

United Under One Roof

Artist Painters and Coarse Painters and their Relations in Seventeenth-Century Leiden

PIET BAKKER

Piet Bakker studied Cultural History with a major in Art History at the University of Amsterdam. In 2003 he was commissioned by the Fries Museum in Leeuwarden to write a socio-economic history of the seventeenth-century art production in Friesland. This also became the main focus of his PhD dissertation, concluded in 2008 at the University of Amsterdam. The same year he started to work for The Leiden Collection, New York, for which he conducted (archival) research into the painters and art market of Leiden during the seventeenth century. Between 2012 and 2017 Bakker has been involved in the project *From Isolation to Coherence*, hosted by the University of Technology in Delft. Currently he participates as archival researcher in the *Jordaens Van Dyck Panel Painting Project*, hosted by the Royal Museums of Fine Art of Belgium in Brussels.

Abstract

The job titles *kunstschilder* (artist painter) and *klad-* or *grofschilder* (coarse painter) only came into regular use after 1640. In the first decades of the seventeenth century, anyone who painted for a living was simply referred to as a *schilder* (painter). This article traces the way the division of the painter's craft into two more or less separate trades emerged, specifically for Leiden. The background against which this process is considered is the genesis of Leiden's Guild of St Luke. In the art historical literature, the Guild of St Luke usually appears in its role as successful protector of the artist painters against the import of paintings from other towns and cities. In most studies, the importance of the guild is measured in terms of the composition of the local holdings of paintings – the demand side of the art market. The difficult genesis of the Leiden Guild of St Luke provides a good opportunity to consider the importance of this guild from the supply side – the artists themselves.

Keywords: Guild of St Luke, Leiden, coarse-painter, art-market, *decoratieschilder*, *kladschilder*

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Modern art historical literature describes the makers of seventeenth- or eighteenth-century painted interiors as ‘ornamental painters’, *decoratieschilders* in Dutch. They are usually credited with painted decorations on fixtures in domestic interiors, such as doors, chimney-breasts, panelling and ceilings, and freestanding elements like tables and cupboards. The use of this term creates the impression that this occupation actually existed at that time, but that is not correct; in the early modern era there was no such trade as ornamental painter.² Instead, from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, all conceivable paintwork in interiors was undertaken by artist painters (*kunstschilders*) and coarse painters (*kladschilders*), split along the dividing line of their specific expertise.³ Generally speaking, the artist painter’s expertise was the figurative painting we know from individual easel paintings, and still lifes, landscapes and narrative scenes on permanent room decorations.⁴ It was long thought that the *kladschilder* was primarily a ‘house painter’, but this gives the wrong impression of his expertise. For instance, he painted signs of all kinds: shop and inn signs, coats of arms, marriage panels and memorial tablets. He also painted and decorated both freestanding and fixed interior elements, using techniques like gilding, wood-graining and marbling. It is consequently misleading to compare the *kladschilder*

¹ This investigation was undertaken for the nwo Vidi project: *From Isolation to Coherence: an Integrated Technical, Visual and Historical Study of 17th and 18th Century Dutch Painting Ensembles* (2011-2016) (www.fromisolationto coherence.nl). The project, led by Margriet van Eikema Hommes, is based at the Materials in Art and Archaeology Department at Delft University of Technology. The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands and the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam are partners in the project. I owe a debt of gratitude to the other members of the project team for reading and commenting on an earlier version.

² The first reference in Dutch dates from 15 December 1802, when a report appeared in the *Utrechtsche Courant* about the famous ‘Decoratie-Schilder Lesueur’. See *Utrechtsche courant* 150 (Utrecht: De Leeuw & comp., 15 December 1802) 1r. (via <http://www.delfpher.nl/>, Accessed on 22 November 2017). Immerzeel also uses the term frequently. See Immerzeel, *Levens en werken*.

³ See Bakker, ‘Crisis? Welke crisis?’ 232-69; Van der Klooster, *Van Leidse schilders*; Bakker, Van Eikema Hommes and Keune, ‘The Coarse Painter’, 70-82.

⁴ Although strictly speaking they are figurative, we do not include under ‘figurative’ the usually stylized garlands of fruit and flowers, vines and all sorts of other motifs derived from nature that were widely used in ornamental decorations.

with the modern house painter, as still commonly happens in the art-historical literature. If the *kladschilder* has to be compared with modern tradesmen, then a combination of the 'house painter' and the *sierschilder* ('decorative painter') is more appropriate.

And yet this revised image is not entirely satisfactory either. What applies to *decoratieschilder* ('ornamental painter'), applies equally to *kunstschilder* and *kladschilder* ('artist painter' or 'fine artist' and 'coarse painter'): in the archival records neither of these words, or their synonyms, were used during the seventeenth century.⁵ Utrecht and Haarlem are the only two exceptions to this rule, and even there *kladschilder* and its equivalent *grofschilder* seldom if ever appear in the records until at least the mid-seventeenth century.⁶ In Leiden, the city that is the focus of this article, the word *kladschilder* first occurs in a marriage certificate in 1642, and does not come into use until after the foundation of the local Guild of St Luke in 1648.

Kunstschilder and *fijnschilder* (fine artist) were likewise not used much during the century. The word 'fijnschilder' appears in a Middelburg deed of 1616 but, like its equivalents *constschilder*, *constig schilder* or *constrijk schilder*, it only came into regular use after 1640.⁷ In the first decades of the seventeenth century, anyone who painted for a living was simply referred to as a *schilder* (painter) with no clues about what sort of painting the individual did for a living.

This lack of distinction indicates that the two trades had not been fully separated before 1650. This article traces the way the division of the painter's craft into two more or less separate trades emerged, each with its own scope of work, specifically for Leiden. The background against which this process is considered is the Leiden painters' request for a Guild of St Luke in 1610, its establishment in 1648 and the problems that subsequently arose. In the art historical literature, the Guild of St Luke usually appears in its role as the protector of the artist painters against the import of paintings from other towns and cities. A particularly important stimulus for this research strand was Michael Montias's book on the Delft art market, in which he showed that the guild was effective in this role and consequently responsible in part for the local character of this market.⁸ Studies for other towns and cities, based on analyses of local ownership of paintings, largely confirm the guild's effectiveness as the protector of its own members, both in the Dutch Republic and beyond, as research into the Guild of St Luke in Antwerp demonstrated.⁹ In most studies, the importance of the guild is measured in terms of the composition of the local holdings of paintings – the demand side of the art market. The difficult genesis of the Leiden Guild of St Luke provides a good opportunity to consider the importance of this guild from

5 De Pauw-De Veen, *De Begrippen*, 16 bis.

6 De Pauw-De Veen, *De Begrippen*. For the situation in Utrecht and Haarlem see also Muller, *De Utrechtsche archieven*; Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden*. It is difficult to determine when the trade of *kladschilder* or *grofschilder* became standard nomenclature in Amsterdam because the most important source for establishing it, the records of the Guild of St Luke for the seventeenth century, have not survived, see Van Eeghen, 'Het Amsterdamse Sint Lucasgilde'.

7 De Pauw-De Veen, *De Begrippen*. See also Bakker, 'Crisis? Welke crisis?.'

8 Montias, *Artists and Artisans in Delft*.

9 Prak, 'Painters, guilds and the art market', also for further reading on the subject. The guild as protector of the Antwerp art market is discussed in Van der Stighelen and Vermeylen, 'The Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke'.

the supply side – the artists themselves. The consequences of its late establishment for the development of the Leiden community of artists is the second question to which this article seeks an answer.

Goeree's *Algemeene Bouwkunde*

As we have observed, the work of the coarse painter is often equated in the art historical literature with that of the modern house painter. This image was recently corrected on the basis of an early nineteenth-century source, the *Grondig onderwijs in de schilder- en verwkunst* published in 1801 by the Amsterdam coarse painter Lambertus Simis (1755-after 1809). This revised image can now be confirmed with the help of a seventeenth-century literary source, previously overlooked by art historians, in which the author comments on the craft. This author was Willem Goeree (1635-1711) and the source is his *D'Algemeene Bouwkunde* of 1681 (figs. 1, 2).¹⁰ Goeree concludes this treatise on architecture with a practical exposition of 'd'algemeenen Huisbouw' (general house building) designed primarily for clients proposing to build a house. His work provided them with a check-list that enabled them to follow the architect and the craftsmen step by step as the construction work progressed.¹¹ As far as the coarse painter is concerned, Goeree explains his role as 'painting and decorating' houses – the two components which, transposed to the present day, are the working areas of the 'house painter' and the 'decorative painter' respectively. We recognize the house painter in such lines as 'not only gives new buildings a particular look, and long protects many things against the adverse effects of water and wind', and 'fit old, deceased and patched-up houses with a new coat'.¹² We also see the house painter in his role as advisor to the architect for his choice of colours to create the best effect of space. For instance, ... 'restrained and broken colours ... show up more and places seem roomier than intense and hars paints, or different colours that clash' and 'the sombre and calm mixed colours and all those that are selected from the divers colours of the sky and daylight and tend towards them look better than the unmixed colours.'¹³

Goeree's treatise, however, also describes a range of skills for which nowadays we would employ a *sierschilder* ('decorative painter'), such as imitating woods of all kind, 'walnut, rosewood, the natural veining of stone, and rich gilding'. The coarse painter also applied glossy varnishes and was the person to call upon to paint such typical ornamental decorations as 'grotesques, festoons and foliage ... on domes and panelled arches, frames,

¹⁰ Goeree, *D'Algemeene Bouwkunde*. With thanks to Margriet van Eikema Hommes, who drew this publication to my notice.

¹¹ Van den Heuvel, 'Willem Goeree', 157 and 172.

¹² 'beschilderen en vercierren der Huisgebouwen'; 'de nieuwe Bouwerken niet alleen een byzondere oog kan geven, en veel dingen lang voor water en wintknaging kan beschermen'; 'de oude verstorvene en verlapte Huyzen een nieu Roktjen [kan] aan passen'. Goeree, *D'Algemeene Bouwkunde*, 192.

¹³ 'Zedige en gebroke kleuren ... meer aanzien, en de plaatzen ruimer doen schijnen, dan sterke en wreede Verwen, of verscheide kleuren die malkander nijdig zijn'; '[d]e zombre en stille gemengde kleuren en al die eenigzins uit de verscheide kleuren des lichts en dachlichts verkozen zijn en daar na sweemen, staan beter dan de enkele'. Goeree, *D'Algemeene Bouwkunde*, 192-193.

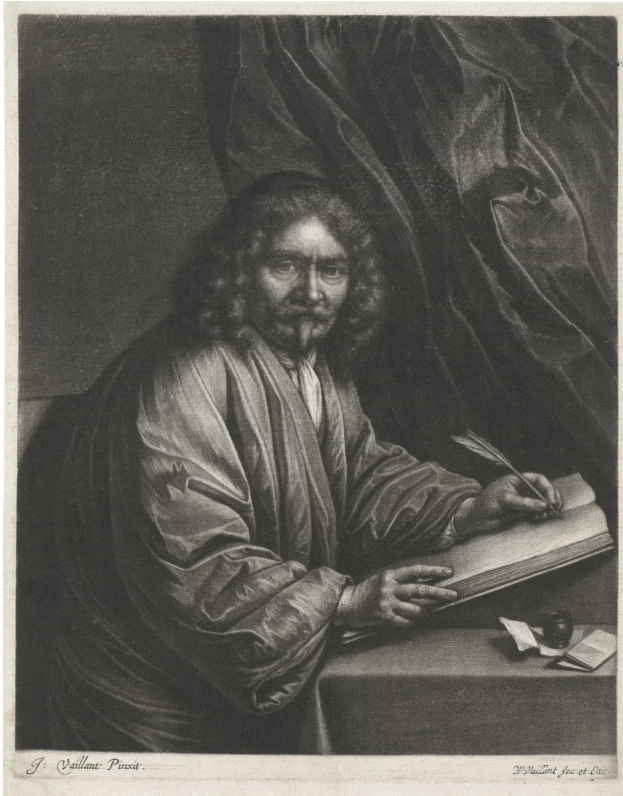


Fig. 1. *Wallerant Vaillant* after Jacques Vaillant, Portrait of Willem Goeree, Writing at a Table with a Quill Pen, c. 1658-1677, mezzotint, 30,7×24,2 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

panelling, doors, galleries, balusters, staircases, pilasters and window shutters, be it in colours or in greys [grisaille] and ochres [brunaille].¹⁴

From Goeree we get the impression that the coarse painter not only undertook the painting of ornaments but could also design them and he even appears to advise the architect to take advantage of both skills in 'painting and decorating houses', albeit with the architect on charge of the final result. If this interpretation is correct, it implies that our idea about the role of the coarse painter in larger decorative commissions has to be revised. It has always been assumed that he worked from drawings or prints by artists or architects, particularly on complicated decorations.¹⁵ On closer examination, however, Andries de Haen for instance may have been one of those coarse painter who had – at least in part – made the designs to which he worked by himself. The literature tells us that he decorated

¹⁴ 'Neuteboomen, Pallezantingen', 'de natuurlijke Steenachtige Marmeringen'; 'rijkstandige Verguldingen'; 'glanzige Verlakkingen'; 'Grottissen (grotesken), Festoenen en Loofwerken' 'Koepels en Gelambrisseerde Welfzels, Lijsten, Beschotten, Deuren, Galderijen, Balonsters, Opgangen, Pylasters en Vensterblindes, het zy met kleuren of Graauwtjes en Okers'. Goeree, *D'Algemeene Bouwkunde*, 194.

¹⁵ Bakker, Van Eikema Hommes and Keune, 'The Coarse Painter', 71-77.



Fig. 2 Title page of Willem Goeree, *D'Algemeene Bouwkunde* (Amsterdam 1681).

the hall of the Leiden Rijnlandhuis to Post's design in 1670, but the specifications give reason to believe that the decoration in Leiden was the product of De Haen alone (fig. 3).¹⁶

¹⁶ The first line of the specification for 'the hall or courtroom' ('Sael ofte rechtekamer') states that De Haen did his work 'according to the drawing' ('volgens de teekeninge'). This is undoubtedly the design drawing, but by whom is unclear. The name of Post, who had died a year earlier, in 1669, was not mentioned. The work covered by De Haen's 660-guilder fee included 'making all the drawings' ('tmaecken van alle teykeningen'), Van Raay, 'Tot hun Contement gemaect', 43. It is evident that these relate to the painted decorations, but it is not clear



Fig. 3 Decorative ceiling in the Great Hall of the Rijnlandhuis in Leiden in 1670 executed by Andries de Haen. Photograph: RKD, The Hague.

Designing decorations was certainly not a standard skill, but was within the scope of a select group of literate men of above-average talent. This group included also painters who had been trained as artist painters but, faced with the declining demand for pictures, had deliberately chosen to concentrate on coarse painting. In Leiden Cornelis and Thadeus Steen and Johannes Porcellis van Delden, all three sons of artist painters, made this choice. Another Leiden example of a coarse painter who stood out from his colleagues because of his talent and success was Jan (II) de Vos (c. 1615-1693). Quite a lot

whether the drawings were by De Haen himself, or working drawings to a (presumed) design by Post. Given the relative simplicity of the composition, however, it is conceivable that the experienced De Haen both designed and executed the decorations himself. After all, De Haen was not just some craftsman, but successful as a coarse painter – in 1674 his wealth was estimated at 12,000 guilders. Van Gelder, 'Haagsche cohieren', 90.



Fig. 4 The present-day interior of the churchwardens' chamber in the St Peter's Church, Leiden.

of his work survived in Leiden, and there are also records that point to a successful career (fig. 4).¹⁷ In 1684 he owned no fewer than nineteen houses and his library was evidence of a man of above-average intellectual cultivation.¹⁸ From 1659, when coarse painters first joined the board, painters like the Steen-brothers, Porcellis van Delden and De Vos were also the coarse painters who quickly rose to occupy the important administrative posts in the guild.¹⁹

¹⁷ Fock and Ekkart, 'Johannes de Vos'; Fock, 'De kerkmeesterskamer'; Fock, 'De kerkmeesterskamer, een aanvulling'.

¹⁸ Leiden, Erfgoed Leiden & Omstreken (ELO), Notarial Archive (NA): notary F. van Egmond, inventory 1368, deed 77, 14 January 1683.

¹⁹ Bakker, 'Crisis? Welke crisis?', 262-265.

De Vos's library also reflects a quality to which Goeree attached importance: theoretical knowledge of one's own trade and of architecture. The classical rules of architecture demand theoretical knowledge not just of the architect, but of everyone involved, including the coarse painter. Not every coarse painter could be expected to possess this knowledge to the same degree, and in part because of this architects preferred to collaborate with the same craftsmen.²⁰ Pieter Post and Andries de Haen, for instance, had worked together before they came involved in the Rijnlandhuis.²¹

Goeree also explains how the activities of the coarse painter can best be reconciled with the architectural theory he expounds elsewhere in his treatise. This theory is beyond the scope of the present article, to which Goeree's book is chiefly relevant because it is a contemporary confirmation of the great importance of the coarse painter's trade to decorative painting. In the following will be explored how the trade acquired this position, specifically for Leiden.

The Situation in Leiden

In Leiden the descriptions *kladschilder* and *constschilder* (coarse painter and artist painter) regularly appear in records after 1648, when the local Guild of St Luke was established.²² Before this only the word *schilder* (painter) was used, so it was not possible to tell the type of painting by which a man chiefly earned his living. The distinction would undoubtedly have occurred in practice before 1648, although it is not possible to say when. In 1642 a 'kladschilder' gave notice of his proposed marriage in Leiden, it is true, but he lived in Amsterdam, where he was also described as a 'kladschilder' in the register of notice of marriage, so the occurrence of the word may well say more about the situation in Amsterdam as in Leiden. Amsterdam, like Haarlem, was home to many more painters than Leiden and the separation process might therefore have started earlier.²³ In Haarlem, for example, the 'kladschilder' is treated as an independent trade in the guild records from the early 1630s. According to a register of 1634, there were eleven painters active as such.²⁴

In Leiden the process of separation followed a different trajectory. In 1610, when the Leiden painters first asked for permission to establish a guild, the process appeared to have barely begun, although it was a typical 'artist painter' problem that inspired their bid.²⁵ A year earlier, in 1609, the painters in Leiden had asked the town council to implement measures against artists from the Southern Netherlands who were taking advantage of

²⁰ Breedveldt-Boer, *Plafonds*, 52.

²¹ In 1664-65, working with the Hague artist Nicolaes Willingh to a design by Pieter Post, Andries de Haen painted the ceiling of the assembly room of the States of Holland, the present-day Upper Chamber of the Dutch parliament. Terwen and Ottenheym, *Pieter Post*, 162, 166, 170 and 172.

²² The frequency with which the trade appears in registers of marriages and proposed marriages is easily checked by entering the search term 'kladschilder' on the website of the ELO (<https://www.erfgoedleiden.nl/>).

²³ For the size of the different Dutch artists' communities see for example Bakker, 'Crisis? Welke crisis?', 240 (table 1) and 241 (figure 2).

²⁴ Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden*, II, 419.

²⁵ Leiden, ELO, Municipal Archive (SA): II 51 Gerechtsdagboeken (GDB) G, fols.144r-146r, 1 April 1610. Published in part in Rammelman-Elsevier, 'Iets over de Leidsche schilders', 35-45.



Fig. 5 *Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg*, *Self-Portrait*, 1568, oil on panel, 95,1×71,7 cm, Leiden, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal.

the beginning of the Twelve Years' Truce to import paintings and sell them throughout the Dutch Republic.²⁶ Unlike other Dutch towns and cities, Leiden could not ban this competition by amending the guild rules for the simple reason that Leiden did not have a painters' guild. And there was not to be one any time soon, because the burgomasters turned down the painters' request. They did, though, publish a bylaw that prohibited artists from outside Leiden from offering paintings for sale, except at the annual fairs.²⁷

The absence of Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg (1537-1614) among the names of those submitting the request is often cited as one of the reasons for the rejection (fig. 5). Around 1600, Swanenburg was Leiden's most important painter, as well as an influential town councillor. His inclusion in the petition might have tipped the scales the other way, it is argued, but perhaps more relevant is the question as to how realistic the request for a guild actually was. A bylaw was, after all, enough to regulate competition. We should therefore probably look

²⁶ Sluijter, 'Over Brabantse voden'.

²⁷ Leiden, ELO, SA: II 51 GDB G, fol. 144.

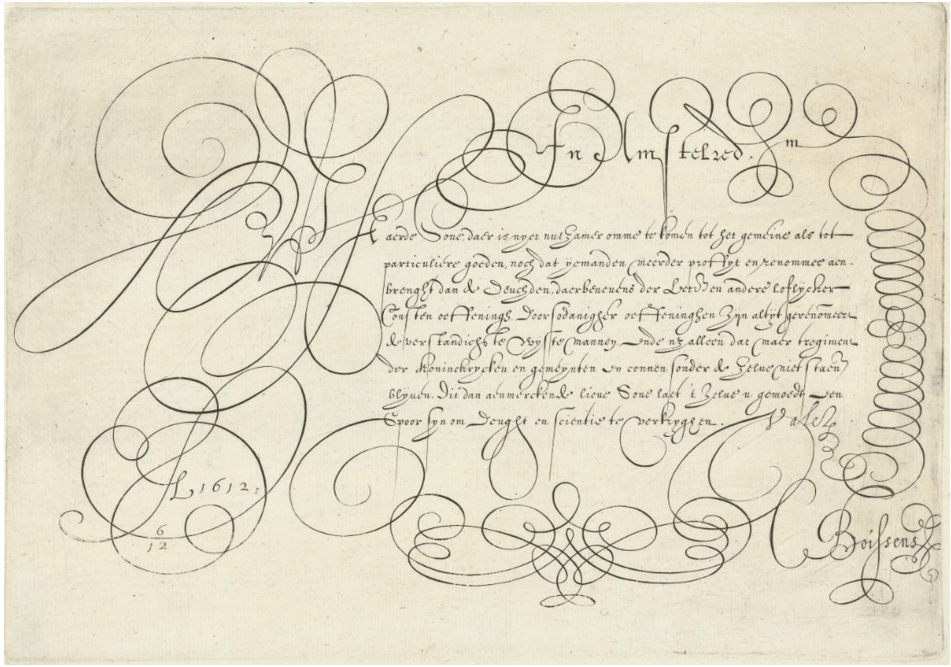


Fig. 6 Ornament print by an unknown engraver to a design by Cornelis Dircksz Boissens, 1612, engraving, 19,2×27,6 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

elsewhere for the reason for refusing the painters a guild. Around 1610 only eighteen painters were active in Leiden, among them the eight signatories and Cornelis Boissens (1568-1635), who had gathered information about the guild regulations in Delft and Amsterdam. The economic importance of this small group probably did not sufficiently impress the town council.²⁸

The Leiden painting community was small, particularly when we realize that not all eighteen painters that were counted worked full time. Among those signing the request, Cornelis Boissens, for instance, was only referred to as a 'painter' on this one occasion. A 'Venus' by him is listed in a Leiden estate inventory, but his known work otherwise points to a career as an engraver and calligrapher (fig. 6).²⁹ Joost Dircksz Grijp was mentioned in the sources more often as a 'glassmaker' than as a 'painter'. Equally unclear is the status of the later burgomaster Hendrick van Tetrode (c. 1581-1625). Not a single painting by him has survived and nor have any by Grijp. A Leiden estate inventory lists 'a picture of two doves made by Burgomaster Tetrode';³⁰ he may have been more of an amateur. Very few works by the other signatories survive, but many works by Aernout Elsevier, Joris van

²⁸ For the town council's attitude towards the guild in general see for example Lourens and Lucassen, 'Ambachtgilden in Nederland', 12-13.

²⁹ Leiden, ELO, NA: notary J. van Vesanevelt, inventory 349, deed 54, 22 July 1641.

³⁰ 'een stuckge van twee duyfgens gemaect by Burgemr. Tethrode'. Leiden, ELO, NA: notary H. Brasser, inventory 393, deed 150, 2 August 1639.

Schooten, Jan Arents de Man, Jan Adriaens and particularly Coenraet van Schilperoort appear in the estate inventories of Leiden burghers.

The group that applied to the burgomasters in 1610 was, as we have seen, not homogeneous and rather small. It is hard to say how many craftsmen had to practise a trade in order to qualify for an independent guild, but the establishment of the Leiden Glassmakers Guild gives us an indication. Like the painters in 1610, the glassmakers complained in 1615 about all the work they lost to some 'vagabonds from Haarlem and Amsterdam and from other towns and countries who go from house to house here'.³¹ The glassmakers also requested permission to establish a guild, and their petition was granted. That same year they were given a guild, which they called after St Luke. We do not know why the glassmakers and glass painters were allowed a guild while the painters had previously been turned down, but it may have had something to do with their number. The glassmakers' petition was signed by thirty-one craftsmen, far more than the number of painters five years earlier.³²

The reason why the painters did not seek to join that year is likewise unknown, but it is decidedly interesting, since in other towns and cities the association of painters, glassmakers and glass painters in the Guild of St Luke was common practice.³³ One answer might be that in 1615 the painters were still sufficiently protected by the annually ratified bylaw of 1610. It was renewed for the last time in 1617, however, and this may explain why the painters did seek admission to the Glassmakers Guild in 1620. It has not previously been remarked that on 17 June of that year the governors of this guild convened a special meeting 'to discuss a request by the painters to join our guild'. Nothing came of it, however, and there were evidently still too few painters to qualify for a guild of their own.³⁴ What prevented the two parties from going forward together is unknown. It is also striking that the Glassmakers' Guild no longer called itself the Guild of St Luke after 1620.

After 1620 the painters made no further effort to set up a guild for more than twenty years. Apparently they saw no need. Encouraged by the growing demand for paintings throughout the Republic, the number of painters grew correspondingly – in Leiden, as in other Dutch towns and cities (fig. 7).³⁵ Given that there were no new requests for protection, the artists who made easel paintings in Leiden must have had a large enough market. Art lovers' purchasing habits in Leiden were not significantly different from those in other Dutch towns and cities.³⁶ If we compare attributed paintings in seventeenth-century inventories with Haarlem and Delft, however, it is striking that only in Leiden was the proportion of local painters below fifty percent (fig. 8). Most of the attributed paintings

31 'vele werx wert benomen door enige Landt lopers Soo van Haerlem ende Amsterdam als uyt andere Steden ende Landen alhiers langs huysen lopende.' Leiden, ELO, Guild Archive (GA): inventory 503, 12 March 1615.

32 Leiden, ELO, GA: inventory 503, 12 March 1615.

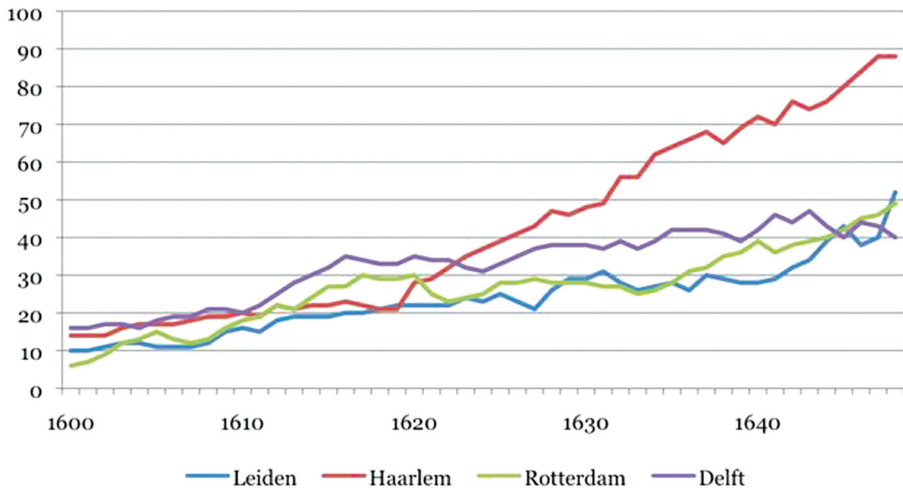
33 Hoogewerff, *St. Lucasgilden*, passim.

34 In Leiden a little more than twenty artist painters were active in 1620.

35 For the development of the number of painters in The Hague and Amsterdam, see Bakker, 'Crisis? Welke crisis?', 241 (Figure 2).

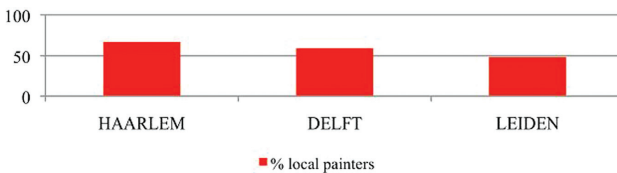
36 Fock, 'Kunstbezit'; for a comparison of the average number of paintings in collections in Amsterdam, Haarlem, Delft, Dordrecht and Leeuwarden, see Bakker, *Gezicht op Leeuwarden*. 139-43.

Fig. 7 The number of artist painters in four major cities in Holland (1600-1648)



Included are all painters we know from one or more easel paintings and painters of whom is apparent from archival sources that they made easel paintings. Sources: RKD, *Explore*; *Groenendijk*, *Beknopt biografisch lexicon*; *Bredius-notes*; *Schadee*, *Rotterdamse Meesters*, *Montias*, *Artists and Artisans*, *Miedema*, *De archiefbescheiden*.

Fig. 8 Percentage of local artist painters in local inventories with attributions



Sources: *Biesboer*, *Collections of Paintings in Haarlem*; *Montias*, *Artists and Artisans*; *Fock Archive*, *Leiden*.

	number of inv. with attributions	number of attributions	attributions to local painters	%
Haarlem	97	1705	1137	66,7
Delft	226	2061	1216	59,6
Leiden	151	2987	1467	48,1

consequently came from elsewhere, chiefly from Haarlem. In Leiden inventories in the 1640-1680 period, Haarlem artists accounted for a fifth of the attributions.³⁷

There is an obvious explanation: the lack of a guild implies that after 1617 artist painters from elsewhere did not have to settle in Leiden in order to sell their work in the town all year round, not just at the annual fairs. This is probably why the Leiden artists'

37 In the Fock Archive or *Archief Fock* (Leiden, Kunst Historisch Instituut) for the years 1650, 1660 and 1670 there are 55, 56 and 52 inventories with 524, 925 and 719 attributions to painters. Of these, 121 (23%), 189 (20%) and 158 (21%) had a Haarlem provenance.

community remained relatively small after 1617.³⁸ The unprotected status of the trade would have discouraged many painters from setting themselves up in Leiden, particularly those who worked at the bottom end of the market and were the most dependent on protection. The number of artist painters grew steadily, it is true, but more slowly than in places like Delft, Rotterdam and Haarlem. Just how far growth lagged behind in Leiden can be seen very clearly when we relate it to the increase in the populations of these towns and cities. The contrast with Haarlem is particularly marked. While Leiden and Haarlem had the same numbers of painters around 1600, by around 1650 there were almost twice as many in Haarlem – and actually three times as many if we take the number of painters per thousand inhabitants (table 1). The situation in Haarlem was decidedly exceptional, but in comparison with Rotterdam and Delft, too, it is remarkable how far behind Leiden was. In absolute numbers, the artists' communities in Rotterdam and Leiden were comparable, but in 1650 Leiden had at least twice as many inhabitants.

The Leiden painters' community consequently was and remained relatively small. This modest size must also have been a contributory factor in their failure to submit a request for a guild until 1642. The local demand for paintings was evidently such that the artists had no problem sharing their home market with painters from other towns and cities. It appears that the community of painters in Leiden had adapted in terms of size and nature to the 'guildless' situation. Had their request been granted in 1610, their number would undoubtedly have been greater than it actually was in 1650 and, to go by the many Haarlem paintings hanging on Leiden walls, that in Haarlem would probably have been smaller. It is perhaps no coincidence that it was after 1620 that the Haarlem painters' community began to grow spectacularly.

The Independence of the Trades of Artist Painter and Coarse Painter

In Leiden glassmakers, glass painters and painters were never united in the same guild. However, it was not at all unusual for these artisans to join forces; in many towns and cities their trades were united in the same guild.³⁹ The connection between glassmakers and glass painters, or stained-glass artists, is evident. Before the sixteenth century general glassmakers could, if required, also make stained glass. However, as demand for stained glass grew, and clients expected better quality, 'glass painting' became a trade in its own right.⁴⁰ At first the glass painter took care of both design and execution, but the higher the standards the composition had to meet, the more often the design became the domain of the painter.⁴¹ In Van Swanenburg, referred to above, Leiden had a painter who also gained fame as a designer of stained glass. The Leiden glass painter Cornelis Cornelisz Clock (1560-1629), for instance, made the windows for the Grote Kerk in

³⁸ See for painting in Leiden in the first decades of the seventeenth century: Wurfbaïn, *Geschildert tot Leyden*.

³⁹ Hoogewerff, *St. Lucasgilden*, passim.

⁴⁰ Van der Boom, *Monumentale glasschilderkunst*, 18-21.

⁴¹ Van der Boom, *Monumentale glasschilderkunst*.



Fig. 9 Lucas van Leyden, Two ornamental vines, c. 1507-1511, engraving, 11,6×7,4 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

Gouda to Van Swanenburg's designs.⁴² And given the major role played by the ornament in stained glass design, the ornament prints by the painter Lucas van Leyden (1494-1533) provide appealing examples of the way a painter could assist the glass painter (fig. 9).

The close connection between glass painters and artist painters also emerges in other ways. In Leiden, Grijp was not the only stained-glass artist who in the first decades of the century was also called a 'painter'. This did not mean he was a 'glasschilder' (glass painter), because in the Leiden records 'glasschilders' are consistently called 'glasschrijver'. This raises questions about what type of paintwork occupied these glass painters when they were not working on glass. A clue is provided by the estate of the glass painter Foy Claesz van Noort (c. 1561-1631), who seems to have doubled as an artist painter. Admittedly Van Noort is never described as a 'painter', but his estate inventory of 1631 included 'various small copies painted by the deceased'.⁴³ In other words he also made paintings, even though these were copies rather than originals. It seems unlikely that he painted these pieces for the market. Given their location in the house, the paintings were not part of a stock for sale. There is no known painting by him in other sources. When we consider that glass painters in the sixteenth century made both figurative and ornamental paintings from drawings, ornament prints and other prints by painters, it would seem unlikely that

⁴² Ekkart, *Isaac Claesz. van Swanenburg*, 96-100 and 105-109.

⁴³ '[v]ersheyde copytgens by den overleden geschildert.' Leiden, ELO NA: notary C.D. van Grotelande, inventory 317, deed 14, 18 January 1631.

they would have supplemented their income by making easel paintings; it would more likely have been the type of painting later attributed to the 'coarse painter'.⁴⁴

The decision of some glass painters to work as painters seems to have been prompted by a downturn in the demand for stained glass.⁴⁵ If painters looked upon the encroachment of the stained-glass artists on to their territory with dismay, they had no power to prevent it because they did not have a guild. It is difficult to say which painters may have been disadvantaged by this, because around 1610 the activities that could later be ascribed quite precisely to a coarse painter or an artist painter had not yet been clearly defined. The Leiden community of painters proved too small for differentiation as well as for a guild – it was better to retain flexibility.

Van Swanenburg could certainly turn his hand to most things. Although his current reputation is based on his easel paintings and designs for stained glass, there are records of payments for painted tin prohibition signs. His workshop also gilded weathercocks and building ornaments, in some cases combined with painted letters and numbers. He also painted the town's coats of arms on clock faces, and there are bills for marbling pilasters and painting capitals.⁴⁶ These practices show that around 1600 the trade embraced many of the activities that would later be ascribed exclusively to the coarse painter. The many occasions on which Van Swanenburg can be linked to typical coarse painting are evidence that this trade had not yet been separated from the artist painters in Leiden.

The moves towards the separation of the two trades may have begun in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, but matured in the early 1640s. The separation process was a gradual one and must have been the consequence of two separate and distinct developments that were evident in the whole of the Republic. The first was the rapidly growing demand for easel paintings.⁴⁷ The painters who had already engaged in fine art painting were now able to concentrate completely on this product. And the painters with insufficient training or aptitude to survive in the market for easel paintings, together with glass painters switching over or earning something on the side, took on the other painting jobs, which would have included ornamental or decorative painting alongside 'house painting'. The market was expanding, for example as result of the trend in bourgeois houses to replace scarce oak as a building material with cheaper pine, which was generally regarded as unattractive. This encouraged people to have the pine painted with simple decorations. Another stimulus for ornamental painting was the gradual replacement of close-beamed ceilings with simple beamed ceilings that left room for more ornate decorations.⁴⁸ Cassette

44 Van der Boom, *Monumentale glasschilderkunst*, 18-21; Van der Boom, *De kunst der glazeniers*, 32. Van der Boom: 'He ... [the glass painter] was increasingly reduced to an ordinary glassmaker or coarse painter' ('[s]teeds meer degradeerde hij [de glasschilder] tot gewone glazenmaker of tot grofschilder'). See also Bogtman, *Nederlandse glasschilders*, 39-41.

45 Van der Boom, *De kunst der glazeniers*, 32. The decline is also reported by Goeree, who in his treatise does address glass painters, but only for the sake of completeness, since 'they are only a small number in the building industry of our time' ('ze in de bouwing dezes tijts, een kleine Figuur maken.'). Goeree, *D'Algemeene Bouwkunde*, 194-95.

46 Ekkart, *Isaac Claesz van Swanenburg*, 122-124.

47 Bok, *Vraag en aanbod*; Fock, 'Het kunstbezit', 5.

48 Fock, '1600-1650', 27. For the various types of ceilings see Breedveldt-Boer, *Plafonds*, 7-12.

ceilings and box ceilings became increasingly popular from 1620 onwards, initially only in court circles but increasingly also among the wealthy citizens after the middle of the century. This meant still more space between the beams, so that even larger and more elaborate decorations were called for.

The ornamental motifs used on ceiling beams and panels had already existed at the beginning of the sixteenth century, but were not much used in Holland until after 1600.⁴⁹ Some examples from the first half of the century have survived in Leiden, although only a few.⁵⁰ Virtually all decorative paintwork from this period has disappeared – not just in Leiden but throughout the Netherlands – from ceilings and from panelling, doors and shutters. The scale on which this type of painting was undertaken is therefore difficult to assess, but in the light of the growing desire for luxury among the elite, it is safe to assume that decoration of this kind also benefited – alongside the easel painting – from a growing demand. We do not know how many painters had been working in this growth market in earlier decades, but in 1648 Leiden had twenty-eight coarse painters.⁵¹

The Establishment of the Leiden Guild of St Luke

After their failed approach to the glassmakers in 1620, it took the Leiden painters until 1642 to make a new attempt. This time the circumstances appeared propitious. A year earlier, in a speech on St Luke's Day, the painter Philips Angel (1616-1683) had sung the praises of the art of painting and held up the successful Leiden-born painter Gerrit Dou (1613-1675) as an example for his fellow artists to emulate. In the same year, in the second edition of his history of the town, burgomaster Jan Orlers (1570-1646) included biographies of the most celebrated Leiden artists that were clearly designed to bolster the inhabitants' pride in their town.⁵² Regardless of this tribute, the painters' request for a guild of their own had nothing to do with any greater sense of self-assurance – the immediate cause was, again, economic. As it had been in 1610, the issue was the import of paintings, this time by artists from other towns and cities in Holland. This competition:

... greatly disadvantages and harms all those who earn their living in this town by painting or dealing in art, who are consequently robbed of trade here or are obliged to move away from this town and establish themselves in surrounding towns where such a manner of bringing in and selling paintings is prohibited.⁵³

49 Breedveldt-Boer, *Plafonds*, 24-51.

50 Some of these surviving decorations (and references to them) can be found on the site of *Cultureel Erfgoed Leiden* (<https://www.erfgoedleiden.nl/>) under the heading 'Vondst van de week'.

51 Leiden, ELO SA: II 68 GDB Z, fol. 117v-118v. Published in Bredius 'De boeken van het Leidsche St. Lucas gilde', 191-192.

52 Sluijter, *De lof der schilderkunst*, 11-17.

53 'tot grooten nadeel ende schade van allen den ghenen die haer binnen dese Stadt met de Schilder-Conste ofte Constkoopen generen, die daer door alhier neringloos gestelt, of genooddruct werden haer buijten dese Stadt in omleggende Steden, daer sodanige manieren van inbrengen ende vercoopen van Schilderijen is verboden, metter woon te begeven.' Leiden, ELO, GA: inventory 849 -1, *Deecken ende Hoofdmansboeck*, fol. 3.

Schilder-Schuldboeck		S	P
1	Cornelis Oetator Gedy	o	16 0
2	Maquodora van den Dike Hoft may	o	16 0
3	Willelm Dugels Hoft may	o	16 0
4	Widooy Hoult van Hingelans	o	16 0
5	Maquodora van der Dore	o	16 0
6	Pistor Smidts Mediamerich	o	16 0
7	Caruelis van Campoy	o	16 0
8	M. van der Goult van der Goult	o	16 0
9	Jan Groot van der Schuyt	o	16 0
10	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
11	Nicolaes van Eerden	o	16 0
12	Maarte Mandoult van Gou	o	16 0
13	Johannit Dorsey Cappitoij	o	16 0
14	Gerrit Seize	o	16 0
15	Gerrit Seize	o	16 0
16	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
17	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
18	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
19	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
20	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
21	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
22	Johannit van der Goult	o	16 0
23	Maquodora van der Goult	o	16 0
24	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
25	Jacob Leinoghe	o	16 0
26	Gerrit Leinoghe	o	16 0
27	Nicolaes Crijnen	o	16 0
28	Johannit van der Goult	o	16 0
29	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
30	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0
31	Dirck van der Goult	o	16 0

Fig. 10 Page of individuals in the Schilder-Schuldboeck, 1644; Leiden, ELO, GA: inventory 855, fol. 15.

The painters may have been referring to artists like Rembrandt (1606-1669), Jan Lievens (1607-1674), Jan Davidsz de Heem (1606-1684) and Jan van Goyen (1596-1656), all four of whom left the town around 1631, after which the growth in the number of painters temporarily went into reverse (fig. 7).

The response of the town council to their petition, asking for a guild of their own was almost identical to what they had received in 1610. Again they had to make do with a bylaw, although this time they were allowed to appoint three ‘inspectors’ to oversee compliance.⁵⁴ Again, we do not know what prompted the council’s decision. This time the numerical situation also appeared favourable for the establishment of a guild. In 1642 Leiden had thirty-two artist painters, one more than the glassmakers had had when they were granted their own guild in 1615. A list drawn up in 1644 that referred to an unofficial guild and perhaps was intended to support a new petition contained thirty-one names (fig. 10).⁵⁵

54 Leiden, ELO, GA: inventory 849-1, *Deecken ende Hooftmansboeck*, fols. 3-5. Published in Bredius and Martin, ‘Nieuwe bijdragen’, 123-124.

55 Leiden, ELO, GA: inventory 855, *Schilder-Schuldboeck*, fol. 15.

However, the two figures do not relate to the same people. All the thirty-two painters working in 1642 were still active in 1644 and yet only seventeen of them appear on the list. This amounted – counting ‘newcomers’ Adriaen van Gaesbeeck (1621-1650), Pieter Steenwijck (c. 1615-1656) and the very young Gabriel Metsu (1629-1667) – to twenty artist painters; the other eleven had different occupations and may have been art lovers. The fact that the 1644 list did not include all the artist painters active in that year – when there were thirty-nine of them – could suggest that there was no consensus among them as to how to approach the problems.

In the end it was 1648 before the artist painters got a guild, although even then it was not strictly speaking a guild. One looks in vain in the bylaw that year for agreements about such things as apprenticeships and the number of pupils. And although the men in charge called themselves ‘dean’ and ‘headman’, the town council consistently referred to them as ‘overseers’ – and overseeing the trade in paintings was what the agreement essentially entailed, just as it had in 1610. A system of records was set up and the members were obliged to pay an enrolment fee and annual dues. The most striking aspect, however, is that the coarse painters joined this guild alongside the artist painters. Precisely when they became involved in its establishment is unknown, as is their motive, but they may have been needed to make up the number required to set up a guild.

All we know about the period prior to the establishment of the guild is that there was consultation between the artists and ‘six of the coarse painters who have most to do.’⁵⁶ There is no information, however, as to whether this consultation took place on the artists’ own initiative or under pressure from the town council. What is more important is that in the run-up to the formation of the guild there were repeated references to *kladschilders*, which indicates that the trade of coarse painter had meanwhile come into its own separate occupation.

That the coarse painters were only involved in the request at a later stage is explained by the fact they, after all, were not troubled by the import of paintings. But given that their participation proved vital, it is remarkable that there is not a word about them in the ordonnance and that it does not contain a single item dealing with their interests.⁵⁷ Conflicts between the two types of painters were therefore likely to emerge. First, the coarse painters complained about the legitimacy and size of the registration dues and the annual membership fee, which was too high because ‘their earnings cannot be compared with those of fine painters, for apart from the fact that a fine painter can earn in a day or two as much as each of its petitioners in almost a whole month’, an artist painter could work all year round and a coarse painter only for three or four months ‘when it is driest’.⁵⁸ The coarse painters therefore asked for their annual membership fee to be reduced to the level that was customary for simple tradesmen ‘such as coopers, tailors, smiths and others’.⁵⁹

56 ‘ses vande Clatschilders die wel meest te doen hebben’. Leiden, ELO, GA: inventory 691; Bredius ‘De boeken’, 191-192.

57 Bredius and Martin, ‘Nieuwe bijdragen’, 121-128.

58 ‘met fijne Schilders soo veel de winsten aenlangt niet en zijn te vergelijken, want behalve dat een fijn schilder in een dach off twee soo veel can verdienen als ijder van haer supplianten bijna In een geheele maent’; ‘als men de meeste droochte heeft’. Leiden, ELO, SA: II 68 GDB Z, fol. 117v-118v, 2 April 1648.

59 ‘tsij Cuijpers cleermaeckers, smeeden ende andere’. Leiden, ELO, SA:II 68 GDB Z, fol. 117v-118v, 2 April 1648.

The town council accepted that their complaint was well-founded and responded by exempting new members from registration dues and cutting the annual fee for all coarse painters by half.

Soon after this, the coarse painters complained again. This time they objected against unfair competition from coarse painters from outside Leiden and by 'some fine artists who let their assistants do coarse work'.⁶⁰ The town council tried to meet the coarse painters objections, but no measures were taken to improve their competitive position, so that the craft itself remained unprotected by the law. In 1657, the extension of the original order still did not include any article to protect the coarse painters. In fact the existing situation was even partly legalised, since 'article 4' permitted every Leiden burgher 'to have a painter from outside this town paint his house as he pleases'.⁶¹

This rule was the last straw for the coarse painters. They could not expect support from the newly established guild, so in 1659 and 1660 they applied three times for a separation. Each time they accompanied their petition with a draft charter of their ownmaking, containing rules that were very similar to those of the other craft guilds. Despite their thorough preparations, they were turned down on every occasion. In 1659, the coarse painters achieved an initial victory, when painters from outside Leiden were no longer permitted to take on coarse painting jobs. When it became clear that after offenders who were caught, could successfully invoke the 1657 'article 4', this was likewise repealed. Administratively, too, the coarse painters got more of a grip on the practice of their trade. In 1659 they were given the right to appoint their own representative on the guild council, and two a year later, and in 1671 a coarse painter was appointed as the dean for the first time. The growing professionalization was also evident in the new 'Deecken en Hoofd-Mans Boeck' (book of deans and headmen) that was begun in 1685, in which almost all the entries related to coarse painters and what was written creates a distinct impression that the draft charters, although never officially implemented, still acted as the guiding principles of the everyday practice of the craft. In 1703 the introduction of the requirement to produce a masterpiece marked a provisional final step in the professionalization process; the transformation of the Leiden Guild of St Luke into a typical craft guild seemed to be complete (fig. 11). In the space of fifty years, the roles had been totally reversed. The guild had been founded by the fine artists in 1648 to protect only their interests, but the coarse painters, having originally been wholly ignored, succeeded in gaining control and organizing it to suit the interests of their own occupation.⁶² Artists no longer played a significance role in the guild, although they continued to be members and were represented on the guild council.⁶³

Leiden was not the only city where this role change took place. Two petitions, in 1693 and 1696, suggest that a similar process took place in Dordrecht, where the artists and the coarse painters were united in a 'Confrerie van St.-Lucas', from 1642 onwards. The first

⁶⁰ 'sommige fijn schilders die oock door knechten de Clatschilderij doen waernemen'. Leiden, ELO, SA: II 68 GDB Z, fols. 211r-213r, 3 September 1648.

⁶¹ 'een Schilder van buyten deser Stede t'sijnen huysse te laten Schilderen 't gene hem believen sal'. Bredius and Martin, 'Nieuwe bijdragen', 126.

⁶² Bredius and Martin, 'Nieuwe bijdragen', 267.

⁶³ Bakker, 'Crisis? Welke crisis?', 267.



Fig. 11 *Masterpiece: ox head and attributes of the Guild of St Luke, 1661, Delft, Museum Het Prinsenhof.*

request petition was submitted by the deans of the 'Confrèrie van de Grofschilders' (the coarse painters) because too many members 'had no understanding whatsoever of the work of the coarse painter and what it involves', a problem the deans wanted to resolve by making membership dependent on a two-year apprenticeship with a master. When this proved insufficient, the coarse painters were able to introduce the masterpiece requirement in 1696.⁶⁴

The name 'Confrèrie van de Grofschilders' indicates that in 1693 the coarse painters and fine artists were already operating as independent trades.⁶⁵ We do not know precisely when the separation became official. The initiative appears to have been taken by the artists, but the contents of an agreement in 1695 suggest that the coarse painters dictated the conditions on which they could go their own way. The artists were released from their original obligations, but were expected to pay half a guilder year each for this 'freedom'. They also had to promise that they would immediately report it 'if any fine painter who had never been in the *Grofschilders Confraterije* were to make work reserved for the *Grofschilders*'. In return, the coarse painters undertook to notify their former guild colleagues 'when any

⁶⁴ 'het werk van Grofschildere en 't geen daartoe Behoort geenszins verstaan'. Hoogewerff, *St. Lucasgilden*, 187; Veth, 'Iets over de confrerie', 83-86.

⁶⁵ For the sake of clarity, the word 'kladschilder' is retained for Dordrecht. The word 'grofschilder' that was current there is only used in quotations.

[fine painter] work was to be awarded'. The *confrérie* of the coarse painters continued to call itself after St Luke.⁶⁶

The Demarcation of the Work

The Dordrecht agreement raises the question as to precisely how the two areas of work were demarcated and whether the boundaries were recognized and respected by both trades. Veth observed that the Dordrecht artists' attempt to split from the coarse painters in 1642 may have failed because it was too difficult to define these boundaries.⁶⁷ If this is true, the problem still had not been solved by the end of the century. The first official charter of the 'Confrérie van de Grofschilders' of 1696 did not provide clear guidelines.⁶⁸ It did say:

... that the coarse painter's work shall consist in painting houses, kitchens, doors, windows, frames and ceilings, banners, banderols, hatchments, chimney-pieces, ornaments in gardens, colouring paper and greenery and everything related to it, while the same may not paint or sell any canvases or panels being the work of the fine artist.⁶⁹

At first sight, the demarcation of the two areas of work seems quite clear, but scarcely two weeks later the coarse painters begged the aldermen to forbid the artists from 'painting foliage on the ceilings of rooms or otherwise'.⁷⁰ The fine artists were also active in the market for decorative painting on the fixed elements of an interior, where they painted all the figurative compositions, narrative and otherwise. Foliage is also figurative in principle, but since painting such stylized greenery had been done in the first half of the century by painters who subsequently became coarse painters, they had come to regard themselves as the rightful painters of this type of figurative work. The aldermen appeared to be aware of this double claim and looked for a compromise. They decided that the artists would be allowed 'to paint foliage on the ceilings of rooms or otherwise, when there are four or more images on such ceilings either in the corners, in the centre or in other places in the same'.⁷¹ If less, such foliage could 'only be made and painted ... by the Confrarie van de Grofschilders'. Two years later it became clear that the artists were still taking work that was supposedly in the domain of the coarse painter. It proved

66 'wanneer eenig Fynschilder die nooit in de Grofschilders Confraterije is geweest eenig werk woude maaken de Grofschilders rakende'; 'haar te waarschouwe wanneer er eenig [fijnschilder]werk te besteden zoude valle'. Veth, 'Iets over de confrerie', 87-88.

67 Veth, 'Iets over de confrerie', 82.

68 Veth, 'Iets over de confrerie', 90-91.

69 'dat der Grofschilders werk zal bestaan in Schilderen van Huizen, keukens, deuren, vengsters [sic], kozijnen en zolders, Vaandels, Banderolle, Rouwapens, Schoorsteenmantels, Cieraden in Tuinen, papierverwen en stoele groene en al wat daaraan dependeert, zonder dat dezelve vermoge zulle eenige Doeke of Peneelen alleneljk den Fijnschilder Rakende te schilderen ofte die te verkoopen.' Veth, 'Iets over de confrerie', 96.

70 'Loofwerken aan ofte op Zolders van Kamers of anderszins te schilderen.' Veth, 'Iets over de confrerie', 96.

71 'vermogen zullen Loofwerken aan ofte op Zolders van kamers ofte anderzins te schilderen, wanneer vier Beelde of meerder op zoodanige Zolders 't zij in de hoeken [.] in 't midden of op andere plaatsen van dezelve komen te schilderen'. Veth, 'Iets over de confrerie'.



Fig. 12 The cassette with Italian inscription and Martinus Saegmolen's signature at 9 Pieterskerkgracht. Photograph: RKD, The Hague.

necessary to pass a resolution forbidding them from 'laying any gold or silver leaf, and also painting hatchments, coats of arms and banners, banderols and everything associated with them'.⁷² This deed is the last evidence of discord about the boundaries between the two areas of work, which suggests that the artists accepted the new distinctions after 1700.

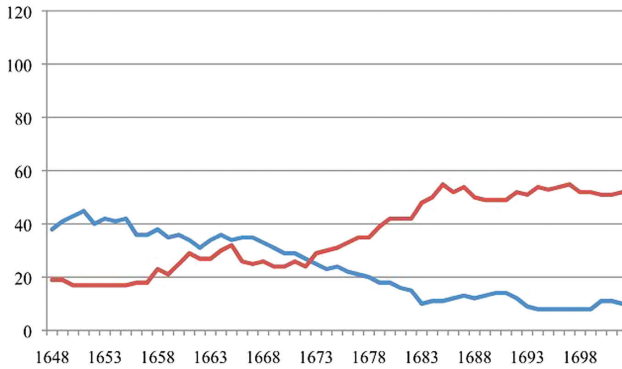
There are no records of any such conflict in Leiden. In number 9 Pieterskerkgracht, there is, however, a surviving ceiling painting that can in itself suggest that there was some disagreement about the precise definition of who did what. It is the cassette ceiling that the history painter Maerten Saegmolen (1620-1669) painted for the cloth merchant Abraham le Pla in 1652. We know that Saegmolen only painted the figurative elements because of an inscription in Italian that he painted on one of the cassettes: *Questie quadrati et not le trabi ha depinto M. Sagomolo* — M. Saegmolen painted these fields and not the beams (fig. 12).⁷³ This is a remarkable signature, which could be interpreted as saying that Saegmolen had to leave the decoration of the partially marbled beams to a coarse painter, possibly unwillingly.

Viewed thus, the ceiling may be an indication that artists and coarse painters had problems delimiting and respecting one another's areas of work in Leiden, too. The Dordrecht

72 'alleen gemaakt en geschildert (...) worden van de Confrarie van de Grofschilders.'; 'eenig Verguldt [= bladgoud] ofte Zilver [= bladzilver] te leggen, als mede ook Rouwbort, Wapen en Vaandels, Banderolle ende al wat daaraan dependeert te schilderen'. Veth, 'Iets over de confrerie', 97-98.

73 Bakker, 'Crisis? Welke crisis??', 249-250; Bakker, Eikema Hommes and Keune, 'The Coarse Painter', 75.

Fig. 13 Members of the Leiden Guild of St Luke, divided into artist- and coarse painters (1648-1702)



Blue: artist painters – Red: coarse painters

Source: Leiden, ELO, GA: inventory 849, Deecken ende Hooft-mans Boeck.

and to a lesser extent the Leiden examples also reveal that in situations in which artists and coarse painters confronted one another, a victory by the former was by no means a foregone conclusion – on the contrary, as the century progressed, the coarse painters appeared to come out best in conflicts increasingly often.

Changes in the Art Market

How did this come about? The turnaround seems to be due to the gradually changing balance of power in the guild. In Leiden, for instance, the coarse painters' growing influence in the guild proceeded in parallel with the growth in their numbers, which made them the numerical majority around 1670. When it was established in 1648, the guild had twice as many fine artists as coarse painters, but the total numbers converged, until the coarse painters overtook the artists after 1670 (fig. 13).⁷⁴

The rapid downturn in the number of fine artists was caused by the collapse of the market for easel paintings.⁷⁵ In the 1650s, the market for easel paintings gradually became saturated in Leiden, as in other Dutch towns and cities. Paintings are durable, and over the course of the century there was less and less room for even more paintings on the walls of people's houses. The artist painters also encountered considerable competition from the secondary market. Increasingly, paintings did not remain in the family after a death, but were sold at estate auctions. The economy peaked and when it actually crashed altogether in 1672 – the disastrous *rampjaar* – the market for easel paintings followed suit, never to recover except at the highest level.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Bakker, 'Crisis? Welke crisis?', 256 (fig. 4).

⁷⁵ Bakker, 'Crisis? Welke crisis?', 233-40; Bakker, 'Leiden *Fijnschilders*'.

⁷⁶ Bok, *Vraag en aanbod*, 121-127.

The slump also began in part as a result of new ideas about decorating and furnishing houses, especially among the elite, the only group that was little troubled by the weakening economy. On the contrary, between 1623 and 1722 the share of the richest 1% of the town's population rose from 33% to 59% of the total wealth of Leiden.⁷⁷ A growing number of elite families withdrew from commerce and industry to devote themselves to public administration at all levels. The consultations this involved meant that people visited one another in their homes more often, so that prestigious reception rooms became increasingly important. The elite had more and more choice of means of showing off their wealth and status. Consequently the painting on the wall gradually lost its prominent place to other forms of decoration: from tapestries and gold leather wall covering to luxurious colonial wares like porcelain and lacquerware.⁷⁸ It was also subject to growing competition from other painted decorations. It became fashionable, for instance, to have doors, panelling and chimney-breasts decorated with attractive ornamental and figurative designs. Ambitious ceiling paintings with illusionistic skies, sometimes interspersed with *trompe l'oeils* of carved festoons and wreaths, were commissioned more and more often. And painted wall hangings with landscapes or narrative compositions – not, it is true, an entirely new phenomenon in the houses of the elite – became the height of fashion after 1660.⁷⁹

The artist painters derived the greatest benefit from the growing demand for illusionistic ceilings and wall hangings with figurative scenes. In Leiden, however, the local artist painters do not seem to have benefited⁸⁰ In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the Leiden elite had to rely mostly on artists from The Hague for high quality work of this kind – artists like Augustinus Terwesten (1649-1711), who around 1680 painted nineteen fields in a cassette ceiling in the house of the Leiden professor Mathijs de Vries with scenes of Juno and Jupiter, the four seasons, day and night, and signs of the zodiac (fig. 14).⁸¹

The shortage of local specialists explains why Elias van Nijmegen (1667-1755) settled temporarily in Leiden in 1689, before moving permanently to Rotterdam. Like Terwesten, Van Nijmegen was a successful representative of a cohort of fine artists who had devoted themselves to painted rooms. Van Nijmegen worked for several wealthy Leiden clients,

77 Soltow and Van Zanden, *Income and Wealth*, 37-41 (tables 3.6 and 3.7).

78 Fock, 'Het interieur', 63-86.

79 Pijzel-Dommisse, *Het Hollandse pronkpoppenhuis*, 68-99; Fock, '1650-1700', 89-100.

80 We only know of 'painted rooms' by Carel de Moor (1655-1738) and Willem van Mieris, both probably created in the eighteenth century. The *Leydse Courant* of 17 December 1745 contained an advertisement offering for sale a house with fine permanent painted decorations 'among them 12 works on canvas by the old Willem van Mieris, who is still living' ('daar onder 12 Stukken op Doek, door den nog in leeven zynde ouden Willem van Mieris'). Where De Moor is concerned, Van Gool praises 'a room attractively panelled all round with mouldings, and in open spaces between painted most artfully by our knight [De Moor, PB] with shepherds and shepherdesses, half-length, leaning over a balustrade' ('een Kamer rontom sierlyk met lystwerk besloten, en tusschen beide met open plaetsen, die door onzen Ridder overkunstig met Harders en Harderinnen, halflyfs over eene Balustrade leunende, beschildert zyn'). Van Gool, *De nieuwe Schouburg*, 430.

81 Van der Goes, 'Enkele aspecten', 51-52, figs. 3, 4.



Fig. 14 Augustinus Terwesten, Jupiter and Juno, part of a painted ceiling, signed A. Terwesten, c. 1680, canvas, 330×330 cm, Leiden, Rapenburg 70-74 (former University Library).

often simply providing the design and leaving the painting to others – among them, no doubt, his uncle, the Leiden coarse painter Jan van Nijmegen (1640-1716) (fig. 15).⁸² The growing demand for this type of decoration evidently contributed to the steep rise in the number of coarse painters in Leiden after 1660.⁸³

The artist painter who wanted to succeed, had to seek employment in the highest segment of the market. There he could benefit from the same desire for luxury, which also painters of painted ceilings and wall hangings played into their hands. The artists in Leiden who recognized and responded to this demand were the genre painters we now call ‘the Leiden “fine” painters.’⁸⁴ This school included the artist painters Gerrit Dou and Frans van Mieris (1635-1681), whose fame extended beyond the borders of the Republic

⁸² Romeyn de Hooghe (1645-1708), who worked in Haarlem, used a similar method, and we may assume that there were other artists who had specialized in figurative decorative painting and called on coarse painters for assistance in painting their compositions, which often covered many square metres. Bakker, Van Eikema Hommes and Keune, ‘The Coarse Painter’, 70-82.

⁸³ Bakker, ‘Crisis? Welke crisis?’, 256 (fig. 4) and 258.

⁸⁴ See Sluijter, ‘Schilders van “cleyne, subtile ende curieuse dingen”’ and Sluijter, *Lof der schilderkunst*.

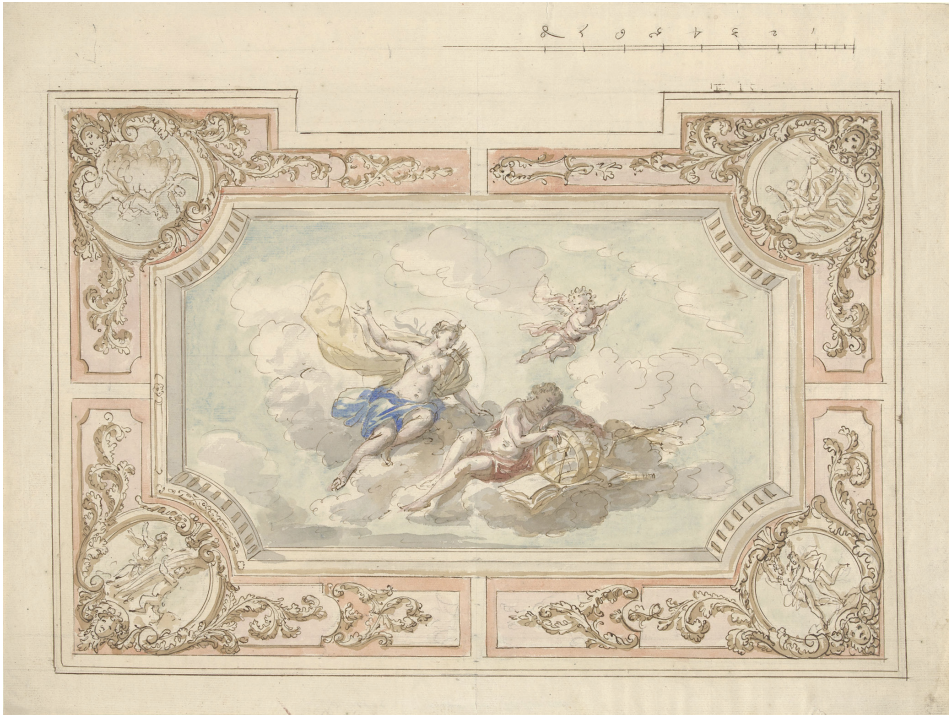
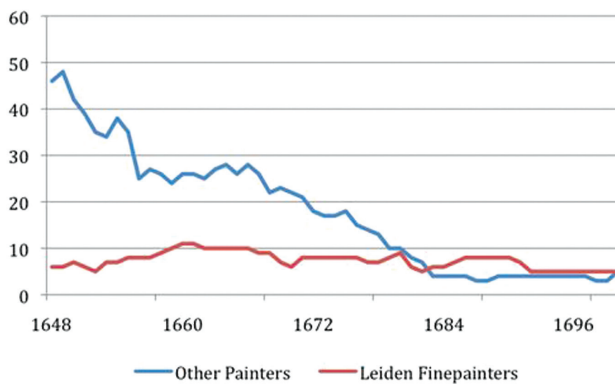


Fig. 15 Elias van Nijmegen, Design for a ceiling painting of Diana and Endymion, c. 1677-1755, pen and brown ink, watercolour wash, pencil, 35 × 46,5 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

Fig. 16 The number of artist painters in Leiden, divided into 'finepainters' and the other painters (1648-1700)



Source: fig. 7; *Exh. Cat. Leidse Fijnschilders*, added are Johannes van Aeck and Pieter Cornelisz van Egmond. See for Toorenvliet's work period in Leiden, Bakker, 'Jacob Toorenvliet'.

in their own lifetimes, as well as their pupils and followers. As fig. 16 shows, these ‘fine’ painters did relatively well in Leiden. They attracted the elite with scenes often reflecting their own lifestyle. Yet not every rich will have been willing to buy this kind of painting. Not only because of the limited supply, caused by a minutious and time consuming production process, but also because of the often very high prices. Success was therefore confined to those who enjoyed the protection of one or more wealthy patrons and were able to benefit from their networks, such as Dou and Van Mieris, as well as Willem van Mieris (1662-1747) and to a lesser extent Pieter Cornelisz van Slingelandt (1640-1691).⁸⁵ Abraham de Pape (1610-1666) and Jan van Staveren (1613-1669) were able to survive as painters because they came from rich families and did not have to make their living from their art.⁸⁶ Another of Dou’s pupils, Quiringh van Brekelenkam (1622-1669), had a rich patron, but the prices his work fetched were not enough for him to survive on that alone.⁸⁷ He spent a considerable proportion of his career living in poverty because he was largely reliant on the open market. The same fate befell Dominicus van Tol (after 1630-1676) and Jacob Torenvliet (1640-1719).⁸⁸ Van Tol left behind so many debts his widow declared:

... that she forwent the estate and relinquished it for the sake of the creditors while her aforementioned husband’s corpse was still ... above the ground, and accordingly laid the keys on the coffin and left wearing her everyday clothes.⁸⁹

Their growing dependence on a small group of art lovers probably led the rapidly shrinking number of artist painters to look for alternative means of protecting their interests. The guild was no longer sufficient. It may have been this that prompted the idea of setting up a drawing academy.⁹⁰ Such an academy could be very useful in establishing contacts with potential clients, particularly because well-to-do burghers believed that learning to draw was part of a good education. Burgomaster Cornelis Paedts (1636-1694), whose signature appears on the deed of association, had himself been taught to draw in his youth by Frans van Mieris and later became one of his most important patrons.⁹¹

85 Fock, ‘Willem van Mieris’, 261-83. For the patrons who supported Dou, Van Mieris and Van Slingelandt see Bakker, ‘Gerrit Dou’; Bakker, ‘Frans van Mieris’; Bakker, ‘Pieter Cornelisz van Slingelandt’.

86 See for their biographies Sluijter, ‘Schilders van “cleyne, subtile ende curieuse dingen”’ and *The Leiden Collection* (www.theleidencollection.com).

87 Bakker, ‘Painters of and for the elite’, 95. For his biography see Bakker, ‘Quiringh van Brekelenkam’.

88 See their biographies at the website of *The Leiden Collection* (www.theleidencollection.com).

89 ‘Dat sij den boedel abandonneerde en daervan afstand dede ten behoeve van de Crediteuren terwijl het lyck van haer voornoemde man alsoch ... boven aerde stont, leggende mitsdien de sleutels op de kiste en uytgaende in hare dagelyxsen klederen.’ Bakker, ‘Domenicus van Tol’.

90 Ekkart, *Leids Kunstlegaat*.

91 The exact date of its establishment is unknown. It is believed that it was 1694. Paedts was burgomaster that year, but he also held the post several times in the 1680s which means that his signature could also date from that period. The artist painters’ modest position in the guild after 1683 makes a date in the 1680s more likely.

In Conclusion

By the end of the seventeenth century the trades of artist painter and coarse painter – *kunstschilder* and *kladschilder* – had become completely separate in Leiden. In theory the Leiden artists, unlike their equivalents in Dordrecht, were still allowed to do coarse work, but that had not happened for decades. How different the situation was at the beginning of the century. The group of painters who had sought permission to form a guild in 1610 represented a largely undifferentiated trade. When, soon after this, the demand for easel paintings grew dramatically, the artist painter came into his own in Leiden. The painters who had concentrated on producing paintings soon did nothing else, leaving the other painted work to be claimed by fellows who lacked the aptitude to paint pictures. This ‘other painting work’ consisted in part in ‘house painting’, but when growing prosperity led to an increase in the demand for painted decorations on fixtures and furnishings in interiors, these painters were the obvious candidates to satisfy it. Like the glassmakers’ craft in the sixteenth century, the painting trade split into two more or less separate trades, each with its own, increasingly minutely demarcated but still unregulated area of work.

This development was not unique to Leiden; it was evident in every other large town in Holland. In Leiden, however, the process was slower than in places like Haarlem. This time-lag can be traced to the size of the Leiden artists’ community, which was relatively small, much smaller than in Haarlem, whereas the population of Leiden was considerably larger. The absence of a guild explains this modest size. For painters at the bottom end of the market, in particular, living in a town where their trade was unprotected was not an attractive proposition. The refusal to allow the Leiden painters a guild in 1610 definitely had a negative impact on the growth in the number of painters.

Eventually the Leiden artist painters did get a guild, but they had to share it with the coarse painters. However, the regulations only protected the artist painters, so discord was inevitable. In the conflict that followed – conducted against a background of an art market that was increasingly turning to their advantage – the coarse painters succeeded in changing the regulations in favour of their craft in many respects. In this struggle the artist painters’ resistance soon weakened. The crisis in the market for easel paintings had caused their number to drop sharply and created a completely new market situation for those who remained. They became increasingly reliant for their sales on a relatively small group of art lovers who were most easily reached through direct contact. A guild was of no help here, and so they looked for an alternative way of protecting their interests. They found it in the form of a drawing academy. They also remained members of the Guild of St Luke, where despite their shrinking number they continued to hold important positions. They were so few that at the end of the century they no longer formed a separate group within the guild. The 1702 membership list records artists and coarse painters as the ‘bent van St.-Lucas’. Just as they had been a hundred years earlier, the artist painters were not immediately identifiable as independent craftsmen – then because the craft of painter was insufficiently differentiated, now because their role in the guild had been marginalized.

Appendix: Tables

Table 1 The number of painters related to the urban population in four major cities in Holland

	1600	1625	1650
Leiden			
Number of inhabitants	25,000	45,000	67,000
Number of artist painters	10	27	51
Number of artists x 1000 inh.	0,4	0,6	0,8
Delft			
Number of inhabitants	17,500	21,000	24,000
Number of artist painters	20	36	44
Number of artists x 1000 inh.	0,9	1,7	1,8
Rotterdam			
Number of inhabitants	12,000	19,500	30,000
Number of artist painters	6	28	50
Number of artists x 1000 inh.	0,5	1,4	1,6
Haarlem			
Number of inhabitants	30,000	35,000	38,000
Number of artist painters	15	44	90
Number of artists x 1000 inh.	0,5	1,2	2,4

Sources: see fig. 7; Lourens and Lucassen, *Inwoneraantallen*.

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