



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Vermeerderd en verrijkt: de eerste gravures van de Leidse universiteit naar Jan Cornelisz. van 't Woudt beschouwd vanuit een stedelijke context 1609-1716

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Citation

Maris, C. van. (2024, May 30). *Vermeerderd en verrijkt: de eerste gravures van de Leidse universiteit naar Jan Cornelisz. van 't Woudt beschouwd vanuit een stedelijke context 1609-1716*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3759702>

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Summary

The central question of this thesis is: who made and published the four prints of Leiden University's teaching institutions and what motivated the authors? Was there a commission with a clear concept for a series of three or four prints? Reasons for the prints' existence can be explained from historical, contextual, and civic perspectives. Political changes in the Dutch Republic were an important impulse for their publication. The Twelve-Year Truce in 1609 created new opportunities for the Northern Netherlands; opening up free trade, safe travel and increased welfare and prosperity, including new town planning concepts. Towns were pictured in prints and on maps. Several contemporary descriptions with cartographical and topographical images, such as street maps and town views, show that there existed a market for these subjects. Places of interest and their pictorial presentation were part of an early-modern enthusiasm for towns and can be seen as instruments for promoting their prestige. Engravings of the Leiden *Hortus botanicus*, anatomical theatre and library, signed in 1610, were created in response to such demand.

The four prints were part of a flood of images of Leiden originated through collective cooperation and a network of local artisans and book publishers, who were largely dependent on the presence of the University for their income. The interior pictures of Leiden with its scholars and students in combination with instruments and collector's items, demonstrate that in 1610 Leiden's citizens wanted to promote Leiden as a university town. An analysis of the works and network of Woudanus, the engravers Willem van Swanenburgh and Bartholomeus Dolendo, the publishers Andreas Cloucq and Jacob Marcus, reveals that around 1609 they produced several engravings of maps, towns and sights of cities. Successful predecessors showing images of collections were known in Leiden, *inter alia* through prominent catalogues, such as one published by the Neapolitan apothecary Ferrante Imperato. Both its theme and its design inspired the maker of the prints. In addition, earlier topographical images, such as of the anatomical theatre of Padua in the atlas of Antonio Lafreri in 1601, served as an example for Woudanus.

The artistic images of Woudanus, presented from an imaginary ‘birds-eye’ view, show a relationship with town maps. The view from above optimizes the layout, ground plans and paths for collectors’ filing systems. Components are geometrically and categorically arranged according to size and types of materials, linking the prints with images in catalogues and the classification used in registers. The deviation in style and technical quality of the fencing school print, prove that it was engraved later and in a different workshop than the other prints. This is also evident from the lack of dating on the print and the absence of the image in publications before 1610. Using several indicators, the print of the fencing school can be shown to having been created between 1615 and 1617: in 1612 and 1615 first Van Swanenburgh and then Woudanus had died, and in 1617 Cloucq added the original print of the fencing school together with the other three prints, in the publication *Icones, elogia* as a novelty. Its style reveals the influence of images in a prestigious fencing guide, titled *Académie de l’espée*, that circulated in 1617 and 1618 in the printers’ networks in Leiden and Amsterdam.

Most prints pictured the image of Leiden as a University town long after 1610, as can be seen in several publications. Between 1610-1716, the images regularly served as examples for small illustrations in publications about Leiden and its university, and the original prints were also included in some of the famous town atlases of Blaeu. This demonstrates a very persistent use of the images in meeting early-modern travel culture as shown in reports on visits to the university institutions. Strolling couples in the images emphasize the public character of the collections and show how visitors could follow the paths, guiding them to important objects to be observed and used as instruments. The increase in town visits in the Republic after 1609, gave a boost to the market for paintings, engravings and book printing as well as other collector’s items. The Leiden prints meshed perfectly with the interest of travellers for collections and relevant catalogues.

It appears from various details that the prints functioned as a kaleidoscopic source of wonder and amusement for the 17th century visitor. To refresh and guide the eye of the spectator, Woudanus in his design constantly varies sightlines and geometrical shapes according to size and va-

nishing points. Through a systematic alternation of repeating oppositions and motives, large and small, left and right, above and below, in darkness and in light, up close and in the background, he seduces the spectator in a playful manner.

Over time, the function and meaning of the individual prints and the series evolved and changed. During the celebration of the four hundred year anniversary of Leiden University in 1975 the series was used for framing the historical context. This frame was made over time by various curators of the Leiden Academic Historical Museum. The curators of this museum assumed from the start that the series had consisted of four prints. This is not the case as, I have revealed in my thesis, chiefly because the print of the fencing school was added to the other three prints later in time.