Robert E. Gerhardt

The Van Musscher Family of Artists*

In the late seventeenth century, Michiel van Musscher was acknowledged as one of the most respected portraitists in Amsterdam. He was appointed by the city magistrates to be one of the two artists who oversaw the art academy in the Amsterdam Stadhuis (town hall)[1], and his commissioned portraits included many of the prominent and prosperous citizens of Amsterdam, as well as Tsar Peter the Great, Admiral François Lefort and several other members of the Russian Great Embassy of 1697.[2] Nevertheless, today he certainly is not as celebrated as many of the other artists of that era. While some reviews of his portraits have been published, little has been written concerning his family and personal life.[3] Standard reference texts simply replicate the text of Houbraken's *De Groote Schouburgh* by reporting Van Musscher's sequential teachers (Martinus Saeghmolen, Abraham van den Tempel, Gabriel Metsu and Adriaen van Ostade), but there is no accompanying description of his genealogy.[4] No mention is made of any possible hereditary artistic talent which might have provided a glimpse into the future of the young child who excelled in draughtsmanship and subsequently developed into a premier artist.

Researching the genealogy of Michiel van Musscher, I was able to obtain the names of a number of his relatives from the respective municipal archives pertaining to Amsterdam, Delft and Rotterdam, thus allowing construction of a genealogy. This new insight, expanded by information from other sources, permits a detailed examination of Van Musscher's extended family. By incorporating these familial relationships and their connection to some of Van Musscher's portraits, possibly coupled with the religious belief of his family and its resulting influence on his oeuvre, we may improve our understanding of his art.

Throughout my research of the documented genealogy, it was evident that seventeenth-century records contain frequent spelling variations. I have made note of some of the common deviations, but, in general, I have tried to standardize the spellings of the various family members to improve readability.

I

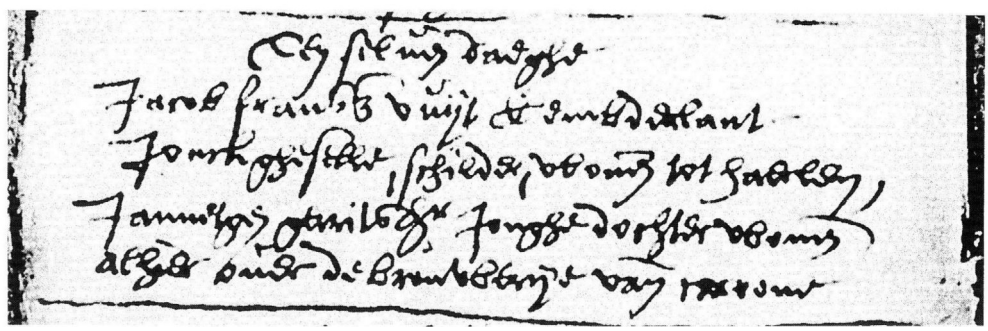
The *pater familias* is **Jacob van Musscher (I)** (?–1623) of Delft. It has been suggested that Jacob (I) arrived in Haarlem about 1590 then subsequently relocated to Delft.[5] In 1603-1604 Karel van Mander, the Mennonite artist and writer,[6] described Van Musscher (variously spelled as Jaques de Mosscher and Jaques de Moschero) as a former student and poet then living in Delft; praising him as 'accomplished and experienced in all aspects of art.'[7] As Van Mander's pupil, Jacob (I) would have been his student in Haarlem and, in fact, a Jaques Muschaart was registered as a painter in the artists' Guild of St. Luke of Haarlem in 1593.[8] The various spellings used by Van Mander for

the Musscher family name may suggest a stay in Italy, and Van Regteren Altena suggests the year 1600 for this sojourn.[9]

As noted, Van Mander places Jacob van Musscher (I) in Delft by 1603-1604.[10] The earliest existing record of the artists' guild of St. Luke in Delft is the register of 01-01-1613, and Jacob is listed as a member.[11] Since the names on that list are cited in order of admission to the guild, and Jacob Musscher is numerically the thirty-eighth of the forty oil painters recorded,[12] he probably became a member in the 1612-1613 period. Montias, in his detailed examination of the Delft guild, reports that Jacob Fransz. Musscher was a history painter originally from Antwerp; this origin is 'inferred from a source but ...not known with any certainty.'[13]

In the Delft guild register, next to the name of Jacob Musscher, is the notation 'Jacob Fransz. Muskel has paid his death duty'.[14] Montias reports that Jacob Francois Musscher was buried in Delft on 29-08-1623, believing him to be the same individual listed in the Delft burial register as 'Jacques Francois'.[15] In reality, the entry for the burial that day in the Oude Kerk reads: 'Jacob Franss' (with the notation 'schilder' [painter]).[16]

Considering the possibility that on other occasions Jacob Franss. Musscher may have used his abridged patronymic name 'Jacob Franss.' (or variations Frans., Fransz., Franssz.), the author, employing the four name variations, searched the digital Delft marriage records and found the entry of Jacob Fransz. Review of the actual register found that 'Jacob Fransz., from Embden, painter, living at Haarlem, married Jannetgen Gerritsdr. in Delft on 12 January 1603' (fig. 1).[17] This record corroborates the important fact that Jacob Fransz. had relocated from Haarlem to Delft; however, it also



1.
Marriage entry of Jacob Franszoon and Jannetge Gerritsdochter, Delft, 12 January 1603. (DTB Delft inv. 117):[17] 'Jacob Franszoon vuyt Eembderlant, jonckgeselle, schilder, wonende tot Haerlem, Jannetgen Gerritsdochter, jongedochter, wonende alhier over de brouwerije van de Croone.'

'Jacob Franszoon from the land of Embden, not married before, painter, living at Haarlem, Jannetge Gerritsdochter, spinster, living here opposite of the brewery of the Crown.' (Deciphered and translated courtesy of Bas van de Wulp, Gemeentearchief Delft.)

signifies that the birth city of the artist was not Antwerp but rather Embden (now Emden, a North Sea port of Lower Saxony in North-West Germany, approximately 100 miles northeast of Amsterdam). It has been reported that many Mennonites had immigrated to Emden to avoid religious persecution.[18] Regrettably, multiple archival searches in both Antwerp and Embden for data regarding Jacob Fransz. van Musscher (and name variations) revealed no information concerning him.[19]

In Delft, on 02-12-1616, Jacob's wife, using the more familial form of her name Jannetge Gerritsdr., possibly also is recorded as a witness at the Baptism of one Gerrit Gerritsz., son of Jan Gerritsz. and his wife Aeffge Pietersdr.[20] While it might appear illogical that Jannetgen Gerritsdr., almost certainly a Mennonite (see below), would be a witness at a religiously sanctioned childhood baptism, she might have made an exception if Jan Gerritsz. were her brother. This familial relationship may be more plausible if it is recalled that the wife of Jan Gerrits was Aeffge Pietersdr., and, years later, one of the witnesses assisting Jannetgen after the death of her husband was one Abraham Pietersz. (possibly a brother of her sister-in-law).[21] Since, the ancestors of Jannetgen Gerritsdr. are only subject to conjecture and cannot be documented adequately, I have started the genealogy of the Gerrits family with her.[22]

Therefore, the descendants of interest in the Musscher family derive from the married couple Jacob Fransz. Musscher and his wife Jannetgen Gerritsdr. (Genealogy 1).

In regard to first names, a traditional Dutch naming pattern, which incorporated names of deceased relatives (children were rarely named after living relatives), customarily was followed.[23] Applying this naming system for children's first names would result in:

First son –	named for paternal grandfather, (likely 'Frans' in memory of Jacob's father followed by Jacobsz. or Jacobs. (for 'son of Jacob') van Musscher.
Second son –	named for maternal grandfather, (thus, for Jacob Musscher's second son the first name would be 'Gerrit Jacobsz. van Musscher'
First daughter –	named for maternal grandmother
Second daughter –	named for paternal grandmother
Third daughter –	named for mother's maternal grandmother
Fourth daughter –	named for father's maternal grandmother

Unfortunately, there are a multiple childhood burials (without mention of the deceased's sex or mother) of offspring of Jacob Franss., Jacob Franssz. and Jacob Franz in both Delft's Oude Kerk and Nieuwe Kerk. Additionally, if a child died their given name could be reused on the next born of the same sex; thus, it is not possible without childhood baptismal records, which generally recorded names of both parents as well as witnesses, to entirely determine the members of the Van Musscher family of Delft. Even thought the baptismal registers for Delft start in 1616, no records are available for children with any variation of the Musscher, Franz., Fransz., Franss. or Franssz. names through the year 1623 (the year of Jacob's burial), consistent with the Mennonite belief in adult baptism.[24]

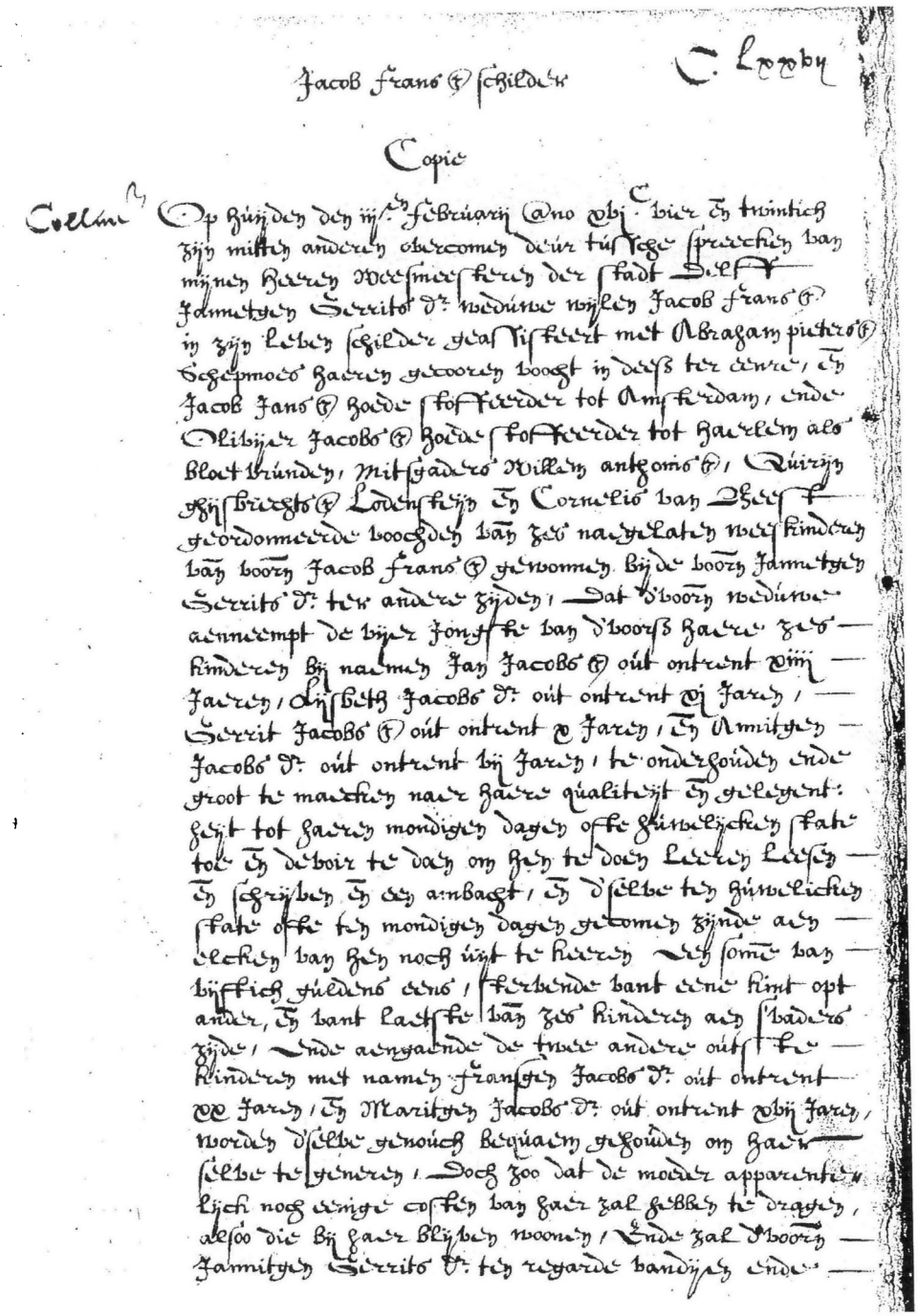
In addition, traditional patronymic naming gave precedence to a deceased relative over a living relative. Thus for a first daughter, if the maternal grandmother (the traditional source of the name) were alive, the child could be named with a variant of the name of the paternal grandfather, if he were deceased. Likewise, if the birth of a child coincided with the death of a grandparent, the name of that grandparent might be used regardless of whose name ordinarily and traditionally would have been used.

In Holland, the Weeskamer (Orphan Chamber) was a civic institution which administered estates for minor children who had survived the death of one or more parents. If the Weeskamer was not formally excluded in the testament of the deceased, property would be either divided or liquidated and the proceeds used for the benefit of the surviving minors (generally defined as less than 25 years of age and unmarried).[25] Importantly, a Weeskamer document (14-02-1624) settling the estate of "Jacob Fransz, painter", was preserved in the Delft archives (fig. 2). This document legally affirms, before his wife Jannitgen Gerritsdr. and several witnesses, that Jacob Fransz. had six surviving minor children at the time of his death in August 1623.[26] (see Genealogy 1)

1.) Fransgen Jacobsdr., about 20 years old[27]
2.) Maritgen Jacobsdr., about 17 years old
3.) Jan Jacobsz., about 14 years old
4.) Lijsbeth Jacobsdr., about 11 years old
5.) Gerrit Jacobsz., about 10 years old
6.) Annitgen Jacobsdr., about 7 years old

While the source of the name 'Fransgen' is unclear, if the traditional patronymic was used then the second daughter, Maritgen, would have been named for her maternal grandmother. The Dutch terminating diminutive (-gen) is used for most of the female names, consistent with the reported possible origin of Jacob.

The origin of 'Jan' in the older surviving son also is uncertain. While a Jan Musschaert is listed in the Antwerp patrician lists and books (*poortersboeken*) in 1549, no



Jacob Frans (f) schilder

Copie

Collatie

Op Vrijdey den iij^en^ februarij Anno 1624 hier in trouwich
zijn mitsdy anderen overcomen deur tusschenspreeckers bay
mijnen Heeren Weesmeesteren der stadt Delft
Jannetgen Gerrits d^r^ weduwe wijlen Jacob Frans (f)
in zijn leven schilder geassisteert met Abraham pietersz (f)
Segelmoco Gaedey gecoorey boogt in dese ter eenre, en
Jacob Jans (f) Gaede voochtreder tot Amsterdam, ende
Olibijer Jacobsz (f) Gaede voochtreder tot Haerlem als
Bloet Vrienden, mitgaders Willem antgonisz (f), Vuijtgen
Gijsbrechtsz (f) Lodewijck Cornelisz bay Gheerit
geordonneerde voochden bay zee naegelaten wees kinderen
bay boorg Jacob Frans (f) gewonnen. Bij de boorg Jannetgen
Gerrits d^r^ ter andere zijden, Dat d'boorg weduwe
aennemt de bijde jongste bay d'boorgs Gaede zee
kinderen bij naemen Fay Jacobs (f) out ontrent xviij
Jaeren, Elysbeth Jacobs d^r^ out ontrent xij Jaeren,
Gerrit Jacobsz (f) out ontrent x Jaeren, en Annitgen
Jacobs d^r^ out ontrent vij Jaeren, te onderhouden ende
groot te maecken naer Gaedes qualiteijt en gelegent:
geijt tot Gaedey mondigen dagen of te ghetrouwelicken state
toe en te beroir te doen en zijn te doen Leeren Leesen
en schrijven en een ambacht, en d'selve ten getrouwelicken
state of te ten mondigen dagen gecomen zijnde acht
oft thien bay zee noch nijet te hebben veel some bay
vijfftich guldens eens, te verbinde bant eene kint opt
ander, en bant Laetste bay zee kinderen ende s'baders
zijde, Ende aengaende de twee andere out ste
kinderen met namen Franszgen Jacobs d^r^ out ontrent
x Jaeren, en Maritgen Jacobs d^r^ out ontrent xviij Jaeren,
worden d'selve genoech bequaem gehouden om Gaedes
selfs te ghenieten, Doch soo dat de moeder apparentie
lijck noch eenige costen bay Gaede zal hebben te draegen,
alsoo die bij Gaede blijven woonen, Ende zal d'boorg
Jannetgen Gerrits d^r^ ten regarde bandijen ende

2.
First page of Weeskamer document, estate of Jacob Fransz, dated 10 and14 February 1624.[27]
Beginning with the last word, line 12:
'Jannitgen Gerritsdr, and it is recorded that the afore-mentioned widow taking the four youngest of her six children – named Jan Jacobsz, around 14 years of age; Lijsbeth Jacobsdr, around 11 years of age; Gerrit Jacobsz, around 10 years of age; and Annitgen Jacobsdr, around 7 years of age – and agrees to sustain them and raise them in a lifestyle quality and in accordance with her kindness until they have reached the age of adulthood or married and until they have learned to support themselves.... In regard to the remaining two oldest children of their father, those with the names Franszgen Jacobsdr, around 20 years of age, and Maritgen Jacobsdr, around 18 years of age, these are considered to be on their own....' (Deciphered and translated by Mr. Gordon Hartig.)

relation to Jacob Fransz. van Musscher or the family can be demonstrated and no other information can presently be located.[28] However, since both the child's mother (Jannetgen Gerritsdr.) and the mother's possible brother (Jan Gerritsz.) use a form of 'Jan' for their first names, the 'Jan' Jacobs. Musscher may well have been taken from his uncle or another maternal relative. The name of the second son, Gerrit Jacobsz., demonstrates a return to the classical patronymic naming tradition.

At his death in August 1623, it does not appear that Jacob Fransz. was a rich man: the amount left to be divided by the six children being estimated by the orphanage board at 211 guilders.[29] Specifically this was stated to exclude joint property which automatically passed to Jannetgen, the surviving spouse. By contrast, the same children inherited 1200 guilders through the death of their paternal grandmother.[30]

Of interest, the house ownership files of Delft record Jacob Fransz. Musscher living on the east side of the Jacob Gerritssteeg (Gerrits Alley);[31] this property would have passed to his wife. This location, confirmed in the burial record,[32] is in close proximity to the Markt Square and the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft.

In regard to the religious beliefs of the family, of note is the fact that Jacob and Janneţje were married by the civil court in Delft,[33] as were their daughters Fransgen[34] and Annitgen;[35] Maritgen appears not to have married,[36] while the marriage of Elisabeth (Lijsbeth) to a Dirck Ponts Slingerlant is noted in a 1640 addendum to the Weeskamer document,[37] yet cannot be located in the marriage register.[38] Moreover, the baptismal records of Delft begin in 1616 when Annitgen could have been listed; the fact that such documentation is lacking is suggestive of the family's belief in adult baptism.[39] The multiple non-church marriages, as well as the failure to locate any family baptismal records, all suggest that the family did not belong to the Dutch Reformed Church and therefore were 'dissenters,' possibly Mennonites. In 1651, with a Dutch guilder worth more than an average worker's daily pay,[40] the final evidence of the family's Mennonite religious beliefs is the fact that Jannetgen left the relatively large sum of 100 guilders to the poor of the Flemish Mennonites in her testament of 4 August of that year.[41] In fact, several children and other descendants subsequently are identified as Mennonites (see below).

Jacob van Musscher (II), is an enigma. This artist is listed variously as I., J., or Jacob van Moscher, Mosker, Mosscher or Mosschert, a landscape painter active in Haarlem from 1635-1655.[42] He is believed to have been born about 1605 and died approximately 1660.[43] I.Q. van Regteren Altena, without citing any documentation, stated that he was possibly the son of Jacob Franz. van Musscher of Delft,[44] and others also have appeared to concur.[45] According to the Netherlandish naming custom of the seventeenth century, the son was not named after the father, unless the son was born posthumously. Thus Jacob (II), born approximately 1605, would not have been named after his father, Jacob (I), who died in 1623. Of greater importance, no son with the first name of Jacob is listed in the Weeskamer archive of 14-02-1624 after the death of Jacob Musscher (I); only sons Jan and Gerrit are listed in that document.[46]

It is to be noted that the Weeskamer was concerned only with unmarried minors; therefore if Jacob (II) were married he would not have been mentioned. However, as the third son, Jacob (II) would have been too young to be wedded; consequently, he should have been mentioned in the Weeskamer document.

It might also be considered that Jacob (II) was the progeny of an earlier marriage, perhaps while Jacob (I) was a student of Van Mander in Haarlem in the 1590s. However, no record of this marriage can be located, and at the time of Jacob (I)'s marriage in Delft in 1603 it is noted specifically that he was 'not married before'.[47] Regrettably, no information currently can be located in either the Haarlem Municipal Archives or the Mennonite Archives of Haarlem regarding Jacob van Musscher (II).[48] Thus, there is no extant documentation that would provide supporting evidence that Jacob van Mosscher/Musscher (II) of Haarlem is the son of Jacob van Musscher (I) of Delft; consequently, I have not included him in the Van Musscher genealogy. Likewise, I was unable, despite a thorough search of the names (including name variations) of the members of the Haarlem Guild of St. Luke, to identify any member with a name similar to the known progeny of Jacob Musscher (I) [49] Thus no member of this Guild can be identified as the elusive 'Jacob van Musscher (II).' While this artist may not have been a member of the Haarlem Guild, it is possible only to speculate on the relationship, if any, to Jacob Musscher (I) of Delft; no certainty of the relationship is possible at this time.

Gerrit Jacobsz. van Musscher (ca.1614-1669) is identified in the Delft Weeskamer document of 14-02-1624 as one of the two surviving sons of Jacob Fransz.[50] As noted previously, the meaning of Gerrit Jacobsz. is Gerrit 'son of Jacob.' The Rotterdam marriage records reveal that Gerrit Jacobsz. van Musscher, from Delft, married Maria Waerts, daughter of Jasper Waerts, in Rotterdam on 04-11-1640.[51] Confirming the sons' relocation to Rotterdam, the 22-12-1640 addendum to the 1624 Weeskamer document stipulates that both Gerrit and Jan were living in Rotterdam.[52]

The genealogy of Gerrit's branch of the family was compiled and reported by Dr. E. Wiersum in *De Navorscher* in 1927; however, the filial relationship to Jacob Musscher (I) of Delft was apparently not known to that author.[53] Wiersum notes that Gerrit Jacobsz. van Musscher was an officer of hunting boats sailing from Rotterdam to Delft, and he also owned a business dealing in fabrics, hats and stockings. The family was reported as Mennonite, and Gerrit Jacobsz. and Maria Waerts, daughter of the late Jasper Waert, were married as 'dissenters' – meaning they were married by the civil authorities rather than by a state recognized church – on 04-11-1640.[54] Their son Jasper van Musscher, a silversmith and member of the Mennonite community, also married as a 'dissenter' in both 1683 (to Maria van Raad) and 1693 (to Clara van de Gamerslagh).[55] Jasper's sister Jannetje, as well a member of the Mennonite community, died a spinster during the week beginning 05-09-1717.[56] Jasper had several children (twins died one week apart in 1689)[57] of both wives, and when he died in November 1715, he was survived by three minor children.[58] The Waerts' family genealogy was expanded with information obtained from the Rotterdam Municipal Archives internet web site.[59]

Jan Jacobsz. (1610-1682), the other son of Jacob Frans. Musscher (I), also is listed in the Weeskamer archive of 14-02-1624 and mentioned in its 1640 addendum as living in Rotterdam.[60] He too is listed in the Rotterdam marriage register as being from Delft, and he married Catalijntie Michiels of Rotterdam on 29-11-1636.[61] Because Jan and Catalijntie were married by the Rotterdam municipality, they too belonged to a 'dissenter group' (likely Mennonite); at least four children resulted from the marriage, none were baptized as children, consistent with Mennonite beliefs.[62] Burial records note that Catelijntje Michiels, wife of Jan Jacobsz., was buried 05-09-1655.[63]

The municipal marriage books of Rotterdam go on to record that Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher, widower, married Catalijntie Maertens on 18-02-1656.[64] Most importantly, the notarial records of Rotterdam reveal a contract of settlement, dated 03-03-1656, between Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher, grocer, widower of Catalijntje Michielsdr. (daughter of Michiels), and Catalina Maertensdr., concerning the four children of the bridegroom.[65] Therefore, this notarial deed from Rotterdam conclusively proves that 'Jan Jacobsz.' was in fact the same person as 'Jan Jacobs. van Musscher.' Additionally, and significantly, because Jan Jacobsz. was the son recorded in the Weeskamer document concerning Jacob Fransz, the notarial deed actually chronicles that Jacob Fransz., the painter who was buried in the Oude Kerk of Delft on 29-08-1623, was the same individual as the artist Jacob Fransz. van Musscher (I) of Delft.

Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher died and was buried in Rotterdam on 18-05-1682.[66] His second wife, Caterijna Maertens, survived him by three years and was buried in Rotterdam on 31-07-1685.[67] In both of the listings, the note respectively is made of them living in Schrijnwerckerstech/Schrijnwerckersteegh ('Cabinetmakers Alley').

Further examination of the ancestry of Catalijntie Michiels is crucial to our understanding of Michiel van Musscher's oeuvre.

II

Similar to the van Musschers, **Michiel Comans** (occasionally Coomans is used for the family name) was the *pater familias* of the Comans family and had two sons:[68] (see Genealogy 2)

1.) Mathijs Comans, a cabinetmaker

2.) Michiel Michiels. Comans (I), a cabinetmaker and Mennonite minister

Michiel Michiels. Comans (I) (1587-1664) was a citizen of Rotterdam.[69] Following tradition, his first name was taken from his grandfather. All sons, in the case of the Comans family, used the patronymic possessive suffix –s with their father's first name as their middle name. In addition to being a cabinetmaker, we learn from Van Thiel that Michiel (I) was the minister of the Flemish Community of Mennonites in Rotterdam, and he signed the Dordrecht Confession in 1632.[70] Apparently he was an early staunch conservative who tried to rid his flock of any new habits which he considered detrimental to the church community. He lived in Rotterdam for fifty years but relocated to Amsterdam in 1662 and died there in 1664.[71] Of the five known children of Michiel Michiels Comans (I) – four were reported by Van Thiel who apparently was unaware of Catalijntie and did not list her as a daughter[72]– only two are important to the history of Michiel van Musscher:

1.) Michiel Michiels. Comans (II), also known as Michiel Michiels Comans de Jonge (the Younger), a schoolmaster and part-time artist

2.) Catalijntie Michiels

Michiel Michiels. Comans (II) (1614-1687), as described in the extensive article by Van Thiel, was an unsuccessful amateur artist, the inventor of a fire pump, and a schoolmaster at a boarding school near Noordwijk.[73] His main interest to us is through his portrait by Michiel van Musscher which 'gives a nice image of a Dutch painter's studio of about 1670'.[74] Documentation of formal membership in the Mennonite community is not found; however, since that religion frequently was persecuted, records of members often were not kept. Given that his father was a Mennonite minister, he likely followed these religious beliefs, and he was married as a 'dissenter' to Catharina Egels by the civil authorities on 22-04-1645.[75] He also appears to have been a follower of the theologian Adam Boreel and may have gone with him to Amsterdam in 1646.[76] Little else is known of Michiel (II), other than what is noted by Van Thiel, but he likely participated in a number of doctrinal discussions with his father and others of the religion,[77] and his active role in the Mennonite church has been noted.[78]

Catalijntie Michiels (?-1655), the wife of Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher, was the daughter of Michiel Michiels. Comans (I). Conclusive proof of this statement is found in the notarial deeds of Rotterdam which reveal:

- 'schoolmaster Michiel Comans as owing money to his brother-in-law Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher, grocer (02-05-1655),'[79] [Refers to Michiel Comans II]
- 'grocer Jan Jacobs. van Musschert gives his former father-in-law Michiel Michiels. Coomans, citizen of this city, a certificate of protection (23-06-1656).'[80] [Refers to Michiel Comans I]

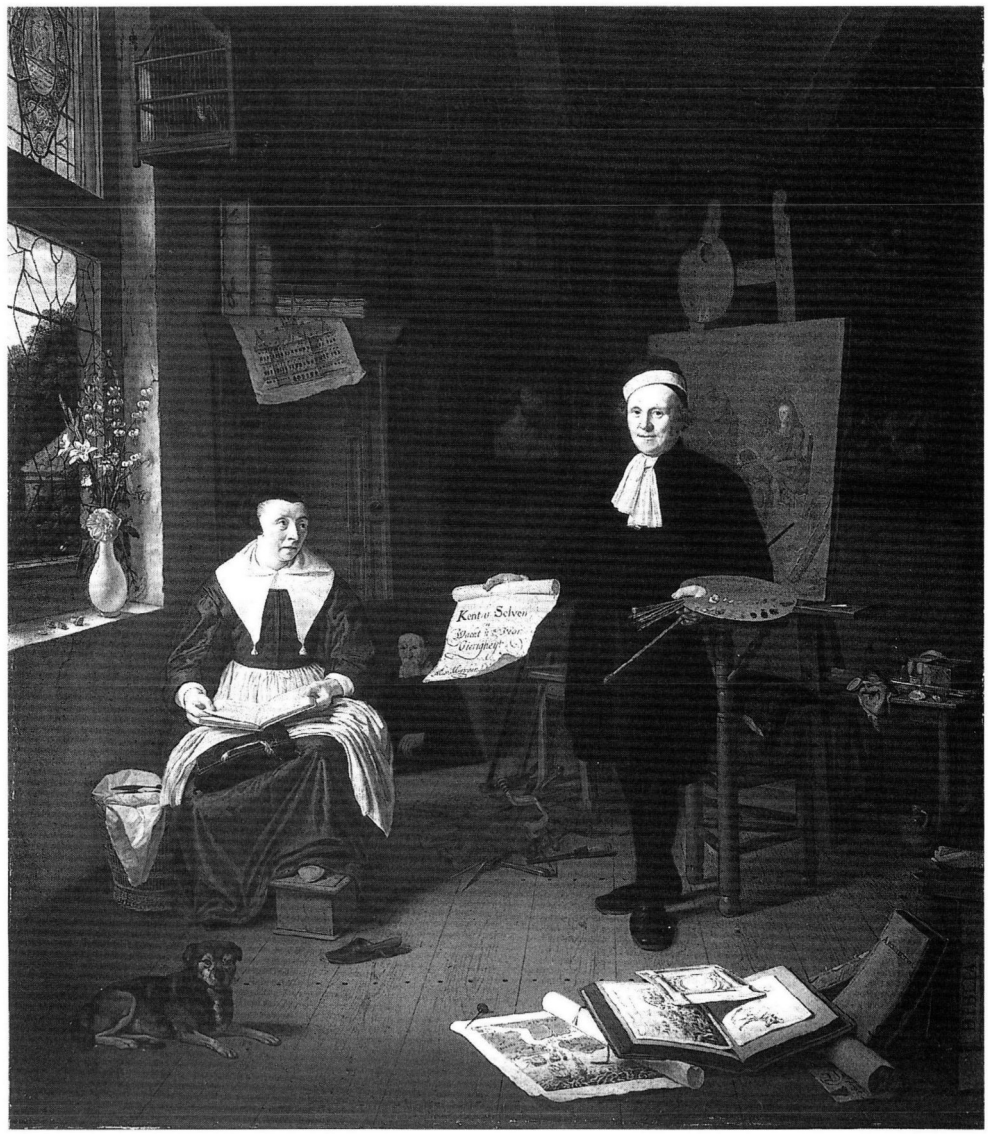
As previously noted, the 03-03-1656 notarial deed from Rotterdam refers to four children of Jan Jacobs. van Musscher and Catalijntje Michiels.[81] None of these children were baptized during childhood[82] (indicating Mennonite religious beliefs, since that community did not practice infant baptism). Presently nothing is known of two of the other children;[83] however, as previously mentioned, the usual name-giving of that period would designate the Christian name of the first son to be in honor of his

paternal grandfather (thus Jacob in honor of Jacob van Musscher (I) of Delft) and the second son to be named after the maternal grandfather (thus Michiel in honor of Michiel Michiels. Comans I). Indeed, Michiel van Musscher did identify in his testament that his brother Jacob was to be his executor.[84] Thus Jacob was born prior to the January 1645 birth of the couple's second son, Michiel van Musscher.[85] Additionally, Michiel's patronymic name traditionally should be taken from his father, and in fact Michiel did sign his name 'Michiel Jansz. van Musscher' in a document dated 02-05-1661.[86]

Michiel van Musscher (1645-1705) is described as having been born inside the ring wall of Rotterdam on 27-01-1645.[87] He began drawing at age five, and he likely inherited some of his skill from his grandfather, Jacob van Musscher (I) of Delft. There is no record of any early instruction in art; however, at age fifteen he moved from Rotterdam to Amsterdam to advance his studies.[88] Quite possibly, Michiel may have received some early instruction from his maternal uncle, the schoolmaster and amateur painter Michiel Michiels. Comans (II). In Amsterdam, Michiel van Musscher sequentially studied with Martin Saeghmolen, Abraham van den Tempel and Gabriel Metsu, and, to complete his formal art education, he studied for three months in 1667 with Adriaen van Ostade in Haarlem.[89] Initially Michiel van Musscher became a painter of genre scenes and portraits, but in later life concentrated on portraiture.

There is no record of a childhood baptism of Michiel van Musscher.[90] Even though there is no available information documenting Michiel's membership in the Mennonite community,[91] he likely was raised in a Mennonite home since his mother was the daughter of a Mennonite minister. In addition, just as his grandfather Jacob (I) had had a Mennonite art mentor in Karel van Mander,[92] one of Michiel's early teachers was the Mennonite artist Abraham van den Tempel.[93] Perhaps reflecting the character of his religious upbringing, his first known portrait, the *Portrait of Adriaen Corver and his wife* of 1666 (Wilanow Palace Museum, Warsaw), painted when Van Musscher was only 21 years of age, 'exudes a Mennonite atmosphere'.[94] A subsequent portrait of the Mennonite preacher *Tobias Govertsz. van den Wyngaert* was painted in 1667.[95]

The relationship between the Van Musscher and Comans families makes it not surprising that another of Michiel's early double portraits immortalized his maternal uncle. Despite the fact that he earned his living as a schoolmaster, Comans II was a part-time artist and elected to have himself portrayed as the latter in the 1669 *Portrait of Michiel II Comans and his wife Elisabeth van der Meersch* (fig 3).[96] Completed a year after Comans II's third marriage, his dual avocations are indicated by Van Musscher's depiction of his uncle's being interrupted in his studio, paint laden palette in hand, yet surrounded by articles signifying education. The painting details include books and maps scattered about the foreground with Comans II holding a scroll inscribed *Kent u Selven en Wacht u voor Gierigheyt* ('Know Thyself and Beware of Avarice').[97] Additionally, his wife has an open book on top of the needlework on her lap, perhaps suggesting the 'value of intellect over handiwork'.[98] While Comans' clothing is that of an artist in his studio, both he and his wife are portrayed in characteristic conservative attire. The published mapmaking skills of Michiel Comans II are indicated by the foreground maps;[99] the foreground book titled *BIBLIA* 'may also refer to Comans's active role in the *doopsgezinde* [Mennonite] church'.[100] Additional religious connotations include the active work of the Holy Family on Comans II's easel as well as the portrait standing on the floor in the background which appears to resemble some of the early engravings of the Mennonite leader Menno Simons.[101] Van Thiel believes, probably correctly, that this portrait in the background is that of Michiel Comans I, for whom no likeness has yet been located. Since Michiel Comans I was a cabinetmaker in addition to a Mennonite minister, the placement of cabinetmaker's



3.
Michiel van Musscher, *Portrait of the Painter Michiel II Comans and His Third Wife, Elisabeth van der Meersch*, signed on scroll, dated 1669. Oil on canvas, 71 x 63 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Photograph and copyright: museum.

tools in front of the painting would appear to support this identification.[102]

At age 33, Michiel van Musscher married 27 year old Eva Visscher (1651-1684) in August 1678 at the Dutch Reformed Church in Buiksloot outside Amsterdam.[103] Eva was the daughter of Jan Bruynsz. Visscher, a soldier, and his second wife Hilletje Hendrix.[104] It appears that the Visschers were Dutch Reformed for several generations; Aafje Jansz., mother of Jan Bruynsz. and grandmother of Eva, owned grave number 230 in the Oudezijds Kapel,[105] a building which was 'conveyed to the reformed for their religious services' in 1602.[106] Thus, even if he had been a practicing Mennonite in his youth, by the time of his marriage in 1678 it appears that Michiel was a member of the state recognized religion and was married in a Dutch Reformed church.

Van Thiel, using Bredius as his source, notes that four children are known from this marriage, but only two sons, Johannes[107] and Michiel (II), are identified in that order as still alive in 1705.[108] In point of fact, Bredius in referring to the same son, uses both the names Johannes[109] and Jan;[110] the latter the more correct patronymic name after the maternal grandfather. Although a birth date cannot be located, Michiel (II) was still alive on 26-11-1713 when he married Grietje Tonning in the town of Purmerend, about seventeen miles from Amsterdam.[111] Jan also appears to have survived into adulthood; the wedding banns were registered on 05-03-1723 for Jan's marriage (noting that the groom was age 41 and accompanied by his uncle Jacobus van Musscher)



4.
Michiel van Musscher, *Portrait of his wife Eva Visscher*, not signed or dated. Oil on canvas, 20.5 x 17.8 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Photograph and copyright: museum.



5.
Michiel van Musscher, *Self-portrait*, signed and dated 1685, bottom left. Oil on canvas, 20.5 x 18 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Photograph and copyright: museum

to Johanna Crayesteyn, age 43; the marriage took place in the Wester Kerk on 25-03-1723.[112] Both Jan and Johanna were still alive on 14-04-1736 when they were witnesses at a Evangelical Lutheran baptism.[113]

While there exists a portrait of Eva by Michiel, dated to 1685 (fig. 4),[114] this either was started earlier and completed in 1685, or it is a posthumous memory portrait, since Eva died and was buried in her grandmother's grave (nr. 230) in the Oudezijds Kapel in Amsterdam on 25-06-1684.[115] A pendant *Self-portrait* that is signed and dated also exists (fig. 5). Both of these portraits are referred to as "black art pictures" by Van Thiel, without further comment.[116] Examination of these pendants reveals that in each the sitter is leaning on a ledge and encircled by a dark black/brown drapery surround accompanied by allegorical symbols. Considering the omission of inscription on the ledge, the less defined details of the surround, and the incompleteness of her hands and fingers as well as the lack of refinement on her sleeve cuffs, Eva Visschers' portrait appears unfinished. However, several putti are recognizable at Eva's left while on her right are Minerva and a cherub. Michiel's more finished self-portrait is replete with symbols of *vanitas*: the grim reaper, hourglass and cherub blowing bubbles. Van Musscher's memorial intent in these two works is magnified by the inscribed verse on the ledge:

> And consequently Muscher's [*sic*] hand has provided this profile
> As a remembrance of what his image was like.
> Father Time is uncovering his head but is also displaying that his glass
> Has already run much of its course, and it is teaching us the fragility of life.



6.
Michiel van Musscher, *Family Portrait*, ca. 1689. Oil on canvas, 122 x 111 cm. Antwerpen (België), Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten. Photograph and copyright: museum.

A much more elaborate family grouping showing the clearly recognizable Michiel and Eva of the pendants accompanied by three of their children in an allegorical garden landscape, *Family Portrait* (also know as *Selfportrait with wife and children*), has been dated to ca. 1689 (fig. 6).[117]

Although this family group painting is not signed or dated, Van Thiel extrapolated a date of ca. 1689 for the work based on the report of Bredius that Michiel's son, Johannes, 'was ten years old in December 1692'.[118] coupled with an estimate of the portrait's depiction of the son as approximating seven years of age.[119] Examination of this painting certainly would appear to support an age of about seven to eight years for the oldest son pictured. However, citing the recently located information of Eva's death in 1684, Jan (Johannes) would have been only two years old at the time of his mother's demise.[120] Michiel van Musscher and Eva Visschers apparently practiced the childhood baptism traditions of the Dutch Reformed Church, thereby permitting accurate documentation of three children by their baptismal records: Catarina (22-03-1680), Johannes (27-02-1682), and Catrina (12-03-1684).[121] This confirms the birth of Johannes/Jan in 1682. Bredius lists the deaths of two children, both buried in the Oudezijds Kapel: one in 1681,[122] and the second on 07-07-1684;[123] undoubtedly both burials were the daughters since the two sons, as noted previously, survived into adulthood.[124] This chronology makes it impossible for the painting to represent any actual date. The portrayed children are too old for the painting to have been painted before Eva's death. Although Van Thiel also believed that the infant on Eva's lap is

Michiel (II),[125] this well may be incorrect. No baptismal record has been found for Michiel (II), nor has his age been found in his marriage papers. Since Michiel and Eva christened their other children, perhaps Michiel (II) was issue of his father's second marriage, a civil ceremony suggesting that the bride was not Dutch Reformed. This would explain not only the presence of but three children with Eva but also would account for the crown of flowers as a symbol of death on the infant Catrina who died shortly after her mother. If 1689 were an accurate date for the painting, Jan's representation would be of appropriate age, but Eva already would have been dead for five years since she was buried only twelve days prior to her daughter, on 25-06-1684.[126] The family chronology coupled with the unusual (for Van Musscher) garden setting, including the abundance of 'wealth and opulence'[127] portrayed, must cause one to consider that this is also a memorial portrait and a composite one at that.

Because of the loss of records over the centuries, it is not known in which year Michiel van Musscher became a member of the St. Luke's Guild of Amsterdam; however, his name (as Miggiel Musschart) is included in a report containing a list of members forwarded to the governors of the Municipal Orphanage, March, 1688.[128]

During the years of the late 1600s, Michiel and his family relocated on a number of occasions. The following locations in Amsterdam are documented (fig. 7):

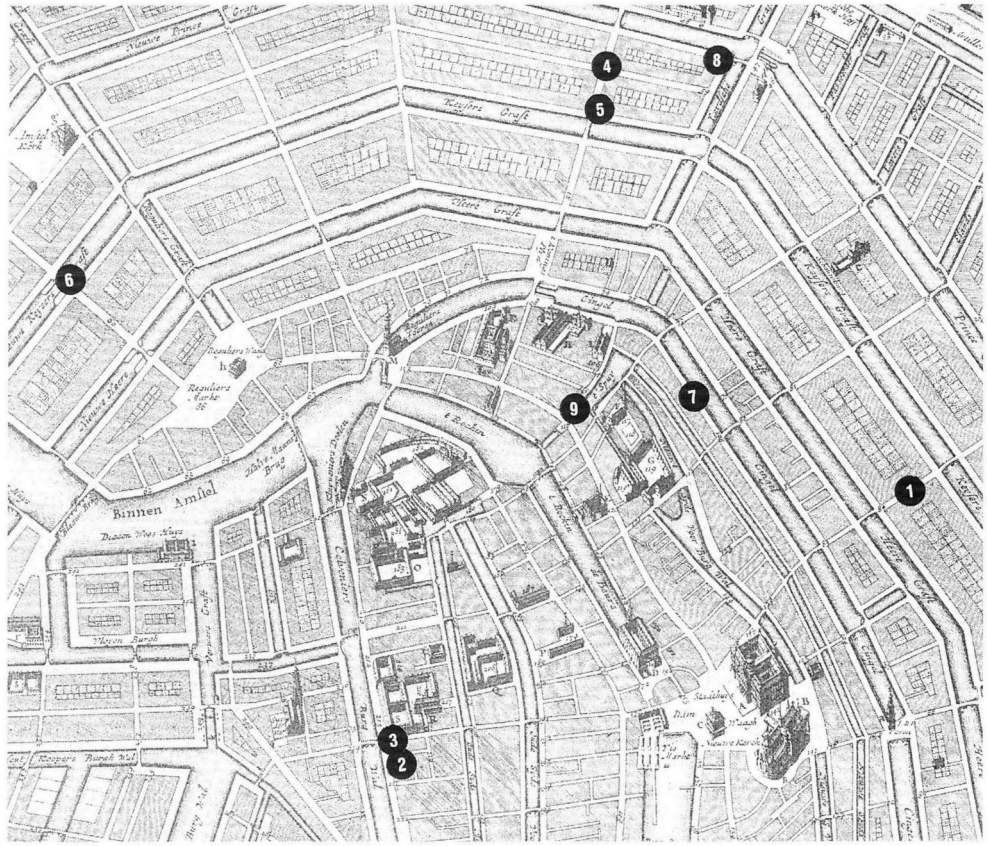
30-07-1678	Banns of marriage note Michiel Musscher living in the Hartenstraat[129]
29-08-1681	Burial of a child of Miggiel Mussger living at the corner of the Boerensteeg[130]
15-04-1682	Testament by Michiel van Musscher, at Kloveniersburgwal near the Oude Hoogstraat[131]
25-06-1684	Burial of Eva Visschers; on the Leidsestraat between the Keizersgracht and the Prinsengracht[132]
07-07-1684	Burial in the Oudezijds Kapel of a child of Miggiel Muskel from the Leytsestraet at the Keisersgracht[133]
17-01-1693	Banns of marriage note Michiel van Musscher living at Nieuwe Keizersgracht[134]
29-07-1697	Testament by Michiel van Musscher, living at the Singel[135]
22-06-1699	Burial in the Westerkerk of Elsje Klanes, wife of Michiel van Musscher, resident of the Prinsengracht at the corner of the Leidsche Gracht[136]
25-06-1705	Burial of Michiel van Musscher, living at the Spui near the Osjessluis[137]

As noted above, Michiel remarried on 01-02-1693, this time to twice widowed Elsie Klanes (?-1699), most recently the widow of the musical instrument maker Jan de Jager.[138] This marriage, unlike his first marriage to Eva Visscher, was a civil ceremony performed at the Amsterdam town hall.[139] It is interesting to observe that as a means of connoting culture, Michiel frequently included musical instruments in his portraits, and at his death he was known to have a large instrument collection.[140] Perhaps some of these instruments had been made by De Jager (Elsie's second husband) and came into Van Musscher's collection through Michiel's second wife's possession.

Elsie was buried on 22-06-1699,[141] and Michiel died on Saturday morning 20-06-1705.[142] He was buried on 25-06-1705, in the Amsterdam's Nieuwe Kerk.[143] A painting by Charles Rochussen titled *De Osjessluis bij de Kalverstraat te Amsterdam* shows approximately where Michiel van Musscher lived at the end of his life; unfortunately the painting dates from 1855 and the buildings portrayed may have changed since Michiel's death.[144] At the time of his death, he only was survived by his two sons, Jan and Michiel.[145]

In summary, the genealogical and family data reported in this paper permit a number of conclusions to be reached:

First: Although in the past it was felt by several authors that Jacob Fransz. of Delft, the painter who was buried in the Oude Kerk of Delft on 29-08-1623, was the same person as Jacob Fransz. van Musscher (I), the artist who was a member of the



7.
Documented locations of Michiel van Musscher in Amsterdam, shown on a 1710 map of Amsterdam after Nicholas Visscher.
1.) July 1678 – Hartenstraat[129]
2.) August 1681 – Corner of the Boerensteeg[130]
3.) April 1682 – Kloveniersburgwal near the Oude Hoogstraat[131]
4.) June 1684 – Leidsestraat between the Keizersgracht and the Prinsengracht[132]
5.) July 1684 – Leytsestraet at the Keisersgracht[133]
6.) January 1693 – Nieuwe Keizersgracht[134]
7.) July 1697 – Singel[135]
8.) June 1699 – Prinsengracht at the corner of the Leidsche Gracht[136]
9.) June 1705 – Spui near the Osjessluis[137]
Note: The location pairs 2-3 and 4-5 have individual locations in proximity to the other and, given the closeness of the dates and the ambiguity of the reported locations, each pair may well specify the identical location.

St. Luke's Guild of Delft, no irrefutable proof of this was ever provided. The Delft marriage records and the Delft Weeskamer document of Jacob Fransz, coupled with the Rotterdam marriage and notarial records, finally provide the irrefutable evidence that these two names refer to the very same person. The Delft marriage record also establishes the birth city of Jacob Fransz. van Musscher to be Embden, not Antwerp. Additionally, it is documented in a Weeskamer proceeding that Jacob and his wife had six surviving children. The two male children (Jan Jacobsz. and Gerrit Jacobsz.) both eventually relocated to Rotterdam where Jan married Catalijntje Michiels, daughter of Michiel Michiels Comans (I). One of the children of this marriage was Michiel van Musscher. (see Genealogy 3).

Second: While for many years I. or J.(acob?) van Mosscher (II), the landscape painter of Haarlem, has been considered to possibly be a son of Jacob Musscher (I) of Delft, and therefore would be the uncle of Michiel van Musscher, at present there is no genealogical evidence to support this idea. To the contrary, there are several legal documents which cite 'all' the children of Jacob (I), and there is no mention of a son named Jacob. Thus, while Jacob (II) may be a distant relative, nothing more can be stated definitively concerning his relationship to Jacob Fransz. van Musscher of Delft.

Third: Michiel van Musscher, rather than appearing on the Amsterdam art scene as a newly discovered, fifteen year old prodigy with an unknown background from Rotterdam, actually was a descendant in an artistic family. We now are able to directly trace the lineage from his paternal grandfather Jacob Musscher (I), a member of the Delft St. Luke's Guild, to Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher of Rotterdam, to Michiel van Musscher, the seventeenth-century portraitist and member of the St. Luke's Guild of Amsterdam.

While there is no preserved archival record verifying that Michiel van Musscher was a member of the Amsterdam Mennonite community, circumstantial evidence of his religious beliefs includes the fact that he was raised in a Mennonite household and had a number of ancestors and relatives who were members of that religion. Records do reveal that these relatives were married as 'dissenters' and did not practice infant baptism; additionally, there is no record of Michiel van Musscher's baptism as a child. Early in his portrait career Michiel painted a number of prominent Mennonites, including his famous double portrait of his maternal uncle, Michiel Michiels. Comans (II) with his third wife. Perhaps these early commissions were facilitated by his maternal Comans family Mennonite connections.

Notwithstanding his early religious traditions, his first marriage to Eva Visscher was performed in a Dutch Reformed church, the religion of his bride. While office holders had to be members of the state recognized church (after 1651 the Dutch Reformed Church), this would not have been a requirement for his later position overseeing the art academy in the Amsterdam Stadhuis. In any event, Michiel's second marriage was performed as a civil ceremony.

Finally: The documented burial date of Eva Visscher, Michiel's first wife, brings into question the dating of two of his portraits of her; alternatively, they may well have been painted posthumously. Her death also raises interesting questions about the understanding of his allegorical family group portrait and may indicate a memorial interpretation of this work.

NOTES

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I would also like to thank: Ms. Leen de Jong and the staff of the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp for permitting me to view van Musscher's *Familieportret* in the storage room and Mr. Gordon Hartig for a number of the translations of the old Netherlandish records. My gratitude as well to the librarians and staff of: the Frick Art Reference Library, New York; the Library of the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Anne and Jerome Fisher Fine Arts Library of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia for their help and courtesy.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my wife Susan for her tireless patience, support and expert editorial help with this report.

[1] E-J. Goossens and B. van de Roemer, 'The art chamber in the town hall of Amsterdam', in: E-J. Goossens (ed.), exh. cat. *Backhuysen at the Helm!* Amsterdam (Royal Palace) 2004, pp. 20-24, 28-30. See also M. Splicthoff and J. Corstens, 'The Life and Times of Ludolf Backhuyzen', *Hoogsteder Journal* 11 (2005), p. 51.

[2] M. Splicthoff and W.J. Hoogsteder, 'Fashionable innovations of Tsar Peter the Great,' *Hoogsteder Journal* 7 (2000), pp. 28-34.

[3] For van Musscher's portraits see: M. Russell, 'The Artist in his Studio – A Self-Portrait by Michiel van Musscher', *Apollo Magazine* 127 (1988), no. 311, pp. 9-15; P.J.J. van Thiel, 'Michiel van Musscher's vroegste werk naar aanleiding van zijn portret van het echtpaar Comans,' *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 17 (1969), pp. 3-36; P.J.J. van Thiel, 'Andermaal Michiel van Musscher: zijn zelfportretten', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 22 (1974), pp. 131-149.

[4] A. Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, 's Gravenhage 1753 (reprint Amsterdam 1976), vol. 3, pp. 210-212.

[5] I.Q. van Regteren Altena, 'I. van Moscher', *Oud-Holland* 43 (1926), pp. 18-28, especially pp. 19 and 21.

[6] K. van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters,* 6 vols. From the first edition of *Het Schilder-boeck* (1603-1604) with the biography of Karel van Mander from the second edition (1616-1618), Hessel Miedema (ed.), translated edition, Doornspijk 1994-1999. H. Miedema, in vol 2: Commentary on 'Biography' and 'Lives,' Derry Cook-Radmore, trans., Doornspijk 1995, pp. 21-24.

[7] Van Mander 1994-1999 (note 6). The reproduction of the first edition text, vol. I, fol. 300, line 34 (translated page 459) states 'Furthermore in Delft there is Jaques de Mosscher, accomplished and experienced in all aspects of art.' The biography of Karel van Mander from the second edition, translates line 11-12 of the second column of page 31 as 'He had various pupils, some of whom became good masters: Jacques van Moschero ...'. On close examination, the reproduced facsimile text is seen to actually use the spelling 'Jaques de Moschero', thus somewhat closer to that used by the first edition.

[8] H. Miedema (ed.), *De Archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem, 1497-1798,* Aphen aan den Rijn, 1980, p. 1036. See also Van Regteren Altena 1926 (note 5), p. 19.

[9] Van Regteren Altena 1926 (note 5), p. 21.

[10] Van Mander 1994-1999 (note 7), vol. 1, fol. 300, line 34, translated p. 459.

[11] Van Regteren Altena 1926 (note 5), pp. 19-21 and K. Kaldenbach, 'Fully searchable complete text of the 1877 Obreen publication of the Guild Book of Delft Master Painters, Engravers, Sculptors, Potters etc. in the seventeenth century' (July 2004), at: <http://www.xs4all.nl/~kalden/dart/d-a-ab-obreen-lucasgilde1.htm >. The artist is also noted by J.M. Montias in two articles: 'Painters in Delft, 1613-1680', *Simiolus* 10 (1978-1979), no. 2, pp. 84-114 as well as in 'Schilders in Delft 1613-1680', in: *De Stad Delft cultuur en maatschappij van 1572 tot 1667*, Delft 1981, pp. 194-202.

[12] F.D.O. Obreen, *Archief voor Nederlandsche Kunstgeschiedenis*, Rotterdam 1877-1878 lists Jacob Musscher in vol. 1 of the Delft Guild Book, p. 5, member #38, with the notation '1.) zijn dootschult betaalt.' Jacob Musscher also is noted by Montias in two articles (note 11).

[13] Montias 1978-1979 (note 11), p. 107 and Montias 1981 (note 11), p. 200. The source for the Antwerp origin of Jacob Fransz. Musscher is not clear. 'Antwerp' is marked with an asterisk which, according to Montias 'denotes that the specialty of the painter, his vital dates or his birthplace have been inferred from a source but are not known with any certainty.' Montias goes on to state that 'the sources below document only information that is not available (or is incorrectly given) in Thieme-Becker's *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler*, Leipzig 1907-1947.' The only 'source below' in the Montias articles is concerned with the artist's name – thus implying that the source for the Antwerp origin is Thieme-Becker; however, examination of Thieme-Becker fails to reveal any suggestion of Antwerp as the city of origin. Dr. Montias' recent death precludes any additional information as to the source of the Antwerp reference.

[14] See Van Regteren Altena 1926 (note 5), p. 19 and Obreen 1877-1878 (note 12) which list Jacob Musscher in vol. 1 of the Delft Guild Book, p. 5, member #38, with the notation '1.) zijn dootschult betaalt'.

[15] Montias 1978-79 (note 11), p. 107.

[16] Delft, Gemeentearchief (DGA), 'Digitale-Stamboom' ('Digital Family Tree') database, <http://www.archief.delft.nl/detailx.aspx?ID=53791&book=B&rolc=D&page=1> (05-07-2005). Reads: 'Deceased: Jacob Franss.; Place: Delft; Date of burial 29-08-1623 (Oude Kerk); Remarks – schilder' (DTB Delft inv. 37). DTB = Doop-, Trouw- en Begraafregisters, meaning the registers of Baptism [doop], Marriage [trouwen] and Burial [begraven]. The actual entry, provided by Bas van der Wulp of the Gemeentearchief Delft, reads: 'Jacob Franss(oon), schilder in Jacob Gerritss(oons)settech"; translated as 'Jacob son of Frans, painter, in Jacob Gerritssteeg [Gerrits alley].' This was renamed Jacob Gerritsstraat in the twentieth century.

[17] DGA (note 16), at: http://www.archief.delft.nl/detailx.aspx?ID=56281&book=T&role=G&page=0> (24-05-05). Reads: 'Groom: Jacob Fransz. from Haerlem, schilder; Bride: Jannetgen Gerritsdr; Place: Delft; Date 12-01-1603' (DTB Delft inv. 117). Again, courtesy of Bas van der Wulp of the DGA, the actual marriage record reads: 'Jacob Franszoon vuyt Eembderlant, jonckgeselle, schilder, wonende tot Haerlem, Jannetgen Gerritsdochter, jongedochter, wonende alhier over de brouwerije van de Croone.' Translated as: 'Jacob Franszoon from the land of Embden, not married before, painter, living in Haarlem (and) Jannetge Gerritsdochter, spinster, living here (i.e. Delft) opposite of the brewery of the Crown.'

[18] I wish to thank Mr. Bas van der Wulp of the DGA for bringing to my attention the Mennonite population of Embden (email of 20-06-2005). See description at: <http://home.planet.nl/~hans.farjon/weichsel_v_uk.htm> (02-09-2005).

[19] Antwerpen, Stadsarchief (ASA) email to the author dated 05-08-2005 from Gie Stappaerts: "...till this moment I did not find any Jacob or Fransz. (Musscher, Mosscher or Mosker)." A Jan Musschet is listed in the "poortersboeken" (the patrician lists and books) on 20-09-1549, vol. 146. Emden, Stadtarchiv (ESA) email to the author dated 11-08-2005, from Dr. Rolf Uphoff. 'The first register (the register of citizenship-gainings) reaches back to the fourth decade of the 16th century. It contains all people who became citizens of Emden. Yet it didn't contain "Jacob Fransz." in any form. So I must state that there wasn't any information about the person mentioned by you.'

[20] DGA (note 16), at: <http://www.archief.delft.nl/detailx.aspx?ID=89269&book=D&role=W2&page=> (24-05-2005). Reads: 'Baptist: Gerrit; Father: Jan Gerritsz.; Mother Aeffge Pietersdr.; Witness: Lijsbeth Gerrits and Jannetge Gerritsdr.; Place: Delft; Date of baptism: 2 December 1616' (DTB Delft inv. 54, folio 3 v).

[21] DGA, Weeskamer Document concerning the estate of Jacob Fransz., painter; City of Delft, dated 10-02-1624 and 14-02-1624: 'Appearing before us on this day the 3rd of February 1624 at the office of the Orphanmaster of the city of Delft, were, on the one hand, Jannitgen Gerritsdr., widow of the late painter Jacob Fransz., assisted by Abraham [?] Pietersz., representing the birth mother in this matter, along with.....legally assigned caretakers of the six surviving orphan children of aforenamed Jacob Fransz. and the aforenamed Jannitgen Gerritsdr., and it is recorded that the afore-named widow taking the four youngest of her six children – named Jan Jacobs, around 14 years of age; Lijsbeth

Jacobsdr., around 11 years of age; Gerrit Jacobsz., around 10 years of age; and Annitgen Jacobsdr., around 7 years of age – and agrees to sustain and raise them.... In regard to the remaining two oldest children of their father, those with the names Franszgen Jacobsdr., around 20 years of age, and Maritgen Jacobsdr., around 18 years of age, these are considered able to be on there own...'.

[22] For his Mennonite beliefs, an earlier Jan Gerrits from Delft was burned at the stake in the Hague on 15-12-1564. See: J. van Braght, *The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror*, Dort 1660. 'Jan Gerrits, Burnt at the Hague, for the Testimony of Jesus Christ, the 15th Day of December, A. D. 1564', second English edition, J.F. Sohm trans., Scottdale, PA 1999, pp. 680-686. Thus this man, according to patronymic naming, could possibly be the grandfather of Jannetgen Gerrits; unfortunately no records documenting the ancestors of Jannetgen currently can be located in Delft as noted in a DGA letter to the author dated 15-08-2005, from C. Vanwesenbeeck: 'In reply to your email I can inform you that the registrations of baptisms in Delft starts in the year 1616. Jannetgen Gerritsdr. was born before 1616 so it is not possible for us to find when she was born and who her father, grandfather, brothers and sisters were. In the notarial archives and in an index on marriage contracts before the court there is no mention of a marriage contract between Jannetgen Gerritsdr. and Jacob Musscher.'

[23] C.M. Franklin, *Dutch Genealogical Research*, Indianapolis, IN 1982, pp. 43-44.

[24] DGA, letter to the author dated 06-06-2005, from B. van der Wulp. The letter relates the start of Baptismal records in 1616, the lack of Baptismal records for the family, the non-church marriages of Jacob Frans to Jannetje Gerritsdr., as well as the non-church marriages of their daughters and also summarizes a Weeskamer document of 14-02-1624 (note 21), after the death of Jacob, relating that Jacob had six children, giving their names and ages, at the time of his death.

[25] J.M. Montias, *Art at Auction in 17th Century Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 2002, pp. 15-19.

[26] DGA Weeskamer Document (note 21).

[27] It is thus possible, but not certain, that the first daughter to survive (Fransgen), rather than being named for her maternal grandmother, was named after her paternal grandfather (Frans), if it is assumed that his death temporally coincided with her birth. Alternatively, she could have been named after her maternal grandmother, name unknown, but some form of Frances.

[28] While a Jan Musschet is listed in the Antwerp "poortersboeken" (the patrician lists and books) on 20-09-1549, vol. 146 (ASA note 19), a subsequent ASA email of 16-08-2005 from Inge Schoups and Philip Heylen stated: 'My colleague performed quite a thorough research for you in the "parochieregisters" (parish registers) and in the "poortersboeken" (burghers registers). I completed the search by taking a quick peek in the other archives that are easily accessible:
- Nota's van de Burbure (notations of De Burbure)
- Genealogisch fonds (genealogical collection)
- Nota's van Bisschops en Donnet (notations of Bisschops and Donnet)
- Certificatieboeken (certification books)
The name of (Jan) Musschaert didn't occur.' Thus, other than the one listing in the "poortersboeken", no other information is available, and no genealogical connection can be made.

[29] DGA Weeskamer Document (note 21:. 'It is understood that the goods received by the six children from their father are estimated in value according to the state at two hundred eleven guilders...'.

[30] DGA Weeskamer Document (note 21): '...and that the goods that these same children would inherit through the death of their grandmother are valued at approximately twelve hundred guilders.'

[31] DGA, letter to the author dated 06-06-2005, from B. van der Wulp (note 24): 'According to the house ownership files Jacob Fransz. Musscher lived on the east side of the Jacob Gerritssteeg in Delft.'

[32] DGA (note 16).

[33] DGA (notes 17 and 24).

[34] DGA (note 24) and DGA, DTB inv. 117, p. 74v.

[35] DGA (note 24) and DGA, DTB inv. 125, p. 81.

[36] DGA addendum dated 22-12-1640, to the Weeskamer Document of 14-02-1624 (note 21) stipulating satisfactory settlement of the estate of Jacob Fransz.: 'Appearing before us in the orphan's court today, the 22nd of December 1640, were Thonis Jansz. van der Ver, a cooper by profession, having married Fransgen Jacobsdr.; and Direk Ponts Slingerlant, having married Elizabeth Jacobs; Maritgen Jacobs, the adult child, Abraham Pieters Schepmoes, having power of attorney passed on to him from Jan and Gerrits Jacobsz. Before the witness Balthasar Vasink in Rotterdam on the 17th of December of this same year, with the same Schepmoes serving as attorney for Cornelis Jansz. van Tol, a carpenter living in Leyden, having married Annitgen Jacobs, ...and therewith every child of the painter Jacob Franz and Jannetgen Gerritsdr. ...'.

[37] DGA (notes 24 and 36).

[38] DGA (note 24): 'Lijsbeth married Direk Ponts Slingerlant. Unfortunately I have not found them in any marriage register.'

[39] DGA (note 24): 'The series of baptismal registers of Delft starts in the year 1616. Only Annitgen could have been mentioned in those registers but unfortunately she isn't. ...Given the facts that two daughters and their parents were married by the court instead of in church and the "missing" baptism of Annitgen in the baptismal registers, you may conclude that they did not belong to the Reformed Church.'

[40] J.M. Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu – A Web of Social History*, Princeton 1989, p. 57. Montias notes that 'The real magnitude of these prices may be gauged from the fact that apprentices and journeymen, who made up the bulk of the population, earned on average less than one guilder a day.'

[41] DGA, Testament of Jenetigen Gerritsdr., Delft, dated 04-08-1651. Letter to the author dated 12-07-2005, from Eveline Kaiser states 'The correct date of her testament is 4 August 1651. After studying the testament once more we found out that Jannetge left 100 guilders to the poor of the Flemish Mennonites. So it is most likely that they were Mennonites.'

[42] Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD) database, <http://www.rkd.nl/rkddb/default.asp?database=ChoiceArtists&action=form/search.asp> (08-04-2005). The RKD preferred name is Jacob

van Mosscher; variants listed are: I. van Moscher, Jacob van Moscher, I. van Mosker, Jacob van Mosschert and J. van Musscher.

[43] RKD (see note 42).

[44] Van Regteren Altena 1926 (note 5), pp. 18-28. See especially page 27. This is the best study of the work of I. van Moscher, and it is available in a 1976 reprint. The article clearly makes the point that I. van Moscher is not the same person as the Jacob van Musscher of Delft, but is rather, most likely, his son. For clarity, I therefore have used the terminology Jacob van Musscher (I) and (II) to distinguish respectively father and reported son, yet indicating their possible relationship.

[45] U. Thieme and F. Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler*, 37 vols., Leipzig 1907-1950, vol. 25, p. 177, uses I. van Moscher with alternate spelling of Mosker. E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire Critique et Documentaire des Peintres, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs et Graveurs*, 14 vols., 1999, vol. 9, p. 885, uses I. Van Moscher with alternate spelling of Mosker.

[46] DGA (note 21).

[47] DGA (note 17).

[48] Haarlem, Gemeentearchief (HGA), email to the author 02-06-2005 from K.J. van Egmond and Haarlem, Verenigde Doopsgezinde Gemeente (HVDG) [Archives of the Mennonite Congregation in Haarlem], email to the author dated 08-06-2005 from Mechteld Gravendeel.

[49] Miedema 1980 (note 8).

[50] DGA (note 21).

[51] Rotterdam, Gemeentearchief (RGA), letter to the author dated 30-11-2004, from F. Cossee-de Wijs. The letter reports that in the municipal marriage books Gerrit Jacobs. Musschert, from Delft, married to Maria Weerts on 04-11-1640. (DTB Rotterdam inv. 15 Stadstrouw, index nr. 056, Trouwen 97664). They were married as dissenters by the municipality. The notarial deeds reveal that Maria Waerts, wife of Gerrit Jacobs. Musscher, is a daughter of the late Jasper Waert (1651). Jasper van Musscher, son of Gerrit Jacobs and Maria, also married as a dissenter to Maria van Raet on 23-05-1683 and to Clara van de Gamerslagh on 18-01-1693 (respectively DTB Rotterdam inv. 15 Stadstrouw, index nr. 056, Trouwen 97667 and DTB Rotterdam inv. 15 Stadstrouw, index nr. 056, Trouwen 97668).

[52] DGA (note 36), the addendum of 22-12-1640 notes 'Abraham Pieters Schepmoes, having power of attorney passed on to him from Jan and Gerrits Jacobsz. before witness Balthasar Vasink in Rotterdam....'

[53] F. Wiersum, 'The Van Musscher Family from Rotterdam', *De Navorscher* 76 (1927), pp. 255-256. Wiersum notes in footnote no. 1 that some of the documents he used mention the name Musgaerdt and Musgert, others Musscher and Van Musscher.

[54] RGA (note 51) and Wiersum 1927 (note 53).

[55] RGA (note 51) and Wiersum 1927 (note 53).

[56] Wiersum 1927 (note 53).

[57] RGA, *Digital Family Tree* at <http://Rotterdam.digitalestamboom.nl> (2004-2005). An excellent web site for tracing births, marriages and deaths in the city of Rotterdam and the vicinity. The deaths of the twins are located at: DTB Rotterdam inv. 44 Begraven.

[58] Wiersum 1927 (note 53).

[59] RGA (note 57).

[60] DGA (notes 21, 24 and 36).

[61] RGA (note 51). 'On November 29th 1636 Jan Jacobsz., from Delft, and Catalijntie Michiels, from Rotterdam, were married by the municipality. Because Jan and Catalijntie were married by the municipality they belonged to a dissenter group (Mennonites?). From this marriage were born at least four children, not baptized.' The marriage is recorded in DTB Rotterdam inv. 15 Stadstrouw, index nr. 034, Trouwen 119151.

[62] RGA (note 61).

[63] RGA (note 51): 'On September 5th 1655 Catelijntje Michiels, wife of Jan Jacobsz., was buried.' This also is noted in DTB Rotterdam inv. 44 Begraven, Begraven 143152.

[64] RGA (note 51): 'In the municipal marriage books: Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher, widower, married to Catalijntie Maertens on February 18th 1656.' This also is noted in DTB Rotterdam inv. 15 Stadstrouw, index nr. 056, Trouwen 97667.

[65] RGA (note 51): 'In the notarial deeds... contract of settlement between Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher, grocer, widower of Catalijntje Michielsdr., and Catalina Maertensdr., because of the four children of the bridegroom, March 3rd 1656.'

[66] RGA (note 57): 'Deceased Jan Jacobsz.; Place: Rotterdam; Date of burial: 18-05-1682; Remarks: Schrijnwerckerstech.' Found in: DTB Rotterdam inv. 44 Begraven. (26-08-2005).

[67] RGA (note 57): 'Deceased: Caterijna Maertens; Place: Rotterdam; Date of burial: 31-07-1685; Remarks: Schrijnwerckersteegh.' Found in: DTB Rotterdam inv. 44 Begraven. (26-08-2005).

[68] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), pp. 3-36. See particularly pp. 14 and 36; as source he cites in note 32: 'Rotterdam, Gemeentearchief, not. Arch., inv. Nr. 122/120 (20 November1639); 337/451 (7 mei 1649).'

[69] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), pp. 14-15.

[70] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), p. 14.

[71] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), p. 14.

[72] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), pp. 16 and 36. Van Thiel lists: Michiel Michiels Comans (II), Pieter Michiels Comans, Maarten Comans and Celcken Comans. In RGA *Digital Family Tree* at: <http://rotterdam.digitalestamboom.nl> (2004), Celcken is listed as 'Celcken Michiels Comans' and 'Marriage 28 March 1643'. Found in DTB Rotterdam inv. 15 Stadstrouw, index nr. 018.

[73] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), pp. 15, 20-26.

[74] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), p. 31.

[75] RGA (note 51): 'Michiel Michiels Comans de Jonge (the Younger) and Catharine Egels married by the municipality on April 22, 1645.' This marriage also is recorded in DTB Rotterdam inv. 15 Stadstrouw, index number 042, Trouwen 26114.

[76] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), p. 20.

[77] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), pp. 3 and 15.

[78] M. Westermann (ed.), 'Costly and Curious, Full off pleasure and home contentment' in: exh. cat. *Art & Home: Dutch Art in the Age of Rembrandt*, Denver (Denver Art Museum) and Newark (Newark Museum) 2001, pp. 50, 70 and 163, cat. no. 18.

[79] RGA (note 51) reports that in the archives of notarial deeds of Rotterdam is found: '... schoolmaster Michiel Comans is owing money to his brother-in-law, Jan Jscobsz. van Musscher, grocer (2 May 1655).'

[80] RGA (note 51). The letter reports that in the archives of notarial deeds of Rotterdam is found: '...grocer Jan Jacobs van Musschert gives his former father-in-law Michiel Michiels Coomans, citizen of this city, a certificate of protection (23 June 1656).'

[81] RGA (note 65).

[82] RGA (note 61). Also RGA (note 51) in this same letter, F. Cossee-de Wijs notes 'We looked in other archives as Weeskamer (for the children of Catalijntje Michiels in 1655) and registration of church members (also Mennonites), without any results.'

[83] RGA (note 82).

[84] A. Bredius, *Künstler-invenare; Urkunden zur Geschichte der Holländischen Kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts, herausgegeben von Dr. A. Bredius, unter Mitwirkung von Dr. O. Hirschmann,* 8 vols., Den Haag 1915-1922, vol. 3, p. 997, item k.

[85] RGA (note 51): 'According to the usual namegiving the second son was named after his grandfather maternal = Michiel.'

[86] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 995, item a.

[87] Houbraken 1753 (note 4).

[88] Houbraken 1753 (note 4).

[89] Houbraken 1753 (note 4).

[90] RGA (note 61) states 'No (child) baptism was found of Michiel van Musscher (or Michiel Jacobs, see below).' The 'see below' refers to Michiel's father variously identified in records as 'Jan Jacobsz. van Musscher', 'Jan Jacobs van Musschert' or 'Jan Jacobsz.' Thus the search for Michiel's baptism was made using both surnames.

[91] RGA (note 82).

[92] Van Mander 1994-1999 (note 7) p. 31 and (note 6) pp. 21-22.

[93] N. van der Zijpp and D. Kossen, "Art", *Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia Online* (1955), Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, at: <http://www.mhsc.ca/encyclopedia/contents/A78ME.html> (16-05-2005).

[94] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), p. 5.

[95] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), p. 5.

[96] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), p. 8.

[97] Westermann 2001 (note 78), pp. 53-54.

[98] Westermann 2001 (note 78), p. 163.

[99] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), pp. 23-24.

[100] Westermann 2001 (note 78), p. 163.

[101] See multiple renditions of Menno Simons at the Universiteit van Amsterdam website of Anabaptist Pictures (Doopsgezinde Prenten): <http://dpc.uba.uva.nl/doopsgezindeprenten> (20-08-2005).

[102] Van Thiel 1969 (note 3), pp. 23-24.

[103] Amsterdam, Gemeentearchief (AGA) letter to the author dated 18-01-2005 from J.T. Brockmeier: '30 July 1678. Publication of the banns of Michiel Musscher (from Rotterdam, painter, 34 years old, living in the Hartenstraat, parents deceased, witness: Bastiaan Stopendaal) and Eva Visschers (from Amsterdam, 27 years old, living at the Kloveniersburgwal, witness: Jan Bruijnsz. Visscher, her father). (DTB 691/145). The parallel register (505/204) mentions: 'married at Buiksloot'. Subsequent AGA email to the author dated 26-09-2005 from J.T. Brockmeier: '...in the copy I sent you: "in de kerck van Buijcksloot in den echten state bevestight" as the secretary of Buiksloot wrote to Amsterdam. They were married in the Dutch-Reformed Church at Buiksloot, the only church there then.' (DTB Buiksloot 5423/4, p. 87).

[104] AGA email to the author dated 03-10-2005 from J.T. Brockmeier: 'Publication of marriage banns, 30 May 1648. Jan Bruijns Visscher, from Beesterzwaag, soldier, widower of Elsje Luycas, in the Batavierstraat and Hilletje Hendrix, from Enkhuizen, widow of Barent Heyndrics. (DTB 465/531). The outcome is that there were five persons of one generation, inheritors of Aafje Jansz, their grandmother: Jannetje, Bruyn, Hilletje, Nicholaas and Eva Visshers. Probably bothers and sisters, the order of birth being not clear.'

[105] AGA (note 104): 'Another register of the archives of the church [Oudezijdskapel] showed the registration of the sale of grave nr. 230 by the Churchmasters to Aafje Jamsz., "widow of Bruyn Jansz."' Additionally, children of Jan Bruynsz. Visscher's first marriage[to Elsje Luycas] were baptized as children. (DTB 42/177, 24 January 1640 [twins] and DTB 65/29, 19 December 1646).

[106] 'The Olof Chapel' on *De Zeedijk & Neighbourhood*, at: <http://www.zeedijk.nl/olofspoort-eng.html> (03-10-2005).

[107] Van Thiel 1974 (note 3), pp. 131-149. See particularly p. 141 and cit. 26 and 27, p. 148.

[108] Van Thiel 1974 (note 3), pp. 131-149. See particularly p. 141 and cit. 26 and 27, p. 148. Also: Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 992; p. 995, item c; p. 996, item e and vol. 7, p. 165, item a. Also AGA (note 103): '29 August 1681. Burial in Oudezijdskapel of a child of Miggiel Mussger, from the corner of the Boerensteeg' (DTB 1064/20).

[109] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 996, item e.

[110] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 992 and p. 997, item k.

[111] AGA, letter to the author dated 18-08-2005 from J.T. Brockmeier: 'November 10, 1713. Publication of the banns of Michiel van Musscher and Grietje Tonning: to be married at Purmerend' (DTB 549/512). Unfortunately, Michiel (II)'s age is not listed in the Amsterdam recording of the banns nor in the Purmerend church books which record the marriage on 26-11-1713 (Waterlands Archief email from Marleen de Haan to the author dated 01-06-2006; Purmerend DTB 50). In both the banns and the marriage, Michiel (II) is only listed as 'jongeman van Amsterdam.'

[112] I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Rudi Ekkart, Director of the RKD, for calling my attention to the marriage banns of Jan van Musscher and Johanna van Crayesteyn (Crajesteijn). The banns note 'Jan van Musscher, 41 years of age, from Amsterdam, Herengracht, parents deceased; witness: his uncle Jacobus van Musscher...' (DTB 560/432). The marriage took place in the Westerkerk, 25-03-1723. (DTB 1003, p. 309).

[113] AGA at: <http://gemeentearchief.amsterdam.nl/archieven/genealogie/doopregisters/zoek/index.en.html> (13-05-2006) Doopregister 219, p. 83 (folio 50), nr. 10.

[114] Van Thiel 1974 (note 3), p. 137.

[115] AGA (note 103): '25 June 1684. Burial in the Oudezijdskapel of Eva Visschers, from the Leidsestraat between the Keizersgracht and the Prinsengracht' (DTB 1064/37). In addition, the burial date of Eva Visschers was confirmed, on request of the author, in a letter (04-02-05) from the AGA, J.T. Brockmeier: 'The burial date of Eva Visschers was no mistake: 1684. A "4" in that handwriting is distinctly different from a "9." It looks very much like a + with one line more at the left upper side. Often the grave-administration of churches has been made in duplo or even triplo. For the Oudezijds Kapel the double registers are only extant since later in the 18th century. But the series of deeds concerning the graves are extant and easily kept in numerical order. A fifth part of the grave an Eva Visschers was buried in 1684: nr. 230, was sold 7 August 1704 by Michiel van Musscher to a cousin or nephew ("neef" in Dutch). Michiel is named as the widower of Eva Visschers, being the keeper of her estate. The grave was earlier owned by her grandmother Aafje Jans.'

[116] Van Thiel 1974 (note 3), p. 135, uses the term *zwartekunstprent* in noting these pictures. See also H. van Hall, *Portretten van Nederlandse beeldende kunstenaars*, Amsterdam 1963, p. 223, artist serial no. 1476, portrait no. 8.

[117] Van Thiel 1974 (note 3), pp. 138, 140-141.

[118] Two sources both indicate a birth year of 1682: Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 996, item e, notes that in the distribution of the maternal share of the estate after the death of his first wife, Michiel van Musscher mentions that his son, Johannes, was 10 years old in December 1692. Jan (Johannes) also was listed as age 41 in March 1723 at the time of his marriage banns (note 112).

[119] Van Thiel 1974 (note 3), p. 141.

[120] AGA (note 115).

[121] AGA (note 113) notes that Doopregister 11, p. 1 lists Catarina as the daughter of Michiel van Musscher and Eva Visschers, christened in the Reformed Church, Oude Kerk on 22-03-1680; Doopregister 11, p. 83 lists Johannis (Johannes), father Michiel van Musscher, mother Eva Visschers, christened in the Reformed Church, Oude Kerk, 27-02-1682 and Doopregister 107, p. 454 lists Catrina, father Michiel van Musscher, mother Eva Visschers, christened in the Reformed Church, Wester Kerk, 12-03-1684.

[122] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 995, item c. See also AGA (note 103): '29 August 1681. Burial in the Oudezijdskapel of a child of Miggiel Mussger, from the corner of the Boerensteeg.' (DTB 1064/20).

[124] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 7, p. 165, item a.

[124] It would appear that the deceased Catarina's name was, as permitted by custom, reused as Catrina for the next child of the same sex; unfortunately, this second daughter also died in infancy.

[125] Van Thiel 1974 (note 3), p. 141.

[126] AGA (note 115).

[127] Van Thiel 1974 (note 3), p. 141.

[128] I.H. Van Eeghen, 'Het Amsterdamse Sint Lucasgilde in de 17de Eeuw', in: *Eenenzestigste Jaarboek van Het Genootschap Amstelodamum*, Amsterdam 1969, pp. 65-102. See especially p. 68 which gives the background of the guild declaration of members to the Municipal Orphanage; pp. 97-98 gives the list of guild members.

[129] AGA (note 103).

[130] AGA (note 108) and Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 995, item c.

[131] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, pp. 995-996, item d.

[132] AGA (note 115).

[133] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 7, p. 165, item a.

[134] AGA (note 103): '17 January 1693. Publication of the banns of Michiel van Musscher (from Rotterdam, painter, widower of Eva Visscher, living at the Nieuwe Keizersgracht) and Elsie Klaues (from Amsterdam, widow of Jan de Jager). (DTB 698/13). Jan de Jager was a musical instrument maker ("houten blaasinstrumenten").'

[135] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 997, item h.

[136] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 7, p. 165, item b.

[137] AGA (note 103). '25 June 1705. Burial in the Nieuwe Kerk of Michiel Musscher widower, of the Spui near the Osjessluis.' (DTB 1057/105v). Also, Bredius, 1915-1922, (note 84), vol. 7, p. 165, item c.

[138] AGA (note 134) and Bredius 1915-1922, (note 84), vol. 3, p. 996, item f. Lists date of wedding between Michiel van Musscher and the 'already twice widowed Elsje Cranes' as 01-02-1693.

[139] AGA (note 134): (DTB 950/169) with: '1 February 1693 Huwelijk Stadhuis' (townhall marriage).

[140] E. Buijsen and L.P. Grijp, *'Ihe Hoogsteder Exhibition of Music & Painting in the Golden Age*, (published on the occasion of the eponymous exhibition), The Hague (Hoogsteder & Hoogsteder) 1994, pp.96-107. Page 98 is of note: 'In the inventory made after van Musscher's death (1705), nine instruments are mentioned: two violins, a harp, two citterns, a guitar, a viola da gamba, a hurdy-gurdy and a bagpipe. This was the largest number of instruments found in Bredius's *Künstlerinventare* with the exception of Simon Jordaens II, who in 1670 kept a box with eight recorders and a sack with a set of at least four recorders in his kitchen, and a cittern in the front section of the house.' Additionally it is mentioned 'In his self-portraits, van Musscher shows himself painting, and not like many of the seventeenth-century Dutch painters, playing a musical instrument.'

[141] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 7, p. 165, item b.

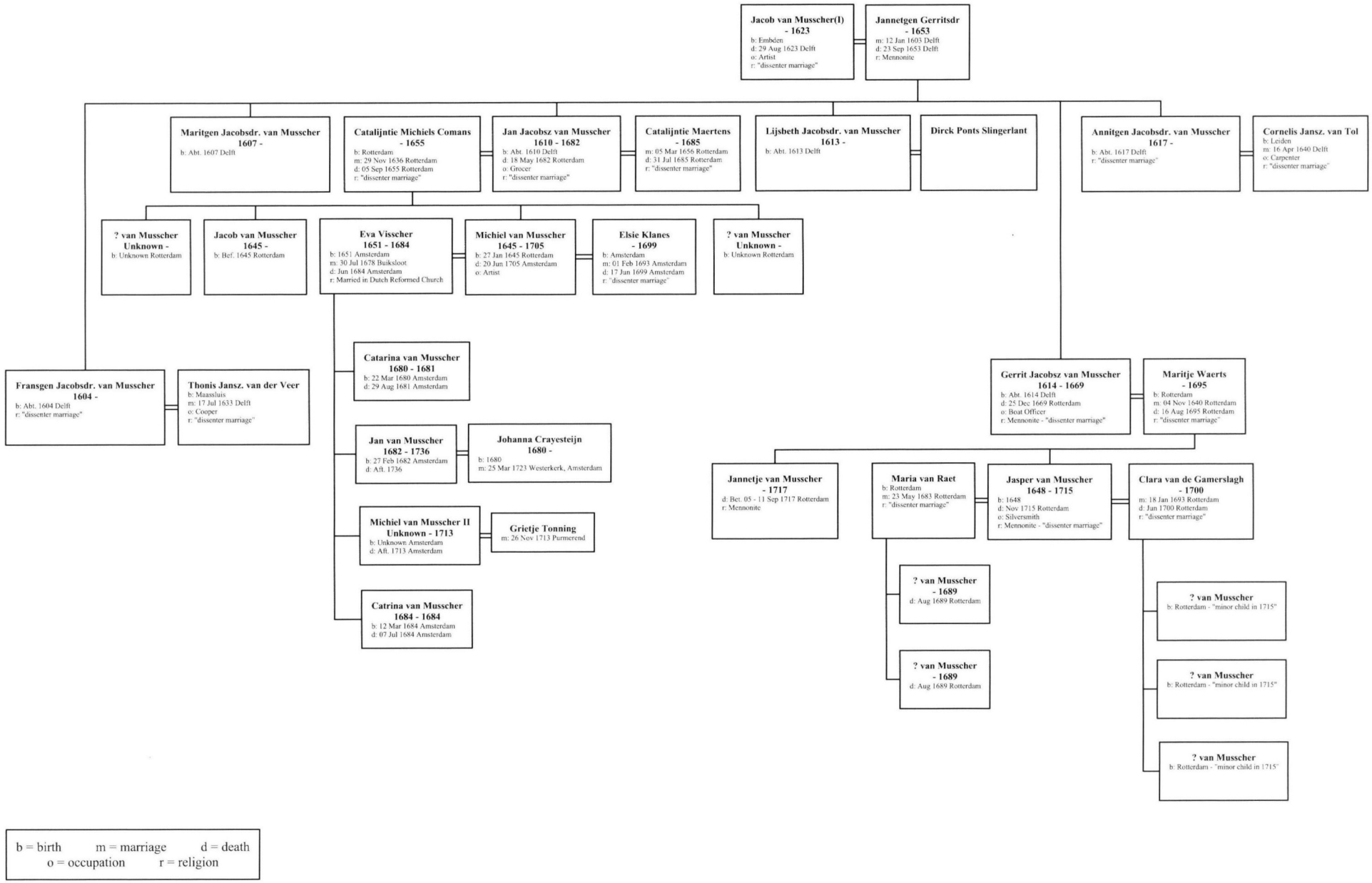
[142] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol 3, p. 992. Also, C. von Bogendorf-Rupprath, 'Michiel van Musscher,' in exh. cat. *Masters of 17th Century Dutch Genre Painting*, Philadelphia (Philadelphia Museum of Art)1984 (organized by P.C. Sutton), p. 266.

[143] Houbraken 1753 (note 4); AGA (note 137). Although the record notes burial was in the Nieuwe Kerk, Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84) vol. 7, page 165, item c, erroneously lists the burial in the Wester Kerk.

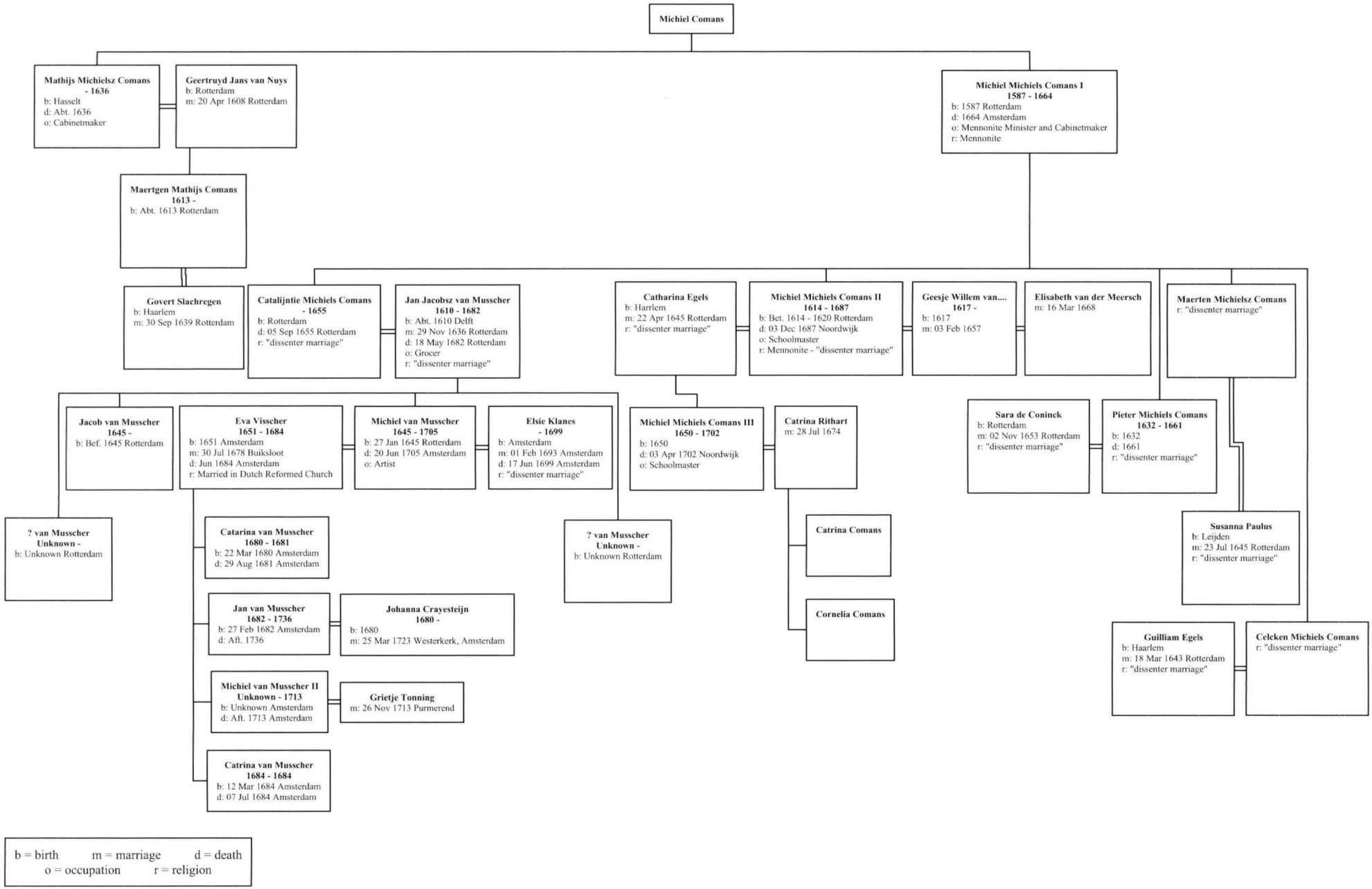
[144] Charles Rochussen, *De Osjessluis bij de Kalverstraat te Amsterdam*, 1855. Panel, 31.5 x 23.5 cm., Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. SK-C-1548.

[145] Bredius 1915-1922 (note 84), vol. 3, p. 992; p. 996, item e and p. 997, item k.

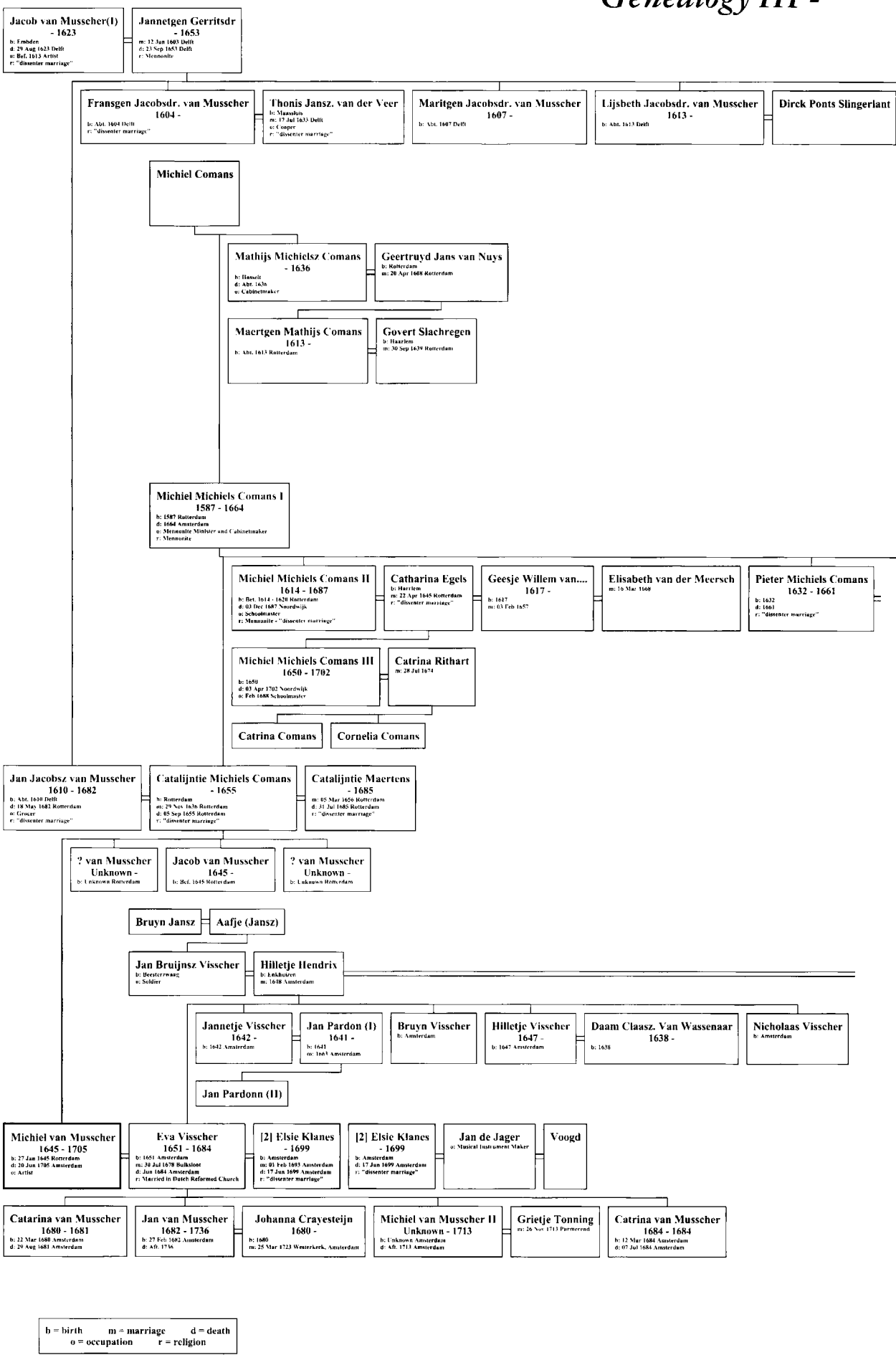
Genealogy I - Descendants of Jacob van Musscher (I)



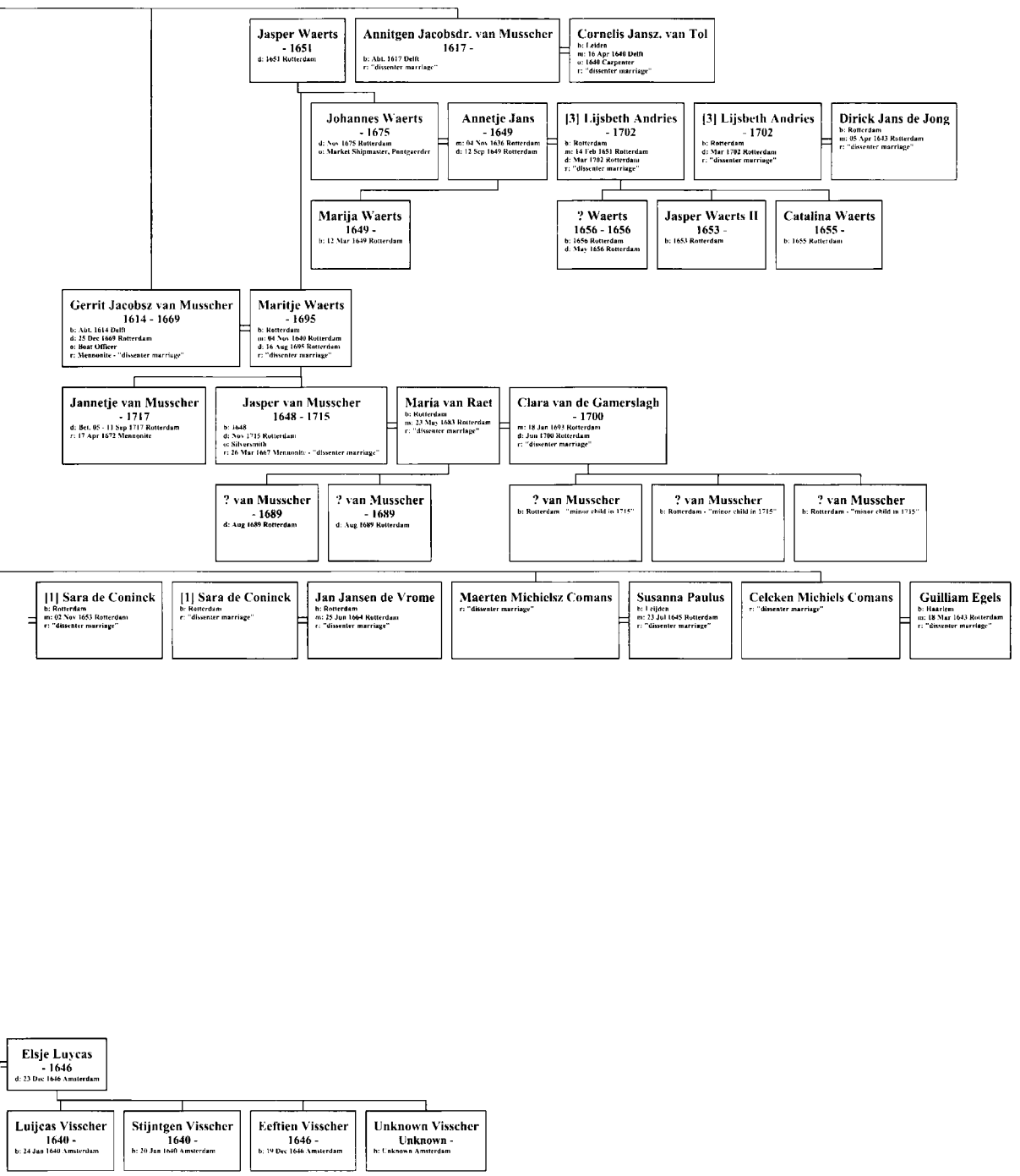
Genealogy II - Descendants of Michiel Comans



Genealogy III -



Extended Family of Michiel van Musscher



Boudewijn Bakker, *Landschap en wereldbeeld van Van Eyck tot Rembrandt*, Bussum: Uitgeverij Thoth 2004. 486 pp. 35 afbeeldingen in kleur, 112 in zwart-wit. ISBN 90-6868-353-5 (gebonden) € 34,90.

Veel mensen onderhouden een relatie met de aanschouwbare natuur, die gekenmerkt wordt door een meer of minder metafysische inslag. En men voelt zich al gauw, de door de horizon opgelegde beperking negerend, verbonden met de kosmos als geheel. Dat is universeel en altijd zo geweest. De tentoonstelling *Wereld, natuur, kunst*, in 2005 in de Nieuwe Kerk te Amsterdam gehouden, getuigde er in overvloedige mate van. Godsdiensten, New Age-oriëntatie, diverse vormen van esoterie fungeren vaak als een katalysator voor natuurbeleving en spelen in op gevoelsleven en numineuze ontvankelijkheid.[1] In het wereldbeeld van het Christendom gold de schepping, de natuur, het zichtbare landschap, eeuwenlang als goddelijke openbaring, ofwel metaforisch als het eerste boek van God, niet alleen voor de eenvoudige gelovige maar eveneens, zoals Eric Jorink onlangs heeft aangetoond, voor het merendeel van de natuurwetenschappelijke onderzoekers uit de vroegmoderne tijd.[2]

Een cruciale vraag in dit verband, die door kunst- en cultuurhistorici steeds weer wordt opgeworpen, is hoe het *verbeelde* landschap door mensen in de Middeleeuwen en de daarop volgende perioden gewoonlijk werd gepercipieerd. In hoeverre kwamen de reacties bij het zien van geschilderde natuur overeen met het ondergaan van de natuur zelf? En wat was de structuur van de inhoudelijke zingeving die zich altijd en overal aandiende en voor een deel door theologen werd bestierd? Pogingen tot beantwoording van deze vragen voerden een aantal malen tot opmerkelijke intellectuele opwinding en grote verschillen van inzicht.[3] Met het peilen van eventuele meerwaarde van geschilderde landschappen hebben zich in de vorige eeuw verschillende kunsthistorici beziggehouden. Veel aandacht trok het gedurfde artikel van Josua Bruyn uit 1987, 'Op zoek naar een Bijbelse interpretatie van zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlandse landschapsschilderijen', een aandacht die bij sommigen gepaard ging met felle kritiek en die in ruimer verband kan worden gezien als weerstand tegen het iconologisch duiden in het algemeen.[4]

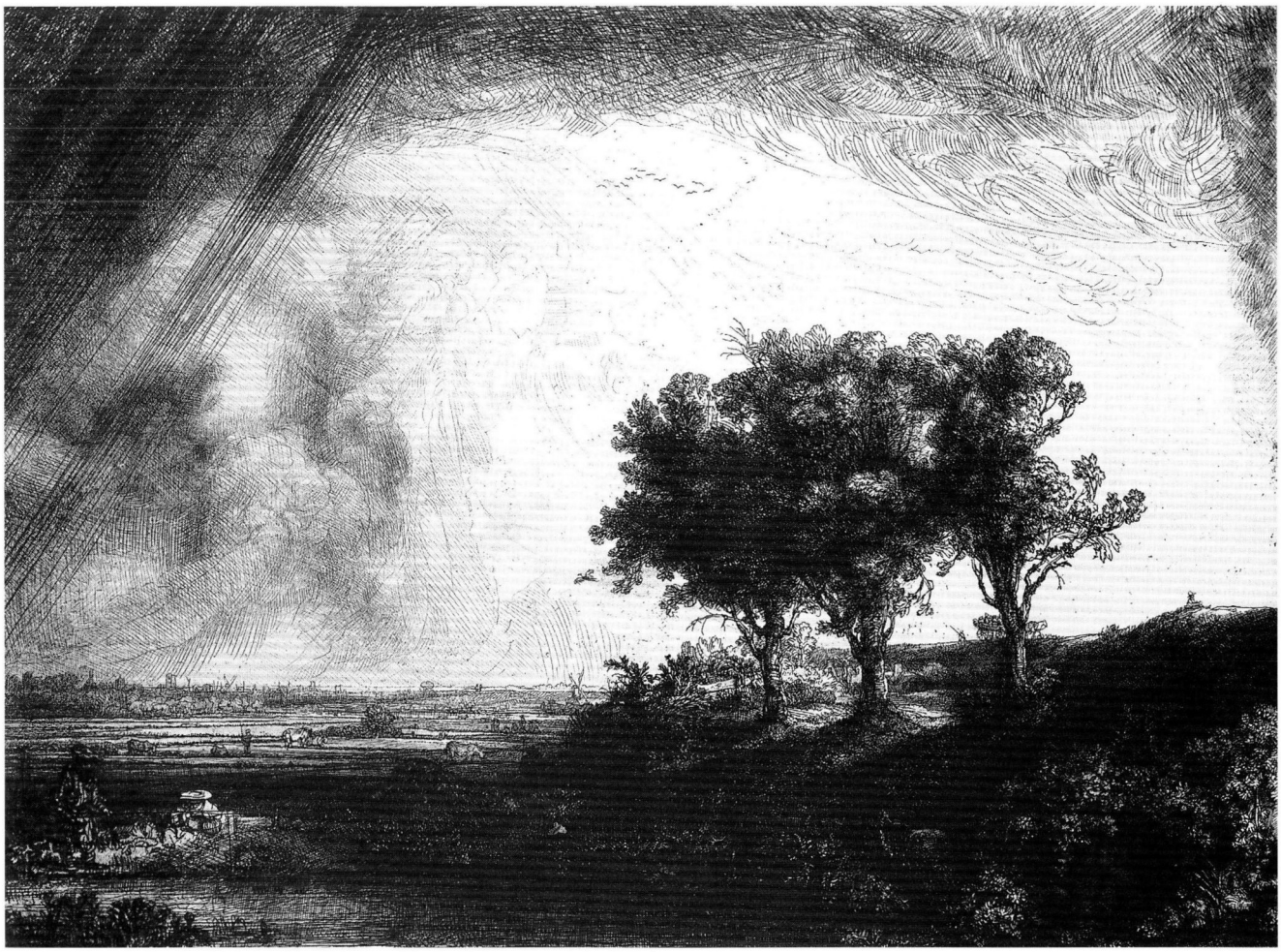
In zijn veelomvattende en erudiete boek, *Landschap en wereldbeeld van Van Eyck tot Rembrandt*, waarin de problematiek in kwestie op de meest pregnante wijze wordt behandeld, laat Boudewijn Bakker er geen twijfel over bestaan dat er in geschilderde landschappen uit de Middeleeuwen en de vroegmoderne tijd diepzinnige betekenissen schuilen. Zijn studie heeft, bijna vanzelfsprekend, een interdisciplinair karakter. Achter de door hem behandelde kunstwerken trok hij een weids decor op van Bijbelexegese en theologische en filosofische denkbeelden over de wereld, de zichtbare natuur en de goddelijke werkelijkheid. In het licht van de desbetreffende ideeën wijst hij erop dat voor veel scholastieke denkers het adagium *per visibilia ad invisibilia* als een dwingend richtsnoer gold.

Zeer belangrijk in Bakkers uiteenzettingen is wat hij 'universeel analogisme' noemt en dat als verschijnsel deels samenhangt met Huizinga's 'symbolisme' oftewel symbolische denkorde, zoals uiteengezet in diens *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen*. Analogie werd, zo schrijft Bakker, 'in het premoderne denken begrepen als een centraal wezenskenmerk van de kosmos als geheel, namelijk als het bindmiddel tussen enerzijds de eindeloze verscheidenheid der verschijnselen, anderzijds de volstrekte eenheid van God en zijn schepping'. In deze kosmische samenhang viel de kunstenaar de taak toe de schepping te bestuderen en zo getrouw mogelijk na te bootsen, 'waarbij hij de betekenisvolle verbanden zichtbaar maakte voor de bekijkers ('beschouwers') van zijn werk'.

Hier schemert natuurlijk een prachtig onderzoeksterrein maar voor moderne wetenschappers is het, dunkt mij, toch zaak met analogie of bindmiddel voorzichtig om te springen. In middeleeuwse en vroegmoderne geschriften mag van alles met elkaar verknoopt zijn, en dit in diverse gradaties van logica en willekeur, intellectuele spinsels uit vroeger dagen kunnen voor ons geen vrijbrief vormen om op even onbeschroomde wijze relaties tussen uiteenlopende fenomenen te leggen. Waarmee ik geenszins wil suggereren dat Bakker zich aan roekeloos associëren zou hebben overgegeven. Integendeel, zich bewust van de discrepantie tussen zijn eigen wetenschappelijke criteria en het – gemeten naar moderne maatstaven – onwetenschappelijke principe van de analogie, is hij vrijwel steeds uiterst bedachtzaam te werk gegaan. Maar zelfs bedachtzaamheid kan tot minder overtuigende resultaten leiden, soms ook, zoals nog zal blijken, in dit geval.

Hoewel geestesgeschiedenis in Bakkers boek een dominante plaats inneemt, bevat het tevens, verspreid over een aantal hoofdstukken, uitvoerige gedeelten over het ontstaan en de ontwikkeling in fysieke zin van het verbeelde landschap, zowel in de schilderkunst als in de grafiek. Met aansluitend een zeer nuttig historiografisch overzicht dat de lezer uitvoerig en kritisch informeert over de uiteenlopende wijzen waarop Bakkers twintigste-eeuwse voorgangers het onderwerp hebben benaderd. Veel studies zijn beeldinhoudelijk van karakter en gaan dus uit van de voorstelling en haar implicaties, met in beginsel de mogelijkheid om op vier betekenisniveaus te lezen: historisch, allegorisch, moreel en anagogisch (omhoogvoerend – 'rechtstreeks naar de Schepper zelf'). Andere studies leggen daarentegen de nadruk op stijl en compositie, op de beeldmiddelen in plaats van op achterliggende ideeën, en daarin past bijvoorbeeld ook de anti-iconologische beschrijvingstheorie van Alpers en in zekere zin het werk van de iconologie mijdende Gibson die in zeventiende-eeuwse landschappen veel vermaak maar zelden ergens lering ontdekte.[5]

Bakker zelf is van oordeel dat het geschilderde landschap, dat vanuit de religieuze iconografie gaandeweg een autonome positie verwierf, sinds de Middeleeuwen tot diep in de zeventiende eeuw gepaard ging met een vrij constant blijvend religieus gehalte. Het is een crux in zijn betoog. De oude analogische wereldbeschouwing waarin betrekkingen tussen de schepselen onderling en tussen de geschapen wereld en de Schepper werden bepaald, vinden we nadrukkelijk



1.
Rembrandt, *De drie bomen*, ets, 213 x 279 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Foto: Rijksmuseum.

geprolongeerd in werken van Vondel, Zacharias Heyns en anderen. Lectuur van de *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst* voert Bakker vervolgens tot de conclusie dat ook in het milieu van Samuel van Hoogstraten 'de uit de Middeleeuwen overgeleverde wereld- en mensbeschouwing nog steeds in overwegende mate de gedachten over de beeldende kunst, en in het bijzonder die over het landschap, bepaalden'. Dit mag een belangwekkende observatie zijn, toch kan men zich afvragen of er in de loop der tijd geen evolutie heeft plaatsgevonden in de religieuze ideeën die achter de geschilderde landschappen zweefden. Zou Rembrandt het goddelijke element inderdaad zo hebben geïmplementeerd als twee eeuwen eerder Jan van Eyck dit had gedaan?

Bakkers zienswijze betreft primair de inhoudelijke zingeving van *gehelen*: het is in de eerste plaats het complete landschap dat, al of niet in samenhang met een verbeelde geschiedenis, de beschouwer een zinvolle boodschap in picturale gedaante brengt. Deze vorm van holisme wordt echter gerelativeerd daar waar de auteur uit bepaalde fragmenten een specifiek eigen betekenis meent te kunnen destilleren. Zo wordt in een aantal kunstwerken bijvoorbeeld een weg als betekenisdrager opgevat. Rembrandts *Landschap met onweer* uit Braunschweig bevat zelfs twee wegen die metaforisch gelezen worden als een 'goede' en een 'verkeerde' weg, waarbij men zich evenwel kan afvragen of deze iconografisch nogal onscherp gearticuleerde voorstelling een dergelijke differentiatie wel toelaat.

Opmerkelijk is dat Bakker met instemming een artikel van Gustav Künstler uit 1966 aanhaalt, waarin deze waarschuwt tegen het lezen van voorstellingen als 'een soort rebus, met vaststaande betekenissen voor alle individuele stukjes zichtbare werkelijkheid'.[6] In feite heeft Bakker deze waarschuwing een aantal malen in de wind geslagen. Ik denk hierbij vooral ook aan zijn verhandeling over Jan van Eycks *Madonna met de kanselier Rolin* en de analyse van de ets met de drie bomen van Rembrandt.

Hoe gedifferentieerder een schrijver te werk gaat, hoe meer risico's hij uiteraard neemt. Van het schilderij van Van Eyck wordt vrijwel ieder onderdeel geïnterpreteerd, in een bespreking die zich laat kenmerken door hetgeen in de logica wel *petitio principii* wordt genoemd, waarbij de conclusie voor een deel reeds in de premisse lijkt te zijn verborgen. Toch maakt ook een zekere relativering deel uit van de gevolgtrekking, aangezien de auteur, daartoe door historische gegevens aangezet, niet verheelt dat 'onze interpretatie [...] altijd in hoge mate benaderend moet blijven, omdat de persoonlijke accenten heel verschillend gelegd kunnen worden [...]'.

Voor Bakker is het vanzelfsprekend dat geschilderde landschappen een religieuze lading bevatten, omdat dit voor de kunstenaars van weleer nu eenmaal ook een vanzelfsprekendheid was. Ten aanzien van nogal wat zeventiende-eeuwse werken lijkt mij hierover nader beraad nodig, maar verder twijfel ik er mét Bakker niet aan dat veel schilders een religieuze strekking aan hun landschappen hebben meegedeeld. Alleen is dit zeker niet altijd *ad oculos* aanwijsbaar en als dat wel zo is, rijst de vraag of elk detail wel als interpretabel kan worden beschouwd. Welke onderdelen dragen betekenis en welke onderdelen doen dat niet? Hoe kunnen we vaststellen welk detail een bepaalde connotatie in zich meedraagt? Specificiteit, het simpele principe dat bijvoorbeeld een kruis in een landschap zich al gauw als semanteem opdringt en de exegeet in de regel meer houvast biedt dan een koe of een struik, kan hierbij in zekere mate helpen. Deze prangende kwestie binnen de uitlegkunde heeft nog meer facetten die sommige wetenschappers waarschijnlijk semiotisch zouden willen noemen. Zo kan men vervolgens de vraag stellen of de plaats van een bepaald motief binnen het geheel van een compositie, de omvang die het heeft en de mate van nadruk waarmee het de aandacht van de kijker opeist, corresponderen met de mate van zijn importantie. Ik snijd dit allemaal aan zonder ook maar de minste pretentie te koesteren een oplossing voor deze methodische problemen te kunnen bieden.[7]

Bij zijn soms vergaande explicaties van onderdelen lijkt Bakker onbewust over een zwakke stee in de kunsthistorische discipline heen te lopen, namelijk onze onwetendheid omtrent de grenzen van de duidingsmogelijkheden. Ook dit behoort tot de hierboven geschetste problematiek. We weten immers niet waar precies die grenzen liggen, en daarom is elke interpreterende schrijver op het gebied van de kunstgeschiedenis in feite zijn eigen grenswachter.[8] In zijn uitweiding over Rembrandts *De drie bomen* (afb. 1), prachtig getypeerd als 'een wereldlandschap dat vermomd is als een portret van Holland', heeft de schrijver de grenzen weer aanzienlijk ruimer getrokken dan ik in zijn plaats zou hebben gedurfd. Met alle respect voor Bakkers speculatieve vermogens lijkt mij dat ook hier de interpreteerbaarheid hoger werd getaxeerd dan op grond van onbetwistbare gegevens mogelijk is. Hoewel het in dit geval, zeker als men het gewoel van Rembrandts etsnaald goed op zich laat inwerken, misschien te begrijpen valt dat iemand geneigd is tot een metafysische verklaring. De krachtige verticale lichtbundel aan de linkerzijde van de compositie, waarmee licht en lucht schijnen te zijn verstrengeld tot een soort bovennatuurlijk meteorologisch manifest, vormt daartoe nog eens een extra stimulans.

Dat de schrijver zich liet overmannen door deze hoogst suggestieve proeve van Rembrandts kunst, ten koste van zijn wetenschappelijke distantie, kan postuum op het conto van de kunstenaar worden geschreven. 'De monumentale groep', aldus Bakker, 'van de drie ineengegroeide en als één vorm ervaren bomen, die bovendien omgeven worden door een kransvormige lichtschijn, heeft een dermate dominerende plaats in de compositie dat hij een bewuste verwijzing lijkt naar het getal drie, het getal van de goddelijke drie-eenheid'. Los van het feit dat men erover zou kunnen twisten of hier inderdaad sprake is van ineengroeiing en kransvormige lichtschijn, dringt zich vooral de vraag op waarom de gedachte aan de drie-eenheid aannemelijker zou zijn dan de eveneens speculatieve gedachte, onder anderen geuit door Martin Royalton-Kisch, dat de drie bomen wellicht verwijzen naar de drie kruisen op Golgotha. Bakker vermeldt dit laatste in een noot en zegt alleen dat die interpretatie hem 'tamelijk geforceerd' aandoet. Niet waarom dat zo zou zijn.[9]

Bijzonder veel gewicht wordt ook toegekend aan een onderdeel van de stoffage in Rembrandt dramatische ets, namelijk het miniscule tekenaartje dat, geheel rechts in de compositie, op een heuvel is gesitueerd. Deze uit het beeld kijkende figuur, die in al zijn kleinheid de blik van de beschouwer onweerstaanbaar tot zich weet te trekken, lijkt Bakker de sleutel te zijn 'tot een dieper reikende lezing van deze zo zorgvuldig doorgecomponeerde voorstelling'. 'Voorzichtig geformuleerd', zo betoogt hij, 'zou ik het een zelfportret willen noemen van de kunstenaar als onderzoeker en nabootser van Gods overweldigend grote schepping, waarbij het stralende licht bovendien als metafoor kan dienen voor de schepper zelf'. Voor deze ondanks nagestreefde voorzichtigheid toch struise karakterisering beroept Bakker zich op algemene en metaforische uitspraken van Van Mander, Huygens en Vondel over de vaardigheden van de scheppende kunstenaar, met analogische verwijzingen naar de goddelijke openbaring in de natuur. God als de ideale 'schilder', de schepping als het ideale 'schilderij', en anderzijds de menselijke schilder als nabootser van God en zijn werk; om zulke noties draait het in grote lijnen.

Wie de doorwrochte, aan de drie bovengenoemde schrijvers gewijde hoofdstukken erop naleest, kan Bakkers redenering zeker niet zonder meer terzijde schuiven. Maar is het ondankbaar om te blijven verlangen naar handreikingen uit de tijd van ontstaan, die concreter en specifieker zijn? Zonder overigens de sceptici bij te vallen die van een manco een polemisch argument hebben gemaakt. We kennen inderdaad geen contemporaine verklarende tekst over een bestaand kunstwerk, laat staan een informatieve brief van een kunstenaar, waarin de overgang van woord naar beeld wordt toegelicht, waarin symboliek wordt uitgelegd, waaruit we vernemen op welke manier geschilderde landschappen gelezen dienen te worden, en hoever men daarin kan gaan.[10] Wel bestaan er over de natuur – in *Landschap en wereldbeeld* ruimschoots belicht – talloze religieuze teksten en theologische en filosofische theorieën, maar de brug van daar naar het verbeelde landschap in engere zin is destijds nooit geslagen en dit moest dus, gezien de taak die hij zich had gesteld, noodzakelijkerwijs door Bakker zelf worden gedaan.

Overigens zegt het ontbreken van onthullende historische teksten op zichzelf niets over de juistheid of onjuistheid van de door Bakker naar voren gebrachte opvattingen. Er zijn in het verleden in de al of niet iconologisch georiënteerde kunstgeschiedenis heel wat overtuigende interpretaties gelanceerd, die niet gebaseerd zijn op contemporaine geschriften en dat niet kónden zijn om de eenvoudige reden dat in die geschriften geen plaats is ingeruimd voor het soort semantische problematiek waarvoor moderne auteurs aandacht zouden vragen.

Bij alles wat men over dit belangwekkende boek verder zou kunnen zeggen, voor de kunstgeschiedenis is *Landschap en wereldbeeld* in elk

geval ook een buitengewoon waardevol discussiestuk. Het geeft voor lange tijd stof voor bepeinzing en discussie. Ik mag bedenkingen koesteren over sommige van Bakkers interpretaties, maar wat mij in laatste instantie hindert is niet zozeer zijn manier van bewijsvoering als wel het feit dat ik als criticus, bij gebrek aan een adequaat methodisch instrumentarium, onmachtig ben precies duidelijk te maken waar, bij beschouwing van *De drie bomen* of welk ander werk ook, de grenzen van de interpretatie zouden moeten liggen. Uiteindelijk zijn het mijn eigen problemen op het drassige gebied van de kunstuitleg, die ik hierboven op Boudewijn Bakker heb losgelaten. Zonder scrupules, maar met grote bewondering voor zijn imposante creatie.

EDDY DE JONGH

NOTEN

[1] Zie Ton Lemaire, *Filosofie van het landschap*, Bilthoven 1970, pp. 85-86; Gerard Rooijakkers, 'Spelen met vuur', in: Jan Bluyssen en Gerard Rooijakkers, *God verborgen en nabij. Religie als heilig spel*, Amsterdam 2002, pp. 153-186, i.h.b. pp. 155-165; en Matthijs G. C. Schouten, *Spiegel van de natuur. Het natuurbeeld in cultuurhistorisch perspectief*, Utrecht 2005.

[2] Eric Jorink, *Het 'Boeck der Natuere'. Nederlandse geleerden en de wonderen van Gods schepping 1575-1715*, Leiden 2006.

[3] Hierover onder andere R.L. Falkenburg, 'De betekenis van het geschilderde Hollandse landschap van de zeventiende eeuw: een beschouwing naar aanleiding van enkele recente interpretaties', *Theoretische geschiedenis* 16 (1989), pp. 131-153. Voor een recente – hevige – botsing van meningen, zie de door Jeroen Stumpel geschreven recensie van Boudewijn Bakkers *Landschap en wereldbeeld* in *Simiolus* 31 (2004-2005), pp. 115-123, de repliek van Bakker in *Simiolus* 31 (2004-2005), pp. 260-263, alsook de dupliek van Stumpel, pp. 263-265.

[4] Gepubliceerd in cat. tent. *Onze meesters van het landschap. Schilderijen uit de gouden eeuw*, Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 1987-1988, pp. 29-64. Het artikel van Bruyn verscheen tegelijkertijd in het Engels in de wetenschappelijke versie van de catalogus: 'Towards a scriptural reading of seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painting', in: Peter C. Sutton et al., cat. tent. *Masters of 17th-century Dutch landscape painting*, Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum), Boston (Museum of Fine Arts), Philadelphia (Philadelphia Museum of Art), 1987-1988, pp. 84-103. Een enigszins bijgewerkte Franse versie, 'Le paysage hollandais du XVIIe siècle comme métaphore religieuse', werd gepubliceerd in: *Le paysage en Europe du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle. Actes du colloque organisé au musée du Louvre [...] 1990*, Parijs 1994, pp. 67-88.

[5] Walter Gibson publiceerde twee boeken over het landschap die in het debat over voorstelling en betekenis een geprofileerde plaats innemen: *'Mirror of the earth'. The world landscape in sixteenth-century Flemish painting*, Princeton 1989, en *Pleasant places. The rustic landscape from Bruegel to Ruisdael*, Berkeley etc. 2000. De hierin geformuleerde noties vormen een onmiskenbare antipode van Bakkers inzichten. Bakker geeft commentaar op Gibson op pp. 130-132, 175-176, 199 en 292. Zijn reactie op Alpers (*The art of describing. Dutch art of the seventeenth-century*, Chicago 1983) op pp. 286-289.

[6] Gustav Künstler, 'Landschaftsdarstellung und religiöses Weltbild in der Tafelmalerei der Übergangsepoche um 1500', *Jahrbuch Wien* 62 (1966), pp. 103-156.

[7] Deze problematiek werd eerder ter sprake gebracht in E. de Jongh, 'Vermeers geduldige iconografie: uitlegkunde en inlegkunde', *Theoretische geschiedenis* 23 (1996), pp. 311-329; en idem, *Kwesties van betekenis. Thema en motief in de Nederlandse schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, tweede druk, Leiden 1999, pp. 106, 130-134.

[8] Zie ook Eddy de Jongh, 'Frans van Mieris: kwesties van begrijpelijkheid', in: Quentin Buvelot (red.), cat. tent. *Frans van Mieris 1635-1681*, Den Haag (Mauritshuis) en Washington (National Gallery of Art), 2005-2006, pp. 44-61 en pp. 216-218, i.h.b. p. 46.

[9] Wat men in de bespreking van *De drie bomen* nog zou verwachten is een vergelijking met de ets *De drie eiken* van Jacob van Ruisdael, die zes jaar na Rembrandts prent, in 1649, is ontstaan. Deze vergelijking komt niet aan de orde. Zou het blad van Ruisdael eveneens verwijzen naar de drie-eenheid? En zo niet, waarom dan niet? Aan het begin van zijn hoofdstuk 15, p. 350, voert Bakker aan dat de kunst van Ruisdael hoe dan ook anders beoordeeld moet worden, omdat deze kunstenaar een ander deel van het 'totale inhoudelijke potentieel' heeft gebruikt, namelijk dat van de 'morele' exegese van het landschap, met name de vanitasgedachte, hoewel bij Ruisdael tevens het 'anagogische' element duidelijk aanwezig heet te zijn. Mijns inziens berust deze gedachtegang met haar verfijnde onderscheiding op een al te optimistisch idee omtrent de kenbaarheid van de intenties van de kunstenaar in kwestie. Vragen zoals bovenstaande zouden overigens ook gesteld kunnen worden over *De drie knotwilgen* van Jan Lievens (Bakkers afbeelding 94).

[10] Een uitzondering in dit verband is een brief van Rubens over zijn allegorie *De verschrikkingen van de oorlog* uit 1638. Zie De Jongh 2005-2006 (noot 8), pp. 44-45.

Elmer Kolfin, *Young Gentry at Play; Northern Netherlandish Scenes of Merry Companies 1610-1645*, trans. by Michael Hoyle, Leiden: Primavera Pers 2005, 296 p., 194 illustrations in b/w; 29 illustrations in color, ISBN 90-5997-013-6, € 34.50.

In recent years, a spate of books and exhibitions have appeared that have explored various aspects of seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting. Indeed, in scope and quantity they have collectively outpaced the production of the last great era of scholarly work devoted to this fascinating field, namely, the 1970's and 1980's. Among the most stimulating publications in this respect is Elmer Kolfin's *Young Gentry at Play; Northern Netherlandish Scenes of Merry Companies 1610-1645* of 2005, an English translation of his dissertation, completed in 2002 at Leiden University. The topic of Kolfin's book is paintings of merry companies that predate 1650. As is well known, this type of subject matter flourished at that time. Yet despite the existence of scattered articles, catalogue entries, and so forth, merry companies in their totality had hitherto remained understudied until the appearance of this important book. So Kolfin's contribution is a very welcome one, all the more so because it has been translated into English. In general, the translation, though at times awkward and containing mistakes (primarily of a grammatical sort), is a good one, which will make the text much more widely accessible than if it had remained in Dutch.

Young Gentry at Play is remarkably comprehensive. Kolfin wisely begins by surveying the rich iconographic and iconological roots of the seventeenth-century Dutch merry company in art produced in the Low Countries as far back as the mid fifteenth century. Hans Bol, working first in Antwerp and then as an expatriate in Amsterdam near the end of the sixteenth century, emerges as a key figure in these developments whose contributions to evolving love-garden imagery are particularly noteworthy. Here, Kolfin establishes three major strands of content that influenced the production of later artists and authors to varying degrees, namely, the ideal, the moral, and the satirical. It is certainly worthwhile to establish categories such as these but as will be seen below, this is symptomatic of what some readers might construe as a too rigorously and inflexibly constructed argument on Kolfin's part. While largely synoptic, this first section of the book chiefly serves to clarify the complex pictorial traditions that underlie the art of masters working in the Dutch Republic during the early decades of the seventeenth century.

The second part of the book consists of four highly informative chapters that cover diverse aspects of the production and reception of merry companies in the Netherlands from roughly 1620 to 1660 - so perhaps a less self-limiting title for this book was in order. Chapter Three addresses iconographic and stylistic developments. Kolfin arranges the visual material according to whether the merry companies in question are gathered outdoors or indoors, categories which are further subdivided by artists and cities. This reader, for one, was particularly receptive to this arrangement because the larger history of genre painting in the Netherlands is, in many respects, enfolded within the rise of certain cities, often at the expense of other ones, as art centers. Again, the survey presented here, like that of the first part of the book, appears to be basically synoptic; Kolfin is indebted to earlier studies by, among others, Walter Liedtke. This chapter concludes with a noteworthy discussion of the impact of tradition and innovation upon the production of merry company pictures. Kolfin astutely recognizes the market implications of these pictures (see further below), which were, fundamentally, mass-produced products. In this sense, artists were under near-constant pressure to create works that would sustain the interests of the vast buying public. As he rightly notes, "Although there was a sharp rise in the number of merry companies in the period 1615-1645. ...there were no genuine iconographic, compositional, or technical innovations after 1625. ...The continual variation, without the introduction of true innovations, could not keep the public interested forever, and by the mid-1640's there was no flexibility left, with the result that the merry company stagnated both in quantity and quality" (p. 105).

The following chapter concerns the production process of merry-company paintings. It contains much useful material on the physical preparation of the panel or canvas and the subsequent act of creating a painting. Very often, information of this technical sort lies buried in exhibition catalogues; fortunately, the launching of the journal *Art Matters; Netherlands Technical Studies in Art*, now beginning its fourth year, has helped somewhat to redress this situation. Still, Kolfin's discussion is easily accessible and understandable; hence it will be useful to students and educated laypersons. It is in this chapter that the reader finds the first discussion of the so-called tonal, or somewhat misleadingly, monochromatic style in genre painting. The limited coloristic effects of these pictures, which impart a feeling of atmosphere (both literal and figurative), can be associated with a large-scale shift in stylistic conventions in Dutch painting during the late 1620's, 1630's and early 1640's, in which artists from Haarlem played a significant, formative role. Traditionally, this phenomenon has been reductively ascribed entirely to changes in taste. But in recent years, scholars have proffered more complex explanations for the rise of this tonal phase in Dutch art that take into account market factors, product innovations, competition from foreign artists, and even concomitant historical and economic events. Kolfin is certainly aware of this but I found myself disappointed that his essay did not address these hypotheses more substantially.

The subject of chapter 5 is the market for merry companies, namely, their pricing and selling. In recent decades, the economic aspects of Dutch seventeenth-century art have undergone much study, and not merely in the influential work of the late John Michael Montias. Since the 1990's, several books and numerous articles on the interaction of painting and the art market during the early modern period have been published, including an entire issue of the journal *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* (1999). Kolfin is to be credited with taking this into account and recognizing the art market's decisive impact upon the genesis of merry company imagery. Clearly, the market functioned as a dynamic system of supply and demand for pictures of all sorts and was affected equally by artists and consumers. In this sense, the creation of highly conventional

genre paintings was impacted by their prospective purchasers: since artists worked for the market, namely, for specific patrons or for an unknown audience on speculation, they were compelled to produce paintings that catered to the tastes and expectations of that audience. As Kolfin demonstrates, economic reasons underlie the rise and fall in popularity of the subject of the merry company in art through the first half of the seventeenth century. He likewise shows that artists targeted their work at a large and differentiated public.

That art-buying public is examined more thoroughly in the sixth chapter, which takes up the all-important question of the audience for merry companies. Entitled, "The Merry Company in the Parlour", it provides insights into public perceptions of these pictures, the constitution of that public, and, on the basis of archival studies, the frequency with which merry companies appear in contemporary homes and where they were hung in relation to other types of paintings. Again, this is logically framed against the broader context of market matters, in terms of product differentiation and variation that kept the demand for such pictures quite high. Likewise, the disparate social classes of the collectors are briefly surveyed, whose personal wealth or lack thereof frequently, but not exclusively, dictated the quality of their purchases.

For Kolfin, meaning was generated by the strategies employed in hanging paintings. Pendant pairs frequently appear in archival notations; it seems that collectors purchased and displayed works with contrasting themes, centering on issues of gender, class, and lifestyles. "There are also indications that people did not perceive a moralistic content in merry companies such as the sixteenth-century biblical companies had. The pendants show that the owners regarded the merry company as a pleasant or perhaps even comical subject" (p. 184). This conclusion, while entirely reasonable, perhaps underestimates the complexity of image reception in the Dutch Republic. Among other things, this rather rigidly constructed taxonomy of meaning does not allow for multivalency, which seems to be at the heart of many pictures. After all, as the research of Mariët Westermann and others have demonstrated, morality is inherent to comedy and in much more sophisticated ways than Kolfin implies in the text. However, Westermann is not cited in the bibliography, nor is, much to my surprise, the work of Alison Kettering and especially H. Rodney Nevitt, both ranking among the earliest scholars to probe Dutch imagery of courtship in art and literature in a substantive way. Admittedly, Nevitt's highly-regarded book, *Art and the Culture of Love in Seventeenth-Century Holland,* appeared in 2003, in other words, a year after Kolfin finished his dissertation. However, Nevitt's study was based on his own dissertation, which had been completed back in 1992, in other words, a full ten years before Kolfin completed his dissertation.

Equally problematic, in my opinion, is Kolfin's seeming endorsement of the notion that art works simply reflect contemporary mores; in other words, they play no role in producing them. Yet it is hard to believe that thousands upon thousands of paintings of merry companies and related literary works (see below) had no capacity to influence perceptions of what was chic, even if they most definitely contain fantastic components. This influence could likewise be nefarious; Kolfin himself provides evidence of this when he refers to the frequently cited concerns of theologians who feared the undue capacity of pictures to incite indecorous behavior in beholders (see pp. 283-284, n. 4).

The last section of the book investigates the theme of the merry company in Dutch seventeenth-century literature, ranging from amatory songbooks and emblem books to the decidedly moralistic works written by the ever-popular Jacob Cats and his like-minded colleagues. Obviously, these literary works do have connections with contemporary paintings not only in the manner in which they provide helpful frameworks for viewing but also in the replication of specific motifs in the illustrations that so often accompany the former - Kolfin discusses several wonderful examples of figures from Dirck Hals's *oeuvre* that found their way into book illustrations. Nevertheless, I wonder whether it would have been better for the author to integrate this material with that of the second section. In its present state, this section has a distinctly additive feel, which renders the unfortunate impression that one is simply reading a dissertation.

Regardless of these organizational problems, there is no doubt that *Young Gentry at Play* provides an authoritative contribution to the art-historical literature on seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting. One final point worth mentioning: there is so much to ponder and reread in *Young Gentry at Play* that an index not restricted to just the names of artists and other relevant personalities would have been enormously helpful.

Wayne Franits

Martina Brunner-Bulst, *Pieter Claesz. der Hauptmeister des Haarlemer Stillebens im 17. Jahrhundert. Kritischer Oeuvrekatalog*, 376 pp, *c.* 60 colour plates and *c.* 350 b&w ills., Luca Verlag, Lingen, 2004. ISBN 3-923641-22-2, (hardback) € 310

Pieter Biesboer, Martina Brunner-Bulst, Henry D. Gregory and Christian Klemm, *Pieter Claesz Master of Haarlem Still Life* (Dutch edition: *Pieter Claesz Meester van het stilleven in de Gouden Eeuw*), exhibition catalogue, Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, Kunsthaus Zürich, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, 2004-2005, 144 pp., 80 colour ills., 20 b&w ills. Waanders Uitgevers, Zwolle 2004, ISBN 90-400-9005-x (hardback, Dutch text), ISBN 90 400 9006 8 (hardback, English text) € 34,95.

Monographs on Netherlandish still-life painters from the seventeenth century that include full oeuvre catalogues are still few and far between. Apart from such well-wrought volumes as those on Willem Kalf (L. Grisebach, 1974), Adriaen Coorte (L.J. Bol, 1977), Frans Snijders (H. Robels, 1989), and the well-hidden catalogue of the still lifes of Floris van Schooten (P. Gammelbo in *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 1966), there are only a few others, perched largely on the other end of the scale of quality, including the wholly uncritical trifles on Rachel Ruysch (M.H. Grant, 1956) and Simon Verelst (F. Lewis, 1979).

Martina Brunner-Bulst's monograph and catalogue raisonné on the Haarlem originator of 'breakfast' still lifes, Pieter Claesz. (1596/97-1660), had been announced since the mid-1980s, but only appeared towards the end of 2004. Its completion and publication coincided with the staging of a monographic exhibition on Claesz. which also yielded a substantial catalogue (published both in Dutch and in English) to which Brunner amply contributed.[1] The three-venue exhibition opened in Haarlem in late November 2004, and travelled to Zürich and Washington, DC.

Monograph

Brunner's book is a stout volume, the contents of which are well arranged and neatly designed. The quality of the illustrations is generally excellent. The book opens with a rather random selection of about fifty Claesz. still lifes reproduced as single-page colour plates, occasionally interspersed with full-page details.

In the opening chapter, Brunner discusses the literature on and the literary reception of the work of Pieter Claesz., beginning with the earliest mention of the artist in Samuel Ampzing's *Beschryvinge ende lof der Stadt Haerlem in Holland* (Description and praise of the city of Haarlem in Holland) from 1628. Next, the author signals that Claesz.'s paintings occur regularly in seventeenth-century inventories and other sources, several of which were included in Abraham Bredius's *Künstler-inventare. [...]* (published 1915-1922). From the fact that the Haarlem genre painter Jan Miense Molenaer owned ten still lifes by Claesz., plus two copies after his work at the time of his death, Brunner concludes that Molenaer must have been an admirer of Claesz. She also points to a still-life detail in one of Molenaer's paintings as further confirmation of this supposition. I would say, however, that the lay-out of the still life she signalled as evidence is in fact much closer to the work of Willem Claesz. Heda. (Molenaer actually owned a painting by Heda, but it was a religious scene rather than a still life.) I strongly suspect that there are other reasons behind Molenaer's ownership of these paintings by Claesz. It is quite plausible that he had accepted Claesz.'s works as payment, maybe over the course of years. Alternately he may have had them on commission for sale at the time of Claesz. death, eight years earlier, and had never returned them to his heirs. Most of the other still lifes in Molenaer's possession were his own efforts, works by his late wife, Judith Leyster, and pictures by 'Clauw' (probably Jacques de Claeuw, five pieces).[2] The latter may (also) have come to him as the result of some business arrangement. The fact that two of them were stored in an attic – where the Claesz. copies were kept as well – does not particularly suggest that Molenaer was a De Claeuw 'fan'. But without knowing any further details, drawing any such conclusions is extremely risky.

Early biographers such as Arnold Houbraken and Jan van Gool mention Claesz. only in passing, as the father of the landscape painter Nicolaes Berchem, whose work they clearly held in more esteem than the father's still lifes, which by the end of the seventeenth century were surely considered to be 'old-fashioned'. Only during the second half of the nineteenth century, with A. van der Willigen's archival research on Haarlem artists, did Claesz. become better known again and did his corpus of paintings become recognised. Due to the lack of interest in his type of paintings during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Claesz.'s name had become virtually unknown. This must partly also have been the result of the fact that he consistently signed with his monogram, P through C, occasionally supplemented with the H of Haarlem. The single fully signed work that we know of (Brunner, cat. no. 4), only surfaced recently.

The author proceeds to present a concise and excellent overview of the literature on Dutch still-life painting published during the twentieth century insofar as publications including Pieter Claesz. are concerned (actually this involves the majority of the books). N.R.A. Vroom's *De schilders van het monochrome banketje* (1945) and its sequel *A Modest Message* (1980) were often treated as the most important references for Claesz., but these publications – probably deservedly – barely receive more attention from Brunner than others. Vroom's erratic confusion of Claesz.'s paintings with those of Clara Peeters and François Elaut is briefly but decisively sorted out.[3]

The second chapter, consisting of only two pages, deals with the few documents that can be found in the Haarlem archives concerning Claesz.'s life. To Brunner's credit she refuted the consistent misapprehension that the painter was born in Burgsteinfurt (Westfalia), an assumption that has been repeated as fact ever since Van der Willigen had considered the 1617 marriage of an eponymous individual to be that of the artist. The registration of the painter's young twin daughters in the orphanage books, shortly after his death, confirms that he had indeed come from Berchem in Flanders. Brunner's suggestion that the addition 'TENzeSIUS' (z on



1.
Pieter Claesz., *Still life of fruit with a stoneware jug*, signed with monogram and dated 1621, oil on panel, 45,5 x 63,5 cm. Private collection, Milan.

top of c), inscribed after the monogram on a still life in the Prado Museum, Madrid (Brunner, cat. no. 73), might mean that the artist came from Temse, a few miles from Berchem, strikes me as rather far fetched.[4] Exactly when Claesz. came to Haarlem, doubtless as one of the countless Flemish refugees, is unknown. Pieter Biesboer's suggestion that he may be identical with the Pieter Clasen whom the Antwerp guild had registered as a master in 1620 sounds entirely plausible to me.[5] This would mean that Claesz. was trained in Antwerp, something that his earliest work seems to support in terms of its obvious affinities with Antwerp still lifes from the 1610s by such artists as Jacob van Hulsdonck and Clara Peeters.

The Haarlem documents listed by Brunner do not reveal many specifics of the artist's life. The author has opted for the traditional spelling of the painter's name as 'Pieter Claesz.' and apparently felt no need to explain her choice. It seems, however, that the artist preferred to call himself Pieter Claessen, since his only known full signature on a painting and most of his signatures on documents are written that way. Ampzing, in 1628, wrote 'Klaeszen', but the invitation to the artist's burial speaks instead of 'Pieter Claesz.'.[6] Perhaps Brunner should have had the courage to use Claessen instead of the widely proliferated Claesz. In the exhibition catalogue, however, 'Claesz' is spelled incorrectly, without the full stop that is obligatory in Dutch for abbreviations.[7]

The frequent mentions of debts in the Haarlem archives would seem to indicate that the artist was by no means a rich man, even though his steady production of paintings suggests a likewise steady stream of income, something Brunner acknowledges.[8]

Brunner's chapter III deals with Claesz.'s stylistic development, which she fully embeds within the Haarlem still-life tradition, thereby tacitly discarding the possibility of an Antwerp background. Nonetheless, when discussing Claesz.'s still life in Dresden further on, she cannot ignore the obvious influence from Flemish antecedents, although she skirts the issue of how they got there: 'Dass Pieter aber in seiner Frühzeit von Claras [= Clara Peeters] Stilleben beeinflusst worden ist, dürfen wir aufgrund seiner flandrischen Herkunft, aber auch wegen des regen künstlerischen Austausches zwischen den südlichen und den nördlichen Niederlanden annehmen'.[9]

Brunner's elaboration on the development of the Haarlem kitchen and market piece (pp. 138-144) provides interesting material for discussion, but one may wonder how relevant it is for Claesz.'s (early) development. Pieter Pietersz.'s game stall from 1571 (Brunner, fig. 7) is of course a magnificently interesting painting, but I fail to recognize its possible influence on later Haarlem works, let alone on Claesz. Also, even though the similarity between the Vincenzo Campi (Brunner fig. 11) and the Floris van Schooten (Brunner, fig. 12) she illustrates is compelling, I find it difficult to believe that this was the immediate result of Pieter van Rijck's first Italian sojourn – as if the latter brought home postcards of Campi's work for Van Schooten.[10] That Van Rijck and particularly Floris van Dijck were influenced by what they saw in Italy – such as the still-life motifs in Caravaggio's work that Brunner intelligently points at – is obvious, however.

Of the Haarlem still lifes from the 1610s, Brunner taps Floris van Dijck and Nicolaes Gillis as the direct forerunners of Pieter Claesz.'s earliest dated still life from 1621 (fig. 1), rather than Floris van Schooten's impressive still life from 1617 (Brunner, fig. 7, our fig. 2), an influence which Poul Gammelbo already correctly suggested. Claesz.'s picture has little to do with the arrangement favoured by Van Dijck and Gillis, i.e. items organized semi-symmetrically around a central axis.[11] Claesz. managed a more naturally convincing



2.
Floris van Schooten, *Still life of fruit with silver-gilt cups*, signed and dated 1617, oil on canvas, 92 x 116 cm. Present location unknown.

perspective from the start. Incidentally, some of the paintings Brunner illustrates lose their ability to support her arguments when their dates and attributions are properly assessed. As I have argued earlier, Nicolaes Gillis's 'earliest' work cannot possibly be from 1601 (Brunner, fig. 16) and her fig. 20 (a painting in Budapest) is not by Floris van Dijck, but rather a German work by a hand that has yet to be properly identified.[12]

After her introduction on Claesz.'s Haarlem predecessors, Brunner concentrates on the artist's own oeuvre.[13] Following the single known dated example from 1621 (Brunner, cat. no. 1), there are three dated pieces from the next year, 1622 (Brunner, cat. nos. 2, 3 and 4), all of which are quite different in composition from the earliest example, as well as from each other. In my view, this shows that Claesz. was clearly going through an experimental phase at that time, trying out various types of compositions and subjects. Brunner then moves on to catalogue number 4, stating that its importance rests in its being Claesz.'s only fully signed work. Only later on (on p. 155) does she address its more significant point of merit as quite possibly the first (dated) still life with smoker's utensils to appear in Dutch art.[14]

A careful review of Brunner's chronological arrangement of Claesz.'s earliest work has led me to somewhat different conclusions about the order in which he produced them. For instance, I would not be surprised if catalogue number 8, which Brunner dates to 'um 1623' in fact precedes cat. no. 1 from 1621. Its somewhat unwieldy composition seems to point to a less experienced artist than Pieter Claesz. demonstrated himself to be in 1623. This chronological shuffle would take the genesis of the 'toebackje' (tobacco still life) back another one or two years. Catalogue number 13 (private collection, currently on long-term loan to the Frans Halsmuseum), in view of its (brighter) palette and (lighter) composition, to my mind fits better within the years 1622/23 than in 1624, which Brunner suggests. Also, she has moved her cat. no. 20 to *c.* 1625 in view of the 'entwickelte Komposition', but in my view an earlier date, *c.* 1623, is preferable.[15] Its palette and the rendering of the rummer are a better fit for that year, in which Claesz. was still experimenting with his compositions. As such cat. 20 is not at all an unlikely result. In fact, Claesz.'s rendering of rummers and their contents, particularly during the 1620s, would appear to provide an excellent criterion for dating his paintings.

Brunner's discussion of Claesz.'s major still life from 1623 in the Louvre, Paris (surprisingly not illustrated in colour) as a representation of the five senses is excellent work, as well as her iconographic treatment of the still life with a silver-gilt cup-and-cover in Dresden (Brunner, cat. no. 10) from 1624. However, the notion that Theodor Matham, whose print (Brunner, fig. 22) must indeed have been an immediate inspiration to Claesz., could have known the paintings by Frans Floris and Caravaggio (Brunner, figs. 23 and 24) – through his father's drawings or otherwise – seems rather speculative to me. Brunner rightly notes that in Isaac Elias's painting from 1620 (Brunner, fig. 27), which she correctly refers to as a representation of the five senses, there is a very Claesz.-like still life on the table. However, Elias painted it one year before that artist's earliest known (dated) painting came into existence. In a way, Claesz. appears to have derived the still-life motif from this type of genre painting, thus creating a new type of image.

On her iconographic tour of Claesz.'s early works, Brunner then returns to the tobacco piece and the fruit still life from 1622 (Brunner, cat. nos. 3 and 4), suggesting that those still lifes may originally have been pendants, representing two of the five senses, Taste and Smell, respectively. She does not tell us, however, what Sight, Hearing and Touch would have looked like, and neither can I. Moreover, the two panels are *similar* in size but not identical. And even if they were, this could have been the result of Claesz. purchasing a number of equally sized panels from a panel maker.[16]

Claesz.'s development during the following years of 1625 to 1630, from the colourful still lifes inspired by such Haarlemmers as Floris van Dijck and Floris van Schooten, to the first 'monochrome' still lifes from the late 1620s are discussed properly on pages 156-167. To discuss the author's arguments here in extensive detail is unnecessary owing to the high quality of her overview. Consequently, I will restrict myself to comment on details I wish to correct.

Brunner dates catalogue number 17 (Private collection) to *c.* 1625. In my view, however, it should be connected with earlier work, particularly with the Louvre still life of 1623 as well as with the painting in Chicago, which she also correctly dates to 1623.

Brunner takes the composition of cat. no. 24 (Heinz Collection) for granted, despite her acknowledgement of its 'ungewöhnlichen Proportionen.' I tend to think this quality stems from the distinct possibility that the panel lost a strip (probably an entire plank, of perhaps about 8 cm) at the top sometime in its history. This idea is corroborated by the copy which Brunner illustrates on p. 217. I would not be remotely surprised if the blue-and-white jug featured in the painting (Brunner, fig. 41) is the product of a Haarlem potter, rather than from Delft. This might suggest that Jan Steen's *Oyster eater* in the Mauritshuis (Brunner, fig. 42) which shows the same vessel should be dated a little later than is usually assumed (1658-1660), and that it stems from the beginning of Steen's Haarlem period (1661).

Brunner's treatment of the stylistic connection between Franchoys Elaut and Claesz., as well as that between Claesz. and Jan Davidsz. de Heem during the late 1620s are excellent specimens of art-historical insight. The latter also does justice to De Heem's incredible instinct for new developments in still-life painting. The discussion of the artistic relationship between Pieter Claesz. and Willem Claesz. Heda that follows is equally insightful. In view of my comment concerning cat. no. 24, above, it would indeed be interesting to know the date of Heda's early still life illustrated in Brunner, fig. 49. She correctly connects it with Claesz.'s early works but fails to note that Heda most likely copied the lying cup screw (only changing the angle slightly) from that painting by Claesz. Willem Claesz. Heda's early development as a still-life painter is still an enigma. It remains a curious notion that Ampzing, in his *Beschryvinge ende lof der Stadt Haerlem [...]* of 1628, already quoted above, praised Heda for his still lifes, while at present we know of no secure example of those works from or prior to that year. The stylistic connections with, and influence of the work of Jan Jansz. den Uyl, particularly on Heda, are very well observed by Brunner. Throughout her text, she tends to place Claesz. on a higher (artistic) level than Heda. I am all too happy to grant her this loyalty to her artist and tend to agree with her to some degree, but at the same time I feel I should advocate for Heda in certain respects. Pieter Claesz. rarely attained the sense of monumentality Heda achieved quite consistently in his large still lifes from the mid-1630s (cf. Brunner, figs. 57 and 58). Moreover, Heda's meticulous rendering of textures, especially metal and white table linens, is rarely equalled by Claesz. The fact that Heda's still lifes were often valued more highly than Claesz.'s during the seventeenth century, stems in part from the fact that Heda's pieces were more delicate and labour intensive than Claesz.'s more loosely brushed works. However, to some degree at least, this valuation must reflect the level of their contemporaries' appreciation.

Brunner signals a gap in Claesz.'s (dated) works for 1634 and suggests that this may have been linked to the artist's wife's illness and death during that year. Perhaps this is true, perhaps not. In the case of Jan Davidsz. de Heem, for example, the year 1643, the same year his wife died, appears to have been extremely productive for him.[17] Just as personalities and tastes differ, so does a reaction to grief.

I personally find it difficult to share Brunner's enthusiasm for Claesz.'s still life from 1640 in Würzburg (Brunner, cat. no. 93, discussed on pp. 175 and 176). This, however, was the painting that triggered her interest in Claesz. in the first place, as a young student at Würzburg University. Although it has areas of high quality – specifically the lemon –, the placing, modelling and texture of the lying 'berkemeier' in the centre are extremely unsuccessful, while the unusually dull background is not very inspired either. For me, the painting certainly did not stand out in the Haarlem exhibition (cat. no. 32) as a masterpiece among the surrounding works.[18]

Brunner sketches Claesz.'s further development in a few concise chapters. In the course of her discussion, many of the paintings that are included in the catalogue – which I will address below – are either mentioned in passing, or discussed in more detail. Helpful references to catalogue numbers and, if applicable, colour plates are always provided. Brunner starts these chapters with the discussion of Claesz.'s tonal 'breakfast' still lifes from the second half of the 1630s, often with a large rummer commanding the composition. In combination with that, she points to his particular skill in rendering objects of costly metal as one which no doubt earned him commissions to portray specific silver-gilt cups (Brunner, cat. no. 94, from 1640, and cat. no. 97, from 1641) as well as a 1649 nomination by Constantijn Huygens as a potential candidate for the team of artists who would undertake the decoration of the *Oranjezaal*. Huygens specifically mentioned Claesz.'s talent for painting 'silver en gout'. Brunner excellently sketches Claesz.'s development during the early 1640s from tonal 'breakfasts' to rich 'banquet' still lifes. Reference is made to several of Claesz.'s contemporaries and emulators, such as Cornelis Kruys (she spells Cruys) and Adriaen Kraen. Rather than those brief mentions and comparisons, however, I would have liked to have seen Pieter Claesz. placed a bit more extensively within the Haarlem still-life scene. The author could easily have improved upon Vroom's books, mentioned earlier, specifically since the distinction of those various Haarlem hands has become much clearer than Vroom ever succeeded in making them, owing to his tendency to treat those artists as individual flowers rather than as part of the bouquet they form together.[19] Several pages are rightly devoted to Pieter Claesz.'s collaboration with Roelof Koets (1592/93-1655), although the author inaccurately labels Koets as 'ein Spezialist der Früchtemalerei'. As Brunner's fig. 64 shows, Koets's earliest known work from 1625 (Antwerp, Museum Mayer van den Bergh) is strongly inspired by Floris van Dijck. Strangely enough, it is also Koets's finest effort by far. During the following years, while he develops as a painter of

'banketjes' alongside Claesz., it is quite obviously Claesz. who is the more talented and inventive of the two. Then, in the course of the 1630s, Koets starts producing his characteristic paintings of grapes, and occasionally contributed clusters of them to Pieter Claesz.'s more ambitious compositions.[20] Koets appears to have been an early bloomer, quickly surpassed by Claesz. We must assume that he deviated to grape paintings because he found that his 'ontbijtjes' were no proper competition for those by Claesz.

The last twelve years of Claesz.'s activity are given barely two columns in Brunner's monograph. She notes that lingering painterly qualities can still be found in his late works, although they are usually paired with a rather coarse handling of the paint. Brunner suggests that this will have been the result of declining sight and control of the brush. However, this does not sufficiently explain how during his last year, 1660, Claesz. succeeded in producing a work possessing the relative level of refinement found in his painting in the Petit Palais, Paris (Brunner, cat. no. 240), which she justly praises.

Brunner's last chapter is devoted to Pieter Claesz.'s vanitas still lifes, which he painted regularly throughout his career. Her discussion of the example in Münster (Brunner, cat. no. 66), which she connects with the plague epidemic that raged in Haarlem in 1634/35, one year before this still life was painted, is a particularly compelling read.[21]

Oeuvre catalogue

The second half of the book contains the 'Kritischer Katalog der Gemälde in chronologischer Reihenfolge', followed by a selection of 30 detail photos of Claesz. signatures.[22] In the catalogue, the author has indicated which of the paintings she has studied in person: these include a little under two-thirds of the 247 catalogued works (243 plus four added works, 32AI, 32AII, 32B and 128A). All of the catalogued paintings have been illustrated, apart from those featured in the colour section, and one or two 'late arrivals' such as Brunner, cat. no. 32AI. This arrangement unfortunately makes a quick search by image somewhat difficult. It would have been tremendously helpful if all the paintings had been illustrated in black and white within the catalogue section, whether or not they were also reproduced elsewhere in colour. This strategy for easy reference was employed to good advantage in the catalogue portion of the exhibition catalogue. In Brunner's monograph the catalogue entries list support, measurements, signature, date, and the location of the latter on the painting. Her entries also give the present location of the work in question, when that information is available, followed by provenance and literature references. Where applicable, the entry opens with reference(s) to the main text and to the colour plate. Additionally, for many paintings, brief to more lengthy remarks have been added at the end of the entry. Only rarely do the remarks offer information on the condition of the painting.

Claesz. has fortunately dated many of his still lifes, thus creating a firm framework for the chronology of his undated pictures, which Brunner has generally filled in convincingly. Above, I have already suggested a different date for a number of the early works whose dates were or may have been misread or ill restored. Catalogue no. 23 (fig. 3), for instance, is listed as dated 1625, which seems rather early to me. And indeed, scrutiny of the painting at the Haarlem exhibition (cat. no. 11) revealed that the last digit of its date is definitely an 8 rather than a 5: in Claesz.'s chronology, the painting probably immediately follows the two large still lifes from 1627 (Brunner, cat. nos. 25 and 26) as an early work from 1628. As a late entry, Brunner has included the fragment of a painting that I published together with its other half as a joint work of Pieter Claesz. and Floris van Schooten (Brunner, cat. no. 32 A/II).[23] She accepts the attribution of the rummer to Pieter Claesz., but then suggests that he also painted the fruit and places it in her catalogue among works from 1627. The work was also included in the exhibition as such (cat. no. 16). My initial dating of the painting to 1630 is perhaps a bit too late, but 1627 would seem too early to me. The attribution of the fruit to Floris van Schooten still fully stands for me and is perhaps best supported by illustrating the other half of the painting next to a detail of Van Schooten's kitchen piece in the Rijksmuseum (figs. 4 and 5). The



3.
Pieter Claesz., *Still life with a pie and a basket of fruit*, signed with monogram and dated 1628, oil on panel, 42,5 x 74 cm. Private collection.

4.
Floris van Schooten, *Still life of fruit*, oil on panel, 42,5 x 48,3 cm (a fragment). Private collection.



5.
Floris van Schooten, *Kitchen scene*, oil on canvas, 113 x 200 cm (detail). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. SK-A-2058.



rather coarsely painted vanitas which now bears a date which reads as 1639 (Brunner, cat. no. 87) would seem to fit much better in the 1650s (compare the larger vanitas from 1653, Brunner, cat. no. 204), while another work listed as dated 1639 (Brunner, cat. no. 89) would appear to fit much more convincingly among works from 1635 (such as Brunner, cat. nos. 63 and 64). Those are minor details, however. And without having checked Brunner's references extensively, it seems safe to say that this catalogue generally is an excellent and trustworthy piece of work.

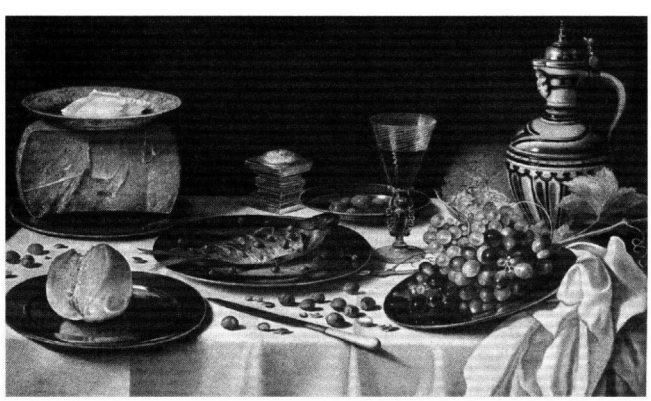
My main objection to the catalogue concerns what it does *not* contain. First of all, the catalogue is labelled as 'Kritischer Katalog', but we are in no way informed of the author's criteria for inclusion – or exclusion – of paintings. From personal conversation, I have understood that she has left out every painting that presented some degree of doubt to her. But even a brief listing of rejected works, possibly with an indication of the degree of doubt, would have been not merely helpful but invaluable. As it stands, we must assume, for instance, that the still lifes listed as Claesz. by Vroom in 1980 that are not included in this catalogue are not accepted by Brunner.[24] As such she has made some major omissions, including Vroom's no. 90 (fig. 6). In 1992, Sam Segal described that painting as a collaboration of Claesz., Roelof Koets and Jan Jansz. den Uyl.[25] Close study, however, reveals that it is entirely by Claesz., that it stems from *c.* 1635 and that it is in fact a more elaborate version of Brunner's catalogue no. 89, already mentioned above – the treatment of the silver cup, the rummer, the plate with a lemon, and the table cloth, among other things, are fully identical.[26] Vroom's no. 61, a still life with a herring dated 1632, may be slightly worn, but nevertheless, in my view is a characteristic Claesz. I would have liked to read Brunner's arguments for its exclusion from her catalogue. Also, to name another example, I see no reason to doubt the still life with a crab, with monogram and date 1645, in the Frans Halsmuseum in Haarlem (Vroom 1980, no.



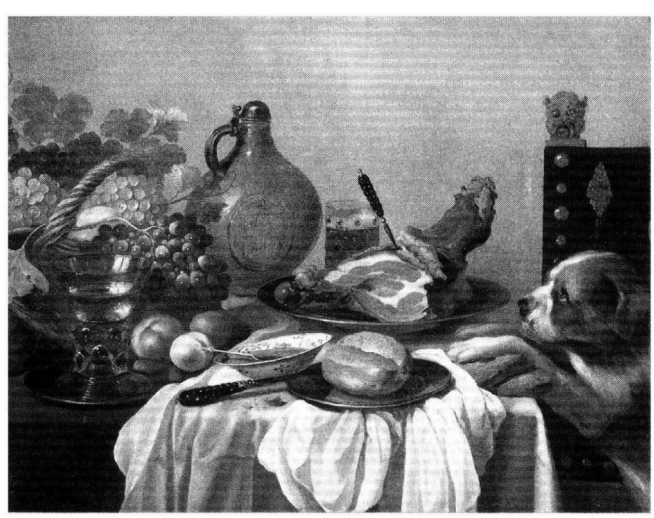
6.
Pieter Claesz., *Still life with drinking vessels, a candle and a ham*, oil on panel, 64,8 x 84,5 cm. Private collection.

123) as Claesz.'s work. The painting must have been a cheap, quick job and has certainly suffered, probably as a result of the use of relatively inexpensive materials. As such it is far from a gem in Claesz's crown, but a Claesz. it is nonetheless.[27]

So much for Vroom's list, but what about the many other paintings that have been presented as the work of Claesz., often by renowned auction houses and art dealers and even by museums? Are we to assume that Brunner considers them to be the work of others, or could she by any chance have overlooked them? One such painting is a still life that was on the English art market in 1946 as a work of Floris van Schooten and included as such by Gammelbo (no. 60) and Vroom (1980, no. 572) (fig. 7). Even on the basis of a photo, I am quite convinced that the painting can be attributed firmly to Pieter Claesz.; it fits perfectly among his works from *circa* 1627.[28] In Brunner's place, I would have included it with a remark saying that the attribution is somewhat tentative and based on a photograph only. Another example is a monogrammed and dated work from 1652 that was not listed by Vroom (fig. 8). I know it only from a rather good colour illustration, and find it an interesting picture because it is apparently one of only two works Claesz. painted featuring a live dog. The other known painting with a dog also would appear to have been overlooked by Brunner. A photo of it from the art dealers



7.
Attributed to Pieter Claesz., *Still life of cheese, a roast bream and fruit*, oil on panel, 47 x 78 cm. Present location unknown.



8.
Pieter Claesz., *Still life with a dog*, signed with monogram and dated 1652, oil on panel, 73 x 94 cm. Present location unknown.



9. Pieter Claesz., *Still life with a kitchen maid and a dog*, signed with monogram and dated 165(6), oil on canvas, 105 x 142 cm. Present location unknown.

Franke in Leipzig from 1933 is in the RKD files (fig. 9). It combines motifs from Claesz.'s various still lifes from the 1650s – including the cat and fish – and appears to be authentically monogrammed and dated. The date is difficult to read, but in view of related paintings is probably 1656. By including a bulky kitchen maid, Claesz. revealed himself to be an excellent figure painter as well. Particularly since the signature is placed next to the figure, it seems unlikely that she was contributed by another artist. In any case, I see no reason at all for excluding either 'dog' painting from Claesz.'s oeuvre.

Notwithstanding these matters of detail, however, we can definitely be grateful to Brunner for finally having made the valuable results of her research on Claesz. available to us in this substantial book.

Exhibition catalogue

The character of the catalogue that appeared with the exhibition in Haarlem, Zürich and Washington, DC is of course quite different from Brunner's scholarly monograph. Like most exhibition catalogues these days, it is a collation of essays provided by representatives from or on behalf of the participating museums and by the 'guest curator.' The present catalogue has four individual texts that are followed by a catalogue of the exhibited works. This list of 47 paintings is coded so that it identifies which works appeared in which venues by means of capital letters next to the black-and-white postage stamp-sized reproductions accompanying each entry. All paintings are also illustrated full-page in colour. Those excellent quality plates are scattered throughout the book, in order of their catalogue numbers, which follow the proposed Claesz. chronology. They have been placed not only in between essays, but also within the essays themselves, which is sometimes confusing since in most cases they have no bearing on the adjacent texts. Once this design element becomes clear to the reader, however, it is not significantly disturbing. In addition, details of the artist's paintings have been included throughout the book, but unlike the full-page illustrations these details do connect with textual references that occur nearby.

Although the catalogue portion of the exhibition catalogue (pages 114-129) is devoted exclusively to the exhibited works by Pieter Claesz., the Haarlem venue of the exhibition included works *hors catalogue* to establish context for Claesz. In Haarlem the first room of the exhibition was dominated by works of Claesz.'s predecessors and early contemporaries, such as Floris van Dijck, Nicolaes Gillis and Floris van Schooten, while at the end of the exhibition a choice of other, more or less related still lifes was shown. Some of these paintings were drawn from the Frans Halsmuseum's own collections, while others were loans.[29]

After the directors' foreword – which rather arbitrarily states that 'Pieter Claesz [...] is arguably the most important Dutch still-life painter of the seventeenth century' (p. 5) – the first essay, by Pieter Biesboer, is titled 'Pieter Claesz in Haarlem'. The chief curator of the Frans Halsmuseum opens his piece with a proper summary sketch of the development of still-life painting during the early seventeenth century in which Claesz.'s work was rooted, but occasionally leans a trifle too hard upon existing literature.[30] Biesboer's fig. 5 is clearly still considered by the museum to be a work by Pieter van Rijck, but in view of our present knowledge of that artist's life and stylistic development it should be ruled out as such. By 1621, the date inscribed on that painting, Van Rijck had by all likelihood already returned to Italy long before, and never came back to the north. The purely Dutch character of the Haarlem painting is diametrically opposed to the style of Van Rijck's market piece from 1622 in the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh. Justly, Biesboer pays ample attention to Floris van Dijck, Nicolaes Gillis and Floris van Schooten as forerunners of Claesz. in Haarlem.[31] He rather firmly places Claesz.'s arrival in that city around 1620, taking into account the factors of previous Antwerp training and guild registration. The author further outlines Claesz.'s development, roughly along the same lines as Brunner's monograph. He can be forgiven for occasional twists such as 'In Leiden, Hendrick van Steenwijck and Jan Lievens were also producing monochrome still lifes'.[32] And why his fig. 9 should suddenly be attributed to Jan Jansz. den Uyl *and* Jan Jansz. Treck, rather than to the first artist only, remains unexplained. The complex web of influences described on the following pages – incorporating De Heem, Den Uyl and even Van Beijeren – is also something of an art historical muddle. But those are details that need not distract us from the general good quality of his contribution. As far as Haarlem is concerned, Biesboer's account is sound, as is his account of Pieter Claesz.'s social and economical situation and the possible explanation of his occasional debts and the lack of information on his life (English edition pp. 24-25). Ready cash was often scarce and payments were made in the form of commodities. Biesboer no doubt correctly suggests that the lack of documents concerning baptisms and other life landmarks for Claesz.'s children, as well as his (second) marriage before the aldermen, suggest that he and/or his bride were Catholics. Biesboer takes this assumption for fact a few lines later. His assessment of the appreciation of Claesz.'s work on the basis of Haarlem inventories certainly would appear to have substantial validity. However, as in the case of Molenaer's 'collection' of Claesz. paintings discussed above, the remaining archival documents generally provide too little information to allow us to obtain a fully clear picture. Could there, for instance, be a connection between the fact that several rich brewer families owned Claesz.'s works and the artist's regular consumption of their products? We simply cannot tell. But indeed, an exhibition catalogue essay like Pieter Biesboer's is not the place to shade arguments too strongly with doubt, and his wording of them is subtle enough to allow for some nuance.

In the following essay, Martina Brunner-Bulst discusses 'The Rediscovery of the Painter and His Origins'. In her introduction, she alludes a bit more openly to Claesz.'s Flemish background than she does in her book, and situates his arrival in Haarlem between 1620 and 1622. After a brief discussion of the connection between Claesz's early works and those of Gillis, Van Schooten and Van Dijck – the latter, in the last lines of her essay, becoming a *deus ex machina* who is explicitly named as Claesz.'s teacher – she rephrases the language of her monograph's chapter on the artist's development to address the specific works in the exhibition. As in the monograph, she begins with a discussion of the iconography of the five senses in Claesz's early still lifes. This time the Louvre painting is illustrated in colour – it is included in the catalogue of the exhibition as no. 3, but was not exhibited at any of the venues. While her catalogue essay does not provide any new material on the artist not included in her monograph, it does present her research even more concisely, and is eminently readable.

The curator from Zürich, Christian Klemm, contributed an excellent, erudite and eloquently written article entitled '*Mors ultima linea rerum*. Prehistory and Foundations of the Skull Vanitas'. Since the author takes a relatively long time getting around to his discussion of Pieter Claesz., one wonders whether perhaps this article was originally part of another essay and then revised for the purposes of this catalogue. After the initial delay, however, which is nonetheless an extremely fine overview of the development of the skull-Vanitas theme in Dutch and even Northern European art, Claesz.'s vanitas still lifes receive their due. Klemm pointedly notes that the early examples, such as the painting from 1625 in Haarlem (cat. no. 9), are the first of their kind in Dutch art. Rather than emblematic and programmatic vanitas images such as Jacob de Gheyn's, Claesz.'s pictures provide an intimate confrontation with the skull and other symbolically loaded objects, bringing the subject matter into the homes of the general public, out of the religious and scholarly atmosphere. Only his presumption that Pieter Claesz.'s preoccupation with the vanitas theme meant that he was likely a melancholic man (pp. 87, 89) smacks a little too much to my mind of over-interpretation.

The final essay, Henry D. Gregory's 'A Repast to Savor. Narrative and meaning in Pieter Claesz's Still Life' has a quite different character than the previous. The author, who participated in the organisation of the exhibition in the National Gallery in Washington, begins his discussion with cat. no 11 (Brunner, cat. no. 23, our fig. 3), which I noted above to be dated 1628 instead of 1625.[33] After convincingly concluding that the food stuffs on Claesz.'s table do not represent a normal, every-day meal, the author lets his fantasy run free. He interprets Claesz.'s still life as some kind of still from a movie, in which the viewer, if he or she wishes, can participate. For instance, one could finish Claesz.'s unfinished meal. Other works, such as cat. no. 35 (Brunner, cat. no. 98), however, were regarded merely as manifestations of the artist's skills, nothing more. *Art pour l'art*, after all! Gregory invests a great deal of effort in showing a distinct development in Claesz.'s work between 1625 and 1628 by comparing cat. nos. 11 and 19. However, as we have seen, cat. no. 11 (fig. 3, above), too, was painted in 1628, although probably early in that year. Much of the difference Gregory signals simply does not exist in the treatment of details. In both pictures the bread, the glass and the

pewter, among other features, are painted very similarly.

Gregory demonstrates that Pieter Claesz. also had an eye for the transience of the luxury he reproduced. By including a pocket watch and broken glasses he reminds the viewer of the inevitable passing of time and of our fragile existence. Also according to Gregory, Claesz. served his viewing customers a dose of religious sustenance by juxtaposing his large rummers of wine with rolls of bread 'to evoke associations with the wine of the Eucharist and thus of Christ'. Perhaps this association worked, but if the artist really intended it to do so, wouldn't he have opted for red wine instead? In any case, Henry Gregory concludes, 'If the audience for Claesz's works [...] sought to advance itself socially through a matrix of assumed behaviours and display, including that of fancy pictures, Claesz was clearly willing to accommodate their wishes'. Perhaps Gregory is pinning modern-day upwardly mobile behaviour on successful Haarlem citizens in the seventeenth century?

The catalogue section compiled by Martina Brunner-Bulst which completes this publication largely follows the catalogue in her monograph, but references her book.

Despite my criticism of numerous details in these two publications, I wish to congratulate Martina Brunner-Bulst and the scholars associated with the Claesz. exhibition for their excellent and substantive work on Pieter Claesz. The two publications underscore the importance of his work, which has certainly been done justice by them. The number and excellence of the illustrations alone make the two books outstanding resources on the artist. Moreover, the painstaking data and documentation assembled and arranged by Martina Brunner-Bulst have already earned their scholarly weight in gold as the groundwork upon which the successful Claesz. exhibition was built. For amateurs and scholars alike, that exhibition served as an historical landmark in bringing together many of the finest examples of Pieter Claesz.'s still lifes for the first time.

FRED G. MEIJER

NOTES

* I am extremely grateful to Marianne Berardi for her careful editing of my English text of this review.

[1] Basic information, however, was included in her text on the artist in Saur's *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon : die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, vol. 19 (1998), pp. 353-354.

[2] The inventory was published in part in Bredius's *Künstlerinventare*, and in full in Frima Fox Hofrichter's monograph on Judith Leyster (Doornspijk, 1989), as well as in an appendix in the exhibition catalogue *Jan Miense Molenaer. Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, Raleigh NC, 2002, pp. 181-187.

[3] The author has apparently taken my advice to heart to ignore volume 3 of *A Modest Message*, which was published in 1999, after Vroom's death (see my review in *Oud Holland* 114 [2000], p. 232). The book is also absent from her list of consulted literature.

[4] I am unable to suggest a proper explanation for this inscription, however.

[5] See Biesboer's essay in the exhibition catalogue, p. 16. This suggestion, tucked away by Brunner in her footnote 186 on p. 194, could have been awarded a more prominent place, in my view.

[6] A copy of this invitation was apparently in the possession of A. van der Willigen (the author of *Les artistes de Haarlem*) but cannot be traced now. Brunner copies his transcription of the note, on p. 125, as well as in note 192 on p. 194.

[7] Claesz. is in fact the abbreviation of Claeszoon, son of Claes.

[8] I. van Thiel-Stroman's biography of Pieter Claesz. on pp. 124-125 in the recent publication, P. Biesboer and N. Köhler, *Painting in Haarlem 1500-1800: the collection of the Frans Hals Museum* (Ghent, 2006), adds no new data to Claesz.'s biography as published in the books discussed in the present review.

[9] P. 154. I am not in favour of Brunner Bulst's frequent use of first names when referring to her artist and others she cites comparatively, but I am gladly prepared to forgive her that flower of speech.

[10] Brunner captions her fig. 12, the painting in the Rijksmuseum (inv. SK-A-2058), as 'Floris van Schooten (hier zugeschrieben).' This is curious since C. I Iofstede de Groot had already suggested this attribution one hundred years earlier and although until recently the Rijksmuseum published it as 'attributed to Floris van Dijck', the painting had already been published as by Van Schooten on several occasions, among them Gammelbo's catalogue of the artist's works in the *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* of 1966, mentioned here in the introduction.

[11] Brunner discards Gammelbo's suggestion to that effect and remarks that Van Schooten's painting from 1617 'einer älteren Tradition verbunden ist'. Which older tradition she is referring to does not become entirely clear, but I could imagine that she was thinking of works by Osias Beert and of Jacob van Hulsdonck's early works.

[12] See my review of the exhibition catalogue *A Prosperous Past* in *Simiolus* 20 (1990-91), no 1, p. 94. My 'perhaps questionable' dating of 1601 for Gillis's painting was obviously expressed mildly. The painting was illustrated by M. Rinaldi, *Kraak Porcelain. A Moment in the History of Trade* (London, 1989) to indicate that this type of porcelain occurred early on, but I would think that particularly for the smaller dish Gillis shows, 1601 would be extremely early. Such dishes abounded in the cargo of the ship 'De Witte Lelie' that sank in 1613 (archaeological finds kept in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). Although published as by Van Dijck since Abraham Bredius first suggested that attribution, the Budapest painting has also been the subject of discussion. In my view it has very little to do with the artist.

[13] A few minor comments concerning details on the following pages are listed here.
Reference on p. 150 to a Claesz.

from 1653 should be to Brunner cat. no. 207 instead of 206.
p. 156: reference for cat. 3 is to a non existent ill. on p. 157 instead of to p. 206.
p. 158: I already argued in my catalogue from 1989 that the painting in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (inv. no. 2933) cannot be by Hans van Essen and should be dated to c. 1615.
p. 181. 'Auch Maler von geringeren Rang, wie die beiden Leidener Harmen Steenwijck und David Bailly, haben arbeitsteilig kooperiert'. Brunner occasionally demonstrates a restricted knowledge of Dutch art outside the area of Claesz. Harmen Steenwijck was trained in Leiden, but not a Leiden painter, while to call him a 'Maler von geringeren Rang' can be the subject of discussion. David Bailly should definitely not be regarded as such. Incidentally, in my essay in the exhibition catalogue *FISH still lifes by Dutch and Flemish Masters 1550-1750*, Utrecht, 2004, I firmly rejected the attribution to Bailly of the figures in the painting she refers to in note 431.

[14] The only possible precedent I can think of is Johannes Torrentius's famous still life with a bridle from 1614 in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum (inv. no. SK-A-2813), but that contains only two clay pipes and no other smoking paraphernalia.

[15] When the painting was on the market in 1991, she still dated it to c. 1623.

[16] Similar measurements (c. 27 x 35 cm) occur more often in Claesz.'s oeuvre during the 1620s: Brunner cat. nos. 16, 31 and 37.

[17] At the time of writing, I know four dated paintings by De Heem from 1643. On the basis of stylistic comparison and presumed chronology, I date another seven paintings to that year as well. Brunner labels the years 1642 to 1647 as Claesz.'s 'produktiven Jahre'. Such conclusions must always be drawn with the awareness that we have no way of knowing whether, and how many works could have been lost from a certain year, period or oeuvre. Unrecorded works, even major ones, still surface occasionally and old listings of paintings that we are unable to point out today are numerous.

[18] Going through Brunner's illustrations and through several visits to the Haarlem exhibition, it occurred to me that, while part of Claesz.'s strength lies with his ability to render large standing rummers almost as containers of light, he often falls very flat on his glasses which lie on the table. The latter frequently come off comparatively dull and unattractive, and often possess obvious errors in foreshortening.

[19] I cannot follow Brunner's attribution of her fig. 66 to Cornelis Kruys. This is clearly the work of a less talented artist than Kruys and an imitator of Claesz., probably inspired directly by the latter's painting from 1653 in Cologne (Brunner cat. no. 206, colour pl. p. 113). I suspect, however, that the wrong painting was illustrated, since the illustrated painting is in fact in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, inv. no. A11, oil on canvas 106 x 162 cm. It was catalogued by Christopher White, *Dutch, Flemish and German Paintings before 1900*, Oxford 1999, pp. 24, 26, as attributed to Claesz., even though his text clearly (and correctly) indicates that it is highly unlikely to be a work by the artist himself.

[20] In an early example of their collaboration (Brunner cat. no. 60), Claesz. contributed only the rummer to Koets's fruit piece.

[21] The only downside to this discussion is the extremely poor illustration of a portrait by Verspronck, (Brunner fig. 70) in which the ostrich fan, ostensibly the point of the illustration, is completely invisible.

[22] The signature details include two signatures on documents, on p. 354, but both are incorrectly captioned 'Kat. 136', so we do not learn to which documents they belong.

[23] F.G. Meijer, 'Twee is niet altijd meer dan één / *Two is not always more than one*', *RKD Bulletin* 1997/2, pp. 16-20, sp. p. 18, fig. 4.

[24] Whatever our judgment of Vroom's work, a concordance of Brunner's catalogue with that of Vroom's list from 1980 would have been a welcome appendix here.

[25] See Christie's London sale catalogue of 15 April 1992, lot 32A.

[26] I corresponded in detail about the painting with the then owner in 1995.

[27] In the museum's recently published catalogue (see note 8), the painting is included as a Claesz., with acknowledgment of the results of the use of inexpensive materials: cat. no. 80 on pp. 420-421.

[28] My attribution, recorded in the RKD files, dates from 1984.
[29] I am not aware if this was also the case in Zürich and Washington.

[30] To put forward Jeremias van Winghen as an example of a still life painter from Frankfurt, based on the single example we have from him which is a kitchen piece rather than a true still life – is inaccurate. Peter Binoit, for instance, would have been a far better example. Additionally, fig. 3 has nothing to do with Jacques de Gheijn, as I have argued earlier (*Simiolus* 20 [1990/1991], pp. 93-94).

[31] His statement that an *Allegory of transience* by Van Schooten is dated 1605 (p. 14) is not substantiated. I have found no reference to a date in any literature and also cannot discern it on the photo of the painting in question. If Biesboer's reference is correct, this would mean an interesting discovery, for thus far I know of no earlier dated painting by the artist besides his 1617 still life mentioned above (fig. 2).

[32] The Delft painter Harmen Steenwijck, who was trained in Leiden, was obviously meant here rather than the architectural painter Hendrick van Steenwijck (see also note 13, above). Furthermore, to characterize Lievens as a painter of (monochrome) still lifes on the basis of one known book still life (in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. SK-A-4090) is a bit odd, while Harmen Steenwijck's work can scarcely be called monochromatic.

[33] He calls it *Tabletop still life with a mince pie*. The term 'tabletop still life' is an American invention, which Ingvar Bergström, in private correspondence (October 1990), called 'a record of stupidity'. After close examination of such paintings, I am convinced, although frankly I am unable to prove it, that Claesz.'s pies of this type are purely fruit pies, not (mince)meat pies. Further on (p. 103), Gregory identifies the fish in cat. no. 19 (Brunner cat. no. 40) as a mackerel, while the Dutch catalogue (pp. 54, 120) identifies it as a 'haring'(herring). Both identifications are blatantly inaccurate. The fish in question is most likely a roast bream. Bream is one of the most common fish in Dutch waters, while the mackerel is not indigenous. Neither were there any 'woods around Haarlem' to speak of (p. 101), and the 'ivy' in Gregory's fig. 3 are grape vine tendrils.

Marjorie E. Wieseman: *Caspar Netscher and Late Seventeenth-century Dutch Painting*, Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers 2002, 542 Seiten, 33 Farbabbildungen, 345 schwarz-weiß Abbildungen, ISBN 90 70288 37 0.

Caspar Netscher (1636/39-1684) gehörte im dritten Viertel des 17. Jahrhunderts zu den beliebtesten Künstlern Den Haags. Seit der Mitte der 1660er Jahre waren seine kleinformatigen häuslichen Genredarstellungen und seine eleganten Porträts von Mitgliedern der wohlhabenden Haager und Amsterdamer Gesellschaft beim Kunstpublikum sehr gefragt und übten (zumindest im Bereich der Porträts) einen nicht unerheblichen Einfluss auf Kollegen und Nachfolger aus. Trotzdem ereilte ihn im 19. Jahrhundert mit der Ablehnung der höfisch orientierten Bildnismalerei zugunsten einer in idealtypischer Weise als „bürgerlich" und „realistisch" empfundenen Darstellungsweise von Malern wie Rembrandt und Frans Hals das Schicksal zahlreicher holländischer Maler des ausgehenden 17. Jahrhunderts. Deren Werken sagte man bis weit ins 20. Jahrhundert zu Unrecht nach, einer Zeit des Niedergangs anzugehören. Ungeachtet dessen erschienen erste Werkverzeichnisse zu Netscher bereits 1833/42 (John A. Smith) bzw. 1912 (Cornelis Hofstede de Groot). Eine umfassende Bearbeitung des weit mehr als zweihundert Gemälde sowie eigenhändige Wiederholungen, leicht veränderte Versionen und zahlreiche Kopien fassenden Oeuvres blieb seitdem ein Desiderat. 2002 legte nun Marjorie E. Wieseman eine ebenso opulente wie grundlegende Künstlermonographie in Form eines durch zahlreiche Kapitel zu Leben und Wirken ergänzten Catalogue raisonné vor. Bereits 1993 war eine Universitätsausgabe der 1991 vollendeten Dissertation erschienen.

Die Publikation von Wieseman enthält eine gründliche Aufarbeitung von Biographie und literarischer Rezeption, eine detaillierte Untersuchung der Genredarstellungen, Historien, pastoralen Szenen und der Porträts sowie eine Annäherung an die Werkstatt Netschers, in sechs Kapiteln. Ergänzt wird diese Untersuchung durch einen Anhang von mehr als 170 Dokumenten, darunter das Nachlassinventar von Netschers Witwe Margareta Godijn, das neun Jahre nach seinem Tod auch umfangreiches graphisches Material aus der Werkstatt auflistet und insofern Rückschlüsse auf dessen Arbeitsweise gewährt. Ein zweiter Teil der Publikation umfasst ein kommentiertes Werkverzeichnis der authentischen Werke (Katalogteil A), der zweifelhaften Zuschreibungen (Katalogteil B) sowie der abgeschriebenen bzw. der Werkstatt zugeschriebenen Werke (Katalogteil C). Auch werden fast vierhundert Werke aufgelistet, die in historischen Quellen, Auktionskatalogen oder weiterer Literatur vor 1800 genannt sind (Katalogteil D). Unterstützt wird das Werkverzeichnis durch eine vollständige Bebilderung der Katalogteile A und B sowie durch zahlreiche Vergleichsabbildungen, beides überwiegend in hervorragender Abbildungsqualität. Ein ausführlicher Registerteil erleichtert den Zugang zu den zahlreichen Fakten.

Das erste Kapitel führt den Leser in die Biographie des Künstlers ein. Wieseman kombiniert hierbei Informationen aus verschiedenen Künstlerbiographien des ausgehenden 17. Jahrhunderts und des 18. Jahrhunderts mit Archivfunden und wägt Fakten und traditionelle Vermutungen gegeneinander ab. Obwohl die ersten Jahre Caspar Netschers weitgehend im Dunkeln liegen und kaum historische Quellen zu seiner Geburt und seiner Jugend existieren, wendet sich die Autorin gegen die bisherige Hypothese, Netscher sei deutscher Herkunft. Vermutlich wurde er um 1636/39 als Sohn des Amsterdamer bzw. Rotterdamer Malers Johannes Nes(s)cher und der Susana Jans. geboren. Die traditionelle Ansicht, der Vater habe sich als Maler am Prager bzw. Heidelberger Hof aufgehalten, schließt sie jedoch nicht vollständig aus. Nach einer Flucht durch das vom Dreissigjährigen Krieg stark in Mitleidenschaft gezogene Deutschland siedelt sich die Familie in Arnhem an, wo Caspar Netscher vermutlich Zeichenunterricht erhält. Deutliche Auswirkungen auf sein Oeuvre hatte jedoch erst die 1654/55-1658/60 erfolgte Ausbildung bei Gerard Terborch in Deventer. Einige Kopien nach Werken des Lehrers, die in dieser Zeit entstanden, lassen deutlich seinen Einfluss erkennen. Eine anschließende Italien-Reise Netschers endete bereits in Frankreich. Bei einem mehrjährigen Aufenthalt in Bordeaux lernte er seine spätere Ehefrau Margaretha Godijn kennen, auch der älteste Sohn Theodoor wurde hier geboren. 1662 kehrte Netscher in die Niederlande zurück und siedelte sich in Den Haag an, wo er den Rest seines Lebens verbringen sollte. Schon bald vollzog sich der Aufstieg zu einem der gefragtesten Maler der Stadt, er wurde Mitglied der Schützengarde der St. Sebastiaansdoelen und ab 1668 Bürger Den Haags. In der Künstlergemeinschaft Confrerie Pictura, die sich 1656 aus der St. Lukasgilde gebildet hatte, wobei sich die bildenden Künstler von den eher handwerklich orientierten Fachrichtungen abspalteten, übte Netscher jedoch erstaunlicherweise Zeit seines Lebens keine führende Rolle aus.

Zur Einstimmung in die Lebenswelten Den Haags zeichnet Wieseman ein Bild des mondänen, wohlhabenden Ortes. Im Gegensatz zu vielen anderen Städten der Vereinten Republik war er weitaus weniger vom Handel geprägt und stellte vielmehr das politische Zentrum der Republik und der Provinz Holland dar. Es war die Bühne der politischen Elite, ausländischer Diplomaten und der Kreise des Statthalterhofes. Die Malerei Den Haags war, insofern man hier eine eindeutige Spezialisierung feststellen möchte, vorrangig auf die Porträtmalerei ausgerichtet. Weder die Genre- noch die Historienmalerei konnten hier auf eine lange Tradition zurückblicken. So verwundert es auch nicht, dass sich Netscher, der zunächst sowohl Porträts als auch Genreszenen und wenige Historiendarstellungen geschaffen hatte, zunehmend auf die Bildnismalerei verlegte. Bereits in den 1660er Jahren war Netscher auch als Kunsthändler in Den Haag tätig. Als Kunde ist unter anderem Cosimo III. de' Medici bekannt, der bei seinem Aufenthalt in der Stadt sowohl Kopien nach Genreszenen Ter Borchs als auch eigene Kompositionen Caspar Netschers erwarb. Hierbei fand der Künstler Unterstützung in der Familie, denn auch seine Ehefrau war in den Kunsthandel involviert. Nach seinem Tod führte sie das Geschäft fort und betreute gleichzeitig die Ausbildung ihrer Kinder,

von denen die Söhne Constantijn und Theodoor dem Vater im Beruf des Malers nachfolgten.

Die Wertschätzung, die Netscher in der kunsthistoriographischen Literatur entgegen gebracht wurde, lässt sich bereits im ausgehenden 17. Jahrhundert erkennen. So fand er bei den gängigen Künstlerbiographen und Kunstschriftstellern, wie Roger de Piles (1699), Arnold Houbraken (1718-1721) und Weyerman (1729-1769), Gérard de Lairesse (1707) und Descamps (1753-1764), Erwähnung. Sie lieferten erste Informationen zu seiner Biographie, setzten sich teilweise kritisch mit der Malweise des Künstlers auseinander und versuchten, Erklärungsmodelle für die Vorliebe des Künstlers für das kleine Format anzubieten. Im 19. Jahrhundert setzte verstärkt die vom Zeitgeschmack geprägte Wertung des Künstlers ein, dessen elegante, „höfische" Bildnisse nun zugunsten der Genre- und Historienstücke ignoriert oder als affektiert gewertet wurden. Die Werke Netschers fielen dem negativen Urteil anheim, das der Kunst des ausgehenden 17. Jahrhunderts als Epoche des künstlerischen Verfalls generell angehängt wurde. Die Blütezeit des Goldenen Jahrhunderts der holländischen Malerei sei überschritten, die späten Künstler wie Netscher lediglich Epigonen ihrer Vorgänger. Zudem wurde generell die internationale Ausrichtung der damaligen Künstler kritisiert. Gleichzeitig setzte in dieser Zeit auch eine kennerschaftliche Auseinandersetzung mit dem Oeuvre Netschers ein. Man unterschied nun stilistisch zwischen dem Früh- und dem Spätwerk und benannte diesbezügliche Unterschiede im Kolorit und im Farbauftrag. Erste Werkverzeichnisse erscheinen von John A. Smith (1833/1842), der insgesamt 113 Gemälde nennt und Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (1912), der mehr als 1.000 Werke auflistet. Hofstede de Groot kritisiert vor allem Netschers Porträts, die „entschieden der Verfallszeit der holländischen Malerei" angehörten. Obwohl er lediglich dessen Genrebilder noch „zur Blütezeit" rechnet, spricht allein die Aufnahme in seine Reihe von Werkverzeichnissen „der hervorragenden Holländischen Maler des XVII. Jahrhunderts" für die Anerkennung, die ihm als Künstler gezollt wurde. Erst in den letzten Jahrzehnten setzte in der kunsthistorischen Literatur eine neutralere Auseinandersetzung mit den Werken Netschers ein.

Kapitel 3 und 4 des Buches beschäftigen sich mit dem Oeuvre Netschers, speziell der Genre- und der Historienmalerei. Anhand ausgewählter Beispiele wird ein Bogen vom Frühwerk (bis 1664) über eine Übergangsphase (1664/1665) und eine reife Phase (1666-1670) bis hin zum Spätwerk des Künstlers gespannt. Als Genremaler war Netscher vor allem in den ersten Jahren seines Schaffens sehr produktiv, gehörte jedoch Wieseman zufolge nicht zu den Erneuerern des Genres. Sowohl thematisch als auch hinsichtlich der Bildmotive orientierte er sich an Werken berühmter Kollegen wie Gerard Ter Borch oder der Leidener Feinmaler. Trotzdem gelang es ihm auch, innerhalb bereits festgelegter Schemata neue Wege zu beschreiten. Vor allem die Annäherung der Gattungen Genre, Historie und Porträtmalerei ist für seine Werke kennzeichnend. Seine frühesten Genreszenen sind durch den starken Einfluss des Lehrers Gerard Ter Borch geprägt, was sowohl in den Kopien nach dessen Werken als auch in eigenständigen Kompositionen erfahrbar ist. Aus der Zeit des direkt an die Lehrzeit anschließenden Frankreichaufenthaltes sind keine Werke erhalten. Erst nach der Rückkehr in die Niederlande und der Ansiedlung in Den Haag im Jahr 1662 ist Netscher künstlerisch erneut fassbar. Zunächst versucht er noch, an die Werke anzuknüpfen, die vor der Abreise nach Frankreich entstanden waren. Neben dem Einfluss Ter Borchs ist in dieser Zeit (besonders um 1660/1670) vor allem die Nähe zu den Genredarstellungen der Leidener Feinmaler spürbar. Thematisch beschäftigte er sich mit eleganten Interieurs und häuslichen Szenen. Vor allem traditionelle Themen wie Liebespaare, Damen bei der Toilette, galante Szenen, Szenen bei Kerzenlicht und musikalische Gesellschaften prägten damals sein Oeuvre. Gegen Mitte der 1660er Jahre beginnen in seinem Werk die Grenzen zwischen Genre-, Historien- und Porträtmalerei durchlässiger zu werden. So greift er nun in den Genre- und Historiendarstellungen gelegentlich auf parkähnliche Hintergründe zurück, die er auch in seinen Bildnissen verwendete. Im Gegenzug versah er nun auch häufiger Porträts mit dem Genremotiv der Fensternische. Auch werden die Genreszenen in die Nähe von Historien gerückt, indem er versucht, die Erkennbarkeit einer bestimmten Zeit und Region in Kleidung und Accessoires zu vermeiden. Obwohl Netschers Maltechnik in dieser Zeit ausgefeilter und feinmalerischer wird, sind seine Werke gleichzeitig durch eine Mischtechnik gekennzeichnet, die einige stillebenartige Elemente sehr detailliert wiedergibt, Figuren oder Hintergrund hingegen in einem lockeren Pinselduktus.

Auf die seit den 1970er Jahren in der Kunstgeschichte schwelende Ikonologie-Debatte hinsichtlich der Genremalerei des holländischen 17. Jahrhunderts geht die Autorin unverständlicherweise in nur sehr geringem Maße ein. Hier hätte man sich eine deutliche Stellungnahme zu den nicht abreißen wollenden Diskussionen über das Thema gewünscht. So behandelt sie die symbolische Bedeutung von Netschers Genredarstellungen lediglich anhand einzelner Fälle und erläutert deren offensichtliche Konnotationen. In den Vordergrund gerückt sieht sie u.a. bei den Darstellungen spielender Kinder die Betonung des naiven Charmes der kleinen Protagonisten, an denen sich der Betrachter erfreuen sollte. Wichtig sei Netscher, Wieseman zufolge, vor allem der erzählerische Kontext in Verbindung mit einer brillanten Malweise gewesen. Diese lässt die unterschiedlichsten Materialien, wie unter anderem geknüpfter Teppich, glatter Stein, glänzendes Metall und schimmernde Seide, in stillebenhaften Bildelementen nahezu haptisch erfahrbar werden.

Neben den Genredarstellungen schuf Caspar Netscher in den Jahren 1665 bis 1683 auch einige elegante, kleinformatige Historien und pastorale Szenen, in denen die Nähe zur Genremalerei spürbar ist. Vor allem in der Ähnlichkeit der Kleidung, der Accessoires, der Verwendung gleicher Kompositionsprinzipien, des Hintergrundes sowie dekorativer Elemente wird diese Nähe deutlich. Hierbei lässt sich seine besondere Vorliebe für biblische, mythologische oder pastorale Themen mit erotischem Unterton erkennen, beispielsweise bei seinen Darstellungen der Bathseba oder von Vertumnus und

Pomona. Vorbildhaft für die Historienszenen Netschers seien Wieseman zufolge unter anderem Werke französischer oder italienischer Zeitgenossen wie Guido Reni gewesen, dessen Einfluss vor allem bei den Darstellungen der Lukretia und der Kleopatra nachvollziehbar ist.

Kapitel 5 beschäftigt sich mit den Porträts des Künstlers, die neben der Genremalerei den Schwerpunkt von Netschers Oeuvre ausmachen. Zunächst standen - wie bereits in den frühen Genreszenen Netschers - die sehr nüchternen, bürgerlichen und strengen Kompositionen des Lehrers Gerard Ter Borch Pate für das eigene Porträtoeuvre. Bereits ein Jahr nach seiner Ankunft in Den Haag werden jedoch Netschers Bemühungen deutlich, sich dem dortigen Bildnisstil anzugleichen. Einflüsse seiner berühmten Haager Kollegen Jan Mijtens (1613/1614-1670) und Adriaen Hanneman (ca. 1604-1671) werden vor allem in den Einzelbildnissen sichtbar, in der Übernahme von Haltungen, Bildelementen wie Säulen und Draperien sowie des Landschaftshintergrundes, die seit der Jahrhundertmitte nicht mehr aus der Haager Porträtmalerei wegzudenken waren. Vereinzelt trifft man in dieser Zeit in Netschers Oeuvre noch auf das traditionelle, leicht unterlebensgroße Format. Erst vier Jahre nach seinem Umzug nach Den Haag fand er um 1666 zu seinem eigentlichen Porträtstil, der sich auf kleinformatige, meist in Dreiviertelfigur gehaltene elegante Bildnisse vor Landschaftshintergrund konzentrierte. Eine opulente Ausstattung durch Draperien, Statuen, Reliefs und andere Accessoires kennzeichnen nun seine Werke, die das traditionelle höfische Haager Porträt vor allem durch einen stärkeren Einsatz dekorativer Elemente weiterentwickeln. Typisch ist seit ca. 1666/1667 bei Netscher unter anderem die Verwendung einer Steinplinthe mit Putto-Relief, auch werden antike oder zeitgenössische Statuen im Hintergrund wiedergegeben, die teilweise symbolische Bedeutungen übermitteln. Das Sitzmotiv wird häufiger verwendet, ebenso wird der Schnitt der Kleidung im Frauenbildnis stärker als zuvor durch Tücher und Schals „verschleiert". Im Männerbildnis erfüllen über die Schulter geschlungene Draperie-ähnliche Mäntel diesen Zweck, auch wird ab den 1670er Jahren häufig der „japonsche rock" als Kleidungsstück gewählt, der den informellen, fast privaten Charakter des Bildnisses verstärkt. Seinem Erfolgskonzept bleibt Netscher im Laufe der Jahre treu, von geringfügigen Änderungen abgesehen. So konnte er auf einen Vorrat an eigenen Standardmotiven zurückgreifen, und durch die Kombination von Haltungen, Kleidung, Frisuren und anderen Accessoires eine rasche Produktion gewährleisten. Besonders in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens verweist die Neigung zur Formelhaftigkeit in der Darstellung auf eine gesteigerte Nachfrage. Von nicht zu unterschätzender Bedeutung für die Porträts Netschers ist der Einfluss seiner Haager Kollegen Adriaen Hanneman und Jan Mijtens, die bereits um die Jahrhundertmitte begonnen hatten, den Bildnisstil des bei Hofe favorisierten Flamen Anthonis van Dyck in die Haager Porträtmalerei zu übernehmen. Ein Einfluss Van Dycks, den die Autorin gelegentlich in zu pauschaler Weise für die Werke Netschers in Anspruch nimmt, ist nur vor diesem Hintergrund zu verstehen. Nur durch die Tätigkeit von Hanneman und Mijtens fand Netscher den Boden vorbereitet, auf dem er seinen erfolgreichen Bildnisstil aufbauen konnte. Ein deutlicherer Verweis der Autorin auf diese Tatsache wäre sinnvoll gewesen. Besonders nach dem Tod der beiden Kollegen in den Jahren 1670 bzw. 1671, der ein Vakuum auf dem Haager Porträtmarkt hinterließ, war der Weg für die inzwischen arrivierten, jüngeren Maler Jan de Baen (1633-1702) und Caspar Netscher endgültig geebnet. Netscher bediente im Grunde ein ähnliches Publikum, erweiterte bestehende Kompositionen und änderte Haltungsmotive leicht ab. Auch seine Vorgänger hatten sich in der Neufindung bestimmter Bildelemente von ihren Vorgängern abgegrenzt und waren dennoch dem traditionellen Grundschema treu geblieben waren.

Netschers Bildnisse hatten schon sehr früh das Gefallen des städtischen Patriziats sowie von Diplomaten, der Hof- und der adligen Kreise gefunden. Wiesemans Berechnungen zufolge rekrutierten sich die Dargestellten zur Hälfte aus der städtischen Regentenklasse, die andere Hälfte wurde durch die Mitglieder des Hofes, der Hofkreise, Diplomaten und der Adligen gebildet. Wie in der Porträtmalerei üblich, richtete Netscher die Erscheinungsform im Bildnis nach der gesellschaftlichen Funktion, dem Beruf und dem sozialem Status der Auftraggeber aus. So lassen beispielsweise Bildnisse des republikanischen Ratspensionärs De Witt und von Gelehrten eine deutlichere Zurückhaltung in der Darstellung von Wohlstand (in Kleidung und Accessoires) erkennen, als der Großteil von Netschers Bildnissen. Wieseman sieht die kleinformatigen Darstellungen, die meist sehr detailliert ausgeführt sind und ein hohes maltechnisches Können voraussetzen, in ihrem privaten Charakter hervorragend als kostbare Sammelobjekte für Kabinette geeignet. So erkennt sie in den Porträts Netschers die gesellschaftlichen Ambitionen der Schicht des neuen „aristokratisierten" Patriziats der Niederlande bildlich umgesetzt. Auch geht die Autorin auf die Entwicklungsgeschichte der kleinformatigen Darstellungen in der holländischen Malerei ein und sieht hier vor allem den Einfluss Ter Borchs als bestimmend für Netschers Wahl des kleinen Formates. Wünschenswert wäre an dieser Stelle eine umfassendere Analyse der Auftraggeberkreise gewesen, die es dem Leser ermöglicht, Wiesemans Ausführungen über Netschers Position als Favorit des „aristokratisierten" Patriziats nachvollziehen zu können. Zwar legt die Autorin in den einzelnen Katalogeinträgen des Werkverzeichnisses kurze Informationen über die jeweiligen Dargestellten vor, ein exkursartiger Überblick zu den Auftraggebern hätte jedoch die an diesem Punkt zu pauschal und weitläufig wirkenden Ausführungen in sehr viel stärkerem Maße untermauert.

Das letzte Kapitel des Buches beschäftigt sich mit der Werkstatt des Künstlers, der Atelierpraxis und den Schülern. Wieseman integriert hier überzeugend den Themenkomplex der Zeichnungen Netschers, von denen sich insgesamt rund 45 Stück erhalten haben. Darunter befinden sich sowohl einfache Kompositions- und Haltungsstudien als auch detaillierte Porträtstudien und eigene Nachzeichnungen nach fertiggestellten Werken. Auch existieren Zeichnungen der Schüler, die sich eng am Stil ihres Lehrers orientierten. Gerade die Zeichnungen sind es, die im Vergleich zu bestehenden

Gemälden Aufschluss über die Werkstattpraxis und Ausbildung der Lehrlinge geben. Vermutlich dienten sie als Arbeitsmaterial im Entstehungsprozess eines Gemäldes sowie zur Ausbildung von Lehrlingen und wurden innerhalb der Werkstatt aufbewahrt. So fand sich beispielsweise im Nachlassinventar der Witwe Netschers von 1694 eine Mappe mit 92 Zeichnungen, darunter mehr als die Hälfte Studien von Haltungsmotiven der Hände. Nachzeichnungen nach Werken anderer Künstler wie Adriaen Hanneman lassen die Vorbildfunktion von deren Porträts erkennen. Besonders interessant erscheint eine Gruppe von knapp 20 Zeichnungen, die eigene, fertig gestellte Gemälde Netschers wiedergeben und die mit Informationen zu u.a. Preisen, Kolorit und teilweise dem Namen von Dargestellten bzw. Käufern versehen sind. Ob diese Blätter als Erinnerungen an verkaufte Gemälde dienten oder als modelli, die dem Auftraggeber vorgelegt wurden, wie Wieseman vorschlägt, kann heute nicht mehr mit Sicherheit festgestellt werden. Zweifelsohne bilden sie einen höchst speziellen Komplex innerhalb der holländischen Zeichnungskunst, der Interesse an einer weiteren, vertieften, Analyse weckt.

Aus der Werkstatt Netschers können nur relativ wenige Schüler identifiziert werden. Von diesen brachten es lediglich die Söhne Constantijn (1668-1723) und Theodoor Netscher (1661-1728) zu einiger Berühmtheit. Vor allem Constantijns Gemälde orientierten sich lange Zeit eng an den Darstellungen des Vaters, dessen Nachfolge er als Porträtmaler antrat. Darüber hinaus existiert eine Reihe von Künstlern, die in engem Zusammenhang mit Netscher gesehen werden müssen, ohne dass hierbei ein eindeutiges Lehrer-Schüler-Verhältnis nachgewiesen werden konnte. Unter anderem weisen die Werke von Aleijda Wolfsen (1648-1692), Frans van der Haagen (gest. 1734), Daniel Haringh (1636-1713) und Johannes van Haensbergen (1642-1705) eine direkte Nähe zu den Gemälden Netschers auf. Teils kann dies mit einer vermuteten, jedoch nicht nachweisbaren Lehrzeit bei Netscher begründet werden, teils mit einer Zusammenarbeit der Künstler. Auch wird hier die Vorbildfunktion Netschers für die Werke anderer Maler des ausgehenden 17. Jahrhundert, vor allem Bildnismaler, sehr deutlich.

Einem Anhang von mehr als 170, meist ausführlich zitierten und chronologisch geordneten, Dokumenten folgt im zweiten Teil des Buches ein umfangreicher kritischer Oeuvrekatalog in den eingangs erwähnten Kategorien A, B, C und D. Vom traditionellen Schema vergleichbarer Monographien weicht an dieser Stelle die Einteilung der Kategorie C für abgeschriebene Werke ab. Hier sind gleichzeitig Werkstattstücke enthälten, deren Zuschreibung die Autorin zurückweist, da hier keine eigenhandige Beteiligung von Netscher zu erkennen war. Die einzelnen Katalognummern enthalten durchweg informative, kurz gefasste Kommentare und eine ausführliche Auflistung der Provenienz, Literatur und der Ausstellungsverweise sowie der zahlreichen Varianten bzw. Kopien.

Insgesamt überzeugt die Arbeit Wiesemans durch den souveränen Umgang mit einer schier unübersichtlichen Fülle an Werken, Dokumenten, Fakten und Abbildungsmaterial. Der Autorin gelingt es in beeindruckender Weise, die Ergebnisse ihrer langjährigen akribischen Studien im Werkverzeichnis zusammenzutragen und in einem eingängigen analytischen Textteil zu verarbeiten, ohne sich in unnötigen Details zu verlieren. Der Leser erfährt einen enormen Kenntnisgewinn über den bedeutenden Künstler und seine Werke und ist dankbar über den Wagemut der Autorin, sich einem derart großen Oeuvre genähert und selbiges in bravouröser Weise gemeistert zu haben, ohne der Detailfülle zu erliegen.

Alexandra Nina Bauer