Rainer Kobe

Trewir

ORCID: 0000-0003-4592-0313

The Copper Engraving *The Pope in the Lateran* by Jan van Londerseel after a Painting by Hendrick Aerts*

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The undated copper engraving *The Pope in the Lateran* by the Dutchman Jan van Londerseel[1] is well-known in the history of art, precisely because it was the architectural model for more than forty paintings of church interiors in the 17th century.[2] Since Hans Jantzen's 1910 dissertation *Das niederländische Architekturbild*, it is the engraving's painted model that has remained unknown to this day, rather than the engraving itself, and which has been the focus of examinations in art history.[3] Again and again, attempts were made to determine what the original model might have looked like, and art historians have rarely focused on the engraving as a separate piece of art. In this study the engraving and its content will be the focus of attention, whereas the possible model is of secondary importance. It will become evident that Londerseel's *The Pope in the Lateran*, contrary to its painted model, is very much connected to the denominational politics in the Netherlands around 1600.

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[*]   This essay is based on: Rainer Kobe, Konfessionalismus im Bild: Der Kupferstich ‚Der Papst im Lateran' von Jan van Londerseel nach einem Gemälde von Hendrick Aerts, in: Patrizio Foresta/Federica Meloni (eds.), Arts, Portraits and Representation in the Reformation Era. Proceedings of the Fourth Reformation Research Consortium Conference, Göttingen 2019, 173–193.

[1]   Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts ca. 1450–1700, vol. XI, Amsterdam 1955, 101, no. 75 'Interior of the Lateran in Rome'.

[2]   Ludwig Schreiner, Ein Gemälde von Hendrick Aerts: Die Phantasiekirche, in: 'Weltkunst' 50 (1980), 872–877, see 872, traces back about 25 paintings of the 'gotische Prachtarchitektur' to Londerseel's engraving. Bernard Maillet, Intérieurs d'églises 1580–1720 La Peinture Architecturale des Écoles du Nord, Merksem 2012, records about 50 such paintings, s. ibid., Catalogue, M-0001–0054.

[3]   Hans Jantzen, Das niederländische Architekturbild [Erstausgabe 1910], Braunschweig 1979, 53–57.

The engraving and its content

Prints of Londerseel's engraving are part of the graphic collections of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the Albertina in Vienna, and the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg. With a height of 30.4 cm and a width of 40 cm, the engraving is of conventional size for this type of artwork. The basis for this paper is the Albertina print[4] that matches the sheet owned by the Germanisches Nationalmuseum[5] (fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Jan van Londerseel, *Der Papst im Lateran*, Albertina Wien

Regarding Hendrick Aerts's church interior in the Londerseel engraving, the literature[6] has exclusively concerned itself with the print in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam that equals the picture in every aspect except for a small, written addition.[7] Unlike the Amsterdam print, the Vienna sheet is missing the inscription

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[4]   Albertina, HB 85.2, fol. 22, 23. Hollstein XI: 1955, 101, no. 75 I, shows the Albertina-print with the remark: "1st state".

[5]   Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Inv. no. K 1328.

[6]   Jantzen Architekturbild 1910/1979, 53; G.L.M. Daniels, Kerkgeschiedenis en politiek in het perspectief van Hendrick Aerts, in: Antiek 9(1974), 63–69, see 64; Schreiner Phantasiekirche 1980, 872; Bernard M. Vermet, Hendrick Aerts, in: Gentse bijdragen tot de kunstgeschiedenis 30 (1995), 107–118, see 108–09; Maillet Intérieurs d'églises 2012, 96.

[7]   See Hollstein XI: 1955, 101, no. 75 II, depicted in: Daniels *Kerkgeschiedenis* 1974, 64.

'*C. I. Visscher excudit*'. This means that several of the original Londerseel sheets had been printed and circulated without the additional 'excudit' before the Amsterdam art trader and publisher Claesz Janszoon Visscher (1587–1652) purchased the printing plate, added his imprint, and resold it with the addition.

In the history of the printing plate it has repeatedly been assumed to have been the other way around, i.e., an initially existing publisher's imprint was removed before circulation. However, the difference in writing between the inscriptions of '*Inventor*' and '*Sculptor*' on the one hand and the publisher's imprint '*C. I. Visscher excudit*' on the other proves that this is not the case (fig. 2 below).

Fig. 2a. Aerts' grave plate and inventor-, sculptor-inscription, detail of Jan van Londerseel, *Der Papst im Lateran*, Albertina Wien
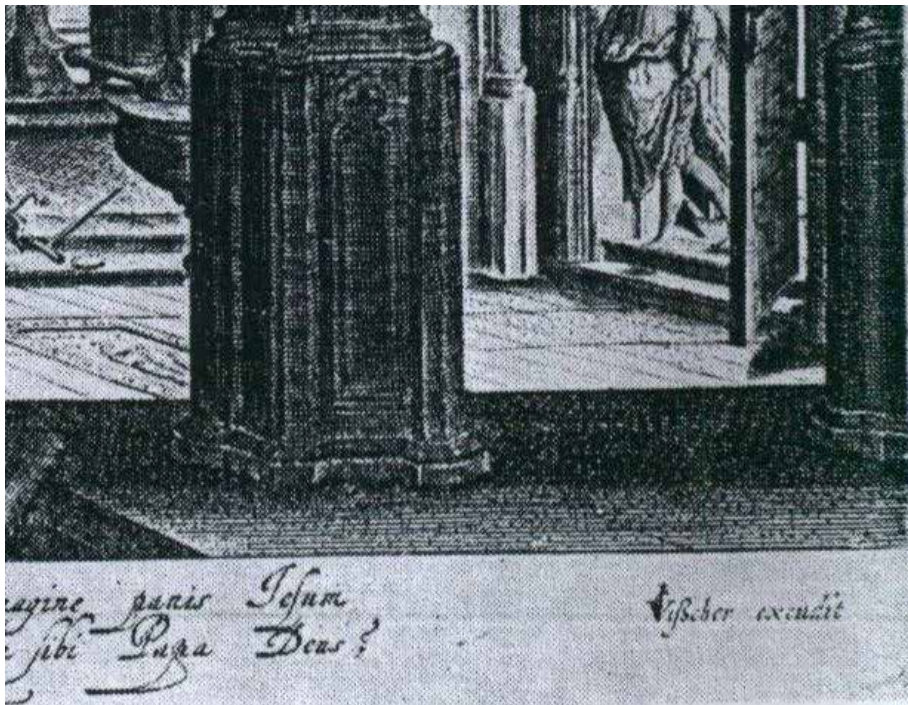

Fig 2b. Publisher seal, detail of Jan van Londerseel, *Interieur van de Sint-Jan van Lateranen te Rome*, Amsterdam Rijksmuseum, repr. Daniels, *Kerkgeschiedenis,* 64, Afb. 1

If the Amsterdam version of the engraving had been the original one, all three imprints would have been made by the same engraver, and the font would be the same. Since neither the writing nor the placement is the same but instead differs greatly from the other two inscriptions, it is certain that the imprint of '*C. I. Visscher excudit*' was added to the plate after the fact. Therefore, the prints in Vienna and Nuremberg are older.

This conclusion negates Ludwig Schreiner's assumption that it was the Amsterdam publisher who originally commissioned the engraving, and decided on its content.[8] The 'commissioning client' was no other than the engraver himself who introduces himself as '*Jan Londerseel Scul[p]tor*' in the engraving and, at the same time, lets the beholder know that '*Hendrick Aerts*' was the '*Inuentor*', i.e., he was the 'inventor' of the content pictured in the engraving (fig. 2 above).

The engraver Jan van Londerseel was born in Antwerp in 1578. After 1600, he worked in Rotterdam and Delft before he died in Rotterdam in 1625.[9] There are 79 engravings of his that are known: typically landscapes or religious themes.[10] *The Pope in the Lateran* is his only work that pictures a church's interior and originated sometime between 1603[11] and 1620, most likely before 1610.

The engraving (fig. 1) shows the interior of a two-aisled basilica, a Gothic church structure with a characteristic Vredeman de Vries 'tunnel view' into the depth of the nave. The untypically situated rood screen with its two arched gate--like passages divides the nave from the narthex that spans the entire width of the church, and includes a gallery on the right next to the rood screen. The light originates from the right side, as is evident from the shadowed figure kneeling in the foreground. Except for a baptismal font and its surrounding memorial slabs that are embedded in the floor, the church is outfitted with holy statues, bishop statues, and statues of the Virgin Mary.

A figure of Saint Lawrence with his grill sits above the left entrance to the narthex, while on the rood screen balcony, within a Gothic-embellished tabernacle and framed by two unidentifiable figures, stands the Mother of God, holding her baby in her right arm. Below the balcony with its clock, Saint Andrew is situated on the centre column of the rood screen, holding a forked cross in front of his chest.

Before the crossing a triumphal rood hangs above the nave. Behind it a high altar can be seen in the elevated choir, although not in detail. On the righthand side, by the stairway leading up to the gallery, a round arch is embedded in the wall and decorated with the relief of a single figure, most likely an epitaph. On the gallery there is an elaborate tomb installation, including a lying bishop.

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[8]   Schreiner *Phantasiekirche* 1980, 874.

[9]   Yvonne Bleyerveld, *Johannes Londerseel*, in: *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon. Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker (AKL)* 85 (2015), 225–226.

[10]   Hollstein XI: 1955, 100–102.

[11]   The engraving had not been made prior to 1603, for that year is mentioned thereon as the year of Aerts's death (see note 30).

Since it is its own element with a large external staircase, including a platform, due to the monumentality of the installation, it could be a Pope's grave.

By the right narthex pillar, on a pedestal and underneath a canopy, stands a bishop figure with its left hand raised. Above the right entrance to the narthex a half-length figure of the Mother of God sits on a crescent moon, holding her baby in her left arm. The column next to the right portal is decorated with a hanging funerary hatchment that is embellished with a crest. The side chapel underneath the gallery houses three unidentifiable saints painted on a winged altarpiece of an open winged altar.

All the elements, with their liturgically defined architecture and their embellishments as well as the absence of the pulpit typical of Evangelical church interiors, clearly indicate that the church is Catholic. Even if both bishop memorials, the presence of the Pope in the church, and, finally, the engraving's title suggest that the artwork shows the medieval di San Giovanni Basilica in Laterano prior to the Baroque remodelling of around 1650 by Francesco Borromini, this is, in fact, not the case.

The old Lateran Basilica was, contrary to the church depicted in the engraving, four-aisled, and the array of saints' figures of the depicted church does not include the figure of John the Baptist that is essential for a San Giovanni--dedicated church. The fact that the shown church faces east, as the shadows originating from the right (south) show, instead of west is another reason why it cannot be modelled after the actual Lateran Basilica. Consequently, the engraving shows a Catholic church interior that arose from the creator's imagination, and supposedly, judging from the artwork content and the inscription, it recreates the interior of the Lateran Basilica. This basilica had been and remained, even after the Pope's move to the Vatican (end of the 14th century), the Cathedral of the Bishop of Rome with the official name '*Omnium Urbis et Orbis Ecclesiarum Mater et Caput*' (Mother and Head of all churches in the city and the world). As late as in the early modern period, the Lateran Basilica was understood to be connected to the priority (primacy) of the Bishop of Rome over other patriarchs as well as to his secular position of power due to Emperor Constantine, as was documented in the 'Donation of Constantine', a known forgery.[12]

Until the modern period, the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano remained a central point of the pontifical ceremonial with the 'Possession of the Lateran' upon the introduction of every new Pope and with the pontifical Corpus Christi procession.[13] The depiction of the Pope in the Lateran Basilica always had this added special meaning: all through the Middle Ages. That is why the double depiction of the Pope in his bishop's church in Londerseel's engraving is even more striking.

[12]   Horst Fuhrmann (ed.), Das Constitutum Constantini (Constantinische Schenkung) Text, Hannover 1968, 80 (§ 11)-95 (§ 18).

[13]   Ulrich Nersinger, Liturgien und Zeremonien am Päpstlichen Hof, vol. I, Bonn 2010, 315–345, 455–468.

On the left, in the middle ground, he has been placed beneath the rood screen in a procession with other clergymen and pontifical personnel below a canopy, carrying a monstrance. The procession is walking along the nave to the high altar. The second depiction shows the Pope kneeling in the foreground, to the right of the narthex, with his cross-staff over one shoulder and his hands raised in prayer or invocation, and with a pile of opened books in front of him.

Both scenes were modelled after the 1567 engraving series *The Devine Charge to the Three Estates* (nobility, clergymen, and peasants) by Philips Galle, inspired by designs by Marten van Heemskerk.[14] The scene on the right in the foreground with the kneeling Pope originated from the first sheet of the series, titled *The Lord Assigning Duties to the Three Estates,* while the scene on the left in the middle ground that shows the Pope carrying a monstrance below the canopy originated from the second sheet from the same series, titled *The Pope Performing Religious Duties*. While the other individuals are probably pure decoration, the third scene, namely the one in the side chapel beneath the gallery, is important for the perceived meaning of the artwork: it depicts a priest who, supported by an acolyte, celebrates the Sacrifice of the Mass in front of the altar.

The engraving and the story it tells

The two inscribed Latin verses at the etching's lower edge say the following about the three scenes:

[1] *In Lateranensi Romanus Episcopus a[e]de.*
Supplicat hinc Triadi mista operante sacris.

[2] *Inde sacrosancti sub imagine panis Jesum Gestat adorandum. Num sibi Papa Deus?*

[1] Here prays the Roman Bishop in the Lateran to the Trinity, while a priest celebrates the mass.

[2] There, beneath the image of the hallowed bread, he carries Jesum who is [actually] to be adored. Does the Pope think himself God?

The first verse relates to the scenes with the kneeling Pope and the mass in the chapel on the right, whereas the second relates to the left middle-ground scene with the Pope in the procession. The final line of the second verse, which relates to the Pope carrying the monstrance, explains the entire image: *Num sibi papa deus?* 'Does the Pope think himself God?'. This short question shines a critical light on the previous lines as well as the described scenes.

14   Ilja M. Veldmann, *The New Hollstein. Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700. Maarten van Heemskerck*, Part II, Roosendaal 1991, 178f (no. 497, 498).

This criticism of the Pope as part of the image design spread in Reformed circles in Central Europe after Lukas Cranach's 1521 Passional Christi and Antichristi.[15] If such an inscription was omitted, the scenes involving the Pope in Londerseel's engraving could be regarded as neutral, as they were meant to be in Heemskerk's designs. Merely the doubled depiction of the Pope and the fact that he is shadowed allow for ambiguity and may express a more negative view. Only the inscription adds the anti-Catholic mark. As is the case with the Heemskerk models, the Londerseel engraving does not depict a specific Pope,[16] but rather the papal office.[17] Ludwig Schreiner, who dealt with the Londerseel engraving and its possible painted model, interpreted the engraving positively, due to his imprecise translation of the Latin inscription.[18] He was convinced the sheet was made to honour the Dutch Pope Adrian VI. With his translation of the question in the final line at the end of the second verse: 'Does God not carry Jesus?', he missed the confessional power that the engraving held.

In more recent Dutch/Flemish literature, the criticism of the Pope implied by the inscription was recognised,[19] but conclusions regarding the content of the entire image were not drawn.

The criticism of the Pope only becomes clear in the combination of the image and the text, which are already well-coordinated by the first words 'Here' (Verse [1]) and 'There' (Verse [2]) in the inscription.

The scene of the Pope in the procession (fig. 1, on the left, in the middle ground) and the corresponding second verse of the inscription hold the key to understanding the entire artwork. The scene that includes the monstrance-carrying Pope underneath the canopy is a depiction of a 'Eucharistic and sacrament procession' of which the consecrated host – as the 'true body of Christ', according to transubstantiations – is a part. This ceremony that was introduced in the 13th century as 'Solemnity of the Body and the Blood of Christ': Corpus Christi, is arguably the most visible 'image' of Catholicism. Even more so if the Pope celebrated the solemnity of Corpus Christi in the Lateran, as was

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[15]   See Kobe Konfessionalismus 2019, 178–181.
[16]   Schreiner *Phantasiekirche* 1980, 873, recognizes Pope Adrian VI (pontificate: 1522–1523), Daniels 1974 *Kerkgeschiedenis*, 66–68, Pope Sixtus V (pontificate: 1585–1590).
[17]   As in Luther's anti-pontifical polemic (Pope is the Antichrist) it was always the institution and not the individual officeholder that was meant, Gottfried Seebaß, Antichrist IV, in: TRE III (1978), 28–43, see 29.
[18]   Schreiner Phantasiekirche 1980, 873, translates from Latin: ‚[1] In der Lateranskirche kniet hier vorne der Bischof von Rom und betet zu der Heiligen Dreieinigkeit. Als ein Eingeweihter verrichtet er seine Gebetshandlungen. [2] Dort hinten trägt er (der Bischof) in der Gestalt des heiligen Brotes den verehrungswürdigen Jesus. Trägt nicht auch Gott Vater für ihn den Jesus?'.
[19]   Bernard M. Vermet, Architectuurschilders in Dantzig. Hendrick Aerts en Hans en Paul Vredeman de Vries, in: ‚Gentse bijdragen tot de kunstgeschiedenis' 31(1996), 27–57, see 47–48: ‚[1] In de Lateraanse kerk bidt de bisshop van Rome hier tot de Drievuldigheid, terwijl een priester de mis opdraagt. [2] Daarachter draagt hij Jezus onder de gedaante van heilig brood ter aanbidding. Denkt de paus soms dat hij God is?', see also: Albert Blankert, Museum Bredius. Catalogus van de schilderijen en tekeningen (1st ed. Den Haag 1978), Zwolle 1991, 39.

the tradition in the late Middle Ages.[20] The creator of the engraving purposely framed the Pope, the Lateran, and Corpus Christi as the epitome of Catholicism in the artwork in order to question it at the same time. By combining the image and text: the Pope with the monstrance together with the second verse of the inscription, the dogma of the physical presence of Christ in the Eucharist is called into question and rejected. In the Reformed belief, Christ sits on God's right and therefore cannot be physically present, neither in the bread nor in the wine of the Last Supper.[21]

To believe that a human, even if the Pope, could carry Christ: in form of the host in the monstrance, would be nothing short of blasphemy. 'Does the Pope think himself God?', the creator of the image and text inquires accusatorily. This question: '*Num sibi Papa Deus?*' has been presented by Protestants of all disciplines to the high priest of the Catholic church as a reproach. Luther viewed the Pope as the Anti-Christ who replaced Christ as the Head of the Church.[22] Zwingli[23] and Calvin[24] held similar views.

In both foreground scenes the criticism of the Pope is not only conveyed by the description but by the image itself. How else would one explain the fact that the kneeling Pope is entirely shadowed, and therefore, according to Protestant beliefs, the light of the true biblical word does not favour him? Another figure that is shadowed is that of the bishop by the column in front of the Pope that the praying Pope is looking at: possibly one of his predecessors who was proclaimed a saint. From the point of view of a Reformed observer, this was nothing more than iconolatry and therefore idolatry.

In the chapel below the gallery the priest is celebrating the mass without the congregation being present. Such masses *sine populo*, or private masses, were viewed by Evangelicals as violation of the divine mission of proclamation and therefore rejected.

Regarding Londerseel's engraving and its inscription, one can conclude:
– Jan van Londerseel, a copper engraver who worked in Rotterdam and Delft, produced both the engraving and the inscription after 1603 in the first quarter of the 17th century. The model for his engraving was an unknown work by the painter Hendrick Aerts, who was named 'Inventor' in Londerseel's engraving.

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[20] Nersinger *Liturgien* 2010, 435–436.

[21] Ernst Iserloh, Abendmahl III/3, in: TRE I (1977), 107–131, see: 114 (Zwingli), 117 (Calvin).

[22] Seebaß *Antichrist IV* 1978, 29.

[23] Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke, Berlin 1905–1991 (Nachdruck München Kraus Reprint, 1981), vol. I: 1905, 460 respectively II: 1908, 103–111; Rudolf Gwalther, Der Endtchrist, Zürich 1546 [ZB Zürick, Sign. III R 435], fol. 49v–51v, with the caption: 'Der Bapst gibt sich selbs für Gott uß' [The Pope pretends to be God].

[24] See Jean Calvin, Unterricht in der christlichen Religion. Institutio Christianae Religionis, übers. v. Otto Weber, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1988, 780 (IV, 7, 29).

– The Amsterdam publisher Visscher acquired the copper plate, most likely after Londerseel's death around 1624, added his own imprint, and circulated the engraving without further alterations.
– The engraving, as Londerseel created it originally, included denominational--Reformed criticism of the Pope and his doctrine of the Last Supper, based on both the image content and inscription.

What J. Londerseel's engraving model, Hendrick Aerts's original church interior, possibly looked like

Up until the 1990s, the painter of the model named '*Inventor*' by Londerseel, Hendrick Aerts, had been entirely unknown, except for a handful of signed architectural paintings, inspired by Vredeman de Vries, that were attributed to him.[25] In 1995, the Belgian art historian Bernard M. Vermet was able to identify the painter with the help of some Gdansk documents and the gravestone inscription in Londerseel's engraving.[26]

Hendrick Aerts, who was born between 1565 and 1575, migrated from Mecheln in the southern Netherlands to Gdansk with his mother, where she remarried.[27] Aerts grew up in Gdansk, and learned the art of painting from Hans Vredeman de Vries and his son Paul while they worked in Gdansk between 1592 and 1596. There are many indications that, as Vermet assumes, Aerts accompanied his teachers to Prague.[28] The Vredeman family moved to Hamburg in 1598 before migrating to Amsterdam in 1601, where Paul became a citizen and ran a workshop.[29] It cannot be ruled out that Aerts stayed in Prague in 1598 after his teachers had moved away, and completed his palace paintings and the church interior, which would later become the model for Londerseel's engraving.

Aerts died in Gdansk in January 1603, according to the gravestone in the engraving that bears the inscription: '*Henderick*' and '*Mynen Son in Danzk 1603*',[30] (fig. 2 above, left gravestone) possibly due to the plague that was rampant there at the time. Due to the uncertainty around his birthdate it cannot be said definitely whether he was in his late twenties or thirties when death overtook him.

[25]   Sigrid Trauzeddel: *Arts, Hendrick*, in: *AKL V* (1992), 341.
[26]   Vermet Hendrick Aerts 1995, 110–112; Vermet Architectuurschilders 1996, 32–37; Bernard M. Vermet, Hendrick Aerts – a Gdansk Painter, in: Małgorzata Ruszkowska-Macur e.a. (ed.), Netherlandish Artists in Gdansk in the Time of Hans Vredeman de Vries, Lemgo 2006, 59–63, see 59–61.
[27]   Vermet Architectuurschilders 1996, 32–37.
[28]   Ibid., 51–53.
[29]   Hans Vredeman died in 1609 in Hamburg, Paul in 1617 in Amsterdam, see Heiner Borggrefe, Hans Vredeman de Vries (1526–1609), in: Heiner Borggrefe e.a. (ed.), Hans Vredeman de Vries und die Renaissance im Norden (Ausstellungskatalog), München 2002, 15–38, see: 30, note 119, 121.
[30]   Vermet *Hendrick Aerts* 1995, 111–12.

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His known oeuvre only includes seven paintings. All of them originated in the three years between 1600 and the end of 1602. The canvases are not very big, the largest measuring 93 by 127.5 cm[31] and the smallest 38 by 62 cm.[32] The measurements of the painting that inspired Londerseel's engraving most likely reside somewhere between the two sizes, but it is no larger than 70 by 100 cm.

Aerts's church interior probably had not originated before 1598, due to the dependence on the Vredeman de Vries-inspired paintings created in Prague,[33] but rather at the same time as his other preserved works: around the turn of the century. How the painting or a drawing of it made it to Rotterdam and into the hands of Londerseel remains unknown. It is entirely possible that Paul Vredeman, who worked in Amsterdam from 1601 onwards, played a role in the transfer.

There is no agreement over what the model for the engraving looked like. A much-discussed question is whether the print reflects the original painting in reverse, as was typical of print reproduction in the 17th century,[34] or whether both scenes involving the Pope as well as the image inscription already belonged to Aerts's painting. The Londerseel print itself proves that the image is inverted, as Schreiner assumed, while Vermet rejected this assumption.[35] The figure of the bishop by the column in the foreground on the right side is the proof. He is blessing with his left hand (fig. 1). This is, as experts say, a definite sign of the inversion inevitable during the printing process.[36] The only way to avoid the inversion would be to create the original version in reverse, which would mean significantly more effort and complexity, and was therefore not commonly done. Such a reversed version of the original was created rarely and only in specific circumstances. Londerseel, as can be seen by the bishop figure's raised left hand, forewent such a procedure.[37] This means that the print shows the original by Aerts in reverse.

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[31]   *'Allegorie auf Jugend u. Liebe'* Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (Vermet *Architectuurschilders* 1996, 34, Afb. 4).

[32]   *'Palastinterieur'* Kiew, lost in the war (Vermet *Architectuurschilders* 1996, 38, Afb. 6).

[33]   Thomas Fusenig, Bernard Vermet, Der Einfluss von Hans Vredeman de Vries auf die Malerei, in: Hans Vredeman de Vries und die Renaissance im Norden 2002, 161–178, see 166: '[H. Aerts war] wohl derjenige Maler, der Vredemans Vorbild am genauesten folgte […] Seine Palastansichten sind eng mit den Bildern verwandt, die Hans und Paul in Danzig und anschließend in Prag malten'.

[34]   Stephan Brakensiek, Gemalte Interpretation – Gemälde nach druckgraphischen Erfindungen. Überlegungen zu einigen medialen Aspekten der Reproduktionsgraphik, in: Markus A. Castor e.a. (ed.), Druckgraphik. Zwischen Reproduktion und Invention, Berlin, München 2010, 39–53, see 47: ‚Annähernd 95 Prozent der vor 1750 erschienenen Reproduktionsgraphik zeigen ihr Motiv seitenverkehrt'.

[35]   Schreiner *Phantasiekirche* 1980, 874–876, Vermet *Architectuurschilders* 1996, 49, note 47.

[36]   See Brakensiek *Interpretation* 2010, 47–48.

[37]   As it is the case with the Roman numerals on the clock at the rood screen (see fig. 1); they can only be read after the engraving's reversion (see fig. 3).

The painting by Aerts, at least in its basic composition, still looked like the inverted engraving without the Latin inscription (fig. 3) and, as can be seen, without the two scenes involving the Pope. The gallery with the chapel is now on the left and the rood screen with the view into the nave on the right. An observer can now 'read' the depicted figures from left to right and advance in perspective into the depth of the nave when looking at the image. Now, the incidence of light originates from the left.

Four different and yet similar church interior paintings by H. Aerts, or Hans and Paul Vredeman, respectively, (fig. 3–6) demonstrate their interconnected content and timeframe. These are: Londerseel's inverted engraving with the composition of the unknown church interior by Aerts (fig. 3), the painting *Interior of a Gothic Church* by Aerts from Brunswick,[38] (fig. 4) the painting *Church Interior* by Paul Vredeman de Vries from the Rohrau Castle,[39] (fig. 5) and the only datable painting, *Interior of a Gothic Church* by Hans Vredeman de Vries, dated 1594 and privately owned.[40] (fig. 6)

Fig. 3. Jan van Londerseel, *Der Papst im Lateran*, Albertina Wien, mirrored

[38] Hendrick Aerts, '*Inneres einer gotischen Kirche*', undated, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton--Ulrich-Museum, Inv. no. GG 425.
[39] Paul Vredeman de Vries, '*Kircheninterieur*', undated, Graf Harrachsche Familiensammlung, Rohrau Castle near Vienna.
[40] Hans Vredeman de Vries, '*Inneres einer gotischen Kirche*', 1594, Privatbesitz. It's his eldest known Church Interior.

Fig. 4. Hendrick Aerts, *Inneres einer gotischen Kirche*; oil on pannel, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum

Fig. 5. Paul Vredeman de Vries, *Kircheninterieur*; oil on pannel, Schloss Rohrau NÖ, Graf Harrachsche Familiensammlung, repr. Fusenig/Vermet *Einfluss*, 163, Abb. 4

Fig 6. Hans Vredeman de Vries, *A gothic church interior*, 1594, oil on panel, private ownership, repr. https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/vredeman-de-vries-hans-3018-c-1964444810

What makes Aerts's church interior from Londerseel's inverted engraving (fig. 3) special and separates it from the church interiors painted by Hans and Paul Vredeman de Vries (fig. 5 and 6) as well as from his own Brunswick painting (fig. 4) is the rood screen in the middle ground that is the central focus of the image. This position of the rood screen: in the narthex before the actual nave, is liturgically and architecturally 'impossible'.

In Paul Vredeman's painting from the Rohrau Castle (fig. 5) the floor plan is very similar to Londerseel's engraving, with the only exception that the rood screen is situated where it liturgically and architecturally belongs: in the depth of the nave, by the crossing, serving as a divide between laymen and priests (choir).

The 1594 Gdansk painting by Hans Vredeman *Interior of a Gothic Church* (fig. 6), with the narthex with the baptismal font and gravestones before the nave, may have influenced Aerts's design just as much as his 1594/95 *Pietas* painting that resides in the Gdansk Town Hall (not listed here).[41] It is from this artwork that Aerts may have taken the conception of the view into the multiple-aisled nave through a divided arch construction all the way to the apse as it opens up at the end of the narthex with the view through both rood screen arches in the engraving.

Since neither the date of origin of the Aerts's painting that is mirrored in Londerseel's engraving (fig. 3) nor the date of origin of Paul Vredeman's similarly designed church interior from the Rohrau Castle (fig. 5) is known, it is impossible to tell whose artwork came first, and therefore served as the model

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[41]   See Borggrefe *Hans Vredeman de Vries und die Renaissance im Norden* 2002, 327, no. 168d.

for the other one. It is entirely possible that Paul Vredeman's painting originated during his stay in Prague, and Aerts, inspired by it, subsequently developed his own more complex architecture with the rood screen in the foreground.

Contrary to Fusenig/Vermet,[42] it can be ruled out that Paul Vredeman's *Church Interior* (fig. 5) is an inverted adaptation of Londerseel's engraving (fig. 1) after Hendrick Aerts, not only because of the engraving's estimated date of origin[43] but also because in that case Paul Vredeman would have had to make the effort to create the painting in reverse without having a specific reason to do so. Additionally, it is unlikely due to the teacher-student relationship between Hans and Paul Vredeman and Aerts.[44]

The 1700 possibly Prague-originated 'Gemäldekabinett' by Johann Michael Brettschneider,[45] (fig. 7) which has resided at the Municipal Museum Rheydt Castle since 1974, is only of interest at second glance. Upon closer inspection, the 103-by-144cm-sized gallery image shows Aerts's painted church interior with a size of approximately 19 by 25 cm among 35 smaller paintings on the illusionistic gallery wall (fig. 8). Contrary to the other 50 different painted copies of the same size, here Brettschneider reproduces the church interior in reverse to Londerseel's engraving. Brettschneider's painting lacks the church interior arrangements that have already been concluded to be of Catholic origin, including the bishop's grave on the gallery and the bishop's figure by the pillar, as well as both scenes involving the Pope and the private mass celebrated in the chapel below the gallery. Instead, the church is filled with people who cannot be definitely assigned to specific confessions.

None of the previous investigators and interpreters of Londerseel's engraving, neither Jantzen nor Vermet nor Maillet, went into detail on Brettschneider's early use of Aerts's architecture, most likely because the painting was unknown to them.

It all points to Aerts's Gothic church interior looking exactly like Brettschneider reproduced it in his painting (fig. 8). It is uncertain whether Brettschneider got to know Aerts's painting while he worked in Prague around 1700[46] and simply reproduced the church architecture. However, it can be ruled out that he made the complex effort to reverse the church interior of Londerseel's engraving

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[42]   Fusenig/Vermet *Einfluss* 2002, 177, note 14.

[43]   Later as 1603 (Aerts's year of death), see note 11.

[44]   See note 33.

[45]   Johann Michael Bretschneider, ‚Gemäldekabinett‘, Mönchengladbach, Städtisches Museum Schloß Rheydt, Inv. no. M 32. Concerning Johann Michael Brettschneider and his Rheydt-painting see Gregor J.M.‘Weber, Neue Erkenntnisse zu drei Gemälden in Schloß Rheydt. I. Johann Michael Brettschneider, ‚Blick in die Galerie eines Fürsten‘“: Malerei nach graphischer Druckgraphik, in: Rheydter Jahrbuch für Geschichte, Kunst und Heimatkunde 20 (1992), 89–122; Andreas Tacke, Die Gemälde des 17. Jahrhunderts im Germanischen Nationalmuseum. Bestandskatalog, Mainz 1995, 63–66.

[46]   Brettschneider who was born in Bohemia (1656) and died in Vienna (1727) lived and worked in Prague 1697–1707, see Weber *Brettschneider* 1992, 100–101.

Fig. 7. Johann Michael Brettschneider, *Gemäldekabinett*, oil on canvas, Mönchengladbach, Städtisches Museum Schloss Rheydt

Fig. 8. Church interior, detail of Johann Michael Brettschneider, *Gemäldekabinett*

if he did not at least assume that Aerts's artwork, which he wished to recreate, looked like he painted it in his Rheydt cabinet of art, i.e., in reverse to Londerseel's engraving and without the scenes involving the Pope.

Conclusions about Aerts's painting and the origin of Londerseel's engraving

Even if without the original Aerts's painting or at least a contemporary description it cannot be known with absolute certainty, neither the double depiction of the Pope nor the inscription can be found in Aerts's work, and therefore they must be additions by the Dutch engraver. In the Gdansk of Aerts's time towards the end of the 16th century, the Reformed and Lutherans determined the current issues through their disagreements amongst themselves and with their competitors. The Catholic denomination played an insignificant role in the public discourse. The Pope and the Vatican, if at all, only acted as buyers for corn from the Vistula delta. In the educated circles of the city they were merely known and admired as connoisseurs and patrons of the arts. After the introduction of Protestantism in preceding years and its firm establishment, there was no reason for Anti-Catholic polemic in the city. Such a Pope-critical and at the same time dogmatically complex subject as is displayed by Londerseel's engraving and its inscription can be ruled out for the Gdansk of the time. Like Gdansk, the Hapsburg imperial residence in Prague, where the painting, at least in its conception and design, likely originated towards the late 16th century, was not a place for dogmatic, Anti-Catholic criticism in an artwork meant for the art market.

The Netherlands are a different story. The satiric engraving of an unknown artist, dated 1572,[47] in which Dutch oppressors, the Pope and Duke Alba, are dancing in each other's arms like a couple, shows the political and denominational anti-Papism around the turn of the century.

The dogmatic criticism of the Pope visible in Londerseel's engraving does not fit with Gdansk or Prague, it does, however, fit with the northern Netherlands, where the Reformed became the predominant denomination and established themselves as the preferred 'publike kerk' towards the end of the 16th century. The Dutch fight for freedom against the Spanish was closely connected to the Calvinists dogmatic fight against Catholicism and Papism. It makes sense to assume the engraving developed from the intrinsic criticism inherent in the Calvinistic-Anti-Catholic setting in the Netherlands.

The dogmatic Anti-Catholicism took a backseat when in 1609 a ceasefire was achieved between the States General and Spain, and around the same time the

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[47] 'Spotprent op Alva en de katholieke kerk' (1572), Historisch Museum, Stichting Atlas van Stolk, Rotterdam, see James Tanis, Daniel Horst, Images of Discord: A graphic interpretation of the opening decades of the Eighty Years' War, Grand Rapids 1993, 64–67.

Reformed-internal disputes around the predestination between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants began. This leads to the assumption that the criticism of the Pope, demonstrated by the two scenes and the inscription, after 1603 but before 1609 was Londerseel's version of reproducing Aerts's original church interior. Whether the engraver himself or a consulted theological dogmatist with the knowledge of Latin had the idea and wrote the text cannot be determined.

The results of the investigation are as follows:

– The unknown painting by the Gdansk painter Hendrick Aerts which was the model for Londerseel's engraving *The Pope in the Lateran* (with Aerts called 'Inventor') showed the interior of the church in reverse to the printed sheets.
– Aerts's original painting contained neither the two scenes involving the Pope nor the inscription. In its church architecture it looked like that which Johann Michael Brettschneider included in 1700 in the church interior of his *Blick in die Galerie eines Fürsten*.
– The church interior Aerts painted around 1600, influenced by Hans and Paul Vredeman de Vries, is Catholic, judging from the interior arrangements, without further denominational statement. The painting most likely originated in Prague, where it was commissioned and meant to be sold.
– The engraver Jan van Londerseel, who worked in Rotterdam and Delft, created the engraving *The Pope in the Lateran* during the first decade of the 17th century after Aerts's painting (due to the print revised to the model); he added the two scenes involving the Pope as well as the inscription, and thereby indicated criticism of the Pope and of the Catholic doctrine of the Last Supper.
– The countless imitative paintings left out the criticism conveyed in the engraving that is expressed in both the image and text. The only thing of interest was the reproduction of Aerts's architecture. The imitative paintings kept the print-related inversion.

The Reformed confessionalism in Londerseel's engraving *The Pope in the Lateran* is an addition from the first decade of the 17th century, influenced by confessional and political circumstances in the Netherlands. The engraving's inspiration, the church interior by Hendrick Aerts, had originated a few years before as a neutral image of a Catholic cathedral whose architecture is mirrored in the engraving.

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Miedzioryt Jana van Londerseela *Papież na Lateranie* według obrazu Hendrika Aertsa

Architektura na miedziorycie *Papież na Lateranie* Jana van Londerseela powstała według nieznanego obrazu czynnego w Gdańsku malarza – Hendrika Aertsa. Pochodzący z Mechelen artysta był najpewniej uczniem Vredemana de Vriesa. Zmarł młodo, bo w 1603 r., ale architektura z jego obrazu służyła za wzór wielu malarzom wnętrz kościelnych. Badanie wykazało, że rycina Londerseela zawiera zarówno w sferze wizualnej,

jak i w łacińskiej inskrypcji niezauważone dotychczas przesłanie skierowane przeciwko papieżowi i Kościołowi katolickiemu. Ten rodzaj konfesyjnej polemiki koresponduje z sytuacją w Holandii na początku XVII w., kiedy Londerseel wykonał rycinę, ale nie ma nic wspólnego z obrazem Aertsa. Na podstawie szczegółów odbitki można udowodnić, że gotycka architektura kościoła przedstawiona na rycinie jest odwróconym odwzorowaniem modelu namalowanego przez Aertsa. *Gabinet obrazów* Johanna Michaela Brettschneidera zachowany w Miejskim Muzeum Zamkowym w Rheydt, namalowany sto lat później, przedstawia fragment wnętrza kościoła Aertsa tak, jak prawdopodobnie wyglądało ono pierwotnie: wnętrza kościoła, o którego uroku decyduje wyłącznie architektura fantastyczna.