

Chapter 3 examines the scholarship on the ancient inhabitants of England and Northern Europe as the ancestors of the English and the Dutch, and the antiquities of England and the Netherlands as they were known in the seventeenth century. Weststeijn applies Junius's ideology to Rembrandt's *Oath of Civilis* for the Amsterdam town hall; he suggests that its rough vernacular style is related to the martial qualities of the Batavians. Chapter 4 concerns the relationship between Junius and his brother-in-law Gerardus Iohannes Vossius (1577–1649). Their families were intertwined and they shared many interests. Vossius admitted his indebtedness to Junius in his own *De Graphice, sive de Arte Pingendi*, published in 1650, a small book that advocates that the four popular arts of music, sports, art, and literacy be incorporated into the curriculum. Weststeijn's own English translation of *De Graphice* as the *Art of Painting* is included in an appendix, which will make this text more widely known and also emphasize its importance in applying rhetorical principles to painting. Ancient painters offered examples of behavior and art that could be applied to the moderns. Junius gave examples of ancient painters who followed nature and gave legitimacy to Caravaggio, Pieter van Laer, and Rembrandt. The typology of the ancients foreshadowing moderns called for a translation from Junius's Latin to the vernacular, so discussion of modern art could harmonize with the standards of classical scholarship.

Chapter 5 examines Junius's conception of the "presence" of painting (in Latin *praesentia*, and in Dutch, *tegenwoordigheid*) to demonstrate its relationship to the painterly goals of immediacy, power, persuasion, and form. In sum, Junius finally gets his due recognition as a key figure in the shift toward a vernacular language and local history that offers an alternative to the general emphasis on the art and theory of Rome and Tuscany.

Amy Golahny, *Lycoming College*

*Michael Sweerts (1618–1664): Shaping the Artist and the Academy in Rome and Brussels.* Lara Yeager-Crasselt.

Pictura Nova: Studies in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Flemish Painting and Drawing 21. Turnhout: Brepols, 2015. 340 pp. €125.

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The Northern artists who went to Rome in the early seventeenth century and stayed there, like Poussin, Claude Lorrain, and the now much celebrated Valentin de Boulogne, are famous but rare. Much more common are Northerners who drank at the Roman font but then returned home: Rubens, the Utrecht Caravaggisti Terbruggen and Honthorst, Rembrandt's teacher Lastman, the Frenchmen Vouet and Mignard, and perhaps (though a visit has yet to be proved) Georges de La Tour and Vermeer. Michael Sweerts (1618–64) is one such returnee, lesser known but extremely fetching and sympathetic. Born and trained in Brussels, he went to Rome in his twenties and

spent a decade in the company of artists who socialized in convivial groups like the Schildersbent, where they were called Bentvueghels (birds of a feather). For a while he went the way of the Bamboccianti, painters of low-life subjects. One of his more daring ideas was to take the seven corporal works of mercy that Caravaggio had compressed into a single painting and spread them out in a full series. One already senses a painter who saw the Lord in the poor, the sick, and the dying.

Sweerts arrived in Rome imbued with the Netherlandish ideal of drawing from life, *naer het leven*. There he absorbed the ethos of the Accademia di San Luca, where life drawing merged into the aesthetic of the ideal. Sweerts studied ancient sculpture but came to venerate above all the statues of his countryman François Duquesnoy (d. 1643), the most Hellenic of Baroque artists. Quotations from Duquesnoy's sculpture turn up in the bathing and begging nudes in Sweerts's Bambocciesque paintings. His fascination with the education of the artist resulted in many paintings that show the studio of the artist, popularized and idealized at the same time. Aspirants draw from the nude in dark rooms cluttered with piles of body parts in plaster, where an antique Juno might lie side by side with a torso by Duquesnoy.

Poussin painted his monumental *Plague at Ashdod* around the time of the plague threat of 1632. Twenty years later Sweerts tried to rival it in his largest and most ambitious canvas, *Plague in an Ancient City*. With a little under a hundred figures it pulls out all the Poussin stops: the heroic nude shown in extremes of emotion, virtuoso foreshortening and perspective, and references to antique pathos formulas all placed in a setting of grand classical architecture. The specific plague is hard to nail down and the meaning purposefully opaque. Perhaps Sweerts was striving to reach the seeming profundity of the great French master, whatever it meant. The *Plague* was a tour de force but it showed that his genius lay elsewhere.

Sweerts had carved a respectable niche for himself in the Roman art world. He participated in the academy held in Palazzo Pamphilj on the Corso. He had clients and was now a cavaliere. Still, he decided to return to Brussels before he was forty. The moment was propitious. The Hapsburg archduke, Leopold Wilhelm, was a great art collector. Sweerts obtained permission to set up a privately financed academy that would feed both the art scene and the tapestry industry. Still, Sweerts nurtured a piety so deep that it loosened him from his new moorings. In 1660–61 he went to Amsterdam where he took up a life of pious austerity and eventually joined the Société des Missions Étrangères. These French missionaries thought at first that a pious painter would be useful. He accompanied a mission bound for Siam but by the time they got to Tabriz no one could stand him: "our good Mr. Svers is not the master of his own mind" said the priest in charge (172). He found his way back to Portuguese Goa where he died in 1664. The last two years of wandering remain a blank for us.

Sweerts is the subject of an extensive monograph of 1996 by Rolf Kultzen and an exhibition in Antwerp and two American cities in 2002. Now Lara Yeager-Crasselt rethinks the personality and painting of this appealing artist in a fine new book with

special attention to the world of academies and the education of the artist. Just as Sweerts crossed boundaries—between Italy and the North, between Catholic Flanders and the United Provinces—she builds bridges between areas of scholarship usually kept apart. Brussels emerges as a protagonist that no longer blushes to be put in the company of Antwerp and Rome. The lively text and superb plates capture the fascination of this intelligent cosmopolite and make us regret that such a fine painter would throw in the sponge to head for the Orient.

Joseph Connors, *Harvard University*

*Catalunya i l'Europa septentrional a l'entorn de 1400: Circulació de mestres, obres i models artístics.* M. Rosa Terés, ed.

IRCVM-Medieval Cultures 5. Rome: Viella, 2016. 374 pp. €45.

This collection of essays edited by Maria Rosa Terés analyzes the origins of the artistic relationships between Catalonia and Northern Europe, particularly in France, the Low Countries, and Germany. The date 1400 is a key reference in this study, as it aims to include a tradition of studies that have explored the diffusion of the International Gothic style. Examples of this can be seen in the catalogues of exhibitions such as *Europäische Kunst um 1400* (Wien, 1962), *Paris 1400: Les arts sous Charles VI* (Paris, 2004), and *Catalunya 1400: El Gòtic Internacional* (Barcelona, 2012), which explore courtly art through the prism of supraregional relationships between the great dynasties. Most of the participating authors in this publication consider the year 1400 as a milestone, based on their analysis of documents and pieces of the fourteenth century, coinciding with the epoch of the kings of the Crown of Aragon, Peter IV the Ceremonious (1336–87), John I the Hunter (1387–96), and the first years of the rule of Martin the Humane (1396–1410).

The collection presents the work of a group of researchers from the University of Barcelona (IRCUM, Institut de Recerca de Cultures Medievals de la Universitat de Barcelona). Each author analyzes a different genre of artistic production, focusing on foreign contributions. Cultural exchanges (including the circulation and movement of artists and their works, and those of committees and models) are the central axes of each essay, even in instances where transmission is not a reciprocal process but merely a one-way process of reception, articulated in different phases and times of progressive assimilation or as a synthesis of different foreign models (such is the case of the examples of Italian and French paintings). The essential reference for these cultural transfers is the French court of Charles VI and his uncles John of Berry and Philip the Bold, so the study begins with the most representative and luxurious genres of courtly art: embroidery (Montserrat Aymerich), goldsmithing (Joan Domenge), illuminated manuscripts (Rafael Cornudella), and tapestries (Jacobo Vidal Franquet). Likewise, the role