

Jan Luyken, the *Martyrs Mirror*, and the Iconography of Suffering

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Abstract: Jan Luyken's illustrations in the *Martyrs Mirror* were a singular contribution to Mennonite history and identity, but they also belonged to a larger context of early modern printed images that portrayed martyrdom in distinctly symbolic and naturalistic terms. This article will explore Luyken's engravings in relation to the visual contributions of preceding martyrologies, including John Foxe's English *Book of Martyrs*, Richard Verstegan's Catholic *Theatrum Crudelitatum Haereticorum*, and, most importantly, the seventeenth-century editions of Adriaen van Haemstede's Calvinist *Historie der Martelaren*. In addition, the formal and thematic impact on Luyken of the Dutch golden age of art will also be examined, revealing the artist to be as much influenced by the world around him as he was a pious renderer of uniquely Mennonite images.

It is ironic that a tradition noted for spurning the culture of worldly materialism would be responsible for one of the greatest and most assertively material artifacts of early modern print culture. With its encyclopedic scale (more than 1,300 folio pages), its elaborate prefaces, marginalia, indices, subheadings, and even its market-driven Calvinist publishers, the 1660 publication of Thieleman van Braght's *Bloody Theater (Het Bloedigh Tooneel)*¹—better known as the *Martyrs Mirror*, based on the title of the second edition in 1685—represents one of the supreme products of Dutch Golden Age prosperity, even if van Braght himself was reacting in part against what he considered to be the corrupting influence of that prosperity on the Anabaptist community of faith that he described.² But the work was much more than that too. Not only did it

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1. The second edition of 1685 would join the titles to form *Het Bloedig Tooneel of Martelaers Spiegel*. See Gerald C. Studer, "A History of the *Martyrs' Mirror*," *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* 22 (April 1948), 163-179.

2. Cornelius Krahn, "Dutch Mennonites prospered in the Golden Age," *MQR* 58 (Jan. 1980), 6; Cornelius Krahn, "Anabaptism and the Culture of the Netherlands," in Guy F.

represent the culmination of almost one hundred years of Anabaptist martyrologies,³ but it also created a richer framework of meaning that connected the longer narrative of Christian suffering, beginning with Jesus and the apostles (the first section), to contemporary Anabaptists (in the second section). In doing so, the *Martyrs Mirror* thus legitimized the church by connecting it back in time, reminding the community that its origins began with a group of men and women whose faith and sufferings were directly shared by Christ and his apostles.⁴

If the first edition of the *Bloody Theater* was significant in its own right, the second edition of 1685, retitled the *Martyrs Mirror*, and published after van Braght's death, would drive the work forward in a new direction, rendering it truly iconic. The difference was Jan Luyken, an already popular and prolific illustrator of engravings, etchings, and emblems, as well as a metaphysical poet of some repute, a previously wayward individual who joined the Doopsgezinde Lamb and Tower church, and finally, a Bohemian mystic who ended his life in pious and impoverished withdrawal from the world.⁵ In a nearly forty-year career, Luyken, based in Amsterdam, would produce over 3,200 engravings and etchings in the period after Rembrandt, with his subjects encompassing historical events, travelogues, morals illustrated through emblems, the various occupations (in the famous *Het Menselyk Bedryf*),⁶ and depictions of Jewish religion and history. In his last years, Luyken was supported by his son Casper, whom he trained as an engraver and who was a successful artist in his own right. Luyken outlived his son, and eventually died in 1712. For all this, however, Luyken—considered one of the great illustrators of his age—has not been subject to any serious art historical study in English, even in monographs that purport to examine the culture of print and engraving in the Dutch golden age.

Hershberger, ed. *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision: A Sixtieth Anniversary Tribute to Harold S. Bender* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1957), 219-236; Cornelis Augustijn, "Anabaptism in the Netherlands: Another Look," *MQR* 62 (April 1988), 197-210.

3. See for example James Lowry, "*Het Offer des Heeren*," in *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* 33 (January, 2010), 10-31.

4. James W. Lowry, *The Martyrs Mirror Made Plain* (LaGrange, Ind.: Pathway Publishers, 2000); see also Ethelbert Stauffer, "The Anabaptist Theology of Martyrdom," *MQR* 19 (April 1945), 179-214.

5. Frank J. Warnke, "Jan Luyken: A Dutch Metaphysical Poet," *Comparative Literature* 10 (Winter 1958), 45-54. For the life and work of Luyken see, for example, "Jan Luyken," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, 3:423-424; Pieter van Eeghen, *Het Werk van Jan en Casper Luyken* (Amsterdam: Frederik Muller, 1905); M. D. Henkel, "Jan and Caspar Luyken," in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler*, ed. Hans Vollmer (Leipzig: Seemann, 1929), 488-489.

6. Donna Barnes, ed. *The Butcher, The Baker, the Candlestick Maker: Jan Luyken's Mirrors of 17th-Century Dutch Daily Life* (Hempstead, N.Y.: Hofstra University, 1995), esp. intro.

The nature of the visual material in the *Martyrs Mirror*, including the sometimes unsettling violence of those images, might account for this relative neglect, even if the illustrations of the 1685 edition reflected all facets of a major and prolific talent in its representation of history and religious experience, persecution and martyrdom, individuals and crowds, landscapes and architecture, human suffering and the body in pain. While Luyken had the 1660 edition as a basis, his achievement in the new illustrations served not only to transform the book—and with it, a later tradition of North American Mennonite culture and identity—but also to make the book unthinkable to contemporary Mennonites without the 104 images of suffering and sacrifice that he created.⁷ The *Martyrs Mirror*, however, was not an insular text. Nor did Luyken forge his images without a deep awareness of a long chain of past and contemporary martyrologies. This article seeks to explore those other traditions he brought to the book—namely, previous non-Mennonite martyrologies and their own illustrations, in addition to the contemporary influence of Dutch Golden Age art. Drawing upon these traditions and influences, Luyken then proceeded to interpret the 1660 edition in pictorial terms, to place his images in a dialectical rather than simply complementary relationship with the text. The result contributed to the book's lasting success even as it provided, in one writer's words, the first "visual account of the Anabaptist legacy of martyrdom," and one that would remain central in the Mennonite imagination for centuries to come.⁸

THE MARTYROLOGICAL IMAGE IN THE AGE OF PRINT

That the 1685 *Martyrs Mirror* abounded in illustrations could itself be construed as problematic to some Protestants, or at least those who believed with Zwingli and Calvin in the idolatrous potential of images in a religious context. From the beginning of the Reformation, however, visual material, and woodcuts especially, were central in conveying the message of reformers, not least in denouncing Rome through the skillful, and sometimes scatological, use of propaganda depicting corrupt monks

7. See Brad S. Gregory, "Anabaptist Martyrdom: Imperatives, Experience, and Memorialization," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521-1700*, ed. John D. Roth and James M. Stayer (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 464-468, 502.

8. Stephanie S. Dickey, "Mennonite Martyrdom in Amsterdam and the Art of Rembrandt and his Contemporaries," in *Contemporary Explorations in the Culture of the Low Countries*, ed. William Z. Shetter and Inge van der Cruyse (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1996), 9:89. A careful analysis of the reception history of the *Martyrs Mirror* among the various Mennonite ethnic and theological traditions (e.g., the Dutch-Prussian-Russian groups) remains to be done.

and popes. It was, therefore, not the use but the misuse of images that was the problem, even if Protestant, and especially Mennonite, attitudes toward art could be complex. On the one hand, as church historian Harold Bender has argued, some Mennonites—like various groups in the Reformed tradition—rejected using objects and images in any church or religious activity. But whereas reformers such as Calvin still recognized the value of art in a nonreligious setting, some groups of Mennonites tended to disdain visual art even outside the church context as artificial and corrupting of cherished values such as humility, sincerity, and simplicity.

Attitudes toward art were especially complex among Mennonites in the Netherlands. For example, Carel van Mander, author of the renowned *Schilder-boeck*, was a vigorous and esteemed promoter of Dutch renaissance painting, even glorifying classical pagan art, despite the fact that he belonged to the strict and conservative Old Flemish Mennonites. On the other hand, Hans de Ries, one of the most “liberal” of the Waterlander elders, strongly opposed commissioning portraits, declaring them in the preface of his 1631 *Martelaers Spiegel der Werelose Christenen*—a main source for van Braght—to be a form of idolatry. And even though Dutch Mennonites (Doopsgezinde) counted among their members several seventeenth-century artists and art collectors as well as commissioners and art dealers, scenes from Anabaptist history, or Mennonite themes in general, were not treated extensively until Luyken’s etchings appeared in 1685.⁹

What may have given Luyken a degree of sanction to use images in a specifically Mennonite context—and for readers to accept and even embrace those images—was the precedent established by previous martyrologies and religious works. First published in 1563, John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, also known as the *Book of Martyrs*, was one such text. As the first truly encyclopedic martyrology, the book traced the history of Christian martyrs from the first century through the middle of the sixteenth centuries, with special emphasis on the suffering of English Protestants during the reign of Mary I. Lutherans were also represented

9. To be sure, some opponents of the Anabaptists did depict scenes from Anabaptist history as, for example, the famous illustrations in Lambertus Hortensius’s 1614 account of Anabaptist rebellion in Münster and the Low Countries. In terms of making or appreciating art, only the urban areas of North Germany and Holland witnessed a Mennonite “culture” of art, albeit in close connection with the national culture. Elsewhere, while individual Mennonites in North America engaged in graphic arts and manuscript illumination, many communities expressed hostility to art until the twentieth century, when Mennonite colleges began to establish departments of art. And more conservative groups continue to maintain their distance from formal art. See, for example, Harold S. Bender, “Mennonites in Art,” *MQR* 27 (July 1953), 191ff., as well as the long list of more recent articles listed under “Art” in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, 5: 38.

by the martyrologist Ludwig Rabus—whose *Historien der Heyligen Außerwölten Gottes Zeügen, Bekennern und Martyrern* (1552-1558) contained woodcuts¹⁰—and Calvinists in France by the largely unillustrated works of the martyrologist Jean Crespin. Meanwhile, the martyrdom of Catholic priests in England found their authors in William Allen and Richard Verstegan, along with the continental Catholic martyrologists who described Jesuit martyrdoms in Asia and the New World.¹¹ Most important of all to Luyken, however, was Adriaen van Haemstede's *Historie der Martelaren* (originally called *De Gheschiedenisse ende den doodt der vromer Martelaren*), a Dutch Calvinist work first published in 1559, but with illustrations added throughout its many editions since 1604.

Key to this explosion in cross-confessional martyrological texts and images was the role of printing, which Foxe and others viewed quite literally as an act of God—a divinely ordained tool through which the Word could be learned by everyone, and not only through text but through pictures.¹² Echoing the sentiment, Luyken also “praised God” for allowing his copper plates to bring on endless reproductions—perhaps one reason, according to John Oyer, “he abandoned the painter’s brush for the engraver’s needle” relatively early in his career.¹³

Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* is similar to the *Martyrs Mirror* in its massive size and long view of martyrological history; but it also provided an example of a book whose illustrations could shape the Protestant mind visually as well as textually. As Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram have written, the *Book of Martyrs* was “very much an illustrated text,” with Foxe and publisher, John Day, including more than 100 woodcuts in the work, thus earning the distinction of having more illustrations than any other sixteenth-century English book, with the exception of Holinshed's *Chronicles*.¹⁴ Foxe and Day included so many woodcuts in part to reach a

10. See Robert Kolb, *For All the Saints: Changing Perceptions of Martyrdom and Sainthood in the Lutheran Reformation* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1987), chap. 2.

11. For a cross-confessional overview of early modern martyrologies, see Brad Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

12. John N. King, “‘The Light of Printing:’ William Tyndale, John Foxe, John Day, and Early Modern Print Culture,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (Spring 2001), 52-85.

13. John S. Oyer, “A Mennonite Artist in the Netherlands’ Golden Century,” *Builder*, 1994, 9.

14. For the influence of earlier illustrations on the *Book of Martyrs*' illustrations, see Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram, “The Iconography of the *Acts and Monuments*,” in *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, ed. David Loades (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997), 90-91; see also R. S. Luborsky and E. M. Ingram, *A Guide to English Illustrated Books 1536-1603* (Tempe, Ariz.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998).

large readership; as a result, the *Book of Martyrs* attained, as Aston notes, a “near-biblical status” in its popularity and its central presence in churches and households. Even enemies of the text and the religion it espoused, like the English Catholic Robert Parsons, had to recognize its influence: “poyseninge [readers] unawares,” as the “spectacle and representation of martyrdomes (as they are called) delighteth many to gaze on, who cannot read.”¹⁵

The influence of Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* and its illustrations extended well beyond England. It is possible that Luyken would have been exposed to Foxe’s great work, which was translated as early as 1579 into Dutch and underwent a number of editions in the Low Countries.¹⁶ By 1630, as Paul Arblaster has written, Foxe’s book had “been thoroughly amalgamated to a central element in Dutch culture, [becoming] a defining document in the self-awareness of Dutch Calvinists”—and likely, one could add, of Mennonites as well.¹⁷ The famous illustrations of the *Book of Martyrs*, and the market value and popularity that resulted in great part from those illustrations, led publishers of similar texts, such as van Haemstede’s and van Braght’s, to commission pictorial representations for their own works.¹⁸

Many of the anonymous artisans who cut images out of the wooden blocks had also been Dutch residents of publisher John Day’s household, and thus carried over a Dutch tradition of illustration in the period preceding Rembrandt and his pupils.¹⁹ On the one hand, the technological

15. Robert Parsons, *A Treatise of Three Conversions of England* (St Omer, 1603-1604), 400.

16. See also Andrew Pettegree, “Haemstede and Foxe,” in David Loades, ed., *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, 278-294.

17. Paul Arblaster, “John Foxe in the Low Countries, 1566-1914,” in *John Foxe at Home and Abroad*, ed. David Loades (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2004), 137-150.

18. In the case of van Haemstede, some illustrations depict Marian martyrs that had served as Foxe’s primary focus. For example, images of John Rogers and John Bradford that appeared in the 1659 Dordrecht Jacob Braat, Jacobus Savry edition.—Adriaan van Haemstede, *Historie der martelaren: die om het getuygenisse der euangelischer waerheydt haer bloedt gestort hebben, van tijden Christi onses salighmakers aftot den jare sesthien hondert vijf-en-vijftigh toe*. These images appear on sig. Ll5, fol. 203v (John Rogers); sig. Oo5r, fol. 221r (John Bradford). Foxe himself excluded Anabaptists from his account, though he practiced an ad hoc toleration of them. See A.C. Duke, “Martyrs with a Difference: Dutch Anabaptist Victims of Elizabethan Persecution,” in *Dissident Identities in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. Judith Pollman and Andrew Spicer (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2009), 199-250. Van Braght himself used Foxe as a source, a model, and even a character in his text, when he described the martyrologist pleading before the council that the lives of fifteen accused Anabaptist immigrants from the Low Countries be spared. Van Braght in turn also revised Foxe to argue that Lollards—who Foxe claimed belonged in his martyrological pantheon of the godly—were actually Anabaptists.—*Martyrs Mirror*, 1023-1024.

19. See in general Elizabeth Evenden, “The Fleeing Dutchmen? The Influence of Dutch Immigrants upon the Print Shop of John Day,” in Loades, *John Foxe at Home and Abroad*, 63-78.

limitations of woodcuts did not permit the kind of detailed work available to etchers and engravers, with the result that many images depicted martyrs who, in the words of art historian Ruth Samson Luborsky, “seemed to have been stamped from a cookie-cutter,” with their “squat figures and expressionless faces.”²⁰ As John King has pointed out, however, the Dutch woodcut artists may nevertheless account “for the relatively high quality of [Fuxe’s] woodcuts at a time when English book illustration was unsophisticated by comparison with continental standards.”²¹ And, as Luborsky herself has noted, many of the Foxean woodcuts were also distinguished by expressive faces that convey suffering, if not in the same emotionally vivid fashion that Luyken would later render.²² Likewise, the illustrations in general ranged from simple textual or chapter markers to depictions of individual martyrs and elaborate historical scenes.²³ Though a woodcut tradition was already in place depicting martyrs in various settings—with Albrecht Durer’s *The Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand* (c. 1496) one of the more notable and influential examples²⁴—the illustrations in Fuxe, as mentioned, disseminated particular images from within a distinct text to a wider audience that undoubtedly included van Braght and Luyken in the next century.

Most importantly, Fuxe and his illustrators advanced a distinctly “Protestant” iconography that included future martyrs giving sermons or carrying their Bibles—as in the case of Thomas Bilney, depicted in one illustration as he is dragged from the pulpit, and another sitting in his prison cell, Bible before him, burning his finger as a way to test his resolve and to symbolize scriptural truth (fig. 1).²⁵ Luyken too would emphasize the association of martyrdom and the Word in his representation of Andries Langedul, apprehended while studying a Bible (fig. 2). Offsetting

20. Ruth Samson Luborsky, “The Illustrations: Their Pattern and Plan,” in Loades, *John Fuxe: An Historical Perspective*, 73

21. See John King, *Fuxe’s Book of Martyrs and Early Modern Print Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

22. Luborsky, “The Illustrations: Their Pattern and Plan,” 73.

23. Aston and Ingram, “The Iconography of the Acts and Monuments,” 101-104. See also Margaret Aston, *The King’s Bedpost: Reformation and Iconography in a Tudor Group Portrait* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 149-175.

24. See Peter Skrine, “Durer and the Temper of his Age,” in *Essays on Durer*, ed. Michael Levey and Charles Reginald Dodwell (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), 24-42.

25. The image, with Bilney burning his finger over a candle, would be repeated by van Hamestede.—van Hamstede, *Historie der martelaren* (Rotterdam, 1658), sig. s4, fol. 71v.



Fig. 1. Thomas Bilney awaiting martyrdom in his cell. John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (London: John Day, 1563), sig. Uu7v (fol. 477v).



Fig. 2. Jan Luyken, martyrdom of Andries Langedul, Mattheus Pottebacker, and Laurens van der Leyen, Antwerp, 1559. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereloose Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:263.

the portrayal of martyrs, depictions of persecutors are also important, though Luyken imbues his tormenters—as will be seen—with more subtlety and cruel variety than Foxe’s illustrators, who rendered Bishop Edmund Bonner, the arch-villain of Mary I’s reign, as a sadistic brute, flagellating a man in his own palace grounds or personally burning the hand of Thomas Tomkins (fig. 3).²⁶ While portrayals of corrupt friars or animalized monks were common in Reformation visual polemic, the personalization of a specific villain, as in the figure of Bonner,²⁷ lends the visual depiction of Foxe’s enemies a distinction that would also appear in Luyken’s approach to individualizing persecutors.



Fig. 3. Burning of Thomas Tomkins, John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (London, 1563), p. 1101.

Luyken and the Foxean woodcuts also share a preoccupation with depicting crowds and bystanders at the execution scene in a manner that sometimes extends beyond the description provided by the accompanying text—even if Luyken, following the illustrations in van Haemstede and

26. Aston and Ingram, “The Iconography of the *Acts and Monuments*,” 79-80. Readers later gouged out the face of Bonner in many editions. See King, *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs and Early Modern Print Culture*, 233.

27. Though not Stephen Gardiner, Foxe’s other great antagonist. See Michael Riordan and Alec Ryrie, “Stephen Gardiner and the Making of a Protestant Villain,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 34 (Winter 2003), 1039-1063.

the Dutch tradition generally, finds more emotional subtlety and dramatic complexity in those crowds. As Aston and Ingram have pointed out, crowds in martyrologies functioned as witnesses, not to the death but to the truth for which the martyr was dying, as evidenced by their gestures of sympathy or, alternatively, their cruel hostility and mockery (fig. 4).²⁸ The centerpiece of the crowds' attention, however, remains the shocking depiction of martyrs embedded in what Aston describes as "flaring flames wrapped around their bodies."²⁹ Here the bodies tend to remain static in comparison to the accompanying text, which often describes the martyrs as clapping their hands, kissing the stake, and singing the psalms (fig. 5).³⁰ The woodcuts also rarely explicitly illustrate the disfiguring effects of the flames or the bodily torments endured, nor do they depict the psychological complexities of physical pain like that found in later illustrations by van Haemstede's artist or Luyken. Instead, the martyrs illustrated in Foxe's volume often offer speeches of forgiveness in the accompanying banderoles, as their faces express the inward joy and peace that Foxe emphasized so strongly throughout his narrative. In short, these are portraits of an idealized and even disembodied suffering. Foxe's goal, in Aston's words, was to visually display "the steadfast courage of a man or woman dying in the flames" and to perpetuate that idea through imaginative images. "It was that very constancy unto death," Aston continues, "that so many of Foxe's pictures were designed to imprint in faithful minds."³¹ This stands in contrast to Luyken and the van Haemstede illustrator, who did not efface the corporeality of suffering in the process. Indeed, it is *because* Luyken's martyrs are so clearly suffering in such specific ways—at least physically—that their constancy becomes all the more heroic.

Standing as an influential counterpart to Foxe's book was Richard Verstegan's popular Catholic martyrology, *Theatrum Crudelitatum Haereticorum*, published in 1587 closer to home in Antwerp, which made its own significant contribution to the tradition of illustrated printed

28. Aston and Ingram, "The Iconography of the *Acts and Monuments*," 87.

29. Margaret Aston, "The Illustrations Books 10-12," Foxe's Book of Martyrs Variorum Edition Online (Sheffield, 2006).—<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/apparatus/aston-essay.html>.

30. See King, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and Early Modern Print Culture*, 196, 204.

31. Aston, "Illustrations," <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/apparatus/aston-essay.html>



Fig. 4. The burning of John Rogers. *John Foxe, Actes and Monuments* (London, 1563), 1037.



Fig. 5. The burning of John Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester. *John Foxe, Actes and Monuments* (London, 1563), 1064.

martyrologies.³² Where Foxe's illustrators primarily represent death through burning, Verstegan shared with Luyken a more varied depiction of the cruel death, rendered in this instance to English Catholics under Henry VIII and Elizabeth, or to French Catholics during the wars of religion. In Verstegan's case, the martyrology, and above all its illustrations, served to reinforce the decrees of the Council of Trent in which images of Christ and his martyrs were to be deployed as "salutary examples [that] are set before the eyes of the faithful, so that they may fashion their own life and come in imitation of the saints and be moved to adore God and to cultivate piety."³³ But the *Theatrum* was also intended to display the cruelties of the persecutors more than the resolution of the saints, and to expose the Calvinists as the most bloodthirsty and pernicious sect in Europe. Represented in scenes of agonizing torture or execution, the martyrs thus display fortitude even if, as Christopher Highley has put it, Verstegan did not present "heroic martyr figures who might console readers or inspire contemplation or emulation, but as brutalized and helpless figures surrounded by frantically animated persecutors" (fig. 6). In this sense, Verstegan's is not a martyrology so much as an illustrated incendiary tract, intended to incite Catholics to "take immediate action against the further bloodletting of innocent Catholics."³⁴



Fig. 6. Richard Verstegan, *Theatrum Crudelitatum haereticorum nostri temporis* (Antwerp, 1592), 81.

32. See Paul Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World: Richard Verstegan and the International Culture of Catholic Reformation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004), esp. 41-46.

33. Henry Joseph Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (St. Louis, Mo.: B. Herder Book Co., 1950), 216.

34. Christopher Highley, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 109-110.

Foxe and Verstegan had only an indirect influence, if any, on Luyken; but as early examples of the illustrated martyrology, they reflected the religiously-imbued choices or difficulties attendant upon representations of martyrological scenes. If Foxe's woodcut martyrs tend for the most part to be somewhat immobile idealizations, Verstegan's martyrs risk being presented as passive and abject bodies pictorially subordinate to the antagonistic power of the tormenters that surround them. Working at the end of the next century, Luyken, by contrast, represented a significant advancement in presenting a more complex and varied visual representation of martyrdom. This was due in part to the fact that his engravings extended across so many more scenes, including the deaths of early martyrs such as Polycarp down to the Waldensians and Albigenians, and included even the most obscure figures in the martyrological pantheon. Clearly, however, Luyken was not completely original in his contribution. Though his images were composed and interpreted within a context of Mennonite religiosity, he was also profoundly affected by the artistic and thematic influences of the Dutch Golden Age, which included not only the etchings and paintings of Rembrandt and his pupils, but also the midcentury editions of van Haemstede's martyrology, whose illustrations matched Luyken's own to a startling degree.

According to Harold Bender, "all opposition to art [on the part of Mennonites, and beginning with the Waterlanders] had faded away by the end of the sixteenth century,"³⁵ due in part to the urban and commercial nature of Holland and northern Germany, as well as to the Dutch Republic's strong and interconnected assimilationist culture.³⁶ Despite their earlier restrictions on art, Mennonites made a substantial

35. Bender, "Mennonites in Art," 189. On the Waterlanders in general, see Mary S. Sprunger, "Rich Mennonites, Poor Mennonites. Economics and Theology in the Amsterdam Waterlander Congregation During the Golden Age" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, 1993); Mary Sprunger, "Waterlanders and the Dutch Golden Age: A Case Study on Mennonite Involvement in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Trade and Industry as One of the Earliest Examples of Socio-Economic Assimilation," in *From Martyr to Muppy. A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands: The Mennonites*, ed. Alistair Hamilton, et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994), 133-148.

36. See, for example, Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997); Svetlana Alpers, "Picturing Dutch Culture," in *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art*, ed. Wayne Franits (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 57-67; Wayne Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004); and Klaske Muizelaar and Derek Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women in the Dutch Golden Age: Paintings and People in Historic Perspective* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003).

contribution to this golden age in terms of commissions for portraits, the purchase of a huge array of decorative objects, the appearance of first-rate Mennonite artists, and numerous publications by Mennonite art critics and historians. Thus, Mennonites were not simply influenced by the culture around them, but they influenced that culture in turn. Rembrandt, for example, had close associations with Mennonites despite the fact that he formally remained a Reformed Calvinist and was most likely a Remonstrant.³⁷ Enjoying extensive patronage, business, and personal contacts with the Waterlander Mennonite congregation, Rembrandt would have been exposed to Mennonite history, theology, and social ideals, which he then deployed in his paintings and etchings. The Old Testament scenes he created, for example, do not emphasize prophecy—as the Reformed church was wont to do—but tended to present episodes that imparted their own moral lesson. In addition, Rembrandt often portrayed Jesus as a healer and teacher, rather than (or in addition to) a figure in crucified extremis. As art historian Stephanie Dickey has pointed out, Rembrandt was also influenced by Mennonite ideas of martyrdom, expressing those ideas in his etchings of the stoning of Stephen or John the Baptist, which depict several victims and secondary characters in the background (fig. 7). In other drawings of martyrs, according to Dickey, Rembrandt emphasizes gestures and expressions of “prayerful resignation” that would later find their echo in Luyken.³⁸

In their visual mood and compositional detail, Rembrandt and his pupils would thus enlarge the possibilities of martyrological representations available to Luyken a few decades later. These motifs were notably evident in illustrations used in some editions of van Haemstede’s aforementioned Calvinist martyrology, *De Historie der Martelaren*. Editions published in Dordrecht in 1657 and 1659 included 177 illustrations that were long attributed to Jacob van der Ulft, a student of the Rembrandt school, and even in some cases to Luyken himself.³⁹ Van

37. Harold Bender’s claim that Rembrandt “was in the deepest sense Mennonite, formed by Mennonite influences, [with] his essential spirit and expression Mennonite in character” is almost certainly wishful thinking on his part.—“Mennonites in Art,” 198–199. For a more careful analysis of Rembrandt’s religious sensibilities, see the monographs by Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt’s Universe: His Art, His Life, His World* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2006); or Friso Lammertse and Jaap van der Veen, *Uylenburgh & Son: Art and Commerce from Rembrandt to De Lairese, 1625–1675*, trans. Yvette Rosenberg, Murray Pearson, Lynne Richards (Amsterdam: Rembrandt House Museum, 2006).

38. See Stephanie Dickey, “Prints, Portraits, and Patronage in Rembrandt’s Work around 1640,” (Ph. D. diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1994).

39. Michiel C. Plomp, “Gerbrand van den Eeckhout’s Illustrations for Adriaen van Haemstede’s Book of Martyrs of 1657 and 1659,” *Burlington Magazine* 148 (March 2006), 180–186. Plomp also discusses changes in the group of illustrations between the two Dordrecht editions and the existence of a pirated edition in 1658 that was published simultaneously in at least four cities by 11 booksellers. See also C. White and C. Crawley, *The Dutch and Flemish*

der Ulft's non-martyrological drawings certainly contain elements found in the *Historie*, particularly his depictions of crowds or Dutch cityscapes — elements that would be extremely important in the *Martyrs Mirror*.⁴⁰ Most recently, however, Michiel C. Plomp has made the case that the illustrations were composed by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (1621-1674), a Rembrandt-trained Amsterdam native whose versatile and “chameleon-like” drawings depict figures or landscapes that share striking stylistic similarities or motifs with the Calvinist martyrology.⁴¹ For all these speculations, unlike the *Martyrs Mirror*, where Luyken shares credit with van Braght, no definitive name has thus far been associated with the illustrations of the *Historie*, even though the engravings reveal a distinctive artistic hand at work, in the strong use of shadows, for example, or the attention to facial expression.⁴²

Van Haemstede, who died in 1562, composed his work in 1559 during an intense period of persecution for Antwerp Calvinists, in which he probably witnessed the executions of his coreligionists.⁴³ While the work was ambitious in its scope—including its appropriation of early Christian martyrological history to legitimize the present faith—van Haemstede, like Foxe, was a compiler of documents and oral accounts, and therefore limited by his piecemeal approach. After Dutch Calvinists in the northern Netherlands co-opted the book, van Haemstede's name was not even acknowledged in the decades following the 1566 edition, as his orthodoxy came into doubt.⁴⁴ By then, however, the work ceased being his own as it assumed a kind of collective editorial authorship, one reflecting a world that for the Calvinists had already been won. The *Historie's* mid-seventeenth-century folio editions thus came to assume an entirely different tenor than did van Haemstede's comparatively modest effort, just as the earlier Mennonite martyrologies of Hans de Ries and others would come to be subsumed under van Braght's own definitive work.⁴⁵

From the beginning, the 1657 and 1659 editions of the *Historie* were connected to the 1660 *Martyrs Mirror* by their common printer, Jacob

Drawings of the Fifteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 336.

40. Plomp, “Gerbrand van den Eeckhout's Illustrations,” 181-182.

41. *Ibid.*, 183-184.

42. Michiel C. Plomp notes that Jacobus Savery [III] has also been mentioned as the engraver of the 177 illustrations.—Plomp, “Gerbrand van den Eeckhout's Illustrations for Adriaen van Haemstede's Book of Martyrs,” 180.

43. See Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 167, 170, 189.

44. Van Haemstede's orthodoxy was restored by the midcentury editions.—*Ibid.*, 189-190.

45. For the earlier Mennonite martyrologies of Hans de Ries and others, see *ibid.*, 235-249.

Braat. While the 1660 edition of the *Martyrs Mirror* did not include Luyken's illustrations, the commercial success of van Haemstede's midcentury editions could not help but bear upon the decisions of later publishers to commission illustrations that would produce a similar profitable enterprise, geared this time toward a discreet buying public that was no less affluent for being Mennonite.⁴⁶ The ten publishers of the later 1685 Amsterdam edition even ensured that their expensive edition would dominate the market for years to come by stipulating in the prospectus that no other editions would be issued for the next fifteen years.⁴⁷ Ironically perhaps, the pious Luyken would thus be following in the path forged by the *Historie's* illustrator, in producing visual material—and stylistically similar material at that—that would be geared toward distinctly commercial as well as religious ends.

Van Haemstede's illustrator, like Luyken, also conveyed the entire sweep of Christian history. In fact, more pictorial attention is paid to the early Christian martyrs, or even the English martyrs under Queen Mary, than to the contemporary victims of van Haemstede's world.⁴⁸ This in itself is revealing, for it reflects the proclivities of Rembrandt and his apprentice-pupils, perhaps van den Eeckhout in particular, who shared an artistic and humanist fondness for ancient history, landscapes, genre pictures, and group portraits, and found in martyrological history an opportunity to indulge that inclination.⁴⁹ The depiction of the moment before Paul's decapitation, for example, allows the illustrator to represent detailed architectural renderings of the Coliseum and other Roman buildings, at the same time that he dwells on the shadowy backs of sentries, and the somewhat placid faces of the crowd.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, in another image St. Thomas is shown being speared by dark-skinned Indians in loincloths, with mountains and palm trees in the distance and a Bible pointedly at the apostle's side.⁵¹ Later on, even a harbor port is

46. Sarah Covington, "Paratextual Strategies in Thieleman van Braght's *Martyrs' Mirror*," *Book History* 9 (2006), 2-7.

47. *Ibid.*, 7. See also, Piet Visser, "De pilgrimage van Jan Luyken door de doopsgezinde boekenwereld," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 25 (1999), 166-195, esp. 166-172.

48. See, for example, John Rogers (Fol. 188 Aaa4), Laurence Saunders (Fol. 189 Bbbr), John Bradford (Fol. 204, Eee4v), et al. Unlike the Foxe illustrations, in van Haemstede the Marian martyrs are depicted in a greater variety of settings. Saunders, for example, is on his knees praying as he is apprehended by the guards while Bradford is tied up, with the stake behind him, as he talks to a bailiff.

49. For the world of Rembrandt's workshop, see Holm Bevers, *Drawings by Rembrandt and his Pupils: Telling the Difference* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty, 2010).

50. *Historie der Martelaeren*, sig. B4, fol. 7v.

51. *Ibid.*, sig. c2, fol. 10r.



Fig. 7. Rembrandt, stoning of St. Stephen (Etching). Los Angeles County Museum of Art.



Fig 8. Jan Luyken, burning of Willem Hans van Durgerdam, Amsterdam, 1569. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereeloose Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:491.

portrayed in a scene depicting an apprehension, allowing the illustrator to visualize a sea and two large ships in the distance.⁵² Such tableaux give the illustrator an opportunity not only to express his visual versatility, but also to ground his martyrs in the specificity of place—an aspect missing from Foxe and Verstegan.

In a similar way, Luyken also revealed his attachment to a more worldly artistic milieu by situating his martyrs in a distinct setting, against backgrounds with detailed architectural or naturalistic renderings.⁵³ Not surprisingly, Amsterdam received special treatment, particularly its distinct landmarks, municipal towers, and buildings such as those to be found in the former Dam Square.⁵⁴ In this Luyken was mirroring the cityscape painters Gerit Berckheyde and Jan van der Heyden and their depictions of the later Dam Square, as well as Van den Eeckhout himself, who illustrated such monuments as the Haarlem Gate in Amsterdam.⁵⁵ Like them, Luyken emphasized the square's preeminence as the locus of civic life and identity, especially in his depictions of the execution of Willem Hans van Durgerdam in 1569 (fig. 8) and of Anneken Hendriks in 1571.

But Luyken also diverged significantly from his Calvinist contemporaries, and van Haemstede's illustrator, by imbuing the cityscape with a degree of irony. After all, the scene that so many artists favored in their renderings of Dam Square is here centered on an execution—and an unjust one at that. Adding further irony are other depictions showing officials carrying a three-pronged stick—the knotted branch representing the rod of justice, and the official symbol of the municipal sheriff's office—as they accompany the martyr to his or her death (fig. 9). Through the iconography of the stick and the cityscape, Luyken thus appears to critique the civic pride and identity that bolstered the emergent Dutch republic. However, the larger message that Luyken conveys from these images centers on the idea that while “the distortion and abuse of human justice produces suffering,” true believers must still meet such abuses with the knowledge that God's larger justice will one day prevail.⁵⁶

In the sixteenth century, the city government of Amsterdam had commissioned a series of paintings in the old Town Hall—part of Dam

52. *Ibid.*, Sig. Pp, fol. 177r, “Pomponius Algier.”

53. Mariet Westermann, *A Worldly Art: The Dutch Republic. 1585-1718* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 151-153, 103-105.

54. For a discussion of Dam Square, see Dickey, 91-94.

55. See Seymour Slive, “Realism and Symbolism in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting,” *Daedalus* 91 (1962), 483-484.

56. Lowry, *Martyrs Mirror Made Plain*, 135-140.



Fig. 9. Jan Luyken, burning of Leonard Kayser, Scharding, 1527. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereelse Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:10.

Square—to commemorate the 1535 Anabaptist insurrection and remind citizens of its victory in suppressing and executing forty of the rebel fanatics. In 1652 the building burned down—a fitting symbol, along with the decline of persecution, of the new atmosphere of wary religious pluralism. But such episodes remained in the collective memory of the Anabaptists, reminding them that as much as they had assimilated into the national Calvinist culture—or, as in the case of Luyken, absorbed its influences—their martyred past existed as a testimony to their core belief that the earthly world and its symbols of justice were ultimately incompatible with the higher truth and calling of Christ. Luyken, by his illustrations, urged his readers not to forget the blood that remained on civic officials' hands, in Amsterdam's central square.

However, the confessional subtext that underlies the two visual depictions of civic life in van Haemstede's *Historie* and the 1685 edition of the *Martyrs Mirror* remains one of the few differences between them. Elsewhere, both share a tendency to focus on prison life as well as on executions, particularly in their depictions of attempts by authorities—Catholic clerics and monks in van Haemstede, civic authorities in



Fig. 10. Johannes Joerius. Adriaen van Haemstede, *Historie der martelaren* (Rotterdam, 1658), sig. Op, fol. 128r.



Fig. 11. Jan Luyken, torture of Joost Joosten, Veere, Zeeland, 1560. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereeloose Christenen*, 2: 283.



Fig. 12. Simon Petrus (Simon Peter). Adriaen van Haemstede, *Historie der Martelaren* (Dordrecht, 1659), fol. 6v.



Fig. 13. Pieter Panis tot Mecchelen... 1577. Adriaen van Haemstede, *Historie der martelaren* (Dordrecht, 1659), fol 496r.

Luyken—to force a recantation (figs. 10, 11).⁵⁷ Even more striking in similarity are the scenes of execution, with van Haemstede’s illustrator rendering the milieu around the stake with a number of details that would find an echo in Luyken’s etchings. The crucifixion of Peter, for example—in which Peter is captured in the moment of being raised vertically on the cross, upside down—contains a vivid rendering not only of the architecture of ancient Rome but also of a choppy earth strewn with shovels, with an ominous black dog in the foreground, all of which reinforce the disorder of execution sites (fig. 12). By the same token, landscapes can also be washed out, desolate, empty, cloudy, and grim, as in the depiction of a decapitated Pieter Panis, hanging from the gallows in the shadowy bleakness (fig. 13). Crowds, once again, also appear to buttress this sense of disarray, with the execution of Christopher Fabritius presented as a particularly violent scene of a fire gone out of control, sending the crowds—and the authorities—into panicked flight (fig. 14).

The artist’s depiction of Fabritius in the *Historie*—and even more, of Pieter Panis—is also shocking for the manner in which it depicts the brute materiality of a corpse seemingly emptied of spirit, holy or otherwise. Depicted as collapsed against the stake, held to that stake only by a chain around his waist, Fabritius hardly emanates the transcendence of martyrdom. Likewise, Panis hangs like so much dead weight, as two figures nonchalantly converse nearby. Like Holbein’s “The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb,” the image is grotesque in its realism—a vision of brute pain that is entirely absent of the kind of mystical meaning that medieval depictions of a wounded Christ had once conveyed (fig. 15). Such depictions were part of the early modern tendency to emphasize the anatomical realities of the body.⁵⁸



Fig. 15. Hans Holbein the Younger, *The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb*. Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.

57. See, for example, fol. 128, “Johannes Joerius,” depicting a monk pleading with outstretched hands, and Johannes responding with right finger raised, as other monks and impassive guards surround them.

58. Dostoevsky was once famously quoted as saying in his agitated response to the Holbein painting, “One could lose one’s faith from that picture.”—See Jeff Gatrall, “Between Iconoclasm and Silence: Representing the Divine in Holbein and Dostoevskii,” *Comparative Literature* 53 (2001), 214.



Fig. 14. Christopher Fabritius, Antwerp, 1564. Adriaen van Haemstede, *Historie der martelaren* (Dordrecht, 1659), fol. 395v.



Fig. 16. Jan Luyken, burning of eighteen persons, Salzburg. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weerloose Christenen*, 2:17.

At the same time, van Haemstede's illustrator, and Luyken after him, also emphasized the very opposite scenario when they represent the extreme emotionalism that attended a martyr about to die. Many scenes in both martyrologies, for example, take place shortly before any wood is set to flame or any ax decapitates a head, thus allowing the illustrators to capture a key moment of horrific anticipation. Violence, when it does occur, is not stylized; the flames do not embed the martyrs—as they can in Foxe, resembling a fiery flower protecting the bud inside. Rather, in van Haemstede and Luyken they lash the martyr's body, causing the martyrs to collapse in suffocation (fig. 16). Though they display fortitude through their ordeals, the martyrs in both volumes also reveal shock, agony, emotional collapse, and exhaustion in their faces, particularly in one remarkably similar image of a martyr—a male in van Haemstede's rendering, a female in the *Martyrs Mirror*—being lifted on a ladder into the flames (figs. 17, 18). And both artists dwell on bodies being opened or eviscerated while alive, as in a rendering in the *Historie* of a man being raised and lowered into the flames by a see-saw pulley, while Luyken displays bodies elongated in hanging, suspended upside down by one foot at the gallows, reeling from the impact of a torturer's blow, or generally bent, twisted, and broken (fig. 19).

In such brutal and emotional depictions of bodies, Luyken and Haemstede's illustrator might have been drawing on a more sophisticated artistic tradition, notably the work of Lucas Cranach the Elder, who mastered the art of what Mitchell Merback has called "the surfaces and substances"—and one might add "the spectacle"—"of the punished body."⁵⁹ But violence is never meaningless with either the illustrator of the *Historie* or with Luyken (or, for that matter, with Foxe and Verstegan). What made the illustrations in the *Historie* and the *Martyrs Mirror* more disturbing in their violence was not simply the graphic nature of the images but also the artistry they brought to the task of capturing their martyrs at the extreme end of their testing. Reflecting the Dutch school emphasis on portraiture, the illustrators depicted faces and facial expressions, for example, in vivid detail. Illuminating the suffering of martyrs even more were renderings of loved ones who surrounded them, whether in the form of wives who broke out of the crowds to embrace their bound husbands as they went to their death (fig. 20) or—in another strikingly similar pair of images—children who ran after their mother or father as the latter were being apprehended and taken away (figs. 21, 22).

59. Mitchell Merback, *The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel: Pain and the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 76.



Fig. 17. Pieter van Rosseau binnen Angiers...”, 1556 (detail) Adriaen van Haemstede, *Historie der martelaren* (Dordrecht, 1659), fol. 239r.



Fig. 18. Jan Luyken, burning of Anneken Hendriks, Amsterdam, 1571. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereeloose Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:539.



Fig. 19. Burning of David and Levina, Ghent, 1554. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereeloose Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:161.



Fig. 20. Guliaem Cornu uyt Henegouwen, 1563 (detail). Adriaen van Haemstede, *Historie der martelaren* (Dordrecht, 1659), fol. 384v.



Fig. 21. Gileyn de Muelere tot Oudenaerdne in fijn huys gevangen, 1554 (detail). Adriaen van Haemstede, *Historie der martelaren* (Dordrecht, 1659), fol. 167v.



Fig. 22. Jan Luyken, *Persecution in Switzerland*, 1637. Thielemans van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereelse Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:812.

“MENNONITE” IMAGES

Yet for all the considerable influence that van Haemstede's images wielded, Luyken's illustrations were, in the end, very much a visual presentation of Mennonite and Anabaptist martyrdom—or at least they were read and interpreted as such, even if they also carried close similarities to the Calvinist work.⁶⁰ In matters of the cross, of discipleship, or of living in the earthly and the spiritual world, Luyken did not illustrate the text so much as illuminate it, isolating its most important and visually powerful components for the edification of the reader. Dramatic as the images were—and at some level they were intended to shock—Luyken also instilled in them a teaching lesson, consistent with his other work in emblems or moral treatises. In this regard, one may speak of Luyken as borrowing from other traditions and illustrators to provide, paradoxically, a distinctly “Mennonite” set of images for one believing community. As a result, the *Martyrs Mirror* became not simply a text of martyrdom, but also a means by which key facets of the faith were visually imparted.

Though the *Historie's* illustrator also contained depictions of the moments preceding an execution, for example, Luyken's images could be read from a Mennonite perspective as emphasizing nonresistance on the part of martyrs. Whereas van Braght provided an extensive analysis of nonresistance through the ages, Luyken complemented the history by capturing the doctrine through images in which the nonresistant, meek, and humble “children of God” are contrasted with the “violent [and] worldly society” that exists around them in the form of bailiffs or buildings or crowds.⁶¹ By emphasizing—indeed, almost obsessively emphasizing—the unjust viciousness of the persecutors, Luyken was thus able to elucidate the heroic nature of his martyrs' nonresistance. The implication also seems to be that if Joost Joosten or Geleijn Cornelus can withstand afflictions such as torture with iron instruments or being hung by the thumb (fig. 23), then late-seventeenth-century Christians can surely honor their predecessors by practicing those same principles if they were to be punished, for example, in refusing to serve the state in the military.⁶²

60. See, in general, Alan F. Kreider, “‘The Servant is not Greater than his Master’: The Anabaptists and the Suffering Church,” *MQR* 58 (Jan. 1984), 5-29; Cornelius J. Dyck, “The Suffering Church in Anabaptism,” *MQR* 59 (Jan. 1985), 5-23.

61. Lowry, *Martyrs Mirror Made Plain*, 95-114.

62. At the same time, Dutch Mennonites by the end of the seventeenth century were, on the whole, very loyal and obedient to the state. In 1672, for example, wealthy Dutch business people had no objections in principle when they were more or less forced to supply loans to the state, amounting to some 1.5 million guilders when the French and English threatened to conquer the Dutch Republic. In the coming century, the Mennonite position on nonresistance would gradually fade away into oblivion. Only the strict and conservative minorities, like the Groningen and Dantzig Old Flemish, continued to maintain the principles.



Fig. 23. Jan Luyken, torture of Geleijn Cornelus, Breda, 1572. Thielemans van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereelse Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:605.



Fig. 24. Anneken uyt den Hove, 1597. Adriaen van Haemstede, *Historie der martelaren* (Rotterdam, 1658), sig. Bbbbb, fol. 2v.

Significantly, neither the *Historie* nor the *Martyrs Mirror* presented all persecutors as sadistic minions of a devilish earthy power. For example, in Luyken's engraving of Andreas Langedul being apprehended at home while reading a Bible, the arresting margrave does not seem particularly sinister but rather a man with a job to do—even if his finery contrasts with the simplicity of Langedul.⁶³ Likewise, van Haemstede's illustrator also conveys scenes of persecution in action, of men simply fulfilling their roles on behalf of the state (fig. 24). Even more interesting, van Braght describes a long and excruciating torture session concerning Geleijin Cornelus (fig. 23), but Luyken chooses to focus on the moment when the three torturers retired to a table in the corner to play cards while Cornelus continues to hang, apparently dead (though in van Braght's words he was in a "sweet slumber," testifying later that he had "never in his life rested on his bed with less pain than while he was suspended there").⁶⁴ It is not that the three men are any more compassionate than the officials, who are depicted as savagely inflicting pain at execution scenes. Rather, Luyken, in his skill and artistic range, sought to portray his persecutors as well as his victims in as many postures—infliction, indifference, wariness—without necessarily rendering them sympathetic in the process. They too are human after all, or certainly more human than their monstrous equivalents in Verstegan.

A stance of forgiveness was also central to any martyr, of whatever persuasion, who sought to follow the model of Christ. Thus, Foxe's woodcuts often depict the dying as proclaiming, "Lord forgive them, they know not what they do." Van Braght also emphasized the last dying speeches of his martyrs; and Luyken certainly could have presented his own martyrs in the moment of an oration, arms raised in gestures of forgiveness. But Luyken might have also felt that depicting martyrs in a stance of elevated speechifying would have diminished the element of humility and meekness that he also sought to convey (Foxe's woodcut martyrs, by contrast, do not seem particularly humble). Luyken thus made a more powerful artistic choice by representing his martyrs as acquiescing to their capture or death, practicing a kind of forgiveness in the full knowledge that God's justice would ultimately be served.

As with the illustrations in the *Historie*, Luyken also conveyed expressions of anguish on the part of the martyr's loved ones, as when he depicted Gerard Hasepoot, a tailor, saying goodbye to his wife and infant child at the Town Hall after a death sentence had been given (fig. 25). Offered some wine, as was the custom after such sentences were given, Hasepoot refused, saying, "I have no desire for this wine, but I hope to

63. *Martyrs Mirror*, 633, 634, 639.

64. *Ibid.*, 929-931.



Fig. 25. Jan Luyken, Capture of Gerard Hasepoot, Nijmegen, 1556. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weerloose Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:173.



Fig. 26. Jan Luyken, Drowning of Annekan Jans, Rotterdam, 1539. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weerloose Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:143.

drink the new wine, which will be given to me above at the kingdom of my father." This seems to be the speech that Luyken captures in his engraving, even if in van Braght's words, "the two separated with great grief, and bade each other adieu in this world; for the woman could hardly stand on her feet any longer, but seemed to fall into a swoon through grief."⁶⁵ Luyken, however, appears to present the couple—and their child—not in the mutual grief that van Braght describes. Instead, the husband admonishes the weeping wife, albeit gently. Giving himself over fully to the authorities, he is confident—as in the text—that he will soon be "in the kingdom of my father"; the wife's tears, however, still betray a clinging to this earthly world and its attachments, as she resists not the secular authorities but the providential design of God's will.

More than most other confessions Mennonites also tended to emphasize the family, though such concerns also coincided with a larger Dutch republic interest in moralistic artistic scenes of domesticity and childhood. While the call to Christ came first, the Mennonite tradition held, paradoxically, that familial ties stood "at the very center of individual identity and spiritual formation," with church nearly inseparable from the family.⁶⁶ The choices that Luyken made in illustrating the *Martyrs Mirror*, however, also tended to focus on scenes of familial rupture if not strife, especially those involving the overriding choices that martyrs had to make regarding their death. One of the most famous images that Luyken produced depicted the arrest of Annekan Jans, whose capture was followed by her trial and execution in 1539. Luyken chose to convey the moment of Jans's arrest, when she holds out her young son in anguish and offers anyone in the crowd a purse of money if they would care for him. That enjoyment was met by a baker, who came forward from the crowd despite the protestations of his wife (fig. 26).⁶⁷ Apart from the issue of the persecutors' cruelty in separating mother and child, the scene is also important in stressing that the call to discipleship requires total commitment even if it comes at the cost of renouncing family. In the process, Luyken also conveyed the utter agony involved in such a renunciation of earthly relations. Still, as John D. Roth has written, while Anabaptists placed great importance on the family, they also "placed these human relationships under a prior and higher

65. *Ibid.*, 560.

66. See Ernst Correll, "The Value of Family History for Mennonite History," *MQR* 2 (Jan. 1928), 67; John D. Roth, "Family, Community and Discipleship in the Anabaptist-Mennonite Tradition," *MQR* 75 (April 2001), 148.

67. *Martyrs Mirror*, 453-455. See also Werner Packull, "Anna Jansz of Rotterdam: A Historical Investigation of an Early Anabaptist Heroine," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 78 (1987), 147-173.

loyalty to Christ and the authority of the gathered church"⁶⁸—even if it came at an emotional cost in the end.

Children, in Luyken's vision, also served as a contrast in their innocence to the fallen world around them. Luyken was not unique in this preoccupation⁶⁹—the illustrator of the *Historie* also depicted the back of a child, beholding an execution and clutching the hand of his solicitous father, whose back was also to the viewer.⁷⁰ But Luyken went further in bringing the sentimental and affective aspects of childhood to a martyrological context. His famous engraving of the aftermath of Maeyken Wens's death, for example, was a poignant example of childhood innocence and abandonment, depicting two sons rendered motherless, searching the ashes for the tongue screw that had been in her mouth—the only tangible evidence of her that remains (fig. 27).⁷¹ Van Braght included letters written from prison by Wens to the elder son, a 15-year-old who brought his 3-year-old brother to watch their mother burn. As van Braght writes, however, Adriaen, the elder son, was overcome by the sight and fainted, only awakening when the burning had ended. Rather than capture the most obviously dramatic moment of the text—Adriaen swooning as his mother was about to be killed—Luyken, however, chose to focus on the desolate quietude of the scene after everyone has left and the bodies have been extinguished. What is revealed by Luyken's brilliant choice is not simply the sadness of the moment as Adriaen tries to search for any memorial of his mother, but also the solidarity of the two boys and the solicitude of the elder for the younger—all in accordance with the enjoinders of the mother, who left her own memorial, in letters. "My dear son," she wrote, "though I am taken from you here, strive from your youth to fear God, and you shall have your mother again up yonder in the

68. Roth, "Family, Community and Discipleship in the Anabaptist-Mennonite Tradition," *MQR* 75 (April 2001), 147-160; Hillel Schwartz, "Early Anabaptist Ideas about the Nature of Children," *MQR* 47 (April 1973), 102-114; for the historiography of the family in Mennonite tradition, see M. J. Heisey, "Mennonite Religion was a Family Religion: An Historiography," *Mennonite Studies* 23 (2005), 9-14.

69. For children in the Mennonite tradition, see William Klassen, "The Role of the Child in Anabaptism," in *Mennonite Images: Historical, Cultural, and Literary Essays Dealing with Mennonite Issues*, ed. Harry Loewen (Winnipeg: Hyperion Press, 1980), 17; for children and early modern martyrologies (including van Braght), see Sarah Covington, "Spared Not from Tribulation: Children in Early Modern Martyrologies," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 97 (2006), 165-183.

70. *Historie*, sig. Rr2, fol. 174r; fol. 116r; sig. Mmm3, fol. 231r.

71. *Martyrs Mirror*, 979-980; For commentary on the Maeyken Wens illustration and other Luyken engravings, see Magdalene Redekop, "Escape from the Bloody Theatre: The Making of Mennonite Stories," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 11 (1993), 15-18.



Fig. 27. Jan Luyken, *Sons of Maeyken Wens Search for her Tongue Screw*, 1573. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereloose Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2: 661.



Fig. 28. Jan Luyken, *Dirk Willems Rescuing His Pursuer*. Thieleman van Braght, *Het bloedig tooneel, of Martelaers Spiegel der Doops-gesinde of weereloose Christenen . . .* (Amsterdam, 1685), 2:387.

New Jerusalem, where parting will be no more." Still, the sense of loss—in Luyken's engraving—remains.

Other of Luyken's engravings also reveal a distinctly Mennonite sensibility at work, as when he depicts secret meetings held on boats, or emphasizes female martyrs not only as women but as mothers. In addition, the famous engraving of a fleeing Dirk Willems, who returns to save his pursuer from drowning in an icy pond, also emphasizes Mennonite traits of charity—which all Christians share of course, though more than simple charity is at work here (fig. 28).⁷² In depicting Willems's decision to rescue the man who pursued him—thereby risking his own safety and renouncing his freedom since Willems was indeed apprehended—the scene raises questions about God's justice in a world where such acts are rewarded with earthly punishment and death. Yet by choosing to save his own enemy, Willems displays complete obedience to Christ and to a godly love that is sacrificial, indiscriminate, and utterly radical in its resistance to worldly rationalizations and complicity. Luyken thus depicted a scene not simply of rescue, but of love. Perhaps for this reason, it is the most famous illustration, deservedly so, in all of the *Martyrs Mirror*.

Luyken's contribution to van Braght's great work of 1660 was to quite literally give a face to individuals such as Dirk Willems, thereby memorializing the martyrs in the visual imagination. As the scene at the icy pond demonstrates, however, Luyken also brought to life essential Mennonite tenets and ideas, rendering them visible, tangible, and spiritually real. Considerable as their achievement had been, what Foxe and Verstegan (or their illustrators) began in the sixteenth century would be advanced over the course of the following century in the thriving artistic and publishing milieu of the Dutch golden age. Though the images by Luyken and those in van Haemstede's work differed in the manner in which they were confessionally interpreted and perceived, both were able to move the martyrological tradition of illustration forward by giving the drama of martyrdom a range previously unseen.

Ironically, it is the *Martyrs Mirror*—a vast work, but one centered, after all, on a minority faith—that lives on globally, while the *Historie der Martelaren* has received no English translation, and its images no extensive or international circulation or renown.⁷³ Meanwhile, Foxe's work thrives,

72. *Martyrs Mirror*, 741-742.

73. To be sure, within the Netherlands, the van Haemstede book had the most reprints of all martyrologies, and even gained some popularity among Dutch Mennonites since one of its most renowned devotional poets, Claes Bruin, lent his skill by adding six line captions to

though in academia rather than in Anglican churches, while Verstegan is virtually overlooked except among scholars of early modern Catholicism. Of all the martyrological texts, only the *Martyrs Mirror* remains a living book, in no small part due to its famous images. Sustaining a community through stories that describe the Christian struggle in a fallen world, the *Martyrs Mirror* calls a community to remember its forefathers and foremothers who died for their faith. And it is through van Braght and Luyken—equally and together, author and illustrator—that those martyrs are remembered today.

each illustration (Leiden 1747). Prior to this Bruin had published a separate volume of only the van Haemstede illustrations, including devotional poetry: *Korte Schets van het Leeven en Sterven der Martelaaren* (1720).