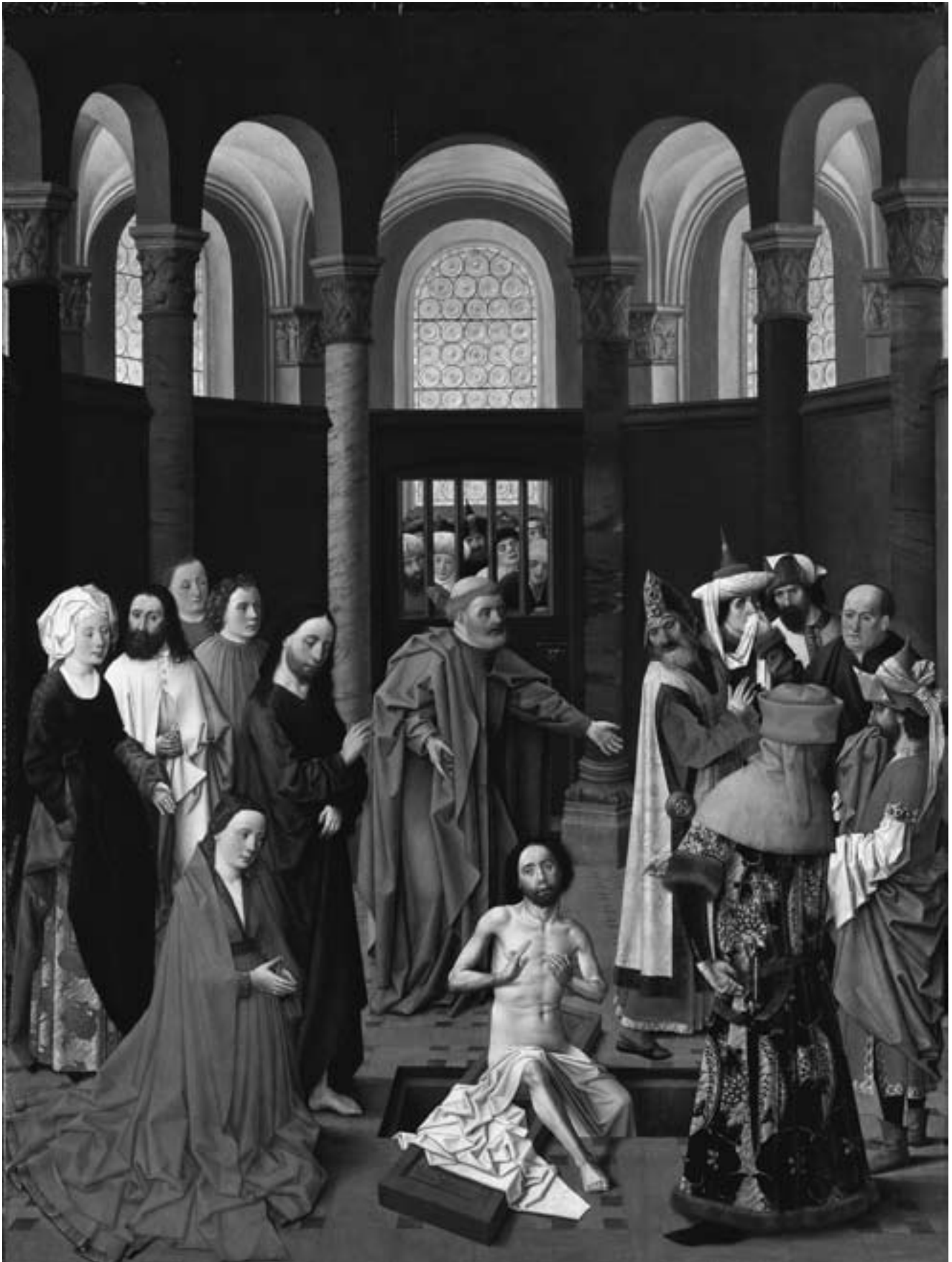


## Albert van Ouwater: *The Raising of Lazarus*

The acquisition of the *Raising of Lazarus* (fig. 1) by the Gemäldegalerie Berlin in the year 1889 meant at the same time the raising of Albert van Ouwater from a mere name in Karel van Mander's *Schilderboeck* of 1604 to a major figure of fifteenth century Netherlandish painting. The panel had been completely unknown to scholars and was only shortly before its acquisition recognized – on the basis of a poor photograph – by Ludwig Scheibler as the work described in some detail by Van Mander in his 'leven van Albert van Ouwater, Schilder van Haerlem'.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Van Mander's claim that the painting had been abducted from Haarlem by Spanish troops – during the occupation of the city in 1573 – fitted well with the provenance of the panel which had come from the collection of a Marchese Mamelli in Genoa who in turn had inherited it from the Balbi family. In this family it was believed to have been gained once as a gift from king Philipp II of Spain.

The medium-sized panel shows the event described in John 11:1-45, set into the rounded apse of a building of Romanesque style. Carved reliefs on the capitals of the ambulatory showing scenes from the Old Testament – the Flight of Hagar and Ismael, the Sacrifice of Isaac, Moses before the burning bush and God giving the tablets of the law to Moses, Moses showing the tablets to the people (fig. 2) – make clear that the building represents a Jewish temple. In the centre of the round apse, the grave of Lazarus opens in the floor; obviously this is the earliest known instance of a placement of the burial inside a sacred building, which corresponds to late medieval custom but not to the pictorial tradition which had Lazarus' tomb set in the open air. In the Berlin painting, the rising saint sits on the slab, his body still looking like a pale corpse, his confused gaze cross-eyed. Christ is standing left of the grave, on the dexter side of the composition, and has just called 'Lazarus, come forth'. Behind him are standing three disciples and a woman with a skirt of brocade under a blue robe, no doubt Lazarus' sister Martha. His second sister Mary Magdalene, clad completely in bright red, a colour underscoring her passion and love, is kneeling in the left foreground, her hands clasped in prayer. Behind Lazarus, St. Peter is pointing out the miracle to a group of Jews on the right; some of them are turning away from the event or hold cloths to their noses in order to escape the smell of decay. Peter plays a major role in the composition and is clearly understood as the apostle or missionary of the Jews. The pose of Lazarus himself recalls the rising dead in pictures of the Last Judgement and makes thus clear that his raising is a promise to the faithful to rise from death at the end of times. The scene is completed by curious observers who have crowded behind a grate in the screen closing off the ambulatory; their position as well as their desire to see the miracle reflect that of the beholder in front of the painting.

Van Mander gives a sufficient description of the picture and an appraisal of its merits in his publication of 1604. Nevertheless, what he describes was not the work



<sup>1</sup>  
Albert van Ouwater, *The Raising of Lazarus*, c. 1460-1475, panel, 124 x 92 cm.  
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. Photograph: Jörg P. Anders, Berlin.



<sup>2</sup>  
 Albert van Ouwater, *The Raising of Lazarus*, detail: Capitals in the ambulatory, c. 1460-1475, panel, 124 x 92 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. Photograph: Jörg P. Anders, Berlin.

now in Berlin, for the original was already in Spain when he wrote his book. Instead, he knew the composition from a ‘ghedootverwede Copie’, a ‘dead coloured’ copy, i.e. either an underpainted, not yet finished painting or a monochrome picture. This copy has since vanished without a trace and so we are ignorant about its author and its exact date. However, an accurate but monochrome copy of a fifteenth century painting seems quite unique, and probably it was executed rather in the sixteenth century than shortly after the creation of the original. In any event this lost copy points to the high esteem the original once held.

Van Mander also mentions a second work as Ouwater’s, an altarpiece of the Rome pilgrims at St. Bavo in Haarlem, but it is not clear if the author had seen it with his own eyes or if his knowledge derived from hearsay. Given that his description is set in the past tense, the work might well have vanished already in Van Mander’s times.<sup>3</sup> All the same, his account has provoked several attempts to identify or reconstruct the pictures allegedly by Ouwater. Two life-size figures of Saints Peter and Paul mentioned as having filled the ‘binnen Tafel’ of the altarpiece were often identified with murals of these apostles on the pillars of the choir of St. Bavo, preserved today only through nineteenth century watercolours (fig. 3).<sup>3</sup> This possibility, however, can be discarded in the view of the present writer as the two figures show the hallmarks of the so-called International Style of the early fifteenth century<sup>4</sup> – suffice it to look at

<sup>3</sup>  
*Two Apostles*, watercolour after a lost wall painting at St. Bavo, Haarlem, after D. van der Kellen, *Muurschilderingen in de Grootte- of St. Bavokerk the Haarlem*, Den Haag 1861.





the curled-up seams of the cloak of St. Paul below his proper right arm. Moreover, Van Mander refers to the apostle figures as ‘beelden’, and these placed in a ‘binnen Tafel’ would, in my view, rather have been sculptures than paintings. Likewise very little can be concluded from the cursory description of a landscape with pilgrims at the ‘foot’ of that altarpiece. While especially Van Mander’s praise of the landscape itself has stimulated the interest of scholars and fuelled the notion that Ouwater stood at the beginning of the great Dutch tradition of landscape painting, the author in fact brings forward only some *topoi* here, praising the landscape as well as the hands, faces, and draperies of the painted figures. That he indeed used *topoi* becomes the more obvious if we accept that he did not know the painting itself.<sup>5</sup>

Thus Karel van Mander had probably never seen any original work by Albert van Ouwater, and all his information on the painter is extremely limited. As is well known, however, his text remains the one and only written source on the master and his work.<sup>6</sup> No trace of either a painter Albert or someone called Ouwater could be found in the comparatively well preserved Haarlem archives.<sup>7</sup> Different explanations for this fact are imaginable – for example that Van Mander made a mistake with the name,<sup>8</sup> or that Ouwater only stayed in Haarlem for a short time – but none can be proved. However, at least for reasons of convenience, I am referring here to the painter of the Berlin panel simply as Albert van Ouwater.

It is certainly quite probable that this painter had been active in Haarlem. Besides Van Mander’s account, the presence of the Lazarus panel in that city is further corroborated by a miniature of the so-called Jason Master, a local book illuminator, who provided a *Raising of Lazarus* (fig. 4) for a Book of Hours of ca. 1470/1480.<sup>9</sup> The miniaturist clearly took several motifs – the figure of Lazarus, the Magdalene kneeling in red at the left, the onlookers behind the grate in the background – from the panel painting. In doing so, he also provides us with an approximate *terminus*



*ante quem* for the painting. Surely, the presence of the panel in Haarlem in the last quarter of the fifteenth century does not necessarily prove that it was painted there. But Van Mander also states that Ouwater had been the master of the most famous early Haarlem painter, Geertgen tot Sint Jans, and this statement seems to agree well with the evidence of the Berlin Lazarus painting itself. Geertgen's treatment of the same subject (fig. 5), today in the Louvre,<sup>10</sup> deviates considerably from Ouwater's version in the general composition; nevertheless some individual motifs and some aspects of the colour scheme seem to derive from the earlier painting: The figure of Christ in his dark garment is very similar, though reversed; in both pictures there is a kneeling figure clad in bright red in the lower left corner, and in both a man in a long brown brocade gown, seen from the back, is standing on the right with a red headgear and a sword on which his left hand rests. More indicative for a relationship between the two painters may be the similarity of certain facial types, especially of young women: The head of the Virgin in Geertgen's Prague *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 6),<sup>11</sup>



6  
Geertgen tot Sint Jans, *Adoration of the Magi*, detail: The Virgin, c. 1490, panel, 111 x 69.5 cm. Prague, National Gallery. Photograph: National Gallery Prague.

7  
Albert van Ouwater, *The Raising of Lazarus*, detail: St. Martha, c. 1460-1475, panel. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. Photograph: author.

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for example, resembles strongly the Martha in Ouwater's picture (fig. 7) both in shape and features while the bony, full-bearded second king in Prague could be compared to the disciple in white behind Ouwater's Martha. If Van Mander is right and Geertgen was indeed the pupil of Ouwater, as seems plausible, we gain another chronological clue: According to the style of his works and the fashion of dress depicted, the time of Geertgen's activity must have lasted at least until around 1490, and if we believe Van Mander's account that the famous painter died very young, at the age of around 28, he must have learned his craft sometimes between the middle of the 1470s and the early 1480s. This, as we will see, agrees very well with what we can learn from the Berlin painting.

The painting itself provides surely the most valuable information on the Ouwater problem.<sup>12</sup> The panel consists of three vertical planks of oak from the Baltic region and measures 124 x 92.5 cm. It has been thinned and cradled and no remains of the original surface are left on the rear side. Dendrochronology shows that the youngest heartwood rings of the individual planks were formed in 1432, 1435 and 1436 respectively; planks II and III come from the same tree.<sup>13</sup> Assuming the unlikely minimum of nine years of sapwood and a minimum of two years for seasoning, the panel could have been painted from 1447 onward. Assuming the much more likely median of 15 sapwood rings, one arrives at a felling date of the tree around 1451 and an earliest creation date, again with two years for seasoning, of circa 1453. However, a span of about ten years for seasoning, transport and the like seems indicated for fifteenth century Netherlandish painting. In this respect it is worth comparing the findings in the Ouwater panel with the dendrochronological results of those works which are closest in style and, roughly, in date: paintings by Dirk Bouts. Two of them are dated exactly, the altarpiece of the Seven Sacraments (St. Pieter, Louvain), commissioned in 1464 and completed in 1468, and the portrait of a man in London of 1462.<sup>14</sup> In both works, the youngest heartwood ring of the wood employed was



8  
Albert van Ouwater, *The Raising of Lazarus*, IRR. Image: Christoph Schmidt, Berlin.

formed in 1436 – the very same year as in the Ouwater, but the wood of none of the three works in question comes from the same tree. The actual creation dates of these Bouts works lie more than 25 years after the date of the last heartwood ring present in the panels; if one would look only at the left wings of the Sacrament altarpiece, where the youngest ring present was formed in 1426, the span of time until its execution would even be at least 38 years. Thus we can assume, with all due caution, that the *Raising of Lazarus* was painted by Ouwater probably after 1460, possibly even in the following decade.

The painted surface of the Berlin painting seems to be more or less uncut with paint barbs remaining on all sides except the right one. Some infrared photographs of the painting have been taken in 1986 on large glass negatives. In the figure of the Magdalene in the lower left, the red of her dress responded very well to this technique, and the infrared photograph proved to be clearly superior to later IRR images.<sup>15</sup> A complete digital scan with a spectral band of up to 1700 nm was made in 2009. As the result of this is in many places inferior to the earlier infrared photographs, an additional scan with a spectral band up to 900 nm has been made. In the red areas, the result was similar, but clearly superior to that of the earlier infrared photographs. We can deduce that the underdrawing of the panel becomes more and more translucent at somewhere above a spectral band of circa 900 nm. The reason could be that either the pigment was not a black one (maybe an ink instead) or that it was applied in a strongly diluted form.

In large areas, especially in the figures, the painting proved to be rather opaque to IRR; moreover the images are in places strongly affected by craquelure. Nevertheless, underdrawing is discernible in nearly all parts of the painting (fig. 8). Obviously the underdrawn lines are of varying thickness with fine ones used for the contours and some hatching in the figures and for the architectural elements. Broader lines are at

9  
Albert van Ouwater, *The Raising of Lazarus*, IRR, detail: vault. Image: Christoph Schmidt, Berlin.





least in some places used to strengthen the shape of some major folds and to adjust individual parts of the bodies; they are best visible in the part of Magdalene's cloak which is spread out on the floor and in Christ's foot (fig. 10). These broader lines and the hatchings were obviously drawn with an aqueous medium applied with a brush; the same may well be true for the thin lines.

Several, mostly minor, changes became visible with IRR. Originally there were ribs planned above the capitals on the inside of the arcades so that the main room of the temple would have been rib-vaulted (fig. 9). The upper part of the glazing of the central window in the ambulatory was planned differently, with the vertical bands of bull's-eyes extending into the penultimate row. Some shifts occurred in the group of onlookers behind the grate in the back; for example there was a forehead visible instead of a mere hat behind the black-haired youth in the second compartment of the grate from the right. St. Peter's proper left hand was spared in the paint

of the background while his right hand was not and thus had to be painted on top of the green of his garments which today shows through the bright flesh colour of the hand. Some shifts also occurred in the figure of Lazarus, mostly in the course of execution in paint: His eyes were first placed more to the left so that his gaze was obviously directed towards his sister Magdalene or towards Christ rather than out of the picture. The position of Lazarus' proper left hand was slightly altered. The right contour of his body is slightly moved to the left in comparison to the area spared in the paint. His proper right thigh first extended further down under the piece of cloth; by the change his position was moved back in space which certainly makes his pose more creditable. Likewise, the space reserved for his right foot was broader than used in the end. The position of Christ's left foot was searched for in the underdrawing (fig. 10), and there are several shifts in the position of fold lines in the lower part of the Magdalene's drapery. The reserve in the paint of the floor for her garments on the left originally extended a bit beyond the present hem of her skirt.

Underdrawing of the architecture appears to consist mostly of contour lines which, for example, indicate the vaults in the ambulatory; additionally there seem to be some incised lines along the vaults and the arcades. But there is also a bit of hatching, namely in the moulding of the upper part of the capitals of the two arcades on the right (fig. 9), and only in these two – maybe this was found sufficient to indicate the shape for all the capitals. There is probably hatching in most parts of the draperies, but it becomes only visible under red paint layers, i.e. in the clothes of the Magdalene and in the red headgear of the man on the right who turns his back to the beholder. Here the hatching consists of regular, parallel lines, falling from right to left. The same kind of hatching is visible in the shaded half of the Magdalene's face where it crosses smaller details like the eyes.

Most underdrawing can be detected in the garments of the Magdalene, and, as already mentioned, it shows better in the scans taken at ca. 900 nm (fig. 10). The outlines of the figure and of the individual folds seem to have been indicated first by fine lines, often quite long. Some of them were adjusted or shifted in a second stage of underdrawing. Several folds in that part of the drapery, which is spread on the floor, are drawn or reinforced by broader lines. They are mostly angular, some are ending in hooks. Different kinds of hatchings were employed: Long, roughly parallel lines run along horizontal folds, for example along the Magdalene's belly; other long hatchings fan out a bit in a piece of drapery behind her back. The shorter hatchings are again varied, and although the predominant direction is from upper right to lower left, they sometimes follow the opposite direction. Somewhat longer, parallel hatchings occur here and there, marking depressions in the cloth. A lot of the hatchings appear to be drawn in sharp, uninterrupted zig-zag-lines, for example near the centre of the figure in the height of Christ's foot; a zig-zag fanning out is visible in the piece of drapery below that very foot. Zig-zag-hatchings can also be faintly discerned in the body of Lazarus where they indicate the shaded right side and partially the relief of the belly. Other hatchings again consist of very short rows of lines which sometimes run along a fold line, sometimes not.

The underdrawing of the Ouwater panel corroborates and adds to the observations and conclusions that can be gained from the painted surface. The architecture and even the general setting of the composition have long been compared with Jan van Eyck's *Madonna of Canon van der Paele* of 1436 (Bruges, Groeningemuseum) on the one hand and with the *Exhumation of St. Hubert* (London, National Gallery), made around 1440 in the Brussels workshop of Rogier van der Weyden, on the other.<sup>16</sup> A dependency of Ouwater's composition on either one of these two paintings or on both of them, or even its role as a model for the Rogerian panel have been suggested. There can be little doubt that the painter knew van Eyck's Bruges painting, for he not only took over the rounded, Romanesque structure of the apse but also the col-

oured columns, the style of their capitals and – almost literally – the design of their bases; he followed his model further by adorning the capitals of the ambulatory with carved scenes and by closing its windows with bull’s-eye-panes. As to the relation to the Rogerian *Exhumation*, scholars have been more sceptical. However, the motif of the onlookers placed behind a grate in the ambulatory, the brightly lit ambulatory itself and even the open grave, placed parallel to the picture plane in a tiled floor, seem to derive from that work. Moreover, the different colours of the inside of the choir and the ambulatory point towards a direct dependency of Ouwater’s painting on the Rogerian composition: Already in the latter one, the interior of the choir is of a dark brownish colour while the ambulatory is of a light grey; as the transition between the two tones in the arcades on the left suggests, the two colours are possibly meant to represent only two different shades of the same stone material. In Ouwater’s picture however the two parts of the architecture, which repeat almost faithfully the hues of the Rogerian panel, are clearly conceived as being two-coloured – a rather unlikely feature in real architecture. A look at the underdrawing now confirms the connection with the Hubertus-panel: The ribs first planned on the inner side of the apse (fig. 9) seem to be derived from the Gothic structure in the Rogerian work,<sup>17</sup> and the painter returned to a solution which is again closer to the model of van Eyck’s Bruges panel only in a second step.

With respect to style, only the well visible underdrawing of the Magdalene’s dress can be used for any comparison (fig. 10). Again, it corroborates observations made on the painted surface. Ouwater’s Berlin panel is closest in style to the works grouped under the name of Dirk Bouts. Max J. Friedländer aptly asserts in 1925 that without Van Mander’s report, ‘the Berlin panel (...) would have been catalogued as the work



11  
Dirk Bouts (circle of), *Marian altarpiece, Annunciation*, IRR, detail: Mary’s cloak, c. 1460-1475, panel, 80 x 52 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado.



12  
Dirk Bouts (circle of?), *Martyrdom of St. Erasmus*, detail, c. 1460-1470, originally panel, 82 x 80,5 cm. Louvain, St. Pieter. Photograph: KIK-IRPA, Brussels.

13  
 Albert van Ouwater, *The Raising of Lazarus*, detail: St. John, c. 1460-1475, panel. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.  
 Photograph: author.



of an unknown painter working close to Dieric.<sup>18</sup> This seems to be true for the underdrawing as well. What shows up under the figure of Ouwater's Magdalene can be compared with the underdrawing in Dirk Bouts' paintings. The IRR of Bouts' *Trial by Fire*, completed in 1473 (Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts), reveals angular fold lines and different kinds of hatchings similar to those visible in the Berlin panel.<sup>19</sup> Of course, this is only a general similarity, not one of individual handwriting, and both the *Trial by Fire* of the *Justice Scenes* for Louvain and the second work documented for Dirk Bouts, the altarpiece of the Sacrament, show no great similarity to the Ouwater painting. There are others, however, which are much closer to it in style and types. This applies for example to the triptych with the *Martyrdom of St. Erasmus* (Louvain, St. Pieter). Matthias Weniger already pointed out that the way brocades are painted is virtually the same in both this triptych and the Berlin panel.<sup>20</sup> But the whole figure of the man clad in brocade (fig. 12) in the central panel of the triptych, emperor Diocletian, compares in its proportions and its sharp, stiff outline well with

14  
 Dirk Bouts (circle of?), *Martyrdom of St. Erasmus*, detail: bystander, c. 1460-1470, originally panel, 82 x 80,5 cm. Louvain, St. Pieter.  
 Photograph: KIK-IRPA, Brussels.





15  
Dirk Bouts (circle of), *Marian altarpiece, Annunciation*, detail: Gabriel, c. 1460-1475, panel. Madrid, Museo del Prado, Photograph: Archive of the author.



16  
Albert van Ouwater, *The Raising of Lazarus*, detail: Mary Magdalene, c. 1460-1475, panel. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. Photograph: author.

the figure in a brocade cloak on Ouwater's painting. Compositionally in both paintings the figure in brocade, seen from the front or back respectively, is placed next to a figure in strict profile while a third one seen in three-quarter-profile stands behind them. Furthermore one may compare the face of the young disciple behind Christ, St. John (fig. 13), in the Lazarus picture with the young, bare-headed bystander behind Diocletian in the Louvain painting (fig. 14): Both have a rather too short neck, angular, somewhat thick features, and a shiny skin – just note the very similar whitish light in the corner of the nearer eye and along the ridge of the nose.

An even closer relationship with the Berlin panel reveals a triptych with four Marian scenes in the Prado which has generally been seen as a youthful work of Dirk Bouts, painted around 1445.<sup>21</sup> This however has proved to be a wrong assumption because the wood it is made of can hardly have been used before ca. 1452, and more likely only from 1460 on, and especially because the scene of the *Nativity* follows the model of a *Nativity* painted by Bruges artist Petrus Christus around 1460/1465.<sup>22</sup> In the Prado painting the way of rendering brocades again corresponds to the Berlin painting, and the same applies to the structure of drapery folds. The little figures of the onlookers behind the grate in the Lazarus panel resemble the shepherds looking from behind into the stable of the *Nativity* in the Prado triptych. Hands and faces are quite similar in the two works, and this is especially true for the face of Gabriel in the Prado *Annunciation* (fig. 15) in comparison to the face of the Magdalene in Berlin (fig. 16). On the whole, the similarities are such that it has already been proposed that both works are from the same hand or at least from the same shop.<sup>23</sup> This assumption is indeed endorsed by the results of IRR: The underdrawing of the Virgin's robe in the Prado *Annunciation* (fig. 11) shows the same thin contour lines, sometimes shifted afterwards, the same broader, angular lines indicating major folds, and the different types of hatching that we have already observed in Ouwater's Magdalene (fig. 10). In short, the underdrawings of both panels, the *Lazarus* of Ouwater in Berlin and the Boutsian *Annunciation* in the Prado are so similar that they could well be by the same hand.

17  
Dirk Bouts, *Altarpiece of the Sacrament*, left wing: *Passover*, 1464-1468. Louvain, St. Pieter. Photograph: Photograpische Gesellschaft, Berlin.



Some works from the group connected with the name of Dirk Bouts are thus very close to Ouwater's painting. In fact, the works in question – the *Martyrdom of St. Erasmus*, the *Marian triptych* in the Prado, and maybe as well the triptych of the *Descent from the Cross* in Granada – are closer to Ouwater than to the paintings documented for Dirk Bouts, the *Altarpiece of the Sacrament* (Louvain) and the *Panels of Justice* (Brussels).<sup>24</sup> One may only compare the faces of the bystander in the Erasmus panel and the St. John in Ouwater's on the one hand, and those of the disciples in the *Last Supper* in Louvain on the other. Likewise, to name a detail already discussed, the brocades with their long, regular hatchings of gold thread in Ouwater's and the related paintings are different from the brocades in the two documented works, for example the robe of the emperor in the *Trial by Fire*.<sup>25</sup> The results of our comparisons thus suggest to agree with Friedländer's observation: Albert van Ouwater was indeed a painter from the circle of Dirk Bouts.

This assumption is perfectly in line with the facts: The *Raising of Lazarus* betrays the knowledge of Jan van Eyck's *Virgin of Canon van der Paele* in Bruges as well as of the Rogerian *Exhumation of St. Hubert*, then in Ste. Gudule of Brussels. And as several peculiarities of the colouring of these two paintings reoccur in Ouwater's picture, it seems likely that he had seen them – or at least one of them – in the flesh which in turn presupposes his presence in the Southern Netherlands. Dirk Bouts seems to have lived in Louvain from at least 1448 on and died there in 1475. Ouwater might have been there at the period when for example the *Martyrdom of St. Erasmus* was produced which probably took place in the 1460s. The figure of the man seen in profile on the right of the *Lazarus*-panel bears a marked resemblance with a Jew standing at the left in Bouts' *Passover* (fig. 17) from the *Sacrament* altarpiece of 1464-1468: The bearded faces resemble each other, and both have a similar stance, showing rather thin legs with funny boots under a half-long robe around which a cloak is slung diagonally; the exotic headgear of the man in Bouts' painting seems to have been passed over to the backmost figure of the group of Jews in Ouwater's composi-

tion. If this observation should be correct, the master could only have been gone to Haarlem around the mid-sixties at the earliest. Again, this would fit well with the dendrochronological data of the Lazarus-panel.

Furthermore, such a date not before the middle of the 1460s would agree with what has been said on the possible apprenticeship of Geertgen tot Sint Jans with Ouwater which could hardly have taken place before ca. 1475. Also the *Marian Altarpiece* in the Prado, which seems to be either by Ouwater himself or by a closely related painter, would, as it is based on the model of a late work by Petrus Christus, very well fit into the chronology proposed here. These considerations are enhanced by the fact that the figure and the placement of the Virgin from the *Adoration of the Magi* in this Prado triptych strongly resembles the Virgin in Geertgen's already mentioned Prague *Adoration*.

Thus Ouwater probably did not work as a painter in Haarlem before the 1460s – regardless whether he or his family originally came from the city of Oudewater in Holland or not. This assumption might also explain his suspicious absence from the records preserved in Haarlem for he would have lived there only for a limited time, maybe about one decade or a little more, and would not have spent a long life within the city walls. Nevertheless Ouwater may well be called the founder of the Haarlem School, the more so if he really was the master of Geertgen. But he would not represent an indigenous Haarlem tradition, and much less could he be regarded as a representative of original 'Dutch' art as opposed to 'Flemish' art – it goes without saying that his elevation to a contemporary of Jan van Eyck and to the teacher of Petrus Christus or Dirk Bouts, once suggested by some scholars,<sup>26</sup> is completely ruled out by all chronological data available.

An Albert van Ouwater leaving Dirk Bouts' studio in Louvain in order to continue his life and work in Haarlem would present a kind of parallel to the career of another painter, the Master of the Tiburtine Sibyl of whom it is thought that he started in Louvain in the workshop of Bouts but left it after the latter's death in 1475 and continued in Haarlem during the 1480s and 1490s.<sup>27</sup> If this possible immigration of two painters from the circle of Bouts to Haarlem had anything to do with the presumed Haarlem origin of Dirk Bouts himself remains an open question. In any event the two masters, and Albert van Ouwater in the first place, ushered in the development of that foremost school of painting in the Northern Netherlands around 1500.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> W. Bode, 'Die Auferweckung des Lazarus von Albert Ouwater in der Königlichen Gemälde-Galerie', *Jahrbuch der königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 1 (1890), pp. 35-41. Karel van Mander, *Het Schilderboeck*, Haarlem 1604, fol. 205v; critical edition by H. Miedema, *Karel van Mander. The lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters*, Doornspijk 1995, vol. 1, pp. 80-81, commentary vol. 2, pp. 258-262.

<sup>2</sup> See the recent summary by F. Lammertse, 'Albert van Ouwater', in: F. Lammertse, J. Giltaij (ed.), exh. cat. *Vroege Hollanders*, Rotterdam (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) 2008, pp. 63-66, with references to older literature.

<sup>3</sup> See Lammertse 2008 (note 2), pp. 65, fig. 2; A. Châtelet, *Early Dutch Painting. Painting in the Northern Netherlands in the Fifteenth Century*, Fribourg 1980, pp. 68, 211, cat. no. 48

<sup>4</sup> The background of these figures was restored already in 1438 by the painter Lambert Rutgersz.; see Lammertse 2008 (note 2), p. 66, note 18.

<sup>5</sup> See on the *topoi* and Van Mander's patriotic Haarlem approach J. Becker, "Pictura nu wel Bataven soojonstigh is." Zur Lebensbeschreibung Ouwaters in Karel van Manders *Schilder-boeck*; in: *Icon to Cartoon. A tribute to Sixten Ringbom*, Helsinki 1995, pp. 41-53.

A Nuremberg painting of ca. 1460/1470 at Aschaffenburg, showing the *Separation of the Apostles*, is often cited as a free copy of the alleged Ouwater. However, besides the often overlooked fact that the subject is not the same as in the panel mentioned by Van Mander – he only speaks of pilgrims in a landscape – there is no connection to early Haarlem painting at all; the landscape is typical of Nuremberg painting. For the picture see most recently Lammertse 2008 (note 2), p. 65, fig. 3.

<sup>6</sup> The mention of a painting of 1476 in Glogau (Silesia) in 1690 as the work of the 'weltberihmbten Mahler Albert' no doubt can only refer to Dürer, despite the too early date.

Likewise the note on 'many little panels with landscapes' in the possession of Cardinal Grimani in 1521 which were in part attributed to a certain 'Alberto di Hollanda' does in all probability not refer to Ouwater given the kind of pictures – rather unlikely for the fifteenth century – and the not really matching name. On the two sources see most recently Lammertse 2008 (note 2), p. 65.

<sup>7</sup> The mention of the burial of a daughter of an 'Ouwater', found in earlier literature, has been proved by Châtelet 1980 (note 3), p. 63, to be a misreading for 'ouwe Claes'.

<sup>8</sup> The proposal in Châtelet 1980 (note 3), pp. 63, 68, to identify the painter with a certain Lambrecht Rutghensz. who is documented in Haarlem between 1426 and 1468 has been rightly refused by Lammertse 2008 (note 2), p. 65. The time of Lambrecht's activity, moreover, does not correspond to what can be deduced from the Berlin painting and some of Van Mander's information, see below.

<sup>9</sup> Private collection, fol. 157v. See: J. M. Plotzeck (ed.), exh. cat. *Andachtsbücher des Mittelalters aus Privatbesitz*, Cologne (Schnütgen-Museum) 1987, no. 64. More precise on the master: Exh. cat. *The Golden Age of Dutch Manuscript Painting*, Utrecht (Het Catharijneconvent), New York (The Pierpont Morgan Library) 1989, pp. 239-241. In contrast, I do not see any influence of Ouwater's composition in a miniature by Lievin van Lathem, *Christ driving the merchants out of the temple*, in the prayer book of Philippe the Good, Paris, BN, ms. n.a.fr. 16428, fol. 61, proposed by A. de Schryver, 'Relations et parentés entre l'oeuvre de Liévin van Lathem et celle de Dirk Bouts et d'Albert van Ouwater', in: *Bouts Studies. Proceedings of the International Colloquium (Leuven, 26-28 November 1998)*, Leuven/Paris/Sterling 2001, pp. 218-221. The similarities are in my eyes not very specific, and the Rogerian

*Exhumation of St. Hubert*, see below, is sufficient as a model.

<sup>10</sup> See Rotterdam 2008 (note 2), cat. no. 3.

<sup>11</sup> See Rotterdam 2008 (note 2), cat. no. 10.

<sup>12</sup> Cat. no. 532. It has been restored by Beatrix Graf in 1995-1996.

<sup>13</sup> Report by Peter Klein, Hamburg University, of September 9, 1989.

<sup>14</sup> See C. Périer-d'Ieteren, *Thierry Bouts. L'oeuvre complet*, Brussels 2005, cat. nos. 13 and 16. For the dendrochronological results mentioned below, see P. Klein, *ibid.*, pp. 370-371.

<sup>15</sup> The infrared films of 1986 were made by Orwo. The complete scan was made in November 2009 by Christoph Schmidt of the Gemäldegalerie with a XEVA-FPA-1.7-640 camera, the number of pixels being 640 x 512. A Nikon 55 mm macro lens was used on the camera. The final IRR assembly consists of 160 individual grabs.

<sup>16</sup> For the *Paele-Madonna* see: E. Dhanens, *Hubert et Jan van Eyck*, Antwerp 1980. For the *Exhumation* see: L. Campbell, *The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Schools. National Gallery Catalogues*, London 1998, pp. 407-427.

<sup>17</sup> In fact, the London panel shows statues of apostles with canopies above the capitals of the apse. However, they take in the place of ribs, and plenty of ribs can be seen in the vaults of the ambulatory.

<sup>18</sup> M.J. Friedländer, *Die altniederländische Malerei*, vol. 3, Berlin 1925, p. 57: '(...) die Berliner Tafel (würde), gesetzt, wir hätten van Manders Bericht nicht, als das Werk eines unbekanntes in der Nähe Diericks tätigen Malers katalogisiert werden.'

<sup>19</sup> Périer-d'Ieteren 2005 (note 14),

p. 96, fig. III.72.

<sup>20</sup> M. Weniger, 'Überwunden, unverantwortlich? Fragen zur Eigenhändigkeit bei Bouts und Ouwater', in: *Bouts Studies* 2001 (note 9), pp. 223-242, spec. pp. 227-228.

<sup>21</sup> Périer-d'Ieteren 2005 (note 14), cat. no. A1.

<sup>22</sup> See S. Kemperdick, 'Aelbert van Ouwaters *Auferweckung des Lazarus* und der Dirk Bouts zugeschriebene *Marienaltar* des Prado', in: *Bouts Studies* 2001 (note 9), pp. 72-87. On the painting by Petrus Christus, today in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, see M. Ainsworth, in: exh. cat. *Petrus Christus. Renaissance Master of Bruges*, New York (Metropolitan Museum) 1994, cat. no. 17.

<sup>23</sup> H.B. Wehle, M. Salinger, *A Catalogue of Early Flemish, Dutch, and German Paintings*, New York 1947, p. 50; Kemperdick 2001 (note 22). The close similarities between the Prado triptych and Ouwater are also pointed out, among others, by J. Snyder, 'The Early Haarlem School of Painting. 1. Ouwater and the Master of the Tiburtine Sibyl', *The Art Bulletin* 42 (1960), pp. 39-55, spec. pp. 43-44, and P.H. Schabacker, *Petrus Christus*, Utrecht 1974, p. 61.

<sup>24</sup> Weniger 2001 (note 20), demonstrates in detail the great differences within the Bouts-group.

<sup>25</sup> See Périer-d'Ieteren 2005 (note 14), p. 105, fig. III.90-93.

<sup>26</sup> Ouwater's role as predecessor of Bouts and P. Christus is assumed by W. Schöne, 'Albert van Ouwater. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei des XV. Jahrhunderts', *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 63 (1942), pp. 1-42.

<sup>27</sup> See Lammertse in: Rotterdam 2008 (note 2), pp. 67-69.