

**Continental Drift: An Interpretation of Meaning and Context  
for the Graphic Satirical Prints of  
Egbert van Heemskerck III**

by

Sandra Elaine Bligh  
B.A. (Honours), University of Victoria, 2002

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In the Department of History in Art

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### **Abstract**

This thesis provides critical analysis and interpretation of meaning and context for a set of graphic satirical prints created in early eighteenth-century London by Egbert van Heemskerck III (c.1670s-1744). Public discourse occurring in the early eighteenth century around contemporary societal issues of class included debate of the definition of both an English theory of art and the idea of the connoisseur. One of the results of these debates was a noticeable decline in the London art market for Dutch genre painting, which had a significant effect on native and foreign artists working in England during this period. Through the process of developing a methodology for a visual analysis and interpretation of the prints within the context of these contemporary issues, this thesis will contribute to emerging perspectives in the methodology of print scholarship. It will identify why the study of a relatively unknown artist of cross-cultural heritage such as Heemskerck III is important in terms of these; it will provide an overview of some of the art theoretical ideas being discussed; it will document known information about Heemskerck III, and finally, through the actual process of a visual analysis of the prints, it will suggest how, through the depiction of considered comment on important societal tensions, these works are reflective of a contemporary artist's negotiation of the changing demands of the early eighteenth-century London art market.

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<<http://links.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/sici?sici=0037-5411%281983%2913%3A3%2F4%3C201%3ATAAAMS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-F>>. p. 202. [November 26, 2007].

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

In developing a focus for this thesis, I considered a number of possibilities. My general area of interest was English art history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as this was a period of great change in the English art world. The plethora of scholarship that exists on high-profile artists such as Hogarth was evidence that a consideration of a less familiar artist would provide more scope for original work. In choosing a subject that might prefigure Hogarth, I came across a number of references to a family of Anglo-Dutch artists named Heemskerck<sup>1</sup> working in London at a pivotal moment in the establishment of English art and English art theory.

With the encouragement of my then supervisor, Dr. Carol Gibson-Wood, I did some preliminary research that revealed little existing scholarship on the family, but suggested the potential for some significant scholarship on issues of genre art of that period.<sup>2</sup> At the time Dr. Gibson-Wood was planning on developing her current research on topics around late seventeenth-century picture consumption in London into a book and, as our areas of research were finding many parallels, she suggested that my work on the Heemskercks might offer an important contribution regarding the place of foreign artists working in the category of genre painting in London circa 1700. For this reason, the initial focus of my thesis was meant to have been the construction of a case study and biography of the family, about whom very little is known. When unforeseen circumstances made it necessary to revise the theme of my thesis I chose to narrow my

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<sup>1</sup> The available biographical information of the family will be discussed in Chapter 4. At least two of the Heemskercks were eponymous - Egbert van Heemskerck II and III. Documentation referencing the artist(s) is indicative of the various spellings of the name; Heemskerck, Hemskirk, Hemskerk, Hemskerck. This thesis will use the form found on the attribution of the prints that are the focus of this work, Heemskerck.

<sup>2</sup> See Harry Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting in England, 1695-1929*, (Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1991), which was particularly significant in generating my interest in the Heemskerck family.

focus to a set of eight graphic satirical prints in the collection of the British Museum created in the early eighteenth century by the youngest Heemskerck, who will be referred to in this study as 'Heemskerck III'.<sup>3</sup> Writing what I initially considered a preliminary study focusing on a small sample of the work of a single member of the family seemed a more practical approach for the requirements of this thesis, while still allowing me to utilize the significant research I had already undertaken towards building the much broader case study. This decision has subsequently proven more valuable in terms of adding to the lacuna in print scholarship and the issues of art consumption of the period; as my thesis will demonstrate, while Heemskerck III has long been considered the least important member of the family, an analysis of these prints clearly indicates his relevance as an artist in terms of the pivotal changes occurring in the London art market at this time.

This thesis will contribute to emerging perspectives in the methodology of print scholarship. It will identify why the study of an artist of cross-cultural heritage such as Heemskerck III is important in terms of these; it will provide an overview of some of the art theoretical ideas being discussed; it will document known information about Heemskerck III, and finally, through a visual analysis of the satirical prints, it will suggest how, through the depiction of considered comment on important societal tensions, these works reflect a contemporary artist's negotiation of the changing demands of the early eighteenth-century art market. While I do not have written evidence documenting Heemskerck III's creative contributions within the art market, I suggest here that the visual evidence of the prints demonstrates his knowledge of the many topics being discussed and at the very least his visual engagement with these subjects. Such an

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<sup>3</sup> Knowing of my interest in the Heemskerck family, Dr. Gibson-Wood had provided me with the references for these images in the collection of the British Museum.

analysis also makes it clear that a full understanding of the meaning in these images can only be achieved through knowledge of contemporary social issues including the theories of art being debated at this time. While much more research must be done in terms of establishing the precise level of Heemskerck III's involvement in these contemporary debates, the satirical messages implicit in his prints are evidence of his involvement and suggest both his place within the contemporary art circle and the consumers' potential involvement in this important contemporary issue.

As noted above, the prints discussed in this thesis are from a significant period in the early eighteenth century that saw the development of both an English theory of art and an English academy of art.<sup>4</sup> Recent scholarship has demonstrated that there is much to be discovered about the consumption of art and the effects of this on artists working in London during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It was a time when the growing consumer strength of the middling classes resulted in the perceived need of the elite and aristocratic classes to establish a clear division between social groups. London was a melting pot of foreign and English artists, and imported and domestic work and patterns of consumption were changing significantly. Individuals from a variety of different social groups engaged in discussion concerning existing continental art theory, the definition of an English theory of art and of practices that constituted the idea of the connoisseur. The effect within the market was a noticeable decrease in the popularity of

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<sup>4</sup> See Carol Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, (London and New Haven: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2000), pp. 9-14. In Italy and France existing theories of art required intellectual qualities of the artist in "a knowledge of classics, history, philosophy or theology" and also promoted the hierarchical ordering of genres of painting, placing history painting as the most important. In England however, until the later seventeenth century, theories of painting were more typically instructional manuals. For the English native artist, portraiture had the "strongest tradition and enjoyed the most demand" until the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when the growing recognition by English gentlemen and elite theorists of the "pre-eminence of continental painting", in particular history painting, resulted in debates around the ideas promoted by continental art theory and of the development of an English theory of art.

Also Harry Mount, 'The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass: Constructions of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Oxford Art Journal*, 29 no. 2 (2006), pp. 167-184.

Dutch 'low' genre art that, in turn, affected the income of artists such as Heemskerck III who specialized in this style.

Given the restrictions of space and time, it would not be possible in this thesis to provide a full examination and evaluation of the historical chronology of the specific contemporary theories and accompanying debates that artists working in the early eighteenth century London might have been aware of or responding to. These debates were a complicated relationship of connected ideas based in societal issues which also reflected ideas of artistic theory and discourse. It is however, important to acknowledge that even at the most basic of levels, these debates significantly affected artists in a variety of ways. An examination of a select number of satirical prints by an artist such as Heemskerck III is especially relevant in this historical moment, not only because the prints document the artist's attempts to negotiate the art market through a recognition of and response to contemporary societal debates, but as well, they reflect the subsequent dictates of the market in anticipation of the great popularity of satire that would be realized in the later eighteenth century. I suggest therefore, his work prefigures that of better-recognized artists such as Hogarth. This thesis will suggest how in light of all these issues, Heemskerck III produced images in this significant period of the early eighteenth century that not only reflect changing patterns of art consumption and class structure in London at this time but are evidence of his significant contribution to an early stage in the development of the genre of satirical prints.

## Chapter Two: A Context for the Work of Heemskerck III

The Heemskercks make a particularly relevant case study for genre art in late seventeenth and early eighteenth century London, both because of the style and popularity of their work and because of their Dutch heritage. Work attributed to the family is often focused on themes depicting humorous and grotesque characters in Dutch low genre style.

Records suggest that the main producer of the family was Egbert van Heemskerck II, active in the seventeenth century and predeceased by his artist father in the 1680s. When Heemskerck II died in London in 1704, he left behind an eponymous son who would have been in his late twenties or early thirties.

Egbert van Heemskerck III created genre paintings in the style of his father and grandfather before him. There are few extant examples of his work and he died in apparent poverty in 1744.<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested that Heemskerck III's contribution to the family workshop did not reach the level of accomplishment of his father and that he achieved only an imitative level of skill in his work.<sup>2</sup> However, the London art market of the early eighteenth century was a different one from that which his father had come from the Netherlands to take advantage of in the 1670s. In the late seventeenth century, Dutch genre art was tremendously popular and work in this style was very well received by the London consumer. After the turn of the century however, this changed significantly. Debates about theories of art had already been occurring on the continent and in early eighteenth-century England in light of the rising power of the English middle classes; there was an effort made by the elite to establish forms of class structure through a definition of an English theory of art that would confirm the best types of art for the

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Einberg and Judy Egerton, *The Age of Hogarth: British Painters Born 1675-1709*, (London: Tate Gallery, 1988), p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> Einberg and Egerton, *The Age of Hogarth*, p. 238.

connoisseur and collector.<sup>3</sup> These theories were for the most part based on continental treatises that promoted the superiority of Italian history painting over the inferiority of a Dutch art that copied directly from nature and made no attempt to improve or elevate its subject.<sup>4</sup> In England, individuals discussed and debated the treatises of native theorists such as Dryden, Shaftesbury, and Richardson as well as those from the continent including those of the Dutch theorist Gerard de Lairesse which were published in 1701 and 1707.<sup>5</sup> Even in its earliest stages, this theoretical discourse was having a significant effect on the London art market and subsequently on the work and income of the artists. Low genre Dutch art was used as the example of what not to buy, and “it became conventional to assert the inferiority of Dutch art even when praising it.”<sup>6</sup> The economic effects of this debate on artists who worked in the low genre style were compounded by the growing availability of imported Italian art that quickly became the “mark of elite taste” as these collectors demonstrated their good taste both in purchasing Italian work and in choosing not to purchase Dutch art.<sup>7</sup> In the late 1720s interest in Dutch genre art was particularly poor and works such as those by the Heemskercks saw a great drop in popularity and price as collectors disposed of their many low genre pieces.<sup>8</sup> Dutch high genre on the other hand, by artists such as Teniers and Ostade, continued to be collected.

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<sup>3</sup> While I recognize that the use of the term ‘middle class’ can be problematic, it will be used in this thesis in order to generally identify the non-elite class of individuals whose business interests and rising economical situations provided a level of disposable income to spend on luxury goods. In terms of English art historical scholarship, the buying power of the ‘middling sorts’ and their identification as significant factors in the art market has until recently been unconsidered, through a continued focus on the elite consumer.

<sup>4</sup> Some discussion of the major points relevant to the debates around art theory and this thesis will be discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>5</sup> De Lairesse is particularly significant for his outspoken views against Dutch genre artists. His treatises were translated into English in 1738. Common themes of de Lairesse and other theorists include the appropriate way for artists to approach art; the need for artists to improve nature and create images in the classical style; promote history painting as the highest form of art; and that modern themes and genre were not appropriate subject matter.

<sup>6</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting*, p. 54.

<sup>7</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>8</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting*, pp. 54-57. Mount notes that as the elite disposed of their collections, it is likely that much of the work filtered down the social scale.

Dutch artists whose work showed the influence of genre, but who elevated their subjects were successful in establishing careers in England.<sup>9</sup> Given the effect of these debates on his means of income, and the very small world of the London art market it is clear that Heemskerck III would have been well aware of the nature of the theories being discussed.<sup>10</sup> While it is uncertain to what extent he was personally acquainted with the major individuals involved in these discussions, it can be suggested that Heemskerck III would, at the very least, have been well aware of the formation of the English art school and of the work of individuals such as Richardson, Kneller, Thornhill and Hogarth.<sup>11</sup> This thesis will suggest that, while there may be no written evidence that Heemskerck III actually took a formal part in these debates and discussions, the information we can read from this set of satirical prints suggests his thorough knowledge of the issues and of how he utilized this medium to make a clever, humorous and satirical comment on the theories being expounded.

The prints are important evidence of the contribution of a 'low artist' in this contemporary debate. While on the surface it may seem that these are simply satires of contemporary social issues, these prints demonstrate much thought and invention. The nature of graphic satire is to engage with the viewer and, as a very interactive and adaptable medium, it requires a much more immediate and fluid level of invention by the artist in responding to the changing needs of the consumer. Satire must establish an interactive relationship with the market not only to maintain it but in order for it to actually function. The direction for change comes from the market as the medium adapts

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<sup>9</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting*, p. 57.

<sup>10</sup> Prior to her illness, one area of research Carol Gibson-Wood was working on was mapping the known locations of artists' homes, various shops and coffee houses in London in the late seventeenth century, including the locations holding auctions of art work which were referenced by the BL Auction catalogues. The results of her research were proving this to be a relatively small area, which implies that most of these individuals would have known and probably been in regular contact with one another.

<sup>11</sup> See Chapter 3, notes 56 and 116.

to address the issues of current social debates. However, in terms of eighteenth-century satire, the more acceptable graphic satire became within society, the less it was empowered to make critical commentary on that society.<sup>12</sup> It was diluted by its own expansion and therefore its very success was causing its loss of voice. Artists working in this medium constantly needed to update the nature of their art and satirical message, making the genre very complex and often resistant to specific definition. Heemskerck III's prints are very complex and it is only through an analysis of the works in terms of their social context that we can understand how the resulting form of satirical statement addresses significant contemporary issues. The use of these prints in satirizing relevant contemporary issues is supported by an approximate dating of the prints from both the subject matter and the iconographical information they contain to the early eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

Additionally, these prints must also be recognized for their complexity in successfully combining elements from traditional Dutch visual culture into an English context in order to form a unique and expressive visual language. Heemskerck III's background as a low genre artist was an excellent preparation for work in the satirical print medium, and the formation and promotion of theories of 'fine art' prints for polite society would have been both problematic and an opportunity. The end of a once profitable market for genre painting brought about by society's promotion of ideas of fine art made it an economic necessity to adapt the nature of his work to meet the changing dictates of the market. Through the creation of these graphic satirical prints he

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<sup>12</sup> Mark Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, (London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1999). p. 236.

<sup>13</sup> The details of the images would seem to indicate a dating to the late 1720s or early 1730s is appropriate, a suggestion which is supported by both Robert Raines, 'Notes on Egbert van Heemskerck and the English Taste for Genre', *The Walpole Society*, Volume 53, (1987), 119-142. (p. 128) and by Harry Mount's indication of the downturn in the market for genre that occurred in the late 1720s, note 6 above.

established a vehicle for exchange with the consumer that not only allowed the opportunity of economic benefit through his continued participation in the art market but at the same time allowed him to add a voice to contemporary debates via the medium of satire. These prints are also evidence that rather than satirizing specific individuals, as had been the style of his father, Heemskerck III is using satire to address broader contemporary concepts.<sup>14</sup> In giving us a snapshot of the issues particularly relevant at that time in London from the point of view of an Anglo-Dutch genre artist, the prints provide valuable documentation of the visual language utilized by an early eighteenth-century genre artist working to negotiate the changing demands of the contemporary art market and thus developing an understanding of these will add significantly to the foundation of English print scholarship.

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<sup>14</sup> It is important to recognize that Heemskerck II was creating genre prints that were satirical of specific subject matter while Heemskerck III is using his satire in a different and possibly more sophisticated way. In addition to a comparison with contemporary prints of other artists, future research will include determining whether Heemskerck III created any works of graphic satire other than these prints and his 1734 pamphlet, *Nothing Irregular in nature; or, deformity a mere fancy* (which is discussed later in this thesis.)

### **Chapter Three: Literature Review and Methodology**

In approaching the research for this thesis, my reading of the literature on print culture in London for the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was directed at answering certain key questions regarding why and how Heemskerck III utilized the medium of graphic satire to negotiate the rapidly changing London art market. It was necessary to examine existing studies of English graphic satirical prints, to determine not only a basis for my own methodology, but both to establish the relevance of this artist and to explore how an examination of these prints could contribute to the emerging methodology of English print scholarship. It was also necessary to develop an understanding of the contemporary societal and art theoretical concepts being discussed, as these are of primary importance in terms of both the use of the medium and the pictorial conventions employed within the prints. It was also important to examine and assess the known information regarding the artist as well as some information around the artistic traditions to which he would have been an heir.

My initial readings around English art historical print scholarship suggested an existing methodology that has long followed those established for traditional art historical research of the painted medium. Prints are comparatively examined against works of different media, such as paintings; they are often discussed in terms of a linear development; they are repeatedly regarded as a single genre rather than in terms of separate sub-genres, and they have frequently been absorbed into and discussed as an illustrative component of works of literature. Perhaps most importantly, due to their lack of authorship, but also as a result of their more immediate and generally assumed transient nature and the relatively smaller value subsequently attached to them, prints have been the subject of much less scholarly study than other media and the existing

scholarship is therefore repetitive in nature. Recent studies, however, are recognizing the necessity of considering the print medium as a separate art form with the need to define methodologies that are not only specifically applicable to the genre but which also address the variety of forms that exist within that genre. In my analysis of the Heemskerck III prints, I have chosen to utilize three works that have shown a cognizance of new ideas in terms of the methodology of print scholarship: the work of Eirwen Nicholson, Mark Hallett and Diana Donald.

Eirwen Nicholson's doctoral thesis *English Political Prints and Pictorial Argument c. 1640 – c. 1832: A Study in Historiography and Methodology* has been particularly useful in addressing the issues of print scholarship noted above as well as expanding my knowledge and understanding of the state of print scholarship. Nicholson believes that the currently accepted 'art historical' form of methodology utilized in print scholarship is "deeply flawed". She stresses the need for a methodology that requires a strong visual analysis of the work itself.<sup>1</sup> While her thesis is focused on the English political print and caricature, the points she raises regarding the state of political print scholarship are supportive of new ideas of methodological approach that are applicable to other print genres such as the graphic social satire of the Heemskerck III prints.

Mark Hallett takes much inspiration from Nicholson in his work *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*. While this study is focused on activity in the early eighteenth century and refers to the example of Hogarth extensively, Hallett also demonstrates new ideas in the methodology of print scholarship. As prints

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<sup>1</sup> Eirwen Nicholson, *English Political Prints and Pictorial Argument c. 1640 – c. 1832: A Study in Historiography and Methodology*. (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1994), p. 20. She indicates that "With a few exceptions, the literature of the political print may be characterized as a corpus which is over-general in scope, superficial, timid and above all derivative, distinguished by a refusal to ask more searching questions of the material and by a refusal to set beyond a few well-trodden paths"; and further, that the field is "hitherto untroubled by untoward criticism, indeed, largely untroubled by debate of any kind".

have long been seen as a lesser part of literary satire, the genre has not been given sufficient attention for its own merit and has in fact been used as “a form of literary illustration”, an assumption that is deeply problematic for art historians.<sup>2</sup> He also notes that studies focused on prints have for the most part addressed political imagery and how these have fit in with the political satire of the period. In terms of the development of a methodology for the Heemskerck III prints, Hallett’s study is very relevant, as he focuses on prints as items that had an engagement with cultural issues and that manipulated and reflected societal issues. Satire is complex and Hallett agrees with Nicholson’s arguments that the genre of graphic satire has its own rules, traditions and conventions and interacts with the market in different ways than genres of other media. He agrees with the need to develop a new methodology for analysis of graphic satire noting that “pictorial satire was an artistic hybrid combining acidic and witty commentary on a range of political and social issues with an eclectic, multi-referential form of pictorial and textural dialogue” that could fit across a variety of classes.<sup>3</sup>

As Diana Donald notes in the preface to her book, “The Age of Caricature, Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III”, her study is working toward filling the void of “a general, critical study of caricature” during this period.<sup>4</sup> She acknowledges Nicholson’s thesis, which was not available until after her own book had been completed, and from that acknowledges some of the problematic issues with her own relevant though generalized, approach. Donald’s survey on the use of caricature and

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<sup>2</sup> Mark Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth* (London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1999). p. ix.

<sup>3</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, pp. 1-2. While it is outside of the scope of this thesis to discuss examples of contemporary satirical textural dialogue that may have influenced the themes of the Heemskerck III prints, it is important to note the intention of doing this in future study, along with a more complete analysis of the rhyming texts that accompany each of the prints.

<sup>4</sup> Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), p. vii.

satire during the reign of George III makes references to the eighteenth century which are sometimes problematic as a result of her generalization of the century as a single period rather than seeing a separation between early and later periods. The focus of her study on the latter half of the century also makes it problematic to assess her comments in terms of an earlier artist such as Heemskerck III.

These three works articulate the following issues in print scholarship: the scholarly oversight of work from the seventeenth century; the perpetuation of a reliance on secondary literature that, given the developments in art historical research, may not draw accurate conclusions; the neglect of un-attributed work as well as the pattern of comparison with and to the work of better known artists; the idea of humour and the perceived aggressiveness of satire; the contemporary market; the concept of politeness; the artist's voice; and, finally, the issue of the application of contemporary art historical methods to the print genre. Given that the Heemskerck III prints were created in the early eighteenth century, this thesis cannot address Nicholson's comments regarding the neglect of scholarship on pre-1720s print production.<sup>5</sup> However, I argue that, as the prints were created in the early part of the eighteenth century, this study can still address the idea that the prints are in fact reflective of contemporary issues arising as a result of events originating in the late seventeenth century. Through a focus on the work of Heemskerck III, this study will therefore serve to add to the foundation of print scholarship in support of future studies of seventeenth-century prints.

The Heemskerck III prints are important evidence of a sophisticated use of satire that predates mid eighteenth-century work and this thesis will demonstrate that rather than being seen as precursors of the full grown genre of the mid-eighteenth century they

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<sup>5</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 77. Nicholson suggests this is a deliberate neglect on the part of scholarship.

need to be understood and discussed as significant images in their own right.<sup>6</sup> By doing so, this thesis addresses the scholarly concerns around the belief in a linear development of the print genre, which has resulted in a common scholarly acceptance that the success of later eighteenth century work occurred because it built upon and improved the lesser pre-1720s work.<sup>7</sup> It will also work to rectify two of the major faults existing in much print scholarship, which are not only the generalized approach that studies of the print genre have traditionally taken, but more importantly the repetitive nature of a scholarship that has become almost totally derivative of itself.<sup>8</sup>

In terms of scholarship on Heemskerck III, there is no secondary literature focused specifically on the artist, and studies focused on the Heemskerck family are extremely limited. The danger would be an unconsidered overdependence on a comparison and use of existing scholarship on contemporary artists such as Hogarth to formulate opinions on the work of Heemskerck III. In order to construct scholarship that adds to the foundation of the prints scholarship of this period without depending on existing secondary literature it is necessary to return to a solid visual analysis of the

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<sup>6</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 111. While Nicholson is referring to pre-1720s work, these images still predate the mid-century and I believe the same argument can be said to apply. This thesis will also suggest that, as the work of Heemskerck III is very different from the seventeenth-century work of his father, a linear comparison is not appropriate.

<sup>7</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 87, 199.

<sup>8</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 20, 30-34. Most art historical studies do not look beyond extant scholarship and continue to build from a small number of primary sources, using work of scholars such as Dorothy George as a seminal focus. While Nicholson acknowledges that works such as the *Catalogue of Personal and Political Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, for which George compiled the volumes documenting the period 1771-1832, as well as George's work *English Political Caricature – A Study of Opinion and Propaganda* (Oxford:1959) provide significant information, she warns that we need to be aware how such dependence might affect or limit creative thinking in our own work. This issue is in part a result of the very limited bibliography print scholars have to work with and the generalizations that have become inherent in secondary literature. She suggests that scholars need to move beyond the repetition of the generalizations of these secondary sources by ensuring that print scholarship replaces a methodological pattern of evasion with one that provides evidence and suggests that many more studies must be done in a variety of areas, means and methods, in order to build up and expand a base understanding and knowledge of the genre.

Heemskerck III prints and to then consciously look beyond related studies in developing an understanding of the message(s) that may be imbedded in them.<sup>9</sup>

Perpetuating a reliance on the example of work of better known native artists is a particular issue in English art historical scholarship, which has long ignored both foreign artists working in England as well as those artists who catered to the non-elite consumer.<sup>10</sup> One of the most problematic areas of print scholarship is the continued reliance, both for comparison and for primacy, on the example of Hogarth. Canonical-based studies on artists such as Hogarth perpetuate the direction of scholarship towards the well-known artist rather than to other less known or anonymous figures that might have been equally as prolific and equally important in print production. Nicholson in particular deplores the fact that Hogarth is held up as the beginning of the age of graphic satire and believes that anonymous prints must be “subjected to the same iconographic analysis and deconstruction as the endlessly picked over plates of Hogarth” in order to promote a broader understanding of the print genre.<sup>11</sup> In contrast, Hallett uses the example of Hogarth extensively and, while he concedes that perpetuating the continued focus on Hogarth is problematic for future studies, he believes that understanding all artists including Hogarth as “participating in a shared, collective artistic enterprise” of graphic satire is one of the necessary steps towards creating a better foundation for prints scholarship.<sup>12</sup> Donald also acknowledges the issue of an overemphasis on major figures of the period such as Hogarth, but suggests such an emphasis will help to give a

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<sup>9</sup> Throughout her thesis, Nicholson strongly promotes the idea of returning to a strong visual analysis of the prints in order to gain a better understanding of the image.

<sup>10</sup> Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, pp. 34. Although, if as Donald notes, the contemporary success of promoting Hogarth’s art was dependent on a separation of his work from that of the ‘low artists’, as this is where “his works, through their subject matter and indeed their marketing as print series, would naturally be presumed to fall”, then this is very indicative of the need to examine the work of others.

<sup>11</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 446-447.

<sup>12</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 1.

basis for building a better understanding of the period.<sup>13</sup> These different views are an indication of the various approaches taken by scholars in their research.

This thesis will not make comparison to Hogarth other than where necessary in situating Heemskerck III. Developing scholarship on a relatively unknown artist such as Heemskerck III not only addresses the lacunae in the area of lesser known artists but will also contribute new scholarship in the area of the cross-cultural artist, as Heemskerck III was raised in England, but trained in the Dutch tradition of his father. One of the problems in assessing the significance of the work of Heemskerck III is the common conception that ‘low genre’ work is inherently humorous images of the lower classes, the deformed, the poor, and the grotesque. This thesis suggests that Heemskerck III has been overlooked as a satirist because he has been grouped under the classification of humorous genre.<sup>14</sup>

### **Defining the category of ‘satirical’ art**

Satire is a difficult concept and cannot be defined in one specific form as the form can vary based on the artist, the theme, and the intended audience.<sup>15</sup> There is also a belief that the reproductive medium of the print is indicative of the subversive nature of the

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<sup>13</sup> Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, p. 32. Donald suggests that Hogarth was the primary figure in the development of social caricature and that “indeed, the new kind of social satire was virtually his invention”. While Donald does acknowledge in the introduction to her book that Nicholson’s work was not available until after her manuscript had been completed, this comment is indicative of the problems inherent in a model of scholarship that disregards the possible contributions of a lesser known artist such as Heemskerck III.

<sup>14</sup> The idea that having humour as a component of an image and further that humour is an inherent component of satire often implies that a work containing these qualities is somehow less important or viable.

<sup>15</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 598. Nicholson additionally notes the lack of studies addressing the satirical print as satire.

work.<sup>16</sup> Some scholars suggest that it is the nature of satire to be aggressive and subversive, and that its very success relies on this.<sup>17</sup> In terms of political prints, Nicholson suggests it is the generalized nature of existing print scholarship that promotes the generic concept of satire's inherently subversive nature, which seems to have been derived from the "believed aggressive or subversive nature of humour."<sup>18</sup> In contrast to Nicholson, who sees even the term 'satire' as subversive and aggressive, Hallett discusses the contemporary definition of satire as seen in literature and believes that graphic satire was created specifically to illustrate the aggressive and biting nature of literature.<sup>19</sup> While we can clearly see that the Heemskerck III prints were meant to be humorous, a more thorough analysis of the prints is required before we can also see that there are layers of meaning in the images which provide clear evidence of the satirical nature of the message. Although he may have couched his satire in terms of a humorous image, it is still addressing specific cultural and art theoretical concerns. In terms of Heemskerck III's prints, understanding the meaning will in turn be suggestive of the intended audiences and we will see that he has successfully blended both humour and satire, which take on a biting quality that is suggestive of the underlying seriousness of the message. Through her focus on political prints, Nicholson makes a very important point when she says "it is easier to claim that political prints 'reflect' something ('opinion', 'society', 'events') than to demonstrate how they articulate ideas, opinions

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<sup>16</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 293. She also indicates that in terms of political print satire, scholarship promotes the idea that it is an inherently subversive or radical medium because this is often the basis for the study.

<sup>17</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 288-294.

<sup>18</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 289-294. Again, care must be taken with regards to making generalizations as different types of prints may require different methodology.

<sup>19</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 5. Prints are often discussed as secondary to the relevant literature and Hallett's study examines the interaction of graphic satire with other contemporary media and how it changed or was manipulated as necessary, both to maintain or in the process of that interaction.

and perceptions".<sup>20</sup> I believe that this idea can and should be expanded to cover print scholarship of other genres including the cultural satire of the Heemskerck III prints. An analysis of these prints will suggest that at the same time as the inherent humour might have made these images marketable to a variety of consumers, they are also important for a consideration of the message(s) they contain which were targeted at significant societal concerns.

At this time ideas of print connoisseurship were being discussed as a result of the sales and auctions that were a form of entertainment used by coffee houses to bring in customers and Hallett acknowledges the relatively small community where the market activity occurred.<sup>21</sup> Print culture became a popular part of social culture where individuals met, discussed and bought art, as part of the coffee house culture that was being established and artists and engravers were working at elevating their status in the art community.<sup>22</sup> In the early eighteenth century, however, graphic satire was problematic in terms of how it was perceived with regards to connoisseurship. Reproductive prints of fine art were more acceptable than 'local satires'.<sup>23</sup> The question of what formed good art was discussed and graphic satire was criticized for its focus on entertainment and play around contemporary social issues rather than a focus on what was considered good art.<sup>24</sup> So it was, even at the time, a separate medium with different concerns which, as a society, consumers were trying to reconcile.

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<sup>20</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 404.

<sup>21</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>22</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, p. 20. Hallett suggests that the quality of the engraving tells us that the engravers promoted themselves with an elevated status which is suggestive of the market they were trying to attract.

<sup>23</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, p. 19. Hallett is referring to the perceived value of fine art reproductions over satires generated by resident artists.

<sup>24</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, pp. 19-20. Hallett makes the important comment that graphic satirical culture was difficult to situate within contemporary ideas of connoisseurship because it "existed on the fringes of aesthetic decorum", and it therefore was an economically "risky product to commission, promote or execute". Graphic satire further existed in a

Graphic satire, because of its nature, did not conform to what was being promoted as appropriate art. Hallett indicates that we need to redefine graphic satire of the eighteenth century to acknowledge its function and use within society, recognizing its process in addressing the debates regarding issues that “registered the central needs and demands of urban society and that at the same time signaled society’s deepest fissures and contradictions” and “engaged with some of the most pressing contemporary debates relating to life in the city”.<sup>25</sup> That the Heemskerck III images are still extant suggests their relevance and their success in establishing an exchange of ideas and opinions of contemporary society. In creating images with themes of contemporary social issues that also evoked the formal qualities of history painting Heemskerck III is satirizing those art theorists, consumers and connoisseurs who were advocating the idea of the importance of continental history painting over work in other ‘lesser’ genres by native artists. Satire needs to be addressed in terms of the ideas of politeness that were so important within society at the time and through an understanding that engraved satire was a product of the market as artists designed and manipulated graphic satire to meet the needs of that market.

As noted above, Heemskerck III was situated within a market that was changing in response to the drive by certain sectors of contemporary society to reinforce levels of class within that society. While his background was mostly in the style of traditional Dutch low genre imagery, he was exposed to the use of satire in the genre of the Quaker

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middle ground of acceptance; it did not depict the elements of fine art and was therefore stigmatized for its “entertaining focus on contemporary subject matter”, but it also could not be placed in the realm of low art because of its “sophistication as a pictorial genre”.

<sup>25</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference: Graphic Satire in the Age of Hogarth*, p. 26.

images created by his father.<sup>26</sup> The Heemskerck III prints are evidence of a move away from the traditional humour of low genre painting to an exploration of how the medium of graphic satire could be utilized in addressing the demands of the contemporary market. While the prints still contain an element of humour, it is significant that they not only address themes of modern social issues, but also contain underlying satirical references addressing the contemporary ideas of art theory and connoisseurship that were being debated. Early eighteenth-century ideas of connoisseurship were phrased in terms of examples of behaviour that worked to establish modes of politeness - as aristocratic or elite models to be followed as well as the idea that politeness could be cultivated - and graphic work was seen as a way of disseminating these ideas. Hallett suggests that in this period through satire's contradictory perspectives on polite behaviour it also became a form that worked to reinforce politeness. The form's ability to satirize culture and society was therefore dependent on the existence of its contradictory politeness.<sup>27</sup> Hallett suggests "graphic satire as a whole was constantly involved in a complex process of cultural push and pull in which the genre both asserted its own critical independence of polite forms of representation and also acknowledged its own complicity with and involvement in the workings of polite culture."<sup>28</sup> He suggests as the century progressed the ideas of politeness generally became more powerful and satire's power to make statement became less. However, as we can see from an examination of the Heemskerck III prints, there were graphic satires being

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<sup>26</sup> The issue of the Quaker images is raised in the chapter in this thesis discussing the secondary literature on the Heemskercks. An important part of the four articles is the question of whether the images are meant to be a satirical representation of the Quakers.

<sup>27</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 10.

<sup>28</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, pp. 14-15.

produced that ensured the genre's separateness from "the pictorial rhetoric of polite art".<sup>29</sup>

### Satire and Class Issues

The idea that the development of a theory of art was in part an effort to establish class distinctions in response to the growth of the power of the middle class consumer is the issue at the core of the debate that Heemskerck III was responding to through the medium of these prints. Hallett believes that we need to break it down even more in our consideration - that 'graphic satire' must be regarded as distinct under the umbrella of 'graphic culture'. It had its own vocabulary but was also fluid in that it was a "highly parasitic genre" borrowing from and adapting vocabularies from other media to maintain the strength of its message.<sup>30</sup> When graphic satire was seen as a mode of improvement, this was because the genre as a whole was moving towards ideas of politeness. Through the idea that prints had a universal visual language that would be readable by all, the implication is that the message of improvement was for and could be understood by the illiterate and yet Nicholson has seen no 'account' that suggests that the illiterate were the target audience.<sup>31</sup> However, the very diverse nature of satire also meant that the more widespread and diverse it became, the more diluted and less threatening it became, thus becoming images illustrative of society rather than making critical comment of that society.<sup>32</sup> Hallett also notes that Hogarth is a good example of

<sup>29</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 15.

<sup>30</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 235.

<sup>31</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 226-227.

<sup>32</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 236. Although beyond the scope of this thesis, Hallett argues that scholars need to re-evaluate the oeuvre of Hogarth within these debates. Hogarth's images met the needs for politeness in terms of how they were structured, but because they promoted the deviant and grotesque, they continued to promote a focus on these issues through an extreme exploitation and themes of moralization. Hogarth's images occur at a time when it was necessary for graphic satire to go to the extremes in order for it to maintain itself in the contemporary print market. However, it is necessary to

an artist who plays off the aggressive and negative nature of his subject matter against the ideas of politeness.<sup>33</sup> In choosing to create a satirical comment of contemporary social issues, I suggest that Heemskerck III's prints are an example of themes that illustrate the play of negative against ideas of politeness, and as an artist who prefigured Hogarth, should not be disregarded or overlooked.

At the same time print scholarship also needs to be multidisciplinary in approach and less theory-based, be inclusive of other media, and make comparisons with contemporaneous iconography. Scholars should look at prints in terms of the scope of contemporary journalism for such things as how these other works reflect the iconography of other publishers and other works published.<sup>34</sup> There were many other media utilized to publish political messages, playing cards, medals, coins, tokens, engraved glass.<sup>35</sup> Most literary studies do not include a review of these types of items nor does prints scholarship. Hallett relates graphic satire to other creative media such as theatre and the advertisement and promotion of these types of events and suggests that seeing advertisements for theatre and graphic art side by side in the newspaper was a method of relating these two in the minds of the consumer as both invite an active participation.<sup>36</sup> He admits that there is still insufficient scholarship on the audiences for graphic satire, but that information can be gleaned from reviewing the type of

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consider these ideas in terms of a broader scope and beyond a specific and continued focus on Hogarth. Hogarth may have been active at the time of the crux of the debates on politeness, connoisseur, and art theory but he was not the only artist working in London at this time. In constructing a better foundation for future print scholarship, it is vital to demonstrate that the contributions of artists such as Heemskerck III can be equally as relevant. As a result of the perpetuated patterns of scholarship of English art, these individuals have been little studied and this has resulted in scholarship that focuses on a few individuals and lacks a broad understanding of the full scope of the work produced. It is possible that further study would suggest that Hogarth should not be so easily regarded as the major creative figure in this period.

<sup>33</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 20. See also Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth, Volume 1, The "Modern Moral Subject", 1697-1732* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1991). p. 228.

Paulson discusses the tension in Hogarth's families and his 'modern moral subjects' that were drawing on both the Dutch tradition and were deliberately contrasting Gerard de Lairese's theories.

<sup>34</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 433.

<sup>35</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 414.

<sup>36</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, pp. 2, 25.

advertisements that appeared in the newspapers. He argues that graphic satire was more aimed at the middling or professional class consumer as it catered to those classes' growing diversity in tastes and issues/practices.<sup>37</sup> This would therefore not only reflect satire's engagement with the consumer, but more importantly suggest the consumer's response to the contemporary theories and practices being promoted by the elite classes. It is thus suggestive of the artist's important role within this interactive component of the art market as Hallett also notes that in the very early eighteenth century these groups were not a coherent representative group, and suggests that, as the public defined itself, so did graphic satire.<sup>38</sup> In analyzing the Heemskerck III images and considering the level of invention employed by the artist, it is also important to consider whether his satire is based in the use of an existing vocabulary of visual elements developed within satirical literature or whether these prints represent the creation of a new visual language. The change from creating paintings in a low genre style, to the medium of prints illustrating contemporary social issues that are additionally referential of the elements of the enhanced visual format that was being promoted for genres such as history painting, is significant. The compositional choices made in combination with the vocabulary of the images ensure that the satirical message is well illustrated.<sup>39</sup> This change indicates the artist's recognition and knowledge of the need to adapt his style to reflect the theories being promoted and also suggests his awareness both of contemporary social issues and of how choosing to satirize such themes as the subjects of these prints would be received within the changing demands of society and the market.

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<sup>37</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, pp. 25-26. I intend to include research of contemporary media for information on Heemskerck III in future studies.

<sup>38</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 26.

<sup>39</sup> Both the iconography and the structure of the images are instrumental in creating the message and provide a suggestion for the direction of future lines of research. There is insufficient room here to do more than introduce some of the elements of iconography and structure of the prints. Future research would involve a full comparison of the iconography of the prints in order to determine if this was representational of a definitive visual voice for Heemskerck III.

### **Defining the ‘voice’ of the artist**

In terms of the Heemskerck III prints, this thesis will discuss both the formal elements of the prints as well as the visual elements that suggest the distinctive artistic language or voice utilized at this particular point in time. Additionally important is the fact that the visual language of Heemskerck III represents a cross-cultural voice in the English art market. Establishing the elements of his ‘voice’ also works to help us define the concerns and needs of the changing art market within the scope of print culture. Nicholson indicates that little work has been done that focuses on establishing the ‘voice’ of particular artists. There is a lack of scholarship devoted to the artist as ‘satirical’ artist which would include a discussion of the satiric language particular to that artist.<sup>40</sup> She calls for a series of specific studies to fill in the missing gaps in scholarship in terms of iconography, structure and rhetoric of the print which will give a basis for future studies to build on. By referring to iconography as the vocabulary of the print, and to the structure of the image as the grammar, she relates the graphic medium to the very fluid and changeable medium of language. However, in terms of the graphic print, neither vocabulary nor structure can be generically defined. The problem with defining methods of iconographic analysis in satirical print scholarship is that the print was such a very fluid medium. This makes it essential that we analyze the prints themselves in order to fully understand them. Scholarship as a whole must work to define the vocabulary of the print, but must be “sensitive to the variations in usage and application” and must avoid the “mechanization of approach” and “standard key” definition.<sup>41</sup> The problem is the instability of iconography over time—we must first

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<sup>40</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 598.

<sup>41</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 533.

understand “the role of iconography in the prints and second the potential rhetorical capacity of symbolism”.<sup>42</sup> In addition to the iconography, we must look at the overall structure of the image to understand why the artist made the ‘compositional choices’ they made in designing the work. Doing so will help us to break down the layering of meaning in order to suggest how the work was intended to be read.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps we can not specifically define structure, but understanding this is an important part of the work required by scholars looking at the print medium.<sup>44</sup>

It is clear that traditional art historical methods such as comparison and establishing linear models of development are not always applicable to the printed medium. While she advocates comparison with other media, Nicholson warns that the typical art historical methodology of comparing images can be problematic for prints because this “predetermines the response” or “limits response and encourages banal pronouncements”.<sup>45</sup> She suggests that graphic political satire should be seen as images and not as art because they were not conceived as art in contemporary frames of reference. Equally, she argues that aesthetic considerations could hamper a truly objective study of the prints.<sup>46</sup> I believe, however, that while this might apply to graphic political prints, in terms of other print genres it can be misleading to totally dismiss the idea that the prints might have been conceived as art. In creating prints that attempt to replicate detailed elements of history painting such as complicated narrative, figural groupings, architectural framing, and staging; conceiving these images as art is exactly what Heemskerck III is doing. The success of the satire in these images in terms of market reception is wholly dependent on achieving a clear imitation of a visual

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<sup>42</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 534.

<sup>43</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 549.

<sup>44</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 587.

<sup>45</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 447.

<sup>46</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 456.

format that suggests they are art. Nicholson therefore suggests that the art historian must not allow “subjective value-judgements” of the work to interfere with their study.<sup>47</sup> In studying images portraying societal issues, it would be easy to start with preconceived ideas or biases, and to then be in danger of imposing society on the work.<sup>48</sup> It is easy to remark that Heemskerck III’s work was part of a popular print culture created for the entertainment of a middling class market.

### **Semantics and Print Culture**

As noted above, terms such as ‘middle class’ can be problematic. Additionally Nicholson emphasizes that semantics must be considered with regards to the use or misuse of terms such as ‘traditional’ or ‘conventions’ that promote the idea of thinking in terms of the linear model that suggests seventeenth century prints are somehow lesser works than subsequent works that are regarded as more fully developed.<sup>49</sup> The semantics of such terms as ‘mass medium’ and ‘popular print’ can be problematic and it has been the pattern of the print scholar to lump together prints under these categories and then make generalizations about the audience.<sup>50</sup> Recent studies indicate that prints were being bought both by the middle class people in trade with disposable income as well as professional people and the elite.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 216.

<sup>48</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 451-453.

<sup>49</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 437. Additionally in terms of the chronology of the work of an artist, Nicholson warns a dependence on this must be avoided as “print scholarship has emphasized change rather than continuity in these genres”. Certainly we can see this in the work of Heemskerck as his work is now including the additional element of satire in addition to humour.

<sup>50</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 224-228, 242-243. Nicholson warns against using the term ‘middle-class’ in a generalizing way and suggests that much more scholarship must be done on the market for prints as well as the need for further research of print shops and print production.

<sup>51</sup> Carol Gibson-Wood, ‘Picture Consumption in London at the End of the Seventeenth Century’, *The Art Bulletin*, 84, no. 3 (2002), 491-500.

As suggested above, the genre of the satirical print is complex, and this must be considered in developing a methodology for the Heemskerck III prints. Prints can have layers of meaning which come not only from their visual components and design, but also from their interaction with contemporary media, both visual and textual. It needs to be understood that it is not only what a print looks like or what other works or media it could be related to that is significant, but that we need greater acknowledgement of how and in what ways a print engaged the consumer or viewer to participate in the interaction. As a group, these scholars also make it clear that the rules around different types of satire cannot be generalized and need to be considered in different ways. Hallett notes the importance of understanding that the success of graphic satire was in the success of the exchange with the viewer, and that “these kinds of exchange were not something to be hidden away or derived. They were an intrinsic part of satirical engraving’s cultural and commercial appeal.”<sup>52</sup> Accepting that images provide historical evidence when we do not have definitive readings of them is particularly problematic in terms of prints as many of the examples are not attributed, so we must be able to find a better way to read them than through knowledge of artist and attribution.<sup>53</sup>

Certainly as noted previously, Heemskerck III’s prints were a change from the traditional Dutch low genre style, and my analysis of the prints will illustrate that the motivation was in part to create a visual response to events which had resulted in an art market that was unresponsive of this style. In developing a methodology, I am clearly supporting the idea of the importance of returning to a reading of the prints and agree that we can only gain a full understanding of the meaning of these images through the process of visual analysis. As Nicholson suggests, much can be learned about the

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<sup>52</sup> Hallett, *The Spectacle of Difference*, p. 9.

<sup>53</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 404-405.

contemporary audience through taking a better look at the content of the images, but a study of the appearance of the prints must be done in conjunction with a study of content. The methodology must also be cognizant of the need to acknowledge the contemporary societal factors that prompt the use of particular content in the images which will be discussed below.<sup>54</sup> According to Nicholson,

“Arguably it is only by recognizing that no such definitive reading is possible with these prints, that there is no single methodological key by which the political print may be unlocked; only by acknowledging the polysemic nature of the material, by recognizing that there are numerous locks in every print for which several methodological keys will have to be cut out and tried before we can arrive at anything like general conclusions that will advance our understanding of the material and of its role in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century society, can prints scholarship advance”.<sup>55</sup>

### **Development of an English art theory**

As indicated above, the early eighteenth century is characterized by significant societal changes that extended into discussions of art and the role of the connoisseur. This thesis suggests that these contemporary debates and discourses directly affected the market for Heemskerck III's genre painting and were the driving force in the creation and design of these prints, as he adapted his work in negotiating the changing requirements of the art market. It is not possible in this thesis to provide a full analysis of the historical development of English art theory as it was discussed and debated; however, it is important to introduce the major theoretical issues being discussed in order to provide a sense of the issues that were affecting the art market and contemporary artists such as Heemskerck III.

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<sup>54</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, pp. 438-439. Nicholson discusses the need to 'deconstruct' images to determine the detail and the layering of meaning; however as she indicates, this can be difficult without the benefit of much broader scholarship.

<sup>55</sup> Nicholson, *English Political Prints*, p. 405. Again, while Nicholson's comment is directed at the genre of the political satirical print, it is certainly relevant in terms of other types of the satirical print genre.

Harry Mount's *Reception of Dutch Genre Paintings in England 1695-1829*

provides a solid historical background to the movement of paintings and painters from the Netherlands to England during the period when the Heemskercks were active. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, this work was significant in confirming the importance of developing scholarship on the Heemskercks. Mount's work focused mainly on Heemskerck II, as an example of a low genre painter working in London in the late seventeenth century; however, his discussion is certainly relevant to my study of Heemskerck III. He confirms that in developing an English theory of art, English theorists followed the continental model of highly regarded Italian art rather than a 'lower' Dutch art. He also points out how subsequent changes occurring in the art market at the elite level affected the popularity of low genre Dutch art in what had previously been a substantial market for Dutch genre paintings and prints. Particularly important is his suggestion that theories crossed boundaries between visual and literary arts and were utilized to establish distinctions of class particularly between the elite and middle classes.<sup>60</sup>

Mount also discusses Dutch theorists such as de Lairese, whose work was translated into English in 1738 and who had particular problems with Dutch genre work.<sup>61</sup> The theories of de Lairese have proven to be particularly relevant to an analysis of the Heemskerck III prints. Importantly, Mount's article 'The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass: Constructions of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Britain', looks at early eighteenth-century attempts to define the idea of a connoisseur, which are related to early ideas that articulated the ideal of the educated art lover put forward by individuals such as Jonathan Richardson and the ensuing and long-term debates between

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<sup>60</sup> Mount, *Reception of Dutch Genre Paintings in England 1695-1829*, pp. 40, 55.

<sup>61</sup> Mount, *Reception of Dutch Genre Paintings in England 1695-1829*, p.58.

various interested groups of artists, writers, the elite and connoisseurs.<sup>62</sup> Since the work was responsive to the discourse around the idea, the term ‘connoisseur’ was changeable and could not be precisely defined, either in the eighteenth century or now.<sup>63</sup> The practicing artists’ fear in this debate was not only loss of patronage and the growing commercial power of the consumer, but more an awareness of the ideological differences that separated them and the loss of the ability to define the tastes and practices of collectors.<sup>64</sup> While Mount bases his article on the debate occurring more toward the middle of the eighteenth century, it is important to note that the discussions around these ideas had been on going for some time, as the works of theorists such as de Lairese, Richardson, Shaftesbury and others had existed since the early eighteenth century.

That Heemskerck III himself entered into these discourses is suggested not only by his participation in the art market with his prints, but also by his 1734 pamphlet, *Nothing irregular in nature; or, deformity a mere fancy. Being a new set of original beauties, design'd by the celebrated E. Hemskirk, curiously etched on twelve copper plates. Likewise twelve short poems on the variety of beauty; adapted to each print. Dedicated to a little, tho' a very great man.*<sup>65</sup> As the title suggests, this satirical work is made up of twelve printed images of grotesque and humorous faces accompanied by twelve poems. Each image includes a two-line inscription, such as ‘Oh what e'er frame or hue the Face is, The Mind may have ten thousand Graces.’ These ‘captions’, together with the images and the poems, suggest that Heemskerck III’s intended to underscore

<sup>62</sup> Harry Mount, ‘The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass: Constructions of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Britain’, *Oxford Art Journal*, 29 no. 2 (2006), pp. 167-184 (p. 170).

<sup>63</sup> Mount, ‘The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass’, p. 167.

<sup>64</sup> Mount, ‘The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass’, pp. 170-172. Hogarth in particular was involved in this discourse and his response in 1737 and his 1761 image of the ‘Monkey as Connoisseur’ for the tailpiece of the Society of Artists exhibition catalogue are indicative of the debate.

<sup>65</sup> The poems in the pamphlet suggest this is probably a self-referential dedication.

the satirical power of images, in response to ideas in contemporary art theory, such as those of Richardson and de Laïresse, which attempted to define the methods for artists to correct and beautify figures in the classical manner.<sup>66</sup>

### **Continental Art Theory - Dutch Theorist Gerard de Laïresse**

In addition to the development of an English art theory, it is important to acknowledge a primary continental source of art theory that became a factor in English art. Gerard de Laïresse, (1640/1-1711), Dutch artist and theorist, worked in the classical tradition, and is particularly relevant to my study of Heemskerck III, as I will suggest that the ideas and theories discussed in his work were part of the debates around ideas of politeness and connoisseurship in early eighteenth-century London.<sup>67</sup> While the full effect of de Laïresse's treatises has yet to be completely explored, his theories appear to have significantly influenced genre art and genre artists in this period. Three articles provided significant background to de Laïresse, Eddy de Jongh's "The Artist's Apprentice and Minerva's Secret: An Allegory of Drawing by Jan de Laïresse", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 13 (1983), 201-217; Claus Kemmer's "In Search of Classical Form: Gerard de Laïresse's "Groot Schilderboek" and Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the*

<sup>66</sup> E. Hemskirk, *Nothing Irregular in nature; or, deformity a mere fancy, Being a new set of original beauties, design'd by the celebrated E. Hemskirk, curiously etched on twelve copper plates. Likewise twelve short poems on the variety of beauty; adapted to each print. Dedicated to a little, tho' a very great man*, London, 1734. It is my intention in future to undertake a focused study of this fascinating example of Heemskerck III's satirical art and writing. See also Arno Dolders, 'Some Remarks on Laïresse's "Groot Schilderboek"', *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 15 (1985), pp. 197-220, <<http://links.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/sici?si=0037-5411%281985%2915%3A3%2F4%3C197%3ASROL%22S%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C>>, [November 26, 2007].

<sup>67</sup> Gérard de Laïresse, *The art of painting, in all its branches, methodically demonstrated by discourses and plates, and exemplified by remarks on the paintings of the best masters; ... By Gerard de Laïresse. Translated by John Frederick Fritsch, ...* London, 1738.

<<http://galenet.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/servlet/ECCO>>, [February 8, 2008].

Gale Document Number CW106124978. The 1738 English translation. Future study on Heemskerck III would require a more in depth analysis of de Laïresse's theories.

*History of Art*, 26 (1998), 87-115 ; and Arno Dolders' "Some Remarks on Lairesse's "Groot Schilderoek", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 15 (1985), 197-220. De Jongh's article in particular provided a background to the theorist and significantly, the illustrations in this article inspired me to explore the connection of visual references to classical subjects in Heemskerck III's print a *Brothel Scene*, (Figure 2).<sup>68</sup>

### **Dutch Influences and the Issue of Symbolism**

In addition to the art theoretical debates, as noted above, Heemskerck III's prints clearly suggest a cross-cultural visual language, and many of the illustrative elements used in his prints are taken from Dutch pictorial heritage. What is relevant to a study of Heemskerck III in regards to Dutch graphic art is recognizing that what appears to be real may not necessarily be so and that there can be, and usually are, layers of meaning within images. Also significant is that while the images do include a wide variety of subject matter, the scope of what was being portrayed is not only fairly limited but is also fairly conventional in that specific themes are repeated over and over again.<sup>69</sup> The Dutch artist responded to the audience's taste for the familiar and respected and continued producing traditional subjects. In English art, artists responded to the market, whose demand determined to a certain extent what the content of the works was. In the Netherlands during the seventeenth century, while genre continued to utilize existing stock themes, these themes were also being updated and developed to meet the needs of

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<sup>68</sup> Chapter 5 will suggest Heemskerck III's borrowing of thematic material from de Lairesse's *Allegory of Drawing* in creating a satirical brothel scene.

<sup>69</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, p. 1.

the consuming society.<sup>70</sup> It is important therefore to consider this as we attempt to define both a visual voice for Heemskerck III and develop an understanding of the prints through the process of visual analysis. With regards to the recognition of elements suggestive of Dutch influence, several studies have provided valuable information about the traditional Dutch visual heritage to which Heemskerck would have been an heir.

Mariët Westermann's study, *The Amusements of Jan Steen: Comic Painting in the Seventeenth Century*, (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1997), provides significant background with regards to the example of Steen and how his art functioned within society. She also discusses how Steen's work would have been seen in terms of Gerard de Lairese's theoretical notions, which supports the idea that artists such as Heemskerck III were responding visually to the comments of theorists such as de Lairese. Another important source is Wayne Franits' work, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting, Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution*, which provides a comprehensive history of the development of genre painting and the artists involved during this period in the major Dutch artistic centers. Importantly, he discusses the changing methods of scholarship in Dutch art that have occurred over the last half century, from Panofsky's 'disguised symbolism' to Alpers' 'reality effect', concluding in the current acknowledgement of the complexity of Dutch genre work and its important role in shaping Dutch culture. However, as suggested by Nicholson, (and a view I share), one must be cautious in utilizing the same art historical scholarship for graphic prints as for other genres. Specifically, one must keep in mind that while genre and satire may contain similar elements, they are not the same things and do not function in the same way.

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<sup>70</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, p. 7. Complicating this is the fact that art of different areas was stylistically different due the restrictions imposed by guilds and governments of regions.

With regards to the element of theatre that is clearly apparent in the prints as well as suggesting sources for some of the repetitive visual elements they contain, Angela Vanhaelan's *Comic Print and Theatre in Early Modern Amsterdam: Gender, Childhood and the City*, provides a comprehensive history and discussion of the 'catchpenny' print and the importance of theatre art, visual art and the prints as they were used to shape society.<sup>71</sup> In particular, she looks at how prints were used in terms of defining issues of social status, noting that they were, in fact, used to reinforce the growing status of the middle class. Prints are important because they were a fluid and changing medium that crossed social boundaries. In a precursor to similar events that would occur in England in the early eighteenth century, the elite in late seventeenth-century Netherlands saw the emerging middle class as a challenge to the social establishment for which forms of Dutch art such as the catchpenny print were utilized as a tool in attempting to ensure both the separation of the classes and the position of the elite class.<sup>72</sup> Dutch society was also governed by ideas of correct and proper behaviour and this was exemplified in the art.<sup>73</sup> Vanhaelan demonstrates the difficulty in defining a methodology for print scholarship by showing how various social groups appropriated and manipulated traditional themes to voice their message. She suggests that we can learn much through an analysis of the prints by starting with the identification of traditional characters and themes and exploring how these have been used and adapted to contemporary purposes.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Angela Vanhaelan, *Comic Print and Theatre in Early Modern Amsterdam Gender, Childhood and the City* (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003), pp. 11-15.

<sup>72</sup> Vanhaelan, *Comic Print and Theatre*, p. 15; Wayne Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 259.

<sup>73</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, p. 11.

<sup>74</sup> Vanhaelan, *Comic Print and Theatre*, p. 14. Starting with an identification of the themes and characters is appropriate; however, in using this as a comparative methodology we should remain aware of

Works that focus on genre prints, such as de Jongh's *Mirror of Everyday Life*, provide helpful information regarding the Dutch art market and the use of recurrent moralizing themes. This work provided background information regarding the wide range of outlets for selling or obtaining graphic prints, such as shops and stalls that sold books and prints, fairs, auctions. More importantly, it suggests the entertainment value inherent in the process of purchasing prints, as buyers could go to an outlet that sold prints and "indulge in their passion for 'print shifting'".<sup>75</sup> There was also a well-established international circuit where prints could be obtained via agents.<sup>76</sup>

De Jongh disagrees with the suggestion that prints should be read differently than paintings, arguing that if the images were displayed together, we cannot expect that the contemporary viewer looked at either any differently.<sup>77</sup> Genre works were expected to be witty and to contain some sort of moralizing message. They were deceptively simple as they appear to give a realistic portrayal of their subject.<sup>78</sup> However, as I have noted already, this is where it is important to differentiate between different types of graphic print. Certainly prints that were representative of the same content as painted genre scenes, such as peasants fighting, would not have been produced or read in the same way as graphic satirical prints. Works of graphic satire could certainly contain much of the symbolism of genre prints, and would usually contain elements of humour; but they would be different in that the subject of genre prints is usually very clearly stated in a visual sense while graphic satire can be more subtle and is usually more complicated. What we need to be aware of is the difference between moralizing genre

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Nicholson's theory regarding assuming a linear model of development from the earliest point and moving forward. It may be that Dutch prints do exhibit a linear development; if so, this would have to be another consideration in a cross-cultural examination of the printed genre.

<sup>75</sup> Eddy de Jongh and Ger. Luijten, *Mirror of Everyday Life, Genre prints in the Netherlands 1550 – 1700* (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1997), p. 19.

<sup>76</sup> de Jongh and Luijten, *Mirror of Everyday Life*, p. 19.

<sup>77</sup> de Jongh and Luijten, *Mirror of Everyday Life*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>78</sup> de Jongh and Luijten, *Mirror of Everyday Life*, p. 11.

work, prints that illustrated satirical literature and graphic satirical prints that were created to directly comment on something. The prints being discussed in this thesis are clearly intended to be satirical and would seem to be making a comment on key issues in contemporary society.

It must be acknowledged that Heemskerck III would have faced a struggle marketing his work in the early eighteenth century. There was a significant decrease in the demand for low genre painting, almost certainly due to the various discourses on art theory and connoisseurship that were circulating at that time. I contend that it is obvious that Heemskerck III did not see contemporary debates that reflected theories and ideas, such as those of de Lairese, in a positive light and that this is reflected in the prints, in which he satirizes both by depicting 'modern' subjects in a frame that referred to concepts of history painting and by borrowing classical themes that exemplified such theories. In doing so, he is working to negotiate a place in the art market through the establishment of methods of exchange with the consumer.

This chapter concludes with a summary list of some of the general references utilized in this thesis followed by a brief survey of the relevant literature on the Heemskercks as a family of artists, in order to establish the state of the field in general, before moving on to a consideration of some of the more complicated issues discussed here.

### **General References**

Antony Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain, 1603-1689*. (London: British Museum Press, 1998), provided relevant general information on prints in this period. A number of works provided background information on the social history of the period including:

Maureen Waller, *1700: Scenes from London Life* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2000), Roy Porter, *London, a Social History* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), and Margaret R. Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender and the Family in England, 1680-1780* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1996). In particular Lee Davison, et al., 'The Reactive State: English Governance and Society, 1689-1750', *Stilling the Grumbling Hive, The Response to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1689 – 1750*, ed. L. Davison, T. Hitchcock, T. Keirn, and R. Shoemaker (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. xi-liv., provided confirmation and discussion of the contemporary discourses occurring among the urban middle classes. That such debate was occurring around social issues of "care for the poor, the suppression of vice, and the regulation of trade and industry" supports the suggestion that a broader examination of the topics discussed would indicate that these also included a participation in the discourses around the theories of art.<sup>79</sup> Ronald Paulson's works on Hogarth, *Hogarth, Volume 1, The "Modern Moral Subject", 1697-1732* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1991) and *Hogarth, Volume 2, High Art and Low, 1732-1750* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1992), provide information that is also relevant to a discussion of Heemskerck III in terms of references to individuals such as de Lairese, Richardson and Thornhill, with regards to the contemporary issues and institutions such as St. Martin's Lane Academy that would have been important and in terms of Hogarth's prints. Additionally, while much of John Brewer's *The Pleasures of the Imagination, English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 1997) refers to the later eighteenth century, there are discussions around

<sup>79</sup> Lee Davison, et al., 'The Reactive State: English Governance and Society, 1689-1750', *Stilling the Grumbling Hive, The Response to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1689 – 1750*, ed. L. Davison, T. Hitchcock, T. Keirn, and R. Shoemaker (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. xi-liv. (p. xv).

ideas of the connoisseur, taste in the arts, music and theatre that are relevant to the period of the Heemskerck III prints.

### **Previous Scholarship on the Heemskercks**

The following studies have provided general assistance in the course of my research on the Heemskercks as a family of painters: Bainbrigg Buckeridge, *An Essay towards an English School of Painting* (London, Cornmarket Press Ltd.: 1969), which provides the only contemporary biographical information on Heemskerck II and III; Elizabeth Einberg and Judy Egerton, *The Age of Hogarth: British Painters Born 1675-1709* (London: Tate Gallery, 1988) is a written source that acknowledges Heemskerck III; British Library, 128 Sales Catalogues, Reference 1402.g.1. (1689-1692), provided much information regarding the sales of Heemskerck family work in this period.

Outside of the few very brief references in the studies cited above, the scholarship on the Heemskerck family to date is limited to four key articles. Robert Raines' article, 'Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck and the English Taste for Genre', *The Walpole Society*, 53, (1987), pp. 119-142; provides a discussion of the artist as a producer of genre images. The other three address a Quaker image, a genre that Heemskerck II is credited with having created. They are, by William Hull, 'Egbert van Heemskerck's "Quaker Meetings"', *Bulletin of the Friends' Historical Association* xxvii (1938), pp. 17-33; Fritz Saxl, 'The Quakers' Meeting', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* vi (1943), pp. 214-216; and particularly Harry Mount, 'Egbert Van Heemskerck's Quaker Meetings Revisited', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Volume 56, (1993), pp. 209-228. These articles are relevant not only for the information on the Heemskercks they provide, but specifically because they discuss the

question of whether the Quaker images were intended to be satirical.<sup>80</sup> This is important to an examination of Heemskerck III because it provides insight into the artistic heritage in which he would have been raised. The articles also discuss significant issues such as levels of realism in graphic media.

A repeated emphasis throughout these articles is the crossing of English and Dutch cultural traditions. Robert Raines sees genre as not gaining real popularity with the English consumer until the middle of the eighteenth century and suggests that the popularity of Heemskerck II's work in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in England was an anomaly.<sup>81</sup> His article provides some of the known biography, discusses the Quaker and other genre images and patrons and collectors known to have owned Heemskerck II's work.<sup>82</sup> While he acknowledges that Heemskerck II would have been aware of the satire, he suggests that the Quaker images are based in a realistic portrayal of real individuals. Raines work implies a definite bias against Dutch, non-English, genre artists and it is necessary to utilize the points of his article with this in mind. In his article, Raines suggests that although there was at least one exception in which satire was not clearly depicted, Heemskerck II's intent in his known prints was clearly to satirize.<sup>83</sup> William Hull's article provides some generally known biographical material and addresses the problem of distinguishing the work of the Heemskercks.<sup>84</sup> He analyzes a number of extant Quaker paintings and engravings,

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<sup>80</sup> It is important to note that at the time these articles were written, there was no consensus with regards to the number of members of the family, and the articles group them generically. I have indicated Heemskerck II in these cases simply to differentiate from Heemskerck III.

<sup>81</sup> Robert Raines, 'Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck and the English Taste for Genre', *The Walpole Society*, Volume 53, (1987), 119-142., (p 131).

<sup>82</sup> Raines, 'Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck', pp. 127-129. Raines discusses the possibility of a connection between Heemskerck, Hogarth and Thornhill. See also note 56 above.

<sup>83</sup> Raines, 'Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck', p.125. Raines indicates that Heemskerck's images also addressed Catholicism.

<sup>84</sup> William Hull, 'Egbert van Heemskerck's "Quaker Meetings"', *Bulletin of the Friends' Historical Association*, xxvii, (1938), 17-33, (p. 18)

making suggestions as to whom the figures might be; and he discusses some of the recurring attributes and themes within the images, and discusses the engravers. While he suggests there is some element of caricature in these images, Hull stops short of implying that these works were created with satirical intent and sees them as realistic representations of Quakers.

A telling accompaniment to this article are some notes and questions posed by John L. Nickalls, Librarian from Friends House, London, who is quite certain that, given an overview of the types of images Heemskerck is known for, these images were certainly meant to inspire humour, and that they should therefore not be taken as accurate representations of actual Quaker meetings.<sup>85</sup> Saxl, on the other hand, believes that Heemskerck II was working in the tradition of Rembrandt, and that the images are mostly sympathetic and unbiased representations of the Quakers.<sup>86</sup> He sees the images as thoughtful and dignified, showing a genuine understanding of this new religion while at the same time suggesting “a certain criticism of its abuse”.<sup>87</sup> He also suggests that the realism of the images was partly due to the tradition of the realism inherent in Dutch art Heemskerck II learned from his master Pieter de Grebber, who was a student of Adrian Brouwer.<sup>88</sup> Any distortion of facial features and expressions should be attributed to a misinterpretation by the engraver, who did not understand Heemskerck II’s attempts to portray the individuals in the act of ‘seeing the light’.<sup>89</sup> In my view, Mount successfully

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<sup>85</sup> Hull, ‘Egbert van Heemskerck’s “Quaker Meetings”’, pp. 32-33, In John L. Nickalls’ addendum to this article he concludes that the pictures were done, like plays and literature of the time, for those who would find “Quakers a good subject for jest” and feels the images are not accurate representations of their meetings.

<sup>86</sup> Fritz Saxl, “The Quakers’ Meeting”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Volume vi, (1943), pp. 214-216, (p.215).

<sup>87</sup> Saxl, ‘The Quakers’ Meeting’, pp. 215-216. Saxl also suggests Heemskerck has portrayed a realistic image of listeners at the meetings who were varied, enthusiastic, peasants, sober, some revoltingly ugly and warns the viewer not to judge rashly.

<sup>88</sup> Saxl, ‘The Quakers’ Meeting’, p. 214.

<sup>89</sup> Saxl, ‘The Quakers’ Meeting’, p.216.

argues that Heemskerck II's intention from the start was to create humorous and satirical images of the Quakers. He provides background information on the Quakers, and contemporary social issues, as well as literary examples in support of his argument.<sup>90</sup> Mount also suggests that Heemskerck II, well-versed in the Dutch tradition of anti-Catholic satire, is continuing in that tradition but addressing the English market through the substitution of Quaker content. Accusations of hypocrisy were an important part of the literary satire, particularly sexual hypocrisy, and anti-Quaker satire became "as much an exercise in comic ingenuity and titillation as a weapon to be used against a dangerous sect."<sup>91</sup> Mount also notes that Heemskerck II was known for his satirical portrayal of other religious groups, such as Catholic figures, so Quakers would therefore be an acceptable subject. The only difference is that the humour in his anti-Catholic images was much more apparent than the humour in the Quaker images.<sup>92</sup>

Additionally, although Mount does not believe that Heemskerck II's purpose was to record Quaker meetings accurately, he does feel that the images are accurate in a number of respects. He contends, however, that one of the reasons that Heemskerck II painted both types of images in the same way was because there was no existing tradition for Quaker scenes. To inspire humour, Heemskerck II returned to a formula that had previously proven successful, that of depicting the socially low.<sup>93</sup> He believes that this did not happen in his other types of paintings because Heemskerck II saw no need to change a successful formula. In giving a detailed and accurate depiction of the

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<sup>90</sup> Harry Mount, 'Egbert Van Heemskerck's Quaker Meetings Revisited', (*Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 1993), pp. 209-228, (p. 217). Mount notes literary satires with such titles as *The Quaker and his Maid* and *The Secret Sinners*.

<sup>91</sup> Mount, 'Egbert Van Heemskerck's Quaker Meetings Revisited', pp. 218-219. Mount suggests that such things as extravagant gestures and upturned eyes, had meanings based in the written works. He also notes that it was the habit of prostitutes to dress up as Quakers and suggests if Laroon portrayed a well-known prostitute in Quaker dress in one of his paintings, Heemskerck may also have done so.

<sup>92</sup> Mount, 'Egbert Van Heemskerck's Quaker Meetings Revisited', p. 224.

<sup>93</sup> Mount, 'Egbert Van Heemskerck's Quaker Meetings Revisited', pp. 222- 223, 227.

Quakers, Heemskerck II was “thus sharpening his satire, taking a step towards the still more pointed references to specific locations and individuals which would later be made by Hogarth. As a result, his images of Quaker Meetings lack the obvious exaggerations and calumnies seen in contemporary anti-Catholic satire; the sort of distortions, in other words, which would have signaled his satirical intentions clearly to modern observers.”<sup>94</sup> While Heemskerck II did not see the need to expand and change his economically successful style, the changes to the market in Heemskerck III’s lifetime required him to adjust with it.

These arguments regarding the Quaker images demonstrate his father’s use of invention and satire was a precedent for Heemskerck III. In Chapter Five, I will suggest that Heemskerck II’s form of satire was more closely related to genre through its focus on the individual, while Heemskerck III’s satire also moved away from genre in addressing broader issues around society and the status of the artist. In this he demonstrates not only a different kind of engagement with the market but also a significant shift in his view of the status of the artist.

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<sup>94</sup> Mount, ‘Egbert Van Heemskerck’s Quaker Meetings Revisited’, p. 227.

### Chapter Four: Biography and the Heemskercks

There is limited biographical information regarding the Heemskerck family; however, if taken in combination with information drawn from a number of other sources, it is sufficient to construct a general background that contains some relevant details for a discussion of Heemskerck III. In my view, a biography, even if fragmentary, is also essential to provide a clear discussion and analysis of the prints.

A review of the data found in a set of auction catalogues in the collection of the British Library suggests that there were at least two and possibly three Heemskercks working in London in the late seventeenth century and that their output was both prolific and popular.<sup>1</sup> There has been some suggestion of a family workshop, and given the volume of work available in the market, as suggested by the number of works cited in the auction catalogues, along with issues of consistency and attribution of the work, this seems a reasonable possibility.<sup>2</sup> Contemporary biographical information of the family is limited to the short account of Bainbrigg Buckeridge:

Was born at Haerlem, and disciple of de Grebber. He became very eminent for Painting drolls after the manner of Brawer. His gross and comical genius succeeded for a long while among us. In most of his conversations, as he called them, you may see in the picture, and read the manners of the man at the same time: but to speak of his Painting part, a thing chiefly aimed at in this short account, there is little fault to be found with it unless sometimes with the foulness of the colouring. His drunken drolls, his wakes, his quakers-meetings, and some lewd pieces, have been in vogue among the waggish collectors, and the lower rank of virtuosi. He went in this kind a great way, but after all fell far short of Brawer, Teniers and the rest of his noble fore-runners, in the study of sots paradise. He often introduced his own picture among his drolls by means of a looking-glass he had upon his pallet. He was a man of humour, and for that valued by the late earl of Rochester, for whom he painted several pieces. He died in London about two years ago, leaving behind him a son whom he had instructed in his way.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> British Library, 1402.g.1, (1689-1692).

<sup>2</sup> Raines, Notes on Egbert van Heemskerck, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> Bainbrigg Buckeridge, *An Essay towards an English School of Painting (1706)* (London, Cornmarket Press Ltd.: 1969), pp. 383.

While Buckeridge's 1706 account gives no birth date for the artist in this biography, it can be deduced from the date of the account that the Heemskerck he is referring to died in 1704, leaving behind a son who was an artist.

References found in secondary literature are limited and most provide no further information than a repetition of the account provided by Buckeridge. Additionally, piecing together the available information regarding the family is complicated by the fact that successive generations shared the same name. While various references attribute works to 'Old Heemskerck', 'Heemskerck', and 'Young Heemskerck', there is no way to confirm consistency in the use of these. Even towards the end of the eighteenth century, some fifty years after the death in 1744 of 'Young' Heemskerck, one biographer notes that almost nothing is known of the details of the artist's life or training.<sup>4</sup>

Some sources quote only certain sections of Buckeridge's biography and use these in a derogatory way. Possibly the most often-quoted line is 'His drunken drolls, his wakes, his quakers-meetings, and some lewd pieces, have been in vogue among the waggish collectors, and the lower rank of virtuosi'.<sup>5</sup> However, if Buckeridge's account is read a whole, it can be seen as giving a much more positive and sympathetic account of the artist than this one sentence implies. Although the work may fall short of that of some of the more notable Dutch painters, the general opinion is that he is moderately well thought of, and that with regards to his painting, 'there is little fault to be found

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<sup>4</sup> Matthew Pilkington, *Pilkington, Matthew, The gentleman's and connoisseur's dictionary of painters. Containing a complete collection, and account, of the most distinguished artists, who have flourished in the art of painting, ... To which are added, two catalogues; ... By the Rev. M. Pilkington, ... London, 1770.* <http://galenet.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/servlet/ECCO>  
Gale Document number CW106458476, pp. 282-283, [November 18, 2007].

<sup>5</sup> Buckeridge, *An Essay towards an English School of Painting*, p. 383.

with it' and that 'his comical genius succeeded for a long while among us.'<sup>6</sup> The varied uses of the Buckeridge biography offer an example of how important it is to critically consider existing scholarly research.

Unfortunately, as a family of Dutch genre artists catering primarily to the middle class market, it seems that the Heemskercks were victims of English historians' notable antipathy to foreign artists. Until recently, most scholarly accounts continued to follow the pattern of two Heemskercks: a father born in Haarlem in 1634 who died in London in 1704; and an eponymous son, of unknown date of birth, who died in 1744.<sup>7</sup> Mount's research suggests the more likely possibility of three Heemskercks: the main Heemskerck, subject of Buckeridge's biography, born in 1634; his father of unknown dates; and, finally, his son who died in 1744.<sup>8</sup> A Dutch biography of 1925 records the 1669 marriage of the Heemskerck b. 1634.<sup>9</sup> This would suggest that the Heemskerck who died in 1744 was born in the 1670s.<sup>10</sup> An individual born in the 1670s would not have been contributing to the output of the workshop at that time and yet a comparison of paintings known to have been produced in the 1670s shows a clear difference in style of work, which Mount concludes is indicative of two active painters, presumably Heemskerck I and II.

Biographical information also notes that the full name of the Heemskerck born in 1634 was Egbert 'Jasperz' van Heemskerck, or son of Jasperz, while his son was simply

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<sup>6</sup> Buckeridge, *An Essay towards an English School of Painting*, p. 383.

<sup>7</sup> Einberg and Egerton, *The Age of Hogarth*, pp.237-238. The authors note the Tate's re-attribution of a work previously given to Hogarth to "Egbert van Heemskerck III". This is the first documentation I have seen of an attribution to a Heemskerck III. They also indicate that all three Heemskercks were eponymous; an idea which has been disputed by scholars such as Mount.

<sup>8</sup> Mount, *Egbert Van Heemskerck's Quaker Meetings Revisited*, pp. 210-211 and particularly footnote 12.

<sup>9</sup> Raines, *Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck*, p. 119.

<sup>10</sup> Raines, *Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck*, p. 121 and p. 132 endnote 12. Raines found no records of marriages or christenings in England.

Egbert van Heemskerck which would imply the existence of a father, ‘Old Heemskerck’, with the name Jasperz.<sup>11</sup> ‘Old Heemskerck’ would have been born c. 1610 or earlier, and would have been a near contemporary of artists such as Teniers, Brouwer, and van Ostade.<sup>12</sup> Also supportive of the notion of three Heemskercks are references that note the use of anthropomorphic figures in the work of ‘Young’ Heemskerck, such as the prints that are the subject of this thesis.<sup>13</sup> Although the prints are not dated, the subject matter and style of dress depicted suggests they were created in the eighteenth century, after the death of both earlier Heemskercks. Further evidence of the activity of the artist who died in 1744 is a pamphlet of satirical poetry and art published in 1734 entitled *Nothing Irregular in Nature; or, deformity a mere fancy* written and illustrated by E. Hemskirk.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, information from auction catalogues in the collection of the British Library from 1689-92 supports the notion of three artists, with references mostly to ‘Old Heemskerck’ and ‘Heemskerck’ but with several attributions to ‘Young Heemskerck’. There is no conclusive evidence that these attributions were made with any consistency, and it may be that the work by ‘Heemskerck’ simply could not be attributed absolutely to either the ‘Old’ or the ‘Young’ artist. However, as the references occur within the same catalogue, it seems reasonable to accept that there was some advantage in making a differentiation between the artists.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Mount, Egbert Van Heemskerck’s Quaker Meetings Revisited, pp. 210-211 footnote 12.

<sup>12</sup> Heemskerck is not an uncommon name and I have found references to a poet, Johan van Heemskerck, born 1597. While Heemskerck is a common name, it is possible that he was related to the family, perhaps a brother of Jasperz. Johan van Heemskerck is also an elusive figure and relevant information has not been easily obtainable.

<sup>13</sup> Raines, Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck, p. 121.

<sup>14</sup> Presumably Heemskerck III – the title page of the pamphlet by the printer references E. Hemskirk, however the first illustrated plate in the book references E. Heemskerck.

<sup>15</sup> BL 1402.g.1.248 and BL 1402.g.1.332.

Raines quotes J. T. Smith in reference to artists whose work has been confused with that of Hogarth, as stating that these include “that drunken pot-house painter, the younger Hemskirk, who was a singer at Sadler’s Wells”.<sup>16</sup> He further indicates that there is no record of a Hemskirk at Sadler’s Wells but that an individual of this name was employed as an “actor, dancer and singer at the theatres in Goodman’s Fields from 1740-42 and at Lincoln’s Inn Fields until 1743”.<sup>17</sup> In response to this, Mount counters that, as the individual who died in 1744 was said to have been working on the stage at that time, it would be unlikely that he was one of the individuals actively painting and contributing to the workshop output in the 1680s.<sup>18</sup> As Mount indicates, no one hypothesis is better than the other without further substantive evidence.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, as noted above, the Tate Gallery has reattributed a work, *The Doctor’s Visit*, originally cited as a work of Hogarth’s, to Egbert van Heemskerck III, c. 1725.

Einberg and Egerton give the dates for three Heemskercks; Heemskerck I as (1610-1680); Heemskerck II (1634/35-1704); and Heemskerck III as active (1700-1744).<sup>20</sup> From the available information, it seems likely that we can be reasonably sure that Heemskerck II was the principal artist of the London workshop and was the individual with dates of 1634-1704, whose son; Heemskerck III was also a painter, trained in his father’s fashion, with dates of c. 1670s-1744. Heemskerck II was one of a number of Dutch artists who made their way to England in the 1670s to participate in the rapidly expanding London art market of the late seventeenth century. Here he raised a son who participated in the family workshop. It is possible that Heemskerck I came to

<sup>16</sup> Raines, Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck, p. 121.

<sup>17</sup> Raines, Notes on Egbert Van Heemskerck, p. 121.

<sup>18</sup> Mount, Egbert Van Heemskerck’s Quaker Meetings Revisited, pp. 210-211 footnote 12. It is also possible that the reference to an actor refers to a fourth Heemskerck, the son of Heemskerck III, or even that the actor ‘Hemskirk’ was unrelated to the family of artists.

<sup>19</sup> Mount, Egbert Van Heemskerck’s Quaker Meetings Revisited, pp. 210-211 footnote 12.

<sup>20</sup> Einberg and Egerton, *The Age of Hogarth*, pp.237-238.

London with his son Heemskerck II in the 1670s but either died soon after that or returned to Holland.<sup>21</sup>

The Heemskerck workshop specialized in low genre images ‘in the Dutch taste’ and made a living in the midst of an English market that presumably rated Dutch art at a lower value than art of other countries. Mount discusses the appeal of low Dutch genre in England in his dissertation, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Paintings in England, 1695-1829*. Low genre works were images portraying peasant or lower class figures in situations that would be considered comical by the consumer. The figures generally had ugly features and were often portrayed in such actions as urinating or vomiting, and the prints often included sexual or lewd subjects.<sup>22</sup> Appendix 1 provides a list of the lot descriptions of works attributed to Heemskerck from the 1689-1692 sales catalogues in the collection of the British Library. The subjects covered by the Heemskerck workshop were many and varied, encompassing everything from biblical images to a sick man making a will.

By far the largest number represented is drolls, followed by heads, but also highly represented are images of conversations, drunks, fights, tavern, school and court scenes, peasants drinking, smoking or playing cards, quack doctors, lewd works and works satirizing religious themes.<sup>23</sup> The vast variety of subject matter these titles represent can for the most part be categorized as genre. The term ‘genre’ did not exist in

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<sup>21</sup> For the purposes of this thesis reference will be made to three Heemskercks; the subject of the thesis, Heemskerck III (Young Heemskerck) c. 1670-1744; his father, Heemskerck II (Heemskerck), 1634/5-1704; and his grandfather, Heemskerck I (Old Heemskerck), c. 1610-1680.

<sup>22</sup> Mount. *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting*, pp. 28-30.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Heads’ are not necessarily portraits as these were most likely droll faces. The categorization of the images is based on my allocation by title and was done solely to provide statistical information for the purposes of this thesis. Certainly many of the images could just as easily have been placed under the category of droll. Approximately 100 of these images are not categorized, and are referred to as ‘a fine piece by Hemskirk’ or ‘an original by Old Hemskirk’. The works included in these auctions included paintings as well as prints. Further analysis of the titles, attributions, sales locations along with other contemporaneous information is required to determine if this would provide additional information on the workshop and practices of the artists and the contemporary market and engravers.

the seventeenth century and, following contemporary practice, the works were referred to by a description of their subject matter. Paintings were often reproduced as prints and the ‘conversations’ may have been one of the sources of inspiration for Hogarth’s later conversation pieces.

Heemskerck II is perhaps most importantly known for his invention of a genre depicting scenes of the Quakers and their meetings and these were produced as satirical prints. There is evidence that other artists copied the style of the workshop as well as the paintings.<sup>24</sup> An overall analysis of the 128 auction catalogues covering the period 1689 -1692 from the British Library gives evidence of how popular the work of the Heemskerck family was. Low genre was popular with elite as well as middle-class consumers and Heemskerck works were in collections of individuals such as John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester; Thomas Blathwayt, politician; Adriaen Beverland, architect; Henry Bell, and the actor William Cartwright.<sup>25</sup>

Mount tells us that approximately 11% of the almost 36,000 pictures listed in the catalogues were genre subjects. Of these, there were 1700 attributed genre paintings; 1152 (68%) were by artists living in England, 506 (30%) were by Netherlands painters not known to have come to England and 42 were from other countries. Of the total paintings, more works were given to Heemskerck than any other, 2.47% of the total.<sup>26</sup> As Mount has pointed out, regardless of whether some of these items were repeats or ‘after Heemskerck’ rather than being definitively painted by the artist, the sales numbers indicate both the productivity of the workshop as well as the popularity of the work.<sup>27</sup> If

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<sup>24</sup> Mount, Egbert Van Heemskerck’s Quaker Meetings Revisited, p. 211. This is also supported by the attributions in a number of the sales catalogues (BL 1402.g.1) identifying the work as “after Heemskerck”.

<sup>25</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting*, p. 26.

<sup>26</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting*, p. 20.

<sup>27</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting*, pp. 20-21.

the work had not been popular with the market, it would not have continued to appear in the auctions.<sup>28</sup>

In their discussion of the work at the Tate now attributed to Heemskerck III, “The Doctor’s Visit”, Einberg and Egerton note the poor execution and very weak design of the painting, which is suggestive of “a painter who could imitate details, but was unable to reorganize them into a convincing whole. One could thus suppose that the younger Heemskerck was a useful helper in the family studio, but failed to develop beyond the imitative level after his father’s death in 1704.”<sup>29</sup> However, while an assessment of one painting such as this may suggest limited skills as a painter, this statement should not be taken to indicate the overall skills or abilities of the artist or that there was no market for his work.<sup>30</sup> In particular, the evidence of the prints under discussion indicates that not only was he aware of the discourse regarding the theories of the production of art and the connoisseur that were occurring at this time in and around the contemporary art market but that he was an active participant in this exchange. The form of this participation will be discussed through an examination of the graphic satirical prints that follows in the next chapter.

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<sup>28</sup> An analysis of the titles also gives us a good idea of the type of genre that was being produced at the time and is some indication of the desires of the market. How many of the paintings were reproduced as prints has not been calculated, but if possible, such an analysis would give a better idea of whether certain subjects were more highly represented and if the images were humorous or satirical or both. It is interesting that given this seemingly prolific output and importance in the contemporary art market, that we have so little personal information about the artists themselves, particularly with regards to the prolific Heemskerck II. However it could be suggested that the lack of information regarding Heemskerck III is perhaps indicative of the effects that the changes in the market had on his profession.

<sup>29</sup> Einberg and Egerton, *The Age of Hogarth*, p. 238.

<sup>30</sup> While it is unlikely, the possibility that the Tate work is itself a copy and not by Heemskerck III might be a consideration given the popularity of the family’s work, the suggestion of a workshop as well as issues of copying and attribution.

### Chapter Five: Visualizing Meaning and Context in Heemskerck III's Prints

It has been suggested above that, in terms of the print genre, an analysis of the work itself can reveal much about the artist's intended meaning. The set of eight graphic satirical prints that are the focus of this thesis depict scenes with themes taken from contemporary English social culture: a *Picture Auction*; a *Brothel Scene*; a *Dissection* (Quack Physician); a *Barber Shop*; a *Gin Shop*; a *School*; *Singers*; and a *Militia Company*, (Figures 1 – 8).<sup>1</sup> Although it is unknown whether these prints were created specifically as a series, the consistent approach taken in terms of design, style and subject matter create an overall visual and thematic similarity that suggests the intention of a set of related images. These images illustrate themes that represent the types of common, modern social issues, which, I argue, would have been the concern and experience of eighteenth-century society from a range of social classes. They are scenes of everyday life in London and reflect a range of issues from gin consumption and health concerns, to prostitution and poverty.

Each image is approximately 45 cm high by 37 cm wide and includes a rhyming satirical inscription or 'caption' related to the actions illustrated by the scene.

Importantly, while these highly detailed works include many elements reflective of traditional Dutch genre art and a wealth of hidden meaning, they show clear differences from the low genre style typically attributed to the work of the Heemskercks.<sup>2</sup>

Traditional low genre images were parodies of the comical actions of grotesque and disgusting figures set in a typical, recognizable scene type. In these prints, however, it is the issue itself that becomes the subject and, significantly, Heemskerck III has

<sup>1</sup> All images, Figures 1 – 10, are contained in Appendix II of this thesis.

<sup>2</sup> The prints are all highly detailed and rich in the use of traditional Dutch symbols which add to the layers of meaning. Emblems such as the birdcage, an owl with glasses, the turbaned surgeon, coils of meat hanging from the ceiling are all well known in Dutch art and the viewer is encouraged to decipher meaning from these.

included in his depiction of these modern themes, visual references to the formal elements that were being promoted as the highest form of art, that of history painting. In rising above the genre of low humour and utilizing the medium of satire, these prints make a comment on some of society's most important contemporary debates and are therefore representative of both the artist's and the market's participation in these debates. However, the prime importance of these prints lies in the fact that, as the work of a little known Anglo-Dutch artist, they are the visual representation of a cross-cultural voice that participated through the art market in the contemporary debates about social issues - such as ideas of politeness - that inherently included discussion around the idea of the connoisseur and the establishment of an English theory of art.

While each of these complex images deserves to be discussed separately, there is not sufficient room in this thesis to provide more than an introduction to the prints and some of the major points I have so far uncovered. I will begin with a general discussion addressing points which are consistent within all the prints, such as the use of anthropomorphic figures; elements of the cross-cultural voice of the artist; contemporary art theory and the referential visual acknowledgement of the formal elements of history painting in illustrating themes of modern social issues; as well as how these images work through a satirical mode in creating a variety of messages that address the changing needs of the early eighteenth-century London art market. I will then provide a short visual description for each of the prints other than the *Picture Auction* (Figure 1) and the *Brothel Scene*, (Figure 2), for which I will provide more detailed analyses.

Overall, it must be said that the prints are fun: they are engaging, entertaining and humorous. They are interesting because they exhibit a great amount of realistic visual detail taking place in a variety of settings. The sense of realism is aided by the

strong lighting, which also allows for a mix of light and shadow that creates volume and depth. Dutch art is known for its implied sense of realism and the symbolism it contains, ideas which in themselves are mutually contradictory. Early art historical scholarship focused on the iconographical method of reading Dutch works with little regard for the style or form of the individual works. Subsequent scholars suggested that style was more relevant than iconography for an accurate reading of the intended message and that what was really important was reading how the artist implied the idea of reality. However, more recent scholarship is beginning to explore and understand the very complex relationship that Dutch art had with contemporary audiences and scholars are becoming more aware of the fact that some combination of both approaches is necessary in order to fully appreciate how the art was related to society and science of the time.<sup>3</sup> This is true of the Heemskerck III prints, which use both style and content to create satire that simultaneously works on a number of different levels.

The prints do not appear to be directed at or to criticize any one sector of society and represent figures from a mixture of classes. They entertain through showing, not telling, and in that are similar to the medium of theatre. Indeed with an open foreground that invites the viewer in, the lighting and the sense of depth created in the settings, these prints are very suggestive of illustrations of scenes from plays. They each contain numerous figures engaged in a variety of actions and, while there is a main focal point for each image, the viewer's eye is then drawn throughout the image in response to the figures taking part in the narrative. The written inscriptions are humorous and correspond with the images. The prints can be read on the surface simply as comic representations of contemporary social issues which would be recognizable by all, and

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<sup>3</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, p. 6.

yet they demand a certain level of engagement with the viewer in recognizing satire and deciphering layers of meaning. They are smart and witty and full of information.

Possibly the first thing one notices about these prints is that almost all the figures are anthropomorphic representations of humans with the heads of apes, cats, lions, elephants, bulls, asses, and foxes.<sup>4</sup> They are dressed and portrayed as humans; the males generally depicted as apes and the females as cats. Most figures wear shoes, other than in the *School* scene (Fig. 6) where the bare feet of the young boys and girls are all monkey and cat's paws respectively. Hands are for the most part depicted as human hands and the figures are all dressed in contemporary attire. The facial features are, in some instances, somewhat crudely drawn, yet show great detail with whiskers, eyebrows and lashes and a strong delineation of features through the use of shadow and light. The humanized proportions of the figures, however, give a sense of realism to the scenes. Significantly, while Heemskerck III is creating what on the surface appears to be humorous images of animals in contemporary social situations, he is at the same time moving away from the low genre practice of portraying the 'disgusting and deformed' and through the use of these humorous though generic figures, he is satirizing the ideas of politeness that suggested that appropriately depicted figures would demonstrate an element of decorum in the classical style. Richardson in particular, as a portraitist, promoted the cause of the serious portrait artist as he often "exhorts portrait painters to 'raise and improve' their subjects following the example set by artists like Van Dyck and recommends 'grace and greatness' as one of the most important aspects of painting".<sup>5</sup> Theorists were suggesting that artists should not draw directly from nature, rather that nature should be improved and only the perfected and beautiful should be

<sup>4</sup> The only image with human headed figures is the Picture Auction print (Fig. 1), and this is limited to two figures.

<sup>5</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson: Art Theorist of the English Enlightenment*, 61.

portrayed. Here Heemskerck III has created “deformity, but deformity which proclaimed itself as artificial, and thus confirmed that nature must be distorted to be funny”.<sup>6</sup>

The decision to use anthropomorphic figures instead of humans is an interesting one. It could be that this was intended to disguise the identity of the individuals being portrayed; although this doesn't seem to fit with the generic subject matter of most of the prints.<sup>7</sup> Due to the use of such figures, however, it is possible to see similarities in characters between the prints. For example, other than the eye-glasses he is wearing, the figure to the left of the table in the *Dissection*, (Figure 3) is very similar to the figure reading the newspaper in the *Barber Shop*, (Figure 4). A more obvious example is the figure on the top of the gin vat in the *Gin Shop*, (Figure 5) who is almost identical to the figure on the top of the ladder in the *Singers*, (Figure 7). It is unclear whether this was deliberate, as it may simply be due to the generic nature of the figures. The detail and expression of the faces suggests that Heemskerck III had the skills necessary to accurately draw human features had he so wanted. That his prints were meant to be humorous, we can see not only from the use of the anthropomorphic figures, but from the actions and expressions of these figures. They are shown with mouths agape, grinning, gesticulating, talking, shouting, and singing. The actions and implied narratives they are engaging in are humorous. Movement is implied through the variety

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<sup>6</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting in England*, p 64. Again, Mount is referring to Hogarth, but the concept is certainly applicable to Heemskerck III's prints.

<sup>7</sup> He may also have done this in order to emphasize the generic nature and message of the images. See also Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800*. (Essex, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2001), p. 25. Another reason may be seen in Carter's discussion of Addison and Steele's aims for *The Spectator*, “Participants in this society, freed from the formalities and constraints inherent in earlier definitions of refinement, were able to practice and perfect an important Whig and broader enlightenment maxim, namely mankind's natural propensity for company. With its moral validation of urban sociability and focused discussion of the means for personal interaction, politeness offered the most complete opportunity for individuals to fulfil Addison's understanding of man as a ‘Sociable Animal’”. This is an interesting concept and one that should be further researched.

and number of actions taking place simultaneously within the scenes. Often the figures raise an eyebrow and meet the gaze of the viewer as if in the sharing of a joke and this along with the theatrical feeling of the scenes invites the viewer in and encourages their engagement with the characters.

Print culture has strong historical ties with oral history and in particular with theatre performance.<sup>8</sup> Oral history and theatre are populated with the same characters and themes that we see later illustrated in print culture. The visual references in the Heemskerck III prints that suggest the stage associate these prints with illustrations of plays, and work within the prints to establish an interaction between the viewer and the image. Most of the Heemskerck III prints exhibit strong lighting and sharp chiaroscuro with a deep foreground that leads the viewer into the scene.<sup>9</sup> This gives the works a theatrical effect that engages with the viewer by providing a sense of entertainment. The prints are highly detailed and well-thought-out and emphasize a grandeur and importance of their subjects, which are presented in a format that refers to the formal elements of history painting; however, the execution of the work is in contradiction to this. The figures have not been improved or perfected, nor are they illustrating in a classicizing style, and thus they do not imply the sense of decorum that would be considered appropriate in a history painting. They are meant to entertain but at the same time to provide a message that has everything to do with the establishment and maintenance of a cultural identity. It has been pointed out that in England, the term ‘droll’ was used to denote a low form of theatre as well as the images created by genre artists. The move to establish social divisions directly affected theatre drolls, through the “exclusion of comic interludes from serious plays”, and the “separation of audiences

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<sup>8</sup> Vanhaelan, *Comic Print and Theatre*, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> This is mostly supplied by a variety of lamps and candles that both cast light and spew out clouds of smoke.

was desired as well as a separation of genres: droll interludes were held to draw the rabble to the theatre”.<sup>10</sup> The popularity of theatre resulted in a gathering of large crowds that represented a variety of social classes and provided a forum for social exchange that was subsequently translated into print culture. Vanhaelen reminds us that it is important to acknowledge that the cultural exchange was not one-sided, that it included what she refers to as ‘representations’ used by powerful groups in targeting the less powerful, which were then ‘re-appropriated’ and modified by the less powerful groups in response.<sup>11</sup> Of this repetitive process she indicates that “these representations emerge as sites of social exchange, where the imposition of identities and resistance to this imposition met”.<sup>12</sup> In analyzing these prints, determining whether Heemskerck III is re-appropriating and manipulating an approved representation in order to create a response will be significant in defining the identity of the consumer for these works.

A unique element of Dutch art is its repeated reliance on stock themes and traditional ideas and elements that have been adapted and reused, over and over again, within a wide range of subject matter that could therefore be easily read and understood by the viewer. Artists of the seventeenth century responded to the market and audience call for those traditional themes, but translated then in ways that represented contemporary issues and ideas. So the works are not always illustrations of everyday life, but are, as Franits notes, “clever fictions, ingeniously synthesizing observed fact with a well established repertory of motifs and styles to create a contrived image that ultimately transfigures the commonplace”.<sup>13</sup> In the *Dissection* print (Figure 3) the turbaned figure of the surgeon is taken directly from the Dutch tradition and represents

<sup>10</sup> Mount, *Reception of Dutch Genre Paintings in England 1695-1829*, pp. 33-34, 40. Future research would involve an analysis of droll interludes.

<sup>11</sup> Vanhaelen, *Comic Print and Theatre*, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> Vanhaelen, *Comic Print and Theatre*, p. 19.

<sup>13</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, pp. 1-2.

the figure of Tetjeroen, who in the Dutch story changes from a strolling musician to a quack physician; he is a charlatan who deceives both his boss and his patients through his humour.<sup>14</sup> Vanhaelan points out the inherent contradictions in the story as even while the viewer sees the charlatan Tetjeroen cheating his innocent victims, their laughter and engagement with the subject identifies them sympathetically with him. She indicates that “these prints demonstrate modes of exercising power in market relations... As they teach readers to evaluate theatrical marketing techniques; the prints self-consciously draw attention to their own powers of persuasion – to their status as both commodities and representations”.<sup>15</sup> Heemskerck III’s prints are attempting to achieve something similar. The prints first encourage the viewer to identify with a humorous portrayal of relevant social issues, and then further to recognize the satirical references to well-known contemporary discourses around issues of polite society that were using the marketing of art as a method for establishing class distinctions in terms of the consumers of that art. Taken further in terms of Vanhaelan’s suggestion, the consumer could additionally look at these ideas of marketing and consumerism at the level of the satirical print market. As she points out, one must consider both sides of the debate in initiating and responding in the process of the exchange and promotion of themes.<sup>16</sup>

On the whole, the Heemskerck III prints address the subject of contemporary issues that would have been the concern of all levels of society, such as illness and disease as seen in both the *Dissection* (Figure 3) and the *Barber Shop* (Figure 4) prints. Both of these images illustrate the types of stuffed creatures such as frogs, strange sea creatures, bats and hares hanging from the ceiling of apothecary’s shops which would

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<sup>14</sup> Vanhaelan, *Comic Print and Theatre*, pp. 85-93.

<sup>15</sup> Vanhaelan, *Comic Print and Theatre*, pp. 91-93. Here she is referring to the use of the character of Tetjeroen in the catchpenny print; however the concept is the same.

<sup>16</sup> Vanhaelan, *Comic Print and Theatre*, pp. 92-93.

have been used to concoct potions and salves as cure-alls for the variety of illnesses that Londoners were prone to, but which in reality often only made patients feel worse.<sup>17</sup> The *Barber Shop* (Figure 4) includes a woman having a bloodletting, a remedy which often did more harm than good to the patient.<sup>18</sup> The prints also address topics such as the evils of drinking seen in the *Gin Shop* print (Figure 5), where people are gathered around the gin vat, vomiting on the floor and each other, or the *School* (Figure 6) where children are encouraged to learn or they will be punished. In doing so, they are suggestive of the Dutch tradition of prints illustrating moralizing messages. Vanhaelan focuses in particular on the Dutch example of the ‘catchpenny’ print developed to educate children in the proper moral upbringing. Importantly, the use of prints was not limited to a children’s market as these were adopted for use in imparting messages to adults as well. In terms of the Heemskerck III prints, this might suggest that the intention was simply to participate in the process of reinforcing ideas of politeness, resulting in separations of class, by providing a visual method of informing the viewer of a moralizing theme and methods of personal improvement. However, the sense of a moralizing intent is not the strongest overriding message implicit in Heemskerck III’s prints. Taking this moralizing intent into consideration with other aspects of the images, I will argue that the overall intention was more complicated.

Gibson-Wood argues that the example of the artist and theorist Jonathan Richardson indicates the challenges faced by artists working in London at this time, where the availability of imported continental art resulted in lower prices for English art. The consideration of such art as a ‘household commodity’ in turn, associated artists with

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<sup>17</sup> Maureen Waller, *1700: Scenes from London Life*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2000), pp. 80-81.

<sup>18</sup> Waller, *1700: Scenes from London Life*, p. 87.

artisans rather than the rising classes.<sup>19</sup> While this comment is made with particular reference to the large number of Dutch genre pictures being imported in the late seventeenth century, she also notes that at the same time “some of England’s aristocrats were defining new roles for themselves as patrons of the arts” and, in an emulation of continental taste, were accumulating significant numbers of French and Italian works, mostly in the form of history painting.<sup>20</sup> Prior to the publication of Richardson’s work, many English collectors followed the example of continental theory that promoted the primacy of Italian and French art, particularly History painting. Richardson promoted an investment in English art and the methodology of reason rather than “uncritical acceptance of authority”;<sup>21</sup> he suggested “that as judges and buyers of pictures, middling-class readers need not comply with the taste and authority of their social superiors, but needed only to exercise reason”.<sup>22</sup>

In the early eighteenth century, there was active discussion of new ideas of art theory particularly facilitated through periodicals and the ‘coffee culture’ in which Richardson was an active participant.<sup>23</sup> Richardson felt that paintings could be useful and instructive and “inform the mind”, emphasize “the capacity for moral, intellectual and religious edification” but at the same time could be “sensitive to the actual range of values and interests held by London’s consumers of pictures”.<sup>24</sup> In particular,

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<sup>19</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, pp. 11-17.

<sup>20</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, pp. 16-17. These comments are made in reference to English patterns of consumption of imported art occurring in the late seventeenth century, but they indicate the model of consumerism that continues into the eighteenth century, when we see a significant decrease in the popularity of Dutch work, which is replaced by a demand for fine art from the continent, particularly in the form of history painting.

<sup>21</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, p. 42.

<sup>22</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, p. 88. See also Maureen Waller, *1700: Scenes from London Life*, p. 196. Waller reports that by 1700 there were more than 2,000 coffee houses in London, each of which “developed their own set of clientele and were known as the meeting place for men of a particular occupation”.

<sup>24</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, p. 146.

Richardson expands his discussion of such things as invention and expression in history painting to encompass other genres such as portraiture. He promotes the idea that painting should provide pleasure and instruction, a concept that supports the middling-class consumer market for art used to decorate the home.<sup>25</sup>

In this he goes against other contemporary theorists such as Shaftesbury, who promoted continental art in the classical manner.<sup>26</sup> Richardson's writings were "responses to the complex set of challenges and pressures affecting the practice and consumption of painting in early eighteenth-century London", and he created a theory that often addressed "conflicting aims and circumstances".<sup>27</sup> We get an understanding from this of the challenges an artist such as Heemskerck III would have faced. In working between the dictates of an existing system of continental theory and the emerging establishment of a continental based theory that promoted the work of English artists as well as the superiority of work in the classical style, we can also see the validity of Donald's suggestion that many artists "inhabited a kind of limbo between the world of polite society and the nether world of the hacks", a description which could well be applied to an artist such as Heemskerck III.<sup>28</sup> By choosing to illustrate scenes from modern life in the genre of satirical graphic print, and by constructing these images to include conscious visual reference to the formal elements of history painting, Heemskerck III was attempting to negotiate an art market that was responding both to the debates around ideas of politeness as well as to the theories that proclaimed that improvement and learning could be achieved through the appreciation of appropriate

<sup>25</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, p. 146.

<sup>26</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, p. 146.

<sup>27</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, p. 139.

<sup>28</sup> Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 30.

subjects for history painting which were ancient, religious or classical subjects, rather than themes of contemporary life.

The Dutch artist and theorist Gerard de Lairese is considered one of the great theoreticians of Dutch art.<sup>29</sup> His work promoted an art form in the classical tradition and built on and added to the work of his predecessors.<sup>30</sup> Assisted by his sons, de Lairese published two treatises, *Grondelegginge de teekenkunst*, (*Principles of Design*) in 1701, and *Het Groot schilderboek* (*Great book of Painters*), in 1707; both of which were translated and widely distributed.<sup>31</sup> He makes pointed comments throughout his treatise with regards to both the artist painting modern subjects, who does not possess knowledge of his subject or exhibit judgment in improving it, as well as to the consumer of these works:

*modern Painting can there not be accounted Art, when nature is simply followed; which is a meer imperfect Imitation or defective aping her... But when Nature is corrected and improved by a judicious Master, and the aforesaid Qualities joined to it, the Painting must then be noble and perfect.*<sup>32</sup>

What great Defect do we not still find in *modern* Painters, when they use or rather abuse, the Life; not doing like those, who being accustomed to a *nobler* Manner, view the Life with Knowledge and Judgement, that is, *not as it ordinarily appears, but as it ought to be, in its greatest Perfection*<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, pp. 221-222. De Lairese "played a leading role in fostering the classicizing style that typified much late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Dutch painting".

<sup>30</sup> Arno Dolders, 'Some Remarks on Lairese's "Groot Schilderboek"', *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 15 (1985), pp. 197-220, (pp. 199-200) <<http://links.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/sici?sici=0037-5411%281985%2915%3A3%2F4%3C197%3ASROL%22S%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C>>, [November 26, 2007]. de Lairese's ideas build on and add to the work of his predecessors; Karel van Mander, Junius, Samuel van Hoogstraeten.

<sup>31</sup> While De Lairese's *Groot schilderboek* can be confusing, it does address new subjects and its expression of the classicist ideal is the culmination of the development of Dutch theory Dolders, 'Some Remarks on Lairese's "Groot Schilderboek"', pp. 198-199. Claus Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form: Gerard De Lairese's "Groot Schilderboek" and Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting', *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 26 (1998), 87-115 <<http://links.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/sici?sici=0037-5411%281998%2926%3A1%2F2%3C87%3AISOCFG%3E2.0.CO%3B2-T>>, (pp. 89-90), [November 26, 2007].

<sup>32</sup> De Lairese, *The art of painting*, p. 134.

<sup>33</sup> De Lairese, *The art of painting*, p. 131.

since we scarce see a beautiful Hall or fine Apartment of any Cost, that is not set out with Pictures of Beggars, Obscenities, a Geneva-Stall, Tobacco-smokers, Fiddlers, nasty Children easing Nature, and other Things more filthy. Who can entertain his Friend or a Person of Repute in an Apartment lying thus in litter, or where a Child is bawling, or wiping clean? We grant that these Things are only represented in Picture: But is not the Art of Painting an Imitation of the Life; which can either please or loath? If then we make such Things like the Life, they must needs raise an Aversion. They are therefore too low and unbecoming Subjects for Ornament, especially for People of Fashion, whose Conceptions ought to surpass the Vulgar. We admit indeed that all this is Art, or at least called so, when the Life is thereby naturally exprest; but how much the beautiful Life, skilfully handled, differs from the defective Life of modern Painters, let the Curious determine.<sup>34</sup>

While this last comment is made in particular reference to low genre work, we can see from the tone that not only was the artist being judged through these theories, but the consumer as well. De Lairese refers to painters of unimproved modern subjects as ‘tradesmen’ who do not exercise their minds in their work.<sup>35</sup> De Lairese believed that, through hard work and practice, good apprentices would realize the importance of putting aside play, and would instead devote themselves to the basics of drawing, including perspective and drapery. His texts include examples of the types of lines and symbols that should be practiced as an initial introduction to drawing. He espoused the brilliance of French art and artists, particularly Poussin and the theories of Le Brun, but had very little regard for the Dutch genre artists, linking “art and social status by disassociating vulgar pictures from the civilized taste of the high-born” while the “excellence of antique art was confidently associated with elite values”.<sup>36</sup> He criticizes genre painting focused on inappropriate subject matter and suggests the improvement of

<sup>34</sup> De Lairese, *The art of painting*, p. 129.

<sup>35</sup> Gerard De Lairese, *The art of painting, in all its branches, methodically demonstrated by discourses and plates, and exemplified by remarks on the paintings of the best masters; ... By Gerard de Lairese. Translated by John Frederick Fritsch, ...* London, 1738.  
<<http://galenet.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/servlet/ECCO>>, Gale Document Number CW106124978, p. 130. [February 8, 2008].

<sup>36</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, p. 222.

figures and poses and the removal of emotion would help elevate the art to a higher level.<sup>37</sup> He suggests that the quality of Dutch painting had gone into a decline in the early seventeenth century as a result of the work of genre artists such as Brouwer.<sup>38</sup> His treatise promoted history painting as the most important of the genres and emphasized style and learning in the classical tradition. It also served to promote ideas of the distinction of the elite through illustrations of correctness in stance and depiction of figures exhibiting proper mannerisms.

Most scholarship cites de Lairese's very negative opinions on genre painting; however, Claus Kemmer's article suggests that scholarship has erred in assuming that de Lairese's opinion of genre was totally negative, and suggests that such assumptions fail "to do justice to his larger project".<sup>39</sup> Kemmer suggests instead that, at the time de Lairese wrote his work, he was considering the differences between high and low forms of art and he was trying to "make a connection between Classicist art theory and the practice of genre painting".<sup>40</sup> He also suggests that "de Lairese's efforts might be described as striving to give genre painting a classical form".<sup>41</sup> In indicating that high genre can take on the functions of history painting, de Lairese challenges the "exclusive identification of this type of art with comedy and its definition as a 'middle' style".<sup>42</sup> De Lairese does distinguish between 'modern' painters who paint in high genre and

<sup>37</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, pp. 253-255. Significantly, Franits also suggests that "the links between de Lairese, late seventeenth century Dutch genre painting and treatises of civility probably ran even deeper, though their possible connections have not been sufficiently explored." p. 253.

<sup>38</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, p. 219.

<sup>39</sup> Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form', p. 91.

<sup>40</sup> Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form', p. 88.

<sup>41</sup> Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form', pp. 88-91. Dutch theorists were concerned with the idea of the ideal in nature. Genre can not depict history, only the contemporary and this leads the artist to copy nature, not improve it. Kemmer indicates that prior to his study de Lairese's theories have rarely been used in regards to studying seventeenth-century genre painting and that many believe that the influence of classicism expressed in this theory was not of concern to Dutch genre painters. Kemmer believes that De Lairese was not totally against genre painting, rather, that he understood the importance of Dutch genre and was trying to elevate it by convincing genre artists to improve it and that the results of his ideas were not seen until the eighteenth century.

<sup>42</sup> Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form', p. 94.

low genre styles. Low genre painters do not attempt to improve on nature or paint the best of nature but merely copy it and depict the lowly and deformed.<sup>43</sup> Presumably, Heemskerck III would fall into this latter category. De Lairese lays the blame for the “degeneration of Dutch art” on the low genre painters, and artists who “merely imitate nature mechanically, without selection or correction” are dismissed as not deserving of comment.<sup>44</sup> Artists such as van Dyck are held as examples, as they exemplify “the unification of the modern and antique modes”.<sup>45</sup>

Significantly, de Lairese relates low and high genre to social structure, suggesting that depiction of figures with correct gesture, stance, and expression indicates politeness and class and suggests that laughter can be in good taste and can also help distinguish class.<sup>46</sup> We can see how Heemskerck III might have been inspired to create a satirical response when faced with the effects of a treatise that made derogatory comments of this type towards the style of genre painting in which he would have been working. Kemmer suggests that de Lairese’s cautionary remarks to artists regarding the mixing of classical and modern themes were an affirmation, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, that genre painters were looking for ways of improving their lot and moving towards the status of history painters.<sup>47</sup> This idea is particularly important in terms of Heemskerck III’s satirical prints, in which he addresses modern themes using the visual conventions of history painting, such as staging; references to classical settings through the use of archways and drapery; narrative configurations; figural stance and lighting. Kemmer suggests that de Lairese saw that genre painters could improve themselves and was encouraging them to leave genre and move to history

<sup>43</sup> Kemmer, ‘In Search of Classical Form’, p. 94.

<sup>44</sup> Kemmer, ‘In Search of Classical Form’, pp. 94-95.

<sup>45</sup> Kemmer, ‘In Search of Classical Form’, p. 97.

<sup>46</sup> Kemmer, ‘In Search of Classical Form’, p. 99-102.

<sup>47</sup> Kemmer, ‘In Search of Classical Form’, p. 104.

painting - that genre, because it was simply copying from nature, did not require a lot of mental effort or ability on the part of the artist.<sup>48</sup> Kemmer indicates that if de Lairese's "call for a new 'classical' form in genre" actually became a practice, or was in fact a practice, and genre and history became equivalent styles, then this would have "extraordinary consequences for the traditional doctrine".<sup>49</sup>

It can be suggested that Heemskerck III created works that satirized not only English social issues, but at the same time contrived to use these images to satirize theories of individuals such as Richardson and de Lairese that were part of the contemporary debate based in ideas of politeness and the establishment of class structure and which were having an effect on the art market. I suggest also that the images indicate that the themes of the Heemskerck III prints are not simply structured around comical scenes of lower or peasant class figures. Importantly, there is deliberate blurring of social classes through the close association of the figures in the narratives, through their dress which is representative of a middle class or elite station and through the generic, though anthropomorphic, features of the figures. Most scenes take place in settings in which one might expect to see a mix of different classes, such as auctions, brothels, or in locations where one would expect to see professionals such as a surgeon or apothecary. Some element of class structure is suggested in a scene such as the *Gin Shop* (Figure 5) which could be said to be more indicative of actions of the lower classes, demonstrated not only in the state of the shabby, torn and unembellished dress of the figures but also through the inscription on the print: "The Rabble Rout in Gin Shop see,/ Tho poor in Purse, yet full of Glee;/ Whore, Porters, Bunters all together,...".

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<sup>48</sup> Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form', p. 113.

<sup>49</sup> Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form', p. 113.

I would assert that the division between elite and middling classes became so nebulous that the classes could not easily be differentiated, and that this caused the perceived need for methods or actions to redefine and maintain an obvious class structure. Kemmer suggests that de Lairese's theories anticipate events and developments in French art theory of the eighteenth century.<sup>50</sup> However, de Lairese's theories indicated that as genre was always limited to contemporary themes it could never achieve the same status as history painting in the classical style and that ennobling the form in some fashion did not result in an improvement of "the genre as a whole".<sup>51</sup> Heemskerck III created works that satirized not only English social issues, but at the same time served to satirize the theories of individuals such as de Lairese whose views were influential in the contemporary debates. De Lairese defines the various formats and requirements of history painting and warns that the artist should not mix contemporary and antique themes, suggesting that, while genre may entertain, the connoisseur of "refined sensibilities" and "high moral stature" will find it disgusting.<sup>52</sup> We get a sense of the type of comment to which Heemskerck III and other artists typically associated with low genre would have been subject and the issues of class that members of society were dealing with. Mount notes the decreasing trend of ridiculing the ugly in visual form and cites Fielding's suggestion that Hogarth did not "ridicule ugliness or social class, but... the gap between these characteristics and his subjects".<sup>53</sup> We can see that this is what Heemskerck III is doing in these prints: his intent was to satirize a process that worked to establish the space between social groups and so he

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<sup>50</sup> Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form', p. 113. Kemmer uses Greuze as an example of genre elevated through the use of classicizing elements, and also discusses theorists such as Diderot.

<sup>51</sup> Kemmer, 'In Search of Classical Form', pp. 114-115. Kemmer indicates that in the later seventeenth century, Dutch genre artists realized the effect that the theory was having and had no choice but to switch over to being history painters if they wanted to remain competitive within the art market.

<sup>52</sup> Dolders, 'Some Remarks on Lairese's "Groot Schilderboek"', pp. 212-215.

<sup>53</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting in England*, p. 64.

takes on the role of the comic history painter.<sup>54</sup> Thus in these prints Heemskerck III has taken both visual and methodological elements from the Dutch artistic heritage and has translated these into an English context illustrating English issues.

Additionally, even while his prints contain references to traditional Dutch art there is a change apparent from the low genre style he was recognized for. In these images he is not targeting particular individuals; his satire is instead addressing broader social concerns. Heemskerck III's level of satirical sophistication has been undervalued because the prints are judged superficially both for their element of humour and as a result of his background as a genre artist. That the prints address modern issues means they would be universally readable, but by framing these modern issues in a satirical vein that was referential to the elements of history paintings, Heemskerck III's work actually engages in the debate around art theory and appropriate subject matter and in this specifically targets the theories of politeness that are being promoted by the elite in an attempt to reinforce class divisions. In this way Heemskerck III was negotiating the needs and demands of certain sectors of the contemporary market. It becomes clear from an analysis of the subject matter and structure that these images both contain and are satirical messages that were intended to be read on several different levels.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Mount, *The Reception of Dutch Genre Painting in England*, p. 62. Mount cites Henry Fielding in contrasting the 'comic history painter' Hogarth with Caricatura in that "Hogarth's excellence lies in his exact copying of nature, while Caricatura exhibits 'Distortions and Exaggerations'. We might however suggest that Heemkerck III did exactly the same thing, and probably at an earlier date than Hogarth, but that given his heritage as a Dutch genre artist, his work has not been as well recognized.

<sup>55</sup> Satire is apparent not only in the visual content of the scenes, but also in the inscriptions that accompany each image although, again, given the space of this thesis, it has not been possible here to discuss fully both the images and the inscriptions that accompany each print, so I will leave this to be addressed in my future studies. It is however important to note that the print *School* (Fig. 6) includes a verse that appears to be in Latin and as noted in de Jongh and Luijten, *Mirrors of Everyday Life*, p. 34, it became the practice in the Netherlands, particularly in the second half of the seventeenth century to include Latin text as a part of class distinction even when these inscriptions accompanied low genre scenes. I was unsuccessful at translating it, but it would be important to determine if this was actually Latin. The first line, 'Monstrum Horendum!' is easily understandable in terms of intent.

### **A Quack Physician (Figure 3)**

In this scene a group of people crowd around a draped surgery table on which the body of a cat lies. A turbaned figure avidly cuts open the body and pulls out some sausage-shaped intestines. The figures directly around the table hold large knives; one has a cleaver tucked into his belt. In the foreground from the left is a chopping block with a huge cleaver lying on it and two tubs on the floor in front of the surgery table, one filled with intestines, the other with the heads of a boar and a cat, more intestines and something shaped like a heart. People crowd around as if participating in some form of entertainment, stretching upwards and around in order to see what is going on, and one man holds a child upon his shoulders.

Dress is not totally indicative of class in this group, although there is a figure of a well-dressed woman in the crowd in conversation with another woman. The figure with the cleaver by the table is dressed in a floor-length furry robe and wears a furry hat with two feathers tucked into the brim. Light is supplied by a lantern suspended over the table. There is no indication of a ceiling, which makes the room feel like a large warehouse, an impression that is supported by the very large open doorway in the back left of the image. On the walls hang skeletons and skulls, and there is the body of a disemboweled pig splayed open across a ladder that leans against the wall beside the table. There are hares, fish and frogs suspended from the ceiling. Two of the frogs still seem to be alive and are in fact riding on the back of the long creature with a sharp snout that is also suspended from the ceiling. The inscription reads: "Behold a Quack Physicians Hall,/ Adorn'd with Beasts like Butcher's stall;/ The various Figures which you see,/ Shew Mankind in Epitome;/ Where Ignorance instead of Art,/ Supplys the

Place of true Desert:/ How hard the Fate of Humankind,/ When Blind Men only lead the Blind!”

#### **A Barber Shop (Figure 4)**

In another crowded room the shadowy figure of the barber stands on the right of the image. He is potbellied and wears an apron and a hat with feathers. His back and left side face the viewer and he has his right hand atop the head of a cat sitting on a barrel in the centre of the room to keep her still while he trims her whiskers with a large pair of shears in his left hand. In the right foreground is a table that holds pliers, a hand scythe, a number of teeth and a covered jar. To the left of the scene another woman sits with her left arm elevated. From a cut in her arm a stream of blood flows into a bowl held by a small monkey. Her arm is supported by an elephant with a ruffle around his neck, who reaches under the arm he is supporting to fondle her breast. Behind these figures stand an ass with a bell hanging around his neck and a boar in an apron holding a newspaper marked ‘Grubstreet Jour’.

Above their heads is a shelf with a variety of the types of jars and containers you would expect to find in an apothecary’s shop. Over the shelf is suspended a sign with the picture of an owl which reads ‘Shave & Blood for A Penny’. The back wall of the shop has wigs hanging from the wall and there are markings on the wall similar to those seen on the Madam’s tablet in the Brothel Scene. There are a variety of creatures hanging from the ceiling, a frog, something resembling a moray eel, and another with a very large mouth, sharp teeth and wings. A figure on two peg legs with a crutch is leaving the shop through the open doorway. On the floor in front of the barrel, lies what resembles a playing card with a club on it, and a hat with two feathers. The floor looks

rough and dirty. The inscription reads, "A Barber's shop adorn'd we see,/ With Monsters, News and Poverty;/ Whilst some are shaving, others bleed,/ And those who wait the Papers read:/ The Master full of Whigg or Tory,/ Combs out your Wig and tells a Story;/ Then palms your Cole & Scraping smiles,/ And gives a Bill to cure the Piles".

### **A Gin Shop (Figure 5)**

In the centre of a dark cavernous room, with a stone archway overhead, we see a very large gin vat. There are a dozen people in the room gathered around the vat and most figures are either drinking or vomiting. A man sits on the top of the vat in the centre of the image and pours himself a drink. To the left of the vat, a woman sits on the floor and vomits as her partner supports her by arm and shoulder and vomits as well, on her. One man, with his back to the viewer, fills a jug from the tap on the vat. Most of the figures either hold or have lying near them, crutches or canes. There are two light sources, one is a lantern suspended over the vat, the other, much brighter is a large candle held in front of the vat. On the right of the vat there is a table or cupboard and to the left of the vat, and a half barrel being used as a table. A shelf along the right wall holds several large containers. In the shadow of the right foreground sit a stool and a basket. The inscription reads: "The Rabble Rout in Gin Ship see,/ Tho' poor in Purse, yet full of Glee;/ Whores, Porters, Bunters, all together,/ Swarm round the Butt, like Birds of Feather;/ Til Drunk and Mad, their common Case,/ They spew upon each others Face;/ Whilst Belle and Beau with Tea dispences,/ With Gin alone these lose their Senses."

### **A School (Figure 6)**

The scene takes place in a small room, and on the left of the print a schoolmaster stands behind his desk. He is depicted with the head of an ass, and holds aloft a large wooden spoon with which he is going to strike a boy's hand. In the left foreground another boy sits quietly reading his book, but he had no choice in this as his ankle is chained to box on which he sits. In the right foreground, a little girl kneels with her hands clasped together, as if pleading. In the centre of the image, a woman holds another girl and prepares to spank her with a switch.<sup>56</sup> There is an arched, lead paned window, chipped and cracked walls and a door that has broken and worn panels. The viewer's gaze is drawn into the picture by the darkened shadow of an interior archway that runs along the ceiling and down the right side of the image. There is a birdcage with a bird inside hanging from the ceiling as well as roasts and sausages and a sheet with an inscription in Latin pinned to the wall behind the schoolmaster. The inscription with the print addresses the "many Senseless flogging Fools" who are teachers; it reads: "Thus many Senseless flogging Fools,/ Are Teachers of our Modern Schooles;/ Tho' void of Learning, Wit or Parts,/ Presume to teach the Lib'ral Arts:/ Strange! That such Asses shou'd bestow/ On others more than yet they know:/ And such the Madness of Mankind,/ We're fond of Fools, to Merit blind."

### **Singers (Figure 7)**

This print is of a room filled with singers crowded around a music stand supporting a large book. The man at the centre of the image leans back as if to sing in a loud voice.

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<sup>56</sup> In this image again, all the females are depicted as cats, and the male children as monkeys.

On his shoulders and head sits a cat, upon whom sits an owl wearing glasses. On the floor at his feet sits a howling dog and to the right stands a cat that is using his whiskers and a long pipe in imitation of a violin. To the right of the central figure stand more singers including a figure blowing a horn. In the right foreground, in the shadow, is a seated figure that while his mouth is open, appears to grimace. In his hands he holds what look like fireplace tools. Beside him stands a bear in a halter, holding what looks like a long bow and some sort of a stringed instrument attached to a block of wood that sits at his feet. The light source is a lamp suspended over the music stand. In the background of the room we see a stone archway and beyond that an open doorway and the moon in the sky. There are figures dancing and a man standing halfway up the ladder that is leaning against the archway plays a pipe and drum. There is evidence of drinking, glasses, bottles, and pinned on the wall on the right of the image is a sheet of music with Latin inscription. The inscription at the base of the image reads: "If Musick's charms can Hearts enthrall,/ this Consort's sure above 'em all:/ How sweet the sound where Cats and Bears,/ With brutish Noise offend our Ears!/ Just so the foreign singers move Rather contempt, than gain our love:/ Were such discouraged we should find/ Musick at Home to charm the Mind." Brewer notes the swift reaction to the early eighteenth-century rise of opera and its affiliation with fashionable society, by "actors, playwrights and critics" who saw it as a threat to dramatic theatre, and in particular attacked opera for its foreign elements.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> See John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination, English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 1997), pp. 365-369. Brewer also discusses the accepted role of music in inns and taverns with public rooms used by amateur groups, and notes that "opera epitomized the threat to drama because it was the most modish and aristocratic musical form – 'it is not the Taste of the Rabble, but of Persons of the Greatest Politeness'".

### **A Militia Company (Figure 8)**

This print depicts a party of soldiers marching in the street. They wear helmets and uniforms, and carry staffs, spears and muskets. To the right are drummers whom we assume are playing a march. Most of the figures have monkey or cat's faces, except for the two figures in the centre of the group. Both of these are well dressed, wearing large hats decorated with plumes of feathers. One is an elephant who wears a wig and carries a staff, the other a bull who ironically carries a long pole with a flag depicting a beef roast and pudding. There are buildings behind them, one of which has a sign hanging in front of it, illustrated with the image of a soldier. The soldier in the left foreground holds a parchment encouraging volunteers to join up and the inscription with the print is in a similar vein, "Hark how the Drum assaults our Ears, /Thus beating up for Volunteers; /Here Cuckolds, Cowards, Pimps & Panders, /By turns are Soldiers and Commanders; /Who fight, besiege, and storm amain, /And yet are never hurt or slain:/ Sad Work! Shou'd this tame Army meet,/ The late Pacifick Spithead Fleet."

We can see from these descriptions and in looking at the prints how rich they are in visual information. There is still significant work to do both in deciphering the underlying message(s) and in supporting the significant overlying thematic connections and purposes that exist between the prints, and given the limitations of space and time allotted for this thesis, I can only begin my work in this area. I will, however, offer a more detailed analysis of just two prints, the *Picture Auction* (Figure 1) and the *Brothel Scene* (Figure 2), as a demonstration of how a close reading of prints reveals the shaping force of graphic media within contemporary English consumer circles. I have chosen to

concentrate on these two prints out of the set because I believe that they are particularly demonstrative in terms of developing our understanding of the contemporary debates about politeness, genre art, the role of the consumer, the definitions of the connoisseur and art theory, and the place of the graphic satirical print artist.

### **A Picture Auction? (Figure 1)**

This crowded scene contains the only two figures with human faces illustrated in the prints in this series. One of these stands in the left foreground, he is a wigged and well dressed, elite looking artist. In one hand he holds a paintbrush and in the other a palette. To the right of the artist a small monkey smiles as he reaches into the artist's coat pocket with one hand and points towards his own grinning face with the index finger of the other. The artist seems unaware of this. Another monkey, standing behind the artist holds a machete to his throat. Again, however, the artist does not appear to be overly concerned by this, and smiles as he watches the auction. Displayed behind the palette of the painter is an unframed painting which appears to be a portrait. Behind the artist, we see a second human faced figure, this time with longer hair, a hat, a large nose and rough features, all suggestive of the peasant class.<sup>58</sup> Both figures stand in the shadows back from where the activity of the auction is taking place. The painting currently up for bid in the scene is a genre style work signed HK, implying it is a work of Heemskerck III's. It is held aloft by an ass-headed figure who wears a medallion around his neck with the inscription "Charitable Corporation". Dramatic lighting is provided by a central figure that holds up a three pronged staff with candles at each prong. Most

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<sup>58</sup> Is it possible that the peasant figure is a self-portrait of Heemskerck III while the elite artist is a well-known English painter, possibly Thornhill or Richardson or perhaps even Hogarth? Theories being discussed at this time include Richardson's ideas of the importance of portraiture and while more research needs to be done into this, it could be that the unframed portrait held behind the palette is meant to be indicative of a portrait artist.

of the light falls on the right side of the painting and lights a seated figure with a lion's head, holding an auction catalogue in his right hand and a purse in his left. Beside him stands a wigged fox that is sneaking a hand into the lion's coat pocket. A deer-headed figure stands behind them and behind this is a tall auctioneer's dais. The auctioneer is a well-dressed monkey, wearing a wig and with a wide open mouth, he raises his gavel to knock down the sale.

There are many figures depicted around the back of the room, including a large bull-headed figure on the left. Behind this figure stands a monkey with a bottle of wine raised in one hand and the auction catalogue in the other. The inscription to this print is particularly insightful; "An Auction is a publick Sale,/ That injures those who fairly deal,/ Whilst South Sea, India Companies/ Are nought but meer Monopolies,/ That like a certain Corporation,/ First bite the Poor, then gull ye Nation:/ Thus Fraud and Insincerity,/ Reign more or less in each Degree" . This verse makes reference to some of the largest financial disasters and scandals of the period, such as the South Sea Bubble, and certainly theft and corruption is indicated throughout the image. We can be certain that there is a message implied regarding artists and the art market, the figure of the artist with the blade at his throat is evidence of that.

However, the setting of the auction is also significant, as is the figure wearing the Charitable Corporation medal. This auction house is filled with references to Dutch art: on the walls are paintings by Van Dyck, Van de Veld and possibly Ostade, so, on the surface the image is making reference to Dutch art in the auctions of the London art market.<sup>59</sup> Art auctions had become the important mechanism for selling and buying art and this scene takes place in a very crowded room. This is indicative of the popularity

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<sup>59</sup> The use of Van Dyck is probably significant, as for both de Laresse and Richardson, Van Dyck was often cited as an artist to be emulated.

of these sales, and the style of dress of the figures in attendance is indicative of the elite level of class often represented. Significantly, however, it is important to ask if this is in fact an ‘art’ auction, as it is usually referred to.<sup>60</sup>

Given the variety of goods on display, including wigs, jewelry, ornaments, clocks, swords, tapestries hanging from the ceiling and paintings, I suggest instead that this represents an auction of personal belongings, seized for debts owed under losses to the Charitable Corporation or South Sea Bubble schemes. A consideration of the vast numbers of paintings and prints listed in each of the British Library auction catalogues referred to in Chapter 4, does not support an art auction with only four paintings. A painting auction would have stacks of paintings leaning against the walls. The nature of the accompanying verse also supports this idea. It is also more reasonable than the theme of a picture auction in terms of the idea that these prints were addressing social issues and class distinctions.

It would be important for future study to determine whether the individuals in the print can somehow be identified, in particular the artist in the left foreground. It would also be important to examine other prints of auctions to determine if there was an identifiable difference between picture-only auctions and auctions of personal effects, such as estate sales. In a period when consumers were losing fortunes through these financial scams, it is conceivable that such events would have had an effect on artists, either through personal investment losses or through the losses their patrons experienced.<sup>61</sup> While there remains a lot of unknown information regarding this and the previous prints, the final print, the *Brothel Scene*, is proof that a decoding of the

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<sup>60</sup> The British Museum reference for the print refers to it as a “Picture Auction”.

<sup>61</sup> It would therefore be important to gather information regarding these scandals including any available lists of people affected.

elements of the image will provide us with much information about the artist, and the tension in art markets at this time.

### **Brothel Scene (Figure 2)**

At first glance this print would seem to be simply a comical representation of a typical brothel scene. The actions of the figures, through their glance and movement, are openly suggestive of this and the scene includes both visible and disguised elements that are meant to be read as referring to a brothel. Dramatic lighting is provided by two handheld candles which spotlight the activities of the two main groups of figures and leave the foreground and sides of the image in shadow. The figures are set back in the scene creating a deep foreground and this along with the lighting serves to draw the viewer into the scene. The perspective lines of the wall and doorway on the left of the image and the bed and window on the right are correctly executed with respect to either side of the image, but do not correctly correspond where they intersect. There is a line running up the wall to the left of the window and the shading of the print suggests the presence of a column. Hanging over the centre of the room is a large birdcage with an open door and a pigeon with a long tail sitting on the open door of the cage. The room is dominated on the right by a large four-poster bed draped with curtains, set back against the wall in shadow. In heavy shadow, two partially clad figures, a male and a female, peer out from behind the curtains on the bed.

The main narrative of the scene takes place in the actions of eight figures, two females and six males. On the right, an older female stands holding a large tablet with various symbols of lines and circles drawn on it. She points to the tablet with a curved index finger and appears to be in discussion with a seated figure of a man in the

foreground of the scene, and another man who stands at her side holding a candle. The seated figure is in shadow, but appears well and expensively dressed, with lace cuffs, waistcoat, coat, and boots and a wig. He holds a glass of wine in his right hand. On the table next to him sits a half-full bottle of wine. On the floor at his feet is another wine bottle as well as a large vessel with an open top, and another broken bottle. The table top is also marked with some of the same symbols that appear on the tablet. The conservative dress of the female, her apron, dark headdress, older appearance and her stance would suggest that she is the Madam of the brothel. Her face has the black pock marks or beauty marks typically denoting a prostitute.

A second group of figures at the centre of the image, directly underneath the birdcage, includes a male with a young female sitting on his lap. Their chair is tilted towards the open doorway. To the right of this group stands a well-dressed male, holding a candle, leaning over the two seated figures. He lifts his other hand to remove his oddly shaped hat. The young female wears a low cut dress with bows and jewelry. She holds a glass of wine in one hand and has an open bottle of wine nestled between her parted legs. The hand of the seated male reaches suggestively towards her lap.

To the left of this group a male figure, whom we take to be the landlord of the establishment, stands in the open doorway facing into the room, with the door at this back. He is holding a long staff in one hand and wears an apron from which a very large key is suspended at his side. His other hand is held aloft and he points towards the young woman with a slightly bent index finger. Behind the door in the shadows hides the figure of a soldier who wears a helmet and spear. He wears a bag draped over one shoulder with the strap across his chest. Even though he can not see from behind the door, his head is turned back towards the activity in the room.

Outside of the obvious references to a brothel, the scene is rich with symbolic elements, in the Dutch manner, to be deciphered by the knowledgeable viewer. Birds generally, and pigeons in particular - as well as the birdcage - are symbolic of sex. The open door of the cage represents the loss of virginity. The open wine bottle suggestively placed in the young woman's lap is indicative of female genitalia as is the large vessel beside the seated man in the other group. The candles, held by men, are clearly phallic symbols and the indication of the curved index finger is also suggestive of the sexual act. However, humour aside, there is an underlying reference and real purpose to Heemskerck III's image of a typical brothel scene.

Knowledge of the subject being satirized serves not only to firmly place the date of this image in the early eighteenth century but more importantly is evidence that Heemskerck III was working to attract a particular audience or consumer in designing this image. Discovering the identity of the audience provides us with information regarding both Heemskerck III and his level of involvement with contemporary social debates. However, understanding the message and reading Heemskerck III's satire, as it was meant to be read, requires knowledge that would have been available to the contemporary viewer, so how do we begin to understand it?

I found one of the most intriguing elements of this work to be the figure of the Madam and the tablet she is holding covered with strange marks. Why is she holding the tablet and what if anything are the marks meant to indicate? In the course of my research for this thesis, I read Eddy de Jongh's article *The Artists Apprentice and Minerva's Secret: an Allegory of Drawing by Jan de Lairese*, which discusses a painting by Jan de Lairese c. 1710-15, *Allegory of Drawing* (Figure 9).<sup>62</sup> In this

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<sup>62</sup> Jan de Lairese was Gerard de Lairese's son.

painting, in which Jan de Lairese pays homage to the theory of art promoted by his father Gerard de Lairese, the key to deciphering the Heemskerck III print quickly became clear. De Lairese's painting is a narrative history painting executed in the classical style. It includes eight main figures: the young apprentice; Ratio; Mercury; Drawing; and Minerva in the foreground, the figure of Labor and an unidentified figure in the background; and Jupiter who hovers over the rest of the figures holding a star that is the source of light for the image.<sup>63</sup> It is a history painting based on a mythical theme, and De Lairese has followed his father's instructions in terms of correctly drawing the figures; including stance and pose, enhancement of the figures, correct proportion, perspective and draperies. In de Lairese's painting, Drawing sits in the foreground, working on a piece of paper attached to the tablet on her lap. De Lairese's theories emphasized drawing and the need to practice and his treatises contain practical instructions and examples for the artist.<sup>64</sup> There is another tablet leaning against the platform she sits on, on which we can see samples of line work, triangles, circles, faces, and a foot.<sup>65</sup> De Jongh indicates that these are typical of the practice samples that Gerard de Lairese promoted in his treatises and his article includes an illustration from de Lairese's *Grondlegginge* (Figure 10).

In his article, de Jongh makes a point of noting the very odd attributes of Minerva; a large key she holds in her right hand and the coffer on which she is leaning. He notes that there is no "other allegorical scene devoted to the arts in the sixteenth,

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<sup>63</sup> E. de Jongh, 'The Artist's Apprentice and Minerva's Secret: An Allegory of Drawing by Jan De Lairese', *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 13 (1983), pp. 201-217, <<http://links.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/sici?sici=0037-5411%281983%2913%3A3%2F4%3C201%3ATAAAMS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-F>>(pp. 202-203). [November 26, 2007].

<sup>64</sup> Dolders, 'Some Remarks on Lairese's "Groot Schilderboek"', p. 202.

<sup>65</sup> De Jongh, 'The Artist's Apprentice', p. 207.

seventeenth, or eighteenth centuries in which Minerva is shown with these objects".<sup>66</sup> He further indicates that there is no reference to these articulated in the Gerard de Lairese's writing, so while they might have been discussed between father and son, the inclusion of such attributes in the painting must be due to Jan de Lairese alone.<sup>67</sup> A comparison of de Lairese's *Allegory of Drawing*, (Figure 9), and Heemkerck's *Brothel Scene* (Figure 4) clearly shows that Heemkerck III has taken the figures and themes from the painting and has translated them into the design of his own print. It is obvious that the Madam of the brothel is meant to be an allegorical representation of Drawing. The tablet she holds depicts the same type of symbols of drawing that we see in the de Lairese painting. Her dark headdress replicates the dark hair of de Lairese's Drawing. The fact that she has been depicted as standing, and in fact her stance, could also be a comment on this topic in Gerard de Lairese's treatise as a section of his theory addresses appropriate stance.<sup>68</sup> Both scenes have dramatic lighting, an important pictorial attribute in de Lairese's theory. The perspective lines of Heemkerck III's room echo those of the *Allegory of Drawing*. However, in Heemkerck III's print, he has replaced the draped dais of Minerva with the draped bed of the brothel. Even the classical column from de Lairese's painting is replicated in the centre of the Heemkerck III work.

While the Heemkerck III print has additional figures in the background, both works depict eight main figures. The second female figure in the de Lairese painting is that of Ratio. She has the young apprentice at her side, and Mercury standing behind her. In the *Brothel Scene* the figure of Ratio is represented by the young prostitute who sits in the lap of the figure representing the apprentice. The figure standing beside them

<sup>66</sup> De Jongh, 'The Artist's Apprentice', p. 203.

<sup>67</sup> de Jongh, 'The Artist's Apprentice', p. 203.

<sup>68</sup> Franits, *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting*, p. 132.

is meant to be Mercury; his oddly shaped hat is suggestive of a winged cap - but here his caduceus has been replaced by the phallic candle that also replaces the lighted star of Jupiter in the de Lairesse painting. In de Lairesse's painting the light from Jupiter's star shines on the apprentice. The figure of Jupiter is referenced throughout Gerard de Lairesse's theory and de Jongh suggests that he is here also taking on the role of Judgment in spurring "mortals on to great achievements".<sup>69</sup> In Heemskerck III's image however, with Mercury holding the source of light, Jupiter is represented by the soldier, hiding in the shadows behind the door. This suggests that the figure who is supposed to be spurring artists on to great heights is in hiding and indeed the inscription with the print indicates "Thy Bully who cou'd huff before – Now poorly sneaks behind the Door".<sup>70</sup>

Could this be a reference to something or someone who had previously championed certain artists and art forms, but had now backed away into silence? Additionally, Jupiter is usually accompanied by an eagle, and while there is no evidence in de Lairesse's painting of an eagle, it is interesting that Heemskerck III has included a bird sitting outside of a cage, suspended above the centre of the scene.<sup>71</sup> In Gerard de Lairesse's theory, the personification of Labor is usually made in reference to the need for the artist to practice.<sup>72</sup> In the *Brothel Scene* Labor becomes the patron seated in shadow; while he is paying some attention to the Madam and her tablet, he has here put aside the need to practice in pursuit of other pleasures. Most importantly, in Heemskerck III's *Brothel Scene*, the role of Minerva is played by the landlord. In an

<sup>69</sup> De Jongh, 'The Artist's Apprentice', pp. 211-212.

<sup>70</sup> The full inscription reads: "Alas! Poor Whore, thou'rt fairly trap'd,/ Tho' by thy spark so sweetly Lap'd,/ And for thy midnight Vice and Folly,/ Your Fate is now to mill your Dolly:/ Thy Bully, who cou'd huff before –/ Now poorly sneaks behind the Door:/ Whilst Madam Bawd is all intent – /T'extort more Money than was spent."

<sup>71</sup> While the bird as noted above is symbolic of the sexual act, it is possible that Heemskerck III is here referring to Gerard de Lairesse's use of the figures of Jupiter and the eagle in his written theories.

<sup>72</sup> De Jongh, 'The Artist's Apprentice', p. 209.

imitation of Minerva, he carries a staff, but even more significantly, he holds the key de Lairesse depicted Minerva with in his painting. If there is a reference to the coffer in the *Brothel Scene*, I have not deciphered this other than to suggest that the bed itself may represent the coffer.<sup>73</sup> The tambourine cast aside by the young apprentice in *Allegory* is represented by the broken circular crockery lying on the floor. Given the vast distribution of Gerald de Lairesse's theoretical writings that occurred during the first part of the eighteenth century and the approximate date of 1710-15 for Jan de Lairesse's *Allegory of Drawing*, it is clear that Heemskerck III's work must have been completed after that period. This easily places it within the scope of the debates regarding art theory and the connoisseur which were occurring in London.

It is also easy to understand that theory and beliefs that supported French painting in the classical style and placed genre painting at the lowest level, would be a cause for concern for an artist such as Heemskerck III, particularly as these categorizations were being promoted by a Dutch theorist. Indeed, we have seen that the acceptance and support of such beliefs certainly had an effect on the market for his work. One of the ways of responding to the promotion of these theories and to enter into the broader discussion would have been to satirize theories such as de Lairesse's through the transformation of subjects emblematic of that theory into something comical. Here Heemskerck III has taken a well-known classical narrative, successfully and recognizably transformed it into a modern English theme, and has further framed that modern theme with the formal visual elements of a history painting. He makes both humorous and satirical reference throughout. The translation of a modern theme is a satirical comment regarding the classical work, both the actual work and the theoretical

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<sup>73</sup> De Jongh, 'The Artist's Apprentice', p. 216. Indeed de Jongh is also uncertain as to what the coffer in de Lairesse's painting might represent.

idea of the primacy of classicism. Using Dutch elements successfully in a history painting format both promotes his own heritage and at the same time allows him to make satirical comment on those contemporary debates that in promoting ideas of politeness, suggest that the elements of Dutch genre are inappropriate for fine art.

There are still, however, many unknowns. I have suggested that Heemskerck III's print was developed specifically as a satire of the de Lairese painting.<sup>74</sup> It will be important to determine how he would have had access to this image. It could have been through a print of the painting; it could have been used to promote the published theories of Gerard de Lairese. As I have noted above, there is evidence that de Lairese's theories were well known and being widely discussed. I have made several assumptions in forming my argument around the analysis of the *Brothel Scene*. I have assumed that de Jongh is correct in noting the originality of Minerva's attributes in Jan de Lairese's painting. I have also assumed that Heemskerck III had access to the Jan de Lairese painting and to Gerard de Lairese's treatise prior to its first translation from Dutch to English in 1738. Whether his access was through printed copy or by word of mouth remains to be seen. Continuing my study of these prints will require research into reproductions of the de Lairese work, but also other contemporary prints and as noted above, into other sources such as newspapers for articles or advertisements that address the ideas of theory. I have also approached my discussion of satire from the point of view of a positive expression of visual ideas, and it would be important to give consideration as well to the negative or dismissive stance, which can be equally as satirical. I firmly believe in the notion that, even

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<sup>74</sup> See also Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth, Volume 1, The "Modern Moral Subject", 1697-1732* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1991), p. 107-108. Paulson indicates that Hogarth was clearly aware of Gerard de Lairese's *Art of Painting* and in fact borrowed from the frontispiece of this work.

given the difference in social standing, the London art world was a very small place and contemporary topics that affected various groups, such as the establishment of an English theory of art and even the establishment of an English school of art would have been major topics of discussion amongst artists, engravers and consumers. Most importantly perhaps, Heemskerck III is creating a form of entertainment and engagement with the consumer that satirizes the attempt by elite classes to establish levels of class through the promotion of theories of art that define what types of art consumers should be buying. He is telling artists that if they adhere to de Lairese's theory, Minerva will become the landlord of their brothel (studio), Drawing becomes their Madam, and they will be proselytizing their art to meet the aims of a continental theory that has the parallel aim of defining class.

I suspect that there is much more information to be discovered in this and the other prints in this series. I cannot believe that in light of the different theories being promoted, such as the publication of the Richardson works, that Heemskerck III was only addressing the theories of de Lairese. As I have noted above, the London art world was very small and it is quite likely that Heemskerck III would have been in close contact with fellow artists who were also being affected by these debates. In creating work in a medium that depends on the very fluid and changing nature of the interaction with the art market, he is working to negotiate a place for himself within the changing demands of that market. It is important to have been able to provide a significant starting point for an understanding of the meaning behind this print as it provides a starting point for further studies of both this and the other prints in the series.

### Conclusion

In 1734 Heemskerck III published a small satirical pamphlet, *Nothing Irregular in nature; or, deformity a mere fancy, Being a new set of original beauties, design'd by the celebrated E. Hemskirk, curiously etched on twelve copper plates. Likewise twelve short poems on the variety of beauty; adapted to each print. Dedicated to a little, tho' a very great man.* The images are of grotesque faces. There is usually more than one face illustrated in each image and they have rolling or squinted eyes, hairy chins and huge, long and warty noses. Their mouths gape open to reveal missing teeth. At first glance they seem quickly and roughly sketched. However, on closer examination, it can be seen that there is a lot of detail captured in the shading and execution of the prints and they exhibit a very competent element of caricature. The accompanying satirical verses are both funny and revealing, as he makes pointed reference to the theory around beauty in form and design as well as to individuals such as Addison and Steele, the *Spectator* and even Lord Shaftesbury. Two of the verses at near the beginning of the pamphlet are very revealing:

#### **The Difference of Beauty**

The Chase of Beauty all pursue,  
Which proves th' Existence of it true:  
In Nature, and in all her Works,  
A Charm, a Secret *Venus* lurks:  
But in what certain Point it lies,  
Is undetermin'd by the Wise.

Bid *Gervase* paint a lovely Dame,  
He'll regularly raise your Flame;  
With nice Proportion, and Design,  
You'll see the finished Picture shine.  
To *Hemskirk* put the same Request;  
Behold his Sentiments express'd!  
In Oddness and Grotesque he'll place  
The Beauties of his fav'rite Race.

On his own Plan the furthest Reach,  
Is what a Judge admires in each:

Distortion there would spoil the Draught,  
 And here all Softness were a Fault.  
 Both Masters may the Skill display,  
 And please us, in a diff'rent Way.<sup>1</sup>

**The Mind's the Man**

When manly Wit in short Essays,  
 Refin'd the Beaux of Anna's Days;  
 When the polite Spectator reign'd,  
 And Vice was pleas'd to be restrain'd,  
 On *Isis* Banks and *Muses* warm'd  
 A virtuous Band, by Nature form'd,  
 In Mind, with ev'ry Art to please,  
 In Face and Body, worse than these.

What powder'd Fop, or noisy Spark,  
 Who travers'd *Hide*, or *James's* Park,  
 Could boast an *Addison* his Friend?  
 Would *Steele* to sooth him condescend?  
 Yet *Steele* and *Addison* the Sage,  
 The joint Reformers of an Age,  
 When in the Ugly Club enroll'd,  
 Were \* proud to have their Honour told.

Learn ye Male Belles, ye He-she Things,  
 Where Virture lies, when Honour springs.  
 Dress, spark, and powder all you can,  
 'Tis to be Boys, - The Mind's the Man.<sup>2</sup>

\* *Spectator*

Research on Egbert van Heemskerck III is complicated by three major factors: gaining a comprehensive understanding of the many and varied theories of art that were being discussed and promoted in the early eighteenth century; understanding the medium of the graphic satiric print, its fluid and changing medium and the issues around print

<sup>1</sup> E. Hemskirk, *Nothing Irregular in nature; or, deformity a mere fancy, Being a new set of original beauties, design'd by the celebrated E. Hemskirk, curiously etched on twelve copper plates. Likewise twelve short poems on the variety of beauty; adapted to each print. Dedicated to a little, tho' a very great man*, (London, 1734).

<<http://galenet.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/servlet/ECCO>>

Gale Document Number CW106340834-CW3306340860].[November 19, 2007].

<sup>2</sup> E. Hemskirk, *Nothing Irregular in nature*, November 19, 2007. The references to Queen Anne, the Spectator and Steele and Addison in this verse place the overall reference to the early eighteenth century. Both of these verses are suggestive as to Heemskerck III's attitudes toward the contemporary events focused on defining 'good art' that were having a significant effect on the market for his work.

scholarship; and, finally, the concept of satire, particularly satire as it is used in terms of prints. These three factors were affecting the consumer, and the market itself was not static; it too was changing.

As a result of the changing nature of the market through its engagement with the issues of print culture, satire and theory this becomes a circular process that in an historical sense is very difficult to define. In order to gain a full understanding of works such as the Heemskerck III prints, we need to be able to take a snapshot of all these contributing factors at one particular point in time. In the case of topics such as art theory, this also requires a consideration of their historical development. In my discussion of the *Picture Auction* and the *Brothel Scene*, I have made a first attempt at this process. In order to maintain my focus on the images, I have documented here a very condensed consideration of a number of broad areas such as the societal debates that were occurring and the many theories of art being discussed; this required an exclusion of those that were probably quite relevant, such as the work of Lord Shaftesbury. Such omissions will be rectified in my future research.<sup>3</sup>

I began my research by thinking that there must have been a specific event that caused Heemskerck III to produce these prints—something that must have been the trigger. It has become clear that it was more likely the culmination of a series of events in the social sphere including the definition of an English school of art and ideas of the connoisseur that demanded the engagement of the artist as well as the consumer in this

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<sup>3</sup> In future research contemporary records of newspapers such as the *Spectator* will be checked for advertisements or references to Heemskerck III, his work and the contemporary issues. It might be possible from such sources to determine whether these prints were created as a series, if they were sold individually or as a set, or if they were a subscription. It will also be important to address the idea that because satirical prints were a more instant medium reflective of the issues and practices in contemporary society and politics they should be reviewed within the broader range of what was produced by that media, be it theatre, newspaper, etc. It would also be important to look for evidence of other contemporary prints that satirized the theories of art being discussed.

debate. Due to a lack of historical documentation, the work of the individual members of this family of artists has not only long been confused, but has been generically grouped together under the little regarded heading of 'low genre'. I have learned, however, that where previously the work of Heemskerck III has been undervalued in comparison to that of his father and grandfather, his contribution in terms of these satirical prints is actually the more significant for our understanding of both English art and the effects of a cross-cultural contribution towards the development of that art. The Heemskerck III prints demonstrate that through the need to find a way of negotiating the changing art market, he visually engaged in this debate, using these prints to make a statement, where his father was simply taking advantage of a specific niche in the market for Dutch genre work.

This represents a fundamental change in the place of the artist, and is even more significant because it involves a non-elite artist of foreign heritage.<sup>4</sup> It is also significant because it happened at a time in English history when the growth of power of the middling classes was seen as a significant threat by the elite, who responded to it by attempts to preserve status distinctions through the definition of the connoisseur.<sup>5</sup> One of the methods for achieving this was through the promotion of art theory and a definition of the connoisseur. That this would have a subsequent and detrimental effect on both native and foreign artists working in London was recognized by many. We are only now beginning to see that due to their status many of these responding voices were either not heard or not officially recognized and it is a neglect that must be addressed. At the very least I am hopeful that, as Nicholson suggests, this thesis has contributed to the existing foundation of print scholarship by establishing some information about a

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<sup>4</sup> It is also significant in that his work may in fact anticipate that of Hogarth.

<sup>5</sup> See Mount, 'The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass: Constructions of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Oxford Art Journal*, 29 no. 2 (2006), pp. 167-184 (pp. 167-171).

little-known though very relevant artist who made an important contribution to the development of the satirical print in early modern England.

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**Appendix I**

Breakdown by subject matter of lots attributed to Heemskerck - BL catalogues 1689-92.

Amorous	32	Head	144
Archers	1	Hermit(s)	13
Bawdy House	8	King William	3
Beggarman	1	Knife Grinder	1
Biblical	25	Lace maker	1
Boors	33	Man and Child	3
Bowling	1	Man before a constable	1
Boy with wagon	1	Man drinking coffee	1
Candle	1	Meeting	1
Cards	24	Merriment	4
Chimney Sweep	1	Music	1
Clown(s)	3	Nun	2
Cobbler	1	Nursery	2
Comical	8	Panther	1
Confession	34	Peasants	1
Conversation	37	Philosophers	10
Cooking	9	Pilgrim(s)	3
Dancing	1	Piper	2
Dentist	1	Portrait	2
Doctor	2	Priests	5
Drinking	32	Quaker	16
Droll	126	Reading	2
Dutch Family	6	School	8
Entertainment	5	Senses	1
Father Peters	2	Sowing	1
Fighting	23	Sick man/woman/will	12
Fire	5	Singing	50
Fisherman	4	Smoking	42
Fortune	2	Still life	2
Fryer(s)	39	Wedding	4
Grace	19	Woman/children	1
Gunpowder Plot	3	Miscellaneous	92
		<b>Total Entries listed</b>	<b>922</b>

Note: Of the 922 lots that reference Heemskerck, 49 of these are noted as being 'after' Heemskerck. These items have been included in the above table for the purposes of giving an overall indication of the variety of subject matter. The categorization of subject matter is my own based on the descriptions given in the catalogues, however it should be pointed out that there is potential for crossover between subjects; for example 'Entertainment' and 'Merriment' could just as easily be listed under 'Boors' or 'Amorous pieces'. The works listed as miscellaneous were those that could not adequately be categorized and include descriptions such as 'an original' or 'a fine piece'.