

The Representation of Wind in the Paintings of Nicolas Poussin — Focusing on the Two Versions of *The Return from Egypt*

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Introduction: In Response to the International Symposium “The Imagery of Wind”

The International Symposium “The Imagery of Wind,” commemorating the publication of the Japanese translation of Barbara Baert’s book, gave opportunities to scholars of eastern and western art histories and contemporary artists to discuss the representations of wind from various points of view.¹ On that occasion, the author highlighted the paintings of Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), a French painter who was active in Rome in the seventeenth century.

Born in Normandy, Poussin completed his training as a painter in Paris, and in 1624 he moved to Rome, one of the centres of European art at that time. In the 1620s, while struggling to secure his position in Rome, he painted an altarpiece, *The Apparition of the Virgin to Saint James the Great* (Musée du Louvre, Paris). “The Apparition of the Virgin to Saint James the Great” (hereinafter called “The Apparition”) is known as an unusual event that occurred during the lifetime of the Virgin Mary. She appeared to Saint James, who engaged in his mission in Spain, to encourage and instruct him to build a chapel for her. In the altarpiece of Poussin, the Virgin sits on the pillar at the upper left in the composition. Her veil flutters horizontally by the left side wind and wraps her head. By focusing on the representation of the wind, the author pointed out that the Virgin is depicted not as an image of vision but as an apparition before the eyes of Saint James.² It can be stated that by

1 The International Symposium “The Imagery of Wind” (March 26–27, 2022, online, The executive committee for the international symposium “The Imagery of Wind”); Barbara Baert, “*Pneuma*” and the *Visual Medium in the Middle Ages and Early Modernity: Essays on Wind, “Ruach”, Incarnation, Odour, Stains, Movement, Kairos, Web and Silence* (Leuven: Peeters, 2016); the Japanese version, trans. Junko Ninagawa (Tokyo: Sangensha, 2022).

2 The Kajima Foundation for the Arts in Japan funded the research on this altarpiece. Miki Kuramochi, “The Virgin Appearing to St. James the Greater by Nicolas Poussin: A Project for painting a Grand Altarpiece in Rome (written in Japanese),” *The Kajima Foundation for the Arts annual report: separate volume 33* (Tokyo: The Kajima Foundation, 2016): 179–89; Miki Kuramochi, “How did Nicolas Poussin represent

introducing the wind blowing from the side of the Virgin to that of the apostles, Poussin represented the presence of the Virgin and Saint James in the same space.

In the symposium, the author indicated as a subject for further research that a similar representation of the wind could be found in the two works, *The Return from Egypt* [Figs. 1 and 2], which Poussin painted shortly before *The Apparition*. In both paintings, angels bear the Cross on the upper part in the vertically long composition. Their garments and clothes surrounding the Cross are waving in the wind. On the lower part, while the Holy Family are riding on a small boat, only Jesus looks up to the Cross supported by the angels. Concerning the depiction of the wind in the sky, a presentation entitled “The Representation of Wind by Rogier van der Weyden” by Dr Ninagawa Junko, an organiser of the symposium, gave suggestions to consider this point.³ While paying attention to the fluttering of the waistcloth of Jesus on the Crucifixion stirred up by the wind, Ninagawa interpreted the representation of the clothes fluttering in the wind as the manifestation of the divine will. It is regarded as a sort of *pneuma* (breath, wind, air, soul, spirit and *ratio*) that Baert defined.⁴ According to Ninagawa, as the centuries rolled by, the clothes blown by the wind were depicted more naturalistically and represented as if they were fluttering in the wind from the side.

Keeping this suggestion in mind, this paper examines the image of the wind in two versions of *The Return from Egypt* by Poussin. Generally speaking, painters in the Baroque period adopted the wind almost as a cliché to demonstrate the dramatic visual effect. Notwithstanding, is it possible to interpret the wind around the Cross in *The Return from Egypt* by Poussin as a *pneuma* that visualises the divine will? To answer this question, the following chapters explore iconographic analysis, comparisons with contemporary works, and comparisons with religious paintings by

The Apparition of the Virgin to Saint James the Great?: A Comparison with Contemporary Altarpieces in Rome,” in *Content-Form: The Proceedings of The International Conference for Doctoral Students*, eds. Magdaléna Nová and Marie Opatrná (Praha: Katolická teologická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova, 2017), 185–92. On the occasion of the symposium, the author also analysed a wind harp painted in *The Triumph of David* by Poussin (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid) based on the following article: Miki Kuramochi, “The Allegorical Representation of Narrative in the Paintings by Nicolas Poussin: A Case Study on The *Triumph of David* at Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid,” in *Aspects of Narrative in Art History: Proceedings of the International Workshop for Young Researchers held at the Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University, Kyoto, 2–3 December 2013*, ed. Kayo Hirakawa (Kyoto: Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University, 2014), 113–26.

3 Junko Ninagawa, “The Representation of Wind by Rogier van der Weyden,” an oral presentation at the above-mentioned symposium, March 27, 2022. The article based on this presentation is published in this website (in English) and same titled book (written in Japanese); *The Imagery of Wind*, ed. Junko Ninagawa (Tokyo: Sangensha, 2023), 149–75.

4 The Greek word *pneuma* was translated as the Latin word *spiritus*. Baert, *Pneuma*, 25–33, esp. 29 (the Japanese version, 42–53, esp. 46)

Poussin himself, with the aim of clarifying the characteristics of Poussin's representations of wind and their effects.

Two Versions of *The Return from Egypt* by Poussin

Before examining the details, it is necessary to confirm basic information about two versions of *The Return from Egypt*. The first work is now conserved in the Cleveland Museum of Art [Fig. 1], hereinafter called “the Cleveland version”).⁵ Although its attribution had been doubted formerly, it is accepted as an authentic work by Poussin at present. The second version is owned by the Dulwich Picture Gallery [Fig. 2], hereinafter called “the Dulwich version”).⁶ Because of the lack of historical documents concerning commissions, their production dates have been judged based on their stylistic characteristics. Following the judgement of Brigstocke, this paper supposes that Poussin would paint the Cleveland version around 1627 and the Dulwich version around 1628.⁷

The production date of two versions of *The Return from Egypt* (around 1627–28) is a period shortly before Poussin, who settled in Rome in 1624, worked on large-scale altarpieces including *The Martyrdom of St Erasmus* for St Peter's Basilica (1628–29, Pinacoteca Vaticana) and *The Apparition* (1629–30) as mentioned above. In both cases of the two *The Return from Egypt*, Poussin used a canvas favoured in Rome (*tela da imperatore*, approximately 98 x 130 cm)⁸ with the shorter side at the top. It is possible that these works would have been appreciated for devotional purposes. Even though the backgrounds of commissions are not known, Hilaire Pader (1617–77) indicated

5 “Nicolas Poussin, *The Return of the Holy Family to Nazareth*,” Cleveland Museum of Art, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1953.156>; Anthony Blunt, *The Paintings of Nicolas Poussin: A Critical Catalogue* (London: Phaidon, 1966), 48–50, no. 68 (in the commentary on the Dulwich version (no. 68), Blunt regarded the Cleveland version as ‘a copy of a lost original or a very adroit imitation.’); Jacques Thuillier, *Nicolas Poussin* (Paris: Flammarion, 1994), 252, no. 89, dated 1632–33; Alain Mérot, *Nicolas Poussin* (Paris: Hazan, 1990), 264, no. 68, dated 1633–34.

6 “Nicolas Poussin, *The Return of the Holy Family from Egypt*,” Dulwich Picture Gallery, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/explore-the-collection/201-250/the-return-of-the-holy-family-from-egypt/>; Blunt, *Paintings of Poussin*, 48–50, no. 68, dated 1628–29; Thuillier, *Poussin*, 250, no. 77, dated c. 1629–30; Mérot, *Poussin*, 263, no. 66, dated c. 1629–30.

7 In 1995, Brigstocke examined the two juxtaposed versions at the Dulwich Picture Gallery and confirmed the validity of his assumption about the production dates. For that reason, this paper follows his judgment. Hugh Brigstocke, “Variantes, copies et imitations: Quelques réflexions sur les méthodes de travail de Poussin”, in Alain Mérot, ed., *Nicolas Poussin 1594–1665: actes du colloque organisé au musée du Louvre par le Service culturel du 19 au 21 octobre 1994*, vol.1 of 2 vols. (Paris: La documentation Française, 1996), 201–28, esp. 218–19.

8 Richard E. Spear and Philip Sohm, eds., *Painting for Profit: The Economic Lives of Seventeenth-Century Italian Painters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), no page number in the glossary.

in his book, *La peinture parlante* (Toulouse, 1653), that an unknown French clergyman owned the Cleveland version as an altarpiece.⁹ As discussed in the next chapter, the motif of the Cross in Poussin's paintings symbolises the prefigure of the Passion to the Infant Christ. If so, it is likely that the depiction of the wind surrounding the angels in the sky could be a representation of *pneuma* to enhance the Cross as a symbol of Passion and Redemption. For instance, in *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (around 1630, The Oskar Reinhart Collection, Winterthur), which Poussin painted shortly after the two versions of *The Return from Egypt*, angels come to offer flower garlands in the upper part of the composition. However, there is no pronounced representation of the wind compared with that in *The Return from Egypt*.¹⁰ This study tests the hypothesis that airflow over *The Return from Egypt* contributed to demonstrating *The Apparition of the Cross* as an object of veneration by comparing Poussin's works with other examples representing the same subjects.

Let us now turn to the Gospel of Matthew (2:13–23). Herod got to know the birth of the Saviour in Bethlehem and ordered the killing of all male infants in the territory to erase Jesus. Joseph, who noticed the threat through a revelation from an angel in a dream, escaped to Egypt with the Virgin and Jesus. Although they returned to Israel after Herod's death, they moved to Nazareth to avoid the danger of living under the domination of Herod's son, Archelaus. From a series of this story, Poussin visualised an episode of the return from Egypt. Comparing the Cleveland and the Dulwich versions will expose some interesting differences.

As a whole, both paintings consist of two parts: the Holy Family getting onto the boat in the lower part and the angels bearing the Cross in the clouds in the upper part on the vertically long canvas. The Virgin standing gracefully at the lower left watches over Jesus while placing her hand on his back. Jesus, who bends his body to Joseph, stares at the Cross that appeared in the sky. However, while Jesus in the Cleveland version is naked and stretches his arms towards the Cross, in the Dulwich version, he clothes himself in a rose-coloured garment and extends his right arm to Joseph. Then, Joseph puts his knee on an edge of the boat and lifts the body of Jesus while looking back attentively. In terms of the age of Joseph, in the Cleveland version, he seems middle age. In contrast, Joseph in the Dulwich version is depicted as a grey-haired older man. In the former version, a donkey, who has accompanied the Holy Family's flight to Egypt, appears modestly on the extreme left. In the latter, the donkey behind Joseph waits facing right. A ferryman puts the boat ashore by plying his pole with his arms. In the Cleveland version, two figures observe the scene from the opposite bank, and ancient remains stand upon the hill in the middle. Although there is

9 Blunt, *Paintings of Poussin*, 48–50; Hilaire Pader, *La peinture parlante* (Toulouse: Arnavd Colomiez, 1653), 19.

10 Thuillier, *Poussin*, 251, no. 80.

no one on the opposite bank in the Dulwich version, we can find arcaded ruins and silhouettes of a pyramid and an obelisk with a sharp point, which indicates Egypt.

In the sky, the angels support together the monumental Cross. In the Cleveland version, two angels and three little angels bear the Cross obliquely disposed to fall in the right direction. It is worth noting that the grey clouds, which envelop the angels and the cross, trail towards the upper right by the wind blowing upward. This type of upward movement of air evokes the *pneuma* depicted in the Crucifixions by Rogier (c. 1399/1400–64), as mentioned in the Introduction part. On the contrary, in the Dulwich version, four little angels hold the Cross slightly inclining to the left. The thick grey clouds surround them loosely by forming a crescent-like shape. The vermilion-coloured cloth in the sky and the blue clothing of the ferryman in the lower part are fluttering dynamically, which clarifies that the air flows from the left to the right direction.

To summarise, the two versions of *The Return from Egypt* show almost the same composition. Nevertheless, there are still some differences in Jesus' garments and gestures, and in Joseph's age. In particular, it should be investigated why differences can be observed in the flow of air shown by the trailing clouds and clothes. To explore its reason, the next chapter analyses the iconography of the Apparition of the Cross and the representation of the wind to enhance the theme.

The Iconography and Contemporary Works of The Apparition of the Cross

The Apparition of the Cross is classified as one of the Presages of the Passion in that Jesus becomes aware of the future Redemption.¹¹ After the Council of Trent in Europe, the Infant Christ staring at the Arma Christi, the instruments of his passion, was venerated as an object of meditation.¹² François Duquesnoy (1594–c. 1643), who shared the production environment with Poussin, invented the motif of the seated Infant Christ beholding the Arma Christi.¹³

Traditionally, painters had represented the appearance of the angels holding the Cross in front of Jesus for a long time. It is from the seventeenth century that the Apparition of the Cross was combined with *The Flight into Egypt* or *The Return from Egypt*.¹⁴ There are several views about

11 Émile Mâle, *L'art religieux du XVIIe siècle: Italie, France, Espagne, Flandres*, nouvelle éd. (Paris: A. Colin, 1984), 285–88; Andor Pigler, *Barockthemen: Eine Auswahl von Verzeichnissen zur Ikonographie des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1 of 3 vols., 2nd ed. (Budapest: Verlag der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1974), 517–19.

12 Morten Steen Hansen, "The Infant Christ with the 'Arma' Christi: François Duquesnoy and the Typology of the Putto," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 71, no. 1 (2008): 121–33, esp. 130.

13 Hansen, "Infant Christ," 125.

14 Anne Tischler Lurie, "Nicolas Poussin, The Return to Nazareth," in *The Cleveland Museum of Art Catalogue of Paintings, Part 3: European Paintings of the 16th, 17th, and 18th Centuries*, ed. The Cleveland Museum of Art (Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1982), 121–24, no. 51, esp. 121.

textual sources that directly associate the Apparition of the Cross with the Flight into Egypt. It is assumed that artists and persons who ordered paintings obtained indications from some sources (not identified yet) written by theologians from the sixteenth to the early seventeenth centuries by consulting medieval writings.¹⁵

Now let's consider the two versions of *The Return from Egypt* by Poussin. From the iconographical point of view, what kind of characteristics can we note in them? On the whole, as Lurie points out, it is reasonable to interpret that Jesus becomes conscious of his destiny of the Passion and is willing to accept it, while the Virgin Mary understands his situation.¹⁶ Then, according to Monot, the representation of angels bearing the Arma Christi would have been embodied in the circle of Rogier and had been repeated in Italy in the sixteenth century and in that country and France in the first half of the seventeenth century.¹⁷ *The Holy Family with Saint Paul and a Donor* [Fig. 3], attributed to Rogier, shows Infant Christ on the lap of the Virgin bending his body to embrace the Cross supported by an angel.¹⁸ The mantle of the angel blowing upwards almost vertically could remind us of the image of *pneuma*. The painter heightens the sacredness of the angel by applying light colour to him like a grisaille. The angel, however, is not surrounded by clouds. This type of iconography was circulated through an engraving [Fig. 4] by Rafael Sadeler I (born 1560–61, died 1628 or 1632) after Marten de Vos (1532–1603).¹⁹ The engraving represents the Apparition of the Cross carried by five angels to the Infant Christ when the Virgin Mary gives

15 Ann Percy, ed., *Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione: Master Draughtsman of the Italian Baroque* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1971), 124–25, 127, no. 113. Exhibition catalogue. As for textual sources connecting the Cross as a symbol of the Passion and the Return from Egypt, Percy, an editor of the catalogue, presents interpretations by Charles Minott, who has listed some texts such as the commentary of St. Flugentius (467–533). Minott noted: ‘the clouds prominently surrounding the Cross may be a reference to the prophecy of Isaiah 19:1, “Behold, the Lord rides upon a swift cloud, and will enter Egypt.” Although it is difficult to confirm whether Poussin would rely on the Isaiah passage, this hypothesis may explain the reason for the unique movements of the clouds in the Dulwich version.

16 First, Mitchell points out that the Dulwich version implies three events (the massacre of the innocents, the flight into Egypt, and the Passion). Then, Lurie developed Mitchell's interpretation. Charles Mitchell, “Poussin's ‘Flight into Egypt,’” *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1, no. 4 (1938): 340–43; Lurie, “Poussin”, 123.

17 Henry Ronot, “Le thème de l'apparition de la Croix à l'Enfant-Jésus à propos d'une peinture de Jean Tassel”, *Archives de l'art français* 25 (1978): 147–155, esp. 147, 149, fig. 2.

18 “Style of Rogier van der Weyden, *The Holy Family with Saint Paul and a Donor*,” The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437492>.

19 Ronot, *Le thème de l'apparition*, 152, fig. 7; “Zes engelen brengen het kruis naar Maria en het Christuskind, Raphaël Sadeler (I) (attributed to), after Maerten de Vos, 1614,” Rijksmuseum, accessed September 15, 2022, <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.168821>.

him a suck. Child as he was, he extends his arms towards the Cross, turning his back on his mother to express his willingness to accept the Passion. The angels' clothes are catching the wind blowing upward. A bright light from the depths of clouds behind the Cross emphasises the presence of the Cross.

This type of iconography originated from the Northern Art newly developed in Rome. This article cites an example *The Holy Family visited by Saint Elizabeth, Zechariah, and the Infant Saint John the Baptist*, painted by Jacques Stella (1596–1657) around 1623–24.²⁰ The scene is settled in the interior with a perforated floor. Jesus, seated on the Virgin's lap, stretches his arms toward the instruments of the Passion. It is possible that Stella would have referred to Rafael Sadeler's engraving. On that basis, he depicted the angels as naked infants according to the taste of Italian art in the seventeenth century. He emphasised the significance of the Presages of the Passion by adding related motifs, including the short column for the Flagellation and the three nails brought by the little angels. It is exceptional that Saint Elizabeth and Zechariah come bearing gifts in the scene of the Apparition of the Cross. Notwithstanding, Jesus accepts the Passion without looking at them. The light from God the Father and haloes of the Holy Family illuminate the scene. In this work, the divine light enhances the Apparition of the Cross.

Stella's work, painted on a small-scaled copper plate (35.7 x 26.8 cm), served devotional purposes.²¹ Francesco Albani (1578–1660) also incorporated the Apparition of the Cross as an object of meditation in his works. Although it is an example made in the 1640s in Bologna, *The Holy Family with the Symbols of the Passion* (1640–41, 320 x 198 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon) shows three angels with the Cross in the sky above the Holy Family, one of whom holds a

20 “Jacques Stella, *Sainte Famille avec saint Jean Baptiste*,” Musée des beaux-arts de Lyon, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://collections.mba-lyon.fr/en/notice/2006-29-sainte-famille-avec-saint-jean-baptiste-621212ff-1024-4a6e-a9ba-e5d1f19bc314>; Frédéric Elsig, ed., *Catalogue raisonné des peintures françaises du XVe au XVIIIe siècle* (Lyon: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, 2014), 100–1, no. 26, entry by Isabelle Dubois-Brinkmann. In the sixteenth-century Italy, Garofalo (1481–1559) depicted angels bearing the instruments of the Passion above the clouds, as seen in *The Madonna Adoring the Child and Angels with the Symbols of the Passion* (1517, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden). Mâle, *L'art religieux*, 287; Fioravanti Baraldi and Anna Maria, *Garofalo: Benvenuto Tisi, pittore (c. 1476–1559): Catalogo generale* (Rimini: Luisè, 1993), 127–28, no. 55. However, the infant Christ does not extend his arms towards the Cross. It means that Poussin was inspired by the iconography descended from Rogier's circle. Stella resided in Rome from 1623 to 1634 and had a lifelong friendship with Poussin. Although it is uncertain whether Poussin would contact Stella immediately upon his arrival in Rome in the spring of 1624, Stella's work is notable as an example created in the mid-1620s in Rome.

21 Dubois-Brinkmann, *Catalogue raisonné*, 100.

chalice in his hand.²² Around them, clouds trail almost horizontally, and rays of light come from the upper left corner, indicating that the Cross and the angels appear by divine intervention. The Albani studio produced a variant of copper plate based on the altarpiece (1640–99, 54 x 39 cm, Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milano). It is thus assumed that this type of iconography was established in the fields of large-scale altarpieces and small-scale paintings for private devotion.²³

The examples painted in the seventeenth century in Italy have shown that artists often combined the Apparition of the Cross with the Holy Family. Rather, it seems unusual to link the Apparition of the Cross to the Return from Egypt just before or after the end of the 1620s, the period when Poussin created the two versions of *The Return from Egypt*.²⁴ Inspired by Poussin's precedent works, Pietro Testa (born 1611 or 1612, died 1650) inserted the Infant Christ embracing the Cross on a boat at the right side in the back of *The Massacre of the Innocents* (1630–50, Galleria Spada, Rome). It should be noted, however, the scene is identified as a journey of the Flight into Egypt.²⁵ In *The Dream of St. Joseph* [Fig. 5], 1635–37), Testa focuses on the dramatic encounter with the instruments of the Passion while adding an angel at the right who informs Joseph of the massacre of the innocents.²⁶ A drawing (1640, The Royal Collection Trust) attributed to Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione (1609–64) combines the Cross that appeared in the sky and the Holy Family who have just crossed a river. The Virgin holding the Infant Christ in her arms proves that the theme of this drawing is not the Return but the Flight into Egypt.²⁷

These subsequent works suggest that Poussin would have juxtaposed the Apparition of the Cross and the Return from Egypt according to his clients' intentions. We are now in a position to return the comparison between the Cleveland and the Dulwich versions. Since the Cleveland

22 Mâle, *L'art religieux*, 287; Catherine R. Puglisi, *Francesco Albani* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 178–79, no. 92. According to Puglisi, “This altarpiece originally decorated the second altar in the right nave of S. Gioacchino.”

23 Puglisi, *Albani*, no. 92. V. a.

24 The author referred to Ferrari's article to collect Italian examples. Oreste Ferrari, “Sul tema del presagio della Passione e altri connessi, principalmente nell'età della ‘riforma cattolica’,” *Storia dell'arte* 61 (1987): 201–24

25 Stefan Albl, *Pietro Testa: Maler in Rom und Lucca (1612–1650)* (Vienna: Brill, 2021), 162–64, no. III, I.

26 “Pietro Testa, *The dream of St Joseph, who is sleeping at the right, the Virgin and Child by a cross surrounded by angels and many putti and with God the Father above*,” The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/399877>. Cropper assumes the subject of the Cleveland version not as Return but as Flight. Elizabeth Cropper, ed. *Pietro Testa 1612–1650: Prints and Drawings* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1988), 46–55, nos. 25–29, esp. 46–49, no. 25, notes 56. As noted below, this paper identifies the scene of the two versions as Return from Egypt.

27 Percy, *Castiglione*, 124–25, no. 113.

version shows the naked infant who extends his arms towards the Cross, this painting is more closely related to the type of the Apparition of the Cross to the Infant Christ on the Virgin's lap. The details, such as the angel supporting the lower end of the Cross with one hand and the angels' clothes being fanned by the wind, are comparable to those in the engraving of Rafael Sadeler. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that Poussin developed his idea based on the existing iconography of the Apparition of the Cross and then integrated the image of the reverence for the Cross with the Return from Egypt, for these scenes have been depicted initially as an independent subject. In this situation, he did not apply the golden lights that Stella utilised nor the rays of light found in Albani's works. Instead, he searched for a proper representation of the flow of air to respect the narrative setting that occurred on the journey in the daytime. In the Cleveland version, on the one hand, the upward wind blows up the angels' clothes and the clouds, as is seen in the Northern works. On the other hand, the hem of the ferryman's clothes flows towards the left side. By differentiating the movements of the wind between the upper and lower parts of the composition, the painter enhances a distinctive feature of the Apparition of the Cross. Subsequently, in the Dulwich version, the vermilion-coloured clothes in the sky and the ferryman's blue clothes in the lower part both receive the wind blowing almost vertically from left to right. It could be explained by Poussin's intention to unite the Presage of the Passion and the Return from Egypt by significantly connecting the upper and lower parts.

To clarify how Poussin addressed the challenge from the artistic point of view, the next chapter reveals the effect of the depiction of wind by comparing his works with contemporary examples devoted to the subject of the Return from Egypt.

The Iconography and Contemporary Works of the Return from Egypt

According to Schiller's classification, the Flight into Egypt includes the following scenes: Joseph's second dream, the Flight and the legends connected with it, the Rest on the Flight, and Joseph's third dream and the return from Egypt. The last two scenes have rarely been depicted.²⁸ As for the Return from Egypt, Francisco Pacheco (1564–c. 1644), a Spanish painter of the same age, described it in detail in his art theory, *Arte de la pintura (The Art of Painting)*, (Sevilla, 1649).

28 Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. 1 of 2 vols., trans. Janet Seligman and Lund Humphries (London: Lund Humphries, 1971), 114–25, esp. 124. See also Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, vol. 2 of 3 vols. (Paris: Universitaires de France, 1957), 267–89, esp. 286–88; Curt Schweicher and Géza Jászai, "Flucht nach Ägypten," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, eds. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Wolfgang Braunfels, vol. 2 of 8 vols. (Rome: Herder, 1970), cols. 43–50, esp. col. 49; Andor Pigler, *Barockthemen: Eine Auswahl von Verzeichnissen zur Ikonographie des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1 of 3 vols., 2nd ed. (Budapest: Verlag der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1974), 260.

In a chapter entitled “The Painting of the Virgin with Her Son and Husband during Their Flight into Egypt,” Pacheco describes an episode of a seamless tunic that the Virgin Mary wove for Jesus Christ.²⁹ It is just the tunic that the Child wears in the Dulwich version. He also explained the situations of the Holy Family on their way home from Egypt as follows:

When the Child is painted as no longer a baby, standing beside the Virgin Our Lady while her husband walks with the donkey or rests in the countryside, just as Barocci painted this scene, we thus ought to know that the scene depicts the return from Egypt. Having been in Egypt for seven years, the child would have been old enough to walk for stretches on foot and from time to time ride the donkey, sitting in front of the Most Holy Virgin. I painted him like this, holding the halter, or reins, his mother wearing a palm-leaf them along the best path with great care and vigilance. On such a long journey, as Gracián considered, from time to time Joseph would take the Holy Child by the hand or bear him in his arms.³⁰

Referring to Pacheco’s description, the following part arranges several types of the Return from Egypt by citing examples produced in Rome in the seventeenth century to be the same as Poussin’s works or prints circulated in Rome. The first type is the rest of the Holy Family in the countryside. Pacheco cited *The Rest on the Return from Egypt*, known as *The Madonna of the Cherries* (1570–73, Pinacoteca Vaticana) by Federico Barocci (1528–1612), in which the seven-year-old Christ receives cherries sitting on the ground.³¹ A reproductive print [Fig. 6] by Cornelis Cort (1533–before 1578) and its copies contributed to diffusing Barocci’s composition.³² The second

29 “Pintura de la Huida que hizo la Virgen con su hujo y esposo a Egipto,” chap., in Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de la pintura*, ed. Bonaventura Bassegoda (Madrid: Istitvto de Valencia de Don Juan, 2009), 622–27, esp. 626–27; Francisco Pacheco, *On Christian Iconography: Selections from the Art of Painting (1649)*, ed. and trans. (from Spanish) Jeremy Roe and Carles Gutiérrez Sanfeliu, trans. (from Latin) José Solís de los Santos (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph’s University Press, 2017), 149–52, esp. 150–52; Francesco Pacheco, *The Art of Painting: Summary and Abridged Translations of the Three Books, Complete Translation of the Iconographic Part, and Articles* (Japanese translation), ed. and trans. Asociación de Historia del Arte Español y Latinoamericano (Tokyo: Asociación de Historia del Arte Español y Latinoamericano, 2019), 172–77, esp. 174.

30 Pacheco, *Arte*, 627; Pacheco, *On Christian Iconography*, 151–52; Pacheco, *Art*, 175.

31 Judith W. Mann, Babette Bohn, and Carol Plazzotta, eds., *Federico Barocci: Renaissance Master of Color and Line* (St. Louis: Saint Louis Art Museum, 2012), 108–19. Exhibition catalogue.

32 “Cornelis Cort after Federico Barocci, *The Rest on the Return from Egypt*,” The National Gallery of Art, Washington, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.66603.html>; Huigen Leeftang ed., *Cornelis Cort, The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and*

type depicts the Child walking while holding hands with Mary and Joseph.³³ In 1636, although later than Poussin's works, Jacques Callot (1592–1635) represented in his etching [Fig. 7] the Infant Jesus walking between Mary and Joseph while holding hands with them.³⁴

As mentioned previously, Pacheco notes: 'On such a long journey, as Gracián considered, from time to time Joseph would take the Holy Child by the hand or bear him in his arms.' In Poussin's pictures, even though the situation is somewhat different, St. Joseph is about to lift the body of Christ to carry him from the shore to the boat. Gracián's writing that Pacheco referred to reveals the role of Joseph, who bears Jesus in his arms, as a guardian angel.

Jerónimo Gracián de la Madre de Dios (1545–1614) was a friar of the Discalced Carmelites. According to Chorpenning, Gracián composed *Sumario de las excelencias del glorioso San José, esposo de la Virgen María* (*The Summary of the Excellencies of the Glorious St. Joseph, Spouse of the Virgin Mary*, Rome: 1597) based on previous literature on St. Joseph.³⁵ The book, translated from Spanish into Italian, French, and German, immediately became a best-seller in Europe. It contributed to the development of the cult for St. Joseph, and furthermore, it significantly influenced the visualization of that saint.³⁶

In a section about the Return from Egypt in the fourth chapter, Gracián discusses the role

Woodcuts 1450–1700, vol. 1 of 3 vols. (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision with Rijksprentenkabinet, 2000), 125–33, nos. 40.

33 In Siena, Francesco Vanni and his son, Raffaello Vanni (1587–1673), depicted Jesus holding his hand with Mary, Joseph watching over them, and the innocents killed by Herode at the lower left. Isabelle Dubois-Brinkmann, "'Surge et fuge in Aegyptum'. L'iconographie de *La Fuite en Égypte*," in Isabell Dubois-Brinkmann and Sylvain Laveissière, eds., *Nicolas Poussin: La fuite en Égypte: 1657* (Lyon: Musée des beaux-arts de Lyon, 2008), 125–39, esp. 136, fig. 5.5. Exhibition catalog.

34 "Jacques Callot, *Le Retour d'Égypte* (*The Return from Egypt, January 7th, from Les Images De Tous Les Saints et Saintes de L'Année* (*Images of All of the Saints and Religious Events of the Year*)," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/420191>.

35 Pacheco, *Art*, 411; Joseph F. Chorpenning, O.S.F.S., "St. Joseph as Guardian Angel, Artisan, and Contemplative: Christophorus Blancus's Engravings for the Summary of the Excellencies of St. Joseph (1597)," a chap., in idem. ed., *Joseph of Nazareth through the Centuries* (Philadelphia: 2011), 103–36, esp. 107.

36 Chorpenning had already interpreted St. Joseph in Poussin's *Holy Family on Steps* (1648, The Cleveland Museum of Art) by referring to Gracián's writing. Chorpenning points out: 'Between 1597 and 1648, the year Poussin painted *The Holy Family on the Steps*, Gracián's treatise went through fifteen editions in four languages: six Spanish, six Italian, two French and one German.' Joseph F. Chorpenning, "The Enigma of St Joseph in Poussin's *Holy Family on the Steps*," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 60 (1997): 276–81.

of Joseph as a guardian angel. First, he notes that roads in Jerusalem and Egypt were sometimes dangerous with stones, rivers, and torrents. Joseph did not allow Mary to hold Jesus, who grew up. He instead took care of him and walked while leading the donkey that carried the Virgin on its back.

For a while on a good road, he [Joseph] let the young Child walk on foot while just taking him by hand. However, when Joseph saw that Jesus was tired, he would carry Him on his shoulders, making him a divine Atlas, [...] Who saw Joseph sweating, loaded with the tools of his trade and on his shoulders the Child, who would wipe the sweat from the saint's brow, and the Virgin and God Himself thanking Joseph in their hearts for the labour that he undertook for them? And who can ponder the graces that on this account Joseph received? What else is all this but the ministry of Guardian Angel: Joseph carrying Jesus in his arms so that He does not stumble or hurt His foot on a stone?³⁷

Following the Gracián's description, an illustration by Cristoforo Bianchi (active late 16th-early 17th centuries) in the Italian edition published in 1597 depicts St. Joseph carrying Christ on his shoulders despite his age.³⁸ The Child wipes the sweat off Joseph's brow. In addition, Gracián states

37 "e quantunque per qualche poco di via buona lasciasse caminar' à piedi il fanciullino, menandolo pur con tutto ciò à mano, non lo pativa però congnoſcendo, che egli cominciasse à stancarsi, ma se lo poneva in spalla, fatto un divino Atlante, [...] O chi potesse veder il glorioso Santo andar carico delli ferri dell'arte sua sudando, e con il bambino sopra delle spalle, il quale andava asciugando il sudore del Santo vecchiarello, e veder' anco la gloriosa Vergine, & il medesimo fanciullo aggradir ne i cuori loro quelle fatiche, che sopportava per loro amore. E chi porrà mai contrapesar' i beni, che egli ricevè poi per questo? Che altro è questo [sic] adunque, se non far' officio d'Angelo custode, portando nelle sue braccia Giesù, acciò non inciampasse, e percuotesse il piede in alcuna pietra?," Jerónimo Gracián, *Sommario dell'eccellenze del glorioso S. Giosef sposo della vergine Maria. Cauato da diuersi autori, per il m.f. Girolamo Gratiano della madre di Dio carmelitano, della citta' di Valledolid. Tradotto di spagnuolo nell'idioma italiano per Sulpicio Mancini* (Rome: Luigi Zannetti, 1597), 190–91 (the page numbers are noted mistakingly as 200–1 by Chorpenning) ("Gracián, *Sommario*," Google Books, accessed September 15, 2022, https://books.google.co.jp/books/about/Sommario_dell_eccellenze_del_glorioso_S.html?id=jqOCO0OK1LgC&redir_esc=y). The English translation is based on Boffa's thesis with some additions by the author. Sophia Boffa, "Angelic Man," chap. 4, in "Joseph of Nazareth as Man and Father in Jerónimo Gracián's Summary of the Excellencies of St Joseph (1597)," (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame Australia, 2016), 122–40, esp. 125–26, <https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/theses/169>.

38 Gracián, *Sommario*, 181; Boffa, "Joseph," 199, fig. 7. Regarding Joseph carrying the Child on his shoulder, it would be helpful to provide an additional explanation on the ferryman in Poussin's *Return from Egypt*. For his identification, there is a discrepancy in opinions: a view to identifying him as Charron, who brings

that Joseph carried Jesus in his arms. The phrase ‘so that He does not stumble or hurt His foot on a stone’ is derived from Psalter (91:11–12): ‘For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.’ This reference specifies Joseph’s role as a guardian angel.

Turning back to Poussin’s two versions of *The Return from Egypt*, Joseph occupies a prominent place near the centre of the composition. He takes Jesus looking up at the Cross to guide him on their way home. The growing popularity of the cult for St. Joseph in the 1620s would have stimulated Poussin or his clients to indicate the cult for St. Joseph in the scene of the Return from Egypt. Wilson suggests: ‘Pope Gregory XV’s (1554–1623) designation in 1621 of St. Joseph’s feast day as a holy day of obligation throughout the Universal Church was unquestionably critical to the saint’s extraordinary rise to devotional height in Roman Catholicism and in the art of Catholic countries thereafter.’³⁹ In Rome, probably around the first half of the seventeenth century, the Return from Egypt was also recognised as a subject for devotional purposes independent from the narrative and became established as a theme to symbolise the Earthly Trinity, which consists of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.⁴⁰ This can be illustrated in *The Return from Egypt* (Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid) by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (1610–62) around 1635–40, later

souls of the dead to the underworld over the Rivers Styx in Greek mythology, in reference to the death of Christ (Mitchell, “Flight into Egypt,” 341; Henry S. Francis, “The ‘Flight into Egypt’ by Nicolas Poussin,” *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 40, no. 10 (1953): 211–13), another view to regarding him as St. Christopher, who carried the Infant Christ on his back across a river (Lurie, “Poussin”, 123). The author supposes that the boatman recalls St. Christopher. For Gracián described that Joseph proceeded carrying Jesus on his shoulders and then added an episode of St. Christopher, who crossed the river with Christ on his back without knowing who the Child was. Gracián, *Sommario*, 191. For the importance of Joseph as Christ’s guardian angel, and paintings depicting Joseph carrying the infant Jesus on his shoulders, see Chorpenning, “St. Joseph as Guardian Angel,” 115–18, figs. 12–15. As an example, to indicate St. Christopher and Joseph as a replacement for St. Christopher, Boffa cites *La Mater Misericordiae with Saints Joseph and Christopher* (1515, Concattedrale di San Marco, Pordenone) by Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone (1483/1484–1539). In this work, St. Christopher lifts Christ onto his shoulder while St. Joseph embraces him with his arms. Boffa, *Joseph*, 131.

39 Carolyn C. Wilson, “Joseph as Mary’s Champion: The Distinctive Connection between the ‘Madonna del Giglio,’ The ‘Compagnia di San Giuseppe,’ and the Church of San Giuseppe in Florence,” in Chorpenning, *Joseph of Nazareth*, 77–102, esp. 78.

40 In the sixteenth century, the Rest at the Flight into Egypt became the subject of separate altarpieces. Sheila Schwartz, “The Iconography of the Rest on the Flight into Egypt,” (PhD diss., New York University, 1975) 2–3. The period ‘around the first half of the seventeenth century’ referred to in the main text is presumed based on the author’s research. Further research must be done to confirm the period. See also Dubois-Brinkmann, “L’iconographie,” 136.

than Poussin's works. In this work, the Holy Spirit is descending from Heaven over the head of Christ, who walks while holding hands with Mary and Joseph. When it was completed, God the Father had occupied an upper space, now lost, and He had formed the Heavenly Trinity with Jesus and the Holy Spirit.⁴¹ Afterwards, in 1659, Bernardino Mei (1612–76) dedicated an altarpiece, *The Holy Family with the Apparition of the Symbols of the Passion* (Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome), in which angels with a chalice and the Cross appear in front of Jesus on the journey with Mary and Joseph.⁴²

The iconographic analysis suggests that *The Return from Egypt*, which Poussin painted at the end of the 1620s in Rome, could be placed around the intersection of two independently developed subjects: the Apparition of the Cross and the Return from Egypt. The Cleveland version shows the naked infant who intends to hold the Cross and the wind blowing up around it. It indicates that the first version originated in the tradition of the Apparition of the Cross. Next, the Dulwich version represents Christ wearing the tunic and extending his right hand to Joseph. Despite his old age, Joseph is about to lift Jesus. The second version, therefore, demonstrates the Return from Egypt more clearly. In both cases, from the viewpoint of religious meanings, the Holy Family, as the Earthly Trinity, accepts the fate of the Passion. It is remarkable that as a setting to visualise it, Poussin chose the Holy Family not walking but embarking to cross the river. For, there exists another type of The Return from Egypt that focuses on the Holy Family on the boat.

According to the fundamental study of Ferrari, this type was spread in the Emilia region. Then, through the Carracci school in Bologna and Rome, it was passed on to the Poussin circle in Rome. *The Return from Egypt* [Fig. 8] by Jan Sadeler I (1550–1600), made in 1582 from a drawing by Marten de Vos is supposed to be one of the visual sources for the Bolognese painters.⁴³ In this engraving, the Holy Family and the donkey cross the river in a boat. The figure of Christ, standing, illustrates they return from Egypt. As for the composition, we can contemplate a panoramic view

41 The Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597–1679), a nephew of the pope of that time; Urban VIII (baptized 1568–1644), ordered this work to Romanelli in 1635 for the gallery of Palazzo della Cancelleria. Roberto Contini, "Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, Return from the Flight into Egypt," Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/romanelli-giovanni-francesco/return-flight-egypt#tab-pane-2>. Francesco Barberini was an art collector who commissioned Poussin to paint *The Death of Germanicus* (1627, Minneapolis Institute of Art). These works suggest that the Return from Egypt was treated as a subject around Poussin from the end of the 1620s to the mid-1630s.

42 Ferrari, "Sul tema del presagio," 211, fig. 32; Fabio Bisogni e Marco Ciampolini, ed. *Bernardino Mei e la pittura barocca a Siena* (Siena: Galleria di Palazzo Chigi-Saracini, 1987), 165, fig. 81. Exhibition catalogue.

43 Ferrari, "Sul tema del presagio," 212, fig. 34; "Terugkeer uit Egypte, Johann Sadeler (I), after Maerten de Vos, 1582," Rijksmuseum, accessed September 15, 2022, <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.168362>.

with townscapes and mountains in depth. At the top, clouds furrow the sky from right to left. In addition, *The Return from Egypt* (c. 1600, private collection) by Ludovico Carracci (1555–1619) has a distinctive feature: a small sailboat.⁴⁴ The sailboat occupies the foreground space of the horizontally long canvas. Christ stands on it while pointing his finger in the direction of their journey. Mary and Joseph sit near him from behind, and a boatman handles his oar. On the right side, one angel holds a mast and the other handles a sail that inflates in the wind. As von Barghahn suggests, the pure white sail swells in the strong wind, implying Divine Providence.⁴⁵ Although it is not an example of the Return from Egypt, *The Holy Family Sailing in Egypt* (before 1619) by Hieronymus Wierix (1553–1619) remains noteworthy. In this print, the cherubs, breathing heavily on the boat of the Holy Family from the upper left corner, suggest divine intervention.⁴⁶

As previously stated, Poussin got to know the type of Holy Family crossing the river through the Bolognese School. Even though he did not adopt the sail, through the engravings by Jan Sadeler I and Wierix, he would have been familiar with the type in which the wind blew the Holy Family on a boat. In addition, Poussin set the scene of the Return from Egypt at the riverside, for he was inspired by a precedent work by a Bolognese painter, Annibale Carracci (1560–1609). In the early seventeenth century in Rome, Annibale Carracci and his school invented the ideal paintings that reconstructed nature in a reasonable way. *The Landscape with the Flight into Egypt* (1602–04, Palazzo Doria Pamphilj, Rome) is considered the beginning of the new genre.⁴⁷ This work represents the Holy Family who have just passed the river by boat to Egypt. To utilise a crescent-shaped canvas intended to decorate a lunette, Annibale represents the river meandering gently in a pictorial space and a ferryman who moves a boat backwards using a pole after sending the Holy Family. In the upper sky with light clouds, we can see skeins of birds that fly while disturbing V-formations, which indicates that the wind blows from left to right. Around 1590, Annibale

44 Ferrari points out that the Flight into Egypt is not always connected to the presage of the Passion, citing Ludovico's work as an example. Ferrari, "Sul tema del presagio," 212; Alessandro Brogi, *Ludovico Carracci (1555–1619)*, 2 vols. (Bologna: Tipoarte, 2001), cat. no. 66; vol. 1, 180–81, vol. 2, fig. 156.

45 Barbara Von Barghahn, "Imaging the Holy Family of Nazareth in the Viceregal Andes: An Alloy of European and Inca Cultures," Joseph F. Chorpenning, ed., *The Holy Family as Prototype of the Civilization of Love: Images from the Viceregal Americas* (Philadelphia: Saint-Joseph's University, 1996), 57–89, esp. 62–63. Exhibition catalogue.

46 Barghahn, *Imaging the Holy Family*, 62, fig. 3.13; "Hieronymus Wierix, *The flight into Egypt by boat; the Holy family on a boat: the Virgin, seated, suckling the infant Christ and St Joseph to left; various fish in the sea and cherubs in the sky*. Engraving." The British Museum, accessed September 15, 2022, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1859-0709-3004.

47 Stéphane Loire et al. eds., *Nature et Idéal: Le paysage à Rome 1600–1650* (Paris: Grand Palais, 2011), 106–7, no. 4. Exhibition catalogue.

already painted *River Landscape* [Fig. 9].⁴⁸ In *The Landscape with the Flight into Egypt*, he intended to harmonise the religious subject and the representation of nature.

Poussin, who struggled to acquire clients in and outside Rome at the end of the 1620s, paid attention to *The Landscape with the Flight into Egypt* by Annibale Carracci to depict the Return from Egypt as a subject. This work, depicting the Holy Family crossing the river on the boat, is known as the novel type of landscape set forth by the Bolognese school. In the Cleveland version, by following Annibale's work, Poussin applied the river landscape and composition to place tall trees on the left side and in the middle distance on the right side, with pastoral figures on the opposite bank. In the Dulwich version, the painter chose to represent the scenery of a more savage riverside that is appropriate for the way back from Egypt. In this process, the wind and clouds surrounding the Cross were likened to the wind blowing over the shores of a river. The breeze that correlates the upper and lower parts of the composition created the interaction to constitute the Earthly Trinity: Jesus recognised his fate of the Passion through the Cross appearing in the sky, while St. Joseph the Guardian takes him and consists of the Earthly Trinity with Mary. It is thus reasonable to conclude that in the endeavour of Poussin, who intended to harmonise symbolic meanings required for religious paintings and depiction of natural scenery, the image of wind not only expresses divinity but also serves as an embellishing element of the landscape.

Conclusion

This article has discussed the representations of the wind in the two versions of *The Return from Egypt* by Nicolas Poussin. At first, it has revealed that the iconography of the Cleveland version is comparable to that of the Apparition of the Cross, in which angels appear in front of the Infant Christ embraced by Mary on her lap. The wind surrounding the angels and the Cross is placed in the lineage of the blowing up wind, namely, *pneuma*, which can be found in *The Holy Family with Saint Paul and a Donor* attributed to the style of Rogier van der Weyden. In the Dulwich version, by introducing the wind that blows almost horizontally through the whole composition, Poussin associated two subjects that had been treated individually, the Apparition of the Cross and the Return from Egypt, and improved the fascinations as a landscape scenery.

The representations of wind in Poussin's religious works, in general, are needed to examine based on individual cases, taking account of their production dates.⁴⁹ In place of conclusion, it is useful to give several remarkable examples for further study. Firstly, it is possible that Poussin

48 "Annibale Carracci, River Landscape," The National Gallery of Art, Washington, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.41673.html>; Loire, *Nature et Idéal*, 100–1, no. 1.

49 Even today, Poussin's religious paintings attract our interest. See Nicolas Milovanovic and Mickaël Szanto eds., *Poussin et Dieu* (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2015). Exhibition catalogue.

preferred the depiction of movements of air and clouds to that of contrast of light and shade as a tendency of his religious works at the end of the 1620s. For instance, *The Agony in the Garden* [Fig. 10]⁵⁰, a work on copper painted shortly before the two versions of *The Return from Egypt* and *The Apparition of the Virgin* painted just after them, depicts events that occurred at night. In order to visualise the manifestations of the divine presence, Poussin minimised the effects of light and applied thick clouds and the veil swollen with the wind. Apart from that, *The Holy Family with the Infant St. John the Baptist* (1629, Staatlichen Kunsthalle Karlsruhe) was painted between *The Returns from Egypt* and *The Apparition of the Virgin*, in which Mary's veil is fluttered by the wind coming from left.⁵¹ The presence of the Infant St. John the Baptist holding a reed cross and a lamb of Redemption indicates that this work also can be interpreted as the Presage of the Passion.⁵² Although it should be carefully judged, the veil of the Virgin waving in the wind from behind might be reminiscent of Christ's fate of the Passion instead of the angels and the Cross.

Poussin utilised the wind to make the divine presence visible. *Moses and the Burning Bush* [Fig. 11], painted in 1641) is a good example.⁵³ According to Exodus (3:1–10), Moses listened to the voice of God from the burning bush and recognised his mission to conduct the Israelites who suffered under the tyrannical regime of Egypt. In Poussin's picture, Moses's hair stands on end, and a blue mantle that envelops God is blown up in the air. However, Moses stares at a snake transformed from his shepherd's crook and the bush without perceiving God in the scene through his visual sense. Based on this depiction, Poussin must have recognised that God in the Old Testament is embodied as a voice, that is, *ruach* in Hebrew.⁵⁴ In contrast with this work, it is interesting to cite *The Annunciation* (National Gallery, London), which Poussin created in the 1650s.⁵⁵ It shows that the Virgin Mary sits with her palms turned up to put herself in a posture of acceptance, and the Holy Spirit stays over her head. Here, Mary, who closes her eyes without staring at Gabriel, signifies that she incarnates Jesus as an inner vision.⁵⁶ Considering that painters in the Baroque age often represent Gabriel, who enters the scene with wind, clouds, and light, the image of the Annunciation by Poussin appears as an unprecedented representation. Visualising

50 Thuillier, *Poussin*, 245, no. 27; "Nicolas Poussin, *The Agony in the Garden*," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/442488>.

51 Thuillier, *Poussin*, 250, no. 74.

52 Ferrari, "Sul tema del presagio," 204–5.

53 Thuillier, *Poussin*, 257, no. 150a; "Nicolas Poussin, *Moses and the Burning Bush*," Statens Museum for Kunst, København, accessed September 15, 2022, <https://open.smk.dk/en/artwork/image/KMSsp688>.

54 The word *Ruach* in Hebrew corresponds to *pneuma* and *spiritus*. Baert, *Pneuma*, 44 (the Japanese version, 27).

55 Thuillier, *Poussin*, 263–64, no. 228.

56 Milovanovic and Szanto, eds., *Poussin et Dieu*, 378–80, no. 76.

pneuma capable of having multiple significances and forms had been an artistic challenge for painters in the seventeenth century.

- [Fig. 1] Nicolas Poussin, *The Return from Egypt*, c. 1627, oil on canvas, 134 x 99 cm, Cleveland Museum of Art.
- [Fig. 2] Nicolas Poussin, *The Return from Egypt*, c. 1628, oil on canvas, 117.8 x 99.4 cm, Dulwich Picture Gallery.
- [Fig. 3] Anonym, *The Holy Family with Saint Paul and a Donor*, mid-15th century, oil on wood, overall, with added strip 57.5 x 48.3 cm, painted surface 55.9 x 46 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Painted in the style of Rogier van der Weyden.
- [Fig. 4] Raphael Sadeler I (after Marten de Vos), *The Apparition of the Cross*, 1614, engraving, 20.1 x 25.4 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
- [Fig. 5] Pietro Testa, *The Dream of Joseph*, 1635–37, etching, 36.5 x 29.5 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
- [Fig. 6] Cornelis Cort (after Federico Barocci), *The Rest on the Return from Egypt*, 1575, engraving, 41 x 28.5 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington.
- [Fig. 7] Jacques Callot, *The Return from Egypt*, 1636, etching, 6.5 x 5 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
- [Fig. 8] Jan Sadeler I (after Marten de Vos), *The Return from Egypt*, 1582, engraving, 16.6 x 12.9 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
- [Fig. 9] Annibale Carracci, *River Landscape*, c. 1590, Oil on canvas, 88.3 x 148.1 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington.
- [Fig. 10] Nicolas Poussin, *The Agony in the Garden*, 1626–27, oil on copper plate, 61.3 x 48.6 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
- [Fig. 11] Nicolas Poussin, *Moses and the Burning Bush*, 1641, oil on canvas, 203.7 x 170.8 cm, København Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen.

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