

The Family Picture:
A Study of Identity Construction in
Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraits

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Volume I: Text

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SHORT ABSTRACT

The seventeenth century saw a large increase in family-related portrait materials, including group family portraits, family portrait collections, and family memorial albums. In this thesis, I contend with the meanings and functions of family portraits created in the Netherlands in an attempt to illuminate the motives behind the rise in the number of portraits of the family during this period. I focus on the ways in which Dutch families utilised portraiture as a vehicle for constructing personal and national identity. In an age of extraordinary economic success, religious tension, and political upheaval, portraits of the members of the expanding Dutch ‘middle class’, who had the means and the desire to commission them, reveal a conscious inclination to define and substantiate a fashioned identity as the new urban elite of a Republic in the making. My study assesses family portraits as sites where identity and changing notions of selfhood were envisioned and performed. The shifting notions of ‘family’, and the increasing popularity of commissioning portraits seems to signal attempts to configure and imagine their relationship to Dutch society. I propose that the amount of portraits related to the family commissioned alongside an exploration of and struggle with identity is a symptom of the anxiety surrounding politics, religion, and social changes, for which the family often served as a metaphor.

New perspectives on portrait theory and identity, especially those of Ann Jensen Adams and Joanna Woodall, contributed to the shaping of this thesis, particularly as a means to comprehend how portraits functioned in the lives of families. There are four chapters that make up the body of this thesis. In each chapter, I focus on specific works of art chosen for their suitability in highlighting certain concepts and anxieties about

identity and the family in its cultural context at their extremes.

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LONG ABSTRACT

The seventeenth century saw a large increase in family-related portrait materials, including group family portraits, family portrait collections, and family memorial albums. In this thesis, I contend with the meanings and functions of portraits of the family created in the Netherlands in an attempt to illuminate the motives behind the striking rise in the number of portraits commissioned by families during this period. I focus on the ways in which Dutch families utilised portraiture as a vehicle for constructing personal as well as national identity. In an age of extraordinary economic success, religious tension, and political upheaval, portraits of the members of the expanding Dutch 'middle class', who had the means and the desire to commission them, reveal a conscious inclination to define and substantiate a fashioned identity as the new urban elite of a Republic in the making. My study assesses family portraits as sites where identity and changing notions of selfhood were envisioned and performed. The shifting notions of 'family', and the increasing popularity of commissioning portraits seems to signal attempts to configure and imagine their relationship to Dutch society. I propose that the amount of portraits related to the family commissioned alongside an exploration of and struggle with identity is a symptom of the anxiety surrounding politics, religion, and social changes, for which the family often served as a metaphor.

The early modern Netherlands, with its high production of portraits of the family, flourishing economic activities, conflict against Spain, and resultant transformations in politics, religion, and social relations, makes for a fascinating and unique case study, especially in comparison to its European counterparts. Family-related portraits merit particular consideration in this period because the notion of

identity was in flux, resulting in a strong emphasis on family. Early modern individuals defined themselves traditionally by their relationships to their ancestors, family members, and progeny as well as to exterior forces such as religion, government, and social class. The construction of identity as such was a highly complex process involving political, national, religious, personal, and dynastic motivations. It is this complicated entanglement of causes and effects that I hope to unravel in this thesis.

The changes in question included the diminishing authority of the Catholic Church, with the rise of the Protestant faith. In addition, the Dutch Revolt and subsequent war with Spain fundamentally changed the system of governance. Spain's departure left a vacuum of power that was filled by the newly formulated seven United Provinces. The structure of the fledgling Dutch Republic meant that the nobility lost a significant amount of power, as no new nobles could be appointed without a monarchy. Furthermore, their decision-making authority decreased due to the distribution of voting rights among provinces. Such shifts provoked fluctuations and instability, deeply felt in the portraiture arising from the age.

The combination of these factors led to a new valuation of the family, which was referred to as the 'little church' or the 'little state', and became a significant model for demonstrating the new values and ideals of the Republic. Domestic advice manuals, such as those written by poet and statesman Jacob Cats and physician Johan van Beverwijck emphasised the significant role that the family should play in nurturing their children intellectually, socially, and especially morally. This was especially related to a Calvinist view of the role of parents in the lives of their children. When the Catholic Church and its clergy lost its authority as an institution of guidance and instruction, these responsibilities were transferred to Calvinist parents. They were to educate and rear virtuous and upstanding Dutch citizens who would ultimately take on positions in

the burgeoning society of the United Provinces. The family was, as van Beverwijk called it ‘the seed of the common state’, and the nursery to the infant Dutch Republic.

More comprehensive theoretical evaluations of portraiture in recent decades have been paramount to this study’s inception, especially most recently, Marcia Pointon’s *Portrayal and the Search for Identity* (2013), as well as those of Richard Brilliant (1991) and Shearer West (2004). The most significant point of departure though, and the impetus for studying the materials in terms of identity, is Ann Jensen Adams’s recent publication, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (2009). She maintains, as her thesis, that portraits play a role in providing an interpersonal psychological experience that helps to shape and affect identity– the identities of both sitter and viewer. Adams presents a stimulating theoretical framework, which is, regrettably, weakened by her effort to fit individual portraiture, marriage portraiture, and group (family and militia) portraiture all under that framework, as it is challenging to apply her method to both communal and individual identity.

Adams expands on previous theoretical studies of identity and self-fashioning in Dutch seventeenth-century portraiture such as Joanna Woodall’s influential essays in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (Manchester, 1997), in which she argues for a less homogenous middle class seeking to position itself strategically within society. H. Perry Chapman’s innovative, though contentious, study of Rembrandt (*Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Identity*, 1990), was some of the first analytically rigorous research of its kind to posit Rembrandt’s self-portraits as a sustained examination of self, identity, and performance. Harry Berger (*Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance*, 2000), also studying Rembrandt, emphasised the contrived nature of the portrait by treating it as an indexical icon in that

it purports to denote by resemblance the act of portrayal that produced it.

When discussing the notion of identity in a theoretical sense, in connection with portraiture, most art historians have relied on the sociological model of Erving Goffman (*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 1971), who describes life and personal interactions as a theatrical performance, as well as the now classic analysis of Renaissance literature of Stephen Greenblatt (*Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare*, 1980), who proposes ‘self-fashioning’ as the process by which an individual constructed an identity in order to adhere to the norms and standards determined by society. The pitfalls in both of these views is that the self is viewed as a ‘fiction’, and there is entirely too much emphasis on the individual.

Correctives to these ‘self as fiction’ and individual-centric views have come to the fore in recent years, which are more appropriate to apply to a study of families and their portraits. For this reason, I turn to the thesis formulated by John Jeffries Martin in *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (Basingstoke, 2004), who claims that Renaissance identities were not about adopting one particular stance, self, or identity, but rather about how different stances effect one’s relation to the world and to others. Identity during the early modern period existed as a shifting relationship between the internal self and external factors. Bronwen Wilson (ed., *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge*, 2010) also follows Martin in her study of Renaissance portraits by pursuing the potential of the portrait in managing identity when people of the early modern people had multiple, unfixed identities.

In addition to a first, introductory chapter, there are four chapters that make up the body of this thesis. Each of these chapters focuses on specific works of art as case studies, chosen for their suitability in highlighting certain concepts and anxieties about identity and the family in its cultural context at their extremes, as well as their positions

vis-à-vis artistic production (the artist plays a significant role in the thesis).

In Chapter 2, I explore the complex ways in which family and ancestor portraits functioned to construct a new type of burgher identity in early modern Holland.

Ancestor portrait galleries were historically an aristocratic assertion of power, a means by which to unequivocally represent one's bloodline to a spectator, and to oneself. In the shifting social situation of the Dutch Republic, urban burghers relied less on their past history and blood relations to prove their wealth and status. Their focus was on the present and on their ability to propel themselves upward in society by means of personal achievement and financial gain.

As we see in a self-portrait of Jan Miense Molenaer with his family (Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, c. 1635), this new conception of family history and identity has been actualised. I argue that, in the eyes of the Dutch burgher, the present accomplishments and acquisitions of the family are the most pertinent and significant elements of their identity, not the past. Two case studies of seventeenth-century Amsterdam families further demonstrate this new model of family identity. Both the Backer and van Loon families originally immigrated to Amsterdam from other Dutch towns and gained personal and political success through intermarriage with regent families. Due to commercial pursuits, both families became wealthy and acquired luxury goods and symbols of wealth. The portrait collections of the two families, influenced by aristocratic models, could be viewed just as representations of wealth and status, but, the evidence from inventories reveals that these portraits were also for personal enjoyment—kept in private back rooms and shown only to those closest to the family. The very fact that these portraits were important to the family and not merely used as superficial symbols of wealth and status is confirmed by a bitter legal dispute fought

over the Backer collection. Similarly, the van Loon collection, though never challenged with legal action, remained greatly intact over time.

In Chapter 3, I argue that the artist Adriaen van der Werff, in his self-portrait with his family (Uffizi Gallery, Florence, 1697), attempts to engage in a dialogue concerning the virtue and status of Dutch artists. This self-portrait allowed him to create a public identity, one that was concerned with his artistic status while, at the same time, firmly rooted in the so-called *burgerlijk* persona within Dutch culture. In the seventeenth century, the artist occupied a precarious position, as both a manual labourer and artistic creator of beautiful and precious works of art. Manual labourers were usually viewed as carrying out their work for profit, rather than for honour or out of love. In order to describe his engagement with Dutch values in society, I will look into the concept of 'virtuous love' during the period, the notion that love was associated with honourable living and high status. The portrait's connection with this theme highlights other aspects of identity, including artist lineage and reproduction, played out in this image artistically as well as biologically. Furthermore, my discussion includes other examples of self-portraits of artists with their families. A replica of the work, which van der Werff produced in 1699 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), exhibiting seemingly slight changes to the composition, was created, however, with completely different intentions. The second portrait was intended for van der Werff's studio, enacting the artist's personal identity in day-to-day interaction. Van der Werff used his own family as the model for the painting and thus as basis for his identity as a painter. This chapter explains how the two portraits operate in concert, and can be seen as reflecting different aspects of van der Werff's identity as a professional painter by virtue of their reception and function.

Chapter 4 begins by examining the *Ghedenck boeck* (Memorial Book) of Jan Sieuwertsz. Kolm, a complicated compilation of autobiography, family portrait, sketchbook, as well as prose and poetry, which has been given insufficient analysis in the scholarship. This text is valuable in light of this project because of its complexity, which allows us to see something of the way in which families attempted to position themselves in society, which is not shown in portraiture. Such texts are part of a growing trend during the period to write about the family, which can be viewed as symptomatic of a struggle concerning identity in the early modern Dutch Republic. Kolm's album and others like it similarly reflect crises around identity, but they also reveal something further. The albums show that memories and reminiscences are crucial to defining relationships and identity, especially as the family is one of the most significant aspects in the definition of self. I will further contextualise Kolm's *Ghedenck boeck* by exploring the famous autobiographical writings of Constantijn Huygens as well as three lesser known diarists. Huygens is of specific significance here as he can be called an early 'theorist' of portraiture when, in his writings, he reflects on the portraits he had commissioned of himself and his family.

Memorial albums were not only vital for their role in memorialising the family, but can also be viewed as records of loss and instances of coming to terms with loss, as many of the memories documented in them have to do with the illness and death of fellow family members. To expand this discussion, I turn to the unique *Family Scrapbook* of Gesina ter Borch, the relatively unknown sister of Gerard ter Borch, in whose work she often features as a model. The book is a memorial album and collection of art, but also seems to have become a vehicle of grief for Gesina. To conclude this chapter, I view these expressions of grief against the prevailing attitudes

towards death, and the wealth of portraits of deceased children in family portraits by artists such as Jan Mijtens and Nicolaes Maes.

The last chapter deals with the ways in which families have defined themselves visually by the morals and virtues expressed in the domestic advice manuals and moralistic writings that were woven into the fabric of Dutch life and culture. Though we cannot always know the ways in which people behaved in their day-to-day life, we can get a clear sense of the kind of standards to which they held their family through their self-images. For example, we see this in the portrait of an unknown family (Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, c. 1655-1658), in which the mother of the family holds a copy of Jacob Cats' *Houwelyck* (Marriage, 1625). Cats, poet and statesman, was the leading moralist of his time and shaped the virtues and ideals of Dutch society with his writings. In the first section, I will examine a number of portraits that depict the sitters in traditional roles in order to explore how families were expected to instruct their children morally, socially, and academically. The question raises as to how moralistic these portraits actually are.

By juxtaposing these images of virtue with the topsy-turvy households of Jan Steen (1626/27-1679), that turned these idealised and rather unrealistic-looking homes of so many family portraits into farce, I attempt to articulate the highly constructed, illusory nature of such images and thus the family's identification with such high, moral standards. In the third section, I look at the remarkable practice of the commissioning of 'portrait historiés' (historiated portraits) by families. As we will see, the narrative was frequently representative of an ideal family life and familial virtues, however, in the examples I examine, the sitters are acutely aware of the roles that they play. I look at a number of portraits that do not, in fact, idealise the family. Instead, they throw light on the obvious fiction and fantasy involved in such portraits.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

In a stately and serious manner, the famed Leiden painter Gerrit Dou (1613-1675) sits at a common wooden table, slightly angled so as to face toward the spectator (fig. 1). By the time this work was created, around 1650, Dou, who studied with Rembrandt, had already gained renown and respect for his artistic talents in his hometown and even beyond. Curiously though, Dou represents himself dressed as a gentleman, in a sober brown robe, and wearing gloves and a hat. He does not depict himself as an artist in his studio, holding the tools of his trade. Dou, who made various self-portraits, usually surrounded himself with attributes that underlined his social status and success as a painter, such as in this example from the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 2). Instead of a palette and brush, the single reference to his profession is the picture he props up with his left hand. The painting portrays three figures dressed in the same sober style as Dou. Their gaze at the viewer and individualistic features make it clear that this is a group portrait. Given that Dou holds the picture close to him and included it as the only attribute in his self-portrait, the portrait-within-a-portrait must have some meaning for him. This was certainly the case, as the individuals in the portrait are his family members: Dou's father, Douwe Jansz de Vries van Arentsveld (c. 1584-1656) who was a glassmaker from Harlinger, his mother Marritge Jansdr van Arentsveld (c. 1585-1647) and his brother Jan Douwes van Arentsveld (c. 1611-1649).¹

As a fellow craftsman, Dou followed in the footsteps of his father. Before joining Rembrandt's workshop in 1628, he worked in his father's glassmaking atelier with his brother Jan. Around 1632, when Jan opened his own independent glassmaking

¹ S. Craft-Giepmans and A. de Vries, *Portret in Portret in de Nederlandse Kunst 1550-2012* exh. cat. (Bussum, 2012), p. 120; R. Baer, *The Paintings of Gerrit Dou (1613-1675)* (New York University Ph.D thesis, 1990), cat. nr. 56.

workshop, Dou established himself as a master painter. He had never painted any group portraits of his family before this work. Dou also never married, and therefore did not have the opportunity to paint portraits with a wife and children. Though the portrait is undated, it can be derived from the clothing and Dou's painting style that the work was produced around 1650. Further motivation for painting a family portrait around this time was the fact that Dou's mother and brother died, in 1647, and 1649, respectively.²

As a successful and wealthy artist in the early modern Dutch Republic, Dou's career exemplified the extent to which social mobility could be achieved by Dutch burghers at the time. This painting sums up, so to speak, several of the aspects of families and portraiture that I will explore with this thesis. Firstly, though Dou presented his social success many times in his self-portraits, the Braunschweig portrait is different because he deliberately presents himself in a family context. There are a number of possible reasons for this, which I will explore in this study with other examples. In terms of Dou's status as an artist, he was technically a manual laborer and thus a member of the third order, the working class.³ I look at the family portrait as a kind of tool of his trade, exploring the relations between presentation of family, profession and social mobility. Displaying his family beside him rather than his artistic instruments serves to prove that love is the source of his art rather than a desire for profit, which I will explore in Chapter 3. Furthermore, representing his father and brother in the self-portrait allows him to present both his biological and artistic lineage, which will be the topic of Chapter 2. Dou's picture is also clearly a memorial and tribute to his deceased mother and brother, a way to remember them, cherish them, and

² Ibid.

³ See: J. M. Montias, *Artists and Artisans in Delft: A Socio-Economic Study of the Seventeenth-century* (Princeton, 1982); H. F. K. van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland: From Knights to Regents 1500-1650*, trans., M. Ultee, (Cambridge, 1992); J. I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford, 1995); J. Woodall, 'Love is in the Air – Amor as motivation and message in Seventeenth-century Netherlandish painting', *Art History* 19 (1996), pp. 208-246.

work through his grief, the area of focus of Chapter 4. Finally, the picture represents a harmonious family unit, which was the goal of so many portraits following the moralistic and didactic literature of the time. This is the subject of the last chapter in this study.

Dou's family portrait, like hundreds of others commissioned during the seventeenth century, were created during a tremendously tumultuous period of Dutch history. In this thesis, I contend with the meanings and functions of portraits of the family in an attempt to illuminate the motives behind the remarkable rise in the number of these objects during this period. I focus on the ways in which Dutch families utilised portraiture as a vehicle for constructing personal as well as national identity. In an age of extraordinary economic success, religious tension, and political upheaval, portraits of the members of the expanding Dutch *burgerij* who had the means and the desire to commission them, reveal a conscious inclination to define and substantiate a fashioned identity as the new urban elite of a Republic in the making. Rather than concentrating on these portraits as 'mirrors' of society, my study assesses portraits of the family and related art works as sites where identity and changing notions of selfhood were envisioned and performed. The shifting notions of 'family', and the increasing popularity of commissioning portraits seems to signal attempts to configure and imagine their relationship to Dutch society. As Svetlana Alpers theorised, the Dutch Republic was very much a visual culture.⁴ Their depictions of themselves and their families served more than as a mere likeness. These images participated in a real way in positioning individuals and their families in society as a whole.

One of the driving questions of this thesis is: why were so many portraits of the family unit created? In addition, I will address related questions such as: In what ways

⁴ S. Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1983).

did the early-modern Dutch family define itself during the seventeenth century? How was portraiture used as a way to construct and establish identity and how was this related to social, political and cultural changes in the Dutch Republic? How was the family evolving during this period and in what ways did this influence family portraiture? In this thesis I not only survey group portraits of the family, but also expand the field of study to include a collection of portrait materials that were familial in nature, specifically collections of individual portraits and family albums. I engage with these portraits in relation to various textual discourses, including genealogy and legal evidence about the status of a family, the virtue of love in Neo-Stoic and Neo-Platonic philosophy and art literature, egodocuments and autobiography, and finally, moralising literature, plays, and theatre. I propose that the amount of family-related items produced, alongside an exploration of and struggle with identity is a symptom of the anxiety surrounding politics, religion, and social changes, for which the family often served as a metaphor.

The Netherlands, during the seventeenth century, with its high production of family portraits, flourishing economic activities, conflict against Spain, and resultant transformations in politics, religion, and social relations, makes for a fascinating and unique case study. In this introduction I will first give an overview of the special circumstances of the Dutch Republic. I will address the socio-political situation that served to create a fluctuating class identity that was especially associated with the family. Next, I will provide an outline of the trends, statistics, and developments of the early modern Dutch family. This will lead into a discussion of the development of the family-related portrait materials as well as the secondary literature available on the subject. Further, I present the theories of portraiture and identity that are pertinent to the main argument of my thesis. Finally, I summarise the four chapters that make up the

body of the thesis.

The Revolt: Setting the Stage for War, Iconoclasm, and Change

The Netherlands differed greatly from its European neighbors during the seventeenth century.⁵ Under the United Provinces, a republic, power was more decentralised, compared to the monarchies that ruled, for instance, in England and France. The Republic was still very young, as it had only begun officially in 1581 with the signing of the Act of Abjuration, which formally declared its independence from the Spanish Hapsburgs. Issues with Spain had, in fact, begun several years before, when the Dutch revolted against Hapsburg rule, led by William of Orange. Ultimately, the revolt resulted in a war that lasted almost continuously from about 1568 to 1648, apart from a twelve-year truce starting in 1609. Despite the lengthy warfare and distress of the populace, the Dutch were able to rule themselves.

The Dutch Republic was headed by a single person, a stadtholder (*stadhouder*), and though this position was traditionally held by one of the Princes of the House of Orange, stadtholders did not have the same rights and powers as monarchs. He was appointed by provincial authorities and subject to their demands. Each of the seven United Provinces had its representatives in the States-General (*Staten-Generaal*), the federal government. In order to pass any legislation, it was necessary to have majority consent of the representatives of the provinces. The transition to a republic was not completely smooth however, as its formation was improvised from the previous

⁵ On the Dutch socio-political situation see: P. Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland*, trans., S. W. Taylor (London, 1962); S. Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London, 1987); A. Th. van Deursen, *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion and Society in Seventeenth-Century Holland* (Cambridge, 1991); van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*; K. Davids and J. Lucassen (eds.), *A Miracle Mirrored: The Dutch Republic in European Perspective* (Cambridge, 1995); J. de Vries and A. van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge, 1997); J. L. Price, *Dutch Society, 1588-1713* (Harlow, 2000); M. Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century* (New York, 2005); A. Goldgar, *Tulipmania: Money, Honor and Knowledge in the Dutch Golden Age* (Chicago, 2007).

monarchical form of government, Medieval-era policies of states, and the new governing ideas of the Dutch Republic. The burgeoning Republic made the best of the situation as its population was united against a common enemy.

The Dutch population was unified against their Spanish oppressors for a number of reasons. These included a backlash against Charles V's, and later Philip II's, move to centralise power in the Spanish Netherlands as well as the high taxes that the Dutch paid to fund Spanish wars. Furthermore, Protestantism had rapidly taken hold in the country since the sixteenth century. Though Protestants were a minority in the Netherlands, the Spanish felt that it was a threat to the stability of their power and sought to defeat it. In a defensive move, Philip sent troops into the region at the end of the Revolt in 1567, to crush rebellion and maintain Catholic control.

The Iconoclastic Fury (known in Dutch as the *beeldenstorm*), which began in the Low Countries in 1566, was another response to the authority of Catholic Spain and spreading conversion to Calvinism. These episodes began in Flanders and rapidly spread farther north. Hundreds of churches and monasteries were stormed and plundered, with art and decorations being destroyed. Art was especially targeted because Protestants criticised the worship of a material object in place of the divine. It was therefore believed that the relationship engendered between object and worshipper had to be censured.

Philip II's efforts to quash the spread of Protestantism were ultimately in vain as the Reformed Church effectively became the 'public' church of the United Provinces. Anyone who wished to hold public office in the Netherlands had to at least seem to convert to Protestantism and to take an oath. Despite the appearance of a rather authoritarian push to conform to the Reformed Church, the Dutch Republic was reasonably tolerant of other beliefs. Officially, Catholicism was proscribed, but many

clandestine churches existed. It was not until 1650 that at least fifty percent of the Dutch population belonged to the Protestant faith.⁶ One of the most important points to remember was the fact that the Catholic authorities, the priests and bishops, which the Dutch associated with Spain, no longer held the same level of influence and control.

Shifts in the political and social atmosphere led to what is now known as the ‘economic miracle.’ The commercial and economic success of the Dutch was supported by a number of factors. For one, the Republic’s break with Spain resulted in a great financial boom. Due to heavy taxation, it was no longer fiscally sensible for the Dutch population to exist under Spanish rule. Furthermore, the Siege of Antwerp in 1585 and subsequent blocking of the River Scheldt allowed the Dutch to prosper.

Antwerp became an extremely important European entrepôt in the sixteenth century, with international trade connections and many wealthy merchants. With Antwerp’s access to the sea cut off, merchants, tradesmen, and craftsmen immigrated and took their business elsewhere. Most of these individuals traveled north to the Dutch Republic taking their trade relationships and skills with them. The money to fund trade internationally was provided by these Southern immigrants, quickly transforming Amsterdam into a hub of trade. International trade was the key, especially to locations such as the East Indies, where the Dutch could acquire rich trade items such as spices, sugar, and tobacco. All of these events set the stage for what would occur in the seventeenth century, a period that saw great political and religious turbulence, as well as financial success for many of its citizens.

⁶ W. S. Reid, *John Calvin: his Influence in the Western World* (Grand Rapids, 1982), p. 103

The Seventeenth Century: Political Instability and Religious Differences

The 'de facto' establishment of the Dutch Republic in 1609 meant an official separation of the northern territories from the south and the recognition by other governments of the United Provinces as an autonomous federation. While this signaled success for the Republic as a governing body, there were also signs of growing tensions amongst various factions. Most notably, the regime of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt (1547-1619) faced resentment from Prince Maurits (1567-1625), stadtholder and would-be monarch. Separation of the United Provinces from their southern neighbours and continuing tensions over the leadership of the Republic resulted in a crisis within the body politic.⁷ The establishment of a new sovereign state forced its population to develop a distinct identity, however that identity was ever changing with the instability of the government.

This insecurity is reflected in the writings of Hugo Grotius, who suggested a stronger directorate at the centre of the republic.⁸ This was advised because the strength of the stadtholderate was not always clear and often caused tension. Furthermore, many felt that the Raad van State should perhaps possess greater authority than it did. Continuing war with Spain also threw the independence and identity of the Republic into question, as it struggled to free itself from the influence of the Hapsburg regime. Even though peace was reached with Spain in 1648 through the treaty signed in Münster, this did not mean an end to political volatility. After the death of Frederik Hendrik (1584-1647) in 1647, his son Willem II (1626-1650) was appointed stadtholder. However, Willem did not have the same stature as his father, nor the respect of the regents in the States-General, who opposed many of his policy decisions. In 1650, he attempted a coup of the city council of Amsterdam and had six Holland

⁷ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 421.

⁸ Ibid., p. 422.

regents imprisoned in order to intimidate the governing body.⁹ The coup ultimately failed and William died shortly after leaving behind only his infant son Willem III (1650-1702), which led to the First Stadtholderless Period (1650-1672).

Functioning without a stadtholder clearly caused significant changes to the power structures, strengthening the position of city regents, while weakening the authority of the *ridderschap* and the guilds. Johan de Witt (1625-1672), Grand Pensionaris of Holland, effectively became the political leader of the Republic due to Holland's financial and political power. Willem III attempted to secure the office of stadtholder when he came of age, but ran into difficulties with de Witt and the States-General, again proving the volatility and fragility of the United Provinces. He was appointed stadtholder in 1672. This year is known as the 'disaster year' as the Republic became involved in both the Franco-Dutch and Third Anglo-Dutch wars.

Political turmoil bled into religious disputes at the time of the effective 'birth' of the United Provinces. Insecurity had taken hold in the reformed church, as there was rising hostility amongst its preachers. Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) and Franciscus Gomarus' (1563-1641) public disputes over theological doctrines such as predestination led to formation of the Remonstrant and Counter-Remonstrant movements. The controversy was eventually submitted to the States-General for judgment resulting in an edict tolerating both sects in order to prevent further conflict. This, however, did not resolve the dispute. The Synod of Dordrecht was convened in 1618-1619 in order to settle the conflict over the Remonstrant movement. Synod delegates concluded that the articles put forth by the Remonstrants were heretical. These disputes were closely connected to political chaos as the Remonstrants were protected by Oldenbarnevelt, who was beheaded only four days after the final judgment was released.

⁹ Ibid., p. 607

In the wake of such political and religious crises, The United Provinces achieved an unusual level of prosperity during the seventeenth century. In contrast, neighboring European nations were generally experiencing decline.¹⁰ The Dutch became successful in many commercial ventures. Fishing, especially herring fishing, was incredibly important to the economy as companies devised ways to preserve the fresh fish, exporting it across Europe and further afield.¹¹ Unsurprisingly, shipbuilding was another significant industry, which was characterised by the fact that it was based in cities and guild-organised.¹² Other significant industries included textiles, ceramics, arts, such as painting and engraving, papermaking and printing, and food and beverage processing such as brewing, distilling, tobacco processing, and sugar refining. They could also develop their expertise in specialised areas like dairy farming, as the population was not as strongly dependent on their local agriculture as other countries.¹³ The Dutch imported much of their grain from the Baltic area, which protected them against famine.

Merchants were able to leverage their industrial production by offering for sale products that were in demand in other regions. For example, herring, salt, and English wool were sought-after in the Baltic, and these items were not available in the Flemish ports.¹⁴ With trade and travel being the new commercial ventures in the United Provinces, merchants, tradesmen, and sailors were able to become extremely wealthy within a brief period of time. The Netherlands was in an ideal position to expand its trading networks because of its proximity to the trade routes in the Southern Netherlands and its natural geographical placement. Much further international trade was also pursued as the demand for the 'rich trades', such as pepper, grew. The Dutch

¹⁰ Goldgar, *Tulipmania*, p. 7.

¹¹ de Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, p. 243.

¹² Ibid., p. 296.

¹³ Ibid., p. 205

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 352.

East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie or VOC), founded in 1602, was formed in order to address these interests.¹⁵ It became successful early on due to the fact that the network of trading stations from Persia to Japan were constructed quickly.¹⁶ Being involved in the VOC as an investor as it expanded was a 'path to riches' for many, especially in the first half of the century. The VOC was also one of the first companies to offer stock and is closely linked to the establishment of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange, which developed into another way for families to succeed financially.¹⁷ There was a certain amount of discomfort around this new prosperity, perhaps not so much in the moralising sense that Simon Schama describes in *The Embarrassment of Riches* (1987), but more so for the reason that great wealth propelled people to a different class level.

Growing wealth and opportunities attracted more immigration within a very short period. The urban population of Holland grew from just 140,000 to 400,000 during the century while the rural population doubled.¹⁸ The Netherlands became highly urbanised, as many families did not rely on subsistence farming to survive. Many Dutch people therefore became involved in other types of businesses where they could quickly gain an enormous amount of wealth. This, combined with the shifting political and religious situation of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, contributed to a general destabilisation of class identity.

One of the most serious changes experienced in Dutch society at the time was the greater ease of social mobility experienced by the middling sort; those who were neither part of the upper crust nor in the lowest classes. The Dutch equivalent to the

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 383-384.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 387.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 385.

¹⁸ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 279.

middle class was known as the *burgerij*, which roughly translates to bourgeoisie.¹⁹

Burghers were primarily merchants, artisans, fishermen, sailors, farmers and certain other labourers.²⁰ These individuals, many of them immigrants from the Southern Netherlands, had the most to gain from the wave of success that engulfed the Republic. There are a variety of terms used in the definition of class and status, which I will discuss here.

The simplest division of classes has to do with the pre-revolt idea of ‘orders’ or ‘estates.’ The first order was the clergy, the second was the nobility, and the third referred to the huge group consisting of the bourgeoisie, manual labourers, and the poor. Orders were viewed as largely fixed and immovable social positions into which people were born. Post-revolt social divisions within the Dutch Republic began to reflect more of a society of classes rather than orders, as class was a socio-economic group where personal achievement was valued over the lottery of birth.²¹ In the *Belgium Federatum* of 1652, Martinus Schoockius introduced nine different classes to the Dutch Republic, including nobles, patricians, merchants, artisans, fishermen, sailors, farmers, workers, and carters.²² The noble class in the Netherlands consisted of the ‘old nobility’, which were the noble families known ‘of old’, who had been ennobled by a monarch. After the revolt, the nobility or aristocracy (I use these terms interchangeably) also included those who purchased manors and noble titles. The terms patriciate or gentry refer to the ‘minor nobility’, which is a complicated group referring to an upper class with good social position who may or may not have had the same rights to a title, coat of arms, or manor as the nobility. The *Ridderschap* (class of knights), though classed above the

¹⁹ In the text I use the term *burgerij* rather than middle-class in order to refer to the specific Dutch situation.

²⁰ Van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*, p. 21.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20

²² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

untitled nobility, was also not technically part of the high nobility.²³

The *burgerij*, which is generally equivalent to the bourgeoisie or the middling classes, also had its various levels of classification. The more average members of the *burgerij* were merchants, artisans, fishermen, sailors, farmers and other labourers. In the Netherlands, the regent class was part of the governing elite, typically a member of the upper bourgeoisie. Before the revolt, many of these individuals would have been part of the aristocracy in some form. Following the revolt, the regent class was often made up of those members of the bourgeoisie who had earned enough wealth, power, or connections to gain the social capital needed to secure a political position. This occurred in both the Backer and Van Loon families, whose members went from successful merchants to regents in a generation, and whom I discuss in Chapter 2.

Financial success opened the door to the social capital needed to hold public office. Dutch burghers were able to marry into the regent classes and through the connections they gained, become involved in politics. One of the foremost characteristics differentiating the Dutch *burgerij* from their European counterparts was the fact that they were actively involved in the ruling of their cities, despite lacking noble status. The nobility's status in the Netherlands was at odds because of these changes. On one hand, the nobility was still the highest and most powerful class, especially in the countryside. On the other, growing urbanisation and changes in the political system meant that the majority of the power was in the towns.²⁴ Likewise, the Alteratie in 1578, the change of governmental positions from Catholics to Protestants in Amsterdam, pushed many nobles out of the direct line of authority. Moreover, the Spanish monarchy was no longer able to raise families to noble status, causing the

²³ Ibid., p. 23.

²⁴ I should note here that the primary geographical focus of this thesis is the highly urbanised province of Holland.

nobility to shrink. The waning influence of the Catholic Church, which had been supportive of the monarchy, was another factor in their slow demise.

Building a new identity in the wake of these shifts to social, cultural, political, and religious institutions was essential for the merchants, artisans, and tradespeople caught in the crossfire. The phenomenon of merchant and artisans being raised to an elite level was entirely new after the Dutch Revolt.²⁵ An ideal exemplar of the *burgerij* whose identity was destabilised by social changes was the artist. First, it is estimated that there were roughly between 650 and 750 artists living and working in the Dutch Republic, or about 1.5-2 artists per 1,000 inhabitants.²⁶ Thus, this rather large group can function as somewhat representative of the class. Second, artists became wealthier throughout the century and the artistic profession was considered a route to a higher social position.²⁷ For these reasons, the artist plays an important role in the thesis as a barometer of society and culture. The combination of all these changing factors in the socio-political lives of Dutch citizens led to a new valuation of the family.

The unrest in the arenas of politics and religion throughout the century was deeply felt by the Dutch family, which served as metaphor for the state and the church. Martin Luther perhaps expressed this best in commenting upon the fourth commandment 'Honour thy father and mother':

Therefore everything that one calls master stands in the place of the parents and must draw from them their power to rule. It is for this reason that according to Scripture they are all called fathers whenever they fill the post of father in their governments and must carry a fatherly heart toward their subjects. Just as since antiquity the Romans and other peoples called the lord and mistresses of the house *patres et matres familias*, which means housefather and mother, therefore they also called their princes and rulers *patres patriae*, that is, father of their

²⁵ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 344.

²⁶ Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 241. In Delft in 1650, there were 30 painters registered amongst a population of 24,000 people. Compared to the painter's guild of Seville this was impressive because this city was four times the size of Delft and had fewer than 30 painters registered in 1599.

²⁷ Montias, *Artists and Artisans in Delft*, p. 113; Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 350.

country. It is a great shame that we who want to be Christians do not do the same or at least regard and honor them in that way.²⁸

Just as the strong, stable family must be headed by a paterfamilias and nurtured by a mother, so must the Dutch body politic and its religious organisations be structured in an analogous way. The nuclear Christian household represented model miniature versions of both state and church, which is why it was frequently referred to as the ‘little church’ (kleyne kerck) or the ‘little state.’²⁹ The family serves as the primary point connecting the various instances of instability beginning with the establishment of the Republic as a sovereign state and increased economic success, and dovetailing with fractures in views of class identity, an increase in marriages and births during the Truce, an abundance of writing on the family, a trend in autobiographical documentation, and finally and most significantly for this study, a wealth of family-related portraiture. In the next section, I look at the statistics regarding marriage and family, as well as the great amount of writing on the family at the time.

Marriage and Family Life

Quantitative research on the early modern Netherlands, done by scholars such as Donald Haks, Jeroen Dekker, Dirk Damsa and Sherrin Marshall, has given us much

²⁸ D. Albrecht, D. Brenner and J. Luther “Der Grosse Katechismus,” (1529) in D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe (Graz, 1964; 1st ed. Weimar, 1910), vol. 30, part 1, p. 152. ‘Also das alle die man herrn heisset an der eltern stad sind und von yhn krafft und macht zuregieren nemen müssen. Daher sind auch nach der schrift alle Veter heissen, als die ynn yhem regiment das vater ampt treiben und veterlich hertz gegen den yhren tragen sollen. Wie auch von alters her die Römer und andere sprachen herrn und frawen ym haus Patres et matres familias, das ist haus veter und haus mutter, genennet haben. Also auch yhre landsfürsten und oberherrn haben sie Patres patriae, das ist veter des gantzen lands geheissen und die wir Christen sein wollen, zu grossen schanden, das wir sie nicht auch also heissen oder zum wenigsten dafür halten und ehren.” Quoted in K. Moxey, *Peasants, Warriors, and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation* (Chicago, 1989), p. 122.

²⁹ M. Westermann, “‘Costly and Curious, full off pleasure and home contentment’: Making Home in the Dutch Republic’ in Mariët Westermann, et. al., *Art & Home: Dutch Interior in the Age of Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2001), pp. 15-81, p. 54; Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, passim; W. Franits, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 227.

information on the marriages and family lives of seventeenth-century individuals.³⁰

Couples married at a later age than they had previously, with men marrying, on average, before age 27 and women before age 25.³¹ The Dutch Revolt had an effect on marriage as many couples delayed their unions until the conflict settled down. The period between 1570 and 1589 showed a decrease in marriages, while the years from 1590 to 1609, when the Twelve-year Truce was signed, showed a large increase in marriage and births for instance.³² In many cases, marriage was primarily an economic and social institution, arranged for the financial and lineage purposes of the family. Despite these practical concerns, it was considered important that marriage partners be chosen based on common interests and values as well as mutual affection. During this period, it appears that partners began to have greater options and more control in their choice of spouse.³³ While the interests of the family still weighed heavily on marital decisions, it was not unheard to marry a person ‘for love’ rather than for more practical reasons.³⁴ Ensuring that the bride and groom were happy was important, to encourage the birth of many children and the continuation of the family line. Jacob Cats, the famous author and moralist, who was writing at the same time of this increased amount of marriages and births, warned in his domestic advice manual *Houwelyck* (Marriage, 1625) that marriage should not be forced. Though women were expected to completely submit to their husbands once married, it was preferred that couples respect and have fondness for

³⁰ D. Haks, *Huwelyck en Gezin in Holland in De 17de en 18de Eeuw: Processtukken en Moralisten Over Aspecten Van Het Laat 17de- en 18de-Eeuwse Gezinsleven* (Assen, 1982); J. J. H. Dekker, *Het Gezinsportret: over de geschiedenis van opvoeding cultuuroverdracht en identiteit* (Baarn, 1992); D. Damsa, *Het Hollandse Huisgezin (1560-heden)*, (Utrecht, 1993); S. Marshall, *The Dutch Gentry, 1500-1650: Family, Faith and Fortune* (London, 1987). Also see: B. Mook, *The Dutch Family in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, (Ottawa, 1977); H. Peeters, et. al. (eds.), *Vijf Eeuwen Gezinsleven: Liefde huwelijk, en opvoeding in Nederland* (Nijmegen, 1988).

³¹ Damsa, *Het Hollandse Huisgezin*, p. 40.; Marshall, *The Dutch Gentry*, p. 35.

³² Marshall, *The Dutch Gentry*, p. 35.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 36-38. Marshall proves this by citing instances where some marriages were protested by family members.

each other.³⁵

Dutch households were smaller in size and simpler in composition than in England and France.³⁶ Urban families, in particular, tended to be small while families in the eastern and southern parts of the Republic were larger.³⁷ Households were typically made up of the nuclear family only: a father, mother, and on average four to five children.³⁸ Families were smaller for several reasons: later age of first marriage, urbanisation, and widowhood. Though more babies were born when soldiers returned home after the Truce of 1609, high child mortality rates guaranteed smaller families.³⁹ Approximately fifty percent of children died before age eighteen, and about eighty to eighty-five percent of those deaths occurred before the age of five.⁴⁰ Adult mortality rates were high as well and widows and widowers were typically remarried for the sake of the protection of the children.⁴¹ In general, elderly parents did not live with their children. The many elderly care homes in the Netherlands prove this fact.⁴²

Much of the literature on the family, since the publication of Philippe Ariès' book *Centuries of Childhood* (1962), has focused particularly on parent-child relations and the treatment of children in the past. Ariès and other social historians formed a dark image of childhood in the past, claiming that a lack of material about children, especially during the Medieval period, signified a lack of concern for youth. Parents were accused of neglecting their children and showing insensitivity toward the special stage of life that constituted childhood. In Chapter 4, I give a greater description of the findings of Ariès, who remains significant as one of the first historians to spotlight

³⁵ Mook, *The Dutch Family*, p. 26.

³⁶ Haks, *Huwelijk en Gezin in Holland*, p. 223.

³⁷ Damsa, *Het Hollandse Huisgezin*, p. 38.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³⁹ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 264.

⁴⁰ J. Dekker, L. Groenendijk, and J. Verbeekmoes, 'Proudly Raising Vulnerable Youngsters: The Scope for Education in the Netherlands', in J. B. Bedaux and R. E. O. Ekkart (eds.), *Pride and Joy: Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500-1700* exh. cat. (Ghent, 2000), pp. 43-60, p. 57.

⁴¹ S. Ozment, *Ancestors: The Loving Family in Old Europe* (London, 2001), p. 36.

⁴² Damsa, *Het Hollandse Huisgezin*, p. 40.

childhood and family history. Moreover, I discuss the views of historians who have given a more tempered view of childhood in the past, and more relevantly, for the Netherlands, such as Rudolf Dekker.⁴³ Drawing on images of deceased children and family members that were either created or commissioned by families, I show that people showed great care and concern for their loved ones.

The family took on a metaphorical role in Dutch culture. In a culture that was transforming in many ways, family was a stable institution, the foundation of society that was modeled after the government and the church. In fact, the Dutch family was often referred to as a ‘little commonwealth’ or a ‘little church.’⁴⁴ Domestic advice manuals, such as those written by Jacob Cats and the physician Johan van Beverwijck emphasised the significant role that the family should play in nurturing their children intellectually, socially and especially morally. Proponents of the Nadere Reformatie (Further Reformation) movement, lasting from about 1600 to 1750, propagated the belief that reformed people should apply the principles of reformation more stringently to their lives.⁴⁵ Moralists Willem Teellinck and Petrus Wittewrongel encouraged the process of reformation at the level of daily life, starting with the family. Wittenwrongel’s *Oeconomia Christiana* (*Christian Economy*) (1655, 1661) was one of the most important treatises on child rearing at the time.⁴⁶ All of this was closely related to a Calvinist belief in introspection, that a believer could have a direct relationship with God without the aid of an intermediary. Indeed, the belief affected the Calvinist view of the family and of the role of parents in the lives of their children.

When the Catholic Church and its clergy lost its authority as an institution of guidance

⁴³ R. Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography in Holland: From the Golden Age to Romanticism* (Basingstoke, 2000); R. Dekker (ed.), *Egodocuments and History: Autobiographical Writing in its Social Context since the Middle Ages* (Hilversum, 2002).

⁴⁴ Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, pp. 386-388.

⁴⁵ L. F. Groenendijk, *De Nadere Reformatie van het Gezin: De visie van Petrus Wittewrongel op de christelijke huishouding* (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam Ph.D. thesis, 1984), p. 182.

⁴⁶ Dekker, Groenendijk, and Verbeckmoes, ‘Proudly Raising Vulnerable Youngsters’, p. 50.

and instruction, these responsibilities were transferred to Calvinist parents. They were to educate and rear virtuous and upstanding Dutch citizens who would ultimately take on positions in the burgeoning society of the United Provinces. The family was, as van Beverwijck called it ‘the seed of the common state’, and the nursery to the infant Dutch Republic, which I explore in Chapter 5.⁴⁷

Indeed an emphasis on the family was not a ‘new’ concept.⁴⁸ The Dutch did not ‘discover’ the family. Many of the ideas in Cats’ and van Beverwijck’s writings had previously been explored by English Puritans in their didactic writing, much of which was Erasmian in origin.⁴⁹ This does not change the fact that an abundance of this type of literature was published and consumed at the time. We also cannot ignore the unique circumstances of the early modern Netherlands and the wealth of family portraits, family albums, and collections of individual portraits that were amassed during this period.

The amount of family-related portrait materials produced during the seventeenth-century is a testament to the incredible focus on family at the time. This included collections of individual portraits, group family portraits, and family albums, all of which I explore in this study. All of these have different, though related connections to family and the domestic sphere. It is necessary to expand the field of study beyond standard group portraits of the family in order to comprehend the extent to which social, political, and religious circumstances created an emphasis on family and thus an increase in material culture related to the family.

⁴⁷ J. van Beverwijck, *Van de wtneementheyt des vrouwelicken geslachts* (Dordrecht 1643), p. 209. ‘een zaeyeling van een Gemeene sake.’ English translation by Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, p. 386.

⁴⁸ J. J. H Dekker and L. L. Groenendijk, ‘The Republic of God or the Republic of Children? Childhood and Child-rearing after the Reformation: An Appraisal of Simon Schama’s Thesis about the Uniqueness of the Dutch Case’ *Oxford Review of Education* 17:3 (1991), pp. 317-335, p. 327. Dekker and Groenendijk point out the fact that a new emphasis on home and children could be seen in Renaissance Florence.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Family Portrait Collections

In Chapter 2, I explore individual portraits of family members that were displayed together as collections in the home. The tradition of creating collections of individual portraits of family members was deep-rooted. Amongst the Dutch aristocracy, such collections were known as *ahnengalleries*.⁵⁰ The nobility drew upon a long tradition of monarchs and rulers who highlighted their illustrious genealogy by including portraits of significant relations in their family galleries in their castles and manors.

The first recorded instance of an individual being ushered around a family portrait gallery took place at Karlstein Castle in Bohemia in 1414.⁵¹ Wenceslaus (1361-1419), son of Charles IV (1316/29-1378), King of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor, took Edmund de Dwynter (1375-1448), secretary to Anthony of Burgundy (1384-1415), Duke of Brabant, to his family's portrait gallery. There, he was able to present the portrait paintings of all of the former Dukes of Brabant, which was part of the family's Bohemian genealogy. A direct line of descent could be drawn from Charles IV to Charlemagne, which further shores up the distinguished heritage of the family.⁵² In the Spanish Hapsburg court, Philip II of Spain (1527-1598) had a grand gallery of portraits, including his father Charles V and their ancestors. Philip II's power was in a way derived from the noble blood he shared with all of the ancestors who came before him.⁵³ In the Netherlands, the paintings in the Oranjezaal of the Huis ten Bosch, constructed in 1645, were largely dedicated to the heroic achievements of Frederik Hendrik, due to his

⁵⁰ J. Loughman and J. M. Montias, *Public and Private Spaces: Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Houses* (Zwolle, 2000), p. 43.

⁵¹ A. Martindale, *Heroes, Ancestors, Relatives and the Birth of the Portrait* (Maarssen, 1988), p. 5.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ J. Woodall, 'His Majesty's most Majestic Room': The Division of Sovereign Identity in Philip II of Spain's Lost Portrait Gallery at El Pardo', in Jan de Jong, Herman Roodenburg, and Frits Scholten (eds.), 'Beeld en zelfbeeld in de Nederlandse kunst, 1550-1750', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 46 (1995), pp. 52-103, p. 64.

recent death. They were also devoted to celebrating and validating the dynasty and lineage of the Orange-Nassau family.

This practice was adopted on a more bourgeois, domestic level by citizens of the Dutch Republic during the seventeenth century. Amongst the Dutch *burger* family, there was a fashion for commissioning portraits of family members, both living and ancestral, for display in domestic homes. The fact that many portraits were being commissioned is confirmed by artist and art theorist Gerard de Lairesse (1641-1711), who conveyed his annoyance that ‘all and sundry’ had their portraits painted.⁵⁴ Portraits of living family members tended to be displayed in the entrance hall, while portraits of ancestors were generally placed in a rear room of the house, typically upstairs, which were private areas with privileged access.⁵⁵ This trend is confirmed in the writings of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century art critics as well as inventories from seventeenth-century Dutch homes.

Haarlem-based painter Jan Miense Molenaer’s self-portrait with his family members of c. 1635 may in fact be an example of just such a private room with the row of ancestor portraits on the wall (fig. 3). Ancestor portraits were first, a document of the family’s genealogy, intended to be passed down through the generations, which is borne out by the information we have on the inheritance of such portraits in wills. In addition, they served as a means to remember the past. Constantijn Huygens’ comments on the miracle of being able to see his ancestors or that his descendants will know his face, allows a peek into how the many portraits of family members and ancestors were viewed during the period, when he writes:

A small part of art can rightly make me happy:
That small part that lays its hand on the wheel of times

⁵⁴ E. de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw: Huwelijk en Gezin in De Nederlandse Kunst van De Zeventiende Eeuw*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 1986), p. 19.

⁵⁵ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 42.

And present my grandfather's great-grandfather
 To the eye, or the people of today or of yesterday,
 And will let my children's grandchildren inherit
 My face that will die with me and perish,
 Is not that science more master than time?
 It is the perishable self portrayed in oil.⁵⁶

Finally, the ancestor portrait gallery was a means of asserting a certain social status within society. Along with expensive homes, titles, and privileges, the portrait gallery was a way to make an impression upon a network of friends, colleagues, and social cohorts who moved within a specific coterie.

For instance, the collections of portraits commissioned of the ancestors of Gerard Schaep Pietersz (1595-1655) fulfill these criteria; the need to document along with the desire to influence a certain social circle (fig. 4, fig. 5). Each panel contains dozens of miniature portraits of the family, one dedicated to Schaep's mother's side and the other to his father's side. As we will learn in Chapter 2, the long family line represented did not always have the firmest base in reality. The large portrait collections of upwardly mobile families the Backers and the van Loons, both of Amsterdam, similarly showed the wish of the family to have their predecessors, and thus family history, documented in a visual way. Many of these portraits, with certain tweaks and changes to clothing and inclusion of symbols, allude to aspirations to ascend socially and to impress colleagues, friends, and important families that they were merging with through marriage.

⁵⁶ C. Huygens, *Gedichten. Deel 6: 1656-1661*, ed., J.A. Worp (Groningen, 1896), p. 19. 'Een deeltje vande kunst mij te recht verblyden:/Dat deeltje, dat de hand op 't rad legt vande tijden./En stelt mij Grootevaer syn overgroote Vaer/Voor ooghen, of het volck van he'en of gist'ren waer,/En sal myn' kinderen kinds kinderen doen erven/Mijn aensicht, dat met mij gaet sterven en bederven./Is niet lie wetenschap meet meesters dan de tijd?/'T is, her verderffelick in d' Olij geconfijtt.' English translation by K. van der Stighelen, "'Amoris t doloris monumentum' Portraits and how they were perceived in the baroque age', in K. van der Stighelen, et. al. (eds.), *Pokerfaced: Flemish and Dutch Baroque Faces Unveiled* (Turnhout, 2010) pp. 249- 273, p. 249.

Group Family Portraits

The incredible growth and rate of production of group family portraits in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic was extraordinary. It is estimated that around 600 such portraits were created in the first half of the century alone.⁵⁷ Neighboring European countries had family portrait traditions too, but none were as extensive as in the Netherlands.⁵⁸ Painting had also penetrated the middle and lower classes to a much greater extent in the Netherlands than elsewhere, which distinguishes the country further.⁵⁹ According to inventories, around half of all portraits in private homes comprised portraits of identified members of the family.⁶⁰ Group portraits of families were commissioned for a number of reasons: to commemorate a birth, memorialise deceased children, present girls and boys of marriageable age, and to celebrate wedding anniversaries, among other reasons.

Portraiture had been reserved primarily for royalty and the nobility up until the sixteenth century and according to renowned Dutch portrait specialist Rudolf Ekkart, family portraits were still relatively rare during the late sixteenth century in the Netherlands.⁶¹ Families appeared in several capacities in portraits: as donors in

⁵⁷ F. Laarmann, *Families in Beeld: De Ontwikkeling Van Het Noord-Nederlandse Familieportret in De Eerste Helft Van De Zeventiende Eeuw* (Hilversum, 2002), p. 9. Laarmann estimated the total production assuming that extant family portraits make up about one to two percent of the original number.

⁵⁸ Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, p. 10. In Renaissance Italy, there was a marked increase in portraits of the family, but it was small in comparison to the Dutch Republic. Family portrait production came later in both England and France, with the peak in the eighteenth century. In Germany, the portraits that emerged were largely influenced by Dutch examples and we cannot speak of a great rise in family portraiture until the nineteenth-century Biedermeier era. On Italy see: D. O. Hughes, 'Representing the Family: Portraits and Purposes in Early Modern Italy' *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17:1 (1986), pp. 7-38; On France see: N. Z. Davis, 'Ghosts, Kin, and Progeny: Some Features of Family Life in Early Modern France', *Daedalus* 106:2 (1977), pp. 87-114; On England see: K. Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 2006).

⁵⁹ A. J. Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 13; K. van der Stighelen, 'Burgers en hun Portretten' in Jan van der Stock (ed.), *Stad in Vlaanderen: Cultuur en Maatschappij 1477-1787* (Brussels, 1991), pp. 141-156, p. 142. Paintings had penetrated the middle and lower classes in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century but not yet in France, England, or Italy.

⁶⁰ J. Loughman, *Paintings in the Public and Private Domain: Collecting & Patronage in Dordrecht 1620-1749*, (Courtauld Institute Ph.D. thesis, 1993), p. 211.

⁶¹ R. E. O. Ekkart, *Potrettisten en portretten: studies over portretkunst in Holland 1575-1650* (University

altarpieces and as part of the memorial aspect of funerary sculpture.⁶² A typical example, from an anonymous artist, is the Gertz triptych, painted circa 1527 (fig. 6), which would have been created for a family chapel. The center panel is a religious scene, the Lamentation of Christ, while the wings show Willem Gertz and his eight sons. St John, who stands behind the male group, would have had a special connection to the family. His wife, Styntgen Dirck Claesgens, and the couple's eight daughters appear on the right wing panel. Behind them is the Virgin Mary holding the Christ child, whose connection to the mother and her children is more evident.

Around this same period, the independent family portrait was freed from its secondary role on the wings of altarpieces.⁶³ Maerten van Heemskerck (1498-1574) painted one of the earliest autonomous family portraits - the family of Pieter Jan Foppesz. seated around a table (fig. 7).⁶⁴ Herbert Malecki traced the sources of the portrait to devotional images of the Virgin Mary.⁶⁵ In such images, the Madonna and child were often seated behind a table with food. St Joseph gradually began playing a role as well, completing the Holy Family. Though the family portrait seems to have grown out of religious sources such as devotional Madonna images and altarpieces, the autonomous family portrait shed its exclusively religious meanings.⁶⁶ The compositional formula and interaction between the figures of Heemskerck's portrait had a great influence on future family portraiture.

Much of the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century family portraiture was quite mechanical looking, with the heads of those in the group lined up in a row.

of Amsterdam Ph.D. thesis, 1997), p. 17.

⁶² Ibid., p. 58.

⁶³ A. J. Adams, *The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7-1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam*, (Harvard University Ph.D. thesis, 1985), p. 242.

⁶⁴ See: H. Malecki, *Die Familie des Pieter Jan Foppesz. Genese und Bedeutung des Kasseler Familienbildes des Maerten von Heemskerck* (Kassel 1983).

⁶⁵ Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, p. 59.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 60-62.

The source for these seems to have been early militia portraits, both standing portraits and banqueting scenes, as well as the theme of the Last Supper, in which individuals were seated at a table. A portrait of an unknown family seated at the table saying grace before their meal is an excellent example of this type (fig. 8).⁶⁷ The family is gathered around a table in a domestic space, mimicking the setting of last supper scenes. This anonymous artist may have been drawing from earlier portraits, such as that of the family of Pierre de Moucheron (fig. 9). Inspiration may also have come from civic guard portraits, like that of the *Banquet of Members of Amsterdam's Crossbow Civic Guard* (fig. 10). In the same way, the majority of family portraits painted before 1630 were set indoors.⁶⁸ During the 1630s and 1640s, landscapes began to be used as backgrounds for family portraits, which can be seen in the prolific family portrait painter Herman Doncker's portrait of a family and its ancestors set in an amphitheater in a pastoral landscape (fig. 11).⁶⁹

The next revolution in family portraiture arrived with Frans Hals (c. 1582-1666). Though Hals only painted four family portraits in his lifetime, he transformed the subgenre with his lively, active figures. The earliest of these examples shows Gijsbert Claesz. van Campen, his wife, and seven of their ten children posed with naturalness and vigor in a landscape (fig. 12).⁷⁰ There are glances and gestures amongst the family members, something we do not find in many earlier family portraits by other

⁶⁷ See: H.L.M. Defoer, et. al., *Goddelijk geschilderd: honderd meesterwerken van Museum Catharijneconvent* (Zwolle, 2003), pp. 154-155; P.J.J. van Thiel, 'Poor Parents, Rich Children and Family Saying Grace', p. 140; de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, pp. 295-298; E. de Jongh, 'Grape Symbolism in Paintings of the 16th and 17th Centuries', *Simiolus* 7 (1974), pp. 166-191; J. B. Bedaux, 'Fruit and Fertility Symbolism in Netherlandish Portraiture of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Simiolus* 17: 2/3 (1987), pp. 150-168.

⁶⁸ Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, p. 62.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15. More than twenty-five percent of Doncker's production consisted of family portraits, and all were created within a period of about ten years. See also: F. K. Laarmann, 'Herman Meindertsz. Doncker – Ein origineller Künstler zweiten Ranges' *Oud Holland* 114 (2000), pp. 131-180.

⁷⁰ P. Biesboer, 'The identification of a family portrait by Frans Hals recently acquired by the Toledo Museum of Art' *The Burlington Magazine* 155:1319 (2013), pp. 72-76.

artists.⁷¹ In the early twentieth century, it was proposed that the painting originally included their ten children and had been cut down, as it shared remarkable similarities with another work by Hals of three children in the Royal Museums of Fine Arts in Brussels (fig. 13).⁷² Some of the figures direct their attention toward the right side of the composition, making it very plausible that the painting of three children with a goat cart once completed the portrait. Biesboer has proposed that the portrait was conceived on the occasion of the couple's twentieth wedding anniversary.⁷³

In this study, I explore a number of different types of family portraits. Certain works are more along the lines of the types of portraits that Frans Hals produced, where a family commissioned a group portrait from an artist, such as Jan Mijtens (fig. 14) and Nicolaes Maes (fig. 15), both of whom I discuss further in Chapter 4. In addition, in Chapter 3, I examine portraits in which the artist has painted his own family and included a self-portrait. In this type of portrait, such as the picture that Adriaen van der Werff produced in 1697 (fig. 16), the identity of the artist becomes entangled with the portrayal of family. To emphasise the connection between procreation and the creation of art, the artist depicts himself with the tools of his trade, while the family stands in as inspiration for the act of creation and an analogy for his ability to create beautiful things. Another category that I explore, in Chapter 5, is the portrait *historié* (historiated portrait) in which a group of family members is dressed in costume and depicted as participating in a historical or mythological scene. They are thus associated with the attributes or themes of the historical roles they portray, which were meant to positively enhance the status of the family. I look at a number of 'anti-portraits', such as this

⁷¹ See: S. Slive, *Frans Hals* (3 vols., London, 1970), vol. I, pp. 59-68. This portrait went through several evolutions. A child who was born to the family later was added to the portrait, yet not by Hals. For an unknown reason, the Haarlem painter Salomon de Bray (1597-1664) was asked to include the child in the family group, in the lower left-hand corner of the work. The left shoe of the child is signed and dated: 'S. de Bray 16[2]8.'

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64. The canvas was cut prior to the mid-eighteenth century.

⁷³ Biesboer, 'The identification of a family portrait by Frans Hals', pp. 72-76.

portrait by Ferdinand Bol (fig. 17), which would have run counter to all rules of propriety in seventeenth-century Holland. I treat a number of group ‘genre-portraits’ by Jan Steen in this chapter as ‘anti-portraits’ as well. His ‘dissolute household’ scenes (fig. 18) can be viewed as an intense response to many of the harmonious images of familial piety and morality that were prevalent at the time (fig. 8)

Family Memorial Albums

Family memorial albums are a further material object that I examine in this thesis. At the same time as the explosion in the number of family portraits, there was a growing interest in recording the family’s lineage, both textually and visually, in memorial albums. Albums, which were complex and destined for a limited audience, exist in many different forms. Family albums may include, among other elements, financial records, family trees, birth, death and marriage records, poetry, autobiographical accounts, and portraits of both living and deceased members of the family. They must be viewed as part of an environment where there was a great interest in genealogy, a trend in commissioning portraits of the family, and a turning inward towards the family as both a source of stability in turbulent times and foundation of social status. Such albums also belie an interest in the self and identity, as there was an increase in the production of egodocuments at the same time.

The history of the family album is closely bound to the development of egodocumentation. The writing of biography and autobiography gives a clue as to the awareness of self and identity. In ancient Greece and Rome, biographies of famous individuals were composed, such as in Plutarch’s *Lives*. In the early Christian world and through to the Middle Ages, authors wrote the lives of the saints as a model for believers. Though these are examples of relating the details of a life story, they were

often not written by the person who had lived the experience. Before 1500, autobiographies and memoirs were incredibly rare.⁷⁴ In early Renaissance Florence, the first instances of autobiography materialised in the form of *ricordanze*.⁷⁵ These texts were a combination of account book, local chronicle, and diary.

Such texts had their equivalent in the Netherlands as well. The Dutch were a highly literate population, with half the male population able to read and write.⁷⁶ Numerous individuals, from the simplest farmers to the most successful merchants, kept some form of record book, which in Dutch were generally called ‘dagboek’ (diary), ‘memoriaal’ (journal), or ‘familieboek’ (family book). From the sixteenth century, the trend multiplied and as Rudolf Dekker states, became an especially fashionable undertaking after 1750.⁷⁷ The sixteenth-century diaries resembled chronicles, which were listings of events. These eventually included autobiographical elements that began to center on personal life and memoirs, but were often religiously constructed in nature. Throughout the seventeenth century, diaries became even more personally oriented, though many remained rooted to their origin as account books, listings of significant events in the family, and genealogical notes that were intended for a small familial audience.⁷⁸ One of the most famous and prolific diarists of the period was statesman and author Constantijn Huygens, who wrote extensively of his family life, the education of his children, and his academic interests. In the eighteenth century, the diary became a literary genre within itself, with much more of an awareness of presenting an image to

⁷⁴ P. Burke, ‘Representations of the Self from Petrarch to Descartes’ in Roy Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present* (London, 1997), pp. 17-28, p. 22.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 22.

⁷⁶ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography in Holland*, p. 12.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 16-17.

a wider public, and the nineteenth century saw the birth of the 'journal intime' and the new practice of publishing memoirs and autobiographies for public consumption.⁷⁹

Rudolf Dekker maintains that the primary purpose of family albums was to pass on information from one generation to the next.⁸⁰ While this is undeniably true, I show that there are other factors at play as well, including a desire to impress social circles and an exploration of family and identity. In the second chapter I examine the family albums created by the Backer and van Loon families, in the context of the large amount of portraits that they had commissioned throughout the seventeenth century. Both albums are primarily genealogical in their interest, listing ancestors, especially those who were noble or upper class. They included a more visual listing of ancestors as well, in the form of family trees and painted coats of arms. One of the most interesting parts of such albums was the inclusion of portraits of the family. They are very much in dialogue with the portrait collections of the families. For example, in the Backer albums, many of the portraits were copied from existing portraits in the collections, with only the more recent having been drawn from life.⁸¹ These albums are further significant in that they provide a document of the changing status of these families. They were created mainly in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and reflect the fact that a regent culture was developing, as the members of these wealthy families, with humble origins, served roles in politics, ceremonial roles in society, and lived off their lands and assets.

In Chapter 4, I examine a different genre of family memorial album, those which can also be viewed as records of loss, as many of the memories documented in them

⁷⁹ A. Baggerman, et. al. (eds.), *Controlling Time and Shaping the Self: Developments in Autobiographical Writing since the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden, 2011), p. 4.

⁸⁰ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography in Holland*, p. 14.

⁸¹ N. Smit, 'Het Album Backer': 't Famiglieboek waar in een seer groote quantiteyd portraitjes (University of Amsterdam MA thesis, 2003), p. iii.

have to do with the illness and death of fellow family members. The memorial album (*Ghedenck boeck*) of Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm contains several instances of posthumous portraits, particularly of his children (figs. 115-117, 119-123). His album was a complex illustrated memorial book consisting of an autobiography, two plays, a number of poems, songs, and prayers, seventy-seven drawings, and a treatise on paint. I also turn to the unique *Family Scrapbook* of Gesina ter Borch, the relatively unknown sister of Gerard ter Borch, in whose work she often features as a model. The book is a memorial album and collection of art, but also seems to have become a vehicle of grief for Gesina, through which she comes to terms with the loss of her brother Moses via drawings of and poems about him (figs. 133-136). These albums reveal that memories and reminiscences are a critical part in defining relationships and identity, because of the interplay between text and image. They are also material objects that are intended to be held, looked at closely, and thumbed through, engaging the whole body in a physical act of memory.

Family Portraiture in Art History

Alois Riegl must first be recognised for *Das holländische Gruppenporträt* (*The Dutch Group Portraiture of Holland*, English translation 1999), not only for the historiographical significance of its author, but as the first serious exploration of the topic of Dutch group portraits. For example, his method more generally of formally analysing works of art is an important tool in the process of interpretation. Moreover, his emphasis on attention and the role of the beholder is imperative to considering subject/object boundaries in portraits. There are, however, several reasons why I do not further pursue or utilise the theories proposed in *The Dutch Group Portraiture of Holland*. To begin with, at the very beginning of the text, Riegl states that family

portraits are excluded from his group of materials. He reasons that the family portrait should be categorised as an individual portrait because:

A husband and wife are, so to speak, two sides of the same coin, their children of the same stamp, and all of them are naturally of the same mintage. The family resemblance leads to a natural unity in a work of art that precludes the need for any special tricks of pictorial conception or composition.⁸²

Despite his explanation, the reason for the exclusion of family portraits may have been rather to simply narrow the focus of the study or perhaps because of lack of access to family portraits.⁸³

Secondly, Riegl's approach was firmly rooted in the empiricism of the nineteenth century, considering art in terms of the scientific method, which meant a classification according to a hierarchy of values.⁸⁴ For Riegl, there were three chronological stages of development from external to internal coherence in the group portraits, in short the 'symbolic symmetrical' phase with attributes connoting common membership, which progressed to the 'genre' phase in which an activity brought the group together, and culminating in the 'dramatic scene' stage where an activity was contrived to both subordinate the figures and put them in relation with the spectator.⁸⁵ The linear progression used by Riegl is impossible to conform to the family portrait genre for a number of reasons. The volume of materials in question is large and painted by a multiplicity of individual artists, a third of whom are unknown.⁸⁶ Because of the limited audience of family portraits, a number of different strategies were devised by artists to portray the family, resulting in numerous different compositional

⁸² A. Riegl, *The Group Portraiture of Holland* (Los Angeles, CA, 1999), p. 62.

⁸³ F. Laarmann, 'Riegl and the Family Portrait, or How to Deal with a Genre or Group of Art', in R. Woodfield (ed.) *Framing Formalism* (2000), pp. 195-214, p. 198. The *Dutch Group Portraiture of Holland* explores Dutch militia and patrician portraits, which were displayed publicly and more easily accessible, while family portraits tended to be in private collections.

⁸⁴ M. Olin, *Forms of Representation in Alois Riegl's Theory of Art* (University Park, 1992), p. xviii.

⁸⁵ M. Iversen, *Alois Riegl: Art History and Theory* (London, 1993), p. 105.

⁸⁶ Laarmann, 'Riegl and the Family Portrait', p. 205.

developments, many of which cannot be traced to a single individual.⁸⁷ The family portrait's progression through the century is complex and multilayered and cannot be simplified to a unitary line of development.

Thirdly, Riegl concludes that the *Kunstwollen* (will to art) of Dutch group portraiture expresses the 'Dutch national character' and the idea of the 'Dutch national character' comes from the works of art themselves. This argument is weakened by the fact that not only is it circular, since Riegl starts from the works of art themselves, he tends to ignore the sociohistorical evidence. In this thesis, sociohistorical evidence is a significant part of interpreting portraits and their functions.

Finally, I take issue with the way in which Riegl relates formal aspects of paintings and history. For instance, his discussion of Dirck Jacobsz' 1529 militia group portrait reports that because the captain of the group is portrayed on the same level as his men, and is in fact pointed out by their gestures, that this betrays a democratic spirit amongst the members of the group.⁸⁸ This claim is in no way substantiated by biographical details of the relationship between the sitters or historical notes on the militia group. Portraits, as my thesis demonstrates, must be deeply entrenched in their cultural and social circumstances in order to interpret them with any kind of meaning.

The topic of family portraiture in seventeenth-century Holland has certainly been broached previously, in 1950 by Herbert Malecki, and in 1972 with Jörg Oberhaidacher's thesis from the University of Vienna.⁸⁹ These scholars were among the first to recognise the origins of the early modern Dutch family portrait, such as the

⁸⁷ Ibid. Laarmann presents the example of Marianne Giesen, who in her thesis attempted to put forth Frans Hals as the inventor of the informal family portrait in a landscape genre. However this cannot be proven because other examples exist from the same period.

⁸⁸ Olin, *Forms of Representation in Alois Riegl's Theory of Art*, p. 165.

⁸⁹ H. Malecki, *Familienbildnis Das im 16. Und 17. Jahrhundert. Seine vorstufen, seine entwicklung und die Bezielungen zur familiaren Lebensform* (University of Gottingen Ph.D. thesis, 1950); J. Oberhaidacher, *Das Holländisch Familienbild des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (University of Vienna Ph.D. thesis, 1972).

altarpiece with donor portraits, and to trace its motifs and compositional forms.

Oberhaidacher's thesis was ultimately unsuccessful because he followed the theoretical schema that Alois Riegl used for militia and civic group portraits in *The Group Portraiture of Holland*.

Though it does not directly concern family portraiture, David Smith's *Masks of Wedlock* (1982) on Dutch pendant portraits of married couples was important in the development of theories used in the interpretation of portraiture. Smith's thesis is problematic in that he did not distinguish greatly enough between 'real' people and their portrayal in portraits. Using Erving Goffman's theories of performance and roles, he interpreted the true attitudes and beliefs of unidentified people based on how they were portrayed in their portraits.

Eddy de Jongh's influential catalogue for the 1986 exhibition at the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw: Huwelijk en Gezin in de Nederlandse Kunst van de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Portraits of Loyalty and Faithfulness: Marriage and Family in Dutch Art of the Seventeenth Century) is another significant resource for the question of the interpretation of family portraits, albeit from a strongly iconological perspective. The introduction is arranged thematically; de Jongh addressed various motifs used in family portraits and their meanings. The individual entries on works of art are filled with extremely useful information, especially concerning iconography and biographical information.

Marianne Giesen's 1997 dissertation, *Untersuchungen zur Struktur des holländischen Familienporträts im XVII Jahrhundert* (Studies on the Structure of Dutch Family Portraits in the Seventeenth Century), presented a different approach to categorising family portraits from the earlier dissertations by developing a framework for a network of sources and developments. She distinguished among the various

compositional formats used by local schools and the leading artists in those schools, concluding that family portraits did not develop along a single line, but that multiple image traditions influenced the family portrait.

The most recent study, Frauke Laarmann's *Families in beeld: de ontwikkeling van het Noord-Nederlandse familieportret in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (*Families in Images: The Development of the Northern Netherlandish Family Portrait in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century*, 2002) draws upon both de Jongh's and Giesen's work, but also delves more deeply into the function of family portraits in the home than previous studies. Primarily, the book focuses on tracing a stylistic and compositional chronological development of the portrait as well as identifying the prominent portraitists and areas of activity during the period. Laarmann's study is most useful to mine when she examines inventory data and speculates on the possible meaning that family portraits held for their owners.⁹⁰ However, I differ greatly from her view, as will be seen in Chapter 2.

Portraiture in Theory

Perspectives on portraiture and more comprehensive theoretical evaluations of the genre in recent decades have been paramount to this study's inception, especially most recently, Marcia Pointon's *Portrayal and the Search for Identity* (2013), as well as those of Richard Brilliant and Shearer West.⁹¹ These studies in English were among the first to attempt to address portraiture in a general sense. It must be noted though, that speaking of portraiture in a general sense is extremely tricky. Portraiture is a genre that is specific to time, place, and the identity of the sitter(s). This may be why most of the information about portraiture prior to such studies was found in monographs on artists.

⁹⁰ Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, see pp. 45-51.

⁹¹ R. Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London, 1991); S. West, *Portraiture* (Oxford, 2004).

For studies of Dutch portraiture, much portrait theory was incorporated into examinations of Rembrandt and Frans Hals.

Some of the most fruitful studies on portraiture have come from collections of essays. For example, the 1989 issue of the *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* was a special issue on the topic of portraits. The contemporary experts on Dutch portraiture, such as Rudolf Ekkart, Joanna Woodall, Lyckle de Vries, and H. Perry Chapman all contributed essays on specific topics and case studies. This has been an incredibly productive way of studying portraiture, as seen in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (1997), a compilation of articles edited by Joanna Woodall, which has become a major reference work in the study of portraiture. Most recently, the anthology *Pokerfaced: Flemish and Dutch Baroque Faces Unveiled* (2010), edited by Katlijne van der Stighelen, contributed a number of insightful essays to the cause of the in-depth study of portraiture.

The most significant point of departure though, and the impetus for studying the materials in terms of identity, is Ann Jensen Adam's recent publication, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (2009). Adams maintains, as her thesis, that portraits play a role in providing an interpersonal psychological experience that helps to shape and affect identity—the identities of both sitter and viewer.⁹² She presents a stimulating theoretical framework, which is, regrettably, weakened by her effort to fit individual portraiture, marriage portraiture, and group portraiture all under that structure, as it is challenging to apply her method to both communal and individual identity. One full chapter is dedicated to family portraiture, specifically two case studies, one of Willem de Passe's print depicting the family of Elisabeth of Bohemia (c. 1624, The British Museum) and

⁹² Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities*, p. 4.

the other of Jurriaen Jacobson's *Portrait of the Family of Michiel de Ruyter* (1662, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). Her argument works well with the de Passe print, because it is of a very public figure, allowing her to correlate the private sphere with the social order.⁹³ However, the De Ruyter family portrait was hung in a private home, though it was of a well-known figure in society. I question how a portrait originally intended for a private context would work to shape communal identity. Moreover, Adams employs anachronistic approaches from psychoanalysis to explain the psychological process experienced by the viewer of a portrait, which makes her theory problematic, because many of the references seem irrelevant to the Netherlands in the seventeenth century

Adams expands on previous theoretical studies of identity and self-fashioning in Dutch seventeenth-century portraiture, such as Joanna Woodall's Introduction and essay, 'Sovereign Bodies: The Reality of Status in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraiture,' in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (Manchester, 1997). In these essays, she argues for a less homogenous middle class seeking to position itself strategically within society. Woodall claims that the nobility's reliance on blood line made it inseparable from the body, while the urban elites were detached from the body in order to justify a position of honour that did not depend on biology.⁹⁴ She further calls attention to the fact that portraits play upon a dualistic relationship of external appearance and internal selfhood.⁹⁵ I rely greatly on Woodall's theory, but hope to problematise it slightly in my second chapter, by pointing out that there is need for nuance, due to the fact that so many portraits were intended for private display. By focusing on the physically private and personal reception of such portraits within the

⁹³ R. van Leeuwen, 'Review of Ann Jensen Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community*' *Historians of Netherlandish Newsletter and Art Review of Books* 28:1 (2011), pp. 32-33, p. 32.

⁹⁴ J. Woodall, 'Introduction' in J. Woodall (ed.), *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (Manchester, 1997), pp. 1-25, p. 16.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, see pp. 7, 9-19.

home, I hope to take the concept further.

The point of origin of both Adams' and Woodall's investigations seems to be H. Perry Chapman's innovative, though contentious, study of Rembrandt, some of the first analytically rigorous research of its kind to posit Rembrandt's self-portraits as a sustained examination of self and identity.⁹⁶ Instead of reading Rembrandt's self-portraiture in the tradition of a map of his life's tragedies, she instead detected a strategy to position himself as an artist.⁹⁷ Rembrandt played with various roles, tried on masks, and was clearly aware of his ability to fashion his 'self'.

Harry Berger, who also took Rembrandt as a primary source of focus, contributed towards the notion of the portrait and the identity as a performance, emphasising the contrived nature of the portrait in his 2000 text *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance*. Berger pushes for the portrait to be treated as an indexical icon in that it purports to denote by resemblance the act of portrayal that produced it.⁹⁸ Given that I wish to treat portraits as 'sites where identity and changing notions of selfhood were envisioned and performed', his theory contributes fundamentally to the thesis, especially in considering the sticky concept of how the portrait proposes to represent 'self' and 'identity.' Before going further, it might be appropriate to review the concepts of 'self' and 'identity' in the early modern world.

⁹⁶ H. P. Chapman, *Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth Century Identity* (Princeton, 1990); C. Ford, 'Review of Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Identity by H. Perry Chapman' *The Burlington Magazine* 133:1062 (1991), pp. 630-631, p. 631. Charles Ford, for example, pointed out the fact that no self-portraits were found in Rembrandt's inventory, so it is unclear whether they were important to him. Chapman also received a great deal of criticism in the catalogue published to accompany the 1999 exhibition 'Rembrandt by Himself' (held at the National Gallery of art, London and the Mauritshuis, The Hague). See: C. White and Q. Buvelot (eds.), *Rembrandt by Himself* exh. cat. (London, 1999).

⁹⁷ C. P. Schneider, 'Review of Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Identity by H. Perry Chapman' *The Journal of Modern History* 64:4 (1992), pp. 831-833, p. 831.

⁹⁸ H. Berger, 'Fictions of the Pose: Facing the Gaze of Early Modern Portraiture', *Representations* 46 (1994), pp. 87-120, pp. 98-99; H. Berger, *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford, 2000), Chapter 8.

Brief History of Early Modern Selfhood and Identity

In the twenty-first century, individuals define themselves around, among many other factors, aspects of gender, race, personality, sexual orientation, and creed which are singular to each individual. Post-modern identity is fractured, according to Cynthia Freeland, not a continuous, enduring entity.⁹⁹ Contemporary society has inherited this view from the seventeenth century, when philosophers began more actively exploring the concept of ‘the self.’¹⁰⁰ Earlier ideas about identity revolved around qualities that manifested physically, through facial expression, body, and deportment. Thus, it is crucial to understand the shift in ideas about the self that occurred in the seventeenth century in order to be able to comprehend its significance with regard to portraiture.

Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), influential French writer and statesman, was one of the first intellectuals to begin posing questions about personal singularity in the Western world. He famously asked the question, ‘What do I know?’ and proposed the idea of the mind as a storehouse of memory.¹⁰¹ The starting point, though, for most discussions of identity during this period is English Enlightenment philosopher John Locke’s (1632-1704) *Essay on Human Understanding* (1694). Locke was mainly concerned with the materiality of the soul and the persistence of identity over time.¹⁰² He proposed that the mind was built up of mental acquisitions and the self is a product of experience and education.¹⁰³ Locke’s account of personal identity was generally considered too narrow by other philosophers, as he considered only the inner self and not the outer. One of these thinkers was Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716), who

⁹⁹ C.A. Freeland, *Portraits and Persons: A Philosophical Inquiry* (Oxford, 2010), p. 80.

¹⁰⁰ West, *Portraiture*, p. 29.

¹⁰¹ R. Porter, ‘Introduction’ in R. Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present* (London, 1997), pp. 1-14, p. 3.

¹⁰² Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, p. 85. Locke was the first to engage in thought experiments about the possibility of transferring one person’s mind into another person’s body.

¹⁰³ Porter, ‘Introduction’, p. 4.

argued that individuals who lack memory of the past can be provided with a ‘middle bond of consciousness’ through the testimony of others.¹⁰⁴ Such conclusions stem from an older discourse and as these essays appear at the end of the century, it is necessary to consider ideas that came before.

The term ‘person’ in the seventeenth century did not have one sole definition. Normally the term referred to an individual human being but could also refer to an aspect or quality of an individual. Etymologically, the word comes from the Latin ‘persona’ which is a translation of the Greek ‘prosopon.’ The Greek word originally referred to the mask by which an actor declares his role to an audience.¹⁰⁵ The term was originally employed to designate a role or a character on the stage, but the meaning eventually transferred from theatrical use to daily life.

Christian doctrine later transformed the meaning of ‘persona’, rejecting the Roman understanding and adopting the meaning of ‘person’ as a responsible human agent.¹⁰⁶ It was important for Christian doctrine to be able to define the term ‘person’ insofar as it related to the doctrine of the Trinity as well as to the concept of life after death, specifically that the self endured in death just as it had in life. The definition of the word and a consideration of personal identity were normally subsumed by the consideration of larger theological issues. Before the introduction of Cartesian thinking, it was widely held that the ‘person’ was an individual substance of a rational nature, consisting of body and soul together, as we find in the writings of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274).¹⁰⁷

René Descartes (1596-1650) did not take issue with the idea of the ‘person’ as

¹⁰⁴ K. Atkins, (ed.), *Self and Subjectivity* (Oxford, 2005), p. 21

¹⁰⁵ U. Thiel, ‘Personal Identity’ in D. Garber and M. Ayers (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 868-912, p. 868.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 869.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 871.

an individual rational substance, nor did he seek to reinvent or reintroduce the Roman origins of the word. In fact, Descartes makes very little use of the technical terms ‘persona’ and ‘personne,’ in his *Discourses on the Method* (1637), only utilising them in reference to the body and soul as one.¹⁰⁸ Descartes introduced the original concept of the body and soul as two separate substances—the body being material and the soul, immaterial, neither able to exist without the other. Descartes placed less emphasis on the body, because for him, the soul contained the essence of the self. The self was a distinct substance and a ‘thinking thing’ and thought was the essence of the soul. Descartes also defined thought in terms of consciousness and related consciousness to one’s thoughts. Since the mind or the soul is always thinking and consciousness accompanies thought, then the soul is always conscious. The self is always consciously engaged in activity and our comprehension of ourselves as thinking beings is based on this consciousness, which is constantly linked with our thoughts. This forms the foundation of the knowledge we have of ourselves as individuals. Self-knowledge thus allows us to individuate ourselves from other beings: ‘I think, therefore I am’.¹⁰⁹ Our soul is what forms the identity of our body. It does not change throughout time and it is distinct from other individuals. Naturally, there were responses to Descartes’ theory, but his philosophy of body and mind was a dominating force of the period.

For instance, Dutch philosopher of Jewish-Portuguese descent, Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), in opposition to Descartes, believed that the mind can neither imagine anything nor recollect past things, except while the body endures.¹¹⁰ Identity for him required a continuity of memory, which necessitated continuity of the body. Unlike Descartes and his followers, he felt that the soul was not immortal. Montaigne

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 873.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 874.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 879.

and French mathematician, writer, and philosopher, Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), had always maintained that the emotional side was central to the qualities that make up the personality.¹¹¹ This was likely related to the old Roman notion of ‘person.’

The entry for ‘identiteit’ in the *Etymologisch Woordenboek* shows that the word comes from the French ‘identité’. ‘Identité’ has its roots in the Latin ‘identitas’ which is a translation of the Greek word ‘tautotès’. ‘Tautotès’ derives from the words to (the) and auto (self).¹¹² It is clear that a concept of identity was entrenched in Dutch society. Italian courtier Baldassare Castiglione’s *The Courtier* (1528), and later Dutch books of manners that were based on it, taught readers that one should ‘know thyself’.¹¹³ Another important concept promoted by such manuals was that of ‘impression management’, meaning that one was expected to inhabit roles and to control behavior. They demonstrate the understanding that individuals had of putting an identity out into the world, as well as the complicated interactions that individuals must contend with in terms of the boundaries between inner self and outer (family, city, community, boss, clients).

Identity in Theory

When discussing the notion of identity in a theoretical sense, in connection with portraiture, most art historians have relied on the sociological model of Erving Goffman or the analysis of Renaissance literature of Stephen Greenblatt.¹¹⁴ Goffman’s seminal work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1971), describes life as a theatrical performance, considering the ways in which people direct and control their actions and

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² P.A.F van Veen and N. van der Sijs, *Etymologisch Woordenboek: De Herkomst van onze woorden* (Utrecht/Antwerp, 1989), p. 349.

¹¹³ Burke, ‘Representations of the Self from Petrarch to Descartes’, p. 19.

¹¹⁴ See: D. R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Marriage Portraiture* (Epping, 1982); Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities*.

the reactions of others to their persona, a metaphor which can be useful in considering the relationship between portrayed and audience in seventeenth-century portraiture.

The potential pitfall in this view is that the self is viewed as a 'fiction', which has the effect of eclipsing social and biological accounts of the formation of self.¹¹⁵

Greenblatt, in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (1980), proposes 'self-fashioning' as the process by which an individual (in his case, Renaissance gentlemen, some at the English court) constructed an identity in order to adhere to the norms and standards determined by society. Greenblatt, as a Foucauldian, focuses on discourses of power directing the individual's response, where the subject, or rather the position he/she takes, ultimately remains empty. His theory also falls short in probing the nature of family, in that there is an over-emphasis on how the *individual* presents him or herself and responds to social pressures. We see here possible remnants of Jacob Burckhardt's discovery of the Renaissance 'individual' in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, written in 1860. Burckhardt's discovery resulted in placing too much stress on the development of the understanding of the individual and too little importance put on the collective. In contrast to these scholars, I would like to re-emphasise the necessity of the collective in the formation of identity as well as the idea that identity is formed within society, not positioned against it.

Correctives to these 'self as fiction' and individual-centric views have come to the fore in recent years, which are more appropriate to apply to a study of families and their portraits. For this reason, I turn to the thesis formulated by John Jeffries Martin in *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (2004). He hypothesises that there was no sense of 'self' in the modern connotation during the Renaissance period and criticises Greenblatt

¹¹⁵ J. J. Martin, 'The Myth of Renaissance Individualism' in Guido Ruggiero (ed.), *A Companion to the Worlds of the Renaissance* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 208-224, p. 210.

for placing too much emphasis on the self-aware individual.¹¹⁶ In fact, Medieval scholars maintain that individualism, as a concept, began to emerge in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.¹¹⁷ He identifies five models of the self, based on a study of Renaissance treatises, etiquette books, dialogues, letters, memoirs, confessions, the visual arts, and Venetian Inquisitorial records.

Martin differentiated himself from other scholars in that he extended his research beyond the lives of upper class men. He instead focused his attention on members of the middle class: medical students, journeyman, and healers.¹¹⁸ He claims that Renaissance identities were not about adopting one particular stance, self, or identity, but rather about how different stances affect one's relation to the world and to others. According to Martin, social groups, such as family, church, guild, or village, had enormous influence on the lives of early modern people and that they were very much defined by their relationships to their community.¹¹⁹ Identity during the early modern period existed as a relationship between the internal self and external factors. It is with this theory of identity in the seventeenth-century Netherlands that I have explored a number of case studies.

Bronwen Wilson, studying Renaissance portraiture, has also followed Martin's theories in relation to portraiture by questioning the Renaissance individual. She argues that portraits were fundamental in the process of interiority. While inwardness may or may not be artifice, she contends that more focus must be put on the relation between inner thoughts and outward words and actions.¹²⁰ Wilson links the greater appearance

¹¹⁶ J.J. Martin, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 6, 13 Martin sees Burckhardt and Greenblatt as being too entrenched in their cultural situations to make a sound historical argument.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹¹⁸ R. L. Martinez, 'Review of Myths of Renaissance Individualism by John Jeffries Martin' *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 37:4 (2006), pp. 1173-1174, p. 1173.

¹¹⁹ Martin, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism*, p. 10.

¹²⁰ B. Wilson, 'The Renaissance Portrait: From resemblance to representation' in John Jeffries Martin (ed.), *The Renaissance World* (New York, 2007), pp. 452-480, p. 455.

of portraiture with the arrival of for example, books of the manners, such as the well-known *Il Cortegiano* (1528),¹²¹ and with the necessity that people begin to carry identity papers due to early state-formation.¹²² I follow Wilson in pursuing the potential of the portrait in managing identity when in fact people of the early modern people had multiple, unfixed identities.¹²³

Summary of Chapters

There are four chapters that make up the body of this thesis. In each chapter, I focus on specific works of art as case studies. These objects were chosen for their suitability in highlighting certain concepts and anxieties about identity and the family in its cultural context at their extremes.

In Chapter 2, I explore the complex ways in which family and ancestor portraits functioned to construct a new type of burgher identity in early modern Holland. Ancestor portrait galleries were historically an aristocratic assertion of power, a means by which to unequivocally represent one's bloodline to a spectator, and to oneself. In the shifting social situation of the Dutch Republic, urban burghers relied less on their past history and blood relations to prove their wealth and status. Their focus was on the present and on their ability to propel themselves upward in society by means of personal achievement and financial gain.

As we see in a self-portrait of Jan Miense Molenaer with his family (fig. 3), this new conception of family history and identity has been actualised. I argue that, in the eyes of the Dutch burgher, the present accomplishments and acquisitions of the family are the most pertinent and significant elements of their identity, not the past. Two case

¹²¹ B. Wilson, 'The "Confusion of Faces": The Politics of Physiognomy, Concealed Hearts, and Public Visibility' in Bronwen Wilson and Paul Yachnin (eds.), *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge* (New York, 2010), pp. 177-192, p. 178.

¹²² Wilson, 'The Renaissance Portrait', p. 460.

¹²³ Ibid., pp. 462-471.

studies of seventeenth-century Amsterdam families further demonstrate this new model of family identity. Both the Backer and van Loon families originally immigrated to Amsterdam from other Dutch towns and gained personal and political success through intermarriage with regent families. Due to commercial pursuits, both families became wealthy and acquired luxury goods and symbols of wealth. The portrait collections of the two families, influenced by aristocratic models, could be viewed just as representations of wealth and status, but, the evidence from inventories reveals that these portraits were also for personal enjoyment—kept in private back rooms and shown only to those closest to the family. The very fact that these portraits were important to the family and not merely used as superficial symbols of wealth and status is confirmed by a bitter legal dispute fought over the Backer collection. Similarly, the van Loon collection, though never challenged with legal action, remained greatly intact over time.

In Chapter 3, I argue that the artist Adriaen van der Werff, in his self-portrait with his family (fig. 16), attempts to engage in a dialogue concerning the virtue and status of Dutch artists during the seventeenth century. This self-portrait allowed him to create a public identity, one that was concerned with his artistic status while, at the same time, firmly rooted in the so-called *burgerlijk* persona within Dutch culture. The artist occupied a precarious position, as a manual labourer but also as creator of beautiful and precious works of art. Manual labourers were often viewed as carrying out their work for profit, rather than for honour and love. I argue that artists used their families in self-portraits as a vehicle by which to express the virtuous love that they possessed for their work. In order to describe his engagement with Dutch values in society, I will look into the concept of 'virtuous love' during the period, the notion that love was associated with honourable living and high status. As I will show, the portrait's connection with this theme highlights other aspects of identity, including artist lineage and reproduction,

played out in this image artistically as well as biologically. Furthermore, my discussion includes other examples of self-portraits of artists with their families. A replica of the work, which van der Werff produced in 1699 (fig. 91), exhibiting seemingly slight changes to the composition, was created, however, with completely different intentions. As I will demonstrate, the second portrait was intended for van der Werff's studio, enacting the artist's personal identity in day-to-day interaction. Van der Werff used his own family as the model for the painting and thus as basis for his identity as a painter. This chapter explains how the two portraits operate in concert, and can be seen as reflecting different aspects of van der Werff's identity as a professional painter by virtue of their reception and function.

Chapter 4 begins by examining the *Ghedenck boeck* (Memorial Book) of Jan Sieuwertsz. Kolm, a complicated compilation of autobiography, family portrait, sketchbook, as well as prose and poetry, which has been given insufficient analysis in the scholarship (figs. 115-117, 119-123). In fact, very little attention has been given to such albums in general. Despite its complexity, this text is valuable because in it we see something of the way in which families attempted to position themselves in society, which is not shown in portraiture. Such texts are part of a growing trend during the period to write about the family among burghers of various social circles, which can be viewed as symptomatic of a struggle concerning identity in the early modern Dutch Republic. Kolm's album and others like it similarly reflect crises around identity, but they also reveal something further. The albums show that memories and reminiscences are crucial to defining relationships and identity, especially as the family is one of the most significant aspects in the definition of self. I will further contextualise Kolm's *Ghedenck boeck* by exploring the famous autobiographical writings of Constantijn Huygens as well as three lesser known diarists. Huygens is of specific significance here

as he can be called an early ‘theorist’ of portraiture when, in his writings, he reflects on the portraits he had commissioned of himself and his family.

Memorial albums were not only vital for their role in memorialising the family, but can also be viewed as records of loss, as many of the memories documented in them have to do with the illness and death of fellow family members. To expand this discussion, I turn to the unique *Family Scrapbook* of Gesina ter Borch, the relatively unknown sister of Gerard ter Borch, in whose work she often features as a model (figs. 129-131, 133-136, 138). The book is a memorial album and collection of art, but also seems to have become a vehicle of grief for Gesina, through which she comes to terms with the loss of her brother, Moses, via drawings of and poems about him (figs. 133-136). To conclude this chapter, I will view these expressions of grief against the prevailing attitudes towards death, and the wealth of portraits of deceased children in family portraits by artists such as Jan Mijtens (fig. 14), one of the few specialists of family portraiture, as well as Nicolaes Maes (fig. 15), who created several similar portraits.

The last chapter deals with the ways in which families have defined themselves visually by the morals and virtues expressed in the domestic advice manuals and moralistic writings that were woven into the fabric of Dutch life and culture. Though we cannot always know the ways in which people behaved in their day-to-day life, we can get a sense of the kind of standards to which they held their family through their self-images. In the first section, I will examine a number of portraits that depict the sitters in traditional roles in order to explore how families were expected to instruct their children morally, socially and academically. I will primarily be dealing with portraits of reformed families and will refer to Protestant ideas on child rearing.

For example, we see this in the portrait of an unknown family by an artist from the circle of Pieter de Hooch (fig. 147), in which the mother of the family holds a copy of Jacob Cats' *Houwelyck* (Marriage, 1625). Cats, poet and statesman, was the leading moralist of his time and shaped the virtues and ideals of Dutch society with his writings. In the first section, I will examine a number of portraits that depict the sitters in traditional roles in order to explore how families were expected to instruct their children morally, socially and academically. The question raises as to how moralistic these portraits actually are. By juxtaposing these images of virtue with the topsy-turvy households of Jan Steen (1626/27-1679), that turned these idealised and rather unrealistic-looking homes of so many family portraits into farce (fig. 18), I attempt to articulate the highly constructed, illusory nature of such images and thus the family's identification with such high, moral standards. In the third section, I look at the remarkable practice of the commissioning of 'portrait historiés' (historiated portraits) by families (fig. 181). As we will see, the narrative was frequently representative of an ideal family life and familial virtues, however, in the examples I examine, the sitters are acutely aware of the roles that they play. I look at a number of portraits that do not, in fact, idealise the family. Instead, they throw light on the obvious fiction and fantasy involved in such portraits. We have seen, in the previous three chapters, how ideology worked closer to home, in the struggle of constructing an identity in a turbulent, changing Dutch society. In this chapter, I examine the situation more abstractly, in terms of the prevailing attitudes towards family during the period, and how certain artists and patrons responded to the pressures of the idyllic Dutch family, the 'fountain and origin' of the Dutch Republic.

Chapter 2

Portraits within Family Portraits: Lineage, Legacy, and the Construction of Identity

Jan Miense Molenaer's *Self-Portrait with His Family* of c.1635 shows a seventeenth-century Dutch domestic interior with a typical black and white tiled floor (fig. 3). We see a group of musicians holding various instruments in the foreground; from left to right the performers play a cittern, a violin, a theorbo lute and a violoncello, while the woman at the center of the composition, her hand raised, sings and beats the rhythm of the music. Two children to the right of the composition do not take part in the musical assembly, instead the young boy blows bubbles and the young girl, clutching a pair of gloves, gazes at the viewer. The members of the group can be identified as the artist Molenaer's brothers and sisters: Adriaen, Anthony, Bartholomeus, Nicolaes (Klaes) Janssen, Geertruyt, Lucia and Marietge Jans.¹ From documents, it is known that the youngest, Nicolaes (Klaes) Janssen was born in 1629, thus he must be the young boy blowing bubbles standing to the right of the artist, Molenaer, who is easily identifiable as he is not playing an instrument (though perhaps leading the group in song?), and has set himself slightly in front of the family group.² On the wall behind are a set of pendant portraits of a man and a woman—the parents of Molenaer and his siblings. On the heraldic right is their father and on the heraldic left, their mother (the traditional positions for the male and female coats of arms on a family

¹ D. P. Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer (c. 1609/10 – 1668): The Life and Art of a Seventeenth-century Dutch Painter*, (University of Maryland Ph.D. thesis, 1992), pp. 13, 19, 21. It has been proposed that the woman on the far left of the portrait may be the famous female painter and Molenaer's wife, Judith Leyster (1609-60) and that the two children standing to Molenaer's right are the couple's children. This cannot be the case if the date of the painting is accepted as c.1635 because Molenaer and Leyster were married in 1636 and their children were not born until 1643 and 1650.

² D. P. Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, exh. cat. (New York, 2002), p. 3. The birthdates of the other siblings are unknown and so it is not possible to positively link names to the individual portraits. The lack of baptism records for the family has prompted the suggestion that the Molenaer family was Catholic, See: E. Broersen "'Judita Leyster': A Painter of 'Good, Keen Sense'" in P. Biesboer and J. A. Welu (eds.), *Judith Leyster: A Dutch Master and her World*, exh. cat. (New Haven/London, 1993), pp. 15-38, p. 21.

crest). On the far left of the composition, two men, presumably Molenaer's half-brothers from his father's first marriage, are portrayed behind a virginal with one holding a small oval portrait of a woman who may be his deceased wife or the pair's deceased mother (Molenaer's father's first wife).³ The musical company is not alone, though. With their backs turned, they perform in front of a rather unexpected audience. In the middle ground of the wall there are a series of eight half-length portrait likenesses on which coats of arms are visible—images of ancestors of the Molenaer family.⁴

Until recently, Molenaer's spirited portrayal of his family has been interpreted in terms of its iconographic relationships to contemporary emblems and moral treatises on the family. The topos of the family making music was recognised in contemporary accounts as a metaphor of marital and familial harmony, as seen in another work by Molenaer, *Allegory of Fidelity in Marriage* from 1633 (fig. 19).⁵ In the family portrait we see a small dog lying at the feet of the woman playing the cittern on the far left of the group while the lower lid of the virginal beside her is decorated with an image of two clasped hands above a burning heart pierced with arrows.⁶ Together, these symbols point to fidelity, love, and the strength of the marital bond. Music, in its temporality, was viewed at the time as a symbol of vanitas, or a reminder of the inevitability of death and the transience of vanity. Furthermore, vanitas' best-known icon, a skull, rests

³ Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 2. The two sons from Molenaer's father's first marriage have been identified by Broersen as Meijndert and Cornelis. Weller suggests that they may have been a later addition, due to their awkward placement in the work. The oval portrait is most likely an image of their mother, Cornelia Jansdr., who died about 1609-1610.

⁴ N. Köhler, *Painting in Haarlem 1500-1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum* (Ghent, 2006), p. 556; Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer*, pp. 3-4. Weller writes that the eight half-length portraits are also characteristic of 'tronies' or figure studies. He cites '4 tronijken van Molenaar' (4 tronies by Molenaer) listed in a 17 November 1631 auction of works owned by Hendrick Willemsz. Den Abt. These types of character studies were typical of Molenaer's early work.

⁵ Köhler, *Painting in Haarlem*, p. 556. The Latin inscription on the original frame of a *Family Portrait* by Frans Floris from 1561 (depicting a family making music) declares: 'Just as there is nothing that can be happier in life than a harmonious marriage and a communal bed without discord, so it is that there is nothing more pleasant than witnessing one's united progeny enjoying peace untarnished mind.'; For more on Molenaer's *Allegory of Fidelity in Marriage* see: P.J.J. van Thiel, 'Marriage Symbolism in a Musical Party by Jan miense Molenaar' *Simiolus* 2 (1967-1968), pp. 90-99.

⁶ Ibid.

beneath the hand of Molenaer's father, indicating that he is deceased (the portrait was painted after his death).⁷ The hourglass on the table beside Molenaer's mother is partially filled with sand, denoting that the day she will expire is approaching. Situated between the pendant portraits is a clock, which reinforces the motif of the brevity and fragility of life. All of these symbols are more or less metaphors of death and the temporality of human existence. A less self-evident allusion reveals itself in the form of a young boy blowing bubbles on the right side of the composition. The bubbles, as impermanent objects, represent the belief that happiness is also temporary and that the human condition is delicate and easily extinguished.⁸

The benefit of the iconographic approach is that it has uncovered many previously inexplicable symbols and signs in painting. It allows for the examination of allegorical and metaphorical themes including harmony, the transience of life, and the permanence of portraiture. However, the methodology is largely limiting and, in my view, significantly restricts the scope of study of family portraits. It allows very little space for questions of function or display, generally disregards the greater cultural role that paintings play in society and furthermore, the roles of the identities of the sitters are subsumed by the symbolic meanings of objects.

Using Molenaer's family portrait as a starting point, I explore in this chapter the complex ways in which family and ancestor portraits functioned to construct a new type of burgher identity in early modern Holland. Ancestor portrait galleries were historically an aristocratic assertion of power, a means by which to, quite unequivocally, represent one's bloodline to a spectator, and to oneself. In the shifting social situation

⁷ Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 3. Documents tell us that Molenaer's father, Jan Mientzen Molenaer, died in 1636, leaving behind his second wife, Grietgen Adriaens.

⁸ E. de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw: Huwelijk en Gezin in de Nederlandse Kunst van de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Haarlem, 1986), p. 280. De Jongh mentions that the boy's actions may also indicate that he is deceased. The 'homo bulla' (man is a bubble) theme was extremely popular in genre and still-life painting.

of the Dutch Republic, urban burghers did not rely on their past history and blood relations to prove their wealth and status. Their focus was on the present and on their ability to propel themselves upward in society by means of personal achievement and financial gain. As we see in the portrait of Molenaer and his family, this new conception of family history and identity has been actualised. Molenaer and his siblings are represented *in front of* the series of eight ancestors portraits. Ancestors are relegated to the background not because they are less significant to the family's personal history, but because in the eyes of the Dutch burgher, unlike among the noble classes, I argue that the present accomplishments and acquisitions of the family are the most pertinent and significant elements of their identity, not the past. The family seems to go further, building on its history.

As I will show in this chapter, two case studies of seventeenth-century Amsterdam families further demonstrate this new model of family identity. Both the Backer and Van Loon families originally immigrated to Amsterdam from other Dutch towns before the 1566 Revolt and gained personal and political success through intermarriage with regent families. In addition, they became involved in businesses like shipping and trading, which brought them financial rewards. The success and accomplishments of the families were materially observable through their creation and display of coats of arms, purchase of large Amsterdam canal houses, and boasting of luxury pursuits such as hunting and keeping horses. The portrait collections of the two families, influenced by aristocratic models of collecting ancestor and family portraits, could be viewed as representations of wealth and status, as has been explained by scholars such as Joanna Woodall and Ann Jensen Adams.⁹ The evidence from

⁹ See: J. Woodall, 'Sovereign Bodies: The Reality of Status in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraiture' in J. Woodall (ed.), *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (Manchester, 1997), pp. 75-100; A. J. Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (Cambridge, 2009), esp. Chap. 1.

inventories further reveals that these portraits, possessed by burgher families, were primarily for a small audience. They were kept in back rooms in family residences and shown only to family and close friends within their specific social circle. Dutch family portrait scholar Frauke Laarmann suggests that such portrait collections were created over time by chance and that people were not interested in portraits of ancestors.¹⁰ She claims that there was no conscious decision for families to surround themselves with family portraits. I will argue against Laarmann's hypothesis and take a more nuanced view of the agency that portraiture had over identity. The very fact that these portraits were important to the family and not merely used as superficial symbols of wealth and status is confirmed by a bitter legal dispute fought over the Backer collection. Similarly, the van Loon collection, though never challenged with legal action, remained greatly intact over time. In order to properly assess these portrait collections and their meaning for identity, it is first crucial to understand how the class system was divided in the early modern Netherlands.

Francisco de Holanda (1517-1585), the Portuguese humanist and painter of Dutch descent, stated around 1550 that 'very few people merited the honour of portrayal.'¹¹ While at the Portuguese court, he wrote a manuscript claiming that these select few were 'illustrious princes, kings and emperors, princesses and queens of virtue and wisdom, men famous in arms, art and letters, or of singular liberty and virtue and nobody else at all.'¹² As a result of his association with the court of Portugal, these

¹⁰ F. Laarmann, *Families in Beeld: De Ontwikkeling Van Het Noord-Nederlandse Familieportret in De Eerste Helft Van De Zeventiende Eeuw* (Hilversum, 2002), pp. 47-48, Laarmann states that it is not clear that families consciously made the decision to surround themselves with ancestor portraits, rather she claims it is a forced development because of the accumulation over time of portraits. Because of the fact that many ancestor portraits were unidentified, family members either did not know or were not interested in the portraits.

¹¹ Woodall, 'Sovereign Bodies', pp. 76-77.

¹² M. Denis, *De la Pintura Antigua por Francisco de Holanda* (version castellana por Manuel Denis), ed. E. Tormo y Monzo (Madrid, Real Academia de San Fernando, 1921), pp. 255-256. 'Y así, acostumbraban los famosos hombres pasados, - como así se conoce en las ilustres imagines y naturales de las esculturas de Roma -, que solamente a los que merecían mucha honra y memoria por sus claros

thoughts seem to have been connected to a hierarchal vision of society that did not exist in the same capacity in the early modern Netherlands. The United Provinces did not have a monarchy but a court culture did exist around the stadtholderate in The Hague; consequently it cannot be seen as a purely bourgeois society, as some scholars have argued.¹³

A class of nobles thrived in the Dutch Republic but it was a small percentage of the population that was difficult to define, as the term ‘nobility’ was not always used consistently.¹⁴ Typically it referred to those who were ‘noble’ by birth; the nobility of a family was known ‘of old’ and this was accepted as proof of lineage.¹⁵ Though they had noble titles, a number of nobles were not wealthy nor were they large estate or fief-holders.¹⁶ The *Ridderschap* (class of knights), though classed above the untitled nobility, was also not technically part of the high nobility. At the same time, those who held high political positions in Dutch society (such as stadtholder) could be considered ‘noble’ to a certain extent because of their political power and the decorum with which they conducted their lives (they were also, in some cases, wealthy and owned estates).¹⁷ The nobility could essentially be divided up into three categories: of birth (those who

hechos y proezas, así en las armas, como en la paz, sacaban ellos en cuadros de illustre pintura y en figuras de plata y de oro o de metal o de mármor por honra [y] en recordación suya como a dinos y merecedores de ser conocidos en el mundo, así en su tiempo, como en el venidero. Y como son pocos los que merecen ser al natural trasladados, así han de ser pocos los eminentes pintores que tengan osadía de sacar al natural un claro y incilito rey, que no nasce en muchos años, porque en otros tantos nasce el pintor para pintarle noblemente. Y cuando quiera que nació el escriptor que le celebrase y el eminente pintor que le enviase por todo el Mundo retratado; y quien esto bien supiere, hallará que es así.’

¹³ H. F. K. van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland: from Knights to Regents, 1500-1650* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 220. Van Nierop argues against modern assumptions of early modern Dutch society as egalitarian, bourgeois, and generally lacking in a structured class system, such as that expounded in J. Huizinga’s text, *Dutch Civilisation in the Seventeenth Century: and Other Essays* (London, 1968).

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 12. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the nobility made up a small but influential part of the total population. Their numbers diminished throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for several reasons. One was that a lack of a monarchy meant that no new families were being ennobled. Secondly, after the Revolt of 1585, the nobility lost power in the *Vroedschap*. Finally, they very rarely allowed ‘outsiders’ to marry into their families, resulting in a lack of male heirs and disappearance of some family lines.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 23; Woodall, ‘Sovereign bodies’, p. 78.

traditionally exercised rule), of virtue (those who served the state), and of *ars* or skill (scholars and artists), the category we see celebrated in the Molenaer portrait.¹⁸ Those who were noble by birth alone were in the minority but they fiercely guarded their few privileges, including the right to be represented in meetings of the States of Holland, exemption from taxes, certain legal rights, and the publicly visible right to hunt.¹⁹ Except for this handful of privileges, birth was the singular aspect separating nobles from non-nobles. Lineage and its expression in portraiture thus became central to communicating the patriarchal principle of genealogy that noble ideology was based on, such as in this copy of a fifteenth-century example showing an extended line of portraits of ancestors (fig. 20).²⁰

According to Dutch historian Henk van Nierop, the Dutch Republic, between 1580 and 1650, should be regarded as a ‘society of classes’ rather than a ‘society of orders.’²¹ He explains that whereas orders are based on birth, juridically defined and typically unchanging, classes are based on economic activities, income, or personal achievement. Societies based on socio-economic groups, such as class, were more flexible and moveable than those based on orders. As the *burgerij* gained wealth and prosperity through their mercantile activities and political power through intermarriage with regent families, a regent oligarchy was formed that was a mix of ‘old’ and ‘new’ families.²² The commercial activities of the Dutch East India Company and the rich trades laid the groundwork for many families to gain a great amount of wealth in a short period of time. Prosperous Dutch cities (especially Amsterdam) grew precipitously,

¹⁸ van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*, p. 23; Woodall, ‘Sovereign bodies’, p. 78.

¹⁹ van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*, p. 35.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 19.; J. Woodall, ‘Introduction’, in J. Woodall (ed.), *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (Manchester, 1997), pp. 1-25, p. 3.

²¹ van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*, p. 20. Van Nierop refers to I. Schöffer, *De Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden 1609-1702* (Groningen, 1977), p. 179.

²² J. I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford, 1995), p. 342.

attracting many immigrants who were then able to buy citizenship fairly easily.²³ With their newfound wealth, many citizens achieved higher social status, such as the Backer and van Loon families, and were thus able to hold political positions that were formerly closed to them, threatening the previously exclusive claim that the nobility and gentry had had to titles, land, and positions. The new urban elite status was based more on personal achievement than on blood lines, though it remained important for the *burgerij* to appropriate the signs and symbols of status that previously were exclusive to the nobility.

With the shifting social situation, families had the opportunity to purchase country estates and noble titles, thereby gaining agency over their status. Initially from Emden, the Pauw family, in particular, gained a political foothold after the Alteration in Amsterdam in 1575. With the support of political, social, and financial success, Adriaan Pauw purchased the town of Heemstede in 1620 and gained the title ‘Lord of Heemstede.’ His son Michiel Pauw (1617-1658), in his portrait with his family by Johannes Mijtens, had the family’s home in Heemstede featured prominently in the background on the right (fig. 21).²⁴ The estate functions to support the family’s claims to power and success, yet this was not an ancestral family home—it was an accomplishment achieved without possessing noble blood. There are a number of examples of a type of portraiture, presenting this kind of achievement, though often the family is unknown and thus sometimes so is the name of the manor and its location, such as in this example from the second quarter of the seventeenth century (fig. 22).

Families could moreover gain certain rights and privileges with titles and manors that they obtained. For instance, Matthijs Pompe van Slingelandt (1621-1679) of Dordrecht had himself portrayed as a hunter holding a bird and standing among his

²³ Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities*, p. 154.

²⁴ See entry in RKD (Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie) database: [http://www.rkd.nl/rkddb/\(S\(ponmnc23eawehqjie1zgrm3w\)\)/detail.aspx](http://www.rkd.nl/rkddb/(S(ponmnc23eawehqjie1zgrm3w))/detail.aspx)

hunting dogs (fig. 23). His family surrounds him and in the background we see one of his manors, which conferred on him the right to hunt. This right seems to have been so essential to his status that he also had his young son, Michiel Pompe van Slingelandt similarly portrayed as a hunter, in an individual full-length portrait by Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp (fig. 24). As we have seen, there were a number of ways to elevate status with publicly visible symbols and signs, such as owning a manor or obtaining the right to hunt, which were extremely public. In contrast, family portraiture, though traditionally a rather public way of presenting status, took a different tack in the support of the new *burgerlijk* status in society. Namely, the fact that genealogy and lineage were tools of presenting status, despite the private context of family portraits. This is evident in the next examples.

Artists took remarkably varied approaches to portraying extended families, probably as portraits were private commissions and so they often did not have an obvious precedent on which to base their own work.²⁵ This appears to have been the case in a rather awkwardly composed and tightly grouped portrait of a family by Christiaan Gillisz. van Couwenbergh (1604-1667) from 1642 (fig. 25). There is no way to identify the sitters, although with eleven figures in the group at various stages of life, it is clear that several generations have been pictured at once.²⁶ Couwenbergh has also highlighted that the family had the privilege to hunt.

Though also underlining the family's hunting privileges, quite a different compositional strategy was employed in the portrait of Cornelis Kaiser and his family (fig. 26).²⁷ The Kaisers were one of the preeminent families of Hoorn and Jacob Kaiser, Cornelis' elder brother, served as head of the *Vroedschap* (City Council) of Hoorn in

²⁵ Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, p. 19.

²⁶ W. C. Maier-Preusker, 'Christiaan van Couwenbergh (1604-1667): Oeuvre und Wandlungen eines holländischen Caravaggisten,' *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch*, LII (1991), pp. 163-236, p. 206.

²⁷ de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, p. 261. In 1660, government officials began to protest against the fact that they did not have the right to hunt and the Kaiser family eventually won this right.

1667.²⁸ The painting includes his wife, Maria Cock, his brother Jacob Kaiser, his son Nanning, his mother Jacoba Outgersdr., his grandmother Liesbeth Jansdr., and his in-laws Cornelis Jansz. Cock and Geertruid Hauwers. Rather than crowding the foreground with bodies, the artists, Matthias Withoos and Steven van Duyven, have created some space and distance in order to display the figures distinctly.

In a third and truly unique example, Herman Doncker, who worked in Enkhuizen, actualised the visual family tree of an unknown family (fig. 11).²⁹ The painting presents the genealogy, which goes back four generations, consisting of a total of thirty-two individuals.³⁰ He displayed the generations in an orderly manner by placing one row of ancestors behind each preceding generation.³¹ Some of the spaces in the very top rows are blank, meaning that either there were no portraits available to be copied or that the names of these people were not known.³² Quite frequently, such genealogies were not always entirely accurate and sometimes even greatly fictionalised. We see this situation in the genealogy constructed by Gerard Schaep Pietersz. (1595-1655), a genealogist and politician of Amsterdam who lamented that visual genealogies were not always accurate and people sometimes lied about ancestry for social gain (though even Schaep did not play by his own rules).³³ In all three of these examples, we see that genealogy and lineage serve as tools of presenting status. This is exactly what is clearly visible in the Molenaer family portrait. Though it looks as if Molenaer draws directly from the pictorial tradition of ancestor portraits, he in fact manipulates it

²⁸ Ibid., p. 262.

²⁹ R. E. O. Ekkart, *Portret van Enkhuizen in de Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle, 1990), p. 31.

³⁰ F. Laarmann, 'Herman Meindertsz. Doncker – Ein origineller Künstler zweiten Ranges' *Oud Holland* 114 (2000), pp. 131-180, p. 151.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ S. A. C. Dudok van Heel 'Op zoek naar Romulus & Remus: zeventiende-eeuws onderzoek naar de oudste magistraten van Amsterdam', *Jaarboek Amstelodamum* 87 (1995), pp. 43-70, p. 50, note 15, quoted from Stadsarchief Amsterdam arch. 195, Familie Bicker (FB), nr. 717, nr. 1, f. 10v.

for his own purposes, so as to present himself as a successful citizen, yet with an ambiguous status in society, as we will see in the following section.

Molenaer was a painter from Haarlem, primarily specializing in genre scenes of peasants, musical groups, and merry companies (fig. 27). The social status of his family is not known in specific detail, though it is clear that his parents were not wealthy enough to support their children, as Molenaer and his siblings had to work to make their livings. However, Molenaer's parents did have the means to commission marriage portraits, which were probably painted in 1610, the year they were wed.³⁴ The two portraits featured on the rear wall of the family portrait follow a growing trend for domestic pendant marriage portraits at the time, as we see in these examples by Frans Hals (figs. 28, 29).³⁵ They also owned ancestor portraits (whether these were family heirlooms or commissioned by the Molenaers is unknown), which emphasise the social ambitions of this burgher family. As an artist, Molenaer's social status was rather ambiguous, though the solitary reference made to him in seventeenth-century printed sources referred to him as 'a famous painter.'³⁶ He was a member of the Haarlem guild of St. Luke and his output from 1630 to 1636 give scholars reason to label him a Haarlem master. His financial standing was never particularly strong, and even less so

³⁴ A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare: Urkunden Zur Geschichte Der Holländischen Kunst Des XVIten, XVIIten Und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts* (Den Haag, 1915), p. 1. Das Nachlass-Inventar von Jan Miense Molenaer 10 October 1668: (7) 2 Conterfeytseltjes van den Overleden syn Vader en Moeder (2 Portraits of the Deceased his Father and Mother). It is possible that these are the pendant portraits featured in Molenaer's family portrait.

³⁵ Q. Buvelot and R.E.O. Ekkart (eds.), *Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals*, exh. cat. (London, 2007), p. 166

³⁶ Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 4, quoted from T. Schrevelius, *Harlemias: Of, de eerste stichting der stad Haarlem* (1648), pp. 384-385. Schrevelius wrote about Molenaer in the context of discussing his wife Judith Leyster, stating that Leyster was 'de huysvrouw van meulenaer, die oock een vermaerd schilder is, van Haerlem geboren, tot Amsterdam wel bekend' [the wife of Molenaer, who is also a famous painter, born in Haarlem, and well-known in Amsterdam]. In slightly later sources, Molenaer was criticised for his choice of subject matter, though this should be seen in reaction to the more 'classical' tastes of the eighteenth century.

the year the work was painted.³⁷ As the firstborn son, he was obligated to insure the debts of his mother and siblings, after the death of his father.³⁸

In his self-portrait with his family (fig. 3), Molenaer deliberately placed himself both among the portraits of his ancestors, in association with them and at the same time, distanced himself from them by standing before them. The framing of the pictures contribute to this dual sense of association and separation.³⁹ In their capacity as framed objects, the ancestor portraits are embedded images that act as ‘vehicles for commentary’ on the remainder of the image.⁴⁰ Similarly, in a civic guard portrait by Jacob Lyon (fig. 30) for example, one of the guards points to a sixteenth-century portrait of a former civic guard company, associating the current members of the civic guard with their illustrious past.⁴¹ However, as framed objects, the ancestor portraits in Molenaer’s painting are also in a way severed from the rest of the image. They constitute a severance of the ‘image’ from the ‘nonimage’ (in the imaginative sense that Molenaer and the group of musicians are meant to exist in ‘real time’).⁴²

The portrait can be considered as a site of exchange between the artist’s familial identity and his projected or performed identity of artist/creator. Dutch society was at that time characterised by tensions between the need for public validation of a family’s lineage or ancestry and the aspirations of the newly wealthy *burgerij*, who were climbing the social ladder. Molenaer associates himself with his family lineage as a

³⁷ J. M. Montias, *Artists and Artisans in Delft: A Socio-Economic Study of the Seventeenth-century* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 112-113. Montias estimates that artisans earned about 18-25 stuivers per day (20 stuivers = 1 gulden). He also notes that the wealth of most artists rose until mid-career and then declined in the latter half of the career.

³⁸ Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer: Painter of the Dutch Golden Age*, p. 15.

³⁹ P.J.J. van Thiel, *Framing in the Golden Age: Picture and Frame in 17th-Century Holland* (Zwolle, 1995), p. 36.

⁴⁰ M. Hollander, *An Entrance for the Eyes: Space and Meaning in Seventeenth-century Dutch Art* (Berkeley, 2002), p. 87.

⁴¹ A. J. Adams, ‘Civic Guard Portraits: Private Interests and the Public Sphere’, in J. de Jong, H. Roodenburg, and F. Scholten (eds.), ‘Beeld en zelfbeeld in de Nederlandse kunst, 1550-1750’, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* (1995), pp. 168-197, p. 186.

⁴² V. Stoichiță, *The Self-Aware Image: an Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 30.

means of validation in the adoption of the role of patriarch as well as the financial burdens of the family after the death of his father. As the various members in the civic guard portrait (fig. 30), Molenaer aligns himself with his family's own past and does this through the conventions of the aristocratic tradition and ideals of the family portrait gallery. The gallery of portraits may seem like an insignificant remnant of the ideals of court society, but in fact Molenaer adapted aristocratic visual conventions for his own means, both retaining and manipulating their meaning.⁴³ In the passage from aristocratic tradition to the domestic sphere, the ancestor portraits lose their formal, public elements and gain a more private connotation associated with family life.⁴⁴ Molenaer's ancestors frame him, giving justification to the new identity that has been accorded him within the nuclear family.

Molenaer's portrait demonstrates the ways in which ancestor portraits could have functioned to shape and reify public identity, however his portrait was ultimately intended for a private audience, and the question arises as to how we can reconcile these ideas. Many families traditionally used rather public 'aristocratic' conventions to express a genealogical family tree but commercially successful burghers and those who gained respect through their artistic skills and aesthetic products, such as Molenaer, did not rely only on birth to justify their claims to power, wealth or status. Thus, family portrait galleries could move to more private areas of the home where they were available to a small network of family and friends. They were neither 'public' nor 'private' images, instead forcing a third category somewhere in between in which success was defined by acceptance by a specific coterie and a personal obligation to examine lineage and identity.

⁴³ Woodall, 'Sovereign Bodies', p. 78.

⁴⁴ D. R. Smith, 'Rembrandt's Early Double Portraits and the Dutch Conversation Piece', *The Art Bulletin*, 64 (1982), pp. 259-288, p. 263.

The dynastic portrait worked as a private and intimate object present in the home. It was a highly emotional and psychologically complex entity, maintaining a memorializing function of those in the picture who were absent from life. Apparently, portraits had the problematic task of reflecting the sitter's 'soul', while at the same time resembling the sitter enough to pass for a convincing likeness.⁴⁵ Molenaer's father's presence is preserved in the family portrait, perhaps as a request from the artist's mother; a last 'family gathering' that in reality will last a lifetime. There is much evidence to suggest that people interacted with portraits in their homes. These works were not merely decorative, nor were they simply a record of the family's legacy. Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687) touches upon the emotional effects of viewing ancestor portraits in his diary of 1623:

... [portraits] perform a noble work, that more than any other is necessary for our human needs, that through them we in a true sense do not die; furthermore, as descendants we can speak intimately with our most distant ancestors. This pleasure is so dear to me that nothing more agreeable can befall me than reading or hearing stories about someone's life and character – whether he be a good or bad man – (and this sort of history particularly attracts me) [which] is made easier by looking at his portrait.⁴⁶

This was not a novel concept; Leon Battista Alberti (1404-72), Italian author, artist, and architect writing in 1435 stated that:

Painting contains a divine force which not only makes the absent present, as friendship is said to do, but moreover makes the dead seem almost alive. Even after many centuries they are recognized with great pleasure and with great admiration for the painter.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ On portraits reflecting the soul see: R. Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London, 1991), pp. 17-18; S. West, *Portraiture* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 29-37; C. A. Freeland, *Portraits and Persons: A Philosophical Inquiry* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 91-97.

⁴⁶ C. Huygens, *De jeugd van Constantijn Huygens: door hemzelf beschreven*, trans., A.H. Kan and G. Kamphuis (Rotterdam/Antwerp, 1946), p. 75. 'Toch verrichten zij een nobel werk, dat meer dan iets anders voor onze menselijke behoeften allernoodzakelijkst is, omdat wij door hun toedoen in zekere zin niet sterven en nog als nakomelingen met onze verste voorvaders vertrouwelijke kunnen spreken. Dit genot is mij zoo lief, dat mij niets aangenaams kan te beurt vallen, dan het mij bij het lezen of hooren verhalen over ieders leven en karakter – hij zij een goed of slecht mensch – (en dit sort geschiedenis trekt mij bijzonder aan) mogelijk wordt gemaakt zijn portret te beschouwen.' English translation by Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities*, p. 42; addition of '[portraits]' mine.

⁴⁷ L. Campbell, *Renaissance Faces: Van Eyck to Titian*, exh. cat. (London, 2008), p. 14., quoted from L. B. Alberti, *Della pittura e della statua* (1435), trans. Cosimo Bartoli (1804), 'Conciossiachè ella ha in se

By Alberti's words, it is suggested that the artist too lives immortally through his painted portraits. This may support Molenaer's reasoning to not picture himself in the act of painting. The visual immortality of the portrait is an everlasting image of the artist's act of representation and, in turn, representation of self. Contemporary writers and critics not only commented on the effect that portraits could have on their viewers, but also on the reasons for commissioning them, as well as how and where to hang them in the home

A number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers on art and architecture gave quite extensive recommendations as to the archetypal plan of hanging for pictures in the home and which paintings were appropriate to each type of room in the house. The majority of these proposed plans involve the placement of history and genre pieces, though they rarely mention portraits. Such comments indicate that there seemed to be a general concern about where to place pictures in the home as a whole.

English historian Sir William Sanderson (1586?-1676), for instance, in his *Graphice: the Use of Pen and Pensil* (1658) offered an ideal program for the hanging of paintings in the home in a section of his text entitled 'To Place the Pictures within Doors'.⁴⁸ For example, he suggested that 'Rustique figures' be placed in the entrance to the house, 'paintings of Peasants, Shep-heards, Milke-maids' decorate the Hall, images of 'foul and fish' hang in the kitchen, and that the great chamber should have 'landskips, huntings, fishing, fowling; or History of Notable actions.'⁴⁹ Sir Henry

una certa forza divina tal che non solo ella fa quell che dicono, chef a l'amicizia, che ci rappresenta in essere le persone che sono lontane, ma ella ci mette innanzi agli occhi ancora color, che già molti e molti anni sono son morti, talchè si veggono con grandissima maraviglia del Pittore, e dilettazone di chi li riguarda.'

⁴⁸ W. Sanderson, *Graphice. the use of the Pen and Pensil: Or, the most Excellent Art of Painting: In Two Parts* (London, 1658), p. 26

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Wotton (1568–1639), English author, diplomat, and politician, in the *Elements of Architecture*, published in 1624, recommended that pictures:

...bee as properly bestowed for their quality, as fitly for their grace: that is, chearefull Paintings in Feasting and Banquetting Roomes; Graver Stories in Galleries, Land-schips and Boscage, and such Wilde workes in open Tarraces, or in Summer houses (as we call them) and the like.⁵⁰

In Book VIII of the *Groot Schilderboek* (1707), Gerard de Lairesse (1640-1711), Dutch painter and art theorist, recommends a similar guide to that of Sanderson, such as placing ‘pictures with figures’ in the audience room, ‘clothed and modest histories’ in the ladies visiting-room, ‘painted emblems or morals’ in the nursery, and hunting and culinary scenes in the kitchen.⁵¹ Again, little to nothing is mentioned about the placement of portraits.

Sixteenth-century Italian writers on art, such as Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, Giovanni Battista Armenini, and Giulio Mancini proposed that scenes of ‘magnificence and virtue’ should be placed in the most public areas of the home.⁵² They were most likely following the advice of Cicero and other ancient Roman writers. The choice of appropriate figures for specific places was part of Cicero’s conception of the order of collecting.⁵³ In classical Rome, it was common for paintings to mirror room function, thus food still lifes were placed in dining halls, paintings of Venus and allegories of

⁵⁰ H. Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture*, collected by Henry Wotton Knight, from the best authors and examples (London, 1624), pp. 99-100.

⁵¹ G. de Lairesse, *Groot schilderboek*, ed., Henri Desbordes, (Amsterdam 1712), vol. II, Book VIII, Chap. VIII, p. 304.

⁵² J. M. Muller, ‘Private Collection in the Spanish Netherlands: Ownership and Display of Paintings in Domestic Interiors’, in P. C. Sutton (ed.), *The Age of Rubens*, exh. cat. (Ghent, 1993), pp.195-206, p. 200. See: G. P. Lomazzo, *Trattato Dell'Arte De La Pittura*, Di Gio. Paolo Lomazzo Milanese Pittore: Diuiso in Sette Libri. Ne' Quali Si Contiene Tutta La Theorica, & La Prattica d'Essa Pittura (2 vols., Milan, 1584), vol. 2, p. 299; G. B. Armenini, *De' veri precetti della pittura* (Ravenna, 1587), p. 175; G. Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, introd. L. Venturi, eds., A Marucchi and L. Salerno, (2 vols., Rome, 1956-57), vol. 1, p. 143.

⁵³ J. M. Muller, *Rubens: The Artist as Collector* (Princeton, 1989), p. 40.

love were in the bedroom, and grand and heroic pictures were placed in reception rooms.⁵⁴

As very little specific advice was given as to where to situate portraits, it is necessary to turn to the comments of English writers. Certainly there were differences between Dutch and English homes and their portrait traditions, but observations from around the same period in a nearby country can shed some light on the situation in the Dutch Republic.⁵⁵ Sanderson, after stating that portraits of monarchs should be displayed in the dining room, does go on to comment that one could also decorate the room with ‘...two or three, of their own bloud...’⁵⁶ In addition, he recommended that men should protect the modesty of their wives and children by keeping their portraits in private spaces:

Your own [portrait] and your wives or Children, best become your discretion, and her modesty (if she be faire) to furnish the most private, or Bedchamber; lest (being too publique) an Italian minded Guest gaze too long on them, and commend the worke for your wive’s sake. We had an errant Knight, notorious in this error, who was so mistaken with the love of his wife and handsome daughters, that in each hole (of his house I mean) you might salute them; As for which they became the more common here, and after beyond the seas, to his and their ruine.⁵⁷

These authors normally recommended that homeowners hang paintings to ensure the best placement in terms of lighting, height, and space (artists too were suggested to get an idea of the space where their work would hang before beginning a painting).⁵⁸ De Lairese and others knew that much of this advice was likely to be ignored because the position of paintings was changed quite frequently in the home,

⁵⁴ J. Loughman and J. M. Montias, *Public and Private Spaces: Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Houses* (Zwolle, 2000), p. 40. On Roman painting see: R. Ling, *Roman Painting* (Cambridge, 1991).

⁵⁵ On English portraiture see: M. R. Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1993); S. West, 'Framing Hegemony: Economics, Luxury and Family Continuity in the Country House Portrait', in P. Duro (ed.) *The Rhetoric of the Frame: Essays on the Boundary of the Artwork* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 63-78; K. Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 2006).

⁵⁶ Sanderson, *Graphice*, p. 27.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ De Lairese, *Groot Schilderboek*, vol. II, Book VIII, Chap. VIII, p. 304.

without taking into account any guidelines whatsoever.⁵⁹ Indeed, there is very little evidence that people actually followed these guides, or were even aware of them. For that reason, rather than basing my argument on such guidelines, I suggest that inventories generally give a better idea of where paintings hung in reality rather than ideally.⁶⁰

A great deal of systematic socio-economic research on painting in the seventeenth-century Netherlands has been carried out, especially in the last 30 years, beginning with the work of John Michael Montias, economist and pioneer on Dutch art market history, on art and artisans in Delft.⁶¹ Montias followed this up with an extensive study of art inventories in Amsterdam, while John Loughman, an art historian following similar methodology, made an analysis of such documents in Dordrecht, and art historian Willemijn Fock did a survey of Leiden inventories.⁶² The most accessible socio-economic study to art historians is the 2000 collaboration between Montias and Loughman, resulting in the book *Public and Private Spaces: Works of Art in Seventeenth-century Dutch Houses*.

Montias and Loughman argue that according to Amsterdam inventories, many of the paintings (of all genres) owned by families were hung in the *voorhuis*.⁶³ The *voorhuis*, the front area of the home, was a space that acted as a kind of threshold between the public and private spaces of Dutch life (fig. 31). If the family worked out of the home, the *voorhuis* would be used for business. The space also functioned as a

⁵⁹ Ibid., vol. II, Book VII, Chap. IV, p. 26. Quoted by Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 106.

⁶⁰ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 106. Many inventories do not list contents by room or describe exactly where works were hanging on the wall.

⁶¹ Montias, *Artists and Artisans in Delft*.

⁶² See: J. M. Montias, *Art at Auction in 17th Century Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 2002); J. Loughman, *Paintings in the Public and Private Domain: Collecting & Patronage in Dordrecht 1620-1749*, (Courtauld Institute Ph.D. thesis, 1993); C. W. Fock, 'Kunstbezit in Leiden in de zeventiende eeuw', in T. H. L. Scheurleer, et. al. (eds.), *Het Rapenburg: Geschiedenis van een Leidse Gracht*, (6 vols., Leiden, 1986-1992), vol. 5a, pp. 3-36.

⁶³ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 30.

kind of reception room early in the century.⁶⁴ It was on the ground floor along with the *binnenhaard/binnenhuis* (inner hearth), which was an inner room where families often cooked, ate, and slept during the winter.⁶⁵ The most significant and valuable works of art were usually hung in the *voorhuis* as it was a superficial way of representing one's self-image to guests and visitors.⁶⁶

Certain family portraits and ancestor portraits on the other hand, were hung in the private back rooms of the home, often a rear upstairs room, or in the *keuken* (kitchen) or *binnenhaard* (an interior room that was the sphere of family life in many smaller buildings), a trend that began in the middle of the century.⁶⁷ As evidenced by Sanderson's comments on portraiture (see p. 56), Montias and Loughman further confirm that family and ancestor portraits were deeply intimate objects that were treated with more cautiousness than other paintings. For example, the ancestral portraits of the parents of Gerrit Schaep Pietersz. (fig. 4, fig. 5) may have been exhibited in one of these types of rooms. Similar spaces containing portraits can be seen in Jacob Ochtervelt's *Portrait of the Family of Issac Elsevier* (fig. 32),⁶⁸ Anthonie Palamedesz' *Family Portrait with Young Musicians* (fig. 33), and Frans Santacker's *Musical Company* (fig. 34).

If we return to Molenaer's family portrait (fig. 3), we can see now that it may have been displayed in such a back room or perhaps the painting itself depicts an

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 23.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 30.

⁶⁷ Ibid.; Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, pp. 47-48. Fock also comes to the conclusion that family portraits were hung in increasingly more private rooms. Laarmann questions the conclusions of Fock and Loughman and Montias because of the basic problems of identifying family portraits in inventories. She argues that it is doubtful that a statistical analysis of a selection of inventories can be at all representative of the norm. For her, it is not clear that families consciously made the decision to surround themselves with ancestor portraits, rather she claims it is a forced development because of the accumulation over time of portraits. Because of the fact that many ancestor portraits were unidentified, family members either did not know or were not interested in the portraits. I argue that this is not true because of disputes over portraits, for example in the Backer family.

⁶⁸ S. D. Kuretsky, *The Paintings of Jacob Ochtervelt, (1634-1682) (with Catalog Raisonné)* (Montclair, N. J., 1979), p. 60. The identification of the group as the Elsevier family comes from an 1842 catalogue by E. Higginson but is not fully supported by Kuretsky.

embedded domestic space in which portraits were hung. These spaces were highly private and access to them was privileged; one had to be a relative or close friend in order to obtain entry.⁶⁹ Families appreciated and were proud of their lineages but there was an increasing tendency towards limiting the viewership of family portraits. For example, Jacob Radt's 1674 inventory reveals that he was eager to remove all portraits from public spaces. Twelve of the thirteen family portraits in the house were in one room, the *achterkamer* (a private room).⁷⁰ The inventory of Catharina de Marez from 1671 repeats the same pattern. Out of ten family portraits, four were in the *voorkamer* (an upstairs room), four were in the *achterkamer* (a rear room), and two others were in the *binnenkamer* (an interior room).⁷¹

Dordrecht had an especially strong tradition of family portraiture due to the age, political importance, and wealth of the city. The trend to collect portraits into one private room was prevalent there, which is clear from a few specific examples from Dordrecht inventories. There was a tendency to keep portraits of living members of the family in great rooms or reception halls while the ancestor portraits were placed in

⁶⁹ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, pp. 42-43.

⁷⁰ Ibid. There was a general lack of standardization in names of rooms used in inventories, but in general, the *voorhuis* seems to have been standard as was the *comptoir* (office) but it is not always clear whether words like *zaal* (hall), *beste kamer* (best room) and *grote kamer* (great room) designated the same room in every house (though they were more or less interchangeable). *Voorhuis* and *zaal* seem to have been public spaces while the *binnenhuis*, *voorkamer* and *achterkamer* were more or less private family rooms.

⁷¹ J. M. Montias, *The Montias Database of 17th-Century Dutch Art Inventories*, The Frick Collection, Frick Art Reference Library, New York, 1998-2010, Web, <http://research.frick.org/index.htm>, inv. no. 135, 2410, omslag 17, film 2551, fol. 117-131.

Family Portraits in the Inventory of Catharina de Marez, 1671/05/16 (inv. no. 135):

Lot 23: kontrefeijsel van de heer Pieter de Marez, location: in de binnekamer

Lot 24: kontrefeijsel van Catharina de Marez, location: in de binnekamer

Lot 35: kontrefeijsel van Pieter Koster, location: op te achterkamer

Lot 36: kontrefeijsel van Pieter Kusters huysvrouw, location: op te achterkamer

Lot 37: kontrefeijsel van Juffr. Johanna van Achterhout, huijsvrouw van Jan de Marez de oude, location: op te achterkamer

Lot 38: kontrefeijsel van d'Heer Jan de Marez, location: op te achterkamer

Lot 41: kontrefeijsel van Heer Abraham de Marez, location: op te voorkamer

Lot 42: kontrefeijsel van Sara Kusters, location: op te voorkamer

Lot 43: doot kontrefeijsel van Sara de Marez, location: op te voorkamer

Lot 44: kindkontrefeijsel van Abraham de Marez, location: op te voorkamer

Originally cited by Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 43

upstairs or private rear rooms.⁷² In the home of the famous physician, Johan van Beverwijck (1594-1647), the largest room on the ground floor was the great hall. It was richly furnished and contained the highest concentration of paintings; out of thirty-seven works, nineteen were family portraits and all but two were copies. The two original paintings were said to be portraits of Dr. van Beverwijck and his widow by Jacob Cuyp.⁷³ The large rear room of the house contained twenty-seven works, including Judith with the head of Holofernes, a copy of a Bosch painting, a landscape with Tobias, a crucifixion, and *seventeen copied portraits of the family*.⁷⁴ One portrait, described as ‘a painting of Dr. Beverwijck, with Madam de Backere and their three children portrayed by Jan Olis’, was valued at a steep twenty-four guilders and is now in the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest (fig. 35).⁷⁵

In the inventory of Maria Boot van Wesel from 1654 we find a similar case in which the large front room on the first floor contained seventeen paintings, fourteen of which were family portraits and ten of which were paintings of van Wesel’s children.⁷⁶ On the walls beside these paintings were two tapestries or carpets bearing the coat-of-arms of the family. Most of the collection of fifty portraits however, was contained in a private upstairs room, which represents a good example of an *ahnengalerie* (family portrait gallery).⁷⁷

A final inventory example, Abraham Heijblom, had one of the largest collections of paintings in all of Dordrecht. He was an apothecary and a member of the

⁷² Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 104.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-79. The portraits are no longer extant.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Italics mine. The fact that these were copied family portraits suggests that they were ancestral family portraits as it was common to have paintings copied and distributed to offspring as part of an inheritance.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 81. For further discussion of this painting, see: J. Loughman et. al, *De Zichtbaere werelt: schildererkunst uit de gouden eeuw in Hollands oudste stad, Dordrecht*, exh. cat. (Zwolle/Dordrecht, 1992), p. 60; R. E. O. Ekkart, *Old Masters’ Gallery Catalogues Szépművészeti Múzeum Budapest Volume 1: Dutch and Flemish Portraits 1600-1800* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 190-192.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

electoral college, a group that nominated town councilors and magistrates. Heijblom also possessed considerable assets; he owned seven houses and a large number of paintings.⁷⁸ In the home where his inventory was taken in 1685, the upper back room appears to have been for family uses. The room was luxurious with expensive pieces of furniture that contained linen (particularly baby linen) so it can be presumed that the room probably had a private orientation. It housed six family portraits including a portrait of Heijblom himself, which was draped in black.⁷⁹ All but one of the twelve family portraits that Heijblom owned were found in three upstairs rooms. The other paintings in the upper back room were as follows: two Rembrandts, religious works, one *tronie* (single figure study), landscapes, seascapes, genre scenes of a barber and quack by Pieter de Hooch, a little temple or perspective, an equestrian painting by Philips Wouwermans, and a representation of fire. There were two prints in the rooms as well: a landscape and a portrait of Erasmus.⁸⁰ The family portraits were not numbered, like the other paintings were in the inventory. This indicates they were probably going to be inherited while the other works would be sold. Their value was clearly immeasurable to the family, given their treatment after they were inventoried.

Portraits of family members were considered heirlooms, as they were highly treasured pieces of the family's history. Paradoxically, they had no value on the art market, unless either the sitter or the artist who painted it was famous.⁸¹ When drawing up inventories, great care was taken to give the identity of the sitter (though many of these identities have since been lost) and they were often not given a monetary value.⁸²

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 91

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 96. Loughman and Montias do not venture an explanation for the reason that this portrait was draped in black. Perhaps the portrait was draped in black to symbolise mourning for Abraham Heijblom's death.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Montias, *Art at Auction in 17th Century Amsterdam*, p. 88. Family portraits had very low incidence in auction sales from 1597-1638. Montias suggests that some portraits may have been withdrawn from auction sales because they had no market value.

⁸² Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 42.

Many times though, family portraits were not even included in inventories because they were inherited and thus their value was of no consequence.⁸³ It was important to retain the portraits within the family, therefore they were normally bequeathed to the next generation, divided up equally among heirs.⁸⁴ Ancestor portraits were typically stored in and/or hung in the rear, private rooms of the home and in order to better understand their place in the home, it is important to explore certain shifts in architecture that were occurring in Dutch houses at the same time.

Development of Privacy and Changes in Architecture

The trend of moving family portraits into more private areas of the home is related to changes in Dutch architecture, which encouraged a sense of privacy within the home. House ownership at the time was strongly supported by burgher ideology concerning the family and privacy.⁸⁵ Around the middle of the seventeenth century, the traditional tall, narrow burgher house was built on a site of between 5.66 and 8.49 square meters and consisted of three to four stories.⁸⁶ The ground floor usually comprised the *voorhuis* and the *binnenhaard/binnenhuis* or inner hearth.⁸⁷ Rooms at street level were also often rented out to store merchandise. First floors with low ceilings were typically bedrooms and children's rooms, while upper stories were made

⁸³ Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, p. 22.

⁸⁴ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 42; Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, p. 50. Some people went to such drastic measures as to order their portraits destroyed so that they would not fall into the wrong hands.

⁸⁵ M. Westermann, "‘Costly and Curious, full off pleasure and home contentment’: Making Home in the Dutch Republic’ in Mariët Westermann, et. al., *Art & Home: Dutch Interior in the Age of Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2001), pp. 15-81, p. 24.

⁸⁶ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 22.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 23. The *binnenhuis* was where families cooked, ate and slept during the winter. There might also be a separate *keuken* (kitchen); sometimes an *achterkamer* (rear room) was added for storage and occasionally a *comptoir* (office) was built for the head of the house.

up of rooms storing provisions and personal objects (such as the *achterkamer*) and were sometimes rented out to the urban poor.⁸⁸

Circa mid-century, transformations could be recognised in the way houses were planned and built. One of the most powerful changes was probably to the *voorhuis*. Previously the *voorhuis* had been the site of business, trade, and transaction in Dutch society. It was a transitional space between the street and the intimacy of the home. During the course of the century, the *voorhuis* became smaller, the side rooms and the *zaal* (reception room) became larger and housed more family portraits (portraits of current family members, especially portrait historiés) towards the end of the century.⁸⁹ The *voorhuis* shifted from a place of business to one of receiving/entertaining/socializing.⁹⁰ As the *voorhuis* reduced in size, business was forced to take place in buildings separate from the house.⁹¹ Entertaining guests and visitors became more popular as the century progressed, and conversely parts of the home began to become out of bounds to all those but close relatives and friends.⁹²

In his seminal work, *A History of Private Life* (1991), Philippe Ariès explains a shift in housing design as one of six measures of privacy that developed during the early modern period.⁹³ Changes in housing design were a catalyst in beginning to separate the more public sociability of the street (seen as a hallmark of medieval society) from the private affairs of the home.⁹⁴ The privacy of the home and the intimate sphere of the family were starting to be viewed in terms of withdrawal or retreat, suggesting that the family ‘turned in on itself.’⁹⁵ Among other changes to the Dutch home in the

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 69.

⁹⁰ Hollander, *An Entrance for the Eyes*, p. 180.

⁹¹ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 27.

⁹² Ibid., p. 13.

⁹³ P. Ariès and G. Duby, *A History of Private Life* (5 vols., Cambridge, MA, 1987-91), vol. III, p. 4.

⁹⁴ D. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Marriage Portraiture* (Epping, 1982), p.10; Hollander, *An Entrance for the Eyes*, p. 179.

⁹⁵ Smith, *Masks of Wedlock*, p. 10

seventeenth century were smaller rooms, private stairwells and corridors, and buildings that were built higher but not wider.⁹⁶ For the first time, rooms began to take on specialised functions that had not existed before in terms of designating specific spaces for sleeping, eating, and receiving visitors in addition to decorating and furnishing them accordingly.⁹⁷ The *voorhuis* evolved into a narrower space as homeowners desired rooms with dedicated functions to be partitioned off from the *voorhuis*. This is particularly clear in the plan of the house designed by Philips Vingboons (fig. 36) that was to be built for Nicolaes van Bambeeck (fig. 37) and Agatha Bas (fig. 38) in 1650. The plan has early designations of specific functions for rooms such as the ‘slaep camer’ (bedroom).⁹⁸ Rooms also had their own distinct entrances for the first time, functioning to partition space in a more obvious way.⁹⁹

This is clearly illuminated by Jan van der Heyden in his *Sectional View of an Amsterdam House on Fire* from *Beschryving der nieuwlijks uitgevonden en geotrojeerde slang-brand-sputten, en haare wyze van brand-blussen, tegenwoordig binnen Amsterdam in gebruik zijnde* (fig. 39).¹⁰⁰ The etching represents a sectional view of an Amsterdam canal house, allowing the viewer to see that the spaces of the house have been divided into rooms with distinct entrances. Another way in which to partition the home was to add a courtyard, separating the front and rear of the house, such as can be seen in Johannes Vingboons’ *Plan of the House built for Daniel Soyhier, Keizersgracht 319* from 1639 (fig. 40).¹⁰¹ The courtyard (usually marked ‘open plaets’) was a practical solution to the suffocating closeness of the canal houses. One

⁹⁶ W. Rybczynski, *Home: A Short History of an Idea*, (London, 1987), p. 62; Ariès and Duby, *A History of Private Life*, vol. III, p. 4.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Westermann, ‘Costly and Curious’, pp. 29-30

⁹⁹ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁰ Westermann, ‘Costly and Curious’, p. 27.

¹⁰¹ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 28.

might do laundry there, play outside, or enjoy fresh air, and it provided the added benefit of a source of natural light.¹⁰²

Increasing intimacy and privacy in the household in the seventeenth century, evident through more complex housing plans, shapes the meaning and discourse surrounding family portraits. Religion too, contributed to the changing nature of family intimacy and privacy. Calvinism, in particular, valued private reflection and solitary reading of the Bible, which ultimately engendered an individual's relationship with God. Within these various aspects of an understanding of privacy that was very much in flux, portraits can be viewed as an interface between the ways in which the familial identity is presented as communal entity and the more private, internal means by which a family portrait functioned, against the great potential for social mobility, in the lives of individuals. Artists devised solutions with which to manage in a visual sense the new domesticity that was arising in Dutch society in concert with established, traditional conventions of public identity. Greenblatt's view of the 'self-as-fiction' is therefore not appropriate when discussing identity in this context, because as Martin argues, the inner self and external factors both contribute to a formation of identity.¹⁰³

As a means of illuminating the significance of ancestor portrait collections for families, I will now explore the portrait as such an interface, and the ambiguities about social status it reflects in two case studies of the Backer and the Van Loon families. Intended for a private audience of family members and close friends, the Backer family portrait collection was crucial to the family's identity, as is evident from the protracted legal dispute that erupted over these portraits in 1731. In the case of the van Loon family, their portrait collection as a whole remained virtually untouched for centuries, indicating the importance of the portraits, not so much as a record of likeness, but as a

¹⁰² Westermann, 'Costly and Curious', p. 27.

¹⁰³ J.J. Martin, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 6, 13.

visual genealogy. The next two sections will discuss in greater detail the history of the portrait collections of both families.

The Case of the Backer Family (See Appendices 1a and 1b for family trees)

The Backers, a family of Amsterdam, received a noble title from King Willem I in 1815, which afforded them a social status that they still retain to this day.¹⁰⁴ The Backers could not claim noble ancestry, however, and in the centuries before the granting of this title, they gained social status by becoming part of the regent class, or the governing elite of Amsterdam. The males of the family raised their status by marrying into other wealthy and important families. Several of the Backer men had a passion for genealogy and ancestry, which was symptomatic of their ambitions and aristocratic aspirations, and which must be viewed against a background of increasing interest in such subjects during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. These activities resulted in copious notes on the family's lineage, extensive family trees, a family portrait album known as the 'Backer album,' and the commissioning of a large number of family portraits. While the family's economic and social success spoke for itself, the tracing of the family's lineage and the representation of the ancestors in paint were substantial factors in the attempt to raise status, in emulation of noble traditions, and in the struggle for *burgerlijk* identity in the seventeenth-century Netherlands. The portraits were clearly incredibly significant to the family's image of itself, especially

¹⁰⁴ On the Backer family and portraits see: Backer Stichting te Amsterdam, *Het Regentengeslacht Backer in de Loop der Eeuwen* (Amsterdam, 1975); N. Middelkoop, et al., *Kopstukken: Amsterdammers Geportreteerd: 1600-1800*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam, 2002), pp. 254-271; N. Smit, 'Het Album Backer': 't Famiglieboek waar in een seer groote quantiteyd portraijtjes (University of Amsterdam MA thesis, 2003); M. de Vries, *Strategische Strijd: De Interne Familiedynamiek rond het Erfenisconflict van de Families Backer en De la Court (1731-1735): Een Historisch Veldanalyse*, (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam MA thesis, 2007); F. Diercks, et al. *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie in Beeld*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2010); Museum Willet-Holthuysen, 'Backers in Residence: A Portrait of an Amsterdam Family', exh. pamphlet (Amsterdam, 2011).

when we discover that a legal battle took place over the family papers and portraits after the death of the patriarch.

Despite fairly humble beginnings, the Backers ended up with the most complete family portrait collection from the seventeenth century through a combination of genuine, dedicated interest and luck. The collection of individual portraits dates back to the early sixteenth century, so not only were they important for their historical, but also for their personal value to the identity of the family as a whole. The meaning the family attached to having their portraits made is further revealed by their choice of artists of the highest caliber, such as Nicolaes Maes, Anthonie Palamedesz, Nicolaes Elias Pickenoy, Michiel van Musscher, Caspar Netscher, and artists from the van Mieris family. In the portraits, we see, over a long period of time, the various ways in which the family intended to represent itself, accompanied by symbols of status and wealth, such as weaponry, adopting coats of arms, and wearing fine clothing.

The earliest portraits in the collection, painted in 1526, are of the Backer ancestors Willem Backer Syvertsz. (1499-1536) and Gheertgen Jan Oomendr (1497-1592) (figs. 41, 42), who were successful brewers.¹⁰⁵ These are also the earliest known existing individual portraits from Amsterdam, unique for their representation of the Backer ancestry and for the history of portraiture. The Backer story began when their descendant Cornelis Jorisz (1564-1599) emigrated from Brabant to Amsterdam in the late sixteenth century where he found work as a herring dealer (fig. 43). He had neither a family name nor a coat of arms, but was able to make connections in Amsterdam through his wife, Grietje Willem Backersdr. (1571-1624), whom he married in 1588 (fig. 44). Cornelis and Grietje originally met one another in Emden (in what is now Northwest Germany) where both of their families lived in exile because of their

¹⁰⁵ The biographical information that follows here was taken from the material compiled in the exhibition catalogue: F. Diercks, et al. *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie in Beeld*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2010) unless otherwise indicated.

Catholic faith. When the Backers returned to Amsterdam, they converted to Protestantism and Cornelis took the name of his wife because of her family's vital new Protestant connections.¹⁰⁶ Association with the Protestant faction allowed Cornelis to be elected to the town council as well as to be named an alderman (*schepen*, in Dutch), a member of the municipal council.¹⁰⁷

Cornelis furthermore took the opportunity to fashion a coat of arms for himself, taking the image of a red horn, which was the symbol from the sign on the seal of the ship he used as a herring dealer. Further evidence of his desire to climb the social ladder is in his marriage portrait (fig. 43), which was a pendant to his wife's portrait (fig. 44). Cornelis stands tall and holds the hilt of a rapier in his left hand. This probably refers to his role in the militia, while his stance points to a strength and confidence in his new social status. He chose to have this allusion to his life portrayed rather than his involvement in politics. Grietje's portrait shows her in an incredibly luxurious brocaded dress and millstone collar of the latest fashion.

Steps taken by Cornelis Jorisz to better his social position were apparently very successful as his son, Willem Backer Cornelisz. (1595-1652), eventually became *burgemeester* (mayor) of Amsterdam (fig. 48). Willem replaced the coat of arms that his father had invented with the arms of the older and more distinguished van Leuven family. He had discovered an imperial charter of the van Leuven family from 1556 in the Backer family archive and used this as justification to borrow that family's seal (fig. 45). His grandmother Lysbeth van Leuven (1543-1625) (fig. 46) had married into the Backer line with her marriage to Willem Backer (1528-1575) (fig. 47), but it was still a stretch for Willem to use their coat of arms as his own. Such attempts to raise status

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 13

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 12. After the Reformation, Catholics were exiled and banned from holding public office.

occurred frequently and were not received well by the Dutch upper classes though it does not appear to have been prohibited, as it was in the Southern Netherlands.¹⁰⁸

Willem followed in the footsteps of his father and uncles in being involved in Amsterdam politics with his appointment to the *Vroedschap*.¹⁰⁹ The *Vroedschap* typically was chosen from the most powerful Amsterdam families. Willem was aided by his brother-in-law Gerard Schaep Symonsz., who already served in the city council, in obtaining the position. While deeply involved in Amsterdam politics, Willem became a supporter of Reijnier Pauw (who conspired with Prince Maurits against Johan Oldenbarnevelt) in opposition to the prominent Bicker and de Graeff families. Eventually he climbed the ranks of Amsterdam's highest governing bodies, becoming *burgemeester* first in 1639, and then a further four times, serving his last term in 1651. His most important public achievement was his involvement in planning the building of the church tower of the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam (which was never completed).

Willem married Bregitta Spiegel (1606-1668) (fig. 49) in 1627 and the two moved to a modest home, which had been inherited by his wife, called 'Nuyssenburg bij Overveen'. Willem continued to rise in prominent circles, and in 1647, he became a knight of the Doge of Venice which inspired him to use the Venetian lion, the symbol of St. Mark, as the family insignia (fig. 50). Willem and his wife, Bregitta Spiegel underlined their social rise as they are wearing clothing that is fitting to their status in their pendant marriage portraits (figs. 48, 49). In particular, Willem Backer's lace collar from the previous generation is possibly a deliberate choice harkening back to an

¹⁰⁸ B. Timmermans, '(Family) portraits in the construction of a visual family tree and a social identity. Anticipating the aspiration of elite clientele in seventeenth-century Antwerp', in K. van der Stighelen, et al. (eds.), *Pokerfaced: Flemish and Dutch Baroque Faces Unveiled* (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 175- 192, p. 176. Heraldic laws prevented this behavior.

¹⁰⁹ Diercks, et al. *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie*, p. 17. His uncle, Jacob Backer, was alderman in 1610 and *burgemeester* in 1632.

‘antique’ or ‘romantic’ period, suggesting that some of the clothing choices in these portraits were purely fantasy.

In a portrait from 1626 by Anthonie Palamedesz, Willem Backer intended to present another side of his social ambition by having himself portrayed as a member of the Amsterdam militia company of Captain Abraham Boom and Lieutenant Anthonie Oetgens van Waveren both individually (fig. 51) and in a group portrait of the company (fig. 52, third figure from left). The group portrait commemorates the company’s honourable mission to defend the Dutch Republic against possible Spanish attack in Zwolle in the autumn of 1622.

A comparison of Willem’s individual militia portrait (fig. 51) with that of Cornelis de Graeff’s (1599-1664) portrait of 1636 (fig. 53) reveals Willem’s social aspirations and the prevailing attitudes of such social climbing during the period. Though both men had full-length portraits painted, Willem’s image is much more diminutive in comparison to Cornelis de Graeff’s, both in the size of the actual portrait and the amount of space that the figure occupies. Pickenoy’s image of de Graeff portrays him more in the style of royalty than as a normal burgher and patriot of the Republic, as does Palamedesz’ likeness of Willem Backer. The stark contrast in the two portraits makes a point about the difference in status between the two families. I will briefly digress in order to explore how these real changes in status affected the presentation of self and family in portraiture, and will then return to the portrait collection of the Backers.

Tensions concerning social status led to a heightened interest in family genealogy, especially among the old regent families of Amsterdam, in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. The established regent families felt a need to legitimise their role in building the history of the city and to gain the respect they

deserved in society, amongst the growing *burgerij*. Cornelis de Graeff, who was elected *burgemeester* ten times and possessed significant political and social power, also had the solidity of his lineage firmly behind him. He had no need to establish the family line in any kind of material sense as he was of the mindset that even the old Amsterdam families did not know a great deal more about their lineage than anyone else. He warned his children against the trend of inventing and drawing up family trees, saying that individuals were ‘...bringing in any person who, in his or her time, had had more respect than the existing family and that these genealogies were based neither in truth nor sincerity.’¹¹⁰ In contrast, as we have seen, Willem Backer had fashioned himself a coat of arms and amended it after he was knighted by the Doge of Venice, an action that was not well received in Dutch society. He did not become very interested in the actual detailed history of his ancestors, though, until he was retired. In his criticisms of the fashion for ‘inventive’ genealogical study, de Graeff was probably not criticising individuals who fabricated a coat of arms, such as Willem Backer, and referring more to people like Gerard Schaep Pietersz., who feigned the majority of his family genealogy in an attempt to gain status.

Gerard Schaep Pietersz (1595-1655) and the Fabrication of Family

Gerard Schaep Pietersz., a nephew of Gerard Schaep Symonsz. (who helped Willem Backer in obtaining his position in the *Vroedschap*), was elected to the *Vroedschap* of Amsterdam in 1638. He held a high post as he was Calvinist, though soon after the appointment, was relegated to the Admiralty of Zeeland, a lesser position. During his period of time serving in Zeeland, he had the time to polish and enhance the history of his family. Before being elected to the *Vroedschap*, his life in Amsterdam

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 32. ‘wilde(n) inbrengen eenighe personen die in haer tijd meer aensien hebben gehad als dat sij die familien bestaen’...’gants niet overseen compt met de oprechtichijt en waerheijt.’ Translation mine.

society had been quite difficult. He felt alienated as he was originally born in Dordrecht to a father from Amsterdam and a mother from Dordrecht, where he had also met and married his wife.¹¹¹

His discomfort with his lack of history in Amsterdam seems to have influenced his interest in his genealogy and family history in general. Schaep researched and wrote a study of the families traditionally elected to the *Vroedschap* in Amsterdam. However, the study contains many mistakes and false claims, with the least friendly comments written in Latin.¹¹² For example, Schaep claimed that Bremen-born Jan Cock, the father of Frans Banninck Cocq (the central figure in Rembrandt's famed civic group portrait *The Nightwatch* and *burgemeester* of Amsterdam in the mid-seventeenth century), was allegedly so poor that he had to beg on the streets of Amsterdam and, even more shockingly, married against the wishes of his parents.¹¹³ None of these claims can be verified, which shows how Schaep, in fabricating one family history, would most likely have had no qualms about tinkering with his own family tree. The lineage that he designed for himself was only based partially in the truth. With this family tree, he commissioned two galleries of portraits, one for each side of his family that would function to authenticate his genealogy.¹¹⁴ For Schaep, portraits were a space in which reality could be manipulated for personal status building and identity formation.

Dordrecht was an older city than Amsterdam and as a result, it had both a more clearly established aristocratic class and prodigious portrait tradition. Schaep was able

¹¹¹ S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, 'Toen hingen er burgers als vorsten aan de muur' in N. Middelkoop, et al., *Kopstukken: Amsterdammers Geportretteerd: 1600-1800*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam, 2002), pp. 46-63, p. 59.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid., note 68. Antiquarium, KB, nr. 78 C 42 f. 50, 'Jan Cock, van Bremen hier in 't land gekomen, ostiatium mendicasse dictur (heft, naar men zegt, aan de deuren gebedeld); 'aengenomen uut comiseratie van de apteker in "de Witte Doos", wonende in de Warmoesstraet. Troude daerna invitis parentibus vel consanguineis (tegen de wil van haar ouders of bloedverwanten) 'Lysbeth Franszn, dochter van Frans Benning ende Lysbeth (sic) in "de Canis."

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 60.

to base some of the portraits of his ancestors from his mother's side on effigies or memorials as well as on triptychs or individual portraits which he had copied by various artists, including Symon Hendrickszn., Lucas tot Aemsteld, Salomon tot Middelburg, David Bailly, Jozef Marinkelle, and Adriaen Hanszn Muylkens, in miniature size (fig. 4).¹¹⁵ On the portrait gallery, Schaep also included written family trees and a guide for which names corresponded with which portraits, which lends a sense of validity and authority to the naming of ancestors (invented or otherwise).

The portrait gallery of Schaep's father's side of the family, on the other hand, is greatly more fictionalised (fig. 5). His father's side of the family was originally from Amsterdam and unfortunately, in his research, Schaep was unable to discover much information about his forebears. Despite a lack of concrete facts, he extended his lineage back to 1361 and altered his coat of arms from the original seal of his ancestors to that of a leaping ram. The blank spaces in his ancestral line allowed for creativity. Schaep had no images of ancestors from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries due to the fact that there was no portrait tradition existing in Amsterdam at that time. As a result, Schaep commissioned 'icons' of his ancestors that appear on the bottom row of the portrait gallery.¹¹⁶ The men are depicted wearing blood-ties, a type of red band that indicates their status as aldermen.¹¹⁷ They are identified individually by their coats of arms, but these seals would have been much too fantastic and beautiful for the time period.¹¹⁸ Just as in the other portrait gallery, this panel too includes a painted family tree and a guide to names, in this case in an attempt to fortify his untruths.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.; Diercks et al., *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie*, p. 33.

¹¹⁶ Dudok van Heel, 'Toen hingen burgers', p. 60. Van Heel introduces the term 'iconen' (icons) in his essay, which should be understood as portraits of individuals that were not done from life. The painter Adriaen Hanszn Muylkens (1602-1648) painted the miniature portraits in 1638 for ten guilders apiece.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. Schaep also ordered a larger second series of these icons.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

Case Study I: The Backer Family (continued)

Schaep's ancestor galleries may have inspired later generations in some ways, though the Backer family did not go to such dramatic lengths to maximise the impact of their genealogy through fictionalization. In 1652, upon the death of Willem, Cornelis Backer (1633-1681), became the patriarch of the Backer family (fig. 57). He married Christina le Gillon (1633-1658) in 1655 and they had three children: Willem Backer (1656-1731), Gerard Backer (1657-1715), and Christina Backer (1658-1734). Sadly, Christina le Gillon died shortly after they married, in 1658. Cornelis was subsequently remarried to Catharina Raye (1641-1712) in 1660. The couple had seven children who lived to adulthood: Jan Backer Cornelisz. (1662-1748), Laurens Backer (1664-1704), Brigitta Catharina Backer (1671-1751), Cornelis Backer (1672-1707), Maria Eva Backer (1674-1734), and Jacob Cornelis Backer (1675-1748). The two branches of the Backer family arose from the fact that Cornelis Backer married twice.

Because he married outside of the ruling families, Cornelis' social position was not strengthened. He was elected to secretary of state, town council and to alderman, but never to *burgemeester*. He had, in fact, attempted to become *burgemeester*, but was the victim of a power struggle between Stadtholder Willem III and the Amsterdam burghers. Rather, Cornelis relied on the acquisition of land to promote his social status. He purchased four tracts of land between the Reguliersgracht and the Utrechtsestraat, as well as a house on the Herengracht, which included a stable and coach house. The keeping of horses was a relatively new status symbol at the time. Cornelis also inherited the Nuyssenburg villa from his mother in 1668. Subsequent generations of the family would hold positions in the town council like Cornelis had, but they would not possess political careers of great meaning like those of their forefathers.

Willem Backer Cornelisz (1656-1731) was the first son of Cornelis Backer and Christina le Gillon and headed the older branch of the family (fig. 54). Willem did not have a political career as his forebears, and instead lived as a rentier (a person who makes an income from the capital of the family's assets). The only public function that he served was as church warden of the Amstelkerk. This was typically a position held by young regents, thus the fact that Willem still performed the duty at age 50 does not demonstrate a great deal of political ambition. In addition, he took a role as an officer in the militia, was lieutenant in 1681, and from 1686-1715 became captain of the company of District XIV (the area around present-day Stopera). His political and social ambitions were likewise not stimulated by his marriage to Magdalena de la Court, youngest daughter of the wealthy Leiden merchant family, in 1682 (fig. 55).

Willem and Magdalena moved into a house of the van der Voort family (Catharina van der Voort, Magdalena's mother, was the second wife of Pieter de la Court), on the Fluwelenburgwal (now Oudezijds Voorburgwal 237) in Amsterdam. They also inherited the Villa 'Voortwijck' near Breukelen from the van der Voorts. Voortwijck was their country home, and Willem indicated in his personal writings that the couple greatly enjoyed staying there, saying that 'I wish to stay there again, because here there is nothing but receiving visitors all day or going to visit other people.'¹¹⁹ The couple had five children who lived to adulthood: Christina Johanna Backer (1688-1737), Catharina Backer (1689-1766), Cornelis Backer (1693-1775), Sara Backer (1695-1732), and Elisabeth Adriana Backer (1697-1781). Their daughter Catharina's marriage to her cousin Allard de la Court in 1711 would greatly strengthen the ties of the two families.

¹¹⁹ Diercks et al., *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie*, p. 37, note 16, S. van Haaren, *Een regentengeslacht in beeld. Geschiedenis en collective van de familie Van de Poll* (Zwolle, 1997), p. 26. 'Ik verlang al weer naar buijte, want hier is niet anders als alle daage mensche te ontfangen off te gaan sien.' Translation mine.

The de la Courts were immigrants from the Southern Netherlands and had made their fortune dealing in the textile industry. Willem was active in some trading on behalf of the de la Courts, but never took on a more leading role. He was instead remarkably devoted to his hobbies, especially his collection of natural and artificial curiosities, antiquities, drawings, and paintings. He collected over 550 animals preserved in glass jars with fluid, from snakes and fish to birds, iguanas, and butterflies. His collection also included unique shells, fossils, figures cut from onyx, coral and other types of stone, as well as combat weapons. He possessed at least five kunstcabinets, which were described in his legacy. As family patriarch, Willem was highly interested in the family genealogy, which is evidenced by his extensive notes on the lineage of the family contained in the archives and the high number of family portrait commissions.¹²⁰

Willem not only had portraits painted of him and his wife by one of the most well-known portrait artists of the period, Nicolaes Maes (figs. 54, 55), but also had older portraits updated and copied. The van Mieris family in Leiden took on a number of these commissions. Willem had a connection to Jan and Willem van Mieris through his father-in-law, Pieter de la Court.¹²¹ Jan van Mieris was commissioned to make copies of the portraits of Willem's father, grandfather and father-in-law. These portraits were all the same size, format, and style and had been updated by van Mieris to provide unity to the series. The visual unity was supported by the unique frames sculpted from lime or pear tree wood with the coat of arms engraved above.¹²²

Jan van Mieris created copies after the original portraits and made slight changes in order to contemporise them and to emphasise the qualities that were important to Willem. His copy of a portrait of Pieter de la Court, Willem's father-in-law, by

¹²⁰ See: Amsterdam, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Familie-archief Backer, nr. 172.

¹²¹ Diercks et al., *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie*, p. 38; Smit, 'Het Album Backer', p. vi.

¹²² Diercks, et al., *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie*, p. 41. The frames are no longer extant; On frames see: van Thiel, *Framing in the Golden Age*, p. 29.

Abraham van den Tempel is very close to the original (fig. 56). He made one significant modification to his copy of the portrait of Willem's father, Cornelis Backer (1633-1681), which was originally painted by Caspar Netscher. Instead of a sword, Cornelis holds the blood band of justice to represent his governmental role (fig. 57). The change may have been instigated by Gerard Schaep Pietersz's gallery of ancestors which was hung in Willem's cousin Maria Schaep's house on Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 28 (See pp. 71-73). The portrait of Willem's grandfather, the *burgemeester* Willem Backer (1595-1652), was adapted by Jan van Mieris to the latest sartorial fashions (fig. 58). In it he wears a Japanese robe, fashionable later in the seventeenth century, coming up with a curious amalgam of the clothing and style of two generations.

The contemporary portraits that Willem had commissioned of himself and his wife also reflected the fashions of the time. Willem's individual portrait was most likely painted before 1681 (fig. 54) and his wife, Magdalena de la Court's, seems to have been painted as a pendant on the occasion of their marriage in 1682 (fig. 55). This would explain the unusual placement of Magdalena to the left of her husband (traditionally, she would be placed on the right, which is the heraldic left). Maes has imagined luxurious, fashionable costumes for the pair, which more likely reflect their aspirations to wealth and status, rather than realistic conditions.

Willem's most remarkable contribution to what would later become the collection of the modern Backer Foundation (est. 1910) is the so-called 'Backer Album', which is comprised of 116 miniature portraits of the family by the artists Frans van Mieris the Younger (1689-1763), Jacob Folkema (1692-1767), Anna Folkema (1695-

1768) and possibly Willem van Meiris (1662-1747).¹²³ As described by his son-in-law, Allard de la Court in the 1730s:

The family book had a great quantity of portraits, which van Mieris made in East Indian ink, there were about 100 images of the family, ancestors as well as friends in the flesh, also a great number of coats of arms of the family which were done neatly in watercolour by Ms. Folkema, and most made by other artists.¹²⁴

The album consists of single sheets with pen and wash drawings of about 8 x 6 cm (fig. 59). Most of the drawings are based on existing portraits, from which only the heads were copied. Below each drawing, the name and dates are provided. Willem had the van Mierises copy from various portrait collections in the family (the album was later used to identify the original portraits). There are more portraits of some family members than others, and of Willem himself there are only three. They are all unsigned but, in some cases, we know the artists that created them from loose notes. The children of the youngest Backer generation were painted in person around 1729, possibly by the miniaturist Jacob Folkema. His sister Anna painted the family coats of arms. After Willem's death, the album went to his son, Cornelis, who had his wife's family added to the album. In 1759, there were a total of 152 portraits of 138 people. This type of album is not unique among regent families, but it is a high point of the genre, due to its quality and thoroughness of documentation. Obvious sources of inspiration for Willem were the miniature portraits of the ancestors of his uncle, Gerard Schaep Pietersz. (figs. 4, 5), which hung in his parents' house next door.

¹²³ The album is presently in the Stadsarchief Amsterdam as part of the 'Familie-archief Backer, nr. 172'.

¹²⁴ Diercks, et al., *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie*, p. 42, note 23. Stadsarchief Amsterdam 172, nr. 799, Stukken en aantekeningen afkomstig van Allard de la Court betreffende de geschillen tussen hem en zijn zwager en schoonzusters Backer over de afwikkeling der nalatenschap van Willem Backer. 1731 – 1735. 't Famiglie boek waar in een seer groote quantiteyd portraijtjes, soo Van Mieris als andre gewassen zijn met Oostindise inkt, van de famiglie wel 100 stuks naar gedagte, soo van voorouders als vrinden nog in leevende lijve, als meede een seer groote quantiiteyd van waapens van de famiglie die alle seer netjes met waaterverf, soo door Juffr. Folkema, de meeste als andre kunstenaars zijn gemaakt.'

In 1711, Willem appears to have taken the opportunity to commission portraits of four of his children and his future son-in-law from Arnold Boonen (1669-1729) because his daughter Catharina was soon to be married to Allard de la Court in Leiden and his son Cornelis was beginning a law degree at Leiden University. The portraits of Sara, Christina, Cornelis, and Allard were probably done around 1712, but the portrait of Catharina was painted in 1713, after the birth of her first child (figs. 60-64). All sitters have been portrayed in 'portrait costume', meaning that their clothing was probably a kind of fantasy of the artist, rather than true to life.

Like many of the other Backer portraits, the sitters are also painted with various personal attributes. Cornelis is portrayed in front of a bookcase, referring to his law studies in Leiden (fig. 60). Christina and Sara have the attributes of a fruitbasket and an open birdcage with a parrot respectively. These symbols refer to their marital availability (figs. 61, 62). As it turns out, the portraits did not quite help their marital prospects as the two sisters remained single and stayed in the house on the Fluwelenburgwal until their deaths. Their portraits stayed in the family as they both outlived their brother. Catharina's attributes are less abstract—her portrait depicts her with a basket of flowers and an easel, which are a reference to her work as a still-life painter, while the books on the table point to her love for reading (fig. 63). Catharina's husband, Allard de la Court's portrait is highly aristocratic in pose and choice of drapery (fig. 64).

Cornelis Backer Willemsz (1693-1775) was his father's son in many ways as he was not interested in politics, had a strong passion for the genealogy of the family, and a great love of the outdoors (fig. 60). Five years after his graduation from Leiden University, he was named alderman in Amsterdam. In 1723, he married Maria Clara van der Hagen (1703-1765). The couple did not own their own house in Amsterdam;

they rented because Cornelis focused a great deal of time on his hobbies, namely art and coin collecting, and on his country manor. In 1726, he purchased a farm near Wassenaar and rebuilt the country estate, which he called 'Backershagen', combining his and his wife's names. After the renovation of the country estate, Cornelis began to withdraw from political life. He was elected to the city council in 1748 but turned it down and concentrated wholly on Backershagen. At his estate, he studied the genealogy of the family. On the reverse side of the portraits in his collection, he painted coats of arms and personal information (fig. 65).¹²⁵ His response to external social pressures in society and the need for internal examination of the family line and genealogy makes a strong case for the importance of the portraits for personal, family identity, as the reverse sides would only have been viewed privately. Further to this familial interest, Cornelis worked to expand the family album that was started by his father.

Dispute over the Estate of Willem Backer in 1731

The Backers were clearly deeply invested in their genealogy and portrait collection, and it comes as no surprise that after Willem Backer died suddenly in 1731, a fierce dispute erupted among his heirs over the future of the family's archives, documents, and portraits. He had left no notarised will, so his next of kin were forced to resolve the controversy in order to come to some mutual agreement. Willem's wife, Magdalena, was perceived to be unfairly favoured in the division of the estate as she received money, a pearl necklace and the country villa 'Voortwyck'. Contrary to custom and common practice, Magdalena also received a number of family portraits, including ones of her parents, Catharina and Jan van der Voort (fig. 66), her uncle Willem van der Voort (fig. 67), and her grandmother Magdalena Stockmans. Typically,

¹²⁵ Ibid., pp. 49, 78-80. Examples of these portraits are in the Backer Stichting.

family portraits were bequeathed to the next male relative, who would have been Magdalena's son, Cornelis. The fact that tradition had not been adhered to caused disagreement. However, this was nothing in the face of the fact that Magdalena's family of birth, the de la Courts, were also deeply invested in the family's history.

Pieter de la Court van der Voort (1664-1739), Magdalena's brother, greatly resented the distribution of assets and his feelings became more intense over time.¹²⁶ He was especially concerned that many of the ancestor portraits and family papers, still in the possession of his sister, would then be bequeathed to his nephew Cornelis. His apprehension was essentially rooted in the fact that documents and paintings significant to the de la Court family line would end up in the possession of the Backer family. Pieter and his son, Allard, eventually brought a legal case against Cornelis Backer and his sisters. In this case, Allard acted on behalf of his wife Catharina Backer who, despite her family of birth, was forced onto her husband's side of the affair.

As a collector of drawings and prints, Allard was very interested in the family portraits and archives. Together with his father, Pieter, he made an official claim on the portraits of their ancestors and the family papers, especially because these included the notes of his grandfather, the renowned economist Pieter de la Court the Younger. The case came before the High Court, which stipulated that both men must give the other party access to the family papers and objects in their own possession, after which the relevant paintings would then be copied. In 1735, the paintings were transferred by a notary. Thus Allard de la Court received papers and writings of his family in hand in order to copy them, but was not able to keep them. In the end, he only partially secured

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 51. Pieter de la Court van der Voort was already in possession of five portraits of the De la Court family painted by Godfried Schalcken (1643-1706). The portraits were of Pieter de la Court the Younger, Willem van der Voort, Jan van der Voort, Magdalena de la Court and her brother Pieter de la Court van der Voort. The portraits had hung in the home of Willem van der Voort, who had commissioned the portraits, and so they ended up in the general estate. In 1685 the pictures were allocated to Pieter.

what he desired. Some items were ordered to be moved to the De la Court residence on Leiden's Rapenburg, among which were the portraits of Allard de la Court and Catharina Backer, painted by Arnold Boonen (figs. 63, 64). Cornelis Backer, who had made it clear from the beginning that he intended to acquire all of the family papers and assets, threatened the De la Courts when they took legal action, but had to resign himself to the decision of the court. Given that the dispute broke out over the importance of family history and genealogy, it is ultimately ironic that the situation resulted in a permanent fracture between the two families.¹²⁷

The strong dispute over the families' archive and portraiture, which eventually divided them, is a significant commentary on the importance of the portraits for family identity. The portraits had a low value in the marketplace, so the question arises as to why both sides would have wanted the family portraits so desperately. While each family had achieved success in financial and social spheres, these portraits and family papers were likely the most private source of familial identity. The family ancestor portraits fed a desire for personal exploration and validation of family identity, especially in such a turbulent period of the Dutch Republic as well as extensive social changes in each generation of the family. The transformations experienced by the family during the seventeenth century clearly affected them deeply, even into the next century. In the following section, I introduce an additional case study of the van Loon family. They managed to keep their family portrait collection and family album together throughout the centuries. This in itself proves the worth and meaning of the objects for family identity, even though it was never threatened like that of the Backers.

¹²⁷ On the dispute see: Diercks, et al., *Backer: Een Amsterdamse Familie*, pp. 49-52; de Vries, *Strategische Strijd: De Interne Familiedynamiek*.

Case Study II: Van Loon Family (See Appendix 2 for Van Loon family tree)

Just as with the Backer family, the history of the van Loon family was strongly connected to the rise of the Dutch Republic, its naval power and its leading role in trade, science, and the arts as well as the development of Amsterdam as a centre of trade and political power.¹²⁸ The social and political changes occurring in the Netherlands during the period had a dramatic impact on the family's success in mercantile activities as well as having an effect on how their familial identity was materially constructed.

The Van Loon family, whose history can be traced back to 1416, was originally from the village Loon op Zand in Brabant where they ran a grain mill.¹²⁹ At the end of the fifteenth century, the family moved to 's-Hertogenbosch in Brabant.¹³⁰ In 1571, they fled to Rotterdam for religious reasons (they were Catholic), though it was likely there were commercial motives as well.¹³¹ The most influential early member of the family, Willem van Loon (1537-1618) started out as a fishmonger, mostly dealing in salted or smoked herring, and later grew into a respected merchant, who would eventually trade with Constantinople and the Levant (fig. 68). He married Petronella van Roy in 1561 (fig. 69).

Willem's commercial activities would explain the family's new coat of arms that appeared during this time. The arms consisted of three crosses and two Moors facing away from one another (fig. 70). The original van Loon coat of arms had only the three crosses (representing the millrinds of the family's profession in Loon op Zand). Later, the family probably added the Moors in order to denote their profitable trade with

¹²⁸ On the Van Loon family and portraits, see: T. Grever, *Museum van Loon: A Splendid House* (Zwolle, 2010); Stichting van Loon, *Museum van Loon: Keizersgracht 672 Amsterdam*, pamphlet (Amsterdam, n.d.); I.H. van Eeghen and M.N. van Loon, *The House with the Purple Windows and the Van Loon Family in Amsterdam* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1990); I.H. van Eeghen, 'De Groepsportretten in de Familie van Loon', *Amstelodamum* 60 (1973), pp. 121-127.

¹²⁹ Grever, *Museum van Loon*, p. 8.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

Constantinople and the Levant, thus shaping their status symbols to match their success.¹³²

Alongside his mercantile pursuits, Willem van Loon became involved in politics. This ambition was strengthened by his son Hans' (1577-1658) marriage to Anna Ruychaver in 1597 (figs. 71, 72).¹³³ The Ruychavers were related to old North Holland noble families such as the Brederodes and the van Duivenvoordes and also supported the Dutch revolt against the Spanish Hapsburgs. Anna Ruychaver's uncle was a leader of the Geuzen privateers who attacked Spanish ships and settlements while her grandfather, Nicolaes van der Laen, was the *burgemeester* of Haarlem. The van Loons gained significant political ties from the Ruychaver family. A sixteenth-century Album Amicorum honours this relationship by placing the arms of both families on the front and back of the book done in rare silver embellishment (fig. 73). The Van Loons further paid tribute to this association by recording the names of the noble ancestors of the Ruychavers inside the album.¹³⁴

In further support of elevating his family's social station, Willem van Loon co-founded the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or VOC) in 1602.¹³⁵ Even though he resided in Rotterdam, he invested in the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC. His son Hans moved to Amsterdam in 1604 to look after the commercial interests of the family.¹³⁶ Hans was furthermore active as a maritime underwriter (one who insures marine vessels). Through his connection with the VOC and work as an underwriter, Hans gained much financial success. In 1627 he purchased the building at 149 Keizersgracht called 'De Koning van Zweden' for 11,900 guilders

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

and in 1628 was appointed governor of the VOC, a position he held until his death.¹³⁷

He was also in a position to pay for the weddings of his eight children and gave them each 30,000 guilders as a wedding gift, a small fortune for which they could purchase two large canal houses.¹³⁸

He was able to marry his children incredibly well, for instance, his daughter, Geertruyd married the lawyer Dirck Graswinckel (fig. 74), his son, Nicolaes (fig. 75), married Emerentia van Veen (fig. 76), who originated from Dutch nobility, and another son, Willem the Younger, married Maria Geelvinck, who was daughter of the mayor.¹³⁹ The marriages bolstered the social position of the family and the van Loons were able to enter the political elite of Amsterdam in a more substantial way than ever before. Most uniquely, they entered the *Vroedschap* which only three families with origins outside of Amsterdam had been able to do before 1650.

With their rise in economic success and social status, the Van Loons made certain deliberate changes to their lifestyle that reflected their social mobility. Not only did they choose to purchase expensive real estate in affluent parts of Amsterdam, but Hans van Loon was also the first member of the family to move to Amsterdam, where he developed a sudden interest in the collecting and commissioning of art.¹⁴⁰ It is known that Hans bought several paintings at auction after his move to Amsterdam in 1608, which certainly signals an attempt to emulate a wealthier lifestyle.¹⁴¹ In 1623, he commissioned portraits of himself and his wife, Anna Ruychaver, from Cornelis van der Voort, probably on the occasion of their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary (figs. 71, 72).

¹³⁷ Montias, *Artists and Artisans in Delft*, p. 112. Montias estimated that a typical house in seventeenth-century Delft would cost anywhere from 150 guilders for a tiny cottage to 6,000+ guilders for a patrician home. Thus it is clear that the van Loon home was extremely expensive compared to contemporary house prices.

¹³⁸ Ibid.; Grever, *Museum van Loon*, p. 11.

¹³⁹ Grever, *Museum van Loon*, p. 11..

¹⁴⁰ R. E. Gerhardt, et. al., *Michiel van Musscher (1645-1705): The Wealth of the Golden Age*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2012), pp. 62-63.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 63.

The van Loons clearly viewed themselves as part of the new urban elite of Amsterdam and strove to align themselves not only with the wealthy but also with the politically powerful and influential, which was indicative of their social aspirations.

In the subsequent decades, the van Loons commissioned artists like Jan Miense Molenaer, Dirck Santvoort, Wallerant Vaillant and Michiel van Musscher, all of whom worked as portraitists at some point.¹⁴² Their preference leaned more towards the *fijnschilders* (fine painters), a style most characteristically exemplified by Gerrit Dou and associated with the town of Leiden. It is surprising that the van Loons did not choose the most famous or renowned painters of Amsterdam to paint their portraits, such as Rembrandt or Jan Lievens, but perhaps this was simply a matter of personal taste.

The individual family portraits (typically commissioned as pendants) portray the lineage of the family and were significant actors in fashioning the identity of the van Loons. A great number of the commissions to paint members of the family went to the Amsterdam-based painter, Michiel van Musscher (1645-1705) and, in fact, no other family gave as many commissions to van Musscher as the van Loons did.¹⁴³ In a way, the van Loon family's success is mirrored in van Musscher's rise to fame. As members of the family gained positions in government, van Musscher's reputation as an artist increased as well. The relationship seems to have been advantageous for both parties in advancing their social positions.

Pieter van Loon (1607-1679), youngest son of Hans, held the same position as his father, administrator of the VOC in the Amsterdam branch, until his death in 1679 (fig. 77). Furthermore, he was a member of many commissions and held several civic positions as well as being a successful merchant with an estimated wealth of 168,000

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 62.

guilders.¹⁴⁴ In 1631, Pieter married Anna van Foreest (1609-1654), daughter of a regent family from Alkmaar (fig. 78).

Usually, pendant portraits were commissioned at the time of marriage, but in this case, Pieter commissioned van Musscher to paint portraits of himself and his wife on the occasion of their fiftieth wedding anniversary (figs. 77, 78). Strangely though, in 1679, Anna had already been dead for 25 years.¹⁴⁵ The posthumous portrait was most likely requested as a memorial and tribute to his wife, though considering that Pieter van Loon is portrayed as a stately gentlemen, the portrait may also have worked to solidify the link to the van Foreest family, a notable connection for them in high society.

Just as the Backers, the van Loon family too composed a family album entitled *Korte Aenteekeninge van de dessendenten van mijn grootvaders soo van 's vaders als moeders sijde* (*Short Notes on the descendants of my grandfathers as well as his father and mother's side*).¹⁴⁶ The van Loon album grew out of the great genealogical interest of the eldest son of Hans, Nicolaes van Loon (1602-1675).¹⁴⁷ It is a bound book with a detailed genealogical overview of the family, paintings of coats of arms, and a number of portraits. The description of the contents on the first page of the album is as follows 'Memorie van de overgrootvaders, overgrootmoeders, gealieerde en gedescendeerse naeste vrienden van Nicolaes van Loon en Emmerentia van Veen, door de selve gestelt en naervolgende ordre tot gedachtenisse haerder naecomelingen.' (Memory of my great-grandfather, great-grandmother, allied and descended friends of Nicolaes van Loon and Emmerentia van Veen, recorded by her in this order for the memory of her descendants).¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁴⁶ Amsterdam, Van Loon Foundation: Nicolaasz W. van Loon, *Korte Aenteekeninge van de dessendenten van mijn grootvaders soo van 's vaders als moeders sijde* (manuscript, 1692).

¹⁴⁷ Smit, 'Het Album Backer', p. xi.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

Nicolaes was a merchant in Amsterdam and fulfilled a number of administrative functions such as alderman, accountant, and captain of the *burgerij* (fig. 75). After marrying Emmerentia van Veen (1605-?) in 1624 (fig. 76), he showed great interest in tracing the history of his ancestors. He passed this passion on to his son, alderman and *burgemeester*, Willem van Loon, who kept himself busy with family history and also wrote a similar genealogical book.

The album contains twenty-one portraits in total, including those of the parents and grandparents of Nicolaes and Emmerentia and their three sons and two daughters-in-law at various ages. Blank pages are left for additions of later descendants. The portraits, by an unknown painter and done partly after extant portraits, are in oil on parchment and bordered by an oval cartouche (figs. 79, 80). The originals have not been discovered for several of the portraits, so these may have been painted from life or have been posthumous imaginings of the painter.

The most remarkable feature of the album is the high quality of the oil portraits that were commissioned. Portraits in albums were normally not commissioned to the same level of artistry or with expensive materials in comparison, for example, with the drawn portraits of the Backer album (fig. 59). The high quality of portraits shows the significance attached to the album, as does Nicolaes' careful genealogical notes which include every noble or upper class family associated with the van Loons along with their coats of arms (figs. 81, 82). This was not the only document devoted to genealogy among the possessions of the van Loon family, but it is the most comprehensive and the inclusion of portraiture makes it a precious object in terms of recording the family's lineage.¹⁴⁹ Both portraits and lineage functioned to document, substantiate, and

¹⁴⁹ There are about ten distinct 'items' in the Museum van Loon devoted to genealogy dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; these are books as well as collections of notes.

construct the identity the van Loons aspired to on a social level, which will become evident in the following examples.

The two sons of Nicolaes, Adriaen van Loon (1631-1722) and Willem van Loon (1633-1695), bought two double-width houses along the Herengracht in one of the most prestigious sections of Amsterdam called the *Gouden Bocht* (Golden Bend). Buying houses of that size and in such a location functioned to further solidify their social position. The confidence of the family in Willem van Loon's potential is reflected in a painting of him as a young boy where he wears mourning clothes and a sash with a Geuzen medal (fig. 83). The medal is a reference to his great-great-uncle, the Geuzen leader Willem Ruychaver, whose initials are engraved on a heart-shaped medallion. Willem lived up to his capability as he studied law at the University of Leiden, was elected as a magistrate of Amsterdam in 1663, made mayor of Amsterdam in 1686, became alderman of Amsterdam in 1692 and finally became the co-director of the Amsterdam section of the VOC in 1688.¹⁵⁰ Willem took after his father in that he commissioned portraits and had a deep interest in the family history.

His brother, Adriaen van Loon on the other hand preferred country life. He resided in the 'Oosteinde onder Hillegom', a country estate that was inherited from the Ruychavers. Adriaen was a merchant in Amsterdam and supervised Amsterdam's carpentry, masonry, stone carving, roofing and painting workshops. In conjunction, he was a house-inspector for taxation purposes.¹⁵¹ Adriaen's children died childless and the family line was carried on by his nephew, Jan van Loon (his brother Willem's son).

A valuable bond was cemented when the brothers married sisters Cornelia and Catharina Hunthum. The Hunthums were a wealthy family originally from Germany. Adriaen van Loon's portrait by Michiel van Musscher from 1681 suggests a life of

¹⁵⁰ van Eeghen and van Loon, *The House with the Purple Windows*, p. 35.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 37.

pleasure and satisfaction while standing in front of his country estate Oosteinde, where he was known to partake in hunting, a sign of wealth and status (fig. 84). An earlier portrait of Adriaen by Issac Luttichuys also presents him with a rather carefree lifestyle, though this was certainly an allusion to the nobility, who were not permitted to do manual labor (fig. 85). A pendant was created of his wife Cornelia Hunthum in the same year as the later portrait, 1681 (fig. 86).

The portrait of Willem van Loon of 1692 seems to portray him in a much more serious manner than his brother (fig. 87). Though he is not shown with any obvious symbols of his social status, the background of the work most likely shows the interior of his house on the Herengracht, which functions as a representation of his success. It was originally assumed that the pendant portrait of his wife, Catharina, was commissioned at the same time, but it is now known that it was painted at a later date by an anonymous artist working in the style of van Musscher (fig. 88).¹⁵²

Later members of the family continued in the political profession and a pronounced interest in the history of the family persisted. Willem's son, Jan van Loon (1677-1763) combined political and business duties. Willem van Loon (son of Jan) (1707-1786) took a great interest in family history most likely because both of his parents were van Loons. The family faced their share of struggles in the eighteenth century but much like the Backer family, and other families of the urban elite, they were ennobled by King Willem I in 1822.¹⁵³

¹⁵² Gerhardt, et. al., *Michiel van Musscher*, p. 68. Gerhardt suggests that perhaps the original pendant was lost or owned by another branch of the family. It was also possible that an original pendant had never been ordered in the first place. Perhaps the portrait of her sister, Cornelia Hunthum, was used as a model for the portrait, given the similarities between the two works.

¹⁵³ Grever, *Museum van Loon*, p. 13.

The Van Loon Group Portraits

The masterpieces of the van Loon collection are the two sizeable group portraits painted by Jan Miense Molenaer during the 1630s. The earlier portrait, entitled *Portrait of the Family Ruychaver-van der Laen*, is a group portrait of ten people clustered into five pairs (fig. 89). It was commissioned around 1629-1630 by Francois van Bergen and Alidt Meerman (the couple second from the right).¹⁵⁴ The idea for the work seems to have derived from the fact that Alidt Meerman's grandparents, Maerten Ruychaver and Alidt van der Laen (who were deceased by the time the portrait was painted), survived into old age and celebrated a golden wedding anniversary.¹⁵⁵ Just as with the musical harmony theme in his own family portrait (fig. 3), Molenaer used various topoi to structure the painting. The portrait has two organizing principles: the four ages of man and the theme of the five senses. The grandparents to the far right symbolise old age (their images were copied posthumously from portraits as they had both died in 1626).¹⁵⁶ The third age of man is represented by the married van Bergen couple; the second age is symbolised by the younger couple, Alidt Meerman's cousin Geertruyd van Loon and her husband Dirck Graswinckel; and the children represent youth, the first age of man.

The ages of man was a natural choice for uniting the composition of a family portrait, and can be seen in other examples. An even more playful and original organizing theme in the portrait is the five senses. The little girl eating a pear at the far left represents taste while her crying sister, who has been scratched by a cat, symbolises touch. A carnation being offered by the man to the seated woman identifies smell. Their neighbours playing the lute and the clavichord represent hearing, and the spectacles of the elderly couple symbolise sight.

¹⁵⁴ de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, pp. 215-217.

¹⁵⁵ van Eeghen and van Loon, *The House with the Purple Windows*, p. 31.

¹⁵⁶ de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, pp. 215-217.

Despite the obvious iconographic conclusions that can be drawn from the work, there is also the sense of drawing a lineage back to one's forebears and forward to one's children. Alidt Meerman had, in fact, been raised by her grandparents, as her parents died in the early 1600s, and so it can be assumed that she had a special bond with them.¹⁵⁷ The inheritance of the work further elucidates the dynastic intention, as the portrait was probably bequeathed to Alidt Meerman's grandson, Francois, who was her favourite.¹⁵⁸ However, Francois' daughter's heirs were not as closely related to the Van Loons, so the portrait was eventually returned to the Van Loon family, who also owned the originals of the portraits of the grandparents.

The second impressive group portrait is the *Marriage of Willem van Loon and Margaretha Bas* from 1637 by Molenaer (fig. 90), showing a dramatised version of the couple's wedding feast on 5 October 1637 set in an extremely large banqueting hall.¹⁵⁹ The composition is rather crowded and detailed with over forty figures, but Molenaer still manages to give defining characteristics or iconographic signals to the primary figures.¹⁶⁰ Molenaer may have taken this commission as an opportunity to establish his artistic reputation in Amsterdam, where he had just moved from Haarlem, and to break into the portrait industry.¹⁶¹ Dennis Weller suggests that, in light of Molenaer's large production of paintings in 1636, he was preparing for his move to Amsterdam and his own family portrait (fig. 3) may have been a demonstration piece on which he based the marriage portrait from 1637.¹⁶²

A bit left of center of the group is the newly wedded couple, Willem and Margaretha. Margaretha grasps her new husband's hand as well as the hand of

¹⁵⁷ van Eeghen, 'De Groepsportretten', p. 124

¹⁵⁸ van Eeghen and van Loon, *The House with the Purple Windows*, p. 31.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer (c. 1609/10 – 1668): The Life and Art of a Seventeenth-century Dutch Painter*, p. 127.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 129.

¹⁶² Ibid.

Willem's son Jan from his first marriage to express the union and the new family formed as a result. The couple is surrounded by van Loon family members: to their right are Geertruyd van Loon and her husband Dirck Graswinckel. The fallen stool next to this couple represents the absence of Hans van Loon, who died of the plague during the Siege of Maastricht on 27 November 1633.¹⁶³ To their left are Willem's sister, Anna, and her new husband, Willem Nieupoort, kneeling before her, who were also married in 1637.¹⁶⁴ Three of Willem's unmarried brothers are also shown: Maerten Ruychaver (left of Willem), Arent van Loon (serving wine to Geertruyd), and Lieve van Loon (pouring wine at the right).¹⁶⁵ Though Willem's parents, Hans van Loon and Anna Ruychaver are not featured in the painting, there is a Moorish servant to the far right of the work, who is probably meant to embody the family's coat of arms and thus symbolise his progenitors.

The hall is most certainly fictitious because such a grand and luxurious room did not exist in Amsterdam at the time. Even though the wedding typically would have taken place at the bride's home, it has been proposed that the room may resemble the van Loon family house, 'De Koning van Zweden'.¹⁶⁶ There is an emphasis on the wealth, prestige, and lineage of the van Loons in this painting, at the price of excluding the bride's ancestry. The 1637 wedding portrait went to the youngest son, Frederick Willem van Loon, and, after his death, to his sister, Anna.¹⁶⁷ After her death, it was bequeathed to her nephew, Willem Blaeu, and then later returned to the van Loon family.¹⁶⁸ These large group family portraits were prized items of the van Loon

¹⁶³ van Eeghen, 'De Groepsportretten', p. 122.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 121.

¹⁶⁵ Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer (c. 1609/10 – 1668): The Life and Art of a Seventeenth-century Dutch Painter*, p. 128.

¹⁶⁶ van Eeghen and van Loon, *The House with the Purple Windows*, p. 31. The house was located at 149 Keizersgracht.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

collection, highlighting the importance of the family's lineage as well as functioning as agents in private family identity.

Conclusion

The pressures of social and financial successes, alongside the political and religious turmoil of Dutch society, gave families an increased desire to explore their pasts—to trace genealogy, have ancestor portraits commissioned and to create albums of family lineage. The family, which stood as a metaphor for the workings of government and society, took the brunt of the stress and emphasis, and we see this over and over again, especially in the case studies of the Backers and the van Loons. The private portrait collections and albums allowed families to visually and materially support the history of their lineage along with the achievements that they had attained without the benefit of noble connections. As these portraits were only available to a small viewership of family and friends in a specific social circle, the portrait materials allowed the family to control its image within the context of this limited audience.

In the next chapter, I will delve into issues of artistic identity during the shifting social tides of the seventeenth century. We have already seen the struggles that artists faced in my examination of Molenaer's self-portrait with his family. The artist can be viewed as a barometer of society and culture, as well as a member of the urban elite whose status rose throughout the seventeenth century. By focusing more closely on the artist as a socially mobile individual whose identity was destabilised and altered by changes to government, religion, and social conventions for which the family served as a metaphor, we may begin to more deeply understand the issues at stake. A number of artist self-portraits with their families will be addressed, looking at how the family became a vehicle for enacting the newly domesticated artist identity.

Chapter 3

***‘Liefde baart const’*: Love as Inspiration for ‘*Burgerlijk*’ Identity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Artists’ Self-Portraits with their Families**

Adriaen van der Werff’s (1659-1722) self-portrait with his family (fig. 16) of 1697 is a tender and moving work painted in the polished manner of the *fijnschilders* (fine painters).¹ This style, usually contrasted with the rough manner associated with Rembrandt and his pupils, was initiated in Leiden in the mid-seventeenth century with prominent artists such as Gerard Dou, and carried into the beginning of the eighteenth century by van der Werff and others.² We see van der Werff facing the viewer; his body positioned in a three-quarter pose, and head nearly straight on, looking the viewer in the eye. The artist’s luxurious ensemble of red and gold velvet catches the light and attracts the eye towards his left arm, which sweeps across the foreground. In his left hand, van der Werff holds a used painter’s palette and a set of brushes. Resting on his left arm and being supported by his right hand is a framed painting. The circularity of the composition and position of van der Werff’s hands, as if lovingly embracing the picture, lures our gaze to the mythological scene. In the painting-within-a-painting, a mostly nude woman, draped in a cloak, gazes up towards the sky, one fist balled up against her cheek, in order to mimic a dream-like impassivity. A child leans against her while a putto figure with raised arms faces the two allegorical figures, his back to us and in shadow. Van der Werff sets this entire scene against a dark, nearly black background so as to focus our attention solely on the figures.

Van der Werff was born to a well-off miller in 1659 in the Rotterdam suburb

¹ See: P. Hecht, *De Hollandse Fijnschilders: Van Gerard Dou Tot Adriaen Van Der Werff*, exh. cat. (Maarssen, 1989).

² The only monograph on van der Werff is: B. Gaetgens, *Adriaen Van Der Werff, 1659 -1722* (Munich, 1987).

Kralingen-Ambacht.³ He served apprenticeships in Rotterdam, first with the portrait artist Cornelis Picolet (1626–1679) from 1668 to 1670 and then from 1671 to 1676 with the genre painter, Eglon van der Neer (1635/6 - 1703).⁴ His early travails in Rotterdam consisted of small portraits and genre scene paintings in the same stylistic milieu as Dou, Frans van Mieris, Gabriel Metsu, and Gerard ter Borch. He must have been quite successful, as he was named head of the Guild of St. Luke in Rotterdam in 1691 and held the position until 1695.⁵ Van der Werff steadily continued to attain success until he became the highest-paid court painter for Johann Wilhelm van der Pfalz, Elector Palatine of Düsseldorf, in 1696. Remarkably, he continued to reside in Rotterdam, while working for Johann Wilhelm six months out of the year.⁶

This portrait was most likely part of the artist's first commissioned works as court painter to Johann Wilhelm. The Elector Palatine often commissioned works that he could then present to his princely friends and acquaintances as gifts. Indeed, this picture was probably commissioned as a present to the Elector's father-in-law, Cosimo de' Medici III who included it in the Medici collection of self-portraits, which was established in the sixteenth century. To be included in the collection was a great honour for any artist and during this period many artists even began to send their non-commissioned self-portraits to the Medici, in the hope that their painting may be incorporated into the collected works.⁷

³ E. Plietzsch, 'Adriaen van der Werff' *The Art Quarterly* 14 (1951), pp. 137-147, p. 143.

⁴ Gaehtgens, *Adriaen Van Der Werff*, pp. 42-45.

⁵ Ibid, p. 46.

⁶ E. de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw: huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, exh. cat. (Haarlem, 1986), p. 276; Plietzsch, 'Adriaen van der Werff', p. 143. He later worked for the Elector nine months of the year; E. Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity. Art, Love and Conjugal Virtue in Seventeenth-Century Artist's Self-Portraits', *Dutch Crossing* 28 (2004), pp. 27-66, p. 55. Working as a court painter from one's hometown seems to have been more normal amongst Dutch painters. Rachel Ruysch, for example, also worked as a court painter for Johann Wilhelm van der Pfalz while residing in The Hague. In contrast to this, the Flemish painters Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony Van Dyck lived at the courts where they worked.

⁷ This collection is still intact and can be viewed in the Vasari corridor at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence.

In light of the inclusion of van der Werff's portrait in the Medici collection, it is hard not to see this as a moment of self-promotion as well as a struggle with artistic identity, using the family as a vehicle. In this chapter, I argue that van der Werff in this portrait attempts to engage in a dialogue concerning the virtue and status of Dutch artists during the seventeenth century. This self-portrait allowed him to create a public identity, one that was concerned with his artistic status while, at the same time, firmly rooted in the so-called *burgerlijk* persona within Dutch culture. In order to describe his engagement with Dutch values in society, I will look into the concept of 'virtuous love' during the period, the notion that love was associated with honourable living and high status. As I will show, the portrait's connection with this theme highlights other aspects of identity, including artist lineage and reproduction, played out in this image artistically as well as biologically. Furthermore, my discussion includes other examples of self-portraits of artists with their families.

If this portrait represents van der Werff's public strategies for social mobility, and alludes to the double meaning of reproduction, the question raises as to how we are to interpret a second version of this work, which he produced in 1699 (fig. 91). This replica, exhibiting seemingly slight changes to the composition, was created, however, with completely different intentions. As I will demonstrate, the second portrait was addressed to an entirely different audience and was intended to be hung in van der Werff's studio, enacting the artist's personal identity in day-to-day interaction. Van der Werff used his own family as the model for the painting and thus as basis for his identity as a painter. The motto, 'Liefde baart const' (Love brings forth art) is particularly appropriate here as love is the basis for art and identity in both versions of

the portrait.⁸ In this chapter, I suggest that we should consider the two portraits as operating in concert, reflecting different aspects of van der Werff's identity as a professional painter by virtue of their reception and function.

Status of the Artist

It was imperative for van der Werff's status and reputation that he convey himself as an artist associated with religious and humanistic ideals, though in a *burgerlijk* way. As theorised by Joanna Woodall in her thought-provoking 1996 article in *Art History*, 'Love is in the Air – Amor as motivation and message in seventeenth-century Netherlandish painting', the shifting religious and social values during the seventeenth century in the Netherlands resulted in a change in imagery.⁹ Woodall is in fact interested in the emergence of other genres such as landscape and genre painting, along with portraiture and how these can be related to a general 'culture of love' in the Dutch Republic. Her essay is highly valuable for describing the class system of the United Provinces, the artist's place in that system and how the virtue of 'love' became an egalitarian and unrestricted value that was significant for translating *burger* identity. Though Woodall does not discuss van der Werff or his work explicitly, her insights into art, society and *burgerlijk* identity can be applied to this case.

Traditionally, before the Revolt, there were three classes or 'orders' in Dutch society. The clergy, which was the highest order as it was closest to God; the nobility, who were also seen as being close to divine providence; and the lowest, the 'third estate'

⁸ de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw*, p. 58. 'Liefde baart const' (love brings forth art) refers to a motto as part of a dedicatory poem and drawing contributed to the Album Amicorum of Frisian portrait-painter Wybrand de Geest (1592-1662) by the Delft artist Leonard Bramer (1596-1674). Bramer was best known for his history paintings and commissions from the House of Orange, and may have instructed Johannes Vermeer in painting.

⁹ J. Woodall, 'Love is in the Air – Amor as motivation and message in seventeenth-century Netherlandish painting' *Art History* 19 (1996), pp. 208-246.

(or 'third order'), which consisted of the bourgeoisie, manual labourers, and the poor. Manual labour existed as a partition between the second and third orders. These divisions within society existed before the early modern period, and persisted throughout the seventeenth century, which is in direct contradiction to depictions of the Dutch Republic as a fully developed bourgeois republic. Class distinctions did play a significant role in self-perception and social relations during the period, as has been recognised by a number of scholars of Dutch history.¹⁰

Social orders were an important frame of reference in legal distinctions as well as for political boundaries. In maps, for instance, symbols and signs were used to refer to the social standing of the people living in the towns and villages pictured.¹¹ Abraham Goos' *Belgium sive Inferior Germania* (1621), is a map that clearly shows a division using noble devices such as coats of arms to designate between the nobility living in the countryside and the villages, where the peasantry lived (fig. 92).¹² Goos further included costumed figures of a merchant, a nobleman, and a farmer and their wives in each of the four corners and at the top of the map. At formal events, individuals were typically listed in order of precedence. People were also often normally named and referenced in accordance with their social standing in biography, dedicatory inscriptions, alba amicorum, and in portraiture.¹³ From these examples, it is clear that individuals were closely identified with their status in society; one that was often associated with specific virtues or vices.

The clergy, for instance, was connected with the virtue of love through their

¹⁰ See: Woodall, 'Love is in the Air'; H. van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland: From Knights to Regents 1500-1650*, trans. M. Ultee, (Cambridge, 1992); J. Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2005).

¹¹ Woodall, 'Love is in the Air', p. 222.

¹² Ibid., note 65. See: G. Schilder and K. Stopp, *Monumenta Cartographica Neerlandica VI: Nederlandse foliokaarten met decoratieve randen, 1604-60* (Alphen aan den Rijn, 2000), 54.2.

¹³ Van Nierop, *The Nobility of Holland*, pp. 19-21, 220-226.

close relationship to God, while the nobility were related to the concept of honour. The third order, on the other hand, was connected to profit, being that they were required to perform manual labour in order to earn a living. While labour was considered a direct path to heaven, it was also viewed as sensual and self-indulgent, making it difficult for an individual in the third order to obtain honour and fame on earth or immortality in heaven.¹⁴ The disinterested love and honour of the clergy and the nobility was different, as they did not have to work for subsistence. Hence they were motivated purely by love and honour and not the base aim of profit, as the third order was.

Merchants and artisans, therefore, occupied an ambiguous position within these social divisions. They were not in the technical sense manual labourers, nor were they usually part of the gentry. They were considered the urban elite of the third estate; at the top of the heap, though nevertheless still subservient to the sacred and secular aristocracies.¹⁵ Many of the individuals in these types of professions were involved in *rederijker* (rhetorician) societies, which often participated in annual poetry and drama competitions, known as *landjuweels*. The *landjuweel* was usually motivated by a particular subject or question for which the *rederijker* society would write a response in the form of a dramatic performance. In Antwerp, in particular, the *landjuweel* attempted to assert that the activities of merchants and artisans could be inspired by honourable love rather than vulgar interest in profit. For example, as Woodall explains, one of the themes of a moralising drama which took place during the large and impressive 1561 *landjuweel*, was 'what most inspires [*verwerckt*] a man to the arts?', with 'arts' referring to any activity institutionalised by the city guilds.¹⁶ With such a theme, the third order

¹⁴ Woodall, 'Love is in the Air', p. 223.

¹⁵ J. I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford, 1995), p. 350.

¹⁶ Woodall, 'Love is in the Air', p. 224, note 75, *Spelen van Sinne, vol scoone moralisacien wtleggingen ende bediedenissen op alle loeflijcke consten en waerinne mensen claerlijck ghelijck in eene spiegel, Figuerlijck, Poetelijck en Rhetorijcklijck mach aenschouwen hoe nootsackelijck ende dienstelijck die*

could do away with the stigma of manual labour by associating it with the spiritual connotations of love, therefore demonstrating their work as a means of salvation through personal fulfilment, and not merely by humble suffering.¹⁷

As a consequence, artists possessed the ability to manipulate their status more than other members of the third order in Dutch society. Though there is an element of physical labour required for the artist to craft his works, the product created exists on a higher level. The artist was, therefore, capable of representing himself as an honourable citizen because the products of his hand were beautiful, and as such, they were appreciated by and beneficial to others.¹⁸ There is an element of selflessness; that the artist creates beautiful works for the sake of beauty, which allows for a slippage between the world of manual labour and the honourable world of the aristocracy. The artist is unique in that he/she becomes deeply identified with the work and the product of his or her hand could stand in for his or her motives. The artist could use the subject matter of his or her painting as a way of constructing identity. Effectively, a painting about virtue and honour contributes towards a sense of the maker as virtuous and honourable as much as a painting about love could project the artist as having been inspired by the virtue of love.¹⁹ The result of such *rederijker*'s plays was then a 'culture of love', which proliferated in the Netherlands, especially after the Protestant Reformation, prompting an exploration of the social and religious conditions of this cultural shift.

With the spread of Protestantism in Northern Europe, several changes occurred. The religion emphasised that, with the doctrines of *sola fide* and *sola scriptura*, a

selven consten alleen menschen zijn, Antwerp (Willem Silvius), 1562, p. 16. Woodall notes that the verb 'verwekken', which means 'to conceive' now has sexual connotations but that this is not referred to in the 1835-59 edition of the *Woordenboek*.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 224.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 225

¹⁹ Ibid.

personal connection to God was available to any believer. It was believed that each person had his or her own individual freedom, which came with a personal responsibility towards God. The values of self-knowledge and self-reflection, esteemed by Protestants, were manifested in practices like solitary reading of the Bible. In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Catholic clergy gradually lost power as a socio-political institution, and left virtuous love open to the lower classes of society. For artists, the spread of the Protestant faith and subsequent iconoclastic acts meant a significant drop in religious commissions from the church and a decline in demand from patrons requiring religious imagery.

The Iconoclastic Fury beginning in 1566 certainly contributed to a change in worship and religious practices. Religious icons in churches and monasteries were destroyed because the significance of icons in Eucharistic worship was condemned, as Protestants recognised an identification between paintings and love. A loving gaze connected believers to the object of worship, but it was less the object that was criticised and more the relationship that was condemned because of the sensual lust engendered by putting a physical object or image in place of the spiritual being.²⁰

Woodall argues that the kind of meaning related to love that was inherent in previously religious representations in art were shifted to vernacular and secular images. The domestic ideal, rather than the divine icon began to be adopted by artists. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) had instructed painters to avoid painting figures ‘adorned with a beauty exciting to lust.’²¹ This would presumably allow beholders to sustain a relationship with an object without being tempted to idolatry. Instead of confusing the object with the divine, the beholder could then view the icon as a *symbol* of divinity as

²⁰ Ibid., p. 226.

²¹ J. Woodall, *Anthonis Mor: Art and Authority* (Zwolle, 2007), p. 449.

well as being able to make a clear distinction between an idol and a symbol.²²

In fact, we see her viewpoint confirmed in van der Werff's self-portrait from 1697 (fig. 16), as the portraits of his wife and child adopt double meanings and could be taken for Venus and Cupid as much as for the sacred figures of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child. In the case of the latter, the additional figure could be interpreted as an angel. This composition would then traditionally situate van der Werff in the place of the evangelist St Luke who, according to Christian myth, was the founder of the art of painting. Compelled by his sacred love for the Virgin Mary, St Luke was inspired to paint her image, which became the very first religious icon. For that reason, painters' guilds took St Luke as their patron saint, as he was seen as the first true artist. The artist in the guise of St Luke was a popular trope of self-portraiture, as well as a common general religious subject in earlier periods, especially in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.²³ Rogier van der Weyden (1399/1400-1464), for instance, interpreted the subject by figuring the scene in his studio and setting it up as an Annunciation, suggesting that the Virgin Mary infuses the artist with divine inspiration just as the Angel Gabriel impregnated the Virgin with the Holy Spirit (fig. 93).²⁴ Another example is from Maerten van Heemskerck (1498-1574), who painted a modified version of the myth by depicting a man wearing a crown of ivy standing behind St. Luke (fig. 94).²⁵ The man is meant to represent the personification of Poetry, guiding and inspiring the

²² J. Woodall, 'Wtewael's *Perseus and Andromeda*: looking for love in early seventeenth-century Dutch painting' in Caroline Arscott and Katie Scott (eds.), *Manifestations of Venus: Art and Sexuality* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 39-68, p. 58. Woodall parallels the shift with the treatment of the Eucharist by Catholics and Protestants. Catholics believe that the Eucharist is Christ's body made flesh while Protestants view it as a symbol of the body of Christ.

²³ E. Griffey, 'The artist's stage: the schilderkamer as a site of play in the 17th century' *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 15:1 (1999), pp. 48-60, p. 48.

²⁴ H. P. Chapman and J. Woodall, 'Introduction: "The Netherlander has intelligence in his hand", ' *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 59 (2009), pp. 7-43, p. 18.

²⁵ N. Köhler (ed.), *Painting in Haarlem 1500-1850: The Collection of the Frans Hals Museum* (Ghent, 2006), p. 498.

work of the artist rather than occupying the role of artist himself.²⁶

The links that the van der Werff portrait have with the theme of St Luke painting the Virgin are immediately discernable. Van der Werff adopted the theme not by depicting himself in the act of creating the picture, such as van der Weyden did, but by presenting the finished product, along with the tools used in its creation. The mother and child in the portrait held by the artist, though mostly naked, wear historicised dress. Both figures gaze into the distance to give the impression that these are stock 'historical' figures. The putti/Cupid figure further gives weight to the interpretation as a religious or mythological theme.

However, the fact that the pair is known to have been a portrait of van der Werff's wife and child significantly transforms the meaning of the image. Van der Werff, in fact, claims that he derives less inspiration from the Virgin and child, and more from his own family. As Woodall has reasoned, the domestic ideal of mother and child is more of a representation of divinity, creating a need for introspection as the viewer ponders the fissuring of the 'smooth, brilliant mirror which connected the natural world with divine reality.'²⁷ Indeed, it would no longer suit the goal of the artist to depict the Virgin as his motivation for love of art, and in this work we witness the shift from the Virgin to the artist's wife and family as the model for artistic inspiration. There is a turn towards interiority when using the family instead as a vehicle for displaying creative motivation.

Due to these shifts in cultural expectations and religious beliefs, artists discovered other ways to make the claim that their art was inspired by love, rather than

²⁶ K. van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters* (1616-1618) (Doornspijk, 1994-1999), fol. 245r. 'Behind St Luke stands a sort of poet, his head crowned with ivy...But whether he meant this to say that painting and poetry are related and painters need to have a poetic, inventive spirit...'

²⁷ Woodall, Wtewael's *Perseus and Andromeda*, p. 58.

the base benefits of honour and profit. With the rising *burgerij* and the growing importance of the family, conjugal love provided a way to present an artist's lofty aims in a bourgeois manner. Van der Werff's image is not entirely unique; it exists amongst a number of similar images, all of which seem to have been inspired by a social environment enamoured with the concept of virtuous love. In order to fully understand this picture, we should place it into the context of the prevailing culture of love.

The Culture of Love in the Netherlands

The dominating culture of love in the early modern Netherlands was unmistakably expressed in the incredibly popular emblem books and *liedboeken* (songbooks), collections of primarily love songs.²⁸ Love was considered the primary inducement of the creativity behind creating works of art while honour and profit were deemed to be its benefits. These concepts were named and discussed by contemporary artist biographers such as Karel van Mander and Samuel van Hoogstraten as well as by philosophers from the Neo-Stoic and Neo-Platonist schools such as Justus Lipsius and Marsilio Ficino.

The concept of virtuous love originally finds its roots in the ethical writings of the Roman Stoic philosopher, Lucius Annaeus Seneca (1BCE – 65CE), specifically in his text *On Benefits*. In this work, Seneca discusses what it means to give and receive benefits, by which he means favours and advantages gained as a result of one's actions. In Book Two of the treatise, Seneca describes a case in which a man bestows a benefit upon another man. If the receiver is grateful and behaves in the proper way, then the giver gets what he wanted from the exchange. If the receiver decides to reciprocate the deed, then this is an additional advantage and not an expectation of the giver. To

²⁸ H. R. Nevitt, *Art and the Culture of Love in Seventeenth-Century Holland* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 14.

illustrate this hypothetical situation, Seneca proposes the case of the benefits that the Ancient Greek sculptor Phideas (c. 480-430 BCE)²⁹ receives in creating a work of art:

For example, Phidias makes a statue. Now the product of an art is one thing, that of a trade is another. It is the business of the art to make the thing which he wished to make, and that of the trade to make it with a profit. Phidias has completed his work, even though he does not sell it. The product, therefore, of his work is threefold: there is the consciousness of having made it, which he receives when his work is completed; there is the fame which he receives; and thirdly, the advantage which he obtains by it, in influence, or by selling it, or otherwise. In like manner the first fruit of a benefit is the consciousness of it, which we feel when we have bestowed it upon the person whom we chose; secondly and thirdly there is the credit which we gain by doing so, and there are those things which we may receive in exchange for it.³⁰

Simply by having conceived of and created a work of art, Phideas receives a certain amount of self-satisfaction and gain from the process, even before contemplating putting the work on the market. Any other advantages that come from his work, whether fame, honour, or profit, are additional benefits, which come out of the first fruit of art.

A similar observation is made by Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678) in his 1678 treatise on painting, *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst: anders de Zichtbaere Werelt* (Introduction to the High Academy of Painting: or the Visible World), a source immediately accessible to late seventeenth-century artists such as van der Werff. In a section entitled ‘the fruits that an artist can expect in recompense for his work,’ van Hoogstraten discusses the extraordinary life of the painter, which, whether he is famous or not, is a gift from God and Nature. He notes that there are not only three incentives of the arts, but also three benefits that the artist looks to attain. Basing his reflections on Seneca, van Hoogstraten explains that ‘there are three stimulations, three motivating forces for learning the arts: for love, for profit, and to be honoured by

²⁹ Phideas is best known for designing the pediment sculptures of the Parthenon in the 5th century BCE.

³⁰ S. L. Annaeus, *On Benefits*, trans. M. Griffin and B. Inwood (Chicago and London, 2011), p. 55 Book II, 33.2, quoted by Woodall, ‘Love is in the Air’, p. 217.

others.³¹ Van Hoogstraten has appropriated and slightly modified Seneca's three stimuli for art; while he acknowledges the philosopher's sentiment that love bears the fruits of honour and profit, he also claims that each motivation is distinct and powerful enough to stand on its own.³²

Van Hoogstraten put theory into practice by including these motivations for art on his most widely known perspective box (*'perspectyfkas'* in Dutch) in the National Gallery of Art in London (fig. 95).³³ The exterior panels of the box are each branded with one of these mottos: *Amoris causa* (for the sake of love), *Gloriae causa* (for the sake of honour), and *Lucri causa* (for the sake of profit) and each motto is paired with an image to illustrate it. *Amoris causa* (fig. 96) is depicted by an image of a boy who is presumably in the process of learning to draw while observing a female figure draped in a classical garment. Cupid hovers above his head in order to indicate that he is inspired by love. In the *Gloriae Causa* panel (fig. 97), an artist is seated at an easel painting a picture, though its image remains indecipherable to the viewer. He wears historicised dress, a laurel wreath, and a golden chain, prompting the assumption that the canvas he is painting may be a history scene. Cupid again floats above the artist's head with one hand placed just above as if he would like to touch him. The *Lucri Causa* panel (fig. 98) depicts a young man painting a portrait of a woman. Here, Cupid is seated on a cloud beside the artist, holding a laurel wreath, symbol of glory and eternal fame after death. The panel on the top of the perspective box shows an anamorphic image of a woman in bed, accompanied by a Cupid figure (fig. 99). Whereas the female figure has traditionally been interpreted as Venus, due to the presence of Cupid, she should be

³¹ S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst: anders de Zichtbaere Werelt* (Rotterdam, 1678), p. 500, quoted in Woodall, 'Love is in the Air', p. 216.

³² Ibid.

³³ See: C. Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion: The Art and Writing of Samuel van Hoogstraten*, (Chicago, 1995), esp. Chap. 5 'Self as Eye: The Perspective Box.'

properly identified as Erato, the poetess of love.³⁴ The ambiguity of the figure seems to be intentional, however. Woodall argues that the motivations for art are placed on the exterior panels and we must ‘look through’ the exterior panels in order to view the illusionistic painted interior. In his peepshow box, van Hoogstraten expressed a philosophy apparently widely known and held during the period and is in fact conveying that we must be aware of and understand the factors that stimulate the artist before viewing his or her art.³⁵

Outside of art theory, Seneca’s writings were of interest to those involved in the revival of Stoic philosophy, known as Neo-Stoicism. Neo-stoicism was spearheaded by the Flemish humanist writer Justus Lipsius (1547-1606), who published his Stoic dialogue *De Constantia* in 1584.³⁶ The Neo-stoics were not only interested in recovering Stoic thought in an intellectual sense, but were also concerned with living the Stoic lifestyle the way Seneca and other philosophers had prescribed.

Lipsius had a particular connection to painting through his friendship with the Antwerp artist Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640).³⁷ Rubens’ brother Philip was a pupil of the humanist and Rubens included a posthumous portrait of him as well as a portrait of his brother in the work *The Four Philosophers* of 1611 (fig. 100). The portrait emphasises the strong connections that existed between philosophy and art. Having been a classically trained humanist scholar himself, Rubens was familiar with Neo-Stoicism and also known for fashioning his image into that of an intellectual nobleman in both self-portraits and in interactions with others, in his capacity as a courtly painter

³⁴ Brusati, *Artifice and Illusion*, pp. 212-213. Myth tells us that Cupid was sent to be coupled with Erato by Venus.

³⁵ Woodall, ‘Love is in the Air’, p. 211.

³⁶ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 566. See: J. L. Saunders, *Justus Lipsius: The Philosophy of Renaissance Stoicism* (New York, 1955).

³⁷ For more on the relationship between Lipsius and Rubens see: M. Schenkeveld, *Dutch Literature in the Age of Rembrandt*, (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1991), pp. 63-64; M. Morford, *Stoics and Neo-Stoics: Rubens and the Circle of Justus Lipsius* (Princeton, 1991), esp. chaps. 1-3.

and diplomat.³⁸ Rubens' self-fashioning demonstrates a knowledge of the motivations of art and the devices used to counteract such an image, though we will see that his self-representation, when involving the family, did not sit as comfortably. In terms of forging a connection between the Northern and Southern Netherlands, Lipsius moved from Louvain to Leiden and then back again, which establishes that he was able to spread his ideas in Holland.³⁹

Likewise, the philosophy of Neo-Platonism influenced Dutch ideas concerning the ties between art, love and life. Neo-Platonism began as part of the renewal of interest by scholars in ancient Greek and Roman literature and philosophy during the Italian Renaissance. Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) was one such humanist scholar, who aspired to refound Plato's Academy in Florence.⁴⁰ In his commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, entitled the *Convivio*, Ficino dubs Cupid as '*magister et gubernator atrium*' or 'lord and master of the arts,' with 'arts' referring to the liberal arts in general.⁴¹ With this comment, he does not only speak of love as a lofty and unattainable virtue, but instead embodies and personifies it in the figure of Cupid, who becomes a physical symbol of the grand values for which artists strive. Cupid is thus credited with the capacity of being the primary inspirational force behind the arts. In reflecting upon

³⁸ A selection of the quintessential works on Rubens in English or translated into English include the following (excluding exhibition catalogues and essays): S. Alpers, *The Making of Rubens* (New Haven and London, 1995); J. M. Muller, *Rubens: The Artist as Collector* (New Jersey, 1989); M. Warnke, *Peter Paul Rubens* (New Haven and London, 1987); J. S. Held, *Rubens and his Circle* (Princeton, NJ, 1982); K. Downes, *Rubens* (London, 1980); M. Jaffé, *Rubens and Italy* (Oxford, 1977); W. Stechow, *Rubens and the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, MA, 1968); C. White, *Rubens and his World* (London, 1968). For the oeuvre of Rubens, see: *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard* (Brussels and London, 1968-current), an ongoing, multi-volume work dealing in detail with specific aspects of Rubens' oeuvre.

³⁹ Morford, *Stoics and Neo-Stoics*, p. 30.

⁴⁰ On Marsilio Ficino see: K. Eisenbichler, *Ficino and Renaissance Platonism* (Ottawa, 1986); M. Shepherd, *Friend to Mankind: Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499)* (London, 1999); S. Clucas, et. al (eds.), *Laus Platonici Philosophi: Marsilio Ficino and his Influence* (Leiden and Boston, 2011). For English translations of Ficino's writings see: M. J. B. Allen and J. Hankins, *Marsilio Ficino: Platonic Theology*, 6 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 2001-6).

⁴¹ S. R. Jayne, 'Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on Plato's Symposium: The Text and Translation, with an Introduction' in *The University of Missouri Studies*, vol. XIX, No. 1 (Columbia, 1944), Third speech, Chap. III, p. 150, quoted by E. de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw*, p. 57, note 7.

Plato's *Symposium*, Ficino, who reintroduced the term 'platonic love' into Western culture, discusses the antiquity of love as well as the benefits that love can offer to man. Plato proposed spiritual love as a noble and lofty ideal, as opposed to the vulgarity of bodily love, essentially explaining that those who chase after love for the wrong reasons will end up disgraced and disappointed.⁴² On the other hand, those who pursue love for pure and honest purposes, even if it concludes badly, will have demonstrated virtue. The metaphor may be applied to the artistic profession in that, if an artist declares his love of art, but in actuality is pursuing the line of work with the objective of earning profit, then his intentions are dishonourable. However, an artist who is motivated by love alone, despite any adversity faced (or benefits such as profit obtained), is morally righteous and honourable.

Van der Werff certainly wished to stress this in his portraits. Love as a bodily symbol of virtuous and noble ideals thus became a significant figure in seventeenth-century literature and in the arts, in particular in popular cultural expressions such as emblem books and songs, which were tremendously widespread forms of entertainment during the period. The first collection of love emblems was written by Daniel Heinsius (1588-1655), under the pen name Theocritus à Ganda. He was a scholar and professor at Leiden University and became the leading author of love emblems.⁴³ *Quaeris quid sit Amor...?* (*Do you want to know what love is?*) was published in 1606/07, and then edited and republished as *Emblemata Amatoria (Love Emblems)* in 1608. The book consisted of twenty-four emblems addressing the subject of love, with most having been inspired by the poetry of Petrarch and his disciple Maurice Scève along with Ovid's

⁴² Plato, *Symposium and Phaedrus*, trans. B. Jowett, (New York, 1993), p. 12.

⁴³ M. Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-century Imagery* (Rome, 1964), p. 98. Heinsius took a pen name so as not to compromise his professional position.

Metamorphoses.⁴⁴

Heinsius continued to produce love emblems and in 1613 published the text *Het Ambacht van Cupido (The Craft/Labour of Cupid)*.⁴⁵ In these emblems, Cupid is placed into a Dutch setting, performing various tasks and taking on multiple roles including a tennis player, a cooper, a joiner, a tailor, a sailor, a geometrician, and a scholar. He sits at the spinning wheel like Hercules for Omphale, plays dice, spins a top, runs after hoops, plays blind-man's bluff, puts on a helmet and girds himself with a sword, rides on the handle of a broom, turns somersaults, makes soap-bubbles, threshes corn to symbolise the *Perfer et obdura* of Ovid, sows seeds so that new little 'Cupids' spring up from the earth, tortures a lover on the rack and burns him at the stake, and finally, takes on the role of a painter.⁴⁶ As Woodall has shown, Heinsius firmly locates noble and virtuous 'Love' not in the ideal world of the Gods, but in the Netherlands during the seventeenth century. His cupids are hard at work at their *ambacht* or 'craft', doing the very same tasks as everyday Dutch citizens, thus ennobling this work while domesticating the virtue of love and making it characteristically 'Dutch' and '*burgerlijk*'.

In another emblem from the same text, entitled *Imaginem eius mecum gesto (Her image preserved with me)*, the image linked with the emblem text depicts Cupid, seen from the back, seated at an easel and painting a picture of a woman (fig. 101). The accompanying verse tells of the happiness Cupid experiences in thinking of his beloved. When he wishes to paint her, he needs only to think of the image that he has of her in

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Woodall, 'Love is in the Air', p. 232. Woodall translated 'Het Ambacht van Cupido' as 'The Occupations of Cupid', but 'craft' or 'labour' would serve as a more appropriate translation of the Dutch word 'ambacht'.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

his mind.⁴⁷ Like in other sources, love is the chief basis for art – it motivates Cupid to paint an image of his lover and means that his love of her is so strong that he is able to paint her from his memory. The 1613 edition of the emblem places Cupid in a nondescript outdoor setting. In 1616, an expanded and revised copy of the text was released, in which Heinsius transferred Cupid from the outdoors into an artist's studio, identified by the painting on the wall and the spare canvases (fig. 102). Not only was love the chief motivation for producing art, it is located in the studio of the artist.

Just as in Heinsius' emblems, love as the stimulus for producing art was given a more bodily, physical metaphor in art literature. It takes marriage and reproduction as its allegory—the artist, who is married to *Pictura* (the personification of painting) as an act of procreation, produces artworks. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Karel van Mander (1548-1606) used this symbolism in *Het Schilder-boeck* (1604) to emphasise and define the way in which artists engage with the act of artistic creation, as well as to convince the reader of an artist's incentive. He even pleads with the reader in defence of his own art treatise, stating that his 'voluntary work is done for nothing other than love of art and not for payment or profit.'⁴⁸

Further examples from *Het Schilder-boeck* demonstrate van Mander's persistence in proving the intentions of the artists he memorialises. In the life of Hugo van der Goes, he describes a history painting the artist created of the biblical story of

⁴⁷ D. Heinsius, *Ambacht van Cupido*, (1613) A Web Edition (accessed November 2011), <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/he1613.html>, Emblem 5, I.6a.

'Het beelt van die ick volg is in mijn hert geschreven: / Dat wesen, dat gesicht, dien tovenaer, dien lach, / Staet altydt in mijn sin, en is daer in gebleven/ Geschildert, van dien tijdt, dat ick haer eerstmael sach. / Ick draech het waer ick gae: en als ick wil gaen smaecten / Een gans volmaecte vreucht, soo denck ick wat zy doet. / Dan sie ick haer voor my. maer als ick haer wil raeken, / Haer rechte schildery treck ick uyt mijn gemoet.' [The image of the one I follow is written in my heart: / That creature, that face, that this magician lay / Is always in my heart, and remained there / Imagined, from the moment that I saw her the first time / I wear it wherever I go: and when I begin to taste / A totally perfect happiness, then I think of what she does to me. / Then I see her for me. If I want to portray her truly / I draw her true painting from my heart.] Translation mine.

⁴⁸ van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters*, fol. 220v.

David and Abigail. The painting was admired by many and van Mander hailed it as ‘outstanding in all its drawing, invention, posture and emotion.’ Van Mander proposes that the painting was so successful because:

...the emotion of love has collaborated and Cupid, in company with his mother and the Graces, has helped steer the brushes; for Hughe, who was still a bachelor, courted the daughter of the house with whom he was very much in love and whom he portrayed in the piece.⁴⁹

Van Mander suggests two things with this comment: Firstly, that van der Goes could not help but to portray his lover in the painting because of his feelings for her, which is physical proof of his emotion and secondly, that love, in controlling his work, was the reason and underlying force for producing a beautiful piece of art. Van Mander supports this further by recounting a sonnet from Lucas de Heere (1534-1584), a painter, writer and poet from Ghent. De Heere composed a sonnet in praise of van der Goes’ painting, proving that the artist’s inspiration was so powerful that it moves others in a similar way. In the sonnet, he gives one of the female figures the ability to speak and this ‘speaking likeness’ refers to the love which compelled van der Goes to imbue one of the figures with the spirit and features of his beloved, likening it to the love that Praxiteles had for Phyrne.⁵⁰

Following van Mander’s example, in the course of the centuries, artist biographers frequently made use of metaphors of love as essential to the artist’s production. For instance, love and marriage were significant to the biographical entries in Arnold Houbraken’s (1660-1719) *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche*

⁴⁹ Ibid., fol. 203v. ‘...want hier oock het affect der Liefden (so men seght) mede in gewrocht, en *Cupido* de Pinceelen heeft helpen stieren, in geselschap van zijn Moeder en de Gracien: want *Huge* noch vry geselle wesende, daer ten huysen vrijdde de dochter, daer hy seer op verliefte was, de welcke hy in’t stuck oock heeft nae t’leven ghedaen’, quoted by Woodall ‘Love is in the Air’, p. 217.

⁵⁰ Ibid., fol. 204r. ‘Door jonst die hy toedroegh een’ onder ons eerbaer/In welcx soet wesen blijckt, wat liefd’ hem heeft ghedreven./Ghelijck als Phyrne beeldt te kennen conde gheven, Hoe Praxiteles oock droegh liefde groot tot haer:’ [For the affection which he in all honour and virtue bore one of us/ In whose pleasant appearance you see what kind of love compelled him./As could be seen in the image of Phyrne/How Praxiteles nurtured a great love for her], quoted by Woodall, ‘Love is in the Air’, p. 219.

konstschilders en schilderessen (*The Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*), published between 1718 and 1721. Houbraken makes a point to mention at the end of many biographies whether the artist was married or had any children, especially if those children were painters.⁵¹ Van Mander had done the same in *Het Schilder-boeck* and even suggested that a stigma existed against artists who were childless as a lack of children indicated a dearth of artistic creativity.⁵²

Though van der Werff's compositional device of presenting his family as a portrait that he holds is distinctive, he was not entirely unique in portraying himself with his family. There are just a handful of other known examples of family portraits that support the fact that love, marriage, and children were essential expressions of an artist's production. For instance, the portrait of Jan de Baen with his wife Maria de Kinderen and their child clearly shows that his reproductive prowess was intended to directly symbolise his artistic ability (fig. 103). A sought-after portraitist to a well-heeled clientele in The Hague especially during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, Jan de Baen (1633-1702) was known for his philandering. In 1671, he was making a swift exit after one of these amorous episodes and badly wounded one of his fingers in the process.⁵³ The finger was unusable following the incident. As the portrait was painted around 1671 as well, Erin Griffey suggests that de Baen chose this moment to strengthen his image as a painter.⁵⁴ The portrait depicts his wife holding a miniature portrait of their daughter with himself beside her gesturing towards the viewer. Clearly de Baen wants the viewer to pay attention to the child he has created with his wife as a way to restore his sexual power. With this link between artistic production and

⁵¹ E. Griffey, *Searching for Self-Portraiture in the Seventeenth-Century Netherlands*, (Courtauld Institute Ph.D. thesis, 2001). p. 168.

⁵² Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity', p. 43.

⁵³ E. Buijsen, *Haagse Schilders in de Gouden Eeuw* (Zwolle, 1999), pp. 83-84.

⁵⁴ Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity', p. 52.

reproduction, he hoped to convince the viewer that he has not lost any creative ability even though he has lost the use of one finger.

Another example is Caspar Netscher's (1639-1684) self-portrait with his family (fig. 104). This portrait has less to do with the link between creation and procreation, as we saw in de Baen's portrait, and more to do with the passing on of artistic talent, a mode of influence of a different type. Netscher was a well-known portrait painter active in The Hague, whose images in general tend to be on a smaller scale than his peers. He had an extremely successful painting studio as his clientele included some of the most elite families in the Netherlands: Pieter de Graeff, Jacob Bicker, Johann de Witte and Wendel Bicker, and Constantijn Huygens.⁵⁵ Netscher and his wife Margaretha had at least nine children who lived to adulthood. In his family portrait from 1664, Netscher portrays himself with Margaretha and their two eldest sons, Theodoor (1661-1728) and Caspar (b. 1663) beside an antique structure and in an idyllic landscape scene. The identifications are supported by the inscription on the reverse side of the canvas: 'Ce cy sest le Peintre avecs Sa Famillje' (Here is the painter with his family).⁵⁶ Netscher's eldest son, Theodoor, also became a painter and was probably trained by his father. It is clear from the portrait that Netscher always intended Theodoor to take over the family business as he points to him, indicating the boy as the next in line of succession. It is known that Netscher left his large portrait production in the hands of Theodoor and another son, Constantijn (1668-1723).⁵⁷ Pointing to his son in the portrait is a double gesture that serves to support his lineage as much as it proclaims his prolific artistic production.⁵⁸

One of the ultimate illustrations of procreation symbolizing artistic conception

⁵⁵ M. E. Wieseman, *Caspar Netscher and Late Seventeenth-century Dutch Painting* (Gent, 2002), p. 32.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 188-189. The painting was acquired by Cosimo de' Medici from the artist's studio in 1668.

and invention comes from the hands of two of the top Dutch artists of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries (fig. 105). Rachel Ruysch (1664-1750), from a prominent scientific and artistic background, was one of the most gifted flower painters in the early modern Netherlands. In 1693, she married Jurriaen Pool (1665-1745), who worked as a portraitist in The Hague. The couple enjoyed a happy and successful union, which eventually produced ten children. Between the years 1708 and 1713, both artists served as court painters to the Elector Palatine Johann Wilhelm of Dusseldorf, along with Adriaen van der Werff who occupied the same position from 1697 to 1716.⁵⁹ Their family portrait was produced during this successful period of time.

In a decisive expression of their productive/reproductive capacities, Ruysch and Pool created the portrait together. The portrait references both of their specialties in that Pool painted his self-portrait and portraits of his wife and daughter, while Ruysch produced the flower still life on the left side of the portrait. As van Mander emphasized, the making of art was closely linked to procreation. Much of the language of art at this time was pervaded by gendered metaphors of reproduction.⁶⁰ This portrait encapsulates well the contemporary idea that the marriage of the artist and the muse *Pictura* would result in the production of many pictures. The union of Jurriaen Pool and Rachel Ruysch produced both great art and many healthy children.

These examples all indicate that love was an ideological aspiration of the seventeenth-century Dutch artist. Love as an ideal virtue was appropriated and

⁵⁹ Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity', p. 55.

⁶⁰ See: Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity'; On the gendered language of art in the Renaissance see: P. Sohm, 'Gendered Style in Italian Art Criticism from Michelangelo to Malvasia' *Renaissance Quarterly* 48 (1995), pp. 759-808; F.H. Jacobs, *Defining the Renaissance Virtuosa: Women Artists and the Language of Art History and Criticism* (Cambridge, 1997).

transformed by the Dutch bourgeoisie into an underlying value of *burgerlijk* identity. The artist, as an elite among his or her social class, below both the clergy and the nobility, occupied a unique position, offering the possibility of social mobility while still remaining within the confines of *burgerlijk* status. In the next section, we will see how artists demonstrated this in various ways, through a comparison between the aristocratic self-portrayal of Rubens and the *burgerlijk* self-positioning of van der Werff.

Peter Paul Rubens and Adriaen van der Werff: Strategies for Public Promotion

Van der Werff provides an excellent example of an artist who was as '*burgerlijk*' as he was clearly socially mobile. Using various strategies in his professional life as well as in his self-portrait, he attempts to place himself within a higher echelon of Dutch society by making a series of learned references to virtuous love and honour, all the while utilizing the vocabulary of a *burgerlijk* painter. Van der Werff was never viewed as a 'painter prince' in the same way as Peter Paul Rubens or Anthony van Dyck, however, as we have seen, he successfully obtained the position of court artist to Elector Palatine Johann Wilhelm in Dusseldorf for six months out of every year (later nine).⁶¹ In contrast, for example, to van Dyck, who lived next to the palace of his patron Charles I in London, he never stayed in residence at the Elector's palace, nor did he visit Dusseldorf for any extended length of time.⁶² When he did visit the Elector, it was with the aim of selling a painting or two, and not necessarily to gain visibility in the court.⁶³ Conversely, Rubens was hired to paint for various nobles, and always mingled within courtly circles, as well as living in residence at court. He became an ambassador of sorts and travelled among courts not only to paint, but also to deliver letters and

⁶¹ Plietzsch, 'Adriaen van der Werff', p. 143.

⁶² H. J. Horn, *The Golden Age Revisited: Arnold Houbraken's Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Paintresses*, (2 vols., Doornspijk, 2000), vol. I, p. 272.

⁶³ Ibid.

negotiate political matters.⁶⁴ Rubens relished the active role he was offered in diplomatic affairs at the various courts in which he worked. The differences between the two artists is further emphasised in their self-portraits with their families.

In his self-portraiture, Rubens never presents himself either in the act of artistic creation or with the tools of his trade, but always as a *gentleman* (fig. 106). Rubens wished to align himself with the image of the Italian Renaissance artists, who typically did not show themselves as professionals or reveal their marriage or family lives, such as in this example from Tintoretto (fig. 107).⁶⁵ This depiction of himself as a gentleman thus becomes problematic when Rubens portrays himself with his family (fig. 108). While presenting himself as a scholarly intellectual he simultaneously illustrates himself in the role of husband and father. A tension can be observed among the various roles he aspired to—in his life and in his art he typically asserted an aristocratic status, yet when he married for the second time, he wedded sixteen-year-old Helena Fourment, a woman of a lower class, and continued to pursue his career as a painter rather than as a full-time diplomat.⁶⁶ The aspirations he presents in the portrait image do not relate to the bourgeois elements of the picture. Evidence of this struggle can be perceived in quite extensive pentimenti, especially around Rubens' head and arms and in changes to the height of the figure.⁶⁷ Some scholars have even claimed that he did not originally intend to include himself in the portrait, due to the fact that Rubens had painted previous portraits of Helena and their children, leaving himself out though he was implied as the viewer who completes the family unit.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ L. Rosenthal, 'Paternal and Painterly Authority in Rubens' Self-Portrait with his Wife, Helena Fourment, and their Son, Peter Paul' *Dutch Crossing* 23 (1999), pp. 131-162, p. 132.

⁶⁵ Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity', p. 42. Also see: J. Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture: The Visual Construction of Identity and the Social Status of the Artist* (London, 1998) for more examples.

⁶⁶ Alpers, *The Making of Rubens*, p. 26. Rubens married his first wife, Isabella Brant in 1609 and was widowed in 1626. He married sixteen-year-old Helena Fourment at the age of fifty-three in 1630.

⁶⁷ Rosenthal, 'Paternal and Painterly Authority', p. 132.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 139; pp. 144-145.

Van der Werff, on the other hand, could not have offered a stronger contrast by including his self-image as an integral part of the composition in his two family pictures. Rather than struggling to fit himself in the composition, he proudly and lovingly presents the picture of his wife and child. Unlike Rubens' aristocratic portrayal, van der Werff depicts himself with his palette and brushes, a deliberate attempt to oppose the aristocratic ideal and to portray his identity in terms of a bourgeois vocabulary. In revealing his materials, I suggest that he distances himself from the Renaissance tradition that was so dear to Rubens, and instead owns the status of an elite member of the third order, and acknowledging that, as an artist, he is a manual labourer. He seems to have been inspired by a tradition of earlier self-portraits by the likes of Otto van Veen (fig. 109), Andries van Bochoven (fig. 110) and Michiel van Mierevelt (fig. 111).⁶⁹ All of these artists have portrayed themselves with their extended families and tools of their trade, with even a couple of examples staged in the artist's studio. There is a sense of pride in displaying one's profession in these images, because it comes from a characteristically 'Dutch' way of locating virtue and honour in everyday activities, which had already been demonstrated in other media, such as in Heinsius' *Het Ambacht van Cupido (The Labour/Craft of Cupid)*. Thus van der Werff locates virtuous love in the 'Dutch', '*burgerlijk*' tradition rather than in the Italian Renaissance tradition that was followed by Rubens. Van der Werff does not project himself as an intellectual, but rather uses the references to history and mythology in his painting to elevate his status. Artists occupied a precarious social position in which they were viewed as manual labourers, who at the same time could elevate status through

⁶⁹ On the van Veen portrait see: Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerp, *Van Bruegel tot Rubens: De Antwerpse schilderschool, 1550–1650*, exh. cat. (Antwerp, 1992), pp. 320–321. On the Bochoven portrait see: M. J. Bok and J.A.L. De Meijere, 'Een familieportret door de Utrechtse schilder Andries van Bochoven (1609-1634)' *Antiek* 20 (1985-86) 2, pp. 323-329. On the Mierevelt portrait see: R.E.O. Ekkart, et. al., *De Portretfabriek van Michiel van Mierevelt (1566-1641)*, exh. cat., (Zwolle, 2011), pp. 128-130.

identification with the subject matter that they created.

In that light, the figures in the painting-within-a-painting in van der Werff's family portrait could be interpreted as having a particular relation to his profession, and it is likely that his wife is depicted here as *Pictura*, the personification of painting (fig. 16).⁷⁰ In Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1644), *Pictura* is shown as a woman with the attributes of a mask, a brush, and a painting palette.⁷¹ While the mask is contained in the allegorical picture, van der Werff is holding the palette, which is part of the 'real' picture, as though they were sharing *Pictura*'s attributes.⁷² As we have seen, at the same time, within the discourse of love, the portrait of his wife and child could be read as *Venus* and *Cupid*, as such adding another professional dimension through its associations with the lofty ideals of noble and especially platonic love.⁷³ The ability to view the figures as portraits or mythological figures also allows van der Werff to present his wife in what otherwise would have been an indecorous manner.

Rather than choosing one interpretation over the other, I suggest they are simultaneously at play, and it is this playfulness that is essential here. These multi-layered connections to allegory, religion and mythology not only demonstrated van der Werff's education in the humanities; it also revealed his experience as a history painter, which as the highest artistic genre, further elevated his status and established him as a painter of the highest quality. This painting, meant for a noble viewer as well as a relatively public audience, speaks to van der Werff's inspiration and motivation for his art.

⁷⁰ A. Bond and J. Woodall, *Self Portrait: Renaissance to Contemporary*, exh. cat. (London, 2005), p. 127.

⁷¹ C. Ripa, *Iconologia, of uytbeeldingen des verstands*, (Amsterdam, 1644), p. 452. '...alwaer een Momaensicht aen hanght... Zy [Pittura/Schilderkonst] sal in d'eene hand, een Pinceel houden, en in d'ander een Pallet...' [...from which a mask hangs... She [Pictura/The Art of Painting] shall in one hand hold a brush, and in the other a palette.] Translation mine.

⁷² Bond and Woodall, *Self Portrait: Renaissance to Contemporary*, p. 127.

⁷³ Ibid.

The Artist's Studio: Inspiration and Procreation

In addition to focusing on the complex iconography of the poses and gestures of the figures in the artist's self-portraits, I would like to reflect on the place of such portraits in the home of the artist and more particularly in the artist's primary workplace, the atelier (or *schilderkamer*). Van der Werff's 1699 copy of his Uffizi self-portrait with his family was a version destined to remain in the family, according to the artist's last will and testament (fig. 91).⁷⁴ The will indicates the very function of the piece within the home and as information on the location of such pictures remains scarce, the will and a small number of inventory entries and biographical sources suggest that a more expansive discussion on inspirational tools in other types of 'work' spaces will assist in proving that such self-portraits with families fulfilled a number of key roles in the artistic/domestic sphere. Evidently, these portraits were an advertisement of the artist's skills, an example of what a patron would receive if commissioning a similar family portrait, as well as, I would argue, a source of direct inspiration to the artist, to remind him of how the virtuous love and commitments of life and art could be married together in paint, reifying personal and professional identity.

The artist's studio was at its most basic both the site of conception and production of art, along with operating as a place to entertain those looking for ready-made works of art and a space in which to meet with potential patrons.⁷⁵ Studio inventories indicate that artists kept certain examples in the workshop in order to show them to potential clients; making them indispensable pieces for the artist's daily

⁷⁴ Gaechtgens, *Adriaen Van Der Werff*, p. 467, The Hague, Reichsarchiv., Inventory 9 March 1704, Notary Gerit Post, fol. 1-6, fol. 4. '...het groote conterfeytsel van hem testateur...' [...the large portrait of him, testator...].

⁷⁵ Wieseman, *Caspar Netscher*, pp. 32-33. In unusual cases, an artist's studio may also have been used by high-profile political players to conduct meetings, such as was the case when Cosimo de'Medici visited Caspar Netscher's studio in The Hague between 1668 and 1669. It is not clear whether Adriaen van der Werff's studio was ever utilised in a similar way.

activities. This is clearly the case with van der Werff's 1699 self-portrait—with its skilful depictions of various fabrics, textures and techniques, it would certainly have worked well in showing off his manner of painting. Van der Werff himself wrote that he considered the portrait 'the most beautiful work he has made in his life.'⁷⁶ He added these comments personally to his biography, which was written by his son-in-law Adriaan Brouwer (1682-1750).⁷⁷ In their stories of his life, both Brouwer and Arnold Houbraken, who used Brouwer's biography as a source, described a visit of Frederick Augustus I (or Augustus II the Strong), King of Poland, (r. 1694 -1733) to van der Werff's *schilderkamer* in Rotterdam in 1710.⁷⁸ The King had heard of van der Werff's talent and when he saw the self-portrait, 'found great pleasure in it' and asked to buy it.⁷⁹ Remarkably, van der Werff refused to sell the painting to such an important client. He was also unable to paint a new work for the King, as he was still in the service of the Elector Johann Wilhelm.⁸⁰ Luckily for Frederick Augustus I, Johann Wilhelm gave him

⁷⁶ Utrecht, Het Utrechts Archief, Familie-archief van Beuningen, inv. nr. 2.1.5: Adriaan Brouwer, *Verzamelde biografische aantekeningen over Adriaen van der Werff, z.j. (18e-eeuw)* (manuscript, eighteenth century), fol. 12. '...het fraeyeste werk hetgene hij van zijn leven heeft gemaekt...' These words were inserted into the manuscript by van der Werff. [Citation in Gaetgens, *Adriaen van der Werff*, p. 437: Adriaan Brouwer, Manuscript (Historisch Museum Rotterdam, 1719/20), fol. 12].

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.; A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam, 1718-21), vol. III, fol. 387-408.

⁷⁹ A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh*, vol. III, fol. 398-399. '...dat Augustus Koning van Polen, als hy onzen Ridder in 't jaar 1710 te Rotterdam kwam bezoeken, die hem zyn beeltenis levensgroot, en daar by vertoonde een klein schilderytje waar in zyn Vrouw en Dochter geschildert is, en dat ook gaat voor het konstigste dat zyn penceel gewrogt heeft; daar groot bevallen in had, en verzogt het voor zig. Dog hy sloeg zulks op voldoende reden af; waar op de Vorst hem verzogt 2, stukjes voor hem te willen maken, dat vander Werf egter hem niet konde verzeekeren; aangezien de Keurvorst zyn tyd gekogt had. Hier op zei de Koning: *Ik zal den Keurvorst om zoo veel tyd verzoeken*. Maar de Keurvorst, in plaats van zulks toe te staan, vereerde aan den Koning van Polen 2 stukjes schildery van vander Werf, die vroeger in tyd geschildert waren.' [...that Augustus King of Poland, came to visit our Knight in 1710 in Rotterdam, which portrayed him (van der Werff) life-size, and thereby displayed a small painting in which his wife and daughter are painted, and that also goes for the artfulness that his brush has wrought, found great pleasure in it, and sought it for himself. But he arrived at an adequate reason; in which the Monarch sought for him to make 2 pieces, that van der Werff however could not ensure; considering the Elector had bought his time. Then the King said: *I shall request more time from the Elector*. But the Elector, in place of allowing such, honoured the King of Poland with 2 painted pieces by van der Werff which were painted earlier in time.] Translation mine.

⁸⁰ Ibid. van der Werff was paid to paint for the Elector for six months out of the year, and later nine.

two pieces that van der Werff had completed earlier.⁸¹ This anecdote demonstrates that van der Werff wanted to hold onto the portrait in his studio, at all costs, not even to sell it to royalty. Clearly the portrait had great personal significance, as well as being an important piece in van der Werff's studio. The portrait's status as studio showpiece, therefore, dictated that it be kept there and indeed van der Werff held on to the portrait for his entire life.⁸² Apparently, the quality of van der Werff's portrait made it worthy of a showpiece in the studio, as such paintings also functioned to show the artist's range.

For comparison, it is useful to examine a portrait by Jan Albertsz. Rootius (1615-1674).⁸³ This painting depicts the artist standing beside and slightly behind his seated wife and infant daughter (fig. 112). There are compositional similarities to van der Werff in that Rootius also pictures himself with his wife and daughter and seems to be presenting them in a comparable way. His wife and daughter are situated between his open arms and he clutches a palette and brushes in one hand, presenting his painterly occupation. Behind the small group, on the wall, is a still life depicting a roemer, plate, a bunch of grapes, and a partially peeled lemon. Rootius, originally from Hoorn, in the North of Holland, studied with Pieter Lastman in Amsterdam.⁸⁴ He developed an accomplished reputation, on his return to his hometown, as both a portraitist and still life painter. Because of his artistic specialisations, this family portrait would have worked perfectly as a showcase of Rootius' skills in a playful and self-reflexive way, in that artists identified deeply with their work and were also seen as being produced by their work in the period.⁸⁵

⁸¹ The text does not indicate which pieces were offered to the King of Poland.

⁸² Gaechtgens, *Adriaen van der Werff*, p. 467, The Hague, Reichsarchiv., Inventory 9 March 1704, Notary Gerit Post, fol 1-6, fol 4. '...het groote conterfeytsel van hem testateur...' [...the large portrait of him, testator...].

⁸³ On Rootius see: B.J.A. Renckens, 'De Hoornse portretschilder Jan Albertsz. Rotius', *Nederlandsch Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* (1948-1949), pp. 165-234.

⁸⁴ *Musée des Ursulines Mâcon: 100 Peintures des Collections* (Mâcon, 1999), p. 41

⁸⁵ Chapman and Woodall, 'The Netherlander has Intelligence in his Hand', p. 10

Further proof that some artist self-portraits with their families were kept in studios as artistic exemplars and tools of inspiration comes from the inventories of Michiel van Musscher (1645-1705), a respected Amsterdam portraitist, whose portraits of the van Loon family I discussed in Chapter 2. Musscher studied with various masters including Abraham van den Tempel, Gabriel Metsu and Adriaen van Ostade.⁸⁶ An unusually large number of portraits of his various family members are found in these inventories – there were seven observed in the studio in 1699.⁸⁷ Most striking is the '*familiestuk*' (family piece) located in the artist's studio and mentioned in both the 1699

⁸⁶ R. E. Gerhardt, 'The van Musscher Family of Artists', *Oud Holland* 120 (2007) Nr. 1|2, pp. 107-126, p. 114. See also: R. E. Gerhardt, et. al (eds.), *Michiel van Musscher (1645-1705): The Wealth of the Golden Age*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2012).

⁸⁷ A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare: urkunden zur Geschichte der Holländischen kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts* (The Hague, 1915-22), 8 vols., vol. VII, pp. 987-994. 30 July 1699 and 20 July 1705. The inventory of 30 July 1699 contained seven of the portraits of family members, all of which were located '*op de schildercamer*' (in the studio):

1. Een familiestuk van den rendant (Michiel van Musscher), door hem geschildert [Nr. 9, fl. 230] f 150.00 [A family piece of the trustee (Michiel van Musscher), painted by him.]
3. Het pourtrait van den rendant in syn schilderkamer [Nr. 11?, fl. 100] f. 125.00 [The portrait of the trustee in his studio.]
5. Des rendants eerste vrouws (Eva Visscher) portret met een papegay [Nr. 12, fl. 158] f. 125.00 [The trustee's first wife's (Eva Visscher) portrait with a parrot]
6. 2 ditto pourtretien synde de rendant en syn laeste vrouw (Elsje Klanes) [Two copies of portraits, being the trustee and his last wife (Elsje Klanes)]
37. Het pourtrait van den rendant en syn overgrootvader te samen...f. 8.00 [The portrait of the trustee and his great-grandfather together]
45. De rendants [drie spelende] kinderen [in een nis] door hem geschildert [Nr. 13, fl. 55] f. 40.00 [The trustee's [three playing] children [in a niche] painted by him.]
49. Het pourtret van de rendants eerste vrouw en kinderen....f. 60.00 [The portrait of the trustee's first wife and children.]
66. Drie kleijne pourtraitjes in doosjes sijnde de rendant en syn laeste vrouw...f. 24.00 [Three small portraits in boxes being the trustee and his last wife.]

The inventory of 20 July 1705 contained 'een familiestuk' (family portrait; in an unnumbered list), again '*op de schildercamer*' (in the studio). I assume that this is the same '*familiestuk*' mentioned as Inventory Nr. 1 in the inventory of 1699. Originally cited by Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity', p. 48, note 78.

Bredius tended to publish the items in inventories that he found most interesting and neglected to include inventory entries of paintings which did not include a painter's name rather than all inventories in their entirety. See: John Loughman, *Paintings in the Public and Private Domain: Collecting and Patronage at Dordrecht 1620-1749* (Courtauld Institute Ph.D. thesis, 1993), p. 202.

It should be noted that inventories do not always directly correspond to exactly what was in the house at the time of the individual's death. Items could have been consolidated in order to facilitate the inventorying process. Also, items could have been removed that were not intended to be valued. This is especially the case for family portraits, which were typically bequeathed to relatives. See: F. Laarmann, *Families in beeld: de ontwikkeling van het Noord-Nederlandse familieportret in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw* (Hilversum, 2002), pp. 45-48.

and 1705 inventories, likely to be of his own family.⁸⁸ In addition, in the *Groote Schouburgh*, Houbraken mentions a portrait that included van Musscher, his wife, and his child, calling it a '*showpiece* of the skills of his brush' (italics mine).⁸⁹ The fact that Houbraken labels it exclusively as a *showpiece* suggests that works like this were made as masterpieces, in the traditional sense of the term, as a qualifying piece, for the studio. Moreover, van Musscher created another portrait of himself with his family, which does not seem to be the same as those mentioned in the inventories, though perhaps similar (fig. 113). In this painting, van Musscher includes himself as a portrait-within-a-portrait on the back wall. Shown insignificantly in his studio at the easel, perhaps suggesting that he is in the very act of painting the family group that we see.⁹⁰ The background portrait exists as an earlier full-size portrait from 1679 (fig. 114).

When clients and art-lovers (*liefhebbers*) visited an artist's studio, it was useful for the artist to have samples of some of his best and most accomplished works to show to them. Those who visited studios, such as the King of Poland, were often of the most discerning taste or had otherwise become aware of the artist's fame and talent. The additional advantage of keeping a family portrait in stock was to show it to potential patrons who were interested in commissioning a portrait of their own family. I distinguish here between a general showpiece, and a family portrait, which, as I argue, served a very specific function. In the case of commissioning portraits, a patron would

⁸⁸ Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare*, p. 993, 20 July 1705. While it not specified whether this is the artist's family, it is not difficult to envisage given the amount of portraits of family members that were already in the house (two of which were noted as being painted by him).

⁸⁹ Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh*, vol. III, fol. 212. This portrait has not been identified. 'Maar 't geen onder alle in Konst van schilderen deursteeckt, is het zoo genaamde Familiestuk, waar in hy zig zelf, zyn vrouw en kind verbeeld heeft, 't geen meer gemelde Heer Witzen, wanneer hy gestorven was, uit het boelhuis kogt. Dit had hy tot een staal van zyn penceels vermogen, door langen tyd, en yver bewerkt, 't welk thans berust by zyn oudsten zoon, wiens beeltenis, nog jong zynde, daar in afgebeeld is.' [But the thing which shines through above all in the art of painting is the so-called family piece in which he has portrayed himself, his wife and his child...Through a great time and effort he had made this into a *showpiece* of the skills of his brush] English translation by Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity', p. 49.

⁹⁰ Griffey, 'Pro-Creativity', pp. 50-51.

first visit the studio in order to engage the services of the artist and to discuss price and what the painting would portray, thus it does not seem inconceivable that an artist would be at an advantage to show his patron the style of the portrait and the types of clothing, gestures, postures and iconography that could potentially be included in it. The artist's family portrait could serve as a template for the potential patron's ideas and modifications, while the patron could also compare the likenesses to the original models, i.e., the artist's own family.⁹¹

After considering some of the more practical aspects of the function of the family portrait as studio fixture, the question remains as to how the portrait, as direct source of love and inspiration, serves the artist's work; as day-to-day imaginable interaction between artist and family portrait. Van der Werff's refusal to sell indicates a strong attachment to the family portrait he had created (fig. 91). In his comments in Brouwer's biography (see Appendix 3), he wrote that it was:

Life-size, very powerful, and smoothly painted, also most curiously, him showing a small painting in which he had painted his wife and daughter, and this the most beautiful work that he has made in his life, which is why it was kept as a memento in his family.⁹²

The significance of the work to van der Werff and to the family is clear in the emotion evoked in the quote above. The fact that van der Werff considered it the most attractive

⁹¹ D. P. Weller, *Jan Miense Molenaer (c. 1609/10 – 1668): The Life and Art of a Seventeenth-century Dutch Painter*, (University of Maryland Ph.D. thesis, 1992), p. 129. For instance, Dennis Weller suggests that Jan Molenaer painted his self-portrait with his family as a demonstration piece on which he based the painting *Marriage of Willem van Loon and Margaretha Bas* from 1637 (See Chap. 2, p. 92).

⁹² Utrecht, Het Utrechts Archief, Familie-archief van Beuningen, inv. nr. 2.1.5: Adriaan Brouwer, *Verzamelde biografische aantekeningen over Adriaen van der Werff, z.j. (18e-eeuw)* (manuscript, eighteenth century), fol. 12. [Citation in Gaetgens, *Adriaen van der Werff*, p. 437: Adriaen Brouwer, Manuscript (Historisch Museum Rotterdam, 1719/20), fol. 12]. 'Levens groote, seer sterk en vlak geschildert, ook ten alderuitersten ceurieuus vertoonende een kleyn schilderijtje waarin hy zyn vrouw en dogter geschildert had, en zulx het fraeyeste werk hetgene hij van zijn leven heeft gemaekt waerom het tot een gedagtenisse in zyne familie werd bewaerd.' The manuscript was dictated to Adriaan Brouwer by Adriaen van der Werff and then annotated personally by van der Werff. Van der Werff inserted the following words in the manuscript in his own hand: 'Levens groote, seer sterk en vlak geschildert, ook ten alderuitersten ceurieuus'; 'het fraeyeste werk hetgene his van zijn leven heeft gemaekt, waerom het'; 'werd bewaerd.' Translation mine.

work he had ever made and insisted on its remaining as a 'memento' in the family prove that it was important as an art object and as an heirloom. Furthermore, the iconography of this portrait deviates greatly from the original version in the Medici collection (fig. 16), as I will explain, though this does not appear to be the case upon first glance. These variations prove its significance as a portrait of the artist's family, and not characterless historical stock figures.

In the painting-within-a-painting of van der Werff's wife and child, the first important change is that the putti figure has been removed, which serves to place the work more firmly in reality, rather than in the realm of the historical. Further to this, the mother and child are more covered and wearing clothing that appears slightly more realistic. Most importantly, the two figures gaze at the viewer, just as van der Werff does, indicating that these are portraits. Finally, there are parts of a curtain that looks as though it has been pulled back on the left side of the painting, perhaps suggesting a kind of revealing of the truth of the picture, that it is in fact inspired by love. Van der Werff does not let the viewer forget, however, that he is a famous painter. He underscores his devotion to his art by including the gold chain that was awarded to him by the Elector. It is with this evidence that I would like to argue that love does in fact bring forth art; that the everyday viewing of and interaction with the family portrait was a source of invaluable artistic inspiration to the painter, motivating him towards the love and honour that he aspired to in creating art.

Conclusion

Surrounding oneself with inspirational models and objects was considered quite important in the early modern period. In particular, scholars were encouraged to keep copies of the works of great authors as well as busts of those authors in their studies as a

source of intellectual stimulation as well as a model by which to aspire in their work.⁹³ Rubens' *The Four Philosophers* expresses this in visual form (Fig. 100). In the portrait, Rubens depicts himself on the far left, next to him, his brother, Philip, on the far right the humanist, Johannes Woverius, and next to him the famous Stoic philosopher and teacher of all of them, Justus Lipsius (who is shown posthumously). Behind the group is a bust of Seneca, the classical exponent on Stoicism. In the portrait, Rubens pays homage to Lipsius' teachings on Stoicism and his influence on his contemporaries, but also acknowledges the source of this thinking, paying respect to the roots of this intellectual tradition. He recognises Seneca as a source of intellectual inspiration, guiding their thoughts and producing a dynasty of intellectual 'children'. As I have demonstrated, self-portraits of artists with their families played a similar role in terms of artistic creation/procreation.

The concept of using objects as intellectual or spiritual inspiration is evident in a more private sense when we look at a case of an intellectual from Dordrecht. The personal study of Johan van Beverwijck (1594-1647), well-known physician and writer, was hung with the portraits of nine Dutch scholars.⁹⁴ One of these scholars was a relative from his wife's side of the family, thus indicating that Beverwijck wanted to project himself among the same cultural and social milieu as the great thinkers of the day. Perhaps he viewed himself as belonging to the same academic tradition—the portraits of these intellectuals were hung in the study as they were the scholarly models to which Beverwijck aspired and which aided in stimulating his educated writings.⁹⁵

⁹³ Loughman and Montias, *Public and Private Spaces*, p. 83. Justus Lipsius encouraged scholars to do this.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 82. From Beverwijck's inventory dated 1651.

⁹⁵ Ibid. Interestingly enough, Beverwijck's house was hung with a large number of family portraits; nineteen of a total of thirty-seven portraits in the house were family portraits. Beverwijck was also noted for his strong views on the family, which he considered 'the fountain and origin of a republic.' J. van Beverwijck, *Van de Wtmentheyst des Vrouwelicken Geslachts* (Dordrecht, 1639), pp. 87-88.

As I have demonstrated, self-portraits of artists with their families played a similar role in stimulating and acting as a force in the creativity of the artist in the studio. The basis of this was, in fact, love: love creates children and family and love too produces art. Love is not the only emotion that brings about art; loss too is a motivating factor in the production of art, as we will see in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Memory, Mourning, and Reflections of Self: Familial Relationships in the Early Modern Netherlands

In a simply painted, though colourful, image on a sheet from a personal family chronicle is a well turned-out woman wearing a dark modest dress with a millstone collar and a white cap on her head (fig. 115). She is seated with her embroidery in her lap and her feet resting on a foot warmer. However, she is not working on her sewing. She instead is in the middle of offering her child a piece of bread. Beside her, a baby is comfortably settled in its wooden crib. The few other details of the space include a bowl, a tiled floor, and a pole with a candle to light the woman's work. The attention with which these accents have been drawn contribute to the feeling of a 'homey' and intimate scene. Were it not for the text inscribed above each one, the two figures may have remained anonymous. The script over the head of the mother identifies her reading 'Fijtge Lindemans, out 33 jaers A 1622' (Fijtge Lindemans, 33 years-old Year 1622). Over the baby, the inscription announces, '1626. Lijsbetge Jans. Out geworden: vier weecken en 2 dagen' (1626. Lijsbetge Jans has reached the age: four weeks and two days). The author of this image made sure to attentively paint details and to carefully note ages and dates. It might then not surprise us that the portrait was created by the husband of the woman and father of the child, Jan Sieuwertsz. Kolm (c. 1575 – 1637), an artist, playwright, poet, and later emissary, from Amsterdam.

The portrait was produced as part of Kolm's *Ghedenck boeck* (Memorial Book), which he assembled between 1618 and 1636.¹ The text is an illustrated memorial book consisting of an autobiography, two plays, a number of poems, songs, and prayers,

¹ I. H. van Eeghen, 'Jan Sijwertsz Kolm, Schilder en Koopmansbode' *Amstelodamum* 72 (1985), pp. 49-56. The *Ghedenck boeck* was discovered when it came up for sale at the Van Gendt auction on 12 March 1985 and was purchased by the Stadsarchief Amsterdam (Amsterdam City Archives) for f 64,000 where it remains.

seventy-seven drawings, and a treatise on paint (fig. 116).² As the text is a complicated compilation of memoir, sketchbook, as well as prose and poetry, it has been given insufficient analysis in the scholarship. In fact, very little attention has been given to such texts in general. Despite its complexity, this egodocument is valuable because in it we see something of the way in which families attempted to position themselves in society, something that is not shown in portraiture. In previous chapters, I have shown that there was a growing trend to write about the family among burghers of various social circles, which can be viewed as symptomatic of a struggle concerning identity in the early modern Dutch Republic. Kolm's album and others like it similarly reflect crises around identity, but they also reveal something further. The albums show that memories and reminiscences are crucial to defining relationships and identity, especially as the family is one of the most significant aspects in the definition of self.

Contemporary studies in remembering and reminiscing in the field of psychology have shown that the stories we tell about our lives help to define who we are as individuals, within particular families, cultures, and historical periods.³ Autobiographical narratives, in particular, aid in defining who we are in relation to our family, our nation, and our history.⁴ Memories are, therefore, a crucial element in maintaining a sense of self and identity. With this in mind, I will further contextualise Kolm's *Ghedenck boeck* by exploring the famous autobiographical writings of Constantijn Huygens as well as three lesser known diarists. In addition, Huygens is of

² M. B. Smits-Veldt, 'De Nalatenschap van Jan Sijwertsz Kolm (1589-1637): Het gezicht van een Amsterdamse rederijker' *Tijdschrift over Nederlandse Letterkunde* 8 (1991), pp. 93-102, p. 93. The largest sections of the book are devoted to the two unpublished *rederijker* plays, 'Spel van sinne: 'tLeven Meest al de Werrelts' (1618) and 'Keyser Mahomet' (1616-22) and a number of the illustrations are related to the characters and costumes for these plays.

³ R. Fivush, 'Remembering and reminiscing: How individual lives are constructed in family narratives' *Memory Studies* 1 (2008), pp. 49-58, p. 49.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

specific significance here as he can be called an early ‘theorist’ of portraiture when, in his writings, he reflects on the portraits he had commissioned of himself and his family.

Memorial albums were not only vital for their role in memorialising the family, but can also be viewed as records of loss, as many of the memories documented in them have to do with the illness and death of fellow family members. Kolm’s album contains several instances of posthumous portraits, particularly of his children. To expand this discussion, I turn to the unique *Family Scrapbook* of Gesina ter Borch, the relatively unknown sister of Gerard ter Borch, in whose work she often features as a model. The book is a memorial album and collection of art, but also seems to have become a vehicle of grief for Gesina, through which she comes to terms with the loss of her brother Moses via drawings of and poems about him. To conclude this chapter, I will view these expressions of grief against the prevailing attitudes towards death, and the wealth of portraits of deceased children in family portraits by artists such as Jan Mijtens, one of the few specialists of family portraiture, as well as Nicolaes Maes, who created several similar portraits.

The *Ghedenck boeck* of Jan Sieuwertsz. Kolm

Jan Sieuwertsz. Kolm, who was born circa 1575 in Amsterdam, appears to have received a quality education as a youth.⁵ This can be surmised because he is most well known in the world of literature for his poetic and dramatic contributions to the *rederijker* (rhetorician) society, ‘Het Wit Lavendel’.⁶ ‘Het Wit Lavendel’ was the younger *rederijkskamer* compared to the older *rederijker* society ‘D’Eglentier’ to which

⁵ M. B. Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam, 1589-1637: Hoofdstukken over zijn tijd, zijn leven en zijn werk, en commentaren op teksten, tekeningen in zijn handschrift* (Amsterdam, 1987), p. 40. Kolm claims in the *Ghedenck boeck* that he was born in 1590 in Amsterdam, but it is more likely that he was born closer to the year 1575.

⁶ See: M. B. Smits-Veldt, ‘Het Brabantse gezicht van de Amsterdamse rederijkskamer ‘Het Wit Lavendel’” *De zeventiende eeuw* 8 (1992), pp. 160-166.

more established literary figures, such as Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft and Gerbrand Bredero, belonged.’⁷ Before his twentieth birthday, Kolm was writing sonnets and songs for the *rederijker* guild.⁸ ‘Het Wit Lanvendel’ regularly showed his plays, which included tragedies, morality plays, and farces. Five of these were published between 1613 and 1633.⁹ Though Kolm gained a significant reputation in the realm of theatre and poetry, he was, in fact, an artist by trade, which he emphasises when he signs off at the end of the *Ghedenck boeck*, stating his profession as a *schilder* (painter). The *Ghedenck boeck* is the sole source that exists to confirm Kolm’s profession.¹⁰ Judging from the illustrations in the *Ghedenck boeck*, Kolm may have been an illuminator of cards and prints, a coats of arms painter, a history painter, and/or a costume artist, though since no other surviving work from him has been discovered, it is difficult to judge.¹¹

Kolm was married three times in his life, first briefly in 1613 to Anna Seroyen (?-1613), with whom he had no children.¹² In 1616, Kolm married his second wife, Fijtge Lindemans (1590-1631), the woman featured in the *Ghedenck boeck*, who was the first of four daughters from an old merchant family in Amsterdam. The couple had six children, three of whom survived: Hans Lindeman de Jonge (1617 - 1657), Siewert Janssen (1619-1624), Anna Jans. (1621 - ?), Lijsbet (1626-1626), Lijsbet (1630-1630), and Lijsbet (1631 - ?). Their family moved several times within Amsterdam, each time with Kolm recording the price of the houses and their locations. In 1618, they moved to Alkmaar for two years, which would be consistent with his artistic profession, because such moves were normal for painters.¹³ The Kolm family then relocated back to

⁷ Smits-Veldt, ‘De Nalatenschap van Jan Sijwertsz Kolm’, p. 94.

⁸ T. Goedings, ‘Een bijzonder rederijkersmanuscript: Het Ghedenckboeck van de schilder Jan Siewertsz Kolm (1590-1637)’, *Amstelodamum* 85 (1998), pp. 194-209, p. 194.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Smits-Veldt, ‘De Nalatenschap van Jan Sijwertsz Kolm’, p. 95.

¹¹ Goedings, ‘Een bijzonder rederijkersmanuscript’, p. 196.

¹² van Eeghen, ‘Jan Sijwertsz Kolm’, p. 52.

¹³ Ibid.

Amsterdam where presumably Kolm worked as an artist until taking a job in Antwerp. Kolm was related to the *burgemeester* Dirck Bas Jacobsz. by a distant nephew of his wife and in 1628 was appointed a *koopmanbode* (emissary) to Antwerp.¹⁴ The position was highly prestigious, though time consuming, given that Kolm wrote less after his appointment. In 1631, Fijtge died and Kolm remarried quickly to childless widow Jannetje Davids (? – 1650) in 1632.¹⁵ Kolm and his third wife had three children together, Siewert (1633-1669), Heiltje (1635 - ?), and Fijtge (?). He died on 4 June 1637.

Beginning in 1618, Kolm systematically recorded the most important facts about his family, starting with his first marriage in 1613 up until one year before his death in 1636.¹⁶ The manuscript, which is an early example of autobiography, gives us a glimpse into Kolm's identity as both father and husband. His notes show us that he was accustomed to dealing with illness and death. Kolm strengthened his autobiographical narrative, and thus his personal identity, by including portraits of his family members amongst the text detailing facts about the family.

The drawings of his family members, done in gouache, are integral to displaying Kolm's familial identity as husband, father, and breadwinner of the family. Kolm starts off the section with an image of himself, which positions him physically at the head of the family (fig. 117). According to the inscription on the page, he represents himself in 1622 at the age of 33, as a well-dressed painter sitting in front of an easel and holding a

¹⁴ Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, pp. 48-50

¹⁵ Smits-Veldt, 'De Nalatenschap van Jan Sijwertsz Kolm', p. 100.

¹⁶ Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, p. 39. Kolm's notes about his personal life can be divided into three sections: 1) The rhyming autobiography entitled 'D'vliegende Tijd van tleeven' (The fleeting time of life), written between 1618 and 1628, 2) His notes about his marriages, children, births, and deaths (written 1613-1636) and 3) His notes about buying and selling of his homes (written 1619-30).

palette and brushes in one hand.¹⁷ Though he most likely practiced as an illuminator, Kolm intended to present himself as a ‘fine painter’ of lofty subjects in this portrait. The panel on the easel in front of him shows a figure dressed in Eastern costume in a landscape, probably a somewhat generic reference to history painting.¹⁸ As history painting was the highest-ranked genre, this would serve to elevate Kolm’s painterly status.¹⁹ On his maulstick, there is a scroll reading ‘Bemint de waerheyt’ (Cherish the truth), which was the personal motto of Kolm and can be found in many places throughout the *Ghedenck boeck*.²⁰ The maulstick may also be interpreted as a kind of conducting baton, placing Kolm in the role of leader of his family. The objects sitting on the table beside him, an inkpot, pen, and book, reflect his education and his hobby as playwright and rhetorician, and perhaps the writing of the *Ghedenck boeck* itself. Kolm, positioning himself between art and literature, connects the two great interests of his life with his outstretched hands. The fact that the *Ghedenck boeck* includes Kolm’s dramatic, prose, and poetic works, as well as his art, only further serves to prove this point.

Naturally, the portrait following his own self-image is of Fijtge Lindemans (fig. 115), whom he called his ‘harts lieve huysvrouw’ (dear sweet wife) and described as a ‘soette will[i]ge last’ (sweet, voluntary burden).²¹ Fijtge represents the ideal wife and mother in her portrait—she holds her embroidery in her lap and rests her feet on a foot warmer, just like the many genre images of ideal womanhood that were created during

¹⁷ Amsterdam, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, nr. 015030000003: J. S. Kolm, *Het Ghedenck boeck* (album, c. 1618-1636), fol. 120 (35). The text above reads ‘Jan Siewertsen Colm. Out 33 jaar A 1622’.

¹⁸ Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, p. 251.

¹⁹ Smits-Veldt, ‘De Nalatenschap van Jan Sijwertsz Kolm’, p. 96. The 1650 inventory of Kolm’s third wife Jannetje Davidts shows that there were 36 pictures in the house, many of which were probably painted by Kolm. There were a variety of subjects listed: biblical and mythological, landscapes, and ‘3 doode kintgens’ (3 dead children, possibly the three dead baby girls of Kolm’s second wife).

²⁰ Amsterdam, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, nr. 015030000003: J. S. Kolm, *Het Ghedenck boeck* (album, c. 1618-1636), passim.

²¹ Goedings, ‘Een bijzonder rederijkersmanuscript’, p. 199; Smits-Veldt, ‘De Nalatenschap van Jan Sijwertsz Kolm’, p. 98.

the seventeenth century, for instance as in this example from Caspar Netscher (fig. 118).²² As the portrait is second in line to Kolm's, she occupies her appropriate place in the family and in the patriarchy. The image of the child next to her is intriguing, as it had represented two different children at different times. As this image had presumably been originally painted in 1622 (the same year as the portrait of Fijtge), it is likely that it initially represented the couple's daughter Anna Jans., who was born in 1621. However, after the death of the couple's fourth child, Lijsbet, Kolm reappropriated the image to function as a memorial to the deceased baby. Anna is represented at the end of the family portrait series at a more mature age.

The family's first-born, Hans Lindeman de Jonge, is the next member represented in the family, as he was the male heir and would carry on the family name (fig. 119). Above his portrait, Kolm wrote: 'This shall mark my son Hans. Spare him in his life God. The year 1622, the 15 November. Hans Lindeman the Younger. 5 years old and 10 weeks named after his mother's father, but called after my father Hans Janssen Kolm.'²³ While portrayed with children's playthings such as a whirligig, a drum, and a cart, Hans represented Kolm's heir and the bearer of the family's names. Though he was given a double name, 'Lindemans' for his mother and 'Kolm' for his father, he used Kolm as his surname. Beside him is a banner inscribed with his initials 'HL' to further emphasise his continuing of the family line.

Kolm intended to create speaking portraits of his children. The figures are each accompanied by autobiographical poems that appear to be inspired by the images. For instance, Kolm described the young Hans as a 'playful, jolly, and naughty boy' who

²² See W. Franits, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge, 1993), esp. Introduction and Chap. 1.

²³ Amsterdam, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, nr. 015030000003: J. S. Kolm, *Het Ghedenck boeck* (album, c. 1618-1636), fol. 122 (37). 'Dit sal hans mijn soons merck syn. Spaer hem godt int leven. Anno 1622, den 15 november. Hans Lineman de Jonge. Out 5 jaere en 10 weecken als gestelt de naem na syn moeders vader, maer heet nae my syn vader Hans Janssen Kolm'

forgets about school as he marches up the street with a drum and standard along with a spear, a pike, and a wagon.²⁴

Following the drawing of Hans, there is an illustration of a housemaid or nurse (fig. 120). She is unidentified and simply dressed though she wears an elaborate collar. Her attributes do little to identify her either as she only carries a shopping basket, but her placement in this section identifies her as a familiar person to the family, such as a housemaid or nurse.²⁵ Such domestic servants were often viewed as being part of the family, thus her presence appears to be crucial to furnishing a full picture of the family.

Kolm and Fijtge's second child (named after Kolm's father Siewert) died tragically young, only one year after his father crafted his portrait (fig. 121). The two pages devoted to Siewert unfold the story of his life and death. The script above his portrait reads, 'Year 1622 the 15th of November. Siewert Janssoon Colm. Three years and 11 weeks.'²⁶ On the accompanying page the reader learns of his untimely demise: 'This child opposite died at 4 ½ years old and 3 weeks. What he had lent through his goodness, Lord, he withdrew from this world in the fifth year' (fig. 122).²⁷ Through the portrait and the accompanying poem, Kolm hoped to demonstrate that Siewert remained part of the family. The young boy is pictured forever youthful with toys such as a whirligig, a stool and a basket. In the poem, Kolm described how the children quarreled with each other, preserving their childish natures.

The final portrait in this autobiographical section is of Kolm's young daughter Anna Jans. (fig. 123). Kolm wrote the following to accompany her portrait: 'Year 1625

²⁴ Goedings, 'Een bijzonder rederijkersmanuscript', p. 199; Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, p. 272. 'Sou speelsieck Hansken wel vergeeten school en dis,/ als hij maer op de straet met trom en vaendel is,/met spiets, met sweep, en tol, off wage nom te sleepen?'

²⁵ Smits-Veldt, et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, p. 253.

²⁶ Amsterdam, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, nr. 015030000003: J. S. Kolm, *Het Ghedenck boeck* (album, c. 1618-1636), fol. 124 (39). 'Anno 1622 den 15 November. Siewert Janssoon Colm. Out 3 jaer en 11 weecken'

²⁷ Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, p. 254. 'Dit kint teegen over sterf out syn 4 ½ jaar en 3 weecken. 'Tgeen gij ons hadt geleent deur dijne goetheyt heer trockt gij int vijfde jaer, van deese werrelt weer.'

the 15th of January in Amsterdam. Anne Jans. dochter 5 years and 3 weeks was 88.15 centimeters long.²⁸ Little Anna carries a doll and a basket and is surrounded by various fruits scattered on the ground. The fruits perhaps symbolise the fruitfulness of her parents' marriage and her own future fertility.²⁹ Just as in the portraits of Hans and Siewert, Kolm describes the children's occupations. In Anna's case, he recounted how she spoke to her doll, trying to calm its imaginary cries.³⁰

Kolm's speaking portraits and descriptions of his children indicate an emotional attachment as well as an attempt to capture a moment in time. It is clear that he delighted in the day-to-day activities of his family when he states, 'The daily pleasures of children go on/ I am not here in between to write about it.'³¹ There is a sense of temporality about such portraits while they are at the same time meant to memorialise the family for eternity. Tension arises over the difference between their sweet, personal portrayal and the larger meaning of the staying power of portraiture. The intention behind the portraits as bastions against death and commemoration of the name of the family is supported by the images chosen to close the autobiographical section: two sets of coats of arms. One is for Kolm (fig. 124) and the other for his eldest son Hans (fig. 125). Mieke B. Smits-Veldt suggests that Kolm and Hans may have designed the coats of arms themselves.³²

²⁸ Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, p. 271. 'Anno 1625 den 15 janniwarus in Amsterdam/Anne Jans. dochter out 5 jaer en 3 weecken was doe lanck 5 vierendeel elle en ½ sestiende' An Amsterdam 'el' is 688 mm. 5/4 el = 86 cm., 1/32 el = 2.15 cm., thus Anna is 88.15 cm. tall.

²⁹ See: E. de Jongh, 'Grape Symbolism in Paintings of the 16th and 17th Centuries', *Simiolus* 7 (1974), pp. 166-191; J. B. Bedaux, 'Fruit and Fertility Symbolism in Netherlandish Portraiture of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries' *Simiolus* 17: 2/3 (1987), pp. 150-168.

³⁰ Smits-Veldt, 'De Nalatenschap van Jan Sijwertsz Kolm', p. 98; Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, p. 272. 'Siet Anna sus vast cruijlen/met Lijsgorts op den arm, en dates niet sou huijlen.'

³¹ van Eeghen, 'Jan Sijwertsz Kolm', p. 56. 'De daagelijcke pret van kinder doens bedrijven/ Heb ick bij haar int net hier tusschen moeten schrijven'

³² Smits-Veldt et. al., *Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, schilder-dichter te Amsterdam*, p. 272

Kolm's *Ghedenck boeck* is modeled on the tradition of the medieval family chronicle with listings of important life events, family trees, and the family's financial accounts, which were meant to be exclusively personal family documents.³³ They cannot be termed 'autobiographies', but can be viewed as 'egodocuments' more generally.³⁴ In the sixteenth century, the autobiography developed into a more specific genre, separate from the account books.³⁵ From the seventeenth century onward, diarists became more personal and a shift took place from the externally-focused diary to the internal, which was mostly spiritual in nature.³⁶ However, the autobiographical diary as we understand it today, the confessional *journal intime*, did not come into existence until the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.³⁷ It was also from this period that autobiographies were considered documents worthy of being published, an act which was previously considered arrogant.³⁸

The growth in egodocuments during the early modern period has been interpreted by many scholars as connected to a rise in individualism.³⁹ The general argument is that during the Italian Renaissance, the bourgeoisie was emancipated from the traditional social hierarchy, causing this particular group to question its identity, leading to a growth in self-reflection and development of the concept of individualism. Rudolf Dekker, the leading authority on Dutch egodocuments, argues against this

³³ R. Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography in Holland: From the Golden Age to Romanticism* (Basingstoke, 2000), p. 17.

³⁴ R. Dekker (ed.), *Egodocuments and History: Autobiographical Writing in its Social Context since the Middle ages* (Hilversum, 2002), 7. The term 'egodocument' was coined by Dutch historian Jacques Presser in the early 1950s. He defined egodocuments as 'those historical sources in which the user is confronted with an 'I' or occasionally (Caesar, Henry Adams) a 'he', continuously present in the text as the writing and describing subject.' See: J. Presser, "Memoires als gescheidbron" in Winkler Prins Encyclopedie VIII (Amsterdam/Brussels, 1958), pp. 208-210.

³⁵ I. Thoen, *Strategic Affection? Gift Exchange in Seventeenth-century Holland* (Amsterdam 2007), p. 27.

³⁶ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 16.

³⁷ Ibid. Dekker refers to the 'confessional' type of secular diary and is specifically referring to developments in the Netherlands.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 18.

³⁹ This originally comes out of Jacob Burckhardt's tracing of the rise of individualism in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (London, 1878), esp. Part 2.

connection between egodocuments and individualism, positing that egodocuments have been treated like constructions of self and identity in postmodernist and poststructuralist interpretations.⁴⁰ He proposes that the purpose of egodocuments was to pass information on to the next generation and that this concept was more strongly rooted in family tradition than in a consciousness of individuality. I feel that, in the case of the albums, it proves to be slightly more complicated as they incorporate autobiographical details, poetry, and portraits. In this light, Dekker's views become slightly problematic. Departing from him, I argue that albums did function as a part in identity construction, but perhaps rather in an almost involuntary way; as a means of working out certain personal set-backs (like the death of a family member) or other tensions surrounding the various extensions of personal identity, including religion, politics, and social status.

Though Kolm's *Ghedenck boeck* follows the example of family chronicles of the Middle Ages, it is a unique document with its combination of text and images. It is difficult to slot it into any one category; it is neither family chronicle nor autobiography. In order to articulate the specificity of Kolm's singular work, I will place it in the context of the rising interest in producing egodocuments in the seventeenth century, the most famous of which were the autobiographical writings of famed statesman and literary figure, Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687).

Constantijn Huygens as Autobiographer

Constantijn Huygens was the second son born to Christiaan Huygens and Susanna Hoefnagel in The Hague on the 4th of September 1596. His father, who came from Brabant, was a personal secretary to William of Orange and held a great amount of political weight. After the assassination of William the Silent in 1584, Christiaan

⁴⁰ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 13.

became one of five secretaries to the *Raad van Staat* (Council of State). Constantijn's mother came from a wealthy merchant family in Antwerp and was a niece of the painter Joris Hoefnagel. The Huygenses were not of noble birth but Christiaan's close relationship to the House of Orange gained him social significance and ensured a successful future for his children. There were six children born to the couple: Maurits (b. 1595), Constantijn (b. 1596), Elizabeth (b. 1598), Geertruyd (b. 1599), Catharina (b. 1601), and Constantia (b. 1602).

Huygens was an exceptional case in that he received a classical humanist education from his father as well as from various hired tutors. This comprised a combination of intellectual studies including French, Latin, rhetoric, mathematics, and law, as well as the arts such as music and painting, and physical education in dancing, riding and fencing. Constantijn's father guaranteed him a prestigious diplomatic career and trained him in the etiquette and behavior of a perfect courtier. In 1616, he entered the University of Leiden to study law. He began his studies in English at Leiden, which would become important later in his career. After one year of study, he completed a Latin dissertation in law. In 1618, Constantijn was sent to London to acquire knowledge of diplomatic policy and techniques. He returned to England several times during his lifetime for diplomatic missions.

Through his mother's family connections, Constantijn met the famed Dutch poet and playwright, Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft (1581-1647). He became involved in the literary circle known as the 'Muiderkring' (Muiden circle), so-called after Hooft's residence. It included other significant actors in the Dutch literati such as the emblemist Pieter Roemers Visscher, as well as his daughter Anna Roemers Visscher, celebrated artist and poet. His relationship to this circle solidified his position in the world of Dutch literature as a poet and author. Constantijn spent much of his spare time

reading and writing and his personal library was enormous, numbering some 8,000 books.

In 1621, Constantijn became secretary of the Dutch embassy in England. In 1624, his father Christiaan died, leaving Constantijn and his brother Maurits with the responsibilities of secretary to Stadtholder Prince Frederik Hendrik. Portraits of Huygens from around this time demonstrate that his political career was on the rise and confirm the image that he tried to cultivate in his literary works. His portrait by Thomas de Keyser from 1627 (fig. 126) shows him in his official role as secretary and also represents his private interests. The tapestry on the rear wall of the portrait is decorated with the Huygens' family arms and the objects on the table include a chitarrone (a stringed instrument), plans for architectural projects, and a pair of globes, one terrestrial and one celestial (often found in the offices of scholars). Jan Lievens' portrait of Huygens of circa 1627-1630 (fig. 127) presents him in a very passive, pensive pose. The serenity of his posture is possibly related to the ideal Neo-Stoic state of 'tranquilitas', which was achieved through rational self-control.⁴¹ Both portraits work to support a self-image of high status and success in his career.

During this time Constantijn began thinking about starting a family. He courted Suzanna van Baerle (1599-1637) daughter of Jan Hendrik Baerle and Jacomina Ham, who were educated and cultivated people. During this period of courtship, Huygens dedicated a number of poems to Suzanna, referring to her as his 'sterre' (star). The two were married in 1627 and had five children together: Constantijn Jr (b. 1628), Christiaan (b. 1629), Lodewijk (b. 1631), Philips (b. 1632), and Suzanna (b. 1637). The couple had a very happy marriage and home life until Suzanna fell ill after the birth of their daughter and died three months later on 10 May 1637. Huygens was so

⁴¹ A. J. Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 79.

overwhelmed with grief that he was unable to complete a poem he had begun writing earlier. The poem, ‘Daghwerck’ (Day’s work), described a period of one day in the family’s life, depicting work and everyday activities, but also focusing on Constantijn’s deep love for his wife.⁴²

Shortly before Suzanna’s death, work was completed on the Huygens family home, which had been in progress for some time. Stadtholder Frederik Hendrik had offered a plot to Huygens along Het Plein in 1634. In consultation with Pieter Post and Jacon van Campen, the top architects of the day, Huygens planned for a stately home. In February 1637, the construction had progressed enough to allow the Huygenses to move into their new home. The family had happily looked forward to inhabiting their new house, but Suzanna’s tragic death brought this to a halt. One day after Suzanna’s funeral, the family moved into their house, with Constantijn writing in his diary: ‘17. May: Moved to the new house, alas! Without my dove.’⁴³ Following this tragic event, the emotional focus of his life moved to his children, specifically their upbringing and education. He devoted himself to them just as his own father had done.

Huygens continued to succeed spectacularly in his career for an individual who had not been born into the upper nobility. He was appointed *rekenmeester*, a financial administrator to the House of Orange, in 1630. The appointment came with a salary of 1,000 florins per year. Part of Huygens’ unofficial role at the court of the Stadtholder was as art advisor. He was extremely knowledgeable about the arts, having studied drawing himself, and took a keen interest in surveying young Dutch talent. It was Huygens who ‘discovered’ Rembrandt as a young Dutch artistic talent and brokered the

⁴² C. Huygens, *Dagh-werck van Constantijn Huygens*, ed., F.L. Zwaan (Assen, 1973).

⁴³ P. Davidson and A. van der Weel (trans.), *A Selection of the Poems of Sir Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687)* (Amsterdam, 2002), p. 93, note 13, C. Huygens, *Dagboek van Constantijn Huygens: Voor de eerste maal naar het afschrijft van diens kleinzoon uitgegeven*, ed., J.H.W. Unger (Amsterdam, 1884), p. 30.

artist's patronage relationship with Frederik Hendrik, due to a close personal rapport with the stadtholder.

Huygens echoed his social rise by purchasing the manor and title of Zuilichem in Gelderland. His new title and social position put him in a standing to form relationships with the privileged classes and intellectuals such as Rene Descartes. He was knighted by both James VI and Louis XIII, which allowed him to acquire a coat of arms. Huygens built his social and political connections without the benefit of noble blood. Though he was a member of the elite and highly educated, he earned his way to the top, exemplifying the Dutch burgher of the period. His formulation of his new social identity manifested itself in the building of his country manor, Hofwijck, in his personal writings about his family, and in his commissioned portraits, as we will see.

Any Dutch burgher on the rise in the Netherlands needed to build a country house in order to distinguish himself. In 1639, Huygens acquired a piece of land from Jacob van Adrichem along the Vliet canal in Voorburg, close to The Hague. He intended to build an estate, or *buitenhuis*, called 'Hofwijck.'⁴⁴ The name of the estate is a play on words with *hof* meaning a garden and *wijck* meaning a place, and at the same time referencing a place where one could avoid (*wijck*) the court (*hof*). Huygens considered his country estate to be a retreat from the world, a kind of personal Garden of Eden, which he hoped to share with those who visited the house as well. His long country house poem, entitled 'Hofwijck' details how he had planned the estate and the purpose that it would serve in his and his family's life.⁴⁵

Huygens wrote prolifically about his family and personal life in both prose and verse, following the example of his ancestors as well as a greater general trend in Dutch

⁴⁴ On Hofwijck see: J. Guillermo, *Dutch Houses and Castles* (London, 1990), pp. 170-171; V. Feijser (ed.), *Soeticheydt des Buyten-levens: Leven en Leren op Hofwijck* (Delft, 1988).

⁴⁵ C. Huygens, *Hofwijck*, ed., F.L. Zwaan (Jerusalem, 1977).

society. These writing were also possibly a manifestation of the identity that Huygens had constructed for himself in his professional life. He wrote pragmatic descriptions of his daily life in his diaries, which can be considered autobiographical accounts. The first account, called *Mijn Jeugd*, was written early in his life, beginning in May 1629 and ending in 1631.⁴⁶ The text is written in Latin and contains a history of the family, both his mother's and father's sides, along with notes on art, literature, and the classical world. It was written as an example for Huygens' children, so that they might continue this family tradition.⁴⁷

The second autobiographical work, written towards the end of his life in 1677, is titled *Mijn leven verteld aan mijn kinderen* (*My Life as Recounted to My Children*).⁴⁸ This diary was in line with a tradition of the Huygens family—many of the family members kept diaries and wrote autobiographies, including Huygens' father, who had made brief notes on his son's upbringing.⁴⁹ Huygens' journal was much more detailed compared to his father's and much longer, consisting of 90 pages.⁵⁰ Concerning his children, Huygens always began with a description of Suzanna's pregnancies and labour. At the beginning of their lives, he made a point to make notes when the children began to recognise their parents and smile. He noted when speech began to develop and how long this process took, the development of motor skills, and when they began to walk. Even seemingly trivial details like the colour of his childrens' eyes were recorded in the diary. It is clear that Huygens' was particularly involved in the early life of his children given that he made notes on wet nursing. Suzanna did not nurse her children

⁴⁶ C. Huygens, *De jeugd van Constantijn Huygens: door hemzelf beschreven*, trans., A.H. Kan and G. Kamphuis (Rotterdam/Antwerp, 1946); I. Broekman, *De rol van de schilderkunst in het leven van Constantijn Huygens* (1596-1687) (Hilversum, 2005), p. 13.

⁴⁷ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 23.

⁴⁸ C. Huygens, 'Constantijn Huygens beschrijft de jeugd van zijn kinderen', eds., E. de Heer and A. Eyffinger in A. Eyffinger (ed.), *Huygens Herdacht: catalogus bij de tentoonstelling in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek ter gelegenheid van de 300ste sterfdag van Constantijn Huygens*, exh. cat. (The Hague, 1987), pp. 89-152.

⁴⁹ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 23.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

because she maybe did not produce milk or her social rank governed that she hire a wet nurse.⁵¹ Their illnesses were given particular attention as well. As they grew older and matured, Huygens observed the developing characters of his children and noted rivalries between them.

Huygens educated his children just as his own father had done, taking quite extensive notes on their studies. He took this education very seriously, though the education he gave to his sons was different to that of his daughter. His goals for his sons were ambitious while his aim with his daughter was to form her into a decent, knowledgeable, individual.⁵² What stands out about Huygens' diary is that his charming anecdotes and relatively open feelings demonstrate his love and concern as a father. Huygens was exceptional in writing so extensively of his feelings, though such emotion for children in Dutch society was confirmed by the reports of foreign visitors to the Netherlands. French traveler and historian Jean de Parival (1605-1669) for example testified that Dutch children were 'adored and spoilt, and lived under conditions of almost total liberty. Excessive tenderness made their parents incurably weak.'⁵³ Pilgrims at Amsterdam and Leiden commented that there was far too much kissing, cuddling, and indulgence towards children and that the parents would eventually be punished for it.⁵⁴ Huygens' affection for his children functioned to place him in his role as father as a significant part of his personal identity, which is further confirmed in the family portrait that he had commissioned.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 25. It was typical for the very upper classes to hire wet nurses, but the majority of Dutch women nursed their own children.

⁵² H. Roodenburg, *The Eloquence of the Body: Perspectives on Gesture in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle, 2004), p. 32.

⁵³ B. Roberts, *Through the Keyhole: Dutch child-rearing practices in the 17th and 18th century, Three urban elite families* (Hilversum, 1998), p. 138. Quoted from P. Zumthor, *Daily Life in Rembrandt's Holland*, trans., Simon Watson Taylor (London, 1962), pp. 99-100.

⁵⁴ S. Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London, 1987), p. 485.

The Huygens family portrait, dated 1640, was most likely commissioned by Huygens in 1639 (fig. 128). Huygens had the noted portraitist Adriaen Hanneman (c. 1604-1671), who was originally from The Hague, paint the work. Hanneman received artistic training from Anthony van Ravesteyn, younger brother of Jan van Ravesteyn, and spent approximately twelve years in England where he may have worked with the famed court painter, Anthony van Dyck, in London.⁵⁵ Hanneman's international training and high profile upon returning to The Hague, the town of his birth, in 1638, probably made him a prime candidate to paint the family of Constantijn Huygens. The work is executed in the type of international style made famous by van Dyck. Soft brushstrokes and flowing drapery are particularly characteristic of the style and would have been apparent to viewers educated in art.

Within a trompe l'oeil frame, six portrait medallions are set in a circular format. Hanneman's large, sensitively rendered painting features Constantijn Huygens as the centerpiece of the work. Surrounding him are five medallions, each containing a likeness of one of his children. Amongst the various round portraits are putti and decorative flora and fauna. In the upper left corner (to Huygen's right), is his eldest son Constantijn Junior (1628-1697), who married Suzanna Ryckaert (1642-1712) in 1668.⁵⁶ From 1672, jointly with his father, he held the post of secretary to Prince Willem III, remaining in office after his father died in 1687. He was a talented draughtsman and wrote a number of diaries, just as his father had done, which painted a picture of his social circles. At the top of the painting is the only daughter in the family: Suzanna Huygens (1637-1725), pictured at age three. Suzanna wears clothing typical of a toddler in the seventeenth century: a white dress with a collar and wristbands, and a

⁵⁵ C. Dumas (ed.), *Haagse schilders in de Gouden Eeuw: het Hoogsteder lexicon van alle schilders werkzaam in Den Haag 1600-1700*, exh. cat. (Den Haag, 1998), p. 155.

⁵⁶ On the Huygens children see: B. Broos and A. van Suchtelen (eds.), *Portraits in the Mauritshuis 1630-1790* (Zwolle, 2004), pp. 119-120

little cap with roses. She married her cousin Philips Doublet in 1660. In the upper right corner (left of Huygens) is Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695) at age eleven. He became one of the greatest mathematicians and astronomers of his age and is famous for, among other things, inventing the pendulum timepiece. At the time the portrait was painted, he was studying Latin, Greek, mathematics, and mechanics. At bottom right is Philips Huygens (1633-1657), the youngest son. He died in 1657 at Marienburg in Prussia while on a diplomatic mission to Sweden and Poland. At bottom left is the third son, Lodewijk Huygens (1631-1699). In 1672, he became sheriff and dikegrave (an officer in charge of dikes) of Gorinchem, after which he married Jacomina Teding van Berkhout.

Significantly though, Susanna is missing from the family depiction, having passed away in 1637. In spite of her palpable absence, it seems that the portrait held much value for the family. In fact, the painting was a fixture in the Huygens house on Het Plein and hung there until 1785.⁵⁷ As the family moved there shortly after Susanna's death, Huygens always saw the house as a kind of memorial to her.⁵⁸ In his will, he requested that the house remain in the family as a memory to him and his wife after his own death.⁵⁹ The portrait may also be viewed then as a monument to the loss of Suzanna, Huygens' wife and the mother of their five children. The portrait even bears the inscription 'ECCE/HAEREDITAS/DOMINI' (Behold the legacy of the Lord),

⁵⁷ On the house of the Huygens family see: F.R.E. Blom, et al., *Domus: het huis van Constantijn Huygens in Den Haag* (Zutphen, 1999).

⁵⁸ Broos and van Suchtelen (eds.), *Portraits in the Mauritshuis*, p. 67. Constantijn and Suzanna Huygens had designed their home in The Hague together.

⁵⁹ A. Schinkel, *Nadere bijzonderheden betreffende Constantijn Huygens en zyne familie, alsmede eenige door hem vervaardigde doch onuitgegeven dichtstukjes*, (2 vols, n.p., 1851-1856), vol. 1, p. 39. 'Myn tegenwoordig Huys, erf en Stalling alhier op het Plein gelegen, wensch ick dat ter eere van my ende Salt, myne Lieve Huysvrouw, die het te samen gebouwt hebben, ende den Haghe, daarmede niet ontciert, in myn Geslacht, ende ongealieneert moghe blyven.' [I desire that my present house, land and stable here on Het Plein remain inalienably in my family in memory of me and my late dear wife, who built it, not to the detriment of The Hague, together.] English translation by Broos and van Suchtelen (eds.), *Portraits in the Mauritshuis*, p. 119.

which was an 'in memoriam' dedication.⁶⁰ On 3 Jan 1641, Huygens dedicated a poem to the portrait, again recalling the memory of the deceased Suzanna:

To my portrait surrounded by the faces of my five children, So that he should always despise ancestors and beauty and the riches and all-threatening torches of an untimely love, the Fates have armed Huygens, the father, bereft of his divine spouse, with this life-guard.⁶¹

Clearly the portrait was viewed by Huygens as a reminder of his spouse and an everlasting memorial of his family. At the same time, he comprehended the portrait as marker of familial identity, as in these verses written one month later: 'To my portrait surrounded by my children. This circle shows equal distances from the centre. Equal from the centre is the line of the father, equal, too, love.'⁶²

Being an art connoisseur as well as someone who commissioned many portraits, Huygens philosophised in his writings about the commemorative function of portraiture.⁶³ In the following lines from *Mijn Jeugd* he speaks of the portrait's ability to bring us into contact with our ancestors:

... [portraits] perform a noble work, that more than any other is necessary for our human needs, that through them we in a true sense do not die; furthermore, as descendants we can speak intimately with our most distant ancestors. This pleasure is so dear to me that nothing more agreeable can befall me than reading or hearing stories about someone's life and character – whether he be a good or

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ A. M. Th. Leerintveld, "'Tquam so welt te pass': Huygens Portretbijschriften en de Datering van zijn Portret Geschilderd door Jan Lievens', *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 8 (1989), pp. 159-183, pp. 176-77. 'IN EFFIGIEM MEAM QUINQUE LIBERORUM VULTIBUS CINCTAM. / Quo genus et formam *Constanter*, opesque et amoris / Imtempesiui spernat ubique faces, / Hugenum diuâ privatum Coniuge Patrem / Hoc armaverunt Fata satellitio.' [Op mijn portret omgeven door de gezichten van mijn vijf kinderen. / Opdat hij afkomst en schoonheid *constant* zou verachten / en ook de rijkdommen en de alomdreigende / fakkels ener ontijdige liefde, hebben de / schikgodinnen, Huygens, de vader, verstoken / van zijn goddelijke echtgenote, bewapend / met deze lijfwacht.] English translation made from Dutch translation by Broos and van Suchtelen (eds.), *Portraits in the Mauritshuis*, p. 119.

⁶² Ibid., p. 177. 'IN EFFIGIEM MEAM LIBERIS CINCTAM. / Circulus a centro paribus patet intervallis, / Par Patris a centro linea, par et amor.' [Op mijn portret omringd door de kinderen. / Deze cirkel laat vanaf het midden gelijke afstanden zien, / Gelijk is vanuit het midden de lijn van de vader, / Gelijk ook de liefde.] English translation made from Dutch translation by Broos and van Suchtelen (eds.), *Portraits in the Mauritshuis*, p. 119.

⁶³ Broekman, *De rol van de schilderkunst*, p. 25. Huygens probably had 35 portraits commissioned of himself in total.

bad man – (and this sort of history particularly attracts me) [which] is made easier by looking at his portrait.⁶⁴

He echoes the sentiment of his poem on the family portrait by speaking of the portrait as a kind buttress against death. Further, Huygens speaks to the feeling of being able to know and communicate with one's ancestors through their portraits. A later poem from 1656, expresses a more imminent wish that his own progeny remember him through his portraiture:

A small part of art can rightly make me happy:
That small part that lays its hand on the wheel of times
And present my grandfather's great-grandfather
To the eye, or the people of today or of yesterday,
And will let my children's grandchildren inherit
My face that will die with me and perish,
Is not that science more master than time?
It is the perishable self portrayed in oil.⁶⁵

Again, Huygens speaks of the portrait as memorial and that the enduring nature of portraiture will allow those who did not know him personally to still be familiar with his visage.

Huygens' autobiographical diaries are part of a tremendously important autobiographical trend. Huygens was of course extremely learned and wrote at a level vastly above that of the typical Dutch citizen. There were however, those in other classes of society who were creating egodocuments. I will discuss three further

⁶⁴ Huygens, *De jeugd van Constantijn Huygens*, p. 75. 'Toch verrichten zij een nobel werk, dat meer dan iets anders voor onze menselijke behoeften allernoodzakelijkst is, omdat wij door hun toedoen in zekere zin niet sterven en no gals nakomelingen met onze verste voorvaderen vertrouwelijke kunnen spreken. Dit genot is mij zoo lief, dat mij niets aangenamers kan te beurt vallen, dan het mij bij het lezen of hooren verhalen over ieders leven en karakter – hij zij een goed of slecht mensch – (en dit sort geschiedenis trekt mij bijzonder aan) mogelijk wordt gemaakt zijn portret te beschouwen.' English translation by Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities*, p. 42; addition of '[portraits]' mine.

⁶⁵ C. Huygens, *Gedichten. Deel 6: 1656-1661*, ed., J.A. Worp (Groningen, 1896), p. 19. 'Een deeltje vande kunst mij te recht verblyden:/Dat deeltje, dat de hand op 't rad legt vande tijden,/En stelt mij Grootevaer syn overgroote Vaer/Voor ooghen, of het volck van he'en of gist'ren waer,/En sal myn' kinderen kinds kinderen doen erven/Mijn aensicht, dat met mij gaet sterven en bederven./Is niet lie wetenschap meet meesters dan de tijd?/T is, her verderffelick in d' Olij geconfijtt.' English translation by K. van der Stighelen, 'Amoris t doloris monumentum' Portraits and how they were perceived in the baroque age', in K. van der Stighelen, et. al. (eds.), *Pokerfaced: Flemish and Dutch Baroque Faces Unveiled* (Turnhout, 2010) pp. 249- 273, p. 249.

examples of autobiographical accounts in order to give a full picture of the extent of the fashion of autobiographical documentation. The three following accounts are perhaps even more reflective of the trend of writing about the family in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic.

David Beck (1594-1634) was a Protestant schoolmaster of German ancestry who left behind a diary that was written in the year 1624 while he was living in The Hague.⁶⁶ Beck was born in Cologne in 1594 and in 1617 moved to The Hague where he started a French school and married Roeltje van Belle.⁶⁷ The couple had three children together: Adriaan, Sara, and Roeltje. Their mother died at the birth of the third child in 1623. When Beck began his diary in 1624, he had just become a widower, but this is neither the impetus nor central focus of the diary.⁶⁸ The diary deals primarily with Beck's daily life, though it is more descriptive than personal. He claimed to have written the diary 'with great diligence in order to keep it as a sweet memory for my beloved children as a mirror of my life'.⁶⁹ Each entry in the diary has a specific format: Beck describes the weather, news and gossip, the people he has seen, letters he sent and received, books that he has read and poems that he has written. He always mentioned when he went to church and noted down births, weddings, and funerals. The text of the diary leans more towards a chronicle than a *journal intime* in content.⁷⁰ The journal ended in 1625 when he moved to Arnhem and became the schoolmaster of a French school there.

⁶⁶ D. Beck, *Spiegel van mijn leven: een Haags dagboek uit 1624*, ed., Svend Erik Veldhuijzen, (Hilvershum 1993).

⁶⁷ Thoen, *Strategic Affection*, p. 31.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Beck, *Spiegel van mijn leven*, p. 26. 'Met grooten vlijt beschreven om te bewaren tot een soete Gedachtenisse, voor mijne lieve kinderen/Als eenden Spiegel van mijn leven.'

⁷⁰ Thoen, *Strategic Affection*, p. 32.

A further example comes from the hand of Hermanus Verbeeck (1621-81).⁷¹

Verbeeck was born in Amsterdam in 1621 to a Catholic family that had emigrated from the Southern Netherlands.⁷² An apprentice to his father, who was a furrier, he took over the workshop when his father died. He was married to Clara Molenaers and was able to purchase a grocery store with the help of his mother-in-law after he was forced to close the fur trade shop. This venture also proved to be unsuccessful. Verbeeck then began to study as a bookkeeper while working in the fur and wine commodities exchange, but again luck was not with him. Because of these failed attempts at a career, he earned less than 400 guilders per year and received financial assistance from the broker's guild. In 1670, he became a clerk for a tax collector but he eventually lost that job. During these dismal living circumstances, Verbeeck stopped writing in his diary. His last words were written in 1673, which may have been due to ill health in the last decade of his life.

The diary that Verbeeck wrote was divided into five parts and written in verse. Verbeeck titled it 'Memoriaal', which is a term often used in bookkeeping.⁷³ It survived because it was bound in a volume along with several plays that he had written. In this journal, Verbeeck meticulously recorded the births and lives of his children. He normally gave the exact age for his children at their deaths, but there is one case of a child who died where he did not mention the name. He described the labour and delivery of each of his children. It appears that they cared a great deal for their children, for instance when the wet nurse for their infant had to travel, the mother traveled with her and the child.

The final diary I would like to discuss here was written by Dirck Jansz. (1578/9-1636) who was born in 1578 or 1579 and worked as a farmer in Friesland.⁷⁴ He was

⁷¹ H. Verbeeck, *Memoriaal ofte mijn levensraijsinghe*, ed., Jeroen Blaak (Hilversum, 1999).

⁷² Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 31.

⁷³ Thoen, *Strategic Affection*, p. 38.

⁷⁴ D. Jansz., *Het aantekeningenboek van Dirck Jansz.* eds., P. Gerbenzon, et. al. (Hilversum, 1993).

relatively well off for his profession and well educated, as he could read and write.

Dirck Jansz.' journal is one of the oldest Dutch diaries in existence, beginning in 1600 and ending in 1636.⁷⁵ During these 36 years, he recorded deaths, news, recipes, songs, anecdotes, weather, and the prices of farm products, some years more extensively than others. Jansz. wrote that he began the diary for his children, but he was not married until 1608 to Suu Andersdochter.⁷⁶ The diary may also have functioned as a chronicle and account book for the running of his farm. Jansz. and his wife had five children who died—Jansz. reported the deaths of the children in his diary and where they were buried. He mentioned only the name of the child who lived the longest and the others may have been unnamed and unbaptised because of their low chances of survival. The notes on the deaths of his children were typically brief and unemotional. His first wife died in 1618 and he was remarried to Jeck Tyommesdochter who bore him eight children, some of whom survived. His notes on these children are longer and more detailed.⁷⁷

These diaries are indicative of a greater cultural trend in the Netherlands of writing about the family. A striking feature of the autobiographical documents is that they often show a great sense of affection and tenderness in recounting memories of children and other family members. We see this too in the next album I will discuss, the *Family Scrapbook* of Gesina ter Borch. Again, as this album is complex, like that of Kolm's, shockingly little study has been made of it. The album, though not an autobiography in a strict sense, was a kind of map of her familial relationships. It included drawings by her father and famous brother, Gerard, as a way of preserving them in the book and presenting her artistic connections. Her own sketches were in the album as well, and especially arresting with regard to this chapter are her drawings of

⁷⁵ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 38.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 39.

her brother, Moses, who died tragically young. The portrayals of him, in the face of death, give the album the function of a vehicle for grief.

Gesina ter Borch's *Family Scrapbook*

Gesina ter Borch, younger sister of the famed Dutch artist Gerard ter Borch (1617-1681), was born on 15 November 1631 in Deventer.⁷⁸ She grew up on the Sassenstraat by the St Michaelskerk in Zwolle, living out her entire life there with her mother and sister as she was never married.⁷⁹ Gesina was the sixth of thirteen children born to Gerard ter Borch the Elder (1583-1662) and his third wife Wiesken Matthys. The ter Borchs were an artistic family—Gerard Sr. traveled to Italy to study art as a young man but, upon returning to the Netherlands, he did not pursue an artistic career, instead becoming an officer for the Admiralty of Holland's North Quarter.⁸⁰ Very few of Gerard the Elder's paintings remain in existence but he did leave behind a large collection of drawings.⁸¹ Gerard the Elder raised his children with a passion for art; he taught them to draw and paint and encouraged them to practice art. Though Gerard the Younger was the only one of his children to pursue painting as a full-time career, his brothers, Harmen and Moses, and sister, Gesina, were all talented amateur artists.

Though Gesina was educated by her father in art, she was encouraged in a different way from her brothers because of her sex and commenced her training with calligraphy.⁸² When she was fourteen, Gesina started creating albums of her best calligraphic examples and drawings. Her 'Materi-Boeck' (Material Book) was a small volume, only twenty-nine pages, containing her earliest work. Materi-Boecken were

⁷⁸ M. Brouwer (ed.), *De Gouden Eeuw van Gesina ter Borch*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2010), p. 8. This birthdate is a guess as the actual date is unknown.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 8.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² K. van der Stighelen and M. Westen, et al., *Femmes Artistes en Belgique et aux Pays Bas, 1500-1950* (Antwerp, 1999), p. 49.

traditionally small books given to children to teach them to read. Gesina's goal was to make a pedagogic book with moral sayings and biblical texts written in beautiful script. In addition, there were small scenes of daily life included in its pages. Gesina most likely began learning to draw at age sixteen or seventeen, so this book showcases her early attempts at drawing.⁸³ She continued to work on this album until she was twenty, at which point she began to develop new projects.⁸⁴ Her two later albums are a great deal more ambitious.

Gesina's next book was her 'Poezie-album' (Poetry Album) consisting of her own poems, songs, and watercolour illustrations. The major themes of the text are primarily love, drink, and religion. One poem, in particular, describes a bad marriage with an illustration of a couple fighting at the bottom of the page. Gesina was clearly influenced by the formats used in the emblem books of Jacob Cats and Cesare Ripa, specifically the combination of image and text.⁸⁵

Gesina's greatest artistic achievement, by far, was her *Familieplakboek* (*Family Scrapbook*), begun in 1660.⁸⁶ It was larger and longer than the previous two books, which indicates an enlargement of artistic ambition.⁸⁷ The book contains a motley assortment of drawings and writings. Her own drawings are included, as well as those of her family members and friends, along with poems, prints, and newspaper clippings. The book opens, like many others, with an illustration of the ter Borch family coat of arms (fig. 129). This blatant reference to the family line associates Gesina with her famed artistic lineage. The following page is an elaborate allegorical drawing

⁸³ Brouwer, *De Gouden Eeuw van Gesina ter Borch*, p. 20.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 35.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 39.

⁸⁶ Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Print Room, nr. BI-1887-1463: Gesina ter Borch, *Familie-plakboek van Gesina ter Borch*, (album, 1660-c. 1687); A. M. Kettering, *Drawings from the Ter Borch Studio Estate* (2 vols, The Hague, 1988), Vol. II, p. 616. A friend of Gesina ter Borch referred to it as her 'Konstboek' (Art Book).

⁸⁷ Kettering, *Drawings from the Ter Borch Studio Estate*, p. 616.

representing 'The Triumph of Painting over Death' (fig. 130). The scene is set in an artist's studio where a woman (presumably representing Gesina) sits behind an easel with a palette and brushes in one hand. The artist presses her foot down on a figure holding a scythe as well as a skeleton holding a broken arrow. A broken hourglass to the left of these figures represents time. The message here is that woman is the personification of painting and that she overcomes death. A phoenix nests on top of the easel, which stands for renewal and behind the painter are the personifications of history and poetry, two additional female figures who triumph over death.

This image speaks to the influence of Henrik Joris, whose poem and play of the same title accompany the drawing. Henrik Joris, who was Gesina's lover and companion, probably introduced her to Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1593, first ed.), as these elements are obvious in the drawing. There is a long description of the drawing by Joris, but he does not refer to one curious element of the painting—a portrait bust resembling Gesina's self-portraits, which is carried by two putti into the studio. Gesina presents herself as a victorious and ingenious painter, a detail that can be attributed to her invention alone. The scene takes place in a studio that is similar to many of the domestic interiors described in the rest of the *Scrapbook*. Ripa thus undergoes a transformation to the familiar, personal, and domestic.⁸⁸ This scene underscores much of Gesina's personal style and education as an artist. As she was brought up outside of the classical art institutions, she was an amateur. Her drawings are more often than not familiar commentaries on everyday life, with little reference to allegory or morality. This allegorical double self-portrait is an important way for Gesina to present her feminine identity at the beginning of the album. It presents her not only as a practicing amateur female painter, but also as the very embodiment of painting, given that *Pictura*

⁸⁸ E. A. Honig, 'The Space of Gender in Seventeenth-century Dutch Painting' in W. Franits (ed.), *Looking at Seventeenth-century Dutch Art* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 187 – 201, pp. 187-88.

was represented as a woman. It also reminds the viewer of the fact that much of the writing on art production was gendered and that art production was equated with reproduction, perhaps placing Gesina in a much more intimate position vis-à-vis the creation of painted works.

Following this drawing are several dedicatory poems written by admirers of Gesina. The *Family Scrapbook* proper starts with Gesina's self-portrait inside of a painted frame decorated with her coat of arms (fig. 131). The next 20 pages or so of the *Scrapbook* contain Gesina's drawings and several of her early watercolours, some of which date from the 1650s. Beginning with folio 41, Gesina began to intersperse her own drawings with those she had collected from her father and brothers. This is the reason she referred to the project as a 'family' scrapbook. Gesina maintained strong relationships with her family members, and, in particular, with her brothers, Gerard and Moses.

Though thirteen years her senior, Gesina enjoyed a close relationship with her brother Gerard.⁸⁹ Gesina had become his favorite model by the early 1650s and at least twelve genre paintings feature a woman who resembles her.⁹⁰ For instance, Gesina is the model in a luxurious satin dress in the genre painting *Lady at her Toilet* of c. 1655 in Dresden (fig. 132). Being the professional out of the two siblings, it is likely that Gerard guided Gesina in her own artistic endeavours, though it seems that Gesina influenced him as well. It is possible that she had an impact on her brother's choice of Petrarchan themes in painting, as so many of her own poems and amorous songs were Petrarchan in diction and content.⁹¹

⁸⁹ A. K. Wheelock, et. al., *Gerard ter Borch*, exh. cat. (Washington, 2004), p. 11.

⁹⁰ A. M. Kettering, 'Ter Borch's Ladies in Satin' in Wayne Franits (ed.), *Looking at Seventeenth-century Dutch Art* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 98-115, p. 106, Kettering claims that Gesina modeled for at least 20 of Gerard's paintings.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106.

Gesina's memories and personal bonds can be traced through her *Family Scrapbook*. Most striking is the relationship to her brother, Moses ter Borch (1645-1667), who perished in the Second Anglo-Dutch War in 1667.⁹² Moses was fourteen years younger than Gesina, but the two seem to have been very close. Gesina placed a number of his original drawings in the *Scrapbook*. Moses had received the same artistic education as his brothers and it is clear that he would have rivaled his brother, Gerard, given the talent evident in these drawings.⁹³ Unfortunately, Moses' tragic, early death meant that he was never able to challenge his brother.

In about 1664, Moses joined the Dutch Navy as a volunteer and in 1666 fought in the battle against the English in the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667). In the summer of 1667, he took part in the final victorious campaign of the war in Chatham. Moses was one of seven men who died in a small attack on Landguard Fort on 12 July 1667. On 31 July 1667, only nineteen days after his death, the Treaty of Breda was signed, ending the conflict between England and the Netherlands. Moses was buried on a hill along the English coast.

After the death of Moses, the extent of the family's grief was tangible in the number of emotional tributes to him. The family made many allegories and portraits of him as a brave hero. In particular, Gesina dedicated a sizeable section of her *Family Scrapbook* to his memory. Gesina had a professional poet compose verses for her book and four of these poems were illustrated by her with pen and ink portraits of Moses. Three out of the four images were painted after his death, while the first may have been made before.⁹⁴

⁹² A. M. Kettering, 'Het Portret van Moses ter Borch door Gerard en Gesina ter Borch' *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 43 (1995) nr. 4, pp. 317-335, p. 317.

⁹³ Brouwer, *De Gouden Eeuw van Gesina ter Borch*, p. 16.

⁹⁴ Kettering, 'Het Portret van Moses ter Borch', p. 322.

In the first image, a devilish monster fishing for a siren grasps Moses by the left forearm (fig. 133). Many ships can be seen on the water in the background of the scene. In the bottom left corner, a mouse illustrates the common saying ‘Don’t crawl into a hole until you have inspected it first.’⁹⁵ This allegorical reference and the marine landscape refer to Moses’ decision to volunteer for the Navy. The drawing, therefore, may have been created before his death, which is supported by the fact that the compositional language of this drawing is different from the three later ones. In the other drawings, Moses is always in a formal pose in the center of the page and displays the body language of a gentleman.⁹⁶

The second drawing shows Moses in a landscape in Zwolle (fig. 134). He wears a stylish brown doublet that is decorated with orange ribbons, the color of the fatherland. Gesina remembers him as a respectable gentleman, but in his hometown of Zwolle, as she knew him before he left for war.

Moses is standing on the English coast surrounded by warships in the third drawing (fig. 135). There are skeletons to either side of him in the scene. One is in a rowboat heading towards the shore and the other hides behind a tree with an arrow in its hand, preparing to strike. The skeletons transparently refer to Moses’ impending death as a casualty of war.

The fourth and final drawing is marked with the year of Moses’ death, 1667, in the lower right hand corner (fig. 136). Again surrounded by ships at war, he is unfettered by the action. Moses stands on a beach and the steep slope to his right probably refers to the rocky English coast in Harwich, where he was buried.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 323.

One year later, in 1668, Gesina and her brother Gerard made a tribute to their deceased brother in the form of a life-sized portrait (fig. 137). It is the only oil painting on canvas that is known from Gesina's hand as well as the only painting made in collaboration with her brother.⁹⁸ The painting is related to the fourth image in Gesina's *Scrapbook*, but the hat has been swapped for a soldier's helmet in imitation of military portraiture. The landscape in the oil painting is more generic; less specific to the Anglo-Dutch war and the circumstances of Moses' death. Gesina seems to have been very involved in designing the composition as it is based on her album drawing.⁹⁹ The figure of Moses carries Gerard's touch; the delicacy and subtlety of the brushstrokes in the skin, features, and hair of Moses are characteristic of him.¹⁰⁰ Gesina may have painted the smaller details, such as the spaniel, some clothing and the allegorical attributes of the landscape. Though the portrait is meant to be related to classic military portraiture with its formal pose, it ultimately fails because of the tenderness and intimacy with which Gerard and Gesina depicted their brother.¹⁰¹ The image, at the same time life-size and miniature, is too familiar to fit with traditional examples of the genre. It is obvious that Gesina felt a strong emotional attachment to the portrait as she stated in 1690 that '...my portraits and [the portraits] of my brother Moses and of father and mother...must be reserved for the children'.¹⁰²

Gesina kept her ties strong to her family of birth all of her life, most likely because she never married. She was very close to her sister Jenneken's family, who lived in Amsterdam. Jenneken's husband, Sijbrandt Schellinger, wrote a number of

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 326.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 326-327.

¹⁰² S.J. Gudlaugsson *Gerard ter Borch* (2 vols., The Hague, 1959-1960), vol. II, p. 39, cited from M.E. Houck, 'Mededeelingen betreffende Gerard ter Borch, Robert van Voersten', *Verslagen en Mededeelingen der Vereeniging tot Beoefening van Overijsselsch Regt en Geschiedenis* 20 (1899), p. 156. 'En zullen mijn Conterfeitsels en [de portretten] van mijn broeder Moses en van vader en moeder...voor de kinderen bewaart moeten worden.' Gesina had no children of her own, but was very close to her siblings and was probably referring to her nieces and nephews.

poems for the *Family Scrapbook* and Gesina included a portrait of the family in her *Scrapbook* as well (fig. 138).¹⁰³ It is the most elaborate watercolour in the text and may have been a copy after a painting by her father.¹⁰⁴ Gesina continued to put objects into the book until 1687. She requested that the album should be kept in the family after her death and left it to her sister Catharina and niece Hillegonda.¹⁰⁵ Gesina died in 1690 in Deventer.

Gesina's album had multiple functions in her life and as part of her identity; it was representative of her artistic self, it traced her familial relationships visually, and it existed as an instrument in the mourning process. To establish the framework of death and mourning in the early modern Netherlands, I will explore a number of family portraits that include depictions of deceased family members, usually children, by Jan Mijntens and Nicolaes Maes. Such portraits, I suggest, worked in a similar way to the *Family Scrapbook* as a way of providing comfort to the bereaved and as a tool in the process of grief and mourning.

'A little angel from the Kingdom of Heaven': Death and Mourning in Family Portraits

Due to high child mortality rates, many of the existing deathbed portraits from the early modern Netherlands feature deceased children. For instance, Ferdinand Bol's 1659 portrait of Jodocus van den Bempden features a peaceful young boy on his deathbed, his head crowned with flowers and holding another flower in his lifeless hand (fig. 139). The pallid skin of the child and the flower crown are signals of death, otherwise one may assume that the boy, who died at only a few months old, was in a

¹⁰³ Brouwer, *De Gouden Eeuw van Gesina ter Borch*, p. 22.

¹⁰⁴ Kettering, *Drawings from the Ter Borch Studio Estate*, p. 639. The couple had four children, two boys who lived and two that died. Depending on whether the date on the painting is correct, it may depict either the living or deceased children.

¹⁰⁵ Brouwer, *De Gouden Eeuw van Gesina ter Borch*, p. 47.

deep sleep.¹⁰⁶ Such portraits may have been drawn from life or copied after an existing portrait of the child. According to Jan Baptist Bedaux, out of the 144 known individual children's portraits, sixty-three of those were painted within the first twelve months of the child's life.¹⁰⁷ A new born baby in the seventeenth century had a fifty percent chance to live to the age of twenty years old, and as a result many parents had their children painted early on in life, as a way to memorialise them in the event that they did not survive.¹⁰⁸

With the high rate of infant and child mortality, it has been proposed by a number of social and family historians that early modern European children were treated with indifference. Acknowledging the probability of death caused parents to create emotional distance between themselves and their children. This theory has been labeled 'the black legend' by Rudolf Dekker. This is in opposition to 'the white legend', which stipulates that parents were in fact affectionate and loving towards their children. The 'black legend' camp professed that early modern parents were emotionally detached from their children because of extenuating circumstances such as an alarmingly high infant mortality rate, the threat of disease, and an inability to recognise the unique circumstances that childhood presents.¹⁰⁹ The apathy shown towards children was also supported by the fact that children were often referred to as 'it' in documents and that the names of dead children were given to later-born children.¹¹⁰ The child-rearing practices of parents are, furthermore, used as evidence, with most scholars noting the frequency of the practices of infanticide, abandonment, wet nursing, swaddling, and

¹⁰⁶ E. de Jongh, 'Bloemen in de knop gebroken' *Kunstschrift* 41: 4 (1997), pp. 34-45, p. 37.

¹⁰⁷ J. B. Bedaux, 'Funeraire kinderportretten uit de 17de eeuw' in Bert Sliggers (ed.), *Naar het Lijk: het Nederlandse doodsportret 1500-heden*, exh. cat (Zutphen, 1998), pp. 88-114, p. 91.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, p. 531. Schama notes that as many as one in thirteen or one in fourteen babies were stillborn or died during birth in the seventeenth century.

¹¹⁰ L. A. Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 23.

sending children away for apprenticeships.¹¹¹ The origins of this theory, along with the origins of the history of family, can be traced back to Philippe Ariès' 1960 publication *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime*, (translated into English with the title *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* in 1962).

In this book, Ariès speaks of a 'new sensibility,' which refers to the burgeoning concept of childhood and the shaping of the modern family during the early modern period. He essentially makes the distinction that there was a shift in the understanding of the child between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, mainly speaking about France. During the Medieval era and up until the sixteenth century, childhood did not exist, but a change occurred in the following century that caused a new recognition of the child's place in the family. For Ariès, an absence of children in Medieval art, literature, and records pointed to indifference of childhood.¹¹² He evidenced the 'new sensibility' of childhood, which he pinpointed as a distinct social construct, in sources such as the emerging realism in child portraiture during the early seventeenth century.¹¹³ In keeping with this theory, parents did not necessarily actively neglect their children, but nevertheless were unaware of the particular situation of childhood and thus did not make the effort to care for or be involved in their child's life.¹¹⁴ Mistreatment was then viewed as a by-product of being insensitive to the special needs of a child. As a consequence, children were treated as little adults, which is supported by the fact that age seven was designated as the 'age of reason' and the age at which children were confirmed by the Catholic Church.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² A. Wilson, 'The Infancy of the History of Childhood: An Appraisal of Philippe Ariès', *History and Theory* 19 (1980), pp. 132-153, p. 139.

¹¹³ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 10. Dekker cites Jan Hendrik van der Berg as the first scholar to have written about childhood as a modern construction. His book, *The Changing Nature of Man* (1956), is written from the perspective of a psychiatrist rather than a historian.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 11.

Portraiture was used to support this thesis as well in *Centuries of Childhood*. It was postulated that children were not often featured in paintings and that when they were included, they were not painted to look like children i.e. they did not have a ‘child-like’ quality and were ‘adult-like’ in terms of dress, musculature, and facial expression.¹¹⁵ In works such as Philippe de Champaigne’s (1602-1674) painting of the children of the Habert family, the eldest child, who is only ten years old, is dressed like a little man and imitating the world of men that he will soon enter (fig. 140).¹¹⁶ Summing up his theory in the text, Ariès stated that ‘...the concept of the family was unknown in the Middle Ages,...it originated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and...it reached its full expression in the seventeenth century.’¹¹⁷

This book exerted a great influence on British and American social historians at the time. Though its theories were criticised, a number of subsequent scholars, including Edward Shorter, author of *The Making of the Modern Family* (1977), and Lawrence Stone, who wrote *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (1977), followed in formulating a dark image of childhood in the past.¹¹⁸ As a reaction against this view, the so-called ‘white legend’ was developed.

The ‘white legend’ school supports the belief that parental affection and concern has always existed and should not be questioned in spite of the harsh circumstances of the past. These scholars also refute the idea that childhood was not recognised as a separate social construct among families between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. Recent scholars that support this side of the debate are Steven Ozment, Katherine Lynch, Linda Pollock, and Alan MacFarlane.¹¹⁹ Among these, Ozment has

¹¹⁵ P. Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, (New York, 1962).

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 50.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 353.

¹¹⁸ Roberts, *Through the Keyhole*, p. 15.

¹¹⁹ See: S. E. Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, 1983), S. E. Ozment, *Ancestors: The Loving Family in Old Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), K. A. Lynch, *Individuals*,

probably been the most outspoken and clearly set in his views of the early modern family. For example, the title of his most recent book is *Ancestors: The Loving Family in Old Europe* (2001). The use of the word 'loving' in the title is a signal intended to make a statement about Ozment's views from the start. These scholars disapprove of the 'black legend' because much of the research done by Ariès and others in the 1960s and 1970s is based on the fact that there is scanty evidence of the 'existence' of the family from the Middle Ages and earlier. Ozment and others sharing his views argue that there is generally limited documentation from those time periods as the means for documentation did not begin to appear until more recently in history, and it is irresponsible to interpret the records in that particular way.

Since the period of backlash against Ariès, views of child and family history have been tempered. Social historians such as Rudolf Dekker have looked at the context in which egodocuments were written in order to interpret better the prevailing attitude towards children. Dekker finds examples of emotional indifference in regard to child illness and death equally alongside illustrations of obvious grief and fondness.¹²⁰ Those composing diaries and family chronicles in the seventeenth century were subject to certain social and belief structures that restricted the expression of excessive emotion.¹²¹ Existing Protestant attitudes dictated steadfastness and restraint in the face of death.¹²² For Dutch Protestants, it was inappropriate to make an emphatic display of grief, or even to wear mourning clothes or decorate a corpse with flowers.¹²³ Such behaviours were associated with the Catholic faith. It was deemed 'unchristian-like'

Families, and Communities in Europe, 1200-1800, the Urban Foundations of Western Society. (Cambridge, 2003), Pollock, *Forgotten Children*, A. MacFarlane, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction 1300-1840* (New York, 1986).

¹²⁰ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 127-136.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 133

¹²² Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, p. 518.

¹²³ E. de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw: Huwelijk en Gezin in de Nederlandse Kunst van de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Haarlem, 1986), p. 34.

that believers should resist the will of God and their comfort should come from the fact that those who died young were among God's chosen.¹²⁴ Neo-stoic philosophy further played a role in directing emotional expression in the early Modern Netherlands. The neo-stoics encouraged an acceptance of personal fate and a lack of sadness in the face of the loss of loved ones.¹²⁵

While the restrained Calvinist attitudes toward death and mourning were widespread and established in the documentation, it seems that the burden of religion may have caused emotions to be released in a more abstract or artistic way. Many scholars, including de Jongh, Bedaux, Schama, and Dekker acknowledge the visual and poetic evidence, while still recounting Calvinist attitudes as though they were the written thoughts and feelings of the Dutch populace.¹²⁶ Though it is important to remember that emotion is culturally dictated, I depart from these scholars in their ambivalent stances on the place of 'emotion' and 'affection' in the context of bereavement. It is my feeling that the evidence before us, the paintings, poems, and emotional diary entries, are equal in the historical record. As we will see, grief-stricken parents and family members who wrote about the deceased or had them memorialised in paint, were mourning in their own way.

The illnesses and deaths of children played a part in defining the lives of early modern diarists and thus such events are usually described, whether in passing or in more detail. Hermanus Verbeeck, in his 'Memoriaal' journal described the illness of his son Gerbrandus:

¹²⁴ J. B. Bedaux, 'Introduction' in J. B. Bedaux and R.E.O. Ekkart (eds.), *Pride and Joy: Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500-1700* exh. cat. (Ghent, 2000), pp. 11-31, p. 24, quoted from *Ordeel des Synodi Nationalis der Gereformeerde kercken van de Vereenichde Nederlanden, gehouden binnen Dordrecht in den iare 1618 ende 1619* (Dordrecht, 1619), Chap. 1, Article 17. The Synod of Dordrecht proclaimed that 'God-fearing parents ought not, therefore, to doubt the election and salvation of their children, whom God has taken from this life in their infancy.'

¹²⁵ F. Scholten, 'Good Widows and the Sleeping dead: Rombout Verhulst and the Tombs for the Dutch Aristocracy', *Simiolus* 24 (1996), pp. 329-349, p. 340.

¹²⁶ See: de Jongh, 'Bloemen in de knop gebroken'; Bedaux, 'Introduction'; Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, Chap. 7; Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, Chap. 14.

My sweet Gerbrandus who brings great joy
 with passion and delight, now in decline,
 has become painfully weakened
 by a fever; my wife
 nurses him night and day,
 and we are in distress.¹²⁷

Gerbrandus eventually died of malnourishment and Verbeeck wrote an epitaph for his deceased son on this occasion:

Death that breaks the body, alas
 in which friendship and reason were held.
 where beauty was not lacking
 his soul rest in peace, but we mourn.¹²⁸

The couple gave their next child the name 'Gerbrandus' as well, which can be viewed as a way to commemorate the deceased child and acknowledging him as a continued part of the family.¹²⁹ Though Verbeeck spoke many times in his journal of his concern for his children and meticulously recorded their births and child, there is one instance where he does not even mention the name of a child who had passed away. Dekker theorises that parents are neither categorically indifferent nor overly emotional and that their sentiments are expressed within a complex web of socially constructed emotion. Given the distress over the death of Gerbrandus, are we to believe that they were not bereaved over another deceased child? There could be many explanations for such an omission.

Dirck Jansz. chose to trust in God's will in a diary entry composed in 1622. In writing about his third child, who died of fever at ten weeks and two days, weighing twelve pounds, Jansz said that, 'It was a comfort that the child relieved of its struggles and died as if it had fallen asleep. Oh Lord, grant us, Dirck Jansz. and Jeck

¹²⁷ Dekker, *Childhood, Memory and Autobiography*, p. 35.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 34

Tyommesdochter, such a blessed hour of death as well.’¹³⁰ A further journal entry reads: ‘On 29 November 1647, our little son Joost, 3 years less 7 days old departed this vale of tears, after a short illness accompanied by a raging fever...although most of the pox that covered his skin were dried up, the fever was unable to burn itself out.’¹³¹

One of the most touching expressions of parental grief comes from the funerary poems that the celebrated poet Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679) wrote for his children. The more famous of these was dedicated to Vondel’s one-year old son who died in 1632. The poem is entitled ‘Kinder-lyck’, which is a play on the word for either ‘childish’ or ‘child corpse.’ In the poem, Vondel speaks in the voice of his son, Constantijn, who refers to the crying and anguish of his grieving mother:

Mother, says he, why do you weep?
Why do you keen over my corpse?
Above I live, above I float,
A little angel from the Kingdom of Heaven.¹³²

Vondel’s second poem, written the following year in 1633, was for his eight year-old daughter. The poignant work, titled ‘Uitvaert van mijn dochterken’ (Funeral of my Little Daughter) is a rather realistic tribute to his daughter in which he remembers her laughing, skipping, and playing in the street or with her dolls. The final verses end with Vondel’s daughter being laid to rest, crowned with a wreath of green and gold leaves.¹³³ The varied expressions of the sorrow that parents felt at the loss of children in written documents may also help to interpret the representation of deceased children in family portraits.

In a number of family portraits from the seventeenth century, deceased children are portrayed as being part of the family unit, though often as putti in the sky floating

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 40.

¹³¹ S. Marshall, *The Dutch Gentry, 1500-1650: Family, Faith and Fortune* (London, 1987), p. 72

¹³² J. van den Vondel, *De Werken van Vondel Deel 3. 1627-1640*, eds., J.F.M Sterck, et. al. (Amsterdam, 1929), p. 388. ‘Moeder, zeit hy, waarom schreit ghy?/Waarom greit ghy, op mijn lijck?/Boven leef ick, boven zweef ick,/Engeltje van ‘t hemelrijk.’ Translation mine.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 397. ‘De groene en goude lover?/ Die staatsie gaat haast over.’

above the heads of the other family members, such as in Jan Mijdens' portrait of Willem van den Kerckhoven and his family (fig. 14). Such paintings posed a paradox in seventeenth-century Dutch society because putti and other angelic figures were typically associated with Catholic imagery.¹³⁴ Though the Synod of Dordrecht had proclaimed that deceased children of believers were among the elect, it seems contrary to represent this theological concept because of Protestant disapproval of divine icons and images. Despite this, research shows that Protestant patrons were the most likely to ask for this feature in their portraits.¹³⁵ Another explanation may be that portraying deceased children as angels was rooted in classical tradition, and thus less subject to the tenets of the reformed church.¹³⁶ I contend that the inclusion of deceased children and family members were communications of deeply felt grief in visual form.

Jan Mijdens' portrait of 1652 shows the Hague-based jurist Willem van den Kerckhoven (1607-1680), his wife Rijburgh Sebastiansdr de Jonge (1609-1679), and their fifteen children, nine of whom were living at the time the portrait was painted. Van den Kerckhoven held various high functions in the Republic. From 1639 on he served as a justice at the Court of Holland and was also a member of the *Ridderschap*. In 1652, the year in which the portrait was created, he became councilor to Amalia van Solms and Mary Stuart.¹³⁷ Van den Kerckhoven's growing success and wealth may have been the impetus to have the portrait commissioned.¹³⁸ He owned two homes on the north side of the Westeinde in The Hague, incidentally very close to Mijdens, who lived on the opposite side of the street.¹³⁹ Aside from this attempt to solidify the high

¹³⁴ Bedaux, 'Funeraire kinderportretten', p. 94.

¹³⁵ Bedaux, 'Introduction', p. 24.

¹³⁶ Bedaux, 'Funeraire kinderportretten', p. 97.

¹³⁷ A. N. Bauer, *Jan Mijdens (1613/14-1670): Leben Und Werk* (Petersberg, 2006), p. 252.

¹³⁸ Ibid. In 1654, Willem's taxable assets were 40,000 guilders, in 1669 they were 60,000 guilders and in 1674 his assets amounted to 138,000 guilders.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

station he had reached in Dutch society, the family portrait simultaneously functions as a memorial.

Van den Kerckhoven and his wife are seated at the base of a tree, central to the painting's composition. On the left side of the canvas, they are surrounded by seven of their children and to the right of the space, three more of their children are present. Many of the flowers, plants, and objects held by the figures in the portrait symbolise virtues relating to marriage such as steadfastness, loyalty, and chastity.¹⁴⁰ Floating above the family group are five angels, one of whom holds a laurel wreath. The angels represent five of the couple's children who died at a young age: Jacob, Willem, Cornelia, Debora and Cornelis.¹⁴¹ The inclusion of these deceased children in the portrait meant that they were counted among the members of the family.¹⁴² Though they are differentiated in terms of physical space and costume, their presence in the portrait means that they are crucial to the makeup and identity of the family. Remembering these children is part of this family's history and they are just as significant as any of the living members. Their presence is also a means for the family to deal with its grief over the loss of the children.

The portrait itself was somewhat of a living document of the family. The youngest child, Pellegom, who rests on the knee of his father, was born after the painting was completed. Pellegom wears leading reins on his dress, which are decorated with pink bows, and on these we find the date '1655', when he was added to the portrait.¹⁴³ The frame, thought to be original, displays the coats of arms of both the van den Kerckhoven and de Jonge families.

¹⁴⁰ For a detailed explanation of the iconography see: De Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, pp. 231-235.

¹⁴¹ W. M. Schaller, *Children Borne Aloft: Nicolaes Maes Ganymede Portraiture and the Context of Death and Mourning in the Seventeenth-Century Netherlands*, (Ohio State University Ph.D. thesis, 2001), p. 67.

¹⁴² Bedaux, 'Introduction', p. 24.

¹⁴³ De Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, p. 231.

Jan Mijtens' family portraits were generally executed in a small format, but this painting is the largest of this type that he ever produced.¹⁴⁴ Mijtens was born in The Hague in 1613 or 1614. He most likely trained with his uncle Isaac Mijtens and then later with his uncle Daniel Mijtens, who was a well-known painter. In 1639, he became a member of the Hague painters' guild, of which he then became governor in 1656. Mijtens primarily worked as a portrait painter in The Hague. His patrons included prominent citizens, members of the nobility, and high-placed government officers, as well as members of the stadtholder's circle. Mijtens worked in an elegant and colourful international style that was reminiscent of the spirit of Anthony van Dyck, though he was not a direct follower of the Flemish master. His oeuvre contains an extensive number of portraits, beginning in 1638, the year before he entered the painters' guild and ending in 1668, just two years before his death. His work can be divided into two main groups: life-size three-quarter and half-length portraits of individuals (figs. 141, 142), and family groups that were generally painted on a smaller scale.

Mijtens was one of the few specialists in the field of family portraiture. From the late 1630s into the second half of the seventeenth century he produced a large number of family portraits in a style that was influenced by various international developments.¹⁴⁵ In the late 1630s, Mijtens expanded on the theme of the family portrait group and developed a personal language for these types of portraits.¹⁴⁶ He had created a schema for group portraits in which he placed families in a landscape, with the parents in the center and the children surrounding them. The relationships between family members were demonstrated by their controlled and subtle gestures. Mijtens often portrayed deceased children of the families he painted by representing them as

¹⁴⁴ Q. Buvelot and R. E. O. Ekkart (eds.), *Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals*, exh. cat. (London, 2007), p. 164.

¹⁴⁵ F. K. Laarmann, *Families in Beeld: De Ontwikkeling Van Het Noord-Nederlandse Familieportret in De Eerste Helft Van De Zeventiende Eeuw* (Hilversum, 2002), p. 15.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

putti in the sky, such as in the portrait of the family of Willem van den Kerckhoven as well as in his portrait of the Van der Graeff family from 1654 (fig. 143).

The painting depicts Pieter van der Graeff, his wife Sophia van der Hoogse with their daughters Machtild, who holds a basket of flowers, and Cornelia, who is shown with a nautilus shell. A third daughter, Petronella, hovers in clouds above. She is depicted as an angel because she is deceased. Petronella holds a laurel wreath towards the head of her father, indicating that he himself had died before the painting was even completed.¹⁴⁷

In a number of works, Mijtens combined living and deceased persons in the same composition. This is the case with his portrait of an unknown family in a landscape in the National Gallery of Ireland (fig. 144). The family was most likely members of the nobility or haute-bourgeoisie of The Hague. On the right hand side of the portrait, a man sits with a woman who is probably his second wife.¹⁴⁸ Between the two, a young woman, who may be that man's daughter from his first marriage, places a bunch of grapes onto a bowl of fruit, which is held by a young girl, who may be the child of the present couple.¹⁴⁹ The use of fruit in family portraits typically refers to the fertility of a marriage.¹⁵⁰ A second group of figures is placed at the left of the outdoor scene and slightly behind the other group in terms of their positioning in the space. Connecting the two groups is the gesture of the father, who indicates the two other figures with a rolled-up piece of paper. As the furled piece of paper was a known sign of transience at the time, it can only be assumed that the two individuals must be

¹⁴⁷ G. Andrews, et. al., *Birmingham Museum of Art: Guide to the Collection* (London, 2010), p. 169.

¹⁴⁸ H. Potterton, *Dutch Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland: A Complete Catalogue* (Dublin, 1986), p. 101.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ See: de Jongh, 'Grape Symbolism in Paintings'; Bedaux, 'Fruit and Fertility Symbolism in Netherlandish Portraiture'.

deceased.¹⁵¹ The man to the far left wearing a Japanese robe is possibly the deceased father of the central male figure, while the young boy beside him is probably a son who died young. The presence of these two individuals in the same space as though they were alive is a remarkable compositional choice. There was a modest visual tradition for these types of images and they mostly tend to be quite rare and unusual. Their rarity may be due to the fact that depicting deceased persons in a portrait disrupted the naturalism of representation as well as the fundamental idea that portraiture is ‘a bulwark against absence.’¹⁵²

The tradition of family portraits that include deceased members of the family was carried on by Nicolaes Maes (1634-1693) who practiced portrait painting slightly later than Mijtens. Maes, who was born in Dordrecht and initially learned to draw from Arnold Houbraken, eventually left his native town to train in painting with Rembrandt in Amsterdam. Though he was also known for his history and genre paintings, Maes was renowned for his portraits. He was even better known for his individual portraits (fig. 145) than his group portraits, but a number of these survive.¹⁵³ After his training in Amsterdam, Maes returned to his native Dordrecht and served a wide clientele of Dordrecht’s elite. As this was the beginning of his career, he painted many family portraits and groups of children in order to introduce and make a name for himself. Later on, and especially after his move to Amsterdam in 1673, he began to offer a standard type of individual portrait to clients. By standardizing his portraits and because of the fact that there was only one figure, this type of portrait was more

¹⁵¹ J. Bruyn, ‘Over het 16de en 17de-eeuwse portret in de Nederlanden als *momento mori*’ *Oud Holland* (1991), pp. 244-261, p. 261. The symbol of a rolled up piece of paper was used in still life, portraiture, and tomb sculpture as a ‘*momento mori*’.

¹⁵² K. Retford, ‘A Death in the Family: Posthumous Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England’, *Art History* 33 (2010), pp. 74-97, p. 75.

¹⁵³ Laarmann, *Families in Beeld*, p. 8.

economical for Maes.¹⁵⁴ He could produce this type of portrait more quickly than group portraits, and this is why he is ultimately noted for his individual portraits.

One of these group portraits is of the successful Dordrecht sea captain and merchant Job Jansse Cuijter and his family (fig. 15).¹⁵⁵ Cuijter is shown pointing at a ship anchored in the bay, possibly belonging to him, which refers to his profession and the family's livelihood.¹⁵⁶ He is central to the group along with his second wife, Dingetje Ariens.¹⁵⁷ This blended family consists of the two children that Cuijter had with his first wife, Willemeintje Otten; Cornelis stands at the far left with a nautical map and daughter, Treintje, sits at the far right.¹⁵⁸ The four children of the couple are placed closer to their parents: from left, Johannes, who stands with a garland of fruit over his shoulders, the baby, Leender, asleep in the cradle, Pieter who clutches his mother's shawl, and an unidentified child sitting next to Treintje. In the black clouds in the sky above the family group, are putti who represent children that the couple lost at infancy. Their first son, Adriaen, is likely one of the infants represented. A number of angels are represented, though all may not symbolise deceased children. When more angels are depicted than deceased children, this is because it was believed that God sent angels to Earth to accompany babies to heaven.¹⁵⁹

Maes began painting in a more international Flemish style in his later portraits, which is evident in his painting of the family of Francois van den Brandelaer (fig.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ D. P. Weller, *Seventeenth-Century Dutch and Flemish Paintings* (Raleigh, 2009), p. 122. This portrait has a fascinating history in that it served as partial payment for a house that Nicolaes Maes bought from Jon Jansse Cuijter. Maes agreed in a contract on 29 March 1658 to paint one composition of Cuijter, his wife, his children, including those who had died and any future children.

¹⁵⁶ A. Staring, 'Vier familiegroepen van Nicolaes Maes' *Oud Holland* 80-81 (1965-1966), pp. 169-180, p. 179.

¹⁵⁷ Weller, *Seventeenth-Century Dutch and Flemish Paintings*, p. 122. The couple was married on 1 July 1646.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Bedaux, 'Funeraire kinderportretten', p. 97.

146).¹⁶⁰ He has zoomed in more on the figures than in his earlier portrait of the Cuijter family. In the portrait, Francois van den Brandelaer (1623-1676) hands an orange blossom, a symbol of conjugal love, to his wife Margaretha Crillaerts (1625-1672).¹⁶¹ Francois was a patrician and captain of a civic guard company of Dordrecht. Just as in the portrait of the Cuijter family, Maes included elements referring to the life and social station of the family. In the background, Maes placed the 'Den Emer' house, close to Breda, which the family had inherited in 1665.¹⁶² They are dressed in more elegant and refined costume, inspired by Van Dyckian portraiture, than is found in Maes' earlier portraits. The couple is represented with three of their living children: Johan, Maria, and Margaretha. The couple lost two children at birth and they are represented as putti in the clouds above the head of their mother.

Conclusion

Memory and mourning seem to have been great motivators for the production of art in the seventeenth-century. Families produced albums and commissioned portraits in order to remember details of their family lives as well as to process grief and loss. Jan Sieuwertsz. Kolm's family album, which can be seen against a trend for autobiographical writing, demonstrates that taking account of the family was a significant aspect in the construction of identity. Gesina ter Borch's *Family Scrapbook* too was a vehicle for constructing her artistic identity, though at the same time it was a tool in the grief process over the loss of her brother; a way of memorialising and immortalising him. I also looked at the context of death and loss by examining several

¹⁶⁰ F. Elsig, *L'art et ses marchés: la peinture flamande et hollandaise (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles) au Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève* (Paris, 2009), p. 79. The painting was originally attributed to Bartholomeus van der Helst. The dating of the painting can be situated somewhere between the birth of Francois van den Brandelaer's daughter Margaretha in 1669 and the death of his wife Margaretha in 1672.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 77-79. An inscription was uncovered on the painting identifying the man as Francois van den Brandelaer. Originally, A. Staring had proposed that it was his brother Jacob.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 79. Den Emer was destroyed around 1850.

family portraits with deceased family members. This was another approach for families to process their feelings of bereavement and capture a picture of their family for eternity.

Chapter 5

‘Fountain and Origin of the Republic’: Idealising the Dutch Family

In a richly hued and selectively ornamented interior, a soberly, though handsomely attired family has taken the stage (fig. 147). This portrait of an unknown family, in the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, was most likely painted by an artist in the circle of Pieter de Hooch in Delft around the middle of the seventeenth century.¹ With a domestic interior as a background, a couple is portrayed with their three children, a girl, the eldest, at the far left, a young boy at the far right, and a baby in a high chair. The father takes his place as head of the family, standing confidently with one arm akimbo and the other hand placed on the back of his wife’s chair. The mother, seated on a chair and gazing up at her husband, has a copy of author and moralist Jacob Cats’ domestic advice manual *Houwelyck* (Marriage), published in 1625, on her lap.² Ultimately, the goal of the portrait is to present the mother and her family within the scope of the virtues and morals described in *Houwelyck*. This text was a moralising guide to marriage that was divided into the six stages of a woman’s life: young girl (Maagd), marriageable girl (Vrijster), bride (Bruyt), wife (Vrouwe), mother (Moeder), and widow (Weduwe). Appropriately, the text is open to the chapter entitled ‘Vrouwe’ (Wife). Many family portraits in the seventeenth century were moulded on the ideals and virtues espoused in moral treatises such as those written by Cats as well as others.

¹ R. E. O. Ekkart, *Old Masters’ Gallery Catalogues Szépművészeti Múzeum Budapest Volume 1: Dutch and Flemish Portraits 1600-1800* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 107-109. The painting was formerly attributed to the circle of Thomas de Keyser, but Ekkart reattributed the painting to the circle of de Hooch in 2011 with the publication of the catalogue of Dutch and Flemish portraits in the collection of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts. Ekkart argues that the painting has nothing to do with de Keyser and is clearly related to the Delft school of the third quarter of the seventeenth century. Though it is difficult to pinpoint the artist who executed the work, the slanted floor and perspectival black and white tiles resemble paintings by de Hooch and Hendrick van der Burch. Ekkart notes that when the painting was restored in 1996-1997, several letters were revealed on the front of the drawer at the bottom of the baby chair. Monograms reading ‘AD’, or ‘AO’ and ‘VR’, which could have been part of a larger inscription, are impossible to link to any artist.

² J. Cats, *Huwelyck*, eds., A. A. Sneller and B. Thijs (Amsterdam, 1993).

Just as in this portrait (fig. 147), many families defined themselves by the morals and virtues expressed in the domestic advice manuals and moralistic writings that were woven into the fabric of Dutch life and culture. Though we cannot always know the ways in which people behaved in their day-to-day life, we can get a sense of the kind of standards to which they held their family through their self-images. In the first section, I will examine a number of portraits that depict the sitters in traditional roles in order to explore how families were expected to instruct their children morally, socially and academically. I will primarily be dealing with portraits of reformed families and will refer to Protestant ideas on child rearing.

Within this culture, how moralistic should we consider these portraits? How accurately did they reflect the writings of those concerned with proper conduct and virtuous living? How realistic were the homes and families represented? In the second part of the chapter, I will explore the topsy-turvy households of Jan Steen (1626/27-1679). Steen managed to turn the idealised and rather unrealistic-looking homes of so many family portraits into farce, pointing up the highly constructed, illusory nature of such images and thus the family's identification with such high, moral standards. In the third section, I look at the remarkable practice of the commissioning of 'portrait historiés' (historiated portraits) by families. As we will see, the narrative was frequently representative of an ideal family life and familial virtues, however, in the examples I examine, the sitters are acutely aware of the roles that they play. I look at a number of portraits that do not, in fact, idealise the family. Instead, they throw light on the obvious fiction and fantasy involved in such portraits. We have seen in the previous three chapters how ideology worked closer to home, in the struggle of constructing an identity in a turbulent, changing Dutch society. In this chapter, I examine the situation more abstractly, in terms of the prevailing attitudes towards family during the period,

and how certain artists and patrons responded to the pressures of the idyllic Dutch family, the ‘fountain and origin’ of the Dutch Republic.³

The unknown family in the Budapest portrait models the type of household that would have been Jacob Cats’ target audience, namely the regent classes. Cats, who was one of the most preeminent figures in seventeenth-century Holland, wore many different hats in public life. He was known domestically as well as he was internationally, having been knighted by King Charles I. From 1629 to 1631 and again from 1636 to 1651 he was Grand Pensionary (*Raadpensionaris*) of Holland, a position that was arguably equal to the power held by the Stadtholder of the United Provinces, due to Holland’s economic strength. In addition, he was a poet and humourist, but is probably best remembered for his extremely popular emblem books. In 1618, at the age of forty, Cats produced two books of love emblems—*Proteus Ofte Minne-beelden Verandert In Sinne-Beelden* (Proteus or Love Emblems Transformed into Moral Emblems) and *Maechden-plicht* (Rules for Girls).⁴ Both books became successful as love emblems and were extremely fashionable at the time, in the wake of publications by Daniel Heinsius (see Chapter 3), Otto Vaenius, and P.C. Hooft.⁵ Cats was concerned with instructing young readers about love and gave them a guide to morality and behaviour. He continued to develop his thoughts on love and marriage in later publications, the most important of which was *Houwelyck*.

Houwelyck was a life-long guide to marriage, family life, and widowhood, and, as such, was specifically directed to women. Each stage of a woman’s life was granted

³ J. van Beverwijck, *Van de Wtmentheyst des Vrouwelicken Geslachts* (Dordrecht, 1639), pp. 87-88. Johan van Beverwijck was noted for his strong views on the family, which he considered ‘the fountain and origin of a republic.’

⁴ F. R.E. Blom, ‘Montaigne and Jacob Cats’ in P. J. Smith and K. A.E. Enenkel (eds.), *Montaigne and the Low Countries (1580-1700)* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 187-204, p. 187. Another possible translation of *Maechden-plicht* is ‘Duty of Girls.’

⁵ Ibid.

its own chapter and coat of arms, with illustrations rendered by Adriaen van de Venne.⁶ *Houwelyck* was published throughout the century in twenty-one editions aimed at different levels of income.⁷ One of Cats' publishers, Jan Jacobsz. Schipper estimated in the 1650s that 50,000 copies of the text were sold and that for some of his other titles it was half that number or more.⁸ Its popularity is further supported by the fact that Jacob Cats was known popularly as 'Father Cats.' He was viewed as a patriarchal and clerical figure who instructed 'his people' through his works.

The text of *Houwelyck* is not very demanding in an intellectual sense. The language that Cats uses is primarily vernacular and it is written in hexameter verse. Its content is culled from familiar literary sources such as the Bible, and classical and humanist texts, as well as Cats' own personal anecdotes. Much of the book consists of a series of dialogues between young maidens and older or married women where the role of the latter is to instruct and direct the former in moral and virtuous behaviour. Cats' approach was novel in that he addressed the book to females, but it is clear that he wished to reinforce the social order and the system of patriarchy.⁹ The ideal woman that Cats describes is an individual of unquestionable virtue, modesty, evenness of temper and lives life defined by serving her husband, family, and home. According to Cats, youth should be spent in preparation for marriage in that a woman must guard her chastity and avoid the advances of her male peers. Once married, a woman must be obedient to her husband and be aware of her place in the home and the kitchen, doing chores, supervising maids and raising the children. Cats' support of the patriarchy is

⁶ P. C. Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch, 1629-1684*, exh. cat. (London, 1998), p. 68.

⁷ M. Westermann, "'Costly and Curious, full off pleasure and home contentment': Making Home in the Dutch Republic' in M. Westermann (ed.), *Art & Home: Dutch Interior in the Age of Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2001), pp. 15-81, p. 55.

⁸ Blom, 'Montaigne and Jacob Cats', p. 189, note 3. From J.J. Kloek, "'Burgerdeugd of burgermansdeugd? Het beeld van Jacob Cats als nationaal zedenmeester' in R. Aerts and H. te Velde (eds.), *De stijl van de burger. Over nederlandse burgerlijke cultuur vanaf de middeleeuwen* (Kampen, 1998), p. 103.

⁹ Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch, 1629-1684*, exh. cat., p. 70.

evident when he writes, 'Men should obey the laws and women their husbands.'¹⁰

This emphasis on marriage and family reached a high point in the seventeenth century. There were a great number of domestic conduct books published around the same time as *Houwelyck* and later. Marriage was viewed as 'humankind's most honourable state' and the 'oldest political society.'¹¹ The reason for this increased stress on marriage and family lies in the changes that took place in Dutch society. Stunning transformations in political, social, and religious areas of Dutch society caused individuals to re-evaluate collective identity and highlight the family as the major building block of society.¹² With the distribution of power in the Dutch state in dispute and the rejection of the pope and monasticism, it could at least be agreed that the hierarchy of power in the home was self-evident and that the family should be the primary forum of moral instruction and character development.¹³

It was widely held that the nuclear family could serve as an analogy of the Dutch body politic and its religious institutions.¹⁴ The concept of the family unit guided by a benevolent paterfamilias and nurtured by a motherly figure defined the structure of Dutch government and belief systems.¹⁵ For moralist writers, theologians, and political leaders, the ideal Christian household represented a paradigmatic miniature state and 'kleyne kerck' (little church). Johan van Beverwijck (1594-1647), the Dordrecht physician and prolific writer, cited Cicero in his 1639 treatise *On the Excellence of the Female Sex* (*Van de wtneementheyt des vrouwelicken geslachts*) when he stated that 'The

¹⁰ J. Cats, *Alle de werken. Deel 1*, ed., J. van Vloten (Zwolle 1862), p. 426. 'De man betracht de wet des lants/Het wijf den wille des mans'. English translation by Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch, 1629-1684*, exh. cat., p. 70.

¹¹ W. E. Franits, *Paragons of Virtue: Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 67.

¹² H. P. Chapman, 'Home and the Display of Privacy' in M. Westermann (ed.), *Art & Home: Dutch Interior in the Age of Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2001), pp. 129-152, pp. 132-133.

¹³ Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch, 1629-1684*, exh. cat., p. 68; Westermann, 'Costly and Curious', p. 54.; M. D. Carroll, 'Civic Ideology and its Subversions: Rembrandt's Oath of Claudius Civilis' *Art History* 9:1 (1986), pp. 10-35, p. 25.

¹⁴ Westermann, 'Costly and Curious', p. 54.

¹⁵ Ibid.

first community, is that of marriage itself; thereafter in a family household with children, in which all things are common. That is the first principle of a town and thus the seed of a common state.’¹⁶ In other words, the family forms both the basis and most important model for society. Beverwijck, who had many family portraits commissioned during his life (see Chapter 2), further wrote that the family functioned as the ‘fountain and origin of a republic.’¹⁷ Family could be viewed as the nursery of the young Dutch Republic. Its citizens, who were fostered in the moralistic, ideal family, would then become those who would further cultivate and develop the Republic.

Other moralists, especially those most influenced by the Nadere Reformatie (Further Reformation), including Willem Teellinck (1579-1629) and Petrus Wittenwongel (1609-1662), also emphasised the importance of the family.¹⁸ The Nadere Reformatie, or Dutch Reformed Pietist movement, which began in Zeeland, propagated the belief that reformed people should apply the principles of reformation more stringently to their lives. Teellinck and Wittenwongel encouraged the process of reformation at the level of daily life, starting with the family. The movement lasted from about 1600 to 1750. Wittenwongel’s *Oeconomia Christiana* (*Christian Economy*) (1655, 1661) was one of the most important treatises on child rearing at the time.¹⁹ The Dutch Reformed Pietists were heavily affected by the writings of English Puritans. Wittenwongel, for instance, borrowed much from English clergyman and author William Gouge’s (1575-1653) *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622) in which he wrote

¹⁶ van Beverwijck, *Van de wtneementheyt des vrouwelicken geslachts*, p. 209. ‘De eerste gemeenschap, seyt Cicero, is in ‘t houwelick selve; daer na in de kinderen; dan een huys, ende alles gemeen. Ende dat is ‘t beginsel van een stadt, ende als een zaeyeling van een Gemeene sake.’ English translation by S. Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London, 1987), p. 386.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 87-88.

¹⁸ L. F. Groenendijk, *De Nadere Reformatie van het Gezin: De visie van Petrus Wittenwongel op de christelijke huishouding* (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam Ph.D. thesis, 1984), p. 182.

¹⁹ J. Dekker, L. Groenendijk, and J. Verbeekmoes, ‘Proudly Raising Vulnerable Youngsters: The Scope for Education in the Netherlands’ in J. B. Bedaux and R. E. O. Ekkart, (eds). *Pride and Joy: Children's Portraits in the Netherlands 1500-1700* exh. cat. (Ghent, 2000), pp. 43-60, p. 50.

that, 'Besides, a familie is a little Church, and a little commonwealth, at least a lively representation thereof, whereby triall may be made of such as are fit for any place of authoritie, or of subjection in church or common-wealth.'²⁰ They had further been inspired by Reformation-era treatises asserting that a sense of personal responsibility was expected from Protestant families. In Catholicism, on the other hand, all religious matters were the responsibility of the parish priest.²¹ The Protestant father was accountable to God himself, while the Catholic father was accountable to the hierarchy of the church. The family was considered the site of Christian virtue and the environment that would mold children into model citizens. As a result, Protestant parents were directly responsible for the way in which they raised their children.

Cognitive and Moral Education

As humanist and religious ideals led parents to pay more attention to raising their children, there was a greater emphasis on the intellectual, social, and moral education of children. As we have seen in the previous chapter, education was a highly valued feature of Dutch society and it was vital to Dutch parents that their children be productive, active members of society. The educational aspects of childhood can be divided by gender and age. For wealthy children under the age of ten, it was not unheard of for boys and girls to receive the same education. Many parents wanted their daughters to be just as well educated as their sons, even if their ultimate paths in life would differ (e.g. Constantijn Huygens' education of his daughter Susanna as discussed in Chapter 4). Lower class children were normally educated in the home. Wealthier sons and daughters attended nursery school from the age of three up until the age of six,

²⁰ W. Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties: Eight Treatises* (London, 1622), p. 18.

²¹ P. J.J. van Thiel, 'Poor Parents, Rich Children and Family Saying Grace: two related aspects of the iconography of late sixteenth and seventeenth-century Dutch domestic morality', *Simiolus* 17 (1987), 2/3, pp. 90–149, p. 92.

where they were taught religious catechisms, which were also taught in the home.²²

Children then attended a French school where spelling, reading, writing, mathematics, French language, and catechisms were taught.²³ Often that education was supplemented by a governor or governess, who tutored the children at home, although only wealthy children benefited from this type of education.

After the French school, there was a divergence in the education provided to girls and boys. Some girls attended knitting or sewing schools but most young women were trained at home and were instructed in the proper running of a household from their mothers. Occasionally, young girls were sent to live with single female relatives in order that they could learn from an older woman about running a household, without the responsibilities and distractions in their own home.²⁴ Wealthy parents had the choice of either sending their sons to a secondary school, to an apprenticeship with a craftsman, or to the court to learn chivalry and the art of courtly life after they completed French school.²⁵ The secondary school was normally a Latin School that boys, and occasionally girls, attended for about five or six years, depending on how long it took them to master the Latin language.²⁶ Those in the *burgerij* either trained their sons in their own trade or found them an apprenticeship with a craftsman.

A number of family portraits illustrate the difference in skills and educations as the differing life paths that would be taken by girls and boys. For example, in a portrait of an unknown family by Michiel Nouts, the two groups are divided deliberately by gender (fig. 148)²⁷. On the left side of the portrait, at one side of a table, sits a father

²² B. Roberts, *Through the Keyhole: Dutch Child-Rearing Practices in the 17th and 18th Century: Three Urban Elite Families* (Hilversum, 1998), p. 99.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

²⁵ Dekker, Groenendijk, and Verbeekmoes, 'Proudly Raising Vulnerable Youngsters', p. 50.

²⁶ Roberts, *Through the Keyhole*, pp. 189-191.

²⁷ N. MacLaren, revised by C. Brown, *National Gallery Catalogues, The Dutch School 1600-1900*, vol. 1, (London, 1991), pp. 290-291. The painting had previously been attributed to Johannes Vermeer and Michael Sweerts. The man in the painting was believed to be the same man as in a drawing by Leendert

who interacts with his son. At the right, a mother is shown in the company of her three daughters. The separation emphasises that instructing children in their gendered duties was best done by the example of the father and the mother.²⁸ In this particular portrait, the father is engaged in writing in a book, perhaps noting down the day's activities or the family's accounts. He holds out his hand to his son who appears to be handing him a book. Perhaps he is showing his son how to perform the household duties or is helping him to read a particular text. Either way, it is significant that the son models his own behaviour and activities after those of his father. The mother is engaged in a more abstract act of mothering. She holds her smallest child on her lap and wraps one arm around a young girl standing at her side. This girl is pictured with a doll, which can work as foreshadowing of her own future role as a mother. Both parents model the ideal roles of father and mother to their children who watch and learn with eagerness.

Jacob Cats emphasised that gender-based attitudes were revealed in childhood, writing in the introductory poem 'Kinder-spel' in *Houwelyck*:

See how human nature
Is revealed in early youth!
The little girl plays with dolls
The little boy shows more courage;
The little girl rocks the cradle,
The little boy beats the drum;
The little girl plays with small objects
that are useful in the kitchen;
The little boy plays with a harmless lance
Like rough men do.²⁹

van der Cooghen in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Print Room, which was identified as the painter Vincent Laurensz. Van der Vinne. However, the resemblance to the man in the Berlin drawing is slight. The painting was also cut into two pieces down the middle. It was reconstructed and strips were added to the top and bottom of the right side of the painting because that side had been cut down.

²⁸ Franits, *Paragons of Virtue*, p. 135.

²⁹ Jacob Cats, *Alle de Wercken Deel I*, p. 334. 'Siet hoe de mensch zijn eygen aert/ Oock in de kintsheyt openbaert/ Het meysje spelt met poppe-goet./ Het knechtje toont een hooger moet./ Het meysje doet de wiege gaen./ Het knechtje laet den trammel slain./ Het meysje speelt met kleyn beslag/ Dat tot de keucken dienen magh./ Het knechtje met een swacke lans,/ Naer wijse van de rouwe mans. English translation by Franits, *Paragons of Virtue*, p. 134.

To exemplify his beliefs about gender roles and duties in visual form, Cats included an illustration in the chapter entitled ‘Moeder’ in *Houwelyck* (fig. 149). The image, much like the family in the Nouts portrait, shows a father teaching his sons to write while a mother suckles an infant and her daughters make lace and play with a doll. Each sex had their particular obligations to fulfill and it was up to the parents to be role models. This family perfectly conforms to the gender roles recommended by Cats and the roles that parents should play in shaping the education of their children. In the second section of this chapter, we will see how Jan Steen mocked this vision of the ideal family. His ‘dissolute households’ show mothers sleeping at the kitchen table (rather than demonstrating household tasks) and fathers giving pipes to their sons (rather than helping them to read). Revealing the exact opposite of the ideal behaviours validates just how pervasive the pressure was to bring children up properly.

In their later teenage years, sons were encouraged to continue their education by attending university and pursuing a professional degree, an objective that gradually gained popularity during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Cornelis Backer Willemsz. (1693-1775), for instance, studied law at Leiden University (see Chapter 2). During the university years, travel became a significant part of the learning experience and those who could afford it took a trip, usually to France, called the *kleine tour*, meaning ‘small’ tour.³⁰ Gerard ter Borch the Elder (1583-1662) embarked on such a trip to Italy in order to study drawing and painting and to view the great masterpieces of Western art (see Chapter 4). Families could also send their sons to apprentice with one of the many guilds or workshops located in the urban centres of the Netherlands. There, these boys would learn a valuable trade that would allow them to eventually open their own workshop and be financially independent.

³⁰ Roberts, *Through the Keyhole*, p. 130.

The moral upbringing of children was considered to be the most imperative part of child rearing because it began from the child's birth. While education was highly valued, morality was deemed a necessary and vital part of life. Children were raised with moral Christian virtues in the hopes that these qualities would carry on into their adult years. They would in turn become pious and virtuous adults who would eventually raise their own families. Although the religious demographics of Holland were quite diverse during this time, much of the northern Netherlands practiced Protestantism.³¹ Dutch lives were not entirely ruled by the church, and therefore, civic values became an important part of the upbringing as well. Simon Schama, in *The Embarrassment of Riches* (1987), notes that children were the 'hope of the fatherland' and thus civic responsibility was necessary and expected of the Republic's citizens.³² Dutch parents taught their children the values of politeness and frugality, qualities that have been attributed to the Dutch people throughout history. Children were punished for immoral and impolite behaviour, which has contributed to the belief that Dutch parents in the past were harsh (see Chapter 4). Punishment was viewed, however, as a necessary way to instil moral values in children.³³ In *Houwelyck*, Jacob Cats writes that 'If the young lack virtue/ Blame not the children/ But punish instead the father/ For failing to teach them better.'³⁴ Parents were especially concerned with deviant behaviour, specifically when it came to alcohol, premarital sex, and idleness.

Symbolizing a harmonious family was an ideal that was particularly significant in family portraits, as in Hendrick Sorgh's portrait of Jacob Bierens and his family (fig. 150). In the painting, Bierens and his youngest son Anthony enter the kitchen of his

³¹ P. J. J. van Thiel, "Catholic Elements in seventeenth-century paintings, apropos of a children's portrait by Thomas de Keyser," *Simiolus* 20 (1990-91), pp. 39-62, p. 49.

³² Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, pp. 491-496.

³³ Roberts, *Through the Keyhole*, p. 168.

³⁴ Jacob Cats, *Alle de werken. Deel I*, p. 758. 'Indien de jonckheyt niet en deugt,/En geef de schult niet aen de jeugt,/De vader selfs verdient de straf/Die haer geen beter les en gaf.' English translation by Dekker, Groenendijk, and Verbeekmoes, 'Proudly Raising Vulnerable Youngsters', p. 50.

home, clearly having just returned from the market. They come upon a scene of domestic activity—his wife Cornelia and daughter, also Cornelia, prepare food while his son Abraham plays the viola.³⁵ A maid in the background is shown cleaning pots. Though there are foodstuffs and kitchenware on the floor, the interior of the family's home is shown to be relatively spare, with the only luxury items being the three large Jan van Goyen-esque landscapes on the background wall.³⁶ Bierens, who was forty years old when the portrait was painted, was a merchant in Amsterdam dealing in fine leathers.³⁷ The family belonged to the Mennonite faith, which explains both the humbleness of their interior and the simplicity of their dress.³⁸ Bierens prominently bears a fish in the painting and even though he was not involved in the fishing industry, the family lived close to the fish market in Amsterdam, on the other side of the Dam.³⁹ The fish may also be seen as a general allusion to Bierens' role as the family's breadwinner. Despite the reference to their place of residence, the fish most likely is a symbol of sobriety, coming from Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (Dutch edition, 1644).⁴⁰ Sobriety was a prized and oft-discussed virtue, one that would have been especially important for parents to demonstrate to their children. Another seemingly out of place element in the composition is the viola, played by twelve-year-old Abraham. This

³⁵ L. T. Schneeman, *Hendrick Martensz. Sorgh: A Painter of Rotterdam*, (Pennsylvania State University Ph.D. thesis, 1982), p. 254. Identifications made by Schneeman. The setting of the family portrait in the kitchen is unusual and there are few paintings with a similar setting.

³⁶ Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw: Huwelijk en Gezin in De Nederlandse Kunst van De Zeventiende Eeuw*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 1986), p. 248.

³⁷ Schneeman, *Hendrick Martensz. Sorgh*, p. 254; de Jongh, *Portretten Van Echt En Trouw*, p. 250. De Jongh states that Bierens was already deceased by the time the portrait was painted. According to Schneeman, Bierens died in 1664, at most one year after the portrait was signed and dated 1663 by Sorgh.

³⁸ de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, p. 248.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ C. Ripa, *Iconologia, of uytbeeldingen des verstands*, (Amsterdam, 1644), p. 475. 'SOBRIETA. soberheyt. Een Vrouwe die slechtlick gekleedt is, houdende in de rechter hand een Sleutel, de slincker op de borst, en onder haere voeten salse een Visch hebben...' [Sobriety. A woman who is poorly dressed, holds in the right hand a key, the left on the chest, and under her feet she shall have a fish...].

refers to the harmony amongst the family members, especially when everyone performs their naturally determined roles and duties.⁴¹

Portraying the family in the midst of saying grace before mealtime was an alternate approach to showing the virtuousness and devotion of the early modern Dutch family. Many paintings with this particular theme survive. Jan Steen's genre scene *Prayer Before the Meal* from 1667-1671 depicts a pious, peasant family saying grace before eating their meagre meal (Fig. 151). The gestures and expressions indicate a religious moment, but the work still contains an element of realism in the portrayal of the family's home, garments, and possessions. It can also be presumed that saying a prayer before a meal was a regular act in most families. However, the dog in the foreground of the painting lifts this work out of the realm of realism. The breed of the dog is a French griffon, now extinct, which was a lap dog for upper class women.⁴² This was a rare and expensive animal, and would not normally belong to a lower class family. The juxtaposition was probably meant to show the poor training and moral values associated with the dog in opposition to the humility of the family.⁴³ Jacob Cats makes reference to dogs in *Spiegel van den Ouden en Nieuwne Tyt* (1632), saying, 'Accustom a greyhound to the pot/ A hunting dog becomes a kitchen fool.'⁴⁴ Both Cats and Steen allude to the story of Lycurgus, originally recounted by Plutarch, the second-century Greek essayist and historian who was widely known during this time. According to legend, Lycurgus brought two dogs together and, after placing a pot of meat and a rabbit between them, the well-trained dog chased the rabbit and the lazy dog

⁴¹ Franits, *Paragons of Virtue*, pp. 87-89; M. Hollander, *An Entrance for the Eyes: Space and Meaning in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (London, 2002), p. 181.

⁴² W. E. Franits, 'The Family Saying Grace: a Theme in Dutch Art of the Seventeenth Century,' *Simiolus*, 16 (1986), pp. 36-49, p. 49.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

began to eat from the pot.⁴⁵ The griffon is a moralising aspect of a painting that otherwise shows us a typically pious Dutch family.

Portraitists similarly used the compositional trope of the family at prayer for family portrait commissions. Particularly illuminating is the example of an unknown family saying grace before the meal from the Catharijneconvent, Utrecht (fig. 8). The work shows a family of six gathered around a dinner table laid with a meal. The two young girls to the left of the composition have their hands folded in prayer, indicating that the family is about to undertake a blessing. Behind the family group, a large vine is entering through the window and spreading across the back wall. The vine refers to Psalm 128: 'Thy wife shall be a fruitful vine/ by the sides of thine house:/ thy children like olive plants/ round about thy table.'⁴⁶ The reference to the psalm is not entirely literal as there are no olive plants shown. A number of genre prints from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries underscore the same message, for example the engraving of Claes Jansz. Visscher from 1609 (fig. 152). In both print and painting, the vine is intended to signify the fecundity of the mother. The greater message in the portrait however is about the spiritual upbringing of the children—that the pious example of the parents has succeeded in raising children who have a moral compass, and are virtuous and reverent.⁴⁷

Morality and the education of young children raises the discussion of the characteristics that children are born with in comparison to the qualities that are instilled

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 46.

⁴⁶ H.L.M. Defoer, et. al., *Godelijk geschilderd: honderd meesterwerken van Museum Catharijneconvent* (Zwolle, 2003), pp. 154-155. See also: van Thiel, 'Poor Parents, Rich Children and Family Saying Grace', p. 140; De Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, pp. 295-298; E. de Jongh, 'Grape Symbolism in Paintings of the 16th and 17th Centuries', *Simiolus* 7 (1974), pp. 166-191; J. B. Bedaux, 'Fruit and Fertility Symbolism in Netherlandish Portraiture of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Simiolus* 17: 2/3 (1987), pp. 150-168.

⁴⁷ van Thiel, 'Poor Parents, rich children and Family saying grace', p. 140; De Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, pp. 295-298. Debate exists over the religious persuasion of the unknown family in the portrait. van Thiel insists that they are Calvinist while de Jongh leaves the question open, saying that the family could easily have been Remonstrant, Mennonite, Lutheran, or even Catholic.

through parenting. Nature versus nurture was a debate among Dutch families just as it is in the twenty-first century. Plutarch addressed this subject in ancient times as did Erasmus during the sixteenth century. Jacob Cats, drawing from this long tradition, touches on the debate in *Houwelyck*, writing, ‘Believe it! In delicate minds [i.e. in those of children], nurture can overcome nature.’⁴⁸ In the same text, Cats expanded: ‘A child is like a sheet of white paper/ So take good care of that innocent beast/ For as soon as someone prints evil thereon/ That noble white will be sullied.’⁴⁹ The proper treatment and education of children seems to have been an area of great concern. This is in direct opposition to the theories of Philippe Ariès and Lawrence Stone, who believed that the early modern family took little interest in their children and mistreated them (see Chapter 4). In fact, mistreating one’s children would be ultimately detrimental to the family dynamic because children began apprenticeships and work at a young age. Thus, this would be hurtful to the family economically and, not to mention, emotionally.

The research of Anne McCants, on the situation of orphans and orphanages in early modern Amsterdam, warrants brief attention here because we may learn more about the treatment of all children from those who were responsible for parent-less children. According to McCants, The Dutch viewed orphanages as ‘...the material acknowledgement of God’s blessing on the community at large.’⁵⁰ Orphanages were a significant component in the social order because they had to keep up with the standards and quality of care that was expected throughout Dutch society.⁵¹ At least on the surface, society was concerned about orphans because those with parents were receiving

⁴⁸ J. Cats, *Spiegel vanden ouden ende nieuwen tijdt*, (3 pts., The Hague, 1632). ‘Gelloft het, dat in teere sinnen / d’Op-voeding kan den aert verwinnen.’ English translation by W. E. Franits, *Pieter de Hooch: A Woman Preparing Bread and Butter for a Boy*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles, 2006), p. 40.

⁴⁹ Jacob Cats, *Alle de werken. Deel I*, p. 758. ‘Een kint is als een wit papier,/Dus let op dit onnoosel dier;/Want soo daer yemant quaet in prent,/Soo is date del wit geschent.’ English translation by Dekker, Groenendijk, and Verbeekmoes, ‘Proudly Raising Vulnerable Youngsters’, p. 49.

⁵⁰ A. E. McCants, *Civic Charity in a Golden Age: Orphan Care in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Urbana, 1997), p. 1.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

education and care at a level that had to be duplicated by an institution. Where another relative could not step in, society took on the economic, moral, and physical responsibility of raising these children.

The advice manuals and paintings discussed reflect the moral values and great responsibilities of the family to raise productive, intelligent, upright young citizens of the Dutch Republic. We have no greater proof that these topics were of immense concern to the fledgling Dutch Republic than in the ‘dissolute household’ paintings of Jan Steen. Steen, in noticing the tensions surrounding such issues, raised the question of their truthfulness, not only by turning the righteous Dutch household on its head, but also by including his own self-portraits in the paintings as well as those of members of his family.

Jan Steen’s Household

In the previous section, I explored portraits that relied on the ideals espoused in domestic conduct literature to portray a family as virtuous and moral. Such portraits became especially prevalent in the mid-seventeenth century, as new ideals of domesticity and family emerged. As a response to families being portrayed in such an idealistic light, Jan Steen began painting genre-like images of ‘dissolute households.’ The ‘dissolute household’ was a home turned completely upside-down: the parents were negligent, the children were naughty, and smoking, drinking, and vulgar behaviour was encouraged. Such images seem to walk the line between humour and didacticism. Steen subverted the norms and expectations of the ideal Dutch family in order to reveal the truth; that the idyllic home and family in many portrait images were highly constructed illusions. He used comic fiction in order to offer an alternative mode of addressing the social concern of the identity of the family. Not only did he throw light on this particular issue of identity, he inserted his own self-portrait into many of his

‘dissolute household’ scenes with the purpose of both underlining their falseness and complicating the issue further. In the following section, I discuss Steen, his identity, the function of the paintings, and a number of examples of the ‘dissolute household’ series, in light of the extensive research of H. Perry Chapman and Mariët Westermann.

Before the resurgence of interest in the 1980s and 1990s, Jan Steen had been given limited scholarly attention. Paradoxically, he is considered one of the paradigmatic Dutch artists of the seventeenth century and his images are some of the best known among Dutch citizens. However, as Christopher Brown notes, Steen’s rather varied and eclectic life and oeuvre are the most likely culprits contributing to negligence in scholarship on the artist.⁵² A comprehensive catalogue of the artist’s paintings, comprising some 1,400 works, was not compiled until 1980 by Karel Braun.⁵³ This was followed by a small in-house exhibition of works by Jan Steen from the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1983.⁵⁴ An accompanying catalogue was published in the *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* with an introductory piece by Peter Sutton and an essay on the technical aspects of Steen’s paintings.⁵⁵ It should also be noted that Lyckle de Vries’ informative dissertation on Jan Steen as a ‘kluchtschilder’, or painter of farce, was completed in 1977, but was unfortunately not published as a book.⁵⁶ However, the strides made in more ambitiously examining Steen’s work and connection to comedy and theatre in the 1990s can probably be attributed to him.

The tides started to turn when H. Perry Chapman published a number of articles on Steen in the early 1990s, exploring Steen’s constructed comic persona and his role in

⁵² C. Brown, ‘Review of Jan Steen: Painter and Storyteller by H. Perry Chapman, Wouter Th. Kloek, and Arthur Wheelock’ *Simiolus* 25:1 (1997), pp. 81-84.

⁵³ K. Braun, *Alle tot nu toe bekende schilderijen van Jan Steen* (Rotterdam, 1980). This text is not a monograph. It contains details, short descriptions, and thumbnail size photographs of each painting.

⁵⁴ The exhibition ‘From the Collections: Paintings by Jan Steen’ took place from 15 January–3 July 1983 at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in Philadelphia, PA, USA.

⁵⁵ P. C. Sutton and M. H. Butler, ‘Jan Steen: Comedy and Admonition’, *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 78 (1982-1983), pp. 3-63.

⁵⁶ L. de Vries, *Jan Steen “de kluchtschilder”*, (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen Ph.D. thesis, 1977).

his 'dissolute household' paintings.⁵⁷ Chapman then proposed the idea for an exhibition on Steen to the National Gallery of Art in Washington and guest curated the show along with Arthur Wheelock and Wouter Th. Kloek.⁵⁸ The show 'Jan Steen: Painter and Storyteller' resulted in a diverse and dense catalogue examining Steen from a number of viewpoints.⁵⁹ Mariët Westermann, contributed an essay on Steen to the catalogue and then one year later, published the book *The Amusements of Jan Steen: Comic Painting in the Seventeenth Century* (1997), which focuses on Steen's comic genius against the background of Dutch literary and dramatic tradition.

Jan Steen's images of households are painted so realistically that many early biographers took them as faithful representations of his domestic lifestyle. The main source for contemporary accounts of Steen's life and work was Arnold Houbraken's (1660-1719) *De Groote Schouburgh*.⁶⁰ It was Houbraken who famously declared that Steen's paintings 'are like his way of life and his way of life like his paintings', describing him as a painter/innkeeper who was a drunk and profligate.⁶¹ Because of this early focus on Steen's pictures as a source for his life story, it has been difficult for scholars to pick apart fact from fiction. Though these comments have been dismissed by many as taking the paintings as too literal evidence of Steen's 'real' life, it appears

⁵⁷ H. P. Chapman, 'Jan Steen's Household Revisited' *Simiolus* 20 (1990-1991), pp. 183-196; H. P. Chapman, 'Persona and Myth in Houbraken's Life of Jan Steen', *The Art Bulletin* 75 (1993), pp. 135-150; H. P. Chapman, 'Jan Steen as Family Man: Self-portrayal as an Experiential Mode of Painting' *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 46 (1995), pp. 369-393.

⁵⁸ H. P. Chapman, W. Th. Kloek, and A. Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, exh. cat. (New Haven and London, 1996), p. 7.

⁵⁹ The exhibition 'Jan Steen: Painter and Storyteller' took place at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC from 28 April–18 August 1996 and at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam from 21 September 1996–12 January 1997. The catalogue published alongside the exhibition has been criticised for its lack of a unified vision. See: P. Hecht, 'Review of Jan Steen. Washington and Amsterdam' *The Burlington Magazine* 138: 1125 (1996), pp. 844-846; L. Silver, 'Review of Jan Steen: Painter and Storyteller. By H. Perry Chapman: Wouter Th. Kloek: Arthur K Wheelock' *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 28:2 (1997), pp. 699-700; Brown, 'Review of Jan Steen: Painter and Storyteller', pp. 81-84.

⁶⁰ A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlandtsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam, 1718-1721), Vol. III, pp. 12-26. Jacob Campo Weyerman elaborated on Houbraken's biography in *De levensbeschrijvingen der Nederlandsche konst-schilder en konst-schilderessen* (The Hague and Dordrecht, 1729-1769).

⁶¹ M. Hoyle (trans.), 'Jan Steen from Arnold Houbraken's De groote schouburgh...1721' in H. P. Chapman, W. Th. Kloek, and A. Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, exh. cat. (New Haven and London, 1996), pp. 93-97, p. 93.

that Steen was, in fact, very much in control of the identity he wished to portray to viewers. It seems as well that his 'persona' is one that was recognised by those who purchased his paintings.⁶² His genre scenes tiptoe on the edge between genre and portrait painting, giving a glimpse into his painterly identity and, at the same time subverting his portrayals, especially those that involve the family.

Jan Steen was born into a respectable, modestly prosperous Catholic family in Leiden sometime between November 1626 and November 1627.⁶³ His father owned a brewery and traded in grain. Steen, who attended a Latin school as a child, appears to have been well educated. In 1646, he registered at Leiden University, though he never graduated.⁶⁴ In 1648, Steen became a master at the Leiden guild of St. Luke.⁶⁵ There are no official records of his apprenticeship, but it is likely that he studied with Adriaen van Ostade and his brother Isaack in Haarlem.⁶⁶ He may also have studied or worked with the painters Nicolas Knupfer and Jan van Goyen.⁶⁷ Early biographers claim that Steen was a student of van Goyen because Steen married his daughter, Margriet, in 1649.⁶⁸ Steen resided in The Hague from the 1630s until 1654, and then moved to Delft where his father gave him a brewery to manage.⁶⁹ The brewery eventually ran into financial difficulties while Steen's family was expanding.⁷⁰ In the 1660s, Steen moved the family to Haarlem, where there was a growing art market, and increased his

⁶² Chapman, 'Persona and Myth', p. 135.

⁶³ M. J. Bok, 'The Artist's Life' in H. P. Chapman, W. Th. Kloek, and A. Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, exh. cat. (New Haven and London, 1996), pp. 25-37, p. 26. Bok places his birth between those dates because his parents were married in 1625.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 27. He may have registered at the school in order to be exempted from certain taxes and civic duties.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 28. It is not clear what made Steen become a painter. He may have been exposed to the profession through family connections.

⁶⁶ M. Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen: Comic Painting in the Seventeenth Century* (Zwolle, 1997), p. 48.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 50-54. Jacob Campo Weyerman suggested that Knupfer was a teacher of Steen but this was probably not the case. Knupfer may have been in The Hague at the same time as Steen, where the two had contact.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 52. Steen may have sold paintings in The Hague under an 'assistantship' with van Goyen.

⁶⁹ Bok, 'The Artist's Life', pp. 28-29.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 29-31. By 1660, Steen and his first wife had five or six children.

production of painting.⁷¹ When his father died in 1670, Steen inherited a house in Leiden, where he moved the family immediately. Because of French and English military incidents in 1672, there was a crisis in the art market and Steen applied for a license to sell alcohol in his home.⁷² His wife had died in 1669 and in 1673, Steen remarried to Maria van Egmont with whom he had one child.⁷³ He died in 1679, leaving behind nothing but the house in Leiden.⁷⁴

Though Steen did own a brewery and held a license to sell alcohol from his home, there are no hard records about his alleged personal behaviours and proclivities. By all accounts, due to his tremendous output and positions served in the Leiden painter's guild, he was an intelligent and productive member of society who had a large family to support and fell on some hard financial times. The identity that appears in early biographies of the roguish ne'er do well then appears to be a work of fiction, one developed and managed by Steen himself. Steen formed a comic identity by including his self-portrait in many of his genre scenes.

Despite multiple self-portrayals in genre paintings, Steen offered up only two individual self-portraits during his career (fig. 153 and fig. 154). The meagreness of this output may not be so remarkable, unless if we consider the proliferation of self-portraits during this period, especially by artists such as Rembrandt. Rembrandt specifically took the art of self-portrayal to another level—he is still considered to be one of the most prolific self-portraitists in Western art. Self-portraiture for Rembrandt meant a constant and lifelong exploration of self and investigation of artistic identity.⁷⁵ Among the aims of his self-portraiture seems to have been an attempt to elevate the artist to the level of humanist intellectual. These portraits form a conscious self-examination, and provided

⁷¹ Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, p. 56.

⁷² Ibid., p. 58.

⁷³ Bok, 'The Artist's Life', p. 32.

⁷⁴ Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, p. 59.

⁷⁵ See: H. P. Chapman, *Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Identity* (Princeton, 1990).

Rembrandt with a level of self-knowledge. Rembrandt also occasionally inserted his self-portrait in his own works, for example in his painting *The Raising of the Cross* (fig. 155). And it may have been precisely Rembrandt's participant self-portraits that served as an inspiration and model for Steen.⁷⁶

Steen's two self-portraits provide the viewer with very different aspects of the same man. In his more formally posed, classical portrait (fig. 153), he even seems to style himself to some degree after Rembrandt (fig. 156), who was modelling his image after Raphael's portrait of Baldassare Castiglione (fig. 157). His smile, however, for which he was known in other portrayals, betrays the formality of the picture. He subverts the traditional artist self-portrait by not wearing antique garb, resting his arm on a chair rather than a ledge as in Rembrandt's portrait, and smiling slyly.⁷⁷ While Rembrandt's self-portraits may be viewed as a distinct exploration of and search for selfhood, Steen's self-portraits do not appear to have served the same function, given their playfulness and theatricality. The other portrait of Steen is the one we are more accustomed to seeing; he portrays himself as a lutenist, smiling broadly, in an incredibly informal pose (fig. 154). It has been questioned whether this is a self-portrait at all, given the genre-like elements in the work, including the curtain and symbolic elements surrounding the artist. It is precisely the theatrical elements that Steen toyed with in the work.

Artists were encouraged to use theatrical techniques in order to compose paintings and to work out the various emotions of their figures. Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678) instructed artists to become actors themselves: to act out

⁷⁶ H. P. Chapman, 'Jan Steen: Player in his Own Paintings' H. P. Chapman, W. Th. Kloek, and A. Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, exh. cat. (New Haven and London, 1996), pp. 11-23, p. 17.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

scenes, gestures, and facial expressions so that they may be able to paint better.⁷⁸

Houbraken, who was a student of Hoogstraten, learned about theatre from his teacher.

In his biography of Jan Steen, Houbraken sustains a distinctly theatrical metaphor and

uses theatrical language to describe his life, such as the word 'farce'.⁷⁹ Seventeenth-

century literary theory defined comedy as the mirror of everyday life and so for

Houbraken, Steen was the ultimate imitator of nature because he supposedly lived the

way he painted.⁸⁰ First-hand experience was needed to be able to represent comic

settings accurately and truthfully. It was said that Pieter Bruegel, for example,

disguised himself as a peasant and participated in peasants fairs, weddings and other

festivities as a means of observing their customs and mannerisms so that he could draw

them 'nae 't leven' (after life).⁸¹

Though he was not an actor himself, Steen had a loose connection to the guilds of rhetoricians in Holland. He painted a number of genre scenes of rhetoricians gathered together and performing (fig. 158). As Westermann demonstrates, Steen was also extremely familiar with comedic theatre and jest books, the most important sources for comedic tropes and themes.⁸² Steen's genre characters, the quack, the fool, the wastrel, and the love sick maid, among others, were all based on stock types used in rhetorician plays and the *comedia dell'arte*.⁸³ Further evidence is that Steen often used the theatrical device of the 'laughing prompt' in his paintings. He frequently took on this role himself, as the laughing or smiling figure directly targeting the viewer and

⁷⁸ S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst* (Rotterdam, 1678), p. 109. 'Wilmen nu eer inleggen in dit alleredelste deel der konst, zoo moetmen zich zelven geheel in een toneelspeeler hervormen' [If one wants to gain honour in this most noble part of art [the passions], one must reform oneself totally into an actor.]

⁷⁹ Chapman, 'Persona and Myth', p. 143.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 142; Chapman, 'Jan Steen as Family Man', p. 376.

⁸¹ K. van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the First Edition of the Schilder-boeck (1603-1604): Preceded by the Lineage, Circumstances and Place of Birth, Life and Works of Karel van Mander . . . from the Second Edition of the Schilder-boeck (1616-1618)*. 6 vols. (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994-1999) Facsimile of the first edition: (Utrecht, 1969), fol. 233r.

⁸² Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, especially Chaps. 3-5.

⁸³ Chapman, 'Jan Steen's Household Revisited', p. 190. Also see: S.J. Gudlaugsson, *The Comedians in the Work of Jan Steen and his Contemporaries* (Soest, 1975).

pointing out the person or object of ridicule.⁸⁴ This person can normally be identified as the fool, the character who speaks the truth and admonishes others for their foolishness.

Steen most notoriously plays the role of the fool in his ‘dissolute household’ scenes. The ‘dissolute household’ recalls sixteenth-century artistic conventions that were used most notably in the print medium. Nanette Salomon offers the prints of disordered homes such as Hieronymous Cock’s *Verlega and Sorghelos* (fig. 159) and Bartel Beham’s *Spinnstube* (fig. 160) as possible sources for Steen’s ‘dissolute households.’⁸⁵ Both are scenes of wild activities taking place in domestic interiors. Crispijn de Passe’s 1589 print, *The Bad Household* may also have served as a resource to Steen (fig. 161). The engraving shows three elegantly dressed couples in the midst of fighting in an interior. Furniture has been toppled and various household items are on the floor, apparently as a result of the skirmishes. A cat takes a bite of a woman’s skirt while both a cat and a child chew on turkeys. Written plainly on the wall above the disputing couples is the word ‘Discordia’.⁸⁶ The engraving is a pendant to *The Good Household*, comically subverting the peaceful, pious family (fig. 162).

Another of the sources available to Steen was the ‘topsy-turvy world’, the age-old rhetorical device of satire and irony.⁸⁷ The ‘topsy-turvy world’ was a symbolic inversion of a culturally standardised norm.⁸⁸ Continuing with the theme of using theatrical practice in painting, one of the main places to view topsy-turvy inversion was at the kermis, a type of carnival or fair celebrating a religious holiday. The kermis was a day of celebration, drinking, feasting and generally a time for all inhabitants of the

⁸⁴ Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, p. 113.

⁸⁵ N. Salomon, *Shifting Priorities: Gender and Genre in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting* (Stanford, 2004), p. 44.

⁸⁶ K.G Boon and J. Verbeek, *Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings Engraving and Woodcuts ca. 1450-1700* (Amsterdam, 1949-2009), Vol. XV, p. 207.

⁸⁷ Salomon, *Shifting Priorities*, p. 43.

⁸⁸ See: K. Moxey, *Peasants, Warriors, and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation* (Chicago, 1989), esp. Chapter 5 ‘The Battle of the Sexes and the World Upside Down.’

community to unwind and enjoy a day without work. The most distinctive feature of the kermis was the custom of turning over established roles and rituals in society. Role reversal was played out through dramatic performance, games, and contests. People took on roles that were completely opposite to their normal daily existence. As Schama describes, 'the urban kermis was...a festival of inversion where apprentices gayed masters and journeyman, the young bearded the old, and women propositioned men.'⁸⁹ Thus, there was a long tradition of subverting 'normal' or 'proper' behaviour from which Steen was drawing. In studies of such inversions, it has been found that role reversal and a destabilization of the norm had very distinct functions in regulating a complex society and were probably not entirely fictional depictions.⁹⁰

Steen rarely used specific and unambiguous topsy-turvy inversions. The most recognizable would be the transposition of tavern life into the home.⁹¹ After 1650, there was a shift in Dutch genre painting toward the 'domestic', with the domestic interior being defined as the inverse of public interior spaces, such as guesthouses, brothels, and taverns.⁹² The domestic interior genre image was intended to create a desire for a synthetic 'familial image.' Steen's 'dissolute household', such as the image that gives the name to the genre from the Wellington Museum in London (fig. 18), is consciously archaizing, functioning to bring up feelings of 'nostalgia' for home and its comforts.⁹³ For example, the obvious symbols in the basket filled with objects representing poverty and illness, the monkey, the representation of old proverbs and the portrayal of the

⁸⁹ S. Schama, 'The Unruly Realm: Appetite and Restraint in Seventeenth-century Holland', *Daedalus* 108 (1979), pp. 103-123, p. 119.

⁹⁰ N. Z. Davis, 'Women on Top: Symbolic Sexual Inversion and Political Disorder in Early Modern Europe', in B. A. Babcock (ed.), *Forms of Symbolic Inversion The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca, 1978), pp. 147-185, p. 152.

⁹¹ Salomon, *Shifting Priorities*, p. 44.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 53. Steen inscribed the words 'Bedurfde huishow' on a slate in the lower left corner of the painting. 'Bedurfde' is translated to dissolute but the seventeenth-century meaning was more literally 'ruined' or 'spoiled'.

seven deadly sins, were all fashioned as belonging to the past.⁹⁴ Steen constructed his home as a place in memory of morality and order, exposed by its absence.⁹⁵ It was not Steen's intention to be didactic, he instead took the portrayal of didacticism and poked fun at it.

One of the most humorous ways in which Steen upended the domestic ideal in his 'dissolute household' paintings was to include 'portraits' of himself and his family members in these scenes. These were not so much 'portraits' as they were stock characters who resembled the Steen family. As Houbraken describes in his biography of Steen:

The first piece that he made was an emblem of his disorderly household. The room was in complete disarray, the dog slobbered from the pot, the cat ran off with the bacon, the children rolled about wildly on the floor, Ma sat watching taking it easy in a chair, and, as a joke, Steen added his own likeness, with a *roemer* in hand, and on the mantelpiece was a monkey gazing at all of this with a long face.⁹⁶

Steen, along with his wives and children, appear to make frequent appearances in his paintings. The children portrayed in the genre painting, *The Punishing School Master* from c. 1663-1665 correspond closely to the actual ages of Steen's children (fig. 163).⁹⁷ Similarly, in *Children Teaching a Cat to Dance*, dated between 1660 and 1679, the same children appear, though older, again in agreement with the ages of Steen's offspring (fig. 164).⁹⁸ The children featured in *The Feast of St. Nicholas* also look very similar to those in the two previous paintings (fig. 165).⁹⁹ Individual portraits of his children, especially one young boy, appear in two different works. In the first, a portrait

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 59.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 60.

⁹⁶ Hoyle, 'Jan Steen from Arnold Houbraken's *De groote schouburgh*', p. 94. For original quote see: Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh*, vol. III, p. 15.

⁹⁷ Chapman, 'Jan Steen: Player in his Own Paintings', p. 12. Chapman's identifications of the children appear to be based on her own observations of the paintings rather than any primary evidence. I have also studied the paintings and agree with her assessment that many of the same children appear and that their ages appear to correspond to the ages of Steen's children.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

of the baker Arent Oostwaert and wife, he is portrayed to the far right blowing a horn, established by a 1738 inscription on the back of the painting stating that the little boy was ‘done after a son of Jan Steen’ (fig. 166).¹⁰⁰ The same boy appears again in *The Drawing Lesson* (fig. 167). Furthermore, Jacob Campo Weyerman, an early biographer of Steen claimed that Steen’s wife was troubled by his repeated portrayals of her as an immoral woman.¹⁰¹ Though the same cast of characters appears again and again in his genre scenes, it is important to be clear that these were not portraits in the traditional sense. Steen toys with the line between genre and portrait by playing with his audience. Part of the game is that viewers may have recognized Steen and his family members; they are ‘in on the joke’ that while many of the figures may resemble his family, they function more as vehicles for subverting the ideal family than they do as portraits.

In a typical example of the ‘dissolute household’, the Mauritshuis’ *As the Old Sing, so Pipe the Young*, the ordinarily peaceful Dutch household is completely turned upside-down (fig. 168). The title of the painting is based on a proverb which means that children follow the example of their elders. In the scene, three generations of a family are gathered around a table draped with an oriental rug and laden with a plate of oysters, a large lemon, and a bunch of grapes. The focus of the composition is the luxuriously dressed and languorously posed woman who holds up her wine glass to be filled by a servant. Her immorality is represented by her undone coat and the foot warmer below her. A parrot on its perch above her head is a symbol of learning and imitation, emphasizing her as an adverse example of behaviour. She greatly resembles Steen’s first wife, Margriet van Goyen.¹⁰² An elderly couple sit across from each other at the table. The grandfatherly man wears a contented grin while the older woman reads from a song sheet with a version of the proverb: ‘Song/ As it is sung, thus it is piped, that’s

¹⁰⁰ W. Kloek, *Jan Steen (1626-79)* (Zwolle, 2005), p. 27.

¹⁰¹ Chapman, ‘Jan Steen as Family Man’, p. 371.

¹⁰² Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, p. 174.

been known a long time, as I sing, so (everyone) do the same from one to a hundred years old.'¹⁰³ Between the pair, a woman holds a child tenderly in her arms, but at closer inspection, she appears to be sleeping. Behind her and to the right, Jan Steen casts himself as the laughing buffoon teaching a boy, possibly his son Cornelis, how to smoke a pipe. Steen's oldest son, Thadeus, plays the bagpipes behind them and Eva, Steen's daughter, catches the attention of the viewer, to sharpen the comedy of the moment.¹⁰⁴ Again, these are figures planted in the scene who appear to resemble Steen's family members, but are not meant to act as portraits in a conventional way.

Fashioning himself as the fool or witness in such works, which remind us of his self-portrait as a lutenist in Madrid, gave veracity to the images as well as subverting the domestic ideal.¹⁰⁵ The family members are cast as comic transgressors or witnesses to that transgression, their resemblance to any living person intended as comedy.¹⁰⁶ The same individuals, including the elderly man appear slightly older in an even rowdier version of *As the Old Sing, So Pipe the Young* in the Rijksmuseum, dated to 1668 (fig. 169). Steen and his family members are again recognizable in *The Cat Family*, from the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts (fig. 170).¹⁰⁷ In the 'dissolute household' compositions from the Philadelphia Museum and the Metropolitan Museum, Steen is even the figure who engages directly with the viewer (fig. 171, fig. 172). Steen plays with and challenges the family portrait tradition of the idealised home in these works.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 172.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. For the identification of the children see: B. Broos, *Meesterwerken in het Mauritshuis* (The Hague, 1987), p. 355. Steen's eldest son Thaddeus was baptised on 6 February 1651. Eva was baptised in 1653. Cornelis was probably born in 1656. Broos alternatively identifies the child between the bagpiper and Cornelis as either Catharina (b. 1657?) or the youngest, Jan (b. 1659?).

¹⁰⁵ Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁰⁷ Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, p. 174. This painting prominently features Steen's son Theodorus (called Dirck) from his second marriage with Maria van Egmond.

Nowhere is this clearer than in Steen's magnum opus of the 'dissolute household' genre, the *Merry Company on a Terrace* (fig. 173).¹⁰⁸ Again, Steen uses the compositional device of the family gathered around a table. The family, as so many other times, behaves in ways that emphasise their lust, greed, sloth, and a multitude of other deadly sins. This 'merry company' contains three or four generations and they have set up their party on a covered terrace, a structure that was still part of the domestic home, though it was exposed to the open air. Most of the participants wear out-dated sixteenth-century costumes reminiscent of the *commedia dell'arte*. The cittern player to the right wears old-fashioned slashed sleeves, the elderly grandfather in the centre of the table sports a ludicrously large collar and to his left, we can spot the infamous theatrical character 'Hans Worst' who is indicated by the sausage on his cap and the jester's stick that he holds.¹⁰⁹ If the unruly gathering was not already enough, Steen underscores the fiction of the scene with references to the theatrical; the terrace could even double as a stage with its shallow space and classical décor.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, he places himself and his family members into comedic roles within the composition.

Steen, too, is dressed in an outmoded stage costume with slashed sleeves. He wears an apron, which identifies him as the owner of the inn or tavern. His laughing expression suggests the response that a viewer of the scene should express.¹¹¹ Grasping a wine jug in his left hand, he holds it suggestively in front of his lap. A figure with a likeness to his second wife, Maria van Egmond, to his right, holds out her wine glass, waiting for it to be filled.¹¹² The centrepiece of the disorderly crowd is this sumptuous

¹⁰⁸ Also sometimes referred to as the *Merry Company on a Pergola*.

¹⁰⁹ Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, p. 254.

¹¹⁰ W. Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (2 vols., New York, 2007), vol. I, p. 254, vol. II, pp. 844-847.

¹¹¹ M. Westermann, 'How was Jan Steen Funny? Strategies and Functions of Comic Paintings in the Seventeenth Century' in J. Bremmer and H. Roodenburg (eds.), *A Cultural History of Humour: From Antiquity to the Present Day* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 134-178, p. 157.

¹¹² Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, p. 254. The same woman appears in *The Cat Family* from the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest.

woman in her revealing green and gold dress and light blue satin bodice. She rests her other arm on the thigh of the cittern player; the very picture of lasciviousness. There are also two pink roses on her bust, associating her with Venus, the goddess of love. The woman's desirability is meant to undercut the imagery of the children in the upper right of the scene. Because of the comedic tone of the scene, and the fact that this is not a traditional portrait, Steen can represent his 'wife' in an indecorous way.

The children, who appear to be modelled after Steen's own, are picking grapes from a vine and delighting in their own amusement. Grapes and grapevines appear in many family portraits, for example the anonymous family portrait from the Catharijneconvent (fig. 8). They are intended to symbolise that the moral virginity of women will not be defiled and that sexual acts will be for procreation only.¹¹³ In that light, the sensuality of the mother of Steen's family presents a distinct problem.

Another of the Steen children stands between his parents in the foreground. His opulent coral satin clothing and black beret recall the popular pastoral portraits of children from mid-century, such as the portrait of Michiel Pompe van Slingelandt by Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp (fig. 24). Such portraits normally included animals—an obedient dog, a tame horse, a bridled goat, or a meek lamb—as symbols of the discipline, education, and good upbringing of children.¹¹⁴ In this image, the symbols are reversed, with Steen's little boy having tied his toy horse to his dog—the child takes discipline into his own hands.¹¹⁵ As Westermann notes, the entire scene corrupts the idyllic scenes of the family portrait in the outdoors as painted by Frans Hals between the 1620s and the 1640s (fig. 174).¹¹⁶ Steen takes the family portrait tradition, pokes fun at it, turns it on its head, and as a result undermines the idealism of such scenes.

¹¹³ Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, pp. 203-204.

¹¹⁴ Chapman, Kloek, and Wheelock, *Jan Steen, Painter and Storyteller*, p. 254.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, p. 203.

Steen's extreme role-playing in his 'dissolute household' scenes is indicative of the struggle of Dutch citizens with their roles in society. Steen was reacting to the pressures of modelling ideal family life and raising children to be upstanding citizens in the new Dutch Republic. In daily life, the roles of citizens were less and less specifically defined, so families play-acted various roles in portraiture. We see this in Steen's paintings of households as well as in types of portraiture in which role-playing was integral to the composition, such as in portrait *historiés*. In the portrait *historié*, we find instances of extreme masking that are illustrative of this battle to express identity. The portrait *historié* further sheds light on what is at stake and a discussion of these portraits will assist in answering the question: to what extent were Dutch families invested in role-playing? Was this self-fashioning, masking, mocking, irony...? In the next section, I will attempt to address these inquiries.

Fantasy and Fiction: The Portrait *Historié*

A portrait by Jan de Bray from the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem depicts the family of Pieter Brahms standing before Christ and the Apostle Peter (fig. 175). The original seventeenth-century frame has an inscription at the top reading 'Sinite parvulos venire ad me' (Suffer the little children to come unto me).¹¹⁷ This gives the viewer a clear clue as to the narrative that is depicted in the portrait. The line on the frame is from the Gospel of Mark in which the disciples of Christ reproached those who brought their young children to see Jesus. However when Jesus saw what had happened he was angered and said 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.'¹¹⁸ The subject was popular in the Netherlands and was an ideal way of portraying families joined together around Christ, hearing his words and

¹¹⁷ P. Biesboer (ed.), *Painting Family: The De Brays: Master Painters of the 17th Century Holland* exh. cat. (Zwolle, 2008), p. 90.

¹¹⁸ Mark 10:13-14.

receiving his benediction.¹¹⁹ It is possible that the portrait had a second layer of meaning. It could have referred to Braems' affiliation with the St. Jacob's Poor House in Haarlem and his participation in caring for the welfare of orphans, the sick, and the elderly.¹²⁰

The portrait presents Haarlem physician Pieter Braems (c. 1621-1674) and his wife Emerentia van der Laen (c. 1621-1667) offering their children to the blessings of Christ and his Apostle Peter. In 1663, when the portrait was painted, the couple only had three children. Their youngest child, born c. 1664, was added later by de Bray.¹²¹ In the background of the painting, there are also four onlookers, who were not included in the original painting, which is clear from a drawn copy of the finished painting from 1663 (fig. 176).¹²²

This type of portrait, in which an individual or group of individuals either watch or participate in a historical or mythological narrative is called a portrait historié, or historiated portrait. The family portrait by Jan de Bray is representative of the genre as it was particularly popular with Haarlem painters. As early as the sixteenth century, painters such as Hendrik Goltzius, Cornelis Cornelisz. and Karel van Mander were making use of this amalgam of history painting and portrait.¹²³ The portrait historié has not received adequate scholarly attention mainly because it is a difficult genre to define and few examples are extant, compared to the number of typical family portraits.¹²⁴ As Ann Jensen Adams points out, debate about the portrait historié often centres on

¹¹⁹ Biesboer, *Painting Family: The De Brays*, p. 90.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid. The other figures were added to the painting much later by a different artist. The changes were probably done at the request of the subsequent owner of the painting. The painting entered the St. Jacob's Poor House by at least 1750. It has been suggested that the four people pictured in the background are either ancestors of Pieter Braems or the four Burgomasters who arranged for the reopening of the St. Jacob's Poor House in 1600.

¹²³ P. H. Janssen, *Caesar Van Everdingen, 1616/17-1678: Monograph and Catalogue Raisonné* (Doornspijk, 2002), p. 102.

¹²⁴ J. A. Loughman, *Paintings in the Public and Private Domain: Collecting and Patronage at Dordrecht 1620-1749*, (Courtauld Institute Ph.D. thesis, 1993), p. 161. Loughman claims that historiated portraits were a rarity because of the greater inventiveness needed to create them and the corresponding expense.

whether it is in fact a portrait or a history painting.¹²⁵ To compound this, there was no term for the portrait historié in the Northern Netherlands in the seventeenth century; such paintings were often labelled ‘beeldenschilden’ (figure paintings).¹²⁶ In some seventeenth-century sources, there are references to ‘figures done from life in ancient clothing,’ which could have referred to Roman costume. In other cases, the person portrayed was simply named along with the historical figure in whose guise they had been painted.¹²⁷ Frauke Laarmann emphasises that it is important to distinguish the portrait historié from the pastoral portrait, in which sitters wear antique or pastoral costumes but play no role in a narrative.¹²⁸

In recent years, the Dutch portrait historié has been given increased consideration. The genre has been lent theoretical weight by Adams for the Northern Netherlands and Rudie van Leeuwen for the Southern Netherlands.¹²⁹ Prior to this, there were only two studies on the genre: Rose Wishnevsky’s 1967 dissertation *Studien zum ‘portrait historie’ in den Niederlanden* and Frederick Polleross’ *Das Sakrale Identifikationsportrat: ein hofischer Bildtypus vom 13. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* from 1988.¹³⁰ Wishnevsky focused on portraits of individuals from the Northern Netherlands and organised her material according to the biblical, mythological, or historical subject. Polleross examined sacred themes that originated in court culture from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. He focused on the qualities of the sitters in the portraits,

¹²⁵ A. J. Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland: Portraiture and the Production of Community* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 158.

¹²⁶ Ibid.; R. van Leeuwen, ‘The portrait historie in religious context and its condemnation’ in K. van der Stighelen, et al (eds.), *Pokerfaced: Flemish and Dutch Baroque Faces Unveiled* (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 109-124, p. 109. Rudie van Leeuwen contrarily states that the term ‘portrait historié’ was introduced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though he is speaking of the Southern Netherlands.

¹²⁷ Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities*, p. 159.

¹²⁸ F. K. Laarmann, *Families in Beeld: De Ontwikkeling Van Het Noord-Nederlandse Familieportret in De Eerste Helft Van De Zeventiende Eeuw* (Hilversum, 2002), p. 80.

¹²⁹ See: Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities*, Chap. 4; A. J. Adams, ‘The performative portrait historie’, in K. van der Stighelen, et al (eds.), *Pokerfaced: Flemish and Dutch Baroque Faces Unveiled* (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 193 – 214; Leeuwen, ‘The portrait historie in religious context’, pp. 109-124.

¹³⁰ R. Wishnevsky, *Studien zum potrait historié in den Niederlanden* (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, München Ph.D. thesis, 1967); F. Polleross, *Das Sakrale Identifikationsportrat: ein hofischer Bildtypus vom 13. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, 2 vols, (Worms, 1988).

dividing them into four categories based on (1) a virtue attributed to the sitter, (2) the sitter's name, (3) the sitter's status and (4) an event in the sitter's life.¹³¹

In earlier periods, the portrait *historié* genre was employed only by monarchs, the nobility, and those in the church. In the seventeenth century, those in the *burgerij* began to have themselves portrayed in the guise of historical figures more often.¹³² With the changing face of Dutch culture, the portrait *historié* allowed families to align themselves with certain norms and values and gave the possibility of identifying with a certain role. The portrait of the Braems family from the Frans Hals Museum for example, valorises the moral fiber of the family as well as emphasizing its contribution to the welfare of those less fortunate. Families could align themselves with certain ideals and virtues by commissioning a historiated portrait in which the narrative was representative of an ideal of family life. I look at a number of portraits that do not in fact idealise the family, in an effort to call attention to the fiction and fantasy involved in the 'masking' in such portraits in the final section of this chapter.

Ferdinand Bol's painting of a family as the mythological figures Paris, Venus and Cupid remained unidentified until quite recently (fig. 17). In 1920, the portrait was sold as a 'self portrait of Bol with his wife Lysbeth Dell and their child'.¹³³ The portrait shows three figures in a landscape with a classical pillar behind them. The man on the left, wearing a luxurious red satin coat plays the role of the mortal Paris of Greek mythology, whose task it was to choose the most beautiful of three goddesses: Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite (in Roman myth: Juno, Minerva, and Venus). In the end he presented a golden apple inscribed with the words 'for the fairest one' to Venus, as is depicted in the portrait. Venus is pictured bare-chested and holding her son Cupid.

¹³¹ Adams, 'The performative portrait historie', p. 196.

¹³² Though such portraits were relatively rare, compared to more traditional family portraits, their rise in popularity has still not been sufficiently addressed in the literature.

¹³³ L. van Noortwijk, et. al., *Dordrechts Museum: de collectie, het gebouw* (Bussum, 2010). Sold at Auction to a Private Collection: Christie's, London (England), Sale Th. Glen-Coats et al., 1920-07-02, lotnr. 59 (source: www.RKD.nl)

The family in the portrait was finally identified as Wigbold Slicher and Elisabeth Spiegel through their connections to Bol's wife, Elisabeth Dell.¹³⁴ Dell was the daughter of Elbert Dell, the auction master of the Amsterdam admiralty, and his wife Cornelia Dirckdr. Spiegel. Cornelia was a sister of the receiver-general of the admiralty, Elbert Spiegel, who had commissioned at least four portraits of himself.¹³⁵ Elbert Spiegel was the father of Wigbold Slicher and father-in-law of Elisabeth Spiegel. The ties between the Bols and the Spiegels were close, which is evident from the fact that after the death of Bol's wife, Elbert Spiegel and Elbert Dell were appointed guardians of the surviving children, a position that was later assumed by Spiegel's son-in-law, Wigbold Slicher. It was through these relations that Bol came to paint the portrait of Wigbold Slicher and Elisabeth Spiegel with their child, along with other portraits of members of the Spiegel family.¹³⁶

The intriguing aspect of this painting is that the narrative depicted is not the model of morality and virtue that would be expected when a socially prominent family decides to have a portrait commissioned. In addition, it was not at all customary to depict a woman in the nude, especially a woman of respectable rank in the community.¹³⁷ Though it might be argued that the nudity is meant to emphasise fertility or that Wigbold Slicher wanted his wife's beauty preserved, such claims have no basis in the rules of propriety in seventeenth-century Holland.¹³⁸ In one example from 1676, Geertruijt de Haes brought a lawsuit against the painter Lodewijk van der Helst because

¹³⁴ R. E.O. Ekkart, 'A Portrait historie with Venus, Paris, and Cupid: Ferdinand Bol and the Patronage of the Spiegel Family', *Simiolus* 29 ½ (2002), pp. 14-39, p. 25

¹³⁵ Ibid., The 1738 inventory of Elbert Spiegel lists four portraits of him.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 26. Bol painted the portrait of the daughter of the merchant Joost Pietersz. Elias and his wife Rebecca Spiegel.

¹³⁷ Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, p. 322.

¹³⁸ Ekkart, 'A Portrait historie with Venus, Paris, and Cupid', p. 14, note 7. S. Nijstad argues that the portrait is simply a painting of a family and that the apple is a symbol of fertility; P. Schoon and S. Paarlberg (eds.), *Greek Gods and Heroes in the Age of Rubens and Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam, 2000), p. 174. Schoon and Paarlberg argue that the man wants to show that his wife is the most beautiful and to immortalise her beauty.

he had painted her ‘as a nude Venus in a greatly dishonourable fashion’.¹³⁹ She demanded that the painting be destroyed, presumably because if others recognised her in the painting, it would bring great shame to her and her family. The issue was only settled when de Haes married the artist in the following year.¹⁴⁰

Ekkart explains the discrepancy between the impropriety of the painting and the traditional belief about decorum and modesty in Dutch society by proposing that the portrait was of a strict personal nature.¹⁴¹ He suggests that it was hung in a private family room, not in a salon, or room for entertaining, where visitors would have been received. Furthermore, he cites the fact that the painter of the portrait was a cousin of the sitters, making the commission even more controlled and private. However, this negates much of what has been discovered about the hanging of portrait *historiés* in private domestic spaces. According to Loughman and Montias, such portraits were typically hung in the most public part of private residences, main reception rooms, where they could be viewed and appreciated by company.¹⁴²

Ekkart’s argument that the painting was strictly personal is also difficult to justify when considering an earlier example of a portrait *historié* in which a woman is shown bare-breasted, Paulus Moreelse’s *Portrait of Sophia Hedwig von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, Countess of Nassau dietz, and her Children as Caritas* (fig. 177). The family group reposes on a terrace against the background of a fantasy scene. Sophia Hedwig is depicted in a non-descript Oriental red and blue costume with an exotic bejewelled headpiece. Moreelse has portrayed her in the role of the personification of

¹³⁹ A. Blankert, et. al., *Dutch Classicism in Seventeenth-Century Painting*, exh. cat. (Rotterdam, 1999), p. 18. A friend of de Haes claimed that van der Helst had painted her face and hands after life and added the body from his own imagination.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ekkart, ‘A Portrait historie with Venus, Paris, and Cupid’, p. 30.

¹⁴² J. Loughman and J. M. Montias, *Public and Private Spaces: Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Houses* (Zwolle, 2000), p. 45.

Caritas, or mother love, the most important of the three cardinal virtues.¹⁴³ She is surrounded by her sons, who wear antique tunics: one year-old Maurits, nine year-old Hendrik Casimir and eight year-old Willem Frederik.¹⁴⁴ In the background, her youngest child Elisabeth is shown in the arms of a maid.

Sophia Hedwig was married to Ernst Casimir, Count of Nassau Dietz and nephew of Princes of Orange, Maurits and Frederik Hendrik.¹⁴⁵ In 1620, one year before the painting was completed, Casimir was made stadtholder of Friesland and moved the family from Utrecht, where he already held the prominent position of lieutenant governor, to Leeuwarden. It is surprising that the wife and family of such a major public figure would have been portrayed this way. Though it is an allegorical representation, with the nursing function of motherhood being emphasised, the portrait goes against all rules of propriety and was most likely not a private portrait due to its size and quality (the Bol portrait is roughly the same size).¹⁴⁶ The difference between the portraits of Sophia Hedwig as Caritas and Bol's portrait of the Slicher family can be attributed to the class level of the sitters. The Slicher family, in their use of a mythological theme and the seeming indecency of the mother as Venus, may have been

¹⁴³ E. N. D. N. Nyegaard, *Paulus Moreelse (1571-1638)* (University of Leiden Ph.D thesis, 2001), p. 92.

¹⁴⁴ de Jongh, *Portretten van Echt en Trouw*, p. 312.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ekkart, 'A Portrait historie with Venus, Paris, and Cupid', p. 14. Ekkart states that the Moreelse portrait is an exception because it depicts a divine virtue and the bare breast has an iconic function. I argue that this does not hold as the painting is still a recognizable portrait of Sophia Hedwig, not a historical painting of the anonymous personification of Caritas; Nyegaard, *Paulus Moreelse (1571-1638)*, pp. 417-418. The painting remained in the family, but given the display of most historiated portraits, it can be assumed that the portrait was hung in the reception room. Sophia Hedwig gave the painting to her son Willem Frederik, who passed it to his wife, Albertina Agnes. The portrait is described in an inventory from Leeuwarden from 1681 as 'Een schoon contereitsel van furstinne van Bruinsvig, gemaellinne van graeve Ernst, met drij kinderen, bij Marsellis geschildert.' Albertina Agnes passed the portrait down to her granddaughter Albertina Johanette van Saksen-Eisenach in 1696. It was described in an inventory of 1697 as 'Item een groot schilderij van de hertoginne van B[r]unswijck, met 3 kinders in een swart ebben list per Paulus Moralsen.' The painting was then inherited by the father of Albertina Johanette, Johan Willem Hertog, Duke of Saksen-Eisenach or by her brother Willem Hendrik van Saksen-Eisenach. After this, it is unclear what happened to the painting. It is possible that it was purchased or inherited after 1741 by Ernst August I van Saksen-Eisenach. The painting then appears to have entered a private Russian collection until it was sold to the Paleis Het Loo in 1977.

playing at a role that was well above their station. Examples of other types of role-playing can be seen in the following portraits.

Jan de Bray's portrait historié of 1652, *Banquet of Anthony and Cleopatra*, in the Royal Collection also falls victim to the debate between portrait and history painting (fig. 178).¹⁴⁷ To be more precise, there has been much discussion over whether the figures represented are portraits of the artist's family members or whether he used them as models for a history painting. This is an important road of inquiry, because if these are indeed portraits, the narrative Jan de Bray chose to depict appears to cast his family members in a negative light, while the goal of the majority of historiated portraits was to represent the sitters positively.

The story of the banquet of Antony and Cleopatra was related in Pliny's *Natural History*, which was translated into Dutch in 1660.¹⁴⁸ In a discussion of pearls, Pliny recounted that:

There have been two pearls that were the largest in the whole of history; both were owned by Cleopatra, the last of the Queens of Egypt...when Anthony was gorging daily at exquisite banquets, she with a pride at once lofty and insolent, queenly wanton that she was, poured contempt on all his pomp and splendour, and when he asked what additional magnificence could be contrived, replied that she would spend 10,000,000 sesterces on a single banquet...On the next day...she set before Anthony a banquet which was indeed splendid...but of a kind served every day – Anthony laughing and expostulating at its meanness...she ordered the second course to be served. In accordance with previous instructions the servant placed in front of her only a single vessel containing vinegar, the strong rough quality of which can melt pearls. She was at that moment wearing in her ears that remarkable and truly unique work of nature...She took one earring off and dropped the pearl in the vinegar, and when it was melted swallowed it.¹⁴⁹

Of the literary sources available to Jan de Bray, the most probable is Jacob Cats'

detailed account of the narrative in the *Huwelijk van Antonius en Cleopatra* (The

¹⁴⁷ The painting has a double dating – both 1652 and 1656/8. The Royal Collection explains that de Bray probably worked on the composition during this period of time. According to unpublished correspondence in the Dossier for Inv. No. 404756, it is nearly impossible to tell whether the last number in the second date is a 6 or an 8, even after the painting was cleaned.

¹⁴⁸ C. Brown, *Art in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, exh. cat. (London, 1976), pp. 27-28.

¹⁴⁹ Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* (Cambridge, London, 1938-1963), Book IX, lines 119-121.

Marriage of Antony and Cleopatra) in his poem *Trouwingh* (Dordrecht, 1637).¹⁵⁰ Cats included the story in the poem as an example of how adultery leads to disastrous results.

The narrative not only represents unsavoury behaviours, but also luxury and excess to an extreme degree, which is supported by the setting of the scene and the attire of the sitters. There is a blue and white Chinese porcelain bowl on the table as well as various foodstuffs surrounding them. Antony and Cleopatra are dressed in sumptuous clothing with antique touches such as Antony's wreath of laurel leaves and Cleopatra's bejewelled crown. They are surrounded by guards, servants, and their numerous progeny, all similarly dressed in finery, though the children appear to wear more contemporary style clothing. The figure peering out at the viewer to the right of Cleopatra has all the hallmarks of a self-portrait.¹⁵¹ This brings us to one of the more troubling aspects of the portrait: why would Jan de Bray choose to portray his family in these roles in **this** narrative?

The figures of Antony and Cleopatra have been identified as the parents of Jan de Bray: Salomon de Bray (1597-1664) and Anna Westerbaen (c. 1605-1663). The two gaze at each other while seated behind a table. Anna Westerbaen, as Cleopatra, touches the pearl at her ear in the moment in the story before she dissolves her earring in vinegar. Salomon and Anna were married in 1625 in Haarlem and were thought to have had at least ten children, four of whom died young.¹⁵² Their oldest son Jan de Bray (c. 1626/7 – 1697), the painter of the portrait, has already been identified as the individual engaging the viewer to the right of his mother. The identities of the couple's other children in the portrait are a bit trickier to define; their birthdates are uncertain due to the fact that the family was Catholic. Circling the table counter-clockwise, the soldier

¹⁵⁰ C. White, *The Dutch Pictures in the Collection of her Majesty the Queen* (Cambridge, New York, 1982), p. 29.

¹⁵¹ Biesboer, *Painting Family: The De Brays*, p. 66. In this catalogue, the self-portrait of Jan de Bray is identified as the man to the right of Cleopatra gazing out at the audience. Though this is most logical, many sources have identified him as the man on the left holding a halberd.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 196. The family was Catholic, so baptismal records do not exist.

holding a halberd to the left is most likely Dirck, (c. 1634/5-1694), the boy standing in front of Salomon is Jacob (d. 1663/4), the youngest boy, with his sister Margaretha (d.1663). The two children huddled together to their right are probably posthumous portraits of a girl who was buried in 1647 and a child buried in 1640. To their right is Josephus (c. 1634/5-1663/4), holding a basin and ewer and standing behind him is Juliana (d. 1663).¹⁵³

The painting was first mentioned in an inventory of the Royal Collection in 1688, described as ‘The history of Mark Antony and Cleopatra by John-the-Bray.’¹⁵⁴ Though the details are unknown, the portrait was purchased by King Charles II (1630-1685), and Biesboer suggests that it would have been a particularly attractive acquisition for the King, given its high quality and that it was painted in the Dutch classicist style for which de Bray and his father were known.¹⁵⁵ It must have been the selling of the work that was the impetus for Jan de Bray to create a second version in 1669 (fig. 179).

Though the first version of the painting may have held personal significance for Jan, the second indisputably held more given that much of his family perished in the plague that ravaged Haarlem between 1663 and 1664.¹⁵⁶ The only members of the family who were surviving at the time that this version of the painting was created were Dirck and Jan. Jan made the addition of including a portrait of his first wife, Maria van

¹⁵³ The identities of the individuals have been determined from various sources: Biesboer, *Painting Family: The De Brays*, p. 66; C. White, *The Dutch Pictures in the Collection of her Majesty*, p. 29; C. Brown, *Art in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, p. 29; B. Broos (ed.), *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, exh. cat. (Zwolle, 1990), pp. 193-194; J. Veith, *Memorializing the Past: Jan de Bray and the Construction of Identity in Seventeenth-Century Haarlem*, (Institute of Fine Arts, New York University Ph.D thesis, 2011), pp. 195-196; E. de Jongh, ‘Een versluierd groepsportret’ *Kunstschrift* 1 (2007), pp. 26-32.

¹⁵⁴ W. Chiffinch, et. al, *A Catalogue of the collection of pictures, &c. belonging to King James the Second: to which is added, a catalogue of the pictures and drawings in the closet of the late Queen Caroline, with their exact measures: and also of the principle pictures in the palace at Kensington* (London, 1758), p. 68, Inv. No. 769.

¹⁵⁵ Biesboer, *Painting Family: The De Brays*, p. 66.

¹⁵⁶ de Jongh, ‘Een versluierd groepsportret’, pp. 26-32.

Hees on the right, who died the same year the portrait was painted.¹⁵⁷ The portrait was intended as a memorial, with the painting expanded on a greater scale (compare the size of the version from the Currier Museum, 247.5 x 191 cm., to the size of the version from the Royal Collection: 170.2 x 166.4 cm.). More luxurious items were added to the space that the figures inhabit, including a peacock to the far left, an Oriental rug draped over the balustrade, and the large metal platter in the foreground. A dog in the foreground has also been added, as a means of leading the viewer into the composition. The figures are recessed further into space than in the first version, perhaps a subtle reminder that they would not return to the mortal world. It is clear that this painting was of great personal value to Jan de Bray and unquestionably a memorial of his deceased family members, but again the choice of narrative is puzzling.

It has been suggested that the narrative was chosen for this 1669 painting as a *vanitas*, to demonstrate that everything eventually perishes. However, this cannot be the case because in the 1652 version of the portrait, all were still alive.¹⁵⁸ Christopher Brown makes the rather vague observation that perhaps the subject had some kind of private significance for the family.¹⁵⁹ I would like to argue that the story Jan de Bray chose to portray had no personal meaning whatsoever and that he was in fact making a commentary on the notion of masking in historiated portraiture in general. Having painted so many portrait *historiés* already, including one of him and his wife as Ulysses and Penelope (fig. 180) is it possible that de Bray used his own family, who were in on the joke, to make the point that just as historiated portraits which celebrate the virtues of its sitters are not authentic, neither are portraits in which the narrative is immoral? Jan's father, Salomon, was also a painter of history scenes and portrait *historiés* and presumably would have understood the farcical nature of the portrait. Furthermore,

¹⁵⁷ Broos, *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, p. 194; Veith, *Memorializing the Past*, p. 209.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Brown, *Art in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, p. 29.

Salomon de Bray was a member of the Haarlem chamber of rhetoric, De Wijngaardranken (The Vineyard Creepers), proving that he was familiar with and enjoyed popular theatre.¹⁶⁰ This theory fits for the 1652 version of the painting when the sitters were living, and takes on a new significance for the second version, when most had departed. Their roles in the performance had come to an end.

The ability to mask and shift roles observed in de Bray's portraits may also help to disentangle the mystery of another portrait histori , which has long perplexed scholars: Caesar van Everdingen's *Diogenes Searching for an Honest Man* of 1652 (fig. 181). The narrative represented in the portrait histori  is an ancient Greek myth about the philosopher Diogenes of Sinope (fourth century BCE), who was one of the founders of the Cynic sect.¹⁶¹ Diogenes, whose philosophy emphasised sober and virtuous living, was known for having cast off all of his worldly possessions and rejected all conventions. As the story goes, Diogenes took a lighted lantern into the busy marketplace of Athens in order to look for an honest man. A more contemporary version of the story was recounted by Joost van den Vondel:

The funny old fool, Diogenes I think,
While the light shone most clearly one afternoon,
Walked with a lantern, to search for his wishes:
Each shouted, what do you look here for? Reasonable humans
I seek; everyone jested and everyone laughed
Well Diogenes, are there not enough humans here?
I don't see a single one (said he) for you prove
That no reason resides in your hearts,
Your beastly life shows that you (and I hate it)
Are Humans in name, but Beasts in deed.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Broos, *Great Dutch Paintings from America*, pp. 194-195, note. 26. Van der Marel, cols. 11 and 16-17. The laurel crown on Salomon's head may refer to his achievements as a poet. He was a close friend of Haarlem poets Jacob and Jan Westerbaen, and married their sister Anna, who must have also been interested in poetry and the theatre.

¹⁶¹ Janssen, *Caesar Van Everdingen*, p. 102. The story of Diogenes of Sinope is recorded by the Greek biographer Diogenes La rtius, Book VI, 41.

¹⁶² J. van den Vondel, *De werken van Vondel. Deel I. 1605-1620*, eds., J.F.M. Sterck, H.W.E. Moller, C.R. de Klerk, B.H. Molkenboer, J. Prinsen J.Lzn. and L. Simons, (Amsterdam, 1927), no. XXXVIII. The poem is entitled, 'Den Gulden Winckel der Konstlievende Nederlanders'. English translation by Westermann, *The Amusements of Jan Steen*, p. 201.

On the left in the background is another scene demonstrating Diogenes' austere lifestyle: the philosopher lived in a tub and survived on a plain diet of turnips, shown in a wheelbarrow next to him. The man wearing a white turban and carrying a sceptre is Alexander the Great, whom Diogenes famously asked to stand aside, out of his light.

The story of Diogenes was an extremely popular subject in both Northern and Southern Netherlandish painting in the seventeenth century. Huys Janssen suggests that Jacob van Campen, who painted the theme in 1628, could have given the idea to Caesar van Everdingen, who though originally from Alkmaar, worked in Haarlem from about 1648 to 1658.¹⁶³ Everdingen then merged the historical motif with the Haarlem tradition of incorporating portraits into historical scenes, a tradition that began with Karel van Mander and Hendrick Goltzius.¹⁶⁴ This combination is rather mystifying, especially because Everdingen used it in a family portrait. The family portrayed has not been definitively identified, but is probably the Steyn or Schellinger family.¹⁶⁵ Many have questioned why the artist chose this subject or why the family would have wanted themselves portrayed in this way. The story depicts all of the individuals surrounding Diogenes in an incredibly negative light, describing them as 'beasts' and suggesting that none are decent or honest.

The painting was bequeathed by the dowager Cornelia Steyn (née Schellinger), widow of the Grand Pensionary Pieter Steyn, to Stadtholder Willem V.¹⁶⁶ Willem V accepted the bequest on 23 September 1783 and the painting was added to his gallery. The first catalogue of the gallery, compiled between 1774 and 1795, describes the painting as:

¹⁶³ Janssen, *Caesar Van Everdingen*, p. 102.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., note 17. Karel van Mander portrayed himself in the history painting *Crossing the Jordan* in the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen. Hendrick Goltzius portrayed his friend and patron Jan Goverts van der Aar as an elder in a representation of *Susannah and the Elders* from the Musée de la Chartreuse.

¹⁶⁵ Janssen, *Caesar Van Everdingen*, pp. 101-103; B. Broos and A. van Suchtelen, et. al., *Portraits in the Mauritshuis, 1430-1790* (Zwolle, 2004), pp. 86-87; A. Blankert, et. al. *Gods, Saints, and Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Washington DC, 1980), p. 215.

¹⁶⁶ Janssen, *Caesar Van Everdingen*, p. 101.

An allegorical painting, composed of contemporary portraits, all of them depicting members of the family of the honourable Mr Stein, or others then in the government, portraying the story of Diogenes the Cynic, who, in broad daylight in the marketplace in Athens, holds up a lantern to look for [wise] people: the picture, which shows Diogenes in a monk's habit and is therefore said to represent one of the forefathers of the Grand Pensionary Mr Steyn, searches here in the same way, in the marketplace at Haarlem, for [wise] people who stand around him, in all kinds of attire and of all ages and [both] sexes, etc. etc.¹⁶⁷

Frederik van Kretschmar was among the first to attempt to identify the various members of the Steyn family.¹⁶⁸ Though there has been debate over whether it is, in fact, the Steyn family portrayed, Janssen convincingly points to the importance that should be attached to the oldest documents, the catalogue of the gallery of Willem V, as evidence.¹⁶⁹ In the role of the man to the left of Diogenes is most likely Jacob Steyn, a notary from Haarlem.¹⁷⁰ The two people at the far right, dressed in outmoded sixteenth-century clothing, are probably ancestors Jacob Steyn (1545-before 1585) and his wife Maritje de Witte, who married in 1568.¹⁷¹ The descendants of these two individuals are among the others portrayed in the portrait: Augustijn Steyn (1636-1669) is the youth in the red cloak whom Diogenes has 'found'. Possible other identifications include Jacob Steyn's mother Maria Deyman (1611-1688) and his sister Maria and younger brother

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., note 2, Drossaers and Lunsingh Scheurleer 1974-76, vol. III, p. 210; Brenninkmeyer-de Rooij 1976-77, pp. 163-164. 'Een Allegorisch Schilderij; hetzelfde verbeeld door Portraits van dien tijd, allen zijnde van de Familie, van den Wel Edelen Heere Stein, of andere als toen in Regeering, de Historie van Diogenes Cijnicus, die bij klaren Dag, op de Markt van Athenen, bij Lantaarn licht naar Menschen zegt: het Beeld, het welk Diogenes vertoond, en in een Munniks-kleed is, en zo men zegt een der Voorouders van den Heer Raadpensionaris Stein verbeeld, zoekt hier insgelijks op de Markt te Haarlem, met een Lantaarn naar Menschen, die rondom hem in diverse Kledingen en van onderscheiden Ouderdom en Sexe staan, etc. etc.'

¹⁶⁸ Brown, *Art in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, pp. 41-42. The identifications of the family members were compiled by van Kretschmar of the Iconographic Bureau in The Hague.

¹⁶⁹ Janssen, *Caesar Van Everdingen*, p. 102; Broos and van Suchtelen, *Portraits in the Mauritshuis*, p. 87, Broos and van Suchtelen agree with Janssen's assessment; A. Blankert, *Gods, Saints, and Heroes*, p. 215 Blankert claims that the ages and number of persons identified do not correspond to the family in 1652. He argues it is the Schellinger family because the painting was left to the stadtholder by Cornelia Schellinger and that if the stadtholder did not accept it, the painting should go to the eldest member of her family.

¹⁷⁰ Janssen, *Caesar Van Everdingen*, p. 101. Objections to this identification centre around the differences between Van Everdingen's portrait and the portrait of Jacob Steyn painted by Frans Hals in his *Officers and Sergeants of the Cluveniers, 1630-1633* (Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem).

¹⁷¹ Ibid. The following is taken from Janssen's text.

Pieter. Many of the others in the crowd appear to be anonymous, probably painted to give the appearance of a bustling marketplace.

Among the stranger features of the portrait is the fact that this classical narrative appears to take place in a contemporary setting. The majority of the figures wear ‘Dutch’, as opposed to ‘antique’ clothing. In addition, the scene transpires not in Athens but in the modern-day Netherlands. It has been proposed that the location is either the marketplace of Haarlem, where the family was from, or Alkmaar, van Everdingen’s hometown. This is due to the church seen in the background, which resembles both Haarlem’s St. Bavo and Alkmaar’s Sint-Laurenskerk.¹⁷² However, much of the architecture is fantasized and is most likely more representative of any Dutch town, with the church being symbolic of ‘the church’ rather than any specific one.¹⁷³

A number of explanations have been put forth to explain the strange choice of this classical story and its negative view of all those portrayed, except for Diogenes. One is that the family was clearly Calvinist who were aware of their sinful nature and responsive to calls for a moral and upright life and that this story would have represented their humility.¹⁷⁴ Rose Wishnevsky proposed that perhaps van Everdingen chose the historical topic and the family simply ordered a family portrait without having a hand in the process.¹⁷⁵ It is also possible that the portrait was dedicated to someone in the family who was named Diogenes. A potential fourth explanation is that the individual who ordered the portrait viewed himself as a ‘Diogenes’ and intended to show his family members what he really thought of them.¹⁷⁶ While these explanations

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 102.

¹⁷³ Blankert, *Gods, Saints, and Heroes*, p. 214.

¹⁷⁴ Broos and van Suchtelen, *Portraits in the Mauritshuis*, p. 87.

¹⁷⁵ Wishnevsky. *Studien zum ‘portrait historie’*, pp. 91-93.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

have viability, given the little we know of this family, one aspect of the portrait has still not been considered.

The composition of the work is quite bizarre. The space depicted is shallow and compressed and greatly resembles a theatrical stage with props in the background. This is highlighted by the fact that all of the short, squat figures in the scene are crowded chaotically into the marketplace. The theatrical look relates again to the commentary to be made on ‘masking’ and changing roles in portrait histories that was also evident in Jan de Bray’s versions of the *Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra*. The peculiar appearance of the individuals and the setting in which they stand all contribute to a farcical comment on the historiated portrait and perhaps on the social transformations in Dutch society.¹⁷⁷

Conclusion

In the beginning of this chapter, I looked at the virtues and ideals to which families aspired in the early modern Netherlands. Parents had great responsibility for the intellectual and moral upbringing of their children. This was not only to benefit them as citizens, but also to give advantage to the young Dutch Republic. The family, especially its offspring, were viewed as the cornerstone of the new Republic. The burgeoning Republic was nursed and fostered in the bosom of the family amidst pronounced changes to political, religious and societal institutions. Several responses can be observed with regard to the novel emphasis on the family as well as the discomfort with societal roles that were caused by changes in the culture. Jan Steen, in his ‘dissolute household’ scenes, sought to comment on the stress placed on the family by turning the virtuous Dutch household completely on its head. He even placed

¹⁷⁷ Janssen, *Caesar Van Everdingen*, p. 102. Janssen also sees humour in the work—he views it as a humorous adaptation of the story, that the members of Steyn’s family are in fact depicted as the wise and honest people for whom Diogenes was searching.

seeming portraits of himself and his family members in the scenes to strengthen the truth-value and comedic reaction. Uneasiness in societal roles can be seen most poignantly in the portrait historié genre. By looking at a number of examples in which the narrative appears to discredit or offend the family, I have shown how fantasy and fiction become entangled in the adoption of various roles.

Conclusion

Legend has it that the invention of painting is inextricably linked to the appearance of the very first portrait. In the *Natural History*, Pliny the Elder approaches the question of the origin of painting by remarking that while it is uncertain, ‘All agree that it began with tracing an outline round a man’s shadow...’¹ He goes on further to describe the first sculptural portrait by recounting the story of Butades, a potter of Sicyon in Corinth. The daughter of Butades, who was in love with a young man who was leaving to go abroad, traced an outline of the shadow of his face on the wall. Her father created a relief by pressing clay onto the outline, which was then fired and preserved in the Shrine of the Nymphs.² With this tale, we understand the fundamental role of human representation in the history of Western Art. What we also begin to appreciate is portraiture’s basic ability to concentrate concepts of likeness, memory, history, and identity onto a seemingly innocuous and straightforward portrayal of a human face.

Portraits, as we have seen in this thesis, are far from innocuous or straightforward. They allow the viewer to consider the various internal and external forces that worked to produce such representations. In this thesis, I have sought to answer two primary underlining questions: What were the circumstances surrounding such an enormous rise in the number of commissioned family portraits, family albums, and collections of portraits during the seventeenth century? And secondly, if we view these portraits in terms of identity construction, defining the portrait as a site of interaction between the internal self and external factors, in what ways were portraits used to construct identity in light of these circumstances?

¹ A. Beyer, *Portraits: A History* (New York, 2003), p. 17. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* (Cambridge, 1949-1954), book XXXV, part v.

² Ibid., Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, book XXXV, part xliii.

The circumstances in question were that the Netherlands experienced incredible economic success and thus greater social mobility, religious changes and tension, and great shifts to the system of governance. I hypothesise that this seems to have caused the Dutch population to turn inward, to focus on family, and to emphasise the family as a metaphor for many of the occurrences in this both turbulent and highly productive period of history. Because of these societal transformations, there was a resulting exploration of and struggle with identity, especially within the family. In relation to this, I argue, portraits of the family and related material culture such as collections and albums, began to appear in greater volume in response to the impact of various events.

Using the portrait as a point of origin for exploring family and identity, I chose to approach the topic by discussing case studies of works of art, including family portraits, collections of portraits and family memorial albums. These works of art are different in many ways and have diverse relationships to the discourse between material culture and text. They address various themes, including genealogy, the virtue of love, mourning, and idealism. However, they are all interrelated in their abilities to weave together a complex story about the ways in which families represented themselves and were concerned with their identity in a changeable society.

When the Dutch Republic revolted against Spain in 1566, this set off a chain of events that would later fundamentally alter the ways in which citizens dealt with family and concepts of identity. First, in the area of politics, the United Provinces formed its own governing body with a stadtholder and a States-General to replace the Spanish monarchy and its governors in the Netherlands. This action accomplished two key things: reduced the power of the nobility and allowed those who had previously had no part in government to take on either an active role or more influential role. Religion was completely intertwined with these political changes as well because Catholic Spain

aimed to quash the rising popularity of the Protestant faith. In an effort to banish Catholic influence altogether, the Catholic city government, which was loyal to Spain, was deposed in favor of a Protestant one in 1578 (an event known as the *Alteratie*) and Catholicism was officially proscribed during the same period.

These shifts to the political scene allowed for staggering changes to social class and the ability for lower class citizens and immigrants to scale the social ladder. For example, in Chapter 2, I traced the history of the Backer family, who benefited greatly from such changes. Their early ancestor, Cornelisz Jorisz (1564-1599), emigrated from Brabant to Amsterdam, becoming a humble herring dealer. He took the name of his wife's family, the Backers, who had converted to Protestantism, a new form of social currency in Amsterdam society after the *Alteratie*. Cornelisz used his fresh social capital to be elected to the town council, and later to be named an alderman. His portraits reflect this new status in a position of power, and not his occupation as a herring dealer.

With this, the Backers had gained the social status to become part of the ruling elite, which, without the changes taking place after the revolt, would have never been possible. The Backers therefore can be viewed as a model for the many families who had emigrated to Amsterdam, began life as merchants, members of the *burgerij*, and took advantage of the social mobility of the changing Dutch society to gain positions of power. The Backers also began to marry into more powerful and socially significant families. Cornelisz' son Willem Backer Cornelisz. (1595-1652) became burgemeester of Amsterdam and later members of the family such as Willem Backer Cornelisz (1656-1731) and Cornelisz Backer Willemsz (1693-1775) lived as rentiers, pursuing personal interests in a manner akin to the aristocratic class.

The successful rise of the Backer family sparked an interest in a number of its members to have portraits commissioned, acting as somewhat of a document of the genealogy of the family. The portrait collection must be closely considered against a background of strong interest in lineage that was shared by many families during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. What I venture, and this topic is open to further scholarship in terms of the specifics of this relationship, is that what caused this interest was an anxiety concerning the changeable 'genealogy' of the Dutch Republic. The Republic had experienced several struggles for power, and even lack of a superior, amongst the top echelons of leadership. At the same time, families such as the Backers were aware of their own lower beginnings and perhaps did not entirely believe in the security of their own social status, just as power was not secure in the Republic.

The history of the van Loon family reveals a similar affinity with changes to Dutch society, the reason for examining their story alongside the Backers. The van Loons were involved in the founding of the Dutch East India company, one of the trading ventures which brought much wealth to the early modern Netherlands. The family benefitted greatly from the enterprise, and like the Backers, married into significant family ties, which allowed them to enter the governing class, thus propelling the social status of the family forward each generation.

The portrait collections of the Backers and the van Loons tell a material narrative about the rising financial and social success of both families. The portraits, readily available to the eyes of family, close friends, and a specific social circle, reveal not only an inward gaze but also an awareness of the outside. The Backers fought intensely to keep their portrait collection whole and in their possession, exposing that they believed their family identity to be indelibly bonded to its physical manifestation;

to the faces of ancestors. The van Loons, though they did not have to struggle to retain their collections, kept the portrait collection intact for an exceptionally long period of time. Holding onto the portraits of family members may be viewed as a way of clinging on to a sense of stability in identity.

Other groups as well advanced and took on a changed sense of identity with different responses to shifts to governance and religion. The artist, a pivotal figure in this thesis, can be seen as an exemplar of the urban burger. Throughout the seventeenth-century, the status of artists changed. Artisans were traditionally considered part of the ‘third order’, and more specifically as members of the *burgerij*. As manual labourers, they existed in a lower class than the nobility and the clergy, who claimed virtuous love as a primary value, as they did not have to toil for subsistence. The artist, however, had several special qualities which allowed him/her to claim that their work was done in the name of virtuous love. Artists could manipulate their status more easily than others in the same class. Though manual labour was required of them, the beautiful product they create exists on a higher level. Artists could take on the qualities represented in their work because they deeply identified with it. Most artists also grew steadily wealthier throughout the century, allowing them to focus more on their love of art rather than the need to produce it for profit.

In Chapter 3, I focused attention on self-portraits of artists with their families. As a result of iconoclasm, divine love was shifted from divine icons to secular pictures of love. In response to secular humanist writings of Neo-Platonist and Neo-Stoic philosophers, I theorized that the subject of portraits like the first version of Adriaen van der Werff’s self-portrait with his family could have been seen as a means of presenting the family as vehicle for the honorable and virtuous love that the artist would want to depict in his work. With his second version of the work, however, we see that

the object itself, which he lived with in his studio, was a kind of divine religious icon for van der Werff. His identity is within, formed by, and reflected in the work, formulated from a struggle to grapple with artistic identity within the context of his upward movement within the *burgerij* as well as source of inspiration considering the banning of sacred imagery. Art and love in domestic spaces became the ideal, rather than love and devotion towards divine images in churches.

The deeply emotional family albums that I discussed in Chapter 4 may also be seen as responses to the turning of the family inward, toward the home as its source of stability in a turbulent period. The family, serving as metaphor for the little church and the little state, began to receive an extraordinary amount of attention in Dutch religious tracts and treatises on good government. Ruminating on family relationships as fundamental to identity resulted in the great many egodocuments that were produced by Dutch authors. An egodocument can be a memoir, poem, letter, or autobiography. Some scholars have argued that the purpose of egodocuments was to simply pass on biographical information from one generation to the next. They functioned in this way certainly, but also as a means of managing familial identity in response to both internal and external factors.

The examples that I discuss are complex egodocuments consisting of portraits, poems, autobiography, records, etc. They also contain complex emotions and considerations, for example, the *Memorial Album* of artist Jan Sieuwertsz Kolm, contemplates both the very specific personal events in his family's life such as moving house, births of children, tiny details in the lives of his children, and deaths of some of those children. Concurrently, he grapples with his own public immortality by including his painted coat of arms, and poems and plays that he has written as a member of a rhetorician's chamber. The *Family Scrapbook* of the female painter Gesina ter Borch

has a personal side in that it included drawings that she had done, as well as those from her father and brothers. It also tells of her grief over the death of her brother Moses with the series of posthumous drawings of him. The album at the same time speaks to an awareness of her own place as an amateur painter in the artistic world, alongside her famous father and brother. These albums were both personal compilations dedicated to the family and intended to be passed down to later generations. However, their mindfulness of an outside audience tells us that both of these artists felt a pressure that was affecting many in Dutch society, of desiring to carve out an identity, especially in relation to family, in a changeable world.

The fact that families were experiencing a great amount of stress is evident in the amount of didactic literature that was produced, instructing parents on how to teach their children and children to respect their parents. Jacob Cats, known popularly as ‘Father Cats’, wrote extensively on the subject of well-matched marriages, how women should behave with their husbands, and that children must be taught right from wrong and raised in a proper Calvinist household. His texts were so popular, that it was said that most Dutch households had at least two books on their shelves: the Bible and Cats’ *Houwelyck* (Marriage). Thus it can only be assumed that the book was read often, perhaps even aloud, so that Father Cats’ lessons would be absorbed by all the family. The Protestant faith encouraged that parents teach their children at home, that all of the important values and lessons they would learn would come directly from them. Portraits and genre pieces of the same period certainly reflect a knowledge of and even a desire to model the family into the perfect Christian ideal espoused by Cats and others, which I examined in Chapter 5.

Perhaps the most profound proof that families felt a pressure to be a model for an idealized life are the number of anti-portraits that exist from the period. Jan Steen

openly mocked this ideal, by inserting seeming portraits of his family members into scenes of destruction and chaos in the domestic household. His ‘dissolute household’ scenes use comedy as a vehicle by which to transgress the boundaries of good/evil, truth/fiction, and to question whether these dichotomies even exist at all. I have also found that a handful of historiated portraits, which use theater and its liminal space similarly, can be viewed as opposing the ideal. It may even be proposed that an uncomfortable family narrative or discomfort in a role may be paralleled with an uneasiness in society’s positioning of the family into this very important role of keeping the Dutch Republic stable and moral.

The portraits examined in all of these case studies are incredibly different, in content, form, and medium. They were vehicles to explore various different themes that emerged in this period, especially genealogy and lineage, love and virtue, intimacy and grief, and the inversion of idealism. The exploration of various types of portraits concerned with different themes allows us to understand the Dutch family as a complex, multilayered entity, susceptible to alterations in the social fabric. I would like to conclude with a few words on dollhouses, which I believe contain some significant parallels to the portraits that I have examined in this thesis.

Concluding Thoughts: The Dollhouse

I can closely recall the first time I stood in front of the dollhouse of Petronella Oortman in the Rijksmuseum (fig. 182). I climbed the stepladder to view the topmost floors, almost afraid to breathe for fear of disturbing the perfect, tiny furniture and fixtures. It was an uncanny replica of the countless elite domestic genre scenes that I had seen throughout the museum, but in this case it could be touched, felt, played with. I could imagine Petronella carefully choosing the objects to place in each room,

coordinating colors and shapes. Placing the dolls just so in their seats, eating at the table and sitting in the drawing room. However, this was no plaything of a young girl, this was the precise creation of a grown woman. Petronella had artists create an exact replica of her actual home, even duplicating the paintings she owned.³

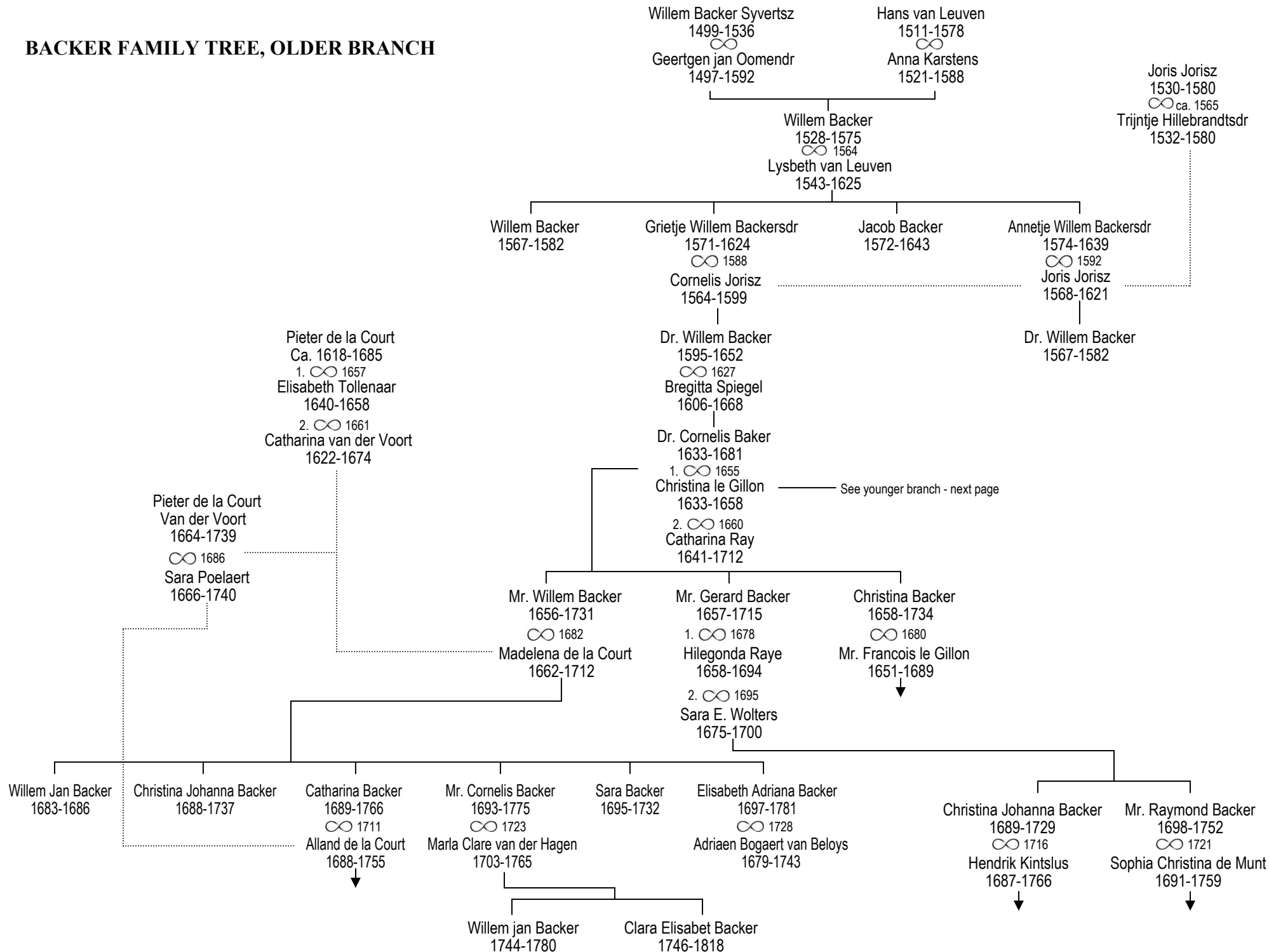
It has been suggested that the dollhouse was an elaborate cabinet of curiosity, a display of wealth, or a didactic tool, but might we also consider it a response to a society that did not feel entirely stable to its citizenry?⁴ Because of its miniature size, it could be very carefully controlled and monitored by the owner. It could be molded into a utopian vision of virtuous, moral family life; a constant, secure safe haven in a world that could not promise any of these luxuries. In the dollhouse, life could be envisioned, objects could be had, and reality could be manipulated in ways that were not possible in lived experience. The ideal household of Jacob Cats could be given a counterpart in reality. Particularly expensive and finely made dollhouses, such as Petronella Oortman's, were intended for display only, presumably to keep them in their pristine condition, but perhaps also because of the fact that if you touch, you might feel the cracks on the surface, and if you push too hard, the entire ideal might collapse into ruin.

³ M. Hollander, *An Entrance for the Eyes: Space and Meaning in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (London, 2002), p. 125.

⁴ See: J. Pijzel-Dommisse, *Het Hollandse pronkpoppenhuis: interieur en huishouden in de 17de en 18de eeuw* (Zwolle, 2000); S. Broomhall and J. Spinks, *Early Modern Women in the Low Countries: Feminizing Sources and Interpretations of the Past* (Surrey, 2011), Chapter 4 'Imagining Domesticity in Early Modern Dutch Dolls' Houses'.

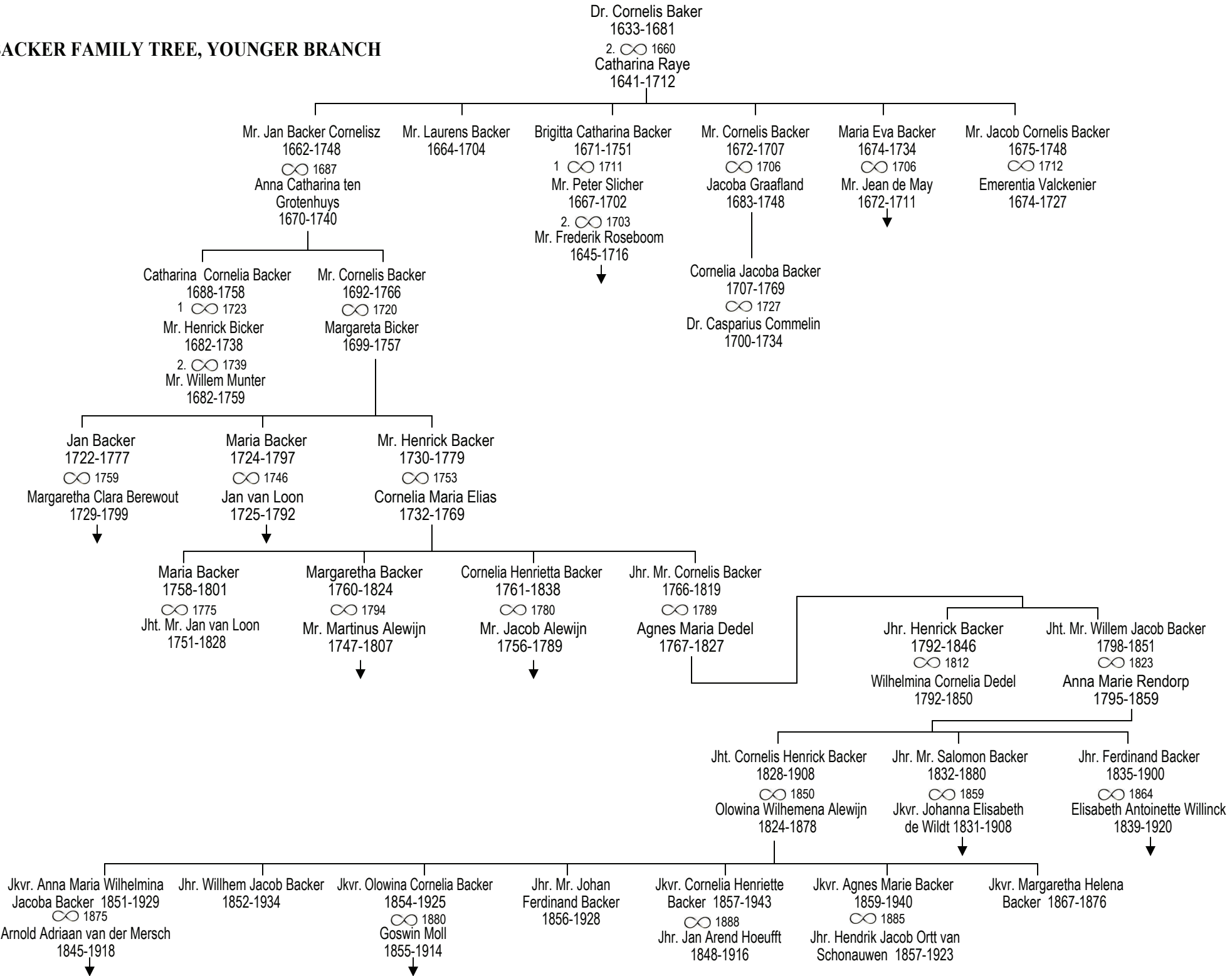
Appendix 1a: Backer Family Tree – Older Branch

BACKER FAMILY TREE, OLDER BRANCH



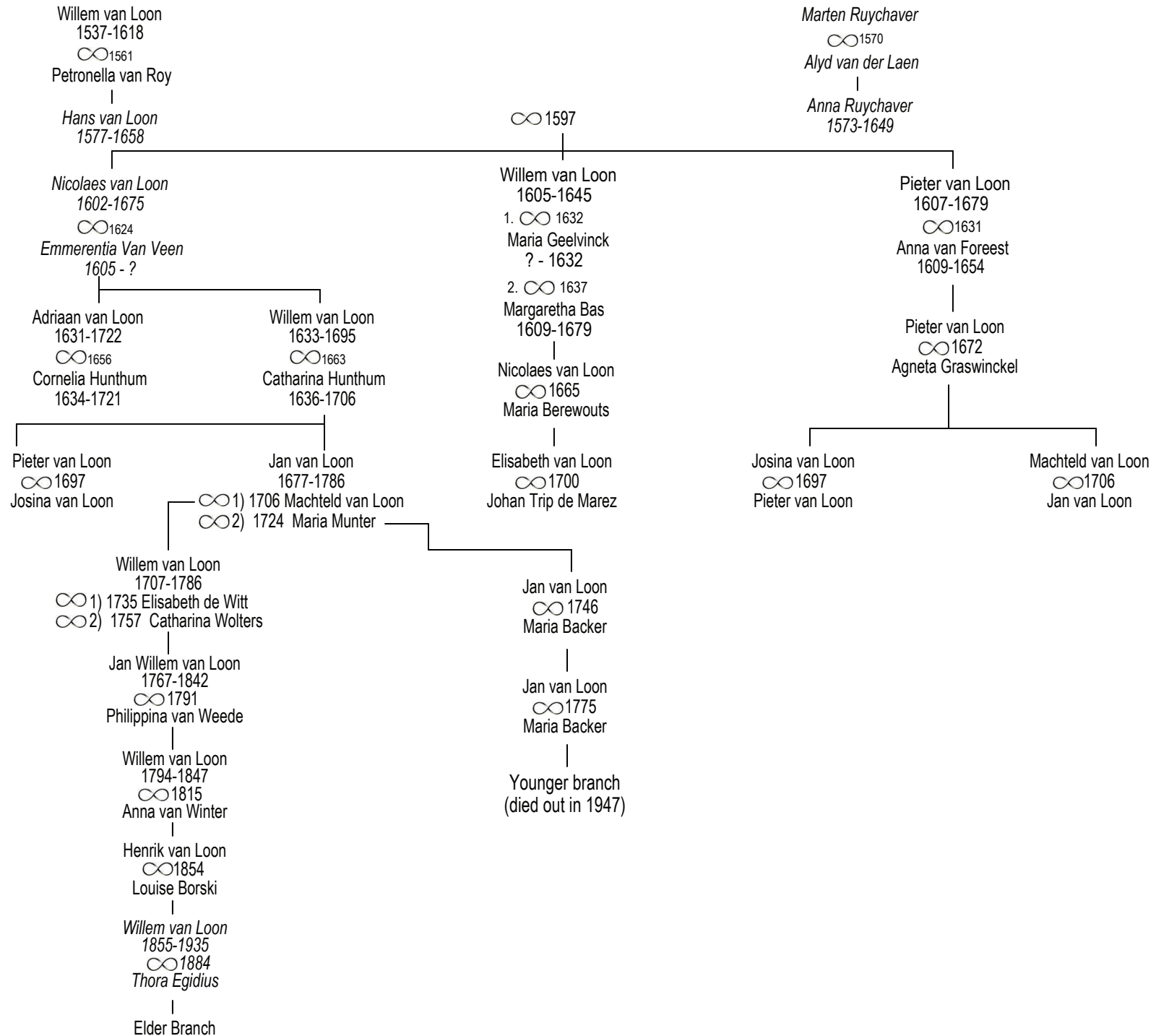
Appendix 1b: Backer Family Tree – Younger Branch

BACKER FAMILY TREE, YOUNGER BRANCH



Appendix 2: Van Loon Family Tree

VAN LOON FAMILY TREE



Appendix 3:

Utrecht, Het Utrechts Archief, Familie-archief van Beuningen,
inv. nr. 2.1.5: Adriaan Brouwer, *Verzamelde biografische aantekeningen
over Adriaen van der Werff, z.j. (18e-eeuw)*
(manuscript, eighteenth century), folio 12.

X ook ten alderuitersten
Cervinus, "

In den Jaare 1710 Had Vander Werff, d'ene dat Augustus Koning
Van Poelen aan Zyn Hooft Zyne werken quam Zien, onder
andere Zaaken die Vander Werff aan Zyn Majest. vertoonde
Was Zyn Zelfs Portraet, ^{Levens groot. Seer Sterk. en vlak geschildert &} "Vertoonende Een Kley. Schilderijtje
waas in Hu Zyn Vrouw en Dogter geschildert had, en Zulk
het fraegste werk het gene hy van Zyn Leven heeft gemaakt, waerom het
tot een Gedagtenisse in Zyne Familie ^{werd zwaerd} Der Koning Verrogt
het voor zig t'geen Vander Werff heiffelyk afslag om
boven gemelte Leedenen, waas op den Koning heb Verrogt
Twee Stukjes voor hem te willen maaken, en als die
antwoorden te vreesen, daas toe geen tyd te sullen konnen
uyt vinden, om dat hy zig zoo ver in den Dienst vanden
Churfurst verbonden had, Zeyde de Koning Ich zal den
Churfurst om dien tyd verroeken, welke in plaats van
Zulk toe te staan aan den Koning Twee Stukjes van
Vander Werff verleen, Nammentlyk Een Handen & Handen
een Cervinus niet gevoerd, dog vanden vroeger tyd, En
Een ander van Laaten tyd verbeedende Lof en Zyne twee
Dogters.
Ondertuffchen hadde Vander Werff in Zynen Vryen tyd, met
veel Licht en Studie gemaakt, Een Bad van Diana met
Cabitto Zynde van acht vrouwe Figuurjes hoog 1 1/2 voet
en Zulk voor Een Gedagtenisse van Zyne Huysvrouw, en
alhoewel Dwerse Liefhebbers veel dan Zulk hadden
gedaan om het selve Stukje, Zoo hadde Zyn Vrouw niet
daas van konnen scheyden - Schoon daas voor Een groote
Prijs wiewd geboden.
Zyn Churfurstlyke Doort onderzigt vande groote Roedanighd
van dit Stukje liet het voor zig bedpreken ingevall
Zyne ~~huys~~ Vrouw daas van t'leniger tyd afftant soude
Willen doen, Zoo dat Vander Werff Zyndelyk te Raade wiewd
het Zelve aan Zyn Edelmoedigen wederen en Prince
te presentieren, En nam het nevens andere Zaaken die
hy gemaakt hadde mede, als hy inden Jaare 1712 met Zyn
Vrouw en Dogter wederom na Duffeldroff tok.
Zeer Voldaar was desen Vorst over het gemelte Stukje, En dede
hem daas voor betaalen 6000 Gulden in Goede Ducaten
die hy hadde doen slaen ^{te Zynen Hooft} naar de Doog van Keyser Josephus
nevens de Churfurst van Saxon, Vicaris van het Roomsche
Rijk Was, En Zeyde tegen Vander Werff, Ich zal uw
Vrouw ook wel vergenoegt Laaten nae huys gaan,

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Figure 2. Gerrit Dou, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1665, oil on panel, 48.9 x 39.1 cm., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Source: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

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Figure 176. Jan de Bray, *Suffer the Little Children to Come Unto Me (Pieter Braems and his Family)*, 1663, pen and brush on paper, 27.5 x 30.3 cm., The Morgan Library and Museum, New York (Source: The Morgan Library and Museum, New York).

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