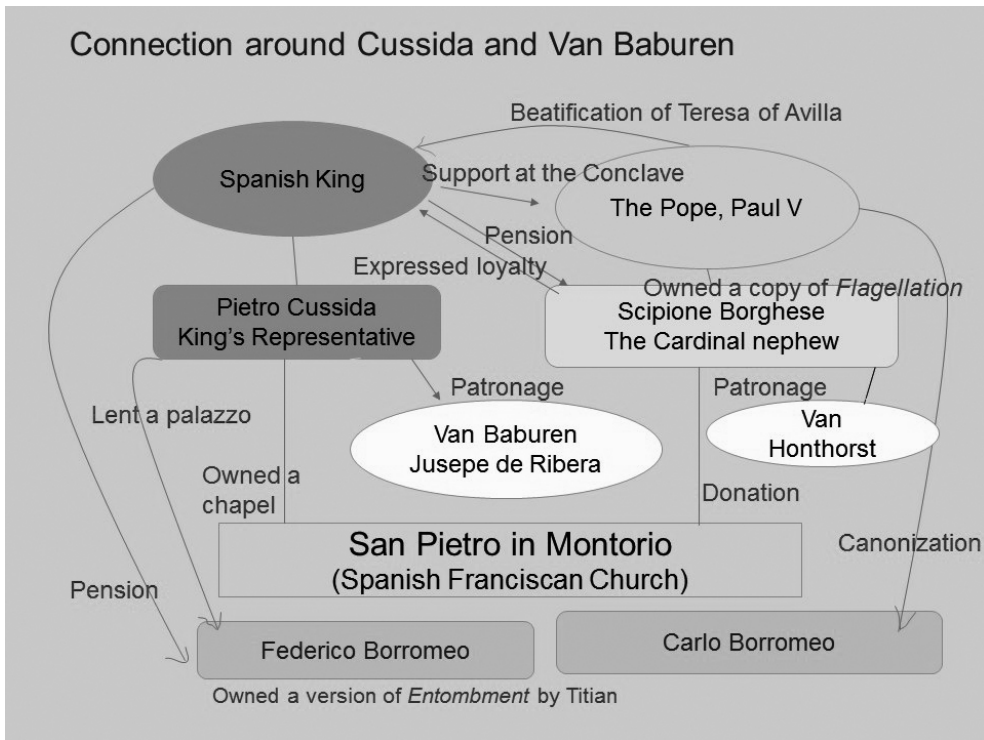


Fig. 24

large patronage network “unified by a variety of powerful patrons and institutions that advanced and protected their widely varying interests. Whether cardinal, ambassador, courtier, artist, artisan, lawyer, priest, merchant, poor widow, or young peasant, everyone in the city at some time relied on a patron for income, work, legal representation, housing, spiritual intervention, a dowry, a bride, charity, or burial.”⁵² Of course, France naturally tried to counter the influence of Spain, and it succeeded when Maffeo Barberini was elected as Urban VIII in 1623 with the support of the French faction. When Van Baburen came to Rome, however, it was during the heyday of Spanish Rome, in the reign of Paul V, who had spent time in Spain and had been on particularly good terms with the Spaniards in Rome.⁵³ He was accordingly supported by the Spanish party in a papal conclave in 1605. Cardinal Borghese was awarded a pension of 4,000 ducats by the Spanish crown in the same year, which was increased in later years, and he expressed his loyalty to the Spanish throne on the death of Philip III in 1621. Similarly, Carlo Borromeo, who owned a version of Titian’s *Entombment*, was made a cardinal by the pro-Spanish Pius IV. Philip II gave him and the pope’s nephews a combined sum of 15,000 escudos from the revenues of Toledo cathedral in 1562.⁵⁴ In addition, Paul V canonized him in 1610. In a symbolic gesture Cardinal Borghese donated the cost for the restoration of the church of San Pietro in Montorio, even though he did not have a chapel there.⁵⁵ He also owned a copy of *The Flagellation of Christ* by Sebastiano del Piombo (fig. 24).⁵⁶ In this way, the Spanish crown, whose

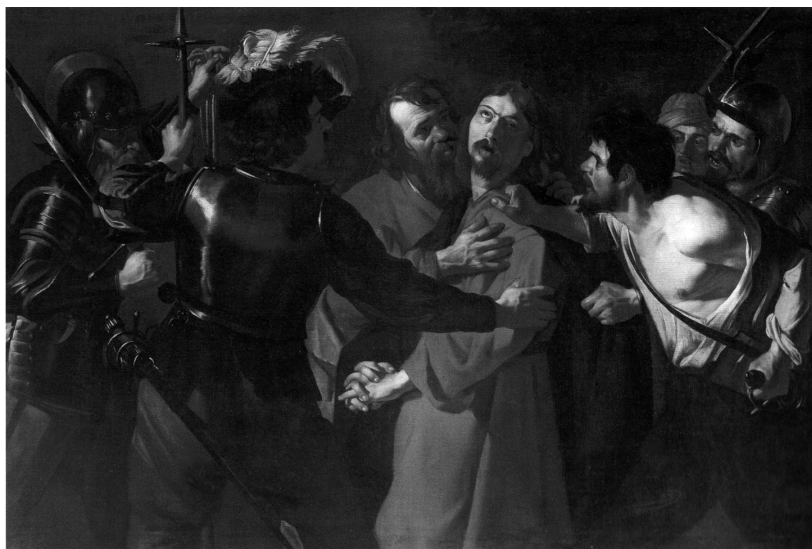


Fig. 25 Dirck van Baburen, *Arrest of Christ*, oil on canvas, 139 x 202 cm, The Borghese Gallery, Rome.

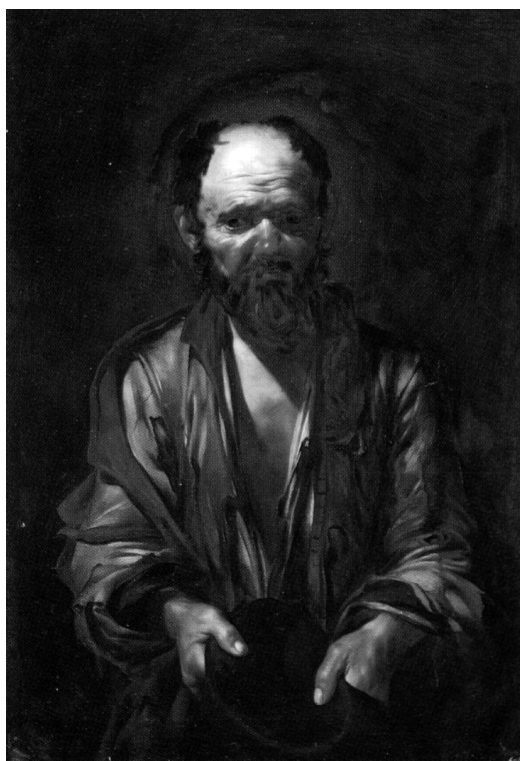


Fig. 26 Jusepe de Ribera, *The Beggar*, oil on canvas, 110 x 78 cm, The Borghese Gallery, Rome.

representative was Pietro Cussida, the pope, his nephew, and Borromeo were closely interconnected through various interests and copies of authentic works.

We have already seen that Van Baburen's first patron in Rome was Pietro Cussida. Someone else who had erroneously been regarded as one of his early patrons was Cardinal Borghese.⁵⁷ It is true that Van Baburen's *Arrest of Christ* (fig. 25), the same subject as Cussida's picture, is in Borghese Collection, but it did not enter it until the eighteenth century.⁵⁸ Scipione Borghese was one of the earliest patrons of Van Honthorst, another painter from Utrecht. Although it has not been given the attention it deserves, the connection between the cardinal and Van Honthorst would have been brought about by Jan van Santen, Giovanni Vasanzio as the Italians called him, architect to both the pope and the cardinal. He was also from Utrecht, became the principal architect for the Borghese family in 1613, carried out many projects for them, and died in 1621.⁵⁹ However, due to a lack of space, Giovanni Vasanzio and his connection with northern artists in Rome will have to be discussed on another occasion.

Another factor that deserves mention in the context of Van Baburen's early career is his proximity to the footsteps of Jusepe de Ribera. Both stayed a while in Parma, and their early patrons in Rome were the same, such as Cussida and Cardinal Giustiniani. The two young painters worked in a highly Caravaggesque manner (fig. 26). Cussida is thought to have owned a version of *St Francis* by Caravaggio, and he also had some paintings by Ribera. Given that kind of artistic taste, and his and the painter's origins, it would not have been strange if the commission for the Pietà chapel had gone to Ribera instead of Van Baburen.⁶⁰ However, the former had left Rome for Naples by July of 1616 at the latest. This is mere conjecture, but the commission for the altarpiece came to Van Baburen partly because Ribera was not available in Rome. In any event, as far as his early patrons were concerned, Van Baburen must have been conscious of the Spanish nature of the commission. In addition, the fierce competition that painters from the north encountered must have made the young painter do his utmost to make use of all the sources of inspiration available to him. Caravaggio and Titian must have struck him as ideal for a painting that was to be installed in Rome's Spanish church, and the success of that altarpiece proved him right.⁶¹

Notes

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1 Timon Henricus Fokker, *Werke niederländischer Meister in den Kirchen Italiens*, The Hague, 1931.

2 *Ibid.* Those other cities are, in parentheses: Montagne (Padua), Rosman (Vicenza), Schayck (Lugo), Soens (Parma), Stom (Naples, Messina), Ter Brugghen (Naples), Wolberck (Palermo).

3 Van Baburen may have left shortly after 1611, and it is thought that Honthorst did so around 1613, although this is not documented. Leonard J. Slatkes, *Dirck van Baburen (c. 1595–1624): A Dutch Painter in Utrecht and Rome*, Utrecht, 1965, p. 4; J. Richard Judson and Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst, 1592–1656*, Doornspijk, 1999, pp. 5–7.

- 4 Anne Charlotte Steland, "Studien zu Herman van Swanevelt: Zeichnungen zu Fresken und Gemälden," *Oud Holland*, 115, 2001/2002, p. 20.
- 5 Adriana Marucchi (ed), Giulio Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, 2 vols., Rome, 1956–1957, vol. 1, pp. 259–260.
- 6 For De Haen see Cecilia Grilli, "David de Haen, pittore olandese a Roma," *Paragone*, 563, 1997, pp. 33–50.
- 7 Cf. Flavia Cantatore, *San Pietro in Montorio: La chiesa dei Re Cattolica a Roma*, Rome, 2007.
- 8 Emilio Lavagnino, *San Pietro in Montorio*, (*Le chiese di Roma illustrate*, n. 23), Rome, n. d., p. 14.
- 9 Wayne Franits, *The Paintings of Dirck van Baburen, ca. 1592/93–1624: Catalogue Raisonné*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 2013, pp. 235–236.
- 10 *Ibid.*, pp. 80–81; Slatkes, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 41; Irene Baldriga and Bert Treffers, "'Una maniera meravigliosamente adatta da seguire'. Percorsi caravaggeschi tra Fiandre e Olanda," Claudio Stirinati and Alessandro Zuccari, *I Caravaggeschi: Percorsi e protagonisti*, 2 vols., Milan, 2010, vol. 1, pp. 255–265.
- 11 Franits, *op. cit.* (note 9), pp. 89–90.
- 12 Slatkes, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 2; Fokker was no longer able to find the signature and date in 1927. See Timon Henricus Fokker, "Twee Nederlandsche navolgers van Caravaggio te Rome," *Oud Holland*, 44, 1927, p. 134.
- 13 Slatkes, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp. 5–6; Bert Treffers, *Een hemel op aarde: Extase in de Romeinse barok*, Nijmegen, 1995, p. 224.
- 14 For Caravaggio's Altarpiece, see Georgia Wright, "Caravaggio's Entombment Considered in Situ," *The Art Bulletin*, 60, 1978, pp. 35–42; Mary Ann Graeve, "The Stone of Unction in Caravaggio's Painting for the Chiesa Nuova," *The Art Bulletin*, 40, 1958, pp. 223–237.
- 15 Slatkes, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 36. For the Rubens see Richard Judson, *Rubens: Passion of Christ (Corpus rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, Part 4)*, 2001, pp. 211–214. It has been dated to around 1602 on the evidence of stylistic similarities to the altarpiece in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 38. It was attributed to Pynas at the time but is now considered to be by Tegnagel.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 37: "Baburen's sources, aside from the obvious influence the Rubens type must have had on his basic conception, seem to have been the works of the Carracci". Vatican Museum, inv. no. 41249; oil on canvas, 172.5 x 126.5 cm. Provenance: collection of Cardinal Flavio I Chigi between 1666 and 1669. See A. Emiliani (ed.), exh. cat. *Ludovico Carracci*, Museo Civico Archeologico-Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna and Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, 1993, p. 73.
- 18 Franits, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 81.
- 19 Valentina White, "Il soggiorno romano di Dirck van Baburen: la committenza e le opere," Irene Baldriga and Silvia Danesi Squarzina (eds.), *"Fiammenghi che vanno e vengono non li si puol dar regola": Paesi Bassi e Italia fra Cinquecento e Seicento: Pittura, storia e cultura degli emblemi*, Sant'Orreste, 1995, pp. 168–193.

20 Confusing information concerning Titian's various pictures of the Entombment is resolved in Hans Ost, *Tizian-Studien*, Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 1992.

21 Oil on canvas, 137 x 175 cm, 1559, Madrid, Prado inv. no. 440, signed "TITIANUS VECELLIUS OPUS AEQUES CAES".

22 Fernando Checa, *Tiziano y la monarquía hispanica: Usos y funciones de la pintura veneciana en España (siglos XVI y XVII)*, Madrid, 1994, p. 258.

23 For this first Prado version see Ost, *op. cit.* (note 20), pp. 44–49. The subject is described as "Nativity of our Savior" in the well-known diary of Cassiano dal Pozzo, but that must be a simple mistake; see E. Harris and G de Andre's, "Descripción del Escorial por Cassiano del Pozzo," *Archivo Español de Arte*, XLV, 1972, pp. 3–33, esp. p. 25.

24 Ost, *op. cit.* (note 20), pp. 49–53.

25 For Cussida see Cecilia Grilli, "Il committente della cappella della Pietà in San Pietro in Montorio in Roma," *Bolletino d'Arte*, 79, 1994, 84/85, pp. 157–164.

26 Ketelsen argues that the print is basically after the second version, though Bonasone might have seen the first one too; see Thomas Ketelsen, "A Drawing for Giulio Bonasone's print after Titian's 'Entombment,'" *The Burlington Magazine*, 138, 1996, pp. 446–453.

27 Cassiano dal Pozzo, *Il diario del viaggio in Spagna del cardinale Francesco Barberini scritto da Cassiano dal Pozzo*, ed. Alessandra Anselmi, Madrid, 2004, pp. 71–72: "Si vidde in un stanzino, che serve d'oratorio, un quadro alto da tre braccia in circa, e largo cinque in circa, d'una Pietà, ò sia Christo morto con la gloriosa Vergine, e le Marie: di Titiano opera bellissima, della quale si vede la stampa".

28 For this version see Ost, *op. cit.* (note 20), pp. 53–54.

29 Grilli, *op. cit.* (note 25), p. 157.

30 Nahoko Kato, "Una considerazione sulla Sepoltura di Cristo di Caravaggio: l'immagine devozionale dell'indulgenza e la salvezza," *Art History: Tohoku University*, 23, 2003, p. 89.

31 Gerhard Ewald, *Johann Carl Loth 1632–1698*, Amsterdam, 1965, pp. 137–138.

32 Ost, *op. cit.* (note 20), pp. 43–44.

33 Harold E. Wethey, *The Paintings of Titian*, 3 vols., London, 1969, vol. 1, p. 91.

34 Ost, *op. cit.* (note 20), pp. 51–52.

35 On this see Angela Delaforce, "The Collection of Antonio Pérez, Secretary of State to Philip II," *The Burlington Magazine*, 124, 1982, pp. 742–752.

36 Ost, *op. cit.*, (note 20), p. 51; Ludwig Urlichs, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kunstbestrebungen und Sammlungen Kaiser Rudolf II., 2. Ankäufe in Spanien und der Lombardei," *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 5, 1870, pp. 80–85, esp. p. 81: "[...]ein sepulchro de nro. Senor von Titian, wie der König al Escurial eins hat".

37 Lisa A. Banner, *The Religious Patronage of the Duke of Lerma, 1598–1621*, Farnham, 2009, pp. 27, 86–87. Also see Piers Baker-Bates, "Sebastiano del Piombo's Úbeda Pietà: Between Italy and Spain," *Melbourne Art Journal*, 9/10, 2007, pp. 35–43.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 128.

- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 135. The 24 scenes from the life of St Charles Borromeo are also brought to the same monastery in 1617.
- 40 Gert Adriani, *Anton van Dyck: Italienisches Skizzenbuch*, Vienna, 1940, p. 38, fol. 22r.
- 41 Leonard J. Slatkes, "Some Drawings around Dirck van Baburen," *Master Drawings*, 6, no. 1, 1968, pp. 27–30, 67–70.
- 42 Jonathan Bikker *et al.*, *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. Vol. 1, Artists Born between 1570 and 1600*, Amsterdam, 2007, pp. 57–60.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- 44 Slatkes, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 48; Franits, *op. cit.*, (note 9), p. 76.
- 45 Bikker, *op. cit.* (note 42), p. 58.
- 46 Slatkes, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 47; Franits, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 76.
- 47 Grilli, *op. cit.* (note 25), pp. 157, 163.
- 48 Cited from Marten Jan Bok, "Dirck Jaspersz. van Baburen," Albert Blankert and Leonard Joseph Slatkes, exh. cat. *Holländische Malerei im neuem Licht: Hendrick ter Brugghen und seine Zeitgenossen*, Centraal Museum, Utrecht and Herzog Anton-Urlich Museum, Braunschweig, 1986, p. 175, note 25: "Il quadro rappresentante S. Sebastiano al martirio è di mano di Teodoro Baburn, fiamingo fatto l'anno 1615 come sta scritto al di dietro. Questo quadro si trova nella Cappella in cornu epistolae dell'altar maggiore sopra un Confessionario".
- 49 Bert W. Meijer, "L'Emilia e il Nord: Alcune Aggiunte (Baburen, Bramer, Renieri ed altri)," Giovanna Perini (ed.) *Il Luogo ed il Ruolo Della Città di Bologna tra Europa Continentale e Nediterranea*, Bologna, 1992, pp. 279–295.
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- 51 Thomas James Dandeleet, *Spanish Rome, 1500–1700*, New Haven and London, 2001.
- 52 Thomas James Dandeleet, "Spanish Conquest and Colonization at the Center of the Old World: The Spanish Nation in Rome, 1555–1625," *The Journal of Modern History*, 69, no. 3, 1997, pp. 479–511, esp. pp. 487–488.
- 53 Dandeleet, *op. cit.* (note 51), pp. 102–105.
- 54 Dandeleet, *op. cit.* (note 51), p. 62.
- 55 Cantatore, *op. cit.* (note 7), p. 123.
- 56 Paola della Pergola, *Cataloghi dei Musei e Gallerie d'Italia: Galleria Borghese. I dipinti*, vol. 2, Rome, 1959, pp. 134–135.
- 57 Among others, Slatkes, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 6.
- 58 White, *op. cit.* (note 19), pp. 183–184; Franits, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 106.
- 59 Godefridus J. Hoogewerff, "Giovanni Van Santen," *Roma*, 6, 1928, pp. 1–12.

60 Gianni Papi, "Flemish and Dutch Painters in Rome," Rossela Vodret Adamo (ed.), exh. cat. *Caravaggio's Rome 1600–1630*, 2 vols., Museo di Palazzo Venezia, Rome, 2012, Essays, p. 367.

61 It was highly praised in the eighteenth century, and one author went so far as to comment that "Raphael's *Transfiguration* would have made every effort not to be hung beside so dangerous a neighbor"; see Friedrich Wilhelm B. von Ramdohr, *Ueber Mahlerei und Bildhauerarbeit in Rom*, vol. 3, Leipzig, 1787, p. 331. See also the many replicas and copies in Franits, *op. cit.*, (note 9), pp. 82–92. The frame of the autograph replica in Utrecht is said to be Spanish; see Slatkes, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp. 105–106.

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