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"We are bent, not broken by the waves": Clandestine Devotion and Community Perseverance in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Catholic Visual Culture

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by

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ABSTRACT

"We are bent, not broken by the waves": Clandestine Devotion and Community Perseverance in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Catholic Visual Culture

by

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In the Northern Netherlands, despite its interfaith diversity, toleration was tantamount to an unstable coexistence that limited the rights of subordinate faiths. After the Alteration in 1578 prohibited Dutch Catholics from publicly displaying their faith, holding public office, and dispossessed of all church property by Protestant civil authorities. My dissertation argues that, in these conditions, Catholics mobilized visual culture to create a permanent record of their distinctive shared experience of subordination, producing a collective culture of resistance that undermined Reformed hegemony. In so doing, they adapted to their devotional needs both the late medieval tradition of affective piety that originated in the Northern Netherlandish movement of the Devotio Moderna and the seventeenth-century mystical revival which was taking place across Europe. From their homes, Dutch Catholic women acted as leaders in their faith communities by transcribing sermons, circulating visual materials, and organizing secret performances of the Mass. By bringing together a wider range of visual materials, devotional texts and archival documents, this project envisions how visual culture ensured the continuity of the Dutch Catholic community. In this way, this

dissertation challenges long-held assumptions about the Protestant nature of the post-Reformation Netherlands, while engaging with ever-relevant concerns regarding social relations between the powerful and powerless. From the act of hand coloring a small prayer card of Christ's flagellation to the foundation of clandestine sacred spaces, my dissertation surveys the material scope of Dutch Catholic visual culture and its driving role in community-organized reformation.

"We are bent, not broken by the waves": Clandestine Devotion and Community Perseverance in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Catholic Visual Culture

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I. "And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones?": The Hidden Transcript of the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Catholic Reformation



Figure 1-1. Pieter de Grebber, *The Unjust Judge and the Persevering Widow*, 1628. Szépmüvészeti Múzeum, Budapest, nr. 295.

In his 1628 painting *The Unjust Judge and the Persevering Widow* (Fig. 1-1), Pieter de Grebber represents a rarely depicted and obscure biblical passage: the parable of the unjust judge. In this story (Luke 18:1-8), a widow continually pleads with an unjust judge for justice against her enemy, until he eventually submits to her unyielding persistence. In his telling of the parable, Christ declares, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"[1] In de Grebber's image, the widow appears undeterred as she steadfastly waits, while the judge points at a book as if making a claim in their dispute. She gazes impassively towards the judge, her calm contrasting his frantic demeanor. The heroic figure of the widow occupies

most of the picture plane, with the judge partially receding into the painting's ochre background. The widow, who specifically resembles a Dutch lay monastic woman, or *klopje*, stands in for the Dutch Catholic faith, maintaining its endurance despite the hardship of the Reformed Church's unjust authority. *The Unjust Judge and the Persevering Widow* exemplifies the way that the Dutch Catholic Reformation harnessed the power of images to perpetuate the sustenance of their spiritual community. Faced with the proscription of their faith in clerical training, education, media, literature, and public practice, Dutch Catholics used visual culture to mobilize their community around their cause and define their spiritual identity. Images like *the Unjust Judge* provided models of quiet perseverance despite adversity, while others also heroized private devotional practices. These images acted as visual affirmations of their distinct identity and collective experience of persecution, far



Figure 1-2. *Dalmatic,* c. 1570, linen, silk, and wool tapestry weave with linen and metallic-thread passementerie, back length 43 3/8 in. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M.79.117.

removed from the triumphant Catholic iconography prevalent in contemporary Antwerp.

Faced with their faith's enforced invisibility, Dutch Catholics used visual culture to image their present persistence and envision their future ambitions.

A set of rare Dutch Catholic dalmatics in the collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Fig. 1-2) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art testify to this shared sentiment of endurance in the face of spiritual oppression. The van der Geer and van Culenborch families likely commissioned the ecclesiastical garments in Utrecht c. 1570, as they bear their coats of arms. The dalmatics include the following Latin inscription in two swirling banderoles of text: FLECTIMVR NON FRAGIMVR VNDIS (We are bent, not broken, by the waves). The iconography of the garments further emphasize this message of perseverance. At the bottom of the two vertical strips of fabric on the back of the dalmatics, the artist visualizes the waves of the inscription with bulrushes above, referring to Moses leading the Israelites to their freedom.[2] The center of each garment illustrates the sudarium, representing a miraculous appearance of Christ that would echo the mystery of transubstantiation performed by the priest. The message of the inscription and imagery on the dalmatics figures Dutch Catholics as the enslaved Israelites, awaiting their freedom from persecution. Like de Grebber's *Unjust Judge*, the dalmatics visualize the persistence of the Dutch Catholic community using biblical metaphor, thereby drawing an equivalence between their struggle and that of their faith's legendary heroes.

Through such objects, Dutch Catholics developed a spiritual culture that functioned as what political scientist James C. Scott has termed "the hidden transcript," the private life developed by subordinated peoples when in the absence of the dominant group. Given their suppression from the public sphere, images allowed Catholics to envision the righteousness of their faith and their triumph over their heretical enemies. In the context of private devotion

in domestic settings and liturgical performances in clandestine churches, objects of visual culture acted as transgressive gestures out of the public eye. As Scott elaborates, the hidden transcript allows the assertion of a voice dissenting from the hegemonic order. De Grebber's representation of the widow's persistence and the dalmatic's declaration that Dutch Catholics are "not broken by the waves" affirm the power of their community not only to endure, but to continue practices banned by Reformed authorities, ultimately undermining the Reformed government's claim to authority. As Scott posed, for the ruling group it is these subversive acts "that will represent a repudiation or profanation of the form of domination in its entirety."[3]

This dissertation maps the private world of Dutch Catholic renewal, which sought to sustain and revive the traditions of their faith despite its dramatic disruption. In their efforts, Dutch Catholics preserved the continuity of their traditions and asserted their belief in their confession's place as the true church of the Netherlands. Participation in clandestine Catholicism in this period thereby functioned, in Scott's terms, as an "everyday form of resistance" against the unjust dominance of the Reformed Church.[4] In seeking the re-formation and ultimate victory of their community, Dutch Catholics returned to those aspects of their religion that defined their identity in defiance to Protestantism: visuality, sensoriality, miracles, mysticism, hagiography, and the Eucharist. These strategies correspond to a wave of confessionalization across Europe, in which the increasingly diverse number of faiths across Europe sought to establish themselves as doctrinally distinct from one another. Dutch Catholicism especially drew on images to affirm their traditions in a markedly anti-Reformed fashion. The Reformed and Lutheran Churches, by contrast, organized their new visual culture around "sola scriptura," the emphasis on the word over the image. Luther had written

of his Church as a “hearing-kingdom” as opposed to the Catholic “seeing-kingdom.” The materiality of the word, even if read on elaborate textual inscriptions on the walls of a Reformed Church, should “disappear the moment it is read.”[5] Thus, an emphasis on the visual and its affective power was a profoundly Catholic, anti-Protestant stance for the Dutch Catholic Reformation to adopt.

"We are bent, not broken by the waves": Clandestine Devotion and Community Perseverance in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Catholic Visual Culture charts the important role of visual culture in the Dutch Catholic Reformation from the 1578 Alteration until around 1650. In this period, Dutch Catholics deployed art to renew their sense of collective identity, make domestic spaces sacred, and define a distinct devotional practice. In this chapter, I first explore the dimensions of interconfessional tolerance in this unstable time and the ways in which it contributed to a sense of Dutch Catholic identity. In this section, I then discuss the major mobilizing forces in Dutch Catholic renewal: secular priests, the leadership of the Holland Mission, Jesuit missionaries, and klopjes, or lay monastic women, who served as essential leaders and organizers. I then turn to the clandestine forms of worship mandated by their new socio-political position: private devotion and gatherings in domestic spaces transformed into clandestine churches. In particular, I examine the ways in which Dutch Catholic Reformation revitalized late medieval Netherlandish traditions of individual meditation and affective piety in their private spiritual practice. These modes of late medieval spirituality informed Jesuit practice, and lent a localized tone to the influence of the Catholic Reformation occurring across Europe. Throughout, I attend to the historiography of Dutch Catholicism: its inclusion and exclusion in Dutch history, and critical analysis of recent scholarship that deals with the subject.

In each of the three subsequent chapters, visual materials are the starting points for my investigation into the primary issues surrounding the Dutch Catholic Reformation over the first half of the seventeenth century. Chapter Two focuses upon the role of print culture in personal devotion, which became increasingly important for Catholic practice after its enforced privatization. Through a visual analysis of Abraham Bloemaert's 1619 illustrated hagiography *'T bosch der eremyten ende eremytinnen van Ægypten ende Palestinen*, I argue for the volume's confluence of spiritual concerns pressing in the Dutch Catholic community: penance, hagiography, eremitic retreat from the public sphere, and stilled devotion. Through close study of the engraved female desert saints in *'t Bosch*, I demonstrate how the series specifically addresses a monastic female viewership, while also negotiating women's mystical power by providing a devotional model that still upheld the feminine virtues of modesty, silence, and passivity. Finally, I consider how in the *Eremitinnen,* as in contemporary devotional prints, the Magdalene especially acted as a model of women's mysticism and asceticism.

In Chapter Three I examine how Pieter de Grebber transformed a devotional print motif in his large-scale painting of the *Ecce Homo,* valorizing private devotion in a manner similar to Bloemaert. Painted for Haarlem's new clandestine church of St. Bernard, de Grebber rendered in life-size scale the tradition of hand coloring prayer cards of Christ at the Column and Christ after the Flagellation popular in his community, including late medieval images repurposed by klopjes. By visually citing these devotional materials, de Grebber located the spiritual experience of viewers in a distinctly late medieval Netherlandish mode of affective piety to cultivate a sense of localized religious identity. Through an examination of the relationship between prints and paintings in Dutch Catholic visual culture, I address

the community's transition from using predominantly print media in their devotional practice to the increasing commissions of large-scale paintings for new clandestine churches.

Chapter Four is concerned with three altarpieces produced for early schuilkerken by Utrecht Catholic painter Gerrit van Honthorst. I look at his 1622 *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, painted for the no longer extant Dominicuskerk in Amsterdam, 1638 *Mocking of Christ* for the H.H. Maria and Ursula church in Delft and 1654 *Ecce Homo* for the clandestine church of Saint Marie Achter Clarenburg in Utrecht. Like de Grebber, Honthorst addresses the interests of the Dutch Catholic viewer, while he is thoughtful about maximizing their devotional effect in the intimate space of the clandestine church. In order to enact an affective meditative experience for viewers, Honthorst represents Christ in a compressed pictorial space, emphasizing the explicit evidence of his suffering. In my study of the three altarpieces, I suggest the original appearance of their original clandestine spaces through archival records and the other objects with documented provenance from their collections. I investigate the implications of reproducing a sacred space in the small-scale, domestic context of the schuilkerk, and their development through the 1650s. While de Grebber sought to monumentalize the intimate experience of using devotional prints in private prayer, Honthorst's altarpieces indicate the ways in which artists began to tailor their compositions to the experience of devotion in the clandestine church. Together, these three studies elucidate the key strategies by which the Dutch Catholic Reformation used visual culture to sustain and ensure the continuity of their community: hagiography, affective Passion devotion, and the performance of the latter in the clandestine church.

Throughout, I draw from contemporary devotional texts in order to trace some of the major parallels between the visual and textual interests of the community. In their archival

research, Joke Spaans (*De Levens der Maechden*, 2012) and Evelyne Verheggen (*Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht*, 2006) have detailed the devotional books and prints collected by klopjes. Although these indexes are incomplete and reliant on the archival materials that survive, the texts and images they reference serve as my starting point throughout my study. While the klopjes that Verheggen and Spaans focus on fostered a literary culture in which they collected books, compiled their own volumes of handwritten sermons, reflections, and prints, this is not necessarily the case for all lay Catholics across the Northern Netherlands. The body of materials preserved by lay monastic women, however, provides scholars with the richest source for understanding the texts and images that held the greatest influence. Late medieval volumes were as popular among Dutch Catholics as those published more recently. Some of the most widely read texts from earlier eras included Jacob Roecx's *Der Wijngaert der Sielen* (Antwerp: By mi Symon Cock, 1544; Antwerp, G. Van Parijs, 1569); Ludolphus of Saxony's *Vita Christi* (1374, first published 1474 in Strasbourg and Cologne); and especially Thomas Kempis's *the Imitation of Christ* (the seminal importance of which is discussed further in section C of this chapter).

A. Dutch Catholic Communities and the Holland Mission: Tolerance, Persecution, and Spiritual Identity

1. The Dutch Revolt and Anti-Catholic Sentiment

In the most violent years of the Dutch Revolt, Catholics developed a shared identity as an embattled, persecuted minority in a fight for the salvation of the Netherlands. William of Orange issued an edict officially banning the practice of Catholicism across the seven provinces of the Northern Netherlands in 1581. In the same year, the Staaten General declared with the Oath of Abjuration that Philip II was no longer their sovereign.[6] During the eighty years of the conflict, Protestants associated Catholic identity with treason and



Figure 1-3. *The Tyranny of Alva*, 1569, engraving, 8 3/4 x 11 14 in. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-79.002.

interpreted the public visibility of their faith as sympathy with the Spanish enemy. Catholic communities often triggered these Reformed fears of their "popish impudence" by celebrating Spanish advances into Dutch territories and venerating those that fought for the Spanish cause. As the government proscribed all Catholic worship in the seven provinces, the

Dutch Reformed Church shaped the character of all public civic rituals. The Calvinist Church and Staaten General of the newly (and tenuously) established United Provinces worked to craft a construction of national identity that continued to emphasize their self-image as the "Dutch Israel," a people chosen by God.[7] This Orangist-Calvinist government likewise configured their Spanish opponents as the Roman authorities unjustly persecuting the Israelites.[8]

Print culture reinforced these anti-Catholic sentiments throughout the Eighty Years War. Both the Spanish and Netherlandish sides of the conflict distributed political prints to rally the people around their causes. *The Throne of the Duke of Alba* was one of the most widely known anti-Spanish propaganda images, first produced in 1569[9] (Fig. 1-3) just after the outrage provoking executions of the Dukes of Egmont and Horn. This popular printed allegory defines the new polity of the Northern Netherlands in opposition to its oppressors, while caricaturing their Catholic faith as a contributor to their evil nature. From 1567 to 1573, the Duke of Alba (1507-1582) served as governor of the Spanish-occupied Netherlands on behalf of King Philip II. In his tenure as governor, Alba's policy of violent persecution led him to become one of the most reviled figures in Dutch history and incited his subjects to rebellion. The original print draws from images of Herod for its treatment of the Duke of Alba as an unjust judge. The seventeen provinces kneel before him, represented allegorically as female figures shackled by their necks holding the coats of arms of their respective regions. The papers representing the rights and titles of Dutch nobles are scattered on the throne before the allegorized provinces, indicating the Spanish Duke's disregard for maintaining civic order. Behind the throne of the Duke of Alba, the Cardinal Granvelle along with the Devil act as his supporters, representing the pernicious influence of the Catholic

Church on the tyrant. Granvelle blows false advice into the Duke's ear, while the Devil holds a papal tiara for him and a crown for Alba, ready to crown both figures. A pool of martyr's blood forms above the provinces from the severed neck of Count Egmont and another executed victim. From this pool, a figure dressed as a cardinal fishes for bags of money and other riches with a net. This figure represents Catholic clergy as the agents of Alba, greedy for Dutch riches; like Granvelle, the fishing clergy person is an ecclesiastical imposter, dressed in clerical garb despite his allegiance with the devil in pursuit of greed and treachery.

The popular image of *the Throne of the Duke of Alba*, copied in prints and paintings throughout the Eighty Years War, continued to remind viewers of the events that inspired their Revolt decades prior and the injustices against which they continued to fight. The image, in turn, contributed to the foundation and dissemination of "the Black Legend" across Europe, a movement of virulent anti-Spanish propaganda.[10] Over time, the numerous printed and painted versions of the *Throne* image transitioned from graphic evidence of the Spanish crimes against the Dutch in the war into more polished allegorical scenes, sans tortures, set in elaborate classical architecture.[11] While this body of propaganda images demonized the Spanish enemy in contrast to the virtuous Dutch, Protestant and Catholic alike, for those working in pursuit of a Catholic restoration they carried very different implications. These images polarized Catholics as much as they did Protestants, in opposing political directions; just as prints dramatized the atrocities committed by the Spanish, Catholics martyr's books lamented crimes against them in England and the Netherlands. Competing martyrologies predominated in the period, with the most popular accounts of contemporary Catholic martyrs including Richard Verstegan's *Theatre of the Cruelties of the Heretics of our Time* (Antwerp, 1587) and Petrus Opmeers's *Historia martyrum Batavicorum* (Keulen, 1625).

These popular volumes fostered the collective memories of these violent events, while shaping Dutch Catholic identity as a persecuted minority and criticizing nationalist propaganda about the republic's foundation.[12] Images of recently martyred Catholics served the more overtly political purpose of rallying viewers around their cause, while also presenting a model for ideal meditation and patient endurance in the face of oppression. For Dutch Catholics, print culture allowed them to share their criticism of the hegemonic Reformed Church, ultimately contributing to what Scott terms an "offstage social existence."[13]

2. The Holland Mission and the Dutch Catholic Reformation

Historians have identified the first half of the seventeenth century as a period of renewal and reformation in the Dutch Catholic community, despite the ongoing conflict and shifts in religious dynamics. R. Po-Chia Hsia, Michael Mullett, and others, have discussed how an international European wave of Catholic renewal comprised more than the doctrinal reorganization in response to the Protestant Reformation.[14] For this reason, Hsia prefers the more historically encompassing term "Catholic renewal" to describe both Tridentine reform and the broader scope of Catholic cultural shifts in the early modern period. The Reformation and Catholic reform were not contradictory, but parallel, mutually informative cultures. Both the Catholic and Protestant Reformations were in many ways indebted to a revival of late medieval spirituality, and the Council of Trent's conclusions built on those of fifteenth-century Church councils.[15] For Catholics in Protestant-ruled regions like Germany, England, and the Netherlands, however, these Reformations took on markedly different tones than those where Catholicism had remained in power. The Alteration of 1587 marked the official exclusion of Catholics from holding government office in Amsterdam (which the rest of the

republic followed gradually thereafter), as well as the seizure of all Catholic churches and properties. The Catholic community understood these events as grave offenses to the republic's true faith, leaving them with a profound feeling of loss after the loss of their visibility and seizure of their properties. In the present study, I use alternately use the terms "Dutch Catholic Reformation" and "Dutch Catholic renewal" (following Hsia) to refer to the distinct culture of Catholic Reformation in the Northern Netherlands, informed by these political and social conditions. While Hsia favors "renewal" for its wider inclusivity of European and non-European Catholicisms, I include "Reformation" in the lexicon of this study as it accurately represents the Dutch pursuit of re-forming their pre-Protestant Reformation Church.

While Catholics continued to practice their faith in private, the Pope declared the Netherlands to be the "missionary area" of the Holland Mission in 1613. Utrecht's history as the center of Catholic life in the Netherlands made it the natural home to a thriving clandestine Catholic community and therefore the clear choice to receive Roman funding and missionary efforts. Roman authorities appointed priests Sasbout Vosmeer (1546-1614) and subsequently, Philippus Rovenius (1574-1651) to lead the Holland Mission in its campaign for the Catholic Church in the Northern Netherlands to be officially restored. The Holland Mission, operated by these priests through a series of "stations" based in major cities, was the most important intermediary organization for Dutch Catholics that could contend with local authorities and negotiate arrangements of toleration. The establishment of these mission stations did not take place quickly or consistently across the Netherlands, and their progress often encountered obstacles. While Amsterdam was home to the third largest Catholic community in the Netherlands, it took until 1622 for Catholics to establish mission stations

there due to its staunchly Counter-Remonstrant city council. [16] These stations corresponded approximately to the bishopric's cathedral Chapters, colleges of clerics which governed the former dioceses in the absence of their bishops.

The reach and efficacy of the Holland Mission's unofficial ecclesiastical organization varied based on the circumstances of each region. Each Dutch city had a different denominational demographic, thereby situating religion in communities with distinct local identities.[17] The Dutch Catholic community comprised a broad range of classes and social groups, from elites to rural peasantry. In the major cities of Holland, Catholic communities most often centered around one or more wealthy elites who could provide some measure of protection and generous patronage.[18] Catholic communities often lived in close quarters in the same neighborhoods, which allowed them to more easily organize secret services and cultivate a localized identity. Amsterdam, Haarlem, and the former seat of the archbishopric, Utrecht, had substantial Catholic populations. In 1616, Rovenius declared that in Utrecht, "the leading and more distinguished inhabitants [were] mostly Catholic, and about a third of the common people."[19] Scholars have estimated the Catholic population of the Northern Netherlands in the period between thirty and fifty percent of the population, with that number falling by about fifty percent by the end of the seventeenth century.[20] While it is difficult to precisely calculate the Dutch Catholic population, Rovenius's statement seems to suggest that there was a large and thriving Catholic population in Utrecht.[21] Utrecht's Catholics largely lived in close proximity together alongside klopjes in the streets bordering their former St. Gertrude's church. The city also hosted a significant community of artists often referred to as the Utrecht School or Utrecht Caravaggisti, many of whom travelled to Rome starting in the 1610s. Among the most well known members of this group were Gerrit van

Honthorst (1592 – 1656), Hendrick ter Brugghen (1588 – 1629), Jan van Bijlert (1598 – 1671), Dirck van Baburen (1595 – 1624) and Matthias Stom (1600 – after 1652). Abraham Bloemaert (1566 – 1651), a leader in the arts in Utrecht and teacher to many of this prolific group of artists, did not sojourn to Rome and is generally understood to belong to the preceding Mannerist generation.

A series of dynamic, involved canons and klopjes led the Haarlem Chapter and defined its community. Accordingly, many of our sources come from the records of Haarlem klopjes, who were more literate and invested in recording their devotional culture than the average lay worshipper. Pieter de Grebber (1600 – 1652/3) served as the Chapter's principle artist, painting portraits of its leaders and members. Like Gerrit van Honthorst in Utrecht, de Grebber had to negotiate his active role in his Catholic community with his participation in civic artist's guilds. The Alteration saw the restructuring of these organizations, and so staunchly Catholic artists like Honthorst and de Grebber sometimes found themselves at odds with their newly appointed Reformed leaders.

A strong clerical leadership led Amsterdam's Dutch Catholic community, especially Leonardus Marius (1588-1652), who sought to revive the late medieval connection between the Eucharist and the honored position of Amsterdam established by its founding miracle. In 1345, a dying man regurgitated the Holy Sacrament and priests were unable to burn the vomited Eucharist in a fire, an incident the priests declared "the Miracle of Amsterdam." In Amsterdam until the Alteration, Catholics commemorated the miracle with a *stille omgang* (silent walk) through the city (this practice ceased in the seventeenth century, resumed with regularity in 1881, and Catholics keep the tradition alive today). The route that the priest processed with the host following the miracle in 1345 inspired the walk, starting from the

church's location on the Kalverstraat. The walk begins near the Nieuwe Kerk, progresses up the Nieuwendijk, around Prins Hendrikkade and down the Warmoesstraat, turning back up the Kalverstraat to the starting point.[22] Although Reformed authorities seized the original chapel where the miracle took place on the "new side" of town (and eventually tore it down in 1908), the miraculous event took on an increased significance in the wake of their faith's suppression.[23] Artists represented the miracle frequently in Dutch Catholic visual culture; for instance, Catholics adorned the clandestine church constructed in the city's Begijnhof (c. 1665-1700) with an altarpiece and two side altar paintings of the subject. Today, this surviving schuilkerk serves as the starting point for the annual silent walk. Marius, by all accounts, initiated a campaign that successfully promoted the Catholic faith and sought conversions; notable converts included the poet Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679) as well as prominent Lutheran and Reformed ministers. Catholics admired Marius for his ability to navigate Remonstrant communities, from which he converted the Leiden professor Petrus Bertius (1565-1629), a close associate of Arminius.[24] Van den Vondel joined Marius in his promotion of the Miracle of Amsterdam, further discussing the miracle in the former's *Altaar-Geheimenissen* (Keulen: Nieuwe Druckerij, 1645) and the priest's own volume *Amstelredams eer ende opcomen* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1639).[25]

A major Catholic community also emerged in Gouda around the turn of the century, led by the charismatic secular pastor Petrus Purmerent (1587-1663). Rovenius sent him to revitalize the Chapter, and during his tenure the number of Catholics, klopjes and active priests rose dramatically. The priest founded one of the earliest clandestine churches on the Hoge Gouwe, across the canal from the city's Lutheran schuilkerk. Purmerent's mobilization of Gouda Catholics is especially astonishing given the exceptional degree of persecution they

experienced between c. 1620-1645. Purmerent is also responsible for an early commission of a suite of large-scale religious painting from Wouter Pietersz Crabeth II (1593/1594-1644). The foundation and extensive furnishing of their clandestine church in this very difficult period indicates the power of visual culture to tacitly resist the dominant order and bring their community together. With the aid of wealthy parishioners, Purmerent spent around 14,000 guilders on the new church and its liturgical essentials between 1630 and 1632.[26] The increasing prosperity of the community prompted even more backlash from Protestant authorities in the form of raids, arrests, and additional recognition fees. In 1631, city magistrates appointed the notoriously persecutory bailiff Anthoni van der Wolff, who went out of his way to disrupt Catholic activities despite the fines they paid. Purmerent eventually negotiated a temporary truce with van der Wolff in 1644 that allowed them to continue their practices for a fee of 700 guilders per year. In 1649, the bailiff continued breaking up clandestine Masses and demanding additional fines, until the burgomasters demanded that the sheriff return to their earlier established truce.[27]

Communities similarly thrived in other major cities, including Delft, Rotterdam, and the Hague. In all cases, it is difficult to ascribe exact numbers to populations of religious groups, and individuals likely ascribed to tenets from different confessions.[28] Lack of declared membership in a church did not necessarily mean an absence of faith, as the centrality of private practice grew across many religious traditions in this period. In Amsterdam, Haarlem, and across the Northern Netherlands, only around half the city's population officially belonged to any church, regardless of confessional preference.[29] This does not indicate that people were not religious, but rather that the strict membership guidelines of Reformed Church restricted its numbers and many may have declined to

officially declare their confessional preference. Although the denominational landscape of the Northern Netherlands shifted and diversified in the period, sizable Catholic communities endured.

The interconfessional diversity of these urban centers contrasts with the Generality Lands in the South, where a substantial Catholic population remained largely resistant to Reformed authority. The shifting, unstable nature of the Southern boundary during the war allowed its Catholic populations to maintain a sense of loyalty to Spain while sporadically reviving public worship. Aware of the sizable Catholic populations of the Generality Lands, the Reformed government took extensive measures to exile its priests and proscribe their public practice. In the city of ‘s-Hertogenbosch, for instance, the celebration of the Mass continued secretly in as many as eighteen different locations after its 1629 reclamation by Dutch forces. Although authorities exiled its priests in 1631, closed its churches, and outlawed its worship, its Catholics remained steadfast in their refusal to convert to the Reformed Church. Due to their geographical proximity to the Spanish Netherlands, Catholics in the South participated in religious services there more often, while maintaining networks of support across the newly official boundary.[30]

An ongoing struggle with foreign Jesuit missionaries continued throughout the Dutch Catholic Reformation. The vicar apostolics appointed primarily secular priests for the Holland Mission, as many perceived Jesuits as having an unwelcome “Spanish character.”[31] Jesuit orders from across Catholic Europe sent priests to Northern mission stations to promote the Catholic faith in the Netherlands in pursuit of its reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church. Jesuits, many of whom traveled from Antwerp and elsewhere in the Southern Netherlands, were active primarily in Amsterdam and Utrecht. Through their

established Catholic networks in the South, Jesuits spread devotional materials and texts printed there to the Northern Netherlands.[32]

3. Tolerance and Interconfessional Interaction

Since this time, the Dutch Republic has cultivated a self-image as a nation founded on toleration and religious freedom, in contrast to their Spanish enemies in the Eighty Years War. This idea of the Dutch as an innately tolerant people grew in the nineteenth century, when historians lauded the virtues of the "golden age." Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, historical scholarship about Dutch tolerance has often confused it with contemporary ideas of tolerance as religious freedom, when it was more akin to an inconsistent absence of persecution. American historians in the late nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries often reinforced this concept, as they saw their Dutch Colonial heritage as the source of America's supposedly inherent tolerance.[33] In his three volume *Rise of the Dutch Republic* (New York: Harper Bros., 1855), the American historian John Lothrop Motley (1814-1877) dramatized the Dutch Revolt as a narrative of good against evil. Motley characterized Spanish invaders like the Duke of Alba as bloodthirsty monsters, in dramatic contrast to the democratic and tolerant Dutch people.[34] Motley described Alba and his "blood council" or "council of troubles" in visceral terms, emphasizing the sanguinary character of the Duke. Describing Alba and his fellow Spanish nobles, Motley recounted that "the only difference between Don John and Alva or Requesens was, that he was younger and more foolish than his predecessors, less capable of concealing his venom, more impatient to dip his hands in blood." To Motley and his generation of Protestant historians, the Spanish were not just political opponents of the nascent Dutch nation, but innately prone to violence, injustice, and intolerance (in Motley's terms, "religious bigotry").[35]

In recent years, historians have been especially interested in critically examining these assumptions and exploring the nature of tolerance in Holland. There is no consensus on the matter, and some scholars argue that interfaith tolerance was tantamount only to an unstable coexistence. Benjamin Kaplan and others have discussed Dutch tolerance as a social construction in favor of Calvinist hegemony that to differing degrees served to mask the real extent of persecution against the suppressed religions. Kaplan has discussed how schuilkerken allowed the Reformed government to maintain the fiction of their dominance: "by containing religious dissent within spaces demarcated as private, schuilkerken preserved the monopoly of a community's official church in the public sphere. By maintaining a semblance of religious unity, they neutralized the threat posed by dissent to the identity and thus to the very integrity of communities."[36] Although Catholicism's relegation to the private sphere maintained the public transcript, I resist Kaplan's assertion that this fiction was only "superficial" because neighbors of clandestine churches knew of their existence. While this was certainly the case in some cities, this tolerance grew over the course of the century (especially after the Peace of 1648) and was not consistent across all regions. As Kaplan notes, the war against Spain caused increased persecution of Catholics, and they endured countless raids and arrests through this period. Since Calvinists formed one of many religious groups at the time, scholars question the degree to which their dominance was in appearance only. The exhibition *Traits of Tolerance: Religious Tolerance in the Golden Age* (Museum Catharijneconvent, 2013) examined the character of Dutch tolerance in the period, and its implications for interfaith dynamics in art patronage networks.[37] In the Eighty Years War, the conditions of tolerance continually shifted based on the events of the conflict, while scholars generally agree that tensions subsided after the end of the war. By all accounts, the Twelve

Years Truce (1609-1621) allowed some relief for persecuted Catholics and saw a marked increase in the number of priests and the regular performances of the Mass. I posit that while the friction between faiths were contingent on civic conditions and the events of the war, the Reformed Church's hegemonic policies created a dynamic in which suppressed faiths had to create private worlds in order to practice their spiritual traditions.

The degree of anti-Catholic sentiment and legal persecution varied greatly from city to city across the United Provinces, as government authorities did not universally enforce the placards. The ban on Catholics holding public office prohibited their open dissent to these restrictive policies. The widespread discrepancies in Catholic recognition fees demonstrates the inconsistent application of anti-Catholic placards. Magistrates collected these fees, called *recognities*, in exchange for turning a blind eye to the construction of clandestine churches, the harboring of missionaries, and the continuation of their secret practices. Although the Dutch government forbade recognition fees, they continued nonetheless to differing extents in different cities. In Amsterdam in 1641, around five hundred Catholics paid over 6,200 guilders to host a Mass for the feast of Corpus Christi.[38] The Staaten General took measures to stop this practice and more evenly enforce the placats, including sending the bailiff of Rijnland, Lord van Wimmenum to investigate in 1643. Unbeknownst to the Dutch officials, the bailiff himself had already accepted thousands of guilders in recognition money from Catholics. In addition to recognition fees, officials also fined Catholics caught hosting secret services or harboring priests. In some extreme cases (especially those concerning the leadership of the Holland Mission), officials banished priests, or subjected them to corporeal punishment and imprisonment. Catholic communities then had to come up with sizable ransom payments ranging from 1,000-4,000 florins to release their captive priests. Marauding

beggars perpetrated most of the incidents of violence at the height of the Revolt, and anti-Catholic policies thereafter consisted less of violent punishment than keeping them hidden from the public eye. The ever-changing negotiation of fees and other punitive measures demonstrates that toleration was a "process rather than a condition," perpetually uncertain.[39]

Although Calvinists expressed anxieties about potential conversion, individuals of different confessions freely intermingled in Dutch society, particularly in major cities. In the heterogeneous climate of Amsterdam, many crossed confessional boundaries in their work and social circles. The Dutch referred to this principle of interaction with those of other religions as *omgangsoecumene,* or pragmatic ecumenism. This dynamic especially factored into the arts, as artists frequently worked for those of different confessions and adapted their work to fit diverse patrons.[40] Rembrandt is one of the most well known examples of this phenomenon, as he worked for Catholics, Mennonites, Jews, and Calvinists alike. While producing paintings for their community, Catholic artists like Pieter de Grebber and Gerrit van Honthorst also worked for major Reformed patrons, including Stadholder Frederick Henry. In his early survey of paintings with provenance from clandestine churches, Xander van Eck identified works by thirty-four Catholic and fifteen Protestant artists, including Jan van Bijlert, Thomas de Keyser, and Jan Miense Molenaer.[41] While this data suggests that Catholic artists were more likely to execute this work, no artist could professionally afford to be selective in their clients and had to develop a broad network of contacts. The relatively small number of painting commissions available for clandestine churches meant that Catholic painters had to work for patrons of diverse faiths, while many did not work for the Holland Mission in any capacity. Many prominent Catholic artists, including Jan Steen, Johannes Vermeer, and Jacob van Goyen, never officially worked on Catholic commissions.[42]

Genres that past art historians have discussed as Protestant in nature, like landscape, still life, and cityscapes were popular across Europe in the seventeenth century and collected by an increasingly wide range of social, economic, and religious groups. Several scholars have identified a tendency among painters to adjust their representations of biblical subject matter depending on the faith of themselves or their clients. For instance, Calvinist painter Adriaen Thomasz Key copied the Catholic artist Michiel Coxcie's painting of *Cain and Abel* and erased its figure of God descending from the sky surrounded by angels. In so doing, Koenraad Jonckheere argues, Key recognized Protestant concerns with images while purposefully rendering a Catholic image as more Calvinist in tone.[43] Artists often tailored representations of religious scenes to suit a Protestant or Catholic patron, regardless of their faith. As I discuss further, the Dutch Catholic community deployed a program of imagery in their private practice and sacred spaces that defined and sustained the spiritual interests of their community. They favored images that resonated with popular devotional culture, mysticism, private meditational practice, martyrology, and the suffering Christ.

Interconfessional interaction was not tantamount to universal tolerance, however, as all non-Reformed denominations faced legal persecution for the visibility of their practices. Religious difference also caused conflict within personal and professional relationships. In some cases, artists faced backlash for producing religious art, especially when it afforded Catholic practice public visibility. The Reformed Church Council in Gouda complained about vendors selling crucifixes in the public markets, only to find that the salespeople belonged to the Reformed faith. Hendrick de Keyser also faced legal action after sculpting a statue of St. John for a Catholic church in 's-Hertogenbosch.[44] Although it would be difficult to accurately survey the degree of interconfessional tolerance among Dutch Catholics,

vehement anti-Reformed sentiment often defined their community's discourse. Klopjes and Catholic leadership sometimes referred to Protestants as *ketters* (heretics), whom they had to work to return to the fold of the true church. Trijn Jans Oly spoke of admirably of her fellow klopjes who had to maintain mission stations in the "ferocious and heretical" cities further north.[45] Catholics often found closer allies in Lutherans, Mennonites, and Counter-Remonstrants, who shared in their experience of oppression by Reformed authorities.

Although Lutherans sometimes commissioned religious art for their clandestine churches, they did not face the same potential trouble with civic authorities as a result.[46] Remonstrants, like Catholics, encountered persecution and found allies in one another as a result. Scholars have discussed numerous examples of the working relationship between the two groups, including the Remonstrant Thomas de Keyser's commission from an unknown Catholic patron for a 1631 *Group Portrait of Three Catholic Brothers*. Van Thiel situates the portrait's unconventional representation of a baby, nude and wearing a prominent golden cross, in the context of Dutch religious culture. Ultimately, he concludes that the two brothers aside their baby brother Simon are sponsoring him and the clerical career path that his parents have selected on his behalf. In his discussion of this unusual portrait, Pieter J.J. van Thiel remarks that given their special connection, a Remonstrant could easily have received work from a Catholic client, and vice versa.[47]

4. Missionary Efforts and Conversion

The visual culture of Dutch Catholicism communicated of what Van Eck has termed a "missionary spirituality," arguing for their faith's historical legacy and primacy as the church of the Netherlands. Images worked for this missionary effort by valorizing the proselytizing practices of national saints Willibrord and Boniface or representing scenes of conversion in which the doubting onlooker acts as a model for the potential convert viewing them. Gouda priest Petrus Purmerent commissioned one example of this type of conversion imagery from Wouter Pietersz. Crabeth II as part of an initial group of large-scale paintings for the community's newly constructed clandestine church. In Crabeth's 1641 *St. Bernard of Clairvaux converting William of Acquitaine* (Fig. 1-4), he casts Purmerent in the role of the titular saint in the process of converting the rebel Duke. While they are as of yet unidentified, the highly individualized faces of the priests, klopjes, and non-monastic women behind him are also likely portraits of other prominent Gouda Catholics. In the image William of Aquitane, bewildered at the sight of the Eucharist which the figure of Purmerent-as-Bernard holds aloft, falls backwards into the arms of his entourage. Crabeth's insertion of a Dutch Catholic leader as Bernard glorifies the conversion efforts of their local community and envisions successful triumph over their heretical enemies (in Scott's terms, the reversal



Fig. 1-4. Wouter Pietersz. Crabeth II, *St. Bernard of Clairvaux Converting William of Acquitane*, 1641, oil on canvas, 56 1/3 x 94 in. Museum Gouda.

of the hegemonic, ruling group). Despite the ever-changing conditions of their toleration and persecution, visual culture imaged their consistent pursuit of justice for their suppressed faith.

The ultimate goal of the community's clerical leadership was their re-legitimation by the official Roman Catholic Church, thereby recovering their official status as an archbishopric. The vicar apostolics of the Roman-established Holland Mission regularly wrote to officials at the Vatican to report their progress in reclaiming the territory for the church. In their letters back to Rome, the vicar apostolics often described exaggerated numbers of their converts; Rovenius wrote in 1635 that in the past year they had brought 2,500 heretics back to the true faith.[48] The Reformation's lay leadership, especially its klopjes, sought their goal of re-legitimation through a sweeping campaign of conversion. In addition to traditional, didactic methods of conversion, the Holland Mission's leadership took pride in the many incidents they recorded in which miraculous visions or events converted the heretical unbeliever.

B. Eremitic Retreat and Heroic Hagiography

In Chapter Two, I examine the essential role of print culture in personal devotion after had the practice of Catholicism been forced into private**.** I especially focus on lay monastic women, or klopjes. After the government's closing of the cloisters, convents, and bagijnhofs in the Alteration, many groups of monastic women of various orders chose to remain living together in communities. The informal groups of klopjes (also known as kloppen, or geestelijke maagden) grew starting in the seventeenth century in the Northern Netherlands as a clandestine movement in the absence of official monastic or semi-monastic options. Klopjes ostensibly continued the beguine movement of the late medieval period, while some beguines still lived in close proximity to one another, refusing to give up their

status.[49] Klopjes acted as leaders in the Dutch Catholic Reformation for a number of reasons. Firstly, Reformed authorities legally relegated the public practice of their faith to the private sphere, which had traditionally been women's primary domain in Dutch culture. They emerged as organizers of the Reformation due not only to its location in domestic space, but due to the absence of consistent clerical assistance. Their priests exiled, klopjes led the organization of the scant available services, notifying their community of upcoming performances of the Mass. They acted as caretakers for altars in private residences, known as "house churches," and thereafter became the custodians of clandestine churches after their establishment. Moreover, the klopje's ability to occupy both the private and public realms fulfilled a dual purpose – for women unable to take official monastic vows, this role afforded them a distinct spiritual commitment and identity. As they did not have to remain in a cloister, the community regarded them as important ambassadors for the Catholic cause in public, aiding in widespread conversion and education efforts. In *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, Scott states that the dissemination of hidden transcripts is dependent on human agents who have free time and relative mobility.[50] In these terms, klopjes fit the bill as agents of the Catholic hidden transcript: they could move between their private Catholic communities and the public world, while their full-time dedication to the faith allowed them the greatest opportunity to work for their cause. Marked as klopjes by their black, modest dress, they visualized the otherwise unseen Catholic presence wherever they went. This public signification of their klopje status openly pushed the boundaries of resistance against the dominant order, rejecting the anonymity of what Scott calls "the arts of political disguise."[51] Due to their visibility and known importance in the Dutch Catholic community,

kloppen faced considerable concern and hostility from Protestant authorities, especially in response to their missionary function.

Klopjes deployed visual and textual devotional culture to serve their community and foster a hidden culture of Catholicism. Klopjes recorded sermons in handwritten devotional books, which they reread aloud to their peers to produce an experience of group reflection on their themes and teachings. They collected and distributed devotional prints and texts for their community, acting as a vital resource for Dutch Catholic visual culture. Contemporary devotional texts published in Antwerp found their way to the Northern Netherlands via furtive exchanges and Catholic community networks. Priests and spiritual women from the Northern Netherlands facilitated the clandestine circulation of religious books and devotional prints, while maintaining correspondences with their colleagues in the South.[52] The influx of international immigrants, increasing literacy, and a relative lack of government control over the industry, among other factors, facilitated a thriving book trade and exchange in the Dutch Republic. While there was a high demand for the Bible and religious texts among Protestants, illustrated devotional books only began to be gradually produced in the Northern Netherlands later in the century when anti-Catholic sentiment waned. As Els Stronks has argued, Protestants increasingly tolerated the Dutch illustrated bible over the course of the century as different confessions negotiated their relationships to illustrative religious imagery.[53] Several Northern printing houses, however, began to clandestinely publish more explicitly Catholic volumes starting around the 1630s. While illustrated books and prints largely came from the Southern Netherlands, Northern artists also collaborated across the tenuous Southern border to produce Catholic printed materials. Chapter Two looks at one of the earliest examples of a publishing house actively producing Catholic texts: Jacobsz. Paets (1587 – c. 1657) in

Amsterdam, who re-published Bloemaert and Bolswert's *'t Bosch der Eremyten ende Eremitinnen* (first published in Antwerp in 1619) in 1619 and 1644. For the 1644 Amsterdam-published edition, Reformed woodcutter Christoffel van Sichem (1581-1658) adapted Bloemaert's original engravings, distilling the spare images of saints in prayer to be more simplified and readily accessible to lay readers.

In Chapter Two, I pair close analysis of Bloemart and Bolswert's engravings of desert saints with my translations of the correspondent Dutch texts that accompanied the 1644 Amsterdam edition. Through consideration of the major themes present in the images and texts, I examine the key functions of hagiographies for a Dutch Catholic reader and viewership. In part through close contact with Jesuit missionaries, the hagiographic tradition became increasingly important in the Dutch Catholic Reformation. Bloemaert's designs for *'t Bosch*, first published in 1619 with accompanying texts by Jesuit Joannes Ryser, and in subsequent Dutch editions with adapted, simplified texts from den Bosch Jesuit Jan van Gorcum. Images of saints in devotion not only provided a meditative model, but also resonated with Dutch Catholics's shared perception of their community as persecuted and their memory of recent martyrdoms during the most violent years of the Eighty Years War. These images of saints represent a confluence of Catholic traditions that disavowed their Reformed rulers: penitence, eremitic retreat, and martyrdom. Klopjes in particular would have identified with images of female saints embodying these aspects of the faith which they steadfastly championed. In the earliest years of the Dutch Catholic community's reorganization, Bloemaert and Bolswert used the private, easily concealable print medium to create a subversive gallery of figures that embodied Catholic heroism and perseverance.

C. Lay Devotion and the Adaptation of Late Medieval Affective Piety

In Chapter Three, I turn to the revival of late medieval affective piety that characterized the private devotional culture of the Dutch Catholic Reformation. Since the late medieval period and the movement of the Devotio Moderna, the Netherlands maintained a tradition of lay piety. For seventeenth-century Dutch Catholics only permitted to practice their faith in private, the adaption and continued reuse of late medieval texts and images not only served the new circumstances of their worship, but cultivated a sense of local, Netherlandish spiritual identity. In his 1632 *Ecce Homo*, Pieter de Grebber monumentalized an image type taken from devotional prints typically for personal use, demonstrating the importance of print culture in the community in the preceding years. This type of the bloodied, isolated Christ as the Man of Sorrows originated in late medieval Netherlandish visual culture. The revival of late medieval affective piety to which de Grebber contributed nurtured a Northern Netherlandish devotional culture that was accessible and driven by lay people. The adaptation of art and literature of the recent past also envisioned the unbroken continuity of Catholicism in the Northern Netherlands, before its disruption in the Reformation. By imagining the reversal of the Reformed Church's dominance in this way, Dutch Catholics enacted a strategy of subordinate groups discussed extensively by Scott. Citing ritual reversals of social order like carnival, Scott discussed how this tendency of oppressed peoples to "have no trouble imagining a total reversal of the existing distribution of status and rewards" ultimately serves as the ideological basis for many revolts against the ruling order.[54]

The late medieval organization of the Devotio Moderna was the principal influence guiding the Dutch Catholic Reformation. The movement started to spread beginning in the

late fourteenth century in the Congregation of Windesheim, led by its deacon Geerte Groote (1340-1384). Also known as the Brothers of the Common Life, the organization consisted of lay people who advocated for the sensory immersion of the soul in devotional experience. These communities of devout individuals promoted piety in the modern era without taking official oaths. The widely read devotional text *the Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis out lines this practice, in which he prescribes to readers the "wholesale immersion of one's self in Christ." Groote similarly favored an Augustine meditational system by which the believer ultimately frees themselves from all that is material and elevate what they at first perceive with the senses to the spiritual. Scholars have discussed the Devotio Moderna as a forerunner to the Reformation in the Netherlands, as their practice consisted of increased lay engagement with biblical text and devotional images. Accordingly, their place between clerical institutions and secular society led to their official dissolution around the turn of the seventeenth century, following tensions with church authorities.[55]

A sustained devotional cult around Thomas a Kempis defined the Dutch Catholic Reformation, and they saw him as the forefather of Netherlandish spirituality, characterized by active lay participation and rigorous, inward focused private meditation. Dutch Catholics venerated Kempis himself as a saint, especially after the discovery of his body relics in Zwolle in 1672.[56] Given the changing conditions of their faith and its practice, the Dutch Catholic Reformation identified with the lay movement of the Devotio Moderna and the tradition of late medieval piety that they represented. Historian Charles H. Parker, in his 2008 *Faith on the Margins,* argued that the Dutch Catholic Reformation facilitated a closer working collaboration between clergy and laity than previously seen in the Netherlands. This particular movement of devotional practice especially resonated with those active in the

Dutch Catholic Reformation not only for its emphasis on lay participation, but also for its affective character. In this practice, one cultivates a rich meditative landscape in their imagination, drawing from memory and the tools of text and image. The goal of vividly envisioning the devotional object (the Passion of Christ, the saints, or the torture of sinners in Hell, for instance) is to engender penance and a profoundly sensorial, empathic relationship to the sacred.

Pious lay people in the Northern Netherlands have historically engaged with images as an essentially important tool in their devotion. Beginning with Michael Baxandall, art historians have considered religious imagery as an important teaching tool for pious but illiterate viewers who could not read the text of the Bible. Drawing from Gregory the Great's writings on the function of religious images, Baxandall argued that images acted as the external manifestations of internal meditation for early modern viewers. Scholars have since articulated in detail the intellectual, emotional, and mnemonic processes by which meditation occurs. In his approach to the devotional paintings of Geertgen tot Sint Jans, John Decker termed the process by which Christians work to make their souls deserving of salvation "the technology of salvation." Decker refers to this process as a "technology" to indicate its systematic, mechanic sequence of steps; images provide models of devotion, help viewers empathize with Christ's suffering, foster contrition and envision richly imaginative worlds.[57] The internal sense of imagination then collects the intuitions of common sense, "storing them as a prelude to further manipulation by the active fantasy," which then produces *phantasmata*, visions assembled from previously stored images in the imagination.[58]

The Jesuit order, founded in 1541 by Ignatius of Loyola and deployed in the militant defense of the church in crisis, set the tone of the Counter-Reformation and its visual culture.

The late medieval Netherlandish tradition of affective piety strongly influenced Ignatius in the development of Jesuit doctrine. As the use of images in meditation was foundational in Netherlandish spirituality since the late medieval period, Jesuit ideas and practices were somewhat familiar for Dutch Catholics.[59] Ignatius particularly looked to Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, from which he adapted a program of rigorous meditation on the suffering of Christ, asceticism, and penance. Like Kempis, Ignatius's teachings emphasized a spiritual progression towards salvation through meditation. At the University of Paris, Ignatius received his spiritual education in a university founded by two members of the Devotio Moderna, Jan Standonck, and Jan Mombaer. The affective Netherlandish dimension of the Jesuit Counter-Reformation took on different implications for Catholics in Protestant States, whose government mandated that their practice take place exclusively in private.

Dutch Catholic paintings like de Grebber's *Ecce Homo* represent a subject that models stilled, quiet contemplation in the Jesuit tradition. In their placement of their sacred figures outside of a distinctive setting or narrative time, they allow the worshipper to cultivate their devotional imagination. As Jesuits privilege the sense of sight in devotion, illustrations to their texts often prompt the viewer to act as a witness to the unfolding action as if the viewers were present with the represented figures. This implication of the viewer in the image is exemplified by Jerome Nadal's illustrations to Ignatius of Loyola's *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines (Pictures of the Gospel Stories)*, or *Spiritual Exercises*, printed by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp in 1593.[60] The book's print of *Christ Crowned with Thorns* presents Christ on a balcony to which a crowd of onlookers is turned, all facing away from the viewer. The central space in the crowd left empty and the position of the figures turned towards Christ allow its viewers to envision themselves as part of the group. This effectively

triggers the Jesuit mental exercise referred to as "composition of place," in which images trigger the viewer to complete the scene imaginatively. This Jesuit meditational tool is omnipresent throughout images of the Dutch Catholic Reformation, in which the sacred figure is often isolated with little to no background context. Allowing room for the viewer's "composition of place," in the words of Gauvin Bailey, does not only permit their imaginative recreation of the scene but in so doing lets them render "what would otherwise be a remote episode of history into something alive and personally affecting." Art of the Catholic Reformation shared this devotion focusing strategy, especially in representations of martyr saints.[61] In Chapter Three, I draw from late medieval devotional texts such as Jacob Roecx's *Der Wijngaert der Sielen* (Antwerp: By mi Symon Cock, 1544; Antwerp, G. Van Parijs, 1569), Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* and John of Calabria's (the Pseudo-Bonaventure's) *Meditations on the Life of Christ* (c.1300). Through consideration of these texts, widely popular among klopjes, alongside the images they collected, I elucidate the revival of late medieval devotional culture in which de Grebber participated. In de Grebber's painting, as in both the imagery and literature of this late medieval meditative practice, the viewer's imagination is triggered to elaborate on the sensorial depiction of Christ's bodily suffering, while further stimulating their imagination to fill in the narrative details absent from the visual or textual prompt.

This project attends to the ways in which images direct devotional experience: isolating figures, pushing them close to the picture plane, and heightening the suffering of Christ. These tendencies participate in a distinctly late medieval Netherlandish culture of affective devotion. I refrain, however, from using the style of Caravaggism as a framework to understand these effects. Comparison of Dutch art to contemporary Italianate work has

characterized scholarship in the field since its inception and often evaluates it based on its likeness to Italian counterparts rather than on its own merit. We cannot generalize and strictly define "Caravaggism" as a style nor discuss the "Caravaggisti" as a cohesive group, and the art historical understanding of Caravaggio and his artistic impact varies widely. While Dutch artists like Honthorst and de Grebber picked up several Caravaggesque pictorial elements, they reinterpreted them with their own approaches to vivid illusionism, sensorial intensity and the immediacy of divine figures. Scholars overcredit pictorial strategies like night scenes and chiaroscuro to Italian influence, when they have a longstanding history in Netherlandish art. Justus Müller Hofstede and Ernst van der Wetering have both called attention to the ways in which the dramatic use of artificial light in night scenes is not unique to the Caravaggisti and has a long tradition in Northern Netherlandish art, particularly for scenes of religious dialogues and for scenes of debauchery.[62]

The aforementioned artistic tendencies which can be found across a great deal of Dutch Catholic imagery (immediacy, intimate compositions, an emphasis on corporeal suffering and the isolation of figures) carry broader implications than their participation in Caravaggesque trends. In the *Sacred Image in the Age of Art*, Marcia B. Hall argued that the Post-Tridentine era of reform in religious art ushered in a new way of engaging the devotional worshipper that gave the illusion of "the divine invading the world," into which the viewer could seemingly enter as "a means to spiritual seeing," without misleading the viewer that they are looking at anything but a work of art. Unlike Hans Belting's argument in *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, in which he contends that devotional worship of the "image" dissolved into "the age of art," around the time of the Reformation, Hall contends that the two are not diametrically opposed and artists of the

Counter-Reformation could operate with a dual agenda in which illusionism served a devotional purpose and the methods of "art" operated to help the viewer to reach a higher spiritual state.[63]

D. Schuilkerken and Clandestine Gathering

The clandestine church located the Dutch Catholic "hidden transcript" of resistance, creating a new kind of space for community gathering and organizing. In Scott's terms, the importance of social sites for marginalized people originates from "the unremitting efforts of elites to abolish or penetrate such sites and the corresponding efforts by subordinate groups to defend them." While authorities did not coerce Dutch Catholics into attending Reformed Church, they thought of the prohibition of their public appearance and secularization of their churches as a humiliating indignity. Scott, drawing from Marxist analysis, described how anger and frustration from this type of perceived injustice serves to "nurture the hidden transcript."[64] By holding services in small house churches and schuilkerken, Catholics recreated a sense of sacred space and sustained the rituals of their communities. Through the decades following the Alteration, the Dutch Catholic community had continued to meet clandestinely in improvised house churches, with less consistency and frequency in the absence of their exiled clergy. All suppressed religions other than the Reformed Church met in these clandestine spaces under the same legal parameters: Mennonites, Jews, Lutherans, and Remonstrants. While these faiths concealed their spaces of worship behind a domestic exterior, each experienced a different degree of tolerance or persecution. For Catholics in particular, these schuilkerken took on a special significance as the small-scale replacements for the medieval churches that they recently lost. In many cases, the Reformed authorities took measures to end the practice of Catholics gathering in domestic spaces. In 1601,

Albertus Eggius (appointed vicar general of Haarlem by Vosmeer in 1602) reported that officials in Amsterdam barged into clandestine worship services, smashing altars with mallets, imprisoning priests, and confiscating liturgical objects in pursuit of the fugitive vicar apostolic Sasbout Vosmeer. In their seizure of Jesuit Paul van den Berghe in Leeuwarden, Reformed authorities burned the parish's secretly held images and liturgical furniture.[65]

To date, scholars have not intensively considered the implications of clandestine worship and the special relationships their congregations held with the assembly of sacred objects therein. Scholars have primarily emphasized the stylistic tendencies of paintings with provenance from schuilkerken, rather than the affective experience they created for their viewership. Natasha Seaman has supported her assertions about ter Brugghen's *Crucifixion* altarpiece by comparison to the styles of Caravaggism or the "idealizing and more conventional" work of their Utrecht followers.[66] Likewise, van Eck privileges discussions of Caravaggism's influence in paintings for secret churches at the expense of their function in secret spaces of worship. Van Eck has extensively discussed the different schools represented in paintings produced for clandestine churches, ultimately seeking to affirm the Counter-Reformation's reach in the Northern Netherlands.[67] While Van Eck and Seaman (among others) are concerned with the interplay of these stylistic categories, this emphasis reduces paintings for schuilkerken to their surfaces without substantive analysis. In Chapter Four, I consider the experience engendered by Honthorst's pictorial choices in altarpieces for schuilkerken, rather than his participation (or lack thereof) in any broader artistic trends. In particular, Honthorst represented the suffering of Christ with an urgent sent of devotional urgency, staging an affective empathetic encounter with viewers. Clandestine churches held a powerful importance for Dutch Catholics in a time characterized by intensely contested

sacred space, and the artists who produced the first images commissioned for them had their setting in mind. Chapter Four further looks at the community's approach to creating these new sacred spaces, sustaining the ritual of Mass, and the central importance of their altarpieces in focusing devotions. To further illustrate how Dutch viewers would have engaged with Honthorst's altarpieces, I draw from parallel descriptions of Christ's wounds, blood, and tears found in Franciscus Coster's *Meditations of the Whole Historie of the Passion of Christ* (Christopher Plantin, 1587) and my translations of Amsterdam Jesuit Andreas van der Kruyssen's *Misse. Haer korte uytlegginge, en godvruchtige oeffeninge onder de zelve: Neffens eenige besondere zegeninge: en het gebruyck der HH. Sacramenten* (By the author, 1651; Antwerp: G. Tielenburg, 1651). In his missal, van der Kruyssen juxtaposes meditations on the life of Christ with engravings that represent correspondent moments in the performance of the Mass, reinforcing the importance of the altar as the site where transubstantiation manifests Christ's presence.

Visual and textual sources reveal that some of these clandestine spaces were sparse, while others were rich in decoration, much of which of which consisted of confiscated paintings and liturgical materials kept in safekeeping after Protestants seized their churches. Van Ostade represents a Mass performed before a simple altar in an unadorned room as a huddled crowd of worshippers sits on the floor. Starting in the 1620s, Catholics converted schuilkerken from smaller house churches, which simulated their former church spaces on a miniature scale. By demolishing floors in large Dutch homes and reproducing the infrastructure of altars, galleries, choirs, baptistries and sacristies, Catholic communities collapsed sacred and domestic space. As you ascended the narrow spiral staircases to schuilkerken, you often passed through bedrooms, kitchens, and reception halls. Through the

eighteenth century, Catholics increasingly constructed and expanded clandestine churches, while also representing them in visual culture.



Figure 1-5. Hendrick ter Brugghen, *The Crucifixion with the Virgin and Saint John*, c. 1624-1625, oil on canvas, 61 x 40 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 56.228.

As Natasha Seaman has discussed in relation to Hendrick ter Brugghen's 1624-1625 *Crucifixion with the Virgin and Saint John* (Fig. 1-5), these paintings often established a pictorial relationship with late medieval images held in the community for safekeeping in decades past. Seaman argues that the ter Brugghen's image, originally made for an early Utrecht schuilkerk, visually cites late medieval and sixteenth-century treatments of the subject, in particular the *Van Rijn Cavalry* from Utrecht's St. Janskerk, a fresco in the city's Dom, and a Matthias Grünewald painting copied in print. Seaman claims that in so doing, ter Brugghen's canvas "comments on rupture: the distance traveled from the past and the broken tradition that lies between then and now."[68] I posit that the tendency of Dutch Catholic images to reference late medieval visual culture accomplishes a great deal more than commentary on the disruption of their faith in the preceding decades. Rather, ter Brugghen's painting visualizes an unbroken continuity, imagining a world where the Reformation never happened and restoring their pre-Reformation visual culture to its former glory. Affirming the historical legacy of Catholicism in the Netherlands, these images would

celebrate its underground revival after years of rupture. Visual references to late medieval devotional traditions, a defining characteristic in the Catholic Reformation across Europe, would act as cues to stir pride in the Dutch Catholic Reformation.



Figure 1-6. Jan van Bijlert, *Sts. Willibrord and Boniface with the Holy Trinity*, 1630. Formerly Onze Lieve Vrouwe ten Hemelopneming, Huissen (destroyed in 1943).

Other images produced for clandestine churches included more overt references to the late medieval Netherlandish past in their vision of the future. Among these works is Jan van Bijlert's now destroyed 1630 *Sts. Willibrord and Boniface with the Holy Trinity*, commissioned by the vicar apostolic Sasbout Vosmeer for an unknown Utrecht clandestine church (Fig. 1-6).[69] In this altarpiece, the national saints hold Christ close to the viewer, as if tumbling forward, while kissing him in adoration. Between the saints stands the Dom tower of Utrecht, on the horizon of an ambiguous landscape. The Dom tower, which acted as the seat of the Archdiocese of the Netherlands since its foundation in 1382, was one of many sacred spaces that Reformed authorities removed from Catholic ownership. In van Bijlert's painting, the symbolic power of this monument imagines the privileged position of the Dutch Catholic Church in heaven alongside its founding martyrs. The inclusion of the Dom tower would also have fostered nationalist sentiments and local pride, while asserting the nascent Republic's Catholic legacy.

Van Eck has identified some of the earliest paintings produced for clandestine churches starting in the 1620s, Wouter Crabeth's four paintings for the schuilkerk of Sint Jan in Gouda, including the 1628 *Assumption of the Virgin* and *Doubting Thomas*. Although the Twelve Years Truce provided room for growth and development as a community, clandestine church construction and decoration continued uninterrupted in the years that followed, in spite of waves of persecution. Despite Gouda's anti-Catholic climate, priest Petrus Purmerent purchased properties in order to build the clandestine church in the backyard, thereafter spending approximately 14,000 guilders preparing the space and gathering the necessary liturgical materials, including ordering the large paintings from Crabeth. Also dating among the earliest commissions for clandestine churches are Abraham Bloemaert's *Supper at Emmaus* for St. Bernard's in Haarlem, which parishioners constructed in the backyard of Catholic-owned properties. [70]

E. Timeline of the Dutch Catholic Reformation

1545-1563: The Council of Trent

1566: The Beeldenstorm in Antwerp

1567: Philip II appoints the Duke of Alba governor of the Netherlands

1570s: The process of secularizing church property begins

1572-1573: The siege of Haarlem

1572: The execution of the martyrs of Gorcum in Brielle

1573: The States General prohibits the public celebration of the Mass

1578: The Alteration, in which the Reformed Church officially takes control over the formerly Catholic city government

1579: The Union of Utrecht

1580: The Beeldenstorm in Utrecht

1581: The first anti-Catholic placate is passed by the States General, outlawing Catholic worship, closing Catholic schools, forbidding clerical garb and Catholic literature

1583: The Catholic Church appoints Sasbout Vosmeer (1548-1614) vicar general of the Archdiocese of Utrecht

1584: Assassination of William of Orange; punishment for Catholic worship increased from fines to include the confiscation of property

1592: Pope Clement VIII establishes the Holland Mission as an apostolic vicariate

1598: Philip II appoints Archduke Albert and Isabella as governors of the Netherlands

1602: Pope Clement VIII appoints Sasbout Vosmeer as the vicar apostolic of the Holland Mission

1609: Start of the Twelve Years Truce

1614: Vicar apostolic Sasbout Vosmeer dies

1618: The Synod of Dordrecht rejects the Arminian Remonstrance

1620: The Catholic Church appoints Phillipus Rovenius (1573-1651) as the vicar apostolic of the Holland Mission

1621: End of the Twelve Years Truce

1640: Reformed authorities ban Phillipus Rovenius from the Republic in Amsterdam

1648: The Peace of Westphalia ends the Eighty Years War

1651: Vicar apostolic Phillipus Rovenius dies

II. The Triumph of Devotion: Abraham Bloemaert's *'t Bosch der Eremyten ende Eremitinnen* and Penitential Perseverance



Figure 2-1. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Olympias*, plate 19 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00123.

In Abraham Bloemaert's engraving of *Saint Olympia* (Fig. 2-1[1]), we see the figure of the fourth-century Antiochian saint from the side as she kneels and leans with her arms crossed over her chest. Olympia's monumental thigh faces the light source, while a line of light across the saint's humble residence parallels the angle of her back. The attributes of a hermit saint populate the scene, spaced apart and stacked vertically on ledges to ensure their clear visibility. The folds of Olympia's drapery zigzag downwards towards an upturned skull, on which a small figurine of the crucified Christ precariously rests. The edge of her garment drapes over the figure of Christ's feet and under the skull, indicating the saint's intimate engagement with the object of her devotion. The body of Christ twists to the right while his head drops downwards, a posture that mirrors that of his adoring female beholder. A shadow falls across Saint Olympia's brow, while her eyes close and head turns downward towards Christ in a moment of profound meditative focus.

The saint's long, flowing hair falls from her face to direct the viewer's attention to the object of her meditative affections. In these ways, Bloemaert takes care to articulate Olympia's contemplative absorption, and encourages the Dutch Catholic viewer to mirror her example in devotional practice. Bloemaert's Olympia represents an ideal of rigorous devotion in eremitic retreat, as she withdraws to the humble setting of a rural thatched hut, engrossed in prayers directly addressed to the figure of Christ.

The engraving of Saint Olympia is an illustration from *'t Bosch der eremyten ende eremytinnen*, a series of forty-nine engravings of early Christian desert saints produced by Utrecht-based Catholic painter and draftsman Abraham Bloemaert (1566-1651) in collaboration with Antwerp publisher and printmaker Boetius à Bolswert (c. 1585-1633) and his brother Schelte à Bolswert (1586-1659). The originally 1612 untitled plates, made after drawings by Bloemaert, was first published in 1619 as the *Sacra Eremus Ascetarum* (Sacred Asethetics of the Desert), accompanied by hagiographical texts for each saint written the den Bosch Jesuit Jan van Gorcum, adapted from Utrecht Jesuit Heribert Rosweyde's (1569-1629) *Vitae Patrum* (Antwerp, 1615). In section two of this chapter, I will further outline the publishing history of the volume, particularly its 1644 Dutch vernacular edition issued by the clandestine Catholic house of Pieter Jacobsz. Paets (1587-c.1657).

As they used the engravings of *'t Bosch* in their private devotions, the Dutch Catholic physically performed the act of eremitic withdrawal from the public sphere, following the saintly models represented in its pages. Bloemaert thus deployed the Tridentine trends favoring martyrology and asceticism popular across Catholic Europe to powerful devotional effect within his Dutch Catholic community. In this way, images of eremitic saints in prayer transform their legally necessitated private prayer into a heroic triumph of Catholic

spirituality uninterrupted by social change and affirm the faith's sacred legacy. In so doing, Bloemaert's representations of penitents engrossed in their prayers model for worshippers the rigorous inward devotion and return to mysticism that characterized Dutch Catholic spirituality following the forfeiture of their public spaces and property less than thirty years prior.

Particularly in the early moment of its execution, when the incipient form of revival had just begun to manifest in the Dutch Catholic community, in the absence of regular clerical presence and liturgical performance, *'t Bosch* steadfastly places the locus of their faith's persistence in an ideal of interiorized piety and private, individual devotion. In contemporary prints and paintings across Catholic Europe, artists often represented saints as militantly triumphant across, especially in the Southern Netherlands and Italy, while Dutch Catholic images tended to represent them deep in quiet, inward looking private devotion. As I will detail further, images of this type, while not exclusive to the Northern Netherlands, mobilized Dutch Catholic identity through their valorizing and monumentalizing representation of quiet, private devotion hidden from public view.

The print series indicates the particular importance of the saints, mystical asceticism, and the sacrament of penance to the Dutch Catholic community, principles rejected by Calvinists. For Protestants, their opposition to monastic practices came from their conviction that all Christians should pursue the same degree of intense piety, and that "the whole Christian life is one of repentance."[2] Both Dutch Protestants and Catholics in this period pursued the late medieval monastic withdrawal in intense private devotion, however for the latter it was a necessary adaptation in the face of adversity. Bloemaert's model of devotion in *'t Bosch* not only addresses the contemporary Catholic through its veneration of the saints

and the sacrament of penance, but allows them to construct their spiritual identity as perseverant in their private practice despite the dominance of the Reformed Church and official prohibition of their religion.

The lay spiritual women who played significant leadership roles in Dutch Catholic renewal would have experienced ’t Bosch’s visual and textual representations of female desert saints as affirming their profound desire for penitential isolation, disciplined devotion and mystical engagement with the divine. The saints model the ideal virtues which they most valued, such as modesty and submissiveness, while through this decorum they also visually negotiate the potential threat of sensorial physicality implicit in women’s mysticism. Ultimately, when viewing the female hermit saint engravings of *’t Bosch*, Dutch Catholic women would have understood them as commending their penitential, private practice in isolation and valorizing the act of eremitic retreat as essential to both ideal feminine virtues and service for their struggling church.

In this chapter, I first discuss the renewed importance of representing the saints in the era of the Counter-Reformation in Europe, and for communities of Dutch Catholics in particular, after establishing the Catholic climate in which Bloemaert worked, his role in the faith’s renewal, and the underground networks that facilitated the production of *’t Bosch*. Thereafter I explore the pictorial strategies by which Bloemaert and Bolswert represent the saints in fervent devotion to an invisible divine presence, while isolated outside of narrative context. Subsequently, I examine how the series of desert saints, particularly functioned in its Dutch Catholic context, first situating the images in the context of the community’s revival of late medieval mysticism and its prominence in Jesuit devotional practice in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Throughout, I focus on how a Dutch Catholic

female viewership would have experienced the engravings of female desert saints, which particularly emphasize women's mysticism, monastic retreat, and penance. After locating Bloemaert's female desert saints in this culture of women's mystical piety, I examine the prints of saints Euphrosyna, Mary, Marana and Cyra, as well as their correspondent biographical texts, and how they negotiate the problematic nature of female mysticism by praising distinctly feminine virtues such as modesty and silence.

A. Bloemaert's Utrecht and Bolswert's Antwerp: Catholic Community Networks

Bloemaert was a leading figure in the reconstitution of Catholic visual culture in the first decades of the seventeenth century, from his residence in the city of Utrecht, which acted as the center of its spiritual community in the eyes of Rome's "Missio Hollandica," and much like Haarlem, served as a major center of the unofficial archbishopric and mission station. Born in Utrecht in 1566, Bloemaert witnessed the dramatic political and religious shifts of the Netherlands beginning with the Revolt, and came to maturity as the Catholic community officially lost its churches and property. Utrecht had acted as the Catholic center of the Netherlands and the seat of its bishop until 1585, when Reformed parishioners officially took over the city's churches, including the artist's parish of St. Mary's church, a no longer extant Romanesque structure. From 1593 to the end of his life, Bloemaert lived and worked in the Catholic immunity of Utrecht's Mariahoek, today's Mariaplaats, the site of the

former church and its newly installed clandestine counterpart, as illustrated in a painting by Pieter Jansz. Saenredam (Fig. 2-2). Bloemaert lived there among fellow Catholics, nuns and spiritual women, or klopjes, when he rented the former presbytery from Utrecht's fourteenth-century Wittevrouwen convent, which shared its site with the Mary Magdalene Confraternity of monks. Prior to this time, he had spent two years living amongst the Poor Clares in Amsterdam, the same order to which his sister Barbara belonged to in 's-Hertogenbosch.[3] While living in the Mariaplaats, Bloemaert maintained connections with another resident there, church official Johannes Wachtelaar, canon of the Utrecht Chapter from 1605, the "right-hand man" of vicar apostolic Rovenius and founder of the immunity's clandestine church of St. Gertrude's chapel. Bloemaert's painting of the national saint Willibrord, which he dedicated to Wachtelaar, was one of the first images to adorn the chapel.[4] The two most active strongholds of Catholic restoration, the Utrecht and Haarlem Chapters remained connected and in communication with one another, and accordingly Bloemaert worked for patrons in both cities. In 1622, for instance, Bloemaert painted an altarpiece of the Supper at Emmaus for the Haarlem Chapter's new clandestine church of St. Bernard.[5]

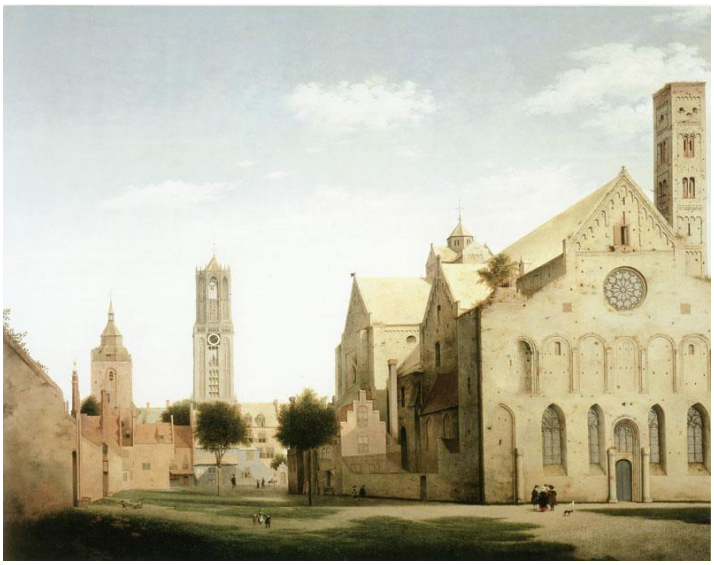


Figure 2-2. Pieter Jansz. Saenredam, Utrecht, Saint Mary's Square and Saint Mary's Church, 1662, oil on panel, 43 1/8 x 55 in. Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 1765 (OK).

Bloemaert often offered refuge to fugitive Jesuits and other priests at great risk of legal consequences. Bloemaert's artistic collaboration with and criminal harboring of their missionary clergy was particularly perilous at this moment, as the Dutch Reformed Church and the secular Catholic clergy saw the foreign order as unwanted invaders, meeting them with intense antagonism. In some cases, Protestants reportedly taught their children to hate the Jesuits most of all the Catholic faith.[6] In 1613, Jesuits constructed a small clandestine church on the Catharijnesteeg, directly neighboring Bloemaert's residence. The Jesuit-educated Italian artist-biographer Filippo Baldinucci (1624-1697) lauded the artist's piety and sympathy for the Jesuit cause. Baldinucci, writing in Florence in 1681, remarked:

> "Abraham is not only a good Catholic but a man of such Christian piety that while living in Utrecht, a city among the most tenacious of that false religion in those regions, he not only was always a particular protector of the Catholics, but being on close terms with the Jesuit fathers, he found a way to have holy mass celebrated daily for the common benefit of them, until he was once accused of it at the magistracy, which having had the doors of his residence forced and finding the clerics in the act of celebrating and the worshipers in prayer, condemned him to heavy fines, and from then on he had to suffer many severe persecutions, to the point where by the heretics…a defamatory book was written about him…"[7]

The biographer also notes that Utrecht's city magistrates fined Bloemaert when they discovered Jesuits performing Mass during a raid on his home. Baldinucci details how the artist a series of anti-Catholic published pamphlets thereafter slandered the artist. Regardless of the degree of historical accuracy in Baldinucci's account, his anecdotes indicate that the

community knew the artist to be a militant Catholic already in the early years of his career.

The historical moment of ’t Bosch’s publication and circulation was particularly characterized by interconfessional tension in the Northern Netherlands, in which Catholics struggled to negotiate their place in society following the Protestant appropriation of their public spaces and properties. In 1611, Bloemaert cofounded a painter’s guild and an art academy in Utrecht, thereby establishing a formal structure for artists that would continue to flourish in the seventeenth century. While Bloemaert worked for patrons of all confessions in Utrecht, Bloemaert often received commissions from major Catholic patrons both locally and abroad, including large-scale works for the Jesuit college of ’s Hertogenbosch and major churches in Brussels. Despite his prominence in Utrecht’s artistic community, Bloemaert’s devout Catholicism would affect him negatively. In the Alteration in 1578, the Reformed Church became the official state religion, and accordingly Stadholder Maurits replaced city governments and their officials with Calvinists and Contra-Remonstrants, beginning in Amsterdam. Due to his faith, city officials removed Bloemaert from his position as the head of the painter’s guild and replaced him with Protestant Paulus Moreelse in 1618.[8] Accordingly, the content of *’t Bosch* itself constituted a firmly Catholic and decidedly anti-Reformed statement, as Protestants rejected the intercessory power of the saints, the sacrament of penance, and monasticism.

In an era in which Protestants and Catholics battled as much with text and image as they did with arms, Bloemaert collaborated with his colleagues in the Southern Netherlands to spread their spiritual message to more diverse viewerships through print. The Bolswert brothers’s 1618 move to Antwerp from Amsterdam to escape persecution for their faith and

gain more freedom to print Catholic materials allowed the production of Bloemaert's *'t Bosch*. The artistic exchange between the Northern and Southern Netherlands, ongoing throughout the Eighty Years' War and throughout the seventeenth century, included the clandestine transport of Antwerp-produced materials to the North. Priests and spiritual women from the Northern Netherlands largely facilitated the reciprocal circulation of religious books and devotional prints, while maintaining correspondences with their colleagues in the South and frequently travelling across borders with visual materials.[9] Bloemaert chose to collaborate with Bolswert to translate his designs into engraving, forgoing the option of working with the nascent printing firm of the Anabaptist Crispijn van de Passe (1565-1637), who had just settled in Utrecht in 1612 following his exile from Cologne.[10] While Utrecht artists maintained friendly relations with van de Passe, Bloemaert understood the wider impact of his connection to major Catholic printmakers in Antwerp. Although the temporary respite from conflict allowed by the Twelve-Years Truce (1609-1621) allowed some relief for Catholics from persecution (and likewise, for Calvinists in the Southern Netherlands), tensions continued until the resumption of hostilities.[11] The maintenance of Catholic networks across North and South, of which Bolswert and Bloemaert's collaboration is one of many examples, indicates that Dutch Catholics understood the precarity of their position and the necessity of preserving their wider community.

B. Saints Alone in Devotion: Blomaert and the Tridentine Hagiographic Tradition

The *Sacra Eremus Ascetarum* (Antwerp, 1612) was the first edition of Bloemaert's illutrated text, followed by the *Sylva anachoretica Aegypti et Palestinae: Figuris aeneis et brevibus vitarum elogiis expressa* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Verdussen, 1619). Bloemaert may

have initially intended the series to function as illustrations for Antwerp Jesuit Joannes Ryser's *Sylva Anachoretica Aegypti et Palaestinae* (The Forest Hermits of Egypt and Palestine), which itself is a condensed version of Rosweyde's *Vitae Patrum*.[12] In all of its incarnations, the volume's text is an adaptation of the Vitae Patrum[13] of Heribertus Rosweyde, in which simple images of saints are included alongside brief biographical texts that describe their virtuous lives.[14] Although Bloemaert created the designs for the prints of male and female desert saints seven years prior, after its publication in 1619 't Bosch marked the most widely read and often published work of Bloemaert's career in printmaking, in no small part due to its later Dutch editions.[15] The print series is broken up into two parts for male and female saints: the *Sacra Eremus Ascetarum* and the *Sacra Eremus Ascetiarum*, with both groups ordered by the dates of their lifetime (beginning with Christ, the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene).

The Amsterdam Catholic publishing house of Pieter Jacobsz Paets issued a second Dutch language edition of the volume, *'t Bosch der Eremyten ende Eremitinnen, van Aegypten ende Palestinen, met figuren van Abraham Bloemaert, door Christophorus a Sichem* (Amsterdam: Paets, 1619).[16] The Paets house also produced volumes of literature from the era of the late medieval Devotio Moderna, especially editions of Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*. The Paets publishing house frequently re-published Catholic texts that were originally issued in Antwerp, even going so far as to publish works under the name of Antwerp publishers to avoid legal implication.[17] Through Paets, many devotional texts produced in the Northern and Southern Netherlands made their way to Dutch Catholic homes, including *the Imitation of Christ*, one of the most often read volumes by klopjes.[18] Although Paets experienced legal ramifications for his publishing of Catholic works, his

continued collaboration with the Reformed woodcutter Christoffel van Sichem II (1581-1658) indicates that interconfessional collaboration characterized seventeenth-century Amsterdam.[19] The 1619 and 1644 Dutch editions featured hagiographies by Den Bosch Jesuit Jan van Gorcum, which condensed and shortened from Rosweyde's in vernacular Dutch that would have been more accessible to the lay reader.

In their distillation of Rosweyde's text, *'t Bosch* allowed contemporary Jesuit devotional literature, produced in Utrecht, to reach a wider lay Dutch audience through its publication in Amsterdam. In addition to the adaptation of Rosweyde's texts, for the 1644 Dutch edition van Sichem's copies the *Vitae Patrum*'s frontispiece from its 1617 edition, an engraving by Jan Baptiste Collaert after a design by Rubens, transforming the image into a simplified woodcut with added labels for each figure. The way in which *'t Bosch*'s title page distills the iconography of the original Rubens engraving, deleting classical architecture, skulls, and vegetation, and adding large titles by each figure (Paulus, Eugenia, Paula, and so forth) indicates that they intendded this edition for a lay readership. With its shorter Dutch texts and larger, more fully developed images of the saints (even when simplified in van Sichem's woodcuts), *'t Bosch* privileges viewing while reading more than the intensive engagement with text required by Rosweyde. The life of Bloemaert's hermit saint engravings was not married to any one text, but rather various versions of Rosweyde's *Vitae*, recycled and adapted in different editions. In this chapter, I accordingly focus on Bloemaert's images and their function for the Dutch Catholic viewer, and judiciously draw from van Gorcum's Dutch text to enhance our understanding of their experience with the volume. Van Gorcum's text does not, however, elucidate the function of Bloemaert's engravings as it is unclear if the

author and artist knew of each other, or if either conceived of the images or text in relation to one another.

'*t Bosch* and its fellow contemporary hagiographies participate in the cult of the saints, widely revived across Europe in response to its rejection by Protestants, and of particular interest to the Holland Mission's project of restoring the church. The Jesuit order especially favored the veneration of early Christian desert saints. While Jesuits urged the faithful to remove themselves from the transitory, earthly world, and to work towards a heavenly eternity through meditation, warnings against worldly pleasures and vanity were common in seventeenth-century Dutch art, culture, and literature, Protestant and Catholic alike.[20] Beginning in the late middle ages with the movement of the Devotio Moderna, which favored disciplined private devotion, theologians catalogued and praised the desert saints as exemplars of rigorous asceticism.[21]

Hagiographic literature, in turn, fulfilled one of the primary goals of the vicar apostolics appointed to the Holland Mission, Vosmeer until 1614, and Rovenius through 1651: the revival of a cult of the national saints of Willibrord and Boniface, who brought Christianity to the Netherlands in the seventh century. The office of the vicar apostolic took such interest in the revival of these local saints that both Vosmeer and Rovenius went as far as to sketch out precisely how to represent St. Boniface in manuscripts, specifying that artists represent him as a bishop while carrying his attribute of the book pierced by a sword. Bloemaert followed these sketched guidelines in his representations of the two saints in paintings for Utrecht's new clandestine church of St. Gertrude and in print in 1630, which his son Cornelis later copied and reissued.[22] In the Haarlem Chapter, the canons ordered priests to draw up lists of local saints to in 1630-1632.[23] For Dutch klopjes, the saints and their holy

writings were highly important. In Cousebant's *Regel*, a book of klopje decorum that dictates their daily routine, the Haarlem priest recommended that the women should read the lives of the saints as part of their rigorous devotional schedule. Although scholars know little about the Haarlem Catholic community's library, although Spaans has commented that there was very likely a library for communal use in or near the house church. While no inventory survives from this community's library, we know that klopjes collected devotional literature, books of hours, and religious music both recently published and from the late medieval period.[24]

Likewise, *martelarenboeken*, or books of martyr saints, acted as models for klopje communities, according to Joke Spaans, because suffering was a particularly important part of their spiritual identity. *Martelarenboeken* read by the klopjes included Richard Verstegan's widely read *Theatre of Cruelty*, first published in Antwerp in 1588, and Petrus Opmeers's *Historia martyrum Batavicorum (*Keulen, 1625).[25] That Tryn Jans Oly adopted the format of the *heiligenleven* of Rosweyde and Verstegan for the *Leven* of her fellow sisters, demonstrates that klopjes thought of themselves as key in preserving and continuing this hagiographic tradition. By drawing from early Christian Syrian St. Ephrem's hagiographies, Oly connected the tradition of spiritual, communal living continued by her community with the former's brotherhood of celibates that he founded in Nisibis.[26] Images of female monastic saints were common, and praised by church officials like Phillipus Rovenius. Beguine saints Begga, Isabella, and Gertrude were popular figures with which Dutch klopjes identified in an affirmation of the historical legacy of their aesthetic tradition.[27] The fourteenth-century German Benedictine St. Gertrude was the patron saint of Bloemaert's community and the clandestine chapel situated in the Mariahoek. The klopjes therefore saw

themselves not as distanced from *heiligenleven* such as *'t Bosch*, but taking part in them. As they followed their saintly models of virtuous, pious lives, described in the *Levens* by Oly, the klopjes understood themselves as living modern exemplary lives in an unbroken Christian tradition.

The engravings in '*t Bosch* participate in the substantial rise in images of individual saints or holy figures in their devotions across Catholic Europe, which in turn corresponds to the wider European Catholic interest in theological clarity and simplicity following the artistic reforms of the Council of Trent, 1545-1563. The important devotional function of non-narrative images of one figure distinguish Catholic paintings and prints from their Protestant counterparts, which favored more didactic narrative imagery, often sourced from the Old Testament, to avoid the dangerously emotional engagement one might have with a solitary sacred figure. While no one subject matter was exclusively Catholic or Protestant in the seventeenth-century Netherlands[28], images of saints represented in this way, for Dutch Catholics, served to affirm and preserve their community's embattled and devotion-oriented identity. As Marcia B. Hall has argued, Catholic art responded to Trent by pictorially exploring "new terrain of affective piety with techniques that had not been seen before." Specifically, artists placed their sacred subjects directly before viewer's eyes, as if they beheld "the divine invading the world." The artist produces the affective experience through a series of pictorial strategies that engage the viewer in sustained looking: stilled action, the manipulation of shallow spaces, and the isolation of corporeal suffering. [29]

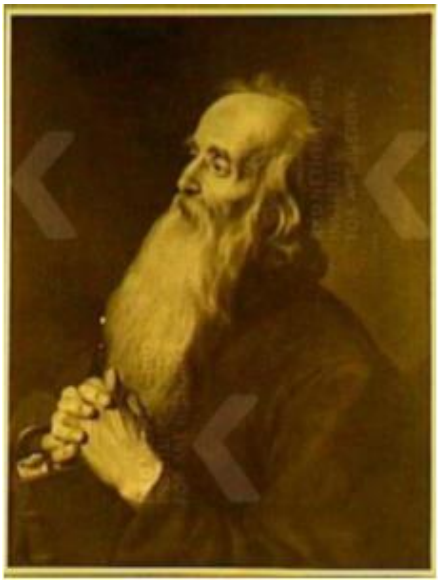


Figure 2-3. Abraham Bloemaert, The Apostle Paul of Tarsus, 1631, oil on canvas. Private Collection, Bremen.

Images of individual saints became enormously popular among Catholics in the wake of the Protestant challenge to hagiography, while the church canonized new Catholic martyrs from religious conflicts across Europe. Hagiographic print cycles and texts were one of the principal means by which the popularity of the saints spread. Through reproductive prints, Antwerp-produced images of individual saints found their way to the hands of Dutch Catholics in the North, while Bolswert engraved Bloemaert's designs, published and distributed from Antwerp. Bloemaert and his contemporaries, such as Pieter de Grebber, represented individual apostles and saints alone in meditation, as did Bloemaert's sons Hendrick, Frederick, Cornelis and Adriaan, and pupils, such as Jan van Bijlert, Gerrit van Honthorst, and others. Bloemaert's saints are markedly pared down: in the 1631 *St. Paul* (Fig. 2-3), his figure fills the entire composition as he faces sideways to his right with his hands clasped in prayer. Save for a bookmarked text on which his hands rest and his long beard, there is little visual information with which to identify him. Bloemaert directs the viewer's focus only to his action of meditative prayer, the object of which resides in the apostle's imagination.[30] Bloemart's studio also produced a series of fifteen identically sized and formatted square panels of Apostles and Evangelists for the original 1634 chapel gallery ceiling in the Gertrudiskapel, Utrecht, only a short walk away from the artist's residence and studio.

In his paintings and prints, Bloemaert breaks from his pictorial precedents for the representation of individual saints, lending his figures greater emotional fervor and devotional focus in their mystical engagement with the divine. As he composed the engravings of *'t Bosch*, Bloemaert would have been aware of the work of Antwerp printmaker Anthonie Wierix, who produced small devotional engravings of saints in the 1590s, compiled together and published as *Figures Des Saints* (Amsterdam, 1590s), only accompanied by a brief biblical verse below each saint's name.[31] While Wierix's *St. Hieronymus* is iconographically identical to Blomaert's engraving of the saint, the Utrecht artist represents Hieronymus leaning forward dramatically, with his left hand gesturing towards himself, and his gaze intently directed towards the figure of Christ on the cross.

C. Bloemaert's 't Bosch der Eremyten ende Eremitinnen: Asceticism, Devotional Fervor and Mystical Engagement with the Divine

Bloemaert's forty-nine prints of desert saints in *'t Bosch* share a visual coherence, in which, much like the artist's earlier prints of saints, the subjects are shown in fervent devotional engagement with the invisible divine, isolated in a non-contextual setting. Throughout, the unseen objects of their devotion populate the landscape, physical attributes, or beams of light. In each series, Bloemaert represents monumental figures that occupy the largest space of the composition, while eremitic symbols recur across the images. In his adaptation of the small woodcuts from the original Latin and Dutch editions of Rosweyde's *Vitae Patrum*, from which *'t Bosch* adapts its texts, Bloemaert more fully develops and details the images, while breaking from traditional prints of saints in such texts. Unlike the static quality found in the hagiographical precedents of Wierix and others, the devotions of Bloemaert's saints are characterized by intense emotional engagement. This can be seen vividly in the weeping Saint Arsenius and the self-flagellating Saints Simeon Stylita and Alexandra (Fig. 2-4).



Figure 2-4. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Alexandra*, plate 20 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00124.

Bloemaert's pared down compositional minimalism, together with the fervent devotional tone of the figures in the series allow the saints to collectively stand in for the ideals of an ascetic lifestyle and its rejection of the earthly, temporal world, while they participate in the Jesuit visual rhetoric popular in Catholic imagery across Europe. In the 1548 *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola instructs the devotional reader and viewer to engage in an active mode of looking, filling in the image with their imagination in the absence of specific signifiers of time and place. Images that follow this Jesuit principle of "composition of place" accordingly place their figures in vague settings.[32] While Bloemaert's hermits saints are grounded in time and place in history in the accompanying texts, the artist opts to represent them in generic dress, with little background save for the slight indication of a thatched hut, bower of trees, or craggy cave. The focus of each image is therefore the devotional experience of each saint, as they address the divine by gazing towards the heavens, a figurine of Christ or the cross. After reading the text, the literate devotional viewer could then paint an imaginative devotional of the saint's virtuous life and their connection with the unseen divine in their head, using Bloemaert's engraving as a signpost in the process.

Particularly at the start of the series, Bloemaert lends the sacred subjects an illusionistic sense of immediate presence. The series begins with a title page in which an angel holding aloft a cloth, on which the words "Sacra Eremus Ascetarum" appear to miraculously manifest, together with a faint, sketchily rendered image of the saintly attributes that will be included in the prints to follow, artfully arranged like a still life (Fig. 2-5).

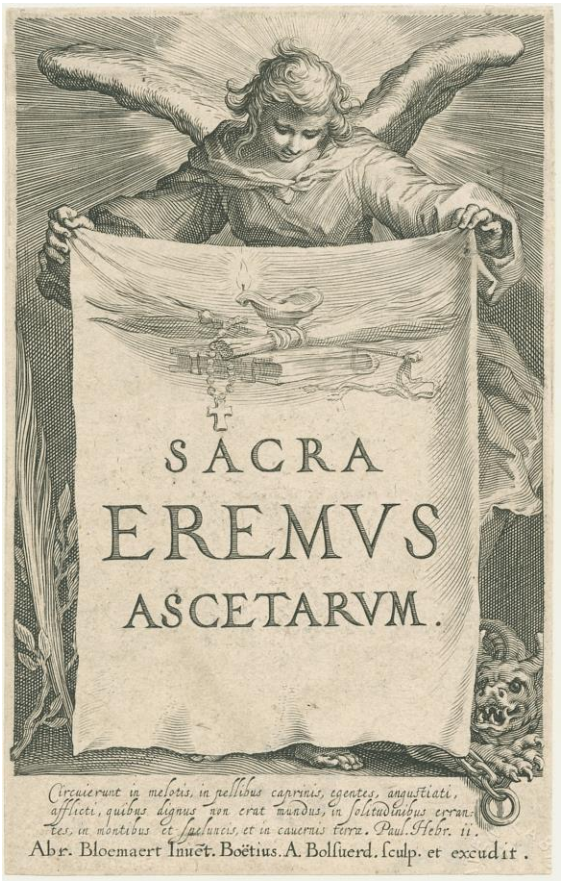


Figure 2-5. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Alexandra*, title page of *Sacra Eremus Ascetarum (’t Bosch der Eremyten)*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00104.

Bloemaert includes a martyr’s palm frond and laurel to the left side of the cloth, and a frightening demon, much like his counterparts in later prints, that growls from behind its lower left corner. The miraculous burst of light from which the angel appears, and the shadow cast by the demon's chain onto the caption below work together to convey the conceit that the image really manifests before their eyes. Deployed in the title pages of the text’s two sections, these hints of illusionistic presence signal to the reader both the pictorial and spiritual authority with which the images will thereafter appear before them. To amplify this the manner in which Bloemaert’s represents the display of the frontispiece’s title cloth recalls the traditional iconography of the Sudarium of St. Veronica, establishing the tone of mystical appearances that will continue throughout the text.

Collectively, the prints emphasize the intensely focused character of the saints’ devotions, in some images made explicitly visible in the saint’s concentration on their prayers despite the torment of a grotesque demon. The fourth print of the series represents St.



Figure 2-6. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Euphraxia*, plate 4 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00108.

Anthony attentively reading, disregarding the two demons behind him, while in the following image Saint Hilarion also reads intently as a demon approaches. The print of the fourth female hermit, Saint Euphraxia, includes a striking example of demonic torment (Fig. 2-6). The saint kneels in prayer, clutching her rosary and gazing at a prayer book set upon a rock, while a bowl and flagellation thrush rest close to the foreground. Euphraxia's serene expression sharply contrasts with the monstrous, winged demon that stands above her, with its right hand poised just above her head in what could be a perversion of the gesture of blessing. Unlike those represented with the male saints, the demon that torments Euphraxia has sagging breasts, rendering the figure distinctively female and recalling the early modern visual tradition of hags and witches. The print of Euphraxia, therefore, represents not only her commitment despite demonic distraction, but also an exemplary model of pious, chaste womanhood directly contrasted with a caricature of its sinful opposite. Through such images, Bloemaert conflates pious femininity with dedication to prayer and isolated private meditation, embodied in Euphraxia's steadfast focus on her book.



Figure 2-7. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Pachomius,* plate 8 of *'t Bosch der Eremyten,* 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00086.

The prints represent saints who through the diligent practice of deep, focused meditation are able to experience the presence of sacred figures directly, represented as an animate figurine of the crucified Christ or a ray of light. The reception of the divine being as a beam of light echoes van Gorcum's accompanying devotional texts, as Mary Magdalene poetically states in her biography, "O Lord my heart is shot-through from the inside with the beams of your love."[33] Saint Pachomius, likewise, opens his arms and gazes upwards to see an angel entering from the upper right corner, carrying tablets inside an explosion of light (Fig. 2-7). Meanwhile, Pachomius ignores a crouching demon in the shadows to his left, as he turns to greet the entering angel. The Virgin Mary's print in the series resembles the Annunciation, as an angel flies towards her inside a small beam of light and interrupts her prayers. Bloemaert uses the signifier of the ray of light, borrowed from Jesuit devotional texts, in which it acts as a common signifier of such direct engagement between earthly and heavenly figures. Glowing light, moreover, carries multivalent symbolic meanings, metaphorically indicating spiritual insight and Christ's role as the light of the world. Throughout Jesuit devotional texts such as Sucquet's 1620 *Via Vitae Aeternae*,

Bolswert represents the transmission of vision from the divine to the earthly realm via rays of light. A vision of God travels through this beam of light to human hearts in Bolswert's illustration of *the Soul's Perfection Found by Journeying in the Presence of God*, and in numerous other prints from Sucquet's text. According to Walter S. Melion, these "optical beams" represent lines of sight, and their origination with divine figures reminds the viewer "that our actions and inclinations, and also our election of office, work, and play, fall under divine purview, which may be apprehended in the meditative image of a reciprocated gaze."[34] The linear connection drawn between the divine and Bloemaert's saints therefore signals to the viewer not only that they are watched by God's omnipresent gaze, but also demonstrate the ideal mystical engagement with him that can only be accomplished by isolated, rigorous devotion.



Figure 2-8. Frederick Bloemaert (engraver), Abraham Bloemaert (designer), Christ in the Heart of the Believer, c. 1650, engraving. Museum Catharijneconvent, OKM dp1000.

Bloemaert's saints also engage with the divine through the symbolic objects that surround them, particularly those that appear to be animate actors in the scene. Together, the symbols establish a homogenous eremitic iconography for the series, but also allow the protagonists to engage with the sacred. Bloemaert's saints grasp cross-adorned rosaries and use large prayer books by the light of candles or oil lamps, accompanied by rolled up straw mats, simple wooden crosses, skulls, and assorted tools for self-punishment.

These same objects also appear in Frederick Bloemaert's print of *Christ in the Heart of the Believe*r, engraved after a design by his father, in which they hold explicitly Christological associations (Fig. 2-8). The Jesuits revived the skull, an omnipresent symbol for the transient nature of life and its worldly pleasures, as an icon of death, one of the "four final things" upon which one should meditate. Along with judgment, heaven and hell, Jesuits recommended the penitent contemplation of death, which could be overcome in salvation.[35] The skulls that populate the prints therefore confirm the saints's rejection of the material, earthly world, in favor of the contemplation of death and eternal life.



Figure 2-9. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Paulus de eenvoudige*, plate 22 of *'t Bosch der Eremyten*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00100.



Figure 2-10. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Domnina*, plate 22 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00126.

While many of the symbols included in Bloemaert's series, such as the skulls and rosaries, appear uniformly, each figure of Christ poses differently, and many defy their status as objects, as they engage with the saints themselves. The animate figurines of Christ throughout the series bring to life his silent omnipresence as the object of the penance that the saints perform. In their sustained, meditative contemplation of the print, they invite the viewer to ponder such details, which at first are not obviously apparent. The figure of the crucified Christ turns to face Saint Paulus Simplex, who returns his gaze in prayer (Fig. 2-9). As Saint Olympia leans forward with her arms crossed, her face anguished in the devotional ardor, the edge of her garment drapes over the sculpture of the crucified Christ, which rests

on an upturned skull (Fig. 2-1). As Olympia gazes downward in meditation towards him, the small figure of Christ mirrors her posture, as he also twists slightly downwards and his head falls in the same direction. As Saint Domnina kisses the feet of her figurine of Christ, his body leans forward to meet her gaze (Fig. 2-10). In this way, Bloemaert allows Christ to become an actor in *'t Bosch*'s prints that engages with the female saints, demonstrating the kind of intimate relationship with God to which monastic women aspired in their devotional practice. Bloemaert's saints, so deeply engrossed in their prayers that they ostensibly ignore the viewer, worldly concerns, and tormenting demons, would register in the viewer's mind as an ideal of the rigorous piety that facilitates mystical experience, and ultimately, permits salvation.

't Bosch in which the desert saints of the series reside, articulated by Bloemaert in trees and craggy rock faces, not only animate the composition and pictorially frame the figure represented, but lend their images greater devotional dynamism. The artist's use of a natural background even for saints enclosed in a cloister indicates his preference for setting his saintly figures in the wilderness. Bloemaert's production of numerous landscape paintings and prints further indicates his predilection for the expressive potential of natural forms. As Melion has elucidated, in religious images landscape can function exegetically, as a devotional locus to which the viewer can direct their love for God and his creations. The representation of lush nature metaphorically stands in for the contrast between the hermit's desolate isolation and the richness of their spiritual wealth: "so the penitent's arid soul, withered like grass, desiccated like kindling, becomes the verdant setting of meditative renewal, strewn with towering trees and sheltering bouwers." This model of the rich forest as the spiritually renewed soul, represented by Bolswert in Sucquet's popular devotional text

Via Vitae Aeternae parallels that of Augustinian psalms, in which the "turning" of trees and grass represents the transformation of the soul.[36]

In the engraving of the series representing Saint Bonosus, for example, a tree twists in an S-curve behind him, paralleling his swaying body, and dramatically framing his pining gaze to the upper right (Fig. 2-11). In the engraving of Macarius Aegytpius, Bloemaert articulates a patch of grass below a devotional book with expressive animation, so that it appears to react to its text, dynamically swaying to the right. Bloemaert's biblical scenes often foreground the emotive use of the natural, as in his 1604 *Ahijah and Jeroboam*, engraved by Jan Saenredam, in which a large tree gnarls and twists behind the two principal figures in a fancifully imaginative manner. Bloemaert's landscape backgrounds in *'t Bosch* do not only serve compositional purposes, but replace any locational specificity or narrative cues, to indicate the extent of the saints's eremitic retreat and physically express the saint's fervor in the surroundings.



Figure 2-11. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Bonosus*, plate 24 of *'t Bosch der Eremyten*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00102.

D. Mysticism in the Dutch Catholic Community: Private Devotion as Eremitic Retreat

According to Michel de Certeau, mysticism is the rejection of the self and the body, in order to become more self-aware and reach the invisible, ineffable divine, the object of the mystic's desire. In the words of de Certeau, mysticism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries sought "a different treatment of the Christian tradition," in a time when its followers were "experiencing a shattered Christendom."[37] Like the saints in the pages of *'t Bosch*, represented in their eremitic retreat from the public, urban world, de Certeau's "mystic speech" gains its authority when spoken from a place of withdrawal, located on the marginalized periphery of society. For Dutch Catholics, their faith's retreat into the private sphere constituted their response to its state crisis of during the ascent of the official Calvinist government. In the Dutch Catholic community's redefinition of their spiritual identity around mystical engagement with the divine revived the late medieval tradition of affective piety. In their period of loss, Dutch Catholic found refuge in the traditions of their late medieval predecessors that redefined devotion around mystical principles and practices. Together with a model of private devotion as eremitic withdrawal from the public sphere, the sacrament of penance and a program of rigorous, inward focused meditation defined seventeenth-century Dutch Catholic spirituality. As I further detailed in Chapter One, Dutch Catholic piety took up, in the words of Parker, "a broad commitment to interiority and internal, mystical devotion"[38] that permitted their community's continuity by redefining their piety around private practice.

For the Jesuit missionaries who saw themselves as the salvation of the Protestant-occupied Holland Mission, the importance they placed on private, individual meditation and penance came from urgent necessity, often in the absence of clergy or regular church

services. Jesuits promoted the stilled, continuous contemplation of an image, while Dutch Catholics took this practice up, renewing the importance of inward, private meditation. Vicar apostolic Vosmeer and his office was key in empowering the laity as the new source of organization and mobilization of people and resources in the Holland Mission's revitalization, in the absence of its formerly organized clergy. Private practices therefore replaced public ones, as for instance the prayer book *De Sondaghs-Schole* stood in for the Masses that went so often missed by Catholics in the period.[39] Without being able to have their confessions heard, Jesuit missionaries thought it particularly necessary that the laity repent for sin themselves, in order to further enrich their moral and spiritual character.[40] This Jesuit mode of interiorized devotion as a solution to the lack of official liturgy in the Northern Netherlands is expressed in the engravings of *'t Bosch*, in which Bloemaert, inundated in the developments of contemporary Jesuit theology, distilled and simplified these erudite concepts in to images for the devout layperson.

The practice of asceticism was foundational to the history of devotion in the Northern Netherlands, lending its seventeenth-century renewal a local resonance. The early Christian and late medieval eremitic traditions had inspired imitation among pious Catholics in the more recent history of the Northern Netherlands. Sister Bertken, or Berta Jacobs, enclosed herself in 1457 in a small, unheated cell that she had built in Utrecht's Buurkerk, where she remained for fifty-seven years until her death at eighty-seven years old in 1514.[41] In her isolation, Sister Bertken wrote devotional texts and songs about her desire for union with Christ, her Bridegroom, many of which gained considerable popularity thereafter. The nun's militant asceticism included restricted eating, and dressing in a simple hair shirt and dress.

Sister Bertken's dedication of her life to prayer and meditation, following her saintly predecessors, served as an exemplar for Catholics in the centuries to come.

Dutch Catholic spirituality in the era of *'t Bosch* was also inextricably tied to the the sacraments of confession, penance, and repentance. Ignatius of Loyola begins the *Spiritual Exercises* with a week of "the consideration and contemplation of sins" through fervent penitence.[42] The fourteenth session of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) particularly reinforced the importance of the sacrament of penance, to counter its opposition by the Reformed Church, and recommended penitential psalms, comprising of three parts: contrition, confession, and satisfaction, which they defined as "suffering for our sins." The official conciliar declaration of penitence's essential importance to one's piety stresses the zeal with which the worshipper should undertake it:

> "The holy council therefore declares that this contrition includes not only ceasing from sin, the resolve of a new life and a beginning of it, but also a hatred of the old…And certainly one who has pondered those exclamations of the saints, 'Against you only I have sinned and done what is evil in your sight'; 'I am weary with my moaning, every night I flood my bed with tears';…and others like them, will easily understand that they have sprung from an intense hatred of the past life and a very deep hatred of sins."[43]

In suffering through such penitential prayer, the devout imitate Christ's sacrifice for the sins of humankind, working towards the absolving of their sins through the purifying, transformative power of penance for one's sins.[44] The figures represented therein act as examples of the intense focus and fervor one should have in their meditative practice, as recommended in the psalms, the Council of Trent, and in contemporary devotional texts.

't Bosch and its engraved desert saints puts forward a model of intensely focused, inward looking devotion which characterized the private practice of the Dutch Catholic community. The inscription on the title page of *'t Bosch's* 1612 second edition explicitly commands the viewer to use such a sustained, meditative mode of devotion that is distinctly Jesuit in nature:

> "Are you returning to the sacred mirror? Pause and contemplate, with an attentive glance observe the hermitage of the holy fathers. Rest for a while at the threshold and learn. Do you see revealed the goodly lodgings of the hermitage and the tools of the fathers? The lamps, whips, books, rosaries, and the fasting proclaim repentance. So many tools! The enemy lies bound, as the rewards of the fathers rise up."[45]

The text compels the viewer to "rest for a while" as they view the prints, attending to them in detail, and to contemplate each penitent attribute, which themselves "proclaim repentance." In his 1620 daily prayer guide, *the Golden Incense Burner*, the militant vicar apostolic Rovenius urged his fellow Dutch Catholics to regularly turn inward in contemplation and examine their degree of spiritual progress throughout the day.[46] For Rovenius, such meditation allowed one to ignore dangerous worldly temptations, ultimately defeating and binding "the enemy," or the Reformed opposition, much like the desert saints unbothered by the chained demons in Bloemaert's images. A Dutch Catholic in Augsburg, writing back to a colleague in the Netherlands, described the situation they faced in terms that recall the focus in the face of torment maintained by Bloemaert's hermits: "you live amidst a cunning and false enemy, who day and night pursues you like poor lost sheep."[47] The representation of saints so intensely focused that they ignore their demonic enemy, therefore, would have

resonated with Bloemaert's viewership as a model of ideal devotional practice for their persecuted minority.

E. Dutch Catholic Women's Monasticism and Klopje Communities

Bloemaert's images of female desert saints serve one function for the spiritual women who would have viewed them, in which they would find spiritual refuge and communal identity in mystical retreat, while they also present a model of domestic womanhood that stresses the importance of hermitic retreat and modesty for Catholic women. Likewise, through text and image the series resolves the problematic capability of women's mystical experiences to grant them social and spiritual authority. As manifested in the early seventeenth-century Catholic debate over the canonization of St. Theresa of Avila, male ecclesiastical authority was uncomfortable with such mystical, monastic women's direct, personal relationship with the sacred (at the expense of the mediating role of the church) and sensorial, bodily experience of the divine. Their modest dress, domestic confinement, and virtuous behavior allows them to avoid these dangers. Such images of female saints served a broader cultural function distinct from their male counterparts, as they not only made visible a public image of the isolated, eremitic, or cloistered life of monastic women, but also in so doing contained and controlled their piety within gendered conventions.[48] In this chapter, I focus in particular on Dutch Catholic mystical women both due to their leading role in their faith's renewal, and accordingly, the ways in which images of female desert saints pictorially address the pious women of the Reformation. For klopjes reading *'t Bosch*, female hermits act as a model for female decorum and piety that affirms their choice to withdraw from public life in favor of leading celibate, ascetic lives. The implications of the eremitic lifestyle

for women in particular is pointed to by the introductory text opposite the title page for female desert saints, which reads "Chastity desires solitude, the chaste female desires the lonely places, and the unchaste desires to be in large gatherings of people."[49] The implication of this message for the Catholic female reader is that eremitic retreat is a necessary condition for piety and chastity.

In the words of Sylvia Brown, people in the early modern period understood gender as a "dynamic, fluid, and often contradictory discursive system, operating both to challenge and reinscribe orthodoxy." According to Brown, Jantzen, and others, the history of mysticism in early modern Europe is inherently one of power and gender relations, which shifted with changes in church and civic authority. Women's monasticism, likewise, operated either to transgress gendered behavior prescriptions or to reaffirm them. Female martyr saints traditionally deviate from gendered norms, speaking out for their causes rather than staying silent, which often led to their punishment or death. It is for this reason that monastic women following their model in the world would so strictly adhere to behavioral guidelines that ensure their distinction from them. The selection of female desert saints represented in *'t Bosch* by Bloemaert, as the text details, are women who have decidedly adhered to the behaviors considered acceptable for their gender.

For both men and women, gendered norms informed the experience of the Catholic faith and its gendered rhetoric of martyrdom and self-denial. Monastic women in the interconfessional, post-Tridentine era negotiated their public presence and gained power through mysticism. In the confines of the convent, the relative authority of women to control their daily devotional routine caused great anxiety on the part of male church authorities, who sought to moderate their autonomy. Tridentine reform brought greater restrictions to female monasticism,

including stricter policies of enclosure and limitations to their public visibility. In the seventeenth century, the Spanish colonist in Peru, St. Rose of Lima, the Spanish Maria of Agreda, and Florentine Maria Maddalena de' Pizza, for instance, found spiritual authority through their mystical experiences. These women continued a tradition of female mystics originating in the affective piety of the late middle ages. Monastic and semi-monastic women across Europe, including Dutch klopjes, responded to the Catholic Reformation by finding their agency as active contributors to their faith in the mystical realm of rigorous domestic devotion. In the words of R. Po-chia Hsia, for Catholic women after the Reformation, their "heroic struggle took place not at the pulpit and in the market square preaching sermons, nor in the torture chamber and execution grounds undergoing martyrdom, but in the enclosed confines of the convents and in the boundless imagination of the mind."[50] Communities of Dutch Catholic monastic women had historically served a significant role in the region's religious life and character. Before the Revolt, around the mid-sixteenth century monastic women numbered around ten thousand, approximately three times the number of monastic men.

These sizable communities of monastic women would have been much more likely than their secular counterparts to engage with contemporary devotional literature and more acutely aware of their faith's embattled Reformation. Although applies to some non-monastic women, nuns, beguines, and klopjes would have been more consistently and directly impacted by the religious shifts of the preceding decades. In particular, the closing of the cloisters and beguinages in the Alteration of 1578 displaced most nuns and beguines, and in turn strengthened and expanded the community networks of semi-monastic women, living in underground, unofficially operating Catholic community networks. These networks

comprised of lay Catholics alongside semi-monastic women, including klopjes and beguines. As has been noted elsewhere, in the Catholic Reformation following the Alteration, klopjes vastly outnumbered priests and accordingly assumed a particularly important role in its organization and direction. Some have argued that this new situation presented Catholic women an unprecedented opportunity for power and leadership. Klopjes, in their ability to move between the monastic and secular worlds, also presented an effective tool for conversion, as they often infiltrated the population and spread the Catholic faith, to the dismay of Reformed opposition. Such klopjes and beguines in particular engaged with devotional literature to a greater degree and intensity than much of the other lay readership, as it was a mandated part of their daily schedule. A readership comprised of lay readers, including klopjes and semi-monastic women, primarily consumed devotional literature in the Dutch vernacular. Texts such as *'t Bosch* published in Antwerp circulated in Dutch translation for these readers.[51]

Communities of klopjes in Utrecht, Haarlem, and across the Northern Netherlands already conceived of themselves as in part eremetically withdrawn from the public, secular sphere, despite not having taken any monastic vows. In the seventeenth-century Northern Netherlands, the domestic sphere was distinctly female, as the virtues of ideal womanhood were located in the household and its tasks in visual media and contemporary literature, including published sermons, songbooks, poetry, and conduct books. At the turn of the century, the accepted social order mandated that women behave demurely and passively, within her prescribed wifely and maternal roles.[52] The perfectly chaste, modest and passive woman also constructed in high-life genre paintings by artists such as Gerard ter Borch (1617-1681) and Caspar Netscher (1639-1684) can be found in Bloemaert's images of female

saints, however, the series puts forwards a specifically Catholic ideal of monastic womanhood. In Bloemaert's prints and van Gorcum's biographies of female saints, however, they negotiate and overcome their dangerous status as feminine temptresses in order to provide the viewers the most fitting model of virtuous piety.

Bloemaert includes a series of female desert saints in *'t Bosch* in order to suit the interests of the sizable female viewership his images would find in their circulation. Particularly given Bloemaert's continuous residence among communities of klopjes, nuns, and Poor Clares, it is safe to assume that the artists's familiarity with the spiritual concerns of these groups of Catholic women, who acted as exceptionally devout and active members in their faith's Reformation. By mid-century, klopjes, or lay spiritual women, numbered around three thousand, a sizable group within the laity working to reorganize its community, vastly outnumbering the clergy and ecclesiastical hierarchy. Haarlem klopje Catharina Oly described how "often when here was something to do in the community, it was done by these maidens; yes, so much that the [Jesuit] fathers did not regulate them and in external matters they ruled more than the fathers."[53] Communities of beguines and klopjes lived in the Netherlands, although they were only nominally different, and both lived in the worldly and spiritual spheres.

Roermond klopje Agnes van Heilsbach made sure to clarify the differences between herself and her fellow sisters and lay people, outlining three categories: *religieuze*, *geestelijke*, en *wereldlijke*. In response to another's question about whether or not she considers herself to be a woman "religious," which she defined as those officially under monastic vows, she gave the following answer: "He asked me whether I am a Religious; I said no, but I live a spiritual life in the world."[54] Although women such as van Heilsbach

engaged with the outside world, they defined their communal and individual identities as firmly distinct from the *wereldlijke,* in their commitment to a spiritual life. According to Oly, klopje Trijn Ariaens "felt she was actually an inhabitant of heaven, who briefly stayed on earth in a mortal body to convey a message, yet would soon return home." Oly's biographies often describe how klopjes would spend their entire day isolated in prayer, forsaking worldly pleasures. Even those klopjes who married, such as Jannetge Pieters, as Oly describes, "would rather sit on her mat in silent devotion than busy herself much with outside things."[55] Klopjes would thus have strongly identified with the hermitic withdrawal from the world, as van Gorcum describes how saints Marana and Cyra retreated into the country because they "despised having to find a place in the city," and so instead turned to an open-air structure in the country to lead silently ascetic lives. Klopjes eagerly sought instruction for proper hermitism, for which they corresponded with nuns and Poor Clares living in the Southern Netherlands, communities which often included their family members. Vosmeer sent two klopjes, Agatha and Hillegont van Veen, on a journey to deliver a message to their brothers in Brabant, during which Agatha developed friendship with the Poor Clares of Leuven, and reportedly learned more about their monastic lifestyle, bringing back their counsel to her spiritual community in Haarlem.[56]

From Oly's *Vitae,* we know that spiritual women created *bidplaatsen,* or homemade, intimate spaces for prayer in one's home, created to supplement the limited available sacred spaces. The spiritual lay person often owned collections of devotional materials and texts such as Bloemaert's *'t Bosch*, which would be read and viewed as a devotional aid, or orated to the illiterate. According to Oly's *Vitae* of Maritgen Isbrant (d. 1649) and Geertge Claesd (d. 1640), they adorned their *bidplaatsen* with numerous paintings and devotional prints on

the walls, and it appeared "as if one had entered a chapel."[57] Dutch Catholic women incorporated the reading of devotional texts and the viewing of correspondent images as a substantial component of their daily routine. Klopjes like Maria Bastyaens van Craenhals, for instance, restored books and images, as necessary, for home altars, and later, clandestine churches.[58]

Spiritual women, as ambassadors of the Dutch Catholic Reformation, looked back to the rich legacy of their historical counterparts and continued the mystical tradition that arose together with the late medieval movement of the Devotio Moderna in the Northern Netherlands. Seventeenth-century semi-monastic women also continued the practices of the Devotio Moderna by living outside the cloister, occupying both the private and public spheres. The klopje movement in the Dutch Catholic Reformation, beginning in the late sixteenth century, revived the late medieval Devotio Moderna beguine tradition in an adaptive response to the relocation of the faith in the lay, private sphere. The movement of the Devotio Moderna was a "religious women's movement," sustained by women, who in the late Middle Ages, joined monastic orders in large numbers.[59] The movement produced a more substantial body of devotional literature by and for Catholic women than had been seen before in Medieval Europe. According to Wybren Scheepsma, the late medieval wave of female monasticism caused great anxiety among clerical leadership, and the church "had continual difficulties with these women, who could not fit into its hierarchical structure."[60]

In their foundation of the Haarlem community of klopjes, priests Nicholas Wiggerts Cousebant and Cornelis Arentz specifically based its organization, spatial layout, and spiritual practices on the model of the Devotio Moderna and its monastic lifestyle.[61] In the age of Catholic Reformation, however, these new groups of semi-monastic women faced

resistance, both from Protestants and critics within the Catholic Church, while the latter favored more male-dominated Missionary orders such as the Jesuits in the campaign for their Counter-Reformation cause. In this way, late medieval history repeated itself, as semi-monastic women's piety saw a revival (at first in the advent of the Devotio Moderna, and again in the Dutch Reformation taking place out of necessity in the lay, private sphere) which the official church hierarchy sought to control and suppress.

In addition to the penitents such as the aforementioned Sister Bertken, the flourishing of the Devotio Moderna saw an explosion of writings from beguines such as the Windesheim canonesses, under the rule of St. Augustus and inspired by the writings of Thomas à Kempis. The Windesheim convent's climate allowed its residents a degree of greater intellectual freedom, until their mystical publications of became a concern for the Chapter, which in 1455 officially banished their freedom of press. Among the Windesheim nuns were Jacomijne Costers (d. 1503), who wrote of her journey to hell and back, Mechtild van Rieviren (d. 1497), who recounted her internal conversations with Christ, and prioress Alijt Bake (1415-1455), whose spiritual autobiographical writing and forceful personality ultimately triggered the ban on women's mystical writings.[62]

While their ability to travel in the secular world distinguished them from their monastic counterparts, klopjes strictly adhered to the virtues of cloistered women that became central in the Devotio Moderna: chastity, poverty, humility, silence, and obedience to the will of God and their priests. Frequently throughout Oly's *Levens*, she describes her fellow klopjes as closer to a monastic woman than a woman in the world, in large part still bound to private, enclosed meditation. Klopjes took from the Devotion Moderna their use of devotional images and text in private meditation, and the emphasis on sustained individual

contemplation.[63] Seventeenth-century klopjes read the essential text of the Devotio Moderna movement, Thomas Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* (Augsburg, 1471-2) as part of their daily routine, in which they adopted its key themes: the imitation of Christ's humility, penitence, and continual suffering. The text's contempt for the vanities of the world and emphasis on modesty, moreover, corresponded to the rules by which the klopjes lived. Given the internally focused tone of their practice, klopjes also identified with the importance that Kempis places on the "internal" dimensions of devotion and its mystical potential. The late medieval mystical tradition of severe penitential devotions was also common among klopjes in the 1590s and early 1600s-1610s, while the practice of extreme self-punishment peaked in the Haarlem Chapter under Claes Wiggers Cousebant's leadership. The notorious Roermond spiritual women, the aforementioned Agnes van Heilsbach and her colleague Joanna van Randenraedt so greatly longed for suffering in their penance that they welcomed bodily pains as a gift from god, consumed animal and human feces, and kissed cadavers. Some klopjes considered such "mortifications," while certainly not common among all lay spiritual women to such a severe degree, an aid in achieving successfully affective penance. Accordingly, monastic women in particular would have identified with the emotional penitence and devotional fervor represented by the self-flagellating saints in *'t Bosch*, and recognized the importance of suffering to the spiritual goal of closeness with Christ.

F. Negotiating Women's Spiritual Power in 't Bosch



Figure 2-12. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), title page of *Sacra Eremus Ascetriarum ('t Bosch der Eremittinnen)*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00078.

Bloemaert, having lived most of his adult life in communities of nuns and klopjes, would have been acutely aware of their devotional interests and central role in the revival of Dutch Catholic spirituality in his age. The second half of *'t Bosch* that features female desert saints addresses concerns of Catholic women's communities, while providing a model of aestheticism and mystical devotion that remains bound to an adherence to the feminine virtues of modesty, passivity, and silence. The gendered division of the saints in *'t Bosch* is marked by a second title page (Fig. 2-12), in which a more feminine angel has gathered penitential symbols in her right arm, together with a large cross, while twisting and pointing towards the upper left of the composition, in which a divine light explodes in a sunburst. The angel's pointing gesture lends the image greater dynamic movement than its counterpart in the initial title page, as if to urge the viewer to continue onwards through the remaining text and its images. The angel steps on a bone adjacent to the skull that will populate the prints to come, encircled

by flames. Just as in the first title page for the male desert saints, Bloemaert foregrounds the materiality of the angel, as her foreshortened knee points outward, casting a shadow onto the stone block which displays the section title. The Latin title is an excerpt from Isaiah 35 commenting on the deliverance of Israel, translating to: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing."[64] Borrowing from the Old Testament to underscore the continuity of Christian time, this passage suits the desert saints in its natural motifs of the parched desert and floral abundance.

Bloemaert's engravings as well as van Gorcum's accompanying hagiographies emphasize the themes of modesty and proper female dress, along with the ascetic virtues of silence, isolation, and passivity. The two male figures in Bloemaert's print of Saint

Euphrosyna (Fig. 2-13) at first appear strangely voyeuristic in their gazes at the reclining, deceased female saint, whose left breast falls out of her garment. According to van Gorcum's narrative of the saint's life, however, this exposure of her womanhood marks the confirmation of her sacred, eremetical identity. Euphrosyna lived for around forty years enclosed in isolation in a chamber, disguised as a man under the name Smaragdus. Although her father Paphnutius had desired her to marry, Euphrosyna chose a monastic life, on the instruction of an Abbot who told her to "give herself in marriage to Christ before all the company of the Angels." Although she disguises herself as a man, while living among the monks in the cloister, Euphrosyna is too distracting to her fellow holy brothers due to her attractive appearance. The Abbot proposes her meditative isolation in a solitary room as the solution to her dangerous beauty, to which Euphrosyna happily agrees. Her monk habit and shaved hair led even her own father, searching for his lost daughter at the monastery, not to recognize her as



Figure 2-13. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Euphrosyna*, plate 5 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00109.

a woman. Only after her death is her womanhood, and therefore her true identity, revealed.[65] The engraving of Euphrosyna therefore represents the moment following her death when her father, joined by the Abbot, discovers that the eremitic Smaragdus is in fact Euphrosyna, which Bloemaert expresses through her fallen hood and exposed breast. The arrangement of the two older men gazing at her breast recalls scenes of Susanna and the Elders, however, reversing the moral implications of their gazes, as the male voyeurs now look upon the womanly form of Euphrosyna not out of lecherous sin, but in admiration for the modest covering she wore in her life. The life of Euphrosyna therefore demonstrates to its readers that the physical covering does not neutralize the dangerously seductive power held by women, which only penance in ascetic isolation accomplishes.



Figure 2-14. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Maria, nicht van de heilige Abraham van Edessa,* plate 6 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00110.

Bloemaert's engraving of Saint Maria Neptis Abrahae (Fig. 2-14), likewise, overcomes her past lasciviousness to achieve salvation through penance. Mary throws her

arms open in a gesture that mirrors that of the large sculpture of the crucified Christ alongside her, revealing her breasts in a manner more typically found in paintings of nighttime tavern scenes than those of saints, to reference her former occupation as a prostitute. Bloemaert draws further attention to her bosom with a raking line of light, seemingly cast by the gaze of Christ from the upper right of the composition. In van Gorcum's narrative of Mary's life, he recounts how she lived virtuously with her holy uncle Abraham in abstinence until a man posing as a monk tempted her into forsaking her vows of chastity. Mary immediately lamented her transgression, mourning that she did not "preserve her undefiled soul for the immortal Bridegroom."[66] Mary thereafter flees to another city, in disguise, to find work in a brothel. Her uncle Abraham later rescues her, ensuring her salvation through the almighty mercy of God. The narrative repeatedly stresses the importance of abstinence and repentance for one's sins, as Mary speaks of her "hateful tears" after her fall from virtue, and her continual excessive weeping in eremitic isolation after her salvation from sin. In his engraving, Bloemaert thus collapses the narrative's key moments of repentance: Mary's initial regret after her sinful act with the monk, and her return to an abstinent lifestyle of devotion to Christ. Like Euphrosyna, the representation of Maria Neptis Abrahae in text and image emphasizes the implicitly sinful, lascivious nature of women and present a solution to its risks in penance and ascetic retreat.

The twenty-third print of female saints in *'t Bosch*, representing saints Marana and Cyra (Fig. 2-15), starkly contrasts the images of Euphrosyna and Maria Neptis Abrahae, and visually stand out in the series, as the duo are faceless, entirely covered by heavy drapery. The narrative and image of saints Marana and Cyra represent ideals of monastic womanhood, parallel to those enforced in contemporary convents, particularly silence and modesty. In the engraving, one saint kneels at the foreground with hands grasped in a gesture of prayer and her head downcast, with the hood of a heavy cloak hiding her physiognomy. The drapery, together with an oversized chain around her neck, lends her figure a sense of solidity and confinement. Van Gorcum praises how, in their weather-exposed isolation, Marana and Cyra wore heavy iron chains that caused their fragile, starved bodies to bend over in penitential pain, as a form of self-torture. Van Gorcum stresses the necessity of such extreme measures, as he writes that each must



Figure 2-15. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Marana van Syrië en de heilige Cyra als kluizenaressen met ketenen*, plate 23 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00127.

bear an iron chain around her neck "for her penance."[67] The second saint sits, facing away from the viewer, some distance away from her companion, as if to indicate that despite their proximity, their devotions are still isolated and silent. Bloemaert represents their handmade straw-thatched structure, without a roof and open to the elements, on the left side of the composition. Marana and Cyra withdrew to the desert at a young age, where they lived as recluses and never spoke save for the occasion of Easter Sunday.[68] Period devotional literature often praised the virtue of silence so greatly emphasized in this text, which was often a fundamental, and often mandatory, element of monastic life. Klopjes thought self-willed periods of silence could open up one's mind to mystical communion with God, and facilitate greater rigorous meditation. At the Windesheim convent, for instance, only Sundays and feast days allowed the nuns to spend more time speaking to one another.[69] In the seventeenth century, klopjes strictly adhered to the virtues of cloistered women that became central in the Devotio Moderna: chastity, poverty, humility, obedience to the will of God and their priests, and especially, silence. Oly described how klopjes spent certain parts of their day in silence, reading, praying or in meditation.[70] Van Gorcum's text also lauds the two female saints for their severe asceticism, particularly their forty day fast, following Moses, and fast on their pilgrimage to Jerusalem, only taking nourishment upon reaching their holy destination. Through its visual and textual emphasis on ascetic practice, and its disciplined

silence, isolation and penitence, *'t Bosch* models a distinctly Dutch Catholic mode of devotional practice, of defining importance for the female monastic tradition.

1. Modest Covering in *'t Bosch* and Klopje Culture

The theme of the female saints's clothing and its capacity to expose or cover the body modestly recurs throughout the narratives of Euphrosyna, Mary, Marana, and Cyra. Bloemaert's juxtaposition of Mary with Euphrosyna in the series allows the reader to contrast the two women, represented with their breasts exposed, for Euphrosyna to signify the virtuous concealment of her femininity until her death, and for Mary to indicate her status as a reformed prostitute. While Euphrosyna dresses as a monk to diffuse the dangerous potentials of her feminine beauty, Mary dons a monk's habit to marks the moment that she returns to virtue from a life of sinful lust. Issues of both modest covering and ascetic nudity are present also in male desert saints's lives, however an emphasis on the virtue of modest and immodest dress in Bloemaert's engravings and van Gorcum's texts would have resonated with its klopje audience, whose ritual dressing in modest black garments formed an important part of their shared daily routine. The essential importance of modest dress to Catholic semi-monastic women can also be located in the text, which consistently discusses women's clothing in the moral terms of their gender's virtue. By contrast, discussions of male nudity in the volume take a tone that stresses their partial nudity as an ascetic decision, allowing them to embrace the strict deprivation of the eremitic lifestyle. Alternately, some texts for male saints fail to address their dress or lack thereof all together, focusing instead on their diligent prayer and other eremitic qualities.

A sermon from the leading priest of Haarlem's 'de Hoek' community, Nicholas Wiggerts Cousebant, outlines the ritual of dressing that klopjes should undertake throughout

the day and its spiritual symbolism. Cousebant describes how klopjes must methodically lay out their spiritual clothing in a ritualized fashion at the start and end of the day, and undertake dressing in their modest habit as a meditative exercise. According to Cousebant, dressing in clothing that completely covers the body, including a veil, made of humble materials like wool, serves to remind the klopje of their special identity, and the strict adherence to the virtues of poverty and modesty that it requires:

> "The habit was considered as sacred and gives her a new identity. Not only externally but also internally does she remove herself from the vain world. The sober clothing also serves to remind one of the most important virtues, submissiveness (*ontmoedigheid*) or humility (*nederigheid*). Each evening the *begijnte* again undergoes the ritual of the 'spiritual' dressing, an activity that wholly offers itself to meditation."[71]

An anonymous klopje of de Hoek relays Cousebant's guidelines for womens's spiritual clothing in a handwritten version of his sermon from 1680. Transcribing sermons by hand was a common practice among the spiritual women, who often reread the transcriptions together in a reenactment of the Mass. According to the klopje's report of Cousebant's sermon, the priest gave a detailed theological explanation for each item of ritual clothing that they should wear. He described how clothing at first served the basic functions of protection from the environment, but after forgiving the Original Sin, it was a gift from God's graces. Simple clothing reminded the women on a daily basis of the sober humility valued by Christ, who will ultimately judge them, and prompted them to imagine themselves in the poverty of biblical settings, such as "the carpenter's workshop of Joseph" or "in the stall of Bethlehem." Accordingly, Cousebant urges klopjes to dress modestly to always remind themselves that

Christ, who abhors luxury, finery, and vanity, will judge them on the degree of the "inner beauty of their virtuousness." The Haarlem priest then reminds his klopje readers that they should dress to avoid drawing attention to themselves, and should pass through the world without engaging with others. At the same time, they must mark their klopje identity to the outside world through their humble dress, thereby visually embodying their spiritual mission.[72] For klopjes, their distinctive black habits served to protect them from the lascivious, corrupt secular world, while making publicly visible the cause of their subordinated spiritual community. The public display of their faith through their distinctive dress succeeded in aggravating Reformed onlookers, as Haarlem Reformed priest Samuel Ampzing decried how they appeared as if "they lived in papist cities and lands."[73] As the policy of mandated clandestinity indicates, the Reformed Church "tolerated" other faiths while requiring their public invisibility, and as such, klopjes's public appearance as Catholic would disrupt the outward appearance of Protestant hegemony they cultivated.

Contemporary representations of klopjes in the seventeenth century confirm the group's adherence to the policies outlined by Cousebant, showing them veiled, and wearing severe black garments with high collars. Catholic painter Jan Steen includes a traditionally dressed klopje in his 1665 painting *Beware of Luxury*, where she acts as the representation of virtuous behavior, as she wags her finger admonishingly at the topsy-turvy household.[74] In the 1643 portrait of Gouda klopje Maeritge Vermeij by Rotterdam artist Ludolf de Jongh (Fig. 2-16), she wears a sober black garment with a high white collar and traditional head covering. In a 1620 portrait by an anonymous klopje from Haarlem's de Hoek, she clasps her hand in a tightly reserved posture, as her hair is covered and she dons a white collar pressed up to her chin.[75] While in *'t Bosch* the demonic is represented by the nude female form in the narrative of Euphraxia, many of the female saints are fully covered in modest, simple clothing, including some in monastic habits. For instance, both Saints Paula Romana (Fig. 2-17) and Synclectica wear the traditional garb of a beguine, including its head covering and high collar. The text therefore juxtaposes



Figure 2-16. Ludolf de Jongh, *Portrait of Maeritge Vermeij*, 1643, oil on canvas. Private Collection.



Figure 2-17. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige* Paula Romana, plate 12 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00116.

the saintly virtue of covered saints clad in the dress valued and espoused in klopje communities, against the shameful exposure of sinful women.

2. The Magdalene as a Model for Mystical Penitence

In *'t Bosch*, the Magdalene acts as a model of disciplined penitence and inward focused meditation. Bloemaert's numerous representations of the repentant Magdalene, more than any other saint in his painted and printed oeuvre, demonstrate his particular interest in her capacity for mystical experience.[76] The Magdalene ranked among the top patron saints of beguinages in the Low Countries, dating back to the late middle ages, behind only the Virgin Mary, and Saints Catherine and Elizabeth. [77] As noted earlier in this chapter, from 1593 to the end of his life, Bloemaert rented his family home from the Maria Magdalena Confraternity, a community of approximately fifty monks living alongside the Wittevrouwen Convent, with a small chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene. Officials dissolved the convent and confraternity six years after Bloemaert's death, in 1657. The site of the confraternity and convent, like so many of its functional and defunct counterparts across the Northern Netherlands, served as a communal space for Catholic residences and community gathering, facilitating their unofficial organization and preserving their shared sense of identity as a faith.[78]

Bloemaert would therefore have had an acute understanding of the particular devotional interests of men and women who had defined their lives by rigorous penance, following the Magdalene. The Magdalene, as the exemplary model of female penance and the imitation of Christ, took on particular prominence in the era of the Counter-Reformation and the Dutch Catholic restoration. A popular subject in this period's visual culture and religious literature, devotional texts for laypeople such as that of French Jesuit François de Sales (1567-1622) praised the Magdalene's mystical suffering.[79] In addition, early modern

female mystics cited the Magdalene, including Teresa of Avila, who compared herself to the penitent, declaring her love for God with the Magdalene's, "in whom this fire of the love of God burned so vehemently," suffering forever in "one continuous martyrdom."[80] For the Dutch Catholic woman the saint acted as a model of the mystical woman and the ideal intensity of penance, devotion, and in Bloemaert's engraving, modesty, to which they aspired.

In his many images of the saint, Bloemaert chooses to represent Mary Magdalene only as a penitent in the desert, removed from the narratives in which she typically participates. Bloemaert refrained, however, from the tendencies that persisted, despite Tridentine opposition to eroticism in religious art, to represent the penitent Magdalene in an openly sensuous fashion, to reference to her former sins. In order to present the Magdalene as an exemplary figure for his klopje readers, Bloemaert fully clothes the saint as she heroically triumphs over her past sinful life and its fleeting worldly pleasures through repentance.

Bloemaert's representation of the clothed Magdalene corresponds to the decorum of Tridentine artistic reforms that intensely debated the decorum for figures in religious scenes. In his *De Pictura sacra* 1624, Cardinal Federico Borromeo had advocated for the Tridentine rejection of nudity in religious images, allowed only when required by narrative. Artists did not universally adopt the Tridentine pictorial ideals set down by Borromeo when it came to the Magdalene, however, as Italian representations of the saint continued to emphasize her sensuous beauty and reveal her nude body.[81] Bloemaert's fully clothed repentant Magdalene is unusual, as contemporary Catholic artists such as van Dyck and Rubens only slightly departed from the eroticized Magdalene images typical of the late sixteenth century, only partly covering the saint's flesh with drapery, with some still exposed.



Figure 2-18. Boetius Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver and publisher), Abraham Bloemaert (design), *De heilige Maria Magdalena*, plate 2 of *'t Bosch der Eremittinnen*, 1612-1619, engraving, 5 3/4 x 3 2/3 in. Museum Plantin-Moretus, PK.OP.00106.

In *'t Bosch*, Bloemaert represents Mary Magdalene in mystical engagement with the invisible presence of the divine (Fig. 2-18). Similarly to the Virgin Mary that precedes her in the series, Bloemaert represents Mary Magdalene's upward gaze paralleled by diagonal lines that extend from the upper right corner to indicate that she is addressing a divine force not pictured in the image. The prints of the Virgin and the Magdalene's shared beams of light creates a pictorial dialogue between the two that allows the viewer to draw a connection between the two women who lived closest to Christ and witnessed his Passion. As the Magdalene gazes upwards to the light, her eyes turn backwards in an ecstatic expression, as her hands against press against her bosom and her body bends slightly to follow her glance. Bloemaert represents the Magdalene engaging with the divine through a beam of light also in a 1609 print designed by Bloemaert and engraved by Willem Isaacsz van Swanenburg (Fig. 2-19) and in a 1619 painting by the artist. In the 1609 engraving, Bloemaert gives the burst of light to which she directs her attention a greater compositional role, while the dynamically animated landscape that surrounds her takes up more space. By paring down the background of the *'t Bosch*



Figure 2-19. William Isaacsz van Swanenburg (engraver), Abraham Bloemaert (designer), *Boetvaardige H. Maria Magdalena*, 1609, engraving, 6 2/3 x 10 2/3 in. Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1885-A-9096.

Magdalene, the subject is shifted to her inward reflecting devotional experience, located in the mind of the believer and expressed externally through only a hint of divine light. Later editions of *'t Bosch* included a copy of the 1609 engraving so that the reader could view both of Bloemaert's prints of the Magdalene. In both, the mystic's long hair and ointment jar in the foreground identify her, while her monumental figure twists beneath its expressive drapery to look upwards. Strangely, the Paets edition recycles the original Magdalene as Martha (leaving her Magadalene iconography, and the ointment jar, unchanged), with his woodcut adaptation of the Swanenburg engraving and several of his own images added for her biographical narrative.

When viewing Bloemaert's print of the Magdalene, the viewers thus identified with her, reflected on their own sinful nature, and sought to follow her example of devotion and penitence. That she is the only saint in the volume with a poem dedicated to her, indicated by centered and indented text, signals her special importance. Likewise, van Gorcum's accompanying text emphasizes that Christ favored the meditation of the Magdalene over the domestic fastidiousness of Martha, as he praises the "inward contemplation" rather than the latter's "outward carefulness."[82] The juxtaposition between inward (*inwendige*) and outward (*uytwendige*) in van Gorcum's text parallels the Magdalene's withdrawal into the desert, and the worldly sphere in which Martha is unable to focus on her meditative practice. The engraved inscription under Bloemaert's 1609 Magdalene print, written by the Catholic humanist Cornelis Plemp, affirms that such an image urges the viewer to reject all worldly temptations, or the "proud ostentation" as the saint did in her decision to follow Christ: "Considered by the young as Venus - ah, beguiling voluptuousness! - I liked the evil Magdalene beyond measure. I myself saw me as in a mirror, most repulsive, when Christ

addressed me. May the pleasure come, to be tested; bereft, the proud ostentation will instantly collapse."[83]

Due to her special status as the most important of the female penitents, van Gorcum writes an extended text for Mary Magdalene that includes a page-long poem spoken from the saint's perspective. For a klopje in particular, reading the text alongside viewing Bloemaert's print of the Magdalene would have inspired contemplation on her exemplary repentance and devotional discipline. Van Gorcum's poetic narrative of the Magdalene's ascension to heaven to hear angels sing would have affirmed the the direct, intimate experience of the divine with which one could be rewarded by God for penitence. Van Gorcum, moreover, continually emphasizes inward looking devotion by repeating the phrase *van binnen* throughout the poem, as the Magdalene narrates, for instance, that she has become "delighted from the inside," "my heart has kindled me from the inside," and "my heart is from the inside shot-through with the beams of your love."[84] The origin of and location in which her mystical experience takes place is therefore inside the devotional mind, a process of internalization ideally suited for the aspirations of Dutch Catholic spiritual women in their domestic meditations.

The text and images of *'t Bosch* presents reclusiveness itself as a traditional female virtue, much like chastity and modesty. The narratives of Euphrosyna, Mary, Marana and Cyra's lives all stress penance and the masking of their feminine features as aids in the journey towards becoming mystically close to God and Christ. Likewise, the Magdalene's narrative presents penitence as a way to cleanse one of lascivious sin and restore them to a pure state. When Euphrosyna's Abbot urges her ascetic isolation, he addresses "Smaragdus" as such: "Son, your face is beautiful, and some Brothers ill; thereon I want you to sit alone in

your room and sing praiseful songs and eat there and you shall go out nowhere from there."[85] When van Gorcum praises Marana and Cyra for their "manner of life," he notes how through this way of living they "honor all women."[86]

Women's mystical engagement with Christ as their "Bridegroom," a mystical union sourced from the Song of Songs, was exceptionally popular in Dutch Catholic devotional texts and prints, and across Catholic Europe, since the middle ages. An ancient Judaic love poem, Catholics understood the Song of Songs's amorous and bridal language to refer to the worshipper and Christ in the Christian tradition since the writings of Saints Ambrose and Augustine.[87] In the emergence of late medieval mysticism, the figures of Saints Francis and Clare clarified the marked gender distinction between men's and women's monastic worldviews. Although St. Francis had described poor women as the "spouses of the Holy Spirit," nuptial language is absent from his works, while St. Clare continually refers to herself as the Bride of Christ. The Song of Songs and its bridal imagery informed this wave of thirteenth-century mysticism for women in particular, as St. Clare most consistently articulated the monastic woman as the Bride of Christ.[88]

Many of the female desert saints in *'t Bosch* are referred to by van Gorcum as Brides of Christ, a status of mystical intimacy to which the monastic women of Dutch Catholic communities would have aspired. Klopje Giertge Dirks, from the young age of four or five, declared that "she desired a Bridegroom who had one mother and no father," and numerous others made vows of chastity early in their childhood and youth.[89] Throughout Oly's *Vitae*, she refers to her fellow spiritual sisters as "brides of Christ" interchangeably with the titles of klopje or spiritual virgin. Accordingly, the female saints of *'t Bosch* appear to engage more intimately and more often with Christ than their male counterparts. Saint Domnina kisses the

feet of a small sculpture of the crucified Christ, which she gently cradles in her arms (Fig. 2-10). Bloemaert's prints and devotional literature include the motif of a woman lovingly gazing into the eyes of her Bridegroom. In Otto van Veen's 1615 *Amoris divini emblemata*, the personified soul intensely gazes at a figure of Christ-Eros, with the caption that "love augments the inclination to scrutinize the beloved," taken from the writings of Gregory the Great.[90]

The popular 1573-74 devotional text *Divinarum nuptiarum conventa et acta* by Spanish theologian Benito Arias Montano, published in Dutch translation with illustrations designed by Gerard van Groningen and engraved by Phillips Galle (Antwerp, 1580), narrates the anonymous Bride's preparation for the wedding to Christ, her Bridegroom. In Montano's text, this progression allegorically stands in for the church's marriage to Christ and for the soul's pursuit of meditation and ultimately, salvation.[91] In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola made it clear that successful devotional practice would be rewarded with "ecstatic vision and spiritual union with God."[92]



Figure 2-20. Abraham van Merlen (engraver and publisher), The Mystical Marriage of Catherine of Siena, engraving. Archiefdienst voor Kennemerland, Bisdom Haarlem, Het Begijnhof, inv. nr. 343, f. 32v.

Dutch Catholic visual culture often represented the fourteenth-century mystic Saint Catherine of Siena, as she served as a model of spiritual union with Christ through her mystical marriage. Catherine of Siena appears in an undated engraving by Abraham van Merlen (Fig. 2-20), pasted into klopje-transcribed Cousebant



Figure 2-21. A Maiden takes Christ as her Bridegroom, engraving. Archiefdienst voor Kennemerland, Bisdom Haarlem, Het Begijnhof, Inv. Nr. 343, f. 14v.

sermons, in which he details the rituals of spiritual clothing. The transcriber pasted the van Merlen engraving opposite an anonymous, undated print of a maiden taking Christ as her Bridegroom (Fig. 2-21), further reinforcing its pairing with the mystical marriage of the saint. St. Catherine receives the crown of thorns from Christ, from whose mouth a banderol reads: "This is for you daughter, the way to heaven."[93] The other prints included in the sermons include numerous images of Catherine of Siena weeping in devotion and her mystical marriage, as well as that of fellow monastic female saint Joanna of Valois, among others.[94]

For the contemporary klopje, the ultimate spiritual goal of penitent contemplation was the mystical union with Christ demonstrated by these saints in hagiographical text and image. Van Gorcum's text describes how God rewarded Mary Magdalene for her virtuous penitence with her ascension to heaven to hear the singing of angels. Accordingly, images often represent the Magdalene carrying or wearing the Holy Face of Christ in order to indicate their corporeal connection and her achievement of mystical union with God. The Magdalene often refers to Christ as her "beloved" in van Gorcum's text, declaring her longing "to behold that pure face."[95] Aspirational imagery that represents women directly engaging with the divine proliferated in Dutch Catholic visual culture, in no small part due to the popularity of

more contemporary female mystics, such as St. Theresa of Avila. *'t Bosch* therefore presents the Magdalene, alongside the other female desert saints, as exemplary models to follow as they work towards the reward of mystical experience through their disciplined devotions.

The female desert saints of *'t Bosch* illustrate both the devotional ideal and the mystical goal of Dutch Catholic women's spirituality, which Bloemaert must have known would be appreciated by his female lay spiritual viewership. Far from the theatrical, spectacular representations of female mystics in works such as Bernini's *Ecstasy of St. Theresa* which displays, under the supervising gaze of the Cornaro patrons, the outward expression of the saint's spiritual experience, the mysticism of Bloemaert's female hermits quietly takes place in the interior of the saint's mind. In this way, the problematic sensuality implicit in women's mystical experience is resolved in the shifting the site of spiritual experience from the body to the mind. The Dutch Catholic woman reading *'t Bosch* would therefore be able to more effectively model their inward-looking devotional practice after the eremitic saint, in the private, domestic sphere. Klopjes in particular would have personally resonated with the eremitic retreat of the saints, which at once affirmed the exemplary virtue of their choice to withdraw from the public realm, and rendered their legal compulsion to practice in private an act of piety to which all Catholics should aspire.

While in the hands of a Dutch devotional viewer, the desert saints represented by Bloemaert in *t' Bosch* would exemplify absorption in one's prayers, and the distinctly Catholic principles of saintly intercession and penance, while thereby creating a communal spiritual identity. The monumental, heroic figures of the penitents that resist the distractions of chained demons to persist in their prayers would have registered with their viewers as a representation of the Catholic faith's triumphant endurance in the face of persecution through

private devotion. The Dutch Catholic community's need to affirm their spiritual survival would have felt particularly urgent at the tumultuous political moment of Bloemaert's 1619 publication, only one year after the Alteration took hold in Utrecht and ensured stricter Calvinist governmental controls. Bloemaert and his Jesuit neighbors experienced persecution firsthand, while the Holland Mission and its clergy defined their faith identity as one characterized by heroic suffering and martyrdom in the face of overwhelming, oppressive opposition. In so doing, Dutch Catholics transformed their compulsion to practice in private, necessitated and enforced through the policies of the Reformed government, into the defining quality of their local faith community. In *'t Bosch*, Bloemaert represents the triumph of rigorous personal devotion as itself a eremitic act of retreat from the public sphere, culminating in an inward, invisible victory, far removed from the imagery of the Church Triumphant that populated the Southern Netherlands and other officially Catholic territories.

III. Tue me caedis: Pieter de Grebber's *Ecce Homo* and Late Medieval Netherlandish Devotion

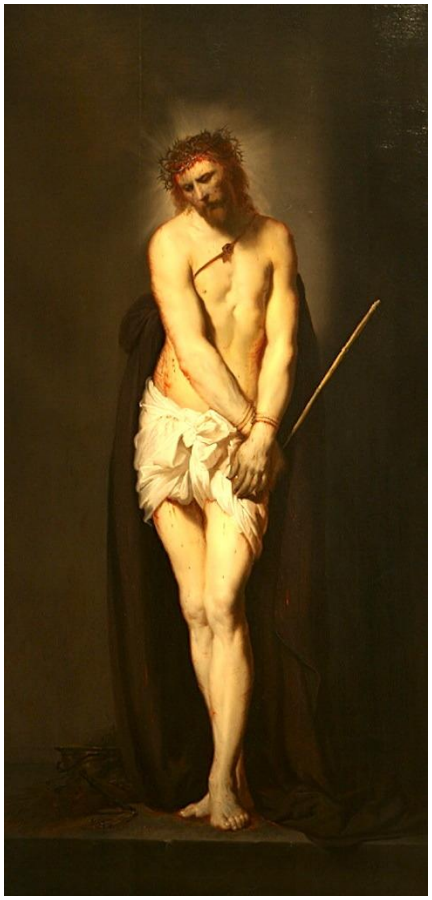


Figure 3-1. Pieter de Grebber, *Ecce Homo*, 1632, oil on panel, 63 x 33 1/2 in. The Legion of Honor, 1995.51.

In Pieter de Grebber's *Ecce Homo* (Fig. 3-1), *Christ* radiates from the void of darkness in which he stands. Finely painted drips of blood contouring the forms of his bluish grey flesh act as signs of the flagellation that occurred moments before. The instruments that produced these drips of blood lie at Christ's feet, the most prominent of which, a spiked cat-o-nine-tails, rests near the lower frame of the picture. Almost life-size, the bloodied body of Christ stands alone, entirely still but for a slight drop of his head and twist of his torso. For a Dutch Catholic viewer the sanguine sensoriality of Christ's luminescent body would have functioned as cue for meditation on his suffering in their devotional imagination.[1] Such devotion on the materiality of Christ's suffering was central to the Dutch Catholic Reformation, of which the Haarlem Chapter where de Grebber lived and worked was a major center. At the same time, authenticated Christological relics in Haarlem and other images of intimate encounters between the devotional subject and the suffering Christ emphasized the tangible traces of Christ's physical suffering. Likewise, Dutch Catholic textual and visual culture

foregrounded the importance of the mystical and miraculous, qualities which both functioned as affirmations of Catholic orthodoxy, particularly as Protestants disavowed the potential for miracles in the modern day.[2]

In his painting, de Grebber's made a significant change to a popular Antwerpian image type of Christ at the Column in his addition of drips of blood that cover Christ's body. De Grebber rejected the Antwerpian type that rendered Christ's figure as Rubenesque, heroic, and bloodless, instead representing his body as defeated and solemn in his suffering. De Grebber depicted Christ in this fashion, as I suggest, in order to engage with the devotional interests of his Haarlem community: the importance of mystical experiences, Christ's bodily suffering in religious literature, and the veneration of relics. I put forward that he drew from the tradition of hand coloring prayer cards, in which their owners often added Christ's blood.

The historical conditions of Pieter de Grebber and the Haarlem Chapter for which he worked serves as a foundation for my visual analysis of the 1632 *Ecce Homo* and its sources. In this discussion, I examine de Grebber's revision of an Antwerpian image type of *Christ at the Column*. After exploring the painting's relationship to these images from the Southern Netherlands, I focus on the pictorial relationship between de Grebber's painting of the suffering Christ and popular prayer cards in Catholic Haarlem. Finally, I attend to the devotional implications of de Grebber drawing from such prayer cards for the local viewership of his painting. Through his monumentalized recreation of these intimate devotional experiences, de Grebber figure of Christ addresses the mystical ambitions of lay spiritual women in his community, or *klopjes*, while also embodying the long suffering plight of Dutch Catholics in their Reformation.

A. Pieter de Grebber and the Haarlem Chapter

Pieter de Grebber (Haarlem, 1600-1652) received his training in the Haarlem history painting tradition of Karel van Mander, starting in the workshops of his father, Frans Pietersz de Grebber (1573-1643) as well as Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617). In his 1642 *Lof de Schilderkonst*, Phillips Angel praised de Grebber for his treatment of the human body in movement and careful observation of its anatomy without drawing from live dissection. De Grebber wrote his own treatise on painting in 1649, *Rules to be observed and followed by the good painter and draftsman*, which largely mirrors the writings of his Haarlem guild predecessor, Karel van Mander.[3] While he was a prominent figure in the early seventeenth-century Haarlem art world, de Grebber, unlike his father, never took on an official guild position. De Grebber's father Fransz. Pieter de Grebber served as the guild's deacon, allowing the removal of the guild's treasured relic of St. Luke and its transfer to a priest, Cloribus of Bruges. De Bray sought its restoration to the guild archive, however it appears de Grebber wished it to stay with Cloribus, for the priest eventually returned only a small part of the relic.[4]

De Grebber was a member of two communities: that of his fellow artists in Haarlem and that of his fellow Catholics dwelling in "de Hoek." While he worked for a wide variety of patrons, he acted as the primary artist working for the Haarlem Chapter. From 1634 until his death, he lived next door to the beguinage's canon in the Bagijnhof, where he often acted as a witness to its marriages, wills, and baptisms. In addition to religious paintings, De Grebber frequently painted portraits of the Chapter's pastors and other prominent members.[5] When secular priest and close friend to the de Grebber family Jan Albert Ban recorded the oral histories of the Haarlem Catholic community before the Reformation, de Grebber signed

the minutes as an official witness, "constrijken Pieter de Grebber meesterschilder."[6] De Grebber and his father both encountered legal trouble for housing known Catholic priests and officials ordered them to pay sizable fines by Haarlem magistrates. In Pieter de Grebber's case, he faced legal consequences for housing one Father Blessius in his home after the priest performed a baptism there.[7] The Haarlem magistrates generally tolerated housing priests, unless the residents brought children into the home or involved them in the Catholic activities that took place there. Legal complications for Catholics were typical in the climate of interfaith tension in Haarlem in the first decades of the seventeenth century. Rumors of Catholics preparing armed revolt against the Reformed government often stirred panic and fear in the city, particularly in 1587, 1598, and 1612, when false information from an anonymous source led to the burghers' armed assembly in anticipation of retaliation.[8]

At the time de Grebber painted his *Ecce Homo*, the Haarlem Chapter understood themselves as heirs to late medieval Netherlandish lay spirituality, in no small part due to a sense of unbroken continuity despite the changes brought by the Reformation. While denied its ecclesiastical legitimacy from Rome, the Haarlem Chapter maintained their institutional coherence since before the Reformation. As the Haarlem Chapter and its dean considered themselves equal in the Holland Mission's ecclesiastical hierarchy to the vicar apostolic, who presided over the Utrecht diocese, the relationship between these two powerful centers was often tense. A 1616 concordat resolved these issues, specifying that while the Haarlem Chapter was technically subordinate to the apostolic vicariate in Utrecht, it could independently manage its affairs and appoint its priests.[9] Even more so than the tolerant Catholic center of Utrecht, the Haarlem Chapter was, according to van Eck, "the most prestigious Catholic institution in the Republic that had survived the Reformation."[10]

B. Pieter de Grebber's Ecce Homo and the Suffering Christ in Devotional Print Culture

De Grebber painted the *Ecce Homo* shortly after the 1631 foundation of the Haarlem Chapter's clandestine church of St. Bernardus en de Hoek, also used as the community's meeting house. While the Chapter likely commissioned the large canvas of the life-size Christ to adorn its altar, archival records cannot confirm the painting's original location. Van Eck has hypothesized that Pieter de Grebber's *Ecce Homo* instead served a devotional purpose in a private chapel or on a side wall of a clandestine church, due to its more "purely devotional rather than Eucharistic character."[11] I suggest its function as an altarpiece is more likely not only due to its monumental size, but because the subject matter of the Ecce Homo is decidedly Eucharistic as well as devotional (and one cannot so easily separate these two functions in religious art). Furthermore, there likely were very few "side wall" spaces for the large painting in the sparse, intimate environment of the early clandestine church (the appearance of which I outline further in Chapter Four). Given the lack of known documentation about the church of St. Bernardus en de Hoek, I focus here on the experience of the painting's viewership, rather than its function in situ. Regardless of its precise location, the painting's viewership certainly consisted of Haarlem's Catholic priests, klopjes, and laity. I posit that in his adaptation of devotional print sources for a large-scale painting, de Grebber sought to create an intimate and immediate experience of engagement with the suffering Christ for its viewers.

De Grebber's *Ecce Homo* is identified as such because Christ stands before the viewer, already mocked, crowned with thorns, and flagellated. The absence of a column distances the image from those of the Flagellation, while de Grebber further complicates its

subject matter by removing the Ecce Homo′s traditional setting, typically a palatial balcony, with Pontius Pilate, jeering soldiers, and a crowd of onlookers. Only the Arma Christi lying at his feet, part of the iconography of the Man of Sorrows, accompany the figure of Christ. For this reason, many sources title the image *the Man of Sorrows*. De Grebber isolates Christ from the Ecce Homo′s narrative context in order to stir mystical, contemplative devotion in its viewer. In this way, de Grebber's treatment of Christ is akin to Erwin Panofsky's concept of the *andachtsbild*, which, in the words of Sixten Ringbom:

> "can be produced in two ways: either by subtraction from a narrative or by the augmentation of a representational image. The first method…consists of isolating the main figure or the most important protagonists from a history. This brings the action to a standstill and gives the emotional experience connected with the action a duration suitable for the contemplative absorption. In this way Christ Carrying the Cross has crystallized from the Carrying of the Cross, Christ Tied to the Pillar from the Flagellation, etc."[12]



Figure 3-2. Abraham van Diepenbeeck, Schelte Adamsz. Bolswert (engraver), Martinus van den Enden (publisher), *Ecce Homo*, 1596-1659, engraving, 10.4 x 5.3 in. Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-102.041.

De Grebber's painting is modeled after the devotional motif of "Christ Tied to the Pillar" referenced by Ringbom, produced by subtracting every element of the Flagellation except for Christ. De Grebber particularly drew from a devotional print type exemplified by Abraham van Diepenbeeck's engraving of the *Ecce Homo* (Fig. 3-2), an often-used composition of the flagellated Christ in a swaying, contrapposto pose. Closely following the type used by van Diepenbeeck, Alexander Voet produced small prayer cards of the subject.[13] Although Pontius Pilate displays Christ before the judging crowd and he wears the attributes of his mocking, in this type his wounds from the flagellation are absent. A few small drips fall from the crown of thorns and Christ gazes downward with a blank, tranquil expression. By representing a more solemnly downcast and excessively bloody Christ, de Grebber indicates the flagellation that came before and shifts the devotional focus of the image to his physical suffering. In so doing, de Grebber adapts this image type to more closely align with the late medieval tradition of hand colored prayer cards in his community.

The ongoing suffering of de Grebber's Christ is dramatically emphasized by the intricately wound crown of thorns pressing into his brow, causing blood to flow down his face. In place of a halo, a circle of soft grey light radiates from Christ's crowned head, further calling attention to the crown of thorns through its contrast against the light background. While de Grebber takes the halo's representation of a burst of light from the Antwerpian type, its muted gray hue particularly works to foreground the vibrant red paint with which he has articulated the excessive blood surrounding the crown of thorns. De Grebber renders Christ's flesh in grey, sickly tones like the blue-grey of the background, while drips of blood continue over the entirety of his body (Fig. 3-3). Blood leaks from under the ropes that tie his hands, indicating the severe abrasion of his skin. The blood dripping from his back falls down his loincloth and legs in small droplets. De Grebber also adds small, fine streams of blood falling from his torso, standing out against his dark cloak and the pale color of his legs. Christ's blood pools at his feet, directly juxtaposed with the instruments that caused them. Accordingly, de Grebber adds blood to the cat-o-nine-tails and birch whips to suggest their recent use in Christ's torture.



Figure 3-3. Pieter de Grebber, *Ecce Homo*, detail.

De Grebber's representation of Christ in the Ecce Homo as weak and passive more directly implicates the viewer as complicit in his ongoing suffering, while it resonates with

the definition of Dutch Catholic identity as an embattled minority. While de Grebber gives Christ's body subtle muscular definition, his body dramatically departs from the heroic, Rubenesque musculature of Christ found in Antwerp engravings of the subject. His slight shoulders passively fall in defeat, while his chest appears fleshy and weak, this posture further contributing to the sense of his passivity. While images of the Ecce Homo often represent Christ staring out at the viewer with a pleading expression, de Grebber's Christ turns his face slightly, with his gaze averted downward to the lower right. Although de Grebber's Christ crosses his left foot in front of his right, his stance is not one of dramatic swaying contrapposto, but rather relaxed repose as he endures his humiliation.

In de Grebber's painting, Christ stands at the edge of an ambiguous stone ledge above a horizontal area of darkness. Christ's cloak drapes over the edge of this ledge slightly, contributing to the illusion of his material presence. Although in Antwerpian prints like van Diepenbeeck's, Christ's cloak drapes over the short column, in de Grebber's painting the ledge extends beyond the picture plane. This effectively collapses the space of the image and that of the viewer before it, bringing the figure of Christ closer to them. While a traditional device used to imply the reality of the painted image, de Grebber treats the projecting slab with particular attention to detail, adding small cracks and blemishes to its face. In its likely location above an altar in a clandestine church, the ledge implicated the viewers as the spectators viewing Christ standing before the balcony in the Ecce Homo. One rule from de Grebber's art treatise echoes his illusionistic treatment of Christ, particularly citing religious matter as exceptionally suitable for this approach:

> "Figures bursting halfway out of the frame are not beautiful, and must therefore be avoided, also figures projecting half out of the background, unless one is making an

> Ecce Homo, or something of that kind, where a necessary emphasis in depiction is required, then it may project from the background."[14]

For de Grebber, the subject matter of the Ecce Homo called for slight adjustments to rules for artists. According to de Grebber, figures are allowed to "uit de grond steken" when "daar nootsaaklijk uit beelding van hoog vereischt werdt." De Grebber thus indicated that he thought illusionism to be necessary for subjects of a sacred nature. His *Ecce Homo* commands the viewer's sustained beholding of the suffering Christ and the Arma Christi, without additional pictorial elements to distract their attention away. The receding cool gray background, Christ's halo of light, and the stone for the ground allow for Christ's body to appear luminescent and glowing, "projecting out of" his ambiguous setting. Together with the figure's life-size scale, the cloak falling over the stone's edge further lends the image the sense of a miraculous apparition of Christ before the viewer's eyes. De Grebber effectively distilled the *Ecce Homo* into the Man of Sorrows in which Christ suffers eternally, outside of narrative time or space, while he appears as if materially present on a ledge before the viewer. The use of a darkened background and distillation of the narrative of the Ecce Homo into a single figure, in the words of John R. Decker, would "require the faithful to activate their memories, emotions, and imaginations as they construct and embroider their own internalized stories of Christ's sufferings."[15] In the absence of an articulated background or narrative context, the viewer is thereby compelled to fill in the missing components from their personal inventory of devotional cues and meditations.



Figure 3-4. Alexander Voet after Abraham van Diepenbeeck, *Christ at the Column*, 1628-1689, engraving with hand coloring, 6 x 3 in. Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-65.737.

The sustenance of the Dutch Catholic Reformation depended on continued communication and exchange with their fellow Catholics in the Southern Netherlands, religious images produced in Antwerp, and elsewhere circulated widely in the North. Catholics brought prints and paintings of Christ at the Column, Christ after the Flagellation, and Christ at the Column that proliferated in the 1620s-1630s in Antwerp to Northern Netherlandish communities. Dutch Catholics collected small prayer cards widely, including many of the image type seen in Galle and van Diepenbeeck's *Ecce Homo* engravings (Fig. 3-4). In one such example by Alexander Voet, Christ stands alone at a short column with the instruments of his torture prominently foregrounded.

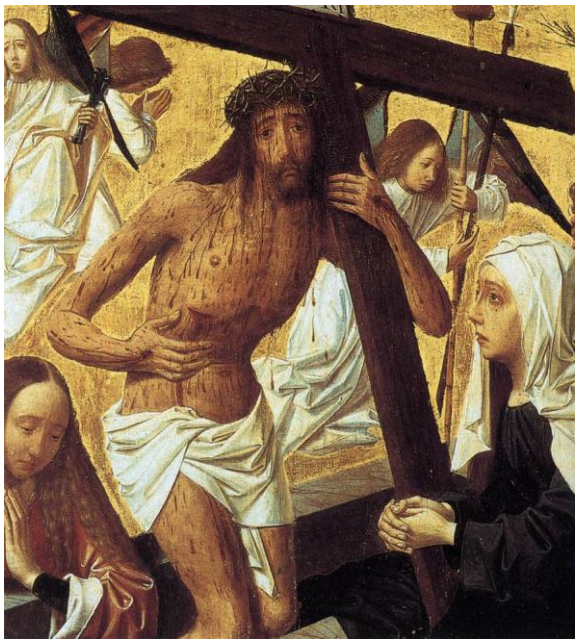


Figure 3-5. Geertgen tot sint Jans, *Man of Sorrows*, c. 1490, oil on panel, 13 2/3 x 9 1/2 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, ABM s63.

De Grebber's shift in approach to the *Ecce Homo* refers to a distinctly late medieval Netherlandish pictorial tradition of affective piety that focused on the suffering Christ. This tradition is exemplified by one of the earliest painted images of *the Man of Sorrows* by Geertgen tot Sint Jans (Fig. 3-5), which may have originally hung in the church of St. John in Haarlem.[16] In tot Sint Jans's painting, Christ stands in his tomb, presenting his violent wounds to the devotional viewer. The Virgin, John the Evangelist, and angels lament around him, while displaying the Arma Christi to remind the viewer of each torment Christ has endured. Describing tot Sint Jans' *Man of Sorrows*, Decker describes the function of devotional images in this tradition:

"…this image provided Christians with emotionally charged meditational motifs drawn from Christ's Passion that were designed to prick their consciences and help them engender contrition for their sins. Geertgen's panel distilled the entire Passion narrative into a single timeless and placeless tableau. The image required devotees to exercise their memories and imagination in order to enmesh themselves mentally in the Passion and forge empathic links between themselves, Christ, and his attendants. These links helped the faithful to experience Christ's sufferings in highly individual terms, to understand their own culpability in them, and to

awaken sorrow for their shortcomings. It accomplished this by confronting Christians with the harm their sins do to Christ, by demonstrating modes of grief that helped them to feel contrition, and by leading them, through careful self-examination and self-recrimination, to desire to make amends for their failings."[17]

In the late medieval tradition of tot Sint Jans's painting, every detail of corporeal violence conditions the devotional experience of its viewers.[18] As Caroline Walker Bynum has articulated, late medieval devotional images emphasized the materiality of sacred bodies: "The physicality we encounter in devotional objects (often in their combination of colors, depth of relief, textures, and materials) reflects and results from the fact that they are not so much naturalistic (that is, mimetic) depictions as disclosures of the sacred through material substance."[19] Walker Bynum describes the visual tradition which de Grebber engages, one less invested in anatomical accuracy than in excess and its devotional affects: the proliferation of wounds, repetition of blood, and the abjection of Christ's suffering. In the same period, Hans Memling painted a life-size *Christ at the Column* (Fig. 3-6) that recalled tot Sint Jans's panel. Although he has not yet received the five final wounds, Christ in de Grebber's image is bloodied and isolated in a way that pictorially references the



Figure 3-6. Hans Memling, *Christ at the Column*, 1485-90, oil on oak panel, 23 x 13.5 in. Mateau Collection.

Man of Sorrows. As my analysis of de Grebber's painting and his sources demonstrates, de Grebber returned to this type of late medieval Netherlandish devotional tradition to foster a sense of local spiritual identity and continuity with its Catholic past.

In this culture of collecting small, portable prayer cards, hand coloring was a common practice among their owners, as Catholics understood the process of sustained engagement with an image to serve a meditative function. In the Voet prayer card, its owner has added streams of blood on Christ's body, thereby transforming the image of Christ to one that more specifically recalls the late medieval images of tot Sint Jans and Memling. The author of the hand coloring also added gold around Christ's halo, on the ties that bind him to the column, the side of the platform facing the viewer, and highlighting the cat-o-nine-tails and bundle of sticks that project outward. In their hand coloring, they carefully added drips of blood to form a schematic pattern covering his body. The owner's addition of red to Christ's shadow heightens the bloodiness of the scene, transforming his cast shadow to make it appear as if the blood from the flagellation soaked into the floor.

The handwritten lines of text on the Voet example, added after the hand coloring, indicate the way viewers engaged with these prayer cards. In pen, the owner wrote the following phrase above Christ's head: "At the right moment make yourself like him so you will not be tortured and tormented for eternity."[20] In the center of the image, directly over Christ's torso, the print's owner has written, "You kill me, you are naked, delicate, and exalted (*tu me caedis / tu denuda / delicate / o superbe*).[21] The forceful language of the handwritten inscription on the prayer card declares the urgency of its devotional message. Both de Grebber's painting and the prayer card implicate their viewer's role in his pain, declaring that it is they who kill him "tu me caedis," although he is "naakt, teer en verheven"

(naked, delicate, and elevated). As the inscription set forward, it is the viewer who is responsible for the flagellation of Christ, and who must recognize their complicity or face damnation. The placement of "tu me caedis / tu denuda / delicate / o supbe" over the bloodied body of Christ forces the viewer to confront the phrase as they contemplate his wounds. Holding such a small prayer card, the viewer would have an intimate experience of the suffering of Christ, as schematized in dashes of red paint and the weapons of his torment at his feet.

In this way, de Grebber departs from the Antwerpian image type to shift the meditative core of the image to Christ's corporeal suffering. The addition of blood prompts the devotional viewer to contemplate the gruesome wounds that would be visible should Christ turn around to reveal his back. The flagellation wounds were the subject of another popular print motif at the time, "Christ after the Flagellation."[22] In the numerous adaptations of this image, Christ crawls on his hands and knees, reaching for his cloak with the short column of the flagellation nearby, his body covered in wounds. In each reiteration of the theme, de Grebber displays the instruments of Christ's torture prominently in the foreground. De Grebber describes the flagellation that occurred shortly before through streaks of blood that wrap around Christ's calves, arms and torso, and those that fall from his back, distinctly visible against his black cloak. In a devotional image type common in seventeenth-century colonial Mexico, this affective function of the flagellated Christ is pictorially explicit, as on the verso Christ turns around to allow the viewer to see the gruesome wounds on his back. Alena Robin has articulated how these reversible images of Christ's back wounds establish, using the terms of Peter Parshall, "a dialectic of honor and defamation," presenting the dignified Christ on display in the moment of the Ecce Homo on one side and his abject

suffering on the other.[23] De Grebber's *Ecce Homo* functions much like this image type, imaginatively conjuring the bloody wounds of the verso in the viewer's imagination. The devotional affect produced by de Grebber is twofold, as it prompts meditation on the wounds on Christ's back, while de Grebber's presentation of Christ from the front allows him to remain dignified and passive in his suffering.

C. Devotional Print Culture and Haarlem's de Hoek

The core of the Haarlem Chapter was its community of spiritual lay women, or klopjes, who lived together communally in de Hoek. They numbered approximately two hundred and lived together in houses on the Bakenessergracht, alongside their schuilkerk of St. Bernardus. De Hoek acted as an essential gathering place for Catholics in Haarlem and offered refuge for its large community, which had remained relatively organized and strong since the Reformation.[24] Clergy founded Haarlem's community of klopjes in 1582, when radical priest Nicolaus Wiggerts Cousebant recruited a number of pious women for a physically and mentally rigorous program of asceticism in pursuit of visionary experiences, while living in impoverished conditions. Following the end of Cousebant's controversially militant rule, a series of more moderate priests worked in direct collaboration with the vicar apostolic to maintain the Haarlem Chapter and its lay spiritual women, making it a cornerstone of the Holland Mission's Catholic Reformation. From Utrecht, Rovenius cultivated a strong relationship with the Haarlem Chapter, often corresponding with its canons and attending its meetings.[25] Rovenius recognized the importance of the Haarlem diocese, particularly as priests from the Chapter continued on to occupy prominent positions in the Holland Mission's leadership.

The Dutch Catholic community considered spiritual women vital to the Holland Mission and its vicar apostolics praised them, while their status laid at the interstices of several ambiguous categories. Unable to join a convent in the Northern Netherlands officially, the church distinguished the women from nuns, but considered them elevated above the laity. Together, they followed a regimented program of devotional practices and charitable work, while they led austere lifestyles in which they dressed and behaved modestly. Klopjes maintained these disciplined lifestyles in pursuit of trances and other visionary experiences, which in turn granted them a certain degree of spiritual authority. Accordingly, women could even act as confessors in the community of de Hoek, deriving "power in piety" from their special status and praise from Dutch Catholic authorities.[26] As discussed in Chapter Two, women gained social authority and an especially high status in their spiritual community from mystical closeness with Christ. In the concluding section of this chapter, I will further explore the mystical revival that took place in de Grebber's Haarlem, and its significance for his painting of the *Ecce Homo*.

Catholic prints from the Southern Netherlands were widely available for purchase in Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, Rotterdam, and elsewhere.[27] Many of the most important Antwerp-based printmakers often travelled between the Northern and Southern Netherlands (or lived in both regions) and maintained Catholic contacts in each.[28] Likewise, priests and klopjes alike in the Northern Netherlands frequently corresponded to Catholics in the South, including to their family members in monastic orders, and regularly travelled there. This correspondence often included the exchange of gifts, primarily religious books, small devotional prints, and prayer cards.[29] The Haarlem Chapter reportedly "supervised the Catholic booktrade" while its priests often commissioned new devotional texts and materials

to be published in Amsterdam and Antwerp.[30] The tenuous and fluid nature of the Southern border, changing at various points in the Eighty Years War, helped to facilitate this free exchange of correspondence and devotional materials.

Klopjes in de Grebber's Haarlem community collected and pasted prayer cards into devotional reflection books in which they wrote devotional thoughts, reflections on the week's Mass, and sermons from memory. Klopjes often included the cards alongside handwritten spiritual reflections that corresponded to the image, a practice taken from the exercises of the late medieval Devotio Moderna. The prayer cards that the klopjes chose to include enrich our understanding of their engagement with religious images. Contemplation of these prayer cards, including the hand coloring of the images, constituted one of the klopjes's principal modes of meditative practice. Of the hundreds of extant handwritten texts by Haarlem klopjes dating from 1620-1637, 106 include small devotional prints are pasted in amidst the writing.[31] They also wrote commentary on devotional prints, indicating the interactive nature of their engagement with visual materials. They cut out the figures from prints and pasted alongside their handwriting creating new religious images themselves through combinations of extracted religious figures and texts. Throughout the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, klopjes produced increasingly elaborate collages of hand cut paper lace work and hand colored prints.[32] Klopjes collected these small prayer cards and distributed them to the poor in their community. In the *Levens der Maechden*, Oly recounts how Haarlem Catholics admired klopje Agatha Cornelis van Veen for hand coloring devotional prints and handing them out to the poor, as well as to her fellow sisters on special occasions. In addition, klopjes restored paintings and statues and embroidered liturgical garments, labor that they considered a form of donation to their community.[33]

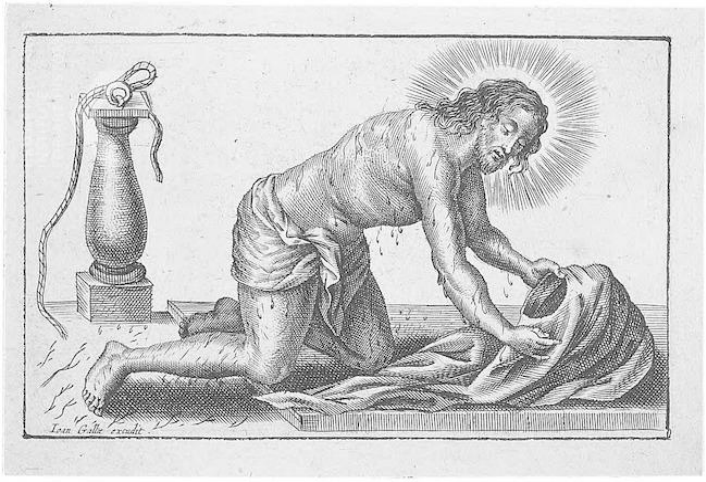


Figure 3-7. Joannes Galle after Balthasar Lauwers and Gerard Seghers, *Christ after the Flagellation*, c. 1630-1665, engraving, 2 1/3 x 3 3/4 in. Universiteitsbibliotheek Nijmegen, Hs 184, fol. 3v.

Prints representing stages of the Passion were particularly popular among Haarlem's klopjes. For instance, a devotional reflection book compiled by the Haarlem klopje Maria van Wierengen preserves a *Christ after the Flagellation* from the studio of Johannes Galle (Fig. 3-7).[34] Oly writes that fellow klopje Jannetge Dirks attached a "simple print of the crucified Christ" surrounded by the Arma Christi to her book, including the figure of a klopje resting in the symbolic representation of his open heart below. According to Oly, Dirkse preferred "artistic prints" such as this, rather than one that she received as a gift from a fellow klopje in which she felt "the side figures were distracting from the life of her Savior."[35] A klopje viewing a prayer card such as Voet's, explicitly representing Christ's suffering, may also have imagined themselves in place of the spiritual woman resting in his open heart, physically present with him and gazing up at his wounded body. The motif of a klopje nestled in the heart of Christ can be found not only in devotional

prints, but also in popular devotional literature, as in Jacob Roecx's *Der Wijngaert der Sielen* (Antwerp: By mi Symon Cock, 1544; Antwerp, G. Van Parijs, 1569).[36] Roecx directs the reader in Passion devotions: "There shall you hide in your sweet wounds and in your poor heart until the winter of sin is over (…)."[37] That Dirks preferred this image over one with additional figures points to the desire for a particularly corporeal, mystical closeness with Christ possessed by klopjes in the community of de Hoek. Likewise, her preference also demonstrates klopje engagement with the suffering Christ isolated in space, without additional narrative context to distract from her devotional focus.

Klopjes recycled late medieval prints, sometimes reprinting them from the original wood blocks, adding their signatures, the date, hand coloring, and commentary. In one example, a woodcut of the Man of Sorrows represents Christ bound and seated on the base of the cross, with the nails and hammer at his feet (Fig. 3-8).[38] The seventeenth-century owner of the woodcut signed her name below the image, "Magdalena Clarissa A 1609 15 May" and hand colored the image. She added green and gold for the setting and crown of thorns, and streams of blood flowing down his body. That "Magdalena Clarissa" chose not only to color in the lines of the woodcut's negative space, but covered the body of Christ in bright red streams of blood indicates that in order to best fulfill her meditative goals, she shifted the devotional core of the image to Christ's physical suffering. De Grebber likely



Figure 3-8. *Christ sits on the cross*, c. 1480, woodcut with later hand coloring, 4 1/2 x 3 1/8 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, BMH g17b.

encountered these hand colored devotional prayer cards, omnipresent in the collections of klopjes with which he resided in de Hoek.

D. Passion Devotion and Women's Mysticism in Haarlem

In his *Ecce Homo,* Pieter de Grebber drew from a popular late medieval devotional tradition of devotion on the suffering Christ that sets forward a vision of him as if he miraculously appears before the viewer. The accounts and writings of klopjes demonstrate the popularity of mysticism and meditation on the Passion in the Dutch Catholic community. Klopjes in de Hoek yearned for mystical experiences of suffering, in part due to the urging of local clerical authorities. Joanna van Randenraedt, a spiritual virgin residing in a community associated with Jesuit colleges in Antwerp and Brussels, recounted in her autobiography that her wish to join a convent stemmed from her "profound desire for physical and mental suffering by which she hoped both to emulate and reciprocate the martyr's death Christ had suffered for humanity." She ultimately opted to become a spiritual virgin instead of a nun because, as she told a fellow sister, "she could best serve God and her fellow men in the world, rather than behind the convent wall."[39] Randenraedt's account points to a key function of klopje identity: it allowed women to lead a pious life that was more active in society than that of their monastic counterparts. Reformed authorities dissolved monasteries, along with all Catholic shrines and sacred sites, since the 1580s. While klopje communities in the Northern Netherlands arose in part from the absence of the monastic option, their increased involvement with the outside world also allowed them to participate in one of the Holland Mission's primary tasks: the promotion of the true faith to non-believers.

Historically, the Catholic Church has had a tense and problematic relationship with women's mysticism and women's lay spiritual organizations. The Franciscan Poor Clares act

as a precedent for the klopjes of seventeenth-century Haarlem, a group whom the papacy sanctioned but ultimately granted the typically monastic privilege of poverty. Such women's spiritual organizations often encountered controversy for the liminal space they occupied between the public world and the private sphere of the cloister. For instance, Mary Ward's Jesuit women's community of "English Ladies" was forbidden and labeled heretical in 1631. The Haarlem women operated in line with communities like the Ursulines, as they operated outside of a convent yet remained distinct from the secular world. In addition to the Haarlem community, some Dutch Catholic women known as "spiritual virgins" considered themselves to be separate from the laity for their rigorous piety, but lived under the supervision of a priest, rather than communally with other spiritual women. The choice among many Dutch Catholic women to become spiritual virgins or lay sisters thereby resulted not only from the dissolution and partial destruction of monasteries before 1600, but from their desire to more effectively promote the cause of their repressed faith in the public sphere.

The spiritual women of Haarlem were rigorous in their program of meditative exercises. Over the course of the century, secular and regular Catholic priests in the Northern Netherlands wrote some twenty-three conduct books as guidelines for the life of lay sisters and spiritual virgins. These texts sought to compensate for their ambiguous status in the structure of the church, ordering their dangerously uncontrolled spiritual lives. These conduct books indicate that diligent devotional reading and private meditation were important parts of their disciplined routines. Conduct books and the daily practices of the klopjes followed the broader devotional program instituted through literature and sermons in the Holland Mission, which focused on, in the words of Parker, "the interiority of the spiritual life" and "individuals' responsibility to reflect on the state of their souls."[40] Rigorous meditation using

devotional images as aids was an essential component of the klopje's daily routines. Oly wrote that her spiritual sister Maria van Craenhals held an enormous collection of devotional images and small figurines, which she meditated on in solitude in her room without outside contact. In addition, van Craenhals spent a great deal of time distributing small devotional prints to the poor, an act that Oly likened to the charitable acts of Christ.[41]

In the *Levens*, Oly extensively described the exemplary daily schedule of a klopje, citing as her example the lay sister Magdalena van Dam. According to Oly, herself, Magdalena, and her sisters structured their schedules around prayers and church attendance, going to Mass twice a day, once in the morning, and once in the afternoon. Klopjes sought to find parallels for each activity and aspect of their lives with the life and Passion of Christ. They named each hour of the day for a stage in the life of Christ and contemplated these events in a rigorous schedule. Upon waking, for instance, priests encouraged them to consider the trumpets waking the dead at the end of times in the Last Judgment. Particularly for lay spiritual women, these regimented daily prayer exercises allowed them to feel removed from the secular realm in their thought, charging each of their daily, mundane activities with sacred resonance. This emphasis on hourly prayer corresponds to the Dutch Catholic turn to internal meditation, particularly as Reformed authorities legally compelled the community to disguise their faith in the public sphere.[42]

Klopjes and their Haarlem Catholic community took up a distinctively late medieval mode of affective piety not only through repurposed prayer cards from the era, but through their selection of devotional reading. Oly's list of the most often read devotional texts among klopjes includes numerous late medieval selections: Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, Henricus Herp's *Spiegel der Volkommenheit* (Delft: Christiaen Snellaert, 1490), a recent

translation of Bonaventure's 1500 *Prickel der minne* (Antwerp: B. Cornelis Tielmans, 1625), and especially Mechelen Franciscan Frans Vervoort's body of ascetic and mystical literature, including *De Pane Angelorum* (Louvain, Reinerus Velpius: Aert Peeters & Jan Verbrugghen, 1552) and *Het Begijnken van Mechelen* (Antwerp: Jan II van Ghelen, 1556). The klopjes loaned these devotional texts from their church and fellow sisters, while some amassed their own small collections.[43] Dutch Catholics returned to these foundational texts in the Christian mystical tradition, to reaffirm the historical legacy of their faith in the minds of heretics and engage with exemplary models for mystical experience.

The clerical leadership of the Haarlem Chapter encouraged mystical encounters between the devotional reader or viewer and the divine. For klopjes, visionary experiences allowed them to "negotiate their own position, status, tasks and authority" in their unofficial position as lay spiritual women. In their spiritual biographies, Roermond klopjes Agnes van Heilsbach (1597-1640) and Joanna van Randenraedt (1610-1684) described their consistent visionary experiences as evidence that Christ selected them to be his brides. Van Randenraedt noted in her autobiography that she desired to become a spiritual virgin because she was eager to experience the suffering of Christ reciprocally. The desire of spiritual women to encounter the body of the suffering Christ mystically manifests in a number of popular image types often found in klopje letters and books. In an anonymous 1680 print, inscribed by its owner with the handwritten title "My love is crucified," a woman in monastic dress embraces the bleeding body of Christ on the cross. The collected and bound letters of Haarlem klopje Maria van Heel include a small prayer card of the *Crucifixion* popular in numerous klopje books: below the cross, a woman ascends a ladder that leads to Christ's side wound, below which the Virgin of Sorrows sits

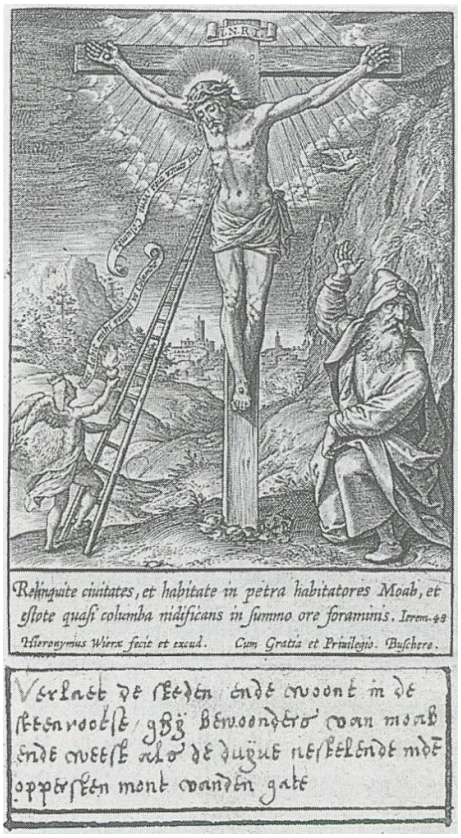


Figure 3-9. Hieronymus Wierix, *Woman climbs to the heart of her beloved*, from the letters of Maria van Heel (1666), 1619, engraving, 3 1/2 x 2 1/2 in. Universiteits Bibliotheek Nijmegen, hs 325.

and mourns.[44] In a similar Hieronymus Wierix print from van Heel's collection, *Woman who climbs to the heart of her beloved* (Fig. 3-9), an angel ascends a ladder to Christ, with a box of handwritten text pasted below the image.[45] The handwriting below, taken from Jeremiah 48:28, reads: "Abandon your towns and dwell among the rocks, you who live in Moab. Be like a dove that makes its nest at the mouth of a cave."[46] Together, the print's inclusion of the figure before the crucified Christ and the eremitic message written below emphasize the importance of solitude and retreat from the public sphere in order to achieve closeness with Christ. The popularity of prints that represent female figures in close physical engagement with Christ, touching his body or resting in his heart, demonstrates the revival of late medieval devotional imagery in the Haarlem klopje community.



Figure 3-10. Title page to Jacob Roecx, *Den wijngaert der sielen/ daer in een mẽsche vinden/ eñ pluckẽ sal die volle soete druyue der incarnacien Christi/ indẽ tijt der gracien/ eñ aẽdenckẽ sal/ hoe die selue wtgheperst verdort eñ verdroocht is/ inde tijt zijnre bitter passien/ op dat hi versoenẽ soude dẽ thoren zijns vaders* (Antwerp: By mi Symon Cock, 1544; Antwerp, G. Van Parijs, 1569).

Prints that directed the viewer's devotion to the miraculous nature of Christ's blood proliferated among klopjes communities, where they served to crystallize and revitalize late medieval piety. In particular, Jacob Roecx's *Den Wijngaert der Sielen* was tremendously popular among the Haarlem

klopjes. Its title page features Christ in the Winepress, standing with grapevines spiraling out from his wounds (Fig. 3-10).[47] The grapevines end in a cross-shaped wine press, before which a woman kneels to collect Christ's blood in a sacramental chalice. In its meditations on the Passion, Roecx's text amplifies the sense of carnage in the reader's mind:

> "Christ as our Savior was thus painfully scourged through wounds that in his whole body do not heal and were bleeding so that his whole body was a flowing wound and that he to all people was horrible to see…"
> "Also let us now see how pitifully that the poor lord there goes filled with both pains and the cold flowing of blood. So that each footstep marks with his red blood…Why is your clothing red and your habit is as my steps? Jesus answers you my bride, my clothing is red, because I alone have stepped the press."[48]



Figure 3-11. Hieronymus Wierix, *Christus in de winjpers*, 1553 – before 1619, engraving, 4 1/3 x 3 in. Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1898-A-19870.

Throughout the text, Roecx describes the bloody wounds of Christ in explicit detail, including the drips of blood that fall down his clothing and the trail of blood left on the ground as he walks. The viewers of de Grebber's painting, familiar with this motif, would therefore be well prepared to meditate on the drips of blood that he added to his *Ecce Homo*. The intimate tone of Roeckx's devotional text, in which Christ directly addresses the female viewer as his "bride," indicates the

kind of close, mystical relationship desired by the reader. The Catholic Reformation also revived the late medieval Northern print motif of Christ in the Winepress, a central theme of Roeckx's popular devotional text. Hieronymus Wierix produced a widely copied engraving of *Christ in the Wine Press* (Fig. 3-11), whose iconography closely relates to his images of the *Fons Pietatis*, in which the Christ child stands atop a small hill dramatically spouting streams of blood from his hands.[49] A 1631 print of *Christ in the Wine Press* by Antwerp printmaker Abraham van Merlen, in the collection of de Hoek in Haarlem, followed Wierix's model.[50] Michiel Snijders's 1625 engraving of the subject (Fig. 3-12) replaces the figure of Maria as Mater Dolorosa beside the wine press as the Bride of Christ kneeling in prayer. Snijders also substituted the Latin text typically underneath the Wierix print with French and Dutch texts, the latter of which reads: "Oh my bride, I alone have tread the press so that you are made free by my Father."[51] This text directly addresses the female beholder while emphasizing the salvific and mystical nature of the blood he effuses into the basin below.



Figure 3-12. Michiel Snijders, *Bridegroom views the mystical winepress*, ca. 1625, engraving.

Through devotional meditation on these images, lay spiritual women of seventeenth-century Haarlem specifically revived Bonaventuran-Ludolfian meditation on the Passion originating in the late medieval Netherlandish tradition of affective piety. This devotional tradition, spearheaded by Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* and John of Calabria's (the

Pseudo-Bonaventure's) *Meditations on the Life of Christ* (c.1300), is defined by meditation on each injury and wound contributing towards the corporeal suffering of Christ, which in turn requires the viewer to "activate their memories and imaginations" in meditation.[52] Accordingly, images in this tradition detail the multitude of wounds and blood effusions from Christ's body to more effectively guide the viewer in their devotion. Caroline Walker Bynum has considered the central importance of miraculous blood of the Eucharist in late medieval devotional texts and images. The inspiration for these late medieval representations of the excessive violence committed against Christ comes from contemporary texts, many of which were later popular in circulation among seventeenth-century Dutch Catholics. In the Pseudo-Bonaventure *Meditations on the Life of Christ* (c.1300), the Franciscan recommends that the devout Catholic contemplate how:

> "The Flower of all flesh and of all human nature is covered with bruises and cuts. The royal blood flows all about, from all parts of His body. Again and again, repeatedly, closer and closer, it is done, bruise upon bruise, and cut upon cut, until not only the torturers but also the spectators are tired; then He is ordered untied. Here, then, consider Him diligently for a long time; and if you do not feel compassion at this point, you may count yours a heart of stone."[53]

Late medieval mystics such as Juliana of Norwich (c. 1342-1416) also elaborated on the mystical nature of the prolific wounds of Christ and the blood he loses during the ordeal of the Passion. Meditation the seven *Bloetstortinghen*, or Effusions of Christ's Blood, paralleled the prayer cycles of the Seven Falls of Christ, and the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin. The Effusions begin with the circumcision, include the injuries sustained during the Passion, and conclude with the final spear wound to his side. Late medieval devotional texts available in

Dutch translation in the seventeenth century, such as the German Dominican Heinrich van Suso's *Hundred Articles of the Passion* (c. 1330s), popularized the Seven Effusions of Blood. In the *Hundred Articles*, Suso maps one's daily prayers onto different details from the Passion narrative. In one scheduled prayer, Suso recounts how "They beat you, wounded you, and they cruelly tore your tender flesh so that the streams of your blessed blood that followed webbed and entirely covered you holy tender body."[54] The language of the handwritten inscription on the Voet prayer card directly parallels this kind of rhetoric, repeating the assaults against Christ's body while directed at an ambiguous "they" or "you" in order to implicate the viewer. The repeated drips of blood flowing over Christ's body in these images echo similar late medieval imagery, inspired by devotional language that urges readers to methodically contemplate Christ's wounds. The excessive nature of Christ's blood and wounds in these images does not come from scripture, but from the instructions for meditation of Kempis, Suso, Norwich, and others. Similarly, late medieval devotional and visionary texts such as those of Julian of Norwich and St. Catherine of Genoa often describe Christ's blood as gushing forth from his body. The active flow of blood from Christ's body signals his presence as a living person, and accordingly his presence in the blood of the Eucharist, which physically connects him with the devout beholder.[55]

When De Grebber painted the *Ecce Homo* in 1632, his community invested in these kinds of mystical encounters with Christ through devotional images of the Passion, as well as the authentication and veneration of its relics. These relics functioned as agents of the miraculous, as demonstrated by accounts of miracles written by vicar apostolic Sasbout Vosmeer. Later in the seventeenth century, Jesuits listed relics and 169 documented healing miracles resulting from individual encounters with them. Catholics across different economic

and social positions kept sizable collections of relics in their homes for safekeeping. In Haarlem, klopje Joanna Tibbel owned the remains of St. Bernulphus that were once part of the St. Peter's parish collection in Utrecht, while Franciscan Arnold de Witte claimed ownership of an authenticated piece of the cross.[56] The Chapter also proclaimed its possession of relics from the Holy Cross and Crown of Thorns, a development that likely carried implications for how Haarlem Catholic viewers would have experienced De Grebber's canvas (particularly should this relic have been held in the parish's St. Bernardus schuilkerk alongside the painting).

In the late medieval period, cults of blood piety characterized popular devotion across Northern Europe. As Walker Bynum has argued, in this tradition, Catholics assign the streams or drips of blood effusing from Christ's body particular devotional and theological significances. Distinct, separate droplets of blood emphasize what Walker Bynum calls the "multiplicity of what extrudes" as a salvific, redemptive substance, and a cornerstone of a particularly bodily and experiential mode of lay devotion. Late medieval meditations urged readers to count, focus on, imagine themselves suffering or touching the innumerable bloody wounds of Christ. Theologians discussed blood relics, most notably those held in Mantua and Weingarten, as evidencing his complete bodily resurrection and presence in transubstantiation. They debated blood relics since the late medieval period, as officials often questioned their historical authenticity and disputed the possibility of Christological body relics. Blood devotion grew in popularity through the fifteenth century across Northern Europe, together with affective piety in which one suffers with Christ. In this type of devotion, one understood "blood as Eucharist, blood as relic, blood as inflamer of memories and of *com-passio* with the suffering Christ, but initially and preeminently, visually and

insistently, blood!"[57] Accordingly, the veneration of Christ's blood constituted a distinctly Catholic mode of devotion, affirming the mystical nature of the Eucharist.

E. Beholding Blood: Contemporary Catholic Martyrology

Christ's blood acts as a sign of spiritual evidence, viscerally and immediately proving the truth of his suffering in the Passion, as paralleled in Passion plays and in judicial violence. In the words of Valentin Groebner, blood "always bears witness to the immediacy of whatever is being shown, to the truth of the sacrifice."[58] Allie Terry-Fritsch has argued that Christ's wounds, particularly in images of the Doubting Thomas, function as evidence of his material suffering and resurrection, recalling in the mind of viewers their experience viewing wounds as "proof" of justice through punishment.[59]

While the contemporary Catholic martyrdoms represented in print and text contributed to the construction of Dutch Catholic identity as a persecuted minority, meditation on images of the suffering Christ affirmed their identity as a community that endured despite prejudice and legal restrictions. De Grebber's quietly defeated figure of Christ would therefore resonate with its viewers as a model of quiet endurance, affirming the sacred dignity of the suffering brought upon their spiritual community for nearly one hundred years. A kind of "martyrological sensibility" grew in Dutch Catholic communities, starting with clergy, the most often targeted group, and spread thereafter to the devout laity. These Catholics suffered nobly despite their suppression, which they understood as establishing spiritual continuity with the early Christian martyrs. In this way, their community's suffering allowed them to imitate Christ effectively.[60] As Chapter Two outlines further, the preponderance of martyrologies published in the period furthered this martyrological

identity. As W.J.T. Mitchell, Mitchell Merback, Samuel Edgerton, and Peter Spierenberg have discussed, early modern viewers understood violent images of Christ and the saints in a framework of contemporary judicial violence. As public executions took on a sacred, devotional tone and the deceased criminal's blood and body took on curative, supernatural qualities, justice and religion were inextricably connected. In both secular and sacred representations of violence, the tension between the viewers's "empathy and approval" produced "an extended contemplation" of both attraction and repulsion. In the words of Merback, as images of the suffering Christ like the Man of Sorrows fixed the viewer's attention on their complicity in his sacrifice for their sins, "the spectacle of punishment fashioned a kind of living devotional image of pain for pious, contemplative immersion."[61] Pain and suffering themselves, when endured by fellow Catholics, stirred penitential contemplation.

For Dutch Catholics, images of Christ's suffering such as de Grebber's *Ecce Homo* would have resonated with their experience of specific martyrdoms in their community. Following the violence of the Revolt, hagiographies glorified executed Catholics in text and image as new martyrs, dying in the image of Christ. Regardless of the historical reality of these incidents, the violent deaths of their fellow Catholics were instrumental in the self-identification of the Dutch Catholic community as a long-suffering and persecuted group. The martyrs of Gorcum, perhaps the most celebrated and discussed contemporary Catholic martyrs, were nineteen monks and priests that an extremist military captain, Lumey, and his beggar troops hung in Den Briel in July 1572. Published hagiographies and images thereafter frequently commemorated the martyrs.[62] The Haarlem Chapter in particular took up the cause of the martyrs' canonization with Rome, which they finally achieved in 1867, although

the Pope beatified them in 1675.[63] Willem Estius chronicled the martyrs of Gorcum in 1603 in Dutch and French publications, and Richard Verstegan represented them in print in his illustrated martyrology *The Theatre of Cruelty* (Antwerp: apud A. Huberti, 1587). The latter text, circulated widely in Dutch translation, featured martyrdoms of Catholics in contemporary France, England, and the Netherlands, with compositions crowded with atrocities, each given a letter corresponding to the description below, in the style of Jesuit devotional engravings.[64] Many of the Dutch martyrdoms that Verstegan represents occurred during the early years of the Revolt, such as *the Martyrdom of the Carthusians of Roermond by the soldiers of William of Orange in 1572*, which shows the assault upon a group of monks in a cathedral.

The klopjes of de Hoek collected martyr's books, as actively preserving the memory of recent Catholic martyrs was particularly important in their community, where these war atrocities had occurred a generation earlier. In the years following the siege of Haarlem in 1572, Catholic diarists such a Willem Verwer reported that "the government troops had massacred young and old, Catholics and Calvinists, lay and clerical alike," among widespread thefts, famine and iconoclasm of the city's churches.[65] Itinerant robbers stabbed city bailiff and father of two klopjes, Sebastiaan Craenhals, when they raided his house in Bergen. His daughters in Haarlem thereafter promoted the narrative of his death as a martyrdom that paralleled that of Sebastian, his name saint. His community framed Craenhals as a martyr for his faith in a corrupt and unjust governmental regime of which the robbers were representatives.[66] The emotions tied to memories of violence during the Revolt pervaded the Holland Mission's veneration of the Reformed government's political enemies. Catholics also praised the assassin of William of Orange, Balthasar Geraerds, as a martyr for

the Catholic cause, and vicar apostolic Sasbout Vosmeer secretly stole away his head to display it as a relic.[67]

Throughout the most violent years of the Revolt, the Orangist government often imprisoned or executed Catholic priests; vicar apostolic Rovenius claimed that captors tortured him frequently during his incarceration. Authorities abused Rijnland priest Martinus van Velde so severely following his 1639 arrest that he died one month later from a head wound he sustained in the ordeal.[68] De Grebber commemorated his death in a design engraved in 1639 titled "The unfortunate events in the life of Pastor Maarten van Velde," as well as in painted and printed posthumous portraits. In the former engraving, rectangular scenes frame the martyred priest's portrait, documenting the stages of his attack, subsequent injuries, and imprisonment. In the first scene, van Velde is represented Christologically by de Grebber, as he is isolated and surrounded by a number of attackers with their weapons raised in imminent attack. The Dutch Catholic collective memory of their recent persecution and martyrdoms for their faith defined their communal identity by their long endurance of suffering at the hands of non-believers.

In de Grebber's lifetime, the Haarlem Chapter's leadership sustained a vested interest in preserving and authenticating its relics, many of which had been kept safe in hiding since the 1587 dissolution of Catholic churches and their possessions. The Chapter led the projects of recording miraculous occurrences and the authentication of relics began by Sasbout Vosmeer in Utrecht decades earlier. The Chapter also held in protection the relics of the city's patron Saint Bavo, and its priests maintained their own relic collections. In 1632, the Chapter declared its possession of relics of the Holy Cross and the Crown of Thorns. In a notarized document produced shortly thereafter, Haarlem priests officially confirmed the

relic's origins and urged their veneration.[69] Canon Nicolas Nomius drew up a list of relics of the Chapter in 1625, while Father Arnoldus de Witte wrote additional lists of its authenticated relics in 1631.[70] The restoration and affirmation of the Chapter's relics also aided in the legitimation of the historical legacy of Dutch Catholicism in hopes of Roman legal recognition and the conversion of non-Catholics.

While the Dutch Catholic Reformation emphasized the spiritual significance of relics, its visual culture prominently featured miraculous narratives. According to the foundational narrative of Haarlem's de Hoek, priest Cornelis Arentszoon saw a vision of Saint Bernard and the Virgin Mary in 1593, urging him to establish the community. Before his death in Haarlem in 1613, he reportedly had a similar vision on his deathbed.[71] Miraculous occurrences could also punish those non-believers who persecuted the Catholic cause. The notoriously anti-Catholic bailiff of Gouda, Anthoni van der Wolff, found blood in his urine the day after he mockingly drank wine from a confiscated Eucharistic chalice from a clandestine church in Gouda, an event that Catholics declared to be "divine retribution" for his sacrilege.[72] As Van Eck has discussed, subjects of "conversions and miracles provoking sudden insight" were common in paintings produced for early clandestine churches. Surveying numerous paintings from clandestine churches that represent the Doubting Thomas, the Healing of the Lame, the Conversion of St. Paul, the Calling of St. Matthew and St. Barnard of Clairvaux converting William of Aquitane, among others, Van Eck primarily connects these trends to the popularity of the Caravaggesque style of painting.[73] Paintings that represent these moments of divine intervention in the earthly world, regardless of their stylistic approach, would serve to demonstrate the power of the Catholic faith to its communities and non-believers.

While de Grebber's *Ecce Homo* may appear to be a more subdued image than these dramatic representations of the miraculous, its figure of Christ metaphorically implicates the viewer in a mystical encounter with his divine body. De Grebber's paintings of miraculous occurrences, from contemporary and biblical accounts, similarly reaffirmed the importance of the miraculous for Dutch Catholic devotion. De Grebber painted the account of the Count of Plettenberg (undated, Dorotheum Auction House), who claimed to have a vision of himself as a bishop before the Madonna in a dream. De Grebber's paintings of such "miraculous" biblical subjects include: *Peter, John and Mary Magdalene at the Grave* (1632, Collection Efim Schapiro); *The Angel Appearing to Anna* (undated, the Barber Institute of Fine Arts); *God the Father Inviting Christ to Sit on the Throne at his Right* (1645, Museum Catharijneconvent); *The Three Marias by the Grave of Christ* (undated; Lempertz Auction House). De Grebber also painted a signed and dated *Raising of Lazarus* (1620, Onze Lieve Vrouwekerk, Bruges; 1632, Pinacoteca, Turin), a narrative that demonstrates the miraculous power of Christ.[74]

F. Conclusion: Affective Piety from de Grebber to Gibson

For his controversial 2004 film *The Passion of the Christ*, Mel Gibson borrowed nearly every aspect of his treatment of the Passion from *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ* of Anna Katharina Emmerich (1774-1824), interpreted by the German Romantic poet Clemens Brentano (1778-1842). While largely agreed to be Brentano's poetic fantasies rather than the authentic writings of Emmerich, a stigmatic, mystic, and Canoness of Windesheim, the text perpetuates the late medieval tradition of meditation on Christ's suffering. Described in news outlets as "a moving, breathing version of the Isenheim altarpiece,"[75] Gibson deliberately deployed this type of late medieval textual and visual

culture to show viewers, in his words, "the extent of the sacrifice." Gibson's self-proclaimed motivation for showing Christ's sacrifice in such grisly detail mirrors that of earlier artists representing his suffering: "the audience has to suffer to understand it more."[76] Like visual artists before him, Gibson believes that through the viewer's visceral engagement with the suffering Christ will bring them closer to their savior, and therefore closer to the ultimate goal of salvation.

Although some renounced the violence of the film as excessive or unnecessary, the emotional reactions of many devout viewers demonstrated the affective power of its cat-o-nine-tails scourging. Catholics in particular not only praised its realistic representation of Christ's torture, but experienced extreme empathic devotion in the movie theater – yelling aloud, crying, and fainting. One Dallas viewer remarked, "I mean, there were times when you felt like it was too much. But I dare anybody not to believe after watching it." Another Los Angeles Christian proclaimed after seeing the film that "it will increase your faith tenfold in what Christ has done for you."[77] For De Grebber's Dutch Catholic viewers, much like the twentieth-century moviegoers, feeling Christ's suffering with him guides them in devotion, while also affirming the righteousness of their faith. While Gibson deployed this type of meditation on the Passion of Christ to increase his film's affective, devotional impact on viewers, for de Grebber it also served to address the needs of his specific community.

De Grebber adapted this type of representation of the suffering Christ to the distinct spiritual atmosphere of the seventeenth-century Northern Netherlands, in which Dutch Catholics constructed their group identity as persecuted. While images of a heroic, muscular Christ twisting in contrapposto and gazing to the heavens adorned the monumental spaces of worship in Antwerp and populated devotional material across Catholic Europe, de Grebber's

Christ stands ambiguously in blue-grey darkness, leaving the viewer little else to contemplate aside from his bloody wounds. De Grebber therefore demands that his viewers engage with Christ compassionately, literally "suffering with" him, confronting their complicity in the Passion as they stand in for members of the condemning crowd. De Grebber imbues his *Ecce Homo* with personal and local spiritual resonance that speaks to the reliquary collections in his community, while visually engaging with the hand colored prayer cards that they collected for personal use. At a moment in which Dutch Catholics venerated the physicality of Christ's suffering in the form of relics of the crown of thorns, while listing, authenticating, and collecting additional relics, de Grebber emphasizes Christ's miraculous, corporeal appearance before the viewer. Klopje Jannetge Dirkse, given her experience viewing her "simple print of the crucified Christ," would have been able to imagine herself as kneeling in prayer immediately before Christ's suffering body in the painting. In his *Ecce Homo*, De Grebber thus transforms the bleeding figure of Christ, popularly represented among the prayer cards distributed in his community into a luminescent, vibrantly colored, life-size material body standing before them, allowing viewers to reenact this individual, private devotional practice on a monumental scale.

IV. Mysticism and the Mass in Clandestine Sacred Space: Gerrit van Honthorst's Altarpieces for schuilkerken



Figure 4-1. Frontispiece to Joost van den Vondel, *Altaer-Geheimenissen ontvouwen in drie boecken* (Keulen: in de Nieuwe druckerye, 1645). Royal Library of the Netherlands.

In the frontispiece to Joost van den Vondel's 1645 *Mysteries of the Altar*, or *Altaer-Geheimenissen* (Fig. 4-1; Amsterdam, 1645), an engraving titled *The worship of the Holy Sacrament before the five senses personified by women*, an elaborate monstrance atop an altar holds a Eucharistic wafer in which the image of the crucifixion miraculously manifests.[1] A beam of divine light shines from this monstrance onto the allegorical figure of Faith, who shepherds the personification of *Gevoelen*, or touch, as she reaches for the glowing altar. In 1765, Jan Wagenaar poetically described the reaction of a female viewer before Honthorst's

1622 altarpiece *the Mocking of Christ* (Fig. 4-22), subtly lit only by the sun pouring through a cupola in Amsterdam's clandestine Dominicuskerk, remarking that "she wept in the mysterious glow" of the altar.[2] While in the engraved allegory, the figure of Touch requires help from Faith in her attempt to comprehend the altar's mystical nature, the viewer's tears before the painted *Mocking of Christ* illustrate the type of intense devotional experience to which she aspires. Both the engraving and Wagenaar's anecdote indicate not only the return to the renewed importance of the Eucharist, but also to the mystical, sensorial mode of devotion that characterized the Dutch Catholic Reformation in the seventeenth century and beyond. Images such as Honthorst's altarpieces facilitated the meditative contemplation on the suffering of Christ championed by contemporary Dutch and Jesuit devotional texts. Throughout this chapter, I examine the implications for large-scale religious paintings relocated in the newly sacralized space of the clandestine church.

Upon entering a Dutch clandestine church today, the experience of unknowing visitors is typically one of surprise at the revelation of the unexpected space concealed by its mundane façade. In Amsterdam's Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder, one ascends a narrow spiral staircase before the ecclesiastical form of its compact space reveals itself. In Utrecht's clandestine church of Maria Minor Achter Clarenburg, today a Belgian pub, its plain residential exterior belies the vaulted ceilings and clerestory light within. For a seventeenth-century Dutch Catholic entering these newly repurposed spaces, the experience of such an entrance would have been married to their awareness of its sacrality, made visible in its reshaped appearance and defined by its consecrated altar, possession of relics, sacred objects, liturgical silver and paintings. Through the transformation of domestic spaces, the clandestine church provided a sense of sacred site for displaced Dutch Catholic worshippers,

spiritually, socially, and physically locating their devotion, while their altarpieces directed and facilitated its mystical, inward character. In this chapter, I consider the devotional experience of the clandestine church in the early seventeenth-century Netherlands and the role of their altarpieces through three examples by Gerrit van Honthorst (1592-1656). In these three major commissions for early clandestine churches, Honthorst represented the visceral suffering of Christ in an isolated, immediate setting, in order to engage the viewer in a devotional experience heightened by their placement in intimate, altar focused spaces. Ultimately, viewing large-scale images depicting the suffering Christ would not only have amplified the sensorial immediacy of Dutch Catholic devotion in the clandestine church, but also presented an image of persecution that spoke to their subordinated status. The altarpieces's devotionally engaging treatment of the suffering Christ further spoke to the Dutch Catholic community in their continuation of the Northern Netherlandish late medieval traditions of the Devotio Moderna, which had been adapted in the work of recent devotional writers, especially those from the Jesuit order. In this distinctive approach to their subject, Honthorst's three altarpieces crystallize the interests of the Dutch Catholic community in commissioning new works for schuilkerken.

The objects once possessed by clandestine churches were disparately scattered following the reestablishment of official Catholic ecclesiastical structure in the Netherlands in 1853. Catholics left many schuilkerken behind for larger churches more suitable for housing their growing parishes, while they renovated some into monumental spaces in a nineteenth-century art nouveau style, as in Amsterdam's de Papegaai and Jesuit church of de Krijtberg. When clandestine churches survived, new owners converted them to other uses or demolished them, their paintings largely auctioned or, brought to the collection of newer

churches. Those that their parishes sold or donated to museums came to the collections of the former Aartsbisschoppelijk Museum in Utrecht and the Bisschoppelijk Museum in Haarlem, and the foundation SKKN (Stichting Kerkelijk Kunstbezit in Nederland), today centralized in the Museum Catharijneconvent.

Since documents pertaining to the foundation, installation and original decoration of the schuilkerken discussed in this chapter are as of yet undiscovered, I draw from the structure of the two best-preserved contemporary schuilkerken, Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder and St. Gertrude's chapel in Utrecht's Mariahoek. My study is therefore unable to reconstruct each church's original installation with precision, but draws together a body of objects from these clandestine churches and data about their later renovations that approximate the nature of spiritual experience there. Display in secret spaces of worship activated Honthorst's altarpieces, prompting a devotional mode of beholding from their viewership. Finally, while my present study looks at examples from the urban centers of Utrecht, Amsterdam, and Delft, in rural areas, particularly in the more Catholic southern regions of the Northern Netherlands, the political climate afforded church spaces more visibility.

A. The Dutch Catholic Search for Sacred Site and the Early Clandestine Church

In order to more fully understand the role of Honthorst's altarpieces in early clandestine churches and the importance of the liturgy hosted in these spaces, it is imperative to examine the origination of these structures, the nature of their clandestinity and function in their communities. Dutch Catholics constructed clandestine churches to host the Mass for congregations of parishes that had lost their former churches, who had organized liturgical services only at makeshift home altars for decades prior. Catholics organized the compact spaces of the first schuilkerken to host the ritual of the Mass, with little possibility for private

chapels or other rooms. Oriented around the altar, the experience of the Mass defined the space of the clandestine church. Under the tenure of vicar apostolic Philippus Rovenius from 1614 to 1651, the Catholic community began to install numerous clandestine churches that varied in ambition and scale, including the renovation of private domestic chapels, the destruction of walls and ceilings in large homes, and the construction of new structures concealed in backyards. By about 1620, the subordinated denominations began church building, establishing permanent sites for worship and commissioning artists to adorn their interiors, contributing to the redevelopment of the Holland Mission's ecclesiastical structure and organization.[3]

For Dutch Catholics, the foundation of clandestine churches met more than their need for spaces to perform the Mass, it created a social space for their community to express their spiritual identity and foster their reformation. In the space of the schuilkerk, Dutch Catholics found a refuge from the public banishment of their faith, reenacting the past gatherings of their communities in spaces since confiscated by Reformed authorities. James Scott described the impulse of subordinated communities to establish sites out of view from dominant groups as such:

> "Within this restricted social circle the subordinate is afforded a partial refuge from the humiliations of domination, and it is from this circle that the audience (one might say "the public") for the hidden transcript is drawn. Suffering from the same humiliations or, worse, subject to the same terms of subordination, they have a shared interest in jointly creating a discourse of dignity, of negation, and of justice. They have, in addition, a shared interest in concealing a social site apart from domination where such a hidden transcript can be elaborated in comparative safety."[4]

While many Dutch Catholics maintained a religiously diverse social and professional circle, gathering and worship with their religious community permitted the free expression of their suppressed faith. While Catholics decried the injustice of their faith's proscription to differing degrees, the construction of private altars, house churches, and clandestine churches allowed those that shared this sentiment a space to organize the reformation of their church. Through visual culture, Dutch Catholics cultivated a private life behind doors that served as an act of resistance to the hegemony of the Reformed Church. In Scott's terms, "the social spaces where the hidden transcript grows are themselves an achievement of resistance."[5] The paintings and liturgical objects that conditioned the experience of worship in a clandestine church accordingly register their community's changed devotional circumstances and their shared sense of suffering as a persecuted minority.



Figure 4-2. Gerrit Pietersz. de Jong, *Family on Pilgrimage to Heiloo*, 1630, oil on panel, 27 1/8 x 23 1/2 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, BMH s473b.

In a climate in which sacred objects were at best hidden and disorganized, and at worst destroyed in iconoclastic fury, Dutch Catholic piety turned to the invisible, miraculous and visionary aspects of the faith, while retaining its spiritual connection to sacred sites where churches and holy objects once stood. As Willem Frijhoff has recounted, in the

Catholic tradition popular healing devotions and pilgrimages were often site specific, and "called for a Place (locus) in the strict and unassignable sense of the word."[6] Accordingly, the worship of sacred sites in the Northern Netherlands, together with a rise in the interest in miraculous events, cultivated a sense of local spirituality. The development of a sense of sacred locality was central for the incipient Dutch Catholic hierarchy, as its officials were concerned both with the maintenance of a distinctly Dutch church by the secular clergy. The community's attachment to former church sites continued in the pilgrimages to ruined structures such as Heiloo's Church of Our Lady in 1630, in front of which one Catholic family had their portrait painted (Fig. 4-2).[7] Catholics often continued to visit their former churches for their prayer, despite their officially Reformed status, as Catharina Oly described in an account of one Alkmaar *klopje*. According to Oly, the woman often visited the church, even though it had become a "cave of murderers," to conduct her prayers discreetly in a corner out of sight.[8] In Tilburg, a small village in Brabant, a Catholic congregation illegally occupied a Reformed church and its minister Paulus Arleboutius caught them in the act. The priest cast the corporal off the altar and demanded they leave with threats of violence, while attempting to cast them off with "women clinging to my body with tears in their eyes."[9] Likewise, in contemporary Wales Catholic communities facing Protestant persecution often rejuvenated their former sacred sites, who even imported relics from abroad in order to establish new pilgrimage destinations.[10] Van Eck has also called attention to the ways in which Catholic painters pictorially reclaimed sacred sites they once held and inserted them into their work. For example, the Utrecht Dom tower appears in Jan van Bijlert's 1630 *Willibrord and Boniface with the Holy Trinity* below the titular saints and the Protestant-destroyed St. Willibrord's church appears intact in a 1631 Heiloo altarpiece.[11] Dutch

Catholics also travelled great distances in order to worship relics that communities relocated, particularly to Brabant and the Southern Netherlands.[12]

While private altars predominated in late sixteenth-century Catholic practice, accounts of early makeshift sites indicate the necessity of forming new communal spaces for prayer. For instance, Trijn Jans Oly relayed how klopje Lysbet Pauels, upon her return from a pilgrimage to Ghent, recreated the Stations of the Cross devotions "in an old barn, where the images were painted on the walls."[13] Joke Spaans has discussed how these early house churches, often improvised in attics and barns, served as centers in which the community could gather, thereby connecting Catholics across a local network. In Haarlem, Catholics Tiet Nobel and Pieter Lakemans hosted a house church in their barn, where the community's priest, Cornelis Arentz, regularly performed the Mass for what was a reportedly sizable group of worshippers.[14] The frequency with which Dutch Catholics imagined monumental churches in print demonstrated their eagerness for new, more official sacred spaces.[15] As the worship in and pilgrimage to formerly consecrated sites did not sustain devotion in daily life, in the first half of the seventeenth century the need for sacred place led to Dutch Catholics beginning the gradual reshaping of select spaces from secular to sacred. A Leiden Carmelite described their amazement at the small scale of a house chapel that they attended in a large home outside Rotterdam "because of the size of the place I can call a church."[16] The clandestine church would allow for the approximation of their former sacred spaces, and remove some of the restrictions of worship in such smaller house chapels.

The establishment of clandestine churches close to their former sites of worship not only illustrated the importance of locality for Dutch Catholics, but also served practical purposes. In Utrecht, the city's foundational Catholic history determined the sacred

geography of its churches and their locations in the city. Catholics maintained Utrecht's famous *kerkenkruis*, founded by Bishop Bernold's early tenth-century establishment and cruciform arrangement of the city's cathedral and four principal Chapter churches, as they built new churches in the following centuries. The cross of churches acted as a pilgrimage route within the city that attracted travelers from elsewhere in the Northern Netherlands and abroad. In his foundation of the five churches in the cross formation, Bernold sought to parallel the pilgrimage route in Jerusalem and took the titles of Rome's major churches: St. Peter, St. John, Maria Major, and St. Paul.[17] The Utrecht Chapter established its two major clandestine churches of St. Gertrude's Chapel and Saint Marie Achter Clarenburg in close proximity to their former parish churches, thereby maintaining Bernold's cruciform pilgrimage route. Maria Minor Achter Clarenburg stood only a few steps away from its parish's former church of Maria Minor, the Buurkerk. They installed St. Gertrude's Chapel adjacent to the former site of the church of Maria Major (later the location of St. Gertrude's Cathedral) in the Mariahoek, in the midst of their community, allowing them to notify one another in case of danger. In Amsterdam, the worshippers at 't Hart (today the Museum Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder) had a direct view of their former church of St. Nicholas from the chapel. In each case, Dutch Catholics maintained their local parish communities while benefitting from the close proximity to their former sacred sites. The rich histories of the old, large houses typically provided by wealthy Catholic residents to house clandestine worship confirm the importance of the locality and sacrality of site. Dutch Catholics transformed the house "Clarenburg" into Maria Minor, a twelfth century house built in a late Gothic style, which at one point served as Utrecht's Stadhuis. Locating the new spaces of worship in

residences that carried with them as much local history as the churches the parishes formerly inhabited reaffirmed their sense of their space's sacrality and its distinction from the secular.

Public, rather than social, invisibility defines the clandestinity of the Dutch schuilkerk. Benjamin Kaplan has argued that communities were often aware of their existence, and Calvinists used these spaces in the preservation of a superficial and tense form of tolerance that "contained religious dissent within spaces demarcated as private."[18] The widespread knowledge of clandestine churches and their locations is confirmed by Englishman James Howell's 1632 account of a visit to Amsterdam in which he described how he quickly found these spaces, entered them easily, and remarked that their neighbors were unbothered by their presence.[19] Clandestine worship was not only a Catholic phenomenon, as Remonstrants, Lutherans, Mennonites, and any other non-Reformed confessions also held services in similar spaces hidden from the public sphere. In this period, clandestinity was shifting and contested, as the degree to which Calvinist authorities urged strict enforcement of their public religious monopoly was different in each city.

The nature of toleration in a given location often involved an economic dimension, as in certain cities Catholics had to pay local bailiffs "recognition money" in order to continue their clandestine operations. In Gouda, Catholics experienced a bout of particularly intense persecution at the hands of the bailiff Anthoni van der Wolff that only paused when Catholics agreed to pay him a bribe of seven hundred guilders per year.[20] In any case, the threat of expulsion or severe penalization loomed for those practicing the liturgy in secret. The conditions of clandestinity therefore carried serious implications for the structure of such newly established sacred spaces, as their builders considered the concealment of sacred objects and easy escape of parishioners when necessary.[21]

Once Dutch Catholics aesthetically and architecturally transformed homes into sacred spaces, they would also have become multi-sensory, living spaces in which the scents of incense, sounds of singing voices, or by contrast, the candlelit silence of individual prayer outside of the hours of Mass would have conditioned one's devotional experience. In Maria Minor, for example, Catholics also used the space for communal gatherings, including groups of women knitting, reading, and children playing.[22] Provided with some security by surrounding Catholic residences, playing and singing liturgical music was a common and popular practice in clandestine churches. Oly frequently noted the musical in Haarlem's clandestine church of St. Bernard, a group of klopjes gathered around its altar to sing as a chorus, while others sometimes played organ or violin. Like the hand coloring of religious prints, klopjes considered singing spiritual songs to be a devotional aid and an ideal way to honor God. According to Oly, Catholics across the Holland Mission admired this group of Haarlem klopjes for their musical abilities. [23]

While schuilkerken were distinct from their civic, secular setting, they would also shelter gatherings of Catholic communities behind closed doors. Although this multi-use function is far from novel for churches as medieval cathedrals doubled as extra space for town hall meetings, this type of space would have been essential for the persistence of the suppressed Dutch Catholic community.[24] The phenomenon of the clandestine church emerged from a period of confessionalization that saw the increasing distinction between profane and sacred spaces for both Protestants and Catholics.[25] Beat Kumin has examined the gradual separation of public houses and churches in Protestant Bavaria, in which the public house became the predominant center for social and civic activities, replacing the local parish church.[26] While Dutch clandestine churches likely never served as alehouses of the type

discussed by Kumin, their frequent placement in private residences and retention of their original domestic architecture lent a secular dimension to their sacred space. In the clandestine church of t'Hart, for example, the worshipper would have passed through a kitchen and living quarters on their way to the chapel space forged from the residence's upper floors.[27]

B. Devotional Experience in the Space of the Clandestine Church

The distinct setting of the clandestine church would have conditioned the devotional experience of those viewing Honthorst's altarpieces during the Mass. For these new spaces, Dutch Catholics carved sacred spaces from profane ones, in each transforming the mundane features of the Dutch domestic interior into the architectural vocabulary of the sacred. The unexpected revelation of ecclesiastical space, created through the demolition of floors to create a more expansive area and the addition of small galleries, defined the visitor's encounter with the space of the clandestine church.[28] For instance, the typically Dutch spiraled staircase, in its narrow width and height, became a kind of liminal, anticipatory entryway to the sacred. The Dutch Catholic interest in creating the illusion of voluminous space is evident in the earliest prints of schuilkerken interiors from the eighteenth century. While such later



Figure 4-3. Willem Kok, *Toediening van het vormsel in de kerk op het Begijnhof te Amsterdam*, 1792, engraving, 16 1/2 x 17 3/4 in. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-86.210.

images cannot testify to their seventeenth-century appearance with any accuracy, their compositions consistently privilege spatial expansiveness, when in actuality many were remarkably small domestic spaces. In a 1792 engraving of the interior of Amsterdam's clandestine Begijnhof church of SS. Mary and Ursula, the enormity of the represented space stands in stark contrast with the reality of the extremely small church (Fig. 4-3). The artist manipulates the point of view of the image to show the church's columns, nave, and central altar in a fantastically monumental fashion.[29] Numerous eighteenth-century prints of schuilkerken similarly represent a massive space centered and facing the altar, with the galleries acting as lines that point directly to its structure.



Fig. 4-4. Isaac van Ostade, Gathering in a Clandestine Catholic Church, c. 1650. Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.

Prominent Dutch Catholic families often installed house chapels in their homes and acted as unofficial facilitators of the Mass, inviting priests and parishioners to worship before their domestic altar. In Amsterdam, the parents of Trijn Jans Oly housed a chapel whose regular parishioners eventually moved to a location on the Singel and founded the station "De Lelie."[30] The visual appearance and arrangement of these early house churches, due to the paucity of known archival materials, is difficult to recover fully. Van

Eck, however, has recently discovered and confirmed the authenticity of a rare image of seventeenth-century worship in an early house church via a 1650 Isaac van Ostade drawing (Fig.4-4). The space represented in the drawing appears to be a relatively minor private house chapel, for while a candle-laden altar is vaguely indicated behind the priest, van Ostade indicates little other decoration and the congregation is contained in one room. In his debut of this newly discovered image in the catalogue of the 2013 exhibition *Traits of Tolerance*, Van Eck claims that it illustrates a "somewhat romanticized picture of such a service, with a priest standing jovially in the middle of a lively congregation."[31] While the degree of romanticization in van Ostade's drawing is unclear, he presents the clandestine service as an intimate gathering in which worshippers huddle together on the floor listening to the sermon in progress in the absence of adequate seating. Van Ostade articulates anecdotal moments and expressive faces in the group, which together with their physical proximity to one another points to a closeness among the participants that emphasizes the importance of community. Van Ostade includes a ladder in the corner of the room to indicate their clandestine entrance from another floor of the home in which they have gathered, demonstrating the unorthodoxy of their sacred space and the physical difficulty of its secret entrance. The worshippers therefore required special knowledge to navigate the hidden space and have exclusive access to their invisible entrances. While Catholics built more sizable clandestine churches in the 1630s, they continued to use these small house chapels late into the century. Even in 1681 in Amsterdam, the twenty-six clandestine churches available to Catholics could each only hold at most a "few dozen believers," according to Judith Pollman. In these crowded spaces, Catholics performed the Mass more than once in a day, as they were eager to attend with regularity.[32] While in Amsterdam parishioners worshipped in a

greater number of smaller spaces, the Utrecht Chapter maintained the key parishes in four new clandestine churches: Maria Minor Achter Clarenburg (formerly the Buurkerk), the Gertrudiskapel (formerly the Geertekerk), St. James's church on the Drakenburgsteeg (the parish kept its name, but with a new location), and St. Nicolaasstatie achter der Wal (formerly St. Nicolas's church).[33]

The parishioners of these developing spaces donated objects to mark the new spaces as sacred, in no small part drawing from the overabundance of hoarded art, relics and liturgical silver kept by Catholics for safekeeping after their churches Protestants emptied them decades before. For example, a lawyer sent to Gouda to monitor Catholic activity noted that a clandestine church was "abundantly furnished with pews, chairs, and altars, a silver crucifix more than one meter high, with several silver candelabra and lamps, furthermore there are very beautiful paintings and a magnificent organ."[34] While these new sacred spaces provided storage for the community's sacred objects, their vast quantity assembled in a small space lent them an aesthetic of plentitude that mimicked the appearance of a fully decorated Catholic church. As early clandestine churches were likely simple in their architecture, their altarpiece and such recently returned sacred objects would have held even more significance as the principal marker of their space's newfound function. The museum of Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder displays a reconstructed example of an altar from an early clandestine church that includes a crucifix and four golden candlesticks on an altar, sitting before a seventeenth-century painting of the Lamentation. This altar indicates the basic objects that mark its humble structure as sacred, in addition to the relics that permit its consecration.

In the era in which Honthorst painted altarpieces for schuilkerken, they were likely closer in appearance to van Ostade's drawing, rather than the lavish decoration added in the

late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In the first half of the seventeenth century, clandestine churches appeared architecturally simpler than they did following these renovations. The structural components that a house chapel like that seen in the van Ostade drawing required to become a clandestine church were the consecrated altar, available sitting or standing room, and a second level gallery. The construction of many schuilkerken, including the Begijnhof Chapel in Amsterdam and the St. Gertrude's Chapel in Utrecht, consisted of the demolition of an upper floor in a domestic home, producing a space with greater height and room for an upper gallery with additional seating, from which worshippers could view the services below. In Amsterdam, for instance, Catholics constructed a schuilkerk on the Raamgracht by clearing out the second and third floor spaces of a large home.[35] Each residence chosen for conversion to a space for clandestine worship was longitudinal and allowed for the articulation of a nave, altar and aisles within its central space. These two-level spaces contained a multitude of art objects but featured little structural decoration, and likely lacked windows to ensure their public invisibility. This candlelit, intimate space, with singing and the scent of incense, heightened the experience of participating in the Mass.

The shift in schuilkerken towards more lavish furnishings in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries constitutes evidence for their early appearance. In these projects, Catholics expanded the buildings spatially, adding large wooden, stucco-decorated altar structures and scaled down barrel vaults constructed from wooden planks just below the ceiling. Through the renovations, the churches maintained their basic spatial layout and second gallery level, oriented towards the performance of sacraments at the altar. In many schuilkerken, the altar armature framed the central altar and altarpiece through a series of

columns and engaged pilasters. Above the eighteenth-century altar structure added to Delft's Maria en Ursulakerk the pediment breaks to reveal an image of the Lamb of God, surrounded by mock-gilded and marbled decorations and paired with a carved burst of golden light above. Through these structures, Dutch Catholics more fully approximated on a small scale the appearance of Catholic churches in the Southern Netherlands. The installation of miniature church organs in these projects of expansion could also indicate that tolerance had increased enough to allow for their conspicuous auditory presence in their communities.

The possession of relics and sacred objects were centrally important to define a new clandestine church space, marking them as sites capable of hosting the Mass. In 1616, Rovenius decreed that private citizens could no longer own the altar vestments, silver, or paintings that they held for years in safekeeping and must hand them over to Catholic authorities for placement in clandestine churches. In St. Gertrude's Chapel, the relics donated by its parishioners were so many that in addition to their traditional storage in the altar, many more had to be held in compartments seamlessly hidden between the wood paneled wall of the chapel and brick of the original fifteenth-century structure.[36] Furthermore, following the return of pre-Reformation holy objects around the beginning of clandestine church building, silversmiths such as Utrecht's Thomas Bogaert saw a demand for numerous new monstrances, ciboriums and reliquaries for these spaces. [37] In the first half of the seventeenth century, Dutch Catholic parishes also facilitated a flourishing production of rich liturgical fabrics that represented Eucharistic iconography.

C. Honthorst's Paintings for Clandestine Churches

In his 1622 *Christ Crowned with Thorns* painted for the no longer extant Dominicuskerk in Amsterdam, 1638 *Mocking of Christ* for the H.H. Maria and Ursula church

in Delft, and 1654 *Ecce Homo* for the clandestine church of Saint Marie Achter Clarenburg in Utrecht, Honthorst brings the suffering of Christ close to the picture plane with little background, collapsing the space of the image and the viewer. Van Eck has argued that "conversions or moments of sudden insight" such as the Calling of St. Matthew were particularly common iconography for paintings in clandestine churches. I posit, however, that no generalizations can be made about the subject matter of paintings for clandestine churches and but they instead share a distinctive pictorial treatment of the suffering body in a shallow, ambiguous space.[38] I am interested in examining the implications of representing these subjects and the devotional experiences that they facilitated in their viewers. As he worked considering the ultimate locations of his images, Honthorst's distinct approach to the suffering Christ for these three altarpieces reveals to us a fuller picture of Dutch Catholic devotion in the early clandestine church. Collectively, Honthorst's paintings for clandestine churches trigger the viewer's empathic response to the suffering Christ, an effect made more direct and intimate given the small, spare spaces in which they worshipped. While artists across the Tridentine era of Counter-Reformation Europe designed religious compositions to function similarly, Dutch Catholic viewers came to Honthorst's paintings of the suffering Christ with a distinct self-identification as persecuted martyrs for the true church.

Honthorst's consistent representation of Christ in this way in his numerous paintings of the Passion of Christ demonstrates the affective power that images of Christ isolated in his suffering for the viewer held specifically for Dutch Catholics. In their complete expressive and bodily inactivity, they do not struggle, appeal with pious gazes heavenward, but appear as if in a vacuum of quietude outside of the narrative. Honthorst's paintings therefore represent Christ's suffering as the focus of contemplation, an experience in which their

meditative stillness mirrored that of the devotional beholder. In this way, he creates an image that directs the viewer to empathic, affective piety in the late medieval Netherlandish tradition. This type of the suffering Christ, as further elaborated in Chapter Three, ultimately served to stir contrition for their sins' contribution to the violence that he endures. John Decker has extensively discussed the dynamics of this devotional function in early Netherlandish paintings by Geertgen tot sint Jans, and the turn towards intensive Passion devotion around the fifteenth century.[39]

Particularly in their capacity as altarpieces, the subjects of the Ecce Homo and its narrative predecessor, the Mocking of Christ, carry a distinct set of devotional implications. In the widely read popular devotional text *the Life of Christ* (1374 manuscript; first published Antwerp, 1474) by Carthusian monk Ludolph of Saxony (1300-78), the author likened Pilate's display of the suffering Christ before the crowd to the moment of the Eucharist's elevation by the priest in the Mass. Ludolph cited how in these moments of display, "God remains hidden, either behind the veil of the consecrated host or the body of human incarnation."[40] The subjects of the Ecce Homo and the Mocking of Christ implicate their viewers as guilty for Christ's suffering, and in the words of Christine Göttler, stand as ''indexical images,' images that draw attention to and present an almost physical relationship between the spectator and the depicted scene." Honthorst's representations of the scene therefore place their beholders in a physical exchange with the suffering body of Christ that registers their perpetual complicity. In this way, reflection on the figure of the suffering Christ, in the words of Peter Parshall, constitutes "a continuing crisis of suffering in which the offer of grace is perpetually renewed and perpetually undeserved," as "the suffering Christ was an image potentially more fraught with private implication than the Crucifixion

itself."[41] Ultimately, the viewer's feelings of guilt for their role in Christ's suffering acted as an important agent that transformed and perfected the soul in pursuit of salvation.[42]

In his analysis of Willem van Branteghem's *Pomarium Mysticum* (Antwerp: Willem Vorsterman, 1535) Walter Melion elucidated the narrative relationship between the moments of the Ecce Homo and the Man of Sorrows. In Pilate's display of the tortured Christ, he completes, unbeknownst to him, the prophecy vividly described in Isaiah 53. According to Melion, in the moment that Pilate commands the crowd to "behold the man," Christ "appears as the living image of this prophecy, lacking form and comeliness…Christ, Man of Sorrows, transforms Pilate's rhetorical fiction and scenic show (*commentum* & *ludicrum*) into a true image of divine salvation, formerly prefigured, now offered to perspicacious eyes."[43] As Melion puts forward, images of the Ecce Homo served a distinctive meditative purpose that demands from the viewer the contemplative viewing of Christ's suffering body. The devotional language in Ludolphus of Saxony's *Vita Christi* further demonstrates the function of this scene, which Andreas van der Kruyssen's meditation on the Ecce Homo in his *Misse. Haer korte uytlegginge, en godvruchtige oeffeninge onder de zelve: Neffens eenige besondere zegeninge: en het gebruyck der HH. Sacramenten* (By the author, 1651; Antwerp: G. Tielenburg, 1651).[44] The Amsterdam priest writes:

> "He appears with a crown that torments Him, wounding His beautiful brow with a thousand pricks. And then, just as if speaking to deprecate or move to pity, Pilate said to them: "*Ecce homo*": behold the man whom you believed to be desirous of kingship…if in something he acted badly, yet is He punished beyond deserving. And therefore should it suffice: see His head pierced, His body lacerated, His face spat upon, and for God's sake, have mercy, for He is your brother. For Pilate wanted them

> to see with their eyes how (Jesus) had been punished and mocked, that they might be moved to compassion; he put Him on show with the intention of freeing Him."

In other popular contemporary devotional texts such as the Bolswert-engraved 1626 *Den Gheestelycken* by Antwerp-based Dominican Vincentius Hensbergh, the viewer is instructed to imagine the physical presence of Christ in the Passion before their eyes.[45] This Jesuit devotional tradition foregrounded the process of imagining the bodily presence of Christ and the nature of his suffering through each stage of the Passion. The authorities of the Holland Mission promoted a similar exercise, as Phillipus Rovenius wrote in his devotional text *Het Gulden Wieroock-vat* (Antwerp: Jan Cnobbaert, 1636):

> "Wie dattet is die daer lijdt / wat hij lijdt / voor wien dat hy lijdt / ende om wat oorsake dat hy lijdt."[46]

The prayer Rovenius suggests approximately translates to "Who is it that suffers there / what he suffers / for whom he suffers / and for what cause that he suffers," thereby emphasizing the importance of the reader's meditation on each aspect of Christ's suffering in the Passion. Haarlem klopjes's priest Nicolaes Cousebant, whose sermons and devotional exercises I discussed in Chapter Three, echoes this emphasis on the bodily suffering of Christ and repetitive meditation on each detail of the Passion narrative.



Figure 4-5. Master of Levensbron (the Master of the Fountain of Life, Northern Netherlandish), *Mass of St. Gregory*, c. 1510, oil on panel, 36 1/4 x 30 3/4 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, RMCC s194.

Images of Christ's miraculous appearance on the altar come from from the iconography of the Mass of St. Gregory, as illustrated by numerous sixteenth-century prints from the Low Countries such as the Master of Levensbron's 1510 *Gregoriusmis* (Fig. 4-5). In this intricately detailed composition, as in others of the subject, Christ miraculously appears to Gregory behind the altar and its silver cross, while displaying his wound from which a stream of blood pours into the Eucharistic chalice, surrounded by the Arma Christi.[47] The popular Man of Sorrows type seen across Dutch Catholic visual culture, which pictorially originates in part from the narrative of the Mass of St. Gregory, embodies the Eucharistic

mysticism of importance to their community through the representation of corporeal presence at the altar.

The collections of prints assembled by Haarlem's klopjes and Amsterdam's beguines allows insight into the devotional interests and popular subjects in the community.[48] These materials contain both Northern and Southern Netherlandish devotional prints dealing with such Eucharistic subjects. In one popular type derived from late medieval devotional images, Christ acts as a priest distributing the Eucharist before the altar (Fig. 4-6). In another example, an anonymous 1650 engraving in the collection of the Assendelft station, Christ is dressed as a priest as he gives the Communion wafer to a kneeling woman that identified as Mary.[49] In print cycles by Michiel Snijders (1651, Utrecht), Abraham van Merlen (1631; Den Hoeck, Haarlem) and Nicolaus van Agreda (1637; Begijnhof, Amsterdam), the motif of Christ's bodily manifestation at the altar is omnipresent. In a pair of oval engravings by Johannes Galle, two altars parallel one another, one adorned with an image of Christ on the cross, candles, and fantastical floral garlands, the other with a monstrance containing a Host representing the crucifixion in a mandorla of divine light with two kneeling angels.[50]



Figure 4-6. *Mary receives the Holy Sacrament from Christ as priest*, c. 1650, engraving with hand coloring, 5 1/3 x 3 1/2 in. Breda's Museum, BT 1827.



Figure 4-7. Abraham Bloemaert, *The Four Fathers of the Latin Church Venerating the Eucharist*, 1632, oil on canvas, 81 1/3 x 61 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, RMCC s331.

Honthorst's master and contemporary Abraham Bloemaert explicitly represented the mystical nature of the altar in his monumental 1632 painting of *the Four Fathers of the Latin Church Venerating the Eucharist* (Fig. 4-7). In the painting, Gregory, Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose are represented before an altar on which a monstrance is centrally placed in front of a large altarpiece.[51] Above the golden monstrance, putti, and the Holy Ghost descend from a ring of clouds to display an opened Bible. The gathering of church fathers, standing in for the intellectual legacy of the church, focuses on the glowing Eucharist, foregrounding the mystical



Figure 4-8. Peter Paul Rubens, *The Triumph of the Eucharist over Idolatry*, c. 1625, oil on panel (oil sketch for tapestry), 25 x 41 in. Museo del Prado, P001698/001.

act of transubstantiation. Unlike in Rubens's 1635-6 tapestry of *the Triumph of the Eucharist over Idolatry* (Fig. 4-8), the soon-to-transform body of Christ in the monstrance in Bloemaert's painting does not triumph in a victorious spectacle over its enemies, but carries power through its physical proximity to the figures represented, and to the viewers by extension. The way in which this image brings the Eucharist close in the foreground, rather than couching it amidst the events of a large-scale history painting, unlike Rubens, corresponds to the intimate settings in which Dutch Catholics engaged with images.

1. Honthorst's Ecce Homo for Utrecht's St. Marie Achter Clarenburg



Figure 4-9. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Ecce Homo*, 1654, oil on canvas, 84 x 71 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, OKM s35.

Honthorst's 1654 *Ecce Homo* (Fig. 4-9) was one of several altarpieces for the clandestine church of Maria Minor Achter Clarenburg shortly after its foundation in approximately 1645.[52] Honthorst's altarpiece rotated in this role with the other paintings in the parish's collection, including Hendrick Bloemaert's 1647 *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1652 *Pentecost*, and 1645 *Calvary*.[53] The church also held several panels by Bloemaert, including a *Cloth of Veronica* and a 1645 *Man of Sorrows* (Fig. 4-10).[54] It is likely that Honthorst produced his *Ecce Homo* knowing it would hang alongside Bloemaert's latter canvas, which also represents Christ suffering with an intensively devotional treatment. While scholars have yet to document the provenance of Bloemaert's *Man of Sorrows*, the artist's working history together with its current residence in St. Gertrude's Cathedral suggests its original location in the community's clandestine chapel. In the *Man of Sorrows*, Bloemaert represents Christ seated against in ambiguous setting, on a stone ledge that distinctly resembles the tomb shown in the Entombment. He bears an expression of profound sadness, while blood is visible profusely dripping from his brow, on the cloth wrapped around



Figure 4-10. Abraham Bloemaert, *Christ as the Man of Sorrows*, 1645, oil on canvas, 31 7/8 x 24 7/8 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, OKM s29. Presently on display in St. Gertrude's Cathedral.

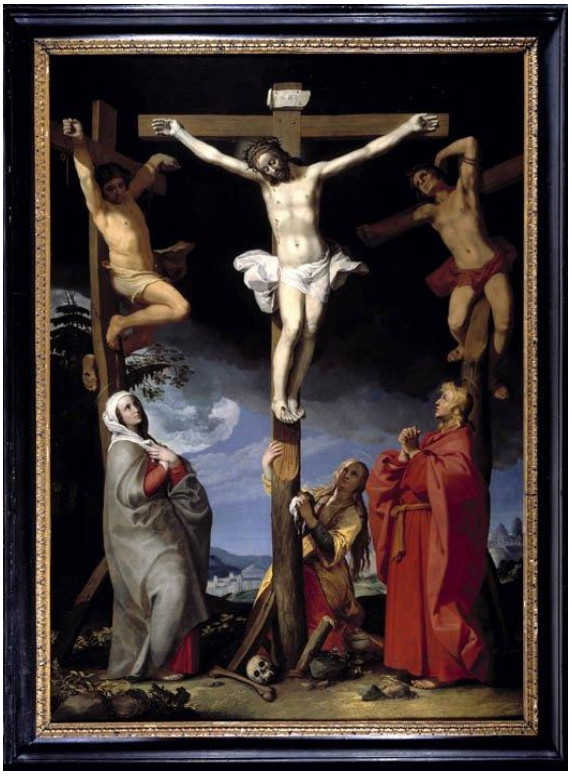


Figure 4-11. Abraham Bloemaert, *The Crucifixion*, 1629, oil on panel, 90 3/4 x 64 3/4 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, BMH s3869.

his torso, in lash marks across his entire body, and on the switches that he holds. In order to make clear the mystical, atemporal status of his subject, Bloemaert includes the Crucifix and a glowing orb of golden light behind Christ. The Maria Minor commission for this series of major altarpieces, including Honthorst's painting, likely involved the church's pastor Jacob van Schendel (d. 1650). The objects remained in the clandestine church until 1988 when the parish permanently moved them from the space to St. Gertrude's Cathedral, a modern church adjacent to the chapel, as well as the Catharijneconvent's collection. In addition, a large *Crucifixion* and small *Agony in the Garden* by Abraham Bloemaert now housed in St. Gertrude's Cathedral may belong to the same group of seventeenth-century paintings originating in the collection of Maria Minor.

The *Crucifixion* and *Gethsemene* paintings from this group are so visually alike that it is likely that Bloemaert produced them as a pair at the same time. Bloemaert's *Crucifixion* modifies an earlier composition of the artist's dating from 1629 (Fig. 4-11), which is one of the earliest paintings produced for a clandestine church or house chapel in Utrecht. In this



Figure 4-12. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Christ and Veronica*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, 41 3/4 x 88 1/8 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, OKM s26.

painting, the traditional figures of the good and bad thief, the Virgin, Mary Magdalene, and John the Evangelist flank the crucified Christ, while the dark storm clouds that signify the moment of Christ's death gather in the background. As the figure of the crucified Christ strongly resembles its model, the Gertrudiskapel *Crucifixion* is likely a copy of the 1629 version for the new schuilkerk. In the later *Crucifixion*, however, all of the supporting figures are absent and the black clouds have spread to occupy nearly three quarters of the canvas. Blomaert's representation of the Crucifixion, in both cases, looks back to the fourteenth and fifteenth-century Netherlandish paintings that explicitly emphasized Christ's suffering on the cross.[55] Honthorst's *Ecce Homo*, produced after this set of Bloemaert paintings, visually connected with the small group of Catholic paintings on view in his community's principle space of clandestine worship.

While its provenance has not yet been explicitly tied to the clandestine church of Maria Minor by the Museum Catharijneconvent like the *Ecce Homo*, another large-scale painting by Honthorst, *Christ and Veronica* (c. 1650; Fig. 4-12), is so strikingly visually similar to the *Ecce Homo* in its treatment of Christ that it seems likely this canvas acted as its

counterpart. While the image of Christ carrying the cross on his knees before St. Veronica is the sixth Station of the Cross, the scale of this canvas (41 x 88 in.) indicates its likely placement in a clandestine church space. The figure of Christ kneeling before Veronica appears very similar to the Christ in the *Ecce Homo*, with pale, grey skin, and bloodied tears. Christ's blood soaked and tearful face mirrors its appearance on Veronica's cloth, which she holds aloft for the viewer to see.

It is unknown precisely how the space of Maria Minor Achter Clarenburg appeared, as following a major 1860 renovation in which the parish removed the original galleries, leaving little original architecture except for the altar wall. In any case, twentieth-century documentation has shown that in later years Honthorst's painting hung at eye level on one of the side walls.[56] Maria Minor Achter Clarenburg's unusual quantity of large-scale paintings compared to others in this period indicates both the wealth of their funding and the fact that Utrecht parishes did not have to pay recognition money to bailiffs, unlike their peers in other cities such as Gouda. The only earlier paintings these spaces were a series of commissions for large altarpieces for schuilkerken in Gouda and Amersfoort beginning in the 1620s, which constituted the first major wave of Catholic painting in the seventeenth century; after the Reformed Church came to power and little painted material made before 1600 survives.[57]

One indication of the appearance of the early space and decorative program of Maria Minor lies in a painting by Abraham Bloemaert originating in the church's collection (Fig. 4-13). The circular composition represents a severely foreshortened angel surrounded by angels, flying downwards towards the viewer while holding a banderol that reads "Gloria In Excelsius Dio." Van Eck has concluded that due to image's shape and the manner in which the angel flies downward, it was one part of a "baroque decorative ensemble" in the church. The painted angel and its text would therefore correspond, according to Van Eck, to other painted angels and a representation of the announcement to, or visit of the shepherds.[58] The ceiling of Maria Minor's galleries was likely the original location of this painting, later removed from the space in the later



Figure 4-13. Abraham Bloemaert, *Flying Angel with Banderol*, 1615-1620, oil on canvas, 28 1/3 x 27 3/4 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, OKM s24.

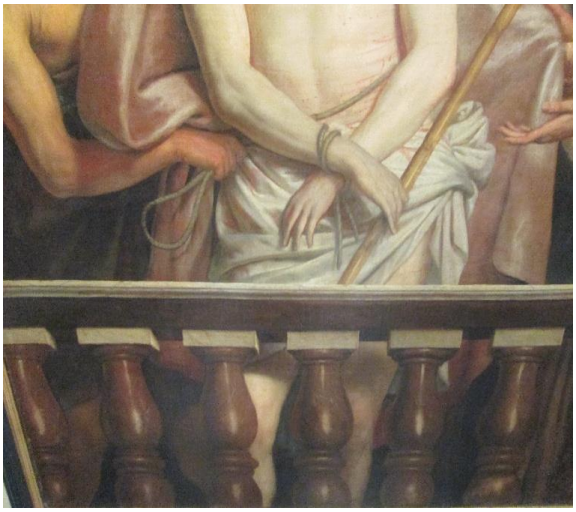


Figure 4-14. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Ecce Homo*, detail.

renovation. In its format, it strongly resembles similarly painted square ceiling panels of the galleries in the contemporary St. Gertrude's Chapel. This series of fifteen unsigned paintings by Godefrius Maas, of a similar size and format, represent the Apostles and Evangelists. Although the chapel attributes them to Maas, they may also have originated in the workshop of Abraham Bloemaert, whose residence and studio stood only a few steps away from the clandestine church.[59] In both Maria Minor and St. Gertrude's chapel, the second level gallery would therefore have acted as a feature defining the new clandestine churches, allowing a pictorial space visible to the seated viewers below.

In his approach to his subject, Honthorst took care to consider the space it would occupy in Maria Minor. In his *Ecce Homo*, the short wooden bannister in front of Christ creates the illusion that he stands behind another architectural element of the church's space, calling attention to the small degree of separation between his body and that of the devotional viewer (Fig. 4-14). The pictorial railing may also have been paralleled by one placed between the congregation's seating and the altar, as the post-renovation structure has before its altar wall.[60] The railing places the viewers in the position of the crowd before which Pontius Pilate displays Christ as he commands them to "behold the man," as he slightly pulls on Christ's cloak with a pained expression and open handed gesture of presentation (Fig. 4-15). The edge of Pontius Pilate's cloak drapes over the railing's edge,

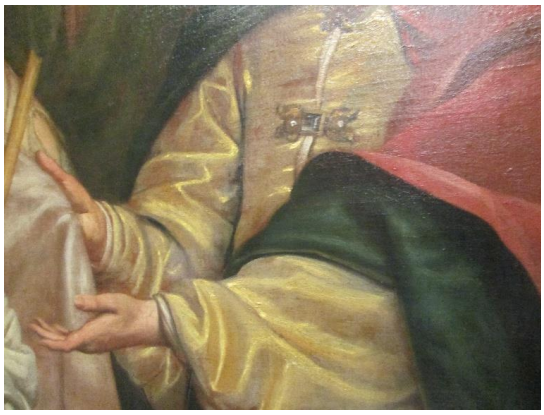


Figure 4-15. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Ecce Homo*, detail.

emphasizing its material reality before the viewer's eyes. Beyond the cluster of figures that surrounds Christ, only a setting sky and the vague hint of an archway indicate the scene's palatial context. In images of the Ecce Homo such as Schelte Adamsz Bolswert's engraving after Rubens[61], the artist shows Christ in a dynamic narrative scene framed by classical architecture, relief sculpture, and columns, as groups of Roman soldiers gathering criminals and onlookers with outstretched hands.

Honthorst therefore rejected the usual representation of the Ecce Homo in which the soldiers and onlookers surround the platform, instead allowing the parishioners in Maria Minor to serve as the crowd. In this way, Honthorst's painting parallels a common function of devotional prints discussed by Els Stronks, in which the image imaginatively figures the viewer as "a witness to the unfolding action." In Nadal's illustration of the *Christ Crowned with Thorns* in the *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* printed by Plantin (Fig. 4-16; 1593, Antwerp), the scene is presented on a balcony before a crowd of onlookers turned away from the viewer, with a space left open for them to envision themselves as part of the group viewing Christ.[62] In Bloemaert's ceiling panel, he collapses the space of the divine in the image with that of the viewer. Bloemaert



Figure 4-16. Jerónimo Nadal, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, from the *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* (Antwerp, 1593).

heightens this effect in his approach to the foreshortened angel flying downward towards the viewers below, an image that would have shared the church space with Honthorst's altarpiece.



Figure 4-17. Cornelis Galle, *Ecce Homo*, undated, engraving. Museum Plantin Moretus, PK.OP.12876.

The device of the railing pressed closely to the foreground in the *Ecce Homo* is present in contemporary devotional prints from Antwerp. Honthorst may have drawn from an engraving of the subject by Cornelis Galle (Fig. 4-17), a printmaker whose work often acted as a point of departure for Dutch Catholic artists. In Galle's engraving, Christ stands alone before a short railing upon which the words "Ecce Homo" read, with the thrush tied to the flagellation column behind him.[63] While Honthorst's treatment of the subject shares with Galle's print its isolation of Christ and railing close to the picture plane, the latter represents Christ gazing pleadingly upwards with a burst of light behind his head serving as a halo. While Honthorst's Christ looks out at his viewers with a gaze of sorrowful, pained



Figure 4-18. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Ecce Homo*, detail.

resignation in his suffering, in the Galle image Christ's upward glance reminds viewers that in his divinity he transcends earthly tortures. Much like de Grebber, Honthorst departs significantly from the precedent of Galle and van Diepenbeeck in his depiction of a passive, defeated, and wounded Christ standing before the viewers, who the image spatially configures as his judging crowd. While the railing cutting across the bottom of the image recalls Cornelis Galle's engraving, in which Christ stands in front of a banister, Honthorst's canvas would serve a radically different devotional function for its viewers in the Mass. Dutch Catholic viewers, given their subordinated position, would resonate more with the suffering Christ than his muscular, heroic, and woundless counterpart, gazing appealingly towards the heavens.

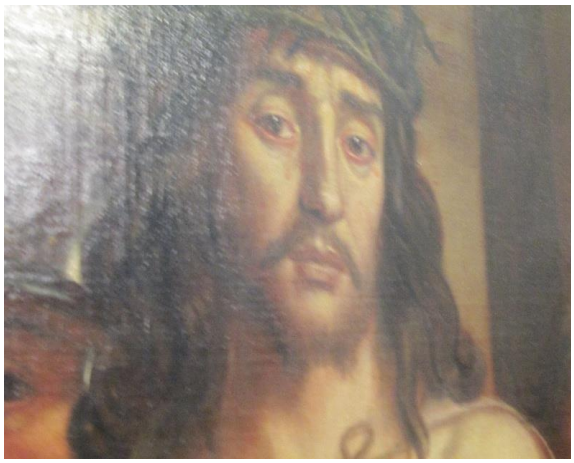


Figure 4-19. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Ecce Homo*, detail.

Honthorst heightens the meditative effect of the composition's spatial compression and immediacy of its figures through his treatment of Christ's body and facial expression. Honthorst represents Chirst in life-size, enhancing the sense of his physical presence and emphasizing his bloodied body. The artist has taken pains to paint fine red lines to describe both the flagellation that occurred shortly before (Fig. 4-18) and the scraping created by the rope pulled harshly around his torso. Christ himself looks pleadingly out of the picture with his tearful and bloody gaze (Fig. 4-19), engaging with the devotional viewer-turned-onlooker in the crowd seated immediately before the metaphorical and actual railings. Christ's eyes water with a mixture of tears and blood, while drips of blood fall down his face and upper torso. While the surrounding tormentors look at Christ with grotesquely caricatured faces in wild expressions and gesture against him, one figure besides Pilate and Christ gazes directly at the viewer. The solemn look of the helmet-wearing and bearded soldier's head, visible just above Christ's right shoulder, separates him from the crowd of caricatured mockers and directly addresses the viewer, establishing a relationship between with viewers. I suggest here that this figure represents a self-portrait of the artist, not only due to his grave outward look, but also because of their physiognomic resemblance. When compared to an earlier engraved portrait of Honthorst by Paulus Pontius (Fig. 4-20), their full face and facial hair strikingly resemble the helmet-wearing man gazing out behind Christ.



Figure 4-20. Paulus Pontius after Anthony van Dyck, *Gerrit van Honthorst*, 1627-1641, engraving, 8 3/4 x 6 1/2 in. Rijksmuseum, RP-P-2004-73-70.

Honthorst's adoption of the mocker's guise therefore implicates his guilt in the suffering of Christ, while his outward gaze asks the viewer to contemplate their complicity.

When it hung as an altarpiece, the Eucharistic dimension of Honthorst's image would have been reinforced by Utrecht artist Nicolaus Knüpfer's painted tabernacle produced four years earlier (Fig. 4-21), on which a circle of angels and putti are represented holding up a monstrance. Molding crowns the tabernacle's architecture, reading, "Ecce Panis Angelorum," or "Behold the Bread of the Angels," describing the consecrated Host. In this period, elaborately decorated monstrances often featured similar iconography of angels venerating and holding aloft the Host.[64] Likewise, a Haarlem clandestine church owned a tabernacle cloth[65] that also represents two angels holding aloft a large golden monstrance with the wafer displayed inside. Much like Knüpfer's tabernacle, this embroidered silk cloth includes the text "Ecce Panis Angelorum" beneath the two angels, reminding parishioners to behold the miraculous transformation taking place in the bread suspended in the monstrance. In their display alongside one another, viewers would certainly have drawn associations between the demand of Honthorst's *Ecce Homo* that they behold the man and Knüpfer's tabernacle asking that they behold his miraculous transformation into the "bread of the angels." As the government



Figure 4-21. Nicolas Knupfer, *Tabernacle from Maria Minor Achter Clarenburg*, ebony, oak and copper, 26 1/2 x 25 x 20 1/2 in. Museum Catharijneconvent, OKM v127.

forbade the Mass and required Catholics to worship in private, for Dutch Catholics the material of the Host took on a renewed mystical significance.

2. Honthorst's *Christ Crowned with Thorns* for the Dominicuskerk, Amsterdam

The date of Honthorst's *Christ Crowned* corresponds to the origination of its clandestine church, founded one year earlier. Like Marie Achter Clarenburg, the Dominicuskerk was originally a large home owned by a wealthy resident converted into a church space, and thereafter rented from its owner for 660 guilders per year in the seventeenth century.[66] Dominicans founded the church decades before others in the city began construction around mid-century, including Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder, de Krijtberg, the Begijnhof's chapel, the Mozes and Aaron church and the Augustinian church of de Ster. The church thereafter served as the only Dominican clandestine church in Amsterdam in this period. In Amsterdam, less remained intact from its former ecclesiastical hierarchy than in Haarlem or Utrecht, while its city government was also more decidedly Counter-Remonstrant. The Holland Mission therefore took longer to take hold in Amsterdam, with its first major, larger clandestine churches constructed in the 1650s and later.[67]

According to Wim Tepe, the *Christ Crowned* may have been displayed in the rectory of Amsterdam's Dominicuskerk, where the Dominican priests resided. In 1765 Jan Wagenaar (1709-1773) wrote that the painting functioned as an altarpiece and hung above the molding in the center of the church space, subtly lit only by the sun pouring through a cupola above. While his account may not speak to the original 1622 installation of the church, his poetic description points to the impact of the painting in its original space, as he notes that a female viewer "wept in the mysterious glow of the heavily gilded altar" below the work.[68] The darkness of Honthorst's composition and the emphasis on the effects of its glimmering

torchlight could have been rendered with the church's natural lighting in mind, drawing a connection between the space's soft glow and the divine light cast upon the suffering Christ.

Given the evidently small church that Tepe describes, and its shared space with the priest's residence, the rectory that displayed Honthorst's painting at one point may have doubled as a sacristy. In a sermon, contemporary Haarlem priest Cousebant connected the ritual process of priests putting on their vestments prior to Mass to the stages of the Mocking of Christ. For instance, Cousebant describes how putting on the waistband represents the flagellation, while the *albe*, or white linen underclothing, stands for the white cloth worn by Christ in his mocking. The maniple, a strip of fabric worn by the priest on the left arm, stood in for the binds that tied Christ during his imprisonment. In this medieval tradition elaborated by Cousebant, the altar marks the offering of Christ at Calvary. According to Cousebant, in their ritual dressing, the priest should contemplate each step of the Passion and meditate on the Christ-like purity and justness he should embody.[69] The direct parallels between the vestment dressing process and the mocking, particularly in its rectory or sacristy setting, would have been reinforced by viewing Honthorst's painting.



Figure 4-22. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, 1622, oil on canvas, 75 3/4 x 87 in. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-A-4837.

In 1622, Honthorst painted *Christ Crowned with Thorns* (Fig. 4-22) for the Dominicuskerk which, given to its large size, may have served as the church's first altarpiece. The commission came at a moment when Honthorst would have been in high demand among patrons in Utrecht and Amsterdam, as he had returned from Rome two years prior, where he garnered a significant reputation as a history painter. Honthorst's earliest known paintings following his return to Utrecht date to 1622, so the *Christ Crowned with Thorns* belongs to this initial group of commissions.[70] In the image, Honthost focuses the viewer's attention on the suffering Christ through strategies unlike those of the two other altarpieces discussed here, as he charges Christ's mocking with frenetic action and movement. Illuminated by one of the artist's signature partially hidden torchlights, the action pulls the viewer's gaze in different directions by a series of lines radiating from the figure of

Christ. Three figures all point to Christ through gesture, a torch, and the angle of an arm. Assailants press the crown of thorns on Christ's head with rods of various angles, while that which he holds is horizontal, and a boy blows a horn into his left ear. The force with which the boy blows the horn close to Christ's face contributes to the scene's sensorial impression of clamor and chaos. Christ himself appears to wheel backwards in a movement that results from the divergent directions in which they pull him (Fig. 4-23), while the strain in his neck demonstrates the force with which it is being pulled backwards. Unlike the other two versions, in which Christ plaintively looks out at the viewer with bloody and tearful eyes, in the Dominicuskerk painting his mouth is agape and eyes roll back to reveal the whites of his eyes, indicating the moment of physical pain he experiences as the crown is pressed into his head.



Figure 4-23. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, detail.

Much like his treatment of the Ecce Homo in his later Maria Minor altarpiece, Honthorst's *Christ Crowned with Thorns* departs from contemporary Catholic pictorial conventions from elsewhere in Europe for representing the Mocking of Christ. Antwerp artists such as Frans Francken represented the Mocked Christ seated on an elevated platform before a grotesquely jeering crowd. Honthorst, in his numerous treatments of the Mocking of Christ, consistently removed the crowd and pared down the additional figures to a small group of assailants. As in the *Ecce Homo*, in his *Christ Crowned with Thorns* Honthorst

leaves the viewer little setting, letting the narrative unfold in what appears to be a void of total darkness. This tendency in Honthorst's religious painting to pare down traditional representations of a narrative and isolate his figures in ambiguous darkness conforms to the Jesuit devotional principle of "composition of place," first articulated in the *Spiritual Exercises* (1548). The *Exercises*, as in Ludolph of Saxony's *Vita Christi*, urge their readers to, in the words of Gauvin Bailey, "re-create imaginatively the sights, sounds, smells and feelings belonging to a scene such as the Nativity of Christ or the Presentation of Christ in the Temple in a way that has reminded many scholars of the kind of instructions that would be given to a painter." As such, Jesuit imagery in this tradition represents holy subjects in deliberately ambiguous settings to allow the viewer to more actively engage in the meditative process by imagining the missing narrative components.[71]

Honthorst's distillation of the narrative elements not only conforms to Jesuit practice, but participates in the revival of a late medieval pictorial device that heightens the emotive effect of devotional images. Christian and Astrid Tümpel have discussed this tendency to pare down narratives for greater impact in Rembrandt's work. Tümpel described Rembrandt's isolation of the main figure in his 1629 *Andromeda*[72], noting that the absence of Perseus coming to her rescue "makes her despair particularly affecting."[73] Like Honthorst, Rembrandt used this pictorial strategy especially for devotionally focused images. Honthorst's adaptation of Caravaggist chiaroscuro to this effect informed Rembrandt's use of this emotionally affective strategy. While Honthorst likely influenced Rembrandt in this technique to some degree, both artists continued a Northern tradition of representing devotional subjects as isolated from narrative context. Justus Müller Hofstede, among others, have discussed the way in which Rembrandt, like Honthorst and other artists of the Utrecht

school, also continued the tendency to represent religious narratives as night scenes lit by dramatic artificial light sources. In Rembrandt and Honthorst's work, they often pair their reductive approach to narrative with the meditative qualities produced by the light of a torch or candle.[74]

3. Honthorst's *The Mocking of Christ* for the H.H. Maria and Ursula, Delft

Honthorst painted the 1638 altarpiece *The Mocking of Christ* for the clandestine church of H.H. Maria and Ursula in Delft, which the parish extensively renovated in 1743. As in Amsterdam, Catholics founded the H.H. Maria en Ursula kerk in a small home in the city's begijnhof, situating the space among Catholic residences. Before this expansion of the space, the original schuilkerk took up only one floor of the house, while continuing the pre-Reformation patron saint dedications of the city's major parish churches.[75] As the canvas measures six and a half by five and a half feet, the life-size figure of Christ, his gaze pleading at his viewers, would be made all the more impactful in the exceptionally small room of the Delft clandestine church.



Figure 4-24. Gerrit van Honthorst, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, 1638, oil on canvas, 77 3/4 x 68 in. Private Collection (sold at auction by Oude Katholieke Kerk, Delft in 1998).

In Honthorst's painting (Fig. 4-24), Christ is given central prominence and surrounded by figures pressed close to the viewer in a minimal and ambiguous setting.

Unlike the other two altarpieces discussed here, however, it is appears similar to his 1617 Roman painting of the same subject now in the Getty Museum in its vertical format and figural arrangement. Although I resist suggesting any kind of development over time in Honthorst's numerous representations of the subject, in his Roman and Dutch paintings of the Mocking of Christ, Honthorst clearly worked out a series of successful pictorial combinations of Christ surrounded by grotesquely caricatured tormentors in an ambiguous, shallow space. The arrangement of the Delft painting also echoes that of the earlier Dominicuskerk *Mocking of Christ*, in which Christ is seated and surrounded by assailants standing and kneeling in a semi-circle, each of which rhetorically perform gestures of mocking, while others press the crown on his head. Given in its prevalence in the oeuvres of Honthorst and his contemporaries, it is clear that the subject of the Mocking of Christ served the interests of Dutch Catholic viewers for its themes of meditative resignation through suffering and persecution.

The most significant shift made by Honthorst for this *Mocking of Christ* lies in his representation of Christ's expression. While in his Roman paintings Christ's head falls in resignation, here, as in the *Ecce Homo*, Christ gazes out at the viewer with a pained expression of yearning. The emotive power of the image hinges upon the naturalistic representation of Christ in pain, his mouth slightly agape and head bent by force. It therefore becomes clear upon close examination, that Honthorst has emphasized the downward force with which two assailants press the crown of thorns on his head. One figure goes as far to step on Christ's seat to gain better leverage for pushing on the crown of thorns, while another uses a rod to press it onto Christ's head. The stark contrast between the particularly excited expressions of these two assailants and Christ's direct address of the viewer in his suffering

would have empathetically engaged the viewer in their meditation. The artist has also carefully added drips of blood flowing from the crown of thorns pressed into his head. Honthorst again indicates the flagellation wounds around his torso and the combination of blood and tears flowing from his eyes. In addition, Christ's torment is augmented by a dog growling with his teeth bared, pulling at the fabric of his garment.

In Honthorst's three altarpieces, he articulates Christ's suffering body before the beholden crowd through both explicit and compositionally implicit gestures of presentation. In the *Ecce Homo* for Maria Minor, Pontius Pilate points to Christ while his gaze pleads with the viewers on the other side of the railing to view the man. Likewise, in the Dominicuskerk *Christ Crowned*, one of Christ's tormentors, awash in torchlight, points to Christ while looking out at the viewer. In one of Honthorst's Roman versions of the *Christ Crowned with Thorns* in the Getty, a figure enshrouded in shadow stands behind the group and points at Christ. The pointing gesture of the man in the Dominicuskerk painting is paralleled by the line created by Christ's cloak which he holds aloft with his middle and ring fingers. While the scene's rods, horn, gestures and gazes all direct the viewer's eye to Christ, this man's pointed figure and outward gaze re-presents the mocking as the moment of our beholding the man in the Ecce Homo – it is the viewers who mock and judge him. In the Delft image, another assailant points to Christ while his other hand is open close to his mouth to indicate his verbal mockery of Christ. The interplay between the mocker's gestures and gazes, in each case, establishes a dynamic that directly implicates the beholder in Christ's mocking. In the Delft and Amsterdam altarpieces, the semi-circular arrangement of Christ's tormentors around him leaves a space open for the viewer to behold Christ's suffering and contemplate their complicity in it. Moreover, in the intimate environment of the clandestine church, the

placement of the life-size figure of Christ as close to the picture plane as possible with his feet just above the lower frame would amplify the illusion of his corporeal presence before the viewer.

D. Beholding the Suffering Christ: Jesuit and Dutch Catholic Meditation

In print, painting, and text the ritual of Mass occupied a position of central importance in Dutch Catholic sacrality, rendering the altarpiece paramount in the ritual experience of worshippers. While this the renewed importance of the Mass characterized Counter-Reformation spirituality more broadly, for Dutch Catholics in particular the prohibition of the practice meant that they re-centralized the Mass as fundamental to the sustenance of their faith and resistance in the face of Reformed oppression. Honthorst's treatment of his subjects in the three altarpieces discussed above establishes a direct devotional address to the viewer through his careful articulation of Christ's suffering, his gaze and immediate presentation. Both lay clergy and Jesuit missionaries in the Northern Netherlands promoted an exceptionally sensorial mode of devotion and the use of visual materials to this end. Likewise, the confrontational beholding prompted by Honthorst's paintings is implicit in their subjects of the tortured Christ on display demands its viewers "behold the man." W.J.T. Mitchell has discussed this type of sustained beholding as a stilled and arrested mode of viewership that combines intrigue and repulsion. Mitchell argues that representations of active process of violence, and the Passion of Christ in particular, prompt such beholding. In his discussion, he described beholding as distinct from the phenomenon of viewing modern horror movies:

> "The paradigmatic beholder, however, is not especially fixated on the active process of violence, the flashy spectacle of explosions and the predictable triangle of the

> perpetrator, the weapon and the victim. Beholding has more to do with the moment of stillness…In Caravaggio, it takes the form of arrested violence, the murderous hand of Abraham held back from cutting Isaac's throat. In Christian iconography, it takes the double form of the tortured human body as a figure of sovereignty – the whole semaphoric language of the symmetrical spread-eagled body."[76]

Honthorst's three paintings compel their viewers to behold the tormented body of Christ, and prompt viewers to meditate on their personal complicity in and profound empathy for his suffering. For the Dutch Catholic, this act of beholding would be located in the space of the clandestine church, anchored by the image of the altarpiece, and colored by the conditions of their secret worship as a persecuted group. As Mitchell articulates, this mode of beholding can take the form of the sustained meditation of "arrested violence," which in the case of beholding the violence of the Passion in Honthorst's paintings would also be facilitated by the meditational practices of the Mass.

In their presentation of Christ's bloody tears and wounds to the viewer, Honthorst's three altarpieces manifest the mystical appearance of Christ in an intimately devotional manner. Unlike traditional representations of the Ecce Homo discussed earlier in this chapter, Honthorst's figures of Christ stand in the material reality of their anguish, stripped of allegorical trappings and angels. For the Dutch Catholic viewer, the representation of his prolonged and stilled state of persecution would parallel their own circumstances of persecution. Honthorst's three altarpieces therefore not only carry with them the Tridentine emphasis on Eucharistic mysticism, but in their immediate and devotional treatment of the suffering Christ, address the newly mystical, interiorized and meditative nature of Dutch

Catholic sacrality in the sparse intimacy of the early clandestine churches in which they would have acted as the central focus.

The Utrecht artistic community to which Honthorst belonged held particularly strong connections to local Jesuits, as both Bloemaert and Honthorst's homes acted as a refuge for them and they granted him numerous commissions for devotional prints and paintings.[77] Honthorst's sensorial treatment of the suffering Christ, prompting the viewer's sustained beholding, evokes the influence of late medieval Netherlandish practice on Jesuit devotion. As I have further discussed in the preceding chapters, the Jesuit order's program of Counter-Reformation devotional strategies adapted late medieval Netherlandish affective piety as manifested in the Devotio Moderna (or Brothers of the Common Life). Since the late Middle ages, lay people in the Low Countries took a more active role in religious life, cultivating a devotional culture focusing on meditations on the suffering Christ.[78] This tradition of dynamic engagement with one's personal piety fostered by lay individuals led to the rise of lay devotional movements like the beguines, and later klopjes. Following the practices put forward by the Devotio Moderna, the widely read contemporary Jesuit devotional texts by Franciscus Coster (1532-1619) and Hieronymus Natalis (active late sixteenth century), conflated the desire to view a holy figure with the desire for the total sensory comprehension of their body. For instance, in his *De vitae et laudibus Deiparae Mariae Virginis* (Antwerp, 1588), Coster likens the wish to view the Virgin to the worshipper's need to reach out and "touch her breasts that suckled Christ."[79] In Coster's *Meditations on the Whole Historie of the Passion of the Christ* (Antwerp: Christoph Plantin, 1587) he recommends that the reader meditate on Christ's suffering during his mocking. In his meditations on the Passion, Coster recommends that the reader pray as follows:

> "Behold his tender body, wounded in every part, and rubbed with their cruel hands. Thou canst not endure to be touched upon any light hurt: what pain then doest thou think our Lord endured by rude and barbarous pulling of the soldiers? First, when by his whipping he was to shed his bloud for thee over his whole body. Secondly, when he was to receive a crowne of thorns upon his head, to prepare an assured Kingdome for thee in Heaven."[80]

The stilled passivity of Christ also has its origins in devotional texts such as the 1374 *Vita Christi* of Ludoph of Saxony, who specifies that during his mocking, Christ's "resignation characterizes him as the likeness of a servant, his silence as the likeness of a mute."[81] In the *Grote evangelische peerle*, (Antwerp, 1568) the worshipper is advised to imitate Christ in all manners, including his "movement and stillness."[82] Participant in the Jesuit devotional tradition prominent in his Catholic community in Utrecht, Honthorst represents Christ with such illusory presence to inspire meditation on his suffering in a distinctly Jesuit fashion.

In the Delft and Utrecht paintings, Honthorst engages with this sensorial mode of devotion by rendering a mixture of blood and tears welling up in and falling from the expressively sorrowful eyes of Christ. The multivalent meanings of Christ's blood and tears possesses a long history in devotional literature in which they are often an imperative part of the author and reader's bodily identification with Christ's suffering in the Passion. In the popular late medieval 1438 date *Book of Margery Kempe*, for instance, her tears stirred by meditation on the Crucifixion act as an essential part of her bodily conversion to suffering, that serves a salvific function and validate the authenticity of her mystical experience. The nature of Kempe's intensely sensorial piety sought to "record immediately the meaning of crucifixion in the body of the worshipper," just as Honthorst, in keeping with this mystical and visionary tradition, pictorially registers the suffering Christ in the mind of the viewer.[83]

Honthorst's careful description of Christ's wounds, blood, and tears, parallels that found in the Jesuit devotional texts of Amsterdam Jesuit Andreas van der Kruyssen and Franciscus Coster. Andreas van der Kruyssen's (d. 1663) *Misse: Haer korte uytlegginge* is a missal (or Mass book), a type of popular devotional text that outlines devotions to be performed at each step of the Mass. Missals became increasingly popular in the seventeenth century, as in the period Catholics increasingly understood Mass attendance as an important devotional practice unto itself.[84] In light of its legal prohibition, attending the Mass was even more valued as a meditative experience for Dutch Catholics. In Kruyssen's *Misse*, the devotional texts are accompanied by engravings in which the priest performing an action in the Mass is paired with a scene from the Passion directly above, separated by a border of cloud as if it to suggest the latter's miraculous appearance. Such highly influential Dutch Catholic prayer books by priests such as van der Kruyssen foregrounded Christ's suffering in the Passion, with each articulating Amalarius van Metz's ninth-century connection between each element of the Passion and the ritual of Mass. In one pairing, van der Kruyssen presents a passage of *Aenmerckinge* (Commentary) and *'t Gebedt* (Prayer) for each action of the priest in the Mass, correspondent to a specific moment in the Passion. While van der Kruyssen is following a

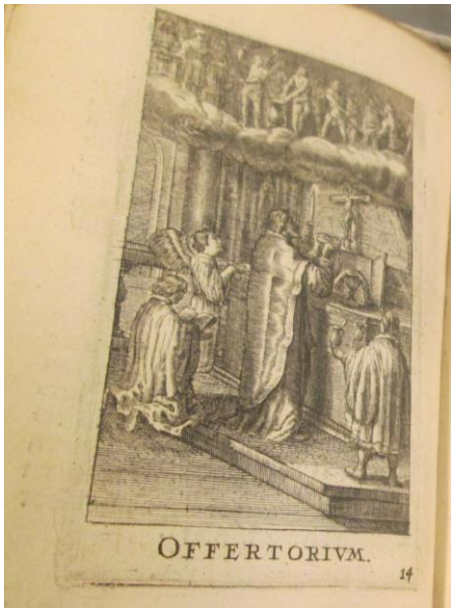


Figure 4-25. *Christ is Flagellated and The Priest offers the Bread and the Wine*, engraving in Andreas van der Kruyssen, *Misse: Haer korte uytlegginge, en godvruchtige oeffeninge onder de zelve* (Amsterdam, 1651).

longstanding tradition of describing the equivalencies between the Passion narrative and the Mass, the engravings's visual emphasis on Christ appearing above the altar, alongside the text's urgent command to meditate on his corporeal suffering, speaks to the function of altarpieces for Dutch Catholics. In plate fourteen (Fig. 4-25), van der Kruyssen juxtaposes "Christ is flagellated" with "The Priest offers the Bread and the Wine." The vision above shows Christ bleeding as he is flagellated, in compositional juxtaposition with the priest below, who lifts up the bread to transform Christ's flesh. In the commentary to the image, van der Kruyssen commands the reader to meditate on the flagellation as follows:

> "Consider the inhuman cruelty with which the blows fell on the body of your Savior; until the holy Body is so full of wounds that the veins split so much of his Godly blood onto the earth that there was not a place for one more wound to open."[85]

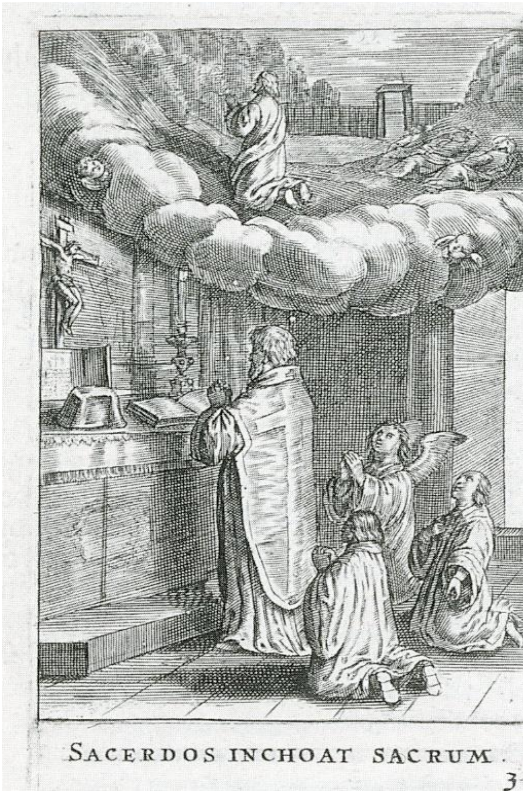


Figure 4-26. *Priester voor het altaar met daarboven een afbeelding van Christus in de Hof van Olijven*, engraving in Andreas van der Kruyssen's *Misse: Haer korte uytlegginge, en godvruchtige oeffeninge onder de zelve* (Amsterdam, 1651).

Much like de Grebber's *Ecce Homo* which I discuss in Chapter Three, Honthorst's representations of the suffering Christ visually articulate this kind of devotional rhetoric, in which the viewer is instructed to imagine his blood and wounds in vivid, graphic detail. In van der Kruyssen's text, he is careful to elaborate on the excessive, "inhuman" cruelty of Christ's torture that goes beyond the flagellation to include the splitting of veins and proliferation of wounds entirely covering his body. In van der Kruyssen's text, an engraving titled *Priester voor het altaar met daarboven een afbeelding van Christus in de Hof van Olijven* (Fig. 4-26), represents a priest ranked by angels and praying at the altar, with his figure mirrored by that of the praying Christ directly above him.[86] Their parallel is not only illustrative of the correspondent text, but especially represents Christ's bodily manifestation at the altar. When viewing Honthorst's *Ecce Homo* in Maria Minor, the evidence of physical violence on Christ's body would remind worshippers to meditate on his suffering in the Mass, recalling the Catholic tradition as a restaging of the Passion at the altar. Viewers more well studied in devotional literature would take this further to assign the stages of the Mass to those of the Passion, for instance thinking of the Flagellation when the priest offers the wine.

E. Conclusion

In the aforementioned frontispiece engraving to van den Vondel's 1645 *Mysteries of the Altar*, captioned *The worship of the Holy Sacrament before the five senses personified by women*, the allegorical figure of Faith, is guided by the personification of *Gevoelen*, or touch, as she reaches for the altar (Fig. 4-1). Smell, Taste, Sight, and Hearing, meanwhile, rhetorically perform their allegorical identities. The altar's relief sculpture represents a group of three angels, one of whom crushes grapes into the chalice held by another, alluding to the wine that transforms into Christ's blood. In the poem accompanying the title page's engraving, van den Vondel elaborates on its complicated iconography and communicates the overarching message of the allegorical invention: Faith, aided by the five senses, reaches out to sensorially comprehend the mystery of the altar. The final line of the poem, italicized in the text, reads: "Faith alone achieves what your mind is missing."[87] Ultimately, Honthorst's altarpieces would reinforce Christ's bodily, mystical presence at the altar in the Mass, at the moment of transubstantiation. Van den Vondel's allegorical illustration, like those of van der Kruyssen in his *Misse*, visualize Christ's appearance above the altar and the viewer's sensory, imaginative engagement with the Mass as parallel to the Passion. In his three altarpieces, Honthorst restages the miraculous presence of Christ at the altar in transubstantiation, as the comprehension of which is allegorized in van den Vondel's title page. Moreover, the frontispiece demonstrates that Honthorst and the parishioners viewing his altarpiece would have similarly understood that through their faith and senses together they could hope to grasp the mystery of transubstantiation. Honthorst, in his representation of the suffering Christ acting as the focus of their altarpiece, hoped to similarly cast the altar below as a mystifying force that triggered the bewilderment of its viewers.

In their function as altarpieces representing the suffering Christ, each of Honthorst's three paintings would have been understood by their viewers as an essential to their community's return to the Eucharistic centrality of the altar and the performance of the rite in the clandestine church. In his three commissions for altarpieces, Honthorst's foremost pictorial interest was therefore the nature of the altar itself, at once signifying the site of Christ's sacrifice, burial, and his miraculous return in the Eucharist, essential in the architecturally intimate space of the schuilkerk. Images of the suffering Christ, for a Dutch Catholic viewership, would have an interest not only for their investment in Tridentine sacrality they shared with their counterparts across post-Reformation Europe, but also profoundly resonated with them as a community who defined themselves as a persecuted minority, silently enduring unfair conditions. In Christ's life-size bodily manifestation at the altar performed by Honthorst's *Ecce Homo*, Dutch Catholics would have taken solace in the forbidden sacrament of Communion. Meeting the gaze of Christ's blood and tear filled eyes, Dutch Catholics would have felt a sense of kinship for their perceived suffering and legal compulsion to conceal the sacrament. In their staging of Christ's bodily presence in transubstantiation, Honthorst's altarpieces would have inspired meditation on the miraculous and mystical aspects that define the Catholic faith widely promoted in contemporary devotional texts and prints. In the Dutch Catholic Reformation more broadly, the production and installation of such large-scale paintings in early clandestine churches marked and directed the sacred function of these new spaces, while Honthorst's treatment of their Eucharistic subject matter definitively asserts the mystical authority of the Catholic faith.

V. Conclusion: The Afterlife of Toleration and Interfaith Interaction in the Dutch Republic

Anti-Catholic sentiment continued long after the end of the Eighty Years War, flaring up in several waves of fervor. In 1672 and 1747, panics broke out over potential Catholic plots to overtake the Reformed government. These disturbances did not originate in the Dutch Catholic community, however, but came about as a response to the threat of French invasions. The function of the Catholic enemy as an other increasingly served to support the growing wave of Dutch nationalism in the late eighteenth century. In 1796, Batavian revolutionaries officially separated church and state in their new republic, hypothetically granting those of all faiths equal status in the eyes of the law. Their separation of church and state, however, functioned largely as a strategy to avoid a much-feared Catholic overthrow of the government, and the legal restrictions against Dutch Catholics remained largely in place. In the Batavian period, Catholicism "became more and more stigmatized as foreign, outwardly pious, superstitious, intolerant and morally inferior, and therefore was not suitable for the required religious and moral education of the citizens."[1]

Dutch Catholics would not accomplish the reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church to which they had aspired to since the Alteration until 1853. In the meantime, Dutch Catholicism had split in the 1723 Schism of Utrecht: Those favoring Jansenism broke away from Rome into what would eventually become the "Old Catholic Church," which continues to operate separately to this day. The Pope excommunicated the "Old Dutch Clergy" and lay Catholics who chose to stay with the Old Catholic Church, leaving Rome. Dutch Catholics id not found the Old Catholic Church until 1889, however, when the Rome declared the dogma

of the pope's infallibility.[2] Although most chose to remain with the Catholic Church, the Jansenist rupture with Rome, in many ways, was the result of the Dutch Reformation's concerted effort to define a localized spiritual identity. Since the earliest re-formation of Dutch Catholic ecclesiastical structure led by lay Catholics under the leadership of the Holland Mission, the movement took on a distinctly nationalist tone, asserting that theirs was the true church of the Netherlands. Foreign missionaries also widely promoted the Jansenist goal of official reintegration with the Roman Catholic Church, seen by the vicar apostolic as unwelcome invaders. Moreover, they objected to the establishment of a new archdiocese, which would break the continuous line of apostolic succession through the Holland Mission. As I argue in this text, Dutch Catholics used visual culture to argue for the cause of their restoration to the place of official church, emphasizing the continuity of their faith's unbroken tradition. Through references to the late medieval Netherlandish past and the representation of national saints, the Holland Mission visualized a church that was distinctly Dutch in character. This nationalist Catholic legacy continued through the 1723 split and beyond; today, the Old Catholic Church describes itself as:

> "A church with its own history dating back to the arrival of Christianity in our land in the time of Willibrord. And a church that stands up for the ideal that 'the local church has its own rights' from their conscience. That was also the reason why in the early 18th century she broke away from the larger whole, which has increasingly become the current centralist Roman Catholic Church, and as a Catholic tradition has gone its own independent way."[3]

Starting in the 1960s, Dutch Catholics belonging to the official Roman Catholic Church have become intensely critical of papal authority, especially around issues of child sex abuse and their stance opposing homosexuality. The Vatican received widespread protest in the Netherlands for banning several Dutch language songs and homosexuals taking Holy Communion.[4] Today's Dutch Catholics continue a tradition of unabashed dissent from Rome and independent agency to enact their own reforms. As their public rhetoric around their foundation indicates, those belonging to the Old Catholic Church see their organization as an heir to the distinctly Dutch church born of the seventeenth century's Reformation.

Catholicism is currently the largest religious population in the Netherlands, at about twenty-five percent, while only seven percent of this group regularly attend Mass. The Netherlands is currently experiencing rapid secularization, in which Catholicism and all other Christian denominations are steadily declining in membership, properties, and participation. In 2015, the Archbishop of Utrecht declared the imminent closure of around two-thirds of Dutch parishes, citing "radical individualism" in which "the individual sees it as his duty to invent himself, his own religion, his own worldview."[5] The notion of Dutch tolerance thereby lives on not in interconfessional interactions between Christian groups, but in a constructed image of the nation as founded in social liberalism. This official narrative is at odds, however, with the growing spread of intolerance in the Netherlands via the increasingly prominent Dutch Party of Freedom (PVV), led by Geert Wilders. Following the events of September 11, 2001 and the inflammatory political murder of Theo van Gogh by Dutch-Moroccan Muslim Mohammed Bouyeri, anti-Islamic sentiment dramatically rose in the Netherlands. Many have argued that those championing the positions of the Party of Freedom and its Islamophobia have co-opted the assumption of Dutch tolerance to their ends. While

characterizing Dutchness as innately tolerant, the PVV and its supporters have also racially defined the national character in opposition to those they would demonize as intolerant and dangerous. As discussed earlier in this chapter, during the Eighty Years War the Orangist government characterized the Spanish Catholic enemy in propaganda and visual culture as fundamentally opposed to the Dutch in their intolerance.

In recent years, the increasing racial discrimination in the Netherlands has been the subject of critical analysis from its scholars and historians. In her *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Duke University Press, 2016), Gloria Wekker put forward the uncomfortable notion that the Dutch "self-image of a tolerant, hospitable, color-blind nation turned out to be wrong."[6] Among other examples, Wekker dealt with the controversial yet beloved figure of Zwarte Piet, a purportedly "Moorish" attendant to Saint Nicholas in Dutch Christmas festivities. Criticisms to the visibly racist caricature of Zwarte Piet faced with tremendous backlash because, as Wekker argues, this runs counter to the national self-image of the Dutch as "deeply tolerant, ethically elevated and justified, color-blind, and antiracist."[7] Wekker's analysis builds on Philomena Essed's seminal volume *Everyday Racism* (Feminist Publisher Sara, 1984), in which she drew from her own experiences of racism to narrate the pervasive prejudice in the modern Netherlands. In this and numerous subsequent publications, Essed deployed race relations theory to destabilize the idea of Dutch tolerance. In Essed's terms, the idea of tolerance in the Netherlands is tantamount only to "tolerance for," which is very different from "having respect for" cultural and religious differences. This attitude structures the experience of the other around the illusion of cultural pluralism, predicating acceptance on some degree of assimilation to the dominant Dutch culture. As Essed remarks, the Dutch often discuss noting one's racial or

cultural difference as intolerant and discriminatory. White Dutch people tend to be more intolerant against visible signs of ethnicity in daily life, as Essed says, for "repressive tolerance delegitimizes the very idea of resistance."[8]

There are broader implications at stake when discussing the historical dimension of Dutch toleration and the power dynamics contained therein. As in the present, in the seventeenth century faiths the Reformed Church only tolerated faiths forced into legal suppression when they kept their dissenting identity publicly invisible. While seventeenth-century Catholics do not share the same racial or socio-economic conditions that face people of color in the Netherlands today, both have endured cultural suppression in service of Dutch nationalist homogeneity. Understanding the nature of the inter-religious strife of the seventeenth-century Netherlands problematizes the assumption of Dutch tolerance that persists today. As contemporary racial theorists have argued, the degree of tolerance that fueled the formation of the Dutch Republic is a matter of scholarly disagreement that carries ramifications for the present treatment of the perceived non-Dutch. As Essed articulated, "repressive tolerance" entails an enforced ideological equality, thereby invalidating the idea that suppressed groups would need to resist the dominant order. This phenomenon originated in propagandistic text and image promoted in the Eighty Years War, in which the government configured the Netherlands as the antithesis of their intolerant, tyrannical and Catholic Spanish enemy. As discussed throughout this volume, Protestants thereafter saw Dutch Catholics as foreign interlopers that potentially posed the threat of new foreign invasions. The Old Catholic Church, as the heir to the Reformation, came to define themselves around their distinctly Dutch identity in comparison to Catholics allied with Rome.

Although interconfessional difference among Christians is no longer a prevalent issue in the Netherlands and all denominations are now in decline, the national assumption of widespread tolerance continues to dismiss and homogenize cultural difference. This project looks at the dynamics of a subordinated community in the seventeenth century not only in order to problematize this idea of tolerance, but primarily to consider the rich visual culture of resistance that sustained the Reformation. For Dutch Catholics, not unlike other groups who continue to be repressed in the maintenance of a national self-image, fostering a private (to use Scott's term, "offstage") world was equivalent to exercising their due rights despite the dominant forces they face.[9]

In the Dutch Catholic Reformation, clergy and laity used paintings, prints, and miraculous images, among other media to assert the primacy of their suppressed faith. Visual culture, which had helped shape their identity as a demonized minority since the earliest years of the Revolt, held the power to visualize Dutch Catholic supremacy and allowed them to continue their image-centered devotional practice. The revival of late medieval Netherlandish meditative culture characterized the faith's Reformation, translated and adapted through Jesuit spirituality in the Catholic Reformation. Like so many resistance movements organized by groups suppressed by a dominant culture, art empowered and emboldered their cause by foregrounding their authenticity in terms of national heritage.

This project opens up possibilities for future research into the Dutch Catholic Reformation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, after the end of the Eighty Years War and relative increase of tolerance across the Northern Netherlands. Especially in the second half of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century, Dutch Catholics continually built and expanded clandestine churches, which facilitated increased commissions of Catholic

painting and sculpture. While this study focuses on Dutch Catholic visual culture from the years of the Eighty Years War, our understanding of this movement would be enriched by an in-depth art historical examination of this material in the century that follows. The effects of the 1723 Jansenist schism and the foundation of the "Old Catholic Church" on the tone of visual culture in both groups should be further explored, as well as the experience of Catholics during the period of the Batavian Republic.

Additional work is also necessary in the area of Dutch Catholic portraiture, which served as a distinct way of proclaiming and celebrating spiritual identity. Most major painters of Catholic images, especially Haarlem's Pieter de Grebber, produced portraits of the Holland Mission's priests, klopjes, and prominent members in great numbers throughout the early years of the Reformation. Through his portraits of Haarlem Catholics and klopjes, de Grebber cast members of his community as isolated, saintly figures, often represented while in devotion. Portaits of klopjes shown in prayer before a crucifix and bible heroize their commitment to private devotion and create an ideal of pious Catholic womanhood (see, for instance, the anonymous *Portrait of Josina van Adrichem*[10], de Grebber's *Portrait of the beguine Isabella van Hoey*,[11] and Leendert van der Cooghen's Portrait of *Barbara van Juckema*).[12] Further research could investigate the relationship between Catholic portraits and other portraits that include allusions to their sitter's faith from the period, and discuss them in the broader context of portraiture in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.

The Dutch Catholic Reformation fostered a clandestine world (or in Scott's terms, a hidden transcript) of devotional practice and visual culture out of sight of Reformed authorities. While this project expands upon prior surveys of seventeenth-century Dutch

Catholic art, it also raises questions about the deployment of this visual culture in the face of official suppression through the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although this study has foregrounded the mediums of painting and print, the rich visual culture of the Dutch Catholic Reformation also comprised ecclesiastical garments, liturgical metalwork, and other decorative arts that have received minimal attention in an art historical context. The diverse media that constituted the Dutch Catholic Reformation's visual culture worked together to foster a distinct sense of localized spiritual identity, while restoring those materials that had been taken from them in the Alteration years prior. Like many cultures suppressed in the wake of social, cultural, and religious upheaval, Dutch Catholics strategically imaged themselves as idealized, heroic, and ultimately victorious in their pursuit of their restoration as the true church. The ever-changing nature of interconfessional tolerance in the seventeenth-century Netherlands continued to condition the expression of spiritual identity in the suppressed Catholic community. From the earliest waves of Catholic prints from Antwerp that circulated in the Northern Netherlands to the earliest paintings of newly built clandestine churches, and Catholic portraits, the community's visual culture developed and transformed with the spiritual climate of the region.

VI. Bibliography

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Chapter One

[1] Luke 18:1-8 NIV.

[2] "Dalmatic," The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, last modified, accessed October 3, 2018, https://collections.lacma.org/node/242448; "Dalmatic with the Sudarium," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, last modified, accessed October 3, 2018, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/227764?searchField=All&sortBy=relevance&where=Netherlands&ft=dalmatic&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1.

[3] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 103.

[4] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 20.

[5] Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2010), 22-23, 45.

[6] The provinces included in the Oath of Abjuration are Brabant, Guelders, Flanders, Holland, Zeeland, Frisia, Mechelen, and Utrecht. Although officially included in the declaration, portions of Brabant and Flanders would be overtaken by Spanish forces at various times throughout the Eighty Years War. R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 86-87.

[7] Willem Frijhoff, "Was the Dutch Republic a Calvinist Community? The State, the Confessions, and Culture in the Early Modern Netherlands," in *The Republican Alternative: The Netherlands and Switzerland Compared*, eds. André Holenstein, Thomas Maissen and Maarten Prak (Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 99-100.

[8] Christine Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics during Holland's Golden Age: Heretics and Idolaters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 71-75.

[9] According to James Tanis and Daniel R. Horst, the vast quantity of images of the Throne of the Duke of Alba testify to its enormous popularity. The theme of the Throne or the Tyranny of the Duke of Alba was reproduced in numerous prints including (among many examples): Museum Catharijneconvent, c. 1570, ABM g209; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1569, RP-P-OB-79.007; 1622, NG-1972-18; and later in the early seventeenth century, pared-down paintings referencing the print motif: Dirck van Delen, c. 1630, Museum Catharijneconvent, RMCC s91; c.1622-1630, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-C-1551; For extensive discussion of this motif in James Tanis and Daniel R. Horst, *Images of Discord: A Graphic Interpretation of the Opening Decades of the Eighty Years' War* (Bryn Mawr: Bryn Mawr College Library, 1993), 51, 53, 63.

[10] Andrew Sawyer, "The Tyranny of Alva: The Creation and Development of a Dutch Patriotic Image," *De zeventiende eeuw* 19 (2003): 189. For other collections of propaganda prints from the era of the Revolt, see Tanis and Horst, *Images of Discord.*

[11] Sawyer, "The Tyranny of Alva," 206-207.

[12] Joke Spaans, *Der Levens der Maechdens: het verhaal van een religieuze vrouwengemeenschap in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), 26.

[13] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 21.

[14] For a thorough review of the historiography of the Catholic Reformation, see: R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1-9.Charles Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010) and *Calvinists and Libertines: Confession and Community in Utrecht 1578-1520* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Christine Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics during Holland's Golden Age: Heretics and Idolaters* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Europe, 1592-1648: Centre and Peripheries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 60-74.

[15] R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1-9; Michael Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation* (New York: Routledge, 2002), x.

[16] Xander van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor: Paintings for the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 17; Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief*, 11; Pieter J.J. van Thiel, "Catholic Elements in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting, Apropos of a Children's Portrait by Thomas de Keyser," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 20, no. 1 (1990-1991): 50; *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, eds. R Po-Chia Hsia and Henk van Nierop (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 91.

[17] Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief*, 23; *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age*, eds. Joaneath Spicer and Lynn Federle Orr (Baltimore: Walters Art Gallery, 1998), 19.

[18] R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal*, 88-89.

[19] Soo Yeon Park, "Use of Devotional Images in the Seventeenth-century Northern Netherlands: A Case Study of Prints by Abraham Bloemaert" (PhD diss., the University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2009), 52.

[20] Parker, *Faith on the Margins*, 17-18.

[21] Xander van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction: Clandestine Catholic Churches as Patrons of Dutch Caravaggesque Painting" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 4 (1993-1994): 219.

[22] Today, around 5,000 walkers participate annually, and five points are marked along the route for those processing in the stille omgang as "locaties gebedsintenties," points at which they can reset the intentions of their prayer. Gezelschap van de Stille Omgang, "De route van de Stille Omgang," accessed September 28, 2018, https://www.stille-omgang.nl/de-route-van-de-stille-omgang/.

[23] Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief*, 17-38.

[24] Van Thiel, "Catholic Elements," 53.

[25] Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor*, 119.

[26] Van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction," 221-223.

[27] Christine Kooi, "Paying Off the Sheriff: Strategies of Catholic Toleration in Golden Age Holland," in *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, eds. R. Po-Chia Hsia and Henk van Nierop (New York: Cambridge University Press), 87-89.

[28] Koenrad Jonckheere, *Art After Iconoclasm: Painting in the Netherlands Between 1566 and 1585* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 51.

[29] Van Thiel, "Catholic Elements," 50.

[30] Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Europe*, 64-67.

[31] Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics*, 87-88.

[32] Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief*, 170; *Masters of Light*, 19.

[33] Parker, *Faith on the Margins*, 2-3.

[34] Henry Kamen, *The Duke of Alba* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 170-171.

[35] John Lothrop Motley, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, vol. 3 (J. Chapman, 1856), 167.

[36] Benjamin J. Kaplan, "Fictions of Privacy: House Chapels and the Spatial Accommodation of Religious Dissent in Early Modern Europe," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 4 (October 2002): 1042-1048.

[37] *Traits of Tolerance: Religious Tolerance in the Golden Age*, eds. Xander van Eck and Ruud Priem (Zwolle: Wbooks, 2013), 7-15.

[38] Parker, *Faith on the Margins*, 52.

[39] Ibid., 48-58; Kooi, "Paying Off the Sheriff," 88-89.

[40] *Traits of Tolerance*, 12-13

[41] Xander van Eck, "The Artist's Religion: Paintings Commissioned for Clandestine Catholic Churches in the Northern Netherlands, 1600-1800" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 27, no. 1/2 (1999): 85-93.

[42] Van Thiel, "Catholic Elements," 39-62.

[43] Jonckheere, *Art After Iconoclasm*, 19.

[44] Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics*, 188-189; Volker Manuth, "Denomination and Iconography: The Choice of Subject Matter in the Biblical Painting of the Rembrandt Circle" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 4 (1993-1994): 235-252.

[45] Spaans, *Levens*, 51.

[46] *Traits of Tolerance*, 40-50.

[47] Van Thiel, "Catholic Elements," 61-62.

[48] Parker, *Faith*, 1.

[49] Sherrin Marshall, "Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish Women in the Early Modern Netherlands," in *Women in Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe: Public and Private Worlds*, ed. Sherrin Marshall (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), 128-129.

[50] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 123.

[51] Ibid., 140-150.

[52] *Van Bolswert naar Antwerpen: Gouden Eeuwgravures naar Bloemaert, Rubens en Van Dyck*, eds. Tjebbe de Jong and Anique C de Kruijf (Bolsward: Titus Brandsma Museum, 2013), 115.

[53] Els Stronks, *Negotiating Differences: Word, Image and Religion in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 30-31; Paul G. Hoftijzer, "The Dutch Republic, Centre of the European Book Trade in the 17th Century," in *European History Online* (Mainz: 2015).

[54] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 183.

[55] John van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: The Devotio Moderna and the*

World of the Later Middle Ages (Philadephia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008, 1-11; Jan van Herwaarden, *Between Saint James and Erasmus: Studies in Late-Medieval Religious Life: Devotions and Pilgrimages in the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 5; Stronks, *Negotiating Differences.*

[56] Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief*, 131.

[57] While an object can be created by an artist explicitly with this kind of devotional function in mind, the concept of "devotional" used in this study is primaril y a designation of function, not a descriptive or formal term that classifies art as "devotional" or not. Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); John R. Decker, *The Technology of Salvation and the Art of Geertgen tot Sint Jans* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

[58] *Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Reindert Falkenburg, Walter S. Melion and Todd M. Richardson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 2.

[59] Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 48.

[60] Stronks, *Negotiating Differences,* 20.

[61] Gauvin A. Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1565-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 7, 138-139.

[62] Rüdiger Klessmann, ed., *Hendrick ter Brugghen und die Nachfolger Caravaggios in Holland* (Braunschweig: Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum), 1988.

[63] Marcia B. Hall, *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art: Titian, Tintoretto, Barocci, El Greco and Caravaggio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 7-10; Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Age of Art,* 7th ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

[64] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance,* 111.

[65] Parker, *Faith on the Margins*, 50.

[66] Natasha Seaman, "Materiality and the Presence of the Past in Hendrick ter Brugghen's 'Crucifixion," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 74, H. 4 (2011): 489-516.

[67] Van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction"; *Clandestine Splendor*.

[68] Seaman, "Materiality and the Presence of the Past," 489-500.

[69] Van Eck hypothesized that although the painting could have been painted for the home of a

member of the Brotherhood of Trinity, dedicated to Willibrord and Boniface, an early schuilkerk
is more likely. The altarpiece, destroyed in a fire in 1943, was discovered in 1930 in a church in Huissen. Van Eck, "Dreaming of an Eternally Catholic Utrecht during Protestant Rule: Jan van Bijlert's 'Holy Trinity with Sts. Willibrord and Boniface," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 30, no. 1/2 (2003): 19-21.

[70] Van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction," 217-234.

Chapter Two

[1] While Bloemaert and Bolswert's printed volume can be found in numerous collections, the images cited and illustrated here are those I consulted in the Museum Plantin-Moretus Prentenkabinet, PK.OP.00077-129.

[2] George Yule, "Luther and the Ascetic Life," in *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition*, ed. W. J. Sheils, (Ecclesiastical History Society, 1985), 229-231.

[3] Soo Yeon Park, "Use of Devotional Images in the Seventeenth-Century Northern Netherlands: A Case Study of Prints by Abraham Bloemaert (1566-1651)" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2009), 63-67.

[4] In 1640, both Wachtelaar and Rovenius were charged with "running an illegal organization" and were banished as punishment. In 1654, the authorities also had the church entrances sealed off, and the extant clandestine church was constructed from a medieval house bought in 1683 on the Mariaplaats. Xander van Eck, "Dreaming of an Eternally Catholic Utrecht during Protestant Rule: Jan van Bijlert's 'Holy Trinity with Sts. Willibrord and Boniface" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 30, no. 1/2 (2003), 22, 30.

[5] Xander van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction: Clandestine Catholic Churches as Patrons of Dutch Caravaggesque Painting," *Simiolus* 22, no. 4 (1993-1994), 226.

[6] "Relatio visitationis missionis S.J. in Hollandia a Pe Gulielmo Bauters," ed. A. van Lommel, AAU 6 (1879), 242, cited in Christine Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics During Holland's Golden Age: Heretics and Idolaters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 57.

[7] Filippo Baldinucci, *Notizie dei Professori del Disegno*, ed. F. Ranelli (1728; Florence, 1846), 623-26.

[8] Jennifer Hardin, "Introduction," in *Abraham Bloemaert (1566-1651) and his Time* (St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts, 2001), 13-14.

[9] *Van Bolswert naar Antwerpen: Gouden Eeuwgravures naar Bloemaert, Rubens en Van Dyck*, eds. Tjebbe de Jong and Anique C. de Kruijf (Bolsward: Titus Brandsma Museum, 2013), 115.

[10] Marten Jan Bok, "Artists at Work: Their Lives and Livelihood," in *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht During the Golden Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 95.

[11] Werner Thomas, "The Treaty of London, the Twelve Years Truce and Religious Toleration in Spain and the Netherlands (1598-1621)," in *The Twelve Years Truce (1609) Peace, Truce, War and Law in the Low Countries at the Turn of the 17th Century*, ed. Randall Lesaffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 296-297.

[12] Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 64.

[13] *Vitae patrum: De vita et verbis seniorum libri X. historiam eremiticam complectentes: auctoribus suis et nitori pristino restituti, ac notationibus illustrati, operâ et studio Heriberti Ros-Weydi* (Antwerp: Ex officina Plantiniana apud viduam et filios lo, 1615); 2nd ed. 1628.

[14] The illustration is located in "Januaris," from "Het leven van de H.Weduwe Marcella, P. Heribertus Rosweydus and P. Petrus Ribadineira, *Generale Legende der Heylighen met het Leven Iesu Christi ende Marie vergadert wt de Schrifture Oude Vaders ende Registers der H. Kercke* (Hieronymus Verdussen: T' Antwerpen, 1649; In 1615 Rosweydus published ten volumes of the *Vitae Patrum*, or desert saints, with Balthazar Moret of Antwerp.

[15] The subject of desert saints was popular with Bloemaert, who in 1611 had executed another series of six prints entitled *Penitent Sinners*, which included Peter, Paul, Zachaeus, King Saul, and unusually, Judas.

[16] Although there are small discrepancies between the different translations and editions, hereafter I will discuss the images in relation only to van Gorcum's text, as this would have been the most read by the Dutch Catholic community.

[17] Feike Dietz, "Under the Cover of Augustine: Augustinian Spirituality and Catholic Emblems in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic," in *Augustine Beyond the Book: Intermediality, Transmediality and Reception*, eds. Karla Pollman and Meredith J. Gill (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 171.

[18] Trijn Jans Oly listed Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* as one of the key texts read by the Haarlem klopje community. Spaans, *De levens*, 133. On the use of the *Imitation of Christ* by Dutch Catholics see also: Th. Clemens, "Een verkennend onderzoek naar de waardering voor de Imitatio Christi in de Nederlanden tussen 1600 en 1800, in het bijzonder onder katholieken," in *De doorwerking van de Moderne Devotie. Windesheim 1387-1987*, ed. P. Bange (Hilversum: Verloren, 1988), 217-231.

[19] One of the first illustrated Catholic devotional texts that circulated in the Northern Netherlands, Herman Hugo, *Pia Desideria* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1628), was published by Paets under the name of the Antwerp publisher. Feike Dietz posits that a long and
unexplained pause in Paets's publishing career after this text until 1644 indicates that the Augustine meditative text was not met with a positive reception from authorities. Dietz, "Under the Cover," 194. After publishing the 1644 edition of *'t Bosch*, the Paets house re-used its figures
in other devotional texts. In the title page to the Paets-published *Bibels Tresoor*, assembled in-house from assorted biblical quotes, devotional texts and images, van Sichem repurposes the angel from the original *Sacra Eremus Ascetarum* text to display its titular cartouche.

[20] Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 288.

[21] *Van Bolswert*, 124.

[22] Van Eck, "Dreaming of an Eternally Catholic Utrecht," 19-33.

[23] Joke Spaans, *De levens de maechden: het verhaal van een religieuze vrouwengemeenschap in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), 101.

[24] Spaans, *De levens*, 133.

[25] Ibid., 26-28.

[26] Ibid., 99.

[27] Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 66-67.

[28] The inter-confessional nature of Dutch society did often affect the choice of biblical subjects that patrons preferred, and art was discussed in the period as identifiably Catholic or Calvinist. Koenraad Jonckheere, *Antwerp Art After Iconoclasm: Experiments in Decorum, 1566-1585* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 19; Volker Manuth, "Denomination and Iconography: The Choice of Subject Matter in the Biblical Painting of the Rembrandt Circle," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 4 (1993-1994), 238. The nature of the Dutch religious climate, however, also ensured that artists of all faiths worked for diverse patrons for many reasons, including economic necessity. Pieter J. J. van Thiel, "Catholic Elements in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting, Apropos of a Children's Portrait by Thomas de Keyser," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 20, no. 1 (1990-1991), 60.

[29] In her text, Hall revises Hans Belting's thesis from *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image Before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), in which he contends that devotional worship of the sacred "image" dissolved in the early modern period, the "age of art." Hall argues that the interests of artistic style and devotional function are not diametrically opposed, as the methods of "art" operated to help the viewer reach communion

with God. Marcia B. Hall, *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 1-11. See also: Sixten Ringbom, *From Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Abo: Abo Akademi, 1965); John Shearman, *Only Connect…Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1992).

[30] Numerous paintings attributed to Bloemaert, titled later as *Portrait of Old Man, Sitting Woman,* and so forth, are likely saints that lack sufficient pictorial signifiers.

[31] Anthonie Wierix, *Figures Des Saints* (Amsterdam, 1590s).

[32] St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Exercita Spiritualia* (Rome: Apud Antonium Bladum, XI, September 1548), as discussed in Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1656-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 137-140.

[33] "O Heer mijn hert is van binnen / Door-schooten metten strael uwer minnen." *'t Bosch*, 259.

[34] Walter S. Melion, *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print 1550-1625* (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2009), 159.

[35] Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 229-230.

[36] Melion, *The Meditative Art*, 153, 162.

[37] Michel de Certeau, "Mystic Speech," in *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 188.

[38] Charles H. Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 126, 188-189.

[39] Michael A. Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 172.

[40] Parker, *Faith*, 129.

[41] *Van Bolswert*, 124.

[42] Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 212.

[43] Norman P. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 2:705, cited in Melion, *The Meditative Art*, 274.

[44] Melion, *The Meditative Art*, 263-270.

[45] "Ad Sacrum Speculum recurris? Haere / Fixus, atq [ue] stupe, intimoq [ue] ocello / Sactorum legito Parentum EREMUM. / Paulum in limine siste, disce. Coeli / Ales ille (vinden-?) revelat almam / Suppellecitilem EREMI, et Arma PATRUM. / Lampas, Flagra, Codex, Corona, Sacra / Et Jeiunia, POENITERE clamant. / Arma Quanta! Jacet ligatus Hostis, / Surgunt Praemia Patribus, dat Ales. Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 295-296.

[46] A.T. van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion, and Society in Seventeenth-century Holland*, trans. Maarten Ultee (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 302.

[47] Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics*, 99.

[48] Margit Thøfner, "How to Look Like a (Female) Saint: The Early Iconography of St. Theresa of Avila," in *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe: An Interdisciplinary View*, ed. Cordula van Wyhe (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 59-68.

[49] The French text reads, "La chastete cherche la solitude, la femme pudique les places retirees, et l' impudique desire d'estre es grandes assemblees." *La forest des hermites et hermitesses d'Egypte, et de la Palestine: representée en figures de cuiure de l'inuention d'Abraham Blommaert, taillées par Boece Bolswert. Et de plus illustré d'vn succinct recueil de leur vies tiŕ de la vie des Pères* (A Anvers: De l'imprimerie de Hierosmo Verdussen, 1619), 25.

[50] Claire Walker, *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English Convents in France and the Low Countries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 130-134; R. Po-chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 140.

[51] Adriaen Poirters's *Typus Mundi* was re-issued as Het maker van de wereldt afghetrocken (Antwerp, 1646), for instance. 122. Peter van Dael S.J., "'*De Christelijcke leeringhe met vermaeck gevat*' De functie van illustraties in boeken van jezuïeten in de Nederlanden tijdens de zeventiende eeuw," *De zeventiende eeuw* 14 (1998): 122.

[52] Wayne E. Franits, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 59, 64-69.

[53] Mullett, *Catholic Reformation*, 172.

[54] M. E. Monteiro, *Geestelijke maagden: leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland gedurende de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1996), 282-283.

[55] Van Deursen, *Plain Lives*, 302.

[56] "…kennisse ende vrienschap maeckende met de Heilichste, volmaecste menschen, soo met cluysenerse als met clooster lieden, principaelyke met de Clarissen te Loven, ondersoeckende

alle de maniere ende oeffeninghe van een clooster leeven." *Leven van Agatha van Veen*, I, 101v-102r, Transcribed in Joke Spaans, *De levens*, 68.

[57] *Van Bolswert*, 112.

[58] Spaans, *De levens*, 49-51.

[59] Herbert Grundmann was one of the first historians to identify medieval monastic movements as a "Religiöse Frauenbewegung," which Scheepsma interprets to mean a 'Religious women's movement.' Herbert Grundmann, *Religiöse Bewgungen im Mettelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftl Buchges, 1977), Published in English translation in 1995; cited in Wybren Scheepsma, *Medieval Religious Women in the Low Countries: The 'Modern Devotion,' the Canonesses of Windesheim, and Their Writings* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2004), 1-3.

[60] Scheepsma, *Medieval Religious Women*, 1-3, 237-238.

[61] Spaans, *De levens*, 89.

[62] Bake's writings include: Alijt Bake, *Van die memorie der passien ons heren*, ed. Scheepsma 1994; *Een merkelike leeringhe*, ed. Lieftinck 1936; *Mijn beghin ende voortghanck*, ed. Spaapen 1967; *Van drien punten die tot enen scouwenden leven behoren*, ed. de Man 1937; *De trechter en de spin*, ed. Scheepsma 1995; *De vier kruiswegen*, ed. Spaapen 1966; *Van drije pointen die toebehooren een volmaeckt leven*, ed. Scheepsma 1992; *De weg van de ezel*, ed. Spaapen 1968; *De weg der victorie*, ed. Bollmann and Staubach; cited in Wybren Scheepsma, *Medieval Religious Women*, 24-25.

[63] Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 136-137.

[64] Isaiah 35:1-2 KJV; "Exultabit solitudo, et Florebit quasi lilium. Germinans germinabit, exultabit latabunda et laudans."

[65] *Van Bolswert*, 127.

[66] "…ick de ziele onbeylecht voor den onstersselijcken bruydegrom soude bewaren." Ian van Gorcum, *'t Bosch Der Eremyten Ende Eremitinnen, Van Aegypten ende Palstinen, met figuren van Abraham Blommaert, door Christophorus a Sichem. Met kort verhael van eends yders leven, getrocken uyt het Vaders-Boeck, door H. Ian van Gorcum, Priester, ende H.R. Societatus IESU*, ('t Antwerpen: Ieronymus Verdussen, 1644), 280.

[67] "hinghen rot op hare boeten." Van Gorcum, *'t Bosch*, 325.

[68] *Van Bolswert*, 127.

[69] Scheepsma, *Medieval Religious Women*, 61-62.

[70] Spaans, *De levens*, 133.

[71] *Regel en sermoenen gegeven door Josephus Cousebant en opgetekend door een (anonieme) begijn*, Haarlem, ca. 1680, 221 fol., Utrecht, MCC, inv. nr. BMH SJ h103, *Regel en sermoenen gegeven door Josephus Cousebant en opgetekend door een (anonieme) begijn*, Haarlem, ca.
1667, inv. nr. BMH SJ h102, f. 40 and 44v, cited in Verheggen, *Beelden*, 47.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Samuel Ampzing, *Suppressie vande vermeynde vergaderinge de Jesuwyteszen door Urbanus VIII by den gedoge Gods Paus van Romen: met eenige poetische-theologische bedenkingen* (Haarlem, 1632), cited in Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics*, 72.

[74] Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 47-48.

[75] Marieke A. W. L. M. Abels, *Tussen sloer en heilige: beeld en zelfbeeld van Goudse en Haarlemse kloppen in de zeventiende eeuw* (Utrecht: Abels, Marieke A. W. L. M., 2010), 144-147.

[76] Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 210.

[77] Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 88.

[78] Het Utrechts Archief Kapittel #708-2.7.7, no. 366 contains a drawing of the Wittevrouwen Convent c. 1725, after an earlier image.

[79] In particular, the Jesuit theologian and writer François de Sales pays special attention to the Magdalene in the *Introduction to the Devout Life* (Antwerp: Guilliam Lesteens, 1616).

[80] St Teresa of Avila, *Life*, in *Complete Works of St Teresa of Jesus*, trans. and ed. E. Allison Peters (London, 1946), vol.1, p. 54, cited in Susan Haskins, *Mary Magdalene: Myth and Metaphor* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1993), 254.

[81] Haskins, *Mary Magdalene*, 253-267.

[82] "…maer Jesus paeyde Martha seer wel ende beschermde Maria hare inwendige contemplatien ende stille neerstigheydt meer prijsende dan de uytwendige sorghvuldigheydt van Martha." Van Gorcum, *'t Bosch*, 257.

[83] "Visa iuventuti Venus (ah, deflenda voluptas!) / Pius nimio placui Magdalis atra mihi / Ipsa ego me velut in speculo teterrima vidi, / Os mea cum Christus vertit in ora suum. / Spectatum Veneres veniant; spectentur et ipsae; / Pompa supercilijs protinus orba cadet," translated and cited in Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 227.

[84] "opgetogen wert van binnen," "Myn hert is my van binnen ontsteken," "O Heer mijn hert is van binnen / Door-schooten metten strael uwer minnen." Van Gorcum, *'t Bosch,* 259.

[85] "Soone u aensicht is schoon; ende sommighe Broeders kranck; daerom wil ick dat ghy alleen in uwe Celle sit ende daer lof sangen singt ende daer eet ende dat ghy van daer nergens en sult uytgaen." Van Gorcum, *t' Bosch,* 275.

[86] "Met dese maniere van leven hebben sy alle vrouwen ver-eert." Van Gorcum, *'t Bosch,* 325.

[87] F.B.A. Asiedu, "The Song of Songs and the Ascent of the Soul: Ambrose, Augustine and the Language of Mysticism," *Vigiliae Christianae* 55, no. 3 (2002), 301-302.

[88] Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism (1200-1350)* (New York: Crossroad, 1998), 66-67.

[89] Van Deursen, *Plain Lives,* 302-303.

[90] Melion, *The Meditative Art,* 340.

[91] Ibid., 39.

[92] Park, "Use of Devotional Images," 241.

[93] Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie,* 48, 293.

[94] Examples include het mystieke huwelijk van Joanna van Valois, anonymous, Utrecht MCC, Inv. Nr. BMH Warm H92D19, Haarlem, 'Den Hoeck,' 1633, and Catherine of Siena, published by Michiel Snijders, Utrecht MCC inv. nr. BMH Warm H92B13, DL. 1, Haarlem, "Den Hoeck," first half of the seventeenth century.

[95] "Och wanneer sal ick aenschouwen dat suyverlick aenschijn." Van Gorcum, *'t Bosch,* 259.

Chapter Three

[1] While well-established in contemporary scholarship, the idea that images of Christ served a devotional function for early modern viewers originates in art historical scholarship from the 1960s and 1970s. The earliest example of this argument is Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1965).

[2] Judith Pollman, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520-1635* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 166.

[3] Philips Angels, *Lof der schilder-konst* (Leiden: Willem Christiaens, 1642), 52-53; Pieter Fransz. de Grebber, *Regulen: Welcke by een goet schilder en Teyckenaer geobserveert moet werden, Tesamen ghestelt tot lust van de leergieriger Discipeelen, door Mr. Pieter Fransz. de Grebber* (Haarlem: Pieter Castelyn, 1649).

[4] E. Taverne, "Salomon de Bray and the Reorganization of the Haarlem Guild of St Luke in 1631" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 6, no. 1 (1972-1973), 58.

[5] IvT-S., "Pieter Fransz de Grebber," in *Painting in Haarlem 1500-1850: The Collection of the*
Frans Hals Museum, eds. Neeltje Köhler and P. Biesboer (Ghent: Ludion, 2006), 158-172.

[6] Paul Dirkse, "Pieter de Grebber: Haarlems schilder tussen begijnen, kloppen en pastoors," *Haerlem Jaarboek* (January 1978), 124.

[7] Marion Elisabeth Wilhelmina Goosens, *Schilders en de Markt: Haarlem 1605-1635* (M.E.W. Boers-Goosens, 2001), 63.

[8] Joke Spaans, *De levens der maechden: het verhaal van een religieuze vrouwengemeenschaap in de eerste helft van die zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), 23-24.

[9] Charles H. Parker, *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 37-38.

[10] Xander van Eck, "The Artist's Religion: Paintings Commissioned for Clandestine Catholic Churches in the Northern Netherlands, 1600-1800," *Simiolus* 27 (1999): 221.

[11] Xander van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor: Paintings for the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 90-95.

[12] Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, 55-57.

[13] The Metropolitan Museum of Art no. 53. 600 4245.

[14] "Alle voorbeelden half uyt de lijst komende is onschoon, en moet daer om ghemijdt werden, en oock voorbeelden die voor half uyt de grondt steecken, ten waer dat men wilde maecken een Ecce Homo, of dierghelijcke, daer nootsaeckelijk uyt beeldingh van hooghte vereyscht werdt, dan moghen die voor uyt de grondt uyt steecken." Pieter de Grebber, *Regulen*.

[15] John R. Decker, "Engendering Contrition, Wounding the Soul: Geertgen tot Sint Jans' 'Man of Sorrows'," *Artibus et Historiae* 29, no. 57 (2008): 63.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Decker posits that the painting was originally commissioned for the St. John's Church in Haarlem due to its provenance in Utrecht's Catharijneconvent, host to the Knights of St. John. The convent held many of the Haarlem parish's possessions in the wake of the revolt. Truus van Bueren, *Tot Lof van Haarlem. Het beleid van de stad Haarlem ten aanzien van de kunstwerken uit de geconfisqueerde geestelijke instellingen* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1993), cited in Decker, "Engendering Contrition," 70.

[18] Ibid., 61.

[19] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011), 41.

[20] "huic debes assimilari in tempore / nisi vis cruciari et confrindi in / aeternitate (maak u op het goede moment aan hem gelijk als u niet voor eeuwig gefolterd en gekweld wilt worden)."

[21] "supbe" is the abbreviation for "superbe"; "u doodt mij, u naakt bent, teer en verheven."

[22] History painter Gerard Seghers first painted *Christ after the Flagellation* in 1625 (Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nancy), who then gave exclusive privileges to Nicolaes Lauwers to copy the image in print. Through its dissemination by a series of prints of Balthasar and Nicolaes Lauwers (1630-1650, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, hand-colored version at Museum Boijmans van Beuningen), the image found popularity in the Southern Netherlands and was widely copied. Joannes and Cornelis Galle then produced a different version of the image after Lauwers (1630-1665, Universiteitsbibliotheek Nijmegen).

[23] Alena Robin, "The Wound on Christ's Back in New Spain, *RACAR: revue d'art Canadienne / Canadian Art Review* 32, no. 1/2 (2007), 83-84.

[24] Xander van Eck, "Een kwijnend bisdom nieuw leven ingeblazen: Pieter de Grebber en het Haarlems kapittel," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 52, no. ¾ (2004), 255-256.

[25] Dirkse, "Pieter de Grebber," 117.

[26] Marit Monteiro, "Power in Piety: Inspiration, Ambitions and Strategies of Spiritual Virgins in the Northern Netherlands during the Seventeenth Century," in *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality: Women and the Roman Catholic Church in Britain and Europe, 1200-1900*, eds. Laurence Lux-Sterritt and Carmen M. Mangion (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 115-120.

[27] *The Shadow of Rubens*, 13.

[28] *Van Bolswert naar Antwerpen: Gouden Eeuw gravures naar Bloemaert, Rubens en Van Dyck*, eds. Tjebbe de Jong and Anique C. de Kruijf (Bolsward: Titus Brandsma Museum, 2013), 27.

[29] Ibid., 115.

[30] Th. Clemens, "Liturgy and Piety in the Netherlands during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Omnes Circumadstantes: Contributions towards a history of the role of the people in the liturgy,* eds. Charles Caspers and Marc Schneiders (Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J.H. Kok, 1990), 206.

[31] Evelyne M. F. Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en hartstocht: bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden, 17de en 18de eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2006), 89

[32] Ibid., 173.

[33] Spaans, *Levens*, 49.

[34] P. van der Coelen, "'Christus na de geseling' - een onbekende prent van Nicolaes Lauwers naar Gerard Seghers'," Delineavit et Sculpsit nr. 34 (December 2010), 4.

[35] Spaans, *Levens*, 138.

[36] Jacob Roecx, *Den wijngaert der sielen/ daer in een mẽsche vinden/ eñ pluckẽ sal die volle soete druyue der incarnacien Christi/ indẽ tijt der gracien/ eñ aẽdenckẽ sal/ hoe die selue wtgheperst verdort eñ verdroocht is/ inde tijt zijnre bitter passien/ op dat hi versoenẽ soude dẽ thoren zijns vaders* (Antwerp: By mi Symon Cock, 1544; Antwerp, G. Van Parijs, 1569).

[37] "Daer sult ghi my leyde en verborghen in u soete wonden en in u minnede herte tot dat den winter de sonde voorby is," Jacob Roecx, *Den wijngaert der sielen*, 145-155.

[38] Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 121, 153.

[39] Marit Monteiro, *Geestelijke maagden. Leven tussen klooster en wereld in Noord-Nederland gedurende de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1996), 376-371.

[40] Parker, *Faith,* 124-125.

[41] *Leven van Maria Bastyaens van Craenhal*, III, 31v-32v, cited in Spaans, *Levens*, 50.

[42] Spaans, *Levens*, 127-130.

[43] Ibid., 133.

[44] Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 99-100.

[45] *Vrouw die opklint naar het hart van haar minde*, from the letters of Maria van Heel (1666); engraving, before 1619, 9 x 6.2 cm; Universiteits bibliotheek, Nijmegen, hs 325; illustrated in Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 99.

[46] Jeremiah 48:28 NIV, transcription from Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 99.

[47] Spaans, *Levens*, 134-135.

[48] "Als Christus Jesus ons ghesondmaker aldus deerlijck was gegeesselt en door wont dat in all zijn lichaem niet heels en was bleven, so dat sijn heel lichae niet en was dan een vloeyende wonde ende dat hy alle menschen grouwelijck was om aen te sien." "Och laet ons nu sien hoe jammerlijc dat die minnelike heer daer gine vervult va pijnen bevede van couwe vloeyende van bloede. So dat elcke voetstap geteeket bleef met sine rooden bloede…Waerom is u cleet root, en u habijt is als die de mijn terden? Jesus antwoort u mijn bruyt mijn cleet is root wat ic heb die persse alleen ghetreden." Roecx, *Den wijngaert.*

[49] Hieronymus Wierix, *Christus in de winjpers*, 1553 – before 1619, engraving, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1898-A-19870; Wierix also produced a second version of the same subject, representing *Christ standing alone with the Arma Christi in the wine press*, 1553 – before 1619, engraving, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1898-A-19869. The subject was thereafter represented by Theodoor Galle and Jacob de Gheyn.

[50] Christ in the *wijnpers* is pasted in a hand-written sermon by prominent Haarlem priest Jacobus Cats (d. 1641) from the collection of Haarlem's Catholic klopje community of de Hoek. Museum Catharijneconvent, inv. BMH Warm h92B10. The sermon is titled "Beschrijvinghe van de natuer des affectijs ghebedt [...] op de meditatien van pr. Ludovicus de Ponte [...]," commenting on the affective prayers in the works of Luis de la Puente (1554-1624), a Spanish Jesuit ascetic and theologian. Illustrated in Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 313.

[51] "O myn bruyt ick heb de pers alleen getrede, om u by mynen Vader te maken vrede." Maagd die mystieke wijnpers aaschouwt, ca. 1625, engraving; illustrated in Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 105.

[52] Decker, "Engendering Contrition," 61.

[53] Pseudo-Bonaventure, *Meditations on the Life of Christ: An Illustrated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 15.

[54] Luc Indestege, ed., *Een Diets gebedenboek uit het begin der zestiende eeuw herkomstig uit het voormalig Klooster Sint-Hieronymusdal te Sint-Truiden* (Ghent: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academe voor Taal- en Letterkunde, 1961), 56; Cited in Mitzi Kirkland-Ives, "The Suffering Christ and Visual Mnemonics in Netherlandish Devotions," in *Death, Torture and the Broken Body in European Art, 1300-1650*, eds. John R. Decker and Mitzi-Kirkland Ives (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 39.

[55] Natasha Seaman, "Materiality and the Presence of the Past in Hendrick ter Brugghen's Crucifixion," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 74, Bd., H. 4 (2011): 510-511.

[56] Parker, *Faith*, 180-181.

[57] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 174-184; "The Blood of Christ in the Later Middle Ages," *Church History* 71, no. 4 (Dec 2002): 685-714.

[58] Valentin Groebner, *Defaced: The Visual Culture of Violence in the Late Middle Ages*, trans. Pamela Selwyn (New York: Zone Books, 2004), 122-123.

[59] Allie Terry-Fritsch, "Proof in Pierced Flesh: Caravaggio's Doubting Thomas and the Beholder of Wounds in Early Modern Italy," in *Beholding Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Europe,* eds. Allie Terry-Fritsch and Erin Felicia Labbie (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), 15-17.

[60] Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 270-280.

[61] Decker, "Engendering Contrition," 61-65; Mitchell B. Merback, *The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel: Pain and the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 10-19.

[62] Spaans, *Levens*, 26.

[63] Parker, *Faith*, 181.

[64] Pollman, *Catholic Identity*, 150-151.

[65] Willem Janszoon Verwer, *Memoriaelbouck: Dagboek van gebeurtenissen te Haarlem van 1572-1581*, 29, ed. J.J. Temmink (Haarlem, 1973); Cited in Pollman, *Catholic Identity*, 99.

[66] Spaans, *Levens*, 27.

[67] Ibid., 26.

[68] A.T. Van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, trans. Maarten Ultee (Cambridge University Press, 1991), 291-92.

[69] Noord-Hollands Archief, Kapitel #2106, no. 420, Notariële verklaring betreffende de herkomst en verering van de relikwieën van het H. Kruis en de Doornenkroon, in bezit van het hof, 1632.

[70] Noord-Hollands Archief, Kapitel #275, No. 261, Lijstje van relikwieën door kanunnik N. Nomius in een capsula ad forman Agnus Dei gedragen, No. 262, Bewijs van echtheid van de relikwie van St. Bavo, met aflaatverlening and No. 263, Lijst van relikwieën bewaard door pater Arnoldus de Witte.

[71] Parker, *Faith*, 129-130.

[72] *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age,* eds. R. Po-Chia Hsia and Henk F. K. Van Nierop (New York: Cambridge University, 2002), 98-99.

[73] Xander van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction: Clandestine Catholic Churches as Patrons of Dutch Caravaggesque Painting," *Simiolus* 22, no. 4 (1993-1994): 217-234.

[74] The painting is held today in the Pinacoteca of Turin, inv./cat.nr 396 (cat. 1909).

[75] Bruce N. Fisk, "Unavoidable Gore, Controversy in 'Passion'? abcnews.go.com. http://abcnews.go.com/Primetime/story?id=132400&page=1 (accessed March 14, 2018).

[76] *Mel Gibson interview in The World Over Live*, hosted by Raymond Arroyo (2004; Irondale, AL: Eternal Word Television Network), TV.

[77] "Crowds flock to 'Passion,' tears common," today.com https://www.today.com/popculture/crowds-flock-passion-tears-common-wbna4365678 (accessed March 14, 2018).

Chapter Four

[1] Wagenaar remarks that "Zij huilde in geheimzinnige gloed het zwaar verguld altaar," *Amsterdam in zyne opkomst, Amsterdam in zyne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenissen, voorregten, koophandel, gebouwen, kerkenstaat, schoolen, schutterye, gilden en regeeringe* (Amsterdam: Isaak Tirion, 1760-1767); Cited in Wim Tepe, *XXIV Paepsche Vergaderplaetsen: Schuilkerken in Amsterdam* (Amstelveen: Luyten), 56.

[3] Xander van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor: Paintings for the Dutch Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 10.

[4] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University, 1990), 114.

[5] Ibid., 119.

[6] Willem Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief: Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2002), 113.

[7] *A prominent family on pilgrimage at Heiloo, near the ruins of the Chapel of our Lady*, painted by Gerrit de Jongh from Alkmaar, 1630, Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht.

[8] *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het Bisdom Haarlem* XXXV (1913): 289, XVIII (1893): 61 and X (1882): 295.

[9] Judith Pollman, "Burying the Dead; Reliving the Past: Ritual, Resentment and Sacred Space in the Dutch Republic," in *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands, c.1570-1720*, eds. Benjamin Kaplan, Bob Moore, Henk van Nierop and Judith Pollman (New York: Manchester University Press, 2009), 84.

[10] Alexandra Walsham, "Holywell: Contesting Sacred Space in Post-Reformation Wales," in *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Will Coster and Andrew Spicer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 221.

[11] *Traits of Tolerance: Religious Tolerance in the Golden Age*, eds. Xander van Eck and Ruud Priem (Zwolle: WBooks, 2013), 54.

[12] Pollman, "Burying the Dead, Reliving the Past. Ritual, Resentment and Sacred Space in the Dutch Republic," in *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands, c. 1570-1720*, eds. Benjamin Kaplan, Bob Moore, Henk van Nierop and Judith Pollman (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 90.

[13] *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het Bisdom Haarlem* XVII, 108, cited in A.T. Van Deursen, 301.

[14] Joke Spaans, *Der Levens der Maechdens: het verhaal van een religieuze vrouwengemeenschap in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), 57.

[15] Pollman, "Burying the Dead," 90.

[16] Christine Kooi, *Calvinists and Catholics during Holland's Golden Age: Heretics and Idolaters* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 62.

[17] Chris van Deventer, *Pelgrimspas Utrecht* (Utrecht: Kerken Kijken, 2014), 18.

[18] Benjamin Kaplan, "Fictions of Privacy: House Chapels and the Spatial Accommodation of Religious Dissent in Early Modern Europe," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 4 (October 2002): 1031-1064.

[19] *Traits of Tolerance*, 34.

[20] Christine Kooi, "Paying off the sheriff: strategies of Catholic toleration in Golden Age Holland," in *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, eds. R. Po-Chia Hsia and Henk F.K. Nierop (New York: Cambridge University, 2002), 96-97.

[21] Het Utrechts Archief, Kapitel #842-2, no. 127, Circulaires van het kerkbestuur aan de gemeenteleden, 1946-1957, 1959-1963, z.j.

[22] Het Utrechts Archief, Kapitel #842-2, no. 127, Circulaires van het kerkbestuur aan de gemeenteleden, 1946-1957, 1959-1963, z.j.

[23] Spaans, *Levens*, 92-93.

[24] Amanda Eurich, "Reclaiming Civic Culture in Early Modern France," in *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Will Coster and Andrew Spicer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 268.

[25] E. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. J.W. Swain (London, 1951), 37, cited in Beat Kumin, "Sacred Church and Worldly Tavern: Reassessing an Early Modern Divide," in *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Will Coster and Andrew Spicer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 7.
[26] Kumin, "Sacred Church," 7.

[27] Marco Blokhuis, *Museum Amstelkring, Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder, Amsterdam* (Ghent: Ludion, 2002), 3-4.

[28] In Delft, the galleries initially added to the clandestine church of Begijnhof were demolished to further open up the church into one central space in 1747, in a project began by priest Nicolaas Broedersen. Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor*, 165.

[29] W. Kok, *Interior of the Begijnhof Church of SS. Mary and Ursula*, engraving, 1792, Museum Ons' Lieve heer Op Solder, Amsterdam. Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor*, 119.

[30] Spaans, *Levens*, 55.

[31] *Traits of Tolerance*, 50.

[32] Pollman, "Burying the Dead," 91.

[33] Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor*, 28.

[34] *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het Bisdom Haarlem* 7 (1889): 350, cited in Van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction: Clandestine Catholic Churches as Patrons of Dutch Caravaggesque Painting, *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 4 (1993-1994): 220.

[35] The schuilkerk from the seventeenth-century double house on Raamsgracht 6-8 served as a church until 1709, and is today rented as office space.

[36] J.N. van Ditmarsch, *De Gertrudiskapel*, ed. M.J. Dolfin, trans. Annelize Roosjen-Hollemans (Stichting Publikaties Oud Utrecht and the Oud-Katholieke Parochie van Utrecht: Utrecht, 2001), 13.

[37] Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor*, 23-28.

[38] Van Eck, "From Doubt to Conviction," 218.

[39] John R. Decker, "Engendering Contrition, Wounding the Soul: Geertgen tot Sint Jans' 'Man of Sorrows'," *Artibus et Historiae* 29, no. 57 (2008): 59-73; John R. Decker, *The Technology of Salvation and the Art of Geertgen tot Sint Jans* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009).

[40] Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Jesu christi domini* (Lyon, 1510), fol. R6, cited in Christine Göttler, "Rubens's 'Ecce Homo' and 'Derision of Silenus': Classical Antiquity, Images of Devotion, and the Ostentation of Art," in *Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 445. The text was first published in Lyon and Cologne in 1474; with the first of many Dutch-language editions issued as *Het leven ons Heeren Iesu Christi* in 1487 (G. de Leeu); 1488 (Delft: C. Snellaert); 1495-1499 (Zwolle: P. Os van Breda). In the seventeenth century it was published in 1618 (Rotterdam: P. van Ghelen).

[41] Peter Parshall, "The Art of Memory and the Passion" *The Art Bulletin* 81, No. 3 (Sep 1999): 456-472, 465.

[42] Decker, "Engendering Contrition," 63.

[43] Walter S. Melion, *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print 1550-1625* (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2009), 11-12.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Evelyne M.F. Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie en Hartstocht: Bid- en devotieprenten in de Noordelijke Nederlanden*, 17de en 18de eew (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2006), 41.

[46] Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 41.

[47] Saskia van Haaren, *Christendom in Nederland: Topstukken uit Museum Catharijneconvent* (Waanders: Zwolle, 2006), 43.

[48] These klopje devotional books containing handwritten sermons, prints and other devotionalia are held today in Dutch archives and museums, including the Museum Catharijneconvent; Universiteitsbiblioteek van de UVA, Amsterdam; Universiteitsbibliotheek, Nijmegen; Archiefdienst voor Kennemerland, Bisdom Haarlem.

[49] Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 156.

[50] *Altaar met kruisbeeld, kaarsen en bloemversiering en de aanbidding van het heilig Sacrament door engelen*; Amsterdam, Universiteits Biblioteek van de UVA, Amsterdam, 1636-1647. The Museum Catharijneconvent lists the large painting's provenance as an unknown Dutch private collection from its production in 1632. https://www.catharijneconvent.nl/adlib/72325/?q=bloemaert+&page=6&f=

[51] Abraham Bloemaert produced this painting from an engraving of his own design, engraved by his son Cornelis in 1629 (engraving, 51.8 x 36 in.; Museum Catharijneconvent, OKM g48). For the painting, Bloemaert heightened the miraculous effect of the burst of light above the altar, adding several additional angels.

[52] J. Richard Judson excludes the *Ecce Homo* from his catalogue raisonne as "judging from the photograph, this painting was probably executed in Honthorst's atelier but not by the master." While there has been little professional photography of the image and it may have been difficult to discern such connoisseurial judgment, the Museum Catharijneconvent today affirms Honthost's authorship. J. Richard Judson, *Gerrit van Honthorst, 1592-1656* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1999), 88.

[53] Iris Meindertsma, "De beeldengroup in St. Marie achter Clarenburg. De kerkhistorische, lokaalhistorische en kunsthistorische context." (M.A. Thesis, University of Utrecht, 2007), 16.

[54] *Goddelijk Geschilderd: Honderd Meesterwerken van Museum Catharijneconvent*, eds. C.J.F. van Schooten and W.C.M. Wustefeld (Zwolle: Waanders, 2003), 135.

[55] For a discussion of the archaizing tendencies in contemporary Dutch Catholic painting, see Natasha Seaman, *The Religious Paintings of Hendrick ter Brugghen: Reinventing Christian Painting after the Reformation in Utrecht* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012).

[56] Het Utrechts Archief, Kapitel #842-2, no. 174, Foto's van de voorgevel van het kerkgebouw en van de kerkzaal. While the exact schedule of this altarpiece's display in the seventeenth century is unknown, van Eck has discussed the regular rotations of altarpieces in schuilkerken in this early period.

[57] Paul Dirkse, *Kunst uit Oud-Katholieke Kerken* (Utrecht: Rijksmuseum het Catharijneconvent, 1989), 13.

[58] *Goddelijk Geschilderd*, 135-136.

[59] Van Ditmarsch, *De Gertrudiskapel*, 23; "De Gertrudiskapel, een 17e-eeuwse schuilkerk," Aartsbisdom Utrecht, Access Date 3.9.17 http://utrecht.okkn.nl/pagina/42/de_gertrudiskapel.

[60] Het Utrechts Archief, Kapitel #842-2, no. 174, Foto's van de voorgevel van het kerkgebouw en van de kerkzaal.

[61] Museum Catharijneconvent, BMH g219.

[62] Els Stronks, *Negotiating Differences: Word, Image and Religion in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 20.

[63] Cornelis Galle I, *Ecce Homo*, copper plate engraving, Collection Museum Plantin Moretus, PK.OP.12876.

[64] Dirkse, *Kunst uit Oud-Katholieke Kerken*, 13.

[65] Museum Catharijneconvent, BMH t3185.

[66] Tepe, *XXIV Paepsche Vergaderplaetsen*, 54-55.

[67] Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor*, 111-113.

[68] Wagenaar remarks that "Zij huilde in geheimzinnige gloed het zwaar verguld altaar," *Amsterdam in zyne opkomst*, cited in Tepe, *XXIV Paepsche Vergaderplaetsen*, 56.

[69] Joseph Fransz Cousebant, *Regels en onderrichting der Maagden*, undated seventeenth-century sermon book with thirteen engravings by Jacob Matham and Hieronymus Wierix; MCC inv. Nr. BMH SJ h102, f. 160v-161r, cited in Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 56. Although Cousebant's sermon book is undated, Verheggen's situates his discussion of the Mass and daily life for klopjes in the first half of the seventeenth century (Cousebant died c. 1664).

[70] Judson, *Gerrit van Honthorst*, 12-15.

[71] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1565-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 8-9.

[72] The Hague, Mauritshuis, inv. no. 707.

[73] Christian and Astrid Tümpel, *Rembrandt: Images and Metaphors* (London: Haus Publishing, 2006), 17.

[74] Examples of religious scenes using simplified compositions and meditative light include *Christ at Emmaus* (Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris); *The Entombment of Christ*, 1636-39 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich, inv. no. 396); *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1646 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich, inv. no. 393); and *The Denial of Saint Peter*, 1660 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-A-3137), among others; Justus Müller Hofstede, "Artificial Light in Honthorst and Terbrugghen: Form and Iconography," in *Hendrick ter Brugghen und die Nachfolger Caravaggios in Holland: Beitr. eines Symposions aus Anlaß der Ausstellung "Holländische Malerei in neuem Licht. Hendrick ter Brugghen und seine Zeitgenosssen" im Herzog-Anton-Ulrich-Museum Braunschweig vom 23. bis 25. März 1987* (Braunschweig, Herzog-Anton-Ulrich Museum, 1988), 13-44.

[75] Dirkse, *Kunst uit Oud-Katholieke Kerken*, 18.

[76] W.J.T. Mitchell, "Foreword," in *Beholding Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Allie Terry-Fritsch and Erin Felicia Labbie (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), xviii-xix.

[77] Foreign religious orders such as the Jesuits, seen as foreign interlopers allied to Spain, often received harsher penalties for their Catholic practice from Reformed authorities, especially longer (and lifetime) bans from the city or country. In addition to Jesuits, communities of Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians were also established in Utrecht and across the Netherlands in the period. Parker, *Faith on the Margins*, xi, 51.

[78] Judith Pollman, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands*, 1520-1635 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 30-31.

[79] Walter Melion, "Pictorial Artifice and Catholic Devotion in Abraham Bloemaert's Virgin of Sorrows with the Holy Face of c. 1615," *in The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation, Papers from a Colloquium held at the Biblioteca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence*, eds. Herbert L. Kessler and Gerhard Wolf (Rome: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1998), 321, citing F. Baldinucci's Lives of Abraham and Cornelis Bloemaert in *Notizie dei professori del disegno*, ed. F. Ranelli, III (Florence, 1846), 623-26.

[80] Franciscus Coster, *Meditations of the Whole Historie of the Passion of Christ*, ed. D.M. Rogers (1616; Yorkshire and London: Scolar Press, 1975), 318-333.

[81] *'Vita Christi' Domini Servatoris nostri, a R.P. Ludolpho Saxone, Carthusiano, ante CCL. Annos es sacris Evangeliis, veterumque patrum sententiis contexta, atque ita disposita*, ed. Johannes Dadraeus (Paris: Michael Sonnius, 1580): fol. 410, cited in Walter S. Melion, "Introduction: Meditative Images and the Psychology of the Soul," in *Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Reindert Falkenburg, Walter S. Melion and Todd M. Richardson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 13.

[82] *Die grote evangelische peerle vol devoter gebeden, godlijcker oeffeninghen, ende geesteliker leeringhen, hoe wij dat hoochste goet in onser sielen sullen soecken ende vinden, ende wt alle onse crachten lief hebben, ende besitten* (Antwerp: Peetersen, 1537), pt 2, chap. 29, cited in *Image and Imagination*, 2007.

[83] Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 89.

[84] Henrik von Achen, "Mass Attendance as a Devotional Practice: An Anonymous 17th Century Illustrated Popular 'Missal'," *ENID* (Bergen: Bergen Museum): 1-3.

[85] "Overleght die onmenschelijcke wreetheyt met de welcken zy op het Lichaem van uwen Zalighmaker vallen; tot dat het alderheylighste Lichaem met wonden vervult d'aderen doorhackelt sulcken menighte van zijn Goddelijk bloedt ter aerde storte dat 'er niet een plaets voor een wonder meer open was." Andreas van der Kruyssen, *Misse. Haer korte uytlegginge, en godvruchtige oeffeninge onder de zelve: Neffens eenige besondere zegeninge: en het gebruyck der HH. Sacramentedn* (Amsterdam, voor den aucteur, 1651).

[86] Verheggen, *Beelden voor Passie*, 58.

[87] Joost van den Vondel, *Altaergeheimenissen ontvouwen in drie boecken* (Amsterdam: D. Van der Stichel and A. de Wees, 1645), 3-4.

Conclusion

[1] Yvonne Maria Werner and Jonas Harvard, eds., *European Anti-Catholicism in a Comparative and Transnational Perspective* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013), 103-104.

[2] Van Eck, *Clandestine Splendor,* 13-14.

[3] "Een kerk met een eigen geschiedenis die teruggaat tot de komst van het christendom in ons land ten tijde van Willibrord. En een kerk die vanuit het geweten opkomt voor het ideaal dat de 'lokale kerk' haar eigen rechten heeft. Dat was ook de reden waarom zij in de vroege 18e eeuw losraakte van het grotere geheel, dat hoe langer hoe meer tot de huidige centralistische Rooms-Katholieke Kerk is geworden, en als katholieke traditie haar eigen onafhankelijke weg is gegaan." "Oud-Katholieke Kerk – Wat is dat?", Website van de Oud-Katholieke Kerk van Nederland, accessed June 3, 2018, https://www.okkn.nl/pagina/1233/oud-katholieke_kerk_-_wat_is_dat.

[4] "Dutch Catholic Rebels Rooted in History," RNW Media, accessed June 3, 2018, https://www.rnw.org/archive/dutch-catholic-rebels-rooted-history.

[5] Hilary White, "Dutch Catholics brace for 'future without churches' after abandoning evangelization: Vatican Radio," Life Site News, April 14, 2015, accessed June 3, 2018, https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/dutch-catholics-brace-for-future-without-churches-after-abandoning-evangeli.

[6] Rasit Elibol and\ Jaap Tielbeke, "Onderzoek Hoe racistisch is Nederland? Goede bedoelingen zijn niet genoeg," De Groene Amsterdammer, June 6, 2018, accessed June 12, 2018, https://www.groene.nl/artikel/goede-bedoelingen-zijn-niet-genoeg.

[7] Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 166.

[8] Philomena Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory* (Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, 1994), 17, 30-35.

[9] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance,* 190-191.
[10] *Portrait of Josina van Adrichem* (d. 1617), 1604, https://rkd.nl/nl/explore/images/182105.

[11] Pieter de Grebber, *Portrait of the beguine Isabella van Hoey,* 1635, Museum Catharijneconvent, inv. no. BHM s8.

[12] Leendert van der Cooghen, *Portrait of Barbara van Juckema,* c. 1660, Museum Catharijneconvent, RMCC s52.