

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PICTURING DEVOTION IN DUTCH GOLDEN AGE *HUISKERKEN*

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Although the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic was officially Protestant, Catholics made up nearly one-third of the population. To circumvent laws prohibiting public worship, Dutch Catholics celebrated Mass in private homes converted into lavishly decorated *huiskerken* (house churches). Unfortunately, most *huiskerken* have been destroyed or poorly documented, and previous scholarship has examined altarpieces out of their historical contexts. This dissertation examines the decorative programs of two well-documented *huiskerken*: St. Bernardus in den Hoeck in Haarlem, rebuilt in 1638 and part of a large community of lay religious women (*kloppen*) in Haarlem, and 't Hart, founded in 1663 in Amsterdam, and preserved today as the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder (Our Lord in the Attic). This is the first English-language study of the complete decorative programs of these two *huiskerken* and their liturgical functions, and I argue that devotional paintings are best understood as pieces of these decorative programs, which included embroidered textiles, illustrated sermon manuscripts, and liturgical silver. I employ reception theory to show that the imagery in these two *huiskerken* aided the celebration of Mass and meditation of laypeople, especially lay religious women. The examples of St. Bernardus and 't Hart demonstrate that the decorative programs of *huiskerken* are largely indebted to lay religious women, who acted as patrons and creators of devotional objects. I prove that crafts like embroidery and inexpensive engravings, commonly considered “low” art, in fact served as creative sources for “higher” art forms like paintings. Furthermore, I conclude that the use of imagery in *huiskerken* is more closely related to medieval devotional practices than has previously been assumed.

PICTURING DEVOTION IN DUTCH GOLDEN AGE *HUISKERKEN*

by

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Dedication

For my grandparents:

Cornelius (Buzz) Daniel Harrington, Jr. †
Helen Armata Harrington
Francis Charles Mansell, Jr. †
Delia Murphy Mansell

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Introduction

Maritgen Isbrants (d. 1649) was a lay religious woman living among nearly 200 other such women at the Catholic community known as “Den Hoeck” in Haarlem, an informal cluster of homes privately owned by Catholic families. These laywomen, known as *kloppen*, did not take formal vows but supported a large, active Catholic parish at the center of the Haarlem Diocese, which still functioned in the midst of the Reformed government of the Netherlands. Indeed, Maritgen was hardly fearful of being caught practicing her faith. Trijn Jans Oly, the spiritual mother and biographer of the community, reports about Maritgen:

She had her small room or cell so fully decorated with small sculptures, paintings, and extraordinary things, that one was brought to devotion when they entered, as if they had come into a chapel. She was entertained by such devotion to ornament, and she had learned a taste for it from her childhood.¹

This description of a room painstakingly filled with Catholic imagery does not fit with the common conception of the Dutch Golden Age as an era of Calvinist simplicity and whitewashed churches. Yet Maritgen was not an anomaly in the mid-seventeenth century; a thriving community of Catholic artists, patrons, and viewers existed throughout the Netherlands, and especially in the Haarlem Diocese, which included Haarlem as well as nearby Amsterdam.

¹ Oly quoted in Tanja Kootte and Inge Schriemer, *Vrouwen voor het voetlicht: Zusters, martelaressen, poetsengelen and dominees* (Utrecht: Museum Catharijneconvent, 2012), 45. "Sij was in een cleyn camerken of celleken, dat was soo claer, perfect verciert met beeldekens, outaertgen, schilderijtjes, dat men tot devotie beweeght werden als men daerin quam, alsof men in een capelletgen ghecomen hadt. Dit was haer recreatie met sodanige devotie van vercierceltjes haer te vermaken, also sij daer van jongs aen daerin een goede ghenegentheyt toe ghehadt hadde."

The officially Calvinist United Provinces forbid the Catholic Church from owning property or from practicing their faith in public, yet by the mid-seventeenth century, one third of the Dutch population celebrated Catholic Mass in repurposed homes now known as *schuilkerken* (hidden churches), more accurately termed *huiskerken* (house churches).² Religious dissidents were tacitly tolerated so long as they upheld the division between public and private space. Rome declared the United Provinces a missionary territory, wherein well-educated clergy promoted reforms based on the Council of Trent while laypeople discussed theology and served as financial and artistic patrons for *huiskerken*. The private nature of the new church spaces and sophistication of Catholic patrons inspired new stylistic choices and iconography on the part of artists, who were often Catholic themselves.

Unfortunately, most *huiskerken* no longer exist and many of the artworks have been lost or poorly documented, leaving art historians to consider altarpieces out of their original contexts. Beyond this, Catholic parishes tended to patronize artists from within their own congregations, resulting in a dearth of written evidence. Since personal relationships were paramount, the artists who decorated Catholic *huiskerken* sometimes specialized in unrelated genres like landscape or still life, and their works are often dismissed as low quality or derivative of prior altarpieces. This dissertation focuses on two well-documented examples of *huiskerken*: St. Bernardus in Den Hoeck, rebuilt in 1638 and part of a large community of lay religious women in Haarlem, and 't Hart, founded in 1663 in Amsterdam, and preserved today as the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder (Our Lord in the Attic). I argue that the devotional paintings made for these spaces

² As argued by Sebastian Dudok van Heel, "Amsterdamse schuil- of huiskerken?" *Tijdschrift Holland* (1991/2), 4.

are best understood as pieces of the decorative programs of *huiskerken*, including understudied embroidered textiles, illustrated sermon manuscripts, and liturgical silver.

Huiskerken: The Site of Catholic Adaptation

Benjamin Kaplan emphasizes that the distinction between public and private became very important for societies with official religions not necessarily embraced by the vast majority of the population, including the Netherlands, England, and Austria. The Dutch Republic created a “cultural fiction” of religious unity that led to the “social reality” of containing the minority in delineated private spaces.³ Maintaining and fusing the cultural fiction with the social reality meant that Catholics settled for cramped or inadequate spaces to celebrate Mass: so long as they upheld the division between public and private spaces, they avoided persecution. Freedom of conscience was equated with freedom of home worship, and a household could mean groups of families, friends and employees beyond blood relations.⁴ For this reason, *huiskerken* are opportunities to study tolerance in practice and not just in theory.⁵

At first, worship spaces tended to be prayer rooms in homes. An early seventeenth-century chronicle claimed, “almost every house belonging to a Catholic had a small room used as a place of prayer, with a pretty little altar and devout image, where [the family] went to read and pray.”⁶ There were 50 such rooms in The Hague by 1619,

³ Benjamin J. Kaplan, “Fictions of Privacy: House Chapels and the Spatial Accommodation of Religious Dissent in Early Modern Europe,” *American Historical Review* (October 2002): 1036–38.

⁴ Kaplan 2002, 1043.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1035.

⁶ *Bijdragen voor de Geschiedenis van het Bisdom Haarlem* (1873), 319. Quoted in Kaplan 2002, 1043.

and 30 in Leiden, but divided among 3,500 Catholics, making it difficult for priests to serve the community adequately even with the protection of privacy.⁷ Entire homes and buildings were soon dedicated to Catholic worship to allow priests to accommodate larger groups. A 1643 report by the Provincial Court of Holland described hidden churches having

very expensive altars, galleries on pillars, vaulted roofs, pews, organs, musicians, and all sorts of musical instruments and, in sum, everything that might be asked of a chartered chapel...of so large a size and capacity that if the exercise of their religion were allowed publicly, they could not ask for them to be larger or more decorous.⁸

This report may have been exaggerated, but anecdotal evidence suggests otherwise: one hidden church in Amsterdam almost collapsed in 1691 because the weight of the organ, altar, pews, decorations and congregation overwhelmed the narrow rowhouse.⁹

Some of this extravagance can be explained by the fact that after the Treaty of Münster in 1648, the States of Holland tended to take an increasingly relaxed attitude toward Catholic building projects. Within five years of the treaty, two relatively large churches, 't Boompje and De Krijtberg, were built in prominent locations in the city center of Amsterdam.¹⁰ The recognizable names of churches and the fact that authorities alternated between imposing fines and purposely ignoring the worship activity of prominent citizens both illustrate what the Dutch called “looking through the fingers,” a selective and self-imposed blindness to religious dissidence.¹¹ This willingness to

⁷ Kaplan 2002, 1044.

⁸ H.A. Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde Vrijheid* (1972), 118. Quoted in Kaplan 2002, 1044.

⁹ Kaplan 2002, 1047.

¹⁰ Dudok van Heel, 4.

¹¹ Kaplan 2002, 1061; Dudok van Heel, 5. Dudok van Heel mentions Claes Heijmansz. Coeck, a wealthy Catholic living on Kalverstraat who sheltered priests, housed the St. Cecilia College, and whose eldest son became a priest and whose daughter played the organ at 't Boompje. Despite his

tolerate what the officially Reformed government would not accept on paper prevented religious conflict that would have stymied the development of the new Dutch Republic. The divide between public and private worship kept several European societies together after the Reformation; home worship was both a symptom and cause of the divide of public and private space more broadly in the early modern period.¹²

Sebastiaan C. Dudok van Heel has convincingly argued that the term *schuilkerk* should be replaced with *huiskerk*, given that most “hidden” churches were not in fact secret. Indeed, it is difficult to call these church spaces “secret” when Philip von Zesen’s 1664 Amsterdam guidebook included their locations and names, and Jan Wagenaar devoted an entire publication in 1765 to descriptions and plans of Catholic churches.¹³ The false conception that Catholic churches were mostly undecorated and constantly under threat of raids comes from a sole seventeenth-century account from Amsterdam: the Jesuit Father Laurentius complained of raids in his 1653 chronicle because his former parish, De Zijdworck (Silkworm) had been raided on busy Kalverstraat. Meanwhile, the new Jesuit parish, the large and prominent De Krijtberg, was under construction on the Singel.¹⁴

The term *schuilkerk* itself does not appear in seventeenth-century accounts of Catholic life, but rather emerged during the nineteenth-century political emancipation of Catholics. At this time, Catholic writers characterized the period before the 1578

involvement in the Catholic community, Coeck also served as the dean of the guild of coppersmiths for several terms and sat on the boards of the Almshouse and Maagdenhuis, or girls’ orphanage, and his own cousin was a burgomeester—a position reserved for registered Calvinists.

¹² Kaplan 2002, 1061–2.

¹³ Dudok van Heel, 1; Kaplan 2002, 1048.

¹⁴ Robert Schillemans, “Zeventiende-eeuwse altaarstukken in de amsterdamsche staties: een inventarisatie,” in Van den Hout and Schillemans 1995, 53.

proscriptions against Catholic worship as the “Roman” period, and the seventeenth century as the period of persecution, drawing a direct comparison to the challenges that early Christians faced and suggesting similarities between early modern Dutch Catholics and Christian martyrs.¹⁵ Fr. Bernard Klonne, pastor of the Begijnhof in Amsterdam, published romanticized stories of Dutch Catholics resourcefully outsmarting sheriffs, while the Protestant enforcers mistreated Catholics out of fear of the power of Catholicism.¹⁶ His influential position allowed him to disseminate and promote popular legends about Catholic suffering.

Such dramatized stories of sheriffs breaking up Masses and destroying Catholic property did not always undergo checks for accuracy because the historical accounts were written by and for Catholics who wanted finally to assert their place within Dutch society.¹⁷ Nonetheless, *huiskerk* is a much more neutral and instructive term for the private worship settings used by seventeenth-century Dutch Catholics, since their churches were defined by their situation within private residences, but rarely secret. After 1600, with the survival of the Dutch Republic as an independent nation increasingly guaranteed, *huiskerken* (house churches) expanded into larger spaces and Catholics forged an ever stronger communal identity.

¹⁵ Dudok van Heel, 6. These comparisons between seventeenth-century Dutch Catholics and Christian martyrs are similar to how Golden Age clergy and laypeople alike characterized their situation in art and literature. The nineteenth-century accounts, however, were more propagandistic while the seventeenth-century collective identity was intended to unify the community and increase devotion.

¹⁶ Guus van den Hout and Robert Schillemans, eds. *Putti en cherubijntjes: het religieuze werk van Jacob de Wit (1695–1754)* (Haarlem/Amsterdam: Origine, 1995), 54.

¹⁷ Dudok van Heel, 7, 9.

The Status of Catholic Imagery within Churches

Images defined the Catholic worship experience during the Counter-Reformation, and that was no less true in the Netherlands despite the difficulties of public worship. Scholars have written substantially about the relationship between the Council of Trent's recommendations for religious imagery and subsequent art theory in the Catholic southern Netherlands, particularly as it pertains to the work of Peter Paul Rubens.¹⁸ In order to appeal to the viewer's paired needs to comprehend religious messages and feel emotionally connected to them, Rubens emphasized the physicality and emotions of the figures in his religious works.¹⁹ He also employed both easily recognizable and learned forms of symbolism to stress specifically Catholic doctrine, like transubstantiation and the role of Virgin as intercessor. Less scholarship has been devoted to examining Dutch artworks in light of Catholic reform, but the decorative programs of St. Bernardus and 't Hart show that the Counter-Reformation emphasis on doctrinal subject matter and meditative practices were instrumental to worship in Dutch *huiskerken* just as they were in Catholic territories in Europe.

Dutch Catholics and Protestants alike shared a lingering belief in the image as a tangible manifestation of the holy figure it resembles, even if they differed on how to use images. While Calvinists in particular feared the worship of images and relics as objects at the expense of the Gospel, Catholics feared the misinterpretation of images, which

¹⁸ See, for example, Thomas L. Glen, *Rubens and the Counter-Reformation: Studies in His Religious Paintings Between 1609 and 1620* (New York: Garland, 1977); Peter C. Sutton et al., *The Age of Rubens* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993).

¹⁹ Richard Viladesau, "Counter-Reformation Theology and Art: The Example of Rubens's Paintings of the Passion," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 29–42. Viladesau claims these characteristics are typically "Counter-Reformation," as well as archaism, although Rubens's archaism is limited to format (triptych) or iconography, rather than an archaism of style as is sometimes evident in Dutch Catholic art.

were viewed as both useful and necessary in strengthening faith. In 1563, the Council of Trent's twenty-fifth session 'On the Invocation, Veneration, and Relics, of Saints, and on Sacred Images,' defended and clarified the purpose of religious imagery:

by means of the histories of the mysteries of our Redemption, portrayed by paintings...the people is instructed, and confirmed in [the habit of] remembering, and continually revolving in mind the articles of faith...that so they may... order their own lives and manners in imitation of the saints; and may be excited to adore and love God.²⁰

Images could work for and against the Church, therefore their unique potency had to be both harnessed and exploited.

Catholic treatises in support of imagery typically invoked Gregory the Great's sixth-century claim that paintings could instruct the uneducated by serving as pictorial texts.²¹ Most ecclesiastical writers defended imagery in the abstract and upheld its emotional effect, but remained vague about the role of artists and the appearance of paintings.²² The first Dutch ecclesiastical writer to address Tridentine recommendations

²⁰ J. Waterworth, ed. and trans., *The canons and decrees of the sacred and oecumenical Council of Trent* (London: Dolman, 1848), 235.

²¹ Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistularum*, CCSL 140–140A, ed. D. Norberg, 3 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982). Quoted in Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 222. "It is one thing to worship a picture, it is another by means of pictures to learn thoroughly the story that should be venerated. For what writing makes present to those reading, the same picturing makes present to the uneducated, to those perceiving visually, because in it the ignorant see what they ought to follow..."

²² Martin Donk, *Een cort onderscheyt tusschen Godlijcke en Afgodissche Beelden* (Antwerp, 1579); René Benoist, A v, iii. Quoted in David Freedberg, *Iconoclasm and Painting in the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1566–1609* (London: Garland Publishing, 1988), 156–57. Following Gregory, in 1579 Martin Donk (1506–1590) championed paintings of episodes recounted by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as the paintings were "not much less than the Gospel of the Four Evangelists," the same as they were written. René Benoist advocated paintings "in memory of the mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Christ...for the teaching and instruction of the simple and gross; and also to uplift and increase the devotion of each and every one, learned and unlearned alike." Benoist notes that just as we do not pray to the cross itself, but to what it signifies, so do we not pray to paintings but to their subjects, and thus images "remind us and warn us to be strong and imitate them."

for imagery and their implications for artists directly was Johannes Molanus (1533-1585), first in *De Pictris et Imaginibus Sacris*, published 1570 in Louvain, and then revised in 1594 as *De Historia Sanctarum Imaginum et Picturarum*, Book II, and reprinted many times (Antwerp 1617, Lyons 1619, Antwerp 1626, Louvain 1771).²³ Molanus deemed it the painter's prerogative to fill in (decorously) what was left vague by Scripture, and allowed for the inclusion of some elements without symbolic significance.²⁴ Post-Tridentine paintings were not referential of an external story, but embodiments of the story, versions of the text itself.²⁵ Following this, Molanus stressed the importance of gaining the Church's approval for new iconography, which would ensure the proper message reached the laity.²⁶ Church authorities and patrons alike established general guidelines but often scrutinized the work only after its completion—a process that implies considerable trust in artists.²⁷

²³ David Freedberg, "Johannes Molanus on Provocative Paintings. *De Historia Sanctarum Imaginum et Picturarum*, Book II, chapter 42," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 34 (1971), 229–30. Molanus was enormously influential for the justifications of Catholic imagery by Italian theorist Gabriele Paleotti (*De Imaginibus Sacris*, 1594) and Cardinal Federico Borromeo (*De Pictura Sacra*, 1624).

²⁴ Freedberg 1988, 140–141. He mentioned the seven joys and seven sorrows of the Virgin as examples of appropriate and beneficial images that required some artistic invention because they were not found in Scripture.

²⁵ Carruthers, 169. Carruthers argues this for medieval imagery but it is applicable to post-Tridentine paintings as well given the renewal of the *Devotio Moderna* movement.

²⁶ Freedberg 1988, 92–93. To illustrate the typical approval procedure, he recounted his receipt of a letter from a pastor asking for an opinion on an unusual portrayal of the Trinity, which Molanus ultimately ruled indefensible.

²⁷ Freedberg 1971, 234. Beyond his theological advice and justification, Molanus also links post-Tridentine Catholic painting and its regulation to Horatio's ancient comparison of painting to poetry, *ut pictura poesis*. In its original usage, the phrase emphasized the importance, for both poets and painters, of making convincing arguments and moving audiences with persuasion. In the early modern era, artists misinterpreted the phrase as an argument for painting's role as visual poetry or literature. Naturally, this interpretation suited Catholics with regards to religious imagery, and Molanus expanded its application: because paintings are visual poetry, the Church should allow in paintings what it allows in books, but censor paintings more aggressively than it censors books because paintings have a greater and broader impact on audiences.

A popular 1591 vernacular treatise by Catholic Johannes á Porta recommended that because Christ and the saints were real historical people, artists should “paint the deeds and suffering of Christ and his saints *nae d’ leven*,” meaning “after life,” for maximum emotional impact.²⁸ This advice is important for its adoption of artistic and art theoretical terminology; painting “after life” was a foremost concern of virtually every Dutch painter, regardless of genre or religious affiliation. Porta’s personal experience led him to believe that while scripture may teach more accurately, images more effectively stir the viewer’s emotions.²⁹

Artistic choices and ecclesiastical regulations could have a profound impact on viewers during prayer. A large majority of Catholics, whether or not they identified with the Jesuits, practiced to some extent Ignatius Loyola’s widely popular and institutionalized meditative visualization, “Rules for Thinking with the Church” from the *Spiritual Exercises*. After publication of the *Exercises* in Antwerp in 1624, they quickly spread throughout the Northern and Southern Netherlands, and various other religious orders compiled their own versions of the same.³⁰ The meditations required the believer to envision scenes on their own, but the imagination is limited to experience and knowledge, and the exercise was easily transferred to praying with physical images as well.³¹ If the devout suspended their disbelief and accepted everything presented to them by the Church, post-Tridentine paintings were compelling indeed.

²⁸ Johannes a Porta, *D’net der beeltstormers* (Antwerp, 1591). Quoted in Freedberg 1988, 159.

²⁹ Freedberg 1988, 78, 159.

³⁰ John B. Knipping, *The Iconography of the Counter-Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1974), 68.

³¹ Ignatius Loyola, “Rules for Thinking with the Church.” Quoted in Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations Sourcebook* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 252. On the topic of trusting Church-sanctioned imagery and the doctrine behind it, Ignatius wrote: To arrive at complete certainty, this is the attitude of mind we should maintain: I will believe that the white object I see

Rather than diminishing the power of images, the elimination of esoteric symbols, false doctrine and convoluted compositions made images more real and accessible than ever. All viewers could now apprehend the sacred truths inherent in images, and were therefore expected to do so rather than to worship them for their surface content alone. Artists faced high stakes to create a historically accurate, decorous, moving, aesthetically pleasing and naturalistic incarnation of God's Word. Beyond this, the physical space of the church and its sacred atmosphere were emphasized as never before. Dutch painters had to conform to the unique spatial limitations of *huiskerken*, often converted townhouses with maximum space devoted to seating. The post-Tridentine justification of images developed into an opportunity to articulate a new batch of artistic concerns. Trent's prohibition of "disorderly...unbecomingly or confusedly arranged" pictures proved an impetus for innovation, as artists developed convincing, visually striking paintings that revolved around a single idea.³²

State of the Scholarship on *Huiskerken*

Only relatively recently in the historiography of seventeenth-century Dutch art have scholars focused on the many paintings created for Catholic patrons and Catholic settings in the officially Protestant United Provinces. Unlike landscapes, still lifes, and portraits of middle-class citizens, religious history paintings were not considered

is black if that should be the decision of the hierarchical Church, for I believe that linking Christ our Lord the Bridegroom and his Bride the Church, there is one and the same Spirit, ruling and guiding us for our souls' good..."

³² Waterworth, 236; Knipping vol. 2 389; See John W. O'Malley, *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000). Knipping somewhat convolutedly suggests that stylistic and theological goals intersected in Netherlandish painting after Trent.

“typically Dutch” because they display foreign stylistic influences and are often emotional or gory, featuring large figures, bold colors and iconography specific to Catholic doctrine. Yet paintings for private Catholic settings are no less Dutch than are secular or overtly Protestant works, and Dutch Catholics developed uses and interpretations for these images that are the particular product of the social, cultural and spiritual influences of the Golden Age Netherlands.

The collective imagination of seventeenth-century Dutch painting has expanded in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century to include religious history paintings and classicizing works. Catholic artists, patrons and subjects are no longer marginal topics, but rather are the focus of major exhibitions and monographic studies. Less common are lengthy treatments of programs of altarpieces created for individual *huiskerken*. My dissertation is not the first to elucidate such groups of devotional paintings, but it is the first English-language study of the complete decorative programs of *huiskerken* and their liturgical functions.

Seymour Slive’s 1956 article “Notes on the Relationship of Protestantism to Seventeenth Century Dutch Painting” influentially argued against a causal relationship between Dutch Calvinism and secular, small paintings, often taken for granted as fact.³³ He pointed out that more Dutch artists were Catholic than nineteenth- and twentieth-century art historians had liked to admit. Since then, art historians have addressed the

³³ Seymour Slive, “Notes on the Relationship of Protestantism to Dutch Art,” *The Art Quarterly* 19 (1956): 15.

work of many Catholic Dutch artists, including Johannes Vermeer and Jan Steen, who painted Catholic subjects.³⁴

In 1983, David Freedberg studied the impact of the Iconoclasm on religious painting and the theological debates that surrounded it. Freedberg introduced many late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish theologians and art theorists who took strong positions on what religious imagery should and should not be, including Martin Donk and Johannes Molanus.³⁵ More recently, Mia Mochizuki's 2008 book, *The Netherlandish Image After Iconoclasm*, looked at the proliferation of text paintings in Dutch Reformed churches. Mochizuki treats text paintings as religious images that encourage recitation, proving that Reformed churches were not devoid of images and that specific devotional practices employing images were not limited to Catholics.³⁶

Dutch art historian Paul Dirkse published a series of seminal articles in the 1980s and 1990s on individual Catholic artists and objects, and contributed to the Museum Catharijneconvent's 1989 exhibition catalogue *Kunst uit Oud-Katholieke Kerken*, which significantly broadened the public awareness of how richly decorated *huiskerken* were.³⁷ He addressed some of the difficulties facing the study of old Dutch Catholic objects, including wear and tear, though regular use also helped preserve some objects because they were properly maintained. One such object is the medieval cope of David of

³⁴ See, for example, Daniel Arasse, *Vermeer: Faith in Painting* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Baruch Kirschenbaum, *The Religious and Historical Paintings of Jan Steen* (New York and Montclair, NJ: Allanheld and Schram, 1977).

³⁵ David Freedberg, *Iconoclasm and Painting in the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1566–1609* (London: Garland Publishing, 1988). 87–93, 156.

³⁶ Mia Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image After Iconoclasm 1566–1672: Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008.

³⁷ Dirkse's articles were collected posthumously and published as Paul Dirkse, *Begijnen, pastoors, en predikanten: religie en kunst in de Gouden Eeuw* (Leiden: Primavera, 2001); Dirkse, ed. *Kunst uit Oud-katholieke Kerken* (Utrecht: Catharijneconvent, 1989).

Burgundy, used and stored in the Sint Gertrudiskapel in Utrecht into the twentieth century. This cope, which appeared in many Utrecht Catholic altarpieces and paintings, is now in the Museum Catharijneconvent. More problematic is the loss of financial security and consolidation of multiple parishes, leading to combined collections and poor inventories leading to unknown provenance or dates for objects from *huiskerken*.³⁸

Robert Schillemans has written about similar issues for paintings in Amsterdam *huiskerken*, noting that without clear documentation, smaller altarpieces are indistinguishable from religious paintings for homes, and dates are difficult to verify when makeshift home chapels had no written records.³⁹ Schillemans identified and traced the provenance of many Amsterdam paintings, and wrote a monographic catalogue on the religious works of Jacob de Wit (1695–1754) the main supplier of Catholic altarpieces in eighteenth-century Amsterdam. This study includes a description of all known *huiskerken* in Amsterdam and their paintings, and Schillemans clarifies that contrary to earlier scholarship, Dutch altarpieces were not all copies or pastiches of works by Rubens and Van Dyck.⁴⁰

The landmark exhibition *Gods, Saints and Heroes* in 1980 introduced the museum-going public to Dutch Golden Age religious history paintings, most of which had been prized by wealthy patrons and art theorists alike, but had not enjoyed the same popular appeal in the intervening centuries.⁴¹ Building on the 1980 exhibition's success,

³⁸ Dirkse 1989, 6.

³⁹ Schillemans, Robert. "Schilderijen in Noordnederlandse katholieke kerken uit de eerst helft van de zeventiende eeuw," *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 8 (1992), 43–43.

⁴⁰ See Schillemans, "Zeventiende-eeuwse altaarstukken in de amsterdamsche staties: een inventarisatie" in Van den Hout and Schillemans 1995, 57.

⁴¹ Albert Blankert et al., *Gods, Saints, and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1980).

Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth Century Painting in 2001 focused on Italianate and classicizing painters including Catholics Salomon de Bray and Pieter de Grebber. The exhibition highlighted the intersections between classicizing painting, architecture and literature in the mid- seventeenth century.⁴² Many of the works included in *Dutch Classicism* were religious or specifically for Catholic patrons, suggesting that a larger relationship exists between Catholic iconography and classicizing formal qualities in Dutch paintings.

Many catalogues raisonné and exhibitions on the group of artists known as the Utrecht Caravaggisti and their workshops from the last few decades have introduced paintings for *huiskerken* to English-speaking audiences. In particular, *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht During the Golden Age; Sinners and Saints, Darkness and Light: Caravaggio and His Dutch and Flemish Followers*; and the recent *Caravaggio and the Painters of the North* point out the stylistic relationships between Utrecht painters and their Italian inspiration as well as their northern predecessors.⁴³

⁴² Blankert et al., *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth-Century Painting* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2001).

⁴³ Monographs include Marcel Roethlisberger's *Abraham Bloemaert and His Sons*, J. Richard Judson's on Gerrit van Honthorst, Wayne Franits's on Dirck van Baburen, Franits and Leonard Slatkes's on Hendrick ter Brugghen. See Joneath Spicer, et al., *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht During the Golden Age* (Baltimore: Walters Art Gallery, 1997); Dennis P. Weller, et al., *Sinners and Saints, Darkness and Light: Caravaggio and His Dutch and Flemish Followers* (Raleigh: North Carolina Museum of Art, 1998); Gert Jan van der Sman, *Caravaggio and the Painters of the North* (Madrid: Funcadción Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2016); Marcel G. Roethlisberger and Marten Jan Bok, *Abraham Bloemaert and His Sons: Paintings and Prints*, 2 vols. (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1993); J. Richard Judson and Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst, 1592–1656* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1999); Wayne E. Franits, *The Paintings of Dirck van Baburen, ca. 1592/3–1624* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 2013); Leonard J. Slatkes and Wayne E. Franits, *The paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen, 1588–1629* (Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 2007).

Outside of Utrecht, less attention has been paid to foreign influences on Dutch painters. The painters represented in Den Hoek and 't Hart include Jan de Bray, who appears alongside his father Salomon in Pieter Biesboer's *Painting Family: The De Brays* and is the subject of a recent monograph by Jeroen Giltaij, Philips Wouwerman, who has received two monographs, Adriaen van de Velde, the subject of a recent monographic exhibition at the Rijksmuseum, Willem Claesz. Heda, a staple in many still life publications, and Pieter de Grebber, who despite success in his lifetime has not received a monograph but has been the subject of several articles regarding his connections to Haarlem Catholic priests.⁴⁴

Most importantly, the work of Xander van Eck on paintings for *huiskerken* is the direct precedent to my dissertation. Van Eck argued in a 1993 article that the Utrecht Caravaggisti's use of tenebrism in scenes of conversion painted for *huiskerken* corresponds to the need for dramatic and emotional scenes to reaffirm the strength of the Church even in officially Protestant areas like the Netherlands.⁴⁵ He also contributed studies on the artworks made for Amsterdam's Jesuit parish, De Krijtberg, as well as for a few churches in the Southern Netherlands, and several articles based on his 1994

⁴⁴ Pieter Biesboer, *Painting Family: The De Brays, Master Painters of the 17th Century Holland* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008); Jeroen Giltaij, *Jan de Braij (1626/1627–1697): Schilder en architect* (Zwolle: Wbooks, 2017); Birgit Schumacher, *Philips Wouwerman (1619–1688): The Horse Painter of the Golden Age*, 2 vols. Aetas Aurea Monographs on Dutch and Flemish Painting (Doornspijk: Davaco, 2006); Frederik Duparc and Quentin Buvelot, *Philips Wouwerman 1619–1688* (The Hague: Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, 2009); Bart Cornelis, *Adriaen van de Velde: Dutch master of landscape* (London: Paul Holberton, 2016); For articles on De Grebber see Dirkse 2001; Xander van Eck, "Een kwijnend bisdom nieuw leven ingeblazen: Pieter de Grebber en het Haarlems kapittel," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 52, no. 3/4 (2004): 254–269; Biesboer, "Een Caritas van Pieter Fransz. de Grebber," *Haerlem Jaarboek* (1987): 130–134.

⁴⁵ Xander Van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction: Clandestine Catholic Churches as Patrons of Dutch Caravaggesque Painting" *Simiolus* 22, no. 4 (1993–1994): 217–234.

dissertation on Catholic commissions and stained glass in Gouda.⁴⁶ Van Eck importantly connected paintings with a known *huiskerk* provenance to Catholic painters to argue, in 1999, that the majority of Catholic altarpieces and other commissions were indeed painted by Catholic artists.⁴⁷ Expanding upon this, his 2008 book discussed the typical commission process and favored subjects of parishes and artists in Utrecht, Haarlem, and Amsterdam in different periods of the seventeenth century.⁴⁸

Beginning with Utrecht, Van Eck described Abraham Bloemaert's large workshop and its prolific production of altarpieces, often intended to replace older paintings. Bloemaert's work inspired younger artists to depict local saints popularized by missionaries hoping to galvanize religious fervor. In Haarlem, Van Eck noted Pieter de Grebber's close connections with and portrait commissions for clergy members in the 1630s and 1640s.⁴⁹ In mid-century Amsterdam, pastors of *huiskerken* commissioned sets of multiple high altarpieces that priests rotated in response to the church calendar, and to compensate for a lack of side altars.⁵⁰ Additionally, theatrical elements like retractable pulpits helped churches remain hidden, but more importantly, enhanced the excitement of

⁴⁶ Van Eck, "Wouter Pietersz. Crabeth II en de parochie St. Johannes de Doper in Gouda," *Oud Holland* 101, no. 1 (1987): 34–59; Van Eck and Christine Coebergh-Surie, "'Behold, a Greater than Jonas Is Here': The Iconographic Program of the Stained-Glass Windows of Gouda, 1552–72," *Simiolus* 25, no. 1 (1997): 5–44; Van Eck, "Between Restraint and Excess: The Decoration of the Church of the Great Beguinage at Mechelen in the Seventeenth Century," *Simiolus* 28, no. 3 (2001): 129–162; Van Eck, "Siding with Philip II: Margaretha van der Marck's donation of Dirck Crabeth's 'Judith and Holofernes' to the Sint Janskerk in Gouda," *Simiolus* 34, no. 1 (2009/2010): 4–17; Van Eck, "The high altar of the archiepiscopal cathedral of Mechelen: St. Rumbold's grand reliquary and tomb," *Simiolus* 38, no. 4 (2015/2016): 213–228;

⁴⁷ Van Eck, "The Artist's Religion: Paintings Commissioned for Clandestine Catholic Churches in the Northern Netherlands, 1600–1800," *Simiolus* 27, no. 1/2 (1999): 70–94.

⁴⁸ Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor: Paintings for the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008).

⁴⁹ He also discussed this in his 2004 article, op. cit.

⁵⁰ Van Eck 2008, 51, 87, 132, 135.

Mass for believers and potential converts. Van Eck concludes that the stylistic inspiration for all of these commissions, spanning almost a century and three cities, are too diverse to pinpoint a “Dutch” Catholic altarpiece style.⁵¹

The connections between “low” arts like prayer books, textiles, and silver liturgical objects and “high” art like paintings have been downplayed or ignored by Anglophone scholars. Marlies Caron’s 1987 article on the embroidery work of the women of Den Hoeck for liturgical garments explains the beautiful objects as products of both the women’s daily regimen of handiwork and meditation, and of a fear of idleness encouraged by their pastors. The figural scenes on these garments were inspired by devotional engravings, which circulated as patterns, allowing amateur *kloppen* to embroider narrative scenes as well as professionals.⁵²

The impact of engravings and copies cannot be overstated in terms of *huiskerken* paintings. Evelyne Verheggen has detailed the ways that Dutch lay religious women used devotional prints from Antwerp as well as those produced in the Dutch Republic to practice meditation, individual devotions and fervent prayer.⁵³ While most devotional prints were pasted into personal prayer books and thus have been overlooked by art historians, Verheggen has shown that their style and iconography reflect international trends in engraving. Additionally, prints used by *kloppen* relate closely to the homilies

⁵¹ Van Eck echoes this conclusion in his 2009 chapter, Van Eck, “Paintings for Clandestine Catholic Churches in the Republic: Typically Dutch?” in Benjamin Kaplan, Bob Moore, Henk van Bierop and Judith Pollmann, *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands c. 1570–1720*, Studies in Early Modern European History (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2009), 216–229.

⁵² Marlies Caron, “Kerkelijk borduurwerk van de Maagden van den Hoeck” *Haerlem Jaarboek* (1987), 8–23.

⁵³ Evelyne M.F. Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2006).

and interests of the priests that served as spiritual guides for the women. Seventeenth-century *kloppen* followed a medieval method of visualizing themselves in the depicted scene in order to deepen their faith and connected moments of Mass to specific images. Verheggen's archival research on these devotional prints and the homilies on which they were based informs my method of linking devotional paintings to their visual and textual sources.

Likewise, church historian Joke Spaans's work on the writings of Trijn Jans Oly, a *klopje* at Den Hoeck who served as spiritual mother and chronicled the lives of other spiritual virgins, has provided further insight into the worship practices of *kloppen* and their influence on imagery.⁵⁴ Oly's biographies reveal another connection to medieval devotion: the practices of recording and studying sermons, and of recording the lives of lay religious women to serve as examples. Both Spaans and Marit Monteiro also analyze the strict regimens and relationships between the priests and women in lay religious communities, which both followed early modern gender norms and skirted them in important ways.⁵⁵

Anglophone church historians that have analyzed the position of Catholics in Dutch society also provide important contextual information for my project: the work of Benjamin Kaplan, Geert Janssen, Charles H. Parker, and Judith Pollmann on

⁵⁴ Joke Spaans, *De Levens der Maechden: Het verhaal van een religieuze vrouwengemeenschap in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012).

⁵⁵ See Spaans, "Paragons of Piety: Representations of Priesthood in the Lives of Haarlem Virgins," *Dutch Review of Church History* 83 (2003): 235–246; Marit Monteiro, *Geestelijke maagden: Leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland gedurende de 17de eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1996); Monteiro, "Een maagd zonder regel is als een schip zonder stuurman: richtlijnen voor geestelijke maagden in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de zeventiende eeuw," *Trajecta: tijdschrift voor de geschiedenis van het katholiek leven in de Nederlanden* 1, no. 4 (1992): 332–351.

ecclesiastical authority, sociopolitical issues, and anecdotal histories of Dutch Catholics sheds light on the circumstances of *huiskerk* decorative programs.⁵⁶ The full material culture and experience of Catholicism in the Golden Age Netherlands can only be understood by taking into account the political, economic, ecclesiastic, and popular religious conditions in which devotional objects were created, which art historians writing in English have not done substantially.

Sources and Methodology

Virtually nothing survives in terms of commission information or correspondence about paintings for *huiskerken*. This is due mainly to the close nature of Catholic communities in which an artist and patron often knew one another. My primary sources, therefore, consist of the paintings, liturgical objects, and devotional manuscripts themselves. Using the manuscript collections at the Catharijneconvent in Utrecht and the Bibliotheek Universiteit van Amsterdam, I drew theological connections between religious patrons and imagery as well as stylistic and iconographic connections between popular prints and devotional paintings.

Following a social history approach, I ask specific questions about churches and the people in them in order to answer larger questions about Dutch Catholic art. Unlike previous work on *huiskerken*, which has taken a wider view and mentioned individual parishes and artworks anecdotally, my approach begins with the historical facts about the

⁵⁶ Geert H. Janssen, *The Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Kaplan 2002; Kaplan, Moore, Van Bierop and Pollmann 2009; Charles H. Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Judith Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520–1635*, The Past and Present book series, general ed. Alexandra Walsham (Oxford, UK: Oxford U Press, 2011).

priests, lay religious women, and artists that decorated *huiskerken*, and acknowledges archival lacunae as part of their history of these spaces.

An important aspect of my study is my emphasis on the role of lay religious women as patrons and creators of works of devotional art and literature, and as pillars of the Counter-Reformation Church in the Netherlands. These women supported priests and parishes financially, maintained church buildings, sewed and embroidered liturgical garments, cared for the poor and sick, educated children, and commissioned works of art to decorate *huiskerken*. As part of their daily devotion, they collected, decorated, and disseminated engravings and woodcuts used for personal meditation and prayer, and commissioned paintings inspired by these inexpensive prints. Eschewing the traditional dichotomy, I argue for the importance of “low” art or crafts like embroidery, silver, and inexpensive engravings collected and decorated by lay religious women as creative sources for “higher” art forms like paintings.

Scope and Contribution

While *huiskerken* existed throughout the Netherlands, I chose to focus on two examples in Haarlem and Amsterdam for a variety of reasons. First, despite the fact that Den Hoeck no longer exists as a church, many objects with a Den Hoeck provenance remain, scattered in museums. Additionally, thanks to Trijn Jans Oly’s biographies of the women of Den Hoeck, enough is known about their daily lives, the priests who served there, and their spiritual concerns, to reconstruct their uses and interpretations of imagery in the chapel. ’t Hart, on the other hand, is nicely preserved as a museum, and provides a

unique opportunity to view the original setting for its decorative program, largely unchanged from the seventeenth-century.

Beyond issues of extant evidence, both *huiskerken* fell under the purview of the Haarlem diocese, which had the uncommon advantage of maintaining autonomy even after the transfer of power to Calvinists in the late sixteenth century. The proximity of the two cities and their shared ecclesiastical authorities meant that Haarlem and Amsterdam priests and *kloppen* belonged to extended social networks that often overlapped. Both Bernardus in den Hoeck and 't Hart were served by groups of lay religious women, to whom devotional artworks and objects can be connected. Both have also left behind edifying literature intended for these women in the form of guidebooks or sermon manuscripts, as well as devotional books and engravings used by *kloppen* and lay congregants during Mass, providing in each case a clear connection between images and the liturgy. Archival records suggest that both stations had large congregations: St. Bernardus was spiritual home to at least 200 *kloppen*, as well as laypeople, and 't Hart in Amsterdam was such a popular station that in 1667 alone, the priest performed 70 baptisms.⁵⁷

These two case studies illustrate what I contend to be the defining characteristics of “Dutch Catholic devotional art,” an amorphous category that has yet to be clearly delineated. Both parishes commissioned artworks that follow either a classicizing or archaizing style, which relates to both the Tridentine recommendations for clarity in religious imagery and to the Church’s goal of reminding the faithful of their storied past before the Iconoclasm. Catholic *huiskerken* also tended to commission series of

⁵⁷ Thijs Boers, “The indefatigable Petrus Parmentier,” in Boers et al., *Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder/ Our Lord in the Attic* (Amsterdam: Lectura Cultura, 2015), 61.

paintings, both to fit the new spatial requirements of narrow chapels with long side walls, and to ensure that the high altar reflected an appropriate devotional theme based on the liturgical calendar. 't Hart's extant artworks demonstrate this characteristic more clearly than do Den Hoeck's, but Den Hoeck may have used rotating altarpieces, given that no surviving works stand out as a likely permanent altar.

As in most Catholic parishes, the commissions and funding for objects in the two *huiskerken* came from tightknit social networks of priests, *kloppen*, painters, writers, silversmiths, and engravers. Almost without exception, the artists that decorated these two parishes were Catholic, and often attended Mass or had children baptized at the same parish for which they painted. My dissertation broadens the perception of some of these Catholic artists who are typically discussed as derivative of others, or who are not known primarily as history painters. Hendrick Bloemaert (1601–1672), overshadowed by his prolific and influential father Abraham, inherited his legacy as a painter of altarpieces and developed a consistent and effective religious painting style for churches throughout Utrecht. History painter Pieter de Grebber (c.1600–1652) fetched high prices and prestigious commissions during his life yet has never received a monograph study. Devoutly Catholic, he lived in a house attached to the Haarlem beguinage and had close relationships with priests and religious leaders in the city. Landscape painter Adriaen van de Velde (1636–1672) attended 't Hart and painted a Passion series for his church, and still life painter Willem Claesz. Heda (1594–1680) painted a devotional triptych with patron saints for a patron at Den Hoeck.

The iconography of the Catholic devotional objects from St. Bernardus and 't Hart speaks to the needs of lay religious women, who modeled themselves around the

Virgin Mary and other virgin saints and meditated on Passion or Eucharistic themes recommended in sermons. Compositions and motifs in paintings, textiles, and silver mirror those of the devotional engravings used by these women, indicating that objects within the chapel were also intended to aid meditation. Such reflective practices originated in the medieval movement known as *Devotio Moderna* and were reinvigorated during the Counter-Reformation.⁵⁸ The archaic styles and themes of Catholic devotional imagery in the Golden Age Netherlands, as exemplified by objects in various media in both St. Bernardus and 't Hart, are often less “early modern” than they are medieval. Both parishes also possessed an interconnected decorative program in which paintings could not be separated from engravings, sermons, textiles, and silver.

My contribution to the literature begins with a contextualization of two well-documented and historically important *huiskerken* in terms of the political and intellectual currents in Haarlem and Amsterdam. After situating Dutch Catholics and *huiskerken* in the political and religious climate of the seventeenth-century Netherlands, I show that the ecclesiastical reforms and tightknit communities of priests, lay religious women (*kloppen*), and wealthy patrons in Haarlem and Amsterdam invigorated Catholic piety in those cities. Next, I analyze the self-fashioned identities of the priests and *kloppen* who supported the St. Bernardus and 't Hart parishes. I also use sermon and prayer manuscripts recorded and studied by *kloppen* to reveal the persistence of medieval

⁵⁸ See John van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: The Devotio Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). Geert Grote (1340–1384) is credited with founding this movement in Deventer, where the “Sisters of the Common Life,” a semi-religious group with regimens and goals similar to seventeenth-century *kloppen*, was established. The primary goals of the movement—simplicity, humility, piety, meditation—were articulated by Thomas à Kempis in his massively influential *Imitation of Christ* (c. 1418).

devotional practices well into the seventeenth century. Finally, I connect the style and iconography of the paintings from each parish to the textiles, engravings, and silver used in conjunction with them. All of these works responded to the spiritual concerns of the women who commissioned, viewed, maintained, and in some cases created these objects. I will demonstrate that the complete decorative programs of St. Bernardus and 't Hart served liturgical functions during Mass and guided *kloppen* and other parishioners in meditation.

I consider the devotional paintings made for these spaces as working in concert with recorded sermons, devotional engravings, embroidered textiles, and liturgical silver to aid in the celebration of Mass and daily meditation, particularly as practiced by lay religious women. I focus for the first time at length on some of the artworks in St. Bernardus and 't Hart, which are often overlooked, but more importantly use these objects to illuminate the crucial roles played by lay religious women as patrons, creators, and viewers of devotional objects. Furthermore, I show that the modern binary of “high” and “low” art was irrelevant in Catholic *huiskerken*, where doctrinal significance took precedence over perceived quality or monetary value. I conclude that the archaism of subject matter and style common to devotional artworks was not due to lack of artistic innovation, but rather demonstrates a greater continuity between the meditative use of imagery in the medieval Devotio Moderna movement and the early modern period than is commonly acknowledged.

Chapter One: The Catholic Church in the Haarlem Diocese

The Political Aftermath of the Reformation and Catholic Exile

In late summer 1566, a Calvinist resident of 's-Hertogenbosch celebrated the Iconoclasm that had just swept through the Low Countries:

...by God's grace all the images and statues in these Low Countries have been destroyed and expelled from all the churches...doubtless to this end, that in the aforesaid churches, which have hitherto been used for idolatry, the true religion might be exercised, and this was not possible without the preceding destruction.⁵⁹

The iconoclasts destroyed Church property in order to send a strong symbolic message against the extravagance and abuses of the Church, and against the idolatry they believed Catholics perpetrated with their use of images during worship. Yet they had a practical motive as well: Calvinists needed a place to hold services with the coming cooler months. Catholic churches provided an ideal setting, but needed to be purged of Catholic paraphernalia first.⁶⁰

Calvinists primarily targeted images in order to disempower them, but in so doing proved the very power that images hold for lay viewers, even nonbelievers. Iconoclasts did not merely break the images, they treated them as if they were living beings—decapitating or gouging out the eyes of statues, for example, to rid the images of their

⁵⁹ P. Cuypers van Velthoven, ed., *Documents pour servir a l'histoire des troubles religieux du XVI^e siècle dans le Brabant septentrional Bois-le-Duc (1566–1570)* (Brussels, 1858) 46. Quoted in Alastair Duke, *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. by Judith Pollmann and Andrew Spicer (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 183.

⁶⁰ Duke, 183.

communicative power.⁶¹ Along with works of art, iconoclasts destroyed implements of Mass. As if exorcising the power from the objects rather than denying the existence of power, rioters trampled the Host and urinated in chalices, destroying anything that contributed to the spectacle of Mass: rood screens, tabernacles, vestments, reliquaries, prayer books.⁶² Despite the stated goals of the iconoclasts, the fact remains that financial and political convenience was often at play alongside religious fervor: several chapter churches, especially those in Utrecht, were spared destruction because even iconoclasts refused to risk breaking ties to the powerful families that supported those churches.⁶³ The contradictions inherent in the Iconoclasm resonated throughout Dutch society and its alternating acceptance of and condemnation of Catholic practice.

In 1572, the States of Holland officially seized and sold all Catholic Church property. This act predated the official proscription against Catholic worship in 1573, so the seizure of property likely stemmed from financial need. Between 1572-76, the first wave of the wealthy Catholic “exodus” from areas of rebellion in Holland and Zeeland led to resettlement either in the “royalist safe havens” in Utrecht and Amsterdam, or in cities in the southern Netherlands like Antwerp, Bruges, Leuven, or Mechelen.⁶⁴ Between 1577-1585, Catholics moved further, to cities near the borders of Habsburg control: Groningen in Friesland, German towns including Mainz, Münster, and especially Cologne, and French towns including Reims, Amiens, and Rouen.⁶⁵ Finally, from 1585 to

⁶¹ Mia Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image After Iconoclasm, 1566–1672: Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 110.

⁶² Duke, 191.

⁶³ Ibid., 184.

⁶⁴ Geert H. Janssen, *The Dutch Revolt and Catholic Exile in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 61.

⁶⁵ Janssen 2014, 62.

1609, a few hundred Dutch Catholics moved to recaptured Catholic Flanders, though this migration pales in comparison to the 80,000–100,000 Protestants who fled Flanders for the Protestant northern provinces.⁶⁶

Migration was not a solution available to all Catholics, however. Exiles tended to be upper middle class people or those with elite political or clerical connections in their new city.⁶⁷ Most migrants were men whose jobs and societal roles put them in the public eye, while women often remained in hostile territory, whether the Protestant north or the Catholic south.⁶⁸ Although many Catholics did flee to more welcoming territories, many others remained in the Netherlands with the hope that the conflict would not last or that their faith would not be forbidden permanently. Those that remained had to practice their faith secretly, in hidden or house churches known as *schuilkerken* or *huiskerken*.

Although the legal division between Protestants and Catholics began in the late sixteenth century, it took several decades for full confessionalization to take place.⁶⁹ In the first years of the seventeenth century, neither Calvinists nor Catholics had many ministers, and some Catholics even retained their positions in city governments, harboring no prejudice against Protestants. Religious historian Willem Frijhoff argues that confessionalization for Calvinists only took hold after the Synod of Dort in 1618, which clarified doctrine and strengthened the identity of their faith as distinct from and in opposition to Catholicism.⁷⁰ The Synod forced Catholics to shift from an accusatory

⁶⁶ Ibid., 63.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 64.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 73.

⁶⁹ Confessionalization is the process by which laypeople come to identify strongly with one faith over another and churches develop distinct hierarchies and worship practices

⁷⁰ At this important meeting, church officials finally resolved the debate over predestination and free will ignited by Leiden professors Arminius and Gomarus and taken up with fervor by political leaders. Contra-Remonstrants, or Gomarists, won the day with their stance that God

position in which they could criticize Protestants for misinterpreting the significance of the Eucharist, of saints and of clerical hierarchy, to a defensive position.⁷¹ From a defensive position, Catholics had to justify their existence both religiously and politically. Although the religious divide between Spanish Catholicism and Dutch Calvinism was not the only cause of the Dutch Revolt, it quickly became, in the minds of many, a cause for continuing the Revolt. The late sixteenth century saw proscriptions against Catholicism in the North, the exodus of Protestants to the North, and the flourishing of Catholic rebuilding in the South, and it became clear that the provinces could never reunite.⁷² Until the Treaty of Münster in 1648, which established the sovereignty of the United Provinces, Catholics in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth- centuries faced suspicion because they were believed to have religious motivations for wanting to remain tied to Catholic Spain. Non-Catholics also accused Catholics of obeying a “foreign prince,” the Pope.⁷³

During the deliberations leading up to the Treaty of Münster, neither the Spanish nor the Dutch wanted to budge on religious issues. The Spanish considered Catholicism

preordained both earthly and eternal life (double predestination) and that man could do nothing to change his fate. With the state confirming the Contra-Remonstrant belief, Calvinist doctrine was firmly distanced from Catholicism, which allowed for good works to redeem a soul. See Willem Frijhoff, “Catholic expectation for the future at the time of the Dutch Republic: Structure, and base lines to interpretation,” in *Embodied Belief: Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2002), 162. For a comprehensive explanation of the Remonstrant and Contra-Remonstrant conflict, see Judith Pollmann, *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic: The Reformation of Arnoldus Buchelius (1565–1641)* Studies in Early Modern History (Manchester, UK: Manchester U Press, 1999), 105–09.

⁷¹ Frijhoff, 163.

⁷² Judith Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520–1635*, The Past and Present book series, general ed. Alexandra Walsham (Oxford, UK: Oxford U Press, 2011), 1.

⁷³ Laura Manzano Baena, *Conflicting Words: The Peace Treaty of Munster (1648) and the Political Culture of the Dutch Republic and the Spanish Monarchy* (Leuven: Leuven U Press, 2011), 41.

essential in the South, and the Dutch considered the Reformed faith essential to their government, and thus they did not want to grant religious freedom to Catholics in the recaptured Generality Lands, which would weaken the unity of the Reformed Dutch state.⁷⁴ Ultimately, the question of spiritual sovereignty was left out of the final document, and Spain agreed to the stipulation that Catholics would not publicly practice their faith in the recaptured Dutch territories, but would have the freedom to continue in their beliefs.⁷⁵ After 1648, the possibility of Catholics siding with Spain against the United Provinces was eliminated, and in 1651, Catholics were officially declared a minority population with a right to exist. By this time, Catholics in government positions had already stepped down, and Catholics in general had become integrated in Dutch society, but their political minority status remained, and they would not be able to regain their former Catholic properties.⁷⁶

Tolerance Among Many Minorities

While Catholics may have been designated as a political minority, they were but one among many religious minorities that composed the Dutch population. Statistics from throughout the seventeenth century consistently reflect confessional diversity. Only one in five Amsterdammers was Calvinist in 1611, and one in four in 1684. On the other hand, in Utrecht, home to privileged populations of both Catholics and Remonstrants (Arminians), Catholics made up between 25 and 50% of the population in 1629, and Reformed members only 13%.⁷⁷ The unaffiliated portion was large in all cities and is

⁷⁴ Manzano Baena, 222, 230.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 240.

⁷⁶ Frijhoff, 164.

⁷⁷ Pollmann 1999, 143–4.

most important in explaining the culture of tolerance and co-existence that developed in the seventeenth-century Netherlands.

The Netherlands was not the only country to exhibit religious diversity or tolerance in seventeenth-century Europe, but it was unique as the only country in which a minority of its inhabitants practiced the official state religion.⁷⁸ Frijhoff coined the term *omgangsoecumene*, or the ecumenicity of everyday life, to refer to the cooperation and openness practiced in the real world by members of different faiths who had to live and work alongside each other.⁷⁹ Anecdotal evidence suggests that members of different faiths intermarried and shared households more often than we would assume, although churches did their best to encourage marrying within the faith. Charles H. Parker has emphasized that although the Netherlands was the state with the greatest number of faiths from which to choose and fewest consequences for choosing one other than the official religion, we must be careful not to equate the seventeenth-century *omgangsoecumene* with modern ideas about religious tolerance.⁸⁰ Parker clarifies that practical tolerance “implied a condition of religious coexistence characterized by both antagonism and concord, along with the power of the state to manage public space.”⁸¹

When Calvinism took on the role of official state religion, it assumed the duties of all other faiths, and as a civic institution, affected and influenced even those who did not believe or worship in the Reformed Church. These duties included religious education in school, charities, and all family milestones, meaning that families of various faiths

⁷⁸ Xander van Eck, “Introduction,” in Xander van Eck and Ruud Priem, eds. *Traits of Tolerance: Religious Tolerance in the Golden Age* (Zwolle: Wbooks, 2013), 12.

⁷⁹ See Frijhoff 2002, and Eck “Introduction” in Eck and Priem 2013, 12.

⁸⁰ Charles H. Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 2–3.

⁸¹ Parker 2008, 3.

celebrated marriages and baptisms, and buried loved ones in the Reformed church. Catholics wanted to marry in their churches and be buried in Catholic cemeteries but were relegated to house churches and banned from holding funeral processions, whereas Reformed burial was open to everyone.⁸² Nearly half of the Dutch population remained unaffiliated, but many attended services and celebrations administered by the Reformed Church. Unable to commit once and for all to one faith, these people were known as *liefhebbers*. With the Reformed church fulfilling social and familial needs for members and non-members alike, there was little motivation for a *liefhebber* to register as a Reformed member, unless required by a professional or civic position.⁸³

Along with a common set of rituals and general education, all faiths shared a certain set of popular beliefs that had little to do with doctrine. Folk belief and fear of evil was stronger in the seventeenth century than modern scholars often want to admit. Reformed believers did not question the source of evil and turned to the Bible and prayer, while Catholics had recourse to exorcism and miracles.⁸⁴ Remnants of Catholic belief persisted even in Reformed churches, and conversions from Catholicism to Calvinism, when they did take place, did not take place overnight or without Catholic teachings informing the convert's newly adopted faith.⁸⁵ Additionally, holiday traditions changed little: Sinterklaas, the popular version of St. Nicholas that brings presents during

⁸² A.T. van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion, and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, trans. Maarten Ultee (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 280.

⁸³ Pollman 1999, 8–9.

⁸⁴ Van Deursen, 238–40.

⁸⁵ See Van Deursen; Pollman 1999.

Christmas, persisted even though Calvinist authorities disapproved of the focus on a saint, and a fictionalized one at that, instead of Christ's birth.⁸⁶

One infrequently mentioned reason for religious tolerance was actually a xenophobic fear of modeling the Dutch government and society after that of other nations, particularly that of oppressive and intolerant Habsburg Spain. The memory of the Inquisition even prevented some Dutch officials from enacting laws aimed at controlling Catholic worship. The result was an early version of a "don't ask, don't tell" policy in which Catholic worship was not entirely secret but authorities often turned a blind eye to discreet, peaceable Catholics. Dutch Catholics also harbored their own mixed political feelings. Most wanted to practice their faith but did not want to live in exile, and many sympathized with the Dutch Revolt rather than with Spain's cause in the war, which put them in a conflicted position.⁸⁷ While nineteenth-century Catholic historians characterized seventeenth-century Catholics as powerless victims, modern scholars now accept that Catholics were integral and visible within Dutch society, even if disadvantaged, and were one of many different confessional identities.⁸⁸

While the legal status of Catholics may have been manageable, contemporary accounts reflect that the spiritual implications were troubling to the faithful. With the series of laws beginning in 1572 that forbade public celebration of Mass or administration of the sacraments, Catholics effectively lost freedom of worship but had freedom of conscience—they could believe what they chose as long as they did not publicly practice their beliefs. The problem with freedom of conscience alone was that

⁸⁶ Van Eck in Van Eck and Priem 2013, 12.

⁸⁷ Janssen 2014, 156–7; Pollmann 2011, 1.

⁸⁸ Janssen 2014, 157. See also Schillemans in Van den Hout and Schillemans 1995, 54.

for Catholics, the sacraments and Mass were the only way to God, and the restricted access to sacraments left Catholic souls in danger, which was its own kind of persecution.⁸⁹ Catholics were also forbidden from processing, which limited the ways in which they could hold funerals or pay respect to local saints and miracles.⁹⁰

In cities, Parker explains, persecution took the form of “hearing Mass in an attic in the middle of the night, coughing up large sums of money to pay the sheriff, helping to conceal a priest, and witnessing vandalism against sacred property.”⁹¹ In rural areas, house churches were few and far between, and contact with priests very rare; Catholics in the countryside throughout Europe traveled many miles to attend Mass.⁹² This confined and restricted (or nonexistent) practice of the faith became part of the Dutch Catholic communal identity, but Catholics still had to find ways to abide by the proscriptions of the Roman Counter-Reformation Church. Predictably, the response to Catholic reforms in the Netherlands was distinct from that of other European nations, and is often described as more “home-grown” than connected to Rome.⁹³

The Haarlem Diocese: Bastion of Catholic Faith in the Reformation

The Haarlem Diocese experienced the Reformation differently than did many other areas of the Netherlands. Pope Paul IV had founded the Bishopric of Haarlem in 1559, at the urging of King Philip II of Spain, who sought more efficient oversight in the Catholic Church in the Netherlands in the midst of the Protestant Reformation. From St.

⁸⁹ Parker 2008, 10.

⁹⁰ Benjamin Kaplan, “Fictions of Privacy: House Chapels and the Spatial Accommodation of Religious Dissent in Early Modern Europe,” *American Historical Review* (October 2002), 1040.

⁹¹ Parker 2008, 13.

⁹² Kaplan 2002, 1040.

⁹³ Parker 2008, 14–16.

Bavo's Cathedral (now also known as the Grote Kerk), the bishopric oversaw Amsterdam, Kenmerland, and West Friesland, giving it authority over a huge population of Catholics.⁹⁴ Unfortunately, the new bishopric had a rough start: while the first bishop, Nicolaas van Nieuwland, had begun some useful improvements to the diocese, he also set a deplorable example in his personal life, and earned himself the nickname "Drunken Klaas." As a result, Van Nieuwland was replaced with the Dominican Godfried van Mierlo in 1571, at the height of mounting tensions between Protestants and Catholics.⁹⁵ While the Catholic Church worked to establish its own authority and standards, Protestants worshipped in sheds on the outskirts of town in fear of Spanish retaliation, and did relatively minor damage to the churches and religious art of Haarlem during the Iconoclasm of 1566.⁹⁶

Moderate and mostly Catholic, Haarlemmers were reluctant to rebel against King Philip II as other Dutch cities did, but the city magistrates eventually succumbed to outside pressure and signed a treaty on July 4, 1572 siding with the Orangists. In retaliation against the Orangists, Philip sent the Duke of Alva's son, Don Fadrique, on murderous campaigns through Zutphen and Naarden in November of that year, moving toward Haarlem.⁹⁷ Hoping to negotiate with Spain, Haarlem's magistrates sent deputies to Amsterdam, where an Orangist commander convinced the deputies to stay loyal to the

⁹⁴ Wim Cerutti, *De 'Haarlemsche Augustyn' Pastoor Bloemert (1585–1659) en zijn Broodkantoor* (Haarlem: Spaar en Hout, 2009), 19.

⁹⁵ Cerutti, 20.

⁹⁶ Joke Spaans, *Haarlem na de Reformatie: Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijk leven, 1577–1620*, (Leiden: Hollandse Historische Reeks, 1989), 297.

⁹⁷ Marieke A.W.L.M. Abels, *Tussen Sloer en Heilige: Beeld en Zelfbeeld van Haarlemse en Goudse kloppen in de zeventiende eeuw*, PhD. diss., Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2009, 19. For more on the Haarlem Siege, see Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477–1806* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

Prince Willem and to overthrow Haarlem's city government in favor of pro-Orange magistrates. Don Fadrique and his troops sieged Haarlem on December 11, 1572, which began a taxing six-month battle. Near starvation and exhausted, the Haarlemmers surrendered on July 13, 1573, after losing as many as 2,000 soldiers and civilians.⁹⁸

Haarlem remained a Catholic city and under Spanish occupation until March 1, 1577, when a treaty concluded that Catholics and Protestants would enjoy equal freedoms. The treaty was not honored for long: on May 29, 1578, known as the Haarlemse Noon, soldiers loyal to the Prince of Orange disrupted a Sacrament's Day procession to St. Bavo's Cathedral. The mob chased down 7,000 Catholics, murdered one priest, destroyed church paraphernalia, and ran Bishop Van Mierlo out of town.⁹⁹ Though the seizure of Catholic property began immediately following the Haarlemse Noon, the forfeiture of all Catholic churches, cloisters, and religious institutions to the state only became official as of April 24, 1581, a full nine years after the process had been put into motion by the States General on a national level.

The provost of Haarlem's cathedral chapter, Jacobus Zaffius, was among those arrested and eventually transported to The Hague for refusal to reveal the location of hidden property. After corporal punishment, Zaffius wrote an inventory of hidden church property, and Catholic authorities in Haarlem were given a pension to leave the city. They could return only upon signing a loyalty oath in which they disowned King Philip II, which a few seem to have done.¹⁰⁰ The first anti-Catholic placard appeared

⁹⁸ Abels, 20.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 21.

¹⁰⁰ Cerutti, 20–21. Fr. Augustinius Alstenius Bloemert, Haarlem chapter board member, was detained along with Zaffius, but took the loyalty oath, much to the chagrin of Apostolic Vicar Sasbout Vosmeer, who very reluctantly had to allow Bloemert to continue to work in Haarlem for lack of a sufficient replacement.

immediately after the Reformed Church officially took over the role of public church in Haarlem, on December 20, 1581. In Amsterdam, dozens of cloisters remained standing within city walls at the time of the Alteration in 1578, and Catholics continued to make up a considerable portion of the populace well into the 1580s.¹⁰¹ In fact, city authorities refused to post the placard, mandated by the States of Holland in 1589, forbidding Catholic worship, and preferred to govern by mutually understood rules. The Amsterdam officials also wanted to soften the penalties for public worship, finding harsh punishment for the practice of one's faith to be more Spanish than Dutch.¹⁰²

While the majority of Dutch priests had fled the United Provinces after the Protestant takeover in the 1570s, Haarlem's canons stayed and maintained the Cathedral Chapter, effectively preserving the diocese of Haarlem and its authority to appoint priests.¹⁰³ Likewise, many Amsterdam clergy went into temporary hiding in the outskirts of the city rather than leaving altogether. Two Franciscan Friars Minor, Hendrik van Biesten and Arnold ab Ischa, better known as Broer Aert, re-established themselves as confessors in Amsterdam as soon as 1584.¹⁰⁴ Broer Aert lived in a house known as "De Sneek" no more than twenty meters from the Stadhuis on the Dam, where he operated a girls' orphanage and had a type of small church hall where presumably other Catholics could attend Mass alongside the orphans. He was finally arrested and exiled in 1591, but the orphanage seems to have survived his absence.

¹⁰¹ Frederik F. Barends, *Geloven in de schaduw. Schuilkerken in Amsterdam* (Ghent: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 1996), 16.

¹⁰² Janssen 2014, 160.

¹⁰³ Parker 2008, 17, 37–39.

¹⁰⁴ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, "Katholiek Amsterdam 17e eeuw, 1600–1700," 2013. <http://www.stichtingkatholikerfgoed.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/KATHOLIEK-AMSTERDAM-17e-eeuw.pdf>. Broer Aert was arrested while saying Mass that year, but gained release upon paying a fine.

Because Philip II refused to fill the empty bishoprics in the “heretical” Netherlands after the Reformation, Rome considered the Netherlands a missionary territory, known as *Missio Hollandica*.¹⁰⁵ In 1578, after the Haarlemse Noon and Alteration, Pope Gregory XIII had appointed Willem Coopal vicar general of the former Haarlem diocese and dean of the Cathedral chapter, wherein he carried out many tasks of a bishop with the help of the Cathedral canons. In 1583 Gregory similarly appointed Sasbout Vosmeer vicar general for the Utrecht diocese.¹⁰⁶ Gregory’s successor Pope Clement VIII then promoted Vosmeer to Apostolic Vicar with authority over all Northern provinces in 1592. This position had not existed since the early days of Christianity when missionaries spread the faith to infidel lands.¹⁰⁷ Throughout Rome’s promotion of Vosmeer, a disagreement arose over whether he should also exercise authority over the Haarlem chapter. Ultimately, Vosmeer resolved the matter by functioning as archbishop in Utrecht, and the Haarlem chapter, which had effectively absorbed the chapters of Leeuwarden and Groningen, retained a vicar general with authority over the former diocese, as well as the Cathedral chapter, with authority to appoint its own priests.¹⁰⁸

Albertius Eggius, a Leuven-educated priest from a rich Amsterdam family, succeeded Coopal as vicar general of the Haarlem diocese in 1589 and returned to

¹⁰⁵ Parker 2008, 30.

¹⁰⁶ Parker 2008, 30–31. Coopal and Vosmeer were Leuven-educated priests responsible for pastoral leadership in the areas around Delft and Haarlem during the tumultuous 1570s. The following year, the Pope established a nunciature in Cologne from which the papal nuncio, Otto Mirto Frangipani, operated and urged the Pope to circumvent the Spanish king, as the Protestant Netherlands and Germany desperately needed clerical oversight. It was thanks to Frangipani’s urging that Rome established the Apostolic Vicar position in the Netherlands.

¹⁰⁷ Parker 2008, 31. Clement angered Archduke Albrecht of the southern Netherlands in 1602 by giving Vosmeer the title archbishop of Philippi *in partibus infidelium*, meaning “in the regions of the unfaithful under King Philip II.”

¹⁰⁸ Parker 2008, 30–32.

Amsterdam to found a makeshift seminary on Warmoesstraat. However, a dramatic incident in 1602, in which magistrates intercepted correspondence between Vosmeer and Coopal, led to a manhunt for Vosmeer. Luckily, he was alerted and fled his hometown of Delft for Cologne, and when the government failed to capture the apostolic vicar, Eggius as next in command was targeted.¹⁰⁹ His arrest and lengthy imprisonment in The Hague beginning in 1602 led to his moving the seminary operation to Cologne, where Vosmeer himself supervised until Eggius' release.¹¹⁰ Vosmeer mostly remained in Cologne from then on, as he could not effectively fulfill his duties as placeholder for the Pope in the Netherlands.¹¹¹

Rebuilding the Faith and Re-educating the Clergy

After his relocation, Vosmeer composed his first regular report to Rome in 1602, “Insinuatio status provinciarum in quibus haeretici dominantur.” He devoted ten pages to the destruction of the previous six dioceses in the Netherlands and the tireless work of 70 priests to rebuild them. He follows with a description of the “particular deeds of the priests,” demonstrating that God worked through them and that Catholicism retained its hierarchy.¹¹² Vosmeer exhorted the Church to return to its “primitive” form, urging for more pastoral services and for clergy and laypeople to contribute their particular talents without social and cultural barriers between them. In the primitive Church as well as in

¹⁰⁹ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op cit.; Herman Selderhuis, ed., *Handbook of Dutch Church History* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 318.

¹¹⁰ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.; Selderhuis, 319.

¹¹¹ Parker, 2008, 32. Clement had told him to do “what I would do if I were there” from the Netherlands

¹¹² Frijhoff, Willem, “The Function of the Miracle in a Catholic Minority: The United Provinces in the seventeenth century,” in *Embodied Belief*, 2002, 118.

the Holland Mission, the layperson had the great responsibilities of community building, gathering funds, and converting heretics with their fervor.¹¹³ Priests' interactions with laypeople were of paramount importance, and the persuasion of clergy convinced most laypeople to accept their authority.¹¹⁴ Those who chose to stay Catholic made a big commitment and typically gained a more nuanced understanding of doctrine than had laypeople of previous generations, along with adopting a radical, if romanticized, communal identity.¹¹⁵ It was not only clergy, but also laypeople that developed what Parker terms "a collective self-awareness as an embattled minority of true believers, which enabled them to identify with the central narratives of suffering in biblical and Christian history."¹¹⁶

Vosmeer had seen the need for formal seminaries during the early 1600s, when the overstretched priests struggled to keep up with the demands of tens of thousands of Catholics, resulting in unsanctioned or illicit Catholic activity in most areas other than Utrecht and Haarlem.¹¹⁷ Bolstered by Eggius' estate in Cologne, Vosmeer purchased a large house called "De Hoge Heuvel" (high hill) and thus founded the Collegium Alticollense (High Hill College) in 1613, with a boarding capacity of forty young men.¹¹⁸ This seminary sent new priests to the former dioceses of Utrecht, Deventer and Middelburg. One seminary would not be enough, however. Leuven's Collegium Regium had been an educational center for priests, including Vosmeer himself, since 1580. Vosmeer's successor as apostolic vicar, Philippus Rovenius, permitted the Haarlem

¹¹³ Frijhoff 2002, 119.

¹¹⁴ Pollmann 2011, 201.

¹¹⁵ Janssen 2014, 82.

¹¹⁶ Parker 2008, 4.

¹¹⁷ Parker 2008, 30; Selderhuis, 318.

¹¹⁸ Selderhuis, 319.

diocese to establish their own seminary in Leuven as well, which became in 1616–17 the Collegium Pulcheria Mariae Virginis (known as Pulcheria). Jointly run by the apostolic vicar and the Haarlem chapter, Pulcheria fed newly-minted priests to the Haarlem diocese and the former dioceses of Leeuwarden and Groningen.¹¹⁹ Eventually, Amsterdam also developed a center for clerical education: the city's large population of lay Catholics signified a minimal threat of persecution, and the Collegio Urbano was established there in 1627.¹²⁰

The priests trained in the new seminaries were secular, meaning they did not belong to a religious order. Regular priests, such as the Jesuits or Franciscans, were subject to the authority of their orders, stationed in Rome. Dutch clergy resented regular priests, who were tethered to their order rather than to the local ecclesiastical authorities, and who they believed took too relaxed of an approach toward Catholics during a time of reform and strife. Despite the organizational differences and variance in their approaches, all Dutch clergy shared a desire to maintain numbers of the faithful and win over converts. Moreover, all of the Apostolic Vicars trained in Leuven, where they developed an Augustinian emphasis on confession, penitence, and absolution of sins.¹²¹

Attendance at either the Alticollense or Pulcheria was mandatory for priests assigned to the Holland Mission, and the number of priests grew, by one count, from 70 to 165 between 1600 and 1614, and again to 442 in 1645, with about two-thirds of the priests stationed in Holland or Utrecht.¹²² Despite the huge increase, even 442 is a low

¹¹⁹ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.; Selderhuis, 319;

¹²⁰ Parker 2008, 103.

¹²¹ Ibid., 33, 43, 97. Secular clergy believed confession, repentance and reform to be more fruitful in a mission territory than a conciliatory approach, such as that taken by the Jesuits.

¹²² Parker, "Cooperative Confessionalism: Lay-clerical collaboration in Dutch Catholic communities during the Golden Age," in Benjamin Kaplan, Bob Moore, Henk van Bierop and

number in terms of the ratio of priests to laypeople. By 1656, about one third of the adult population of the Netherlands identified as Catholic, or up to 450,000 people.¹²³

In 1622, 4,800 people, or about 12% of Haarlem's population of roughly 40,000, identified as Catholic, compared to 20% identifying as Reformed/Calvinist.¹²⁴

Haarlemmers distinguished between "ijverige" or devout and "slappe" or lazy/lapsed Catholics, and church histories indicate between 6,000 and 8,000 "iverig" Catholics in 1635. Not only did the number of Catholics increase, but it also appears that most people who identified as Catholic at all were devout rather than lapsed.¹²⁵ In Amsterdam, too, the Catholics numbered almost as many as the Calvinists. Throughout the century, the Calvinist faction grew from 20 to 25% of Amsterdam's population of well over 100,000. Yet in Apostolic Vicar Rovenius's 1642 report to Rome, Amsterdam counted 14,000 Catholics, and by 1662, Apostolic Vicar Johannes van Neercassel reported 30,000 Catholics, at that time equal to 20% of the population.¹²⁶ These numbers were likely inflated by enthusiastic Apostolic Vicars, but the percentage of Catholics stayed relatively constant until the end of the eighteenth century, even during a period of growth for Amsterdam.¹²⁷

Judith Pollmann, *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands c. 1570–1720*, Studies in Early Modern European History (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2009), 20, 23; Parker 2008, 17.

¹²³ Parker 2008, 17.

¹²⁴ Spaans 1989, 299. In comparison, 14% of people identified as Anabaptist, and 1% each as Lutheran and Walloon Reformed, making Catholics a large minority. These statistics were taken from registered members of parishes and thus do not reflect people who had not registered or did not attend church regularly.

¹²⁵ Abels, 21.

¹²⁶ It is entirely possible that the number more than doubled between the two reports because by Van Neercassel's report in 1656, the Revolt had ended and Catholics may have felt more secure reporting their faith.

¹²⁷ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.

To serve the large number of Catholics, 107 priests operated in the entire Haarlem diocese by 1638. The city of Haarlem was home to 18 priests at that time: 12 secular, half of which worked in the city and half in the villages surrounding it, and 2 each from the Jesuit, Franciscan, and Dominican orders.¹²⁸ The borders of the seven prior parishes were maintained, and seven stations established. Under the purview of the Haarlem diocese but with a much larger population, Amsterdam was divided between the Oude Zijde and Nieuwe Zijde, each with a head pastor or archpriest. Sybrand Sixtius, Eggius's successor as vicar of the Haarlem chapter, led the Oude Zijde while his friend Stephen de Kracht (known as Crachtius) led the Nieuwe. This changed again in 1631 as the scope of Amsterdam's Catholic population became more obvious, and the city was divided into five districts; the previous two were retained, and Sixtius was succeeded by Leonardus Marius, while Crachtius kept his position. In addition, Jacob Oly oversaw the northern neighborhoods, Hendrik Ebben the western, and Jacob Vlieger the southern. Along with the tens of thousands of urban Catholics, the countryside around Amsterdam also employed one secular priest for each village, a higher rate than any other city.¹²⁹

The shortage of priests, obstacles to worship, and variety of churches from which to choose forced the Catholic Church in the Holland Mission quickly to adopt reforms designed to maintain members and strengthen commitment. Thus the Holland Mission enacted the Catholic reforms recommended by the Council of Trent earlier than did many other nations. Parker explains that Dutch clergy had to refrain from punishing attitudes that would scare away members and instead focused on educating the laity about Catholic doctrine and traditions, promoting sacraments and local devotions, and warning of

¹²⁸ Cerutti, 22.

¹²⁹ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.

heresy.¹³⁰ Clergy also encouraged the development of a collective identity of suffering and persecution, which helped Dutch Catholics to identify with saints and martyrs.¹³¹ The Dutch clergy were the first secular clergy in Europe trained entirely under Tridentine guidelines, and with the new seminaries, received some of the best clerical education in Europe.¹³² The Holland Mission was more concerned with thoroughly trained and devoted teachers and confessors than with a high quantity of priests, because defense against heresy and inspiring and maintaining lay commitment were crucial.¹³³ Lay Catholics became deeply involved in the maintenance of their church and sometimes demanded a closer following of Tridentine guidelines themselves.¹³⁴

Because of the Dutch secular clergy's commitment to education and reform, and a desire to rebuild a distinctly Dutch Catholic Church, regular clergy (those belonging to religious orders) faced backlash when they established stations in the Netherlands.¹³⁵ While the Pope encouraged the spread of religious orders like Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Augustinians to "missionary" lands, the top-down, Roman hierarchy of these orders made local Dutch clergy wary of outside influence undoing their hard work at winning back Dutch souls and establishing local accountability. Apostolic Vicar Rovenius established a quota for each order in 1624, which presaged the growing

¹³⁰ Parker 2008, 19.

¹³¹ Ibid., 19.

¹³² Ibid., 97. Even before the founding of the Alticollense in 1602, the Pulcheria in 1617, and the Collegio Urbano in 1627, priests trained in homes with a regimen of prayer and academic study of scripture.

¹³³ Ibid., 97.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 22.

¹³⁵ Secular clergy are priests that do not belong to a religious order, while regular clergy belong to a religious order such as the Jesuits, Augustinians, Dominicans, and Franciscans. Religious orders were centrally governed from Rome, while secular clergy in the Netherlands were governed by local ecclesiastical authorities.

tensions that would lead, in almost exactly a century, to the irreparable split between regulars supported by Rome and seculars supported by local religious authorities.¹³⁶

Out of the city of Haarlem's seven stations, four were secular and three regular, although the virtually undamaged Cathedral chapter and its secular hierarchy ensured that regular stations remained small and had little influence in the city. Of the approximately thirty priests serving Amsterdam as of 1629, most were secular, but religious orders quickly set themselves up in the city as well.¹³⁷ Despite the number of different religious orders represented, their numbers remained low due to conflict with secular authorities.¹³⁸ In 1622, a placard directed at Jesuits gave all regular priests just eight days to vacate the city. Like earlier placards, this one did not inspire immediate action or fear, and Jesuits either chose not to leave or returned immediately, to the dismay of secular priests who felt their territory encroached upon.¹³⁹

While some regular clergy, particularly the Jesuits, felt stronger loyalty to the Pope and to the leaders of their own order than to local hierarchy, the secular clergy reported to the apostolic vicar of the Holland Mission. Secular clergy wanted to maintain authority over the appointment and assignment of all pastors and priests and hence built

¹³⁶ Barends, 29.

¹³⁷ Barends, 26.

¹³⁸ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit. In 1638, thirteen seculars were reported alongside three Franciscans and two each of Dominicans, Jesuits, Augustinians, and Capuchins. Two decades later, the number of seculars had doubled while the numbers of regulars stayed consistent, due to limitations.

¹³⁹ See S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, "De rol van de katholieke elite bij het ontstaan der staties tot 1715," in Guus van den Hout and Robert Schillemans, eds., *Putti en Cherubijntjes: Het religieuze werk van Jacob de Wit (1695–1754)* (Haarlem/Amsterdam: Origine, 1995), 37. Also beginning this year, exiled religious, secular or regular, were not to be readmitted without taking an oath of loyalty to the Dutch Revolt, but such an oath would either not bother priests or not prevent them from returning.

tight-knit networks of lay patronage and support for secular priests in case the Netherlands returned to a Roman Catholic state and Catholic property was restored.¹⁴⁰

Although the political climate antagonized Catholics, and freedom of conscience was an incomplete freedom, the *omgangsoecumene* practiced by the majority of the population meant that actual persecution was moderate and that the Catholic Church still had room to reform. In fact, the state ownership of Catholic property and loss of revenue meant that the Church relied on secular patronage, and therefore had less money to spend on extravagances and corruption.¹⁴¹ In this sense, state restrictions played an unintended but crucial role in reforming the Church and helping it better to serve its constituents. While elsewhere in Europe, reform took place either in a top-down or bottom-up format, in the Netherlands both types of reform unfolded side-by-side. The interdependence between priests, the lay elite and even the poor congregation members was unique to the Dutch Republic.¹⁴²

Financially, laypeople supported priests' education and charity and poor relief efforts. Lay leaders sometimes managed to keep their pre-Reformation titles and roles, such as *kerkmeesters* (church wardens) and *Heilige Geestmeesters* (Masters of the Holy Ghost, in charge of poor relief).¹⁴³ Often, the lay elite who took on leadership positions within parishes had previously held political power but found themselves divested of

¹⁴⁰ Parker 2008, 22.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 5.

¹⁴² Parker in Kaplan, Moore, Bierop and Pollmann 2009, 28.

¹⁴³ See Parker in Kaplan, Moore, Bierop and Pollmann 2009, 27. Originally, the Counter-Reformation Church intended for *Heilige Geestmeesters* to care for impoverished and sick parish members so that they did not seek help from Calvinist sources, but by the end of the seventeenth century, the state encouraged churches to take care of their own congregations rather than to burden the state.

those positions in the Reformed government.¹⁴⁴ In less tangible but no less important ways, they supported the Church by familiarizing themselves with church history, debating theological issues, participating in struggles between secular and regular clergy, reading and writing their own opinions about ecclesiastical matters, and advocating for their own needs within the parish.¹⁴⁵ Their knowledge and interest in doctrinal issues came from printed matter imported from the south: the Catholic book trade flourished in Antwerp during the Golden Age, and by the second half of the century, there were at least 28 distributors of Catholic books. One Amsterdam bookseller imported as much as 50,000 guilders worth of Catholic reading material.¹⁴⁶

Kloppen and Beguines

Laws against the formation of new Catholic orders and organizations prompted yet another particularly Dutch solution that helped the Church both maintain and increase lay support and respond to calls for reform. Two types of spiritual women became instrumental in parish education, financial support, and charity work. Beguines, which had existed before the Reformation, were typically unmarried or widowed laywomen who lived together in a community overseen by a superior, serving the Church with a semi-cloistered lifestyle. *Kloppen*, or spiritual virgins, were unmarried or widowed women who could live with their own families, in small groups, or in a community, occupying a status between lay and religious women. Both groups lived by humility, chastity and obedience but did not take formal vows and thus could not be considered a

¹⁴⁴ Janssen 2014, 175.

¹⁴⁵ Parker 2008, 21.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 57.

new religious order.¹⁴⁷ The idea behind *kloppen* originated during the fourteenth century Devotio Moderna movement under Geert Grote (1340–1384), who established the lay religious Sisters of the Common Life in Deventer.¹⁴⁸ The movement was taken up anew under Father Nicolaas Wiggerts. Cousebant (active 1583–1602) of Haarlem, who moved to Cologne during the first wave of exile, and returned to his native Haarlem in the 1580s, where he convinced laywomen to form this semi-religious group.¹⁴⁹ The numbers of *kloppen* in Haarlem grew from 200 in the first years of the seventeenth century to 4,800 by 1700.¹⁵⁰

Along with Haarlem, groups of *kloppen* especially flourished in Amsterdam, Delft, and Gouda.¹⁵¹ The practical duties of a *klopje* included taking in and feeding travelling priests, caring for the sick within the parish, patronizing the arts and managing church decoration, and educating children.¹⁵² The responsibility for youth education technically rested with priests, but overwhelmed priests often merely oversaw education or let *kloppen* handle it entirely. *Kloppen* used songbooks and storybooks to relate to children, and the tradition of teaching doctrine through pictures and word games lasted

¹⁴⁷ Parker 2008, 44; Janssen 2014, 174; Abels, 16–17. Abels notes that *kloppen* are only mentioned in documents beginning in the seventeenth century and seem to have disappeared once monasteries and cloisters were legalized again in the nineteenth century. Because beguines had already existed, they fell under the Roman Church's rule as well, while *kloppen* were only accountable to state laws.

¹⁴⁸ See John van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: The Devotio Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). The third order or lay religious movements were especially popular in the Low Countries throughout the fifteenth century. The primary goals of the movement—simplicity, humility, piety, meditation—were articulated by Thomas à Kempis in his massively influential *Imitation of Christ* (c. 1418).

¹⁴⁹ Janssen 2014, 173–4.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 174.

¹⁵¹ Parker 2008, 44.

¹⁵² Janssen 2014, 174; Parker in Kaplan, Moore, Bierop and Pollmann 2009, 25–6.

into adulthood with illustrated meditations and prayer books.¹⁵³ The role of *kloppen* as teachers illustrates the close relationship between clergy and laity, as spiritual women took over important tasks and helped connect priests to their congregations.¹⁵⁴

Kloppen and beguines often came from elite families and became important church patrons themselves, financing the maintenance of *huiskerken*, and commissioning artworks and worship objects.¹⁵⁵ Thus, the subject matter, style, and format of altarpieces, devotional paintings, engravings, silver, and liturgical garments within *huiskerken* often reflected the concerns and popular devotions relevant to lay religious women. Women were not only patrons of the decorative programs of *huiskerken*, but also often the primary viewers and consumers.

Catholic Charities, Traditions, and Social Networks in Haarlem

As in most cities in the Republic, city magistrates in Haarlem allowed Catholics to celebrate baptism, marriage, and funeral ceremonies in each of the tacitly tolerated churches, while the legal aspect of marriages occurred in the Reformed Church or the town hall.¹⁵⁶ Whereas the Latin Schools in other cities were closed or the teachers were replaced with Protestants, the Latin School in Haarlem persisted as before, led by a Catholic teacher. The city treasury continued to fund it, and the burgomeesters actually discouraged Reformed influence on the school, believing that would provoke Catholics to

¹⁵³ Parker in Kaplan, Moore, Bierop and Pollmann 2009, 25; Spaans, *De Levens der Maecheden: Het verhaal van een religieuze vrouwengemeenschap in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), 135.

¹⁵⁴ Parker in Kaplan, Moore, Bierop and Pollmann 2009, 24.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 25–6.

¹⁵⁶ Spaans 1989, 299.

establish their own schools.¹⁵⁷ Joke Spaans notes that in contrast to common conception, the Reformed Church in Haarlem “had little or no influence on public display, traditional holidays and festivals, and on the enforcement of law and order.”¹⁵⁸ Haarlem Catholics continued to celebrate feast days, to process and circumambulate during ceremonies, and to support their own brick-and-mortar charity organizations, all of which were strictly outlawed and punished in other cities.¹⁵⁹

Prior to the Alteration, charity fell under the purview of the city and Catholic Church as a single entity, but the Reformation brought forth competing views of how best to handle poor and vulnerable populations.¹⁶⁰ Rather than take over existing Catholic charity organizations, the Reformed magistrates allowed Catholics to continue their work independently. The ever-expanding Burgerweeshuis (city orphanage), an outgrowth of the medieval poorhouse, required a new building by the mid-seventeenth century, and in 1609, Catholics built a new Aalmoezeniersarmen en Werkhuis for old men, beggars, alcoholics, and homeless, at the site of the former Pesthuis (plague house).¹⁶¹ Only on May 4, 1655 did a placard appear preventing Haarlemmers from bequeathing money or property in their will to priests, beguines, *kloppen*, churches, or church-affiliated organizations, so thenceforth charity was a private affair.¹⁶²

In the early 1570s, two sisters, Aeltje and Meynau Pieter Fopsdochter, founded what became the Maagdenhuis, a home where disadvantaged young girls learned basic

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Jo M. Sterck-Proot, “Haarlemse schuilkerken: 4 artikelen gepubliceerd in de *Nieuwe Haarlemse Courant*,” 1936; See Cerutti. Fr. Augustinius Alstenius Bloemert founded a Broodkantoor (soup kitchen) that was physically built, although Bloemert didn’t live to see it.

¹⁶⁰ See Spaans 1989, 300; Cerutti, 110.

¹⁶¹ Cerutti, 110.

¹⁶² Ibid., 114.

skills such as reading and writing, sewing, spinning, and embroidery so that they could live independently, or ideally, pursue religious life in the Catholic Church.¹⁶³ Although not an orphanage, many girls attended free of charge, particularly since wealthy Catholic supporters of the Maagdenhuis, including the lay religious women who served as teachers, feared for girls being raised in “slappe” Catholic or Protestant homes.¹⁶⁴ During the Alteration in 1578, the girls were temporarily housed on the Dam in Amsterdam. Placards against formal Catholic schools were issued in 1581, 1584, and 1589, but not specifically directed at the *kloppen* teaching at the Maagdenhuis.¹⁶⁵ The Maagdenhuis was officially shuttered in 1592, but in fact the girls were simply divided and rehoused in private homes, and continued to attend school together, creatively avoiding the proscription against Catholic living communities.¹⁶⁶ Because Fr. Cornelis Arentsz., influential leader of Haarlem’s community of *kloppen* at Den Hoeck, oversaw the Maagdenhuis beginning in 1602, many girls were persuaded to join lay religious life as they got older.¹⁶⁷

In addition to charity organizations, Haarlem Catholics upheld centuries-old guild traditions, including the Heilig Kerstmisgilde (Christmas guild), which hosted a community dinner and special Mass for all Catholics near Christmas and held special collections for the poor.¹⁶⁸ The Sint Jacobsgilde celebrated their patron saint on July 25

¹⁶³ Spaans 2012, 44.

¹⁶⁴ Abels, 79. For example, in the *Levens der Maecheden*, Trijn Jans Oly writes that Grietgen and Neeltgen Jans were sent to the Maagdenhuis by extended family, who disapproved of their father remarrying with a “geusse vrou” (Geuzen woman), and Weyntgen Pieters’s godmother paid her way to the Maagdenhuis because Weyntgen’s father lived in “ketterie” (heresy).

¹⁶⁵ Abels, 77.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 80.

¹⁶⁷ Spaans 2012, 46.

¹⁶⁸ Cerutti, 138.

with Mass and a feast, sheltered pilgrims on the way to or from the Santiago de Compostela, and functioned as a network for those who had made the journey. Members included Haarlem artists Cornelis van Haarlem, Pieter Soutman, and Jacob Matham.¹⁶⁹

Haarlem's pastors belonged to a tightknit community of Catholic ministers, lay religious, and artists who frequently discussed theology, philosophy, philanthropy, and politics, as well as collaborated and inspired one another in art, literature, and music. Jan Albertsz. Ban (1597/8–1644), pastor of the Begijnhof from 1630 until his death, maintained friendships with Haarlem priests as well as with philosopher René Descartes, Constantijn Huygens, secretary to Prince Frederik Hendrik, poet Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft, composer Cornelis Padbrué, and painter Pieter de Grebber. Trained as a lawyer in Leuven, Ban decided to pursue the priesthood like his older brother, while two of his sisters were *kloppen* at Den Hoeck.¹⁷⁰ Ban, along with Joost Cats of Den Hoeck and chapter secretary Joannes Bugge, undertook extensive efforts to update, expand and archive the Haarlem chapter's protocol, historical documentation, and visual record.¹⁷¹ Ban also interviewed elderly beguines for a history of the Begijnhof, instituted formal written "Regulen ende Handvesten" (Rules and Charters) for the women in 1631 and took over as chapter secretary upon Bugge's death in 1636.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 140.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 68. A third sister was a *klopje* at the Jesuit station.

¹⁷¹ Van Eck 2008, 83. Van Eck notes, "Their diverse activities included forging alliances with other institutions within the Catholic Church, compiling the *Tabula Chronologica Episcopatus et Ecclesiae Cathedralis Harlemensis* (a chronicle of the diocese's history from its establishment in 1560 by King Philip II of Spain until 1635), publishing an *Officium Proprium* with the liturgical texts of all prescribed feast days of the of the diocese of Haarlem, modified to comply with the requirements imposed by the Council of Trent, and commissioning prints and paintings depicting the most prominent saints and clerics of the diocese."

¹⁷² Cerutti, 69, René Hazelager, "Pieter Fransz. de Grebber: Schilder tot Haerlem," PhD diss., Universiteit van Utrecht, 1979, 25. Painter Pieter de Grebber, who lived at the Begijnhof, signed the Rules and Charters as a witness.

Ban's correspondence with Huygens and Descartes led him to write also to Marin Marsenne, a Sorbonne-educated Jesuit knowledgeable in the philosophy of knowledge, math, astronomy, and whose 1637 *Harmonie Universelle* espouses a total theory of music.¹⁷³ In the same year, while living in Leiden, Descartes published his masterwork *Discours de la Methode*, in which he argues for the unreliability of human perception, introducing a new worldview and new proof of God's existence. Following this, Descartes moved to a suburb of Haarlem where he regularly discussed philosophy and music with Ban and Fr. Augustijn Bloemert of the St. Anna and Maria *huiskerk*, the only Catholic priests he felt worthy of his trust and whom he defended frequently to Protestant authorities, including Prince Frederik Hendrik.¹⁷⁴

With this philosophical and theoretical background, Ban published his songbook, *Kort Sang-Bericht op Mijne Ziel-roerende Zangen* (Short message on my soul-stirring songs) in 1643, which explains his musical theory and which set texts by P.C. Hooft and Huygens to music. Ban felt that music notes were subservient to the text or lyrics, and tune only a rhetorical device to transfer the content or meaning of the song to the listener more effectively.¹⁷⁵ In contrast to popular polyphonic songs of the period, he preferred a single melody, which would incidentally become more popular in time, though not likely

¹⁷³ Cerutti, 80.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 47, 77. Descartes described Ban and Bloemert as “voortreffelijke en rechtschappen” (superior and righteous) in a letter to Huygens, and later attempted to mediate between the priests and Prince Frederik Hendrik via Huygens, claiming that if any priests were to be allowed in the country, then better the likes of Bloemert and Ban than others.

¹⁷⁵ Cerutti, 69. Friso Lammertse in Pieter Biesboer, ed., *The De Brays: Painting Family, Master Painters of the 17th Century Holland* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 15. Marin Marsenne disagreed with Ban's view of music and proposed a competition between Ban and foremost French court composer Antoine Boesset in which both men set the same love poem to music. Ban took his time to be careful with the key, intervals, rhythm and accents, and finally gave up his composition in frustration. Huygens mediated and declared Boesset the unquestioned winner because Ban's song seemed too mechanical.

because of Ban's work. He called his style "zinroerende zang" or sense-stirring song, as if he were inspired in his musical theory by the Council of Trent's recommendation that religious art be composed so that the audience "may be excited to adore and love God."¹⁷⁶ Ban's interest in rules, structure, and the primacy of meaning and message was shared by important Haarlem artists and architects as well, many of whom were Catholics. Pieter de Grebber, devout Catholic and fellow resident of the Begijnhof, served as a witness to over twenty documents at the Begijnhof between 1629–47, and even composed a song for Ban that appeared in *Kort Sang-Bericht*.¹⁷⁷

Huiskerken in Haarlem

Though no *huiskerken* remain as worship spaces in Haarlem today, there were indeed as many as twenty *huiskerken* of varying sizes in Haarlem at certain points in the 17th century.¹⁷⁸ A parish dedicated to St. Franciscus was formed on Nauwe Damsteeg/Het Klokhuis in 1614, a station known as Drie Klaveren dedicated to St. Dominic was formed in 1620 on the former Achterstraat (now Anthoniestraat/Spaarne), and a second Dominican station dedicated to St. Thomas Aquino was formed in the same year on Ossenhoofdsteeg. Though Jesuits were not popular in Haarlem, given the strong tradition of secular priests there, a Jesuit priest said Mass in the home of Martinus or Marius Utenhogius as of 1628. A secular station dedicated to St. Maria was formed in 1630 on Biggesteeg (now Bloemertstraat), and soon the station would fall under the leadership of

¹⁷⁶ Cerutti, 69; *The canons and decrees of the sacred and oecumenical Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), 236.

¹⁷⁷ Hazelager, 24–25. Lammertse, 135n43. De Grebber's composition set to music a poem about Ban written by Nicolas Verwer, a member of Ban's congregation.

¹⁷⁸ Sterck-Proot, July 12, 1936.

Fr. Augustijn Bloemert, who combined it with a new parish dedicated to St. Anna in a home he purchased in 1636.¹⁷⁹ After 1648, as in most of the Republic, it became easier for Catholics to expand into larger *huiskerken*. In Haarlem this was especially true, as many breweries began declining after 1650, providing large, affordable spaces for worship, helped by the fact that many of the old Haarlem brewing families had remained Catholic.¹⁸⁰ A secular station dedicated to St. Bavo, patron saint of the Netherlands, opened in 1660 on the former Achterstraat (now Anthoniestraat), a second station dedicated to St. Franciscus known as Vier Heemskinderen opened at Spaarne 94 in 1666, and the brewery called Het Springende Paard on Koudenhorn was converted to a Jesuit station in 1681.¹⁸¹

The Begijnhof on Goudsmidpleintje housed a community of lay religious women as well as a church since the medieval period, but being a private organization and not a formal convent, was never seized by the government. The community re-formed in 1581, and allowed the Wallonians to use the existing choir, as the women moved their worship to a home on the property.¹⁸² Shortly thereafter in 1583, Nicolaas Wiggertsz. Cousebant founded a second community of *kloppen* on Bakenessergracht that would become Den Hoeck.

¹⁷⁹ Cerutti, 83, 90–92.

¹⁸⁰ Sterck-Proot, July 12, 1936.

¹⁸¹ Cerutti, 83.

¹⁸² Ibid.

Charity, Popular Belief, and Social Networks in Amsterdam

Amsterdam's population was significantly larger than that of Haarlem, and the Catholic community was therefore more dispersed, but also harder for the authorities to suppress. Much like in Haarlem, however, the Catholic social networks in Amsterdam included priests, writers, artists, and wealthy patrons, and Catholic traditions influenced cultural movements and monuments. Undoubtedly, the most important figure among the Catholic leaders in Amsterdam was Leonardus Marius (1588–1652, figure 1). He not only succeeded Sixtius as archpriest of the Oude Zijde in 1631, which in itself made him *de facto* archpriest of the entire city, but also as spiritual father of Amsterdam's Begijnhof, overseeing a community of beguines. Marius inherited the job in 1630, at which time only two beguines remained from before 1578.¹⁸³ Yet the beguines circumvented the placards against taking religious vows and forming new religious communities because they did not take official vows and were considered lay religious; during Marius's tenure there were as many as 160 women living in the Begijnhof, 54 of which beguines.¹⁸⁴ The rectory across the Begijnensloot from the cloister provided a safe place from which to oversee Amsterdam's Catholic community, and Marius enjoyed protection from authorities because of his important political and cultural connections. In fact, Marius was so popular that for his funeral procession to the Oude Kerk in 1652—an anomaly in itself—burghers with space on their roofs or in windows rented out viewing spots.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ Barends, 33; Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed *op. cit.* During the Reformation, Simon Joosten had led the religious women, and was able to stay in the community until 1580 when Mass was prohibited. When Joosten died in 1594, Sixtius took over the Begijnhof.

¹⁸⁴ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, *op. cit.*

¹⁸⁵ Barends, 34. Processions were technically outlawed in the Republic, but Marius's influence in the city was so great that the magistrate was loath to shut down his funeral procession, demanding

One benefit of Marius's connections was his ability to maintain part of the heritage of the 1345 Miracle of Amsterdam for the city's Catholics. In that year, a nurse administered last communion to a dying man, whose fever abated as soon as the Host touched his lips, and he vomited up the Host unscathed. His nurse cast it into a cold fireplace, and though a fire began to blaze the Host remained intact. The miracle immediately inspired devotional poems and art, the construction of the *Heilige Stede* (Holy Place) Chapel on Kalverstraat and an annual commemorative procession.¹⁸⁶ The focal point of Heilige Stede was the miraculous fireplace, which was finally destroyed in 1624 when the Heilige Stede was converted to a Reformed chapel. In place of attending the chapel, the faithful silently processed (careful not to disobey the placard against disruptive processions) around the spot of the former Heilige Stede during the day and night of the Miracle's anniversary.¹⁸⁷ Seventeenth-century priests took advantage of this story to illustrate the real presence of God in the Eucharist and to unite congregations.¹⁸⁸

Marius published a 1639 commentary, in advance of the tricentennial in 1645, declaring that the miracle proved that "there once was unity in belief and uniformity in worship just as the first teachers and founders of Christian belief in our land have taught us."¹⁸⁹ Indeed, his text, *Amstelredams eer ende opcomen door de denckwaerdighe miraklen aldaer geschied aen ende door het H. Sacramet des Altaers, anno 1345* (Amsterdam's honor and rise through the worthy miracles done there and through the

instead that it remain undisruptive. Catholics had already conceded in this situation, as Marius had to be buried at the Oude Kerk, now Protestant, rather than on consecrated ground, and without a full Catholic Mass.

¹⁸⁶ Parker 2008, 178.

¹⁸⁷ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.

¹⁸⁸ Parker 2008, 178.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

Holy Sacrament of the altar, 1345) directly linked Amsterdam's Golden Age, the honor and rise mentioned in his title, with adoration of the Miracle, the Sacrament contained within, and with the thousands of pilgrims that came to pray at the Heilige Stede. The Miracle demonstrated how God healed and protected Amsterdammers that trusted their souls to the Catholic Church. Marius's publication was not an esoteric text intended only for theologians, either: Peter Paul Rubens wrote the dedication and Boëtius A. Bolswert, influential Antwerp engraver of Catholic subjects, illustrated the text with sixteen engravings (figs. 2–3).¹⁹⁰

While the actual Heilige Stede may have been seized by Protestants, the adjacent houses on Kalverstraat were still owned by prominent Catholic families. After 1640, private worship in small groups took place in the homes of several families in this wealthy neighborhood, including at nearby Papenbroekssteeg 15A, the home of future Apostolic Vicar Petrus Codde (b. 1648).¹⁹¹ Next door to the former Heilige Stede at number 73 and directly across at 112 Kalverstraat, homes owned by Roelof Codde (no relation to Petrus) and later by Claes Heijmansz. Coeck, respectively, housed the St. Cecilia College dedicated to upholding the Brotherhood of the Holy Sacrament with sung Mass every Sunday.¹⁹² The Brotherhood and College, which had been founded in 1549 in honor of the Miracle of Amsterdam, enjoyed popularity among Amsterdam's wealthy Catholics during Fr. Marius's campaign to renew interest in the Miracle.¹⁹³ The Counter-

¹⁹⁰ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.; see also Evelyne Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg, 2006).

¹⁹¹ Although they share a name, Apostolic Vicar Codde is not related to painter and poet Pieter Codde, who also lived in Amsterdam from his birth in 1599 until his death in 1678.

¹⁹² Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.

¹⁹³ Eric Jan Sluijter, *Rembrandt's Rivals: History Painting in Amsterdam 1630–1650*. *Oculi: Studies in the Arts of the Low Countries* 14, edited by Koenraad Jonckheere and Stephanie S.

Reformation songs used by the St. Cecilia College, in opposition to Protestant songs, celebrated the Virgin Mary, saints and feast days, and the Holy Sacrament. In the early seventeenth-century, Amsterdam's Catholics ordered such songbooks from printers the Spanish Netherlands, but later in the century print shops in Amsterdam produced them as well, as evidenced by the Amsterdam Jesuit Christianus de Placker's two editions of *Evangelische Leeuwerk* in 1667 and 1683.¹⁹⁴

If Catholics were excluded from public posts and from formally educating children in Amsterdam, they still managed to exert influence on the city's cultural life. Perhaps the best example, apart from the many Catholic artists working in the city, is celebrated poet and playwright Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679). Vondel, a Mennonite, arrived in Amsterdam at the turn of the century and began his career as a silk merchant before joining the Witte Lavenel rhetoric chamber. He met Jesuit priest Petrus Laurentius, who is credited with converting Vondel to Catholicism, and gradually the subjects of his works became increasingly Catholic.¹⁹⁵ Friends with Marius, Vondel also

Dickey (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin Publishing, 2015), 169; Dudok van Heel in Van den Hout and Schillemans, 38. The latter home would eventually be converted to a Catholic charity headquarters, but locals continued to refer to it as "Mirakelhuis."

¹⁹⁴ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit. Along with housing priests and worship services, wealthy and politically connected Catholics found ways to create their own institutions. At first, poor relief was managed entirely by lay religious women, as priests were consumed with staying out of the sheriff's custody, and orphanages like the one led by Eggius on the Dam, were housed in wealthy burgher's homes. In 1632, Gerrit Vermeulen, Jacob Dircksz. de Roy, Dirck Claesz. Scheepel, and IJsbrand Hem created a charitable institution for needy Catholics called Beurs voor de Catolijke Armen binnen Amstelredam. Consummately businesslike, the organization lent money to citizens at an interest rate, the proceeds of which went to parishes to distribute for poor relief, along with gifts collected four times annually at holidays. Occasionally money went straight to the poor, for example in times of illness, and records were kept in dispensation books. This privately-owned organization was replaced with the Roomse Catolijke Oude-Armenkantoor around 1650, which gained its own meeting hall in 1647 with a painting over the fireplace by Catholic architect Jacob van Campen, who also designed the famous Stadhuis on the Dam.

¹⁹⁵ Cerutti, 72. In the late nineteenth century, during the legitimization of Catholicism in the Netherlands, seculars and Jesuits battled over who was responsible for Vondel's conversion: Marius or Laurentius, and up to fifty texts debating the matter appeared in print! Vondel was a

wrote about the tricentennial of the Miracle, *Eeuwgetijd der Heilige Stede t' Amsterdam*, (Centennial of the Holy Place of Amsterdam) and in 1645 wrote *Altaergeheimenissen* (Altar Mysteries) on the significance of Eucharistic mysteries (fig. 4).¹⁹⁶ Vondel apparently felt great respect for religious women as well, penning two odes: “Maeghdepalm” (Virgin’s Palm), on the occasion of his niece Anna Bruining’s initiation into the Order of Poor Clares, and “Lofzang der geestelijke maeghden” (Song of Praise for Spiritual Virgins), both dated 1658. The latter suggests that, like Mary, the Virgin has chosen the best lot in life and will be crowned in heaven for eschewing earthly riches and remaining chaste like a temple to the Lord.¹⁹⁷

Huiskerken in Amsterdam

On December 5, 1656, an emissary of the Protestant church council of Amsterdam issued a report on “popish” activity to the city magistrates. Although riddled with errors, it provides a useful perspective on how Protestants viewed the annoyingly persistent Catholic population. The report claims that over fifty Catholic meeting places were common knowledge, some with two or three attics together in order to house “several hundred” people, and that moreover they contained “altars and all types of popish ornamentation.” During weekly Mass, Catholics sang and played “organs, violins, and other instruments” loud enough to be heard in the streets, and both priests and religious women made their identities obvious through their clothing and (dishonest)

very famous and beloved Dutch figure, and claiming him for the Jesuits or seculars would earn either side plaudits.

¹⁹⁶ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.

¹⁹⁷ Universiteit van Amsterdam Bijzondere Collecties, OTM: Port. Vondel C 73.

evangelizing.¹⁹⁸ While clearly biased, the report speaks to the prevalence of Catholics in city life, and proves that these *huiskerken* were not *schuilkerken* at all. A century later, Jan Wagenaar published the names and locations of Catholic churches in a volume of his chronicle of the city, *Amsterdam in zyne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenissen, voorreglen, koophandel, gebouwen, kerkenstaat, scholen* (Amsterdam in its emergence, growth, histories, regulations, commerce, buildings, religious institutions, schools...), indicating that this general knowledge had not disappeared when religious tensions eased.

Though these records reflect large numbers of Catholic stations, Amsterdam's *huiskerken* generally developed later than in most other Dutch cities. This fact has puzzled scholars, considering Amsterdam's rich Catholic heritage, large population, wealth, and the presence of important Catholic religious leaders, and its relative tolerance

¹⁹⁸ Vertoog van de paepsche stouticheyt alhier binnen Amsterdan den 5 desember,” Acta Kerckeraad 9, 184, 1656. Quoted in I.H. van Eeghen, “De eigendom van de katholieke kerken in Amsterdam ten tijde van de Republiek,” *Haarlemsche Bijdragen: bouwstoffen voor de geschiedenis van het bidsom Haarlem* 64 (1957): 268–69. “1. Paepsche kereken: Hebben de ghansche stadt duer hare solumnele vergaderplaetsen, die zij selfs kereken noemen, vereiert met altaren en alderlay paepsche ornamenten in alsuleken menichte datter meer als vijftich in ghaetalle daer voor bekend zijn, die men weet te noemen en dienstelijck aen te wijsen. Sommighe hebben twee a drie solders ineen gheslaghen, oock hare toeganghen tot de selvighe wtkomende tot verschniden plaetsen, daer en boven noch nuwe soo binnen als buiten de stadt op de paden ende jurisdieckey van dien. 2. Vergaderinghen: Oefenen haren paepsche afgodischen godtsdienst in de ghemelte vergaderplaetsen baide des sondags en de gansche weeck duer soo openbaer dat se bij claren daghen met veele honderden van menschen vrij en onverhindert bij malkanderen komen, alsoft het gheorlofde openbare verdageringhen waren, singhende en spelende in de selve op positiven orlighen, fyolen en andre instrementen dat men het buiten op de straet en in de buiterhuisen kan hooren. 3. Papen: Hebben tot dien einde menichte van papen, monniken, jesuwieten, die in ghetalle seer verre de ghereformeerde predicanten te boven ghaen, en onder haer de stadt in wijken verdeelt, ider zijn quartier toeghelait, soodat men weet wie se zijn, war se woonen, waer se hare kerken hebben ende dat ider onder haer zijn besonder biechtvader heeft, behalven die Aengelarissen die daghelickx wt Vlanderen en wt Brabant comen. 4. Kloppen: Daerbij een ontallicke menichte van Baginen en Cloppen, die in haer afghesondert ghewaet de straten van de stadt overal vullen, in alderlay huisen onbeschamdelijck inkruipen, ongheroepen tot de cranken toetreden en met duisenderlay valsche pracktiken de swacke harten wankelmoedich maken, die oock hebben haer maegdenhuis en bagijnhof en andre dierghelijcke woonplaetsen, daerin zij haer maters hebben, jonghe baginnen opqueken en de aencomende dochters op alderlay wijze in de paperije confijten.”

due to its diversity. Although large *huiskerken* appeared a few decades later than they did in Utrecht and Haarlem, nonpermanent stations had existed there since the Alteration. The earliest baptism book from an Amsterdam Catholic station, used as a register of parish members and of major events and ceremonies, dates to 1628 for the station known as 't Boompje on Kalverstraat. However, this and other such stations likely had existed for decades without formal records; as Dudok van Heel points out, the sacrament of baptism itself was much more important to Catholics at the time than was recordkeeping.¹⁹⁹

Smaller stations founded by regular clergy also existed within homes and without records: The Jesuits formed a station first, in 1604, and had a house church of sorts on the Herengracht as early as 1606. The Dominicans followed in 1621, the Augustinians in c. 1623, and the Capuchins and Carmelites in 1638–40. During these decades, the term *schuilkerk* is indeed appropriate, as there were not yet established *huiskerken* serving large congregations, but rather small groups gathering in various homes of burghers, who likely rotated duties as they were liable to be fined as well as the priests they sheltered.²⁰⁰

After the Treaty of Münster in 1648, Amsterdam city magistrates allowed Catholics to build *huiskerken* “in connivance,” meaning that authorities knew the locations and often even the Mass times, but would levy the required fines and seize property only if a *huiskerk* appeared as such from the outside, if Catholics processed or carried rosaries, rang bells, sang audibly, or let out of Mass at the same time as Reformed services.²⁰¹ Catholics must not have waited for the official peace, however. On

¹⁹⁹ Dudok van Heel in Van den Hout and Schillemans, 37.

²⁰⁰ Barends, 17.

²⁰¹ Dudok van Heel 1991/2, 4; Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit. The 1656 report aside, loud and obvious celebrations of Mass could not have been the norm.

Sacraments Day in 1641, sheriffs broke into at least two churches, including De Boom, where 500 congregants gathered to hear Mass said by Jesuit Petrus Laurentius, and the parish lost its liturgical property and received a 6,200 guilder fine.²⁰² Clearly, large *huiskerken* existed before 1648 if 500 people could be surprised during Mass, and such raids would not completely stop after 1648.²⁰³

During the war, the anti-Catholic placards and sentiment in Amsterdam were at least partially intended to prevent people from siding politically with Catholic Spain, a fear that was much more tangible and practical than the fear of others practicing an idolatrous faith. After 1648, this fear was without basis, and the Reformed government had no more pressing reason to pretend that they would not accept the inevitable development of large Catholic *huiskerken*. Changing or repealing laws would be a symbolic step too far in favor of Catholics, but Amsterdam law enforcement had already developed their own strategies for technically upholding the placards while actually dealing in leniency.

The lay religious women who maintained church property and handled ministry and outreach in Amsterdam included the beguines living in the Begijnhof, but more often *kloppen*, who did not always live in a community but rather in groups of two and three. These women far outnumbered beguines because of the freedom to live independently or even with one's family so long as they upheld the religious code of purity, humility, and obedience.²⁰⁴ An Italian Capuchin visiting Amsterdam in 1646 claimed that 2,000

²⁰² Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.

²⁰³ Complicating the matter is the fact that targeting a prominent Jesuit also had political motives. The government had better relations with seculars, who were not loyal to an order based in Rome.

²⁰⁴ Humility replaced the traditional vow of poverty, as their financial donations and familial connections were crucial to the survival of the church.

kloppen lived there, which was substantiated by the governmental report of 1656 complaining of uncountable numbers of *kloppen* and beguines.²⁰⁵ Among their many indispensable tasks, lay religious women were entirely responsible for educating Catholic children in Amsterdam.²⁰⁶ While there was not one single prominent physical community of *kloppen* in Amsterdam as in Haarlem, they nonetheless formed an important group of patrons and viewers of devotional art there, which is reflected in the subject, styles, and iconography of commissions for Amsterdam's *huiskerken*.

²⁰⁵ Barends, 22.

²⁰⁶ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op. cit.

Chapter Two: Priests and *Kloppen*, Patrons and Subjects of Devotional Art

Den Hoeck: Formation, Development, and a Distinct Identity for *Kloppen*

In 1583, Father Nicolaes Wiggerts. Cousebant built a community of *kloppen* in Haarlem, beginning with just two women, Maritgen Tonis and Geertje Isbrants, who lived with him in a small peat shed behind his family's house on Bakenessergracht.²⁰⁷ Cousebant aspired to lead an order similar to the Poor Clares, and thus had the women wear wool clothing, fast daily, abstain from meat, and wake up at all hours of the night to make the trek to the house church owned by Cousebant's father Wiggert (not yet connected to their living space) to pray the hours.²⁰⁸ Despite Cousebant's reputation for mistreating the women under his charge, conscious recruiting and mission trips in 1580 and 1590 on the part of Cousebant and his assistant Fr. Cornelis Arentsz., both of whom had connections to nobility, helped the community grow.²⁰⁹ In 1602 Cousebant was chastised for his encouragement of mysticism in the women and resigned to join a Franciscan cloister in Cologne, and Arentsz. took over as pastor of Den Hoeck.²¹⁰

Within thirty years, as many as 200 women had joined the community and lived in small houses (called *perticuliere vergaderinghe*) on Bakenessergracht, Vrouwensteeg, Kerksteeg, Krom, and Koksteeg, connected by winding paths or *krollen*.²¹¹ Each group of five to fifteen women had its own spiritual mother as well as one superior mother.

²⁰⁷ See Spaans 2012, 35.

²⁰⁸ Ibid. Agatha van Veen, from the southern Netherlands, spoke favorably about the Poor Clares to Cousebant, and from this and his education in Cologne he developed a "penchant for asceticism."

²⁰⁹ Spaans 2012, 38.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 39.

²¹¹ Abels, 25.

Countless other women, known as *buitenmaagden*, lived by the same virtues as the *kloppen* outside of Haarlem and traveled there for Masses and feast days.²¹² Most women lived off of their inheritance, and those from less fortunate families supported themselves by spinning, sewing, embroidering, working as housemaids, or teaching handiwork to young girls in the orphanages or Maagdenhuis.²¹³

While the 1581 law against Catholic cloisters, organizations, and new members of religious orders prevented women from becoming nuns, they could still enter foreign cloisters. Yet this was not a viable option for many women who could not provide a dowry to join a cloister or did not want to go abroad.²¹⁴ Communities like Cousebant's became increasingly attractive for women wanting to practice their faith, remain in their homeland, and maintain certain freedoms of lay life, including personal property and the ability to practice skills like sewing and embroidery to the community's benefit. Moreover, *kloppen* often lived to be 80 to 90 years old; unlike many married women, they enjoyed regular healthy meals and a consistent schedule, and avoided the dangers of childbirth.²¹⁵

Kloppen made up 1.6% of the Catholic population in the Netherlands, but these women were particularly concentrated in the provinces of Holland, Utrecht, Friesland, and Twenthe. Only 10% of Dutch women defined as *kloppen* lived in communities like Cousebant's, but it became the model for many others across the Dutch Republic. After the first few women moved into the peat shed on Bakenessergracht, small groups began

²¹² Verheggen, 85.

²¹³ Marlies Caron, "Kerkelijk borduurwerk van de Maagden van den Hoeck," *Haerlem Jaarboek* (1987), 11.

²¹⁴ Abels, 2.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 30. *Kloppen* also enjoyed the psychological benefits of community living, including reading, regular discussion and activities, and charity work.

to join them and moved into houses on Appelaerssteech, as well as at the nearby Begijnhof. The borders of these locations made a rectangle, which gave the community its nickname, “Den Hoeck.” As the number of women at the original location grew, a smaller version down the street in Haarlem even came to be known as “De Cleyne Hoeck” (The Little Corner).²¹⁶

A *huiskerk* known as St. Bernardus in den Hoeck was established on the lower story of Bakenessergracht 65, and the offices of the Haarlem chapter were located on the upper story, while the rectory found a home next door at number 63 (fig. 5).²¹⁷ The proximity and interconnectedness of the church, living spaces, and chapter offices gave the entire community a certain authority over all Catholic matters in Haarlem. It was very important to *kloppen* and their confessors to keep the entire area of Den Hoeck in Catholic possession, and wealthy families bought up houses to be used by the community. Fr. Joost Catz, pastor of Den Hoeck from 1613–39, believed that the closeness of the religious community allowed for “people as spiritual limbs to make one spiritual body, each equal to one another and all equal under one head.”²¹⁸ On the other hand, Protestant historian and poet Samuel Ampzing complained in a pamphlet against a “*samenrotte*” (communal rot) of *kloppen* in the Bakenes neighborhood, living “in a foul Papist nest, just as if in a formal cloister.”²¹⁹

²¹⁶ Abels, 2, 7; Verheggen, 85.

²¹⁷ Pieter Biesboer in conversation with the author, November 2016. 63 Bakenessergracht is now the home of Dutch art historian Pieter Biesboer; he recalls that when he originally purchased his home, the room that is now the hall bathroom had a stone basin set into the wall with which Den Hoeck’s priests would wash and dress for Mass next door.

²¹⁸ Abels, 27. “menschen als geestelicke litmaten te maecken een geestelick lichaem, elk te wesen een ander lit, ende alle ghelijck te staen onder een hooft.”

²¹⁹ Quoted in Spaans 2012, 37. “in een vuyl Papennest, ja selfs als in een formeel Klooster.”

Under Cousebant's successor, Fr. Cornelis Arentsz., the growing numbers of *kloppen* followed a strict schedule of prayer, attending Mass, and handiwork. This rule was codified by Arentsz.'s successor Fr. Joost Cats, who stressed that such regimented activities paved the way for salvation. Although they did not take formal vows, *kloppen* wore what many described as a habit, consisting of sober, modest clothing and a black cap or head scarf tied under the chin, making them recognizable symbols of the Church outside of a cloister (fig. 6). The virginal *kloppenstaat* was the subject of much debate in the seventeenth century, being a liminal state between religious and secular life.²²⁰ Spiritual fathers of these women in the Dutch Republic defended them as being equally worthy of salvation as were cloistered nuns; living in the secular world allowed *kloppen* and beguines to reach more people in need and inspire more laypeople by their virtuous example.²²¹ Indeed, stories abound of *kloppen* converting their own family members who had become "slappe" or even Reformed. Elysabeth Heyndriks Verwer, for example, created a chapel inside her family's home where she led them in worship before she was able to join Den Hoeck, and convinced her brother to become a priest despite his training as a physician. Elysabeth's nieces, Anna and Grietie Barents, also joined Den Hoeck and converted their own immediate families.²²² Other women did mission work in "woetse en ketterse" (wild and heretical) villages of their own volition.²²³

While *kloppen* exercised important influence over Haarlem's Catholic Church and over their social networks, their agency was limited by both religious and social norms.

²²⁰ The Council of Trent said that all women religious needed to be confined to convents, so they could not be accepted as women religious in the eyes of Rome.

²²¹ Marit Monteiro, *Geestelijke maagden: Leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland gedurende de 17de eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1996), 402.

²²² Spaans 2012, 48–49.

²²³ Ibid., 51–52.

The identity of a *klopje* hinged entirely on gender. In written guidelines for *kloppen*, the specifically female term *maagdelijkheid* or maidenhood was emphasized, as distinct from *kuishuid* (chastity): it was not enough to remain virginal in body, one must also forsake any physical or mental pleasure offered by the world. While decidedly subordinate to male clergy, a spiritual maiden who gave up her ability to bear children and refused temptation was rendered virtually sexless, and proved her capability to transcend the inherent weaknesses of her sex.²²⁴ At the same time, a *klopje* was instructed in all ways to be a bride of Christ, a role that depended on the feminine aspects of virginity and subservience to one's bridegroom. *Kloppen*, loving and serving only Christ, had a spiritual advantage over secular women, who remained subservient to their earthly husbands as well.²²⁵ In order to maintain authority within the spiritual community, regimens for *kloppen* also asserted the need for communion and regular confession administered by a spiritual father, Christ's representative on earth.²²⁶

Priests Portrayed in Den Hoeck

Trijn Jans Oly's *Levens der Maechden* includes not only the lives of the spiritual virgins who upheld the community at Den Hoeck, but also those of the spiritual fathers who shaped the religious life in Haarlem during their tenure. Presented as the polar opposites of the pre-Reformation priests who received less education, misused church

²²⁴ Monteiro, "Een maagd zonder regel is als een schip zonder stuurman: richtlijnen voor geestelijke maagden in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in de zeventiende eeuw," *Trajecta: tijdschrift voor de geschiedenis van het katholiek leven in de Nederlanden* 1, no. 4 (1992), 341–2.

²²⁵ Monteiro 1996; Monteiro 1992.

²²⁶ Relations could be tense because entire hierarchy of Dutch Church was in jeopardy and spiritual virgins increasingly wanted a say in church policy, etc. so the fluid gender roles had to be clarified by male pastor always taking lead.

funds, and even took concubines, the priests in Oly's *Levens* were highly educated, chaste, and obedient to canon law and community regulations.²²⁷ Counter-Reformation priests in the Netherlands had to live up to both the monastic, austere ideal and the pastoral, missionary ideal. Without officially recognized authority, priests educated laity on how to live by example, completing pastoral duties but making as much time for prayer and contemplation as possible.²²⁸ Den Hoeck's first leader, Fr. Cousebant, certainly embodied the monastic ideal more than the pastoral; although he did actively recruit new members, his affinity for the ascetic Franciscan/Clarissen lifestyle and encouragement of mysticism in the women under his charge led to his discharge.

Cousebant's successor, Fr. Arentsz., took over Den Hoeck at a point when he was considered too weak to carry out other pastoral duties. Although he was just as austere as Cousebant, he discouraged "hoge contemplatie" and extreme asceticism, emphasizing in its place constant dedication to the heavenly bridegroom, daily Mass, prayer, manual labor, and denial of one's own will and desires, including possessions and family ties.²²⁹ A particularly skilled orator, Arentsz. spent his time ministering to and doting on the sisters of Den Hoeck and preaching in Catholic villages, and had a special devotion to St. Bavo.²³⁰ In 1592, before taking over from Cousebant as superior, he had a miraculous vision of St. Bernard (who would become patron saint of Den Hoeck) and the Virgin giving him the commission to found St. Bernardus in Den Hoeck, and recommending chastity, clarity of mind, and purity of heart. After Arentsz's death in 1613, the story of

²²⁷ Spaans, "Paragons of Piety: Representations of Priesthood in the Lives of Haarlem Virgins," *Dutch Review of Church History* 83 (2003), 245.

²²⁸ Spaans 2003, 245–6.

²²⁹ Spaans 2012, 87; Spaans 2003, 237.

²³⁰ Spaans 2003, 238–9.

this vision became especially popular and places associated with the priest's life became hallowed ground: the room where the vision occurred, the room where Arentsz. died, and the room that served as the original chapel. Oly's obituary for the priest recounts that the president of the Papal college of Leuven, Jacobus Jansonius, described Arentsz. as "immaculate superior over Haarlem's virgins."²³¹

Arentsz.'s holiness was confirmed when, on May 6, 1630, his body was exhumed seventeen years after burial and was found unscathed and emitting an odor of sanctity. Catholic painter Pieter de Grebber was asked to make a posthumous portrait (fig. 7), and his oil sketch served as the model for an engraving that appeared shortly thereafter with a caption describing the miraculous disinterment and verifying that the painter had been present onsite.²³² A year later, due to a shortage of burial places, the body was disinterred again, and Trijn Oly reported that the head still looked as perfect as it did in De Grebber's painting.²³³ De Grebber did not idealize the priest's features, as the swollen eyelids and pallid cheeks indicate, and his detailed style lends itself to the documentary function of the painting. Individual hairs on Arentsz.'s beard are visible. The painting remained in Den Hoeck and no doubt inspired many conversations about the former superior and his virtues.

After Arentsz. had ensured the health and continued success of Den Hoeck, he was replaced by Joost Cats, son of an exiled official of the Spanish crown and a student of Albertus Eggius, Vicar General of the vacant bishopric of Haarlem, who answered

²³¹ Spaans 2012, 87.

²³² Xander van Eck, "Een kwijnend bisdom nieuw leven ingeblazen: Pieter de Grebber en het Haarlems kapittel," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 52, no. 3/4 (2004), 255–6.

²³³ Hazelager, 27.

only to the Apostolic Vicar.²³⁴ Unlike his predecessors, Cats was the first to set down a written rule for the *kloppen* of Den Hoeck, and stressed prayer, meditation, and good works over self-mortification.²³⁵ Because Cats was active in a time of relatively little political strife in Haarlem, he had no need to spend periods of time in hiding or exile, and was therefore able to minister to his parish as well as the 100–200 women under his care, many of whom said confession multiple times a week.²³⁶ Only 32 at the time he took up his post at Den Hoeck, Cats was known as a physically attractive man but one who resisted all temptation and was a model of obedience to his widowed mother, to church teaching, and to the Apostolic Vicar.²³⁷ A talented speaker, Cats was described by Oly as “offering up his sweat in the pulpit” and based his intellectual sermons on biblical authority and personal explanation rather than on complicated theology or mysticism; several manuscripts of his sermons recorded by *kloppen* survive.²³⁸

It is clear that Cats composed his sermons with his specific audience in mind, both the congregation that heard the sermon and perhaps even more importantly, the women who would read and discuss the sermons in the years to come. A 1627 manuscript of Cats’s sermons on the three divine and four cardinal virtues includes a clear definition of each virtue and *trappen* (steps) to take in everyday life to achieve them. Cats then laid out a meditation for each virtue, including relevant examples from saints’ lives: many of the meditations point to St. Bernardus, the patron of Den Hoeck, followed by appropriate prayers to recite and a concept on which to contemplate. In the meditation on faith, Cats

²³⁴ See Spaans 2003, 236; Spaans 2012, 87. In 1613, at the time of Cats’s succession to superior of Den Hoeck, the Apostolic Vicar was Sasbout Vosmeer.

²³⁵ Spaans 2003, 238.

²³⁶ Ibid., 242.

²³⁷ Ibid., 240.

²³⁸ Spaans 2012, 89; Spaans 2003, 243.

emphasized *suyverheit* (purity) which was foremost among the concerns of *kloppen*, and in the meditation on love, Cats elaborates with many *puntgen* (points) on the only types of love necessary for a *klopje*: love of God, which inspires love of neighbor. He divided the cardinal virtues into many traits; fortitude tellingly consists of abstinence, sobriety, purity, *maechdelijcke suyverheijt* (specifically maidenly purity), modesty, discipline, humility, clemency, poverty, studiousness, and silence.²³⁹ In a manuscript of sermons specifically on divine love dating from a year after the virtues manuscript, Cats compares brotherly love to medicine for the sick, gives testimonials to the power of God's love, and closes with twelve steps to climb toward more perfect worship of the love of God for mankind.²⁴⁰

A 1633 portrait of Joost Cats at age 53 in the Catharijneconvent was likely painted by Pieter Soutman (1580–1657), or replicates an original by the Haarlem artist (fig. 8). Despite its poor condition, the face in the portrait, with its reddish curly hair, upturned mustache, and graying, pointed beard, mirrors that of Cats's face in a 1641 posthumous engraving designed by Soutman (fig. 9). In the painting, Cats wears a sober black tabard with many buttons and a small collar, and grasps a pair of gloves in his

²³⁹ Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH Warm h92C7 “Beschrijvinghe van de drie goddelijcke deuchden, geloof, hoop en liefde met de vier cardinale deuchden wijsheijt, rechtveerdicheijt, sterckheijt en maticheijt [...] ghepreeckt bij onse E. Overste I.C.S.T.L.” Cats divided the four cardinal virtues into sections as well: wisdom consists of discretion/modesty, resilience, and caution, while justice consists of penitence, devoutness, worship, obedience, thankfulness, truthfulness, simplicity, and generosity, and fortitude tellingly consists of abstinence, sobriety, purity, *maechdelijcke suyverheijt* (specifically maidenly purity), modesty, discipline, humility, clemency, poverty, studiousness, and silence. This section closes the manuscript and is followed by the engravings of St. Bernard and the child Jesus entering the virgin's heart inside a tulip in an enclosed garden, reinforcing the elements of fortitude relevant to the female listener and reader.

²⁴⁰ Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH SJ h106 “Beschrijvinghe vande liefde tot ons naasten.”

hand. One could almost mistake him for a layman if it were not for the Cats family crest in the upper left, with Joost's personal motto, *Iustus ex fide vivit*, below. The Latin phrase (the just shall live by faith) comes from a letter of St. Paul to the Hebrews (10:38) and is also a play on Cats's name: Joost was often Latinized to Justus.²⁴¹

The painting likely comprised part of the series of portraits of Haarlem religious initiated by Jan Albertsz. Ban, pastor of the Begijnhof, as part of extensive efforts by Ban, Fr. Cats, and chapter secretary Joannes Bugge to update, expand and archive the Haarlem chapter's protocol, historical documentation, and visual record.²⁴² The posthumous engraving designed by Soutman also reflects this priority. Cats here appears in the same garment, but now with a fur stole over his shoulders, and rather than gloves, he holds a prayer book with his left hand, which extends outside of the oval portrait frame. The architectural setting incorporates the family crest and Cats's motto, as well as a Latin inscription naming Soutman as the designer, initialed by chapter deacon Leonardus Marius, and relating that because Cats exemplified virtue on earth, he currently resides in heaven. Dirkse argues that the meticulous design and importance of the commission suggest that this engraving was placed in an album and honored as a work of art by the Haarlem chapter.²⁴³

²⁴¹ Dirkse, "Pastoor Joost Cats en zijn betekenis voor de collectie van het Catharijneconvent," in Dirkse 2001, 136.

²⁴² See Dirkse 2001, 136; Van Eck 2008, 83. Van Eck notes, "Their diverse activities included forging alliances with other institutions within the Catholic Church, compiling the *Tabula Chronologica Episcopatus et Ecclesiae Cathedralis Harlemensis* (a chronicle of the diocese's history from its establishment in 1560 by King Philip II of Spain until 1635), publishing an *Officium Proprium* with the liturgical texts of all prescribed feast days of the of the diocese of Haarlem, modified to comply with the requirements imposed by the Council of Trent, and commissioning prints and paintings depicting the most prominent saints and clerics of the diocese.

²⁴³ See Dirkse "Joost Cats," 136.

Fr. Joost Cats helped to define the spirituality and culture of reading, prayer, and meditation at Den Hoeck during his 26-year tenure and beyond, and oversaw the expansion of the community and construction and decoration of the *huiskerk* St. Bernardus in den Hoeck, more on which later. Cats died in 1641 and was succeeded by his nephew, Boudewijn Cats (1602/3–1663). The younger Cats also hailed from Gorcum, studied in Leuven, and was named president of Pulcheria in Leuven in 1637. After joining his uncle and working under him at Den Hoeck beginning in 1639, he would climb the ranks of the Haarlem diocese and become deacon of the Haarlem chapter in 1642, vicar general of the Haarlem chapter in 1652, and in 1662, reluctantly succeed Philippus Rovenius as Apostolic Vicar of the entire Holland Mission.²⁴⁴ Pieter de Grebber portrayed Boudewijn in 1643 as newly-minted deacon of the Haarlem chapter, and the portrait remained in Den Hoeck, likely alongside those of Boudewijn's predecessors (fig. 10). Boudewijn, bearing a strong family resemblance to his uncle, wears a simple black tabard with thin white collar and rests his right hand on the edge of a table while his left hand holds a prayer book. The same Cats family cross adorns the top left corner, with its three St. Andrew crosses and three shells representing St. James and pilgrimage. Boudewijn's personal motto, *Fide et Spe* (Faith and hope) appears below.

²⁴⁴ Spaans 2003, 236; Hazelager, 27.

Women as Writers and Collectors of Histories and Sermons

Although *kloppen* were well-versed in the guidelines for their own lives and for the Catholic faith, not all of them were knowledgeable about theology, or even necessarily literate.²⁴⁵ An entire genre of literature for *kloppen* to read and discuss in groups developed in the seventeenth century and occupied a status between the high-minded interests of foreign-educated Dutch priests and the relative ignorance of true laypeople. The most informative type of literature by and for *kloppen* was collections of lives, modeled after saints' lives. Catharijna (Trijn) Jans Oly (1585–1651)²⁴⁶ recorded the lives, virtues, and achievements of 250 women who lived at Den Hoeck during Oly's fifty years there, giving a detailed picture of the women's family backgrounds, good and bad characteristics, contributions to Haarlem's Catholic community, and even their spiritual struggles.²⁴⁷ Along with examples of the women's private prayer, Oly frequently discusses the assiduous work of *kloppen* who served as scribes, recording sermons by their spiritual fathers for communal reflection, those who collected and distributed devotional images for meditation, and those who sewed and embroidered liturgical garments.

²⁴⁵ Abels, 5.

²⁴⁶ See Spaans 2012, 16–17; Tanja Kootte and Inge Schriemer, *Vrouwen voor het voetlicht: Zusters, martelaressen, poetsengelen and dominees* (Utrecht: Museum Catharijneconvent, 2012), 48–49. Trijn Oly was born into a wealthy Catholic family and told her parents that she wanted to join religious life at age seventeen, at which time she left for Den Hoeck. According to her biography, written after her death by Maria van Wieringen, Trijn was hardworking and intelligent, constantly cleaning the church and altars, singing during services and reading daily. She was named spiritual mother over the novitiates' house and eventually became the general spiritual mother in 1625. Trijn's father Jan Jansz. Oly owned land in the new expansion of Amsterdam and bought a plot for a hof known as St. Andrieshof in 1617, where Catholic widows were housed. In 1623 St. Andrieshof got its own house church, which came to be used by Jacob Oly, Trijn's younger brother, who would go on to become archpriest of the northern neighborhoods of Amsterdam after the 1631 division of the city (see chapter one).

²⁴⁷ Kootte and Schriemer, 49.

Oly's *Levens* not only recorded the history of women who lived at Den Hoeck, but it also encouraged the development and improvement of virtues in living *kloppen*, and aided the living in their memorial prayers for their deceased companions.²⁴⁸ Furthermore, the *Levens* played a role in defining and reinforcing Catholic identity and legend in Haarlem: Oly emphasized certain women's connections to prominent Catholic historical figures or martyrs, as well as recounted horrifying stories of abuse and attempted rape at the hands of Geuzen.²⁴⁹ Such stories were common and frightening in the early years of Den Hoeck, but by the mid-seventeenth century, they served more as evidence of God's

²⁴⁸ See Spaans 2012.

²⁴⁹ Spaans 2012, 27, 107–109. Maria van Craenhals, a *klopje* at Den Hoeck, told the story of her father, Sebastiaan Craenhals of Haarlem, who joined the covenant of the lower nobility in 1566, and who participated in negotiations governing Haarlem's status in the States of Holland under the Ghent Pacification. As Kennemerland's bailiff, he kept country peasants safe from wandering robbers and deserters, and one night was robbed and killed by wandering soldiers outside of Haarlem. The story was linked by his descendants to St. Sebastian, also attacked by soldiers because of his faith. Other members of Den Hoeck with connections to martyr stories included the Sixema sisters, born in Dokum, where St. Bonifatius first brought Catholicism to the Netherlands, and Fr. Joost Cats of Gorkum, where nineteen priests and friars were hanged in 1572. Maria Jans van Teylinghe was not only noble but the niece of "de salighe Justus Catuser" who was tortured and killed by Geuzen in Lumey because he refused to reveal where his fellow charter members had hidden their church property. In terms of abuse, Oly recounted the tale of Johanna Wouters, who came to Den Hoeck after working as housemaid to Jan de Wit, woodworker for the Haarlemmer Hout who was forced to house 16 soldiers. Johanna was cordial and mended the soldiers' clothes so as not to draw their anger, and she dressed as modestly as possible so as not to tempt the soldiers. One night when she thought they were sleeping, she went to get peat for the hearth from the shed and found the captain waiting for her there. When he tried to rape her, she prayed to God to save her, and miraculously escaped. After that encounter, she became devout—Johanna and her sister Maria Wouters as well as the two De Wit daughters, Catarina and Haesgen, became *kloppen* in Den Hoeck. Anna Jans, housekeeper for Frs. Arentsz and Joost Cats, had a similar story. She had been working in a country farmhouse, and while her employers had gone into hiding from soldiers, they left Anna there to take care of the house. She fell ill and was lying in the empty house on a bed of straw when soldiers broke in looking for money and valuables. They saw her under the straw and she assumed her life would soon be over, but the soldiers decided not to touch her because of her illness. As soon as they left, she recovered and went to work for a Catholic noblewoman, Mvrv. Van Nuysenburgh in the Hague, and eventually came to Den Hoeck.

intervention in times of need, and as a way to differentiate virtuous Catholic women from unsavory Protestants.²⁵⁰

Kloppen devoted a portion of each day to silent reading of devotional texts by church fathers and lives of saints, after which they modeled their lives. Oly reports that Maria van Craenhals (d. 1640) purchased many old religious books from former cloisters for use by *kloppen* and *buitenmaagden*, and that Maritgen Isbrants (d. 1649) read so much that “she had a heart full of holy scriptures.”²⁵¹ Re-copying and repurposing medieval religious texts ensured that a certain medieval spirituality and attitude toward text and images prevailed in Den Hoeck.²⁵² Along with reading, *kloppen* spent a good deal of time discussing, summarizing, and recording sermons given by their pastors, many of which are preserved in beautiful manuscripts. These written sermons served the women during times when their pastor was unable to say Mass due to fear of political backlash, or during his visits to other parishes. They especially enriched the *buitenmaagden* who did not benefit from constant spiritual dialogue with fellow virgins.²⁵³ Printed copies of Catholic songs were difficult to acquire, and Oly named Anna Gabrants Clomp (d. 1628) and Reinou Gerrets (d. 1624) as women who wrote down songs for liturgical use.²⁵⁴ Additionally, the act of summarizing and recording sermons or songs in elegant handwriting was a form of devotion and self-discipline in itself.

²⁵⁰ Spaans 2012, 111. Remarkably, these stories do not always clarify which ill-behaved soldiers were Spanish and which were Geuzen.

²⁵¹ Oly quoted in Monteiro 1992, 338.

²⁵² Verheggen, 91. Oly reported that Craenhals attempted to make medieval writings more accessible to her peers, and that Aeltgen Thomas (d. 1638) also secured old texts for the community and copied down some on her own.

²⁵³ Verheggen, 90.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 91.

Following a tradition dating back to medieval cloisters, the *kloppen* of Den Hoeck appear to have collaborated in recording sermons from memory, which involved summarizing the main points (often delineated by the priest verbally and written down as numbered lists) and the Gospel message explained in the sermon. The women mined their memories along with letters, breviaries, and other religious texts, and actually had a good deal of freedom in their recording process, with the priest approving the final version.²⁵⁵ Oly often refers to sermons in the biographies and either draws from or includes entire funeral sermons given for many of the women. Joke Spaans suggests that not only did sermons influence the *Levens*, but also that Oly, as spiritual mother, likely provided material to the priests as they prepared funeral sermons, since she had closer contact with the women. The sermons legitimize the identities of the women and provide scriptural basis for the virtues each woman possessed. Additionally, the *kloppen* often re-read sermons in a group for their daily spiritual reading, and thus the *Levens* could be used as an appendage to other sermon manuscripts, providing further concrete examples to follow.²⁵⁶ Moving sermons were particularly important in the Counter-Reformation Netherlands: a growing taste for public oratory led to longer sermons, and the Council of Trent recommended that priests appeal to the listener's emotions, mind, and senses in order to bring the faithful closer to the divine. Sermons made the sacraments more accessible to laypeople and contributed more demonstrably to the faithful living a godly life.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁵ Spaans 2012, 115.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 113–115.

²⁵⁷ Spaans 2003, 246.

As much as the sermons delivered to and recorded by *kloppen* reflect a continuation of medieval piety, they also prove that communities like Den Hoeck were integrated with the larger society in strikingly modern ways. Joost Cats, for example, used the imagery of nerves connecting the heart to the hands to demonstrate that good works should come from a place of love. His nephew Boudewijn later claimed that doing good works was akin to throwing a stone in the air, fighting against evil, which, like gravity, continuously pulls one down. Such examples prove that the Catholic social network in Haarlem, which included intellectuals and elites, made for an overall “world-wise” congregation and community of spiritual virgins, able to understand recent scientific and scholarly developments and relate them to their religious lives.²⁵⁸

The Centrality of Images to Spiritual Life

The sermon manuscripts, guidelines for virginal life, and lives of *kloppen* written by and for *kloppen* were not merely texts for studying or exercises in discipline. They were also filled with devotional engravings; Evelyne Verheggen, in her magisterial 2006 study on the use of devotional prints by lay religious women, counted 106 engravings pasted or impressed into the extant manuscripts with a provenance of Den Hoeck in Haarlem dating from 1600–1665.²⁵⁹ *Kloppen* purchased inexpensive prints from bookstores that covertly sold Catholic material or had them sent from Antwerp. The engravings not only reinforced key points of the adjacent texts but also constituted complete meditations in themselves. A manuscript of Cornelis Arentsz.’s sermons on the

²⁵⁸ Spaans 2012, 72–3.

²⁵⁹ Verheggen, 89.

Passion of Christ includes a set of engravings by Theodoor Galle depicting the Passion events in order for enhancing one's prayer, although they do not exactly correspond with the order of the sermons (fig. 11). Dating from c. 1627, the aforementioned manuscript of Joost Cats's sermons on the three divine and four cardinal virtues, recorded by avid copyist Maeyken de Graef, closes with two illustrative engravings. On the left, a now-lost anonymous engraving of St. Bavo, patron saint of Haarlem, with a request that he pray for the readers, previously faced an engraving of an enclosed garden (*hortus conclusus*). Inside a large tulip, the child Jesus enters a heart through a door crowned by the dove of the Holy Spirit (fig. 12). The enclosed garden refers to the reader's virginity and distance from the secular world, while the child Jesus stirs the reader's motherly sentiments.²⁶⁰ The Latin and Dutch inscriptions based on the Song of Songs, "Open to me, my sister, my friend/ receive my doctrine of perfect virtues within you," reinforce the reader's devotion to her bridegroom, Christ.²⁶¹ The tulip, most valuable flower in the Netherlands, points to the high value of spiritual women, and along with St. Bavo, locates the devoted female reader specifically in Haarlem.²⁶²

Engravings later added to sermon manuscripts make the connection between the priest's instructions for spiritual virgins and their eventual heavenly rewards very clear. A

²⁶⁰ Verheggen, 99.

²⁶¹ Ibid. Maeyken de Graef's inscription below also reads, "Use this reading to perfect your inner virtues my sister and my friend."

²⁶² Verheggen, 97–100. Verheggen notes that the concept of *hartenspiritualiteit*, or making room in one's heart for Christ as the virginal bridegroom, originated in the Devotio Moderna of the middle ages, but reemerged in Cousebant's teachings, in Joost Cats's sermons, and even later in poetry written by Maria van Wieringen, Oly's successor as historian of Den Hoeck. Wieringen's poem reads, "Als Godt voor de deur van u hert komt cloppen door sijn heijlighe inspiratie/Soo laet Hem met vreuchden in, en verwacht meerder gratie" (If God comes knocking on the door of your heart with His holy inspiration/so let him in with fruits and expect greater grace). She was also inspired by a series of engravings by Michiel Sniijders to pen another poem about opening your heart to let God mold her like iron and purify her for more grace.

collection of anonymous sermons from Den Hoeck features, between chapters on spiritual reading and prayer, an engraving by Schelte A. Bolswert of Christ crowning Mary with thorns at the foot of His cross (fig. 13). Surrounded by Passion instruments, Mary envisions her later, glorious crowning by God in heaven, pictured above. Surrounding the image, the Song of Songs reminds the reader that Christ gives his bride the crown of life, and that a bride of Christ should be a lily among thorns.²⁶³ In a similar anonymous manuscript from 1596 of sermons pertaining to major dates in the liturgical year, an engraving by Karel de Mallery (pasted in much later) shows an unidentified virgin represented as a model of the penitent heart, kneeling before Christ as the Man of Sorrows (fig. 14). Five swords pierce Christ's visible heart, and chains bind the woman's hands; two tall candles, an empty set of "worldly" clothes and cherubs holding banderoles with Latin inscriptions emphasize aspects of her Catholic faith.²⁶⁴ Later in the manuscript, a similar composition by De Mallery depicts a spiritual virgin wearing crown and royal garb as she marries Christ (again shown as Man of Sorrows) with a ring (fig. 15). As she hands her bridegroom her flaming heart, He brings the dove of the Holy Spirit down over them, and God and angelic musicians watch from above. The accompanying sermon includes over 180 "puntgens" or points for the reader to remember about a virginal life.²⁶⁵

The majority of devotional engravings found in sermon manuscripts were produced in Antwerp, which became a center of Catholic prints after the recapture of the city by Catholics in 1585. Church authorities, and particularly orders like the Jesuits, used

²⁶³ Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH WARM H92D4, 183v. "Geestelijke oefeningen over het H. Sacrament."

²⁶⁴ Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH H82 113r. "Sermonen ende geestelichte puntgens."

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

prints to circulate standardized images of patron saints, celebrate feast days, promote Catholic education for children, and to encourage a more intense form of personal devotion in keeping with the goals of the Counter-Reformation.²⁶⁶ Engravers also copied the many devotional paintings made in Antwerp, allowing for a unified iconography across artistic media. Virtually every relic, miraculous image, pilgrimage site, and brotherhood or sodality had its own engraving design, and both Flemish and Dutch Catholics used prints of patron saints with memorial prayers on them on the occasion of the death of a lay religious brother or sister.²⁶⁷

Alfons Thijs reported that ten out of fifteen engravers registered with Antwerp's St. Luke's Guild in the early seventeenth-century specialized in Catholic devotional prints, including Adriaan and Jan Collaert, Karel de Mallery, Cornelis and Theodoor Galle, Michiel Snyders, Abraham van Merlen, and Hieronymus Wierix. Works by all of these engravers appear in at least one manuscript used by lay religious women in Haarlem or Amsterdam.²⁶⁸ As the century went on, demand for highly finished, artistic prints decreased while demand for inexpensive, emotional or archaic prints increased, as these were easier to distribute far and wide and likely to appeal to diverse audiences.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ Alfons K. L. Thijs, *Antwerpen, Internationaal Uitgeverscentrum van Devotieprenten 17de-18de Eeuw* Miscellanea Neerlandica 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 6, 13. As of 1606, the city of Antwerp gave a subsidy to all tuition-free Sunday schools for them to buy "beeldekens," or little images, and by the mid-seventeenth-century, as many as four to five thousand poor children received devotional engravings from Sunday school programs.

²⁶⁷ Thijs, 15, 17, 41. Every member of a Marian sodality, which multiplied astronomically in the seventeenth century, received twelve prints a year for personal prayer. In 1614, the southern Netherlands counted 1500 members of sodalities, resulting in 18,000 prints per year; 50 years later, 3800 people belonged to sodalities. Most of these prints had Dutch inscriptions, though some were made with French or Latin texts, which explains the several examples in Dutch sermon manuscripts with Latin inscriptions.

²⁶⁸ Thijs, 43.

²⁶⁹ Thijs, 44–45.

While prints were often ordered or sent from Antwerp to the Northern Netherlands, bookstores in the United Provinces also covertly sold Catholic material from Antwerp. For example, after 1650, *klopje* Anna Keyser ran a Catholic bookstore near the station she served in Amsterdam, 't Boompje, and private Catholic school teacher Franciscus van den Ende ran a bookshop called In de Kostwinkel.²⁷⁰ Dutch *Kloppen* purchased, distributed, and gifted one another these inexpensive prints, and drew from their collections to decorate their pastor's sermons. Although some of the images found in sermon manuscript do not depict events from the Bible, they encouraged the spiritual virgin to imagine herself, as always, in the place of the Virgin Mary, ultimate example of humility and purity, and to suffer alongside the bridegroom, Christ. Narrative series of engravings are often discussed out of context as "fine" or "high" art, in contrast to seemingly utilitarian, emblematic devotional prints. Yet spiritual virgins, the primary consumers of devotional engravings in both the Northern and Southern Netherlands, apparently did not differentiate between the values of various types of devotional images.

In addition to the engravings pasted and pressed into sermon manuscripts and edifying literature, the women of Den Hoeck also decorated their private spaces with loose prints taken from older devotional literature or purchased for distribution. Maria van Craenhaels not only donated spiritual texts for fellow sisters to read, but also gave them devotional images, a common practice upon a new sister entering the community. Maritgen Isbrants, the fervent reader, decorated her tiny cell so thoroughly with devotional images that Oly claimed "people felt compelled to devotion when entering, as

²⁷⁰ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op cit.

if they had come into a chapel.”²⁷¹ Lijsbeth Pauwels Houwaert, using only devotional books and prints, converted an unused barn into a chapel complete with the Stations of the Cross and a Rosary cycle featuring the fifteen mysteries of the Virgin. *Kloppen* made do with the spaces and images available to them, but longed for a time when public worship using paintings and statues was not only allowed but encouraged: Grietge Jans Quispel often reminisced about the former prevalence of churches, statues, and pilgrimage sites around Haarlem. She recreated a pilgrimage through the city’s Catholic sites with small statues and prints that she placed in front of her while she sewed.²⁷² Maritgen Adriaens decorated tabernacles and cabinets with *beeldekens* of the Virgin to enhance her devotion. Others used individual prints as intercessors, like Jannetgen Dirks, who harbored a strong devotion to a popular Antwerp engraving of the crucified Christ surrounded by Passion instruments and a heart with the bride of Christ inside.²⁷³ Using, embellishing, and decorating spaces with devotional prints was seen as a combination of the required daily prayer and handiwork, and all the more worthwhile as it aided others in prayer.²⁷⁴

While no sermon manuscripts with a provenance of ’t Hart survive, Amsterdam’s Begijnhof, which was home to some of the lay virgins that served ’t Hart, provides three extant examples of manuscripts decorated with engravings. The oldest, dated 1632–36, was recorded by beguine Aeltge Jans van de Poel, who also recorded birth and death

²⁷¹ Kootte and Schriemer, 45. "Sij was in een cleyn camerken of celleken, dat was soo claer, perfect verciert met beeldekens, outaertgen, schilderijtjes, dat men tot devotie beweeght werden als men daerin quam, alsof men in een capelletgen ghecomen hadt. Dit was haer recreatie met sodanige devotie van vercierteltjes haer te vermaken, also sij daer van jongs aen daerin een goede ghenegentheyt toe ghehadt hadde."

²⁷² Kootte and Schriemer, 107.

²⁷³ Verheggen, 92.

²⁷⁴ See Spaans 2012, and Verheggen, 92.

dates for Amsterdam's beguines at the end of the manuscript, and listed marriages that took place in the Begijnhofkerk.²⁷⁵ Aeltge demonstrated her talent for calligraphy with large initial letters at the beginning of each sermon by Leonardus Marius, harkening back to the medieval tradition of manuscript illumination. Aeltge illustrated the sermons with eight devotional engravings, none of which appear in the Haarlem manuscripts, and which originated not only from Flanders but also from Germany and France, indicating that lay religious women had access to a large body of devotional prints and that this material was sent or sold internationally.²⁷⁶ Interestingly, two of the images depict pilgrimage sites in Spain: French engraver Thomas de Leu portrayed the apparition of Mary to Jacob in Saragosa, the site of a later basilica, as well as the miraculous event of 1238/9 in which Spanish crusaders saved the Host from the Moors in Daroca (figs. 16–17). Verheggen suggested that the latter image resonated with Amsterdam's beguines because their pastor, Marius, actively promoted the fourteenth-century Host Miracle of Amsterdam in the 1630s.²⁷⁷ Pilgrimage prints also allowed the beguines to take a “mental pilgrimage” during times when they could not do so physically, much as Grietge Jans Quispel did in Haarlem.

A 1637 anonymous manuscript of Marius's sermons includes several engravings from Theodoor Galle's round Passion series, which provided compositional sources for Dutch artists, as they likely did for Adriaen van de Velde at 't Hart. The latest manuscript, recounting sermons from the 1630s given by Fr. Jacobus Oleus, includes no

²⁷⁵ Verheggen, 111; Anneke Sandeman, “Voor wie het leest of hoor lezen: over de betrokkenheid van de Amsterdamse begijn Aeltje Jans vande Poel bij de totstandkoming van een bundel preken van Leonardus Marius,” *Ons Geestelijke Erf: driemaandelijks tijdschrift voor de geschiedenis van de vroomheid in de Nederlanden* 84, no. 2/3 (June–September 2013): 290–309.

²⁷⁶ See Verheggen, 112.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

fewer than 52 devotional engravings.²⁷⁸ Oleus was pastor of De Lelie on the Spui, near the Begijnhof, and sister of Trijn Oly of Haarlem's Den Hoeck. Oleus's sermons refer to the Poor Clares and Franciscan themes of poverty often, suggesting that his community and that of his sister shared a Franciscan spirituality, and the women in both cities likely kept in close contact.²⁷⁹ Divided into four sections, the anonymous manuscript not only includes sermons by Oleus, but also writings by Bernard of Clairvaux, Cyprianus, and Ambrosius about the Virgin's purity, funeral sermons for seven *kloppen* preached by Oleus, and thirteen further sermons on the Passion given during Lent. Most of the narrative engravings pasted into the manuscript depict scenes from the Passion, but the *klopje* author repeated favorite prints several times, colored in 32 of the engravings, and cut and pasted floral borders around an image of the Virgin and Child in the forest as an additional act of devotion (figs. 18–19).

While there are fifteen female virgin saints depicted in the manuscript, only eight male saints serve as spiritual examples, and the *klopje* also included allegorical prints of the Virgin as the Church, the Virgin Among Virgins, and the (female) Soul Imitating the Cross (fig. 20). The choice of images in the expansive Amsterdam manuscript reveals a very similar attitude toward the use of images for personal meditation and prayer as exhibited in Haarlem, and stresses the role of the spiritual virgin as pure bride of Christ. Just as in Haarlem, the devotional engravings used, decorated, and cherished by lay religious women would serve as iconographical and compositional sources for paintings, textiles, and silver made for *huiskerken* in Amsterdam like 't Hart.

²⁷⁸ Verheggen has published all of the extant prints—some may have fallen out over time.

²⁷⁹ Verheggen, 112.

't Hart/ Het Haantje

Huiskerken built in Amsterdam before 1648 were often expanded as congregations grew: adjacent houses would be purchased and walls demolished in between to create “gallery churches” across two or three attics, but churches built later in the century were built large from the start. Such was the case with 't Hart. Built between 1661–1663, the *huiskerk* comprises the canal house at Oudezijds Voorburgwal 38 and the two smaller houses behind it along the narrow alley Heintje Hoekssteeg. This alleyway, where the discreet entrance to the attic church lay, was named for a fifteenth-century owner whose family crest was a cockerel (*haantje*), and so the *huiskerk* was also occasionally called Het Haantje.²⁸⁰ The former 't Hart is now open to the public as Museum Ons' Lieve Heer Op Solder (“Our Lord in the Attic,” a nineteenth-century nickname).²⁸¹ Dedicated to the history of Amsterdam's *huiskerken*, the house has remained largely unaltered since its transformation in 1661 (fig. 21).²⁸²

The more commonly used name 't Hart comes from Jan Hartman (1619–1668), a Catholic merchant born in Coesfelt, Westphalia. He moved to Amsterdam with his brother Hendrick in 1633 after brief stays in Zwolle and Utrecht, and married Maria

²⁸⁰ Marco Blokhuis, et al., *Amstelkring Museum: Our Lord in the Attic Amsterdam* (Amsterdam/Ghent: Ludion and Amstelkring Museum, 2002), 5.

²⁸¹ See Leonardus van den Broecke, *Onze Lieve Heer op Solder* (Amsterdam: Geschiedenis van het schuilkerktje 't Haantje Museum Amstelkring, 1939), 5–7. The Amstelkring, or club for preservation of history of the Oude Katholiek Kerk in Amsterdam, was founded in 1884 and originally housed in the former rectory of the Begijnhof. A formal museum was established in 1887 on the site of 't Hart, and the new Catholic cathedral, the Nicolaaskerk, was built around that time as well. 240 people paid for acquisition of the museum building, which has always exhibited religious and artistic artifacts relating to Catholic life in Amsterdam. The building was renovated for the 50th anniversary of the Amstelkring with the philosophy of maintaining the house church setting as accurately as possible.

²⁸² Blokhuis et al., 5; Van Eck 2008, 127.

Verhoeven of Haarlem in 1643.²⁸³ Maria died just a year later, and Jan remarried in 1645 with the independently wealthy Elisabeth Jansdr.²⁸⁴ The Hartmans increased their fortune in the linen and stockings trade, and Jan also joined a business group that imposed excise taxes on wine, a job at the time given to private citizens.²⁸⁵ Jan and Elisabeth had nine children, six of whom survived past infancy; the eldest son Cornelis pursued the priesthood and the second son Adriaan followed his father into the linen trade. The 1656 list of “popish meeting places” lists a house church on Zeedijk, where the Hartmans lived at number 2 in a home known as “Hart van Munster” and presumably sheltered Fr. Petrus Parmentier, who would remain connected with the family (fig. 22).²⁸⁶

In 1661, Hartman bought the three connected houses on Oudezijds Voorburgwal for 16,000 guilders, and immediately converted the upper stories into a church.²⁸⁷ It seems he intended for his son Cornelius to use the space when he finished seminary, but this never came to pass. In 1663, Hartman rented the church and the rear house as a residence to Parmentier for 250 guilders a year.²⁸⁸ Hartman’s tax business also allowed him to supply the wine needed for Mass, which the family attended. Jan died in 1668 but stipulated in his will that Parmentier could continue to rent the church and back house by

²⁸³ Thijs Boers, “Jan Hartman, founder of the station,” in Boers et al., *Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder/ Our Lord in the Attic* (Amsterdam: Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder/ Lectura Cultura, 2015), 29.

²⁸⁴ Boers in Boers et al., 30.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 36.

²⁸⁶ Vaan Eeghen, 273. “14. In de bocht van de Zeedijk tot pater Parmentier in Brachrach insghelickx een ghroote verghadering,” from “Lijste van de Paepsche vergaderplaetsen in Amsterdam bij de predicanten en ouderlinghen in hare respective quartieren aenghetekent en door last des kerekenraets aen de Hogachtbare heren Burgemeesteren overghelevert in desember, Anno 1656.” See also Boers in Boers et al., 34.

²⁸⁷ Boers in Boers et al., 41.

²⁸⁸ Anne Versloot in Boers et al., 51.

paying a stipend to Cornelius, still studying in Leuven.²⁸⁹ Unfortunately, the tax business left the family out of a great deal of money when consumers refused to pay taxes on wine. The house was sold in 1671 to Protestant Joan Reynst, Lord of Drakenstein and Vuursche, who rented out the property for income, but did not at first rent out the church space. Parmentier relocated, but the Hartman family continued to attend his parish, and Parmentier baptized Jan Hartman's grandchildren at the new station, De Ster. Cornelius did eventually become a priest, serving in Abcoude and Hoogmade, and his mother Elisabeth moved in with him, while a sister, Alegonda, apparently became a beguine.²⁹⁰

Fr. Petrus Parmentier (1599–1681)

Petrus Parmentier was an impressive figure in Amsterdam's Catholic community; a popular refrain claimed, "Waren alle paepen al Parmentier, de Geuzen waren ver van hier" (If all Catholics were like Parmentier, the Sea Beggars would stay far from here).²⁹¹ From Ghent, he entered the Augustinian monastery of St. Stephanus in 1622 and was later ordained there.²⁹² He was appointed subprior of the monastery and professor of theology in 1631, but in 1636 was sent as a missionary to the Netherlands with instructions to "convert as many people as possible."²⁹³ Parmentier's longtime secretary, Johannes Uutten Eeckhout (1614–1682), would later write that although Parmentier began with no possessions and without guidance or predecessor in the missionary

²⁸⁹ Boers in Boers et al., 42.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 46.

²⁹¹ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op cit.

²⁹² See Boers, "The indefatigable Petrus Parmentier," in Boers et al., 53. Boers discovered that the register entry of Parmentier's ordination is decorated with violets and carnations, symbols of modesty and love of the Virgin Mary.

²⁹³ Boers in Boers et al., 54.

territory, he was able to shelter in various houses and preach to small groups on a rotating basis. It appears that the Hartman home at Zeedijk 2 was his first permanent station, which, according to Eeckhout, quickly amassed a large congregation eager to donate fine silver, textiles, and church decorations.²⁹⁴ Certainly this growing community influenced Hartman's decision to buy the three houses on Oudezijds Voorburgwal.

After 1663, Parmentier presided over 't Hart, where Eeckhout joined him as assistant in 1664. In that year, a plague year, Parmentier had a close call with life-threatening illness, although he did not come down with the bubonic plague, and requested to retire. The Augustinians sent a replacement, namely Eeckhout, who hailed from Dendermonde and managed the monastery there.²⁹⁵ Parmentier ultimately stayed in Amsterdam, heeding the "pleas and tears of the many people who urged him earnestly not to leave them at such a perilous time," according to Eeckhout, who referred to the plague that ravaged the Netherlands that year, killing over 24,000 in Amsterdam alone.²⁹⁶ Eeckhout, impressed with Parmentier, decided to stay on in Amsterdam and moved into 't Hart, while Parmentier quickly recovered from his illness. 't Hart was considered the successor parish to the Oude Kerk, the oldest and most important church in the city before and after the Reformation, and like its predecessor, was dedicated to St. Nicholas.²⁹⁷ The station enjoyed great successes, with about a thousand communicants attending weekly Mass, and according to Eeckhout's records, the parish celebrated 70 baptisms and 14 weddings in 1667.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁴ Eeckhout quoted in Boers in Boers et al., 54, 58.

²⁹⁵ Boers in Boers et al., 59.

²⁹⁶ Eeckhout quoted in Boers in Boers et al., 61.

²⁹⁷ Van den Broecke, 46.

²⁹⁸ Boers in Boers et al., 61.

There had been an Augustinian priest stationed in Amsterdam since at least 1623, but Parmentier was arguably the most influential Augustinian in the city during the 46 years he served there.²⁹⁹ Charles H. Parker observes that Augustinian pastors emphasized penitence and contrition for sins in order to attain grace and salvation.³⁰⁰ Apostolic vicar Philippus Rovenius wrote a “well-established genre of penitential literature grounded in Augustine,” including his collection of daily prayers and meditations for laity, *Het Gulden Wierooock-vat* (The Golden Censer), published in Antwerp in 1670. The handbook was intended “to rekindle a spiritual desire for piety and love of God.”³⁰¹ A manuscript belonging to beguine Aeltge Jans van de Poel at the Begijnhof containing *Het Gulden Wierooock-vat* as well as transcribed sermons by Fr. Marius illustrates how this literature was used. Just as in Den Hoeck, lay religious women in Amsterdam recorded their pastor’s sermons as a form of meditation and as part of their structured schedule of devotional activities.³⁰² While no sermon manuscripts attributed to Petrus Parmentier survive, the group of *kloppen* he oversaw likely recorded or discussed his sermons similar to the way that the women of Den Hoeck did. Both *Het Gulden Wierooock-vat* and recorded sermons broke down theological concepts into several key points on which to reflect, and this distillation into meditational “bullet points” is also reflected in the decorative programs of *huiskerken* in Amsterdam.³⁰³

²⁹⁹ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed, op cit.

³⁰⁰ Parker 2008, 83.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 84.

³⁰² See Sandeman, 290–309.

³⁰³ Marius expressly stated in one sermon that he presented “drie punten” in order to encourage future meditation on his sermons. “Ick wilde wel mijn lieve kinderen, dat ghij desen dach u wat oeffende in die besnijdenisse, iae niet alleen deese dach, maer al die daegen die u Godt noch sal spaeren. Daer toe sal ick u drie punten geven, om dat te beeter, op desen dach wel te oeffenen, om een goede wel behouwende vruchtbarigen boomen te woorden,” Manuscript XXV c79, Y6v, Universiteit van Amsterdam.

That the congregation considered Parmentier a prime example to follow in the quest for holiness is evidenced by the posthumous portrait of the priest based on his image in a 1677 altarpiece donated to De Ster.³⁰⁴ Van Eck notes that the entire figure was adapted out of its original context, resulting in a bust-length portrait of Parmentier with eyes upturned and hands folded in prayer, still in the collection of the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder (fig. 23).³⁰⁵

After his relocation, Parmentier's success and reputation for pastoral care earned him a promotion to prefect of the Amsterdam mission, meaning he was authorized to administer all sacraments as well as to grant absolution to heretics. Having survived a health scare a decade earlier, Parmentier refused to commit to more than a single three-year term as prefect. In 1679, feeling his age, Parmentier drew up a will leaving everything to his secretary, Eeckhout. He died at the age of 82 in 1681, and Eeckhout followed him a few months later. The Catholic community in Amsterdam mourned Parmentier deeply; at his funeral local artisans carried his bier along with tools he had given them. Both Parmentier and Eeckhout were buried in the Van Loon family tomb in the Nieuwe Kerk.³⁰⁶

Parmentier's Augustinian successor relocated the parish a second time in 1697, when the former Van Loon home was rented to English Episcopalians.³⁰⁷ After a dispute with one of the Van Loon women over an increase in rent, the parish rehomed in a

³⁰⁴ See chapter four for more on the altarpiece itself.

³⁰⁵ Van Eck 2001, n.p. The Museum's didactic texts describe the portrait as a copy of a (presumably lost) deathbed portrait in which Parmentier was posed with closed eyes and hands praying, and explains that the copy currently on display simply turned the composition 90 degrees to the left so that he would appear to be alive and praying.

³⁰⁶ Boers in Boers et al., 70.

³⁰⁷ Van Eeghen, 240.

warehouse on Spinhuissteeg that had been transferred to the ownership of master carpenter Gillis Jacobs, who rebuilt the interior so that De Ster existed formally once again by August 1698.³⁰⁸

The Augustinians continued to occupy the warehouse on Spinhuissteeg through different owners until 1739, at which time the parish closed temporarily due to difficulties appointing a priest.³⁰⁹ This unfortunate situation was not uncommon after the Schism in 1723, but after 1746, the parish functioned once again, and did so until the end of the nineteenth century.³¹⁰ As of 1836, the bicentennial of the first Augustinian station in Amsterdam under Parmentier (on Zeedijk), the parish still possessed a portrait of the influential pastor and an embroidered altar cloth with his initials, P.P.³¹¹

't Hart after Parmentier

While the Augustinians flourished at new locations, the original location of 't Hart functioned between 1671–1674 not as a church, but rather as an investment property for Joan Reynst, who rented the side houses to tenants.³¹² Reynst apparently had no qualms about renting to Catholics, however, and in 1675, secular priest Willem Schoen assumed the role of pastor of 't Hart, renting the apartment and the attic church.³¹³

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Van Eeghen, 240. In 1726, Gillis Jacobs's widow, Pieterella Gijsberts van Holsem, transferred ownership of the warehouse and the townhouse to soap boiler Jan Woltman for 20,000 and 3,000 guilders, respectively. Woltman was merely a straw man for the purchase, however, because he had attended De Ster and had had his children baptized there. He took over the supervisory role of the Van Loon family while the Augustinians were the real tenants.

³¹⁰ Van Eeghen, 239–240.

³¹¹ Boers in Boers et al., 71.

³¹² Ibid., 43.

³¹³ Van Eeghen, 248. The baptism book for 't Hart does not begin until Schoen's tenure, because the earlier records traveled with Parmentier to De Ster.

Though not much is known about his training or specifics of his pastoral work at 't Hart, it is clear that Schoen shared Parmentier's commitment to fostering a tight community of spiritual virgins.

In 1676, the first edition of Schoen's guidebook for new spiritual virgins, *De Weg der Suyverheyt voor d'Hollantse Maegden* (The Way to Salvation for Dutch Virgins), appeared under an Antwerp imprint (fig. 24). However, the inscription, "voor Philips van Eyck inde Calverstraat inde 4 gekroonde evangelisten," indicates that Philips Van Eyck either printed or sold Catholic material himself at a shop called the Four Crowned Evangelists on Kalverstraat.³¹⁴ In 61 short chapters that span 316 pages, Schoen provides his opinion and advice on every aspect of joining a lay spiritual community, ranging from the definition of virginal purity to advice for those facing resistance to the decision to live a spiritual life, to guidelines for reading, confession, and mortification. Similar to other treatises for beguines and *kloppen*, Schoen includes a "rule," or a regimented schedule that the virgin should follow each day, consisting mostly of prayer and meditation, with allotted time for reading the lives of saints or other religious texts, discussion with peers, and handiwork to benefit the parish, such as sewing. The rule was adapted to different emphases for each day of the week, and included special masses or fasting depending on the liturgical calendar.

While Schoen's inclusion of the daily regimen for virgins aligns his text with others in the genre, a remarkable and unique aspect of the book is the priest's theological argument for the legitimacy and value of lay religious women and the semi-religious life. Several of his short chapters address contemporary debates:

³¹⁴ See Verheggen. It was not uncommon for Catholic material to be printed in Amsterdam with a fake Antwerp imprint in order to avoid legal repercussions.

11. Whether it is better in this country to serve God inside or outside of a cloister.
13. Whether a virgin takes up a "state" by pledging purity.
16. Whether a virgin should take the vows of purity in this country, and when?
17. That a virgin can still maintain her vows and state of purity in this country.³¹⁵

Aside from anxiety about whether a laywoman who pledged purity, humility, and obedience was truly a servant or bride of Christ, the restrictions placed on Dutch women specifically raised concern to Schoen. Because religious orders were outlawed in the Netherlands, ecclesiastical authorities from majority Catholic countries argued that Dutch women could not participate fully in spiritual life the way those who took formal vows could. In their liminal state between religious and worldly life, they did not fit neatly into a category, arousing suspicion and doubt about their piety.³¹⁶ The fact that Dutch beguines and *kloppen* lived outside of a closed community, and furthermore maintained ownership of property and wealth, rankled authorities who saw these conditions as an invitation to impurity and vanity. Others worried that beguines or *kloppen* compromised their own safety or that of their families by drawing attention to their outlawed faith.

Schoen is clear about his stance on all of these issues: given the political situation, pledging oneself to virginal life as a laywoman was the highest form of spiritual commitment available, and should be regarded as if the vows were formal and binding. The semi-religious life these women forged for themselves was not technically a religious "state," such as occupied by a cloistered nun, and was of course subservient to male clergy, but should command respect nonetheless. The multi-confessional character of Dutch society made virginal laywomen with access to the entire community all the more

³¹⁵ Willem Schoen, *De weg der suyverheyt van d'Hollantse maegde gemaect door Wilh. Schoenius*. Published Philips van Eyck, 1676, Antwerp/Amsterdam. Universiteit van Amsterdam Bijzondere Collecties inv. nr. OTM: O 61-189 and OTM: OK 62-3294.

³¹⁶ See Monteiro 1992; Monteiro 1996.

useful. Their presence in the outside world encouraged faith among the undecided or doubting, and contributed to conversions and further vocations. Schoen dismisses the accusation that a spiritual virgin would be tempted toward impurity; she need only follow the rules established for virginal life by a pastoral advisor, such as his own three chapters on the matter: “34. How she should dress/carry herself outside of the house, 35. On her meek/self-effacing outward presence in all that she does, 36. How she should behave if visited by others.”³¹⁷ While Schoen’s impact on Catholic society in Amsterdam was not as profound as Parmentier’s, his guidebook for lay religious women provides crucial insight into his involvement with *kloppen* and their importance to maintaining the church organization and community of ’t Hart.

³¹⁷ Schoen, op. cit.

Chapter Three: The Decorative Program of St. Bernardus in den Hoeck

The Catholic artistic community: Playing by the rules

Along with the multilayered connections between Catholic elites and intellectuals described in chapter two, the Catholic artists in Haarlem had strong personal connections with priests and intellectuals themselves. Perhaps the best example of this network is the devoutly Catholic De Grebber family. Aside from enjoying a high reputation for his religious history paintings and serving as deacon of the St. Luke's Guild in 1627, Frans de Grebber (1573–1649) also held illegal Masses in his home, which resulted in the arrest of a Fr. Simon van Linteloo on July 22, 1642.³¹⁸ Pieter (c. 1600–1652) followed in his father's footsteps and housed a priest named Dominé Blessius, according to the census taken June 17, 1648.³¹⁹ Both Frans and Pieter lived in the Begijnhof as of 1634. Pieter's brother Adolphus (also recorded as Aelbertus) became a priest, and was abroad between 1649–53, presumably to avoid arrest.³²⁰ Their sister Maria de Grebber (1602–1680), a painter herself, married the brother of Father Augsutinus Wolff, pastor of a *huiskerk* in

³¹⁸ Report of arrest dated July 22, 1642, from Memoriaal, Haarlem Arch. Bredius, Map Pieter de Grebber, p. 5, quoted in René Hazelager, "Pieter Fransz. de Grebber: Schilder tot Haerlem," PhD diss. (Universiteit van Utrecht, 1979), 24. "Officier Schutter op Sondach in apprehentie genomen hebbende Simon van Linteloo, priester van Amsterdam, (soo hij seyde) ie ten huiuze van Frans Pietersz de Grebber, schilder bevonden hadde pauselycke bedienninge te doen, versochte derselve met kennisse van de E. Heeren Magistraten te mogen rantsoeneren ende los te laten, welck rantsoen hij vermeende omtrent 900 guldens te sullen bedragen welck versoeck van de voors. Heer Officier in deliberatie gelijkt sijnde, en hem geconsenteert met de voors. Linteloo, priester over 't rantsoen te accoderen."

³¹⁹ Not. L. Coesaert, Haarlem, Arch. Bredius, Map Pieter de Grebber, p. 6, quoted in Hazelager, 24. The census lists "Dominé Blessius op 't Bagijnhof bij den schilder de Grebber."

³²⁰ This is the justification given in the existing literature, particularly in Hazelager, however I am skeptical of Adolphus/Aelbertus's fear of arrest after the 1648 Treaty of Münster, at which time restrictions on Catholics loosened across the Republic. He may have gone abroad for training or education.

Enkhuizen, and her portrait of Fr. Wolff hung in Den Hoeck (fig. 25). Fr. Wolff also commissioned Pieter to paint the high altarpiece for his station in 1633, for which Pieter produced the large triangular composition of the *Descent from the Cross* now in the Rijksmuseum (fig. 26).

Pieter met often with close friend and pastor of the Begijnhof, Jan Albertsz. Ban, as evidenced by Pieter's frequent appearances as witness to Begijnhof documents. They shared an interest in music and seem to have collaborated on compositions—Pieter contributed a song to Ban's 1643 *Kort Sang Bericht*. Ban also appears as the older man in profile in Pieter's 1639 *Musical Company* (fig. 27), and Pieter painted a now-lost *Jubal*, according to Genesis the inventor of the zither and flute, for Ban.³²¹ Both men valued established rules, clarity of message, and engagement of the senses in order to further Counter-Reformation goals. Given their similar philosophies, it is not surprising that Ban commissioned Pieter to paint devotional paintings for the Begijnhof. Paul Dirkse proposed that the Catharijneconvent's *Adoration of the Shepherds* from 1633 hung in the Begijnhof, because the legible musical score held aloft by angels is an original *Gloria* in the style favored by Ban (fig. 28).³²² Likewise, Pieter's 1635 painting of a beguine rapt in prayer before a makeshift altar with a crucifix, tabernacle, and rosary was made for the Begijnhof (fig. 29). The identity of the woman has long been debated, but regardless of her identity, she models devotion to the Passion and to the Eucharist, and wears the sober

³²¹ See Hazelager, 24–5; 37.

³²² See Dirkse 2001, 137–42.

dress of seventeenth-century beguines, codified in the 1630s by Ban in his new regulations for the Haarlem Begijnhof.³²³

In 1649, after decades of success as a history painter, De Grebber set down eleven rules for history painting that he and his contemporaries had followed throughout their careers.³²⁴ Heavily influenced by Karel van Mander's seminal 1604 guidebook for painters, *De Grondt der edel vry Schilder-konst*, De Grebber's rules include practical advice such as introducing variation in the levels and size of heads in a composition with many figures, avoiding cropped figures or elements, and keeping in mind where the painting will eventually hang.³²⁵ However, the rules also indicate that De Grebber's primary concern was that a history painting be convincing, clear, and accurate, much like

³²³ See Dirkse 2001, 78; Hazelager, 26; Verheggen, 67–70; Tanja Kootte, abridged catalogue entry for Pieter de Grebber, *Gentse begijn Matteken wordt toegesproken door een kruisbeeld*, 1635, Museum Catharijneconvent. <https://www.catharijneconvent.nl/adlib/42252/?q=begijn+matteken>. Previously identified as Trijn Jans Oly, a beguine named Neeltje Cornelis van Heemskerk, and Delft beguine Gertruud van Oosten, who had received the stigmata, the two prevailing hypotheses are now the Ghent beguine Matteken, proposed by Dirkse, and Isabella van Hoey, proposed by Verheggen. Matteken received a miraculous vision in front of a crucifix and later died praying in front of it, according to the *Vitae S. Beggae*, written in 1631 by the Leuven abbot Joseph Geldorph van Rijckel and given to Ban by the author. Ban visited Ghent's Great Beguinage, where he would have seen the miraculous cross, in 1635. On the other hand, the woman prays not only to a crucifix, but also to a covered tabernacle, and a rosary rests on the table, both of which are attributes associated with Isabella van Hoey. Isabella appears along with St. Begga, patron of beguines, in engravings pasted into a manuscript from the Begijnhof, and Joseph Cousebant, pastor of the Begijnhof after Ban, preached about her healing talent thanks to the strength of the Eucharistic sacrament. Archduchess Isabella promoted devotion to Isabella van Hoey, not only because they shared a name, but also because St. Begga was believed to be the start of the Habsburg dynasty.

³²⁴ Although only one sheet of the *Regulen* survives today, they may have been in circulation and frequently used in De Grebber's workshop. Alternatively, due to the late date of the sheet, it is plausible that the rules summarize a lecture or lesson De Grebber gave on painting (see more below) or that they merely reflect lessons learned throughout his career. I explored several issues relating to the *Regulen* and the theoretical views of the Haarlem classicists in my Masters thesis, "Reclaiming the 'Ancient Luster' of Painting: Pieter de Grebber's *Regulen* and Haarlem Classicism (University of Maryland, 2012).

³²⁵ See Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, ed. and trans. Elizabeth Honig et al. (New Haven, 1984); Hessel Miedema, "Karel van Mander: Did He Write Art Literature?" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. ½ (1993–1994).

Ban's music. To this end, the artist stresses the importance of a thorough knowledge of linear perspective in order to create believable settings, skill in blending light and shadow so that figures and objects appear naturalistic, and placement of the most important element in the narrative in a central location, with the rest of the composition arranged to direct the viewer's attention toward it.³²⁶

That De Grebber intended the rules not only as practical instructions for his pupils, but also as a statement of his commitment to improving and developing the art of history painting is borne out by his activity in Haarlem's St. Luke guild during the 1630s and 1640s. In 1631–2, under the direction of fellow Catholic history painter Salomon de Bray, Haarlem's painters reorganized the guild, which previously included a variety of craftsmen, in order to focus on furthering the goals of painters. Ratified shortly after De Grebber's admission to the Haarlem Guild, De Bray's new charter proclaims, "our first and greatest concern is the renewal of the ancient luster of the art of painting, which was always held in the highest esteem by the olden kings and princes."³²⁷ This statement positions painters as the leaders and spokesmen of the entire guild. De Bray also suggests that it is both possible and beneficial to seventeenth century Dutch painters to discover the fundamental practices and modes of thinking consistent with the artists of classical antiquity.

³²⁶ See Albert Blankert et al., Blankert et al., *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth Century Painting* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2000), 10; Friso Lammertse, "Salomon de Bray: Painter, architect and theorist," in *Painting Family: The De Brays, Master Painters of Seventeenth Century Holland*, edited by Pieter Biesboer. (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers, 2008), 16.

³²⁷ Salomon de Bray, "Register van Wapens der onderafdelingen van het gilde," Haarlem Municipal Archives, guild archive nr. 149. Quoted in E. Taverne, "Salomon de Bray and the Reorganization of the Haarlem Guild of St. Luke in 1631," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 6, no. 1 (1972–1973), 52.

The new guild statutes suggest that De Bray equated painting in general with history painting, the genre held in highest regard and believed to bring the most honor to its practitioners as well as its patrons. E. Taverne has convincingly argued that the guild reform reflects the goal of the so-called “Haarlem classicists” (including De Grebber, De Bray, and others) to transform the guild from a mere craftsman’s union into a true academy of arts. Rather than the Italian Renaissance academies, De Bray, De Grebber and their contemporaries looked for inspiration to the “academy” that Karel van Mander, Hendrick Goltzius, and Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem, the masters of the previous generation, had apparently formed in 1583 in order to study and draw from life.³²⁸ De Bray and his collaborators proposed in the guild charter “joint sessions in drawing, anatomy, and other skills and exercises...”³²⁹ The guild reformers thus revived, codified and enhanced the 1583 Haarlem academy mentioned by Van Mander’s biographer. In fact, Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem signed the 1632 charter, forging a “living tie” to the former academy.³³⁰ Evidence that these practices occurred comes from Leiden artist Philips Angel’s 1641 speech published as *Lof der Schilderkonst* (Praise of Painting), in which he singles out De Grebber for his assiduous study of plaster casts of the human figure, inherited from Goltzius.³³¹

³²⁸ Taverne, 53.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Taverne, 53.

³³¹ Philips Angel, *Lof der Schilderkonst*, translated by Michael Hoyle and Hessel Miedema, in *Simiolus* 24, no. 2/3, Ten Essays for a Friend: E. de Jongh 65 (1996), 247–8. “I refer you to the anatomies of Master Hendrick and Master Cornelis van Haarlem, who have left you flayed plaster casts, for want of anything else, from which you will gain some knowledge of the nude, which is most serviceable to us. Likewise P.F. de Grebber, who is greatly experienced and excels many others, by way of the numerous examinations and marvelously close observations he has made in this matter, noting all the particulars, which he observes very keenly in all figures, how they alter through movement, which he achieved through much labor and after spending several of his best years on it, which knowledge he might easily have gained by anatomizing, employing that time

The reformed charter recommended “public lectures, lessons and demonstrations by the best masters... This is to the honor and esteem of our city and guild.”³³² De Bray believed that educating the general public on the theoretical basis of history painting would foster intellectual appreciation for the arts in Haarlem. The preferential status of history painters in the guild charter is indicative of a growing trend toward academicism and toward codifying painting practices at mid-century. Addressed to “inquiring disciples,” only one specimen survives of De Grebber’s *Regulen*, indicating that they likely recapitulated a master lecture or discussion as described in the guild charter. Pieter Casteleyn, a former student of De Grebber’s, printed the rules, and included in the large first initial the figures of Mercury and Minerva, the Greek gods that together signify wisdom and education, particularly in the arts (fig. 30).³³³

Along with his work as a painter and dean of the St. Luke’s guild, Salomon de Bray was active as an architect, and wrote the introduction to the 1631 *Architectura moderna, ofte Bouwinge van onsen Tijdt*, which included plans by classicizing architect Hendrick de Keyser. In his text, De Bray stresses that antique architecture is the standard of beauty because of its close relationship to mathematics and theory, and “Because ideal proportions and beauty have such power over our sensibilities, they captivate us with wonderment, as though a spirit had descended from heaven.”³³⁴ De Bray believed that the symmetrical columns and perfectly proportioned temple fronts that we associate with

instead on other matters in the service of art. Be that as it may, let this spirit serve as an example to us that we may follow him in this virtue, because those matters are most serviceable to us for the rare fruits we obtain from them to the benefit of our art.”

³³² Taverne, 53.

³³³ See E. K. Grootes, ed., *Heydensche Afgoden: Beelden, Tempels en Offerhanden; met De vremde Ceremonien naar elcks Landts vvijsse*, 1646. (Deventer: Sub Rosa, 1987).

³³⁴ De Bray quoted in Lammertse, 16. See also Salomon de Bray, *Architectura Moderna ofte Bowinge van Onsen Tyt*, with introduction by E. Taverne, (Soest: Davaco, 1971).

Greek and Roman antiquity in fact originated during the events of the Old Testament, which allowed him to square his love for classical architecture (associated with pagan societies) with his Catholic faith. For this reason, De Bray often included classical architecture in his religious paintings, legitimizing the connection between antique perfection and the Judeo-Christian tradition.³³⁵ Much like his friends De Grebber and Ban, De Bray believed in a measured, theoretical approach to both painting and architecture, in which the (often Christian) narrative was paramount over the auxiliary elements.

It is surely not coincidental that De Bray and De Grebber, with their documented interest in rules and academic study for history painting, were themselves devout Catholics that supplied religious paintings to *huiskerken*. In a special way, they understood the importance of rules not only for elevating the art of painting, but also for conforming to Tridentine guidelines on religious imagery. Catholic artists and thinkers in Haarlem seem to have internalized the Council of Trent's exhortation to use art (and we can assume music and architecture) to move the audience to a more perfect understanding of the underlying concept and feel a deeper connection to their Catholic faith.

Paintings Commissioned for St. Bernardus and Their Devotional Uses

Under the leadership of Fr. Joost Cats, the conglomeration of buildings at Den Hoeck were renovated to create a distinct *huiskerk* as of 1638, dedicated to St. Bernardus. St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) is not only associated with cloistered life as the reformer of the Cisterian order, but also had a special devotion to the Virgin. Bernard had

³³⁵ See Lammertse in Biesboer, 15.

miraculous visions of the Virgin and dedicated much of his scholarship to her.³³⁶ Fr. Arentsz. in turn had a vision in 1592 of the Virgin and St. Bernard, who charged him to found a church at Den Hoeck.³³⁷ Prior to Cats's fulfillment of Arentsz.'s legacy, Mass had indeed been celebrated in a chapel at Den Hoeck, but it is after the incorporation of St. Bernardus that the majority of large-format decorations were commissioned for or arrived at the *huiskerk*. Paintings are not, strictly speaking, necessary for the celebration of Mass, especially when compared to the liturgical silver required to celebrate the Eucharist. It can, however, be assumed that an older painting functioned as an altarpiece in the early days of Den Hoeck, before the numbers of *kloppen* living there grew to the hundreds and its congregation in general expanded such as to require a full chapel.

About half of the paintings with a known provenance of Den Hoeck unfortunately are no longer extant, but related works or copies are known of several, making it possible to discuss the program as a whole. Stylistic trends from Utrecht Caravaggism to late-seventeenth century classicism are represented in the group of paintings, and it seems that the priorities of the spiritual fathers lay in patronizing Catholic artists. Thus, some artists represented had excellent reputations as religious history painters, while some specialized in other genres, but were nevertheless connected to the *huiskerk* through their faith and location in Haarlem.

³³⁶ See John R. Sommerfeldt, *The Spiritual Teachings of Bernard of Clairvaux: An Intellectual History of the Early Cisterian Order* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cisterian Publications, 1991).

³³⁷ See chapter two and Spaans 2012, 87.

Abraham Bloemaert, *Supper at Emmaus*, 1622

Arguably the jewel of the Den Hoeck program is the oldest seventeenth-century painting traceable to the *huiskerk*: Abraham Bloemaert's 1622 horizontal altarpiece depicting the *Supper at Emmaus* (fig. 31). The patron is undocumented, but given the date, the painting likely came into the possession of Den Hoeck during the tenure of Joost Cats (1613–39). Although Bloemaert was widely renowned for his paintings of Catholic themes, he is the only artist represented in Den Hoeck's decorative program who did not hail from Haarlem. This fact suggests to me that the patron, perhaps a *klopje*, came from Utrecht and gave the painting to Den Hoeck. The artist did paint on commission for *huiskerken* both in Utrecht and outside of his hometown, and perhaps a *klopje* admired his works and requested a painting for her new home at Den Hoeck.

Bloemaert has depicted the precise moment at which Christ, seated in the center of a table laid for three guests, breaks a loaf of bread and thus reveals His identity to the two disciples seated on either side of Him, who react in opposite ways (Luke 24: 30–32). To the left, the elderly disciple in a red cloak places his left hand on his breast in a gesture of devotion, while his younger companion on the right wearing a brown cloak and cap leans back and raises his hands in surprise. A servant in a white turban prepares to serve the younger disciple and remains unaware of the transformation next to her. The table, covered in a white tablecloth, holds the two candles that provide the only light to the darkened room, as well as a large rack of meat, a plate of olives, two apples, a bowl of beans, a glass of wine, and two additional loaves of bread. In the left background, the

two disciples approach the house before the miraculous meal, foreshadowing the miracle to come, as well as symbolizing the journey of life.³³⁸

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio's dark chiaroscuro made for dramatic, emotional, and convincing expressions of Catholic doctrine in the churches of Counter-Reformation Rome. Dutch painters, especially from Utrecht, studied and adopted Caravaggio's intense tenebrism, and popularized the style upon their return to the Netherlands. Van Eck found that the Caravaggesque style particularly suited the artists working in *huiskerken*.³³⁹ Dark chiaroscuro dramatized the suffering of Catholics living in a land of heretics. Naturalistic, oversized figures in dynamic compositions fulfilled the Counter-Reformation mission by presenting Christ and the saints as though they had entered the church.³⁴⁰ Caravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus* from 1601 was one of the most frequently copied and thus best known works from his Roman period, which explains Bloemaert's apparent familiarity with the composition (fig. 32).³⁴¹ Hendrick ter Brugghen, Bloemaert's student, painted the subject in 1616, the year of his enrollment in the Utrecht Guild of St. Luke, and his version also inspired his teacher (fig. 33).³⁴² Bloemaert, like Ter Brugghen, depicted Christ in the act of breaking the bread, and

³³⁸ See Marcel Roethlisberger and Marten Jan Bok, *Abraham Bloemaert and His Sons: Paintings and Prints*, vol. 1 (Doornspijk: Davaco 1993), 220.

³³⁹ Van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction: Clandestine Catholic Churches as Patrons of Dutch Caravaggesque Painting" *Simiolus* 22, no. 4 (1993–1994): 217–234.

³⁴⁰ Van Eck 1993/4, 225.

³⁴¹ Gert Jan van der Sman, "Caravaggio and the Painters of the North," in Van der Sman et al., *Caravaggio and the Painters of the North* (Madrid: Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2016), 19.

³⁴² See Tania de Nile, "Hendrick ter Brugghen, *The Supper at Emmaus*" in Gert Jan van der Sman, et al., *Caravaggio and the Painters of the North* (Madrid: Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2016), 138. The attribution of the Toledo Museum's painting to Ter Brugghen has long been questioned, but Tania de Nile gives it to the artist because of common motifs throughout this and other works from his early period. She suggests that an original remained in Italy, and Ter Brugghen made the Toledo version upon returning to Utrecht.

included a turbaned servant girl, while Caravaggio had shown Christ blessing the meal and attended by a male servant.³⁴³

Following in his students' footsteps in their adoption of Caravaggio's tenebrism, compositional techniques, and emphasis on drama, Bloemaert sets the story from the Gospel of Luke in a dark room, with only two prominently placed candles as a light source.³⁴⁴ The left candle's flame moves toward the right as the elderly disciple exhales in reaction to Christ's revelation. While the faces of the three mortals at the table are bathed in the candle's light, Jesus remains more in the shadows, as if to differentiate the knowable and earthly realm from the divine and mysterious. Like Caravaggio and his followers, Bloemaert includes minute details, such as wrinkles on the older disciple's hands and face and fine wisps of facial hair, to ground the miraculous event in reality. The figures consume the majority of the composition, and the disciple on the right in particular seems to enter the viewer's space with his outstretched left hand. Despite the relatively balanced composition, the scene reads as a brief moment in time due to the quick actions of the protagonists: Jesus breaks the bread, the disciples react, and the servant has not yet noticed a change—indicating that the miracle has only just occurred.

Along with Italianate influence, Bloemaert also references the Dutch tradition of the banquet piece with his laid table, from the creases in the white tablecloth to the pewter dishes off of which candlelight bounces. Like many Golden Age still lifes, Bloemaert's spread also suggests a meaning beyond what meets the eye. The rack of

³⁴³ See De Nile in Van der Sman et al., 138–9. De Nile describes turbaned figures as “a sort of trademark” in Ter Brugghen's early works, and traces their origin to prints by Lucas van Leyden and Albrecht Dürer. The motif of Christ breaking bread can also be found in Dürer's prints.

³⁴⁴ See Roethlisberger and Bok 1993, 221. Roethlisberger notes that the inclusion of candles is a nod to Caravaggio's style but actually goes beyond what Caravaggio himself would have done—the Italian artist never included visible candles in his paintings.

lamb before Jesus hardly belongs at a meager feast provided at the last minute to weary travelers—instead, it references both the body of Christ sacrificed in the Eucharist, and Christ as the lamb of God. The broken bread held aloft just above the meat suggests that the bread of communion will become the flesh of Christ sacrificed for the faithful. During the supper, Christ “took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them,” mirroring his actions at the Last Supper and thus reinforcing that Christ is physically present at every instance of Eucharist.³⁴⁵ The wine beside the rack of lamb, of course, refers to the blood of Christ, and the olives symbolize peace.³⁴⁶ Importantly, while Bloemaert adopted motifs from both Caravaggio and his former student Ter Brugghen, he transformed the poultry meal depicted by both of his predecessors into lamb, emphasizing the Eucharistic symbolism.

Although the horizontal format of the painting would seem to preclude its usage as a high altarpiece, the small size and fluid structure of the *huiskerk* before 1638 mean that it could have functioned as such, at least temporarily.³⁴⁷ More importantly, the Eucharistic symbolism and the story of Christ revealing His divine nature to disciples is a fitting subject for a high altarpiece, where the transformation and presentation of Christ in the form of a sacred meal will take place during each Mass. The Caravaggesque lighting of Bloemaert’s painting would also add to the mysterious and dramatic atmosphere of the

³⁴⁵ Luke 24: 30.

³⁴⁶ Roethlisberger and Bok 1993, 221.

³⁴⁷ See Roethlisberger, “Bloemaert’s Altar-pieces and related paintings,” *The Burlington Magazine* 134, no. 1068 (March, 1992): 156–64. Due mostly to its horizontal format, Marcel Roethlisberger does not treat *Supper at Emmaus* as an altarpiece in his catalogue raisonné of Bloemaert, nor in his 1992 article, yet the article reveals that most of Bloemaert’s other high altars depict major events from the life of Christ or scenes relating to the Sacraments (e.g. *Philip Baptizing the Moor*, *Four Church Fathers Discussing the Eucharist*).

high altar in a small church with dim candlelight.³⁴⁸ Even with the later addition of paintings with vertical formats, discussed below, it is likely that *Supper at Emmaus* retained a central position, especially given the unflagging reputation of its creator.

Abraham or Hendrick Bloemaert, *Simeon in the Temple*, 1641

According to nineteenth-century inventories, Den Hoeck owned a 1641 painting by Abraham Bloemaert depicting *Simeon in the Temple*.³⁴⁹ The depicted event occurred forty days after Christ's birth, when His parents brought Him to the temple in Jerusalem to be blessed, and when the elderly Simeon first held the infant and prophesied about His role as the Messiah.³⁵⁰ Abraham designed an engraving of the same subject, depicting a full length Simeon, between 1615–18, and Crispijn van de Passe II engraved it in 1625 (fig. 34). The Simeon composition was a pendant to *David Playing the Harp*; painted copies of both subjects were previously recorded in the Utrecht station Maria Minor,

³⁴⁸ Roethlisberger also notes that many of Bloemaert's high altarpieces are noticeably more Italianate in style than Bloemaert's earlier Dutch Mannerist style, but does not provide an explanation for the stylistic differences. It seems to me that Italian trends serve high altarpieces well in two ways: on the one hand, Caravaggesque paintings function well over an altar due to the continuity of low lighting or candles both on the altar and within the painting, and on the other hand, classicizing and balanced compositions inspired by Italian Renaissance masters also draw the worshipper's focus to the narrative and doctrinal message of the altarpiece, and avoid distracting elements as recommended by Tridentine reformers.

³⁴⁹ Roethlisberger and Bok, 471.

³⁵⁰ "Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel." And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed." Luke 2: 25–35.

located on the same block as the Bloemaert home. Marcel Roethlisberger suggests that no painted version by Abraham existed, but that the half-length version by his son Hendrick, now in the Catharijneconvent, is either a copy of a now-lost Abraham original, or, more likely, identical to the one mentioned in Den Hoeck's inventory (fig. 35).³⁵¹ Due to the impossibility of determining whether an original Abraham painting ever existed, I will treat Hendrick's painting as a copy of the version from Den Hoeck, and De Passe's engraving as a model for the original Den Hoeck painting.³⁵²

In the engraving, a full-length figure of Simeon with wispy gray hair and a long beard kneels on a cushion and looks heavenward, cradling the infant Christ, whose awkward position and chubby legs reveal Bloemaert's earlier mannerist style. The engraving includes a table on which Simeon has placed his bishop's miter, along with two large, smoking candles, and in the background, a curtain partially obscures a large column. The implements on the table, particularly the smoking candles, emphasize the ritual aspects of the Biblical story, as well as its continued celebration in the Catholic Church. On February 2 (forty days after Christmas), Catholics celebrate Candlemas, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. and traditionally, townspeople brought their own candles to be blessed for use in the coming year. Simeon's posture in the engraving—kneeling and reverently praying—also mirrors the posture that worshippers would assume in the presence of Christ, in the form of the Eucharist, during Mass.

³⁵¹ Roethlisberger and Bok, 471.

³⁵² Even if Hendrick (or another Bloemaert pupil) produced the original version, it seems more likely to me that the composition was originally full-length, as the version at the Catharijneconvent has the dimensions (of a painted study or copy rather than an altarpiece or commissioned work).

Simeon prophesied that while Christ would be the true salvation of mankind, many would oppose Him, and that Mary in particular would suffer her Son's persecution and death. From the perspective of Dutch Catholics in the seventeenth century, Simeon's message could be interpreted as the Church (personified by Mary) suffering the persecution of those who follow the true way to salvation (Christ, in the form of Catholic Mass and Eucharist). These connections are made clearer with the full-length engraved composition, which in my view increases the likelihood that the original painting housed in St. Bernardus in den Hoeck, and perhaps used as an altarpiece, included the candles, the full-length Simeon and the altar setting, all of which are missing from Hendrick's half-length copy.

In Hendrick's painting, Simeon's beard has been shortened and the Christ child appears less muscular and "sweeter."³⁵³ The painting's color reveals that Simeon's flowing brocade chasuble was in fact modeled after an existing cope, known as the Cope of David of Burgundy, located in Utrecht during Bloemaert's lifetime (fig. 36).³⁵⁴ Bloemaert apparently stored the cope at his home, along with other Catholic property, when the Calvinist government seized church property after the Alteration. Priests hid and practiced Mass in the group of homes known as Mariahoek, the location of the former *huiskerk* Maria Minor.³⁵⁵ The elaborate embroidery of the cope not only forged a

³⁵³ Roethlisberger and Bok, 471.

³⁵⁴ Micha Leeflang and Kees van der Schooten, eds., *Middeleeuwse Borduurkunst uit de Nederlanden* (Utrecht: Catharijneconvent, 2015), 197–8.

³⁵⁵ See Caspar Staal, *Middeleeuwse gewaden in Museum Catharijneconvent: het ontstaan van een verzameling* (Utrecht: Museum Catharijneconvent, 2015), 117. The cope is now held at the Catharijneconvent, and appears in several of Bloemaert's altarpieces, including the the *Four Church Fathers Discussing the Eucharist* at the same museum, and the 1624 *Adoration of the Magi* in Utrecht's Centraalmuseum.

connection to contemporary viewers, but also reminded them of the former splendor of the Church. The *kloppen* of Den Hoeck sewed and embroidered liturgical garments themselves, and while they did not work on the David of Burgundy cope, they would see reflections of their own handiwork in the embroidery and encouragement to continue their work for the Church.

The spiritual women of Den Hoeck would also recognize another tradition and devotional practice in the scene of Simeon holding the swaddled infant Christ: *kindjewiegen*, or baby-cradling. During the Christmas season, *kloppen* and *beguines* traditionally acted out the Nativity story (as do many Christian church congregations today!) by swaddling an infant from a parish family and laying him in a manger or carrying him through the streets on the “Flight into Egypt.” After the Alteration, such practices were outlawed in the Netherlands, but as late as 1653, the States General representative in ’s-Hertogenbosch reported *kindjewiegen* still taking place at Christmas.³⁵⁶

Although it is unclear if Haarlem’s *kloppen* continued this tradition privately inside their *huiskerk*, they nonetheless were encouraged in sermons to act as if they were shepherds adoring the infant Christ at His birth, or, following early church father Ambrosius’s recommendation, as if they were the Virgin mother caring for her beloved child.³⁵⁷ Engravings of Nativity scenes pasted into sermon manuscripts, which would be studied almost as frequently as the paintings in the church, reinforced these messages. A

³⁵⁶ Verheggen, 46.

³⁵⁷ See Verheggen, 46. This specific connection was made by Joseph Cousebant, pastor of Haarlem’s Begijnhof, in a sermon recorded in a manuscript dating to after 1668. It is reasonable to assume that identical or similar connections were made by Den Hoeck pastors, especially given that Joseph Cousebant was the nephew of Nicolaas Cousebant, founder of Den Hoeck, and the successor of Cornelis Cats at the Begijnhof, who then went on to oversee Den Hoeck.

manuscript dating to 1637 from Den Hoeck includes two oval-shaped engravings by Theodoor Galle depicting the Adoration of the Shepherds and the Adoration of the Magi (figs. 37–38). In both images, Mary cradles her newborn son and presents him to his worshippers.³⁵⁸ Two engravings of the Madonna and Child embracing, apparently by the same anonymous hand, appear in two sermon manuscripts from Den Hoeck dated 1627 and 1632 (figs. 39–40).³⁵⁹ Abstracted from a narrative setting, the figures are enclosed in octagonal borders and surrounded by radiant haloes. In the 1632 manuscript, Mary embraces her toddler-aged son, who gazes at her adoringly and grasps her neck, while in the 1627 engraving, Mary’s long hair flows past her shoulders as she hands her infant son a piece of fruit and caresses his foot.³⁶⁰ The similarity between the shape of the fruit and a human heart is likely intentional—the medieval “heart-exchange” motif in which the Virgin or a religious woman hands her heart to Jesus, or He presents His to her as a sign of devotion, maintained popularity into the seventeenth-century, especially in emblematic or meditational literature.³⁶¹

Perhaps most influential for the *klopje*’s mental image of the infant Christ and her motherly love for Him were images based on the belief, stemming from fourteenth- and fifteenth- century German theologians and religious women, that Christ lives inside the devout woman’s heart. Apostolic Vicar Philippus Rovenius wrote in his 1636 devotional handbook, *Het Gulden wieroock-vat*, that Thomas à Kempis, in chapter 13 of the

³⁵⁸ Utrecht Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH WARM H92D6. Reproduced in Verheggen, 307, ill. H3 and H4.

³⁵⁹ Utrecht MCC inv. Nr. BMH WARM H92C11, f.242v Haarlem 1632; Utrecht MCC inv. Nr. BMH WARM H92C4, f.163r, Haarlem 1627. Reproduced in Verheggen, 316, ill. T1 and V3.

³⁶⁰ See Verheggen, 106. The Virgin handing Christ fruit appeared elsewhere in meditational engravings as a symbol of the fruits or blessings awaiting the faithful, especially those who suffer for their faith.

³⁶¹ Verheggen, 97.

enormously popular 1441 treatise *The Imitation of Christ*, laid the foundation for modern devotional life.³⁶² Kempis's chapter uses highly sensual and emotional imagery to describe the ideal relationship between the believer and Christ—in which Christ lives in the believer's heart and the believer rests in Christ's heart as well.³⁶³ Josephus Cousebant, pastor of Haarlem's Begijnhof from 1662 until his death in 1694, mentioned "hartenspiritualiteit" as a required part of the rule or order by which beguines lived, claiming that religious women must make a place in their hearts for Christ, their bridegroom, to live.³⁶⁴

The best-known image of Christ living in the supplicant's heart from the seventeenth-century comes from Antonius Wierix's third engraving for the 1595 series *Cor Iesu Amanta Sacrum* (The Heart Devoted to the Loving Jesus), in which the Christ child uses a heavy handle to knock on the door of a heart (fig. 41). Over the centuries, historians have even used the popularity of this imagery to argue for it as the origin of the word "klopje," taken from the Dutch "klop," or "knock."³⁶⁵ The series originally included 18 plates and appeared with Dutch inscriptions in 1628 (*Het Godtvruchtige Herte. Den Koninghlijcken Troon van Jesus den vreedsamighen Salomon*) and the images themselves were reprinted, reordered, and reused in other devotional texts countless times.³⁶⁶ In other images from the series, the Christ child (also described as Divine Love) uses a broom to sweep away lizards and snakes, signifying evil, from the heart, paints the interior of the

³⁶² Philippus Rovenius, *Het gulden wierooock-vat eenen ieghelycken nut ende oorbaer om syn gebeden*, 1636/7. Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht, inv. nr. BMH h88

³⁶³ Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ: A New Reading the Latin Autograph Manuscript*, ed. and trans. William Creasey (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2007).

³⁶⁴ Verheggen, 44, 97. In 1668, Cousebant reformed the rule instituted by Jan A. Ban in 1631.

³⁶⁵ See Verheggen, 96–97.

³⁶⁶ Knipping v. 1, 99–100.

heart with scenes from the four ages of Man, plays the harp as angels rejoice surrounding the heart, and crowns the aorta while angels adorn the heart with palm branches and flower wreaths.³⁶⁷ In an innovative interpretation of this series, an anonymous image pasted at the end of a 1627 sermon manuscript from Den Hoeck shows the Christ child knocking on a wooden door inside a heart.³⁶⁸ The heart is contained within a tulip that sprouts from an enclosed garden (*hortus conclusus*). As previously mentioned, the tulip locates the spiritual virgin, owner of the heart, in the Netherlands, and suggests that, like the tulip, the heart of a spiritual virgin is especially valuable or precious (fig. 12). A Latin inscription reads “Apere mihi soror mea, amica mea” (Open to me, my sister, my friend/beloved), taken from Song of Songs and confirming that the viewer used the engraving to imagine Christ entering her heart and thus entering into an intimate relationship with the believer.

Devotional engravings also referenced the more sorrowful aspect of Christ’s childhood: the knowledge that He would eventually suffer and die, also foreshadowed by Simeon. An anonymous engraving in a sermon manuscript from Den Hoeck shows the Christ child seated on a cushion inside a heart, making a blessing gesture with his right hand and holding a glass orb with his left (fig. 42). Behind the heart, a cross serves as the centerpiece of an encyclopedic collection of Passion instruments and symbols.³⁶⁹ Abraham Bloemaert also designed an engraving, executed by his son Frederik, with a similar composition, but here, an especially adorable nude infant Christ holds two scourges as if they were baby rattles (fig. 43). The viewer simultaneously feels affection

³⁶⁷ See Knipping v. 1, 101 for this series.

³⁶⁸ Utrecht MCC inv. Nr. BMH WARM H92C7 f. 292r.

³⁶⁹ Utrecht MCC inv. Nr. BMH H92D4 f.296v, reprinted in Verheggen, 314, ill. R4.

for the innocent child and a pang of sadness at the reminder of His eventual Passion and death, just as she would when viewing a painting of Simeon holding Christ. These feelings exemplify the dual nature of the spiritual virgin's relationship with Christ: mother to the infant Christ and bride and companion to the crucified and resurrected Christ.

Pieter de Grebber, *Ecce Homo*, 1641

The 1641 *Ecce Homo* by Pieter de Grebber mentioned in Den Hoeck's inventory is generally believed to be lost, but could be identical to, or else a copy of, the nearly life-size *Christ at the Column* at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, dated 1632 (fig. 44). It is also possible that the San Francisco painting is the same as the Den Hoeck painting, and the discrepancy in dates merely reflects the gap between De Grebber painting the piece and its installation in St. Bernardus; perhaps it previously adorned another *huiskerk* or private chapel. De Grebber was an obvious choice for an artist to decorate St. Bernardus, given his many strong connections to Haarlem's Catholic community. In 1640, Boudewijn Cats succeeded his brother Joost as pastor of Den Hoeck, so he likely commissioned or purchased the *Ecce Homo* for the chapel, or a *klopje* purchased it in honor of Boudewijn. De Grebber portrayed Boudewijn two years after the *Ecce Homo* entered the *huiskerk's* collection, so the two men maintained a relationship (fig. 10).³⁷⁰

The Fine Arts Museums refer to their painting as an altarpiece, although Xander van Eck believes the dimensions, particularly the narrow format, preclude this function. I

³⁷⁰ See Chapter 2 for more on De Grebber's portraits of the Haarlem clergy.

do not think it can be ruled out entirely, but given the Eucharistic significance of Bloemaert's earlier painting, De Grebber's *Ecce Homo* may have hung on a side wall to enhance devotion throughout the Mass, during which congregants, particularly spiritual virgins, were exhorted to meditate on specific moments from the Passion.³⁷¹ The composition also resembles that of devotional engravings that *kloppen* both pasted into sermon manuscripts and hung in their cells to aid in private meditation. The solitary figure of Christ suffering stirred the *klopje*'s sympathy and allowed her to imagine a dialogue with Him directly, making him a tangible part of her daily prayer. The dark, nondescript background abstracts the figure of Christ from His surroundings, so that He is no longer part of a narrative, but rather appears as if in a miraculous vision, or as if in the mind's eye, the way that *kloppen* were encouraged to picture Him as they prayed and reflected on their actions.

Kloppen pasted similarly beautiful "portraits" of Christ in the role of Salvator Mundi into sermon manuscripts. Schelte A. Bolswert's idealized, painterly *Salvator Mundi* engraving appears as the first image in several manuscripts from Den Hoeck (fig. 45).³⁷² Narrative devotional engravings also depict Jesus as an attractive, muscular man that allowed religious women to focus romantic attention toward him in an acceptable way. In a 1665 manuscript, probably from Haarlem's Begijnhof, a series of Old Testament scenes designed by Pieter Hendricksz. Schut and engraved by Claes Jansz.

³⁷¹ See Chapter 4 for more on instructions for meditating during Mass, specifically as it applied to Adriaen van de Velde's Passion series in Amsterdam.

³⁷² It occurs in the 1627 manuscript that closes with the aforementioned image of the Christ child knocking on the heart's door inside the tulip, and again in another manuscript that closes with the anonymous engraving of the Christ child inside a heart, surrounded by Passion instruments. Utrecht MCC inv. Nr. BMH SJ H106 title page, Utrecht MCC inv. Nr. BMH WARM H92C7 f.101v, and Utrecht MCC inv. Nr. BMH WARM H92D4 f.29v, reproduced in Verheggen, 307, 308, 314, ill. I1, J1, R1.

Vischer is interrupted with two images of a solitary, nearly nude Christ by Johannes Galle (figs. 46–47).³⁷³ The first shows a bloodied Christ crawling from the column against which He has just been beaten, and He reaches for His robes. The second depicts a recently dead Christ, reclining almost as if asleep against a shroud, with the Passion instruments laid out in front of Him. The lack of other figures in either image directs the focus toward Christ’s idealized body, and rather than detract from His beauty, His sweat and blood almost adds to the sensuality of the images, just as it does in De Grebber’s painting. Even when in a crowded composition, the emphasized musculature of Christ makes Him a subject of adoration, both spiritual and physical or romantic. Such is the case in Michiel Snijders’ engraving of Christ as Man of Sorrows surrounded by Passion instruments, pasted into a manuscript of Trijn Oly’s *Levens der Maechden* (fig. 48).³⁷⁴

Images of the tortured, resurrected, or triumphant adult Christ as an idealized heroic figure appear alongside images of the infant Christ in Nativity scenes, with Passion instruments, or entering the believer’s heart. The combination of diverse “versions” of Christ reveals the spiritual virgin’s multifaceted imagination of Christ and her ability to worship and meditate on various, even disparate aspects of the Savior’s identity in the course of her daily prayer. If Abraham/Hendrick Bloemaert’s painting of *Simeon* encouraged motherly devotion to the infant Jesus, then De Grebber’s idealized, muscular, semi-nude *Ecce Homo* encouraged another type of devotion entirely, one that is difficult to make sense of in our modern conception of Catholicism.

³⁷³ In Nijmegen Universiteitsbibliotheek HS 184, f. 3v and f. 369. In Verheggen E4 and E16, pp. 302–3.

³⁷⁴ Utrecht Museum Catharijneconvent inv. Nr. BMH WARM H92B13 v. 1 t.o. F.1, reproduced in Verheggen, 311, ill. N2.

While chastity and purity were of utmost importance to *kloppen*, it was in fact not considered problematic to feel romantic love for Christ. Sermons and *kloppenboeken* or instructional literature frequently referenced the Song of Songs, a book that imagines the soul's relationship to God and Christ as a romantic partnership, replete with sexual imagery. Emblematic images such as Wierix's *Cor Iesu Amanti Sacrum* series and Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria*, first published in Antwerp in 1624 and illustrated with engravings by Boetius A. Bolswert, include inscriptions from Song of Songs. Bolswert's series illustrates metaphors such as the speaker's beloved providing shade and sustenance, like an apple tree, and the speaker dripping with myrrh and her heart sinking as her love departs (figs. 49–51). As mentioned above, the Song of Songs was used to conceptualize the child Jesus knocking on the door of the heart, but the knocking in Song of Songs 5:2 can also be interpreted romantically: the beloved (Christ) knocks and enters at night as the soul's (or spiritual virgin's) heart pounds for him, but he quickly steals away, leaving the soul/spiritual virgin "faint with love."³⁷⁵ Bolswert's series interprets the scripture literally, with the female personification of the soul awaking in bed and looking through a curtain for her departed lover (fig. 52–53). Thus the same Biblical passage inspired images of both the innocent love of the child Jesus and the more mature bond with Jesus the lover, who enters the heart and leaves the soul desirous. However, the early modern (female) viewer of emblematic images would not have found it problematic

³⁷⁵ In Song of Songs 5: 2–8 the female character relates that after he knocks, "my beloved thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him. I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrh, on the handles of the bolt. I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had left; he was gone. My heart sank at his departure... Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you—if you find my beloved, what will you tell him? Tell him I am faint with love."

to reconcile these two interpretations of Christ's love, and would have seen in De Grebber's painting an invitation to deepen their romantic love for their bridegroom.

The Virgin was certainly a perpetual role model, and just as her motherly love for Christ was to be emulated, so too did the Virgin in the early modern Catholic faith stand for the Church, the bride of Christ, herself. Spiritual virgins were constantly encouraged, through sermons and imagery, to be brides of Christ, and in addition to the phrasing of Song of Songs, the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matthew 25: 1–13) links marriage to Christ with knocking on His door, potentially providing another source for the term *kloppen*.³⁷⁶ Ten virgins awaited their bridegroom, but only five were wise enough to bring extra oil to keep their lamps lit. When the bridegroom (Christ) arrived at midnight, he invited the wise virgins to their wedding banquet, but the foolish virgins who had no oil and needed to retrieve some, missed the arrival of the bridegroom. When they returned, they knocked and asked to be let in, but the bridegroom answered, "I know you not." The parable teaches preparedness for the coming of Christ at the end of the world, because we "know not the day or the hour" in which He will come, but it also encouraged spiritual virgins to live as brides of Christ each day so that they would be awarded with bridal crowns in Heaven when Christ makes His final judgment.

A Hieronymus Wierix engraving pasted into a manuscript from Haarlem's Begijnhof, dating c. 1680, depicts the five wise virgins, dressed in bridal finery and holding their lit lamps, awaiting Christ as He descends from a cloud to collect them (fig.

³⁷⁶ See Verheggen, 97. Verheggen suggests that this is more plausible than another explanation for the term, which claims that *kloppen* got their name from their duty of knocking on doors to alert Catholics when it was time for an unscheduled or secret Mass. Another possible scriptural source is John 10:9, "I am the door, if anyone enters by me, he shall be saved."

54).³⁷⁷ He is accompanied by the Virgin Mary, who wears the same bridal garments as the wise virgins and holds Christ's hand as if she, too, were His bride. This image thus refers to Mary as the Church and bride of Christ, and encourages spiritual virgins to be like Mary as well as like the wise virgins who lived their lives in preparation for their heavenly wedding banquet with Christ.

In order to conceptualize their heavenly marriage to Christ in terms of their earthly existence, spiritual virgins adopted particular prayer rituals that allowed them to feel more connected to their bridegroom, even in his physical absence. Verheggen has remarked on the common rosary practice of holding an abbreviated strand of ten rosary beads (one decade) that ends in a ring for the (female) devotee to place on her ring finger during prayer, as if entering into marriage with Christ during her personal meditation.³⁷⁸ The symbolism recalls the Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine of Siena, a popular virgin saint venerated by *kloppen* and beguines for her particular devotion to Christ as His bride. Her legend acted as a precedent for romantic feelings toward the bridegroom Christ.

While the earliest manuscript traceable to Den Hoeck includes an image of Catherine of Siena, later manuscripts include instead Joanna of Valois (1464–1505), daughter of King Louis XI and onetime wife of Louis XII, who retreated to a castle in Bourges to live a religious life after her marriage was annulled. Under the direction of Franciscan Gilbert Nicolas, Joanna lived alone rather than within a community of nuns, but lived by poverty, chastity, and obedience, and took the Order of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1500.³⁷⁹ Like many of the *kloppen* at Den Hoeck, Joanna

³⁷⁷ Utrecht Museum Catharijneconvent inv. Nr. BMH SJ H102 f.181v. Reproduced in Verheggen, 300, ill. C17.

³⁷⁸ Verheggen in conversation with the author, November 16, 2016.

³⁷⁹ Verheggen, 94.

came to religious life in a nontraditional way, did not take formal vows, harbored a special devotion to the Virgin, and, like the first women at Den Hoeck, was led by a priest with a Franciscan mindset.³⁸⁰ Joanna's semi-religious life was such a touchpoint for Den Hoeck's *kloppen* that an engraving by Abraham van Merlen of Joanna receiving a wedding ring and Franciscan cord from the infant Christ enthroned on Mary's lap appears next to the *Leven* of Trijn Jans Oly, spiritual mother and historian of Den Hoeck (fig. 55).³⁸¹

Another Van Merlen engraving of Joanna of Valois in a mystic marriage with Christ adorns a 1633 sermon on "The Way to Eternity" (fig. 56).³⁸² Joanna, in her habit, presents an adult Christ her heart as He hands her a ring and crown, and the Virgin holds the couple's hands together while St. Francis looks on and the dove of the Holy Spirit descends from above. This engraving treats the marriage as a real ceremony rather than as a miraculous vision, as it commonly appears elsewhere, including the aforementioned Van Merlen image. Van Merlen's interpretation also mirrors the very formal and solemn ceremony by which spiritual virgins entered the community and accepted Jesus as their bridegroom, complete with witnesses, a new "habit," and very often a ring or crown.³⁸³

Along with identifiable Biblical stories or saints like Joanna of Valois, manuscripts from Den Hoeck also include didactic engravings of an anonymous virgin in a mystic marriage or spiritual dialogue with the resurrected Christ. The two best examples, engraved by Karel de Mallery, appear in the 1610 manuscript of Fr. Cornelis

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Utrecht Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH WARM H92C10 v. 3 f. 24v, after 1651, in Verheggen N11, p. 312.

³⁸² Utrecht Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH WARM H92D19 f. IV, in Verheggen 309, ill. K1.

³⁸³ Verheggen, MORE ON THIS.

Arentsz.'s *Sermoenen en gheestelijcke puntjes* (Sermons and spiritual points).³⁸⁴ In the first engraving, titled *Sacrum Verbi et animae matrimonium* (Mystic Marriage of Word and Soul), an anonymous virgin, representing the viewer as well as the Church itself, presents her heart to Christ as He hands her a crown and wedding ring (fig. 15). Latin inscriptions relate each part of the figure's bodies and garments to various Christian virtues: the virgin's outstretched left hand represents *fidelitas*, the cross around her neck, *fides*, her dress, *vestimenta salutis*, her belt, *puritas*, and the cloak held for her by angels, *fortitudo*. The virgin's heart stands for *charitas* and the flames around it, *desideria*, while Christ's blessing right hand holding the wedding ring represents *gratia dei*. The columned arch surrounding the couple is labeled *Domus Deus vivi* (house of the living God) and *Ecclesia Catolica Romana*, reinforcing the central role of the Catholic Church in this mystical marriage. God the father and angelic musicians look on in celebration from clouds labeled *Sacramentum hoc magnum est* (The mystery is profound). Passages from Isaiah (in Latin) adorn the arch enclosing the scene: "As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so your God shall rejoice over you," and constitute the inscription below: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."³⁸⁵

In De Mallery's *Typus animae poenitentis* (Picture of the Penitent Soul), which Verheggen describes as "macabre" to modern eyes, an anonymous weeping virgin, hands bound in chains, kneels and confesses her sins before Christ (fig. 14). Her sins take the

³⁸⁴ Utrecht Museum Catharijneconvent inv. Nr. BMH H82 t.o.113r and t.o.139r

³⁸⁵ Isaiah 62:5; Isaiah 61:10.

shape of Christ's crown of thorns, the nails in His hands and feet, and a dagger with five blades plunged into His open heart and labeled *Peccatum Mortale* (mortal sin). Christ's words appear on banderoles: "I am severely wounded by you, who has done evil...I kept silent and patiently endured." The virgin answers "Oh my Lord, why have I sinned? Say to my soul, I am your salvation." The angel standing between the two figures gestures toward the suffering Christ and tells the virgin "Do not be content with the riches of His goodness; God's kindness leads you also to punishment," while the angel pulling on the virgin's left arm exhorts her, "Remember whence you have fallen..." The wedding ring and maiden's crown from the earlier mystical marriage have fallen off the virgin's head because of her sins.³⁸⁶ The inscription from Ezekiel 16 compares Jerusalem (and thus the sinful virgin) to an adulterous wife who took her fine garments and jewels for granted, and was unfaithful to her bridegroom.³⁸⁷ The vengeful language of this chapter refers often to sexual promiscuity, and while spiritual virgins lived by chastity, their spiritual marriage to Christ meant that any sin equated to adultery against their faithful bridegroom.

³⁸⁶ See Verheggen, 94.

³⁸⁷ "I clothed you with an embroidered dress and put sandals of fine leather on you. I dressed you in fine linen and covered you with costly garments. I adorned you with jewelry: I put bracelets on your arms and a necklace around your neck, and I put a ring on your nose, earrings on your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. So you were adorned with gold and silver; your clothes were of fine linen and costly fabric and embroidered cloth. Your food was honey, olive oil and the finest flour. You became very beautiful and rose to be a queen. And your fame spread among the nations on account of your beauty, because the splendor I had given you made your beauty perfect,' declares the Sovereign LORD. 'But you trusted in your beauty and used your fame to become a prostitute. You lavished your favors on anyone who passed by and your beauty became his. You took some of your garments to make gaudy high places, where you carried on your prostitution. You went to him, and he possessed your beauty. You also took the fine jewelry I gave you, the jewelry made of my gold and silver, and you made for yourself male idols and engaged in prostitution with them..." Ezekiel 16:10–17.

While one engraving celebrates the joys of a mystic marriage to Christ, the other reminds the viewer that such a relationship with Christ requires a life of humility, mortification, and penance. This medieval spiritual attitude was indeed strongly felt in seventeenth-century communities of women like Den Hoeck, and Maria van Wieringen, spiritual mother following Oly's death and author of Oly's *Leven*, composed poetry on the subject:

Would you have the Heavenly bridegroom alone live in your heart?/
Then you must give the entirety of your nature...A great feast will be
held for you in heaven, if you have served God with your body and your soul/
...Therefore always open your heart with great desire, until the entire heavens
are opened to receive you.³⁸⁸

De Grebber's painted *Ecce Homo* conjures thoughts of the joyous and romantic aspects of the spiritual virgin's mystic marriage and devotion to Christ, even with its sexual undertones, as well as the necessity of humility, chastity, penance, and empathy for Christ's suffering, all of which would have been reinforced regularly with sermons and their accompanying narrative or didactic engravings like De Mallery's.

Jan de Bray, St. John Giving Virgin Communion, 1656

Like his older colleague De Grebber, Jan de Bray (1627–1697) combined an interest in refined, classicizing painting style with his Catholic faith to produce restrained devotional works suited to quiet meditation. Having trained with his father Salomon, who oversaw the reorganization of the Haarlem Guild of St. Luke to increase the social and

³⁸⁸ Wieringen quoted in Verheggen, 95. "Wilt ghij dat u Hemelsche Bruydeghom alleen in u ziel sal leeven./Soo moet ghij de gelijkheijt uws natuers, en alle creatueren een scheij briefff geeven./ In den Hemel sal van u gehouden worden groote feest./Ist dat ghij Godt gedient hebt nae licham, en nae Gheest/Op menschen affeckti en wilt niet ztaen./Want heeden sullen zij u beminnen, en morgen ist weer ghedaen./Hierom soo oopent altijt u hertie met een groot verlangen./Tot die gheene die sijnen geheelen hemel ontsluijt, om u daer in te ontfangen."

intellectual standing of history painters, Jan absorbed the theoretical and academic mentality of the prior generation. Perhaps most talented as a portraitist, Jan sometimes used mythological, biblical, or allegorical settings to depict family groups, as in *The Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra*, where his own family members fulfill the roles of the protagonists and guests, and *Suffer the Children to Come Unto Me/Portrait Histoire of Pieter Braems, Emerentia van der Laen and Their Children* (figs. 57–58).³⁸⁹ Jan also painted some refined New Testament paintings for Catholic patrons, among which was the *St. John Giving the Virgin Communion* dated 1656 and belonging to Den Hoeck (fig. 59).

The subject, also known as the Viaticum, is an imagined scene in which St. John the Evangelist administers the body of Christ to His elderly mother Mary, who is near death. At his death on the cross, Christ had charged St. John with fulfilling His role as Mary's son (John 19:26): "When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to his mother, 'Woman, behold your son!'" This relationship is not treated in detail in the Gospels, but John the Evangelist is frequently depicted at Mary's side during the Crucifixion or Lamentation, and often in pre-Tridentine images, supporting her as she faints or wails in grief.³⁹⁰

This precise moment appears in engravings pasted into sermon manuscripts from Den Hoeck, for example as part of a Passion series in roundels by Theodoor Galle included in one of four volumes that make up Joost Cats's 1630s sermons on the Passion (fig. 11). Verheggen notes the relative simplicity of De Galle's round Passion series

³⁸⁹ See Biesboer 2008; Blankert et al. 1999; Van Eck 2008, 107.

³⁹⁰ After the Council of Trent, Mary appears stronger and accepts her son's fate as a model of forbearance, rather than collapsing with emotion as if too weak-willed to fulfill God's role for her.

compared to others of his engravings, suggesting that the evocation of emotion far outweighed artistic refinement for meditative imagery.³⁹¹ The final scene in the series depicts Christ crucified with Mary standing to His left and John to His right includes the Latin inscription of John 19:26 (fig. 60). Cats's sermons were explicitly inspired by Ludovicus de Ponte's (Luis de la Puente, 1554–1624) *Meditations upon the Mysteries of Our Faith*. Maeyken de Graef, prolific recorder, inscribed the first set of the sermons, and Galle's round engravings appear in a facsimile of the final section of De Ponte's *Meditations* inscribed later by Maria van Wieringen, Oly's successor as historian of Den Hoeck.³⁹² The fact that these Passion images appear in sermons based on Luis de Ponte is significant, because De Ponte, a Jesuit theologian, treated the Virgin's receiving communion from St. John before her Assumption as a concrete truth in his 33rd meditation, although it was a relatively recent Catholic tradition, and likely led to the wider acceptance of this event as doctrine.³⁹³

Earlier in De Galle's series, the narrative of the Passion is interrupted with a symbolic scene of angels weeping at the sight of Christ beneath His cross, which has become part of a gigantic wine press, and the blood from His wounds becomes the wine (fig. 61). Isaiah 63:2–3 accompanies the image: "Why are your garments red, like those

³⁹¹ Verheggen, 103.

³⁹² See Verheggen, 102–3. The Dutch title of the sermon collection is "Beschrijvinghe vande natuer des affectiffe ghebedt, ende voortbrenginghe der affectien op de meditatie van pr. Ludovicus de Ponte. Aengaen de droefheijt Christi int hofke." Utrecht Museum Catharijneconvent inv. Nr. (Description of the nature of affective prayer, and the production of affection/love on the meditation of Fr. Ludovicus Ponte. Entering the affliction Christ's courtyard) Ludovicus de Ponte was a Spanish Jesuit writer whose cause of beatification was taken up by the Jesuits shortly after his death.

³⁹³ Knipping vol. 2, 251. Knipping notes that De Ponte's acceptance of the event was enough for most Counter-Reformation theologians, and that soon after he mentioned it in his *Meditations*, others treated it as long-standing consensus, despite a lack of earlier sources for the story.

of one treading the winepress? ‘I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me.’” Elsewhere in the three volumes, Abraham van Merlen’s version of the same scene reinforced its Eucharistic importance: in Van Merlen’s images, God Himself operates the winepress, the Virgin sits at a distance with a sword stuck into her heart, and angels catch the wine exiting the press in a chalice, while farmers carry large sacks of wheat through a field (fig. 62). A Van Merlen engraving (fig. 63) also depicts Christ crucified between Mary and John, with an angel catching blood from Christ’s feet in a chalice. This image appears in a 1631 manuscript of Joost Cats’s sermons, called “Beschrijvinge hoe Godt de minnende siel tot hem treckt in zijn wijnkelder des beschouwende van zijn eewighe Godtheijt en de aenghenoomen menscheijdt” (Description of how God draws the loving soul to him in His wine cellar to contemplate the eternal Godhead and His adoption of human form).³⁹⁴ The subject of these sermons is relevant here, because as before, Christ in the winepress illustrated the connection between His original sacrifice and the Eucharist. Unsurprisingly, this specifically Catholic theme dated to medieval *Devotio Moderna* practices, and *kloppen* meditating on this image as well as on De Bray’s painting would associate communion and wine with the moment of Christ’s death, when He also called on St. John to fulfill His filial duties.³⁹⁵

De Bray’s pared down composition depicts the figures in profile, as John presents a communion wafer to a kneeling Mary whose hands meet in prayer. According to Catholic tradition, St. John was also one of the first among the apostles to be transported divinely to Mary’s bedside at the moment of her Dormition, and her wrinkled face and

³⁹⁴ Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent, inv. Nr. BMH SJ H201, f.217v

³⁹⁵ Verheggen, 103.

hands indicate that De Bray's painting depicts a moment between John's arrival and the Virgin's death.³⁹⁶ John wears a seventeenth-century long hairstyle and sparse mustache along with a white alb and red embroidered chasuble that matches the pattern on the altar cloth. Mary wears a red dress, dark blue cloak, and white shawl covering her head and shoulders. Both figures have subtle haloes; without these and the Dutch inscription on the altar step, MOEDER SIET UWEN SONE (Mother, behold your son), the identities of the figures could easily be mistaken for a Haarlem priest and elderly *klopje*.³⁹⁷

Van Eck points out that De Bray likely used an engraving by Antonius III Wierix of the same subject as a model, however the engraving features a younger Mary, angels kneeling and supporting a cloth under the communion paten, and John's attributes of a large eagle and quill with ink pot lying next to him (fig. 64).³⁹⁸ I suggest that De Bray purposely left out such obvious iconography in order to allow viewers to place themselves in the scene. Likely commissioned by Fr. Boudewijn Cats, pastor at the date of the work's creation in 1656, the painting may have adorned pastoral offices or even the residences in Den Hoeck. Boudewijn's uncle Joost had developed a strong interest in the idea of confessing one's sins and preparing one's heart for Eucharist during his studies in Leuven, where his curriculum emphasized strict rules about preparedness for sacraments. As a result, his many recorded sermons frequently touch on the necessity of examining the conscience and meditating to develop the right purity of body and mind before receiving the body of Christ.³⁹⁹ Boudewijn upheld the ideas promoted by his uncle, and

³⁹⁶ See Knipping vol. 2, 252. Dutch Catholic theologians like Johannes Molanus disapproved of the tradition begun by fifteenth-century artists representing Mary sick in bed receiving the sacraments, citing breach of decorum.

³⁹⁷ Van Eck 2008, 107.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ See Van Eck 2008, 107; Verheggen 2006; Spaans 2003; Spaans 2012.

enforced the regimented schedule of prayer, handiwork, fasting, and confession, all of which prepared *kloppen* for the Eucharist.

Beyond providing an example of the correct spiritual state in which to receive Eucharist, exemplified by the ever-humble Virgin, De Bray's painting reinforces the authority of priests like Cats. Just as St. John was Christ's substitute as son of Mary after His death, the priest is Christ's representative on earth, and he is charged with caring for the Church—often visualized as the Virgin herself. Indeed, *kloppenboeken* encouraged laywomen to view their pastor as a placeholder for their true bridegroom, to whom they owed full obedience and who alone could clean their conscience of sin.⁴⁰⁰ Fr. Willem Schoen of 't Hart in Amsterdam wrote in his 1676 instructional booklet *De Weg der Suyverheyt van 't Hollandtse maegden* (The Way to Salvation for Dutch [Spiritual] Maidens) that women should see their pastor as “niet een mens, maer wel een stadhouder Godts, ja Godt selve gelijcker staet” (not a man, but a placeholder for God, the equivalent of God Himself).⁴⁰¹ Jan de Bray's intimate painting supported the existing gendered identities of the *kloppen* of Den Hoeck, defined in relation to that of their spiritual father as well as their bridegroom, Christ, whom they received regularly in Eucharist.

⁴⁰⁰ See Montiero 1992, 350.

⁴⁰¹ Schoen, *De weg der suyverheyt*, 177. See also Abels 2009, 46–9. For more on Schoen, see chapter two.

Willem Claesz Heda, *Triptych with Crucifixion and Sts. Francis and Clare*, 1626

Although known today as a master of the banquet still life, Willem Claesz. Heda (1594–1680) also belonged to the Catholic artistic community in Haarlem, as well as to the group of painters who reformed the St. Luke's Guild in 1631. He appears for the first time on the guild rolls as author of the new guild charter alongside Salomon de Bray and Pieter Soutman, both also Catholic artists with connections to Haarlem parishes and priests.⁴⁰² Later, Heda would serve as *deken* of the Guild in 1642 and 1652, and as *hoofdman* in 1637, 1643, and 1651. Jan de Bray painted Heda's portrait at the age of 84 in 1678, suggesting that Heda remained involved with this group of classicizing Catholic history painters even after he focused his talents on still lifes.⁴⁰³

In 1626, Heda painted a small devotional triptych of the *Crucifixion with Sts. Francis and Clare* for a resident of Den Hoeck (figs. 65–66). The altarpiece belongs to a private collection today after auction at Christie's in April 2013, but was likely painted at the request of a *klopje*, perhaps one who was initiated into Den Hoeck in 1626. In the central panel, Christ hangs on the cross, blood gushing from all of His wounds and a bright aureole for a halo behind his head, His stark white loincloth floating out on either side of Him. The gray clouds behind Him turn into a blackened, spare landscape. From left to right, the Virgin stands upright and calmly prays, Mary Magdalene kneels and embraces the foot of the cross with her hair covering Christ's feet, her white handkerchief in her left hand, and a silver ointment jar resting in front of her. Behind the cross, St. Catherine of Alexandra kneels and looks up to Christ with hands crossed over her chest

⁴⁰² Gary Schwartz and Marten Jan Bok, *Pieter Saenredam: The Painter and His Time* (The Hague: SDU Maarssen, 1990), 102.

⁴⁰³ Arthur K. Wheelock Jr., "Willem Claesz Heda," NGA Online Editions, <https://purl.org/nga/collection/constituent/32> (accessed December 18, 2017).

and a broken wheel at her feet, and St. John the Evangelist mirrors the Virgin's calm pose and gazes at Christ with his right hand to his chest. On the left panel, St. Francis of Assisi wears a tonsure, brown robes, and a rosary on his belt, and receives the stigmata while gazing toward a crucifix appearing between parted clouds. St. Clare on the right panel wears a similar habit and with downcast eyes, holds a staff and a gold monstrance with the host inside, demonstrating her devotion to the Eucharist.

While triptychs with patron saints not actually present at the Crucifixion were common in the centuries before the Reformation, Tridentine reforms discouraged such historical inaccuracies as they could easily mislead uninformed believers. Heda and his patron would certainly have known this, not only because they were Catholic themselves but also because of the prevalence of Counter-Reformation altarpieces, notably by Peter Paul Rubens, that strove for Biblical accuracy in depicting the Passion. Moreover, the triptych format itself was outdated by 1626, having been succeeded by large canvases. When triptychs did occur, artists tended to treat the three interior panels as a single scene with a single narrative, such as Rubens did in *The Raising of the Cross* for St. Walburga in Antwerp (fig. 67). Heda's specialty as still life painter does not fully explain his outdated composition, as the case of Adriaen van de Velde will show again in the next chapter. The format, presence of anachronistic saints, and archaizing style, then, serve an iconographic purpose.

Like Rubens, Dutch artists also received commissions to replace older altarpieces destroyed by the Iconoclasm, and often adopted a purposely archaic style to minimize the difference between the lost altarpiece and its replacement. Natasha Seaman writes about Hendrik ter Brugghen's 1625 *Crucifixion with St. John* at the Metropolitan Museum that

certain self-consciously archaizing formal elements not only linked the new altarpiece to its predecessor, but also reminded the Catholic viewers of the materiality of the painting, ensuring that they would not treat the image as an icon (fig. 68). Specifically, she mentions the blood dripping from Christ's hands as having no relationship to gravity or to the setting behind it, but rather appearing as if on the surface of the picture itself. The blood signals the painting's materiality and also marks the painting as Catholic, in that only Catholics had a use for such graphic evidence of Christ's suffering.⁴⁰⁴ Likewise, Heda's Christ, painted just one year after Ter Brugghen's, gushes blood from his wrists that also seems to remain on the surface of the panel rather than drip realistically into three-dimensional space. From His side wound the blood pours out and from his crown of thorns, it streams in straight lines. The tears of the mourners, which are exaggerated to begin with, also fall straight down rather than run down their cheeks. The stark black background, while consistent with the traditional belief that the sun went dark at the moment of Christ's death, abstracts Him from his reality. His loincloth also flares out wildly in a nonexistent wind, leaving Christ to look like He does not inhabit the same space as the figures below the cross.

Interestingly, Seaman's theory indicates that self-consciously manmade images, with details like gravity-defying clothing and blood, disobey the Council of Trent's mandate to portray holy figures in a believable manner.⁴⁰⁵ Yet such details played a

⁴⁰⁴ Natasha Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrik ter Brugghen* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2012), 76–79.

⁴⁰⁵ Seaman, 79. Seaman discusses post-Tridentine Crucifixion scenes as increasingly simplified due to an interest in “apostolic purity and a reformatory urge to strip away the excess.” Images of Christ alone on the cross, however, also tend to emphasize the corporeal reality of Christ's body and thus link it to the Eucharist, functioning almost as illusionistic sculptures rather than paintings.

specific role in Dutch Catholic *huiskerken*: they stirred the viewer to a deeper, emotional faith, as recommended by Tridentine reforms, reminded viewers of the rich tradition and necessity of images in worship, and prevented the conflation of image and figure that had prompted Iconoclasm in the first place. The same can be said of the devotional prints pasted into Den Hoeck's sermon manuscripts, which include gory details like gushing blood, open wounds, and fantastic or ahistorical settings like Christ in the winepress, Christ appearing to the penitent soul, and the infant Christ living inside a heart with Passion instruments. It seems these highly emotional images focused the viewer's thoughts on a particular aspect of the Passion or concept of Catholic faith rather than encouraging them to admire the artistic prowess of the creator or the beauty of the image in its own right.

Heda's triptych features St. Catherine of Alexandria with her broken wheel in the central crucifixion panel, although she was not present at the Crucifixion. Catherine was a favorite saint of lay religious women, however, and her suffering through repeated attempts on her life provided an example of willingness to suffering alongside Christ to which *kloppen* could aspire as they prayed. The outer panels depict Sts. Francis and Clare, the patrons of third order religious groups and also popular among *kloppen* for their dedication to penance, solitary meditation, and self-denial.⁴⁰⁶ Den Hoeck, under its first leader Fr. Nicolaes Cousebant, who had an affinity for Franciscan teachings, began with a strict regimen inspired by the Poor Clares order, and even when later pastors relaxed the rules slightly, the women listened to, recorded, and studied sermons heavily

⁴⁰⁶ For more on the popularity of St. Francis in Dutch religious culture and art, see Frank Bosman et al., *Franciscus van Asissi* (Utrecht: Museum Catharijneconvent, 2016).

influenced by the Franciscan and Clarissen orders.⁴⁰⁷ The three saints in combination relate the triptych directly to its viewers in Den Hoeck, who looked to Catherine, Clare, and Francis as examples after whom to model their lives and devotions.

The small size of Heda's triptych indicates that it was used for private devotion, and likely in combination with or similarly to the *beeldekens* and *schilderijtjes* that *kloppen* acquired and donated to their parish—small, inexpensive statues and paintings, typically depicting Passion scenes or the Virgin. Oly's *Levens* names several women who decorated their cells with *beeldekens* or *schilderijtjes*, and some who set up stations or exhibitions where others could also come and pray.⁴⁰⁸ It is clear that outside of the St. Bernardus chapel, *kloppen* had many makeshift altars at which they could complete their required daily prayer, meditation, and examination of conscience, and that Heda's archaizing triptych served this purpose for one or more *kloppen*. Heda's archaizing style not only harkens back to “quieter times” before the Alteration in Haarlem, but also focuses the viewer's attention on Christ's wounds and solitary suffering and on the third order patron saints to imitate while reminding the viewer of the image's materiality.

Philips Wouwerman, *Conversion of St. Hubert*, 1660

Heda was not the only painter to supply religious paintings to Den Hoeck despite specializing in a very different genre. Philips Wouwerman (1619–1688) apparently completed three paintings, potentially of similar dimensions, for Den Hoeck in the 1660s. The only work that survives is the *Conversion of St. Hubert*, dated 1660 and now in the

⁴⁰⁷ See Verheggen, 95. When Cousebant left Den Hoeck for Cologne and joined the Friars Minor there, he brought a few former *kloppen* along, who joined the Poor Clares in Cologne as well.

⁴⁰⁸ See Chapter two on the importance of images for *kloppen*.

Penrhyn Castle in Gwynedd, Wales (fig. 69). While likely not baptized Catholic, Wouwerman married the Catholic Annetje Pietersdr. van Broeckhof of Hamburg after an apprenticeship there.⁴⁰⁹ The couple returned to Haarlem in 1640, the year that Wouwerman entered the St. Luke's Guild—where he would have met the De Grebbers, the De Brays, Heda, Soutman, and Saenredam. At this time, Wouwerman made his first religious paintings, probably as an attempt to corner a piece of the market for such works in Haarlem, and he apparently favored the subject of the *Annunciation to the Shepherds*, as it called for horses and livestock, for which he would come to be known.⁴¹⁰

As of 1643, Wouwerman is recorded as living in the Begijnhof, near to the father and son De Grebber; during the 1650s the Wouwerman family is listed on St. Jansstraat nearby.⁴¹¹ In 1667 they lived in a house called either Bloempot (Flower pot) or Haesewint (Whippet) on Bakenessergracht—the same street as Den Hoeck, and possibly considered part of the community itself. Toward the end of his life, he may have moved to Koksteeg, the alley on which the entrance to the Sts. Anna and Maria *huiskerk* was situated.⁴¹² Given these connections, it is unsurprising that Wouwerman, despite his specialty as a horse, animal, and landscape painter, painted three scenes of pivotal moments in saints' hagiographies for Den Hoeck.

In 1782, Roeland van Eynden wrote that the *St. Hubert* is actually a historiated portrait of a pastor of Den Hoeck; this quickly turned into a legend that the painting

⁴⁰⁹ Frederik J. Duparc and Quentin Buvelot, *Philips Wouwerman 1619–1688* (The Hague: Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, 2009), 18.

⁴¹⁰ Duparc and Buvelot, 25. Peter van Laer also liked this subject, and legend states that Wouwermans acquired all of Van Laer's drawings, exploited them, and burned them.

⁴¹¹ See Duparc and Buvelot, 18; Birgit Schumacher, *Philips Wouwerman (1619–1688): The Horse Painter of the Golden Age*, Aetas Aurea Monographs on Dutch and Flemish Painting (Doornspijk: Davaco, 2006) 17.

⁴¹² Duparc and Buvelot, 18; Schumacher, 32.

depicts Cornelis Cats, pastor of Den Hoeck from 1663 until his death in 1671.⁴¹³

However, at the date of the painting's completion, in 1660, Cornelis's elder brother Boudewijn was still pastor of Den Hoeck and Cornelis was instead pastor of the Begijnhof. A legend also states that Cornelis Cats gave Wouwerman a 600-guilder loan in 1643, but the painting is unlikely to have been a repayment given the time that had elapsed in between.⁴¹⁴ In any case, there was probably a connection between the Cats and Wouwerman families; Wouwerman even had one of his sons baptized Balduinus (the Latinized form of Boudewijn).⁴¹⁵ His daughter Elisabeth was also married in Den Hoeck in 1671, possibly by Cornelis Cats.⁴¹⁶

Whether *St. Hubert* was made specifically for Cornelis or Boudewijn Cats, or for another patron at Den Hoeck who enjoyed hunting, as suggested by Frederik Duparc and

⁴¹³ Alastair Laing, *In Trust for the Nation*, 1995, adapted for web, <http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/1420339>. Laing notes that Van Eynden did not provide any backstory about the painting, but by 1789, Samuel Ireland, in his *A Picturesque Tour through Holland, Brabant, and part of France; Made in the Autumn of 1789*, recounted that Wouwerman, like Berchem, struggled with poverty, until, "in his ripe years, he was relieved from his indigence and dependence on picture-dealers, by a Catholic priest (he being himself of the Romish church) who lent him six hundred guilders, which sum, though but small, enabled him to increase his price to double what he had been usually paid, and he became soon after possessed of sufficient wealth to give his daughter, as a portion in marriage, twenty thousand guilders. In return for his confessor's liberality, he painted his portrait in small, kneeling before his horse, in the character of Saint Hubert, which he presented to him, and with it the sum so graciously lent. The picture should be noticed by every Connoisseur who passes through this city: the drawing and colouring are in his best stile, and the picture is exquisitely finished: it may be termed a chef d'oeuvre, where the superiority of the work vies with the gratitude of the artist, and may be found in a chapel near the house where Wouwermans resided, situated in the Bakenessegragt". Samuel Ireland, *A Picturesque Tour through Holland, Brabant, and part of France: Made in the Autumn of 1789*, vol. 1 (London, 1790), 114–15. Quoted in Laing 1995.

⁴¹⁴ Laing 1995.

⁴¹⁵ Schumacher, 18, 32. Of ten children, two died as infants in 1644, and another in 1646; for the seven who lived past infancy no baptismal dates are known. Schumacher suggests that this is because they were baptized in Den Hoeck, which has gaps and incomplete information in baptismal books.

⁴¹⁶ Schumacher, 20.

Quentin Buvelot, it is unusual in Wouwerman's oeuvre.⁴¹⁷ Duparc and Buvelot note the striking division of the composition into two sections: forest and open sky. At center, St. Hubert has dismounted his horse and kneels with his right hand across his chest and his left hand holding his removed hat. As his hunting dogs sniff around or rest, his magnificent white horse stops in its tracks with its right foreleg raised, and even its tail seems to stop mid-swish. Both the saint and his horse stare at a stag at the opening of the forest that returns their gaze, and in the stag's antlers appears a crucifix. In the distance, the remainder of the hunting party approaches unawares, and dark clouds overhead open up into a bright blue sky dotted with fluffy white clouds. Wouwerman's hunting scenes are typically full of action and dynamic movement across the picture plane, but in this scene the central figures are completely still to emphasize the miraculous vision of St. Hubert.

Wouwerman probably derived the prominence of the horse and the stillness of the figures, as well as the arrangement of the hounds, from Albrecht Dürer's engraving of *St. Eustace* (fig. 70).⁴¹⁸ This borrowing is apt, given that the legend of St. Hubert itself is borrowed from that of St. Eustace—the story seems only to have been applied to St. Hubert in the fifteenth century. St. Hubert (d. 727) is said to have lived a profligate life until he went hunting one Good Friday, and while he had a stag in his sights, the miraculous crucifix appeared between its antlers and it spoke, saying "Why are you pursuing me? I am Jesus, whom you honor without being aware of it." Confused, Hubert asked advice, and the stag recommended seeking instructions from St. Lambert, Bishop of Tongeren/Maastricht. Hubert eventually became ordained and succeeded Lambert as

⁴¹⁷ Duparc and Buvelot, 116.

⁴¹⁸ Duparc and Buvelot, 116; Lang 1995.

bishop. The legend was assigned to St. Hubert because in 825, his relics were transferred to an Abbey of Andage, renamed the Abbey of St. Hubert, in the popular hunting area of the forests of the Andennes. Thus, Hubert became patron saint of hunting (and of protection against rabies).⁴¹⁹

Though there was no particular devotion to St. Hubert in Haarlem, Duparc and Buvelot suggest that the painting's patron may have been a wealthy congregant of Den Hoeck who enjoyed hunting.⁴²⁰ Whether or not that is the case, the painting does emphasize the transformative power of conversion to the faith and the importance of giving up worldly wealth for a life of service. Any member of Den Hoeck would have been familiar with this message, given the overwhelming presence of *kloppen* there, most of whom had traded family wealth for a life of sacrifice, charity, and prayer. Indeed, the other two Wouwerman paintings linked by provenance to Den Hoeck (but which no longer survive), depicted *The Conversion of St. Paul*, and *St. Martin Dividing His Cloak with a Beggar*, both stories which not only typically feature horses, but which also feature conversion and forgoing a sinful life for a new life of faith.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁹ Lang 1995.

⁴²⁰ Duparc and Buvelot, 116.

⁴²¹ See "St. Martin Dividing His Cloak," Royal Collection Trust, catalogue entry adapted for website, <https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/405878/st-martin-dividing-his-cloak-0> Famous examples of these subjects include Caravaggio's 1600 *Conversion of St. Paul* for the Cerasi Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome, in which the horse figures prominently, and Anthony van Dyck's two versions of *St. Martin Dividing His Cloak* (c. 1620), one version made for the Baron of Zaventem in Flanders and one currently in Windsor Castle, UK. St. Martin wears cavalry armor and a sixteenth-century hat and sits atop a white horse, and the Windsor Castle version likely remained in Rubens's studio when Van Dyck left Antwerp, allowing for Rubens's pupils to copy the composition.

Worthy Handiwork: Embroidery for Liturgical Garments

The paintings and engravings commissioned, used, and interpreted by lay religious women were made by well-known male artists and often treated by art historians as “high” or fine art. Yet women were not only patrons and viewers of art in Haarlem’s *huiskerken*, but also makers of art. Along with recording sermons in beautiful script, combining and displaying devotional engravings, and sometimes coloring them, *kloppen* were instrumental in the production of embroidered liturgical garments, for which they were also the primary viewers. These garments belie the dichotomy in early modern art history between “high” art like paintings produced by men and “low” art or craft produced by women.

Virgins were encouraged to sew, embroider, or spin in order to support their existence, as well as to avoid idleness. Fr. Josephus Cousebant’s 1676 *Regels der Maechden* for the women of the Begijnhof includes a lengthy chapter on the importance of handiwork, in which he praises the “puere schouwende leeven” (pure contemplative life) over the working life, but notes that mortals, and particularly women, must find a “middelmatig leeven” (middle way).⁴²² Cousebant’s justification for a combination of work and prayer reveals the persistence of medieval ideas. Because women have a wet humoral composition, they tend toward vanity, mutability, and are weaker to temptation than are men, like their predecessor, Eve. Therefore, he claims, some worthy handiwork other than solitary prayer will keep their minds turned toward God. He quotes St. Jerome,

⁴²² Marlies Caron, “Kerkelijk borduurwerk van de Maagden van den Hoeck,” *Haerlem Jaarboek* (1987), 20; Spaans 2012, 122. While this set of rules appeared later than the high point of Den Hoeck’s membership, Oly reported that Fr. Arentsz. had given Tryn Dirks Wy and Aeltgen Thomas vande Ketel a written rule, for which no record survives. Spaans suggests that the Begijnhof and Den Hoeck used either the same set of rules or very similar ones.

who said that keeping busy prevents the devil from trapping a weak soul.⁴²³ In the seventeenth-century century, *kloppen* and beguines worked on liturgical garments for the same reasons; beguines followed a 1408 statute claiming that their handiwork served God, and the renewal of Devotio Moderna in the Counter-Reformation Netherlands meant that *kloppen* followed the same precept.⁴²⁴ In addition to serving the Church, these skills allowed *kloppen* without substantial inheritance to support themselves financially. The women either did these tasks for hire or, more commonly, taught the young girls in the Maagdenhuis (orphanage) to sew, embroider, spin, or make lace, which served a few related purposes: the *kloppen* paid their room and board, the poor girls learned skills to earn a livelihood, and the lessons helped to recruit more young women for Den Hoeck.⁴²⁵

Even when the women were compelled to do handiwork for financial reasons, the underlying motive of keeping their minds on Christ was reinforced with devotional imagery. In two manuscripts of J. Cousebant's *Regels*, the handiwork passages open with engravings depicting the Virgin and Holy Family doing handiwork and housework. In one version of the manuscript, the title page to the handiwork chapter features an engraving by Theodoor Galle known as "The First Dream of Joseph" that depicts the Virgin sewing while Joseph pensively reads and a vision of the soul kneeling before Christ in heaven is visible above (fig. 71). Later in the chapter, an engraving by Hieronymus Wierix shows the Virgin knitting to the right as Joseph and the child Christ build a boat, assisted by angels (fig. 72). The engraving's inscription reminds the viewer

⁴²³ Caron, 20.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., 11.

that Jesus does not need a boat because He can walk on water, and the writer of the manuscript notes that as the Virgin knits, she thinks of her Son the entire time.⁴²⁶

Likewise, in a second manuscript with the same text of the *Regels*, another scene from H. Wierix's series of Christ's childhood opens the chapter on handiwork. This time the Virgin spins while the child Christ and Joseph build a house with the angels' help (fig. 73). The second manuscript includes a second chapter on the mentality one should have while undertaking handiwork, which opens with a Karel de Mallery engraving entitled OPERIS CHRISTIANI VESPER (Christian work in the evening). Mary sits by the hearth sewing as Joseph saws at his carpentry bench in the background and the child Jesus dutifully sweeps up the sawdust (fig. 74).⁴²⁷ All of these images reinforce that even the Holy Family humbled themselves to do handiwork and suggest that hard work not only keeps one's mind on Christ, but also brings one closer to His selfless nature.

Oly's *Levens* are full of praise for the women who contributed embroidered and sewn garments to their parish. Machteld Bicker (d. 1624), who hailed from Amsterdam, made "many beautiful heavenly ornaments for the Temple of Our Lord."⁴²⁸ Aechtgen Jansdochter from the North Holland town of Binnewijzen (d. 1634) made an "ornament" to honor the Virgin, like a chasuble, described with "a beautiful cross...in the middle of which [was] the Holy Mother of God with her son the child Jesus in her arm, at her side St. Agnes and St. Catherine of Siena, and underneath St. Ursula, St. Catherine, St. Agatha, St. Barbara, and St. Cecilia, to which virgins she [Jansdochter] had great

⁴²⁶ Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH SJ h103 f. 70r, f. 91v

⁴²⁷ Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH SJ h102, f. 80v, f.95v

⁴²⁸ Oly quoted in Caron, 17. "veel freie cierlijcke ornamenten tot de Tempel des Heeren."

devotion.”⁴²⁹ Such a scene of the Virgin and Child surrounded by virgin saints appearing on the back cross of a chasuble, visible all throughout Mass, would have been quite popular and significant in Den Hoeck. Indeed, Oly claims that this white chasuble was the best in the church, and used for a long time, at least until the time of Jansdochter’s death.⁴³⁰

Clearly, some women had real talent for embroidery. Another gifted artist was Aechtegen Cornelis van Veen of Leiden (d. 1623), who was known to “make many beautiful crosses on the chasubles.”⁴³¹ At her initiation into Den Hoeck, Aechtgen gave, along with her sister (d. 1612) a “beautiful new silk ornament to honor God,” presumably made by the sisters.⁴³² It should come as no surprise that Aechtgen earned a reputation as a skilled embroiderer, given that her brother, Otto van Veen, was a painter, humanist and emblem designer best known for teaching Rubens, and another brother, Gijsbert, was a successful engraver.⁴³³ Aechtgen also taught girls at the Maagdenhuis and motivated the women of Den Hoeck to put effort into their handiwork, famously saying “We will rest forever in heaven, so let us do some work to honor God here on earth.”⁴³⁴ At Den Hoeck, Aechtgen’s niece carried on her legacy after her death.

Annetgen Emingha, a Frisian (d. 1632) “devoted her whole year to sewing for the church, making chasubles, altar cloths and church ornaments.” She apparently was not

⁴²⁹ Oly quoted in Caron, 17. “een freij perduert cruisc...in 't midsen de H. Moeder Gods in de son 't kindeken Jesu op haer arm, ter sijen S. Angnietge en S. Catarina van Cenen, onder S. Ursula, S. Catarina, S. Agatha, S. Barbara, S. Cecilia, tot welcke maecheden sij grote devotie hadt.”

⁴³⁰ Caron, 17.

⁴³¹ Oly quoted in Caron, 17. “maeckende veel freie cruicen in de casoffels”

⁴³² Ibid. “een fray nieu damast ornament ter eere Gods.”

⁴³³ Caron, 18.

⁴³⁴ Oly quoted in Caron, 17. “In den heemel sullen wij altijd rusten, laet ons hier wat ter eeren Gods arbeijden.”

especially talented, but rather hardworking.⁴³⁵ Regardless, the faithful probably did not distinguish the handiwork of *kloppen* from professional embroidery; the level of quality was equal, and originality was not essential to early modern tastes. Indeed, the main difference between professional embroiderers and *kloppen* is that the latter's goal was not financial gain but rather piety and hatred of idleness.⁴³⁶ It seems that rather than commission professional embroiderers to complete the narrative scenes for such garments or to use appliqués made by professionals, certain patterns became popular in circulation, allowing *kloppen* to embroider elaborate narrative scenes as well as simpler floral borders themselves.⁴³⁷

Emingha likely contributed to a chasuble made after 1620 for Apostolic Vicar Philippus Rovenius, who frequented the offices of the Haarlem chapter directly above the church in Den Hoeck (fig. 75). Virtually all of the embroidered scenes can be traced to a previous engraving or painting, including the Assumption of the Virgin on the forked cross on the back, which comes from a 1620 *Immaculate Conception* altarpiece by Peter de Witte for a Jesuit church in Munich that was engraved by Raphael Sadeler before 1628 (fig. 76).⁴³⁸ The Visitation at the bottom of the cross is based on a 1593 engraving by Hendrick Goltzius, part of his imitative *Life of the Virgin* series (fig. 77). It was common practice dating back to the medieval period for embroiderers to work after engravings or woodcuts, or for very prestigious objects, after designs commissioned directly from

⁴³⁵ Oly quoted in Caron, 17, 19. “oefende haer veel jaeren in't perdueren ende neyen voor de kerk, opmakende de casoffels, outerclede en kerkelicke ornamente... hoewel sij de cunste daer niet van en hadt.”

⁴³⁶ Caron, 21.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 19.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 16. Caron notes that the Catharijneconvent also has an anonymous painting traceable to a former Oude-Katholiek church with the same composition as the engraving and De Witte's altarpiece.

painters.⁴³⁹ The Assumption of the Virgin design appears in very similar form on another chasuble with a provenance from Den Hoeck, indicating that the women had a pattern at their disposal.⁴⁴⁰ In cases where the women did not have a pattern or outside professional help, they likely worked from the stores of devotional engravings they owned.

Goltzius's *Visitation* in the style of Parmigianino is an obvious choice for a scene to adorn the cross, as the scenes on this chasuble celebrate the life of Mary, and such scenes would have served as meditative aids for *kloppen*. Walter Melion also argues that Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* series itself makes a statement about meditation with his adoption of other masters' styles. Just as Christ was humbled in His incarnation and Passion, an artist humbly imitates nature. Goltzius went a step further by imitating other masters as well, making the undertaking of this series an act of *imitatio Christi*.⁴⁴¹ Depicting Christ in a work of art is parallel to the act of meditation, as understood by Jesuit and widely popular Devotio Moderna practices, in which the devout picture Christ in their minds.

Devotional engravings of events from the Virgin's life also provided compositions for the embroidery on a chasuble with matching stole, maniple, and chalice cloth made for Apostolic Vicar Boudewijn Cats, who assumed that position after serving as spiritual father at Den Hoeck from 1639–62 (fig. 78). This garment is harder to date, but the back cross depicts a large painterly scene of the Adoration of the Shepherds, with

⁴³⁹ Henri Defoer, "Borduurkunst naar ontwerpen van Noord-Nederlandse Schilders," in *Middeleeuwse Borduurkunst uit de Nederlanden*, ed. Micha Leeftang and Kees van Schooten (Utrecht: Museum Catharijneconvent, 2015), 33.

⁴⁴⁰ Caron, 19. Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. OKM t69.

⁴⁴¹ See Walter S. Melion, "The Meditative Function of Hendrick Goltzius's *Life of the Virgin* 1593–4," in Reindert Falkenburg, Walter S. Melion, and Todd M. Richardson, eds. *Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Proteus: Studies in Early Modern Identity Formation 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 379–425.

gold rays emanating from the sky where angels watch over the scene, complete with sleeping shepherds next to their sheep in the far background (fig. 79). Under the main scene are two round niches housing St. Peter with his key and St. Clement, third successor of Peter as Pope, wearing a papal tiara, staff, and carrying an anchor.⁴⁴² The front side depicts three popular virgin saints in architectural niches: St. Catherine of Alexandria with her broken wheel, St. Gertrude of Nivelles (now damaged but identifiable by the mice climbing up her staff), and St. Elizabeth of Hungary holding her crown and giving alms to a beggar (fig. 80).⁴⁴³ The legends of all three of these women would have been studied and emulated at Den Hoeck during solitary reading time, and St. Gertrude in particular was often depicted or described as spinning and sewing devoutly.⁴⁴⁴ The base of the chasuble is white silk and gold thread, and embroidered with beautiful, highly detailed pale pink roses and carnations, yellow daffodils, and blue and pink irises whose vines twist around one another in a swirling pattern. A white miter with similar floral patterns alternating with gold bands accompanied the chasuble.

The creation of these remarkable garments required a high level of concentration, patience, and discipline, as well as many small repetitive movements of the hands, and in that way embroidery and sewing were connected to the practice of intense prayer itself. These connections appear in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century devotional literature for

⁴⁴² Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH t129a. Catalogue entry adapted for website, <https://www.catharijneconvent.nl/adlib/39545/?q=bmh+t129a>. Pope Clement VIII named Sasbout Vosmeer the first Apostolic Vicar of the Holland Mission in 1602, so the inclusion of St. Clement may reference the former Pope and creation of the position recently assumed by Cats.

⁴⁴³ Identification of saints from web catalogue entry op cit.

⁴⁴⁴ See Hanneke van Asperen, "Praying, Threading, and Adorning: Sewn-in Prints in a Rosary Prayer Book (London, British Library, Add. MS 14042)," in Kathryn M. Rudy and Barbara Baert, eds., *Weaving, Veiling, and Dressing: Textiles and their Metaphors in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 103.

women and reappeared in the seventeenth century along with *Devotio Moderna*. In particular, prayer imagery associated with the rosary encouraged the devout to imagine that Ave Marias wove together to form golden robes for Mary, and the *kloppen* of Den Hoeck likely prayed while embroidering, in order to quite literally clothe their pastor, Christ's representative on earth, in gold.⁴⁴⁵ A fifteenth century nun, Sister Lubbe of Zwolle (d. 1418) had also instructed her sisters to “spin the thread through the wounds of Christ,” or to create a spiritual bond between their handiwork and their meditation on the Passion.⁴⁴⁶ Hanneke van Asperen describes the practice of praying while sewing or embroidering as way for a *klopje* to “thread together” the required daily meditation, spiritual exercise of the rosary, physical labor, and herself with the figure she worships.⁴⁴⁷

Den Hoeck's congregants could not have gazed upon Abraham or Hendrick Bloemaert's 1641 painting of *Simeon with the Christ Child* for St. Bernardus without noticing Simeon's exquisitely embroidered cope, which would have appeared more magnificent in the now-lost full length original version (figs. 34–35). The Bloemaerts, as previously mentioned, stored David of Burgundy's fifteenth-century cope in their home to protect it from Protestant authorities, and often used it in paintings. While the women of Den Hoeck did not work on the Burgundy cope, their related work on more recent garments worn by the new local clergy could be appreciated anew in comparison. The appearance of actual garments in paintings and engravings throughout the early modern period speaks to the legacy and wide reach of the seemingly modest work of these lay religious women.

⁴⁴⁵ Van Asperen, 94–95.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 105.

Haarlem's Church Silver: A Family Affair

Much like the multilayered connections between Catholic painters working for Den Hoeck in the seventeenth-century, the majority of church silver produced for Haarlem's Catholic parishes came from several branches of one family, united by marriage. Haarlem's silver production was even better known and respected than was Amsterdam's during this period, and indeed some of the Haarlem silversmiths' work ended up in *huiskerken* in nearby Amsterdam as well.⁴⁴⁸ While infrequently discussed alongside paintings or sculptures, it is important to remember that until the St. Luke's Guild underwent reorganization to elevate the status of painters in 1631–2, silversmiths were considered equal alongside painters, and in Haarlem they continued to garner respect. Much silver has been melted down in the course of history, as well, leaving an incomplete picture of how lavishly *huiskerk* altars were decorated.⁴⁴⁹

Pieter Biesboer has written about the complicated family tree that connects the majority of Catholic artistic families in Haarlem, and particularly about the Ebbekin and Bagijn branches of this family, many of whom were talented silversmiths. Pieter Cornelisz. Ebbekin, perhaps the most important silversmith in Holland, made six large (77 cm tall) silver candelabras for the high altar of St. Bernardus in 1653 (fig. 81). The elegant claw-foot design speaks of their value, as do the individual characteristics of each. Although they seem identical at first glance, and to be decorated only with floral patterns, in fact the foot of each candelabra displays a different saint or group of saints. Aside from one candelabra with only Ursula on its foot, the rest have three: The Three Marys; Catherine, Bernard, and John; Barbara, Mark, and Francis of Assisi; Jerome,

⁴⁴⁸ See Chapter Four for examples.

⁴⁴⁹ Biesboer, "Haarlems zilver" exhibition brochure, (Frans Halsmuseum: Haarlem, 2015).

Ursula, and Matthew; and Luke, Agnes, and Augustine.⁴⁵⁰ The fact that Ursula appears individually and again in a grouping suggests that the patron felt a special connection to that saint—a virgin saint often adored by *kloppen*. Frequently, *kloppen* gifted silver to priests upon their initiation into communities like Den Hoeck or upon the beginning of a new pastor's tenure, and the silver would remain in the priest's personal property if he traveled to another parish.⁴⁵¹

Ebbekin also made a silver tower monstrance in 1649, so called for its shape, which ends in a spire topped with an orb and crucifix (fig. 82). The Passion imagery is mirrored both literally, in the crucifixion scene on the monstrance's foot, and figuratively, in the consecrated host that would have been displayed inside. In the center space, two angels support a crescent moon above which the host would rest, and in an upper compartment the Virgin appears in an aureole, completing the Immaculate Conception iconography.⁴⁵² To either side of the tower are Sts. Willibrord and Boniface, patron saints of the Netherlands, announcing both the Catholic and Dutch identity of the monstrance and the worshippers. Such delicate and symbolic design suggests that Haarlem's *huiskerk* patrons had a sophisticated understanding of Catholic doctrines about the Eucharist, saints, the Virgin, and an appreciation for liturgical silver as a meditation aid during Mass.

⁴⁵⁰ See online catalogue of Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, inv nrs. oz 75-658a, oz 75-658b, oz 75-658c, oz 75-658d, oz 75-658e, oz 75-658f. <http://www.franshalsmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/>

⁴⁵¹ Pieter Biesboer, "Een Rooms-katholieke kunstenaarsfamilie in Haarlem en hun kerkelijke opdrachten," *Haarlem Jaarboek* (2007): 70.

⁴⁵² The Virgin on a crescent moon signals her dual role as both mother of God, sinless from conception, and the Apocalyptic Woman described in Revelation, but her ability to defeat Satan comes from the fact that she bore Jesus, divine and human at once, who would be represented in the monstrance by the crucifixes and the Host.

Pieter C. Ebbekin was the nephew of Frans de Grebber and first cousin of Pieter de Grebber on De Grebber's mother's side.⁴⁵³ Both men contributed to the decoration of St. Gommaruskerk in Enkhuizen, which was led by Maria de Grebber's brother-in-law Augustinus Wolff.⁴⁵⁴ In 1629, Wolff presided over the marriage of his brother and Maria, and another of Maria, Pieter, and Ebbekin's maternal uncles, Dominicus van Lynhoven, served as witness.⁴⁵⁵ Van Lynhoven was also a silversmith, known for inventive religious iconography. The Frans Halsmuseum has an ampoule tray by Van Lynhoven with a relief depicting Christ washing the disciples' feet before the Last Supper in the center of the platter and Passion instruments around the rim (fig. 83). Two ampoules were typically used in Mass—which itself was a recreation of the Last Supper—one for wine, and one for the water with which the priest washes his hands. Given the foot-washing motif, Lynhoven's ampoule tray was likely used along with the water ampoule. Whether or not this ampoule tray originated at Den Hoeck, it reveals a tradition of sophisticated and deliberate Passion iconography in Haarlem's Catholic liturgical silver and the ways that iconography and Eucharistic function intertwined.

Van Lynhoven was also related by marriage to the Bagijn family, an artistic family that included sculptors, silversmiths, and carpenters, one of whom, Claes Pietersz. Bagijn, would be the father of Willem Claesz. Heda. Given Heda's frequent inclusion of elaborate silver vessels in his still life paintings, it stands to reason that he used his family

⁴⁵³ Biesboer 2007, 64–5.

⁴⁵⁴ See Biesboer 2007, 73. As previously mentioned, Maria de Grebber also portrayed Augustinus as a priest during a short stint at Den Hoeck; although he returned to Enkhuizen, his portrait remained at Den Hoeck.

⁴⁵⁵ Biesboer 2007, 73.

member's secular creations as examples.⁴⁵⁶ His triptych for Den Hoeck also includes a gold tower monstrance held by St. Clare and a silver ointment jar in front of Mary Magdalene (figs. 65–66). Just as in the case of the embroidered garments in Abraham/Hendrick Bloemaert's painting of *Simeon*, the silver in Heda's triptych would remind viewers at Den Hoeck of the importance of these objects to the celebration of Mass and of the interconnectedness of decorative programs used for meditation. Paintings, engravings, textiles, and silver worked together in St. Bernardus in Den Hoeck to reinforce concepts from the pastors' sermons, which were further enhanced and interpreted by the *kloppen* manuscripts and devotional engravings used alongside them. Such a complex relationship between all of the visual arts was mirrored by the webs of social connections between priests, *kloppen*, painters, silversmiths, engravers, and patrons.

⁴⁵⁶ Biesboer 2007, 69–71. Jan Pietersz. Bagijn was a sculptor and brother-in-law to Dominicus van Lynhoven by marriage, and brother to Claes Pietersz. Bagijn, father of Heda. Jan Bagijn's sons were Dominicus, godson of Van Lynhoven, and Pieter Jansz. Bagijn, another silversmith who married Maritge Cornelisdr., daughter of painter Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem and inheritor of his collection of paintings, prints, sculptures, plaster casts, and other studio items. Pieter Jansz. Bagijn had a cousin who joined the priesthood, and at his death in 1673, painter Jan de Bray was executor of his estate, which included silver monstrances.

Chapter Four: The Decorative Programs of 't Hart and De Ster

Sybilla Fonteyn and Van de Velde's Passion series

In 1664, Sybilla Fonteyn (d. 1678), a *klopje* who lived at the Begijnhof, paid landscape painter and congregant of 't Hart Adriaen van de Velde (1636–1672) 250 guilders for “five pictures of the same size depicting the mystery of Christ's Passion” that were destined for 't Hart.⁴⁵⁷ Fonteyn gave the finished paintings to Petrus Parmentier. Known as “Bellitje,” Fonteyn was the great-granddaughter of one the last Catholic burgomeesters of Amsterdam, Joost Buyck (1505–1588) and was wealthy enough to have her own maidservant, Annetje van Doorn, who received a 150-guilder per annum pension after Fonteyn's death.⁴⁵⁸ Eeckhout describes Fonteyn as an “excellent benefactress” for donating the paintings and presumably providing other financial support to 't Hart.⁴⁵⁹ Fonteyn was one of about twenty women who assisted Parmentier at 't Hart as of 1664, several of whom donated works of art, silver, or liturgical garments either to 't Hart or to De Ster, the parish Parmentier later served.⁴⁶⁰

The moments from Christ's Passion that Van de Velde painted for Fonteyn were *Christ in Gethsemane*, the *Flagellation*, the *Crowning with Thorns*, *Christ Carrying the*

⁴⁵⁷ See A.K. de Meijer, *Augustinian filiae spirituales in Amsterdam During the Seventeenth Century* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Ordinis S. Augustini, 1997), 56. Translated from J. Uutten Eeckhout's records for 't Hart and De Ster, 1664–1682. Eeckhout's parish records mention the commission: “quinque picturas eiusdem formae in quibus depicta sunt mysteria passionis Christi, quarum singular constitit quinquaginta florenis.”

⁴⁵⁸ See Boers in Boers et al., 64; Robert Schillemans, “Terug op Solder: de vijf passiescenes van Adriaen van de Velde,” *'t Haantje: Nieuwsbrief van Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder*, no. 29 (2007): 5. Schillemans also suggests that she may have been married late in life—this would indicate that she left the lay religious community.

⁴⁵⁹ Eeckhout quoted in De Meijer, 56.

⁴⁶⁰ See Schillemans 2007, 4; A.A.E. Vels Heijn, “Verborgten vrouwen: geestelijke maagden in Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder,” (Amsterdam: Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder, 2007), 10.

Cross, and the *Lamentation of Christ* (figs. 84–88). 't Hart has not undergone major structural changes since the time of the paintings' commission, hence one can easily fit the five-part Passion series into its probable original setting along one of the side walls.⁴⁶¹ Van de Velde composed each canvas with a simplified horizontal composition and with figures emerging from a dark background. In *Gethsemane*, Christ kneels at center with His arms spread, while an angel seated on a cloud presents Him a small chalice. Christ remains unaware of figures entering the garden behind Him at the right. *The Flagellation* also shows Christ kneeling at center, wearing only a loincloth. As He looks up in despair, one soldier binds Christ's hands and two others strike dynamic poses as they prepare the scourges. The *Crowning with Thorns* features Christ seated and wearing the purple cape given to Him in ridicule. His head hangs to his left as a soldier forces the crown of thorns onto His head. As one kneeling tormenter presents Christ a reed and sticks out his tongue, a second kneels and holds his nose in disgust. In *Christ Carrying the Cross*, the cross forms a strong diagonal as Christ struggles under its weight while Simon of Cyrenia assists Him. Veronica, with her back to the viewer, kneels in the left foreground and Christ returns her gaze. Finally, in the *Lamentation*, Christ's emaciated body lies on a white shroud in front of the cross; the Virgin kneels at His head with eyes closed and arms crossing her chest. Mary Magdalene holds up Christ's right hand and looks toward a praying St. John, while, at left, Joseph of Arimathea wipes his teary eyes with his robe.

The series served a vital function as meditative aid during Mass. Indeed, Parmentier felt so attached to the five paintings that he brought them along when he relocated to De Ster in 1671. An early nineteenth-century lithograph confirms that the

⁴⁶¹ Van Eck 2008, 179.

five paintings occupied the side walls in their second home as well (fig. 89).⁴⁶² The series is in such poor condition today that it is difficult to imagine how it must have looked to Fonteyn, to Parmentier, or to lay viewers in seventeenth-century Amsterdam. The *Crowning With Thorns* scene has received a restoration treatment that strengthens the tenebrism, anatomical details of the figures, and bright colors of the clothing, and the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder hopes to clean and restore the remaining paintings, which are quite dark and suffer from paint losses in areas.⁴⁶³

Time and scholarly opinion have not been kind to the Passion series. Van de Velde was the subject of a monographic exhibition at the Rijksmuseum in 2016, but the Passion paintings were not included due to their condition, and Bart Cornelis described them as having an "infelicitous mix of Caravaggesque and Flemish baroque elements [that] leaves the viewer ill at ease," suggesting the paintings' appearance may also be due to studio assistance.⁴⁶⁴ Other reasons cited by scholars for dismissing the series include Van de Velde's supposed lack of experience in history painting, belied by the existence of a few earlier religious works, and the idea that 250 guilders was not a high enough compensation.⁴⁶⁵ This last argument is also invalid, as 250 guilders was roughly an annual salary for an artisan, Fonteyn was wealthy enough to pay an appropriate price, and Van de Velde was likely willing to charge less due to his affiliation with the parish.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶² Ibid., 128, 179.

⁴⁶³ Robert Schillemans, curator at Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder, in conversation with author, November 28, 2016.

⁴⁶⁴ Cornelis, 24.

⁴⁶⁵ Schillemans 2007, 5.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.; Eric Jan Sluijter, *Rembrandt's Rivals: History Painting in Amsterdam 1630–1650*, *Oculi: Studies in the Arts of the Low Countries* 14, edited by Sluijter, Koenraad Jonckheere and Stephanie S. Dickey (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 2015), 170–171. Moreover, several mid-sized history paintings by Van de Velde's contemporary, history painter

Van de Velde had no reason not to put forth a good effort on the paintings, as he and his family attended 't Hart and would see them weekly. More importantly, an attractive religious series could serve as a calling card for the artist and potentially lead to more *huiskerk* commissions. Rather than focusing on the condition of the series, I want to suggest that not only was Van de Velde's connection to the Catholic community important to his being chosen for the Passion commission, but also that a 1663 allegorical painting for a Catholic client had previously demonstrated Van de Velde's ability and predilection for conveying sophisticated theological themes.

The ability to discourse about religious themes was evidently pivotal to the patronage of artists like Van de Velde. Van Eck has proven that Catholic artists received more commissions for *huiskerken* than their Protestant contemporaries because of their spiritual investment in the subject matter and personal relationships with priests.⁴⁶⁷ Born to a Reformed family, Van de Velde converted to Catholicism before marrying Maria Pietersz. Ouderkerck in 1657.⁴⁶⁸ All of the couple's five children were baptized in Catholic *huiskerken*, including three at 't Hart: Eva in 1664, Sara in 1666, and Aleida in 1667.⁴⁶⁹ The artist must have known Parmentier before his commission, and perhaps attended one of the various stations at which Parmentier served before 1663. While Sybilla Fonteyn paid for the Passion series, Parmentier, in accordance with common

Claes Moyaert, were valued by fellow history painters at 30 to 63 guilders each, making the Passion series of average valuation for the time.

⁴⁶⁷ Van Eck, "The Artist's Religion: Paintings Commissioned for Clandestine Catholic Churches in the Northern Netherlands, 1600–1800," *Simiolus* 27, no. 1/2 (1999): 81.

⁴⁶⁸ Bart Cornelis, *Adriaen van de Velde: Dutch Master of Landscape* (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2016), 13.

⁴⁶⁹ Schillemans 2007, 4.

practice, likely supplied the program.⁴⁷⁰ When Van de Velde worked on the Passion series, he was aware that he would later look to his own paintings for spiritual guidance during Mass. The cycle, then, was an act of devotion very much like summarizing and recording sermons in manuscripts for later meditation, a process with which Fonteyn, as a beguine, would have been familiar.

Van de Velde completed his most unusual religious painting, *Allegory (Innocence Between the Virtues and the Vices)*, in 1663, the year prior to the 't Hart commission (fig. 90). Cornelis has suggested that this painting was possibly intended for the Amsterdam *huiskerk* known as Geloof, Hoop en Liefde, since the three virtues feature prominently on the left side of the painting. Moreover, Van de Velde's son Adriaen was baptized there in 1670, as well as a niece in 1671. The provenance of the painting, however, is unknown and its Cornelis argues that its relatively small size and complicated iconography make it a better fit for a rectory than a church.⁴⁷¹ *Allegory* depicts the female figure of Innocence shrouded in white, seated at the top of a set of steps and looking toward a Caritas figure with three small children, an angel who points toward heaven, a shrouded woman representing Hope, and Faith with an anchor. Opposite the virtues are elaborately dressed

⁴⁷⁰ Van Eck 2008, 130, 203; Knipping vol. 2, 369, plate 357; Waterworth, 234. Van Eck recounts an instance in which Jacob de Wit, prolific painter of Catholic altarpieces, received specific written instruction from a Father Broedersen in Delft, although the commission was financed by a *klopje*. No extant documentation substantiates Parmentier's involvement in Van de Velde's series, but he did provide a program for a later altarpiece, *All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed*, discussed below.

⁴⁷¹ Cornelis, 23. Presumably, priests would have a better understanding of the allegorical concepts represented in the painting, while laypeople could be distracted by the lack of Biblical narrative and lavishly adorned female figures, who do not represent saints to emulate. I disagree that the average lay viewer of paintings made for *huiskerken* would have only a rudimentary understanding of allegories and theology. It is, however, possible that a priest or another clerical authority would not have approved Van de Velde's *Allegory* for placement in a church, as tradition required, since it does not follow the Council of Trent's recommendations for clarity in narrative and focus on important saints.

figures representing vices, including “Lady World,” a typical allegorical figure of vanity, with a feather in her hair and an African servant. The classicizing composition consists of neatly arranged, detailed figures in a variety of poses and wearing bold colors, leading up the stairs toward the central figure of Innocence.

While Van de Velde had developed a reputation as a landscape and animal painter, and was praised for the figures he contributed to others’ landscapes, this allegorical history painting with many full-length figures and no landscape backdrop announced his versatility and his ability to communicate erudite topics, presumably as directed by a patron.⁴⁷² It is possible that Parmentier or Fonteyn saw or knew of this allegorical work and selected Van de Velde for the Passion series because of it. *Allegory* advertised Van de Velde as a logical choice for a series of religious works that served a meditative function in the celebration of Mass.

Van de Velde used live models for the figures in his religious history paintings. He typically began with studies of nude models for correct proportions and body positions, and later repeated the study with the model clothed. William Robinson remarked that Van de Velde was acutely interested in the human body during the 1660s, a period in which his preparatory studies contributed to the “novel feeling for the vitality and inner animation of the individual.”⁴⁷³ Cornelis claims that “Few artists seem to have been quite so obsessive in the care they took to prepare compositions, groupings within those compositions, and individual motifs.”⁴⁷⁴ For example, when planning *The Lamentation* for ’t Hart, Van de Velde completed a preparatory drawing of St. John

⁴⁷² Ibid., 35.

⁴⁷³ William W. Robinson, “Preparatory Drawings by Adriaen van de Velde,” *Master Drawings* 17, no. 1 (Spring, 1979): 10–12.

⁴⁷⁴ Cornelis, 30.

weeping (fig. 91). While the drawing depicts St. John, in the painting, Van de Velde used this posture for Joseph of Arimathea instead, and placed the figure of St. John on the ground. Further, a chalk drawing of a nude woman has been linked to Van de Velde's *Annunciation*, completed in 1667 for another parish (figs. 92–93).⁴⁷⁵

Van de Velde's interest in the rendering of human anatomy speaks to the special concern Dutch theologians had for the correct and convincing portrayal of solemn themes like the Passion. A 1591 treatise by Johannes a Porta recommended that painters portray Christ's sacrifice *nae d' leven*, or "after life," for maximum emotional impact.⁴⁷⁶ In this way, Northern naturalism deepened the theological character of the image. Since man was made in the image of God, one must picture God in terms of mankind. Additionally, the Amsterdam history painter Gerard de Lairese asserted in his *Groot Schilderboek* that a long-standing artistic tradition made anthropomorphism of God acceptable. Lairese further proclaimed, "a painter has no nearer expressions in such representations where God himself is acting, than to exhibit his figure in an human shape, as best agreeing with those likenesses."⁴⁷⁷

Along with his meticulous figure and composition studies, Van de Velde also revisited compositions and increased the level of detail in them. He made a second version of *Gethsemane*, possibly for another *huiskerk*, in 1665 (fig. 94). The second *Gethsemane* is signed, dated, and is not only larger but also in better condition than the original.⁴⁷⁸ Most importantly, Van de Velde reversed the composition, and adjusted his

⁴⁷⁵ Lammertse, "The Annunciation," in Blankert et al. 1999, 322; Cornelis, 30.

⁴⁷⁶ Johannes a Porta, *D'net der beeltstormers* (Antwerp, 1591). Quoted in Freedberg 1988, 78, 159.

⁴⁷⁷ Gerard de Lairese, *The Art of Painting*, trans. J.F. Fritsch (London, 1738), 471–2.

⁴⁷⁸ See Schillemans, "Christus in de Hof van Gethsemane' van Adriaen van de Velde," *Bulletin Stichting Vrienden van Museum Amstelkring Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder* 19 (2000): 13, 15.

use of light to give more emphasis to the figures of Christ and the angel than in the darkened first version. In the version for 't Hart, Christ holds up His hands reluctantly as if to reject the chalice, while in the 1665 painting, He prays to heaven and seems to gain confidence. The angel physically supports and guides Christ in the 1665 version, which is a detail described only in the Gospel of Luke.⁴⁷⁹

Van de Velde's compositional changes in the 1665 *Gethsemane* not only strengthen the message of Christ's acceptance of His fate and trust in God, but also relate to Van de Velde's shift toward an increasingly classicizing style. Robert Schillemans, curator at the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder, noted similarities between the positions of Christ and the angel in Van de Velde's second *Gethsemane* and the positions in Karel Dujardin's *Tobias and the Angel* from 1663/4 (fig. 95).⁴⁸⁰ The two artists may have collaborated, and at least knew of one another's work, as evidenced by their simultaneous development of classicizing compositions and motifs like flowing drapery around the same time.⁴⁸¹ The clarity, balance, and natural movement of such classicizing works appealed to Catholic patrons, who prioritized effective communication of religious narratives, but the style increasingly appealed to patrons of secular works as well.

Amsterdam had no shortage of classicizing history painters from which to choose in 1664, but Van de Velde's connection to the parish would have ensured timely

In 2000, the second *Gethsemane* was available for purchase from a Jesuit monastery for 475 guilders, but the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder could not produce the funds.

⁴⁷⁹ Schillemans 2000, 15.

⁴⁸⁰ Schillemans 2000, 15. Schillemans also points out Van de Velde's angel's resemblance to another of Dujardin's angels from the 1660s.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid., 16. A bust of Christ's face at the Bayerische Staatsgemaldegammlungen also resembles Van de Velde's Christ in the second version, but it is unclear when he painted the bust, which appears too finished to be a study for the 1665 painting. Hofstede de Groot attributed the bust of Christ to Dujardin on the basis of its similarity to the latter's *Peter in Denial* from 1663/4, but Schillemans believes the bust is by Van de Velde.

execution, adherence to the patron's requests, and personal investment in the job. Van de Velde was also not alone in receiving such a commission despite his specialty in another genre of painting, as the previous examples of Willem Claesz. Heda and Philips Wouwerman have shown.

Just as the painters who decorated Den Hoeck sought inspiration from devotional engravings for compositions and figures, Van de Velde seems to have looked to *Dominicae Passionis Mysteria*, a series of twenty-four engravings by Antonius II Wierix after designs by Maerten de Vos.⁴⁸² Originally published in 1585, second and third editions of Wierix's prints appeared in two illustrated Bibles printed in Amsterdam: Claes Jansz. Visscher's 1643 *Theatrum biblicum*, and Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje's 1646 *Grooten figuer-bibel*, which increases the likelihood that Van de Velde knew these images.⁴⁸³ Though the vertically-oriented engravings include architectural settings not seen in Van de Velde's paintings, Van de Velde adopted similar figural groupings for his *Crowning with Thorns* and *Christ Carrying the Cross* (figs. 96–97).

Even if Van de Velde did not own or use a set of Wierix's Passion engravings, his patron, Sybilla Fonteyn, certainly did. Women at Amsterdam's Begijnhof recorded and decorated sermon manuscripts in much the same way that their peers at Den Hoeck did. A manuscript of Leonardus Marius's sermons possibly recorded by beguine Aeltje Jans van der Poel (d. 1656) includes seven of Theodoor Galle's round scenes from the life of

⁴⁸² Van Eck 2008, 181. Sluijter 2015, 284. This series was already a popular source for artists working on Catholic subjects well before 1664. In 1635, Amsterdam portraitist Thomas de Keyser completed a *Crucifixion* and a *Resurrection* for a Catholic patron, for which he sought inspiration from his recently acquired copy of *Dominicae Passionis Mysteria*.

⁴⁸³ Zsuzsanna van Ruyven-Zeman and Marjolein Leesburg, *The Wierix Family, Part I*, vol. 59 of *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700*, ed. Jan van der Stock and Marjolein Leesburg (Rotterdam: Sound and Vision Publishers, 2003), 88.

Christ.⁴⁸⁴ The *Lamentation* and *Carrying of the Cross* engravings, in particular, resonate with Van de Velde's compositions (figs. 98–99). As is the case with many print series that appear in sermon manuscripts, Theodoor Galle's Passion scenes are out of order in the collection of Marius's sermons. The beguines who recorded and studied these sermons associated certain moments from Christ's Passion with points from their pastors' sermons, and their reinterpretation of print series suggests that the emotional or spiritual significance of a scene was more important than its place in a Biblical chronology.

One especially impressive manuscript from the Begijnhof compiled the sermons of Fr. Jacobus Oleus (Jacob Oly, the brother of Trijn Jans. Oly and pastor of the Amsterdam station De Lelie), the writings of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Cyprianus, and Ambrosius on Mary's virginity, funeral sermons given by Oleus for spiritual virgins, and 13 further sermons on the Passion from Lent.⁴⁸⁵ The anonymous owner of the manuscript decorated it with no fewer than 52 devotional engravings.⁴⁸⁶ After many images of individual saints and emblematic images depicting meditative themes like the seven "bloodlettings" of Christ, the narrative scenes pasted into the sermons focus exclusively on the Passion. Theodoor Galle's *Mocking of Christ* from another of his Passion series appears amidst Fr. Oleus's Lenten sermons (fig. 100). In Galle's scene, the kneeling figure who hands Christ a reed mirrors the pose of Van de Velde's figure in his *Mocking of Christ*, suggesting that a figural type was popularized through devotional engravings

⁴⁸⁴ See Verheggen, 113; Anneke Sanderman, "Voor wie het leest of hoor lezen: over de betrokkenheid van de Amsterdamse begijn Aeltje Jans vande Poel bij de totstandkoming van een bundel preken van Leonardus Marius," *Ons Geestelijke Erf: driemaandelijks tijdschrift voor de geschiedenis van de vroomheid in de Nederlanden* 84, no. 2–3 (June–September 2013): 290–309.

⁴⁸⁵ Verheggen, 113. See also chapter two.

⁴⁸⁶ See Verheggen, 112–114. Verheggen has published all of the extant prints—some may have fallen out over time.

like Galle's. The beguine creator of the manuscript also selected least 10 scenes from the Wierix family's Passion series after designs by De Vos, and she repeated Hieronymus Wierix's engraving of De Vos's *Gethsemane* scene three times, with few pages separating the images (fig. 101). This repetition indicates that the scene resonated with the owner of the manuscript and perhaps helped her to meditate on the content of the accompanying sermon.

The closest compositional relationship exists between Van de Velde's *Lamentation* and an anonymous oval-shaped engraving of the same subject from the Begijnhof manuscript (fig. 102). In the engraving, the figures of St. John and Mary Magdalene hold up Christ's wounded hand, point toward it, and pray, just as they do in Van de Velde's canvas. Although the figures' roles are reversed in the engraving, the tilts of their heads, hand positions, and relationship to one another and to Christ's body are so similar as to suggest that if the engraving itself was not a source for Van de Velde, the two artists shared a common visual source. This visual connection suggests that paintings for *huiskerken* could be used in a similar way as the devotional engravings that guided lay religious women during their required daily meditation.

I believe that the source for the anonymous engraver in terms of the positions of St. John and Mary Magdalene is Anthony van Dyck's *Lamentation*, 1635, intended for the tomb of Italian abbot Cesare Alessandro Scaglia, Count of Verrua, in the Friars Minor church in Antwerp (fig. 103).⁴⁸⁷ Both Van Dyck and the engraver depicted Mary

⁴⁸⁷ "The Lamentation of the Dead Christ," inv. 404, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp, http://www.kmska.be/en/collectie/highlights/Bewening_Christus.html; Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Most Eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century*. Edited and translated by Edward G. Hawke (Cambridge, UK: Chadwyck-Healey, 1976), 461.

supporting the body of Christ in her lap, with a white shroud beneath Him. Van de Velde's Christ has been laid directly on the ground, but, like Van Dyck's Christ, is in an inelegant, broken position, with His head toward His shoulder. In the anonymous engraving and in both paintings, a figure holds Christ's hand and points to its wound.⁴⁸⁸ Van Dyck portrayed St. John showing the hand to two mourning angels, while the engraver portrayed St. John showing Christ's hand to Mary Magdalene. Van de Velde further altered the image by reversing the figures' roles: in his painting, Mary Magdalene points out Christ's hand to St. John.

This subtle transformation of previous compositions may indicate that Van de Velde was familiar with both Van Dyck's 1635 altarpiece, perhaps via a reproductive engraving, and the anonymous devotional engraving from the Begijnhof. The iconographic shift produced by switching St. John and Mary Magdalene also suggests that Van de Velde was familiar with Van Dyck's similar *Lamentation* altarpiece, painted in 1628 for St. Catherine's Beguinage (fig. 104). In this work, Van Dyck features Mary Magdalene as the only figure touching Christ and includes St. John by her side rather than angels. Sarah Joan Moran has described Van Dyck's 1628 altarpiece as both a donation to the church for his future tomb and a gift of artistic invention for his sister Cornelia, a beguine who took vows there in 1618.⁴⁸⁹ Moran argues that Van Dyck did not include his sister's portrait in the work in order to emphasize the "everywoman" aspect of

⁴⁸⁸ Van de Velde's composition is reversed from that of Van Dyck, which suggests that he saw an engraving of Van Dyck's altarpiece.

⁴⁸⁹ Sarah Joan Moran, "A cui ne fece dono': Art, Exchange, and Sensory Engagement in Anthony van Dyck's *Lamentation* for the Antwerp Beguines," in *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2013), 222, 234.

Mary Magdalene and to encourage beguine viewers to repent as the Magdalene did.⁴⁹⁰ In a similar way, the women in Van de Velde's paintings—the Virgin, Mary Magdalene, and Veronica—lack individualized features, and Veronica even turns her back to the audience, allowing the viewer to put him or herself in the place of this “everywoman” figure as a comforter of Christ before His death.

Previous scholars have assumed that Van de Velde employed a mix of styles due to his lack of experience as a religious history painter.⁴⁹¹ Instead, I argue that Van de Velde's Passion series demonstrates familiarity with altarpieces and devotional engravings made in Antwerp and used by lay religious women, like his own patron. Emulation and imitation of well-known and reproduced altarpieces was not reserved for inexperienced painters, but rather was commonplace for religious history painters of the Golden Age.⁴⁹² Furthermore, as previously discussed, adopting another master's style when painting a religious scene could have been interpreted as a meditative act, in which the artist humbles himself just as Christ did in His human incarnation.⁴⁹³ In addition to

⁴⁹⁰ Moran 2013, 239, 252–53; Schillemans 2007, 10–11. Schillemans notes that it was uncommon for a portrait of a beguine or *klopje* patron in the Northern Netherlands to appear in a religious painting, and that even in the Southern Netherlands modesty and humility frequently prevented these women from commissioning portraits. Sybilla Fonteyn's portrait is not included in Van de Velde's series because she was not the primary viewer of the series, nor was it intended for an all-female audience, the way other decorative programs in beguinages and communities of virgins were. See Chapter 3 for more on paintings made for primarily female audiences.

⁴⁹¹ See Van Eck 2008, 178–179.

⁴⁹² Sluijter 2015, 238. Amsterdam was also home to several important collections of recent Italian paintings owned by wealthy elites, including works by Titian, Annibale Caracci, Caravaggio, Guido Reni, and followers of Caravaggio like Jusepe de Ribera and Bartolomeo Manfredi. Sluijter discusses the importance of the collections of Nicholas Sohier, Gerard Reynst, Balthasar II and Joan Coymans, Lucas van Uffelen, and Alphonso Lopez for Rembrandt and his contemporaries. The range of available examples, from Titian's Venetian impasto and color, to Caracci's and Guido's graceful figures, to Caravaggio and his followers' tenebrism and violence, inspired many Dutch painters in the mid-seventeenth century, Van de Velde possibly among them.

⁴⁹³ See chapter three; Melion in Falkenberg 2007, 379–425.

inspiration from Antwerp, Van de Velde's usage of strong contrasts between light and dark and attention to human anatomy fit into both the Caravaggesque and classicizing idioms popular in commissions for Dutch Catholic *huiskerken*.

Like the Utrecht Caravaggisti, Van de Velde adopted strong chiaroscuro to lend drama and emotionality to his Passion scenes. Van de Velde focused his compositions by concentrating light on a few key figures in each scene.⁴⁹⁴ For example, in the *Flagellation*, the brightly illuminated body of Christ is a foil for His foreboding surroundings and his shadowy aggressors. Light and dark take on moral significance. Similarly, in the *Lamentation*, Christ's skin appears gleaming white, simultaneously conjuring the naturalistic pallor of death and the supernatural Light of the World personified by Christ.⁴⁹⁵

Along with intense tenebrism, Van de Velde adapted a powerful motif from Caravaggesque painting in another version of the *Mocking of Christ*, now in the Museo Municipal de Castrelos in Vigo, Spain (fig. 105). The date of this version is unknown, but it is significantly smaller than the 't Hart version and has a more complex composition.⁴⁹⁶ Notable additions to the Vigos painting include a tracery window to the left and the

⁴⁹⁴ Knipping vol. 2, 424. Knipping suggests that Dutch and Flemish masters were particularly effective at utilizing contrasts of dark and light to emphasize main figures and to imbue works "with a special feeling," in contrast to Spanish Baroque painting, in which extreme tenebrism leads to the impression of an apparition rather than a historic event.

⁴⁹⁵ Knipping vol. 2, 431; Van Eck 1993/4, 217. Knipping asserts that Northern painters of Catholic subjects merely adapted an existing stylistic preference for naturalistic, nocturnal lighting, in the tradition of Adam Elsheimer. Van Eck has commented on Knipping's dismissal of the spiritual significance of light and shadow.

⁴⁹⁶ See Enrique Valdivieso, *Pintura Holandesa del Siglo XVII en España* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1973), 158–9, 381, plate 218. Schillemans and some Spanish art historians agree on its authenticity; a partially legible signature resembles others of Van de Velde's signatures. Valdivieso suggests that this painting, which has been in Vigo since at least 1937, is later than the 1664 Passion series.

eyeglasses of the older man kneeling at left, who in the 't Hart version appears to be holding his nose. The spectacles change the meaning of the man's gesture entirely; rather than immaturely taunting Christ, the man in the Vigos version attempts to see Him more clearly. This motif has a rich history in Northern religious painting, often symbolizing the spiritual "blindness" of unbelievers or the moment that a convert "sees" for the first time.⁴⁹⁷ For example, Utrecht Caravaggesque painter Hendrick ter Brugghen's *Calling of Matthew* features an elderly man peering through glasses at coins and a ledger, completely unaware of Christ's presence in the room or of Matthew's revelation, and thus spiritually "blind" (fig. 106).⁴⁹⁸ In a similar way, Van de Velde's figure could be interpreted either as unable to see that Christ was truly the Savior of the world, or as a troubled soul in the midst of renouncing his old ways and turning to Christ.

It is entirely possible that Van de Velde originally painted eyeglasses on the same kneeling figure in the 1664 *Mocking of Christ* at 't Hart, and that the glasses disappeared due to abrasion or repainting. In any case, the fact that the Vigos version includes an identical figure in a virtually identical position, holding spectacles on his nose, indicates that Van de Velde saw this man as a transitional figure between Christ's evil tormentors and Christian viewers. The Christian viewer's sins, or their reluctance to stop sinful acts, crucify Christ anew, an idea which was reinforced in seventeenth-century sermons on the Passion.⁴⁹⁹ The kneeling man was both a cautionary tale and an example for parishioners

⁴⁹⁷ See Seaman 2012, 125–8. Seaman lists Jan van Eyck's *Madonna of Canon van der Paele*, Rubens's *The Real Presence in the Holy Sacrament*, and genre paintings like Jacob Cornelisz. Van Oostanen's *The Glasses Seller* as examples of different usages of eyeglasses as symbols of folly, spiritual blindness, or (in the case of removing glasses) true sight.

⁴⁹⁸ See Leonard J. Slatkes and Wayne E. Franits, *The Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen, 1588–1629* (Philadelphia, PA: J. Benjamins, 2007); Seaman, 125.

⁴⁹⁹ See discussion of the Penitent Soul as seen in sermon manuscripts from Den Hoeck in Chapter 3.

to follow: even those who previously doubted will be forgiven if they turn away from sin and open their eyes to salvation.

It is remarkable that Fonteyn gifted a series of paintings intended for the side walls of a newly built *huiskerk*, when such items as liturgical silver, altar cloths, or a tabernacle were necessary for the celebration of Mass. The Passion series was not regarded as mere decoration, however. Van Eck contends that the closest literary source for the five Passion scenes is the 1651 booklet compiled by Amsterdam priest Andreas van der Kruyssen, entitled *De Misse, Haere korte uytlegginghe* (Mass, her short explanation). The booklet connects the priest's actions during Mass to illustrated moments from the Passion (figs. 107–111). Thus, one reflects on Gethemane when the priest enters and recites the Penitential Rite, on the Flagellation during the consecration of the Host, on the Crowning with Thorns when the priest covers the chalice after consecration, on Christ's Meeting with Veronica when the priest puts his hands over the chalice, and on the Lamentation during communion.⁵⁰⁰ *De Misse* unquestionably influenced Parmentier's conception of the cycle, yet this is not a simple case of cause and effect. By its very nature as a meditation aid, *De Misse* conjured thoughts and reflections beyond its explicit content. The booklet, like Van de Velde's paintings, prompted the faithful to contemplate the deeper significance of Mass, and specifically reinforced an important Counter-Reformation precept about the Eucharist.

A basic premise of Catholic doctrine is the belief in transubstantiation. The Council of Trent, in its 1547 session on the Eucharist, clarified that during the sacrament, the priest takes on the role of Christ and thus repeats His sacrifice anew, a position at

⁵⁰⁰ Van Eck 2008, 181; Schillemans 2007, 7.

odds with that of Protestants, who believe that Christ sacrificed Himself only once to save sinners. The Council stressed that the priest's actions were not mere superstition or signs, but mimetic gestures that helped the laity understand the mystery of the Eucharist.⁵⁰¹ Given this context, one can understand how Van der Kruyssen's *De Misse* booklet encouraged readers to consider Christ's sacrifice in all of its incarnations, both in the Biblical past and in the present. In much the same way, Van de Velde's paintings not only referred to the story of the Passion as a historical event, but also supplemented the real performance of the sacrifice taking place in the present. Parmentier's chosen subject matter reminds his flock as they prepare to receive the body of Christ that as members of the true Church they were the privileged recipients of true salvation.

Catholics in Amsterdam had good reason to believe in the transformative and salvific power of the Eucharist and its impact on their worldly existence. Proof took the form of the Miracle of 1345, newly celebrated and promoted by Leonardus Marius in his 1639 booklet *Amstelredams eer ende opcomen*.⁵⁰² Boëtius A. Bolswert's engravings in this volume illustrate the Miracle and later miraculous or advantageous events linked to the sacred Host that survived a man's digestive system and multiple fires (figs. 2, 3). Bolswert's engravings include a scene of a seventeenth-century priest giving communion, one of a priest hearing confession, and angels kneeling and holding a monstrance with a consecrated host much like one that worshippers likely saw in their parish (figs. 112–

⁵⁰¹ Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation: Incarnation and Liturgy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 217, 222, 227.

⁵⁰² See Chapter one.

114). These familiar scenes of familiar moments in their worship practices helped the reader link the benefits of a fourteenth-century miracle to their own time and place.⁵⁰³

Van de Velde's series and its relationship to devotional literature and engravings reflects the meditative practice, made popular during the Devotio Moderna movement and reinvigorated during the Counter-Reformation, of envisioning moments from the Passion during prayer and the celebration of Mass. Moreover, Parmentier's request for five scenes likely relates to a Devotio Moderna tradition of composing sermons in five parts to represent the five wounds of Christ.⁵⁰⁴ Jacobus Oleus, whose sermons were recorded in the anonymous Begijnhof manuscript, also recommended meditating on just a few points, in imitation of the apostles taking grains of wisdom from Christ Himself.⁵⁰⁵

In terms of iconography, Van de Velde's series also looks back to Northern traditions of previous centuries. As discussed in Chapter Three, archaism in composition and iconography on the part of seventeenth-century Dutch artists working for *huiskerken* can be attributed to several goals of the Counter-Reformation Church in the Netherlands. Artists adopted recognizably outdated compositions, iconography, and emotional details in order to remind Catholic viewers of their glorious past before the Reformation, to emphasize the materiality of images so as to prevent idolatry, and to encourage a visceral connection between the viewer and the figures and stories presented.⁵⁰⁶ Van de Velde's

⁵⁰³ Leonardus Marius, *Amstelredams eer ende opcomen, door de denckwaerdighe miraklen aldaer geschied, aen ende door het H. Sacrament des Altaers. Anno 1345* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1639), Museum Catharijneconvent BMH od172.

⁵⁰⁴ Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 105. Robert of Basevorn recommended composing sermons in five parts for ease of memory as each part could be linked to one of Christ's wounds.

⁵⁰⁵ Verheggen, 119.

⁵⁰⁶ See Chapter 3 and Seaman 2012.

Lamentation harkens back to fifteenth-century Netherlandish compositions, with the removed mourners looking on at the lifeless, broken body laid out on a white sheet. Barbara Lane claimed that Mary's heightened suffering and separation from Christ in compositions such as Petrus Christus's *Lamentation* in New York "defines her central role, as the Church, in the daily oblation."⁵⁰⁷ Further, the prominent white shroud in Christus's *Lamentation* stands for the white altar cloth that supports the body of Christ in the consecrated Host (fig. 115).⁵⁰⁸ Mary sitting apart from Christ with her hands crossed over her chest therefore inspired pious churchgoers to meditate on both the story of Christ's death and on his body as the Host about to be received.

Indeed, each of the four mourners in Van de Velde's *Lamentation* scene assumes a posture connected to one of several acceptable behaviors during spiritual meditation, and glancing at the canvas would encourage viewers in structuring their "manners in imitation of the saints."⁵⁰⁹ Joseph of Arimathea weeps as churchgoers may weep over Christ's death, St. John prays over Christ's body as the faithful should do while contemplating His death. Mary Magdalene discusses the mystery of the Passion, and the Virgin meditates with downcast or closed eyes. This final, crucial posture implies that one need not search the paintings themselves for spiritual truth, but instead, guided by these images, find spiritual truth through prayer and remembrance. The series thus enriched the collective understanding of the Mass, but did not distract the faithful or detract from the sacred truth of the Eucharist, just as each celebration of Mass did not detract from Christ's original sacrifice.

⁵⁰⁷ Barbara G. Lane, *The Altar and the Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Painting* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), 95.

⁵⁰⁸ Lane, 95.

⁵⁰⁹ Waterworth, 235.

Although Van de Velde's series does not include a Crucifixion scene, the moment of the original sacrifice, Schillemans suggests that one of 't Hart's now-lost high altarpieces depicted a crucifixion. This was the case at least in Parmentier's second parish, De Ster, as can be seen in the nineteenth-century lithograph (see fig. 89).⁵¹⁰ Moreover, parishioners familiar with De Kruyssen's booklet and the complementary meditation would see the Host elevated above the altar as the body of Christ crucified. This connection was reinforced with devotional imagery even more literal than De Kruyssen's handbook: in the aforementioned anonymous Begijnhof manuscript, an engraving by Johannes Galle includes a pair of ovals with similar compositions. On the left is a crucifix on an altar surrounded with candles and flowers, and on the right, two angels worship a monstrance on an altar displaying the Host (fig. 116). The mirrored depictions of devotional objects indicate that the reader was meant to equate the crucifix, and thus Christ's sacrifice, with the consecrated Host.

The choice of Passion scenes represented by Van de Velde suggests a connection with the five sorrowful mysteries on which one concentrates while reciting the Rosary.⁵¹¹ Indeed, Eeckhout's records refer to the series as "mysteria."⁵¹² Augustinian pastors like Parmentier promoted rosary prayer and the cult of the Virgin, and of course lay religious women like Fonteyn related to the Virgin in a special way. However, Van Eck pointed out that "Rosary paintings" depicting the fifteen mysteries—five sorrowful, five joyful, and five triumphant—typically exist elsewhere as a complete set of fifteen. Furthermore,

⁵¹⁰ Guus van den Hout and Robert Schillemans, *Putti en Cherubijntes: Het religieuze werk van Jacob de Wit (1695–1754)* (Haarlem/Amsterdam: Origine, 1995), 68.

⁵¹¹ Knipping vol. 2, 278. Knipping observed that paintings of "Mary's Psalter" often featured the Virgin encircled by a wreath of flowers or by medallions representing the mysteries.

⁵¹² Schillemans 2007, 7.

while the first four scenes of Van de Velde's series correspond to the sorrowful mysteries, the fifth sorrow is traditionally the Crucifixion, not the Lamentation.⁵¹³ Despite this inconsistency, it is possible that the series was meant to evoke the sorrowful mysteries. Van de Velde's 1667 *Annunciation* for another Amsterdam *huiskerk* portrays the first joyful mystery of the Rosary (fig. 93).

The dimensions of the *Annunciation* are larger than those of the Passion series, but they are close in terms of proportion, and the later painting also shares with the Passion series a classicizing style and brilliant figures against an obscure background. Van de Velde may also have painted corresponding joyful scenes that no longer survive. If, as Friso Lammertse suggests, Van de Velde painted the *Annunciation* for De Ster, the second home of Parmentier and the Passion series, it would have shared wall space with the Passion series for at least a few years—an arrangement that would have pointed up these similarities.⁵¹⁴ Christ's posture in *Gethsemane*, kneeling with arms extended in opposite directions, mirrors Mary's position in the *Annunciation*. The two narratives likewise correspond, as Mary's willingness to carry the Son of God foreshadows her willingness to bear his unavoidable death for the sins of mankind.

In 1664 particularly, the state of one's soul was a primary concern, for in that year a plague outbreak ravaged the Netherlands. Over 24,000 died in Amsterdam alone, and for a period during the summer, the death tolls climbed to nearly 1,000 per week.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹³ Van Eck 2008, 180.

⁵¹⁴ Albert Blankert, "The Annunciation," in *Gods Saints Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, ed. Blankert, et al. (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1980), 235. The dimensions do not match those of the Passion scenes, and whether the *Annunciation* belonged to a separate series of five joyful mysteries is unknown.

⁵¹⁵ Valerie Hedquist, "Dutch Genre Painting as Religious Art: Gabriel Metsu's Roman Catholic Imagery," *Art History* 31, no. 2 (April, 2008): 168.

Parmentier felt compelled to stay at his post and provide spiritual care during this time despite suffering from illness himself.⁵¹⁶ Predictably, the Catholic Church attributed the plague to sin and heresy, and prescribed as antidotes prayer and fulfillment of the Sacraments, including communion.⁵¹⁷ The role of Van de Velde's Passion series as a meditation aid during the celebration of Mass thereby helped to alleviate serious and timely fears.⁵¹⁸

Amsterdam's community of lay virgins, including Van de Velde's patron Sybilla Fonteyn, committed to caring for the poor and sick, and proved that laypeople could rely on the Church to get them through the plague.⁵¹⁹ Parmentier's secretary Eeckhout included in his records for 't Hart a touching eulogy for Margaretha van Loon (1632–1664), a klopje close to Parmentier and the daughter of Jacob van Loon, whose home became Parmentier's second parish, De Ster.⁵²⁰ Eeckhout writes that once joining the lay religious community 15 years before her death:

⁵¹⁶ Boers in Boers et al., 61.

⁵¹⁷ Christine Boeckl, *Images of Plague and Pestilence: Iconography and Iconology*, vol. 53 of *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies*, general ed. Raymond A. Mentzer (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000), 125.

⁵¹⁸ Boeckl 1990, 76, 88–89; Hedquist, 169. However, Van de Velde's figure does not belong to a cohesive plague narrative with typical post-Tridentine conceits like an angel drawing a sword or a popular plague saint like Sebastian. No text identifies the series as an ex-voto or a community offering, nor would a Passion series with a meditative function be the most likely vehicle for such purposes. Boeckl notes the popularity of paintings commissioned as community offerings, as it was believed the efforts of the entire town were needed to stave off pestilence.

⁵¹⁹ De Meijer, 51.

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 59.

she lived all this time, until the end of her life, under one roof with Parmentier—she served in the sacristy with utmost dedication, tirelessly and most properly... She learned to embroider so well—Parmentier was a helpful teacher—that even those who were expert in there could hardly match the work she produced, such as a chasuble, antependium and other items that she made, reveal. She also played a musical instrument in the choir... On 31 August 1664, she succumbed to plague and left this mortal existence at the age of 32.⁵²¹

While Van de Velde's commission did not specifically commemorate Van Loon, the emotional scenes of sacrifice nonetheless create an instinctual emotional parallel with the plight of Amsterdammers. Furthermore, Christine Boeckl maintains that the high proportion of plague-era Catholic paintings financed by lay virgins led to an emphasis on female tenderness in the paintings.⁵²²

Religious imagery and popular devotions provided solace more than ever during outbreaks of the plague. Most people afflicted with the disease did not understand its origin, only that it was highly contagious, and vacillated between trusting doctors and priests. Carolus Cuvrechef (1588–1664), a Discalced Carmelite from Antwerp, published a booklet for members of the Brotherhood of St. Charles Borromeo especially dedicated to fending off the plague. Appearing in 1655 and 1664, both of which were plague years, the booklet's second edition included slight revisions as it was dedicated to

⁵²¹ Eeckhout quoted in Boers, 59.

⁵²² Boeckl 1990, 176–8; Hedquist, 169. Additionally, Boeckl describes a *St. Charles Administering the Viaticum to a Female Plague Victim* completed by Jan Erasmus de Quellinus in 1660 for the beguinage of Malines as one example of how religious imagery during plague outbreaks reinforced the role and importance of spiritual virgins. Hedquist, in an argument concerning Gabriel Metsu's religious genre painting *The Sick Child*, claims that "during the height of the plague in Amsterdam, the close, personal concern of a Dutch nurse or mother with her child during a period of illness served as a vehicle for a reflection of the love and attentiveness of the Virgin Mary for her son, Christ

Catholics in the Dutch Republic, particularly hard-hit Amsterdam.⁵²³ Cuvrechef resented that the sick turned to medical professionals instead of to plague saints for aid during the epidemic, and encouraged reading the lives of these saints, praying to their images, making pilgrimages to miraculous sites related to the plague, and meditating on relics connected to the plague as well as to the five wounds of Christ, a universal Christian symbol of suffering.⁵²⁴ Van de Velde's paintings, one for each of Christ's wounds and each depicting a different aspect of Christ's suffering, could also have guided laypeople in popular devotions connected to the plague.⁵²⁵

Information about the high altar during Parmentier's tenure at 't Hart is scarce, but Eeckhout's records indicate that spiritual virgin Eva Claas, along with her brother-in-law Martin Lubbertsz., donated a now-lost altarpiece identified as *St. Augustine's Love of God* in 1665. The Augustinian theme was an obvious choice for Augustinian pastor Parmentier, and parish records summarily mention lost paintings of St. Augustine, his mother Monica, and William of Aquitaine, a prominent crusader and founder of the

⁵²³ See Verheggen, 197–99. Both editions recommended daily prayer, visiting altars dedicated to Borromeo or other plague saints, regular communion and confession, and performing the Acts of Mercy, each of which actions would grant the member an indulgence of a certain length.

⁵²⁴ Verheggen, 202–03. One noticeable difference between the two versions is that processions in honor of plague saints were not encouraged in the second edition because they were outlawed in the Dutch Republic.

⁵²⁵ See Verheggen, 213, 227. The continued use of religious images as protection from illness indicates the persistence of superstition even amidst strict Tridentine reforms designed to eradicate idols or amulets. Indeed, Catholic authorities did little to condemn this type of thinking, and regular clergy (like Parmentier, an Augustinian) even authorized the usage of certain kinds of images as tokens, particularly when associated with brotherhoods and sodalities. During the Counter-Reformation, winning souls over to Christ became paramount. Although studying Scripture and imitating saints' lives took on greater significance, pastors still occasionally assuaged fears related to survival with centuries-old popular devotions that veer close to the realm of magic. Ironically, however, while items like devotional engravings, rosaries, coins or medals with the likeness of a saint, and even edible prints thought to cure illness, were consecrated and used as amulets, the objects themselves apparently had little inherent value or power. Guidebooks and brotherhood booklets recommend replacing damaged or lost devotional objects, in order to continue regular practice.

Willamites.⁵²⁶ Given the Council of Trent's rule that high altarpieces should depict moments from the life or Passion of Christ, rather than the lives of patron saints, it is likely that the Augustinian altarpiece rotated with one or more Christological scenes that corresponded with the liturgical year.⁵²⁷ Because this cannot be verified, however, the only definitive Christological iconography in 't Hart during the 1660s, then, was Van de Velde's Passion series. Thus it seems likely that worshippers and spiritual virgins did use the series for prescribed meditations within and outside of Mass, and likely with the help of small devotional prints and objects.⁵²⁸

Liturgical Silver in 't Hart

If the exact appearance of the altarpiece during Parmentier's time is a mystery now, reconstructing the liturgical silver gives a better idea of how the congregation experienced Mass and viewed the high altar during worship. Even without records of pieces owned by Parmentier, he undoubtedly used a chalice, paten, ciborium, and monstrance.⁵²⁹ After the Council of Trent, medieval Eucharistic devotion surged in popularity, weekly communion was encouraged, and the altar was seen primarily as a place to hold the monstrance, which in turn held the white consecrated Host.⁵³⁰ As the priest recited Mass in Latin with his back to the congregation, the uplifted monstrance

⁵²⁶ Van Eck 2008, 178, 205.

⁵²⁷ See the discussion below about the rotating altarpieces at 't Hart under the leadership of Laurentius Schayck.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., 178.

⁵²⁹ See Guus van den Hout in Gina Beijne, Peter van Dael, and Guus van den Hout, eds., *Kerkzilver uit de Gouden Eeuw*, Zeven bijdragen ter gelegenheid van de tentoonstelling "Kerkzilver uit de Gouden Eeuw- 17de-eeuws religieus vaatwerk afkomstig uit Amsterdamse Huiskerken" 10 July–10 October 1993, *Museum Amstelkring Bulletin* 7 (July, 1993), 22.

⁵³⁰ Peter van Dael in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 9–10.

was the focal point and where Jesus entered the church. The importance of the Host itself was especially obvious in Golden Age Amsterdam, given the renewed devotion to the 1345 Miracle of Amsterdam and literature celebrating the event, like Marius's 1639 booklet. Likewise, Vondel's 1645 *Altaergeheimenissen* reinforced the idea of the altar as the center of Mass and the site of transfiguration, the point around which the multi-sensorial celebration revolves and encourages the congregation to accept the Host as Christ Himself (see fig. 4).⁵³¹

The chalice and paten were essential for administering communion, and were typically silver on the exterior and gold on the interior side that touched the Host.⁵³² Thomas Boggaert (1597–1653) and his son Joannes (1626–1673) produced a large portion of church silver for Catholic parishes in Amsterdam, especially regular stations like 't Hart.⁵³³ A 1640 gilt silver chalice by Thomas Boggaert, now in the collection of the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder, serves as an illustrative example of what Parmentier likely used (fig. 117). The base features six cherub heads with their interlocked wings forming cartouches, on which are displayed Passion instruments. Between the cherubs are depictions of the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Last Supper,

⁵³¹ Van Dael in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 9.

⁵³² Ibid., 12, 15. Though it is unclear which style of chalice Parmentier used at 't Hart, by the 1660s, silversmiths had moved from a Gothic, geometric style for chalices to a Baroque style in which the foot, nodule, and cup merged into a single shape and often featured realistic flower and leaf motifs.

⁵³³ See Karin Westerink in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 45. Chalices and necessary functional items by Thomas are found in many regular stations like 't Hart, while Joannes received commissions for more diverse pieces including relic holders, ampoules, candleholders, as well as required items like elaborate monstrances and chalices. Westerink suggests that Johannes got more variety in his commissions because he worked in a later period in which parishes wanted decorative elements, whereas his father had worked during the founding of Catholic parishes, when priests focused only on the necessary items.

and the Resurrection based on engraved prototypes like those by the Wierix and Galle families.⁵³⁴

An 1857 inventory of 't Hart lists three items by Haarlem silversmiths and Catholics Dominicus van Lynhoven and Pieter Cornelisz. Ebbekin, related by marriage to one another and to the De Grebber family of painters. Two ampoules from 1632-3 and a pyx from 1652 predate the parish itself and were likely donated by a priest or by parishioners who had the older items in their collection.⁵³⁵ Van Lynhoven's ampoules, marked *A* for aqua (water) and *V* for vinum (wine), also boast scenes related to water and wine: the soldier piercing the crucified Christ's side, causing water and blood to flow out, and Christ changing water to wine at the Wedding at Cana, respectively (fig. 118).⁵³⁶ These scenes of the transformation of blood into water, and of water into wine, underline the transformation of wine into blood occurring on the high altar during the Eucharist. The corresponding tray, covered in decorative floral motifs, has two low relief scenes of the Resurrection of Christ and the Assumption of the Virgin.⁵³⁷ Along with the ampoule set, 't Hart also owned a pyx signed and dated 1652 by Van Lynhoven's nephew Ebbekin. The silver lid features three cherub heads, a bust of St. Augustine with a burning heart, and a flower that probably adorned a now-lost cross (fig. 119). The gilt silver interior features an image of the Lamb of God holding a cross and a banner in its right front hoof that reads *Ecce Panis Angelorum* (Behold the bread of angels).⁵³⁸

⁵³⁴ Blokhuis et al. 2002, 40.

⁵³⁵ Van den Hout in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 23.

⁵³⁶ Ibid., 25.

⁵³⁷ Ibid., 24.

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

Also by Ebbekin in the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder's collection is a silver holy earth box from 1651, for storing consecrated earth used during the burials of Catholics, who could not celebrate funeral Masses properly (fig. 120). Instead of burying their dead on holy ground as they would have preferred, Dutch Catholics used the holy earth box to scoop a small amount of consecrated earth into their loved one's grave. While the example in the Museum's collection was later purchased from another Amsterdam *huiskerk*, De Pool, Parmentier surely used such a box, especially during the plague year when funerals were a daily task. Ebbekin's example is engraved inside with the phrase, "Remember the finality of Death, you will not sin in eternity."⁵³⁹ This sober reminder encouraged those attending funerals to cling to their faith and confess their sins to ensure they made a "good" death.

The liturgical silver in 't Hart during Parmentier's time reinforced for those receiving communion the connection between Christ's Passion and the reiteration of His sacrifice during the Eucharist. During the most important moments in Mass, the congregation could view Van de Velde's paintings for assistance in meditating on the proper moment of the Passion, and as they received Christ in the form of the Host, they would be reminded once again of the Passion by the iconography of the chalice and other altar silver. For the priest and lay religious women who had more access to the liturgical implements, the scenes on the ampoules and tray recalled the important Counter-Reformation precepts of transubstantiation and the Virgin's bodily assumption into heaven, as well as her role as intercessor to her Son. Especially during the plague year, the connection between the salvific power of Eucharist and the end of a person's life

⁵³⁹ Blokhuis et al. 2002, 45.

would also be reinforced. At funerals, Catholics were constantly reminded of their marginalized status, but also aware that maintaining their faith in Christ's presence on earth at Mass would grant them eternal life.

Paintings and Liturgical Objects for De Ster under Parmentier

When Jan Hartman died in 1668, he left his family with a great deal of debt, forcing it to sell the house in 1671 to Protestant Joan Reynst, Lord of Drakenstein and Vuursche, for 24,350 guilders.⁵⁴⁰ Reynst would eventually rent the space to a Catholic again, but Guus van den Hout suggests that the Republic's battles with France and England during the early 1670s made renting out an illicit *huiskerk* unappealing to a Protestant owner.⁵⁴¹ As a result, Parmentier needed to relocate his parish to a Catholic-owned property. Fortunately, the Van Loon family, who lived nearby in Oudezijds Achterburgwal 81, had recently expanded its home in order to accommodate a future Augustinian parish. Jacob van Loon, a cloth merchant, appears in Rembrandt's famous group portrait known as *The Syndics* (1662, fig. 121). Van Loon's son-in-law, Jacob Munninex, had purchased the two warehouse spaces behind the main house in 1650, and in 1669, master mason Baltasar Faber and master carpenter Gijsbert Voetangel converted the warehouses into a *huiskerk*, which was ready for Parmentier in May of 1670.⁵⁴² Although the baptism book for De Ster begins in 1657, it is unclear where the earlier iteration of the parish was housed, and we can assume that after 1671, many parishioners from 't Hart followed Parmentier, effectively merging the two sets of records.

⁵⁴⁰ See Chapter two for more on Jan Hartman and the sale of 't Hart.

⁵⁴¹ Van den Hout in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 23.

⁵⁴² Boers in Boers et al., 66.

Along with the late Margaretha, three more Van Loon sisters served Parmentier's parishes at various times. Anna van Loon died in 1666; like Margaretha she would not live to see her family home used as a *huiskerk*. Petronella (1637–1683), had committed to semi-religious life as a *klopje* in Parmentier's flock, celebrating with a ceremony much like a wedding (to Christ) in 1663, and Emerentiana is listed as active in the community of spiritual women in the 1667 parish record.⁵⁴³ The eldest sister, Maria, became the landlord of the *huiskerk* and managed the household after her father's death in 1674.

De Ster benefitted not only from the service of the Van Loon women who rented out the church space and housed the priest, but also from the donations of several other *kloppen* and Catholic families. The Hartman family, original benefactors of 't Hart, remained in close contact, and Parmentier baptized Jan Hartman's grandchildren at De Ster.⁵⁴⁴ Parmentier forged another link with the original station by bringing Van de Velde's five Passion scenes along to his new home; a nineteenth-century lithograph confirms that the series hung along the side wall of De Ster, as it probably had in 't Hart (see fig. 89).⁵⁴⁵

The space that was formerly De Ster is no longer preserved as such, and so all discussion of its decorative program is conjectural. A 1676 inventory of De Ster lists 19 "not costly" paintings, only a few of which can be identified, but none of which, apart from Van de Velde's series, survive.⁵⁴⁶ The first recorded painting commissioned

⁵⁴³ Ibid., 64; Vels Heijn, 10, 16. According to Eeckhout, Petronella had many suitors, but "she felt contempt for worldly splendor and was inspired by holier thoughts."

⁵⁴⁴ See Chapter two; Boers in Boers et al., 66.

⁵⁴⁵ Schillemans 2007, 9; Schillemans in Van den Hout and Schillemans, 69. Schillemans 2007 notes the odd arrangement of the Passion scenes—the *Lamentation* appears furthest from the high altar in the lithograph, rather than closest to the altar as would be expected.

⁵⁴⁶ Schillemans in Van den Hout and Schillemans, 69.

specifically for the space was a complex Marian altarpiece known as *All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed*, donated by *klopje* Barbara van Roeyen in 1677. Van Roeyen appears along with the Van Loon sisters on the 1667 registry of spiritual virgins associated with 't Hart.⁵⁴⁷ The altarpiece apparently featured the Virgin miraculously appearing to a crowd of people from all corners of the world, indicating the now-unknown artist interpreted the phrase “all generations” from Mary’s song of praise (Luke 1:48) to mean all peoples and cultures.⁵⁴⁸ The most remarkable feature of the altarpiece was the inclusion of Parmentier himself among the adoring crowd, kneeling before the Virgin, dressed as William of Aquitaine (fig. 122). A locally popular saint, William renounced his faithless life of war and retreated to the wilderness to live as a hermit, but kept his armor underneath his robes as a reminder of his new purpose as a warrior for Christ.⁵⁴⁹ Parmentier may have wanted to draw attention to his own ascetic way of life and his special devotion to the Virgin, and most importantly to encourage his congregation to “order their own lives and manners in imitation of the saints,” using himself as an example.⁵⁵⁰

Along with paintings, spiritual virgins donated other costly liturgical objects upon their entry into the community. In May 1672, spiritual virgin Catharina Hartman (1651–1698), Jan Hartman’s niece, gifted De Ster and Parmentier a satin chasuble, possibly embroidered by her own hand. Catharina’s sister and fellow spiritual virgin Maria (1654–after 1699) donated a wooden baldacchino depicting St. Augustine in 1674, presumably

⁵⁴⁷ Vels Heijn, 10.

⁵⁴⁸ Van Eck, “Petrus Parmentiers posthume portret en de altaarstukken voor 'Het Hert' en 'De Ster',” *Bulletin Stichting Vrienden van Museum Amstelkring Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder* (November, 2001), n.p.

⁵⁴⁹ Van Eck 2001, n.p.

⁵⁵⁰ Van Eck 2001, n.p.; Van Eck 2008, 130; Waterworth, 234.

upon her entry into the spiritual community. Both women appear regularly on the list of benefactors to De Ster.⁵⁵¹

Even after Parmentier's death in 1681, and Eeckhout's death the following year, donations to the parish and artistic commissions did not flag.⁵⁵² In 1688, the parish celebrated its 25th anniversary, and the Hartman sisters presented De Ster with an expensive silver lectern.⁵⁵³ De Ster also gained a new altarpiece for the anniversary in 1688 depicting the *Crowning of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity*, with St. Augustine and St. John the Evangelist writing mysteries.⁵⁵⁴ No individual donor paid for the piece, but rather funds collected from the parish as whole financed the altarpiece. Van Eck posits that the 1688 painting may have replaced Barbara van Roeyen's altarpiece, but more likely, the two appeared alternately depending on the liturgical calendar, perhaps also sharing the role with the 1665 altarpiece from 't Hart, *St. Augustine's Love of God*.⁵⁵⁵ Together, the three paintings and Maria Hartman's St. Augustine baldacchino would have presented a strong Augustinian and Marian iconography, promoting both Augustine's emphasis on examination of conscience and penitence, and the need for the Virgin as intercessor to her Son.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵¹ See Van Eck 2001, n.p.; Schillemans in Van den Hout and Schillemans, 69.

⁵⁵² See Chapter two on Parmentier's and Eeckhout's deaths.

⁵⁵³ Boers in Boers et al., 70.

⁵⁵⁴ See Van Eck 2001, n.p.; Van Eeghen, 239. On January 3, 1688, Maria van Loon, Jacob's daughter and widow of Pieter Loyens, sold the house to Joanna de Grave, wife of Van Bruell, for 11,900 guilders, but the space continued to be used as an Augustinian parish until 1697.

⁵⁵⁵ Van Eck 2001, n.p.

⁵⁵⁶ See Verheggen 2006, 213–214. The Brotherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary, approved by Pope Innocent XI in 1684, renewed interest in images of the Virgin, and was particularly popular among elites throughout Europe. Rather than special clothing or a token like a rosary, members received a "gewijd beeldeken" (small consecrated image), typically a print. Extant examples indicate that these images were kissed and held frequently during prayer, as well as laid on the chest of the dying to ward off the devil, and even buried with them. Several Amsterdam booksellers distributed unconsecrated versions well into the eighteenth century, underscoring the importance of the image of the Virgin in all its forms.

In addition to the anonymous painters represented in the seventeenth-century inventory, a twentieth century list also notes a copy of Maarten van Heemskerck's *Lamentation* by Barend Graat (1645–1708), and *The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* attributed to Jacob Jordaens (1593–1678). It is unclear when the no-longer-extant Jordaens came to the parish, but the Graat copy after Heemskerck was recorded in De Ster's possession since before the 1698 relocation to Spinhuissteeg.⁵⁵⁷ Heemskerck and Graat portrayed a large, pallid Christ, draped in a white cloth and sitting on the edge of a stone tomb, supported by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (fig. 123). Also gathered around Christ are St. John, the Virgin, Mary Magdalene, and two other women, presumably Mary, the wife of Clopas and mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee, as mentioned in the Gospels.⁵⁵⁸ Rather than the emotional reactions of the seven mourners, the artists emphasized Christ's body by pushing it to the front of the picture plane as if He was being lowered into the viewer's space, equating His body and the Eucharist. Like Van de Velde and his contemporaries working for *huiskerken*, Graat embraced archaism to recall a time before the Alteration, and to reinforce, through older Northern iconography, the necessity of Eucharist in the Tridentine Church.

⁵⁵⁷ Schillemans in Van den Hout and Schillemans, 69. The Graat copy after Heemskereck is now in St. Petrus-Bandenkerk, Driebergen-Rijsenburg. D'Hulst records *The Martyrdom of Sts. Perpetua and Felicitas* as previously belonging to the Augustinian sanctuary in Antwerp, and notes that the composition was very similar to *The Martyrdom of Apollonia*, 1628, which itself was based on a model by Rubens. The dimension given in the late inventory for the Jordaens work are 170 x 132 cm, which match the dimensions of an oil sketch of Sts. Perpetua and Felicitas by Jordaens, indicating that the work at De Ster may have not have been a finished altarpiece.

⁵⁵⁸ Matthew 27: 55–56, “Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.” John 19: 25, “Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Roger A. d'Hulst, in his catalogue raisonné of Jordaens, lists a lost altarpiece depicting *The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas* from the Augustinian sanctuary in Antwerp.⁵⁵⁹ While it is possible that this painting was brought to De Ster from Antwerp by an Augustinian, the twentieth century inventory of De Ster lists dimensions of 170 x 132 cm for the Jordaens, which is considerably smaller than most of Jordaen's altarpieces.⁵⁶⁰ These dimensions also match those of an oil sketch of *Perpetua and Felicitas* now belonging to an Augustinian church in Amsterdam, indicating that De Ster owned the oil sketch rather than the finished altarpiece (fig. 124).⁵⁶¹ The composition of *Perpetua and Felicitas* is similar to that of Jordaens's *Martyrdom of Apollonia*, 1628, which was in turn inspired by altarpieces by Rubens depicting martyrdom scenes (fig. 125).⁵⁶² Like the archaic style and iconography of Graat's copy of Heemskerck, the subject of Jordaens's altarpiece reminded seventeenth-century Catholics of the history of their faith. Perpetua and Felicitas were early Christian martyrs, killed in Carthage in 203 under Emperor Septimius Severus. As discussed in Chapter one, Dutch Catholics romanticized their persecution by connecting it to early Christian martyr narratives.⁵⁶³ Interestingly, early Christian female martyrs were often described as having transcended their sex due to their moral strength, much like the language used to describe Dutch

⁵⁵⁹ Roger Adolf d'Hulst, *Jacob Jordaens*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 250.

⁵⁶⁰ Schillemans in Van den Hout and Schillemans, 69.

⁵⁶¹ D'Hulst, 339n45; RKD Nederlands Instituut voor Kunstgeschiedenis, <https://rkd.nl/explore/images/5589>

⁵⁶² D'Hulst, 131, 250. D'Hulst suggests that Rubens's *Martyrdom of St. Catherine*, c. 1618, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille, is a direct precedent for Jordaens.

⁵⁶³ See Chapter one and Parker 2008.

kloppen.⁵⁶⁴ Images of female martyrs like Jordaens's would therefore resonate with the *kloppen* serving De Ster.

In 1698, Maria Hartman donated an altarpiece of an unknown subject that cost 125 guilders. Given that her elder sister Catharina died that year, it is possible that Maria's altarpiece was donated in memory of Catharina, who had served De Ster since 1672. Catharina's loss was certainly a cause for mourning and prayer in the parish, evidenced by a silver medal (fig. 126) depicting St. Catherine of Siena wearing a crown of thorns, cradling a crucifix and revealing her burning heart, on the back of which an inscription reads "Pray for the soul of Catharina Hartman, 18 June 1698."⁵⁶⁵ Catherine of Siena was not only Catharina Hartman's patron saint, but a role model for all spiritual virgins, as a figure who also transcended the weaknesses of her female sex with her mystic marriage to Christ.

't Hart after Parmentier: Willem Schoen

Although Joan Reynst, the new owner of 't Hart, was a Protestant, he grew to accept the idea that a Catholic priest could rent the attic church space and living quarters and began to rent it again in 1675. That year, the first pastor to serve at 't Hart after Parmentier's relocation to De Ster, Willem Schoen, moved in. The following year, he published his guidelines for spiritual virgins, *De Weg der Suyverheyt voor d'Hollandtse Maegden*.⁵⁶⁶ While the book did not originally include devotional images, I surmise that

⁵⁶⁴ See Joyce E. Salisbury, *Perpetua's Passion: The Death and Memory of a Young Roman Woman* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Virginia Burrus, "Reading Agnes: The Rhetoric of Gender in Ambrose and Prudentius," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 25–46.

⁵⁶⁵ See Verheggen 2006, 217.

⁵⁶⁶ See Chapter two for more on Schoen and the text of *De Weg der Suyverheyt*.

versions of the book were used and decorated by *kloppen* serving under Schoen. In combination with the text, the title page illustration of Schoen's book provides a clear picture of the role of *kloppen* at 't Hart. In the image, four lay religious women in habits read and pray the rosary as they gradually ascend toward heaven (see fig. 24). Above them, a virgin kneels before Christ, who holds both a flower crown and a jeweled crown and says "Kome myn Bruyt ontfangt de Kroon" (Come, my bride, and receive the crown). Meanwhile, the Virgin Mary sits enthroned on a cloud to the right surrounded by cherubim. The virgin received by Christ wears an embroidered robe with her hair flowing, linking her to the Virgin and other female saints, and suggesting that the virgins below will become true brides of Christ in heaven if they live as brides of Christ on earth. The title page engraving illuminates several important aspects of literature intended to guide spiritual virgins: dedication to reading and prayer, keeping the Virgin as a constant example, and spiritual marriage to Christ.

To enhance the meditation on one's relationship with Christ and His suffering that Schoen recommended for virgins, he commissioned a large *Deposition* in 1675 from Catholic history painter Johannes Voorhout (1647–1717). In 1675, Voorhout had just returned to Amsterdam after fleeing to North Germany for three years to escape the Rampjaar of 1672. He and his wife, Margaretha van Os, settled at the intersection of the Keizersgracht and Utrechtsestraat and had five children baptized at the Begijnhofkerk between 1675–1682.⁵⁶⁷ Two of Voorhout's daughters became beguines at the Begijnhof, Maria in 1684 and Anna, who eventually became the superior of the Begijnhof, in 1701.

⁵⁶⁷ Marina Aarts, "Schilderkunst in opdracht van katholieke kerken in de Noordelijke Nederlanden," in J.H. Listenburg, *De Restauratie van de Schilderijen in de Voormalige R.K. Schuilkerk op het Begijnhof te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1995), 20.

Johannes, Margaretha, Maria, and Anna Voorhout were all buried at the Engelse Kerk on the Begijnhof grounds.⁵⁶⁸ The *Deposition* was likely the first of several major Catholic commissions Voorhout executed after he returned to Amsterdam, and it demonstrates the turn toward classicism that made him popular as a painter of altarpieces. Marina Aarts has argued that Gerard de Lairese's presence in Amsterdam since 1667 impacted Voorhout's technique, as De Lairese advocated for symmetry and balance in color, light and shadow, and movement across the picture plane.⁵⁶⁹

In the 1675 piece, three men, including Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, carry a muscular Christ toward a tomb on the right, while the three Marys mourn in the upper left, creating a diagonal force in the composition (fig. 127). Below the figures sits a bowl and cloth used for anointing the body, and in the far distance Roman ruins establish the location and historical period. Christ's lifeless right arm falls limp in a manner reminiscent of Caravaggio's 1603 *Entombment* (fig. 128), while His left arm rests on his stomach with the wound in His hand clearly visible. The mood is solemn rather than dramatic, and none of the mourners open their mouths to speak or cry out.⁵⁷⁰ Voorhout's classicizing style also corresponds with the recommendations of theologians like Johannes Molanus, who stressed decorum and literal, accurate adaptation of Scripture.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁶⁸ Schillemans, "Zeventiende- en vroegachttiende-eeuwse wisselaltaarstukken in de Amsterdamse Begijnhofkerk," *De zeventiende eeuw* 15 (1999): 212.

⁵⁶⁹ Aarts, 21.

⁵⁷⁰ Aarts, 22. Along with De Lairese, Voorhout seems to have studied the work of Annibale Carracci, who revealed the mystery and gravity of Passion scenes with tangible classical realism. Aarts uses this comparison for Voorhout's 1696 altarpiece *Resurrection of Christ* for the Begijnhof, but his trend toward classicism and idealized naturalism and realism was already apparent in the *Deposition*, which the beguines who commissioned the 1696 work undoubtedly saw.

⁵⁷¹ Gary Schwartz, *Emoties, Geschilderde gevoelens in de Gouden Eeuw* (Haarlem: Frans Halsmuseum/NAi Uitgevers, 2014), 51.

The solemn tone of Voorhout's *Deposition* also suits the contemplative lifestyle of the beguines and *kloppen* under Fr. Schoen's guidance. Much like Van de Velde's Passion series, Voorhout's *Deposition* encourages not outward displays of emotion, but rather quiet meditation on Christ's sacrifice and its repetition in the Eucharist.

Laurentius Schayck and Ludovicus Reyniers

After Schoen's tenure as pastor of 't Hart, Fr. Laurentius Schayck took over in 1684 and served until his death in 1723, making him the longest serving priest in 't Hart, even if his legacy is not as powerful today as Parmentier's or Schoen's. He commissioned a high altarpiece that still occupies its place in the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder, as well as a large monstrance, silver altar decorations, and a baldachin referred to as an "expositietroon" used for displaying the monstrance.⁵⁷² Schayck focused more intently on unifying the appearance and iconography of the high altar than did his predecessors, and thereby created a coherent theological message for his congregation.

In 1704, Schayck purchased a 93-centimeter tall silver and pearl monstrance from 's-Hertogenbosch, with symbols of the four Evangelists on the foot—an angel, a lion, an eagle, and an ox (fig. 129). In the center of the foot, the Lamb of God lies on a cross, inscribed with words recited during Eucharist. The stem consists of female personifications of the divine virtues Faith, Hope, and Charity holding a crown of thorns, which serves as a nest in which a pelican feeds its young by piercing its own breast—a powerful metaphor of Christ's sacrifice. Surrounding the lunula, or moon-shaped space for the Host, angels hold up grape vines, and above the Host (Christ), a bust of God the

⁵⁷² Van den Hout in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 25–26.

Father and a dove (Holy Spirit) create the full Trinity. Above the entire piece, two flying angels hold a crown topped by a crucifix.⁵⁷³

Nearly two decades later, Schayck commissioned further decorations for the altar. 'S-Hertogenbosch silversmith Jacob Smits, known for his sumptuous liturgical silver, created two altar ornaments resembling cornucopias spilling out acanthus leaves, sunflowers, and fruit, with a parrot nestled among them and an angel presenting an ear of corn and bunch of grapes (fig. 130).⁵⁷⁴ A female figure of *Ecclesia* by an unknown artist likely stood on top of the tabernacle, wearing a cape and pectoral, holding a papal tiara in her left hand and originally, a cross and orb in her right (fig. 131). With her hair partially up and adorned with lace, the dove of the Holy Spirit floats above her in a copper plated aureole. The figure serves as an unmistakable reminder of the power and universality of the Catholic faith and its tradition during a time of strife between the Roman Church and local Dutch ecclesiastical authorities. Together with the exquisite monstrance, the *Ecclesia* atop the tabernacle and the silver cornucopias surrounding it would have amazed the congregation, “almost blinding” them as they gazed on the Host and the altar.⁵⁷⁵

To contrast the luminous high altar, the solemn mood of Voorhout's painting was reflected during funeral Masses with a funeral antependium or altar curtain dating to 1720 and original to 't Hart during Schayck's time. In black velvet with white silk embroidery and applique, the altar curtain depicts Calvary, where a skeleton representing

⁵⁷³ See Van den Hout in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 26; Blokhuis et al. 2002, 41. Though the maker of this beautiful work is unknown, it is a type that was made popular in the 1720s by Jacob Smits and frequently copied by others. The gilt and diamonds were likely added in the nineteenth century, so in Schayck's time the silver monstrance would have encouraged interpretation of the iconography more than is the case today with the addition of jewels.

⁵⁷⁴ Blokhuis et al. 2002, 44. Van den Hout in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 26.

⁵⁷⁵ Van den Hout in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 29.

Death looms over a deathbed, with a dead tree to the left (fig. 132). Surrounding the scene is a floral wreath topped with a crowned medallion, and two cornucopias spill out above the crown, revealing a pomegranate, symbol of resurrection.⁵⁷⁶ Though only used during funeral services, this altar decoration, like the earlier silver holy earth box used for burials, reinforces the importance of reconciliation with Christ before death, and the hope in everlasting life to be gained at that very altar, through the Eucharist.

Complementing the altar ornamentation was the crown jewel of Schayck's parish: a 1716 high altarpiece by twenty-year-old Jacob de Wit (fig. 133). De Wit (1695–1754) returned to Amsterdam in 1716 after an apprenticeship in Antwerp, where he absorbed the painterly style and monumental drama of Flemish altarpieces.⁵⁷⁷ The *Baptism of Christ* was designed specifically for 't Hart, as a 1716 drawing inscribed with Fr. Schayck's name demonstrates (fig. 134). De Wit's first major work in Amsterdam, this altarpiece solidified his reputation as a Catholic painter who would soon be considered a "godsend" by priests expanding and redecorating their parishes in the early eighteenth century.⁵⁷⁸ De Wit is best known in Amsterdam for his prolific work for the Franciscans, particularly in their newly renovated Mozes en Aaronkerk, and the *Baptism of Christ* presages his later classicizing, unified programs.

In an evenly lit landscape, De Wit's idealized Christ modestly stands in contrapposto with His hands crossed over His chest as John the Baptist pours water from the Jordan on Him. The dove of the Holy Spirit alights over Christ's head, and God the Father looks down on His "beloved Son, in whom [He is] well pleased" (Matthew

⁵⁷⁶ Blokhuis et al. 2002, 47.

⁵⁷⁷ Dudok van Heel, "De rol van de katholieke elite bij het ontstaan der staties tot 1715," in Van den Hout and Schillemans, 35.

⁵⁷⁸ Blokhuis et al., 2002, 30.

3:17).⁵⁷⁹ To emphasize the presence of the Trinity in the painting, a stucco figure of God above a stucco dove were designed in concert with the altarpiece. In addition to the sculpted figures, Schayck also commissioned the columns framing the painting and the sculpted putti on them, which match the putti in the clouds of De Wit's scene (fig. 135).⁵⁸⁰ Thus the early eighteenth-century iteration of 't Hart exemplifies the thematic marriage of architecture, sculpture, painting, and silver that all pointed to the concept of the Trinity and Christ's power to grant eternal life through the Eucharist.⁵⁸¹

Along with De Wit's altarpiece, 't Hart gradually amassed three other altarpieces of identical size, meant to be interchanged according to the liturgical calendar. De Wit's *Baptism of Christ* was appropriate for Ordinary Time, a now-lost *Crucifixion* was displayed during Lent and Holy Week, a 1737 *Resurrection* by Norbert van Bloemen was shown on Easter Sunday and other high holidays (fig. 136), and a 1720 *Descent of the Holy Spirit* by an anonymous artist was displayed for Pentecost (figs. 137–138).⁵⁸² In contrast to De Wit's soft style, the unknown artist of the *Descent of the Holy Spirit* uses a rougher finish, with blockier figures. The artist apparently took into consideration the congregation's low viewpoint when adapting the composition from a print after a 1627 altarpiece by Rubens (fig. 139).⁵⁸³ Although the three remaining altarpieces date to different decades and came from different hands, a pastel color scheme, bright lighting,

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 27.

⁵⁸⁰ Anne Versloot in Boers et al. 2015, 55.

⁵⁸¹ Van Dael in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout, 17.

⁵⁸² Blokhuis et al. 2002, 30. The Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder still owns all but the lost *Crucifixion*.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., 31.

and life-size figures unite them.⁵⁸⁴ Schayck seems to have commissioned at least two of the works and intended for the program to expand after his death in 1723. Fr. Ludovicus J. Reyniers took up the mantle of priesthood at 't Hart after Schayck's death and commissioned at least the 1737 Van Bloemen altarpiece, and perhaps further artworks as well.⁵⁸⁵

The idea for four equivalent altarpieces to rotate during the liturgical year may actually have stemmed from De Wit himself. Rotating altarpieces became popular particularly in Jesuit churches in Antwerp during the Counter-Reformation for a number of reasons, and De Wit not only saw and studied such programs but also drew copies of Rubens's ceiling in the Antwerp Igantiuskerk.⁵⁸⁶ Van Eck argues that rotating altarpieces allowed Jesuits and other religious orders to celebrate major feast days as well as the patron saints of their order.⁵⁸⁷

't Hart did not rotate altarpieces to showcase patron saints, but rather different moments from the life of Christ, as recommended for the high altar by the Council of Trent.⁵⁸⁸ While the Antwerp Jesuits used rotating patron saint altarpieces to attribute reform and triumph in the Catholic Church to their order, Dutch Catholics only adopted

⁵⁸⁴ Robert Schillemans in conversation with the author, November 28, 2016. The *Crucifixion* would necessarily have been more somber than the *Baptism of Christ* and *Resurrection*, but it was also said to be the most beautiful of the three works.

⁵⁸⁵ See Van Eeghen, 249. Reyniers took over the house and *huiskerk* from Gerard Bord van Waveren, who was not Catholic but came from a Catholic family, for 26,000 guilders in June 1725. By 1739, Fr. Reyniers was the owner of the house and church, valued at 31,500 guilders, and he rented out the front house to a family who made the ingredients for beer.

⁵⁸⁶ Schillemans, "Zeventiende- en vroegachttiende-eeuwse wisselaltaarstukken in de Amsterdamse Begijnhofkerk," *De zeventiende eeuw* 15 (1999): 217.

⁵⁸⁷ See Van Eck 2008.

⁵⁸⁸ See Schillemans 1999, 217. The Begijnhofkerk, early in the seventeenth century, also had rotating altarpieces dedicated to Christological stories as well as to Sts. Ursula and the Virgin, but Fr. David van der Mije, who oversaw the expansion and redecoration of the "modern" baroque *huiskerk* at the Begijnhof in the 1670s, seemed to prefer Biblical stories for the high altar in accordance with Counter-Reformation thinkers.

the dramatic persuasion technique of rotating altars after 1648, when rules on Catholic worship relaxed.⁵⁸⁹ The combined influence of a popular classicizing style and theologians' recommendations on decorum resulted in more restrained rotating altarpieces with Christological subjects in the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Republic.⁵⁹⁰

Even with its adherence to Tridentine guidelines, the Catholic *huiskerk* with its rotating altarpieces became a participatory *gesamtkunstwerk*.⁵⁹¹ To this end, in 1730, Fr. Reyniers had a retractable pulpit installed in the left column of the altar, a feature that was primarily theatrical, since a raid on the church requiring the pastor to hide the pulpit was unlikely at this late date (fig. 140).⁵⁹² Additionally, rotating altarpieces and extravagant accessories like the pulpit communicated to patrons that the church valued their contributions, which helped in gaining donations at a time when Amsterdam had a large number of *huiskerken* from which patrons could choose.⁵⁹³

The storied pasts of 't Hart and De Ster encompass people, objects, and beliefs spanning a century of Catholic faith in Amsterdam. Petrus Parmentier and his flock of spiritual virgins encouraged special devotions to the Eucharist and the Passion, and prayer as an antidote to the plague. To aid in meditation, worshippers looked to Van de

⁵⁸⁹ Schillemans 1999, 216–19. Schillemans attributes the differences between the Antwerp Jesuits and Amsterdam seculars to geography and politics. Churches in Catholic countries did not feel the urgency to maintain members as strongly as did the Antwerp Jesuits, who bordered Protestant countries. To win converts and maintain its Catholic congregation, the Jesuits of St. Ignatius went bankrupt commissioning marble altars and monumental paintings depicting miracles performed by newly-minted Saints Francis Xavier and Ignatius.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 219.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² Blokhuis et al., 2002, 27; Schillemans 2007, 9. The current layout of 't Hart also dates to this time, when the upper gallery was extended toward the canal side and the altar moved forward, creating a space behind it and pushing the altar closer to the congregation.

⁵⁹³ Schillemans 1999, 219–20.

Velde's Passion series and myriad devotional prints, from decorated sermon manuscripts like those from the Begijnhof to treatises like Marius's celebration of the Miracle of Amsterdam and Van der Kruyssen's *De Misse*. After relocation, Parmentier's congregation gained new Marian and Augustinian altarpieces, which reinforced the role of Augustinians in ministering to the faithful in Protestant territory, as well as elaborate liturgical silver that emphasized the high altar as the site of transubstantiation.

Meanwhile, Willem Schoen at 't Hart instructed his spiritual virgins to use their unique position in the Netherlands to win souls to the Church, and commissioned Voorhout's *Deposition* to emphasize the Passion. After Schoen, Schayck began a redecoration project for 't Hart, continued by his successor Reyniers, that resulted in four rotating altarpieces corresponding to major holidays, as well as extravagant, theatrical silver and altar décor that narrowed the congregation's focus on the high altar, where the Church triumphed, and the Eucharist entered their lives and granted salvation in a world full of uncertainty.

Conclusion

Redefining Dutch Catholic Art

Prior scholarship on seventeenth-century Dutch paintings made for Catholic settings emphasizes the seemingly disparate stylistic and iconographic sources used by artists as justification for the nonexistence of a specifically Catholic style or iconography. Yet Counter-Reformation guidelines for imagery and the spatial restrictions of Dutch townhouses in fact resulted in several important trends common to the decorative programs of many *huiskerken*. These trends include archaic or classicizing compositions, the prevalence of rotating altarpieces and series of devotional paintings rather than major single works, the use of devotional engravings as sources of subject matter and composition, and the resulting meditative function of Catholic paintings, as well as their particular appeal to the spiritual concerns of lay religious women. The fact that most artists employed by Catholic stations decorated their own parish meant that many painters ended up working outside of their specialty, which may have been still lifes, landscapes, or hunting scenes rather than religious history paintings. At the same time, the importance of social connections between artists and patrons led to tightknit Catholic intellectual and artistic communities and to a greater ability to convey Counter-Reformation Catholic doctrine on the part of Catholic artists.

Seventeenth-century artists were often tasked with recreating older works destroyed during the Iconoclasm or incorporating older paintings into new decorative schemes. New commissions had to coexist with older works of art, which were often

treated as relics in their own right.⁵⁹⁴ This need for clarity and consistency, and a desire to evoke the pre-Reformation past, led many painters to employ a classicizing or archaizing style. Scholars including Xander van Eck have used these older influences as evidence that Dutch Catholic painters had limited exposure to the stylistic advances of international Catholic painters and therefore employed a transitional style that was neither sixteenth-century nor fully baroque.⁵⁹⁵ Yet the “transitional” paintings served a specific purpose in *huiskerken* settings. Seemingly outdated altarpieces or devotional paintings could conjure a viewer’s sense of nostalgia for days past when they practiced their faith publicly and legally. I have shown that Willem Claesz. Heda, working for St. Bernardus in Haarlem, and Adriaen van de Velde and Barend Graat, working for ’t Hart and De Ster in Amsterdam, consciously adopted archaic compositions in their respective paintings. The artists chose prototypes from the centuries prior not because they were unversed in innovative history painting, but rather because they sought to communicate Catholic themes.

Heda’s small triptych of the *Crucifixion with Saints Francis and Clare* refers to triptychs with patron saints produced before the Reformation, a period for which the *kloppen* of Den Hoeck expressed nostalgia.⁵⁹⁶ Christ’s gushing blood and the onlookers’ exaggerated tears provoke an emotional response from the lay religious female viewer,

⁵⁹⁴ Seaman 2012, 22–23. Many Dutch artists shared with Italians a contemporary belief that archaic and medieval art in its simplicity was an antidote to the crowded mannerist compositions that the Church sought to eliminate. The newly-excavated catacombs of Rome also proved that Christians had always used images for worship and solidified the Catholic argument for religious imagery.

⁵⁹⁵ For example, see Van Eck, “Introduction,” in Xander van Eck and Ruud Priem 2013.

⁵⁹⁶ Seaman, 76–79. See Chapter two, p. 18 for an example of a nostalgic *klopje* who used imagery to recreate a pilgrimage around Haarlem.

conditioned to meditate on Christ's suffering and experience a visceral reaction.⁵⁹⁷ In Van de Velde's Passion series, the *Lamentation* shows Christ's broken body separated from the mourners as in fifteenth-century Netherlandish altarpieces, which emphasizes the Eucharistic symbolism of the body of Christ presented on a white shroud.⁵⁹⁸ The same painting also features a figural grouping inspired by sixteenth-century devotional engravings, and an earlier altarpiece by Anthony van Dyck.⁵⁹⁹ Likewise, the *Mocking of Christ* scene features soldiers adopting poses reminiscent of those in sixteenth-century Passion engravings.⁶⁰⁰ Both of these compositional choices reflect the desire on the part of Catholic artists and patrons to connect their works with those produced during a time when Catholicism flourished in their country.

Along with archaic compositions, Dutch Catholic artists found a classicizing style conducive to their communication of Biblical narratives and specifically Catholic beliefs. The Council of Trent recommended that paintings focus on the narrative, avoid confusing compositions and extraneous details, and move the viewer to imitate the saints depicted.⁶⁰¹ As such, Dutch artists working for Catholic stations tended to portray few, large, identifiable figures, and emphasize emotional details. To convince viewers of the truths conveyed by imagery, religious history painters gravitated toward academic training, study of live models, and rules or guidelines for history painting.

⁵⁹⁷ See Knipping, 109–112. gruesome versions of *Ecce Homo* or Passion-related scenes with the instruments of the Passion (cross, nails, cat-of-nine-tails, sponge, crown of thorns) originated in the medieval period but returned in the golden age with the nickname *wapenen Christi*, or “the weapons of Christ.”

⁵⁹⁸ See Lane, 95.

⁵⁹⁹ Moran 2013, 222.

⁶⁰⁰ Van Eck 2008, 181.

⁶⁰¹ Waterworth, 234.

The reorganization of Haarlem's Guild of St. Luke in 1631 and its emphasis on academic training and study of models gave primacy to history painters in the city.⁶⁰² I have connected this reform to the number of Catholic painters involved in steering the guild, including Salomon de Bray and later his son Jan, Pieter de Grebber, Willem Claesz. Heda, and Pieter Soutman, among others.⁶⁰³ Salomon de Bray, author of the revised guild charter, also made highly finished drawn copies after his own paintings, many of which religious, with which his sons and pupils could practice.⁶⁰⁴ Pieter de Grebber, devoutly Catholic resident of Haarlem's Begijnhof and frequent painter for the priests of Den Hoeck, formulated eleven rules for history painters in 1649. While not avowedly Catholic in nature, the rules stress knowledge of the narrative, perspective, and clarity of composition.⁶⁰⁵ De Grebber, according to Leiden poet and painter Philips Angel, also studied plaster casts to perfect the anatomy of his figures.⁶⁰⁶ Both his interest in correctness and convincing human forms are evident in De Grebber's paintings for

⁶⁰² See Taverne 1972.

⁶⁰³ Karel van Mander and Hessel Miedema, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), fol. S2; Taverne, 66. As early as 1593, Haarlem artists Hendrick Goltzius, Karel van Mander and Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem had formed an informal "academy" for drawing from life. A generation later, in 1631, Goltzius's student and Catholic painter Salomon de Bray reorganized the Haarlem Guild of St. Luke around the principle of academic study, proclaiming that painters would engage in group demonstrations and lessons. Taverne suggests that De Bray and his colleagues may have been trying to restart the academy begun by their predecessors, especially since Cornelis van Haarlem was a signing member of the 1631 guild charter.

⁶⁰⁴ See Jeroen Giltaij and Friso Lammertse, "Maintaining a Studio Archive: Drawn Copies by the De Braij Family," *Master Drawings* 39, no. 4 (Winter, 2001): 367–394.

⁶⁰⁵ P.J.J. van Thiel, "De Grebbers Regels van de Kunst," *Oud Holland* 80, no. 1-4 (1965): 126–131.

⁶⁰⁶ Philips Angel, *Lof der Schilderkonst*, translated by Michael Hoyle and Hessel Miedema, *Simiolus* 24, no. 2/3, Ten Essays for a Friend: E. de Jongh 65 (1996), 247–248. Philips Angel in Leiden noted in his 1641 speech, "Lof der Schilderkonst," that Pieter de Grebber had inherited Goltzius's plaster casts and used them to perfect the anatomy of his painted figures.

Catholic stations, including his *Ecce Homo* for Den Hoeck and his *Descent from the Cross* for his brother-in-law's parish in Enkhuizen.⁶⁰⁷

Haarlem's Catholic painters were not alone in their interest in perfecting the human form. Utrecht master Abraham Bloemaert, whose 1622 *Supper at Emmaus* decorated St. Bernardus in den Hoeck, and whose Catholic altarpieces influenced an entire generation of Utrecht painters, instructed his large studio in drawing from models.⁶⁰⁸ His son Frederik engraved and published Abraham's drawings of models and casts as a *Teyckenboek* for student instruction and inspiration, allowing artists to build careers around compositions inspired by Abraham.⁶⁰⁹ One such artist was Abraham's son Hendrick; Den Hoeck owned a 1641 *Simeon and the Christ Child*, painted either by Abraham or by Hendrick as a copy after his father. Adriaen van de Velde in Amsterdam also drew from models frequently throughout his career, occasionally using the same model in the same position in different settings. For his *Annunciation* in the Rijksmuseum, which is compositionally and stylistically related to his Passion series, he seems to have repurposed a drawing of a seated female nude for the figure of the Virgin.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁷ See Van Eck 2004.

⁶⁰⁸ Paul Huys Janssen, *Jan van Bijlert 1597/98–1671* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins Publishing, 1998), 31. In 1643, Crispijn van de Passe's engraved frontispiece of *Van 't Licht der teken en schilderkonst* shows a group drawing lesson featuring Abraham Bloemaert and Paulus Moreelse instructing their students, including Gerrit van Honthorst and Jan van Bijlert, both of whom painted for *huiskerken*.

⁶⁰⁹ Gero Seelig, "Abraham Bloemaert and the Graphic Print," in *The Bloemaert Effect: Colour and Composition in the Golden Age* (Utrecht: Centraal Museum, 2011), 41; Jaap Bolten, "Abraham Bloemaert (1564–1651) and his Tekenboek," *Delineavit et Sculpsit*, no. 9 (March 1993): 1–10.

⁶¹⁰ Blankert et al. 1999, 322. Peter Schatborn, *Dutch Figure Drawings from the Seventeenth Century* (The Hague: Government Publishing Office, 1981), 17. Van de Velde's use of models for religious and secular subjects aligns him with mid-century classicists, including artist and theorist Jan de Bisschop, who advocated frequent drawing but specified that the artist should

It was important for Catholic painters to portray the human form accurately, in order to ensure that their works were believable and moving for Catholic viewers. Beyond this, the study of models, live or plaster, speaks to Dutch artists' preoccupation with drawing *naer het leven*, or after life. Art theory beginning at the turn of the seventeenth century foregrounded drawing *naer het leven* regardless of specialty, but for Catholic artists, drawing from life also took on doctrinal significance.⁶¹¹ The ability, and indeed, charge, to depict Christ and the saints in human form for devotional purposes distinguished Catholics from Calvinists, who shunned figural imagery in worship settings. An academic emphasis on painting *naer het leven*, along with simplified classicizing compositions, allowed Catholic artists not only to convey Catholic doctrine effectively, but also to argue implicitly for the utility of images in devotional practice.

The narrow space and lack of side altars in *huiskerken* led to a focus on the high altar, as Van Eck has argued, but it also created opportunities for artists to decorate side walls with series of devotional paintings.⁶¹² In addition, the main altarpiece was often rotated to reflect the appropriate time of the Church calendar. 't Hart in Amsterdam, by the end of the seventeenth century, had altarpieces for Ordinary Time, Lent and Holy Week, Easter and high holidays, and Pentecost: respectively, Jacob de Wit's *Baptism of Christ* a now-lost *Crucifixion*, a 1737 *Resurrection* by Norbert van Bloemen, and a 1720 *Descent of the Holy Spirit* by an anonymous artist.⁶¹³ Though no single painting stands

choose good models or examples and exercise judgment to depict perfected human figures in history paintings

⁶¹¹ See Walter Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel Van Mander's Schilder-boeck* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 38–39; Hessel Miedema, "Karel van Mander: Did He Write Art Literature?" *Simiolus* 22, no. 1/2 (1993/4).

⁶¹² Van Eck 2008.

⁶¹³ Blokhuis et al. 2002, 30.

out as a high altarpiece, St. Bernardus seems to have had a number of paintings that functioned as such, perhaps for different times of the year, Bloemaert's *Supper at Emmaus* for Ordinary Time and De Grebber's *Ecce Homo* for Lent being the most likely possibilities.

A renewed interest in Sts. Willibrord and Boniface, who spread the Catholic faith in the Netherlands, led to altarpieces honoring the local saints, thanks to the Apostolic Vicars Sasbout Vosmeer (who identified strongly with Boniface), and Philippus Rovenius (who identified with Willibrord).⁶¹⁴ These two local saints even appeared on a silver monstrance made for Den Hoeck by Catholic silversmith Pieter Cornelisz. Ebbekin. Likewise, the reinforced importance of the Virgin Mary as intercessor and patron of lay religious women also spurred the creation of altarpieces dedicated to Marian themes that could rotate during the year. When Petrus Parmentier relocated to De Ster, his new parish was gifted altarpieces depicting Mary worshipped by the masses in *All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed*, and later, *Crowning of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity*.⁶¹⁵ For Den Hoeck, Jan de Bray's *St. John Giving the Virgin Communion* not only encouraged emulation of the Virgin but also reminded *kloppen* of their pastor's role as representative of Christ on earth.

Van de Velde's Passion series provides an illustrative example of how the side walls in *huiskerken* could be used for a devotional series: in the case of 't Hart, patrons could use Van de Velde's paintings to meditate on specific Passion scenes during

⁶¹⁴ Xander van Eck, "Dreaming of an Eternally Catholic Utrecht during Protestant Rule: Jan van Bijlert's *Holy Trinity with Saints Willibrord and Boniface*," *Simiolus* 30, no. 1/2 (2003), 21–26. Again, Bloemaert was instrumental in the development of the iconography for this subject: his pendant paintings from 1626, engraved by his son Cornelis and others, became the standard compositional and iconographical models for Dutch artists throughout the century.

⁶¹⁵ Van Eck 2001, n.p.

prescribed moments of the Mass. Van Eck has shown that the five paintings correspond not only to a common practice upheld by priests of composing sermons in five parts, but also to an illustrated booklet expiating the order of the Mass.⁶¹⁶ I have further argued that, given the patronage of *klopje* Sybilla Fonteyn, the series reflects the meditative practices of lay religious women, who used series of engravings in a similar way to reflect upon sermons and on devotional literature. Moreover, the outbreak of the plague in the same year as the series' creation reminded viewers of the importance of devotion to the Passion, reliance on the Church, and celebration of Mass and Eucharist in order to secure eternal life.

Political conditions, the transfer of patronage from the Church to individuals, and the tight-knit nature of Catholic communities created opportunities for Catholic artists to decorate their own parishes. Not only were all of the artists represented in St. Bernardus and 't Hart practicing Catholics, but most had personal relationships with the priests for whom they worked. Pieter de Grebber fostered a close friendship with Fr. Jan Albertsz. Ban of the Begijnhof, for whom he served as a witness on many documents and even composed a song.⁶¹⁷ De Grebber also portrayed Den Hoeck pastors Cornelis Arentsz., miraculously intact at his disinterment seventeen years after his death, and Boudewijn Cats, who later became Apostolic Vicar.⁶¹⁸ Beyond this, the De Grebber family was related by marriage to the Ebbekin, Lynhoven, and Bagijn families, major producers of liturgical silver in Holland.⁶¹⁹ Philips Wouwerman likely knew Boudewijn Cats as well, accepting a loan from him, according to legend, or at least living within the boundaries of

⁶¹⁶ Van Eck 2008, 191; Schillemans 2007, 7.

⁶¹⁷ Hazelager, 24–5.

⁶¹⁸ Van Eck 2004; Spaans 2012, 87.

⁶¹⁹ Biesboer 2007.

Den Hoeck and supplying Cats's community with three paintings.⁶²⁰ Both Wouwerman and Van de Velde had at least one of their children baptized or married by the priest for whom they painted devotional pieces.⁶²¹ Because Catholic artists and patrons presumably had a deeper understanding of Catholic theology than their Protestant colleagues, the subject matter of paintings and scenes on garments and silver tended to be theologically complex.

Devotional themes originally popularized during the *Devotio Moderna* movement beginning in the fourteenth century, such as the Christ child living in the worshipper's heart, as well as the Virgin Mary or unidentified spiritual virgin as the Bride of Christ, recurred in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century devotional engravings used by *kloppen*.⁶²² These women saw themselves as both nurturing mother of the baby Jesus and faithful spouse of the resurrected Jesus. They then viewed paintings like De Grebber's *Ecce Homo* or Bloemaert's *Simeon and the Christ Child* from the perspective of these relationships with Christ, prescribed and reinforced in edifying literature written for *kloppen* and in sermons recorded by *kloppen*. Likewise, *kloppen* embroidered liturgical garments with images of virgin saints, such as St. Gertrude of Nivelles, known for her assiduous handiwork, who appears on a chasuble made by the women of Den Hoeck.⁶²³

The tendency for priests to preach on Eucharistic, confessional, and redemptive themes in accordance with Counter-Reformation goals in the Holland Mission resulted in similar themes and iconography appearing across the paintings, devotional engravings,

⁶²⁰ Schumacher, 17; Laing 1995.

⁶²¹ Schumacher, 18; Schillemans 2007, 4.

⁶²² See Verheggen.

⁶²³ Museum Catharijneconvent inv. nr. BMH t129a.

liturgical silver, and garments used in a single parish.⁶²⁴ In St. Bernardus, for example, Jan de Bray's painting of *St. John Giving the Virgin Communion* speaks on one level to the centrality of the Virgin and of the Eucharist in Catholic faith, and on a deeper level to the role of priest as stand-in for Christ and spiritual father to lay religious women, and the need for preparedness of conscience before death. These themes are echoed in an anonymous engraving of the Virgin receiving Christ's crown of thorns before being crowned in glory in heaven, pasted into a sermon manuscript recorded by *kloppen*, as well as in the *gaffelkruis* depicting the Assumption of the Virgin on a chasuble worn by Apostolic Vicar Vosmeer, embroidered by the same women.⁶²⁵ In 't Hart, Van de Velde's Passion series not only corresponds to the order of the Mass, but also refers subtly to the doctrine of transubstantiation and the power of the Host to perform miracles, reinforced in the popular pamphlet on the Miracle of Amsterdam by Fr. Leonardus Marius.⁶²⁶ 't Hart's liturgical silver reinforced these messages, displaying the Lamb of God, Passion instruments, and stories related to water, wine, and transformation including the Wedding at Cana and the Last Supper.⁶²⁷

Revisited medieval iconography and relatable, individualized saints reminded viewers of the strength and age of the Catholic tradition in the Netherlands. Devotions to the Eucharist, the Virgin, and miraculous events, all of which the Protestants considered heretical, reaffirmed the special status of Catholics and the role of ritual and tradition in salvation. Whether paintings, engravings, textiles, and silver evoked these older traditions with archaic style or archaic iconography and subject matter, Dutch congregations used

⁶²⁴ Spaans 2003; Sandeman 2013.

⁶²⁵ Verheggen, 97–100; Caron.

⁶²⁶ Stichting Katholiek Erfgoed.

⁶²⁷ Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout 1993.

these “transitional” objects simultaneously to connect their experience to the Roman Church and to forge a Dutch Catholic identity.⁶²⁸ No patrons had a stronger relationship to the devotional objects in *huiskerken* than lay religious women, who commissioned, maintained, and in the case of manuscripts and textiles, created the objects, and linked them all in their ritualized daily mediations, in which imagery played a central role.

Questions for Further Research

In the scope of this dissertation, I covered only two examples of *huiskerken* in North Holland with complete decorative programs. Many more examples exist and have received even less attention from scholars than have St. Bernardus and 't Hart. The reason for this is often a dearth of written records or material evidence. There are, however, several more examples that I think would make for fruitful exploration: the Begijnhof in Amsterdam, Sts. Anna and Maria in Haarlem, St. Joris op 't Zand in Amersfoort, Sts. Frederik and Odulphus in Leiden, and St. Maria Minor in Utrecht.

In Amsterdam, the Begijnhof and its chapel, led by the influential Fr. Leonardus Marius until his death in 1652 and then expanded and redecorated by Fr. David van der Mije in the 1670s, is still home to several altarpieces: from the first decorating phase, Nicolaes Moeyaert painted an *Assumption of the Virgin* (1649), *Adoration of the Shepherds*, and a *Crucifixion* (both 1650). From the redecorating phase of the 1670s, Nicolaes Roosendaël's *Christ at the Column* (1677) is now at the Museum Catharijneconvent, and Jan Weenix's *Assumption of the Virgin* (1675) is now lost. In 1696, two more altars were commissioned, and Weenix contributed an *Adoration of the*

⁶²⁸ Parker 2008, 19.

Magi, now at the Franciscan Abbey in Weert, while Johannes Voorhout's 1696 *Resurrection of Christ* remains at the Begijnhof. Also still in situ is an older *Crucifixion* by Isaac Isaacsen (1626) and an *Allegory of the Roman Catholic Church* by Jacob de Wit (1747).⁶²⁹

These works, all by Catholic artists, appear either in Robert Schillemans's article about altarpieces in the Begijnhof or in the catalogue produced on the occasion of the restoration of some of the paintings. Due to the prominence of the church as the seat of one of the archpriests of Amsterdam and home to a community of beguines, I believe further research would flesh out the relationships between Marius and Van der Mije's sermons, some of which survive in manuscripts compiled by the beguines. Likewise, the overlapping of artists, priests, and lay religious women between the parishes of the Begijnhof and 't Hart likely means that similar relationships existed between devotional literature and decorative programs at the two locations. Several of the paintings and a large portion of the liturgical silver and textiles that remain from the Begijnhof were commissioned and financed by beguines, about whom more is known than about the women that served 't Hart.⁶³⁰

Haarlem's Sts. Anna and Maria church was consolidated in 1636 under the supervision of Fr. Augustijn Bloemert, and while the original location is now an artist's studio, several paintings survive in the collections of the Oude-Katholiek Kerk in Holland. Wim Cerutti has written extensively on Bloemert's impact on Haarlem's Catholic community and charities, including his connections to Fr. Jan Albertsz. Ban, Leonardus Marius, and intellectuals like Marin Mersenne and René Descartes, but did not

⁶²⁹ See Van den Hout and Schillemans 1995; Listenburg 1995; Schillemans 1999; Van Eck 1999.

⁶³⁰ Van den Hout and Schillemans in Beijne, Van Dael, and Van den Hout 1993.

treat the artworks for the *huiskerk* in depth.⁶³¹ Along with three portraits of priests, other surviving works include a 1636/7 high altarpiece of the *Adoration of the Magi* variously attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, Abraham van Dijck, and Cornelis Cornelisz. van Haarlem, a *Last Supper* (c. 1670) attributed to Reyer Bloemmendael, and an anonymous *Mary Magdalene* from the third quarter of the seventeenth century. The physical proximity of this station to Den Hoeck and the interconnectedness of Haarlem Catholic society mean that these images would have functioned similarly to those in St. Bernardus.

Outside of Amsterdam and Haarlem, the Catholic painters of Utrecht have received ample scholarly attention. However, the many surviving paintings from Maria Minor, now a Belgian bar but structurally unchanged, have not been examined together as a cohesive program. Abraham Bloemaert and his sons and students produced the paintings for this chapel and Bloemaert lived very close by and stored some valuable garments and liturgical implements in his home for safekeeping. Many of the paintings made for Maria Minor now belong to Utrecht's Gertudiskathedraal, the main Oude-Katholiek (distinct from Roman Catholic) church in the city. Abraham Bloemaert painted a high altarpiece of the *Adoration of the Shepherds* in 1620, likely with help from his workshop, which now hangs in the Gertrudiskathedraal along with an undated *Sudarium of Veronica*. His son Hendrick completed three paintings for Maria Minor now in the cathedral: *Christ on the Cross* (1645), *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1647), and *Pentecost* (1652). Abraham's famous pendant pair of *St. Boniface* and *St. Willibrord* (1626) were

⁶³¹ Cerutti 2009.

originally for Maria Minor, though only the Boniface survives in Utrecht's Aartsbisshoppelijk Paleis.⁶³²

The Museum Catharijneconvent now owns the rest of the objects from Maria Minor. Jan van Bijlert painted a *Calling of Matthew* c. 1625–30 that adopts the contemporary tavern setting used by Caravaggio and other Utrecht Caravaggisti like Hendrick ter Brugghen. Abraham Bloemaert's 1645 *Man of Sorrows*, which resembles many devotional engravings of a solitary Christ holding Passion instruments, speaks to the popularity of Passion imagery, as does Gerrit van Honthorst's large 1654 *Ecce Homo* scene, with a related *Pilate Washing His Hands*, now lost. Along with silver and gold-plated monstrances featuring patron saints like Willibrord and Boniface, Maria Minor had an elaborate tabernacle from 1650, painted by Nicolaus Knupfer with a scene of two kneeling angels presenting the Host floating above a chalice.⁶³³

Once again, the related iconography and relatively short periods in which these objects were commissioned suggests a stronger connection between them and between liturgy at Maria Minor than has been discussed thus far. Unfortunately, not much is known about lay religious women in Utrecht, although large communities certainly existed there, since two Utrecht priests published guidebooks for them, called *kloppenboeken*. Fr. Johannes Lindeborn wrote *Leeder Jacobs* (Jacob's Ladder), a series of steps by which *kloppen* could improve their spiritual state, in 1670, and Willibrordus

⁶³² Roethlisberger and Bok 1993; Van Eck 1999.

⁶³³ Van Eck 2008; Jeltje Dijkstra, Paul Dirkse, and A.E.A.M. Smits, *Schilderijen van Museum Catharijneconvent* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2002).

Kemp wrote *Zedelessen voor de maegden* (Moral Lessons for Maidens), another description of rules for virginal life, in 1709.⁶³⁴

Near Utrecht and almost completely overlooked in scholarship, St. Joris op 't Zand of Amersfoort has been rehoused in a modern building, but still boasts a full painting cycle. Hendrick Bloemaert painted a series from the lives of Mary and Christ, with a single addition by Dirck van Voorst, and the high altarpiece, *in situ*, is by Jan de Bray. Bloemaert's pieces surely came from a single commission, since all pieces conform to the same dimensions and style and do not seem to have been completed in a logical order, although they were finished over twenty years. He began with the *Resurrection of Christ* (1649), returned only in 1659 with the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, and then produced the *Pentecost* in 1661, the *Assumption of the Virgin* in 1667, and the *Annunciation* in 1669. Meanwhile Van Voorst supplied the *Lamentation*, conforming to the same dimensions, between 1650–55, and based his composition on an earlier work by Abraham Bloemaert.⁶³⁵ De Bray's high altar of the *Adoration of the Shepherds* dates to 1697, and has suffered unfortunate abrasion and overpainting, making it difficult to discern the master's hand.

Along with the felicitous preservation of these paintings in the same parish, a former pastor, Wietse van der Velde, chronicled the entire history of the station in 2009,

⁶³⁴ Willibrordus Kemp, *Zedelessen voor de maegden, die, haer zelve aen Godt opgedragen hebbende, trachten volgens de plichten van de maegdelijke staet te leven: vergadert uit Gods Woord, en uit de schriften der heilige vaderen; en tot een t'zamenspraek, tusschen Christus en een maegd* (Utrecht: Theodorus van den Eynden, 1709), Bibliotheek Universiteit van Amsterdam Bijzondere Collecties OTM: O 61-5244; Johannes Lindeborn, *De leeder Jacobs: De maegden, die Godt met opzet van eeuwige reinigheit, in de weereld dienen, toe-gepast van den eeuw* (Antwerp: Michiel Cnobbaert/Joachim Metelen, 1670), Bibliotheek Universiteit van Amsterdam Bijzondere Collecties OTM: O 61-8026.

⁶³⁵ Roethlisberger and Bok 1993.

providing useful information about circumstances for Amersfoort Catholics during the Dutch Revolt and seventeenth-century pastors and *kloppen*.⁶³⁶ Most important for the interpretation of the painting cycle is the parish's special devotion to a miraculous image of Mary found in the fourteenth century. The *mirakelbeeld*, credited for several miraculous healings, survived the Alteration and is still housed in a shrine dedicated in the 1690s. The cohesion of the paintings and existence of many silver and embroidered liturgical implements, and even the shrine and miraculous image itself, will contribute to an overdue art historical analysis of St. Joris.

Another understudied example of a *huiskerk* with a complete painting cycle intact is Sts. Frederik and Odulphus in Leiden, former home of Willem van Ingen's expansive series of paintings, all completed in 1685 and all currently housed in Leiden's Museum Het Lakenhal. Van Ingen painted *St. Frederick*, *St. Odulphus*, *Sts. Hugo of Grenoble and Bruno of Cologne*, *St. Peter*, and *St. Paul*, altarpieces of *Adam and Eve*, *The Adoration of the Magi*, and *Christ Appearing to Mary Magdalene*, and a horizontal series of Christ's childhood and Passion including the *Nativity*, *Circumcision*, *Childhood of Christ*, *Christ Among the Doctors*, *Transfiguration of Christ* (now lost), *Flagellation*, *Carrying of the Cross*, *Crucifixion*, and *Lamentation*.⁶³⁷ Van Ingen also painted, perhaps for the rectory or sacristy of Sts. Frederik and Odulphus, ten similar coats of arms each featuring a different Passion instrument or object from Christ's childhood. The Lakenhal also owns a *Deposition* from 1665 by Johannes van Wijckersloot which does not match the dimensions of Van Ingen's Passion scenes but perhaps functioned as a high altarpiece

⁶³⁶ Wietse van der Velde, *Sint Joris op 't Zand: geschiedenis van de Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland en haar parochie te Amersfoort* (Amersfoort: Bekking, 2009).

⁶³⁷ Van Eck 1999.

before Van Ingen's program. Few *huiskerken* had such comprehensive and unified programs of paintings as this, and Van Ingen has the interesting distinction of impressing Apostolic Vicar Johannes van Neercassel so much that he accompanied the archbishop to Rome in 1670.⁶³⁸

These examples are not an exhaustive list, but merely ones I once considered including in this study or which I hope to take up in the future. In addition to comprehensive studies of individual *huiskerken*, some Catholic artists have received little attention, despite success in their lifetimes, and should be reevaluated for their contributions to religious history painting. To name but a few Catholic artists in my study whose reputation has suffered from the perception that their Catholic works were “un-Dutch” or derivative of other religious history painters: Pieter de Grebber, Hendrick Bloemaert, Jan de Bray, and Johannes Voorhout.

An important aspect of my project that I hope to carry forward is its emphasis on craft or “low” arts as a stylistic and iconographic source for “high” art like painting. The distinction between high and low art was indeed on the minds of seventeenth-century artists, especially those history painters who reformed their St. Luke's Guilds in order to prioritize the concerns of painters over other craftsmen. Yet in the *huiskerk* context, a painting was no more important liturgically than a silver pyxis, and a sermon manuscript with carefully selected and added devotional engravings was perhaps the object most intimately connected to a *klopje's* or layperson's faith. Art historians that work on *huiskerken* have tended to treat paintings separately from all other objects, a tradition

⁶³⁸ According to Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* vol. 3 (1718-21, facsimile 1976), 316-7.

which I hope to change as it is not particularly conducive to a historical understanding of decorative programs. The material culture perspective has become crucial to other areas of Dutch Golden Age art history, for example still lifes, but I believe the study of religious works would also benefit from this methodology.⁶³⁹

I also plan to continue exploring the relationship between Catholic subject matter and classicizing painting style, and between Dutch theologians' justifications for figural imagery in devotional settings and Dutch art theory on drawing from life and academic study. I have already suggested that the Bloemaert, De Bray, and De Grebber families provide good examples of art created at the intersection of theory and faith, but I suspect other Catholic artists could illustrate this relationship as well. Needless to say, the field of art made for Catholic *huiskerken* and its relationship to art theory, worship practices, and early modern identities, at least for Anglophone scholars, is virtually unexplored territory.

My contribution has been to contextualize two well-documented and historically important *huiskerken* in terms of the political and intellectual currents in Haarlem and Amsterdam. I considered the devotional paintings made for these spaces as working in concert with recorded sermons, devotional engravings, embroidered textiles, and liturgical silver to aid in the celebration of Mass and daily meditation, particularly as practiced by lay religious women. I have focused for the first time at length on some of the artworks in St. Bernardus and 't Hart, which are often overlooked, but more importantly have used these objects to illuminate the crucial roles played by lay religious women as patrons, creators, and viewers of devotional objects. Furthermore, I have shown that the modern binary of "high" and "low" art was irrelevant in Catholic

⁶³⁹ See for example, Julie Hochstrasser, *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

huiskerken, where doctrinal significance took precedence over perceived quality or monetary value. I conclude that the archaism of subject matter and style common to devotional artworks was not due to lack of artistic innovation, but rather demonstrates a greater continuity between the meditative use of imagery in the medieval *Devotio Moderna* movement and the early modern period than is commonly acknowledged.

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