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# Pieter Aertsen's Meat Stall

## Divers aspects of the market piece

Ethan Matt Kavalier

Pieter Aertsen's well-known *Meat Stall* in the collection of the University of Uppsala is often considered a landmark in the development of European art (fig. 1). Bearing the date 'March 10, 1551', it is one of the earliest and most remarkable examples of market painting, that distinctive combination of still life and low life that enjoyed a considerable vogue throughout Europe into the eighteenth century. Yet despite several studies of the depictions of market goods and their vendors, this startling presentation of victuals remains a puzzling image, a discontinuous point on the smooth curve of traditional art history.<sup>1</sup>

A copious display of luxury foods dominates the foreground of Aertsen's painting. Before an open shed we find a side of beef, a ham, the heads of a cow and a pig, and various other butchers' wares, along with poultry, butter, cheeses, and fish. A scene from the New Testament, the Flight into Egypt, can be seen in the background through an opening in the rear of the dilapidated stall (fig. 2). Aertsen, however, presents an unusual variation of this theme by showing the Virgin offering alms to a child. Behind the Holy Family a procession of Netherlanders dressed in sixteenth-century attire advances towards the left, presumably headed for the church that is visible through the adjacent aperture in the stall (fig. 3).<sup>2</sup> By contrast, a party is in progress in the inn at the upper right. Two men from the city are celebrating with a pair of women, whose décolletage suggests the pleasures in store (fig. 4). There is a clear spatial and conceptual opposition between these background scenes, between the charity of the Virgin and piety of the churchgoers on the left and the sensual indulgence of the figures on the right.

The original commission or function of the work has not been identified. An Antwerp provenance has been deduced from an unofficial insignia of the city shown above the opening at the left, a rendering of two severed hands referring to a local legend.<sup>3</sup> The prominent sign at the right, however, is disappointingly cryptic. It reads: 'Behind this point there is land for sale, measured either immediately by the rod according to your pleasure, or 154 rods altogether' (*hier achter is erve te coope tersto(n)t metter roeije(n) elck syn gerief oft teenemale 154*).

Although we know a good deal about the subsequent history of market paintings, we are less well informed about the origins of the genre. There seem to be no earlier depictions of still life elements that might suggest Aertsen's *Meat Stall* in embryonic state.<sup>4</sup> The search for Aertsen's compositional sources can reveal the range of established imagery that would have made his painting comprehensible to contempora-

1 Pieter Aertsen, *Meat Stall*, dated '1551, 10 Martius', Uppsala, Collection of the University of Uppsala.



ries. What were the traditional visual signs that Aertsen exploited in his Uppsala painting?

Historians of Netherlandish painting have based their interpretations on the continuity of iconographic motifs. Less attention has been paid to the variation among images, the changing context in which specific elements appear, and the constantly evolving reception of these paintings as the market piece became a more common and accepted genre. We may wonder whether the earliest market paintings, which often include religious scenes, elicited different responses than later ones.<sup>5</sup> Let us first examine Pieter Aertsen's *Meat Stall* before turning briefly to later market scenes.

Not all compositional elements in the *Meat Stall* are new. Inconspicuous religious scenes overshadowed by genre details had been an established feature in painting and the graphic arts before Aertsen. Best known are depictions of the *Ecce Homo* by Lucas van Leyden, Herri Bles, and others from the first half of the sixteenth century.<sup>6</sup> Early in his career Aertsen painted two versions of this theme, closely following prototypes by Lucas and the so-called Brunswick Monogrammist.<sup>7</sup> This type of composition challenges the viewer to find the de-emphasized biblical scene hidden among worldly distractions, a metaphor for the choice between the 'narrow way' and the 'broad way' in life.

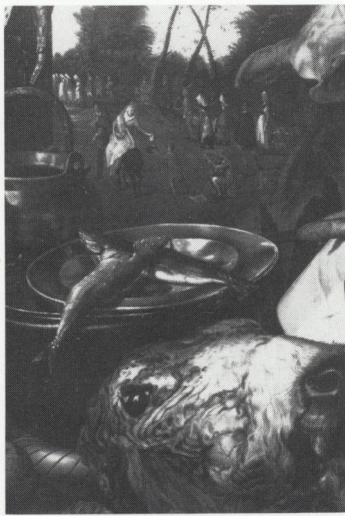
The contrast between worldly goods displayed in the foreground and a spiritual example set in the background is an important aspect of many market paintings. Julius Held and Georges Marlier first postulated the ethical connotations of these 'inverted compositions'; several recent articles on market paintings and kitchen scenes have refined this observation, interpreting the art in the context of moralizing literature.<sup>8</sup> Günther

Irmscher, for example, suggests Cicero's *De Officiis* as the inspiration for these pictures, which he interprets as painted condemnations of illicit behavior.<sup>9</sup> Falkenburg relates market scenes to sixteenth-century landscape paintings, which often present a similar moral choice. In the background of many of these panoramic views, small figures follow diverging paths, one leading toward a worldly destination and the other toward a spiritual haven. For Falkenburg the market paintings reflect common ethical concerns best exemplified by St. Augustine's contrast between the *civitas terrena* and *civitas dei*.<sup>10</sup>

A discussion of Aertsen's *Meat Stall* must address the sign displayed prominently at the right. There have been no satisfactory interpretations of this announcement beyond the observation that its message directs attention to the Holy Family in the rear. There may, however, be a more cogent explanation for this message, which relates it thematically to the scene of the Virgin's charity. In the sixteenth century *erve*, the term for 'land' on the sign, also signified 'inheritance' (*erfdeel* in modern Dutch). It could be used to express Christ's legacy in particular, that is to say, salvation. The mystic Jan van Ruusbroec used *erve* with this meaning in several of his religious writings: 'He has paid your debts and has both bought and received His Father's legacy with His blood' (*[Hi] heeft uwe scout betaelt ende heeft sijns Vader erve ghecocht ende vercreghen met sinen bloede*).<sup>11</sup> We also find *erve* used in this context in a play from the Ghent *Landjuweel* of 1539, the poetry of Anna Bijns, and other writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>12</sup> Thus the sign in Aertsen's painting announcing *erve te coope* performs several functions: it announces that the plot of land behind the meat stall is for sale; it directs attention to the Holy Family in the background through the phrase 'Behind this point'; and it suggests through the double meaning of *erve* that spiritual destiny is at stake, not merely capital holdings. About 1580 the mystic Hendrik Barrevelt (Hiël) used this idea in a way closely reminiscent of Aertsen's imagery. In his *Hidden Treasure of the Field* he states: 'Thus with St. Paul's help (that sound within our hearts) let us learn to know and use the time of ignorance for penance and the improvement of our mortal lives. And then, in the final stage of this time [let us] buy the field [den acker koo- pen] where the hidden treasure lies buried – Christ's life, for which we must accept death of the flesh'.<sup>13</sup>

Like Hiël, Aertsen may have wished to represent spiritual transformation in the form of a real estate transaction, and it seems likely that most sixteenth-century viewers would have been sensitive to this double meaning. Seeing the Virgin dispensing charity in the background, we are encouraged to read the sign in the context of good works. The 'legacy for sale' suggests that we may earn our place in heaven by following the Virgin's example.

This metaphor may have drawn greater force from the extraordinary land speculation in and around Antwerp at the time. The completion of the new city walls in the late 1540s began a period of intense investment in land. By 1550, the year of the *Meat Stall*, houses and lots were often



2 *Flight into Egypt*. Detail of fig. 1.

3 *View with Church*. Detail of fig. 1.

resold at a profit soon after their purchase, and an active market had developed for the sale of taxation rights. Within Antwerp, land values and rents rose to the highest level in the province. As might be expected, considerable objection was voiced by non-investors against what they perceived to be opportunistic exploitation of community resources.<sup>14</sup> Aertsen's reference to spiritual salvation behind the offer of real estate investment may contain an ironic comment on Antwerp business ethics, on the use and misuse of wealth, thereby strengthening the associations of worldliness conveyed by the copious banqueting provisions in the foreground.

If the *Meat Stall* expresses visually the conflict between material and spiritual values, Aertsen's unusual metaphor for worldly pursuits still requires explanation. What factors might have induced Aertsen to choose an array of meats and other comestibles as a contrast to his *exemplum virtutis*? Several writers have noted the dual connotations of the Dutch word *vlees*, which signifies both animal flesh and the pleasures of the flesh.<sup>15</sup> Further, Kenneth Craig has proposed that the portrayal of meat might have acquired unprecedented significance from a contemporary event. Noticing the date (March 10, 1551) and the insignia of Antwerp on Aertsen's painting, Craig suggested that the picture had been commissioned by the Antwerp butchers' guild to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of their new hall, begun in March 1501.<sup>16</sup>

Craig's thesis was mentioned by Swedish cataloguers of the Uppsala painting and has been tentatively accepted by James Snyder in his survey of the period, *Northern Renaissance Art*.<sup>17</sup> There are, however, a number of problems with this hypothesis, not the least of which is the date. Antwerp citizens rang in the New Year at Easter, not on the First of January. The date inscribed on Aertsen's picture, March 10, fell before Easter and therefore still belonged to the old year, 1551. By our modern reckoning, the *Meat Stall* would be dated 1552 (not 1551) and would mark the fifty-first anniversary of the new Butchers' Hall, rather than the fiftieth. This would seem a less likely occasion for a commemorative painting.<sup>18</sup> In addition, Aertsen's picture includes many products within the purview of competing guilds. Butchers did not sell fowl, butter, meat pies, pretzels, or cheese, let alone fish. Furthermore, the paintings normally commissioned by guilds were altarpieces dedicated to patron saints or depicting biblical episodes relating to the activity of the guilds.<sup>19</sup>

The imagery of popular culture, however, may help explain the dominance of butchers' wares in the *Meat Stall*. Aertsen's interest in the customs of common people is documented at this time by his depictions of rural life, such as the *Peasant Kermis* of 1550 in Vienna.<sup>20</sup> In composing the *Meat Stall*, he may have drawn from a similar stock of unofficial symbols.

In the painting in Uppsala the Virgin and Child appear directly above the herring that lie crossed on a silver platter (fig. 2). The juxtaposition of meat and fish recalls the well-known imagery of the opposition between Carnival and Lent. The *Meat Stall* seems to derive its over-



## Aertsen's Meat Stall



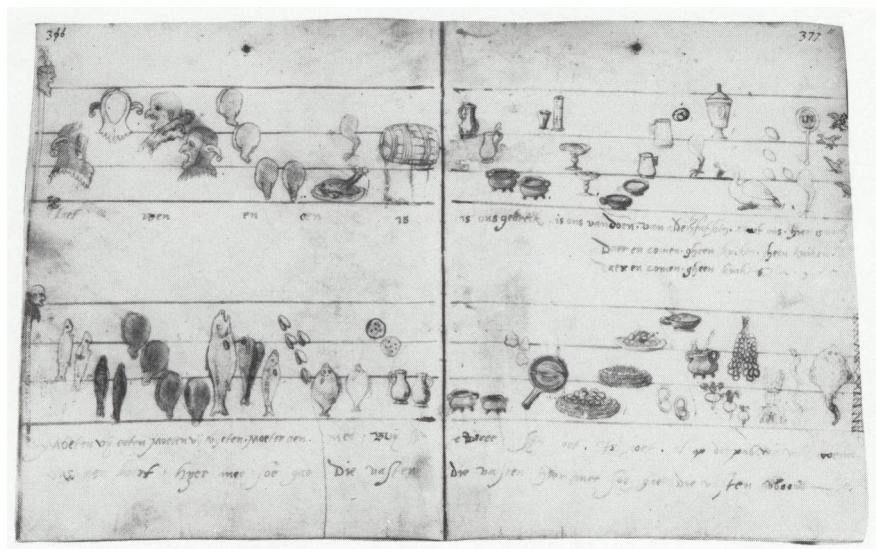
4 Scene in Inn. Detail of fig. 1.

whelming emphasis on victuals from this subject, in which luxury foods – meat in particular – stand for the indulgence of the flesh, a characteristic associated with Carnival. The fish and pretzels in Aertsen's painting, ascetic fare, belong instead to Lent. Although the herring constitute a small fraction of the goods on display, they nonetheless occupy a privileged position: ritually crossed on a platter directly beneath the Holy Family.<sup>21</sup> The pretzels, too, are located strategically: by the window with the church in the distance (fig. 3).<sup>22</sup> Much like St. Augustine's *civitas terrena* and *civitas dei*, Carnival and Lent stand for opposing values. Popular imagery associated with these traditional seasons of feasting and fasting provided Aertsen with visual terms for the expression of conventional ethical concepts. He was not the first to use the pictorial language of popular festivities; like Hieronymous Bosch and others before him, he found a comprehending and appreciative audience.<sup>23</sup>

The contrast between Carnival meats and Lenten fish was one of the commonplaces of European folk imagery. The Rijksmuseum Meermanno-Westreenianum in The Hague, for example, owns a manuscript of a fools' testament, which was to be read on Shrove Tuesday. The document, dating from the mid-sixteenth century, includes a song that presents this rivalry in visual terms (fig. 5). The musical staves are marked with representations of food: pork chops, chicken, and beer for Carnival, fish, mussels, and dried bread for Lent. Fools' heads complete the notation.<sup>24</sup> Roughly contemporary with this manuscript, Pieter Bruegel's painting of *Carnival and Lent* of 1558 depicts personifications of these liturgical periods equipped with appropriate foods. Carnival rides a beer barrel with a pork chop affixed to its front. He balances a chicken pie on his head and carries a spit holding a chicken, a pig's head, roast meat and sausages. Lent, for her part, brandishes herring on a baker's peel, while she rides a cart littered with pretzels and dried bread.<sup>25</sup>

This opposition between the traditional foods of the Carnival and

5 Mock Carnival Song, mid-sixteenth century, The Hague, Rijksmuseum Meermanno-Westreenianum, Ms. 10 C 26.





6 *Battle between Carnival and Lent*, Flemish woodcut, mid-sixteenth century, London, The British Library.

Lenten seasons is more explicit in a Flemish woodcut datable to the mid-sixteenth century (fig. 6). The print portrays a battle waged between armies of Lenten fish and Carnival meats. On the right Carnival has gained the upper hand. Fish lie disemboweled or impaled on spits and knives. A platoon of dismembered fowl, cow, and pig parts ready for consumption, along with sausages and rabbits, survey their victory. At the left of the woodcut, in contrast, Lent triumphs. A well-disciplined battalion of fish surrounds a castle, as the defeated chickens, ham hocks, sausages, and pigs' feet hang over gallows or turn on spits over roasting fires.<sup>26</sup>

Similar imagery appears in other countries as well. Throughout the sixteenth century Italian presses produced numerous editions of the *Contrasto di Carnesciale e Quaresima*, in which personifications of Carnival and Lent each proclaim their own virtues and impugn the character of their rival.<sup>27</sup> The woodcuts in the early Florentine editions represent each liturgical period by an illustration of the purchase or preparation of its appropriate food (figs. 7 and 8). In the Lenten marketplace customers buy fish displayed on a table, while women offer onions and other humble produce for sale. The Carnival woodcut depicts a kitchen in which a well-heeled man sits expectantly at a table holding a jug of wine, while a servant cooks a chicken at the hearth. On the wall hang other chickens, plucked and ready for cooking. Although food does not dominate these Italian woodcuts, they support the notion that emblematic representation of Carnival and Lent by their respective foods was a common pictorial tradition.

The detailed description of food is also a common device in the innumerable literary treatments of the rivalry between Carnival and Lent, of which Rabelais's version is the best known.<sup>28</sup> From the thirteenth century comes the French fabliau *De Caresme et de Charnage*. 'Baron Charnage' counts among his loyal servants various animals, both live and





7 Lent, woodcut from *'Contrasto di Carnesciale et la quaresima'*, Florence c. 1500, London, The British Library.

8 Carnival, woodcut from *'Contrasto di Carnesciale et la Quaresima'*, Florence c. 1500, London, The British Library.



cooked – notably sausages. The retinue of 'Baron Caresme' consists mostly of fish; his very harness is composed of salmon, lampreys, and the like.<sup>29</sup> A similar battle occurs in the Spanish *Book of Good Love* by Juan Ruiz, which dates from the fourteenth century. 'Sir Carnal' readies his forces against the advancing 'Lady Lent':

As soldiery on foot to hold his foremost battle line,  
He set his pullets, partridges, his hares and capons fine  
And wild and tame ducks so they might with his fat geese combine  
Then in review he passed them all where roasting fires could shine.

They were the luscious cuts of beef, of goat and suckling pig.  
That reared and snorted here and there with cries and squealing big:  
Just after them I saw their squires, the smart fried cheeses sprig  
Which goad a man to ruddy wine till he takes many a swig.<sup>30</sup>

'Lady Lent,' however, attacks at night with her troops. Joining the hering in their 'holy hot crusading spree' is an army of sardines, shad, salmon, dogfish, eels, tuna, and shrimp. The field belongs to 'Lady Lent'. The Damsels 'Beef' and 'Bacon Fat' are hanged on the gallows, while 'Sir Carnal' is brought to prison and 'commanded then to keep the Lenten fast'.<sup>31</sup>

The *Bataille et paix du glorieux saint Pensard à l'encontre de Caresme* was performed at Tours in 1485 and at Issoudun around 1533.<sup>32</sup> Carnival's troops are cooks armed with beef, sausages, tripe and similar fare. Lent sits on a throne adorned with herring and cod. One of his sergeants is armored with herring and eel. As usual, their allies are drawn from other fish, as well as cabbages, turnips, and mussels.<sup>33</sup> *Le testament de Carmentrant*, written about 1540 by Jean d'Abundance, presents Carnival and Lent once more personified by their foods. Speaking parts are given to 'Great Pot', 'Grease Pan', 'Pickled Herring', 'Onions', and 'Clove of Garlic'.<sup>34</sup>

In the Netherlands there are several instances of this genre. The Hague manuscript cited above ends with a debate in song between Carnival and Lent:



KAVALER

SHROVE TUESDAY

Fools' caps, Fools' caps, let fools feed  
Hams and haunches and a capon  
The barrel is empty  
We're missing jugs and pots  
We need glasses and platters  
Cups and pints of all kinds  
Bring us the chickens  
Here is a fat goose  
Eggs in the pan  
There won't come any chickens [from these eggs], no chickens  
There won't come any chickens from these.

LENT

Herring, fresh and smoked, we have to eat  
Hams and haunches we have to forget  
Cod, fresh and dried, haddock must be brought  
Mussels and flounder and egg cakes too  
We're covetous of jugs and pots  
Oil cakes, fried fish, and figs are sweet  
Raisins and nuts, pretzels are good  
Turnips and onions we fart freely  
Eel and ray are here to visit  
With all this Lent thus proceeds, does Lent,  
With all this Lent thus proceeds on.<sup>35</sup>

Once again the texts are constructed around food – the meat, poultry, eggs, and alcohol of Carnival opposed to the fish, figs, pretzels, turnips, and onions of Lent. Self-indulgence confronts self-restraint.

A close literary parallel to the choice between moral alternatives presented in Aertsen's *Meat Stall* is the 'Débat du Poisson et de la Chair' by the *rhétoriqueur* Jean Molinet. After several exchanges in which *Chair* reveals her intemperate nature and *Poisson* his piety (the usual sexual identities are here reversed), *Chair* asks the reader to decide the winner of the debate:

God will repay all on Judgment Day  
The good and bad according to their due;  
We debate in order to determine  
Which of us most deserves  
To be honored among all creation;  
You who know the laws and obligations  
Take note and judge according to reason  
Which is the better, meat or fish [*Chair* or *Poisson*].<sup>36</sup>

These texts usually recount Carnival's reluctance to depart when his days are over. Although some versions conclude with Carnival banishing kill-joy Lent and prolonging a reign of uninhibited pleasure, in most accounts Lent emerges victorious, routing Carnival in a triumph of Christian virtue. Thus in a Flemish play of the late sixteenth century, we hear first from Carnival who delivers his hedonistic monologue.<sup>37</sup> Lent makes her appearance only at the end, in the guise of a nun brandishing a cross to

vanquish her enemy. Similarly in Hieronymous Bosch's painting *Carnival and Lent*, known through copies, the figure of Lent, supporting on her head a small table with fish, enters upon a crowd of Carnival revelers. Like the herring in Aertsen's painting, she is at first easy to overlook, being greatly outnumbered by her adversaries.<sup>38</sup>

Although Aertsen's *Meat Stall* depicts no battle, it draws on this traditional imagery of the opposition between Carnival and Lent in its metaphorical use of food. The date, March 10, was the eighth day of Lent in 1552 and suggests that Aertsen composed his picture at a time when imagery of this type was particularly visible. By inscribing 'March 10' on his painting, Aertsen may have wanted to convey this perspective to the viewer.<sup>39</sup> Certainly the contrast between the herring and meat evokes the end of Carnival and the arrival of Lent with its dietary prohibitions. The people in the inn have apparently disregarded this injunction by continuing their enjoyment of physical pleasure; they may also have earned censure by absenting themselves from the procession toward the church, seen with the Holy Family.

The transition from Carnival to Lent mandated an abrupt curtailment of sensual indulgence. A popular devotional tract of the sixteenth century, the *Consolation of the Soul*, tells of the fate in store for those who shamefully continue their Carnival carousing and fail to attend church during Lent. We learn of one merry pair whose drinking bout of several days ended on Ash Wednesday with a mockery of the religious service, in which one fellow threw ashes wildly at the other. In retribution for this sacrilege, the ashes solidified on the faces of the tipplers, preventing them from opening their mouths or eyes.<sup>40</sup> Another *exemplum* tells of Carnival guests who do not know when to call it a night: 'Friends were sitting and eating on Shrove Tuesday until around midnight before Wednesday, and they had eaten all sorts of foods. Then the cock crowed [announcing Ash Wednesday], and the host of the house said, 'Friends, we still have a fat hen to taste'. And he said, 'Get up and bring us a fat hen, the one sitting next to the rooster is surely the fattest'. [The servant] brought this one to him and the hen was killed. As they were removing the entrails, they drew out a huge awful worm, so horrible that all present were terrified. Thus the dining was abandoned. Dear child, honor the holy time'.<sup>41</sup>

The Lenten diet must have pleased few people who had the means to eat richer fare. During Aertsen's years in Antwerp the city government repeatedly issued ordinances forbidding the eating of meat during Lent. In 1545 the fine was placed at one hundred gulden. In 1560 not only butchers, but also pastry bakers, tavern owners, poultry sellers, and restaurateurs were included in the prohibition, as they were again in 1566.<sup>42</sup> Nor were violations considered trivial. In 1529 the writer Willem Gnapheus was accused of Lenten dietary infractions in The Hague. Gnapheus attributed the breach to a pregnant woman who, he claimed, had discarded a sausage in his home. The matter, however, did not rest there: 'The government officials and council members considered this case so serious, that for two days they abandoned the care of all the other prob-

lems of the land in order to hold consultations over the sausage. Doctors of medicine were queried as to whether it was natural for a pregnant woman to wish to eat meat during Lent'. An order was issued for Gnaphheus's arrest, and he thought it best to leave the city.<sup>43</sup> Erasmus, too, suffered reproach for allegedly violating Lenten restrictions, if we credit the seemingly autobiographical references in his *Colloquia*.<sup>44</sup>

The contrast between Carnival and Lent was a distinction that Aertsen's contemporaries experienced each year. There was no shortage of visual and textual expressions of this theme, which paralleled ideas in established religious literature. The opposition between Carnival and Lent thus had rich associations for people of the sixteenth century. In Aertsen's painting, the abundant meat confronts us with our susceptibility to physical pleasure, whereas the fish, which lie beneath the Holy Family, remind us of higher obligations. Just as both the fish and the Holy Family are visually subordinated to the bounty of the meat stall, so the way of Christ is obscured by the sensual distractions of worldly existence.

How useful is this interpretation of Aertsen's *Meat Stall* for understanding later paintings of market scenes? The great variety among market paintings precludes a general interpretive rule. In Aertsen's *Christ and the Adulteress* in Stockholm (ill. on p. 48), the vendors of vegetables and fowl in the foreground are reminders of the worldly life, of the way of the flesh by which many are led astray.<sup>45</sup> Aertsen has painted the still life elements with such sensitivity to their different textures and colors that the viewer is momentarily seduced by the depiction of material goods before recognizing the spiritual lesson taught by Christ. In the context of the story depicted, oblique sexual references carried by objects in the foreground are not out of place. Onions, for example, were commonly thought to be aphrodisiacs, and the bird raised by the young man may have suggested the slang term for copulation, *vogelen*.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, neither the religious scene nor the sexual references are obligatory in paintings showing market goods or those who sell them.

Were market scenes without religious content also understood as didactic images? Did the appeal to sensual pleasure in these paintings set the sixteenth-century viewer on guard? Responses to these images were probably less restricted than usually stated. The prevailing tendency among art historians has been to relate sexual references in paintings of market and kitchen scenes to the admonitions of religious writers. Although sermons and other moralizing texts often use imagery similar to that found in certain paintings, other types of sources reveal additional values that attached to works of art. There was room for aesthetic appreciation, for awe at the technical skill of Pieter Aertsen and Joachim Beuckelaer in imitating the appearance of the world's bounty. There was also pride in the prosperity of the city and in the fertility of the land and its workers.

Emmens, Grosjean, and other writers have based their interpretations on sexual imagery that they identify in market scenes.<sup>47</sup> Such refer-



ences do occur, though only in certain paintings. They may be conspicuous details that physically resemble the genitalia (for example: a phallic faucet or scrotal purse), or they may be objects with names bearing sexual connotations (the classic example being the upraised fowl suggesting *vogelen*).<sup>48</sup> Sexual allusions occur not only in painting, but in a variety of cultural artifacts. Misericordia are well-known bearers of sexual and scatological motifs.<sup>49</sup> In Lucas van Leyden's engraving, the *Milkmaid*, the genders of the peasant man and woman are echoed in the trees that flank the scene, as has been observed.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, numerous texts of the period refer to the sexual act and to the reproductive organs in oblique terms that approach the form of riddles. A Netherlandish parodic calendar for 1528 offers the following forecast: 'In May there will be a conjunction with many people. Then archers in many places will be inclined to shoot upwards at the parrot. The children of Venus will want most to shoot between two poles for as long as they have arrows in their quiver...'.<sup>51</sup> A forecast for 1561 reads:

'And between two lovers, hear this farce,  
There will be no discord, come what may,  
If one has the spear, the other has the shield.  
And what they do will be for pure pleasure.  
Thus there will be complete peace; this I affirm...'.<sup>52</sup>

The metaphors of Venus's archery competition and of the spear and shield are easily understood.

We also find sexual puns among the ballades published at Antwerp by Jan van Doesborch around 1528. Conforming to *Rederijker* practice, the editor divides the poems into three groups. Doesborch explains in his introductory lines that the 'Foolish Ballades' are intended 'to bring pleasure and drive away grief and melancholy', while he promises 'much fine counsel and teaching' to be gained from the 'Wise Ballades'.<sup>53</sup> Though not entirely consistent, Van Doesborch's distinction between these two categories suggests that such poetry could satisfy needs other than moral instruction.

These written examples of sexual imagery are neither sources for art works nor simply evidence for our interpretation of painting, sculpture, and prints. Rather, they testify to a prevalent feature of the culture, thoroughly accepted, and sporadically adapted to market paintings as to other artistic and literary genres as they arose.

The market paintings of Aertsen and Beuckelaer would have elicited a range of associations, which varied according to the values and circumstances of the individual viewer. Sexual attitudes among the laity seem to have been freer than ecclesiastical writers would have wished. In the confessional manual of Master Godschalc Rosemondts (1517), a sample penitent declares: 'I have had naked men and women and other unseemly figures painted in my house or on glass, and have had pleasure and delight from these, and have happily gazed on them and thereby incited myself and others to sin'.<sup>54</sup> Rosemondts obviously disapproves of the



9 Joachim Beuckelaer, *Market Scene*, 1563, Valenciennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts.

nude in art, yet his choice of this example implies widespread acceptance of such subjects among less inhibited sectors of society.

A similar conflict of values is revealed by the differing reactions to a theatrical performance. In Brussels during Lent of 1559 the dramatic company, the 'Barefoot Brothers', presented a play that treated the Franciscans with less than the respect they considered their due. The depositions taken when the incident came before the authorities have survived. As we might expect, testimony on the nature of the play differed according to the witness. One of the actors, the rope maker Jan Knibbers, could see nothing offensive in the farce. He protested that the same piece had twice been performed by the Brussels *Corenbloeme* and had taken first prize. He would never have become involved, he claimed, had he foreseen such a reaction.<sup>55</sup>

The priest Jacop Cammaert gave a less innocent account of the affair. He believed that the players had intentionally mocked the Franciscans, and he declared that such theater should never be performed. The deposition continues: 'Asked if others had been offended by the play in question, he said that he hadn't known anyone there, and that those who stood by him had laughed so hard, that he... really couldn't say'.<sup>56</sup>

The encoding of sexual references in puns or visually ambivalent forms protected author, actor and artist against accusations of boorishness or *dorperheit*.<sup>57</sup> The disguised form of these sexual messages allows us to consider the phenomenon as a type of riddle.<sup>58</sup> By solving these visual puzzles, the viewer could temporarily acknowledge the powerful force of natural drives that were severely inhibited in his culture, and thereby release the tension caused by this repression.<sup>59</sup> Further, by defying the strictures of his society, he could recapture his relationship to nature; he could see himself within a wider context than his culture openly permitted. The recognition of the obscene alternative in ambiguous visual forms might thus be likened to the violation of taboos. This recognition, like certain aesthetic and intellectual revelations, permits passage between compartments of experience that have been institutionally isolated from each other. Thus, the sexual pun or riddle in painting often functions as a metaphor, asserting unrecognized or unacknowledged relationships much as do other types of metaphorical imagery.<sup>60</sup>

Sexual allusions, though, may be more specific. Beuckelaer's *Vegetable Seller* of 1565 in Valenciennes (figs. 9 and 10), for example, seems to exemplify the fertility of the land. At the left, behind an imposing presentation of vegetables and fruits, a peasant man gropes at the breast of a peasant woman, who bends over a wheelbarrow loaded with turnips and cabbages. The aphrodisiac properties of the turnip had been mentioned in antiquity by Pliny, although continued affirmation of this belief depended more on the shape of the vegetable than on knowledge of the classics.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, the cabbage seems to have borne associations of the womb, perhaps deriving from its rounded enveloping form. Children were said to come *uyt den kool*, much as they are said to emerge from the cabbage patch today. The saying, still current in Dutch, can be found in literature

10 Couple in the background. Detail of fig. 9.



11 Pieter van der Borch, *Vegetable Market*, engraving, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection.



of the early seventeenth century, which likely records an earlier oral tradition.<sup>62</sup>

The erotic vignette in Beuckelaer's Valenciennes painting is a subsidiary event. His primary concern is to depict the bounty of nature for the visual consumption of the viewer. A print by Pieter van der Borch illustrates an urban market scene by a river (fig. 11). Vegetables, poultry, rabbits, butter, and eggs are sold to dignified customers, as more goods are brought ashore in the background. In the left foreground a peasant man tries to embrace a peasant woman. This amorous escapade is intended as no more than a light diversion from Van der Borch's main theme: the abundance of available goods and the enviable position of both customer and more modest vendor. As the legend states, 'The markets are convenient and necessary for all sorts of people, for both buyers and sellers find here what they seek'.<sup>63</sup> It is no accident that this genre originated in Antwerp, a city known for the great variety of goods it offered. Guicciardini found the situation worthy of comment in his *Description* of 1567: 'Antwerp is very well provided with foods, for apart from the foreigners who import from every direction, the providers of the entire province deliver so much daily by water and over land, that there is not only an abundance of all sorts of common foods, but there is also found a great abundance of all sorts of unusual foods... As for expensive delicacies for banquets (beyond necessity), one finds here all types of pleasantries and tidbits from every country that one could want or desire'.<sup>64</sup>

Many paintings of vegetables, fish, meat, and their vendors can be



read as images of civic pride in prosperity. In these cases, the peasants, as well as their produce, are signs of the fertility and abundance of nature, harvested and at the disposal of the potential urban patrons of Aertsen and Beuckelaer.

In discussing the work of Pieter Aertsen, we must also consider the aspect of technical accomplishment. His astonishing skill at representing the appearance of still-life objects was more than a means to an end. Aertsen's illusionistic talent was widely seen as the supreme mark of his art and praised as such. Van Mander lauds his ability to 'deceive' (*bedrieghen*) the eye with paint in a passage from his *Grondt*:

Everything seemed alive, the green with the ripe,  
One would almost think to grab it with his hands  
Some platters resting in the dark,  
Where a lustre is reflected,  
As one may see by a favorable flame  
In the works of an art lover at Amsterdam.  
In sum, in art he was a genius,  
In pleasantly rendering reflections,  
Indeed, a great adroit and crafty deceiver  
Of people's eyes, and an intelligent liar, as well:  
For one thinks he sees all kinds of things,  
But it's only paint, which he knew how to mix,  
So that the flat seems round, and the level raised,  
The dumb to speak and the dead to live.<sup>65</sup>

Arnoldus Buchelius cited this passage some years later in his appreciation of Aertsen. This claimed confusion between an object and its representation is often cited in discussions of the artist, who is commonly praised for his ability to deceive.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, the Jesuit Carolus Scribani lauds Beuckelaer's market paintings in his description of Antwerp of 1610: 'Varro relates that he knew a certain Possis in Rome who painted grapes and fish so naturally, that they couldn't be distinguished from the real things. What would Varro say if he saw a kitchen piece by Beuckelaer with apples and vegetables, with fowl, meat, and fish, everything so deceptively imitated (*mentiuntur*), that it would trick and astound a kitchenmaid?'<sup>67</sup>

In the *Spel van Sinne* of the *Goubloeme*, the weightiest play contributed by this Antwerp chamber of rhetoric, the arts are discussed by two characters: 'Praiseworthy Fame' and 'Reason'. The two agree in their high esteem for painting. There follows the established *paragone* between poetry and painting, in which painting suffers no dishonor. Both arts can move (*beweghen*) men's emotions and record deeds long past, and thus painting, if not greater than poetry, is to be extolled above all crafts.<sup>68</sup>

The longest part of the dialogue, however, addresses illusionism in painting. 'Fame' and 'Reason' praise this pictorial quality by relating the famous rivalry between the Greek artists Zeuxis and Parrhasius recorded by Pliny:

*Aertsen's Meat Stall*

PRAISE OF FAME

For Zeuxis was therefore not disheartened  
To show in this connection an artful manner.  
He, in competition with Parrhasius (also quite famous)  
For the highest praise, once artfully crafted  
And produced a painted bunch of grapes  
So natural, that with it he deceived  
The birds who came to it in flight  
Thus would he be a skillful artist.

REASON

But Parrhasius showed him a linen cloth  
Which was so perfectly painted  
That Zeuxis thought that it covered  
The art, which [Parrhasius] would display  
But when Zeuxis wanted to pull away the cloth,  
He found himself deceived and defeated

PRAISE OF FAME

Because, although he had deceived  
The birds through such a subtle art,  
Parrhasius had shown a more laudable deed,  
[Parrhasius,] who remarkably deceived through his own art  
An artist himself.

REASON

Always and forever after, therefore,  
One should hold such artful painters  
To be praiseworthy and deserving of favor,  
Worthily recorded in all chronicles.<sup>69</sup>

It is clear that illusionism in painting was a talent generally appreciated in the Netherlands. Aertsen's still lifes did not owe their success to a change in aesthetic taste but rather to existing values and expectations.

Sixteenth-century praise for the *Ghent Altarpiece* often stresses similar concerns. The Ghent nobleman Marcus van Vaernewijck selected the figures of Adam and Eve for special appreciation: 'But concerning Adam and Eve, it is a wonder that nobody would be able to judge on sight whether one of Adam's feet protruded from the panel or not. And his right arm and hand that rest on his chest appear to be reflected by his body. The body is also so fleshy that it seems to be actual flesh. Not only are the veins within imitated in a lifelike manner, but also the small hairs that grow on a person'.<sup>70</sup>

Although Vaernewijck discusses other aspects of the polyptych, he praises especially the realistic detail and lighting effects. Lucas d'Heere, an acquaintance of Vaernewijck's who had studied in Antwerp, discusses the panels of Adam and Eve in similar terms in his *Hof en Boomgaard der Poësie*.<sup>71</sup> Both Guicciardini and Van Mander in turn base their discussions on d'Heere's ode.<sup>72</sup>

Although this praise of artists conforms largely to classical literary models, it nonetheless suggests genuine appreciation for the ability to suggest the tactile qualities of different materials and the illusion of gras-

pable three-dimensional form. We can therefore understand that Aertsen's skillful representations of still life objects struck a responsive chord in viewers such as Van Mander. Only a great artist could evoke the sense of tactile response through the eyes of the observer, who was concurrently aware of the surface of the picture plane. This controlled deception of the eye through art, this *trompe l'oeil*, was indeed admirable duplicity.<sup>73</sup>

During the middle of the sixteenth century Antwerp was one of Europe's artistic capitals, and its inhabitants were conscious of their status. After 1540, painters took over the second floor of the Stock Exchange, where they exhibited their works for sale.<sup>74</sup> In no other city was there a permanent facility on this scale for the display of paintings. A large group of sophisticated patrons and a critical mass of painters helped account for numerous artistic innovations in Antwerp. There was also unusual tolerance of novelty among Netherlandish intellectuals and connoisseurs. Lucas d'Heere, who trained in that city, praised Van Eyck for having *gh'experimenteert* and invented oil painting, according to the tradition.<sup>75</sup> Erasmus also praised novelty in verbal expression, particularly in the forming of proverbs.<sup>76</sup> In Antwerp Pieter Aertsen was probably freer to deviate from tradition than in other Northern cities. His imaginative still lifes and peasant paintings testify to this unusual liberty.

Among the factors that contributed to the genesis of Aertsen's *Meat Stall* was the 'inverted composition' established by Lucas van Leyden and others, an interest in popular customs and festive imagery, the presence of sophisticated and tolerant patrons, and the development of certain technical skills. There were several avenues of access to these pictures, and their variety allows us relate to them to broader cultural, economic, and aesthetic structures that helped determine their appearance and reception.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Sievers 1908, 43-48; A. Hahr, *Uppsala Universitets porträtt- och tavelssamling*, 1934, 20; Friedländer 1975, nr. 339; Hoogewerff, vol. IV, 510-512; Bergström 1956, 18-19; Kreidl 1972, 80; Craig 1982, 1-15; Buchan 1975, 81-95; Moxey 1976B, 143-146; Paul Verbracken, 'Joachim Beuckelaer, Het markt- en keukensstuk in de Nederlanden 1550-1650', in Cat. tent. Gent 1986-87, 114-115; J. C. H. Buijs, in Cat. tent. Amsterdam 1986, 343-344. For the arguments on behalf of the primacy of Aertsen's painting, see Craig 1982, 1-2; Verbracken, 114-115; and, somewhat more circumspect, Buijs, 343. 'Market piece' and 'market painting' are reductive but convenient terms. Paintings of urban markets differ from displays of goods in rural settings. There is also a difference between peasants from the countryside who handle produce and the members of the urban gardeners' guild (*hoveniers ambacht*). These distinctions, however, are not essential to the questions that I raise in this essay. The *hoveniers*, like the butchers and fish sellers, belonged to the twenty-six privileged guilds of Antwerp. Ordinances regulated the buying and selling of produce within the city and its immediate surroundings. P. Génard, 'Aantekening over de Antwerpsche gilden en ambachten', *Verslagen en mededelingen der Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Taal- en Letterkunde* 1895, 266-275; F. Prims, 'Het Antwerpsch Hoveniersambacht', *Antwerpiensia* 5 (1931), 343-351. For a discussion of the history of the genre after Aertsen, see C. Grimm, 'Küchenstücke - Marktbilder - Fischstilleben', in Cat. tent. Münster/Baden-Baden 1979-80, 352-374.



- <sup>2</sup> Buchan 1975, 94 ff; Verbraeken, in *Cat. tent. Gent 1986–87*, 124. Craig 1982, 4–7, suspects that this scene of charity related to an Antwerp legend. He identifies the depiction of the Virgin giving bread in two paintings executed by other artists from this city and reasonably suggests that the church in the distance is the Cathedral of Antwerp.
- <sup>3</sup> Craig 1982, 8; L. Voet, *Antwerp. The Golden Age*, Antwerp 1973, 119; Guicciardini, *Beschryvinghe van alle de Neder-Landen; anderssins ghenoeemt Neder-Duytlandt*, trans. C. Kilian, Amsterdam 1612, 58. For a discussion of formally related scenes of loose living see Craig 1982, 9–10; Renger 1970, 16.
- <sup>4</sup> Isolated earlier engravings and woodcuts convey in *nuce* aspects of the compositions of later market paintings and kitchen pieces. E. Mummenhoff, *Der Handwerker in der deutschen Vergangenheit*, Cologne 1924, rpt. n.d., fig. 25. An anonymous Netherlandish *Still Life*, showing shelves with glassware, containers, books, a candle, and a mouse eating a piece of old cheese, is dated 1538 and belongs to the Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller in Otterlo. *Catalogus van schilderijen uit de XV<sup>e</sup> tot en met de XVIII<sup>e</sup> eeuw. Benevens een keuze uit de tekeningen van die periode*, Otterlo 1962<sup>3</sup>, cat. 27. The date '1543' on Aertsen's *Market Woman* in Lille is no longer readable, and the style suggests a work by Aertsen or his shop from the late 1550s or 1560s. Buchan 1975, 53–57.
- <sup>5</sup> Freedberg 1982, 133–153. Freedberg discusses the problematic distinction between the sacred and profane realms of inverted compositions and the potential confusion between the two.
- <sup>6</sup> Moxey 1976B, 146–148; E. S. Jacobowitz and S. L. Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden & His Contemporaries*, exhibition catalogue Washington 1983, especially cat. 30; H. G. Franz, *Niederländische Landschaftsmalerei im Zeitalter des Manierismus*, 2 vols., Graz 1969.
- <sup>7</sup> Genaille 1974–1980, 65–96, fig. 71; Buchan 1975, 57–59, dates Aertsen's earlier version (Smidt-van Gelder Museum, Antwerp) to the 1540s. The later version (Rijksmuseum Het Catharijneconvent, Utrecht) is perhaps from the 1550s.
- <sup>8</sup> J. Held, Review of Friedländer's *Early Netherlandish Painting* in *Art in America* 27 (1939), 82; Marlier 1941, 94; Craig 1982, 11.
- <sup>9</sup> Irmscher 1986, 219–232. The relevance of *De Officiis* to the art of the sixteenth century, however, is doubtful. As Irmscher concedes, Cicero does not mention vegetable sellers, the most frequent vendors in market paintings. Further, Cicero does not imply that practicing a craft or selling meat are evil, only that such work is unfit for the educated gentleman. None of Cicero's admonitions apply to laborers who market their goods in the paintings of Aertsen, Beuckelaer and their followers.
- <sup>10</sup> Falkenburg 1988, 114–126; Emmens 1973, 99.
- <sup>11</sup> J. van Ruusbroec, *Spiegel der ewigher salicheit*, in *Werken van Jan van Ruusbroec*, ed. J. David, 6 vols., Ghent 1858–1868, vol. III, 163.
- <sup>12</sup> Ruusbroec, *Werken*, vol. IV, 116, 283, 288; vol. V, 19; A. Bijns, *Refereynen*, ed. W. L. van Helten, Rotterdam 1875, 424; *Spelen van Sinnen, binnen der stede van Ghendt verthoont xij Junij 1539*, 2nd ed., Antwerp 1539, 84; Ph. Blommaert, ed., *Oud Vlaemsche Gedichten*, 3 vols., 1838, vol. III, 136, 448; K. van Mander, *Olijf-Bergh ofte Poëma van den laetsten Dagb*, Haarlem 1609, 40; D. Sprankhuisen, *Van Blyschap*, 9, in *Alle de Stichtelijke werken*, Franeker 1657; *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, vol. 3<sup>a</sup>, cols. 4164, 4218; *Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek*, vol. 2, cols. 725, 728.
- <sup>13</sup> Hendrik Jansz Barrefelt ('Hiël'), *Het Boeck Der Ghetuygenissen vanden verborghen Acker-schat*..., n.p. n.d., 139–140: Daerom laet ons deur den dienst Pauli (het gheluydt in onse herten) den tijdt der onwetenheydt, tot boete en(de) beteringhe van onsen dootlicken leuen, leere(n) kennen/ en(de) betrachten: en(de) dan, in den lesten deel des tijds, den acker koopen, daer den verborghen schat (het leven Christi/daer wij den doot int vleesch veur gheven moeten) in begraven(n) ligt;...

The phrase *erve te coope(n)* ('land' or 'heaven for sale') may also refer satirically to the Catholic belief in the efficacy of charity and good works. By 1550 persecution of Protestants was common in Antwerp. We may wonder whether *coope(n)* was understood by some as criticism of Catholic attitudes toward charity and indulgences. G.

Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, Harmondsworth 1977, rpt. 1981, 57-64; A. Bousse, 'De historische gebeurtenissen', *Antwerpen in de zestiende eeuw*, Antwerp 1975, 26. I would like to thank Alison Kettering for suggesting the relevance of Protestant criticism. There are objections to Lenten fasting in a Protestant *rederijker* play of the sixteenth century. I thank Robert Baldwin for calling my attention to this source. See *Een schoon Tafelspel van drie Personagien, een Prochiaen, een Coster en een Wever*, in L. M. van Dis, *Reformatiorische Rederijkersspelen uit de eerste helft van de zestiende eeuw*, Haarlem 1937, 185-186. The weaver complains:

Sulcx en straffe ick niet, maer prijset loffelijck,  
 Die in sulcke meynighe vasten onbelast,  
 Ghelijck de vrome ouderen hebben gevast,  
 Want sy en hebben niet ghevast om verdienste noch om loon,  
 Noch wt bedwanck noch vreesen van eenich persoon,  
 Noch wt hypocrisie, als nu is de wijse,  
 Sy en vasten ooc niet van eenige wtgenomen spijs,  
 Als vlees, eyeren, boter oft kaes, groot noch cleyn,  
 Want den reynen (seyt paulus) is alle dinc reyn.  
 Ooc heeft hyse voor leere der duyvelen beseeft,  
 Die de spijs verbieden die Godt gheheylicht heeft,  
 Niet aensiende tijt, stontd noch eenigen dach,  
 Want al wat op de merct veyl coemt, muecht ghy eten present,  
 So verre als ghy de conciencie niet en scheynt,  
 Noch u even broeders daerin niet geergert en zijn  
 Anders en proefde ick liever geen vlees noch gesuyckerden wijn,  
 Dan ick den crancken soude schandaliseren.

- <sup>14</sup> H. Soly, *Urbanisme en kapitalisme te Antwerpen in de 16de eeuw*, Antwerp 1975, 109-130, 137-194, 301-302; E. Scholliers, 'De Lagere klassen', *Antwerpen in de zestiende eeuw*, Antwerp 1975, 170-174. Between 1542 and 1550 Antwerp rents rose 63%, compared to 15% in Brussels, 9% in Ghent, and 23% in Bruges. Guicciardini wrote in 1567 that housing in Antwerp was more expensive than in any other city he knew.
- <sup>15</sup> Plays on this double meaning were common enough in sixteenth-century parlance and are found in Scripture. *Der ghebeelen Bybel| Inhoudende het oude ende nieuwe Testament*, Louvain 1548, Romans viii: 3-6  
 Want dat der wet onmoghelijck was/ midts dat sij cranck was doer tvleesch/ dat heeft God ghedaen/ sende(n)de sijne(n) sone in die ghelijkenisse des sondischs vleeschs/ en(de) heeft die sonde int vleesch verdoemt doer die sonde/ om dat die rechtveerdich-makinghe der wet soude vervult worden in ons/ die nae de(n) vleesch niet en wanden/ maer nae den gheest. Want die nae den vleesch zijn/ die hebben smaek int tghene datten vleesch aen gaet/ maer die nae den gheest sijn/ hebben ghevuelen van tghene dat den gheest aengaet. Want de wijsheit des vleeschs is die doot/ maer die wijsheyt des gheests is leven ende vrede.'
- <sup>16</sup> Craig 1982, 10-12.
- <sup>17</sup> G. Cavalli-Björkman, *Bruegels Tid. Nederländsk konst 1540-1620*, exhibition catalogue Stockholm National Museum 1984, 56-57 ('Kanske var målningen avsedd att hänga i en möteslokal'); J. Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art 1350-1575*, New York 1985, 445.
- <sup>18</sup> E. I. Strubbe and L. Voet, *De Chronologie van de middeleeuwen en de moderne tijden in de Nederlanden*, Antwerp/Amsterdam 1960, 129.
- <sup>19</sup> Prims (345-346) discusses the altarpieces for the *hoveniers* guild. Buijs, in Cat. tent. Amsterdam 1986, 408-410, comments on the *Three Youths in the Fiery Furnace* by Pieter Pietersz, painted for the Haarlem bakers' guild.
- <sup>20</sup> P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, New York 1978, 178-185. In the prologue Burke defines 'popular culture' as 'unofficial culture, the culture of the non-elite, the "subordinate classes"'. Klaus Demus, *Katalog der Gemäldegalerie. Holländische Meister des 15., 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, Vienna 1972, 1; Raupp 1986, 195-223, 265-270; P. Vandenbroeck, 'Het schildergeslacht Verbeeck. Voorlopige werkkatalogoog', *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* 1981, 31-60.

- 21 C. Cuttler, *Northern Painting from Pucelle to Bruegel*, New York 1968, 459; Craig 1982, 4. Craig and Cuttler both call attention to the crossed fish under the Virgin and Child, regarding the salver and its contents as a Christological symbol. Smoked herring are also present in the lower left corner.
- 22 T. Döring, 'Jan van Bijlert und die Ikonographie von Karneval und Fasten', *Holländische Genremalerei im 17. Jahrhundert*, Symposium, Berlin 1984, ed. H. Bock and T. W. Gaehtgens, *Jahrbuch Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, Sonderband 4, Berlin 1987, 61-90. I thank Thomas Döring for comments on the relevance of the pretzels in Aertsen's *Meat Stall*, not discussed in his article.
- 23 P. Vandenbroeck, *Jheronimus Bosch. Tussen volksleven en stads cultuur*, Berchem 1987, 193-353; J. Steppe, 'Jheronimus Bosch. Bijdrage tot de historische en de ikonografische studie van zijn werk', *Jheronimus Bosch. Bijdragen bij gelegenheid van de herdenkingstentoonstelling te 's-Hertogenbosch 1967*, 's-Hertogenbosch 1967, 5-41.
- 24 *Carnival Fools' Tract*, The Hague, Rijksmuseum Meermannno-Westreenianum, MS C 10 26, fol. 10v-11r. H. Pleij, *Het gilde van de Blauwe Schuit. Literatuur, volksfeest en burgermoraal in de late middeleeuwen*, 1979, rev. ed. Amsterdam 1983, 249, 253-254.
- 25 C. Gaignebet, 'Le Combat de Carnaval et de Carême de P. Bruegel (1559)', *Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 27 (1972), Part 2, 313-345; Arthur Haberlandt, 'Das Faschingsbild des Peter Bruegel d. Ä.', *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 43 (1933), 237-249; C. G. Stridbeck, '“Combat between Carnival and Lent” by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. An Allegorical Picture of the Sixteenth Century', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 19 (1956), 96-109; Hanns Swarzenski, 'The Battle Between Carnival and Lent', *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts*, Boston 49 (1951), 2-11.
- 26 W. Nijhoff, 'Een oude nederlandse houtsneede van den strijd tusschen vleesch en visch', *Het Boek* 21 (1933), 333-336.
- 27 Luigi Manzoni, ed., *Libro di Carnevale dei secoli XV et XVI*, Bologna 1881, with reproductions of the woodcuts; P. Kristeller, 'Florentine Book-Illustrations. Part II', *Bibliographica* II (1896), 227-256. Italian prints of the triumph of Carnival from the mid-sixteenth century are discussed by M. A. Katritzky, 'Italian Comedians in Renaissance Prints', *Print Quarterly* 4 (1987), 236-254.
- 28 *Pantagruel*, Book IV, chapters 35-41. See *The Histories of Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. J. M. Cohen, Harmondsworth 1955, rpt. 1982, 524-538.
- 29 Grégoire Lozinski, *De Caresme et de Charnage*, Paris 1933; Barbara C. Bowen, 'Lenten Eels and Carnival Sausages', *L'Esprit Créateur* 21 (1981), 13-18.
- 30 M. Criado de Val and E. W. Naylor, *Arcipreste de Hita, Libro de Buen Amor: Edición Crítica*, Madrid 1965; *The Book of Good Love by Juan Ruíz*, trans. E. K. Kane, introduction by J. E. Keller, Chapel Hill 1968, v. 1082, 1985; K. M. Laurence, 'The Battle between Don Carnal and Doña Quaresma in the light of medieval tradition', in *Libro de Buen Amor Studies*, ed. G. B. Gybbon-Moneyppenny, London 1960, 159-176; Bowen (see note 29), 14.
- 31 *The Book of Good Love*, v. 1099-1127.
- 32 J.-C. Aubailly, ed., *Deux jeux de carnaval de la fin du moyen âge*, Geneva 1977, 1-70.
- 33 Aubailly, 11-17, 22-34; Bowen (see note 29), 15-18.
- 34 Aubailly, 71-87; Bowen (see note 29), 16-17. Another French example is the sixteenth-century poem *La description du merveilleux conflict et très cruelle bataille faite entre les deux plus grands Princes de la Région Bufatique, appellez Caresme et Charnaige*. The theme was also well-known in Italy. G. Amalfi, ed., *El contrasto de Carnasciale et de Quaresema*, Naples 1890; Manzoni (see note 27; including a selection of related French and Spanish writings and a bibliography). The great popularity of literature on this theme induced a publisher in Lyon to offer a French translation of an Italian *contrasto* during the first decade of the seventeenth century: *Procez et amplex examinations sur la vie de Caresme Prenant...* 'Traduit d'Italien en François', n.p. 1609.
- 35 *Carnival Fools' Tract*, The Hague, Rijksmuseum Meermannno-Westreenianum, MS 10 C 26, fol. 11r; Pleij (See note 24), 254. I would like to thank E. Haverkamp Begemann and J. W. Smit for their help with the translation.



Vastelavont  
 Cuvels Cuvels laet gecken voe[de]n  
 Hammen en[de] schoeren en een capoen  
 Die ton is leck  
 Kannen en potten zijn ons gebreck  
 Glasen en schalen is ons van doen  
 Coppen en pinten van alderley faetsoen  
 Lanct ons die hens  
 Hier is noch een vette gens  
 Eyer ende pan  
 Daer en co[m]men geen kuyckens, kuyckens  
 Daer en co[m]men geen kuyckens van.

Die Vasten  
 Heyrinck en bocking moeten wy eten  
 Hammen en schoeren moeten wy vergeten  
 Cabbellau en stockvis scelvis moeten aen  
 Mosselkens pladyskens en eyercoeckens mede  
 Kannen en potten wy zijn vra(c ?)  
 Olycoecken pannevis vyghen zijn soet  
 Rasynen en nueten craeckelinghen is goet  
 Erritten en bry al op dit pas,  
 Knollen en uien wy vysten vlas  
 Palinck en roch compt ons aen boort  
 Hier mee soe gaet die vasten, die vasten,  
 Hier mee gaet die vasten voert.

There are similarities to the *Pronstelcatie van den jare ons Heeren [1561]...van meester Malfus Knollebol*, Antwerp, Widow of Jacob van Liesveldt; rpt. H. van Kampen *et al.*, ed., *Het zal kond zijn in 't water als 't vriest. Zestiende-eeuwse parodieën op gedrukte jaarvoorspellingen*, The Hague 1980, 95, lines 229-234:

Van die lenten...  
 En dan coemt ons die Vasten oock aen boort  
 En dan siet men aen alle canten voort  
 Met vijghen, rosijnen en lekeren compost,  
 Stockvisch, pekelharinckis dan oock goeden cost  
 Nootkens, amandelen en crakelinghen mede  
 Brenght die Grave van Halfvasten nae d'oude sede.

<sup>36</sup> Noël Dupire, ed., *Les Faictz et Dictz de Jean Molinet*, Paris 1937, vol. II, 636-648.

La Chair  
 Dieu paira tout au jour du jugement,  
 Bons et mauvais selonc leurs fourfaictures:  
 Nous disputons pour sçavoir clerement  
 Qui de nous deux a plus d'avancement  
 D'estre honoré entre les creatures,  
 Vous qui sçavés les loix et les droictures,  
 Donnés arrest, jugés selonc raison  
 Lequel vault mieux, la chair ou le poisson.

<sup>37</sup> Brussels, Koninklijk Bibliotheek, MS no. 15663, fol. 147v-151r; W. M. H. Hummelen, *Repertorium van het rederijersdrama 1500-ca. 1620*, Assen 1968, 350; There is a second play on this theme by Wouter Verhee. See J. van Vloten, *Het Nederlandsche kluchtspel van de 14e tot de 18e eeuw*, 2nd ed., Haarlem 1877, 206 ff. For the author Verhee see 'Wouter Verhee', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsche Taal- en Letterkunde* 5 (1885), 137 ff.

<sup>38</sup> For Bosch's painting of *Carnival and Lent* see Gustav Glück, 'Die Darstellungen des Karnevals und der Fasten von Bosch und Bruegel', *Gedenkboek A. Vermeylen*, The

- Hague 1932, 263-68; Vandenbroeck (see note 23), 305-310; "*Jheronimus Bosch*", exhibition catalogue 's-Hertogenbosch Noordbrabants Museum 1967, 139, no. 39; K. Arndt, 'Zur Ausstellung Jheronimus Bosch, 's-Hertogenbosch 1967', *Kunstchronik* 21 (1968), 6-7.
- <sup>39</sup> March 10, 1552 fell on the eighth day of Lent, a Thursday. In other cases, the dates on Aertsen's paintings seem significant. See Craig 1983, 25.
- <sup>40</sup> *Der zielen troost*, Leiden, Jan Seversz., 1515, fol. 25r-25v: 'Van ghesellen die inder asscen sticten. Des sondaechs inden vasten avont saten gesellen ende droncken ende waren blijde ende des manendaechs ende des dinxdaechs daer toe ende inden asscele woensdach ende lieten si niet af. Doemen dye misse singen soude sprack die een totten anderen Ga wij ter kercken ende nemen asschen opt hooft. Doe begonde die ander te scempen ende sprack. Siet hier neder ick will die assche genoeg geven ende nam assche ende werp hem daer mede. Siet daer quam een ende werper met assche also lange dat haer der geen mont noch ogen op en mochten doen vander asscen want sticten allegader'.
- J. Andriessen, 'Het Geestelijke en godsdienstige klimaat', *Antwerpen in de XVI<sup>e</sup> eeuw*, Antwerp 1975, 205. *Der Sielen Troost*, an adaptation of a fourteenth-century Low German text, was published nine times at Antwerp between 1502 and 1587. The hardships of Lenten asceticism are expressed in an Antwerp play of the mid-sixteenth century. C. G. N. de Vooys, ed., 'Een verloren vastenspel van sinnen uit de XVI<sup>e</sup> eeuw', *Verslagen en mededelingen Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Taal- en Letterkunde* 1953, 622.
- <sup>41</sup> *Der zielen troost*, fol. 25v: 'Van een vette henne diemen wt van een vreeslike grote worm Het saten ghesellen ende aten opten vasten avont totter midder weken toe totter midder nacht ende hadden gegeten menigerley spijsen. Doe die haen cræyde. doe sprack die weert vanden huse Gesellen wi moeten noch eten van eender vetter henne ende sprack. staet op ende haelt ons een vette henne die den haen alder naest sittet dat is dye vetste henne hi haeldese hem si wert ghedoot doemen dat ingewant wt doen soude doen toech. men daer wt enen groten vervaerlijcken worm die was so vreesliken dat hem gruelede alle dye daer waren soe bleef dat eten onder weggen Lieve kint Eert dien heylighen tijt'.
- <sup>42</sup> *Antwerpsch Archievenblad*, 'Stadsordonnantien', ed. P. Génard, vol. I, Antwerp 1864, 225, 268, 283.
- <sup>43</sup> G. Gnapheus, *Acolastus*, ed. P. Minderaa, Zwolle 1956, 16-17: 'Dese sake is bi den heeren stadhouders ende den gantschen raet so hoogh geweghen, dat men twee dagen lanck de gemeynde saken des gantschen lants liet aanstaen, om allen consultatie over die worst te houden. Daer werden de doctoren der medicijnen verhoort ende afgevraecht of het ooc natuerlijk waer, dat de zwangere vrouwen lust soudén mogen hebben, om vleesch te eten in den vasten'.
- <sup>44</sup> And this despite episcopal and papal dispensations on account of Erasmus's infirmity. See 'A Fish Diet' in C. R. Thompson, ed. and trans., *The Colloquies of Erasmus*, Chicago/London 1965, 313, 349-350.
- <sup>45</sup> Stockholm, National Museum, cat. N. M. 2106; Grosjean 1974, 130-131; *Bruegels tid*, (see note 17), 58; Kavalier, in Cat. tent. Gent 1986-87, 25, note 18. The gestures of the foreground figures alert the viewer to the potential sexual associations of the objects they touch.
- <sup>46</sup> E. de Jongh, 'Erotica in Vogelperspektief, de dubbelzinnigheid van een reeks 17de-eeuwse genrevoorstellingen', *Simiolus* 3 (1968-69), 22-74.
- <sup>47</sup> Emmens 1973, 93-101; Grosjean 1974, 121-143; Kavalier, in Cat. tent. Gent 1986-87, 18-26; L. Wuyts, 'Joachim Beuckelaers Groentemarkt van 1567. Een iconologische bijdrage', *ibidem*, 27-38; L. Wuyts, 'Lucas van Leydens "Melkmeid"'. Een proeve tot ikonologische interpretatie', *De Gulden Passer* 53 (1975), 441-453; L. Maeterlinck, *Le genre satirique, fantastique et licencieux dans la sculpture flamande et wallonne*, Paris 1910, 177; Grosjean 1974, 128.
- <sup>48</sup> Kavalier, in Cat. tent. Gent 1986-87, 20-21; Dürer's *Bathhouse* is illustrated in W. Strauss, ed., *The Illustrated Bartsch* 10, *Sixteenth-Century German Artists*, New York 1980, nr. 128.

- <sup>49</sup> Grosjean 1974, 128; Maeterlinck (see note 47), 177.
- <sup>50</sup> Wuyts, 'Lucas van Leydens "Melkmeid"...' (see note 47); L. Vergara, *Rubens and the poetics of landscape*, New Haven/London 1982, 170; Kavalier, in Cat. tent. Gent 1986-87, 21; Raupp 1986, 222.
- <sup>51</sup> Van Kampen (see note 35), 113: 't Sal in den meye conjunctie sijn met veel personen. Dan sullen die scutters tot veel plecken geneicht sijn opwaerts na den papegay te schieten. Venus-kinderen sullen liefst schieten tusschen twee staken, also lange als si pilen hebben in haren coker'.
- <sup>52</sup> Van Kampen (see note 35), 91, lines 139-143.  
 En tusschen twee amoreuskens, verstaet die cluchten,  
 En sal gheen en twist wesen, het come hoe 't wilt,  
 Heeft d'een de speere, d'ander heeft den schilt,  
 En wat si bedrijven, 't sal sijn uut ghenuechten reyn.  
 Dus zal 't al peys sijn, ick seg 't certeyn.
- <sup>53</sup> D. Coigneau, *Refreinen in 't zotte bij de rederijckers*, Ghent 1982, vol. I, 14-15; J. Suchomski, 'Delectatio' und 'Utilitas.' *Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis mittelalterlicher komischer Literatur*, Bonn/Munich 1975; H. Pleij *et al.*, *Een nyuwe clucht boeck*, Muiderberg 1983, 34-47; J. B. Drewes, 'De Blauwe Schuit' [Review of Herman Pleij], *De nieuwe taalgids* 74 (1981), 420-432; P. Bange, 'Voorstellingen over seksualiteit in de late middeleeuwen', *Soete minne en helsche boosheit. Seksuele voorstellingen in Nederland 1300-1850*, ed. G. Hekma and H. Roodenburg, Nijmegen 1988, 58-60; C. Kruyskamp, ed., *De Refreinenbundel van Jan van Doesborch*, vol. II, Leiden 1940, 150: 'REFREYNEN Ende Balladen int wijs. ende van sinnen. met veel schoone onderwisingen ende leeringen'; 228: 'REFREYNEN Int sot/ om ghenuecht te verwecken/ ende swaricheyt en melancolie te verdriven.' *Die catalogen oft inventarissen vanden quaden verboden boucken*, Louvain 1550, cii: 'Refereynen in sot/ amereus/ wijs'. Van Doesborch's book of ballades includes woodcuts showing men and women together in bed. Although the book was later placed on the *Index Librorum prohibitorum*, this is as much a measure of appreciation from one sector of the population as it is disapproval from another.
- <sup>54</sup> Rosemond's book was published at least three times between 1517 and 1518. Coigneau (see note 53), 272; G. Brom, *Schilderkunst en Literatuur in de 16<sup>e</sup> en 17<sup>e</sup> eeuw*, Utrecht/Antwerp 1957, 75-92; L. Indestege, 'Een Leuvense theoloog uit de kring van Erasmus. Godschalch Rosemond en zijn Boeckken vander Biechten', *Verslagen en Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 1973, 25, 28; G. Kalf, *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsche Letterkunde in de 16de Eeuw*, Leiden 1889, vol. I, 147. 'XIII. Item ic heb naecte mans ende vrouwen ende onbehoorlicke figuren in mijn huys of glasen laten schilderen ende heb daer ghenuechte ende delectacie in gehadt ende gaerne aengesien ende mi selven ende ander menschen daer doer tot sonden verweert'.
- <sup>55</sup> Willem van Eeghem, ed., *Drie schandaleuse spelen (Brussels 1559)*, Antwerpen/Amsterdam 1937, 81-82.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* 74-75. 'Gevraeght ofter eenige andere deur tvoirscreven spel gescandalizeert worden seeght dat hy daer nyemant en kende ende die by hem stonden die logen zeere sulcx dat hy deponent nyet meer en dorste seggen'. Freedberg 1982 discusses the defiance of ecclesiastical interdiction of images and considers the function and reception of paintings in the context of iconoclasm and the Catholic Reformation.
- <sup>57</sup> References to censorship of ribald language were not uncommon. In early modern Europe, urban societies increasingly demanded regulation of bodily impulses. R. Muchembled, *Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France, 1400-1750*, 1978, trans. L. Cochrane, Baton Rouge/London 1985; P. Vandenbroeck, *Beeld van den andere. Vertoog over het zelf*, Antwerp 1987, especially 1-37, 141-153; P. Vandenbroeck, 'Verbeek's peasant weddings: a study of iconography and social function', *Simiolus* 4 (1984), 79-124; Coigneau (see note 53), II, 271-272, n. 61, 275-291; E. van Autenboer, *Volksfeesten en rederijckers te Mechelen (1400-1600)*, Ghent 1962, 80, note 5. Townspeople condemned peasants for exhibiting animal passions yet often harbored a longing for more 'natural pleasures'. We find an essentially male fantasy of sexual freedom and unchecked force

- in the more idealized sections of Noël du Fail's *Propos rustiques*. Rabelais presents us with a similar vision of the liberated body, though he also emphasizes the selective nature of this desire by mocking the male fear of women accorded equal sexual freedom. G. A. Pérouse, 'Le dessein des *Propos Rustiques*', in *Études Seizièmistes*, Offertes à Monsieur le Professeur V.-L. Saulnier, Geneva 1980, 137-150. I am indebted to Paul Vandenbroeck for aspects of the anthropological perspective on these phenomena.
- <sup>58</sup> C. Scott, 'Some Approaches to the Study of the Riddle', *Studies in Language, Literature, and Culture of the Middle Ages and Later*, ed. E. B. Atwood and A. Hill, Austin 1969, 111-127; R. A. Georges and A. Dundes, 'Toward a Structural Definition of the Riddle', *Journal of American Folklore* 76 (1963), 111-118; N. F. Barley, 'Structural Aspects of the Anglo-Saxon Riddle', *Semiotica* 10 (1974), 143-175; R. Caillois, 'Riddles and Images', trans. J. Mehlman, *Yale French Studies* 41 (1968), 148-58; C. Williamson, *A Feast of Creatures. Anglo-Saxon Riddle-Songs*, Philadelphia 1982, 7-46; *Een nederlands raadselboek uit de zestiende eeuw*, ed. W. L. Braekman, Brussels 1985; P. J. A. Franssen, 'Een Nederlands raadselboek uit de zestiende eeuw' [review of Braekman], *Spiegel der Letteren* 28 (1986), 96-99.
- <sup>59</sup> This visual phenomenon shares aspects of the obscene joke. S. Freud, *Jokes and their relation to the Unconscious*, 1905; trans. J. Strachey, Harmondsworth 1976; S. Kreidler, *et al.*, 'How to kill jokes cognitively? The meaning structure of jokes', *Semiotica* 68 (1988), 297-319. Coigneau (see note 53), 270, 276, draws examples from art as well as literature.
- <sup>60</sup> Vandenbroeck, *Beeld...* (see note 57); V. Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society*, Ithaca/London 1974, rpt. 1985, 23-59, 272-299; M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, 1966, rpt. London 1985, 140-158; Williamson (see note 58), 25-46; Coigneau (see note 53); I. Hammett, 'Ambiguity, Classification and Change: The Function of Riddles', *Man*, n.s. 2 (1967), 387; E. Leach, 'Anthropological aspects of language: Animal categories and verbal abuse', in *New Directions in the Study of Language*, ed. E. H. Lenneberg, Cambridge, Mass. 1963, 23-63. Closely related is the concept of play: J. Huizinga, *Homo ludens. A study of the play element in culture*, 1944, English ed. 1950, rpt. Boston 1955, 1-27, 105-118; R. Caillois, *Les jeux et les hommes*, Paris 1958; J. Ehrmann, 'Homo Ludens revisited', *Yale French Studies* 41 (1968), 31-57.
- <sup>61</sup> Pliny (*Naturalis Historia*, XX, 19) cites Diocles and Dionysus in discussing the turnip as an aphrodisiac. I thank Herman Pleij for this reference. *Den Herbarius in Dyetsche*, Antwerp, Willem Vosterman, ca. 1500; rpt. Ghent 1974, fol. cxix: 'Rapen oft rapa is heete inden tweede(n) graet en(de) nat. Sy doe(n) voeden meer da(n) ander cruide(n) maer sy zij(n) swaer te vertere(n) make(n)de morwe En(de) opgeblasen vleesche om haer winden ende op blazi(n)ghe. daer om vermeerdere(n) si sperma ende beroeren oncuischeyt hoe sij langher sien hoe si vat voeden ende min letsels hebben.... Rapen blasen oppe en(de) maken vochigheyt oft sperma inden mensche'.
- William Turner, the sixteenth-century English herbalist, cites Averroes and Dioscorides as his authorities. W. Turner, *The first and seconde partes of William Turner Doctor in Phisick...*, Cologne 1568, vol. II, 80 ff. and 115; Grosjean 1974, 129. Jacob Jordaens exploits the sexual associations of turnip and cabbage in a painting now in Kassel. The large canvas shows peasants of all ages seated around a table (a cycle of life?). The mother points to a prominent still-life detail in the foreground: an orderly group of four turnips, arranged symmetrically around a cabbage. (A couple of small squash (?) are also present, and a child urinates in the lower right corner.) B. Schnackenburg, *Flämische Meister in der Kassler Gemäldegalerie*, Kassel 1985, 40, pl. 27.
- <sup>62</sup> I. Burghoorn, *Klucht-hoofdige Snorre-Pypen, Quacken, en Quinck-slagen, Springende van den Os op den Esel*, vol. I, s.p. 1644, p. 28: 'Ik heb daer een kint helpen halen uytte kool, hier tot onse An'; *Den eereycken Pluck-vogel, ghepluckt in diverse Pluymkens van Minne-Liedekens, ende andere Vrolyckheden Uytgebroeyt door Joncker Livinius van den Minnen*, Antwerpen 1669, 232; 'Ick wil spraek hy tot sijn Joole Dat gy brengt een kint aen my 't Sy een knechtjen uyt de koolen oft uyt den Roosmary'; Kavalier (in Cat. tent. Gent

- 1986-87), 22. Similar to Beuckelaer's painting in Valenciennes is a painting attributed to Magdalena Pietersz and dated 1583 (location unknown; illustrated in Kavalier, fig. 6). The artist shows a peasant woman seated before an impressive display of produce. A man standing beside her grasps one of her breasts, while a child suckles freely on the other. In the background two men stand by a well, while a woman tends a cart and basket filled with cabbages and turnips. The subject of the painting is sexual, though not erotic. The attitude displayed toward the peasants is condescending but not condemning.
- <sup>63</sup> The print by Pieter van der Borch, published by Jan Baptist Vrints, is not listed in Hollstein. The Dutch and French texts are as follows:
- De merckten syn seer gherieflyck ende nootlyck voir alle soorten van menschen,  
Want soo wel de coopers als de vercoopers hier vinden daer sy naer wenschen.  
Les merches sont fort necessaires aux humains sans contredire,  
Car tout le monde ycy trouve ce quil desire.
- <sup>64</sup> Guicciardini (see note 3), 69: 'Antwerpen is seer wel versien van lijfneeringhe: want behalven die de vreemdelingen van alle zyden bybrenghe/ wordt van de besorghers der gantscher Provincien/ te water ende te lande/ daghelijcx soo veel bygebracht/ dat hier niet alleenlijck overvloedt van allerley ghewoonlijcke lijfneeringhe/ maer oock seer groote overvloedt van allerhande onghewoonlijcke ghevoonden wordt... Aengaende costelijcke eetware/ om te banketeren/ buyten noodtsaekelijckheydt/ wort allerhande lusticheyt ende leckernye/ die men mocht wenschen oft begheeren/ uyt alle landen/ hier ghevoonden'.
- <sup>65</sup> Van Mander 1604, chap. VII, 53-55. See H. Miedema's edition of Van Mander's *Grondt*, vol. 2, Utrecht 1973, 531-532; Moxey 1976B, 145-146, 183; J. Muylle, 'Pieter Aertsen en Joachim Beuckelaer in de kunstliteratuur (ca. 1560-1610)', in *Cat. tent. Gent 1986-87*, 15.
- Het scheen al te leven, t'groen met den rijpen,  
Men soude schier meenen met handen grijpen  
Eenighe tailliooren in 't doncker staende,  
Daer soo enen teghen-glans in is slaende,  
Ghelijck men mach sien met jongstigher vlamme  
Bij eenen Const-lievenden t'Amsterdamme.  
Summe, in Const was hy een overvliegheer,  
Om de Reflexy aerdich by te bringhen,  
Jae een groot behendich listich bedriegheer  
Van s'Menschen ooghen, oock een cluchtich liegher:  
Want men meent te sien alder haende dinghen,  
Doch ist maer verwe, die hy wist te minghen,  
Dat t'effen schijnt rondt, en t'platte verheven,  
T'stomme te spreken, en t'doode te leven.
- <sup>66</sup> A. Buchelius, 'Res Pictoriae.' *Aantekeningen over kunstenaars en kunstwerken voorkomende in zijn Diarium, Res Pictoriae, Notae Quotidianae en descriptio Urbis Ultrajectinae*, ed. G. J. Hoogewerff and J. Q. Van Regteren Altena, *Quellenstudien zur holländischen Kunstgeschichte*, I, 1928, 76.
- <sup>67</sup> Muyle (see note 65), 16; C. Scribani, *Antverpia*, Antwerp 1610, 37: 'Varro narrat cognitu(m) à se Posim nomine, ab eoq(ue); factas Romae vuas & pisces, ita ut no(n) esset aspectu discernere à veris. Quid disceret si culinam vidisset Ioachimi Buecklaer, in quâ poma & hortorum reliqua; in quâ altilia, carnes, pisces, ita rem mentiuntur, ut non una(m) fallant ancillam conquarem?'
- <sup>68</sup> *Spelen van sinne vol scoone moralisacien wtlegging ende bediedenissen op alle loeflijcke consten waer inne men claerlijck gbelijck in eenen spiegel/ Figuerlijck/ Poetelijck en(de) Retorijckelijck mach aenschouwen hoe nootsakelijck ende dienstelijck die selve consten allen menschen zijn*. Antwerp, Willem Silvius, 1562, sig. Q3-v. I would like to thank E. Haverkamp Begemann for helping me with the translation of this play.



LOFLIJCKE FAME

Dats pictura/ die oyt in menich rijck/  
Groot gheacht wert/ en gheestimeert// wordt  
Voor een stille Poesis/ en ghelaudeert// wordt/  
Want soo Poesis den mensche beweghen// can/  
Diesghelijcx Pictura oock daer teghen// can  
Elcken inden gheest verwecken sonder spreken/  
En ghelijck een Poet met gheleerde treken  
Feyten/ gesten verhaelt van voorleden tijen  
Soo oock can een Schilder/ oorloghen en strijen  
En al dat oyt ghebeurt is merckelijck tooghen  
Ja oft wijt natuerlijck saghen voor ooghen  
Weert om verhooghen/ boven alle hantwercken

REDENE

En dat noch meer is/ men siet in alle percken  
Dat een Schilder met sijnen pincele net  
Op een cleyn plaetse int gheheel set  
Landen/ en steden/ fortressen/ en sloten

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. Q3-v – Q4-r.

LOFLIJCKE FAME

Ten heeft daerom Zeuxim niet verdrotten  
Hier in te toonen eenen constighen aert  
Die teghen Parrhasium (oock seer vermaert)  
Om dlofijckste eens constich ghewracht// heeft  
En eenen wijntors gheschildert voort ghebracht// heeft  
Soo natuerlijck/ dat hy daer door heeft bedroghen  
De voghelen die daer na quamen ghevloghen  
Dies hy wel wou sijn een constenaer cloeck

REDENE.

Maer Parrhasius heeft eenen lijnen doeck  
Hem ghetoont die gheschildert soo perfect// was  
Dat Zeuxis meende dat daer me ghedect// was  
De conste/ die hy laten blijken// souwe  
Maer doen Zeuxis dan doeck af strijken// wouwe  
Vant hy hem bedroghen/ en verwonnen

LOFLIJCKE FAME.

Want al hadde hy de voghelen connen  
Bedrieghen door sulcke conste delicaet  
Parrhasius toonde een loflijcker daet  
Die eenen constenaer selve door sijn conste  
Merckelijck bedrooch.

REDENE

Een loffelijcke ionste  
Moetmen altoos/ en ten eeuwighen daghen  
Hierom sulcke constighe schilders na draghen  
Weerdich gheset/ in alle Cronijcken

<sup>70</sup> M. van Vaernewijck, *Van die beroerlicke tijden in die Nederlanden en voornamelijk in Ghendt 1566-1568*, ed. F. Vanderhaeghen, Ghent 1872-1881, Vol. 1, 143-144: 'Maer van Adam ende Eva waer wonder te zegghen, niemant en zoude wel zonder twijffelen connen jugieren, tzelve anziende, of den eenen voet van Adam uuten platten tafereele steect of niet, ende zijnen rechter aerme ende handt, die hij up zijn burst lecht, schijnt van zijnen lijve duerluchtige zijnde. Dlichaem es oock zoo vleesch-achtich dat schijnt vleesch te wesen. Niet alleene de aderen en zijn daer inne gheconterfeet zeer levende, maer ooc die cleene aerkins die een meinsche uuten lichame groijen'.

<sup>71</sup> Lucas d'Heere, *Den Hof en boomgaard der poësen*, Ghent 1565, ed. W. Waterschoot, Zwolle 1669, 129-132.

- <sup>72</sup> W. Waterschoot, ed., *Ter liefde der Const. Uit het Schilder-Boeck (1604) van Karel van Mander*, Leiden 1983, 46-50, 64-67. Vaernewijck also knew d'Heere's poem. See W. Waterschoot, 'Lucas d'Heere en Marcus van Vaernewijck voor het Lam Gods', *Jaarboek De Fonteyne* 1966, 109 ff. Guicciardini (see note 3, p. 80) praises even Frans Floris for his illusionistic painting of flesh: 'Laet ons nu spreken vande levende/ ende stellen ten eersten Frans Floris/ so uytmemende Schilder in zijn eygen conste van vindinghe ende beworpinghe/ dat herwaerts 'tgheberghte in soo veel Provincien zijns ghelijck veel licht niet en is: want hy is een sonderlingh meester/ ende daer en boven een rustich ende beleeft man van natueren: desen wordt de prijs ghegheven dat hy uyt Italien ghebracht heeft de conste van muysvleesch ende vel des lichaems aerdichlijk ende wonderbaerlijck te schilderen'.  
For a discussion of the increasing priority placed on the visual intuition of form and space, see W. M. Ivins, *On the Rationalization of Sight*, New York 1975, 7-13; D. Tomas, 'Toward an anthropology of sight', *Semiotica* 68 (1988), 246-251.
- <sup>73</sup> Van Mander praises Aertsen as literally a deceiver of men's eyes (note 65). Among the recent considerations of illusionism are J. Lacan, *The Four Fundamental concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, 1973, trans. A. Sheridan, New York/London 1981, 67-119, particularly 105-112, and R. Wollheim, *Painting as an Art*, Princeton 1987, 43-100. Both positions, different as they are, recognize simultaneous perception of the painted surface and the object represented upon it. Wollheim (360-361) cites other modern views. For an introduction to Renaissance theories of imitation and illusion see D. Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, Princeton 1981, 193-196, 279-282. Netherlandisch encomia on art consistently use the term 'deception' in a positive sense, although contemporary opinions on the virtue of mimesis were divided. The well-known platonic views of Michelangelo, as recorded by Francesco da Hollanda, stand in opposition. See Summers, 286, 332; R. Klein and H. Zerner, *Italian Art 1500-1600. Sources and Documents*, Englewood Cliffs 1966, 34; L. Mendelsohn, *Paragoni. Benedetto Varchi's 'Due Lezzioni' and Cinquecento Art Theory*, Ann Arbor 1982, 41-43, 113-115, 120-122; E. W. Tayler, *Nature and Art in Renaissance Literature*, New York/London 1964, 30-35; O. B. Hardison, Jr., R. Tuve, *Elizabeth and Metaphysical Imagery*, 1947; Chicago 1963, 50-57, 73.
- <sup>74</sup> Zirk Z. Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp 1550-1700*, Princeton 1987, 21, 41; Jean C. Wilson, 'The Participation of painters in the Bruges "Pandt" Market, 1512-1550', *Burlington Magazine* 125 (1983), 476-479; Lorne Campbell, 'The Art Market in the Southern Netherlands in the Fifteenth Century', *Burlington Magazine* 118 (1976), 188-198; Hans Floerke, *Studien zur niederländischen Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte. Die Formen des Kunsthandels, das Atelier und die Sammler in den Niederlanden vom 15.-18. Jahrhundert*, Munich/Leipzig 1905, 38-39, 62; G. F. Koch, *Die Kunstausstellung. Ihre Geschichte von den Anfängen bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1967, 63; Moxey, 1976B, 181-186. The degree of artistic self-consciousness in Antwerp is suggested by the artist who had the heads of Van Eyck and Dürer carved on the facade of his house. The sculptures, which have survived, are displayed in the Antwerp *Vleeshuis*, now a museum. See Filipczak, 14; J. Duverger and M. J. Onghena, 'Beeldhouwer Willem van den Broecke alias Gulielmus Paludanus', *Gentse Bijdragen* 5 (1938), 91-95.
- <sup>75</sup> The artistic innovation of Antwerp artists contrasts, for example, with those of Bruges. D'Heere (see note 71), 31:  
 Van desen moetme(n) hem te meer lofs gheve(n) waerlic  
 Om dat hi in zulcke tiden alsoo heeft ghefloereert,  
 Doen hi zulck' eccellente waercken eenpaerlic,  
 Als hi selve dede en had' gh'experimenteert.  
 Een Schilder uut Italien selfs confesseert,  
 Dat Heycus daer d'Oolverwe broght en heeft vonden:  
 En van dry sine waercken hi mentioneert  
 Die te Napels, Florencen, en Turbino stonden.
- <sup>76</sup> Erasmus, *Adages Iii to Iv100, Collected Works of Erasmus*, trans. M. M. Phillips, ed. R. A. B. Mynors, Toronto 1982, 6-7.