THE DOCUMENTED PAINTINGS AND LIFE OF

ANDREA VACCARO (1604-1670)

A Thesis in
Art History

by
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This dissertation takes stock of what is known about Andrea Vaccaro (1604-1670), one of the most prominent painters of Naples in the middle of the seventeenth-century. Although successful during his lifetime, Vaccaro currently suffers a reputation that is, at best, second rate. Due to the hundreds of paintings attributed to Vaccaro of dubious quality, modern art historians characterize his art as “eclectic” and “academic.” The sole monograph on Vaccaro, Maria Commodo Izzo’s Andrea Vaccaro pittore (1604-1670) published in 1951, is also sorely out of date. This study provides a new and more accurate portrayal of the artist. Rather than the customary all-inclusive approach, this study is based on the solid foundation of all known documents about the artist’s life and art, which are gathered and analyzed in one place for the first time. An overview of Vaccaro’s career organized in three sections provides an original assessment of the artist. Vaccaro’s early period (ca. 1604-1636) is the least documented and therefore the least understood. An analysis of different speculations on his formation reveals the biases of those who propose them. I also suggest a model employed by the eighteenth-century biographer Bernardo De Dominici for characterizing Vaccaro and his artistic advancement. Vaccaro’s mature (ca. 1636-1660) and late (ca. 1660-1670) periods are studded with documented artistic activity for both private and public patrons. In my chronological discussion of the paintings, stylistic and iconographic links are made in order to revise the wide-spread perception of Vaccaro’s so-called eclecticism. The results of this study demonstrate that Vaccaro was a good painter, on par with his contemporaries Massimo Stanzione and Bernardo Cavallino. In addition, contrary to
what is believed, Vaccaro’s art and reputation did not decline as he grew older and he
was not immediately eclipsed by Luca Giordano. Instead, numerous prestigious church
commissions, his post as the first prefetto of the renewed Corporation of Painters, and a
variety of other documented activity attest to his artistic importance and the public
recognition he enjoyed before he died in 1670, making him a model religious painter of
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I. INTRODUCTION

The time is ripe for taking stock of what is known about Andrea Vaccaro (1604-1670), one of the most prominent painters of Naples in the middle of the seventeenth century. Praised by Bernardo De Dominici, the eighteenth-century biographer of Neapolitan artists, as “nobilissimo professore” for his gift of grace which he cultivated with continuous study, Vaccaro was even hailed by another Neapolitan eighteenth-century critic, Onofrio Giannone, as the “Neapolitan Raphael.” Almost every collection in Naples boasted at least one painting by him. Although Vaccaro worked primarily for patrons of his native city, paintings by him are located in collections in other parts of Italy. The Florentine biographer, Filippo Baldinucci, in his notes on Neapolitan artists, remarks about five years after Vaccaro’s death, that Vaccaro was a painter of “gran grido.” His fame among contemporaries spread also to the rest of Europe. Included in Cornelis de Bie’s Het Gulden Cabinet van de Edel vry Schilder-Const (1661-1662), Vaccaro is complimented for his great artistic skill, lifelikeness, marvelous compositions, and virtuous moral content. During his lifetime he was also one of the Neapolitan painters whose art was most exported to Spain. Why then, as demonstrated in respected surveys of Italian seventeenth-century art, does Vaccaro currently suffer a reputation that is, at best, second-rate? Wittkower characterizes him as a painter “who found a rather vulgar formula of combining second-hand Caravaggism with Bolognese classicism (Reni, Domenichino)...a popular success at his time but a master of the second rank.” R. Causa detects a compromise between eclecticism and academicism in his art, and despite Vaccaro’s renown and prolific
activity, he considers him an artist of the second rate, except on rare occasions. If he was “a secondary artist...subject to many influences,” how then could he “emerge late in his life as a leader of artists in the city”?9

These recent negative judgments are only a few of the very large number made about Andrea Vaccaro, despite the fact that so very little is known for certain about his life and art. De Dominici’s statements, the primary source for the artist’s biography, must be consulted with caution and checked against other evidence. Although an excellent critic describing many paintings, De Dominici’s dates are often wrong and he fabricated stories to fill in the gaps of his knowledge which can be misleading.10 Late seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century guidebooks of Naples provide us with information about the location, iconography and occasionally quality of some of Vaccaro’s works. However, critics of the twentieth-century to the present are, for the most part, ambivalent about his art, perhaps due to the hundreds of paintings attributed to him of dubious quality, many of which are copies and variants.11 Since the 1980s, with the renewed attention to the field of Neapolitan Seicento painting through numerous exhibitions, Andrea Vaccaro’s reputation has slightly improved.12 Yet his unenthusiastic reception today is strikingly in contrast with that of his own lifetime.

The sole monograph on the artist remains Maria Commodo Izzo’s Andrea Vaccaro pittore (1604-1670) published in 1951, which is sorely out of date.13 Her attempt at a catalogue of Andrea Vaccaro’s oeuvre was too ambitious for the time, and, in a way, demonstrates the risks involved in such an arduous endeavor with so few facts on which to depend. With very few documents to establish a firm chronology, she resorted to organizing Vaccaro’s paintings according to iconography (religious versus
non-religious works) and location. Although she gathers much valuable information, describes the over one hundred and fifty paintings she found, conducts and reports research in archives, and admirably attempts to characterize Vaccaro and link him to his contemporaries, at a time when so very little was known about them, the result is less than satisfactory. She was unable to establish a convincing artistic development, and her inclusion of many questionable paintings resulted in the perception of Andrea Vaccaro as an uneven and eclectic painter, a less talented artist than his contemporaries, Massimo Stanzione and Bernardo Cavallino. In short, although she is aware of problems of connoisseurship, her approach undermines her scholarship. Now that more is known about Vaccaro’s life and art, her assessment must be questioned and brought up-to-date.

Thanks to a large number of documents, in particular those published over the past twenty years by Eduardo Nappi from the Archivio Storico del Banco di Napoli, a firm chronology may be established. In addition, a plethora of recent monographs and exhibitions on Andrea Vaccaro’s predecessors and contemporaries in Naples also render Commodo Izzo’s assessment obsolete. Many prominent scholars, primarily Italian, discuss Andrea Vaccaro’s paintings in a multitude of catalogue entries, as well as several articles, making significant contributions to further our understanding of the artist. The most recent and extensive study is one by De Vito, “Appunti per Andrea Vaccaro con una nota su alcune copie del Caravaggio che esistevano a Napoli,” in Ricerche sul ’600 napoletano (1996). He reconstructs the artist’s career and publishes many new paintings for the first time, linking them to documented works. However, he
continues the trend of speculating on additions to the artist’s œuvre rather than concentrating on what is known.

In fact, a remarkable number of paintings ascribed to Andrea Vaccaro continue to surface, inflating the artist’s already very large output listed by Commodo Izzo. Many of them are of questionable quality and authenticity, some of which are produced by his workshop, and serve only to obfuscate the secure paintings by the artist. Andrea Vaccaro’s monogram appears on many of these dubious paintings. It is composed of his initials A and V interlaced, with the left leg of the A over the left part of the V, and vice versa for the right parts (see Fig. 11 for a painting with a large monogram). The bar of the A is omitted, thus the center of the two letters creates a diamond shape.

Sometimes a small triangle (delta) appears on both sides of the monogram, as found in Latin inscriptions for abbreviations and/or word divisions (called an “interpunct”). Andrea Vaccaro employs it in two inscriptions as well. Vaccaro’s monogram is easy to replicate and examples of it are legion; therefore, it cannot be taken alone as proof of authenticity. As in the case for all artists, a monogram can be added by a forger, restorer or copyist. In addition, what did Vaccaro himself consider to be an “original”? It was common practice at the time for an artist to sign works painted by his pupils, such as the case for Ribera. It was also customary for a painter to alter the quality of his art according to the amount he was paid, such as Luca Giordano’s practice.

Only two paintings by Andrea Vaccaro are known to bear a full signature: Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar (Cat. 3, Fig. 4) in Madrid, and Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child (Cat. 15, Fig. 26) for the Corporation of Neapolitan Painters. These signed paintings also include the year; only one other painting, the
Communion of Saint Mary of Egypt (Cat. 17, Fig. 28), displays the year. These works are among the fifteen documented commissions (some of which comprise more than one painting) addressed in this study—a small number indeed when one considers that over fifty paintings alone representing Mary Magdalen, the subject of Vaccaro’s earliest extant documented commission (Cat. 1, Fig. 2), have been linked to him (see APPENDIX: MARY MAGDALEN). Obviously, at this point it is premature to write a catalogue raisonné. The task would be not only daunting, but also imprudent.

Rather than the customary all-inclusive approach to the artist, I take quite a different one in this dissertation. After having read everything published on Andrea Vaccaro (the SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY is primarily limited to sources about Vaccaro’s documented paintings, listing only about two-thirds of all the sources I have consulted), it became apparent that it would be necessary to make a new beginning and gather, for the first time in one place, all known documents about the artist’s life and art. By so doing, I avoid the pitfalls which would result if I did not build my case on the solid foundation of the documents. Transcribed in the APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS and ordered chronologically, they establish a firm basis for a more accurate outline of Andrea Vaccaro’s life and art. Other documents mentioned in the literature, but without transcriptions, are summarized and dealt with in the appropriate section on the life of the artist. By concentrating on only the securely documented paintings by Vaccaro, I fortunately found enough information to begin to reconstruct his career, which I have divided into three periods: his early (1604-ca. 1636), mature (ca. 1636-1660) and late (ca. 1660-1670) periods. One problem with this approach, of course, is that many high quality paintings linked to the artist, but not documented, are neglected, such as the
monogrammed *Lamentation* (Sorrento, Museo Correale di Terranova). For the sake of consistency and clarity, I made the difficult decision to refrain from including them, even if many are undoubtedly authentic. On the other hand, many of the documented paintings included in the dissertation are not necessarily well-known or in the best condition. Often the same paintings by Vaccaro—the few that are restored and easily transportable—are published over and over again in the literature, especially exhibition catalogues. Witness paintings such as the *Saint Sebastian* and the *Triumph of David* (Fig. 5) in the Museo di Capodimonte which are more widely known than church altarpieces included less frequently in these exhibitions.

As a result of my highly selective and cautious approach, most paintings discussed happen to be public, church commissions. Although documents mention payments to the artist by a number of illustrious private patrons, many of these works are still unidentified. But even a glance at the hundreds of works attributed to Vaccaro reveals that he was principally a painter of religious themes, with only an occasional interest in mythology, landscape or still-life painting, although quite a few of his works include naturalistic portraits and detailed architectural settings. He worked almost exclusively in oil painting; only one fresco commission is known by him, and it remains problematic.

My catalogue entries not only summarize the literature, but provide an overview of the critical fortune for each documented painting. More often than not, negative comments begin to appear only in the twentieth-century, perhaps partly due to the darkened varnish and poor condition of the paintings. That which emerges is the perplexing array of influences proposed for Andrea Vaccaro’s style, often for a single
work. I attempt to look at the paintings with fresh eyes, in order to discern what makes the artist’s style his own. A close reading of documents sheds new light on the circumstances and details of the commissions, many of which have been heretofore ignored. The iconography of many works is analyzed at length for the first time, and original interpretations are proposed. In addition, Andrea Vaccaro’s only known fresco commission (for the church of San Paolo Maggiore), barely addressed by Commodo Izzo in her monograph, is given great attention and a new analysis of the program of the cycle offered.22

An overview of Andrea Vaccaro’s career organized in three periods provides a new and original assessment of the artist. It is not surprising that Vaccaro’s early life and artistic formation (1604-ca.1636), discussed in section two, is the least documented and therefore the least understood. An analysis of different speculations on his formation reveals the biases of those who propose them. I also suggest a model employed by De Dominici for his characterization of Vaccaro and his artistic advancement. Vaccaro’s mature (ca. 1636-1660) and late (ca. 1660-1670) periods, in sections three and four, are studded with documented artistic activity for both private and public patrons. In my chronological discussion of the paintings, stylistic and iconographic links are made in order to revise the wide-spread perception of Vaccaro’s so-called eclecticism. Perhaps the most surprising result of this study is that, contrary to what is believed, Vaccaro’s art and reputation did not decline as he grew older and he was not immediately eclipsed by Luca Giordano. Instead, numerous prestigious church commissions, his post as the first prefetto of the renewed Corporation of Painters, and a variety of other documented activity attest to his artistic importance and the public
recognition he enjoyed before he died in 1670, making him a model religious painter of the period in Naples.
NOTES: I. INTRODUCTION


2Renato Ruotolo, “Aspetti del collezionismo napoletano del Seicento,” in Naples, *Civiltà del Seicento a Napoli* I (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1984), 41-42. Many copies or works done in the style of Andrea Vaccaro are listed in inventories as by the master himself to raise the worth and prestige of the collection. As Ruotolo points out, it was common for collectors to decorate large expanses of walls by surrounding a few paintings of high quality by well-known artists with a larger quantity of works by lesser-known artists or copyists. In another study of inventories, Ruotolo concludes that the art of Andrea Vaccaro was the common denominator in all the great collections of the period. See “Artisti, dottori e mercanti napoletani del secondo Seicento: Sulle tracce della committenza ‘borghese,’” *Ricerche sul ‘600 napoletano* (1987): 179, 181.

3Vaccaro received payments by patrons from the region of Calabria (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). Today Vaccaro’s works in Italy outside of Naples are mostly found in southern Italy, especially in the regions of Campania and Apulia. For the latter, see Bari, *Mostra dell’arte in Puglia dal tardo antico al rococo*, ed. Michele D’Elia (Rome: De Luca Editore, 1964), 175-176. As in the case for Vaccaro’s close contemporary, Massimo Stanzione, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was rare to find works by the artist north of Naples.


5“Andreas Vacar, Schilder van Roomen. Pictur al menichmael bestrijt t’verstant van binnen, Als jemandt haere Const met onghetoemde sinnen Wilt onderschoren, en haer edelheyt verstaen: Daer hy naer reycken wilt als by de bleecke Maen. Want de verborghenthuyt van al haer wetenschappen Heest soo veel ommeegangs en smal verheven trappen, Dat meest de menschen die haer niet en sijn ghewent, Oft haer verholen aert in eenich deel bekent. Noot moghen door hun bot vernuft Pictura stooren Om niet als Midas eens te crijghen Esels ooren. Want die de Const wilt sien die ons Vacar uytwerckt Moet wel een Kender sijn en met oordeel versterckt: Midts al het
gen’hy doet met groote cloeckicheden Is t’leven gans ghelijck vol deughts begaefde silden, In ordonnantien seer wonderlijck en vrement Sulckx dat sijn werck door Const, de Const-behaters tempt.” Cornelis de Bie, Het Gulden Cabinet van de Edel vry Schilder-Const [Antwerp 1661-1662] (Soest: Davaco Publishers, 1971), 287. I am grateful to Amy Golahny and Lida Ouwehand for assistance in understanding this text. Although de Bie is rather vague and does not address specific paintings by Andrea Vaccaro, it is clear that he held them in high esteem and thought that experts with good judgment were required to appreciate them fully.

6 Over ninety paintings attributed to Andrea Vaccaro in Spain, some of which are of high quality, are listed in Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana del siglo XVII en España (Madrid: Universidad de Madrid, Fundación Valdecilla, 1965), 461-476. See also comments by the same author in “Unfamiliar Italian Paintings of the 17th century,” Apollo XCI (1970): 372; and in Madrid, Pintura napolitana de Caravaggio a Giordano (Madrid: Museo del Prado/Palacio de Villahermosa, 1985), 59. For paintings by Andrea Vaccaro listed in Spanish inventories, see Marcus B. Burke, “Private Collections of Italian Art in Seventeenth-Century Spain,” Ph.D. diss. (New York University, 1984) and Marcus B. Burke and Peter Cherry, Spanish Inventories I: Collections of Paintings in Madrid: 1601-1755 (2 parts) (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Trust, 1997).


10 Maria Commodo Izzo, author of the only monograph on the artist, Andrea Vaccaro pittore (1604-1670) (Naples: Conte Editore, 1951), 22, is correct when she observes that De Dominici’s errors are more frequent for earlier artists, but, for those of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he is a mine of information that should be checked, but not neglected, since it would be difficult to find that same information elsewhere. For a critical reassessment of De Dominici, see Thomas Willette, “Bernardo De Dominici e le Vite de’pittori, scultori ed architetti napoletani: Contributo alla riabilitazione di una fonte,” Ricerche sul ´600 napoletano (1986): 255-273.

11 An example of a prominent early twentieth-century scholar who had a mixed opinion of Vaccaro is Aldo De Rinaldis. He states, “Anche [Vaccaro], come lo Stanzioni, vuol essere giudicato nel complesso di tutta l’opera sua, e non da questo o da quel quadro. Nel cercare le sue pitture si hanno sorprese graditissime e sorprese spiacevoli: talvolta egli ci appare come un gelido e vuoto accademico, tal altra come un modellatore delicatissimo di forme: spesso il suo colore ci sembra povero e nullo,

12See SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY for a list of these exhibitions, especially in Naples.

13Commodo Izzo’s monograph has been harshly criticized. For example, Ferdinando Bologna calls it “confusissimo” in Francesco Solimena (Naples: L’Arte Tipografica, 1958), 38, note 20. Nicola Spinosa remarks that “Andrea Vaccaro, pitore ancora più noto che conosciuto, di un livello qualitativo spesso discontinuo, ma sul quale la critica dovrà al più presto tornare in profondità, sia per porre rimedio ai guasti arrecati alla conoscenza dell’artista dalla monografia della Commodo Izzo, sia per meglio definire l’andamento delle relazioni che si stabilirono, dopo il ’40, tra quest’ultimo e il più giovane Bernardo Cavallino,” in La pittura napoletana del ’600 (Milan: Longanesi & Co., 1984), 12.

14Causa, “La pittura del Seicento,” 989, note 137, proposes convincing reattributions for some of the questionable paintings ascribed to Vaccaro by Commodo Izzo. Even though Commodo Izzo is aware of problems of connoisseurship, she concludes from the uneven quality of the works she gathers that if Andrea Vaccaro had painted less and with more care, he would have produced better paintings, since every once in a while he did paint excellent works. See Andrea Vaccaro, 42-43, 91, 159.


16Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 171, note 65, also observes that the artist’s monogram is not sufficient proof of authenticity. For example, Nicola Spinosa draws attention to a painting on the art market by Giovan Battista Spinelli which displays the monogram of Andrea Vaccaro on it. See “Aggiunte a Giovan Battista Spinelli,” Paragone XXXV, no. 411 (1984): 21-22.
Interestingly, Andrea Vaccaro’s monogram is similar to that of Andrea del Sarto’s. See George C. Williamson, Bryan’s Dictionary of Painters and Engravers V, 4th ed. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1903-1905), 224.

Craig M. Felton discusses these problems of connoisseurship in “Jusepe Ribera: A Catalogue Raisonné,” Ph.D. diss. (University of Pittsburgh, 1971), 121. Very little is known about workshop practice in seventeenth-century Naples. Andrea Vaccaro, like Ribera, and also Stanzione before him, most likely relied on his workshop to produce numerous paintings of varying quality for private devotion, such as depictions of single figures (usually bust-length) of saints. See Sebastian Schütze and Thomas C. Willette, Massimo Stanzione: L’opera completa (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1992), 76. Many of these paintings have compromised Vaccaro’s artistic reputation. Instead, they are an indication of Vaccaro’s success and the popular demand for his works by clients of different social classes. For example, the Counter-Reformation subject of the Mary Magdalen was a favorite of the artist. Although only two documents for paintings of this subject are known (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS), an extraordinary number of Mary Magdalen paintings attributed to Vaccaro exist (see APPENDIX: MARY MAGDALEN).

De Dominici, Vite II (1742-1745), 432, describes how Luca Giordano admitted to using a gold, silver or copper paintbrush according to the amount of money he received from a patron. This certainly may be applicable to Andrea Vaccaro as well as to other artists. See Renato Ruotolo, “Aspetti,” 41-42.

Stanzione’s paintings rarely display dates either. Willette remarks that the Annunciation in Marcianise (near Caserta) is the only known painting by Stanzione that has an authentic date on it. Yet this painting is not of high quality, showing workshop intervention in the wooden attitudes of the figures and the mistakes in drawing. Hence, a date painted on a canvas is not necessarily an indication of authenticity or high quality. See Schütze and Willette, Massimo Stanzione, 243.

A helpful starting point for gathering information on published documents about Andrea Vaccaro (and other Neapolitan artists) is Eduardo Nappi, ed., “Catalogo delle pubblicazioni edite dal 1883 al 1990, riguardanti le opere di architetti, pittori, scultori, marmorari, ed intagliatori per i secoli XVI e XVII, pagate tramite gli antichi banchi pubblici napoletani,” Ricerche sul ‘600 napoletano (Milan: L & T, 1992), 109-110. Nappi’s compilation for Vaccaro is not complete, but he adds many new documents. Most of the known documents about Vaccaro are published by Nappi. My dissertation is based on many of the results of his indefatigable archival research (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS).

Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 130.
II. EARLY LIFE AND ARTISTIC FORMATION (1604-ca. 1636)

Very little is known for certain about Andrea Vaccaro; his early life is particularly obscure and biographical details may be quickly listed. De Dominici is correct when he tells us the names of Andrea’s parents--Pietro Vaccaro, who had a legal profession, and Giovanna di Clauso--but the year given for his birth (1598) is erroneous.¹ According to the baptismal notice dated 8 May 1604 from the family’s parish church of San Giuseppe Maggiore, Andrea Vaccaro, whose full name was Matteo Andrea Baccaro, was the son of Pietro Baccaro, and Gioanna di Glauso (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS).² Given the frequency of infant mortality and the urgency of baptism, he was probably born no more than a few days earlier. His godmother, by the way, was a countess (unidentifiable) of the Buonocore family. Andrea was apparently the second of at least eight children.³ Also from the parish archives, come the facts that members of the Vaccaro family had close ties to the painters Carlo Sellitto and Filippo Vitale. In 1613 Andrea Vaccaro’s mother and Carlo Sellitto witnessed the baptism of Filippo Vitale’s son, Carlo.⁴ Andrea Vaccaro’s mother’s sister, Vittoria de Grauso, married Francesco Beltrano. Their son, the painter Agostino Beltrano, and Andrea Vaccaro were therefore cousins.⁵

Not surprisingly, facts about Andrea Vaccaro’s early period of artistic formation are similarly scant. Understandably, one finds more scholarly speculation about this phase of his development than about his mature and late periods (ca. 1636-1670) when a greater number of bank documents for identifiable commissions establish the artist’s activities with certainty. Despite De Dominici’s inconsistent reliability, he remains our
primary source for a glimpse of Andrea Vaccaro’s artistic beginnings. He informs us that Pietro Vaccaro sent his son, Andrea, to grammar school at a Jesuit college. Although Andrea made some progress, he was soon drawn to painting when, after passing every day by the palazzo of the Seggio di Nilo on his way to school, he witnessed with delight Belisario Corenzio painting there. Pietro consented to his son’s desire to turn to painting, but suggested that he study with Girolamo Imparato, rather than Corenzio, who was notorious for being wicked and unjust. No documents verify this information, but it is interesting to note that Corenzio was a prolific fresco painter, and Andrea Vaccaro, as we shall see, only received one fresco commission (Cats. 13-14, Figs. 15-25), specializing in oil painting. An apprenticeship with a noted artist such as Girolamo Imparato would have provided Andrea with a sound artistic formation. However, this apprenticeship is untenable because Girolamo Imparato died in 1607, and we know now that Andrea Vaccaro was born in 1604, and not in 1598 as declared by De Dominici.

Much more to the point, a document dated 18 July 1620 (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS) establishes that Andrea Vaccaro, at the age of sixteen, became apprenticed to Giovanni Tommaso Passaro, a minor artist, of whom scarcely anything is known, except through documents for his artistic activity between 1609 and 1642-1643. Passaro received payments for paintings, several of which were copies, and for a public commission in 1642-1643 for a painting of Saint Mary of Constantinople with Saints Giacinto and Peter Martyr for a chapel in the church of San Domenico Soriano (previously named Santa Maria della Salute). Unfortunately, although Passaro’s painting may not be identified, it is interesting to note that the subject happens to be the
same as that of Vaccaro’s earliest documented work, recorded in a document of 2 October 1629, when the artist was twenty-five years old. Vaccaro received a final payment of 20 ducats (for the total sum of 60 ducats) for Saint Mary of Constantinople with two Blessed Figures for the church of the Trinità delle Monache (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). Although Vaccaro’s painting has yet to be found—and De Dominici does not mention it—the fact that the young artist received a public commission for a chapel in an important church suggests that he had already achieved a certain degree of renown. Early the previous year, 16 February 1628, Angela Geronima, a child of the young artist and his first wife was baptized which suggests that he had already established his family by this time as well (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). Nothing more is known about the marriage.

The next documented painting for Vaccaro dates from seven years later (1636) when he received payment for the Penitent Mary Magdalen (Cat. 1, Fig. 2). By the time Vaccaro obtained this prestigious commission from the Certosa di San Martino, he was already a mature man thirty-two years old and the painting manifests the talent of a mature artist. It displays powerful emotional content, sophisticated contrasts of light and shade, a complicated pose and textures of various materials and objects, for example, the skull at the lower right, foreshortened from below to reveal the three remaining upper teeth. Besides his apprenticeship with the little-known artist Giovanni Tommaso Passaro, which reveals nothing about Vaccaro’s beginnings, who else could have been decisive for his early artistic development?

De Dominici proposes different stages of development as Vaccaro matured, and modern scholars have elaborated on this hypothesis. The biographer reports that at a
certain point Vaccaro shifted his interest away from Girolamo Imparato, with whom, as we saw, he proposes the apprenticeship, to the more famous and innovative Caravaggio. Caravaggio’s brief sojourns in Naples (September 1606-June 1607 and October 1609-July 1610) transformed the art of numerous local mannerist artists. His paintings, such as the Seven Acts of Mercy, the high altarpiece for the church of the Pio Monte della Misericordia, and the Flagellation, for a chapel in San Domenico Maggiore (now Museo di Capodimonte), with their striking naturalism and dramatic lighting, galvanized many painters to rethink and change their styles. Whereas Caravaggio’s closest follower in Naples, Battistello Caracciolo (1578-1635), knew him personally and forged his own potent version of Caravaggio’s late style, as demonstrated clearly in many of his works, Andrea Vaccaro was just a toddler when Caravaggio visited Naples. With no documented paintings during this phase, we are left to speculate about how the influence of Caravaggio might have shaped Vaccaro’s art. De Dominici, revealing his prejudice, laments that as a young adult Vaccaro could still be so easily dazzled by Caravaggio’s manner, yet for the most part mainly praises him for his mastery of copying originals by Caravaggio; supposedly he was so successful that even experts were deceived.

De Dominici’s comments explain why the most often discussed painting associated with Andrea Vaccaro’s formative phase happens to be a copy of Caravaggio’s Flagellation which the writer attributes uncertainly to either Caracciolo or Vaccaro, and which, he says, hung near the high altar in the church of the Santissima Trinità degli Spagnuoli. Most scholars assume that this is the same copy which has hung in the De Franchis chapel in San Domenico Maggiore since 1928 (Fig. 1) where
the original by Caravaggio was located until transferred to the Museo di Capodimonte in 1972. Notwithstanding the large amount of writing on this mediocre copy, with the majority of scholars following Giannone who corrects De Dominici, Andrea Vaccaro’s authorship is nonetheless debatable. As Stoughton points out, the problem of identifying the copyist is probably insoluble. For obvious reasons, it is difficult to determine with confidence the authorship of a literal copy based on stylistic analysis alone when no other contemporaneous work by the presumed copyist may be identified.

Although it is quite natural to assume that Andrea Vaccaro, following the usual practice, studied, copied and selectively imitated the art of illustrious masters, both earlier and contemporary, we must learn more about Vaccaro’s youthful paintings from the 1620s to the early 1630s to determine whether he should be grouped among the caravaggisti, as he often has. Moreover, the term “Caravaggism” is itself problematic because it establishes a category for grouping diverse artists, thus blurring their distinctly separate approaches to naturalism. Without summarizing unnecessarily the numerous and polemical writings on this topic, it is worthwhile mentioning the opinions of three great specialists: Longhi fervidly asserts more than once that: “Vaccaro no...non fu mai vero caravgesco.” Moir defines Vaccaro as a diluted follower, a member of the “second generation caravaggisti (1620s),” with traces of a “brand of gentle Caravaggism developed by Stanzione” noticeable as late as the 1650s in the two paintings in the chapel of Saint Hugh in the Certosa di San Martino (Cats. 5-6, Figs. 7-8). In contrast, Spear notes that by the mid-1630s (the period of Andrea Vaccaro’s first known extant documented painting, the Penitent Mary Magdalen, Cat. 1, Fig. 2),
the artist’s “peculiar blend of decorativeness, mannered elegance, and Riberesque
naturalism is as unmistakably Neapolitan as it is alien to Caravaggio’s sensibility.”
Especially for Vaccaro’s early years, when Caravaggio’s impact was allegedly at its
greatest, the dearth of secure paintings makes this vein of analysis, at present, fruitless.

According to De Dominici, the youthful Andrea Vaccaro turned to yet another
style as a result of being easily swayed by others. While imitating Caravaggio, Vaccaro
became a very close friend of Massimo Stanzione (1585?-1656), who alerted him to the
errors of his Caravaggesque ways and advised him to assume the most beautiful and
noble manner of the Bolognese artist Guido Reni. Reni, himself, when a young artist,
flirted briefly and unsuccessfiully with Caravaggio’s naturalism and dramatic lighting, as
evidenced in his Crucifixion of Saint Peter (1604-1605; Rome, Musei Vaticani,
Pinacoteca), and in other works unknown or ignored by De Dominici. The biographer
recounts how Stanzione and Vaccaro inspected together Reni’s paintings, especially his
half-length compositions, in private collections in Naples. Vaccaro, evidently
impressed by the religious devotion expressed by Reni’s figures, with their gazes turned
upward to heaven, cleared his mind and left behind the “horrendous” manner of
Caravaggio. Vaccaro thanked Stanzione for showing him a new model of grace and
elegance to emulate and through study he improved his earlier dark Caravaggesque style
and walked toward the light of classical Bolognese painting. De Dominici boasts that
Andrea Vaccaro was so successful that those unfamiliar with his work thought that his
paintings were originals by Reni.

As in the case of the copies after Caravaggio mentioned by De Dominici, those
after Reni are even more difficult to identify since not a single subject is mentioned.
Also, one must keep in mind that De Dominici may be rhetorical when he praises an artist for his ability to imitate, thereby elevating the quality of the copyist to the level of the originator. However, elements of Reni’s style can be detected throughout Vaccaro’s later documented career, even in his last painting, the Saint Martha (Cat. 18, Fig. 29), which he left unfinished when he died in 1670. It is credible that Vaccaro was a good friend of his older peer, Stanzione, whose art also reflects the style of Reni and a catalogue raisonné of Stanzione’s oeuvre provides a better understanding of his art. But one remains to be written for Andrea Vaccaro.  

It is not within the scope of this dissertation to make detailed comparisons between these two artists, and it is premature to draw conclusions. It is true, however, that both have been accused of “eclecticism.” Both painters share the seventeenth-century Neapolitan approach of combining elements of the naturalism of Caravaggio (and Caracciolo and Ribera) with those of the classicism of Bolognese painting. Since Stanzione was older than Andrea Vaccaro, it follows that De Dominici would use the elder to pave the way for the younger to the more idealized painting of Guido Reni. Although Stanzione’s female models are more slender and petite than Vaccaro’s, they both repeat Reni’s female types and frequently employ his motif of eyes turned upward to heaven. De Dominici, in his life on Stanzione, tells us that Gaspar Roomer called Stanzione “the Neapolitan Guido [Reni].” He also reports that Andrea Vaccaro called Stanzione “Guido Napoletano”—which signifies “Neapolitan Guido Reni” and implies “Neapolitan guide”—in reference to Stanzione’s role as “guide” for artists in Naples to the Bolognese style.

With regard to Andrea Vaccaro’s early works and supposed shifts in style from late mannerism (Girolamo Imparato) to Caravaggio, and then to Guido Reni via
Massimo Stanzione, as simplistically plotted by De Dominici, I propose that the biographer did not have much specific knowledge about them. He recreates a believable artistic development in retrospect from the standpoint of Vaccaro’s later and more well-known paintings. De Dominici’s portrayal of the young Vaccaro—impressionable to outside influences, responding to successive styles—brings suspiciously to mind Giorgio Vasari’s celebrated discussion of Raphael’s development. Raphael is renowned for creating perfection through imitation of his outstanding older contemporaries: Perugino, Leonardo and Michelangelo, in a sequential manner. In his early career, Raphael painted works under his master Perugino’s influence which are difficult to distinguish as by his own hand. However, Raphael ultimately created invenzioni by assimilation and not mere imitation, whereas De Dominici reports that Vaccaro primarily made successful copies, although the biographer does mention that Stanzione and Vaccaro drew figures based on the Bolognese masters because these works should always be before one’s eyes to keep alive the imagination and allow it to conceive beautiful ideas. It is, of course, absurd to consider Vaccaro as an artist of the same stature of Raphael, but De Dominici attempts to elevate the lesser known Neapolitan artist by analogy, probably for the glory of the native city (patria). De Dominici begins and ends his biography with echoes of Vasari’s life of Raphael when he announces that Vaccaro was one of the very few who was granted grace by benign nature, and that by cultivating his artistic gift he was able to produce perfect works, unlike many artists who only imagine that they are Raphael. De Dominici’s analogy certainly explains why Giannone, the critic of De Dominici, writing about twenty-five years later, calls Vaccaro explicitly the Neapolitan Raphael.
Guido Reni, himself, was hailed in his lifetime as the Raphael of the seventeenth-century for his gratia and facility, and what more telling compliment could De Dominici have made than to invoke the name of Reni throughout Vaccaro’s biography:

Vaccaro was guided to Reni by Stanzione, the Neapolitan Reni.

These topoi are telling, but it will be more productive to return our attention to Andrea Vaccaro by inspecting and analyzing his extant, documented paintings.
NOTES: II. EARLY LIFE AND ARTISTIC FORMATION (1604-ca.1636)

1 De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 135.

2 A transcription of this document and all others related to Andrea Vaccaro are listed in chronological order in APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS. For convenience, documents which deal with specific paintings are also transcribed in the appropriate catalogue entries. Prota-Giurleo transcribes the baptismal notice for Andrea Vaccaro in Pittori napoletani del Seicento (Naples: Fausto Fiorentino-Libraio, 1953), 162. However, Commodo Izzo already mentioned the document two years earlier; see Andrea Vaccaro, 28, note 6. Rolfs, Geschichte, 257, note 1, had already surmised the correct year based on the dates of baptismal notices for Andrea Vaccaro’s numerous siblings (see note 3 below). Andrea Vaccaro’s mother’s family name appears in the documents as Glauso or Grauso (and sometimes in the plural)—alternate spellings are not uncommon for the time. In Spanish Naples B and V are interchangeable.

3 Lorenzo Salazar transcribes the baptismal notice for Andrea Vaccaro’s brother Bartolomeo (born 1612) in “Documenti inediti intorno ad artisti napoletani del secolo XVII,” Napoli nobilissima IV (1895): 187. For Giuseppe (born 1606), Michelangelo (born 1610), Tommaso (born 1614) and Grazia (born 1616), see Salazar, “Documenti,” (1897): 131. Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 28, mentions baptismal notices for these siblings, but adds Francesco (born 1602) and Matteo (born 1607). She omits Tommaso (born 1614), but lists instead Teresa (born 1614, the same year as Tommaso). Prota-Giurleo, Pittori napoletani, 163, mentions baptismal notices for all of these siblings, but omits both Tommaso and Teresa (born 1614). Andrea’s first name, Matteo, is given later to a younger brother (born 1607), which explains why the artist is called simply Andrea.


5 Ibid., 25.

6 See De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 135-136. In fact, Corenzio was paid for frescoes in a room of the palazzo of the Seggio di Nilo in the Piazzetta del Nilo in 1618 (see Gaetano Quarta, “Documenti estratti dall’Archivio Storico del Banco di Napoli dai giornali copia-polizze del Monte e Banco della Pietà,” Rassegna economica del Banco di Napoli X, no. 2 [1940]: 83) when Andrea would have been fourteen years old, the age at which he might have become an apprentice. This palazzo today is inaccessible, due to its ruinous condition.

7 For a register of documents related to Girolamo Imparato and his date of death, see Pierluigi Leone de Castris, Pittura del Cinquecento a Napoli: 1573-1606: L’ultima maniera (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1991), 332-333.


11 Salazar, “Documenti,” IV (1895), 187. This is mentioned by Ortolani in Thiene and Becker, eds. Allgemeines Lexicon XXXIV, 25.


14 De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 136.

15 Ibid. See also Vite II (1742-1745), 276, for a mention of this copy in the life of Caracciolo.

16 Giannone, Giunte, 125. For a recent summary of the opinions about this copy, see Denise Maria Pagano, ed., La Flagellazione di Caravaggio: Il restauro (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1999), 25.


18 Some other copies of Caravaggio’s works linked to Vaccaro include the Amor Vincit Omnia, apparently signed by Vaccaro, in a Roman private collection. See Maurizio Marini, Io, Michelangelo da Caravaggio (Rome: Studio “B”, Bestetti & Bozzi, 1974), 397. Richard Spear proposes that the Madonna of Loreto in the Sersale collection in Rome may be by Caracciolo or Vaccaro in “Unknown Pictures by the Caravaggisti (with notes on ‘Caravaggio and His Followers’),” Storia dell’arte XIV (1972): 155, notes 52-53.


21 Cleveland, Caravaggio and His Followers (Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1971), 20.

22 De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 60, 137.

23 Ibid.

24 Schütze and Willette, Massimo Stanzione. According to Willette, no modern scholars agree with Onofrio Giannone’s assertion that Andrea Vaccaro was actually one of Stanzione’s disciples. See p. 128. I would like to express my gratitude to Thomas Willette for our conversations in Naples and Rome on this and other topics. See also, 111-113.

25 Ibid., 113, note 2, and Willette’s discussion, 156. For an analysis of the role of Guido Reni in De Dominici’s Vite, see Wolfgang Prohaska, “Guido Reni e la pittura napoletana del Seicento,” in Frankfurt, Guido Reni e l’Europa: Fama e fortuna, ed. Sybille Ebert-Schifferer, Andrea Emiliani, and Erich Schleier (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1988), 644-651.


27 De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 135, 156.

28 Giannone, Giunte, 125.
III. MATURE PERIOD (ca. 1636-1660)

Any speculations about Andrea Vaccaro’s early period of formation seem to vanish when one views in person the Penitent Mary Magdalen (1636; Cat. 1, Fig. 2), his first known extant documented painting. When Vaccaro procured this prestigious commission from the Certosa di San Martino, he was thirty-two years old and without doubt an already established artist. In terms of reception, if extensive imitation is an index of popularity, then Vaccaro’s Penitent Mary Magdalen was highly successful. He, along with artists in his circle, are credited with more paintings of this subject than any other.\(^1\) A robust, vigorous Mary Magdalen is rendered with loose brushstrokes and rich application of paint. One searches in vain for traces of Caravaggio, Stanzione and/or Guido Reni, except for the latter’s signature gaze with eyes turned upward to heaven, which by then had become commonplace in devotional images. Instead, we are surprised at first to find yet another, completely different, model for Vaccaro, Anthony van Dyck. De Dominici may be right when he claims that Vaccaro was capable of keeping pace with the latest artistic trends of the time. But De Dominici, who must have known the Penitent Mary Magdalen, ignores it and its manifestation of the general shift in Neapolitan seventeenth-century painting to pittoricismo and impreziosimento coloristico in the mid-1630s recognized by modern scholars, starting with Bologna.\(^2\) The speculative tracing of influences, from De Dominici to the present, is the result of not having more documented information about Vaccaro’s creative development and his artistic relationships.
During the second half of the 1630s, only a few documents provide a glimpse into Andrea Vaccaro’s life and activities. On 19 April 1638, the Duca di Bruzzano (Calabria) paid him the final amount of 20 ducats for two paintings: Virgin Annunciate and Saint Catherine of Siena and, a month later, on 27 May 1638, Vaccaro received a payment of 45 ducats from Mattia Pironti for an unspecified painting (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). Nothing more is known about these works.

The next known date for Vaccaro is his second marriage to the twenty-four year old Anna Criscuolo, daughter of Francesco and Angela De Turris, on 17 April 1639, in the parish of San Giuseppe Maggiore, probably following custom, the parish of the bride, and, coincidentally, the same church where he was baptized. He was thirty-five. Within a year, on 13 March 1640, their son, Tomaso Domenico Nicola, who will later be known as the painter Nicola Vaccaro, was born.

Andrea Vaccaro’s next identified public commission was for the church of Santa Maria della Sapienza, which had just been renovated at the time, but now temporarily closed for restoration. On 28 February 1641 he received payment for the Temptation of Christ in the Desert (Cat. 2, Fig. 3), one of six paintings commissioned from him and important contemporary artists. Due to severe damage and extensive overpainting, it is difficult to draw conclusions about Vaccaro’s style in this work, although the application of paint seems less fluid and rich or “Van Dyckian.” Thus, it appears to have very little in common with the Penitent Mary Magdalen of five years before, except for the dependence on diagonals in the composition. In fact, the more attenuated
figures and the position of the tree limb against a cloudy sky recall elements in paintings by Stanzione and Ribera.

Neither is the “Van Dyckian manner” apparent in Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar (Cat. 3, Fig. 4); rather Guido Reni seems to be the primary source of inspiration for the ideal, harmonious style in this work. This painting is not mentioned in a document, but displays the signature and date, Andrea Vaccarius F. 1642. Only one other signed work is known to bear a signature, rather than the monogram, the Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child (Cat. 15, Fig. 26); both are in Latin. Like the Temptation of Christ in the Desert of the year before, this painting is an accurate and clear illustration of a Christian text describing an extraordinary apparition. Unfortunately, the provenance can be traced back only to the early nineteenth-century when the Marqués de Astorga donated it to the Academia de San Fernando in Madrid in 1818. It was probably meant for a reformed Carmelite religious house since the painting depicts Saint Teresa of Avila’s vision of receiving divine approval for the establishment of the new discalced monastery of Saint Joseph of Avila inaugurated on 24 August 1562. De Dominici does not mention this canvas, perhaps because it left Naples early on, but he does say in passing that the number of paintings by Vaccaro in private homes, as well as those transported outside the Kingdom of Naples, are infinite. Moreover, the presence of Vaccaro’s works in inventories of Spanish collections and the large number attributed to him there contribute further to his reputation as the Neapolitan baroque painter whose art was most exported to Spain.

The following year on 14 October 1643, Alonso Vargas, the Duca di Cagnano, paid Vaccaro for a painting of an unidentified Story of Abigail. The sum total of 280
ducats for the commission draws attention to itself because it is so large, especially as a work for a private individual and is more representative of amounts paid for major altarpieces (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS).  

De Dominici speaks of Andrea Vaccaro’s great fame and names Giacomo Aniello Farelli as one of his first, and perhaps his best, disciples. He tells familiar stories about the young Farelli’s leaving grammar school—the reason not known—to study painting. In fact, a document of 18 October 1644 spells out the terms and conditions of Farelli’s apprenticeship with Vaccaro and is of great interest for providing a glance at Vaccaro’s personal and professional life, and for understanding artistic practice in Naples (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). The contract states that Giacomo’s father, Onofrio Farelli, agrees to place his approximately fifteen-year-old son (he was, in fact, fifteen) for a continuous period of two years of work and service under Vaccaro’s care (starting from the date of the contract). The father promises that Giacomo would faithfully serve Vaccaro and his household according to the law, night and day, and according to the customary and necessary hours, and that his son would not withdraw from his responsibilities for any reason, even if he were to desire to dedicate himself to another profession, to become a monk or to find a wife. The father also promises that Giacomo would not steal or damage Vaccaro’s belongings. If Giacomo were to leave or steal, the father promises to find him, lead him back to his responsibilities, and pay Vaccaro for what had been stolen and damaged, and for all damages caused as a result, including expenses and interest incurred. If, for example, Giacomo were to leave after six months from the date of the contract, the father promises to pay Vaccaro 50 ducats for food and instruction provided during that period;
if after a year, 100 ducats, and if after a year and a half to two years, 150 ducats. In turn, Vaccaro agrees to take Giacomo into his home, to treat him well in conformity with his station, and to teach him to draw and paint according to his capacity and talent. In addition, Vaccaro must provide food, drink, a bed and a yearly allowance of 15 ducats for necessary foot-wear and clothing.\textsuperscript{12}

One wonders about the initial results of Vaccaro’s instruction, since, not surprisingly, no painting from the two years of the apprenticeship (1644-1646) is known, nor from Farelli’s early years of independent activity.\textsuperscript{13} Giacomo Farelli most likely assisted Vaccaro in the execution of his works during this period and, in so doing, learned the practical aspects of painting. De Dominici claims that the apprentice continuously made drawings after prints, models, and nude figures and perfected his knowledge of anatomy. Apparently, Vaccaro assisted him in copying and then composing history paintings and Farelli became so accomplished, including as well in the imitation of his master, that some half-length figures were mistaken as by Andrea Vaccaro’s own hand.\textsuperscript{14}

In the 1640s, Andrea Vaccaro secured other commissions from private patrons known only through documents of payment (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). On 18 July 1647, Dottor Vincenzo d’Andrea paid Vaccaro for a painting of the Triumph of David, a subject which appears in several paintings ascribed to the artist. Thus, the document cannot be linked with certainty to a specific work.\textsuperscript{15} In addition, the Principe di Cardito paid Vaccaro on 13 September 1649 for a large painting of an unspecified subject which was underway at the time.\textsuperscript{16}
Fortunately, Andrea Vaccaro’s documented artistic activity in the 1650s is greater than that in the 1640s. Four payments have been found from 1650-1651 for the *Death of Saint Joseph* (Cat. 4, Fig. 6) for a chapel in the church of Santa Maria delle Anime del Purgatorio.\(^\text{17}\) Thanks to a recent restoration in 1996, this splendid painting now approximates its original appearance. The paint, applied with thick, loose brushstrokes, can be associated with the “Van Dyck” manner detected already in Vaccaro’s *Penitent Mary Magdalen* (Cat.1, Fig. 2). Additional links with earlier works include the figure of Christ whose elegant pose, with left foot stepping forward and left hand holding up his cloak, quotes directly the equivalent figure in the *Temptation of Christ in the Desert* (Cat. 2, Fig. 3). It is the eloquent affetti (emotions of the human soul) and depth of poignant religious sentiment expressed in this work and the earlier *Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar* (Cat. 3, Fig. 4), which make these paintings two of the great masterpieces by Vaccaro.

Judging from the quality of these examples, one can assume that Andrea Vaccaro’s artistic reputation was well-established by this point and he received what must have been a coveted commission for the Certosa di San Martino in Naples for the chapel of Saint Hugh, located to the right as one enters the church. Although a document of payment from the Certosa dated 24 June 1652 mentions the considerable sum total of 200 ducats for only one painting without specifying a particular scene of the life of the Saint Hugh, it is highly probable that the painting in question is *Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln*. (Cat. 6, Fig. 8).\(^\text{18}\) The painting across from it, on the left wall of the chapel, *Saint Hugh Resuscitating a Baby* (Cat. 5, Fig. 7), has traditionally been attributed to Vaccaro as well, but only the former bears the artist’s
monogram. They both are narrative paintings, with complex, multi-figured compositions. The Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln, in particular, with the semi-nude laborers in various attitudes of physical exertion, demonstrates Vaccaro’s knowledge of anatomy and skill at drawing action poses. Unlike the almost exactly contemporaneous Death of Saint Joseph (Cat. 4, Fig. 6), with its denial of deep space, the present example, in keeping with the iconography, includes important details of the architecture with a view of the sky and clouds at the upper left. The flickering light effects with the figures modeled with a marked degree of chiaroscuro creates their convincing three-dimensionality. In terms of size and number of figures included, it is one of his most ambitious paintings to date.

From 9 December 1652 to 1 April 1654, Andrea Vaccaro received a series of seven payments from Gaspar Roomer, the extremely wealthy Flemish merchant and art dealer from Antwerp who had settled in Naples (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). All but one mention paintings; unfortunately, not a single subject is named. Nappi, who published most of these documents, reports that Gaspar Roomer bought thousands of paintings, but rarely do the bank documents specify the subjects or if they were purchased for export. It appears that he operated as a dealer for investment, rather than as a sophisticated connoisseur or collector. He bought paintings not only from Andrea Vaccaro, but from other well-known artists, such as Aniello Falcone, Mattia Preti and Luca Giordano. It is important to note, in addition, that the paintings that Gaspar Roomer bought might not necessarily be by the artist who received the payment.

Marshall speculates on the role Neapolitan artists themselves might have played as dealers for their own works, those by assistants in their workshops or even by other
artists, and emphasizes that Naples was different from other artistic centers in Italy for its late establishment of a painter’s academy to promote the status of painting as a liberal art. Hence, in Naples a strikingly positive attitude of artists toward art dealing prevailed; that is, an artist could also be a merchant. De Dominici mentions Vaccaro, in particular, as marginally or actively involved on more than one occasion in art dealing. In the beginning of his life of the artist, the biographer recounts that his father, Raimondo De Dominici, a dealer in art from the late 1670s and 1680s, sold Vaccaro’s excellent copies after Caravaggio as originals without the least scruple because of their high quality. De Dominici also relates how Vaccaro painted by day and would go out in the evenings for cool air when it was hot. He would frequent the shop of Aniello Mele, the honorable art dealer, to engage in erudite and virtuous conversation with Aniello Falcone, Viviano Codazzi, Micco Spadaro, Francesco Di Maria, Luca Giordano and other artists, as well as with honorable dilettantes of the city, including the famous Gaspar Roomer. Incidentally, Aniello Mele (or Mela) sold two paintings by Andrea Vaccaro after the artist’s death, one on 8 April 1680 of a Nativity and another on 22 February 1683 of a Saint Sebastian. Authenticity was apparently a matter of concern since the first check specifically stipulates “an original painting by the hand of Vaccaro” and the second “by Vaccaro’s hand,” rather than “by Vaccaro.” This rules out the possibility of workshop intervention (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). De Dominici also tells how Vaccaro took the young Bernardo Cavallino (1616-1656) under his wing and requested him to copy some half-length figures by Guido Reni which were in the house of the Principe di Conca, as well as paint some small history paintings of his own invention. This guidance resembles that which Stanzione
had given to Vaccaro during the latter’s formative period. Even more specific references to art dealing are found in De Dominici’s life of Cavallino. Apparently, Vaccaro admired Cavallino’s paintings and asked Stanzone (Cavallino’s early teacher) for permission to have the youth work for Vaccaro to make copies of some mythological works with small figures, and some depictions of female saints, then to be sent to Spain. Cavallino was also supposedly commissioned by Stanzone to paint some small history paintings for Gaspar Roomer. Since details of possible transactions in art dealing are not usually recorded in bank or notarial documents in sufficient detail, it is difficult to trace such activity and to know to what extent Andrea Vaccaro, and other Neapolitan artists, were involved.

It is likely that Andrea Vaccaro was in close contact with his younger contemporary, Bernardo Cavallino, because of similarities in their style and subject matter, but their relationship is still not clearly defined. Of Vaccaro’s known documented paintings, the Death of Saint Joseph (1650-?1651; Cat. 4, Fig. 6) is closest to Cavallino’s art. Many scholars who admire Cavallino usually disagree with De Dominici and consider Vaccaro to be dependent on Cavallino, rather than vice-versa. However, their artistic relationship remains a mystery because Cavallino’s documented career is even more obscure than Vaccaro’s. Cavallino’s works were primarily for private collectors and his only known public commission, the Saint Cecilia in Ecstasy, an altarpiece for the church of Sant’Antonio da Padova in Naples, is his only dated work (1645). De Dominici is correct when he states that Cavallino painted primarily small-scale figures, and this is the main difference between his and Vaccaro’s art. In regard to iconography, it is interesting to note that Vaccaro received a payment on 18
December 1655 from Fra Pietro Turbolo for two paintings: Story of Moses and Lot and his Daughters (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). They have not been identified, although one may comment that their subjects were also painted by Cavallino.

* * *

In 1656 the plague devastated Naples and took the lives of over half the population, including the artists Bernardo Cavallino and Massimo Stanzione with whom Andrea Vaccaro had close ties. It is difficult to gauge the repercussions that this disaster had on the artist’s personal and professional life. However, the number of Vaccaro’s known documented works increases. The following year, in October 1657, his seventeen-year-old son, Nicola Vaccaro, married Anna Maria Manecchia, the daughter of the painter Giacomo Manecchia. One year later, on 15 July 1658, both Andrea Vaccaro and his son, Nicola, witnessed the marriage of the painter Domenico Andrea Malinconico with Antonia De Popoli, sister of the painter Giacinto De Popoli, in the parish of Santa Maria della Carità, which attests to the close connection between these artists (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS).

During this period, the first half of 1658, Andrea Vaccaro received a series of four payments of a total of 150 ducats for two paintings for the Oratory of the Santissimo Crocefisso di San Paolo: Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary and Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ (Cats. 7-8, Figs. 9-10). Both are signed with the monogram. Of all the documented paintings by the artist, these are the least well-known and studied, perhaps because of their deplorable condition. They are both very dirty, with darkened varnish preventing a detailed stylistic analysis; however, one may comment on the compositions, noting that
they are conservative and based on diagonals extending from one corner to the opposite one. The interest of these two devotional works lies in their pairing. They represent two (later canonized) saints of the Theatine order and their mystical visions. Having painted them as pendants, Vaccaro adroitly called attention to visions from the beginning and the end of Christ’s life, and, respectively, from the beginning and end of the two saints’ priestly careers. The idealized angels, in contrast to the more naturalistic appearance of the saints, recall some of Guido Reni’s religious paintings.

A year later Andrea Vaccaro painted the Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria and the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena (Cats. 9-10, Figs. 11-12). He received a final payment toward the sum total of 400 ducats on 5 November 1659 for these two large altarpieces for the church of Santa Maria della Sanità made by a representative of the church, not a private patron, as a single commission which perhaps explains the close relationship between the two, although they are located in adjacent chapels. Similar to the pendants of Blessed Gaetano and Blessed Andrew of the previous year, these two works depict mystical visions related to Christ’s infancy and passion. However, nothing could contrast more with the intimacy of the Gaetano and Andrew, who experience their private visions, than these operatic and large spectacles. The two Saints Catherine share the same name, but only Saint Catherine of Siena was a member of the Dominican order, whereas both Blessed Gaetano and Andrew became saints of the Theatine order. The two paintings are praised; particularly the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena, as one of Andrea Vaccaro’s best paintings. Again, the grace, harmony, and poise of the figures evoke Guido Reni’s idealizing manner, although Vaccaro’s style is more solemn and majestic.
Towards the end of the decade of the 1650s, other documents record payments for works that have not been identified (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). On 17 February 1659, Vaccaro received an advance payment for a painting of an unspecified subject promised to the Duca d’Aquara for the church of the Capuchin friars of Vico Equense, a town on the Sorrentine peninsula. Later the same year, on 29 November 1659, Giovanni Michele Grutter paid 150 ducats for nine works, also with unnamed subjects. On the same day, the artist received payment for a Mary Magdalen which he was executing for the Capuchin friars of Scilla in Calabria. The document states that the painting should represent Mary Magdalen in ecstasy with two angels carrying her, and four small angels with a bouquet of flowers, as well as a landscape; that is, quite distinct from the Penitent Mary Magdalen of 1636 (Cat. 1, Fig. 2). The total price for the painting was 120 ducats, to be paid for by alms collected for this purpose.

Andrea Vaccaro’s documented activities increase in the 1660s, the last decade of his life. During that period, which I characterize in the following section as Vaccaro’s late period, he produced his greatest altarpiece and received recognition from the public, including contemporary artists.
NOTES: III. MATURE PERIOD (ca. 1636-1660)

1See APPENDIX: MARY MAGDALEN for a working list of paintings of this subject attributed to Andrea Vaccaro. In considering the large number, it must be remembered, though, that the most predominant female saint in paintings in Neapolitan homes was the Mary Magdalen. See Gérard Labrot, Collections of Paintings in Naples: 1600-1780 (Munich: K. G. Saur Verlag, 1992), 36.

2It was not necessary for Andrea Vaccaro or other Neapolitan artists to have left Naples to learn about Anthony van Dyck’s art. Van Dyck visited Palermo for several months in 1624 and had an impact on Pietro Novelli ("il Monrealese," Monreale 1603-Palermo 1647) who in turn visited Naples around 1630-1634 and probably had contact with Andrea Vaccaro, transmitting his knowledge of Flemish baroque painting shortly before the time of the Penitent Mary Magdalen. Paintings by Van Dyck and Rubens were also part of the wealthy Flemish merchant Gaspar Roomer’s collection in Naples. In addition, Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, another Italian artist in close contact with Van Dyck’s art in Genoa, visited Naples about 1635. Raffaello Causa proposes a connection between Vaccaro and Van Dyck stating that Vaccaro made copies of Van Dyck’s paintings and that “tutta l’opera di Vaccaro rappresenta una sorta di diario della fortuna del vandyckismo a Napoli.” See “La pittura del Seicento,” 948, note 136, 988-989. Ferdinando Bologna is generally acknowledged as one of the first scholars to draw attention to this stylistic change to pittoricismo in the Neapolitan school of painting. See “A proposito dei ‘Ribera’ del Museo di Bruxelles,” Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts Bulletin I (1952): 47-56. Most Neapolitan scholars agree with this view, although a few non-Neapolitan scholars have raised objections. Richard Spear (in regard to the London 1982 exhibition catalogue, Painting in Naples: 1606-1705 from Caravaggio to Giordano) argues that “one of the most disturbing leitmotifs…is the purportedly strong influence of Van Dyck on the Neapolitan school.” He thinks that “Bolognese models and others by Vouet and Artemisia Gentileschi determined the mainstream of painting in the 1630s and 1640s.” See Spear’s “Notes on Naples in the Seicento,” Storia dell’arte XLVII (1983): 127-137. Prohaska also raises doubts about Van Dyck’s influence via Pietro Novelli by pointing out that in Naples Ribera was already undergoing a process of impreziosimento coloristico. He does concede that Vaccaro and to some extent Cesare Fracanzano may have received painterly impulses from Novelli, but suggests that “Van Dyckian influence” may be instead a metaphor for a general painterly style. See Wolfgang Prohaska, “I rapporti di Ribera con la pittura flammenga in area mediterranea: Il caso Van Dyck,” Ricerche sul ’600 napoletano: Scritti in memoria di Raffaello Causa (1994-1995) (1996): 219. As Prohaska observes, one of the ironies of the modern history of Neapolitan Seicento painting is that non-Italian scholars have the tendency to argue for Italian influences on Neapolitan artists during this period, whereas Italian scholars assert that non-Italian influences are the more significant for their local painters. Despite conflicting views, there is general agreement about the crucial role of the influence of the “Neo-Venetian” movement in Rome. At any rate, the belief persists that Neapolitan painters, not just Vaccaro, were
mostly willing, yet passive, recipients of outsiders’ innovations. The literature on this topic is too large to summarize further here.


5Prota-Giurleo published his findings without transcribing the documents: “Andrea si decise a prendere moglie, e il 17 aprile 1639 furono celebrate le sue nozze con Anna Criscuolo nella Parr. Di S. Giuseppe Maggiore. Nel processetto matrimoniale che si conserva nell’archivio della nostra Curia Arcivescovile, Andrea tace la sua professione, mentre la sposa Anna Criscuolo si dichiara figlia del fu Francesco e di Angela De Turris, di anni 24.” See Prota Giurleo, Pittori napoletani, 163. This was Andrea Vaccaro’s second marriage (see note 6, below).


8De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 147.

9Nappi, “Pittori del ’600 a Napoli,” 80. See also Ruotolo, “Aspetti,” 41, who gives the year as 1642.

10De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 457, 466. De Dominici gives the mistaken year of birth as 1624; the correct year is 1629.

11Antonio Delfino, “Documenti inediti sui pittori del ’600 tratti dall’Archivio Storico del Banco di Napoli (A.S.B.N.) e dall’Archivio di Stato di Napoli (A.S.N.),” Ricerche sul ’600 napoletano (1988): 58-59. I would like to thank Nicola De Blasi and his assistants at the Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II for helping me to understand this document which is riddled with seventeenth-century Neapolitan and Latin notarial terms.

Barbone Pugliese, “Proposte,” 19, comments that the early works by Farelli, under the tutelage and influence of Vaccaro, have yet to be discovered. De Dominici, _Vite_ III (1742-1745), 398, 457-458, reports that a decade after the apprenticeship Andrea Vaccaro joined forces with Francesco Di Maria against Luca Giordano by encouraging his best pupil, Farelli, to compete with Giordano for the commission for the high altar of the church of Santa Brigida. He would have been about twenty-seven years old at the time of this audacious undertaking. For an analysis of this competition, see Renato Ruotolo, _S. Brigida_ (Naples: Luigi Regina Editore, 1978), 35-39. Giacomo Farelli, as artistic heir of Andrea Vaccaro, appears to represent the conservative, classical trend of Neapolitan painting, whereas Luca Giordano, the innovative, coloristic baroque. A similar contest occurs about 1660 for the commission for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto when Andrea Vaccaro, himself, competes with Luca Giordano. See section IV. LATE PERIOD (ca. 1660-1670), and Cat. 12, Fig. 14.

De Dominici, _Vite_ III (1742-1745), 457.

Fausto Nicolini publishes the document in _Notizie tratte dai giornali copiapolizze degli antichi banchi napoletani intorno al periodo della rivoluzione del 1647-48_ I (Naples: L’Arte Tipografica, 1957): 219. Vincenzo Pacelli discusses an inventory of a jurist named Vincenzo D’Andrea of 1 September 1649 which lists a half-length figure of David by Vaccaro, but no mention of a Triumph of David. See Vincenzo Pacelli, “La quadrieria di Vincenzo D’Andrea, giurista e rivoluzionario, da un inventario del 1649,” _Ricerche sul ’600 napoletano_ (1987): 150. However, a painting “colla testa d’Oloferne [sic], portata da Davide, e molte donne dansanti, seu festigianti con cornice intagliata, et indorata di palmi otto, e sei mano d’Andrea Vaccaro” appears in an inventory of the chattels of Donato Bianchi drawn up by Antonio de Simone in 1693. See Renato Ruotolo, “Artisti,” 180, 187. Two extant versions of high quality of this subject are attributed to Andrea Vaccaro: one in the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples (Fig. 5) and another in the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire in Geneva (see Commodo Izzo, _Andrea Vaccaro_, fig. 10). The Naples version, included in several exhibitions on Neapolitan painting, measures 207 X 256 cm. and was donated to the museum in 1955 by the Baronessa Colletta De Peppe. The Geneva version, 215 X 255 cm., was given to the museum in 1839 by the Conte di Sellon. For an extensive analysis of the comparative qualities of the two works (the Geneva version considered superior), see Matteo Marangoni, “Un Domenichino di meno e un Vaccaro di più,” _Bollettino d’arte_ n.s. 2 III (1923-24): 228-233; and Margherita Nugent, _Alla mostra della pittura italiana del ’600 e ’700: Note e impressioni_ II (San Casciano Val di Pesa [Florence]: Società Editrice Toscana, 1925-1930), 128-131. Although in both works the central figure of
David with the head of Goliath is well-drawn, three of the female figures, in a plane behind the primary one, seem strangely distorted, with very long necks, especially in the Naples version. Marangoni laments the unevenness of Vaccaro’s talent and calls the Naples version a parody of the Geneva one, which he considers to be perhaps the most beautiful work by Vaccaro that he has ever seen. Nugent forgives the imperfect anatomical drawing in the name of Vaccaro’s decorativeness. The deficiencies in drawing of the subsidiary female figures may be due to workshop intervention. The refined movements of the figures call to mind those of Bernardo Cavallino with their dancing, elegant poses. Interestingly, around 1686, Luca Giordano demonstrated his interest in the compositions of both the Naples and Geneva versions in a bozzetto (Wellesley, College Museum) for a painting (Leeds, Temple Newsam House). See Oreste Ferrari and Giuseppe Scavizzi, *Luca Giordano: L’opera completa* (Naples: Electa Napoli, [1992] 2000) I, 319, and II, 696, figs. 547-548. Giordano combined elements of both versions: the pose of David resembles that of Vaccaro’s Geneva version, whereas the pose of the dancing woman with a tambourine is similar to that on the far right of Vaccaro’s Naples version. Giordano though was less interested in dancing, graceful female figures and included children, bolstering the triumphal celebration. De Vito draws attention to a replica of Vaccaro’s Naples version, but smaller in size, in a private collection also in Naples. See G. De Vito, “Appunti,” 135, 137, fig. 61. A variant of the Naples version portraying a more youthful David appeared on the art market in 1974 (oil on copper, 62 X 88 cm., Rome, Finarte, 7 May 1974). See *Catalogo Bolaffi della pittura italiana del ’600 e del ’700 II* (Turin: Giulio Bolaffi Editore, 1974-1980), 158.

16D’Addosio, “Documenti,” 518. D’Addosio proposes that the document refers to a painting of the Massacre of the Innocents, which De Dominici, *Vite III* (1742-1745), 148, describes as by Andrea Vaccaro: “In quella [galleria] del principe di Cardito sono tre quadri grandi, in uno è figurate la strage degli Innocenti, ed è il più grande.” Some scholars assume that the large painting (273 X 388 cm.) of this subject signed with Vaccaro’s monogram in the Palazzo Reale in Naples is the work in question. See, for example, Ortolani in Naples (1938), 49; and Commodo Izzo, *Andrea Vaccaro*, 147, fig. 49. However, without further evidence, I remain skeptical. For more information about this painting, see Marina Causa Picone and Annalisa Porzio, *Il Palazzo Reale di Napoli* (Naples: Azienda Autonoma di Soggiorno, Cura e Turismo, 1986), 20, 68, fig. 75.


18Faraglia, “Notizie di alcuni artisti,” (1892), 661.

Nappi, “Le attività,” 65. Renato Ruotolo analyzes the dealer and collector activities about 1630-1670 of the Flemings Gaspar Roomer and the Vandeneyndens in Mercanti-Collezionisti. Roomer kept abreast of artistic currents, but, unfortunately, his large collection of paintings was dispersed shortly after his death in 1674. From the study of other numerous inventories, Ruotolo informs us that Vaccaro was represented in many collections, that his paintings were sought after and often hung near works of a completely different style. Buyers seemed to be interested primarily in adding importance to their homes with paintings of standard subjects by artists of renown. For instance, paintings by Vaccaro and Giordano, which are stylistically incompatible to modern viewers, are recorded as hanging side-by-side. See Ruotolo, p. 16-17. For further information from inventories, see Ruotolo, “Aspetti,” and Labrot, Collections.


De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 136, 150-151.

Nappi, ed., “Catalogo,” 110, for both.

De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 37, 150, 155.

Ibid., 34-37. Pérez Sánchez was not able to locate any of them in Spain. See Pintura italiana, 382.

Of the many canvases attributed to both Vaccaro and Cavallino in the past, see especially the Saint Anthony of Padua and the Death of Saint Joseph (both Naples, Museo di Capodimonte). For a critical analysis of their relationship, see comments by Ann T. Lurie, Ann Percy, and Nicola Spinosa in Naples, Bernardo Cavallino: 1616-1656 (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1985). De Vito recently addresses this matter in “Appunti,” 82-100.

De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 36.


Prota-Giurleo, Pittori napoletani, 163, mentions this document without transcribing it and points out that Andrea Vaccaro identifies himself as the father of the groom, fifty-three years of age, and his profession as “Scrivano in civilibus della Gran Corte della Vicaria,” rather than painter. De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 135, begins his life of Vaccaro stating that he was the son of “Pietro Vaccaro di profession curiale, esercitando l’ufficio di sollecitator di cause.” Prota-Giurleo suggests that when Andrea Vaccaro’s father suddenly died, he had to provide for his mother and numerous
younger siblings and, therefore, continued his father’s legal profession, while at the same time pursuing his profession as painter.

30Salazar, “Documenti” V (1896): 123; and Prota-Giurleo, Pittori napoletani, 34-35. Using this document as evidence, Prota-Giurleo speculates that Andrea Vaccaro, rather than Stanzione (as reported by De Dominici), was the master of Malinconico and perhaps also of Giacinto De Popoli. See also Rosanna Cioffi, “Giacinto De Popoli: Spunti per uno studio sulla committenza ai ‘pittori minori’ nella Napoli del Seicento,” Prospettiva XCIII-XCIV (1999): 212, note 22. Ferdinando Bologna raises doubts about this proposal in “Andrea Malinconico in Sicilia. E anche qualche chiarimento sul suo esordio,” in Studi in onore di Michele D’Elia, ed. C. Gelao (Matera: R & R Editrice, 1996), 357. For the strained relations between the three artists, Andrea Vaccaro, Andrea Malinconico and Giacinto De Popoli, and the Dominicans of the church of San Pietro Martire, see Giuseppe Cosenza, “La chiesa e il convento di S. Pietro Martire,” Napoli nobilissima IX (1900): 25-26. According to Cosenza’s findings, in 1667 the Dominican friars offered 500 ducats to Andrea Malinconico to execute fifteen paintings of the life of Saint Peter Martyr for the nave. For some unknown reason the commission was not completed. Andrea Vaccaro owed the convent 100 ducats and he offered to pay it back by painting some works for the choir. However, this same commission was then handed over to Giacinto De Popoli, but the patrons were not satisfied and a legal suit followed, which, after De Popoli’s death in 1682, involved his heirs.


35Nappi, “Le chiesa di Sant’Eframo Vecchio,” 177. For the subject of Mary Magdalen, see also APPENDIX: MARY MAGDALEN.
IV. LATE PERIOD (ca. 1660-1670)

The persistent assumption that Andrea Vaccaro’s creative activity weakened as he became older can no longer be maintained.\(^1\) The number of documented commissions alone in the beginning of the 1660s suggests just the opposite, that Vaccaro was actually at the height of his career. In a single year 1660, he received payments for no fewer than four different commissions (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). Only one of them was from a private individual, Presidente Diego Ugliola, who paid part of the sum total of 180 ducats on 22 May 1660, for three unidentified paintings, a Nativity, Sacrifice of Isaac, and another Old Testament Story.\(^2\) However, the other three from this period were public commissions. Perhaps because Vaccaro was among the few leading artists in Naples after the plague, it was he who was requested by survivors in response to the tragedy to paint two main altarpieces to encourage prayer to assist souls in purgatory. On 13 April 1660 the governatori of the Monte della Misericordia, executors of the will of the deceased Reggente Giovanni Camillo Cacace, paid an advance of 30 ducats for a painting of the Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph or Saint Mary of Providence for the church of Santa Maria della Providenza (known as Santa Maria dei Miracoli; Cat. 11, Fig. 13). The final payment on 21 October 1661 notes the sum of 180 ducats for this commission.\(^3\) A series of four other payments in 1660 (17 July, 23 August, 13 October, and 8 November) are for the Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory (Cat. 12, Fig. 14) for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto newly constructed over the burial site of tens of thousands of victims of the plague.\(^4\) During the same year on 19 August 1660, (later payments on 30 March 1661 and 7 April 1661), Andrea Vaccaro received the advance payment toward
the large sum total of 1200 ducats for an extensive fresco cycle, his only known work in this medium. He was commissioned to paint eight scenes of the life of Saint Gaetano (Cajetan of Thiene) in the nave and the Cardinal Virtues in four spandrels of the crossing of the church of San Paolo Maggiore in time for Lent of the following year 1661 (Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25). 5

The *Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph* and the *Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory* are both high altarpieces with complex compositions of numerous figures arranged in hierarchical order of importance. The lesser known of the two, the *Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph*, depicts more figures with a less dynamically unified conception, undoubtedly dictated by the iconography. Above, Christ, the Holy Spirit and God receive the intercession of Mary and Joseph at the intermediate tier for the souls burning in the purifying flames of purgatory. At the lower left, the four Franciscan nuns add their prayers to those of the faithful. Two of them resemble the graceful Saint Catherine in the *Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena* painted a year before (1659; Cat. 10, Fig. 12). Vaccaro continues to combine an ideal type for the holy figures with a naturalistic approach for the three portraits. At the bottom of the *Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph*, there appear bust-length portraits of the founder and benefactor of the church, Reggente Giovanni Camillo Cacace, as well as of his mother, at the center, and uncle, all immortalized and prominently displayed immediately behind the picture plane to ensure that they would be remembered with prayers. These stiff portraits contrast markedly with the elegant grace and fluidity of the rest of the painting, and continue a long tradition for the inclusion of donor portraits. Rather than grouping them, Vaccaro distributes them in
balanced order to introduce the bilateral symmetry of the composition which develops from the two at the lower corners upward and into space. The center portrait begins the vertical axis which includes the guardian angel lifting a soul to heaven and the dove of the Holy Spirit at the very top center. The Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory is a much more powerful painting, and is arguably Andrea Vaccaro’s greatest work. A strong diagonal forcefully organizes the composition; the fewer number of figures concentrates attention on the expressive interchange of their gazes. In this painting, Mary is the sole intercessor for the souls in purgatory and she implores her son, appearing as Salvator mundi, for assistance. The solemn dignity of these figures and the depth of religious sentiment and pathos are remarkable; their noble grandeur and eloquence are among Vaccaro’s most poetic creations.

Of all his works, the Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory attracts the most attention from early biographers. Francesco Saverio Baldinucci, Giovanni Pietro Bellori and De Dominici all tell anecdotes about the circumstances of the commission. Although that which they relate may be apocryphal, it is worthwhile examining as revealing different critical perceptions about the artist.

The three biographers describe at length the supposed competition between Andrea Vaccaro and Luca Giordano for this commission, ordered by the greatest benefactor of the church of Santa Maria del Pianto, the Viceré Don Gaspar de Bracamonte, Conde de Peñaranda (Viceroy from 1658-1664). In Francesco Saverio Baldinucci’s account, the Viceroy ordered both Vaccaro and Giordano to submit paintings, but, once they were finished, he had difficulty choosing which of the two
should serve as the main altarpiece. After calling experts to judge them, and with no conclusion reached, the Viceroy tried to decide himself which painting was better. The problem finally resolved itself when Giordano of his own volition conceded the high altar to Vaccaro because of the great esteem he had for him and because of Vaccaro’s greater age and fame as a renowned teacher. In other words, Vaccaro won as a result of Giordano’s generous recognition of Vaccaro’s authority, not necessarily because of Vaccaro’s superior ability as an artist.

Giovan Pietro Bellori presents a different version of the competition in his life of Luca Giordano, which first appeared in the second edition of his Vite. When the Viceroy saw Giordano’s painting and fast method, he cleverly convinced the artist that it would be to his advantage to paint another work; that is, two for the two altars flanking the high altar, which would give Giordano more opportunity to show off his work. Thus, Giordano, for the sake of both honor and usefulness followed the wishes of the Viceroy, and withdrew from the competition in deference to Vaccaro’s greater virtue and age, and was rewarded with Vaccaro’s friendship and support. However, again, it is understood that Giordano is the superior painter due to his new manner and velocity; his loss to Vaccaro was calculated by both him and the Viceroy for Giordano’s own advantage.

It is De Dominici, the last of the three, who embellishes the story to such an unlikely extent that famous artists in Rome are called upon to judge. Bozzetti by both artists were sent to Rome to be viewed by Pietro da Cortona, Andrea Sacchi, Giacinto Brandi, Baciccio, and other valentuomini. The others deferred to Cortona, Giordano’s teacher, who proclaimed Vaccaro the winner because of his greater experience, age, and
reputation. The Viceroy then convinced Giordano to accept this decision and to be content with his opportunity to execute and display two paintings, instead of only one, the two lateral altarpieces. Vaccaro is the victor, again, because of his venerable age, not necessarily because he was the better painter.

All of these stories demonstrate the respect contemporaries gave to Andrea Vaccaro as an experienced artist and as a virtuous person. As Colton observes, even if De Dominici’s story is not true, it shows that by about 1660 Giordano was competing with Vaccaro, one of the best artists in Naples. Giordano does not eclipse the older, traditional Vaccaro immediately. Yet as Ferrari points out, despite Vaccaro’s victory, the paintings themselves reveal him to be a survivor from a previous age. He describes Vaccaro’s altarpiece as expressing a solemn and impeccable language, like that of a liturgical oration, but quite archaic. In contrast, Luca Giordano’s side paintings, the Saint Gennaro Interceding for the Plague Victims and the Crucified Christ with Patron Saints of Naples, exhibit the vibrant colors and light effects of Rubens. From a Vasarian and De Dominician point of view, in which originality and “progress” are the criteria of great art, Vaccaro is conservative, and thus undeniably the loser. His Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory sums up a long tradition of religious painting which developed in Naples. Vaccaro was evidently chosen for the commission precisely because his approach to religious painting was traditional, appropriate, and respected.

De Dominici discusses the presumed rivalry of Vaccaro and Giordano also in regard to the fresco commission for the Theatine church of San Paolo Maggiore of the same period (Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25). He states that the Theatines consulted Vaccaro for
advice about which of the many contenders to choose, one of whom was Giordano. Vaccaro finally decided that he would take on the commission himself, despite his inexperience in the medium and his advanced age. Giordano, supposedly excluded because of his youth, predicted that the Theatines would waste their money and that Vaccaro would work in vain and lose the reputation that he had acquired over the years.

De Dominici then reports two slightly different versions. In the first, Vaccaro asked Andrea de Lione, an artist more experienced in fresco painting, to execute the frescoes based on Vaccaro’s *modelli* (Cat. 13, Figs. 15-18) and they both began work on the cycle together, with the younger artist teaching Vaccaro how to paint in fresco. In the second version, Vaccaro undertook the commission with the intention of giving it to Andrea de Lione who had competed for it; Vaccaro executed only the *modelli* and did not work on the frescoes. Most scholars agree with De Dominici that Andrea Vaccaro was not solely responsible for the frescoes, although the six documents of payment to Vaccaro do not indicate that other artists were involved in the commission, which might have been the case. Novelli Radice has studied the frescoes in greatest detail and detects the style of both Vaccaro and de Lione. She proposes that the uneven quality may be due to workshop intervention, and that payments by Andrea Vaccaro during this period to Andrea de Lione (19 February 1661, 5 April 1661) and Nicola Vaccaro (10 January 1661) indicate that both may have collaborated on this project (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). In the final analysis, judgment is extremely difficult because of the poor state of preservation of the frescoes which are not only dirty, but suffer areas of paint loss and overpainting.
Although it is true that the frescoes are not innovative stylistically and are uneven in quality, they are effective in communicating salient events in the life of Saint Gaetano and his founding of the Theatine order. The eight scenes situated between the clerestory windows above the cornice in the nave resemble a type of ceiling painting, quadri riportati, and can easily be read from the floor. Some of the subjects from the modelli were eliminated or altered to create a thoughtful iconographical program that starts at the left as one enters the church. Most commentators limit themselves only to identifying the scenes. Commodo Izzo in her monograph devotes a mere paragraph to the commission because, in her view, they are of little value.\textsuperscript{15} This is the most misunderstood and neglected commission of Vaccaro’s documented career. Its scope, however, underscores the continued importance of the artist into the last decade of his life.

Shortly after the final payment for the fresco commission, Vaccaro and his son witnessed the marriage of Anna Dò, a daughter of the painter Giovanni Dò, to the wood sculptor Michele Angelo Perrone on 2 July 1661 (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS).\textsuperscript{16} Evidently the newlyweds went to live in the lower part of a palazzo owned by Andrea Vaccaro.\textsuperscript{17} On 15 November 1662 Andrea Vaccaro received payment for two unspecified and unidentified paintings for the Conte di Lemos (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS).\textsuperscript{18}

The greatest manifestation of the respect Andrea Vaccaro enjoyed from his contemporary artists during his late career is his position as the first prefetto of the renewed Corporation of Neapolitan Painters, known as the Congregazione di Sant’Anna e San Luca dei Pittori. He held this prestigious post from 1664-1666 and his assistants
were Francesco Di Maria and Luca Giordano. Very little is known about the activities of this organization, but Ceci and Strazzullo published findings which give us a glimpse of its history and aims. It originated in the sixteenth century and was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and Saint Luke. Members included indoratori (1521), cartari di carte da gioco (1541), and rotellari (ca. 1562). In 1664 the organization, rather like a guild, changed and became a group for painters only, perhaps in an attempt to promote their status in society. Andrea Vaccaro most likely played a role in its establishment, along with other painters such as Natalino Troncia, Onofrio de Marino, Gerolamo Boccia, Francesco Chiaese, Giuseppe Tiro, Bartolomeo Spina, Vincenzo Mercadante, and Domenico Tagliafierro. Natalino Troncia, along with the Jesuit Gennaro Britti, were instrumental in obtaining permission from the Jesuits to allow the members to meet in the chapel of the Sciabica in the cloister of Il Gesù Nuovo, where a painting of Saint Luke by Tagliafierro adorned the altar. This was replaced shortly afterward in 1666 by Vaccaro’s *Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child* (Cat. 15, Fig. 26) which became the official painting of the Corporation. No document records this painting, but it is one of only two known works by Vaccaro to bear both a full signature and a year (1666). It seems logical to conclude that Vaccaro donated the painting to the Corporation at the end of his tenure as prefetto.

Vaccaro interprets the subject as a vision appearing to the aged Saint Luke—Vaccaro was himself an old man—who paints Mary and the Child who pose for him, while Saint Anne, the other patron of the Corporation, looks on. The holy figures float on clouds, surrounded by putti and cherubs. At the same time Vaccaro devotes his attention to the idealized beauty of Mary, he includes such naturalistic details as the nail
heads on the edge of the stretched canvas and the viscous globs of paint on Saint Luke’s palette.

Strazzullo publishes the statutes of the Corporation of 1665 which were drawn up while Vaccaro was in office, and as the senior officer he presumably had much to say about them. They admonish members to assist each other. Helping the sick, aiding imprisoned debtors, and burying the dead are mentioned specifically, and recall the Christian virtue of charity. Artistic practice, let alone theory, is not addressed, although De Dominici claims that Vaccaro founded an associated Accademia del Nudo where drawing lessons were given “per giovare a’giovani, e coltivar lo studio de’Professori.”

Although the Corporation was different from and later than the academies in Florence (1562), Rome (1577) and that of the Carracci in Bologna, it is an important part of the development of academies in the seventeenth century in Italy.

Partly due to Vaccaro’s fundamental role in the establishment of the Corporation, his style during the 1660s has sometimes been labeled “academic.” This is misleading, since it imposes a nineteenth-century notion of academic painting on his work. It must also be remembered that Luca Giordano, a more “progressive” artist, was Vaccaro’s second assistant and then became the next prefetto of the Corporation after Vaccaro’s tenure.

Andrea Vaccaro was also active as an official in a confraternity during the latter part of his life. He was a member of the Confraternita dei Bianchi of the Conservatorio of the Pietà dei Turchini by 1657 and later held positions as Consultore (1659-1660), Tesoriere (1660-1661), and Deputato (1662-1663). In addition, Vaccaro is named a Governatore of the Conservatorio and church of the Pietà dei Turchini in a document of
21 May 1667 (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). His association with the organization may help explain his receiving a commission in the church.

The Consigliere Francesco Rocco on 21 May 1667 paid the concession for his funerary chapel, in the church of the Pietà dei Turchini, the entire right transept, to be dedicated to Saint Anne. The altarpiece of this chapel, the Saint Anne with Mary before God the Father (Cat. 16, Fig. 27), clearly displays the artist’s monogram. Its composition is similar to that of the Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child (Cat. 15, Fig. 26), for the Corporation, since both works are organized by a strong diagonal from the lower right to the upper left with a kneeling saint experiencing a vision in the lower right corner. It is clear that Vaccaro knew the intended location for, in the corner of the present example, Saint Thomas Aquinas holds a monstrance toward the viewer. When standing in the nave and facing the high altar of the church, the viewer is drawn into the composition. Aspects of the iconography remain unresolved, but the importance of Saint Anne is clear in keeping with the dedication of the chapel and other paintings in it which represent scenes of her life. Here, Mary serves as her attribute, but, instead of being presented to God positioned at the upper right, the usual interpretation of the subject, she looks down to Saint Thomas of Aquinas at the lower right. He holds the monstrance containing the host, in which is the body of Christ made manifest through the Virgin Mary, alluding to his eucharistic writings.

In contrast, Andrea Vaccaro employs a symmetrical composition for the Communion of Saint Mary of Egypt (Cat. 17, Fig. 28) for the church of Santa Maria Egiziaca a Forcella. This painting is not documented, but Vaccaro’s monogram appears prominently placed in the center of the composition and the year 1668 is legible in the
lower left. Pride in his work, suggested by the location of the monogram, is countered by its location on the cloud under Mary’s foot. All critics are in agreement about Vaccaro’s authorship of this work, and the angels carrying tapers are praised in particular. Again, Vaccaro paints a religious work that imparts Counter-Reformation ideas to the viewer, but this time conversion, penance and communion. It successfully depicts the reformed sinner, Mary of Egypt, taking communion for the first time by the priest Zosimus, after many years of penance in the desert, not long before her death. Mary of Egypt’s complete absorption in communicating and her unawareness of the Madonna and Child’s compassionate gazes project a poignant example to the faithful.

During this time, around 1667, Vaccaro was involved with Andrea Malinconico and Giacinto De Popoli in unsuccessful dealings with the Dominicans of the church of San Pietro Martire. Vaccaro’s part, an offer to paint some works for the choir to pay off a debt of 100 ducats owed to the Dominicans, was not carried out and the commission was handed over to Giacinto De Popoli. There is no reason to believe Rolfs’ suggestion that Vaccaro did not paint them because he was close to the end of his life. His documented activity continued, for he received payments in 1668 for other paintings, all unidentified (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). On 20 September 1668 Giovanni Battista Fusco paid him 150 ducats for a Nativity and, on the same day, Vaccaro received an advance payment from Aniello Mazzella of 100 ducats for four history paintings.

When Andrea Vaccaro died on 18 January 1670, he left an unfinished painting of Saint Martha (Cat. 18, Fig. 29) for the high altar of the church of Santa Marta. A document of payment of 55 ducats to Nicola Vaccaro on 23 July 1670 specifies that
Andrea Vaccaro had already received 25 ducats for it before he died. Although the condition of the work precludes analysis, it is logical to assume that Nicola Vaccaro completed the painting following the composition established by his father. Perhaps the facial type is not a familiar one in the oeuvre of Andrea, and neither is the billowing drapery carried aloft to the right by the wind, to be found earlier in the fathers’s art.

In Andrea Vaccaro’s final years it appears that he continued to paint traditional religious paintings and requests for them did not diminish. The social and economic success that he attained during the latter part of his career seems to be expressed in his contented countenance in a Self-Portrait (Cat. 19, Fig. 30), probably painted around 1664 to 1666 when he was about sixty to sixty-two years old and at one of the high points of his professional career, as prefetto of the Corporation of Neapolitan Painters. De Dominici, who in this case is easy to believe, tells us that Vaccaro was loved and appreciated by everyone, a man of the highest integrity, an enemy of deception, who refused the company of liars. He had many virtues and was deeply religious and never painted lascivious subjects. In his will, drawn up in 1669, and summarized by Protagiurleo, Andrea Vaccaro named his son, Nicola, his heir and executor of the will. He left to his wife, Anna Criscuolo, a settlement that she was entitled to and a gift of 100 ducats. He wanted his wife to enjoy the paintings left in his room and stipulated that, after her death, they were to be given to their son, Nicola. He left to his sister, Grazia, a life-long annuity of 18 ducats. He also expressed the wish to be buried in the church of the Pietà dei Turchini, where he had served in many capacities for the Confraternita dei Bianchi. No trace of his entombment is to be found in the church today.
NOTES: IV. THE LATE PERIOD (ca. 1660-1670)

1De Dominici refers often to Andrea Vaccaro in these terms and modern scholars have followed suit. For example, a discussion of a painting of the Sacrifice of Isaac attributed to Vaccaro in the Quadreria dei Girolamini (Naples) is typical: “Il livello non è dei più alti di Vaccaro, essendo presente una certa stanchezza di modi e di effetti, certo dovuta alla collocazione molto tarda nel percorso dell’artista, la prima metà degli anni sessanta, quando era sempre più difficile per un pittore di stampo tradizionale tenere il passo con le fulminanti novità di un Luca Giordano.” See Roberto Middione, ed., La Quadreria dei Girolamini (Pozzuoli: Elio de Rosa Editore, 1995), 67.


6My photograph of the painting, showing it in situ, is the best available but not very revealing. It does have the advantage of displaying Vaccaro’s contribution along with the magnificent enframement of the high altar, although a later addition partially covers the bottom of the painting.

7“E ciò fu la causa che, dovendosi poi fare due gran tavole per la Chiesa nuova eretta sopra Poggio Reale, chiamata Santa Maria del Pianto, d’ordine del Viceré in ringraziamento a Sua Divina Maestà per l’ottenuta liberazione dalla peste dell’anno 1656, una fu assegnata ad Andrea Vaccaro, più provetto d’età, e l’altra a Luca. Ma terminate queste, nacque fra i pittori la contesa quale di quest’opere dovesse avere il primo luogo, che era quello dell’altar maggiore. E non volendo alcun di loro cedere dell’altro, fu determinato dalla prudenza del Viceré che si facesse da’ professori giudicare quale fosse delle due la migliore e a quella si desse la prelazione. Ma essendo venuti i maestri eletti ad una gran disputa fra loro senza alcuna conclusione, per levare ogni dissenzione o gara fu ordinato dallo stesso Viceré doversi mettere alla sorte la decisione di questa lite. E venendosi al cimento, cadde la sorte sopra quella di Giordano: il quale, avendo avuto sempre una somma stima del Vaccaro per la sua maggiore età e per la fama che aveva di gran professore, rinunziando al favor della

8 “Così essendo Luca venuto nella stima universale per le sue opere tanto celebri, contrastava il primato al vecchio Vaccaro; conciossiacosachè il Conte di Pegnorrando Vicerè di Napoli in quel tempo, avendo ordinati ad entrambi, come Pittori rinomati, un quadro per ciascun altro, per collocarsi nella nuova Chiesa eretta sopra Poggio Reale, intitolata S. Maria del Pianto, perché poco prima a’ prieghi della B.V. era stata liberata la Città di Napoli dal flagello della Peste, che l’avea miseramente afflitta: il Giordano risolutamente insistè, che il suo nell’Altare maggiore si collocasse, giacchè il Vaccaro altresì per la sua età; laonde ambedue dipinsero i quadri per ottenere la gloria. Compi Luca il suo con mirabil prestezza, e lo presentò al Vicerè, il quale per dar campo al Vaccaro difinire il suo, perciocchè sapea, che ricercava con lentezza le parti, finse di non troppo gradirlo, e commise a Luca altro di consimil grandezza, ma di pensiere differente alquanto, facendo per questo incontro turbarlo. Per la qual cosa di mala voglia il secondo Quadro facendo; portollo a Palazzo, ove per ultimo fù anche portato quello del Vaccaro, con istudio, e diligenza finito. Rinovossi la gara per la precedenza del luogo: ma il Vicerè con soprafina politica disse al Giordano, che se egli espor volea il Quadro nel maggiore Altare, uno solo ne avrebbe esposto, ma che cedendo il luogo al Vaccaro, come più antico professore, ambedue i suoi quadri si sarebbero esposti ne’ Cappelloni laterali di esso altare, peròchè a tal fine gli avea fatto fare il secondo, assicurandolo, che il primo solamente l’era piaciuto, non ostante, che allora il contrario addimostrato l’avesse. Così il Giordano vedendosi stretto, e per l’onore, e per l’utile, cede il primo luogo al Vaccaro, confessando che era a lui maggiore per virtù, non meno che per l’età, e in tal guisa per l’avvenire furon poi sempre amici questi due grand’uomini con sommo piacere di quel Signore. Anzi il Vaccaro molto la bella, e nuova maniera da Luca trovata in presenza del Vicerè commendando, affermò che anzi da vecchio Maestro, che da giovine artefice parea, che fossero stati dipinti que’ due quadri, e specialmente lodò quell’ ove è espresso S. Gennaro in aria, il quale prega N.S. Gesù Cristo, che tiene la Croce su la spalla, acciochè si compiacesse di far cessare il flagello, che la misera città affligea, e la Santa Vergine in atto piangente, che ancor lo prega, vedendosi poi nel piano varj cadaveri d’appesatì così al vivo espressi, che spirano orrore a’ riguardanti. Non è però, che non lodasse il Vaccaro l’ altro quadro, in cui è dipinto il Crocifisso co’ Santi Protettori della Città con una inarrivabil maestria, e franchezza.” Giovanni Pietro Bellori, “Vita di Luca Giordano,” in *Le vite de’ pittori, scultori, ed architetti moderni: Co’loro ritratti al naturale*, 2d ed. (Rome: Francesco Ricciardo & Giuseppe Buono, 1728), 314-315.

9 “Aveva il conte di Pignoranda Vicerè di Napoli fatto eriger da questo pubblico la chiesa di S. Maria del Pianto sopra Poggio Reale, perché in quelle grotte erano stati sepelliti molte migliaia di Cittadini estinti dalla crudele pestilenza del 1656, ed essendo la
Chiesa terminata circa il 1660, e dovendosi adornar di pitture, fu al Vicerè riferito, che
due Artefici in quel tempo gareggiavano nel primato, l’uno Andrea Vaccaro pittor già
vecchio, e consumato nelle fatiche, e l’altro Luca Giordano, il quale sebben giovane,
aveva fatto opere maravigliose, col dono avuto da Dio di una gran prontezza
nell’operare. Udì volentieri il Vicerè la gara de’ due Pittori, e come prudente ch’egli
era, ne volle veder l’opere per farne dritto giudizio; onde fu condotto a vedere le pitture
cosi dell’uno come dell’altro, e si dice che un parziale del Vaccaro non solo gli additò le
migliori opere di lui, ma fece dallo stesso Andrea portargliene alcuna delle squisite, che
per suo studio teneva in Casa; Fù adunque dal Vicerè ordinato a ciascuno di loro un
quadro di uguale misura, col soggetto d’impetrar misericordia da Dio, mediante
l’intercessioni della Beata Vergine, di S. Gennaro, e di altri Santi Protettori. Lieti
ambidue questi Artefici dieron principio all’opera, cercando ogn’uno di loro rendersi
toll’alto superiore, acciocché essendo migliore la sua opera giudicata, ottenesse dal
pubblico il primo vanto; Ma più che il Vaccaro aspirava a questo applauso il giovane
Giordano, desideroso di fama, e di gran nome, acciocché il suo quadro fusse collocato
nel maggiore Altare della nuova Chiesa, come apertamente egli pretendeva, ed i suoi
parziali il davano per cosa certa; Ma ciò saputo da Andrea, si oppose gagliardamente, e
con molte ragioni fece intendere al Vicerè, che il luogo dell’Altare maggiore toccava a
lui; e la contesa andò tanto innanzi, che ne fu commesso il giudizio a Pietro da Cortona,
Andrea Sacchi, Giacinto Brandi, Baciccio, ed altri valentuomini, che in duel tempo
fiorivano in Roma, i quali congregati per tale affare esaminarono i disegni, over bozzetti
mandati dal Vaccaro, e dal Giordano, e ne rimisero finalmente il giudizio al Cortona; il
quale decise a favor del Vaccaro, come di Maestro più faticato, e più vecchio nell’arte
del quale era buona fama in Roma, posponendo il suo proprio discepolo Luca Giordano,
come ancor giovane, avvegnachè questi si fusse lusingato di ottenere dal suo Maestro
sentenza favorevole. Questa decisione volle prima di ogn’altro averla in mano il
Vicerè, e come prudente la tenne qualche tempo occulta, fingendo di aspettarla. Intanto
avendo Luca Giordano finito il suo quadro colla solita mirabil prestezza, lo portò a
Palazzo, e presentollo al Vicerè, il quale finse che non fusse di tutto suo piacimento, e
gli diede ordine, che un altro di simil misura ne dipingesse, ma di diverso soggetto, che
fu un Crocefisso, con alcuni Santi Protettori della Città, e ciò fece ad arte il prudente
Vicerè; così per dar campo al Vaccaro di finire il suo quadro, come per adornare co’due
quadri di Luca, i Cappelloni della Croce.

Finito che ebbe Vaccaro il suo quadro, lo presentò al Vicerè, e’l simile fece Luca
dell’altro suo, istando pur tuttavia, che si collocasse nell’Altar maggiore. Ma il Conte
de Pignoranda, tiratolo da parte gli di disse, che si contentasse di quel chè egli avrebbe
fatto, e dрастramente gli pose avanti gl’ occhi l’età canuta di Andrea alla Maestria del
quale, si doveva usar venerazione, e che cedendogli il luogo si sarebbon messi tutti e
due i suoi quadri ne’ Cappelloni laterali all’Altar maggiore, e finalmente gli disse, aver
finto ad arte di non troppo gradire il primo suo quadro, quantunque sommamente gli
fusse piaciuto; Quindi gli palesò le laudi date al medesimo quadro dallo stesso Andrea,
il quale avea commendato quella nuova, e bella maniera. Persuaso perciò da tali
ragioni, anzi convinto il Giordano, cedè ad Andrea il primato, e da quel punto divennero
veri Amici; confessando Luca, essere il Vaccaro maggiore non solo per l’età, ma
principalmente per la virtù, nella quale aveva pochi che pareggiar lo potessero. Andrea
altresì lodando anch’egli dal canto suo le belle opere di Luca venne a presagire, che si


13“La debolezza però che mostrò Andrea nella sua vecchiezza meritò positivo biasimo, e fu indegna di scusa; dapoiché non avendo egli giammai dipinto a fresco, volle poi carico di anni provarvisi, e quel ch’è peggio in un opera grandiosa, ed in una Chiesa delle più insigni della nostra Patria, come di S. Paolo Maggiore, che fu già famoso Tempio di Castore, e Polluce. In essa Andrea avea dipinto le due Virtù che ornano l’Arco dell’Altare Maggiore, e volendo quei Padri ornare anche le mura che son tra’ finestroni della nave di mezzo per fare accordo con la volta assai ben dipinta dal Cavalier Massimo Stanzioni, il quale era pochi anni prima mancato nel contaggio del 1656, perciò dunque andarono i detti PP. a consigliarsene con Andrea, acciocché come Vecchio Pittore proponesse loro qualche ottimo Artefice, che quella opera degnamente eseguisse: Dapoiché molti erano i concorrenti, ma pochi quelli che con loro insigni, e molte opere, si avessero acquistato una gran fama, ed era fra costoro anche Luca Giordano allor giovane, che prometteva rendergli con l’opera sua appieno soddisfatti. Andrea ponderato avendo la grandezza, e l’importanza di quel lavoro, e misuratolo col proprio interesse, e coll’amor proprio, si lusingò, che a fresco gli avessero a riuscire quelle pitture, come felicemente le altre gli erano ad olio riuscite, senza punto riflettere nè all’età avanzata, nè alla sua pratica di quel modo di operare i colori: anzi avendo già nella sua mente scelto chi potesse in tal bisogno servir di guida, persuase a i Padri Teatini con varie apparenti ragioni a non fidarsi di alcun di quei, che si eran offerti per l’opera, poiché non conosceva fra essi niuno idoneo a ben servirli, e conchiuse il discorso, dicendo che per non vederli angustiati, e perplessi nella elezion del Pittore, egli proferiva loro l’opera sua: superata in fine la difficoltà fattagli, circa il dipingere a fresco, gli fu l’opera allogata contro l’aspettazione di ogn’uno, e massimamente di Luca Giordano, che predisse a quei Padri, che averebbero speso inutilmente il denaro, e che Andrea invano si sarebbe affaticato, anzi più tosto vi averebbe perduta la reputazione in tanti anni acquistata, mentrechè non aveva mai dipinto in fresco, nè la minima pratica di tal modo di colorire. Ma alle parole di Luca non fu prestata fede, perciocché egli come
giovane, era stato escluso dal lavoro, e si sospettò non per interesse proprio, cercasse
con sue ragioni poner gli in diffidenza; e dall’altro canto era ben noto il valor del
Vaccaro; ma l’esperienza dimostrò poi, che il Giordano aveva parlato con sentimenti di
verità, e per lor proprio bene.

Aveva Andrea famigliarità con Andrea di Lione, già scolaro di Belisario, dal
quale aveva appreso la franchezza del dipingere a fresco, e poi di Aniello Falcone, tirato
dal genio di dipinger Battaglie, come di lui abbiam detto. Da costui dunque fece capo il
Vaccaro, acciochè la pratica gli mostrasse di adoperare i colori sulla tonaca fresca, e con
la calce, e quegli volentieri gli mostrò le mescolanze, e la maniera di servirsene, onde si
diede da ambue principio all’opera, giacchè toccava al giovane di operare per
insegnare al Vecchio; cosa invero disdicevole all’età, e alla virtù di Andrea. Ma a tanto
e più giunse la passione, e l’interesse, e la dolce lusinga di piacere: in somma l’opera fu
continuata, e finita di quel carattere, che ai nostri giorni la veggiamo, cioè a dire indegna
di darsi a dirsi di Andrea Vaccaro, e quale aveала antiveduta il Giordano.

Si dice però da alcuni, per iscus a del Vaccaro, che egli quel lavoro prendesse a
fare per compiacere Andrea di Lione, che vi concorreva, e che ne fece solamente i
bozzetti, i quali furon poi dipinti da quel di Lione; ed in prova di ciò si adduce, che
molte cose ivi dipinte sembrano più tosto della scuola di Belisario, che della maniera del
Vaccaro, e che se questi avesse fatto coi disegni, e bozzetti, ad ogni modo Andrea di
Lione gli esegui con quei colori, ch’erano conformi alla sua solita maniera; ma siasi pur
come si voglia, per tutti i modi di questa opera tornò gran biasimo ad Andrea per le
ragioni tocche di sopra, della qual cosa egli tardi avveduto, si diede a riparare al
possibile la sua stima, con l’opere ad olio, nelle quali facendo tutto quello studio, che in
quell’età gli era conceduto dalle sue forze, venne a scemare in parte in discredito
cagionatogli da quelle mal riuscite pitture.” De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 143-
145.


15Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 130.

16Salazar, “Documenti,” V (1896), 123.

series of unpublished documents on the economic relationship between the sculptors
Aniello and Michele Angelo Perrone and Andrea and Nicola Vaccaro in “La borghesia
napoletana della seconda metà del Seicento e la sua influenza sull’evoluzione del gusto

18Eduardo Nappi, “Il viceré e l’arte a Napoli,” Napoli nobilissima iii ser. XXII

8-13; and Franco Strazzullo, La corporazione dei pittori napoletani (Naples: G.
D’Agostino, 1962), especially 5-6; for a list of Prefects, see 25-26; for a list of
members, see 27-35; and for the statutes of 1665, see 43-45.
De Dominici, in the life of Francesco Di Maria, claims that Andrea Vaccaro introduced the useful custom of the Accademia del Nudo to benefit youths and to cultivate the study of professors. See Vite III (1742-1745), 308. In the life of Domenico Gargiulo, De Dominici states that Gargiulo copied some drawings by excellent masters which were loaned to him by a student of Andrea Vaccaro. Gargiulo also made drawings at the Accademia del Nudo in the casa of Vaccaro. See Vite III (1742-1745), 191, 194. Bellori, Le vite, 2d ed., 319, singles out Vaccaro for his excellent drawing. “Imperciocchè fiorivano a’tempi suoi nella nostra Partenope bravi disegnatori, che si facevan Capi di buone scuole, e dove si professava lo studio di un esatto disegno, siccome eran celebri quelle del Vaccaro, di Francesco di Maria, e del Cavalier Gio: Batista Benasca…” Unfortunately, hardly anything is known today about Vaccaro’s drawings. See Marina Causa Picone, ed., Museo Nazionale di San Martino: I disegni del Cinquecento e del Seicento: La collezione Ferrara Dentice (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1999), 164.


Rolfs, Geschichte, 263.

Nappi, “Catalogo,” 110, for both.


De Dominici, Vite III (1742-1745), 151.
V. CONCLUSION

Although many questions still remain about Vaccaro’s artistic development, especially his early formation, and his oeuvre is far from completely known, it is already clear from this investigation of his documented works that he was not a secondary painter in Naples. In fact, he was perhaps the leading local artist about 1660, in the years following the plague of 1656. Important commissions during this time, including his masterpiece commissioned by the Viceroy, the Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory, and his prestigious fresco commission, the cycle of the life of Saint Gaetano for the church of San Paolo Maggiore, demonstrate his renown and great activity in his later career. His election as the first prefetto of the Corporation of Painters (1664-1666) is further evidence of the high esteem contemporaries held for him.

These years of Vaccaro’s success have heretofore been neglected in histories of Neapolitan Seicento painting. It is all too easy to explain his accomplishments as the result of less competition due to the deaths of many contemporary painters from the plague. In addition, the criteria of originality in western art has led many to allow Luca Giordano’s development of an innovative style in fresco painting to overshadow the more traditional accomplishments of Andrea Vaccaro.

However, by discounting Vaccaro’s contemporary success, we are overlooking significant aspects of Neapolitan art and society. Very few attempts have been made to understand the reasons for Vaccaro’s popular appeal. Rather than “eclectic” (a modern stylistic term often debated in a vacuum), he was probably viewed as a master at summing up and interpreting a long, valued legacy of earlier religious painting in
seventeenth-century Naples. Aware of his illustrious predecessors in his native city, Vaccaro responded to them while forging his own strong devotional style. Elements of other artists, such as Caravaggio, Caracciolo, Guido Reni, Ribera, Stanzione (and perhaps Van Dyck) may be found in his works, but not in a random or meaningless way. For instance, Vaccaro employs dramatic light and shade associated with the caravaggisti appropriately for the somber scene of the Death of Saint Joseph or to highlight the vision in Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar. Like Caravaggio and Ribera, Vaccaro primarily executed oil paintings. However, unlike the Lombard, Vaccaro prefers cool colors, such as deep shades of violet with different hues of red and blue. He usually omits ochre, a color often employed together with different hues of blue and red by Stanzione and Artemisia Gentileschi. Vaccaro shares with Caracciolo and Ribera the expression of deep religious sentiment, but avoids the decorative, mannerist poses of the former and the brutally violent subjects and detailed naturalism of the Spanish master. Like Reni, Vaccaro portrays suave and graceful figures, but the Neapolitan master is much more solemn and intense in his religious interpretations.

The relation of Vaccaro to his closest contemporaries is still not clear, but there is no reason to assume, as many have done, that he is inferior to Stanzione and Cavallino. All three artists depict figures of sophisticated beauty. Stanzione’s models appear more petite, whereas Cavallino painted primarily lyrical, intimate compositions with small figures. Vaccaro’s figures, in comparison, appear more grand and stately.

What are the principal characteristics of his art? The documented paintings reveal an artist who was talented at drawing anatomy, as proven by the athletic bodies of the semi-nude workmen in the Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln.
However, he sometimes sacrificed accurate anatomy for the sake of elegance and grace, especially for holy figures. One of his best works, the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena, portrays the miraculous experience of the saint in her wraith-like body. In contrast, the female onlookers on the left, with their stocky builds, are depicted naturalistically. The same combination of naturalism and idealized beauty may be seen in the Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph, in which the donors seem stiff and awkward in comparison to the refinement of the holy figures. Rather than “eclectic” or “uneven,” Vaccaro deliberately chooses an appropriate style for each subject. As a painter concerned with decorum, he is attentive to appropriateness and clarity in his religious scenes.

His paintings also demonstrate a thorough knowledge of religious iconography. His Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar depicts details from the saint’s own written life. The changes he made from the modelli to the frescoes in the church of San Paolo Maggiore reveal that Vaccaro thought carefully about the life of Saint Gaetano and the most fitting scenes to communicate the virtues of the saint to the public. Thought-provoking connections are made by Vaccaro between two saints in the pendants of Gaetano and Andrew and the Saint Catherine paintings. Vaccaro was also concerned with communicating religious ideas in a comprehensible and effective manner, even if it entailed more conservative solutions. His fresco cycle in San Paolo Maggiore is easily read from left to right from the nave below because of his simple compositions resembling quadri riportati. The Communion of Saint Mary of Egypt is located above the altar where mass is celebrated. A symmetrical composition places emphasis on the reformed sinner, a model for the viewer to follow. Strong diagonals
often organize other compositions by Vaccaro, allowing the viewer to enter the scene more easily, such as the Saint Anne with Mary before God the Father located in the shallow right transept of the church of the Pietà dei Turchini. Vaccaro’s style is often in the service of iconography.

Vaccaro conveys profound emotion in his works as well through facial expressions of his figures and the affetti. Some remarkable examples are the teary-eyed saint in the Penitent Mary Magdalen, the sorrowful Mary in the Death of Saint Joseph, and the compassionate gazes of Mary and Christ for the souls in purgatory in the main altarpiece for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto. These three works each date to different decades of his career. They all are executed by a painter who consistently expresses heightened religious devotion. Vaccaro’s paintings are befittingly solemn for the subjects they depict.

Vaccaro’s apparent lack of interest in ancient art, violent or lascivious themes, or history, landscape, and still-life painting, and his concern for clear, accurate interpretations of Counter-Reformation subjects make him an exemplary religious painter. Sacred figures are idealized, and traditional Christian iconography (especially Catholic Counter-Reformation themes) often dictates the style and details of his paintings. One must keep in mind that most of his documented works are public church commissions, and the category of altarpieces is traditionally more conservative, with its emphasis on decorum and didacticism. As more documents and secure paintings are discovered, especially for private patrons, and Andrea Vaccaro’s life and oeuvre become better established, many of the conclusions in this study may have to be revised. At least modern notions of his art—often reduced to the level of the identificaton of
influences—have been questioned here and an initial corpus of reliable knowledge of
the artist formed. This study paves the path for Andrea Vaccaro’s rehabilitation.
CATALOGUE OF DOCUMENTED WORKS

In measurements, height precedes width. One palmo napoletano is approximately 26.5 cm.

1. Penitent Mary Magdalen, Fig. 2

Oil on canvas, 180 X 120 cm.

Naples, Certosa di San Martino, Chapel of Mary Magdalen

1636

A document of payment published by Faraglia (1892) establishes that Andrea Vaccaro received 30 ducats on 25 September 1636 from Padre Procuratore Don Isidoro de Alegria for a finished painting of Mary Magdalen for the Capitolo in the Certosa di San Martino. Still located at the Certosa, it is now the altarpiece in the small chapel of Mary Magdalen where the painting was moved, possibly when this chapel was decorated in a light-hearted, ornate, rococo manner by Giovan Battista Natali ca. 1724. The delicate illusionistic frescoes in the new setting, although very feminine, seem incongruous with the painting’s stark, emotional subject. Andrea Vaccaro portrays a powerful, robust, teary-eyed Mary Magdalen seated in a dark, mountainous setting.

The penitent Mary Magdalen is common during the Counter-Reformation period as an example of the sacrament of penance. Here she is unequivocally recognizable by her traditional attributes: her long, flowing reddish blonde hair and simple garments indicate her status as a reformed prostitute; an ointment jar, with which she anointed Christ’s feet, along with a skull and book for meditation which symbolize the vanity of earthly life. In baroque paintings it is typical to find Mary Magdalen gazing
up at angels in heaven with tears of remorse in her eyes. Guido Reni’s versions, as well as many other seventeenth-century examples, find their origin in Titian’s penitent Magdalen. Even more striking about Andrea Vaccaro’s Mary Magdalen is her imposing size and heaviness—she embodies the voluptuous physicality she renounces. Leaning against a rocky outcropping, she gazes upward at three small putti carrying off her ointment jar to heaven as an offering and reminder of her goodness. She seems both grave and hopeful in her penitent state as she pleads for a reward of forgiveness. Light shines down from the upper left, illuminating the boldly foreshortened putti, a bit of rolling countryside in the distance, and Mary Magdalen’s face and upper body. In the lower right corner, a skull with a book of wrinkled pages is a fine example of naturalistic still life.

Andrea Vaccaro’s palette of deep blue, violet, and brown, and his use of fluid, loose brushstrokes create a rich and sensual painting in keeping with the traditional representation of the subject. Causa (1973) notes the raffinato pittoricismo and patetismo of this painting, which he believes derives from Reni, and, above all, Van Dyck. Even Prohaska (1996), who is more skeptical of the direct impact of Van Dyck on Neapolitan art, also admits that Andrea Vaccaro displays an interest in the Flemish artist’s refined and rich, painterly manner. The bulky female type, however, clearly calls to mind Artemisia Gentileschi’s female models, although ample figures such as this one relate in general to the artistic trend of “Neo-Venetian” painting of the Italian high baroque of the 1630s. The strong diagonal composition leading to the source of light, figures viewed from below rather than at eye-level, chubby putti, and deep
shades of blue and violet exhibited in this painting recur in later documented works by Andrea Vaccaro.

A monogrammed variant of the Penitent Mary Magdalen is located in the Prado Museum (179 X 128 cm.; Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana, 466, plate 186). Two other related paintings attributed to Andrea Vaccaro include a very similar Mary Magdalen type in a larger composition: a monogrammed Lamentation (Sorrento, Museo Correale di Terranova; Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, fig. 44), and a Noli me tangere (Cosenza; Palazzo Arnone, Pinacoteca Nazionale; Francesco Samà, “Un altro capolavoro va ad arricchire la Pinacoteca di Palazzo Arnone,” Calabria Letteraria XLIX, no. 10/12 [2001]: 60). The exorbitant number of Mary Magdalen paintings ascribed to Andrea Vaccaro (for a list, see APPENDIX: MARY MAGDALEN), suggests that he found not only success with his interpretation of this subject for the Certosa di San Martino, but also that it may be considered one of his most influential works.

**Condition**: Good; restored 1947 (Naples, IV Mostra di restauri, eds. Raffaello Causa, Oreste Ferrari, and Marina Picone [Naples: L’Arte Tipografica, 1960], 106).

Bibliography: See Condition and Documentation; Luigi Angelini, Le migliori pitture della Certosa di Napoli disegnate e pubblicate dal pittore Luigi Angelini...ed illustrate da Raffaele Liberatore (Naples: Tipografia Trani, 1840), 34-36 (illustration); Raffaele Tufari, La Certosa di S. Martino in Napoli: Descrizione storica ed artistica (Naples: Tipografia di Giovanni Ranucci, 1854), 111; Chiarini in Carlo Celano, Notizie del bello, dell’antico e del curioso della città di Napoli divise dall’autore in dieci giornate per guida e commodo de’viaggiatori [1692], III, with additions by Giovanni Battista Chiarini [1856-1860], with an introduction by Gino Doria and Luigi De Rosa and an essay by Benedetto Croce, edited by Atanasio Mozzillo, Alfredo Profeta, Francesco Paolo Macchia (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche, 1970), 1658; Carlo Tito Dalbono, Nuova guida di Napoli e dintorni [Naples 1864], reprint (Naples: Antonio Morano, 1876), 333 (as L. Vaccaro); Antonio Muro, Nuova guida generale del Museo Nazionale di Napoli (Naples: Bellisario, 1887), 35; Carlo Tito Dalbono, Guida di Napoli e dintorni (Naples: Cav. Antonio Morano, 1891), 333 (as L. Vaccaro); Vittorio Spinazzola, Guida del Museo di S. Martino (Naples: Premiato Stab. Tip. Vesuviano, 1901), 6; Rolfs 1910, 263-264; Aldo De Rinaldis, Pinacoteca del Museo Nazionale di Napoli: Catalogo (Naples: Richter & Co., 1927 and 1928), 344, no. 307 (as 1642); Ortolani in Naples 1938, 49 (as 1642); Ortolani in Thieme-Becker XXXIV (1940), 26; Commodo Izzo 1951, 141-142 (as 1642); Gino Doria, Il Museo e la Certosa di S. Martino: Arte, storia, poesia (Cava de’Tirreni: Di Mauro Editore, 1964), 113, fig. 36; Vincenzo Golzio, Seicento e Settecento, 2d. ed. (Turin: Unione Tip.-Editrice Torinese, 1968), 828; Raffaello Causa, L’arte nella Certosa di San Martino a Napoli (Cava de’Tirreni: Di Mauro Editore, 1973), 65, 80, fig. 65, plate XLIII; Raffaele
2. **Temptation of Christ in the Desert**, Fig. 3

Oil on canvas

Naples, formerly Church of Santa Maria della Sapienza

1641

A document first published by Bonazzi (1888) establishes that Andrea Vaccaro painted the **Temptation of Christ in the Desert** for the church of Santa Maria della Sapienza, which had apparently just been restored, from 1639-1641. While at work on the painting, he received a payment of 25 ducats (of a total of 50 ducats) on 28 February 1641 with the notation that it is in oil, and 12 palmi (about 318 cm.) high. The document also refers to the inclusion of “prospettive di Sei personaggi,” which are not necessary for the iconography, and not included in the painting. It specifies, in addition, that Vaccaro was obligated to finish it in time for the upcoming Holy week and that if it were not completed on time to the satisfaction of the patron, he would have to return the 25 ducats, as well as the money he had previously received, and pay for damage, expenses and interest.

The **Temptation of Christ in the Desert** was originally on the left wall upon entering the church, and was part of a series of six paintings of the life of Christ executed by other leading artists in Naples. The indefinite closure for restoration of the church of Santa Maria della Sapienza unfortunately precludes a viewing of the painting’s original location and its stylistic and iconographic relation to the others in the series. Colombo (1902) describes viewing them on the nave walls between the chapels of the church; on the right: **Baptism of Christ** by Enrico Somer, **Transfiguration** by Giovanni Ricca, and **Last Supper** by Domenico Gargiulo; on the
left: Temptation of Christ in the Desert by Andrea Vaccaro, Healing of the Epileptic by Massimo Stanzione (?), and Crucifixion of Christ by Massimo Stanzione (?). The Healing of the Epileptic is now attributed to Carlo Rosa (Wiedmann 1984); the Crucifixion of Christ to Belisario Corenzio (D’Addosio, “Documenti,” 53). Some commentators in the past mistakenly believed that the author of Vaccaro’s painting was Stanzione (see Bibliography below).

The subject of the Temptation of Christ in the Desert is not otherwise known among the large number of religious paintings associated with Vaccaro. The document stipulates that he represent specifically the first of three temptations of Christ all of which took place after his baptism and fasting in the wilderness for forty days as described in the New Testament (Matthew 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 12-13; Luke 4: 1-13). “And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4: 3-4).

The vertical format and simple, balanced composition with parallel strong diagonals serve to heighten the contrast between the devil and Christ in the foreground where they dominate the composition. The counter diagonal of the tree limb on the left effectively casts a shadow on the horned devil who extends his hand with a stone backward toward Christ. In contrast, Christ’s face is illuminated, a halo surrounds his head and he points upward to heaven with a gesture which also repulses the devil. Both figures step forward with the left leg, a pose that Vaccaro repeats often in later works, and which reappears with an identical left hand gesture as well, for example, in
another documented painting dating to the next decade (the Death of Saint Joseph, church of Santa Maria delle Anime del Purgatorio 1650-?1651; Cat. 4, Fig. 6). The clawed foot of the devil juxtaposed with Christ’s idealized foot draws attention to their difference. The devil also seems to rush forward whereas Christ stands resolutely in an elegant pose. This noble and serene figure gracefully gathers the folds of his cloak with his left hand as he successfully rebukes the devil.

The painting’s appearance in reproductions on file at the Archivio Fotografico at the Soprintendenza in Naples indicates that it has suffered severe damage and overpainting, discouraging any attempt at a detailed stylistic analysis. However, the slender figures and attention to sky and landscape call to mind Stanzione's style, and it is not surprising that the painting has been wrongly attributed to him in the past. If Colombo is correct, the work hung next to the Healing of the Epileptic painted at the same time by Carlo Rosa (1613-1678), an artist associated with the school of Stanzione (Willette in Schütze and Willette, Massimo Stanzione,127). Wiedmann (1984) notes that in both paintings Christ stands on the right side of the composition and turns toward the left to gesture to another figure. But Vaccaro’s painting only has two figures set against a very low horizon line, while Rosa crowds his work with numerous figures in the foreground, filling up the space before a high horizon line. These differences were dictated by iconographical requirements. At any rate, Vaccaro’s work has a more classical appearance. Restoration of all six paintings in the series and their reinstallment in their original location in the church would allow more conclusions to be reached about the artistic relationship of Andrea Vaccaro to Carlo Rosa and his contemporaries.
**Condition:** See above.

**Documentation:** 1641, February 28. Al Monastero della Sapienza D. 25. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro pittore et sono a conto di D. 50 per un quadro ad oglio di palmi 12 di altezza che sta facendo per servizio della nova Ecclesia dove doverà pingere Cristo Signore Nostro tentato nel deserto et quelle prospettive di Sei personaggi che riterrà mettere a piacere allo loro padre ordinario et doverà darlo finito a soddisfazione loro et dello loro padre ordinario detto quadro per la prossima Settimana Santa et non dandolo finito per detto tempo ovvero non facendolo a soddisfazione loro e del loro padre sia tenuto restituire tanto li sodetti D. 25 quanto li altri che ritrovasse havere ricevuti con danni, spese et interesse. Et per lui a Luise Guaracino per altritanti.


**Bibliography:** See Documentation; Celano [1692] in Celano-Chiarini [1856-1860] 1970 (as Stanzione); Luigi D’Afflitto, Guida per i curiosi e per i viaggiatori che vengono alla città di Napoli I (Naples: Tipografia Chianese, 1834), 66 (as Massimo Stanzione); Luigi Catalani, Le chiese di Napoli: Descrizione storica ed artistica II (Naples: Tipografia fu Migliaccio, 1845-1853), 5 (as Massimo Stanzione); Chiarini in Celano-Chiarini [1856-1860] 1970; Galante [1872] 1985, 58 (as Massimo Stanzione); Gaetano Filangieri [di Satriano], Documenti per la storia, le arti e le industrie delle province napoletane VI (Naples: Tipografia dell’Accademia Reale delle Scienze,1883-1891), 497; Antonio Colombo, “Il Monastero della Chiesa di S. Maria della Sapienza,” Napoli nobilissima XI (1902): 61-62, 68; Rolfs 1910, 260; Ortolani
3. Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar, Fig. 4

Oil on canvas, 198 X 253 cm.

Madrid, Academia de San Fernando

Signed and dated: Andrea Vaccarius F. 1642

1642

Although no document has been published for this painting, it is of special interest because both the signature and year emerged on the canvas during restoration (Pérez Sánchez in Madrid 1970 and 1985). The majority of paintings associated with Andrea Vaccaro are signed with the monogram of his initials, the letters A and V interlaced. Very few display his full signature and/or the year, and Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar is the earliest known painting to do so. Two other signed works in Naples date to the artist’s last decade: Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child (formerly church of Il Gesù Nuovo, chapel of the Sciabica, Cat.15, Fig. 26) bears his full name and the year 1666, and the Communion of Saint Mary of Egypt (church of Santa Maria Egiziaca a Forcella, Cat. 17, Fig. 28) displays the year 1668, but with the artist’s monogram rather than his signature.

Many paintings attributed to Andrea Vaccaro in collections in Spain and those mentioned in Spanish inventories give him the reputation for being the Neapolitan baroque artist whose works were most exported to that country. However, very few of these paintings can be authenticated or dated with certainty; the present example is an important exception. Not much is known about its provenance, except that it was donated to the Academia de San Fernando in Madrid by the Marqués de Astorga in 1818. Pérez Sánchez (in Madrid 1985) proposes that the Marqués had acquired it from
the Convento de San Pascual where Ponz reports having seen a Neapolitan painting of this subject, unusual in Italy, but much more common in Spain.

Saint Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) was a Spanish Carmelite nun, beatified on 24 April 1614 by Pope Paul V and canonized on 12 March 1622 by Pope Gregory XV. She was later further honored by being proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1970 by Pope Paul VI. Distinguished for her writings about her religious experiences and mystical visions, she suffered great physical ailments as well as opposition in her efforts to reform the Carmelite order and establish new convents and monasteries. Gianlorenzo Bernini celebrates her most famous vision, the transverberation of her heart, in his masterpiece, the Ecstasy of Saint Teresa (1645-1652) in the Cornaro chapel in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome.

Andrea Vaccaro’s painting depicts another vision she describes in her autobiography. On Assumption day 15 August 1562, she saw herself receiving a golden collar from Mary and a white cloak from Joseph as tokens of the divine approval she was granted by them to found the first reformed monastery of Saint Joseph of Avila which was inaugurated on 24 August 1562, just a few days after her vision.

At about this same time, on the festival of Our Lady’s Assumption, I was in the convent-church of the Order of the glorious St Domenic, thinking of the many sins that I had confessed there in time past, and of other incidents in my wicked life, when I was seized with a rapture so strong that it almost completely took me out of myself. I sat down, and I remember now that I could neither see the Elevation nor hear the Mass; and afterwards I was left with a scruple about this. While in this state I seemed to see myself clothed in a robe of great whiteness and clarity, and at first I could not tell who was putting it on me. But afterwards I saw Our Lady on my right and my father St Joseph on my left, and that it was they who were clothing me. I was given to understand that I was now cleansed of my sins. When I was clothed, and was experiencing the greatest joy and bliss, Our Lady seemed suddenly to seize me by the hands. She told me that
I was giving her great pleasure by serving the glorious St Joseph, and promised me that my plans for the convent would be fulfilled. She said that they would watch over us and that her Son had already promised to be with us; and that as a sign that this would be so she would give me a jewel. Then she seemed to hang round my neck a very beautiful gold collar from which hung a cross of great value. The gold and stones were so different from those of this world that there is no comparing them; their beauty is quite unlike anything we can imagine here. Nor can the imagination rise to any understanding of the nature of the robe, or to any conception of its whiteness. Such was the vision that the Lord was pleased to send me that by comparison everything here on earth seems, as you might say, like a smudge of soot.

The beauty that I saw in Our Lady was wonderful, though I could make out no particular detail, only the general shape of her face and the whiteness and amazing splendour of her robes, which was not dazzling but quite soft. I did not see the glorious St Joseph so clearly, although I plainly saw that he was there, as in those visions which I have described already, in which nothing is actually seen. Our Lady looked to me almost like a child. When they had stayed with me for a little while, bringing me the greatest joy and bliss—more I believe than I had ever known before, and I wished it would last for ever,—I seemed to see them ascend into the sky with a great multitude of angels. I was left in great solitude, but so comforted and uplifted and recollected in prayer, and so softened that I could not stir or speak for some time, and was quite beside myself. I was left with a passionate longing to be consumed by the love of God, and with other feelings of this sort. All this took place in such a way that I could never doubt, however hard I tried, that this vision was of God. It left me greatly comforted and very peaceful. (The Life of Saint Teresa of Avila by Herself, translated with an introduction by J.M. Cohen [Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1957], 246-248).

Rather than being seated, Saint Teresa assumes a partial kneeling position with one knee and one foot on clouds; Vaccaro thereby associates her with these heavenly figures, drawing attention to her sanctity. Saint Teresa occupies the center of the composition; her eyes are closed, her hands crossed over her heart. Following the description, Vaccaro places Joseph to her left and Mary to her right, creating bilateral symmetry. Vaccaro merges the sequence of events of the vision into a single image; she receives the white cloak from Joseph and the collar from Mary at the same time. In contrast to the description, Vaccaro does not portray the cross on the collar and Mary
wears her traditional robes of rose and blue instead of white. Teresa wears the habit of the Carmelite order, but her crown is not mentioned in the account. However, this emphasizes her authority in her role as ruler of a newly reformed religious order. The peaceful effect of the vision is projected by the figures’ calm, idealized faces and in the harmonious, balanced composition. In contrast with the visionary aspects of the painting, the setting is detailed in its naturalistic realism. Vaccaro employs linear perspective in the inlaid floor and wooden beams of the ceiling, creating the room in the Dominican convent church of Saint Thomas of Avila in which the vision took place. At the far right, a crucifix with vanitas symbols of a skull and books suggest her devotion to study and contemplative prayer. The painting communicates unambiguously Saint Teresa’s private vision to the viewer, and at the same time endorses her public activities as practical reformer of the Carmelite order.

Pérez Sánchez (in Madrid 1970) claims that the painting belongs to that period of Andrea Vaccaro’s career marked by monotony and poverty of invention and he notes the symmetrical composition, frontal figures and clarity of space which derive from the influence of Roman classicism on Neapolitan art (in Madrid 1985). Ferrari (1994) views this painting as indicative of Andrea Vaccaro’s parallel development with that of Massimo Stanzione’s, when both artists display an interest in the classical style of Guido Reni.

Bibliography: See Condition; Elias Tormo, España y el arte napolitano (Madrid: Estanislao Maestre, 1924), 11; Pérez Sánchez 1965, 465-466, plate 179; Spinosa 1984, 846 (illustration); Ferrari 1994, 270; De Vito 1996, 81, plate 1 (as Madonna del Rosario con San Domenico e Santa Caterina festeggiati da due putti), 87, fig. 17, 100; Lattuada in The Dictionary of Art XXXI (1996), 790.
4. **Death of Saint Joseph**, Fig. 6

Oil on canvas, 215 X 140 cm.

Naples, Church of Santa Maria delle Anime del Purgatorio, third chapel on left

Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on lower right

1650-?1651

Three documents published by Nappi (1998) establish the date of the **Death of Saint Joseph**. Andrea Vaccaro received two payments on 31 October and 14 November 1650 while he was working on the painting and a final one about a year later on 3 October 1651 after it had been consigned to the church. In the document both Andrea Vaccaro and another artist, Girolamo de Magistris (dello Mastro), receive payment. As Nappi speculates, it is probable that Vaccaro’s altarpiece was commissioned to replace an earlier one of the same subject since an inventory of paintings in the church made on 10 February 1648 lists “La Morte di San Giosef,” without specifying artist or date. De Magistris was probably also commissioned to paint his **Archangel Michael** as a substitute for an earlier painting of “San Michele Arcangelo” mentioned in the same inventory. The two altarpieces are still in situ in chapels on the left side of the church: De Magistris’ **Archangel Michael**, portrayed in combat with the devil, is the altarpiece for the first chapel, and Vaccaro’s **Death of Saint Joseph** is located in the third chapel. (Curiously, several early writers mention viewing Vaccaro’s painting in the first chapel on the right; see notations in **Bibliography**).

Not only do these two paintings share a common date, they also portray **Archangel Michael** in his important role in leading angels in the battle against Lucifer
and the forces of evil and assisting souls at the time of death. According to rabbinical tradition, he was present at the burial of Moses. Of particular pertinence to the church of Santa Maria delle Anime del Purgatorio, Archangel Michael’s name is invoked during the liturgy of the deceased as a guide for souls from purgatory when they ascend toward heaven.

Consequently, Archangel Michael frequently appears in depictions of deathbed scenes, including that of Saint Joseph. A description of Joseph’s death at a very old age is found in the apocryphal gospel of the History of Joseph, the Carpenter (fourth or fifth century A.D.; see Gianfranca Ranisio, Il paradiso folklorico: San Giuseppe nella tradizione popolare meridionale [Naples: Colonnese Editore, 1981], 21). We are told that when Joseph died, Christ and the Virgin Mary were present, along with angels who had descended from heaven. In Vaccaro’s painting, two Archangels stand at the foot of Joseph’s bed: Michael carries his characteristic armor and sword, and, to the left of him, Gabriel holds a lily, a traditional symbol of Mary’s purity and an attribute of his annunciation to her of the birth of Christ. Although Joseph’s carpenter’s tools are often shown in treatments of this theme, they are not included in Vaccaro’s work.

It is obvious why this subject was such a popular one during the Counter-Reformation period. Catholics then, and still today, consider Saint Joseph to be an effective patron and intercessor for a good death because of his having died happily at an old age in the presence of Mary, Christ and angels. Because of Joseph’s mortal nature (unlike Mary and Christ), worshippers could more easily identify with him and aspire to a similarly long earthly life and comforting death. It is not surprising to find a painting of this theme in a church dedicated to saving souls in purgatory.
Vaccaro refers to the popular belief that Joseph’s death occurred right before the public life of Jesus began. Jesus, the dominant figure, stands with authority on the right side of the composition. He gestures to Joseph while looking calmly at Mary who returns his gaze with a pleading, sorrowful expression. She appears to be equally sad about her son’s imminent departure and points emphatically to the bed upon which lies Joseph’s corpse, decorously foreshortened from the head and not the feet. Joseph’s ashen grey pallor, shrunken body and arthritic hands folded over his chest suggest his death from old age. The lily and sword of the two Archangels direct the viewer’s gaze upward to the flying putti, who prepare the way for his soul. One pushes away a cloud to partly reveal the source of light, while another awaits the soul to crown it with a wreath of flowers. Three angels in a plane behind the main figures emerge from the darkness, one, between the archangels, looking at Joseph, and two others behind Christ and Mary, in discussion as one points to the deathbed.

As revealed by a recent restoration (1996), the painting appears to be in good condition and its high quality, now visible, allows it to be judged one of Vaccaro’s finest creations. The Caravaggesque background creates an appropriate dark setting for the deathbed scene. Vaccaro’s consummate skill in handling light and shade appears in his representation of the angels partly revealed and partly concealed in the chiaroscuro, which contrasts effectively with the effulgence of heavenly light at the upper left. The cold grey color of Joseph’s corpse contrasts strongly with the flesh tones of Mary and Christ, who are shown idealized, as youthful and incorruptible. Christ’s elegant pose is very close to one he employs in an earlier painting, the Temptation of Christ in the Desert (1641; Cat. 2, Fig. 3) for the church of Santa Maria
della Sapienza. Bernardo Cavallino adopts this pose for many of his figures, although Andrea Vaccaro’s models possess a more imposing and solemn demeanor, quite distinct from the younger artist’s more delicate figures.

Most commentators praise this painting and a bewildering array of influences are mentioned by twentieth-century writers. Celano (1692) remarks that it is an “opera studiata.” De Dominici (1742-1745) mentions a noticeable improved taste for color in this work. Galanti (1829) calls it an “opera reputatissima.” D’Ambra and de Lauzières (1855-1857) also claim that it is a “studiiata e reputata opera.” Ortolani (in Naples 1938) criticizes the Death of Saint Joseph for being crudely executed, eclectic and pedantic. Commodo Izzo (1951) notes the Caravaggesque chiaroscuro which may also derive from Matteo Stomer and that the figures of Christ and Mary are reminiscent of Guido Reni’s. Moir (1967) thinks that the models for the figures derive from Stanzionale and the sfumato and sweetness from Artemisia Gentileschi. Pacelli (in Naples 1984; and 2001), on more than one occasion, draws attention to Van Dyck’s influence. Leone de Castris (in Leone de Castris and Middione 1986) views it as a reelaboration of a Stanzionesque theme. Ruotolo (in Napoli sacra 1994) has recently acknowledged it as one of Andrea Vaccaro’s best altarpieces.

Another signed replica of this painting of similar dimensions (212 X 158 cm.) is in the Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence (Brejon de Lavergnée in Paris 1988, and Brejon de Lavergnée and Volle 1988). Another version of the Death of Saint Joseph, with a different composition and more similar in style to that of Bernardo Cavallino, is located in the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples. The long debate over attribution of
this painting is summarized by Commodo Izzo (1951), and more recently by Spinosa (in Naples 1985; see also Spinosa in Strasbourg 1994).

Condition: Good; restored 1946 (Naples 1960, 104) and May 1996 (information on label in church).

Documentation:

1. 1650, October 31. 31 ottobre 1650 ducati 30 cioè ducati 20 a Geronimo dello Mastro e ducati 10 ad Andrea Vaccaro, pittori, a conto delle cone stan facendo per servizio di nostra chiesa.


5. Andrea Vaccaro?

**Saint Hugh (?) Resuscitating a Baby, Fig. 7**

Oil on canvas, 205 X 305 cm.

Naples, Certosa di San Martino, Chapel of Saint Hugh, left wall

About 1652?

6. **Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln, Fig. 8**

Oil on canvas, 205 X 305 cm.

Naples, Certosa di San Martino, Chapel of Saint Hugh, right wall

Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on lower right

About 1652

The Certosa di San Martino in Naples is a veritable gallery of seventeenth-century art, especially of Neapolitan masters. The most well-known artists of the period competed with each other for commissions there and contributed to the creation of a richly decorative and harmonious ensemble of baroque painting. Andrea Vaccaro first worked for the Carthusians in the 1630s when he received payment for the *Penitent Mary Magdalen* in 1636 (Cat. 1, Fig. 2). He was paid for another work for the monastery approximately fifteen years later in 1652 for a painting of Saint Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln. Faraglia (1892) publishes the only document for the commission which states that on 24 June 1652 Aniello Antonio de Turri received a payment of fifty ducats on behalf of Andrea Vaccaro, the final part of a sum of two hundred ducats for a painting of Saint Hugh. The document mentions only one
painting and it does not specify a particular scene of the life of Saint Hugh or the intended location.

The chapel of Saint Hugh, the first chapel on the right of the church, contains Massimo Stanzione’s altarpiece, the Virgin between Saints Hugh and Anthelm (1644), which was presumably already in place when Andrea Vaccaro received payment. It includes Saints Hugh (ca. 1140-1200) and the lesser-known Anthelm (1107-1178), Bishop of Belley (often confused with Saint Anselm), to both of whom the chapel is dedicated, as noted in the document of payment to Stanzione (Willette in Schütze and Willette, 1992). The right lateral painting in the chapel, in all probability the one referred to in the document of payment for Vaccaro, bears the artist’s usual monogram and represents without doubt Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln (frequently misidentified; see comments in Bibliography).

Saint Hugh was born in Avalon (Burgundy, France) in about 1140 and joined the Carthusian order at the age of twenty-five. Around 1176 he went to England upon the request of King Henry II to become prior of the charterhouse founded by the King at Witham, Somerset. In 1186 he was consecrated bishop of Lincoln in England, the year before an earthquake caused structural damage to the Cathedral and Hugh began reconstruction in 1192, in the Gothic style. Accounts always include this building project and note that Hugh actually participated in the reconstruction (summarized in New Catholic Encyclopedia VII [Farmington Hills, MI: Gale, 2002], 153-154). He died in 1200, before completion of the project.

The Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln, a congested scene of great activity, includes Saint Hugh prominently occupying the center of the
composition. Dressed as a Carthusian monk and not as a bishop, he joins the other workers carrying a hod to the right as he glances to the side and to the left of the composition, unifying the two parts. He, clothed in heavy garments, contrasts with the semi-nude, muscular workmen around him who are so completely engaged in their tasks that they seem oblivious to him. The partially completed nave arcade, incidentally with round, not pointed arches, recedes at an angle to the right, creating a coulisse which provides an organizational backdrop for this scene of vigorous activity. With a marked degree of contrast of light and shade, Vaccaro illuminates the semi-nude workers. Although criticized for being “academic,” their twisting and turning muscular bodies, straining with exertion, effectively display the artist’s mastery of drawing anatomy necessary for the iconography. In fact, De Maio (1983) proposes that paintings such as this one encouraged the building of religious structures in Naples as well. This episode from Saint Hugh’s life provided justification for the continued construction of the Certosa di San Martino, itself.

Although the subject of the facing painting on the left wall is clearly a bishop resuscitating a baby and always so named in the literature, the identity of the bishop saint remains somewhat uncertain. Saint Hugh is known for his assistance to the sick and poor, and he was especially devoted to children, although no specific event in his life has been linked with the subject of this painting. Moreover, if Saint Hugh is repeated, he is a much older man than the energetic construction worker in the facing painting. One is tempted to suggest that Saint Anthelm is represented, considering the joint dedication of the chapel, but this idea may not be substantiated. In addition, doubt has been cast on the attribution of this painting to Vaccaro, which has been
assumed, given the certainty of the authorship of the Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln. Nonetheless, the two were certainly planned as a pair, for iconographically they complement each other. The concept inherent in both is one of resurgence, achieved through pragmatic, physical activity in the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Lincoln on the right, and through miraculous, spiritual force, no less potent, on the left with the resuscitation of the baby. Thus, the different moods of the two paintings, overtly active vs. expectantly passive, may be explained as a deliberate decision.

In the resuscitation scene, the bishop, dressed in his ecclesiastical garb, and three acolytes on the right, are separated from the humble people huddled together on the left side of the composition. The scene, pregnant with suspense, focuses on the space between the bishop’s blessing hand and the dead baby, foreshortened in the arms of the pleading mother, the instant before the resuscitation takes place.

Although the format, choice of contrasting subjects with the figures set before details of architecture, and degree of chiaroscuro of these two works complement each other, it remains uncertain if Andrea Vaccaro painted the Saint Hugh Resuscitating a Baby, as D’Orsi (1938) has proposed, attributing the work to Paolo Finoglio. The facial types of the mother and the woman with the hands crossed on her bosom, as D’Orsi notes, are decidedly like those of Finoglio, such as his female models in the Circumcision (1626) in the Capitolo of the Certosa di San Martino. The pleated drapery of the acolyte at the right may also be found in some of Finoglio’s works. These details, along with the elaborately embroidered cope of the bishop, are all typical of Finoglio and are foreign to Vaccaro’s oeuvre, which leads me to suggest
again D’Orsi’s idea that the resuscitation painting is not by Vaccaro. This opinion did not find favor with later writers who reverted to De Dominici’s (1742-1745) attribution of both works to Andrea Vaccaro. Of lesser importance, but necessary to keep in mind, are the facts that this painting is not signed and that the document of payment is for only one work. If Andrea Vaccaro did indeed paint both, he was influenced by Paolo Finoglio in ways that are not apparent in Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln. It is stylistic inconsistencies such as these which help contribute to the perception that Andrea Vaccaro is an eclectic artist.

De Dominici (1742-1745) praises Vaccaro’s compositions, movement of figures, expression of the affetti, the colors and, above all, the good drawing and understanding of chiaroscuro. Giannone ([1768-1773] 1941) thinks that as a result of the competition between artists at the Certosa, Vaccaro’s paintings of Saint Hugh are among the most studied in his oeuvre. D’Afflitto (1834) remarks that both paintings are executed with much mastery. Marangoni (1923-1924) makes a thought-provoking comparison between Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln and Velázquez’s Forge of Vulcan, painted in the 1630s during the Spanish artist’s sojourn in Rome. Commodo Izzo (1951) believes that Vaccaro is incapable of expressing the emotion of the miracle due to his academic style. Montini (1952) and Golzio (1968) propose that the realistic group of kneeling devotees on the left in Saint Hugh Resuscitating a Baby derives from Caravaggio’s Madonna of Loreto in the church of Sant’Agostino in Rome. Moir (1967) identifies Caravaggesque traces, strongly conditioned by Stanzione, in the narrative conception. Causa (1973) comments that Vaccaro’s lateral paintings are merely a pretext for Stanzione’s altarpiece. M.R.
Nappi (in London 1982) asserts that, in spite of his interest in color, which was also influenced by Ribera, Vaccaro never succeeded in freeing himself from a certain academic stiffness even present in his best works, such as the Saint Hugh paintings. Leone de Castris (in Leone de Castris and Middione 1986) detects naturalistic regurgitations, whereas Ferrari (in Pugliese Carrattelli, ed. 1994) thinks that Andrea Vaccaro’s two paintings, in comparison to Stanzione’s altarpiece, demonstrate the limits achieved by bland description. Lattuada (in The Dictionary of Art 1996), instead, spots an astonishing range of influences: an original synthesis of the classical style of Stanzione, influenced by Domenichino and Reni, and the brilliant neo-Venetian colour of Novelli, Ribera, Van Dyck and Rubens. Pacelli (in Naples 1984 and Pacelli 2001) interprets these works as characteristic of Van Dyck’s influence (mid-1630s-1660).

Causa (in Naples 1947) mentions a preparatory bozzetto for Saint Hugh Resuscitating a Baby ascribed to Andrea Vaccaro then in the collection of the Conte Gigli in Naples (oil on canvas, 52 X 65 cm.), noting a stronger influence of Stanzione in the bozzetto than in the finished painting, and speaking of Vaccaro’s eclecticism by observing the Caracciollesque features of Saint Hugo and the Caravaggesque kneeling devotee. Ferrari (1990) could not locate the bozzetto and reports that no bozzetti exist for the other paintings in the chapel. He concludes that since this is the only known example of a bozzetto or modello for a work of art carried out for the Carthusians at the Certosa di San Martino, it appears that they were not required of the artists who were selected to work there. He does not rule out the possibility that another artist may have been involved with executing the finished painting of Saint Hugh.
Resuscitating a Baby, which he believes may have been the case with Andrea Vaccaro’s modelli for Andrea de Lione’s collaboration in the frescoes of the life of Saint Gaetano in the church of San Paolo Maggiore (Cats. 13-14, Figs. 15-25).


Condition of both paintings: Good. Restored in 1960 (Naples 1960, 74).

Bibliography: See Documentation and Condition; Pompeo Sarnelli, Guida de’ forestieri della città di Napoli (Naples: Giuseppe Roselli, 1697), 318; Parrino pt. 1 (1700), 123; De Dominici III (1742-45), 141-142 (as Foundation of new church in Grenoble or Grazianopoli in France); Giannone [1768-1773] 1941, 126 (as Saint Hugh establishes the church in France); Sigismondo III (1788-1789), 109; Domenico Romanelli, Napoli antica e moderna II (Naples: Trani, 1815), 125; Giambattista Gennaro Grossi, Biografia degli uomini illustri del Regno di Napoli, ornata de loro rispettivi ritratti, compilata da diversi letterati nazionali VIII (Naples: Nicola Gervasi, 1822), (no page number); Galanti 1829, 67 (as second chapel on right); D’Afflitto II (1834), 82 (as Foundation of a new church in Granoble or Grazianopoli in France); Napoli e i luoghi celebri delle sue vicinanze I, ed. Giambattista Ajello, Stanislao D’Alöe, Raffaele D’Ambra, Mariano D’Avala, Carlo Bonucci, Cesare Dalbono, Francesco Puoti, Bernardo Quaranta (Naples: Gaetano Nobile, 1845), 373 (as
Foundation of the Certosa of Grenoble; Tufari 1854, 48; D’Ambra and Lauzières I (1855-1857), 304 (as Foundation of the Certosa of Grenoble); Chiarini in Celano-Chiarini III [1856-1860] 1970, 1646; Francesco Ceva Grimaldi, Memorie storiche della Città di Napoli dal tempo della sua fondazione, sino al presente (Naples: Vico Freddo Pignasecca, 1857), 243; Raffaele D’Ambra and Achille de Lauzières, Un mese a Napoli: Descrizione della città di Napoli e delle sue vicinanze divisa in XXX giornate I, ed. Gaetano Nobile (Naples: Cav. Gaetano Nobile, 1863), 391 (follows 1855-1857 edition); Dalbono 1876, 331 (as A Miracle of Saint Bruno and the Foundation of the Charterhouse of Grenoble); Galante [1872] 1985, 271 (as A Miracle of Saint Anthelm on the right and Construction of a Charterhouse on the left); Nunzio Federigo Faraglia, “Notizie di alcuni artisti che lavorarono nella chiesa di S. Martino e nel Tesoro di S. Gennaro,” Archivio storico per le province napoletane X (1885): 440; Muro 1887, 29; Dalbono 1891, 331 (follows 1876 edition); Filangieri [di Satriano] VI (1883-1891), 497, 499; Spinazzola 1901, 14; Vittorio Spinazzola, “La Certosa di San Martino,” Napoli nobilissima XI (1902): 136; Rolfs 1910, 261 (as second chapel on right, and as Foundation of Charterhouse in Grenoble); Marangoni 1923-1924, 232 (as Construction of the Church of Grenoble); Nugent 1925-1930, 128; De Rinaldis in Enciclopedia italiana XXXIV (1937), 872; Ortolani in Naples 1938, 49 (as 1644); Mario D’Orsi, Paolo Finoglio: Pittore napoletano (Bari: Alfredo Cressati, 1938), 19-21, fig. 7 (date of document as 24 June 1656, and Saint Hugh Resuscitating a Baby as by Paolo Finoglio); Ortolani in Thieme-Becker XXXIV (1940), 26; Raffaello Causa in Naples, Mostra di bozzetti napoletani del ’600 e ’700, ed. Raffaello Causa (Naples: Stab. Tip. G. Montanino, 1947), 29-30; Commodo Izzo
7. Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary, Fig. 9

Oil on canvas
Naples, Church of San Paolo Maggiore (formerly Oratory of the Santissimo Crocefisso)
Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on step at lower right
1658

8. Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ, Fig. 10

Oil on canvas
Naples, Church of San Paolo Maggiore (formerly Oratory of the Santissimo Crocefisso)
Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on step at lower left
1658

Thanks to a series of payments published by Pasculli Ferrara (1984) and Nappi (1992), both of these works, signed with a monogram, can be identified and dated with certainty. From January to May 1658 Andrea Vaccaro received four payments towards a total of 150 ducats for two paintings specified as depicting “Blessed Gaetano receiving from Mary the holy Christ Child accompanied by angels” and “Blessed Andrew presented with the Mysteries of the Passion by many angels.” Commissioned by the governatori of the Oratorio del SS.mo Crocefisso di Santo Paulo to adorn their oratory, they now hang next to each other on the back wall of the apse of the church of San Paolo Maggiore, Blessed Gaetano on the left, and Blessed Andrew on the right. The document calls both Gaetano and Andrew “blessed” because they
had been beatified by that time. They were canonized later, Gaetano by Pope Clement X in 1671 and Andrew by Pope Clement XI in 1712. (Information about the lives of the two saints in this discussion and also that of Cats. 13-14 comes from numerous sources, especially Giovanni B. Mattoni, *San Gaetano Thiene: Grande uomo e grande santo*, 2d ed. [Rome: P.P. Teatini, 1992] and Pasquale Di Pietro, *San Gaetano Thiene (1480-1547): Umiltà e grandezza del santo della provvidenza*, 6th ed. [Rome: P.P. Teatini, 1997]).

These two paintings were obviously conceived as pendants. Approximately the same size with a vertical format, each portrays a saint of the Theatine order experiencing a vision, a traditional devotional theme painted frequently by the artist, and, when seen together, they encompass the beginning and end of Christ’s life. They are Vaccaro’s least well-known works in his documented career. Presumably because of their location in an oratory, the early guide book writers are silent about them and they attracted little attention in the twentieth century. Some writers have misidentified the figure of Andrew (see notations in Bibliography), whereas the more famous Gaetano is easily recognizable because of his realistic features, such as his lean, bearded face.

Both men spent many years in Naples. Saint Gaetano (1480-1547), the founder of the Theatine order, was originally from Vicenza, but upon the request of Pope Clement VII, he moved to Naples. In the 1530s he founded a house adjacent to the church of San Paolo Maggiore, and spent his last years in Naples until he died on 7 August 1547. His tomb is located in San Paolo Maggiore and his physical appearance is preserved in a marble effigy. He was especially known for his desire to reform the
church by imitating Christ, rejecting material wealth, and assisting the sick and needy. His life is celebrated by Vaccaro in a fresco cycle in San Paolo Maggiore (1660-1661; Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25) which illustrates salient events in the saint’s life in a narrative cycle. The two oil paintings were carried out first and may have played a role in obtaining for him the larger and more prestigious fresco commission.

Saint Gaetano celebrated his first mass in Rome on 25 December 1516 in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. The Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary undoubtedly refers to a mystical vision which Saint Gaetano describes in a letter to a nun, Laura Mignani, on 28 January 1518. Christmas night in 1517, one year after his first mass in the same church, Saint Gaetano experienced a mystical vision. In the letter, he speaks of holding the infant Jesus during the hour of his birth, which is referred to in the present example and explicitly illustrated in the related modello and fresco for the San Paolo Maggiore project, both of which include a manger (Figs. 16, 20). The detail of the manger relates to the treasured relic of the Crib of Jesus housed in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. The vision in the oil painting represents Saint Gaetano kneeling before an altar as he opens his arms to receive the Christ Child from Mary who sits on a cloud and is accompanied by putti. Were the painting cleaned, the shades of blue and violet of Mary’s drapery, to be found in other oil paintings by Vaccaro, would be vibrant.

In the Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ, another vision occurs, but in this work, with reference to the end of Christ’s life. Saint Andrea Avellino (1521-1608) was first a lawyer at the ecclesiastical court in Naples and then became a member of the Theatine order in 1556. When he entered the order,
he changed his name from Lancelotto (or Lorenzo) to the name of the apostle Andrew, who was crucified on an X-shaped cross, but sometimes on a cross of the type included in the painting. Known for his devotion to the cross, he travelled widely, established Theatine houses in northern Italy, and was a great leader of the Catholic reform movement. He returned to Naples in 1582 and died of a stroke in 1608 just before he began to celebrate mass, hence he is called upon for protection against sudden death. His tomb is also located in the church of San Paolo Maggiore. In the painting, he is portrayed contemplating the passion of Christ while kneeling at an altar, perhaps shortly before he died for he appears to be an old man, much older than Gaetano in the other painting. Angels bring him symbols of the passion of Christ: the cross, the column and the crown of thorns. But it is the cross which attracts his attention, the most important of the symbols and the object of his devotion. Both paintings were brilliantly conceived as a pair: they refer to mystical experiences connected with specific masses celebrated by each saint, one at the beginning and the other at the end of their priestly careers. The visions likewise encompass the life of Christ from infancy to death. And, a progression in age is depicted from the young Saint Gaetano in the company of putti to the old Saint Andrew shown with angels.

Pasculli Ferrara (1984) notices the unusual, elegant flight of adult angels in the Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ, although she mistakenly refers to it by the title of the other work. She also draws attention to one of the ten modelli for the fresco cycle of the scenes of Saint Gaetano’s life in San Paolo Maggiore, Saint Gaetano Composes the Rule of the Theatine Order (entitled Saint Gaetano’s Vision of the Cross; illustrated in Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana, plate
Their similar subjects and compositions suggest that (although the modello is more complex and detailed) Vaccaro was working on the modelli and these two oil paintings during the same period. Spinosa and Pagano (1988) also draw attention to the group of flying angels which they think are derived by Vaccaro from the artist Giovanni Battista Spinelli. Their suggestion of a possible relationship between these two artists remains to be investigated.

**Condition:** Both paintings are very dirty with darkened varnish, and the Blessed Andrew presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ, in particular, suffers from large areas of paint loss on the right side.

**Documentation:**


9. **Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria**, Fig. 11

Oil on canvas

Naples, Church of Santa Maria della Sanità, fifth chapel on right

Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on second step at bottom center

1659

10. **Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena**, Fig. 12

Oil on canvas

Naples, Church of Santa Maria della Sanità, sixth chapel on right

Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on column base on left

1659

Two documents published by Pasculli Ferrara (1984) and Nappi (2000) establish that Andrea Vaccaro received a total sum of 400 ducats for the **Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria** and the **Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena** for the Dominican church of Santa Maria della Sanità, paid for by a representative of the church, not private patrons, as a single commission. The first on 3 October notes that he was at work on the commission; the second, on 5 November, was the last payment. Each painting depicts a mystical moment in the life of a female saint named Catherine. Their monumental size (each 15 by 10 palmi; that is, about 397.5 X 265 cm.), vertical format, and related iconography make them pendants, although they serve as altarpieces for separate, adjacent chapels. Even details of architecture contribute to their visual unity, since the narrow strip of column shaft, base and pedestal at the far right in the **Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of**
Alexandria is almost identical to the corresponding details of architecture in the other work.

Both display elements of seventeenth-century Bolognese style, especially that of Guido Reni: lofty architectural settings, idealized figures, emphasis on the affetti, and rich shades of deep blue and violet. In the Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria, steps formally separate, yet at the same time, lead the viewer to the enthroned Mary and Christ Child. The artist’s usual monogram appears prominently displayed on the second step. Saint Catherine of Alexandria sinks to a kneeling position and leans forward to receive the ring from the Christ Child. Typical of baroque altarpieces, a strong diagonal, from Saint Catherine to Mary, organizes the composition in a dynamic manner leading the eye across and into space. Putti playfully lift a curtain to reveal the scene and the space behind it at the upper right which extends the diagonal to the upper right. Like a sacra conversazione, Mary and Christ are flanked by Saint Joseph carrying his flowering rod on the left, and, on the right, an attenuated Saint Paul, with his sword and book, and another unidentifiable figure behind Paul who makes eye contact with the viewer. In addition, two angels turn to each other at the left, behind Catherine.

The mystical vision took place in the fourth century, according to The Golden Legend, which recounts that Catherine of Alexandria was of royal birth and became queen, hence the crown and scepter on the top step. When she converted to Christianity she had a vision of herself experiencing a mystical marriage to Christ and, in keeping with traditional and popular representations of this episode, Vaccaro depicts the Christ Child literally placing a wedding ring on her finger. The theatrical
curtain suggests the visionary enactment of her religious commitment and spiritual union with Christ reinforced by the appearance of Mary and the Child on clouds supported by putti. Details in the lower left corner allude to her torture, the broken wheel with knives, and the actual martyrdom by decapitation, the sword. As patroness of education and learning, she appears often in Dominican contexts and as a companion to Saint Catherine of Siena, a Dominican saint.

The Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena, also displaying a prominent monogram, again portrays a woman’s union with Christ during a miraculous encounter. In 1375 Catherine of Siena (ca. 1347-1380) received the wounds of Christ in a vision while at prayer in the church of Santa Cristina in Pisa. Andrea Vaccaro paints that which Catherine experienced: rays of light emanating from the wounds on Christ’s body reappear in her outstretched hands and side (her feet have disappeared with the paint loss). She wears the humble habit of the Dominican order, unlike Catherine of Alexandria whose elegant apparel proclaims her royal status. Vaccaro organizes the composition by creating two diagonals from the lower corners which meet at Saint Catherine’s head. Her rapt gaze continues the major recession to the upper left where Christ appears with clouds carefully held in position by putti and two angels. In the Stigmatization, the vision of Christ is the source of light; in the painting of the Marriage, the light comes from behind Mary. Below, people of Vaccaro’s contemporary world witness the miraculous vision, including, at the left, a mother of decidedly plebian aspect who nurses her child, and, at the right, the striking hooded woman who establishes eye contact with the viewer. Her elderly features are so very individualized that one wonders if this is a portrait of a specific individual. Andrea
Vaccaro’s combination of naturalistic figures with idealized ones indicates that he was capable of using both and employing them selectively at the same time.

Saint Catherine of Alexandria unites with the infant Christ in a joyful moment through a vision of her marriage to him. Saint Catherine of Siena, by contrast, unites with the adult Christ by sharing his pain and suffering from the Crucifixion. Although the two Catherines lived during quite distant historical periods and in different geographical regions, they complement each other efficaciously because Vaccaro links the two scenes stylistically. Both paintings portray elegant and graceful holy figures with elongated proportions along with witnesses with more naturalistic features, a few of who look out of the canvas to draw the viewer’s attention. Saint Catherine of Siena is particularly remarkable for her spiritual attenuation. Strong diagonals organize both compositions and the scale of the figures is similar. In addition, the cool, deep blue and violet colors characteristic of Andrea Vaccaro’s palette are also found in both works. Just as in the pendants, the Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary and the Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ (Cats. 7-8, Figs. 9-10) of a year before, Vaccaro makes thoughtful comparisons with two different saints.

The majority of writers on these paintings praise them both, but the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena is especially admired. De Dominici (1742-1745) applauds them and notes Andrea Vaccaro’s new manner which is admirably improved. He calls the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena one of the most beautiful paintings the artist ever painted. Romanelli (1815) and Galanti (1829) also exclaim that the paintings are bellissimi. D’Afflitto (1834) remarks that the angels in
the Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria are extremely beautiful, and that the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena is one of Vaccaro’s most beautiful works. Chiarini (1856-1860) admires the harmonious color relationships in both. Dalbono ([1864] 1876 and 1891) concurs with De Dominici when he describes the paintings as beautiful because they display Vaccaro’s second manner in which he leaves behind the “savage” coloring and drawing of Caravaggio and follows a more delicate school of painting. Rolfs (1910) complains that the Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria is dark like a work by Caracciolo, and that it is of very little value. Ortolani (in Naples 1938) also criticizes these paintings as representative of Andrea Vaccaro’s official style with monotonous results. Commodo Izzo (1951) agrees with De Dominici and concludes that these are some of his best works. Spinosa and Ciavolino (1979) state that the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena is an authentic masterpiece of the artist’s maturity. Pasculli Ferrara (in Pane, ed. 1984) praises these paintings for their refined passages, and Lattuada (1988) thinks that they are noteworthy for their austere expressiveness.

Condition: The Mystical Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria is currently undergoing restoration. The Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena has suffered large paint losses in the lower corners and bottom center, as well as along the right side.

Documentation:
1. 1659, October 3. Al padre maestro Michel’Angelo Mazzaferro D. 30. E per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro a compimento di D. 140 et sono in conto di due quadri che sta facendo per la chiesa della Sanità. (A.S.B.N., Banco di San Giacomo, giornale del


Bibliography: See Documentation; Celano [1692] in Celano-Chiarini III [1856-1860] 1970, 1726; Parrino pt. 1 (1700), 411; De Dominici III (1742-1745), 138, 151; Giannone [1768-1773] 1941, 125; Sigismondo III (1788-1789), 60; Galanti [1792] 2000, 159; Romanelli II (1815), 137; Grossi VIII (1822), (no page number); Galanti 1829, 88; D’Afflitto II (1834), 141; Chiarini in Celano-Chiarini III [1856-1860] 1970, 1897; Dalbono [1864] 1876, 497; Galante [1872] 1985, 308 (as fourth and fifth chapels); Filangieri [di Satriano] VI (1883-1891), 499; Dalbono 1891, 497 (follows 1876 edition); Rolfs 1910, 262 (as fourth and fifth chapels); Giuseppe Ceci, “Sculture e dipinti nella chiesa di S. Maria della Sanità,” Napoli nobilissima ii ser. I (1920): 96, note 5 (as fourth and fifth chapels); Ortolani in Naples 1938, 50; Ortolani in Thieme-Becker XXXIV (1940), 26; Commodo Izzo 1951, 108-110, fig. 24; Aurora Spinosa and Nicola Ciavolino, S. Maria della Sanità: La chiesa e le catacombe (Naples: Luigi
11. **Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph** or **Saint Mary of Providence**, Fig. 13

Oil on canvas, 322 X 182 cm.

Naples, Church of Santa Maria della Providenza (known as Santa Maria dei Miracoli)

Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, at bottom to the right of portrait of Vittoria de Caro

1660-about 1661

Nappi (1982) publishes two documents of payment to Andrea Vaccaro for the main altarpiece of the church of Santa Maria della Providenza, known for centuries by the Neapolitans as the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli. Governatori of the Monte della Misericordia, the executors of the will of the Reggente Giovanni Camillo Cacace, made an advance payment to Vaccaro of 30 ducats on 13 April 1660. The document states that the altarpiece would be painted for the church of the monastery founded and paid for by Cacace. Over a year later, on 21 October 1661, Andrea Vaccaro received a final payment of 120 ducats for a total sum of 180 ducats for the painting. The church and monastery, not yet completed at the time of Vaccaro’s final payment, were finished in 1662, thirty years after the death of Cacace’s mother, Vittoria de Caro. She, as well as Cacace’s maternal uncle, Giuseppe de Caro, are immortalized along with the patron and benefactor of the church, Reggente Giovanni Camillo Cacace, in the realistic bust-length portraits Vaccaro painted of them at the bottom of the painting. They seem to be inserted, almost as afterthoughts, but in these details Vaccaro follows a long tradition of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For example, Carlo Sellitto’s **Madonna delle Grazie with Souls in Purgatory** (1581-1614; Aliano [Matera], church of San Luigi Gonzaga) provides a notable early seventeenth-century precedent because the half-
length donor appears before a scene of purgatory (see Causa, Battistello Caracciolo, 29, figs. 25-26).

The portraits and request to paint the subject of Santa Maria della Providenza undoubtedly reflect the wishes of the patron. He, along with his mother and uncle, continue to participate in the celebration of mass in their painted images and their souls enjoy the benefits of the prayers of the faithful, including those of the Franciscan nuns whose monastery Cacace had founded. The painting includes many figures although commentators usually refer to it as the Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph. A bilaterally symmetrical composition arranges the figures in a hierarchy of spiritual power when the painting is seen straight on. When viewed in situ, however, the composition appears to be more pyramidal with the Holy Spirit at the apex. In the uppermost part, Christ, the Holy Spirit and God gaze down from heaven and, at either corner, charming putti embrace each other. Mary, at Christ’s right, and Joseph, to God’s left, from below and closer to the picture plane, return their gazes creating an X, the center of which is the putto pushing a cloud to the side. Their imploring expressions and gestures indicate their function as intercessors for the figures beneath them: on the left in space closer to the picture plane, four Franciscan nuns in a group assume various attitudes of devotion and break the balanced symmetry. One of them gestures to the souls in purgatory in the lower right and farthest from the picture plane who are being purified of their sins in the flames. In the opening in the center of the composition the aspiration of the souls in purgatory is manifested—a guardian angel lifts a soul up to heaven, also the hope of the donor and his relatives.
As Commodo Izzo (1951) observes, the realistic half-length portraits give the altarpiece an archaic, fifteenth-century appearance, since donor portraits such as these were painted more frequently then. They appear stiff and awkward and clash stylistically with the idealized grace of the figures above them. But, again, this is a reminder that Vaccaro was capable of combining classical and realistic tendencies in the same painting and undoubtedly did so intentionally. He painted a similar combination of naturalism and idealism only a year before in 1659 in the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena for the church of Santa Maria della Sanità (Cat. 10, Fig. 12). As De Vito (1996) notes, the Franciscan nuns of the present example are particularly akin to the spiritual attenuation of Saint Catherine of Siena in the almost contemporaneous painting.

De Maio (1983) analyzes the popularity of purgatory themes in seventeenth-century Neapolitan painting and concludes that they were represented often to show affection for the deceased. In 1660, the same year Vaccaro worked on this painting, he also received payments for another altarpiece, the Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory (Cat. 12, Fig. 14) for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto, paid for by numerous patrons in memory of plague victims represented in purgatory. It is obvious why such a theme would be urgent in Naples, a city whose inhabitants had recently been devastated by the plague in 1656, a calamity which Vaccaro managed to survive, unlike his close colleagues Massimo Stanzione and Bernardo Cavallino.

The Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph, in comparison to other documented altarpieces by Andrea Vaccaro, has drawn little attention from commentators. The iconography is usually identified in passing, but hardly anything
else is mentioned. Sarnelli (1685 and 1697) does remark that this work was painted by
the most highly esteemed brush of Andrea Vaccaro. Although De Dominici (1742-
1745) identifies the figures accurately, he makes no comments about style. Grossi
(1822) lists this painting as one of Andrea Vaccaro’s extremely beautiful works, but he
misidentifies the portraits when he describes Vittoria and Giuseppe de Caro as Cacace’s
wife and brother-in-law, rather than Cacace’s mother and uncle. Dalbono ([1864] 1876)
remarks that it is pleasing to see the portrait of the respectable Cacace. Ortolani (in
Naples 1938) groups this painting with others that display Andrea Vaccaro’s official
style with monotonous results.

Ceci (1895) believes that this painting is a copy and he claims that the nuns took
the original to their new house at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ortolani (in
Naples 1938, and in Thieme-Becker 1940) agrees with Ceci that this painting is a copy,
but most scholars think there is no reason to question its originality. It bears the artist’s
monogram and no copy of it has been published.

**Condition:** Poor. According to a document published by Nappi (“La chiesa di S. Maria
dei Miracoli,” 202, 214), Andrea Malinconico was paid for retouching Vaccaro’s
altarpiece in 1686, and subsequent restorations have taken place.

**Documentation:**

1. 1660, April 13. Alli governatori del Monte della Misericordia esecutori del
testamento e codicilli del quondam Gio Camillo Cacace ducati 30. E per loro ad Andrea
Vaccaro pittore, dissero in parte di un quadro di S. M. della Providenza datoli a fare per
la chiesa del Monastero ordinato erigersi dal quondam reggente, conforme al disegno et


Bibliography: See Condition and Documentation; Sarnelli 1685, 368; Sarnelli 1697, 368 (follows 1685 edition); Celano [1692] in Celano-Chiarini III [1856-1860] 1970, 1735; Parrino pt. 1 (1700), 404; De Dominici III (1742-1745), 147; Sigismondo III (1788-1789), 35; Galanti [1792] 2000, 162; Grossi VIII (1822), (no page number; figures as wife and brother-in-law of Camillo Cacace); Galanti 1829, 101 (follows 1792 edition); D’Afflitto II (1834) 146-147; D’Ambra and Lauzières II (1855-1857), 737; Chiarini in Celano-Chiarini III [1856-1860] 1970, 1920; D’Ambra and Lauzières II (1863), 20 (follows 1855-1857 edition); Dalbono [1864] 1876, 414; Galante [1872] 1895, 306; Dalbono 1891, 414 (follows 1864 edition); Giuseppe Ceci, “I Miracoli,” Napoli nobilissima IV (1895): 19 (as copy); Rolfs 1910, 262; Ortolani in Naples 1938, 50 (as copy); Ortolani in Thieme-Becker XXXIV (1940), 26 (as nineteenth-century copy); Commodo Izzo 1951, 124-126, figs. 29-30; De Maio 1983, 179, 198, note 19; Roberto Pane, “Marmi mischi e aggiunte a Cosimo Fanzago,” in Seicento napoletano: Arte, costume e ambiente, ed. Roberto Pane (Milan: Edizioni di Comunità, 1984), 109;
12. **Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory**, Fig. 14

Oil on canvas, 412 X 315 cm.

Naples, formerly Church of Santa Maria del Pianto

Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on lower left

1660

Documents published by Strazzullo (1965) and Nappi (1980) establish that Andrea Vaccaro received payments in 1660 for the **Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory**, the main altarpiece for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto at Poggioreale, just outside of Naples, constructed over the grotte degli sportiglioni (caves of bats, in Neapolitan dialect) where tens of thousands of victims of the plague in 1656 had been buried. The church was paid for by donations from individuals and organizations of diverse social classes, including Gaspar Roomer, members of the Guilds of the Silk and Gold workers, and the greatest benefactor, Don Gaspar de Bracamonte, Conde de Peñaranda (Viceroy of Naples from 1658-1664). In addition, mendicants in Naples collected offerings toward its completion (see Strazzullo, “Documenti,” 224-225, note 7; summarized by James D. Clifton, “Images of the Plague and Other Contemporary Events in Seventeenth-Century Naples,” Ph.D. diss. [Princeton University, 1987], 63-80). Andrea Vaccaro’s painting, commissioned to inspire prayer to assist the souls in purgatory, was finished by 1662, the year the church was consecrated. The first two of the four partial payments of 17 July and 23 August imply that work on the commission was yet to begin and the other two, of 13 October and 8 November, state that the painting was underway. Two of the documents specify the
donors Angelo Felice Ghezzi and the Guild of Silk workers and the total sum is still unknown. Additional documents would undoubtedly provide a more complete picture.

This monumental altarpiece has been restored recently to its former splendor (although not yet photographed), and Vaccaro’s skill in representing flickering light and his preference for deep shades of blue and violet are visible once again. In contrast to Commodo Izzo’s (1951) highly critical comments on the quality of this painting, Wethey (1967) perceives that it is surely one of the artist’s best works. I agree. The major diagonal created by Mary and Christ united by their gazes organizes the composition. Below, souls in the purifying flames of purgatory look upward for assistance and most likely refer to those who had just died shortly before in the plague, some of whom had not received the last sacrament. Clifton (1987) notes that the inclusion of the monastic figure clearly demonstrates that even the religious were not exempt.

Mary kneels on a cloud as she is lifted by putti to the upper right in the direction of Christ. Her attitude of devotion and sorrow accurately expresses the meaning of the church’s dedication, Santa Maria del Pianto. A benevolent, noble Christ gazes down at her and seems to accept her compassionate intercession for the souls in purgatory with his outstretched right arm. As Salvator mundi he holds a scepter with his left hand supported by a blue globe. Throng of the heavenly host—angels, putti and cherubs, who form a halo behind Christ’s head—surround Christ. Many commentators (Celano, Sigismondo, Galanti, D’Afflitto, Chiarini, Galante, Rolfs, and Strazzullo) misidentify the scepter and describe the subject as Mary praying to her indignant son not to hurl thunderbolts against the city of Naples. Clifton (1987) argues convincingly that such a misinterpretation is comprehensible when one remembers that the plague or any disaster
was commonly viewed by Catholics as punishment by a just God. De Dominici (1742-1745) reflects this view when he reports that the painting portrays our Lord angered by the grave sins of the Neapolitans in the act of punishing them with the flagellation of the cruel pestilence. He mistakenly includes San Gennaro (Saint Januarius) in the composition, perhaps thinking of one of Luca Giordano’s lateral paintings.

Due to the extent of the tragedy suffered by the Neapolitans from the plague of 1656, it is not surprising that Vaccaro received another commission for a painting with a similar subject during this same period, the Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph or Saint Mary of Providence (1660-1661; Cat. 11, Fig. 13). In this, the high altarpiece for the church of Santa Maria della Providenza (known as Santa Maria dei Miracoli), Mary and Joseph are joined by Franciscan nuns as intercessors to the Trinity for the souls in purgatory.

Don Gaspar de Bracamonte, Conde de Peñaranda, Spanish Viceroy of Naples (1658-1664), was the leading patron for the construction and decoration of the church of Santa Maria del Pianto. He ordered Vaccaro’s altarpiece, as well as two paintings by Luca Giordano, the Saint Januarius Interceding for the Plague Victims and the Crucified Christ with Patron Saints of Naples. Everything was paid for by a remarkable outpouring of communal charity as a stimulus for celebrating mass and praying for the souls of the plague victims buried underneath the church. This intercession could abbreviate the length of time a soul spent in purgatory for purification before entering heaven, which belief gained greater currency during the Counter-Reformation period and is expressed in Vaccaro’s painting. For further discussion of the significance of the church of Santa Maria del Pianto for Naples in terms of its historical and religious
context, and of Giordano’s paintings from the point of view of plague iconography, see Clifton (1987).

Earlier accounts by the biographers Francesco Saverio Baldinucci, Giovanni Pietro Bellori, and Bernardo De Dominici do not focus on the religious and historical significance of this commission, nor the Viceroy’s munificent contributions. They primarily describe the presumed rivalry between the older, well-established Vaccaro and his younger contemporary, Giordano. The biographers all assert that the two competed with each other for the honor of having a painting selected by the Viceroy for the high altar, but eventually became friends. It is difficult to believe these stories at face value, but it is worthwhile to study the versions in an attempt to discern critical perceptions behind the *topos* of their competition. In other words, the “competition” is a vehicle for expressing certain ideas about each artist, not simply, as one would expect, championing Luca Giordano who ushers in a new age of baroque painting by defeating the traditional Andrea Vaccaro. As evidenced by this commission itself, Vaccaro was a very successful, respected artist in his own lifetime and esteemed by the Viceroy and his contemporaries. The anecdotes also call attention to Andrea Vaccaro’s worth, although is is easily forgotten since Luca Giordano soon afterwards eclipsed him in fame (addressed in greater detail in section IV. LATE PERIOD [ca. 1660-1670]).

**Condition:** Excellent. Recently restored.

**Documentation:**

1. 1660, July 17. Pagate per me al S.r Andrea Vaccaro pittore duc. 50, dite sono in conto del prezzo del quadro che detto signore Andrea have havuto peso di pintare precedente ordine di S.E. per la cona della chiesa di S. Maria del Pianto sopra le grotte


3. 1660, October 13. Pagate per me al magnifico Andrea Vaccaro pittore duc. 50, dite sono a complimento di duc. 100, et essi in conto della valuta del quadro che detto Andrea sta facendo per ordine di S.E. per servizio della chiesa nuova di S. Maria del Pianto sopra le grotte delli Sportiglioni, e detti duc. 50 sono della summa delli duc. 900 donati per elemosina a detta chiesa dalla nobile Arte della Seta a petizione di Sua Eccellenza.


4. 1660, November 8. A Giuseppe Brancaccio, governatore, D. 50. E per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro, pittore, disse sono a compimento di D. 100, et essi in conto della valuta del quatro che detto Andrea sta facendo per ordine di S.E. per servitio della chiesa nova di Santa Maria del Pianto sopra la grotta delli Sportiglioni. E per esso a
Nicola Vaccaro per altritanti. (Banco della Santissima Annunziata, giornale del 1660, matricola 349, November 8. Nappi, Aspetti, 69).

13. Ten modelli for the fresco cycle of the life of Saint Gaetano in the Church of San Paolo Maggiore, Naples, Figs. 15-18

Saint Gaetano before Mary, the Christ Child and Joseph* (Fig. 16)

Saint Gaetano Attacked During the Sack of Rome

Death of Saint Gaetano in the Company of Saint Michael* (Fig. 17)

Saint Gaetano Composes the Rule of the Theatine Order

Pope Clement VII Approves the Rule of the Theatine order

Saint Gaetano Refuses Offerings from Count Antonio Caracciolo d’Oppido* (Fig. 18)

Apparition of Saint Gaetano to the Sick and Needy

Saint Gaetano Offered to Mary by his Mother* (Fig. 15)

Miraculous Construction of a Theatine House

Glory of Saint Gaetano

(The ordering of these works corresponds to the sequence of scenes of the fresco cycle [Cat. 14] for which they are modelli. The last three modelli have no corresponding frescoes. Although they are almost always discussed in the literature as bozzetti, following De Dominici [1742-1745] who uses the term, because of their highly finished nature and close correspondence with few exceptions to the finished frescoes, I prefer to use the term modello, which is also suggested by Ferrari in Bozzetti, 57. The precise function they served remains unknown, either as a means to secure approval from the patron or as a model for execution in large scale in a different medium, or both. Writers frequently misidentify the subjects represented. For sources on the life of Saint Gaetano, see Cat. 7).

Oil on canvas, 125 X 76 cm. (each)
Andrea Vaccaro probably painted these ten modelli for the fresco cycle of the life of Saint Gaetano (Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25) in the church of San Paolo Maggiore in Naples (1660-1661) about 1660; that is, in preparation for that commission. All ten modelli are located in Madrid, divided between the collections of the Museo del Prado* (4) and the Palacio Real (6). According to Francisco J. Sánchez Cantón, Museo del Prado: Catalogo de los cuadros (Madrid: Blass, S.A., 1942), 669-670, and Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana, 467-468, the first known record of them in Spain appears in an inventory of the Palacio Real in Madrid in 1700; see also Gloria Fernández Bayton, Inventarios reales: Testamentaria del Rey Carlos II I [1701-1703] (Madrid: Patronato Nacional Museos Madrid, 1975-1981), 69. Palomino (1724) remarks upon their superior quality, notes that they belong to a certain D. Cristóbal Ontañón, Knight of the Order of Santiago, and adds that the painter Don Juan de Alfaro faithfully copied them for Don Pedro de Arce, another Knight of the same order (A. Palomino, “El parnaso español pintoresco laureado,” [1724], in Fuentes literarias para la historia del arte español IV, ed. Francisco J. Sánchez Cantón [Madrid: Imprenta Clásica Española, 1923-1941], 261). Conca (1793-1797) records seeing them in the Palacio Real in Madrid in the late eighteenth century (Antonio Conca, Descrizione odeporica della Spagna in cui spezialmente si da notizie spectante alle belle arti I [Parma: La Stamperia Reale, 1793-1797], 122-124, 132).
Unlike the scholarly debate over the degree of Andrea Vaccaro’s participation in the execution of the final fresco cycle, the *modelli*, although not documented, are signed with a monogram and have always been attributed to the artist. The known documents of payment to Vaccaro for the fresco commission (Cat. 14) do not mention the requirement of *modelli* or prior approval from the patron before the frescoes were to be painted. Perhaps he executed them as models for Andrea de Lione or others in his workshop to follow. In fact, De Dominici (1742-1745) reports a rumor that Vaccaro undertook the commission to please Andrea de Lione, who competed for it, and that Vaccaro executed the *modelli* for de Lione. Ferrari (1990), who notes that these *modelli* may be identified as such because of their finished state, thinks that they served precisely that purpose because of Vaccaro’s working relationship with de Lione. De Vito (1996), instead, argues that since they bear Vaccaro’s monogram and are detailed, finished works, they served as a guarantee of Vaccaro’s authorship of the initial conception and that he did not allow de Lione full responsibility for carrying out the frescoes since de Lione would have achieved quite different results.

For some unknown reason—perhaps due to decisions of the Theatines for an iconographical program for eight fields between the clerestory windows of the nave—only seven of the ten *modelli* were utilized and one of the subjects altered (see Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25).

In one of the three not carried out in fresco, the *Saint Gaetano Offered to Mary by his Mother* (Fig. 15), aristocratic Maria Da Porto, known for her piety as well as for being the mother of Gaetano, kneels before the altar of the Virgin Mary and Christ Child and offers her son. Behind her are two women, a child and two men framed by a
classical arch. The Miraculous Construction of a Theatine House, also, does not appear as a fresco (see Pérez Sánchez 1965, plate 184). Conversely, there is one fresco, the Saint Gaetano Distributing Alms, for which there is no corresponding modello.

In Saint Gaetano before Mary, the Christ Child and Joseph (Fig. 16), the adult Gaetano kneels before the Virgin Mary and Christ Child who smiles and reaches toward the saint. Saint Joseph and two angels stand to one side and another angel kneels at the right. Putti unfurl a banner near the roof of the manger and announce the birth of Christ.

In Saint Gaetano Refuses Offerings from Count Antonio Caracciolo d’Oppido (Fig. 18), the saint, with gestures, shows disdain for a platter of coins offered to him by the nobleman. As in the Saint Gaetano Offered to Mary by his Mother (Fig. 15), lofty architecture is used to organize the scene and divides the two religious figures on the left from the secular figures on the right. The attendant holding the horse’s reins appears understandably surprised, while the page holding the money stares into the viewer’s space. All of these details including the black slave speak to the position and wealth of the young nobleman. S. Causa (2000), who misidentifies this scene as San Gaetano che dona i suoi beni, has pointed out a pentimento, a third head between those of the two Theatines, a detail which does not appear in the fresco. In the Death of Saint Gaetano in the Company of Saint Michael (Fig. 17), the saint is shown lying on his deathbed assisted by a priest and three acolytes in prayer, all of whom are unaware of the presence of Saint Michael and an angel on the left. In the upper section, the saint with open arms receives the anger of Christ and in this way offers himself to save the city of Naples and its people from civic strife. S. Causa (2000) notes a compositional
relationship between this part of the modello and the corresponding upper section in Caracciolo’s Saint Ignatius in Glory and the Pious Works of the Jesuits (Sorrento, Museo Correale di Terranova) although the subjects are very different.

Aspects of the modelli resemble some of Andrea Vaccaro’s earlier oil paintings. For example, the Death of Saint Gaetano in the Company of Saint Michael calls to mind the Death of Saint Joseph (Cat. 4, Fig. 6) in which Saint Michael is also present, although the modello is more complex with a larger number of figures, a more detailed setting, and a general lighting scheme rather than the Caravaggesque chiaroscuro. The semi-nude worker in the foreground of the Miraculous Construction of a Theatine House is a variation of the worker at the far left in Saint Hugh Reconstructing the Cathedral of Lincoln (Cat. 6, Fig. 8). Aspects of the iconography and composition of the Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary (Cat. 7, Fig. 9) for the Oratory of Santissimo Crocefisso of 1658 reappear with variations in the modello of Saint Gaetano before Mary, the Christ Child and Joseph (Fig. 16).

Such an extensive set of modelli for a fresco cycle is unusual. S. Causa (2000) is of the opinion that they originated as autonomous works of art, without reference to the fresco cycle, because of the invenzioni, pentimenti and quickness of the painterly passages, suggesting that they are a hidden jewel of Neapolitan painting of the early 1660s. Indeed, despite their high quality (considered generally to be superior to the frescoes) they are not well-known, partly because of their location outside the city of Naples in Madrid and their inaccessibility in storage in the Palacio Real and the Museo del Prado. Juan J. Luna, Guia actualizada del Prado (Madrid: Alfiz, 2001), 183, notices
that Vaccaro alternates the style of each *modello* from classical to realistic depending on the subject portrayed.

14. Eight scenes of the life of Saint Gaetano and the Cardinal Virtues, Figs. 19-25

Left wall (near main entrance):

Saint Gaetano before Mary, the Christ Child and Joseph (Fig. 20)

Saint Gaetano Attacked During the Sack of Rome (Fig. 21)

Death of Saint Gaetano in the Company of Saint Michael (Fig. 22)

Right wall (near crossing):

Saint Gaetano Composes the Rule of the Theatine Order (Fig. 23)

Pope Clement VII Approves the Rule of the Theatine Order (Fig. 24)

Saint Gaetano Accepts Offerings from Count Antonio Caracciolo d’Oppido for the Church (Fig. 25)

Over main entrance:

Saint Gaetano Distributing Alms (left; no modello)

Apparition of Saint Gaetano to the Sick and Needy (right)

Cardinal Virtues (Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude, Justice), four spandrels of the crossing

Frescoes

Naples, Church of San Paolo Maggiore (Fig. 19)

1660-1661

Although Andrea Vaccaro was a specialist in oil painting, he received the prestigious commission to paint a large fresco cycle of the life of Saint Gaetano for the Theatine church of San Paolo Maggiore in Naples. Documents of payment from 1660 and 1661 state that he received the sum total of 1200 ducats for eight large scenes and four spandrels above the cornice. Many writers think that the frescoes of Saints Peter
and Paul in the spandrels on the triumphal arch are also by Vaccaro (see comments in Bibliography), even though the documents do not mention them and their style seems far removed from that of Vaccaro.

Unfortunately, very little is left of the four Cardinal Virtues in the spandrels of the crossing. Only the one to the left of and closer to the high altar still contains a fragment, perhaps the beam of a scale to signify Justice. The eight scenes of the life of Saint Gaetano on the walls between the clerestory windows of the nave are not as damaged, but are in poor condition, with losses of the intonaco in several areas and extensive overpainting in others. These changes inhibit a detailed stylistic analysis and the resolution of complex attribution problems concerning the possibility of the collaboration of other artists or workshop intervention.

However, the well-illuminated scenes of the life of Saint Gaetano remain legible from the floor of the nave; the figures are large in scale and positioned in the shallow foreground, for the most part set before or enframed by architectural elements with no distracting details behind, except when called for by the subject. It is as though they were an illustration of the dictates of the 1563 session of the Council of Trent that religious images should be clear and simple, easily understood, and be an emotional stimulus to piety (Wittkower, Art and Architecture I, 1). That is, the frescoes may be viewed as a conscious reversion to the style of art near the end of the sixteenth century. Discussions of iconography thus far are usually limited to identifying each scene, without taking into consideration the overall program and physical setting of the cycle. Three scenes on each wall and two over the main entrance relate to each other and one may read them clockwise, starting on the left, upon entering the church. The
chronological order of the events of Saint Gaetano’s life is intentionally broken as a coherent program emerges which promotes first Saint Gaetano and then the Theatine order he founded.

Since Gaetano was beatified in 1629 and not canonized until 1671, the Theatine order took an urgent interest in making their founder’s good deeds widely known. Vaccaro had already addressed Theatine subjects in two oil paintings of 1658, the Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary (Cat. 7, Fig. 9) and the Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ (Cat. 8, Fig. 10) for the Oratory of the Santissimo Crocefisso of San Paolo Maggiore and in the ten modelli (Cat. 13, Figs. 15-18) executed presumably in preparation for this fresco commission. The purpose of these modelli is still debated. Even if they were not necessary for the patron’s prior approval, it is noteworthy that Vaccaro, perhaps on his own initiative, explored his ideas thoroughly when he had other important commissions at hand about 1660, such as the altarpieces for the churches of Santa Maria della Providenza (Cat. 11, Fig. 13) and Santa Maria del Pianto (Cat. 12, Fig. 14).

The three documents of payment do not specify which episodes of Saint Gaetano’s life should be depicted, but the payment on 19 August 1660 stipulates that the subjects would be assigned and the paintings carried out to the satisfaction of Padre Reverendo Angelo Pistacchio. (Documents nos. 2 and 5 are restatements of the previous payments.) Each scene is flanked by windows creating individual quadri riportati (Fig. 19). The narrative emphasis is evident since the episodes are arranged in a logical sequence, with chronological and thematic relationships. The three scenes on the left wall depict the most important moments in Gaetano’s life: the Saint Gaetano
before Mary, the Christ Child and Joseph (Fig. 20) refers to his mystical vision on 25 December 1517 in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome of holding the Christ Child in his arms in the hour of his birth; the Saint Gaetano Attacked During the Sack of Rome (Fig. 21) recalls his escape from harm during the horrible events of 1527; and the Death of Saint Gaetano in the Company of Saint Michael (Fig. 22) depicts his death on 7 August 1547 and offering himself to achieve peace in Naples.

Across the nave, continuing clockwise, on the right wall, three scenes portray significant events in the early history of the Theatine order: Saint Gaetano Composes the Rule of the Theatine Order (Fig. 23), Pope Clement VII Approves the Rule of the Theatine Order (14 September 1524; Fig. 24), and Saint Gaetano Accepts Offerings from Count Antonio Caracciolo d’Oppido for the Church (Fig. 25). The modello for this last scene (Fig. 18) shows Saint Gaetano rejecting the count’s offering, to emphasize the Theatine vow of poverty and renunciation of earthly goods. Yet in the fresco, with a change in position of his left hand, Saint Gaetano accepts the offering, but he gestures upward and looks up to a heavenly ray of light to indicate that the coins are for the service of the Church. Saint Gaetano depended on providence for his livelihood, but he accepted offerings for the restoration of the new Theatine house at San Paolo Maggiore which was granted to the Theatines on 28 May 1538 by Viceré Pedro de Toledo.

As the cycle continues, over the main entrance, the final two scenes illustrate Saint Gaetano’s imitation of Christ in two examples of charity: on the left, the Saint Gaetano Distributing Alms celebrates the saint’s generosity to the poor; on the right, the Apparition of Saint Gaetano to the Sick and Needy demonstrates the supernatural
appearance and miraculous healing powers of the saint. Together they illustrate material and spiritual aid, and exhort the faithful to follow suit.

Of the eight frescoes in the series, two deal with the proper use of money in reference to Saint Gaetano’s pioneering attempts to reform the Church by returning to a life of strict poverty and service like that led by Christ and the apostles. Although Galante ([1872] 1985) misidentifies the left scene on the entrance wall as Saint Gaetano receiving alms, he correctly understood Gaetano’s faith in providence when he discusses the two scenes together as illustrating Christ’s saying date et dabitur vobis.

De Maio (1983), in a more cynical vein, comments on the propaganda inherent in these scenes. One way for the clergy to attract goods from the faithful was through works of art displaying the receiving and distributing of alms.

Since the modelli (Cat. 14, Figs. 15-18) were presumably painted in preparation for the frescoes, it is important to note how they differ and how the conception of the program evolved. Although the commission calls for eight scenes of the saint’s life, there are ten modelli, three of which were not utilized: Saint Gaetano Offered to Mary by his Mother (Madrid, Museo del Prado; Fig. 15), Miraculous Construction of a Theatine House (Madrid, Palacio Real; see Pérez Sánchez 1965, plate 184) and Glory of Saint Gaetano (Madrid, Palacio Real). Some of the modelli were modified in the fresco versions: the modello Saint Gaetano Refuses Offerings from Count Antonio Caracciolo d’Oppido (Fig. 18) became Saint Gaetano Accepts Offerings from Count Antonio Caracciolo d’Oppido for the Church (Fig. 25), a major change discussed above. In the Saint Gaetano before Mary, the Christ Child and Joseph (Figs. 16, 20), details of the architecture are changed and the banderole born by the putti becomes inscribed with
GLORIA IN EXCELSIS and the ox appears, to more emphatically establish the subject of the nativity of Christ. In the Death of Saint Gaetano in the Company of Saint Michael (Fig. 17, 22), the result of the success of Saint Gaetano’s acceptance of the wrath of God is manifested for, in the very far distance, Michael and the angel have left the side of the deathbed and in a battle in the air drive demons from Naples. The ambiguous details of a city in the view past the coulisse in the modello (Fig. 17) are clearly identifiable as Naples in the fresco (Fig. 22), with the famous lighthouse, bay and Vomero clearly visible. In fact, the Bull of Canonization addresses the connection between the death of the Saint and the return of peace to the city. A further, poignant, naturalistic detail is evident: Saint Gaetano’s open mouth in the modello is closed, for the sake of decorum, in the fresco. One fresco for which there is no modello, the Saint Gaetano Distributing Alms, is adjacent to and follows the Saint Gaetano Accepts Offerings from Count Antonio Caracciolo d’Oppido for the Church (Fig. 25). This addition to the program calls further attention to the proper use of money and charity by the Theatine order, as exemplified by the life of the founder. After studying the thematic coherence of the finished cycle with its attendant propaganda, the reasons for these changes become comprehensible. The frescoes are successful in conveying clearly a didactic Counter-Reformation message exhorting the faithful to acts of charity following the example of Gaetano in imitation of Christ, and, although not the intention of Saint Gaetano, publicly elevating him to an important position.

The documents published by Pasculli Ferrara (1984), Novelli Radice (1988), and Renato Ruotolo (1988) provide us with important information about the extent of the commission, the date, and the amount of money Andrea Vaccaro received. Still, a
major question remains unresolved, which has dominated analyses of the modelli and frescoes. Did Andrea Vaccaro in turn commission another artist, such as Andrea de Lione, to execute the frescoes which might explain stylistic disunity and uneven quality? Many commentators starting with Celano (1692) suggest that this is the case primarily because Andrea Vaccaro, like Caravaggio, Ribera and Cavallino, was not a fresco painter and he received the commission at the relatively old age of fifty-six years. In addition, Novelli Radice publishes two documents of payment by Andrea Vaccaro to Andrea de Lione during the same period of this commission with checks drawn at the same bank (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS, 19 February 1661 and 5 April 1661). The total, 300 ducats, is a significant amount considering that Vaccaro received 1200. Were the series of modelli painted by Vaccaro as models for de Lione to follow? It is important to keep in mind though that the modelli are not mentioned in the documents and neither is de Lione. In any case, Vaccaro would have had assistance in the execution of the frescoes from someone, possibly including de Lione and/or Vaccaro’s son Nicola who also received a payment by check during the pertinent time (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS, 10 January 1661, 20 ducats). These matters of attribution are difficult if not impossible to resolve because of the condition of the frescoes and also because our knowledge of Vaccaro as a fresco painter depends on this single commission. However, it is undeniable that in general and in detail, scenes reflect closely the modelli which are securely by Vaccaro. By this time, ca. 1660, Andrea Vaccaro enjoyed a position as leading artist of Naples, to which this fresco commission bears witness.
Unfortunately, no complete set of photos of the fresco cycle is available at the Archivio Fotografico at the Soprintendenza in Naples, and scholars have discussed these works without the benefit of seeing them restored. It has thus been all too easy for writers to believe De Dominici’s (1742-1745) detailed account that Andrea Vaccaro, due to age and inexperience, was unwilling to jeopardize his reputation by failing as a frescoist, and handed over this prestigious commission to Andrea de Lione, who, according to De Dominici, also competed for it.

Magda Novelli Radice (“Contributi alla conoscenza di Andrea e Onofrio de Lione,” Napoli nobilissima iii ser. XV (1976): 162-169), the first scholar to study the San Paolo Maggiore commission at length, re-examines De Dominici’s anecdotes in her study on Andrea de Lione and attempts to resolve this problem firsthand despite the scaffolding that then filled the nave and partially blocked her view. Based on stylistic grounds, and confusing the location of the scenes, she concludes that both de Lione and Vaccaro collaborated by working on alternate scenes. In a later study Novelli Radice (1988) changes her mind. She writes that Vaccaro is not acceptable as the artist, even though the transcription of the modelli is faithful, except for some insignificant details. In many of the scenes Vaccaro’s style is completely lost and no one would suspect a link to Andrea Vaccaro if the modelli were not known. Only in several scenes is Vaccaro’s style faithfully translated from the modelli: Saint Gaetano before Mary, the Christ Child and Joseph (Figs. 16, 20), Saint Gaetano Composes the Rule of the Theatine Order (Fig. 23; see Pérez Sanchez 1965, plate 184) and Death of Saint Gaetano in the Company of Saint Michael (Figs. 17, 22). Furthermore, Novelli Radice proposes
that the other scenes show de Lione’s hand, to the extent of making one assume that they are original works not based on another artist’s modelli.

Commodo Izzo (1951) asserts that these frescoes are of little value and are not worth discussing; she practically neglects them in her monograph, the only major study of the artist. Moreover, Novelli Radice finds the entire cycle to be superficial. She singles out three scenes, those on the right wall, for their apparent crude execution: Saint Gaetano Accepts Offerings from Count Antonio Caracciolo d’Oppido for the Church (Fig. 25), Pope Clement VII Approves the Rule of the Theatine Order (Fig. 24), and Saint Gaetano Composes the Rule of the Theatine Order (Fig. 23). She concludes, finally, that De Dominici may be right after all, that the frescoes are an act of vanity, weak, and not worthy of Vaccaro. But they are also, in her view, not worthy of Andrea de Lione either! Thus, Novelli Radice proposes that the uneven quality is due to a workshop. She names Andrea Vaccaro’s son, Nicola, as a possible participant in the cycle since he also received a payment in 1661 which she published and suggests that there may have been other artists from Andrea Vaccaro’s workshop who participated. Only in this way can she explain the poor quality in some of the scenes, overlooking the possibility of overpainting. Ruotolo (1988), following Novelli Radice, thinks that Andrea Vaccaro and Andrea de Lione, or perhaps even another artist, worked on alternate frescoes.

As Novelli Radice points out, two very early writers (before De Dominici) ascribe all the Saint Gaetano frescoes to Vaccaro without mentioning de Lione: Il Fuidoro [P. Vincenzo D’Onofrio] writes in his “Diary” of 7 August 1671 that the frescoes are by Andrea Vaccaro (see Don Ferrante [Giuseppe Ceci or Benedetto Croce],
“Notizie di artisti che lavorarono a Napoli nel secolo XVII dal diario del Fuidoro,”
Napoli nobilissima IX [1900]: 30), and Carlo De Lellis (Aggiunta alla Napoli sacra del
D’Eugenio I [ms. ca. 1666-1688], ed. Francesco Aceto [Naples: Fiorentino Ed., 1977],
325) records that the “celebre pittore napoletano,” Andrea Vaccaro, painted them.
Commentators beginning with Celano (1692), introduce the idea that Andrea de Lione
painted the frescoes based on the modelli by Andrea Vaccaro, and that the frescoes are
inferior to the modelli. Giannone ([1768-1773] 1941), usually a severe critic of De
Dominici’s lives of the artists, follows De Dominici in stating that, although Andrea
Vaccaro painted very well in oil, he was not a good fresco painter because of lack of
experience. However, disagreeing with De Dominici, Giannone remarks that this did
not dim Vaccaro’s reputation. Giannone discusses the San Paolo Maggiore frescoes as
if they were painted by Vaccaro, although very weak in comparison to his oil paintings.
Ortolani (in Naples 1938) criticizes Vaccaro’s sentimental vulgarization of Guido
Reni’s style in the scenes of Gaetano’s life. Pasculli Ferrara (in Pane, ed. 1984),
following De Dominici, thinks that all the frescoes are by Andrea de Lione because
Vaccaro may have been inexperienced in fresco painting or suffered from old age. For
the opinions about attributions of other writers, see comments in the Bibliography.
Condition: Poor. Overpainting with areas of paint loss in some scenes.
Documentation:
1. 1660, August 19. A don Carlo de Palma D. 200. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro,
pittore, disse pagarglili di denari della Casa di S. Paolo Maggiore di Napoli, d’ordine
del Padre Reverendo Angelo Pistacchio preposito, e sono in conto di D. 1200 prezzo
intiero stabilito per convenzione a patto fra loro, pur che il detto Andrea debbia


5. 1661, June. Per le pitture della chiesa pagati ad Andrea Vaccaro per la Pietà per finale pagamento...1000-0-0. (A.S.N., Monasteri Soppressi, San Paolo Maggiore MLXXXVII, 282. Ruotolo, “Documenti,” 297, 300).

Bibliography: See Documentation; De Lellis I ([ca. 1666-1688] 1977), 326 (all Gaetano scenes by AV); Sarnelli 1685, 100 (two spandrels with virtues by AV); Celano [1692] in Celano-Chiarini II [1856-1860] 1970, 715 (two spandrels with virtues near the high altar by AV, all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Sarnelli 1697, 102 (two spandrels with virtues by AV, all Gaetano scenes by a pupil of AV); Parrino pt. I (1700), 335 (two spandrels with virtues near the high altar by AV, all Gaetano scenes by AdL); De Dominici III (1742-1745), 144-145 (two spandrels with virtues near the high altar by AV, all Gaetano scenes by both AV and AdL or all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Giannone [1768-1773] 1941, 126 (all Gaetano scenes by AV); Sigismondo I (1788-1789), 216 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Galanti [1792] 2000, 184 (two spandrels with virtues near the high altar by AV); Romanelli II (1815), 74-75 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Galanti 1829, 147 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL); D’Afflitto I (1834), 84 (all Gaetano scenes by AV); Napoli e i luoghi I (1845), 286 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Catalani I (1845-1853), 107, 110 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL, spandrels of virtues, and frescoes under arches, by AV, but retouched); D’Ambra and de Lauzières II (1855-1857), 839 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Chiarini in Celano-Chiarini II [1856-1860] 1970, 821 (two spandrels with virtues near high altar by AV, all Gaetano scenes by AdL); D’Ambra and de Lauzières II (1863), 160 (follows 1855-1857 edition); Dalbono [1864] 1876, 88 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Galante [1872] 1985, 111 (all six spandrels by AV, all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Filangieri [di Satriano] VI (1883-1891), 499; Dalbono 1891,
88 (follows [1864] 1876 edition); Don Ferrante [Ceci or Croce] 1900, 30 (all Gaetano
scenes by AV); Rolfs 1910, 259-260, 262 (two spandrels near high altar by AV, all
Gaetano scenes by AdL); Salvatore Scotti, La chiesa di S. Paolo Maggiore in Napoli:
Cenni storici e artistici (Naples: Pontifica M. D’Auria, 1922), 10-11 (all six spandrels
by AV, all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Ortolani in Naples 1938, 49 (all Gaetano scenes by
AV); Ortolani in Thieme-Becker XXXIV (1940), 26 (two spandrels with Saints Peter
and Paul by AV, all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Commodo Izzo 1951, 130 (spandrels with
Saints Peter and Paul by AV, all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Pérez Sánchez 1965, 468 (all
Gaetano scenes by AdL); Novelli Radice 1976, 164, 168, note 9 (all Gaetano scenes
alternately by AV and AdL); De Maio in London 1982, 35; De Maio 1983, 52-53, 192
(all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Maria Serena Mormone in Galante [1872] 1985, 122, note
111; Lattuada 1988, 90 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL); Ferrari 1990, 57, 251 (all Gaetano
scenes by AdL); Schütze in Schütze and Willette 1992, 225 (all Gaetano scenes by both
AV and AdL); Willette in Schütze and Willette 1992, 115, note 71; Di Mauro in Napoli
Sacra, no. 7 (1994), 434, 436 (all Gaetano scenes by AdL, two spandrels with Saints
Peter and Paul and the Church Fathers under the arch by AV); Regina 1995, 57 (all
Gaetano scenes by AdL, spandrels of Saints Peter and Paul with Church Fathers by
AV); De Vito 1996, 99, 101-109, 124, figs. 28-37 (all Gaetano scenes by AV with the
help of AdL, Church Fathers on triumphal arch of uncertain authorship); S. Causa 2000,
107 (Gaetano scenes by AV with the help of AdL); Clara Gelao in Conversano, Paolo
Finoglio e il suo tempo: Un pittore napoletano alla corte degli Aquaviva (Naples:
Electa Napoli, 2000), 152 (all Gaetano scenes by AV in collaboration with AdL).
15. **Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child, Fig. 26**

Oil on canvas

Naples, formerly Church of Il Gesù Nuovo, Chapel of the Sciabica


1666

This painting and **Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar** (1642; Cat. 3, Fig. 4) are the only known works by Andrea Vaccaro which bear both his full signature and a year. Although not recorded in any published document, circumstantial evidence also confirms Vaccaro’s authorship. Research by Ceci (1898) and Strazzullo (1962) verifies Vaccaro’s fundamental role in the renewal of the Corporation of Neapolitan painters, the Congregazione di S. Anna e S. Luca dei Pittori, dedicated to Saint Anne and Saint Luke.

About 1664, the Jesuit Gennaro Britti and the painter Natalino Troncia, together with many others, including Vaccaro, decided to establish an organization of painters which met at the chapel of the Sciabica in the cloister of Il Gesù Nuovo. Two years later, a painting of Saint Luke on the altar by Domenico Tagliafierro was replaced by the present example, which became the official painting of the Corporation. Vaccaro was also the first **prefetto** (1664-1666), and his first assistant was Francesco Di Maria, while his second assistant was Luca Giordano, who became the next **prefetto** in 1666. De Dominici (1742-1745) conveys this information and recounts also that Andrea Vaccaro wanted to honor the new seat of the Corporation and to glorify its protectors, Saint Anne and Saint Luke, by painting this canvas. This explains the presence of Saint Anne, who is usually not included in paintings of Saint Luke portraying the Virgin
Mary. Prota-Giurleo’s (1953) assumption that it was a gift by Vaccaro to the Corporation is probably correct given the circumstantial evidence. The painting followed the numerous changes in location of the seat of the Corporation, and finally around 1865 was moved to the church of San Giovanni delle Monache. Both this work and a self-portrait attributed to Andrea Vaccaro (Cat. 19, Fig. 30) were housed there until restoration, construction work and then severe earthquake damage in the 1980s caused the church to be closed to the public indefinitely. Although De Maio (1983) suggests that with this painting Vaccaro admonished his companions in the Corporation that art should be divinely inspired or it is not worthy of the Church, paintings of this subject for guilds and academies of Saint Luke were already an established tradition.

Luke, the patron saint of painters who, according to legend, a painter himself, was the first to paint the Virgin Mary’s portrait. According to tradition, Bishop Aspreno of Naples, a disciple of the apostle Peter, commissioned the first portrait of Mary from Saint Luke. De Maio reports that Naples alone boasted over six hundred paintings by him!

Vaccaro depicts in a straightforward manner Saint Luke in the act of painting Mary and the Child. The composition is organized along a prominent diagonal, characteristic of devotional images by Vaccaro, with two major interacting figures. In a reverent, kneeling attitude, Saint Luke holds his palette and paintbrushes and gazes adoringly at Mary and the Child. Saint Anne, the other patron saint of the Corporation, looks on. The divine nature of the event is conveyed by the appearance of the heavenly personages on clouds, accompanied by cherubs, the three putti who serve the purpose of
an easel, and the bowl of turpentine at the lower center which supernaturally levitates above the floor.

Very little is known about the artistic activities of the Corporation, although it is likely that it promoted painting from the practical aspect of teaching drawing to aspiring young artists and, from the theoretical, as a liberal art, elevating its status in society. In fact, De Dominici (1742-1745) recounts in the life of Francesco Di Maria, that Vaccaro introduced the useful custom of holding the Accademia del Nudo in the Congregazione de’ Pittori, newly erected in Il Gesù Nuovo, to benefit youths and cultivate the study of professors. According to the statutes of 1665, during Vaccaro’s tenure as prefetto, members were also supposed to assist other members who were sick, or imprisoned for not paying debts (Strazzullo 1962, 43).

The election of Vaccaro as first prefetto of the Corporation indicates the respect and authority he enjoyed during the last years of his career. Giordano, his second assistant and the next prefect, was certainly aware of Vaccaro’s painting, yet his own versions of this subject (Ponce, Museo de Arte, ca. 1650-1654, and Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, ca. 1650-1654) are very different (Ferrari and Scavizzi, Luca Giordano I, 252-253, II, figs. 72-73). In the Ponce painting, Giordano depicts himself as Saint Luke, thereby identifying himself ingeniously with the renowned saint sharing both his name and prolific activity as a religious painter. In the Lyon version, Saint Luke resembles one of Ribera’s philosophers. Both paintings share with Vaccaro’s work a diagonal composition with Mary and the Child appearing on clouds with angels, but neither includes Saint Anne. Vaccaro’s Saint Luke is clearly not a self-portrait (compare Cat. 19, Fig. 30), however the artist makes an indirect reference to himself by
depicting the saint as aged. Vaccaro was, in fact, sixty-two years old when he painted it and perhaps further identifying himself with the holy artist, his full signature appears prominently to the right of the saint’s head, on the pedestal of one of the columns.

De Dominici (1742-1745) states that the painting measures 8 X 6 palmi (about 212 X 159 cm.) and that it is one of Vaccaro’s most beautiful works. Grossi (1822) also lists this painting among Vaccaro’s most beautiful works. Catalani (1845-1853) praises this painting as well, but he mistakenly describes the portrait that Saint Luke paints as depicting the coronation of the Virgin. Catalani also claims that Vaccaro was assisted by his son, Nicola, in the execution. Ortolani (in Naples 1938) comments on the monotonous shades of brown that are common in Vaccaro’s late works. Commodo Izzo (1951) notes the high quality of the painting, despite Vaccaro’s advanced age, and attention to anatomy, especially in the figure of Saint Luke. Ferrari (in Storia di Napoli 1970) thinks that if it were not for paintings such as this one, Vaccaro would have been only a pathetic and outdated old master. Pavone (1980) views this work as belonging to Vaccaro’s late phase marked by a strain of ideal nobility deriving from Guido Reni.

Bibliography: Celano [1692] in Celano-Chiarini [1856-1860] 1970; De Dominici III (1742-1745), 139-140, 308; Giannone [1768-1773] 1941, 127; Grossi VIII (1822), (no page number); Catalani II (1845-1853), 157-159 (as by Andrea Vaccaro with the assistance of his son, Nicola); Chiarini in Celano-Chiarini II [1856-1860] 1970, 985; Galante [1872] 1985, 57; Filangieri [di Satriano] VI (1883-1891), 500; Ceci 1898, 10; Rolfs 1910, 258-259, note 2; Aldo De Rinaldis, “Un quadro di Luca Giordano,” Napoli nobilissima ii ser. I (1920): 24; Ortolani in Naples 1938, 52; Ortolani in Thieme-Becker XXXIV (1940), 26; Commodo Izzo 1951, 36-37, 134-136, fig. 34; Prota-Giurleo 1953,
16. **Saint Anne with Mary before God the Father**, Fig. 27

Oil on canvas, 335 X 213 cm.

Naples, Church of the Pietà dei Turchini, Chapel of Saint Anne

Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on lower left

About 1667-1668

Although no document specifically names Andrea Vaccaro as the artist responsible for this painting, it is signed with his monogram, and other evidence, his close involvement with this church, supports his authorship. It is likely that he donated it. Commodo Izzo (1951) mentions unpublished documents concerning Vaccaro’s membership in the Confraternita dei Bianchi of the Conservatorio of the Pietà dei Turchini (1657). He was also Consulatore (1659-1660), Tesoriere (1660-1661) and Deputato (1662-1663) of this organization, and is named as one of the Governatori of the Conservatorio and church of the Pietà dei Turchini in a document of 21 May 1667. Francesco Rocco on that day bought the concession for his funerary chapel to be dedicated to Saint Anne. Rocco agreed to fund the construction and ornamentation of the chapel which today occupies the entire shallow right transept of the church (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS). The chapel’s decoration was completed in the following years; Rocco died in 1671. **Saint Anne with Mary before God the Father** is the main altarpiece of this chapel and can still be viewed *in situ*. At each side are paintings by Andrea Vaccaro’s student, Giacomo Farelli, which depict the **Birth of Saint Anne** on the left (to avoid possible confusion, ANNA appears on the baby’s chest) and the **Death of Saint Anne** on the right, from about 1671-1672. Above, two paintings executed by Nicola Vaccaro in 1676 represent a **Miracle of Saint Anne** and the
Apparition of Saint Anne to Francesco Rocco and His wife. Andrea Vaccaro died in 1670 and in his will requested to be buried in this church.

Similar to Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child (Cat. 15, Fig. 26) of 1666, the major diagonal from the lower right to the upper left organizes the composition. Seen from the nave while facing the high altar of the church, Saint Thomas Aquinas on the lower right holds a monstrance toward the viewer and draws the eye into the composition. It is apparent that Andrea Vaccaro knew in advance the intended location of the painting. The first of two steps (the second has the monogram) introduces details of lofty architecture. Saint Thomas of Aquinas kneels and gazes with rapt devotion at the young Mary who bows humbly in his direction as her mother, Anne, one hand on Mary’s shoulder, looks upward to God. Angels, putti and cherubs on clouds accompany the vision of the holy figures. One angel presents Mary on a cloud to the saint, helping to complete the major diagonal, while another angel assists Anne, and helps create a secondary diagonal linking Anne with God the Father who appears at the upper right with putti and cherubs on clouds. The two diagonals meet at Mary’s crossed arms, where she serves as an attribute of Saint Anne.

Although the painting is almost always entitled, Saint Anne Offering Mary to God, the iconography is unusual and much more complex. The chapel is dedicated to Saint Anne and other paintings in it reveal the patron’s special devotion to her and she is the most prominent figure in the painting. However, we are introduced to her through a vision of Saint Thomas Aquinas whose primary focus, however, is on Mary, and not Anne. He may be identified through his Dominican habit and the attribute which he extends to the viewer, the monstrance, which he also holds in a map of Naples dated
1648 as one of a series of protector saints of Naples (Naples I [1984], 79). Saint Thomas of Aquinas (ca. 1225-1274) is relevant to Naples. He taught at the University of Naples, and among many things he is known for his chastity and devotion to Mary. After successfully resisting temptation, he experienced the miracle of the girdle granted to him by angels. The monstrance he holds refers to his writings on the Eucharist in the *Summa Theologica* for which he received divine approval when he had a vision of a crucifix speaking to him of it in the church of San Domenico Maggiore in Naples. This painting contains profound religious and philosophical ideas which should be further investigated, in relation to the requests of the patron Francesco Rocco.

Except for Commodo Izzo (1951) who conducts a detailed stylistic analysis and concludes that, despite its late date, this is one of Andrea Vaccaro’s better works, not many writers comment upon this painting and no one seems to have noticed how Andrea Vaccaro was aware of the chapel setting within the church, thereby creating a composition that successfully carries its religious message to the viewer. De Dominici (1742-1745) singles out the angels lifting up Saint Anne, calling them very beautiful because they possess the idea and form of Paradise. Giannone ([1768-1773] 1941) praises in particular the beautiful putti. D’Afflitto (1834) follows De Dominici by remarking upon the beauty of the angels that hold up Anne and Mary. Chiarini (1856-1860) calls the altarpiece a very precious painting. Ortolani (1938) groups this painting with others that reflect Andrea Vaccaro’s official style with monotonous results.

**Condition:** Generally good, but dirty. Restored in 1947 (Naples 1960, 104).

**Bibliography:** See Condition; Celano in Celano-Chiarini III [1856-1860] 1970, 1409-1410; Parrino pt. 1 (1700), 135; De Dominici III (1742-1745), 138-139 (as left chapel);
Giannone [1768-1773] 1941, 126; Sigismondo II (1788-1789), 353; Galanti [1792]
2000, 201; Romanelli II (1815), 150; Grossi VIII (1822), (no page number); D’Afflitto
II (1834), 8-9 (follows De Dominici); Catalani II (1845-1853), 144; D’Ambra and
Lauzières II (1855-1857), 1186; Chiarini in Celano-Chiarini III [1856-1860] 1970,
1467; D’Ambra and Lauzières II (1863), 634 (follows 1855-1857 edition); Dalbono
499; Dalbono 1891, 270; Rolfs 1910, 261, 265-266; Ortolani in Naples 1938, 50;
Ortolani in Thieme-Becker XXXIV (1940), 26; Commodo Izzo 1951, 37, 104-105, fig.
19; Ferrari in Storia di Napoli VI, pt. 2 (1970), 1351, note 7 (as before 1656); Nappi
1993, 87, 110, fig. 29; Flavia Petrelli in Napoli sacra, no. 10 (1995), 592, fig. 28; De
Vito 1996, 118, 131, fig. 46 (as left chapel).
17. **Communion of Saint Mary of Egypt**, Fig. 28

Oil on canvas, 390 X 310 cm.

Naples, Church of Santa Maria Egiziaca a Forcella

Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, near the center

Dated: 1668, on lower left

Andrea Vaccaro’s **Communion of Saint Mary of Egypt** is the high altarpiece of the church of Santa Maria Egiziaca a Forcella. No document of payment has been discovered for it, but Vaccaro’s monogram appears prominently displayed on a cloud under Mary’s foot near the center of the composition, and the year 1668 is located on the lower left corner of the painting. Only two other works by Vaccaro are known to bear a year: **Saint Teresa’s Vision of the Golden Collar** (1642; Cat. 3, Fig. 4) and **Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child** (1666; Cat. 15, Fig. 26).

Vaccaro portrays one of the most commonly depicted episodes in the life of Saint Mary of Egypt, as told in *The Golden Legend*. Saint Mary, called the Sinner, lived in the third century, and from the age of twelve to twenty-nine she prostituted herself in Alexandria. Later, in Jerusalem, an invisible force prevented her from entering a church. She then experienced a sudden conversion, repented and prayed to the Virgin Mary for pardon, promising to renounce the world and live chastely. She was then allowed to enter.

She followed a voice instructing her to cross the river Jordan into the desert where she lived for forty-seven years without seeing anyone and where she conquered temptations of the flesh. When a priest named Zosimus came upon her, she asked him to return to the Jordan on the day of the Lord’s Supper so that she could communicate
for the first time. The following year, he did so and saw her miraculously walk across
the water of the river to join him to receive communion. She asked him to come back
again the next year, but, when he did, he found her lying dead, with instructions written
in the sand to bury her. After her long life of solitude, she did receive the sacrament of
communion before dying.

The Catholic practices of conversion, penance, and communion, which were
promoted in the Counter-Reformation period, are taught by the life and legends of Saint
Mary of Egypt and, with this painting, Vaccaro again demonstrates his ability to paint a
religious subject with a clear message. Mary of Egypt’s ascetic lifestyle, recognizable
through her haggard appearance and unbound hair, which covers her naked body, are
signs of her penitence. The old and bearded priest Zosimus wears a monk’s habit, in
keeping with traditional representations of him. No other humans are present; however,
two angels kneel with Mary of Egypt at the right, and two others stand with tapers
behind Zosimus at the left. Their presence suggests that shortly afterward she will die
and join Mary and the Child in heaven. Surrounded by putti, and somewhat off center
to the left, they look down on Mary of Egypt with tender compassion. The painting,
portraying the first and only time that Mary of Egypt receives communion, is all the
more poignant because of its position above the high altar where the faithful receive
communion, allowing for an association with the reformed life of Saint Mary of Egypt
and the promise of forgiveness suggested in the sympathetic faces of Mary and the
Child. Mary of Egypt sets an example for the faithful communicant below as she
concentrates exclusively on the host and chalice, rather than her reward.
Andrea Vaccaro was undeniably proud of this painting because, unlike any other, he displays his monogram very prominently at the center, a detail which carries well to the viewer below, looking up. Yet the cloud on which it is located serves as a footstool for Mary, suggesting humility along with pride. Luca Giordano executed the side paintings which show other episodes from the life of the titular saint: Saint Mary of Egypt in the Desert and Saint Mary of Egypt’s Vision of the Virgin. Here again Vaccaro received the commission for the main altarpiece and Giordano that for the other two. But there are no stories or anecdotes regarding a competition between the two artists, unlike those recounted about the paintings for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto (1660; Cat. 12, Fig. 14). This is probably due to the fact that Giordano’s paintings date to a much later period (about 1702), well after Vaccaro’s death in 1670. Even if Giordano employs a more fluid, sketchy brushstroke and treats the figures in a more cursory manner, his style was apparently not seen as incompatible with Vaccaro’s: the juxtaposition of the three works offers an opportunity to observe how Neapolitan painting shifted in style during the latter part of the seventeenth century.

Commentators note the high quality of both artists’ works, although all three have received little attention. If Vaccaro’s painting were cleaned, it would certainly be recognized as one of his greatest works. Parrino (1700) pronounces the painting remarkable. De Dominici (1742-1745) describes it as very good, and states that the angels carrying tapers are particularly beautiful. D’Affitto (1834) remarks that Vaccaro’s altarpiece is expressive. Catalani (1845-1853) calls this work a good painting. D’Ambra and Lauzières (1855-1857) note its excellence. Chiarini (1856-1860) is ecstatic and describes it as extremely beautiful. Dalbono (1859, 1876, 1891)
says that it is an extremely beautiful work, but complains about the poor condition, almost reduced to pieces. He speculates that Vaccaro was pleased with it since he put his monogram in the center of the composition. Galante ([1872] 1985) hails it as one of Vaccaro’s most beautiful paintings. Among more recent commentators, Ortolani (Naples 1938) groups this painting with those that he believes are characteristic of Vaccaro’s official style with monotonous results. Commodo Izzo (1951) observes that, despite the late date of this painting, it displays a fresh and imaginative approach. Lattuada (1980) notes the academic and sweetened style of Vaccaro’s late period. Pavone (1980) detects the ideal, noble style of Reni in this work. Leone de Castris (1986) and Maietta (in Napoli sacra 1994) describe the painting as typical of Andrea Vaccaro’s academic style.

**Condition:** Restored in 1948 (Naples 1960, 104).

**Bibliography:** See Condition; Parrino pt. 1 (1700), 240; De Dominici III (1742-1745), 141; Sigismondo II (1788-1789), 132-133; Galanti [1792] 2000, 209; D’Afflitto I (1834), 135; Napoli e i luoghi I (1845), 379; Catalani II (1845-1853), 178-179; D’Ambra and Lauzières II (1855-1857), 993; Chiarini in Celano-Chiarini II (1856-1860) 1970, 1182 (date as 1669); Dalbono 1859, 140; Galante [1872] 1985, 164; Dalbono 1876, 170; Dalbono 1891, 170; Ortolani in Naples 1938, 50; Ortolani in Thieme-Becker XXXIV (1940), 26 (as 1669); Commodo Izzo 1951, 38, 110-111, fig. 28 (as 1669); Ferrari in Storia di Napoli VI, pt. 2 (1970), 1256 (as 1669); Dizionario enciclopedico XI (1976), 216, fig. 305; Lattuada 1980, 306; Pavone 1980, 19 (as 1669); Ida Maietta in Galante [1872] 1985, 176, note 119; Leone de Castris in Leone de Castris and Middione 1986, 104; Lattuada 1988, 108; Ida Maietta in Napoli sacra, no. 9 (1994),
532; Regina 1995, 214; De Vito 1996, 119, 131, fig. 47; Lattuada in *The Dictionary of Art* XXXI (1996), 791.
18. **Saint Martha**, Fig. 29

Oil on canvas

Naples, Church of Santa Marta

1670

This painting of **Saint Martha** hangs above the high altar in the church of Santa Marta. It is very significant as one of Vaccaro’s last works—he died on 18 January 1670. A document of 23 July 1670, paying Nicola, the son, 55 ducats, notes that the then deceased Andrea Vaccaro had already received 25 ducats for it, in the past months. The total, 80 ducats, was for the high altarpiece of the church of Santa Marta (D’Addosio 1913). Because this document does not state that the painting is by Andrea, which is the case for others for which Nicola received payment after his father’s death (see APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS, 16 September 1681), one may infer that the **Saint Martha** was begun by Andrea, but left unfinished at his death, adding credence to De Dominici’s (1743-1745) statement to that effect. In fact, Celano (1692) writing just over twenty years after Andrea’s death states that the painting was left imperfect due to Andrea’s death, and that Nicola, a talented youth, finished it. De Dominici (1742-1745), building on the story, claims that the **Saint Martha** was repainted all over again by Nicola, for which he received a lot of praise. All later commentators have accepted the idea that Nicola finished it. Fiorillo, who has investigated the art of Nicola Vaccaro (Ciro Fiorillo, “Nicola Vaccaro a Calvizzano,” in Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Raffaello Causa [Naples: Electa Napoli, 1988], 265, 272, note 4) identifies in the **Saint Martha** Nicola’s more up-to-date style, in consonance with a classicizing tendency in Naples. For example, in comparison to his father’s approach, Nicola employs
enlongated figure types and a softer treatment. I shall refrain from commenting on the matter since the condition of the painting, with dirt and darkened varnish, evidence of overpainting, and its location, high above the altar, precludes examination of stylistic subtleties.

Although the church is rarely open to the public, the painting is still located in situ. It dominates the small interior, and despite its darkened state, areas of golden light, patches of blue sky and the red of Saint Martha’s gown are visible. She stands gracefully on the fierce dragon, and her upturned gaze directed at the putti disporting on the clouds are typical of Andrea Vaccaro’s other devotional paintings inspired by Guido Reni. In particular, the solidity of the clouds and the putto type are found in other works by Andrea. The detailed attention given to the dragon, a well-known attribute of the saint, however, is unusual in his art.

According to The Golden Legend, after the story recounted in the bible about her siblings Mary and Lazarus, Martha went to France, converted people and delivered them from a fearful dragon which she conquered with holy water. She holds the aspergillum in one hand and the container of holy water in the other, two additional attributes. Thus, Andrea Vaccaro and his son produced a straightforward and traditional Counter-Reformation painting of a saint of royal lineage known for her chivalric behavior appropriate for a church, the origins of which may be traced back to the Angevin dynasty, and with a prestigious confraternity boasting members from royalty and the nobility.

**Condition:** Poor condition and very dirty.

19. **Self-Portrait**, Fig. 30  

Oil on canvas, 76 X 63 cm.  
Naples, formerly Church of San Giovanni Battista delle Monache  
Signed: monogram with letters AV interlaced, on upper left  
1664-1666?  

Andrea Vaccaro’s pronounced monogram on the upper left corner and the immediacy of the sitter have led all scholars to agree that this is a self-portrait, painted at an advanced age. Vaccaro in this painting has been proposed to be sixty-five to seventy years old (Naples, *Mostra del ritratto storico napoletano*, ed. Gino Doria and Ferdinando Bologna [Naples: L’Arte Tipografica, 1954], 29-30). But archival discoveries (Prota-Giurleo, *Pittori napoletani*, 162-164) prove that Vaccaro was born in 1604 (not 1598 as claimed by De Dominici) and that he died at the age of sixty-six on 18 January 1670.

Presumed portraits of Andrea Vaccaro include a pen-and-ink drawing (Fig. 31), one of a series of artists’ portraits in Giannone’s now destroyed manuscript (1768-1773) published by Ceci (Giuseppe Ceci, *La storia dell’arte napoletana di Onofrio Giannone: Brani inediti accompagnati dalla riproduzione di XLV ritratti d’artisti* [Naples: Riccardo Ricciardi Editore, 1909], 26, plate VII, no.26). Despite Ceci’s belief in the portrait’s physiognomic accuracy, and presuming that a younger man appears in the drawing than in the painting, the resemblance between the two is only a very general one.

A later and even less convincing presumed portrait of Vaccaro appears as an engraving published by Grossi in 1822 (*Biografia*; Fig. 32). The stylized features of the
sitter are very different from the naturalism of the painted self-portrait. The caption describes Andrea Vaccaro as celebre, but the birthdate of 1596 is erroneous.

Unlike these two graphic works, the painted self-portrait shows Andrea Vaccaro wearing a wig, which began to be popular in Naples in the second half of the seventeenth century following the royal fashion in France. By the end of the century, this fashion accessory was considered necessary for appearing well-bred and civilized (Adelaide Cirillo Mastrocinque, “Moda e costume nel Seicento napoletano,” in Storia di Napoli VI [Cava de’Tirreni: Società Editrice Storia di Napoli, 1970], 781-782). The exquisite lace scarf tied around Vaccaro’s neck suggests wealth and breeding, as well, and enhances his dignified, plump, smiling face.

As Pacelli (in Naples 1984) observes, this painting is not mentioned in the primary sources or even in more recent guidebooks. He proposes that the self-portrait should be associated with the location of Saint Luke Portraying the Virgin and Child (see Cat. 15, Fig. 26) in the various seats of the Corporation of Neapolitan Painters, of which Vaccaro was the first prefetto. It may have been originally in the chapel of the Sciabica, in the cloister of Il Gesù Nuovo and subsequently moved several times, eventually in 1865 to the church of San Giovanni Battista delle Monache. Pacelli argues convincingly that the self-portrait has an official air about it and it may have been painted about 1664-1666 during the time when the artist was prefetto of the Corporation and at the age of sixty to sixty-two years. Even if Pacelli detects irreversible signs of tiredness on Andrea Vaccaro’s face, he appears to radiate a sense of social and economic well-being. As Commodo Izzo (1951) and Pacelli (Vincenzo Pacelli, “L’ideologia del potere nella ritrattistica napoletana del Seicento,” Bollettino
del Centro di Studi Vichiani XVI [1987]: 232, fig. 28) point out, Vaccaro seems to be content from a life filled with satisfaction and success. De Dominici’s (1742-1745) description of Andrea Vaccaro as “nobilissimo e virtuosissimo professore di pittura” springs to mind. Doria and Bologna (1954) discuss the painting as an involution, reflecting the assumption that as Vaccaro grew older his art declined. The facts of his life prove otherwise. Not only was he the first prefetto of the renewed Corporation of Neapolitan Painters, he obtained prestigious commissions to the time of his death in 1670 (see Cats. 15-18, Figs. 26-29).

Bibliography: Grossi VIII (1822), (no page number); Catalani II (1845-1853), 159; Giuseppe Ceci, “Il primo critico del De Dominici,” Archivio storico per le province napoletane XXXIII (1908): 635-636; Ceci 1909, 26, plate VII, no. 26; Commodo Izzo 1951, 166-167, fig. 55; Naples, Mostra del ritratto 1954, 29-30, no. 34 (as formerly church of Santa Maria Maggiore); Pacelli in Naples I (1984), 492-493, no. 2.269 (illustration); Budapest, A nápolyi festészet aranykora XVII-XVIII század, ed. Roberto Middione and Fausta Navarro (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1985), 119, no. 70 (illustration); M. R. Nappi in Galante [1872] 1985, 71, note 275; Pacelli, “L’ideologia” 1987, 232, fig. 28; Marina Santucci in Napoli sacra, no.3 (1993), 180; Naples, Il secolo d’oro 1994, 153 (as 73 X 60 cm.); Pacelli 1996, 162, fig. 145.
APPENDIX A: MARY MAGDALEN

Although long, this working list of paintings of varying quality of Mary Magdalen, attributed to Andrea Vaccaro, is not intended to be exhaustive. Only one source for each painting is included for reference. Easel paintings are notorious for being peripatetic; hence this list may repeat an item more than once. Some are undoubtedly copies or variants. Erroneous, unverified attributions swell Andrea Vaccaro’s œuvre, creating confusion on the art market.

PUBLISHED MARY MAGDALEN PAINTINGS ATTRIBUTED TO ANDREA VACCARO:

Mary Magdalen (Naples, S. Maria Maddalena), Galanti, Breve descrizione, 165, no. 116.

Mary Magdalen in the Desert, (Madrid, Museo del Prado), Madrazo, Catálogo 1843, 129, no. 624.

Mary Magdalen (Vienna, Kunstakademie), Gustav F. K. Parthey, Deutscher Bildersaal: Verzeichniss der in Deutschland vorhandenen Oelbilder verstorbener Maler aller Schulen II (Berlin: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1863-1864), 669, no. 5.

Mary Magdalen in the Desert, (Madrid, Museo del Prado), Madrazo, Catálogo 1876, 93, no. 511.


Penitent Magdalen (Naples, Museo Nazionale), Muro, Nuova guida, 92, no. 34.

Penitent Magdalen (Naples, Museo Nazionale), Muro, Nuova guida, 94, no. 70.


Mary Magdalen, (2); (Naples, Certosa di San Martino, Quarto del Priore), Angelo Borzelli, Un inventario di quadri nel Quarto del Priore alla Certosa di S. Martino (Naples: Giuseppe De Alteris, 1913), 19-20.


Mary Magdalen (Sorrento, Museo Correale di Terranova), De Rinaldis, “Notizie,” 159.

Mary Magdalen (Trapani, Museo Pepoli), Luigi Biagi, Il R. Museo Pepoli in Trapani (Rome: La Libreria dello Stato, 1935), 17, no. 338.


Mary Magdalen, Naples 1938, 320.

Mary Magdalen (Vienna, Museum), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 2.

Penitent Mary Magdalen (Valencia, Museum), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 3.

Penitent Mary Magdalen (Vienna, Harrach Gallery), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 4.

Mary Magdalen, (Leningrad, Hermitage), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 5.

Penitent Magdalen (Sorrento, Museo Correale), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 6.

Mary Magdalen (Naples, Museo Filangieri), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 7.

Penitent Magdalen (Naples, Pinacoteca Nazionale), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 8.

Mary Magdalen (Naples, Certosa di San Martino Pinacoteca Nazionale), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 9.

Mary Magdalen (Naples, Pinacoteca Nazionale), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 10.

Mary Magdalen (Barletta, Museo Civico), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 11.

Mary Magdalen (New York, private collection), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 12.

Penitent Magdalen (Madrid, Museo del Prado), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 13.

Mary Magdalen (Naples, Dr. Luigi Romeo), Commodo Izzo, Andrea Vaccaro, 59, no. 15.


Mary Magdalen (Salerno, Museo del Duomo di Salerno), D. Arturo Carucci, Il Duomo di Salerno e il suo museo (Salerno: Scuola Arti Grafiche Orfanotrofio Umberto I, 1962), 68.

Mary Magdalen (Barletta, Pinacoteca Provinciale di Terra di Bari), Bari 1964, 175.

Mary Magdalen (Trapani, Museo Nazionale Pepoli), Vincenzo Scuderi, Il Museo Nazionale Pepoli in Trapani (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1965), 11, 36, 72, no. 33.

Mary Magdalen (2); (Madrid, Palacio de Liria), Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana, 466-467, plate 185.

Mary Magdalen (Madrid, private collection), Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana, plate 185.

Mary Magdalen (Madrid, Museo del Prado), Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana, plate 186.

Mary Magdalen (Madrid, El Escorial), Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana, 474.

Mary Magdalen (Madrid, Bosch collection), Pérez Sánchez, Pintura italiana, 475.


Mary Magdalen (Perth, Art Gallery and Museum), Christopher Wright, Old Master Paintings in Britain: An Index of Continental Old Master Paintings Executed before

Mary Magdalen (Munich, Staatsgäldesammlung), Alfred Moir, Caravaggio and His Copyists (New York: New York University Press, 1976), fig. 40, note 239.


Mary Magdalen (Salerno, Museo del Duomo), Salerno-Guida storico-artistica (Salerno: Boccia Editore, 1977), 77.


Mary Magdalen (Munich, B.S.), Hans F. Schweers, Gemälde in deutschen Museen: Katalog der in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland ausgestellten Werke (Munich: K.G. Saur Verlag, 1982), 1086.

Mary Magdalen (Salerno, Museo del Duomo), Mario Alberto Pavone, “Correnti pittoriche dal Cinque al Settecento, in Guida alla storia di Salerno e della sua provincia, ed. Alfonso Leone and Giovanni Vitolo (Salerno: Pietro La veglia Editore, 1982), 275.


Penitent Magdalen, Naples, Bernardo Cavallino 1985, 201.

Mary Magdalen (Spain, Duke of Alba collection), Madrid 1985, 336, no. 149.

Mary Magdalen (Rio de Janeiro, Museo), Madrid 1985, 336.

Mary Magdalen, Gaetano Andrisani, Il Seicento napoletano (Gaeta: La Poligrafica, 1986), 111.

Mary Magdalen (Palermo, Galleria Regionale della Sicilia), Palermo, Pittori del Seicento a Palazzo Abatellis, ed. Vincenzo Abbate (Milan: Electa, 1990), 162-165, no.27.

Mary Magdalen in Ecstasy (Naples, private collection), Bologna, “Battistello,” 130, no.132.


Penitent Mary Magdalen (Madrid, Museo del Prado), Museo del Prado 1996, 413, no. 466.

Mary Magdalen (Salerno, Museo Diocesano), Padula, Pathos ed estasi: Opere d’arte tra Campania e Andalusia nel XVII e XVIII secolo, ed. Vega de Martini (Naples: Electa Napoli, 1996), 42.

Mary Magdalen (Warsaw, Narodowe Museum), De Vito, “Appunti,” 126, fig. 53.


Mary Magdalen in the Desert (Madrid, Museo del Prado), Bénézit, Dictionnaire XIII, 937.

Penitent Mary Magdalen (St. Petersburg, Hermitage), Bénézit, Dictionnaire XIII, 937.

Mary Magdalen (Vienna), Bénézit, Dictionnaire XIII, 937.


ART MARKET:

del fu Comm. Giovanni Tesorone (Naples: privately printed, 1919), 66, no. 1061, plate XXXIV.

Mary Magdalen (drawing); Naples 1919, 66, no. 1062.


Mary Magdalen (Milan, Finarte, 9 November 1971), Catalogo Bolaffi I, 195.

Mary Magdalen (Milan, Finarte, 16 December 1971), Catalogo Bolaffi I, 195.


Mary Magdalen (San Leucio-Caserta, Mostra dell’antiquariato), Della Ragione, Il secolo 1997-2001, 216.

INVENTORIES:


Mary Magdalen, (Reggente Stefano Carrillo y Salsedo), Ruotolo, “Collezioni,” 153.


Mary Magdalen, (Marchese Ferdinando Vandeneynden), Ruotolo, Mercanti-Collezionisti, 32.

Mary Magdalen, (Antonio Gerbasio), Ruotolo, Mercanti-Collezionisti, 41.

Mary Magdalen, (Giovanna Battista d’Aragona Pignatelli, Duchessa di Terranova e Monteleone), Labrot, Collections, 316, Inv. 61, no. 126.
Mary Magdalen, (Ignazio Provenzale, Duca di Collecorvino), Labrot, Collections, 180, Inv. 37, no. 108.

Mary Magdalen, (Diego de Ulloa), Labrot, Collections, 152, Inv. 30, no. 32.

Mary Magdalen, (Giovanni Angelo Piscopo), Labrot, Collections, 383, Inv. 71, no. 7.

Mary Magdalen, (Giovanni Montoya de Cardona), Labrot, Collections, 307, Inv. 60, no. 177.


PAINTINGS WITH MARY MAGDALEN AND ANOTHER FIGURE:


Martha chastises Mary Magdalen for her vanity (private collection), Maurizio Marini, Pittori a Napoli: 1610-1656: Contributi e schede (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1974), fig. 65.

Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen (Rome, art market, 9 December 1997), Bénézit, Dictionnaire XIII, 937.

Noli me tangere (Cosenza, Palazzo Arnone), Samà, “Un altro capolavoro,” 60.
APPENDIX B: DOCUMENTS

All known documents related to Andrea Vaccaro are listed in chronological order. Those which deal with paintings are also transcribed in full in the appropriate catalogue entries. Spelling and punctuation have been left as they appear in the original document or the published version of it. Each document has a heading with a brief summary in English. Standard abbreviations for archives are used: A.S.B.N. (Archivio Storico del Banco di Napoli, Naples); A.S.N. (Archivio di Stato, Naples). Unless otherwise noted, all locations are in Naples. The citation following the document is the source for the transcription included here; other published versions are noted after the document under Bibliography.

1604, May 8

Andrea Vaccaro’s baptismal notice.

1620, July 18

Andrea Vaccaro identified as the disciple of Giovanni Tommaso Passaro.
A Lanfranco Massa D. quattro et per luj a Giovanni Thomaso passaro disse per caparro di uno quadro della beata Teresa di altezza palmi 17 e 7 di larghezza l’hà da fare a sua sodisfatione fra termine di un mese per prezzo di D. venticinque, e non consignandolo
fra detto termine si è obligato restituirli detti D. quattro e farcelo fare da altri ad
interesse suo e per esso ad Andrea Vaccharo suo discepolo.

(A.S.B.N. Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale del 1620, matricola 151, July 18.

1628, February 16

Baptismal notice of a child, Angela Geronima, born to Andrea Vaccaro and his first
wife, Lucrezia d’Ambrosio.

Il 16 Febbraio 1628 Giuseppe Guida tiene al sacro fonte Angela Geronima Vaccaro,
figlia di Andrea Vaccaro e di Lucrezia d’Ambrosio.

(Archivio Parrocchia Santa Maria della Carità, Libro dei battezzati I, 261. Salazar,
“Documenti,” 1895, 187).

1629, October 2

Final payment for a Saint Mary of Constantinople with two Blessed Figures for the
church of the Trinità delle Monache.

Al monastero della Santissima Trinità D. 20. E per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro, pittore, a
compimento di ducati 60, e sono per final pagamento dello quadro della Madonna de
Costantinopoli con li due beati del loro ordine.

(A.S.B.N., Banco di San Giacomo, giornale del 1629, matricola 138, October 2. Nappi,
“Le chiese di Giovan Giacomo Conforto,” 141).

1636, September 25

Payment for the Penitent Mary Magdalen (Cat. 1, Fig. 2) for the Certosa di San Martino.

Io Andrea Vaccaro ho ricevuto dal P. Procuratore D. isidoro de Alegria Ducanti Trenta;
et detti sono per un quadro che ho fatto per il capitolo della frati Conversi et detto
quadro e una s. Madalena. et in fede di cio ho fatta la presente firmata de mia mano
Andrea vaccaro affirmo ut supra.

(A.S.N., Monasteri soppressi, Certosa di San Martino, MMCXLII. Faraglia, “Notizie,”
1892, 661).

1638, April 19
Final payment by the Duca di Bruzzano (Calabria) for a Virgin Annunciate and a Saint
Catherine of Siena.
Al duca di Bruzzano D. 20. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro, li quali se li pagano per saldo
et ultimo pagamento di due quadri a loro fatti e consegnati, cioè uno della SS.ma
Annunziata per Bruzzano (Calabria) et l’altro di Santa Catarina di Siena per stare così
d’accordo.


1638, May 27
Final payment by Mattia Pironti for an unspecified painting.
Da Mattia Pironti D. 45 per resto di un quadro che l’ha venduto e consignato.

(A.S.B.N., Banco dello Spirito Santo, giornale del 1638, matricola 284, May 27. Nappi,

1641, February 28
Payment for the Temptation of Christ in the Desert (Cat. 2, Fig. 3) for the church of
Santa Maria della Sapienza.
Al Monastero della Sapienza D. 25. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro pittore et sono a conto di D. 50 per un quadro ad oglio di palmi 12 di altezza che sta facendo per servizio della nova Ecclesia dove doverà pingere Cristo Signore Nostro tentato nel deserto et quelle prospettive di Sei personaggi che riterrà mettere a piacere allo loro padre ordinario et doverà darlo finito a soddisfazione loro et dello loro padre ordinario detto quadro per la prossima Settimana Santa et non dandolo fenito per detto tempo ovvero non facendolo a soddisfazione loro e del loro padre sia tenuto restituire tanto li soddetti D. 25 quanto li altri che ritrovasse havere ricevuti con danni, spese et interesse. Et per lui a Luise Guaracino per altritanti.


**Bibliography:** Bonazzi, “Dei veri autori,” 126; Strazzullo, *Documenti inediti*, 57-58.

1643, October 14

Payment by the Duca di Cagnano for a *Story of Abigail*.

Ad Alonso Vargas duca di Cagnano D. 65. E per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro a compimento di D. 280, che li restanti l’ha ricevuti in più e diverse volte contanti. E sono per il prezzo di uno quatro di pintura che l’ha fatto della Istoria de Abigail.


1644, October 18

Apprenticeship contract for Giacomo Farelli, a Neapolitan painter (born 1629), with Andrea Vaccaro.

Locatio persone Pro Andrea vaccaaro.
Die decimo ottavo mensis ottobris duodecime indictionis millesimo sexcentesimo quattagesimo quarto neapoli. Coram nobis constitutus Honofrius fariello de neapoli pater et legitimus administrator Iacobi Anelli fariello presentis etatis annorum quindecim in circa et ex aspettu sue persone evidenter apparuit sponte ad conventionem devenit cum Andrea vaccaro de neapoli pittore presente cui locavit opera et servitia persone ditti Iacobi anelli eius filij ipsumque posuit ad standum et serviendum cum ditto Andrea durante tempore annorum duorum continuandorum ab hodie in antea numerandorum quo tempore durante promisit quod dictum eius filium servire habeat dittum Andream eiusque domui et familia bene fideliter legaliter (f. 269 verso) die notteque horis solitis consuetis ac necessarijs et a servitijs predittis non discedere aliquam ratione nec etiam si allegare voluerit aliam artem velle facere se monacare vel uxorem ducere nec in bonis ditti Andree furtum committat nec consentire cui committere voluerit et discedente vel furtum committente teneatur dittus honofrius prout sic se obligavit et promisit dittum eius filium jnvenire et inventum reducere ad servitia preditta eidemque Andree reficere tam furtum forse committentum in eius bonis quam omnia danna expensas et jnteresse ex causa preditta patienda videlicet partendosi fra sei mesi da hoggi detto honofrio sia obligato sin come se obliga et promette pagare al detto Andrea presente et acceptante docati cinquanta per li alimenti da detto Andrea à quel tempo remisi al detto Giacomo Aniello et fatiche fatte in impararlo et partendosi fra uno anno da hoggi sia obligato detto honofrio sincome se obliga et promette pagare al detto Andrea presente et acceptante docati cento per le cause sodette et partendosi fra uno anno et mezzo ò fra li due anni da hoggi sia obligato detto onofrio sincome se obliga et promette per li sodetti Alimenti et fatiche fatte in impararlo pagarli al detto andrea
presente et accettante docati cento cinquanta jn pace ac non obstante quacunque
excettione etiam liquida preventione quibus expresse cum juramento renuntiaverit et pro
eis possit coggi et compelli jn quavis curia ubi necesse fuerit juris et fatti remedij
opportunis et pro effettu citationis omnium predittarum designiaverunt curiam mei notarij
sitam jn quarterio montis oliveti meardum domorum jn qua citati habeant tanquam citati
de persona non obstante eius (f. 270) absentia à ditta curia et ab hac civitate quia sic.
Vice versa dittus Andreas promisit ditto tempore durante dittum Iacobum anellum
tenere in eius domo ipsumque bene trattare justa sui qualitatem docere de designiare et
colorire justa sui jncenij capacitatem dare vittum potum lettum et pro eius salario ad
finem ut possit se calciare et vestire de vestimentis et calciamentis necessarijs pro dittis
duobus annis se obligavit et promisit solvere ducatos triginta id anno quolibet ducatos
quindecim serviendo solvendo quia sic. Pro quibus omnibus osservandis prefate partes
respettive ut supra prout ad unamquamque ipsarum spettat et pertinet sponte
obligaverunt se ipsas et quamlibet ipsarumque ac earum et cuiuslibet ipsarum heredes
successores et bona omnia mobilia stabilia presentia et futura una pars altieri
presentibus sub pena duplice medietate cum potestate capiendi constitutione precarij
renuntiaverunt et juraverunt. Presentibus Judice mario russo de neapoli Regio ad
contrattus Anello penna Aloitijo de lilla et Vincentio biscotti de neapoli omnibus.
(A.S.N., Notai del Seicento, Giuseppe Anello Borrelli di Napoli, scheda 932, protocollo

1647, July 18

Payment by Dottor Vincenzo d’Andrea for a Triumph of David.
Al dottor Vincenzo d’Andrea D. 10. E per lui al pittore Andrea Vaccaro, a conto del prezzo di un quadro rappresentante *Il trionfo di David*.


**1649, September 13**

Payment by the Principe di Cardito for an unspecified painting.

Il Principe di Cardito paga D.ti 30, ad Andrea Vaccaro a comp.to di D.ti 70, in conto di un Quatro grande che li sta facendo.


**1650, October 31**

Payment for the Death of Saint Joseph (Cat. 4, Fig. 6) for the church of Santa Maria delle Anime del Purgatorio.

31 ottobre 1650 ducati 30 cioè ducati 20 a Geronimo dello Mastro e ducati 10 ad Andrea Vaccaro, pittori, a conto delle cone stan facendo per servizio di nostra chiesa.


**1650, November 14**

Payment for the Death of Saint Joseph (Cat. 4, Fig. 6) for the church of Santa Maria delle Anime del Purgatorio.

Alli governatori della deputazione dell’Opera delle Benedette Anime del Purgatorio D. 10. E per loro ad Andrea Vaccaro a compimento di ducati 20, che l’altri l’ha ricevuti contanti et in conto della manifattura della cona sta facendo per servitio della detta
Ecclesia delle Effigie di Santo Gioseppe et pensieri. Et per lui a Domenico Galiano per altritanti.


**1651, October 3**

Final payment for the *Death of Saint Joseph* (Cat. 4, Fig. 6) for the church of Santa Maria delle Anime del Purgatorio.

3 ottobre 1651 ducati 17 ad Andrea Vaccaro a compimento di ducati 80 per manifattura della cona di San Giuseppe ha consignato per servizio di nostra chiesa con il qual pagamento resta sodisfatto.


**1652, June 24**

Payment for a painting of Saint Hugh (Cats. 5-6, Figs. 7-8) for the Certosa di San Martino.


**1652, December 9**

Payment by Gaspar Roomer to Andrea Vaccaro for something unspecified.
A Gaspare de Roomer D. 110. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro per altritanti.


1653, February 6
Payment by Gaspar Roomer to Andrea Vaccaro for unspecified paintings.
A Gaspare de Roomer D. 90. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro se li pagano per resto e saldo de quadri venduti et consignati sino al presente giorno 4 febbraio 1653. E per lui a Domenico Vagliano.


1653, May 7
Final payment by Gaspar Roomer to Andrea Vaccaro for unspecified paintings.


1653, July 17
Advance payment by Gaspar Roomer to Andrea Vaccaro for unspecified paintings.
A Gasparo de Roomer D. 74. E per lui al pittore Andrea Vaccaro a compimento di D. 100 in conto di quadri li ha da fare in Napoli.

1653, October 6

Final payment by Gaspar Roomer to Andrea Vaccaro for unspecified paintings.
A Gasparo de Roomer D. 100. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro et se li pagano per resto e saldo de quadri depintoli sino alla presente giornata cussì d’accordo.


1654, January 9

Advance payment by Gaspar Roomer to Andrea Vaccaro for unspecified paintings.
A Gaspare de Roomer D. 50. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro in conto de quadri da pingerli.


1654, April 1

Final payment by Gaspar Roomer to Andrea Vaccaro for unspecified paintings.
A Gasparo de Roomer D. 150. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro per resto et saldo de quadri fattoli sino a 31 marzo 1654.


1655, December 18

Payment by Fra Pietro Turbolo for two paintings: Story of Moses and Lot and His Daughters.
Da fra Pietro Turbolo D. 60 a compimento di D. 150 per prezzo di due quadri uno la Storia de Mosè de palmi otto et l’altro de Lot con li figli della stessa misura.


1658, January 21
Payment for the two paintings: Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary and Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ (Cats. 7-8, Figs. 9-10).


1658, February 20
Payment for the two paintings: Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary and Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ (Cats. 7-8, Figs. 9-10).

Alli governatori dell’Oratorio del SS.mo Crocefisso di Santo Paulo D. 30. E per essi al padre Angelo Pistacchio in conto della spesa dell’i quadri si pittano per adornamento del loro oratorio per osservanza del legato del quondam Francesco Mele. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro a comp. di D. 50 a conto della due quadri che dipinge per lo suddetto Oratorio.
1658, April 12

Payment for the two paintings: Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary and Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ (Cats. 7-8, Figs. 9-10).

Alli governatori Oratorio del SS.mo Crocifisso di S. Paolo D. 50. E per loro al molto R. P. Angelo Pistacchio a comp. di D. 120 in conto di D. 150 per la spesa della pittura di quadri di mano d’Andrea Vaccaro si fanno per adornamento del loro Oratorio. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro, disse per la suddetta causa.

(A.S.B.N., Banco della Pietà, giornale del 1658, matricola 473, April 12.


1658, May 7

Final payment for the two paintings: Blessed Gaetano Receiving the Christ Child from Mary and Blessed Andrew Presented with the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ (Cats. 7-8, Figs. 9-10).

Alli governatori dell’Oratorio del SS.mo Crocifisso de S. Paolo D. 30. E per essi a padre Angelo Pistacchio a compimento di D. 150 spesi per pittura fatta per mano di Andrea Vaccaro in due quadri delli BB, Gaetano et Andrea per adornamento del detto Oratorio. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro per li due quadri da lui dipinti.

(A.S.B.N., Banco della Pietà, giornale del 1658, matricola 474, May 7.

1658, July 15

Andrea Vaccaro and his son, Nicola Vaccaro, named as witnesses at the marriage of the painter Domenico Andrea Malinconico and Antonia De Popoli, sister of the painter Giacinto De Popoli.


Bibliography: Prota-Giurleo, Pittori napoletani, 34-35.

1659, February 17

Advance payment from the Duca d’Aquara for an unspecified painting for the Capuchin friars of Vico Equense.

A Filippo Mosci D. 40. Et per lui a Andrea Vaccaro in conto di ducati 40, per il prezzo d’uno quadro che ha da fare di sua mano e a tempo che ha promesso al duca d’Aquara. Et detto quadro serve per la chiesa delli padri cappoccini di Vico. Et per lui a Nicola Vaccaro.

1659, October 3

Payment for the Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria and the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena (Cats. 9-10, Figs. 11-12) for the church of Santa Maria della Sanità.

Al padre maestro Michel’Angelo Mazzaferrro D. 30. E per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro a compimento di D. 140 et sono in conto di due quadri che sta facendo per la chiesa della Sanità.

(A.S.B.N., Banco di San Giacomo, giornale del 1659, matricola 257, October 3.

Nappi, “Santa Maria della Sanità,” 74).

1659, November 5

Final payment for the Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria and the Stigmatization of Saint Catherine of Siena (Cats. 9-10, Figs. 11-12) for the church of Santa Maria della Sanità.

A fra Michel’Angelo Mazzaferrri D. 30. E per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro a compimento di D. 400, che l’altri l’ha ricevuti contanti per total pagamento e prezzo delli due quadri di 15 e 10 palmi l’uno per servizio della sua chiesa di S. Maria della Sanità di Napoli, cioè uno rappresenta lo Sposalizio di S. Caterina Vergine e Martire e l’altro le Stimmate di S. Caterina di Siena. E per esso a Nicola Vaccaro suo figlio per altritanti.

(A.S.B.N., Banco dei Poveri, giornale del 1659, matricola 354, November 5.

Nappi, “Santa Maria della Sanità,” 74).

Bibliography: Pasculli Ferrara, “Pittura napoletana,” 252, note 74 (lists the bank as Banco del Popolo).
1659, November 29

Payment by Giovanni Michele Grutter for nine unspecified paintings.
Da Gio Michele Grutter D. 150 per il prezzo di nove quadri li deve consignare.
(A.S.B.N., Banco di San Giacomo, giornale del 1659, matricola 255, November 29.

1659, November 29

Payment for a *Mary Magdalen in Ecstasy* for the church of the Capuchin friars of Scilla (Calabria).
A Francesco Prenci D. 60. Et per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro pittore in conto del prezzo
del quadro della Madalena che sta facendo per li padri capucini di Scilla di grandezza di
palmi sette largo e palmi nove alto, rappresentante la Madalena in estasi con due angeli
che la sostengono et quattro altri angioletti con un mazzo di fiori con il suo paesaggio
accordato per il prezzo di ducati 120, quale è pervenuto di elemosina a detto effetto
destinate.
(A.S.B.N., Banco di San Giacomo, giornale del 1659, matricola 255, November 29.

1660, April 13

Advance payment for the *Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph* or *Saint Mary of
Providence* (Cat. 11, Fig. 13) for the church of Santa Maria della Providenza (known as
Santa Maria dei Miracoli).
Alli governatori del Monte della Misericordia esecutori del testamento e codicilli del
quondam Gio Camillo Cacace ducati 30. E per loro ad Andrea Vaccaro pittore, dissero in parte di un quadro di S. M. della Providenza datoli a fare per la chiesa del Monastero ordinato erigersi dal quondam reggente, conforme al disegno et misura datali.


1660, May 22

Payment by Presidente Diego Ugliola for three paintings: Nativity, Sacrifice of Isaac, Old Testament Story.

Dal presidente Diego Ugliola D. 165,08 a compimento di D. 180 per il prezzo di tre quadri cioè uno della Natività di Nostro Signore, e l’altro l’Effigie di Abramo con il Sacrificio e l’altro una Istoria del Testamento Vecchio.


1660, July 17

Advance payment for the Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory (Cat. 12, Fig. 14) for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto.

Pagate per me al S.r Andrea Vaccaro pittore duc. 50, dite sono in conto del prezzo del quadro che detto signore Andrea have havuto peso di pintare precedente ordine di S.E. per la cona della chiesa di S. Maria del Pianto sopra le grotte degli Sportiglioni, quali duc. 50 sono della summa delli duc. 300 donati dal Sig. Angelo Felice Gezzi a detto Ecc.mo Signore per servizio di detta chiesa.

1660, August 19

Advance payment for the frescoes (Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25) in the church of San Paolo Maggiore.

A don Carlo de Palma D. 200. E per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro, pittore, disse pagarglili di denari della Casa di S. Paolo Maggiore di Napoli, d’ordine del Padre Reverendo Angelo Pistacchio preposito, e sono in conto di D. 1200 prezzo intiero stabilito per convenzione a patto fra loro, pur che il detto Andrea debbia dipingere l’otto quadri grandi e le quattro quinte degli archi sopra il cornicione della loro Chiesa di S. Paolo quelle Istorie che li saranno assignate e darle finite a sodisfazione di detto padre proposito per quaresima dell’anno prossimo venturo 1661.

(A.S.B.N., Banco della Pietà, giornale del 1660, matricola 503, August 19.


1660, August

Restatement of advance payment for the frescoes (Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25) in the church of San Paolo Maggiore.

Al pittore Andrea Vaccaro d. duecento per la Pietà in conto delle pitture che deve fare nell’otto quattro e quattro quinte della chiesa…200.


1660, August 23

Advance payment for the Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory (Cat. 12, Fig. 14) for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto.
A Giuseppe Brancaccio, governatore, D. 50. E per esso a Andrea Vaccaro, pittore, disse in conto del prezzo del quatro, che detto Andrea have hauto peso di pintare, precedente ordine di S.E. per la cona della chiesa di S. Maria del Pianto sopra la grotta delli Sportiglioni. Quali D. 50 disse esserno della somma delli D. 300 donati da Angelo Felice Ghezzi a detto eccellentissimo signore per servitio di detta chiesa. E per esso ad Andrea de Lione per altritanti.


1660, October 13

Payment for the Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory (Cat. 12, Fig. 14) for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto.

Pagate per me al magnifico Andrea Vaccaro pittore duc. 50, dite sono a complimento di duc.100, et essi in conto della valuta del quadro che detto Andrea sta facendo per ordine di S.E. per servizio della chiesa nuova di S. Maria del Pianto sopra le grotte delli Sportiglioni, e detti duc. 50 sono della summa delli duc. 900 donati per elemosina a detta chiesa dalla nobile Arte della Seta a petizione di Sua Eccellenza.


1660, November 8

Payment for the Intercession of the Madonna for Souls in Purgatory (Cat. 12, Fig. 14) for the church of Santa Maria del Pianto.

A Giuseppe Brancaccio, governatore, D. 50. E per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro, pittore, disse sono a compimento di D. 100, et essi in conto della valuta del quatro che detto

1661, January 10

Payment by Andrea Vaccaro to his son, Nicola Vaccaro.


1661, February 19

Payment by Andrea Vaccaro to Andrea de Lione.


1661, March 30

Payment for the frescoes (Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25) in the church of San Paolo Maggiore.

1661, April 5

Payment by Andrea Vaccaro to Andrea de Lione.

Ad Andrea Vaccaro ducati cento e per lui ad Andrea de Leone per altri tanti, e per lui a Domenico de Leone per altri tanti e per lui a Francesco Positano per altri tanti.


1661, April 7

Final payment for the frescoes (Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25) in the church of San Paolo Maggiore.

Al padre D. Angelo Pistacchio Preposito della Cassa di S. Paolo ducati duecento, e per lui ad Andrea Vaccaro a compimento di ducati 1200 che l’altri ducati 1000 l’ha ricevuti parte in contanti, et parte per l’istesso nostro banco, et tutti esserno per saldo, et final pagamento de otto quadri, et quattro quinte di pittura a fresco fatti nella chiesa di S. Paolo, sopra il cornicione, et con detto pagamento si dichiara pienamente soddisfatto. Ducati 200.


1661, June

Restatement of final payment for the frescoes (Cat. 14, Figs. 19-25) in the church of San Paolo Maggiore.

Per le pitture della chiesa pagati ad Andrea Vaccaro per la Pietà per finale pagamento…1000-0-0.
1661, July 2

Andrea Vaccaro and his son, Nicola Vaccaro, are witnesses at the marriage of a daughter of the painter Giovanni Dò and the wood sculptor Michele Angelo Perrone.


1661, October 21

Final payment for the Holy Trinity with Saints Mary and Joseph or Saint Mary of Providence (Cat. 11, Fig. 13) for the church of Santa Maria della Providenza (known as Santa Maria dei Miracoli).

Alli governatori del Monte della Misericordia, esecutori del testamento del quondam Reggente Gio Camillo Cacace ducati 120. E per loro ad Andrea Vaccaro, dissero a compimento di ducati 180 per l’intero prezzo d’un quadro di pittura fatto per la cona maggiore della chiesa costituenda nel Monastero erigendo.


1662, November 15

Payment for two unspecified paintings for the Conte di Lemos.

A Michele Lopes Bario Nuovo ducati 140 et per esso ad Andrea Vaccaro per due pitture che ha fatte per il conte Suo Signore.
1667, May 21

Andrea Vaccaro named as one of the Governors of the Real Conservatorio and church of the Pietà dei Turchini in a payment by Francesco Rocco to the Governors for the concession of his funerary chapel (see Cat. 16, Fig. 27).

Al signor Francesco Rocco D. 50. E per esso alli signori Governatori della Real chiesa e Conservatorio della Pietà delli figlioli torchini di questa Città per tanti che li dona elemosinaliter per sussidio delli figlioli di detto Conservatorio, et anco in ricompenza a riguardo della concessione che l’hanno fatto del luoco del muro grande di detta chiesa vicino all’altare maggiore dello lato dell’Epistola per edificarci una cappella di Sant’Anna con altri ornamenti in virtù di conclusione fatta da detti signori governatori et dell’Illustre Signor Duca di Diana protettore di detta chiesa e conservatorio a tre del mese di febbraio passato del presente anno del tenor seguente: a tre di febbraio 1667 giovedì, giuntati li signori governatori della real chiesa e conservatorio della Pietà de figlioli torchini coll’intervento del signor Presidente duca di Diana protettore nel luoco solito per trattare del buon governo et interesssi di detto luogo et precipue come il signor Consigliero Francesco Rocco ha dimandato se li concedesse facoltà di poter far una cappella di marmi con la cona della gloriosa Sant’Anna nel muro grande di detta Chiesa vicino all’altare maggiore e proprio in quello del lato dell’Epistola, quale al presente sta nudo senza ornamento con la sepoltura vicino detta cappella con il genuflessorio decente per il ius patronato per se, suoi heredi et successori offerendo a tener una cappellano ammovibile ad nutum di detto signor Consigliero, quale debbia celebrare
ogni dì in detta cappella et anco di pagare D. 20 l’anno al detto luoco per una litania perpetua da dirsi ogni giorno avanti detto altare affrancabile alla ragione di cinquanta per cento et essendosi fatta matura riflessione sopra detta concessione in conformità di quello che altre volte si è discorso hanno concluso di concedere conforme con la presente concedano al detto Consigliero detto luoco dove possa far detta Cappella per se, suoi herede et successori con il ius della sepoltura da farsi nel luogo dove meglio si potrà più vicino detta cappella purchè non apporti danno alle pedamente, lamie e magazzeni di sotto con il genuflessorio decente, che non sia d’impedimento di sconcerto all’altare maggiore, tutto a spese di detto signor Consigliero con obbligo di mantenere il cappellano e di pagare D. 20 l’anno per le litanie ogni giorno da dirse davanti detto altare affrancabile ut supra rimettendo questi alla cortesia et Charità di detto signor Consigliero di dar al detto luoco quello li parerà per detta concessione sapendo li bisogni di quello, il delegato e Governatori del Real Conservatorio e Chiesa di figlioli torchini della Pietà il Duca di Diana, Gio Batta Tartaglione governatore, Federico Zannetti governatore, Aniello d’Errico Governatore, Andrea Vaccaro governatore, Giuseppe Nocca governatore, Paolo de Simone rationale, estratta dal libro de conclusioni meliori sempre salva. E per essi a credito di Giosèppe Trotta loro collega e tesoriero per farsene introito.


1668, September 20

Payment by Giovanni Battista Fusco for a Nativity.
Da Gio Batta Fusco D. 150 per il prezzo di un quadro della Natività di Nostro Signore di misura otto e dieci palmi.


1668, September 20

Advance payment by Aniello Mazzella for four history paintings.

Da Aniello Mazzella D. 100 per caparro di quadri quattro di palmi sei et otto historiati che dovrà fare.


1670, July 23

Payment by Aniello d’Errico for the Saint Martha (Cat. 18, Fig. 29) for the high altar of the church of Santa Marta.

A 23 luglio 1670--Aniello d’Errico paga ducati 55, a Nicola Vaccaro a comp.to di D.ti 80, atteso li D.ti 25, li ha ricevuti il q.m Andrea Vaccaro suo padre li mesi passati per Banco S. Eligio: quali D.ti 80, sono per il prezzo di un Quatro fatto de la Gloriosa S.ta Marta per servitio di d.ta Chiesa et proprio nell’Altare Maggiore.


1680, April 8

Payment by Angelo Maria Petagna to Aniello Mele for a Nativity by Andrea Vaccaro.

Da Angelo Maria Petagna D. 50 ad Aniello Mele per uno quadro della Natività di mano di Andrea Vaccaro originale di palmi sette et nove.
1681, September 16

Payment by Domenico Mazza to Nicola Vaccaro for a painting by his father, Andrea Vaccaro.

A Domenico Mazza D. duecento quindici, et per lui à Nicola Vaccaro, e sono per il prezzo d’un Quadro Grande che l’hà venduto di mano del quondam Andrea suo Padre, et con detto pagamento resta intieramente sodisfatto.

1683, February 22

Payment by Antonio Ciappa to Aniello Mela for a painting of Saint Sebastian by Andrea Vaccaro.

Da Antonio Ciappa D. 40 ad Aniello Mela per prezzo d’un quadro di palmi quattro e cinque di uno S. Sebastiano mano del quondam Andrea Vaccaro.

1698, May 2

Payment by the Principe di Terranova to Andrea Vaccaro (undoubtedly Nicola Vaccaro) for two unspecified paintings.
Al Principe di Terranova D. dieciotto, e per lui ad Andrea [sic, Nicola] Vaccaro per due quadri venduti.


1698, June 26

Payment by Francesco Antonio Prota to Notary Andrea Passaro for an Allegory of Purity by Andrea Vaccaro.

Fr.co Antonio Prota paga D.ti 9, a Notar Andrea Passaro per il prezzo di un Quatro di palmi 3 _, con cornice di legno indorato con il ritratto della Purità pittato dal q.m Andrea Vaccaro et ad esso venduto et consignato.

APPENDIX C: FIGURES

Figure 1
Figure 3
Figure 5
Figure 6
Figure 9
Figure 11
Figure 16
Figure 17
Figure 22 (right) in comparison to Figure 17 (left)
Figure 23
Figure 25
Figure 26
Figure 29
Figure 31
Figure 32
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