Distribution Agreement

In presenting this thesis as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for a degree from Emory University, I hereby grant to Emory University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive, make accessible, and display my thesis in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter now, including display on the World Wide Web. I understand that I may select some access restrictions as part of the online submission of this thesis. I retain all ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis.

Lonnie Hollingsworth III April 7, 2014

Patronage and Painting in the Sixteenth-Century Dutch Low Countries

by

Lonnie Hollingsworth III

Walter Melion
Adviser

Emory Department of Art History

Walter Melion
Adviser

Sarah McPhee
Committee Member

Mark Ravina
Committee Member
2014

Patronage and Painting in the Sixteenth-Century Dutch Low Countries

By
Lonnie Hollingsworth

Walter Melion
Adviser

An abstract of
a thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences
of Emory University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Bachelor of Arts with Honors

Emory Department of Art History

2014

Abstract
Patronage and Painting in the Sixteenth-Century Dutch Low Countries

By Lonnie Hollingsworth

For most of Western history, art was created not for its own sake, but as the finest of material commodities. In the Dutch Low Countries, as in the rest of Europe, groups of wealthy and powerful patrons commissioned and purchased paintings from the finest painters for a variety of reasons. While the painters themselves may have come from somewhat varied backgrounds, the patrons of most masterpieces of sixteenth-century Dutch painting were generally from one of three backgrounds: the nobility, the Catholic hierarchy, or artisanal guilds, especially the Guild of Saint Luke. By looking at a set of paintings by three artists, each from distinct regional and artistic backgrounds, and their work as viewed through the context of their relationship to the patron of the artwork, we can gauge the impact that patronage had on the style, subject matter and overall development of painting in the Dutch Low Countries during the first half of the sixteenth-century.

Patronage and Painting in the Sixteenth-Century Dutch Low Countries

By

Lonnie Hollingsworth III

Walter Melion
Adviser

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences
of Emory University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Bachelor of Arts with Honors

Emory Department of Art History

2014

Acknowledgements
Special thanks to Walter Melion, for all his assistance in helping this project come to life.

Table of Contents

Introduction

In order to better understand the impact of patronage on the art of the Dutch Low Countries, I have examined several paintings where the impact of the patron can be understood from the way the final product uses symbolism, iconography and other methods. The first consists of two versions of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin*, both painted by Jan Gossart, one in 1515, the subsequent image in 1522 [Figures 1, 2]. By comparing the two images and the circumstances surrounding their completion, we can get a better understanding of the impact that the different patrons of the two images had on the finished products. Next, we will consider an earlier painting that was a collaborative effort shared by Jan Gossart and Gerard David. The *Malvagna Triptych*, painted in 1513, is distinctive in that the individual nature of the artwork can be explained by reference to the patron [Figures 3, 4]. Finally, we will consider the works of other artists, Maarten van Heemskerck's 1532 version of *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin* and Lucas van Leyden's 1527 *Last Judgment* triptych, and the way that their argument and style can be better understood by viewing the works through the lens of the relationship the artist had with the patron [Figures 5, 6, 7].

No artifact exists without some sort of use, no piece of music was performed without an intended audience, and no painting was crafted without the intention of being seen one day. The fine arts, painting in particular, are not generally viewed as an act done for the self, but rather are an inherently social pursuit, involving at least two persons, the artist and the viewer. This has held true throughout western history, and the interaction between artist, artwork and viewer has been examined many times. However, there is another actor whom we must consider when thinking about the conceptualization and

execution of a painting: the person who commissioned the piece, who is also by definition its primary viewer.

Art is not created in a vacuum. Someone has to make the piece, someone has to view the piece, and generally it is expected that the person who made the artwork will be compensated for their time and effort. Renaissance painters in Italy certainly did not work for free, but rather for a commission and for fame. The same was true of the German states and the Dutch Low Countries during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There are records kept from many of the most famous artists showing payment in guilders for the completion of a painting, whether that painting is a portrait or a monumental altarpiece. The type of painting may be quite different depending on the person or entity buying the piece, as well. The head of a wealthy noble family might want his visage immortalized in paint, while his heirs might want to commemorate his life or have people intercede on behalf of his soul after his death by placing his image in a religious setting. The same religious setting, or another scene from scripture, might be purchased by a local church for their patron saint, or by a local guild for the same reason, with greater works of art by more famous artists bringing more power and prestige to the person commissioning the work.

There were a variety of potential patrons for a sixteenth century Dutch artist, but they were generally from one of three major groups. A noble family, or the court of a particularly powerful and influential family, may frequently find that they required a painting for purposes ranging from commemoration for posterity to mending or increasing diplomatic ties, as was the case with some of the earliest works and sketches Jan Gossart did under the employment of Philip of Burgundy, the admiral of Zeeland and the Bishop of

Utrecht from 1517 until 1527.[1] Noble patrons could be particularly valuable to an artist due to their need for a court painter, which would involve steady work for an artist as well as significant power and prestige, as beloved court painters could become quite intimately involved with the affairs of the nobleman and other courtiers, even to the point of becoming minor nobility themselves. The payment for such a position could be enough to maintain a lavish lifestyle for the artist and his heirs, and the position offered a degree of stability that might be difficult for other patrons to match. While the most likely type of painting to be requested by a nobleman would have been a portrait, I will largely avoid discussion of portraiture here, as my focus is on how patronage subtly impacts paintings that are commissioned by a patron but have another purpose aside from portraiture, such as monumental religious paintings.

While a nobleman might be an excellent long-term patron, the majority of commissions for paintings created for the nobility were executed by artists associated with the local Guild of Saint Luke, and that Guild and others were major patrons of the arts in their own right. A guild in the Dutch Low Countries was an association of professionals in the same line of work, such as a guild of blacksmiths or a guild of merchants. These men would have apprenticed under a master of their craft for years before being considered for full membership in the guild. Membership would increase the demand for your goods, as guild membership could work as a seal of quality, and it would increase the possibility of making useful relationships that would help with business throughout one's life. Since guilds were often filled with wealthy non-noblemen or had funds coming in from large numbers of people, they could often afford, and indeed would find their guild's reputation

[1] Weidema, Sytske, and Anna Koopstra. *Jan Gossart - the Documentary Evidence* (London: Miller, 2010), 15

enhanced, through the practice of large and often public devotional processions or by commissioning artwork for local churches, particularly those related to a patron saint of the guild, or a church that was closely related to one of the local heads of the guild. A guild like the Guild of Saint Luke, the painter's guild in the Dutch Low Countries, may act as both artist and patron, increasing the prestige and networking for their associated artists as well as purchasing or otherwise commissioning artwork done for their own uses.

Members of the nobility and local guilds alike were not only involved in their own specific duties, but were often closely entangled with the affairs of the church. In the earliest part of the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church was still the sole arbiter of religious doctrine in the Dutch Low Countries, and the teachings of the Church were often purveyed through pictorial images. Prints and smaller paintings might find their way to a nobleman or a high-ranking member of the clergy in order to serve as devotional instruments, something that would allow the viewer to meditate on the image and the subject matter depicted within it and to reflect upon one's actions and misdeeds by dwelling on the examples depicted within the image and, on that basis, improving oneself. A larger painting might be more useful in the chapel of a church or cathedral, acting as an altarpiece that generally serves to remind the viewers about a specific moment in scripture or a set of themes, with the message usually dealing with issues about Christ, the Virgin, or the patron saint of the particular church.

Religious paintings, starting in the sixteenth century in the Dutch Low Countries, were complicated by the advent of the Protestant Reformation. The popular uprising against certain Catholic doctrines led to the public questioning of many practices that had once been considered sacrosanct. One of these was the use of religious paintings. While the

Catholic Church had generally made use of religious subject matter in their devotional services, some of the reformers found this use of imagery to be idolatrous, and there was an increasing need to consider the forms, functions and meaning of sacred images and their religious justification throughout much of the area. This had an impact on much of the art commissioned by powerful and influential patrons such as Philip of Burgundy, and associated humanists and religious thinkers, who believed that the use of images in art was particularly valuable to a religious experience, something that was encouraged rather than forbidden by the word of God. This conflict will be seen in two of the major paintings considered later on, but the effects of the reformation would not have been as significant on the artwork of the Dutch Low Countries during the early sixteenth century as it would become in the latter half and the seventeenth century.

The ultimate impact that a patron would have on a work of art he or she commissioned likely depended on the issues that were part of their originating decision to commission the painting. A religious painting crafted for the personal or public use of a wealthy courtier or other political official might make reference to their role in the government, while another image crafted for a Catholic bishop might defend against Lutheran doctrine through the pictorial argument. The manner in which this varied patronage impacts a painting can be as important to understanding its argument as internal elements such as iconography. Patronage should be construed as another generative source of pictorial meaning, complementary to a picture's exegetical apparatus and crucial to determining why the artist chose to manipulate his vision in a certain way. While there are many images that may serve as examples of the many functions of patronage, the two versions of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* by Jan Gossart make an

excellent comparative study of the impact patronage can have on the most similar of topics [Figure 1, Figure 2].

1: Jan Gossart and the Guild of Saint Luke in Mechelen

While his paintings and portraiture in marble have been recognized both in his own time and to this day as masterpieces of the Dutch Low Countries, little is known about the early life of Jan Gossart. He is believed to have been born in 1478 in the town of Maubeuge, but the exact date and place cannot be verified.[2] The exact details behind his training as an artist are similarly unknown: scholars suggest a connection between Gossart and the Bruges painter Gerard David, but this comes from their later correspondence and a geographic overlap between the two painters rather than any concrete evidence. What is certain is that Jan Gossart finished his apprenticeship and joined the Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke in 1503, giving him the status of a full-fledged guild member able to take on apprentices of his own.[3] The details of his life remain vague for another five years, until he somehow becomes involved with a powerful patron. The manner in which Jan Gossart met Philip of Burgundy, the Admiral of Zeeland and later the Bishop of Utrecht, is sadly unknown. However, Philip of Burgundy was traveling through Antwerp at the time on a diplomatic mission at the request of Margaret of Austria. He was the leader of a diplomatic delegation sent to meet with Pope Julius II in Rome.[4] It is likely that Gossart met Philip of Burgundy at this time, but more importantly, Philip of Burgundy asked Gossart to accompany him to Rome in 1508.

---

[2] Ainsworth, Maryan Wynn. "The Painter Gossart in His Artistic Milieu." *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance : The Complete Works* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010), 9
[3] Ibid, 10
[4] Ibid, 11

According to the biography of Philip of Burgundy written by his court poet Gerard Geldenhouwer, there was nothing that gave Philip more happiness during his trip to Rome, where Philip and Gossart arrived in 1509, than the myriad drawings of architecture and sculpture that Gossart completed for Philip of Burgundy.[5] But the purpose of Philip of Burgundy's visit to Rome was not simply related to his knowledge of and admiration for classical art and architecture. He was also there to lobby the Curia for greater Burgundian independence in matters of appointing officials to church offices.[6] Philip of Burgundy used his knowledge and understanding of the rules and masterpieces of classical sculpture and architecture to endear himself to Pope Julius II, who was himself fascinated with classical artworks. By building a relationship based on shared interests, Philip of Burgundy believed he would be better placed to remind the pope about the benefits of greater Burgundian independence to both the Church and his realm. It was here that Jan Gossart's activity as a master draftsman of classical sculpture and architecture worked in Philip's favor, both personally and professionally. Gossart was able to use his talent as a draftsman to make copies of the ancient statues and architecture of Rome, which allowed Philip to expand and display his mastery of classical works, strengthening the relationship between Philip, as paragon of courtly refinement, and the papacy. Gossart's sculptures and sketches made Philip of Burgundy known at the papal court, allowing him to gain the friendship of the pope, if not his complete agreement on the issue of Burgundian independence from papal interference in the appointment of church officials.[7]

---

[5] Ibid, 12
[6] Schrader, Stephanie. "Drawing for Diplomacy: Gossart's Sojourn in Rome". *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance : The Complete Works* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 201). 45.
[7] Ibid, 52

Philip of Burgundy and his court were also known for their activities as champions of Renaissance Humanism in the Netherlands. Men such as Erasmus of Rotterdam found themselves in correspondence with Philip, and his court poet, Gilbert Geldenhower, was a well-established humanist scholar in his own right. These thinkers tried to revive the rich tradition of classical thought, philosophy and knowledge, making them compatible with the Catholic Church of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Philip's court and other people who were educated in humanist thought would have instantly recognized many symbols of pagan antiquity, and they showed a predilection for subjects and Dutch artists who were able to negotiate between the modes of classical antiquity and Dutch religious beliefs , showing their knowledge of the nature and importance of humanism to the patrons of Burgundian court culture.

Gossart returned from Rome having spent a great deal of time and effort working in the entourage of Philip of Burgundy, and the experience of his journey and the contacts he made would influence his work, and the patrons that purchased his paintings, for the rest of his life. Immediately after returning from Rome, it seems likely that Jan Gossart traveled to Middelburg, where he would meet his wife and retain residence for another six years.[8] While he was located in Middelburg, Gossart would be commissioned to produce a variety of paintings for people with connections to Philip and the nobility of the Low Countries, from the Milanese diplomat who commissioned the Doria Pamphilij Diptych, and potentially the Malvagna Triptych, to the Lord of Boelare, the man who commissioned *The Adoration of the Kings* [Figure 11].[9] While these and other works were commissioned in the period between Gossart's sojourn in Rome and his direct employment at the courts of these

[8] Ainsworth, Maryan Wynn. "The Painter Gossart in His Artistic Milieu." 11
[9] Ibid, 11-12

powerful and influential figures, perhaps the most interesting commission of this period in Gossart's life would be the one he received from a corporate entity that served to secure courtly patronage.

Gossart, like almost all other painters who received official commissions in the Dutch Low Countries, was a member of the Guild of Saint Luke, having apprenticed and become an official master in the city of Antwerp. But while a member of the Guild of Saint Luke in a particular city was likely to receive important commissions from that particular chapter and its individual members, it was rare for the Guild of Saint Luke in one city to commission an artist from another city's chapter of the Guild.[10] In other words, the fact that Jan Gossart, an artist associated with Antwerp, painted an image for the chapel of the Guild of Saint Luke in Mechelen, is somewhat unusual.

Mechelen was the seat of power for the court of Margaret of Austria for the first part of the sixteenth century. Because of her Hapsburg background, she was a powerful regional leader, and her court was visited by noblemen from as far away as the Italian states, as well as important clergymen. The city had a great deal of diplomatic prestige, but there were no artists in the city who were as prestigious as Jan Gossart had already become by 1515. In particular, Gossart's mastery of two styles of painting made him quite valued as a painter. Gossart was proficient in the Antwerp Mannerist style of painting, which combined the Early Netherlandish and Northern Renaissance styles of painting with other Dutch and Flemish modes and techniques, and some Italian influence can be seen in later Antwerp Mannerist works. He was also a superb draftsman and painter of classical and Italian art and architecture, having mastered the depiction of these classic buildings and artifacts

[10] Montias, John Michael. "The Guild of St. Luke in 17th-Century Delft and the Economic Status of Artists and Artisans" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* , Vol. 9, No. 2 (1977) , 93

during his journey to Rome with Philip of Burgundy. This varied skillset left him famous as a master of two styles of painting, which was particularly valuable to a painter in a city that did business with people from both the Low Countries and the Italian states.

The 1515 version of Jan Gossart's *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* is an unusual painting in several ways [Figure 1]. The first and most glaring departure from typical depictions of the event is the fact that the image of Saint Luke and the Virgin is repeated in the background. The background image is not a mere reflection of the image in the foreground, but rather places the Virgin, Saint Luke, and the infant Christ in a drastically different setting.[11] The foreground situates the Virgin and Saint Luke on the lower steps of a classical building, bringing them as close as possible to the viewer. Mary is seated on a lower step than Saint Luke, acting as the Virgin of Humility as well as the Queen of Heaven, as is made obvious by the fact that she is inside a grand temple, likely influenced by the architecture of Bramante and the fifth-century basilica at Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. Yet she is seated on the floor like someone of much lower status than her settings would suggest. We can also understand the reference to this religious icon through the antiphon, or the recited psalm verse, on the mantle of her dress.[12] She is holding the infant Christ and one breast is bared, meaning that Gossart is also referring to the icon of the Virgo Lactans, representing the Virgin's great purity and humility.[13] Her hand also holds a rose out to her son, symbolizing her love for the infant Christ. And perhaps most importantly, the mantle of her dress is also inscribed with the Ave Maria prayer, noting her role not only as the mother of Christ, but as the intercessor, the link who prays to Christ on our behalf. This is a

---

[11] Ainsworth, Maryan Wynn. *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance: The Complete Works* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010) 152
[12] Ibid, 152
[13] Ibid, 152

powerful image of the Virgin: Gossart's representation of the Madonna uses a rich mixture of religious text and iconography to show the great power the Virgin has as both the most pure and holy of women and as the most potent of intercessors. This second point is perhaps more important, for reasons which will be addressed later.

Luke himself is seated across from the Virgin, the sketch neatly placed on his lap as he looks at the Madonna and Child. The image of the Virgin in his sketch does not match the Virgin seated near him, possibly suggesting that he is observing the Virgin through a different lens than the audience, making his image more divinely inspired than based on corporeal vision. This is further corroborated by his gaze: Luke does not look directly at the Virgin and Child, who would almost certainly be the focus of his attention were they present in the earthly scene, rather, he stares outwards, as if lost in thought, or more likely, as if he was deeply absorbed in a religious vision of the holy pair. Luke sketches the scene with a metalpoint stylus, dragging it across the surface of a piece of paper or parchment, which had traditionally been the medium represented in Dutch and Flemish paintings of drawing the Virgin, particularly after Rogier van der Weyden completed his painting of the scene in 1440.[14] Gossart would have been aware of this painting, and his choice of a medium shared with the famous image by Van der Weyden was likely intentional.

The background of the image takes a completely different approach than the image we see in the foreground. Set in a generically Gothic cathedral, this locus starkly contrasts with the classical architecture of the foreground. The spires and exquisite ornamentation suggest that the appearance of the façade is unmistakably of the vernacular Gothic architectural style, suggesting that Gossart drew upon architecture that he saw in the Low

[14] Ibid, 153

Countries, making the setting in the background almost certainly an epitome of contemporary architectural ornamentation in the Burgundian manner.[15] The way in which Saint Luke and the Virgin are portrayed in the background is also different from the way they appear in the foreground. The Virgin is standing, holding the child while Saint Luke draws the scene from a seat nearby. The imagery of the Madonna of Humility which we see in the foreground image has been replaced by a more typical Madonna and Child pose, as the Virgin stands and holds the infant Christ rather than sitting on the floor. Saint Luke is seated while the Virgin looks at him, suggesting that this is not an image of Saint Luke drawing the Virgin, but rather that the Virgin is dictating the holy word to him, which means the image marks the moments where Saint Luke wrote his gospel.[16] This scene suggests the power of Mary, as she voiced the gospels which Luke writes, but it is also as if she intercedes between Luke and Christ, just as he mediates between us and the Virgin. This is how the background and the foreground become linked: just as the Virgin intercedes with Christ on our behalf through word and deed, Saint Luke intercedes for us with the Virgin by creating his portrait, the true image of the Virgin, that in turn mediates between her and us, her presence made manifest through a devotional image. In other words, it is through the sacred painter's agency that we secure access to Mary, who secured access to Christ. Gossart constructs the painting so that the lines of perspective converge on the Virgin and Child, furthering this interpretation and making sure that the viewer is interested in the smaller scene happening in the background.[17]

---

[15] Ibid, 150
[16] Ibid, 153
[17] Ibid

In order fully to understand the way that Gossart's patron, and the interests of both patron and painter, helped to decide the form and function of his works, we need to look at his later version of Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin, as well. In 1517, Philip of Burgundy was elected to the position of Bishop of Utrecht, and began to maintain residence at the castle of Wijk bij Duurstede.[18] Jan Gossart would follow Philip to the new residence, where he would serve as his court painter until Philip's death in 1524. Gossart did not remain solely in the castle: he was sent out on diplomatic missions for Philip of Burgundy and was occasionally appointed to paint for other important figures and diplomats. However, he was mostly involved with Philip of Burgundy, painting mythological works and other scenes from antiquity as well as devotional panels.[19] One of Gossart's largest and most important works from this period was the later version of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* [Figure 2].

The latter image of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* is immediately distinguishable from the earlier work. Rather than showing the Virgin and Luke in the foreground of an expansive church with a distant background, the painting has moved entirely to the foreground, keeping both the actors and the background near to the viewer. Set in a massive and beautifully detailed Renaissance-style church, the Virgin of Humility has been replaced by a majestic image of the Madonna veiled by clouds, held by putti who crown her as the Queen of Heaven.[20] Luke himself is kneeling at a prie-dieu in front of the scene, while an angel helps him to draw the divine experience he witnesses. The angel's presence suggests that the image Luke is viewing is a vision rather than physically occurring in front of him, and the clouds that surround Mary further this view. The divine nature of Luke's

[18] Ainsworth, Maryan "Gossart in his Artistic Milieu", 16
[19] Ibid, 16
[20] Ainsworth, Maryan *Man, Myth and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance,* 160

vision is further implied by his gaze, which is directed internally rather than externally; the image of the Virgin and Child, though it appears to us, functions as the object of Luke's spiritual gaze. Behind Luke and the angel is a statue of Moses, located on the same vertical axis in order to emphasize the relationship between the two religious figures.[21] Moses is holding the tablet with the Ten Commandments in his hands. A connection between Luke and Moses is further suggested by the removal of Luke's shoes, which relates to Moses removing his shoes when given the vision of the burning bush, so that he would not soil holy ground.[22] Given the visual relationship between Moses and Luke, the tablet likely refers to the Old Law, particularly the injunction against worshipping false idols.[23] Because the angel is helping Luke, the vision is divine, and the direct action of God makes the drawing of the Virgin and Child not an act of creating a false idol, but rather an act of deep religious significance. This is not a forbidden image, this is a holy one. This idea of the image being licensed through the New Law is also implied by the depiction of Moses as a stone statue. This draws upon scripture, using the doctrine of the Circumcision of the Heart present in the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel to note that those who have successfully given their hearts to the Lord will have their stone hearts made flesh. We understand that this has occurred here, as the Old Law represented by the statue of Moses has given way to the flesh and blood of Luke, who has completely given his heart to Christ.[24]

These two images show the same subject, were painted within seven years of one another by the same artist, and yet look shockingly different, so much so that it is not immediately apparent that they were painted by the same artist. This difference seems

---

[21] Ibid, 160
[22] Ibid, 160-162
[23] Ibid, 160
[24] King James Bible, Jeremiah 4.4, Ezekiel 11.19-20

quite unusual, yet may be explained if we look at the images again through the context of their patronage, Gossart's work with the respective patrons, and the ultimate purpose that the paintings were intended to fulfill.

Looking back at the original version of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin*, it is immediately apparent that the image makes use of classical architecture and themes [Figure 1]. The foreground is obviously a space in the Renaissance style, with a marvelous arch and a hall lined with granite columns, but there are many other references to Roman and Italian culture throughout the space. Behind the Virgin, the walls of the building are filled with decorative sculptures, filling the niches with references to a classical heritage.[25] An owl is perched next to a statue of a putto, which given its location near other statues of pagan antiquity likely refers to the evils of the world before Christ's sacrifice.[26] The putto is holding a goose, probably representing the pride inherent in the world of man before Christ's death. Nearby, a golden statue of Hercules is standing on the ledge directly above the Madonna and Child, which likely acts as a Roman prefiguration of the strength embodied in Christ and the Virgin, as well as their nature as both human and divine.[27] All of this is meant to emphasize the fact that Luke was the first person who made a record of the Virgin's countenance in Roman times. But bizarrely, there are other niches behind Luke that are decorated not in the classical style, but rather in the Gothic manner. The power of Luke's words and the history of his drawing of the Virgin were seen as powerful not only in antiquity, but their lingering power and importance carried on to contemporary times, and the combination of Gothic and Renaissance architecture in the same space was meant to

[25] Ainsworth, Maryan, *Man, Myth and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance*, 151
[26] Ibid, 152
[27] Ibid, 153

imply this argument, but it was not the only reason that both Gothic and Renaissance architecture were explicitly used in this painting.[28]

Mechelen's role as the seat of power for Margaret of Austria and her court left the country full of diplomats and influential leaders, and they used works of art to signify their diplomatic importance. Many influential artists from both the Low Countries and the Italian states were commissioned to produce works of art in Mechelen for the members of Margaret's court, including Jacopo de' Barbari, Conrad Meit and Bernard van Orley.[29] This talented group of artists coming together was not at all surprising, as Mechelen was the destination and occasional home to famous patrons of the arts, such as Antonio Siciliano, the ambassador sent to the court of Margaret of Austria by the Duke of Milan, eventual owner of Jan Gossart's *Doria Pamphilij* Diptych, and likely the patron who commissioned the Malvagna Triptych as well.[30] As previously mentioned, the area had its own chapter of the Guild of Saint Luke, but trying to find patronage in Mechelen was a fiercely competitive task. Nevertheless, the barriers for an outside artist to become involved in an official commission from another city's chapter of the Guild made Gossart's arrangement with the Mechelen Guild of Saint Luke unusual. Guild structure for artists and craftsmen in the Low Countries during the 15th and 16th centuries was heavily focused on a sense of confraternity.[31] Artists in the same chapter of a guild, such as the Guild of Saint Luke, would typically be involved in religious processions and pilgrimages together, and strong ties would often be formed between members. These activities would not only be useful for

---

[28] Ibid, 153
[29] Ibid, 150
[30] Ibid, 135
[31] Prak, Maarten Roy. *Craft Guilds in the Early Modern Low Countries: Work, Power and Representation* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate Pub., 2006) 163-165

forming bonds between local artists, but would also increase their local prestige. Similarly, gaining a commission for a painting from a wealthy nobleman would be considered prestigious for the whole chapter of the guild.[32] Given that Guilds existed primarily for the advantage of their members, it is truly extraordinary that an outsider such as Gossart was selected to execute the Guild altarpiece.

The unusual architectural styles represented in the original *St. Luke Drawing the Virgin* are likely the key to understanding how Jan Gossart received such a commission, and why this commission was so exemplary of his ability as a religious painter. Gossart was recognized, but there were other Dutch artists, likely including members of the Mechelen Guild of Saint Luke, who could have painted a technically competent vision of Saint Luke drawing the Virgin. Gossart was specifically famous as a master of portrayed architecture. His abilities did not stop at the Antwerp Mannerist style which he originally learned, but rather he became known for his ability to depict masterfully both the Gothic architecture of the Low Countries and the Classical and Renaissance architecture he encountered on his journey to Rome. This skill made Jan Gossart a singular artist, for there were virtually no other artists capable of explicitly commanding both styles of architecture at this time in the Northern Netherlands. Gossart's understanding of either architectural style alone would have made him famous, but his ability to paint both Gothic cathedrals and classical columns, as well as associated architectural nuances, made him a perfect candidate for the commission in a cosmopolitan and courtly town like Mechelen. Through Gossart, the Mechelen Guild advertised to Margaret of Austria that they could indeed negotiate between various registers of pictorial and architectural style-the local, the Italian, the Gothic, the

[32] Ibid, 164

classical, the contemporary and the antique. The court of Margaret of Austria, and through her, the town of Mechelen, consisted of diplomats and thinkers from these varied fields and locations, and someone who could negotiate through these varied ways of thinking would have been quite talented. In Jan Gossart's painting the Guild of Saint Luke in Mechelen found a master of multiple modes of painting whose skill serves as a proxy for their own talents. An altarpiece painted for a position of honor in an international town, the monumental work needed to be a masterpiece that could be understood and appreciated by all, and Gossart, as a master of multiple idioms produced an epitome of artistic accomplishment that would have been conspicuous to all viewers.[33] The prestige that such a work would have garnered for the membership of the Guild of Saint Luke makes the departure from normal guild rules far more understandable.

Not only can the modes of painting in the Prague *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* be understood as a response to the patron, the way the subject matter is depicted and the argument of the image can be viewed as Gossart's response to the patron. The relationship between the foreground and the background of the image do not only serve to show Gossart's mastery of the dual architectural styles, they relate the two deeds of Saint Luke. The background image, with Mary and the Christ child standing near Luke reciting the gospels while Luke transcribes them depicts Luke serving as an intermediary for the word of God, writing the gospels so that people might know Him better. This is directly related to the foreground image of Luke drawing the Virgin, implying that the same vision of Luke as the mediator works for both images. In other words, the drawing of the image of the Virgin is an act that is equally inspired by the divine as writing the gospels. This argument would

[33] Kavaler, Ethan M. "Gossart as Architect." *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance: The Complete Works* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010) 40-41

have been understood by the viewers, and the argument that religious painting can be as important as scripture for understanding and explaining the divine would have been important to Gossart.

The image and its use of two forms of architecture also becomes important when related to the Austrian version of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* [Figure 2]. The later image makes a similar claim about the importance of painting, but the context is entirely different. Rather than being an image painted for the altarpiece of a guild-associated chapel, the latter version of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* is a significantly smaller image painted while Gossart was working directly for Philip of Burgundy. Philip was facing a severe backlash against religious art, which became increasingly severe while Gossart was painting the second image, due to the publication of *Von Abtuhung der Blider* by Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt. A preacher who was once an avid supporter of Martin Luther, Karlstadt advocated the destruction of religious art, which was not a belief shared by the Catholic bishop of Utrecht.[34] Karlstadt held that the creation of devotional artwork was an act that violated the Decalogue, he could see no way to reconcile the creation of such religious panels with the commandment against the worship of false idols. By the early 1520's, the works of Karlstadt were circulating through the German states and neighboring Burgundy, and it is quite likely that Philip of Burgundy would have been familiar with his writings.[35] The painting therefore serves as a rebuttal to the argument for iconoclasm. The statue of Moses in line with Luke acknowledges the Old Law, but the angel guiding Luke's hand

---

[34] Ainsworth, Maryan *Man, Myth and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance*, 161
[35] Olds, Clifton. "Jan Gossaert's 'St. Luke Painting the Virgin': A Renaissance Artist's Cultural Literacy" *Journal of Aesthetic Education,* Vol. 24, No. 1, Special Issue: Cultural Literacy and Arts Education (Spring, 1990), 92-93, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3332857

offers a counterargument to Karlstadt's claim by suggesting that this drawing, and other religious artwork through the connection artists have with Saint Luke, is not only condoned but actually guided by the Lord, making the creation of religious artwork a divine act, and the observation and reading of religious paintings an act of religious devotion as well.

Both versions of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* contain a complex religious argument that makes a point about the role of artists, but the exact role of the artwork is expressed differently depending on the needs of the patron and Gossart's relationship with the men who made the commission. In the original version of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin*, Gossart gains the commission due to his famous ability to depict architectural styles from both Gothic and Renaissance oeuvres, and therefore his painting gives us a view of the vision of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* where the architecture takes up the majority of the image, as the main actors appear small in comparison to the vast space filled by images of paired columns, ancient statues and other symbols of pagan antiquity as well as the background image of a massive Gothic cathedral. Here, the abundance of masterfully represented architecture serves to enhance the reputation of both patron and artist, and the interaction between Luke and the Virgin is no less important than the space in which they interact. The Austrian version places the interaction between Luke and the Virgin in the center of the image, as close to the foreground as possible, leaving the viewer as the closest of witnesses to the figures of Luke and Mary, who themselves take up a great deal of the space of the painting. This image is not meant to be a declaration of skill for Jan Gossart in the same manner as the original version of the subject matter, but rather uses the skills Gossart mastered while working alongside the patron of the image, making readily

apparent Gossart's value to the Bishop of Utrecht and the advantage that both parties might expect to procure from their mutually beneficial partnership.

The two versions of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* are only separated by five years, but they appear so markedly different that it seems like a lifetime may have passed. Through the changed relationship with the patron who commissioned the image, the original version of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* makes masterful use of pagan, Classical and Gothic themes and architecture. It enhances not only a religious argument about the beneficial effect that the Virgin and Child have on the world around them, their power to save mankind from damnation, but an additional argument about the power of religious artwork. The writing of the Gospel of Luke is compared to the drawing he makes of the Virgin, allowing both patron and painter to understand the spiritual importance of art. The second image takes the same subject matter and a similar theme about the importance of religious art, but takes it a step further: Gossart's mastery of Renaissance architecture and, implicitly, his fame as a court artist associated with Philip of Burgundy, are accumulated into the background of an image that focuses on the idea of religious vision, divine intercession and idolatry, and argues against iconoclasm, in support of the view of the patrons. The two images are separated by five years, but the more decisive change was the different intentions of the two patrons when they commissioned the work: this led to the result that two paintings sharing a common theme diverge in of style and subject matter so drastically that they appear radically different.

2. The Malvagna Tripytch, Collaboration and Foreign Patrons

We can see how patronage impacted the works of Jan Gossart through other paintings, as well. While Gossart was a painter in high demand by many from the court of Margaret of Austria, including the duchess herself, several of the most prolific patrons of Gossart's works were ambassadors to the court. Diplomats from Antonio Siciliano, mentioned previously as the chamberlain of the Duke of Milan, to the duchess and even the Emperor Charles V likely commissioned works from Gossart during the years before he became Philip of Burgundy's court painter.[36] Of particular interest are the two works attributed in part to Jan Gossart that arrived in Italy, likely commissioned by Antonio Siciliano, the Malvagna Triptych and the Doria Pamphilij Diptych [Figures 3, 8]. The Malvagna Tripytch can be attributed to the hands of Jan Gossart and a famous contemporary, Gerard David. This work of art, peculiar in its collaborative status, consists of a central panel of the Virgin enthroned, surrounded by putti at her feet, with flanking figures of Saints Catherine and Dorothy on the left and right interior panels. The central panel shows the Virgin holding the Christ child on her lap, gently holding the infant while he looks out at the viewer. The scene is different from Italian devotional imagery due to the elaborate High Gothic architecture that looms over the scene in the form of a magnificent golden canopy that fills much of the space. The canopy is filled with decorative ornamentation and embedded statues that enchance the majesty of the Virgin and Child seated below. While the canopy is most prominent in the central panel, it is seen above all three panels in the interior of the triptych, with Catherine on the left panel and Dorothy on

[36] Weidema and Koopstra, *Jan Gossart: The Documentary Evidence,* 17

the right both seated in a relaxed manner while facing downward in humility.[37] The background depicts what appears to be a landscape set in the Low Countries, with buildings that would have been recognizably northern, rather than Italian, in the background of the central panel. The exterior panels show an image of Adam and Eve holding one another, Eve already having tasted the forbidden fruit while Adam reaches out to grasp it, the snake on the tree nearby [Figure 4]. Curiously, the architectural form behind Adam and Eve is clearly of Italian Renaissance origin. The background also shows the moment in which an angel banishes the two sinners from the beautiful garden, their sins incompatible with such splendor.

Many of the putti, particularly those located in the central panel, are holding and playing with musical instruments. These have been considered symbols of Flemish art and culture, and the mixture of Classical and northern motifs in Gossart's work suggests that Siciliano, or in the unlikely event he was not the patron, whoever commissioned the artwork, was interested in Gossart's ability to weave the motifs of the two different cultural spheres together in such a masterful way.[38] But this painting is made somewhat more challenging by the fact that there were two famous artists involved in its execution. Gerard David, well-known at the same time and perhaps even more famous than Gossart for, among other things, his depictions of lush landscapes, makes for an interesting partner in this endeavor. David's influence can be seen particularly in the vivid backgrounds, particularly those in the exterior panels with Adam and Eve.[39] This is made all the more likely by the fact that the scene is quite similar to several other works done by Gerard

---

[37] Ainsworth, Maryan *Man, Myth and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance*, 138
[38] Ibid, 135
[39] Ibid

David, particularly his *Saint Jerome* [Figure 9]. David was also involved in the underdrawing of the central panel, as there is evidence of his shorthand marks for trees when the image is compared to his other works, particularly the *Study of a Tree* [Figure 10].[40] He was also likely involved in the detail work on the heads of Saint Catherine and Dorothy, as their faces, locked in a downward gaze, appear quite similar in composition to the head of the Virgin in David's *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* [Figure 11].[41] However, the figures were likely not solely completed by David, as the way in which they are seated and the treatment of their drapery closely resembles other works by Jan Gossart.[42] Similarly, the putti in the central panel were almost certainly done by Gossart, as the foreshortening in the arms of the putti is quite similar to what one sees in images of putti in other pictures by him, including the statue located in the Prague version of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* [Figure 1]. The Gothic architecture in the canopy and the background was also likely done by Gossart, as there is a great deal of similarity in the pattern and decoration of the canopy and the background cathedral in the Prague *Saint Luke*.

The relationship between patron, artist and image is somewhat complicated by the dual authorship of the triptych, but there are nevertheless several things that can be surmised about the patron's wishes for Gossart. The most obvious evidence of Gossart adapting to the specific needs of the patron is again the mixture of Flemish traditional imagery and style with that of Rome. If we assume Siciliano was the patron who commissioned the triptych, the fact that he commissioned artwork done in the Low Countries at all suggests that there was some interest in the Italian states in art coming

[40] Ibid, 136
[41] Ibid, 138
[42] Ibid, 138-139

from the area. This Italian interest in Dutch art is further suggested by the popularity of prints done by Albrecht Dürer in the Italian states. While there is a great deal of evidence of interest in Dürer's artwork in Italy, perhaps most revealing is the fact that one of his prints was copied by Marcantonio Raimondi, an early sixteenth-century Italian printmaker who will become even more important later in this essay.[43] A particularly influential printmaker in both the Italian states and the Dutch Low Countries, Raimondi's interest in Dutch artwork suggests that works from Flemish and Dutch masters could be quite popular among the Italian elite. For a patron like Antonio Siciliano, a man who had the power of the Duke of Milan behind him, it would not have been difficult to purchase a triptych made by a famous Italian artist. If this was not his goal, it would still have been simple to find an artist who was quite fluent in the Antwerp Mannerist or other Flemish styles of artwork, as there were many such masters working for the courtiers of Margaret of Austria and ambassadors to her realm. The fact that the commission was given to Jan Gossart suggests that the intended goal of the piece was not only to be a masterfully crafted triptych, but one that blended the two artistic styles together into an harmonious single set [Figures 3, 4].

The assistance from Gerard David remains somewhat baffling, but the decision to include the other artist and the effects this has had on the triptych may be explained by the wishes of the likely patron. David's treatment of landscape and facial detail had become quite famous throughout the Low Countries during the time that Antonio Siciliano was located in Mechelen. David absorbed the mode of several famous Haarlem artists such as Dieric Bouts and Geertgen tots Sin Jans, making him a representative of the Haarlem style,

[43] Ibid, 120

while he became influential in his own right due to his mastery of details.[44] Gerard David's uniquely local style of painting stood in contrast to Jan Gossart's mastery of both Italian and Dutch forms of painting. For a commission intended directly for an Italian audience interested in the local art scene from the Low Countries and Mechelen area, a commission from Gerard David would likely be considered a major acquisition. The talent and prestige he would bring as an artist would be quite impressive to those who were familiar with Low Countries artists because of his background influences, his own impressive showings as an artist, and his popularity as a manuscript illuminator. However, this still does not explain why the two artists were involved in the painting of the image rather than simply commissioning a separate painting from each artist. There is no consensus currently on the reasons for this strange occurrence.

[44] Ibid, 136

3. Lucas van Leyden and Maarten van Heemskerck: An Interest in a Classical Heritage

Around 1527, Jan Gossart went on a journey through many of the states of the Low Countries. This trip took Gossart through Zeeland, Flanders and Brabant, and he was accompanied on this journey by a variety of artists and intellectuals. One of these men was Lucas van Leyden.[45] A contemporary of Jan Gossart, Lucas van Leyden had a completely different set of experiences than did Gossart, having never left the Low Countries, and his style and modes of painting were similarly removed from those of Jan Gossart.[46] Nevertheless, Lucas van Leyden became well-known as a printmaker and a painter, and his talents in the latter area allow us to see the impact that a certain patron, or family of patrons, had on Lucas's monumental painting of a familiar subject. Likely born in 1494, Lucas van Leyden was the child of a painter, and he began studying painting at a young age under the tutelage of Cornelis Engebrechtsz after the death of his father.[47] Lucas spent the majority of his life in Leiden, aside from two major trips, one to Antwerp in 1521 and the aforementioned journey with Jan Gossart six years later. While Lucas never traveled as much as Jan Gossart, he was a well-received and influential painter, particularly in the Leiden area. He became one of the wealthiest men in Leiden, where he apparently held banquets for other artists, although his skills as a printmaker were likely more lucrative than his commissions as a painter.[48] The style of his earlier works draws heavily from his mentor, but later in his life he was increasingly influenced by prints, particularly those

---

[45] Jacobowitz, Ellen S., Lucas, and Stephanie Loeb. Stepanek. *The Prints of Lucas Van Leyden & His Contemporaries* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1983), 11-13
[46] Smith, Elise Lawton, *The Paintings of Lucas Van Leyden : A New Appraisal, with Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1992), 3-5
[47] Ibid, 3
[48] Ibid, 7

published by Marcantonio Raimondi. From his journey in 1527 until his death in 1533, several of Lucas's paintings, in their use of space and treatment of figures, reveal that he was looking closely at works by Jan Gossart, particularly his later *Virgin and Child*.

While we know about his travels and sources, much of Lucas van Leyden's life remains mysterious: his exact birth year remains controversial, the date of his original training is uncertain, and the level of influence of his two mentors, Huygh Jacobz and Cornelis Engebrechtsz, is just as contentious.[49] And while he was perhaps more famous and was certainly better compensated for his prowess as a printmaker, several of his paintings soon became paradigms of the art of painting, if remaining somewhat contentious themselves. None, however, were as monumental as the *Last Judgment* Triptych [Figures 5, 6].

Just as Jan Gossart played with the traditional image of Saint Luke drawing the Virgin in his paintings, Lucas van Leyden's *Last Judgment* used a traditional subject in several unusual ways, playing with form, typical subject matter and lighting to make an atypical version of one of the most famous scenes of scripture. The basic structure of the image depicts Christ as judge on a throne in the center of the central panel, with one hand blessing the redeemed on his right, and the left hand casting the damned into hell.[50] Lucas draws from scripture to make this more apparent; an image of the lily of peace appears on Christ's right, while the sword of retribution appears on his left, clearly referencing the book of Revelations.[51] The complete trinity is shown, with God as Father at the top of the central panel, and a dove representing the Holy Spirit above Christ. Surrounding Christ are

[49] Ibid, 14
[50] Ibid, 128
[51] Ibid, 129

the twelve apostles, with saints behind him. The apostles are led by Mary on his right and John the Baptist on his left, although the two figures are curiously neither larger nor visually more important than the other apostles.[52] As the dead rise to the calls of the angels below Christ, the saved on the left of the painting's middle panel as well as the left panel are ascending to heaven, some being carried by still other angels. The damned on the right of the painting are in considerably worse shape, as deformed and vile demons force or drag these pitiful souls down to their eternal punishment, here depicted as the flaming mouth of a beast in a reference to the book of Matthew.[53] The background of the central panel is a largely empty landscape, while the exterior panels show us Saints Peter and Paul in front of a turbulent sea, with a rocky beach behind them. Peter is easily identifiable by his large key, suggesting his role as the gatekeeper to Heaven, while Paul has a book suggesting his writings and a sword suggesting the manner in which he was eventually martyred. The shipwreck in the background perhaps alludes to the event recounted in Acts 28.[54]

While a *Last Judgment* triptych was not unusual, several things about this image were distinct departures from the traditional style and form of the subject matter. The Archangel Michael, who almost always appears in Last Judgment scenes painted in the Low Countries, is here absent.[55] Michael's role in the *psychostasis*, the manner by which souls are weighed and judged either worthy or damnable, is featured in other Last Judgment scenes by contemporary masters such as those by Joos van Cleve and Geertgen tots Sint Jans, two artists whose work Lucas would have encountered in Antwerp. Perhaps even more unusual is Lucas van Leyden's use of light in the image. The golden light of Heaven

[52] Ibid, 128
[53] Ibid
[54] King James Bible, Acts 28
[55] Smith, *The Paintings of Lucas Van Leyden : A New Appraisal, with Catalogue Raisonné,* 131

spreads through the entire image, giving the saved a pale appearance because of the light of Heaven shining down on them. This perfect light, which shines brightly behind Christ and entirely saturates heaven, is in stark contrast with the dark attire worn by the disciples near Him. The golden hue of the central panel itself stands in similar contrast with the darker exterior panels, as the light seems to emanate from Christ and the Father, while the images of Peter and Paul are far rougher, with far less soft golden lighting, darker hues and rich backgrounds. This makes the difference between the exterior and interior panels immediately recognizable, likely to increase the impact of seeing the interior for the first time after seeing the exterior panels.[56]

The triptych was likely not intended to be an altarpiece for a chapel in the church of Saint Peter at Leiden, as the triptych is far too large to fit comfortably in any of the chapels. The painting was commissioned by the family of the recently deceased Claes Dirscz van Swieten, the patriarch of a wealthy local family. A wealthy burgomeister, Claes Dirscz would have been heavily involved in local political affairs, and he also served as a churchwarden.[57] This makes sense when viewed in the usual context of a Last Judgment work during this era in the Dutch Low Countries. Rather than serving as the devotional altarpiece in a church, Last Judgment scenes were often located in areas where justice was served and legal proceedings were conducted, such as a town hall or other judicial buildings. The purpose of the scene was not only to educate, but also to serve as a reminder about the fact that all souls would one day be judged, and therefore justice should be done on earth.[58] Lucas van Leyden's *Last Judgment* was likely located on the western wall of the

[56] Ibid, 31
[57] Ibid, 131
[58] Ibid, 130

chapel above the *schepenbank*, the bench where local magistrates and city officials were generally seated.[59] This suggests that the triptych was meant to serve a dual purpose, as both a focal point for religious devotion and as an example for the governing officials beneath the painting to follow.

Given the intended purpose of the image, the unusual nature of the painting makes sense. The reduced focus on the apostles, particularly the Virgin, makes Christ appear as the prime intercessor, who serves as both judge and redeemer for those who accept him into their heart.[60] As the painting serves as a memorial for the life of Claes van Swieten as well as a reminder of the necessity of acting justly by reference to the example of divine justice, the fact that Christ serves as the sole intercessor gives the viewer a single ideal vision of the most just of all decision makers. This same concept likely explains the removal of the *psychostasis* scene, which emphasized the importance of Christ as judge and intercessor in the image.[61] Put another way, his justice is shown to be exercised here without mediation.

The focus on nudes and light, on the other hand, may be explained less through the demands of the patron and rather through the lens of Lucas van Leyden's fame. The use of many nude figures in the foreground of the image was particularly unusual, leading many scholars through the nineteenth century to refer to the triptych as a somewhat bizarre study of these naked figures.[62] The painting does in fact make reference to a variety of figure studies, particularly from sculptures and paintings brought to Leyden's attention through the prints of Marcantonio Raimondi. Several of the nudes in the painting appear to

[59] Ibid
[60] Ibid
[61] Ibid
[62] Ibid, 19

be based on models from the prints by Raimondi circulating throughout the Low Countries, such as the nude in the center of the triptych, who is clearly based on Raimondi's *Judgment of Paris* [Figure 13], itself adapted from the famous *Belvedere Torso* in the Vatican.[63] The Italian qualities of the painting were a new addition to the paintings of Lucas van Leyden, suggesting that Leyden was increasingly influenced by these prints later in his life, and was also comfortable in adopting different stylistic techniques for representing figures.

This new approach to figures may have been quite attractive to both the artist and the patron. The Swieten family would have a long legacy as the elite of the city of Leiden, and the men would have been highly educated.[64] It is therefore likely that they were not only familiar with the prints of Lucas van Leyden but also those of Marcantonio Raimondi, whose work had become quite popular in both Italy and the Netherlands. The use of the Italian motifs made famous in the Low Countries through prints would have been immediately apparent to educated men, such as the van Swieten family, and they would surely have recognized the source. The *Last Judgment* triptych, in making use of motifs found in the Raimondi's prints, exemplifies Lucas van Leyden's mastery of an Italianate idiom, and this would likely have been an attractive quality to the wealthy Swieten family. Their patronage of Lucas, which resulted in one of the artist's most complex altarpieces, would certainly have served to enhance the prestige of the family.

In order to get a clearer sense of the impact of patronage on the art of the Low Countries in the sixteenth century, we can also view another version of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* [Figure 7]. Maarten van Heemskerck lived longer than Jan Gossart, born twenty

---

[63] Ibid, 33

[64] Lament, Sterling "The Vroedschap of Leiden 1550-1600: The Impact of Tradition and Change on the Governing Elite of a Dutch City" *The Sixteenth Century Journal* Vol. 12, No. 2 (Summer 1981), 32

years later in 1498 and living until 1574. He was a resident of Haarlem, where he was active until the end of his life. Raised in the village of Heemskerck, a somewhat non-descript village, just north of Haarlem, he would become intimately involved with the affairs of Haarlem artists and patrons for quite some time.[65] Heemskerck learned from painters throughout the Low Countries, and he studied with Jan van Scorel after his return from Italy. This left Heemskerck well educated as a painter even before his journey to Rome in the middle of 1532, although the trip would have a major impact on his later works.[66] He stayed in Rome until 1536, potentially leaving at the beginning of 1537, making his stay in the renowned city a longer one that was usually seen among Dutch artists, and this shows in his work through his use of Italian sources. Heemskerck was married twice throughout his long life, would become quite wealthy due to his mastery as both a painter and print designer, and survived the Spanish siege of Haarlem, although several of his works would be lost in the chaos.[67] But for our purposes, the most interesting work when dealing with patronage is one he completed when he was still a relatively young artist in Haarlem, before his journey to Rome had left him well-acquainted with a cardinal and in a position of great prestige.

Heemskerck's version of *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin* is markedly different from anything we have seen from Jan Gossart [Figure 5]. Painted for the chapel of the Haarlem chapter of the Guild of Saint Luke in St. Bavo, the painting was intended to be a gift to the guild of which Heemskerck was a member. The background in the image clearly serves as nothing more than a backdrop for the events in the foreground, its soft monotone serving

---

[65] Veldman, Ilja M. *Maarten Van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century*. (Maarssen: G. Schwartz, 1977), 12
[66] Ibid, 13
[67] Ibid

to keep the foreground as the prime actor by giving the painting the effect of sculpture, as the figures against the grey background appear similar to a sculptural relief. The scene is not simply an image of Luke painting the Virgin, however, but includes a variety of added figures and objects. Luke himself is seated on a chest, adorned with classical imagery of a man riding a bull, with the heads of lions rising from the seat. Meanwhile, a man with a wreath leans into Luke's ear, raising his hand as if animatedly making a point. This figure is believed to be an allegory for poetic inspiration, a driving force behind Luke's famous image.[68] The Virgin Enthroned sits across from Luke and the muse, lit by the fire held by an angel. She holds an orb in her hand, beneath the infant Christ,who is raising his hands in a blessing. The orb signifies his dominion over the earth. The throne of the Virgin is unusual in that it has the face of a human and has a visible leg ending in an eagle's claw. Between the two groups of figures is a stone herm, the face of a satyr looking in Luke's direction.

Maarten van Heemskerck completed the painting just before his journey to Rome in 1532. The script on the lower left-hand corner of the painting serves as thanks to the Haarlem Guild of Saint Luke, while the image itself carries the guild's namesake.[69] While this is important, it does not explain by itself the major shift towards the use of classical imagery and symbols in the painting. Rather than relating to the other members of the guild, this unusual path for a Northern artist is likely explained by Heemskerck's involvement with Dutch humanists. Many of Heemskerck's works after his return from

---

[68] *Maerten van Heemskerck. Die Gemälde* by Rainald Grosshans; *Marten de Vos als Maler* by Armin Zweite Review by: Larry Silver *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 47. Bd., H. 2 (1984), 269-280, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1482196

[69] "This panel is given as a remembrance of Maarten Heemskerck, its painter. He has created it in honor of St. Luke and out of regard for his fellow painters. We should thank him, by day and by night, for his kind gift, here before us. Accordingly we will pray, with all our strength, that God's grace attend him. Finished in the year 1532, May 23."

Rome would deal with imagery and scenes from pagan and classical antiquity, from his famous Vulcan triptych to the great deal of work that he did as a printmaker.[70] Humanist patrons from across the Dutch Low Countries and the Germanic states would become patrons of Heemskerck.

When we look at the painting through the lens of Heemskerck's future endeavors as a painter as well as his intention of leaving for the Italian states, it seems likely that the artwork served a dual purpose. The painting makes repeated references to symbols of classical antiquity, from the muse of poetic inspiration that guides Luke's hand to the harpy that adorns the Virgin's throne. This not only serves to presage his trip to Rome, the land where humanist thought was initially inspired, but it also serves as a signal for his fellow Guild members, distilling for them what Heemskerck was likely to encounter in what he likely considered the birthplace of humanist philosophy. However, this trip would also serve to endear Heemskerck to later patrons, men interested in both his talents as a painter and as a printmaker. Heemskerck would later become increasingly well-known for his depiction of non-religious and often humanist subject matter, creating masterpieces such as his *Vulcan Triptych* as soon as he returned to the Low Countries from Rome.[71] In his 1532 version of *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin*, we can see a precursor to the sort of paintings that Heemskerck would become famous for completing after his return from Rome. It is therefore quite likely that the unusual classical and pagan influences we see in the painting were meant to be an example of the type of work that Heemskerck, already well-known before his departure to Rome, would have been expected to produce after

---

[70] Veldman, *Maarten Van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century,* 38
[71] Ibid, 22-25

completing his artistic education and becoming expert in two different regional styles of painting.

A comparison between the images of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* by Jan Gossart and Maarten van Heemskerck's painting of *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin* illustrates the profound impact that the patron had on the artwork of the Dutch Low Countries. Gossart's later version of the image and Heemskerk's painting both show a figure guiding Luke's hand, but the figures have drastically different meanings. The angel that guides Luke's hand in Gossart's work does so in reference to the will of God, sanctioning the drawing Luke makes of the divine scene for the purpose of showing the importance and permissibility of devotional images. In Heemskerck's painting, the figure of poetic inspiration that speaks in Luke's ear suggests that poetry, not divine will, sanctioned and produced the image. This serves to make Luke's painting deeply connected with Dutch humanism, as the motivation for Luke's image of the Virgin and Child comes from classical philosophy, bringing together religious and philosophical enlightenment in a single image. A similar comparison can be drawn between the statue of Moses in Gossart's later painting and the bust of the satyr in Heemskerck's artwork. Two artists, showing not only the same scene but even the same action occurring in the scene, used separate characters to personify Luke's action, and in doing so the paintings ended up with divergent messages. These two artists were from separate cities, yet were influenced by a common regional artistic style, and often have shared themes in their artwork. The greatest factor that separates Gossart and Heemskerck's paintings is the difference in patron, as Gossart's work was commissioned by a man who was seeking a strong argument against iconoclasm, while Heemskerck's

painting was a gift, intended to show the Guild and all who witnessed the image his prowess as an artist and a humanist.

Conclusion

When the paintings of Lucas van Leyden, Jan Gossart and Maarten van Heemskerck are placed side-by-side, it is easy to see that the trio of artists are different in their approach to architecture, background and figures. Nevertheless, the overall meanings of the works we have covered by all three artists were heavily influenced by the individual patrons, or corporate patrons, and their expectations of the function and style of the image. The patron and his wishes and expectations had so great an impact on the paintings of Jan Gossart that two paintings with the same subject made within seven years of one another are almost entirely different in appearance, but even in works made for a consumer that would not have been nearly as interested as the Mechelen Guild of Saint Luke in increasing their profile through a painting that combines both Northern and Italian traits, the expectation of the patron that Jan Gossart would use this skill to the advantage — or better, as a proxy for their skills — seems to have drastically impacted the final product. The Swieten family, who likely paid a hefty cost for the massive triptych for the Church of Saint Peter where their deceased patriarch had once worked as a churchwarden, commissioned a picture that was not merely a memorial, but also a call for justice and a reminder of the power and influence of his surviving family. Maarten van Heemskerck, in the last painting he crafted for his local chapter of the Guild of Saint Luke in Haarlem before leaving for Rome, took a famous religious scene and added humanist iconography. The painting is valedictory and it demonstrates to his fellow guild members how a learned painter envisions a traditional subject, as well as functioning as a premonition of the art he would

fashion after his firsthand encounter with Italy for later patrons. In this essay, I have claimed that patronage had a distinct impact on all aspects of a sixteenth-century Dutch painter's work, not only on the style and subject matter of their paintings but also their place of residence, their ability to travel and their future patrons. By looking at three artists from the Dutch Netherlands, usually separated by time and space but overlapping in their sources and influence, and showing the impact that patronage had on their lives and craft, I have examined the overall importance of the relationship between painters and patrons to Dutch and Flemish artists in the sixteenth century. This relationship was one of the most important factors in deciding the eventual style and meaning of their paintings.

List of Figures

Figure 8. Jan Gossart, **Doria Pamphilj Diptych**, 1010-15, oil on panel. Galleria Doria Pamphilj, Rome

Figure 9. Gerard David, **Saint Jerome in a Landscape**, 1501, oil on oak. National Gallery, London

Figure 10. Gerard David, **Study of a tree and a Man's Head**, ca. 1505-1510, metalpoint on prepared paper. Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg

Figure 11. Jan Gossart, **The Adoration of the Kings**, 1500-1515, oil on panel. National Gallery, London

Figure 12. Gerard David, **Rest on the Flight into Egypt**, 1510, oil on panel. National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

Figure 13. Marcantonio Raimondi, designed by Raphael. **Judgment of Paris** 1510-20, Engraving. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

Bibliography

Ainsworth, Maryan Wynn. *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance: The Complete Works*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010. Print.

Ainsworth, Maryan Wynn. "The Painter Gossart in His Artistic Milieu." *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance : The Complete Works*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010. Print.

Jacobowitz, Ellen S., Lucas, and Stephanie Loeb. Stepanek. *The Prints of Lucas Van Leyden & His Contemporaries*. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1983. Print.

Kavaler, Ethan M. "Gossart as Architect." *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance: The Complete Works*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010. Print.

Lament, Sterling "The Vroedschap of Leiden 1550-1600: The Impact of Tradition and Change on the Governing Elite of a Dutch City" *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 2, Summer 1981. Web http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539499

Montias, John Michael. "The Guild of St. Luke in 17th-Century Delft and the Economic Status of Artists and Artisans." *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* Vol. 9, No. 2 (1977) , pp. 93-105 Web. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3780327

Official King James Bible Online. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Apr. 2014. http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/

Olds, Clifton. "Jan Gossaert's 'St. Luke Painting the Virgin': A Renaissance Artist's Cultural Literacy" *Journal of Aesthetic Education,* Vol. 24, No. 1, Special Issue: Cultural Literacy and Arts Education (Spring, 1990), pp. 89-96 Web. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3332857

Prak, Maarten Roy. *Craft Guilds in the Early Modern Low Countries: Work, Power and Representation*. Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate Pub., 2006. Print.

Schrader, Stephanie. "Drawing for Diplomacy: Gossart's Sojourn in Rome". *Man, Myth, and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossart's Renaissance : The Complete Works*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010.

Smith, Elise Lawton. *The Paintings of Lucas Van Leyden : A New Appraisal, with Catalogue Raisonné*. Columbia: University of Missouri, 1992. Print.

Silver, Larry. "*Maerten van Heemskerck. Die Gemälde* by Rainald Grosshans; *Marten de Vos als Maler* by Armin Zweite." Review by Larry Silver, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, Bd. 47, H. 2 (1984). Web. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1482196

Veldman, Ilja M. *Maarten Van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century*. Maarssen: G. Schwartz, 1977. Print.

Weidema, Sytske, and Anna Koopstra. *Jan Gossart: the Documentary Evidence*. London: Miller, 2010. Print.