

## 2. Rembrandt and the Germanic Style

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### Abstract

This essay draws from the writings of authors such as Franciscus Junius and Samuel van Hoogstraten to suggest that Rembrandt associated his artistic identity with the ancient Batavians, purported forefathers of the Dutch. Tracing the etymological association of 'schild' (shield) and 'schilder' (painter) and the fascination with Teutonic lore in Rembrandt's milieu, the author proposes an analogy between Rembrandt's increasingly blunt, direct manner of painting and the plainness of manner and speech associated with the Batavians. This analysis sheds new light on Rembrandt's *Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis* (Stockholm, Nationalmuseum), painted for the Amsterdam Town Hall.

**Keywords:** Rembrandt van Rijn, Franciscus Junius, Johannes Colaert, Tacitus, Nehalennia, Claudius Civilis, Roman Batavia, Teutonophilia, Amsterdam Town Hall (now Royal Palace)

### Introduction: Rembrandt's Name<sup>1</sup>

Raphael's and Michelangelo's names, which allegedly expressed the 'angelic' character of their works, may have reflected an element of their ambitions in self-fashioning, in a more pretentious manner than that by which Tintoretto's name stood merely for his dexterity with paints.<sup>2</sup> North of the Alps, these Italians may in turn have been an example for Peter Paul Rubens, whose own last name could be derived from the Latin verb 'rubere', literally meaning being red or, more figuratively, blushing. The name 'Rubens' may have come to stand for a specific manner of brushwork, connected to the self-image the artist wanted to project: perhaps he focused on rosy flesh tints as one of his trademarks.

Like his predecessors who were known by their first names, the master from the Jodenbreestraat signed simply with 'Rembrandt'. This essay explores a possible background for his choice. The name was idiosyncratic in the seventeenth century; an old Germanic word, Rembrandt meant 'regal sword'.<sup>3</sup> This article will suggest that when the artist highlighted his first name, he probably had his presumed Batavian forefathers in mind. This was not dissimilar to his pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten, who carried the nickname 'The Batavian', identifying him as descendant of the local tribe that had inhabited the Low Countries during the Roman occupation.<sup>4</sup> Van Hoogstraten, who was thankfully so garrulous on paper in contrast to his master's silence, referred repeatedly to these northern forefathers, including

the Saxons, Longobards, Scandinavians, and Anglo-Saxons, and quoted from authors well versed in Germanic antiquities, Richard Verstegan and Franciscus Junius.<sup>5</sup> Rembrandt's library does not mention the latter's work of art theory, *The Painting of the Ancients*; as a quarto-sized volume it could have been among the 'fifteen miscellaneous books' mentioned at his bankruptcy.<sup>6</sup> Yet he probably owned a copy of J.L. Gottfried's *Historical Chronicle* (1630–1635), an illustrated world history also including images of the Batavians.<sup>7</sup>

Rembrandt may have associated his artistic identity with the military valour of the Batavians whose shields were their first works of art. There is no definitive proof for this hypothesis. In order to connect seventeenth-century ideas about etymology to themes and styles in painting, this article will therefore sketch a broad scholarly background, proposing that the choice for 'Rembrandt' as an artistic brand name was related to the antiquarian interest of some of the master's contemporaries. Our discussion will first outline the insight that the Germanic languages shared a single past that could be a cultural counterweight to the Mediterranean. Then some instances of Germanic iconography will come to the fore, before the focus falls on Rembrandt's brushwork. As shall be argued by singling out the painting *The Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis*, the master's idiosyncratic working manner reflected a conscious choice to adjust form to content, related to the vernacular ideology formulated by learned contemporaries, Franciscus Junius in particular.

### *Teutonophilia* in the Early Seventeenth Century

Junius's treatise on painting, the starting point for our analysis, was the first of its kind in Dutch to appear after Karel van Mander's

*Schilder-Boek* (1604). The Latin original (1637) was in fact the only work of art theory ever published in seventeenth-century Amsterdam, Europe's most dynamic art market at the time. The book was renowned among the lettered and when the Dutch version appeared in 1641, it must have made an impact among painters, too; Rembrandt's acquaintances, including Constantijn Huygens, Joachim von Sandrart, and Van Hoogstraten, respectively owned a copy, quoted from it, and praised its qualities.<sup>8</sup> Junius's scholarship is essential for our integrated analysis of etymology and art. He was a mainstay in a circle of 'Philoteutones', to use his own term, among whom taking pride in an obscure word such as 'Rembrandt' responded to a larger cultural pattern that would culminate in the painted decoration of Amsterdam's Town Hall.<sup>9</sup>

Around 1641, the Batavians again came to life for the Dutch: their battle against the Romans was deemed to have foreshadowed the Dutch revolt against the Habsburgs. The Philoteutones around Junius included, for one, Johan van Heemskerck, who brought the manuscript of Junius's treatise, *The Painting of the Ancients*, from the author, at the time working in London, to Amsterdam for publication in 1634 and was among the first to receive a printed copy.<sup>10</sup> Van Heemskerck's own novelistic work, *Batavian Arcadia*, was read by an especially large audience; its subsequent editions contained an increasing number of references to the ancient Batavians, pitting this bravest of the Germanic tribes not only against the Romans but also, anachronistically, against the Spaniards.<sup>11</sup> The book sparked a peculiar, new, patriotic-novelistic genre that suited the Philoteutones' tastes. Another author to receive a copy of Junius's art theory was Hugo Grotius, who became a great admirer; he wrote some of the seminal texts about Germanic ancestry.<sup>12</sup> His *Treatise on the Antiquity of the Batavian, now Dutch Republic* (1610) developed a positive

view of the Dutch in comparison to other nations; he also devoted attention to artists such as Lucas van Leyden, presented as exemplary of the Batavian mentality.<sup>13</sup> Grotius's books were essential in providing the new culture politics of the northern provinces, especially Holland and Zeeland, with a historical dimension.

After finishing his treatise on painting, Junius became a key figure in the cultural movement that highlighted the Germanic past as a counterweight to the predominance of Italy and France. As Germanic antiquity had left almost no material remnants, language was an essential source. When he returned from England to Holland in 1642, the scholar started to work on various editions and dictionaries related to the history of the Germanic languages. Sophie van Romburgh's unparalleled work on Junius's learned background has pointed out that it was *The Painting of the Ancients* that put him on the trail of comparative Germanic linguistics: in London, he had worked simultaneously on Dutch and English translations, which inspired his subsequent, pioneering studies of Anglo-Saxon, Frisian, Gothic, Old Norse, and Icelandic – all subordinated to this grand project of elevating the status of Dutch or, as he called its ancient forerunner, 'Teutonic':<sup>14</sup>

I know the sharp and vigorous talents of the Dutch; I know how great the lovers of splendour and all elegancies are; I also know for certain with what a great love for a joint mother tongue and fatherland they are burning; I am so roused to the greatest and, as I trust, truest hope that there will always be the exceptional talents of our people, who apply themselves, together with me, to recovering Teutonic to the grace of pristine prestige and grandeur by all application of their energy.<sup>15</sup>

This ambition echoed the then popular idea that Dutch would be the purest Germanic

language, as posited by Verstegan and Abraham Mylius. Mylius saw Dutch as a direct derivation from Hebrew or Greek;<sup>16</sup> the latter idea appealed to Junius too:

Such a great splendour overflowed the ancient Teutonic language everywhere that foreigners of great name in our century have willingly granted it the primacy because of the extraordinary richness of an idiom spread far and wide, the splendour, the magnificence, and the remarkable pre-eminence of authentic elegance.<sup>17</sup>

Junius's ambitions united art and language throughout his career: he continued to refer to his painting treatise in later works, including an edition of an Old High German version of the Song of Songs (1655) and an unfinished Anglo-Saxon dictionary.<sup>18</sup> This dictionary, in fact, incorporated a manuscript glossary on Anglo-Saxon from the library of Rubens, who apparently shared some of Junius's interests and wrote a letter in praise of his art theory.<sup>19</sup> Growing insight into the similarities between Dutch, Frisian, and Old English apparently contributed to the awareness of a common cultural origin in Britain and the Low Countries. Junius was in an ideal position to explore this through his appointment as curator of the collections of the London-based Earl and Countess of Arundel, which included paintings by many artists from the Netherlands, including Rembrandt, and illustrated Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. Here, Junius started to collect the texts in various ancient Germanic languages that would determine his further career.<sup>20</sup> In addition, he corresponded with pivotal figures of the Teutonic 'Renaissance' in the Netherlands, such as Johannes Smetius, whose antiquarian collection the Arundels desired to buy, and Janus Vlittius.<sup>21</sup> Whereas in the Arundel circle, respected English antiquarians such as William

Camden restricted their historical interests to the countries bordering the 'British Ocean' (North Sea), Junius's work eventually linked England not only to Holland and Friesland but also the German states, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland. By the 1640s, the Dutchman fully exchanged art theory for etymological research, suggesting that his 'comparison of most ancient dialects' should shed light on those 'most noble peoples': 'the triumphant Goths, Huns, Vandals and Longobards when the glory of the Roman Empire was in decline'.<sup>22</sup>

### Germanic Iconography

As early as 1604, Karel van Mander demonstrated his awareness of the importance of Germanic art when referring to Lambert Lombard's and Hubert Goltzius's interest in 'Frankish' or 'Teutonic antiquities'.<sup>23</sup> These ancient works had been made when art in Italy had declined and was almost destroyed in war; therefore the 'images by the Franks' provided Lombard with 'his basis in art'. This characterization appeared inspired to some extent by the painter's name, which identifies him as a descendant of the ancient Longobards (more specifically, the tribe of the Eburones).<sup>24</sup> Some examples of those 'Frankish' masters are to be found in Junius's writings: Notker, a painter at Otto II's court; the artist and engraver Tutilo of the Swiss Abbey of Saint Gall; and Eginhard, Charlemagne's secretary, who was also an architect.<sup>25</sup> Only the latter's work remains: an altar cross for the monastery of Saint Servaas in Maastricht. Imitating the form of a Roman triumphal arch, it is decorated with classical personifications and thus interprets the ancient heritage in Christian terms (fig. 2.1).

What did art based on presumed Germanic roots look like for antiquarians in the Low Countries? Versteeg depicted the seven deities of

the Germanic pantheon in some detail.<sup>26</sup> When it came to images to complement the philological scholarship, however, the Batavians merit our attention, and especially their goddess, Nehalennia. The tribesmen themselves were first portrayed in Otto van Veen's text, *The War of the Batavians and the Romans* (1612), where they appeared as civilized ancients in elegant clothes and feathered hats.<sup>27</sup> By contrast, Simon Frisius's images in Philippus Cluverius, *Ancient Germany* (1616) showed half-naked barbarians (fig. 2.2).<sup>28</sup> Both books drew from Tacitus's account, 'The Origin and Land of the Germans', praising the Batavians as a battle-hardened tribe, translated into Dutch in 1616; Van Hoogstraten's treatise also quotes from it.<sup>29</sup> According to Tacitus, the tribal leader Julius Civilis (Claudius Civilis to the Dutch, due to faulty copying of the source texts), had staged a revolt against the Romans;<sup>30</sup> Van Hoogstraten fondly recalls him as 'our Batavian'.<sup>31</sup> A more detailed picture of Germanic idolatry featured in Abraham Ortelius's *An Image of the Golden Age or the Life, Manners, Rites, and Religion of the Ancient Germans* (1596). The engraving, possibly by Pieter van der Borcht the Elder, shows the ancient tribe venerating the sun, moon, and statues apparently imported by the Romans, representing Mercury and Minerva (fig. 2.3).

The coastal province of Zeeland was a special focus of attention in Junius's circle. From time to time, battered votive sculptures surfaced on its shores dating back to the Batavian era, some of them depicting syncretist Roman-Germanic Gods. The Amsterdam professor Gerardus Johannes Vossius discussed a statue of Mercury, found on the island of Walcheren, that was reportedly destroyed by Saint Willibrord (658–739). This Anglo-Saxon missionary, the 'Apostle of the Low Countries', made conversions in the area from Friesland to the Southern Netherlands. According to



- ▲ 2.1. Anonymous artist, Drawing of the foot of a cross, in the form of a Roman triumphal arch donated by Eginhard to the Basilica of St Servatius in Maastricht (first half 9th century), undated, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS fr.10440, fol. 45
- ▼ 2.2. Simon Frisius, *Germanic Family*, 1616, etching and engraving, 262 × 162 mm, in: Philippus Cluverius, *Germaniae antiquae libri tres* (Leiden 1616), Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. RP-P-1950-361
- ▲ 2.3. Attributed to Pieter van der Borcht the Elder, *Germanic Religion*, 1596, engraving in: A. Ortelius, *Aurei Saeculi Imago*, Antwerpen 1596. Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, Special Collections

Alcuin's hagiography of c. 795, Willibrord's company demolished the Walcheren shrine and murdered its guard.<sup>32</sup>

Such a scene was portrayed by an Amsterdam artist in Rembrandt's orbit, Johannes Collaert (fig. 2.4): Willibrord, in full ecclesiastical regalia, is surrounded by a disheveled group of natives. At a gesture of his left hand, it seems, an altar statue of a laurel-crowned young nude (male or female), holding a torch, breaks in



two. It apparently symbolizes pagan antiquity as well as the sensuality associated with it.<sup>33</sup> Vossius's son Matthaeus made a detailed study of the area of the finds: after writing a 'book on the deeds of the ancient Batavians' (*Annalium*, 1635), he proceeded with *The Antiquities of Holland and Zeeland* in 1642;<sup>34</sup> 'the subject will also be welcome to Englishmen, because it is still unknown to foreigners; well, it is even hardly known to the Dutch', Vossius wrote to Junius in London.<sup>35</sup>

The most conspicuous of the Zeeland finds were monuments dedicated to Nehalennia, a Germanic deity the Romans had included in



- ▼ 2.4. Johannes Jansz Colaert, *Willibrord Destroys the Cult Statue*, 1653, oil on canvas, 113 × 156 cm., formerly Amsterdam, Collection Willem Russell. Present location unknown
- ▲ 2.5. Jan de Mel, *Nehalennia Altars*, in: Olivarius Vredius (Olivier de Wree), *Historiae Comitum Flandriae Libri Prodrumi Duo* (Bruges 1650), engraving, 265 × 178 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, F.G. Waller Bequest, 1937, inv. RP-P-1937.2216
- ◄ 2.6. Unknown artist, *Altar for Nehalennia, of Dacinus, Son of Liffio*, c. 150-250 AD, limestone relief, 95.5 × 64 × 28 cm, Leiden, Royal Museum of Antiquities, inv. IDN 1. Found in Domburg

their pantheon. Some imagery had already been found in the sixteenth century, but in 1647 a low tide revealed a fully-fledged temple structure dedicated to her.<sup>36</sup> Its discovery, sketched by Hendrick van Schuylenburg,

attracted many in the Netherlands, including Constantijn Huygens and the draftsman Willem Goeree, a Zeeland native who witnessed the findings with his own eyes: it is not hard to imagine other artists present by his side on the

beach.<sup>37</sup> The votive objects characteristically represented Nehalennia as a woman with a basket of fruit on her lap and a dog by her side (figs. 2.5-2.6). The Dutch painters do not seem to have explored this iconography, unless we presume that it contributed to the popularity in the 1620s and '30s of pastoral images of women carrying fruit or flowers, such as shepherdesses and female portraits *all'antica* – including Rembrandt's painting of his wife Saskia in arcadian costume (fig. 2.7).<sup>38</sup>

Among scholars, however, speculations about the goddess sparked discussions on art and etymology. Nehalennia seemed to prove that the ancient indigenous culture of the Netherlands was already fully developed before the Roman occupation. Such, at least, was the opinion of Marcus Boxhornius, professor of history in Leiden, who wrote a *Chronicle of Zeeland* (1644) connecting the archaeological finds to a

theory on the ancestry of many Dutch words. Not only did he derive Nehalennia's name from *Nat eiland* ('wet island'), he also traced the name of Zierikzee, one of Zeeland's largest cities, back to the sorceress Circe in the *Odyssey*.<sup>39</sup> Thus he contributed his share to the theory that Homer's epics actually took place not on the Greek islands but in the Low Countries, an idea that became very popular (and still has its adherents today): the city of Vlissingen (Flushing) would even bear Odysseus's name.<sup>40</sup>

Among the Teutonophiles, discussions about the iconography of the extant indigenous Dutch antiquities thus became intertwined with a wider linguistic argument, drawing the Dutch language and history closer to the most ancient past. Inspired by Junius's scholarship, Vlitius eventually used Nehalennia to argue for the pedigree tracing Dutch back to Scythian, and the Batavians as descended from the Scyths. Junius came to embrace this theory, too, after the 1660s.<sup>41</sup> Later in the century, Nehalennia's myth grew to inflated proportions; a particularly elaborate image was included in Servatius Gallaeus's *Discourse on the God Hercules Magusanus and the Goddess Nehalennia* (1688). The frontispiece by Romeyn de Hooghe demonstrates the veneration of Nehalennia and 'Hercules Magusanus', another syncretistic deity and the presumed forefather of the Batavians.<sup>42</sup> The artist has included worshippers with sacrificial animals, prostrating themselves before their idols in two shrines, in fact greatly enlarged versions of the Zeeland finds (fig. 2.8). On the left, one of Nehalennia's votive stones has been turned into the front of a full-fledged temple crowned with statues of Ceres and Neptune, highlighting her status as the coastal province's fertility goddess. Nehalennia is depicted with her signature dog,



◀ 2.7. Rembrandt, *Saskia van Uylenburgh in Arcadian Costume* (*Saskia van Uylenburgh as Flora*), 1635, oil on canvas, 123.5 × 97.5 cm, London, National Gallery, inv. 4930

basket of flowers, a hood and a cloth draped over her shoulders; the columns flanking her image echo the pilasters on the original sculptures. The flying putto to her right, however, was a product of the imagination, as was the scale of the architecture: the real votive stones almost never exceed one meter in height.

### Germanic Style

Boxhornius's attempts were one example among many using language for a reconstruction of Germanic antiquity. The most popular etymological argument used by Dutch art theorists concerned the verb *schilderen* (to paint), which they interpreted as developed from the noun *schild* (shield); Van Hoogstraten explained that 'one will easily admit that the ancient Batavians have known no other paintings than their shields'.<sup>43</sup> Hence he stated that Teutons and Batavians should be represented wearing shields with painted images, and the Anglo-Saxons with chariots decorated in the same manner. Contemporary prints confirm this idea: Cluverius's book represents Germanic noblemen with large, rectangular shields, one decorated with a painted bird; the personification of Germania also carries a painted shield (fig. 2.9).<sup>44</sup>

This popular etymology was codified in a Dutch-Latin dictionary of 1605. Its entry for *schild* reads: 'a painted shield, or the painting and image of a shield'; likewise, the verb *schilderen* is explained as 'the construction or painting of a shield'.<sup>45</sup> Van Mander repeats this argument and Junius gives it a prominent position in the Dutch version of his treatise. More

than both the Latin and the English versions, this book devotes attention to the Germanic tribes' courage, replacing a discussion of Christian imagery with an exploration of the origin of the 'Dutch verb *schilderen* [...] since it is probable that for a long time, the ancient battle-hardened inhabitants of these lands have used art only to ornament their shields'.<sup>46</sup> In Junius's scholarship, the etymology is taken seriously; it returns in his manuscripts for a dictionary of Anglo-Saxon.<sup>47</sup> The painted decorations, apparently, expressed martial valour: 'in the times of our ancestors [...] the shields of valiant men were painted; the shields of fresh-water souldiers on the contrary and of unmanly cowards, were unpainted'.<sup>48</sup>

The reasoning that derived *schilderen* from *schilden* in fact reflected a fundamental attitude in the Dutch appreciation of their ancestors. Ultimately, the 'Golden Age' of



- ▶ 2.8. Romeyn de Hooghe, *Veneration of Nehalennia and Hercules Magusanus*, 1688, engraving, frontispiece in: Servatius Gallaeus, 'Dissertatio de deo Hercule Magusano et de dea Nehalennia in littore maris Zelandi effossis' in: *Dissertationes de Sibyllis earumque oraculis*, 1688, Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, Special Collections, inv. OTM O 62-3647

Dutch painting – which, according to Van Hoogstraten, equalled that of ancient Greece – mirrored the *aetas aurea* of Germanic history when the Romans praised the Batavians for their martial prowess and noble simplicity.<sup>49</sup> Verstegan states that ‘Seneca doth exceedingly laud them, not letting to say, that there is no nation more coragious then the German’; Van Hoogstraten praises in particular the Rhinelanders’ weaponry.<sup>50</sup> We are reminded of the exemplary Batavian Soranus, able to cross the Danube swimming in full armour.<sup>51</sup> Yet, the Germanic tribes allegedly shared not

only military but also cultural values. In the seventeenth century, those values became a model for judging Dutch art and literature.

As Henri van de Waal has shown, Dutch writers reiterated a commonplace that Roman historians had used in describing and appropriating foreign civilizations: the simplicity of the barbaric tribes was deemed a positive value that had been lost by the ancients themselves.<sup>52</sup> More recently, Ernst Gombrich addressed this issue in a wider context of art criticism when he showed that the alleged simplicity of one’s forefathers was a recurring theoretical concept in discussing the figurative arts from Cicero onwards.<sup>53</sup> Theories of painting presented simplicity, and a corresponding inability to flatter, as particularly praiseworthy virtues. The preference for Germanic antiquity itself followed closely the ancient authors’ topical fondness for the ‘roughness’ and ‘crudity’ of an earlier age. Ultimately, Cicero’s formula in *De oratore* was made famous by Gombrich’s book: ‘How much more brilliant [...] in beauty and variety of colouring are new pictures compared to the old ones. But though they captivate us at first sight the pleasure does not last, while the very roughness and crudity of old paintings maintain their hold on us.’<sup>54</sup>

Verstegan, for instance, writing about the Germanic tribes, echoed the various elements of this positive judgment of primitive civilization: ‘uncorrupt nature’, simplicity, and masculinity in contrast to ‘whorish’ or ‘effeminate’ appearance. Following Tacitus, he recounted that the Germans ‘were without fraud and subiltie, yea one of Caesars own successors in the Roman Empyre saith plainly that hee had learned by experience, that this people could not flatter, but conversed simply and plainly with all other nations’.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, the notion of ‘virtuous



◀ 2.9. Nicolaas van Geilenkercken after Simon Frisius, *Germanic Warriors*, 1616, engraving, in: Philippus Cluverius, *Germaniae antiquae libri tres* (Leiden 1616), p. 194. Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, Special Collections

primitives' related to various artistic concerns. Most obvious was the rhetorical concept of brevity, denoting plain and unadorned speech. *Brevitas* was connected, for example, to writing in the vernacular.<sup>56</sup> Art theorists used this notion to legitimize their efforts when writing in Dutch, since 'lessons are of more benefit [...] when they are presented concisely and clearly in a common language, without polished speech'.<sup>57</sup> According to Verstegan, this also held true for the early Christian missionaries: although they had preached in Anglo-Saxon, their straightforward speeches were understood by the local tribes in the Netherlands. Verstegan and Junius thus deemed the Germanic languages less corrupted by stylistic affectation than modern Romance ones. The former held that a 'broken and corrupt kind of Latin' is spoken in Spain and France, while Junius echoed this sentiment in speaking of 'bastard Latin languages' that serve as a stark foil to the purity of the modern Germanic tongues.<sup>58</sup>

Verstegan dwelled at length on the Teutons' virtues, related to their alleged simplicity and unaffected style of speaking: he praised their 'honesty of lyf, a rare thing among pagan people'. Caesar would have reported that 'the youth of Germanie were not given to the lusts of the flesh': the men refrained from intercourse with women younger than twenty years and married only virgins.<sup>59</sup> The author repeated the Roman authors' preference for the incorruptible masculinity of foreigners that mirrored their compatriots' alleged decadence. This commonplace is also expressed in Ortelius's representation of the Germans, specifying frugality as one of their chief virtues – even though the image also stresses their preference for huge quantities of food.<sup>60</sup>

Verstegan's topical remarks on primitive virtues are echoed in Junius's theory, where the appreciation of uncorrupt civilization apparently overlaps the preference for an art which is 'close to nature'. For Junius, 'a right

lover of Art' must 'preferre a plaine and honest worke agreeing with Nature before any other phantastically capricious devices'.<sup>61</sup> Colette Nativel has even recently indicated that his moral standards derived to a large extent from ancient Stoicism;<sup>62</sup> as an example one could single out a statement in Seneca's *Letters*: 'Our principle is to live according to Nature [...] philosophy calls for frugality, not self-torture: frugality can still be in good taste [...] He is great who uses pottery dishes as if they were silver.'<sup>63</sup>

In Junius's treatise, masculine appearance and behaviour are directly equated to the pictorial values of 'natural colouring' and 'closeness to life'. He quotes Quintilian: 'The dignitie belonging to a man must be stout and uncorrupted; it cannot abide an effeminate smoothnesse, nor such a colour as is procured by choice painting; seeing bloud and strength must make it goodly and faire.'<sup>64</sup> The Dutch text speaks about 'healthy' colours.<sup>65</sup> It is worth quoting a longer passage in which Junius explains his vision of ideal antiquity, determined by the virtues of virile, martial simplicity, and praises plain colouring above gaudy ornamentation (*hoogh-verwighe blanketsels*):

Those who are taken with an outward shew of things [...] iudge sometimes that there is more beautie in them which are polled, shaved, smoothed, curled, and painted, than incorrupt Nature can give unto them: even as if pulchritude did proceed out of the corruption of manners. [...] [I]f any man study to trim bodies with an effeminate kinde of polling and painting, the very labour and affectation of such a forced beauty shall make them most ill-favoured and ugly.

Junius continues this simile with a quote from Lucian, declaring that refined dress is not befitting to masculine strength, and concludes that painters should address the subject matter

around them in an uncorrupted, simple painting style:

If any man should offer to adorne a lusty and stout wrestler [...] with purple cloaths and other whorish ornaments, disguising likewise and painting his face; would he not seeme to be very ridiculous, for shaming the man after this manner? Even so is it for the most part better to decke his worke in a rug gowne, than to adorne it with strumpet-like ornaments. [...] [W]e must not alwayes thinke that best which is most hidden; for the best things are ever at hand, inherent in the things themselves, and most easily discerned by their owne light, being the first things our eyes meet with if we winke not.<sup>66</sup>

The topical train of thought attributing virtue to the simple and unaffected explains how Verstegan was able to conclude in regard to the Germanic costumes, that 'theire incivillitie appeereth to have bin such that it might have given great example of civillitie, to al the rest of the barbarous nations of the world besyde'.<sup>67</sup>

It does not seem an impossible train of thought to connect the simplicity in the choice of subject matter, recommended by Junius, to the straightforward representation of everyday objects that in some measure determined the Dutch painters' international acclaim – their preference, according to Van Hoogstraten, 'to follow the simplicity of nature'.<sup>68</sup> As early as 1602, Grotius, analysing the characteristics of the Dutch, harked back to the Batavian virtues of simplicity and purity in order to contrast the 'artificial' painting of the Italians with the works of Maarten van Heemskerck and Lucas van Leyden who allegedly 'followed Nature'.<sup>69</sup> The aims formulated in Dutch art theory to imitate nature in a simple and uncorrupted manner, and the authors' less pronounced interest in products of the imagination, have recently been put into perspective by referring to the

Stoical ethics prevalent in seventeenth-century Dutch moral philosophy.<sup>70</sup> Junius's remark that painters should realize that 'the best things are ever at hand [...] being the first things our eyes meet with if we winke not', applies well to the focus of many artists on genre scenes, low-life figures and the surface qualities of simple objects. Van Hoogstraten, for one, retains Junius's preference for nature above fantasy. Thus, he not only mentions the sobriety in the attire of the Teutonic tribes, but he also repeats Junius's criticism of extravagance, quoting Vitruvius's statement that 'a ship should look like a ship, an image like a human being, or [...] a known or natural creature'.<sup>71</sup>

### *The Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis*

It is hard to establish whether the Stoic admonishment to 'use pottery dishes as if they were silver' was relevant to the usage of simple pewter cups for the Supper celebration in Dutch Protestant churches, including large congregations such as Amsterdam's Westerkerk. Even more speculative is a connection between the commonplace in artistic literature that the Romans boasted of their humble origins as farmers and shepherds, as expressed for example by Van Hoogstraten, and the Amsterdam Burgomasters' pride in their pedigree stemming from primitive but virtuous indigenous tribes.<sup>72</sup> An example of this association is Govert Flinck's monumental painting in the Amsterdam Town Hall (now the Royal Palace), *Manius Curius Dentatus Preferring Turnips to Gold* (1656), in which the theme expressed the ideal of stoic constancy in the face of bribery and decadence – Dentatus' simple brown gown, contrasting with the bejewelled silk of his interlocutor, expressed his virtues (fig. 2.10). Originally, this work

was part of the same decoration programme as Rembrandt's *Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis* (1661-1662) (fig. 2.11 and pl. 2.11). In contrast to Flinck's work, however, Rembrandt's *Conspiracy* was soon taken down again. In what follows, a new answer will be proposed to the question of why Rembrandt misjudged his patrons' wishes – why he chose to make such an idiosyncratic painting. This work may have expressed his vision of 'incorrupt nature' associated with the indigenous Germans: a vernacular style of painting that corresponded to the Batavian subject matter.

### Content and Form

Rembrandt obviously differed from his colleagues working for the Town Hall in his choice of iconographic details: he chose not to represent his figures in Roman dress as Jan Lievens and Jacob Jordaens did in the context of the same commission.<sup>73</sup> Most striking is the Batavian headgear: Claudius Civilis, or 'Klaas Burgersen' in Dutch, wears a particular fan-ciful hat that the artist perhaps derived from a fifteenth-century medal.<sup>74</sup> The standing figure on the viewer's side of the table wears



► 2.10. Govert Flinck, *Manius Curius Dentatus Preferring Turnips to Gold*, 1656, oil on canvas, 458 × 370 cm, Amsterdam, Royal Palace

slitted sleeves which, as Van de Waal has shown, were identified with the oldest Germanic garb.<sup>75</sup> When Rembrandt tried to give his Batavians such a ‘vernacular’ appearance he may have been echoing his pupil Colaert, who had depicted the Dutch Republic’s ancestors in a similarly un-Roman manner: behind Willibrord lurches a bearded man with a large fur hat foreshadowing Rembrandt’s *Civilis* (above, fig. 2.4). Moreover, in contrast to Otto van Veen’s depiction and to the painting that came to replace the *Conspiracy* (by Jürgen Ovens and Flinck),<sup>76</sup> in Rembrandt’s work the oath is not confirmed with a civilized handshake, but by a joining of unsheathed swords.

There were clear literary reasons for representing the Batavians in such a disheveled fashion – in Verstegan’s words, ‘the moste ancient manner of the Germans clothing’.<sup>77</sup> Rembrandt’s hirsute portrayal was in keeping with Van Hoogstraten’s reference that the Germans ‘did not shave their beards before they killed, captured, or disarmed one of their enemies’,<sup>78</sup> as well as with Junius’s description of the ancients’ preference for a ‘rug[ged] gowne’ above ‘purple cloaths and other whorish ornaments’. He also depicted the hero full face with his one eye directed at the beholder, highlighting his affinity to Hannibal, Rome’s most illustrious enemy (and in breach of what ancient decorum itself prescribed: Apelles, confronted with a

- ▼ 2.11. Rembrandt, *The Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis*, 1661-1662, oil on canvas, 196 × 309 cm, Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, on loan to Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. SK-C-1747



similar theme, had depicted his one-eyed sitter *en profil*).<sup>79</sup>

Yet Rembrandt's Batavians stand apart from the other figures made for the Town Hall in other respects, too. *The Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis* displays a stylistic 'roughness' of brushwork using blurred contours, a differentiated relief in the paint layer, and a predominantly monochromatic palette.<sup>80</sup> In the Batavians' hands joined in taking the oath, the movements of the painter's hand are emphatically visible. Especially in the three figures on the right, the crude impasto renders the faces with plasticity. Paint is also applied thickly on the canvas to suggest Civilis's jewels.

Differentiations in the transparency of contours, and the variation of small tonal nuances within an overall monochromatic palette, were elements of Rembrandt's art that contributed to the suggestion of space. Obviously, this sketchy manner of painting was at the same time an abbreviation of method, suitable in particular for a painting, like *The Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis*, intended to be seen from a considerable distance. Yet Rembrandt's work is so different from the other images made for the Town Hall that the question arises whether there may have been additional, iconographical reasons for his choice of brushwork. Perhaps he rendered 'rugged gowns' in a rough manner: his use of the relief of the paint layer to suggest the decorations on Civilis's dress calls to mind the 'crude' kind of ornament that was such a central theme in Junius's treatise, which condemned effeminate embellishment. Moreover, Rembrandt may have wanted to depict the Batavians' features in an unpolished, monochromatic, robust manner responding to the same ideals of masculine brushwork.

Junius's condemnation of smooth and polished paintings and his preference for roughness foreshadowed what Van Hoogstraten

and others would later write about the 'rough manner', of which Rembrandt's art was deemed the epitome (Wybrand de Geest would refer to it as an example of *rouw* work, and as late as 1712, Gerard de Lairese even spoke of paint 'dripping like mud on the canvas').<sup>81</sup> Leaving the brushstroke visible was a means of more strongly engaging the viewer, whose imagination filled in the missing elements: when Junius criticized 'shaved, smoothed, curled, and painted' figures portrayed 'with an effeminate kinde of polling and painting', he pointed out that the artist should rather take care that when 'he hitteth the maine and weightiest points of art aright', he 'needs not trouble himselfe much about the neatnesse of some little haire, and of the uttermost ends of the nailes'.<sup>82</sup> In effect, Junius took from ancient rhetorical theory the virtue of *brevitas* – suggesting a lot with few words – and adapted it to the art of painting.

Someone especially famous for the brevity that typified his style in writing was Tacitus. In the words of Van Hoogstraten, 'among the Latin [authors ...] Tacitus occupies first place, and who can encompass so many things in so few words better than he [...] It is true that, because he is profoundly succinct and somewhat obscure, a quick mind is needed to understand him, which is why he is also criticized by some.'<sup>83</sup> It seems probable that these literary ideas influenced Van Hoogstraten when he wrote in a similar way about brevity in painting: the 'shorthand' that would not concern itself with representing individual hairs, but only suggest the optical impression it made.<sup>84</sup> Like brevity in literature, in painting, too, this abbreviation of method might result in *obscuritas*, the ambivalence resulting from lack of detail. Precisely this obscurity – the quality that, as with Tacitus, made the work less accessible to the unlearned and prone to criticism by stylistic puritans – may have been the reason for the Burgomasters' eventual disappointment

with Rembrandt's *Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis*. Like Tacitus's style, Rembrandt's was not for everyone. According to Houbraken, quoting Tacitus, such a rough manner was an idiosyncratic strategy, aimed at avoiding comparison with other masters.<sup>85</sup>

The hypothesis that Rembrandt's shorthand style echoed Tacitean brevity seems all the more more plausible if we take into consideration that 'Tacitism' was a popular topic of discussion among humanists in the Low Countries concerned with the writing of history – especially for those working on the history of the Batavians: Justus Lipsius, Grotius, and Vossius. Van Hoogstraten's statement on brevity effectively echoed Lipsius's praise of the ancient author's 'rugged and obscure' style.<sup>86</sup> Precisely these idiosyncratic aspects became elements of emulation in the historical writings of Grotius, whose emphasis on Batavian virtues we have already discussed.

To quote a modern scholar, 'Lipsius and Vossius [...] note [...] that Tacitus's difficult style makes him unpopular or too difficult for some readers. Naturally Grotius imitated this aspect too. He employs many devices to disturb smoothness, symmetry, regularity and ease of reading in the text, and sometimes this spills over into outright obscurity'.<sup>87</sup> Lipsius even compared Tacitus's style to the figurative arts: his writing would have been like the work of embroiderers who skilfully embed gems in a cruder fabric. This style had obvious ideological connotations: a conscious breach with the ideal of smoothness and ease accorded with the 'preference for the primitive' and with the condemnation of the alleged decadence of Roman civilization. The link between a Batavian 'primitive' subject matter and a Batavian 'primitive' style was even more explicit in an ideologically charged text by another Tacitist, Nicolaas Heinsius. The preface to his *Dutch Poems (Nederduytsche Poemata, 1616)* praises

the Dutch language in contrast to corrupted French: 'We have remained Batavians, / not used to servitude: and it is on free ground / that we have kept our language of old: / Not hampered, not chained by anyone.'<sup>88</sup> The text, in reference to Tacitus, continues to praise the Batavian heroes and presents Civilis as vindicating indigenous culture against foreign influences. Here, there was evidently a specific Batavian manner of speaking to accord with a Batavian subject matter.

### Paintings and Shields: The Artist's Germanic Virtues

The question arises, how much *The Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis* – Rembrandt's largest work by far and his most important public commission, directly related to the city of Amsterdam's cultural politics – was a statement about Rembrandt's own identity as an artist. To what extent was he aware of his humanist contemporaries who, when writing about the Batavians, tried to emulate Tacitean brevity? Did he consider a Batavian *artistic* style that could be associated with the Dutch Republic's newly won independence?

In historical texts, the link between Tacitus and the visual arts was reinforced in 1684, when Frisius's images of the Batavians were reused for a new translation of Tacitus (these were the 'primitive' Batavians with their barbarous shields).<sup>89</sup> Yet the only artist who seems to have envisioned adapting his *style* to the Batavian virtues of simplicity and crudeness may have been Rembrandt, perhaps elaborating on elements pioneered by his pupil Colaert. Perhaps *The Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis* was an attempt at painterly decorum in a full sense, in which the original source text's style of writing, the figures' style of dress and behaviour, and the artist's style of brushwork

all accorded. Moreover, Rembrandt's rough manner seems to have been an aspect of his self-fashioning, if we may believe Houbraken's statement; perhaps in this painting, he wanted to associate his artistic persona with this seminal moment in Dutch history.

Exploring the interplay of form and content, it is important to realize that the 1648 Peace of Westphalia was also interpreted as a military victory. The end of the Dutch Revolt was partly the consequence of the United Provinces' military successes, for which Prince Maurits of Orange had made his famous studies of ancient texts on the art of war. When analysing the painting of the Batavian warriors, it is hard to ignore the etymology that joined martial and artistic virtues: the art of painting as *schilden-const*. In Rembrandt's work, the metaphor of painting as a mirror would have been replaced by a comparison of the paint surface with the battered shield of one's forefathers.<sup>90</sup>

Germanic etymology may have played a role in the context of *schilden-const* as well as in the context of its practitioner. The artist may have thought of his own name, 'a king's sword', as referring back to his presumably battle-hardened, Batavian forefathers whose shields were their first works of art. In keeping with Junius's theory that held the art of war to be the fundamental human activity, Rembrandt's Batavians may have been ideologically related to the Homeric warriors sketching their strategy with wine on the table, whom Junius praised as the inventors of painting.<sup>91</sup> For Junius, who traced Germanic language and civilization back to the Greeks, the metaphor of painting as *schilden-konst* would then be founded on Homer's description of Achilles' shield, the first ekphrasis in European literature.<sup>92</sup>

Regarding the interplay of etymological and antiquarian notions as discussed above, it is possible to point out a final parallel in Colaert's

painting, which may have been Rembrandt's model in different respects. The painting showcases the power of Willibrord's speech that was able not only to sway the audience, but even to affect the pagan idol, destroyed by the mere force of language. This was obviously eloquence in the vernacular: as Verstegan suggested, Willibrord's preaching had been so admirable in its brevity that his Anglo-Saxon dialect was easy on the natives' ears. This painterly representation of the ancient Germanic tongue might inspire a further consideration of the figures in Rembrandt's *Conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis*, represented at the moment they sealed their oath. Their words, 'we will fight for our freedom with the sword',<sup>93</sup> would have been uttered in the language of 'the old Batavians our ancestors', to quote Van Hoogstraten.<sup>94</sup>

Is it conceivable that Rembrandt envisioned his manner of painting as a suitable 'Germanic style' to echo the style of *speaking* of his primitive forefathers? Perhaps when the painter chose, in contrast to Van Veen's example (and to Ovens's later solution), to depict Batavian history's key moment as an act of drawing blades, he made an implicit reference to his own name that referred to swords in an idiosyncratic and, above all, distinctly Germanic manner.

## Notes

1. This essay elaborates on an argument in Thijs Weststeijn, *Art and Antiquity in the Netherlands and Britain: The Vernacular Arcadia of Franciscus Junius (1591–1677)* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 175–187, which is also taken up in Thijs Weststeijn, 'Germanic antiquity in Rembrandt's circle', in Sven Dupré and Christine Göttler (eds), *Knowledge and Discernment in the Early Modern Arts* (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 236–264. Preliminary thoughts were presented at the conference, *Expanding the*

- Field of Rembrandt Studies*, at Herstmonceux in 2009.
2. One example dating from Michelangelo's lifetime is Vittoria Colonna's letter of c. 1539–1540, possibly regarding the *Pietà* (now Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum). The Marchioness compares the artist, whose work was infused with 'divine grace', to Michael the Archangel: 'Io ebbi grandissima fede in Dio che vi dessi una gratia soprannaturale a far questo Christo [...] Et ve dico che mi alegro molto che l'angelo da man destra sia assai più bello, perchè il Michele ponerà voi Michel Angelo alla destra del Signore nel di novissimo'; Paola Barocchi and Renzo Ristori, (eds), *Il Carteggio di Michelangelo, edizione postuma di G. Poggi*, 5 vols (Florence: Sansoni, 1965–1983), IV, n. CMLXIX, p. 105.
  3. The name stems from 'reginbrand', see *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* (URL: <http://gtb.inl.nl/>, accessed 1 July 2011), entry 'brand II'. According to the combined regional Dutch archives in *Digitale Stamboom* (URL: <http://www.digitalestamboom.nl>, accessed 25 May 2011), the name 'Rembrandt' occurs eight times and 'Rembrant' thirty-three times in the period 1575–1774.
  4. Van Hoogstraten was given his nickname upon joining the Dutch artists' community in Rome; it may have been related to the artist's hometown of Dordrecht, known as the oldest city in the Netherlands (ancient Dorestad). He continued to use this name after his return to the Netherlands, as the many references to it in his friends' poems testify; see, e.g., Dirk van Hoogstraten's liminary poem in Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderconst, anders de zichtbaere werelt* (Rotterdam: François van Hoogstraten, 1678), n.p. All artists joining the Dutch *Schildersbent* in Rome were given nicknames (*bentnamen*) that usually had little to do with their artistic identities, the landscape painter 'Horisont/Orizzonte' (Pieter van Bloemen) and the master of *sottobosco*, Otto Marseus van Schreik, known as 'Snuffelaer' (Sleuth), being the exceptions rather than the rule.
  5. The Anglo-Saxons occur in Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, pp. 96, 146, and 151. He refers to the people in 'd'uiteerste Noortsche landen' on p. 135; to the Saxons, 'our ancestors', on p. 157, and to the Longobards on pp. 145 and 151. Franciscus Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients* (London: Richard Hodgkinson, 1638), Dutch edition, *De Schilder-konst der Oude, Begrepen in drie Boeken* (Middelburg: Zacharias Roman, 1641), is Van Hoogstraten's main source; Van Hoogstraten refers to Verstegan's writings, which appeared in a number of Dutch translations throughout the seventeenth century, on pp. 96, 146, and 151.
  6. Amy Golahny, *Rembrandt's Reading: The Artist's Bookshelf of Ancient Poetry and History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003), pp. 77–78.
  7. Johann Ludwig Gottfried, *Historische Chronica, oder; Beschreibung der fürnehmsten Geschichten* (Frankfurt: Matthäus Merian, 1630–1635), as argued in *ibid.*, pp. 135–147.
  8. Huygens probably met Junius on his visit to the Arundel collection (of which Junius was the curator) together with Jacques de Gheyn III; see I.Q. van Regteren Altena, *Jacques de Gheyn, Three Generations*, 3 vols (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983), I, p. 126; for his knowledge of the treatise see W.P. van Stockum (ed.), *Catalogus der bibliotheek van Constantijn Huygens verkocht op de Grootte Zaal van het Hof te 's Gravenhage 1688* (The Hague: Van Stockum, 1903), p. 39, no. 502. Sandrart quotes Junius in Joachim von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der Edlen Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste*, 3 vols (Nuremberg: Jacob von Sandrart, 1675–1680), II, chap. 3, p. 345, and it seems that many more of the references to antiquity in the book derive from Junius; on Sandrart's visit to Arundel's art collections (where he may have met Junius), see I, pp. 5–6: 'Lebenslauf und Kunstwerke Joachims von Sandrart'. Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 2, was sceptical of art theorists who had not been painters themselves, but he made an exception for Junius for his 'great diligence'.
  9. Sophie van Romburgh, *For my worthy friend Mr Franciscus Junius: An Edition of the Correspondence of Francis Junius F.F. (1591–1677)* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), nr. 189d, 169d, n. 14.
  10. Van Romburgh, *Worthy Friend*, nr. 93, n. 4.

11. Compare the fourth edition: Johan van Heemskerck, *Batavische Arcadia, waer in, onder 't loofwerck van liefkooserye, gehandelt werdt, van den oorspronck van 't oudt Batavien* (Amsterdam: Johannes van Ravesteyn, 1662), pp. 93, 100, 386.
12. In 1638, Willem de Groot sent a copy of Junius's *Painting of the Ancients*, 'a work of great effort and care', to Grotius, who soon wrote to Junius that it 'contains a vivid image of your talents and learning. I admire your wide reading, discernment, composition, and what you have adduced from all arts to illustrate that art. [...] I pray you present us with many similar books'; Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, nr. 117a, and n. 2; see also Colette Nativel, *Franciscus Junius De pictura veterum. Édition du livre I* (Geneva: Droz, 1996), p. 56.
13. Hugo Grotius, *Liber de antiquitate republicae Batavae* (Leiden: Raphelengius, 1610); see also Dutch ed., *idem.*, *Tractaet van de oudtheyt vande Batavische, nu Hollandsche Republique* (The Hague: Hillebrant Jacobsz, 1610); Hugo Grotius, ed. by Johan Meerman, *Parallelon rerum publicarum/Vergelijking der genemebesten* (orig. 1602), 3 vols (Haarlem: A. Loosjes Pz., 1801-1803), on Lucas see III, pp. 43-45.
14. Sophie G. van Romburgh, 'Why Franciscus Junius (1591-1677) Became an Anglo-Saxonist, or, the Study of Old English for the Elevation of Dutch', in: Thomas Shippey and Martin Arnold (eds), *Appropriating the Middle Ages* (Cambridge/Rochester: Brewer, 2001), pp. 5-36.
15. Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, nr. 188 d.
16. Abraham Mylius, *De Lingua Belgica* (Leiden: Bibliopolio Commeliniano, 1612).
17. Junius to Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie, in Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, nr. 211a; like Verstegan, Junius intends the term 'Teutonic' to mean 'Dutch'.
18. Bodleian MS Junius 5, II, leaf 126, refers to 'de Pictura Veterum lib. II, cap. 8, § 12'. Franciscus Junius, ed. by Norbert Voorwinden, *Observationes in Willeramii Abbatis Francicam paraphrasin cantici canticorum* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1992), p. 68. Eventually, Junius's Dutch audience seems to have recognized the interconnected nature of his work on painting and on Germanic languages: Balthazar Huydecoper, for instance, refers extensively not only to the Dutch edition of the painting treatise and to Van Hoogstraten, but also to Junius's work on Gothic and Anglo-Saxon; Balthazar Huydecoper, *Proeve van taal- en dichtkunde in vrijmoedige aanmerking op Vondels vertaalde Herscheppingen van Ovidius* (Amsterdam: E. Visscher and J. Tirion, 1730), pp. 139, 150, 322, 343, 395, 428, 451-452, 529, 530.
19. C.A. Ladd, 'The "Rubens" Manuscript and Archbishop Aelfric's Vocabulary', *Review of English Studies* 11:44 (1960), pp. 353-364.
20. Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, 187a. One of his first acquisitions was the so-called 'Caedmon' manuscript; see T. de Vries, *Holland's Influence on English Language and Literature* (Chicago: C. Grentzschbach, 1916), p. 144; Franciscus Junius, 'Fragmentary Commentary on Manuscript Bodleian Library MS Junius 73\*' [1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1655], in: *idem.*, ed. by Peter J. Lucas, *Caedmonis monachi Paraphrasis poetica* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000).
21. Junius corresponded with Smetius about his 'De Noviomagi antiquitate'; see Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, p. 155. On Junius and Vlitius, see Cornelis Dekker, *The Origins of Old Germanic Studies in the Low Countries* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 92-104.
22. Junius to Bouchorst, Schaap and Van Beveren, 30 January 1655; Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, p. 859, no. 189c.
23. Ellen Kemp and Wolfgang Kemp, 'Lambert Lombards antiquarische Theorie und Praxis', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 36 (1973), pp. 122-152.
24. 'Lambert [Lombard] heeft verscheyden Landen besocht, eerst ontrent de Nederlanden, in Duytschlant, en Vranckrijck, en heeft weten te vinden eenighe Antijcken, die de Franci oft Duytschen souden hebben ghedaen, doe in Italien oft onder d'Italianen de Const door oproeren, inlandtsche krijghen, en anders vervallen, en schier vergaen was: dese heeft hy neerstich gheconterfeyt, aleeer hy oyt de Roomsche dinghen hadde ghesien, uyt die beelden der Franschen zijnen eersten gront der Consten ghenomen', Karel van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck* (Haarlem:

- Passchier von Wesbusch, 1604), 'Leven der [...] nederlandsche en hooghduytsche schilders', fol. 220r; for Hubert Goltzius see fol. 248r. Dominicus Lampsonius, Lombard's biographer, identifies the artist more specifically as a descendant from the Germanic tribe of the Eburones, which had inhabited the Liège area.
25. Franciscus Junius, *Catalogus architectorum, mechanicorum, sed praecipue pictorum, statuariorum, caelatorum, tornatorum, aliorumque artificium, et opera qua fecerunt* (Rotterdam: Regnerus Leers, 1694), quoted in Keith Aldrich, Philipp Fehl, and Raina Fehl (eds and trans.), *Franciscus Junius, The Literature of Classical Art*, 2 vols, (Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), II, nrs. 853, 502, 1224, 1145a.
  26. These images were the model for John Michael Rysbrack's statues at Stowe, England. See Thijs Weststeijn, "Having No Other Paintings than Their Shields": The Germanic Origins of Art in the Seventeenth Century', in: Christina Lee and Nicola McLelland (eds.), *Germania Remembered 1500-2009: Commemorating and Inventing a Germanic Past. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* (Tucson: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2011), pp. 43–74.
  27. For Otto van Veen, *Batavorum cum romanis bellum*, see Mark Morford, "Theatrum Hodiernae Vitae": Lipsius, Vaenius, and the rebellion of Civilis', in: Karl A.E. Enekel *et al.* (eds), *Recreating Ancient History: Episodes from the Greek and Roman Past in the Arts and Literature of the Early Modern Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 57–74.
  28. See Peter van der Coelen, 'De Bataven in de beeldende kunst', in: Louis J.F. Swinkels (ed.), *De Bataven: verhalen van een verdwenen volk* (Amsterdam: De Bataafse Leeuw, 2004), pp. 143–193.
  29. Translation of 'De origine et situ Germanorum': 'De zeden van Duitslant' in Johannes Vennekool, trans., *De hoochberoemde historien van C. Cornelis Tacitus* (Delft: Adriaen Gerritsen, 1616); see also Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 96, p. 144 ('De Duitsche Suevi'), p. 151 ('oude Duitschen'), p. 246.
  30. Sandra Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht. Oudheidkunde in de Gouden Eeuw. Arnoldus Buchelius en Petrus Scriverius* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001).
  31. Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 144.
  32. Alcuin, 'Life of Willibrord', in: Thomas F.X. Noble and Thomas Head (ed.), *Soldiers of Christ. Saint and Saints' Lives from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), pp. 191–192.
  33. Gerardus Johannes Vossius, *De theologia gentili, et physiologia Christiana, sive de origine ac progressu idololatriae, ad veterum gesta, ac rerum naturam, reductae: deque naturae mirandis, quibus homo adducitur ad Deum* (Amsterdam: Iohan and Cornelius Blaeu, 1641), p. 476. For Colaert's work see Sumowski, *Gemälde*, III, cat. 214.
  34. Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, no. 103c; the book was begun in 1642 but only completed (by Isaac Vossius) in 1646.
  35. Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, no. 103c.
  36. Hendrick Danckers, *Affbeeldinge vande ouer oude rariteyten aende strandt ontrent Domburch inden eylande van Walcheren, bij dyckgraef... gevonden den 5en januarij 1647* (The Hague: Hendrick Danckers, 1647). The Domburg statues were reproduced in Mattheus Smallegange, *Nieuwe Cronyk van Zeeland* (Middelburg: Johannes Meertens/Amsterdam: Abraham van Someren, 1696).
  37. Willem Goeree, *Inleyding tot de practijck der algemeene schilderkonst* (Middelburg: Wilhelmus Goeree, 1697), p. 60. See further Weststeijn, *Art and Antiquity*, pp. 158–163.
  38. Rembrandt, *Saskia van Uylenburgh in Arcadian Costume (Saskia as Flora)*, 1635, London, National Gallery, Corpus VI 138; see also Rembrandt, *Flora*, 1634, Saint Petersburg, Hermitage, Corpus VI 125. For other images see Alison McNeil Kettering, *The Dutch Arcadia: Pastoral Art and its Audience in the Golden Age* (Totowa: Allanheld and Schram, 1983), figs. 28–59. I thank Amy Golahny for setting me on this train of thought during a conversation at Herstmonceux.
  39. Marcus Zuerius van Boxhorn, *Bediedinge van de tot noch toe onbekende afgodinne Nehalennia*

- (Leiden: Willem Christiaens vander Boxe, 1647), p. 25.
40. The Vlissingen/Ulysses theory was developed by Olivarius Vredius; see Petrus J.J. Stuart, *Nehalennia. Documenten in steen* (Goes: De Koperen Tuin, 2003), p. 22. Boxhorn corresponded with Huygens about the sculpture in February 1947; later Salmasius also became involved in the correspondence; Constantijn Huygens, ed. by J.A. Worp, *De briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens, 1608–1687*, 6 vols (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1911–1917), nrs. 4563, 4552. On the Zierikzee-Circe analogy see Boxhorn, p. 18.
  41. On these authors see Dekker and Maria Jacoba van der Wal, *De moedertaal centraal. Standaardisatie-aspecten in de Nederlanden omstreeks 1650* (The Hague: SDU, 1995), pp. 43–48. On Junius and Scythian see also John Considine, *Dictionaries in Early Modern Europe. Lexicography and the Making of Heritage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 225.
  42. Petrus Scriverius, *Batavia Illustrata* (Leiden 1609), discusses the altar stone found at Westkapelle (Walcheren) in 1514 and refers to Becanus on Scythian as the forerunner of Dutch, yet he also identifies the stone's inscription correctly as reading 'Magusanus'; see Sandra Langereis, 'Van botte boeren tot beschaafde burgers. Oudheidkundige beelden van de Bataven, 1500-1800', in Swinkels (ed.), pp. 72–105 (p. 90).
  43. '[W]ant dat d'oude Batavieren van geen andere schilderijen als van haer schilden geweeten hebben is licht toe te staen', Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, pp. 328–329.
  44. Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, pp. 156, 161.
  45. On this topic see Celeste Brusati, 'Pictura's Excellent Trophies: Valorizing Virtuous Artisans in the Dutch Republic', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 54 (2003), pp. 61–90.
  46. '[D]it woordt / Van Schilder, oft Schildry, comt van den Schilden voort: / [...] Dit Schilde schildren, siet, en is sindt noyt vergaen, / Waer uyt dat is ghevolght, en voort en voort ghecommen', Van Mander, *Schilder-Boek*, 'Het leven der oude antijcke doorluchtige schilders', fol. 58 v. Junius, in fact, replaces his discussion of images of Christ (present in the Latin and English editions of his book) with the discussion of *schilden-const*, apparently to accommodate Calvinist sensibilities: 'So magmen oock seer wel staende houden dat ons Nederlandsche woord *Schilderen* oorspronckelick van dese ghewoonte hervoord komt, want het waer schijnelick is dat d'oude strijdbaere inghesetene deser landen dese Konst voor eenen langhen tijd maer alleen tot op-pronckinge haerer schilden gebruyckten; [...] dit woord in't eerste sijn benaeminghe ende eyghenschap uyt het schild-cieraet ghenomen heeft', Junius, *Schilde-konst*, p. 143; see also his statement on the 'stoutmoedighyeyt der Duytschen', p. 133.
  47. 'De origine vocabuli *shield*', Bodleian MS Junius 5, II, leaf 126.
  48. Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, I, p. 139.
  49. Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 329.
  50. Richard Verstegan, *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities: Concerning the Most Noble and Renowned [sic] English Nation* (Antwerp: Robert Bruney, 1605), p. 46; Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 96.
  51. '[S]eeckere Batavier met name Soranus [is] geheel gewapent in sijn volle harnas den Donau-stroom overgeswommen, 't welck de wilde volcken aensiende sich soo ontsetten, dat se datelyck den Keizer [i.e., Hadrianus] te wille waren, ende hem tot een scheidsman versochten van hun onderlinge geschillen', Johannes Smetius, *Chronijk van de stad der Batavieren* (Nijmegen: A. Van Goor [1784]), p. 49. See also Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, II, nr. 221.
  52. Van de Waal demonstrates how Dutch historiography first condemned Germanic tribes and later positively evaluated them for their 'primitive' characteristics; Henri van de Waal, *Drie eeuwen vaderlandsche geschied-uitbeelding, 1500-1800. Een iconologische studie*, 2 vols (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952), I, pp. 172–210.
  53. Ernst H. Gombrich, *The Preference for the Primitive: Episodes in the History of Western Taste and Art* (London: Phaidon, 2002).
  54. Cicero, *De oratore*, ed. and trans. by E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham, 2 vols (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), III.xxxv.98.
  55. Verstegan, p. 46.

56. Jeroen Jansen, *Brevitas. Beschouwingen over de beknoptheid van vorm en stijl in de Renaissance* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1995), p. 115.
57. 'Dat d'Onderwijzingen den Jongelingen, dan veel meer te nutte koomen, alze in een gemeene Taal, kort en klaar, en zonder opgepoetste reden worden voorgesteld', Goeree, preface, n.p.
58. Verstegan, p. 200. Junius to Johann Clauberg, undated; Van Romburgh, *Worthy Freind*, nr. 204d.
59. Verstegan, p. 49.
60. Image: 'Frugalitas et Gula', Abraham Ortelius, *Aurei Saeculi Imago* (Antwerp: Phil. Gallaeum, 1596).
61. Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, I, p. 41.
62. Many of Junius's Stoic sources are traced by Nativel, o.a. pp. 441-442, 437.
63. '[P]ropositum nostrum est secundum naturam vivere [...] frugalitatem exigit philosophia, non poenam: potest autem esse non incompta frugalitas ... magnus ille est qui fictilibus sic utitur quemadmodum argento', Seneca, *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 5.4-5.6.
64. Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, I, p. 284.
65. 'De manhaftige schijn-staetelickheyd, ghe-lijckse voornaemelick in de rechtschaepene rustigheyd van een onverseerde kloekheyd bes- taet; soo moet se haer meeste cieraet zoeken in de ghesonde verwe van een onghekrenckte sterckte, sonder sich met de vertaerde glat- tigheyd van hoogh-verwighe blancketsels in't minste te behelpen, seght Quintil[ianus] VIII.3', Junius, *Schilder-konst*, p. 273.
66. Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, I, p. 255, cf. Junius, *Schilder-konst*, p. 278: 'Indien yeman een van dese kloecke worstelaers die van wegghen haere sterckte uyt eenen boom schijnen uytgehouw- en te sijn, seght Lucianus, niet alleen met pur- pere kleederen ende allerley bordeelachtige verciersels bestond t'overladen, maer oock sijn aenghesicht met allerley blancketsels gingh overstrijken; de selvige soude nimmermeer de schimpachtige hoon-spraecke en spotwoorden der gantscher wereld machtigh sijn t'ontgaen, van sulcken welghemaecten lustighen quant soo schandelick mishandelt te heb- ben. Dus vernemen wy hoe het meinigmael gevoeghlicker is, datmen sijn werck met eenen ruyghen rock bekleede, dan datmen 't met d' omhangsels van hoerachtige cieraeten ontschoone. [...] Dies moghen wy niet dencken dat het altijt beter is het ghene sich als noch verborgen houdt: Het beste behoeft niet verde ghesocht te worden; het is dicht by der hand, en met de dinghen selver soo vermengt, datmen het door sijn eyghen licht ghemack- elick kan uytvinden, 't en sy datmen ghesint is het selvighe puer willens en met winckende oogghen voor by te gaen'. Cf. Lucian, trans. by K. Kilburn, 'How to Write History', in: *Lucian in Eight Volumes* (London: William Heinemann, and Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), VI, pp. 12-18.
67. Verstegan, p. 50.
68. Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 291, referring to Junius, *Schilder-konst*, p. 33 (Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, I, p. 41).
69. Grotius, *Parallelon*, III, pp. 43-45, cf. 29-31 and 46-48.
70. Boudewijn Bakker, *Landscape and Religion from Van Eyck to Rembrandt* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 214-219; Thijs Weststeijn, 'Imitatie in Samuel van Hoogstratens *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilder-konst*', *De zeventiende eeuw* 21:2 (2005), pp. 243-266.
71. Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 151, and p. 184: '[D]at een schip een schip, een beelt een mensch, of een beest, of een bekend, of im- mers natuerlijk gedierte zal gelijken'; Vitru- vius, trans. by Ingrid Rowland, *Ten Books on Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univer- sity Press, 1999), IV.2.6.
72. 'd'Oude Romeynen, die van Harders en Boeren opquamen, pasten't in vrede de ploeg te men- nen, en van d'Akkers tot oppergezaghebbbers verkoren te worden, of met gebrade rapen, na de gewoonte van haere opvoeding, vernoegt te zijn'; Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 142.
73. Jan Lievens, *Brinio Raised on a Shield*, 1661, and Jacob Jordaens, *Peace between the Romans and the Batavians*, 1661/1662, Amsterdam, Royal Palace.
74. Melchior Fokkens, *Beschrijvinge der wijdt-ver- maarde Koop-stadt Amstelredam* (Amsterdam: Markus Willemsz Doornick, 1662), p. 160; see

- also Simon Schama, *Rembrandt's Eyes* (London: Allen Lane/Penguin, 1999), p. 631.
75. Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt's Universe* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2006), p. 182.
76. Otto van Veen, *The Oath of Claudius Civilis with the Batavians in the Schaker Forest, c. 1600-1613*, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. SK-A-422; Govert Flinck, completed by Jürgen Ovens, *The Oath of Claudius Civilis, 1660-1662*, Amsterdam, Royal Palace.
77. Verstegan, p. 71, referring to the quintessential Teutonic deity 'Tuysco' who wore nothing but a primitive rag.
78. Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, pp. 146, 144.
79. Among Apelles's works was reportedly a portrait of the one-eyed Macedonian general Antigonus I Monophthalmus (382-301 BC) on horseback. On this motif, see also Stephanie S. Dickey, 'Bartholomeus van der Helst and Admiral Cortenaer: Realism and Idealism in Dutch Heroic Portraiture', *Leids Kunst-historisch Jaarboek* 8 (1989), pp. 227-246.
80. For the commonly accepted view that the painting was rejected because of 'Rembrandt's rough style and the unpolished conception of the Batavians', see, e.g., Mariet Westermann, *Rembrandt* (London: Phaidon, 2000), p. 298.
81. Thijs Weststeijn, *The Visible World. Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), pp. 229-234; 'een ruw Schildery, als van Rembrand', Wybrand de Geest, *Den leermeester der schilderconst* (Leeuwarden: Pieter Ruirds, 1702), p. 92; '[T]ast uw werk met een kloeke hand aan. Evenwel niet op zyn Rembrands of Lievensz, dat het sap gelyk drek langs het Stuk neêr loope; maar gelyk en mals, dat uwe voorwerpen alleen door de konst rond en verheeven schynen, en niet door kladdery', Gerard de Laresse, *Het groot schilderboek*, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Hendrick Desbordes, 1712), p. 324.
82. Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, I, pp. 255-256; 'datmen sijn werck met eenen ruyghen rock bekleede, dan datmen 't met d'omhangsels van hoerachtighe cieraeten ontschoone [...] een moedvaerdigher dapperheyd [...] sonder ons selven veele ontrent de nettigheyd van eenighe dunne hayrkens en d'uyterste naghelen te kekommeren [sic]'; Junius, *Schilder-konst*, p. 278.
83. 'Onder de Latijnen behoudt Tacitus (na het zeggen der werelt wijzen) de eerste plaats, en wie kan ook beter als hy met weynig woorden zoo veel zaken begrijpen [...] Hy is voorwaar verwonderlijk, schijnende als oft hem niet ter harte ging, verricht hy zoo voortreflijk zonder eenige verwarring sijne warachtige vertelling, en rust nimmer in sijne ordening al leerende, even gelijk de zijde-stickers het goudt en zilver in haar werk schikken [...] 't Is waar, dat, dewijl hy diepsinnig kort en eenighsins duyster is, wel een gauw verstant van nooden is hem te verstaen, waerom hy ook van eenige berispt wort', Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Den eerlycken jongeling, of de edele kunst, van zich by groote en kleyne te doen eeren en beminnen* (Dordrecht: Abraham Andriesz, 1657), pp. 22-23.
84. Weststeijn, *Visible World*, pp. 229-240.
85. 'Zyne wyze van doen ontrent de konst [...] doet my besluiten dat hy zulks voordachtig gedaan heeft; want indien hy zig een wyze van schilderen, die naar die van anderen geleeck, had aangewent, of zyn penceel op den voet van eenige berugte Italiaanen, of andere hoogvliegers geschoeit, zoo zouw de waerelt, uit vergelyking van't een met het ander, zyne verdienste hebben konnen opmaken, daar hy nu, met het tegendeel te doen, die proefneming heeft vooruit geloopen, en gedaan als Tacitus van Keizer Tiberius zeit: Dat hy alles vermydde waar uit het volk gelegent heit konde nemen van vergelykingen tusschen hem en Augustus te maken, wiens gedachtenis hy zag dat by yder aangenaam was.' See also Houbraken on Rembrandt's depictions of jewellery: 'Dus zietmen ook gesteente en paerlen, op Borstcieraden en Tulbanden door hem zoo verheven geschildert al even of ze gebootzeerd waren, door welke wyze van behandelen zyne stukken, zelf in wyden afstand, kragtig uitkomen', Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols (Amsterdam: Houbraken, 1718-1721), II, pp. 273, 269.
86. 'Then the Latin [historians], of whom the leading one in my view is Cornelius Tacitus. [...] Who tells more truthfully than he, or more briefly? Who teaches more in telling?

- [...] Just as people who colour clothing with needle-work ingeniously add gemstones without disturbing or detracting from the form of the garment, just so Tacitus inserts *Sententiae* all over, without in any way losing or damaging the line of the narrative. Still he seems rugged and obscure to some. Is that his fault or their own? For I admit his writing is sharp and penetrating; and such must be those who read him', Lipsius, note to *Politica* I.9 (published separately in 1589), quoted in translation by Jan Waszink, 'Your Tacitism or Mine? Modern and Early-Modern Conceptions of Tacitus and Tacitism', *History of European Ideas* 36 (2010), pp. 375–385 (p. 376). Houbraken also includes the reference to needlework (see n. 85).
87. Waszink, p. 381.
88. 'Daer tegen sijn wy noch gebleven Batavieren, / Geen dienstbaerheyt ghewent: en op een vryen gront / Is't dat wy noch van outs behouden onsen mont: / Van niemant niet gesnoert, van niemant niet gebonden. / Ia in het minste niet van yemant oock geschonden'; Daniel Heinsius, ed. by Louis P. Rank *et al.*, *Bacchus en Christus. Twee lofzangen van Daniel Heinsius* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1965), p. 85, vs. 45-50.
89. Engravings by Joseph Mulder in *Cornelius Tacitus Jaarboeken en historien, ook zyn Germanië, en't leeven van J. Agricola: in 't Hollandsch vertaalt door den Heer Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft*, Amsterdam 1684.
90. See also Thijs Weststeijn, 'The Gender of Colors in Dutch Art Theory', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 62 (2013), pp. 177-201.
91. Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, I, p. 113. This becomes clear, for instance, in the many references in Junius's *Painting of the Ancients* and *Catalogus Architectorum* to designs for military machinery, siege engines, and other warlike inventions. It seems that his category of 'artifice' derives its main social legitimacy from its military applications.
92. Surprisingly, Junius mentions Homer's ekphrasis without discussing it in detail, perhaps because he deemed its contents too well known; Aldrich, Fehl, and Fehl, I, p. 155. By contrast, it is paraphrased at length by Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 159.
93. 'wy zullen onze vryheydt met den degen bepleyten', Fokkens, p. 161.
94. 'der oude Batavieren onze voorouders', Van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding*, p. 117; he quotes an ancient oath in Anglo-Saxon on the same page.

## About the author

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