

Rubens and Goltzius in dialogue

Artistic exchanges between Antwerp and Haarlem during the Revolt

FILIP VERMEYLEN AND KAROLIEN DE CLIPPEL

Filip Vermeylen (Ph.D. Columbia University 2002) is an Associate Professor at the *Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication* at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. He lectures and publishes on various aspects of the economics of art and culture, past and present, and with a particular focus on art markets. Since 2009, he is the director of an NWO–research project entitled ‘Artistic exchanges and cultural transmission in the Low Countries, 1572–1672: mobility of artists, works of art and artistic knowledge’. His book *Painting for the market. Commercialization of art in Antwerp’s Golden Age* won the Robert Bainton Prize for Art History in 2006.
vermeylen@eshcc.eur.nl

Karolien De Clippel (Ph.D. KU Leuven 2002) is an Associate Professor at the Department of History and Art History of Utrecht University. She specializes in Early Modern painting of the Low Countries, with a particular focus on genre and classical mythology and with a special inclination for individual artists such as Peter Paul Rubens and Adriaen Brouwer. Since 2009, she is the co-director of an NWO–research project entitled ‘Artistic exchanges and cultural transmission in the Low Countries, 1572–1672: mobility of artists, works of art and artistic knowledge’.
K.J.DeClippel@uu.nl

Abstract

The Haarlem school of painting is considered to be an archetype of the Dutch Golden Age, whereby a quintessential *Dutchness* is said to emanate from its famous landscape and genre paintings. In our contribution, we wish to challenge this perceived autonomy by taking stock of the artistic exchanges which took place between Haarlem and Antwerp during the first decades of the seventeenth century. A seminal example of this cross-fertilization occurred between Rubens and Goltzius. Cultural transmission thus took place in both directions: from Antwerp to Haarlem, and vice versa.

Keywords: Cultural transmission; artistic exchange; art market; local schools; Peter Paul Rubens; Hendrick Goltzius

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Haarlem has long been considered the archetype of a Dutch city school by many art historians. A quintessential *Dutchness* is said to emanate from its famous land- and cityscapes, as well as genre paintings.¹ Indeed, the Haarlem school of painting has been deemed a prime example of a local school with recognizable and typically 'Dutch' characteristics.² We wish to challenge this perceived autonomy of the Haarlem school by taking stock of the (artistic) relationships the city maintained with Antwerp during the latter third of the sixteenth and first decades of the seventeenth century.³ It was during these decades that the Antwerp art scene enjoyed a genuine Indian summer, inaugurated by the return of Peter Paul Rubens in 1608, and thanks to a booming art market the city continued to be a net exporter of paintings.⁴

In our contribution, we will emphasize that artists, works of art and artistic know-how flowed freely throughout most of the seventeenth century, and that it allowed for cultural transmission in many guises. Through a close reading of the artistic dialogue that occurred between Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617) and Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640), we aim to shed light on the fascinating relationship between Haarlem and

¹ For instance, during his noteworthy inaugural lecture at the Center for the Study of the Golden Age in Amsterdam in 2002, the renowned art historian Christopher Brown singled out Haarlem as the archetype of a Dutch city school in terms of painting. Christopher Brown, *The Dutchness of the Golden Age*, Working paper, Amsterdam 2002.

² Pieter Biesboer (ed.), *De gouden eeuw begint in Haarlem*, exh. cat. Haarlem (Frans Hals Museum) 2008. At the level of national schools, the divergence between the Dutch school and its Flemish counterpart was recently a topic of an essay by Theodore Rabb entitled 'Separate paths', in: *The Art Newspaper*, 2011, vol. 21, nr. 229, p. 78 and 83.

³ In one of his typically insightful and comprehensive lectures at the 2009 *City Limits* conference in Dublin, Eric Jan Sluijter commented upon the commonly used concept of the Dutch local school and provided some suggestions for new research. See Eric Jan Sluijter, 'Neat concepts and messy realities: local schools, tastes and identities', in: *City Limits. Urban Identity, Specialisation and Autonomy in Seventeenth-century Dutch Art*, international conference, organised by UCD School of Art History & Cultural Policy and The National Gallery of Ireland, 24–25 April 2009.

⁴ Neil de Marchi and Hans van Miegroet, 'The history of art markets', in: Victor Ginsburgh and David Throsby (eds.), *Handbook of the economics of art and culture*, Amsterdam, Boston 2006, p. 69–122; Filip Vermeulen, 'Antwerp beckons. The Reasons for Rubens' Return to the Netherlands in 1608', in: *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek/Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 55 (2004), p. 16–33.

Antwerp as two of the leading Netherlandish art centers during the seventeenth century. Since this is a rather vast area of research, we will limit ourselves to, firstly, a more general introduction dealing with the rise of the Haarlem art market in connection to Antwerp, taking stock of the substantial migrations of artists and the vastly improved transport infrastructure of the seventeenth century which greatly facilitated travel between the two art centers. A second part will highlight the importance of personal relationships Antwerp and Haarlem artists maintained during the first half of the seventeenth century, by examining the close ties that existed between Goltzius and Rubens during the 1610s and the artistic cross-fertilization that resulted from their contacts.

The Flemish migration into Haarlem

The basis of the strong ties between the cities of Haarlem and Antwerp were forged at the times of the great migration which started with the outbreak of the Revolt in 1566–1568. The facts are well known and it is an interesting coincidence that both cities suffered much in the early phases of the Revolt. Antwerp was ravaged by the Iconoclasm, the Spanish Fury and a long siege culminating in its surrender in 1585 which left the city economically isolated, while Haarlem had to contend with a lengthy and disastrous Spanish siege as well, which brought the town to its knees, a cataclysmic event which would later claim its place in the Dutch canon of patriotic bravery. To make matters worse, a devastating fire laid major sections of Haarlem to waste in October 1576.⁵

Still, with most of the fighting taking place in the Southern Provinces and the Spanish acquiring a stronghold in Flanders and Brabant, significant numbers of people started to migrate north. Freed at last from the Spanish yoke, Haarlem was an exhausted city which opened its gates in the late 1570s to Flemish refugees. And they migrated in great numbers. They came from all parts of the South but notably from the County of Flanders. Most of these migrants were active in the linen and cloth industries, originating from towns such as Kortrijk and Ghent, but many other professionals flocked to Haarlem after 1578. As a result, the city witnessed an exponential growth during the decades preceding and following the turn of the century. The population doubled between 1580 and 1622 due in principal to the vast immigration from the Southern Provinces. In fact, it has been estimated that in 1622 approximately twenty thousand souls on a population of 39,500 – in other words no less than fifty one percent – consisted of Flemish immigrants and their descendents. By the end of the Twelve Years' Truce, Flemish migrants had infiltrated all layers of civil society (the political establishment excepted) and left their mark on the morphology of the city. They contributed substantially to Haarlem's economy and cultural life. For instance, a separate Flemish

⁵ Guido Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation. Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis 1550–1577*, Baltimore 1996; Pieter Biesboer, *Collections of paintings in Haarlem, 1572–1745 (Netherlandish inventories 1)*, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 2001, p. 1–2.

chamber of rhetoric was established, named *De witten angieren*, which participated in public rituals and events such as the 1606 *Landjuweel*.⁶

Jan Briels and Pieter Biesboer in particular have elaborated extensively on the general causes that explain the attractiveness of the town of Haarlem. There were many push and pull factors, and some of these conditions were specific to Haarlem. For instance, an historical accident helped to create the physical space needed to house the new arrivals. The fire of 1576 destroyed at least four hundred houses and created space in the city for Flemish refugees. A map dating from 1578 clearly shows the empty quarters in the south-western part of the city (fig. 1). Moreover, starting in 1581, as a result of the treaty between the States of Holland and William the Silent, the city could develop properties of former monasteries as building sites, and sell or offer them to Southern immigrants. Haarlem thus welcomed the new arrivals with open arms. In fact, the city's magistrate offered subsidies and other perks to lure immigrant-weavers and other professionals to set up their looms within the city walls, and they did so most successfully.⁷

Besides scores of textile workers, many Flemish artists were among the myriad of other professionals who found their way to Haarlem as well. Up until the eve of the Iconoclasm, Antwerp had been one of the most international, most innovative and highly commercial markets for paintings in Europe, but the iconoclastic wave that swept the Low Countries in the summer of 1566 would introduce challenging times for Antwerp's substantial artistic community. Many would pack up their belongings and head for safer havens, and the majority of them would settle in Dutch towns such as Amsterdam, Middelburg and Haarlem.

The ECARTICO database reveals the names of fifty six master-painters active in Haarlem from the outbreak of the Revolt until 1630 (table 1).⁸ About a third of these artists with a known origin were born in the Southern Netherlands, the vast majority coming from Antwerp. Among the more well-known painters to this day are Jacob de Gheyn (1565–1629), Jan Porcellis (1584–1632), the young Frans Hals (1582/3–1666) and Pieter Soutman (1593/1601–1657). In addition, a cluster of artists came from the County of Flanders, notably Kortrijk, Ghent and Bruges. The most famous of these is Karel van Mander (1548–1606), who was born in Meulebeke near Kortrijk and who was not only a painter, but also the author of *Het schilder-boeck* (1604). This pattern echoes the migration of the textile workers with whom the artists shared a similar background.

Irrespective of their exact place of origin, this notable immigration of artists resulted in a veritable supply shock. In other words, the significant influx of human capital into Haarlem helped to jump-start the local art market. These skilled and experienced artists brought with them new genres and exposed the locals to landscape painting,

⁶ Biesboer, *Collections*, p. 2–3; Pieter Biesboer et al. (eds.), *Vlamingen in Haarlem*, Haarlem 1996, p. 10.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ This database is in essence an online version of Pieter Groenendijk's, *Beknopt biografisch lexicon van Zuid-en Noord-Nederlandse schilders, graveurs, glasschilders, tapijtwevers et cetera van ca. 1350 tot ca. 1720*, Utrecht 2008. The database can be consulted online at <http://burckhardt.ic.uva.nl/ecartico/database.html>.



Fig. 1 Joannes van Doetecum after Thomas Thomasz., Map of Haarlem, 1578. Haarlem, Gemeentearchief.

Table 1 Place of birth of painters active in Haarlem, 1565-1630

City of birth	Number of painters	% of total
Haarlem	11	19,64
Antwerp	10	17,86
Amsterdam	4	7,14
Kortrijk	3	5,36
Middelburg	2	3,58
Other Dutch Republic	5	8,92
Other Southern Netherlands	3	5,36
Foreign origin	2	3,57
Unknown	16	28,57
Total	56	100,00

Source: ECARTICO database, University of Amsterdam.

genre and naval scenes. Moreover, they set up workshops in their newly adopted home towns, and most importantly, they also trained local talented youths. It is noteworthy that this displacement of artistic talent was in essence caused by war, and would afford Haarlem to emerge as a major art center.

The fact that Haarlem had such great attraction for Flemish artists should not entirely surprise us. After all, Haarlem had a long tradition in the arts with important artists such as Jan Mostaert (1475–?), Jan van Scorel (1495–1562), Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574) and of course Hendrick Goltzius. Van Mander admitted that he was quite astonished ‘to find such painters [in Haarlem]’.⁹ Furthermore, there are indications that word of mouth also contributed to the sustained influx of Southern artists into Haarlem. No wonder then that Van Mander commented that he enjoyed hearing the Flemish language all year round.

The growth of the Haarlem art market

With such a critical mass of artistic capital available in the city, the art market grew and developed quickly into a mature and innovative art scene, surpassed in many ways only by Amsterdam. Haarlem painters and engravers developed their own styles and specializations, such as landscape and marine painting (exemplified by Esaias van de Velde and Pieter de Molijn) or genre painting, but it has been argued that these were indebted to painterly innovations that originated in Antwerp.¹⁰

As soon as more artists specialized and demand grew while at the same time became more complex and diverse, professional art dealers appeared on the scene in the mid-1620s. In her dissertation, Marion Boers-Goossens determined that all of the art dealers active in Haarlem since the mid-twenties were recent immigrants or direct descendents of them.¹¹ It is interesting that the immigrants also imported art marketing techniques from Antwerp. Lotteries, auctions and raffles may not have been invented in Antwerp, but were employed there on a large scale to widen the market for paintings and to stimulate demand. The implementation of the same strategies in Haarlem – which often met with resistance – points to a commercialization and professionalization of the art market modeled on Antwerp.¹² And there are other striking similarities. The fact that many Haarlem art dealers – or painters for that matter – were not a member of the painters’ guild (and therefore did not abide by their rules and restrictions) may again have been a *bad* habit imported from Antwerp.¹³ At any rate, by the 1610s, Haarlem had developed into a very competitive and leading market for paintings and engravings,

9 ‘[...] hier sulcken schilders te vinden’, quoted in Jan G.C.A. Briels, *Zuidnederlandse immigratie in Amsterdam en Haarlem omstreeks 1572–1630. Met een keuze van archivalische gegevens betreffende de kunstschilders*, Utrecht 1976, p. 150.

10 Marten Jan Bok, ‘The rise of Amsterdam as a cultural center. The market for paintings, 1580–1680’, in: Patrick O’Brien et al. (eds.), *Urban achievement in early modern Europe*, Cambridge 2001, p. 186–209.

11 Marion Boers-Goossens, *Schilders en de markt. Haarlem 1605–1635*, unpublished dissertation, Leiden 2001.

12 Marion Boers-Goossens, ‘Een nieuwe markt voor kunst. De expansie van de Haarlemse schilderijenmarkt in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw’, in: *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek/Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 50 (1999), p. 195–220.

13 Filip Vermeylen, *Painting for the market. Commercialization of art in Antwerp’s Golden Age*, Turnhout 2003, p. 127–139; Biesboer, *Collections of paintings*, p. 18.

but one that was by no means closed off from the world, and this 'openness' did not disappear after the great migrations tapered off. Exchanges took place from a material perspective through the art trade, and on the level of personal contacts between artists themselves.

Travelling artists

In general, a great mobility existed among early modern artists, more so than we probably assume today. Not only did many of them travel to Italy to complete their training, or migrated in the wake of military conflict and economic hardship, for reasons of religion or lured by better opportunities elsewhere, but in addition, artists would not hesitate to travel great distances on a temporary basis to complete a commission or visit with colleagues, friends or relatives. Artists appear to have been particularly eager to move between towns in the Low Countries. There were many reasons for this, but improved transportation facilities without a doubt acted as a catalyst.

The province of Holland could offer an unrivalled infrastructure in terms of roads and canals, facilitating relatively cheap and safe travel. The Dutch Republic overall was an easy place to get around in thanks to its intricate network of canals and overland connections by coach.¹⁴ Particularly barges provided a comfortable and reliable mode of transportation with regular services between the major cities, a network that would be developed in the course of the seventeenth century. Canals being dug from Haarlem to Leiden and Amsterdam in the 1630s and 1640s respectively greatly enhanced the city's accessibility, but good connections with Antwerp existed prior to that.¹⁵

The relative ease with which people travelled within the whole of the Low Countries emanates from travel books which mention timetables, costs and frequency of both overland connections and those via waterways, in addition to suitable inns where travelers could spend the night, and even places of interest in the respective towns. The early modern travel guides were widely disseminated and allowed travelers to plan their trips in an expedient manner. Using these and other sources, Jan de Vries and more recently Gerrit Verhoeven have established that travel on these barges was particularly user friendly. Verhoeven's research shows that by comparison to other

¹⁴ Jan de Vries, *Barges and capitalism. Passenger transportation in the Dutch economy, 1632–1839*, Amsterdam, Utrecht 1981; Gerrit Verhoeven, *Anders reizen? Evoluties in de vroegmoderne reiservaringen van Hollandse en Brabantse elites*, Hilversum 2009; Idem, "Een divertissant somertogje". Transport innovations and the rise of short-term pleasure trips in the Low Countries, 1600–1750', in: *Journal of Transport History* 30 (2009), p. 78–97.

¹⁵ Certainly by the 1620s, people travelling from Antwerp to Haarlem tended to board a coach in the direction of Dordrecht (via Breda), from there they went by barge to Leiden and then onwards to Haarlem either by coach or boat. We would like to thank Gerrit Verhoeven for supplying us with this information; Biesboer, *Collections of paintings*, p. 5.

European countries, travel in the Dutch Republic was the cheapest per kilometer. Furthermore, the perceived safety was equally high in the Low Countries, in other words, travelers were far less worried that they would fall victim to robbers compared to elsewhere.

Surely there were impediments to swift travel, besides the fact that it was time-consuming and cumbersome, and it always involved costs. After the re-opening of hostilities in 1621, passports were required once more to cross the frontline, but even then, the archives reveal many instances of artists travelling from South to North and vice versa. For instance, Jacob Jordaens (1593–1678) and members of the Teniers family requested passports to travel to the Republic in the thirties and forties of the seventeenth century.¹⁶

All this implied that artistic exchanges between both cities never ceased. In fact, from 1609 onwards, when peace was restored, artists from the Southern and Northern Netherlands were able to visit with each other much more easily. Making use of the earlier mentioned extraordinary transportation facilities over land and water, Antwerp artists traveled to Haarlem and their Haarlem counterparts went to the city on the River Scheldt. For instance, the trip Rubens and some of his colleagues made to Haarlem in 1612 is well documented (see below). Notable Haarlem-based artists who spent time in Antwerp include Pieter Soutman,¹⁷ Frans Hals,¹⁸ and Frans (1573–1649) and Pieter de Grebber (c. 1600–1652/53).¹⁹ Moreover, this practice persisted even after hostilities resumed in 1621. Adriaen Brouwer (ca. 1605–1638), a native of the Southern Netherlands, stayed in Haarlem in the second half of the 1620s, but returned to Antwerp around 1630.²⁰ And if Arnold Houbraken is right, Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641) met with Frans Hals in Haarlem at the beginning of the 1630s.²¹ In the following paragraphs, we will – by means of a case study – draw attention to the seminal importance of such journeys ‘abroad’ and the concomitant personal contacts for the assimilation of styles and motifs across geographical borders and more specifically, for the ongoing artistic dialogue between Antwerp and Haarlem.

16 Karolien De Clippel, ‘Two sides of the same coin? Genre painting in North and South during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries’, in: *Simiolus* 32 (2006), p. 22.

17 Kerry Barrett, *Pieter Soutman. Life and oeuvre (Oculi: studies in the arts of the Low Countries, 12)* Amsterdam 2012, p. 24–51.

18 Irene van Thiel-Stroman, ‘Chronologie’, in: Seymour Slive (ed.), *Frans Hals*, exh. cat. Washington (National Gallery of Art) – London (Royal Academy of Arts) – Haarlem (Frans Halsmuseum), 1989, 1990, p. 19; Idem, ‘De documenten over Frans Hals. Geschreven en gedrukte bronnen, 1582–1679’, in: Slive, *Frans Hals*, p. 377, doc. 17 en p. 378, doc. 22.

19 Irene van Thiel-Stroman, ‘Frans Pietersz de Grebber’ en ‘Pieter Fransz de Grebber’, in: Neeltje Köhler (ed.), *Painting in Haarlem 1500–1850. The collection of the Frans Hals Museum*, Ghent 2006, p. 163–164 en p. 168.

20 Konrad Renger, *Adriaen Brouwer und das niederländische Bauerngenre 1600–1660*, exh. cat. Munich (Bayrische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek) 1987, p. 9; Karolien De Clippel, ‘Brouwer, Adriaen’, in: *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek*, Brussels 2011, p. 165–169.

21 Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*. 3 vols., Amsterdam 1718–21, vol. 1, p. 90–91.

Rubens and Goltzius

Some of the most intensive and important interactions took place between Peter Paul Rubens on the one hand, and Hendrick Goltzius and his entourage on the other. Already very early in his career, during the 1590s, Rubens turned his gaze to Goltzius whose engraved *Passion series* of 1596–97 he copied.²² According to Kristin Belkin, Rubens' copies were made shortly after the publication of the series, which means that the originals must have been almost immediately accessible to him. A wonderful example of this reproduction practice is the partial copy after Goltzius' *Entombement* which is dated 1596 (figs. 2–3).²³ Rubens concentrated on the central group, omitting certain figures and rearranging others. Mary Magdalen and one of the other three women are removed, John has been relocated, and the head of Christ and the figure of Joseph of Arimathea are cut off. Belkin contends that two aspects in particular attracted the young Rubens' attention in Goltzius' engravings: their compositional strength and, most of all, their archaizing style, of which the early sixteenth-century costumes form a main component.²⁴ In addition, Goltzius' *Passion series* also distinguishes itself by its virtuoso use of the burin in function of surprising coloristic chiaroscuro effects.²⁵ As a consequence, we argue that this strikingly pictorial technique could have been an additional pull factor for Rubens in his capacity as a painter.

Moreover, one should not forget Goltzius' role as a designer, certainly in the period after his return from Italy until his death, from 1592 until 1600. It was during those years that he made his most inventive prints. He played a crucial role in the dissemination of mythological iconography, and especially of those subjects allowing the representation of titillating nudes.²⁶ He hereby openly competed with his Italian and other examples.²⁷ Should it come as a surprise then that this aspect of Goltzius' art exerted a special attraction on Rubens?

This interest in Goltzius' engravings appears to have been more than just a beginner's fancy. About fifteen years later, in June 1612, Rubens travelled to Haarlem to meet his great example in person. He did not go on his own but was accompanied by other Antwerp painters such as, amongst others, Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568–1625) and Hendrik van Balen (1575–1632).²⁸ It is difficult to ascertain the precise reason of Rubens' visit. We can do no more than formulate some hypotheses. It seems quite plausible that

22 Kristin Lohse Belkin, *Rubens. Copies and adaptations from Renaissance and later artists. German and Netherlandish artists (Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard XXVI, 1)*, Turnhout 2009, vol. 1, p. 36; p. 164–165, no. 72; p. 218–219, no. 108.

23 Belkin, *Rubens. Copies and adaptations*, p. 218–219, no. 108.

24 Ibidem, p. 36, 219.

25 Huigen Leeftang and Ger Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617). Tekeningen, prenten en schilderijen*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) – New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art) – Toledo (Toledo Art Museum) 2003, p. 266.

26 Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius*, p. 203–204.

27 Leeftang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius*, p. 205–206.

28 On this trip, see J.G. van Gelder, 'Rubens in Holland in de zeventiende eeuw', in: *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek/Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 3 (1950–51), p. 119–120; R. De Smet, 'Een nauwkeurige



Fig. 2 Peter Paul Rubens after Hendrick Goltzius, Entombment, 1596-97. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts graphiques.



Fig. 3 Hendrick Goltzius, *Entombement*, 1596, engraving, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.

the first and main motivation was artistic. As suggested above, Rubens must have seen in Goltzius a kindred spirit and a great example in the creative sphere.

A second point of interest was probably Goltzius' special working method and the organization of his print business. In his day, Goltzius was unique in the Netherlands in that he personally controlled all parts of the production process – concept, design and publication –, aiming thereby at the highest possible quality, technical as well as artistic, and targeting an international clientele. Whereas in the beginning, the studio also emulated work of other masters, gradually it disseminated only Goltzius'.²⁹ Rubens, who in

datering van Rubens' eerste reis naar Holland in 1612', in: *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (1977), p. 199–220.

²⁹ Leeflang and Luijten, *Hendrick Goltzius*, pp. 33–39, 203–209.

his painting business also aimed at a strong hierarchic organization,³⁰ must have been inspired to pursue a similar approach for printmaking; the more so once he seriously took up printmaking himself. There is every indication that the production process of prints in Rubens' studio was very similar to that of Goltzius not in the least by his hiring of engravers who were able and willing to produce quality work under his supervision.³¹

The most frequently formulated hypothesis so far, that he went to Haarlem out of a desire to control his production due to the increasing availability of pirate prints after his compositions on the market,³² was very recently, and in our opinion correctly, contested by Kerry Barrett in her monograph on Pieter Soutman. She argued that starting in 1612, it would take Rubens at least another six years before he applied for privileges and launched a sizable print production.³³ This said, it remains striking that during the years following Rubens' visit to Haarlem some excellent engravers from Goltzius' circle delivered Rubens prints. One of those was Goltzius' pupil and stepson, Jacob Matham (1571–1631). Matham made a wonderful engraving after Rubens' famous composition of *Samson and Delilah*, painted in about 1610 for the Antwerp burgomaster Nicolaes Rockox (figs. 4–5). Some details in the print suggest that it was not made after the final painting, which is now in the London National Gallery, but after Rubens' oil sketch or *modello* in Cincinnati (fig. 6).³⁴ The beardless barber, the arrangement of jars on the shelf on the wall, the tapestry without print and the number of soldiers in the doorway correspond more closely to the *modello* than to the finished painting. About the precise dating of the print there is no consensus, but it seems plausible that it was made around 1613.³⁵ Therefore, one could imagine that Rubens brought the oil sketch with him when he visited Haarlem in June 1612, or had it sent there afterwards to have it reproduced.

30 Arnout Balis, '“Fatto da un mio discepolo”. Rubens' studio practices reviewed', in: T. Nakamura (ed.), *Rubens and his workshop. The Flight of Lot and his family from Sodom*, exh. cat. Tokyo (The National Museum of Western Art) 1993, p. 97–127; Idem, 'Rubens and his studio: defining the problem', in: Joost Vander Auwera and Sabine Van Sprang (eds.), *Rubens: a genius at work. The works of Peter Paul Rubens in the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium reconsidered*, exh. cat. Brussels (Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium) 2007, p. 30–51.

31 Konrad Renger, 'Rubens dedit dedicavitque. Rubens' Beschäftigung mit der Reproduktionsgrafik I. Teil: der Kupferstich', in: *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 16 (1974), p. 122–175; Idem, 'Rubens dedit dedicavitque. Rubens' Beschäftigung mit der Reproduktionsgrafik II. Teil: Radierungen und Holzschnitte—Die Widmungen', in: *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 17 (1975), p. 166–213; see also Paul Huvenne, 'Inleiding', in: Nico Van Hout (red.), *Copyright Rubens: Rubens en de grafiek*, exh. cat. Antwerp (Royal Museum of Fine Arts)—Québec (Musée National des Beaux-Arts du Québec) 2004, p. 8–17.

32 See for example quite recently: Nico Van Hout (ed.), *Copyright Rubens. Rubens en de grafiek*, exh. cat. Antwerp (Royal Museums of Fine Arts) 2004, p. 13.

33 Barrett, *Pieter Soutman* (n. 17), p. 18–23. Finally, he received his first privilege in 1619. See Nico Van Hout, 'Copyright Rubens. Cum privilegiis ...', in: Idem, *Copyright Rubens*, p. 30–39.

34 See Peter Sutton et al. (eds.), *Drawn by the brush. Oil sketches by Peter Paul Rubens*, exh. cat. Greenwich (Bruce Museum of Arts and Science) — Berkeley (University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive) — Cincinnati (Cincinnati Art Museum) 2004, p. 92.

35 Suggested dates vary from 1611 to 1614. See Julius Held, *The oil sketches of Peter Paul Rubens: a critical catalogue*, vol. 1, Princeton 1980, p. 432; Elizabeth McGrath, *Rubens: subjects from history (Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard XIII)*, London 1997, vol. 1, p. 50 (1614); Sutton, *Drawn by the brush*, p. 92 (ca. 1613); David Jaffé, *Rubens. A master in the Making*, exh. cat. London (National Gallery) 2005, p. 161 (1611).



Fig. 4 Jacob Matham after Rubens, Samson and Delilah, ca. 1613, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.

During this same visit Rubens probably also met some of Jacob Matham's colleagues. One of those was Willem Buytewech (1591/92–1624) who also made several reproductions around the time of Rubens' visit or shortly after it. Around 1612–13, for example, he produced an engraving after Rubens' *Cain slaying Abel*, now in the Courtauld Institute (figs. 7–8).³⁶ The source for this engraving as for the others is difficult to retrieve and the question whether these etchings were made after existing paintings or after drawings or oil sketches cannot be solved at this moment. But the dating is such that their creation almost has to be linked to Rubens' visit to Haarlem.

Another artist Rubens must have met at this occasion was Pieter Soutman. This contact had significant implications since shortly afterwards, in 1616, Rubens convinced

³⁶ J.G. van Gelder, 'De etsen van W. Buytewech naar Rubens', in: *Oud Holland* 48 (1931), p. 52; Roger D'Hulst and Marc Vandeven, *Rubens. The Old Testament (Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard III)*, ad. nr. 4 (copy 2); Jaffé, *Rubens. A master in the making*, p. 171.



Fig. 5 Peter Paul Rubens, *Samson and Delilah*, ca. 1609. London, National Gallery.

Soutman to accompany him to Antwerp in order to work in his studio as a printmaker, and also as a painter. Soutman, who for too long remained a mysterious person in art historiography, partly due to his activities in two regions, the Southern as well as the Northern Netherlands, has finally received his richly deserved place in art history thanks to Kerry Barrett's recently published dissertation.³⁷

So far we have established to what extent Rubens' production is indebted to the Haarlem art scene, and this from the very beginning of the artist's career. Therefore, it seems not too far-fetched to argue that Goltzius acted as a kind of teacher to the young artist whose work he carefully studied in function of his own artistic education. At the moment of their meeting in 1612, Goltzius had already exchanged the burin for the brush and was working in Rubens' cherished discipline. Moreover, by that time the Dutch master

³⁷ Barrett, *Pieter Soutman* (n. 17).

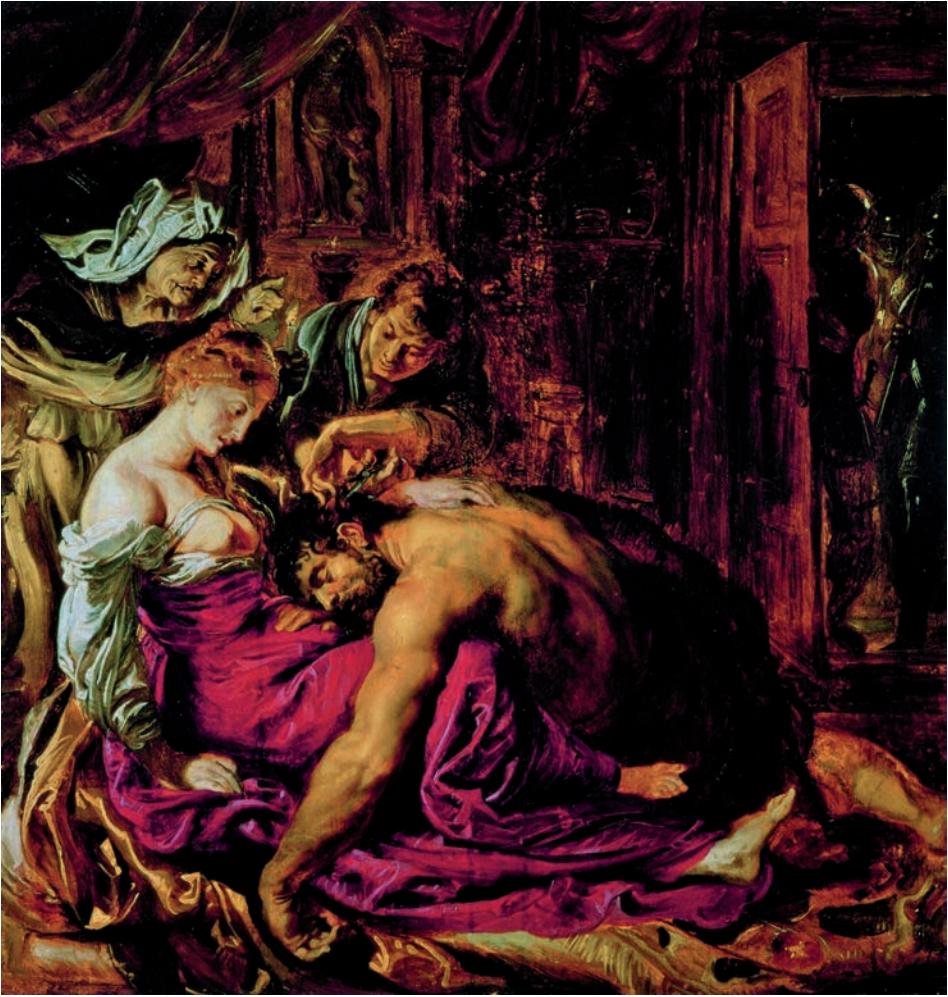


Fig. 6 Peter Paul Rubens, *Samson and Delilah*, ca. 1609. *Cincinnati*, Cincinnati Art Museum.

was highly praised for his painting talent and, especially for his exceptional skillfulness in the representation of the human skin.³⁸ Even if one was not in the opportunity to see his works, one could read in Van Mander's *Schilderboeck* how Goltzius had applied himself since his return from Italy to the depiction of, what he called, the 'glowing' skin, first in his works with pen and later in a discipline allowing much more lifelike shades, in

³⁸ Eric Jan Sluijter, 'Goltzius, Painting and Flesh. Or, why Goltzius Began to Paint in 1600', in: M. van den Doel et al. (eds.), *The Learned Eye. Regarding Art, Theory and The Artist's Reputation. Essays for Ernst van de Wetering*, Amsterdam 2005, pp. 158-177.



Fig. 7 Willem Buytewech after Rubens, Cain slaying Abel, ca. 1612-13, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.



Fig. 8 Peter Paul Rubens, *Cain Slaying Abel*, ca. 1608, London, *The Samuel Courtauld Trust, Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery*.

painting.³⁹ The effect of carnations glowing from beneath the surface which was mainly reached through the use of red and ochre is beautifully illustrated by Goltzius's *Danae* in Los Angeles (fig. 9): it can be observed in the body of Danae, in her red cheeks, but also in the face of the old woman which is literally glowing. As Van Mander pointed out, this working method was unique in the Netherlands at the turn of the seventeenth century and contrasted strongly with 'the stony greyness, or pale, fishy, coldish color' and 'hard shadows' or 'sharp-edged highlights' which were so typical for the Northern nudes. Goltzius' special talent and innovative contribution in this field must have sounded as music to Rubens' ears. And, who knows, maybe this fact gave him an extra incentive to go to Haarlem. Whatever the case may be, in Goltzius he found a kindred soul who did not only show a unique interest in the painting of the nude and of the human skin, but who also drew inspiration from the Northern masters as well as from the antique tradition and the Italian Renaissance. This respect and admiration by the Flemish artist for his Dutch colleague is nowhere more poignantly illustrated than in Balthazar Gerbier's lament on the death of Goltzius written in 1618, and published in 1620, in which Rubens was chosen from all artists over the Low Countries to lead the funeral procession.⁴⁰

Goltzius and Rubens

Granting Rubens such a prominent position in an homage to Goltzius – Gerbier's poem bestowed him with the title of the greatest artist of the Netherlands – makes it conceivable that this opinion was fully shared by the deceased artist. And indeed, the signs of sympathy and respect were mutual. Ever since the personal meeting between both artists in 1612, the older master appears to have gotten fascinated by his younger colleague. This is most evident from the scenes Rubens had made since his return from Italy in 1608, and which were characterized by a limited number of figures and a highly sensual stamp in which the nude featured prominently.⁴¹ At least six paintings by Goltzius made between 1613 and 1616 bear resemblance to, or are indebted to, earlier

³⁹ Hessel Miedema (ed.), *Karel van Mander. The lives of the illustrious Netherlandish and German painters. From the first edition of the Schilder-boeck (1603–1604)*, Doornspijk 1994–1999, vol. 1, fols. 285v23, 286r21 and vol. v, p. 214, 218; see also Paul Taylor, 'The glow in late sixteenth and seventeenth-century Dutch paintings', in: E. Hermens (ed.), *Looking through paintings. The study of painting techniques and materials in support of art historical research (Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek xi)* 1998, p. 159–178.

⁴⁰ The part of Gerbier's poem where Rubens comes into the scene is published and commented by David Freedberg. See David Freedberg, 'Fame, Convention and Insight. On the relevance of Fornenbergh and Gerbier', in: *Ringling Museum of Art Journal* 1 (1983), p. 236–59; see also Otto Hirschmann, 'Balthasar Gerbiers Eer end de Claght-Dight ter Eeren van Henricus Goltzius', in: *Oud-Holland* 38 (1920), p. 104–125; E.K.J. Reznicek, *Die Zeichnungen von Hendrick Goltzius*, Utrecht 1961, p. 28–31.

⁴¹ It has been often argued that Goltzius was mostly interested in Rubens' classicistic scenes, but this is not entirely correct. Rubens' classicist period only starts in 1612 and Goltzius' oeuvre shows influences from works before that period too: Rubens' *Venus and Adonis* in Düsseldorf and *Lot and his daughters* in Schwerin date from 1609–10 and 1610 respectively.



Fig. 9 Hendrick Goltzius, *Danae*, 1603, Los Angeles, County Museum of Art.

pictures by Rubens which were available in Holland in their authentic, painted form or in the form of an engraving. A painting that would have made a profound impression on Goltzius is Rubens' *Jupiter and Callisto* from 1613, nowadays in Kassel (fig. 10). This is one of Rubens' typical classicist paintings where the action is carried out by a limited number of figures placed in the foreground and clearly highlighted, giving the painting an almost relief-like appearance. The subject of the painting is taken from Ovid. Rubens shows us here how Callisto, one of Diana's nymphs, is being seduced by Jupiter who has disguised himself as Diana in order to gain the nymph's presence, but who betrays his identity to the viewer by the eagle next to him. Only two years later, Hendrick Goltzius made a painting depicting a very similar Ovidian story where a male god disguises himself as a woman in order to gain access to the woman he loves. The staging of the two sculptural figures on the foreground, the natural setting behind with a tree on the left and a view to the right, the smooth coat of paint and the bright parts of the skin, all those elements remind us of Rubens' *Jupiter and Callisto*. Unfortunately, the early provenance of Rubens' picture is not known. This means that we do not know



Fig. 10 Peter Paul Rubens, Jupiter and Callisto, 1613. Kassel, Staatliche Museen.

where and when Goltzius might have seen Rubens' picture. However, the fact remains that it made a lasting impression since another composition, dated 1616, shows clear reminiscences to it, as has been pointed out by Eric Jan Sluijter.⁴² This is the *Fall of Man* in Washington (fig. 11). Here as well we see two intertwined figures against a natural background; here again the right figure tries to seduce the left one with a sweep of the hand and a penetrating gaze. These are only two examples of Goltzius' quoting practice. There are many more.

Goltzius' link with Rubens was continued by his most talented pupils Pieter de Grebber and Salomon de Bray (1597–1664). Both artists distinguished themselves as history painters and, as has been noticed and convincingly illustrated by Xander van Eck in his very stimulating book on Catholic history painting in the Northern Netherlands, both repeatedly fell back on composition schemes, figures and stylistic elements of Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony Van Dyck which they knew mostly thanks to the widespread print production.⁴³ Pieter de Grebber had probably an additional incentive for his Rubensian inclination. Already at the age of eighteen, he met the Flemish master at the occasion of the famous negotiations with Sir Dudley

⁴² Eric Jan Sluijter, 'Vertumnus en Pomona door Hendrick Goltzius (1613) en Jan Tegnagel (1617). Constanten en contrasten in vorm en inhoud', in: *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 39 (1991), p. 396, nr. 24.

⁴³ Xander van Eck, *Clandestine splendor. Paintings for the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Studies in Netherlandish art and cultural history, volume ix), Zwolle 2008, especially. p. 81–109.



Fig. 11 Hendrick Goltzius, *Fall of Man*, 1616, Washington, National Gallery of Art.

Carleton in 1618. In this instance his father, Frans Pietersz. de Grebber, acted as an agent for Rubens and Pieter accompanied his father on his trip to Antwerp.⁴⁴ During their stay in the city on the river Scheldt, De Grebber junior must have seen a fair number of paintings by Rubens, and probably also of other masters such as the young Van Dyck. These impressions had a lasting effect on this precocious, Catholic artist who would develop into a specialist of monumental history scenes and religious altarpieces. Moreover, he would make good use of his father's vast Catholic network and further expand it, not only in the Northern but also in the Southern Netherlands. Indeed, it seems quite plausible that despite the presence of famous history painters in the south, De Grebber managed to carry off commissions of Flemish cloisters and churches.⁴⁵ It would be very interesting to learn more about De Grebber senior's

⁴⁴ This appears from Rubens's correspondence with Sir Dudley Carleton, and more specifically from the letters of 28 April, 7 May, 12 May, 20 May and 29 May 1618. See Max Rooses and Charles Ruelens (eds.), *Correspondance de Rubens et documents épistolaires concernant sa vie et ses œuvres*, vol. 2, Antwerp 1898, p. 136, 146, 150, 161, 177.

⁴⁵ Peter Sutton, who is preparing a *catalogue raisonné* on De Grebber, assumes that the artist 'painted altar pieces for churches in Flanders (the *Resurrection of Lazarus* of 1623, Church of Our Lady, Bruges; *Assumption*

activities as a dealer and intermediary between the Antwerp and Haarlem artistic community, and also about the importance of Catholic networks in the transmission of artistic patrimony across the borders.

The varied and multiple interactions between Goltzius and his followers on the one and Rubens and his followers on the other hand – in the worlds of both printing and painting – have led us to the conclusion that it is difficult to consider the origin and development of the Haarlem and the Antwerp schools of painting as independent phenomena. In this paper, we have focused on one example only, but many more cross-border exchanges can be detected in the numerous specializations which were taking shape during those early years of the seventeenth century. We only have to think of the marine painter Jan Porcellis, who was born in the south, who became a leading specialist in marine painting in Haarlem, and who spent part of his career in Antwerp.⁴⁶ Another noteworthy example is Adriaen Brouwer, who through his travelling between Antwerp and Haarlem, had an important impact on the development of genre painting in both cities.⁴⁷ Or, think of the still-life painter Pieter Claesz. (1596/97–1660), originating from Antwerp and importing in 1620 an Antwerp style into Haarlem, which in turn underwent significant changes in his new Haarlem environment.⁴⁸

Based on these examples, we argue that cross-border migrations had seminal influences on the iconographic traditions on both sides of the frontier which demand further research in order to grasp the essence of the shared patrimony, as well as discernible differences. Furthermore, it is important to find out how these interactions developed towards the end of the century when the Antwerp school of painting had lost most of its brilliance and when the Haarlem school of painting was also losing a lot of its innovative power.

of the virgin of 1648, Saint Peter's church, Ghent, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent'). Peter Sutton, 'Pieter de Grebber', in: Albert Blankert et al. (eds.), *Hollands classicisme in de zeventiende-eeuwse schilderkunst*, exh. cat. Rotterdam (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) – Frankfurt am Main (Städelsches Kunstinstitut) 1999, p. 116. Research by Marloes Hemmer and Karolien De Clippel has revealed that the earliest provenances of both paintings are missing and that the earliest references go back to the eighteenth century only. Even if they situate the paintings in the Bruges and Ghent context respectively, evidence of a commission is missing. *Museum voor Schone Kunsten Gent: catalogus schilderkunst*, vol. 1, Ghent 2007, p. 97; Stadsarchief Ghent: *Notice des tableaux, dessins et estampes trouvés dans la ci-d(é)vant Ecole de l'Abbaye de Baudeloo. Ceux marqués d'un K sont conformes à la note du 10 ventôse An V, trouvé au quartier de l'Abbé de Saint-Pierre*, Ghent 1797, no. 269.

⁴⁶ See amongst others J. Walsh, 'The Dutch marine painters Jan and Julius Porcellis, 1. Jan's early career', in: *The Burlington Magazine* 116 (1974), p. 653–662; Idem, 'The Dutch marine painters Jan and Julius Porcellis, II. Jan's maturity and "de jonge Porcellis"', in: *The Burlington Magazine* 116 (1974), p. 734–745; Eric Duverger, 'Nadere gegevens over de Antwerpse periode van Jan Porcellis', in: *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* 16 (1976), p. 269–279.

⁴⁷ Karolien De Clippel, 'Adriaen Brouwer, portrait painter. New identifications and an iconographic novelty', in: *Simiolus* 30 (2003) p. 196–216; Idem, 'Two sides of the same coin' (n. 16), p. 17–34.

⁴⁸ Pieter Biesboer et al. (eds.), *Pieter Claesz. Meester van het stilleven in de Gouden Eeuw*, exhib. cat. Haarlem (Frans Halsmuseum) – Zürich (Kunsthau) – Washington (National Gallery) 2004.

Conclusions

The root causes of the emerging Haarlem art market were to a large extent a result of external factors. Haarlem welcomed the Flemish artists fleeing from violence, religious prosecution and lack of opportunities, and also imported the Antwerp addiction of collecting pictures, as well as their marketing techniques. Haarlem – like Amsterdam – was in effect Antwerp transferred. But the story does not end with the integration of Flemish artists into Northern towns. Easy, cheap, safe and reliable passenger transport proved essential for continued exchanges between artists in both the Southern Netherlands and the Dutch Republic. Family ties played a crucial role as did the networks artists belonged to. Through the art trade a shared visual culture was both maintained and developed further, not in the least by the dissemination of prints. All of this facilitated artistic cross-overs and cross-fertilization in the visual arts. Despite the tendency of Haarlem artists to specialize in certain genres, they did not operate in a vacuum and were indebted to developments taking place in other Netherlandish towns.⁴⁹ Rubens' excursion to Haarlem demonstrates that the personal contacts – casual or more sustained – between artists of the Low Countries did contribute to the spread of artistic know-how. We also take this opportunity to again stress that these exchanges were by no means a one-way street.

In conclusion, if we wish to gain full insight into artistic developments and changes in pictorial traditions, we need to put into question the autonomy and identity of city schools, even if it means crossing borders and challenging time-honored art-historical paradigms. To put it more bluntly, by drawing attention to the Flemishness of the Haarlem school, we wish to make the case for a more international approach in studying Dutch painting.

⁴⁹ Or to use Baxandall's terminology: they made *choices* which illustrate their awareness of trends, manners and fashions in other Netherlandish towns. Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of intention. On the historical explanation of pictures*, New Haven 1985.