

# 23 The effects of Venetian School Art and Leonard da Vinci to “The Calling of Saint Matthew”

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I will present the study of the direct effects of Venetian School Art, especially in the works of painter Carpaccio, Paolo Veronese, Giorgione, and Leonard da Vinci’s “The Calling of Saint Matthew” .

- This study is a revised and modified version of its 2013 counterpart.



fig.1

“Calling of Saint Matthew”

## 1 The Bilateral Space Compaction Technique

Try to notice the similarity between “The Calling of Saint Matthew” of Caravaggio and “The Story of Saint Ursula” of Carpaccio. Usually the spectator of modern arts feels strange with regards

to the distance between Saint Ursula and Attila. (See the two circles of the fig.2)

They look like standing fairly closely to each other.

I feel that Attila doesn't need to shoot Ursula with a bow. I feel it's faster to cut her with a sword than use a bow.



fig.2

“The Story of Saint Ursula” 1490–95 Carpaccio

The scene is painted that Attila targeting the kneeling Ursula who is praying for her life.

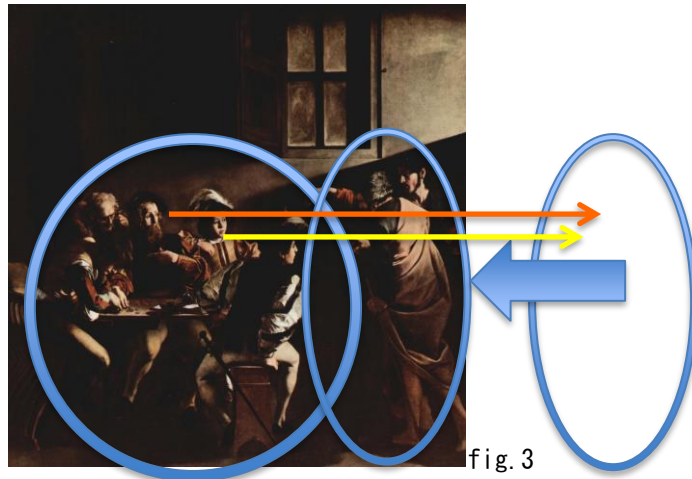
If Carpaccio drawn this scene in a real scale, the people in the scene would be drawn small.

But, Carpaccio didn't paint the people on smaller size, but it is drawn to shorten the distance between Attila and Ursula.

In this case, those who lived in Renaissance period can understand it and not perceived as un usual.

Now, where is the similarity in expression with “The Calling of Saint Matthew” ?

The common expression with “The Calling of Saint Matthew” is the distance between Jesus' party and the party around the table.



“The Calling of Saint Matthew”

\*The two party drawn near to each other.

The bearded man in the party of Jesus and the young man looking at his way has the line of sight behind Jesus’ s party.

But, if the people at that time didn’t feel funny, the reason may be that the appreciation style of the bilateral space compaction technique had existed by “The Story of Saint Ursula” .

## 2 The upper free space

Try to look “The feast in Levi” .

Please pay attention to the composition of it.



“The Feast in Levi” Paolo Veronese 1573



fig.5

“The Calling of Saint Matthew”1600

We easily notice that the upper area on the painting is free.

In short, we know the precedent that the “The Feast in Levi” had been drawn before “The Calling of Saint Matthew” was drawn.

Caravaggio would have great confidence in himself due to the previous example that Carpaccio had done in his ” The Feast in Levi” .

### 3 The similar composition

Now, I will present another famous Venetian painter influenced to Caravaggio,

His name is Giorgione.

“The Three Age of Life” had great influenced to “The Calling of saint Matthew” .

Try to see the composition on canvas.



fig6



fig.7

“The Three Age of Life”

“The Calling of Saint Matthew”

\*The most suitable title of “The Three Age of Life” may be “I will lead people like Jesus did them”

The first common point is the order.

The arrangement of order of each work is just same.

The order is Jesus, a young man and an old man.

The second common point is a stable rhythmic sense.

Each v-line makes a stable rhythmic sense.



fig.8

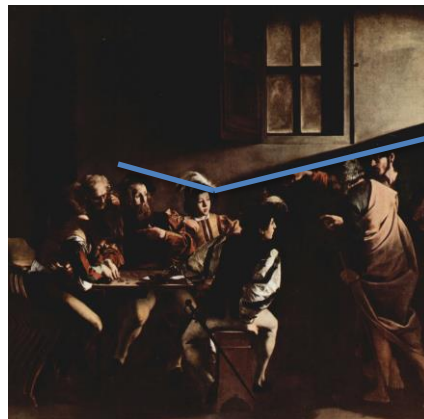


fig.9

The third common point is Jesus ‘s gesture of his hand.



fig. 10

“The Three Age of Life”



fig. 11

“The Calling of Saint Matthew”

Jesus’ s gesture in “The Three Age of Life” shows “here” .  
 Jesus ‘gesture in “The Calling of Saint Matthew” shows “over there” .

The fourth common point is the free column shape space made by the characters.



fig. 12

“The Three Age of Life”

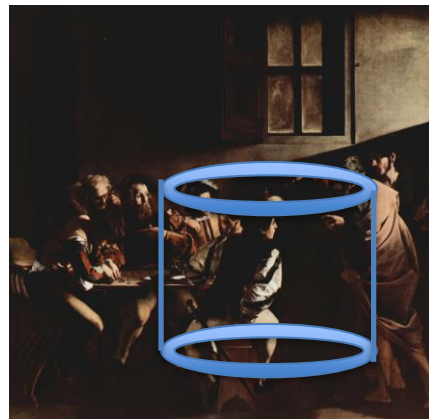


fig. 13

“The Calling of Saint Matthew”

The fifth common point is “The Light and Dark Method” .  
 The dark back space of “The Calling of Saint Matthew” may be influenced by some Renaissance paintings like “The Three Age of life “ and Leonard’ s “The Virgin of the Rocks”



fig. 14

“The Three Age of Life”

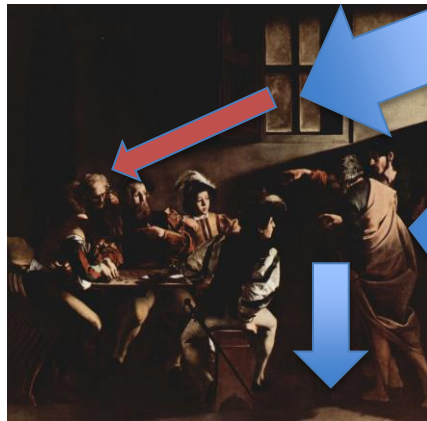


fig. 15

“The Calling of Saint Matthew”



fig. 16

“The Virgin of the Rocks” London Version

These five common points show us that Caravaggio may have noted these points from “The Three Age of Life” =” I should lead like Jesus had done to People”

I thought the most probable person who influenced Caravaggio was Leonardo (as of 2013), but now (as of 2019), I changed my opinion.

Specifically, the most influenced work to “The Calling of Saint Matthew” is “The Three Age of Life” =” I should lead like Jesus had done to People” and the Venetian School painter, such as Carpaccio and Paolo Veronese.

From Carpaccio, Caravaggio learned the skill to open up the space in the canvas and the skill to compress the right and left space.

From Paolo Veronese, Caravaggio learned the skill to open the upper space of a painting.

Leonard visited Venetia on 1499 after he left Milan. Leonard might have met Giorgione, the theory of Leonard would lead to Giorgione and Venetian school painters.

The master of Caravaggio, Simone Peterciano was a Venetian School painter. It's very high possibility that he passed the Venetian school skill to Caravaggio.

#### 4 The Chiaroscuro skill used of multiple directions light.

When Caravaggio met "the Virgin of the Rocks" at Milan, he would have gotten new influence from it.

"The Virgin of the Rocks" was painted by Leonard's the basic style of Chiaroscuro painting.

But, Leonard would not have a clear will to make profound study a new Chiaroscuro skill.

Because, Leonard did not continue the Chiaroscuro painting on the next work.

Leonard painted some portrait and icon by orthodox chiaroscuro skill.

But, Caravaggio studied hard both the Chiaroscuro painting. "The Virgin of the Rocks" and "The Three Age of Life" = "I should Lead the people as Jesus leads them".

So, Caravaggio pioneered "the multi lighted Chiaroscuro painting"

#### 5 The contents that Caravaggio learned from Leonard's "The Virgin of the Rocks" and "The Last Supper".



I guessed Caravaggio learned the two points from Leonard's "The Last Supper" .

The idea of the leaning Saint Matthew in "The Calling of Saint Matthew" may be hinted from "The Last Supper"

Because, Bartholomew who is one of Apostle, is leaning on the table on "The Last Supper" as same as Saint Matthew leaning on the table on "The Calling of Saint Matthew" .



fig. 17

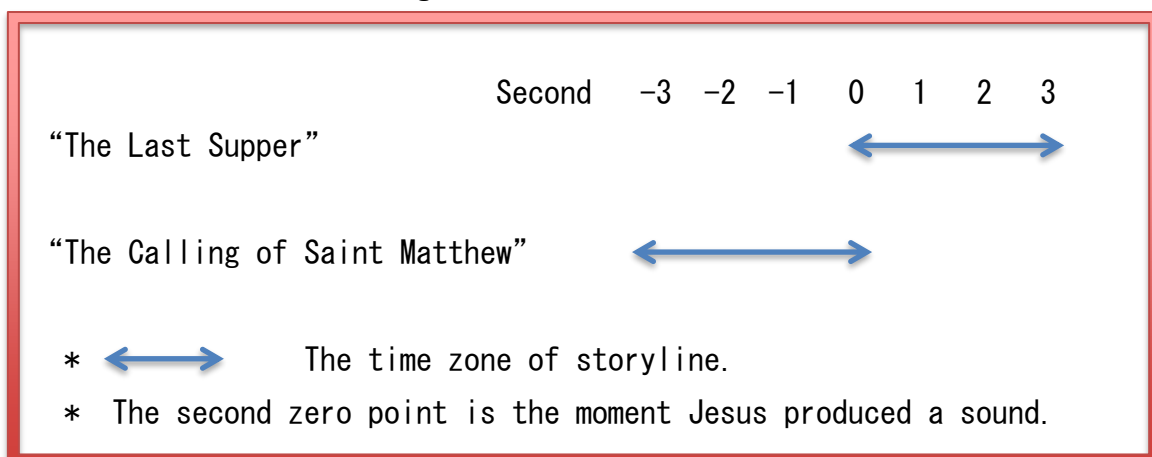
- \* See the leaning Bartholomew who is the most left Apostle in "The Last Supper" .
- \* He may be recognized as Matthew not Bartholomew at that time.

I believe that a hint to create a role in "The Calling of Saint Matthew" may be from Bartholomew in "The Last Supper" .

Next is a very important point in a regional painting.

It's a story structure.

See the next outline figure.



These two painting is common on the story structure.

The different point is that the before or after story the moment Jesus

produced a sound,

And, the motion video-like expression is common to each other.

Off course, it' s Caravaggio homage to Leonard' s style.

## 6 Conclusion

“The Calling of Saint Matthew” is much influenced of “screen structure” from Venetian school paintings like Carpaccio’ s “The Levi’ s Banquet” , Giorgione’ s “The Three Age of Life” (=I should lead the people as Jesus leads them.) and Paolo Veronese’ s “The Martyrdom of Saint Ursula” .

And also much influenced from Florence school painter Leonard’ s “The Virgin of the Rocks” and “The Last Supper.

Further more, Caravaggio homage to “the storyline” of Leonard’ s “The Last Supper”

The talent of Caravaggio is shown by the deep expression in “The Calling of Saint Matthew” which extracted the traditional and innovative element from a last masterpiece.

“The Calling of Saint Matthew” is very deep work involves the tradition of Venetian school paintings and the innovativeness of Leonard’ s paintings.

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\* I desire the discovery of the document that would prove that Caravaggio had been to Venetia in his young days to learn at Venetian school paintings.

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