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#### A NEW MODE OF RELATIONALITY: BERSANI AND DUTOIT'S CARAVAGGIO

YENİ BİR İLİŞKİSELLİK KİPİ: BERSANİ VE DUTOİT'IN CARAVAGGİO'SU

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#### **Abstract**

This paper shall focus on Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit's intriguing claim that famous Italian artist Michalengelo Merisi da Caravaggio's paintings address a new mode of relationality. In their co-authored book *Caravaggio's Secrets*, Bersani and Dutoit analyze the works of this radical artist from a non-anthropomorphized perspective in opposition to a psychoanalytical approach. In their meticulous study, Caravaggio became a master who depicts the subjects and their nexus to the surroundings in such a unique way that his paintings foresee new modes of sociality along with an unfamiliar relationality they present. The present study revisits Bersani and Dutoit's contentions by focusing on the three significant aspects of Caravaggio's paintings namely the soliciting gaze, the notion of center and the relationality in the paintings.

**Keywords**: Caravaggio, Relationality, Soliciting Gaze, Notion of Centrality.

## Öz

Bu makale Leo Bersani ve Ulysee Dutoit'in, ünlü İtalyan ressam Michalengelo Merisi da Caravaggio'nun resimlerinin yeni bir ilişkisellik taşıdığı yönündeki ilgi çekici iddiasına odaklanmaktadır. Bersani ve Dutoit, birlikte kaleme aldıkları *Caravaggio'nun Sırları* (*Caravaggio's Secrets*) adlı kitapta bu radikal sanatçının eserlerini psikanalitik yaklaşıma karşıt şekilde antropomorfik olmayan bir perspektifle analiz eder. Onların titiz çalışmasında Caravaggio, benliği ve benliğin sosyallikle olan bağını öyle eşsiz şekilde resmeden bir ustaya dönüşür ki resimleri görülmemiş bir ilişkiselliği sunmanın yanı sıra yeni bir sosyallik kipini de öngörür. Bu çalışma Bersani ve Dutoit'in iddialarını Caravaggio'nun resimlerindeki üç önemli nosyon olan talepkar bakış, merkezi odak nosyonu ve ilişkisellik bağlamında yeniden ele alacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Caravaggio, İlişkisellik, Talepkar Bakış, Merkezi Odak Nosyonu.

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#### 1. Introduction

Gained fame postmortem and treasured in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Michalengelo Merisi called Caravaggio was a young scandalous artist of the 16<sup>th</sup> century-Italy. His influence on the Baroque style and his use of chiaroscuro<sup>1</sup>, which is followed by tenebrism later on, made him an alluring subject for art historians as well as art critics. Painting directly on the canvas -without sketch-from live models; giving the volume of the figure by contrasting light and dark; minimalist use of decorum and obviously, unusual interpretations of religious scenes contributed Caravaggio's reputation as a unique artist. Because of these bold features of his art and his arrogant attitude towards the artists of the era, he is accused of "destroying painting" and sued by Giovanni Baglione, an artist and art critic (Hibbard, 1983:355). He is known to be described as an "antichrist who came to destroy painting" (Félibien quoted in Warwick, 2006:13) and called "extremely crazy" by Giulio Mancini, one of his contemporaries.

Caravaggio's paintings and his artistic style are analyzed by numerous art historians through many of his masterpieces. Yet, for the present purposes, extremely crazy Caravaggio's paintings are of much importance in order to draw out a kind of alternative reading of his artistic style. This intriguing reading is based on the relationality between elements that are human and non-human in his works. This is the nub of the analysis performed by Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit, who contend that Caravaggio's paintings suggest a new kind of relationality. This particular interpretation of the artist's works is thought-provoking because I believe that Bersani and Dutoit indicate a quite liberating reading of the artist in which Caravaggio would not be seen as a thwarted genius of his time but on the contrary, as an exceptional instance for connecting nature and the world in a new mode of relationality.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chiaroscuro is an "Italian term which literally means 'light-dark'. In paintings the description refers to clear tonal contrasts which are often used to suggest the volume and modeling of the subjects depicted" (National Gallery, Glossary). Caravaggio is not the founder of chiaroscuro but Lambert writes that Caravaggio is the one who "put oscuro into chiaroscuro". See Lambert, G. (2000). *Caravaggio*, Cologne: Taschen, p.11.

Bersani and Dutoit's approach to Caravaggio's work offer us a reading outside of the psychoanalytic approach. Indeed, both Bersani's solitary works and his co-authored book with Dutoit on Caravaggio owe much to Bersani's assessments of psychoanalysis. His detailed analysis cannot be exhausted here but briefly In *The Freudian Body*, Bersani explores psychoanalysis in relation to arts. In the book, by performing a close reading of Freud's fundamental texts such as *Civilization and Its Discontents* and *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, he asks what kind of a discipline psychoanalysis is and whether it is a discipline or not. He contends that psychoanalysis cripples the fundamentals of the sciences as it attempts to become one of them. Indeed, Freud is one of the "different thinkers" as Bersani calls them. According to him, "thinkers as different as Descartes, Freud, and Proust have accustomed us to thinking of our connection to otherness in terms of epistemological appropriation and possession" (Bersani, 2015:ix). Bersani writes elsewhere that in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud reduces the whole individual happiness and freedom to a discussion of sex (1990:17).

With regard to Caravaggio and the striking elements of his compositions such as beheading and bodies positioned as sexually attractive, they are often interpreted in the context of castration complex and fetishism in the context of psychoanalysis. No doubt that a psychoanalytical analysis of the artist could be alluring for the readers. Yet, for Bersani and Dutoit it might overlook the complex and prolific web of relations that his paintings offer. For instance, what psychoanalysis would see as failure, Bersani and Dutoit define as an opportunity. They regard the moment of collapse or failure as constitutive and suggest retaining it. They trace the occasions that failure occurs in many areas like art, literature and culture in particular in the writings of Balzac, Flaubert and Beckett as well as the paintings of Caravaggio. This paper shall visit Bersani and Dutoit and their particular reading of Caravaggio following the notions of failure, subject and relation of the human and non-human elements in his paintings in order to focus on the project of the writers to "redefine the modes of relationality" and community which meant actually to redefine the social and sociality.

## 2. On Caravaggio's Secrets

Bersani and Dutoit's extensive study on Caravaggio is gathered in their co-authored book *Caravaggio's Secrets*. In the first chapter of the book, the writers engage themselves to the discussions concerning Caravaggio's so called homosexuality.<sup>2</sup> According to them, reading homosexuality as the secret of Caravaggio's paintings is to underestimate both artist's originality and the possibilities suggested by each of his works. The writers contend that Caravaggio's paintings are adamantly enigmatic.<sup>3</sup> For instance, the young boys depicted in many occasions by Caravaggio seem to have some secrets which are intrinsic in their allure. However, they don't have to be necessarily special or mystical in themselves. Neither their appearances in the paintings can lead to a reading that interpret them solely as homoerotic subjects. Thus, Bersani and Dutoit claim that giving a sexual identity to these boys as homosexuals will end up in taming of these "enigmatic bodies" (1998:13). Any kind of identity will kill the rich content of the worlds of these young boys as models by its restraining character. In addition, the two writers' analysis of the paintings clearly manifests the poor results of labeling these boys or Caravaggio as merely homosexuals.

The subjects of Caravaggio betray the society that they come from by being detemporalized or unhistorical. The use of figurative representation enables "the insertion of nonhistorical modes of being in time" and furthermore, in its form free from historical constraints, the art of Caravaggio presents the relationality historically available (Bersani and Dutoit, 1998:64). Thus, Caravaggio presents us a new reading of the religious subjects. He frees them from their arduous roles and reveals the possible underlying relations amongst human, non-human and even inanimate matter. Now his subjects "trace a sensuality, the pleasurable and diversified extensibility of the body in space we may have missed in the urgent and

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Roger Hinks and Donald Posner are earliest and two of many names who claimed for a homosexual tendency in Caravaggio. Hinks, Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, London, 1953; Posner, "Caravaggio's homo-erotic early works", *Art Quarterly*, 34, 1971, p.301–24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The word enigmatic is first used by Jacques Lacan, then by Laplanche but Bersani gives reference to Laplanche when he uses the word.

exclusionary soliciting of our attention -of our spatial imagination- by the narrow environment that first called us into the world" (Bersani and Dutoit,1998:64). Caravaggio's bold attitude towards religious scenes results from a search for a secular disposition of these famous tales. It is this attitude that causes Poussin to accuse Caravaggio of "coming to world in order to destroy painting" (Félibien quoted in Bernstein, 2013:171). However, Bernstein notes that

Caravaggio "destroys painting" for the sake of a secular disposition and he does this by depicting the "vitality of the object" and by rejecting the "nobility of the subject" (2013:172).

The singular position of Caravaggio's subjects is almost similar what Bersani writes as to

the individual's position in art with reference to Baudelaire in *The Culture of Redemption*:

Irony in Baudelaire's prose poems is individuating without being psychologically expressive. The individual subject thus appears in art without violating a fundamental condition of art: that it represents the modes of being distinct from particular histories. In the Baudelairean universe of correspondences and fusions, individuation is achieved as the phenomenon of a perspective purified of selfhood (1990:86).

The paragraph indicates that the human subject in a piece of work of art does not correspond to an individual human subject of psychoanalysis. The subjects are present not as subjects of history or that of themselves. This "purification of selfhood" enables them to correspond and relate its surroundings in a new fashion. Bersani sees in Caravaggio the same promises almost like Baudelaire's. The models of Caravaggio do not correspond to individual human subjects for psychoanalysis. They are present in the paintings without any history of themselves. This opens the way to have a grasp of new relationality in which the boundaries are blurred in the closeness of entities or to the possibility for unknown nets of relations such as between human being and the inanimate matter.

Bersani and Dutoit state that the interest in Caravaggio's paintings lies in their potential to be seen as a "visual speculation on the meaning and the conditions of knowledge". Since they openly reject the notion enigmatic signifier theorized by Laplanche, as Tuhkanen puts it rightly "with the disappearance -emptying out- of the enigmatic signifier, the sensual is redirected from secret interiority to indefinite openness of surfaces and spaces- in this case to the sensual connectedness between species" (Tuhkanen, 2002:137). In the absence of

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enigmatic signifier they claim that Caravaggio performs experiments with relationality and his aim is "to propose the erotic enigma as defining the terms of a relation, as that which might stimulate us into initiating connectedness" (Bersani and Dutoit,1998:15). In the next section, the three pillars of Caravaggio's experiment on spatial connectedness will be revisited with the guidance of Bersani and Dutoit's analyses of the paintings by the artist namely, the soliciting gaze, dissemination of the idea of centrality and the notion of relationality.

## 3. The Soliciting Gaze

Caravaggio is known to depict different kinds of looks on his models. Thus, the alluring look of the models is the key to see the mobile and various groupings among both the human and the parts of inanimate matter in the painting. The soliciting gaze or provocatively exposed bodies of the models invites the viewer to a new kind of contemplation. In some of Caravaggio's paintings, the idea of external and internal is destructed since in some paintings we see some subjects directly looking at us while they are at the same time distracting the gaze from finding a center to focus on. The reading of Bersani and Dutoit necessarily requires a new kind of attitude other than a one-focus approach. They write that this kind of look is a "disoriented" look. We confront a piece of work which does not initiate a priority or hierarchy. It proposes no readable visual narrative that can serve to the mainstream interpretations of arts. Therefore, Caravaggio is not easily readable, cannot be easily deciphered or decoded through an interpretation upon the gaze as the center. However, Bersani and Dutoit also write that the Caravaggio's secrets are visible to the eyes that can detect that the secrets are strictly related to the presence of the subjects in the paintings. For example, in the Fortune Teller and Calling of St. Matthew, the object of attention is the soliciting gaze which is occupied by decoding another look in the composition. Bersani and Dutoit choose these two paintings as they exemplify two different versions of Caravaggio's use of the soliciting gaze (1998:15).



**Image 1.** Caravaggio, *The Fortune Teller*, 1593–94, oil on canvas, 115 cm × 150 cm, Pinacoteca Capitolina Museum, Rome.

The Fortune Teller is painted in two versions by Caravaggio. Bersani and Dutoit favor the Capitoline version over to the Rome version because the former is found more spontaneous and thus more fruitful than the carefully narrated Rome version. In the *Fortune Teller* of Capitoline Museum version, the secret as the future of the young man is not written in his palm, so the gypsy girl looks into the face of the young man. His face has "a look impersonally directed toward her, as if she were nothing more than an accident, or a punctuation, in some larger indefinite space" (Bersani and Dutoit, 1998:18).

Bersani and Dutoit inform us that the young man's look does not have a psychological intention but it is a look that enables "formal extensions of his own physical presence" which can be read in "the upper part of her outer garment" that "prolongs the diagonal shape of his sword" (1998:18). Here the look of the girl is on the young man's face in order to see his secrets while the young man mystifies the painting with his disoriented blank look towards the girl.



**Image 2.** Caravaggio, *The Calling of St. Matthew*, 1599-1600, oil on canvas,  $322 \text{ cm} \times 340 \text{ cm}$ , Contarelli Chapel, Rome.

As for the soliciting gaze in the depiction of the *Calling of St. Matthew*, it is rather unambiguous. The theme is the Calling of St. Matthew by the Christ to follow him. Yet, Caravaggio seems to depict a moment before the proper moment of calling. The Christ's face and eyes are hidden and his hand is just rising to address St Matthew. There are actually two more people to point at Matthew. One is the young boy beside the Christ and his finger appears more decisive than the Christ. The second man is the one sitting next to St. Matthew, firmly and almost in a surprised manner indicates Matthew. Another interesting element in the painting is the disoriented look of the young man with his back to us seems to leaning towards the Christ but looks far away from him. His look is not fixed at the Christ; either he is focused on a determinate point in the painting. In this way, his look distracts the viewer's attention away from the Christ. According to Bersani and Dutoit, Caravaggio has chosen to paint "the moment before he consents, the moment of suspension, of the slightly shocked response to a soliciting presence that weakly but unambiguously asks for nothing more interesting than that it be followed" (1998:20). This painting interestingly distributes the looks all over the scene in such a way that both the figure of the Christ and the importance of the calling are pale.

### 4. Distribution of Center

Another controversial aspect of Bersani and Dutoit's analysis is closely related to both the disoriented looks and to the classical notion of centrality in paintings. Caravaggio can be seen as an artist who ignored the expectations of the critics by rejecting the very idea of a sole center or focus in a painting. Although this rejection is generally interpreted as failure by critics, he might be seen as a painter who painted the relations or the connectedness of forms. Bersani and Dutoit emphasizes that the so-called failure of Caravaggio is indeed the opportunity to decenter the subject and distribute it in such a way that the subject appears merely through correspondence of forms.

The imperfections of his perspectival techniques result from his unwillingness to paint depth which will gather all the attention towards a specific look or a subject (Bersani and Dutoit, 1998:23). The most interesting example of the deviation from the idea of centrality seems to be the *Supper at Emmaus*.



**Image 3.** Caravaggio, *Supper at Emmaus*, 1601, oil and tempera on canvas,  $141 \text{ cm} \times 196.2 \text{ cm}$ , National Gallery, London.

At first glance, the Christ is obviously in the center of the composition. However, Caravaggio makes such interesting arrangements and couplings that he decenters the figure of the Christ. The looks are directed away from him, he is no more the most holly object in the painting. Moreover, Caravaggio paints the equality of the objects and the space at the same time. Therefore, in the painting we see nets of relations not only between persons but also between the human subject and the lifeless matter. In other words, the boundaries of subjects disappear and "(t)he couple never becomes one; each member of each pair echoes its partner without sacrificing any parcel of its own space, of an individuality that can be paired but that cannot essentially be repeated (Bersani and Dutoit, 1998:25).

Similarly, in the Fortune Teller, the secret message disguised in the look of the young man would be that "I am nothing more than my existence here at this moment and my secrets are visible in the way we relate to each other" (Bersani and Dutoit, 1998:25). This actually means that there is no essence of the young man as a subject as such. To put it differently, the young man has no independent essence of himself outside the frame of relations in the painting. Bersani and Dutoit contend that his gaze directs us to "other types of extension: not toward her as a psychologically or socially individuated presence, but toward her as an occasion for formal extensions of his own physical presence (the upper part of her outer garment, for example, prolongs the diagonal shape of his sword)" (1998:18). The young and curious girl as the fortune teller tries to unravel the secrets of the young man's future through examining his face instead of "the decipherable lines of his palms".

It seems that as to Bersani and Dutoit, the young man describes a common space together with the young gypsy girl. This is tailored by Caravaggio through the garments rather than physical bodies of the couple. Although the closeness of the bodies enables extension of the bodies into each other, the visual binding is supported by the shape and the color of the garments. Hence, the idea of center in this painting melts away in the continuity of both the bodies and the inanimate matter.

## 4. Relationality

On the general notion of relationality, Bersani and Dutoit privilege aesthetics over other areas since art enables a reading in which the correspondence of forms flows freely, independent from formalist interventions of rationality. Art opens itself to any other kind of relationality by play of forms. Bersani and Dutoit in their elaborate analysis on Caravaggio's paintings in *Caravaggio's Secrets* interpret the artist's paintings in such a manner that every detail, human or nonhuman turns out to be potent elements of relationality existing in that piece of work. This brings us to the second focus of Bersani and Dutoit's work on Caravaggio. Caravaggio by playing with light, facial expressions and posture of the assistant figures create a network of relations throughout the painting. Then, some peculiar details like hanging curtains or sometimes an old woman or a boy that with its almost bizarre presence disseminates the

idea of center. For instance, in the painting *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, the old woman- who is actually present in the original story of Judith in the Bible- and also the curtain hanging towards the head of Holofernes drawn in such a fashion that they- even momentarily- drive the attention away from the two famous historical figures.



**Image 4.** Caravaggio, *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, 1598-9, oil on canvas, 145 cm × 195 cm, Palazzo Barberini, Rome.

By depicting a historical scene in such a milieu, Caravaggio clearly presents us his reading of the history through the other possible but untold dynamics of the scene which are not mentioned in the past well-known reproductions. Caravaggio's Judith is no doubt ruthless. She positions her body away from Holofernes but surprisingly she has a relatively sad and confused look on her eyes. Contrary to her cold blooded act of murder, she does not carry mad eyes filled with revenge. The expression of eagerness and rage is elsewhere. It is readable on the face and in the hands of the old woman firmly holding a piece of cloth. Thus, the scene is completed when one reads Judith's bizarre look in its relation with the old woman's expression on her face and the position of her hands. As accomplices, their body language together with the surrounding inanimate matter completes the scene of revenge. The power of Caravaggio's *Judith and Holofernes* lies in the relationality amongst the living and inanimate matter on the canvas.



**Image 5.** Caravaggio, *Bacchino Malato (Sick Bacchus)*, 1593, oil on canvas, 67 cm × 53 cm, Gallery Borghese, Rome.

As to the connectedness of the elements in the paintings, the writers also make several intriguing points on *Bacchino Malato (Sick Bacchus)*. First of all, in the mentioned painting there are elements which both support and work against each other. The pose of Bacchus is erotically provocative but the surroundings operate as distracters or the intruders that steal the attention of the viewer away from the alluring look of Bacchus. Bersani and Dutoit describes Bacchus's pose as self-withdrawing and note that it may be represent "only partial concealment of the provocatively exposed body", however, it is also "redirecting of the viewer's solicited look to objects of undecidable identity" (1998:5). Thus, the changing relation between Bacchus' body and the surroundings as a double movement of distracting and gathering attention towards each other blurs the very idea of center in the painting. From this point on, Bersani and Dutoit goes further by claiming that the table is the rival of the soliciting look as another center:

Formally, its horizontal position contrasts with the verticality of the youth's upper body (a contrast repeated, in detail, in the way the two peaches are lying on the table). With its heavy, stone like quality, this mass of matter more closely resembles the tombstone jutting out at us from the Entombment than it does a table, and it brings into the work a threat to life more unsettling than the greenish hue of Bacchus' flesh (1998:5).

The striking point of this passage is that Bersani and Dutoit try to distribute the idea of center all over the painting in such a manner that even the background becomes an active

participant by a reading of the elements in a double movement of exposing and concealing. The body exposes itself while hiding the genitals and; the moment of hiding genitals is distracted or interrupted by the fruits implicitly replicating the genitals (Bersani and Dutoit, 1998:5). It seems that Caravaggio does not paint a body per se but the surroundings still present us the parts that are missing from the perspective. This surely enables Bersani and Dutoit to disclose a multiplicity of centers which devalues the very idea of the subject or gaze as the center in the painting. Besides the act of de-centering a new kind of relationality is suggested here: as mentioned earlier the boundaries of the body is distributed all over the frame that there is no longer a proper body but there are relations of a mobile kind. Their mobility is revealed in a double movement of concealing and unconcealing: The offered shoulder of Bacchus versus concealed genitals and also the genitals versus the replica of them as fruits on the table which also seems to duplicate the sickness in the face of Bacchus. Here what is suggested by Bersani and Dutoit is the mobile relation between human and non-human elements which they call "correspondence of the forms". The correspondence of the forms lies in the dynamic relations of all the elements in a painting. Caravaggio's paintings exemplifies this kind of relations between human and non-human elements with respect to the distribution of the classical notion of central focus. It is as if that Caravaggio distributes the focus all over the painting and compels the viewer's gaze to join this dynamic set of relations. All elements are counterparts of the whole as there is no one absolute center of object of focus. Perhaps it is the dialogue between the forms in the paintings that makes Caravaggio's interpretation unique when it comes to the depictions of the well-known historical scenes.

### 6. Conclusion

According to Bersani and Dutoit, Caravaggio supported the suspicion that "truth cannot be the object of knowledge" and his work made this fact evident. Art displays the insufficiency of truth in presenting the modes of relationality. The new kind of relationality suggests us not to define ourselves according to an original seduction which leads us into a feeling that the external world is a threat for the ego. The pre-existing system is obsessed with knowledge and it misses the diverse modes of relationality by being stuck to the erotic secret that is, the center

of human gaze. Caravaggio deprives the viewer of the *erotically soliciting gaze*. Then, the center is demolished in the mobile relations of figures or religious subjects (1998:73). Thus, in Caravaggio's works, the figure is determined by its relation to its surroundings whether they are other humans or inanimate matter. Instead, a net of relations in the subjects are defined as corresponding forms and in that we disseminate ourselves without ever being afraid of harmed by the external world (as wrongly stated in psychoanalysis). The nets of relations are not only intersubjective but there are the relations between the human and the non-human matter

without the former dominating the other.

Caravaggio's art is of great worth because it depicts the new mode of relationality by decentering the gaze, grouping both the human and the inhuman by duplicating in one another and lastly, by divorcing the Christianity's holy figures from their privileged positions through depicting them in a rather humble mode. His alleged failure in painting the depth enables him to indicate a world where the gaze is decentered as soon as the viewer focused on one or the other figure in the painting. Therefore, Caravaggio's paintings seem as dispersion, and frankly suggesting a new reading of both the subject and its relation to the world. In this sense, Bersani and Dutoit believe that Caravaggio's works are the products of an "ontological laboratory" (1998:59). This laboratory supplies an alternative to the processes indicated by Freud and Laplanche. The relationality suggested can be a sublimated reiteration of the mentioned processes (1998:64). This is pretty much the move Bersani assumed when he announces:

Ulysse and I trace in Caravaggio's painting: from the teasingly enigmatic eroticism of the portraits of boys to the nonsexual sensuality of physical contacts, extensions, and correspondences, from a problematic of knowledge (and interiority) to a kind of cartography of the subject, a tracing of spatial connectedness (Silverman et al., 1997:8).

In this statement the phrase "cartography of subject" excites the reader. What is it really? Does the "disseminated" subject can have a cartography? And if it has one, what would it be like? How can we disseminate our subjectivities? Art then (at least in the case of Caravaggio) opens itself to other kinds of relationality through the play of forms. In such a play ego is also assumed to be a form that can be read in different modes of spatial connectedness. The possibility of defining the subject in its diverse relations with the outside world is both

alluring and promising. In this sense, Bersani and Dutoit pave the way for an alternative

approach to subjectivity other than Freud and Laplanche and thus, he "articulates a form of

relationality that confounds appropriate models of self and desire" (Tuhkanen, 2002:136). The

whole project is a valuable contribution both to the attempt of deciphering the codes of

subjectivity and to the studies of Caravaggio's unorthodox paintings. Lastly, if another mode or

relationality exists and if it is possible-as proposed by Bersani that is- that a human being will

be able to withdraw from an ego-centric thinking. The nets of relations will not be only

intersubjective but there will be a relation between the human and the non-human without the

former dominating the other.

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**Image 2.** Caravaggio, "The Calling of St. Matthew", 1599-1600, oil on canvas, Contarelli Chapel, Rome.https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\_Calling\_of\_St\_Matthew\_(Caravaggio)#/media/File:The\_Calling\_of\_Saint\_Matthew-Caravaggo\_(1599-1600).jpg. Date Accesst: 27.05.2018.

Image 3. Caravaggio, "Supper at Emmaus", 1601, oil and tempera on canvas, National Gallery, London.https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supper\_at\_Emmaus\_(Caravaggio,\_London)#/media/File: 1602-3\_Caravaggio,Supper\_at\_Emmaus\_National\_Gallery,\_London.jpg. Date accesst: 27.05.2018.

Image 4. Caravaggio, "Judith Beheading Holofernes, 1598-9, oil on canvas, Palazzo Barberini, Rome.https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/monarchy-enlightenment/baroque-art1/baroque-italy/a/gentileschi-judith-slaying-holofernes. Date accesst: 03.01.2019.

Image 5. Caravaggio, "Bacchino Malato (Sick Bacchus)", 1593, oil on canvas, Gallery Borghese, Rome.https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bacchino\_malato#/media/File:Bacchino\_malato\_(Caravaggi o).jpg. Date accesst: 27.05.2018.