

CHAPTER 3  
THE CARRACCI

AT the beginning of the last chapter it was noted that it is still customary to see Caravaggio and Annibale Carracci as the great antagonists in Rome at the dawn of the seventeenth century. The differences between them are usually summed up in pairs of contrasting notions such as naturalism-eclecticism, realism-classicism, revolt-traditionalism. This erroneous historical conception has grown over the centuries, but before the obvious divergencies to be found in their art hardened into such antithetical patterns, contemporaries believed that the two masters had much in common. Thus the open-minded collector and patron Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani, who has often been mentioned in these pages, explained in a famous letter<sup>1</sup> that, in his view, Caravaggio, the Carracci, and a few others were at the top of a sliding scale of values, because it was they who knew how to combine in their art *maniera* and the study from the model; *maniera* being, as he says, that which the artist 'has in his imagination, without any model'. Vincenzo Giustiniani clearly recognized the *maniera* in Caravaggio and also implied by his wording that the mixture of *maniera* and realism (i.e. work done directly from the model) was different in Caravaggio and the Carracci. Even though our terminology has changed, we are inclined nowadays to agree with the opinions of the shrewd Marchese.

Nevertheless it was, of course, Annibale Carracci and not Caravaggio who revived the time-honoured values in Italian art and revitalized the great tradition manifest in the development of painting from Giotto to Masaccio and on to Raphael. Caravaggio never worked in fresco. But it was monumental fresco-painting that educated Italians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries still regarded as the finest flower of art and the supreme test of a painter's competence. This approach, which was deeply rooted in their theoretical premises and historical background, was detrimental to the fortunes of the easel-painter Caravaggio. It helped, on the other hand, to raise Annibale Carracci to his exalted position, for, next to Raphael's Stanze and Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling, his frescoes in the Farnese Gallery were regarded until the end of the eighteenth century as the most important landmark in the history of painting. And now that we are beginning to see rule rather than freedom in Caravaggio's work, we are also able once again to appreciate and assess more positively than writers of the last 150 years<sup>2</sup> the quality of Annibale's art and his historical mission. Once again we can savour those virtues in Annibale's bold and forthright 'classicism' which were inaccessible to the individualist and 'realist' Caravaggio.

One must study Annibale's artistic origins and see him in relation to the other painters in his family in order to understand the special circumstances which led up to the climax of his career in the frescoes of the Farnese Gallery. Among the various attempts at reform during the last decades of the sixteenth century Bologna soon assumed a leading

position, and this was due entirely to the exertions of the three Carracci. Agostino (1557-1602) and Annibale (1560-1609) were brothers; their cousin Lodovico (1555-1619) was their senior by a few years. It was Lodovico without any shadow of doubt who first pointed the way to a supersession of the complexity, sophistication, and artificiality of Late Mannerism. In the beginning the three artists had a common studio, and during the early period of their collaboration it is not always easy to distinguish between their works.<sup>3</sup> After 1582 they opened a private 'academy', which had, however, a quite informal character. This active school, in which special emphasis was laid on life drawing, soon became the rallying point of all progressive tendencies at Bologna.<sup>4</sup> At the same period, in the early 1580s, the personalities of the three Carracci become more clearly defined, and from about 1585 onwards a well-documented series of large altarpieces permits us to follow the separate developments of Annibale and Lodovico. Agostino, a man of considerable intellectual accomplishments, was primarily an engraver and also, so it seems, a devoted teacher with a real knack of communicating the elements of his craft.<sup>5</sup> As a painter he attached himself to Annibale rather than Lodovico. It is, therefore, justifiable to concentrate on the two latter artists and begin with a study of some of their fully developed Bolognese works as a springboard to a correct assessment of the pre-Roman position.

Annibale's *Virgin with St John and St Catherine* of 1593 (Bologna, Pinacoteca; Plate 12)<sup>6</sup> immediately calls to mind works of the Central Italian High Renaissance of 1510-15. Three powerfully built figures are joined by the compositional device of the triangle, well known from High Renaissance paintings, and are placed in front of a simple and massive classical architecture. Moreover the *contrapposto* is extended from governing the unit of each figure to determining the greater unit of the whole, for the two saints, left and right of the central axis, form balanced contrasts. This is the compositional method first practised by Leonardo and followed by Raphael, Fra Bartolommeo, and other High Renaissance masters. Also the firm stance and the clear, unequivocal gestures and expressions of Annibale's figures are reminiscent of early sixteenth-century Florentine art. But Annibale's deep, warm, and glowing colours, replacing the pale, often *changeant* hues of Mannerism, give his work a distinctly down-to-earth quality; by comparison, Central Italian High Renaissance paintings appear cold and remote. Annibale's rich and mellow palette derives from Correggio and the Venetians. These masters rather than Raphael were from the beginning of his career his consciously elected guides in the revolt against contemporary Mannerism. The *Virgin with St John and St Catherine* is, in fact, the first picture in which Annibale's turn to a Central Italian type of composition is evident.

Individual motives prove that even at this important moment Annibale was more indebted to North than to Central Italian models: the figure of St Catherine is borrowed from Veronese, the medallion on the throne from Correggio's throne in the *Virgin with St Francis* (Dresden), and the Child resting one foot on His Mother's foot from Raphael's *Madonna del Cardellino* (Louvre). These models were used almost undisguised, for everyone to see. At this juncture it may be asked whether such a picture is a sterile imitation, an 'eclectic' mosaic selected from acknowledged masterpieces. The reader hardly needs

to be reminded that until fairly recently the term 'eclectic' was liberally employed to support the condemnation of post-Renaissance art in general and that of the Carracci in particular; nor has this designation disappeared from highly competent specialized studies.<sup>7</sup> If the term 'eclecticism' implies the following of not only one but more than one and even many masters, Annibale, like so many artists before and after him, availed himself of a traditional Renaissance method; a method advocated, for instance, by Leonardo as the proper road to a distinguished style. This procedure came into disrepute only with the adulation of the *naïveté* of genius in the Romantic era.<sup>8</sup> If 'eclecticism' is used, however, as a term to expose a lack of co-ordination and transformation of models – and in this sense it may justifiably be used – then it does not fit the case under review; for, like every great artist, Annibale did create something entirely new from his models: he wedded Correggiquesque *sfumato* and warm Venetian tone values to the severe compositional and figure conceptions of the Central Italian High Renaissance, while at the same time he gave his figures a sculptural quality and palpability which will be sought in vain during the High Renaissance, but which conform to the seventeenth-century feeling for mass and texture.

Some of the steps by which Annibale arrived at this important phase of his development may be retraced. The *Crucifixion* of 1583 (Bologna, S. Niccolò) illustrates his Mannerist beginnings. Two years later, in the *Baptism of Christ* (Bologna, S. Gregorio), the Correggiquesque quality cannot be overlooked, although formally and colouristically Annibale is here still struggling against the older conventions. After that date he surrenders increasingly to Correggio's colour and emotional figure conceptions. This development may be followed from the Parma and Bridgewater House *Lamentations over the Body of Christ* (the latter destroyed) to the Dresden *Assumption of the Virgin* of 1587. From then on, Titian and Veronese begin to replace Correggio, with important consequences: Titian's dramatic colour contrasts replace the lighter Parmese tonality, and Venetian composure and gravity Correggio's impetuous sensibility. To assess this change, one need only compare the *Assumption* of 1592 (Bologna, Pinacoteca) with the earlier versions of the same subject. But already the Dresden *Virgin with St John, St Francis, and St Matthew* of 1588 was essentially Venetian, as the asymmetrical, Veronese-like composition immediately reveals. None the less Correggio's grace and charm pervade the picture, and it must be said at once that in spite of his reduced influence, the Correggiquesque component remained noticeable even in Annibale's Roman years. The trend of his development is clear: the character of his late Bolognese works continued to be pre-eminently Venetian right to his departure from Bologna; he moved away from Correggio towards solidity and clear definition of attitudes and expressions and towards an impressive structural firmness of the whole canvas.

His cousin Lodovico turned in a different direction. A study of his *Holy Family with St Francis* of 1591 (Cento, Museo Civico; Plate 13) makes this abundantly evident. The basic conception of such a picture has little in common with Titian, as a comparison with the latter's *Pesaro Madonna* may show. The principal group recurs in both pictures: the Virgin on a high throne with St Joseph beneath and St Francis who recommends with a pleading gesture the donors in the right-hand corner. Yet how different is the

interpretation! The mere bulk and weight of Lodovico's figures make his work different in essence from any Renaissance painting. Moreover, St Joseph and St Francis have exchanged places, with the result that, in contrast to Titian's work, the relation between the donors, St Francis, and the Virgin runs zigzag across the picture. Lodovico's figures are deeply engaged and their mute language of gestures and glances is profoundly felt – very different from Titian's reserve as well as from the cold correctness of the Mannerists. It is precisely this emphasis on gesture and glance that strikes a new note: St Francis's eyes meet those of the Virgin and emotions quiver; the mystery of Divine Grace has been humanized, and this is also implied in the spontaneity of the Child's reaction. All the registers are pulled to draw the beholder into the picture. He faces the Virgin, as does St Francis – indeed, he can imagine himself kneeling directly behind the saint; the close viewpoint helps to break down the barrier between real and painted space and, at the same time, the strong *sotto in su* ensures that the Virgin and Child, in spite of their nearness, remain in a world removed from that of the beholder. Titian, by contrast, has done everything to guarantee the inviolability of the picture plane and, compared with Lodovico's, his figures show the restraint and aloofness of a cult image.

Although for the sheer volume of the figures and the immediacy of their presence the two cousins form here in the early nineties what might be called a 'united Seicento front', the spirit informing Annibale's art is closer to that of the Renaissance masters than to Lodovico's, for Annibale lacks Lodovico's intense emotionalism. It is only to be expected that their approach to colour would also be fundamentally different. Annibale, conforming to the Renaissance tradition, used light and shade, even in his most painterly Bolognese works, primarily to stress form and structure. Lodovico, on the other hand, created patterns of light and dark often independent of the underlying organic form; and he even sacrificed clarity to this colouristic principle. One need only compare the right knee and leg of the Virgin on Plates 12 and 13 to see how decisively Annibale's and Lodovico's ways part. It is evident that Lodovico owed much more than Annibale to the study of Tintoretto, in whose pictures one finds those brilliant and sudden highlights, that irrational flicker which conveys emotion and a sense of mystery. The basic quality of classic art, namely clear definition of space and form, meant very little to an artist steeped in this painterly tradition. It is characteristic of this approach that foreground stage and background scenery are often unrelated in Lodovico's pictures; in the Cento altarpiece (Plate 13) the colonnade looks like an added piece of stage property, and the acolyte behind St Francis emerges from an undefined cavity. Such procedure frequently makes the 'readability' of Lodovico's settings elusive.

For the sake of clarity, we may now define the difference between Annibale and Lodovico as that between the Classical and the Baroque, never forgetting of course that there is in their work that close affinity which we have noticed, and that I am, therefore, stretching the terms beyond their permissible limits. But with this proviso it may be said that Lodovico at the beginning of the nineties had evolved a painterly Baroque manner in contradistinction to Annibale's temperate classicism. Although pictures of such importance as the *Madonna dei Bargellini* of 1588 and the *Preaching of St*

*John* of 1592 (both Pinacoteca, Bologna) are essentially Venetian with Correggionesque overtones – in the *St John* he followed Veronese for the composition and Tintoretto for the light – Lodovico's whole trend in these years is towards the colossal, the passionate, dramatic, and heroic, towards rich movement and surprising and capricious light effects; in a word, away from Venice and towards the style of Correggio's fresco in the dome of Parma Cathedral. The principal document of this tendency is the *Transfiguration* of 1593 (Bologna, Pinacoteca); pictures like the dramatic *Conversion of St Paul* of 1587–9, the *Flagellation* and *Crowning with Thorns* of 1594–5 (all three Bologna, Pinacoteca), even the ecstatic *St Hyacinth* of 1594 (Louvre), illustrate this Baroque taste. To a certain extent, therefore, Lodovico and Annibale after their common Mannerist beginnings developed in different directions.

With advancing age, however, and after the departure of his cousins from Bologna, Lodovico's work became by degrees retrogressive, and some of his late pictures show a return to patently Mannerist principles.<sup>9</sup> With some signal exceptions, there was at the same time a notable decline in the quality of his art. The better pictures of this period, like the *Meeting of St Angelus with St Dominic and St Francis*, the *Martyrdom of St Angelus*, and *St Raymond walking over the Sea* (all three 1608–10,<sup>10</sup> Bologna, Pinacoteca and S. Domenico), appeal by the depth of mystical surrender and by their linear and decorative grace; his failures show a studied, superficial classicism, mask-like expressions, tired gestures, and a veneer of elegant sweetness.<sup>11</sup> Lodovico's sense for decorative patterns, his emotionalism, and above all his painterly Baroque approach to colour and light contained potentialities which were eagerly seized on by masters of the next generation, particularly by Lanfranco and Guercino; taken all in all his influence on the formation of the style of the younger Bolognese masters cannot be overestimated. But it was mainly his earlier manner up to about 1600 which attracted them, while his less satisfactory later manner had often an irresistible appeal to minor masters who were directly or indirectly dependent on him, such as Francesco Brizio (1574–1643), Lorenzo Garbieri (1580–1654), and even Reni's pupil Francesco Gessi (1588–1649). It is then evident that Lodovico was not the man to lead painting back to classical poise and monumentality. Such qualities were, however, manifest in Annibale's work of the 1590s and were even implicit in his pictures of the 1580s. It was therefore more than mere chance that he, rather than Lodovico, accepted Cardinal Odoardo Farnese's invitation to come to Rome to paint monumental frescoes in his palace.

With Annibale's departure in 1595 the common studio broke up. Two years later Agostino followed him, leaving Lodovico alone in Bologna. During his ten active years in Rome, between 1595 and 1605, Annibale fulfilled the promise of his late Bolognese work: he became the creator of a grand manner, a dramatic style buttressed by a close study of nature, antiquity, Raphael, and Michelangelo. It was this style, equally admired by such antipodes as Poussin and Bernini, on which the future of 'official' painting depended for the next 150 years.

Annibale's first work in the Farnese Palace was the decoration with frescoes of a comparatively small room, the so-called Camerino Farnese, executed between 1595 and 1597, before Agostino's arrival. On the ceiling and in the lunettes he painted scenes from

the stories of Hercules and Ulysses, which have, in accordance with contemporary taste, not only a mythological but also an allegorical meaning: they illustrate the victory of virtue and effort over danger and temptation.<sup>12</sup> The decorative framework in which the stories are set is still dependent on North Italian models, in particular on the monochrome decorations in the nave of Parma Cathedral; but in the structure of the mythological scenes and in the treatment of individual figures the impact of Rome begins to be noticeable. It was fully developed in the Gallery of the same palace, the decoration of which began in 1597 and may not have been completely finished until 1608.<sup>13</sup>

The hall of about 60 by 20 feet has, above the projecting cornice, a coved vault which Annibale was asked to decorate with mythological love scenes chosen from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Plate 14). It has been made probable that Cardinal Farnese's librarian, Fulvio Orsini, wrote the programme for the ceiling<sup>14</sup> and that in the final stages Annibale's learned friend, Monsignor Giovan Battista Agucchi, may have acted as adviser.<sup>15</sup> The theme is the power of all-conquering love, to which even the gods of antiquity succumb. In contrast to the emblematic character of most Mannerist cycles of frescoes the programme of this ceiling is centred on mythology, and Annibale painted the stories with such vigour and directness that the beholder is absorbed by the narrative and entertaining spectacle before his eyes rather than distracted by the less obvious symbolical and moralizing implications.<sup>16</sup> In this joyful and buoyant approach to classical antiquity a return will be noticed to the spirit of Raphael's *Cupid and Psyche* frescoes in the Farnesina.

It was precisely at the moment when Caravaggio began his career as a painter of monumental religious pictures that Annibale turned to monumental mythologies on an unprecedented scale. And just as Caravaggio found a popular idiom for religious imagery, Annibale perfected his highly civilized manner to cater for the refined taste of an exclusive upper class. The very fact that his patron, a Prince of the Church and one, moreover, who bore that family name, surrounded himself with frescoes of this nature is indicative of a considerable relaxation of counter-reformatory morality. The frescoes convey the impression of a tremendous *joie de vivre*, a new blossoming of vitality and of an energy long repressed.

For the organization of the whole work Annibale experimented with a number of possibilities. He rejected simple friezes, suitable only for rooms with flat ceilings, a type of decoration used by him and his collaborators in the Palazzi Fava and Magnani-Salem at Bologna. Other Bolognese reminiscences,<sup>17</sup> however, were to have a more lasting influence, namely the Ulysses cycle in the Palazzo Poggi (now the University), where Pellegrino Tibaldi had combined pictures painted like easel-paintings with figures in the corners of the ceiling perspectively foreshortened for the view from below. This is a combination first found in Raphael's Logge in the Vatican,<sup>18</sup> which were, of course, well known to Annibale. Illusionist architectural painting (*quadratura*), aimed at extending real architecture into an imaginary space, had existed ever since Peruzzi had 'opened up' the Sala delle Colonne in the Villa Farnesina about 1516, but it was not until the second half of the sixteenth century that *quadratura* on ceilings really came into its own. Bologna, *di scienze maestra* (Bellori), was the centre of this practice, which required an

intimate knowledge of the theory of perspective. When the Bolognese Pope Gregory XIII (1572-85) summoned Tommaso Laureti and Ottaviano Mascherino from Bologna to paint in the Vatican Palace, *quadratura* gained a firm foothold in Rome. It had its most resounding triumph in Giovanni and Cherubino Alberti's decoration of the Sala Clementina in the Vatican, executed between 1596 and 1598, that is exactly when Annibale began his Farnese ceiling.<sup>19</sup> *Quadratura* was then the last word in wall- and ceiling-painting, sanctioned, moreover, by the highest papal authority. Annibale, however, decided not to use pure *quadratura* but to follow the Palazzo Poggi type of 'mixed' decoration. Like Tibaldi, he painted the mythological scenes as *quadri riportati*, that is, as if they were framed easel pictures transferred to the ceiling, and incorporated them in a *quadratura* framework. His decision to use *quadri riportati* for the principal scenes was almost certainly influenced by Michelangelo's Sistine ceiling, but he was doubtless also convinced that the mythological representation, as belonging to the highest class of painting,<sup>20</sup> should be rendered objectively and in isolating frames. Thus, although Annibale's ceiling is much more complex than Raphael's Logge or Tibaldi's Ulysses cycle, it remains in the same tradition of compromise solutions.

Annibale devised a *quadratura* framework consisting of a large cornice fully visible only in the four corners and supported all round the room by a carefully-thought-out system of herms and atlantes (Plate 15A). It is this whole framework, together with the sitting youths handling garlands, that is foreshortened for the viewpoint of the spectator. Since all this decoration is contrived as if it were real – the seated youths of flesh-and-blood colour, the herms and atlantes of simulated stucco, and the roundels of simulated bronze – the contrast to the painted pictures in their gilt frames is emphasized, and the break in consistency therefore strengthens rather than disrupts the unity of the entire ceiling. The crowding within a relatively small space of such great variety of illusionist painting, the overlapping and superimposition of many elements of the over-all plan, logical and crystal-clear and nowhere ambiguous as it would surely be in a similar Mannerist decoration, the subtle build-up from the corners towards the centre – all this gives this work a dynamic quality quite different from the steady rhythm and comparative simplicity of Michelangelo's Sistine ceiling, to which Annibale evidently owed so many of his constituent ideas. There is here, moreover, for the first time a noticeable continuity leading on from the real architecture of the walls to the painted decorative figures of the ceiling, and this contributes perceptibly to the dynamic unity of the entire Gallery.

The centre of the ceiling is dominated by the largest and most elaborate composition in the scheme, the *Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne* (Plate 15B). Surviving drawings show how closely Annibale had studied Bacchanalian sarcophagi; in fact, the train of revellers in the fresco has retained something of the classical relief character, while individual figures can be closely paralleled by classical types. On the other hand, the fresco has a flowing and floating movement, a richness and exuberance which one would seek in vain either in antiquity or in the High Renaissance. The composition strikes a balance between firm classical structure and imaginative freedom; it consists of two crowded groups which rise gently from the centre to the two sides, and the caesura between them is bridged by a maenad and a satyr following the beat of the tambourine

with an impetuous dance. The Bacchic retinue is compositionally enlivened and at the same time held together by the undulating rhythm of the flying cupids and by the telling *contrapposto* of the satyr and nymph below, reclining figures which have a framing as well as a space-creating function. This richness of compositional devices heralds a new age. Each single figure retains a statuesque solidity unthinkable without a thorough study and understanding of classical sculpture, and Annibale imparted something of this sculptural quality to his many preparatory chalk drawings. Nevertheless these magnificent drawings remain at the same time close to nature, since, true to the traditions of the Carracci 'academy', every single figure was intensely studied from life. It is this new alliance between naturalism and classical models – so often in the past a life-giving formula in Italian art, but with what different results! – that accounts for the boisterous vitality of Annibale's Roman manner. His classical style, full-blooded and imaginative and buttressed by a loving study of nature, keeps the beholder at a certain distance, however, and he always remains conscious of a noble reserve. Clearly, Annibale's was a classical revival that contained many potentialities. From it a way led to Poussin's pronounced classicism as well as to the freedom of Rubens and the High Baroque. On the other hand, Annibale's combination of *quadratura* and the *quadro riportato* had only a limited following. The broad current of the Italian development turned towards a complete illusionist spatial unification.

During the execution of the Gallery, Annibale had the help of his rather pedantic brother Agostino for three years (1597–1600).<sup>21</sup> Contemporary sources attribute to him the two large frescoes of *Cephalus and Aurora* and the so-called *Galatea*,<sup>22</sup> and this is borne out by the cool detachment of these paintings, which lack the *brío* and energy of Annibale's manner. In 1600 Agostino fell out with his brother, left Rome, and went to Parma, where he decorated with mythological scenes a ceiling in the Palazzo del Giardino for the Duke Ranuccio Farnese.<sup>23</sup> Agostino's earlier manner may best be studied in his carefully constructed, strongly Venetian masterpiece, the *Communion of St Jerome*, dating from the early 1590s (Bologna, Pinacoteca). His complete conversion to Annibale's Roman manner is evident in the Parma frescoes, which display a somewhat metallic and frozen classicism. His premature death in 1602 prevented the completion of this work.<sup>24</sup>

One other aspect of the Farnese ceiling should here be stressed. In his preparatory work Annibale re-established, after the Mannerist interlude, the method of Raphael and Michelangelo. Many hundreds of preparatory drawings must have existed, of which a fair number survive, and in these every single part of the ceiling was studied with the greatest care. Annibale handed down to his school this Renaissance method of slow and systematic preparation, and it is probably not too much to say that it was mainly through his agency that the method remained in vogue for the following 200 years. It broke down only in the Romantic era, when it was felt that such a tedious process of work hampered inspiration.

Annibale's development in Rome was rapid, and the few years left to him at the beginning of the new century were crowded with important works. Again, the fate and careers of Caravaggio and Annibale run strangely parallel. At about the time Caravaggio fled from Rome, never to return, Annibale retired from life stricken by a deep melan-



cholia, and during his last years hardly touched a brush.<sup>25</sup> In his later canvases we can follow a progressive accretion of mass and sculptural qualities coupled with a growing economy in the compositions.<sup>26</sup> The *Assumption of the Virgin* of 1601 for the Cerasi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo is a characteristic work of his fully developed Roman manner (Plate 16A). Here for the first and only time Annibale and Caravaggio worked on the same commission, and the visitor to the chapel naturally lets his eye wander from one master to the other. In such a comparison Annibale's *Assumption* may appear tame and even laboured, but it is worth observing that, just as in Caravaggio's *Conversion of St Paul* (Plate 10) and his *Crucifixion of St Peter*, it is the overpowering bulk of Annibale's figures that dominates the canvas. In spite of this triumph of the massive sculptural figure, Annibale's *Assumption* shows that he never forgot the lesson learnt from Titian and Correggio. By fusing Venetian colour with Roman design, a painterly approach with classical severity of form, Annibale demonstrated in practice – as was correctly seen in his own day<sup>27</sup> – that these old contrasts, about which so much ink had been spilt in theoretical discussions of the sixteenth century, were no longer irreconcilable.

In their measured and heroic expressions many of Annibale's late pictures, such as the London *Domine Quo Vadis*, the Naples *Pietà*, or the Paris *Lamentation*, are reminiscent of classical tragedy. Contemporaries realized that Annibale was deeply concerned with the Aristotelian problem (*Poetics*, 17) which, since Alberti's days, had taken up a central position in any consideration of the highest class of painting, namely how to represent in an appropriate and forceful visual form the *affetti*, the emotions of the human soul. Annibale had neither the theoretical mind of an Alberti nor the experimental passion of a Leonardo; he was, in fact, opposed to theorizing and a man of few words. But he sensed, as it were intuitively, the temper of the age, and in his concern for the telling use of gestures and expressions one has no difficulty in recognizing a new rationalist spirit of analysis. To base the rendering of the *affetti* on rational and generally valid findings became an important preoccupation of seventeenth-century artists. Poussin learned his lesson from Annibale, and the same problems were later submitted to philosophical analysis by Descartes in his *Passions de l'Âme* of 1649.

A new sensibility characterizes the seventeenth century, and this manifests itself not only in what may appear to us nowadays as the conventional language of rhetoric, but also in highly charged subjective expressions of feeling, grief and melancholy. The rational medium of design gives conventional gestures an objective quality, while the irrational medium of colour adds to conveying those intangible marks which are not readily translatable into descriptive language. The early Roman *Bacchus playing the Lute to Silenus* (London, National Gallery) exemplifies very well this important element in Annibale's *œuvre*. There is an atmosphere of melancholy pervading this little picture, and this is due to the wonderfully rich Titianesque evening sky casting a sombre mood over the wide deserted landscape behind the figures. Characteristically, this mood is transmitted through the landscape, and, as in Venice, landscape always plays an important part in Annibale's canvases as a foil against which to set off and underline a picture's prevailing spirit.<sup>28</sup> Considering this Venetian evaluation of the landscape element, it is not strange to find pure landscapes early in Annibale's career.

His first loosely constructed landscapes, peopled with huntsmen and fishermen (Louvre), are essentially Venetian. But in accordance with the general trend of his development and under the impression, it would seem, of the severe forms of the Campagna, Annibale in Rome replaced the freedom and rusticity of his early landscapes by carefully constructed landscape panoramas. The most celebrated example of this new landscape style is the lunette with a *Flight into Egypt* (Rome, Galleria Doria-Pamphili; Plate 17), dating from about 1604.<sup>29</sup> An integral part of these panoramas is always the work of man – castles and houses, turrets and bridges, severely composed of horizontals and verticals and placed at conspicuous points in the landscape. The architectural motif in the centre of the Doria *Flight into Egypt* is framed by a cluster of large trees in the left foreground – such trees become *de rigueur* in this type of landscape – and by the trees to the right in the middle distance; nor is the position of the Holy Family fortuitous: the group moves forward protected, as it were, by the firm lines of the castle above it and, in addition, it is placed at the meeting points of two spatial diagonals formed by the sheep and the river; thus figures and buildings are intimately blended with the carefully arranged pattern of the landscape. This is neither Nature untouched and wild where the role of man shrinks into insignificance – as in the landscapes of some contemporary northern artists working in Rome, above all Paul Brill and Jan Bruegel – nor is it on the other hand the fairy-lands which Elsheimer created in his Roman years; instead it is a heroic and aristocratic conception of Nature tamed and ennobled by the presence of man. It was Annibale's paintings of ideal landscapes that prepared the way for the landscapes of Domenichino and Albani, of Claude and Poussin.

Annibale's grand manner of the Roman years may rightly be regarded as his most important achievement, but the formal side of his art had an interesting counterpart of informality. Both Annibale and Agostino had an intimate, genre-like idiom at their disposal. This, it seems, found expression more often in drawings than in pictures, although a number of genre paintings do exist and many more must have existed, judging from contemporary notices. A picture like the *Butcher's Shop* at Christ Church, Oxford makes it evident that the Carracci at Bologna had come in contact with, and were deeply impressed by, northern genre painting in the manner of Pieter Aertsen.<sup>30</sup> Annibale's homely portrait sketch in oil of a smiling young man (Rome, Galleria Borghese) and, above all, the half-length of a *Man with a Monkey* looking for lice in his master's hair (Uffizi; Plate 7B) illustrate the trend with an admirable and entertaining candour. This last picture was probably painted two or three years before Caravaggio's *Bacchus* in the Uffizi (Plate 7A). Compared with it, Annibale's painting strikes one as 'impressionist' and progressive; it is, moreover, genre pure and simple.

It is clear from contemporary sources – in the first place from Malvasia, the biographer of Bolognese artists – that the two Carracci brothers regarded nothing as too insignificant or too uninteresting to be jotted down on paper on the spur of the moment. They were tireless draughtsmen and their curiosity was unlimited. They had an eye for the life and labours of the common people, for the amusing, queer, odd, and even obscene happenings of daily life, and something of this immediacy of approach will also be noticed in their grand manner. But with these two idioms, the official and the unofficial,

## THE CARRACCI

at their command, a duality was possible which would have been unthinkable in the age of Raphael. By being able to work simultaneously on two levels, the Carracci reveal a dichotomy which from then on became more and more pronounced in the work of great artists and culminated in the dual activity or aspirations of a Hogarth or a Goya.

It is not at all astonishing that this mentality predestined the Carracci to become the originators of modern caricature: caricature, that is, in the pure sense, as a mocking criticism of other people's shortcomings. It is well attested that Annibale was the inventor of this new form of art.<sup>31</sup> The caricaturist substitutes a primitive, timeless technique for the established conventions of draughtsmanship, and an uninhibited personal interpretation for the objective rendering of reality which was the principal requirement of the Renaissance tradition. The artist who was acclaimed as the restorer of that tradition also forged dangerous weapons to undermine it.

## CHAPTER 4

### CARAVAGGIO'S FOLLOWERS AND THE CARRACCI SCHOOL IN ROME

ANNIBALE CARRACCI alone had a school in Rome in the accepted sense of the term. Not only were he and the other members of his family good teachers, but his art, particularly his Roman manner, lent itself to being taught. The foundation of the school was, of course, laid in the Bolognese 'academy', and his young pupils and friends who followed him to Rome arrived there well prepared. Caravaggio on the other hand, a bohemian, turbulent and uncontrolled, never tried to train a pupil, nor indeed could he have done so since the subjective qualities of his style, his improvisations, his *ad hoc* technique, his particular mystique of light, and his many inner contradictions were not translatable into easy formulas. Yet, what he had brought into the world of vision was a directness, a power of immediate appeal that had an almost hypnotic fascination for painters, so that even Carracci pupils and followers fell under his spell at certain stages of their development. Moreover, generations of painters inside Italy and even more outside her confines sought inspiration from his work. Nevertheless when one contemplates the life and art of Caravaggio and of Annibale, the pattern of the development in Rome during the first quarter of the seventeenth century seems almost a foregone conclusion.

#### *The Caravaggisti*

Few of Caravaggio's followers actually met him in Rome, but most of them were deeply moved by his work while its impact was still fresh and forceful. The list of names is long and contains masters of real distinction. Among the older painters Orazio Gentileschi (1563-1639<sup>1</sup>) stands out. Next to him artists like Antiveduto Gramatica (1571-1626) and Giovanni Baglione (c. 1573-1644) are of only marginal interest. The most important younger artists were Orazio Borgianni (1578 or earlier-1616), Bartolomeo Manfredi (c. 1587-1620/1),<sup>2</sup> Carlo Saraceni (1579<sup>3</sup>-1620), Giovanni Battista Caracciolo (d. 1637), Giovanni Serodine (1600-30), and Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-c. 1652), apart from a host of northerners, among whom the Italo-Frenchman Valentin (1594-1632) should here be mentioned.<sup>4</sup>

These names make it at once apparent that Caravaggio's manner was taken up by painters with very different backgrounds, traditions, and training. Few among them were Romans; Gentileschi, for example, came from Pisa, Saraceni from Venice, Manfredi from near Mantua, and Serodine from Ascona. In contrast to the Bolognese followers of the Carracci who shared a common training and believed in similar principles, these artists never formed a homogeneous group. Caravaggio's idiom was a kind of ferment giving their art substance and direction for a time; but with most of them it was like a leaven not fully absorbed and which was to be discarded when they thought fit.

In this respect Orazio Gentileschi's career is symptomatic. He was in Rome from 1576 on and came under Caravaggio's influence in the early years of the new century. But a typically Tuscan quality always remained noticeable in his work – so much so that his pictures are on occasions reminiscent of Bronzino and even of Sassoferrato: witness his clear and precise contours, his light and cold blues, yellows, and violets as well as the restraint and simplicity of his compositions. Moreover, his lyrical and idyllic temperament is far removed from Caravaggio's almost barbaric vitality.

The chronology of Orazio's *œuvre* is not without problems, for dated pictures are few and far between. One of his chief works, the graceful *Annunciation* in Turin (Plate 18A), painted for Charles Emanuel I of Savoy, probably in 1623, clearly shows him developing away from Caravaggio, and the pictures painted after he settled in England in 1626 as Charles I's court painter carry this tendency still further. They are extremely light in colour, and the Florentine note supersedes his *Caravaggismo*. By contrast a work like the Dublin *David and Goliath* with its powerful movement, foreshortening, chiaroscuro, and its Caravaggesque types must have been created in Rome at an early period of his career.<sup>5</sup> Examples of Orazio's later manner may be seen in a picture such as the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (known in four versions in Birmingham; the J. Paul Getty Coll., Los Angeles; Vienna; and the Louvre),<sup>6</sup> datable c. 1626, and in his principal work in England, the nine compartmental pictures for the hall of the Queen's House, Greenwich, probably executed after 1635, and now in a mutilated condition in Marlborough House.<sup>7</sup> The difference between the two latter works makes it evident that the longer he was away from Rome the thinner became the Caravaggesque veneer. It is undeniable that in the setting of the London Court, with its progressive tendencies represented by Rubens and Van Dyck, the work of Gentileschi appears almost outdated.<sup>8</sup>

The development of Orazio Gentileschi is characteristic of much of the history of the early *Caravaggisti*. But in the case of an artist such as Giovanni Baglione the emphasis is somewhat different. Baglione, nowadays chiefly known as the biographer of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Roman artists, belongs essentially to the late academic phase of Mannerism. An exact contemporary of Caravaggio's, he was that artist's bitter enemy. However, for a brief moment in his career, and even earlier than the rank and file of the *Caravaggisti*, he was overwhelmed by the impact, although never fully understanding the implications, of the great master's work. His *Sacred Love subduing Profane Love* (Berlin), painted after 1600 in competition with Caravaggio's *Earthly Love* for Cardinal Benedetto Giustiniani, is a hybrid creation where a Caravaggesque formula hardly conceals Late Mannerist rhetoric.<sup>9</sup>

The art of Orazio Borgianni, Carlo Saraceni, and Bartolomeo Manfredi represents very different facets of *Caravaggismo*. Borgianni, a Roman who grew up in Sicily and spent several years in Spain, returned permanently to Rome in 1605,<sup>10</sup> where he painted a small number of great and impressive pictures. Their extraordinarily free handling and their warm and glowing colours are exceptional for an artist born in Rome. Some are reminiscent of the Bassani, in others there is a strong Tintorettesque note, others again, like the *Nativity of the Virgin* of c. 1613 (Savona, Santuario della Misericordia), seem to anticipate the Venetian work of Domenico Fetti. His best pictures, among which the

*Virgin in Glory handing the Child to St Francis* of 1608 (Sezze Romano, Town Hall), the *St Charles Borromeo* of 1611-12 (S. Carlo alle Quattro Fontane; Plate 18B), and *St Charles attending the Plague-stricken* (c. 1613, formerly S. Adriano, now Chiesa della Casa Generalizia dei Padri Mercedari, Rome) may be mentioned, excel by a deep and mystical devotion which in its compassionate appeal differs from that of Caravaggio. What in fact Borgianni owed to Caravaggio was perhaps the strengthening of inherent realistic and chiaroscuro tendencies. Nevertheless before his pictures one feels compelled to believe that this highly talented artist, who, incidentally, was another personal enemy of Caravaggio's, would have developed as he did even without the great master's example before his eyes.

The art of Carlo Saraceni was to a large extent determined by his contact with the German Elsheimer, to whose close circle he belonged soon after his arrival in Rome, perhaps as early as 1598. Their pictures are sometimes so intimately related that the dividing line between them is not easily seen.<sup>11</sup> Elsheimer expressed his immensely poetical micro-cosmic view of the world in miniature format. Saraceni, although accepting the miniature style (and also the copper panel technique), toned down this Northern magic and invested his pictures with an almost Giorgionesque quality which revealed his Venetian upbringing. In his early Roman period there is, of course, an unbridgeable gulf between him and Caravaggio, as a comparison between the latter's *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* with the former's similar work of 1606 in Frascati<sup>12</sup> shows: Saraceni translated Caravaggio's tense and mysterious scene into a homely narrative enacted before a warm 'Elsheimer' landscape. One would, therefore, not expect to find much of Caravaggio's spirit during Saraceni's Caravaggesque period which begins in the second decade, after Elsheimer's death. Yet in these pictures the format as well as his vision grows. One can follow this process of monumentalization from the *St Raymond preaching* (c. 1614, formerly S. Adriano, now Chiesa della Casa Generalizia dei Mercedari; Plate 19B)<sup>13</sup> to the *St Charles Borromeo and the Cross of the Holy Nail* (c. 1615, S. Lorenzo in Lucina) and the *Miracle of St Benno* and *Martyrdom of St Lambertinus* (c. 1617-18, both S. Maria dell' Anima). Saraceni, however, can never compete with Caravaggio's dramatic Roman manner; nor did he ever fully absorb the latter's *tenebroso*. It remains true that even before these monumental pictures one does not easily forget that his real talent lay in the *petite manière*.<sup>14</sup> In 1620 Saraceni returned to Venice, where he died the same year.

Manfredi's known work falls approximately into the period 1610-20. He was one of the few close imitators of Caravaggio and interpreted the master in a rather rough style which later generations came to regard as characteristic of Caravaggio himself; for it was Manfredi possibly more than anyone else who transformed Caravaggio's manner into proper genre, emphasizing the coarse aspects of the latter's art to the neglect of his other qualities. Guard-room and tavern scenes as well as religious subjects suffer this metamorphosis. Valentin's choice of subjects is similar to that of Manfredi, and indeed the two artists have often been confused. The son of an Italian, coming from France (Boulogne), Valentin settled in Rome in about 1612. Most of his known work seems to date from after 1620. His pictures are not only infinitely more disciplined than Manfredi's, but also exhibit an extensive scale of differentiated emotions and passages of real drama. Valentin carried on Caravaggio's manner in Rome longer than almost any other *Caravaggista*.<sup>15</sup>

Like Valentin, Serodine really belongs to a younger generation, but both died so young that they should be included among the first generation of Caravaggio followers. Yet when Serodine arrived in Rome in about 1615, Caravaggio was little more than a legend. By far the greatest colourist of the whole group, Serodine can be followed in his rapid development from the Caravaggesque *Calling of the Sons of Zebedee* at Ascona (c. 1622), which combines reminiscences of Caravaggio's *Madonna di Loreto* and of Borgianni's palette, to his masterpiece, the immensely touching *Almsgiving of St Lawrence* of the mid 1620s (Rome, Galleria Nazionale); thence to the freer *St Peter and St Paul* (Rome, Galleria Nazionale) and to the Edinburgh *Tribute Money*. The last-named picture, with its light background and its painterly handling recalling Bernardo Strozzi, prepares the way for the extraordinary *tour de force* of the *Portrait of his Father*,<sup>16</sup> painted in 1628 (Lugano, Museo Civico; Plate 19A), which is reminiscent of the mature works of Fetti and Lys. Still later is the *St Peter in Prison* (Rancate, Züst Collection) where he used Honthorst's candle-light but not his technique. The impasto calls to mind Rembrandt's advanced work, and the 'impressionist' freedom of the individual brush-stroke leads further away from Caravaggio than the work of any other of his followers in Rome. The rapidity of Serodine's development is equalled only by that of Caravaggio. The fact that it removed him from Caravaggio towards rich chromatic values ties him to the aspirations of a new age.

By about 1620 most of the *Caravaggisti* were either dead or had left Rome for good. Those who returned home quickly adjusted their styles to their native surroundings; some of them hardly reveal in their later work that they had ever had any contact with Caravaggio.<sup>17</sup> Not one of them had really understood the wholeness of his conception. They divested his realism of its irrational quality and his *tenebroso* of its mystique. They not only devitalized his manner, but as a rule they selected from his art only those elements which were congenial to their taste and ability. Some of them, like Gentileschi and to a certain extent Saraceni, were strongly attracted by Caravaggio's early Roman phase; others, like Manfredi and Valentin, who saw chiefly the plebeian side of his art, blended the genre subjects of his early Roman phase with the *tenebroso* of his later style. Soon after 1620 Caravaggism in Rome had lost its appeal. It remained successful only in the popular genre in cabinet format, the introduction of which was largely due to the Haarlem artist Pieter van Laer, who was in Rome from 1625 to 1639. His so-called *Bambocciate*<sup>18</sup> (Plate 20A) survived as an undercurrent with a long history of their own.

In spite of the comparatively brief life of *Caravaggismo* in Rome and in spite of the toning down of the master's example, the diffusion of his style continued, either directly or indirectly, and by a variety of routes. Apart from Naples, where his work had a more lasting and invigorating effect than anywhere else in Italy, its penetration to Bologna and Siena, Genoa and Venice, and throughout Europe, is one of the most astonishing phenomena in the history of art. The names of Terbrugghen, Crabeth and Honthorst, Baburen, Pynas and Lastman, Jan Janssens, Gerard Seghers, Rombouts, and Vouet, most of them working in Rome at some time during the second decade of the century, indicate the extent of his influence; and we know now that neither Rubens, who had very early in his career experienced Caravaggio's direct influence in Rome, nor Rembrandt,

Velasquez, and Vermeer, would have developed as they did without the Caravaggio blood-transfusion. But while elements of Caravaggism became a permanent feature of European painting, I must repeat that many of those who were responsible for its dissemination discarded it on their return to their home countries in favour of current styles. As an example, the Frenchman Vouet, after an intense early Caravaggesque phase, submitted entirely to an easy international Baroque style tempered by a classical note.<sup>19</sup> It is all the more remarkable that *Caravaggismo* did not begin to spread to any considerable extent until the third decade of the century, that is, at a moment when in Rome itself it was moribund or even dead.

### *The Bolognese in Rome and Early Baroque Classicism*

I have already indicated that the Carracci school presents a picture vastly different from the *Caravaggisti*. A phalanx of young Bolognese artists, observing Annibale's success, chose to follow him to Rome; nor did events show that their assessment of the situation was incorrect. They had besides much to recommend themselves. First and foremost they were excellent artists. They had undergone a thorough training in the Carracci academy and had acquired a solid classical background even before they reached Rome. They were supported by Annibale's unrivalled authority and could rely on a circle of wealthy and powerful patrons. Moreover, they were all masters of the fresco technique and were, therefore, both able to assist Annibale in his own work and to execute monumental fresco commissions on their own account. In addition, during the short reign of Gregory XV (1621-3), who was himself born in Bologna, they were in undisputed command of the situation.

Guido Reni (1575-1642) and Francesco Albani (1578-1660) appeared in Rome shortly after April 1600, Lanfranco (1582-1647) and Domenichino (1581-1641) came soon after, and the much younger Guercino (1591-1666) arrived in 1621. Annibale used Domenichino for work in the Galleria Farnese,<sup>20</sup> and it was mainly Albani, assisted by the Parmese Lanfranco and Sisto Badalocchio, also from Parma, who carried out from Annibale's designs most of the frescoes in the S. Diego Chapel in S. Giacomo degli Spagnuoli between 1602 and 1607.<sup>21</sup> At the same time Innocenzo Tacconi,<sup>22</sup> another Bolognese of the second rank, executed the frescoes on the vault of the Cerasi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo, for which Annibale painted the *Assumption of the Virgin*.

In the succeeding years these Bolognese artists firmly established a style in Rome which by and large shows a strengthening of the rationalist and classical tendencies inherent in the Farnese ceiling. With the exception of Domenichino and Lanfranco, however, the time spent in Rome by these artists was neither consecutive nor protracted. Domenichino stayed for a period of almost thirty years, though he returned to Bologna between 1617 and 1621, and Lanfranco, who was once absent from Rome between 1610 and 1612, left for Naples only in 1633-4. On the other hand Reni, after visits to Rome between 1600 and 1604 and again from 1607 to 1611 and from 1612<sup>23</sup> to 1614, made Bologna his permanent home, remaining there except for a few relatively brief intermissions until his death in 1642. Albani did not leave Rome until mid 1617,<sup>24</sup>



## CARAVAGGIO'S FOLLOWERS AND THE CARRACCI SCHOOL

to return only for short periods of time; and Guercino's years in the Holy City were confined to the reign of Gregory XV, from 1621 to 1623.

From about 1606 onwards these masters were responsible for a series of large and important cycles of frescoes. Their activity in this field is an impressive testimony to their rapidly rising star. A feeling for the situation is best conveyed by listing in chronological sequence the major cycles executed by the whole group during the crucial twelve years 1606-18.

1606-7: Palazzo Mattei di Giove, Rome. Three rooms with ceiling frescoes in the south-west sector of the *piano nobile*, by Albani: *Isaac blessing Jacob*, *Jacob and Rachel*, and *Jacob's Dream*.<sup>25</sup>

1608: Sala delle Nozze Aldobrandini, Vatican. Reni's *Stories of Samson* (repainted).<sup>26</sup>

1608: Sala delle Dame, Vatican. Reni's *Transfiguration*, *Ascension of Christ*, and *Pentecost* on the vault of the room.

1608: Oratory of St Andrew, S. Gregorio Magno, Rome. The large frescoes of *St Andrew adoring the Cross* by Reni and the *Scourging of St Andrew* by Domenichino, commissioned by Cardinal Scipione Borghese.

1608-9: S. Silvia Chapel, S. Gregorio Magno, Rome. The apse decorated by Reni with *God the Father and Angels*.

1608-10: Abbey of Grottaferrata. Chapel decorated by Domenichino with scenes from the *Legends of St Nilus and St Bartholomew*. The commission was due to Cardinal Odoardo Farnese on Annibale's recommendation.

1609: Palazzo Giustiniani (now Odescalchi), Bassano (di Sutri) Romano. The ceiling of a small room painted by Domenichino with stories of the myth of Diana, in the manner of the Farnese Gallery. The frescoes of the large hall by Albani. On the ceiling of the hall Albani represented the *Fall of Phaeton* and the *Council of the Gods*, the latter placed in tight groups round the edges of the vault - the whole an unsuccessful attempt at illusionistic unification. Along the walls there are eight scenes illustrating the consequences of the *Fall*. The patron was the Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani.<sup>27</sup>

1609-11: Chapel of the Annunciation, Quirinal Palace. The whole decorated by Reni, in collaboration with his Bolognese assistants, see p. 11.

1610, 1612: Cappella Paolina, S. Maria Maggiore. Reni is responsible mainly for single figures of saints.

1612-14: Choir, S. Maria della Pace. Albani completes the mariological programme begun in the sixteenth century.

1613-14: Casino dell'Aurora, Palazzo Rospigliosi, Rome. The *Aurora* ceiling painted by Reni for Cardinal Scipione Borghese (Plate 22).

1613-14: S. Luigi de' Francesi, Rome. Domenichino's scenes from the *Life of St Cecilia* (Plate 21).<sup>28</sup>

1615: Palazzo Mattei di Giove, Rome. Lanfranco (*Joseph interpreting Dreams* and *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife*).<sup>29</sup> These frescoes are inspired by Raphael's Logge.

c. 1615 and later: Palazzo Costaguti, Rome. Domenichino: *The Chariot of Apollo* in the

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION AND THE EARLY BAROQUE

centre of the ceiling of the large hall, set in a Tassi *quadratura*.<sup>30</sup> Lanfranco: the ceiling with *Polyphemus and Galatea* destroyed (replica in the Doria Gallery); the ceiling with *Justice and Peace* probably 1624<sup>31</sup> (*quadratura* by Tassi?); the third ceiling with *Nessus and Dejanira*, previously given to Lanfranco, is now attributed to Sisto Badalocchio.<sup>32</sup> The ceiling with Guercino's *Armida carrying off Rinaldo*, once again in a Tassi *quadratura*, was painted between 1621 and 1623. Mola's and Romanelli's frescoes belong to a later phase.

1616: S. Agostino, Rome. Lanfranco's decoration of the Chapel of St Augustine.<sup>33</sup>

c. 1616: Palazzo Verospi (now Credito Italiano), Corso, Rome. Albani: ceiling of the hall with *Apollo and the Seasons*. The artist's Carraccesque style has become more decidedly Raphaellesque, and reliance on the *Cupid and Psyche* cycle in the Farnesina is evident.<sup>34</sup>

1616-17: Sala de' Corazzieri, Quirinal Palace. For Lanfranco's contribution to the frieze of this large hall, see p. 11.

1616-18: Stanza di Apollo, Villa Belvedere (Aldobrandini), Frascati. Eight frescoes with scenes of the myth of Apollo, painted by Domenichino and pupils at the instance of Monsignor Agucchi for Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini (now National Gallery, London).<sup>35</sup>

All these frescoes are closely connected by characteristics of style. Not only are most of the ceiling decorations painted as *quadri riportati*, but they are also more severely classical than the Farnese Gallery. Annibale's rich and complex framework, reminiscent of Mannerist decoration, was dropped and, at the most classical moment between 1613 and 1615, the *quadro riportato* appears isolated on the flat centre of the vault. Thus, Guido's *Aurora* was framed with stuccoes, leaving the surrounding area entirely white. The principle was perhaps followed in the Palazzo Mattei and certainly in the *Rape of Dejanira* ceiling in the Palazzo Costaguti, probably the only room which survives undisturbed from the period around 1615. These examples are evidence that in the second decade of the century the Bolognese artists were inclining towards an extreme form of classicism. It is, of course, Domenichino in whose work this development is most obvious, and it typifies the general trend that his St Cecilia frescoes of 1613-14 are far more rigidly classical than his previous work.

Corresponding to the requirements of decorum, his *Scourging of St Andrew* of 1608 takes place on a Roman piazza; the carefully prepared stage is closed by the wall and columns of a temple placed parallel to the picture plane, and its rigidity contrasts with the somewhat freer arrangement of the ancient city and landscape in the left background. In order to safeguard the foreground scene against visual interference from the crowd assembled under the temple portico, Domenichino introduced an unusual device; disregarding the laws of Renaissance perspective, he made these figures unduly small, much smaller than they ought to be where they stand. The principal actors are divided into two carefully composed groups, the one surrounding the figure of the saint, the other consisting of the astonished and frightened spectators. Firmly constructed though these groups are, there is a certain looseness in the composition and, particularly in the onlookers, a

distinct lack of definition. In the St Cecilia frescoes the depth of the stage has shrunk and the scenes are closed (Plate 21). The figures have grown in size and importance; each is clearly individualized and expresses its mood by studied gestures. Many figures are directly derived from classical statues, archaeological elements are more conscientiously introduced, and the spirit of Raphael permeates the work to an even greater extent.<sup>36</sup> But at the same time Domenichino has seen all this through the eyes of Annibale.

At this moment Domenichino was probably acknowledged as the leading artist in Rome, and the circle of his friend Agucchi must have regarded the St Cecilia frescoes as the apogee of painting. One would have expected Domenichino to pursue the same course which accorded so well with Agucchi's and his own theoretical position.<sup>37</sup> History, however, is never logical and so, after his performance in S. Luigi de' Francesi, we find Domenichino beginning to turn in a different direction. In his most important commission of the next decade, the choir and pendentives of S. Andrea della Valle (1622, not 1624, -8),<sup>38</sup> this arch-classicist seemed to be tempted by the new Baroque trend. This is clearly visible in the Evangelists on the pendentives, where a strong Correggienesque note is added to the reminiscences of Raphael and Michelangelo. It may be supposed that Domenichino wished to outshine his rival Lanfranco, who to the former's anguish was given the commission for the dome. A development towards the Baroque will also be noticed in the celebrated scenes from the life of St Andrew in the apse of the church (c. 1623-6). While the single incidents are still strictly separated by ornamented ribs, the stage is widened and on it the figures move in greater depth than formerly, some of them in beautiful co-ordination with the rich landscape setting. In addition, borrowings from Lodovico Carracci make their appearance,<sup>39</sup> another indication of Domenichino's drifting away from the orthodox classicism of ten years before.

In 1631 Domenichino left Rome for Naples,<sup>39a</sup> where he was under contract to execute the pendentives and dome of the Chapel of S. Gennaro in the cathedral. Here he built on the tendencies already apparent in the pendentives of S. Andrea and amplified them to such an extent that these frescoes appear as an almost complete break with his earlier manner. He filled the spherical spaces to their extremities with a mass of turgid, gesticulating figures which at the same time seem to have become petrified. The principal interest of these paintings lies in their counter-reformatory content, which Émile Mâle has recounted; but it cannot be denied that Domenichino's powers, measured by the standard of his most perfect and harmonious achievements, were on the decline.<sup>40</sup> Nor was his attempt to catch up with the spirit of a new age successful. The hostility he met with in the course of executing his work in Naples and which may have contributed to his failure is well known; however, after his dramatic flight north in 1634 he returned once more to Naples, but left the work in the chapel unfinished at his death in 1641.

Domenichino's reputation has always remained high with the adherents of the classical doctrine, and during the eighteenth century he is often classed second only to Raphael. But this reputation was not based only on his work as a fresco-painter. Oil-paintings such as the Vatican *Last Communion of St Jerome* of 1614 or the Borghese *Hunt of Diana*<sup>41</sup> of 1617, done for Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini but acquired by force by

Scipione Borghese, reveal him as a more refined colourist than his frescoes would lead one to expect. These two works, painted during his best period, show the breadth of his range. The *St Jerome*, more carefully organized and more boldly accentuated than his model, Agostino Carracci's masterpiece, has never failed to carry conviction by its sincerity and depth of religious feeling.<sup>42</sup> Coming from Domenichino's frescoes, one may note with surprise the idyllic mood in the *Diana*, but that he was capable of it is attested by a number of pure landscapes which he painted.<sup>43</sup> These, and particularly the later ones, show a relaxing of Annibale's more severe approach. By allying the pastoral and the grand, Domenichino created a landscape style which was to have an important influence on the early work of Claude.

The art of Albani follows a more limited course. Like Domenichino he had started as a pupil in Calvaert's school<sup>44</sup> and later removed to the Carracci. At first vacillating between dependence on Lodovico (e.g. *Repentance of St Peter*, Oratorio S. Colombano, Bologna, 1598) and on Annibale (*Virgin and Saints*, Bologna, Pinacoteca, 1599), his early work already shows a somewhat slight and lyrical quality which later on was to become the keynote of his manner. It is therefore not at all surprising that in Rome he was particularly captivated by Raphael (Palazzo Verospi frescoes) without abandoning, however, his connexion with Lodovico, as one of his ceilings in the Palazzo Mattei shows.<sup>45</sup> Although he worked for Reni in the chapel of the Quirinal Palace, he remained in these years essentially devoted to Domenichino's type of classicism, but lacked the latter's precision and unfailing sense of style. Even before returning to Bologna his special gift led him towards light-hearted and appealing representations of myth and allegory in landscape settings<sup>46</sup> of the sort that is perhaps best exemplified by the *Four Elements* in Turin, painted in 1626-8 (Plate 25A). In his later years Albani became involved in theoretical speculations of a strictly classical character. Although he had a relatively strong moment in the early 1630s (*Annunciation*, S. Bartolommeo, Bologna, 1633), during the last period his large canvases, many of which have little more than a provincial interest, often combine influences from Reni with an empty and boring symmetry of arrangement.

Guido Reni was an infinitely more subtle colourist than Domenichino. In retrospect it would appear that his vision and range far surpassed those of his Bolognese contemporaries. His fame was obscured by the large mass of standardized sentimental pictures coming from his studio during the last ten years of his life, the majority the product of assistants. It is only fairly recently, and particularly through the Reni Exhibition of 1954, that the high qualities of his original work have revealed him once again as one of the greatest figures of Seicento painting.

Guido was less dependent on Annibale than the other Bolognese artists, and from the beginning of his stay in Rome he received commissions of his own. Between 1604 and 1605 he painted the *Crucifixion of St Peter* (Vatican) in Caravaggio's manner. That even Reni, despite having gone through Lodovico's school at Bologna, would for a while be drawn into the powerful orbit of Caravaggio<sup>47</sup> might almost have been foreseen; but although the picture shows an extraordinary understanding of his dramatic realism and lighting – and that at a time before the *Caravaggisti* had come into their own – the basis

## CARAVAGGIO'S FOLLOWERS AND THE CARRACCI SCHOOL

of Reni's art was classical and his approach to painting far removed from Caravaggio's. The picture is composed in the form of the traditional classical pyramid and firmly woven into balance by contrappostal attitudes and gestures. Moreover, Reni's essential unconcern for primary realist requirements is exposed by the irrational behaviour of the executioners: they seem to act automatically without concentration on their task.

Reni's first great fresco, the *St Andrew led to Martyrdom*, is in telling contrast to the static quality of Domenichino's fresco on the wall opposite. The figure of the saint, forming part of a procession from left to right which moves in an arch curving towards the front of the picture, is caught in a moment of time as he adores the Cross visible on the far-away hill. There is, however, a lack of dramatic concentration and a diffusion in the composition which, while allowing the eye to rest with pleasure on certain passages of superb painting, distracts from the story itself. How lucidly organized, by contrast, is the Domenichino! And yet one has only to compare the figure of the henchman seen from the back in both frescoes to realize Reni's superior pictorial handling. The classicism of Reni is in fact far freer and more imaginative than that of Domenichino. In addition, Guido was capable of adjusting his style to suit the subject-matter instead of conforming to a rigid pattern. This may be indicated by mentioning some works created during the same important years of his life.

In the *Music-making Angels* of the S. Silvia Chapel in S. Gregorio Magno, and still more in the denser crowds of angels in the dome of the Quirinal Chapel, Reni has rendered the intangible beauty and golden light which belong to the nature of angels. A few years later he painted the dramatic *Massacre of the Innocents* (Bologna, Pinacoteca).<sup>48</sup> Violence, of which one would have thought the artist incapable, is rampant. But the spirit of Raphael and of the ancient Niobids combine to purge this subtly constructed canvas of any impression of real horror. In the *Samson* (Bologna, Pinacoteca; Plate 23A)<sup>49</sup> he mitigated the melancholy aftermath of the bloodthirsty scene by the extraordinary figure of the hero, standing alone in the twilight landscape in a pose vaguely reminiscent of Mannerist figures, as if moving to the muffled sound of music, with no weight to his body. Triumph and desolation are simultaneously conveyed by the contrast of the brilliant warm-golden hue of the elegant nude and the cold tones of the corpses huddled on the field. The monumental *Papal Portrait*, probably painted a decade later,<sup>50</sup> now at Corsham Court, is a serious interpretation of character in the Raphael tradition, showing a depth of psychological penetration which is surprising after a picture like the *Massacre*, where the expressions of all the faces are variations on the same theme. Finally, Reni transmutes in the *Aurora*<sup>51</sup> (Plate 22) a statuesque ideal of bodily perfection and beauty by the alchemy of his glowing and transparent light effects, welding figures adapted from classical and Renaissance art into a graceful and flowing conception.

As early as 1610 it seemed that Reni would emerge as the leading artist in Rome. The road to supreme eminence was open to him, not least because of his favoured position in the household of Cardinal Scipione Borghese, through whose good offices he had been given the lion's share of recent papal commissions. But he himself buried these hopes when in 1614 he decided to return to Bologna, leaving Domenichino in command of

the situation. The change of domicile had repercussions on his style rather than on his productivity. One masterpiece followed the other in quick succession. Among them are the great *Madonna della Pietà* of 1616 (Bologna, Pinacoteca), which with its peculiar symmetrical and hieratic composition could never have been painted in Rome, and the *Assumption* in S. Ambrogio, Genoa, begun in the same year, in which evident reminiscences of Lodovico and Annibale have been overlaid with a more vivid Venetian looseness and *bravura* (Plate 163). This rich and varied phase of Reni's activity reaches its conclusion with the *Atalanta and Hippomenes* (Prado) of the early 1620s. The curhythmic composition, the concentration on graceful line, and the peculiar balance between naturalism and classicizing idealization of the figures, all reveal this work as an epitome of Reni's art. He has discarded his warm palette, and the irrational lighting of the picture is worked out in cool colours. The remaining years of his Bolognese activity, during which he developed this new colour scheme together with a thorough readjustment of general principles, belong to another chapter.

Reni's influence, particularly in his later years, was strongest in Bologna, from where it spread. Lanfranco, on the other hand, after having been overshadowed by Domenichino during the first two decades of the century, eventually gained in stature at the expense of his rival, and in the twenties secured his position as the foremost painter in Rome. Born at Parma in 1582, he first worked there, together with Sisto Badalocchio, under Agostino Carracci, and it was after Agostino's death in 1602 that both artists joined Annibale in the Eternal City. From the beginning Lanfranco was the antipode of Domenichino. Their enmity was surely the result of their artistic incompatibility; for Lanfranco, coming from Correggio's town, had adopted a characteristically Parmese palette and always advocated a painterly freedom in contrast to Domenichino's rigid technique. In fact the old antithesis between colour and design, which for a moment Annibale had resolved, was here resurrected once again.

In his early Roman years we find Lanfranco engaged on all the more important cycles of frescoes by the Bolognese group, often, however, in a minor capacity. Beginning perhaps as Annibale's assistant in the Farnese Gallery, he had a share in the frescoes in the S. Diego Chapel, in S. Gregorio Magno, the Quirinal Palace, and even in the Cappella Paolina in S. Maria Maggiore. Of the first cycle painted by Lanfranco on his own in about 1605 in the Camera degli Eremiti of the Palazzo Farnese, three paintings detached from the wall survive in the neighbouring church of S. Maria della Morte.<sup>52</sup> This work shows him already following a comparatively free painterly course, remarkably untouched by the gravity of Annibale's Roman manner. But it was his stay from the end of 1610 to 1612 in his home-town Parma that brought inherent tendencies to sudden maturity. Probably through contact with the late style of Bartolommeo Schedoni<sup>53</sup> he developed towards a monumental and dynamic Baroque manner with strong chiaroscuro tendencies. It was the renewed experience of the original Correggio and of Correggio seen through Schedoni's Seicento eyes that turned Lanfranco into the champion of the rising High Baroque style. The change may be observed in the Piacenza *St Luke* of 1611. It appears there that Caravaggio's monumental Roman style helped to usher in Lanfranco's new manner. *St Luke* combines motifs from Caravaggio's two *St Matthews*

for the altar of the Contarelli Chapel; a graceful angel in Lodovico's manner is added, and the whole is bathed in Lanfranco's new Parmese tonality. After his return to Rome he gradually discarded the traditional vocabulary, and in a daring composition such as the Vienna *Virgin with St James and St Anthony Abbot* of about 1615-20<sup>54</sup> his new idiom appears fully developed.

Lanfranco's ascendancy over Domenichino began with the frescoes in S. Agostino (1616) and was sealed with the huge ceiling fresco in the Villa Borghese of 1624-5 (Plate 24A).<sup>55</sup> An enormous illusionist cornice is carried by flamboyant stone-coloured caryatids between which is seen the open sky. This framework, grandiose and at the same time easy, reveals a decorative talent of the highest order. But although there is a Baroque loosening here, the dependence on the Farnese ceiling cannot be overlooked: the *quadratura* yields on the ceiling to the large *quadro riportato* depicting the Gods of Olympus. Compared with the Farnese Gallery, the simplification and concentration on a few great accents are as striking as the shift of visual import from the *quadro riportato* to the light and airy *quadratura* with the accessory scenes. Traditional *quadratura* of the type practised by Tassi was reserved for architecture only. By making use of the figures as an inherent part of his scheme Lanfranco revealed a more playful and fantastic inventiveness than his predecessors, excellently suited to the villa of the eminent patron who required light-hearted grandeur.

The next important step in Lanfranco's career, the painting of the dome of S. Andrea della Valle, 1625-7,<sup>56</sup> opens up a new phase of Baroque painting (Plate 45). Correggiasque illusionism on the grandest scale was here introduced into Roman church decoration, and it was this that spelt the real end to the predominance of the classicism of the second decade.

A similar step had been taken a few years before by Guercino in the decoration of palaces. One should not forget that this artist belonged to a slightly younger generation; thus already in his earliest known work, carried out in his birthplace, Cento, he reveals a breaking away from the Carracesque figure conception. Although these frescoes of 1614 in the Casa Provenzale are derived from those by the Carracci in the Palazzo Fava, Bologna, they contrast with their model in their flickering effect of light which goes a long way to dissolve cubic form. These atmospheric qualities, which to a certain extent Guercino shared with Lanfranco, were developed more fully during the next ten years. Between 1616 and his visit to Rome in 1621 Guercino painted a series of powerful altar-pieces which entitle him to rank among the first artists of his time. His *Virgin with Saints* of 1616 (Brussels Museum), the *Martyrdom of St Peter* of 1618 (Modena), the *Prodigal Son* of 1618-19 (Vienna), and the Louvre *St Francis and St Benedict*, the *Elijah fed by Ravens* (London, Mahon Collection), and particularly the *St William receiving the Habit* (Bologna, Pinacoteca), all of 1620, show a progression towards Baroque movement, the merging of figures with their surroundings, form-dissolving light effects, and glowing and warm colours. In addition, *contrapposto* attitudes become increasingly forceful, and there is an intensity of expression which is often carried far beyond the capacity of Lodovico, for whose early style Guercino felt the greatest admiration.<sup>57</sup>

When Guercino appeared in Rome in 1621, it seemed a foregone conclusion that his

pictorial, rather violently Baroque manner would create a deep impression and hasten a change which the prevailing classical taste would be incapable of resisting. Between 1621 and 1623 he executed, above all, the frescoes in the Casino Ludovisi for the *Cardinale nipote* of Gregory XV (Plate 24B). The boldly foreshortened *Aurora* charging through the sky which opens above Tassi's *quadratura* architecture is the very antithesis of Guido's fresco in the Casino Rospigliosi. At either end the figures of *Day* and *Night*, emotional and personal interpretations with something of the quality of cabinet painting, foster the mood evoked by the coming of light. There is here an extraordinary freedom of handling, almost sketch-like in effect, which forms a deliberate contrast to the hard lines of the architecture and must at the time have appeared as a reversal of the traditional solidity of the fresco technique. This work, however, which might have assured Guercino a permanent place in the front rank of Roman painters, had for the artist an unexpected consequence. Under the influence of the Roman atmosphere, which was charged with personal and theoretical complexities, his confidence began to ebb. Already in the great *Burial and Reception into Heaven of St Petronilla* of 1622-3 (Rome, Capitoline Museum) there is a faint beginning of an abandonment of Baroque tendencies. The figures are less vigorous and more distinctly defined, the rich palette is toned down, and the composition itself is more classically balanced than in the pre-Roman works.<sup>58</sup> It is a curious historical paradox that Guercino who, it is not too much to say, sowed the seeds in Rome of the great High Baroque decorations, should at this precise moment have begun to turn towards a more easily appreciated classicism. But in the very picture where this is first manifest, the idea of lowering the body of the saint into the open sepulchre in which the beholder seems to stand has a directness of appeal unthinkable without the experience of Caravaggio.<sup>59</sup> Thus a painterly Baroque style, an echo of Caravaggio, and a foretaste of Baroque-Classicism combine at this crucial phase of Guercino's career. The aftermath, in the painter's home-town. Cento, must be mentioned in a different context.



CHAPTER 5  
PAINTING OUTSIDE ROME

THE Italian city-states and provincial centres looked back to an old tradition of local schools of painting. These schools lived on into the seventeenth century, preserving some of their native characteristics. In contrast to the previous two centuries, however, their importance was slight compared with Rome's dominating position. It is true they produced painters of considerable distinction, but it was only in Rome that these masters could rise to the level of metropolitan artists. It seems a safe guess that the Bolognese who followed Annibale Carracci to Rome would have remained provincial if they had stayed at home.

Before discussing the contributions of the local schools, the leading trends may once again (see p. 8) be surveyed. About 1600, Italian painters could draw inspiration from, and fall back upon, three principal manners. First, the different facets of Venetian and North Italian colourism: the warm, glowing and light palette of Veronese, the loaded brush-stroke of the late Titian, Tintoretto's dramatic flickering chiaroscuro, and Correggio's *sfumato*. Venetian 'impressionist' technique was surely the most important factor in bringing about the new Baroque painting. Its influence is invariably a sign of progressive tendencies, and it is hardly necessary to point out that European painting remained permanently indebted to Venice, down to the French Impressionists. Secondly, there was the anti-painterly style of the Florentine Late Mannerists, a style of easy routine, sapped of vitality, which remained nevertheless in vogue far into the seventeenth century. But this style contained no promise for the future. Florence, which for more than a hundred years had produced or educated the most progressive painters in Europe, became a stagnant backwater. Wherever Florentines or Florentine-influenced artists worked at the beginning of the seventeenth century, it spelled a hindrance to a free development of painting.<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, Barocci (1528 or later-1612),<sup>2</sup> whose place is in a history of sixteenth-century painting, has to be mentioned. All that can be said of him here is that he always adhered to the ideal of North Italian colour and fused an emotionalized interpretation of Correggio with Mannerist figures and Mannerist compositions. Whenever artists at the turn of the century tried to exchange rational Late Mannerist design for irrational Baroque colour, Barocci's imposing work was one of the chief sources to which they turned. Among his direct followers in the Marches the names of Andrea Lilli (1555-1610),<sup>3</sup> Alessandro Vitale (1580-1660), and Antonio Viviani (1560-1620) may be noted. His influence spread to the Emilian masters, to Rome, Florence, Milan, and above all to Siena, where Ventura Salimbeni (c. 1567-1630) and Francesco Vanni (1563-1610)<sup>4</sup> adopted his manner at certain phases of their careers. As the century advanced beyond the first decade three more trends became prominent, the impact of which was to be felt sooner or later throughout Italy and across her frontiers, namely the classicism of Annibale Carracci's school, Caravaggism, and Rubens's

## THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION AND THE EARLY BAROQUE

northern Baroque, the last resulting mainly from the wedding of Flemish realism and Venetian colourism. This marriage, accomplished by a great genius, was extraordinarily fertile and had a lasting influence above all in northern Italy.

At the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries provincial painters could not yet have recourse to the new trends which were then in the making. But provincial centres were in a state of ferment. Everywhere in Italy artists were seeking a new approach to painting. This situation is not only cognate to Barocci's Urbino, Cerano's and Procaccini's Milan, Bernardo Strozzi's Genoa, Bonone's Ferrara, and Schedoni's Modena, but even to Cigoli's Florence, and may be characterized as an attempt to break away from Mannerist conventions. On all sides are seen a new emotional vigour and a liberation from formulas of composition and colour.<sup>5</sup> Since the majority of these artists belonged to the Carracci generation, much of their work was painted before 1600. They were, of course, reared in the Late Mannerist tradition, and from this, despite their protest against it, they never entirely emancipated themselves. It was only in Bologna, due mainly to the pioneering of the Carracci 'academy', that at the beginning of the Seicento a coherent school arose which hardly shows traces of a transitional style. As regards the other provincial towns, it is by and large more appropriate to talk of a transitional manner brought about by the efforts of individual and often isolated masters, some of whose names have just been mentioned. The special position in the Venice of Lys and Fetti will be discussed at the end of this chapter, while the lonely figure of Caracciolo may more conveniently be added to the names of the later Neapolitan painters (see p. 230).

### Bologna and Neighbouring Cities

The foremost names of Bolognese artists who did not follow Annibale to Rome are Alessandro Tiarini (1577-1668), Giovanni Andrea Donducci, called Mastelletta (1575-1655), Leonello Spada (1576-1622), and, in addition, Giacomo Cavedoni from Sassuolo (1577-1660).<sup>6</sup> They all begin by adopting different aspects of the Carracci teaching, on occasion coloured by Caravaggio's influence. It is, however, in the second decade of the seventeenth century that these artists emerge as the authors of a series of powerful and vigorous masterpieces. Nevertheless their production is essentially provincial. Neither academic in the sense of the prevalent Domenichino type of classicism nor fettered to *Caravaggismo*, their work is to a certain extent an antithesis to contemporary art in Rome. The culmination of this typically Bolognese manner occurs about fifteen years after Annibale's departure to Rome, when the powers of Lodovico, both as painter and as head of the Academy, were on the wane. In the ten years between 1610 and 1620, above all, the artists of the Carracci school fulfilled the promise of their training; but on the return of Guido Reni to Bologna, they relinquished one by one their individuality to this much superior painter.

If Mastelletta was the most original of this group of artists, the most highly talented were undoubtedly Cavedoni and Tiarini. After a brief Florentine phase in his early

youth<sup>7</sup> the latter returned to Bologna, where he soon developed a characteristic style of his own. His masterpiece, *St Dominic resuscitating a Child*, a many-figured picture of huge dimensions, painted in 1614-15<sup>8</sup> for S. Domenico, Bologna, is dramatically lit and composed (Plate 26B). Since he was hardly impeded by theoretical considerations, little is to be found here of the classicism practised at this moment by his compatriots in Rome. While the solidity of his figures and their studied gestures reveal his education in the Carracci school, his 'painterly' approach to his subject proves him a close follower of Lodovico, on whom he also relies for certain figures and the unco-ordinated back-drop of the antique temple and column. During the next years he intensified this manner in compositions with sombre and somewhat coarse figures of impressive gravity. Characteristic examples are the *Pietà* (Bologna, Pinacoteca) of 1617, and *St Martin resuscitating the Widow's Son* in S. Stefano, Bologna, of about the same period. According to Malvasia's report he was deeply impressed by Caravaggio, and a version of the latter's *Incredulity of St Thomas*, at the time in Bologna, was gleefully copied by him. In the twenties Tiarini uses a lighter range of colours; his style becomes more rhetorical and less intense, and simultaneously an interest in Veronese and Pordenone is noticeable. His latest work, under the influence of Domenichino and above all Reni, hardly bears testimony to his promising beginnings.

Cavedoni lacks the dramatic power of Tiarini's early style, but he displays in the second decade a sense for a quietly expressive mood which he renders with a looser and more painterly technique. If his reliance on Lodovico Carracci is the dominant feature of his work, a Correggienesque note probably reaches him through Schedoni, with whom he has certain affinities – as can be seen in the frescoes of 1612-14 in S. Paolo Bologna. In his masterpiece, the *Virgin and Child in Glory with St Ald and St Petronius* of 1614 (Bologna, Pinacoteca; Plate 26A), his glowing palette shows him directly dependent on sixteenth-century Venetian painting. This is surely one of the most commanding pictures produced at Bologna during the period. Cavedoni never again achieved such full-blooded mastery.

It seems difficult to discard Malvasia's circumstantial report that Spada accompanied Caravaggio to Malta.<sup>9</sup> His early manner is close to Calvaert's Mannerism (*Abraham and Melchisedek*, Bologna, c. 1605). In 1607 he was still in his home-town, as is proved by the fresco of *The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes* in the Ospedale degli Esposti. There is no trace here of Caravaggio's influence, and it is Lodovico, as again in Spada's later pictures, who is uppermost in the artist's mind. Only in the course of the second decade do we find him subordinating himself to Caravaggio, and although nowadays this would appear slightly less conspicuous than his Bolognese nickname of *scimmia del Caravaggio* ('Caravaggio's ape') might lead one to suppose, the epithet was doubtless acquired by virtue of his liberal use of black and his realistic and detailed rendering of close-up figures either in genre scenes (*Musical Party*, *Maisons Laffitte*) or in more blood-thirsty contexts (the *Cain and Abel* in Naples or the *Way to Calvary* in Parma). His use of Caravaggio's art, however, is always moderated by a substantial acknowledgement of the instruction of the Carracci academy. But he seems to have regarded Caravaggism as unsuited to monumental tasks, for there is no trace of it in *The Burning of*

*heretical Books* of 1616 in S. Domenico, Bologna, where the tightly packed and sharply lit figures before a columned architecture fall in with the style commonly practised at Bologna during these years. In his late period Spada worked mainly in Reggio and Parma for Ranuccio Farnese, and his *Marriage of St Catherine* (Parma) of 1621 shows that under the influence of Correggio his style becomes more mellow and that his Caravaggism was no more than a passing phase.

Together with Mastelletta, Pietro Faccini must be mentioned. Both these unorthodox artists are totally unexpected in the Bolognese setting. Faccini, a painter of rare talents who had been brought up in the Mannerist tradition, died in 1602 at the early age of forty. In the 1590s he followed the Carracci lead, but in his very last years there was a radical change towards an extraordinarily free and delicate manner, to the formation of which Niccolò dell'Abate, Correggio, and Barocci seem to have contributed. His *Virgin and Saints* in Bologna is evidence of the new manner which is fully developed in the self-portrait (Florence, Uffizi), possibly dating from the year of his death. This curious disintegration of Mannerist and Carraccesque formulas gives to his last works an almost eighteenth-century flavour. Mastelletta painted on the largest scale in a *maniera furbesca* (Malvasia), and the two huge scenes in S. Domenico, Bologna, reveal that in 1613-15 he was not bound by any doctrinal ties. His chief interest for the modern observer lies in his small and delicate landscapes in which the influence of Scarsellino as well as Niccolò dell'Abate may be discovered.<sup>10</sup> They are painted in a dark key, and the insubstantial, brightly-lit figures emerging from their shadowy surroundings contribute to give to these pictures an ethereal effect (Plate 25B). The most imaginative and poetical artist of his generation in Bologna remained, as might be expected, an isolated figure, and even today his work is almost unknown.<sup>11</sup>

At the same period Ferrara can claim two artists of distinction, Scarsellino<sup>12</sup> (1551-1620) and Carlo Bonone (1569-1632). The former belongs essentially to the late sixteenth century, but in his small landscapes with their sacred or profane themes he combines the spirited technique of Venetian painting and the colour of Jacopo Bassano with the tradition of Dosso Dossi. He thus becomes an important link with early seventeenth-century landscape painters, and his influence on an Emilian master like Mastelletta is probably greater than is at present realized. In Carlo Bonone Ferrara possessed an early Seicento painter who in his best period after 1610 shows a close affinity to Schedoni. Though not discarding the local tradition stemming from Dossi, nor neglecting what he had learned from Veronese, he fully absorbed the new tendencies coming from Lodovico Carracci (Plate 27A). In his fresco in the apse of S. Maria in Vado, depicting the *Glorification of the Name of God* (1617-20), he based himself upon Correggio without, however, going so far towards Baroque unification as Lanfranco did in Rome. Parallel to events in the neighbouring Bologna, his decline begins during the twenties. In his two dated works in the Modena Gallery, *The Miracle of the Well* (1624-6) and the *Holy Family with Saints* (1626), he displays a provincial eclecticism by following in the one case Guercino and in the other Veronese. His last picture, *The Marriage at Cana* (Ferrara) of 1632, shows him not surprisingly returning to a typically Ferrarese Late Mannerism.

## PAINTING OUTSIDE ROME

Bartolommeo Schedoni (1578-1615)<sup>13</sup> is in his latest phase certainly an artist of greater calibre. He was born in Modena and worked mostly at Parma, where he died. His frescoes in the town-hall at Modena of 1606-7 are still predominantly Mannerist in their dependence on Niccolò dell'Abate, although his style is already more flowing. But beginning in about 1610 there is an almost complete break with this early manner. Pictures of considerable originality such as the *Christian Charity* of 1611 in Naples (Plate 27B), the *Three Marias at the Sepulchre* of 1614, and the *Deposition* of the same period, both in Parma, and the unfinished *St Sebastian attended by the Holy Women* (Naples) prove that it is Correggio who has provided the main inspiration for this new style. It is marked both by an intensity and peculiar aloofness of expression and by an emotional use of areas of bright yellows and blues which have an almost metallic surface quality. His colour scheme, however, is far removed from that of the Mannerists, for he limits his scale to a few tones of striking brilliance. The treatment of themes with low-class types as in pictures like the *Charity* probably resulted from the experience of Caravaggio or his followers. It is a pointer in the same direction that Schedoni often placed his figures before a neutral background. Yet how different from Caravaggio is the result! In Schedoni's case there is a strange contrast between the dark ground and the figures which shine like precious jewels.<sup>14</sup>

It appears from this survey that the Emilian masters owed more to Lodovico than to any other single personality, but it is equally evident that the style of the outsize canvases by artists like Tiarini, Spada, and Mastelletta, with the many narrative incidents, the massive figures, and the studied academic poses, did not join the broad stream of the further development. Only of Schedoni, the master less obviously connected with the Carracci tradition, can it be said that he had a lasting influence, through the impression he made on the youthful Lanfranco.

## FLORENCE AND SIENA

It has already been indicated that the role of Florence in the history of Seicento painting is disappointingly but not unexpectedly limited. Not a single artist of really great stature was produced there at this period. To a greater or lesser extent Florentines remained tied to their tradition of draughtsmanship, and their attempts to adjust themselves to the use of North Italian colour were more often than not half-hearted and inconsistent. Furthermore, neither the emotionalism of Barocci nor the drama and impetuosity of Lanfranco and the young Guercino were suitable to Tuscan doctrine and temperament. Bernardino Poccetti's (1548-1612) sober and measured narrations (Chiostrò di S. Marco, 1602) remained the accepted style, and artists like Domenico Cresti, called Passignano (1558/60-1638), were faithful to this manner far into the seventeenth century. Passignano did, however, make concessions to Venetian colour, and his pictures tend to show a richer and warmer palette than those of his contemporaries. Similarly, Santi di Tito (1536-1603) softened his style towards the end of his career, but his paintings, though often simple and appealing, lacked vigour and tension and were never destined to transmit

new life. This style was continued anachronistically by Tito's faithful pupil Agostino Ciampelli (c. 1568-1630, not c. 1575-1642).<sup>15</sup> It is likely that the Veronese Jacopo Ligozzi (1547-1626),<sup>16</sup> who spent most of his life in Florence, was instrumental in imposing northern chromatic precepts upon the artists in the city of his choice.

A painter of considerable charm, who deserves special mention, is Jacopo Chimenti da Empoli (1551/4-1640). He began in Poccetti's studio with a marked bias towards Andrea del Sarto and Pontormo, but the manner which he developed in the second and third decades of the new century is a peculiar compound of the older Florentine Mannerism and a rich, precise, and sophisticated colour scheme in which yellow predominates. Venturi was reminded before a picture such as the *Susanna* of 1600 (Vienna) of the palette later developed by Zurbaran, and similar colouristic qualities may also be found in his rare and attractive still lifes,<sup>17</sup> the arrangement of which is dependent on the northern tradition.

By far the most eminent Florentine artist of this generation, however, is Ludovico Cardi, called Il Cigoli (1559-1613). An architect of repute and a close friend of Galilei,<sup>18</sup> he went further on the road to a true Baroque style than any of his Florentine contemporaries. In the beginning he accepted the Mannerism of his teacher, Alessandro Allori. At a comparatively early date he changed under the influence of Barocci (Balducci). In his *Martyrdom of St. Stephen* of 1597 (Florence, Accademia) Veronese's influence is clearly noticeable, while one of his most advanced earlier works, the *Last Supper* of 1591 (Empoli, Collegiata), reveals him as colouristically, but not formally, dependent on Tintoretto. The clarity, directness, and simplicity of interpretation of the event shows him almost on a level with the works of the Carracci at the same moment. In some of his later works, like the *Ecce Homo* (Palazzo Pitti), a typically Seicento immediacy of appeal will be found; in others, like his famous *Ecstasies of St. Francis* (Plate 28A), he gives vent to the new emotionalism. Nevertheless, he hardly ever fully succeeded in casting off his Florentine heritage. He went to Rome in 1604, returning to Florence only for brief intervals. His largest Roman work, the frescoes in the dome of the Cappella Paolina in S. Maria Maggiore (1610-13), are, in spite of spatial unification, less progressive than they may at first appear. In his last frescoes (1611-12), those of *Cupid and Psyche* from the Loggetta Rospigliosi (now Museo di Roma), he accepted the Carraccesque idiom to such an extent that they were once attributed to Lanfranco as well as to Annibale himself.

Even the best of Cigoli's followers, Cristofano Allori (1577-1621) and the Fleming Giovanni Biliverti (1576-1644), adhere to a transitional style.<sup>19</sup> More important than these masters is their exact contemporary Matteo Rosselli (1578-1650), a pupil of Passignano. He owed his position, however, not to his intrinsic qualities as a painter but to the fact that he was the head of a school which was attended by practically all the younger Florentine artists.<sup>20</sup>

Siena at this period had at least one painter worth recording apart from the Barocci followers Ventura Salimbeni and Francesco Vanni, who have been mentioned. Rutilio Manetti (1571-1639), Vanni's pupil, was also not unaffected by Barocci's manner. But only with his conversion to Caravaggism in his *Death of the Blessed Antonio Patrizi* of

1616 (S. Agostino, Monticiano) does he emerge as an artist of distinction. In the following years his vigorous genre scenes are reminiscent of Manfredi and Valentin or even the northern *Caravaggisti*. From the beginning of the thirties there is a falling off in quality, for example in the *St Eligius* of 1631 at Siena; in his latest production, to a great extent executed with the help of pupils, the energy displayed during the previous fifteen years is exhausted.<sup>21</sup>

The popular Florentine narrative style of the Poccetti-Passignano type, which was adopted by Manetti early in his career, was a success not only in Rome but also in the North, particularly in Liguria and Lombardy. However, the use to which it was put was not everywhere the same. While in Genoa it was imported directly, without variation, in Milan it was blended with new tendencies in an effort to produce a distinctly 'native' manner.

### MILAN

Seicento painting in Milan developed under the shadow of the great counter-reformer St Charles Borromeo (d. 1584), who was discussed in the first chapter. His spirit of devotion was kept alive by his nephew Archbishop Federico Borromeo. It was he who in 1602 commissioned a cycle of paintings to honour St Charles's memory. These large canvases depicting scenes from his life were increased in 1610, the year of St Charles's canonization, to over forty to include portrayals of his miracles (the whole cycle in Milan Cathedral). Many of these pictures were due to the three foremost Milanese painters of the early Seicento, Giulio Cesare Procaccini (1574-1625),<sup>22</sup> Giovanni Battista Crespi, called Cerano (c. 1575-1632), and Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli, called Morazzone (1573-1626),<sup>23</sup> and a study of their work gives the measure of Milanese 'history painting' at this period: influences from Venice (Veronese, Pordenone) and from Florentine, Emilian (Tibaldi), and northern Mannerism (e.g. Spranger) have been superimposed upon a local foundation devolving from Gaudenzio Ferrari. To a lesser degree than Genoa, Milan at this historical moment was the focus of cross-currents from south, east, and north. But this Milanese art is marked by an extraordinary intensity which has deep roots in the spirit of popular devotion epitomized in the pilgrimage churches of the *Sacri Monti* of Lombardy. (See also Plate 131.)

Cerano, born at Novara, was the most comprehensive talent of the Milanese group. Architect, sculptor, writer, and engraver apart from his principal calling as painter, he became in 1621 the first Director of Federico Borromeo's newly founded Academy. In fact his relation to the Borromeo family dates back to about 1590, and he remained in close contact with them to the end of his life: no wonder, therefore, that he had the lion's share in the St Charles Borromeo cycle. Despite his long stay in Rome (1586-95), he shows, characteristically, in his early work a strong attachment to Gaudenzio,<sup>24</sup> Tibaldi, and Barocci as well as to Flemish and even older Tuscan Mannerists (*Archangel Michael*, Milan, Museo di Castello).<sup>25</sup> But he soon worked out a Mannerist formula of his own (*Franciscan Saints*, 1600, Berlin, destroyed) which is as far removed from the formalism of international Mannerism around 1600 as from the palpability of the rising

Baroque. An often agonizing tension and an almost morbid mysticism inform many of his canvases, and the silver-grey light and clear scale of tones for which he is famed lend support to the spiritual quality of his work. Although he never superseded his mystic Mannerism, as may be seen in one of his greatest works, the *Baptism of St Augustine* of 1618 in S. Marco, Milan, and although no straight development of his style can possibly be construed, he yet produced during the second decade compositions of such impressive simplicity as the *Madonna del Rosario* in the Brera (Plate 30B) and the *Virgin and Child with St Bruno and St Charles* in the Certosa, Pavia, both of about 1615, in which he humanized the religious experience by falling back on the older Milanese tradition. Few pictures are known of Cerano's latest period. In 1629 he was appointed head of the statuary works of Milan Cathedral, and from this time date the impressively compact monochrome *modelli* for the sculpture over the doors of the façade (Museo dell'Opera, Cathedral) which were translated into flaccid marble reliefs by Andrea Biffi, G. P. Lasagni, and Gaspare Vismara.<sup>26</sup>

Like Cerano, Morazzone had been early in his life in Rome (c. 1592-8), and some of his work in the Eternal City can still be seen *in situ* (frescoes in S. Silvestro in Capite). But Morazzone's style was even more radically formed than Cerano's on Gaudenzio Ferrari. Back home, he made his debut as a fresco painter in the Cappella del Rosario in S. Vittore at Varese (1599 and 1615-17). Large frescoes followed at Rho (c. 1602-4) and in the 'Ascent to Calvary' Chapel of the Sacro Monte, Varallo (1605). In the frescoes of the 'Flagellation' Chapel of the Sacro Monte near Varese (1608-9) and the 'Ecce Homo' Chapel at Varallo (1609-13; Plate 30A) Morazzone's characteristic style is fully developed. In 1614 he finished the frescoes of the 'Condemnation to Death' Chapel at Varallo, and between 1616 and 1620 he executed those of the 'Porziuncola' Chapel of the Sacro Monte at Orta.<sup>27</sup> It is at once evident that Morazzone, like his contemporary Antonio d'Enrico, called Tanzio da Varallo (1574/80-1635), was thoroughly steeped in the tradition of these collective enterprises, in which the spirit of the medieval miracle plays was revived and to the decoration of which a whole army of artists and artisans contributed between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>28</sup> Morazzone's reputation as a fresco painter, solidly founded on his achievements in the Sanctuaries, opened other great opportunities for him. In 1620 he painted a chapel in S. Gaudenzio at Novara and in 1625, shortly before his death, he began the decoration of the dome of Piacenza Cathedral, the greater part of which was carried out by Guercino. Morazzone as a master of the grand decorative fresco went further than his Milanese contemporaries in promoting the type of popular realism that was part and parcel of the art of the Sanctuaries. But that the intentions of Morazzone, Cerano, and Procaccini lay not far apart is proved by the famous 'three-master-picture', the *Martyrdom of SS. Rufina and Seconda* in the Brera of about 1620.<sup>29</sup>

The S. Rufina painted by Giulio Cesare Procaccini in the lower right half of this work carries the signature of a precious manner and a bigoted piety very different from those of his collaborators. The more gifted brother of the elder Camillo (c. 1560-1629), Giulio Cesare had moved with his family from Bologna to Milan in about 1590; but if any traces of his Bolognese upbringing are revealed in his work, they point to the older



Bolognese Mannerists rather than to an influence from the side of the Carracci. In Milan he began as a sculptor with the reliefs for the façade of SS. Nazaro e Celso (1597-1601),<sup>30</sup> and a statuesque quality is evident in his paintings during the first two decades. Apart from his contacts with Morazzone and Cerano, the important stages of his career are indicated by his renewed interest in sculpture after 1610, by his stay in Modena between 1613 and 1616, where he painted the *Circumcision* (Galleria Estense), and his sojourn at Genoa in 1618. After Modena he was at the mercy of Correggio and his Parmese followers, above all Parmigianino, as his *Marriage of St Catherine* (Brera) and the *Mary Magdalen* (Brera; Plate 28B) prove. Genoa brought him in contact with Rubens, and the repercussions on his style will easily be detected in such works as the *Deposition* of the Fassati Collection, Milan, and the *Judith and Holofernes* of the Museo del Castello.

A word must be said about Tazio, the most temperamental, tense, and violent of this group of Milanese artists. It is now fairly certain that he was in Rome some time between 1610 and 1615, and the impact of *Caravaggismo* is immediately felt in the *Circumcision* at Fara San Martino (parish church) and the *Virgin with Saints* in the Collegiata at Pescocostanzo (Abruzzi), works which appear deliberately archaizing and deliberately crude.<sup>31</sup> The important frescoes at Varallo as well as those in the Chiesa della Pace, Milan,<sup>32</sup> show him returning to the local traditions, to Cerano and the Venetians; nevertheless, *Caravaggismo* seems to have kept a hold on him, as later pictures attest, among them the obsessed-looking *David* with the enormous polished sword and the almost obscene head of Goliath (Varallo, Pinacoteca; Plate 31A) and the most extraordinary *Battle of Sennacherib* (1627-9, S. Gaudenzio, Novara; bozzetto in the Museo Civico), where an uncompromising realism is transmuted into a ghostlike drama with frightfully distorted figures which seem petrified into permanence.<sup>33</sup>

To the names of these artists should be added that of the younger Daniele Crespi (c. 1598-1630), a prodigious worker who derived mainly from Cerano and Procaccini, but whose first recorded work shows him assisting Guglielmo Caccia, called Il Moncalvo (c. 1565-1625),<sup>34</sup> in the frescoes of the dome of S. Vittore at Milan. In his best works Daniele combined severe realism and parsimonious handling of pictorial means with a sincerity of expression fully in sympathy with the religious climate at Milan. His famous *St Charles Borromeo at Supper* (Chiesa della Passione, Milan, c. 1628; Plate 29) comes nearer to the spirit of the austere devotion of the saint than almost any other painting of the period and is, moreover, expressed without recourse to the customary religious and compositional props from which the three principal promoters of the early Milanese Seicento were never entirely able to detach themselves. The question has been raised if Daniele was indebted to Zurbaran's contemporary work. Whether or not the answer is in the affirmative, he certainly was impressed by Rubens and Van Dyck, as is revealed in his principal work, the cycle of frescoes in the Certosa at Garegnano, Milan (1629). A similar cycle painted in the Certosa of Pavia in the year of his death may be regarded as an anticlimax. Daniele's career was prematurely interrupted by the plague of 1630. This event, immortalized by Manzoni, spelled to all intents and purposes the end of the first and greatest phase of Milanese Seicento painting.

## GENOA

While the most important period of Milanese painting was over by about 1630, a local Seicento school began in Genoa somewhat later but flourished for a hundred years. During the seventeenth century the old maritime republic had an immensely rich ruling class who made their money for the most part by world-wide banking manipulations; and the international character of their enterprises is also reflected in the artistic field. It is true that at the end of the previous century Genoa had possessed in Luca Cambiaso (1527-85) a great native artist. Capable of working on the largest scale, his influence remained a vital force far into the Seicento, and among his followers must be numbered Lazzaro Tavarone (1556-1641), Battista Castello (1547-1637), and his brother Bernardo (1557-1629). But it was not these much sought-after, tame Mannerists who brought about the flowering of seventeenth-century Genoese art. Genoa grew to importance as a meeting place of artists from many different quarters. There was a Tuscan group to which the Sienese Pietro Sorri (1556-1622), Francesco Vanni, and Ventura Salimbeni belonged. Aurelio Lomi (1556-1622) from Pisa was in Genoa between 1597 and 1604, and Giovanni Battista Paggi (1554-1627), a Genoese who had worked in Florence with Cigoli, brought back the latter's manner to his home-town. In accordance with their training and tradition these artists represent on the whole a rather reactionary element. More vital was the contact with the progressive Milanese school, and the impact of Giulio Cesare Procaccini, working in Genoa in 1618, was certainly great. Of equal and even greater importance for the future of Genoese painting were the Flemings. They had long regarded Genoa as a suitable place to try their fortunes, and works by artists such as Pieter Aertsen were already collected there in the late sixteenth century. Snyders was probably in Genoa in 1608, and later Cornelius de Wael (1592-1667) became an honorary citizen and leader of the Flemish colony.<sup>35</sup> Their genre and animal pictures form an important link with the greater figure of G. Benedetto Castiglione, and in this context Jan Roos (Italianized: Giovanni Rosa) should at least be mentioned. But the names of all these Flemings are dwarfed by that of Rubens, whose stay in the city in 1607 (*Circumcision*, S. Ambrogio) and dispatch, in 1620, of the *Miracle of St Ignatius* (S. Ambrogio) were as decisive as Van Dyck's sojourns in 1621-2 and 1626-7. Caravaggio, in Genoa for a short while in 1605, left, it seems, no deep impression at that moment. Caravaggism gained a foothold, however, through Orazio Gentileschi and Vouet, who were in Genoa at the beginning of the twenties. Finally it should not be forgotten that the Genoese appreciated the art of Barocci and of the Bolognese. The former's *Crucifixion* for the cathedral was painted in 1595; and pictures by Domenichino, Albani, Reni,<sup>36</sup> and others reached Genoa at an early moment. The impression Velasquez made in Genoa at the time of his visit in 1629 seems worth investigating. It can, therefore, be seen that in the first decades of the seventeenth century Genoa was in active contact with all the major artistic trends, Italian and foreign.

The development of the early seventeenth-century native Genoese painters Bernardo Strozzi (1581-1644), Andrea Ansaldo (1584-1638), Domenico Fiasella, called *Il Sarzana*

## PAINTING OUTSIDE ROME

(1589-1669), Luciano Borzone (1590-1645), and Giocchino Assereto (1600-49) runs to a certain extent parallel. They begin traditionally enough: Fiasella and Strozzi deriving from Lomi, Paggi, and Sorri; Ansaldo from the mediocre Orazio Cambiaso, Luca's son; and Assereto from Ansaldo. Towards the twenties these artists show the influence of the Milanese school, and only Fiasella, who had worked in Rome from 1607 to 1617, is really swayed by the *Caravaggisti*.<sup>37</sup> In the course of the third decade they all attempt to cast away the last vestiges of Mannerism and turn towards a freer, naturalistic manner, largely under the influence of Rubens and Van Dyck. It should, however, be said that, lacking monographic treatment, neither Borzone nor Ansaldo and Fiasella are clearly defined personalities; it would seem that the prolific Fiasella, who lived longest and was much in fashion with the Genoese aristocracy, must be regarded as the least interesting and original of this group of artists. By contrast Assereto, through Longhi's basic study, has become for us an artistic personality with clear contours.<sup>38</sup> In his work after 1630, for example in the Genoa *Martyrdom of St Bartholomew* or the Genoa *Supper at Emmaus* (Plate 132), he achieved a unification of composition and a complete freedom of handling which places him almost on a level with Strozzi in his Venetian period.

The genius of this generation, surpassing all his contemporaries, was Bernardo Strozzi. His early style, from his 'Tuscan' beginnings to his vacillations between Veronese, Caravaggio, and the Flemings, is not yet sufficiently clear (Plate 32).<sup>39</sup> In 1598 he became a Capuchin monk, but in 1610 he was allowed to leave the monastery. Between 1614 and 1621 he acted as an engineer in his home-town and from 1623 to 1625 he painted the frescoes in the Palazzo Carpanetto at San Pier d' Arena. Imprisoned by his Order, he went after his release in 1630 to Venice, where he lived until his death in 1644. Discussion of his work may be postponed, since his great Venetian period belongs to a later chapter.

## VENICE

In the smaller centres of northern Italy a Late Mannerist style prevailed practically throughout the first half of the seventeenth century. This was primarily due to the influential position of Venice, where the leading roles were played by three eclectic artists, namely Jacopo Negretti, called Palma Giovane (1544-1628), Domenico Tintoretto (1560-1635), and Alessandro Varotari, called Padovanino (1588-1648). Domenico Tintoretto continued his father's manner with a strong dash of Bassani influence; Padovanino in his better pictures tried not unsuccessfully to recapture something of the spirit of Titian's early period; Palma Giovane, basing himself on a mixture of the late Titian and Tintoretto, was the most fertile and sought-after but at the same time the most monotonous of the three.<sup>40</sup> Strangely enough, these masters had little understanding for the potentialities of the loaded brush-stroke. As a rule their canvases are colouristically dull, lacking entirely the exciting surface qualities of the great sixteenth-century painters.<sup>41</sup> Deeply under the influence of these facile artists, their contemporaries in the *Terra Ferma*, in Verona, Bergamo, and Brescia, bear witness to the popularity of what had by then become a moribund style. It was, in fact, the degeneration of the great

Venetian tradition in Venice itself, together with the rise of Rome as the centre of progressive art, that determined the pattern of seventeenth-century painting for the whole of Italy.

In 1630 probably few Venetians realized that they had had two young artists in their midst who had aroused painting from its 'eclectic slumber'. They were neither Venetian by birth, nor were they ever entrusted with important commissions in the city in which they had settled. Giovanni Lys came to Italy in about 1620, and by 1621 was in Venice. In the same year Domenico Fetti had his first taste of Venice. Both artists excelled in cabinet pictures and both died young. They each developed a manner in which the spirited brush-stroke was of over-riding importance, and by this means they re-invigorated Venetian colour and became the exponents of the most advanced tendencies. They are the real heirs to the Venetian colouristic tradition; with their rich, warm, and light palette and their laden brush-work they are as far removed from the *tenebroso* of Caravaggio as from the classicism of the Bolognese. Lys was born in Oldenburg in North Germany in about 1597, and Fetti in Rome in 1589. Fetti died at the age of thirty-four in 1623; Lys was even younger when he was carried off by the Venetian plague of 1629-30. Their *œuvres* are therefore limited, and their influence, although considerable - particularly on Strozzi - should not be overestimated.

Fetti's first master was Cigoli, after the latter came to Rome in 1604; but although their association remained close until 1613, little evidence of Cigoli's transitional style can be discovered in Fetti's work. In fact in Rome Fetti must have felt the influence, if not of Caravaggio himself, at any rate of those followers such as Borgianni and Saraceni who were more in sympathy with Venetian colour. Not much is known about Fetti's Roman period, but it would have been in this circle that he developed his taste for the popular genre. At the same time he must have been deeply impressed by the art of Rubens, whose transparent red and blue flesh tones he adopted. When in 1613 he went to Mantua as Court Painter to Duke Ferdinando, he again found himself under the shadow of Rubens, but while working there, he became increasingly dependent on Venetian art, particularly that of Titian and Tintoretto. Fetti was not a master capable of working on a large scale, and to a certain extent the official paintings he had to execute in the ducal service must have been antipathetic to him. Apart from the fresco of the *Trinity* in the apse of the cathedral, now attributed to Ippolito Andreasi (1548-1608),<sup>42</sup> the most massive of these commissions was the *Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes* (Mantua, Palazzo Ducale) where the intricate composition with its manifold large figures falls below the high standard shown in many passages of painting. Fetti's early work is rather dark, but slowly his palette lightened, while he intensified the surface pattern by working with complementary local colours.<sup>43</sup> It was only after his removal to Venice in 1622<sup>44</sup> and during the brief remainder of his life that he was able to devote himself entirely to small easel pictures (Plate 33). These little works, many of them illustrating parables set in homely surroundings, must have attracted the same public as the *Bambocciate* in Rome, and the numerous repetitions of the same subjects from the artist's own hand attest their popularity.<sup>45</sup> It was in these pictures with their loose and pasty surfaces punctuated by rapid strokes of the brush, giving an effect of vibrating light, that Fetti

## PAINTING OUTSIDE ROME

imparted a recognizably seventeenth-century character to the pictorial tradition of Venice. A decisively new stage in the history of art is reached at this point.

Although Fetti himself went a long way towards discarding the established conventions of picture-making, it was Lys who took a step beyond Fetti: his work opens up a vista on the future of European painting. Lys had started his career in about 1615 in Antwerp and Haarlem, where he came into contact with the circles of local painters, in particular Hals and Jordaens. In Venice he formed a friendship with Fetti and, after the latter's death, with the Frenchman Nicolas Regnier (c. 1590-1667), a follower of Caravaggio in Rome who moved to Venice in 1627. Only one of Lys's pictures is dated, namely the *Christ on the Mount of Olives* (Zürich, private collection), and the date has been read both as 1628 and 1629. For the rest it would appear that the longer he stayed away from Holland the more he dissociated himself from his Northern upbringing. Not only did he exclude from his repertory the rather rustic northern types, but he also tended towards an ever-increasing turbulence and freedom of handling. His development during his few Venetian years must have been astonishingly rapid. Such a picture as the *Fall of Phaeton* in the Denis Mahon Collection, London,<sup>46</sup> with its velvety texture and an intensity which may be compared with Rubens, must date from about 1625, since despite its softness it is still comparatively firm in its structure. On the other hand later pictures like the *Ecstasy of St Paul* (Berlin) or the *Vision of St Jerome* (Venice, S. Nicolò da Tolentino; Plate 34) show a looseness and freedom and a painterly disintegration of form which call to mind even the works of the Guardi (Plate 200A).<sup>47</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The reader may well ask what the over-all picture is that emerges from this rapid survey. Almost all the artists mentioned in this and the previous chapters were born between 1560 and 1590. Most of them began their training with a Late Mannerist and retained throughout their lives Mannerist traces to a greater or lesser degree. Only the youngest, born after 1590, who were here included because, like Lys and Fetti, they died at an early age, grew up in a post-Mannerist atmosphere or were capable of discarding the Mannerist heritage entirely. The majority matured after 1600 and painted their principal works after 1610. What creates a common bond between all these provincial masters is a spirit of deep and sincere devotion. Viewed in this light, a Tiarini, a Schedoni, a Cerano, and a Cigoli belong more closely together than is generally realized. On this level it counts very little whether the one clings longer or more persistently to Mannerist conventions than the other, for they are all equally divorced by a deep rift from the facile international Mannerism of the late Cinquecento, and they all return in one way or another to the great Renaissance masters and the first generation of Mannerists in their search for guidance to a truly emotional art. It would, therefore, be as wrong to underestimate the revolutionary character of their style and to regard it simply, as is often done, as a specific type of Late Mannerism as it would be to stress too much its continuity into the Baroque of the mid century. The beginnings of the style

#### THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION AND THE EARLY BAROQUE

date back to Lodovico Carracci of the early nineties and to Cigoli of the same period. It finds its most intense expression in Caravaggio's work around 1600; by and large it is the idiom of *Caravaggisti* like Orazio Gentileschi, Saraceni, and Borgianni, and of the Emilian and Milanese masters, mainly during the second decade; and, as has been shown again and again in these pages, it slowly comes to an end in the course of the third decade.

It is important to notice that this art is strongest, or even arises, in the provinces at a moment when the temper began to change in Rome. This is revealed not only in the Farnese Gallery but also in Annibale's religious work after 1600, where studied severity replaces emotional tension. In the provinces the enormous intensity of this style, the compound of gravity, solemnity, mental excitation, and effervescence could not be maintained for long. To explore further the possibilities which were open to artists roughly from the beginning of Urban VIII's reign onwards will be the task of the Second Part. But meanwhile the reader may compare the change of religious temper from an early, 'Mannerist', to a late, 'Baroque', Strozzi (Plates 32 and 31B), a telling experience which may be repeated a hundred times with artists of the generation with which we were here concerned.

If it is at all possible to associate any one style or manner with the spirit of the great reformers, one would not hesitate to single out this art between about 1590 and 1625/30, and whether or not this will be agreed to, one thing is certain, that the period under review carries its terms of 'Late Mannerism' or 'Transitional Style' or 'Early Baroque' only *faute de mieux*.