

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE BRUEGELIANS: FORMATION AND
CANONIZATION OF PEASANT IMAGERY
IN THE TRADITION OF PIETER BRUEGEL
THE ELDER

Brighton Kelley Payne, Doctor of Philosophy,
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Dissertation directed by: Professor Arthur K. Wheelock,
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Pieter Bruegel the Elder's peasant imagery has come to be the picture of mid-sixteenth-century Flemish art and a reflection of the native countryside before the ravages of the Dutch Revolt. A hundred years later, its impact on seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish low-life genre scenes by Adriaen Brouwer, Adriaen van Ostade, David Teniers the Younger, and Jan Steen is undeniable. This dissertation examines the longevity of Bruegel the Elder's subjects, manner, and motifs, identifying how and why this imagery retained its appeal through years of drastic social and political change. The acquisition of Bruegel the Elder's paintings by the highest pinnacle of society, Emperor Rudolf II and his Austrian Habsburg kin, fueled an existing market of emulative paintings and prints. Identification of the artists who supplied these works and their relationship to Bruegel the Elder and his imagery reveals that many artists, particularly Marten van Cleve and Karel van Mander, contributed subjects and

manner to a period style later associated with Breugel the Elder. Foremost in the process of appropriating peasant imagery under the name Bruegel were Pieter Bruegel the Elder's two painter sons, Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder, and Karel van Mander, whose *Het Schilderboeck* (1604) canonized Bruegel the Elder as the archetypal landscape and peasant painter. Three case studies trace the trajectory of Bruegelian imagery from the middle of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century. A contrast with emulative works by Bruegelian artists reveals the singularity of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's artistry.

THE BRUEGELIANS: FORMATION AND CANONIZATION OF PEASANT
IMAGERY IN THE TRADITION OF PIETER BRUEGEL THE ELDER

by

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Dedication

Again, to those who would have been proud. I miss you so much, but do so much because of you.

And to my little one, for reminding me of why I am doing this.

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On my commute home, I pass an advertisement that states: “No one gets a diploma alone.” It is cliché, yet every evening I am reminded of those who have supported me to complete my doctorate.

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And to the youngest, I thank my sweet daughter. I will always cherish the memory of your baby “Bruegel faces,” even though they have been replaced by the cherubic look seen in Rubens’ chalk drawings of children. Your pretend “work day” validates everything I do: “Mama, do you want to hear about my day? Well, I had to work on my dissertation. I biked to the Gallery, then read some books and wrote for a while, then had lunch with Rosie and Daisy and Elsa, then Arthur came down and we had a meeting, then I wrote a bit more, then biked home. And how was your day?”

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List of Abbreviations

KMSKA – Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten

MRBAB – Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique

Introduction

Bankruptcy puts a price on art. In 2013, *Peasant Wedding* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1556, Detroit Institute of Arts) (fig. 1) was priced at \$100-200 million dollars, a value that could help the bankrupt city of Detroit appease its creditors.¹ This same painting was likely the one subjected to similar scrutiny when its first owner, Jan Noirot, filed for bankruptcy in 1572. In the auction inventory of his collection, a *Peasant Wedding* was listed for 80 florin.²

The dismal circumstances surrounding of bankruptcy clash in our minds with the delight that Pieter Bruegel's paintings of festive peasants bring to everyone who gazes upon them. Bruegel (c.1525-1569), one of the most renowned painters of mid sixteenth-century Antwerp, painted imaginative fantasies inspired by Hieronymous Bosch, landscapes, biblical stories, extensive allegorical and proverbial works, and peasant scenes. Carefully rendered details in his paintings provide endless amusement. Adept at both painting and designing prints, Bruegel the Elder perfected a manner that was acclaimed for its naturalism but also provided sharp observational accounts of the human condition and the natural world.

During Bruegel's lifetime, his art was exceptional, but he was not the only renowned peasant painter. In the following generations, however, his name, manner,

¹ Randy Kennedy, "A Bruegel, A Rembrandt, a van Gogh: Appraisal Puts Prices on the Priceless in Detroit," *The New York Times*, December 20, 2013.

² This was likely painted on panel, in comparison to another *Peasant Wedding* on cloth (linen) valued at 42 guilders. Noirot also owned a smaller *Peasant Wedding*, possibly painted in tempera on canvas. Walter S. Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2006), 75.

and subjects became the embodiment of peasant imagery.³ This dissertation examines how emulative paintings, laudatory literature, and elite collecting behavior established the Bruegel tradition of peasant painting and transmitted it to the seventeenth century. Through repetition, certain subjects become canonized, and an artistic manner became associated with the name Bruegel. Later painters, particularly David Teniers the Younger and Jan Steen, fused this archaic tradition with new approaches to genre subjects in the seventeenth century.

Bruegelian artists painted thousands of peasant works, of all sizes and levels of quality, from the 1550s to the 1670s.⁴ The mid sixteenth-century period style peasant paintings developed into a tradition linked to Bruegel by the start of the seventeenth century. Later peasant paintings emulating Bruegel's works both looked back to sixteenth-century sources as well as adapted to changing tastes and circumstances. Within the peasant genre, the most popular subjects feature festivities, including kermis and weddings, as well as violence against peasants, seen in both *boerenverdriet* (Peasant's Sorrow) and contemporary enactments of the Massacre of the Innocents, proverbial imagery acted out by peasants, and depictions of the labors

³ In 2010, Svetlana Alpers proposed the question, "I have long been fascinated by the fact that there were two kinds of 'peasant' figures available in the mid-sixteenth century in northern Europe: the tubby, compact one favored by the Bruegel family and the lean, lanky one found in Aertsen and others. If we look at peasants as they are depicted in the seventeenth century – Ostade and Brouwer – it is clear that the Bruegel type won out. Why? And is there any sense to be made of the difference." Laurie Schneider Adams, "Editor's Note: Roads Not Taken - A Proposal by Svetlana Alpers," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 29, no. 4 (Summer 2010): 1–2.

This dissertation was independently conceived around this time, and partially answers Alpers's question. Further inquiry into the legacy of Aertsen's manner and its survival for full analysis of this question.

⁴ Robert Genaille first used the term "Bruegelians" in "Les Brueghel et les Bruegelians," the concluding chapter of his 1953 monograph on Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Robert Genaille, *Bruegel, l'Ancien* (Paris: Editions Pierre Tisné, 1953), 61–65.

of the countryside as representations of the seasons or months of the year. Within this dissertation, works in these veins are emphasized.

These emulative peasant paintings fulfilled a demand that included the highest echelons of collecting society, including the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II, who owned “some of [Bruegel’s] most important works.”⁵ When he arrived in the Netherlands in 1595, Rudolf II’s brother, Archduke Ernst acquired a *Peasant Wedding* for 160 florins that he added to the series of *The Months* the City of Antwerp had gifted him (figs. 2-6).⁶ In Bruegel’s lifetime, the influential Cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, as well as Antwerp mercantile elites Jean Noirot and Nicolaes Jongelinck established Bruegel’s popularity among both the political and economic elite in both Antwerp and Brussels.⁷ At the turn of the seventeenth-century, affluent merchants in Amsterdam and Antwerp proudly hung Bruegel’s paintings in their elegant townhouses.⁸ The popularity of Bruegelian imagery among the elite collectors of the day bolstered its appeal among lower, aspiring classes, who collected lesser-artists’ interpretations of the great master.

⁵ Karel Van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the First Edition of the Schilder-Boeck (1603-1604). Preceded by The Lineage, Circumstances and Place of Birth, Life and Works of Karel van Mander, Painter and Poet and Likewise His Death and Burial, from the Second Edition of the Schilder-Boeck (1616-1618)*, trans. Hessel Miedema, 4 vols. (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), v.1, fol.233v.

⁶ Archduke Ernst purchased the *Peasant Wedding*, which he added to the collection he acquired from the City of Antwerp upon his Triumphal Entry. Iain Buchanan, “The Collection of Nicolaes Jongelinck: II The ‘Months’ by Pieter Bruegel the Elder,” *The Burlington Magazine* 132, no. 1049 (August 1990): 542.

⁷ Bruegel moved to Brussels by 1563, where he married Mayken Coecke. He may have moved to Brussels, the administrative center of the Netherlands, in the hope of court patronage. Manfred Sellink, *Bruegel: The Complete Paintings, Drawings, and Prints* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2007), 30.

Van Mander argues that Mayken’s mother, the widow of Pieter Coeck van Aelst, lived in Brussels, and required Bruegel to relocate to Brussels to marry her daughter. Van Mander 1994, v.1, fol. 233v.

⁸ Ibid.

The artist and art historian Karel van Mander (1548-1606) summed up the appeal of Bruegelian peasant imagery in his biography of Bruegel in *Het Leven der Doorluchtighe Nederlandtsche, en Hooghduytsche Schilders* (*The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters*) in *Het Schilderboeck* (1604), confessing that “one sees few pictures by him which a spectator can contemplate seriously and without laughing,” while also celebrating how Bruegel faithfully followed Nature, and “swallowed all those mountains and rocks which... he spat out again onto canvases and panels.”⁹ Van Mander adapted Bruegel’s manner of painting tradition in his own work, thereby helping transmit this Flemish artist’s style into the Northern Netherlands at the turn of the seventeenth century.

Scope of Study

Although studies on Bruegel the Elder and the genre of peasant scenes in the second half of the sixteenth century and the early decades of the seventeenth century are not rare in the least, there is still much to be discussed and examined. This dissertation ultimately seeks to understand how and why Bruegel’s art continued to be popular and have such influence on art well into the seventeenth century. It also aims to explore which subjects and manners resonated with later artists and art lovers. Related to this is the question of how Bruegel’s name and imagery came to be so strongly associated with a period style of peasant imagery.

Chapter one investigates the demand for Bruegel’s paintings in the seventeenth century by focusing on the most elite group of collecting society: the Austrian Habsburgs. With power and wealth, Emperor Rudolf II and his kinsmen

⁹ Ibid.

could form their art collections to be almost anything they chose, and they chose paintings by Pieter Bruegel. Not only that, but they acquired paintings after Pieter Bruegel the Elder, as well as by Pieter Brueghel the Younger and other Bruegelians.

The identity of these Bruegelian artists is the focus of chapter two. The chapter explores the manner and contributions of different generations of these artists. While it is clear that a period style influenced the stylistic and thematic approaches of these artists, this overview reveals the ongoing impact of Bruegel's peasant paintings.

Chapter three focuses on a single Bruegelian, Karel van Mander, and his pivotal role in establishing Bruegel's reputation as the preeminent peasant painter of the age. Van Mander articulated this view throughout *Het Schilderboek*, and his own peasant paintings demonstrate his adherence to Bruegel's model.

Karel van Mander's peasant imagery emerges frequently in chapter four, which examines the development of three peasant subjects from Bruegel through Jan Steen. The *Peasant Wedding* (1566, Detroit, Institute of Arts) and *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) are two of Bruegel's most recognizable paintings, partly due to the appeal of these subjects to subsequent artists. A drunk carried away from festivities is a motif relevant to the peasant genre, and it was often incorporated into paintings by artists from the middle of the sixteenth century through the 1670s. What emerges in this chapter is a network of artists who looked to Bruegel as well as to one another for inspiration. It also examines the ways in which these artists adapted these subjects and motifs through the years.

Each chapter examines the reception of Bruegel's peasant imagery by distinct viewing audiences in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Chapter one, on the

Austrian Habsburgs' collections, focuses on the reception of Bruegel by wealthy art lovers. The other chapters focus on the Bruegelians, and elaborate on the ways in which other artists imitated, emulated, and interpreted Bruegel the Elder's peasant imagery. Throughout, Bruegel himself is often the object, rather than the actor, in this study.

Peasants in Art and Culture

Medieval peasants frequently populated the background of biblical or historical subjects and labored through images of the seasons. Early landscape paintings almost always contained religious subjects, often dressed as peasants.¹⁰ The peasant as a subject on its own emerged in German imagery in the fifteenth century, and became more popular in the first half of the sixteenth century, particularly as a celebration of local culture.¹¹

Literature and art in Northern Europe in the early decades of the sixteenth century increasingly focused on the peasantry.¹² In the Netherlands, mid-century

¹⁰ Larry Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes: The Rise of Pictorial Genres in the Antwerp Art Market* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 26–52.

¹¹ Margaret D. Carroll, "Peasant Festivity and Political Identity in the Sixteenth Century," *Art History* 10, no. 3 (September 1987): 290–95; Keith Moxey, "Sebald Beham's Church Anniversary Holidays: Festive Peasants as Instruments of Repressive Humor," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 12, no. 2/3 (1982 1981): 107–30; Paul Vandenbroeck, "Verbeeck's Peasant Weddings: A Study of Iconography and Social Function," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 14, no. 2 (1984): 79–124; Keith Moxey, *Peasants, Warriors, and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Walter S. Gibson, "Verbeeck's Grotesque Wedding Feasts: Some Reconsiderations," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 21, no. 1/2 (1992): 29–39; Alison Stewart, *Before Bruegel: Sebald Beham and the Origins of Peasant Festival Imagery* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008).

¹² For example, Erasmus of Rotterdam wrote of the peasantry in the early sixteenth century. German authors inspired by Publius Cornelius Tacitus's *Germania* (c.98 AD) include Joannes Boemus (1520); Aventinus (Johannes Turmair, 1521). Johannes Agricola published a collection of German Proverbs in 1529, which defended the peasantry. These literary works corresponded with the print imagery of Bartel Beham and Erhard Schoen (1528), as well as Hans Sebald Beham (1535). Carroll, "Peasant Festivity and Political Identity," 290–95.

political upheaval likely contributed to the emergence of images celebrating country activity.¹³ In the 1550s and 1560s, many artists in Antwerp painted and printed peasant subjects, including Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Pieter Aertsen, Cornelys Matsys, and artists associated with Hieronymous Cock's publishing house *Au Quatre Vents* (*At the Four Winds*).

Peasant subjects were not only assertions of local customs in the face of foreign oppression. Bruegel's peasant imagery, in particular, were amusing visuals of celebration. Jan Noirot, Master of the Antwerp Mint, was likely the first owner of Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding*, and it hung in his small dining room.¹⁴ The freedom and joy represented in the painting may have inspired Noirot and his peers to recall the pleasure of country festivities. Noirot may have intended the painting to serve as a substitute for the country estate many of his peers owned but he did not.¹⁵ Hung in the dining room, the peasant painting may have provided the backdrop for *rederijker* actors performing as peasants in entertaining *tafelspelen*, or banquet plays.¹⁶

Tafelspel was one genre of theatrical works produced by the *rederijkers*, or rhetoricians, literary and dramatic civic groups popular in the sixteenth century.¹⁷

¹³In the face of increasing repression by the Spanish crown under Charles V and later Philip II, prints and paintings of peasant kermis became increasingly popular as a means to assert local rights. Ibid., 295–302.

¹⁴ Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 67–76.; Claudia Goldstein, *Pieter Bruegel and the Culture of the Early Modern Dinner Party* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 2–5, 37–74.

¹⁵ Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 77–105.

¹⁶ Peasants were the subject of a significant proportion of *tafelspelen*. Peasant imagery, including Bruegel's paintings, became a backdrop for the actors' playings. Goldstein, *Pieter Bruegel and the Culture of the Early Modern Dinner Party*, 76–83, 87–124.

¹⁷ See Walter Gibson, "Artists and Rederijkers in the Age of Bruegel," *The Art Bulletin* 63, no. 3 (September 1981): 426–46.

Antwerp boasted several chambers, one of which, the *Violieren*, was associated with the artist's Guild of St. Luke. Though there is no evidence Bruegel participated in *Violieren* activities, several of his colleagues, friends, and fellow guild members were active members of the rederijkers chamber.¹⁸ Peasants frequently feature in the literature and plays of rederijkers.

Contemporary literature beyond plays produced by the rederijkers featured peasant subjects in the sixteenth century, many focusing on the festivities of the countryside. Praise of the local peasantry for their simplicity, industriousness, and festivity coincided with opposing condescending literature of a moralizing bent.¹⁹ Such conflicting interpretations of village festivities are evident in Bruegel's print *The Kermis at Hoboken* (1559) (fig. 7). As a village outside of Antwerp with three popular yearly festivals and a low tax on beer, Hoboken was a popular location for country homes and leisurely excursions.²⁰ Bruegel's image presents a benign kermis, in which peasants tamely enjoy themselves and exercise their native rights at a shooting contest.²¹ The inscription on the print, however, condemns the villagers' overindulgence and abuse of church holidays. "The peasants rejoice at such festivals/

¹⁸ Individuals associated with Bruegel who partook in rederijker chamber activities were Hieronymous Cock, Pieter Baltens, Maerten de Vos, Frans Floris, and Hans Franckert. Ibid., 431.

¹⁹ Hessel Miedema, "Realism and the Comic Mode: The Peasant," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 9, no. 4 (1977): 205–19.; John Oliver Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel: Netherlands Drawings in the Sixteenth Century* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1986), 220–21.

²⁰ Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 81–84, 151.

²¹ Carroll, "Peasant Festivity and Political Identity," 299.

to dance and drink themselves drunk as beasts/ They must observe the church festivals/ Even if they fast and die of the cold.”²²

The radically divergent interpretations of Bruegel’s *Kermis at Hoboken* that have been advanced through the years demonstrate that no single interpretation of peasant imagery is possible.²³ Part of this question stems from the myriad of subjects and manners of peasant paintings created during the sixteenth century.²⁴ Artists painted peasants peacefully celebrating the kermis, a wedding, or simply time at leisure. Sometimes, however, the village inhabitants were shown overindulging or behaving boorishly, presenting themselves as figures one should not emulate. At work, peasants are the descendants of medieval laborers portrayed in illuminated

²² Cited in Moxey, “Sebald Beham’s Church Anniversary Holidays,” 122. ; Miedema, “Realism and the Comic Mode,” 212–13.

²³ Originating in a debate between Svetlana Alpers and Hessel Miedema in the 1970s, interpretation of peasant images remains divisive. On the one hand, scholars, led by Alpers, read the images as comic entertainment for the art-buying public. Miedema and his followers, often citing print inscriptions as support, interpret peasant imagery as derisive examples of immoral behavior. Svetlana Alpers, “Bruegel’s Festive Peasants,” *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 6, no. 3/4 (1973 1972): 163–76; Svetlana Alpers, “Realism as a Comic Mode: Low-Life Painting Seen through Bredero’s Eyes,” *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 8, no. 3 (1976 1975): 115–44; Miedema, “Realism and the Comic Mode”; Svetlana Alpers, “Taking Pictures Seriously: A Reply to Hessel Miedema,” *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 10, no. 1 (1979 1978): 46–50.

Recent contributions to the interpretation of peasant imagery have remained as divisive. Scholarship that interprets peasant paintings as comic entertainment include: Carroll, “Peasant Festivity and Political Identity”; Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*; Goldstein, *Pieter Bruegel and the Culture of the Early Modern Dinner Party*.

More negative interpretations of peasant imagery also continue. See: Moxey, “Sebald Beham’s Church Anniversary Holidays”; Margaret Sullivan, *Bruegel’s Peasants: Art and Audience in the Northern Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

This author believes that there can be no single interpretation to all of the peasant imagery produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that each artist – and even each work – must be examined individually. If an overarching interpretation is to be made, it is that printed peasant works tend to be more condemning than their painted counterparts, a possible revelation about the distinct audiences of the two media.

²⁴ Genaille, *Bruegel, l’Ancien*, 63.

For example, see Moxey’s opposing interpretations of printed peasant festivities by Pieter van der Borcht and Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Moxey, “Sebald Beham’s Church Anniversary Holidays,” 122.

manuscripts, representing the diligence and acceptance of a rural population. Specific peasant imagery, such as *boerenverdriet* (“Peasants’ Sorrow”) or biblical histories in the guise of contemporary peasant scenes, have also elicited different interpretations.²⁵

Peasants in allegorical or proverbial guise presented humorous representations of folly. In genre scenes from the mid-sixteenth century, depiction of the fool and the topsy-turvy world that relate to literary genres established by Sebastian Brandt in his *Ship of Fools* (1494) and Desiderius Erasmus in his *In Praise of Folly* (c.1511) were popular. Corresponding imagery included representations of Carnival, such as Bruegel’s *Battle between Carnival and Lent* (1559, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 8), as well as reversals of place, including *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) (fig. 9), also known as *Topsy-Turvy World*.²⁶

Inspired by Erasmus’s humanist legacy, the intellectual elite of mid-sixteenth-century Antwerp, including Bruegel’s associates Abraham Ortelius,

²⁵ See: Jane Susannah Fishman, *Boerenverdriet: Violence between Peasants and Soldiers in Early Modern Netherlands Art*, Studies in the Fine Arts, 5: Iconography (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982); Ethan Matt Kavaler, *Pieter Bruegel: Parables of Order and Enterprise* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

²⁶ The world turned topsy turvy was often used to describe the paintings by the Brueg[h]els. Rebecca Duckwitz, “The Devil Is in the Detail. Pieter Brueghel the Elder’s *Netherlandish Proverbs* and Copies after It from the Workshop of Pieter Brueghel the Younger,” in *Brueghel Enterprises* (Ghent-Amsterdam: Ludion, 2001), 61. Kunzle argues that this is a misnomer, and that the World Upside Down referred to the inverse of the known world, and as such was a structured world that “posited the negation and inversion of traditional, familiar relations between strong and weak, within human society, between humans and animals, and between animals among themselves.” The globes found in Bruegel’s composition “indicate that the follies embodied in the *Proverbs* tend to turn the world down, that is, make a mess of it, but he does not mean literally upside down, he does not depict literal role-reversal.” David Kunzle, “Belling the Cat - Butting the Wall: Military Elements in Bruegel’s *Netherlandish Proverbs*,” in *The Netherlandish Proverbs: An International Symposium on the Pieter Brueg(h)els* (Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, 2004), 130–32.

Hieronymous Cock, and Christopher Plantin,²⁷ referenced ancient texts to advance ideals of Christian morality.²⁸ Margaret Sullivan argues that Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding* and *Peasant Dance* (c.1568, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 10) allude to ancient literature familiar to humanist circles and, for the most part, present peasants as the antithesis to living a moral existence.²⁹ However, the known owners of most of Bruegel's paintings were not among the intellectual elite. Bruegel's patrons in Antwerp, like Nicolaes Jongelink and Jean Noirot, were more concerned with demonstrating their wealth than their erudition, and likely did not read the peasants on their walls as examples of moral deficiency.³⁰

Art lovers of various wealth levels collected images of peasants at leisure. Brueghel the Younger painted exceptional works for elite collectors like Archduchess Isabella, but also oversaw a workshop that produced smaller, sketchier works for a broader market.³¹ Prints, though less expensive than paintings, often fulfilled the

²⁷ Sullivan, *Breugel's Peasants*, 7–13.

²⁸ Ibid., 9..

²⁹ Ibid., 13–15.

³⁰ Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 73–76; Goldstein, *Pieter Bruegel and the Culture of the Early Modern Dinner Party*, 4–5.

Abraham Ortelius owned Bruegel's *Death of the Virgin* (c.1564, Upton House, Banbury), which may have been a gift from the artist. Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 75.

The fact, too, that Karel van Mander, himself quite versed in ancient literature, would choose to focus on the humorous qualities of Bruegel's art in the biography, rather than any intellectual readings, supports this interpretation.

³¹ Dominique Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings? Some Methodological and Critical Reflections," in *Brueghel Enterprises* (Ghent-Amsterdam: Ludion, 2001), 50.

The 1663 inventory of Anna de Schot, the widow of Nicolas Cheeus, includes several paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder. At least for those works that Anna de Schot owned, those by Pieter were valued significantly less than those by Jan. Georges Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, ed. Jacqueline Folie (Brussels: Editions Robert Finck, 1969), 7–8; Jacqueline Folie, "Pieter Brueghel the Younger, 1564/5-1637/8," in *Brueghel Enterprises* (Ghent-Amsterdam: Ludion, 2001), 44.

demand of less affluent art lovers, but were also acquired by elite collectors, like Emperor Rudolf II.

Many of the paintings included in this dissertation focus not on rural activities, but rather on festivities in small towns and villages.³² The figures, however, can be considered “peasants,” at least in contrast to wealthier town folk. This imagery was unceasingly popular throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, unlike landscapes with rural laborers, which fell out of favor in the seventeenth century.

Pieter Bruegel the Elder (c.1525-1569)

Pieter Bruegel’s peasant paintings and landscapes developed into distinct artistic genres. His name has come to be associated as the prominent practitioner of both genres, and his manner influenced generations and peasant and landscape painters. Copyists and followers into the next century extended Bruegel’s influence beyond his relatively short lifetime, as well as preserved many lost compositions by

The techniques Bruegel the Younger employed for his workshop production allowed for rapid reproduction of the same composition. Infrared radiography reveals replicated underdrawings, sometimes outlined by two artistic hands. To speed up the painting – and drying – process, artists painted layers with reserves corresponding to the outlines of the underdrawing. With this production technique, copies could likely be produced with great efficiency, fulfilling the demand for the imagery. Christina Currie, “Demystifying the Process: Pieter Brueghel the Younger’s ‘The Census at Bethlehem’. A Technical Study,” in *Brueghel Enterprises*, ed. Peter van den Brink (Ghent-Amsterdam: Ludion, 2001), 93–95; Christina Currie and Dominique Allart, *The Brueg[H]el Phenomenon: Paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder and Pieter Brueghel the Younger with a Special Focus on Technique and Copying Practice* (Brussels: Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage/ Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium (KIK)/ Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique (IRPA), 2012), passim. The St. Luke’s guild lists nine pupils in his studio between 1588 and 1626, including his son, Pieter, who entered the guild in 1608. The other registered apprentices were Franchois de Grooten (1588), Fransken Snyders (1593), Hans Tripou (1593), an unnamed pupil (1596), Andries Daniesl (1599), Hans Gareit (1608), Jasper Breydel (1611), Gillis Placquet (1615), and Conzaes Coques (1626 or 1627). Folie, “Pieter Brueghel the Younger, 1564/5-1637/8,” 45; Currie, “Demystifying the Process,” 81.

³² Pilar Silva Maroto and Manfred Sellink, “The Rediscovery of Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s ‘Wine of St Martin’s Day’, Acquired for the Museo Nacional Del Prado, Madrid,” *The Burlington Magazine* 153, no. 1304 (December 2011): 791.

the master. Bruegel's reputation as the "lasting fame of the Netherlands" was established during his lifetime, and is discussed in more detail in a later chapter.

Both Lodovico Guicciardini and Karel van Mander identify Bruegel's birthplace as a small village in Brabant.³³ His exact year of birth is unknown, though documents suggest he was born between 1525 and 1530.³⁴ He studied with Pieter Coecke van Aelst, whose daughter became Bruegel's future wife.³⁵ "From there he went to work at Jeroon Kock's," the printmaker Hieronymous Cock, for whose publishing house, *Au Quatre Vents* (*At the Four Winds*), he designed prints throughout his career.³⁶ After Bruegel joined the Antwerp Guild of St. Luke in 1551,³⁷ he and Pieter Baltens were commissioned by Claude Dorisi to paint an

³³ Lodovico Guicciardini, *Descrittione di tutti I Paesi Bassi* (1567) Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r; cited in Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 38, n.18.

From the 1551 *liggeren* of the Antwerp Guild of St. Luke, which lists Bruegel's first entry into the painter's guild, Sellink has interpreted the possibility that Bruegel's family had long been in Antwerp, and that he may not necessarily be from a small village, as the popular imagination would have it. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 9–10.

Van Mander strengthens Bruegel's identity as a painter of peasants and country landscapes by locating his birthplace in a small village. Bruegel's narrative would be significantly weakened had he merely been a citizen of Antwerp, whose excursions into the countryside were limited to outings with Hans Franckert. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r.

³⁴ As a new master admitted to the St. Luke's Guild in 1551, Bruegel would have been between 21 and 25 years old. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 38.

A portrait engraved by Aegedius Sadeler equates the age of Pieter Brueghel the Younger in 1606 with the age of Bruegel the Elder at his death in 1569. In 1606, Brueghel the Younger was 41, so Bruegel the Elder would have been born in 1527/1528. J.B. Bedaux and A. Van Gool, "Bruegel's Birthyear, Motif of an Ars/Natura Transmutation," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 7, no. 3 (1974): 155; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 10; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 39.

³⁵ Van Mander claims Bruegel also studied with Jeroon Kock. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 11–12.

³⁶ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r. Van Mander/Miedema 1604/1994, fol 233r. Sellink notes that prints from Bruegel and Cock's collaboration date from after 1554, but an early relationship is possible. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 13.

³⁷ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 38.

alterpiece for the glovers' guild for St. Rombout's Cathedral in Mechelen. While Baltens painted the more prestigious interior of the altarpiece, Bruegel painted the outer wings in grisaille.³⁸ Shortly after, Bruegel left for France and Italy, where he drew majestic landscapes. These works helped solidify Bruegel's reputation as an emulator of images from life, for Van Mander wrote:

On his travels he drew many views from life so that it is said that when he was in the Alps he swallowed all those mountains and rocks which, upon returning home, he spat out again onto canvases and panels, so faithfully was he able, in this respect and others, to follow Nature.³⁹

Upon Bruegel's return to Antwerp around 1555, he resumed work with Hieronymous Cock, designing landscapes as well as fantastic works inspired by Hieronymous Bosch.⁴⁰ According to Van Mander, Bruegel's humorous art stemmed from Bosch's influence. "He had practiced a lot after the works of Jeroon van den Bosch and he also made many spectres and burlesques in his manner so that he was called by many Pier den Drol."⁴¹

Guicciardini, Giorgio Vasari, and Domenicus Lampsonius all described Bruegel as "Jeroon [Bosch] once more returned/to the world..."⁴² One of Bruegel's first figural prints published by Cock was *Big Fish Eats Little Fish* (1557), which

³⁸ Sellink, *Bruegel*, 12; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 38-39.

³⁹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, 233r.

⁴⁰ Sellink, *Bruegel*, 17-23; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 39.

⁴¹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, 233r.

⁴² *Ibid.*, v.1, fol.234r; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 21.

Bruegel signed as Bosch.⁴³ Bruegel's peasants and landscapes, however, quickly strayed from Bosch's influence.

The dissemination of Bruegel's designs in print, including his early peasant imagery like *Kermis at Hoboken* (1559) (fig. 7), helped establish his reputation.⁴⁴ Bruegel's early peasant paintings, like *The Battle Between Carnival and Lent* (1559) (fig. 8) and *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559) (fig. 9), similarly feature a high vantage of a large scene teeming with small figures.

During his lifetime, Bruegel's art was in demand from important private and civic patrons. By 1563, he had moved to Brussels, where he married the daughter of Pieter Coecke van Aelst.⁴⁵ He enjoyed the patronage of Cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle,⁴⁶ advisor of Philip II and Margaret of Parma, but also maintained close relations with Antwerp's elite. Nicholaes Jongelinck, a wealthy Antwerp merchant, owned at least sixteen paintings by Bruegel.⁴⁷ The Antwerp mint-master, Jean Noirot, owned several landscape scenes.⁴⁸ Bruegel's friend, the humanist and geographer Abraham Ortelius, owned *The Death of the Virgin* (c.1564, Banbury, National Trust,

⁴³ Sellink, *Bruegel*, 21, 88–89.

⁴⁴ Currie and Allart, *The Bruegel[h]el Phenomenon*, v.1, 39. Bruegel and Cock's collaboration continued until about 1562. However, Au Ventre Vents under Hieronymous Cock's widow published several designs after the deaths of both Bruegel and Cock. Sellink 2007, 23. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 23, 263–65.

⁴⁵ According to Van Mander, the move coincided with the courtship of his wife. The family of Pieter Coecke van Aelst, who had been court painter to Charles V, had moved to Brussels. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 11.

⁴⁶ De Granvelle owned several works, one of which, *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt*, remained in his family's possessions until 1607, when Emperor Rudolf II acquired it. Larry Silver, *Pieter Bruegel* (New York/ London: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2011), 249, 276.

⁴⁷ Currie and Allart, *The Bruegel[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 41.

⁴⁸ Noirot may have purchased these works shortly after Bruegel's death. Ibid.

Upton House) (fig. 11), which he had engraved and printed.⁴⁹ In his *Album Amicorum*, Ortelius lamented Bruegel's death "at the height of his career," an accurate assessment.⁵⁰ Not long before his death, Bruegel was awarded a commission to "make some pieces of the digging of the Brussels canal to Antwerp, but because of his death that was left undone."⁵¹

According to Van Mander, Bruegel faithfully adhered to Nature's example, replicating it in landscapes and representations of peasants. Identified by Van Mander as from the country,⁵² Bruegel maintained his accurate depiction of peasant appearances and behaviors by

often [going] out of town among the peasants... to fun-fairs and weddings, dressed in peasants' costume, and ... gave presents just like the others, pretending to be family or acquaintances of the bride or bridegroom. Here Bruegel entertained himself observing the nature of the peasants – in eating, drinking, dancing leaping, lovemaking and other amusements – which he then most animatedly and subtly imitated ... He knew how ... to express very naturally that simple, peasant appearance in their dancing, toing and froing and other activities.⁵³

Bruegel's surviving oeuvre celebrates peasants with paintings such as *Peasant Wedding* (fig. 1), but he also used peasants and country villages to stage works like

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Full text (in French) in Philippe Roberts-Jones and Françoise Roberts-Jones, *Pierre Bruegel l'Ancien* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), 332.

⁵¹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, 233v.

⁵² "Nature found and struck lucky wonderfully well with her man ... when she went to pick him out in Brabant in an obscure village amidst peasants..." Ibid., v.1, fol.233r. Sellink argues that it is more likely that Bruegel was from Antwerp, and his family had lived there for several generations. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 10.

⁵³ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r.

The Netherlandish Proverbs (fig. 9). Van Mander emphasized the humor in Bruegel's art, noting "one sees few pictures by him which a spectator can contemplate seriously and without laughing, and however straightfaced and stately he may be, he has at least to twitch his mouth or smile."⁵⁴ Despite this assessment, inscriptions added later to Bruegel's prints present a more negative view of the peasantry, which has led some scholars to interpret the works as moralizing.⁵⁵ Bruegel's imagery rarely presents peasants behaving despicably, and need not be read as negative examples of human activity. However, there are likely multiple readings of the images, based on the medium in which they are distributed. As less-expensive works, prints reached an audience that may have been receptive to advised behavior guidelines.

Karel van Mander associated Bruegel with humor and laughing. One anecdote of Bruegel's pranks appears in his biography of Hans Vredeman de Vries.⁵⁶ The Treasurer Aert Molckemann commissioned Vredeman de Vries to paint a perspective in his summerhouse in Brussels. However, "when Vries was not around, Pieter Bruegel, who came across his tools there, painted a peasant in a befouled shirt occupied with a peasant woman – which caused much laughter and with which the gentleman was very pleased: he would not have had it removed for a great deal of money."⁵⁷ While the tale is unverifiable, it demonstrates the humor with which

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Miedema bases much of his argument that peasant imagery was moralizing on the inscriptions added to peasant prints by Bruegel and related artists. Miedema, "Realism and the Comic Mode," 209–19.

⁵⁶ The story is reminiscent of the anecdote included in Karel van Mander's biography when he painted a fellow boy's white coat with cherry juice, and also painted the boy's buttocks with an image of the devil, knowing his mother would spank the little boy. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.R2v–R3r.

⁵⁷ Ibid., v.1, fol.266r–266v.

Bruegel was associated when Van Mander wrote his *Lives* at the turn of the seventeenth century.⁵⁸

Landscapes and peasant paintings made up only a portion of Bruegel's output. Although the early Mechelen altarpiece commission with Baltens represents Bruegel's sole painting for a religious institution,⁵⁹ religious subjects frequently appear in Bruegel's paintings, often depicted as being a contemporary scene. For example, *The Massacre of the Innocents* (c.1565-1567, Royal Collection) (fig. 12) and *The Sermon of St. John the Baptist* (1566, Budapest, Szépművészeti Museum) (fig. 13) were painted during the early, bloody years of the Dutch Revolt, and are generally believed to contain social or political commentaries on current events.⁶⁰

Van Mander writes that

one sees many unusual inventions of symbolic subjects of his witty work in print; but he had still many more, neatly and carefully drawn with some captions on them, some of which he got his wife to burn when he was on his deathbed because they were too caustic or derisory, either because he was sorry or that he was afraid that on their account she would get into trouble or she might have to answer for them.”⁶¹

When Bruegel painted peasants, he depicted them in a heavy, yet lively manner that is distinct from the more slender forms he painted in biblical scenes. Figures tend towards round forms. Broad planes of color are rendered with fluid brushwork and a light touch. Localized color of reds, blues, and greens punctuate the earthy hues of the

⁵⁸ Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 10–11.

⁵⁹ Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 41.

⁶⁰ Kavalier, *Pieter Bruegel*; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 263–306; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 42.

⁶¹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v–234r.

foreground. As befits works from the mid-sixteenth century, Bruegel used a high viewpoint, particularly in his early works, which allowed him to depict his expansive scenes of small figures and a high horizon. In later works he moved closer to the scene and lowered the vantage point.

The Primacy of Pieter Bruegel the Elder and the Establishment of the Bruegel

Tradition

The appeal of Bruegel the Elder's original compositions created the foundation on which the Bruegel tradition was built and sustained over time and political boundaries. The *Peasant Wedding*, for example, presents the universal human condition of celebration. Bagpipes fill the air with festive sounds as dancers swing and swirl. Bruegel's use of a high vantage point allows a bird's-eye view of the hundreds of celebrants at the wedding festivities. Vignettes of dancing couples, amorous embraces, buzzing conversation, and free-flowing libations evidence simple gaiety.

The large panel commands attention. Dark trees frame the scene, while steady bagpipers and observers ground the foreground. Colors, particularly red, white, blue, ochre, and green, unfold in a rhythmic manner corresponding with the undulations of a peasant dance. Trampled grass before the dancing foreground figures separates the viewer from the festivities. From a seated position with the painting hanging just above eye level, one can scan the grounds, but also feel like a participant in the revels.

While Bruegel's art was exceptional, his work emerged at a time of great flourishing of peasant imagery in the Netherlands. Bruegel's contemporaries painted

expansive kermis scenes teeming with small figures and paintings focusing on larger peasant figures celebrating weddings, both styles that today are identified as “Bruegelian.”

It should also be noted that Bruegel looked to his contemporaries for his compositions and subject matter, indicating that he participated in a broad interest in peasant imagery that developed in the mid-sixteenth century. Bruegel, for example, based his *The Wine of St. Martin’s Day* (1566-1567, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 14) on Pieter Baltens’ version of the same subject, painted only a few years earlier (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 15).⁶²

This style is partially defined in opposition to the other predominant style of peasant imagery at the time, exemplified by Pieter Aertsen (1508-1575), in which large peasants and bounty from the countryside fill the foreground.⁶³ Though this dissertation does not focus on the reasons why the Bruegelian manner prevailed over the one epitomized by Aertsen, a few brief comments about the distinction between

⁶² Another version by Baltens is in Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten. Stephen J. Kostyshyn, “‘Door Tsoechen Men Vindt’: A Reintroduction to the Life and Work of Pieter Baltens Alias Custodis of Antwerp (1527-1584)” (Case Western University, 1994), 254–69; Museo del Prado, Madrid, “Technical Investigation and Restoration. The Wine of Saint Martin’s Day, Bruegel El Viejo, Pieter.,” December 12, 2011, <https://www.museodelprado.es/en/resource/the-wine-of-saint-martins-day/6a4a9c81-e2f3-41b2-9a73-c0d8e5020dab>; Silva Maroto and Sellink, “The Rediscovery of Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s ‘Wine of St Martin’s Day’, Acquired for the Museo Nacional Del Prado, Madrid.”

This was not the only time Bruegel looked to Baltens for inspiration. He also emulated Baltens’ print of *The Land of Cockaigne* for his painted version in the Alte Pinakothek (1567). Kostyshyn, “‘Door Tsoechen Men Vindt,’” 282–85; Silva Maroto and Sellink, “The Rediscovery of Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s ‘Wine of St Martin’s Day’, Acquired for the Museo Nacional Del Prado, Madrid,” 792. A fragment in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna was formerly attributed to Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 54.

⁶³ Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 103–7.

the two manners reveals contemporary emphases that suggest why Bruegel's peasant manner was preferred.⁶⁴

Pieter Aertsen's characteristic composition for peasant paintings features large figures filling the pictorial space of the foreground (example: *Village Festival*, 1550. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 16). Depth into the middle ground is limited, and background figures, where Aertsen traditionally incorporated a biblical vignette with a moral lesson, is de-emphasized. Aertsen's style and compositional structure was evidently popular, as contemporaries emulated it. Marten van Cleve's *Peasant Meal* (after 1566, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 17) fills almost the entire foreground with smoothly-rendered, muscled peasants, while a small glimpse into the background reveals additional dancing peasants.⁶⁵ Lucas van Valckenborch also represented country and city life in the manner of Aertsen, for

⁶⁴ In 2010, Svetlana Alpers wrote: "I have long been fascinated by the fact that there were two kinds of 'peasant' figures in northern Europe: the tubby, compact one favored by the Bruegel family and the lean, lanky one found in Aertsen and others. If we look at peasants as they are depicted in the seventeenth century – Ostade and Brouwer – it is clear that the Bruegel type won out. Why? And is there any sense to be made of the difference." In Adams, "Editor's Note: Roads Not Taken - A Proposal by Svetlana Alpers," 1–2.

Alpers's question focuses on figure types, comparing "tubby" to "lanky" ones, which is not entirely consistent with the distinction between Bruegel and Aertsen. While Bruegel the Elder's "tubby, compact" peasant figure did flourish in many Bruegelian works and was eventually embraced by Brouwer and Ostade in their low-life genre scenes, Bruegelian artists such as Louis van Valckenborch, Hans Bol, Jan Brueghel the Elder, and David Vinckboons also portrayed leaner peasant figures. I believe that there is difference in composition and emphasis that defines the distinction between the two sixteenth-century masters of peasant painting.

⁶⁵ Ertz attributes the painting to Marten van Cleve, though the Kunsthistorisches Museum's website refuses to commit to that authorship, identifying the signature "*Marten Clev*" as by an unknown hand. Klaus Ertz and Christa Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve, 1524-1581: Kritischer Katalog Der Gemälde Und Zeichnungen*, Flämische Maler Im Umkreis Der Grossen Meister 9 (Lingen: Luca Verlag, 2014), 15, 90, 142; Kunsthistorisches Museum, "Bauernmahl," accessed October 19, 2016, <http://www.khm.at/objektdb/detail/490/?offset=4&lv=list&cHash=63aac0f3be99dd7aabf79178812db8d3>.

example, *Summer* (Germany, Private Collection) (fig. 18), in which polished representations of country inhabitants oversee the gathering of the season's produce.⁶⁶

By the turn of the seventeenth century, Bruegel's peasant manner had eclipsed that of Aertsen. Karel van Mander's characterizations of the two artists reveal plausible reasons for the primacy of one manner over the other. Van Mander emphasizes Aertsen's larger altarpieces, many of which were destroyed in the Iconoclasms.⁶⁷ Of Aertsen's peasant pieces, Van Mander writes,

He had devoted himself to making kitchen pieces, with all kinds of goods and victuals from life in which he caught the colors so naturally that things appear to be real; and by doing this a great deal he has become the surest master in the mixing of or tempering of his colours ever to be found.⁶⁸

Van Mander again emphasized Aertsen's technique rendering inanimate objects in the chapter on "Reflection and Reverberation" in *Den Grondt der Edel Vry Schilderconst* (*The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*), the didactic poem from *Het Schilderboeck* (1604), celebrating

... how glossy fish, tin, and copper share reflection with each other is exemplified in "Langhe Piers'" paintings.

This man depicted wonderfully stems with colors, and relating to those things it all seemed to be alive, the leaves and the fruits. One could almost think to grasp with one's hands some

⁶⁶ It seems evident that the two women are landed gentry, in comparison to the peasant man bringing a basket of peas. The estate behind the foreground is lush and manicured. Alexander Wied, *Lucas Und Marten Van Valckenborch (1535-1597 Und 1534-1612): Das Gesamtwerk Mit Kritischem Övrekatalog* (Freren: Luca Verlag, 1990), 175.

⁶⁷ "He was not really outstanding at small figures, but in large works, in which lies art's power, he was a supreme, competent master, understanding and painting his architecture and perspective very well, with other details such as animals and similar things; he adorned his figures most exotically, somewhat in the manner of masquerades. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.243v–244v.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, v.1, fol. 243v.

dishes standing in the darkness, in which such a reflection appears, as one can see with glowing affection, with an art patron [Jacob Rauwert] in Amsterdam.

In sum, in art he was a “high-flier,” particularly in bringing about reflection’s characteristics; yes a great, skillful, cunning deceiver of the eyes of men, and also a convincing liar; because one imagines that one sees all sorts of things, but it is merely colors which he knew how to mix so that the plane seemed round and the flat to have relief, the mute to speak and the dead to live.⁶⁹

Van Mander’s characterization of Aertsen as a skilled painter corresponds with Hadrianus Junius’s praise of the artist from 1588. He declared that Aertsen

... deliberately portray[ed] lowly things with his brush [and] gained in everyone’s eyes the highest honour in the low genre... in his works there shines everywhere a certain grace that shows itself very tastefully in the shaping of the body and the clothing of peasant girls, in foods, vegetables, slaughtered chickens, ducks, haddock and other fish, and furthermore with all kinds of kitchen utensils, so that besides the perfect pleasure [that they provide] his paintings with their unending variety never sate the eyes.⁷⁰

In contemporary literature, a focus on Aertsen’s “kitchen pieces” and praise of Aertsen’s coloring and brushwork prioritizes technique and the description of objects over human activity. This emphasis contrasts directly with Van Mander’s celebration of Bruegel’s figures, “which he then most animatedly and subtly imitated with paint.”⁷¹ Surely, it is for this reason that in *Den Grondt*, Van Mander celebrates Bruegel, not Aertsen, as among the best Northern artists.

⁶⁹ Karel Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, ed. Elizabeth Honig, trans. Jonathan Bloom et al. (New Haven, 1985), 49–50; Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.4, 56.

⁷⁰ Cited in Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.4, 50, n.3.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, v.1, fol.233r.

O, exceptional Dürer, glory of Germany. In the monastery of Frankfurt the praiseworthy rare refinement becomes apparent. Yes, Bruegel and Lucas, with Johannes [van Eyck] their master at the head... drew the outlines of the realm of the painter with such definite limits that no one should easily surpass them.⁷²

Introducing Pieter Bruegel the Elder's biography, Van Mander wrote

Nature found and struck lucky wonderfully well with her man – only to be struck by him in turn in a grand way – when she went to pick him out in Brabant in an obscure village amidst peasants, and stimulate him toward the art of painting so as to copy peasants with the brush...⁷³

Van Mander played down Bruegel's connections to the humanist community while constructing his identity as "a very quiet and moderate man, not of many words but quite animated in company," and practitioner of practical jokes.⁷⁴ In both landscape and peasant paintings, Bruegel was faithful to Nature.⁷⁵ To emphasize Bruegel's adherence to peasant behavior and traits that the artist observed, Van Mander wrote

Bruegel often went out of town among the peasants... to fun-fairs and weddings, dressed in peasants' costume, and ... gave presents just like the others, pretending to be family or acquaintances of the bride or the bridegroom. Here Bruegel entertained himself observing the nature of the peasants – in eating, drinking, dancing, leaping, lovemaking and other amusements – which he then most animatedly and subtly imitated with paint... He knew how

⁷² Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 71.

⁷³ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, 233r.

Van Mander's construct of Bruegel's country past may not be accurate. Bruegel's family may, in fact, have been in Antwerp for several generations by Bruegel's birth. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 9–10; Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 23.

⁷⁴ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r–233v.

For the humanist circle of Antwerp in which Bruegel the Elder may have circulated, see Sullivan, *Bruegel's Peasants*, 7–10.

⁷⁵ "...it is said that when he was in the Alps he swallowed all those mountains and rocks which, upon returning home, he spat out again onto canvases and panels, so faithfully was he able, in this respect and others, to follow Nature." Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, 233r.

to attire these men and women peasants very characteristically in Kempish or other costume, and how to express very naturally that simple, peasant appearance in their dancing, toing and froing and other activities.⁷⁶

Bruegel replicated the natural activities and physiognomies of the peasants in the paintings of the *Peasant Wedding* Van Mander had seen in Amsterdam. *Peasant Wedding* in the collection of Willem Jacobsz. van Rijn contained “many burlesque postures and the true behavior of the peasants.”⁷⁷ The version owned by Herman Pilgrims was “most subtle; there one sees the faces and unclothed parts of the bodies of the peasants in yellow and brown as if tanned by the sun – and their skin is ugly, different from that of town dwellers.”⁷⁸ Van Mander’s emphasis on Bruegel’s observational skills includes evaluation of the appearance of the figures as “ugly.” This criticism of the peasant guise is not necessarily negative, but more of a distinction between manners and physiognomies of the inhabitants of the country versus the city, of laborers versus the sedentary elite.

In addition to casting Bruegel as an artist who faithfully replicates the human experience, Van Mander highlighted Bruegel’s ability to provoke laughter. In the art of “Pier den Drol,” who was “quite animated in company,” “one sees few pictures by him which a spectator can contemplate seriously and without laughing, and however

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Van Mander’s use of the term “burlesque” likely refers to the legacy of Hieronymous Bosch, which Bruegel was seen to have inherited. *Drollicheden* (burlesques) belong to a group of subjects which “contain[ed] so much ‘spirit’ that the viewer, through a sudden surfeit of that fluid, collapses into laughter.” Ibid., v.3, 49, 51, 258. See also Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 133–59. Willem Jacobsz. van Rijn (1577-1628) was an Amsterdam art lover and merchant. He may have had some associations with Haarlem, as he bought 23 lots in the lottery for the Haarlem old men’s home in 1606. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.3, 264.

⁷⁸ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v. Herman Pilgrims was born in Antwerp, moved with his family to Nuremberg, and established himself as a merchant and investor in the Dutch East India Company in Amsterdam. Ibid., v.3, 263.

straightfaced and stately he may be, he has at least to twitch his mouth or smile.”⁷⁹

Bruegel was also a prankster, as Van Mander asserted in his biography of the artist, an assessment he reinforced in an anecdote he recounted in his biography of Hans Vredeman de Vries.⁸⁰

Contemporaries evidently appreciated Bruegel’s amusing paintings, particularly his interpretation of peasant weddings.⁸¹ Noirot owned two versions of the subject, possibly commissioned or purchased directly from the artist.⁸² Subsequent generations similarly felt the appeal of Bruegel’s interpretation of peasants celebrating a wedding. The Archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia owned a large *Peasant Wedding* “after Bruegel,” which is listed in her posthumous inventory after 1633. The 1640 collection inventory of Nicolaas Rockox, Burgomaster of Antwerp, also includes a *Peasant Wedding* attributed to “Bruegel.”⁸³

The last two inventories point to the existence of copies of Bruegel the Elder’s paintings from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many of which were made by

⁷⁹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r–233v.

⁸⁰ Ibid., v.1, fol.233v.

“[Hans Vredeman de Vries] returned to Antwerp and ... was immediately commissioned by the Treasurer Aert Molckeman in Brussels to paint a summerhouse in perspective in which he, among other things, conceived of an open door into which, when Vries was not around, Pieter Bruegel, who came across his tools there, painted a peasant in a befouled shirt occupied with a peasant woman – which caused much laughter and with which the gentleman was very pleased: he would not have had it removed for a great deal of money.” Ibid., v.1, fol.266r–266v.

The laughter Bruegel garnered by his graffiti was seemingly two-parted: he not only adulterated Vredeman de Vries’s elegant perspective painting by inserting low-life figures, he also mocked the peasants themselves, for their coarse behavior.

The biography of Karel van Mander characterizes him as a prankster as well. Ibid., v.1, fol.R2v–R3r.

⁸¹ For contemporary reception of humor, see Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*.

⁸² Ibid., 67–76.; Goldstein, *Pieter Bruegel and the Culture of the Early Modern Dinner Party*, 2–5, 37–74.

⁸³ Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 50.

his sons, Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder. Other artists, including Marten van Cleve (1520-1581) also painted variants of Bruegel's work, among them *Peasant Wedding* (Christie's London, 8 December 2004) (fig. 19). In this dissertation, it is argued that late sixteenth-century peasant paintings were so strongly identified with Bruegel the Elder because his subjects and motifs were so frequently emulated by later generations of artists.

Inevitably, several of Bruegel's works have been lost to time, surviving only in inventory notations.⁸⁴ Many of these were copied by Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder.⁸⁵ Other lost paintings are known from prints, as, for example, Pieter van der Heyden's print of Breugel's *Peasant Wedding* (after 1570) (fig. 20). Paintings of *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air* by Marten van Cleve (fig. 19), Pieter Brueghel the Younger (1620, Narbonne, Musée des Beaux-Arts) (fig. 21), and Jan Brueghel the Elder (Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-Arts) (fig. 22) may be copies of a lost cartoon that Breugel left to his sons.⁸⁶

Pieter the Younger and Jan Brueghel also both painted *A Visit to the Farmhouse*, a subject explored by Marten van Cleve before them and Adriaen van Ostade after them.⁸⁷ A grisaille of this subject (c.1597, Antwerp, KMSKA) (fig. 23)

⁸⁴ One estimate suggests that only one percent of Bruegel's output survives. Nadine M Orenstein, ed., *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints* (New York and New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 31.

⁸⁵ Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 53–54.

⁸⁶ Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 598-610.

⁸⁷ Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 255–61; Klaus Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere: Die Gemälde Mit Kritischem Œvrekatalog* (Lingon: Luca Verlag, 1988), 454, 474–86; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.3, 840-841, 872-873; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 62–64, 109, 187–90.

has variously been attributed to both Jan and Pieter the Younger. No evidence of a sixteenth-century original remains.⁸⁸

Reference to a lost design by Bruegel the Elder emerges in the 1640 inventory of Peter Paul Rubens. The listing, “*un combat des paysans, faict après un dessein de vieux Bruegel*” (“a peasant fight, made after a design by Bruegel the Elder”), was likely an oil sketch by Rubens after Bruegel, likely the same composition that Lucas Vorsterman engraved in 1620-1621 (fig. 24).⁸⁹

Formal qualities and additional contemporary evidence, however, lend uncertainty to Bruegel’s authorship of the composition.⁹⁰ Documents identify early versions of this composition as being by Jan Brueghel the Younger. Between 1626-1630, Lord Arundel wrote to his agent in Antwerp, asking him to

⁸⁸ A grisaille in the Institut néerlandais (Fondation Custodia), Paris, is sometimes attributed to Pieter Bruegel the Elder, however, the painting is currently considered a seventeenth-century work after Jan Brueghel the Elder. Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 285–94; Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, 474–86; Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 53; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 274; Klaus Ertz and Christa Nitze-Ertz, *Jan Brueghel Der Ältere (1568-1625): Kritischer Katalog Der Gemälde*, vol. 3 (Lingen: Luca Verlag, 2008), 1244–47; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, 840, 872, n.13. See also chapter two.

⁸⁹ A chalk drawing attributed to Rubens (Rotterdam, Boymans-van Beuningen Museum), likely from 1619-1620, is a fluid depiction of the main combatants in the composition. Walter Liedtke, “‘Peasants Fighting Over Cards’ by Pieter Bruegel and Sons,” *Artibus et Historiae* 10, no. 19 (1989): 127–28. A complete painting of the subject (Kroměříž, Czechoslovakia) was formerly attributed to Jan Brueghel the Elder, but is now believed to be from Rubens’ studio. Genaille, *Bruegel, l’Ancien*, 92–93; Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 272; Liedtke, “‘Peasants Fighting Over Cards,’” 130. The inscription reads “Pet. Bruegel invent.” A poem below the image dedicates the work to Jan Brueghel the Elder. Ibid., 127; Nadine M. Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, ed. Manfred Sellink, *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700* (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: Sound & Vision Publishers in co-operation with the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, 2006), 196.

⁹⁰ Liedtke cites *The Good Shepherd* and *The Bad Shepherd* as comparative images, neither of which have direct connections to extant works by Bruegel the Elder. Liedtke, “‘Peasants Fighting Over Cards,’” 125–26. Another work that is reminiscent of *Peasants Fighting over Cards* is *Peasant Couple Attacked by Robbers* (Stockholms Universitets Konstsamling), a work more likely by Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 276.

receive for me a peece of painting begunne by Brugels and finished by Mostard; being a squabbling of clownes fallen out at Cardes, w^{ch} is in stampe by Mr. Lucas Vorsterman, and w^{ch} shal be brought unto you by order of a letter from Vorsterman...⁹¹

Rather than a painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, the Arundel painting was more probably a work by Jan Brueghel the Elder (Brugels), who often collaborated with Gillis Mostaert (Mostard). Archduke Leopold Wilhelm's 1659 inventory contains a version attributed to Jan Brueghel the Elder, and numerous copies of the composition by Pieter Brueghel the Younger survive.⁹²

The copies and derivations by Jan Brueghel primarily date to the 1590s, when he was establishing his career in the Netherlands upon his return from Italy.⁹³ His use

⁹¹ Cited in Liedtke 1989, 127.

⁹² Liedtke, "Peasants Fighting Over Cards," 127–30.

⁹³ Jan may have focused on producing copies of his father's works upon his return from Italy in 1596, even working side by side with his brother, and then "concentrated his efforts on personal creations." Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.II, 472; v.III, 834–841.

Jan and Pieter the Younger copied many of the same compositions. In the *Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery* (c.1597–98, Munich, Alte Pinakothek), Jan retains Bruegel the Elder's grisaille medium. One of Pieter the Younger's versions (c.1600, Philadelphia Museum of Art), however, strays from the original by introducing color to the work and thus reducing the solemnity of the piece.

Jan Brueghel's *Sermon of St. John the Baptist* (1598, Munich, Alte Pinakothek) is likely the prototype for Pieter Brueghel the Younger's versions of the compositions, though both are derived from Pieter Bruegel the Elder's original painting, now in Budapest. Konrad Renger and Claudia Denk, *Flämische Malerei Des Barock in Der Alten Pinakothek* (Munich and Cologne: Pinakothek-DuMont, 2002), 82–83; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.II, 468–474.

Jan Brueghel also copied compositions by Pieter Baltens (*Peasant Kermis with Theatre Production*) and Marten van Cleve (*Peasants Attacked by Robbers*).

The fluidity of identification between "Bruegel" and "Brueghel" was occasionally used to intentionally confuse attribution and increase value for works by Jan Brueghel the Younger. A comparison of the inventory and sale catalogue of the art collection of Antwerp city councilor Jan Meurs, both compiled in 1652, demonstrates the malleability of the name "Brueg[h]el" in the seventeenth century. The inventory lists one work by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, three works by Jan Brueghel the Elder, and a number of collaborations between Jan Brueghel the Elder and other artists. The sale catalogue, however, attributed these works quite differently. While the family chose not to sell their single painting by Bruegel the Elder, works by "Pieter Bruegel" were still featured in the sale, presumably paintings that had previously been attributed to Jan or simply a generic "Bruegel" in the inventory. Even if, as Honig argues, "every buyer at the auction must have realized that, in all cases, the 'Bruegel' now in question was Jan," the catalogue attempted to increase the prestige of the works by attaching the more valuable name of Pieter Bruegel to works by the son. Jean Denucé, *Inventories of the Art-Collections in Antwerp in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, Historical Sources for the Study of Flemish Art, II ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1932), 133–36; Elizabeth Honig, "The Beholder as Work of Art.

of his father's compositions likely aided his entry into the artistic community of Antwerp. However, it is entirely possible that Jan, who was concurrently developing his own artistic style, also designed works that are currently identified as copies of lost Bruegel originals.

Original compositions by Pieter Brueghel the Younger primarily date between 1619 and 1636.⁹⁴ Before then, Brueghel the Younger and his large workshop developed a huge market for copies of paintings by his father and his father's contemporaries, such as Marten van Cleve and Pieter Baltens. It is possible that some of these presumed copies are free inventions that have been mistakenly identified as lost works by Bruegel. Questions of authorship, however, are not the focus of this dissertation, rather an examination of the phenomenon of the ongoing appeal of Bruegel's works and how this appeal was transmitted into the seventeenth century.

Prints after Bruegel reinforced the association of his name with peasant subjects. When Volcxken Dierix, Hieronymous Cock's widow, took over *Au Quatre Vents* after her husband's death in 1570, she published Pieter van der Heyden's engraving after Bruegel's design of *The Peasant Wedding* (fig. 20). Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder both painted versions of *The Peasant Wedding* that resemble their father's composition.⁹⁵ A profusion of Bruegelian

A Study in the Location of Value in Seventeenth-Century Painting," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek (NKJ) / Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art*, Beeld en Zelfbeeld in de Nederlandse Kunst, 1550-1750/ Image and Self-Image in Netherlandish Art, 1550-1750, 46 (1995): 254-56.

⁹⁴ Currie and Allart suggest that Brueghel the Younger did not paint original works before 1619. Their source, Marlier, however, merely outlines that in Brueghel the Younger's second period, between 1619 and 1636, the artist painted more original compositions than copies of his father's work. Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 37; Currie and Allart, *The Brueghel Phenomenon*, v.1, 51-52.

⁹⁵ Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder may have based their compositions on a lost drawing by Bruegel the Elder. Currie and Allart, *The Brueghel Phenomenon*, v.2, 603-610.

peasant imagery coincided with the careers of Bruegel's two sons around the turn of the seventeenth century.⁹⁶ Over fourteen hundred paintings by Brueghel the Younger, his workshop, and anonymous followers survive.⁹⁷ Another frequent copyist and emulator, Abel Grimmer, monographed or signed at least one hundred and four paintings; another couple hundred autograph paintings survive without signatures.⁹⁸ The production of Bruegel-inspired paintings lasted through the 1630s, eventually phasing out after the death of Pieter Brueghel the Younger in 1637/1638. Prints inspired by Bruegel's design compositions, however, were still being produced until mid-century, as in Hendrick Hondius's 1644 print of a *Peasant Wedding* (fig. 25) and Wenceslaus Hollar's engraving of the same work in 1650 (fig. 26), based on a composition by Jan Brueghel the Elder.⁹⁹ Contemporary audiences would have likely recognized the lineage of Jan Steen's *The Fat Kitchen* (1650, Private Collection) (fig. 27.) and *The Lean Kitchen* (1650, Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada (fig. 28) originating in Bruegel the Elder's prints of the same subject (1563) (figs. 29-30).

⁹⁶ Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 47.

⁹⁷ Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, passim.

⁹⁸ Reine de Bertier de Sauvigny, *Jacob et Abel Grimmer: Catalogue Raisonné* (Belgium: La Renaissance du Livre, 1991), 189–295.

⁹⁹ Nadine Orenstein, *Hendrick Hondius*, ed. Ger Luijten, *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700* (Roosendaal, Netherlands: Koninklijke van Poll in cooperation with the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1994), 34; Simon Turner, *Wenceslaus Hollar*, ed. Giulia Bartrum, vol. IV, *The New Hollstein German Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1400-1700* (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: Sound & Vision Publishers in co-operation with the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, 2010), 128, n.1087.

Historical Context: The Dutch Revolt and Peasant Imagery

The long-lasting appeal of Bruegel's subjects and his artistic manner spans a period during which the Netherlands experienced immense social, political, and religious changes.¹⁰⁰ This examination of Bruegel-inspired imagery created between Bruegel's death in 1569 and Jan Steen's death over a century later encompasses the entirety of the Dutch Revolt, which lasted from 1566 to 1648. The following overview provides the context in which Bruegelian peasant imagery spread throughout the Netherlands in the latter part of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century.

Pieter Bruegel the Elder's first major works coincide with stirrings of the Dutch Revolt. By 1556, when Bruegel returned to the Netherlands from his travels to Italy, and was establishing his career as a designer of prints in the tradition of Hieronymus Bosch for Hieronymus Cock's publishing house At The Four Winds, unrest in the Netherlands had simmered for years.¹⁰¹ When Charles V abdicated in 1556, he left the Netherlands to his son, Philip II, who ruled from Spain. Philip II installed local authority in his half-sister, Margaret of Parma. She and her advisor, Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, who was both a cardinal and a collector of Bruegel's

¹⁰⁰ For an examination of Bruegel's paintings in the context of the Dutch Revolt, see Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 265–304.

¹⁰¹ Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806*, Oxford History of Early Modern Europe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 169; Elizabeth Alice Honig, *Painting & the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 100–103. For Bruegel's early years with Cock's publishing house, see Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*, 41–56; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 86–89; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 67–91. Bruegel's earliest paintings, like *Landscape with the Parable of the Sower* (San Diego, Timken Art Gallery), date to 1557.

art, were unpopular with the local nobility.¹⁰² Cardinal Granvelle was removed from office in 1564 at the protest of the Council of State (*Raad van State*), whose members included William, Prince of Orange, and the counts of Egmont and Horne, future leaders of the formal Dutch Revolt.¹⁰³ Unpopular government and religious policies, coupled with food shortages and economic stagnation, led to general unrest.

The summer of 1566 often marks the start of the Dutch Revolt. Throughout the summer, “hedge preachers” led outdoor Calvinist sermons outside the city walls in opposition to Philip II’s anti-heresy laws. Bruegel’s *Preaching of St. John the Baptist* from 1566 (Budapest, Szépművészeti Museum) (fig. 13) may not have demonstrated any Calvinist sympathies, but his compatriots likely associated this image with contemporary events.¹⁰⁴ Calvinist preaching against religious imagery led to the organized iconoclasm that removed religious imagery from city churches throughout the Netherlands in August 1566.¹⁰⁵

Philip II responded to this upheaval by sending the Don Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alva (1507-82) to suppress the religious unrest. Alva’s harsh proceedings led Margaret of Parma to resign her authority, leading to Alva’s

¹⁰² Granvelle owned *Flight into Egypt*, 1563. Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 249, 276. Silver argues that Bruegel’s *Suicide of Saul* (1562, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) and *Tower of Babel* (1563, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) demonstrate his criticism of monarchy. Bruegel moved to Brussels in 1562, though he continued to have contacts with collectors in Antwerp, such as Nicolaes Jongelinck. Ibid., 252–61.

¹⁰³ When forced into exile, Granvelle had to surrender his palace and art collection. He was evidently concerned with the safety of his art, particularly the Bruegels. Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 41.

¹⁰⁴ Both Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder copied this painting. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.1, 359-379; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 265–69; Currie and Allart, *The Brueghel Phenomenon*, v.2, 447-484.

¹⁰⁵ For more on the nature of the iconoclasm, as well as Calvin’s teachings about imagery, see Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 276–276.

draconian tenure as governor-general of the Netherlands.¹⁰⁶ The feared general suppressed religious heresy, executed thousands of citizens, including the Counts of Egmont and Hornes. Numerous Protestants and nobles involved in the uprising fled to Germany and England to escape Alva's persecution.¹⁰⁷ New taxes further alienated the people.¹⁰⁸ Despite Alva's repressive policies, local Protestant communities of various persuasions persisted in clandestine religious practice, even growing in size.¹⁰⁹

The Duke of Alva's tyranny over the Netherlands lasted six years, and imprinted itself on the consciousness of a frustrated people. Bruegel's *Massacre of the Innocents* (c.1565-1567, Windsor Castle, Royal Collection) (fig. 12) has often been cited as representative of the popular sentiment against Alva's forces in particular, and Habsburg oppression in general.¹¹⁰ Staged in a wintry Flemish village, the horror of the biblical brutality would have resounded with contemporary viewers.¹¹¹

Bruegel died in 1569, during Alva's regency. In 1572, the Dutch, under William of Orange, succeeded in taking numerous cities in Holland and Zeeland,

¹⁰⁶ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 156.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 157.

The nobles gathered in Germany before returning to participate in the main Revolt. The bulk of the exiles were northern in origin. Ibid., 160, 162–63.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 166–68.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 160–61.

¹¹⁰ Fishman, *Boerenverdriet*, 19–31; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 276–80.

¹¹¹ In addition to numerous copies after Bruegel the Elder's composition, a lost painting by Marten van Cleve likely perpetuated the setting of the scene in a winter village. See Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 647-670.

effectively separating the northern seven provinces that ultimately formed the United Provinces from the ten southern provinces that remained the Southern, or Spanish Netherlands.¹¹² William of Orange established the “Religious Peace” in all occupied cities, establishing and legalizing Protestant worship.¹¹³ Cities in the south, however, did not find the same support of the rebel cause, and remained loyal to Spanish rule and Catholic orthodoxy.¹¹⁴

Violence was widespread during the Revolt. Spanish troops massacred citizens in cities that resisted their authority.¹¹⁵ Haarlem, Leiden, and Alkmaar all suffered under Spanish lengthy sieges in 1572-1573. By 1576, the Spanish crown was no longer able to pay its soldiers, who mutinied and pillaged towns in the southern Netherlands. In November, during the “Spanish Fury,” soldiers pillaged, sacked, and raped women in Antwerp.¹¹⁶ The destruction of this economic center motivated Brabant and Holland, the two main centers of opposition, to unite under the Pacification of Ghent. While still accepting Spanish sovereignty, the Netherlands, under a combined States General in Brussels, sought to expel Spanish military forces and establish provisional religious tolerance.¹¹⁷

¹¹² For the different responses to and results of the Revolt, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 169–70, 196–97; Honig, *Painting & the Market*, 100–114.

¹¹³ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 170–73.

¹¹⁴ Mechelen was the one exception, and was punished for its rebellion by a severe massacre. *Ibid.*, 178.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 177–80.

¹¹⁶ The event was highly propagandized, and while disastrous, the actual loss was likely less than reported. *Ibid.*, 184–85.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 186.

Ultimately, the unity presented in the Pacification of Ghent was short-lived. Conflicts arose between conservative and liberal factions, particularly concerning religious tolerance. In 1578, a group of conservative nobles centered in Brabant invited Archduke Matthias, a Habsburg prince, to be Stadholder of their envisioned Catholic Netherlands.¹¹⁸ The more liberal provinces in the north appointed William of Orange to lead their States General, which upheld the central tenant of religious toleration.¹¹⁹ Simultaneously, both factions battled Spanish troops.

This division ultimately led to a final separation between the northern and southern provinces.¹²⁰ In 1579, the Union of Arras in the Southern Netherlands and the Union of Utrecht in seven northern Provinces, now the United Provinces, established *de facto* separation of the Netherlands. While the Spanish Netherlands remained under influence from Madrid and was prominently Catholic, the United Provinces, with Antwerp as its capital, rejected the Spanish king's sovereignty over the Netherlands.¹²¹ While religious tolerance remained a goal for William of Orange, Protestants increasingly gained momentum in the north, effectively purging many Catholics from Dutch cities.¹²² Further separation of the two states continued as the north and south divided along religious lines. The Spanish, now led by Alessandro

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 190, 193-195, 197.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 189-190.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 196-198.

¹²¹ Ibid., 196-205.

¹²² Ibid., 190-192, 200-203.

Public Catholic worship was no longer tolerated in the United Provinces, though private services continued throughout the seventeenth century. See also Peter Van Rooden, "Contesting the Protestant Nation: Calvinists and Catholics in the Netherlands," *Etnofoor* 8, no. 2 (1995): 15–18. The families of prominent seventeenth-century artists such as Jan Steen and Johannes Vermeer were Catholic.

Farnese, Duke of Parma, focused their efforts on reconquering the southern provinces. In 1585 Antwerp surrendered to Spanish forces. The Antwerp that the Spanish won, however, was not the economic power it had once been. Immediately before Antwerp fell to the Spanish, the Dutch, under Prince Maurits of Orange and Johan van Oldenbarneveldt,¹²³ blocked the River Scheldt, the river linking Antwerp with the sea, and the source of its commercial success. The loss of its mercantile identity and religious tolerance led many Antwerp residents to flee.

From 1566 to 1590, Protestants in the southern provinces fled in a mass exodus, seeking refuge in cities in the north.¹²⁴ In this first wave of emigration, as many as 100,000 to 150,000 people moved to cities in the Northern Netherlands to escape war and persecution.¹²⁵ Among those who fled were artists and their families, whose terrifying ordeals were recounted by Karel van Mander, each with tales of artists “robbed and without clothing.”¹²⁶ Among the artists who painted peasants in the manner of Bruegel were several who had harrowing experiences during their flights from danger. While Van Mander’s anecdotes may not be entirely accurate, they represent examples of a shared public history.¹²⁷

¹²³ William the Silent was assassinated in 1584.

¹²⁴ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 307–11, 329–32.

¹²⁵ This wave peaked in 1585-1587. Ibid., 308.

A second wave of emigration, prompted by economic opportunity, occurred after 1590. Ibid., 329-332. See also Eric Jan Sluijter, “On Brabant Rubbish, Economic Competition, Artistic Rivalry, and the Growth of the Market for Paintings in the First Decades of the Seventeenth Century,” trans. Jennifer Kilian and Katy Kist, *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 1, no. 2 (Summer 2009), <http://www.jhna.org/index.php/past-issues/volume-1-issue-2/109-on-brabant-rub-bish>.

¹²⁶ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol 260r-260v.

¹²⁷ Kloeck in Ger Luijten et al., eds., *Dawn of the Golden Age: Northern Netherlandish Art, 1580-1620* (Amsterdam and Zwolle: Rijkmuseum and Waanders Uitgevers, 1993), 55–56.

Lucas and Marten van Valckenborch (c.1535-1597 and 1534-1612) fled from the Southern Netherlands in 1566, and settled in Germany along with the many exiled noblemen. In 1572, when William of Orange returned to the Netherlands to fight, the Van Valckenborchs were among the exiled who attempted to return to their homes. Lucas joined the short-lived Stadholder court of the Archduke Matthias, and accompanied the Archduke to Austria upon his dismissal from Brussels.¹²⁸

In 1572, Hans Bol (1534-1593) was “robbed and without clothing” when his home in Malines was “wretchedly attacked and plundered by the soldiers.” He found refuge with an art lover in Antwerp, but fled again in 1584 “on account of the approach revolt and misery of art-hating Mars.” His itinerant path eventually led him to Amsterdam, where he found safety and prosperity.¹²⁹

Gillis van Coninxloo (1544-1606), a relative of the Bruegels through Pieter van Aelst and perhaps the teacher of the Brueghel sons,¹³⁰ “suffer[ed] through all [Antwerp’s] troubles during the time that she was besieged” in 1571. He left shortly after, staying in Zeeland, then Frankenthal in Germany, before settling in Amsterdam.

David Vinckboons (1578-1632) was a child when his parents left Malines for Antwerp and later Amsterdam.¹³¹ The same was likely for the Savery brothers, Jacob and Roelandt (c.1565/67-1603 and 1576?-1639), whom Van Mander only briefly chronicles. The Savery family moved from its native Kortrijk in 1580, when the brothers were about fifteen and four, respectively. Records show portions of the

¹²⁸ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.259–260r.; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 209.

¹²⁹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol 260r-260v.

¹³⁰ Ibid., v.1, fol267v-268r, fol.234r.

¹³¹ Ibid., v.1, fol 299r-299v.

family had arrived in Haarlem as early as 1583, but Jacob lived temporarily in Antwerp, Dordrecht, and Haarlem before ultimately settling in Amsterdam.¹³² When the number of painters in the Northern Netherlands increased suddenly after 1610, many of them were children of Flemish émigrés who had fled with their families.¹³³

Van Mander was particularly sympathetic to the plight of other artists forced to leave their homes due to violence. He and his family suffered at the hands of the “Malcontent Walloons”¹³⁴ as they attempted to flee their village in 1581. Van Mander’s biographer, likely his brother Adam, recounted the event with vivid detail, including the heroic part Adam played as an eighteen-year old saving his mother and sister. Karel van Mander was saved from being hung by the marauding soldiers by a passing Italian soldier in Alva’s army, with whom he had been acquainted while in Rome.¹³⁵ The family settled in Courtrai, but was forced to leave there for Bruges in 1582 on account of the plague “and other reasons.” On the road, Van Mander and his family “were again robbed clean by the Malcontents... right down to their small clothes.” They enjoyed temporary reprieve in Bruges, but left “since there was no peace there either, with the enemy approaching nearer each day, and a severe plague beginning to rage in the city.” Karel van Mander sailed for Holland, and settled in “the ancient and glorious city of Haarlem, where he was engaged to make paintings

¹³² Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 251; Olga Kotková, ed., *Roelandt Savery: Malíř ve Službách Císaře Rudolfa II/ A Painter in the Services of Emperor Rudolf II* (Prague: Národní Galerie, 2010), 45–49; Filipp de Potter, ed., *Savery: Een Kunstenaarsfamilie Uit Kortrijk*, *Handelingen Nieuwe Reeks 77* (Kortrijk: Koninklijke Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring van Kortrijk, 2012), 15.

¹³³ Sluijter, “On Brabant Rubbish,” n.29.

¹³⁴ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 198, 202.

¹³⁵ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol. R4v–S1r.

and drawings.”¹³⁶ The artist’s resilience was in his ability to wield the brush. After each incident, Van Mander was able to save his family financially by painting and drawing.¹³⁷

Images of peasants’ distress, *boerenverdriet*, reflect the horror many artists and their compatriots experienced during the Revolt. These works elaborate on the violence seen in *The Massacre of the Innocents*, setting generic violence in a village, as in Jacob Savery’s *Village Plundered by Cavalry* (before 1602. Drawing, British Museum, London) (fig. 31), or more personal violence, such as *Peasants Attacked by Robbers* (Stockholm, Universitets Konstsamling) (fig. 32), a frequently copied work that is either based on a design by Bruegel or Marten van Cleve.¹³⁸ David Vinckboons designed a series of four works allegorizing the Twelve Years Truce (*Zinneprent op het Bestandt*) that depict distress to the peasants as well as the reconciliation brought about by the Truce (1610, engraved by Boëthius à Bolswert) (fig. 33).¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Ibid., v.1, fol. S1v.

¹³⁷ For the Grey Friars in 1581 he painted an altar triptych for the deans and regents of the weavers’ guild. In 1582 in Bruges, he worked for a fellow painter, Paulus Weyts. Ibid., v.1, fol. S1r–S1v.

¹³⁸ Silver argues the Stockholm version may be by Bruegel the Elder, with workshop participation in the weaker areas of execution and the reuse of gestures from other works. Sellink provides an overview of attribution arguments, without coming to any firm conclusion. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 276; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 380–84, 416. See also Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v. 2, 775–794.

¹³⁹ *The Peasant Tyrannized, Peasant Joy (The Expulsion), Peasants Revenge, and Reconciliation*, engraved by Boetius à Bolswert after David Vinckboons, 1610. An inscription on the final print, of the reconciliation between peasants and soldiers, reads: “Behold how the Treaty turns all upside down:/ The turbulent soldier sits down with the peasant.” Cited in Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 179.

Two paintings in the Rijksmuseum depict similar themes of well-dressed soldiers and their companions conflicting with peasants. *Peasant Sorrow* and *Peasant Joy (The Expulsion)* are dated after c.1619 by the Rijksmuseum, but Silver dates the works to 1609, earlier than the printed versions of the works. Ibid., 178–79.

See also Fishman, *Boerenverdriet*; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 416–17.

The majority of refugees settled in Holland and Zeeland, rebuffing the efforts of other provinces, such as Utrecht, to encourage them to settle elsewhere. Amsterdam, Leiden, Middelburg and Haarlem had enormous increases in population, primarily Flemish immigrants.¹⁴⁰ These immigrants brought with them both a purchasing power and culture of acquiring paintings.¹⁴¹ To fill this increased demand for paintings, peasant scenes, landscapes and still lifes were imported from the Southern Netherlands to supplement the meager offerings of local artists.¹⁴² This influx of paintings encouraged local merchants and wealthy artisans to acquire similar works in emulation of these new arrivals. It also stimulated local production of paintings in these genres.¹⁴³

The Bruegelian manner of peasant paintings remained largely confined to Amsterdam and Haarlem, while other cities where Flemish émigrés relocated, such as Leiden, did not develop a similar peasant painting tradition. Hans Bol in Amsterdam and Karel van Mander in Haarlem directed artistic workshops that guided the development of local artistic traditions in subsequent generations. Through the publication of *Het Schilderboek*, Van Mander's penchant for peasant paintings in the manner of Bruegel the Elder was disseminated to subsequent generations of artists.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 308–9; Sluijter, “On Brabant Rubbish,” n.26. Some eventually moved on the Germany and other countries. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 308.

¹⁴¹ Sluijter, “On Brabant Rubbish,” n.30.

¹⁴² In the second decade of the seventeenth century, local guilds pushed for protectionist measures against this import of paintings, calling them “Brabant Rubbish,” and arguing that they were “copies instead of originals.” Likely, some of these works were copies, but also originals. And while some of the art may indeed have been of lower quality, other was likely exceptional. Sluijter, “On Brabant Rubbish.”

¹⁴³ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 309–11, 332.

¹⁴⁴ See also page 104.

While the United Provinces experienced nascent prosperity around the turn of the seventeenth century, the war-scarred Southern Netherlands was crippled by its loss of prosperous merchants and artisans and economic growth stagnated.¹⁴⁵ King Philip II of Spain acquiesced to local pressure by appointing an Austrian Habsburg as Stadholder. Archduke Ernst's arrival as Stadholder in Brussels in 1594 was celebrated with Joyous Entries in Antwerp and Brussels, but his tenure was short, curtailed by his death in 1595. In 1598 the Southern Netherlands similarly placed great hope in the Stadholdership of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella Clara Eugenia.¹⁴⁶ The sovereignty granted to the Archdukes by King Philip II gave the impression of increased autonomy to the Spanish Netherlands.¹⁴⁷ Themes of hope and peace reverberated through art.¹⁴⁸

Around the turn of the seventeenth century, all of the Netherlands was war weary. Negotiations for an armistice began in the hopes that a respite from the conflict would allow trade and society to be re-established. On April 9, 1609, the Truce of Antwerp established a Twelve Years Truce in hostilities.¹⁴⁹ During the

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 308.

¹⁴⁶ King Philip II of Spain died in 1598, and was succeeded by his son, King Philip III. The new king of Spain did not promote the sovereignty of the Spanish Netherlands and the Archdukes to the same extent as did his father. Werner Thomas, "The Reign of Albert & Isabella in the Southern Netherlands, 1598-1621," in *Albert & Isabella, 1598-1621*, ed. Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 5–6.

¹⁴⁷ Erik Larsen, *Seventeenth Century Flemish Painting* (Freren: Luca Verlag, 1985), 12; Thomas, "Reign of Albert & Isabella," 2–7.

¹⁴⁸ Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo, eds., *Albert & Isabella, 1598-1621* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 1–14, 55–66, 121–28, 241–48.

¹⁴⁹ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 399–401.

Truce, prosperity, peace, and the arts flourished in all of the Netherlands.¹⁵⁰ While many still hoped for a single united Netherlands, both sides worked towards creating identities for their new political existence. At the end of the Truce in 1621, intermittent warfare resumed until a final peace was concluded with the Treaty of Münster in 1648.

Bruegel's Legacy: Existing Scholarship

In 1604, Karel van Mander was the first author to write about Bruegel and his followers, and his testimony about these artists in *Het Schilderboeck* guides this dissertation. Van Mander's biographies in the *Het Leven der Doorluchtighe Nederlandtsche, en Hooghduytsche Schilders* also comment on artists' manners, influences, and subjects. For example, he identifies Pieter Baltens as "a very good landscape painter who followed very closely the manner of Pieter Bruegel."¹⁵¹ Van Mander did not just chronicle the lives of the artists. His educational treatise, *Den Grondt der Edel Vry Schilderconst (The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting)*, establishes Pieter Bruegel's landscapes and peasant paintings as models of their genres.

Inspired, in part, by the increasing Belgian nationalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the study of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, "our lasting fame of the Netherlands,"¹⁵² coincided with the emergence of modern art history. René van

¹⁵⁰ The Southern Netherlands saw significantly less growth than cities in the North, and continued to struggle through the first few decades of the seventeenth century. Zirka Zaremba Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp, 1550-1700* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 49–50.

¹⁵¹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol 257r.

¹⁵² Ibid., v.1, fol.233v.

Bastelaer wrote both *Bruegel l'ancien, son œuvre et son temps* (1907) and *Les estampes de Peter Bruegel l'ancien* (1908), the latter which established the numerical reference guide for Bruegel's prints.¹⁵³ Connoisseurship studies in the early twentieth century aimed to sort out attribution between Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Pieter Brueghel the Younger, Jan Brueghel the Elder, and anonymous copyists. It is not surprising that the earliest catalogue to identify paintings by the various "Bruegels" and emulators would be from the commercial world, the dealer P. de Boer's 1934 exhibition catalogue of paintings emerging from the Bruegel tradition, *De Helse en de Fluweelen Brueghel en hun invloed op de kunst in de Nederlanden* (*The Hell and the Velvet Brueghel and their influence on the art of the Netherlands*).¹⁵⁴ De Boer claimed Bruegel's influence was readily recognizable in these emulative works.¹⁵⁵ This parallels the argument that seventeenth-century collectors associated Bruegelian works, particularly those by Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder as suitable alternatives to paintings by Bruegel the Elder.¹⁵⁶

The term "Bruegelians" was coined in 1953 by Robert Genaille as a brief chapter, "Les Brueghel et les Bruegelien" in his monograph of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Bruegel, l'ancien*.¹⁵⁷ Georges Marlier utilized the terminology for a collection

¹⁵³ Sellink, *Bruegel*, 290.

¹⁵⁴ P. de Boer, *Helse En Fluweelen Brueghel En Hun Invloed Op de Kunst in de Nederlanden* (Amsterdam: N.V. Kunsthandel P. de Boer, 1934).

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁵⁶ Neil DeMarchi and Hans J. Van Miegroet, "Art, Value, and Market Practices in the Seventeenth-Century Netherlands," *The Art Bulletin* LXXV (1994): 455; Honig, "The Beholder as Work of Art," 256–257.; Neil DeMarchi and Hans J. Van Miegroet, "Pricing Invention: 'Originals,' 'Copies,' and Their Relative Value in Seventeenth Century Netherlandish Art Markets," in *Economics of the Arts, Contributions to Economic Analysis* 237 (Amsterdam and New York: Elsevier, 1996), 30.

¹⁵⁷ Genaille, *Bruegel, l'Ancien*, 61–65.

of notes for future scholarship of “The Bruegelians” published posthumously by Jacqueline Folie in Marlier’s 1969 monograph of Pieter Brueghel the Younger.¹⁵⁸

In 1979, Klaus Ertz published the first of his many Bruegelian catalogue raisonnées, *Jan Brueghel der Ältere (1568-1625), die Gemälde: mit kritischem Œuvrekatalog*.¹⁵⁹ This volume initiated a series of publications about the Bruegelians by him, among them Pieter Brueghel the Younger, the Brueghel family in general, Marten van Cleve, and most recently David Vinckboons.¹⁶⁰ Many of the publications correspond with exhibitions in small museums or dealers’ galleries, or provide reference catalogues for connoisseurs.¹⁶¹ The extensive catalogue raisonnées focus on attributions and connoisseurship. They not only present works of exquisite quality, but also lesser pieces. Ertz’s access to works in private collections helps present a more complete picture of the oeuvres of the Bruegelians, but his commercial associations present possible conflicts of interest in terms of attribution.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Jacqueline Folie in Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 451.

¹⁵⁹ Klaus Ertz, *Jan Brueghel Der Ältere (1568-1625): Die Gemälde Mit Kritischem Oeuvrekatalog* (Cologne: DuMont Buchverlag, 1979).

¹⁶⁰ Klaus Ertz, *Jan Brueghel Der Ältere (1568-1625)* (Cologne: DuMont Buchverlag, 1981); Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jüngere*; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Jan Brueghel Der Ältere*; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*; Klaus Ertz and Christa Nitze-Ertz, *David Vinckboons 1576-1632: Monographie Mit Kritischem Katalog Der Zeichnungen Und Gemälde*, Flämische Maler Im Umkreis Der Grossen Meister 10 (Lingen: Luca Verlag, 2016).

¹⁶¹ Klaus Ertz and Christa Nitze-Ertz, eds., *Breughel-Brueghel (Pieter Breughel Der Jüngere - Jan Brueghel Der Ältere): Flämische Malerei Um 1600, Tradition Und Fortschritt* (Lingen: Luca Verlag, 1997); Klaus Ertz and Cremona, Museo Civico Ala Ponzone, *Breughel-Brueghel (Pieter Breughel Il Giovane (1564-1647/8) - Jan Brueghel Il Vecchio (1568-1625): Tradizione E Progresso: Una Famiglia Di Pittori Fiamminghi Tra Cinque E Seicento* (Lingen: Luca Verlag, 1998); Andrea Wandschneider, ed., *Die Brueghel Familie/ The Brueghel Family* (Dortmund: Verlag Kettler, 2015).

¹⁶² Ertz also provides certificates of authenticity. See, for examples: Christie’s London, July 6, 2010, lot 12; “Sharp Eye Nets €100K+ for Pieter Brueghel II Painting,” *Bruegel Now*, September 28, 2016, <https://bruegelnow.com/2016/09/28/sharp-eye-nets-e100k-for-pieter-brueghel-ii-painting>.

Pieter Brueghel the Younger was by far the most prolific artist to perpetuate Pieter Bruegel the Elder's compositions and manner, and directed a large workshop that churned out thousands of paintings over the decades.¹⁶³ The 2001 exhibition *Brueghel Enterprises* and its accompanying catalogue presented side-by-side technical analysis of different versions of the same composition by Pieter Brueghel the Younger.¹⁶⁴ Dominique Allart and Christina Currie expanded their initial research from that exhibition catalogue to include more compositions as well as thematic essays, and in 2012 published *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon: Paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder and Pieter Brueghel the Younger, with a special focus on technique and copying practice*, a three-volume comparison of paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, which revealed valuable information about Brueghel the Younger's source material, his copying practices, and the role of his large workshop.¹⁶⁵

The interest in the endurance of Bruegel's tradition is evident in the trend to conclude monographs on Bruegel with a chapter on his legacy in the Netherlands, as Genaille and Marlier initiated in the middle of the twentieth century. Manfred Sellink's 2007 catalogue raisonnée, *Bruegel: The Complete Paintings, Drawings, and*

¹⁶³ See page 32.

¹⁶⁴ Peter van den Brink, ed., *Brueghel Enterprises* (Ghent-Amsterdam: Ludion, 2001).

¹⁶⁵ Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*. The two scholars also contributed to the conference proceedings, "European Paintings 15th-18th Century: Copying, Replicating and Emulating" associated with the exhibitions for *Bosch & Bruegel: Four Paintings Magnified*, a technical analysis of four paintings of *Christ Driving the Moneylenders from the Temple* in the circles of Bosch and Bruegel the Elder. Erma Hermens, ed., *On the Trail of Bosch and Bruegel: Four Paintings United under Cross-Examination* (London: Archetype Books, 2012).

Technical studies of the copies of Bruegel the Elder, particularly those by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, has emerged as a current scholarly interest. Another example of this rose from the discovery of an autograph *Triumph of Death* by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, leading to a scientific examination of the painting and exhibition at the Museum Mayer van den Burgh, where it was compared to other versions. James I.W. Corcoran, *The Triumph of Death by Pieter Brueghel the Younger* (Antwerp: Museum Mayer van den Burgh, 1993).

Prints, presents works of “problematic attributions,” a continuing concern in Bruegel scholarship.¹⁶⁶ A chapter on “Bruegel’s Legacy” concludes Larry Silver’s thematically-organized *Pieter Bruegel* (2012), which is itself a summary of two chapters in Silver’s earlier *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes: The Rise of Pictorial Genres in the Antwerp Art Market* (2006). These chapters, aptly named “Descent from Bruegel I: From Flanders to Holland” and “Descent from Bruegel II: Flemish Friends and Family,” map the evolution of peasant and landscape imagery in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, separating their paths between the artistic development in the Spanish Netherlands and the United Provinces. Silver focuses on the ways in which both landscape and peasant paintings changed, rather than the persistence of the sixteenth-century period style associated with Bruegel.

As a result of the Bruegelians’ continuation of Bruegel’s manner and subjects, Bruegel’s name became synonymous with sixteenth-century Netherlandish peasant imagery. Scholars continue to puzzle over the reasons why peasant paintings, particularly by Bruegel and his followers, retained their immediacy for so long, and why they had such an impact into the seventeenth century. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Svetlana Alpers and Hessel Miedema raised the question of meaning in peasant imagery through a lively scholarly debate.¹⁶⁷ While Alpers argued that peasant paintings presented amusing views of country inhabitants, Miedema

¹⁶⁶ Several works tangential to this dissertation appear, including Jan Breughel the Elder’s *The Wedding Procession* (Museum van de Stad Brussel – Broodhuis), a grisaille of *The Visit to the Farmstead* (Antwerp, KMSKA) by either Pieter or Jan Brueghel, and a *Peasant Couple Attacked by Robbers* (Stockholm Universitets Konstsamling) whose authorship is still contested. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 268–77.

¹⁶⁷ Alpers, “Bruegel’s Festive Peasants”; Alpers, “Realism as a Comic Mode”; Miedema, “Realism and the Comic Mode”; Alpers, “Taking Pictures Seriously.”

characterized the same works as moralizing examples of behavior the upper-class viewing audience would be better not to imitate. This debate has continued into recent scholarship. With the major exception of Margaret Sullivan's *Bruegel's Peasants: Art and Audience in the northern Renaissance* (1994), which reads Bruegel's peasant imagery through the humanist lens that criticizes the peasantry,¹⁶⁸ most current literature illuminates more positive meanings in peasant imagery.¹⁶⁹ Margaret Carroll's "Peasant Festivity and Political Identity in the Sixteenth Century" (1987) identifies political meaning in images of peasant celebrations.¹⁷⁰ Walter Gibson is perhaps the most vocal scholar to recognize comic elements in Bruegelian peasant imagery, most notably in *Bruegel and the Art of Laughter* (2006).¹⁷¹ A recent contribution to contextual reading of Bruegel's paintings is Claudia Goldstein's *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of the Early Modern Dinner Party* (2013).¹⁷² Taking its start from Gibson's analysis of Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding* as a display of wealth in the home of Jean Noiroot, Goldstein contextualizes the work in contemporary culture of entertainment and ideas of the peasant.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ Sullivan, *Bruegel's Peasants*.

¹⁶⁹ This is not an exhaustive bibliography of recent literature on either Pieter Bruegel the Elder nor the interpretation of peasant imagery, but is a list of the most relevant scholarship for this dissertation.

¹⁷⁰ Carroll, "Peasant Festivity and Political Identity."

¹⁷¹ Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*.

Other studies by Gibson also support this interpretation, including Gibson, "Artists and Rederijkers"; Walter Gibson, "Festive Peasants Before Bruegel: Three Case Studies and Their Implications," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 31, no. 4 (2005 2004): 292–309; Walter S. Gibson, *Figures of Speech: Picturing Proverbs in Renaissance Netherlands* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2010); Walter S. Gibson, *Pleasant Places: The Rustic Landscape from Bruegel to Ruisdael* (Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: University of California Press, 2000); Gibson, "Verbeeck's Grotesque Wedding Feasts."

¹⁷² Goldstein, *Pieter Bruegel and the Culture of the Early Modern Dinner Party*.

¹⁷³ Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 67–105.

A generalizing observation can be made that Bruegel's peasant paintings are often positive subjects. His contemporaries and followers painted peasants in both positive and negative lights. Lively yet benign villagers gathering to celebrate the kermis in Roelandt Savery's *Peasant Dancing before an Inn* (1605 or 1615, Collection Willem Baron van Dedem) (fig. 34) contrast sharply with the lusty and dishonest country inhabitants in David Vinckboons's *Bordello* (c.1608, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 35). Subtle condescension of the peasantry appears in paintings like Van Mander's *Peasant Kermis* (1600, St. Petersburg, Hermitage) (fig. 36), but is notably absent from many of Pieter Brueghel the Younger's paintings, such as *Landscape with Peasant Wedding* (Maastricht, Bonnefantenmuseum) (fig. 37).

With a focus on paintings, this dissertation does not explore print imagery to the same extent as paintings. However, in general, prints tended towards more negative representations of peasant subjects than those found in paintings. Karel van Mander's *Peasant Kermis* (1593) (fig. 38) contains considerably more violence, lust, and overindulgence than represented in his paintings of the same subject. Inscribed verses on peasant prints that comment on the specific image as well as the general interpretation of peasant subjects tend towards negative appraisal.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ A negative presentation of a peasant subject in a print could be amplified by its inscription. An interesting example of this is Karel van Mander's *Peasant Kermis*, which he drew in 1592 (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum). On it, he wrote a poem about the peasantry, presenting his subjects as benign boors whose uncouth behavior was amusing. When the image was engraved by Nicolaes Clock and published in 1593, a new inscription in Latin by Franco Estius more harshly condemned the peasants with vocabulary like "horrible" and "wretched. A second, undated engraving attributed to Gillis van Breen adds a Dutch legend to the Latin poem. Alpers, "Realism as a Comic Mode," 123–24; Miedema, "Realism and the Comic Mode," 209–14; Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 221; Marjolein Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, ed. Huigen Leeftang and Christiaan Schuckman, The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700 (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers in co-operation with the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, 1999), lxxix, n.118.

What this reveals most of all is that there can be no single interpretation of peasant imagery. For both positive and negative readings of peasant subjects, there continued to be both demand and supply for paintings and prints. Much of the visual material in this dissertation focuses on peasants at leisure, an admittedly narrow category within the broader genre of peasant scenes. Many of these scenes depict peasants at their worst behavior, as violent, lusty drunks, although others feature peaceful, industrious, and joyous peasants. Bruegel's tradition of peasant scenes emphasizes the human element of village life, and tends towards positive images that are entertaining to examine. This assertion is as true today as it was in 1604, when Karel van Mander wrote that "one sees few pictures by him which a spectator can contemplate seriously and without laughing... he has to twitch his mouth or smile."¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r.

Chapter 1: The Austrian Habsburgs: Increasing the Demand for Pieter Bruegel the Elder's Paintings

The Value of Paintings by Bruegel the Elder

In 1728, Bernard Mandeville commented on the prices of paintings and the factors that contributed to their value. According to the Rotterdam-born, London-based physician,

The value that is set on Paintings depends not only on the Name of the Master and the Time of his Age he drew them in, but likewise in a great Measure on the Scarcity of his Works, and... the Quality of the Persons in whose Possession they are as well as the length of Time they have been in great Families.¹⁷⁶

In the sixteenth century, paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder were in demand by esteemed patrons such as Cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, Nicolaes Jongelinck, Jan Noirot, and Abraham Ortelius.¹⁷⁷ Upon Bruegel's death in 1569, the demand for his work increased. In 1572, Cardinal Granvelle found it difficult to purchase paintings by Bruegel to replace those he had been forced to abandon when

¹⁷⁶ Cited in DeMarchi and Van Miegroet, "Pricing Invention," 454.

¹⁷⁷ Nicolaes Jonghelinck (1517-1570) owned at least 16 paintings by Bruegel, including a *Tower of Babel*, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, and *Twelve Months*. Jean Noirot's collection, auctioned in 1572, included five paintings by Bruegel, including two paintings of a *Peasant Wedding*, two *Peasant Kermis*, and a *Winter Scene*. In Rome, the 1577 estate inventory of Giulio Clovio included several paintings by Bruegel, including a miniature painted in collaboration between the two artists, as well as a landscape with view of Lyon, a *Tower of Babel* on ivory, a painting of a tree, as well as a landscape with St. George and two landscapes, all with likely Bruegel attributions. Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 47-50.

Abraham Ortelius likely owned *The Death of the Virgin*, which he had Philip Galle engrave. Arthur Ewart Popham, "Pieter Bruegel and Abraham Ortelius," *The Burlington Magazine* 59 (1931): 184.

he was forced out of the Netherlands in 1564.¹⁷⁸ Shortly after the Spanish Sack of Mechelen, Provost Morillon wrote to Cardinal Granvelle that,

If I were you, I wouldn't count on finding more paintings by Bruegel unless you are prepared to pay a very high price. For they are in even greater demand since his death than they were before; they are now valued at 50, 100 and 200 crowns, which puts a strain on one's conscience.¹⁷⁹

Around the turn of the seventeenth century, the value of scarce Bruegel the Elder paintings increased even more.¹⁸⁰ Bruegel's son, Jan Brueghel the Elder, wrote that Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II "made large expenditures for all of his work," outbidding and outmaneuvering other art lovers in his quest to acquire paintings by Bruegel the Elder.¹⁸¹ The active acquisition of Bruegel the Elder's paintings by

¹⁷⁸ Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*, 10.

¹⁷⁹ 'il ne fait plus que vous estimiez recouvrer des pieces de Bruegel, sinon fort chèrement: car elles sont plus requisees depuis son trespas que par avant, et s'estiment 50, 100 et 200 esxusz, qu'est charge de conscience.' Cited in Guillaume Joseph Charles Piot, *Correspondance Du Cardinal de Granvelle 1563-1583* (Brussels: F. Havez, 1877), 524; Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 47, 56, n.2.

Morillon had been asked by Granvelle to "retrieve Bruegel's works' which had disappeared from the palace of Mechelen after it had been sacked by the Duke of Alva's forces." Philippe Roberts-Jones and Françoise Roberts-Jones, *Bruegel* (Paris: Flammarion, 2012), 21.

Evidently, Cardinal Granvelle found the means to acquire more paintings by Bruegel, as the inventory of his descendants' collection in 1607 includes at least one painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, and several other works either by Bruegel the Elder or one of his sons. Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 49.

¹⁸⁰ For contemporary Flemish inventories, see: Abraham Bredius and Otto Hirschmann, *Künstler-Inventare: Urkunden Zur Geschichte Der Holländischen Kunst Des XVIten, SVIten Und SVIIIten Jahrhunderts*, 6 vols. (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1915); Jean Denucé, *Export of Works of Art in the 17th Century from Antwerp. The Firm Forchoudt*, Historical Sources for the Study of Flemish Art 1 ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1931); Jean Denucé, *De Antwerpsche "Konstkamers": Inventarissen van Kunstverzamelingen Te Antwerpen in de 16e En 17e Eeuwen* (Antwerp: De Sikkels, 1932); Denucé, *Inventories*; Erik Duverger, *Antwerpse Kunstinventarissen Uit de Zeventiende Eeuw*, 8 vols., *Fontes Historiae Artis Neerlandicae* (Brussels: Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, 1984); Sluijter, "On Brabant Rubbish"; Currie and Allart, *The Bruegel[h]el Phenomenon*, 46–48, 72–74.

¹⁸¹ "L'imperator ha fatto gran spese per auer tutti sua opera." ["The Emperor has made large expenditures for all of his work."] Jan Brueghel the Elder to Cardinal Borromeo, 1609. Even the artist's son was unable to obtain a painting by his father for his patron, Cardinal Borromeo. Giovanni Crivelli, *Giovanni Brueghel: Pittor Fiammingo O Sue Lettere E Quadretti Esistenti Presso l'Ambrosiana* (Milan: Ditta Boniardi-Pogliani di E. Besozzi, 1868), 118–21, 340.

Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612) and his powerful relations, some of the most prominent art lovers in Europe, secured and enhanced the high value of those works. This chapter focuses upon the paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder in the collections of Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612, ruled 1576-1612), Archduke Ernst (1553-1595, ruled 1594-1595), Emperor Matthias (1557-1619, Governor General of the Netherlands 1578-1581, Holy Roman Emperor 1612-1619), the Archdukes Albert (1559-1621, ruled 1598-1621) and Isabella Clara Eugenia (1566-1633, ruled 1598-1621), and Archduke Leopold Wilhelm (1614-1662, ruled 1647-1656), many of whom demonstrated an insatiability for Bruegel's paintings that left few works for others to purchase. Art lovers who wished to enhance the prestige of their own collections by echoing Habsburg art holdings were relegated to purchase Bruegelian paintings that emulated or copied the master's subjects or manner.

The Habsburgs and the Arts

In the introduction to his didactic poem, *Den Grondt der Edel Vry Schilderboeck (Foundation of the Noble, Free Art of Painting)* (1604), Karel van Mander instructed students of the arts to

go to Prague, to the presently greatest art-lover in the world: to wit, the Roman Emperor Rudolf II, to see in his princely dwelling and also elsewhere, in all chambers of art [Constat-
camers] of the strong amateurs, all excellent, costly pieces, and to enquire, value, and calculate the worth and price of each, in order to see what a remarkable sum he would find. I think that he would be wonderfully compelled to recognize that our art in painting is a noble,

Jan Brueghel then sent his only painting by Bruegel the Elder, *Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery*, to the Cardinal. The cardinal refused the gesture, and, after having a copy of it made, sent the original back to the artist. Brueghel bequeathed the work to Borromeo upon his death, and the painting was sent to Rome in 1625. F. Grossman, "Bruegel's 'Woman Taken in Adultery' and Other Grisailles," *The Burlington Magazine* 94, no. 593 (August 1952): 229.

excellent, distinguished, virtuous occupation, which has to yield to no other natural or free art.¹⁸²

Rudolf II, who reigned from 1576-1612, created a world-renowned collection, but he also cultivated his prestige by disseminating his court art to foreign courts through gift-giving. He also enhanced his fame among general art lovers through sponsored print production.¹⁸³ Many artists heeded Van Mander's advice and visited the imperial collections in Prague.¹⁸⁴ Rudolfine artists, most notably Bartolomeus Spranger (1546-1611), who worked for patrons in Vienna, Germany, and the Netherlands, also ventured to other cities.¹⁸⁵

To various degrees, Rudolf II's three brothers, Archduke Ernst, Emperor Matthias, and Archduke Albert, also styled themselves as patrons of the arts.¹⁸⁶ Archduke Ernst was already an active patron of the arts when he was appointed Stadholder of the Netherlands in 1594. He used his position and wealth to acquire rapidly an art collection that reflected local collecting trends. Matthias asserted his independence from Rudolf II's influence by fostering his own artistic court both before his election to the imperial throne in 1612 and after he moved the imperial

¹⁸² Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 1–2; Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *The School of Prague: Painting at the Court of Rudolf II* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 3.

¹⁸³ Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 105–7. Rudolf II appointed Sadeler the newly-created position of *Kupferstecher* (imperial printmaker) in 1597. *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁸⁴ Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 105–14.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 103–7.

¹⁸⁶ Maximilian II and Maria of Spain had two other sons, Archduke Maximilian of Austria (1558-1618) and Archduke Wenceslaus of Austria (1561-1578). Maximilian demonstrated little interest in promoting the visual arts, and Wenceslaus died at age 17.

capital to Vienna.¹⁸⁷ At the same time, he seems to have acquired the best works from Rudolf II's collection, as is later discussed. Archduke Albert, with his wife and co-regent Archduchess Isabella, were best known for their patronage of contemporary local artists in the Southern Netherlands, including Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder. Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, the youngest son of Emperor Ferdinand II, who succeeded Matthias as Holy Roman Emperor in 1619, amassed an enviable art collection in the middle of the seventeenth century.

The Austrian Habsburgs all shared the familial trait of admiring the paintings of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Karel van Mander wrote that "some of his [Bruegel's] most important works are now with the Emperor [Rudolf II]."¹⁸⁸ Archduke Ernst owned nine paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, and Archduke Leopold Wilhelm owned eight of his works.¹⁸⁹ While the Habsburgs may have been limited in their choices of Bruegel's paintings due to availability, they supplemented their interest in Bruegel's paintings by acquiring works by his sons and emulators.

To various degrees, the Austrian Habsburgs employed Bruegelian artists in their courts.¹⁹⁰ Lucas van Valckenborch was a court artist for Matthias but he also

¹⁸⁷ Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 100–101.

¹⁸⁸ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

¹⁸⁹ Marcel de Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella En de Schilderkunst: Bijdrage Tot de Geschiedenis van de XVIIe - Eeuwse Schilderkunst in de Zuiderlijke Nedernaden* (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1955), 259–61.; Adolf Berger, "Inventar Der Kunstsammlung Des Ertzherzogs Leopold Wilhelm von Österreich," *Jahrbuch Der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen Des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 1, no. II (1883): LXXIX–CLXXVII.

¹⁹⁰ Few works labeled "after Bruegel" or "in Bruegel's manner" appear in the inventories. Exceptions include a *Christ Carrying the Cross* "in Bruegel's manner" in Ernst's collection, a *Peasant Wedding* "after Bruegel" in the posthumous inventory of Isabella, and a winter scene by Baltens after Bruegel in Leopold Wilhelm's collection. Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259, 422; Berger, "Inventar Des Ertzherzogs Leopold Wilhelm," CXVIII. Full analysis of Bruegelian works in the inventories of the Austrian Habsburgs has yet to be done.

painted for Ernst. Rudolf II employed Roelandt Savery and Peter Stevens, and purchased works by Jan Brueghel the Elder.¹⁹¹ Jan Brueghel was a court painter to Archdukes Albert and Isabella.¹⁹² Many of the Bruegelian paintings in the inventories of Rudolf II, Ernst, Matthias, and Albert were landscapes, mythology and religious subjects, with surprisingly few peasant paintings.¹⁹³

Scholars have attributed the Austrian Habsburg interest in Bruegel to the upbringing of Rudolf, Ernst, Matthias, and Albert in the court of Philip II (1527-1598).¹⁹⁴ Nevertheless, while the Spanish monarch was a noted collector of paintings by Hieronymous Bosch and Titian, artists whom the Austrian Habsburgs similarly collected, he did not possess any works by Bruegel. Rather than the influence of the Spanish monarch, a more local fashion for the Netherlandish master likely inspired them to collect Bruegel.

The three younger brothers, Matthias (r.1579-1581),¹⁹⁵ Ernst (r. 1594-1595), and Albert (r. 1598-1621) each governed the Spanish Netherlands, giving them convenient access to the great art market of Antwerp. In particular, the exquisite

¹⁹¹ Rudolf II purchased flower paintings and diableries from Jan Brueghel. The latter subject was inspired by Breugel the Elder. Wilhelm Köhler, "Aktenstücke Zur Geschichte Der Wiener Kunstkammer in Der Herzoglichen Bibliothek Zu Wolfenbüttel," *Jahrbuch Der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen Des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 26, no. II (1907 1906): VI–VII, nn.8, 29, 30, 48, 49.

¹⁹² Anne T. Woollett and Ariane Van Suchtelen, *Rubens & Brueghel: A Working Friendship* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2006), 13–15.

¹⁹³ The exception would be the few peasant paintings by Roelandt Savery for Rudolf II.

¹⁹⁴ Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 23; Dominique Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche, Gouverneur Des Pays-Bas (1594-1595). Portrait D'un Amateur de Peinture et Analyse Du Contenu de Sa Collection," *Pays Bourguignons et Autrichiens (XIVe - XVIe Siècles): Une Confrontation Institutionnelle et Culturelle*, no. 46 (2006): 248.

¹⁹⁵ Matthias left the Netherlands in March 1581 when he was replaced by the States Generals' appointment of Francis I, Duke of Anjou (1555-1584) as sovereign over the Netherlands. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 209.

collection Ernst amassed relatively quickly in Brussels in 1594-1595 reflects the collecting tendencies of the Antwerp elite, which favored works by native artists.¹⁹⁶ Archduke Leopold Wilhelm acquired a large portion of his collection en masse through the purchase of entire English art collections, though he obtained his paintings by Bruegel elsewhere.¹⁹⁷ Leopold Wilhelm then promoted his esteemed collection to European courts through the gifts of gallery paintings.¹⁹⁸

The provenance of paintings in the Habsburg collections is often unclear. None of the Austrian Habsburgs discussed in this chapter had children and no clear line of inheritance between the brothers emerges, and tracing works between collections is extremely difficult. Collections were parceled up after each ruler's death, with some works descending to brothers and cousins. Bruegel the Elder's paintings of peasants dancing, celebrating weddings, and at kermis were all subjects that could be identified generically as peasants celebrating. Name confusion between

¹⁹⁶ The model Antwerpian art collection contained works by a canon of Antwerp artists, which was firmly codified by 1620. This canon contained mostly mid-sixteenth century painters, including Pieter Bruegel the Elder, which was modernized with contemporary turn of the century artists, including Jan Brueghel. Antwerp art lovers' protectionist collecting habits stem not only from the existence of a tradition of excellent local art, but a pride in asserting and maintaining pride in the lingering economic strength after the fall from prominence in the late sixteenth century. Honig, "The Beholder as Work of Art," 267–68; Honig, *Painting & the Market*, 108–10.

The taste for local paintings can also be identified by the choices of paintings to include in fictive collections represented in gallery paintings, an Antwerp specialty that emerged in the second decade of the seventeenth century. Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp*, 57–58, 62–63.

Archduke Albert and Isabella demonstrated a preference for local traditions. Rudolf II seems to have constructed an artistic tradition in his court. Ernst and Matthias do not present enough information to be able to judge their connection with local artistic traditions, but this may be interesting for further study.

¹⁹⁷ See page 32.

¹⁹⁸ The publication of the Archduke's collection in the *Theatrum Pictorium* (1660) by David Teniers the Younger further promoted the repute of Leopold Wilhelm's acquisitions. Hans Vlieghe, *David Teniers the Younger (1610-1690): A Biography* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2011), 38–41.

Bruegel the Elder and his two artistic sons lends further uncertainty to provenance identification.

Archduke Ernst of Austria (1553-1595)

Archduke Ernst's collection of paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder represents the earliest recorded compilation of paintings by the master by one of the Habsburg brothers.¹⁹⁹ His acquisition of ten Bruegel paintings coincided with his appointment as Stadholder of the Netherlands in 1594, a position he held for only a year before his untimely death in 1595.²⁰⁰ History has almost forgotten Ernst, for as a political or military leader he had little impact.²⁰¹ However, as a collector, Ernst affected the supply and likely the promotion of Pieter Bruegel the Elder as a great artist.

The contents of Ernst's collection in Brussels are known from two overlapping posthumous inventories, one from February 24, 1595, and the other dating from July 17 of the same year. Notes from Ernst's secretary, Blasius Hütter,

¹⁹⁹ It is unclear when Rudolf II acquired his vast collection of Bruegel paintings, though by 1604 Van Mander partially lists his extensive holdings.

²⁰⁰ For details of each acquisition, see: Alphons Lhotsky, *Festschrift Des Kunsthistorisches Museums Zur Feier Des Fünfzigjährigen Bestandes: Die Geschichte Der Sammlungen: Erste Hälfte von Den Anfängen Bis Zum Tode Kaiser Karls VI. 1740* (Vienna: Verlag Ferdinand Berger, Horn, 1941), 215–16.

²⁰¹ During his short reign, he suffered numerous defeats at the hands of Prince Maurits and the Dutch. Jean Béranger, *A History of the Habsburg Empire*, trans. C.A. Simpson (London and New York: Longman, 1994), 223. He also encouraged the Catholic reclamation and Counter-Reformation. Robert John Weston Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1550-1700: An Interpretation* (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press and Oxford University Press, 1979), 43–44; Benjamin Curtis, *The Habsburgs: The History of a Dynasty* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 110–11.

supplement the inventories, and include references to the portion of Ernst's collection that remained in Austria.²⁰²

Hütter notes in his Account Book on July 5, 1594: "the five gentlemen from [the City of] Antwerp... presented His Highness with six panels representing the twelve months and eight pieces of tapestry."²⁰³ The gift was transported by barge from Antwerp to Brussels, where the paintings appear in the July 1595 inventory as "*Sechs Taffell, von 12 Monathenn des Jars von Bruegel.*"²⁰⁴ The Bruegel series of the *Months* most likely constituted *Hunters in the Snow* (December/January) (fig. 2), *The Gloomy Day* (February/March) (fig. 3), *Return of the Herd* (October/November) (fig. 4) (all Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), *Haymaking* (June/July) (Prague, National Gallery) (fig. 5), and *The Harvesters* (August/September) (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) (fig. 6), as well as a lost sixth painting, all from 1565.²⁰⁵ The city went to great expense for the gift: the series of the *Months* was purchased from the art dealer Hans van Wijk for 1,400 florins, and the tapestries were purchased from the tapestry maker Merten Reynbouts for 8,550 florins.²⁰⁶

²⁰² Ernst's collection of paintings in Austria may have been left there while he relocated to Brussels, or may have been works acquired in the Netherlands, but sent back to Austria while the Archduke remained in Brussels. These were not inventoried. Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 254.

²⁰³ Blasius Hütter cited in Hans J. Van Miegroet, "'The Twelve Months' Reconsidered: How a Drawing by Pieter Stevens Clarifies a Bruegel Enigma," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 16 (1986): 29–30.

²⁰⁴ Cited in Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259–61.

²⁰⁵ The lost painting would have contained April and May. Buchanan, "The Collection of Nicolaes Jongelinck," 546.

²⁰⁶ The series was first owned by Nicholaes Jongelinck, who pledged it to the city of Antwerp as collateral against outstanding debts of Daniel de Bruyne. The paintings did not likely remain in the city of Antwerp's possession, as other works pledged by Jongelinck were returned to him upon repayment of the debt. Sources after Jongelinck's death in 1570 do not mention the Bruegel paintings, suggesting that they had been already sold. The city of Antwerp was required to purchase the paintings from Van

Upon his Triumphal Entry into Antwerp in 1594, Ernst had a great desire to develop a collection that contained works by Bruegel and other canonical artists. From Van Wijk, the dealer who sold the series of the *Months* to the city of Antwerp, Ernst purchased Bruegel's *Children's Games* (1560, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 39). In that same transaction, Ernst also acquired a painting of the *Three Kings* by Hubert of Prague, and a painting of the Virgin Mary, costing together 538 florins, 40 kreuzers.²⁰⁷ From Secretary Praets, Ernst purchased Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding Banquet* for 160 florins (1567, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 40).²⁰⁸ In October 1594, Ernst acquired Bruegel's *The Conversion of St. Paul* (1567, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 41), paying 320 florins for it.²⁰⁹ He also owned a *Crucifixion* by Bruegel,²¹⁰ as well as a "*Christy Creutzigung*" in "Bruegel's manner," both acquired at unknown dates.²¹¹

Ernst's posthumous inventory of 1595 lists ten Bruegel paintings, and one work in Bruegel's manner. Nine of those works were purchased in 1594. The great bulk of the collection stem from gift from the city of Antwerp to the Stadholder.

Wijk to present to Ernst, confirming that they were not in the possession of the city in the 1590s. Ibid., 541–42.

²⁰⁷ Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 245.

²⁰⁸ Records of this individual are scarce. A Secretary Praets, possibly the same individual, assisted the councilors who confined and charged the Dukes of Egmont and Hoorn at the command of the Duke of Alva in 1568. Secretary Praets also read the sentence condemning the two rebel noblemen for treason. John Lothrop Motley, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, vol. 1 (New York: A.L. Burt, 1898), 628, 660. The Secretary had purchased the painting from his cousin. Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 245.

²⁰⁹ It is unclear from where Ernst purchased this work. Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 243.

²¹⁰ Lhotsky suggests that this work may have been by Jan Brueghel the Elder. Lhotsky, *Festschrift Des Kunsthistorisches Museums*, 217.

²¹¹ Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259–61.

Ernst's subsequent purchase from Hans van Wijk suggests that he initiated the request to the city to present these works to him. Ernst clearly recognized that his official political position afforded him the unique opportunity to acquire Bruegel's paintings.

The nature of Ernst's collection may have been dictated by which works were available in 1594. However, the composition of Ernst's acquisitions and its correlation with other works he added to the collection suggest a conscious curating by the Archduke. Out of ten paintings by Bruegel, Ernst only owned two of biblical subjects, *The Conversion of St. Paul* and a *Crucifixion*. The other eight paintings were peasant subjects. *Peasant Wedding* and *Children's Games* locate characteristically Bruegelian figures in country villages. The six panels of the *Months* focus on peasants at the labors of the year, set within Bruegel's traditional three-part landscape compositions.

Ernst's interest in Bruegel the Elder, particularly his peasant and landscape compositions, may derive from his collection of paintings by Lucas van Valckenborch.²¹² Ernst owned numerous paintings by the late sixteenth-century Bruegelian, including *Spring* (1587, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 42). Painted in 1587, long before Ernst was named Stadholder,²¹³ *Spring* includes a

²¹² Van Valckenborch also painted subjects other than those influenced by Bruegel, such as portraits and landscapes. Ernst's collection of Van Valckenborch's works, however, seems to have favored those inspired by Bruegel. Ernst is documented purchasing directly from Van Valckenborch. Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 246–47.

²¹³ This was after Archduke Matthias's brief – and disgraceful – term as Stadholder of the Netherlands from 1578–1581. At the time, Van Valckenborch was in the service of Archduke Matthias, Ernst's brother, though Ernst seems to have developed a close relationship with the artist. In 1593, Van Valckenborch was granted citizenship in Frankfurt, which was obtained for him by Ernst, not Matthias. Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 15.

portrait of Archduke Ernst standing before the Palace of Brussels.²¹⁴ Allart argues that the prominence of the Archduke and the seat of the Stadholder of the Netherlands likely reveals “the Habsburg ambition of being associated with the Netherlands/Brussels.”²¹⁵

In 1594, Ernst expanded his collection of Van Valckenborch paintings. The posthumous inventory lists “*Ein klain Landtschaff*” and a series of canvases of the *Four Seasons*.²¹⁶ “*Ein klain Landtschaff*” may correspond to the *View of Linz* Ernst purchased for 26 florins on January 3, 1594.²¹⁷ The *Four Seasons*, purchased in September of 1594 for 240 florins, were likely acquired directly from the artist.²¹⁸

Ernst seems to have preferred serial works. In addition to his Bruegel series of the months and the Van Valckenborch set of the seasons, he owned a series of twelve panels depicting the *Twelve Months* by “Griemer” (Grimmer).²¹⁹ These paintings could have been by either Jacob or Abel Grimmer, both of whom painted several series of the months. Abel Grimmer also painted an exceptional set of the seasons that

²¹⁴ Ernst stands with a court beauty beside the blanket spread with a splendid picnic. Allart, “Ernest d’Autriche,” 251–52.

This is not the only time Van Valckenborch included portraits of the Habsburgs in his landscape paintings. See Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 15; Peter Assmann and Oberösterreichischen Landesmuseen, *Der Kaisers Kulturhauptstadt: Linz Um 1600*, ed. Christina Schmid (Linz: Verlag Bibliothek der Provinz, 2012), 123.

²¹⁵ Allart, “Ernest d’Autriche,” 251–52.

²¹⁶ Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259–61.

²¹⁷ The price of this work in comparison to other works, for example the *Four Seasons*, suggests it was a small work.

²¹⁸ Allart, “Ernest d’Autriche,” 246–47.

²¹⁹ Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259–61.

copied Pieter Bruegel the Elder's prints of *Spring* and *Summer* (1607, Antwerp, KMSKA) (figs. 43-44).

Ernst's Brussels art collection was relatively small, consisting of only seventy-four works, but it was exceptional in quality.²²⁰ Like local contemporaries,²²¹ he preferred works by Netherlandish masters: Bruegel, Hieronymous Bosch, Rogier van der Weyden, and Hubert van Eyck.²²² Ernst's interest in Bruegel was second only to his love of Bosch.²²³ He owned nineteen panels from that master, at least two of which he purchased in 1594.²²⁴ Ernst also owned two works by Frans Floris, Bruegel's main competitor in mid-century Antwerp.²²⁵ The Archduke was also a patron of the geographer Abraham Ortelius.²²⁶ Though he resided in Brussels, Ernst seems to have been closely connected to the artistic and intellectual world of Antwerp.

Allart argues that Ernst's acquisition of so many Bruegel paintings, particularly in such a short period, inspired the proliferation of Bruegelian imagery in

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Honig, "The Beholder as Work of Art," 257, 267.

²²² The latter two were listed as "Rugier von Brussell and "Rubert von Eicken." Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259–61.

²²³ Allart suggests Ernst's interest in Bosch stems from his childhood in Philip II's Madrid court. Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 248.

A comparison of Ernst's Bosch collection with those belonging to Philip II and Rudolf II would be an interesting endeavor.

²²⁴ The *Crucifixion* and *Descent into Limbo* were purchased in December 1594. Ibid., 245.

²²⁵ Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259–61.

²²⁶ Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "Archduke Albrecht as an Austrian Habsburg and Prince of the Empire," in *Albert & Isabella, 1598-1621*, ed. Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 21.

the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.²²⁷ Ernst, however, did not initiate the popularity of Bruegel's imagery; art lovers had been collecting Bruegel's paintings since the artist's own lifetime. Contemporary artists as well as those of subsequent generations capitalized on this fashion by making forgeries and emulative works even in Bruegel's generation. That being said, Ernst's large acquisitions did alter the market for original paintings by Bruegel. The impact of his collective initiative was compounded by Rudolf II's similar desire to purchase works by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612)

Upon the death of Ernst in 1595, his brother, Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (ruled 1576-1612), inherited at least one of Bruegel's paintings from Ernst's collection, *The Conversion of St. Paul*, but likely more. Unfortunately, the character of Rudolf II's painting collection is little known, for the inventory of his legendary *kunstkammer*, made in 1607/1611, which fills 389 folios, with 2814 listings, many of them containing more than one object, only lists objects representing the natural and artificial world, not paintings.²²⁸ An inventory of Rudolf II's painting collection was not completed before his death in 1612. However, a Venetian visitor surmised that the collection included three thousand pieces.²²⁹ In addition to works by famous masters like Dürer, Michelangelo, Correggio, and Bruegel, Rudolf supported a prolific court

²²⁷ Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 253–54.

²²⁸ Rotraud Bauer and Herbert Haupt, *Das Kunstkammerinventar Kaiser Rudolfs II., 1607-1611*, *Jahrbuch Der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 72 (Vienna: Verlag Anton Schroll & Co., 1976).

²²⁹ Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 4.

of artists creating works to his specifications.²³⁰ Van Mander named the Emperor “the greatest art lover of our time.”²³¹

[W]hoever would wish something more recent (than ancient art) would have to (if he had the opportunity) go to Prague, to the presently greatest art-lover in the world: to wit, the Roman Emperor Rudolf II, to see in his princely dwelling and also elsewhere, in all chambers of art [Const-camers] of the strong amateurs, all excellent, costly pieces, and to enquire, value, and calculate the worth and price of each, in order to see what a remarkable sum he would find.²³²

Rudolf took an aggressive approach to acquiring any works by older masters. In 1609, the frustrated Tuscan ambassador wrote that Rudolf’s “desire for paintings is so great that he... acquires whatever is choice in the world, and scrapes together for it great sums from the empire...”²³³ In 1609, Jan Brueghel apologized to Cardinal Borromeo for his inability to purchase any works by his father for the great collector. He lamented that Emperor Rudolf II had offered high prices for any works by Bruegel the Elder that became available.²³⁴

²³⁰ For example, Joachim Sandrart reported that Rudolf sent Roelandt Savery into the Alps to make drawings for his paintings. Cited in *ibid.*, 17–18.

²³¹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, 213v.

²³² Van Mander continues, “I think that he would be wonderfully compelled to recognize that our art of painting is a noble, excellent, distinguished, virtuous occupation, which has to yield to no other natural or free art.” Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 1–2; See also Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 3.

²³³ Cited in Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 7.

²³⁴ “*L'imperator ha fatto gran spese per auer tutti sua opera.*” (“The Emperor has made large expenditures for all of his work.” Crivelli, *Giovanni Brueghel*, 118–21, 340. Jan Brueghel the sent his only painting by Bruegel the Elder, *Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery*, to the Cardinal. The cardinal refused the gesture and, after having a copy of it made, sent the original back to the artist. Brueghel bequeathed the work to Borromeo upon his death, and the painting was sent to Rome in 1625. Grossman, “Bruegel’s ‘Woman Taken in Adultery’ and Other Grisailles,” 229. Two works by Bruegel sold in 1607 in Amsterdam seem to have escaped Rudolf II’s notice. The first, a large *Tower of Babel*, was from the estate of Gillis van Coninxloo. The second, “Beggars by Bruegel,” was sold at the *Waidenkammer* sale and purchased for 40 florins by David Colyns. Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 48–49.

In his quest to acquire the best works by the great masters, including Bruegel the Elder, Rudolf II not only offered extraordinary sums, but also managed and coerced the market.²³⁵ He employed his ambassadors and court artists to both reconnoiter available works and to assert pressure on collectors. Lesser princes sent art from their private collections or off the walls of churches in their lands to seek the favor of their lord. In 1597, eleven years after the death of Cardinal Granvelle, an avid collector of Bruegel the Elder's paintings, Emperor Rudolf produced a list of works he wished to purchase from the cardinal's heir, François Perrenot de Granvelle, Comte de Chantecroy. The Emperor offered a menial sum for the thirty-three works, which included Dürer's *Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand* (1508, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum). The Comte, who had previously refused a higher offer from Cardinal Farnese, had no choice but to accept Rudolf's request, and bowed to "the wish and pleasure of Your Majesty rather than my own private interest."²³⁶

Because no inventory of Rudolf's painting collection in Prague was made, scholars have attempted to piece together an approximation of Rudolf's collection on the basis of Karel van Mander's comments and an inventory of the imperial collection in Vienna, likely recorded in the latter half of the 1610s, during the reign of Rudolf's

²³⁵ Hugh Trevor-Roper, *Princes and Artists: Patronage and Ideology at Four Habsburg Courts, 1517-1633* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 108.

²³⁶ Cited in *ibid.*, 112, 169.

It does not seem that Rudolf II acquired any Bruegel paintings from this great acquisition from Cardinal Granvelle's collection. In 1607, the inventory of Granvelle Palace in Besançon drawn up after the death of François Perrenot included at least one painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, a "Landscape with Our Lady fleeing into Egypt," as well as several other works by Bruegel or one of his sons. Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 49.

successor, Matthias.²³⁷ Rudolf's career as a collector had a languid start when he became Holy Roman Emperor in 1576. In 1577, Karel van Mander stopped in Vienna on his way back to the Netherlands from his travels in Italy, where he, at the urging of Bartholomeus Spranger, then court painter to Emperor Maximilian II, assisted in designing the spectacular triumphal entry of Rudolf into Vienna.²³⁸ Van Mander wrote that, as "the new Emperor did not at first have a great interest in art," he and Spranger were not immediately employed at court,²³⁹ but quite rapidly "His Majesty [became] so very inclined towards art."²⁴⁰

By the time Van Mander published his *Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish Artists* in 1604, he could report that Rudolf owned, among other treasures, an extensive collection of paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.²⁴¹ He wrote

Some of [Bruegel's] most important works are now with the Emperor, to wit: a large piece with a *Tower of Babel*²⁴² in which there are many handsome details to be seen; it is shown in bird's-eye view. And another of the same subject only small, or at any rate smaller.²⁴³ And

²³⁷ The inventory has been dated to between 1610 and 1619. Rudolf died in 1612, and Matthias died in 1619. The inventory was likely made after Rudolf's death, when Matthias moved the capital and the imperial art collection to Vienna.

²³⁸ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.4r, 272r.

²³⁹ Spranger later became a court artist under Rudolf II.

²⁴⁰ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol. 272r, 273r.

²⁴¹ Van Mander's information about Rudolf's collection seems to have come from his close correspondence with Spranger, then one of Rudolf II's court painters. Spranger visited Holland in 1602, two years before Van Mander published his account of Rudolf II's art collection in his *Lives*. There is no evidence Van Mander himself visited Prague. Marjolein Leesberg, "Karel van Mander as a Painter," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 1/2 (1994 1993): 42.

²⁴² 1563, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

²⁴³ c.1568, Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen.

two pieces with the *Carrying of the Cross*,²⁴⁴ very natural to look at, in which there were always some burlesque details. Then a *Massacre of the Innocents*²⁴⁵ in which many effective details can be seen, of which I have told elsewhere: how an entire family begs on behalf of a peasant child which one of the murderous soldiers has grabbed in order to kill; in which the grief and pallor of the mother and other effects are well expressed. Then a *Conversion of Paul*²⁴⁶ with very subtle rocks. It would be difficult to relate all that he made with regard to sorceries, hells, peasant scenes and other things. He made a *Temptation of Christ*²⁴⁷ in which, as in the Alps, one looks down from above onto towns and countries with clouds swirling above them, through which one sees in some places; and a *Dolle Griet*²⁴⁸ carrying away plunder in the face of hell, who looks quite crazy and is weirdly kitted-out in a higgledy-piggledy way. I believe this, as well as some other pieces, to be in the Emperor's palace too.²⁴⁹

Van Mander continues, as if reporting from others,²⁵⁰ “[h]e also made a piece in which Lent fights against Shrove Tuesday; and another in which all remedies against Death are used; and another with all manner of childrens’ games, and innumerable allegories.”²⁵¹ Though Van Mander does not clearly identify the owner

²⁴⁴ One could be the painting from 1564, now in Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

²⁴⁵ c.1565-1567, Windsor Castle, Royal Collection. In the margin next to the section where he described Bruegel the Elder's *Massacre of the Innocents* in *Den Grondt*, Karel van Mander noted “Dit stuck is nu (als ick acht) by den Keyser Rhodolphus,” perhaps to remind himself of its location when he later mentioned it in the Life of Bruegel the Elder. Lorne Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 17.

²⁴⁶ 1567, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

²⁴⁷ Possibly lost.

²⁴⁸ c.1562-1564, Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh.

²⁴⁹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., v.3, 263.

²⁵¹ Ibid., v.1, 233v; v.3, 263.

of these last three works, but they were likely also in the Emperor's collection.²⁵²

Rudolf II could have inherited *Children's Games* from Archduke Ernst, who acquired the work in 1594. Bruegel's *Battle Between Carnival and Lent* (1559, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 8), however, does not appear in any Habsburg inventories until it is described as being in the Treasury of the imperial gallery in 1748.²⁵³ The location of *The Triumph of Death* (1562-1563, Madrid, Museo del Prado) is similarly unknown until 1766, when Queen Isabel Farnesio acquired it for the Spanish Royal Collection.²⁵⁴ Contemporary sources cite Rudolf's interest in and aggressive acquisition of paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.²⁵⁵ The fact that he

²⁵² Even though Van Mander's writing structure isolates these three works from the rest of the paintings he identifies in Rudolf II's collection, it is likely that these three paintings also belonged to the Emperor.

Between Van Mander's mention of the imperial collection and this additional sentence is the single sentence discussing Mr. Herman Pilgrims's *Peasant Wedding* in Amsterdam. After the sentence about the *Battle between Carnival and Lent*, *Triumph of Death*, and *Children's Games*, Van Mander mentions the Amsterdam collection of Mr. Willem Jacobsz. The placement of these sentences are a little strange, and suggest that they are possibly out of order. Ibid., v.1, 233v.

The fact that the three works in question are now in collections descended from Habsburg collections lends itself to this conclusion. Lhotsky seems to interpret Van Mander's testimony in this way, tracing the provenance of these three works to Rudolf's collection. Lhotsky, *Festschrift Des Kunsthistorisches Museums*, 36, 221.

²⁵³ Sylvia Ferino-Pagden, Wolfgang Prohaska, and Karl Schütz, *Die Gemäldegalerie Des Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien: Verzeichnis Der Gemälde*, ed. Martina Haja (Vienna: Christian Brandstätter, 1991), 36.

²⁵⁴ Museo del Prado, Madrid, "Bruegel 'The Elder', Pieter. The Triumph of Death. 1562-1563. Oil on Panel, 117 X 162 Cm.," accessed November 9, 2016, <https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-triumph-of-death/d3d82b0b-9bf2-4082-ab04-66ed53196ccc>.

²⁵⁵ Shortly after Van Mander published his account of the emperor's collection, sometime between 1607 and 1611, Daniel Fröschl, a court painter and curator of the imperial collection, compiled the inventory of Emperor Rudolf II's *kunstammer* at Hradčany Castle. Although he lists no paintings, the inventory does include works on paper, which the Emperor kept in large bound books in his study. Item number 2778 is, "*Vonn alten Brügel mit der feder gezeichnet auff ledige bletlein paper allerley schnagkeren, trogeren und selzame inventionen, in rott liderm copert*" roughly translated to "From Bruegel the Elder, drawn with a pen on a loose piece of paper, all sorts of comical nonsense, deceitful behavior, and rare inventions." Bauer and Haupt, *Das Kunstammerinventar Kaiser Rudolfs II., 1607-1611*, 137-39; Joaneath A. Spicer, "Referencing Invention and Novelty at the Court of Rudolf II," in *Novità: Neuheitskonzepte in Den Bildkünsten Um 1600* (Zürich: diaphanes, 2011), 413.

owned two versions of the *Tower of Babel* (1563, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Musuem) (fig. 45) indicates what a passionate collector of Bruegel's works he had come to be.²⁵⁶

Van Mander seemingly placed a higher importance on biblical scenes in Rudolf's collection than on "sorceries, hells, peasant scenes and other things."²⁵⁷ Of the eleven paintings he cites in the imperial collection, seven are biblical, two of which, the *Conversion of St. Paul* (fig. 41) and *The Carrying of the Cross*, Rudolf likely inherited from Ernst.²⁵⁸ The only paintings by Bruegel from Ernst's collection that Van Mander did not identify as being in Prague were the series of *The Months* (figs. 2-6) and *Peasant Wedding*.²⁵⁹ If the Emperor had acquired the entirety of his brother's collection, it is possible that Van Mander referenced them simply as "some other pieces," or "peasant scenes." Otherwise, it is not known where they were then located.

In the same chest that housed this volume of Bruegel the Elder drawings, Rudolf also stored bound volumes containing landscapes by "Brügl," likely corresponding to Jan Brueghel the Elder, as well as Pieter Stevens and Hans Bol (One entry includes works by "Brügel" and "H. Boln," possibly Hans Bol. The other work, listed immediately after the former, also has "Brugel," but with works by "H.B." These are found in a chest. In another page of the inventory are works by "Jungen Brügel." Bauer and Haupt, *Das Kunstkammerinventar Kaiser Rudolfs II., 1607-1611*, 137-39.

²⁵⁶ Duplicated works in a collection may not have been an infrequent occurrence. Jean Noirot owned two *Peasant Weddings*, which he likely purchased directly from Bruegel the Elder. Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 48.

²⁵⁷ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

However, Van Mander specifically cited peasant subjects for works found in other collections, particularly those with the Amsterdam merchants Herman Pilgrims and Willem Jacobsz, as well as *The Magpie on the Gallows* Bruegel left to his wife. Ibid., v.1, fol.233v-234r.

²⁵⁸ Even if Rudolf inherited the remainder of Ernst's collection, which leans heavily towards peasant subjects, Rudolf's personal acquisitions suggest a preference for biblical works. Rudolf demonstrated a distinct preference for mythological and erotic subjects from contemporary artists. Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 18-26.

²⁵⁹ Even without firm evidence, several scholars conclude that Ernst's collection was acquired wholesale by Rudolf. Lhotsky, *Festschrift Des Kunsthistorisches Museums*, 221; Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 23.

After Rudolf II's death in 1612, some of his renowned collection was parceled out to his heirs, including his brothers, Holy Roman Emperor Matthias and Archduke Albert. Emperor Matthias moved his capital and art collection to Vienna, and Archduke Albert quickly transported his inherited paintings to Brussels.²⁶⁰ However, Matthias and Albert did not inherit all of the imperial collection.²⁶¹ An inventory of the imperial collection made for Emperor Ferdinand II (1578-1637, ruled 1619-1637) in Prague in 1621 likely includes some of the works Rudolf II so energetically gathered during his reign, including six paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

Ferdinand II, a cousin of Rudolf, Ernst, Matthias, and Albert, emerged victorious in the power struggles for the imperial throne after the death of Emperor Matthias in 1619.²⁶² In November 1621, however, with his power power only recently solidified, Ferdinand II won Prague back with the Battle of the White Mountain.²⁶³ The imperial collection in Prague was inventoried shortly thereafter, on December 6, 1621.²⁶⁴ At the time the notaries drew up the inventory, Ferdinand II was in dire need of funds. He sold the land and titles of numerous estates he had taken from the

²⁶⁰ See page 18

²⁶¹ Kaufmann, "Archduke Albrecht," 18.

²⁶² His reign would be known for its efforts to unify Austria as a Catholic power. Edward Crankshaw, *The Habsburgs: Portrait of a Dynasty* (New York: Viking Press, 1971), 113. Protestant forces led by Frederick V (1596-1632), Elector Palatine, and Elisabeth Stuart (1596-1662), sister of King James I of England, plagued the Catholic emperor and briefly controlled Prague. Géza Pálffy and Alan Campbell, "Crisis in the Habsburg Monarchy and Hungary, 1619-1622: The Hungarian Estates and Gábor Bethlen," *The Hungarian Historical Review*, Bethlen: The Prince of Transylvania, 2 (2013): 733-35.

²⁶³ He had been crowned King of Bohemia in 1617, but his power was uncertain during the uprising. Crankshaw, *The Habsburgs*, 117.

²⁶⁴ Heinrich Zimmermann, "Das Inventar Der Prager Schatz- Und Kunstkammer Vom 6. Dezember 1621," *Jahrbuch Der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen Des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 25 (1905): xii-lxxv.

condemned Protestant noblemen who had led the uprising.²⁶⁵ The catalogue of his other holdings may have been taken to find additional sources of income.²⁶⁶ Full descriptions and attributions characterize the listings of the paintings, among which were six works by Bruegel the Elder.

One of the six paintings appears to correspond to a work in Rudolf II's collection. "Ein dorffblinderung vom alten Prügl," an *Attack on a Village* is likely the *Massacre of the Innocents* that Van Mander reported was being in that collection (now in the English Royal Collection) (fig. 12).²⁶⁷ This painting also appears in an inventory made in Prague in 1647-1648 as "Eine Dorff-blündrung," or *Village Plundering*.²⁶⁸ Works from that collection were taken by Queen Christina of Sweden in 1648 when Swedish troops attacked Prague, captured the Castle, and looted its art treasures. In 1660, King Charles II of England purchased in Breda "A Villadge w.th souldiery Landskip & c^a of Olde Brughell, of his best manner," one of eleven paintings said to "of the Galleries of the Emperor Ridolf that were taken at Prague & from Sweden brought hither by the Queene of whome F. [William Frizell] had

²⁶⁵ Crankshaw, *The Habsburgs*, 120.

²⁶⁶ The Emperor was supported in the cataloguing of his collection by his councilor, Karl I (1569-1627), first Prince of Liechtenstein and former courtier of both Rudolf II and Matthias in Prague. The Prince of Liechtenstein was an interesting choice for support; he profited enormously from the sale of Protestant estates and titles, purchasing twenty separate estates. Museo Poldi Pezzoli, *The Princes and the Arts: Paintings and Sculptures from the Liechtenstein Collections* (Milan: Skira Editore S.p.A., 2007), 16-17; Crankshaw, *The Habsburgs*, 120.

²⁶⁷ Recall that Matthias had a version transported to Vienna. However, that version was both broken into two pieces and still clearly identified as the biblical *Massacre of the Innocents*. The version in the Royal Collection is now believed to be the original by Bruegel the Elder. Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, 15.

²⁶⁸ B. Dudik, "Die Rudolphinische Kunst- Und Raritätenkammer in Prag," *Mittheilungen Der K. K. Central-Commission Zur Erforschung Und Erhaltung Der Baudenkmale* XII (1867): xxxviii.

them.”²⁶⁹ This work bears all traces of being a generic village plundering, as recorded in 1621 and 1647-1648. It is likely that Rudolf II ordered the work to be overpainted to obscure all traces of its biblical subject, particularly references to the Roman double-headed eagle traditionally associated with the House of Habsburg.²⁷⁰

The identification of one painting with Rudolf II’s famous collection lends credibility to the argument that Rudolf II had also acquired the other five paintings by Bruegel the Elder listed in the inventory of 1621. Among the Bruegel works that Karel van Mander mentions in Rudolf’s collection were “sorceries, hells, peasant scenes and other things... and innumerable allegories.”²⁷¹ The subjects of the six paintings by Bruegel the Elder in the imperial collection listed in the 1621 inventory could feasibly be among those mentioned by Van Mander. The inventory lists two other peasant paintings, “Ein schaffhirt vom Peter Prugeln alten ” (*A Shepherd*) and “Ein hirt mit waßerfarben vom alten Prügl” (*A Shepherd in watercolor*).²⁷² The *Land of Cockaigne* (1567, Munich, Alte Pinakothek) (fig. 46), listed as “Drei schlaffende bauern im schalraffenland von dem alten Peter Prügel” was an old satirical subject of

²⁶⁹ Cited in Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, 14. After abdicating the throne in 1654, Queen Christina stayed in Brussels for nine months on her way to Italy. She sold many of her paintings during this time. Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 49, 56, n.28.

²⁷⁰ Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, 13–14; David Kunzle, *From Criminal to Courtier: The Soldier in Netherlandish Art 1550-1672* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2002), 35–62, 103–12; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 234; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 280.

²⁷¹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

²⁷² Zimmermann, “Das Inventar,” XXXVIII, 830; XLIV, 1130. Two compositions linked with a lost composition by Bruegel the Elder are *The Good Shepherd* and *The Bad Shepherd*, known through copies by Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.1, 142-150, 209-211.

the mythical land of plenty and includes proverbial references.²⁷³ Two other paintings could be described as histories: a biblical scene, “Der ritter sanct Georg vom alten Prügl” (*The Knight St. George*); and a mythological scene, “Eine historia vom Dedalo und Icaro vom Alten Prugl” (*The Fall of Icarus*).²⁷⁴

The 1621 inventory of the imperial collection in Prague confirms the preference for biblical paintings revealed in Karel van Mander’s description of Rudolf II’s collection of paintings by Bruegel the Elder. This later inventory, however, also documents the “sorceries, hells, peasant scenes and other things” Van Mander did not fully list.²⁷⁵ Missing from all documentation of Rudolf II’s collection are the “innumerable allegories” mentioned by Van Mander and extant in Bruegel the Elder’s oeuvre.

Holy Roman Emperor Matthias (1557-1619)

While firm documentation of Rudolf II’s painting collection is lacking, two inventories taken during the reign of his successor and brother Matthias (ruled 1612-1619) list works Matthias inherited from Rudolf II and reveal his own collecting practices. Matthias, the second eldest Habsburg brother, accomplished little once in

²⁷³ Zimmermann, “Das Inventar,” XL, n.911; Mirjam Neumeister, ed., *Alte Pinakothek: Flämische Malerei*, Herausgegeben von Den Bayerischen Staatsgemäldesammlungen, München (Munich: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 84.

Bruegel the Elder was likely inspired by a print of this subject by a print by Pieter Balten from 1650. While the inscriptions on the prints generally condemned sloth and extravagance, Bruegel’s version of the subject is not explicitly moralizing. Ross. H. Frank, “An Interpretation of Land of Cockaigne (1567) by Pieter Bruegel the Elder,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1991): 299–329; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 242–43.

²⁷⁴ “Das Inventar,” XLIX, 1363; XLI, n.957.

The famous version of this subject in Brussels (Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België/ Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels) is no longer believed to be by Bruegel the Elder, but is more likely a copy from around 1600. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 271.

²⁷⁵ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

power.²⁷⁶ The States-General of the Netherlands had invited him to be Governor of the Netherlands in Brussels in 1578, where he participated in the Union of Utrecht, but the appointment did not carry with it the approval of Philip II, sovereign of the Netherlands, and Matthias had retreated to Austria in disgrace.²⁷⁷ Until his appointment by Rudolf II as Governor of Austria in 1593, Matthias travelled frequently, though he based his courts in Linz and Vienna. He had at his court a number of artists, including Lucas van Valckenborch, whom he likely met during his tenure in Brussels.²⁷⁸ As Governor of Austria, Matthias took command in the war against the Turks. His military strength was his source of power, and he eventually acquired all of Rudolf II's titles through military force and political maneuverings. Matthias became Holy Roman Emperor after Rudolf II's death in 1612, and reigned until his death in 1619. He moved the imperial capital back to Vienna, though in the process he dispersed much of Rudolf II's art collection and replaced some of Rudolf II's court artists with new painters and sculptors.²⁷⁹

The two inventories from Matthias's reign give insight both into the types of works Rudolf II collected as well as the pieces that Matthias prized.²⁸⁰ A small

²⁷⁶ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 190, 197; Curtis, *The Habsburgs*, 112–13.

²⁷⁷ Bérenger, *A History of the Habsburg Empire*, 223.

²⁷⁸ Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 14–15; Assmann and Oberösterreichischen Landesmuseen, *Der Kaisers Kulturhauptstadt*, 123.

²⁷⁹ The new painters employed by Matthias include Hans Henseiller, Hans van Peltt, and Erasmus de Pere. Many existing court painters left Matthias's court due to low pay. Other artists made their way to Archduke Albert's court in Brussels. Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 100–101.

²⁸⁰ Both inventories include works that came from Rudolf's collection in Prague. Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, 17.

The works listed in the 1621 imperial inventory in Prague were likely officially the property of Emperor Matthias during his reign, though he did not choose to move them to Vienna. Most of the paintings mentioned by Karel van Mander are notably absent from this inventory. Only the *Massacre*

inventory taken in Vienna between 1612 and 1619 likely represents a portion of the collection Matthias moved to Vienna after his accession to the throne.²⁸¹ Numbering only eighty-four entries out of the thousands of paintings believed to have been in Rudolf II's collection, the inventory only includes the paintings and works in the Neue Berg in Vienna, and not other imperial holdings. After Matthias's death in 1619, a second inventory recorded a more complete account of his art collection.²⁸² This inventory is significantly more substantial, with 334 paintings, but does not indicate whether Matthias acquired any new paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.²⁸³

An apparently damaged version of *The Massacre of the Innocents* appears in the 1612-1619 inventory as "ein gross zerbrochen stuckh, die unschuldigen khindlin... vom Altenbriegl."²⁸⁴ Matthias's posthumous inventory is more explicit about the painting's condition, describing it as "in zwei stuck von einander broche," or "broken in two pieces."²⁸⁵ Karel van Mander had mentioned a painting of this subject in Rudolf II's collection, but that painting likely remained in Prague, where it

of the Innocents, re-identified as a *Village being Plundered*, correlates. Additional paintings by Bruegel the Elder suggest that Ferdinand or someone else added them to the collection. In total, six paintings are attributed to Bruegel the Elder. Zimmermann, "Das Inventar," XXXVIII–XLIX.

²⁸¹ Scholars date the inventory between 1610 and 1612, but it is more likely to have been compiled after Matthias's ascension to the imperial throne in 1612. Furthermore, as is outlined in this dissertation, Matthias's collection included works that were likely inherited from Rudolf II after his death in 1612. Köhler, "Der Wiener Kunstkammer," Document G. 19446, VI–VIII.

²⁸² Ibid., Document 19448, VIII–XIII.

²⁸³ The notaries who recorded the inventories were careful to ascribe distinct authorship to "Altenbriegl" and "Prugl," the latter likely referring to Jan Brueghel the Elder, based both on the terminology used in the inventory and the subject matter of the paintings. For example, "Ein landschaft," and "vom plaembwech [bloembwerk?]," both of which were likely subjects by Jan Breughel. Ibid., VII, nos. 30, 48.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., VII, no.27.

²⁸⁵ "Ein unschuldige kindl ermordung, in zwei stuck von einander broche, vom alten Brigel." Ibid., X, no.91; Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, 14–17.

was inventoried in 1621.²⁸⁶ Now in the British Royal Collection and unbroken, it bears the hand of Pieter Bruegel the Elder.²⁸⁷ A version in Vienna attributed to Pieter Brueghel the Younger (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) is also not likely the painting in Matthias's inventories since it does not exhibit evidence that it was ever damaged.²⁸⁸

A painting of peasant festivities appears in both Vienna inventories. In 1612-1619, "Ein paurenmusica... vom Altenbriegl," describes a peasant wedding, dance, or kermis.²⁸⁹ A "bauernmusica" also appears in the inventory after 1619.²⁹⁰ Although scholars identify this work as *Peasant Dance* (c.1568. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 10), the work could also represent a peasant wedding, like the one owned by Archduke Ernst, which reappears in the inventory of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in 1659.²⁹¹

Two additional paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder are noted in the 1612-1619 inventory of paintings in the Neue Berg. The first was catalogued with a

²⁸⁶ Van Mander referenced Bruegel the Elder's *Massacre of the Innocents* two times. Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 41; Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

²⁸⁷ Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, 19; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 234.

²⁸⁸ However, Ertz lists the provenance of this work back to the 1610-1619 inventory of Matthias's collection in Vienna. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, 353, n. E298; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 234.

²⁸⁹ Köhler, "Der Wiener Kunstkammer," VII, no.28.

²⁹⁰ "Ein bauernmusica auf holz vom alten Brigel." Ibid., X, no.76.

²⁹¹ Friedrich Polleroß, "'Kayserliche Schatz- Und Kunstkammer.' Die Habsburgischen Sammlungen Und Ihre Öffentlichkeit Im 17. Jahrhundert," in *Das Haus Habsburg Und Die Welt Der Fürstlichen Kunstkammern Im 16. Und 17. Jahrhundert*, Schriften Des Kunsthistorischen Museums 15 (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2015), 263.

The Kunsthistorisches Museum identifies their *Peasant Dance* with the entry from 1610-1619, though does not trace its provenance through the 1619 inventory. Ferino-Pagden, Prohaska, and Schütz, *Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien*, 37.

collection of twenty-one pieces of “allerhand stuck,” or “all kinds of pieces,” by such diverse artists as Jan Brueghel the Elder, Pieter Aertsen, and Joachim Wtewael.²⁹² This work likely corresponds with “Ein schene landschaft vom alten Brigel” in the 1619 inventory.²⁹³ The second painting by “Altenbriegl” [Pieter Bruegel the Elder] in the 1612-1619 inventory appears among twenty-three paintings of Christian subjects, “christliche stuckh,” by diverse artists including Pieter Stevens, Roelandt Savery, anonymous painters of Greek altarpieces, and unknown masters.²⁹⁴ Several biblical paintings by Bruegel the Elder in the collection of Rudolf II, such as *Conversion of St. Paul* or *The Tower of Babel*, could correspond with this painting in the Matthias’s collection.²⁹⁵

Matthias’s posthumous 1619 inventory identifies a Bruegel painting of a woman and child as “Ein frauenconterfeth mit einem kindl vom alten Brigel.”²⁹⁶ The nature of this painting is uncertain, though is likely a representation of the Virgin

²⁹² In this grouping, seven paintings “vom Prügl” are distinct from the one “vom Altenbriegl,” establishing the different articulation of authorship between father and son(s). Köhler, “Der Wiener Kunstkammer,” VI, no.8.

An additional landscape, “vom Prügl” is likely a work by Jan Brueghel the Elder or possibly Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Ibid., VII, n.30.

The notary for this particular inventory was consistent to clarify authorship between Pieter Bruegel the Elder and his sons by specifying “Altenbriegl” or other distinctions.

²⁹³ Köhler, “Der Wiener Kunstkammer,” X, no.80.

Two landscapes bear the vague attributions to “Brigel” and “Prigel.” The former, “Ein niederlandsche kircwei sambt einer landschaft,” may be a kermis scene. Ibid., IX, no.52.

Based on their subjects and copper supports, several additional works by “Brigel” were the work of Jan Brueghel the Elder. Ibid., IX, nos. 7, 8, 19.

A kermis scene, “Ein stuckh vom Hieremias Günther nach dem Prügl, ein cope der niederländischen paurenkirchweih,” appears in the 1610-1619 inventory. Ibid., VII, no.74.

²⁹⁴ Köhler, “Der Wiener Kunstkammer,” VI, no.9.

²⁹⁵ *Christ Carrying the Cross* appears in an inventory from 1637 taken in Prague, which casts doubt upon its location in Vienna in the 1610s. Ferino-Pagden, Prohaska, and Schütz, *Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien*, 15, 36.

²⁹⁶ Köhler, “Der Wiener Kunstkammer,” X, no.86.

Mary and Christ Child. As a Christian subject, this work could be the work described as the “christiliche stuckh,” in the earlier inventory. However, no copies of such a composition are known.²⁹⁷ It is unlikely that the inventory notary would have identified the *Adoration of the Magi* (1564, National Gallery, London) (fig. 47) in such a manner, although the National Gallery, London posits that its painting of the subject is the one listed in Matthias’s inventory.²⁹⁸

Matthias’s collection of paintings by Bruegel the Elder conforms to characteristics of his brother Rudolf II’s excellent collection, likely because of inheritance.²⁹⁹ The two inventories that catalogue Matthias’s Vienna painting collection each list four paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Correlations seem likely between the references to the *Massacre of the Innocents* and “bauernmusica.” It is also possible that the unidentified work in the 1612-1919 inventory is the landscape listed in the 1619 inventory. It is uncertain whether the biblical subject from the 1612-1619 inventory is the painting described as a woman and child in the later inventory. The character of the subjects in Matthias’s collection corresponds with the emphasis on biblical landscapes and peasant scenes found in the documented collections of Matthias’s brothers.

²⁹⁷ The closest subject to a Madonna and Child by Bruegel the Elder is *The Adoration of the Magi* (1564, National Gallery, London), though this does not correspond with the inventory description.

²⁹⁸ Christopher Baker and Tom Henry, *The National Gallery: Complete Illustrated Catalogue* (London: National Gallery Company and Yale University Press, 2001), 77.

²⁹⁹ Matthias was said to have been competitive with Rudolf II. Allart, “Ernest d’Autriche,” 253.

Archduke Albert of Austria, Governor General of the Spanish Netherlands (1559-1621)

Rudolf II's extensive collection was partially portioned out to his brothers after his death. While the extent of Matthias's inheritance from Rudolf is uncertain, Archduke Albert's share of his eldest brother's extensive collection is well documented. On September 6, 1615, Archduke Albert's agents, the painters Jeremias Gunther and Hansz von Peltt, inventoried the paintings from Rudolf II's collection that the Archduke inherited.³⁰⁰ The collection of 115 paintings transferred to Brussels includes mannerist, erotic, and mythological subjects, as well as genre and market scenes. The inheritance, with its focus on contemporary works, reflects Albert's collecting taste.³⁰¹ Nevertheless, the list suggests that Albert's agents did not receive the prime works from Rudolf II's collection. Few paintings carry definitive attributions, and many are copies after famous artists.³⁰²

Archdukes Albert and Isabella, co-regents of the Netherlands from 1598-1621, were renowned patrons of the arts. Albert, the youngest Habsburg male to survive adolescence, was raised in the Spanish court with his brothers. But the Spanish court, and Philip II in particular, seem to have had greater influence over him

³⁰⁰ Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 316–19.

³⁰¹ Albert played a considerable role in choosing the pieces he inherited. A year after Albert's initial inheritance from Rudolf was inventoried, his agents in Prague noted that he continued to inquire about acquiring more objects. Lhotsky, *Festschrift Des Kunsthistorisches Museums*, 235; Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 53–54, n.6; Kaufmann, "Archduke Albrecht," 18.

³⁰² Albert's agents in Prague note that some of the items he obtained were quite good, though they did remark that the Archduke could not choose the most famous works from Rudolf's collection, for fear of offending Matthias, the new emperor. Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 53, n.6; Kaufmann, "Archduke Albrecht," 19.

than it did over the others.³⁰³ Until his marriage to Isabella in 1596, Albert lived in Spain, overseeing his diocese in Toledo and supporting Philip's throne in Madrid.³⁰⁴ His suitability to marry Isabella only presented itself after Ernst and Rudolf were no longer candidates, the former due to his untimely death and the latter due to indecision.³⁰⁵ In 1596, Albert renounced his ecclesiastic vows to exchange matrimonial vows with Isabella.³⁰⁶ Her dowry included governance of the Netherlands controlled by Spain, which had been ruled by Spanish military might since Ernst's death in 1595.³⁰⁷ Albert and Isabella's triumphal entry as co-regents of the Netherlands in 1599 was celebrated by the people, much as Ernst's entry in Antwerp in 1594 had been similarly hailed as a portent of better times to come.³⁰⁸

A complete inventory of the archducal art collection does not survive from Albert's lifetime, and the scant documentation that does exist does not give a

³⁰³ Luc Duerloo, "Marriage, Power and Politics: The Infanta and Archduke Albert," in *Isabel Clara Eugenia: Female Sovereignty in the Courts of Madrid and Brussels*, by Cordula van Wyhe (London: Paul Holberton, 2011), 161–65.

³⁰⁴ Bérenger, *A History of the Habsburg Empire*, 223–24; Duerloo, "Marriage, Power and Politics," 161–65.

³⁰⁵ Philip was negotiating a marriage between Isabella and Ernst when the Archduke died in February 1595. Philip refused to consider Matthias as a possible match for Isabella due to the latter's disastrous and unsanctioned attempt at the governorship of the Netherlands in 1578. Duerloo, "Marriage, Power and Politics," 161.

³⁰⁶ He actually exchanged vows with a proxy in Italy. *Ibid.*, 176.

³⁰⁷ Pedro Henriquez de Acevedo, Count of Fuentes, who had served under both the Duke of Alva and Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, briefly governed the Spanish Netherlands between Ernst and Albert. *Ibid.*, 170–71.

³⁰⁸ Johannes Bochijs, *The Ceremonial Entry of Ernst, Archduke of Austria in Antwerp, June 14, 1594* (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1970); Margit Thøfner, "The Ideal of Sovereignty in the Joyous Entries of the Archduke Albert and the Infanta Isabella," in *Albert & Isabella, 1598-1621*, ed. Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 55–66.

It should be noted that Albert and Isabella entered as sovereigns, whereas Ernst entered as a governor reporting to Spain. Even though Albert and Isabella ruled as co-regents, it is likely the people saw Albert's rule as a continuity of Habsburg rule from Ernst's reign.

comprehensive picture of the Archdukes' holdings.³⁰⁹ However, a posthumous inventory of a portion of Isabella's collection includes two paintings by Bruegel the Elder, *Sermon of John the Baptist* and a *Peasant Kermis*.³¹⁰ In addition, she owned a *Peasant Wedding* "after Bruegel."³¹¹ It is unclear when she acquired the paintings, and if they were gathered during her co-regency with Albert. The subject matter, however, is consistent with the Habsburg's emphasis on biblical and peasant paintings by Bruegel the Elder.

Albert and Isabella were renowned for their patronage of local artists like Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder. Jan Brueghel the Elder's emulation of his father's art for the Archdukes is analyzed further in chapter two.

Archduke Leopold Wilhelm (1614-1662)

Documentation of the art holdings for Emperor Matthias's successors, Ferdinand II (1578-1637, ruled 1619-1637) and Ferdinand III (1608-1657, ruled 1637-1657) is lacking. In 1635, Emperor Ferdinand II established primogeniture for the imperial art collections, ensuring the paintings would succeed with the imperial throne and remain the "inalienable property of the ruling house." Thus, descriptions of the holdings of Emperor Leopold I (1640-1705, ruled 1658-1705) could both

³⁰⁹ For example, a list of the works Albert inherited from Rudolf II in 1615 survives, but is such a minor portion of the Archdukes' acquisitions during their reign and does not reflect their aesthetic preferences. Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 316–19.

³¹⁰ "Een predicatie van St Jan, van den Ouden Breughel. Hooch 4 7/11, breet 7 2/11." "Een boerenkermis, van Brueghel. Hooch 2, breet 2 9/11." Ibid., 423, nn.117, 121.

³¹¹ "Een boerenbruloft, naer Bruegel, hooch 6, breet 10 8/11" Ibid., 422, no.110.

reflect the character of the collections of his predecessors, Ferdinand II and Ferdinand III as well as reveal Leopold I's own collecting interests.³¹²

Emperor Ferdinand II's youngest son, Archduke Leopold Wilhelm owned the best-documented collection of any Austrian Habsburg.³¹³ As Governor General of the Netherlands from 1647-1656, Leopold Wilhelm developed his love of art and gathered a collection that was one of the best of his time.³¹⁴ It might even be claimed that he attempted to rebuild the imperial collection of Rudolf II and Ferdinand II in Prague that had been raided by the Swedes in 1648.³¹⁵ His collection was gathered rapidly, but was of the highest quality.

³¹² The imperial jewels were attached to the primogeniture in 1621. Manfred Leithe-Jasper and Rudolf Distelberger, *The Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna: The Imperial and Ecclesiastical Treasury*, vol. 1 (London, Munich: Scala Books, C.H. Beck, 1998), 7. See also Polleroß, "Kaiserliche Schatz- Und Kammer," 263–95.

³¹³ Leopold Wilhelm's older brother was Emperor Ferdinand III (ruled 1637-1657), who was primarily known for his cultivation of music. Steven Saunders, "The Emperor as Artist: New Discoveries Concerning Ferdinand III's Musical Compositions," *Studien Zur Musikwissenschaft* 45 (1996): 7–8. An inventory of Ferdinand III's art holdings does not survive.

³¹⁴ He also had a passion for alchemy, and created a center for alchemistic inquiry in Brussels during his reign. Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 589. Leopold Wilhelm brought military experience to the Spanish conflict with France. Ibid., 739–40; Jonathan Brown, *Kings & Connoisseurs: Collecting Art in Seventeenth-Century Europe*, vol. 43, The A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Bollingen Series, XXXV (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 147. The Treaty of Münster, ending hostilities between Spain and the United Provinces, was signed and ratified in 1648, after three years of negotiations. At the ratification ceremony in Münster on May 15, 1648, the Spanish delegation was represented by Don Caspar de Bracamonte y Guzman, Count of Peñaranda and delegate for King Philip IV, and the Flemish diplomat Antoine Brun. Records do not indicate that Archduke Leopold Wilhelm participated in the negotiations. Alison McNeil Kettering, *Gerard Ter Borch and the Treaty of Münster* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers and Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1998), 11–13; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 596–98. Leopold Wilhelm did commission two paintings, *Peasant Wedding* and *Peasants being Robbed by Soldiers* (1648, Madrid, Museo del Prado) from David Teniers the Younger to commemorate the signing of the Treaty of Münster. Vlieghe, 32–33.

³¹⁵ Leopold Wilhelm sent many of the pictures he acquired from the Buckingham collection to Prague in 1651, to replace those that were taken by Swedish soldiers. They are notably absent from many of the gallery paintings by David Teniers the Younger for this reason. Brown, *Kings & Connoisseurs*, 43:160–61, 180.

Leopold Wilhelm's collecting goals were immense. He joined the Guild of St. Luke's in Brussels as a *liefhebber der schilderyen*, an art lover.³¹⁶ In 1647, he informed his brother, Emperor Ferdinand III of his goal to purchase two paintings from every major Flemish painter, so that each brother would have an encyclopedic collection of works.³¹⁷ Leopold Wilhelm rapidly built his collection, acquiring wholesale the collections of exiled English dukes who had supported the deposed Charles I of England (1600-1649). In 1650, he purchased the entire collection of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.³¹⁸ Around the same time, Leopold Wilhelm acquired all of the pictures formerly owned by James, Duke of Hamilton, who was executed shortly after his monarch.³¹⁹ Leopold Wilhelm also fostered the arts in his court with vibrant patronage.

By 1656, when Leopold Wilhelm left Brussels for Vienna, his collection was renowned.³²⁰ His focus was on Italian paintings from the High and Late Renaissance, particularly from the Venetian masters; canonical Netherlandish painters like Jan van Eyck, Albrecht Dürer, Quentin Massys, and Lucas Cranach; sixteenth-century Flemish paintings, particularly by Joris Hoefnagel; and contemporary Flemish and

³¹⁶ Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp*, 51–52.

³¹⁷ Vlieghe, *David Teniers the Younger*, 31.

³¹⁸ Through a series of complicated transactions, in part due to the fact that many of the paintings were pawned to support the Duke and his family in exile, Leopold Wilhelm purchased the lot for 60,000 or 70,000 florins. Brown, *Kings & Connoisseurs*, 43:59–60, 160–61.

³¹⁹ These paintings, too, had been sent to Holland, and likely served to support the exiled family. *Ibid.*, 43:60, 161.

³²⁰ Leopold Wilhelm was assigned to Brussels to provide military leadership against the French. While he won some early battles, lack of funds from Spain resulted in many defeats. His role seemed to have been primarily military, as he was not involved in the negotiations of the 1648 Treaty of Munster. *Ibid.*, 43:147.

Dutch paintings.³²¹ He had particular regard for history paintings by Rubens and his circle.³²²

When Leopold Wilhelm moved to Vienna, he left some of his collection in Brussels for his court painter, David Teniers the Younger to copy for the *Theatrum Pictorum*, a publication of engraved copies of works from the archducal collection.³²³ Teniers served as Leopold Wilhelm's "pintor de camara," both court painter and collection curator, and helped promote the fame of his master's collection, particularly the Italian paintings.³²⁴ He made numerous gallery paintings of Leopold Wilhelm's collection, including *Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in his Gallery* (1647-1651, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 48), which the Archduke gifted to other monarchs and prominent individuals throughout Europe.³²⁵

³²¹ Italian examples include Titian, Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, and Correggio. Of contemporary northern artists, he owned works by Teniers, Mostaert, Frans Floris, Adriaen van Ostade, Jan Lievens, and Anthony van Dyck. Berger, "Inventar Des Ertzherzogs Leopold Wilhelm"; Brown, *Kings & Connoisseurs*, 43:62.

³²² Vlieghe, *David Teniers the Younger*, 31.

³²³ Teniers independently funded and completed this initiative, though Leopold Wilhelm assisted by leaving paintings in Brussels for the painter to copy. Brown, *Kings & Connoisseurs*, 43:171, 180–83. See also The British Museum, "'Theatrum Pictorium,'" accessed September 29, 2016, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=3105878&partId=1&searchText=heart&page=13&sortBy=imageName.

³²⁴ Teniers was appointed "pintor de cámara" in 1650, an appointment that ended when Leopold Wilhelm moved to Vienna in 1656. He then became "ayuda da camera" (chamberlain) for Leopold Wilhem's successor, Juan José of Austria, illegitimate son of King Philip IV. Brown, *Kings & Connoisseurs*, 43:171; Vlieghe, *David Teniers the Younger*, 34, 50–53.

³²⁵ Prior to 1653, Philip IV of Spain was gifted a gallery painting (now in the Prado) of his cousin Leopold Wilhelm's collection. Leopold Wilhelm commissioned about a dozen paintings of his collections from David Teniers to send to aristocrats throughout Europe. An emphasis on Italian paintings, particularly the works of Titian, who was favored by the Spanish Habsburgs. The Archduke did not retain any of these works. He did, however, own two gallery paintings of imaginary collections. Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp*, 62; Brown, *Kings & Connoisseurs*, 43:173–80.

In 1659, Leopold Wilhelm had both his Vienna and his Brussels collections inventoried. The Brussels inventory, taken in January, includes 232 works, ordered by their location within the palace.³²⁶ Leopold Wilhelm moved most of his prized Italian paintings to Vienna, though he left many exceptional paintings in Brussels. Listed among the many Habsburg portraits were some collaborative works by Jan Brueghel the Elder and a copy by Pieter Baltens after a winter scene with hunters and dogs by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.³²⁷ The description of this copy is reminiscent of Bruegel the Elder's *Hunters in the Snow* (fig. 2), one of the series of the *Months* that had been owned by Archduke Ernst in 1594-1595.³²⁸

The majority of the Archduke's paintings appear in the inventory July 1659 inventory made in Vienna, which lists "Fünff grosse Stuckh einer Grossen, warin die Seithen desz Jahrs... Original vom alten Brögel," (*Five Large Pieces of the Seasons of the Year*).³²⁹ These works are Bruegel the Elder's series of the *Months* that Archduke Ernst acquired in 1594 (figs. 2-6). Where Leopold Wilhelm acquired them

³²⁶ Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 436–48.

³²⁷ "Un invierno pintado in medera, por Pedro Baltens, es copia de Brugel, alto de quarto pies y medio y largo de cinco pies y medio, en que ay un cassador con perros." Ibid., 441, n.108. Conspicuously absent are paintings by David Teniers the Younger.

³²⁸ The inventory also includes a series of the *Months* in four parts by an unnamed artist, which hung in the same room as the Baltens copy of Bruegel, the *aposenito del despacho*. Ibid., 441.

³²⁹ The inventory consists of 517 Italian and 880 northern paintings. Bruegel the Elder's *Months* correspond with entries 582, 583, 584, and 585, on page CXLIII. Berger, "Inventar Des Ertzherzogs Leopold Wilhelm," LXXIX–CLXXVII. Between 1595 and 1659 one of the paintings, associated with the months of April and May, and likely included "leading sheep to pasture, milking cows in the fields, and ploughing and sowing," was lost. Buchanan, "The Collection of Nicolaes Jongelincq," 546.

is not known, but it is likely that they had remained in Habsburg collections after Ernst's death.³³⁰

Leopold Wilhelm owned several other paintings by Bruegel the Elder, including a large *Tower of Babel* and a *Massacre of the Innocents*.³³¹ The former painting could correspond with the large *Tower of Babel* Karel van Mander identified in Rudolf II's collection (1563, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 45). The *Massacre of the Innocents*, however, is more difficult to link with the one owned by Rudolf II, which remained in Prague until it was taken by the Swedes in 1648. Matthias had owned a *Massacre of the Innocents* in Vienna, though this was severely damaged. Leopold Wilhelm's version is listed with details of its size and condition, and does not mention any breakage. Leopold Wilhelm also owned a small nocturnal scene with a bagpiper in a landscape by Bruegel,³³² and a winter landscape copied after Bruegel.³³³

³³⁰ If the series had remained in Brussels after Archduke Ernst's death in 1595, it would have been inherited by his successor, Archduke Albert, for whom no inventories remain. Few inventories list the works of his co-regent, Archduchess Isabella. After Archduke Albert's death in 1621, the governance of the Spanish Netherlands reverted to Spain, first under Archduchess Isabella's regency until her death in 1633. From 1633 to 1647, Spaniards and Portuguese governor generals ruled from Brussels. It is possible the paintings remained in the archducal palace in Brussels until Leopold Wilhelm arrived in 1647, and he chose to take these works with him back to Vienna in 1656. For a list of the governor-generals of the Spanish Netherlands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 740–41.

Another possibility is that the paintings were acquired by Emperor Rudolf II after Archduke Ernst's death. A *Tower of Babel* from Leopold Wilhelm's collection may correspond with the one owned by Rudolf II, lending credibility to the possibility that Leopold Wilhelm acquired works from the imperial collection.

³³¹ "Ein Stückhel von Öhlfarb auf Holcz, warin das Martyrium der vndschuldigen Khinder. In einer Schwartz glatten Ramen, das innere Leistel verguldt, hoch 2 Spann 6 Finger vnddt braidt 3 Spann 7 Finger. Original vom alten Brögel." Berger, "Inventar Des Ertzherzogs Leopold Wilhelm," CL, n.740.

³³² "Ein kleines Nachtstückhel von Öhlfarb auff Holcz, warin ein Sackhpfeiffer in einer Landtschafft, mit einem grawen Rockh vnndt schwartzer Kappen, vmb den Leib ein schwartze Gürttel vnndt in beedten Händten ein Pixen. In einer schwarcz glatten Ramen, das innere Leistel verguldt, 1 Span 2 Finger hoch vnddt 1 Spann 3 Finger braidt.

Leopold Wilhelm's highly detailed Vienna inventory includes descriptions and dimensions of the paintings. This level of detail differs from earlier inventories, in which identifiable features are lacking. Even with the great detail in this inventory, several works are vaguely identified as by Bruegel, as opposed to the others that are clearly described as by "alten Brögel." Jan Brueghel's authorship is only explicitly mentioned in two instances.³³⁴ Three collaborative paintings likely include Jan Brueghel's contributions. Four works are attributed to "jungen Breugel," or variants of it, and seven works simply list "Brogel" as the artist. For some of these, descriptions of a copper support or depict a mythological subject suggest that Jan Brueghel was the artist. But for other works, such as a *Peasant Wedding*, which is simply attributed to "Brögel," authorship is unclear.³³⁵

In Leopold Wilhelms's vast collection, the paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder were relatively few. The two biblical scenes, the *Tower of Babel* and *Massacre of the Innocents*, correspond in subject matter to the imperial collections of Emperors Rudolf II and Matthias. The series of the *Months* may have come from Albert's

Von dem alten Brögel Original." Ibid., CXLIII, n.577.

³³³ "Ein Stuckh von Öhlfarb auf Holcz, ein Winterlandtschafft, warauf viel Persohn auff Eyszschuech lauffen vnndt ein Vogl thethän (!)
In einer schwartzen Ramen, das innere Leistel verguldt, hoch 2 Spann 2 Finger vnndt 3 Spann 1 Finger bräidt.

Copey von dem von Breugel." Ibid., CXVIII, n.67.

The description of this work is slightly reminiscent of the Baltens copy of a Bruegel landscape mentioned earlier.

³³⁴ An additional reference to "Hansz Brögel" likely also refers to Jan Brueghel the Elder. Ibid., CXXVIII.

³³⁵ "Ein grosses Stuckh von Ohlfarb auf Holcz, warin ein Baurenhochzeit, darbey ein Franciscanermünch neben den Richter siczt..In einer zier vergulden Ramen, 6 Spann 6 Finger hoch vnndt 8 Span 7 Finger braidt.
Original von Brögel." Ibid., CXLIII–CXLIV, n.591.

collection. The other paintings – the bagpiper in a landscape, two copies after a winter landscape by Bruegel the Elder, and the *Peasant Wedding* of questionable attribution – are peasant scenes. These subjects were the type that influenced seventeenth-century genre painters like David Teniers the Elder.

The Habsburg Influence

Karel van Mander's description of Bruegel paintings in Emperor Rudolf II's collection features biblical stories set into naturalistic landscapes and peasant scenes with amusing details. Duplication of subject matter did not seem to have been a concern for Rudolf II. The Habsburgs so loved Bruegel's work that they often owned two versions of the same subject, for example, the *Tower of Babel* and the *Massacre of the Innocents*. Replication by a follower or copyist was also not a concern, as they also owned paintings of the same subject by both Bruegel the Elder and one of his followers. Archduke Ernst, for example, owned two versions of *Christ Carrying the Cross*, one by Bruegel the Elder and one in his manner. Similarly, Archduke Leopold Wilhelm had in his possession a winter scene with hunters and dogs by Bruegel the Elder, and another after Bruegel by Pieter Baltens.

By 1620, Pieter Bruegel the Elder was firmly included in the canon of important sixteenth-century painters respectable Antwerp collectors should own.³³⁶ However, the number of paintings in the collections of Austrian Habsburgs significantly reduced the availability of paintings by the master to other collectors. All of the significant Austrian Habsburgs owned paintings by Bruegel, and they seem

³³⁶ Honig, "The Beholder as Work of Art," 267.

to have added more of his works to their collections at every opportunity.³³⁷

Encumbered by dwindling supply, Antwerp merchants and other collectors who wished to acquire a painting by Bruegel often substituted the original with works by Bruegelians. In this environment, copies, emulations, and forgeries of various quality found a ready market.³³⁸ The vogue for paintings by Bruegel and his followers encouraged the production of Bruegelian paintings well into the seventeenth century.

³³⁷ Even Albert and Isabella, whose collection reveals a preference for contemporary works, emphatically acquired Bruegelian pieces, like those commissioned from Jan Brueghel the Elder.

³³⁸ Records suggest that Bruegelian works were popular on both sides of the newly-established border between the Northern and Southern Netherlands. Antwerp dealers frequently crossed into the United Provinces to sell Flemish paintings. Honig, *Painting & the Market*, 110. The popularity of Flemish paintings in Dutch cities in the first decades of the seventeenth century prompted local artists to respond against the invading competition. Complaining to the city council, the Amsterdam painters' guild argued that the public auction of these works was deceiving local collectors, who were purchasing "rubbish and inferior apprentices' works" and "poor copies." Leiden painters identified the sellers as from "Brabant and surrounding places" in a complaint from October 1609. In 1613, the Amsterdam painters again complained about the competition of foreign works; they claimed the works at auction were "often... copies instead of originals," "and other worthless rubbish." Even more insulting to native artists, these so-called low-quality works sold for high prices. Sluijter argues that, while not necessarily lower quality than works painted by local artists, the paintings from Antwerp and environs were "made according to different production methods, for example by means of a less time-consuming and labor-intensive technique," and thus at times were cheaper. And, while prices for different subjects varied greatly, "inexpensive landscapes, still lifes, and peasant scenes... could have been originals (*principalen*) produced in a fast technique... [and] fetched between ten and twenty guilders." However, the locals deemed that even those cheaper prices were too high considering the value they ascribed to works painted in that different manner. Sluijter, "On Brabant Rubbish"; See also Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 187–88. Contemporary documents praised artists working in this new, rapid technique, and celebrated the necessary technical innovation. Several Bruegelians emerge as practitioners of rapid production. Karel van Mander praised Pieter Balten, "a very good landscape painter, closely following the manner of Pieter Bruegel," for his "lovely and swift manner." Jacob Grimmer was also celebrated for being "working very rapidly." His son, Abel, codified a "pictorially derivative" and "simplified" manner for his prolific output. He created original works in a "streamlined technique" in which "each pictorial zone of his landscapes was composed in essentially a single color with little or no modulation or subtle modeling, and he used minimal varnishing, thus eliminating some of the pictorial effects of roundness or reflection. This process innovation permitted rapid repetition of standard pictorial formulas" Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol. 2357r, 256v; Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 190. Pieter Brueghel the Younger's workshop similarly employed techniques that allowed for the rapid reproduction of the same composition. Brueghel the Younger used his father's compositional drawings to quickly and precisely reproduce his father's paintings. Infrared radiography reveals precise underdrawings in the copies of *The Census at Bethlehem*, with at least two artistic hands outlining the design. To speed up the painting – and drying – process, artists painted layers "according to the outlines in the underdrawing, reserving spaces for the forms to follow." With this production technique, copies could likely be produced with great efficiency. Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the

Chapter 2: The Bruegelians

Defining and Identifying the Bruegelians

Recognition of artistic influences was very important to contemporary art lovers. Karel van Mander identified Pieter Baltens as “a very good landscape painter who followed very closely the manner of Pieter Bruegel,” even though a more accurate assessment finds that both artists looked to one another for inspiration.³³⁹ Inventories also noted artistic similarities between works by Bruegel the Elder and lesser artists, and listed paintings as being “after Bruegel” and “in the manner of Bruegel.”³⁴⁰

Van Mander’s categorization of Baltens as a follower of Bruegel reveals that by the beginning of the seventeenth century, art lovers recognized Bruegel as the principal painter of peasant imagery. While there was a degree of conscious emulation of Bruegel’s manner and subjects in the second half of the sixteenth century and the first three three decades of the seventeenth century, it must also be recognized that Bruegel’s art belonged firmly to a period style of peasant imagery that developed in the middle of the sixteenth century. Following seventeenth-century

Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 55–56; Duckwitz, “The Devil Is in the Detail,” 59, 78; Currie, “Demystifying the Process,” 93–95; See also Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*. Flemish paintings were also popular abroad, and received welcome markets in Paris, Vienna, Frankfurt, and Spain. Honig, *Painting & the Market*, 111; Denucé, *Export of Works of Art*.

³³⁹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol. 257r; Kostyshyn, “Door Tsoechen Men Vindt,” 254–304; Silva Maroto and Sellink, “The Rediscovery of Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s ‘Wine of St Martin’s Day’, Acquired for the Museo Nacional Del Prado, Madrid.” Also see pages 20 and 97.

³⁴⁰ For example, the posthumous inventory of Archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia includes a *Peasant Wedding* “after Bruegel” (*naer Bruegel*). Archduke Ernsts’s inventory from July 17, 1595 includes a *Christy Creutzigung* (*Christ Carrying the Cross*) in “Bruegel’s manner.” Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259, 39; 422, 110.

precedents, modern scholarship now identifies the manner of peasant imagery epitomized by Bruegel as “Bruegelian.” Works belonging to this classification tend towards round, solid figures rendered in bold colors with little modeling. This dissertation restricts the subject matter to peasants, excluding pure landscapes and most narrative scenes.³⁴¹

This chapter introduces the most prominent Bruegelians and examines the ways in which Bruegel’s peasant paintings impacted their work, for it is evident that hundreds of paintings executed in Bruegel’s manner depict peasant kermises, weddings, violence, and representations of the seasons. This study differs from other examinations of the Bruegelians in its focus on peasant paintings and in distinguishing three distinct generations of these artists, as well as prioritizing works that adhere closely to the manner demonstrated by Bruegel.

In the earliest modern study of the Bruegelians, *De Helsche en de Fluweelen Brueghel en hun invloed op de kunst in de Nederlanden* (*The Hell and the Velvet Brueghel and their influence on the art of the Netherlands*) (1932), P. de Boer presented works in the Bruegel tradition as “Höllenbreughel,” a term he used to describe paintings by the multi-generational Brueg[h]el family as well as unknown painters in their manner.³⁴² De Boer included paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, mis-identified as Hell Brueghel, and Jan Breughel the Elder, Velvet Brueghel, as well as works inspired by these masters. De Boer also focused on the tangential tradition of elegant landscapes and flower paintings that emerged from Jan

³⁴¹ An exception to these parameters includes the *Massacre of the Innocents*, which utilizes a scene of peasant life to stage the biblical story.

³⁴² Boer, *Helsche En Fluweelen Brueghel En Hun Invloed Op de Kunst in de Nederlanden*, 16.

Brueghel, which are not discussed in this study, as well as later seventeenth- and eighteenth-century paintings.³⁴³

Robert Genaille coined the term “Bruegelians” in 1953 to describe the followers of Pieter Bruegel the Elder.³⁴⁴ Acknowledging the uncertainty of many attributions, Genaille identified several contemporaries whose subjects and manners corresponded with the master: Cornélis van Dalem, Marten van Cleve, Cornelis (Klaus) Molenaer, Jacob Grimmer, and Peter Baltens.³⁴⁵ In the subsequent generations, the identification of artists influenced by Bruegel became less certain, but Genaille noted that Bruegel inspired Isaac Claesz van Swanenburgh, David Vinckboons, Abel Grimmer, Hans Bol, Gilles Mostaert, and Lucas and Marten van Valckenborch. In the following generation, Pieter the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder, as well as Rolandt Savery, Hercules Seghers, and Jan van Kessel looked to Bruegel for artistic inspiration. The Bruegelians were precursors to many seventeenth-century genre painters, including Adriaen Brouwer, Adriaen and Isaack van Ostade, David Teniers the Younger, Peter Paul Rubens, and Jan Steen.³⁴⁶

In her edits to Georges Marlier’s posthumous monograph of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Jacqueline Folie published Marlier’s notes for an intended study of “L’Heritage de Bruegel,” in which he intended to focus on landscapes and peasant

³⁴³ His list is extensive, inspired, perhaps in part, by the inventory he held in his gallery, but includes brief biographies for each artist.

³⁴⁴ Genaille, *Bruegel, l’Ancien*, 61–65.

³⁴⁵ Genaille also rightly cautions against over-identifying Bruegelians simply because of subject matter. Peasant kermis and Towers of Babel were popular with Bruegel’s contemporaries, resulting in several threads of influence. *Ibid.*, 63.

³⁴⁶ Rubens’ late peasant paintings looked to Bruegel the Elder in an idiosyncratic manner. See Liedtke, ““Peasants Fighting Over Cards””; Hans Vlieghe, “Rubens Emulating the Bruegel Tradition,” *The Burlington Magazine* 142, no. 1172 (November 2000): 681–86.

paintings, particularly kermis scenes. Marlier listed eight names in two generations: Pieter Bruegel, Peeter Baltens, Jacob Grimmer, Martin van Cleve, Lucas van Valckenborch, and Hans Bol in the first generation; and Pieter Brueghel the Younger, Jacob Savery, Abel Grimmer, and Sébastien Vrancx in the younger generation. This unfinished project, “L’Héritage de Bruegel,” with its focus on the kermis and peasant paintings of Bruegel and his followers, has inspired this dissertation.³⁴⁷

Larry Silver’s recent studies of Bruegel from 2001 and 2011 also follow the “Bruegel Legacy” into the seventeenth century.³⁴⁸ The Bruegelians he identifies are Jacob and Roelandt Savery, Peter Stevens, Hendrick Goltzius, Hans Bol, Lucas van Valckenborch, Jan Brueghel, Hendrick Avercamp, Jan van de Velde II, Adriaen van de Venne, David Vinckboons, Peter Paul Rubens, Pieter Brueghel the Younger, and Joos de Momper.³⁴⁹ Silver divides his study between the Bruegelian developments in the United Provinces and the Spanish Netherlands. His broad survey of the developments of landscape and peasant paintings follows several trajectories of development, though it emphasizes the movement towards more elegant paintings by Jan Breughel the Younger and David Vinckboons than the ruddy works by Pieter Brueghel the Younger that remain closer representations of Bruegel the Elder’s sixteenth-century manner.

Copies and pastiches of Bruegel’s art comprise the majority of the works examined by Christina Currie and Dominique Allart in *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*:

³⁴⁷ Jacqueline Folie in Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 451.

³⁴⁸ Silver’s 2001 *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes* follows the development of the two genres, which include Bruegelian artists, however it also follows other developments in the genres that are not influenced by Bruegel’s tradition. Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 161–207.

³⁴⁹ Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 401–31.

Paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Younger with a Special Focus on Technique and Copying Practices (2012). The authors identify Pieter Baltens, Lucas and Maerten van Valckenborch, Marten van Cleve, Jacob Grimmer, Hans Bol, Jacob and Roelandt Savery, and David Vinckboons, along with Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder as Bruegel followers. In addition to the copies produced mainly around the turn of the seventeenth century, there were “reprises of Bruegelian [that were] most often vague and approximate.”³⁵⁰

As these various authors have demonstrated, many artists were inspired by Bruegel’s legacy, and followed in his footsteps, albeit along slightly different paths. A number of Bruegelians, including Marten van Cleve, Pieter Baltens, Lucas van Valckenborch, and Pieter Brueghel the Younger, remained true to Pieter Bruegel’s peasant style. Figures in these paintings tend towards a grotesque, solid type that he featured, and these artists favored the hearty earth tones that he utilized. Another group, including Hans Bol, Jan Brueghel the Elder, and David Vinckboons, generally used cooler paint tones to describe more elegant figures set smaller into a jewel-like landscape. Of course, many of these Bruegelians painted in both manners throughout their careers. Throughout the period in question, there is no single line of development, and disparate changes are often concurrent. The dichotomies of the period can be expressed in terms of opposites: archaic versus modern; earthy versus elegant; fat versus thin; cool tones versus warm; crowded compositions of small figures in a great expanse versus large figures in a tighter setting.

³⁵⁰ Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 44.

This dissertation focuses on the Breugelians whose work followed closely the example of Bruegel's peasant paintings. To facilitate a discussion of these masters, short biographical accounts of important Breugelians follow, organized chronologically by birth, and grouped into cohorts, termed "generations" here, to recognize the distinct trends and developments of four different groups of artists. The first generation consists of Pieter Brueghel the Elder's contemporaries, including Marten van Cleve, Pieter Baltens, and Lucas van Valckenborch. Hans Bol and Karel van Mander, both emigres and important teachers to later painters, comprise the second generation. Gillis van Coninxloo, the likely teacher of Pieter Brueghel the Younger, belongs to this generation, but primarily painted landscapes, so is omitted from this study. Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Breughel the Elder, the sons of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, front a generation whose art introduces the burgeoning seventeenth century, and includes Jacob Savery, Roelandt Savery, Sebastiaan Vrancx, Abel Grimmer, David Vinckboons, and Peter Paul Rubens. A final group cannot truly be described as a generation, for it encompasses artists from two distinct periods, but represents artists whose entire lives and careers are contained within the seventeenth century, and include Adriaen Brouwer, Adriaen van Ostade, David Teniers the Younger, and Jan Steen.

The First Generation: Pieter Bruegel the Elder's Contemporaries

The first generation of peasant painters associated with Bruegel were artists born in the 1520s and 1530s, hence contemporaries of the master and not later followers. These artists include Pieter Baltens, Marten van Cleve, and Lucas van Valckenborch. Peasants celebrating weddings and kermises, and the seasons of the

year were popular subjects that were often depicted in a manner consistent with that of Bruegel.

The artists from this generation, all from Antwerp or Brussels, witnessed an escalation of tensions, outbreak of violence, and religious persecution – including the Alva terror. While most of these artists remained in the Southern Netherlands, some fled to Germany or Holland to escape persecution and violence. Aside from Bruegel, all of these artists lived to witness the origins of the two states with the Union of Utrecht, but not an end to hostilities.

Pieter Baltens (c.1525- after 1598)

A contemporary of Pieter Bruegel, Pieter Baltens (c.1525-after 1598) is often simply described as a Bruegel follower.³⁵¹ Even Karel van Mander notes that Baltens “was a very good landscape painter who followed very closely the manner of Pieter Bruegel...”³⁵² In the first record of him, though, he is given prominence over Bruegel. Around 1550-1551, both artists were contracted by Claude Dorisi to paint the glovemakers’ altarpiece at the Church of St. Rombout in Mechelen. Bruegel painted the exterior wings in grisaille, while Baltens painted the more important interior panels.³⁵³

³⁵¹ Kostyshyn, “Door Tsoechen Men Vindt,” 1–3.

³⁵² Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.257r.

Van Mander’s dates for Baltens are not reliable. He stated that Baltens entered the guild in 1579, but Baltens’ first entry in the *liggeren* of the Guild of St. Luke in Antwerp is in 1541, though that listing is puzzling, as he was very young and referenced in the diminutive form “pierken Custodis.” Kostyshyn, “Door Tsoechen Men Vindt,” 83–84.

³⁵³ Kostyshyn, “Door Tsoechen Men Vindt,” 236.

No other documented contact between the two artists exists, but their shared subject matter suggests they were familiar with one another's work.³⁵⁴ In c.1565-66, Baltens made copies after Bruegel's *Twelve Months*.³⁵⁵ A year or so later, Bruegel used Baltens' engraving of *The Land of Cockaigne* (c.1560) (fig. 49) for his painting of the same subject (Munich, Alte Pinakothek) (fig. 46). In the mid 1560s, both masters painted *The Wine of St. Martin's Day* (figs. 14-15) with similar compositional elements, such as the horseman in the right foreground.³⁵⁶ Baltens' great peasant kermises, such as *Performance of the Farce 'Een Chuyte van Plaeyerwater' at a Flemish Kermis* (c.1570, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 50) relate to Bruegel's expansive village scenes, such as the *Kermis at Hoboken* (fig. 7).³⁵⁷ Pieter Brueghel the Younger knew Baltens's composition and copied it several times.³⁵⁸

In general, Baltens' compositions feature small figures in varied groupings populating a great scene. A high horizon line and point of view correspond with Bruegel's earlier compositions. Baltens' figures are robust and stout, and have the

³⁵⁴ Baltens' *Village Wedding* (Brussels) was painted before Bruegel the Elder painted kermis or wedding scenes. Ibid., 285–86.

³⁵⁵ The paintings, likely copied after Bruegel the Elder's series in Jongelinck's collection, were listed in the archducal collection in the Palace of Brussels in an inventory compiled after January 12, 1659. They were identified by their subjects, which correspond closely with the Bruegel series owned by Jongelinck and Archduke Ernst, and noted that they were by Baltens after Bruegel. Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 436–48; Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," 274–82. There is no record that these works still exist.

³⁵⁶ Baltens' versions are in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; and Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp. A version in Madrid has recently been declared to be by Bruegel the Elder. Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," 3–5, 282–85, 359–68; Silva Maroto and Sellink, "The Rediscovery of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's 'Wine of St Martin's Day', Acquired for the Museo Nacional Del Prado, Madrid."

³⁵⁷ Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," 269–73; Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 894-901, 923-927.

³⁵⁸ Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 894-901, 923-927. This makes one wonder how Pieter Brueghel the Younger became familiar with Baltens' work.

coarse features found in Bruegel's figure type. He favored earth tones with local color of husky red and green. Pieter Baltens remains an underappreciated artist, in part because his compositions have become subsumed into the broader world of the Bruegelians.³⁵⁹

Marten van Cleve (1527-1581)

Marten van Cleve, though born about two years after Pieter Bruegel the Elder, painted works that are often confused with those executed by Pieter Breughel the Younger. Both artists painted in bold colors and often demonstrate awkwardness in figural representation. In comparison to Bruegel, Van Cleve and Brueghel the Younger painted in a smoother, more simplified manner. Van Cleve's manner can partially be discerned by his emphatically modeled forms. Motifs and compositions designed by Marten van Cleve came to be incorporated in the vocabulary of Bruegelian artists, often through their replication by Brueghel the Younger, as is further studied in chapter four.

Attributions issues plague the study of Van Cleve's art, complicating the assessment of his work. Faggin attributed only six paintings to the artist, and listed an additional five more works known only through copies.³⁶⁰ Ertz, however, lists over two hundred works, though he notes that some of these are copies after Van Cleve.³⁶¹

³⁵⁹ Baltens' artistic hand is challenging to discern, and is often confused with those of Marten van Cleve or Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," 269–72; Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jongere*, v.II, 894-901, 923-927; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 143.

³⁶⁰ Giorgio Faggin, "De Genre-Schilder Marten van Cleef," *Oud-Holland* 80 (1965): 35, *passim*.

³⁶¹ Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 131–224.

Ertz's attributions, however, include stylistically divergent works that cannot be by the same hand.

Van Mander wrote that Van Cleve studied with Frans Floris and never left Antwerp.³⁶² Indeed, his paintings from the 1560s reveal the influence of Floris and Pieter Aertsen.³⁶³ In the next decade, Van Cleve looked to Bruegel for inspiration, though he does not exactly duplicate his fellow artist's compositions.³⁶⁴ After Bruegel's death, Van Cleve expanded his style to include works after Gillis Mostaert, but he continued to paint peasant subjects in a Bruegelian manner.³⁶⁵

Van Cleve and Bruegel also both painted the subject of the Massacre of the Innocents in a wintry Flemish village, isolating and emphasizing the scene as had never been done before.³⁶⁶ Van Cleve's lost painting, known through a preparatory drawing (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Sammlung Uffenbach) (fig. 51) and copies by Pieter Brueghel the Younger (example: Brussels, MRBAB) (fig. 52), is reminiscent of Bruegel's large version (fig.12), in both environment and figural elements. It includes similar vignettes such as the peasants pleading with the mounted soldier in the left foreground and the man pulling the large dog in the center of the

³⁶² It appears he was a part of the thriving Antwerp artistic community, and contributed staffage to Gillis van Coninxloo's paintings. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.230v.

³⁶³ Van Cleve also copied compositions by Pieter Baltens. Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 65.

³⁶⁴ In *Copper Monday with Beggin Lepers* (1579, St. Petersburg, Hermitage), Van Cleve quotes Bruegel the Elder's *Begging Lepers* (1568, Paris, Louvre), though incorporates them into a greater scene of village life. Fagg, "Marten van Cleef," 37.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 27; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 24–26.

³⁶⁶ Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 280.

work.³⁶⁷ The figures themselves feature full forms that generally recalls Bruegel's figural type. However, Van Cleve's composition has a lower vantage point and fewer, though larger, figures.³⁶⁸

In general, Marten van Cleve used a low vantage point to paint his peasant subjects.³⁶⁹ Bold local color defines the medium-sized figures, whose distant spacing highlights each individual. Van Cleve's figures tend towards the corporeal type epitomized by Bruegel, though they tend to have distinctly swollen limbs and are contorted into more exaggeratedly twisting poses.

Lucas van Valckenborch (c.1535-1597)

Lucas van Valckenborch, an artist associated with the Habsburg court, relocated many times because of political upheaval. Born in Leuven, he moved to Mechelen, where he entered the guild in 1560. In 1567, he fled to Liège and then Aachen, then moved to Antwerp in 1575, Brussels in 1577/79, Linz in 1582, then Vienna and possibly Prague, before settling in Frankfurt from 1593 to his death in 1597.³⁷⁰ Van Valckenborch met the Archduke Matthias (1557-1619) and moved to Brussels in his employ in the late 1570s. For the Archduke, he painted portraits, designed uniforms for the guards, and painted courtly leisure scenes.³⁷¹ Van

³⁶⁷ Faggin argues that, partly due to the numerous copies after it, Van Cleve's composition was probably more famous than Bruegel's. Faggin, "Marten van Cleef," 25–26.

³⁶⁸ Currie and Allart, *The Bruegel[h]el Phenomenon*, v.II, 646–669.

³⁶⁹ Included subjects include not only peasant festivities, but also peasant brawls, for example the *Peasants attacked by Robbers* (Stockholm, Universitets Konstsamling) (fig. 32) that has alternately been attributed to both Van Cleve and Pieter Brueghel the Younger.

³⁷⁰ Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 10, 13–16; Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 190.

³⁷¹ Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 14.

Valckenborch was also acquainted with Archduke Ernst, who sponsored his Frankfurt citizenship when the artist retired from the court.³⁷² Van Mander writes of Van

Valckenborch:

Lucas, who was not only subtle at landscape but also at small figures and small portraits in oils and gouache, through his art came into contact with Duke Matthias – and when he left these lands Lucas travelled with the Duke to Linz on the Danube where he stayed with him and made many works.³⁷³

Archduke Matthias may have patronized Van Valckenborch because he painted Bruegelian works. Though Habsburg acquisitions of works by Bruegel are not documented until Archduke Ernst's gift of *The Months* from the City of Antwerp in 1595, the brothers may have developed their collective esteem for paintings by Bruegel and his followers by the 1570s. By that time, Van Valckenborch had demonstrated an affinity with the works by Bruegel. Van Valckenborch's earliest version of Pieter Bruegel's *The Tower of Babel* (1563, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 45) is signed and dated 1568 (Munich, Alte Pinakothek).³⁷⁴ An early peasant festival is signed and dated 1569.³⁷⁵

Van Valckenborch had other specialties as well. He also painted market scenes inspired by Pieter Aertsen and Joachim Beuckelaer, and naturalistic landscapes painted with observed and recognizable landmarks. Ibid., 28; Honig, *Painting & the Market*, 133–34; Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 190–93.

³⁷² Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 15; Allart, “Ernest d’Autriche,” 241, 251–52; Assmann and Oberösterreichischen Landesmuseen, *Der Kaisers Kulturhauptstadt*, 44, 123.

³⁷³ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.260r.

³⁷⁴ He and his brother, Marten van Valckenborch, painted several *Tower of Babel* compositions between 1568 and 1595. Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 31–34.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 20–21, 133–34, n.9.

As a court painter for the Habsburgs, Van Valckenborch painted the four seasons with references to the imperial family. The series of seasons in Vienna (1585, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (figs. 42, 53-55) likely hung in Archduke Matthias's Linz castle.³⁷⁶ Coarse peasants close to the picture plane attend to their daily labors in *Winter (January/February)* (fig. 53), *Summer (July or August)* (fig. 54), and *Autumn (September)*. While these three scenes recall Bruegel's landscapes of the seasons, *Spring (May)* (fig. 42) and *Autumn (October)* (fig. 55) contain smaller, elegant courtiers enjoying the pleasures of the seasons.³⁷⁷ This different approach to depicting low life figures and upper class merry companies recalls the way the seasons were represented in luxury books of hours.³⁷⁸

Van Valckenborch also painted peasant paintings that recall Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding* (fig. 1) and *Peasant Wedding Banquet* (fig. 40).³⁷⁹ For example, *Peasant Festivities* (1589, New York, Dr. Emil Ramat) (fig. 56), has peasant figures close to the picture plane organized into small groupings within a defined space. The figures are coarse and round, but not grotesque or distorted. Vibrant reds of the peasants' garments contrast with the verdant surroundings on the right side of the picture plane, while the earthy brown of the tavern scene enlivens the rustic setting. In general, Van Valckenborch's peasant kermis scenes are sweet, gentle works in which

³⁷⁶ Ferino-Pagden, Prohaska, and Schütz, *Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien*, 342–43. Allart identifies the portrait of a Habsburg in *Spring (May)* as Archduke Ernst. Behind him is the Palace of Brussels. Because this work is dated 1587, after Matthias was ousted from Brussels, but before Ernst takes up his place as Stadholder, Allart reads political ambition upon the part of Archduke Ernst in the painting. Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 251–52.

³⁷⁷ See also Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 410.

³⁷⁸ Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 193.

³⁷⁹ Van Valckenborch continued to paint for patrons other than the Archduke Matthias, even while he was employed in the archduke's court. Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 15.

hearty folk enjoy themselves amidst clean, rustic villages, often with quaint streams and bridges. Even the drunks behave themselves well, choosing to simply sleep off their alcohol instead of vomiting or engaging in uncouth activity.³⁸⁰

The Second Generation: Bridging the Generations

The cohort between Bruegel the Elder and his sons carried the sixteenth-century Flemish genre of peasant paintings into the seventeenth century and northward to the United Provinces. These two artists were teachers, both in the studio and as writers and theorists. Hans Bol (1534-1593) was a contemporary of artists in the previous cohort, his role as the master of numerous painters makes him an influential figure in the transitional generation. Karel van Mander (1548-1606) was also an important teacher for, among others, Frans Hals, but perhaps of even greater significance were his writings, which instructed the next generation of artists and art lovers.³⁸¹ Also belonging to this generation is Gillis van Coninxloo (1544-1606), a landscape painter and the teacher of Pieter Brueghel the Younger, though his extant oeuvre does not include any Bruegelian peasant paintings, and he will not be discussed in this section.³⁸²

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 138–39.

³⁸¹ Van Mander ran a productive studio in Haarlem, and instructed Frans Hals, Cornelis Engelsz, Evert Crijnsz van der Maes, François Venant, and Karel van Mander II. Luijten et al., *Dawn of the Golden Age*, 310.

Hals was the teacher of Adriaen Brouwer and Adriaen van Ostade. Peter Van der Coelen et al., *Everyday Life in Holland's Golden Age: The Complete Etchings of Adriaen van Ostade*, ed. Peter Van der Coelen, vol. 3, *Studies in Dutch Graphic Art* (Amsterdam: Museum Het Rembrandthuis - Rembrandt Information Centre, 1998), 7.

³⁸² Coninxloo primarily focused on forest landscapes, with small figures populating ever more varied woods and vistas. In his art, Mannerism influences coincided with Bruegel's influences of observation. Born in Antwerp to artistic families on both his mother's and father's sides, Coninxloo studied with Pieter van Aelst, whose widow, Mayken Verhulst, was Coninxloo's maternal aunt. Van Aelst was also the teacher of Bruegel the Elder, and Mayken Verhulst was the grandmother of Pieter Brueghel the

Bol and Van Mander, who were part of the migration of artists from the Southern Netherlands at the tumultuous end of the sixteenth century, settled in Amsterdam and Haarlem, respectively. They perpetuated the Bruegel tradition in the Northern Netherlands, although their influence remained largely confined to the cities in which they worked. Even in subsequent generations, other artistic centers like Utrecht and Leiden remained untouched by Bruegelian influences, largely due to the absence of any stimulating workshops that promoted peasant imagery in the manner of Bruegel.

Hans Bol (1534-1593)

Hans Bol was influential in translating Bruegel's landscape and peasant traditions to the following generation and in transferring it to Amsterdam. When Bol moved to from Mechelen to Antwerp in the 1570s,³⁸³ Van Mander relates:

... he began to abandon canvas painting entirely when he saw that his canvases were bought and copied on a large scale and sold as if they were his. So he devoted himself totally to painting landscapes and small histories in miniature saying: Now let them labour in vain trying to copy me in this.³⁸⁴

Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder, making Coninxloo and the Brueghels cousins. Coninxloo was also related by his mother's second marriage to Jan van Amstel (Jan van Hollander), a painter in Bruegel's circle who provided Van Mander with valuable information about painters in Antwerp and Brussels in the mid-sixteenth century. Van Mander also reports that Coninxloo instructed Pieter Brueghel the Younger, and may have taught him a painting method he learned from Van Amstel, who was known for "allowing the preparation of the panels or canvases play a part – which Bruegel very idiosyncratically imitated." Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.215r, 218v, 267v–268r; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 12; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 48. In Amsterdam, Bol and Coninxloo both were also connected to Philip Vinckboons, father of David Vinckboons. Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 169.

³⁸³ He registered as a citizen of Antwerp in 1575. Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 169, n.28.

³⁸⁴ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.260v. Bol's delightful gouache *View of Amsterdam* (1589, Van Otterloo Collection) reflects this undertaking, intricately detailing the many figures and idyllic landscape in a small scale composition.

By 1584, Bol was in the Northern Netherlands, settling in Amsterdam in 1591. He described his adoptive city in the following manner: “from life: from the waterfront with the ships, and from landward, very vividly, with other views of some villages too, by which he earned much money.”³⁸⁵ In Amsterdam, he helped turn members of the next generation into Bruegelians, among them Jacob and Roelandt Savery, David Vinckboons, and Bol’s stepson Frans Boels, a little-known artist with several Bruegelian works in his oeuvre.³⁸⁶

Bol’s connection to Bruegel was not only in his subtle landscapes. Hieronymous Cock saw him fit to complete the engraved series of the seasons Pieter Bruegel had started but not finished. Bol’s *Autumn* and *Winter*, engraved by Pieter van der Heyden (figs. 57-58), joined Bruegel’s *Spring* (fig. 59)³⁸⁷ and *Summer* (fig. 60),³⁸⁸ all of which were issued as prints in 1570.³⁸⁹ For this work, Bol enlarged his figures, and adopted Bruegel’s compositional model of a high foreground before the retreating middle- and back-grounds. His figures have a solidity reminiscent of those by the older artist. However, greater detail fills the crowded setting, showing buttons, textures, and other minute elements Bruegel had only subtly hinted at in his images.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 167–68, 188–89.

³⁸⁷ A preparatory drawing from 1565 by Bruegel the Elder is in the Albertina, Vienna. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 224.

³⁸⁸ A preparatory drawing from 1568 by Bruegel the Elder is in the Kunsthalle Hamburg, Kupferstichkabinett. Ibid., 226.

³⁸⁹ Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 167–68, 188–89.

This same distinction applies to Bol's peasant kermis scenes, such as his *Kermis* scene in Antwerp (Antwerp, KMSKA) (fig. 61).³⁹⁰ Seen from a high viewpoint, the setting stretches far back into the village. Solid buildings and fluffy trees abruptly contain the scene, allowing no outlet into the far distance. Revelers fill every possible space. Bol takes to the next level the profusion of activity in Bruegel's *Kermis at Hoboken* (fig. 7), creating a scene whose visual delights take hours to fully assess. Much as his print of the Seasons, Bol's work here is more detailed than that of Bruegel. This is especially apparent in the costuming of the upper-class, whose jewels and embroidery flicker on shimmering silk. But details in the rendering of the peasants, too, contain more overt description than those found in any Bruegel paintings.

Karel van Mander (1548-1606)

The art of Karel van Mander is often overshadowed by his literary contribution to the history of Northern European Art, *Het Schilderboek* (1604). Moreover, when Van Mander's art is discussed, his elegant Mannerist works receive primacy over his images of peasants.³⁹¹ However, as expanded in chapter three, Van Mander's Bruegelian peasant imagery bolsters his theoretical arguments that Bruegel the Elder's manner was the ideal way in which to portray peasants.³⁹²

³⁹⁰ Jan Briels, *Peintres Flamands En Hollande Au Début Du Siècle d'Or, 1585-1630* (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1987), 118, fig.133.

³⁹¹ Van Mander's art often celebrates elongated figures in exaggerated poses. His mannerist tendencies are exemplified in his 1602 *The Feast of Venus* (St. Petersburg, Hermitage), and his traditional history painting composition is perfected in *Dance Around the Golden Calf* (1602, Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum).

³⁹² Van Mander's peasant imagery, particularly his drawings and the prints engraved after his designs, appear in specialized studies of Bruegelian peasant imagery, though never discussed as a complete

Van Mander's anonymous biographer, likely his younger brother Adam, first cast Van Mander in the same lens as Bruegel in the prefatory biography for the 1618 edition of *Het Schilderboek*.³⁹³ In it, Van Mander is described as a prankster, who had "droll ideas."³⁹⁴ One such spirited idea was to decorate a fellow boy's new coat with butterflies painted in cherry juice. Anticipating that the little boy would be punished with a rap on his bottom for soiling his new coat, Van Mander painted the face of a devil on the boy's behind. When the boy's mother lifted his coat to punish her son, she swooned at the sight of the devil. "When the matter was explained, and a complaint had been made to Karel's father, there was much laughter at the jest." These antics recall Van Mander's own characterization of "Pier den Drol... [for

entity, nor discussed in conjunction with his theoretical writings. See Alpers, "Bruegel's Festive Peasants," 171; Alpers, "Realism as a Comic Mode," 122–27; Miedema, "Realism and the Comic Mode," 212–13; Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 220–21.

Van Mander is not included in Silver's discussion of peasant scenes and landscapes. Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, passim.

Van Mander's landscapes also bear traces of Bruegel's influence, though these correspond with contemporary trends. His *Arcadian Landscape* (1596, Munich, Wittelsbacher Ausgleichsfonds), with fluffy trees foregrounding the gentle vista retreating in the background, and delicate peasants with their livestock recalls the arcadian examples of Hans Bol and Gillis van Coninxloo, fellow Southerners who brought the Bruegelian landscape mode to the Northern Netherlands. *Landscape with John the Baptist* (1597, Hannover, Landesgalerie) similarly has this landscape structure of a foreground wood, craggy alpine rocks, and undulating retreat into the distance. Small, elegant figures, so reminiscent of Van Mander's attenuated mannerist figures, populate the fore- and middleground. Leesberg suggests that Coninxloo painted this landscape, into which Van Mander painted the figures, a possibility that solidifies Van Mander's exposure to the Bruegelian landscape mode. Coninxloo's *Landscape with the Judgment of Midas* (1588, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie) may also have figures by Van Mander. In both of these works, the landscape dwarfs the relatively sparse figures, who serve merely as staffage within the larger world. One might additionally see Jan Bruegel's influence in this landscape type. Leesberg, "Karel van Mander as a Painter," 32–33, 44.

Outside of peasant paintings, Bruegel's influence on Van Mander appears in several instances. Van Mander's *Calvary in the Snow* (1599, England, private collection) has been argued to be influenced by a print by Lucas van Leyden of the same subject. Additionally, Van Mander's *Massacre of the Innocents* (1600, St. Petersburg, Hermitage) seems to look directly to Bruegel's composition of the same subject (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) in its clustering of figures into references to the story. Ibid., 28, 31.

³⁹³ See Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.2, 12–14.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., v.1, fol.R2v.

whom] one sees few pictures by him which a spectator can contemplate seriously and without laughing, and however straightfaced and stately he may be, he has at least to twitch his mouth or smile.”³⁹⁵ According to Van Mander, Bruegel, too, was a prankster, defacing the painting Hans Vredeman de Vries painted on a stately summerhouse with crude images of lusty peasants.³⁹⁶

Van Mander, who was originally from a small village in Flanders, travelled to Italy and Vienna before settling back in his native country.³⁹⁷ He and his family left the Southern Netherlands in distress, eventually settling in Haarlem in 1583.³⁹⁸ There he became acquainted with Hendrick Goltzius and Cornelis van Haarlem. Van Mander introduced Goltzius and Van Haarlem to the Mannerist style of Bartolomeus Spranger, with whom he had worked in Italy and Prague.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁵ Ibid., v.1, fol.233r.

Miedema discusses the characterization of Bruegel and Van Mander as pranksters. Bruegel’s participation in peasant festivities is explained for the need to observe his subjects in their own environment, akin to Leonardo da Vinci hosting characters to dinner in order to note their facial expression. Van Mander’s pranks are described for their emphasis on his “spirited” mind, “with the inclination to invent, to think of ways of bending nature to his will, of making use of people by manipulating their natures, of setting up ‘pranks.’” In Van Mander’s choice of vocabulary, Miedema interprets a “disdain for peasants.” Ibid., v.2, 39-41.

³⁹⁶ “[Hans Vredeman de Vries] returned to Antwerp and ...was immediately commissioned by the Treasurer Aert Molckeman in Brussels to paint a summerhouse in perspective in which he, among other things, conceived of an open door into which, when Vries was not around, Pieter Bruegel, who came across his tools there, painted a peasant in a befouled shirt occupied with a peasant woman – which caused much laughter and with which the gentleman was very pleased: he would not have had it removed for a great deal of money.” Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.266r–266v. Van Mander characterized Bruegel as “quite animated in company; sometimes he gae people, as well as his own assistants, a fright by making one or other prowling or rattling.” Ibid., v.1, fol.233v.

³⁹⁷ Meulebeke, “which is nine miles around... in the middle of the County of Flanders, one mile from Tielt, Izegem, Pittem and Rozebeke.” Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.R1v.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., v.1, S1v-S3r; v.2, 65.

³⁹⁹ Luijten et al., *Dawn of the Golden Age*, 310.

Peasant subjects, often corresponding with one another, are infrequent in Van Mander's artistic career, but they appear in both his paintings and drawings.⁴⁰⁰ These are stylistically distinct from the more elegant figures in Van Mander's Mannerist history paintings, and betray the influence of Bruegel. His earliest peasant piece, a drawing of a couple, dated 1588 (fig. 62), was subsequently engraved by Harmen Muller (fig. 63). Other, more complete peasant kermis scenes made for prints followed.⁴⁰¹ Van Mander also painted two scenes of a peasant kermis, *Peasants Merrymaking* (1594, London, Christie's, 8 July 1994, lot 84) (fig. 64) and *Peasant Kermis* (1600, St. Petersburg, Hermitage) (fig. 36).

Van Mander derived motifs in his drawings and paintings from other artists' Bruegelian imagery. The peasant couple he depicted in several variations belongs to a thread of motifs that weaves throughout his oeuvre, a phenomenon that will be discussed later in this dissertation. Other artists, too, looked to Van Mander's Bruegelian imagery. The welcome reception of Van Mander's large *Peasant Kermis* from 1600 is evident from the fact that of its main motif, the table with festive peasants, is replicated in a painting from the circle of Pieter Brueghel the Younger (1636, Vienna, Dorotheum, 1978) (fig. 65).⁴⁰²

⁴⁰⁰ More research needs to be done between Van Mander's proverb prints, engraved by Julius Goltzius, and his peasant kermis works. See Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, 104–23.

⁴⁰¹ Van Mander's peasant subjects primarily feature the peasant kermis, as evidenced in *Peasant Kermis* (1591, drawing. Paris, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts) and *Peasant Kermis* (1592, drawing. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum), with its corresponding print engraved by Nicolaes Clock in 1593.

Van Mander also designed a series of proverbial images using peasant figures that were engraved by the workshop of Hendrick Goltzius (c.1592). Ibid., 104–16.

⁴⁰² Signed "P. Brevghel" and dated 1636, the work is no longer considered by Brueghel the Younger's hand. The table at which the peasants imbibe, including the man whose tangled legs threaten to trip him should he attempt to rise, is an exact replica from Van Mander's 1600 St. Petersburg painting. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 915, no.A1293.

The Third Generation: The Brueghel Sons and Inheritors of a Manner

In the first three decades of the seventeenth century, when Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder were most active, a profusion of derivative copies and imitations of Bruegel's peasant imagery coincided with a flourishing of new compositions in the Bruegel mode by diverse artists including Jacob and Roelandt Savery, Sebastiaan Vrancx, Abel Grimmer, David Vinckboons, and Peter Paul Rubens. The division between two manners of peasant paintings also becomes more apparent during this period. One, epitomized by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, stayed close to Bruegel the Elder's earthy color and coarse manner. The other, represented by Jan Brueghel the Elder, depict refined peasant imagery, often set into a lush landscape, with lean, elegant forms, and cool jewel tones.

This generation of artists viewed Bruegel's art through the interpretive lens of their teachers. At the same time, Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder likely had direct access to Bruegel the Elder's paintings and working drawings, and delivered imagery that was consistent with the old master's manner, compositions, and subjects. Prints after Bruegel continued to be published, providing other examples of Bruegel imagery to a community of artists and art lovers who looked to the sixteenth century in a nostalgic way.

This generation of artists was born in a time of conflict, and grew up possibly experiencing sporadic violence. Many artists fled from the Southern Netherlands northward with their families, relocating several times before finally establishing new homes. Whether in the North or the South, they also experienced the nascent

prosperity of the seventeenth century. This generation established the foundations of the art that characterized the Dutch Golden Age.

Pieter Brueghel the Younger (1564/5 – 1637/8)

The most prolific of all Bruegelians was Pieter Brueghel the Younger, the eldest son of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Van Mander identified Brueghel the Younger as a “portraitist after life,” an error he amended in the appendix. He corrected his assessment of Brueghel the Younger’s *conterfeyten nae t’leven* by noting that he did not copy “faces from life,” but rather “copied and imitated the works of his father,” which accurately reflects Brueghel the Younger’s artistic pursuits.⁴⁰³ The inscription below Anthony van Dyck’s portrait of Pieter Brueghel the Younger in the *Iconographia* describes the sitter as an “Antwerp painter of rural scenes” (*Antverpiae pictor ruralium prospectuum*, 1630-31), taking into account the original compositions Brueghel the Younger painted after 1619.⁴⁰⁴

Born in 1564 or 1565, only five years before his famous fathers’ death, Pieter Brueghel the Younger inherited the “family business” of painting in his father’s manner, which he promulgated until his own death in 1637/1638. Mayken Verhulst, Pieter and Jan Brueghel’s maternal grandmother, widow of Pieter Coecke van Aelst,

⁴⁰³ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.3, 266.

Another translation, by Constant van de Wall, reads “I have been wrongly informed: young Pieter Brueghel paints from life. He copies and imitates the works of his father.” Carel Van Mander, *Dutch and Flemish Painters*, ed. Constant Van de Wall, McFarlane (New York, 1936), 431.

⁴⁰⁴ Folie, “Pieter Brueghel the Younger, 1564/5-1637/8,” 45.

Marlier notes that Brueghel the Younger’s plate is one of the few portraits Van Dyck engraved himself. Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 3.

Carl Debauw, Ger Luijten, and Erik Duverger, *Anthony van Dyck as a Printmaker* (Antwerp: Antwerpen Open, 1999), 104; Currie and Allart, *The Brueghel Phenomenon*, v.1, 51.

and a watercolor artist, initiated the sons' early artistic instruction.⁴⁰⁵ In his biography of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Karel van Mander briefly mentions the artist's "two sons who are also good painters. The one, called Pieter, trained with Gillis van Coninxloo."⁴⁰⁶ Pieter moved to Antwerp in 1583, where he was apprenticed to Coninxloo, a cousin.⁴⁰⁷

In 1585, Brueghel the Younger's name first appeared in the Antwerp *liggeren*, as a *vry-meestersson* ("free master's son").⁴⁰⁸ He developed a large workshop, which trained nine pupils, including his son, from 1588 to 1626.⁴⁰⁹ The identification of additional hands in Brueghel the Younger's workshop paintings suggests he employed assistants as well.⁴¹⁰ The prodigious output from Brueghel the Younger's

⁴⁰⁵ Van Mander only relates that Mayken Verhulst instructed Jan Brueghel, but it is likely she taught both boys. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, 234r; v.3, 265; Duckwitz, "The Devil Is in the Detail," 59; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 48. Mayken was among the few women artists mentioned by Guicciardini. Natasja Peeters, "Family Matters: An Integrated Biography of Pieter Brueghel II," *Revue Belge D'archéologie et D'histoire de L'art* 77 (2008): 49.

⁴⁰⁶ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, 234r; vol.3, 265.

⁴⁰⁷ Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 48. Peeters questions which Gillis van Coninxloo taught Pieter Brueghel the Younger. The more famous Gillis van Coninxloo, who left Antwerp in 1585, was the son of a Gillis van Coninxloo who was the husband of Pieter Coecke van Aelst's sister-in-law. Peeters, "Family Matters," 49.

⁴⁰⁸ Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 48.

⁴⁰⁹ The nine apprentices registered with the St. Luke's guild are Franchois de Grooten (1588), Fransken Snyders (1593), Hans Tripou (1593), an unnamed pupil (1596), Andries Daniels (1599), Hans Garet (1608), Jasper Breydel (1611), Gillis Placquet (1615), Gonzales Coques (1626 or 1627). His son, Pieter, entered the guild in 1608 as a '*meesterssoon*' (master's son), and would have studied with his father before his entrance as a master. Folie, "Pieter Brueghel the Younger, 1564/5-1637/8," 45; Currie, "Demystifying the Process," 81; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 50.

⁴¹⁰ For example, a comparison of Brueghel's *The Census at Bethlehem* identifies numerous distinct hands in both the underdrawing and paint layers. Currie, "Demystifying the Process," 93, 99–101. Jan Brueghel the Younger (1601-1678), son of Jan Brueghel the Elder, ran a workshop that copied and emulated his own father's works. His workshop likely organized in a similar manner to the one of his uncle, Pieter Brueghel the Elder, and employed German workers as journeymen. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 50. See also Peeters, "Family Matters," 54–57.

workshop and evidence of numerous artists working on each painting suggests that Brueghel the Younger had a flourishing business. Earlier assessments of Pieter Brueghel the Younger's dire financial situation are unfounded, as the artist eventually moved near the homes of Jan Brueghel the Elder and Peter Paul Rubens in the affluent Tapissierspand.⁴¹¹

As Van Mander accurately recorded, Pieter Brueghel the Younger reproduced his father's compositions, *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (1627, Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum) (fig. 66) being a beautiful example.⁴¹² Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder likely inherited their father's compositional drawings, which aided in the copies each brother made after his designs.⁴¹³ Brueghel the Younger likely tasked his workshop to assist with these copies, resulting in great fluctuations in quality between versions.⁴¹⁴

Most of Brueghel the Younger's peasant paintings expand on themes originally worked by Bruegel the Elder, such as the *Peasant Wedding in a Barn* (1620, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland) (fig. 67) and *Landscape with Peasant Wedding* (Maastricht, Bonnefantenmuseum) (fig. 37). In addition to painting copies

⁴¹¹ Peeters, "Family Matters," 53; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 51. Pieter the Younger's success is always compared to that of his brother, Jan. Most revealing, Pieter the Younger chose for godparents of his children members of the Antwerp artistic community. Jan, on the other hand, chose Cardinal Borromeo and Archduchess Isabella. Peeters, "Family Matters," 51–52.

⁴¹² Marlier noted sixteen copies and Ertz counted twenty-four, ten of which he attributed to Pieter Brueghel the Younger and not his workshop. Duckwitz, "The Devil Is in the Detail," 58–79.

⁴¹³ Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 55–56; Duckwitz, "The Devil Is in the Detail," 59–79; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.II, 598–610.

⁴¹⁴ Unauthorized copies may also have been made. Ertz has undertaken the task of assessing attribution and quality issues, and has produced an extensive catalogue of Brueghel the Younger's output, as well as inclusion of copies of questionable and rejected authorship. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, passim.

and pastiches of his father's work, Brueghel the Younger also copied other Breughelians, such as Marten van Cleve, Pieter Baltens, and David Vinckboons.⁴¹⁵ Reuse of settings and motifs, a focus in the following chapter, aided him in his prolific production.

Over a thousand paintings by Brueghel the Younger and his workshop survive, and these works make up a large proportion of the Bruegelian imagery that fulfilled the market demand in the early decades of the seventeenth century.⁴¹⁶ Many of those include a prominent signature.⁴¹⁷ Seventeenth-century inventories often list paintings by "Brueghel,"⁴¹⁸ a vague term that could refer to the father or either of the

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., v.2, 739-765; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.1, 52.

⁴¹⁶ Ertz catalogued 1436 paintings by or after Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Only a portion of these were of peasant subjects. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, passim.

⁴¹⁷ Pieter Brueghel the Younger signed his works either "BRVEGHEL" or "BREVGHTEL." Pieter Bruegel the Elder signed 'brueghel' (in lower case letters) at the start of his career, and changed to "BRVEGEL" in 1559. Jan Brueghel the Elder consistently signed "BRVEGHEL." Brueghel the Younger consistently signed in a way distinct from both his father and his brother, perhaps as a way to distinguish his works from those by his family. Attempts to estimate the percentage of works that carry reliable signatures using the catalogues by Marlier and Ertz is impossible, due to the unreliability of those publications. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.1, 38, 74-81.

⁴¹⁸ In addition to the confusion between which Bruegel is intended by the generic terminology of "Bruegel" or "Brueghel," a misidentification of "Hellschen Bruegel," or "Hell Bruegel" exists. First appearing in the early seventeenth century, as evidenced by its inclusion in the 1614 inventory of Filip van Valckenisse, the identification referred to Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Denucé, *Inventories*, 21; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.1, 72-73. In the 1627 auction inventory of Louis Rocourt, a "boerenkermis" is listed by "Helschen Bruegel" and valued at 19 florins. More likely, this work was by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, as other works by Jan Brueghel are listed in the inventory. "Rotkoert [Rocourt], Louis De, Inventory # 624," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories, accessed October 10, 2016, <http://research.frick.org/montias/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=1806>. A second portion of that same inventory of Rocourt's holdings includes two *keucken*, or kitchen scenes, attributed to Pieter Bruegel the Elder. "Rocourt, Louijs, Inventory # 6240," The Montias Database of 17th Century Dutch Art Inventories, accessed October 10, 2016, <http://research.frick.org/montias/browserecord.php?-action=browse&-recid=2435>. The misnomer refers to diableries and hell scenes in the tradition of Hieronymous Bosch and Bruegel the Elder, derived from works such as *Triumph of Death* and *Dulle Griet*. However, it is now demonstrated that Pieter Brueghel the Younger did not paint most of these works, and Jan Brueghel the Elder was the author of these fantastical hellish scenes. Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 17-35.

sons, who both signed their works “Brueghel.”⁴¹⁹ Sometimes an addendum such as “Le Vieww” or “Fils” helped distinguish between Pieters Elder and Younger.⁴²⁰

Pieter Brueghel the Younger likely encouraged the association with his famous father. In 1606, he commissioned a portrait engraving of his father from Egidius Sadeler (1570-1629), with an allegorical border by Bartholomeus Spranger (1546-1611) (fig. 68). The surrounding allegory and text suggests that the portrait, less familiar than the oft-reproduced likeness of Bruegel the Elder by Dominicus Lampsonius (1532-1599), is a double portrait of father and son. Their Pieters Bruegel become a single artist – “the single word ‘uterque’” – because “Minerva took the father away and Mercury brought him back in the guise of his son... The father and son are, as painters, one and the same person.”⁴²¹ The coda suggests that while Pieter the Younger commissioned his father’s portrait, Sadeler instead produced a likeness of both artists in one image, for “not only do they look alike but they have, thanks to the son’s copying of his father’s paintings, together produced a single *oeuvre*.”⁴²²

⁴¹⁹ Both Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder primarily used a different spelling than their father used. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.I, 72-73, 79. Paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Younger likely enhanced the association between his works and those by his father in two ways. His paintings were recognizable compositions by Bruegel the Elder or derivations of his oeuvre. Pieter Brueghel the Younger also signed his works “Brueghel.” High quality paintings by Brueghel the Younger were likely “recognized both as ‘Bruegels’ and as ‘authentifiable’ copies of his father’s most famous compositions – the ideal substitute without the price tag.” DeMarchi and Van Miegroet, “Art, Value, and Market Practices,” 455.

⁴²⁰ Subject matter also assists with identification, particularly for Jan Brueghel, whose flower still-lives and allegories are unique in the Brueg[h]el family.

⁴²¹ Bedaux and Van Gool, “Bruegel’s Birthyear,” 141, 144.

Further, Fame has already celebrated the father, and since the younger is still living and creating his own fame, a single fame must be attached to both artists. Ibid., 142.

Roberts-Jones and Roberts-Jones, *Bruegel*, 21.

Carl Depauw argues that the Sadeler print after Spranger is a print of Pieter Brueghel the Younger, whose appearance was “deliberately cultivated ... [to resemble that of] his father’s.” Debauw, Luijten, and Duverger, *Anthony van Dyck as a Printmaker*, 108.

⁴²² Debauw, Luijten, and Duverger, *Anthony van Dyck as a Printmaker*, 144.

For the most part, Pieter Brueghel the Younger's paintings consist of earthy, bold colors, and are often brighter in color and have higher tonal contrast than those by Bruegel the Elder.⁴²³ Although at times his works are quite accomplished, Pieter Brueghel the Younger's painterly hand never achieved the fluidity or tender touch of his father's. His figures tend towards outlined forms of blocked-in hues. Many works betray the artist's hand with rough brushstrokes across the features. In both copies and original compositions, a coarse solidity permeates Pieter Brueghel the Younger's figures.

Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568-1625)

Of the three nicknames given to Jan Brueghel the Elder during his lifetime, none refer to his familial artistic legacy of peasant paintings. As "Velvet" Brueghel, Jan was known for his meticulous manner and delicate scenes, often painted on copper with jewel-like coloring. "Flower" Brueghel was celebrated for floral still lifes that inspired the following generation of still life specialists.⁴²⁴ While wrongly applied to his brother, Pieter, even in the seventeenth-century, the descriptions "Hell" Brueghel is most aptly associated with Jan, whose fantastical diableries derive from the Bosch and Bruegel legacy.⁴²⁵ In addition, Jan Brueghel painted landscapes and collaborated with other Antwerp artists, including Peter Paul Rubens.

⁴²³ Studies in the color of Brueghel the Younger's works often focus on hue changes between Bruegel the Elder's original and their counterpart in Brueghel the Younger's copy. These are used to support the argument that the son most likely did not see his father's original paintings, but instead relied upon compositional drawings. Currie, "Demystifying the Process," 95; See also Duckwitz, "The Devil Is in the Detail," 71.

⁴²⁴ See Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 208–14.

⁴²⁵ Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 17–35.

The younger son of Pieter Bruegel the Elder was born in Brussels in 1568. After his father's death, Jan learned the art of painting from his maternal grandmother, Maycken Verhulst, an accomplished miniaturist, before training further with the landscapist Pieter Geotkint. He left Brussels in 1589 and settled in Rome from 1592-1594. In Rome, he became acquainted with Cardinal Federico Borromeo, who was to become his longtime patron,⁴²⁶ and Paul Bril, whose landscapes had a lasting affect on Brueghel's art. Van Mander relates that in Italy "he made a great name as a landscape painter; he also made other subjects, very small in size, a type of work in which he excelled."⁴²⁷

Jan Brueghel returned to Antwerp in 1596 and joined the St. Luke's Guild as well as the Romanists, an elite group whose members had all travelled to Italy.⁴²⁸ As his paintings became increasingly in-demand, Brueghel also began to collaborate with other artists, a practice he initiated while in Rome.⁴²⁹ Collaborations with Peter Paul Rubens, Joos de Momper, Frans Francken the Younger, and Hendrick van Balen were particularly popular. In 1604, he visited the court of Rudolf II in Prague. In 1606, he

⁴²⁶ In 1621, Cardinal Borromeo owned 21 works by Jan Brueghel. Woollett and Van Suchtelen, *Rubens & Brueghel*, 12. Bruegel the Elder's version of *Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery* (London, Courtauld) belonged to Jan Brueghel. This may be the work mentioned by the son to Cardinal Borromeo when asked if he could acquire any works by the father for the great collector. It is argued that Jan offered the painting to Borromeo, who had a copy made and returned it to Jan. However, Borromeo's inventory only lists a grisaille, but does not identify the subject. Renger and Denk, *Flämische Malerei*, 88. Upon Jan Brueghel's death, he bequeathed the painting by Bruegel the Elder to Cardinal Borromeo. Ertz, *Jan Brueghel Der Ältere 1979*, 453–62; Renger and Denk, *Flämische Malerei*, 88.

⁴²⁷ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.234r.

⁴²⁸ At the time of Brueghel's induction, he and Otto van Veen were the only two artists in the rosters. Woollett and Van Suchtelen, *Rubens & Brueghel*, 9.

⁴²⁹ He began collaborating with Rubens in 1598 with *Battle of the Amazons* (Potsdam, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, Schloß Sanssouci Bildergalerie), before the latter went to Italy. *Ibid.*, 2, 44–51.

was named a “painter to their Royal Highnesses,” the Archdukes Albert and Isabella Clara Eugenia, governors of the Southern Netherlands in 1606.⁴³⁰

Many of Jan Brueghel the Elder’s copies after his father’s works are dated from the late 1590s, and may indicate that Brueghel used his father’s name and copies of his paintings to establish himself in Antwerp upon his return from Italy.⁴³¹ Similar copies by both Jan and Pieter Brueghel the Younger suggest that the brothers shared source materials. Similar versions of *Wedding Dance in the Open Air*, a presumably lost painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, survive by both Jan Brueghel the Elder (Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-Arts) (fig. 22) and Pieter Brueghel the Younger

⁴³⁰ Though not an official court appointment, he was retained in the governors’ service and received privileges. The inventories of Isabella reflect the Archdukes’ preference for Jan Brueghel’s art. Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 422–23.

⁴³¹ Jan may have focused on producing copies of his father’s works upon his return from Italy in 1596, even working side by side with his brother, and then “concentrated his efforts on personal creations.” Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.II, 472; v.III, 834–841.

Jan and Pieter the Younger copied many of the same compositions. In the *Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery* (c.1597–98, Munich, Alte Pinakothek), Jan retains Bruegel the Elder’s grisaille medium. One of Pieter the Younger’s versions (c.1600, Philadelphia Museum of Art), however, strays from the original by introducing color to the work and thus reducing the solemnity of the piece. Jan Brueghel’s *Sermon of St. John the Baptist* (1598, Munich, Alte Pinakothek) is likely the prototype for Pieter Brueghel the Younger’s versions of the compositions, though both are derived from Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s original painting, now in Budapest. Renger and Denk, *Flämische Malerei*, 82–83; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.II, 468–474.

Jan Brueghel also copied compositions by Pieter Baltens (*Performance of the Farce ‘Een Plaeyerwater’ at a Flemish Kermis*) and Marten van Cleve (*Peasants Attacked by Robbers*). The fluidity of identification between “Bruegel” and “Brueghel” was occasionally used to intentionally confuse attribution and increase value for works by Jan Brueghel the Younger. A comparison of the inventory and sale catalogue of the art collection of Antwerp city councilor Jan Meurs, both compiled in 1652, demonstrates the malleability of the name “Brueg[h]el” in the seventeenth century. The inventory lists one work by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, three works by Jan Brueghel the Elder, and a number of collaborations between Jan Brueghel the Elder and other artists. The sale catalogue, however, attributed these works quite differently. While the family chose not to sell their single painting by Bruegel the Elder, works by “Pieter Bruegel” were still featured in the sale, presumably paintings that had previously been attributed to Jan or simply a generic “Bruegel” in the inventory. Even if, as Honig argues, “every buyer at the auction must have realized that, in all cases, the ‘Bruegel’ now in question was Jan,” the catalogue attempted to increase the prestige of the works by attaching the more valuable name of Pieter Bruegel to works by the son. Denucé, *Inventories*, 133–36; Honig, “The Beholder as Work of Art,” 254–56.

(Narbonne, Musée des Beaux-Arts) (fig. 21).⁴³² A comparison of these paintings reveals consistent distinctions between copies by the two brothers. Jan demonstrates lighter, freer handling that evidences his greater artistic confidence.

Jan Brueghel the Elder's own peasant paintings closely resemble his landscape paintings in style and technique.⁴³³ Even in a work indebted to Pieter Bruegel the Elder, like *Wedding Banquet with the Archdukes Albert and Isabella* (1612-1613, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 69), Jan Brueghel's small, lean figures are rendered in more refined detail and set in a lush setting that diverge from works by Bruegel the Elder. At the same time, in this work commissioned by the Archdukes, he clearly referred to his father's *Peasant Wedding Banquet* in Vienna (fig. 40).⁴³⁴ The Archduke and Archduchess sit in the place of honor at the diagonal table, at about the same place as the bride in Bruegel the Elder's painting. A more direct quote is the servant pouring libations from one jug into another, a motif found in the lower left of both compositions.

In *Sight* (1617, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 70), which belongs to the allegorical gallery painting series Brueghel painted in collaboration with Peter Paul Rubens, the paintings, sculpture, scientific instruments, and wonders of the natural world all relate to the sense of Sight, about which Venus and Cupid seem to be discussing. A version of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *The Blind Leading the Blind* (fig.

⁴³² The earliest version by Pieter Brueghel the Younger is dated 1607. Most of Jan Brueghel the Elder's copies after his father date from the late 1590s. Currie and Allart, *The Bruegh[el] Phenomenon*, v.II, 605.

⁴³³ For example, *River Landscape*, 1607 (Washington, National Gallery of Art).

⁴³⁴ Cordula Schumann, "Jan Brueghel's Peasant Weddings as Images of Social Unity under Archducal Sovereignty," in *Albert & Isabella, 1598-1621*, ed. Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 151-60.

71) stands stacked with other paintings along the base of the wall, to illustrate the importance of sight.⁴³⁵ The series was a gift from the city of Antwerp to the Archdukes, and likely underscored the city's celebrated artists: Peter Paul Rubens, Jan Brueghel the Elder, and, as Karel van Mander identified him, "our lasting fame of the Netherlands," Pieter Bruegel the Elder.⁴³⁶

Jacob Savery (c.1565/67-1603)

Karel van Mander gives little mention to Jacob Savery. The artist appears in Van Mander's biographical account of Hans Bol, as a student who was "just about his best pupil and very diligent, making his works very precisely and with great patience." Van Mander also mentions Savery's students: his younger brother, Roelandt,⁴³⁷ and Frans Pietersz. De Grebber, "an excellently good portraitist who in between times also paints figures." However, with Savery, "he learned nothing except some landscape."⁴³⁸

Jacob Savery was born in Kortrijk, but moved with his family in 1580. By 1583, part of his family is recorded in Haarlem.⁴³⁹ Based not only on Van Mander's

⁴³⁵ Jan Brueghel the Elder's familiarity with his father's compositions lends itself to this usage. This version of *The Blind Leading the Blind*, however, is vertical instead of Bruegel's horizontal composition, with vibrant jewel tones and cool leafy trees more reminiscent of Jan Brueghel the Elder's manner than his father's. Similarly, a colorful painting of *The Fat Kitchen*, based on Bruegel the Elder's print, hangs above the doorway in Brueghel and Rubens' *Taste* (1618, Museo del Prado, Madrid).

⁴³⁶ Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp*, 61.

Karel Van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the First Edition of the Schilder-Boeck (1603-1604). Preceded by The Lineage, Circumstances and Place of Birth, Life and Works of Karel van Mander, Painter and Poet and Likewise His Death and Burial, from the Second Edition of the Schilder-Boeck (1616-1618)*, trans. Hessel Miedema (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), v.1, fol.233r

⁴³⁷ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.260v.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., v.1, fol.300r.

⁴³⁹ Potter, *Savery*, 15.

testimonial, but also on the style of Jacob Savery's watercolor landscapes that reflect the older master, Savery studied with Hans Bol.⁴⁴⁰ Whether this period of study occurred in Antwerp around 1584 or in Dordrecht between c.1584 and 1586 is unclear.⁴⁴¹ In 1585, Savery received payment for a painting in Haarlem; he joined the local guild in 1587. By 1591, he had moved to Amsterdam, where he became a citizen.⁴⁴²

Today, Jacob Savery is best known for a series of landscape drawings and one figural work, all of which bear false signatures and dates ascribed to "Bruegel."⁴⁴³ Other

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 89–90.

⁴⁴¹ Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 251.

⁴⁴² Ibid.; See also Kotková, *Roelandt Savery*, 45–49.

Jacob Savery lived on the Sint Antonieestraat, and neighbored the Vinckboons family. Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 169.

⁴⁴³ These drawings of mountain landscapes, castles, and ruins, as well as the walls of Amsterdam, are signed "Bruegel" and bear dates between 1559 and 1562, a time for which no other drawings by Bruegel exist. Whether Savery intentionally forged the works or later added the falsifying inscriptions is unclear. However, when Jacques de Gheyn II engraved *Landscape with Castle* in 1598, he included the Bruegel signature and date of 1561. There was an evident market for both the "Bruegel" drawings and print in the later 1590s, when Savery not only drew these forgeries, but also emulated Bruegel's manner in works he signed as himself. Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 253–58; Hans Mielke, "Review: L'époque de Lucas de Leyde et Pierre Bruegel: Dessins Des Anciens Pays-Bas: Collection Frits Lugt," *Master Drawings* 23/24, no. 1 (1986 1985): 77–78; Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*, 276–81.

Stylistically-related to the forged landscapes, *The Blind* (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett) also has the forged calligraphic Bruegel signature and date of 1562. While weaknesses in the execution first raised suspicions about this work's authenticity, the subject matter is immediately reminiscent of Bruegel's *The Blind Leading the Blind* (1568, Naples, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte), and suggests Bruegel's noted interest in peasants, cripples, fools, and beggars, as seen in the sheet *Study of Cripples* (Vienna, Albertina – image Spicer on R Savery). In manner, however, the figures relate more closely with Savery's *Study Sheet with Peasants and a Child* (Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie), while the landscape recalls another Bruegel forgery by Savery, *Farmhouses by a Stream* (Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum). This is Savery's only attempt at a Bruegel forgery of a figural work. Like the *Landscape with a Castle* (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett), which Jacques de Gheyn II also engraved, *The Blind* was likely intended for reproduction; indentations by a stylus mark some outlines. While no print of this composition survives, the relative ease with which Savery passed off both the drawings and prints evidences the eager market for Bruegel imagery at the turn of the seventeenth century. Mielke, "Review: L'époque de Lucas de Leyde et Pierre Bruegel: Dessins Des Anciens Pays-Bas: Collection Frits Lugt," 79–81; Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 256–57.

works of his also reflect Bruegel's influence. In 1595, Savery painted three watercolors representing *December*, *January*, and *June*. *December* (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum) (fig. 72) depicts peasants engaged in the labors of the season. A soft calm permeates the village setting, where all is neat and idyllic. Though the figures are squat and round like those found in Bruegel's work, they are more detailed, particularly in their facial features, and their dough-like forms are not terribly anatomically persuasive. In *Kermis* (1598, London, Victoria and Albert Museum) (fig. 73), the high vantage point Savery used to depict the village square and small teeming figures within recall Bruegel's *Kermis at Hoboken* (fig. 7). Nevertheless, the fine details and crisp tonalities betray Bol's influence.

Roelandt Savery (1576?-1639)

Jacob Savery taught painting, watercolors, and likely passed down an interest in Bruegelian compositions and themes to his brother, Roelandt, eleven years his junior.⁴⁴⁴ Born in Kortrijk around 1576,⁴⁴⁵ Roelandt Savery fled the plagued and pillaged city with his family. After stays in Bruges and Haarlem, the family settled in Amsterdam by 1591. The younger Savery brother may have also worked with Hans Bol, who died in Amsterdam in 1593, as well as Gillis van Coninxloo, who settled there in 1595. After his brother's death in 1603, Roelandt moved to Prague.⁴⁴⁶ His

⁴⁴⁴ The different drawing styles of the two brothers are outlined in Mielke, "Review: L'époque de Lucas de Leyde et Pierre Bruegel: Dessins Des Anciens Pays-Bas: Collection Frits Lugt," 80.

⁴⁴⁵ Kotková discusses the possibility that Roelandt was born in 1578, not 1576, on the basis of uncertain documentation. Kotková, *Roelandt Savery*, 20–21.

⁴⁴⁶ Based on a drawing, he was in Bohemia in 1600. Joaneath A. Spicer, "Roelandt Savery's Studies in Bohemia," in *Umění Časopis Ústavu Dějin Umění Československé Akademie Věd*, 18 (Prague: Nakladatelství Československé Akademie Věd, 1970), 4. However, a signed deed places him in Amsterdam in 1603. Kotková, *Roelandt Savery*, 27.

Plundering of a Village (Kortrijk, Broelsmuseum) (fig. 74), a work heavily influenced by Bruegel's *Massacre of the Innocents* (fig. 12), then in the imperial collection in Prague, is dated 1604.⁴⁴⁷ Roelandt stayed in the employ of the imperial court until 1615,⁴⁴⁸ when he returned to the Netherlands, first to Amsterdam, and then to Utrecht, where he was settled by 1618.⁴⁴⁹

For Rudolf II's *kunstkammer*, he produced paintings, watercolors, drawings, and designs for engravings of landscapes, animals, and flowers.⁴⁵⁰ Rudolf II sent him on an expedition to describe the awesome mountainous landscape of the Tyrol in 1606-1607. The resulting drawings, which were engraved for a print series, recall Bruegel's alpine landscapes.

⁴⁴⁷ Kotková, *Roelandt Savery*, 59.

Savery's *Plundering of a Village* is not a direct copy of any element of Bruegel's work, but retains the same violence of a village being pillaged by soldiers. Vibrant colors against the snowy background lend to this frenetic mood. Most interesting is that Savery likely saw the censored version of the work, possibly the version now in the Royal Collection. In this work, not only has the subject of the biblical massacre been erased by transforming murdered children into hams, cheeses, geese, and goats, but all references to the Duke of Alva and Philip II of Spain have similarly been covered. Véronique Bücken, *The British Royal Collection: Van Bruegel Tot Rubens* (Brussels: XXXXX, 2008), 93–97. It is only through other copies that the slain babies and references to contemporary violence emerge. See Campbell, *The Early Flemish Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, 13–14; Kunzle, *From Criminal to Courtier*, 35–62, 103–12; Kavalier, *Pieter Bruegel*; Joseph Gregory, *Contemporization as Polemical Device in Pieter Bruegel's Biblical Narratives*, vol. 35, *Studies in Art and Religious Interpretation* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005), 3–4.

⁴⁴⁸ After the death of Rudolf II, Savery seems to have continued in the court's employ under Emperor Matthias. Peter C. Sutton, *Dutch & Flemish Paintings: The Collection of Willem Baron van Dedem* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2002), 225.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

In Utrecht, Savery collaborated with numerous artists, including Cornelis van Haarlem, Paulus Moreelse, Cornelis van Poelenburgh, Jan Pynas, and Joachim Wtewael, as well as found great artistic success with the local and international collecting community. However, he declared bankruptcy in 1638. Prague/Kortrijk 2010, 39-41, Sutton 2002, 225.

⁴⁵⁰ These works were pictorial additions to Rudolf II's imperial *kunstkammer*. See Kaufmann, *The School of Prague*, 74–89.

Roelandt Savery accurately described his Bohemian surroundings in a group of *naer het leven* drawings that were formerly attributed to Bruegel the Elder.⁴⁵¹ Comprised of some eighty drawings, these figural studies seem to be studies for more finished drawings and compositions.⁴⁵² The misattribution to Bruegel stems, in part, from Van Mander's claim that Bruegel, who observed peasants in their country villages, "drew many small views from life."⁴⁵³

Savery's accurate representations of Bohemian village costumes extended to his topographically recognizable depictions of landmarks around Prague and Bohemia. In *Peasants before an Inn* (1606, Brussels, MRBAB) (fig. 75),⁴⁵⁴ Savery presents an intimate view of peasants clustered tightly around the inn's table. This close composition of neckless peasants in earthy hues recalls Van Mander's *Peasants*

⁴⁵¹ See Spicer, "Roelandt Savery's Studies in Bohemia," 270–75; "The 'Naer Het Leven' Affair," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 5, no. 3/4 (1971): 137–38; Frans Van Leeuwen, "Figuurstudies van 'P. Bruegel' (The 'Naer Het Leven' Drawings by 'P. Brueghel')," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 5, no. 3/4 (1971): 139–49; Joaneath A. Spicer, "The Drawings of Roelandt Savery" (Yale University, 1979), 196–246; "Review: L'époque de Lucas de Leyde et Pierre Bruegel: Dessins Des Anciens Pays-Bas: Collection Frits Lugt," 78–84. Savery's paintings often contain descriptive references to actual landmarks as well. For example, in *Peasant Kermis* (St. Petersburg, The Hermitage) from 1606, Roelandt paints a distant view of the Vltava River. *Peasants before an Inn in the Lesser Town* (c.1608, France, private collection) also references local landmarks, here an accurate depiction of Lesser Town with Prague Castle. Spicer, "Referencing Invention," 99–101.

⁴⁵² Savery used his *naer het leven* drawings as preliminary sketches for later works. A market woman in a figure drawing (The Netherlands, private collection) re-appears in a peasant kermis (Dennis Flower collection). Other kermis paintings may have had lost *naer het leven* drawings as sources for some of the individual figures. Bohemian costumes, such as the ones worn by some of Savery's drawn figures, feature in his 1606 *Kermis* (St. Petersburg, The Hermitage) as well as other works. Spicer, "Roelandt Savery's Studies in Bohemia," 5; Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 263. Notes of garments' colors appear in the margins. Jacob Savery also made color notations in his drawings from life. Spicer, "The Drawings of Roelandt Savery," 198.

⁴⁵³ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r.

⁴⁵⁴ The foreground of this painting is replicated in another painting from around c.1608 that features the features of Prague's Lesser Town in the background. Kotková, *Roelandt Savery*, 99.

Merrymaking as well, and may have inspired David Vinckboons's rough peasant manner.

In cooler, brighter tones, Savery painted smaller figures in a more expansive setting in *Peasant Dancing before an Inn* (1605 or 1615, Collection Willem Baron van Dedem) (fig. 34).⁴⁵⁵ With a slightly higher viewpoint and cool, crisp colors, this painting suggests the influence of Jan Brueghel the Elder. The general setting, particularly the elevated walkway and tower in the background appear in three other paintings by Savery, as well as a drawing that may be attributed to Savery.⁴⁵⁶

Sebastiaan Vranckx (1573-1647)

Karel van Mander mentions Sebastiaan Vranckx as having trained with Adam van Noort, and was “now about 31 years old, [and] very subtle at landscape, little horses and figures.”⁴⁵⁷ Van Mander's characterizing of this Antwerp artist is quite accurate; he painted landscapes, combat scenes, and compositions filled with many small figures. His Roman sketchbook, filled with landscapes he drew while in Italy in the late 1690s, demonstrate the landscape style he derived from Paul Bril.⁴⁵⁸ He was also a noted rhetorician with the rederijders chamber, *De Violieren*.⁴⁵⁹ Vranckx

⁴⁵⁵ Sutton notes that Savery stopped painting dancing peasants by 1610, so a reading of the date is more likely 1605. Sutton, *Dutch & Flemish Paintings*, 222.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.295v.

⁴⁵⁸ Michael Jaffé, “The Roman Sketchbook of Sebastian Vranckx at Chatsworth,” in *Die Malerei Antwerpens : Gattungen, Meister, Wirkungen : Studien Zur Flämischen Kunst Des 16. Und 17. Jahrhunderts, Internationales Kolloquium Wien, 1993* (Cologne: Locher, 1994), 195–205.

⁴⁵⁹ See “De Schilder Sebastiaan Vranckx (1573-1647) Als Rederijker,” *Jaarboek van Het Koninklijk Museum Voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen*, 1982, 165–86.

collaborated with Jan Brueghel the Elder, and contributed the figures for three battle scenes from 1612-1618, for which Brueghel painted the landscapes.⁴⁶⁰

“Little horses and figures” feature in Vrancx’s Bruegelian works. In *Market Day in a Flemish Village* (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 76), small figures populate a great city square. Influenced by Bruegel’s *Kermis at Hoboken* (fig. 7) and Baltens’ *Performance of the Farce ‘Een Cluyte van Plaeyerwater’ at a Flemish Kermis* (fig. 50), this painting fills the cityscape with the bustle of peasants and citizens, though coincides with contemporary trends by lowering the viewpoint.⁴⁶¹ At the far left, a motif of a drunk escorted home by his wife and child recalls one found in other paintings and prints by fellow Bruegelians, as detailed in a later chapter.

Winter scenes inspired by Bruegel’s *Winter Scene with Bird Trap* (1565, Brussels, MRBAB) ((fig. 77) and Frans Huys’s print after Breugel’s *Skaters before the St. George Gate* (1558) (fig. 78) proliferated in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Vrancx’s *Winter Scene on the Scheldt* (1622, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 79) is an example of the elegant terminus of the genre’s development.⁴⁶² Urbane citizens of Antwerp perambulate, skate, and mingle with

⁴⁶⁰ *Attack of the Soldiers* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), *Attack* (Galerie de l’Etat de’ Aschaffenburg), and *Cavalry Battle* (Belgium, private collection). Ertz, *Jan Brueghel Der Ältere* 1979, 505–8; J. Van der Auwera, “Sebastiaan Vrancx (1573-1647) En Zijn Samenwerking Met Jan I Brueghel (1568-1625),” *Jaarboek van Het Koninklijk Museum Voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen*, 1981, 151; Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 173, 296, n.37.

⁴⁶¹ See also *Das Hagelkreuzfest in Ekeren* (1622, Munich, Alte Pinakothek). Renger and Denk, *Flämische Malerei*, n.504. The *Dutch Proverbs* (c.1630, Brussels, MRBAB) by Sebastiaan Vrancx has a similar compositional layout.

⁴⁶² See also the works of Hendrick Avercamp (1585-1634), an isolated Bruegelian in the Netherlands. Seymour Slive, *Dutch Painting: 1600-1800* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 181–82; Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 169.

lower-class residents along the cold banks of the river, enjoying the rare opportunity to skate on the river.⁴⁶³ Vrancx's clear palette and delicate brushstrokes combine with the small, intricately detailed figures to produce an elegant composition.

Abel Grimmer (after 1570- after 1619)

Brief mention must be made of Jacob Grimmer (c.1526- after 1590) before discussing his son, Abel Grimmer. A contemporary of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Jacob received Van Mander's praise as a naturalistic landscapist whose focus was on the environs of Antwerp.⁴⁶⁴ In addition to landscapes in the period style, Jacob Grimmer, along with his son Abel, painted imitations of Bruegel's work, which were sold at reduced prices in the Antwerp market.⁴⁶⁵

This painting appears in William van Haecht's *The Cabinet of Cornelis van der Gheest* (1638, Antwerp, Rubenshuis), where its inclusion could reference the fact that the painting represents a view from close to Van der Gheest's home.

Julius Held identifies a landscape by Bruegel the Elder high on the window wall in the painting, though its style and subject are more reminiscent of Jan Breughel the Elder Julius Held, "Artis Pictoriae Amator: An Antwerp Art Patron and His Collection," *Gazette Des Beaux-Arts* 50 (1957): 62–64, nn.26, 72–74.

⁴⁶³ The river froze in 1608, an important year for Van der Geest, who described the rare occurrence. The previous instance of its freezing was in 1564, when Bruegel may have drawn *Skaters Before the St. George's Gate*. Held, "Artis Pictoriae Amator," 73–74.

⁴⁶⁴ Van Mander wrote, "He made many views of landscapes from life, around Antwerp and elsewhere, and was so outstanding at landscape that in some ways I know of none better, he was that lively and subtle in his skies, in which he captured the clarity of life, and also in all other details he followed life absolutely naturally, be it in the houses, the distant landscapes, or the foregrounds." Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol. 256v.

Jacob Grimmer's *Village on the Schelde* (1587, Antwerp, Koninklijke Museum voor Schone Kunsten) used Bruegel's traditional three-part landscape construction. Both elegant and rustic figures populate the countryside, though all are slender, as if not to overwhelm the landscape they inhabit.

Grimmer collaborated with figural painters to add staffage to his landscapes. The squat, Bruegelian peasants in a landscape series from 1575, are likely by Lucas Van Valckenborch. Grimmer painted landscapes for works by Marten van Cleve and Gilles Mostaert. Wied, *Lucas Und Marten van Valckenborch*, 190; Bertier de Sauvigny, *Jacob et Abel Grimmer*, 19.

⁴⁶⁵ Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 189–90.

Van Mander does not mention Abel Grimmer in his 1604 publication of the *Lives of the Illustrious Painters*. By that time, however, Abel Grimmer was a prolific artist in Antwerp, churning out numerous paintings of the seasons, city squares, church interiors, delightful village landscapes, and copies of compositions by Pieter Bruegel.⁴⁶⁶ Paintings by him were even occasionally valued on par with those by Jan Brueghel the Elder, and higher than those by Anthony van Dyck and David Teniers.⁴⁶⁷ He collaborated with Frans Francken the Younger, Pieter Baltens, and Sebastiaan Vrancx.⁴⁶⁸

Many of Abel Grimmer's most successful works borrow from prints after Bruegel's compositions, either in entirety or for key elements. The *Four Seasons* (*Spring*, *Summer*, *Autumn*, and *Winter*, all 1607, Antwerp, KMSKA) (figs. 43-44, 80-81) copy the series of the seasons Hieronymous Cock published after Pieter Bruegel's *Spring* (fig. 59) and *Summer* (fig. 60) and Hans Bol's *Autumn* (fig. 57) and *Winter* (fig. 58). However, Grimmer's paintings are not exact replications of the prints: Grimmer simplified the compositions by removing some figures and increasing the space between pictorial elements. For example, in *Winter*, Grimmer eliminated the fallen skater behind the elegant couple on the ice. He shrank all of the figures, which isolated each figure and grouping, making the overall effect less cohesive. Grimmer's

⁴⁶⁶ Records only document one student for Abel Grimmer, Antoine de Riddler, in 1597. Bertier de Sauvigny, *Jacob et Abel Grimmer*, 31.

⁴⁶⁷ Grimmer's painting of a *Tower of Babel* in the Forchoudt collection was valued at 60 gulden, while in the same collection a Van Dyck *St Anthony* was 40, and a Teniers was 18. Denucé, *Inventories*, 55; Bertier de Sauvigny, *Jacob et Abel Grimmer*, 11, 31, 51–53.

⁴⁶⁸ Alexandra Onuf, "Small Landscapes in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp," *The Burlington Magazine* 150, no. 1260 (March 2008): 190.

painted version of Cock's *Four Seasons* is unusual in his oeuvre, in that it focuses on quite large figures and minimizes the distant landscape.⁴⁶⁹

In Grimmer's series of roundels of the four seasons and the twelve months of the year, one finds landscape elements from prints by the Master of the Small Landscapes.⁴⁷⁰ Hieronymous Cock first published the print series *The Small Landscapes* in 1559, and then added more views in a second group published in 1561. When he republished the series as a whole in 1601, Philips Galle wrongly attributed the works to Cornelis Cort. In 1612, Claes Jansz. Visscher published the series yet again, this time adding Pieter Bruegel the Elder's name as inventor.⁴⁷¹

Many of Grimmer's paintings using backgrounds from the Small Landscapes are undated, but a roundel of *November* (Private Collection, Belgium) (fig. 82) is dated 1614, when Bruegel's name was already formally associated with the design.⁴⁷² Grimmer based his village on the print *Village Road with a Draw Well* (1561) (fig. 83), altering the composition to fit his roundel format.⁴⁷³ In this instance, he eliminated the lush foliage from the trees to place the scene in the dismal days of November, as evoked by the damp brown hues of the village street. In general,

⁴⁶⁹ The *Four Seasons* is also unusual, in that it is a single version of a group of paintings. Grimmer notoriously copied his paintings several times.

⁴⁷⁰ Onuf, "Small Landscapes," passim.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 190.

⁴⁷² Pieter Brueghel the Younger also used several landscapes from the Small Landscape series, including this same scene for a version of *The Drunk Taken Home by his Wife*, a painting discussed in chapter four. Ibid.; Johnny van Haefen, *Dutch and Flemish Old Master Paintings* (London, 2011), n.9.

⁴⁷³ Onuf, "Small Landscapes," 190.

Grimmer's populated villages diverge from the largely empty print landscapes.⁴⁷⁴ In *November*, a herdsman guides his cattle home, joining other villagers who head home before the early sun sets. Grimmer's figures are wholly original, though in subject matter they recall Bruegel's *Return of the Herd (October/November)* (fig. 4). The figures are stock figures that appear in other works, and were painted on top of the completed landscape painting by Grimmer or a workshop assistant.⁴⁷⁵

David Vinckboons (1576-1632)

Karel van Mander did not seem to care for the art of David Vinckboons, but he included the painter in his biographies on the account of his popularity with art collectors.⁴⁷⁶ He admits that Vinckboons "[makes] very subtle little figures which look excellently good," in numerous media, and is an accomplished landscapist for whom Nicholaes de Bruyn engraved the designs.⁴⁷⁷ Today, Vinckboons is best known

⁴⁷⁴ Onuf argues that this may be why the association between the prints and the Grimmer works were only identified recently. *Ibid.*, 192.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁶ At the time Van Mander's *Lives* were published in 1604, Vinckboons was about 30 years old. Many of the works for which he is celebrated today were painted significantly later.

Van Mander's testimony is a bit conflicting. On the one hand, he seems not to value Vinckboons's work, and includes the artist due to his popularity with other art lovers.

"If my own understanding or judiciousness is not good enough in itself to write with discrimination and proper discretion about the practitioners of our art or their works, I nevertheless avoid comparing artists with one another or childishly undervaluing anyone, or setting the one higher than the other so that the other suffers harm. I therefore thought it all to the good (in order not to lapse into blameworthy mistakes) to make it a habit, when I enter the houses of art lovers, to take heed and note which art-full works and by whose hand have been gathered and been valued there as being special and excellent. For although in my own opinion I do rely somewhat on my own knowledge, or I believe myself to have an understanding, at the same time I like also to follow the consensus of those who understand art. And therefore I cannot omit here to remember David Vinckboons..."

At the same time, he concludes his biography of Vinckboons with praise, stating that "These things are sufficiently common and known by everyone and can therefore vouch for his talent and accomplishment in art. ... but for his clever, lively works and according to his skill, effort, time, work and merit he is rewarded far too little." Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.299r–299v.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, v.1, fol.299r–299v.

for his merry companies, paintings gathering elegant figures in beautiful gardens or interiors.⁴⁷⁸

David Vinckboons was born in Mechelen in 1576, and fled with his family first to Antwerp, then to the Northern Netherlands. They had settled in Amsterdam by 1591.⁴⁷⁹ Vinckboons' father, Philip Vinckboons, was a painter of watercolor tapestries who had connections to Hans Bol, Gillis van Coninxloo, and Jacob Savery.⁴⁸⁰

Vinckboons's early landscapes demonstrate an affinity with the wooded landscapes of Bol and Coninxloo,⁴⁸¹ as well as Van Valckenborch and Bruegel. However, unlike the work of those artists, who focused on the wilds of nature, Vinckboons's landscapes serve to provide a setting for human inhabitation.

Van Mander's list of paintings by Vinckboons features his figural works, particularly biblical scenes and peasants. Of the seven paintings Van Mander listed by name or subject, three are of peasant subjects: a *Peasant Fair*, "very full of subtle and

⁴⁷⁸ These works come out of the traditions of the medieval Garden of Love, as well as images of the Prodigal Son. Sebastian Vrancx was also a painter of this subject. Jane Iandola Watkins, Peter Sutton, and Christopher Brown, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1984), 349–50.

⁴⁷⁹ In this year, David Vinckboons's father, Philip Vinckboons, received his citizenship from his adoptive new city. Goossens mentions that David Vinckboons spent some time in Frankenthaler, likely before the family settled in Amsterdam. However, he does not mention any works from this period. This mention is intriguing for the fact that Archduke Ernst spent time in Frankenthaler, bringing Lucas van Valckenborch with him. Another location-based similarity between Vinckboons and other Bruegelians such as Van Mander, (others?), is their shared native city of Mechelen. Goossens does highlight the Mechelen tapestry style found in the foliage of Vinckboons's early landscape paintings. Korneel Goossens, *David Vinckboons* (Soest-Holland: Davaco, 1977), 3–7.

⁴⁸⁰ The family lived on the Sint Antonieestraat, and were neighbors with Jacob Savery. Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 169.

⁴⁸¹ Upon the death of Coninxloo in 1607, David Vinckboons purchased a number of his drawings. Ibid., 173–74.

lively postures”; and two *Peasant Weddings*, one “very subtly executed,” and the other “full of excellently handsome details, various little figures as well as houses, ships and landscape, and also well composed.”⁴⁸²

Peasant Kermis from c.1608 (Munich, Alte Pinakothek) (fig. 84) accords with Van Mander’s characterization of Vinckboons’s peasant paintings with small figures executed delicately in detail. As a group of elegant city folk observe, the villagers drink, dance, and play. Arguments, overindulgence, and frantic movement among the peasants contrast with the refinement of the upper class visitors, who seem to comment on such boorish behavior. Most of Vinckboons’s peasant paintings and drawings date from 1601-1611, and follow a relatively standard compositional program with an inn at the foreground, from which a tree-lined lane plunges towards a church in the background.⁴⁸³

The intimate drawing of a bordello scene is representative of Vinckboons’s peasant imagery (c.1608, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 35). Set outside an inn, a curious mix of peasants, soldiers, and well-dressed women are observed by the patroness looking out her inn window. The work is characteristic of many of Vinckboons’s peasant paintings, with large figures and a slightly negative view of the subject. In the background, a drunk is escorted home by his wife, a motif featured in chapter four. Also seen in the background is the blind hurdy-gurdy player surrounded by children. This motif, a descendant of Bruegel’s *The Blind Leading the Blind* (1568,

⁴⁸² Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.299v.

⁴⁸³ Vinckboons made approximately a dozen paintings and drawings of peasants. Several compositions were copied as well as printed. Watkins, Sutton, and Brown, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting*, 351–52.

The late *Peasant Kermis* (1629, The Hague, Mauritshuis) is a singular exception to these limitations. Furthermore, this work presents a gentle peasantry, harmlessly celebrating the kermis.

Naples, Capodimonte Museum) (fig. 71), emerges in several of Vinckboons' paintings.⁴⁸⁴

A significant degree of violence permeates Vinckboons's peasant imagery, both of peasants celebrating and peasants in distress, *boerenverdriet*. The subject of *boerenverdriet* is familiar to many Bruegelian artists, and ultimately stems from Bruegel's *Massacre of the Innocents*.⁴⁸⁵ Vinckboons designed a print of this subject for inclusion of a series allegorizing the Twelve Years Truce, *Zinneprent op het Bestand* (c.1610) (fig. 33). Around 1619, he painted a pair of opposing panels, one of *Peasants' Distress* at the hands of unmerciful soldiers, the other *Peasants' Joy* (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum), in which the peasants violently enact their revenge (figs. 85-86). The coarse, boorish nature of peasants described by Vinckboons laid the foundation for later low-life genre paintings of peasants behaving roughly, particularly in the paintings by Adriaen Brouwer.

Vinckboons utilized flickering impastos to render both his bejeweled courtiers and festive peasants, the latter's ruddy tones and heavy brushwork made coarse. His figures are a round type, though more anatomically believable than many of the doughy forms of previous Bruegelians.

Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640)

Peter Paul Rubens retired from diplomatic office and freed from court life and spent the last decade of his life pursuing personal artistic interests, including

⁴⁸⁴ Example: *The Blind Hurdy Gurdy Player*, c.1606-1610. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 175-76.

⁴⁸⁵ Other artists noted for their *boerenverdriet* works are Jacob Savery, Hans Bol, Jan Brueghel, and Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Fishman, *Boerenverdriet*; Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 171-74, 178-79.

landscape paintings and works inspired by Pieter Bruegel. By his death in 1640, he had acquired at least twelve paintings by Bruegel, about half of which were landscape paintings.⁴⁸⁶ Five were “tronies” or “heads and busts of mostly anonymous, fictive and literary figures.”⁴⁸⁷ He was a close friend and collaborator of Jan Brueghel the Elder,⁴⁸⁸ and acquired paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Younger.⁴⁸⁹

Rubens demonstrated an interest in Bruegel’s compositions during his early years in Antwerp.⁴⁹⁰ In a drawing dated before 1600 (Lille, Palais des Beaux-Arts) (fig. 87), Rubens copied several groupings from Bruegel’s *Massacre of the Innocents* (c.1565-1566, England, Royal Collection) (fig. 12).⁴⁹¹ Bruegel’s painting was likely already in the collection of Emperor Rudolf II in Prague, and the gruesome details that identified it as the biblical subject had been obscured to make the piece more palatable to the Habsburg family as a generic scene of a village being plundered.⁴⁹² Rubens’ drawing includes elements, such as the child dragged from his mother’s

⁴⁸⁶ Kristin Lohse Belkin, *Rubens* (London: Phaidon Press, 1998), 309; Karolien De Clippel, “Rubens Meets Brouwer: Confrontations with Low-Life Genre Painting,” *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek (NKJ) / Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 55 (2004): 312. Included among the works was *Death of the Virgin* (c.1564, Banbury, National Trust, Upton House). Isabella Brandt brought the painting to her marriage with Rubens in 1609, and had obtained the grisaille from Abraham Ortelius upon his death. *Ibid.*, 315.

⁴⁸⁷ Cited in De Clippel, “Rubens Meets Brouwer,” 315.

⁴⁸⁸ For example, the two collaborated on the pendant portraits of Archduke Albert and Archduchess Isabella (both c.1615, Madrid, Museo del Prado) and on the series of the senses now in the Prado as well (1617). See Woollett and Van Suchtelen, *Rubens & Brueghel*.

⁴⁸⁹ Rubens retouched three paintings after Marten van Cleve, two of which were documented as the work of Pieter Brueghel the Younger. The third is now attributed to Brueghel the Younger. Vlieghe, “Rubens Emulating the Bruegel Tradition,” *passim*.

⁴⁹⁰ Rubens trained with Tobias Verhaecht (1561-1631), Adam van Noort (1562-1641), and Otto van Veen (c.1556-1629). He joined the Antwerp painter’s guild in 1598. “Rubens, Peter Paul, Sir.” <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/artist-info.1847.html> accessed 1/20/17

⁴⁹¹ De Clippel, “Rubens Meets Brouwer,” 315.

⁴⁹² Fishman, *Boerenverdriet*, 19–31; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 276–80.

grasp by the cruel soldier, that suggest he knew an untouched version of Bruegel's composition, like the late sixteenth-century copy now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum (fig. 88).

Few references to Bruegel's art can be found for most of Rubens' career. Rubens established himself in Italy from 1600-1608, where he secured a court appointment with Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua. In Italy, he studied the art of Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, Michelangelo, Raphael, and ancient statuary. He returned to Antwerp in 1608 and established a large workshop, which he needed for the commissions he received as court artist to the Archdukes Albert and Isabella. After Archduke Albert's death in 1621, he became an important advisor and diplomat for the Archduchess Isabella. He retired from diplomacy in 1630, purchased the estate of Het Steen, outside of Antwerp, in 1635, and retreated from public life. It is during these last years, both in Antwerp and Het Steen, that Rubens explored Bruegelian subjects and compositions.

A painting from about 1630 is one of the first of Rubens' works that reveals his Bruegelian interests. While titled *Flemish Kermis* (Paris, Musée du Louvre) (fig. 89), the scene does not necessarily represent a church celebration on a saint's day, but does express the raucous celebrations of peasants outside a tavern. The expansive scene corresponds with contemporary scenes of peasants merrymaking, like Bruegel's *Detroit Peasant Wedding* (fig. 1), as well as some by Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder, but is made much more dynamic with the strong diagonal leading from the peasants into the bucolic countryside beyond. A strong diagonal that leads out into the bucolic countryside and vibrant, loose brushwork gives dynamic

movement to a work in which peasants whirl themselves into dancing and drinking. The figures themselves are free in both representation and morals. As they dance barefooted, several women lose their garments. Other peasants lose the contents of their stomach, lose consciousness, or lose their sense of decency as they relieve themselves in the corner.

This painting coincides with Rubens' awareness not only in the art of Bruegel the Elder, but also that of Adriaen Brouwer. Some of the documentation for Brouwer's relocation to Antwerp in 1632 comes from Rubens' request that Brouwer authenticate a painting that Rubens had already purchased.⁴⁹³ The older master clearly appreciated the innovative paintings by Brouwer and acquired seventeen works by him.⁴⁹⁴ The loose brushwork demonstrated in Rubens' *Flemish Kermis* may relate to the technique and subjects of Brouwer's peasant paintings.⁴⁹⁵

Brouwer's depiction of emotions may have inspired Rubens, in the 1630s, to retouch a panel of *The Feast of St. Martin* by Pieter Brueghel the Younger after Marten van Cleve (Private Collection) (fig. 90). His retouches, which likely completed an incomplete painting, made the figures more emotive, the composition more cohesive, and enhanced a narrative element.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹³ Fishman, *Boerenverdriet*, 276–80.

⁴⁹⁴ Rubens owned more paintings by Brouwer than other artist in his collection, including Titian. The second most collected artist in his collection was Bruegel the Elder. Ibid., 305. Rubens' interest in Brouwer relates also to his involvement in representations of a print of *Peasants Fighting at Cards* by Lucas Vorstermann, possibly after Pieter Bruegel the Elder, which is detailed in note 503. See also Ibid., 313–14, n.44.

⁴⁹⁵ Vlieghe, "Rubens Emulating the Bruegel Tradition," 686; De Clippel, "Rubens Meets Brouwer," 325–27.

⁴⁹⁶ Vlieghe, "Rubens Emulating the Bruegel Tradition," 681–86; De Clippel, "Rubens Meets Brouwer," 320–25.

After his permanent move to Het Steen in 1635, Rubens painted companion pieces of his chateau and its surrounding countryside, *Het Steen* (c.1635-1638, London, National Gallery) (fig. 91) and *Landscape with a Rainbow* (c.1635-1638, London, Wallace Collection) (fig. 92). Taking liberties with the reality of the flat landscape, he placed his estate in a landscape of rolling hills and green trees. In *Het Steen*, farmers in a cart roll along the foreground, passing a hunter in the brambles. The composition seems inspired by Bruegel's three-part landscape schema, which Jan Brueghel the Elder embraced in many of his landscape paintings. *Landscape with a Rainbow* seems directly inspired by Bruegel's *Haymaking* (fig. 5), which may have been in the Archdukes' collection in Brussels while Rubens was employed by Albert and Isabella. Rather than depicting his path crossing along the foreground, Rubens plunged his road into the distance, a feature similarly found in many of Jan Brueghel the Elder's paintings, such as *Landscape with Travellers and Peasants on a Track* (1610, London, National Gallery) (fig. 93).

Peasant antics inspired by Bruegelian artists likely provided the compositional basis for Rubens' *Dance of Mythological Characters and Villagers* (c.1630-1635, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 94). With leaf-crowned bacchics and loosely-clad peasant women, the work is neither a true bucolic mythology nor a representation of peasant celebrants. The painting is a seamless amalgamation of Rubens' more

In the 1630s, Rubens had acquired this panel, as well as two others by Brueghel the Younger after Marten van Cleve, *Carneval*, and a *Lame Bishop on Copper Monday*, and may have used them to practice techniques to emulate both Van Cleve and Brouwer. The works subsequently appear in the collection of Arnold Lunden, brother-in-law of Rubens, in the 1640s. In an inventory from 1692, the *Carneval* and *Lame Bishop* are further described and attributed to Brueghel the Younger after Van Cleve. The *Feast of St. Martin* was painted on a panel prepared by an artisan active from 1615/1616 to 1637, so could not have been painted by Van Cleve. All three paintings may have been acquired directly from Pieter Brueghel the Younger and may have been incomplete. Vlieghe, "Rubens Emulating the Bruegel Tradition," 681, 684-86.

traditional iconography and Bruegelian peasant circle dances, represented frequently in the art of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Pieter Brueghel the Younger, David Teniers the Elder, and other emulative artists.

Late Bruegelians

Seventeenth-century Dutch, and to a lesser extent Flemish, painting is often associated with the naturalistic views of everyday life scenes. Imagery of peasants have been rebranded as low-life genre scenes, accounting for the increasing urbanization of the age. Increasingly focused on imagery of peasants or the lower classes at leisure, these paintings, drawings and prints still looked back to the tradition of peasant celebration, firmly epitomized and codified under the name of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Highlights of this seventeenth-century Bruegelian tradition include Adriaen Brouwer, Adriaen van Ostade, David Teniers the Younger, and Jan Steen.

Adriaen Brouwer (1605/6-1638)

Flemish by birth, Adriaen Brouwer emigrated to the Northern Netherlands in the early 1620s. Houbraken claimed that Brouwer studied with Frans Hals, though little in Brouwer's art suggests the association.⁴⁹⁷ Brouwer was in Amsterdam between 1625 and 1626, before moving to Haarlem, where he joined the *rederijkers* society. He was in Antwerp by the winter of 1631, and remained there until his death in 1638.

⁴⁹⁷ Franits suggests closer association between Brouwer's works of 1625-1627 and Esaias van de Velde and Willem Buytewech. Wayne Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 35.

Brouwer's lowlife subject matter lends comparison with the peasant scenes of Pieter Bruegel.⁴⁹⁸ During his Dutch years, his manner, too, particularly his bold palette, is reminiscent of the Flemish master.⁴⁹⁹ Brouwer's lowlife scenes often focused on rough behavior in smoky tavern interiors, and include an element of violence rarely found in the paintings of Bruegel. This pictorial emphasis owes much to *boerenvordriet* subjects of the Bruegelians, particularly David Vinckboons, whom Brouwer may have met while in Amsterdam. Arnold Houbraken characterized Brouwer as one of the uncouth drunks in his paintings, whose rough living led to an early death, writing, "Comical was his brushwork, comical was his life. As the man was, so was his work."⁵⁰⁰ However, Brouwer was included in the elite artistic community in Antwerp, his portrait added to Anthony van Dyck's *Iconologia* (1646) with the inscription "'Gryllorum pictor', painter of caprices."⁵⁰¹ Brouwer's peasant paintings were a modern update to subject matter perpetuated by Pieter Brueghel the

⁴⁹⁸ Additionally, elements such as peasants guzzling from a jug are reminiscent of figures in Bruegel's *Gula* and *The Fat Kitchen*. Ibid.

Brouwer's late landscape paintings are also reminiscent of Bruegel's landscape drawings and prints, which had found resonance with many Bruegelians in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. See Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 161–205.

⁴⁹⁹ Later works demonstrate a restriction of color that corresponds with the monochromatic trend in 1630s Dutch art. Larsen, *Seventeenth Century Flemish Painting*, 316–17.

⁵⁰⁰ Cited in Hendrik J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, vol. 1 (Doornspijk: Davaco, 2000), 184.

Gerard Knuttel, *Adriaen Brouwer: The Master and His Work*, trans. J.G. Talma-Schilthuis and Robert Wheaton (The Hague: L.J.C. Boucher, 1962), 9–22.

Houbraken also emphasized the "art imitates life" aspect in his biography of Jan Steen, a concept that reaches back through Van Mander and into antiquity. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited*, 1:184, 186; Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, 36.

⁵⁰¹ The inscription, as well as some errors, were printed after Van Dyck's death. Knuttel, *Adriaen Brouwer*, 21.

However, other aspects of Brouwer's life, including his membership in *rederijker* chambers and use of the title "Signor," suggest the artist was not a scoundrel. Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, 36.

Younger, and presented a juxtaposition to the erudite and sumptuous history paintings of Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony van Dyck.

An early work from his Amsterdam year, *Fighting Peasants* (1625-1626, The Hague, Mauritshuis) (fig. 95) sets squabbling peasants outside a hovel.⁵⁰² A card game has just ended, but the entire table seems upset at the outcome. A man in archaic dress reaches for his sword in defense of the bamboozled loser, whose sword is ready for the attack. Even the pigs in the lower right corner are frenetic in excitement. The exaggerated emotions, emphasized most clearly in the bulging eyes of the seated man who was swindled by the standing dandy in sixteenth-century dress, may have been inspired by a print by Lucas Vorsterman of *Peasants Fighting over a Game of Cards* (early 1620s) (fig. 24), identified by the inscription as based by a design by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.⁵⁰³ Brouwer's painting minimizes the excessive

⁵⁰² Houbraken describes a painting of this subject: "He [Brouwer] painted a fight between Farmers and Soldiers, arising (so it seems) out of a card game, of which the cards were strewn everywhere on the ground. Here one strikes the other on the head with a beer tankard, there another lies felled to the ground, with the pallor of death already set in, but who still seems to want to avenge himself with his foil, which he tries to remove from its sheath during the struggle. On the other side I see one rising from his chair in total rage, with his knife in his fist, as if he would force his way among the champions. In the distance one sees someone descending the stairs in all haste with a pair of tongs in his hand, etc.

Everything was depicted so naturally according to the kind of passions in the facial features, and painted so wonderfully confident and free that it could serve as an example of his Art." Cited in De Clippel, "Rubens Meets Brouwer," 313-14, n.44.

⁵⁰³ Vorsterman identified his print as after a design by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, but dedicates the work to Jan Brueghel the Elder. Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 196.

Its actual source is still debatable. While Vorsterman may have seen a drawing by Bruegel the Elder in Jan Brueghel the Elder's possession, he may also have based his print on a copy of Bruegel's design painted by Rubens. Jeffrey M. Muller, *Rubens: The Artist as Collector* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 60, 120, n.143; Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 196.

A painting of this subject was sold from Jan Brueghel the Elder's estate in 1626. Liedtke, "'Peasants Fighting Over Cards,'" 126; Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 196.

Between 1626-1630, Lord Arundel wrote to his agent in Antwerp, asking him to "receive for me a peece of painting begunne by Bruegels and finished by Mostard; being a squabbling of clownes fallen out at Cardes, w^{ch} is in stampe by Mr. Lucas Vorsterman, and w^{ch} shal be brought unto you by order of a letter from Vorstermann..." Cited in Liedtke, "'Peasants Fighting Over Cards,'" 127.

Rather than a painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, the Arundel painting was more probably a work by Jan Brueghel the Elder (Brugels), who often collaborated with Gillis Mostaert (Mostard). Archduke

physical violence of Vorsterman's print, and the artist used facial expression to convey the anguish and tension between players. Behind the table, combatants struggle with one another, but in a more constrained fashion than the flailing assailants in Vorsterman's print. In characteristic Brouwer fashion, he included a man relieving himself in the background.⁵⁰⁴

Brouwer often utilized overly expressive faces to convey humor and emotion in his peasant subjects. His *tronie* paintings and prints isolated and emphasized the ability of facial features to convey emotional depth. The *tronies*, like *Youth Making a Face* (1632/1635, Washington, National Gallery of Art) (fig. 96) and *The Bitter Draft* (1636-1638, Frankfurt am Main, Städelches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie) (fig. 97) recall a work sometimes attributed to Bruegel, *The Yawning Man* (Brussels, MRBAB) (fig. 98).⁵⁰⁵

Leopold William's inventory of 1659 contained a version attributed to Jan Brueghel the Elder. Ibid., 127-30, n.11.

However, inventories and surviving works point to the existence of a lost work of this subject by Bruegel the Elder. The 1640 inventory of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) includes "*un combat des paysans, fait après un dessein de vieux Bruegel*" ("a peasant fight, made after a design by Bruegel the Elder"). However, this listing may actually refer to an oil sketch by Rubens after Bruegel the Elder. A chalk drawing attributed to Rubens, likely from 1619-1620, is a fluid depiction of the main combatants in the composition (Rotterdam, Boymans-van Beuningen Museum) (fig. xx). Ibid., 127-28.

One of the complete paintings, formerly attributed to Jan Brueghel the Elder, may actually originate in Rubens' studio. The version was in Kroměříž, Czechoslovakia, which Genaille attributed to Jan Brueghel the Elder, but Marlier reattributed to Rubens' studio. Genaille, *Bruegel, l'Ancien*, 92-93; Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 272; Liedtke, "'Peasants Fighting Over Cards,'" 130, n.32.

The greatest evidence of a lost painting by Bruegel the Elder are the numerous versions of *Peasants Fighting over Cards* by Pieter Brueghel the Younger. The earliest of these is dated 1610, which was arguably before the Brueghel the Younger ventured into painting original compositions. Several versions date to around 1619-1622. Ibid., 127-30; Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 766-774, 787-792.

Jan Brueghel the Younger (1601-1678), son of Jan Brueghel the Elder, also painted several versions, at least one of which may include the hand of Jan Brughel the Elder. Ibid., v.2, 769, fig. 613.

See also page 80 for Steen's use of this similar composition.

⁵⁰⁴ As often observed and pointed out by Arthur Wheelock.

⁵⁰⁵ *The Head of a Woman* (c.1568, Munich, Alte Pinakothek) is the only head study firmly attributed to Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 257.

After the death of Adriaen Brouwer in 1638, a number of tronie prints formerly attributed to Pieter Bruegel the Elder were reassigned to the younger artist (fig. 99).⁵⁰⁶ The original series of seventy-two oval peasant types, printed as pairs with humorous, often derogatory names attached with each figure was first published in Antwerp in c.1564-1565. In this form, it was re-issued twice, the third edition in 1658. Twelve plates in reverse were alternately inscribed with either Bruegel's or Brouwer's name.⁵⁰⁷ Though it is unclear if Brouwer attached his name to the prints, contemporary audiences accepted the attribution and association between Brouwer and Bruegel.

Adriaen van Ostade (1610-1685)

Houbraken also claimed that the Haarlem native Adriaen van Ostade studied with Frans Hals, and would have done so around the same time as Brouwer.⁵⁰⁸ Though the connection with Hals may have been inaccurate, the association between Ostade and Brouwer is obvious. Ostade's peasant imagery of caricatured peasants at excess diverges from those by Brouwer in that they are not as violent and tend to be

Rubens owned several tronies by Bruegel. See Muller, *Rubens: The Artist as Collector*, 60; Allart, "Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father's Paintings?," 50; Sellink, *Bruegel*, 272. For a print tronie attributed to Pieter Bruegel the Elder, which Ertz gives to Pieter Brueghel the Younger and dates after 1616, see Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 175, n.A22; Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 961.

⁵⁰⁶ Konrad Renger, *Adriaen Brouwer Und Das Niederländische Bauerngenre, 1600-1660* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 1986), 23.

⁵⁰⁷ René van Bastelaer, *Les Estampes de Peter Bruegel l'Ancient* (Brussels: G. Van Oest & Co., 1908), 312–13; F.W.H. Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, 1450-1700*, vol. III (Amsterdam: M. Hertzberger, 1950), 310–12; Arthur K. Wheelock, *Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century*, The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue (Washington and Oxford: National Gallery of Art and Oxford University Press, 1995), 12–13; Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 176–84.

⁵⁰⁸ Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, 41–42.

more jocular, particularly later in his career.⁵⁰⁹ While Brouwer focused on facial expressions to convey emotion, Ostade used body language and the setting to articulate a narrative.⁵¹⁰

Documentation of Ostade's artistic career all dates to after Brouwer left for Antwerp. Ostade enrolled in the Guild of St. Luke in 1634, but received payment for a painting as early as 1632.⁵¹¹ His brother, Isaack (1621-1649), a talented genre painter whose career was cut short by his untimely death, is one of several students of Adriaen van Ostade. Though he was likely raised Protestant, he may have converted to Catholicism when he married his second wife in 1657.⁵¹²

Parallels to Van Mander's biography of Pieter Bruegel the Elder surface in Houbraken's account of Adriaen van Ostade's paintings. Houbraken's description of Ostade's painted "figures in their costumes doing all sorts of activities, so naturally peasantlike and witty that it is astonishing how he was able to contrive it"⁵¹³ recalls Mander's claim that Bruegel "knew how to attire these men and women peasants very characteristically in Kempish or other costume, and how to express very naturally that simple, peasant appearance in their dancing, toing and froing and other activities."⁵¹⁴

Ostade almost exclusively painted peasant subjects, the genre that developed out of the Bruegel tradition. Beyond merely subject matter, though, it is clear that

⁵⁰⁹ Watkins, Sutton, and Brown, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting*, 284.

⁵¹⁰ Van Ostade's figures tended to be more generic than Brouwer's, and their faces are often hidden under a hat. *Ibid.*, 282–83.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, 281–82.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, 281.

⁵¹³ Cited in *ibid.*, 284.

⁵¹⁴ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r.

Ostade based at least one composition on a work by Bruegel. A painting of a *Peasant Kitchen* (J. Dollfus 1912) (fig. 100) and related drawing (Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle) (fig. 101), both dated c.1637, relate to Bruegel's *Fat Kitchen* and *Lean Kitchen* prints (1563) (figs. 29-30). Ostade combined elements from both of Bruegel's kitchen scenes into a single image of a peasant meal. The figures are not all fat or all thin, but rather representative of reality. A plump mother wipes her child's bottom in the left foreground, before a crowded table of peasants enjoying the meal. A child scrapes the bottom of a pot on a stool in front of the table, hoping for some remnants in a way suggestive of the child peering into the empty pot in Bruegel's *Lean Kitchen*. In the background, a man pushes another out the door, a motif sourced from Bruegel's *Fat Kitchen*. In Ostade's painting, a man huddling by the fire recalls the emaciated man stirring a pot in Bruegel's *Lean Kitchen*. A calmer, almost tender scene, the drawing and painting are demonstrative of Ostade's naturalistic interpretation of Bruegel's compositions.

Ostade's 1668 *Interior of a Peasant's Cottage* (England, Royal Collection) (fig. 102) is an example of the seventeenth-century trend towards placid views of everyday life, here exhibited in a poor family's home. Though the family lives in squalor, evidenced by the missing glass window and the rubbish-strewn dirt floor, a sense of tenderness permeates the activities of a family partaking in their daily meal.⁵¹⁵ Both mother and father engage with the infant as the older child finishes his

⁵¹⁵ Details in this painting suggest that the family was not always so destitute. The windows are beautifully executed, and include stained glass, and a violin hangs on the wall. A verse inscribed below an etching after a painting of a peasant family by Ostade reinforces the interpretation of the scene as tenderly human. "Yet we love our child from the heart, and that is no trifle./ Thus we regard our miserable hovel as a splendid mansion." Cited in Watkins, Sutton, and Brown, *Masters of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting*, 286.

porridge. Ostade approached this theme several times throughout his career, most notably in his 1647 etching of *The Family* (fig. 103) and later in *Asking for the Doll* (1679, etching) (fig. 104).⁵¹⁶

The generic peasant family subject in these works by Ostade has its roots in sixteenth-century paintings by Pieter Bruegel the Elder and Marten van Cleve.⁵¹⁷ For example, in *Visit to the Farm*, a subject known in works by both Jan Brueghel the Elder (c.1597, Antwerp, KMSKA) (fig. 23) and Pieter Brueghel the Younger (Antwerp, KMSKA), presumably after a lost painting by Bruegel the Elder, a wealthy burgher couple dressed in elegant black visits the pious and bustling farm of a peasant family.⁵¹⁸ Each peasant engages in industrious behavior, churning butter or safely rearing children, as a large cauldron boils in the center. Marten van Cleve also painted several variants of the subject, including *The Formal Visit* (late 1570s, Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art) (fig.105).⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ And also resonate with Rembrandt's *Holy Family with a Curtain* (1646, Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen) and the *Holy Family with St. Anne* (c.1640, Paris, Louvre) that was formerly attributed to Rembrandt. Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Jan Brueghel the Elder painted this composition twice, once in grisaille (Antwerp) and once in color on copper (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum). Pieter Brueghel the Younger painted the work several times, all in color. Though the compositions are almost identical, those by Jan and those by Pieter are of different sizes, so are not based on the same compositional cartoon. Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 255–61; Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, 454, 474–86; Currie and Allart, *The Brueghel Phenomenon*, v.3, 840–841, 872–873.

⁵¹⁹ In some of Van Cleve's works, for example, the version in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, the visitors behave less decorously with their female hosts, and seem to take advantage of their position in relation to the peasants. The works do not seem to condemn their behavior, but treat the women as objects for their taking. See Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 62–64, 109, 187–90.

These paintings humanize the peasants, much as Ostade did in his depictions of the family. By eliminating the wealthy visitors in his compositions, however, Ostade substituted the viewer for the wealthy visitors.

David Teniers the Younger (1610-1690)

The son of a struggling history painter, David Teniers the Younger found initial success following the model of Adriaen Brouwer's peasant paintings.⁵²⁰ Brouwer had settled in Antwerp by 1631, and Teniers registered with the St. Luke's Guild in 1632-1633. In addition to peasant subjects, Teniers also executed histories, portraits, and, later in his career, gallery paintings. In 1637, Teniers married Anna Brueghel, the daughter of the late Jan Brueghel the Elder, and assumed guardianship of his wife's younger siblings. His status in the Antwerp art community continually rose, and in the 1640s, he painted for the international art dealer Chrystostomus van Immerseel; Antonius Triest, Bishop of Ghent; and even King Philip IV of Spain.⁵²¹ In 1650, he joined the court of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in Brussels as *pintor de camera*, a court painter as well as curator of the archducal art collection.⁵²² In this role, he promoted the Archduke's collection through the gallery paintings of his employer's collection, which were gifted to powerful art patrons throughout Europe. He also compiled and published the *Theatrum Pictorium*, a book of engravings after Leopold-Wilhelm's Italian masterpieces.⁵²³ After Leopold-Wilhelm left Brussels for

⁵²⁰ Vlieghe, *David Teniers the Younger*, 10–14, 20–21.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, 11–29.

⁵²² In a letter to his brother, Emperor Ferdinand III, in 1647, Leopold Wilhelm praised Teniers' naturalism, "*als nach dem Leben gemacht*" ("like after life"). *Ibid.*, 27, 31–32, 34.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, 36–41.

Austria in 1656, Teniers remained at the archducal court as *ayuda da camera* for the new Archduke, Juan José of Austria (1629-1679).⁵²⁴ Teniers utilized his connections with the court and Philip IV to establish an academy, which was established in 1663, just months before Teniers' private petition to be elevated to the nobility was granted.⁵²⁵

Brouwer's influence on Teniers is reflected on the latter's early tavern interiors, such as *Peasants in a Tavern* (c.1633, Washington, National Gallery of Art) (fig. 106), that explore the vivid facial expressions and naturalistic depictions of peasants inspired by Bruegelian subjects. Exterior scenes, including 1637 *Peasant Wedding* (Madrid, Prado) (fig. 107), painted the year Teniers married Anna Brueghel, look more directly to Bruegel the Elder.⁵²⁶ The composition of festivities in a country yard is one that features in peasant paintings throughout Teniers's career. The exuberant man in the lower left who engages with the viewer recalls Brouwer's *Smokers* (c.1636, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) (fig. 108), a work that inspired Teniers's painting of the same subject (1631-1640. Madrid, Museo del Prado). In the center of the composition, a dancing man confronts the viewer, inviting one into the festivities. Along with the dancers, the background bridal table is reminiscent of the subjects for which Bruegel was well known.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁴ Ibid., 50–51.

⁵²⁵ Ibid., 57–59, 68–71.

⁵²⁶ This work may correspond to a scene of dancers inventoried in the Torre de la Parada, the Spanish royal hunting lodge. The previous year, Philip IV acquired Jan Brueghel's 1623 *Peasant Wedding* and *Peasant Dance* (Madrid, Museo del Prado), commissioned by Archduke Isabella. Ibid., 28, 111, n.227.

⁵²⁷ See chapter four.

A flurry of Bruegelian activity by Teniers surrounds his appointment to Archduke Leopold Wilhelm's court.⁵²⁸ A *Peasant Kermis* from around 1647 (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 109) is reminiscent of the Prado's *Peasant Wedding* from a decade earlier, with its festive activity within the yard of an inn. Teniers includes even more celebrants in the composition by making his figures smaller. Familiar motifs, such as the mother feeding her children before a table that contains an amorous couple, further enliven the scene.⁵²⁹ Some dancers, several reminiscent of Bruegel's dancers from the *Peasant Wedding* (fig. 1), cluster in the center of the yard.⁵³⁰ A wife pulls her husband away from the tempting atmosphere at the back gate as a bagpiper sets the festive tone. A second gathering at the right is engaged in a circle dance near the tree where the parrot will be shot.

Through his first marriage, David Teniers the Younger had unrivalled access to the Brueghel family materials and even employed the brothers of Anna Brueghel as his studio assistants.⁵³¹ Teniers' interest in his late father-in-law's work is evidenced by his drawing (Stockholm, Nationalmuseum) (fig. 110) of Jan Brueghel's *Country Wedding* (1612, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 111), the pendant to the artist's *Peasant Wedding with the Archdukes Albert and Isabella* (fig. 69) commissioned by

⁵²⁸ It is during this period that Teniers painted *The Flemish Proverbs* (1646/1647, Grantham, Belvoir Castle), an overt reference to Bruegel the Elder that is discussed in chapter four. Not all of Teniers' peasant paintings were indebted to the precedent of Bruegel or Brouwer. Teniers painted a pendant set of peasant activities for Archduke Leopold Wilhelm upon his appointment to court in 1647. The large foreground figures in both *Peasant Wedding* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) and *Peasant Sorrow* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) recall the peasant tradition of Pieter Aertsen rather than Bruegel.

⁵²⁹ Like many sixteenth and seventeenth-century works, elegant city burghers observe the festivities.

⁵³⁰ See chapter four.

⁵³¹ Vlieghe, *David Teniers the Younger*, 18–20, 75.

the Archdukes. Teniers emphasized his familial connection to Pieter Bruegel the Elder through his version of Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs* (fig. 9), a *Flemish Proverbs* (1646/1647, Grantham, Belvoir Castle) (fig. 112) that both modernizes the composition while retaining the embodiment of the subject.

Jan Steen (c.1626-1679)

Lowlife genre paintings flourished in the generation of Brouwer, Van Ostade, and Teniers, and Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669). In the following generation, however, an increasing interest in refinement permeated genre scenes, whose subjects became more and more sophisticated, as seen in the interiors of Gerrit Dou (1613-1675), Gabriel Metsu (1629-1667), Pieter de Hooch (1629-1684), and Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675). Like his contemporaries, Jan Steen painted elegant women in rustling silks playing the clavichord, but he also explored peasant subjects, frequently with a humorous bent, inspired by those by Pieter Bruegel.

Jan Steen was born in Leiden around 1626, and likely received his early artistic training from Nicolaus Knüpfer (1603-1655) in Utrecht and Adriaen van Ostade (1610-1684) in Haarlem in the early 1640s.⁵³² Steen completed his training with Jan van Goyen (1596-1656) in The Hague, and married his master's daughter, Margaretha in 1649. He moved frequently, settling briefly in Delft, Warmond,

⁵³² One of Steen's eighteenth-century biographers, Jacob Campo Weyerman (1677-1747), upon testimony from Steen's friend Carel do Moor (1655-1738), related that Steen studied with Knüpfer and Ostade before joining Van Goyen. The only firm evidence to date Steen's training is his marriage to Margriet van Goyen, daughter of Jan van Goyen, in The Hague in 1649. Bok in H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock, *Jan Steen: Painter and Storyteller*, ed. Guido M.C. Jansen (Washington and Amsterdam: National Gallery of Art and Rijksmuseum, 1996), 28.

Haarlem, and Leiden.⁵³³ The image of the artist, as conveyed through self-portraits tucked into genre scenes and anecdotes of his life, was of an uncouth drunk like the characters that inhabit his works, though was not likely an accurate picture of Steen's true life.⁵³⁴

In his 1718 biography of Jan Steen, Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719) perceived that Steen's observations of nature allowed him to

distinguish between people... for I have seen scenes of his in which gentlemen and peasants are depicted together but one could almost see from their stances and gestures, without paying any heed to the clothing, which was the peasant and which the gentleman...⁵³⁵

This characterization recalls Van Mander's claim that Bruegel "knew... how to express very naturally that simple, peasant appearance in their dancing, toing and froing and other activities."⁵³⁶

Houbraken also utilized some of the same vocabulary to describe Steen that Van Mander had used over a hundred years before in his biography of Bruegel the Elder. Words like "*gheestigh* (witty), *bootsigh* (jocular), *cluchtigh* (farcical), *aerdigh* (subtly amusing), *drolligh* (droll or burlesque)" in Houbraken's text on Steen parallel language used to characterize the art of "Pier den Drol."⁵³⁷ This terminology, used

⁵³³ Steen remained in The Hague until 1654, when he moved to Delft, where he stayed until around 1657. Between 1656 and 1660, he lived in Warmond, a village near Leiden. He lived in Haarlem from 1661 to 1670, and then settled in Leiden for the rest of his life. He remarried in 1673 and was named deacon of the Guild of St. Luke in 1674. See Bok in *ibid.*, 25–37.

⁵³⁴ Chapman in *ibid.*, 11–23.

⁵³⁵ In *ibid.*, 95.

⁵³⁶ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r.

⁵³⁷ Mariët Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen: Comic Painting in the Seventeenth Century* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1997), 195–96.

specifically for peasant subjects, also corresponds with the established language of contemporary comic literature.⁵³⁸

Steen's references to Bruegel's art were so overt that Houbraken easily recognized them years after the artist's death. Quotations from works by Bruegel, as translated through prints or intermediary sources, feature in works throughout Steen's career, from some of his earliest paintings to some of his latest. In *Peasant Kermis* (c.1668-1670, Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum) (fig. 113), for example, Steen gathers a full compendium of Bruegelian motifs. In the foreground, a young boy carries the hat of an inebriated man who is led away from the festivities by two women. Behind them, another man is passed out drunk on a hillock. He may have been ill before succumbing to sleep, for a pig stands suggestively before him, a motif found in Bruegel's *Gula* (1558) (fig. 114) and Karel van Mander's *Peasant Kermis* (figs. 36 and 115). At the right, a woman squats to relieve herself, while a couple enjoys a private moment behind her. Several variants of the *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air* by Brueghel the Younger contain the uncouth woman.⁵³⁹ The intimate couple behind the fence does not have a direct correlation, but is reminiscent of a pair by a shed set far into the background of the same composition. The requisite bagpiper plays in the middle ground, while a jolly peasant man seems to welcome the viewer into the pictorial space as he and his wife enter the scene. Steen reuses the dancing figures

⁵³⁸ Houbraken avoided using *boer(t)ig* (peasant-like, hence funny) to acknowledge Steen's figures, who increasingly became more refined and from higher classes. Ibid., 196.

⁵³⁹ Versions in the Coppée-le Hodey collection and the Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Ghent, both unsigned and undated, contain this variant. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 597, fig. 404a, 405a, 405b.

This motif also appears in other paintings by Brueghel the Younger, for example, *Return from the Kermis* (1620-1630, Private Collection). Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Breughel-Brueghel*, 422–23, cat. 145.

from his 1663 *Dancing Couple* (Washington, National Gallery of Art) (fig. 116) with only subtle alterations.⁵⁴⁰ Throughout, floppy felt hats partially obscure the figures' faces, a feature found throughout Bruegel's oeuvre.

Often, Steen referenced Bruegel through motif, subject matter, or figural form as a way to incorporate an archaic element to his work, and enhance its comic appeal.⁵⁴¹ For example, *Village Festival with the Ship of Saint Rijn Uijt* (c.1653, Private Collection) (fig. 117), a work that includes the Bruegelian figure of the drunk and his wife Steen used in his c.1668-1670 *Peasant Kermis* (fig. 113), references an outdated *rederijker* narrative verse.⁵⁴² Like the quack wearing sixteenth-century clothes and *rederijker* literature, Bruegel the Elder represented an old-fashioned manner that was considered comical for its out-datedness, which Steen utilized to enhance his paintings.

Though he frequently was influenced by Bruegel's imagery, Steen's interpretations of Bruegelian subjects and motifs reflect an intermediary source such as a print or seventeenth-century painting. Steen's first encounters with Bruegel's art probably occurred in Van Ostade's studio in Haarlem, as can be seen by the two artists' interpretations of Bruegel's *Fat Kitchen* and *Lean Kitchen* (1563) (figs. 29-

⁵⁴⁰ Steen's *Dancing Couple* begs for further analysis of its Bruegelian roots. Not only does it seem that Steen identifies his central motif as Bruegelian enough for inclusion in a very emulative peasant kermis painting, the work's numerous proverbial elements suggest that the composition is reminiscent of encyclopedic proverb paintings like Steen's own *The World on a Stage* (c.1665-1667. The Hague, Mauritshuis) and may also stem from Bruegel the Elder's *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie).

⁵⁴¹ Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, 200–203.

⁵⁴² Ibid., 203; Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 111.

30), which are based on prints by Pieter van der Heyden.⁵⁴³ Steen painted both *The Fat Kitchen* (private collection) (fig. 27) and *The Lean Kitchen* (Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada) (fig. 28) around 1650.⁵⁴⁴ Although many elements from these paintings correspond with Bruegel's print versions, Steen also looked at Ostade's version of the subjects (figs. 100-101).⁵⁴⁵ The diligent mother who cleans her child's soiled bottom in the right foreground of Steen's *The Lean Kitchen* does not correlate with any figures in Bruegel's print, but does relate to the round matron in the lower left of Ostade's *Peasant Kitchen*. Her counterpart in Steen's *The Fat Kitchen* is the nursing mother who simultaneously feeds her toddler, a figure loosely based on the central foreground mother in Bruegel's print. Steen, however, places her in the left foreground, in the same location as the mother in Ostade's works.⁵⁴⁶

In Steen's peasant paintings, like those by Ostade and Teniers before him, the question of whether a work was influenced by an artistic source or simply an observation taken from daily life is not easy to answer. At the center of Steen's *Dancing Peasants near an Inn* (c.1648, The Hague, Mauritshuis) (fig. 118), a group of peasants dance in a circle. The dancers celebrate again in the left foreground of *Village Festival with the Ship of Saint Rijn Uijt* (fig. 117). This circle dance also appears in the background of David Teniers's *Peasant Kermis* (c.1647, Vienna,

⁵⁴³ The prints were reissued and copied several times. Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 83–89.

⁵⁴⁴ Several variants by Steen are known from old sources, including a pair sold to the agents of the Swedish marshal Karl Wrangel in 1651. Chapman, Klock, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 106.

⁵⁴⁵ Not only are they compositionally related, but Steen also conceives the works as a pair of opposites. *Ibid.*, 103–8.

⁵⁴⁶ This figure also vaguely recalls the nursing mother sitting on the ground in *Visit to the Farmhouse*, a composition that both Pieter Brueghel the Younger and Jan Brueghel the Elder copied. See also page 71.

Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 109), Pieter Brueghel the Younger's *St. George Kermis* (after 1616, Antwerp, KMSKA) (fig. 119), Jan Brueghel's *Country Wedding* (1612, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 111), Karel van Mander's *Peasant Kermis* (fig. 36), and Pieter Bruegel the Elder's print *Kermis at Hoboken* (fig. 7).⁵⁴⁷ It is likely, too, that Steen incorporated his own observations of peasants celebrating with a traditional dance into his paintings, a custom similarly reflected in other works of art.

An exaggeration of emotional response is frequent in Steen's Bruegelian works. In a late work, *Cardplayers Fighting outside an Inn* (1671, Arnhem, Gemeentemuseum (on loan from the Netherlands Office for Fine Arts, The Hague)) (fig. 120), Steen portrays the defeated man with bulging eyes, an emphasis that finds resonance in earlier Bruegelian works of the same subject, like those by Lucas Vorsterman, Pieter Brueghel the Younger, Jan Brueghel the Younger, and Adriaen Brouwer. Again, the question arises whether Steen, as well as the earlier emulative artists, emulated Vorsterman's print when he divided his figures into two distinct groupings, or whether the nature of the subject lent itself to such a strong compositional split.

Steen consistently looked to Bruegelian images when he painted subjects evocative of Bruegel's works. However, he never seemed to have depended upon the paintings by Bruegel's, but rather prints after Bruegel or later emulative works. Often, Steen's Bruegelian paintings derive from both a print as well as a seventeenth-century

⁵⁴⁷ Pieter Brueghel the Younger focused on the circle dance in a painting of peasants in a landscape from 1634 (Innsbruck, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum). Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Brueghel-Brueghel*, 420, cat. 144.

source, such as paintings by Van Mander, Brueghel the Younger, Brouwer, Ostade, or Teniers.

A Century of Bruegelians

Throughout the tumultuous years between 1550 and 1670, peasant paintings retained their appeal. The artists who continued to paint these works experienced the century differently, some were required to flee their homes, some observed the upheaval from the relative safety of Antwerp or Amsterdam, and for others, the violence that characterized the end of the sixteenth century was far and long away. Yet all of these artists chose to depict peasants, inhabitants of the countryside, at leisure, at work, and in strife.

The appeal of peasant paintings throughout this period is no clearer. No direct correlation can be made between a specific peasant subject and the political situation in which it was painted. Violence against and between peasants was depicted throughout this period, as were placid views of peasants hard at work or enjoying their kermis. However, the persistence of the subject matter, through war, urbanization, religious change, and mass emigration, suggests that the peasant represented something inherently personal to the residents of the Netherlands, perhaps nostalgia for a time before such drastic change. Pieter Bruegel the Elder's subjects and manner, developed in the early years of the Dutch Revolt, may represent an artistic tradition and a way of living that spoke to an audience that yearned for a simpler time.

A single development from one manner of representation to another does not emerge. Bruegel's early expansive scenes gave way to larger figured-works, but both

compositional schemas persisted through the years. Two divergent figure types, one solid and round, the other elongated and elegant, coexisted. Some artists modernized peasant imagery to correspond with contemporary tastes while others continued to paint in a manner reminiscent of older models. This continued until the 1630s, when the replicative and directly emulative paintings of Pieter Brueghel the Younger gave way to the naturalistic low-life scenes of Adriaen Brouwer. Jan Steen was the only master from the 1650s to 1670s who hearkened back to a sixteenth-century manner.

Chapter 3: Karel van Mander and the Canonization of Pieter Bruegel the Elder as “Drol Pier”

As the first biographer of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Karel van Mander (1548-1606) looked at the master in a very specific way, in part because as a painter, he approached Bruegel’s art as a Bruegelian, a follower and emulator of the master he engagingly described as “Drol Pier.” His assessment of Bruegel’s importance helped elevate Bruegel’s standing to the highest echelon of the Netherlandish canon. Van Mander emphasized Bruegel’s identity as a peasant painter, proclaimed him the preeminent landscape painter of his generation, and celebrated the master’s depiction of the emotions. His literary ekphrasis of artistic ideals often described Bruegel’s paintings, particularly the biblical landscapes, giving further evidence of Van Mander’s esteem for the older master’s work.

Published in 1604 and reprinted posthumously in 1618 with an introductory biography of the author, Karel van Mander’s *Het Schilderboeck* is a masterpiece of six books dedicated to art. The first, *Den Grondt der edel vry schilder-const* (*The Foundations of the noble free art of painting*), is a didactic poem describing the practical and theoretical framework for the art of painting. Books two, three, and four feature the lives of the artists (*Het Leven*), divided into ancient, Italian and Northern. The fifth book is a translation of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, and the sixth book is *Wtbeeldinge der figuren*, which describes allegories and personifications similar to those found in Cesare Ripa’s *Iconologia*.⁵⁴⁸ With the exception of *Den Grondt*, which

⁵⁴⁸ For more on *Het Schilderboeck*, see Walter S. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander’s Schilder-Boeck* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Van Mander, *Het*

he wrote for “young painters whom I have undertaken to teach to paint,” Van Mander dedicated his texts to the art-loving elite he hoped would patronize both his writing and art.⁵⁴⁹

In his own paintings, Van Mander revealed a distinctly different approach and style when depicting history subjects and genre scenes. In *Den Grondt*, the didactic introductory poem to *Het Schilderboek*, Van Mander outlined the reasoning for varying his style with different subjects and cited as a precedent the works of Pieter Bruegel and his followers. As a Flemish émigré, Van Mander carried the Bruegel tradition to the Northern Netherlands, where it, with his help, it formed the basis for peasant representation well into the seventeenth century.

Literary Accolades of Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Karel van Mander’s assessment of Bruegel was not the first celebration of the artist. Pieter Bruegel made an impression on his contemporaries. Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) and Lodovico Guicciardini (1521-1589) both mention Bruegel in their compilation of Flemish artists, however both emphasized Bruegel’s early associations with Hieronymous Bosch and not his idiosyncratic landscapes or peasant paintings.⁵⁵⁰ A more knowledgeable source is by Bruegel’s friend Abraham Ortelius (1527-1598).

Schilder-Boeck; Brighton K. Hanson, “Coloring the Narrative: Color Symbolism in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting” (University of Maryland, 2008), 9–28.

⁵⁴⁹ “All for the pleasure, delight and benefit of painters and lovers of the art of painting.” “To the honourable, worthy gentlemen my good friend Jan Mathijsz. Ban and Cornelis Gerritsz. Vlasman of Haarlem, doubly related by marriage, and lovers of the art of painting.” Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol. 196r, 197r; v.2, 180–181.

⁵⁵⁰ Vasari’s account, however, “was totally bungled,” as he identified Bosch as a follower of Bruegel. Guicciardini only listed Bruegel as “a second Hieronymus Bosch.” Lampsonius continued this identification, though expanded his praise of the artist. See *Ibid.*, v.2, 174; v.3, 252.

Between 1574 and 1598, Ortelius collected proclamations of friendship and praise of his artistic endeavors from contemporary masters and friends.⁵⁵¹ Into this *Album amicorum*, Ortelius contributes a eulogy of Bruegel, who had died in 1569.⁵⁵² Ortelius, the author of the *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, the first modern atlas of the known world, praises Bruegel's exceptional ability to portray nature.⁵⁵³ "That Pieter Bruegel was the supreme picture of his time, no one will deny... but whether he was snatched away from us in the prime of his life... by nature, who feared to be brought to scorn by his skillful and ingenious imitation, I cannot easily say."⁵⁵⁴

Ortelius owned Bruegel's grisaille *Death of the Virgin*, which he commissioned Phillips Galle to engrave in 1574. On that engraving, Ortelius added an inscription praising Bruegel's depiction of "mixed sorrow and joy on the faces of the Apostles."⁵⁵⁵ Karel van Mander would later evoke similar sentiments when describing Bruegel's *Massacre of the Innocents*.

⁵⁵¹ Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 174–76.

For more about the humanist community in Antwerp during Bruegel's lifetime, see Sullivan, *Bruegel's Peasants*.

⁵⁵² Ortelius only contributed the entries on Cort and Bruegel. Ortelius's entry on Bruegel was completed in three sections, the earliest of which was written in 1574, when he first initiated the project. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 174; See also Popham, "Pieter Bruegel and Abraham Ortelius"; Zsuzsa Urbach, "Notes on Bruegel's Archaism: His Relation to Early Netherlandish Painting and Other Sources," *Acta Historiae Artium Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 24 (1978): 237–56.

⁵⁵³ Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 177–79.

⁵⁵⁴ Cited in *ibid.*, 177.

⁵⁵⁵ Cited in De Clippel, "Rubens Meets Brouwer," 314–15.

In 1572, Domenicus Lampsonius (1532-1599) published *Pictorum aliquot celebrium Germaniæ inferioris effigies*, a series of portrait prints and poems.⁵⁵⁶

Though Lampsonius described Bruegel as a Hieronymous Bosch “once more returned,” he argues that Bruegel “surpasses him as well.” Lampsonius highlights Bruegel’s “lively poses, which are most amusing,” and exclaims that he should “be royally praised no less than any other master.”⁵⁵⁷

Karel van Mander reprinted Lampsonius’s poem at the end of his biography his biography of Bruegel in *Het Leven*, and confirms the praise for Bruegel established by Ortelius and Lampsonius throughout *Het Schilderboeck*, in both *Den Grondt* and *Het Leven*.⁵⁵⁸ In *Den Grondt*, Bruegel appears among those celebrated for their well-skilled painting.

O, exceptional Dürer, glory of Germany. In the monastery of Frankfurt the praiseworthy rare refinement becomes apparent. Yes, Brueghel and Lucas [van Leyden], with Johannes [van Eyck] their master at the head, these flowers and genuine Non plus ultra, drew the outlines of the realm of the painter with such definite limits that no one should easily surpass them. Because of their noble minds they probably got on well together. They manipulated their colors beautifully, neatly and delightfully, did not overload their paintings as today, so one can touch and palpitate the work from either side as would a blind man.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁶ Domenicus Lampsonius (1532-1599) inscribed poems with portrait prints in *Pictorum aliquot celebrium Germaniæ inferioris effigies*, first published by the widow of Hieronymous Cock in 1572. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.2, 175.

Van Mander cited Lampsonius in several artists’ biographies. See, for example, the entries for the Life of Lucas van Leyden and that of Jan de Hollander. *Ibid.*, v.1, fol.214v, 215r.

⁵⁵⁷ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol. 234r.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁹ Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 71.

Bruegel appears three additional times in *Den Grondt*. In chapter six, “The Depiction of Emotions, Passions, Desires, and Sufferings of Men,” Van Mander praises him as “faultless and penetrating.”⁵⁶⁰ Bruegel “hold[s] the palm of landscape painting” in chapter eight: “Concerning Landscape.”⁵⁶¹ In chapter eleven, “About the Choices and Setting by Each other of Colors,” Van Mander writes that Bruegel’s “works [seem to be] alive.”⁵⁶² In total, Van Mander emphasizes Bruegel’s exceptional painting manner, his figural representations, and his biblical landscape compositions, and his comments will be examined in detail in this chapter.

Bruegel’s biography covers merely two and a half pages in *Het Leven*, a relatively short entry in comparison to his contemporaries.⁵⁶³ There is no clear

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 41.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., 53.

⁵⁶² “Bruegel, whose works [seem to be] alive, often made variously half-tinted [gray] drapery – yes, even shadowed without shadows; and among all that subdued color a beautiful azure or red richly bloomed, which glowed like fire./

Like the poets who sometimes build up long arguments or tales, with which they gladden our longing ears, and sometimes let a significant aphorism slide across that is worthy of consideration: or just like the lovely-feathered peacock or indian birds stand out among other birds – [with these] this is to be compared.” Ibid., 68.

⁵⁶³ Bruegel fares considerably better than his contemporary and follower, Marten van Cleve, whose biography is less than a page, most of which focuses on his brother, Hendrick. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.230r–230v.

Another contemporary, Frans Floris, whose Italianate manner of painting in Antwerp was considered the rival of Bruegel’s “Flemish” naturalism, is given over nine pages, which includes a defense of his manner against criticism by Vasari and other Italians. Ibid., v.1, fol. 238v–243v.

Even though Bruegel is featured on par with the greatest Netherlandish artists in *Den Grondt*, his biography is significantly shorter. For example, the Life of Lucas van Leyden is a little of eight pages. Ibid., v.1, fol. 211r–215r.

Not surprisingly, Van Mander’s friends receive the most attention in *Het Leven*: Bartholomeus Spranger’s biography runs a little over twelve pages, the Life of Hendrick Goltzius is eleven pages, and that of Cornelis Ketel is almost twelve pages. Ibid., v.1, fol.268r–274v; fol.281v–287r; fol.274v–280r.

Bruegel’s followers are not explicitly identified. In his biography of Bruegel the Elder, Van Mander mentions Bruegel’s two sons, Pieter Brueghel the Elder and Jan Brueghel the Younger. He also writes about other Bruegelians such as Louis van Valckenborch, Pieter Baltens, the Grimmer brothers, Marten van Cleve, Gillis Mostaert, Hans Bol, and Gillis van Coninxloo. However, with the exception of Pieter Baltens, identified as “a very good landscape painter who followed very closely the manner of Pieter Bruegel,” Van Mander neglected to discuss of any emulative work inspired by Bruegel and

explanation for the comparatively brief attention Van Mander pays to Bruegel, particularly since he seems to place Bruegel within a lineage of the most esteemed artists in the Netherlandish canon.⁵⁶⁴ Van Mander's identification of Bruegel as "our lasting fame of the Netherlands"⁵⁶⁵ suggests that he viewed Bruegel as an artist who helped create an identity for the Netherlandish people as well as their art.⁵⁶⁶ This characterization corresponds with that of Bruegel by both Ortelius and Lampsonius. In 1606, two years after Van Mander published *Het Schilderboeck*, Egidius Sadeler engraved a portrait of Bruegel within an allegorical print by Bartholomeus Spranger. The Latin inscription on the print emphasizes Bruegel's ability to depict nature:

Art has surpassed nature, but even art only exists by [virtue of] nature.

Nature had made art eternal, but even in nature there is nothing eternal.

The foster-son [Bruegel] emulating the foster-mother has matched her in so far as anyone can.

The foster-mother promoting a rival has sustained him as far as possible.

Begone Jealousy! Art is associated with nature by a natural bond.

did not identify artists as "Bruegelian." Himself an artist of the second generation of Bruegelians, Van Mander was in a unique position to discuss both Bruegel the Elder and his contemporaries as well as younger artists painting peasants in Bruegel's manner. However, he neglects to comment considerably on the art of Pieter Brueghel the Younger, Jan Brueghel the Elder, the Savery brothers, and other artists of the youngest generation. His biography of David Vinckboons opens with an almost apologetic introduction for the near omission. (cross-reference. For more, refer to chapter three.

⁵⁶⁴ Melion argues that Van Mander highlights Bruegel's exceptionalism in several areas: his ability to capture nature, his coloring, and his depiction of emotions. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 181.

⁵⁶⁵ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r.

⁵⁶⁶ In his biography of Bruegel the Elder, Van Mander mentions Bruegel's two sons, Pieter Brueghel the Elder and Jan Brueghel the Younger. He also writes about other Bruegelians such as Louis van Valckenborch, Pieter Baltens, the Grimmer brothers, Marten van Cleve, Gillis Mostaert, Hans Bol, and Gillis van Coninxloo. However, with the exception of Pieter Baltens, identified as "a very good landscape painter who followed very closely the manner of Pieter Bruegel," Van Mander neglected to discuss of any emulative work inspired by Bruegel and did not identify artists as "Bruegelian." Himself an artist of the second generation of Bruegelians, Van Mander was in a unique position to discuss both Bruegel the Elder and his contemporaries as well as younger artists painting peasants in Bruegel's manner. However, he neglects to comment considerably on the art of Pieter Brueghel the Younger, Jan Brueghel the Elder, the Savery brothers, and other artists of the youngest generation. His biography of David Vinckboons opens with an almost apologetic introduction for the near omission. *Ibid.*, v.1, fol. 257r, 299r.

Begone Rancor! Nature into art is brought about by art's product.⁵⁶⁷

Like the sentiments expressed by Ortelius, this inscription mourns Bruegel's death in the prime of his career, attributing it to Nature's jealousy of being surpassed by the painter's brush.

The topos featuring the competition between Nature and Bruegel also opens Van Mander's biography.

Nature found and struck lucky wonderfully well with her man – only to be struck by him in turn in a grand way – when she went to pick him out in Brabant in an obscure village amidst peasants, and stimulate him toward the art of painting so as to copy peasants with the brush: our lasting fame of the Netherlands, the very lively and whimsical Pieter Bruegel.”⁵⁶⁸

This emphasis on Bruegel's peasant paintings is confirmed in Van Mander's vocabulary, “*bootsighen*” (“whimsical”), a nuanced term that referred to inventing and characteristic depiction of poses and gestures, particularly in peasants.⁵⁶⁹

Van Mander's anecdotes again accentuate Bruegel's association with peasants. Bruegel

worked a great deal for a merchant called Hans Franckert... who liked to be with Bruegel and who daily associated with him very companionably. Bruegel often went out of town among the peasants... to fun-fairs and weddings, dressed in peasants' costume, and they gave presents just like the others, pretending to be family or acquaintances of the bride or the bridegroom. Here Bruegel entertained himself observing the nature of the peasants – in eating, drinking, dancing, leaping, lovemaking and other amusements – which he then most animatedly and subtly imitated with paint... he knew how to attire these men and women

⁵⁶⁷ Cited by and translated in Bedaux and Van Gool, “Bruegel's Birthyear,” 137; See also Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 179.

⁵⁶⁸ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol. 233r.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, v.3, 256.

peasants very characteristically in Kempish or other costume, and how to express very naturally that simple, peasant appearance in their dancing, toing and froing and other activities. He was wonderfully sure in his poses...⁵⁷⁰

The success of Bruegel's peasant associations revealed themselves in the peasant paintings the artist made.

In Amsterdam with the art lover Mr Herman Pilgrims, there is a *Peasant Wedding* in oils which is most subtle; there one sees the faces and unclothed parts of the bodies of the peasants in yellow and brown as if tanned by the sun – and their skin is ugly, different from that of town dwellers. ... There are also two watercolor canvases to be seen with the art lover Mr Willem Jacobsz., near the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam, namely a *Peasants' Fair* and a *Peasants' Wedding* in which there are many burlesque postures and the true behavior of the peasants; for instance, bringing gifts to the bride, and there is an old peasant with his purse around his neck busy counting out the money in his hand. They are very outstanding pieces.⁵⁷¹

As has already been discussed, when inventorying the exceptional paintings by Bruegel owned by Emperor Rudolf II, Van Mander featured biblical subjects in lieu of peasant paintings. This focus reflects Van Mander's esteem of history paintings as the pinnacle of all genres, a belief also held by many ancient and contemporary theorists.⁵⁷² This esteem of Bruegel's biblical paintings emerges in Van Mander's celebration of Bruegel's landscape settings for his compositions. In his didactic *Den Grondt*, Van Mander's frequent choice of visual examples from Bruegel's oeuvre cemented the master's role as an exemplar and his works as worthy

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid., v.1, fol. 233r.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid., v.1, fol. 233v.

⁵⁷² Part of why Van Mander held history as the pinnacle of artistic achievement was that it incorporated all aspects of artistic description, as well as an ability to interpret literary texts. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 6.

of emulation. The following discussion of Van Mander's literary celebration of Bruegel's biblical landscapes provides the foundation of Bruegel's status as a standard to which other artists should aspire.

Chapter eight in *Den Grondt*, "Concerning Landscape," celebrates "Bruegel and similar masters with great names, who hold the palm of landscape painting." He proclaims, "let us yet strive to follow them with equal vigor," and emulate their characteristic landscape structure of grounding a tree or other solid object in the foreground, from which a vista may recede.⁵⁷³

Van Mander asserts that Bruegel's naturalism compares to the best of the Italian landscapists, Tintoretto and Titian.⁵⁷⁴ These Italian masters have a completely distinct manner of depicting the environment and landscape.⁵⁷⁵

Next to these I shall praise the well-colored and clever composition of the paintings and prints of Bruegel, who so naturally looks out and wherein he teaches us, depicting without great

⁵⁷³ "First of all it is good that all our foreground is always solid, so that other levels can recede; and also [one must] take care, that the foreground brings in large things, just like Bruegel and similar masters with great names, who hold the palm of landscape painting; for in the work of these worthy men often stand powerful tree trunks in the foreground; let us yet strive to follow them with equal vigor." Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 53; See also Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 179–80.

Van Mander's use of the term "landscape" needs to be more clearly examined. In the case of Bruegel, Van Mander does not seem to entirely limit his discussion of landscapes to works depicting the environment or vistas, but rather includes landscapes in which a populated scene takes place. He similarly describes Pieter Baltens as "a very good landscape painter who followed very closely the manner of Pieter Bruegel." Again, he seems to be referring not to pure landscapes, but to peasant activities set into expansive scenes. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.257r; Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," 254–304.

⁵⁷⁴ Van Mander also includes among this fine company, "the painter from Brescia," who may refer to Girolamo Savoldo, Romanino, Moretto da Brescia, or yet another artist. Thank you to Adam Rudolphi, for consulting on this question.

⁵⁷⁵ Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 53.

trouble, how one looks into the angular, rocky Alps, the deep sight into the dizzy abysses, steep crags, pine trees that kiss the clouds, extreme distances and rushing streams.⁵⁷⁶

Such a description recalls Bruegel's *Conversion of St. Paul* (1567, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 41), a work Van Mander mentions in *Het Leven* and celebrates for "very subtle rocks."⁵⁷⁷ Van Mander again seems to reference Bruegel's alpine peaks in his ekphrasis of an ideal landscape:

even climbing the steep crags, which the floating clouds bedew with their moist lips and wash the highest peaks. On the whole their color is fairly tolerable and light; now and then out of their pale peaks a dense fir-forest pokes through.

And from the horrible outcrops which the Swiss lands are full of and which separate them from France and Italy, which is the target of the north wind, full of white flashes, and in these landscape sometimes only the tips stand out, from the clouds and castles.⁵⁷⁸

An even more extensive description of the type of landscape that Van Mander admired is the following, which seemingly is based on Bruegel's *The Magpie on the Gallows* (1568, Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum) (fig. 121).

[T]he thoroughly elevated, evil overgrown hilly ground, invoked from blue to green, as the lower meadowland descends... [into] the emerald- or sapphire-green turf with all its nuances, and through the middle the twisting curves of the murmuring, crystal-clear rill, flowing between grassy green banks.... Rivers with their branching bends we must allow to meander in these marshy lands; thereby we must always do the water in the last place, and beside it ...

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid., 54.

⁵⁷⁷ Archduke Ernst acquired this work in Antwerp in 1594, and passed into Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II's collection upon his brother's death in 1595. Van Mander listed the painting in the imperial collection. Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v; Allart, "Ernest d'Autriche," 243.

⁵⁷⁸ Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 55.

build sea towns, which stretch toward the higher-situated regions, with castles on peaks, difficult to make broken.

Let us now, as we ascend higher, skillfully divide the vast land into fields. Off to one side Ceres, with blond hair; on the other side a field now full of unripe oats, where Eurus comes gliding for pleasure, so that he turns the field into a sea of green waves, with a soft, rustling sound. ... Also plowed fields, sectioned by furrows, or here and there fields with harvested crops; ... then we should be aware to bring into being the eccentric, whimsical herders; huts and farm hamlets, grottoes and hollow trees and stakes, walls, and roofs, not with clear red bricks, before the turf of the earth, reeds and straw, cut and full of holes; and [you can see] fancifully plastered and overgrown with moss. And in the distance are blue-colored forests, on an underlayer of ash, touched-up white and on dry, broken blue, so that you mark off; and cleverly drawn light tree-trunks, which stand close upon each other.⁵⁷⁹

The compositional schema of this painting, which Van Mander claims Bruegel left to his wife upon his death,⁵⁸⁰ became a sort of trademark of a Bruegel panoramic landscape.⁵⁸¹

Van Mander chose Bruegel's biblical painting that featured peasant figures, *The Massacre of the Innocents* (c.1566, The Royal Collection, London) (fig. 12) to

⁵⁷⁹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, 54.

⁵⁸⁰ "In his will he left his wife a piece with a magpie on the gallows; by the magpie he meant gossiping tongues, which he committed to the gallows." Ibid., v.1, fol.234r.

⁵⁸¹ Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 26–52.

Other works following this same format include *The Suicide of Saul* (1562, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), *Christ Carrying the Cross* (1564, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), the entire series of *The Months: Haymaking (June/July)* (1565, Nelahozeves, Roudnice Lobkowicz Collection), *The Harvesters (August/September)* (1565, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), *The Return of the Herd (October/November)* (1565, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), *Hunters in the Snow (December/January)* (1565, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), and *The Gloomy Day (February/March)* (1565, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum).

Van Mander did not adhere to Bruegel's manner when he painted his own landscapes, nor his figural types. Leesberg, "Karel van Mander as a Painter," 31–33.

embody the pinnacle of emotional representation.⁵⁸² In *Het Leven*, he described the work

... in which many effective details can be seen, in which I have told elsewhere: how an entire family begs on behalf of a peasant child which one of the murderous soldiers has grabbed in order to kill; in which the grief and pallor of the mother and other effects are well expressed.⁵⁸³

In chapter six of *Den Grondt*, “The Depiction of Emotions, Passions, Desires and Sufferings of Men,” Van Mander used *The Massacre of the Innocents* again as evidence of Bruegel’s ability to portray pathos.⁵⁸⁴

By the faultless and penetrating Bruegel is yet to be seen in [*The Massacre of the Innocents*] a deathly pale mother, weakened by distress, yes, and a sorrowing family beseeching the life of a child from a herald, in whom quite enough compassion may be perceived, but he shows with sorry feeling the King’s proclamation that one must be merciful toward none.⁵⁸⁵

Karel van Mander followed his own recommendations in his own painting of the same subject (1600, St. Petersburg) (fig. 122). He divided his figures into groupings comparable to those in Bruegel’s painting: mothers “weakened by distress...

⁵⁸² This version, with violent details covered up, is likely the original, reworked to mitigate the horror. Van Mander saw the painting in the collection of Emperor Rudolf II, from whence it was taken by Queen Christina of Sweden, and then to the Royal Collection in England. A version in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, long believed to be the original by Bruegel the Elder, is now believed to be one of several versions by Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 234. Pieter Brueghel the Younger painted several versions of a medium-format work of the same subject, believed to be copies of an original by Marten van Cleve. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 646-669.

⁵⁸³ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

⁵⁸⁴ Chapter 6: “The Depiction of Emotions, Passions, Desires and Sufferings of Men.” Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 36–43. Van Mander compares Bruegel’s depictions of mixed emotions in the herald (sorrow and firm resolve) to the singular rage represented by Michelangelo’s Charon in *The Last Judgment*, and argues that Northern artists are more skilled in the depiction of emotions than even the Italians for the ability to represent the human spirit. De Clippel, “Rubens Meets Brouwer,” 315.

⁵⁸⁵ Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 41.

beseeking the life of a child,” though in Van Mander’s painting, pleading to the viewer instead of a herald who turns away to “show with sorry feeling the King’s proclamation that one must be merciful toward none.”⁵⁸⁶ As in Bruegel’s painting, Van Mander clustered his horsemen in the left foreground. Unlike Bruegel’s work, in which Flemish peasants are beset upon by the king’s soldiers, Van Mander’s painting features figural types consistent with those in his other history paintings. They are lean, elegant figures, delicately painted in a smooth, crisp manner.

Karel van Mander’s Peasant Imagery

Two of Van Mander’s genre scenes of peasant festivities, *Peasants Merrymaking* (1594, private collection) (fig. 64) and *Peasant Kermis* (1600, St. Petersburg, Hermitage) (fig. 36) stand out for their radically different manner and composition. In a way that corresponds with Breugel’s low vantage point in his large-figured peasant paintings, Van Mander lowered the vantage point and created a more intimate view.⁵⁸⁷ Additionally, instead of a cool, fresh, and bright palette, Van Mander used warm earthy tones appropriate to the dusty villages depicted in these works. He scumbled his pigments to create a loose haze over the surface, a technique opposite to the smooth manner and crisp finishes he used in his history paintings. The figures are consistently corpulent and reminiscent of peasants painted by Pieter

⁵⁸⁶ “The group of despairing mothers, ‘swooning in distress,’ the group of cavalymen and ‘murderous warriors,’ and the ‘sorrowful family’ in the center imploring Herod’s herald to spare their child’s life.” Several of Van Mander’s soldiers, “with their full breeches and plumed hats, smack of Bruegel,” and, as a type, appear no where else in Van Mander’s oeuvre. Leesberg, “Karel van Mander as a Painter,” 30–31.

⁵⁸⁷ Bruegel painted with both high and low vantage points. Works such as *Peasant Wedding Banquet* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches) and *Peasant Dance* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches) have a low vantage point, while earlier multi-figured paintings featuring small figures, such as *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) retain the birds-eye view for which Bruegel was renowned.

Bruegel. These two paintings may be the ones that Van Mander's biographer mentions as being owned by two Amsterdam collectors: "a fine peasant *kermis*" for Jacob Rauwet, and a "small piece" for Jacques Razet.⁵⁸⁸ Rauwet's "fine peasant *kermis*" could have easily been *Peasant Kermis*, while the small *Peasants Merrymaking* could be the "small piece" Van Mander made for Razet.⁵⁸⁹ The adjustments Van Mander made to his manner of painting peasant subjects, parallels prescriptions he advocated in *Het Schilderboek*, which derive from the work of Pieter Bruegel.⁵⁹⁰

Even though Van Mander's manner of depicting peasants in *Peasant Kermis* has its origins in Bruegel's peasant paintings, its compositional structure follows the one Van Mander recommends for history paintings.⁵⁹¹ In *Den Grondt*, he wrote that in biblical and mythological paintings, large figures should fill the foreground, while repoussoir elements should frame the scene and the picture plane should be left open in the middle. Van Mander followed this compositional arrangement in *The Continnence of Scipio* (1600, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 123) and *Dance Around*

⁵⁸⁸ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.S2r.

Jacob Rauwert was a dilettante painter and lover of the arts in Amsterdam. Van Mander/Miedema 1604/1994, v2, 69.

Jacques Razet, also of Amsterdam, was a patron of the arts, member of a chamber of rhetoric, and a close friend of Van Mander, Goltzius, and Cornelis Ketel. Ibid., v.2, 73, 89-93.

⁵⁸⁹ *Peasants Merrymaking* measures 33.5 x 42.3 cm. The structure of *Peasants Merrymaking* is anomalous as well. Its figures, close to the picture plane, is suggestive of a detail from one of Van Mander's larger compositions, rather than a complete work. Leesberg, "Karel van Mander as a Painter," 50; 29.

⁵⁹⁰ Leesberg asserts that Van Mander came to the Bruegelian manner independently of other influences, including Hans Bol. In fact, Van Mander does not mention any peasant paintings by Bol, his stepson Frans Boels, or Roelandt Savery. Van Mander, though, was likely an influence on David Vinckboons's Bruegelian imagery. Ibid., 30.

⁵⁹¹ Van Mander is consistent in his parallel between his theoretical prescriptions and his artistic practice. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 1-7.

the Golden Calf (1602, Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum), as well as *Massacre of the Innocents* (fig. 122).

The visual distinction between Van Mander's peasant paintings and his history paintings is largely one of style, with an elegant, gem-like finish being used for history paintings, and rough brushwork and earthen colors for peasant paintings. For Van Mander, this distinction in manner of finish had a theoretical basis. In *Den Grondt*, Van Mander advocated a fluid approach, corresponding with the subjects:

Because Orpheus treated his sweet-sounding harp differently and played it with deafening racket so that the giants all fell, conquered by fearful thunder. On the other hand, his playing sounded much sweeter at another time when he was singing of young maidens who were suffering from a mad love that would never be requited. In this fable we see that one is sometimes required (according to the nature of the work in our things) to use such variances.⁵⁹²

Van Mander used this approach to differentiate between characteristics of different figures in history paintings as well. In *The Adoration of the Shepherds* (1598, Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum) (fig. 124), Van Mander used distinctive manners to represent each figure "differing in their placement, stance, activity, shape, nature, character and disposition," as he implored artists to do.⁵⁹³ Coarse brushwork describes the rustic environment of the nativity scene. Flickering impastos in the faces and hair of the three adoring shepherds illustrate their coarse disposition, as well as reflect the luminous glow upon their faithful faces from the Christ Child. In

⁵⁹² Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 22.

⁵⁹³ Ibid., 28.

contrast, Van Mander depicted the Virgin Mary with light flicks of paint, rendering her with soft grace, radiance and nobility appropriate to her special status.

Van Mander particularly admired Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding*, in which "one sees the faces and unclothed parts of the bodies of the peasants in yellow and brown as if tanned by the sun – and their skin is ugly, different from that of town dwellers."⁵⁹⁴ In Van Mander's *Peasant Kermis* (fig. 36), a juxtaposition of peasants and town dwellers provided the artist an opportunity to demonstrate his own ability to distinguish between different classes.⁵⁹⁵ The peasants have crude features, strong outlines, and round comportments, while the amorous couple in the foreground has softer, more elongated proportions. The man's breastplate, sword, and plumed hat identify him as a soldier, socially distinct from the peasants elsewhere in the composition.

Artists often depicted city burghers as spectators at a peasant kermis.⁵⁹⁶ Van Mander wrote that Bruegel himself used to attend peasant festivities to observe the

⁵⁹⁴ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

⁵⁹⁵ Comparison between figures in different paintings similarly demonstrates Van Mander's adherence to distinct representation for different character types. A comparison between profiled women in *The Continence of Scipio*, *The Dance Around the Golden Calf*, and *Peasant Kermis* reveals this conscious alteration to manner. Smooth brushstrokes articulate the refined features of the central woman in yellow in *The Continence of Scipio*, and suggest her virtuous and obedient character through the demure hint of blush on her porcelain cheeks. While not as delicate as the maiden in *The Continence of Scipio*, the elegant features of a seated woman in *The Dance Around the Golden Calf* are executed in a similarly smooth manner. In *Peasant Kermis*, on the other hand, the standing maiden looking onto the peasant spectacle at the left has rounded, coarse features that Van Mander depicted with scumbled brushwork. Her cheeks and sensuously full nose and lips are ruddy and fleshy in comparison to the women in the other paintings. Her actions further demonstrate that she is no demure maiden, as she only half-heartedly discourages her companion from reaching under her apron. Further inquiry into Van Mander's printed images, particularly his proverb illustrations, may reveal more about his approach to depicting different characters in different manners. Van Mander's approaches differ according to the proverb depicted; comparison between Van Mander's proverbs and those by Bruegel also warrants further study. See Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, 104–31.

⁵⁹⁶ Both Alpers and Gibson argues that the inclusion of upper-class figures observing peasant festivities likely corresponded with historic reality, as many urban elites ventured into the countryside

peasants in their natural setting.⁵⁹⁷ The couple in *Peasant Kermis* is similar in appearance to a drawing Van Mander made for a print, in which an elegant couple standing at the right observes the peasant festivities (1592, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 115). Though the woman turns away from the viewer in the drawing, the back of her elegant gown and her companion's refined visage are rendered more softly than the simple outlines and broad shading Van Mander used to depict the peasant figures. The woman emphatically gestures towards the peasants and, as if recording her words, Van Mander writes below the composition, "See here the peasants in their bold majesty/ Celebrating the kermis with guzzling and gaping/ They think they do much that is wise/ But one can detect little wisdom here..."⁵⁹⁸ Van Mander's inscription is relatively neutral compared to the text that replaced it on the engraving after the drawing. When Nicholaes Clock engraved the design for print in 1593 (fig. 38), it was published with a Latin inscription by Franco Estius, which harshly judges the kermis with adjectives such as "horrible" and "wretched."⁵⁹⁹

for peasant kermis celebrations. Alpers, "Bruegel's Festive Peasants," 169–71; Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 77–98.

⁵⁹⁷ Bruegel often went out of town among the peasants with [the merchant Hans] Franckert, to fun-fairs and weddings, dressed in peasants' costume, and they gave presents just like the others, pretending to be family or acquaintances of the bride or the bridegroom. Here Brueghel entertained himself observing the nature of the peasants – in eating, drinking, dancing, leaping, lovemaking and other amusements – which he then most animatedly and subtly imitated with paint..." Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233r.

The concept of artist observing peasants in their natural environment in order to best depict them has a literary tradition which includes a tale of Leonardo inviting peasants to a banquet so that he may observe them laughing. Miedema, "Realism and the Comic Mode," 210.

⁵⁹⁸ The text continues, "The one sings, the other jumps, the third wants to sleep/ Or shoot the parrot, for a lousy prize/ There the pigs come to gather up the arrows/ Then it often ends in a brawl." Quoted in Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 221.

⁵⁹⁹ "Behold how the children of the country celebrate. After the drinking Thymele gives one kiss after another to Mopsus; Chromis and Mnasyllus and Aegle dance and sing, and the vomit of many celebrants is a feast for the pigs. Soon one will play the bagpipe. The wretched Irus gets ready for a

Van Mander's evaluation of village behavior was not as condemning as the tone of the inscription for the 1593 engraving, but it was not entirely sympathetic either. The soldier, a character of a class separate from the peasants, yet not incorporated into refined society, engages in unruly behavior with a lusty maid. As he lifts her apron, she only half-heartedly attempts to halt his amorous advances, her outstretched arm mirroring her ardent gaze.

Seated at the table beside this pair, a peasant couple similarly engages in lusty behavior. Leaning into the embrace of her companion, the woman spreads her legs wide, bare knees uncouthly revealed, in a pose Van Mander specifically defines as indecorous. He writes, "indeed, to make the feet of a woman stand or lie too far apart... is done contrary to dignity, which requires that the feet be placed close together according to the demands of modesty."⁶⁰⁰

Prominently situated in the center of the composition is a woman who clutches her wriggling child. This woman's pose is the antithesis to that of the demure, decorous maiden described in *Den Grondt*. Her squat facial features are the type he recommends "one should avoid, as contrary to fitness" in the human body, since "shortening the face too much... expresses little grace."⁶⁰¹ While slyly

brawl. Traso, having emptied many a jug, repeatedly trumpets the horrible sound of the horn he heard in battle." Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, lxxxix, n.118.

For discussion of moralizing peasant paintings in reference to this drawing and print set, see Alpers, "Realism as a Comic Mode," 128–30; Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter*, 77.

For discussion of inscriptions on kermis prints in general, see Miedema, "Realism and the Comic Mode," 208–13.

⁶⁰⁰ Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 22.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

This figural type is also seen in the nursemaid lifting the Christ Child's blankets in *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1598. New York, R.L. Feigen & Co). It is also common in works by Bruegel and his followers, though has a tendency to degrade into peasants suffering from awkward foreshortening that causes them to lose their necks, a relatively common hazard.

confronting the viewer with her sideways glance, she crudely holds her child in such a way to allow him to relieve himself upon the bare ground.⁶⁰² Two robust pigs busily engorge themselves on the delicacies thus presented to them.

Van Mander had already depicted the revolting insatiability of swine in his *Peasant Festival* drawing of 1592, where pigs lap up the vomit of an inebriated peasant. An inscription below the drawing describes the scene: “The one sings, the other jumps, the third wants to sleep/ Or shoot the parrot, for a lousy prize/ There the pigs come to gather up the arrows/ Then it often ends in a brawl.”⁶⁰³ Interpreted as an ironic commentary on the drunken archer,⁶⁰⁴ Van Mander may have also intended a double entendre playing on projectile vomit and shot arrows.

Franco Estius’s Latin inscription on Nicholaes Clock’s print after Van Mander’s drawing again more pointedly describes the pigs’ activity.⁶⁰⁵ “Behold how the children of the country celebrate. After the drinking... the vomit of many celebrants is a feast for the pigs...”⁶⁰⁶ While the peasants cavort in excess, so do their swine, suggesting a correlation between the peasants in revolting animal behavior; between boers and boars.

⁶⁰² For scholarship on scatology, see Russell Ganim and Jeff Persels, eds., *Fecal Matters in Early Modern Literature and Art: Studies in Scatology* (Hampshire, England; Burlington, VT: Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004); Peter J. Smith, *Between Two Stools: Scatology and Its Representation in English Literature, Chaucer to Swift* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).

⁶⁰³ Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 221. See note 598

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ Leesberg, “Karel van Mander as a Painter,” 133. Conflicting interpretations of Van Mander’s moralizing images are in Alpers, “Realism as a Comic Mode,” 126; Miedema, “Realism and the Comic Mode,” 209–14.

⁶⁰⁶ Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, lxxxix; Alpers, “Realism as a Comic Mode,” 125.

Contemporary sources associate the insatiability of pigs, who eagerly feast upon vomit and excrement alike, with gluttony.⁶⁰⁷ For example, Pieter Bruegel's allegorical print of *Gula* (1558) (fig. 114) features a figure in an archaic headdress, swilling from a jug of beer while seated astride a pig directly above the title inscription.⁶⁰⁸

In his admonition against the vices that lead young painters away from their art - as well as fame and glory - in *Den Grondt*, Van Mander criticizes excessive drinking. He warns, "See all that this barley can cause; how often it makes men nothing but pigs as one reads of Ulysses' companions."⁶⁰⁹ By citing this myth in which Circe transforms the epic heroes into swine as they greedily guzzle her poisonous brew, Van Mander reinforces the association of pigs with gluttony.

Van Mander's peasant images reveal a disapproving view of village inhabitants. Peasants drink to excess, engage in lusty behavior, and even engage in violence – a fight breaks out in the background of *Peasant Kermis*. The artist's own words, both added to the drawn image and published in *Den Grondt*, support these images as examples of behavior one should avoid. However, the publisher's choice to intensify the disparaging language against the image's peasant subjects suggests that contemporaries did not always consider Van Mander to be censorious enough. In fact,

⁶⁰⁷ Leesberg associates the entire drawing, as well as *Peasant Kermis*, as "an allegorical representation of gluttony or of excess, of *gula*..." Leesberg, "Karel van Mander as a Painter," 29.

⁶⁰⁸ Preparatory drawing from 1557 in Paris, Frits Lugt Collection, Institut Néerlandais. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 95, 100, 107; Silver, *Pieter Bruegel*, 151. The concept was familiar, emerging, for example, in an earlier drawing by Jan Swart van Groningen that personifies *Gluttony* as a drinking peasant and swine (c.1540, London, British Museum). Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 221.

⁶⁰⁹ Van Mander, *The Foundation of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, 8.

Van Mander's prints are consistently more critical of peasant behavior than his paintings, a pattern seen throughout peasant imagery in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This suggests also a distinction in audience response to the peasantry, between those who could afford to purchase paintings and art lovers who could only acquire prints. Perhaps in a way to distance themselves from the social class to which they were closer, the print-buying public was considerably more disparaging towards the peasantry.

In *Het Schilderboek*, Van Mander wrote in a fairly neutral tone about the peasant paintings by Pieter Bruegel. The figures were characterized as “ugly,” but more as a result of their lifestyle as laborers in comparison to townspeople than as a harsh criticism of their behavior. Van Mander held Pieter Bruegel the Elder, champion of peasant paintings, at the highest pinnacle of Northern artists, in company with Albrecht Dürer, Johannes van Eyck, and Lucas van Leyden. His biblical paintings were examples for young artists, and his peasant paintings were worthy of emulation by the author, Karel van Mander, himself.

Through stylistic choices, Van Mander made a clear distinction between history paintings and peasant imagery. His peasant paintings closely follow the recommendations he outlined for young students in *Den Grondt*, both in compositional structure and appropriate figural types. These works continue the tradition of Bruegel, whom Van Mander casts as the epitome of the peasant painter, but he never explicitly conflated his own peasant paintings with those of Bruegel. Van Mander's endorsement of Bruegel as the standard to which artists should aspire

in landscape and peasant paintings solidified the appeal of Bruegel's imagery and encouraged the emulation of the master.

In both his writings and his paintings, Van Mander played an important early role in the conflation of Bruegel's own works and the peasant painting style of other mid to late sixteenth-century artists. His first known peasant drawing, *Peasant Couple* of 1588 (Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet) (fig. 62), which was engraved by Harmen Muller, is likely the earliest example of Bruegelian peasant imagery in the Northern Netherlands.⁶¹⁰ The couple reappeared with slight differences in later peasant prints by Van Mander, confirming their place in the visual vocabulary of late sixteenth-century imagery.⁶¹¹

Flemish émigrés to the Northern Netherlands like Karel van Mander were the likely carriers of Flemish traditions, including peasant subjects like those painted by Pieter Bruegel.⁶¹² Unlike other Bruegelian émigrés like Hans Bol, the Savery brothers, and David Vinckboons, who moved to Amsterdam, Van Mander settled in Haarlem. According to Van Mander's biographer, Frans Hals (1582/3 – 1666) studied with him, though little emerges in Hals's work that evidences the relationship.⁶¹³ However, artists of the following generation, including Hals's students Adriaen

⁶¹⁰ Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, 134–35, n.119.

This image predates any Bruegelian imagery by Bol, the Savery brothers, Vinckboons, or others. Ibid., xxvii.

⁶¹¹ Several drawings and prints by Van Mander emerge in the development of Bruegelian motifs, as discussed in chapter four.

⁶¹² Sluijter, "On Brabant Rubbish."

⁶¹³ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.S3r.

Brouwer and Adriaen van Ostade, demonstrated a clear knowledge and appreciation for the subjects and manner of Pieter Bruegel.

Text and Image: Affirming the Peasant Typography of Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Karel van Mander not only introduced Bruegelian peasant imagery into the Northern Netherlands, but he validated it through theoretical texts. Bruegel emerges as the pinnacle of landscape painters in *Het Schilderboeck*. Further, Van Mander's sections about peasant painting seem to describe Bruegel's works. When Van Mander represented peasants in his own art, he conformed to his own theoretical precedents. These images and texts justified the representation of peasants in a manner consistent with the one associated with Bruegel the Elder and the Bruegel tradition.

Chapter 4: Bruegelian Evolution: A Series of Case Studies

The Longevity of Breugelian Imagery

In the early decades of the seventeenth century, thousands of Bruegelian paintings decorated private spaces and filled dealers' inventories.⁶¹⁴ Many of these paintings directly copied Pieter Bruegel's compositions. Others emulated his manner and subjects, and even included figures derived from Bruegel the Elder's oeuvre. This chapter explores the artistic response by contemporaries and subsequent generations of artists to peasant imagery by Pieter Bruegel. By tracing the subjects and motifs that were adapted by one artist or another, this chapter reveals changes and constancies in Bruegelian imagery.

A core group of artists emerge as instrumental to the transmission and proliferation of subjects and motifs in the Bruegel tradition of peasant paintings. As his father's primary copyist, Pieter Brueghel the Younger, with his industrious workshop, was the most productive user of Bruegel's subjects and motifs, and his copies helped proliferate that imagery for later artists. However, he went beyond replicating his father's material, and contributed new elements to the Bruegel tradition that also impacted later peasant imagery. Jan Brueghel the Elder also copied Bruegel the Elder's compositions, and reinterpreted his subjects and motifs. Such adoptions of their father's works are also found in images created by other Bruegelians, among them Marten van Cleve, Karel van Mander, the Savery brothers, Adriaen van Ostade, David Teniers, and Jan Steen.

⁶¹⁴ The surviving paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Younger and his workshop alone account for over fourteen hundred works. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*.

The attributions of many paintings in this tradition are debated, but attributions are of minor importance in this study. Of greater importance is the fact that the mass production of these images meant that Bruegelian paintings were both popular and plentiful. Seventeenth-century artists could have seen numerous painted and printed works with motifs inspired by Bruegel the Elder's peasant scenes.

This chapter will feature three case studies that trace the evolution of Bruegelian subjects and motifs from Pieter Bruegel and his contemporaries to Jan Steen in the second half of the seventeenth century.⁶¹⁵ Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding* (1566, Detroit, Institute of Arts) (fig. 1) and *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) (fig. 9) inspired artists both generally and specifically. The main motif in a third work, *The Wife Taking Home the Drunk* by Pieter Brueghel the Younger (c.1623, Montreal, Museum of Fine Arts) (fig. 125), has possible roots in Bruegel's drawings, but also resonates with drawings, prints, and paintings by several artists in both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These case studies will focus on works in which artists closely interpreted Bruegel's subjects and manner of painting peasant subjects. In these works, hardy rustic peasants cavort in vibrant villages, and large-scale figures tend toward squat-solid forms, rendered in earth tones. This chapter will focus on the journey and transformation of some subjects, compositions, and elements that exemplify the broader impact of Bruegel's art on subsequent generations. Occasionally, the inclusion of Bruegelian elements reveals greater meaning in a composition, particularly in seventeenth-century works.

⁶¹⁵ Interestingly, the prolific Bruegel copyist Abel Grimmer did not replicate the subjects examined.

The first of these case studies will feature quintessential images of peasants merrymaking. Bruegel's peasant weddings, specifically *The Peasant Wedding* (1566, Detroit, Institute of Arts) (fig. 1) and *Peasant Wedding Banquet* (c.1567, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 40), were frequently copied and emulated in paintings and prints. The main components of these works, particularly from *The Peasant Wedding*, were restaged in different settings and had great impact on the visual arts in the Netherlands. Another case study focuses on *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) (fig. 9). This painting continues to inspire interpretive scholarship, but its visual impact on the seventeenth century has been less frequently discussed and its impact on later traditions underestimated.⁶¹⁶ The third case study features a particular motif that repeatedly emerges: the drunk man escorted home by a woman, often interpreted as his wife. Though this subject is not found in the surviving work of Bruegel the Elder, its frequent inclusion in paintings by Brueghel the Younger and close visual association with other Bruegelian motifs suggest that it was fully incorporated into the vocabulary of the Bruegel tradition.

Peasant Weddings

Bruegel the Elder's Peasant Wedding Paintings

Inventories from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries indicate that Pieter Bruegel the Elder painted several versions of a peasant wedding. The 1572 auction from the estate of Jan Noirot, Master of the Antwerp Mint, includes two paintings of the subject. A large oil painting of a *Peasant Wedding* was valued at 80

⁶¹⁶ Mark A. Meadow, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder's "Netherlandish Proverbs" and the Practice of Rhetoric* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2002); Wolfgang Mieder, ed., *The Netherlandish Proverbs: An International Symposium on the Pieter Brueg(h)els* (Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, 2004).

florins, while another painting, on canvas, was estimated at 27 florins.⁶¹⁷ In 1595, Archduke Ernst purchased a *Peasant Wedding* for 160 florins, which appeared in his posthumous inventory from the following year.⁶¹⁸

Karel van Mander noted the location of two peasant wedding paintings in the biography of Pieter Bruegel included in the *Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish Artists* (1604). Willem Jacobsz. van Rijn, who lived “near the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam,” owned a *Peasant Wedding*, “in which there are many burlesque postures and the true behavior of the peasants; for instance, bringing gifts to the bride, and there is an old peasant with his purse around his neck busy counting out the money in his hand.”⁶¹⁹ He saw another *Peasant Wedding* in Amsterdam, with the “art lover” Herman Pilgrims, which he described as “most subtle; there one sees the faces and unclothed parts of the bodies of the peasants in yellow and brown as if tanned by the sun – and their skin is ugly, different from that of town dwellers.”⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁷ Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 48, 56, n.11.

⁶¹⁸ Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 259; Buchanan, “The Collection of Nicolaes Jongelincq,” 542. Without providing evidence, Roberts-Jones assume that this was the same painting owned by Noirot. Roberts-Jones and Roberts-Jones, *Bruegel*, 298.

⁶¹⁹ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

Miedema translates “van Water-verwe” as painted in “watercolor.” Allart translates it as “tempera on canvas.” Ibid., v.3, 263-264; Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 49.

The description recalls a composition by Pieter Brueghel the Younger that includes the work in Dublin. See also page 205.

Miedema translates *drolligh* as “burlesque,” an adjective frequently occurring with *bootsen* (having a bizarre aspect, as in *vreemde bootsen*, “strange little figures”). Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.3, 55, 216v23.

⁶²⁰ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

For more on peasants and physical appearances, see Vandenbroeck, “Verbeeck’s Peasant Weddings,” 106–8.

Later inventories, particularly those after 1620, evidence the increasing fluidity of the name “Bruegel.”⁶²¹ The 1621 estate inventory of Jacob Snels, an Antwerp innkeeper, lists a painting of the *Bride* by “Peeter Bruegel.”⁶²² While nothing suggests Bruegel ever painted a focused study of a bride, his followers explored the subject. Pieter Brueghel the Younger painted several compositions that focus on the bride, works that may have been invented by Marten van Cleve.⁶²³ The 1640 collection inventory of Nicolaas Rockox, Burgomaster of Antwerp, includes a *Peasant Wedding* vaguely attributed to “Bruegel.”⁶²⁴ A *Peasant Wedding* “after Bruegel” in the posthumous inventory of Archduchess Isabella hints at the continuation of Bruegel’s compositions.⁶²⁵

⁶²¹ For a wonderful example of the misuse of the name “Bruegel” to sell paintings by a Brueghel in the seventeenth century, see Honig, “The Beholder as Work of Art,” 254–58.

⁶²² Snels seems to have appreciated “Peasant Bruegel,” as he also owned a “Peasant Kermis” and two works of a “Blind Man.” Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 49, 56, n.29.

⁶²³ Marten van Cleve depicted bridal processions, focused studies of the bride at her table, and blessings of the wedding bed. See Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 199–204, 207–11. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jongere*, v.2, 631–633, 641–643, 696–698, 699–700, 704–706, 737–738.

⁶²⁴ Other works in the inventory also listed as paintings by “Bruegel” can be identified by their subjects or copper supports as works by Jan Brueghel the Elder. Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 50.

⁶²⁵ Measuring 6 *voet* (feet) high by 10 *voet* $\frac{8}{11}$ *duym* wide, it was one of the largest pieces in her collection. Aside from two histories, a still life, and a landscape, most of the paintings in this inventory, representing only a portion of her collection, were of smaller proportions. A painting of a *boerenkermis* by “Bruegel” measured 2 *voet* high by 2 $\frac{9}{11}$ wide. *The Sermon of St. John* by “den Ouden Brueghel” measured 4 $\frac{7}{11}$ by 7 $\frac{2}{11}$. Maeyer, *Albrecht En Isabella*, 415–31; Allart, “Did Pieter Brueghel the Younger See His Father’s Paintings?,” 50.

The subject matter and recorded size of this painting enables speculation about the painting, and possible comparison with extant paintings. Several copies of Bruegel the Elder’s *Peasant Wedding* by followers of Pieter Brueghel the Younger are large horizontal formats, as is a version of the composition Brueghel the Younger staged in the open air (examples: Ertz A867, A864, A865, A866, all by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, and F863 by a follower). Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jongere*, 710–11.

Versions of the *Wedding Procession to the Church*, a horizontal composition best known by the small version by Jan Brueghel (Musée de la Ville de Bruxelles – Maison du Roi, Brussels), were also painted by anonymous painters in large format. *Ibid.*, 702.

Based on the above inventories, as many as six paintings of peasant weddings by or attributed to Bruegel the Elder were in sixteenth and seventeenth century collections. Today, only two paintings attributed to his hand remain. The *Peasant Wedding Banquet* in Vienna from c.1567 focuses on a wedding feast in a rustic interior of wattle-and-daub masonry with a rough floor (fig. 40). A diagonal banquet table, free-flowing food and libations, and the suggested hum of conversation and music, create a dynamic composition. In the *Peasant Wedding* in Detroit (1566) (fig. 1), peasants celebrate the festivities with a dance in the clearing at the edge of a village.⁶²⁶ The bride has left her traditional seat below the bridal canopy and suspended bridal crown to dance amidst her guests. Thatched roof cottages and fields beyond the sparse trees barely contain the profusion of exuberant dancing peasants.

Contemporary Peasant Weddings

The theme of the peasant wedding was popular in Antwerp in the middle of the sixteenth century.⁶²⁷ A print of the *Peasant Wedding* by Pieter van der Borch from 1560 presents the bride at her bridal table, surrounded by her celebrating guests (fig. 126).⁶²⁸ While a flurry of activity happens around her, including excessive

The large copy of Bruegel's Detroit painting (Antwerp, KMSKA) by an anonymous artist measures 115 x 166 cm, and comes closest in scale to Bruegel the Elder's expansive Detroit painting, which measures 118 x 157 cm. Currie and Allart, *The Bruegel Phenomenon*, v.2, 598-610.

⁶²⁶ Some still doubt the attribution of this painting to Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 228.

⁶²⁷ Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 294–98.

⁶²⁸ Frans Verbeeck painted several versions of wedding feasts that have formal similarities with Van der Borch's print. However, in agreement with Walter Gibson, I do not believe that these works describe peasant weddings. Gibson, "Verbeeck's Grotesque Wedding Feasts." For more on Verbeeck's compositions, see Vandenbroeck, "Verbeeck's Peasant Weddings." Furthermore, Stewart argues that, while painted by the Mechelen-based Verbeeck family, these works belong more firmly to the German tradition of peasant paintings, epitomized by Sebald Beham, than to the Flemish tradition emerging in the middle of the sixteenth century. Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 297.

drinking, lecherous love, and the stockpiling of presents, the bride's importance is highlighted by the bridal cloth and the solidity of her enthroned position.

A few years previously, Pieter van der Borch engraved a *Kermis of St. George* (1553) (fig. 127) that contains foreground figures dancing in a manner similar to those in Bruegel's images. This example implies that the dance moves captured in Bruegelian weddings and kermis were reflections of cultural traditions, a caution one must consider when identifying models and replications. Van der Borch's figure style in this early work is considerably more elongated and elegant, in contrast to his later *Peasant Wedding*.

Pieter Baltens's *Peasant Wedding Celebration* (c.1560, Brussels, MRBAB) may be the earliest Flemish painting of the peasant wedding.⁶²⁹ Baltens nestles his bridal table at the back of an expansive village clearing that teams with figures. Compositionally, the work is reminiscent of his *Performance of the Farce 'Een Cluyte Plaeyerwater' at a Flemish Kermis*" (1570, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 50), and corresponds with Bruegel's images from the 1550s that contain small figures set into large scenes. Like Van der Borch's engraving, the painting focuses on the arrival of the guests and preparations for the wedding feast, and does not include dancing or other merrymaking.

In the late 1560s, Pieter Baltens engraved a scene of the bride dancing with her guests to the music of the bagpiper (fig. 128).⁶³⁰ This work betrays some

⁶²⁹ Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," v.1, 286; Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 297.

A copy of this composition with Galerie de Jonckheere, Paris, in 2002, is currently attributed to Marten van Cleve. Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 65, 68, 193.

⁶³⁰ Several figures from this engraving appear in Baltens's *Performance of the Farce 'Een Cluyte van Plaeyerwater' at a Flemish Kermis* (1570, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum), and may originate in the print. Other motifs originate in Baltens's other paintings, for example, the stage performance is borrowed

similarities with Bruegel's Detroit *Peasant Wedding*, particularly in the dancers, where a man spins his partner under his arm and another pair steps toward one another, arms akimbo. Rather than evidencing influence from one work to another, the commonalities suggest that both artists painted traditional Flemish peasant dances and peasant wedding activities.⁶³¹

Finding Bruegel the Elder's Lost Peasant Weddings

Other Bruegel depictions of peasant weddings have come down to us through prints and painted copies. A composition of a peasant wedding similar to that in Detroit, but also reminiscent of the intimate scale of Balten's *Peasant Wedding* print, was engraved by Pieter van der Heyden and published by Hieronymous Cock's widow after 1570 (fig. 20).⁶³² With "P. BRVEGEL INVENT" boldly inscribed on the rock in the foreground, the print circulated throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in three editions.⁶³³ Likely based on a lost painting by Bruegel the Elder,

from *Village Kermis with Stage at Extreme Right* (Cremona), and a self-portrait originates from *Village Wedding* (Brussels). Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," v.1, 288, v.2, 907. This composition was evidently popular, as twenty-six versions survive. Eight of those were painted by Pieter Brueghel the Younger between 1604 and 1632, and most include the prominent signature, "P.BRVEGHEL," which may have led to the composition's identification as a painting after a lost work by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Ibid., v.1, 269-274, 287-289, v.2, 629-639, 907; Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, 894-901, 923-27; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 65-67, 193-94. Baltens also engraved a close depiction of *Bringing the Bride to Bed* (1576-77, fig), which greatly influenced Marten van Cleve's depictions of the same subject. Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," v.2, 915-917; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 69-71, 208-9.

⁶³¹ Kostyshyn does note that Baltens' bagpiper is placed in the same location as the one in Bruegel's Detroit painting. Kostyshyn, "Door Tsoechen Men Vindt," v.1, 288.

⁶³² Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 108.

⁶³³ Awkward elements in the print, particularly in the background, have raised the question of whether Bruegel the Elder painted the model. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 604-607. In a second state, the publisher "*Au quatre Vents*" was removed and replaced with "*Ad. Coll. excud.*," likely referring to the publisher Adriaen Collaert (c.1560-1618). A third state erases Collaert's name and adds "*Galle ex.*" in the right corner, referring to Theodoor Galle (1571-1633). All states retain "P. Brvegel Invent." Ann Diels, Marjolein Leesberg, and Arnout Balis, *The Collaert Dynasty*, *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700* (Amsterdam: Sound &

several of the figures in the print resemble those in the Detroit painting, particularly the three dancing couples in the left and central foreground.⁶³⁴ The background scene, however, differs, as does the moment depicted; as opposed to the Detroit painting, the bride remains enthroned at her bridal table.

A group of paintings appear to copy a second lost painting by Bruegel the Elder. Though similar to the Van der Heyden print in its major elements, such as the dancing guests and enthroned bride, these paintings have more focus on the outdoor elements surrounding the festivities, while at the same time they omit the gifts to the bride.⁶³⁵ Marten van Cleve painted four versions of this *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air*, suggesting that this painting was well known in the late sixteenth century (before 1581, Johnny van Haften 2005) (fig. 129).⁶³⁶ All of the major compositional elements – the foreground dancers, the enthroned bride, even the man relieving

Vision Publishers in co-operation with the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, 2005), part 1, lxxv; Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 108, 259–60.; “Theodoor Galle,” RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History, accessed 17 October 2016, <https://rkd.nl/en/explore/artists/record?query=theodoor+galle&start=3>.

⁶³⁴ Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 600.

⁶³⁵ When he copied from a source, Pieter Brueghel the Younger remained true to his model. These alterations from the Van der Heyden print are not consistent with this practice, so it is likely that the print was not the source. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, 600–601.

⁶³⁶ Marten van Cleve (?), *Wedding Dance in the Open Air* (Johnny van Haften 2005); Follower of Marten van Cleve, *Wedding Dance in the Open Air* (fragment), (Paris, Drouot, December 4, 2000); After Marten van Cleve, *Wedding Dance in the Open Air* (Sotheby’s London, July 3, 1985, no.38). Ibid., v.2, 607–608.; “Copies of the *Wedding Dance in the Open Air* probably after a Lost Painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder,” *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, accessed September 30, 2016, <http://xnngg:prfbx@bruegel-brueghel.kikirpa.be/p/13.html>; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 68. The Van Haften version is exceptionally large, measuring 77 x 106 cm. Along with an anonymous copy of Bruegel the Elder’s *Detroit Peasant Wedding*, it comes closest in scale to Bruegel the Elder’s *Detroit* model, which measures 119 x 157 cm. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 598–610; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, n.166.

A drawing currently attributed to Marten van Cleve (Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Stiftung Preuß. Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett) sketches elements of the *Peasant Wedding*, including the tree in the right middle ground around which several couples congregate. Ibid., 238.

himself at the wall of the hut – correspond with the Van der Heyden print. However, in Van Cleve's paintings, one finds no pile of gifts around the table. His paintings also include two figures who look out from behind the tree at the left, a couple standing before a small shed, a bagpiper who looks out to the viewer, a dog, and a solitary man at the lower right.⁶³⁷

Van Cleve is rarely given credit for inventing compositions. However, many of the noted compositional elements Van Cleve added to *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air* are found in later copies of this composition by Jan Brueghel the Elder and Pieter Brueghel the Younger.⁶³⁸ In the 1590s, Jan Brueghel the Elder painted this composition on copper (Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-Arts) (fig. 22).⁶³⁹ Pieter Brueghel the Younger painted the most replicas of this composition, numbering at least twenty-eight copies painted between 1607 and 1638.⁶⁴⁰ Almost all of Pieter the Younger's autograph copies, as well as some works by his workshop or followers,

⁶³⁷ The dog and last man are found in Van Cleve's four paintings, but not in versions by other artists.

⁶³⁸ Two major distinctions between Van Cleve's panel and those by Jan and Pieter Brueghel are size and color. Van Cleve's version is about twice the size of those by Bruegel's sons. Additionally, Jan and Pieter Brueghel retain a consistency in color in their works, suggesting they shared a compositional cartoon with color notations. These colors, primarily of garments, differ from those in Van Cleve's work. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 602-608.

⁶³⁹ A second version in gouache on vellum (Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi) is attributed to Jan Brueghel the Elder, and is consistent in size and orientation with Brueghel's copper version. Ibid., v.2, 602-606.

Copies by Jan Brueghel the Elder and Pieter Brueghel the Younger are consistently half the size of Van Cleve's painting, though it is argued that the brothers likely based their versions directly compositional cartoon by their father that the brothers shared. Ibid., v.2, 603-609.

⁶⁴⁰ His workshop and followers painted dozens more. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 722-736. The majority of Pieter Brueghel the Younger's versions, including his earliest example, reverse the orientation of the composition as preserved in paintings by Jan Brueghel the Elder, Marten van Cleve, and even the distinct-yet-similar print by Van der Heyden. No prints exist of Van Cleve's composition, so it is unclear why Brueghel the Younger's versions are reversed. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 603.

include the prominent signature “P.BRVEGHEL,” for example, in the signed and dated version in Narbonne (1620, Narbonne, Musée des Beaux-Arts) (fig. 21).

Bruegelian Variants of Peasant Wedding Dances

The foreground dancers in Bruegel’s *Detroit Peasant Wedding*, Van der Heyden’s print, and *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air* by Marten van Cleve and the Brueghel brothers are all quite similar to each other. Variants of this group, often including the enthroned bride, are found in many other late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century works.

Bruegel’s name would have been widely associated with these motifs in large part because of Van der Heyden’s print, which names Bruegel as the artist. Marten van Cleve helped popularize Bruegel’s imagery by inserting numerous dancing couples from either Van der Heyden’s composition or the second lost Bruegel composition into his works.⁶⁴¹ Into his populous *Peasant Wedding* (1570s, Autun, Musée Rolin) (fig. 130), Van Cleve inserted four dancing pairs, two kissing couples, and the bagpipers from Bruegel’s composition.⁶⁴² Original motifs by Van Cleve, then, surrounded these figures with inventions of his own, such as the man and woman holding a basket, the mother and child, the sleeping peasant on the hillock in the

⁶⁴¹ In no less than twelve additional panels, Van Cleve inserted between one and nine dancing couples plucked from either Van der Heyden’s composition or the second lost composition. Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 194–98.

⁶⁴² Ibid., 194, fig. 126.

The work was formerly attributed to an unknown painter. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, 683. In the center of the Autun painting, beside couples derived from Bruegel’s composition, Van Cleve depicts a couple dancing with free abandon. This couple, who stand somewhat far apart from one another as they mirror each other’s steps, appear in other peasant paintings by Van Cleve. This motif appears as distinct figures in no less than eight paintings currently attributed to Marten van Cleve and his followers, including an original painting by Van Cleve (Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh) with a related drawing (c.1570, Vienna, Albertina). Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 194–98, 227–28.

foreground, and the couple with the woman's flying white cap and apron. Van Cleve replicated these figures in other works to build a standard vocabulary in his Bruegelian works of peasant festivities.⁶⁴³

Though related to Bruegel's peasant wedding compositions, Marten van Cleve also composed scenes that focus on different events of the peasant wedding, occasionally grouping them together to form a series of isolated vignettes.⁶⁴⁴ One subject, treated both as a part of a series with other works and individually, is *The Presentation of the Gifts* (example: before 1581, Antwerp, Private Collection) (fig. 131). What was merely a secondary background element in Van der Heyden's engraving became the featured motif in Van Cleve's composition. Enthroned before her bridal cloth, the bride seems to be the one serene element in the painting, as guests cluster around to pay their respects and bring her gifts. Van Cleve was likely inspired by Pieter van der Borcht's 1560 engraving (fig. 126) that likewise used the bride at her table in the center of the composition to ground the frenetic activity around her. Pieter Brueghel the Younger copied Van Cleve's composition in the early seventeenth-century, further disseminating the focused image of the bride receiving her guests and gifts.⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴³ These figures are featured prominently in a composition of a *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air* that Van Cleve replicated at least five times, including versions in the Museum Mayer van den Bergh, Antwerp, and Hermitage, St. Petersburg. Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 196–98.

⁶⁴⁴ Ranging from four to six paintings, each series contained combinations of paintings portraying *The Bridal Procession*, *The Procession of the Groom*, *The Presentation of the Gifts*, *The Wedding Feast*, *The Blessing of the Wedding Bed*, and *The Adoption of the Lover*. See Ibid., 65–71, 199–211.

⁶⁴⁵ Pieter Brueghel the Younger copied many of the compositions by Van Cleve cited in note 644. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 641–645, 692, 704–706. It is likely that Jan Steen knew a composition of *The Presentation of the Gifts* or *Peasant Wedding Feast*, for his *Wedding Feast* (1667, London, Apsley House) demonstrates compositional similarities with Van Cleve's paintings, which were frequently replicated by Pieter Brueghel the Younger.

Like Van Cleve, Jan Brueghel the Elder also adapted the main figures from *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air* for new compositions. In 1597, he inserted the main subjects – the dancers, bagpipers, and enthroned bride – into a more expansive scene of the *Peasant Wedding outside a Village* (England, Private Collection) (fig. 132), for which a corresponding drawing also exists (London, British Museum) (fig. 133). The setting, with its emphasis on the wooded surroundings and village backdrop, and several additional figural groupings are his original inventions.

This version retained its relevancy through the years, and was engraved and published in 1644 by Hendrick Hondius (fig. 25) and again in 1650 by Wenceslaus Hollar (fig. 26) with slight alterations. Hondius's engraving is more vertical in orientation, and reduces both the setting as well as the figural groupings. Hollar's later print is more consistent with Jan Brueghel the Elder's original composition. Tellingly, both engravers inscribed their prints "P. Bruegel inv."⁶⁴⁶ While it is possible that Hondius and Hollar based their works on a lost composition by Bruegel the Elder, it is more likely that they consciously identified the works as designed by Pieter Bruegel instead of his son. The prominence of the dancing figures and enthroned bride, familiar to audiences through Van der Heyden's print and the numerous copies by Pieter Brueghel the Younger would have encouraged seventeenth-century viewers to accept the work as one by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

Like his younger brother, Pieter Brueghel the Younger also expanded his repertoire with adaptations of the peasant wedding composition. Although the eldest son made primarily made direct copies of his father's paintings until 1619, his

⁶⁴⁶ Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 185–86.

subsequent paintings remain indebted to the Bruegelian tradition. Perhaps needing a working method that allowed for the rapid production of paintings in a large workshop, Brueghel the Younger utilized his father's motifs like puzzle pieces in various combinations.⁶⁴⁷

An undated roundel depicting a wedding feast (London, Sotheby's 1986) (fig. 143) is one example of Brueghel the Younger's frequent practice combining motifs inherited from his father.⁶⁴⁸ The bridal couple has vacated its table of honor and stands at the center of the painting, surrounded by merrymakers, among them eight dancing couples. Closest to the two bagpipers is a man with legs bent akimbo who spins his dancing partner. Behind them, a couple kisses and a man in conversation swills his drink. To the left of the bridal couple, a woman passes under the arm of her dancing partner. All four of these couples derive from figures seen in Bruegel's Detroit painting, Van der Heyden's print, and *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air* by Van Cleve and both Brueghel sons.

The remaining three dancing pairs, all at the left side of the painting, stem from a wedding variant designed by Brueghel the Younger, *Peasant Wedding in a Barn* (1620, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland) (fig. 67), a work that exists in sixteen versions.⁶⁴⁹ Like Van der Heyden's print, this composition combines two events: the presentation of gifts to the bridal couple and the peasant wedding dance.

⁶⁴⁷ For more on Pieter Brueghel the Younger's workshop practices, see: Currie, "Demystifying the Process," 55–56; Duckwitz, "The Devil Is in the Detail," 59, 71; Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.3, 729–784.

⁶⁴⁸ Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 672, n.928.

⁶⁴⁹ A total of twenty-eight versions are known, sixteen of which Ertz attributes to Brueghel the Younger. *Ibid.*, v.2, 716–721.

Brueghel the Younger's figures are awkward derivations of his father's figural type, and betray a neckless, angular form that results from extreme foreshortening. The scene recalls Van Mander's description of the *Peasant Wedding* he had seen in the collection of Willem Jacobsz. van Rijn. While an old woman accepts a pouch from a guest "bringing gifts to the bride... an old peasant with his purse around his neck [busily counts] out the money in his hand."⁶⁵⁰

Contemporaneously to Pieter Brueghel the Younger's peasant wedding paintings, Roelandt Savery's *Peasant Kermis* (1605 or 1615, Willem Baron van Dedem) (fig. 34) features two dancing couples and an embracing couple similar to those found in Bruegel's works. The bold colors of the dancers' costumes and the lively steps of their folkdance immediately recall those in the Detroit *Peasant Wedding* or in Pieter Brueghel the Younger's various copies of *Peasant Wedding in the Open Air* (fig. 21). The prominence of these figures, isolated in a clearing before the throngs of other merry-makers, suggests that an association was intentional. At the same time, however, Savery's figures are not identical copies of those in Bruegel's compositions.⁶⁵¹ Savery likely painted this piece between 1600 and 1615, while in Prague, where he would have seen Bruegel's works.⁶⁵²

⁶⁵⁰ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.233v.

⁶⁵¹ The foreground dancing and spinning couple is seen from a slightly different angle and a different moment in time.

⁶⁵² Spicer, "Roelandt Savery's Studies in Bohemia," 4, 19; Sutton, *Dutch & Flemish Paintings*, 220–23. Sutton argues that this mature work incorporates both the Netherlandish tradition of Bruegel the Elder and the Bohemian surroundings he embraced in Prague. Costume elements are more Bohemian in nature than Netherlandish. Savery repeated the background composition four times with different themes and foreground figures. *Ibid.*, 222.

In the first half of the seventeenth century, hundreds of variants of the *Peasant Wedding* by Marten van Cleve, Jan Brueghel the Elder, Pieter Brueghel the Younger, and unidentified followers hung on the walls of art lovers' homes in both the Southern and Northern Netherlands.⁶⁵³ Van der Heyden's print after Pieter Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding* circulated in three editions.⁶⁵⁴ Pieter Brueghel the Younger made replicas of almost every variant of the *Peasant Wedding*, often several times. Not only did he copy entire works, but he also adapted elements from those works into new compositions, which he – and his workshop – then repeated. He signed most of these paintings “BRVEGHEL” or “BREVGHEL,” a spelling choice that corresponded with that of his brother Jan, who signed his works “BRVEGHEL.” These signatures differed from those of their father. In his early career, Bruegel the Elder signed ‘brueghel’ in lower case letters, but Latinized his signature after 1559 to read “BRVEGEL.”⁶⁵⁵

Contemporary inventories and inscriptions on published prints, however, were less clear as spellings of the last name of each of the three artists varied.⁶⁵⁶ In an age when flexibility in spelling was common, it is likely that seventeenth-century art lovers did not entirely distinguish between “BRVEGEL” and “BRVEGHEL.” Additionally, it may be questioned if contemporary viewers associated Brueghel the

⁶⁵³ For example, inventories from both Antwerp and Amsterdam list works by Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.1, 72-73.

⁶⁵⁴ Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 108.

⁶⁵⁵ Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.1, 38, 74-81.

⁶⁵⁶ Honig, “The Beholder as Work of Art,” 254–56.

Younger's copies after Pieter Baltens and Marten van Cleve with Bruegel the Elder due to the prominent signature, "BRVEGHEL."⁶⁵⁷

The Netherlandish Proverbs

One of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's most iconic compositions is *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) (fig. 9). Though not strictly a peasant painting, the multi-figured image set into a village with surrounding countryside is reminiscent of several Bruegel peasant subjects, such as *The Children's Games* (1560) (fig. 39) and the print after Bruegel of *Kermis at Hoboken* (1559) (fig. 7). As if a view of daily life in a village, the figures go about their business, occasionally interacting with one another. Yet each embodies and acts out a proverb, sometimes two, the result of which demonstrates the folly of visual interpretations of literal sayings. For example, the man wholeheartedly pounding his head against a brick wall in the left foreground embodies a concept understood by the modern viewer.⁶⁵⁸

Aligning with contemporary interest in proverbs, imagery, and literature, Pieter Bruegel focused on them in two distinct periods of his career, 1558-1560, and around 1568.⁶⁵⁹ Many of these utilize contemporary backgrounds to emphasize the folly of acting out proverbs, such as *The Drunk Cast into the Pigsty* (1557, Private

⁶⁵⁷ Pieter Brueghel the Younger signed and dated many of his replicas of Baltens' *Performance of the Farce 'Een Cluyte van Plaeyerwater' at a Flemish Kermis*. Honig, "The Beholder as Work of Art," 254–56.

⁶⁵⁸ Kunzle, "Belling the Cat," 142.

⁶⁵⁹ For the relationship between illustrated proverbs and contemporary literary trends, see Meadow, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder's "Netherlandish Proverbs"*; Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 1–38.

Collection),⁶⁶⁰ or the print series of the *Virtues* (1559-1560). *The Netherlandish Proverbs* belongs in this group, its village setting containing eleven proverbs that earlier feature in the roundels of *Twelve Proverbs* (1558, Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh).⁶⁶¹

In the late 1560s, Bruegel reduced the format of his proverb paintings, and presented the subjects in a manner more reminiscent of genre scenes. Some of his most celebrated – yet enigmatic - works, such as *Misanthrope* (1568, Naples, Museo di Capodimonte), *The Blind Leading the Blind* (Naples, Museo di Capodimonte) (fig. 71), and *Peasant and the Nest Robber* (1568, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum). Many of these compositions found traction as copies in both print and paint, indicating their continued popularity. Pieter Brueghel the Younger replicated numerous proverbs by Bruegel the Elder as well as created new compositions of proverbs. He also painted individual proverbs after the prints by Jan Wierix after Bruegel the Elder's designs, including *The Drunken Fool Seated on an Egg*,⁶⁶² and *The Man with Moneybag and Flatterers*.⁶⁶³ Others sought to capitalize on this fashion. The same Jan Wierix printed works claiming to be “after Bruegel,” but today are not considered to be the old master's designs.⁶⁶⁴

⁶⁶⁰ This work was engraved by Johannes Wierix. Sellink, *Bruegel*, 113.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid., 128–29.

⁶⁶² Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.1, 37; Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 97.

⁶⁶³ Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.1, 40, 76-157; Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 99.

⁶⁶⁴ *Drunken Peasant Pushed into a Pigsty* (1568, NHD A6) was likely a print after a lost painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder from 1557. Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, vii, n.A6. Jan Wierix printed several proverb illustrations after Bruegel. Ibid., 166–73.

While proverb illustrations are often found in Bruegel's oeuvre, *The Netherlandish Proverb* was his only encyclopedic collection of them. This painting is distinguished from *The Virtues* series in that it was a compilation of profane subjects, rather than canonized religious imagery.⁶⁶⁵ Several contemporary prints presented similar constructs. The subject was apparently popular, as around the turn of the seventeenth century, an apparent demand inspired Pieter Brueghel the Younger to reproduce his father's composition many times.⁶⁶⁶ Isolated works by Sebastian Vrancx and David Teniers evidence a continuing interest in the subject. In the later part of the seventeenth century, however, Jan Steen seemed to have been uniquely inspired by Bruegel's proverbs and utilized sixteenth-century schemas to enhance the narrative aspects of his genre scenes.

Bruegel's encyclopedic painting of the proverbs comes out of the sixteenth-century tradition of collecting common proverbs, allegories, and fables into one entity.⁶⁶⁷ One of the first of this tradition was Erasmus' 1500 *Adages*, a collection of

⁶⁶⁵ Sellink, *Bruegel*, 134–35.

⁶⁶⁶ Sullivan notes the different appeal of proverbs between the middle of the sixteenth century and the early decades of the seventeenth century. "By the early years of the following century when PBJ and his workshop produced their copies of the father's paintings, the situation was quite different. The active phase of proverb collecting was over and there was little need to translate Latin and Greek proverbs as much of the work was already done. Humanism was no longer the exciting and fashionable cultural development it was in 1559, and when Brueghel the Younger changed the spelling of his name in 1616 it did not have the same significance as his father's use of BRUEGEL in Roman letters. The sense of discovery attendant on the collecting, publishing, and painting of proverbs was dissipated and a patron could simply commission a copy of the father's famous painting without knowing much about the subject. a copy of the father's painting by pbj was a known quantity, hardly a risky undertaking as proverbs were no longer the leading edge of a prestigious cultural enthusiasm." Margaret A. Sullivan, "'Muti Magistri (Silent Teachers)' Learning from the Brueg(h)els, Father and Son," in *The Netherlandish Proverbs: An International Symposium on the Pieter Brueg(h)els*, ed. Wolfgang Mieder (Burlington, VT: The University of Vermont, 2004), 55.

⁶⁶⁷ Meadow, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder's "Netherlandish Proverbs"*; Sullivan, "'Muti Magistri,'" 49–53; Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 1–38.

around 800 proverbs and sayings from antiquity and the Bible.⁶⁶⁸ Illustrated proverbs go back even earlier, already flourishing by the late Middle Ages. By the middle of the sixteenth century, picturing proverbs in print and paint was common throughout Western Europe.⁶⁶⁹

Two collections of illustrated proverbs likely inspired Bruegel's painting. The most important was Frans Hogenberg's engraving *The Blue Cloak*, or *Blau Huicke* (fig. 135). Published by Hieronymous Cock in 1558, the year before Bruegel painted his masterpiece, Hogenberg's print illustrates forty-three proverbs.⁶⁷⁰ An inscription identifies each proverb, all of which are depicted by individual vignettes on a barren landscape.

Bruegel's interpretation of the proverbs as vignettes set into a contemporary scene of village life also relates to a print of *Proverbs on Sloth* (1540s-1562) (fig. 136) by Frans Huys after Cornelis Massijs.⁶⁷¹ Like Bruegel's painting, this print depicts country villagers acting out the literal meanings of proverbs such as "watching the stork," or "taking the hen for a walk." All of the proverbs refer to wasting time, which, as the top inscription admonishes, will result in the villagers'

⁶⁶⁸ Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 9–11.

An earlier collection of Netherlandish proverbs, the *Proverbia Communia*, appears in 1480, but was not as widely received as Erasmus's. Ibid., 11.

⁶⁶⁹ Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 21–30.

⁶⁷⁰ Bruegel considerably increased the number of proverbs in his painting, which total 85 vignettes, each of which could represent more than one proverb. Max Seidel and Roger H. Marijnissen, *Bruegel* (New York: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1971), 38–43. Bruegel incorporated thirty-seven of Hogenberg's proverbs into his painting. Yoko Mori, "She Hangs the Blue Cloak Over Her Husband," in *The Netherlandish Proverbs. An International Symposium on the Pieter Bruegel(h)els*. (Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, 2004), 73; Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 149–51.

⁶⁷¹ A later state by Joannes Galle falsely attributes the design to Hieronymous Bosch. Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 150.

poverty.⁶⁷² Bruegel expanded his depiction of proverbs to refer to more than a single admonishment, and lowered the point of view to include even more vignettes. It is unclear if Huys's print after Massijs predates Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs*, though as a print, its influence was more extensive than Bruegel's painting, as will later be demonstrated.

Proverb prints, such as those by Hogenberg and Huys after Massijs, as well as Bruegel's painting, were immensely popular, inspiring a flood of other illustrations of proverbs.⁶⁷³ Reprints of prints of proverbs continued well into the next century.⁶⁷⁴ The continued supply of illustrated proverb collections reflects the flourishing allegorical literature and pictorial interpretations through the sixteenth and

⁶⁷² Ibid., 150–51.

⁶⁷³ Ibid., 133, 207–8, n.73.

In 1577, the Van Doetechum brothers published yet another version of *The Blue Cloak* in three sheets with little effort to incorporate the figures into a naturalistic setting. Bruegel's own oeuvre included numerous proverbial and allegorical images, including the print series of the *Virtues and Vices*, *Twelve Proverbs* (Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh), *Misanthrope* (1568, Naples, Museo di Capodimonte), *The Blind Leading the Blind* (Naples, Museo di Capodimonte), *Peasant and the Nest Robber* (1568, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum). Many of these were copied in both print and paint, evidencing their continued popularity. For example, *Drunken Peasant Pushed into a Pigsty* (1568) was likely a print after a lost painting by Bruegel the Elder from 1557. Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, vii. Jan Wierix even printed designs claiming to be "after Bruegel," but which today are not considered to be the older master's work. Ibid., 166–73. Pieter Brueghel the Younger's workshop replicated other paintings of proverbs by Bruegel the Elder and created new compositions. Among the individual proverbs he painted were ones after prints Jan Wierix based on Bruegel the Elder's designs, including *The Drunken Fool Seated on an Egg* and *The Man with Moneybags and Flatterers*. Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.1, 37, 40, 76–157; Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 97–99.

⁶⁷⁴ Johannes van Doetecum published Hogenberg's print in 1577. Johannes Galle (1600–1676) engraved *Die Blau Huicke* after Hogenberg after 1633, and reprinted Massij's *Proverbs on Sloth* as well. Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 134. Bruegel the Elder's first proverb print, *Big Fish Eat Little Fish* (1557) was reprinted well into the seventeenth century. A copy in reverse was published by Hendrick Hondius, reworked with a date of 1619 in a second state. A third state adds Claes Jansz. Visscher's name, along with "P Bruegel inv." Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, 68.

seventeenth centuries, exemplified by Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1603) and Jacob Cats's *Sinne- en Minnebeelden* (1618, 1627).⁶⁷⁵

This environment fueled the demand for the many copies of *The Netherlandish Proverbs* by Pieter Brueghel the Younger and his workshop.⁶⁷⁶ Though few of the paintings by Brueghel the Younger are dated, those that do carry a date range from 1607 to 1619.⁶⁷⁷ Though not precisely exact copies of Bruegel's version in Berlin, they retain most of the elements found in the original composition.⁶⁷⁸ However, distinct changes identified in the copies suggest that the reception of proverbs by the early years of the seventeenth century was different than in the middle of the sixteenth century.

In all of Brueghel the Younger's copied *Netherlandish Proverbs* (example: 1627, Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum) (fig. 66), the artist omitted two proverbs, possibly because the proverbs and their associated motifs were no longer relevant or

⁶⁷⁵ By the turn of the seventeenth century, emblem books, such as Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1603) and Jacob Cats's *Sinne- en Minnebeelden* (1618, 1627) with illustrations by Adriaen van de Venne were immensely popular. In an emblem, the illustrated images, the *devise* or device, was expanded/elucidated/enhanced with "a prefatory motto, often cryptic in meaning" as well as an explanatory poem. Proverbs often appeared in the explanatory portion of the emblem. The paired image and text codified, as well as expanded, much of the symbolic pictorial language used by later genre painters. Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 109. For the relationship between illustrated proverb collections and contemporary literary trends, see Meadow, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder's "Netherlandish Proverbs"*; Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 1–38.

⁶⁷⁶ At least twenty-four versions were painted by Brueghel the Younger and his workshop. Ertz attributes 10 of those to Pieter Brueghel the Younger. Ertz, *Pieter Bruegel Der Jungere*, v.1, 68–75; Duckwitz, "The Devil Is in the Detail," 61.

⁶⁷⁷ Duckwitz, "The Devil Is in the Detail," 70.

⁶⁷⁸ Differences between the Berlin original and the copies suggest that the copies were based on a different model than the Berlin painting, likely a detailed cartoon drawing. It is possible that the drawing Brueghel the Younger used for his copies was the same Bruegel the Elder used for his original painting. Ibid., 61–79.

recognizable.⁶⁷⁹ Alterations to the proverbs also suggest changes in proverbial language. Brueghel the Younger changed the headdress of the man who defecates from the upper window above the upside-down globe, painting him bareheaded or wearing a helmet.⁶⁸⁰ The different headgear does not change the main concept of the proverb, “*Hij schijt op de wereld*” (he shits on the world), meaning, “he has nothing but contempt for the world.”⁶⁸¹ However, for works painted around or during the Twelve Years Truce (1609-1612), the identification of this figure as a soldier may

⁶⁷⁹ The first, a man kissing the knocker ring on the castle door, illustrates to the proverb “*De ring van de deur kussen*” (to kiss the door ring [knocker]), and refers to either being mad with love, or being rejected by a lover. Seidel and Marijnissen, *Bruegel*, 42, n.56.

A passage from *Le voyage et navigation que fist Panurge*, first edition 1538 by Denis Johannot, refers to this proverb: “After [the green goats’] ears are cut off, they turn into women and are known as curly-haired goats. Plenty of fools fall in love with them, [and behave] like lovers, often kissing the door handle behind what they take to be their sweetheart.” The same literature also references the Land of Cockaigne. *Ibid.*, 62–63, n.91.

The second omitted proverb in the seventeenth-century copies is a man with fire on his backside, illustrating “*Hij loopt of hij het vuur in zijn achterste had*” (he runs if he had fire in his backside). *Ibid.*, 42, n.61.

In Bruegel the Elder’s painting, this man chases after pigs eating wheat. Proverbs the pigs refer to include:

““*Waar het hek open is, lopen de varkens in het koren*” (where the hedge is open, the pigs run into the corn). A warning against careless supervision. When the cat’s away, the mice will play.” Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 125, n.7; Seidel and Marijnissen, *Bruegel*, 42, n.60; Meadow, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s “Netherlandish Proverbs,”* 60–61, 139.

Another interpretation could be “the pigs are in the wheat,” meaning everything is not as it should be. *Ibid.*, 60–61, 139.

Yet another interpretation could be “*mindert de schoof, zo wast het varken*,” (less wheat, but more ham), meaning one can not have both at the same time. Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 125, n.7. Together, the pigs and the man could illustrate “he knows well what he drives, who has pigs before him,” meaning that he is not easily deceived in business. However, the meaning fire out of his backside does not appear in this proverb. Meadow, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s “Netherlandish Proverbs,”* 60–61, 139.

This also could illustrate “*Zijn korentje groen eten*” (eat his unripe wheat), meaning to spend one’s income before it has come into one’s possession. Seen in a version from a private collection in Belgium. Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 124, 52; 126, n.86.

The pigs remain in the copies by Brueghel the Younger, sometimes chased by a man, but he never has fire on his backside.

⁶⁸⁰ Duckwitz, “The Devil Is in the Detail,” 68.

Kunzle does not discuss this alteration in the Brueghel the Younger copies in his study of military armor in *The Netherlandish Proverbs* (original, copies, and variants). Kunzle, “Belling the Cat,” 139.

⁶⁸¹ Seidel and Marijnissen, *Bruegel*, 41, n.42.

have resonated in a similar manner as illustrations of *boerenverdriet* (Peasants' Sorrow).⁶⁸²

While Brueghel the Younger made only small alterations to his father's composition, a painting of the *Dutch Proverbs* (1630s, Brussels, Musée Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique) (fig. 137) more fully modernizes the subject. Painted by Sebastian Vrancx or a follower, the work corresponds with precedents by Bruegel and Huys by staging the literal interpretations of proverbs within a contemporary town square.⁶⁸³ Stylistically, however, the work corresponds with Vrancx's other paintings with its lower horizon, small diagonal outlet beyond profusive architectural elements, and profusion of detailed activity within the scene.⁶⁸⁴ It represents a modernized interpretation of the collected proverb composition.

Painted representations of the illustrated proverb encyclopedia like *The Netherlandish Proverbs* are relatively rare outside of the profusion of copies by Brueghel the Younger and his workshop from the 1610s. Few other seventeenth century representations of the subject exist. When David Teniers painted *Flemish Proverbs* (Grantham, Belvoir Castle) (fig. 112) around 1646/1647, he was likely familiar with one of Brueghel the Younger's copies or the compositional cartoon by Bruegel the Elder used in that workshop, source materials he may have known

⁶⁸² Fishman, *Boerenverdriet*.

⁶⁸³ Kunzle, "Belling the Cat," 139–40; Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 149–50.

⁶⁸⁴ The figures are so numerous and close to one another that it is challenging to distinguish one proverb representation from another. Scholars accept the enormous identification of 202 proverbs counted by Grauls in 1960. Jan Grauls, "Het Spreekwoordschilderij van Sebastian Vrancx," *Bulletin Des Musées Royaux Des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles* 9, no. 3–4 (December 1960): 107–64; Kunzle, "Belling the Cat," 139–40; Malcolm Jones, "Fiddlers on the Roof and Friars with Foxtails," in *The Netherlandish Proverbs. An International Symposium on the Pieter Bruegel(h)els* (Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, 2004), 174.

through his marriage to Anna Brueghel, daughter of Jan Brueghel the Elder and niece of Pieter Brueghel the Younger.⁶⁸⁵ At the same time he painted the *Flemish Proverbs*, Teniers executed the Breughelian *Peasant Kermis* (c.1647, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 109). Together, the two likely represented Teniers' status as a member of the prestigious artistic family and presented him in a favorable light to the Breugel-loving Archduke Leopold Wilhelm.

Considerable visual similarities exist between Teniers' *Flemish Proverbs* and Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs*. Foremost, Teniers includes the upside-down globe and the woman placing a blue cloak on the shoulders of her husband, references to the two contemporary titles given to the subject, the "Topsy-turvy world," or "World Upside-down," and "The Blue Cloak." Teniers composed his work with a large house at the left, with the pies on its roof and upside-down globe on its wall, as well as the arched stone bridge over the water. Other prominent figures like the man digging a hole in front of them, the boy in the bubble, and the man with the red cloak addressing the viewer all make the Bruegel reference obvious.

However, Teniers only represented around fifty proverbs, as opposed to one hundred found in Brueg[h]el's paintings.⁶⁸⁶ He included several images of proverbs that are not found in the Berlin painting or in copies after it.⁶⁸⁷ The *plumstrycker*

⁶⁸⁵ Jan Brueghel died in 1625. Teniers and Anna Breughel were married in 1637. Teniers made a drawing after Jan Brueghel's *Wedding Procession* (Stockholm, Nationalmuseum). Vlieghe, *David Teniers the Younger*, 13, fig. 8.

⁶⁸⁶ Kunzle observes that the number of proverbs identified is not firmly established, and fluctuates with different scholarship. As many as 132 proverbs have been proposed for Bruegel's *The Netherlandish Proverbs*, with several motifs carrying more than one proverb identification. Kunzle, "Belling the Cat," 158; Jones, "Fiddlers on the Roof," 165.

⁶⁸⁷ Additionally, Teniers altered the image of the woman binding the Devil to a cushion, replacing the devil with a fish, possibly a *zee-duivel*. He also seems to make a variant with the image of the man

(feather-stroker, a flatterer) appears in Hogenberg's 1558 print of *De Blauwe Huyck*, which had been re-published by Johannes Galle (1600-1676) in 1633.⁶⁸⁸ Slightly altered, this figure also appears in Vrancx's painting.⁶⁸⁹ Two additional proverbs may derive from Joannes van Doetechum's 1577 print series of *De Blauwe Huyck* (fig. 138): the pig wearing a pair of tongs, representing "*Dat sluijt gelijk ee[n] tanghe vp een verrken*" ("it does not apply in the least"); and atop the distant hill, "who comes to the mill first, grinds first."⁶⁹⁰ Teniers likely introduced the illustrated proverb of fiddlers on the roof.⁶⁹¹

While major elements of the composition refer back to Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs* village, Teniers' approach is consistent with that found in his contemporary works, as in *The Skittle Game* (c.1645, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 139). At the left, the large houses provide a backdrop for the figures, while a perspective opens up at the right and the sky takes up a considerable amount of space. The rolling hills and even the vertical punctuation of the obelisk in *The Skittles Game* recall the compositional schema of *The Flemish Proverbs*. Teniers' reduction of the number of figures in his variant of the encyclopedic illustrated proverb corresponds this work with others in his oeuvre, for example, in his earlier *Peasant Wedding* (1637, Madrid, Museo del Prado) (fig. 107).

holding a ladle, perhaps a conjunction of the woman attempting to spoon up spilt milk, and the man with the long knife, who represents "every man who holds a saucepan is not a cook." Jones, "Fiddlers on the Roof," 173–74.

⁶⁸⁸ Gibson, *Figures of Speech*, 134.

⁶⁸⁹ It is possible Teniers knew Vrancx's painting. Jones, "Fiddlers on the Roof," 174–76.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid., 170–73.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid., 173.

As a balance between recognizably Bruegelian works and Teniers' own paintings, *Flemish Proverbs* may represent Teniers' claim on his wife's artistic heritage. Made ten years into his marriage with Anna Brueghel, the painting could not represent Teniers' proclamation of his familial prestige. However, in 1646 and 1647, Teniers was establishing his relationship with Archduke Leopold Wilhelm. In November of 1647, Leopold Wilhelm praised Teniers' naturalism in a letter to Emperor Ferdinand III.⁶⁹² While contemporary works by Teniers attest to the artist's exceptional peasant paintings, a clear association with Pieter Bruegel, the model of naturalistic peasant depictions and relation of Teniers likely helped him land the prestigious position of court painter for Leopold Wilhelm.

Overtly recognizable quotations from Bruegel's *The Netherlandish Proverbs*, such as those by Teniers, do not continue later in the seventeenth century. However, seventeenth-century artists continued an interest in such imagery by incorporating illustrations of proverbs into their genre scenes for their narrative meanings.⁶⁹³ At the same time, genre scenes also became the vehicle on which to act out proverbs, which were often identified through inscriptions. Jan Steen painted both types of scenes.

Some of Steen's most popular works are illustrations of a single proverb. He depicted the proverb *The Old Sing So Pipe the Young* (c.1663-1665, The Hague, Mauristhuis) (fig. 140) several times.⁶⁹⁴ In Steen's painting, a bespectacled

⁶⁹² Vlieghe, *David Teniers the Younger*, 27.

⁶⁹³ Iconographical readings in Dutch genre scenes were first advocated by Eddy de Jongh. See Eddy de Jongh, *Questions of Meaning: Theme and Motif in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Painting*, trans. Michael Hoyle (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2000), passim.

⁶⁹⁴ Other versions are: c.1663-1666, Berlin, Staatliche Museen; 1668, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum; c.1670-1675, Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

grandmother reads the lyrics to the song her family sings. Her songbook opens to the viewer, identifying the proverb in the painting, “Song/ As it is sung, thus it is piped, that’s been known a long time, as I sing, so (everyone) do the same from one to a hundred years old.”⁶⁹⁵ He was most likely familiar with a composition of the same subject by Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678), who painted it numerous times, the earliest in 1638 (Antwerp, KMSKA), a version that was engraved by Schelte Adamsz. Bolswert.⁶⁹⁶ Although Steen seemed to have drawn most of his Bruegelian imagery from prints rather than painted sources, it is more likely that he based *The Old Sing So Pipe the Young* on a later painting by Jordaens, like the version in Paris (c.1638-1640, Paris, Musée du Louvre) (fig. 141), rather than Bolswert’s print.⁶⁹⁷ The print omits key elements seen Steen’s painting, like the caged bird.

In the late 1650s and early 1660s, Steen illustrated several other proverbs, the specific proverb often identified through an inscription cleverly incorporated into the scene. An elegant music lesson is enhanced by words on the decorated lid of the harpsichord, which reads, “*Acta Virum Probant*,” “or actions prove the man” (1659, London, National Gallery). It appears that the tutor has proven himself worthy of a duet with his student, as a boy in the background brings forth a theorbo for him to

⁶⁹⁵ Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 172.

⁶⁹⁶ Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, 1450-1700*, III:v.3, 87, n.293; Larsen, *Seventeenth Century Flemish Painting*, 219; Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 175; R.-A D’Hulst, Nora De Poorter, and Marc Vandeven, *Jacob Jordaens (1593-1578)*, ed. Hans Devisscher and Nora De poorter (Brussels: Gemeentekrediet, 1993), v.2, 178-183, 204-205.

⁶⁹⁷ Steen was living in The Hague when Jordaens came in 1651 to paint the *Triumph of Frederick Henry* in the Huis ten Bosch. Furthermore, Jordaens paired his work with *Twelfth Night*, which evidence suggests Steen did as well. Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, 161.

play.⁶⁹⁸ Temptation and indulgence tempered by warnings of moderation and folly in *Easy Come, Easy Go* (1661, Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen) are coalesced and identified by the inscription on the mantelpiece: “*soo gewonne soo verteert*.”⁶⁹⁹ Scribbled writing on a slate in the lower right corner of *In Luxury Beware* (1663, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) identifies the proverb, the meaning of which is indicated by objects and human actions throughout the room.⁷⁰⁰

Not all of Steen’s proverbs are so clearly identified, however the elements Steen includes often clearly add up to allegorical or proverbial subjects. Behind a half-raised curtain, figures of all ages play on a stage, suggesting the passage of a lifetime in *The World’s a Stage* (c.1665-1667, The Hague, Mauritshuis) (fig. 142). Additional elements refer to time, particularly the ephemerality of it, such as the clock on the wall, the boy blowing bubbles, the eggshells scattered on the floor. Yet at the same time, the scene is reminiscent of life. A large elegant Dutch hall contains the raucous party of small vignettes, with all in attendance behaving fairly poorly.⁷⁰¹ In this way, the work recalls Bruegel’s *Netherlandish Proverbs*, in which the images of proverbs are integrated into a contemporary village.

Throughout his career, Steen incorporated proverbial imagery to enhance narrative elements. An ace of spades, yellow stocking, and jug on the ship’s flag in *Village Festival with Ship of Saint Rijn Uijt* (c.1653, Private Collection) (fig. 117) allude to the proverb “*Kaart, kous en kan maken menig arm man*” (“Card [gambling],

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid., 215.

⁶⁹⁹ Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 147–48.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid., 166–68.

⁷⁰¹ Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, 232–33.

stocking [women], and jug [drinking] make many a man poor.”)⁷⁰² In addition to the clearly-identified ship of “Rijn Uijt,” the painting includes other features related to the proverb, among them the lifeless tree behind the boat and the empty barrel behind the posturing man who has thrown down his red book and supplicates to the revelers in the boat.⁷⁰³

Village festivals offered these artists a range of opportunities to incorporate figures and vignettes that could illustrate proverbs. Steen’s *Village Revel* (1673, England, Royal Collection) (fig. 143) contains pictorial elements from *Proverbs on Sloth* (fig. 136), the engraving by Pieter Huys after Quentin Massijs that is similar to Breugel’s *Netherlandish Proverbs* (fig. 9).⁷⁰⁴ Diogenes, the ancient philosopher associated with Elke, or Everyman, appears in *Village Revel* as an old soldier in outdated armor and garments, carrying a lantern in his attempt to find a decent human.⁷⁰⁵ Around him, vignettes of folly reveal the moralizing warning of an existence without world order.⁷⁰⁶ The inscription on the tavern’s sign reads “’T

⁷⁰² Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 111.

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

It is unclear whether he (uselessly) entreats them to mend their ways, or is seeking passage on their vessel.

⁷⁰⁴ A work from the same year, *Village Fair with Quack* (The Hague, Rijksdienst Beeldkonde Kunst) also references *Proverbs on Sloth* with emblems associated with blindness, such as the owl, men winking, and figure in the barrel that may refer to Diogenes. Mariët Westermann, “Steen’s Comic Fictions,” in *Jan Steen: Painter and Storyteller*, ed. H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. (Washington and Amsterdam: National Gallery of Art and Rijksmuseum, 1995), 62; Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 248–50.

⁷⁰⁵ “According to the ancient story, when asked why he was carrying his lantern in the marketplace on a bright day, Diogenes replied that he was searching for a human being. In Vondel’s version of the story, Diogenes responds to his interrogators: ‘Your beastly life proves that you are men only by name and beasts in your deeds.’” Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 248–50.

⁷⁰⁶ A man puts out a sign that reads “*Dit huis is te huer*” an innuendo to both a house available for lease and a “moral bankruptcy.” Morality is a concern for this brothel, identified by the dove. The hay in the upper window refers to a proverb that states that everything is hay or nothingness. The

misverstant,” meaning “misunderstanding and its consequences,” while the accompanying image depicts a bare bottom defecating.⁷⁰⁷ A comparable symbol of worldly folly is found in Bruegel’s *Netherlandish Proverbs*, where a man perches outside a window to relieve himself on a globe. A second buttocks visible at the bridge’s gatehouse and defecates into the water below. Another association with Bruegel’s painting is the man walking with his crutch while carrying a basket of eggs. With his awkward gait, tilted head, and contorted face, he closely resembles the motif of the drunk supported by his wife, examined in the next section. Such elements related to *The Netherlandish Proverbs* suggest that Steen knew Bruegel’s iconic composition, possibly through a painted copy by Pieter Brueghel the Younger.⁷⁰⁸

Steen isolated pictorial elements such as figural groupings or scattered eggshells and tipped jugs to allow easier reading of the symbolic imagery within his work. *The Dancing Couple* (1663, Washington, National Gallery of Art) (fig. 116) is one of many paintings that feature broken eggshells, pipes and bowls, empty jugs, scattered flowers on the otherwise pristine floor. As Arthur Wheelock has catalogued, the work is a compilation of proverbs and symbolic images related to relationships and the transient nature of pleasure, particularly those enjoyed at kermis.⁷⁰⁹ As such, it belongs to the tradition first codified by artists from the mid-sixteenth century,

entirety of the painting shows a reversal of gender roles, suggesting that the world is topsy turvy. Passengers in the ship of fools demonstrate three vices; lust is demonstrated throughout. Ibid., 248. Bruegel’s painting addresses itself to the viewer with the dandy figure in red and white in the lower foreground. Likely inspired by this, Steen personifies idleness with the pipe-packing man seated before the boat. It is no surprise that this painting also includes Steen’s closest emulations to Bruegel the Elder’s painting manner.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁸ The selection of proverbs and emblems also relate to Massijs’ *Proverbs on Sloth*.

⁷⁰⁹ Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 163–65.

among them Bruegel, Quentin Massijs, and Frans Hogenberg in their prints and paintings.

A Wife Carrying Home her Drunk Husband

A drunk led home from the tavern by his long-suffering wife is the type of image one expects to find in Bruegelian paintings of peasants at leisure. Pieter Brueghel the Younger, his workshop, and unknown followers painted multiple variants of *The Wife Taking Home the Drunk* (example: 1615 or c.1623, Montreal, Museum of Fine Art) (fig. 125).⁷¹⁰ The central feature in all of these works is a stumbling man, legs tangled from too much drink, supported by his wife (interpreted possibly as long-suffering, or as beleaguered, or as frustrated, or as annoyed). In the Montreal version, she berates him as he slops away, glancing back towards his former companions, his sword mirroring the direction of his gaze. A small child carries the flaccid bagpipe the man is clearly too drunk to handle, possibly alluding to sexual impotence experienced in the drunken state.⁷¹¹ Other peasants brawl outside the tavern, thrusting axes and tridents at one another.⁷¹² Chickens pluck at grain fallen from the cart, the only other furious activity in an otherwise peaceful winter country

⁷¹⁰ Brueghel the Younger and his workshop and associates painted the drunk and his wife in both summer and winter scenes. Winter scenes tend to replicate the entire composition, while summer scenes include the motif in four distinct settings. Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 163–65. A constancy of form for the man and woman, if not in size and placement, suggests that Brueghel the Younger and his workshop used some sort of copying practice. The underdrawing of a winter scene (Paris, Galerie de Jonckheere 2010) reveals firm outlines of the figures by the hand of Brueghel the Younger. Missing, however, are pounced dots suggesting cartoon transfer. Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.3, 786-788.

⁷¹¹ The flaccid bagpipe as a sign of impotence may also relate to the man's inability to determine his own actions as his wife drags him away.

⁷¹² A drawing exists of these figures. Kunsthau Kende, Vienna, May 1952, lot 438. Ludwig Münz, *Pieter Bruegel, The Drawings*, trans. Luke Hermann (Greenwich, CT: XXXXX, 1961), 236, n. A43.

scene. Snow muffles the ruckus of the drunks and more diligent villagers go about their daily activities in the background.

In Brueghel the Younger's works, all from after 1615, this motif is isolated from the rest of the composition, or highlighted against a contrasting background.⁷¹³ A drawing attributed by Münz to Pieter Brueghel the Younger similarly focuses on the peasant couple (Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Kupferstichkabinett) (fig. 144). Possibly made after a lost drawing by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, the drawing depicts the old woman grimacing as she holds up her husband his sword, slumped posture, and unsteady legs correspond with those in Brueghel the Younger's painted versions.⁷¹⁴

Within Bruegel's oeuvre, similarities between the Frankfurt drawing and the gallivanting groom in *The Dirty Bride, or the Wedding of Mopsus and Nisa* (woodcut, c.1566, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art; engraving by Pieter van der Heyden, 1570) (fig. 145) support an argument that the Frankfurt drawing was based on a design by Bruegel the Elder.⁷¹⁵ The groom, younger, more nimble, and certainly less inebriated, may have inspired the clothing, sword, and turned head of Brueghel the Younger's drunk.

In Bruegel's *Magpie on the Gallows* (1568, Darmstadt, Hessische Landesmuseum) (fig. 121), a woman, partially obscured by a tree, stands beside her

⁷¹³ For the most part, Brueghel the Younger placed the couple left of center, though uses the couple's turned heads to draw attention back into the composition.

⁷¹⁴ Münz, *Pieter Bruegel, The Drawings*, 236, n.A42; Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Brueghel-Brueghel*, 385–87.

⁷¹⁵ The engraving, cut by Van der Heyden, strays stylistically from Bruegel the Elder's original design, as preserved in the woodblock. The woodblock, drawn by Bruegel himself, is closer in manner and subject to the motif used by Brueghel the Elder.

husband. His leg is lifted, possibly in dance, or possibly as a stumble as they leave the festivities. Karel van Mander claimed that Bruegel left this work to his wife, Mayken Coecke.⁷¹⁶ His sons knew the work. Pieter Brueghel the Younger painted at least one copy of the work (Georges de Jonckheere Collection), and Jan Brueghel the Elder used the background landscape for the background of two small landscapes on copper.⁷¹⁷

Though quite similar, it is unclear whether the couple in Bruegel's *Magpie on the Gallows* and in Brueghel the Younger's *Wife Taking Home the Drunk* are related. A major difference between the two works is the importance of the motif to the composition. Brueghel the Younger's drunk and wife are central to his composition. Bruegel the Elder's couple is one of several groupings of festive figures.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, variants on the drunk and his wife populated and flavored paintings of peasant celebrations. Indeed, a wife dragging her inebriated husband away from a place of revelry is often encountered in peasant festivities, where overindulgence was a certain possibility. The motif appears throughout the period examined by this dissertation, and was utilized by many different artists.

An early instance of the motif by Pieter Baltens suggests the possibility that Bruegel did not invent this figure type. In Baltens' *Performance of the Farce 'Een*

⁷¹⁶ "In his will he left his wife a piece with a magpie on the gallows; by the magpie he meant gossiping tongues, which he committed to the gallows." Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.234r.

⁷¹⁷ Currie and Allart, *The Brueg[h]el Phenomenon*, v.2, 547-548. Brueghel the Younger's version is unsigned, possibly indicating that the work was never intended for sale, but precisely replicated the father's painting for the family's own purposes. Unlike most works that he copied, Brueghel the Younger did not make multiple versions of this painting. Ibid., v.2, 562. Another version in the former Bruno Donath Collection was exhibited in at the 1935 *Exposition universelle et internationale* in Brussels, but its present location is unknown. Ibid., v.2, 562-563.

Cluyte van Plaeyerwater' at a Flemish Kermis (c.1570, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 50), a man and a woman support an unsteady man as they leave the kermis festivities in the lower right foreground. This figural grouping appears in many replications of the composition, however is strangely absent from the copies Pieter Brueghel the Younger made of the composition.⁷¹⁸

A group of paintings from the 1570s of *St. Sebastian Kermis*, now considered the work of Marten van Cleve, include a drunk man carried by his wife (London, Sotheby's, 7 July 1990, lot 53) (fig. 146).⁷¹⁹ Tucked into the tumult of the kermis festivities, the drunk and his wife move toward the viewer, rather than across the picture plane, as they do in the Frankfurt drawing and Brueghel the Younger's paintings. The man holds his cap in one hand and stretches his arm up behind his wife's head. All that is seen of the wife is her head, topped with a stiff white cap folded in the manner as the one worn by the peasant woman in the Frankfurt drawing.

In front of this couple, a peasant flings both arms over his head. A comparable threesome appears in a drawing of a peasant village kermis by Karel van Mander (1592, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 115), which was engraved by Nicolaes Jansz. Clock in 1593 (fig. 38).⁷²⁰ Karel van Mander utilized the motif of the exuberant man

⁷¹⁸ Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.II, 923-927.

⁷¹⁹ The other two works are: Amsterdam, Christie's, 20 June 1989, lot 92; and Paris, Galerie Gismondi 1985. Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 35, 143-44. Several of these paintings were formerly identified as late works by Pieter Baltens, and dated to the 1590s. Ibid., 143-44.

⁷²⁰ Beneath the drawing, Van Mander wrote in Dutch: "See here the peaants in their bold majesty/ Celebrating the kermis with guzzling and gaping/ They think they do much that is wise/ But one can detect little wisdom here/ The one sings, the other jumps, the third wants to sleep/ Or shoot the parrot, for a lousy prize/ There the pigs come to gather up the arrows/ Then it often ends in a brawl." Cited in Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 220-21.

To the engraved edition, Franco Estius added Latin verses, translated as:

with his patient wife in several more works, although he varied his representation of the motif. A drawing of a kermis from 1591 (Paris, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts) (fig. 147) includes a man with his arms raised, awkwardly stepping forward as he converses with a female companion. The degree to which this peasant is intoxicated is unclear, though the calm festivities represented in this peasant kermis drawing suggest a more restrained level of celebration.

Van Mander leaves little doubt of the drunkenness of a peasant couple in his earliest drawing of the motif, from 1588 (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 62).⁷²¹ In the engraving after it by Harmen Muller (fig. 63),⁷²² an inscription reads, “*Nu ben ick lustich...*” (“Now I am happy”).⁷²³ This motif then appeared as an engraving in German emblem books of 1596, 1611, and 1627, where the couple served as a “warning against gluttony.”⁷²⁴ Though absent of any overt reference to overindulgent, the figures’ awkward stumbles along the dirt road and overly dramatic gestures suggest intoxication. He leans back into her for support, his arms outstretched in

“Behold how the children of the country celebrate. After the drinking, Thymele gives one kiss after another to Mopsus; Chromis and Mnasyllus and Aegle dance and sing, and the vomit of many celebrants is a feast for the pigs. Soon one will play the bagpipe. The wretched Irus gets ready for a brawl. Traso, having emptied many a jug, repeatedly trumpets the horrible sound of the horn he heard in battle.” Cited in Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, lxxxix, n.118.

Claes van Breen then copied Clock’s engraving. Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 221, n.1.

⁷²¹ Two versions of this drawing are known, in Düsseldorf, Boerner; and Paris, École des Beaux-Arts. Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, 135.

⁷²² The drawing in Paris was indented for transfer. *Ibid.*, cvi, 135.

⁷²³ The rest of the inscription reads “...doer druck voor duer is,” which is untranslatable to this author. *Ibid.*, 135.

⁷²⁴ Johann Theodor de Bry, engraving in reverse, used in *Emblemata secularia*, Frankfurt 1611, n.56, and in *Proscenium vitae humanae*, Frankfurt, W. Fitzer, 1627, n.64. Alpers, “Realism as a Comic Mode,” 134; Leesberg, *Karel van Mander*, 135.

exclamation, his face turned toward hers. She returns the gaze, sagging under his weight in the same manner as other representations of this motif.

These edifying inscriptions suggest that the motif, not surprisingly, carried associations of excess and overindulgence. Furthermore, the figures of the drunk and his wife only appear in scenes of the peasant kermis, suggesting an association between the motif and readings of the general subject matter. The man and his wife serve as warnings against excess, a common theme in peasant kermis imagery.

Van Mander's drawing of the peasant couple and the Frankfurt drawing are the only instances in which the figures are the subject. Unlike the Frankfurt drawing, Van Mander's composition is complete; the couple is placed into a landscape just outside a village. In this respect, it anticipates Brueghel the Younger's paintings that focus on the drunk and his wife in the village scene.

At the time Van Mander was artistically active in Haarlem and Brueghel the Younger was establishing his studio in Antwerp, Jacob Savery was in Amsterdam.⁷²⁵ In 1598, he utilized two variants of the peasant couple motif in a large watercolor Bruegelian kermis (London, Victoria and Albert Museum) (fig. 73).⁷²⁶ In the foreground of this scene of merriment and debauchery, Savery included a man with a sword, possibly drunk, with his face hidden behind his red hat. He follows his wife

⁷²⁵ Jacob Savery's reputation as an imitator of Bruegel the Elder's drawings makes him a possible candidate for the author of the Frankfurt drawing. However, the manner of the Frankfurt drawing does not correspond to that found in works attributed to Savery, such as *Study Sheet with Peasants and a Child* (Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archeologie) or *The Blind* (Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett). The faces of the figures in the study sheet are more detailed than the Frankfurt drawing, and the shading is more regular. The study sheet lacks the subtlety and suggestive nature of the handling in the Frankfurt figures. The outlines of the figures are crisp, but more consistent than the gradient lines found in the Frankfurt sheet. Regular hatching also permeates the shading in *The Blind*, a finished work that includes a false Bruegel signature and date. In this work, too, the faces are rendered in a more labored manner. See also Hand et al., *Age of Bruegel*, 256–57.

⁷²⁶ Ibid., 258.

and child away from the festivities. Directly behind them, at the center of the scene, another woman pulls her gesticulating husband away from a more escalated vignette of men with swords and clubs attempting to brawl.

These two motifs, similar yet distinct, represent divergent depictions of what is formally the same figural coupling. Savery almost seems to suggest this association, placing the two works close enough that a connection can be made between the ebullient form of a man pulled away from a fight, and a more contained version of a couple leaving the festivities. In Savery's watercolor, both representations emphasize figures moving away from something, whether retreating from temptation or exiting before the situation escalates. This theme is consistent in all representations of this motif.

The foreground drunk in Savery's watercolor differs from both Van Mander's earlier peasant and Brueghel the Younger's later drunk in that he is not obviously inebriated as he steps forward with his left foot. Pieter Brueghel the Younger also adapted the drunk figure into a different character in a group of paintings of *The Inn of the Swan*, a composition he repeated frequently between 1625 and 1633.⁷²⁷ In *The Inn of the Swan* (1625, Amsterdam, Christie's, 14 November 1991, lot. 193) (fig. 148), peasants gather to drink outside a lively tavern marked by the sign of the swan.⁷²⁸ At the far edge of the composition, a woman in a white hood gently urges her husband along, a variant of the woman supporting her drunk husband motif. He, in turn, steps forward while turning back and stretching out his arm towards a lovely

⁷²⁷ Ertz, *Pieter Brueghel Der Jungere*, v.2, 834-836, 844-847.

⁷²⁸ Marlier argued that this is one of the nicer compositions Brueghel the Younger designed, with its relatively large figures and unique format. Marlier, *Pierre Brueghel Le Jeune*, 389.

young lady in a bonnet seated with another man at the right of the scene.⁷²⁹ While the motif is altered, the characters still behave in a similar way. The wife takes control to extricate her husband from a bad situation, whether pertaining to alcohol, excess, violence, or lust.

Brueghel the Younger propagated the image of the drunk couple in the early decades of the seventeenth century, but he was not the only seventeenth-century artist to utilize the motif. For example, it appears as a background element in David Vinckboons's drawing of a bordello scene (c.1608, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 35), near a blind hurdy gurdy player taunted by small children.⁷³⁰ Immediately behind the couple one sees an adult flanked by two children reminiscent of a similar group in Bruegel's *Kermis at Hoboken* (1559) (fig. 7).

In a rare usage of these figures outside of a country setting, Sebastiaan Vrancx included the drunk and his wife in a painting of the *Market Day in Antwerp* (c.1620-1630, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) (fig. 76). The woman's red skirt is the brightest element in the composition. The small child who leads the couple carries the man's sword over his shoulder serves a similar function as the diminutive bagpipe carrier in Brueghel the Younger's contemporary paintings.

Even after the death of Pieter Brueghel the Younger in 1638, this motif continued to be used in depictions of peasant festivities. David Teniers' *Peasant Kermis* (c.1647, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) (fig. 109), for example, includes

⁷²⁹ The motif of the young lady and her companion, complete with bench and baret table, is found in a drawing in Munich (Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, inv. Nr. 1941.67). The drawing was formerly attributed to Marten van Cleve. Ertz and Nitze-Ertz, *Marten van Cleve*, 237. The woman in a bonnet and her male companion also feature in Jan Brueghel the Elder's *Peasant Wedding Banquet* (1623. Madrid, Museo del Prado).

⁷³⁰ Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes*, 175–76.

a woman dragging her husband out of the tavern yard, away from the temptations of drink, music, and lust. Jan Steen often featured this motif in his most Bruegelian works. In his early *Village Festival with the Ship of Saint Rijn Uijt* (c.1653, Private Collection) (fig. 117), a woman, left of center, pleads with her inebriated husband to leave the festivities. He gesticulates back with an outstretched arm while feeble legs barely hold him upright, his bold red cap highlighted against the dark background. His extended arm and leaning stance recall Van Mander's 1588 drawing of a peasant couple (fig. 62), which circulated in several printed versions. An emblem of gluttony, the couple appropriately belongs in Steen's variant of the Ship of Fools, the allegorical warning of the consequences of drinking, gambling, and wanton activities under the "mock" patronage of Saint Rijn Uijt.⁷³¹ Other Bruegelian elements in the painting, such as the bagpiper and peasants dancing in a circle, provide appropriate components to the representation of village festivities and may enhance the comedic and archaic aspects of the subject, but do not carry the same implications as the drunk and his wife.

Steen again revisited this motif in two late paintings, though in these instances he represented the figures with considerably more freedom.⁷³² His *Peasant Kermis* (c.1668-1670, Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum) (fig. 113) includes a wide array of Bruegelian motifs, as is discussed in chapter three. In the foreground, two women escort a stumbling old drunk away from the tavern, guided by a proud boy carrying

⁷³¹ Saint Rijn Uijt was the "mock patron saint for those who have lost their fortune through women, gambling, and drinking." Chapman, Klock, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen*, 109–11.

⁷³² A third instance of a drunk man supported by his wife is in *Village Fair with Quack* (c.1673, The Hague, Rijksdienst Beeldende Kunst), though this inclusion differs in that the man is offered a glass by a man in the cart, and the man and woman are not leaving the festivities.

the man's cloak and hat. Immediately behind them, in a way reminiscent of Roelandt Savery, another drunk man leans on his wife as he calls out with an outstretched arm to someone he knows. These two groupings represent seeming opposites, one coming and one going, one bolstered with drink, the other overcome by it.

At the far left of *The Wedding Feast at Cana* (c.1670-1672, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland) (fig. 149), a patient wife escorts her inebriated husband down the stairs.⁷³³ As the rest of the wedding celebrants enjoy the miraculous water-turned-to-wine, the man must decline the tall glass offered him by the server. His restraint is made difficult by the seated man pulling at his red cloak, and the resulting turn of his body, unsteady legs, and supportive wife all reference the Bruegelian motif. In this instance, the reading of the motif aligns more precisely with that in Brueghel the Younger's *Wife Taking the Drunk Home*, where the figures leave the scene and temptation. For *The Wedding Feast at Cana*, a departure from the celebration would also result in missing Jesus's first miracle, turning water into wine.

In almost all examples of the drunk and his wife, the figures are represented leaving temptation. One must consider that the motif was most often represented in the context of some sort of revelry, and the subject itself was over intoxication and the inability of the man to extricate himself from the situation. However, its replication over the years in the same contexts suggests that it came to be associated with extricating oneself from temptation.

While the source of this figural group can be traced to the middle of the sixteenth century, possibly even back to Pieter Bruegel or Pieter Baltens, it was most

⁷³³ Thank you to Arthur Wheelock for bringing to my attention this example of the motif in Steen's oeuvre.

frequently depicted in the seventeenth century. Karel van Mander's frequent inclusion of the motif in his works on paper likely dispersed the motif. In the first few decades of the seventeenth century, Pieter Brueghel the Younger incorporated the motif into many of his paintings of peasants outside a tavern or village. The inclusion of this motif into works reminiscent of Bruegel the Elder's imagery and on panels which Brueghel the Younger clearly signed his name likely absorbed the motif into the vocabulary of the Bruegel tradition. The motif continued to resonate with artists well into the seventeenth century, almost always in the context of peasants and festivities, the subject matter most directly associated with Bruegel.

From Bruegel to Steen: A Similar Pattern

The three case studies explored in this chapter were chosen with select criteria. Two examples, *Peasant Wedding* and *The Netherlandish Proverbs*, are subjects that derive from the art of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. The case study of a single motif, the drunk and his wife, corresponds with the peasant imagery coming out of the Bruegel tradition.

A similar pattern emerges in the lifespan of these three examples. Although Bruegel the Elder's artistic career corresponded with those of Pieter Baltens and Marten van Cleve, their contribution to the Bruegel tradition has often been undervalued, even by sixteenth-century sources like Karel van Mander. The greatest proponent of Bruegelian imagery around the turn of the seventeenth century, however, was Pieter Brueghel the Younger, whose prolific copying and emulation of his father's art helped cement his reputation. Brueghel the Younger revived subjects and a manner of painting that had continued to appeal to a large public well into the

seventeenth century. He not only replicated old subjects, but he also developed new ones in ways that emulated his father's manner. And in all of these paintings, Brueghel the Younger boldly signed his name, solidifying the association between the image and the name Bruegel.

David Teniers embraced the Bruegel tradition as it manifested itself in the naturalistic low-life genre scenes of the 1630s, but he utilized the subjects and motifs to emphasize his own personal connection to the Brueghel family – with career-advancing success. His interpretation of the Bruegel tradition was fairly conservative, and he did not modernize the compositions to any great degree. The same cannot be said for Jan Steen, who seamlessly incorporated sixteenth-century subjects and compositions into his thoroughly relevant genre scenes. At the same time, he adopted references to Bruegel's art for distinct purposes, often to enhance a comedic aspect of his work through an archaic citation.

The continued appeal of peasant weddings, proverb subjects, and overindulgence at festivals is evidenced by the sustained production of these subjects through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The peasant wedding and the motif of a drunk and his wife correspond to the genre of peasants at leisure. However, the two subjects present opposing views of the peasantry: one a positive celebration of life's events, the other a warning against excess. Their coexistence speaks to the fact that no single reading of peasant imagery is possible.

From Bruegel to Steen, proverb imagery evolved from overt illustrations of folly as the proverbs were acted out to more subtle incorporation of proverbs into contemporary genre scenes. Unlike peasant subjects that correspond to country life,

like weddings and kermis, proverb imagery as encapsulated by collections like Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs* did not retain its appeal in the later seventeenth century. Jan Steen's incorporation of proverbs and symbolic imagery into his genre scenes were individual responses to an archaic mode.

Conclusion: Images of Humanity

One could stand in front of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *The Harvesters* (*August/September*) (1565, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) (fig. 6) for hours.⁷³⁴ After galleries of solemn paintings of the *Lamentation* and *Madonna with Child*, the golden vibrancy of Bruegel's panel is invigorating. Closer inspection reveals delightful details: additional peasants trudging their way from fields to the hay cart, a small hamlet in the background, and even an impromptu game of sport. Even a familiar element, such as a farmer's face, is rendered with great facility in suggestive brushstrokes.

The ability of this painting to speak so clearly through four and a half centuries does not solely rest on its liveliness, details, and innovative technique. Through representation of peasants at work and rest, Bruegel captures elements of humanity that allude to universal truths. In a single image, he represents fatigue, endurance, relief - and most of all, peace and harmony. Bruegel's peasant imagery presents a positive view of those who labor through life, but their emotions resonate with all classes. For sixteenth- and seventeenth-century audiences, images of the peaceful and productive countryside would have contrasted sharply with ongoing war and strife of the Dutch Revolt. Van Mander even suggested his biographies of artists were equal to those of military generals, arguing that art was the antidote to war.⁷³⁵ Furthermore, as urban settlement eclipsed rural life, idyllic scenes of the Flemish countryside hearkened back to a world recently abandoned.

⁷³⁴ Truthfully, there is a bench in the gallery, so one must not necessarily stand.

⁷³⁵ Van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, v.1, fol.198r.

Sixteenth-century literature suggests that Bruegel's contemporaries agreed and that he could capture human emotion and record the natural world in compelling ways. Karel van Mander's celebration of Bruegel's landscapes and peasant paintings firmly established the artist in the canon of great northern artists.

The theme of naturalism threads through literary accolades of Breugel's work. However, Bruegel's naturalism does not aspire to the verisimilitude of earlier Netherlandish painters. In his landscapes, one cannot clearly identify each type of greenery or always recognize a scene's location. Bodies tend toward suggestive forms, and faces, when not obscured by hats, are sketchy. These elements, however, enhance the universal qualities of Bruegel's work. The settings are familiar, yet vague. The people are recognizable, but not individual. Through this, one can identify with these humans and the world in which they inhabit – and sense that the painted world represents a reflection of the real world.

Through Van Mander and other authors, Bruegel's name emerged as the example of the mid-sixteenth-century peasant painting. Yet it is important not to undervalue other artists who contributed to the period style in which he worked, as many of their subjects, compositions, and motifs came to be incorporated into the so-called Bruegel tradition. Seventeenth-century painters likely experienced paintings by Pieter Baltens and Marten van Cleve through copies made by Pieter Brueghel the Younger. The sons of Bruegel the Elder were instrumental in adapting and preserving their father's imagery, while also absorbing innovations of other artists into paintings that were clearly signed with the name "Brueghel." Through them, elements such as peasants dancing in a circle, tipping back a large jug of beer, and even less-decorous

activities such as relieving themselves in a corner or being carried away in drunken stupor, came to be incorporated into the visual vocabulary of the Bruegel tradition.

Though demand for Bruegel's paintings originated during his lifetime, the flurry of collecting activity by the Austrian Habsburgs around the turn of the seventeenth century not only severely limited the availability of works on the market, it also increased their demand by art lovers who wished to emulate the esteemed collections. It is precisely at this time that the third generation of Bruegelians replicated Bruegel's imagery and produced hundreds of derivative compositions.

The collecting fashion of the Austrian Habsburgs and aspirational taste cannot solely account for the continued interest in Bruegelian art into the seventeenth century. Images of peasants celebrating the end of productive week or a momentous rite presented nostalgic visions of a world at peace, before the upheaval and resettlement of the later sixteenth century. Distinctly separate, the figures of these visions still resonated with later audiences, who recognized in them a natural representation of human existence. It is no surprise, then, that Jan Steen, whose images abound with universal truths, was the later seventeenth-century's greatest reflection of and emulator of Pieter Bruegel.

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