



Allegory and allegiance

The Dutch Americas in the imagination of Bonaventura and Gillis Peeters

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The colony of Dutch Brazil, as a territorial and political entity, existed only between 1624 and 1654, but the visual impact of the Dutch ‘moment’ in Atlantic history is a lasting one.¹ More than four centuries after the short-lived colonial regime of the West India Company in northeast Brazil began, its legacy is still defined by the achievements of a single, larger-than-life figure: Governor-General Johan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen, who ruled the colony for seven years during its brief heyday, and financed prestigious artistic studies of the tropics as part of his ambition to create a cosmopolitan court culture in Recife.² Generations of art historians have since examined the oil paintings created in the Americas by the landscape artist Frans Post and the ethnographic portraitist Albert Eckhout – demonstrating the multiple layers of visual rhetoric encapsulated in their work.³ Recent research has revealed that at least one more artist, the marine painter Abraham Willaerts, also worked in the service of Johan Maurits for three years, constructing ship portraits in Recife as well as an impressive visual representation of the maritime campaign to invade Angola, one of the two main entrepôts for enslaved Africans on whose labor the sugar colony depended.⁴ The collective output of Post, Eckhout, and now Willaerts is practically synonymous with the European visual experience of Brazil in the seventeenth century.⁵

Detail of fig. 1

Historians and art historians, somewhat blinded perhaps by the splendor of the works of Johan Maurits’s entourage, have paid only scant attention to the lively visual imagination of the Americas by stay-at-home artists in Europe. Two painters stand out in this respect. Gillis and Bonaventura Peeters, two brothers from Counter-Reformation Antwerp in the Spanish Netherlands, together created at least a dozen oil paintings (and probably many more) of Dutch Brazil. Whereas Albert Eckhout’s works had only a very limited audience in the seventeenth century – they were gifted to the King of Denmark by Johan Maurits in 1651 – and at least some of the landscapes and seascapes of Frans Post and Abraham Willaerts were made for customers with investments in or personal memories of Dutch Brazil, the paintings by the Peeters brothers, in contrast, were geared to the expanding art market in the Low Countries. There is every reason to believe

that the imaginative paintings from the Peeters workshop were equally as relevant and meaningful for contemporary audiences as those made *naer 't leven* by the artists who had lived and worked across the Atlantic. This essay is both a preliminary survey and a first attempt to understand the American oeuvre of these two accomplished Antwerp artists.

Gillis I (1612-1653) and Bonaventura I (1614-1652) Peeters never traveled to Brazil. The matter has divided opinions, driven mainly by a topographic painting of Olinda and Recife, dated 1637 and attributed to Gillis (fig. 1): in order to explain both this bird's-eye view and additional paintings dated to the 1640s, some art historians have suggested that Gillis traveled to the Americas not once but twice. This assumption can still be found occasionally in modern scholarship.⁶ There is no archival material, however, to suggest that either of the two brothers ever left European soil, and Gillis's panorama of northeast Brazil was almost certainly based on cartographic representations that were widely available in the Low Countries at the time.⁷ What we do know for certain about their lives and activities suggests that they both spent the lion's share of their respective careers in Antwerp. Together they joined the local Guild of St. Luke in 1634/1635, and in 1639 they received a joint payment of 480 Brabant guilders from the municipal authorities for a large canvas of the victorious battle of Kallo of the year before – an archival document that forces those who want to argue for Gillis's presence in the colony to suggest not one, but two visits to Recife.⁸ The only archival evidence of movement that has survived points to two visits by Bonaventura to the Dutch Republic, applying for a passport to travel to *de vyant* ('the enemy') north of the border in 1637, and again in 1640.⁹

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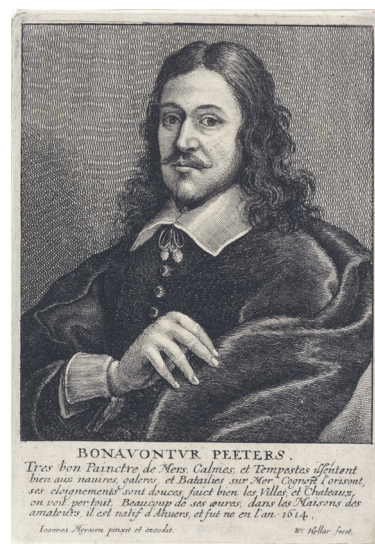
Gillis Peeters (attr.), *Panorama of Olinda and Recife*, 1637, oil on panel, 49,8 x 85,1 cm, private collection (sale New York [Sotheby's], May 1995; photo: RKD 3166), <https://rkd.nl/imageslite/3166>



Bonaventura Peeters is traditionally regarded as the most gifted artist of the family (fig. 2). His oeuvre – like that of his younger brother Jan (1624–1677) – consists of shipwrecks and storms, colorful seascapes, and capriccio views. In the second quarter of the seventeenth century, Bonaventura was considered the leading marine painter in the Southern Netherlands. Cornelis de Bie, biographer of painters and author of *Het Gulden Cabinet* (1662), lauded him as one of the principal artists of his era in all categories – ‘his genteel [*deftich*] work receiving ubiquitous praise (...) because nobody was so gifted to bring the Sea to Life’.¹⁰ Sixty years later, Arnold Houbraken admired Bonaventura for his dramatic paintings of ‘ships in dire peril’, and praised him for being able to depict ‘these and similar sad subjects, as well as air, water, reefs, and beaches, so naturally that he was judged to be the best of his time in this way of painting’.¹¹ Surprisingly little has changed in this respect: in the recent four-volume survey catalog of the magnificent Inder Rieden collection, Gerlinde de Beer reserves great praise for both Bonaventura Peeters and his brother Gillis, writing that ‘in the 1630s the two Flemish artists embarked on a successful career with foreign scenes which, on the basis of their painting technique, composition and light effects, can only be described as outstanding’.¹²

For artists whose work was and is so well regarded, by contemporaries and twenty-first-century critics alike, there is remarkably little modern scholarship on the Peeters brothers. This can at least partly be explained by the predilection of art historians in the twentieth century to examine marine painting along national lines. Fred C. Willis, a pioneer in the study of Dutch seascapes, went to great lengths to point out the difference in quality between the marine painters of the Northern and Southern Netherlands. He argued in the 1910s that the important innovations to the genre all happened in Holland, ‘while the few Flemings hardly got beyond an art that offered external charms and could never count on a very large audience’. When discussing the works of Bonaventura Peeters and his contemporaries, he dismissed them as having a ‘solid style of painting that seems so hard and clumsy to us compared to the Dutch’.¹³ In the major studies and surveys of Dutch marine painting that followed, the works of the Peeters brothers have been glanced over, or not mentioned at all.¹⁴ Art historians have sometimes justified the strict separation by pointing to the difference in themes, emphasizing the preference among Southern Netherlandish artists for shipwrecks, stormy seas, and apocalyptic scenes in an overly dramatic and lyrical style. As a result, the connections between marine painters north and south of the border have been insufficiently explored. Margarita Russell’s excellent study on the Southern Netherlandish origins of Dutch marine painting focuses on Hendrick Vroom, and unfortunately does not continue into the middle third of the seventeenth century when the popularity of the genre reached its zenith.¹⁵ In recent years, more attention has been devoted to the similarities between north and south, but an overarching study on Netherlandish marine painting is still lacking.¹⁶

The Peeters brothers defy such an easy separation along national, stylistic, and thematic lines. The best scholarly vantage point to examine their work, for this reason, is still Lawrence Goedde’s 1989 book *Tempest*



2

Wenceslaus Hollar (after Johannes Meyssen), *Portrait of Bonaventura Peeters*, 1649, engraving, 16,1 x 11,3 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-P-OB-11.417

*and shipwreck in Dutch and Flemish art.*¹⁷ Perhaps because Goedde is concerned with the storm at sea as a motif, he examines Northern and Southern Netherlandish painting together, without prioritizing the cultural divide that came into being after the Fall of Antwerp in 1585.¹⁸ This approach, it will be argued here, is a prerequisite for reexamining Bonaventura and Gillis Peeters's combined oeuvre. For a better and more complete understanding, it is essential to remember that a contemporary critic like De Bie characterized Bonaventura's work as a mixture of the 'tempestuous' and 'the calm and quiet'.¹⁹ Any reexamination, then, should be extended to include works that depict a calmer sea. Paintings of the Americas, at the forefront of the minds of the Dutch in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, offer the required blend of themes and motifs, and provide an excellent opportunity to comprehend the relative position of Bonaventura and Gillis Peeters in the field of marine painting beyond the national characteristics that were constructed in the twentieth century. Because relatively little hard evidence on the Peeters brothers and their marine paintings is available as yet regarding dates and attribution, my interpretations are at times more speculative in nature than usual, addressing not only the motifs and marketability of the brothers' paintings but also their meaning in light of the rise and fall of Dutch Brazil.

A calm Brazil

The American oeuvre of the Peeters brothers can roughly be divided into three formulas: calm alongshore views, tempestuous views, and battle scenes. In what follows, they will be discussed in this order. Arguably the most instantly recognizable of the American artworks in Bonaventura's oeuvre represents a serene coastal view with two merchant men-of-war in a small bay in the foreground and several other ships in the distance (fig. 3). Both ships are flying Dutch flags, and the supremacy of the vessels that have arrived from across the ocean is in no doubt, with the ship closest to the viewer sporting an orderly row of guns. Unmoved by the power on display, four Indigenous people in a canoe have come to within earshot of the main Dutch ship. At the same time, two rowboats full of European sailors are approaching the rocky coast, where a motley crew of local inhabitants is awaiting the closer encounter that is about to come. Contemporary viewers will have recognized the Indigenous figures as Americans, with their feathered headdresses in particular immediately catching the eye.

Signed with the monogram BP, and dated 1648, the painting represents an encounter in Brazil at the time the Dutch West India Company was beginning to lose its hold on the colony. The battle for Brazil between the Dutch Republic and the Habsburg monarchy had captured the attention of early modern Europeans with an interest in trade, politics, and war ever since it had commenced in the mid-1620s. For contemporaries in the Low Countries, Brazil was practically synonymous with the 'public' dimension of the Atlantic world in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. Through a wide variety of early modern 'media' – newspapers, prints, maps, poetry, sermons, and oral reports – Brazil would retain that exclusive position in the broader perception of the Americas until the



recapture of Olinda and Recife by a Portuguese fleet in January 1654.²⁰ The attributes that Peeters used to depict the local people – a semi-naked presence adorned by feathers, capes of long-haired animal skin, and brightly colored parrots – were staple items in the European catalog of stereotypical representations of Indigenous South Americans, from the crude woodcuts in Hans Staden's eyewitness report of Brazilian cannibalism and Jean de Léry's polemical travel account of *La France Antarctique*, both available in Dutch translation, to the illustrated costume books of Zacharias Heyns and the ethnographic margins of the celebrated maps by Jodocus Hondius, Pieter van der Keere, and Willem Jansz Blaeu.²¹ Peeters, in other words, did not need to make the oceanic crossing to create a painting of Brazil that was instantly recognizable to customers in the European art market.

In order to understand how Bonaventura Peeters operated, we have to compare this painting, currently in the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Connecticut, to several of his other 'Brazilian' compositions. One painting in particular stands out in this respect, because it offers a striking resemblance to the Hartford painting (fig. 4).²² The painting – now in a private collection in Brazil – is more or less similar in size, and displays the exact same features: Indigenous Americans in a canoe approaching a mighty Dutch vessel, now with lowered sails, and a rowboat full of European soldiers and sailors advancing to the rocky coast. Here, a group of benevolent Americans is awaiting them, standing on a large rock that appears identical to the one in the Hartford

3

Bonaventura Peeters, *Dutch men-of-war in the West Indies*, 1648, oil on panel, 47 x 71,5 cm, Hartford, CT, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, inv. no. 1940.403

painting. The vegetation is a bit more lush, and there is no second Dutch ship in immediate support of the first one. The sea is calm, and the intercultural encounter is likewise peaceful. The main difference is that Peeters has mirrored the composition: the exotic rock formations that serve as a repoussoir are now on the right side of the image, the ocean stretches out beyond the horizon to the left.²³ The composition was by all means successful in the art market in the Low Countries and beyond, because a third such painting – this time ascribed to Gillis rather than to Bonaventura, yet once again with only subtle differences – has also survived.²⁴

4

Bonaventura Peeters, *Dutch men-of-war in the West Indies*, 1646, medium and support unknown, 45,1 x 64,1 cm, private collection of João Fernando de Almeida Prado (photo: RKD 580010), <https://rkd.nl/imageslite/580010>



5

Bonaventura Peeters, *Tropical coast with a Dutch man-of-war*, c. 1646, oil on canvas, 59 x 73 cm, Kassel, Hessen Kassel Heritage, inv. no. GK 166



An early impression of the problems of interpretation connected to a relatively neglected oeuvre like that of Bonaventura Peeters is presented by a painting in the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Kassel (fig. 5). At first glance, it will be immediately clear that the image is practically identical to the one in the Brazilian private collection, albeit without the eye-catching Indigenous figures at the heart of the composition. In the late 1950s, the painting was regarded as 'a coast in the Orient', but the resemblance with a painting by the same artist that is unquestionably meant to be 'American' makes it unlikely that Bonaventura intended it to represent the Indian Ocean world. The museum in Kassel, which currently uses the risk-free term 'tropical coast', characterizes the painting as 'made after one of two higher-quality, probably original, copies with Indians in the foreground'. Be that as it may, the clear difference is that this work – on canvas – is substantially bigger than the panel 'with Indians' in the private collection in Brazil. The catalog entry on the Kassel website adds that this painting was obtained 'before 1819', and it is hence tempting to conclude that Bonaventura made this 'copy' himself. If correct, this would suggest that the Antwerp artist produced these views of the Dutch Americas as staple items – made to order based on a template, or produced on his own initiative with a considerable market of potential buyers in mind, a distinct possibility given the public resonance of the colonial endeavor in Brazil.

That we should pursue this line of reasoning with considerable care becomes clear from another example, inadvertently highlighted by the American art historian Erik Larsen in one of his final publications.²⁵ Larsen, in 2002, claimed to have discovered a new painting by Gillis Peeters, supposedly representing a Brazilian or West African coast (fig. 6a). The panel resembles Bonaventura Peeters's Atlantic output closely: a ship, sporting a Dutch flag, lies at anchor in a sheltered bay, its sails lowered in a composition that once again oozes calm and control. The setting is a tropical one, judging from the three crisply painted palm trees on the shore near the ship. Dated to the second half of the 1640s, when the Dutch were firmly in control of the slave entrepôts in Elmina (Ghana) and Luanda (Angola), it appears to be another representation of the West India Company's maritime empire. Arched rock formations to the left of the composition provide a familiar repoussoir, and the beach is populated by about a dozen local inhabitants, some of whom appear to be of African descent. Two years before Larsen's 'discovery', however, the same painting had been put up for auction at Sotheby's in London. The size is identical, the composition is identical, but the palm trees and some of the local beach-dwellers that are present in Larsen's version were not yet on display in the Sotheby's catalog (fig. 6b).²⁶ The current whereabouts of the painting are unknown and there is no restoration report to offer conclusive evidence, but it appears that an already exotic painting was 'exoticized' a little more in the early years of this century – perhaps in the same spirit that saw Bonaventura add Indigenous Americans to the uninhabited surroundings of the work in the Kassel collection.

There is more to the Atlantic oeuvre of the two Peeters brothers than mere copying. Variety is provided by two other paintings attributed to

6a

Gillis Peeters, *Ship off the Brazilian or West African coast*, c. 1645, oil on panel, 34,6 x 54,6 cm, private collection (sale New York [Christie's], April 2018; photo: RKD 26654), <https://rkd.nl/imageslite/26654>



6b

Gillis Peeters (attr.), *Ship off the Brazilian or West African coast*, c. 1645, oil on panel, 34,6 x 54,6 cm, private collection (photo: Sotheby's catalog, December 2000)



Bonaventura Peeters – all anchored in the same representational mold, yet sufficiently different to merit moving beyond the notion of an American ‘template’. Arguably the most arresting one is another depiction of a Dutch-Brazilian encounter in an unknown private collection (fig. 7). Its exact measurements are unknown, and it is even unclear if it is painted on panel or on canvas, but, from an illustration in Hugh Honour’s 1975 study *The New Golden Land*, it appears to be an elongated version of the painting in the Hartford collection, with added exotic value for good measure.²⁷ Bonaventura Peeters, to whom Honour attributes the work, has placed the Indigenous Brazilian man holding a parrot in his hand in exactly the same pose again, on a large rock anticipating the approaching Dutch sailors and soldiers. The intercultural encounter, however, appears to be in full swing already after a sloop with a prominent red, white, and blue flag has landed on the small beach.

The attribution to Bonaventura, as well as the provisional date around



1650, makes perfect sense when we take the similarities with his panel in the Hartford collection into account, and broadens the perspective on the paintings of the Dutch Americas from the Antwerp workshop. It is difficult to draw conclusions based on artworks that are not in the public realm and of which we have only hazy images. In scrutinizing the five calm Atlantic compositions collectively, however, it becomes apparent that while they are not identical, and were 'pasted' onto a generic format, an undeniable connection binds them together. Bonaventura's imaginative views of the Dutch Americas – or more specifically northeast Brazil, given that they were all produced in the later 1640s when attention for events in Pernambuco was at its peak – appear to have emerged from a production line that operated with considerable uniformity, tailored for a broad and perhaps somewhat indiscriminating audience for art in the Low Countries. The paintings' consistent formats, and their often similar sizes, is an additional clue to the organized and purposeful nature of their conception and creation.

A tempestuous Brazil

Comparable in terms of composition to Bonaventura's views of a calm Brazil, but rather different in the atmosphere that it exudes is another painting of a Dutch ship approaching a tropical landmass (fig. 8). Signed 'B. Peeters' and dated 1651, the scene this time is less calm, although the ocean is still navigable and the coast is within reach. Three rowboats full of sailors are heading towards a dramatically shaped peninsula after two ships – with the heraldic devices of the cities of Utrecht and Amsterdam at their transoms, and flying the flag of the States General – have just dropped their anchors.²⁸ Three more Dutch ocean-going vessels are depicted in the background, completing what was a fairly sizeable reconnaissance fleet for

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Bonaventura Peeters (attr.), *Dutch ship before a rocky coast*, c. 1648, medium and support unknown, measurements unknown, private collection (photo: RKD 580422), <https://rkd.nl/imageslite/580422>



8

Bonaventura Peeters, *Sailing vessels off a rocky coast*, 1651, oil on panel, 52,7 x 73,3 cm, private collection (sale Madrid [Ansorena], July 2024; photo: Ansorena)

the time. A first party of ten European men has already set foot ashore. In a marked departure from the representations discussed above, they are visibly armed, and two of them are pointing their weapons in the direction of the Indigenous Brazilian man who is closest to the Europeans, recognizable by the same stereotypical features as those in the other paintings of encounter in the Dutch Americas. Two other Brazilians are carrying spears instead of exotic birds, and in the background a native person appears to be running for safety towards a cave where more Indigenous Americans are seeking shelter.

Although the composition is still formulaic – yet another exotic landscape with inserted groups of staffage – the meaning may well have been very different. Substituting calm waters and intercultural coexistence for a tempestuous sea and a more threatening environment of encounter, this work may well epitomize a subtle shift in the painter's imagination of the Dutch Americas. It is interesting, in this context, to take into account what Bonaventura himself had to say on the meaning of the elements in marine painting. In an undated poem that he scribbled on the back of a gouache of ships in a storm, the painter underlines the metaphorical qualities of tempest scenes (figs. 9a, 9b):

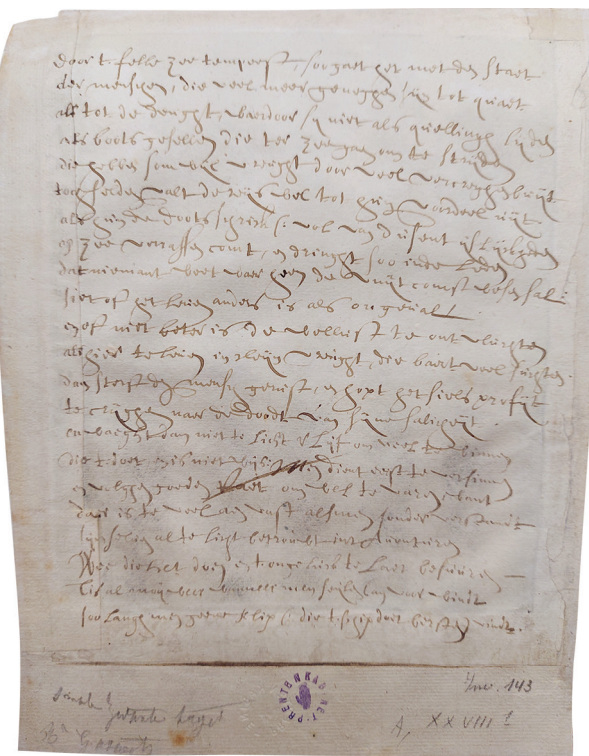
Like a ship at sea driven by the Waves
first high, then low, uncertain where to sail,
due to the fierce sea tempest, so it goes with the state
of men, who are much more inclined to evil
than to virtue, whereby they suffer nothing but torment
like sailors who go to sea to fight,
who sometimes have joy from much captured booty
yet the voyage rarely turns out to their benefit;
as mortal terrors full of a thousand horrors
catch them by surprise at sea, and infiltrate the limbs
so that nobody knows what the outcome will be:
behold whether life is anything other than misfortune,
and whether it is not better to flee pleasure
than to live here in little joy, which gives birth to many sighs.
[For] then man dies peacefully, and hopes for the good of his soul
to gain after death his salvation,
do not then risk your Life too lightly in order to profit
he who does so is not wise: one ought first to consider
and take good advice to sail well, because
there is too much at stake if without reason
one commits oneself all too lightly to Adventuring.
Woe to them who do so and suffer misfortune --
It is nice weather when one can sail before the wind
as long as one does not find a shoal (to burst the ship).²⁹

9a

Bonaventura Peeters, *Three ships in a storm*, c. 1640, gouache, 23,4 x 17,7 cm, Antwerp, Stedelijk Prentenkabinet, PK.OT.00143, recto

9b

Bonaventura Peeters, *Three ships in a storm*, c. 1640, ink on paper, 23,4 x 17,7 cm, Antwerp, Stedelijk Prentenkabinet, PK.OT.00143, verso



The storm-tossed ship, in the words of the painter, becomes a symbol for the unrest and misfortune that adventure brings.

Combining Bonaventura's moralistic poem with the variety in atmosphere in his visual representations of the Americas opens up new avenues of interpretation. In the first four lines, Peeters connects the notion of a 'fierce sea tempest' to the 'state of men, who are much more inclined to evil than to virtue'. Unlike in the serene views of the Americas discussed before, where the intercultural encounters are taking place in a peaceful and orderly fashion, the stand-off between European soldiers and Indigenous inhabitants in this painting appears to be unfriendly and grim, 'so that nobody knows what the outcome will be'. This impression is reinforced at sea, where the ships and boats are facing waves that are rougher and more unpredictable. Bonaventura's pictorial vocabulary, then, may have deliberately aligned with the metaphorical wisdom he had entrusted to paper. Perhaps the geopolitical situation in Brazil was meaningful as well. In 1649, the Dutch had suffered a narrow yet crucial military defeat at Guararapes to a combined Luso-Brazilian force, and by 1651, when Peeters created this composition, the West India Company had all but lost control of northeast Brazil – to the delight no doubt of the more politically engaged inhabitants of Antwerp who had been on the other side of the divide for more than 25 years. Would a more tempestuous representation of the Dutch Americas be what the art market in the Low Countries expected or demanded in the early 1650s?

Two further paintings appear to sustain this speculative interpretation. They, too, are storms in a tropical setting – perfectly identical at first glance, but with several subtle differences. In both paintings, groups of Indigenous Americans watch on as two Dutch ships fight the elements (figs. 10, 11). Both are undated and inconsistently attributed – one currently to Bonaventura, the other to Gillis – but either way they appear to stem from the same industrial attitude to art as the calm scenes of encounter discussed above. They can be connected to a number of different tempestuous works with American staffage, including a particularly dramatic panel in the Philadelphia Museum of Art of which the subject is not demonstrably Dutch because the ship in despair has lost its flags as it is pushed dangerously close to the rocky coast – the museum catalog predicts the outcome of the scene as the painting is labeled as a shipwreck, which it technically is not (yet) (fig. 12). Given some of the solid dates of Bonaventura's other views of the Dutch Americas, the date around 1640 appears almost certainly too early. Another very sizeable painting, dated around 1652 and attributed to Gillis, supposedly represents a Dutch ship in peril before Fort Ceulen, one of the few strongholds that remained in the hands of the West India Company until the Portuguese takeover in 1654 (fig. 13). The interpretation of the castle as Fort Ceulen is suspect – it is depicted rather differently than in contemporary engravings or in a painting made *naer 't leven* by Frans Post – but is understandable and not at all unlikely in light of the Peeters brothers' preference for Brazilian themes in these years.³⁰

To determine the level of speculation involved in this reading of the evolvment of the imaginative views of the Americas – from calm to stormy and from amicable to hostile as the position of the West India



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Bonaventura Peeters (attr.), *Dutch ships in a storm before a tropical coast*, c. 1649, oil on panel, 45,5 x 71 cm, private collection (sale The Hague [Nijstad], 1964; photo: RKD 26570)



11

Gillis Peeters (attr.), *Dutch ships in a storm before a tropical coast*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, 48,4 x 71,7 cm, private collection (sale London [Sotheby's], December 1999; photo: RKD 39591)

Company deteriorated – it is instructive to look at the third category of American paintings from the Peeters workshop, battle scenes. Gillis Peeters's reputation was not as high as that of Bonaventura: Cornelis de Bie does not mention him, nor do later connoisseurs like Houbraken. His artistic persona is decidedly more elusive than that of his sibling. Gillis made marine paintings as well, perhaps including the representation of the Brazilian or West African coast that was further embellished in modern times as we have seen, and he cooperated with Bonaventura on at least one commissioned work with a maritime theme. Yet he was certainly not an established exponent of the maritime genre like his two younger brothers. Some of his own paintings fall between the cracks of easy categorization, combining ships and ports with scenes on land, occasionally adorned with a few Biblical figures. The panorama of Olinda and Recife falls into this hybrid category – one might think of it as a pastoral harbor vista – meaning

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Bonaventura Peeters, *Shipwreck on a rocky coast*, c. 1649, oil on panel, 47,8 x 72,7 cm, Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, inv. no. 1970-2-1



13

Gillis Peeters, *Dutch ships in a storm before 'Fort Ceulen'*, c. 1652, oil on canvas, 80 x 112 cm, private collection (photo: RKD 580452), <https://rkd.nl/imageslite/580452>



that it, too, is an outlier of sorts. Most of the paintings that can confidently be ascribed to Gillis are landscape paintings, but here again, he stands out for his adaptability: sometimes his scenes are rocky and remote, but just as often they are bucolic and languid in nature with a 'softness of expression and an atmospheric sobriety', focusing on the simple pleasures of life in the countryside.³¹

Two surviving views of the Dutch Americas that can be attributed to Gillis with a degree of assurance are of a different category entirely. They can best be described as battle scenes, situated in an imagined exotic landscape that resembles the pristine 'New World' as depicted by Jan Mostaert in the early sixteenth century, adorned with one or more palm trees.³² Just like with Bonaventura's formulaic seascapes, the political

context is such that there is no doubt that both paintings are supposed to represent Brazil. The first one, dated around 1650, depicts a battle between Dutch forces, recognizable because of the red, white, and blue flag that also features as a signifier in Bonaventura's works, and an indiscriminate group of Indigenous Americans (fig. 14). Moving from left to right on the impromptu battlefield, the European soldiers fire their rifles at the group of natives, who once again display all the standard ethnographic features, and cannot be recognized as either Tupi or Tapuya, the two main ethnic groups involved in the colonial struggle in northeast Brazil. The Dutch forces are unquestionably in the ascendancy. All the same, one of the soldiers appears to be mortally wounded by an arrow, and based on this single snapshot, the outcome of the battle is not yet clear. By 1650, several major incidents in Dutch Brazil had soured the relationship between the West India Company and their Indigenous allies.³³ By choosing this motif, Gillis may have deliberately catered for the art market in the Southern Netherlands, where the ongoing decline of Dutch Brazil was followed with great interest.

The second painting is remarkably similar, which suggests that these battle scenes appealed to customers at the time (fig. 15). This panel, signed 'G. Peeters' and dated 1651, represents another military encounter, but here the soldiers of the West India Company appear to have just come ashore: in the background two large ships can be detected, and two small boats that have just transported the troops to the coast are lying on the beach, guarded by a handful of sailors. The Dutch soldiers are fighting an uphill battle. At least three of them have been wounded or killed by arrows, and several others are in the process of leaving the battlefield – perhaps an allusion to the problems the West India Company faced in the final years of its regime in Brazil with deserting troops. Peeters's interest in the ethnicity of the Indigenous forces is once again not of the essence, despite



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Gillis Peeters, *Dutch soldiers in battle with Indigenous American forces*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, 45 x 63 cm, private collection (sale London [Christie's], 1969; photo: RKD 580515), <https://rkd.nl/imageslite/580515>



15

Gillis Peeters, *Dutch soldiers in battle with Indigenous American forces*, 1651, oil on panel, 46 x 53 cm, private collection (photo: private collection)

widespread awareness in Europe that there were different groups involved in the battle for Brazil. The pendulum of the war appears to be swinging towards the Indigenous fighters, who are supported by Portuguese soldiers with firearms, just like in Pernambuco at the time. Several palm trees, a daunting mountain landscape, and exotic vegetation complete the composition. The bland yet recognizable features of both the European and the American figures in the two battle scenes suggest that Gillis may have been responsible for the figures in Bonaventura's views of the Dutch Americas as well – the armed men in the hostile encounter in the 1651 painting in particular look conspicuously similar.

Once again, both battle scenes display a number of identical features – just like the seascapes of Bonaventura – which suggest that they, too, were part of a pipeline of 'Brazilian' paintings from the family workshop. The choice that was apparently made by both brothers to focus on Brazilian themes, each working to his strengths and skills, must have been a conscious one. The paintings of the Dutch Americas by Bonaventura and

Gillis Peeters that are firmly dated, or to which a date has been attributed, were all conceived in the second half of the 1640s and the early years of the 1650s. This, it appears, was the 'Brazilian moment' in the combined careers of the two Antwerp siblings, and – if true – indicates how finely tuned they were to public affairs and the impact of societal concerns on the market for art in the Low Countries. From the beginning of the planters' revolt in Pernambuco against the regime of the West India Company in June 1645, initiated by the colonial government of the Portuguese in Salvador de Bahia and tacitly supported by the Braganza monarchy in Lisbon, until the fall of Dutch Recife in January 1654, the battle for Brazil was a key feature in Europe's political present, and future. For European diplomats involved in the lengthy negotiations in Westphalia in the later 1640s, the war in Brazil provided a major stumbling block for a lasting peace agreement.³⁴ When the issue of Brazil lost its political relevance – the West India Company never attempted to regain control over Pernambuco after 1654, not even during a four-year war between the Dutch Republic and Portugal that began in 1657 and that was closely related to the earlier struggle over the sugar colony – the theme did not resurface in Netherlandish art, other than the perennial landscapes that Frans Post continued to produce in Haarlem until his death in 1680.

Appeal and allegiance

The American imagination of the Peeters brothers was not only formulaic in nature but also carefully calibrated to the demands of the art market in the Low Countries. Within the confines of their formula, the fortunes of the West India Company in Brazil may well have determined the tenor of their compositions: calm and benevolent in the late 1640s as the evolving story in the Americas gained momentum, increasingly turbulent and unsettled as the colonial enterprise of *de vyant* began to fade. In this context, it is important to look at the contemporary clientele of the Peeters brothers' seascapes and battle scenes. Marine paintings feature in a substantial number of inventories in the mid-seventeenth-century Low Countries. That they suffer from being described in a rather bland and indiscriminating manner – '*een zeetje van Bonaventura*' (a small seascape by Bonaventura) – is often ascribed to the functional way in which notaries composed their records of private estates, but becomes more understandable when we take the industrial process of manufacturing maritime art into consideration. Studying inventories in Amsterdam and Haarlem, John Michael Montias first observed that marine paintings were steady sellers in Holland's lively art market.³⁵ Remmelt Daalder, in his elaborate study of the Van de Velde firm, has since confirmed that the number of artists who specialized in maritime themes increased rapidly, in Amsterdam in particular, in the 1640s. Their number continued to be very high for at least another three decades, and the many references to seascapes in Holland inventories in this period suggests that most of these artists were able to make a living.³⁶

Based on these records, Bonaventura Peeters appears to have been operating in the middle segment of the art market. His paintings were sold in Amsterdam for an average price of 29,5 guilders,³⁷ a little bit lower than

the very comparable works of Simon de Vlieger, and considerably lower than those of Jan Porcellis, another marine painter from Antwerp who, unlike Peeters, had migrated to the Dutch Republic.³⁸ One of Bonaventura's paintings commanded a price of 100 guilders, however, which was unusually high for maritime art that was not commissioned.³⁹ All of this is especially interesting when we take into account that the popularity of paintings made in Antwerp gradually diminished in Amsterdam. By the 1640s, when Bonaventura's career was at its peak, only 12 percent of all paintings in Amsterdam inventories were made by artists from Antwerp, as opposed to almost 20 percent in the 1610s.⁴⁰ Bonaventura Peeters was the only marine painter from the Southern Netherlands whose work continued to appear regularly in Amsterdam inventories, and he may well have been the only 'outsider' who was able to compete with the growing contingent of Amsterdam and Haarlem specialists – a testimony to the quality of his paintings, as emphasized by De Bie. An important caveat, however, is that of the 18 works by Bonaventura, 13 were in the same sizeable collection at the Keizersgracht domicile of the Antwerp-born merchant Balthasar van Haeften.⁴¹ These 13 provide a cross section of Bonaventura's oeuvre, and include a painting of the port of Hoorn, an English castle with a ship, a storm, an Italian port, a view of Antwerp, and a naval battle. There are no recorded paintings of the Americas by Peeters in Van Haeften's possession. Notary Gillis Borsselaer does document a 'piece of the coast of Guinea', right before listing two paintings by Bonaventura, but the painter of the West African scene is registered as anonymous.

In Antwerp inventories, the picture is considerably different. Marine paintings by Bonaventura Peeters feature in private art collections of all shapes and sizes. The references to the paintings in the Antwerp inventories are usually even more generic than in Amsterdam, however, so it is impossible to determine which collectors had an interest in Bonaventura's views of the Dutch Americas. One inventory, of the merchant Gerard Caillet, contains a reference to 'a piece of painting by Peeters which represents Havana', but given the geographic precision, this is likely to have been a harbor scene rather than an exotic seascape.⁴² For many references to paintings by 'Peeters', it is not clear which of the three brothers was responsible. Perhaps some of the works were produced by the workshop, and the reference to the surname may have represented a mark of quality. But only Bonaventura's name was mentioned explicitly in the inventories, almost exclusively as the painter of *een Scheepvaertken* or *een Zeeken* – a ship or a seascape. There are occasional references to tempestuous scenes or to 'a rocky coast', but as we have seen, this is far from sufficient evidence to conclude that these are views of the Americas.⁴³ What is clear is that the marine paintings by Bonaventura were already a prized item during his lifetime, especially in Counter-Reformation Antwerp, and retained their appeal at least until the end of the seventeenth century. Some paintings were on display 'in the principal art room' or 'on the mantelpiece' – the latter reference in particular suggesting that the works were slightly bigger in size.⁴⁴ It is also apparent from the inventories that Bonaventura's marine paintings did not have much direct competition in his hometown – marine paintings from the Dutch Republic seldom featured. In the new Antwerp

genre of painted art galleries, too, Bonaventura's seascapes were regularly included as part of the vibrant culture of connoisseurship that pervaded the city on the Scheldt.⁴⁵ Beyond the private inventories in Amsterdam and Antwerp, it is difficult to learn more about Peeters's clientele. Bonaventura's many townscapes – of Antwerp, Middelburg, or Dordrecht – have sometimes been considered indications of commissions.⁴⁶ There is considerable reason to be cautious, however. Van Haeften, the Antwerp-born merchant in Amsterdam, owned a painted view of Hoorn, without having any obvious personal ties to the maritime town in Holland's Northern Quarter. Southern Netherlandish collectors, in Antwerp and Ghent, possessed views of Stockholm, Texel, and Vlissingen.⁴⁷ In July 1642, Bonaventura sold three townscapes – of Seville, Milan, and Paris – for 60 Brabant guilders each to the merchant Hendrik van Spaignien, again without a clear connection between the client's biography and his artistic taste.⁴⁸ There is no reason, then, to assume that Bonaventura's imagined views of the Dutch Americas were aimed primarily at buyers with a personal connection to the Americas in the same way that landscapes by Frans Post and ship portraits by Abraham Willaerts probably were.⁴⁹ Here, too, the distinction between artists who had visited Brazil and a painter who imagined the Americas at home is all too clear. Based on several pieces of circumstantial evidence, it appears that Bonaventura Peeters painted for the market, without always having a preconceived idea of who exactly his customers might be. And it is apparent, from the limited evidence that has survived, that the appeal of his works in Antwerp exceeded that in Amsterdam. When this is connected to the careful differentiation in formulaic seascapes – from calm to tempestuous – in representations of the Dutch Americas, and to the battle scenes attributed to Gillis in the early 1650s when the West India Company was losing ground in Brazil, conclusions can cautiously be drawn.

Conclusion

This first exploration of the 'Brazilian' paintings of Bonaventura and Gillis Peeters is essentially just that, a first and by all accounts incomplete overview that is meant as an invitation for further research. My interpretation is deliberately speculative, as an opening gambit towards a better understanding of the output of the Peeters workshop in Antwerp that has never been the subject of consistent scholarly attention, despite the high regard in which the seascapes of Bonaventura in particular were held by contemporary customers and connoisseurs. What is evident is that both siblings consciously began to add representations of the Dutch Americas to their oeuvre in the second half of the 1640s, and continued to paint tropical scenes until their respective deaths in the early 1650s. That these paintings were intended and understood as imaginations of Dutch Brazil is clear from the amount of public attention the conflict in Pernambuco generated in the Low Countries after the outbreak of the planters' revolt against the regime of the Dutch West India Company in Recife in June 1645. Developments in Brazil were closely connected to matters of war and peace in Europe, and public opinion about the war

in the Americas became ever more acrimonious as the faraway conflict threatened to stall the peace talks in Westphalia.

The Peeters brothers' views of the Dutch Americas cannot be compared directly to the paintings that were made *in situ* by Frans Post, Albert Eckhout, and Abraham Willaerts – artists in the retinue of Governor-General Johan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen. But the imagination of the Peeters brothers presumably made a bigger impact on the art market in the Low Countries, and perhaps, as a result, also on the collective imagination of the Americas in Europe. The ethnographic works of Eckhout disappeared from public view in the early 1650s, and the tailor-made visual memories of the Dutch colony by Post and Willaerts often ended up in the private collections of people with a personal connection to Brazil. Instead, Bonaventura and Gillis Peeters reemployed stereotypical conceptualizations of the Indigenous inhabitants of the Americas from the years before the establishment of the West India Company, and used them as staffage for their calm and tempestuous seascapes, and for battle scenes. In doing so, they tapped into (and in turn reinvigorated) the taste for exoticism that was gradually developing in Europe in the 1640s, and that would reach maturity from the third quarter of the seventeenth century onwards.⁵⁰

One thing that can be concluded with a fair degree of certainty is that Bonaventura Peeters often used visual templates to produce marine paintings of the Americas. Some of his exotic compositions are very similar, and at times they are almost identical. It appears reasonable to assume that Bonaventura produced these works, all of a comparable, relatively modest size, because he knew from experience that they would be appreciated by customers from the urban middle classes. His ship paintings and seascapes featured in many Antwerp collections, great and small. Variations on the theme could perhaps be added based on specific demands of his clientele, although this remains practically impossible to prove. From the two examples of Brazilian battle scenes provided in this essay, it appears that the same formulaic approach may well have been applied by Gillis Peeters, but his oeuvre has not even begun to be studied in detail by scholars – partly because of the perceived lower quality of his work.

Gillis created his two battle scenes in the early 1650s, when Dutch Brazil was in decline. The connection between art and politics is often circumstantial, and that is also the case in this preliminary survey of the Peeters paintings. It is nevertheless enticing to assume that as the only imperial moment in the history of the Dutch Atlantic world drew to a close, Bonaventura Peeters, as the leading marine painter in the only remaining Catholic trading hub in the Low Countries, made visual representations of the Dutch Americas that displayed some of the metaphorical qualities that he mused about in the moralistic poem that he wrote. As Dutch Brazil began to recede from view, the waves in his paintings became higher, the wind speed increased, and the ships flying the flags of the Dutch Republic and the States General found themselves in ever more perilous circumstances, often on the verge of losing the fight against the elements. Because scholarship on the Peeters brothers has hitherto been so limited – for reasons of national navel-gazing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – it is difficult to establish a firm connection between the dates

and exact attributions of the artworks and the motifs that originated from the Antwerp workshop. But after the Peeters brothers had died in the early 1650s, and the West India Company surrendered Recife to the Portuguese in January 1654, the Dutch Americas disappeared from view – not just in a geopolitical sense, but also as a theme in Netherlandish painting. The collective memory of Dutch Brazil faded as well. As early as the turn of the eighteenth century, Bonaventura Peeters's Dutch American marine paintings were finally on a par with Frans Post's Brazilian landscapes – as both could now be sold as representations of 'the East Indies' without anyone raising an eyebrow.⁵¹

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Notes

- 1 Klooster 2016; Van Groesen 2017. In writing this article, I have benefited from two unpublished student dissertations (Bazuin 2009; Van der Tol 2021).
- 2 The best recent biographies of Johan Maurits have not been translated into English: Odegard 2022 and Cabral de Mello 2006. On Johan Maurits as a patron of the arts, see a number of the essays in Van den Boogaart et al. 1979 and Whitehead & Boeseman 1989.
- 3 On Eckhout, see Parker Brienens 2006 and Buvelot 2004. On Post, see Correa de Lago & Correa de Lago 2007, added to by a recently discovered set of drawings discussed in De Bruin 2016.
- 4 Van Groesen 2019.
- 5 Hochstrasser 2014.
- 6 The main protagonist in this debate is Erik Larsen. In two separate articles, he claims that it is 'reasonable to assume' that Gillis arrived in Brazil with Johan Maurits in early 1637, returned to Antwerp in or before 1639, and then traveled to Brazil a second time 'in or about' 1640. See Larsen 1970, esp. 127–130, and Larsen 2002. Larsen's claims are echoed by Sutton 1990, 478 ('who is said to have traveled to Brazil in the entourage of the Dutch prince Johan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen in 1636–1637 and perhaps again in 1640'); De Maere & Wabbes 1994, 315 ('who had traveled to South America'); and Oliver 2013, 211 ('Gillis Peeters [...] visited Brazil during the Dutch colonial project in mid-seventeenth century and vividly illuminated the potential dangers of inland travel').
- 7 Zandvliet 1998, 244. On the changing townscape of Recife, see Van Nederveen Meerkerk 1989 and Mota Menezes 1999.
- 8 Rombouts & Van Lierius 1872–1876, vol. 2, 59.
- 9 De Beer 2019, vol. 1, 97–98.
- 10 The final four lines of De Bie's 28-line hagiographic poem, in Dutch, are: 'Soo dat zijn deftick werck wort over al ghepresen/ Midts niemant sijns ghelijck in Const en schijnt te wesen,/ Want niemants Const in Zee soo op het leven treckt/ Als Peeters cloeck Pinceel, die t'leven gans ontdeckt'. I used the online edition of De Bie 1662 at www.dbnl.org.
- 11 Houbraken 1718–1721, available online in English translation at <https://houbraken-translated.rkd.nl>. Goedde 2015 argues that Houbraken emphasized Bonaventura's predilection for storms, thus diminishing the significance of his calmer compositions.
- 12 De Beer 2019, vol. 2, 500.
- 13 Willis 1911, 4, 92.
- 14 Bol 1973; Giltaij 1996; Daalder 2016.
- 15 Russell 1983. On the popularity of marine painting between 1630 and 1670, see Daalder 2016, 51–64.
- 16 See the somewhat speculative essay by Schwartz 2015, and the stinging response from De Beer 2019, vol. 1, 102. More general reflections on the added value of looking at art in the Low Countries as a whole include De Clippel & Vermeylen 2015, with further references.
- 17 Goedde 1989. See also Gaschke 2008, but here, again, four of the five chapters focus on Dutch marine painting, and only the chapter by Goedde refers to the artistic landscape as 'Netherlandish'.
- 18 Throughout his study, Goedde prefers the term 'Dutch' over 'Flemish', but at no point does this affect his interpretation.
- 19 De Bie 1662: 'Bonaventura heeft dit alles soo geschildert/ tempeestich, calm en stil, jae somtijts oock verwildert'.
- 20 Van Groesen 2017. See in particular chapter 5, 'Amsterdamified', for an examination of the debates on the decline of Dutch Brazil in contemporary media.
- 21 On the influence of Staden and De Léry on stereotypes of Brazil in the Low Countries, see Schmidt 2001, 33–46. See also the very graphic adaptations of Staden's and De Léry's illustrations in Theodore de Bry's monumental collection of voyages: Van Groesen 2008. On Zacharias Heyns, see Van Groesen 2017, 14–20, as well as Meeus 2008. On Hondius and Van der Keere, see Schilder 2007. On the Blaeu dynasty, see Zandvliet 1998 and Van Netten 2014.
- 22 The painting is dated 1640 or 1646. Based on a survey of Bonaventura Peeters's Brazilian paintings, the latter date appears more likely.
- 23 On rock formations as markers of the 'exotic' in Netherlandish art of the second quarter of the 17th century, see Spicer 1999.
- 24 See <https://rkd.nl/imageslite/70774> (last visited 30 Sept 2024).
- 25 Larsen 2002, 936–937.
- 26 The records at the RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History in The Hague state that 'Between December 2000 [when it was sold at Sotheby's in London, MvG] and 2002 this work has been severely overpainted. Apart from a (false) signature several figures, palm trees, plants, an armadillo, a dog and a crocodile were added'.
- 27 Honour 1975, 83.
- 28 The shipwreck of the Dutch vessel Utrecht was excavated by an international team of maritime archaeologists just outside of the Bay of All Saints in December 2012, after having been located five years before. The Utrecht was part of a naval expedition of seven ships under the

- command of Admiral Witte de With, and was sunk in battle in September 1648 off the island of Itaparica. Given the generic nature of Bonaventura Peeters's paintings of the Dutch Americas, it is extremely unlikely that the painting was directly connected to the campaign of three years earlier. On the archaeological research, see Manders & Brouwers 2015; on De With's campaign, see Van Hoboken 1955.
- 29 Stedelijk Prentenkabinet, Antwerp, PK.OT.00143: Gelijck een schip in zee gedreven door de Baaren/ dan hoogh, en dan weer leegh, onseker waer 't sal vaaren,/ door 't felle zeetemppeest, soo gaet het met den staet/ der menschen, die veel meer geneygen zijn tot quaet/ als tot de deught waardoor sy niet als quelligh lijden,/ als bootsgesellen die ter zee gaen om te strijden/ die hebben somwijl vreught door veel vercreghen buit/ toch selden valt de reijs wel tot hun voordeel uijt;/ als hun de dootsschicks vol van durent ijslijckheden/ op zee verrassen comt, en dringht soo inde leden/ dat niemant weet waer heen de vuytcomst wesen sal:/ siet of het leven anders is als ongeval,/ en of niet beter is de wellust te ontvluchten/ als hier te leven in cleijn vreught, die baert veel suchten/ dan sterft den mensch gerust, en hopt het sielsprofijt/ te krijgen naer de doot van sijne salicheijt,/ en waeght dan niet te licht u Lijf om niet te winnen/ die 't doet en is niet wijs: men dient eerst te versinnen/ en volghen goeden Raet om wel te varen, want/ daer is te veel aen vast als men sonder verstandt/ sijn selven alte licht betrouwt int Avonturen./ Wee die het doen en 't ongeluck te laet besuuren – /
- 'T is al moij weer wanneer men seijlen van voor bindt/ soo langh men geene klip (die 't schip doet bersten) vindt. I generally follow the translation in Goedde 1989, 128-129.
- 30 See my own discussion of the painting in Van Groesen 2017, 150-152, where in hindsight I may have been a little too eager to accept it as a view of Fort Ceulen. Frans Post's 1638 painting of the fortress, currently at the Louvre, is discussed at length by Correa de Lago & Correa de Lago 2007, 94-97. Claes Jansz Visscher, the trusted spin-doctor of the West India Company, represented Fort Ceulen shortly after its conquest by the Company in 1633.
- 31 The quotation is from Vlieghe 1998, 189. Gillis is not mentioned at all in Goedde 1989.
- 32 On Mostaert's representation of the 'New World', see Schmidt 2001, 1-5.
- 33 Meuwese 2012, 176-180.
- 34 Cabral de Mello 1998; Van de Haar 1961.
- 35 Montias 2004-2005.
- 36 Daalder 2016, 52.
- 37 Calculated from 18 known sales, (n = 18).
- 38 On the intimate connection between the works of Bonaventura Peeters and Simon de Vlieger, see De Beer 2019, vol. 1, 96-99, who speculates that Peeters and De Vlieger were in contact in the late 1630s when Bonaventura visited the Dutch Republic. There are several obvious stylistic similarities to suggest that this is not unreasonable.
- 39 Montias 2004-2005, 329-330.
- 40 Montias 2004-2005, 335. The decline was gradual, according to Montias's data, from 19.6% (1607-1619), to 16.6% (1620-1639), to 12.1% (1640-1659), and finally to 10.2% for the 1660s and 1670s. The data can be productively compared with an examination of the number of artists active in both cities; see Nijboer et al. 2019.
- 41 Montias 2004-2005, 344.
- 42 Duverger 1984-2009, vol. 8, 51 (18 & 28/29 March 1659): 'Une piece de peinture de Peetters que représente la Havana et encore 3 petites'.
- 43 For example, Duverger 1984-2009, vol. 7, 210 (Miguel Mendes de Vasconcelos, 13 March and 28 August 1656): 'Una Roche de Peeters'.
- 44 Duverger 1984-2009, vol. 7, 355 (Suzana Willemsen, 6 July 1657: 'In de Principaelste Constcamer'). References to ships or seascapes 'on the mantlepiece' (schouwstuk) are more common: for example, Duverger 1984-2009, vol. 7, 221; vol. 8, 338; vol. 8, 455, and vol. 12, 495.
- 45 Van Suchtelen & Van Beneden 2009.
- 46 Bazuin 2009, 19.
- 47 Duverger 1984-2009, vol. 5, 166 (Sara Schut, 26 July 1644); vol. 5, 328 (Martinus van den Enden, 20 June 1646); vol. 8, 172 (Jacques Knudden, 14 December 1660).
- 48 Duverger 1984-2009, vol. 4, 488.
- 49 Parker Brien 2014, 232-235. On Willaerts, see Van Groesen 2019.
- 50 Schmidt 2015.
- 51 Sutton 1990, 480, mentions a 1698 catalog that refers to 'Twee halfdoeckens van Buenaventuer Peeters, het eene daer de Hollanders de eerste reys in Oostindien comen, en van de Indianen wel onthaelt worden, het ander daerse met hun slaeghs syn'. On Post's landscapes that are labeled as 'East Indian' in 1710, see Van Groesen 2017, 170.

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